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Gender inequality and the quality of work life in Ukraine

1. Introduction

A lot of attention has been paid to the issues of gender inequality around the world lately. The practical implementation of the principles of gender equality in the labor area provides economic freedom for both women and men, allowing individuals realizing their life goals and values. Gender equality is an important issue Ukraine needs to solve in the context of EU integration.

The values and ratings of the Gender Inequality Index (GII), which reflects gender inequality in three dimensions – reproductive health, empowerment and economic activity, were represented in The United Nations Human Development Report 2014. In 2014 GII of Ukraine was 0.286, which means that it is on the 57th place among 155 countries. This means that about 28.6% of the human potential is not used because of the presence of gender inequality in Ukraine (*The Human Development Report 2015*, 225). It can be explained as a result of certain government activities, particularly in the legal sphere. Several laws that are important in terms of gender sphere were adopted.

It must be acknowledged that GII is not the ideal method for measuring gender inequality. It does not include information on gender differences in the use of free time, does not take into account the separation of occupations on "feminine" and "masculine" (gender segregation), and the wage gap by gender. Therefore, in this article the author examines these factors and their impact on the formation of gender inequality.

The legal basis for ensuring gender equality in Ukraine is the Constitution. In particular, Article 24 of the Constitution states: "Equal rights for women and men are ensured: by providing women with equal opportunities in the socio-political and cultural activities, in obtaining education and professional training, in labor and remuneration..." (SCU, nr 254k/96). The article guarantees the equality of rights and freedoms of all citizens and no restrictions on the basis of gender.

Gender relations are also governed by various laws. Thus, in order to achieve parity between women and men in all spheres of society the Law of Ukraine "On ensuring equal rights and opportunities of women and men» №2866-IV was adopted. Article

16 of the Law № 2866-IV stipulates that "the heads of state and local governments are obliged to ensure equal access to public service and service in local government, according to the qualifications and training of the applicant, regardless of gender" (SCU, nr 2866-IV).

The presence of gender stereotypes has long been predetermining legislators' refusal to secure gender equality in the Ukrainian labor legislation. On the 13th of November 2015 Ukraine adopted Act №3442 which touches upon the prohibition of discrimination in employment, including gender discrimination (SCU3442). This Act significantly brings the country's legislation to European standards. However, this act is only declarative and doesn't have specific rules and mechanisms of achieving gender equality in employment. Latent discrimination, conservative gender stereotypes linking the role of women exclusively with the family, and the role of men – with social activities are still widespread in Ukrainian society.

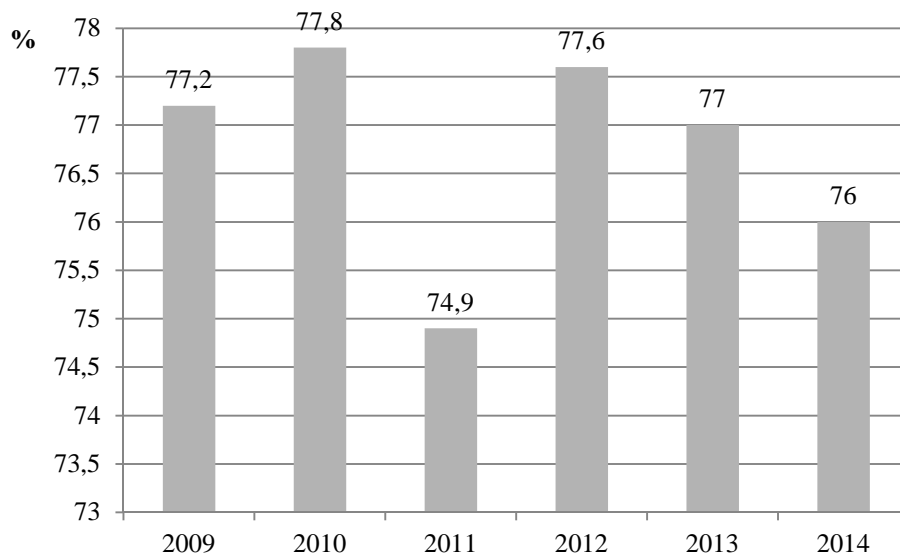
Many questions emerged during the work on the article and studying the situation around provision of gender equality in the labor market of Ukraine the author got many questions. The most important of them are the following ones:

- what are the factors and processes that form the gender inequality in Ukraine?
- what impact does gender inequality have on the quality of work life?
- what are the main problems in the area of female employment?
- how well does the state statistics reflect gender inequality problem?
- what are the main directions of solving the problem of gender inequality in Ukraine?

Trying to answer these questions is the aim of this work. In order to achieve this aim the author used the analysis of statistical data and opinion polls in the article and on that basis he tried to find a strategy to resolve the identified problems.

2. Gender inequality in the Ukrainian labor market – diagnosis

In order to evaluate gender inequality in the Ukrainian labour market let us look into the factors and processes that cause gender inequality in Ukraine. The ratio of women's and men's average salary decreased by 0.9% during 2013-2014 according to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine (Figure 1), that is in 2013, the share of the average salary of women was 77.2% of men's wages, while in 2014 this figure decreased to 76.3%.

Figure 1. The ratio of wages of men and women in 2013-2014

Source: calculated by the author according to *Women and men in Ukraine. Statistical Yearbook* (2014), State Statistics Service of Ukraine, Kiev, p. 24.

This indicates an increase of the gender gap in pay between women and men in men's favor. Considered imbalances often lead to the phenomenon called "feminization of poverty", which in turn has a negative impact on reproductive and social needs of women, significantly lowering their quality of life. At the same time women often lack access to sufficient economic resources.

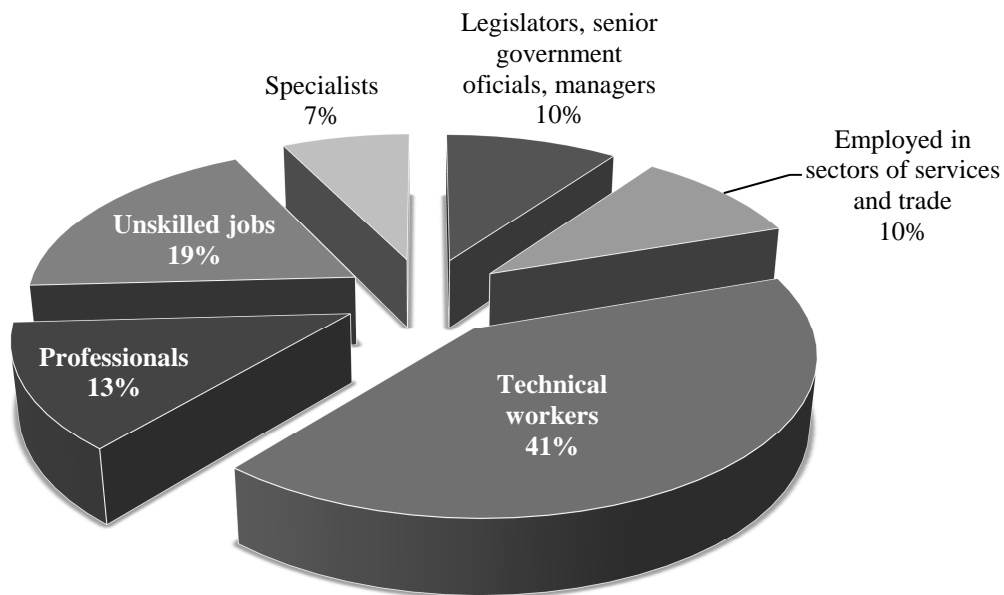
Figure 2. The level of employment of men and women in 2000-2014, %

Source: calculated by the author according to *Economic activity of population of Ukraine. Statistical Yearbook* (2014), State Statistics Service of Ukraine, Kiev, p. 140.

Figure 2 shows that there was a dramatic fall of the employment level of both men and women during 2013-2014 due to the socio-economic crisis in Ukraine that emerged at that time. However, the employment level of women remained significantly lower

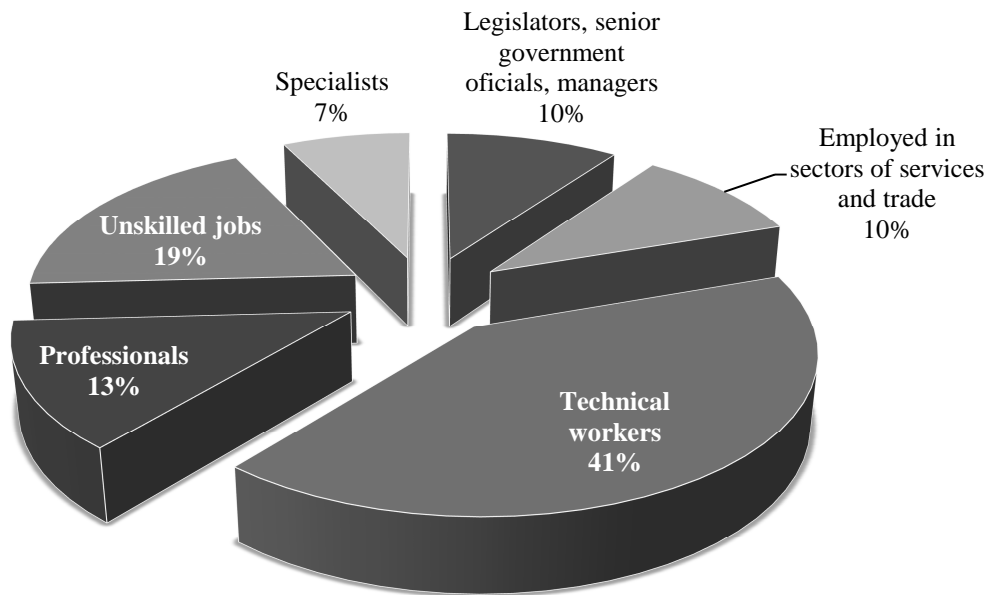
than the employment level of men. In 2014 the gap between the rates for women and for men was 9.9%. This indicates the primary direction for state policy regarding gender parity. Moreover, Ukrainian women traditionally are predominantly employed in sectors of services, commerce and unskilled labor, while managerial and legislature positions are hard for them to get (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Predominating sectors of women's employment by occupational categories in Ukraine, 2014



Source: calculated by the author according to *Economic activity of population of Ukraine. Statistical Yearbook* (2014), State Statistics Service of Ukraine, Kiev, p. 140.

According to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine it can be concluded that the predominant occupational group (22.6%) among the employed women in Ukraine in 2014 consists of those ones employed in sectors of services and trade. The preservation of a fairly large proportion of professionals (21.8%) and specialists (17.1%) is a positive phenomenon. They are followed by two equal groups (18%) – social sector employees and unskilled workers. The least numerous occupational group among the employed women in Ukraine (only 6.1%) consists of legislators, senior government officials and managers. It can be seen that the minimum percentage of women holds managerial positions in Ukraine, while the vast majority is employed in the sectors of services, trade and unskilled labor. By comparison, the share of legislators, senior government officials and managers among the employed men in 2014 was 9.6%, which is 3.5% more than women (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Predominating sectors of men's employment by occupational categories in Ukraine, 2014

Source: calculated by the author according to *Economic activity of population of Ukraine. Statistical Yearbook* (2014), State Statistics Service of Ukraine, Kiev, p. 140.

According to the data of the State Statistics Service for 2014, we can also see that the proportion of men among technical workers (40.1%) is significantly higher than among working women (11.4%). And 12.2% more men are employed in the sectors of services and trade than women which indicates the distribution of traditionally male and female profession, i.e. gender asymmetry on the labor market.

It is advisable to use a set of special statistical indicators – segregation indexes. It allows assessing gender inequality in the labor market and the extent of gender segregation more accurately. The most common indexes are the following ones: the index of dissimilarity, the index of sex ratio in the labor market, the index of female employment, the marginal matching index, and Gini coefficient, which is the traditional measure of inequality in income and is sometimes used to assess inequalities in the distribution of men and women in economic activities and occupations (Koval, Paseka 2015, 169).

The index of dissimilarity (ID) was used in order to assess the level of gender segregation in Ukraine. This coefficient is used to determine the percentage of men or women who have to change jobs in order to equalize the number of men and women in each group, selected on a professional basis. International Labor Organization (ILO) recommends this coefficient for measuring the equality of opportunities and treatment

in the system of indicators of decent work. The calculation of this index is carried out according to the formula (*Analytical study...* 2012, 45):

$$ID = \frac{1}{2} \sum \left| \frac{F_i}{F} - \frac{M_i}{M} \right|.$$

where F – the number of women in the labor force;

M – the number of men in the labor force;

F_i – the number of women in the i -th kind of economic activity;

M_i – the number of men in the i -th kind of economic activity;

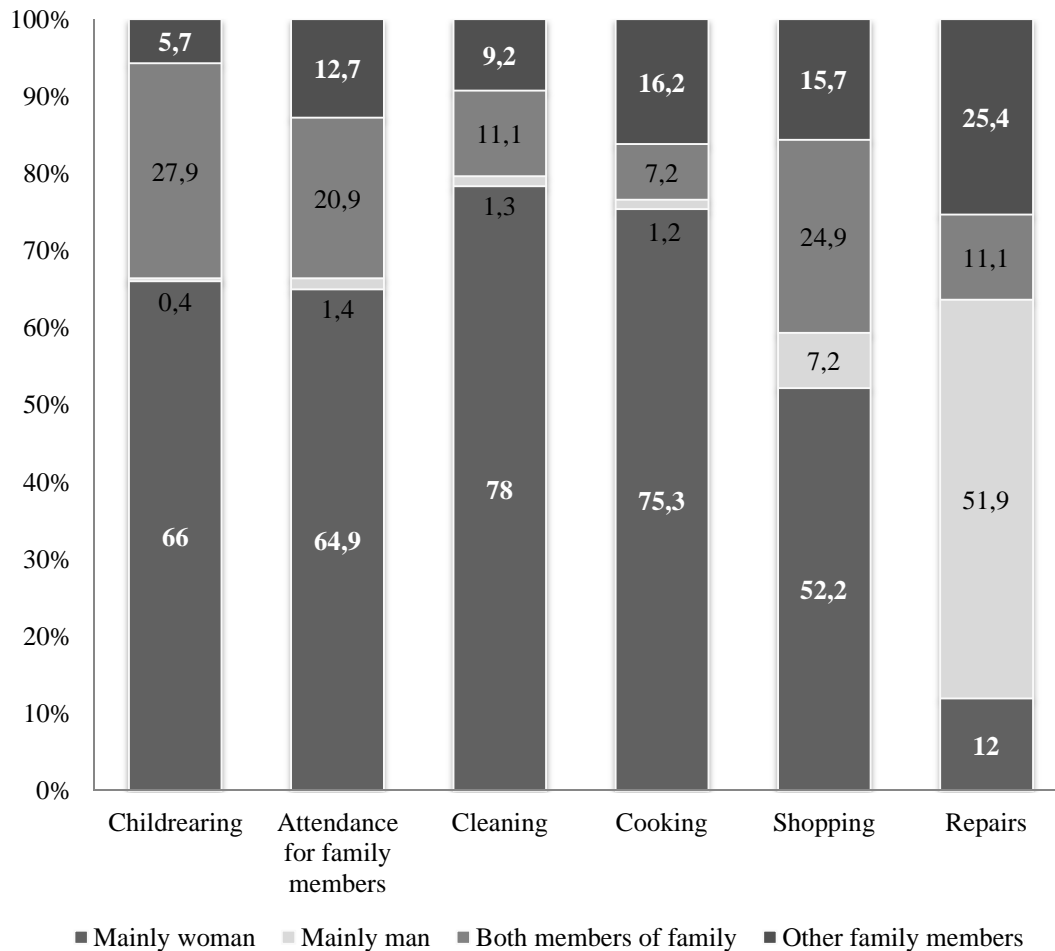
i varies from one to the number equal to the number of economic activities.

The results of the calculations of the index of dissimilarity by the types of economic activity in Ukraine showed that during 2013-2014 the value of this index increased from 0.453 to 0.458. This indicates an increase of gender inequality by professional basis. Index of 2014 shows that in order to achieve equality between male and female employment 45.8% of workers of both sexes would have to change their jobs. Taking into account the gender structure of employment in Ukraine, the expansion of female employment in managerial sector and the expansion of male employment in social sector could reduce the level of segregation. But the real situation of the provision of gender equality in the labor market in Ukraine indicates the presence of gender disproportions. “Thus, employers have different expectations regarding experience of candidates of different sexes. In particular, “male” openings dominate among job offers that require 3 years of experience. There are twice as many job offers that require the most experienced male candidates. In addition, considerable experience is the requirement of highly paid openings, which are available mostly for men” (Martsenyuk 2013, 91).

However, nowadays household duties are traditionally women’s responsibility. Therefore, in most cases women choose jobs and positions that are flexible, have less workload and do not require high-intensity labor. Such participation of women in the labor market leads to the formation of “female” jobs that prevent the professional growth of women and significantly reduces their quality of work life. Considering the fact that women are burdened with household duties, they work much longer than men. This negatively affects their quality of life. Thus, gender imbalance in the distribution of household duties is traditional in the Ukrainian society. According to the sociological survey *Analytical study of women’s participation in the workforce of Ukraine* conducted

in 2012, approximately three-quarters of women noted that they mainly cleaned their houses (78.4% of respondents) and cooked (75.3 % of respondents) (*Analytical study...* 2012, 82). Approximately two-thirds of women with children or family members in need of constant care answered that it was their responsibility to attend to them. Most women also claimed that they were responsible for purchasing products and goods of daily consumption for their families (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Aspects of household duties division in Ukraine



Source: *Analytical study...* 2012, 82.

A very small proportion of respondents indicated that both wife and husband were responsible for certain household duties (from 7 to 27% depending on the type of domestic work). To the greatest extent it concerned the purchase of products and goods of daily consumption, child rearing and caring for disabled family members. This situation greatly reduces the opportunity for professional and personal growth of women, preventing them from self-actualization without restrictions in labor. The author considers it is appropriate to radically change the system of traditional values and views on the role of women in society and to develop gender culture according to the needs and in-

terests of different gender groups in order to eradicate this problem. This approach is essential to solve the problem of social justice.

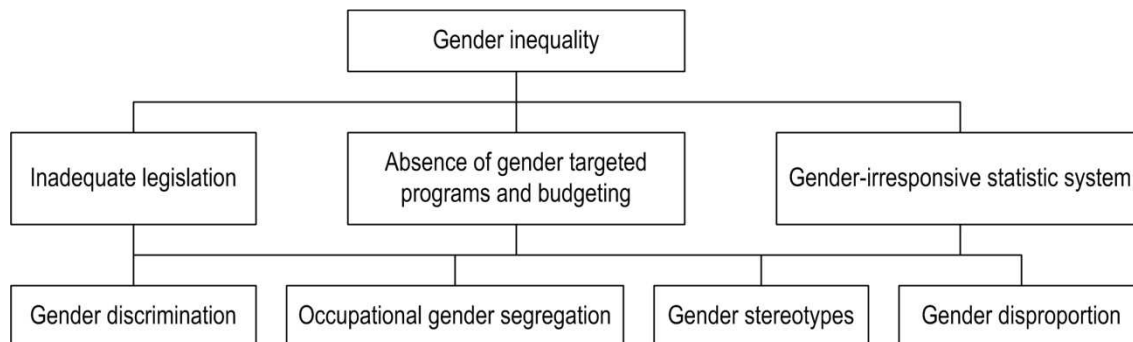
According to the sociological survey *Analytical study...* female gender and the presence of family responsibilities shared the second place among the ranking factors of discrimination in the sphere of employment. Almost every tenth woman of all the interviewed ones faced prejudice from management regarding getting a particular task or its assessment. The same number reported cases of being underpaid for work of equal value in comparison with their male colleagues. Such phenomena de-motivate women; deprive them of incentives to work, which reduces their quality of working life. The author considers that it is necessary to control and monitor work conditions and compensation of different gender groups on the government level; introduce gender expertise of normative legal acts in the labor sphere.

3. Determinants of gender inequality and proposals for the government gender policy

One of the reasons of the disproportion between the employment of men and women is the gender misbalance of opportunities for women to have decent work, which is reflected in frequent cases of employment refusal for women because of gender stereotypes. There are also differences in the quality characteristics of the employment and social status of women and men. Women own only 22% of the businesses and manage only 6% of big businesses in Ukraine. Therefore, it is more difficult for women to get a loan, because they have fewer resources that they can give as a collateral. The government has not taken special efforts to enhance women's access to loans. (Sycheva, Honiukova 2014, 7).

The author believes that the major factors and processes that form gender inequality in Ukraine are gender inequality in the labor market, which is manifested in the gender gap in compensation of women and men, gender segregation and discrimination, limited access to decent work for women, as well as the gender imbalance in the distribution of household duties.

The analysis of gender relations in major social institutions, including the state, the municipality, the households and the labor market makes it possible to draw conclusions about the determinants that form gender inequality in Ukraine. Their structure is displayed in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Factors of gender inequality in Ukraine

Source: own elaborates.

The formal nature of laws regarding gender inequality that were adopted in Ukraine identifies problems in the legal sphere. For example, many laws are only declaratory in nature. They do not have specific rules and mechanisms that would allow achieving gender equality in the labor sphere. For instance, Law №3442 prohibits discrimination in employment, including gender discrimination. However, it only proclaims the principles of gender equality. Its norms and rules should be seriously revised (SCU3442). For example, no specific measures of identifying and preventing the displays of gender segregation and discrimination in the labor sphere are mentioned in it. There are no sanctions for violating this law. In addition, women with disabilities are not mentioned as a target group neither in the State program of provision equal rights and opportunities for women and men for the period until 2016 (*Resolution of the Cabinet ... 2013*), nor in the State targeted social family support program for the period until 2016. Therefore, the national legislation is inadequate in terms of modern requirements and is one of the determinants of such phenomena as gender discrimination, gender occupational segregation and imbalance.

Many other post-socialist countries address the problem of gender inequality more efficiently. For example, Latvia holds the leading position in reduction of the gender gap. It is followed by Lithuania. However, Kazakhstan is clearly ahead of Lithuania in terms of economic opportunities for women and men (Aivazova 2014, 18). The achievements of Latvia and Lithuania can be explained by the successful reformation of social opportunities for men and women and the developed mechanism of provision of gender equality at all levels. For example, even in private sector men and women receive almost the same salary. Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia provides statistical data and analysis of gender issues. The National Human Rights Office monitors compliance with gender equality, non-discrimination, consults, provides guidance on address-

ing gender issues, deals with complaints on violations of gender equality and represents individuals in court. State Labor Inspectorate monitors compliance with the legislation on labor, health and safety at work from the perspective of gender equality (Voronina 2008, 144).

Lithuania implements the norms of gender equality through the complex gender approach with assistance of several institutions. European Institute for Gender Equality's objective is collecting reliable data on the issue of gender equality, analysing them and creating solutions. The Inter-Ministerial Commission on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women is composed of representatives of every ministry and two departments. This unit is primarily responsible for the implementation of complex gender approach. The Commission oversees the execution of programs on gender equality and the implementation of other gender-sensitive measures. It makes proposals to amend the existing legislation and advises the government on gender policy. The Commission is working in close cooperation with other actors of the national mechanism: the ombuds-woman for Equal Opportunities, the advisor of the Prime Minister, the scientists and the non-governmental organizations. In addition to the implementation of complex gender approach, this unit is also an important element in establishing cooperation between all parts of the national mechanisms, including not only the public, but also the private sector. Each year, the commission reports to the head of the system of national mechanisms (Voronina 2008, 153).

The author believes Ukraine should use the experience of such countries as Latvia and Lithuania that are successfully solving the problem of gender inequality. The situation is complicated by the fact that currently the state administration system doesn't have an institution with real authority regarding issues of the implementation of gender equality. The unit responsible for gender policy was formally retained after the administrative reform of 2010. However, its status and functions remain unclear. As a result, the introduction of gender approaches into the state administration system is extremely inefficient (*Ukraine National Review...* 2014).

No unified system of monitoring the financing of gender equality has yet been established in Ukraine. Therefore, it is impossible to objectively evaluate the corresponding share of the national budget. There was no any government program for ensuring gender equality in 2011-2013 in Ukraine.

Insufficient representation of women in economic and sociological researches is a significant part of the gender inequality problem, which needs to be addressed first of

all. Doing so will allow identifying the most significant imbalances that lead to the gender inequality. That is, it is necessary to create a gender-sensitive statistics system that would reflect the actual state of the labor market and society. Its absence leads to gender misbalance. But is it enough to improve these factors alone to solve the problem of gender inequality? The author believes that this phenomenon is caused by the values and culture of the society. The low level of political gender culture in Ukrainian society and sustainable gender stereotypes are the obstacles that should be dealt with first of all. It must be done at the institutional level. The attitude towards the problem of gender in society must be changed. The values of gender equality should be gradually transformed to the level of public organizations, labor collectives and consciousness of ordinary citizens.

The author believes that the reasons abovementioned phenomena exist is that at the country level Ukraine doesn't have:

- mechanism of analysis and evaluation of gender equality;
- statistics describing the level of gender equality, gender-sensitive indicators;
- concerted efforts of government, employers and society to achieve gender equality;
- targeted funding of gender programs;
- gender-appropriate legal and regulatory framework.

Consequently, in order to achieve high level of quality of work life on meso-level in Ukraine it is necessary to provide:

- safe and decent working conditions;
- labor protection organization in order to provide all the employees with health protection, simultaneously taking into account specific needs of both women and men;
- equal access to vocational training, use of new technology, sources of new skills in order to eliminate occupational segregation;
- improvement of social security mechanisms that provide equality of men and women both in family and in labor market;
- gender balance in managerial positions;
- achievement of both formal and real equality;
- elimination of poverty by disposal of limitations of employment opportunities for women;
- equal access to production resources.

3. Conclusions

Successful solution of gender inequality problems requires the use of modern tools of gender policy. State statistics of Ukraine does not operate with gender-sensitive indicators which would allow measuring the level of inequality. The author believes that the inclusion of gender aspects in statistics will open new opportunities for the achievement of equality.

Thus, it is necessary to introduce parameters regarding time costs of men and women, their participation in the informal sector of economy, domestic violence and sexism at work, allocation of resources, income, etc. In view of the abovementioned information the priority areas of gender policy in Ukraine are as follows:

- implementation of gender monitoring and examination of normative legal acts regarding labor relations;
- introduction of gender-sensitive indicators to the state statistics;
- budgetary planning with consideration of gender perspective;
- gender issues consideration in the activities of the ministries of labor, employers' associations and trade unions;
- increasing information literacy of the population in the area of gender issues.

Gender equality is a focus for Ukraine on the path of Euro integration. Institutions that form economic life of society in the country must become gender-oriented. Improving the quality of work life in gender aspect relies greatly on maternity protection, prohibition of sexual harassments in workplace, improvement of working conditions in hazardous industries. It is necessary to provide equal opportunities and equal treatment in all sectors of political, economical and social life so that both men and women would equally have high quality of life and access to decent work. Under these conditions inequality can be totally eliminated.

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Аннотация

Гендерное неравенство и качество трудовой жизни в Украине

Целью статьи является оценка гендерного неравенства на рынке труда Украины. В первой части материала определяются и анализируются факторы и процессы, формирующие гендерное неравенство в Украине. Исследуется влияние гендерного неравенства на качество трудовой жизни. Рассматриваются проблемы в сфере занятости женщин. Выделяются гендерные диспропорции, гендерная профессиональная сегрегация, «феминизация бедности» как негативные факторы влияния на качество трудовой жизни. Затем определены принципы преодоления гендерного неравенства на рынке труда в Украине, а также приоритетные направления гендерной политики государства. В заключении описана концепция стратегии формирования гендерного паритета и обеспечения расширения

возможностей женщин в сфере труда. Обосновано положительное влияние предложенных мер на социальный климат и экономическое развитие страны.

Ключевые слова: гендерное неравенство, качество трудовой жизни, гендерная сегрегация, гендерная дискриминация, гендерные стереотипы.

Abstract

Gender inequality on the labour market in highly developed countries

The aim of the article is to assess gender inequality in the labor market of Ukraine. The first part of the article identifies and analyzes the factors and processes that shape gender inequality in Ukraine. The impact of gender inequality on the quality of work life is researched. The problems in the area of female employment are considered. Gender disproportions, gender occupational segregation, "feminization of poverty" are highlighted as the negative factors affecting the quality of work life. The principles of overcoming gender inequalities in the labor market of Ukraine are then defined as well as the priorities of the gender policy of the state. In conclusion, the concept of the strategy of formation of gender parity and ensuring the empowerment of women in the labor area is described. Positive effects of the proposed measures on the social climate and economic development of the country are substantiated.

Key words: gender inequality, quality of work life, gender segregation, gender discrimination, gender stereotypes.