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## GENDER EQUALITY IN UKRAINIAN ECONOMY AS A FACTOR FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**Abstract.** *This article aims to analyze the state of gender equality in the Ukrainian economy and identify key issues. The article considers the indicators of gender equality, which are planned in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals. And also, the place of Ukraine in various country rankings on gender equality is analyzed. For comparison, data from other countries, including Poland. The main problems that prevent overcoming gender inequality in Ukraine are identified based on the study. Achieving gender equality is an important condition for sustainable development for any country. That is why Ukraine needs to develop and implement effective measures to address the imbalance between women and men, especially in the economic sphere. Using the potential of women will increase economic performance and promote socio-economic and environmental development. Further research will focus on the experiences of other countries that have better achieved gender equality. Based on these studies, recommendations for further action for Ukraine can be developed.*

**Keywords:** *gender equality, Sustainable Development Goals, Poland, Ukraine, gender imbalance*

**Introduction.** Equality between men and women in various fields is one of the essential features of any modern society. It ensures the efficiency of its functioning in general and the economy in particular. This issue is incredibly ripe for sustainable development, which is a relevant and promising way to develop our world. Unfortunately, gender imbalance can be observed in most areas of Ukraine. Recently, due to the implementation of applicable legislation and national and local programs, the problem is increasingly being paid attention to, and specific results are being achieved to solve it. But even the current state of consideration of gender inequality does not allow us to come close to its complete solution.

Gender relations affect the effectiveness of both society and the economy. Therefore, gender mainstreaming in economic analysis is vital for efficiency and equality. At the current stage of economic development, women and men have formally received equal rights, which society seeks to consolidate and develop. Still, the quality of positioning of women and men

in the labor market is different. The gender approach is an essential part of a comprehensive study of the problems of economic and sustainable development of Ukraine, as it reveals the mechanisms for achieving sustainable development identifies issues and their consequences.

Achieving gender equality is one of the critical tasks of many international organizations. For example, it is one of the goals of sustainable development, which the UN members have made mandatory until 2030. Achieving gender equality is also a key element in implementing the Council of Europe's mission, which is to protect human rights, uphold democracy and uphold the rule of law.

Therefore, it is vital to analyze the current state of the ratio of indicators between men and women, especially in the economic sphere, and to compile a relevant profile.

Today in Ukraine, most government organizations have programs of gender equality or combating gender discrimination; in their structures, there are special organizational departments (for example, National Social Service of Ukraine<sup>1</sup>, Ministry of Finance of Ukraine<sup>2</sup>, Ministry of Justice of Ukraine<sup>3</sup>, State Tax Service of Ukraine<sup>4</sup>, etc.). This makes it necessary to analyze the effectiveness of public administration and assess the state of gender equality in Ukraine. Therefore, the **aim of this article** is to analyze the state of gender equality in the Ukrainian economy and identify key issues.

**Research results.** According to the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030<sup>5</sup>, which the UN General Assembly approved in 2017, one of the factors in ensuring sustainable development is gender equality. Like other UN members, Ukraine has declared the achievement of the adopted Goals. It is necessary to analyze the level of progress in target achieving gender equality, particularly in the Ukrainian economy.

Goal 5, "Gender Equality," includes the following objectives:

- Create an environment for ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls;
- Reduce the level of gender-based and domestic violence, and ensure efficient prevention of its manifestations and timely assistance to victims;

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1 <https://nssu.gov.ua/genderna-rivnist> [Access: December 20, 2021]

2 [https://mof.gov.ua/storage/files/Проблеми\\_гендерної\\_рівності\\_в\\_галузі\\_культури\\_та\\_мистецтва.pdf](https://mof.gov.ua/storage/files/Проблеми_гендерної_рівності_в_галузі_культури_та_мистецтва.pdf) [Access: December 20, 2021]

3 [https://minjust.gov.ua/m/str\\_7596](https://minjust.gov.ua/m/str_7596) [Access: December 20, 2021]

4 <https://tax.gov.ua/baneryi/zabezpechennya-rivnih-prav-ta-mojlivostey-jinok-i-cholovikiv/432409.html> [Access: December 20, 2021]

5 <https://sdgs.un.org> [Access: December 20, 2021]

- Encourage shared responsibility for housekeeping and childrearing;
- Ensure equal opportunities for representation at all levels of decision-making in political and public life;
- Increase the population's access to family planning services and reduce teenage fertility;
- Expand economic opportunities for women.

According to the latest data published by the State Statistics Service of Ukraine<sup>6</sup>, a positive trend is the number of normative acts revised or adopted to provide men and women with equal rights and opportunities and prevent discrimination against women and girls. In 2020, the number was 24 units. For comparison, in 2015, this indicator was equal to 3.

The ratio of the duration of unpaid domestic work (housekeeping, care for children and other family members, etc.) between women and men in 2020 was 212%. Women spent 274 minutes a day on unpaid domestic work, while men spent only 129 minutes. At the same time, in urban areas, the duration reaches 257 and 124, and in rural areas – 382 and 149 minutes per day, respectively. As we can see, in addition to the significant difference between men and women, there is also a significant imbalance in the duration of unpaid domestic work of women in rural areas compared to women in cities.

Ukraine has set a goal to increase the ratio of average wages for women and men to 80% by 2020. In 2015, this figure was 74.9%, and in 2020 – 79.6%. Therefore, the goal was almost achieved. It should be noted that the gender pay gap in the European Union in 2019 averaged 14.1%. The smallest difference is in Luxembourg (1.3%) and the largest – in Estonia (21.7%). Poland has a low wage gap (8.5%)<sup>7</sup>.

In Ukraine, the most unfair and discriminatory areas of remuneration are "Arts, sports, entertainment and recreation" and "Financial and insurance activities". In these areas, in 2020, women received a salary lower than men by 36.5% and 32%, respectively. However, women received 3% more for administrative and support services than men.

An important indicator is the Employment rate of women aged 25–44 with children aged 3–5. An increase of this index to 63% was declared. In 2015 it was 54.9%, in 2019 it increased to 58.3%, but in 2020 it dropped again to a record 51.5%. This can be explained by the COVID-19 pandemic, which began in 2020. On the one hand, a significant number of service facilities had to close due to quarantine restrictions. On the other hand, the transition

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6 [http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/csr\\_prezent/ukr/st\\_rozv/metadata/05/05.htm](http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/csr_prezent/ukr/st_rozv/metadata/05/05.htm) [Access: December 20, 2021]

7 [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Gender\\_pay\\_gap\\_statistics](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Gender_pay_gap_statistics) [Access: December 20, 2021]

of educational institutions (including preschools) to distance work in the spring of 2020 forced a significant percentage of women in Ukraine to leave work to be able to care for their children. It is unlikely that the Employment rate of women aged 25–44 with children aged 3–5 will return to pre-pandemic indicators shortly, let alone exceed them.

In general, summarizing the level of achievement of the targets set by Ukraine in the objectives of "Goal 5. Gender equality" in the economic sphere, we can note the trend towards successful implementation of the set goals. However, the level of gender equality in Ukraine still lags far behind that of Europe.

To compare Ukraine with other nations, consider several country rankings on gender equality.

Gender indexes play an essential role in the system of social indicators. Many international organizations (including the UNDP, the World Economic Forum, etc.) and regional (European Institute for Gender Equality, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa) monitor, compile and publish such indicators in relevant reports and reports. Gender indexes have not been introduced at the state level in Ukraine, and there is no single organization that compiles these indices on a regular and regular basis. However, some indicators for Ukraine, calculated by European and international organizations, are contained in international and global rankings [Chernova (Eds.), 2016, p. 159].

The Gender Development Index (GDI) measures gender inequalities in achievement in three basic dimensions of human development: health, measured by female and male life expectancy at birth; education, measured by female and male expected years of schooling for children and female and male mean years of education for adults ages 25 years and older; and command over economic resources, measured by female and male estimated earned income. GDI is the ratio of female to male Human Development Index (HDI) values<sup>8</sup>.

Countries are divided into five groups by absolute deviation from gender parity in HDI values. Group 1 comprises countries with high equality in HDI achievements between women and men (absolute deviation of less than 2.5 percent), group 2 comprises countries with medium to high equality in HDI achievements between women and men (absolute deviation of 2.5–5 percent), group 3 comprises countries with medium equality in HDI achievements between women and men (absolute deviation of 5–7.5 percent), group 4 comprises countries with medium to low equality in HDI achievements between women and men (absolute deviation of 7.5–10 percent) and group 5 comprises countries with low equality in HDI

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<sup>8</sup> [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2020\\_technical\\_notes.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2020_technical_notes.pdf) [Access: December 20, 2021]

achievements between women and men (absolute deviation from gender parity of more than 10 percent)<sup>9</sup>.

According to these indicators, Ukraine belongs to the first group of countries with a value of 1. As the HDI in Ukraine in 2019 is estimated at 0.776 for women and men. But for a better understanding, consider the indicators of the GDI components, compare the data of Ukraine with similar data from Poland (Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1

**Components of the Gender Development Index in 2019, Ukraine**

Life expectancy at birth, years		Expected years of schooling, years		Mean years of schooling, years		Estimated gross national income per capital, 2017 PPP \$
Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
76.8	67.1	15.3	14.9	11.3	11.3	10,088

*Note: based on data from [7]*

Table 2

**Components of the Gender Development Index in 2019, Poland**

Life expectancy at birth, years		Expected years of schooling, years		Mean years of schooling, years		Estimated gross national income per capital, 2017 PPP \$
Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
82.6	74.8	16.9	15.3	12.5	12.4	24,827

*Note: based on data from [7]*

As can be seen from the tables, life expectancy at birth is higher in women than in men in Ukraine and Poland. However, the life expectancy of Polish people is much longer than in Ukraine. The number of expected years of schooling for women is also greater than for men in both countries. In Ukraine, the estimated gross national income per capita of women is almost 60% of men's estimated gross national income. In Poland, this ratio is nearly 64%.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2020.pdf> [Access: December 20, 2021]

The Gender Inequality Index (GII) reflects gender-based disadvantage in three dimensions— reproductive health, empowerment, and the labor market—for as many countries as data of reasonable quality allow. It shows the loss in potential human development due to inequality between female and male achievements in these dimensions. It ranges from 0, where women and men fare equally, to 1, where one gender fares as poorly as possible in all measured dimensions<sup>10</sup>.

Table 3 shows the data of the index calculation for Switzerland, which took 1st place, Poland – 28th place, and Ukraine – 52nd place. Moreover, although Ukraine is inferior to the other two countries, higher education among women and men is relatively high.

Table 3

**Gender Inequality Index in 2019, Switzerland, Poland, Ukraine**

Country	Gender Inequality Index		Maternal mortality ratio, deaths per 100,000 live births	Adolescent birth rate, births per 1,000 women ages 15–19	Share of seats in parliament, % held by women	Population with at least some secondary education, % ages 25 and older		Labour force participation rate, % ages 15 and older
	Value	Rank				Female	Male	
Switzerland	0.025	1	5	2.8	38.6	95.6	96.8	62.9
Poland	0.115	28	2	10.5	27.9	83.1	88.5	48.6
Ukraine	0.234	52	19	23.7	20.5	94.0	95.2	46.7

*Note: based on data from [7]*

The Women Peace and Security Index (WPS Index) is published by the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security and the PRIO Centre on Gender, Peace, and Security with support from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs<sup>11</sup>.

The WPS Index includes three dimensions: inclusion, justice, security. Each dimension has its indicators. Inclusion: Education, Financial inclusion, Employment, Cellphone use, Parliamentary representation. Justice: Absence of legal discrimination, Son bias, Discriminatory norms. Security: Intimate partner violence, Perception of community safety, Organized violence.

<sup>10</sup> [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2020\\_technical\\_notes.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2020_technical_notes.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/the-index/> [Access: December 20, 2021]

Consider in more detail the components of the direction of Inclusion, which contains economic indicators:

- Education – the average number of years of education of women ages 25 and older;
- Employment – the percentage of women ages 25 and older who are employed;
- Cellphone use – the percentage of women ages 15 and older who report using a mobile phone to make and receive personal calls;
- Financial inclusion – the percentage of women ages 15 and older who report having an individual or joint account at a bank or other financial institution or who report using a mobile money service;
- Parliamentary representation – the percentage of combined seats held by women in lower and upper houses of national parliament.

Table 4 shows the WPS Index rank, WPS Index score, and Inclusion components for Norway, which took 1st place, Poland – 29th place, and Ukraine – 66th place. Underline, that Ukraine was at the end of the second subgroup of countries – the Second quintile (the other two mentioned countries – to the Top quintile) and shared 66th place with those countries that are traditionally considered unfriendly to women – Rwanda and South Africa.

Table 4

**Women Peace and Security Index in 2021, Norway, Poland, Ukraine**

Country	WPS Index rank	WPS Index score	Inclusion				
			Education, years	Financial inclusion, %	Employment, %	Cellphone use, %	Parliamentary representation, %
Norway	1	.922	13.0	100.0	58.9	99.0	45.6
Poland	29	.840	12.5	88.0	48.7	97.6	27.6
Ukraine	66	0.748	11.3	61.3	43.1	99.5	20.8

*Note: based on data from [15]*

The Global Gender Gap Index benchmarks the evolution of gender-based gaps among four key dimensions (Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment). It tracks progress towards closing these gaps over time<sup>12</sup>.

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12 <https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2021> [Access: December 20, 2021]

Thus, the Global Gender Gap Index of the World Economic Forum was launched in 2006. and has since been compiled annually, measuring gender gaps without regard to the country's level of development. The index measures gender gaps in health and life expectancy, education, political rights and opportunities, career growth, and economic life. The methodology is based on publicly available statistics in different countries. It is assumed that the Index should be used by states that seek to minimize gender gaps. The index is measured on a scale from 0 to 1, where 1 – there is virtually no gender gap between the capabilities of the two groups, respectively – the closer to zero, the greater the gap [Chernova (Eds.), p. 170].

In 2021, Ukraine took 74th place in the ranking with an index value of 0.714, losing 15 positions compared to 2020. While Poland was next after Ukraine (75th place, 0.713), in 2020 this country took 40th place<sup>13</sup>.

Ukraine has the worst performance in Political empowerment among all countries in 2021, ranked 103rd, and the best – traditionally in Educational attainment (27th place).

As we can see, the analyzed country rankings of the level of gender equality show the average values of the corresponding level in Ukraine. While neighboring Poland occupies much higher positions in the indices.

Let's try to identify the main problems that hinder overcoming gender inequality in Ukraine (developed by the author based on [Bilinska (Eds.), 2011, Council of Europe, 2018, Pavlenko, 2020]):

1. The predominance of patriarchal stereotypes in Ukrainian society regarding the traditional division of family responsibilities.
2. Traditional division into women's and men's professions, forms of economic activity.
3. The desire for strong power, which forces to incline political choices towards men.
4. Lack of political will to form parity in political and power circles.
5. The belief that the principles of gender equality are uncharacteristic of Ukrainian history is a plantation of Western countries with some negative intent.
6. Gender stereotypes establish the economic and social marginalization of women. Women disproportionately perform unpaid domestic and care responsibilities, as well as low-paid or informal work.

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13 [https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GGGR\\_2021.pdf](https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf) [Access: December 20, 2021]



7. Excessive barriers in the labor market for women related to stereotypes about focusing on family, children, and not work responsibilities.
8. Lack of well-developed social infrastructure to facilitate the return of women to work after childbirth.
9. Stigmatizing men who choose to take care of their families, while women can be more active in building their careers.
10. The imperfection of legislation and social programs to ensure equal treatment of child care by both women and men.

**Conclusions.** Achieving gender equality is an essential condition for sustainable development for any country. Ukraine needs to develop and implement effective measures to address the imbalance between women and men, especially in the economic sphere. Using the potential of women will increase economic performance and promote socio-economic and environmental development.

Further research will focus on the experiences of other countries that have better achieved gender equality. Based on these studies, recommendations for further action for Ukraine can be developed.

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