

VII. Gender equality situation in Ukraine: challenges and opportunities

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1. Introduction and background information

Ukraine as a post-Soviet country has been in the process of transition to democratic institutions that also include gender component. European vector of integration plays important role in the defining values among which there is equality and fairness. Gender equality measures access of men and women into resources and possibilities to stand for their interests in all spheres of the social life.

Recent events in Ukraine connected with Euromaidan protests of 2013-2014 and later armed conflict in the Eastern part, brought changes into women's lives and their roles both in the society and their families. From one hand, the threat of violence makes women more vulnerable towards socio-economic situation. For example, women are the majority among IPDs (internally displaced persons) from Eastern Ukraine responsible for children, elderly, and disabled relatives²⁰⁷. From the other hand, during these turbulent events Ukrainian women managed to challenge traditional gender roles (as cares and victims of conflict) and reclaimed visibility, recognition, and respect as revolutionaries and volunteers²⁰⁸.

²⁰⁷ According to UN data (October 2015), women make up over 63 per cent of the country's estimated 1.4 million internally displaced persons (IDPs). - See more at: <http://eca.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2015/10/ukraine-un-tackles-gender-and-humanitarian-impacts#sthash.ZYEr7Htp.dpuf>

²⁰⁸ Martsenyuk, T. (2015). Gender Issues in Ukraine and EuroMaidan Protests: Patriarchal or Egalitarian Notions? Anti-Gender Movements on the Rise? Strategising for Gender Equality in Central and Eastern Europe, Ed. by the Heinrich Böll Foundation, Vol. 38 of the Publication Series on Democracy, p. 73-81.

The collapse of Soviet Union was followed by a decline in the number of women in elected office in the region that happened during the transition from communist party rule to multiparty competitive elections. Ukraine appeared to be among the countries with the lowest percentage of women in top-politics. Ukrainian women are well educated and in general actively involved in the labor market, yet they are virtually excluded from top political decision-making.

Democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity are among the major values of European Union²⁰⁹. Over the last 50 years EU is implementing gender policies in different spheres of society demonstrating some successes in achieving gender equality²¹⁰. Gender mainstreaming and special measures in gender equality implementations are two major policies in EU that are also being implemented in Ukraine. In this paper, are analyzed successes and problems in gender equality politics in Ukraine based on international and national data (statistics, reports, and articles), legislation, and results of different research projects.

2. Gender (in)equality in Ukraine: international comparison and obligations

According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2015, provided by the World Economic Forum²¹¹, Ukraine takes 67th place among 145 economies according to how well they are leveraging their female talent pool, based on economic, educational, health-based and political indicators. Table 1 shows all four of these sub-indexes for Ukraine, demonstrating that the worst ranking is in women's political empowerment, where Ukraine takes 107th place among 145 countries.

²⁰⁹ Delegation of the EU to Ukraine (2016). Human Rights, EU Projects and Programs, accessed

http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/ukraine/key_eu_policies/human_rights/index_en.htm

²¹⁰ Martsenyuk, T. (2015). Gender Politics of European Union: General Principles and Best Practices, Kyiv, International Center for Policy Studies, 44 p. (in Ukrainian) // http://www.icps.com.ua/assets/uploads/files/genderna_pol_tika_s.pdf

²¹¹ World Economic Forum (2015), Global Gender Gap Report, accessed <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/>

*Table 1. Ukraine in the Global Gender Gap Report, 2015*²¹²

#	Subindexes	Rank (among 145 countries)	Index Score ²¹³
1	Economic participation and opportunity	40	0.731
2	Educational attainment	30	1.000
3	Health and survival	42	0.979
4	Political empowerment	107	0.098
5	Total	67	0.702

The political empowerment sub-index includes the gap between men and women in political decision-making at the highest levels – ratio of women to men at the ministerial level and in parliamentary positions; the ratio of women to men in terms of years in executive office – prime minister or president in the past 50 years. In other sub-indexes such as educational attainment and even economic participation Ukraine delivered much better scores.

Moreover, when we search the Inter-Parliamentary Union database of Women in Parliaments²¹⁴, Ukraine takes only 143rd among 190 countries classified in descending order of the percentage of women in the lower or single House.

Ukraine undertook to reach the Millennium Development Goals by 2015²¹⁵. The goals were adapted to the Ukrainian context, taking into consideration the particularities of the country's development. In particular, Goal 3 is connected to ensuring gender equality. In this aspect of development there are two main targets: (1) gender equality in political life and (2) gender equality in Ukraine's labour market. According to the UNDP Millennium Development Goals for 2015,

²¹² For Ukraine see: <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/economies/#economy=UKR>

²¹³ 0.00 = inequality; 1.00 = equality.

²¹⁴ Inter-Parliamentary Union (2016), Women in National Parliaments, on the basis of information provided by National Parliaments by 1st April 2016, accessed <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>

²¹⁵ UN (2015), Millennium Development Goals, accessed <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

ratified by Ukraine, those goals were not successfully reached. By 2015 the Ukrainian state planned to have at least 30% of women in the Verkhovna Rada, but this number fell far short of meeting its international obligation. Following the 2014 parliamentary elections, the Verkhovna Rada continued to be an almost totally male-dominated body, consisting of only 12% of women. Since independence Ukraine has shown little improvement in increasing the number of women in Parliament that could be explained by a number of factors on the societal, political and individual levels²¹⁶. Women have less money and fewer social networks to work with, and the stereotype of politics as dirty business further justifies patriarchal notions of blocking them out²¹⁷. Moreover, Ukrainian women are supposed to fulfil two main roles – to be beautiful (in order to inspire men) and to be mothers (to provide reproductive resources and care for a nation). In this situation it is hard to perform the other roles.

Ukraine ratified major worldwide women's rights document – Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)²¹⁸ – in 1980. Ukraine is obliged to report to Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women about the progress in achieving women's rights. As it is concluded into 8th State periodic report, “the problem of preserving gender stereotype still remains topical. The work for counteracting stereotypes reproducing gender inequality is unsystematic and is more formal in its nature”²¹⁹.

²¹⁶ Martsenyuk, T. (2015). *Women's Top-Level Political Participation: Failures and Hopes of Ukrainian Gender Politics in New Imaginaries: Youthful Reinvention of Ukraine's Cultural Paradigm*, ed. and translated by Marian J. Rubchak, New York & Oxford: Berghahn.

²¹⁷ Martsenyuk, T. (2012). *Ukraine's Other Half, Post-Soviet Post*, online Stanford University journal, accessed <http://postsovietpost.stanford.edu/discussion/ukraines-other-half>

²¹⁸ CEDAW (1979), *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, UN Women, accessed <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>

²¹⁹ CEDAW/C/UKR/8 - Eighth periodic report of States parties due in 2014, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women; Date received: 6 August, p. 28, accessed http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW%2fC%2fUKR%2f8&Lang=en

3. EU gender policies and Ukraine

Equality between women and men is one of the European Union's founding values. It goes back to 1957 when the principle of equal pay for equal work became part of the Treaty of Rome²²⁰. The European Commission follows the dual approach in its gender politics by both implementing gender mainstreaming and initiating specific measures²²¹. *Gender mainstreaming* is the integration of a gender equality perspective into every stage of policy process - design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation - with a view to promoting equality between women and men. It means assessing how policies impact on women and men, and taking steps to change policies if necessary. *Specific measures* (such as legislation, awareness-raising campaigns or financial programmes) aim to tackle specific problems such as the gender pay gap or the persistent underrepresentation of women, particularly in the field of employment.

Moreover, co-operation with the various institutions and stakeholders active in the field of gender equality – EU countries governments, the European Parliament, social partner organisations, civil society, equality bodies, international organisations, EU agencies – is crucial to ensure progress in this field²²².

According to recent European Commission “Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019” there are five priority areas²²³:

- increasing female labour market participation and equal economic independence;
- reducing the gender pay, earnings and pension gaps and thus fighting poverty among women;
- promoting equality between women and men in decision-making;

²²⁰ European Commission (2016), Justice, Gender Equality, accessed <http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/>

²²¹ Gender Equality in the European Union (2011), Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 7 p., accessed http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/brochure_equality_en.pdf

²²² Ibid., p. 12.

²²³ European Commission (2015), Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019, accessed http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/document/files/strategic_engagement_en.pdf

- combating gender-based violence and protecting and supporting victims;
- promoting gender equality and women's rights across the world.

The EU promotes gender equality through legislation, monitoring, policy guidance, awareness raising activities and support to grass-root projects. The EU-Ukraine Association Agreement was completely signed on 27 June 2014. Gender equality is mentioned in the article 419, Chapter 21 “Cooperation on employment, social policy and equal opportunities”,²²⁴. In the Article 420 it is stated that Agreement shall pursue the following goals, among which are: aim at gender equality and ensure equal opportunities for women and men in employment, education, training, economy and society, and decision-making.

Moreover, a number of Directives (concerning gender equality) are listed²²⁵, such as:

- Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation
- Council Directive 2004/113/EC of 13 December 2004 implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services
- Council Directive 96/34/EC of 3 June 1996 on the framework agreement on parental leave concluded by UNICE, CEEP and the ETUC
- Council Directive 92/85/EEC of 19 October 1992 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding (tenth individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16(1) of Directive 89/391/EEC).

Moreover, the European Union was actively supporting the empowerment of women and children via a €14 million package of

²²⁴ Official Journal of the European Union (2014), Associate agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and Ukraine, of the other part, 29.5.2014, p. 154, accessed http://eeas.europa.eu/ukraine/docs/association_agreement_ukraine_2014_en.pdf

²²⁵ Ibid., p. 1978-1979.

technical assistance under the programme “*Women and Children’s rights in Ukraine*” 2009- 2011²²⁶. Working with the Ministry of Family, Youth and Sport, as well as with other line ministries and civil society actors, the programme consisted of five projects run by international donors including the International Labour Organisation, Council of Europe, United Nations Development Programme and United National Children’s Fund’s and Safege company. Among the issues covered by the programme were domestic violence, child protection and gender equality at work.

4. Gender politics in Ukraine: contradictions of gender legislation

The issue of equal rights and opportunities for women and men in the Ukrainian society is governed by both general and special legislation. According to some international NGOs and experts, during the last two decades, Ukraine has achieved considerable progress in promotion of gender equality by establishing core elements of an appropriate legal and institutional framework²²⁷.

Discrimination on the basis of gender is prohibited both by the Constitution of Ukraine and the Law of Ukraine “On Principles of Prevention and Combating Discrimination in Ukraine” (2012)²²⁸. Ukraine also has specific legislation designed to promote gender equality: the Law of Ukraine “On ensuring equal rights and opportunities of women and men”.

The Constitution of Ukraine (1996), Section II “The rights, freedoms and duties of man and citizen”, Article 24 guarantees to citizens equal constitutional rights and freedoms, “there can be no privileges or restrictions based on race, color, political, religious and other beliefs,

²²⁶ More information could be found here: <http://www.un.org.ua/en/information-centre/news/1250>

²²⁷ European Commission & UN Women (2013), Gender analysis of official development assistance in Ukraine: baseline study, Kyiv, p. 9.

²²⁸ In the Crosscurrents (2015), Addressing Discrimination and Inequality in Ukraine, *The Equal Rights Trust Country Report Series*: 5 London, August 2015, p. 28, accessed http://www.gay.org.ua/publications/antidi_report2015-e.pdf

sex, ethnic or social origin, property, residence, language or other characteristics.”²²⁹

In 2005 Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted the Law “On ensuring equal rights and opportunities of women and men”²³⁰. The Government of Ukraine also ratified the Decree “On adoption of the state program of ensuring gender equality in Ukrainian society for 2006-2010” (Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers № 1834), and developed the similar one for 2011-2016. It is important to note, that Ukraine was the first post-Soviet country to introduce domestic violence legislation more than ten years ago (Law of Ukraine “On prevention of family violence”). Moreover, in 2011 separate legislation on the prevention of human trafficking (an important gender-based problem) was adopted. To conclude, *De jure* gender equality is supported by national institutional mechanisms and legislation. International and national NGOs monitor the results of state and regional programs, and propose issues for improvement.

At the same time, *de facto*, it could be argued that despite different legislative attempts not much has been implemented in terms of tangible policies. Unarguably, there is a lack of accountability by the government for meeting those legislative initiatives. Mentioned above gender legislation “On ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men” is a clear example of such ineffectiveness. On the one hand, the Law introduced such gender sensitive terminology as equal rights and opportunities for women and men, gender equality, discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual harassments etc. The aims of government policy to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men have at least been proclaimed. Concrete bodies, institutions and organizations are named as those with powers in the area of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men (article 7). On the other hand, most articles are simply declarative, without any real mechanism for implementing them (particularly the Administrative or Criminal Codes), or sanctions for violating them. For example, according to Article 17,

²²⁹ Constitution of Ukraine (1996), Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, accessed <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/254%D0%BA/96-%D0%B2%D1%80>

²³⁰ Law № 2866-IV (2006). On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Men and Women, 8 September 2005. Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

“Employers shall not discriminate by offering jobs only to women or men in vacancy advertisements, with the exception of specific jobs that only persons of certain sex can perform. Employers shall not put different demands to employees based on their sex giving priority to one of the sexes and require from them information about their personal life and plans to have children.” But in the absence of any sanctions the Ukrainian labor market vacancy advertisements are full of such discriminatory descriptions.

Ukrainian legislation (such as the Code of Labor Laws of Ukraine), in its effort to become gender specific still tries to protect women, family and children, thus perpetuating traditional gender roles. Some examples of more favorable treatment of women (especially with children) than men²³¹:

- article 185 allows pregnant women and women with children under the age of 14 to claim vouchers to sanatoriums and rest homes as well as material aid;
- article 182 provides 56 days leave for women who adopt a child from birth (70 days if the woman adopts two or more children);
- articles 63 and 177 require employers to obtain the consent of women with children aged between three and fourteen years old or who have a disability before requiring them to work overtime or to go on business trips.

According to experts, “while unique and favourable treatment for women during pregnancy and immediately after childbirth may be justified, the blanket favouring of mothers of young children or children with disabilities over fathers in the same situation is unjustifiable, as is the prohibition of women (regardless of whether they are pregnant or have children) from undertaking certain forms of work cannot be justified”²³².

The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention) is the first legally binding instrument in Europe on this

²³¹ In the Crosscurrents (2015), p. 35.

²³² In the Crosscurrents (2015), p. 35.

subject and the most far-reaching international treaty in this field²³³. According to Council of Europe project “Preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence in Ukraine project”, the Ukrainian Constitution guarantees equal rights for women and men, and the country has made significant advances in ensuring equality between women and men however. But Ukrainian women still face discrimination at legal, policy and practice levels. The legislation is inconsistent which added to the lack of available data, results in the low effectiveness of measures aimed at combating violence against women. Lack of cooperation between various bodies and services makes it impossible for victims of violence against women to receive assistance. Ukraine signed the Istanbul Convention on 7 November 2011. The purpose of the mentioned above project is the ratification of the Istanbul Convention by Ukrainian authorities, including the preparation for the ratification and its implementation.

5. Gender aspects of family life in Ukraine

Sexism is the ideology and practice of gender-based discrimination. Gender stereotypes that envision a specific set of the so-called "traditional" roles for women and men both in private and public spheres of the society are the key problem of sexism. So called reproductive labor (un-paid work that is “attached” to women and explained by biological determinism) is an important issue to analyze in this sub-chapter. Reproductive labor includes caring for children, elderly, people with disabilities, and also maintaining household (preparing food, cleaning, buying food etc.) and it demands a lot of such resource as time. In the Ukrainian society reproductive labor is predominantly done by women and explained stereotypically as “traditional” women’s “duty”. According to the sociological survey “Women’s labour force participation in Ukraine – 2012”²³⁴, more than three-fourths of women said that it was mainly they who cleaned up the house (78.4% of the respondents) and made meals (75.3%). About two

²³³ Council of Europe (2016), Preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence in Ukraine project, accessed <http://www.coe.int/en/web/stop-violence-against-women-ukraine>

²³⁴ UNPFA Ukraine (2014), Analytical research on women’s participation in the labour force in Ukraine p. 79-80.

thirds of women having children or family members in need of continuous care said that care for such persons belonged particularly to their duties. Most women also stated that it was they who are responsible in the family for purchase of foodstuffs and everyday goods. The only type of household work remaining a “male” prerogative in most domestic households consists of minor repair, as more than a half of female respondents reported.

In Ukrainian society, double standards towards gender roles still prevail. There are different expectations for women and men about family planning and marriage. According to official statistics²³⁵, the average age of entering into the first marriage permanently increases: among women, it has increased from 21.8 years old in 2010 to 24.5 years old in 2012. Among men over the same period, this age has increased from 24.5 years old to 27.0 years old. The average age of women when giving birth to the first child over the same period has increased from 23.9 years old to 24.4 years old. The crude birth rate in 2010 was 1.45, in 2012 — 1.53. The natural population decline in 2010 was 200,500 people, in 2013 — 158,700 people. The migration gain of population in 2010 was 16,100 persons, in 2013 — 31.9 thousand people. Resident population of Ukraine as of 1 June 2014 totalled 42,995,500 people, which is by 2,597,500 people lower than as of 1 June 2010.

Following recommendations from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and the CEDAW Committee, in 2012 the Family Code of Ukraine was amended to raise the minimum age for marriage for girls from 17 to 18; the minimum age for boys was already set at 18²³⁶. At the same time, international NGOs are worried about problem of early marriage that may cause problems such as school dropout, and prolonged economic and psychological dependency on parents. Early marriage in Ukraine is connected with the problem of early sexual debut

²³⁵ CEDAW/C/UKR/8 - Eighth periodic report of States parties due in 2014, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women; Date received: 6 August, accessed http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW%2fC%2fUKR%2f8&Lang=en

²³⁶ Martsenyuk, T. (2013), Child marriage in Ukraine factsheet, UNFPA Office in Ukraine, p. 3, accessed http://www.unfpa.org.ua/files/articles/4/52/Child%20Marriage%20in%20Ukraine_Overview.pdf

of young people, and unplanned pregnancies²³⁷. There is no particular course or approved curriculum on sexual education in schools. Some aspects of sexual education (such as HIV/AIDS prevention, sexually transmitted diseases, gender relations between boys and girls) are studied in grades 5 to 9 at secondary school, in the course “Fundamentals of Health”.

According to the statistical evidence available, early marriages in Ukraine are quite rare, and are more typical for villages than cities, for women with lower education, for poorest households²³⁸. Moreover, for the age group 16-18, the number of women who married exceeded the number of men by seven times: 14472 (or 2,6%) of women compare to 2087 (0,4%).

Parenthood is a marginal issue and the role for men in the Ukrainian society. Men are expected to be, first of all, as “wallets” (or breadwinners) but not responsible fathers for their children. As it was mentioned above about Code of Labors in Ukraine, state perceived women as a major or event the only parent for the children.

According to EU gender politics, men are important target of gender equality implementation. Some of these ideas were brought to Ukraine. For example, from 2001 to 2007 SIDA supported projects within the field of men’s role in gender equality in Ukraine, implemented by the Swedish and Ukrainian partners. An international network was established that helped to disseminate the idea of men’s centers also in other countries (men’s centers in Kazakhstan and Lithuania). The project operated in six regions of Ukraine. One of the objectives of this cooperation was to change stereotyped gender roles, which prevent men from being social fathers, living a healthy longer life, and having good private and professional cooperation with women. This cooperation has contributed to the popularization of the idea of *responsible fatherhood* in Ukraine. A model for a father school was suggested, piloted and multiplied first in six regions, and then in eight more regions with the UNICEF support.

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ Ibid., p. 4

6. Gender aspects of labor market in Ukraine

According to recent studies, the employment rate of Ukrainian women was 57.5% in 2011 which was rather close to the EU average figure of 58.5% and exceeded the indicator of most South and East European countries.²³⁹ On average the female employment rate in Ukraine is growing at a slower pace than in the EU. During 2000-2011, female employment rates in most EU countries increased by 5-7%, whereas in Ukraine the growth was only 2.4%. As experts explain,²⁴⁰ one of the reasons of this - the considerably lower retirement age limit. The retirement age for women in Ukraine was 55 years until recently whereas the current standard European retirement age is 65 for women and men. According to the latest World Bank statistics, in Ukraine ratio of female to male labor force participation was 79.9 in 2014.²⁴¹

As we could see from Table 2, women are more often employed as wage and salaried workers, compare to men. At the same time, 17% of men in labor force are self-employed compare to 14% of women.

*Table 2. Economic opportunities for women and men, World Bank statistics.*²⁴²

Featured indicators	2000	2014
Wage and salaried workers, female (% of females employed)	89.2	85.9
Wage and salaried workers, male (% of males employed)	90.6	82.5
Self-employed, female (% of females employed)	10.8	13.8
Self-employed, male (% of males employed)	9.4	17.2
Unemployment, female (% of female labor force)	10.2	6.5
Unemployment, male (% of male labor force)	13.0	8.9

²³⁹ UNPFA Ukraine (2014), Analytical research on women's participation in the labour force in Ukraine, p. 9.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ World Bank (2016), Database of Gender Statistics, Ukraine
<http://datatopics.worldbank.org/gender/country/ukraine>

²⁴² Ibid.

According to experts, despite higher male unemployment figures from the perspective of real labour supply, women traditionally prevail among the unemployed registered with the State Employment Service.²⁴³ It can be assumed that such distribution is caused by women's greater inclination to apply to relevant services for help in job placement, while men are more inclined to search for a job by themselves rather than rely upon assistance from the State.

The Ukrainian labour market is characterized by a high rate of female participation and regulation that is relatively gender neutral, apart from some protective regulation for women workers in mines and other parts of the heavy industry.²⁴⁴ According to the Labor Code of Ukraine, women may not be employed for hard work or dangerous jobs, they may not be involved in lifting and moving items, whose weight exceeds specially established limits. Indeed, over professions are prohibited by law for women in Ukraine

today. Women don't have the right to do any work or to have one of the professions that are included in the "List of heavy jobs and work in harmful/dangerous conditions" approved by the Ministry of Health. Also, women may not be involved in work at night, except for the sectors and types of work with the maximum night hours for women approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. These paternalist regulations also do not allow official employment of women in a majority of professions in the military sector.

Ukrainian labor market could be characterized by two major forms of gender segregation: vertical and horizontal. Ukrainian women are concentrated in the less status and lower paid labor market spheres. To illustrate one of the aspects of the vertical gender segregation problem, let's check data on women's representation at the top executive positions in Ukraine's civil service system.²⁴⁵ According to 2011 results, female share among Category 1 civil servants (at the level of responsible state decisionmaking), was only 14%, indicating extremely limited

²⁴³ UNPFA Ukraine (2014), Analytical research on women's participation in the labour force in Ukraine, p. 30.

²⁴⁴ Women and Men on the Ukrainian Labour Market (2011), p. 14.

²⁴⁵ UNPFA Ukraine (2014), Analytical research on women's participation in the labour force in Ukraine, p. 40.

representation among the top executive officials of women. The female share among Category 2 and 3 executive civil servants was 30% and 42%, respectively, and it was more than two-thirds at lower levels where an experienced skill pool of civil servants is usually formed. Only at the level of executives in the Category 4, male share was close to one-third whereas women amounted up to 80% of the staff at lower levels of self-governance executives. It should be noted that such patterns in the gender structure of high-ranking officials have remained rather stable during the entire period of Ukraine's independence.

Experts indicate that another worrisome development is the large pay gap between women and men, which is close to 30%. The pay gap is most likely even higher than the official figures indicate since informal employment is not included in the statistics.²⁴⁶ The pay gap is connected to gender segregation of the labor market of Ukraine and could be one of the examples of the gender discrimination in the labor markets of the country.

There is also gender discrimination in the process of job recruitment²⁴⁷. Advertisements which call only for female or male applicants, despite being prohibited by law, are commonplace; and women, particularly young women, are asked personal questions about their marital status and plans regarding children during job interviews, with employers reluctant to hire women seen as a "risk".

Moreover, women compare to men face problem of "double burden" such as reproductive labor is attached to them. There is a lack of childcare and children's facilities in general for parents (both women and men) to reconcile work and family responsibilities.

At the same time, not only women but also men "suffer" from such limitations of gender roles. During transition period in post-Soviet Ukraine (as in the other former SU republics) gender relations are being changed because of socio-economic development of the society. Male breadwinners' roles are being challenged. In Ukraine men's unemployment has undermined the traditional role of men. It is also affecting the structure of authority and power of men and women within

²⁴⁶ Women and Men on the Ukrainian Labour Market (2011), p. 5.

²⁴⁷ In the Crosscurrents (2015), p. 45.

the household. Changing roles have caused uncertainties in gender relations that are reflected in declining marriage and fertility rates, increasing numbers of female-headed households, children living in single-parent families. And finally, inability of men to meet wide-spread expectations (to be leaders and problem-solvers) induces decline in males' self-esteem, increases in alcohol-addiction problem, suicide and mortality rates among men, as well as increased levels of domestic violence.

7. Gender aspects of political life in Ukraine

As it was mentioned above in the analysis of Global gender gap report and other international data, political empowerment component is the most problematic one while speaking about gender equality implementation in different spheres of the Ukrainian society. Women have less resources and social networks to be successful competitors with their male colleagues. Political life in the country is also perceived as rather "dirty games", not suitable for women. Women also face problems with solidarity and empowerment. In the Ukrainian Parliament (Verkhovna Rada) women constitute only 12% of all 450 deputies.

At the same time, the women's lobby in Ukraine witnessed some visible changes to its organizational forms since 2012.²⁴⁸ Large campaigns to empower women started a couple of years ago, for example, by National Democratic Institute (NDI) and Ukrainian Women's Fund etc. In 2011 the Equal Opportunities Inter-Factional Union (Caucus) was first formed. The establishment of the Caucus is aimed at improving the status of women in the society and achievement the equal participation of women and men in governance.²⁴⁹

During the period of Equal Opportunities Caucus functioning its members had registered series of common draft laws designed to combat domestic violence, ensure equal salary for men and women, a fair

²⁴⁸ Kostiuchenko T., Martsenyuk T., Oksamytna S. (2015). Women politicians and parliamentary elections in Ukraine and Georgia 2012, East/West: Journal of Ukrainian Studies, Vol. II, No. 2, p. 88.

²⁴⁹ Annual report (2015) of the Equal Opportunities Inter-Factional Union (Caucus), 12 p., electronic document.

pension reform and equal rights and opportunities for men and women in electoral process. What is very important, it members supported and lobbied the *gender quota* in 2015.

Before 2015 Ukraine has made approximately ten legislative attempts to introduce gender party quotas.²⁵⁰ Each of these attempts failed. Article 1 of the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Men and Women,” discussed above, defines the term “positive actions” as “special temporary actions, designed to overcome the imbalance between opportunities for women and men to implement equal rights given them by the Constitution and the Laws of Ukraine”.²⁵¹ Article 3 of the same law refers to affirmative action as the primary focus of state politics on ensuring the equal rights and opportunities for women and men. So, the main gender legislation of Ukraine refers only to general definitions and statements about positive actions but offers no concrete quotas for eliminating the gender imbalance in politics.

At the same time, in recent years more than 100 countries have adopted quotas in order to facilitate the election of female candidates to political office. Electoral quotas for women may be constitutional, legislative, or take the form of a political party quota.²⁵² Gender quotas are quite popular affirmative action measures in the EU countries.²⁵³ Almost all EU countries have some kind of gender quota. In particular, legislative quotas were adopted in Belgium, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia and France. More than half of the EU member states have voluntary party quotas have: Austria, Great Britain, Greece, Spain, Italy, Cyprus, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the

²⁵⁰ Martsenyuk, T. (2015). Women's Top-Level Political Participation: Failures and Hopes of Ukrainian Gender Politics in *New Imaginaries: Youthful Reinvention of Ukraine's Cultural Paradigm*, ed. and translated by Marian J. Rubchak, New York & Oxford: Berghahn.

²⁵¹ Law № 2866-IV (2006). On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Men and Women, 8 September 2005. Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

²⁵² International IDEA (2016). About Quotas. Global Database of Quotas for Women. A joint project of International IDEA and Stockholm University, accessed <http://www.quotaproject.org/aboutquotas.cfm>

²⁵³ Martsenyuk, T. (2015). Gender Politics of European Union: General Principles and Best Practices, Kyiv, International Center for Policy Studies, p. 21-22 (in Ukrainian)

Netherlands, Germany, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, France, Croatia, Czech Republic, and Sweden.

International gender experts perceived Ukraine's local elections in October 2015 as yet another critical democratic milestone for the country.²⁵⁴ The newly adopted local election law included gender quota (legal requirements to nominate no less than 30 per cent of one gender as candidates in local elections) but has no effective sanctions to ensure compliance.

2015 election results to city councils of Kyiv city and cities-oblast centers demonstrate:²⁵⁵ the average representation of women in city councils reached 18% that is much lower compare to 32% of women among candidates. Committee of Voters of Ukraine concludes that "the proportional representation of women among the candidates (and ensuring this representation through quota) is not sufficient to improve the gender balance in the city councils. Additional measures to encourage active participation of women in elections and provide equal opportunities to be elected are required".²⁵⁶

The average representation of women in oblast councils reached only 15%.²⁵⁷ Similarly to city councils elections, women constituted twice more candidates (30%) and they had twice lower chances to be elected compare to male candidates.

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

Among *achievements* three major developments could be pointed out:²⁵⁸

²⁵⁴ Kalandadze N. (2016). Ukraine's elections through a gender lens, IDEA, accessed <http://www.idea.int/gender/ukraines-elections-through-a-gender-lens.cfm>

²⁵⁵ Committee of Voters of Ukraine (2015). Final report on monitoring of women participation in the electoral process at 2015 local elections in Ukraine, accessed https://issuu.com/8612157/docs/final_report_cvu_gender_monitoring_c984ab7faf6631?e=16898265/32196700

²⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 17.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 19.

²⁵⁸ Ukraine (2014). National review of implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000) in the context of the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration

- (1) legislative framework on gender equality;
- (2) non-governmental organizations in the sector of gender equality and women empowerment (that keeps pace with the increase of gender sensitivity of non-profit sector at large);
- (3) raising awareness in the society on gender equality and gender education.

At the same time, there are some *challenges* like:²⁵⁹

- (1) the level of women representation in social and public life is still very low;
- (2) low level of legal awareness of citizens in terms of gender discrimination;
- (3) lack of political will to implement gender politics.

Based on analyzed materials, it could be appropriate to propose some recommendations.

Ukrainian authorities should create effective mechanisms to ensure implementation of existing legislation to protect the rights of all women and girls.

Patriarchal gender stereotypes (for example, that women's self-fulfilment can only be realised through marriage) should be challenged. This should include discussing other paths that women can follow (for instance, higher education and building their careers, planned and responsible parenthood where men are also involved as fathers) in the media and in education.

The educational system is in need of profound deconstruction of its patriarchal traditions while such tasks as shaping the skills of non-sexist teaching in the pedagogical community, gendered expert assessment of the schoolbooks and curricula.²⁶⁰

and Platform for Action (2015) / With the support of UN Women in Ukraine and Office of Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Ukraine, April 2014. – 98 p. – Accessed on September 18, 2014 from http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/Gender/publication/NV111.07_att1_att2_att3_merged.pdf

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Marushchenko, O. (2013), In between cultural traditions and reactionary threats: is gender education possible in Ukraine? Materials of the second international Gender Workshop "Overcoming gender backlash: experiences Of Ukraine, Belarus,

Ukraine needs to develop a framework for the modernization of the labour market, which includes targets and measures to decrease the gender pay gap and to improve family and work reconciliation.²⁶¹ Since one of the major factors behind the gender pay gap is the horizontal labour market segregation, with women usually over-represented in the lowest paid sectors, it is recommended that measures are taken in order to change or break gender stereotypes in choices of education and profession.²⁶²

They should be more open and involve women into party leadership in all levels.²⁶³ Political parties should introduce volunteer party quotas as affirmative actions for women to become more visible in public discourse. Political parties should develop other mechanisms (mentoring programs, trainings etc.) to break glass-ceiling in political sphere.

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²⁶¹ Women and Men on the Ukrainian Labour Market (2011), p. 5.

²⁶² Ibid., p. 25.

²⁶³ Committee of Voters of Ukraine (2015). p. 25.

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