



Exploratory Workshop Scheme

Scientific Review Group for the Social Sciences

ESF Exploratory Workshop on
**Transgender and Political Science
in Europe: a comparative approach**

Brussels, (Belgium) 17-19 September 2014

Convened by:
**Joz Motmans, Surya Monro
and Janneke van der Ros**

SCIENTIFIC REPORT

1. Executive summary

The workshop “Transgender and Political Science in Europe: a comparative approach” took place from 17-19th September 2014 at the Free University of Brussels, Belgium. It gathered 20 participants from 11 different countries: Norway, the Netherlands, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Slovenia, Hungary, UK, Germany and Belgium.

The aim of the workshop was to gather key established and emerging European scholars working in the trans* field in order to develop chapters which will be published in an edited collection. The workshop was organised around three key themes: Trans* Recognition and Citizenship; Trans* Citizenship and the Welfare state, and Representation and Democracy. Each theme started with two keynote lectures presenting possible approaches, subthemes, and topics for discussion. All participants received the keynote papers in advance and were asked to reflect on them from their own research experience. These prepared contributions concerning specificities of the participants’ own countries (socio-political, legal, cultural, and/or otherwise) fed the moderated discussions. The presentations and discussions raised important questions concerning the direction and scope of political science in relation to gender diversity, including the gender binaried nature of much current theorising.

The last session of the workshop was devoted to general conclusions for future cross-country and cross disciplinary collaborations, and as a result chapters for a book proposal as well as a special issue for an international journal were planned.

The general atmosphere was excellent: the participants valued very much the possibility to have a scientific meeting solely devoted to discuss and exchange knowledge on transgender studies from a political and social science perspective. The book proposal was discussed in detail and contributors were listed. The final session of the workshop furthermore enabled networking and the establishment of possible collaborative publishing beyond the edited collection. Notably, a number of workshop members began to plan the production of Special Edition of a journal (for example *Contemporary Politics*) and it is possible that some of the pieces that are currently being developed as book chapters may go into this. In exploring publication possibilities, the organisers were also mindful of the career trajectories of the workshop attendees; book chapters may not be the ideal destination for some scholarship. In particular, there was keen interest in producing a methodological critique of knowledge production relating to gender diversity, and it was felt that this would have an interdisciplinary audience and could be best placed in a journal.

2. Scientific content of the event

The workshop brought together key emerging and established scholars in the field of trans* and gender diversity, with a view to beginning to address the gap in the political science literature and wider knowledge regarding trans*. To date, gender and politics scholars have largely focused on issues such as the representation of women in parliament and the reproductive rights of non trans* people. The workshop participants came from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, including sociology, law, and psychology, as well as political science. The political scientists played a key role in bringing their disciplinary frameworks and concerns to the table.

The workshop addressed key cross-cutting themes, such as the gender binaried nature of much existing theory, and the historical development of trans* scholarship primarily within medical, psychological and sociological frameworks. The marginalisation of trans* persons, in terms of rights to freedom from hate crime and abuse, access to employment, rights to

travel, rights to a family life, and bodily self-determination, underpinned many of the debates. Another key cross-cutting theme concerned gender-spectrum approaches to modelling trans* as opposed to binaried ones which erase people whose identity is other than 'male' or 'female'. These different approaches play out variously in relation to activism and the interfaces between trans* people and state institutions (particularly the medico-legal establishment).

The workshop was organised around three key themes: Trans* Recognition and Citizenship; Trans* Citizenship and the Welfare state, and Representation and Democracy.

Session I: TRANS* RECOGNITION AND CITIZENSHIP

Paper presentations

1. *“From recognition to a politics of difference”* by Sally Hines, UK

Sally Hines provided a critique of the work of Nancy Fraser in relation to recognition and trans* people. Her central argument is that a politics of recognition is an unproductive framework for gender and sexual diversity policies. The main limits of Fraser's theory of recognition, according to Hines, are that for Fraser, socio-economic class is related to redistribution, and sexuality to cultural recognition. This analysis is insufficient to capture the materiality of trans* bodies, i.e. the centrality of embodiment. In addition, the theory does not sufficiently address the concept of authenticity of, and within, the community which should be seen as a site of construction and regulation of embodiment. As such, agency and power are not accounted for in the theory of recognition. Here, Hines argues, politics of differences, also as a mode of doing policy differently to enforce social change, is more productive.

2. *“Transgender citizenship and recognition in Eastern Europe”* by Judith Takács, Hungary

Takács approaches the theme of trans* recognition and citizenship by focusing on two constitutive aspects of the citizenship concept: inclusion/exclusion and legality. The Hungarian ETA (2003) was the first national equal treatment legislation in the world that in addition to sexual orientation also included gender identity, thereby specifically providing antidiscrimination protection for transgender people. This can be read as an expression of (non-normative) gender identity being accepted as a socially meaningful category and a protected category. However, opposition against this “vague category” reflects a certain hierarchical preference among different grounds for equal treatment. Furthermore, Takács presented recent survey results indicating large differences in opinion among LGBT respondents regarding the main goals that Hungarian LGBT organizations should prioritize. Her conclusion is that, in Hungary, transgender citizenship is far from being fully acknowledged and recognized.

Discussion

The discussion after the two presentations concerned Fraser's theory of recognition. Divergent views were expressed regarding recognition and citizenship, with some workshop participants suggesting that citizenship claims, however flawed, provide a basis for trans* persons to gain some rights, in a way that politics of difference approaches may not. The discussions also enabled workshop participants to raise a number of (sometimes overlapping) concerns and interests, specifying and concretizing the aim of the workshop, and of European transgender/trans studies in general. Important questions were put on the table, such as: What is “European” – is

trans* to have its own agenda in the European context? What do we (want to) mean by comparative (for example south/north or east/west) and what do these dimensions mean and imply? On comparative dimensions: a suggestion was to consider what constitutes different states – colonial versus non colonial past; states with dictatorship in recent history. Another possible comparative approach concerns the constitution of “triggering moments” in the transgression to citizenship? When did gender get broadened to include trans? Is there purchase in comparing European welfare state regimes in relation to trans*? Who are the stakeholders, and who are the opponents to trans/transgender persons fundamental rights and recognition, for example faith-based organisations, some feminist groupings and authors (such as Sheila Jeffreys) and disagreements and opponents within the LGBTQQI+ community itself. The workshop contributors reflected on their positions within the academy and roles as knowledge producers. The role of activists in knowledge production and in forging a relationship between theory and practice was also debated. The group conversations then moved on to address the definitions and scope of citizenship, beyond Marshallian approaches. We discussed citizenship as a means of the state producing nation, and citizenship in terms of access/participation; rights and obligations; citizenship rights versus human rights; and intersectional issues such as migrating trans* people and nationality.

Session II: TRANS* CITIZENSHIP IN THE WELFARE STATE

Paper presentations

3. *“Medicolegal embodiment in a political perspective”* by Zowie Davy, UK

Zowie Davy outlined the influences that medical professionals (such as psychiatrists, surgeons, endocrinologists, and gynaecologists) have on the understandings of trans individuals’ needs, and the key role of the medico-legal establishment in forging trans* persons’ identities and in legalising rights to access health services. Davy discussed the issue of medical recognition, as expressed in the discussions among medical professionals, sometimes in consultation with trans* activists. She analysed the potential changes to the key medical frameworks provided by the American Psychiatric Association’s DSM-5 and World Health Organisation’s ICD-11. She addressed changes both in whether gender identity issues should be viewed as a pathology, and whether they should be seen as a mental health condition; what kind of treatments are recommended, available, necessary – and who are to decide the trajectories, the extent of treatment – ‘patient’ or doctor. Davy argues that there is an issue (for example in the USA) in that doctors are the ones who both define the rules, and for who benefit financially from the pathologisation of the condition because it can mean that their clinics survive financially – through trans* persons using insurance funds for their treatment. These dynamics demonstrate the power of semantics in framing the embodiment of trans, and trans health and welfare issues. For Davy, sexological research tends to be circular: the patients know what narratives to use to obtain a diagnosis, and these same patients are part of the research, thus reproducing and affirming earlier research results on the symptoms of ‘Gender Dysphoria. The political system has lost, or given away, its power to decide citizens’ rights to the medicolegal system. The other side of the discussion is about trans activists’ discursive strategies, and the political effects of these. One strategy is to towards defining gender identity questions in biogenetic terms, while other activist shift the discourse to body integrity and self-determination within a human rights discourse.

4. *“The role of the welfare state in creating trans (e-)quality of life. Recognizing Differences and Distributing Differently”* by Janneke van der Ros, Norway

Van der Ros used Norway as a case to explore the role of the welfare state in recognizing differences – different differences, and acknowledging differences through (re)distributive policies, ensuring justice for all its citizens. The role of the social democratic (Nordic) welfare state’s is additionally paternalizing, ‘heterogenizing’ and has controlling functions, in two ways. Firstly, it determines who is seen as worthy of welfare state services, i.e. who are deserving citizens, and secondly it constructing the ‘good’ citizens, thus moulding its citizens into acceptable citizens. Gender non-conforming and gender independent citizens, those beyond the gender binary, provide challenges to the gender binaried construction of ‘good trans* citizens’ as evident in the Norwegian case. Because non-binaried trans* persons do not fit with the normative model discussed by Davy (above), they are marginalised in terms of state welfare provision, notably access to healthcare and legal services and rights. Norwegian trans* activists and the trans ‘community’ are divided along these lines of good and deserving and ‘not so good’ citizens. In the gender equality policies, genders beyond the binary are not recognized.

Discussions

The discussion was held in small groups, each focused on a key area, including for example non-health related welfare issues (including housing and employment), the role of activist communities in interfacing with the welfare state, the tensions between pathologizing and non-pathologizing approaches, transnational comparisons in welfare provision, and medico-legal welfare issues. For example, the group focusing on activism addressed the strengths of the trans* activist communities, including the role of these communities in knowledge production which can then be used strategically in relation to policy makers, and the importance of agency (individual and collective) in underpinning activism. They also highlighted to importance of international coalitions between trans* activists. The opportunities that were identified included changing state practices concerning trans* welfare, including practices of service monitoring and evaluation, the training of duty bearers so that they can fulfil their roles in relation to trans* welfare, and the emergence and consolidation of trans* studies. In contrast, the weaknesses and threats that were identified included social conservatism and traditionalism, the crisis relating to austerity, and the issue of trans* activists being socially and politically marginalised and sometimes unable to influence policy networks and therefore welfare provision.

There were a number of other lines of discussion. One angle for analysis concerned pushing the boundaries of what constitutes the “good” citizen; expanding the notion from within, looking also at the obligation side of citizenship (responsibilities). Another line of analysis was provided by an examination of what is missing from political science in relation to trans*. The workshop discussed the micro-politics of intimacy in relation to welfare and citizenship as being one missing issue in political science.

One of the themes addressed in the discussions was carried forward from the previous day, drawing on Hine’s presentation. Further discussion concerned recognition *or* difference versus recognition *of* differences, trying to combine the two approaches – not losing Fraser’s points, but avoiding Fraser’s cultural recognition linked to sexuality.

Furthermore, recognition by whom became an issue; the welfare state’s recognition of differences and the issue of which differences are recognized. Agency by actors in the medicolegal system becomes part of the recognition and politics of difference debate. And following up on that: ensuring the use of non-essentialist concepts (another Hines’

critique of Fraser), and concepts that can traverse. What matters; or what are differences that matter?

Session III: REPRESENTATION AND DEMOCRACY: THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Paper presentations

5. *“Trans* politics between human rights and border control”* by Jan Simon Hutta, Germany

Hutta presented the results of a three year project for TGEU (Transgender Europe) on transnational activism in organizations such as Transgender Day of Remembrance, Travesti, TGEU Youth, ILGA world, STP2020 and GATE. How does the notion of ‘trans’ work as strategic entity in different regions of the world: Hutta has observed a large variety of identities across cultures – f.i.: Lahti, Tonga, Hirja, .. Hutta also documented the difference between legal rights versus the use of rights, the Yogyakarta and Human Rights Agenda, migration as a project and the position of migrant sex workers and the role of migration and borders and how border guards function as state official representatives.

6. *“The trans* movement: identity, representation and institutionalisation”* by Joz Motmans, Belgium

Motmans discussed the identity politics/struggles within the trans movement: the classical transvestite/transsexual conceptual pair has been replaced by the overarching trans/transgender umbrella, denoting a shift in paradigm. However tensions between different positions in the trans/ gender identity field are not reduced. Presentation of a different large scale surveys shows a large variety of gender identity terms among trans respondents, with a majority not preferring the trans women and trans men identities. Motmans formulated some reflections about who speaks on behalf of whom, and the problem of representation: most trans are not visible/out, most trans have ever contacted the trans movement. Identity struggles are between the visible and audible, elite ones. With regards to representation: Trans people line up with LGB crowds to obtain attention; in the Belgian consultancy model trans activists are obtaining a place at the table, by using the doors opened by the LGB allies. Motmans discussed also how research acts as a form of representation, using online questionnaires that reach out to many otherwise invisible unknown trans. The outcomes of trans activism, resulting in the institutionalising of transgender as an identity category and of specific transgender policy issues, are in the Flemish context placed within a sexual minorities frame, not within a (broadened) gender frame. This leaves aside a questioning of the concept of gender, and places trans issues as a minority amongst the minorities. A second challenge in the institutionalisation processes identified by Motmans was how the trans field’s enormous variety can ever be captured by using only one policy term for this diversity. The velvet triangle, between “lgbt-crats” (equivalent to femocrats), politicians and activists is still weak.

Discussions

The discussion centred around different topics. A large portion was devoted to the necessity of self-reflexive practises, the role of trans researchers, the role with activism, the questioning/critiquing the image of objectivity in science, and the awareness of the risks of essentialising identities. The double perspective: research subject risks becoming/experiencing being (?) objectified, due to the similarities between interviews in

medical setting (in diagnostic process) and in interview in social research setting. Self-reflexive practises of scholars; particularly trans studies' researchers. A second part was focussed on how do discourses travel and the social imaginary and her/hir/histories of people. Medical and legal changes and discourses can change the locus of struggle. A current topic of debate is the 'psychopathologisation' of gender independent/creative children: age, body regulation, age of consent for body interventions, and how families of gender nonconforming children act as political agents in the medicolegal context.

Session IV: DEVELOPING COLLABORATIVE WRITING ARRANGEMENTS & FUTURE ACTIVITIES

One of the key aims of the workshop was to generate ideas to be used in a proposal for an edited collection, which will begin to address the dearth of political science scholarship concerning trans*. A draft outline of the book contents, which emerged during informal discussions taking place at the workshop as well as the formal workshop sessions, was therefore presented to the workshop members in the final session. The title was discussed and a strong preference expressed for the title '*Debating Transgender Politics*'. This title sites the proposed collection in relation to political science without limiting the appeal of the text to political scientists; moreover it is accessible and engaging. The potential scope and contents of the edited collection were discussed, for example suggestions were made about the need to include chapters specifically on human rights and on the welfare state. We addressed Europe and International Relations debates, including whether EU Member States are using trans* issues strategically, and we discussed engagement with trans* issues (or not) by EU Member State Equalities infrastructures. Key topics for debate also included the need for comparative and empirically grounded scholarship, and the challenges of conducting comparative work that avoids re-inscribing existing dichotomies (such as the East-West divide). We discussed the authorship of chapters that draw on particular empirical contexts (in for example Norway, Hungary and the UK) but that frame discussions in relation to EU-wide (and international) themes. We developed the following draft outline (chapters will be reduced to a maximum of ten once we have worked as chapter teams).

Publisher: Routledge

Title: Debating Transgender Politics

Editors: Surya Monro, Joz Motmans, Janneke van der Ros

Introduction: Scope and remit, methodological issues; activist knowledge production, chapter outlines

Section 1: Citizenship/rights perspectives

Theories of citizenship

Human rights

Differences/recognition debates

Comparative rights and citizenship (in post-soviet context)

Embodied citizenships

Section 2: The State and Democracy

Democracy

Welfare State

Europe and International Relations

Equality Machinery and State Feminisms

Section 3: Agency, Contestation, Difference

Trans Social Movements

Trans Feminisms

Intersectionality
Nationalist, faith-related, and nationalist opposition

The final session of the workshop also provided space for the generation of research bidding ideas, and other publishing plans (please see below). These emerged from a lively set of debates about issues and themes, including the nature and composition of citizenship; the use of existing political theories such as Iris Marion Young's politics of difference; the formation of prejudice against trans* persons in relation to nationalism, conservatism and traditionalism; and political opposition and mobilisation against the rights of trans* persons and sexual minorities across Europe. We looked at the discursive construction of trans* policy issues and the ways in which they are shaped by the interests of policy and political elites, with some issues remaining erased or marginalised. The basis for comparative analysis was also discussed, with possible groupings of countries being based not just on geo-political characteristics but perhaps on histories (such as colonial past/lack of colonial past; history of dictatorship or not; countries which have a constitution versus those who do not). We discussed various potential areas for research, including the need for an inventory of trans* persons human rights across EU Member States. We also discussed potential funders, such as HORIZON 2020.

3. Assessment of the results, contribution to the future direction of the field, outcome

The participants of the workshop were all very enthusiastic of having the possibility to discuss trans research from a political/social science perspective, and to exchange knowledge and methodological experiences from different backgrounds and countries. Many were keen on building research project proposals together in the future, and to bring trans research to the level of cross country comparisons. The felt need for comparative data was accompanied by the need for elaborating theoretical political science perspectives on gender and diversity.

Timescale and planning for the edited collection:

Potential chapter authors for the edited collection were identified in the final session of the workshop and we will be developing and circulating an early draft book proposal in early 2015. It is intended to develop the book proposal for submission to Routledge in 2015, with a view to submitting the full manuscript within a year of the contract being agreed with the publisher. The edited collection will therefore be published in 2016-7.

Conference panels and presentations:

Workshop members will develop the network that has been fostered by the ESF further by providing panels at two international conferences: the Equality is Not Enough conference (Antwerp 4-6 February 2015) and the European Conference on Politics and Gender (Uppsala University, 11-13 June 2015). It is anticipated that both conferences will also provide opportunities for meetings to work specifically on the edited collection (we will work on the proposal in Antwerp and the book chapters in Uppsala).

Possible joint research funding applications:

We discussed a number of existing research projects and research bidding possibilities. We agreed to look at the possibility of replicating the Quality of Life for Transpeople survey (led by Joz Motmans in Belgium) Zowie Davy, Tracey Yeadon-Lee and Surya Monro are interested in working on this in the UK, if funding can be found, in order to enable comparative analysis.

Other knowledge production:

The final session of the workshop also enabled networking and the establishment of possible collaborative publishing beyond the edited collection. Notably, a number of workshop members began to plan the production of Special Edition of a journal (for example *Contemporary Politics*) and it is possible that some of the pieces that are currently being developed as book chapters may go into this. In exploring publication possibilities, the organisers were also mindful of the career trajectories of the workshop attendees; book chapters may not be the ideal destination for some scholarship. In particular, there was keen interest in producing a methodological critique of knowledge production relating to gender diversity, and it was felt that this would have an interdisciplinary audience and could be best placed in a journal.

4. Final programme

Overview of the programme:

Wednesday 17 September 2014

- 12.30 Coffee & tea & sandwich lunch aka registration (Salle Henri Janne, 15th floor, Institut de Sociologie, Avenue Jeanne, 44, 1050 Brussels)
- 13.00-13.15 Welcome by Convenor Joz Motmans (Convenor, University of Antwerp, Belgium)
- 13.15-13.30 Presentation of the European Science Foundation (ESF), by Pasqualina Perrig-Chiello (Scientific Review Group for the Social Sciences)
- 13.30-17.00 Session I: TRANS* RECOGNITION AND CITIZENSHIP
- 13.30-13.35 Introduction to Session I, Joz Motmans (Convenor, University of Antwerp, Belgium)
- 13.35-14.00 Presentation 1 “Gender diversity, recognition and citizenship: towards a politics of difference”, by Sally Hines (University of Leeds, UK)
- 14.00-14.30 Presentation 2 “Transgender citizenship and recognition in Eastern Europe”, Judit Takács (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, Hungary)
- 14.30-17.00 Discussion “Trans* people and recognition”, Moderator: David Paternotte (University of Brussels, Belgium)
- 17.00-17.30 Closing of Session I: conclusions and challenges, Moderator: Joz Motmans (Convenor, University of Antwerp, Belgium)

Thursday 18 September 2014

- 09.00-09.05 Introduction to the Sessions by co-covenor Surya Monro (Co-convenor, University of Huddersfield, UK)
- 09.05-12.30 Session II: TRANS* CITIZENSHIP IN THE WELFARE STATE
- 09.05-09.30 Presentation 1 “Medicolegal embodiment in a political perspective”, Zowie Davy (Brayford Pool University of Lincoln , UK)
- 09.30-10.00 Presentation 2 “The role of the welfare state in creating trans* (e-)quality of life”, Janneke Van der Ros (University College of Lillehammer, Norway)
- 10.00-10.30 Coffee / Tea Break
- 10.30-12.00 Discussion: Trans*gendered citizenship in different welfare state regimes, Moderator: Ana Cristina Santos
- 12.00-12.30 Closing of Session II: conclusions and challenges, Surya Monro (Co-covenor, University of Huddersfield, UK)

12.30-14.00 Lunch

14.00-17.00 Afternoon Session III: REPRESENTATION AND DEMOCRACY: THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

14.00-14.05 Introduction to the Session by Janneke Van der Ros (co-convenor, University College of Lillehammer, Norway)

14.00-14.30 Presentation 1 “Trans* politics between human rights and border control”, by Jan Simon Hutta (Humboldt University Berlin, Germany)

14.30-15.00 Presentation 2 “The creation of a trans* movement: grass roots versus institutionalisation?” by Joz Motmans (University of Antwerp, Belgium)

15.00-16.30 Discussion: Trans* social movements – diverse and contradictory agents of change, Moderator: Roman Kuhar

16.30-17.00 Closing of Session III: conclusions and challenges, by Janneke Van der Ros (Co-convenor, University College of Lillehammer, Norway)

Friday 19 September 2014

09.00-12.30 Session III: DEVELOPING COLLABORATIVE WRITING

ARRANGEMENTS & FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Moderator: Petra Meier (University of Antwerp)

09.00-10.00 Conclusions from Part I, II & III: General conclusions for future cross-country

and cross disciplinary collaborations

10.00-12.00 Discussion on follow-up activities/networking/collaboration (with Coffee)

12.00-12.30 Closing of the exploratory workshop

Joz Motmans, Janneke van der Ros, Surya Monro (Convenors)

12.30 End of Workshop, lunch and departure

5. Final list of participants

1. Joz MOTMANS, University of Antwerp, Belgium
2. Surya MONRO, University of Huddersfield, UK
3. Janneke VAN DER ROS, University College of Lillehammer, Norway
4. David PATERNOTTE, Université libre de Bruxelles, Belgium
5. Roman KUCHAR, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia
6. Judit TAKACS, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Hungary
7. Zowie DAVY, University of Lincoln, UK
8. Petra MEIER, University of Antwerp, Belgium
9. Amets SUESS, Andalusian School of Public Health, Spain
10. Emmanuelle BEAUBATIE, Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale, France
11. Carlo D'IPPOLITI, University Sapienza University of Rome, Italy
12. Sally HINES, University of Leeds, UK
13. Lisette KUYPER, The Netherlands Institute for Social Research |SCP, The Netherlands
14. Jan Simon HUTTA, University of Bayreuth, Germany
15. Anniken SØRLI, University of Oslo, Norway
16. Noelia FERNANDEZ ROUCO, University of Cantabria, Spain
17. Raquel (Lucas) PLATERO MÉNDEZ, Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, Spain
18. Tracey YEADON-LEE, University of Huddersfield, United Kingdom
19. Myrte DIERCKX, University of Antwerp, Belgium
20. Ana Cristina SANTOS, University of Coimbra, Portugal

7. Statistical information on participants (age bracket, countries of origin, M/F repartition, etc.)

GENDER	M: 8	F: 12	
AGE BRACKET	20-30: 4	30-40: 11	40-65: 5

COUNTRY	Belgium: 4
	France : 1
	Germany: 1
	Hungary: 1
	Italy: 1
	The Netherlands: 1
	Norway: 2
	Portugal : 1
	Slovenia: 1
	Spain : 3
	UK: 4