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Gender mainstreaming and the Common Agricultural Policy

Abstract

While there are many case studies looking at gender mainstreaming in national contexts, this article offers a pan-European perspective to examine how a stated commitment to gender mainstreaming at this meta-level works in practice. The European Union's stated commitment to gender mainstreaming the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is critically reviewed. The article reviews theoretical literature on gender mainstreaming, considers the position of women in agriculture across Europe, and examines efforts by the EU to gender mainstream the CAP. It argues that at best, gender mainstreaming focuses on the symptoms of gender inequality in agriculture rather than the causes. Because of this, gender mainstreaming cannot be transformative in this context. Little thought has been given to the practical difficulties of actually gender mainstreaming a policy like the CAP. The EU's priority for the CAP focuses on the mainstream business goal of a viable agricultural industry and does not pay any heed to gender inequalities in the agriculture. In short, the stated commitment to gender mainstreaming is empty rhetoric.

Key words: gender mainstreaming, agriculture, business, Europe, rhetoric

Introduction

Many studies have questioned the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming (Daly, 2005; Perrons, 2005; Prugl, 2010; Walby, 2005, Shortall 2010; Bock 2010). While there is a commitment to gender mainstreaming in theory, in practice there is little evidence of its execution. Gender mainstreaming is in principle, transformative, and challenges the status quo (Daly, 2005; Woodward, 2008). In practice, it has tended to make women the subject of change, where the goal is to fit women into the status quo rather than transform the status quo (Verloo, 2005). This article contributes to this literature by considering how the rural development programme might be mainstreamed, and whether there are tensions between the EU commitment to gender mainstreaming and the EU commitment to a viable agricultural industry. Farming provides one clear example of the inherent difficulties with the promotion of gender equality through rural development programmes. While women are rarely the holder of the farm, their unpaid contribution to the family labour force, and income generated through off-farm work are essential to the viability of the family farm (Shortall, 2006; Jack et al, 2009; Bock, 2010; Meredith, 2010). How can gender equality be promoted in an industry that is intrinsically premised on the exploitation of women's (family) labour?

This paper will take a pan-European perspective and examine the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming in The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The CAP is the most expensive European policy, accounting for over forty per cent of the budget. Hence, it

is a mainstream project and the commitment to gender mainstreaming is significant. This article teases out the complexities of this commitment to gender mainstreaming. First an overview of some of the relevant gender mainstreaming literature is offered. This focuses on what gender mainstreaming is supposed to be; the difficulties with a lack of stated objectives and goals; tensions between the technical execution of gender mainstreaming and its feminist roots; the strain between gender goals and mainstream/ business goals; and difficulties between state change and social change. The review considers the possibility of gender mainstreaming being truly transformative. Next an overview of the position of women in agriculture across Europe is given, describing women's contribution to the farm labour force, the gendered inequalities in land ownership, and the EU commitment to the business goals of agriculture rather than gender goals of equality. The business viability of agriculture depends on the exploitation of family members, particularly women. The article concludes by reflects on the ability and commitment of the EU to gender mainstream the Common Agricultural Policy. It is concluded that it is a rhetorical gesture.

Gender mainstreaming; an overview of the literature

What is gender mainstreaming?

Gender mainstreaming is seen as the most 'modern' approach to gender mainstreaming (Daly, 2005). While initial gender equality approaches focused on equal treatment (presuming the male position to be the norm), followed by positive action approaches (specifically focusing on women), both these approaches were seen as limited because they did not consider how the gendered structures through which equality measures were implemented actually prolonged inequalities (Prugl, 2010; Rees, 2005; Daly, 2005). Gender mainstreaming is seen as the superior approach to gender equality because it turns attention away from individuals and their rights and focuses instead on the processes, norms and organisational practices that generate inequalities (Woodward, 2008; Daly, 2005; Bock 2013). In this way it is similar to the concept of social exclusion in that it moves the focus from the individual and their 'shortcomings' to social structures and social practices and their shortcomings. The biggest claim gender mainstreaming makes is that it is transformative; it aims to transform organisational processes and practices by eliminating gender biases in existing routines (Benschop and Verloo, 2006; p. 19). One aspect of this transformative approach is that countries are spreading responsibility for gender mainstreaming across all government departments rather than channelling it through a specific 'women's unit' (Daly, 2005). Gender mainstreaming is now seen as the responsibility of all areas of government and all aspects of public policy.

How does gender mainstreaming work? The idea is that it makes mainstream policies more effective by making visible the gendered nature of assumptions, processes and

outcomes. It does this by instilling gender sensitive practices and norms in the realm of public policy by reflecting on how public policy is constructed and executed (Daly, 2005; Verloo, 2005). So for example if we look at the European Union, gender mainstreaming is enshrined in Articles 2 and 3 of the Amsterdam Treaty; Article 3 'places an obligation on the Community to eliminate inequalities and promote equality between men and women in all its activities' (European Commission, 2000; p. 21). This requires policy makers acquiring the necessary skills, methods and procedures to implement gender mainstreaming. To be effective, and truly transformative, it requires robust baseline information, careful monitoring and evaluation against clear goals of change. As we will see, there is little evidence of this having happened to date.

Some difficulties implementing gender mainstreaming: What is it trying to do?

One of the main charges against gender mainstreaming is that what it is trying to achieve is not clear. It is confused (Benschop and Verloo, 2006; Rees, 2005); ambiguous (Woodward, 2008); it is an empty concept (Verloo, 2005). Gender mainstreaming has tended to become mired in a technocratic approach; the focus is on training policy makers to ensure they understand how to do gender mainstreaming and fill out the appropriate forms and paperwork, rather than a sustained clear statement of what gender mainstreaming any particular policy hopes to achieve. How is success measured? It is impossible to say, given that the goal to be achieved is rarely stated in the definition (Verloo, 2005). Gender mainstreaming is a concept that we instinctively respond to as positive and transformative, but when it is critically analysed it is seen to have little substance in the way it currently operates.

The divide between the technical process and theoretical underpinnings

Another problem is the wide gap between policy rhetoric and empirical reality (Perrons, 2005). It has become a technical project, where the focus is on demonstrating due regard has been paid to the principle of gender mainstreaming. It has become divorced from its critical feminist roots, and no longer challenges gender inequalities, power relations (Daly, 2005; Perrons, 2005) or how the state co-opts feminist efforts (Prugl, 2010a; Walby, 2005). Manuals read like handbooks of rational policy making but do not have any stated goal that gender mainstreaming intends to achieve (Verloo, 2005). One of the added difficulties is that as gender mainstreaming turns the lens on the policy process and policy makers as part of the fabric of gender inequality, responsibility is often given to junior staff and it is not properly resourced. It also motivates 'new escape attempts', with the least motivated civil servants passing off unwillingness as incomprehension (Benschop and Verloo, 2006 p.30). Furthermore, policy makers argue gender mainstreaming does not relate to their particular policies and thus avoiding engaging with the concept. This technocratic focus has shifted attention away from the more radical aspects of gender mainstreaming; that it is transformative; brings about social change; challenges and attacks social inequalities.

Tensions between gender and the mainstream

One stumbling block for gender mainstreaming is that it has not problematized the relationship between 'gender' and the 'mainstream' and has instead tended to present the two concepts as bound together as a harmonious couple. It presumes a dual agenda is being pursued by parties that share an equal amount of power. The dual (equal) agenda is business needs and feminist goals. This presumption has been shown to be deeply problematic (Benschop and Verloo, 2006; Walby, 2005; Daly, 2005; Verloo, 2005; Elgstrom, 2000). Benschop and Verloo give a particularly good overview of the tensions between gender and the mainstream and the unequal balance between the two. They argue that a business rationale uses language that seems more legitimate and convincing than gender language, and framing interventions as consensual risks losing gender and actually leaving the status quo unchanged (2006, p.21). Mainstream goals, such as economic growth, tend to be well established. Tension emerges when gender is foisted onto these embedded goals, and there is an inherent power differential. Political and policy commitment is with the mainstream part of gender mainstreaming. Some argue that new gender norms have to fight their way into institutional thinking because established goals may compete with the priority of gender equality even if they are not directly opposed (Walby, 2005; Elgstrom, 2000). Others argue that the presumed harmony between gender and the mainstream must instead be acknowledged as a tension and problematic (Benschop and Verloo, 2006; Daly, 2005; Verloo, 2005; Bock 2013). As Verloo (2005) notes, if gender mainstreaming is about tackling power and privileges, and attempting to dismantle power differentials and abolish privileges, it is very difficult to see how it can be a harmonious process.

Historical context and social change

Given that this article takes an EU perspective, there are a number of arguments raised by Daly (2005) that are particularly relevant. Daly states very clearly that history matters. The history, social and political context is very important in how gender mainstreaming and the idea of gender equality is incorporated into national policy. Attempts will be shaped by the previous history of gender equality measures. What this means for EU gender mainstreaming is unclear given the vast historical, social and political contexts of Member States. Daly (2005) also questions the commitment of Member States to embracing EU gender mainstreaming and suggests that sometimes it is adopted in some capacity or another to satisfy EU constraints tied to the allocation of funding (p. 440). Gender mainstreaming is not underpinned by law, but nonetheless, the supranational pressure of EU gender policy is seen as important in how it will be adopted in national contexts (Woodward, 2008). Others argue that the EU transmits gender mainstreaming to Member States as a form of global governance (Prugl, 2010, p. 449). However the reality is that gender mainstreaming is interpreted through nation state's own legislative frameworks on gender equality and gender mainstreaming. Daly (2005) problematizes the relationship between state change and social change; because the state adopts a change in perspective, this does not

necessarily lead to social change. I argue that this can only be even more pronounced at the EU level, where a change in perspective has to be mediated through national legislation before even beginning to think about effecting social change.

To conclude, it is clear that gender mainstreaming offers the prospect of being transformative, but has been mired by difficulties of ambiguity. It does not have clearly stated objectives or goals, and does not specifically state how it will be transformative in relation to particular policies. It does not take account of regional differences in social, political and ideological priorities and how this impacts on attempts to gender mainstream. The focus has become a technocratic one, rather than focusing on the feminist principle of transformation in terms of gender equality. The tensions between gender and the mainstream/ business goals are often not explored and sufficiently problematized. Nor is the disjuncture between the state adopting a change in perspective and what this means for social change problematized. Armed with this knowledge of gender mainstreaming, the article now turns to consider the EU commitment to gender mainstreaming the Common Agricultural Policy. First the position of women in agriculture across Europe and the gendered inequalities in agriculture are outlined. Next the EU commitment to gender mainstreaming the CAP is examined. Then the EU commitment to the business goals of agriculture and the tensions between this commitment and gender equality are discussed. Finally, it is concluded that the EU commitment to gender mainstreaming is not intended to be transformative. It is rhetoric.

The position of women in agriculture across Europe: an overview

While we can speak generally about agriculture in the European Union, we must always be mindful of the vast regional differences, particularly between New and Old Member States, but also within each of these categories. We can also say that the Common Agricultural Policy, still the most expensive of the EU policies, has shaped and will continue to shape how agriculture develops across Europe. In addition, there are considerable gaps in the information available to examine the position of women across Europe. Statistics provide partial information; a lot of available evidence is qualitative, and provided for individual Member States. Available data is not always analysed by gender (Shortall, 2010).

The European Union has had a long commitment to family farming as the European model of farming. Family farming is seen as the most democratic means of land ownership in Europe. Preservation of the family farm is a key commitment of the EU (Shortall, 2010). Only 4.4% of holdings in the EU are not family farms. The bulk of work on family farms is provided by the holder and his/her family, and nine out of ten persons working on agricultural holdings are family labour force (Eurostat, 2009). Men and women on farms actively work together to develop strategies to secure the future and viability of the family farm, including diversification activities and supplementing farm income with income earned off the farm. The strategies pursued are shaped by the economics of the farm, and also by the negotiation of roles, including gender roles,

within the family. Strategies followed by men and women depend on the strategies of the other; for example, the structure of the local labour market and the educational levels of each spouse can impact on who works off the farm and who undertakes more farm work (Shortall, 2010, p.18; Cernic-Istenic 2013). While feminists have argued against using the household as the unit of analysis, research suggests that members of farm families do not behave as 'maximising individuals' but instead adopt a family strategy influenced by the needs of the farm (Shortall, 2006).

While women do not behave as maximising individuals within the family farm, this is not to suggest that there is gender equality within the family farm – far from it. Only 24% of women are holders/ owners of farms across Europeⁱ, 78% of women are classified as spouses of holders (Eurostat, 2009). Women who do own land tend to own very small amounts of land (less than 1 ESUⁱⁱ) and this is particularly true in Central and Eastern Europe. Despite the increasing number of women working off the farm, European women constitute 41% of the farm labour force, ranging from 28% in the Republic of Ireland to 49% in Latvia. Qualitative research has long shown that statistics under-report the amount of farm labour women undertake (see various contributions to Bock and Shortall, Eds., 2006). More recently, women's off-farm work is seen as even more important to the survival of the family farm than their on-farm work (Meredith, 2010; Copus et al, 2006). While it is not possible to get a European perspective on women's involvement in farm diversification activities, many national case studies show that women are active in farm diversification activities (Bock, 2004; Gorman, 2006; Brandth and Haugen, 2010).

Gendered inequalities in European agriculture

Again, there are difficulties in generalising the gendered inequalities in European agriculture because of regional variations; nonetheless robust over-arching comments can be made. These are substantiated by many national studies within Member Statesⁱⁱⁱ and a general overview is offered here.

Within EU agricultural policy, the owner/ holder of the farm is seen as the producer. As the figures above show, with 41% of women constituting the farm labour force, this view of the owner/ holder as the producer is not true for family farms in the European Union. While on the one hand, the EU has enshrined the idea of the family farm, its policies interact with one person, the holder/ owner, who in the majority of cases is the man. The holder is the public face of farming, regardless of the division of labour within the farm family (Shortall, 2010). This has implications for access to benefits, capital for investment, and training and professional advice. Women are very under-represented in lifelong agricultural training programmes and in farming unions (Shortall, 1999; Prugl, 2010a; Cernic-Istenic 2013; Oedl-Wieser 2013). The fact that the public domain of farming is almost entirely male takes on a cultural power of its own, making it even more difficult for women to participate (Shortall, 2010).

What are described above are the *symptoms* of gender inequality in agriculture. The *cause* of these symptoms is that women in the European Union rarely inherit land. Access to property has fundamentally shaped women's role in farming. The social norms and customs that regulate the transfer of property to men rather than women, also shape and construct gender roles and identities. The cultural norms of inheritance have historical bases, linked initially to the fact that in most Western societies, women, especially married women, did not have property rights and farming was a physically difficult occupation (Holmlund, 2008). Nonetheless, the persistence of this pattern of inheritance of land is nothing short of remarkable (Shortall, 1997). Women tend to be holders of very small, non-commercially viable farms, especially in Central and Eastern Europe. This is considered further below.

What makes women's limited inheritance of land even more interesting is that it is governed by different legal and economic frameworks across Europe (see for example Bohak, et al. 2010; Schwarz, 2004; Gibbard, 1997). In Ireland and the UK, the farm can be passed intact to one heir, and other siblings do not need to be compensated. In Denmark, the heir buys the farm at a reduced rate below market value, and after parents die, all their assets are split between the children. In France, the heir must compensate the other children, but at a considerably reduced rate to the market value of the farm. In Greece and particularly in parts of Spain, there is equal distribution of land amongst all children, and the heir, if wishing to continue farming, must buy the portions of land of siblings. It is argued that this pattern of inheritance threatens the economic viability of agriculture (Ramos, 2005). In the Czech Republic, property acquired during marriage is presumed to be held in joint undivided joint ownership. However, property that serves the personal or occupational needs of one spouse is presumed to be individually rather than jointly owned (this would include agricultural land). In Norway, the Allodial Law was introduced in 1974 in an attempt to dismantle gender inequalities in inheritance of land. This law made the eldest child, regardless of gender, the legal heir to the farm. Despite this, only 11% of farm owners are currently women (Melberg, 2008).

It is clear that the transfer of land is governed by economic principles to try and ensure the continuing viability of the farm; future agricultural policy suggests that the consolidation of holdings into larger farms will be necessary to ensure viability. Hence fragmentation of farms should be avoided. It is also clear that the transfer of land is governed by legal frameworks underpinned by different ideological and cultural values of Member States; the Norwegian stance is what we might expect of a country deeply imbued with principles of social equality, while the ability to disinherit children is what we might expect in the UK and Ireland where the state upholds the right of the individual to own property and dispose of it as they wish. Two things are remarkable; first that children who are disinherited or receive a reduced share of the inheritance do not in general quarrel with each other but instead remain committed to their siblings (Schwarz, 2004). The second is that, despite the various legal and economic factors governing inheritance across Europe, in each case women rarely inherit land. Even in

Norway, where the law was overtly changed, it has only had limited impact on the extent to which women inherit land.

What has, and can, gender mainstreaming the Rural Development Regulation, and specifically the Common Agricultural Policy, do to address the gendered inequalities in EU agriculture?

Gender mainstreaming and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

Article 3 of the Amsterdam Treaty 1999 integrated gender equality into the foundation of the Community; 'places an obligation on the Community to eliminate inequalities and promote equality between women and men in all its activities' (European Commission, 2000; p. 21). The Community strategy for achieving this rests on the promotion of gender mainstreaming. This means the inclusion of a gender perspective into all of EU policies and programmes, together with specific actions in favour of women (European Commission, 2000). With respect to the Common Agricultural Policy, gender mainstreaming is an obligation of the Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 governing the Rural Development Regulation 2007-2013. The Rural Development Regulation governs the CAP. It states that

Member States and the Commission shall promote equality between men and women...this includes the stages of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (Article 8).

This is all it says. There are no targets, objectives or goals identified. How it will be achieved is not discussed. What success might look like is not considered. This is the second RDR that included a commitment to gender mainstreaming. The last programme, which ended in 2006, did not provide gender assessments of ex-ante evaluations of future National plans, indicators broken down by sex, the composition of committees, or any general information on how attempts were undertaken to promote equality between women and men. There is little evidence of a commitment to gender mainstreaming.

In addition, there is no discussion of the fact that while legislatively, gender mainstreaming is integral to the RDR; the reality is more complex. Equality legislation at Member State level remains important. There remains considerable scope for Member States to implement these requirements within their own institutional and legislative frameworks. There is evidence to suggest that the RDP is adopted in ways that reflect existing gender imbalances, and that gender mainstreaming is not considered in how programmes are implemented. In other words, gender mainstreaming is sometimes circumvented by cultural norms and established patterns of practice (Oedl-Wieser 2013; Cernic-Istencic 2013, Prugl, 2010). Where there have been attempts to address gender mainstreaming issues, either through projects across Europe or feminist research calling for change, they have in general tended to focus on the symptoms of gender inequality in agriculture, rather than addressing the cause.

Addressing the symptoms of gender inequality in agriculture

Women's participation in lifelong agricultural training is low. We would expect it to be low in full-time programmes for new entrants given that women rarely inherit land, but because of the amount of labour women contribute to the farm, and the managerial role they often assume, it might be expected that participation in lifelong agricultural training would be higher. Sometimes attempts have been made to provide women only training for women on farms and this has often been successful (see Shortall, 1996; Safilios-Rothschild, 2006). Elsewhere attempts have been made to counter the low representation of women in farming organisations by forming women's farming organisations to provide support to women, including skills training and network support^{iv}, and research has called for family membership of farming unions rather than individual membership (Shortall and Kelly, 2001). A recent report commissioned by the European Parliament (2010) to examine how to promote the contribution of women to the development of agriculture in Europe noted the need to target training at spouses, increase representation on national Rural Development Programme Monitoring Committees, and the need to ensure correct pension provisions for spouses of self-employed workers. Similarly, Prugl (2010a) describes how the Council of Agricultural Ministers in 2002 ignored a note from the Spanish Presidency advising them to acknowledge that women working on the farm deserved 'genuine farmer status', and acknowledge women agricultural labourers as 'paid employers' (p. 184)^v.

All of the measures and changes called for above only address the *symptoms* of gender inequality in agriculture. Women avail less and are targeted less for agricultural training because they are not the owner/ holder of the farm. They become part of the invisible family labour force. Farmer's Unions and other farming organisations work very effectively around the business of farming and do not see any need to include women who are not owners/ holders. Giving women 'genuine farmer status' does not change the fact that they rarely inherit a finite, valuable resource; land. Acknowledging women agricultural labourers as 'paid employees' will not change the fact that they are employees because they do not own the business. Similarly calls to provide correct pension provisions for spouses of self-employed workers, including farmers, does not critically reflect on the fact that women in agriculture are primarily described by their relationship to the head of household; spouse. These are symptoms of the gender inequality inherent in agriculture. Can gender mainstreaming address the cause of gender inequality in agriculture?

Addressing the cause of gender inequality in agriculture

Entry to farming is different to most other occupations. For other occupations, young people train and then compete in the labour market for employment. However, this is not the case for agriculture. There is little point training to be a farmer if you will not own or have access to property in the future. In order to farm, it is necessary to have access to land. However, property is not a commodity equally accessible to all. The majority of people who farm have not acquired their land through the market, but rather

through inheritance. Across the EU, it remains the case that in general, men inherit land. Male inheritance of land is the key factor shaping women's participation in agriculture and the public perception of farming as a male activity. EU policies primarily target the owner/ holder of the farm. Subsidies and farm payments are paid to the holder, training initiatives are targeted at the holder, new entrant programmes and retirement schemes are primarily targeted at the holder.

How can gender mainstreaming be transformative? Calls to address the symptoms of gender inequality, and include spouses of the holder, while they may be useful in their own right, are not transformative. For gender mainstreaming to be transformative, it would need to address the unequal gendered ownership of land. It is difficult to see how this could be achieved through a European policy, when the laws around inheritance are determined at a national level and shaped by societal ideology and values.

The EU and its commitment to agriculture: gender or business?

The EU is committed to a viable business model of agriculture across Europe. It is recognised that consolidation is a feature of viable farm holdings – larger farms are better able to compete in the global market. Research has shown that the CAP had a differential impact on the North and South of Europe because of the way in which subsidies predominantly went to larger farms (Cartwright and Swain, 2003; Shucksmith, 2005). This differential spatial impact also impacted on women, as on and off-farm employment to subsidise smaller farms grew in importance. It is now argued that the West/ East divide is more pronounced than the North/ South divide (Cartwright and Swain, 2003). The collapse of socialist agriculture throughout Central and Eastern Europe has unfolded in different ways in different countries, but in general it has led to a proliferation of small subsistence-orientated holdings. The fact that these are not market oriented is seen as a structural problem by the European Commission (Mathijs and Noev, 2004). Women are the holders of many of these units. In Eastern Europe many small producers depend on their land for a significant amount of food and sell at least part of that food. While these might be considered hobby farms in Western Europe, they have an entirely different economic and social significance in Eastern Europe (Swain, 1999). There is something of a paradox in women's patterns of land ownership. We know that securing incomes from agriculture that are comparable to non-farm earnings depends on structural adjustment towards fewer, but larger farm units. However, women's participation rates in agriculture appear to increase as average farm size falls. Is women's increased access to very small farms advancing equality? It could be argued that in circumstances where farms are bigger (more viable) women are disadvantaged by exclusion and when farms are smaller (less viable) they are disadvantaged by inclusion.

While women are rarely the holder, they are key contributors to the farm family labour force. Women undertake all kinds of unpaid farm labour, and frequently provide full cover if their partners need to be away from the farm for the day (Shortall, 2006; Machum, 2006; Rickson et al, 2006). A recent study suggests that farms likely to be

viable in Europe are those that can rely on underpaid or unpaid family labour (Vrolijk et al, 2010). However it is unclear how gender mainstreaming can apply to an industry that is intrinsically premised on the exploitation of family labour, and particularly women's labour.

More recently research has highlighted how women's off-farm labour is essential to the viability of the family farm (Shortall, 2006; Gorman, 2006; Jack et al, 2009; Bock, 2010; Meredith, 2010). Women invest their off-farm income in the farm and subsidise the farm income. They often play down this role to protect the farming status and identity of their spouse (Shortall, 2002). There is some recent evidence that pre-nuptial agreements are increasing as a strategy to limit women's entitlement to the farm in the case of divorce (Price and Evans, 2006). What this means for the protection of women's economic contribution to the farm household is not clear.

The fact that the business of the farm is the priority goal for the European Union rather than gender equality in agriculture is evident in their recently commissioned report on the role of women in farming. Ostensibly, this could be seen as an attempt to engage with the position of women in agriculture. However, when we look more closely at what the report aimed to do, we can see that it is not transformative, in the gender mainstreaming sense. Specifically the brief asked that the background paper should consider three issues:

1. Highlight the differences that cross Europe's rural areas in terms of the role of women in farming.
2. Suggest possible innovations to be introduced in the European legal and political framework to strengthen the guarantees awarded to female spouses of farm owners and to young farming women who are incorporated as owners of a farm.
3. Consider possible measures that could be introduced in the CAP post 2013 to improve the quality of work and level of responsibilities of women involved in agriculture. (European Parliament, 2010).

It is not questioning the unequal patterns of land ownership by gender. The measures to be introduced post 2013 are aimed at improving the quality of work of women and their level of responsibilities. The priority is the business, the industry of farming.

Conclusion

Examining the stated commitment to gender mainstream the CAP shows that it is simply rhetoric. There are no aims and objectives identified. What gender mainstreaming might achieve is never discussed. Indeed, once we reflect, as this article does, what gender mainstreaming the CAP might mean in a transformative sense, it becomes very difficult to see how gender mainstreaming might work in practice. The literature on gender mainstreaming has highlighted the tensions between gender and the mainstream; between gender goals and business goals. In the case of agriculture, addressing gender inequalities might actually threaten the business; the

success of agriculture depends on gender inequalities and relies on women's unpaid labour, and off-farm employment to subsidise the farm. There are inherent gender inequalities in the ownership of land across Europe. It is impossible to see how this could be addressed through gender mainstreaming the CAP, as inheritance is organised differently in differing Member States and agriculture is structured differently. Nonetheless, the CAP is gendered in the way it operates because of these inheritance patterns. To be truly transformative, the issue of land ownership has to be addressed.

The gender mainstreaming rhetoric of the CAP is passed down to Member States. Many argue that the CAP does not need gender impact assessments because it deals with the farm family. It becomes a classic case of developing escape routes not to deal with the question of gender. How the supranational pronouncement of gender mainstreaming is worked through national legislations is not a matter of concern for the CAP. The focus is on the business of farming and developing a viable industry. At a policy level there is no concern about inherent gender inequalities. The stated commitment to gender mainstreaming is rhetoric.

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ⁱ We do not technically have an EU wide evidence base regarding the gendered ownership of farms, the Eurostat definition of holder stands as a reasonable proxy (communication with Eurostat, September 2010). The holder is the person in whose name the holding is operated, and who has economic responsibility for the holding (Shortall, 2010).

ⁱⁱ ESU stands for European Size Unit. This is the unit of measurement of the economic size of an agricultural holding: 1 ESU = 1,200 € of Standard Gross Margin of the holding (Community typology for agricultural holdings -Commission decision 85/377/EEC). Eurostat does not break down information for holdings less than 1 ESU unless specifically asked to do so.

ⁱⁱⁱ See for example Bryant and Pini, 2011; Shortall and Bock, Eds., 2006.

^{iv} See COPA (2009) and other COPA publications that showcase these women's organisations.

^v I presume Prugl means where women are paid employees- the majority of women working on farms across Europe are not paid a wage.