

Daniela Jauk: Gendersensitive governance in the field of transport

The proposed presentation will report findings and visual material from a current action research project carried out in Graz, Austria (and financed by <http://www.node-research.at>). It deals with the quality and the opportunities of female participation in decision and planning processes in the area of transport politics.

Cosima Pilz and Daniela Jauk started their research asking: "Are there gender differences within existing participation methods in the field of transport in Austria?" and "How would a innovative participation tool look like which is able to attract and invite especially women?"

Exploratory research showed that not only Austria lacks a tradition and practise in citizen's participation generally but one can also find enormous gender gaps in the professional sphere of planning questions and transport politics (e.g. 96% of the participants of planning committees concerned with the current long-term regional transport concepts in Austria are male). Similar findings are reported by project partners from Italy, Great Britain and Germany.

What already has been theoretized among (feminist) scholars is that the gendered division of labour connected with differences in the availability of time and (financial) resources evoke different quality and quantity of female mobility. However, this knowledge actually influences the malestream planning context only marginally and was described by an interviewed official as "*orchid theme*". Further, women are entitled to be "*not interested*" in tranport and public space; that is, as we can assume after 20 expert interviews done and analyzed, definitely not the case. Participation of women is rather a question of knowledge about female lifestyles, the use of adequate methods and the abandonment of an exclusive technical oriented discourse. As we were looking for "best practise participation technologies" also in other European countries, we developed innovative activating research instruments, which are:

- webbased information platform providing resources for both experts and "users", online requirements - questionnaire
- informative city bicycle trips especially for women together with local politicians and municipal officers in charge for transport solutions in Graz
- (repaid) focus groups engaging the "woman from the street", inviting persons observed in typical mobility situations
- cooperative workshop between local politicians, municipal officers, local city and transport planners, administrators, journalists and best practitioners

The main activity will take place from February to May 2005, whereby the cooperative workshop is also meant to be a presentation and sustainability platform for the perspectives and demands of the women engaged in the project and the results of the study. The study shall contribute to local empowerment in the sense of initiating a discourse which focuses the explicate invitation of women in planning processes, the awareness of different life and mobility conditions and (gender)democratic, transparent decision structures.

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