

# ECONOMIC AND LEGAL DIMENSIONS OF GENDER EQUALITY IN UKRAINE

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## ABSTRACT

*Gender equality is among the goals of the UN's sustainable development. Ukraine is one of many countries in the world who prioritizes the policy of gender equality. The basis of such a policy is legislative documents that correspond to international documents in the field of gender equality. Macroeconomic indicators show the country's unsustainable progress towards overcoming gender discrimination.*

*The aim of the article is to reveal the economic and legal preconditions for gender equality in Ukraine.*

*The methodological basis of the study is a systematic approach to the study of phenomena and processes related to gender equality. The research used the dialectical method, methods of induction and deduction, comparative characteristics, economic and statistical methods.*

*The study shows that there are problems of gender inequality in Ukraine. These problems should be addressed through the partnership of all actors involved in the formulation and implementation of gender policy.*

**Keywords:** Gender, Gender Inequality, Global Gender Gap Report, Global Gender Gap Index, Gender Equality Legislation in Ukraine.

**JEL Classification:** D63; J71; K39; N30.

## INTRODUCTION

Sustainable developments, as defined by the ideology of the 21st century, have to ensure the balanced development of world society. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) outline a general call for action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure peace and prosperity for all. The fifth goal is gender equality, which describe concerns based on gender.

The definition "gender" appeared in the late 60's of the 20th century as derived from the concept of "sex". Sex is a biologically determined characteristic, while gender has a social nature and is a product of socio-cultural norms and expectations.

The individual does not receive gender automatically from birth but acquires it in the process of inclusion in public life (Martsenyuk, 2014). Gender is a socio-cultural category that summarizes a set of cultural and social characteristics that covers all areas of human activity (Glossary, 2019). Such characteristics change over time and depend on the country and cultural environment.

However, when we talk about gender in society, first of all, it means inequality and not just the difference between men and women. Along with inequality, it is about hierarchy, stratification and power, which is embedded in gender relations (Kimmel, 2003).

Assurance of gender equality, namely, equal rights and opportunities for women and men, is a good fit into the concept of human rights.

## METHODOLOGY AND DATA

Gender equality issues are relevant and studied by both scientists and representatives of think tanks, NGOs and international institutions. The object of the study is the reason of gender inequality (N. Kaminska et al., 2020), gender equality as a fundamental human right as a necessary basis for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world (Esuna Dugarova, 2017); situations when different factors create and sustain gender pay gaps around the world, trends that explain key aspects of policy related to its decline (Venge Nyirongo, 2020); significant gender differences in overall productivity and the impact of academic careers in the field science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) (Junming Huang et al., 2020) and others.

Heisook Lee & Elizabeth Pollitzer (2016) in their report cited substantial research evidence, with 170 examples, to show that sex-gender considerations should be more deeply and broadly integrated into science knowledge and technologies supporting measures to achieve the SDG targets.

Statistical data of gender equality/inequality is summarized in The Global Gender Gap Report (GGGR). GGGR is a comprehensive report that compares countries of the World Economic Forum on the level of gender equality / inequality according to the Global Gender Gap Index (Wikipedia, 2021). It is based on a combination of publicly available statistics in the field of socio-economic development in different countries of the world and designed to measure the gender difference in access to certain resources and opportunities in a particular country. Measurements are made in four key areas: economic participation and career opportunities; education; health and survival; political rights and opportunities (Uvarova, 2018). The closer the value of the Index to 1, the better position of women the country under study has.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Global Gender Gap Index (based on the weighted average of each of the 156 countries included in the Global Gender Gap Report 2021) is 67.7% which means that another 32.3% is needed for full equality between women and men (World economic forum, 2021). In fact, no country has reached full gender parity yet. Nonetheless, two countries (Iceland and Finland) have bridged about 85% of the gender gap, and seven more (Lithuania, Namibia, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Rwanda and Ireland) have bridged 80% of their gap.

Rank	Country	Score	Score change	Score change
		0-1	2020	2006
1	Iceland	0,892	+0,016	+0,111
2	Finland	0,861	+0,029	+0,065
3	Norway	0,849	+0,007	+0,05
4	New Zealand	0,840	+0,041	+0,089
5	Sweden	0,823	+0,003	+0,009
6	Namibia	0,809	+0,025	+0,122
7	Rwanda	0,805	+0,014	-
8	Lithuania	0,804	+0,059	+0,096
9	Ireland	0,8	+0,002	+0,066
10	Switzerland	0,798	+0,019	+0,098
11	Ukraine	0,714	-0,007	+0,034

Scandinavian countries are continuously dominating among the world top 10 (Table 1). Ukraine occupies 74th position with 0.714 points at a parity of 1.00. Compared to the previous year, this figure deteriorated by 0.7%.

If we trace the dynamics of change in Ukraine compared to previous years, in 2019 Ukraine improved its position and ranked 59th out of 153 countries and de jure strengthened its position by six points, and in 2018 the country ranked 65th but among 149 countries. In general, the situation in Ukraine can be evaluated as unsustainable progress, which is mainly due to greater involvement of women in economic and political life.

Nowadays, Ukraine more and more prioritize the policy of gender equality. The basis of such a policy is the regulatory framework (Table 2). Ukraine has recognized the basic international documents in the field of gender equality, enshrined the principle of non-discrimination on the grounds of sex at the constitutional level, and adopted a special law on equal rights and opportunities for women and men, created conditions for appropriate institutional guarantees in this area.

S.No	Normative documents
1	Constitution of Ukraine of June 28, 1996
2	Decree of the President of Ukraine "On raising the social status of women in Ukraine" of April 25, 2001
3	Decree of the President of Ukraine "On Improving the Work of Central and Local Executive Bodies to Ensure Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men" of July 26, 2005
4	Law of Ukraine "On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men" of August 8, 2005
5	Law of Ukraine "On Combating Trafficking in Human Beings" of September 20, 2011
6	Law of Ukraine "On Principles of Preventing and Combating Discrimination in Ukraine" of September 6, 2012
7	Law of Ukraine "On Prevention and Counteraction to Domestic Violence" of December 7, 2017
8	Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of April 11, 2018 "State social program to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men for the period up to 2021"
9	Order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated 5.09.2018 "National Action Plan to implement the recommendations set out in the concluding observations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to the eighth periodic report of Ukraine on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women until 2021"
10	Decree of the President of Ukraine "On urgent measures to prevent and combat domestic violence, gender-based violence, protection of the rights of persons who have suffered from such violence" from 21.09.2020
11	Order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated 2.12.2020 "Issues of data collection for monitoring gender equality"
12	Decree of the President of Ukraine "On the national strategy in the field of human rights" from March 24, 2021

Overall, Ukrainian legislation is characterized as non-discriminatory. Yet, legislation in the field of gender equality does not fully address non-discrimination in Ukraine. The main problem lays mostly on the practical side of applying legislation: ignoring the relevant provisions, having only formal references to them, a gender-neutral approach to cases related to the protection of women's rights, lead to the violation of the right to equal access to justice (Uvarova, 2018).

The issue of gender inequality in Ukraine is also indicated by:

1. low representation of women in parliament (20.8% of the total) (Slovaidilo, 2020);
2. low representation of women in the executive branch (12% of women have equal rights in government and hold high positions) (BUG, 2020);
3. The pay gap between men and women in Ukraine in 2020 was 20.4% (Ukrinform, 2021). By type of activity, the largest gap in wages is observed in financial and insurance activities - 67.1%, arts, sports and entertainment - 60.8% (State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 2021).
4. the spread of cases of sexism in advertising, the presence of humiliating and insulting statements about women from government officials, public figures, media representatives;
5. Entrusting women with the care of children and other family members in need of outside help, doing housework.

To reduce the socio-economic negativity caused by gender asymmetry in the labor market, Ukraine needs to: legislate the problem of gender inequality and carry out constant gender expertise of legislation (currently there is a complete lack of anti-discrimination block in employment legislation); to establish a network system of constant gender monitoring of inequalities in the labor market through employment centers; to ensure the work of employment centers to support women in the labor market by creating special programs of employment, vocational guidance and vocational training (Komlichenko, 2021). Raising awareness of Ukrainian society on gender equality and non-discrimination remains relevant, in particular through the introduction of curricula in higher education institutions.

## CONCLUSION

Gender equality is an important component in the sustainable development of the country's economy. Involving women in society ensures productivity and economic growth. Ukraine has acceded to international documents on gender equality and adopted regulations that do not contradict generally accepted norms. After all, there are still problems with discrimination in Ukraine. The gender pay gap can be a public policy problem because it reduces economic output and means that women are more likely to depend on social benefits. Occupational segregation is one of the main factors in the overall pay gap between men and women. Insufficient awareness of civil society on gender equality issues leads to social tensions.

These issues should be addressed to all parties concerned by cooperation in the formation and implementation of gender policy between representatives of public organizations, higher education institutions and the general public.

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