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QUALITY OF GOVERNMENT

Deliberation or Jurisdiction?  
Testing the effectiveness of different  
routes towards gender equality

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# DELIBERATION OR JURISDICTION?

Testing the effectiveness of different  
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**Abstract:** The point of departure for this paper is current debates in feminist research on hindering and enabling factors for the transformation of society in women-friendly directions. I develop two theoretically founded routes that both might lead to gender equality: *the route of deliberation* versus *the route of jurisdiction*. Cultural explanations are frequent in cross-country comparative research that attempts to explain variations in everyday life situations for women and men. However, this approach has been criticized for being unable to capture short-term changes and for being almost a tautology. The routes, or explanatory themes, developed in this paper focus on factors easier to “engineer” than beliefs deeply embedded in society (the cultural approach). In the empirical part of the paper the number of women elected to the national parliament is used as an indicator of the route of deliberation and an index over the institutionalization of women’s rights in a country’s constitution or law is used as an indicator on the route of jurisdiction. The paper ends with a suggestion on how to classify countries along these dimensions. The ambition is however to continue this research and make a fully developed test of the effectiveness of different routes.

**Key-words:** women in parliament, institutionalization, women’s rights, impartiality.

## Introduction

Definitions—and visions—of gender equality vary. However, it is not controversial to state that women, generally speaking, are subordinated in relation to men in most contemporary societies. It is neither controversial to state that degrees of gender equality varies between countries. The question asked here is *why* some countries have succeeded better than others in terms of progress for women. The point of departure is current debates in feminist research on hindering and enabling factors for the transformation of society in women-friendly directions. A watershed found is to what extent an increased number of women in parliament is seen as a decisive factor. The theory of the politics of presence (Phillips 1995) ascribes a major role to female politicians, whereas the role of feminist bureaucrats is highlighted in research on “women’s policy agencies” (Lovenduski et al 2005).

The aim of the paper is twofold: I will compare arguments within different strands of feminist research, and thereby elaborate two theoretically founded routes that both might lead to gender equality: *the route of deliberation* versus *the route of jurisdiction*. I will thereafter ask whether the theoretically founded routes correspond with differences in contemporary societies: is it plausible to use these dimensions to separate between countries? If the answer is yes, it is plausible to separate between countries following the route of deliberation from countries following the route of jurisdiction; the research question that follows is which route is most effective for gender equality? The test of effectiveness will however be conducted at a later stage of this project. This paper ends with a classification of countries based on indicators in line with the deliberative versus the juridical approach.

## Definition of Gender Equality

The ambition that guides this research is to develop a framework useful for world-wide comparisons. From this ambition follows that the definition of gender equality has to be rather straightforward; it should capture aspects that are possible to measure—trustworthy and meaningful—in a large number of countries.

Even though there are disagreements among feminist scholars on how to define gender equality (Dietz 2003), there is a kind of mainstream understanding that gender equality is about increased autonomy for women. Autonomy should here be understood in terms of an individual’s room to maneuver in society. Anne Phillips (2007, 101) makes a useful definition:

I take autonomy as the capacity to reflect on and, within the limits of our circumstances, either endorse or change the way we act or live—thus, in some significant sense, to make our actions and choices our *own*.

This definition focus on possibilities for self-determination and the core issue for gender equality becomes to what extent there exist equal opportunities for women and men to exercise choices of their own. Thus, gender equality is defined in broader terms than formal rights, however the definition does not say anything about outcomes of choices; what matters is if there in some significant sense exist opportunities for self-determination. Two requirements are set up: the capacity to *reflect* on actions and choices, and the capacity to make a *change* in life, if a change is desired.

Needless to say, there is a multitude of factors that determines people's actions and choices and to compare capacities among women and men is troublesome. However, I argue that education lead to better opportunities for reflection, and that economic assessments lead to better opportunities for making changes. So far, I continue to follow what can be regarded as a kind of mainstream understanding; this way of defining gender equality is in line with the reasoning behind the guidelines for measuring human development developed by the United Nations.

The UN Human Development Index (HDI) was created in the 1990's on the principles that it should be simple, easily calculated and easily interpretable (Klasen 2006). The HDI consists of three components: life expectancy, education and incomes. As a supplement to the HDI, the UN compiles two measures focusing gender equality; the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM). The GDI is based on the HDI, but adjusts it by imposing a penalty on each country score according to the size of gender gaps in the three development components. The GEM, on the other hand, is not based on the HDI, but includes gender-specific information on shares of parliamentary seats, shares of positions as senior officials and managers and shares of professional and technical positions. So, GEM is more oriented towards agency as it seeks to capture participation and decision-making power in the political as well as the economic sphere of society.

It should be noted that the two UN gender equality measures have not been as successful as the HDI-index in penetrating debates and policies around the world. Apart from criticism regarding a too narrow range of elements included, critique of the two indexes focuses on a first world bias, measurement problems and conceptual problems (Klasen 2006, 244). I will get back to the discussion on definitions and measurements of gender equality later on. For the time being it is enough to state that UN rankings show that there are noteworthy differences between countries concerning the situation for women (see list in appendix). At top of the scale (most equal situation for women and men) countries like Iceland, Australia, Norway, Canada, and Sweden are to be found; at the other end of the spectra (least equal situation) countries like Chad, Central African Republic, Burkina Faso, Niger and Sierra Leone are to be found (UN Human Development Report 2007/08).

### Explanatory themes in research on Gender Equality

Cultural explanations are frequent in cross-country comparative research that attempts to explain variations in everyday life situations for women and men. A recent noticeable example is found in the book *Rising Tide: Gender Equality and Cultural Change around the World*, by Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris (2003). Inglehart and Norris construct a gender-equality scale from measurements on attitudes among citizens regarding women as political leaders, women's professional and educational rights, and women's traditional role as a mother. Inglehart and Norris demonstrate that egalitarian values are systematically related to the actual conditions of women's and men's lives. They conclude that modernization underpins cultural change, that is attitudinal change from traditional to gender-equal values, and that these cultural changes have major impact on gender-equality processes.

Inglehart and Norris (2003) are not the first to emphasize culture as important in relation to gender equality. What this perspective alludes to are beliefs deeply embedded in society. However, even though cultural explanations are commonly used, this approach has been criticized for being unable to capture short-term changes and for almost being a tautology (Sainsbury 1993, Rosenbluth, Salmond & Thies 2006, 172). From my point of view, it is important to note that cultural change is hard to "engineer." I want to test the effectiveness of changes possible to enact by *conscious acts* by such actors as political leaders (c.f. Kittilson 2006). However, it is important to bear the cultural perspective in mind. It might be the case that the routes developed in this paper are superficial constructions—that they can be likened

to tip of ice-bergs floating around in the deep sea of cultural beliefs identified by Inglehart and Norris.

### *Current debates in feminist research*

In the book *Women, Quotas and Politics*, Drude Dahlerup (2006) and colleagues state that there are 40 countries in the world where gender quotas in elections to national parliaments have been implemented by means of constitutional amendment or by changing the electoral laws; these are legal quotas. In another 50 countries, major political parties have set out quota provisions in their own statutes; these are party quotas.<sup>1</sup> Thus, there is a current world-wide “quota-trend” and at first glance it seems like an increased number of women in parliament has become an all-embracing strategy for the transformation of society in women-friendly directions.

Gender quotas are generally understood as formalized measures with the specific aim of increasing the number of women elected. This is a strategy in line with the reasoning in Phillips (1995) book *The Politics of Presence*. Phillips argue that societies will not achieve equality between women and men by simply disregarding existing gender-related differences (Phillips 1995; see also Phillips 2007, 127). A core argument in the theory of the politics of presence is that equal rights to a vote are not strong enough to guarantee transformative processes; there must also be equality among those elected to office.

The most interesting challenge to the theory of the politics of presence is currently found in the writings of, among others, Iris Marion Young (2000). This alternative approach highlights other driving forces than the distribution of women and men in parliament. Instead of focusing the number of women elected, Young concentrates on the formulation and implementation of programs explicitly aiming to change society. Young does not ascribe importance to female politicians per se, but to politicians with a feminist agenda.

There is a strand of feminist research that take this idea from Young one step further and more or less neglect the parliamentary process. Instead of focusing on the role of certain

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<sup>1</sup> The quota trend can be traced to Norway at the beginning of the 1970s, when the Socialist Left Party implemented gender quotas regarding seats in internal party settings, such as the Party Board, as well as external party candidate lists. However, many observers point out that it was the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, 1995, that sparked changes.

politicians—women and/or feminists—these scholars focus on the role of feminist bureaucrats. The background is that during recent decades, governments in most Western democracies have developed a set of agencies to meet the demands of women’s movements for gender equality. These agencies are labeled women’s policy agencies (WPAs) and WPAs are, by some scholars, seen as a more effective strategy to change society in women-friendly directions than electing women to parliament: Joni Lovenduski (2005, 4) and colleagues suggest that “WPAs could increase women’s access to the state...by inserting feminist goals into public policy” and Weldon (2002, 1153) states that “women’s movements and women’s policy agencies may provide more effective avenues of expression for women’s perspective than the presence of women in the legislatures.” A last example from this strand of research can be drawn from Sawer (2002, 17), who argues that increasing the number of women in parliament is “insufficient” to ensure that women are better off in society.

It is possible to tackle current debates in feminist research from a number of different angles. What interests me is that the tone is rather harsh and that we get different pictures of causal mechanisms—of what drives change in society. There are some studies on policy promotion and implementation in the field of gender equality, however the closer one gets to explanations for variations in women’s and men’s everyday lives the fewer empirical findings there are to report (Wängnerud 2009 present an overview). There is a need to develop explanatory themes and make them useful for empirical research. In the following sections I will continue to sort out differences between different strands of research and argue that the tension described above can be interpreted as a tension between deliberation and jurisdiction as key causal mechanisms.

### *The route of deliberation*

Does it make any difference if elected bodies are made up of women or men? The feminist research that actualize issues of who has a seat in the parliament, build on a critique the nucleus of which is that a male-dominated parliament does not give equal consideration to the interests of women and men. Phillips (1995, 66) formulates the critique as follows:

There are particular needs, interests, and concerns that arise from women’s experience, and these will be inadequately addressed in a politics that is dominated by men. Equal rights to a vote have not proved strong enough to deal with this problem; there must also be equality among those elected to office.

The critique is founded upon a number of observations, the most important of which have to do with the differences in everyday life experiences for women and men.<sup>2</sup> However, what is important to highlight here is an observation which have to do with the function of the parliamentary system. Phillips point out that the political process can never be planned entirely in advance. Even if bills and programs have been thoroughly worked out before the parties take a vote, elected representatives still have a certain measure of autonomy in their daily work in the parliament:

New problems and issues always emerge alongside unanticipated constraints, and in the subsequent weighing of interpretations and priorities it can matter immensely who the representatives are...representatives do have considerable autonomy, which is part of why it matters who those representatives are. (Phillips 1995, 44)

Phillips' observation is a reasonable point of departure for suggesting deliberation as a route towards gender equality. Parliaments are key actors in policy-making processes; however the interpretation I make is that Phillips—and other scholars within this strand of research—want to pin-point more invisible or evasive tasks than formulating and implementing policies/programs. The core argument in Phillips' book is about changes on *the political agenda*, a concept that have other connotations than “pure” legislation. When I do this interpretation I also rely on the fact that empirically oriented researchers trying to test the theory of the politics of presence often use indicators that capture other stages in the parliamentary process than the voting behavior in the chamber that is for example indicators on views and priorities among women and men (Wängnerud 2009). Between the lines is a story presented where debates and discussions on gender equality are in themselves driving forces in society.

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<sup>2</sup> Phillips (1995, 67-68) writes that “Women have distinct interests in relation to child-bearing (for any foreseeable future, an exclusively female affair); and as society is currently constituted they also have particular interests arising from their exposure to sexual harassment and violence, their unequal position in the division of paid and unpaid labor and their exclusion from most arenas of economic or political power.”

### *The route of jurisdiction*

I mentioned Iris Marion Young earlier. It is not totally fair to present her as a frontfigure for a juridical approach towards gender equality. Marta Ackelsberg and Mary Lyndon Shanley (2008) points out that Young has made warnings about the danger of viewing gender equality as a juridical issue and treating gender equality as the elimination of difference. Young talks about a misleading idea of impartiality, that is "...the notion that there is a single vantage point and perspective available to rational beings, that it is the role of judges to articulate that perspective, and that the true meaning of "justice" is the "impartial" application of rules to everyone, regardless of the particularities of their situations" (interpretation in Ackelsberg & Shanley 2008, 326). However, a juridical approach towards gender equality does not have to mean the elimination of all differences. Bo Rothstein and Jan Teorell (2008, 170) make a useful definition of impartiality in their theory of impartial government institutions:

When implementing laws and policies, government officials shall not take into consideration anything about the citizen/case that is not beforehand stipulated in the policy or the law.

The focus in this theory is on procedural norms; the key-word is *beforehand*. Impartiality does not rule out policies or laws that take into account the interests of a specific group like women. However, people should not have to live in a situation of uncertainty regarding the rules of the game in society. Rothstein and Teorell (2008, 166) points out uncertainty as a hindering factor for transformative processes.

In the article *Political Citizenship and Democratization: The Gender Paradox*, Eileen McDonagh (2002) presents an interesting twist to this discussion when she shows how certain principles embedded in government institutions effect women's office-holding. She states that women's political citizenship is not strengthened by a "sameness" principle (asserting women's equality to men as individuals) or a "difference" principle (asserting women's group difference from men), but rather by the paradoxical combination of both. One important conclusion from her work is that principles are important; however her conclusion builds upon an analysis of women in top-positions in society. It remains an open question whether we also can see an affect on the everyday life situation of ordinary women and men.

It is not self-evident that the route of jurisdiction is the best label to use here, or that what we have at hand is a coherent approach. However, there is a current trend in feminist research to

focus on legal demands for gender equality. A core argument in this strand of research is that gender equality has to be *institutionalized*, that is firmly included in constitutions, codes, laws etcetera in order to enable for transformative processes (c.f. Skjeie & Squires 2009).

A further argument to separate between the route of deliberation and the route of jurisdiction is findings from cross-country comparative research on women’s presence in high courts. Margaret Williams and Frank Thames (2008, 465) finds that there are *no* spill over effect on high courts for the number of women serving in the legislature. However, women’s presence in high courts correlates with other measurements of women’s influence on public life, such as the presence of quota laws in a country and the number of years since the introduction of female suffrage. Processes of gender equality within high courts seem to be at least partly independent from processes of gender equality within parliaments.

#### A framework for cross-country comparative research

Even though the picture that emerges of the different routes is a bit scattered I find it reasonable to suggest two dimensions along which countries can be classified (i) the number of women elected to parliament and (ii) the institutionalization of women’s rights. In the empirical analysis I will take a high number of women elected to the national parliament as an indicator for the route of deliberation, and strong institutionalization of women’s rights as an indicator for the route of jurisdiction. The theoretical framework is presented in Figure 1.

**Figure 1 The route of deliberation versus the route of jurisdiction. A framework for cross-country comparative research on gender equality**

		number of women elected to parliament	
		high	Low
institutionalization of women's rights	strong	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
	weak	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>

Countries can, presumably, be found in all four boxes A-D in Figure 1. Box A indicates equal strength for the route of deliberation and the route of jurisdiction; box B indicates dominance of the route of jurisdiction; box C indicates dominance of the route of deliberation. Box D indicates that there exist no route towards gender equality, or that the route is entirely different from what is suggested in this paper.

## Classification of countries

A first step towards a fully developed empirical test is to use the theoretically founded framework as a tool for classification of countries. This will give some indication on whether the construction of different routes is a mere desktop product or something that corresponds with substantial differences between contemporary societies. The metaphor “route” suggests a longitudinal study—that is a study that follows developments within countries over a long period of time. What I will conduct in this paper is however a cross-sectional analysis using data from the Quality of Government (QoG) Institute at the University of Gothenburg.<sup>3</sup>

It is rather easy to find trustworthy and meaningful measurements in line with the reasoning behind the route of deliberation; the number of women elected to the national parliament is a useful “proxy” for core arguments in this strand of research. It is a trickier task to find measurements in line with the reasoning behind the route of jurisdiction. However, four variables in the QoG dataset seem reasonable to use:

- *Labor Discrimination on Grounds of Sex*, measuring if there is an affirmative statement prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of sex in the constitution, the labor code, or a law dealing specifically with the equality of the sexes.<sup>4</sup>
- *Women's Economic Rights*, measuring the extensiveness of laws pertaining to women's economic rights and government practices towards women or how effectively the government enforces the laws.<sup>5</sup>
- *Women's Social Rights*, measuring the extensiveness of laws pertaining to women's social rights and government practices towards women or how effectively the government enforces the law.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Teorell, Jan, Sören Holmberg & Bo Rothstein. 2008. The Quality of Government Dataset, version 15May08. University of Gothenburg: The Quality of Government Institute, <http://www.qog.pol.gu.se>.

<sup>4</sup> Equals 1 if there is an affirmative statement prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of sex in: (1) the constitution; (2) the labor code; (3) a law dealing specifically with the equality of the sexes. The variable equals zero otherwise. The QoG-Institute considers an affirmative statement as one which expresses the equality of man and woman or the prohibition of discrimination based on sex or gender. A general statement regarding the equality of citizens is not considered an affirmative statement.

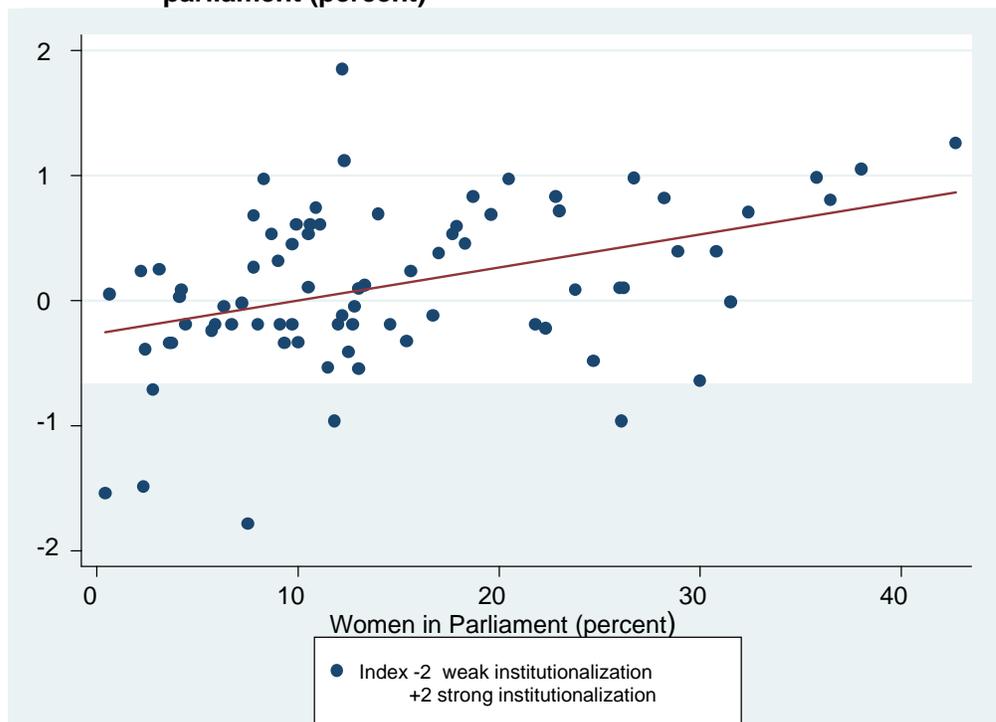
<sup>5</sup> Regarding the economic equality of women: (0) there are no economic rights for women under law and systematic discrimination based on sex may be built into the law. The government tolerates a high level of discrimination against women. (1) There are some economic rights for women under law. However, in practice, the government does not enforce the laws effectively or enforcement of laws is weak. The government tolerates a *moderate level* of discrimination against women. (2) There are some economic rights for women under law. In practice, the government does enforce these laws effectively. However, the government still tolerates a *low level* of discrimination against women. (3) All or nearly all of women's economic rights are guaranteed by law. In practice, the government fully and vigorously enforces these laws. The government tolerates none or almost no discrimination against women.

<sup>6</sup> Regarding the social equality of women: (0) there are no social rights for women under law and systematic discrimination based on sex may be built into the law. The government tolerates a high level of discrimination against women. (1) There are some social rights for women under law. However, in practice, the government

- *Statutory Duration of Maternity Leave*, measuring the length of the statutory duration of maternity leave for normal delivery/birth of a normal child with 100% of earnings.<sup>7</sup>

The four variables have been used in order to construct a women’s rights index.<sup>8</sup> Cronbach alpha for the index is 0.64 which is acceptable but not ideal for index construction (0.70 is a commonly used “rule of thumb” for index construction). The index runs from -2, weak institutionalization of women’s rights, to +2, strong institutionalization of women’s rights. Figure 2 shows a scatter plot for the women’s rights index versus the variable measuring the number of women elected to parliament. Each plot represents a country and data reflect the situation as of 2002 (or a close year).

**Figure 2 Women’s institutionalized rights (index) versus the number of women in parliament (percent)**



does not enforce the laws effectively or enforcement of laws is weak. The government tolerates a *moderate level* of discrimination against women. (2) There are some social rights for women under law. In practice, the government does enforce these laws effectively. However, the government still tolerates a *low level* of discrimination against women. (3) All or nearly all of women’s social rights are guaranteed by law. In practice, the government fully and vigorously enforces these laws. The government tolerates none or almost no discrimination against women.

<sup>7</sup> The variable is normalized from 0 to 1, where higher values mean longer maternity leave (higher protection). Equals zero if maternity leave is unpaid. If payment for maternity leave is less than 100% of previous wages, the time is reduced proportionally. The highest observation in the QoG dataset is 12 months and the lowest observation is 0.

<sup>8</sup> I thank Marcus Samanni for this work. Variables have been standardized and the index is constructed on the means of the different variables (mean 0, standard deviation 1).

Most interesting to note in Figure 2 is that plots/countries are (almost) spread over the entire figure. This means that there is no total correspondence between the number of women elected to parliament and the institutionalization of women's rights.

Results in Figure 3 build on the same data as in Figure 2, however in this second analysis I distinguish between countries with a high/low number of women elected and with strong/weak institutionalization of women's rights. The dividing-line used is whether countries are situated above or below the mean value of all countries included in each analysis—this corresponds with 15 percent women in the national parliament and the value +0.23 on the women's rights index.

**Figure 3 The route of deliberation versus the route of jurisdiction. A classification of contemporary societies (data from the year 2002 or close)**

		number of women elected to parliament			
		high		low	
institutionalization of women's rights	<b>strong</b>	Sweden Denmark Finland Norway Canada New Zealand Australia Belgium Netherlands Poland	Spain Croatia Switzerland Portugal Ireland United Kingdom Peru Latvia Mexico (19 countries)	Slovakia Czech Republic Slovenia Madagascar France Lithuania Mongolia Panama Venezuela Ghana	Greece Hungary Italy Ukraine Armenia Kyrgyzstan (16 countries)
	<b>weak</b>	South Africa Mozambique Bulgaria Malaysia Vietnam Uganda Jamaica Tanzania China Senegal Japan (11 countries)		Ecuador Israel Burkina Faso United States Kazakhstan Colombia Philippines Mali Zambia Singapore Tunisia Thailand Zimbabwe Uruguay Malawi India Indonesia Jordan	Georgia Dominican Republic Brazil South Korea Romania Sri Lanka Turkey Chile Bolivia Kenya Nigeria Egypt Lebanon Russian Federation Morocco (33 countries)

**Source:** Teorell, Jan, Sören Holmberg & Bo Rothstein. 2008. The Quality of Government Dataset, version 15May08. University of Gothenburg: The Quality of Government Institute, <http://www.qog.pol.gu.se>.

It should be remembered that this is a first suggestion on how to classify countries, however the results in Figure 3 have some face validity: countries with a high number of women elected and strong institutionalization of women's rights are foremost well established democracies. Countries at the other end of the spectra, with a low number of women elected and weak institutionalization of women's rights are foremost less stable democracies or authoritarian states. The country which placing is most surprising is perhaps the United States; the US is found in the category "low number of women in parliament, weak institutionalization of women's rights."<sup>9</sup>

It is possible to classify 79 countries using the framework in Figure 1 separating between the route of deliberation and the route of jurisdiction. The largest group, 33 countries, consists of countries with no route at all towards gender equality, or with a route that is totally different from what is suggested in this paper (box D in Figure 1). The second biggest group, 19 countries, consists of countries with equal strength for the route of deliberation and the route of jurisdiction (box A). The third group, 16 countries, consists of countries with dominance for the route of jurisdiction (box B). The smallest group, 11 countries, consists of countries with dominance for the route of deliberation (box C).

One thing to note here is that a high number of women elected can be a result from top-down policies implemented for a number of different reasons. The use of gender quotas is becoming especially frequent in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa. Dahlerup (2006, 4) notes that an international contagion effect is important for the spread; and suggests that for some countries, the implementation of quotas reflects a wish to appear "modern" in the international community. Dahlerup reflects that state-driven political inclusion of women might foremost be symbolic. The reflection I make is that the fully developed empirical analysis have to take a number of control variables into account. The route of deliberation is perhaps only meaningful in a democratic state.

## Concluding discussion

Measuring gender equality is tricky. It is an even trickier task to try to explain variations in every day live situations for women and men. This does not mean that we should give up on

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<sup>9</sup> The validity of these measurements has to be evaluated further. However, the appearance of some cases with less expected placing does not ruin the value of the whole framework.

this enterprise. One complexity that can be added to the list of what has already been discussed is that there are changes in the ranking of countries over time. Table 1 includes a list of top-20 countries based on the United Nations indexes mentioned previously in this paper: the Human Development Index (HDI), the Gender Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Index (GEM) for 2007 and 1995.

**Table 1. Top-20 Countries on HDI, GDI and GEM 2007 & 1995**

HDI		GDI		GEM	
2007	1995	2007	1995	2007	1995
1. Iceland	1. Canada	1. Iceland	1. Sweden	1. Norway	1. Sweden
2. Norway	2. USA	2. Australia	2. Finland	2. Sweden	2. Norway
3. Australia	3. Japan	3. Norway	3. Norway	3. Finland	3. Finland
4. Canada	4. Netherlands	4. Canada	4. Denmark	4. Denmark	4. Denmark
5. Ireland	5. Finland	5. Sweden	5. USA	5. Iceland	5. Canada
6. Sweden	6. Iceland	6. Netherlands	6. Australia	6. Netherlands	6. New Zealand
7. Switzerland	7. Norway	7. France	7. France	7. Belgium	7. Netherlands
8. Japan	8. France	8. Finland	8. Japan	8. Australia	8. USA
9. Netherlands	9. Spain	9. Switzerland	9. Canada	9. Germany	9. Austria
10. France	10. Sweden	10. UK	10. Austria	10. Canada	10. Italy
11. Finland	11. Australia	11. Denmark	11. Barbados	11. New Zealand	11. Australia
12. USA	12. Belgium	12. Spain	12. New Zealand	12. Spain	12. Barbados
13. Spain	13. Switzerland	13. Japan	13. UK	13. Austria	13. Luxemburg
14. Denmark	14. Austria	14. Belgium	14. Italy	14. UK	14. Bahamas
15. Austria	15. Germany	15. Ireland	15. Czech Rep.	15. USA	15. Trinidad-Tob.
16. UK	16. Denmark	16. USA	16. Slovakia	16. Singapore	16. Cuba
17. Belgium	17. New Zealand	17. Italy	17. Hong Kong	17. Argentina	17. Switzerland
18. Luxemburg	18. UK	18. New Zealand	18. Belgium	18. France	18. Hungary
19. New Zealand	19. Ireland	19. Austria	19. Switzerland	19. Ireland	19. UK
20. Italy	20. Italy	20. Germany	20. Netherlands	20. Bahamas	20. Bulgaria

The top-20 list makes changes in rankings obvious, however analysis (Klasen 2006) show that whether a country is found at the top—most equal situation for women and men—or at the bottom—least equal situation; is rather stable over time. Changes that occur are basically restricted to changes within top, middle or bottom categories.

A further and perhaps even more important complexity in this field of research is the within country variation. In some countries gender equality (or the lack of it) is rather evenly distributed between different layers of the population; in other countries the situation for women, in relation to men, vary enormously between different ethnic groups and/or socio-economic strata of the population. I will not be able to take such within country variation into

account in the continuation of this project. However, I will try to be creative when using control variables.

The aim of this paper has been foremost theoretical. On the basis of current debates in feminist research on hindering and enabling factors for the transformation of society in women-friendly directions, I have developed two different routes towards gender equality: the route of deliberation and the route of jurisdiction. There is a need for developing explanatory themes that can be used in cross-country comparative research on variations in gender equality. Existing research is to a large extent focused on gender equality in top-positions in society, for example on the number of women elected to parliament. It is urgent to strengthen research on every day life situations for ordinary women and men.

The aim of the paper was also to test whether the theoretically founded routes correspond with differences in contemporary societies: is it plausible to use these dimensions to separate between countries? “Yes,” is the preliminary answer to that question. The framework developed works in that sense that it provides four groupings of countries that at first glance seem to have some face validity. However, the ultimate test is of course whether the framework developed here adds something to the understanding of *why* some countries have succeeded better than others in terms of progress for women.<sup>10</sup> In order to solve that question I have to get back to the discussion about definition of gender equality and also discuss other explanatory themes important to take into account; beliefs embedded in society and the level of democratization has already been mentioned and will be scrutinized further.

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<sup>10</sup> A list of indicators in the QoG dataset possible to use for measuring gender equality in everyday life situations is presented in appendix.

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## Appendix

2007/2008 UN Human Development Report  
Human development index (HDI) and  
Gender-related development index (GDI) rank

HDI Rank	Country	GDI
1	Iceland	1
2	Norway	3
3	Australia	2
4	Canada	4
5	Ireland	15
6	Sweden	5
7	Switzerland	9
8	Japan	13
9	Netherlands	6
10	France	7
11	Finland	8
12	United States	16
13	Spain	12
14	Denmark	11
15	Austria	19
16	United Kingdom	10
17	Belgium	14
18	Luxembourg	23
19	New Zealand	18
20	Italy	17
21	Hong Kong, China (SAR)	22
22	Germany	20
23	Israel	21
24	Greece	24
25	Singapore	..
26	Korea (Republic of)	26
27	Slovenia	25
28	Cyprus	27
29	Portugal	28
30	Brunei Darussalam	31
31	Barbados	30
32	Czech Republic	29
33	Kuwait	32
34	Malta	33
35	Qatar	37
36	Hungary	34
37	Poland	35
38	Argentina	36
39	United Arab Emirates	43
40	Chile	40
41	Bahrain	42
42	Slovakia	39
43	Lithuania	38
44	Estonia	41
45	Latvia	44
46	Uruguay	45
47	Croatia	46
48	Costa Rica	47
49	Bahamas	48
50	Seychelles	..
51	Cuba	49
52	Mexico	51
53	Bulgaria	50
54	Saint Kitts and Nevis	..
55	Tonga	52
56	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	61
57	Antigua and Barbuda	..
58	Oman	66
59	Trinidad and Tobago	55
60	Romania	53
61	Saudi Arabia	69
62	Panama	54
63	Malaysia	57
64	Belarus	56
65	Mauritius	62
66	Bosnia and Herzegovina	..
67	Russian Federation	58
68	Albania	60
69	Macedonia (TFYR)	63
70	Brazil	59
71	Dominica	..
72	Saint Lucia	..
73	Kazakhstan	64
74	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	67
75	Colombia	65
76	Ukraine	68
77	Samoa	71
78	Thailand	70
79	Dominican Republic	73
80	Belize	..
81	China	72
82	Grenada	..
83	Armenia	74
84	Turkey	78
85	Suriname	77
86	Jordan	79
87	Peru	75
88	Lebanon	80
89	Ecuador	..
90	Philippines	76
91	Tunisia	82
92	Fiji	81
93	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	..
94	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	83
95	Paraguay	85
96	Georgia	..
97	Guyana	87
98	Azerbaijan	86
99	Sri Lanka	88
100	Maldives	84
101	Jamaica	89
102	Cape Verde	92
103	El Salvador	91
104	Algeria	94
105	Viet Nam	90
106	Occupied Palestinian Territories	..
107	Indonesia	93

108	Syrian Arab Republic	95	167	Burundi	146
109	Turkmenistan	..	168	Congo (Democratic Republic of the)	147
110	Nicaragua	98	169	Ethiopia	148
111	Moldova	96	170	Chad	151
112	Egypt	..	171	Central African Republic	152
113	Uzbekistan	97	172	Mozambique	149
114	Mongolia	99	173	Mali	150
115	Honduras	100	174	Niger	154
116	Kyrgyzstan	101	175	Guinea-Bissau	155
117	Bolivia	102	176	Burkina Faso	153
118	Guatemala	103	177	Sierra Leone	156
119	Gabon	104			
120	Vanuatu	..			
121	South Africa	106			
122	Tajikistan	105			
123	Sao Tome and Principe	109			
124	Botswana	108			
125	Namibia	107			
126	Morocco	111			
127	Equatorial Guinea	110			
128	India	112			
129	Solomon Islands	..			
130	Lao People's Democratic Republic	114			
131	Cambodia	113			
132	Myanmar	..			
133	Bhutan	..			
134	Comoros	115			
135	Ghana	116			
136	Pakistan	124			
137	Mauritania	117			
138	Lesotho	118			
139	Congo	119			
140	Bangladesh	120			
141	Swaziland	122			
142	Nepal	127			
143	Madagascar	121			
144	Cameroon	125			
145	Papua New Guinea	123			
146	Haiti	..			
147	Sudan	130			
148	Kenya	126			
149	Djibouti	128			
150	Timor-Leste	..			
151	Zimbabwe	129			
152	Togo	133			
153	Yemen	135			
154	Uganda	131			
155	Gambia	132			
156	Senegal	134			
157	Eritrea	136			
158	Nigeria	138			
159	Tanzania (United Republic of)	137			
160	Guinea	140			
161	Rwanda	139			
162	Angola	141			
163	Benin	144			
164	Malawi	142			
165	Zambia	143			
166	Côte d'Ivoire	145			

**List of variables from the QoG dataset possible to use for measuring gender equality:**

**bl\_asyf15 Average Schooling Years (Female)**

(Time-series: 1960-2000, n: 928, N: 110, *N* : 103, *T* : 9)

(Cross-section: 2000, N: 104)

Average schooling years in the female population aged 15 and over.

**bl\_asyf25 Average Schooling Years (Female)**

(Time-series: 1960-2000, n: 920, N: 108, *N* : 102, *T* : 9)

(Cross-section: 2000, N: 103)

Average schooling years in the female population aged 25 and over.

**undp\_gem Gender Empowerment Measure**

(Cross-section: 2002, N: 78)

A composite index measuring gender inequality in three basic dimensions of empowerment: economic participation and decision-making, political participation and decision-making and power over economic resources. The variable ranges from 0 to 1, where a higher value indicates a higher level of gender empowerment.

**wef\_gend Gender Gap Index**

All scores are reported on a scale of 0 to 1, with 1 representing maximum gender equality. The study measures the extent to which women have achieved full equality with men in five critical areas:

- Economic participation
- Economic opportunity
- Political empowerment
- Educational Attainment
- Health and well-being

**Some of the relevant control variables:**

**wvs\_e083m Confidence: the women's movement (mean).**

**wvs\_e083p Confidence: the women's movement (%).**

(Cross-section: 1999-2002 (varies by country), N: 45)

**wvs\_genm Gender Equality Scale (mean).**

(Cross-section: 1999-2002 (varies by country), N: 77)

(Inglehart and Norris 2003).

Gender Equality Scale is a 0-100 scale composed of five items:

- "On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do," (agree coded low).
- "When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women," (agree coded low).
- "A university education is more important for a boy than a girl," (agree coded low).
- "Do you think that a woman has to have children in order to be fulfilled or is this not necessary?" (agree coded low).
- If a woman wants to have a child as a single parent but she doesn't want to have a stable relationship with a man, do you approve or disapprove?" (disapprove coded low).