

“Gender policy makes a difference”¹

**The future of feminist and gender-democratic
policy at the Heinrich Boell Foundation**

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Introduction

Gender policy and feminist analyses and strategies have a permanent place at the Heinrich Boell Foundation and are of key importance to its activities at home and abroad, scholarship programs and the entire organization development. Gender policy is one of the Foundation's key political hallmarks. In organization development, the Foundation has become a precursor and role model for many other organizations.

"...We are proud [of the common task of gender democracy at the Heinrich Boell Foundation] because it is virtually certain that these structures are not found in another mixed organization. But, for us, there is no reason to leave the Foundation's further development process to its own devices."

The above statement made by Gunda Werner in 1999 – a mentor for the role model of gender democracy at the Heinrich Boell Foundation – is the result of a fundamental contemplation of our strategies and key political areas of gender policy as well as their institutional embedding within the Heinrich Boell Foundation.

For this reason, part of our political culture involves repeatedly sounding out whether our gender-political orientation is moving in the right direction given the new social, political and economic challenges. Do we affect the discourse of gender policy? Are we, as a political foundation, in a position to lend gender-political impetus for the furtherance of gender equality – on a global scale? And, finally: how do we accomplish our role model of gender democracy as a common task within our own organization and within the corporate culture?

In answering these questions, we set about, last year especially, holding numerous discussions and making some important changes: we have merged the two units "*Executive Office for the common task of Gender Democracy*" and the "*Feminist Institute*", which, until then, had been working independently, into one common organizational and working unit. The aim of this move is to be even more effective politically and to jointly deal with the tense rapport between feminism and gender democracy productively. With respect to political education work, the newly founded "Gunda Werner Institute for Feminism and Gender Democracy" (GWI) seeks to illustrate in certain select core issues that viewing and addressing political issues from a gender-political perspective does indeed make a significant difference and provide impetus for political action.

At the same time, the Heinrich Boell Foundation has, over several stages, taken full stock of its equality, equal opportunities and empowerment policies in its activities abroad and, at a Foreign Department strategy workshop, determined new thematic courses for the future.

The aim of this position paper is:

firstly to tackle the gender-political challenges of the future for our activities at home and abroad, and to renew our self-image and/or our role model of gender democracy.

Secondly, we would like to outline our program focus more clearly, define our aims and tasks, and agree on the terminology and tools of gender-democratic policy.

The Executive Board has passed "Programmatic Guidelines" and defined gender policy both as a common task and an independent issue. These need to be bolstered in our activities at home and abroad, in scholarship programs and in organization development through concrete programs and adequate financial and human resources.

Unlike virtually any other strategic paper drafted by the Heinrich Böll Foundation, this position paper has been the subject of intense discussion during all of the draft stages among employees, all of the international offices, virtually every department within the Foundation, as well as among the honorary bodies of the Foundation (Supervisory Board, Women's Council, General Meeting, Expert Advisory Board North/South and Expert Advisory Board Scholarship Programs as well as the Men's Forum). The majority, if not all, of the many suggestions and additions have been incorporated into the final draft of the position paper on the future of feminist and gender-democratic policy at the Heinrich Böll Foundation. Our sincerest thanks go out to all concerned!

A. The gender-political challenges

I. Women-policy successes and ...

Gender relations have been set in motion through political processes and economic overthrow. In the Federal Republic of Germany, Europe, and across the globe, socio-political conditions and the legal equality among women and men have been advanced due to the influence of women's movements as well as feminist theory and practice.

Since the 1980s, the "nationalization" of women's policy has produced an abundance of laws, regulations and byelaws, UN resolutions as well as supra-national (EU) and national policies in the majority of all those countries which seek to establish gender equality.

This political and social upheavals, as well as economic and cultural overthrow caused by globalization processes, have resulted in numerous ways of life and work everywhere. As a consequence, women have conquered ground throughout the world at an economic and political level. They have made a gigantic leap forward on the labour markets: 40% of all those gainfully employed worldwide today are women - 30 years ago, it was only half that figure. Major advances in equality have also been made in the field of education. Civil society and state initiatives supporting greater equality for women have also led to a significant improvement in the legal situation.

One gender-political milestone internationally was undoubtedly the Beijing Platform for Action during the World Conference on Women in 1995. This Platform marked the first time that the gender category had been introduced into international policy. In doing so, it was recognized that gender roles and relations are embedded in social, political, economic and cultural contexts and are therefore also changeable.

Through the tool of gender mainstreaming – embedded in the Beijing Platform of Action as a strategic approach – state institutions, and international organizations and companies are to challenge and question stereotype gender roles in private and public spheres and change them in an emancipative sense. A new approach was that gender mainstreaming explicitly seeks to focus on the dynamism between the genders. Reducing inequality and undemocratic conditions between the genders is therefore not only a women's but also a men's domain and defined as a task for society as a whole. This therefore marks the first time that men are addressed as gender policy players. This is still an improvement, if far from being a breakthrough. Implementing the gender mainstreaming tool with this originally radical purpose in mind is frequently blocked politically and financially, is not taken seriously, or is the subject of curtailed technocratic practice. At all events, its gender-political potential has not yet been able to fully unfold in any society.

II. ... women-policy and gender-political challenges

Compared with the situation facing women in the first half of the 20th century, a virtually revolutionary transformation has taken place. The undeniable progress that has been made must be offset, however, by the fact that – both from a national and global perspective – the hierarchies, power differences and dominance relations between the genders have far from diminished.

Discrimination, prejudice and violence remain factors in all corners of the world that shape the living conditions of millions of women. Virtually every international document, international (women's) conference confirms that, in many societies, the structural inequality dividing the genders has been intensified if anything. Politically, women are still excluded from the decision-making processes on numerous occasions. Their legal situation is precarious. The economic disadvantages experienced by women have barely subsided despite the rise in their gainful employment, among other things because the percentage of women working in unstable and part-time jobs as well as underpaid sectors is far higher than that of men. At the same time, however, men are more affected by unemployment, violence and marginalization than ever before.

Indications of this situation include:

- the continued presence of gender-differentiated and hierarchical division of labour in many sectors of economic life, politics, science, administration and private lives;
- unequal access for women to resources (e.g. education, communication, health care, uneven distribution of public funds, land, and also of "natural" resources);
- income divides between the genders, above all unequal pay for similar or, at times, equal jobs. Europe-wide the average woman's income is 15 percent below that of a man's; on a global scale, it is up to 30 percent lower;
- Women (around the world) spend twice as much time as men doing unpaid care and reproduction work in the home and communities. The dominating image of masculinity excludes men from care and nursing and instead makes men primarily responsible for the pursuit of gainful employment. Until now, few changes have occurred to this gender-specific division of labour;
- unequal participation in democratic decision-making processes as well as in the performance of political offices in political parties and administration;
- violence against women. In 95 percent of all cases of domestic violence worldwide, women are the victim. This is especially true of women migrants in Germany and Europe;
- dominance of the heterosexual norm and discrimination of other sexual orientations and identities (e.g. through heterosexual family concepts).

Gender policy is therefore as relevant as ever, even though the societal and socio-cultural contexts have shifted. Gender relations and hierarchies are also closely related to political, social and, above all, economic transformations. Even though the constellations of power and interests persistently change, hierarchized gender arrangements especially are not only deeply rooted in individual attitudes but, above all, in institutions and organizations of society.

At the same time, the continuity of power asymmetries between the genders has become fragile. They are differentiated between the genders and within the respective gender groups. A simple division into powerful men and powerless women comes nowhere near to describing the manifold realities of life of men and women.

Strategic and political approaches aimed at achieving the goals of gender democracy and gender equality must repeatedly reset the complicated interrelations between the state, the industry, society and the individual, on the one hand, and gender relations, on the other, and must analyze the various, at times, contradictory constellations.

At the same time – and this is something that Heinrich Boell Foundation lays claim to – political strategies must also take a clear stand against obvious structures that misuse power as well as structures of exploitation. From this perspective, we (together with our partners) take political initiatives for the benefit of disadvantaged gender groups (i.e. lobbying for the rights of homosexuals, for example, or encouraging exclusively women in their self-organization).

In spite of similar structure features, focal points and strategies need to be identified for each society in their relevant cultural, socio-economic and political context. This presupposes that in-depth analyses of the local gender-political situation are conducted, and presents the Foundation with the task of also promoting the corresponding methods of analysis.

III. Relevance of gender policy worldwide

While presenting the “UN Report on Women and Peace and Security” in 2002, UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, came to the conclusion that: “No women in any society enjoy the same status as men.” Yet: Not even the UN itself is in a position to oppose this fact with any vigour, neither within its internal organization nor politically. A clear example of this is the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which are disappointing in terms of women’s policy especially. They fall well short of the political demands of the Beijing Platform for Action. The proposals for UN reform also contain few programmatic approaches as to how gender policy could be injected with fresh impetus at international level.

The UN, for its part, currently has no initiative to offer, not one single future-oriented reference project that international women’s organizations or gender politically active networks can/could positively relate to, as was the case with the UN women’s conferences between the 1970s and Beijing 1995. The UN is more concerned with defending the status quo in the face of attacks from the neo-conservative political camp and from fundamental religious networks and organizations.

Internationally, and in the foreseeable future, no significant gender-political impulses leading to equality are to be expected. When it comes to institutionalizing (regulatory) women’s policy and to more political and economic participation, the documents signed by governments around the world, such as the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) or UN Security Council Resolution 1325 are and will remain vital points of reference which the Heinrich Boell Foundation will continue to refer to with its partners and networks at the regional and supra-regional levels.

For the Foundation, gender policy is a core **democracy and equality issue** in every region. In addition to climate and energy policy, gender policy represents an outstanding core issue of our regional work. Unlike other political foundations, the Heinrich Boell Foundation has a clear gender-political profile in activities abroad which it seeks to strengthen continuously.

1. Democracy and gender policy

Gender equality must be advanced through legal frameworks as well as through the further institutionalization of gender policy. This is a key field of action of the work the Heinrich Boell Foundation performs abroad. They are an **integral part of our democracy work**.

- **Institutionalization of women's and gender policy:** The adoption of national laws and the ratification of conventions have improved the prerequisites for women gaining legal equality and human rights being implemented. In many countries, the principle of gender mainstreaming has been introduced. As a result, whilst equality for women may have increased worldwide de jure, there is still a very long way to go before it is complete. Moreover, the great divide worldwide between the legal frameworks and their implementation is a source of grievance. For this reason, the capacity for political and administrative implementation in parliaments and administrations must be raised at all levels. Many countries have succeeded in improving the political, economic and social participation of women with the help of positive discrimination measures (quotas for political parties, parliaments, businesses, universities). Nevertheless, the aim of the Beijing Platform of including a critical mass of at least 30 percent of women in political decision-making structures has not been achieved by any stretch of the imagination and continues to be a task that needs to be completed. To counter the open and latent resistance to women's rights, which is deeply rooted in many societies, we need public and political campaigns.
- **Lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender (LGBT) are specifically affected by discrimination:** in around 85 nations, homosexuality is prohibited and subject to prosecution; in nine states, it is even punishable with the death penalty. Worldwide, transsexuals are persecuted with violence and random arrest, and attempts are made to push them into sexual gender drawers. The renouncement of basic rights, along with discrimination on a daily basis, is the order of the day even in European states. Alongside the LGBT projects operating in many different locations at home and abroad, campaigns and political initiatives opposing the persecution and systematic discrimination of lesbians, gays and transgender are needed. In many countries, the Heinrich Boell Foundation is often the only organization supporting such campaigns and networks.
- **Religion, equality and politics:** a special challenge for the implementation of equality and human rights is the strengthening of religious movements and politics. The parallelism of various legal systems – modern law, religious law and traditional law – has a negative impact above all on the legal situation of women since, in many countries, marriage and family law, for example, is practiced in accordance with religious law. What these religiously grounded legal systems have in common is the rigid allocation of gender roles and gender identities that all genders are “subjected to”.

Priority should be given to secular marriage and family law for state action, the basis of which should be gender equality. In the context of religious law, however, a number of moderate Muslim, Christian or Jewish spiritual leaders, but above all women's rights activists, are advocating an emancipative and feminist interpretation of religious law with a view to bringing religion, equality and feminism into line with one another from their perspective. Locally and regionally embedded reform approaches and/or approaches seeking to alter and adapt traditional and/or religious law can also provide a connecting point for political intervention aimed at promoting more women's rights. In doing so, one of the challenges will be to sound out the barriers to religious and cultural freedom and to relate these to the personal rights of the individual. Banning contraception, forced veiling, the male's defence of the family honour, forced marriage, genital mutilation and circumcision all mark clear religious and cultural boundaries that violate the personal rights of women and men.

The Heinrich Boell Foundation will address the correlation between religion, politics and gender relations more intensely than before and will promote cross-regional and cross-religious analyses.

2. Gender policy and economy

With their asynchronicities and ruptures, economic globalization processes have very different and often opposing effects on women and men. They change social systems, cultures and economies in different ways. On the one hand, women have far greater access to jobs than ever before. This entails new freedoms and greater self-determination. At the same time, women across the globe account for the majority of the working poor (60 percent). On the other hand, as men see jobs becoming increasingly endangered, their “masculine” self-image being the breadwinner is deeply unsettled.

Migration turns female: More than ever, women are looking for new ways of earning a living on the global markets. Migration – which had been a male domain until now – has long since turned female. Worldwide, women now account for half of the 180 million migrants. And they are looking for work, not just in the care sector, but also gainful employment. Here, above all transnational corporations and their suppliers offer jobs at the lowest wage levels and often under degrading working and living conditions.

Redistribution of care work: Gender inequality not only continues to exist in gainful employment but also in care work. Women are largely unpaid for this work, among other things, because it appears impossible to bring this type of work into line with the overbearing image of masculinity.

Women and men solve the problem of achieving a good work-life balance by employing low-wage cleaners, nannies and geriatric nurses – many of whom are migrants. The redistribution of care work is a process currently underway across the globe; however, it is not taking place between men and women but rather through a global supply chain involving very different women from different countries, social classes and cultures.

Strengthening economic competence: Understanding the ambivalence of economic globalization processes on gender relations and of integrating it into political and economic decision-making processes is an important issue for international gender policy. Analyses on this subject are still rather few and far between. Broadening knowledge of the gender-political effects of global economic processes and political decisions – be these trade, labour market, financial or investment policy – is an important field of action in the international activities conducted by the Heinrich Boell Foundation. We would like to strengthen the capacities of women especially to enable them to exercise greater influence on national and international decision-making processes. Doing so requires capacities and networks capable of analyzing the policies of the World Bank, the World Trade Organization (WTO) or the bilateral trade agreements of the European Union with a number of Third World countries in terms of their gender effects and gender policies. One of the key projects of the Heinrich Boell Foundation involves holding regular summer schools on the pinnacle issue of “**Engendering Macroeconomics**”.

3. Women in peace policy and conflict resolution

Foreign and security policy continues to be dominated by men. Even concepts of conflict prevention and conflict resolution find it hard to consistently integrate the gender dimension when conflicts arise and are resolved. With respect to this core issue, the Heinrich Boell Foundation seeks to systematically integrate the gender perspective into every aspect of “war and peace” – an ambitious and highly difficult venture. However, the initial successes of our many years of work are now apparent.

- **UN Resolution 1325:** Women are players in the resistance to war and armed conflicts, in conflict resolution and prevention, even though, in this respect, we do not wish to accredit women with attribute of being more peace-loving people. In women-policy and feminist networks worldwide, interest in the foreign and security policy issues and concepts of the past few years has increased again. These networks have begun voicing their claims more loudly and vociferously again to being represented in political decisions relating to war and peace. In crisis and conflict regions, women are making themselves heard and calling for their right to be politically involved in peacekeeping measures and in post-conflict resolution.

In doing so, they refer to UN Resolution 1325 which was adopted in 2000. This resolution is a crucial milestone towards achieving a gender-sensitive peace and security policy. For the first time in the history of the United Nations, the UN Security Council has established a binding standard under international law to involve women in decisions on war and peace and/or to a gender-sensitive security policy.

Feminist networks emphatically demand that governments implement Resolution 1325, and are developing concrete action plans to actually integrate the guidelines of the Resolution into concepts of conflict resolution. The Heinrich Boell Foundation is a pioneering force and main player in the networking in Germany and Europe, and will attempt to expand this at global level, through corresponding case studies showing how Resolution 1325 can be implemented, for example.

IV. Relevance of gender policy in Germany

1. Between a “backlash” and new feminism?

For a long time, the issues of feminism and gender democracy were considered in Germany to be old-fashioned and superfluous. The subjective awareness – young women especially have grown up with no appreciable experience of discrimination – shapes this perception. Equality policy or even feminist approaches were long considered to be out of date and embarrassing. It is an undeniable fact that, for girls and young women, self-determined concepts of life which combine a career, family life and/or a private life have become a more natural process. Men and boys are also increasingly turning to role attributions and models other than the traditional ones in society. And the emancipation of traditional roles has also become a core element in the individualization of our society and the differentiation of lifestyles. All of this is reflected in how (young) men and women behave – above all in Western societies and among the global middle class.

Some gender researchers² also argue along similar lines, maintaining that, nowadays, the specifically hierarchical organization of gender relations is increasingly being disbanded from within, as these relations are losing their normative basis: the gender-specific division of labour. As a result, they argue, feminism has completed its historical task, achieved its goals and is no longer of use.

For some time now, however, feminism and gender equity are issues that have returned to the political stage and become the subject of discussion. There has been resurgence in the public debate on what gender equity might mean. There was suddenly reflection on why especially we came off so badly in a European comparison of gainful employment for women, of their lack of presence at executive board level and in top-notch university jobs. These problems, which have been recognized as modernization deficits, are now echoed in everyday politics and in the media.

In the debate on a new family policy, gender-political aspects are now being given consideration. Job-life balance concepts should be geared to both genders. It is to the credit of the German Minister for Family Affairs, Ursula von der Leyen, that she is also trying as virtually never before to bring the role of men into the public debate. Parents' money, crèche places, all-day schools: all of these issues are sparking or have sparked fierce debate about gender roles, not just in conservative and religious settings and within the Christian-Democratic parties.

The debate has reached every part of society. Its scope meanwhile ranges from the call for a “new feminism” (DIE ZEIT) or “conservative feminism” (Ursula von der Leyen) to “back to the stove” (Bishop Mixa, for example). For a long time, the discussion has also been charged with full anti-feminist rhetoric and polemics. In one case in point, a leading German newspaper, the FAZ, and a leading magazine, Spiegel, are trying to disavow the advances made in emancipation over the past few years with malice, innuendoes and ideological statements culled from the relicts and to place them in a suffragette-like and therefore anti-male corner which has long since ceased to apply. Here, diffuse fears are being mobilized and specific aggressions fuelled. Evidently, perceptions of masculinity that have been passed down from previous generations should be asserted. Some of the polemics even go as far as to claim that new feminism and also the new family policy of the German government are making it impossible for men to be truly men and women to be truly women. Such contributions are unfortunately eluding any differentiated discussion on the future spheres of action of gender policy.

² See Sabine Hark: “Dissidente Partizipation - Eine Diskursgeschichte des Feminismus”, (“Dissident participation – A discourse and history of feminism”) Frankfurt 2006.

2. German government: softened-up gender policy

Beyond the public discussions, we must therefore concern ourselves with what is being introduced in Germany in practical policy terms for more gender equality: what political initiatives does the German government have to offer to reduce discrimination, inequality and stereotypical gender constructions? What does a conservative “new feminism” look like?

- Approaches to the policy on gender equality are generally geared to reconciling a working and family life and are therefore subordinate to family policy or are replaced by it entirely. One such example of this is parents’ money (a tax financed payment to couples to encourage them to become parents). Whilst it does admittedly incorporate men/fathers as a target group, it nevertheless aims, on the one hand, to make optimum use of the qualified male and female workforce, and, on the other hand, to increase the birth rate in Germany’s educated middle class.
- The policy of nurturing women is barely afforded any public attention and mainly focuses on promoting women in their careers. Funding at federal and EU level for nurturing women is being cut or abolished entirely.
- No legal initiatives are in sight that would counter wage discrimination against women, be in favour of an equality law for businesses or in favour of a residence permit status for women migrants which is granted irrespective of where the spouse resides.
- The German government is distancing itself from groundbreaking strategies such as *gender mainstreaming*, which have the capacity to align political initiatives and measures in every institution and organization with the aim of achieving gender equality, and is now once again reducing them to “equality policy as a preventive procedure”. This distancing on the part of the German government is particularly clear in the 6th CEDAW Report of the German Government (2007) in which gender mainstreaming is falsely interpreted as the trigger for resistance against gender equality. The requisite changes to the structural framework no longer appear as the goal; no new gender-political strategies are outlined; an analysis of the outcome of the applied strategies so far is conspicuous by its total absence.
- Concepts or political campaigns which could fundamentally change the hierarchical gender order, the social attributions of “male” and “female” and the contiguous social scale of values and hierarchy either fall by the wayside or have never formed part of the equation in government action.
- Binding political standards such as quotas and especially structural policy measures designed to dissolve the economic and emotional states of dependence in partnerships and therefore seek to safeguard the existence of the individual have little to no chance. On the contrary, socio-political and tax policy standards continue to preserve the traditional marriage and family model – as can be seen in the duty of spouses to care for those drawing unemployment benefit under the ALG II system in Germany, and so-called ‘*Ehegattensplitting*’ (a system of taxation of spouses in which the husband and wife each pay income tax on half the total of their combined income) – which, at best, will develop into a system of ‘family splitting’ within the bounds of the newly propagated family ideology.
- Gender policy includes active discussion on the images of masculinity and the realities of life for boys and men. It has long been clear that boys and men are also negatively affected by gender-blind education, health or labour market policy. According to the statistics, violence (perpetrators and victims), vandalism, drug addiction and crime are male dominated. Actively debating the “masculinity crisis” requires a gender-sensitive change

of perspective overall and also especially male role models who deal with the issue in the political and public sphere. Although the “New Ways for Boys” (“Neue Wege für Jungs”) campaign is a start, it is far from sufficient.

- Family concepts which deny homosexual family constellations social and legal recognition and equality do not comply with the gender-democratic objectives.

3. Middle-class sectoral feminism?

The challenges and fields of action of a future-oriented gender policy outlined here go largely ignored by the German government. The dovetailing of instruments of family policy with gender-political goals will help to improve the modernization deficits for our economy (more gainful employment for women to secure their existence) and the demographic problems of the future. These “efficiency goals” are of absolute value to women and men. It is also clear, however, that the German government’s current policy has no recipes for more equality for the part of the population which is marginalized and excluded, and is furthermore subject to legal and wage policy discrimination. And, in our society, this still also affects women in the majority of cases. Empowerment approaches for “weak” women, girls, men and boys, and the special promotion of women, girls and boys continue to be repressed in favour of a **policy for the few** that could be put to good use for our competitiveness in the global economy and be integrated more easily into our society.

“New feminism” or “Conservative feminism” is therefore also criticized as being “middle-class sectoral feminism” which, it is claimed, in no way focuses on all the other problems such as gender-based discrimination in the division of labour, violence, sexism and racism, and legal or political exclusion.

With its role model of gender democracy (see section below), gender policy at the Heinrich Böll Foundation builds on a concept that attempts to do justice to the various realities of life of women and men, and seeks to reduce the power relations and claims to power between the genders and to help human rights become a reality for both genders.

B. Gender policy at the Heinrich Boell Foundation

I. The role model of gender democracy

Given the political, economic and cultural gender-political challenges outlined above, the Heinrich Boell Foundation's role model of gender democracy – as passed at the time when the Heinrich Boell Foundation was newly founded – is as current as it ever has been. It has lost none of its societal brisance because our role model of gender democracy addresses legal, economic and social discrimination, injustice and hierarchy relationships. In doing so, we are not concerned with evening out gender differences but with equal rights and opportunities for a variety of people.

Challenging and questioning stereotypical gender roles in political and private spheres and changing them in an emancipative sense are at the core of the task of implementing this role model. The analysis of gender relations and the gender impact of political and entrepreneurial decisions is a decisive instrument in establishing emancipative equality policy.

Gender democracy as a visionary goal means that:

- a number of role models and concepts of life are recognized and viewed as being on a par with one another;
- the allocation of social positions, work, income and power are not conveyed by virtue of gender;
- patriarchal structures and power relations in private and public spheres have been overcome.
- the variety of gender identities, forms of gender expression and sexual orientation are recognized legally and by society.

This role model should be conceived as a socio-political vision and organization principle alike. Gender democracy is a normative term which postulates equal rights, equal opportunities, equal access for men and women to economic resources and political power. Participation is the prerequisite for changing and transforming (gender) unequal circumstances. By doing so, the Heinrich Boell Foundation has established theoretically positive conditions for formulating, in a gender political sense, its own focal points and fields of action in its activities at home and abroad, in scholarship programs, in human resources and budgetary policy.

Gender-democratic and feminist policy seeks to inquire about its effects on the gender relation and to work on these. Given this, gender democracy calls for nothing less than the transformation of all those societal structures which reproduce inequalities and stereotypical models between the genders. At the Heinrich Boell Foundation, implementing gender democracy and filling it with life is therefore

a common task!

II. Strategies, tasks, and players for gender democracy

Outlining the political, economic and cultural challenges and upheaval facing the entire political education work of the Heinrich Boell Foundation makes clear that gender issues and gender equality policies can no longer be developed from the “perspective of those affected” and uniform interests alone, as was the case during the golden age of the women’s movement. For this reason, we must devote more attention to the prerequisites of gender-political action and intervention:

1. Re-politicizing the gender issue

Gender policy has consequences for every aspect of society: for the organization of work and business, ways of living and the family, social security and taxation, education and science, research and technology. Here, we seek programmatic discussions in order to advance the goals, roles and fields of action. A re-politicization of the gender issue is needed in the Federal Republic of Germany. This re-politicization will only achieve success, however, if we reformulate the gender issue under changed conditions, analyze developments, highlight new problem areas and look for new possible solutions – both nationally and internationally.

Activities at home and abroad, in scholarship programs or in **public relations work** therefore constantly involve honouring the claim to gender policy being a cross-cutting task. Regular stock-taking and evaluations are a basic requirement for evaluating learning experiences and for bringing the political education work of the Foundation to fruition. In addition to the political challenges, practical and methodological issues are raised: how much analytical work needs to be undertaken? What resources do I need to bring in?

2. Naming target conflicts – integrating diversity

The numerous **target conflicts** which result from our involvement in social, economic and technological developments must be named far more aggressively than before. The female population can barely be embraced by using the term “women” alone, just as little as the male population can be embraced by the expression “men”. What unites the single female head teacher in Munich and the Philippine home help who does the domestic chores for her so that she can fund her children’s school education in her native country? What unites the landless Brazilian woman with a policewoman in Rio? What does the hedge fund broker in London have in common with an unemployed man from Berlin or an African refugee in Morocco? These examples label (new) divisions of labour and divides, and indicate that the social attributions of “male” and “female” can no longer be applied to the respective gender as a matter of course.

Both feminist and any form of emancipative gender policy entails going beyond gender duality and gender-typical attributions. This also includes crossing the analysis category “gender” with other social distinguishing features (diversity), such as which class people belong to, which ethnic origin and which sexual orientation. In doing so, the question of how equal opportunities are perceived must be rephrased or reiterated again and again. They could provide starting points for alternative models to be developed (further). For this reason, the productive discussion surrounding the relationship between **gender** and **diversity** and their mutual interlacing must be continued **in all departments**. This process of integrating gender and diversity perspectives in education work, in human resources and organization development, in advising management and in evaluating and designing further training and education opportunities for employees is supported by the **gender democracy/diversity steering group** coordinated by the Executive Management.

3. Organizing gender-political intervention

For gender policy to be accepted by society, it must address concrete, socio-politically relevant issues and future issues everywhere: in health policy, for example, on demographic change, on social security issues, in legal policy, in bio and knowledge policy, security and peace policy, in labour market and global economic and fiscal policy as well as education policy. These politically highly competitive fields need gender-political and feminist intervention. Here, women and men must make their claim to want to form gender policy and highlight alternatives. One of the aims of the education work of all of the departments at the Heinrich Boell Foundation is to embed, in gender-political terms, a broad understanding of gender democracy in keeping with our role model and to organize gender-political intervention.

4. Promoting the development of gender competence

Doing so requires **gender competence** and **new gender knowledge** so that gender aspects can be integrated into issues of relevance to the future.

Common tasks and cross-cutting policies represent a major challenge for every organization – including for the Heinrich Boell Foundation. It requires a fundamentally different approach from that prevalent in standard political and institutional practice. Gender democracy as a cross-cutting and common task presupposes **gender competence**, in other words knowledge of the significance of gender relations and impact and the ability to integrate it into a broad range of political fields. The “gender” category (while not the only one) is one criterion for analyzing and resolving social, economic, and political problems. The gender competence of employees is therefore a key qualification that is echoed, among other things, in the human resources policy model. The **Human Resources department** and the **Gunda Werner Institute** support employees in their development of gender competence through further education and advisory services.

5. Advancing empowerment and gender mainstreaming

At the Heinrich Boell Foundation, the fundamental understanding of gender policy of its activities at home and abroad includes pursuing several parallel strategic approaches. Depending on the political analysis and gender political priorities, we promote and strengthen women-specific (and men-specific) political causes and networks, in other words what are termed classic **empowerment strategies**, and also pursue gender democracy and cross-cutting approaches. Within this context, **gender mainstreaming** is one of several strategies that we have been implementing with success for a long time as part of our **activities at home and abroad**. Our independent, gender democracy approach explicitly aims to focus attention on every gender in the political treatment of gender relations in a variety of topics. In doing so, the Foundation will also repeatedly enter uncharted territory and stamp its specific hallmark as is the case with the transnational qualification project for multipliers known as “Fit for Gender Mainstreaming – Gender-sensitive Transcending of Borders between East and West”.

6. Forging alliances – extending networks

Anyone looking to challenge and influence the political mainstream needs gender-sensitive analyses, on the one hand, and social alliance partners and networks, on the other. Gender policy aimed at gender democracy is a social negotiating process for power and resources. This presupposes that strong networks and alliances capable of intervention can be mobilized.

Our numerous strategies include forging classic women-policy and new gender-political alliances and, in the process, above all integrating new players. Well-educated **women** who are

becoming more vociferous at voicing their desire to be promoted and lead **in companies**, in **science**, in the **media** and **state institutions** are looking for means of political articulation. Such women need to be integrated more strongly than before into political initiatives which, above all, seek to strengthen the rights and means of participation of less privileged women. What is needed are new forms of solidarity with weaker women and women with fewer negotiating powers for new feminism to benefit more than just middle-class women throughout the world.

Together with **homosexual activists**, the Foundation is actively looking for alliance partners in the South, in a politically extremely difficult environment.

Throughout the world, **men** in a variety of functions have meanwhile set about breaking down old gender stereotypes and foregoing old privileges. Perceiving them **as independent players** in the gender discourse and not as mere vicarious agents for women's policy is vital to forging the corresponding alliances. The Foundation is already building many different bridges for the corresponding "gender dialogues" and future alliances.

With the "Ladies Lunch" and "Men's Forum in the Theory and Practice of Gender Relations" ("Forum Männer in Theorie und Praxis der Geschlechterverhältnisse"), the Gunda Werner Institute has established two formats which offer a gender-specific exchange of views and networking and also provide a venue for holding gender dialogues and developing gender democracy.

A further objective is to bring in the gender perspective into socio-political, sector-specific and multi-gender organizations and networks – be this in social policy, international climate policy or in the work performed by social movements.

7. Strengthening transnational exchange of strategies and experiences

The transnational exchange of strategies and experiences on, among other things, legal and implementation issues, globalization or the significance of religion and women's rights is a task to which the Foundation devotes a particular amount of time and effort with its international network and partnership structure.

8. Further developing the organization

With respect to organization and human resources development, it is also true that the gender-specific data and statistics (human resources statistics, budgets, etc.) as well as clear guidelines from the management and executive levels are indispensable requirements. The **gender democracy/diversity steering group** coordinated by the Executive Management supports suitable measures such as gender and diversity training courses or advisory services, the process of integrating gender and diversity perspectives in education work, human resources and organization development, advising management as well as evaluating and designing further training opportunities for the employees. The Gunda Werner Institute assumes an advisory function here.

The Heinrich Böll Foundation is a role model for other organizations with respect to the implementation of gender democracy and/or *gender mainstreaming*. It is therefore frequently asked to provide support and advice. The Foundation has developed and tested an abundance of guidelines for action and tools (gender training concepts and methods, guidelines and tools to aid gender mainstreaming practice, etc.). Under the banner of the further training academy, **Green Campus**, this range of advisory services will, with the support of the Gunda Werner Institute, be continued in the future and gender-oriented learning opportunities will be further developed. This includes, for example, the gender competence modules relating to policy manage-

ment as well as advising organizations and associations when introducing and implementing *gender mainstreaming*.

9. Gender-equal nurturing of young talent

We perceive the promotion of young talent, especially in and through the **Scholarship Program Department** at the Foundation, as a contribution to nurturing democratic culture. Here, performance-oriented ideas conjoin with equal opportunities and gender equality. Women and men with a migration background therefore form part of the specific target groups nurtured by the Heinrich Boell Foundation. In selecting biographical criteria such as parenthood, social discrimination/underprivileged background or disability are given special consideration. In the future, the Foundation intends to develop a concept for a balanced, gender-related distribution of fostered talent by subject.

III. Relationship between gender democracy and feminism at the Heinrich Boell Foundation

At the time that the three individual foundations were merging in the mid 1990s, the Foundation opted, on the one hand, to establish an “Executive Office for the Common Task of Gender Democracy” and, on the other, to found a small “*Feminist Institute*”. Until now, they were the locations where gender democracy and/or feminist policy was “certain” to be tackled. At the same time, all of the specialist departments and “service providers” were asked to implement the role model of gender democracy in the respective tasks and fields of responsibility as a common task. This has occurred in a variety of ways and differing degrees of intensity through the corresponding advisory and education services (among them, gender training courses, handouts and guidelines).

How the two feminist and gender-democratic policy approaches interact with one another and how they correlate with one another has never been the subject of discussion. Both approaches were merely described as parallel discourses.

By merging the two units to form the “Gunda Werner Institute for Feminism and Gender Democracy” (GWI), we would like to document that both approaches productively complement each other and, at the same time, have their special significance.

In founding the “Feminist Institute” as a self-contained organizational unit (anchored in the by-laws), the merged Heinrich Boell Foundation explicitly professed to the feminist roots of the Green movement. Feminist political theory and practice consistently focuses on the causes of the differences between the “male” and “female” when distributing power, in terms of social and legal status and with respect to the availability of economic resources. Although neither uniform feminist theory nor undisputed feminist policy concepts, goals and strategies exist, all feminisms relate to the radical criticism of socially established structures and norms.

In this sense, feminism is biased. Irrespective of the differences and ruptures, it sides with women, articulates women’s interests and calls for consideration to be given to a feminist perspective. A utopian objective of feminism is and remains the radical transformation of hierarchical gender relations. Given the prevailing principle of hegemonic masculinity as perceived by the Heinrich Boell Foundation, this objective is far from passé historically. Hegemonic masculinity does not merely denote the subordination of a woman by a man but also dominance relationships among men. This also includes the systematic devaluation of homosexuality and supposedly feminine manners of behaviour.

The analysis of gender relations requires taking a close look at both genders. In this context, feminist and women-specific as well as reflexive male-political perspectives and non-heterocentric perspectives and practical access – depending on the initial state of analysis – must be strengthened and nurtured. In doing so, the Heinrich Boell Foundation is underlining that a wide variety of means of access can exist to attain the goal of gender democracy. However, feminist analyses and practices are central to the Foundation lending political impetus, inducing discussions and generating pressure to effect change. Feminist analyses and strategies in radical intention, but also measures specifically designed to promote and network women – to empower women – consequently enjoy an exceptional standing and are equipped with the corresponding resources at the Heinrich Boell Foundation.

C. The Gunda Werner Institute for Feminism and Gender Democracy

Feminist and gender policy had previously been native to two separate units – the “Executive Office Gender Democracy” and the “Feminist Institute”. By merging these two units to form the “Gunda Werner Institute for Feminism and Gender Democracy” (GWI), we are documenting within our Foundation and also to the outside world the productive coexistence of feminist and gender-democratic approaches in the political treatment of gender relations and hierarchies. It is not a question of “either-or” but of **complementary** strategies that should be based on a gender analysis wherever possible. In a common institute, the prerequisites for the productive and constructive treatment of a variety of sometimes even contradictory perspectives are embedded more effectively. Here, we can pool our resources and, at the same time, benefit mutually from the political profiles and networks which have been set up in previous years.

The “Gunda Werner Institute for Feminism and Gender Democracy” will, however, only be able to treat select individual gender-political issues and fields of action. To this end, it is equipped with special human and financial resources. **The GWI therefore does not supersede the common task of gender democracy.**

For the purposes of the role model, the aim of the Institute is to support and promote the societal emancipation and equality of women and men in every aspect of society.

In detail, the GWI seeks to:

- analyze power strategies, forms of communication and concepts of action in politics and society from the gender perspective and to steer against discriminating and exclusionary trends;
- introduce and nurture new gender-democratic and feminist perspectives into politics and society and to stimulate public debate;
- support and advance the exchange between feminist, women and men policy-related, gender-democratic scientific approaches and research perspectives as well as new approaches to emancipative work for women and men;
- promote the political involvement of women in general and of gender-competent people in particular;
- actively contribute to the gender sensitivity and competence of women and men, including especially people in decision-making and management positions;
- develop various (further) education courses and advisory services and to make these available internally and externally;
- look for, promote and expand on conceptually new forms of communication and education by and for women nationally and within a global context;
- develop offers that bring men round to gender policy, take up their points of view and integrate them as stakeholders;
- create room for developing social drafts that focus on a non-hierarchical coexistence of the genders;
- contribute to the establishment and expansion of national and international women’s and men’s networks as well as gender-democratic and feminist activities;
- promote a new generation of feminist and gender-conscious people in the fields of science and politics - and therefore promote the production of knowledge;

- actively tackle the discrimination of lesbians, gays and transgender and to put an end to the hushing up of homosexual lifestyles.

Work profile of the GWI:

The main areas of focus of the GWI are recorded in a medium-term work profile and incorporated into the planning phases of activities at home and abroad.

The following focal issues have currently been identified:

- *safeguarding the existence of the individual* as the key to and/or basic requirement for creating fair and equal gender relations;
- *Gender policies in Europe* within the meaning of a transnational exchange of experiences on emancipative and transformational policy concept approaches which, on the one hand, seeks to lend impetus to the national context in Germany and, on the other, looks for new courses of action and strategies in the light of EU policy and is linked to the EU project “Fit for Gender Mainstreaming – Gender-sensitive Transcending of Borders between East and West”;
- Continuation of the *peace and security policy activities from a feminist and gender-orientated perspective* with special focus on the global implementation of UN Resolution 1325
as well as
- *safeguarding and extending the (target-group-specific) rooms for thought and reflection* such as Ladies Lunch, Men’s Forum or the international dialogue process in order to discuss the perspectives of feminist and gender-democratic policies.