



WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL LIFE IN UKRAINE 2010-2012

MARFA SKORYK, Kyiv Institute for Gender Studies Charity Organisation **(0, 2, 3, 5, 6)**

YULIYA STREBKOVA, Ukrainian Centre for Gender Education at the "KPI" NTUU **(1, 4)**

Edited by:

SVITLANA MATVIENKO, USPS Programme Coordinator, Agency for Legislative Initiatives

ANDRIY KOGUT, Programme Coordinator, European Studies, Regional & International Cooperation, Agency for Legislative Initiatives

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Introduction

The present country report is based on the results of the Women's Participation in the Social and Political Life Workshop arranged by the Agency for Legislative Initiatives jointly with the Council of Europe and held on 19-21 June 2013 in Kyiv.

The topics proposed then for discussion and raised at panel sessions, such as gender inequality in the field of employment, traditional concepts of the woman's role in the society, women's involvement in politics, education, protection of motherhood, family planning, domestic violence, implementation of the National Action Plan on Women's Issues and other laws, living standards, as well as valuable expert comments made during the event contributed to the development of the vision and content of individual parts of this report.

The challenges that the authors faced are obvious.

In Ukraine, too much of everything has been done – for more than a decade, the country has been justly proud of its status as a leader in promoting gender equality in its region. Therefore, it was not the easiest task to select the proper retrospective of events, as well as the relevant key and model outcomes.

The authors realise and admit with regret that there are important subjects which, for various reasons, have not been included herein. For example, there is virtually no coverage of the very interesting and powerful activities of some international donor organisations, which have often been initiators or our country's full-fledged and reliable partners in the process of asserting equality and non-discrimination. In this context, the relevant credit goes, in the first place, to the UN, the Council of Europe and the European Union agencies or institutions representing individual countries – the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the USAID, the Canadian International Development Agency; the multi-year UNDP Equal Opportunities and Women's Rights Programme, which provided support in institutionalising the gender equality policy in our country; UN Women with its current highly valuable initiative in the field of gender budgeting which is not covered here in view of the selected format of the report either; ILO, which has facilitated equality in the labour market programmes.

Besides, the entire new directions in the equality policy pursued by the Ukrainian NGOs have not received sufficient attention in the report. The examples include the extremely interesting media initiative of the Ukrainian Marketing Association on non-governmental regulation of non-discriminatory advertising standards, or the approaches to gender equality in business practiced by the Development of the Corporate Social Responsibility Centre, as well as some other programmes.

As a consequence, the report focuses on six major topics: the traditional woman's role in the society, an overview of

political obligations, gender dimensions in education, standards of living, and domestic violence. A separate, final section looks into the practical implementation of gender equality and fulfilment of the respective programmes.

While drafting the report, the authors used data of the official statistics, Country Reports on the gender equality status in the Ukrainian society of 2007, 2008 and 2009, as well as findings of the surveys performed by the distinguished research centres in Ukraine.

The report consists of 45 pages.

1 - Traditional Concept of Women's Role in Society

Overview of the situation

Revival of traditions has played a key role in the process of Ukraine's statehood development. The traditions are safeguarded by law: Article 11 of the Constitution of Ukraine proclaims the state's assistance to consolidation and development of Ukrainian traditions.

Starting with 2010, a new phase in bringing traditional values into the public focus can be singled out, expressed in a strengthened influence of the church on the social and political processes and clerical changes in legislation. There is the Ukrainian Orthodox Church Representation functioning at the Ukrainian parliament, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, with the status of the Synodal Institution. Some of the recent draft amendments to certain laws of Ukraine on partnership relations of the state, the school and the church concern the educational reform in order "*to preserve and to enhance the traditional religious culture*". According to the Razumkov Centre Ukraine- 2013: State-Religion Relation survey, 67% of the Ukrainian citizens recognised themselves to be believers as of the early 2013 with the Orthodox Christianity of Moscow Patriarchy being the most numerous confession.

Even though the Constitution and laws of Ukraine do not define the concepts of traditions or traditional and family values, a number of regulations related to the themes of customs and social activity of women operate these terms quite extensively. Thus, the traditional approach implies not so much restriction of the women's social activity, as their assignment to the family (private) sector. Article 24 of Ukraine's Constitution guarantees equal opportunities to women and men in their social, political and cultural lives. The same article sets that there shall be no privileges on the grounds of political, religious or other beliefs. However, more and more often Ukrainian MPs refer to the Constitution Preamble stating that the Basic Law is adopted with awareness of "*responsibility before God*", which, in their opinion, means that "the Constitution of Ukraine determines that Ukraine is a Christian state". In general, it can be expected that in the context of the intended constitutional amendments the issue of legalisation of traditional values will become relevant again.

Traditions in the Mass Media and Private Sector

The positive thing is that the current Constitution of Ukraine establishes equality of women and men in the most traditional field – marriage. According to Article 51, "marriage shall be based on the free consent of a woman and a man. Each of the spouses shall have equal rights and duties in the marriage and family". Article 3 of the Law of Ukraine on Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities

of Women and Men (the Equal Rights Law) stipulates that the state policy shall be aimed at promoting the gender equality culture. At the same time, religious figures solicit provision of air time on all the channels to broadcast their spiritual and educational, moral and instructive programmes involving representatives of Churches and religious organisations in Ukraine.¹

The recommendations of the September 2012 Parliamentary Hearings on the Institute of Family in Ukraine: the Status, Challenges and Solutions repeatedly emphasise the need for the traditional family values propaganda, while gender equality is never mentioned. As mentioned above, however, such terms as "propaganda", "traditional values", "family values" are not currently defined in the Ukrainian law, and thus they become subject to speculations. Often by the traditional family values propaganda, such approaches imply popularisation of the image of a dependent, subordinated and socially limited woman. Thus, even in the religious congratulation address on the occasion of a women's holiday, it is mentioned that a woman was given to a man and "*must work with love for his good*".²

According to the Women's Information Consultative Centre, the Women's Consortium of Ukraine, La Strada - Ukraine and others, the Ukrainian media continue disseminating gender stereotypes limiting women's activity to the private field: housekeeping, care, sexuality. TV programmes with dismissing attitudes to women are positioned as family ones: "Wife Swap", "Let's Get Married", "Family". In the first programme, two families swap wives as if they were things. In the "Family" programme, a husband and a wife get married blindly. Disguising that as traditions, spouses in such TV programmes are picked up for men by unfamiliar matchmakers, numerologists, and astrologers. Meanwhile, the Ukrainian tradition lies not only in the woman's consent to marry, but also her initiative in choosing her husband. It is generally not in the Ukrainian customs to restrict the women's participation in the social and cultural life. Our history knows bright images of female leaders, patrons, scientists, artists, public and political figures, fighters for Ukraine's independence and preservation of national traditions.^{3,4} Starting with the ancient references made in "The History" by Herodotus and up to "La Description d'Ukraine" composed in the 17th century by G. de Beauplan, the Ukrainian studies sources record that in comparison with their geographical neighbourhood, the Ukrainian women stood out due to their education, physical development, activity, bigger property rights and social freedoms.

¹ http://yrciro.org.ua/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=206&Itemid=1

² http://churches.kiev.ua/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1604:2011-08-31-14-12-17&catid=77:2011-08-30-13-38-08&Itemid=6

³ Ukrainians in History, Borisenko, V., Holovashchenko, M., Krivoshiy, O.

⁴ Hrabovska, I. Heroic Gender Identity: the Ukrainian Studies Dimension – http://archive.nbuv.gov.ua/portal/Soc_Gum/Nznuoa/kultura/2010_5/25.pdf

Modern ethnographers, historians and sociologists, while pointing out to certain inequalities between men and women,⁵ still note a series of unique cultural manifestations of Ukrainian women's activity: the rite of a girl making a proposal to a young man, the Idle Monday rite reserved only for married women, the economic power the mother and the mother-in-law, sexuality of women of various age groups, the phenomenon of "materyzna" (inheritance of land, property and money along the female line, independently of the marriage) and others. *Engraved in the Ukrainians' minds back in the time of the Trypillian culture, the matriarchal traditions were supported and stroke roots in the Cossack times. The Ukrainian folklore often demonstrates a woman's dominance over a man.*^{6, 7, 8}

There are reasons to believe that a high, compared to the territories adjacent to the Ukrainian land, social activity of Ukrainian women has developed historically. This contrasts with the traditional Catholic vision of the woman's social calling "*as a servant to a man, as different from a man at the individual and social levels*".⁹ Modern religious figures also note: "How far is the God's standard from the spread everywhere Ukrainian matriarchy!"¹⁰ Therefore, under the guise of the traditionally Ukrainian female role playing, the concept of "Berehynia" (the keeper of a household) is often presented. A number of experts from the Ukrainian Association of the Women's History Researchers and the Ukrainian Studies Centre believe that the Berehynia mythologem is culturally and historically unjustified.

It is noteworthy that the social and role-playing model of the Berehynia is still rather ambiguous. For example, there used to be the "Me – Berehynia" All-Ukrainian Socio-Educational Project supported by the Institute of the Presidential Commissioner for Children's Rights that aimed to choose the best Berehynia. The parameters included the ability to take care of one's appearance, to be stylish, to become successful and to correctly choose one's future profession, to know and to protect one's rights. In our opinion, popularity of the "Berehynia" concept shows that in the Ukrainian mentality femininity does not conflict with the leadership qualities. Instead, the suggested vision of the female subordination, humility and social restrictions hardly inspires any response in the mass consciousness of the Ukrainian women. It is,

⁵ Kys, O. Who is Protected by Berehynia, or Matriarchy as Men's Invention http://gazeta.dt.ua/SOCIETY/kogo_oberigae_bereginya_abo_matriarhat_yak_cholovichi_y_vinahid.html

⁶ N. Bozhko, Researches in the Ukrainian Mentality as Part of Upbringing the National Elite

⁷ Ukrainians in History. Borisenko V., Holovashchenko M., Krivoshiy O.

⁸ Apanovych, O. The Cossack Mentality of the Ukrainian People / Suchasnist. -1995. - #9. - p. 104-108. - p.108.

⁹ The Phenomenon of a Woman in the Interpretation of the Roman Catholic Church: Civilisational Challenges of Today. PhD Thesis Abstract: 09.00.11 / Pohorila Lyudmyla Mykhailivna, Zhytomyr, 2011. – 19 p. Page 5

¹⁰ The Catholic Portal "Milites Christi Imperatoris". The Man and the Woman's Obedience – <http://www.christusimperat.org/uk/node/20232>

however, in the reproduction of the pseudo-tradition of the female limitations that some public figures see Ukraine's future, while the women's activism and women's going beyond the family context are interpreted as a threat to their own interests ("the religious faith and the strong family is what brings the "Russian World" together).

Along with the propaganda of the neo-traditional values, the concept of the "anti-family technologies" is being developed with the reference to the gender policy, juvenile justice, and the so-called "homodictatorship". The gender policy is interpreted as something imported, not typical of the Ukrainian mentality. A number of pro-religious NGOs and informal associations have been registered and are functioning in Ukraine ("The Parent Committee of Ukraine", the Ukrainian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church, the Family under the Veil of the Virgin) that aim at cooperating with public authorities and at strengthening their influence on the legislative and executive branches power. Their representatives can now be met as members of public councils (consultative and advisory bodies acting at executive authorities in accordance with the Resolution of 3 November 2010) in many regions of Ukraine. Regional councils are used to initiate mass appeals to the central authorities to review the policy of equal rights and opportunities for women and men. As a result of their activity, social and political activity of women, their cultural efforts and the gender policy are interpreted as non-conventional and threatening damage on the society ("traditional family – future of the nation; gender – collapse of the traditional family"). The messages of these organisations to the state authorities create the contraposition effect between "our" (cultural, Christian, correct) and "Western" (immoral, spiritless and bad) roles forming a hostile attitude to everything "alien-western": *"The majority of the destructive phenomena alien to the culture and traditional values of Ukraine are spread through the resources of the intergovernmental structures, such as the United Nations and the Council of Europe".¹¹*

The official view of the ACCRO (the All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organisations), however, on the modern gender roles and the European integration is quite ambiguous. They declare *support for the traditional moral, family and other spiritual values in the context of the deepening relations between Ukraine and the EU.*¹² At the same time, the Basics of the Rus Orthodox Church Social Concept (part of the ACCRO) stipulate that gender specificities are not limited only to physical differences, as a man and a woman are two different ways of existence, and "equality of the genders' essence" is based on the natural differences meaning different callings both in the family and in the society. Also, *"the Church calls for the struggle with the*

¹¹ <http://www.upr.moippo.org.ua/noviny/rezolyuciya.PDF>

¹² http://vrciro.org.ua/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=205&Itemid=1

dissemination of this demonic temptation, which, contributing to the destruction of the family, undermines the foundations of the society". Thus, feminism is seen as "a very dangerous phenomenon".

Threats to the Women's Social and Political Activity

The gender policy is being rejected at the background of the anti-European movements: *"The EU gender ideology is destruction of the Ukrainian family, youth and state", "The EU forms a punitive gender fascism system."*¹³ Together with the popularisation of the criminal subculture, this sort of proselytism leads to the spread of aggressive anti-gender and xenophobic moods: *"Fruits of the European integration - the hell on earth", "The European integration = Ukraine's suicide".*¹⁴ Apart from the pro-religious organisations websites, such projects get a massive information support through the "V Kontakte" social network, the "Russian People's Line" information and analysis service, the "Russian-Speaking Ukraine" website, the website of the Russian People's Union of the City of Kharkov and others. Intolerance and the hate language used towards the opponents of the neo-traditionalists are being spread. All these threats the safety of not only individual women, but also to the social stability in general.

In the post-Soviet space, a certain legislative trend of "traditional family values" is being formed. It implies strengthening of the state's control over the private sphere, restriction of women's social activity and opportunities, presentation of female subordination as traditions. Some representatives of the academic community develop the following recommendations: *"Ukraine has a great opportunity to stop the gender education and gender policy expansion in the country. The first step to be made on this path is to withdraw the term of "gender" from the conceptual apparatus in our country".*¹⁵ Contraposition of the legislative provisions and the neo-traditionalism is reflected in some legislative initiatives: if the religious vision of a tradition contradicts legal provisions, an effort is made to amend the legislation. *"The main objective of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church Representation to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine is approximation of the Ukrainian legislation and the regulatory framework to the needs of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church".*¹⁶ Thus, 20 gender and bio-policy bills were submitted to the VR in the period between 2011 and 2013 with the following of them being most widely discussed: the abortion ban (withdrawn (12.12.2012) and restriction of the assisting reproductive

¹³ <http://srn.kharkov.ua/ru/journalism/45-novosti/975-hsrn.html>,
<http://www.pokrov.lviv.ua/?p=537>.

¹⁴ http://semia-ua.blogspot.com/2013/02/blog-post_26.html

¹⁵ Bioethical Perspectives of the Gender Policy Issues in Ukraine –
<http://vg.rodkom.org/?p=653>

¹⁶ Annual Report of the Representation of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church Representation to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine – <http://orthodox.org.ua/en/comment/reply/2224>

technologies (waiting for consideration upon the President's veto). Out of the four draft laws dealing with the so-called prohibition of the "homosexuality propaganda", the most recent one, No. 8711, has been adopted in the first reading. A certain evolution is observed: from limitation of women's opportunities to exercise their rights, through various bans, to alienation of human rights, in particular in the areas of sexuality and reproduction. These legislative changes caused a negative response of the human rights organisations^{17,18}. All in all, there seem to loom a conflict between the international agreements ratified by Ukraine and the national legislation. Thus, the official website of the Science and Education Department of the Mykolayiv Regional State Administration reads the following recommendation: *"The international legal acts that come in conflict with the traditional Ukrainian moral and family values must not be signed and ratified, and those ratified previously must be cancelled"*.¹⁹

¹⁷ Human Rights in Ukraine – 2012. / The Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Group, 2013, (<http://khpg.org/files/docs/1362676111.pdf>) p. 454-45

¹⁸ The LGBT Vector of Ukraine, the "Our World" Centre, 2013 – http://gay.org.ua/publications/lgbt_ukraine_2012-u.pdf

¹⁹ <http://www.upr.moippp.org.ua/noviny/rezolyuciya.PDF>

2 - Political Engagement

Background

The situation around the parity of political representation in Ukraine (as well as at the decision-making level in general) is rather ambivalent.

Ukraine features a low women's representation at almost all levels of the socially important decision-making. Thus, in the Women in National Parliaments world classification, Ukraine ranks 116th among 142 countries, between Bahrain (115) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (117).

Most indicatively, in all the years of Ukraine's independence, women's representation in parliament has never reached even 10%. Upon the most recent 2012 parliamentary elections, the percentage of female MPs has come to its maximum value and almost amounted to 10% (two more female candidates, Halyna Herega and Tetiana Zasuha, are still in the re-election process).

Year	Convocation	Number of female MPs	Share of female MPs, %
1991	I	13	2.9
1994	II	19	4.6
1998	III	37	8.3
2002	IV	23	5.1
2006	V	38	8.4
2007	VI	36	8
2012	VII	43	9.4

Table 1. The number of women in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, all convocations

This is especially interesting, as according to Ukraine's Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 3, the number of female MPs in 2015 is supposed to be 30%, or 150 persons, which, obviously, will not be achieved. Meanwhile, women's representation in the regional and local councils grows with the weakening of powers of the relevant representative bodies. Thus, after the recent 2010 local elections, there are 12% of women in regional councils, 23% – in district councils, 28% – in city/town councils, 46% – in large village councils, and, finally, 51% – in the village councils.²⁰

At the same time, in spite of this quite high, as for Ukraine, political representation of women at the local level, there are no women among the chairpersons of the 25 regional councils (including the Crimean parliament). Five women act as deputy chairpersons of regional councils, mostly in the eastern Ukraine: in Kharkiv (2), Dnipropetrovsk (1), Kirovohrad (1) and Kherson (1) regions, making up 6.8% of the total.

²⁰ Gender Arithmetic of the Authorities – <http://www.fundgp.com/ua/media/infographics/1/>

Women's representation in the central and local executive authorities is even lower.

Currently, there are three female ministers (among 17 ministers in total): Raisa Bohatyrova, Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Public Health Care, Natalia Korolevska, Minister of Social Policy, and Olena Lukash, the newly-appointed Minister of Justice. Two more women occupy the positions of the (first) deputy ministers, both in two of the above-mentioned ministries, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, i.e. a female minister looks for a woman to be her deputy. In percentage terms, it is an indicator even lower than women's representation in the parliament, coming up to just 7.6%.²¹

At the regional level, no woman has been appointed to head an oblast administration. At the same time, in 16 out of 25 regions (including Crimea) there seem to be a trend to appoint a woman as one of the deputy heads of the regional administration, due to which now 16 out of 150 individuals serving in these positions (10.7%) are women.²²

The latest National Civil Service Agency research evidences that as of 31.12.2011 women constituted the overwhelming majority of civil servants working at the central public authorities – 77% of the total number. A reverse proportion, however, is observed at the senior management level where women make up about 28% of top managers.

Position categories	Number of women	% of all civil servants in the relevant positions
Senior management (Categories I-II)	383	27.9%
Medium-level managers (Categories III-IV)	10,081	54.2 %
Specialists (Categories V-VII)	195,080	78.6 %
Secretarial positions	-	-
Technical staff	-	-

Table 2. Distribution of the number of women employed at central executive authorities, by category²³

Analysis of HR reserve at central executive authorities shows that as of 2010 it included 23.3% of women, while 14% of women were put on the waiting lists for appointment to the local state administrations leadership. No women were proposed to the HR reserve of several ministries and agencies in 2010.²⁴

The public opinion in Ukraine is quite positive about women's political representation. The contributing factor is that

²¹ As of 20.07.2013, calculated on the basis of the data presented on the Ukrainian government website –

http://www.kmu.gov.ua/control/uk/publish/officialcategory?cat_id=43145

²² As of 20.07.2013

²³ "Perspective of the Government 2013". Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities of Women and Men in All Spheres of Life of the Ukrainian Society

²⁴ "Perspective of the Government 2013". Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities of Women and Men in All Spheres of Life of the Ukrainian Society

Ukrainian women in politics are quite active, featuring some bright and charismatic personalities (Yulia Tymoshenko, Iryna Farion, Natalia Vitrenko, Oleksandra Kuzhel, Iryna Herashchenko) with an outstanding political image, supporters among voters of the both sexes, political backing and significant political experience. There are also many highly professional and bright female political leaders at the local level.

The monitoring public opinion polls show that both men and women in Ukraine are mostly positive about women's political leadership, rather willing to vote for women and to support political representation gender quotas. According to the 2007 research of the Social Expert Studies Centre of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences Sociology Institute, Ukrainian voters are mostly in favour of increasing women's representation in the local authorities (47% vs 25% of opponents). Quite noticeably, male voters equally approved (34%) and disapproved (34%) of the idea to attract more women into politics, while another 32% hesitated with answer; at the same time, female voters mostly declared their support for women's more active participation in local self-governments (58%) against 17% of those who thought otherwise. Also 53% of the respondents favoured legislative stipulation of equal representation of women and men (gender quotas) at the top of the political party election lists, while 20% were against. Introduction of the above was supported by 61% of the surveyed women against 40% of men.

The establishment of political opinion on these issues is quite different.

The Ukrainian Women's Foundation (UWF) survey conducted within the International Gender Policy Network (IGPN) project revealed that "none of the political parties that participated in the poll supported the idea of introducing special quotas for women and does not consider it to be an effective tool for involving more women who run for positions from such parties". Moreover, political parties' representatives do not see their role in the low political representation of women and believe that it is due to "the traditional perception of a woman in the society as a mother and a wife, women's low political activity, outlook, lack of institutionalisation of the women's movement in Ukraine, women's reluctance to take a more active part in parties' managerial bodies, and sometimes counteraction by male politicians".²⁵

Currently, we have no statistics on the number of women in the judicial branch, although they seem to constitute quite a significant part there. The man/woman ratio among judges, however, does not reflect the court management figures, as the female representation in courts' administrative positions does not speak in the women's favour. Thus, out of 782 chief justices only

²⁵ <http://www.uwf.kiev.ua/Political%20parties%20final%20report.pdf>

86 or 11% are women. In the Supreme, High Administrative and High Commercial Courts, there are no women among their management.²⁶ The Ukrainian courts have also not been dealing with the issues, and thus there are no relevant judgements, that would concern restoration of the violated rights due to gender discrimination.²⁷

The women's political activity is based on their rather public activity in general. A number of Ukraine's women's organisations (La Strada, the Information and Advisory Centre for Women, the Women's Consortium of Ukraine, the Women's Perspectives, the Gender Centre, the Women's Network, Rozrada, the Gender Museum and others), normally committed to the media-invisible "social work feminism", are quite active in the human rights work (e.g., Women Sue Mykola Azarov). Also, against the drop of activity of the "traditional" national women's organisations, united in the National Women's Council of Ukraine, which have now practically left the field where significant political and social decisions are developed, one can observe the surge of new, politically aimed women's activism represented by organisations such as Femen and the Feminist Ofenzyva can be observed.

Women are also well represented as members of many civil society organisations, which is yet another important component of their social and political activism.

The law of Ukraine contains no direct discriminatory provisions that would condition gender inequality in political representation and participation. No discrimination by gender is legislatively guaranteed by the Constitution (Article 24), the framework 2005 Equal Rights Law, as well as the respective international obligations. Overall, Ukraine has strong positions with regards to political commitments to respect equality of women and men: all key international documents on these issues have been signed and adopted, above all the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), as well as its Optional Protocol adopted at the 54th session of the UN General Assembly on 6 October 1999 (ratified by Ukraine in September 2003) and others (Ukraine's Recognition of the Major International Approaches to Gender Equality / Tamara Melnyk).

At the same time, however, the recent attempts to set gender parity in politics through legislation, in particular by introducing the relevant provisions into the Parliamentary Election Law, which would secure Article 15 of the Equal Rights Law, failed. The legislative amendments on ensuring equal rights

²⁶ Suslova, O. I., Lazarenko, O. O., Akhtyrskaya, N. O. Protection of Women's and Children's Rights by Judicial and Law-Enforcement Authorities in Ukraine / ed. by Khrystova H. O. - Kyiv: Tyutyukin, 2010. - 336 p. / p. 64.

²⁷ The Status of Gender Equality in the Ukrainian Society. Annual National Report. Ministry of Family, Youth and Sport Affairs of Ukraine. Kyiv, 2007
[/http://wu.cn.ua/articles/Stan_rivnosti.pdf](http://wu.cn.ua/articles/Stan_rivnosti.pdf)

and opportunities for women and men in the election process submitted on 9 February 2010 was supported by only 189 MPs instead of the needed 226 and were finally turned down by the Parliament.²⁸

Female MPs reflect on this and similar situations in the lawmaking. As of today, women MPs have established two inter-faction unions in the Verkhovna Rada: "For Equal Opportunities" (co-chaired by Iryna Herashchenko from UDAR and Olena Kondratyuk from Batkivschyna) and "The Equal Rights" (chaired by Iryna Berezhna from the Party of Regions), which aim at promoting gender equality ideas in the social and political sphere and initiating the relevant draft laws.

Challenges

On the one hand, Ukrainian women take an active part in political and social life as professionals, but on the other, their influence on the decision-making is rather limited. Most women function at the lowest political management levels where work is most difficult: it requires direct communication with voters, solution of specific everyday problems with, as a rule, minimal resources and minor remuneration. Women's prominent activity at the lower stages of public administration and self-government does not become a springboard for their further political careers or access to decision-making at the national level.

Low representation and insufficient participation of women in political and decision-making processes is a rather serious challenge for democracy, as it actually estranges more than 50% of citizens from participation in public administration. As a consequence, their interests are hardly taken into account in the decisions made. A number of the quite urgent problems, such as poverty reduction, neglected children, health care and education issues, are not solved efficiently due to their lower priority for men in politics.

There is a gap in the attitudes to the women's political leadership and the legislative means to ensure it demonstrated by the more positive part of the society and its public opinion and the opinion of the political establishment, mostly being against this idea. It is necessary to work with political parties to help their management to become more sensitive to the issues of gender parity in political representation.

Political parties are critically inactive in promoting equality ideas. According to the Civic Control over Gender Equality during 2012 Elections Network, which studied electoral activity of the political parties, there was an extremely low commitment to gender equality ideas among the prevailing majority of the candidate parties. Even the human rights rhetoric in general and gender equality in particular were not seen as a priority during

²⁸ The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine official web-site:
http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb_n/webproc4_1?id=&pf3511=31114

the most recent parliamentary elections. The important gender equality elements, such as women's political representation, counteracting domestic violence and trafficking in women and children, were sieved away by the party ideologies and programmes.²⁹

Extremely problematic is the non-adoption of the amendments to certain laws of Ukraine aiming to secure women and men's rights and opportunities in the election process (Bill No. 1232), which would ensure the minimum 30%-ratio between the representatives of both sexes in the parliament.

Political persecution of female politicians and obstacles set to the performance of their professional activity is another acute problem with imprisonment of the former prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko and a tell-tale, but not solitary, case of the recent attack at MP Lilya Hrynevych, Chair of the VR Education Committee as examples. Parliamentary immunity no longer protects female politicians. They are also, obviously, not better protected by the influential (as is widely believed) gender stereotypes about women as the weak sex.

The numbers and professionalism of the women's political representation has been seriously affected by the lack of a national institutional mechanism to ensure gender equality, lost due to the administrative reform (initiated by the Presidential Decree on Optimisation of the Central Executive Authorities System of 9 December 2010). The current executive agency responsible for the equality policy, the Gender Policy and Children's Recreation Department at the Ministry of Social Policy (that fulfils the gender policy functions instead of the eliminated Ministry for Family, Youth and Sports), is institutionally weak, while its priorities in ensuring equality of women and men still remain rather poorly defined.

²⁹ Gender Monitoring of the 2012 Parliamentary Elections. - Lutsk: VMA "Teren", 2012. - 68 p. - p. 24 – http://govinfo.library.files.wordpress.com/2013/02/publication-fin_pdf.pdf

3 - Education

Background

No significant gender imbalances in the education levels is considered to be an important social and cultural feature of Ukraine with the level of literacy that takes it to the leading positions among the developed countries of the world. There are no explicit legislative prohibitions or discriminatory restrictions on women's education or access to educational services in Ukraine. The literacy rate among women aged 10 and older is 95.4% against 97.8% among men.³⁰

By the key education indicators, Ukrainian women are not lagging behind men being in approximately equal situation. Ukraine is proud of the high index of women's access to higher education as the recent census has revealed that 54.3 % of Ukrainian women have higher education vs 45.7% of men.

The gender-equal access to education is established by law. Equal conditions for women and men as concerns their enrolment with educational institutions; knowledge assessment, issuance of grants, provision of student loans; preparation and publication of textbooks, manuals free from the stereotypes regarding the role of women and men are declared by Article 21 of the Equal Rights Law. The two main priorities regulated by the Law – expert study of the educational institutions curricula, textbook, and manuals as to their compliance with the principle of equal rights and opportunities for women and men and inclusion of the disciplines on equal rights and opportunities of women and men into the higher educational institutions curricula and advance training courses – have been rather actively implemented in Ukraine.

Gender education in Ukraine is generally well-developed and has a good background.

More than 130 specialised courses on gender issues have been developed and delivered; the Gender Studies journal has been established; the methodology has been developed and gender expert analysis of the social studies and humanities curricula has been performed, the introductory course curriculum has been developed and the higher school training manual has been prepared on "Introduction into the Gender Theory" (Kyiv Institute for Gender Studies, 2001-2004); key works on gender have been translated and published; monographs by Ukrainian researchers on gender issues within the framework of individual disciplines have been prepared and published³¹. Overall, Ukrainian experts have conducted a number of gender expert studies in the field of education, starting from the social sciences and humanities curricula for the higher school and up to school

³⁰ Closing Remarks of the Committee for Elimination of Discrimination Against Women – 45th session, 18 January – 5 February 2010 (CEDAW/C/UKR/CO/7.

³¹ http://archive.nbuv.gov.ua/portal/soc_gum/Npd/2011_1/podliny.pdf

textbooks (Frolov, 2001) and curricula. A selective gender expert study of primary school textbooks has shown that, like in the previous times, professions of men and women on the pages of the "ABC", "Reader" and other textbooks are gender-stereotyped (men are astronauts, mechanics, drivers, craftsmen, scholars, while women mainly represent the take-care professions like housewives, nurses, teachers, physicians)³².

The basic textbook on gender education at secondary school "We Are Different – We Are Equal" (2009) has been published and, finally, the gender expert study of the National Education Standards has been undertaken (2011).

In the period between 1996 and 2011, the gender equality priority was actively supported by the Equal Opportunities and Women's Rights in Ukraine Programme (a joint project of the European Union, the Swedish International Development and Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and UNDP in cooperation with the Ministry of Family, Youth and Sports).

The educational component of the Programme contributed to the development of the educational and guideline materials on gender equality for secondary schools, as well as implementation of gender sensitivity and knowledge into the educational system. In addition to the materials and manuals, the special course curriculum for the advanced educators training "Gender Education in the Pedagogical Staff Excellence Training" was developed, the network of trainers on gender education was established, and approximately 600 trainings for more than 13,000 teachers have been conducted in 2012-2011.

The Programme also supported the development of the gender resource and educational centres: by 2011, gender centres had been established and started operating in 16 regions of Ukraine. In addition to them, gender education centres and five gender studies chairs at universities are functioning (in Ostroh, Sumy, Ternopil, Kyiv, Mariupol, Ivano-Frankivsk, Vinnytsia, Zhytomyr, Uzhgorod, Luhansk, and Kherson). Over the recent two years, independent regional initiatives to establish gender education networks have also emerged: nine universities in Kharkiv have initiated and set up gender centres, which subsequently united and created their own All-Ukrainian University Gender Education Centres Network (2010). A similar initiative was launched and implemented by a number of research centres that established the Ukrainian Gender Research Network (2011).

Overall, steps have been made to institutionalise gender education, and gradual work has started to develop methodical, training, and analytical materials on gender issues.

Challenges

³² <http://gender.at.ua/publ/4-1-0-61>

At the same time, it would be rather premature to conclude that the gender component is well-implemented into the Ukrainian education system as a number of problems can be traced to this regard.

Gender-equal access to educational services

Even though aggregate education indicators show no significant gender disparities, they are rather noticeable within individual educational segments.

This is above all valid for the access to pre-school education. Around a third of urban children and about two-thirds of rural kids have virtually no access to the relevant facilities. This violates the child's right to accessible pre-school education in the first place, and secondly influences employment and family maintenance opportunities for their mothers.

The most democratic in terms of gender-equal opportunities for education is secondary school. At the same time, however, it is here that the priorities are formed and gender unequal vocational choices are made and further transformed at the level of higher education. This stage of education demonstrates a trend towards gender-specific training and/or employment choices: boys opt for an earlier vocational specialisation than girls.

A significant gender asymmetry can be traced in students' selecting training by the branches of knowledge at universities. Male students dominate in the training fields attributed to the production sector, while female students prevail in the branches of knowledge regarded as non-industrial sectors.

Gender differences are also observed in such an indicator as access to paid or free education. The growth in the number of students, and, thus, people with a higher education degree, is mainly due to the highly-feminised humanitarian, social and economic professions, which also predominantly become "paid" ones. Instead, at technical universities, where men prevail, the share of paid options is 5-10 times lower. Women dominate at private higher educational institutions, constituting about two-thirds of the students.

In recent years, there has been a number of qualification areas at higher education institutions where no female individuals study at all. This is yet another detail of the significant gender segregation in the access to educational programmes and to education in general due to the "female" and "male" profession stereotypes.

At the higher school, the gender segregation phenomena in the access to professional training is even more visible.

Male students dominate in the training fields attributed to the production sector: "Production Industries", where their share is 97.7%, "Security" – 94.9%, "Transport" – 84.7%, "Construction and Architecture" – 79.4%, "Engineering" – 74.7%, "Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Processing" – 70.5%, respectively.

Instead, female students dominate in the branches of knowledge that are regarded as non-industrial sectors: Public Health – 86.8%, "Humanities and Arts" – 75.5%, "Social Protection" – 77.2%, "Education" – 69.9%, "Social Sciences, Business and Law" – 69.8%, "Service Sector" – 63.9% and "Natural Sciences" – 60.8% (DS-2009).

In Ukraine's education system, a growing gender asymmetry of public funding of education can be observed caused by its segregation. The number of students is growing mainly due to the highly-feminised humanitarian, social and economic specialties, which also predominantly become "paid" ones. Instead, at technical universities, where men dominate among the students, the share of paid options is 5-10 times lower.

There are some higher educational institutions of Ukraine with the qualification areas with no female students at all. Thus, based on the Junior Specialist Professions List, as of the beginning of the 2008/09 academic year, no women studied "Engineering", "Construction and Architecture", "Transport", "Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Processing", "Equipment and Energy in Agricultural Production", "Natural Sciences", "Military Sciences", "National Security". Such highly-feminised sectors as "Education" ("Engineering Education") and "Economics, Commerce and Entrepreneurship" ("Antitrust Management") also included a number of qualification areas where no women were represented.

All of these challenges to gender equality in the education system confirm the above-mentioned conclusion about gender segregation in the access to educational programmes and to education in general, which, in particular, is expressed in the stereotypes of "female" and "male" professions.

This conclusion is also supported by earlier analytical studies. Thus, according to the Alternative Report on Ukraine's CEDAW Implementation, in particular Article 11 "Discrimination against women in the field of employment", division of employment sectors into "female" and "male" ones, which is clearly seen at the stage when students select and get education depending on their sex, is recognised as one of the key factors of further economic, legal and social gender-based discrimination beyond the education field.

Finally, in the recent years, overt gender discrimination cases are recorded in access to education. This was in particular the case with the actual prohibition to admit female citizens to the higher educational institutions of the Ministry of Interior contained in the Prime Minister's Instruction on the Pilot Programme for Training Specialists issued in December 2010. This Instruction encountered active counteraction by women's and human rights organisations ("The Cabinet prohibits admitting women to higher educational institutions of the Ministry of Interior. La Strada-Ukraine requests stopping the discrimination"), but it still remains valid.

The attempts made to arrange, manage, and publish any departmental and national statistics in the field of education do not make it possible to determine and monitor a number of important indicators related to the gender balance in the staffing of the educational sector.

The collected state statistics on education does not single out gender segregation data to enable any conclusions on the vertical gender segregation in the education system.

A considerable gender imbalance in the staffing of the educational sector in general and at its primary levels in particular is one of the negative factors affecting gender equality in the education field, as well as in the society as a whole. As a consequence, it results in feminisation of requirements to students at the levels where concentration of female pedagogical workers is already high.

This situation requires development and implementation of the coherent staffing policy in the educational sector aiming at ensuring observance of the gender equality principles.

Challenges of gender education development

The main problem in this area is sustainability of the results already achieved.

In general terms, it may be concluded that institutionalisation of the gender education in the system of higher education is still highly insufficient.

Ukraine's experience with introducing gender studies into the teaching process remains scattered and localised, while absence of any centralised training and retraining of gender issues experts becomes increasingly relevant. The shortage of such human resources has been evident already since 2000. (DS-2007)

As Ukraine has no system to train specialists in gender issues, the majority of them received their knowledge through self-education. The situation is even worse among those who are not researchers or teachers by profession but, due to the nature of their activities, are involved in the gender policy development or implementation.³³

Absence of the gender component in education affects not the ideological or momentary, but rather the professional level of the higher, secondary and primary schools curricula and strongly inhibits innovation not just in education, but also in the society in general.

Since the gender education was an assisting component in promoting the equality policy, attention thereto resulted from the focus on the equality policy and depended on the development of the national institutional gender equality mechanism. This means that gender approaches should have been developed and

³³ Expert Assessment of the Gender Policy Principles Development in the Ukrainian Society, p. 13.

implemented into the higher educational institutions curricula, as well as gender specialised courses should have been elaborated as a response for the need of the relevant experts.

Now, in the situation of Ukraine's weakened political will to implement democratic reforms and the actual refusal to pursue any targeted policy to ensure equality between women and men, developments in the gender education area are no longer in demand and lose the support of the state.

In the recent two years, educators and researchers have noted that they often become objects of unwelcome attention from fundamentalism-minded citizens³⁴, who tend to misinterpret gender equality and to distort the understanding of the gender equality policy³⁵. Meanwhile, the now common policy of admitting supporters of such views as members of public councils at public authorities, in particular the one under the Ministry of Education and Science, leaves rather little chances to the preservation of the gender education experience.

At this background, some new and interesting "grassroots" initiatives of civil gender education have started to appear, such as the Kherson Gender Studies project, gender lectures within the Free School self-education project at Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, the Kharkiv Feminist Studies and others.

³⁴ <http://www.pokrov.lviv.ua/?p=2916>

³⁵ <http://sovest.dnepro.org/2012/4430.html>

4 - Standard of Living

Background

UN employs a number of factors to define the level of life in a society, in particular health, demographic conditions, food, clothes, consumption and accumulation funds, labour and education conditions, including literacy, accommodation and public amenities, social security, etc. The indicators that describe the level of life include the Human Potential Development Index (HPDI) or the Human Development Index (HDI) and the Gender Inequality Index (GII) that reflects gender inequality in three dimensions – reproductive health, empowerment and labour market participation. These indicators put Ukraine into the group with high level of human development (positions in the range from 48 to 94). As of 2012, Ukraine occupies the 78th place and has the general integral indicator of 0.740. In general terms, year by year, starting with 2000, this indicator has testified a certain improvement of the quality of life in Ukraine: in 2000 its value made up 0.673, 2005 – 0.718, in 2007 – 0.732, in 2010 – 0.733, and finally in 2011 – 0.737 points.³⁶ Currently, the GII in Ukraine is 0.338 putting it into the 57th position among 148 countries.

Birth Rate Trends and Demographic Policy Approaches

It is rather characteristic of the demographic situation in Ukraine that its birth rate crisis is combined with a sharp deterioration of public health, higher death rates, reduction of life expectancy and male supermortality.³⁷ Women constitute the majority of population in Ukraine: 53.8% of its constant population as of early 2012.³⁸ The average life expectancy among women is 75.88 years (71.02 for both sexes). The most numerous group is formed by the middle-age women of 50-59 years old (3,648,503 individuals) and those above 60 years old (6,215,883 individuals). Along with the aging of the female population, the condition of the women's reproductive health is another matter of concern. The level of maternal death rate remains high. In 2010, there were more than 27.5 cases of women's pregnancy related-deaths per every 100,000 births and 21.1 cases in 2011 accordingly.³⁹

The number of marriages is rising. Thus, 355,900 marriages were registered in Ukraine in 2011. The divorce rate, however, is also quite high: 182,500 divorces were recorded in Ukraine in 2011. Also, the specific weight of the children born by the unmarried mothers is increasing: 21.9% of children were born

³⁶ http://hdr.undp.org/hdr4press/press/outreach/figures/HDI_Trends_2013.pdf

³⁷ http://ukrstat.gov.ua/noviny/new2006/zmist_novin/demogr/narodj.htm

³⁸ Children, Females and Family in Ukraine / Statistics Collation / State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2012. – p.22-23.

³⁹ Living Standards Social Indicators. Statistics Collation, State Statistics Service of Ukraine, Kyiv — 2012. – p. 37.

in Ukraine out of a registered marriage.⁴⁰ This data may evidence people's disappointment in the marriage with its traditional roles played by each spouse. At the same time, the lesbian cohabitation households have no legal status of a family and are forced, for security reasons, to be constantly changing their contacts, telephones, places of residence, as well as to limit their activity.

Young women and girls are considered to be the reproductive potential of the country in the context of the birth rate increase and family development being among the Demographic Development Strategy main objectives until 2015.⁴¹ In 2011, the cumulative birth rate in Ukraine made up 1.459.⁴² Starting with 2010, an emphasis has been made on the birth rate in order to improve the demographic situation and to support traditional family values.

A number of legislative initiatives in the biopolicy area have been submitted to the parliament. Not only current restrictions, but also their evolution is important. In particular, the governmental resolution approving the Reproductive Health of the Nation State Programme Until 2015 mentions insufficient attention to the role of the family and preservation of the traditional culture of relations in the family as the basic component of the society being the primary cause of the above problem along with the unsatisfactory social conditions faced by the citizens. In 2012, amendments were filed with the Verkhovna Rada prohibiting artificial interruption of pregnancy (abortions) (No. 10170) which limited the women's rights. Despite of the Ministry of Justice opinion stating that the above bill did not meet the Ukrainian and the international law, another draft legislation, No. 2646-1, legitimising the reproductive pressure and introducing criminal liability for interrupting pregnancy is currently in the parliament. In our opinion, today's Ukrainian law contains no direct discriminative provisions in the biopolicy domain, but quite a negative trend can be observed as concerns policy changes and legislative amendments in the field of sexuality, reproduction and biopolicy based on the religious beliefs where scientific terminology and legal norms are replaced by moral and evaluative judgments and ideological concepts.

The government's interference into the private life aims to increase the birth rate rather than improve the female life and health. Thus, in the Informed Consent Instruction, the pregnant woman is supposed to sign a form to confirm that she has been informed and warned of the threats borne by the abortion. The woman, however, gets no information on the risks for her life and

⁴⁰ Children, Females and Family in Ukraine / Statistics Collation / State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2012. – p.33.

⁴¹ Economic Reforms Programme for 2010 – 2014. Economic Reforms Committee under the President of Ukraine – http://www.president.gov.ua/docs/Programa_reform_FINAL_1.pdf

⁴² Children, Females and Family in Ukraine / Statistics Collation / State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2012. – p.18.

health that may emerge if the unintended and/or crisis pregnancy continues. The reproductive pressure also forces educators to tell their female students seeking consultation on unintended and/or crisis pregnancy to preserve it, even if this may obviously harm such student's future.

In terms of health care, at its 45th session (2010), the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women pointed out to the lack of statistics in Ukraine's report⁴³. Indeed, the Ukrainian State Statistics Committee open sources provide no up-to-date information on women's health, in particular as concerns the vulnerable groups, the reasons of female death rate, as well as the key diseases of the reproductive age women and girls (the female morbidity structure). Before 2011, the number of abortions was steadily decreasing, but their level still remains rather high: 169,100 abortions in 2011; 176,800 in 2010; 194,800 in 2009; and 217,400 in 2008. In addition, the number of abortions per 100 births is also high: 33.9 in 2011; 35.6 in 2010; 38.2 in 2009; and 42.8 in 2008.⁴⁴

The increase of the unintended and crisis pregnancies is also caused by inaccessibility of reliable contraceptives for the youth. As an example, the cost of a monthly hormonal contraception makes up almost 50% of the college scholarship (Scholarship Regulation). In this context, the wind-down of the sexual and gender education among the youth is an issue of concern. Against this background, starting with September 2013, the Ministry of Education introduces family values formation classes into the secondary school curriculum intended to assess how well school students adopt "the female's family role".⁴⁵ Such education may become a problem, as Ukraine still lacks sexual education standards.

The opportunities enjoyed by the Ukrainian women and the quality of their life have been also quite influenced by the ongoing public health care reform accompanied by the shut-down of medical institutions and reduction of their staff. The citizens, experts, and some politicians believe that this impedes the timely provision of medical aid.⁴⁶ According to "The Systemic and Structural Ways to Achieve Equality in Health Care Study",⁴⁷ the cut-down of the medical aid scope and shrinkage of the hospital network, in particular in the rural area, have narrowed considerably the possibilities of mothers with little children and

⁴³ Closing Remarks of the Committee for Elimination of Discrimination Against Women – http://empedu.org.ua/sites/default/files/files/publications_materials/gfw_bplus_15_report_publication.pdf

⁴⁴ Children, Females and Family in Ukraine / Statistics Collation / State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2012. – c. 155.

⁴⁵ Family Values: Family Education Training Programmes (9, 17, 35, 70 hours) [for 8 – 9 school grades] / [O. V. Melnyk (head of author group), T. V. Kravchenko, L. V. Kanishevska, H. H. Kovhanych, V. I. Kuryshenko, L.V. Koretska, V. I. Pryt]. – Ivano-Frankovsk: "Typovit", 2012. – 48 p.

⁴⁶ Publication "How Does Medical Reform Looks Like in Ukraine)".

⁴⁷ Exploring Systemic and Structural Pathways to Health Equity in Health Reform, 2012.

senior women living in villages. Currently, there is a bill considered by the parliament introducing a moratorium on liquidation and restructuring for a different function of the health care institutions.

Women's Empowerment. Combination of Work and Family Life

There are still not many possibilities in Ukraine to combine work and family life, despite of the fact that "ensuring equal opportunities for women and men as to the combination of professional and family responsibilities" is one of eight leading priorities of the state gender policy legally established in the target Equal Rights Law.

On the one hand, Ukraine has ratified ILO Convention No. 156 on Workers with Family Responsibilities, which concerns men and women in the period of their parental potential and other individuals with minor dependants. The maternity/paternity leave looks quite generous on paper in Ukraine: the insured mothers and fathers are entitled to a fully paid leave for the period of up to 126 days, while the uninsured get 50% of the minimal wage in the same period. But the maternity/paternity leave is calculated on the basis of the official, rather than factual salary, which is often minimal, especially in the case of young mothers.

Ukraine also makes one-off payments for each new-born child (12,000 UAH for the first baby, 24,000 for the second, and 50,000 UAH for the third one in 2009). According to the National Strategic Studies Institute, however, a trend can be observed when more children are born in socially vulnerable families which tend to use the "children" money not so much for children, as for the satisfaction of their own needs. This situation has been well described by MP M. Zhuk, Chairman of the Subcommittee for Youth Policy, Family, and Childhood in the Verkhovna Rada, who has said that *„the current aid system strengthens the taste for being kept, where the state plays the role of the keeper, though families need not keeping, but normal life conditions (accommodation, pre-school education or day care institutions, jobs etc) for the combination of professional and family responsibilities“*.

There is a network of pre-school institutions (kindergartens) in Ukraine enabling young mothers (and fathers) to get back to work quite quickly, but such institutions are sharply insufficient, in particular in the rural areas. According to the Ukrainian State Statistics Committee, as of 2010 only 56.0% (of the total number of the relevant age children) was covered by the pre-school institutions, of which 67% in urban settlements and 34% – in the rural areas.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ www.mon.gov.ua/images/files/doshkilna-crednyia/.../derzhkom.xls

Ukrainian women are not very active in using personal services, while the relevant service providers are often not particularly accessible. Thus, only 2% of women have been using laundry services, 6% – dry-cleaners, 6% – shops selling prepared food,⁴⁹ which evidences that practically all homework is put on the family and is done by women. Experts consider that the total time spent for doing the unpaid homework cumulatively exceeds the working time dedicated by women to the official economy. This deepens the women-related discrimination phenomena on the paid labour market.

The economic and other possibilities that women have is substantially affected by the fact that they perform almost all social service functions related to the minors, senior people, and disabled individuals care. The work related to the care for seniors and disabled individuals actually lies on the shoulders of the working women. According to the European Social Survey, such children, sick, incapable, and senior people care responsibilities are fulfilled by every second woman in Ukraine making it a leader among all other European countries by the prevalence of this phenomenon.

Recently, the combination of the professional and family life has become subject to certain initiatives, such as the *Family-Friendly University* (the Equal Opportunities for Young Mothers to Get Profession at Universities Project) launched in Sumy last year or the Back to Work: Mothers and Fathers Reintegration into the Professional Life After a Maternity/Paternity Leave Project initiated and implemented by the Social Workers League and the Ministry of Social Policy.

Women's Economic Activity, Incomes and Labour Market

The situation with gender equality in Ukraine is relatively good. Unlike the representation of women in high political offices, more women occupy managerial positions in the business sector where they head 15% of medium-size and 12% of big-size companies. However, less than 10% of economic resources in the country are run by women, even though they outnumber men (24.5 million women against less than 21 million men⁵⁰). Such rather low representation of women in managerial positions has given Ukraine only 64th place among 135 countries in the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index.

Generally, the share of the working women is quite big in Ukraine: as of 2012, about 55% of all women were working against 65% of the working men. Women's economic activity is also quite high: they make up more than 46% of the total economically active working age population (Economic Activity of

⁴⁹ Lavrynenko – http://wu.cn.ua/articles/Stan_rivnosti.pdf

⁵⁰ Report by N. Korolevska, Minister of Social Policy / E-publication: http://www.kmu.gov.ua/control/publish/article?art_id=246254321

the Population by Gender and Place of Residence in 2012). The working Ukrainian women are rather well educated (91.5% of the grown-up women have secondary or higher education against 96.1% of men)⁵¹ and mainly have high qualification.

Among the able-bodied Ukrainian women, the unemployment level is lower as compared to men (7.2% against 8.9% accordingly, ILO methodology, 2012); this level is also lower for all women in total making up 6.4% against 8.5% among men.⁵² The 2013 data, however, evidences that more unemployed men were employed as compared to the unemployed women: 154,300 men against 116,200 women constituting about 43% of all individuals that were employed (calculated on the basis of the Employment of the Unemployed by Gender in 2013). The evolution of the number of the unemployed population that was registered with the State Employment Service in the period between 1999 and 2012 evidences that the gender gap among the unemployed was observed all the time, even though it was decreasing over the years. Thus, in 1999 the number of women registered as unemployed made up 744,300 individuals or about 62% of the entire unemployed population, 477,900 women or 54.5% in 2008, 281,100 individuals or 53.3 % in 2012 (calculated on the basis of the Evolution of the Number of the Unemployed Population Registered by the State Employment Service by Gender and Professional Groups in 1999-2012).

There is also a gap in the incomes received by the working women as compared to men. Thus, in 2012 the salaries received by women on average constituted 77.6% of the salaries received by men. Even these official calculations made by the State Statistics Committee revealed considerable differences depending on the type of the economic activity where women were employed. Thus, the gender gap in labour remuneration in such areas as industrial and financial operations or culture and sport, recreation and entertainment was considerably bigger: the women working in these industries were on average getting 63.6%-69.6% of the salaries received by men (calculated on the basis of the Average Monthly Salaries of Men and Women by the Type of Economic Activities in 2012). In general terms, the labour remuneration gender gap in Ukraine is much higher than the EU average (17.4% in 2007). This is explained by the existing gender segregation on the labour market where women are mainly concentrated in the low-paid industries, while men are working in the industries with high salaries. Women also tend to occupy lower positions as compared with men.

The legislative support to the gender equality on the labour market in Ukraine is also mainly available. The women's right to work is supported by the national legislation. No Ukrainian law,

⁵¹ <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2013/03/15/6985637/>

⁵² Population Unemployment Level (ILO Methodology) by Gender, Age Groups and Place of Residence in 2012.

including the Labour Code, contains any direct restrictions of the woman's right to work. As exceptions, the following are not considered to be gender discrimination: special protection granted to women during pregnancy, child delivery, and breast-feeding; mandatory conscription for men envisaged by law; a difference in the pension age for men and women established by law; special requirements to the protection of women and men's labour related to the protection of their reproductive health; positive actions (special temporary measures aiming to remove the imbalance between the opportunities that women and men have to exercise equal rights granted to them by the Constitution and laws of Ukraine. At the same time, these provisions of the Ukrainian labour law are somewhat in a conflict with the international requirements as to the equality in labour: ILO has encouraged its member states to avoid fulfilling such protective regulations if there is no scientifically grounded higher risk for women. These provisions also promote possible discriminative effects for women weakening their competitiveness on the labour market in a number of cases.

In addition, some new legislative initiatives that are expected to influence this area have come up. Thus, the recently adopted legislative amendments on the pension assignment and indexation introduce changes to the Law of Ukraine on Collection and Record of the Single Contribution of the Mandatory State Social Insurance, which was supplemented with "the pregnancy and child delivery aid" as a contribution. The amount of such contribution is 33.2% of the basic amount to be paid by the employer. On the other side, the Ministry of Social Policy came up with a legislative initiative of the quotes to be introduced not only at public authorities, but also in the state sector of the economy aiming to ensure gender equality, in particular in the field of labour.

Challenges

Attention in Ukraine is focused on the birth rate increase, while other important factors of the demographic crisis, such as low income, deterioration of the public health, in particular reproductive health, no certainty in the future which hinders family planning and upbringing of children, male supermortality, are mainly ignored.

The quality of the middle-aged women's life is a separate and underestimated problem. The remuneration that pension-age women get for their many years of work does not cover the material needs. The middle-aged women are not considered as the social services beneficiaries. The expert potential of such women is artificially limited and used for the non-expert and service labour.

Such phenomenon as feminisation of poverty, vertical and horizontal segregation of the labour market by gender

considerably limits the economic and social opportunities for the self-expression of Ukrainian women. Ukraine needs systemic measures to counteract the gender discrimination on the labour market. Sexual harassment is a wide-spread and well-established practice at many Ukrainian companies. There are still no efficient measures to fight this phenomenon.

Combination of the family and professional obligations remain to be a sharp problem. The state proposes no system of steps to help parents to combine their maternal (paternal) and professional obligations, which is why the burden of upbringing new generations is put on the shoulders of families and women. This deepens the women's discrimination on the labour market even further. The number of children institutions is critically insufficient to the point of absence in some rural areas. The area of personal services is commercialised at a rather slow pace, while the very system of their provision is insufficient and not very developed.

Access to the health care institutions has become rather complicated because of the medical reform. Reduction of medical institutions, in particular in the rural area, has resulted in the actual impossibility to get doctor's services, in particular due to the physical remoteness and transport problems. Access to emergency aid is also complicated: in villages due to the fuel deficit, and in the cities because of traffic jams. Private emergency aid services are unaffordable for the majority of the population due to low incomes (calling a general practitioner or a cardiologist and getting transported within a city costs 1.5-2 times more than an average pension).

Another problem is destruction of the relevant infrastructure and insufficient conditions to support the healthy way of life. Due to the wide-spread problematic constructions, free stadiums and sport sites becomes less accessible for urban women. Pools and sport clubs are not accessible for the majority of women because of the high costs of such services. Social and transport infrastructure is not well adjusted to the needs of women with little children and senior women, in particular in cities.



The infrastructure is not adjusted to the needs of women with kids and senior women. Typical space of a Ukrainian city: no place for a mother with a child in a stroller. Taras Dzedzey *Let Me Pass Through!* (c) 2013

5 - Domestic Violence

Background

The situation with domestic violence, just like with violence in general, is rather difficult in Ukraine.

Thus, according to GfK Ukraine, 50% of Ukraine's population have suffered from domestic violence during their life, of which 30% experienced domestic violence as children.⁵³ According to the Ministry of Interior, 30-40% of all calls received by the police concern domestic violence. The Public Security Department of the Ukrainian Interior Ministry reports that "over the recent 3 years, the number of the domestic violence statements made in all regions of Ukraine exceeds 100,000, while in 2011 there were 160,000 of them." According to the Donetsk Oblast League of Business and Professional Women reports, 35-50% of the women hospitalised with body injuries are victims of domestic violence. La Strada Ukraine, that has been counteracting domestic violence for more than 10 years, reports that women still make up 90% of those who suffer from domestic violence, and that over the recent years the number of consultations provided by the organisation experts over the domestic violence prevention national "hot line" (0 800 500 335) has steadily been no less than 1,000 every month.⁵⁴

This problem has been recognised in Ukraine only recently when the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence was passed in 2001, in spite of women's civil society sector and the government continuous efforts to change the situation.

Among the countries of the Central and Eastern Europe and CIS, the above law was not only the first specialised piece of legislation aiming at fighting domestic violence. According to O. Suslova, "adoption of this law evidenced that counteracting gender violence has become part of Ukraine's state policy". By passing this and other related legislation, Ukraine has recognised the existence of domestic violence phenomena in its society; expressed its readiness to counteract them; has started systemic collection of information on domestic violence cases, thus having broken the "silence area" around the problem; has launched practical steps to fight domestic violence; has started an integral system of interaction among governmental and non-governmental institutions working to counteract and prevent domestic violence.

Starting with 2001, Ukraine has been developing legal support to abate domestic violence.⁵⁵

⁵³ GfK Ukraine Study Results ordered by the Equal Opportunities and Women's Rights in Ukraine Programme, 2009.

⁵⁴ http://www.la-strada.org.ua/ucp_mod_news_list_show_371.html

⁵⁵ Extracts from the Legislation to Fight Domestic Violence Against Women.

A number of regulations and legislative acts adopted for the implementation of the profile law passed by Ukraine include the following important provisions:

- the procedure for the consideration of the statements and reports on domestic violence or its realistic threat;
- the mechanism for the local family and youth authorities and the law-enforcement bodies to record the relevant cases;
- the procedure to consider the statements and messages on ill-treatment of children or its realistic threat.

In addition, the above-mentioned law has defined mechanisms of cooperation among the services for minor citizens' affairs, law-enforcements bodies, education institutions, public health care bodies, as well as offices and institutions dealing with social protection of children from ill-treatment.

Furthermore, the Instruction on the Procedure for Interaction of the Department for Family, Youth, and Sport, the Services for the Minor Citizens' Affairs, the Centres for Youth Social Services and Law-Enforcement Bodies to Take Measures to Prevent Domestic Violence has been developed.

Quite a lot has been done in Ukraine after the adoption of the law.

The public authorities to coordinate counteraction to domestic violence have been established. Social services and family, children and youth departments have started the relevant actions. Large educational projects have been implemented for various categories of experts along with information campaigns, such as "Stay Human" implemented by the EU Project "Women's and Children's Rights in Ukraine – the Communication Component"⁵⁶, "Let's Act Together" and the Stop Violence annual national campaign. Judicial practices have been analysed. Correctional programmes have been developed for the individuals that have committed domestic violence.

There are quite a number of strong and respected women's NGOs dealing with domestic violence in Ukraine, including the *Rozrada* International Humanitarian Centre, the Equal Opportunities School International NGO, the *Well-Being of Children* Ukrainian Foundation, the *Women's Consortium of Ukraine* All-Ukrainian NGO, the *Volunteer* All-Ukrainian Civil Society Centre, the Association of Ukrainian Monitors for Observation of Human Rights in the Law-Enforcement Bodies Operation, and the Information and Advisory Centre. Due to the huge scope of their selfless work, it is not possible to list all their projects. Just as an example, the most recent one, "Let's Say NO to Domestic Violence", not only runs a "hot line" and a specialised website, but also supports a pro-European volunteer movement. The programme also enables professional psychologists and lawyers, wishing to

⁵⁶ <http://vsirivni.com.ua>

help the violence victims, to provide consultations on the La Strada hotline.

A number of big international donors have worked on this issue. Thus, within the framework of the EU-UNDP Programme for Equal Opportunities and Rights of Women in Ukraine, in 2009-2011 an all-Ukrainian education programme for prevention of domestic violence has been implemented: 44 trainers produced by the programme conducted 600 trainings for the local police inspectors (about 60% of all such officers). The OSCE Project Coordinator's Office in Ukraine has been supporting the counteraction to domestic violence, in particular it prepared the Domestic Violence and Police Counteractions: Guidelines to the Specialised Course on Counteracting Domestic Violence for the Ministry of Interior College Students. The Parliamentary Development Project-II has also been involved.

It is rather noteworthy that the efforts of public authorities and NGOs dealing with fight against domestic violence have been subject to the on-going monitoring and assessment. In particular, back on 21 November 2006, the third (and the fourth combined) Parliamentary Hearings on the Current Status and Objectives of the Gender Violence Prevention which was a good way to keep these issues under the public control.

The domestic violence issues have been regularly considered in special sections of the annual Human Rights in Ukraine 2009 – 2010 reports prepared by Ukrainian human rights activists. A special and detailed Monitoring for the Implementation of Ukraine's Legislation to Counteract Domestic Violence, 2001–2011 was issued to describe the ten years of experience of the fight against the gender violence.

Finally, over the recent year the problem of violence against women drew attention of not only the civil society sector, but also of the women members of parliament. The UDAR MPs have expressed their intention to initiate at the next session adoption of the law to strengthen liability for domestic violence. According to UDAR MP Iryna Herashchenko, Co-Head of the Equal Opportunities Interfaction Union, stressed, "the fines that are often paid by the victim herself, and not by the offender, should be replaced by public correctional works".

Challenges

There are, however, still quite a number of problems in this area. Unfortunately, the above positive steps have not yet resulted in proper protection of the individuals suffering from domestic violence and in due liability for the offender. According to the 2011 monitoring of how the relevant legislation is implemented, the victim is not protected from domestic violence that she/he may be subject to, while the offenders bear no proper liability for it.

There are also problems caused by gaps in the existing regulations. The current mechanism of legal and social protection of domestic violence victims is not efficient enough because of the following:

- there are not enough institutions to provide assistance to the victims, as well as experts specialising in prevention of violence are lacking;
- no system has been developed for the early detection of domestic violence cases;
- the penalty sanctions applied to the offenders are not efficient enough – as a rule the penalties become a hard financial burden and cause further deterioration of relations in the family.

There is no system of on-going training for the police officers, judges, and social workers on the current legislative provisions counteracting domestic violence.

Funding is lacking for any activities aiming at preventing domestic violence and at helping its victims, which results in failures on the fulfilment of the legislative provisions.

Low legal discipline at various levels of power resulting in the situations when instructions and internal documents prevail over laws, while the legislative amendments passed are not brought to the attention of those concerned for years.

The gender-specific statistics on domestic violence prevention and counteraction are not duly collected.

Practically no public attention is drawn to other serious types of gender violence, of which only human trafficking (as concerns women and girls) is covered and is subject to state regulation.

Such types of violence as sexual harassment remain invisible. Because the laws of Ukraine establish no procedures to complain against sexual harassment and gender-based discrimination in general and no civil or administrative liability has been established for this action, Ukraine still lacks efficient system for protection of individuals that have been subject to gender violence in general and sexual harassment as a type of gender-specific violence in particular. The existing mechanisms do not enable the victims of these forms of violence to get an efficient defence and to restore broadly their violated rights. Development of an efficient system to counteract this type of gender violence remains relevant.

Finally, the recent events in Ukraine related to the resonant rapes and atrocious murders of girls, such as the case of Oksana Makar, and no less inhuman crime against Iryna Krashkova in the village of Vradiyivka, Mykolayiv Region, are not exceptional and show the extent to which the problems of violence against women go beyond the limits of studying the official statistics of the number of statements filed, as well as how deep and old the roots of the structural (not just domestic) gender violence are.



Hired sportsman V. Titushko beats journalist Olga Snitsarchuk.
Dmytro Lipavskyi, (c) 2013

6 - Fulfilment of the Gender Equality Regulations

The 2005 Equal Opportunities Law (hereinafter the Law) has become determinant for the introduction of the equality policy in Ukraine. The Law has aimed to achieve the parity conditions for women and men in all areas of social life through legal definition of equal rights and opportunities for men and women, elimination of gender discrimination, and application of special temporary measures to remove a gap in the possibilities that women and men have to exercise their constitutional rights. Among other, this law laid down eight key priorities for the implementation of the gender equality policy in the Ukrainian society.

A number of other documents, described below, have been subsequently passed to implement the above mentioned Law.

In 2006, the government approved the State Programme to Establish Gender Equality in the Ukrainian Society for the Period Until 2010.

The Programme was drafted on the basis of broad expert consultations with national NGOs and individual experts and aimed a fulfilling a number of ambitious objectives: from development of the relevant gender quality regulations in accordance with the Law, adaptation of Ukraine's legislation to the EU gender equality legislation and improvement of the mechanism of the gender-related legal expert analysis of the national legislation initiated by the Ministry of Justice to the creation of an institutional mechanism to support gender equality and to implement gender approaches into the way the executive authorities and local self-governance bodies function (including, for example, through an instruction issued to the oblast state administrations to put the gender component into all oblast programmes of social and economic development).

The Programme expired at the end of 2010, and because of the administrative reform, launched at the same time, it was not extended. Namely, the reform, announced by the Presidential Decree on Optimisation of the Central Executive Authorities System, abolished the Ministry for Family, Youth, and Sport Affairs, which ceased to exist on 9 December 2010. Its powers were actually passed over to the successor Ministry only in November 2011, i.e. almost in one year when the Department for Family Policy with a separate gender policy section was restored (currently – the Department for Gender Policy and Children's Recreation). The relevant powers are still being transferred along the executive sector from one ministry to another, while the whole process is being accompanied by considerable losses of the experts already trained and competent in the equality issues, as

well as other complications faced by the institutional mechanism for establishing gender equality in Ukraine.

The actual absence of the institutional mechanism affects the social climate and results in the appearance of both pro- and anti-gender initiatives. In general terms, elimination of the Ministry for Family, Youth, and Sport Affairs at the background of the crisis phenomena, that had a negative influence on the institute of the family, brought the pro-family policy discourse back to the agenda, primarily on the side of the religious associations and organisations.

Because of this on-going lack of institutional clarity, the very governmental programme on an integral and well-considered gender equality policy has not yet been passed.

The State Programme for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men Until 2016 drafted by the UNDP experts at the end of 2010 (the government did manage to pass its Concept in November 2012) is still being discussed.

This is how Natalia Korolevska, Minister of Social Policy, in charge of the equality policy, summed up the situation as of last April: “The Ministry is already working on a comprehensive draft of the State Programme for Establishing Gender Equality Until 2016. This paper has already been discussed with experts and should be finalised in the near future”. The status of this Programme, however, as well as the measures to be taken to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men have already been put on the agenda of the special parliamentary hearings on Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men: Problems and Efficient Solution Mechanisms to be held this October.

While the already three years old suspense of the adoption of the next Programme that should be running until 2016 is still going on other governing documents, described below play the role of a road map for the implementation of the equality policy:

- CEDAW – Ukraine is obliged to report under this Convention, and this is quite conducive to the constructive attitude to the equality problems (it is, for example, used as a basis for the annual Gender Threats List and the relevant action plan developed by the Gender Strategic Platform, an influential network of Ukrainian NGOs);
- MGT Ukraine 6 objective – there is a system of broad indicators, which can be used as a check list to examine the status of gender equality in politics and political representation in Ukraine;
- The Equal Rights Law eight key gender policy priorities – from time to time they are elaborated in other more specific initiatives (e.g. the proposed amendments to certain legislative acts to prohibit sexism expressions in advertising submitted to the parliament by MP Iryna Berezhna in May 2012).

The public authorities, in particular the local ones, also take various ways out of this deregulated situation around the gender equality issues.

In a number of regions, mainly in the east and centre of Ukraine, regional and district gender equality programmes have been passed for this period. It is rather noteworthy that their development was often governed by the gender policy priorities defined by the Equal Rights Law. These programmes have been developed for different periods, from 2013 (Kharkiv) and until 2026 (Dniepropetrovsk); they also feature a certain variability in the approaches to the understanding of the gender equality and priority steps to its establishment.

Altogether, gender equality programmes have been passed and are valid in nine out of twenty five regions of Ukraine, in particular in the following:

- Vinnytsya Region – the Oblast Target Social Comprehensive Programme for Family and Demographic Development Support, Human Trafficking Prevention, and Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Men and Women until 2015 is being implemented;
- Dnipropetrovsk Region – the Programme for Family and Gender Policy Development in Dnipropetrovsk Region in 2012 – 2021 has been approved together with a section on the Establishment of Gender Equality in the Ukrainian Society;
- Zhytomyr Region – the Comprehensive Programme Zhytomyrshchyna Youth and Family in 2012 – 2016 has been passed. Even though the programme title is neutral to the equality issues, it does contain two special gender related sections, X. Gender Equality Establishment and IX. Prevention of Domestic Violence. The relevant information, education and training measures, as well as those aiming at building capacities have been developed for the implementation of these sections at the regional and district levels.
- Zaporizhzhya Region – the Comprehensive Programme for Children Recreation and Rest, Family, Youth, and Gender Parity Support, and Human Trafficking Counteraction in 2012-2016 has been passed and is valid. Its main objectives include extension of the opportunities for the combination of the family and professional life for men and women; establishment of conditions for harmonisation of professional and family obligations; introduction of a system of efficient response to the gender discrimination cases; formation of the gender culture and elimination of gender stereotypes; conduct of research on the gender issues and implementation of its results.
- Luhansk Region – the gender policy is implemented within the framework of the Regional Programme for

Establishment of Gender Equality in All Life Activities Fields in Luhansk Region in 2010-2014. The Programme is aiming at solving such priority objectives for the region as political and economic inequality of men and women; gender inequality on the labour market, in particular as concerns professional employment and career development; demographic crisis; life expectancy reduction (especially among men); domestic violence and violence in the society in general; women trafficking; gender imbalance in the rural areas due to the active departure of women from villages; lack of the education gender theory optional and special courses at secondary school etc. The programme is based on the idea that gender discrimination violates the principle of equal rights and respect of human dignity, prevents equal participation of women and men in the state, economic, political and private life, holds back the development of the country's well-being and full opening of the men and women's potential.

- Poltava Region – the Oblast Programme for the Implementation of the Youth Policy, Family Support, and Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men in 2012-2014 has been developed and passed with the main objectives being introduction of the gender component into the regional and sectoral social and economic development programmes. The programmes aims at better public awareness of the domestic violence programmes and provision of services to the victims; provision of medical and legal support to the violence victims, in particular those coming from the rural areas; weakening of the gender stereotypes in the media which is still one of the barriers to both women and men's full-fledged participation in all areas of social life and, finally, consideration of the gender component in the adoption of the long- and short-term regional programmes independently of their priorities and implementation areas.
- Khmelnytsk Region – a very well developed and practically oriented Oblast Programme to Ensure Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men Until 2015. Among other, it includes the following measures: improvement of the method for selection and conduct of gender legal study; introduction of training modules on the basics of gender equality and gender integration into the professional training and excellence programmes for pedagogues, managerial staff of the oblast institute for post-diploma pedagogical education, civil servants and local self-governance officials; gender analysis of the regional public authorities and local self-governance staff; inclusion of

women candidatures to the staff reserve and appointment of women to the managerial positions at executive authorities and local self-governance bodies etc.

- Kherson Region – the oblast has the Gender Equality Establishment Programme Until 2016 with well thought-out, developed and specified implementation measures from analysis of the women and men’s position in all areas of social life (based on incomes, budget funds distribution, participation in adoption of political decisions, etc.), preparation and issuance of the oblast gender portrait and to the conduct information and education events to promote counteraction to gender violence.
- Kharkiv Region – no programme has been passed in this oblast, but there is a valid Instruction issued by the Head of Oblast State Administration on Approval of Oblast Measures to Ensure Equal Rights and Opportunities of Men and Women and Prevent Domestic Violence in 2009-2013 (No. 192 of 06.06.09).

No equal rights and opportunities have been passed in four other oblasts, Volyn, Mykolayiv, Chernivtsi, and Crimean Autonomous Republic, but they have local family support programmes. In individual cases, the programmes may contain references to gender issues or include provisions grounded in their time by gender experts, in particular:

- Volyn Region has neither a gender equality programme, nor measures; instead, there is the Family Support Programme Until 2015. At the same time, this programme included two proposals developed by gender experts of the oblast: support to the conscious parenthood and the need to support the combination of family and professional obligations.
- Mykolayiv Region has the Social Comprehensive Programme for Family and Children Support, Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men in 2011-2015 aiming at forming the social resentment towards any forms of violence; formation of the gender culture and elimination of any gender stereotypes in the society; practical exercise of every citizen’s right, including that of children and senior people, to be protected from any forms of domestic violence and ill-treatment. In this programme gender equality is considered as the way to establish traditional family values.
- Chernivtsi Region – the oblast has passed the Programme for the Implementation of the Family, Children, and Youth Affairs in 2011-2012. Its objectives include prevention of domestic violence and promotion of gender equality as a fundamental criterion of democracy. Unfortunately, this programme envisages no implementation measures. Thus, in this case, the executive authorities have declared the

establishment of equal rights and opportunities of women and men as a priority, but there seem to be no plans for its implementation.

- The Crimean Autonomous Republic has passed the Programme for Development of Education and Science, Physical Culture and Sport, and Family Support in the Crimean Autonomous Republic in 2012-2016. The Programme, however, contains no gender equality objectives, as their scope is limited to the “formation of the gender culture in the society” with its tasks being “preservation and strengthening of the family institute; improvement of the population gender culture”.

In the remaining 11 oblasts, in particular in Kyiv, Ternopil, and Chernihiv regions, as well as in Kyiv City, the validity of the previously adopted regional programmes to ensure equal rights and opportunities of men and women has expired, while the new programmes are still under development.

In addition to the development of the programmes as such, Ukraine has been working quite seriously on the development of the institutions and agencies that would be able to influence the implementation of the equality policy. Certain elements of the National Gender Equality Ensuring Mechanism (the National Gender Mechanism, NGM), developed with the help of the UNDP, that has considerably suffered from Ukraine's administrative reform, have managed to survive and continue fulfilling their functions, in particular at the regional level.

Thus, development of the institutional capacity envisaged that, in addition to the vertical management as such, advisory bodies would be broadly formed to help develop gender equality policy. This would include dissemination of the practice of appointing an adviser to the minister for gender issues; establishment of working groups for introduction of gender approaches; the practices for the appointment of the advisers to the heads of state oblast administrations (18 oblasts in 2008); establishment of the oblast steering gender councils for family issues, demographic development and counteracting human trafficking (at 18 oblast state administrations) etc.

Currently, in 16 regions of Ukraine there are advisers to the heads of oblast state administrations for gender issues, as well as Expert Councils to Consider Gender Discrimination Cases have been set up under the heads of oblast state administrations.⁵⁷ Some regions also still have their oblast interdepartmental commissions to coordinate actions aiming at preventing domestic violence and at introducing gender equality; about 10 gender resource and 20 gender education centres of different subordination levels and legal registration forms have been established.

⁵⁷ <http://www.centre.gov.ua>

Challenges

Currently, one of the most pressing issues is the failure to adopt the long-expected State Programme for Equal Rights and Opportunities of Women and Men until 2016 which results in two other problems.

Firstly, this Programme, developed with the involvement of the most prominent and influential experts, used to provide guidelines for the similar regional programmes, while now implementation of the gender equality at the local level has become a sort of a hostage of the current political moment, a compromise between the policy adopted by the state and the local activity of the ultra-traditional and ultra-regional groupings, as this has been well demonstrated by the situation with adoption of the regional gender quality programmes.

Secondly, under such conditions of institutional weakness of the Department for Gender Policy and Children's Recreation in charge of gender equality, the government practically has no possibilities and takes no systemic efforts to assess the previous State Programme that has expired and its results, as well as to define the barriers and problems encountered during its implementation.

In addition, analysis of the currently valid regional programmes evidence that the problems related to the ensuring of the full-fledged participation of the Ukrainian women in all spheres of social life tend to be eliminated from the developed documents and be replaced by the family support issues.



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