

RHEA Research Seminar

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**GENDER, DIVERSITY
& INTERSECTIONALITY
RESEARCH CENTRE**

With the academic year coming to close, we welcome you for a last RHEA Research Seminar with PhD-researcher Amal Miri from Ghent University!

"Bordering family life: tensions within marriage migration policy in Flanders" **Amal Miri**

Monday 3 June 2019 - 12.30h-14h

Location: VUB, Campus Etterbeek, Building D, room D1.07.



Marriage migration has been at the source of various societal controversies across European countries in general, and Belgium in particular. Over the recent years, several EU countries have adjusted their juridical restrictions concerning family related migration in general and marriage migration in particular often differentiating between national citizens, EU and non-EU members. The most important pre and post marriage restrictions in Belgium contain conditions in terms of income, housing, age and a prolonged – up until five years - probationary period, during which residence is conditional and marriage migration couples have to prove their commitment to a “genuine” marital life/cohabitation.

This paper builds on a “narrative analysis” of policy documents, transcripts of parliamentary debate and media pronouncements by government ministers/representatives as well as in-depth interviews with six experts in the field of family migration and integration. Drawing from these different narratives and ‘situated knowledges’ (Haraway, 1988) this paper wishes to contribute to the existing scholarship on politics and migration in general and “the gendered politics of migration” in particular. By applying a critical lens in analysing family/marriage migration policy and the rising discourse of gender-equality, women’s empowerment and social inclusion that informed this policy, this paper will argue that these policies embody a fundamental tension. This tension is located between holding on to these restrictive measures and controls using the rationale of gender-equality and the fight against forced/sham marriages on the one hand and the vulnerable positions couples in general and women in particular are put in while struggling to bring their relationship in line with the family norms and ideals of state policies on the other hand.

Amal Miri is PhD-researcher at the Centre for Research on Culture and Gender at Ghent University.



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RHEA Centre of expertise Gender, Diversity and Intersectionality
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Belgium

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