

**European Master in Human Rights and Democratisation**

# **Women in European Asylum Law**

**A legal and policy analysis**

**Master Thesis**

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To my parents,  
with love and gratitude

## **Abstract**

Around one third of all asylum applications in Europe are made by women. Gender affects the whole process of asylum, from the question of why someone is leaving her or his home to the treatment in the host country. To deal with both female and male asylum seekers in a non-discriminatory and equal manner, gender-neutral provisions are essential. As the EU is the main legislator in the field of asylum law in the Member States, this thesis aims to analyse to what extent the heavily criticised legislative measures of the first phase of the Common European Asylum System show awareness of the gender dimension of the asylum process. I describe briefly the connection between human rights and gendered refugee law and the development of the European asylum system, continue to analyse the choice of words in the provisions and finish with an in-depth legal and policy analysis of the Reception Conditions Directive, the Dublin II Regulation, the Qualification Directive, the Procedures Directive and the respective proposals. The examination shows that only few gender-sensitive provisions are included in the measures, which is reflected in the lack of constant use of gender-neutral language. Female asylum seekers therefore do not find equal and sufficient protection in European countries.

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