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lingt es dem Sammelband, einen Einblick in die Vielschichtigkeit des Phänomens zu geben. Die kritische Perspektivierung und Betrachtung von Frauen- und Geschlechterrechten erfolgt hier aus der Tradition universeller Menschenrechte heraus. Die zentralen Fragen „Whose Rights – Which Rights?“, so auch der Name der begleitenden Podcast-Serie des Projekts, wären künftig v.a. in Hinblick auf die More-than-Human World dringend zu diskutieren, da die Naturalisierung von Unterdrückungs- und Ausbeutungsmechanismen weltweit sehr wirkmächtig entlang intersektionaler Achsen in Verschränkung mit den Kategorien human/non-human verläuft.

„Global Contestations of Gender Rights“ ist sehr empfehlenswert für alle, die sich – innerhalb wie außerhalb des akademischen Feldes – mit aktuellen Entwicklungen und Herausforderungen gleichberechtigter Geschlechterverhältnisse auseinandersetzen und dabei an einem globalen Dialog interessiert sind.

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**Gabriele Abels**, **Andrea Krizsán**, **Heather MacRae**, **Anna van der Vleuten** (Eds.)

## The Routledge Handbook of Gender and EU Politics

MARIA STRATIGAKI

The value of the handbook lies in its usefulness to all three components of the *velvet triangle*, academia (gender studies), institutions (policy makers), and the movement (activists). For academics, it provides new scholarly insights by examining the hidden or implicit gendered impacts of ‘neutral’ European Union (EU) policies. For policy makers, it exposes gaps between commitments and outcomes and stimulates institutional activism. For activists, it provides new areas for advocacy by facilitating the formulation of demands based on accurate policy analysis.

The handbook applies the triple political analysis of policy, policies, politics to include all aspects and levels of the EU machinery. This option is innovative for gender studies and contributes to a holistic understanding of the construction of a sui generis modern union.

The handbook challenges the myth that gender equality was an easier task for the new EU than for the old member states (MS). It shows that patriarchal structures, ideologies, and resistances were quickly established in the absence of feminist safeguards. Historically, the following opportunity structure can be cursorily traced: During the constant conflict between economic and political competition among MS and the EU's struggle for legitimacy, new opportunities opened up. In this context, the accidental Article 119 of the Treaty of Rome proved to be the first trigger for EU gender equality policy and only possible in light of the second wave of the women's movement in the 1970s. In the 1990s, the social democratic project for a social Europe, economic prosperity, and the accession of Sweden and Finland created the golden age for gender equality in the EU and for its dynamic contribution to the United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. The formal commitment to gender mainstreaming was enshrined in the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997.

The 31 chapters of the handbook, which is divided into five parts (Theories, Polity, Policies, Politics, Crisis), thoroughly analyze gendered aspects of fundamental concepts, institutions, and policies, as well as perspectives and dynamics for further gendering of the EU.

Part I (Theories) provides a gendered analysis of integration theories and brings new insights into the founding ideologies and ideas of the *sui generis* construction of the EU. It informs about how gender is (or should be) an integral part of all theoretical approaches developed to understand the EU. Specifically, the chapters theorize the EU as a gender regime, examine the concept of Europeanization from a gender perspective, apply the theory of social constructivism to gendered aspects of the EU, analyze the theory of feminist institutionalism on the EU, and argue for a feminist political economic analysis. The final chapters focus on men and masculinities and analyze the EU approach to intersectional discrimination.

Part II (Polity) examines the structures of governance. The EU institutions (along with Policies in part IV) are the most studied by feminist scholars for uncovering the connection between women in power and the gendering of policies. This link is integral to the EU concept of gender mainstreaming and an important feminist argument for the need to combine the two policy tools: gender mainstreaming and positive action in political bodies. From 1992 and the Athens Declaration to the appointment of Ursula von der Leyen, this argument has been borne out in several instances. More women in decision-making have a better chance of developing gendered policies. In the handbook, all major EU institutions are considered from a gender perspective: The European Parliament, the Council, the Commission, the European External Action Service (EEAS), the Court of Justice and the European agencies.

Part III (Politics) examines gender aspects of major European political issues. The chapters contribute to mainstream EU studies with a refined analysis to the fundamental issues of citizenship and enlargement. The first issue concerns the deepening of the EU and places the EU's struggle for competences *vis-à-vis* MS at the center of interest. The second part addresses the ways in which enlarging could bring about

lasting change in new MS, especially on issues where the policy gap between old and new ones is very wide. Obstacles to gender equality in the Eastern countries prevent alignment with the EU acquis. Moreover, party politics and civil society organizations have a different influence at the EU level than at the MS level. European parties round out national political priorities, and civil society has a stronger influence when it represents all MS. Last but not least, gender differences in political knowledge in Europe shape political understanding and action.

Part IV (Policies) examines the gendering of major EU policies. Since 1997 (Amsterdam Treaty), gender equality should have been integrated into all EU policies. However, so far only a few have an explicit reference to women or gender. These are mainly those related to the main objectives of the internal market (employment), the creation of a competitive European Research Area (research) and the EU's international leadership (development). The chapters in part IV are most useful for policy makers, gender experts, and women's organizations such as the European Women's Lobby, which advocates for better and more effective gender mainstreaming. Nine specific policy areas are scrutinized in the handbook: Social and Employment Policy, Economic and Monetary Policy, Trade Policy, Development Policy, Climate Policy, Research, Security and Defense, Migration and Asylum, and Violence against Women.

The fragility of gender mainstreaming in the EU is harshly demonstrated by examining the major crises of recent times in part V (Crisis). Gender priorities and objectives are easily 'forgotten' when the European project faces a serious crisis. The handbook wisely includes a gendered analysis of recent crises and discusses in depth their gendered implications. The example of the recent economic and monetary crisis shows how austerity measures hit social and gender policies. The resulting rise of populism in Eastern and other countries has curtailed important women's rights and tarnished the EU's image in defending human rights and gender equality. Populism also damaged the integrity of the Union in the Brexit process.

In summary, the handbook is a complete, accurate, and highly useful tool for feminist policymakers, academics, and activists, as well as those interested in exploring EU, beyond traditional conceptual frameworks and with innovative tools. The gender lens has proven to be a better and more holistic lens, especially in the case of understanding the Union.

**Gabriele Abels, Andrea Krizsán, Heather MacRae, Anna van der Vleuten** (Eds.), 2021: *The Routledge Handbook of Gender and EU Politics*. London: Routledge. 446 S., ISBN 9781138485259.