

CEFC Taipei - Academia Sinica Lecture Series

法國研究學者來台訪問暨學術演講系列

The **French Center for Research on Contemporary China, Taipei Office**
and the **Institute of Sociology (IOS), Academia Sinica**,
have the pleasure to invite you to attend the following lecture:

**" Gender, Local Government and Public Policies.
The Europe of Local Parity yet to Be Done "**

“ 性別、地方政府與公共政策：歐盟的地方性別平等尚待落實 ”

(in English)

by **Prof. Jacqueline Heinen**

Professor Emeritus of Sociology,
University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines (UVSQ), France

on **Friday April 24, 2009, 2:30 PM**

Venue: **Conference Room 802, Institute of Sociology** (Humanities and Social
Sciences Building, South Tower, 8th Floor), **Academia Sinica**, Taipei

Organized with the support of the **French Institute in Taipei (IFT)**

The lecture is open to all
Please find the abstract below

Contact: cefc@gate.sinica.edu.tw - Tel : (02) 2789 0873 - www.cefc.com.hk/taipei

Abstract:

The failure to take into consideration gender inequalities and the under-representation of women in decision bodies have been identified as important brakes in terms of social change. To understand better that problem, we would like to investigate what are the consequences of ongoing political transformations concerning local democracy.

This paper is based mainly on a comparative case study conducted from 2000 to 2003 in seven European countries (Belgium, France, Finland, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Sweden) going from the North to the South of Western Europe. It concerned some eighty towns where the percentage of women within elected bodies happened to be quite different at that time and covered some 600 interviews. The objective of the research was to evaluate the effects of the gendered composition of elected political bodies on the functioning of local institutions and to explore women's dynamic contribution to the fate of local communities. At the heart of the analysis was as well the interaction between political bodies and civil society.

The outcomes of the investigation have shed light on the dynamic of changes within municipal councils. Indeed the presence of women in local government led to innovative public policies in several cases, and examples of countries such as Finland, Italy, and France demonstrated that changes in forms of governance influence women's capacity to develop innovative policies. But this went hand in hand with a trend observed in several countries concerning the regression of the real power of the councils, particularly in the economical field (the changing locus of decision-making from town councils to inter-communal structures are processes which throw women's increasing power in local government back into question). Anyhow, in all the considered countries, one could observe that the feminization of these bodies is not sufficient *per se* to insure that the gender dimension is seriously treated within the local life. Not only do the political configurations weight on the proclaimed objectives, but the plans of action and *material means* linked to the gender policies of equal opportunities appear to be decisive in the evaluation of the true impact of such measures. When these are not coupled with the feminization of high-ranking administrative positions and with closed links with feminist groups or movement, they often appear to become a dead letter.

Short biography:

Prof. Jacqueline Heinen, Professor Emeritus of Sociology, University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines (UVSQ), France.

Main fields of research: Sociology of gender, Social policies, Citizenship, and Welfare state.

Recent publications related to the topic of the seminar:

- *Gendering citizenship in Western Europe. New challenges for citizenship research in a cross-national context* (collective with R. Lister *et alii*), Policy Press, 2007.
- "Clashes and ordeals of women's citizenship in Central and Eastern Europe", in J. Lukic, J. Regulska and D. Zavirsek (eds), *Women and Citizenship in Central and East Europe*, Ashgate, 2006.
- *Guide to the integration of gender equality in local government policies* (with F. Gaspard, eds), European Commission, 2004.
- "Gender and (local) governance", in K. Verlaeckt and V. Vitorino (eds), *Unity and diversity: the contribution of the social sciences and the humanities to the European Research Area*, Vlanderen / C.E, 2002.
- "Citizenship in France and Finland in the 1990s. Restructuring Motherhood, Work and Care" (with H. Martiskainen), *Social Politics - International Studies in Gender, State and Society*, vol 8, n° 2, 2001.

French Center for Research on Contemporary China (CEFC) - Taipei Office

<http://www.cefc.com.hk/taipei>

Room B111, RCHSS, Academia Sinica,

128 Yanjiuyuan Road, Sec. 2, Nankang, Taipei

Tel : (886-2) 2789-0873 - Fax : (886-2) 2789-0874

cefc@gate.sinica.edu.tw