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## **UKRAINIAN EXPERIENCE IN IMPLEMENTING NATIONAL GENDER POLICY IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE SYSTEM**

*This scientific article is devoted to a comprehensive and comprehensive analysis of the current state of implementation of Ukraine's national gender policy in the public service system. The relevance of this study is explained by the objective need to ensure a high level of gender parity in our country. First of all, Ukraine has assumed a number of international obligations that impose on it the responsibility to implement and comply with anti-discriminatory gender policy. Compliance with these obligations is an integral part of our path to European integration. Secondly, gender equality is an integral part of any modern civilized state.*

*The main purpose of the article is to study the retrospective of Ukraine's successes in implementing gender parity policy in the public service system and to identify the real state of implementation of its international obligations in this area.*

*Significant progress has been made in the legislative sphere, the regulatory framework, and the general awareness of the population regarding gender issues. At the same time, the actual implementation of a high-quality national gender policy faces serious challenges. As a result, other civilized countries are developing at a faster pace, which leads to their better ratings in annual reports on gender equality.*

*The results of the study contain analytical conclusions and practical recommendations for improving the implementation of national gender policy in the public service system in the future. It has been established that Ukraine is gradually improving the implementation of national gender policy, but the pace of its implementation for our state is stable compared to other countries in the world. It has also been proven that women predominate in the judicial sphere in Ukraine, and over the past 20 years, the involvement of women in military service has increased significantly. Based on these conclusions, options for improving the current and future implementation of national gender policy have been proposed.*

*The study has theoretical and practical significance. The article contributes to a better understanding of the current state of implementation of national gender policy.*

**Key words:** gender equality, gender parity, civil service, parliament, European integration, anti-discrimination policy, international obligations.

**Problem statement.** The issue of implementing appropriate national gender policies in the public service system is a key aspect of both our European integration development vector and an important element in building a law-abiding civil

society. The equal and non-discriminatory participation of men and women in the life of the state through the implementation of their declared rights plays a decisive role in bringing legislation into effect. Proper implementation of regulations concerning

the rights of women and men in public service will enhance this effect, as the creation of high-quality and non-discriminatory gender policies must be shaped by institutions based on the idea of gender parity.

**Analysis of recent studies and publications.** The theoretical basis of this article is formed by the works of domestic scientists such as A.I. Berlach, N.A. Litvin, O.S. Pronevich, V.V. Chernyakhivska, I.O. Gritsai, T.O. Martseniuk, and others. The report materials of the World Economic Forum were also analyzed.

**The purpose of this article** is to assess the current state of gender parity policy implementation in the public service system in Ukraine. To this end, it is important to analyze not only the regulatory framework but also statistical data that could demonstrate our country's performance in achieving gender parity and compare it with other countries around the world to identify relevant trends.

**Presentation of the main material.** One of the elements of national policy implementation is its legislation and system of institutions, their development and improvement. At the same time, it is important to emphasize that the norms of legislation on achieving gender parity in the public service system can be divided into norms-principles that lay the foundation for the relevant vector of national gender policy, and prescriptions that are designed to put them into action. This makes it possible to ensure that these norms are not merely declarative, but have an impact on social relations in the relevant sphere.

The authors of the scientific commentary on the Law of Ukraine "On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men" argue that the provisions enshrined in the above-mentioned act are not always implemented in practice. One of the authors of the commentary believes that the provisions of Article 2 of the relevant gender law very often do not work in practice [1, p. 12]. As a result, we can state that certain norms designed to ensure gender parity, especially in the public service system, are not always implemented.

One of the key elements that directly pushes Ukraine towards the proper

implementation of national gender policy is the European integration vector of our state's development. This includes the need to adapt Ukrainian legislation in the field of gender relations to high European standards. A member of the Yurfem organization claims that as of early 2023, Ukraine has fulfilled more than 70% of the commitments that our state has undertaken under the Association Agreement with the European Union. The researcher notes that the main recommendations related to ensuring gender parity concern individual clusters in the section "Social Policy and Employment" [2]. According to official data, progress in adapting national legislation to the above section between 2014 and 2022 was only 54%. Significant progress was observed in 2023, when this figure rose rapidly to 79% [3].

At the same time, in addition to the nominal existence of regulatory acts governing social relations in the field of gender parity, it is important that they are of high quality and ensure the proper implementation of the relevant national policy. Vox Ukraine analysts conducted a gender analysis of 63 national legislation acts and came to the following conclusions. Almost half of the laws had the same impact on both men and women, 27 may contain provisions that in some cases may have a different impact on representatives of different genders, and 6 have a clearly different impact on representatives of different genders. This gender audit also showed that 12 of the 78 acts do not contain provisions that would adequately regulate gender-related issues, although such provisions should be included [4]. This demonstrates that about 15% of regulatory acts do not fully comply with the principle of gender parity and non-discrimination, and although this percentage cannot be considered critical, a high-quality national gender policy encourages us to reduce such poor-quality legislation to a minimum.

It is also important to emphasize that the process of implementing national gender policy is fluid and changeable. The quality of this implementation is influenced by many subjective factors, such as, for example, individuals who have held certain leadership

positions in the public service. At the same time, Ukraine is a country that takes into account the experience of other countries and implements the practices of European Union member states. That is why the pace of gender policy implementation in Ukraine must correspond to the pace of development of these indicators in other countries. This not only demonstrates our country's place in the global gender gap ranking, but may also indicate the need to improve the speed and quality of implementation of leading practices for achieving gender parity.

To visualize Ukraine's implementation of its gender policy, we suggest comparing data for the period from 2006 to 2024, which the non-governmental organization World Economic Forum (hereinafter referred to as WEF) publishes annually on its official website [5–19]. To compare Ukraine and other countries in the gender gap ranking, it is advisable to pay attention to its place in the global ranking of gender parity achievement, its individual coefficient for this indicator, our country's place in the global ranking based on the criterion of political participation of representatives of both sexes and its individual coefficient for the same indicator, as well as Ukraine's place in the global ranking based on the criterion of participation of women and men in the national parliament and government.

To begin with, we suggest focusing on the issue of Ukraine's implementation of national gender policy in general. The data show that Ukraine is constantly improving its practices in implementing appropriate gender policies, combating discrimination, and ensuring proper enforcement of legislation on equal rights for men and women. It is only natural that in 2024, the WEF assessed Ukraine's implementation of its gender policy with a coefficient of 0.722, which is the highest national indicator in the history of the gender gap report [5].

At the same time, Ukraine's position in the global ranking of gender parity achievements cannot be called encouraging. This position is confirmed by statistical data from reports on the gender gap between 2006 and 2024. We can see how this indicator has remained almost unchanged for a long period of time, from 2008 to 2020. As of 2024, Ukraine

ranks almost the same in the global gender gap ranking as it did in 2008 (63rd and 62nd place, respectively) [5; 18].

We consider it necessary to focus separately on the indicators of political participation of women and men in the life of the state. These data demonstrate the extent to which national gender policy enables representatives of both sexes to exercise real power and be part of the decision-making mechanism. As in the previous case, the data show a steady increase in Ukraine's personal indicators in terms of the opportunities for men and women to participate in the political life of the country. In 2024, Ukraine also received the highest personal assessment of the implementation of this component in the form of a coefficient of 0.175 [5].

Ukraine's position in the global ranking of political participation of representatives of both genders has remained almost unchanged for a long period of time. Between 2008 and 2018, our country ranked 105th–119th, which can hardly be called positive progress. At the same time, Ukraine's position in the global ranking of the gender gap in terms of political participation of men and women has strengthened somewhat, and as of 2024, we rank 91st [5].

The situation regarding the representation of men and women in certain public service bodies, such as parliament and government, can be traced in more detail using the relevant indicators. The WEF study shows that there have been no optimistic changes in Ukraine's position in the global ranking of women's and men's participation in the above-mentioned positions. If we compare Ukraine's results in the area of women's and men's participation in the national parliament, we can see that between 2006 and 2024, our country's results deteriorated by only one point, and as of April 2025, it ranks 92nd [5; 19].

The situation is somewhat better with regard to the representation of women and men in government. We consider it positive that Ukraine's ranking in this indicator is not static, but constantly changing. This indicates the potential for positive change. At the same time, in some cases, there have been sharp declines in Ukraine's position

relative to other countries, such as in 2015 and 2021 [8; 13]. Despite this, Ukraine has made significant progress in this area over the past 15 years, as our country has improved its ranking from 125th place in 2009-2013 to 68th in 2023 [6; 15-17].

Therefore, based on the analysis of the data, it can be concluded that Ukraine is constantly developing and improving the implementation of its gender policy in the public service system, but other civilized countries are doing so more effectively. As a result, our country does not demonstrate the best positions in the global gender gap ranking. Certain patterns can be observed in the changes in both Ukraine's position in comparison with other countries and its individual indicators. For example, from 2006 to 2008, there was a significant decline in all indicators, followed by a period of stagnation. There were also two periods of growth in all indicators: 2014 and 2018-2020. We assume that this is related to the change of government in Ukraine, as both periods coincided with presidential and parliamentary elections.

It is also important to emphasize that the issue of gender parity in the public service system includes not only indicators of political involvement of men and women, but also other aspects of their activities in this area. For a more complete analysis, we propose to focus on some of them in more detail.

After studying the implementation of national gender policy with regard to officials in the legislative and executive branches of government, it is advisable to focus on the representation of women and men in the judicial branch of government and the justice system as a whole. Official statistics from the State Judicial Administration (hereinafter referred to as the SJA) for 2022 show that women predominate in Ukrainian courts. For example, women make up 54% of all judges in the country. Significantly more women work in court administration positions – 82%. The same percentage of female employees work in the patronage service. Among civil servants who are heads of structural units and their deputies, the absolute majority are women (76%) [20, pp. 2-3].

We can track the development of women's participation in the judicial sphere based on statistics from the State Judicial Administration for 2016. It is important to note that this is their first official statistics containing gender indicators. As of 2016, women made up 50.1% of the judiciary, and 67% of women were employees of the patronage service [21].

Based on the above statistics, we can conclude that there was an increase in women's involvement in the judicial system between 2016 and 2022. At the same time, it can be noted that women hold less prestigious positions in this field. Regarding the implementation of national gender policy in the field of the prosecutor's office, the then Prosecutor General stated in 2021 that about 40% of all prosecutors in Ukraine are women [22]. We consider this indicator to be close to gender parity.

Continuing the analysis of the implementation of national gender policy regarding the political participation of women and men, it is impossible to ignore the issue of local self-government. In our opinion, 2020 can be called a turning point, as elections to the relevant local self-government bodies were held under new rules. The Electoral Code of Ukraine of December 19, 2019, provided for the application of a gender quota system [23]. A representative of the Central Election Commission (hereinafter – CEC) reported that this novelty increased the percentage ratio of male and female candidates to 56% and 44%, respectively [24].

The last criterion for the implementation of national gender policy in the public service, which we will analyze, is the involvement of women and men in military service. It is important to note that the statistics on the representation of both sexes in the Armed Forces of Ukraine (hereinafter referred to as the AFU) in the period up to 2022 and after that date differ significantly. This can be explained by objective reasons, such as mobilization, which mainly affects men. At the same time, the full-scale invasion has also led to an increase in the number of women in the AFU. The Ministry of Defense of Ukraine states that as of March 8, 2025, more than 70,000 women had joined the

Armed Forces of Ukraine [25]. The increase in the representation of women in the AFU also occurred in the period before 2022. The press service of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine states that between 2008 and 2019, the number of women in this field increased 15-fold [26].

Based on the above statistics, we can state that Ukraine continues to implement appropriate gender ideology in military service. At the same time, we believe that this field has many problematic issues that need to be resolved in the future to achieve gender parity.

A number of duly authorized entities are also involved in ensuring the implementation of gender policy. The authors of the scientific manual "Service Law of Ukraine" argue that in order to achieve an appropriate and high-quality gender policy in the public service system, a system for hiring relevant employees must be created that is free from subjective approaches and based on professionalism. The authors emphasize that special attention in this matter is paid to the gender sphere [27]. This will allow for the creation of a gender-non-discriminatory and professional staff. Ukrainian researcher N.A. Lytvyn asserts that teams built on the principle of gender balance are more effective. As a result, this has a positive impact on performance indicators and also allows for the implementation of a "dualistic" approach in the activities of public servants [28, p. 27]. Ukrainian scientist O.S. Pronevich The researcher believes that "the professionalization of public servants is a social imperative, an objective marker of their functional ability to effectively perform their duties on the basis of human-centeredness, inclusiveness, proactivity, and rationalism" [29, p. 30].

Proper implementation of national gender policy in the public service system requires not only the establishment of appropriate regulatory guarantees, but also the restoration of violated rights, as the provisions of the law are not always enforced. Analysis of court practice regarding violations of certain norms designed to ensure the compliance with gender quotas during the

2020 local elections" assert that the above provision has been violated repeatedly [30]. The authors of the report "Protection against gender discrimination in the decisions of Ukrainian courts" also emphasize that violations of gender norms often occur when a person is dismissed from work [31, p. 69].

### **Conclusions and recommendations.**

Based on the analysis, we can draw the following conclusions. First, Ukraine is gradually improving the implementation of its national gender policy. Second, the pace of implementation of gender policy in Ukraine is consistent compared to other countries around the world. Third, women predominate at all levels in Ukraine's judicial sphere. Fourth, over the past 20 years, the involvement of women in military service has increased significantly. Based on these conclusions, the following recommendations are obvious. First, there is an objective need to update the issue of improving the implementation of Ukraine's national gender policy at all levels. Second, focus attention on those areas of public service where gender representation is most contrasting. Third, make adjustments to gender parity programs and strategies to make them more effective and less declarative.

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### **Мацелюх І., Махно В. Досвід України щодо реалізації національної гендерної політики в системі публічної служби**

Наукова стаття присвячена комплексному та всесторонньому аналізу сучасного стану реалізації національної гендерної політики України в системі публічної служби. Актуальність цього дослідження пояснюється об'єктивною необхідністю забезпечення високого рівня гендерного паритету в нашій державі. Перш за все, Україна взяла на себе ряд міжнародних зобов'язань, які покладають на неї обов'язки з реалізації та дотримання антидискримінаційної гендерної політики. Дотримання цих зобов'язань є невід'ємним елементом нашого євроінтеграційного шляху. По-друге, гендерна рівність – це невід'ємна частина будь-якої сучасної цивілізованої держави.

Основною метою статті є дослідження ретроспективи успіхів України у реалізації політики гендерного паритету в системі публічної служби та виявлення реального стану виконання її міжнародних зобов'язань у цій сфері.

Відзначається значний прогрес у законодавчій сфері, нормативно-правовій базі та на рівні загальної обізнаності населення щодо питань з гендерної проблематики. В той же час фактична реалізація якісної національної гендерної політики стикається із серйозними викликами. Як результат, інші цивілізовані країни розвиваються швидшими темпами, що і зумовлює їхні кращі рейтингові позиції у щорічних звітах з гендерного розриву.

Результати дослідження містять аналітичні висновки та практичні рекомендації щодо покращення реалізації національної гендерної політики в системі публічної служби у майбутньому. Встановлено, що Україна поступово покращує реалізацію національної гендерної політики, але темпи її виконання для нашої держави є сталими порівняно з іншими країнами світу. Також доведено, що в судовій сфері України переважають жінки, а за останні 20 років залучення жінок до військової служби значно збільшилось. На основі цих висновків запропоновано варіанти покращення поточної та майбутньої реалізації національної гендерної політики.

Дослідження має теоретичне та практичне значення. Стаття сприяє кращому розумінню поточного стану реалізації національної гендерної політики.

**Ключові слова:** гендерна рівність, гендерний паритет, державна служба, парламент, євроінтеграція, антидискримінаційна політика, міжнародні зобов'язання.

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