

5. Present and Future of Gender in Impact Assessment: a Standpoint—a Paradigm Shift?

It is said that “theories are to serve a purpose of change, or none.”¹ Accordingly, the overall paradigm of my study is feminist: I propose that an implementation of gender equality tools for policy IA will eventually contribute to better equality policy and programming outcomes. Mainstreaming GIA/GBA practices in public policy and programme analysis is indispensable both to fulfilling constitutional and international commitments to legal equality as well as to exercising democratic stewardship.

In the first part of this last chapter, I synthesise my empirical findings, providing comparative conclusions from the Canadian and European approaches to gender analysis. In the second part, I then contextualize these empirical results in relation to feminist, post-positivist, standpoint and critical governance theories. In the third and concluding part, I present a vision for the future of IA and the role of gender analysis could play in it.²

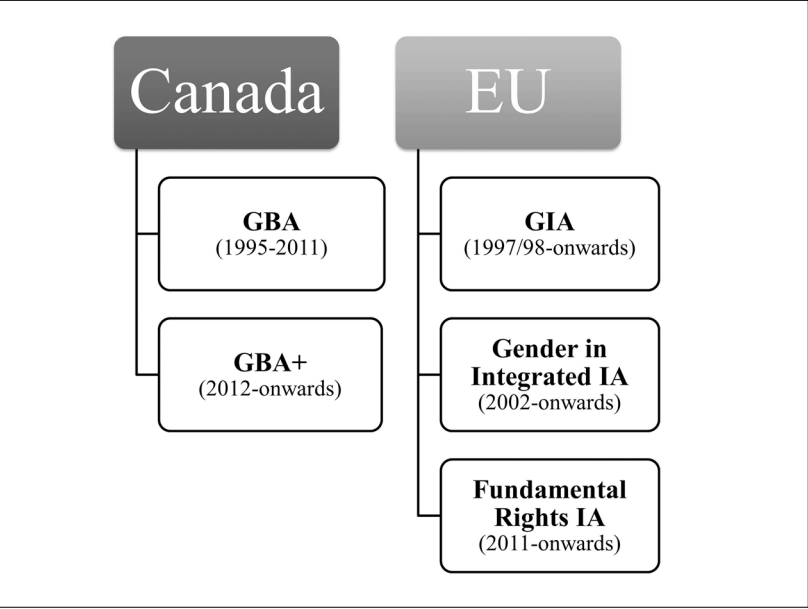
5.1 GENDER EQUALITY GOVERNANCE THROUGH IMPACT ASSESSMENT: COMPARATIVE CONCLUSIONS

This section provides a comparative overview of the implementation and practice of gender analysis tools in the Canadian and European environments. It identifies the factors that hinder enhanced tool implementation and practice and those that drive change by providing institutional learning opportunities. The following table is a reminder of the genealogy of each tool.

1 | Bogason 2005, 251.

2 | For usage of central terminology, see subsections 1.4.1 and 1.6.

Table 25: Gender Analysis Tool Genealogy in Canada and the EU



5.1.1 Tools: Fit for Use?

If both the Commission Gender Impact Analysis (GIA) and the Canadian Gender Based (GBA),³ are held up to the instrument and quality principles, it is clear that they meet the core criteria for *good* gender mainstreaming tools.⁴ They were developed by feminist researchers, in not only a method—but also a theory-driven fashion. They are scientific in nature, geared towards equality, and suited to establishing measurability. With their checklists of questions, they are structured like other tested IA tools, such as environmental IA or health IA, which gives them a good context fit. They both have legal triggers and call for institutional (self-) commitment through their inclusion in gender action plans. And finally, they both have the clear goal of fostering gender equality by addressing strategic levels of decision making (gender mainstreaming). As such, GIA and GBA are *explicit* IA tools. They fulfil all IA tool criteria, and are therefore theoretically fit for use. The practice of GIA and GBA, however, tells a different story. Ex-ante IA has gained tremendous importance in Western public policy and programme making. But what became clear in my study is that, in practice, gender IA tools are not central to the integrated IA process and that the gender lens is not (yet) widely applied in either the EU or Canadian IA environment. The reason for this may lie in the relevance tests for GIA, which make it essentially a “procedure in the procedure.”⁵ As long as it is assumed that gender is accounted for in integrated guidelines and

3 | For Canada (SWC 1995). For the Commission, compare (European Commission 1996).
4 | The quality assessments of the Canadian tools are presented in detail in 3.2, the European tools in 4.2.
5 | Windoffer 2011, 246.

as long as there is no accountability for gender mainstreaming in IA, GIA can and will be ignored. Both Canadian and European experts are concerned with the lack of GIA application, the absence of system-wide, routine implementation of gender analysis tools, and insufficient consideration of gendered effects in integrated IA.

The surprise is that this is occurring in Canada, where GBA has a long history. The tool originated in 1976 in the first worldwide “Policy on the integration of concerns about the status of women,”⁶ which called for a strategy for gendered analysis of all federal Canadian legal and programmatic initiatives.⁷ The path toward gender equality and GBA was further paved by the 4th World Conference on Women 1995 in Beijing with the introduction of Canada’s *Federal Plan for Gender Equality ‘Setting the Stage for the next Century’*⁸, which included a GBA strategy and an outline for a GBA tool. In the years that followed, the Status of Women Canada refined its GBA stand-alone tool, which government departments, such as Health Canada, the Canadian International Development Agency, and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, further diversified and custom-tailored for ex-ante IA. Thus, in Canada, GBA is highly diversified and policy-field specific. But despite its long history and refinements, it is still little used in practice.

GIA and GBA are “explicit”⁹ policy analysis tools, structured according to the policy cycle and streamlined with ex-ante IA processes and procedures. GBA/GIA as stand-alone tools are intended to be applied (with other assessment forms) early in the policy process to ensure that a gender perspective is integrated and mainstreamed in the problem definition, the overall assessment design, and policy or programme goals and objectives. However, even when implemented later in the process, a gender lens can be added to the assessment, either in parallel or ex-post. The stand-alone tool approach seems to guarantee visibility and attention to gender in the assessment process. Here, however, one of the differences between the Canadian and EU environments becomes evident. Canadian experts were familiar with GBA and the GBA duty, but the EU gender experts had only heard of GIA’s existence.

The Canadian interviewees voiced their satisfaction with tool design and process integrability, but they were disappointed with missing departmental GBA frameworks and with the lack of proof of assessment, the quality of assessments, and the non-systemic government-wide implementation. Creating accountability for GBA was an overarching theme of the interviews, along with fostering more transparency in and sustainability of GBA and better quality analytical outcomes.

In the Commission, impacts on gender equality are, in principle, part of the social IA section of the integrated IA guidelines.¹⁰ However, they are not mainstreamed into the economic and ecological impact sections of the assessment.¹¹ The EU experts interviewed knew generally that gender equality was part of the

6 | SWC 2000b, 2; SWC 2000a, 5.

7 | Hankivsky 2007c, 144.

8 | SWC 1995.

9 | Podhora/Helming 2010, 2. See also chapter 1.6.1.

10 | European Commission 2009a.

11 | This finding poses no difference to Windoffer observations for the years 2006-2010 (Windoffer 2011, 252).

overall IA duty, but they were not aware of the particular GIA tool itself. In only one Directorate General were staff aware that the stand-alone GIA, as developed by DG Employment, still existed.¹² Only in this Directorate did staff know that GIA would still be acceptable and applicable as an add-on, stand-alone tool when there was a need to deepen an integrated assessment with respect to gendered effects.

As with the Canadian GBA, GIA is also intended to be applied very early in an assessment, but only after gender relevance has been established:

“Gender impact assessment should be carried out once it is established that a certain policy has implications for gender relations. It is most successfully carried out at an early stage of the decision-making process, to allow for changes, and even major reorientation, of policies, when appropriate.”¹³

The developer of the Commission’s GIA, as well as the academic interviewees and the few Commission gender experts who were aware of GIA, described the tool as well suited to the ex-ante IA system. However, none of them was able to provide proof that GIA had ever been used for assessment. In fact, most were sure that GIA had never been put into action. The Canadian interviewees were not able to provide proof either, but most *claimed* that it had been used, citing case studies in GBA training material. However, they were not able to demonstrate how the case studies informed actual policies.

Three factors may help explain the absence of GIA practice in Commission policy and programme analysis. First, there appears to be an underlying *neutrality* assumption that not many policies or programmes need a gendered analysis, despite evidence from gender research that almost all do, since they affect all people, both women and men. Second, mainstreaming gender is absent in the tool design of the integrated guidelines and the IA support structures surrounding it. By *subordinating* gender questions to the social IA section, the Commission implies that economic and ecological factors do not produce differently gendered effects—which sends a powerful negative message to the Directorates General. This subordination continues in tool methodologies: GIA, seen as a tool for qualitative research, ranks lower in the informal hierarchy of trusted methods of analysis. Quantitative research methods, at best enabling monetisation¹⁴, are preferred within the Commission’s IA system, where computer models and scenarios are the most widely applied assessment techniques.¹⁵ Third, GIA practice is hindered by the mixed messages in the integrated IA guidelines regarding gender. Inequality is framed under both a) a systemic, rights-based, empowering gender equality paradigm (which calls for addressing indirect discrimination by positive action), and b) a protective, paternalistic, anti-discrimination paradigm (where women

12 | The mentioning of GIA is reduced to a footnote in the supporting SIA sub-guidelines of the integrated IA manual (European Commission 2009b, 21), see chapter 4.2.3.1.

13 | European Commission, Directorate-General Employment, Equal Opportunities Unit DG 5 1997/1998, 4.

14 | As such, it becomes clear that methods of monetisation are not exempt from gender bias.

15 | I.e. in sustainability IA tools (Podhora et al. 2013, 91).

are perceived as a vulnerable group subject to direct discrimination).¹⁶ While all interviewed public servants in the Commission did have some perception of the latter, only the gender experts had an understanding of the more structural and indirect workings of gender difference.

The challenges to a cross-cutting implementation of GBA in Canada may also be explained by three main factors. First, individuals may resist taking up the tools because of a perceived *dramatization* of gender or because they believe that a state of gender equality has already or almost been achieved (for these individuals, diversity would be a more accepted frame). Second, GBA is hampered by a lack of cultural acceptance in departments that deal with so-called *hard policies* and that do not recognise the far reaching, structural effects of gender in their presumably *neutral* policies. Third, GBA policy resources and support structures have suffered cut backs in the past, which has delayed accountability for GBA implementation. These challenges are not limited to Canada, and are, in one way or another, present in the European context, where agencies have even less experience with gender analysis and do not yet provide specific resources for ex-ante gender analysis.

The tools for gender analysis have changed since I completed my field work. In Canada, the intersectional approach provided in the latest edition of the GBA+ in 2011-2012 added a degree of sophistication to the tool. It gave GBA a wider mandate, but still placed gender at the centre of the tool tradition.¹⁷

In Europe, the Commission introduced another stand-alone tool in 2011 that addresses non-discrimination and gender equality: the *Operational Guidance on Taking Account of Fundamental Rights in Commission IAs*¹⁸. Like GIA, this tool sees gender equality as a fundamental right, although it does not include gender mainstreaming of all fundamental rights and non-discrimination categories. It has a parallel tool in the social IA section of the integrated IA, which provides a “discernible continuity with existing gender and equality assessment tools.”¹⁹ This overlap of tools mirrors a similar overlap between the Fundamental Rights Agency, the EU’s non-discrimination body and a driver of equality and diversity, and the European Institute for Gender Equality.²⁰ Such duplication of tools is a reminder of the need for joint political and research efforts to clarify the benefits and drawbacks of tools in their multi-jurisdictional and multi-sectoral application.

In Canada, demands by women academics for increased attention to intersectionality in policymaking and assessment have strengthened gender analysis tool since GBA+ became the *one-stop-shop*. In the European context, however, GIA’s position has been weakened. It is now even further marginalised as a misinterpreted, seemingly out-dated, mono-dimensional tool—even though intersectionality was built into its original design and even though, much like GBA+, it manages to address the structural level:

16 | Compare also sub-chapter 2.3.1.

17 | SWC 2012h.

18 | European Commission 2011c. See also sub-chapter 4.2.3.5.

19 | Toner 2012, 4.

20 | The competing in/equality regimes and European shift from gender equality to multiple discrimination and diversity are expressed in IA tools. For a critique of this transference on the political and institutional level, see (Krizsan et al. 2014); for a transnational analysis centred on civil society actors, see (Siim 2014).

“It should be borne in mind that gender is a structural difference which affects the entire population. Neither women nor men should be treated like some special interest group among several such groups. On the contrary, gender affects, and indeed often reinforces, differences and vulnerabilities according to other structural differences, such as race/ethnicity, class, age, disability, sexual orientation etc.”²¹

Academic debates on intersectionality have been translated into tool design in both GBA+ and the Fundamental Rights IA—although in a limited way—with a focus on direct discrimination based on group membership and supported by patchy databases. Still needed is a profound intersectional approach to analysis of systemic discrimination—racism, ableism, sexism, heteronormativity, etc.—in the structures and institutions of policy and programme making, including their intersections or interdependencies. Gender analysis tools, with their long tradition, level of sophistication and existence across policy fields, have the most potential for implementing intersectionality. Their concepts of sex/gender have been intersectional from the start, and their data base has improved tremendously since their introduction.

What lessons can be drawn from this status quo for the future? The principles of democratic decision making and the quest for better, more inclusive ways of doing research will demand that political decision makers, including femocrats, pay more attention to moving gender analysis, and with it gender mainstreaming, from the fringes to the core of IA. If gender analysis is really taken seriously as one of the main tools to implement gender mainstreaming, GIA, GBA and similar tools need to be included in routine, systematic and institutionalised ways into IA processes and guidelines. Both the EU and Canada provide valuable case studies on the current status of gender mainstreaming in ex-ante policy IA: they have started on the road to gender equality through ex-ante IA, but there are still major roadblocks to overcome.²²

Integration of gender into IA could be a way forward, but the quality of that integration is central.²³ The current, integrated guidelines of the Commission are an example of why it makes only limited sense to “just add a few questions on gender (and non-discrimination) and stir.” In theory, a true mainstreaming approach in

21 | European Commission, Directorate-General Employment, Equal Opportunities Unit DG 5 1997/1998, 3.

22 | As do other member states of the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD). A OECD study shows, only 48 per cent of the OECD member states show “some” evidence of conducting analysis on the gender-differentiated effects of policy making (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2012a, 39). With “some,” the OECD means traces of gender aspects to be found in singular policies, and decidedly not the cross-cutting implementation of evidence-based gender analysis in ex-ante policy IA. The OECD attests for a sporadic implementation among its member states and recommends to: “Enhance the incorporation of gender impact assessment in the design, implementation and evaluation of laws, policies, regulations, programmes and budgets in a systematic and comprehensive manner.” (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2012a, 41).

23 | In order to overcome “separate silos,” better scoping and integration is requested (Morrison-Saunders et al. 2014). The silo concept is explained in 1.5.2.

IA would make explicit gender analysis tools irrelevant. In practice, however, the gender dimension is not mainstreamed into integrated IA tools, nor are questions of meaningful integration (i.e., of how to weigh effects against each other) resolved. Over twenty years after the introduction of gender mainstreaming, there is still insufficient expertise among IA practitioners to grasp the full consequences of direct gendered effects, not to mention effects that are less obvious or that are related to structural discrimination of women in their fields and impact areas. Until a higher level of expertise is achieved and until we see a mainstreamed commitment to gender equality, it will be essential for gender experts to continue promoting GIA/GBA or other gender analysis mechanisms as stand-alone and key policy making tools. Here, the Status of Women Canada, with its committed femocrats, serves as an example of good gender equality governance.

But even this organization faces a major challenge: how to raise expertise for gender public policy assessment practice. Feminist writings have pointed to the marginalisation of gender in the academy and the ignorance of gender in research.²⁴ At the macro-level, feminists have observed a lack of attention to their attempts to engender the state, its institutions and practices:

“One thing that has remained constant over the course of the past three decades has been the feminist lament that their contribution to understanding the state has not been taken seriously by the ‘mainstream.’ The importance of gender and other relations of power to the operation of the state has been documented empirically and defended theoretically, but very little of it is reflected in nonfeminist work.”²⁵

Many authors have noted the resistance to gender mainstreaming in public bureaucracy.²⁶ Suggestions are that it emanates, on an abstract level, from androcentric systems and processes, but also on a personal level, from the preponderance of men among the legal, economic and financial experts in public administration.²⁷ Academic writers have also noted a general science-knowledge gap between existing tools and the need to provide policy advice in areas that deviate from the economic-financial paradigm, for example, in ex-ante research with an environmental and sustainability focus.²⁸

Gender analysis shares with other impact analyses the need for appropriate tool selection and handling, and this has become the object of a new strand of research.²⁹ At present, a few in the international IA community recognise the value of “agency” and emphasis on specialised tools like GIA to enable “genuinely informed project planning”³⁰ and to pursue “[...] social justice, human rights, [...] and more inclusive

24 | Just to name a few in the context of the marginalisation of gender in the realm of policy making and feminist critical governance (Brodie 1995; Carney 2004; Abu-Laban 2008; Brodie 2008; Paterson 2010).

25 | Chappell 2013, 621.

26 | Benschop/Verloo 2006; Won 2007; Erfurt 2007; Erfurt 2010. See especially chapter 1.5.2.

27 | Lewalter 2013, 51.

28 | Turnpenny et al. 2008; Podhora/Helming 2010; Podhora et al. 2013.

29 | de Ridder et al. 2007; Nilsson et al. 2008; OECD et al. 2011; Adelle et al. 2012.

30 | Harvey 2011, xx.

democratic practice.”³¹ But if gender mainstreaming researchers and feminist academics want to open a wider entry gate for gender in policy and project analysis and to gain access to the IA community, they need to find new ways to frame and communicate their findings to target groups, in this case policy analysts as users and politicians as consumers. They need to become better gender “knowledge brokers”³² at the policy interface.

What the Canadian example shows is that it is not sufficient to create demand for gender analysis by reminding the actors involved of their legal duty to the mainstreaming strategy or to the raising of awareness for the tools. The disconnect between tools and users needs to be transformed into a mutually meaningful connection. From my research, there appear to be three ways to achieve this: 1) by integrating gender mainstreaming and forms of gender analysis into obligatory well-known, instruments like social IA under the integrated approach, as has been done in the EU, 2) by enlarging the gender frame to include a more widely accepted diversity framing in GBA+, renaming (with a little remodelling) the already intersectional tool GBA, and 3) by increasing accountability and providing more GBA exposure, as been done in Canada.

One way to increase GBA(+) tool uptake is through a top-down requirement for gender analysis of all initiatives—as Canadian departments were challenged to do by the administrative quality management boards (the Treasury Board Secretariat and the PCO). The former Canadian bottom-up integration approach did not ensure gender analysis practices, particularly when analysts were disconnected from the tools and the subject and where no quality management system for gender equality concerns was in place.

To a certain extent in the EU, the gender questions in the social IA tool section of the integrated IA have been seen as fulfilling the crosscutting assessment duty. But while gender aspects may be mainstreamed in economic or ecologic impact areas of the tool, integration into IA is difficult as long as analysts lack a theoretical and data-based understanding of gender relations and their effects in specific fields. Analyst’s lack of insight into sex and gender as power relations and as determinants of the different impacts of processes, structures and institutions, obstructs meaningful uptake in integrated instruments.

One way to advance the practice of gender analysis would be to raise awareness of the impacts of policy and programme making on real people and of the gendered nature of the structures, processes and power relations concerned. The international policy analysis/policy IA community still lacks such awareness and has few field-specific case studies as reference points. Usually practitioners of policy IA operate on meta-levels and analyse quantified, stratified, monetised meta-data mainly through computer modelling. Other approaches have received little attention or resources for conducting full-fledged gender analysis.

As long as analysts are not capable of making such connections, stand-alone gender analysis tools with a focus on gender equality (including its intersections with other equality strands) and applied by gender experts in field-specific research teams, are the tools of choice. The disconnect between tool users and the gender analysis tools can be bridged further through gender training combined with

31 | Mintrom 2012, 247.

32 | Söderman et al. 2012; Lyytimäki et al. 2015. See also sub-chapters 2.2.3. and 5.1.7.

hands-on practice. The goal is to increase familiarity with tool content, analytical goals, and methods, which in turn enables more profound analyses and avoids trivialisation. Instead of aiming for immediate cross-cutting implementation of gender analysis, which can only cause frustration on all sides, efforts could be first concentrated on policies and programmes that affect women and gender relations substantially and directly (based on a pre-test), in order to build an easy to create, fast-growing, evidence-based demonstration of relevance. These can be called the “fast gains.” Then the focus could be turned to selected larger scale or highly aggregated assessments of meta-policies and to larger programmes involving big-data (i.e., free trade agreements³³) that, at first glance, seem removed from people and therefore neutral or without gender relevance. These gains would be “hard won”, but would provide important institutional examples. In the end, all gender analysis practices would need to be centrally collected, sorted by tools, policy field, assessment purpose, methods and data (at a minimum), and placed in practice libraries, with open access for analysts.

5.1.2 Responsibilities: Linking Gender Equality and Impact Assessment Governance

Gender equality strategies firmly anchored in legal frameworks, with specific goals, responsibilities, timelines and monitoring mechanisms, are indispensable for the advancement of gender equality. And to be effective, these strategies must be intertwined with other government frameworks and strategies, including IA and performance measurement. This is not the case in either Canada or the EU.

In Canada, despite the clear constitutional mandate for gender equality, there is no gender action plan or gender equality strategy. The Office of the Attorney has criticised the weak legal base for GBA application: “there is no government-wide policy requiring that departments and agencies perform it.”³⁴ In Canada, the 2009 audit by the Office of the Attorney General (as a form of administrative accountability) confirmed the findings of this study that the implementation of GBA had been insufficient and non-systematic.³⁵ A wide variety of practices were being employed: The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, for example, had implemented all key elements of a proper framework for GBA, whereas Transport Canada and Veterans Affairs Canada had no GBA framework or proof of GBA implementation. Despite the existence of GBA frameworks in some Canadian departments, GBA was not visible in policy outcomes or objectives. The Auditor General attested that “very few of the departments that perform gender-based analysis can show that the analyses are used in designing public policy.”³⁶

The state of ex-ante policy analysis in the EU and Canada are similar. In the case of the EU, the Commission did not consider supporting frameworks necessary to conduct gender-sensitive ex-ante analysis. As a result, few such analyses have been conducted. In the EU to date, the Commission’s annual IA roadmaps have not been

33 | For gender equality concerns in trade agreements, see (True 2009; Wagner 2012).

34 | Office of the Auditor General of Canada 2009a, 2.

35 | Office of the Auditor General of Canada 2009a.

36 | Office of the Auditor General of Canada 2009a, 2.

linked to gender equality strategies.³⁷ The Canadian GBA in particular, requires clarification with regards to its status in the policy documents. The GBA label itself is confusing: GBA as a tool needs to be clearly distinguished from GBA as an overarching strategy, and the gender mainstreaming duty and the institutional framework under the GBA strategy should be rationalised in a communication to public policy makers. In the EU roadmap on gender equality, we see a buy-in by European equality actors into the mainstreaming rhetoric, despite the absence of mainstreaming in the IA guidelines. If they are to be used more broadly and effectively, gender analysis tools will need to be given separate attention in *interlinked* equality *and* IA strategies.

5.1.3 Training: Building Sustainable Gender Competency for Impact Assessment

In Canada, GBA training is a crucial part of the GBA implementation framework. Training focuses on GBA both as an overarching strategy and as the equivalent to gender mainstreaming. It also focuses on implementation of policy field specific GBA tools.³⁸ The Status of Women Canada has offered a train-the-trainer programme,³⁹ although it was discontinued due to a lack of demand for trainers. Some departments such as the Canadian International Development Agency, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, Health Canada and Citizenship and Immigration Canada were leaders in educating their analysts and in making GBA training mandatory, e.g., as part of the International Development Agency's recruitment programme. However, the majority of the Canadian departments did not provide special training and left it to Status of Women Canada to offer general, inter-departmental GBA training for all interested civil servants on a volunteer basis.⁴⁰ Since 2007 there has been special training for staff of the Central Agencies⁴¹ to them understand and exercise their GBA challenge function. At the time I conducted my field research, consideration was also being given to making GBA training an integrated module in the Canadian School of

37 | European Commission 2010b. In the Commission, GIA implementation is based on the soft mechanism of the Communication on gender mainstreaming, which again is decoupled from Communications pertaining to the IA system: The Commission's IA website mentions only the Communication on Impact Assessment, the Communication on Better regulation for Growth and Jobs in the European Union and the Commission Report on Impact Assessment: the Next Steps—In Support of Competitiveness and Sustainable Development as key documents guiding the Commissions IA system.

38 | Canadian International Development Agency 1997b; Canadian International Development Agency 2007; Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2008b; SWC 1998; SWC 2001; SWC 2003b; SWC 2004; SWC 2005g.

39 | SWC 2005e.

40 | I.e. in 2011 and 2012, SWC provided GBA training to public servants from 27 different, federal organisations (SWC 2012j, 14). No such figures are available for the European context, since it is not monitored.

41 | TBS/SWC 2008.

Public Service's introductory course. In 2012 an online self-learning training for GBA+ was rolled out,⁴² which has made Canada a leader in gender training.

In the European Commission, training focused on implementing GIA or on how to consider gender issues under the integrated IA has not been delivered. Gender trainings have tended to be general, i.e., they introduce basic concepts and provide some case studies, which were deemed not particularly relevant for the field of practice. At the time of my research, such trainings were neither regular nor frequent enough to satisfy the needs of the interviewed Commission staff.⁴³ As a result, facing the day-to-day challenges of handling the integrated IA, the Commission's analysts did not seem equipped to deal with the integration of gender concerns in a meaningful way. These findings correlate to studies of other IA researchers, who have attributed the general shortfall in IA quality, independent of gender aspects, to the lack of resources and training in IA tools and practices.⁴⁴

The most notable criticisms of gender trainings in both Canada and the EU were that they were provided in a non-systemic way, that they were infrequent, and that they were not relevant enough to the field (i.e., that they had few case studies). Goals beyond raising general awareness for gender issues were not always set or achieved. Gender competency was created, but with varying degrees of sophistication, depth, and field-specific practicability. My study points up a need for more training that is policy-field and tool-specific and that is delivered as a mandatory, regular and repeated part of the analyst's education. Also, post-training coaching in the course of an IA process are needed (learning by doing)—which remains an unmet demand in both Canada and the EU.

These important aspects were not addressed in the Madrid declaration on gender+ training by the QUING research group, which focused on content and not context of trainings.⁴⁵ The European Institute for Gender Equality has pushed for more quality in gender training,⁴⁶ but has focused on gender training practices in EU member states rather than in the Commission. However, it hosts a comprehensive website on gender training⁴⁷ and gender mainstreaming tools and best practices⁴⁸. It is interesting to note that in 2013, the Commission planned to launch its own

42 | SWC 2012d.

43 | After the interviews were conducted, the Commission was determined to provide "staff at all levels with the required technical capacity to determine gender relevance and to integrate gender aspects into policies, regulatory measures and spending programmes is a prerequisite for putting gender mainstreaming into practice." (European Commission; Directorate-General for Justice 2013, 12). Specific policy relevant training was then only developed by DG Research and Innovation and DG Development and Cooperation, however it remains unclear of how well connected those are with the IA system. The Commission's equality strategy mid-term report concludes: "The development of more policy-specific gender mainstreaming training in other Directorates-Generals would be useful." (European Commission; Directorate-General for Justice 2013, 12).

44 | Turnpenny et al. 2008.

45 | QUING 2011b.

46 | European Institute for Gender Equality 2012b.

47 | European Institute for Gender Equality 2014d.

48 | European Institute for Gender Equality n.d. b; European Institute for Gender Equality n.d. c.

intranet website to serve “as a pool of information on gender mainstreaming but also as a platform for exchange of experiences.”⁴⁹

Such siloed⁵⁰ approaches to gender training do not allow for discussion of the broader, more fundamental issues that IA analysts face: a) competing policy commitments, b) the perception that assessments should support rather than determine policy, c) (gender-blind) organisational traditions, including qualifications of staff and hiring practices, and d) the sectoral character of policy making and its double selective perception⁵¹.

There is a large gap between the information available on gender mainstreaming and gender equality and the information available on gender in IA. My literature review attested to the existence of two research communities: a gender research community and a scientifically oriented IA community, each with their own research interests, habits, semantic codes and language.⁵² There is not much cross-fertilization between the two. The gender research community has a wealth of publications on the benefits, risks, theories and practices of gender mainstreaming, but very little has been published specifically on gender in IA. Publications scarcely move beyond presenting tools, and very few case studies are available. Gender mainstreaming implementation tools, such as GIA or GBA, were mentioned in some of the general gender mainstreaming publications, but I was only able to uncover this information through meticulous content analysis. Clearly, gender IA tools and practices do not get a high degree of exposure in the literature, nor are they much acknowledged in current IA research.⁵³ As a consequence, theories on

49 | European Commission; Directorate-General for Justice 2013, 13. Since 2013, the EIGE has an exhaustive website on gender mainstreaming (European Institute for Gender Equality n.d. c).

50 | For the concept of maintaining separate silos, see sub-chapter 1.5.2 and (Morrison-Saunders et al. 2014).

51 | Turnpenny et al. 2008; Lewalter 2013. For the concept of double selective perception, see 1.5.2. For suggestions of how to bridge the knowledge gap, see chapter 5.1.5.

52 | I am more interested in the practices of IA, tools, case studies, indicators and data, risk management etc. than in theorising IA or gender in IA. Although this represents a catch-twenty-two, since most gender mainstreaming publications lend heavily from theory because there is so little practice, the gender research community must nevertheless understand the rationales of IA practitioners and learn how to speak each other's language.

53 | There are very few conferences, seminars or workshops devoted exclusively on gender in IA. For example, I organised and chaired the first panel on GIA (“Gender Impact Assessment: between benefits, betterment and betrayal”) in the history of the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) at the occasion of its 31st Annual Conference in Puebla, Mexico, from May 29 to June 4th, 2011. I wish to express my gratitude to the two panellists, Dr. Aranka Podhora and Francesca Viliani, as well as to Ana Maria Esteves, who encouraged me to do so. Without their generous support this panel would not have happened. Other examples are the expert meeting on gender equality and impact assessment (“Gleichstellungsorientierte Folgenabschätzung & Wirkungsanalysen—Beispiele und Erfahrungen”), held at Humboldt University Berlin, 10 April, 2008, and organised by the GenderCompetencyCentre (GenderKompetenzZentrum 2008b). In the Commission, the DG for Health and Food Safety held a seminar on gender in health IA in 2012 (European Commission 2013, 49) and there was a GIA good practice exchange workshop in Vienna,

gender and case studies of gendered impact analysis do not find their way into IA evidence, training material, or knowledge.⁵⁴

There is a continued need among policy analysts, especially those who are new and untrained in gender in policy making and IA, for greater access to custom-tailored research and information on gendered tools, case studies, and data sources in their policy fields. The main gender mainstreaming implementation instruments, such as GIA or GBA, need to be made visible and accessible.

Gender analysis training can function as a communication tool to provide this visibility. Training can communicate the necessity for and benefits of conducting a gendered analysis and can provide information on appropriate tools and competencies to the IA practitioner community. Training can also communicate gendered consequences in concrete, policy field specific case studies and can show the analytical benefits of integrating the gender dimension. Information on the micro-level relevancy and results of gender analysis when applied to tangible policy issues needs to be disseminated widely.⁵⁵

Among my interviewees, even experienced gender specialists who had worked for years in public administration admitted to not always feeling confident about or to not having the right information on gender in their policy field. They expressed the need for repeated gender training and more support. Femocrats and gender trainers are valuable mediators in this process, especially for their ability to translate gender research into the language and procedures of public policy analysts. Executives, even parliaments, such as the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality of the European Parliament, have discovered a need to sensitise their policy departments to gendered effects in policy making:

"To this end, specific gender training on how to include a gender perspective within EP's work (especially for the assistants, the network of GM administrators and/or the FEMM secretariat) as well as promoting studies and analysis on women's rights and gender equality contribute to improving knowledge and raising awareness of gender mainstreaming."⁵⁶

Regular and custom-tailored gender trainings will remain indispensable as long as mandatory modules on gender are not part of professional training in public administration and policy analysis/policy IA. But attention must also be drawn to gender in other trainings and informational activities—to make up for the fact that the methods and practices of gender analysis are not widely covered in other venues. It goes without saying that policy analysts must be asked to actively look for *all* relevant factors, including gender, in their IAs and to reach for the appropriate tools. The easier the access to gender research, the more likely that this knowledge will be deployed in IA practice.

initiated by the Commission at 4-5 June 2014 (European Commission; Directorate-General for Justice 2014).

54 | One exception being Austrian administrative studies, which see the travelling international concept of gender mainstreaming as a quality criteria for good governance and an integral part of IA systems, see (Bauer et al. 2011), and especially (Bauer/Dearing 2011; Heinisch-Hosek 2011; Hödl 2011).

55 | See chapter 5.1.5.

56 | European Parliament et al. 2014, 19. Emphasis as in original.

In these times of budget cut backs and dwindling resources for gender trainings, experimentation with DVD-ROM⁵⁷ and online self-learn formats⁵⁸ are in vogue, (such as a voluntary self-assessment on GBA). The effectiveness of these type of training, however, has not yet been evaluated. At a first glance, online courses, such as the one on GBA+, appear to introduce the tool and set the stage for the topic. But the format tends to oversimplify the content, and the courses lack in-depth engagement and do not convince in terms of conceptualisation and theorisation. Good policy advice rests on solid education and a profound understanding of the subject matter, but in online courses, knowledge transfer is usually tested via short, playful, multiple-choice questionnaires designed to keep people motivated. Building organisational gender competency depends on having an overview of the educational level and qualifications of employees, but self-learn tools often lack the specificity required for effective transfer of learnings into daily work routines. In Canada, participation in these online courses is voluntary, and the test results are not given to managers or recorded.

In an ideal world, IA trainings should have integrated, policy field specific gender modules. All public servants, and policy analysts in particular, would bear the responsibility for implementing gender mainstreaming. In-depth gender trainings should be offered to employees upon entering the institution, and there should be refreshers at frequent intervals. Interviewees working for equality bodies said that, to fulfil their public duties, all public employees, but policy analysts first and foremost, should attend at least one gender training unit. Knowledge transfer should be assured by mandatory, rigorous, policy field specific tests that public servants would need to pass in order to advance in their professional careers.⁵⁹

Policy analysts also voiced a need for coaching on the job, either through external gender trainers or colleagues who are also gender experts. Such coaching would help operationalise the lessons learned and ensure a “four-eye” principle of quality monitoring in the use of gender analysis tools. The quality and sustainability of trainings could be increased by creating a trainer pool under the auspices of a qualified institution, as has been done by the Status of Women Canada. Gender trainers would be selected according to their experience with the specific policy area *and* the relevant gender analysis tool(s). Their knowledge of the field and relevant academic discourses would be frequently refreshed and tested by the responsible body (ideally the equality body in collaboration with education bodies). In short, for sustainability, building gender competency should follow the paths typically taken by bureaucracies to ensure that they have qualified employees.

5.1.4 Resources: Doing Gender Is Taking Time

Gender mainstreaming and the application of gender analysis tools need time, financial, and personal resources. Extra expenses are to be expected. *Doing gender* and gender analysis in public administration means additional work simply because these things have not yet been done.⁶⁰ Including sex and gender as additional

57 | SWC 2005c.

58 | SWC 2012d.

59 | SWC 2012d.

60 | As the example of the German Federal Environment Agency shows (Sauer 2014).

variables and lenses raises the bar for precision, quality and excellence of research and is not cost-neutral.⁶¹ The interviewees were not able to state the actual budget spent on GBA/GIA, due to a lack of tracking or activity. In the rare cases where spending could be estimated, interviewees reported on budgets for gender equality activity in general (e.g., for gender-specific programming or gender expert full-time equivalents) rather than GBA/GIA in particular. In all cases, spending on GBA/GIA was estimated as insignificant compared to the overall departmental budget.⁶² In both the Canadian and the EU contexts, it was clear that more resources were needed for work on gender equality, including tracking mechanisms for allocations and expenditures with respect to gender analysis.⁶³

Status of Women Canada staff in particular emphasised that the equality machinery needs budgetary lines and departmental discretion to support gender analysis across government—that is, to conduct GBA and react in a flexible manner in response to requests for policy advice. Without mid- to long-term financial security, the continuity of gender analysis and capacity cannot be guaranteed. The Status of Women Canada served as a warning example when its GBA policy analysis unit was reduced under the politically motivated funding cuts between 2006 and 2008. As long as gender analysis is not routine, the lead entity for gender equality, as well as the departmental network of gender focal points, will need substantial, regularised and predictable resources,⁶⁴ adequate to implement their equality mandate and their responsibilities for policy and programme IA.⁶⁵

In addition, all departments and governmental bodies will need to continue introducing gendered budgets in order to make transparent the resources they allocate to gender equality goals. Funding for gender equality goals, including GBA/GIA implementation, ideally would come from regular budgets and not extra-budgetary sources alone. Budgetary transparency would enable better

61 | The claim, gender mainstreaming could be implemented in an almost cost-neutral fashion, since it was supposed to be included in the routine tasks, is one of its myths proven to be wrong and harmful, by raising wrong expectations and creating frustration instead of acceptance, as initially hoped for.

62 | With the exception of SWC, which in the fiscal year 2011-12 spent 2 million Canadian dollars (of a total budget of 29.4 million Canadian dollars) on 17 full-time equivalents for strategic policy analysis, planning and development (SWC 2012j, 7; 9; 11).

63 | Gender analysis and gender budgeting operate at the two opposite ends of the same policy problem, as Layey's brilliant case study of international taxation shows (Lahey 2009/2010). They could potentially lead to the same result.

64 | While African ministries argue with their "tight budget" and "financial constraints," exacerbating the level of priority given to gender issues and inhibiting instrument use (Haastруп 2014, 109-110), a wealthy Western context should be able to demonstrate more financial leverage.

65 | I.e. in 2011, SWC provided direct support to eight federal agencies, assisting them to meet their obligations laid out in the GBA Departmental Action Plans. SWC is still in the process of strengthening the departmental usage of GBA "through institutional mechanisms that create an environment where routine application of GBA can be carried out" (SWC 2012j, 5). This careful choice of words indicates that such environments have not yet been fully completed and GBA "routine" implementation is not yet guaranteed.

future planning and policy advice.⁶⁶ Budgetary steering toward gender equality in government spending lines could highlight where stewardship for gender analysis lies and help inform the gender-sensitive content of policies.⁶⁷

A major topic raised by my interviewees was the lack of time. They said they worked under constant pressure to react in a timely fashion to everyday problems, and the pressure has only intensified with the New Public Management cutbacks. They said they were not allowed the extra time needed to integrate gender into the analytical IA process, and, in the case of GBA in Canada, that the time factor had also impeded uptake of the stand-alone tool. In general, IAs were produced under time pressure, with assessments taking a few weeks to a couple of months, depending on the complexity of the assessment. In the EU, integrated assessments added yet another time-consuming layer of complexity.

Having officially endorsed extra planning time would demonstrate that gender analysis is important and part of *good IA conduct*, and it would indirectly validate good analytical performance. Time set aside for GBA/GIA would act as an incentive. Integrating gender questions into a standard IA guideline, as in the Commission's IA system, is a first step, since it justifies the time and staff resources spent on answering the questions. But as long as there is no real requirement, specific time allocation, or system for monitoring individual assessment performance, gender considerations in IA will remain patchy at best.

5.1.5 Knowledge: Bridging the Science-Gender Gap

As noted in the preceding section, the lack of data and indicators has often been identified as a barrier to gender analysis:

"Pragmatic barriers are those most often identified in accounts of gender mainstreaming and reflect the level of resources required for successful implementation of gender equality policies. A common problem is the lack of gender-specific information."⁶⁸

Recently, however, more sex-disaggregated data and studies on differential gendered effects of public policies and programmes have become available. The question is: how widely are they acknowledged? Gender experts interviewed for my study expressed an overall satisfaction with the collection of sex-disaggregated data on a meta-level by statistical offices. They also made clear, however, that knowledge production and the statistical evidence-base for gender equality are fragile. In the case of Canada, for example, the statistical compendium *Women in*

66 | As the Austrian practice in the city of Vienna proves (City of Vienna 2006; City of Vienna 2008).

67 | With regards to gender budgeting of their fiscal policies, Canada, as well as the EU, have stalled their efforts (or are in no hurry to make strides despite standing commitments) (Council of Europe 2005; Brodie/Bakker 2008). Also the German government refuses to implement gender budgeting, claiming that gender effects should rather be considered at the input (policy content), not output (spending) side, which heightens the significance of ex-ante gender analysis (Deutscher Bundestag 2012).

68 | Payne 2011, 525.

Canada depended more or less on the work of a single individual.⁶⁹ Other data-related problems noted were the lack of quality in meso and micro level data (an issue particularly relevant for ex-ante assessment of policies and programming), the unavailability of disaggregated data for multi-variable studies, and the lack of sufficient, field specific gender expertise for interpreting the data.

One particularly daunting issue was raised: the difficulty of integrating qualitative data sets, such as those associated with GIA and GBA, into quantitative IAs. Quantitative data prevails in IA, perpetuating and accentuating existing evidence hierarchies in research. Most interviewees seemed to regard the focus on quantitative data and appraisal methods as disadvantageous for the inclusion of gender in IA.⁷⁰

One way of mainstreaming sex/gender concerns into quantitative IA methods such as modelling and cost-benefit analysis could be to perform a feminist critique of mathematical models, variables and underlying assumptions to expose their inherent biases.⁷¹ Another way could be to mimic cost-effectiveness analysis and develop quantification parameters and models for the incurred (societal, economic, health) costs of gender inequality. This approach, however, may not be practical, as there are currently no accepted instruments or mathematical models and few case studies available.⁷² Recently though, the German Federal Environment Agency has set an example by presenting guidance for calculating costs and benefits of proposed legislation as part of the German Regulatory Impact Assessment.⁷³

Even more than a lack of data or instruments, however, current gender analysis seems to suffer from a translation problem. There is a disconnect between the research cultures of gender studies, with a preference for qualitative methods and data, and the science-heavy IA and policy analysis community, with a preference for quantitative methods and data.⁷⁴ To bridge the gap, femocrats and gender experts could play an interpretative role both in the larger international IA and policy analysis discourse and in public administration. A role largely characterised as knowledge brokerage.⁷⁵ Creating and disseminating policy field specific case studies on successful applications of the gender lens could also provide analysts with concrete examples and easy to follow models. IA case studies should be developed for gender-specific policies or programmes and for situations where

69 | It is coordinated by SWC in collaboration with 18 contributing departments (SWC 2012j, 12).

70 | Although the women's movement internationally has gained its biggest support through the presentation of statistical evidence as hard facts on sex imbalance.

71 | Sigle-Rushton 2014; Floro 2014.

72 | I.e. the methodology of calculating the sex-differential benefits of the current German tax system for spousal income as a Standard Cost Model (Färber 2013). This is not to confuse with gender budgeting, which anticipates (ex-ante) or measures (ex-post) the sex-differential budgetary costs.

73 | Porsch et al. 2015.

74 | Compare sub-section 1.4.1, which addresses the disconnection between the IA/public policy analysis and gender analysis communities.

75 | For the concept and role of IA knowledge brokerage at the policy-interface, see sub-chapter 2.2.3 and (Söderman et al. 2012; Lyytimäki et al. 2015).

gender aspects have been integrated in policies and programmes with different focuses (environmental, sustainability, financial policies etc.).⁷⁶

Feminist policy researchers and gender studies experts can also invest more thought and care in developing communication strategies and using straightforward language to explain gendered effects to different science communities and the administration. Gender researchers should work to insure that their papers and findings can be understood by non-specialist readers and across disciplines. *Applied gender studies* as a transdisciplinary public policy interface is yet to be institutionalised as a subject in academic programmes and international conferences.⁷⁷

The reoccurring challenge is to establish the relevance of the categories sex and gender and how such knowledge can be found, created and injected into specific IA research. Solving this translation problem is critical to the future of gender analysis, as knowledge transfer is as important as having instruments. Gender researchers need to make their work understood by public policy and programme analysts, who must convert it into administrative language devoid of “bureaucratese.”⁷⁸ The at times theory and jargon heavy gender studies enter a learning curve while in the process of becoming an *applied* (non-)discipline.⁷⁹

To meet the demands of good governance, public administrators in their turn must communicate their actions⁸⁰ quickly and in an accessible, transparent and

76 | Especially for the later, there is an immediate need. The integration of gender needs explanation and additional information on what is expected (European Commission 2014). The public provision of case studies can also serve an accountability function, see subsequent chapter 5.1.6.

77 | Here, the Gender Summits are a fruitful initiative and beneficial forum of transdisciplinary exchange in the realm of academic networking under the EU research framework Horizon2020 (European Commission 2015b, 31). The Gender Summits were initiated by the EU and DG Research and Innovation (RTD), in order to strengthen gender aspects in research by using gender analysis as well as the role of female researchers in its 8th framework programme Horizon 2020 (European Commission 2013e). The so far four conferences brought international experts from research, industry and policy together, to consider gender research evidence as a way of improving the quality and impact of research. The Gender Summits lobby for the inclusion of gender in science knowledge making and frame it as inciting innovation and constituting criteria for research excellence. In 2011, they started out as an European event, but quickly became international, spanning continents from North-America (in 2013) to Africa and Asia (in 2015) and scientific communities. (European Commission 2014).

78 | Watson 2006. A desirable principle also for communicating academic research in general. It was most certainly and knowingly violated also in this dissertation in the attempt to successfully navigate different Anglo-American and German scholarly writing traditions. The Canadian administration is sensitised to the exclusionary effects of bureaucratic langue (TBS 2006/2012). The importance of gender inclusive or gender-neutral language in regulatory drafting, has long been emphasised, but remains an on-going conflictual issue in public administration (Wilson 2011).

79 | I.e. Health Canada's experience with the gender jargon in its first GBA manual and the resulting resistance to use it, see sub-section 3.3.3.

80 | Compare e.g. the German recommendations in its evaluation of its federal regulatory IA practices (Bundesministerium des Innern, Stabsstelle Moderner Staat—Moderne Verwaltung

comprehensible manner.⁸¹ Decision-makers need to be able to understand policy recommendations that are derived from complex assessment processes and they need to understand them quickly. The same is true for lobby groups and the average citizen outside of public administration. The public needs to understand policies, the motive behind them, and intended outcomes—in a way that is free from IA “jargon.”⁸²

To overcome disciplinary jargon, a bureaucratic siloed way of thinking and to raise the likelihood that a gender lens would be applied in public policy problem solving and framing, some feminist authors have called for a change of playing fields, that is, to take a transdisciplinary approach to “doing gender” in research, in both humanities and sciences.⁸³ They want to change university curricula to familiarise students early on with the impact of gender in their disciplines. This approach has not yet been widely followed due to its systemic, overarching character.⁸⁴ However, invoking new feminist research epistemologies expands to the reflection on norms and the ontology and objects of research, which as a process can be incited by the implementation of gender-based analysis tools in applied IA research. Such practice also requires the questioning of one’s own subject position and adopting positions of multiple others.⁸⁵

In sum, increased interaction and communication between the various scientific and non-scientific communities is essential to position gender analysis as a routine part of policy making.⁸⁶ Here, feminist academics and gender researchers can learn from social IA projects in international development cooperation and extractive industries, areas that face similar challenges.⁸⁷ Deanna Kemp sees

2002, 31) or the results of the first and still sole evaluation of the implementation of Germany’s gender-oriented ex-ante regulatory IA tool in 2004 (Lewalter 2012, 255).

81 | Watson 2006, 621.

82 | Watson 2006, 623–624. See the EU example as in chapter 4.4.5.

83 | For a more detailed theoretical engagement with the epistemologies of knowledge production for IA from a gender perspective, see chapter 5.2.

84 | According to Marhsa Lyle-Gonga there “is some resistance in many political science departments to the integration of gender into their curriculum” (Lyle-Gonga 2013, 212). Currently over 900 BA and MA programmes, departments, research centres, and even PhD programmes in interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary women and gender studies exist worldwide, mostly in the Anglo-Saxon countries (Korenman 2016). In Europe, gender and women’s studies are mostly found in Western and Northern countries, complemented by a few sexual diversity and masculinity study programmes. A recent EU-wide evaluation attested for 21 countries, universities and accreditation agencies being active in mainstreaming gender analysis in curricula (Lipinsky 2014, 14).

85 | Hesse-Biber 2007b.

86 | As this study shows for the EU and Canada, which was confirmed by a OCED survey for its member states (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2012a, 41).

87 | Mainly by inhabiting the same subordinate position: SIA is most often not mandatory for development and—if conducted—it is decoupled from the technical part from the project and poorly integrated in environmental or sustainability IA (Harvey 2011). Non-implementation of SIA even in the light of negative social impacts of the project has no negative consequences for the project and developer (Manfredi 2000, xxvii). Even if SIA is mandated by governments and lending institutions, “compliance” trumps the “exploration of possibility” (Harvey 2011,

“social science professionals” as the agents of change who need to “become adept at utilising language and concepts that bridge the ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ sciences.”⁸⁸ Bridging the science-gender knowledge gap will require more gender experts with a technology and/or science background. But better communication of the gender relevance and the full potential of gender in policy IA will also be essential. More and better exchange via inter- and trans-disciplinary and participatory projects, research, publications, forums, workshops, and conferences will go a long way toward achieving the ultimate goal of greater application of the gender lens in IA.⁸⁹

5.1.6 Accountability: Conflict For and Over Oversight

From my interviews and research on GIA/GBA practices (or non-practices), it was clear that gender in IA systems in both Canada and the EU needs to be subjected to tighter accountability and oversight.⁹⁰ While there are first steps towards controlling for gender mainstreaming in Canada,⁹¹ the European Commission does not routinely monitor how gender equality goals and indicators are included in overall assessment goals, processes, indicators and outcomes, due to the subordinated character of gender analysis.

Whereas Canada had just started to exercise hierarchical, professional and administrative accountability⁹², the EU had some form of accountability built into the integrated IA process, the mechanisms in both cases were inadequate. There was personal responsibility among the analysts, but apart from guidelines issued by the Treasury Board Secretariat in Canada⁹³, there were no accountability mechanisms to steer and monitor the implementation of gender-based policy and programme analysis. In fact, quality assurance of IA in general is relatively new, and the application of gender analysis suffers from a lack of oversight.

xx). Such a traditional, techno-centred perspective of developers “limits the potential of SIA to make a difference” (Vanclay/Esteves 2011b, 3).

88 | Kemp 2011, 26.

89 | A position and experience again fully shared in project SIA by Frank Vanclay and Ana Maria Esteves, who suggest that “the SIA community is at a critical juncture: either we learn how to communicate more effectively and demonstrate the value of SIA, or we will become increasingly tainted by the limitations of the traditional regulatory compliance mind-set and become increasingly irrelevant” (Vanclay/Esteves 2011b, 4). One of the main defeats of project SIA was the non-inclusion in the newly developed International Standards on Social Responsibility ISO 26000 for private sector organizations (Vanclay/Esteves 2011b, 9). Gender equality was also not explicitly included into the ISO 26000 requirements and can only be interpreted via respect for the rule of law and human rights in international project and strategic IA.

90 | The modes of accountability are presented in sub-chapter 1.5.4.1.

91 | Welpé 2005, 103-105; GenderKompetenzZentrum 2010; Eschner 2011.

92 | Through the Treasury Board Secretariat's submission guidelines (Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat 2007b), the audits of the Auditor General (Office of the Auditor General of Canada 2009a; Office of the Auditor General of Canada 2009b; Office of the Auditor General of Canada 2016) and the two Action Plans on GBA (Privy Council Office et al. 2009; SWC et al. 2016).

93 | Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat 2007b.

In the absence of legal, hierarchical and downward accountability,⁹⁴ other modes of accountability become essential. One means of achieving accountability is through what I have called the *conflict* thesis, in which external stakeholders are expected to point out instances of dissonance and thus create horizontal or political accountability.⁹⁵ In this model, accountability is established through the recognition that not pursuing gender in IA will create conflict. There are two main groups of stakeholders with potential for raising conflict: the extra-institutional interest groups, such as women's groups and the feminist movement at large, and the intra-institutional actors, such as femocrat gender equality bodies. Ideally, conflict with intra-institutional actors would lead to administrative accountability by audits (as later occurred in the case of Canada)⁹⁶ or the establishment of quality management bodies for IA (such as the Impact Assessment Board, also in Canada).

But due to the internal character and the technocratic nature of public policy analysis/IA, the chances of raising such conflict is low. External actors find it hard to evaluate highly specialised and diverse assessments (if they are accessible at all and not subject to government secrecy) or to note the absence of gender. Outsiders also find it difficult to lobby the IA system to remedy a lack of gender consideration, since its assessments are supposed to be conducted scientifically and independently from external influence. Only a few academics are occupied with analysing gender-blind policy making, and almost no one targets the pre-policy making phase of ex-ante IAs. In the cases of both the Commission and the Canadian federal government, it was evident that, apart from consultations, the feminist or women's movement was not able to exert much influence on the IA system. Clearly, non-existing or low levels of internal oversight for GBA/GIA practices cannot be counter-balanced by external, horizontal or political accountability—accountability by conflict. It remains a question as to why the engagement of women's lobbying organisations in the political process is high⁹⁷ but in IA consultations and processes is barely visible.

At the point in time, the EU and Canadian practices showed no hierarchical accountability, that is, no supervision, over individual policy analysts with regard to incorporating gender aspects into IA. In Canada, guidelines have required the conduct of GBA since 2007,⁹⁸ but the professional accountability that is “marked by high levels on operating autonomy on the part of those who have internalised norms of appropriate practice”⁹⁹ was not yet in place. Gender equality is a clear organisational goal of both the European Commission and the Canadian federal government, but in neither institution has it been translated into professional accountability at the level of individual actors. The element of political oversight by key stakeholders, such as elected officials, the public at large, client groups—a construct called “dual accountability”¹⁰⁰—was also missing due to weak feminist movements (Status of Women Canada) or only recently established (European

94 | Bovens 2007, 187.

95 | See accountability chapter 1.5.4.1.

96 | Office of the Auditor General of Canada 2009a; Office of the Auditor General of Canada 2009b; Office of the Auditor General of Canada 2015.

97 | van der Molen/Novikova 2005, 153.

98 | Privy Council Office 2013. It is a mandatory requirement for all submissions to Cabinet.

99 | Gregory 2003, 559.

100 | Gregory 2003, 559.

Institute for Gender Equality) intra-institutional gender equality bodies, each of which had decoupled from the IA system. At the time of my research, there was also no binding obligation to conduct GIA/GBA, and consequently no legal oversight in the form of “external bodies such as legislatures and courts.”¹⁰¹ Only the Canadian Court of Auditors, as a result of appeals by the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, has managed to exert some degree of oversight through its reports on GBA¹⁰²—a function of political oversight the European Parliament’s Women’s Committee has yet to fulfil.

The biggest paradigm shift with regard to accountability in Canada was the 2007 update of the Treasury Board Secretariat guidelines¹⁰³ that reminded departments and agencies of their continued GBA duty. By introducing what the Canadian civil servants prefer to call the *challenge function*, the Secretariat is required to ask for proof that GBA has been conducted and to point out instances where gender was deemed irrelevant. As a result, departments and agencies are bound to deliver financial submissions to the Secretariat that include sex-disaggregated evidence as to why or why not gender plays a role in their policy and programme initiatives. The Privy Council Office provides a second level of quality assurance and control; it too challenges policy and programme content with regard to the presence of GBA or gender non-relevance. Non-relevance can no longer be claimed in a tick-box fashion; it must be substantiated in the same manner as gender-relevance.¹⁰⁴ The effects of the update to the Treasury Board guidelines were beyond the scope of this study. Regrettably, the 2008 update of the guide on drafting memoranda to the Cabinet missed an opportunity to clarify how and when gender-specific impacts are to be considered and reported in policy proposals.¹⁰⁵

Although the Status of Women Canada as an external body or department does not have the mandate and institutional powers to oversee departmental GBA implementation, and although the evidence refutes any belief that “under the auspices of the Canadian Government’s Status of Women, all departments now conduct GBA of their own policy and legislation,”¹⁰⁶ the latest common activities of Status of Women Canada, the Treasury Board Secretariat and the Privy Council Office offer hope that the gender lens will be applied systematically in policy analysis. The new European Institute for Gender Equality could potentially fulfil a function similar to that of Status of Women Canada, in that it would provide gender expertise in the process of challenging the quality of IAs and policy proposals. Its mandate, however, has thus far not been intertwined with the EU IA system, and it was created too recently for the role it will finally assume to be seen.

In 2006, the Commission created the Impact Assessment Board as the central quality management entity to ensure more consistent and high quality IAs.¹⁰⁷

101 | Gregory 2003, 559.

102 | Office of the Auditor General of Canada 2009a; Office of the Auditor General of Canada 2016.

103 | TBS 2007b.

104 | A “rationale” should be “included in those cases where GBA+ is not conducted” (SWC et al. 2016, 5).

105 | Office of the Auditor General of Canada 2009a.

106 | Boucher 2007, 396.

107 | European Commission 2016a.

The Board is supported by a High-Level Group Of National Regulatory Experts,¹⁰⁸ which operates under the mandate for *smart* or *better* regulation to reduce the administrative burden and enhance growth and employment.¹⁰⁹ It is not linked to other expert groups occupied with horizontal issues such as gender equality, e.g., the Inter-service Group on Gender Equality or the High-level Group on Gender Mainstreaming. Its deliberations are confidential and can only be made public by majority vote.¹¹⁰ More transparency and resolution of the conflicting roles of the Board would have benefits for IA quality.¹¹¹

The Impact Assessment Board performs its watchdog role by receiving and commenting on drafts of IAs one month prior to their completion. Even though the Board has no right to issue return letters and has no veto powers, and therefore is in a weaker position than the Canadian Treasury Board Secretariat and Privy Council Office, it can make evaluations and ask for resubmission of IA drafts. In order to improve accountability, the Commission—after initially hesitating—has decided to publish all Board opinions, thus opening up the policy making process at a point where discretionary decision making is most needed.¹¹² Although the Board does not identify a possible lack of gender analysis as a *specific and visible* quality concern in its annual reports, since gender issues are subsumed under social impacts in general,¹¹³ its opinions and the transparency of individual IAs create a role model for external accountability.

With the advent of the Common Approach to IA in 2005¹¹⁴, the EU decided to publish all IAs on a central website,¹¹⁵ which provides lists of all IAs conducted or in process,¹¹⁶ as well as roadmaps for future and open consultations for current IAs.¹¹⁷ But so far, GIA methods, tools or approaches to integrating gender in IAs do not appear in the Commission's best practice library.¹¹⁸ In the Canadian context, a best

108 | It was established in 2006 based on the Commission Decision 2006/2010/EC, amended by Decision 2012/C 390/09, and is comprised by high-level national regulatory experts (European Commission 2012g). For a list of members see (European Commission; Impact Assessment Board 2013).

109 | European Commission 2016a.

110 | According to Art. 10(2) of its Rules of Procedure (European Commission 2006b, 4).

111 | Mainly the imbalanced composition (no seat for an explicit gender expert, economic expertise outweighing other fields of competency) and unsolved questions of departmental loyalty in the absence of an explicit Gender Equality DG, as addressed in chapter 4.1.3.4.

112 | Karpen/Hof 2003, 74.

113 | Compare Annex V.

114 | In 2016, the Council of the European Union, the European Parliament and the European Commission launched a new Inter-institutional Agreement on Better Law-Making, which was not subject of this study. It replaces the Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Lawmaking from 2003 and the Common Approach to Impact Assessment from 2005.

115 | European Commission 2016a.

116 | E.g. for the last year 2012 (European Commission 2016a).

117 | European Commission 2016a. Organizations interested to receive information on the roadmaps need to subscribe to the Transparency Register.

118 | Compare the Best Practice Library on the EC Impact Assessment website (European Commission 2016a).

practice GBA library was underway at the time of my field research,¹¹⁹ but I was not able to retrieve detailed information on a single executed GBA in the course of my interviews. In the past, the “maybe existing” case studies were not shared in the Inter-departmental Committee on GBA due to the facts that the members of the committee (GBA champions and gender unit officers) were not always aware of GBA activity in their departments and that not all departments sent representatives to this volunteer body. Sometimes matters of secrecy may prohibit the publication of IAs (as claimed in Canada), although in the European context this has not yet been the case.

Full scientific transparency should mean publishing full IA reports and policy recommendations, providing open access to research data, tools and logbooks, and describing how data and information were interpreted in the respective IAs. As soon as the need for an IA is established, stakeholders should be informed about how they can get involved in the IA consultation process and given the details about how the IA will be performed. Insider gender expert groups and advisory networks should be integrated into the IA system through consultation. A high-level transparency into the IA research process can pique the interest of outsider groups—peer researchers and experts in independent think tanks, civil society, NGOs, and public research institutes—and encourage them to contribute in a timely fashion so that they can influence the IA design and database. Lastly, real scientific transparency of IA data, methodologies, and results would enable non-administrative, independent researchers to inject IA findings into their own body of work in academia and educational institutions for the larger benefit of society, without having to appeal under Freedom of Information Acts.

In a study by Van der Vleuten and Verloo, the authors noted that while benchmarking and best practices as governance tools set the standard, they are usually derived from “technocratic exercises”, and “experts and the availability of data will define the problem.”¹²⁰ This observation raises questions about transparency, the legitimacy of public action, and who should be held accountable.¹²¹ Unscrutinised technocratic tools, such as ex-ante IA, might actually reduce the overall transparency of decision-making and public accountability. The European Court of Auditors for example, criticised the non-transparent “case by case” decision making in the Commission’s roadmap for conducting IAs.¹²² In this line of thinking, the IA selection process suffers when political factors are not made transparent in choosing initiatives and determining the *right* IA toolbox and assessment method. As a possible solution, the European Court of Auditors suggested monetisation and a financial threshold for quantifying the impact of initiatives.¹²³ First, such interventions do not solve the more basic question of how to determine the monetary impact without properly conducting a full-fledged IA that considers all relevant aspects and data, including gender. Second, monetisation is vulnerable to integration problems between qualitative and quantitative data. Third,

119 | Privy Council Office et al. 2009, 7-9.

120 | van der Vleuten/Verloo 2012, 76. See also sub-chapter 1.5.4.1.

121 | van der Vleuten/Verloo 2012, 76.

122 | European Court of Auditors 2010, 28.

123 | European Court of Auditors 2010, 28.

it perpetuates a positivist view of research, leading to the one and right answer to always messy policy problems.

Additionally, different approaches to the same policy problem will likely produce more than one solution.¹²⁴ Democratic decision makers find themselves in the middle of politically and often heated debates on issues framed by multi-stakeholder constellations. By establishing complete transparency in the IA research process and by opening it up for external comments by independent, academic peers as well as other stakeholders, IAs will be messier, but the IA practitioner has the chance to improve IA design through participation. Moreover, if external contributions are made visible, along with the reasons for adopting or rejecting them, political decision makers would have the chance to see the possible biases in IAs and policy recommendations.

Research has called for a wider scope for IA quality management bodies such as the Impact Assessment Board in providing general oversight.¹²⁵ However, due to different regulatory environments and mandates, to date there are no shared core *quality criteria* for guiding these bodies and their watchdog function. Adding cross-cutting obligations like gender mainstreaming would require them to assume a quality duty beyond cost-benefit analysis and technocratic adherence, and help shape such quality criteria. Neither the challenge function of the Central Agencies in Canada nor the Commission's Impact Assessment Board, has yet introduced a quality indicator for the integration of gender in IAs. There are, however, some inspiring practices, for example, the gender marker introduced by the Canadian International Development Agency and the "G-marker" of DG EuropeAid Development and Cooperation.¹²⁶ The latter sets quantitative objectives for GIA implementation and qualitative targets for the depth of assessment.

At the end of the so-called "decade of striving for accountability for GBA" in Canada, the 2007 update of the Treasury Board Secretariat submission guidelines represents a crucial step forward. It shifts the responsibility for GBA oversight from Status of Women Canada, which in reality never had this mandate, to the central agencies. Canada became an international role model for GBA stewardship when it instituted its first controlling elements—the Central Agencies' GBA challenging function and the mandate for reporting ex-ante GBA implementation and departmental GBA frameworks to parliament.

124 | See also chapter 5.2.

125 | Wiener/Alemanno 2010, 328.

126 | To be applied in 80 per cent of the EU development projects and reported to OECD (European Commission et al. 2011, 12). For the EC's Toolkit in development cooperation, see (European Commission; Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation 2004). In the EU's development cooperation gender is integrated as a cross-cutting issue in its performance measurement system (European Commission, EuropeAid Co-operation Office; 2012, 15).

5.1.7 Summary: Hidden Leadership Disowned

The current state of GBA and GIA implementation corresponds to the perception of public policies as something that “governments choose to do or not to do.”¹²⁷ So far, the absence of cross-cutting GBA in Canada practice and the lack of gender mainstreaming in IA in the European Union indicates that these governments have not yet chosen “to do” proper gender mainstreaming in their ex-ante IA or policy analysis. As noted in the introductory chapter, gender mainstreaming was transformational in its conception and rhetoric.¹²⁸ Its implementation, however, has been extremely limited.

The presence of equality strategies and tools is no proof of the existence of gender mainstreaming.¹²⁹ Gender mainstreaming has often been only reluctantly adopted in *mainstream* departments and agencies, largely because its relevance was not acknowledged and top leadership did not adequately support the agenda. Canada and the EU are no exception to this general rule. Gender mainstreaming on the level of IA tools has too often been a policy of *adding women and stirring*, without questioning basic assumptions, power relations, or ways of conducting assessments. In Canada as well as in the Commission, gender analysis tools are implemented in organisational contexts of hierarchy and political agenda setting that have not prioritised women’s rights or equality issues over neo-liberal economic growth paradigms. In the Commission, such a hierarchy is represented by gender equality and non-discrimination stand-alone tools¹³⁰ and in the subordinated status of gender equality and non-discrimination questions in the social IA¹³¹.

Page observes, however, that equality leadership is emerging in the context of changes and innovations in the public service.¹³² Gender analysis tools were seen as innovative when they were introduced over 15 years ago. The incorporation of comprehensive ex-ante IA systems beyond cost-benefit analysis into public policy and programme making is even newer. My study shows that roughly two decades after the first instruments were launched, gender analysis is still regarded as a bureaucratic innovation and a novelty.

Applying Mackay’s concept of *nested newness*, public administrators should be encouraged to remember the new, while not forgetting the old, by “locking in” gender quality in IA.¹³³ As a metaphor, nested newness captures the ways in which the new is *embedded* in time, sequence, and the institutional environment. While the new is a “blank slate,” it depends on institutional culture, environment and

127 | Dye 2001, 2.

128 | Wetterer called gender mainstreaming merely a „rhetoric modernisation” (Wetterer 2002).

129 | For example in the EU and its member states, there was a “large amount of material” produced, such as “gender impact assessment guides, gender budgeting guides, check lists, training modules, databases, e-learning tools,” but little real engagement with the “horizontal clause” of gender mainstreaming (European Commission 2013c, 34).

130 | European Commission, Directorate-General Employment, Equal Opportunities Unit DG 5 1997/1998; European Commission 2011c.

131 | European Commission 2009b; European Commission 2009a.

132 | Page 2011, 334.

133 | Mackay 2014, 549.

“legacies of the past.”¹³⁴ Gender analysis can be perceived as “bounded innovation within an existing system,”¹³⁵ but Benschop and Verloo have stressed the central function of internal bureaucratic actors in bringing about desired change from within: “The feminist researchers remain organisational outsiders, while the civil servants have the power to decide what is an acceptable agenda for change.”¹³⁶ In the inner-governmental setting of competing value paradigms, the gender equality machinery¹³⁷ remains the main proponent and driver for gender mainstreaming tools.

My findings further support Page’s *hidden leadership*¹³⁸ argument that leadership is critical and is required to foster gendered, relational and interpretive GIA/GBA practices. Without a lead entity, gender equality continues to be everybody’s and nobody’s responsibility. Women’s or gender equality units are in place both in Canada and the EU, but with different positions and mandates. The central equality machineries have limited (in Canada) or no (in the EU) authority to initiate, monitor and control gender equality in policy and programme assessment. Nor do they have the authority to hold policy analysts accountable. Neither in Canada nor in the Commission are they interlinked with particular accountability and quality management systems for IA.

In the EU, gender focal points or gender units in the individual Directorates General serve as supplements, but their network is not government-wide. The European central equality agency, the European Institute for Gender Equality is an institutional outsider to the Commission’s IA system and—due to its recent creation—is not (yet) nested. The larger EU equality architecture is neither aligned with regards to its GIA mandate, nor linked to the IA system. Canada, however, with its long history of employment equity and institutionalised state feminism, seems more amenable to *nesting* gender concerns in ex-ante IA due to GBA accountability novelties and the central role of Status of Women Canada.

Anchoring gender firmly in IA practice requires a strong and *persistent* lead from government bodies that can advocate at the highest levels and increase inner-institutional accountability for gender equality. An entity with system-wide reach and connectivity and that is placed near the apex of power will most likely improve the sharing of information and be able to provide expertise and follow-up between the normative political and operational administrative arms. In order to function effectively, this entity must be backed up with several critical components or characteristics—as the shortcomings of the Status of Women Canada and the European Institute for Gender Equality show. The entity must have *autonomy*; it must be *adequately and sufficiently resourced* (financially and with personnel with the high levels of substantive expertise); and it must have the *authority and clout* necessary to function as a substantive and political leader that is recognised and routinely sought after by and within the IA system.

With respect to the implementation of gender analysis tools, it is critical for gender equality units to develop their capacity for evidence-based strategic and

134 | Mackay 2014, 552.

135 | Mackay 2014, 553.

136 | Benschop/Verloo 2006, 31.

137 | For a definition of gender equality machinery, see subsection 2.2.3.2.

138 | Page 2011. For the concept of hidden leadership consult sub-chapter 2.2.3.

intersectional thinking, constituency building and research. To enhance their leadership role in policy expertise, Canadian gender equality units sought to provide high quality research and practice on gender dimensions in a range of areas, from macroeconomic policy and governance issues to micro-issues. Such research was conducted in-house and/or developed in partnership with gender experts, specialised research institutions, women's or feminist NGOs and equality networks. Building policy capacity within the gender equality machinery, they were able to establish links to the gender research community and institutions (supply side), as well as to inner-institutional actors, such as individual departments and the Canadian Central Agencies (demand side). In contrast, the Commission's Secretariat General and the Impact Assessment Board did not provide policy capacity building, and gendered research was only conducted in a policy specific fashion in single Directorates General or the European Parliament's new policy research unit.¹³⁹

As observed in Canada, in the mainstreaming process, the perception of femocrats in equality machineries could shift from being promoters of unwanted, seemingly superfluous and hard to promote gender analysis tools to being appreciated partners in the gender equality assessment duty. Such a shift in perception can only be effective once tight accountability is established. Status of Women Canada has demonstrated how its role has switched from that of *gender police* to *partner in crime* and "knowledge broker,"¹⁴⁰ thus enabling departments to excel in their gender duty as a routine part of their IA practice. In order for this shift to take place, gender equality needs to *disappear* in a neutral discourse of technicalities and IA regulative framework, as has happened in Canada. And a requirement for a gender lens needs to be put in place as a marker for policy and programming quality and good governance.

As long as there is a strong state *feminist* institution, gender mainstreaming technology can be beneficial rather than harmful in administrative, technocratic contexts. Even in a less than empowering framework, gender experts at Status of Women Canada were successful in engaging a field of inter-institutional relationships. Their accounts of how they went about their work to promote GBA reinforces Page's observation of "hidden leadership"¹⁴¹ as a success model. Canadian femocrats did not act in isolation, but formed official and unofficial networks (i.e., the inter-departmental GBA committee) with key persons in other departments. With such networks, GBA leadership was distributed among various actors in a variety of organisational contexts and roles. Most notably, in the absence of a binding GBA strategy and in an unfavourable political climate, the quiet insertion of the GBA duty in the Treasury Board submission guidelines in 2007 succeeded—mainly due to the persuasiveness of the actors in inner-bureaucratic networks. By inciting such change, Status of Women Canada's *hidden leadership* with regard to GBA helped create the conditions in which other actors might feel responsible for and capable of gender mainstreaming:

139 | European Parliament 2014.

140 | SWC 2012], 14. For the concept and role of IA knowledge brokerage in environmental IA see also sub-chapter 2.2.3 (Söderman et al. 2012; Lyytimäki et al. 2015).

141 | Page 2011.

“Just as the advocacy and specific content associated with gender equality that was associated with a politically driven past had to be disowned, replaced by business driven regulatory processes, so leadership based on advocacy of gender or women's equality also had to be disowned and outsourced, in order to sustain a break with history and to reposition equality as core business in their organization.”¹⁴²

As we have seen in the Canadian context, in order to achieve an increase in GBA accountability, gender equality had first to be *disowned* by Status of Women Canada, handed over to the responsibility of the Central Agencies, and replaced by rationale-driven regulatory processes. Consequently, Status of Women Canada's advocacy role for gender or women's equality also had to be disowned: GBA accountability was placed with the Central Agencies to reposition equality governance as a core business of government, with the goal of routinely integrating equality in ex-ante policy and programme analysis.

Such practices of disownment and hidden leadership from within have yet to be established in the Commission, where the newly founded European Institute for Gender Equality is still struggling to own GIA as part of its institutional role.¹⁴³ The transfer of the gender equality duty from DG Employment to DG Justice in 2010.¹⁴⁴ This reorganisation has produced ambiguous results: a theoretical gain in status for gender equality as it moved from its origin in social and employment policy fields, allowing gender equality finally to become an actual crosscutting and rights-based issue; but also a loss in practical status due to the much smaller size and lower staffing of DG Justice, which is a newer Directorate with less perceived status in the unspoken hierarchy of the Directorates General.

For IA practices, the gender equality unit D.2 of DG Justice could provide a cross-cutting entry to the Directorate's internal actor networks and IA system. It is conveniently nestled in the D. equality unit, in which D.1 is responsible for *Equal Treatment Legislation*, D.3 for *Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, and D.4 for *Non-discrimination Policies and Roma Coordination*. Placing gender equality in DG Justice and thus making it an overarching Commission duty, rather than placing it with social and labour policies, could eventually have a positive effect on the IA system and help overcome its sectoral boxing. If DG Justice's gender experts were also internal bureaucratic actors, they could play a much more active part in the inner-institutional approach to IA. This, however, would require adaption of IA processes and an increase in staffing and resources in D.2 to serve the different policy advice needs across all the Directorates General. In any case, there is a need for clear allocation of responsibility for gender in IA among the institutional components of the EU's equality architecture—DG Justice, the European Institute for Gender Equality and the expert networks.

As my research in Canada demonstrates, the central equality machinery should be complemented by a system-wide, sustainable network of gender equality units or focal points in individual departments. If the hidden leadership model is abandoned

142 | Page 2011, 334.

143 | With its seat geographically removed from Brussels' policy making in Vilnius, the EIGE currently focuses on GIA practices in the member states and not the Commission itself.

144 | While DG Employment has 755 members of staff, DG Justice has 440 (European Commission 2015a, 1).

in favour of an open leadership model, the central gender equality machinery should be at the core of the gender equality network and at the heart of IA and policy making. It should perform the three critical equality governance functions: 1) It must have policy-setting responsibilities on substantive issues of gender equality and women's rights; 2) It must have the capacity to monitor, that is, it should have the authority to ensure accountability on gender mainstreaming throughout the political system; 3) Finally, it must have access to steering capabilities of the IA system to inform, conduct, shape and control operational assessment activities and ensure that intersectional gender equality mainstreaming efforts in policy analysis are carried out effectively.

Comparing the potential benefits or drawbacks of the stand-alone tool GBA in the Canadian context to those of the EU's integrated method, it appears that the single gender analysis tool approach, combined with a tight accountability mechanism, is superior. The gender lens in the EU's integrated IA does not live up to the more encompassing GIA tool or to the EU's commitment to gender equality and gender mainstreaming. I have concluded that the European experiment in subordination does not fill the gap in gender-based policy advice. Rather, it is a starting point and requires more intense top-down support, monitoring and real gender mainstreaming in all impact areas. At no point does it match the sophisticated understanding of gender relations in such stand-alone gender analysis tools as the Canadian GBA, the EU's GIA or the Dutch GIA.¹⁴⁵

When the gender mainstreaming strategy was first designed, the hope was that it would produce custom-tailored tools for better equality governance processes in the new ex-ante assessment systems for policy making.¹⁴⁶ The new regulatory clothes for an old Europe cannot disguise that the EU's integrated IA system in its current state does not ensure "equality between women and men [...] in all areas."¹⁴⁷ But more patience is required before the effectiveness and sustainability of this process can be judged. At present, though, the European experiment in subordination of gender to social impacts runs counter to the political commitment to gender mainstreaming and enlarging "the scope of gender equality beyond the social sectors"¹⁴⁸ to other impact areas such as governance, infrastructure, migration, trade, economic growth, environment and climate change or agriculture. The mainstreaming of gender into the other two IA pillars, environmental and economic impacts, is currently missing from the Commission's IA system. The integration

145 | Verloo 2008.

146 | Verloo 2005a.

147 | Art. 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. The first paragraph is based on Art. 2 and 3(2) of the EC Treaty, now replaced by Art. 3 of the Treaty on European Union and of Art. 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which impose the objective of promoting equality between men and women on the Union, and on Art. 157(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. It draws on Art. 20 of the revised European Social Charter of May 3, 1996 and on point 16 of the Community Charter on the rights of workers. See the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (European Union 2000) and chapter 4.1.

148 | O'Connell 2013, 3. Mainstreaming gender analysis across all policy areas and practice e.g. is envisioned in the EU Gender Action Plan (European Commission 2010e).

of gender into the EU's social analysis of policy and programme making is far from routine or systematic, and could not be attested to in practical terms in this study.

Canada has launched promising initiatives for comprehensive GBA implementation. Canada is in the midst of reforming its GBA system through more centralised quality assurance and accountability, as exercised by the Treasury Board Secretariat and the Privy Council Office. In assuring the application of GBA, it appears to be simpler to train for and track a stand-alone, independent policy tool.¹⁴⁹

In the EU context, questions of integration into other (cost-benefit¹⁵⁰, environmental, small- and medium-sized enterprises, etc.) assessments remain. The European Institute for Gender Equality does not have the central role that the Status of Women Canada plays in building networks, competencies and fostering gender tool application. Nor has the Commission taken the indispensable step for quality management that Canada has taken by evaluating its federal equality governance through an audit report by the Office of the Auditor General.

A shared experience in Canada and the EU is the problem of gender competency.¹⁵¹ Outside of gender focal points and gender experts, the level of sophistication of gender competency in both contexts was low to medium. Occasionally, individual interviewees demonstrated a high awareness of gendered effects in their field, but they also admitted that they had neither time nor the resources to apply them to IA. This creates a persistent theory-practice gap, which gets in the way of a gender relevance check and meaningful in-depth tool application.

The theory-practice gap in tool implementation is symbolic of an even larger credibility gap for IA in democratic governance environments. Governments remain slow to respond to the constitutional mandates of gender equality and for demands for equitable and sustainable policy designs and outcomes. Birgit Sauer and Yvonne Benschop and Mieke Verloo, in their work on gender mainstreaming, discuss these points.¹⁵² These researchers found that the genderedness of organisations and sub-systems such as the IA system negatively influenced the transformative potential of gender mainstreaming—a point also made by many feminist institutionalists.¹⁵³ GIA and GBA operate in non-feminist contexts of public administration and government, which marginalise, even devalue, gender analyses in IA.¹⁵⁴

Sara Payne has identified pragmatic, conceptual and political barriers to implementing gender mainstreaming in international health sector policies.¹⁵⁵ Conceptually, she worried about the *othering* of gender analysis tools, the potential of the tools for rendering women's needs as special, and the possibility that the tools may simplify implementation by reframing the question of structural gender inequality

149 | PCO et al. 2009, 6.

150 | For a gender critique of economic analytical models, see (Hankivsky/Friesen 2007).

151 | For a definition of what defines gender competency, see (Baer/Lewalter 2007, 130; Lewalter 2013; 50). For a definition of gender competency, see sub-section 1.5.3.2.

152 | Sauer 2005a; Benschop/Verloo 2006. See also chapters 1.5.1 and 1.5.2.

153 | Haussman et al. 2010; Mackay et al. 2010; Mackay/Waylen 2014a; Mackay/Waylen 2014b.

154 | An observation made as early as 1999 in Canada Williams 1999.

155 | Payne 2011. Her pragmatic and conceptual barriers are laid out more specifically in sub-chapter 1.6.2.

“as one of knowledge, which is itself variable and contestable.”¹⁵⁶ In agreement with Payne, As political barriers I identified a) the lack of compulsion in introducing and monitoring gender mainstreaming¹⁵⁷ in ex-ante policy IA, b) the subordinated status of knowledge produced by the epistemic community of feminists, women and gender studies researchers (as opposed to privileged/hegemonic androcentric knowledge), which prevents it from being carried sufficiently into the process, either by internal actors (femocrats and the analysts themselves) or by external actors like women’s organisations,¹⁵⁸ scholars or academic associations or political actors, and c) the narrow focus of and confusion of gender mainstreaming with policy and programme making for women.¹⁵⁹

In sum, a number of factors—missing or insufficient resources and gender expertise; lack of accountability and quality management mechanisms; lack of political top-down support, which allows analysis requirements to be ignored with impunity—are preventing gender analysis from being applied in a crosscutting fashion as just another regular, routine IA assessment. With respect to GIA and GBA, it is too early to answer questions about their “integrationist” or “transformative” potential¹⁶⁰, since there are not yet enough cases where these tools have been put into practice. Any questions concerning the implementation of gender mainstreaming in IA and policy making processes and who controls for gender are not to going to be answered in the short run. As Dorte Sindbjerg Martinsen notes with regard to realising gender equality through gender mainstreaming tools, the “impact must be investigated over time, as it is unlikely to happen fully, or be detected in the short or medium term.”¹⁶¹

All the above raises questions about the future of gender research and gender IA tools in the interdisciplinary epistemic IA community. Which knowledge is regarded as superior and who is enabled to partake in knowledge creation? What political and institutional backing could be beneficial in overcoming the subordinate, inferior status of gender equality concerns? Do we need a completely different perception of what constitutes an *evidence base* and *knowledge* for public policy making if the current system misrepresents large parts of the population and/or renders them invisible? In doing so, is it enough, to target the *narrow* IA system and its actors? Or should we take Payne’s insights and those of the interviewees seriously and address political and educational systems in an all-encompassing way, in order to have our states live up to their gender equality duty in public policy and programme making? Which theoretical underpinnings could be useful to start individual as well as institutional reflexive processes that could deal with these questions and trigger desired changes in applied research for public administration? The concluding chapter discusses these challenges that the empirical material has disclosed, looking at them in the light of feminist standpoint theory in combination with new post-positivist, critical governance approaches to policy analysis/IA.

156 | Payne 2014, 38.

157 | Payne 2011, 528-529. For Payne’s concept of narrow versus all-encompassing gender mainstreaming, see sub-chapter 1.5.2.

158 | Payne 2011, 529-530.

159 | Payne 2011, 530-531.

160 | Lombardo 2009, 324.

161 | Sindbjerg Martinsen 2007, 556.

5.2 EQUALITY GOVERNANCE THROUGH IMPACT ASSESSMENT

“Science can be a powerful ally in the struggle for equality for women. Science, after all, can expose society’s prejudice against women for that what it is, and science can both justify the replacement of this prejudice with a more adequate perspective and move society to accept the replacement. All too frequently however, science has done more to perpetuate and add to the problems women confront than to solve them.”¹⁶²

Placing gender equality at the centre of ex-ante public policy and programme advice, where it belongs, has not yet happened in the IA world. In my study, I sought to answer Annesley and Gains’ question as to whether, in the absence of an engendered executive, gender-oriented policy making can be institutionally embedded or whether it is “vulnerable to entrenchment.”¹⁶³ Studies finding that women feel betrayed by IAs and their negative consequences for women (e.g., in tax reforms, labour market or social benefit reforms) still outnumber the optimistic views.¹⁶⁴ Science and evidence-based policy advice have disappointed equality-seeking feminists by largely ignoring questions of gender justice. Contrary to other fields, such as environmental research, where developments in scholarly research and IA appraisals usually inform each other,¹⁶⁵ gender research and IA practices have not yet interacted deeply enough.

The constitutions of such nation states as Canada and such supranational systems of governance as the European Union have already formally transitioned to the point of enhancing and ensuring gender equality. The question now is how individual actors, policy makers and analysts will better position themselves in systems of governance (of IA and policies) and in the scientific communities they stem from. This chapter also engages with questions of how to foster gender equality governance through policy IA in the light of feminist theories of *knowing*:

“Knowledge is an important dimension of discursive politics; in order to understand the dynamics of discursive politics, it is pivotal to analyze processes of institutional knowledge production and to unfold different ways of knowing (e.g., normative, scientific, or everyday knowledge) in gender mainstreaming practices.”¹⁶⁶

Focussing on standpoint theory, which calls for self-reflexive processes and structures, I conclude this research with a theoretical reflection on gender equality governance and the possible benefits to agencies of engendering IA tools and practices. Standpoint theory points towards the interlocutors, in this case the policy IA system and its actors, with their subjectivities and positionalities within public administration frameworks, with their inherent logics. At the same time, it positions gender in IA in a wider context of hegemony in science and scholarly knowledge production, which replicates itself in IA practice (tools, methods, research questions) and tool take-up.

162 | Kourany 2010, 4.

163 | Annesley/Gains 2010, 926.

164 | Compare literature reviews in 1.5 on gender analysis.

165 | Adelle et al. 2012.

166 | Çaglar 2013, 342.

5.2.1 Feminist Standpoints in Impact Assessment

Feminist theorists are concerned with the way subconscious (or overt) androcentric (male-centred) and sexist values have found their way into the structures of society, including science, influencing methods, observations and theories, whereas female or femocentrist values have largely been excluded. Feminist and other reflexive, critical methods are only recently acknowledged as playing a role in policy development and advice—and that by authors on the periphery of policy analysis research.¹⁶⁷ IA research remains dominated by science, and science remains not only a male-dominated activity, but one whose applications function to serve “typically male” activities and perceptions of the world:

“Androcentric thinking is not a ‘prejudice’ created by false beliefs and bad attitudes. Rather, the kind of activities socially assigned to men and from which women tend to be excluded make certain kinds of concepts and thinking appear natural and right to men.”¹⁶⁸

The core message Harding conveys is that the resulting *value-intrusion* in science also concerns women and is based on the binary organisation of society and its institutions. To date, gender in IA research still poses more questions than it provides answers. Having gender analysis tools is not sufficient to integrate a gender perspective into ex-ante policy assessment. Feminism as a social and political movement has criticised non-gendered modes of knowledge production as well as the biased results they produce, which justify, stabilise and perpetuate asymmetrical relationships of power in society. Consequently, it is not surprising that IA, as a very specialised, standardised, purpose-driven mode of knowledge production, is often blamed for overlooking or ignoring core issues of gender equality, and for insufficient, dissatisfactory, even harmful effects. The question then arises: Is it even desirable to ask an inherently (male) biased system with its (male-)biased tools to assess the effects on women and men?¹⁶⁹

5.2.1.1 Epistemic Advantage—Embodied, Embedded, Entrenched

Looking behind the reasons for the unsatisfactory status quo, it appears that the absence of gender analysis in IA is the result of the fact that analysts are signatories of an incomplete contract, in which the terms, conditions and goals of assessments are laid out, but hidden agendas are not made transparent. A host of factors—education in the professional discipline, loyalty to ministerial or bureaucratic positions and policy field traditions—all influence the likelihood that an actor will choose respected, robust, causal-positivist IA methods. IA today is facing a paradoxical situation. On the one hand evidence-based policy advice is sought in order to overcome the “neoliberal anxiety regarding ‘capture’ of the public sector by partial interests,”¹⁷⁰ and GIA or GBA are still largely seen as political tools

167 | Hassard et al. 2008.

168 | Harding 2003, xv.

169 | As discussed in 2.3.1 transgender, intersex, non-gender and gender-queer people are not yet part of the assessment under a possible gender diversity framework.

170 | Teghtsoonian 2004, 281.

representing the partial interests of women.¹⁷¹ On the other hand, public policy advice is forced to comply with equality rights based calls: “To re-examine the role of the state in reproducing or challenging masculine domination, the operations of power within the bureaucratic apparatus and state policies, and the way in which changes in the state effect changes in society.”¹⁷²

As such, gender analysis tools are at the epistemic core of what standpoint feminists called the *bias paradox*.¹⁷³ While feminists problematise the inherent androcentric values of male-dominated science and academic knowledge production, standpoint feminists propose the need for and point out the positive role of feminist questions, values and interests in science and research. Whereas feminist standpoint theory criticises scientific objectivity as wrong in its partiality on the side of men, it calls for partiality on the side of women. Such *balanced partiality*¹⁷⁴ is supported by agentive¹⁷⁵ and *embodiment* theories,¹⁷⁶ in short: subject positions matter in IA.

Individuals with particular backgrounds and visions as researchers, as bureaucrats and/or politicians, who demand and accept policy advice, inhabit a central role:

“The social locations of individual group members, insofar as they produce different experiences relevant to the critical evaluation of background assumptions, can make a difference to how epistemically rigorous this critical reflection is.”¹⁷⁷

Thus, civil servants are positioned as powerful individual actors responsible for organising, designing, and conducting ex-ante IAs, as well as writing and negotiating policy drafts:

“Policy analysts have the potential to add value to policy making in a variety of ways. It is important to be able to define problems, to consider how those problems might be addressed, and to develop and present useful advice to decision makers. But it is the careful and appropriate use of various analytical strategies that distinguishes policy analysts from other actors in and around the policy-making process.”¹⁷⁸

Complex political and scientific struggles come together to form a policy problem in the hands of one or a few analysts, operating under positivist paradigms of seeming impartiality and objectivity. As disciplinary trained individuals, however, they are not free or independent. They are embedded in structured, social and

171 | See chapter 1.6 on tool typology.

172 | Prügl 2010a, 447.

173 | Intemann 2010, 792-793; Rolin 2006. For an understanding of bias paradox, see chapter 2.1.2.

174 | For the concept of balanced partiality, see chapter 2.1.2.

175 | Barad 1998; Barad 2007. The actor-centred approach is mainly laid out in chapters 2.2.3.1 and 2.3.1.

176 | Thanem 2011. For considerations about embodiment, see subsection 2.1.3 and 2.2.3.1.

177 | Intemann 2010, 787.

178 | Mintrom 2012, 111.

institutional spheres with hierarchical system logics, particular epistemic cultures, organisational and individual values.¹⁷⁹ To gain an epistemic advantage¹⁸⁰ through gender analysis, it is necessary to engage in a systematic examination of how gender equality is *entrenched* in governance systems, including the accountability mechanisms, and to devote attention to the system-bound actors within.

Embodied

In order to understand the effects of policy and programme making from “the experiences of women,”¹⁸¹ the question needs to shift from technicalities of what tool to apply and when, to what role should public analysts and researchers inhabit between disciplinary education and bureaucratic rationalities. Actors play a crucial role in the reconstruction of knowledge for decision making. They are also exposed to the powers and logics of the system they operate in. Especially in the limited framework of policy advice for public administration based-on standardised tools, individual actors possess the ability to invoke change, to introduce innovation, and to make a difference, as noted by Benschop and Verloo.¹⁸² Annesley and Gains stressed the importance of feminist actors in the core executive in efforts to enhance “women’s substantive representation”¹⁸³. In order to offset Abel and Mushaben’s *double democratic deficit*,¹⁸⁴ gender equality and gender competency must be *embodied*. This can be accomplished by increasing the gender competency of staff through routine training, by consulting external specialised gender expertise and by paying attention to gender equity in hiring practices. Addressing employment inequity was recognised by the Canadian government as one route to the representation of women’s issues in public policy making.¹⁸⁵ In the face of uncertainty in policy advice and in the quest for excellence in research, Canadian science advisory mechanisms have discovered the role that hiring practices play in ensuring quality of research through openness and inclusiveness:

179 | Biegelbauer/Grießler 2009, 73.

180 | See chapters 2.1.1 and 2.1.3.

181 | Kitch/Fonow 2012, 116.

182 | Benschop/Verloo 2006, 31.

183 | Annesley/Gains 2010, 926.

184 | Abels/Mushaben 2012, 14. See also sub-chapter 2.2.3.1.

185 | Phillips et al. 1998; Weiner 2010. While Bey Benhamadi accounts for the benefits of successful diversity hiring in Canadian public administration (Benhamadi 2003), Suzan Ilcan, Marcia Oliver and Daniel O’Connor report about the frictions with a NPM-oriented civil service experienced by the women in it (Ilcan et al. 2007). The Commission also pursues more employment equity, but mainly frames it as an equality and equal opportunities issue, not connecting it with better policy making. Whereas, much could already be learned from its own recommendations to European research institutions by DG Research and Innovation: “Within the complex array of capacity variables to shape the quality of the scientific system and the scientific knowledge production, gender equality and diversity represent a key and well understood—but much underutilised—tool to promote excellence and enable sustainable success.” (European Commission; Directorate-General for Research and Innovation/Raudma 2012, 35).

“Special attention should be paid to obtaining qualified persons from groups historically under-represented in scientific fields such as women, under-represented minorities, and persons with disabilities. Members should be elected to balance age, ethnicity, language, etc.”¹⁸⁶

When representatives of socially marginalised groups are able to enter institutions and processes of power, the power will shift, because they are bearers of former outsider knowledge that determines the “context of discovery.”¹⁸⁷ Institutional learning is more likely when institutions not only get involved (through trainings and internal regulations), but *are* involved through *embodiment*, resulting in representational employment policies and staff.¹⁸⁸

Also the requirements and institutional settings for coordination among departments influence the design of IAs. As Melissa Tyler states, “gender and organisation are mutually implicated.”¹⁸⁹ Policy and related departmental cultures (*hard* and *soft* issues¹⁹⁰) determine the susceptibility to or immunisation against gender concerns. Smith and Monaghan were able to establish which policy areas are gendered and how.¹⁹¹ Their multi-variable testing of the way *representative bureaucracy*¹⁹² works for women brought to light: 1) a statistically significant correlation between gender in leadership and gender of the policy area (commonly categorised as hard, equalling masculine, or soft, equalling feminine policy areas)¹⁹³; 2) and a statistically evident correlation between women in bureaucratic top leadership positions and feminine policy areas and female representation in second-level leadership.¹⁹⁴ Their findings support the hypothesis that women in the highest political leadership positions reinforce the representation of women in the higher echelons and middle management of public administration.

Due to its methodological limits, my study could not confirm the beneficial effects of female top-down leadership in departments, apart from assertions made in individual interview statements. But the limited number of non-anonymous interviews in Canada (Health, International Development, Indigenous Affairs) did indicate that soft or stereotypically feminine policy areas are more prone to show higher GBA/GIA activity. A qualitative analysis of all my interviews, both in the EU and Canada, underlined how female civil servants are more likely to work as gender experts and to be advocates for or enforcers of GBA/GIA implementation, despite the fact that gender expertise as knowledge cannot and should not be essentialised.

Civil service hiring and subcontracting practices do not yet pay enough attention to diversity, gender partiality and multi-disciplinary research teams.¹⁹⁵

186 | Kinder 2010, 131. Emphasis by author. See also chapter 2.3.1.

187 | Harding 1992, 577.

188 | Biegelbauer 2012.

189 | Tyler 2011, 22. See also chapter 1.4.1 and 2.2.3.

190 | See sub-chapter 1.4.1.

191 | Smith/Monaghan 2013. See also chapter 1.4.1.

192 | See chapter 1.4.1.

193 | For the genderedness of each policy area, see table 2 in (Smith/Monaghan 2013, 59).

194 | Smith/Monaghan 2013, 62.

195 | It also does not pay enough attention to contracting female researchers to the same extent as male researchers in its research funding, as it became evident in Plenary Session

Heterogeneity may be difficult to achieve in practice, but research thrives in environments of diversity and new perspectives on unsolved problems. Smith and Monaghan's research for instance, indicated that a more balanced sex ratio in the representation of women in IA would be another way to increase GIA/GBA activity.¹⁹⁶ The assumption is that public service workforces that reflect the variety and gendered realities of their constituencies across all hierarchical levels are more likely to pick up on the relevant issues.

If standpoint feminism is to be applied to the circumstances of policy IA, it tells us a story of *balanced partiality*,¹⁹⁷ one in which ideally a multitude of actors, men, more women, people from different backgrounds work together and add their perspectives to frame political and research problems. Such *balanced partiality*¹⁹⁸ offers a solution to overcome androcentrism in IA research by injecting multiple standpoints and providing different ways of inquiry as well as a diversity of people counter-balancing each other. The *Sex of the Knower*¹⁹⁹ matters, but so do other experience- and education-based differences. To value equality in a diversity of knowledge producers is a first step on the path to a more reflexive, standpoint approach to IA that gives policy makers a "less partial and distorted"²⁰⁰ account.

A lack of balanced partiality became apparent in my study. According to research on Canadian science advisory experience, overcoming bias in research, including gender bias in IA research, is possible where there is diversity in research boards, based on individual qualifications, field of expertise, public impact, under-represented views and other demographic factors.²⁰¹ As such, the "science question" is inseparable from the "women's question"²⁰² in its intersectional implications, as Harding has pointed out with her concept of "strong objectivity"²⁰³.

Embedded

Building on balanced partiality and strong objectivity, gender equality needs to be embedded in epistemic IA culture.²⁰⁴ Although the issue of employing more women scientists has been elevated to the science agenda,²⁰⁵ simply increasing the numbers is not enough. In the current state, pushing for gender analysis does not come from the regular actors within the IA process; it is still largely left to internal gender experts and femocrats. In the case of GBA implementation in Canada's

1: Best Practices for Gender Policy in Research Organisations at the 4th Gender Summit 2014 in Brussels in the case of the EU. For example in the past EU Framework Programmes, women were awarded less than 20 per cent of senior Grade A posts (genSET—gender in science; European Gender Summit 2012, 1).

196 | Smith/Monaghan 2013. A point made in a very early—yet largely unheard—critique, expressed for the realm of environmental IA (Goudie/Kilian 1996).

197 | Intemann 2010, 792. For the concept of balanced partiality, see also chapter 2.1.2.

198 | Intemann 2010, 792.

199 | Code 1981. See also chapter 2.1.3.

200 | Harding 1987, 187.

201 | Kinder 2010, 129-133.

202 | Abels 2012, 202.

203 | Harding 1992. See also following chapter 5.2.1.2 on strong objectivity and IA.

204 | See chapters 2.1 and 2.2.

205 | Compare the Gender Summits (European Commission 2014).

federal administration and GIA in the Commission's IA system, my results support the vulnerability²⁰⁶ and roll-back thesis, in which a gendered analysis is rarely executed without strong institutionalised equality governance structures within and knowledgeable, partial actors to carry it.²⁰⁷ Strengthening the representation and mandate of gender experts is therefore important for challenging gender bias in IA research and raises the likelihood and quality of gender analysis application. In largely androcentric academic systems of knowledge production, positivist ideas of hard science obstruct the internal and external views needed to achieve a standpoint consideration of women's realities, which is where the inquiry needs to begin:

"The activities of sociologists and political philosophers are complicit with different activities of the dominant institutions; thus changing conceptual frameworks in those disciplines can affect how women are served by, say, a welfare system and a legal system."²⁰⁸

Gender experts help IA actors reflect on their personal role in *un/doing* gender in the organisation and assessment at hand and on the genderedness of the policy analysis/IA system itself. As internal femocrats partnering with IA analysts, gender experts help question the procedures of selection and the definitions of policy problems in guideline drafts, assessment designs and objectives of assessment in order to *undo* unquestioned bias and the assumed neutrality of policy analysis/IA.²⁰⁹ My study confirmed that gender experts are not (yet) an integral part of the relevant IA systems and communities of practice. They and their knowledge base are still seen as outsiders and are subjected to *othering* and *devaluation* processes. *De-othering* attempts as through the Status of Women Canada are not yet advanced enough for their epistemological effects to be fully understood.²¹⁰

External support to scientific communities for this *strong objectivity* and *epistemic advantage* in conducting academic inquiry for policy advice is available from interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary gender studies.²¹¹ An epistemic commitment to gender equality and implementation of gender analysis tools would require governments to employ formerly excluded members of marginalised or "outsider" groups (such as gender experts and feminists) and to equip them with IA responsibility, giving them a new unique position as *insider-outsiders*.²¹² The Status of Women Canada as the main gender equality machinery, with its clear mandate and role pertaining to GBA, was seen as one of the driving forces for change.

Gender studies form yet another epistemic community, examining power relations, institutions, policies, and technologies that perpetuate hierarchies and subordination from the women's perspective. The goals are to render oppressive, inequality-producing mechanisms visible by critiquing them, to abolish the

206 | For a definition of vulnerability, see sub-chapter 2.3.1.

207 | Many interviewees additionally stressed the importance of outside feminist actors (the women's movement) pressing for the integration of gender in IA and monitoring practices.

208 | Harding 2009, 198.

209 | For the concepts of *un/doing* gender, see chapter 2.3.1.

210 | Compare subchapter 3.4.1.

211 | For the concepts of *strong objectivity* and *epistemic advantage*, see chapter 2.1.1.

212 | Compare also chapter 2.2.3.1.

systemic causes of inequality and to alter the way knowledge is produced. In order to include multiple forms of knowledge, IA research needs a moderated process that includes representation across disciplines and employs intersectional modes of knowing.²¹³ Although transdisciplinarity and intersectionality are used so frequently as to be in danger of becoming buzzwords and empty shells, university education is undergoing a major shift towards problem-oriented, inter- and trans-disciplinary education in an ever increasing portfolio of BA and MA programmes.²¹⁴ This is to suggest that there is general agreement with Kristina Rolin “that a standpoint is a commitment to diversity in a scientific community.”²¹⁵ A standpoint is therefore a plea not only to acknowledge internal diversity (e.g., of gender studies, of IA practices), but also to appreciate and openly encounter external diversity among disciplines, in order to achieve a state of balanced epistemic partiality. According to standpoint theory, such policies of representation and balanced epistemic partiality, mandated through human resources and university education, thereby divorced from policy making, would provide the epistemic community of policy advisors and makers with “both expertise and experience to recognise problematic background assumptions and to identify the sort of evidence that will be relevant given the aims of the research.”²¹⁶

The democratisation of IA, for the purpose of attenuating the *double democratic deficit* seen in the EU and other multilevel governance systems, is an all-encompassing process.²¹⁷ The long-term goal, in the case of gender equality, should be the full integration of policy field specific gender experts in IA units. Full proportionate representation and comprehensive transdisciplinarity will certainly be as unachievable as finding and speaking *the truth* to power in IA, but it is the approximation that counts. Establishing gender competency in *ghettoised* bodies of government, as Stacy and Thorne have noted, by employing femocrats in gender equality bodies such as Status of Women Canada or the European Institute for Gender Equality, represents an important but insufficient step in changing the status quo. Sustainability of gender in IA will only be achieved through a government-wide cross-cutting *entrenchment* with gender competency and policy field specific gender expertise embodied in all government institutions and functions, including IA.

The IA expert Radaelli stated that “institutions are the *riverbeds* in which regulatory processes flow.”²¹⁸ Based on the Charter of Rights and Freedoms,²¹⁹ Canada has carved out a bed to accommodate the results of its long history of immigration and indigenous diversity. Canadian public servants and the policies they developed are often portrayed as being at the forefront of consideration of diversity and participation in policy analysis and policy making. As part of the

213 | Banse/Fleischer 2011.

214 | Although to a varying degree, compare A. Lann Hornscheidt and Susanne Baer’s critique of the German university system regarding the disciplinary incorporation of transdisciplinarity and gender aspects (Hornscheidt/Baer 2011, 169).

215 | Rolin 2006, 135.

216 | Intemann 2010, 788.

217 | For the current deficit of democratisation within the EU and its IA system, see sub-chapter 2.2.3 (Abels/Mushaben 2012a; Abels/Mushaben 2012a).

218 | Radaelli 2005, 933.

219 | Canada; Department of Justice 1982.

vision of a Canadian government “for, by and with the people,”²²⁰ public servants constantly seek to improve federal governance structures through responsible and accountable administrative practices. These are meant to be fair and inclusive, embracing and validating a multitude of differences—race, gender, age, language, ethnic origin, religion and disability, and aboriginal values and traditions.²²¹ It seems appropriate to apply this metaphor of a Canadian *riverbed* to gender analysis, with the newly designed intersectional GBA+ tool and a government agency, Status of Women Canada, supporting its development and tool up-take.

The European Commission’s IA system is equally based on fundamental values, including gender equality, but it does not yet provide a similar institutional *riverbed*. It is rather a trickle far from the *main stream*, perhaps because the Commission’s overall culture is geared more towards economic coherence and because there is no strong gender equality player in the IA system. However, this neglect is not unique to mainstreaming gender equality in IA. The integration of environmental IA has been equally neglected.²²² The integrated IA has proven problematic, partly because of its complex nature, but also because organisational traditions and the sectorisation of policy making are hampering its successful practice.²²³

Entrenched

Creating accountability is an effective method for entrenching gender equality, thereby correcting bias and re-democratising IA. Accountability can be hierarchical, integrated into existing IA accountability and quality management structures. Accountability can also be horizontal, taking the form of deliberation and other softer modes. The complications of accountability are myriad. Depending on the interpretative approach, the same instruments will trigger different results if implemented in different contexts by different actors,²²⁴ making replicability and robustness a deception. Due to the historical factors and institutional set-up, not all instruments fit all local political systems.²²⁵

220 | Bogason 2005, 251.

221 | See also chapter 2.3.1. North-America in general, is a laboratory for inclusive approaches in policy advice: In the late 1990s and early 2000s, a group of primarily African American scholars in the U.S., including Henry Frierson, Rodney Hopson, Stafford Hood, Veronica Thomas and Gerunda Hughes, started what is today known as “culturally and context responsive evaluation” (Greene 2006, 131). These participatory and critical evaluations, also sometimes called “borderland epistemology,” are based on deliberately democratic models and critical indigenous inquiry (Denzin/Lincoln 2008, 2), and part of a larger empowerment framework of democratically-oriented evaluations that foster social change (Greene 2006). Along similar lines run the Canadian first nation’s value-based, holistic approaches to a culturally sensitive Gender-based Analysis (Assembly of First Nations; National Aboriginal Women’s Summit 2008; Stirbys 2008). For the diversity commitment in Canadian government with regard to representation and employment equity of designated groups, see (Benhamadi 2003).

222 | OECD et al. 2011, 12.

223 | Turnpenny et al. 2008.

224 | Durnová 2012.

225 | Biegelbauer 2012.

There is a growing demand for a transformative, participatory science. At sustainability conferences, speakers from technology-oriented research institutions call for new modes of experimental social research, such as theatre plays, city-hall meetings, strategic games or participatory scenarios, as opportunities for developing political systems focused on democratic citizen-oriented policy outcomes.²²⁶ An *experimental turn* and the democratisation of a *post-normal* science are called upon to answer the question of “what should be done” to bring about greater economic, environmental, social and inter-generational justice.²²⁷ In the IA field, this experimental and social turn is still fresh, fragile and limited, yet promising.²²⁸ Gendered forms of policy analysis/IA, whose main function is to challenge underlying assumptions, could benefit from these participatory methods. The result would be more sustainable assessments.

Traditionally, gender analysis and other *social justice tools*, as I call the vast selection of socially transformational tools,²²⁹ have a strong focus on stakeholder consultation, and they need to target stakeholders *from below*. Such targeting includes thinking about empowerment elements for reaching and activating non-organised stakeholders and individuals as part of the appraisal and problem framing process. The related academic literature also stresses the need for continuous monitoring on whether the effects have benefited the intended stakeholders and encouraged thinking about how to keep the target groups in the process. The importance of this monitoring was confirmed by a Canadian example, in which a seemingly sound GBA ex-ante analysis did not trickle down to positive effects on women during policy implementation.²³⁰

Changes in the way research is conducted are context specific. When the direct participation of multiple marginalised standpoints is not ensured, because of exclusive or elite education, political and economic systems, the tools and methods of research and knowledge production become doubly important, along with the institutional riverbeds and accountability frameworks they are embedded in. Transforming the institutional set-up is as important for the entrenchment of gender equality as employing a knowledgeable, more diverse work force—or paying attention to tool design, field specific (gender) knowledge, (gender) expertise, the reflexivity of analysts or gender-sensitive stakeholder consultations. Especially in the light of *selective perception*, Klaus Jacob et al. have confirmed the importance of vertical integration in bureaucratic hierarchies and processes, which I also found to be relevant.²³¹

Blame for lack of accountability is usually laid on institutional constraints, such as a lack of resources or insufficient horizontal integration or an absence of alignment with departments in charge of gender equality. Canada has attempted to inscribe GBA into the departmental performance management system, but the

226 | Biegelbauer 2012; Schneidewind 2012.

227 | Schneidewind 2012; Weiland 2013; Ferretti et al. 2014. See also chapter 1.4.1.

228 | Adelle/Weiland 2012. Mainly limited to social, sustainability and environmental IA.

229 | Such as social, gender, health, poverty, indigenous, culture, vulnerability, sustainability, equality, diversity, human rights IA, just to name a few. See chapter 1.6.1.3.

230 | Scott 2003a.

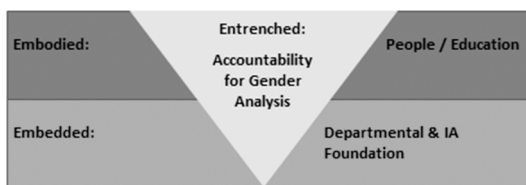
231 | OECD et al. 2011. The need and possibilities for vertical integration of gender into IA processes is discussed in the context of the accountability chapter 5.1.6.

Commission lags behind in this respect. But as Teghtsoonian asserts, establishing an initial fit into the existing IA system and its accountability mechanisms is the goal and still holds the potential for overall transformation:

“In conjunction with more vigorously enforced and broadly applied Cabinet submissions guidelines, the formal inclusion of gender-sensitive policy analysis as key ‘outputs’ and ‘result areas’ in purchase and performance agreements could well provide the necessary incentive for significant change to take place.”²³²

Increased accountability in the Canadian system is also an attempt to close the policy cycle and is essential to move forward.²³³ Creating institutions with specific, hierarchical streamlined instructive powers and state equality machineries—like Status of Women Canada—is crucial for entrenching gender quality in governance systems. The mandated existence of these institutions demonstrates the importance of equality-oriented policy and programme making, and the femocrats employed in these organisations have the opportunity to act for change from within. They provide opportunities for cross-fertilising administrative cultures across departments and seeding state bureaucracies with equality-seeking values and tools. The interview participants underscored the importance of interlinking public equality machineries with central policy advice and IA quality assurance processes. The disconnect of the European Institute for Gender Equality from the Commission’s IA roadmap, including IA steering groups in the Directorates General and the Impact Assessment Board quality management routines, demonstrates the need for stronger liaisons based on a democratic argument that is inclusive of gender equality. Gender equality can transform the political climate and overarching paradigms (like cost efficiency, economic growth) only if both actors *and* context are conducive.²³⁴

Table 26: Gender Analysis and Epistemic Advantage: Embodied, Embedded, Entrenched



5.2.1.2 Strong Objectivity and Expertocracy

In the EU or Canada, we find that constitutional democratic values prevail as legal foundations for analytical frames. All protected areas in the constitution (and more) compete for attention in policy analysis and IA, leading to the possibility

232 | Teghtsoonian 2004, 279.

233 | Teghtsoonian’s envisioned IA system seems to have been realised in Austria in the meantime. In the Austrian integrated IA, gender equality is one of a total of eight impact elements and is subject to general IA quality management and controlling (OECD 2013; Bundeskanzleramt Österreich 2013).

234 | Doppelt 2008, 304-305.

of overlapping frames. Rights-based social justice tools like gender analysis derive from a “philosophy of democracy.”²³⁵ In fact, some theorists see gender analysis as a kind of ethical analysis.²³⁶ But recently, the more inclusive tools proposed in the EU’s Fundamental Rights IA, along with other equality seeking tools, make gender analysis appear overly simplified—although in a thorough intersectional application it is not.

In addition, current and reoccurring postmodern critiques of our Western democracies see our systems in danger of becoming *post democratic*—subjected to the economic interests of business and political elites as privileged groups, as Crouch observed.²³⁷ Knodt describes the result as a *semi-permeable* bureaucracy, penetrable mainly by the economic privileged elites.²³⁸ What Knodt sees as semi-permeable, Harding sees as *almost impermeable* from the perspective of the excluded, the non-beneficiaries, in their failing attempts to interfere with the: “Exceptionalist and triumphant ways in which privileged groups (and the research disciplines that serve them) think and interact with others and the world around them.”²³⁹ Like Crouch and his followers,²⁴⁰ Harding critiques this self-reproducing system of privileged elites from a standpoint perspective for its assumptions about the creation of knowledge as fact-based and value-free:

“It is scientists as a group (and their philosophers) and the politicians who rely on them who have gained an illegitimate authority about both the nature of the world and the desirable social politics, through their insistence on the fact/value distinction which they can’t even achieve in their own best work.”²⁴¹

Merging these post democratic and standpoint theoretical concerns and transferring them to IA raises the apprehension that business elites will operate from a dominant position in the competing assessment framework.²⁴² Thus, extending the reach of expert advice through an emphasis on ex-ante IA could weaken the political and democratic processes of policy and programme making and provide even more entry ways for elite issues. To follow this logic through: strengthening gender expertise and gender analysis tools in IA could actually increase the potential for democratically disempowering analyses.

Again drawing on Annesley and Gains’s work, it is crucial to reclaim gender analysis from being a *politicised* technocratic exercise. The two researchers draw a dubious picture of policy making practices—outsourced to public administration and research institutions that pretend to inhabit a neutral space. As Crouch stated,

235 | Vanclay 2002, 388.

236 | Mintrom 2012, 257.

237 | Crouch 2008; Crouch 2013. For Crouch and his followers, modern Western democracy is little more than window dressing, giving the illusion of participation, while being steered by business and media elites; see also chapter 2.2.3.

238 | Knodt 2013. See also chapter 2.1.3.

239 | Harding 2008, 233.

240 | Crouch 2008.

241 | Harding 2008, 217.

242 | The cooptation of gender equality and reinterpretation of equality demands in favour of EU economic and labour market goals, for instance is described in (Rubery 2015).

research institutions follow the logic of markets and bureaucracies, serving the dominant elites and not always acting in the common interest.²⁴³ Annesley and Gains also address the lack of transparency and democratic legitimacy inherent in technocratic, evidence-based policy advice systems such as the EU's ex-ante IA, which is based on *expertocracy*²⁴⁴:

"In the EU, negotiations on new legal standards to be approved by the national and European parliaments have been replaced by the production of seemingly depoliticised data. The latter is presented as a technical, a-political process in which experts determine the indices based on shared academic knowledge. However, it is a two-stage political selection process, first one of who will count as experts, and then one of negotiations between officials and experts in the selection of indices and the definition of targets, all without control by the national parliaments or the European Parliament and without possibility for appeal before the Court."²⁴⁵

Creating gender analysis tools and wanting to mainstream their application can represent an uncritical desire to be admitted to elitist expertocratic IA circles²⁴⁶ while trying to win over competing assessment frames. This leads again to a paradoxical question: How to incite a power shift while participating in exclusionary mechanisms power? As van der Vleuten and Verloo put it, IAs can never be better than instruments and context allow: "All of them have to do with the political, power-based logic underneath the construction and application of these instruments."²⁴⁷ The assumption that policies are *gender-neutral*²⁴⁸ unless proven otherwise deviates from IA practice with other impact factors—i.e., nobody deems all policies *cost-neutral* unless proven otherwise—and does not correspond to the complex nature of policy problems.

In the preceding chapters, I explored a related critique on what I decided to call *the double epistemological trap* for gender in IA: that is, IA is marginalised in 1) a non-sensitised system of mainstream, non-feminist science and research, and 2) a mainstream, non-feminist, system of policy making that fails to recognise policy needs and effects that, after careful analysis, might turn out to be different for women and men. In such an environment, rights-based tools focused on gender equality alone, like GBA/GIA, and used by analysts in uncritical, positivist ways are prone to failure. The reality of failed tool integration, combined with postmodern and intersectional perspectives on IA, forces feminists toward such fundamental critiques of postdemocracy and expertocracy. New ways of conducting IA (including gender analysis) need to be established if they do not want to abandon the entire IA project altogether.

243 | Crouch 2013.

244 | For a definition of expertocracy and the expert-bureaucratic model, see chapter 1.5.2.

245 | van der Vleuten/Verloo 2012, 85.

246 | See chapters on the technology of gender mainstreaming and gender analysis 1.5.2 and 1.5.3.

247 | van der Vleuten/Verloo 2012, 84.

248 | See for example the critique of gender-blind microfinance policies (Johnson 2000; Goodwin/Voola 2013).

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the perspectives of science and scientists are subject to individual standpoints, the influence of systemic professional (main-)streams, and societal and individual values. The existence of a global women's movement, albeit marginalised, and its involvement in policy and agenda setting through its stakeholders, has not sufficiently challenged *expertocratic* IA actors and their *evidence-based* policy advice. The IA's top-down approach is waiting to be complemented by bottom-up efforts, in which all—governments, science, public administration, parliaments, NGOs and individuals—have a role to play in framing and tackling problems of the “everyday world.”²⁴⁹ When feminist stakeholders are engaged, policy analysts and scientists cannot be allowed to abdicate their professional role in taking democratic—in this case gender equality—considerations into account, even though those considerations might not represent their daily experience or views of the world. At the same time, the postmodern feminist awareness of the potential for coercion and the limited conception of sex/gender as a focus of non-intersectional examination in gender analysis tools, are still waiting to enter the sphere of policy analysis/IA. A critical employment of gender analysis tools is still in the wings.

5.2.2 Feminist Empiricism in Impact Assessment

“The effects of the postmodern problematic on public administration/affairs lie more in the future than in the present [...].”²⁵⁰

The future of evidence-based policy and programme making lies in its ability to answer the *postmodern problematic*.²⁵¹ The shattering effects of the 2008-2009 worldwide economic and financial crises are not yet over. The collapse of financial markets triggered second and third waves of crises, including austerity measures, declining labour protection and wages, cut backs in health and social security systems, and more precarious, fragmented, temporal modes of employment in many states. The policies and programs designed to provide relief, have in turn provoked gendered effects, with the most marginalised suffering the most.²⁵² In this chapter I will discuss how standpoint feminism and feminist empiricism can join forces with the latest development in postmodern policy analysis to innovate IA.²⁵³

Harding notes that science is now faced with a new challenge: “people’s daily experiences are producing demands that new questions be addressed by scientific institutions.”²⁵⁴ She argues that the key to infiltrating the impermeable systems lies in acknowledging the end of a modern meta-narrative and replacing it by a

249 | Smith 1987a.

250 | Fox/Miller 2006, 632. See also sub-chapter 1.4.1.3.

251 | Fox/Miller 2006.

252 | Sabarwal et al. 2009; Walby 2009b; European Commission; Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2009; European Parliament; Directorate General for Internal Policies; Policy Department C Citizens’ Rights and Constitutional Affairs; OpCit Research 2013; Klatzer/Schlager 2014; Rubery 2015.

253 | See also chapter 1.4.1.1.

254 | Harding 2008, 218.

multiplicity of postmodern, fragmented narratives representing fragmented societies: “in the present era ‘reflexive’ modernities emerge alongside continuing forms of industrial modernity [...]”²⁵⁵ These “reflexive modernities” also emerge in the realm of evidence-based IA, where critical authors are questioning the “technical rational model” and wanting to insert “more reflexive approaches.”²⁵⁶ Gender mainstreaming literature has called for more self-reflexive approaches to conducting IAs in general and gender analysis in particular, highlighting the partial character of analytical endeavours and questioning methods and the very evidence-base itself.²⁵⁷ To question positivism and causality is akin to critiquing objectivity.²⁵⁸ For Catherine MacKinnon “the state is male in that objectivity is its norm.”²⁵⁹ When objectivity is androcentric and carries a normative, androcentric bias, the appropriateness of applied science and research in public administration must also be questioned:

“Values and beliefs (i.e. subjectivity) will always be extant. And, most importantly, striving to apply ontologies, epistemologies, and methodologies of the natural sciences will not produce better research and will not improve the field of public administration; they are, in effect, inappropriate.”²⁶⁰

Recently, positivist approaches in IA have been criticised from many perspectives as being prone to bias. Klaus Jacob et al. found for instance that although policy analysts see the drafting of IA as an objective, technical task²⁶¹ that follows strict guidelines and procedures, there is in fact room for (unintended) bias:

“Political positions often predetermine the range of options that can realistically be explored. The definition of the problem, the scope of the assessment and the formulation of options may already exclude or favour certain policy options. The design of the methodology (e.g. choice of time scale, discount rate in cost benefit analysis, or safety margin; the consideration of distributional effects, external costs or impacts on other countries) influences its outcome. In short: IA is an exercise that combines evidence, logic, norms, judgment and rhetoric in a certain ‘policy space’.”²⁶²

Jacob et al. posits, in addition, that knowledge creation, politics and values are intertwined in IA practice in EU member states. Thus, IAs are not separate from political processes and currently operate under a neo-liberal paradigm that places

255 | Harding 2008, 218.

256 | Adelle et al. 2012, 401. Proponents of more self-reflexive science and research designs and procedures that are more conscious of the process and of the barriers to knowledge use are also (Hertin et al. 2009; Jones 2009; de Schutter/Lenoble 2010; May/Perry 2011).

257 | Bacchi/Eveline 2010; Lombardo et al. 2010; Krizsan/Lombardo 2013.

258 | Compare also chapter 1.4. and the concept of post-normal science, establishing a fragmented “truth.”

259 | MacKinnon 1987, 141.

260 | Riccucci 2008, 9.

261 | Jacob et al. 2008, 12.

262 | Jacob et al. 2008, 12.

the highest value on financial and economic criteria. This is troubling for many feminist economists, who—since the 1980s—have been examining the harmful consequences of economic models, which are bare of the non-paid economic care-sector (in households).²⁶³ That economic assessment is perceived as superior to and independent of social and gender assessment is also evident in the Commission's integrated IA guidelines and a recent study on the role of cost-benefit analysis conducted for the purpose of informing the guideline's update.²⁶⁴

Consequently, from a postmodernist point of view, the concept of what is *appropriate* research, knowledge production, and policy advice needs to shift from “nomothetic, inductive” and “value-free, rationally derived, testable, and verifiable” to value-aware and value-seeking (gender equality) “hermeneutics and phenomenology.”²⁶⁵ The doing enables the knowing and determines its limits. Critical realism, which hints at the multi-entangled processes by which researchers are involved in the re-creation of reality through knowledge production, should be turned into postpositivist and nominalism and postmodern relativism. Which questions are important to ask? Which method should be used to tackle which—when the “choice of method is the choice of determinants”²⁶⁶?

In both postmodern and postpositivist ontologies, “researchers and reality are one and the same,”²⁶⁷ and scientifically valid, monolithic truth can never be achieved. The basic difference is that postpositivism upholds the critical realist idea of an objectivity and a *reality*, although too complex to be fully understood and examined; postmodernism denies even the option of objectivity and stresses the relativity of knowledge based on the social construction of *truth*:

“Postmodern approaches to the study of organizations tend to share in common a discursive understanding of the self, an emphasis on truth as a socially contingent multiplicity, a conception of knowledge as the situated outcome of power relations [...]”²⁶⁸

Or as MacKinnon, reflecting on the question of power posed by feminism to state theory, has said: “Dis-engaged truth only reiterates its determinations.”²⁶⁹ The old

263 | Hanappi-Egger 2014; Bauhardt/Çaglar 2010. Central to a feminist critique of economics is the privatisation of care and reproductive unpaid work, mostly performed by women, externalising economic costs (Bauhardt 2012, 4).

264 | Renda et al. 2013. In the case of the EU, Andrea Renda, Loran Schrefler, Giacomo Luchetta and Roberto Zavatta as the authors of this study see: “The need to reconcile CBA [Cost Benefit Analysis, A.S.] with the requirement for an integrated assessment of economic, social and environmental impacts. As a corollary of the above-mentioned wider scope of the EU system compared to systems in place in other jurisdictions, it must be observed that monetizing some of the impacts listed in the IA guidelines, such as respect for fundamental rights, would be a meaningless exercise, and as such should not be undertaken. Rather, multi-criteria analysis (which falls outside the scope of this study) should be used in order to provide policymakers with a basis for informed decisions.” (Renda et al. 2013, 221).

265 | Riccucci 2008, 8.

266 | MacKinnon 1987, 136.

267 | Riccucci 2008, 7.

268 | Tyler 2011, 12.

269 | MacKinnon 1987, 136.

question of how to speak truth to power, with its old empiricist answer, needs to be converted into the more humble acknowledgement that there is no *dis-engaged* truth, in fact there might be many truths or no one truth at all. Here, with regard to IA, feminism asks: how can IA account for the multiplicity of truths, based on democratic, constitutional values and an awareness of the entanglement in power dynamics, including the power exercised by IA systems?

New postmodern and postpositivist streams of evaluation research are marked by a scepticism about truth and by a distrust of the representation of *realities* in language and research.²⁷⁰ Also included in the mix are feminist concepts of strong objectivity and situated knowledge.²⁷¹ Postmodernism asks for changes in the attitude toward policy making. It brings about changes in how this policy machinery (namely the administrative structures for designing and implementing policies) is perceived. And it alters the self-perception of public servants and the ways they conduct their public duties, since they are the core actors in the *policy game* in which: “Postmodernists have something to add, [...] with such themes as democratic governance, links to the public, interaction with clients and methods of evaluation of the consequences of public policies.”²⁷²

Although “there is no unifying postmodernist approach,”²⁷³ most postmodernists “criticize generalizing science, and their anti-foundationalist stance leads them to a new pragmatism.”²⁷⁴ Based on such postmodern interventions and again drawing on Harding’s work, I would plea for a critical knowledge construction that does not attempt to create novel angles and that does not valorise some voices (e.g., those of women) or political projects (e.g., feminist) over others in a bid to claim the truth. Rather, in the quest for “strong objectivity” and “less false” science, knowledge construction should start from a position perceived as the least privileged or, as Donna Haraway says, a position that “better accounts for the world that is science”²⁷⁵—that is the closest possible approximation to scientifically true representations of the potentially endless versions of reality.²⁷⁶

According to one line of thinking, the researcher is a person with subjective experiences in or outside the field of inquiry, who manages to catch the fugitive figure of the distanced, objective scientist.²⁷⁷ Such sophisticated epistemology intentionally: “Delegitimizes certain voices and interests—specifically, the voices and interests of policy makers—and [...] legitimates others—specifically, the voices and interests of marginal and invisible groups.”²⁷⁸ This positioning reverses pre-constructed hierarchies (e.g., male-female, black-white, intellectual elite-working

270 | Schwandt 2005, 325.

271 | See chapter 2.1.

272 | Bogason 2005, 251.

273 | Bogason 2005, 252.

274 | Bogason 2005, 251.

275 | Haraway 1988, 590. Such an attitude is called for even by public policy and management studies (Adler/Jermier 2005).

276 | Whereas Elvira Scheich intervenes, that viewing science as a “single purpose” project of “gaining power, appears standardized and simplified. [...] there is no one science,” rather a multitude (Scheich 1991, 29).

277 | Smith 1990.

278 | Trubek/Esser 2011, 155.

class, same-other), but even more, it questions, contextualises and then historicises the relational systems within which subjectivities are constructed.²⁷⁹ If it is no longer possible to construct “the big picture”, then science must pursue different routes,²⁸⁰ one of which may be offered by standpoint theory. Standpoint theory provides a notion of subjectivity as established through communal, temporal and spatial belongings and processes of self-identification that challenge universalist and essentialist frameworks and identity concepts without ceding to relativism.²⁸¹

“Unlike the subject of a group identity who strives for the reformation of one axis of the symbolic order, the collective subject of a counterhegemonic ideology critique emerges from a discourse that calls for a sweeping rearrangement of the social imaginary and the political and economic structures it supports. Once the feminist standpoint is formulated as this sort of dis-identifying collective subject of critique, the emphasis in its claims for authority can shift from concern over the grounds for knowledge—women’s lives or experiences—to consideration of the effects of knowledge as always invested ways of making sense of the world.”²⁸²

5.2.3 Reflexivity in Impact Assessment

IA carries an inherent optimism: the positivist evaluation model aims to predict and plan the future. It is thus often criticised as being romantic and unable to foresee and prevent social and political conflicts or to create just and balanced interventions.²⁸³ The increased formalisation of ex-ante IA, with fixed guidelines and assessment procedures, allows for the negotiation of different strands of power seeking *truths* (the economy, the ecology, the social) in a way that is standardised, presumably transparent and fair. But still missing from IA is the Foucauldian insight into power “as both a repressive and a productive capacity.”²⁸⁴ Such insight results in an awareness that it is impossible to pay due diligence to all truths and power imbalances and a realisation of the capacity to empower certain truths while disempowering others.

In public administration and governance literature, policy assessment tools, including gender analysis, are described as institutionalised forces for self-reflexivity, with the goal of promoting rationality.²⁸⁵ But what if rationality itself, as discussed in the prior chapter, is questioned and at stake due to postmodern and feminist standpoint interventions? From discussions on the role of ex-ante IA and the presence of postpositivism in ex-post evaluations, it becomes clear that a mere technocratic and positivist application of impact analysis runs the risk of simplification and would not provide a full range of outcomes.²⁸⁶ According to Antke

279 | Hennessy 1993, 30.

280 | Trubek/Esser 2011, 153-154.

281 | Intemann et al. 2010, 927.

282 | Hennessy 1993, 30.

283 | Kevenhörster 2006, 115.

284 | Tyler 2011, 12.

285 | Schuppert 2003, 35.

286 | Adelle/Weiland 2012. A fear shared with regards to gender by many authors (van Eerdewijk/Davids 2014; Payne 2014; Bock 2015).

Engel, the relationship between queer-feminist theories and public policy advice will always be in conflict because of the (power) struggle over (positivist) cause-effect assumptions. And this tension can never be resolved.²⁸⁷ Acknowledging, even entertaining this tension, I maintain that an engagement of critical governance approaches with feminist standpoint reflexivity would benefit gender analysis tool implementation and foster a general awareness of the dynamic processes of equality governance through IA.

Ex-ante instruments represent different, more specialised lenses, such as human rights, poverty, social and environmental IA, through which a problem is analysed from a certain angle, a particular intervention is assessed, and targeted mitigating options are developed. Verloo limits the expectations for GIA as an instrument by positioning gender in a political rather than a technocratic perspective:

"The assumptions behind these demands are rooted in a technocratic perspective in policymaking; they assume that the gender problematic is a simple problem, or that gender studies can provide the final analysis of the problem, and then action can follow. This denial of the political character of the gender problematic is a first problem. The gender problematic is not a simple problem, but a messy one, or a wicked one, or simply a political one, meaning that there is no real consensus about what the problem is exactly, about why and for whom it is a problem, about who is responsible for the existence of the problem, who is responsible for solving it."²⁸⁸

Here, Verloo reveals the political nature of instrument application, including gender analysis. But what is the alternative? How do we support better policy advice? Should we denounce ex-ante IA altogether in favour of purely political decision making? I would like to suggest a middle path, one that takes a reflexive, standpoint-oriented, postpositivist approach to collecting and analysing evidence. Gender analysis in ex-ante policy and programme assessment needs to be placed in the context of a much larger transformation: a critical engagement with the epistemologies of research and knowledge production. To arrive at a reflective paradigm for IA, we need to shift from today's dominant positivism to a postpositivist perspective. At the same time, we must frame and make effective the New Public Management modes of gender quality governance and accountability.²⁸⁹ At first glance, this attempt to reconcile postpositivist, self-reflexive, democratic approaches to IA with heightened accountability and control may seem contradictory. At a second glance, however, it makes more sense. Policy making for messy real life problems is "wicked," as Loma Turnbull points out, but:

"Women must continue to hold governments accountable, insist on gender-based analyses of all policies, and demand that the federal plan be meaningfully implemented. Recognizing problems as wicked and approaching them in the collaborative ways that are suggested by design theory may really be about just using feminist methods with a new name."²⁹⁰

287 | Engel 2013, 39.

288 | Verloo 2001, 13-14.

289 | It is worth noting that all of these ontologies are based on belief systems.

290 | Turnbull 2010, 238.

In the area of European research funding, Abels describes some of the ways such “wicked” problems could be addressed in order to counter the *double democratic deficit*.²⁹¹ Gender mainstreaming and its tools can be used to counteract the gender-blindness of programming and the ways that research is conducted within a programme:

“Gender statistics and indicators, GIA, gender awareness and GAP [Gender Action Plans, A.S.] are leading to some success, as FP [Framework Programme, A.S.] evaluations show. [...] Still missing is a comprehensive approach gendering the epistemological foundations of EU research policy and the underlying scientific cultures.”²⁹²

The tools she describes navigate a paradoxical mandate. On the one hand, they are essentially a critique of insufficient knowledge production and of the failing ways of that scientific truth is established in positivist IA. On the other hand, gender mainstreaming and its instruments introduce a partiality toward women that is necessary as long as the overall scientific culture has not accepted and dealt with the critique of androcentrism and male bias within its structures, methods and analysts. The mere existence of gender analysis tools is a *political intervention* in the administrative systems of states and of bureaucracies that had previously imagined themselves *neutral* in acting upon, and on behalf, of a neutral, genderless citizen. By challenging this illusionary neutrality or sameness, the presence of such tools touches on a central part of postmodernist thought, the scepticism of metanarratives.

To develop gender-analysis tools, but not use them is wasteful. But gender analysis tools can no longer be “a means to an end.”²⁹³ The goal of gender quality as the desired outcome and *end* of good public governance raises questions about how to increase tool usage and the sophistication of its implementation. It is problematic that the normalising function of existing tools and practices has not been recognised. To correct this, inherent paradigms need to be made visible and reassessed: “there is no doubt that RIA incarnates cognitive and normative beliefs about the role of economic analysis and cost—benefit principles.”²⁹⁴

Normative beliefs are already represented in the guidelines and structures of IA, and shape the way these guiding principles are applied by the end-users. IA research demonstrates that these highly standardised “guidelines written by governments are implemented by constellations of actors,” whose “ideas behind the instrument” are “ambiguous and pliable.”²⁹⁵ Strictly speaking, guidelines do not dictate research questions or the use of concrete methodologies. They guide, but even so, do not replace the negotiation of tool application (whether in-depth and functional, or partial and superficial and perfunctory)²⁹⁶ on the ground. This is left to individual analysts and working groups:

291 | See also sub-chapter 2.2.3.1 on the double democratic deficit.

292 | Abels 2012, 203.

293 | Beveridge et al. 2000a.

294 | Dunlop et al. 2012, 40.

295 | Dunlop et al. 2012, 40.

296 | See typology chapter 1.6.1.

“The initial commitment of the government to carry out the RIA is an incomplete contract that can be shaped by implementation actors. Since appraisal is reframed by communities of practice, it often leads to outcomes that are different from the original aims set by the government.”²⁹⁷

But the communities of practice that shape tool implementation through practice, are already pre-determined by their assessment guidelines, education, values and departmental logics. As a result, gender analysis is vulnerable, especially in integrated tools. The existence of overarching guidelines that pay attention to some gender aspects has so far resulted mostly in formal rather than enthusiastic inclusion. My findings resonate well with Veit’s results concerning regulatory IA in the German and Swedish contexts, where gender equality is formally included as one variable of assessment, but in most cases is deemed irrelevant, with no follow-up.²⁹⁸

The implementation of gender analysis tools demands and begins a self-reflexive process that questions the basic premises of gender-neutral policy research. Since their introduction, however, gendered analysis tools have not managed to engage the largely positivist IA community in such theoretical self-reflection. Why this resistance to reflecting on practices in a field that proclaims itself *scientific*? The answer may lie in the perception that the development and deployment of IA tools is fraught with power struggles within and between larger societal structures. According to Elisabeth Prügl’s theorising of state feminism²⁹⁹, the power question extends beyond the area of tool application:

“Gender mainstreaming encounters both sedimented masculinity institutionalized in laws and policies and masculinist power in the state bureaucracy. An investigation of gender mainstreaming must account for both the path dependencies resulting from previous institutionalizations and the techniques of power in practices of administration.”³⁰⁰

Systemically anchoring gender analysis practice in the realities that affect women as much as men, requires a transformation of epistemological frames in administration and research for public bureaucracy, including those underlying positivist causal thinking, still prominent in IA. As we face the additional challenge of increasingly fragmented, post-industrial societies, this critique of gender (or intersectional gender+) blindness needs to extend to a critique of objectivist evidence-based policy making in general. This line of questioning, however, sets an unsettling process in motion. How can we reconcile the need to address the postmodern problematic with the fact that IA practitioners, as well as the policy makers who relying on their advice, are looking for clarity and answers not for more questions? The field of IA was not prepared for postmodern and feminist critiques of its accounts of *reality*. *Reality* in IA must be a *reflection* of its own problem framing, methods, evidence and needs—a lesson taught by feminist standpoint theory. It also must reflect the (gendered) hierarchies, exclusions, presences and absences that lie inside

297 | Dunlop et al. 2012, 40.

298 | Veit 2010. See also chapter 1.5.2.

299 | See also chapter 2.2.3.2.

300 | Prügl 2010a, 455.

and outside the narrow bureaucratic and IA systems. This *double reflexivity* at the micro-level and macro-levels is required to avoid reproducing persistent relations of domination and marginalisation. A third layer of reflexivity needs to be added to provide an intersectional, situated gender+ assessment.³⁰¹ This third layer must *start* with the most marginalised positions, rather than adding them in the end. Doing so will ensure the inclusion of context-specific, real life needs of those subject to laws and the recipients and users of public services.

Public bureaucracies need to make their actions transparent and accountable to the wider public. Despite continued criticism of their positivist set up, IA tools offer standardised, tested means of appraisal, which are trusted. Gender analysis tools offer an additional level of reflexivity for users who might otherwise not be trained in critical studies or sensitised to gender issues—who in short would not have started from outsider or marginal perspectives. Gender analysis tools, especially those with an in-built, intersectional gender+ framework, as technocratic as they might seem to those outside of bureaucracy, are useful to achieve all three levels of reflexivity within an administrative setting. They need, however, to be accompanied by user education and coaching on how to engage in the reflexivity exercise.

The reflexivity exercise consists in acknowledging that a gender perspective in IA produces just one of manifold possible narratives, but it gets closer to the impossible (and maybe not even desirable, from a postpositivist perspective) meta-narrative of an all-encompassing (integrated) IA. If such a postmodernist conceptualisation of IA were to be applied, new questions would emerge about if and how to assess, measure, weigh and actually make policy recommendations in the light of incommensurable multiple truths and decentred subjectivity.

Mitigation and weighing of various impacts is in fact the daily business of IA practitioners and is mainly achieved through quantification, preferably even monetisation. Here, it is important to be reminded that public stewardship already operates with a simulacrum³⁰² of truth, rather than with truth and reality itself. Variables, indicators, performance reports and so forth are all representations and therefore variations and approximations of truth. Every public policy manager who has found that on the ground conditions vary greatly from the progress reports received, and every IA practitioner who has been confronted with policy outcomes contrary to or unforeseen in the ex-ante assessment, knows what I am trying to convey. The step from this insight to the general acceptance of an un-representable truth is small, and the terrain is not so new or unfamiliar to public administration as is commonly assumed.³⁰³

The outcome of the reflexive process is evaluation and then control, through yet another layer of accountability, either by gender experts (i.e., femocrats) or quality management agencies with the required gender competency. This is what I would call the fourth reflexive loop. As long as analysts are told, “Here is the tool, have fun,” the tools will not be taken up, and even they are, the quality of assessment will disappoint feminists and gender experts, who have already worked through several

301 | See sub-chapter 2.3.1.

302 | Fox/Miller 2006, 658-658.

303 | Fox/Miller 2006, 632.

levels of reflexivity and knowledge. These modes of reflection are indispensable to arrive at *evidence-informed* rather than evidence-based policy advice.³⁰⁴

5.3 CONCLUSION

Public bureaucracy has a central role to play in equality governance. Policies, legal initiatives, public programmes and services shape the future of states and their people—women and men, transgender and intersex. Yet, ex-ante policy analysis is not as occupied with questions of gender equality as it should be. In this transdisciplinary and transnational study, I have established IA and gender analysis typologies in order to bridge the tool gap between the largely disconnected IA and gender mainstreaming communities. Building on quality criteria for IA tools, I then specified gender mainstreaming quality criteria for gender analysis tools. I also developed a framework for the institutionalisation of gender analysis specifically, since existing frameworks focused on the institutionalisation of gender mainstreaming in only very general terms.

My study revealed that gender impact assessment tools have resulted in a lot of “paper production,”³⁰⁵ in integrated instruments not in tune with gender mainstreaming criteria,³⁰⁶ and very little practice. The interviewees had an understanding of gender mainstreaming as a legal duty and an all-encompassing organisational strategy. However, the implications of gender analysis for policy making and assessment beyond issues specific to women remained largely unexplored. Even social policies are not always deemed relevant for gender analysis. Overall, there seems to be very little expertise with mainstreaming gender issues in integrated IAs³⁰⁷ or hard policies in general,³⁰⁸ which almost reduces gender equality to a “gender myth.”³⁰⁹

Only stand-alone assessment tools like GBA or GIA heighten visibility and lived up to gender mainstreaming quality criteria and the legal duty. According to the IA tool typology, as established in this study, the examined stand-alone gender analysis instruments (GBA and GIA) are explicit IA tools as they have a legal trigger, are method- and evidence-based, applicable to project, programme and/or strategic levels and address levels of decision-making. Low internal support and visibility, paired with non-welcoming scientific cultures and a lack of monitoring and accountability, are the main drivers behind the low rates of acceptance for these instruments. In the case of the EU, the—however incomplete—integration method is yet another factor for the subordination of gender analysis.

It is important to remember that decision making is politicised at all levels of governance, and IAs, whether they are conducted in-house or contracted out, are part of that politicised structure. As I have argued before, gender equality needs to be internalised as a central value in bureaucratic systems, and those systems

304 | Atkinson et al. 2013, 141. See also chapter 1.4.1.3.

305 | Holzleithner 2002, 86.

306 | See quality criteria for gender mainstreaming tools in sub-chapter 1.6.2.

307 | Esteves/Vanclay 2010. As in the European Union.

308 | As in the Canadian case.

309 | MacRae 2010, 169.

need to be held accountable for the outcome of their practices. What is needed is a accountable commitment to equality and to a set of equality norms and values, both at the abstract level as systems of governance (*entrenchment*), as well as at the individual level of the people (*embodiment*) who work within those bureaucratic environments and IA systems (*embeddedness*).³¹⁰

Knowledge production has a real impact on persons, groups, and institutions in what Smith would describe as the “everyday” world.³¹¹ In this study, I have conceptualised IA and policy analysis as particular modes of applied knowledge production that can never be value-free or a-political. Drawing on Harding and other standpoint theorists, I have acknowledged this strong objectivity³¹² and the interrelatedness of diverse constructions of multiple worlds,³¹³ resulting in Harraways’ situatedness of knowledge.³¹⁴ From this perspective, empiricism can no longer provide an interpretation of reality. It can, however, offer a frame for defining meaningfulness if it allows for a multiplicity of perspectives. The unravelling of the empirical impact of policies and programmes on women and men, as individuals, part of groups, and institutions can stimulate an ongoing reflexive process and lead them to ask “whether one is ready to accept responsibility for this impact.”³¹⁵ In my research, I sensed a desire among the interviewed gender experts to introduce a reflexive, partial, experimental, participatory turn in IA through gender analysis.

If governments adopt the gender mainstreaming strategy, they will need to embrace this responsibility, which will require a commitment to better ways of understanding³¹⁶ and the revision of epistemic practices such as assumed neutrality. Public bureaucracies will need to foster implementation of gender analysis tools so as to identify, understand, and ultimately abolish the ways in which systemic inequality limits knowledge production and obstructs the path to scientific truth (or a multiplicity of truths). In this sense, standpoint feminism, as a normative aid to policy advice, regards certain ethical and political values—in short, gender equality—as central to inquiry. The illusion of neutrality is still central in the public service and in the policies of fiscal restraint advocated by neo-liberal governments, which have followed the trajectory from “state feminism” to “market feminism.”³¹⁷ Public administration has an active role to play in re-framing and re-democratising the policy issues at hand. Issue framing, the central starting point of any analysis, is political, contested and a power struggle,³¹⁸ even in the hands of scientists and researchers in ex-ante IA.

Due to a continued focus on the internal logics of administration, gender mainstreaming is still “sowing the seeds of its own failure.”³¹⁹ This will continue

310 | Compare chapter 5.2.1.1.

311 | Smith 1987a; Smith 1990.

312 | Harding/Hintikka 1983; Harding 1986; Harding 1991; Harding 1992. Compare chapter 5.2.1.2.

313 | Harding 2003; Harding 2004a; Harding 2011.

314 | Harraway 1988; Harraway 2004.

315 | Trubek/Esser 2011, 155.

316 | Including feminist ways (Zalewski 2010).

317 | Kantola/Squires 2012.

318 | Blofield/Haas 2013, 712-714.

319 | Meier/Celis 2011, 470; 484.

as long as New Public Management modes of public stewardship do not account for gender equality in a crosscutting fashion. Thus, pretending that gender analysis tools can be implemented like any other IA procedure and that they are simply bureaucratic “business as usual,” is a questionable approach. Such technocratic tools have been accused of serving the economic elites. Gender equality tools are trapped within a system of biased tools and analytical systems and are applied by users who are not trained (or inclined?) to ask *all* the right questions. Answering these questions requires a high level of gender competency in the particular policy area, a capacity for introspection in order to uncover one’s own (research) biases, and a propensity to reflect upon methodologies and the subject at large. But if supported with resources, expertise and time, and if applied in a systematic and monitored fashion, formalised gendered IA tools and methods could push against the “male-stream” and add another layer to the simulacra of truth of complex realities. To avoid elite supporting effects, gender analysis application as well as general ways of conducting IA, are asked to pay attention to the margins and to do “science from below,”³²⁰ which would give this research an epistemic advantage.³²¹

Postmodernity is characterised not only by fractured truths and an absence of meta-narratives, but also by a fragmented, diverse population base. New diversity instruments (Fundamental Rights IA, GBA+) have appeared that reflect this base and that attempt to go beyond *just* gender equality. However, in their mostly groupist framing of inequality, these new tools run the risk of being applied in an additive way rather than based on an in-depth, intersectional understanding. They also rarely address intra-group gender inequalities and are better at picking up on direct discrimination of groups instead of addressing indirect discrimination in seemingly neutral structures. However, value-based acceptance for diversity framings seems to be higher with analysts in public administration, and it remains a subject for further research whether less resistance will actually translate into tool up-take.

Along with calls for reflexivity and increased intersectionality in IA, expert policy advice also needs to answer accusations that it lacks legitimacy and accountability, both in general and with regard to gender equality. Despite a history of over 20 years, gender in IA and the *travelling instruments* of gender mainstreaming are still characterised by their nested newness³²² as administrative innovations. In the perception of this study, they have just started out on a long journey as a “slow revolution,”³²³ “in small steps.”³²⁴ Making gender analysis sustainable, calls for both heightened accountability and educational efforts. These efforts must continue for as long as gender equality is not mainstreamed in the disciplinary curricula of policy analysts and researchers and for as long as gender competency is not sufficiently *embodied* in organisations. The existing IA systems, with their epistemic cultures

320 | Harding 2008.

321 | Thus, following up on standpoint theories, which “map how a social and political disadvantage can be turned into an epistemic, scientific and political advantage.” (Harding 2004b, 7-8).

322 | Mackay 2014.

323 | Davids et al. 2014, 397.

324 | van Eerdewijk/Davids 2014, 313.

and inherent accountability mechanisms, would serve well as a means to *embed* and *entrench* gender equality into organisations.

Introducing accountability for gender analysis is procedural; it cannot suddenly convert the (post?) neo-liberal state into a state that puts gender equality and other human and fundamental rights at its core. However, it can provide a starting point for more reflexivity in policy making. A new accountability model would be deemed successful if it managed to integrate gender concerns as an epistemic advantage in a cross-cutting way. What was formerly situated at the fringes and was always at risk of being subordinated would be moved more to the centre of the dominant (fiscal and economic) concerns in ex-ante policy analysis/IA (as attempted by the Commission's integrated IA). Such practices would eventually provide a critical, non-normative perspective in IA that over time will help develop new ways of seeing. Even when IA is executed in a positivist empiricist fashion in an integrated assessment, as in the EU, it provides an additional perspective that adds other data, another layer of assessment, another truth. Building accountability for many variations of truth in IA and enhancing policy advice through heightened equality governance in IA are endeavours that are long overdue.

To overhaul the entire IA system in favour of more democratic, reflective, feminist approaches will take time and strategic effort on many levels. It is not easily achieved, and the areas of required action are also outside of bureaucratic IA systems—in curricula and education systems. Nevertheless, there are already many actions that public administrations can take today: Build and maintain cross-cutting gender competency among staff and analysts, beyond femocrats; hire gender experts and build, extend and link the gender equality architecture to all policy areas in all departments and agencies, etc.; validate gender expertise in area-specific policy capacity and establish inter-linkages and collaborations between gender experts and IA and evaluation units; steer and monitor IA contracting and research policies towards more reflective, democratic designs as well as towards more inclusivity; foster inter- and trans-disciplinary as well as participatory and experimental IA designs; fund research on gender analysis tools and practices; create interfaces between gender equality strategies and IA roadmaps in order to steer assessments; involve female and male researchers from diverse educational and personal backgrounds in more equitable ways; make gender expertise in research teams, boards and IA quality management mandatory; control for gender mainstreaming and ensure the policy-relevant refinement and application of gender analysis tools in all initiatives and for all impact areas as a routine practice (including substantiating non-relevance); make gender analysis part of heightened accountability by introducing gender mainstreaming in controlling and IA quality management; and close the policy cycle with respect to gender equality governance (gender controlling).

Such steps would transform IA into a more reflexive, deliberate and equitable process. Striving for gender equality governance and heightened accountability, parliamentary democratic processes of checks and balances will again become crucial to exercise control and regain stewardship.³²⁵ Ideally, the democratic

325 | Lahey 2009/2010, 415. In a way, the latest efforts of building IA capacity in the European Parliament's policy department can be interpreted as an effect of re-appropriating some corrective control over IA outcomes.

element lies within IA (through deliberation),³²⁶ but it also remains outside of IA in the hands of parliamentary committees, women groups and feminists in media and academia, who should continue to challenge and engage with public service about its practices of knowledge production. As we know from governance research, “disturbance” and “conflict” generate learning and new governance modes in interactive structural-actor processes.³²⁷ Here, the loci of disturbance are important and twofold: More conflict around the institutional absence of gender analysis practice is necessary, if gender is to be put (back) on the IA agenda. As long as gender is primarily seen as the scientific “other”, as a negative disturbance in IA instead of a quality-enhancing asset, there remains much for policy analysts to learn—and the academic disciplines they stem from.

The endeavour is worthwhile: IA practitioners and policy analysts will benefit from a spill-over of reflexive feminist empiricism. Reflexive, intersectional and theory-based gender equality analysis tools will not only deliver more refined research results, but also more equitable policies and programmes for a diverse population base. Gender analysis will potentially be the catalyst for a more reflexive analytical process that can also target other structural inequalities. If implemented well, gender analysis tools will help re-democratising the expertocratic IA exercise. After all, even evidence-based, feminist, reflexive policy advice is nothing but advice that can be taken—or disregarded—by the elected political class and the electorate, the citizens.

The results of this comparative study suggest a new, transformative pragmatism regarding equality governance under the ex-ante IA rationale of public administration. Gender analysis may not be revolutionary, but its implementation practice is evolutionary and as many have said: Evolution is here to stay, while revolutions sometimes have an expiry date. The institutionalisation of gender analysis is on its way at the international level, but a full implementation will require a longer time frame and greater accountability and attention from within bureaucracy, the IA and policy analysis communities. Fully implementing gender analysis might indeed be the start of a future paradigm shift in IA towards standpoint perspectives. I want to conclude with Nora Fuhrmann's: Such “miracles take slightly longer.”³²⁸

326 | The participation of women's organisations is named as indispensable for executing quality GBA (Findlay 2015). “The ultimate goal should be participatory gender-based analysis” (Findlay 2015, 193).

327 | Benz 2008, 54.

328 | German original: “Wunder dauern etwas länger” (Fuhrmann 2005, 281).

