

Place, Gender and Strategies for Self-Support

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This paper discusses the need for taking gender into consideration when unemployment measures are being discussed. Focus is on the countryside of the south of Sweden. Restructuring of the labor market hit women as hard as men. In a society where adults have to provide for their own sustainability, work is of immense importance. The labor market in Sweden could be described as divided between a male, private- and a female public sector. The labor market also differs between different places. Cultural aspects of who can conduct what work are important in order to understand this split labor market. Gender is something we are taught in the socialization process and the ideas of what "proper" women as well as "proper" men do for a living is based upon traditions and cultural values produced and reproduced over time. In this paper I discuss why a gender perspective among women living in the countryside is of importance in order to understand ways of livelihood strategies.

Keywords: Sweden, women, countryside, labor market, livelihood strategies, culture, history.

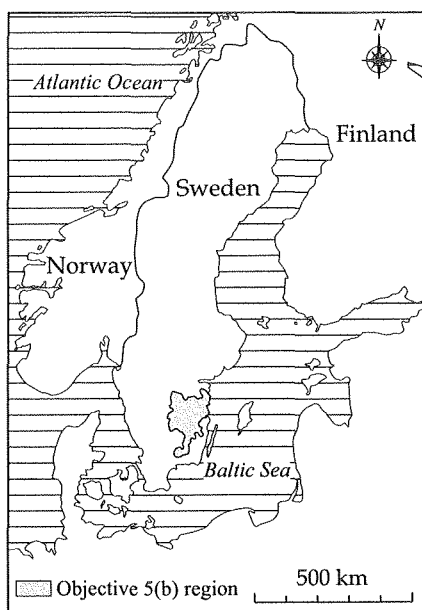
This paper discusses how place and gender can interact in self-supporting strategies. Place is understood as a geographical setting with its geophysical resources, as well as constructed by social relations with embedded power relations (Massey, 1994). The focus is on women's possibilities for self-support when they become unemployed. What options do they identify and what strategies seem reasonable? In order to analyze the strategies adopted by the women in the study—the subject of this paper—the term gender contract is used.

THE SETTING

The setting for the research project is the Objective 5(b) region¹ in southeast Sweden, consisting of twenty municipalities in four counties.² The region is about 1,800 square kilometers, an area about a quarter the size of the Republic of Ireland (Figure 1). The region as a whole is sparsely populated, with municipalities varying in size from 4,000 to 38,000 inhabitants. Due to its low population density and access to nature because of the legal right to enter private land, the area is popular as a tourist destination with a sizable proportion of foreign-owned holiday homes.³

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Figure 1: Sweden and the Objective 5(b) Southeast 1995–1999 region.



The labor market is characterized by long-established manufacturing industries. The workplaces have evolved from traditional localized industries, based on local resources such as timber and minerals. Today, comparatively labor-intensive industries such as light engineering, subcontracting and manufacturing, as well as paper mills and glassworks, are common. Alongside this type of industry where most men tend to work, women tend to be employed in the public sector.

The region is heterogeneous with forested inland areas, coastal districts, and the island of Öland. The region was not previously characterized as deprived, but was designated as such when Sweden became a member of the European Union.

A SENSE OF PLACE

Place is constructed through everyday actions of people living there, through industries and services, traditions, institutions and organizations. These structures are also connected in a wider network of power relations stretching at different levels through the world. The natural resources of a place provide the conditions for industries to evolve and for people to support them. These workplaces interact with different markets through the economic system in use (Massey, 1994). It is therefore difficult to describe the place, as its significance will alter according to who has the possibility or power to describe it. When a region is described as remote or underdeveloped, one must ask according to what criteria? In a traditional center-periphery perspective, where the city is the center and the values of an urbanized

area are the norms of prosperity, rural areas seem underdeveloped. Important are the level of education among the population, average income levels and living standards. Even this is problematic as individual experiences are hard to measure statistically. It might also be the case that people living in rural areas have advantages over people in some areas of large cities. There might, however, be problems when head offices of local industries, and decisions concerning people's futures, are situated and taken far away.

In the region examined there are several hamlets with traditional, localized industries.⁴ Such places have their own specific societal organization, with one dominant workplace and everyone deriving their income from this single unit. In the setting of this study, paper mills, glassworks, foundries, brickyards, engineering and so on dominate the labor market. Doreen Massey (1994) has in an essay described the organization of such societies in England. The situation is similar in Sweden, though the system was adapted to local conditions. This organization of society was left behind when trade unions became one part of the organization of labor (Wikander, 1992). The traditional industries were modernized, but the hamlets and small villages remained tied and dependent on the workplace, which was often the only or the largest employer in the area. The culture of how labor used to be organized and ideas based on the former organization of labor along gender lines may still be significant, even if its expressions have changed. It may still be a kind of common or received knowledge that women are interested in certain types of jobs and in specific positions which do not challenge the norms of the local (male) labor market.

SOME FEATURES OF THE SWEDISH LABOR MARKET

When the public sector was expanded in the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, it was mostly women who were recruited. This has led to a situation in the Swedish labor market where women are in the majority in the public sector and men dominate in the private sector (Gonäs, 1989, 1991; OGR, 1996; Statistics Sweden, SCB, 2000). However, not only is the labor market divided horizontally, but vertically as well. Men in the public sector tend to hold higher positions within organizations, or at least have the opportunity to organize their own work to a greater extent than women (Sundin and Holmquist, 1989; Sundin, 1998). Another characteristic of the Swedish labor market is the number of women in the workforce with small children. Because of well-developed childcare provision, women with children under school age have been able to take paid employment outside the home. Women in Sweden have been adopting a specific way of organizing their everyday lives according to work and family responsibilities (Friberg, 1990; Statistics Sweden, 2000). When the labor market is as divided according to gender as in Sweden, general cutbacks affect women's possibilities to support themselves in two ways: a reduction in care for children and the elderly so that women have less spare time to take on paid labor, and as a job provider. Women, in particular those living

in rural areas, were suffering hard as a result of the cutbacks in the 1990s (Gunnarsson and Friberg, 1995).⁵ Women are also less unionized than men, and the public sector trade unions are less aggressive than male-dominated or blue collar unions. This indicates that women, when they become unemployed, have greater difficulty finding a new job (Gonäs 1989) and often end up in a shadowland of various government-funded programs run by employment offices (Davies and Esseveld, 1988).

THE LABOR MARKET IN THE REGION

The intensive labor market described above tends to attract men before women. This is a problem for employment and job opportunities when structural changes demand cuts in official finances. A social and economic analysis of the former Objective 5b area concluded⁶ that women have suffered more than men from the economic crisis at the beginning of the 1990s. Although the industry was one of the first sector to be affected by the recession, the situation remained problematic for women even when industries were recovering from the economic crisis. Unemployment among women is higher than among men, and part-time unemployment among women in this region is far higher than the national average. It is most important to widen the labor market for women and to convince women to consider private sector industrial jobs (Program document for Objective 2 South).

MAKING USE OF THE TERM GENDER CONTRACT⁷

Gender System Theories

'Place' and 'space' are gendered categories, according to Rose (1993) and Massey (1994) all the same, 'space' and 'place' exclude women in geographical thought (Rose, 1993). Massey writes:

From the symbolic meaning of spaces/places and the clearly gendered messages which they transmit...they both reflect and affect the ways in which gender is constructed and understood. The limitations of women's mobility, in terms both of identity and space, has been in some cultural contexts a crucial means of subordination. (Massey, 1994:179)

This subordination has resulted in restricted possibilities for women for paid labor and in public life. In order to control women's sexuality, women's mobility was supervised. The division between paid labor and the home lead to a situation where men could control their women and women's identities (Arrhenius, 1999; Hirdman, 1990; Massey, 1994). The concept of 'woman' is built on the idea of a

woman as something completely different from a man⁸ (de Beauvoir, 1973; Johannisson, 1994, 1998). Today women in Sweden work almost as much as men, they are better educated, and many decide not to have children (Sundin, 1998; Statistics Sweden, 2000). How then is it possible to understand women's general subordination towards men?

One possibility is to use the terms gender systems and gender contracts. To understand women's subordination powerful tools are required, because power relations are both concretely evident and concealed in character. 'Gender' is understood as a process in which people are turned into female or male beings. These identities have institutional implications in terms of creating orders and meaning. Its outcomes are hierarchies and differences. What is constructed or thought of as 'female' is subordinated toward what is thought of as 'male'. Despite historical time or events, 'female' is less valued than that which is coded 'male'. This system forces men and women into specific rationalities because of social, cultural and economic necessity. In order to systematize these rationalities, one could speak of gender contracts.

Gender Contracts

Gender contract⁹ is a simple term for a complex reality, and it may be used to analyze the relationship between men and women, ideas and imagination, informal as well as formal rules and norms which these gendered ideas create according to men's and women's places, work and qualities within society. The contract can be identified on three levels: metaphysical, institutional and individual.¹⁰ There are two laws according to the gender system: (1) the separation of the sexes, and (2) the norm of the male primate (Hirdman, 1990). Hirdman illustrates how this concept may be useful in geography as she argues that "women's position within society compared to men's is characterized by a lack of space, restricted moves and controlled actions. The oppression of women is characterized by control of women's mobility, in physical as well as psychological space...A has restricted B's space, A controls/obstructs B's locomotive power, A takes up room at B's expense. Then we have an actor's perspective where people undoubtedly act out of 'their own interests', that is to say a power perspective..." (p. 79). To act rationally according to gender, in terms of gender contract, leads to a situation where both men and women are creators of the existing gender system. Everyone tries to make the best of the present situation. It is almost unthinkable to question or break the existing contract (Hirdman, 1990; Wikander, 1992). However, contracts may be renegotiated. But, as Wikander puts it: "a radical questioning of existing gender contracts is only possible at times when a society enters a materially expansive period or a crisis and at the same time there is an awareness of the existing unjust situation. Not until an interpretation of the prevailing situation as unjust gains acceptance by groups of people may lasting changes in terms of gender contracts be achieved" (Wikander, 1992:24, my translation).

A HISTORICAL APPROACH IN UNDERSTANDING WOMEN'S OPTIONS IN SELF-SUPPORTING STRATEGIES

Women have always responded to economic changes (Ehlers and Main, 1998; Bladh, 1995; Mackenzie, 1986). To many women this is a skill that comes with gender, such as being brought up as a girl and taught specific knowledge (Ehlers and Main, 1998). Doreen Massey argues for a historical approach in order to understand the present when analyzing the situation of women. When Massey compared different local labor markets according to gender, there were significant differences depending on women's situations. Although some women in certain areas had better options, women always tend to be subordinated to men within the same place (Massey, 1994).

Self-supporting strategies differ, depending on place. In Sweden, in a historical perspective, trading was strictly regulated by the guild system and only permitted in towns. In order to franchise, one had to control one's own economy, and since women did not achieve majority,¹¹ they were not allowed to trade. Instead they had to support themselves as hawkers (Bladh, 1995) or by selling food in kiosks. In rural areas the situation was different. Poor people did various kinds of jobs in order to support themselves. Johansson shows that a structuring variable such as gender did not have the same force as in towns. In order to survive, one could not afford to argue if the job offered was a man's or a woman's (Johansson, 1996).

In order to understand the present labor market, it is important to know what options women identify. Why is certain work coded as female? Why do women respond in certain ways when faced with unemployment? In April 1999, the licentiate thesis 'Women's Self-Supporting Strategies in Rural Areas' (Lindkvist Scholten, 1999) was presented. The purpose of the study was to find out how women in the Objective 5(b) area supported themselves when they became unemployed. The strategies identified in the thesis were:

- To live on unemployment benefit
- Education
- A combination of various support strategies, including the informal economy.

SOME FEMALE VOICES

On Unemployment

Habits are very important to many people. Everyday tasks may seem dull, but they organize the day and one comes into contact with other people, some of whom are friends. When one becomes unemployed, this daily structure is broken. There are no duties to carry out, no coffee breaks to share, and there is no news to catch up on. Even in times of high unemployment, as in the 1990s, unemployment seems to be something personal, something people are unwilling to discuss with friends or neighbors. Anne, one of the women interviewed, told how she stayed indoors in

order not to show her neighbors that she was at home during the day. She became very isolated. Some of the women discussed the situation of not having a job to go to, for example Annika: "It's quite hard not having a job...it's depressing" (Lindkvist Scholten, 1999:46). Gunilla expressed the hardship of not having a job in terms of begrudging herself things and food: "It is hard to justify things for yourself...sometimes it's hard to eat, because you haven't...you don't deserve food, that's how I've felt it..." (Lindkvist Scholten, 1999:46). Anne talked about how she handled being unemployed: "For the time being, in order not to be completely ruined, mentally...you have to have something practical to do" (Lindkvist Scholten, 1999: 46).

*Living on the Dole*¹²

Anne's way of supporting herself was on unemployment benefit: "Living on the dole means that you are actively seeking work and that you have to be at the labor market's disposal seven days a week, Saturdays as well as Sundays, twenty-four hours a day" (Lindkvist Scholten, 1999:50). These are the terms in order to receive unemployment benefit, which is paid for 300 days. After that Ann would have to take part in activities run by the employment office. Economically, her life was quite insecure: "It's terrible, I have twenty years to retirement and I dread to think what might happen if I lose my right to unemployment benefit". She continues: "I have to struggle to support myself for another twenty years, but I don't know how" (Lindkvist Scholten, 1999:47). She was planning to start her own business, but found the terms and conditions too hard. There is a great deal of insecurity involved in starting a business from unemployment without capital, in particular with children to support. The economic responsibility towards her child was crucial in her decision not to start a business.

Planning to Start a Business and the Situation of a Businesswoman

Women who took part in the training program and were considering starting their own business intended to use their homes or farms as the business location. Since they had small children, horses or interests that were hard to combine with a business a long distance away, they argued for a practical solution. Working at home meant that they would be able to carry out their everyday tasks and would not need to spend money renting business premises or have large travelling expenses. This also indicates that the women not only viewed themselves, but also were viewed by their husbands as the head of domestic responsibility (Hultén, 2000; OGR,1997). Starting a business at home further meant that they would turn their home from a private space into a public room, into which people and goods would meet (Mackenzie, 1986; Staeheli, 1996; Bondi and Domosh, 1998). Practicality was the common opinion held by the women interviewed, although business advisors¹³ argued that this is a problem among women wishing to start their own business: according to them, women do not strictly separate their professional and personal lives, but tend to merge their private economy with the business administration.

In order to successfully start a business of their own, the women had to involve their husbands in some way. One of the interviewees, Marie, stated that there had been difficulties at home when she wanted to work on her material for starting her business: neither her husband nor her children understood mum's unfamiliar behavior. She herself felt that she had developed a great deal through meeting new friends, learning a new way of expressing herself, contemplating new ideas, and being focused on a specific target—her business. She understood that it was hard for her family to cope with the new person she had become, and the solution was to talk a great deal with the rest of the family.

Wendela, who had been running her business for a while, combined leatherwork with handicraft, a second-hand shop and various kinds of training courses. She built her business slowly from scratch, combining her interest in leather with paid work outside the home for the first few years, sewing waistcoats in the evenings. She applied for a business development loan and was met by a young business advisor: "I applied for this grant, and along came a young thing from the Development Fund who told me that I shouldn't count on getting the grant. I was below the threshold and I wouldn't be able to support myself. My opinion was that it was up to me if I wanted to be here, living a Spartan life with less income. But according to her, I would need to invest at least SEK 300,000" (Lindkvist Scholten, 1999:58).

The women interviewed, living in this type of settlement, have limited options for job opportunities or other possible livelihood strategies. However, one can state that their choices, when starting a business of their own, lie within what are considered female interests.

Living in the Country

The meaning of living in the country varies according to socio-economic group, expectations, experiences, and networks, both in local terms and to a broader extent. The women interviewed spoke in terms of 'us' and 'them'. 'We' were the people living in the country, having to face increasingly difficult circumstances. 'They' were the people who lived in the city, having it all in place: activities for children, jobs, schools and services. At the time of the interviews, two important questions were debated in the media: the postal service and the school bus service. The postal authorities proposed that people living in remote areas should pick up their mail at the nearest larger village. One woman stated: "I think it's insane. It's better that people living in town walk to pick up their post. They can walk. We always have to take the car, and then you have to think about the petrol prices" (Lindkvist Scholten, 1999:76).

Belonging and identity were other important questions. Women who ran their own businesses thought it was important to be well known in the community. One of the women said: "It would have been much more difficult if I had ended up in a different area" (Lindkvist Scholten, 1999:68). However, people do move around and new families had moved into some of the hamlets where the interviews were conducted. Some differences existed among the women who had moved into the

area. Some of the new villagers, like Simone and Maryanne, held a positive view: they had left the big city behind for the country, and were very happy with their decisions. They thought it was natural that local people took an interest in them. Maryanne moved to a farm with no husband, three children and a large number of horses. She thought it was natural that people would pay attention to her: "I don't see the attention as something negative, I don't. I think it's great, and for many people it is a question of security, knowing who lives there, what kind of people they are and what they do for a living" (Lindkvist Scholten, 1999:72). Simone also thought it was natural. Being the outsider, a person known to the local community as the one from the big city, also had practical advantages: "I never had to give directions to friends visiting from town. Anyone paying a visit could simply ask the first person they met, 'Where does the woman from Stockholm live?'" (Lindkvist Scholten, 1999:72). Erica, a third woman who had recently moved to the village, though from a nearby village, viewed things differently. She felt that the neighbors observed her and her family and that the family was a target for gossip. She said: "They don't mean to be spiteful, they are just thoughtless" (Lindkvist Scholten, 1991:71). However, one of the women quoted earlier said: "If you're an outsider and arrogant, that's not very popular—I know best, this is how I usually did it—I don't think that's the way. You have to be, humble isn't the word, however, bragging about yourself is not the way" (Lindkvist Scholten, 1999:73).

Kinship also means that people are concerned about relationships: friends look after one another and protect each other's livelihoods. In her attempt to start a business of her own, Anne asked around what one of the hamlet administrations paid for plants and gardening services. She did not get any answers. One person working as administrator knew the old horticulturist. Anne's proposed business was viewed as a threat to the existing contractor. Anne reflected on the situation: "It hasn't got anything to do with me, it's about the harsh situation in the job market, and everyone protects their own income" (Lindkvist Scholten, 1999:73).

ANALYZING PLACE, GENDER AND LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES

Analyzing place is not an easy task, and it is even more difficult when the region is constructed in order to fit programs such as those run by the European Union for regional development funds. There are several aspects that need to be taken into consideration, one of which is how the region is defined and by whom. If well-organized groups manage to make their voices heard, others are silenced.

A description of a region is not enough. In order to deepen the understanding of what constitutes a given society, one way might be to divide it into different pieces. The labor market, the culture connected with labor, and women's and men's involvement in paid labor might be different aspects that could generate interesting knowledge. By investigating how women and men have supported themselves and their families in a certain region, and in a historical perspective, it is possible to

discuss whether certain tasks have been coded according to gender and what cultural aspects of labor have organized women's and men's paid work. In so doing, it may be possible to map gender-specific labor markets.

Follow-up research has for instance revealed the importance of work carried out by women and children in the glassworks industry in the county of Småland in southern Sweden. On the basis of earlier findings on the situation of women and men in rural areas (Bjerén, 1989; Eriksson, 1989; Bull, 1991, 1993; Friberg, 1993; Frånberg, 1994; Forsberg, 1995; Ronnby, 1995a, b; Cullblom, 1996; Friberg and Sundin, 1996), one interpretation is that the labor market, in particular in small settlements with traditional industry, is male. The gender system in these villages is clear. Even though the government talks about mainstreaming gender issues, men still dominate society in the small industrial communities and sometimes poorly treat women who wish to become part of local development (Frånberg, 1994; Sundin, 1989; Ås, 1981).

The women in the study who wish to start businesses of their own are challenging the local labor culture, since industry and business are perceived to be male domains (Sundin and Holmquist, 1989, 1996). In order to conform to local society, but still be determined to run a business of their own, it is more socially acceptable for women to start businesses coded as 'female'. This may be one explanation why, in addition to the fact that the women planning such enterprises also have skills within these domains, women start businesses such as handicraft stores, gift shops, guided tours on horseback, and so on. These sectors pose no threat to the 'real' labor market from a male perspective. Men will continue to control important places of work: it won't be women who change the community.¹⁴ In a gender contract perspective, the public arena within local society will continue to be lead by organizations with chairmen, and industries and workplaces in the private sector will continue to be lead by men. The enterprises planned by women in the study are located in the home, which thereby provides the space needed for women restricted to the private domain (see for instance Massey, 1994). Women who wish to start a business offering guided tours on horseback are seldom seen in the public arena at the center of local society—they are using the space in-between. Nevertheless, if women are successful, this will result in a better economic situation for the family, a re-evaluation of the work done by women, and, in a longer perspective, efforts made by women may become important for local development (Ronnby, 1994; Bull, 1991, 1993; Frånberg, 1994).

However, in bringing about change, most women complained about 'lack of time'. In order to succeed in supporting themselves, they had to work out how they should behave. Applications for government subsidies for business start-ups had to be approved by employment office advisors. The women who had taken part in special training programs had to present budgets to supervisors and banking advisors for approval. Sometimes they had problems organizing their activities according to all the different authorities they had to contact. In attempting to make every step on

the path to self-support, in the correct order, some failed. And women who were in the process of starting their own business received little help from their husbands and children with everyday domestic chores. As responsible mothers, they sacrificed their own ambitions until everything else was done. As a woman, one never has to be thought of as unemployed: "Women's unemployment is not seen to 'disrupt' family life, or cause TV programs to be made about the challenges to gender relations, for women do the domestic work anyway. Having lost one of their jobs, they carry on (unpaid) with the other" (Massey, 1994:207). This is as true for Sweden as for any other country, even if the Nordic countries are viewed as progressive with regard to domestic responsibilities and gender (OGR, 1997).

CONCLUSIONS

Livelihood strategies evolve differently in different places. Where some women argue for diversified livelihood strategies in order to support themselves in rural areas, and believe that they are necessary to survive, other women view diversified strategies with suspicion. The work carried out in this research is one contribution to help understand how women organize their lives to support themselves, how they define the place where they live, and what it means to be self-supporting. Construction of reality is never easy. One interviewee, Gunvor, reflected on the categorization of her municipality as in need of government aid for regional development: "People from Småland didn't have to cry out for government aid before. We didn't shout out loud. Then. There was lots of work, you could choose. That was the situation during the whole of my working life, there was no shortage of work here before...but we were a deprived municipality already in 1992, or became one: all these building firms that have disappeared since then" (Lindkvist Scholten, 1999:77). This also indicates, as Massey (1994) has argued, that deprived areas are not static, rather the situation varies according to time and place.

'Place' may not contain the whole explanation for gender inequality (Bowlby, 1986), or what options may be open to women to support themselves in rural areas. Socio-economic group, migration, education and love are all important variables. In order to understand the present situation according to livelihood strategies and the situation of women in rural areas, various aspects must be considered. 'Place' is important because rural areas differ. Being peripheral in the South does not necessarily mean the same as being peripheral in the North. The construction of gender is another important issue. What it is like to be a woman in a certain area, what traditions might be observed and how womanhood is defined are not predetermined options. How labor is organized and the division of paid and unpaid as well as unpayable work, such as being a mother and the responsibilities entailed, must be taken into consideration (Hirdman, 1992; Wikander, 1992). When all these different aspects have been adjusted, then it will perhaps be possible to redraw the map of rural society and local community according to livelihood strategies and development.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I wish to thank Eric Clark, professor at the Department of Social and Economic Geography, Malin Rönnblom, Marianne Bull, Elin Whilborg and Ulrika Dahl in the Network for regional development and gender for comments on earlier drafts. Thanks also to Tora Friberg and Birgitta Andersson for your support.

NOTES

1. The European Union's Structural Funds consist of the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund and the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance. Together, these funds are intended to help increase economic and social cohesion between Member States, and constitute an important instrument for reducing regional imbalances and differences in economic development. Objective 2 is designed to stimulate industrial development in remote industrial and rural regions. In Sweden, Objective 2 largely corresponds to the previous Objectives 2 and 5b (Document of Strategies for Objective 5(b); Document of Strategies for Objective 2) www.nutek.se 2001-06-04).

The Objective 5(b) region has since the study been transformed into the Objective 2 South region with the addition of four new municipalities in the county of Blekinge. The new municipalities have not been included in this paper, and the figures presented are based on the former Objective 5(b) region.

2. The region includes the administrative districts of Boxholm, Kinda, Valdemarsvik, Ydre, Ödeshög, Aneby, Eksjö, Nässjö, Sävsjö, Transå, Vetlanda, Lessebo, Tingsryd, Uppvidinge, Borgholm, Hultsfred, Högsby, Mörbylånga, Vimmerby and Västervik.

3. See for instance Müller, 1999.

4. When the sample was derived, the intention was that women living in rural areas would be interviewed. The setting shows a broad variety of cities and hamlets, with three cities, a number of market towns, villages and small towns built up around railway stations, church villages and mill hamlets. The employment offices offered names of individuals who were members of organizations interested in the situation of women in rural areas. These women in turn provided the names of other women who might be interested in participating in the research project. When analyzing the data, it became clear that all the interviews were located in mill hamlets, though this was not the intention of the study. Five women were interviewed individually, one unemployed, two self-employed and two who had entered an education program. A group interview was also conducted with 15 women who had joined a training program financed by the European Union, Objective 3.

5. In some municipalities in northern Sweden dependence on the public sector as an employer is as high as 70 percent.

6. This analysis was conducted by the board of the Objective 5b-organization.
7. This section is based on Hirdman, 1990.
8. Differences such as socio-economic boundaries, sexual preference, ethnic identity or different family status among women were not taken into consideration until recently.
9. In Sweden there has been major criticism of the term gender contract, in particular of its static construction and structural perspective, see for instance Gro Hagemann 1994, Gro Hagemann and Klas Åmark 1999, Lena Sommestad 1994 and Christina Carlsson-Wetterberg 1992.
10. Gender contract on an individual level is also characterized by age, socio-economic structure and family situation.
11. Women in Sweden gained the right to vote in 1918. The first election in which women were allowed to vote was in 1921.
12. Since this fieldwork was carried out, unemployment law has changed.
13. This was an opinion held by a business advisor in the county of Jönköping, who was interviewed in 2000.
14. See Massey, 1994.

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