

**FROM TOTALITARIAN TO DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY  
IN THE POST-SOVIET SPACE: MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION  
PROCESS OF GENDER POLICY IN UKRAINE (1991-2017)**

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**Abstract.** *The article reveals the development of gender relations in contemporary Ukraine. The author admits that since gaining independence, the Ukrainian society passed various stages in the legal management of gender issues: from practically total indifference to an extremely open approach. Special attention paid to gender issues has led to the diminishing of the gender gap in the bodies of public authority. Despite the fact that Ukraine has not yet fully aligned with European standards, the progress can be noted in the field of gender policies.*

**Keywords:** *gender, policy, sex, feminism, gender methodology, gender equality*

**Rezumat:** *De la societatea totalitară la democrație în spațiul post-sovietic: procesul de management și de implementare a politicilor de gen în Ucraina (1991-2017).* Articolul analizează dezvoltarea relațiilor de gen în Ucraina contemporană. Autorul constată că, de la obținerea independenței și până în prezent, societatea ucraineană a parcurs diferite etape în gestionarea legislativă a problemelor de gen: de la practic totală indiferență până la o abordare extrem de deschisă. Atenția deosebită acordată chestiunilor de gen a condus la diminuarea disparității dintre femei și bărbați în organismele autorității publice. În pofida faptului că Ucraina încă nu s-a aliniat integral standardelor europene în domeniu, totuși pot fi remarcate progrese în domeniul politicilor de gen.

**Résumé :** *De la société totalitaire à la société démocratique dans l'espace post-soviétique : processus de gestion et de mise en œuvre de la politique de genre en Ukraine (1991-2017).* L'article révèle le développement des relations de genre dans l'Ukraine contemporaine. L'auteur admet que depuis l'indépendance, la société ukrainienne a franchi différentes étapes dans la gestion juridique des questions de genre : de l'indifférence quasi totale à une approche extrêmement ouverte. Une attention particulière accordée aux questions de genre a conduit à la réduction de l'écart entre les sexes dans les organes de l'autorité

*publique. Malgré le fait que l'Ukraine ne s'est pas encore entièrement alignée sur les normes européennes, les progrès peuvent être notés dans le domaine des politiques de genre.*

## INTRODUCTION

The place of women in public life has evolved from feminism to gender. Such changes have brought results. Because they gave rise to the concept of equality and women's solidarity. Historiography on this topic covers a wide range of researchers. The basic theoretical foundations of the influence of women's issues on the socio-political processes on formation of feminism and its transformation into the concept of gender. In social sciences, "gender" means socially determined roles, identities and spheres of activity of men and women, which depend not on biological differences, but on the social organization of society. This position is reflected in the definition of gender as the everyday world of interaction between men and women, embodied in practice, imagination and customs. Foreign and Ukrainian researchers agree that the process of society genderization of has taken three ways<sup>1</sup>. An important principle of gender studies is giving a special perspective to the analysis of democracy, the essence of which is determined by the freedom of expression of group interests at the national and international levels. In this context, the problem of transition from the hierarchical principle of power organization in the world to the network principle of various forms of political governance coordination is particularly important, leading to changes of level and forms of the national states – carriers of modern democracy – control in

<sup>1</sup> Н. В. Кушнир, *Історико-правова еволюція визнання рівності чоловіків і жінок* [Historical and Legal Evolution of the Equality of Men and Women Recognition], in "Науковий вісник Міжнародного гуманітарного університету", Харків, 2016, № 22, с. 95-98; Rosalind Delmar, 'What is Feminism?', in Juliet Mitchell, Ann Oakley (eds.), *What is Feminism?* in Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986, p. 8-33; Elaine Showalter (ed.), *The New Feminist Criticism: Essays on Women, Literature and Theory*, New York, Pantheon, 1985, 403 p.; О. А. Воронина. *Социокультурные детерминанты развития гендерной теории в России и на Западе* [Socio-Cultural Determinants of the Gender Theory Development in Russia and in the West], in "Общественные науки и современность", 2000, № 4, с. 9-20; Lucy Delap, *Feminist and Anti-Feminist Encounters in Edwardian Britain*, in "Historical Research", vol. 78, 2005, No. 201, p. 377-399; Дж. Скотт, *Отголоски феминизма* [Echoes of Feminism], in "Гендерные исследования", ХЦГИ, 2004, № 10, с. 7-36; К. Уэст, Д. Зиммерман, *Создание гендера* [Doing gender], in "Гендерные тетради", Санкт-Петербург, 1997, Вып. 1, С. 94–124.

the most important human problems: employment, migration, income, interest representation etc. Another problem which development the gender representatives are interested in is the problem of various precise forms of democracy at various stages of its development, which raises the question of democracy quality and the internal process of developing democracy and the need to develop the semantic field of democracy theory. At the same time, the transition went somewhat differently during Soviet times, through the prism of communist ideology and the specifics of the state system did not allow women to go through the same path of change as in the West. That is why the gender issue in the post-Soviet countries has become one of the leading issues in the socio-political processes. Various countries in different ways pass this stage of standard stereotypes and patriarchal thinking. Research of the gender issue in Ukraine is reoriented from the study of statistical factors to thinking by strategic definitions, which in turn provides an opportunity to clearly understand the main trends in society and the possibility of reaching the European standards<sup>2</sup>.

The idea of the article is concentrated on the analysis of theoretical foundations of the gender concept. The standard vision of a woman as guardian of the family, which prevailed till the end of the 19th century, began to change. With the notion of the right of women to vote and the evolution towards the concept of a woman – an equal politician. Conceptually, the principles of gender sensitivity policies were formulated by combining the legal framework and the dual strategy of gender mainstreaming and positive actions / positive discrimination, operating in the EU's political and legal space. The strategy of gender mainstreaming focuses on the transformation of public institutions and organizations that create barriers to achieving gender equality in society. The strategy of effective gender main-

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<sup>2</sup> Оксана Ярош, *Жіночі об'єднання України як суб'єкти державотворення кінця ХХ століття: проблеми і перспективи* [Women's Associations in Ukraine as Subjects of State-Building in the Late 20th Century: Issues and Perspectives], Київ, ІПіЕНД, 2000, Вип. 10, с. 243-245; Т. О. Марценюк, *Жінки в українській політиці: виклики і перспективи змін* [Women in Ukrainian Politics: Challenges and Prospects of Change], Київ, Міжнародний центр перспективних досліджень, 2015, с. 19-20; Юлія Біденко, Валентина Кисельова, *Гендерна політика в Україні: складний шлях від декларацій до позитивних дій* [Gender policy in Ukraine: a complex path from declarations to positive actions], in <http://hvylya.net/analytics/society/genderna-politika-v-ukrayini-skladniy-shlyah-vid-deklaratsiy-do-pozitivnih-diy.html>, (Accessed on 02.11.2017); *Цілі Розвитку Тисячоліття: Україна 2015* [Objectives of Millennium Development: Ukraine 2015], <http://www.ukraine2015.org.ua/tsil6> (Accessed on 02.11.2017).

streaming should be formed by the synthesis of four components, presented in the form of sequential actions:

- The preparatory stage – organization and implementation of a structural and cultural base for the principles of equal opportunities implementation (the target group is defined, goals, tasks and mechanisms of achievement are developed taking into account the specifics of a separate group).

- The stage of characters' examination (the study of gender differences) is an examination of the current situation of gender (in) equality and identification of priority areas (monitoring observation in order to identify trends or prevent gender inequality manifestations).

- The stage of assessing effectiveness of gender policy - an analysis of the potential impact of gender policies on participation (assessing both quantitative and qualitative indicators), resource allocation, norms, values (including targeting men to domestic unpaid work) and rights.

Rebuilding policy stage – defining problem areas and their elimination/replacement according to an integrated approach.

### **EVOLUTION OF THE WOMEN'S ISSUE IN CIVILIZATION DIMENSION**

Today, all aspects of society functioning have gained a gender dimension. That is why the phenomenon of gender discourse, being interdisciplinary in its basic characteristics, is of great interest for representatives of social philosophy, sociology, history, political science, social psychology, cultural studies, economics and law. If the feminists of the middle of the 19th and early 20th centuries demanded equality of rights and usually based it on the views that there were no significant differences between sexes that would allow legitimate inequality to be created, then feminists of the second wave of 1960-1970s demanded recognition of an independent female personality and promoted the development of collective women's self-awareness, stressing differences between women and men, the specificity of 'female' in relation to 'male'. Unlike the term 'gender', feminism is primarily an ideological movement that studies and tries to solve the issue of women inequality<sup>3</sup>. The concept of 'gender' is wider because within the framework of the system of values offered by it the relationship of men and women from both positions is considered, whereas feminist culture places the woman, her issues and interests first.

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<sup>3</sup> Н. В Кушнір, *Історико-правова еволюція визнання рівності чоловіків і жінок* [Historical and Legal Evolution of the Equality of Men and Women Recognition], in “Науковий вісник Міжнародного гуманітарного університету”, Харків, 2016, № 22, с. 95.

Researchers understand feminism in different ways giving it a unique spin. In the broadest sense, feminism is 'an active desire of women to change their position in society'<sup>4</sup>. But feminism can also consider the ideology of equality of women's rights, social changes of femininity depriving women of stereotyped social roles, etc.<sup>5</sup>. "A feminist," says S. Elaine, "is any person, man or woman whose ideas and actions meet three criteria: 1) they recognize the possibility of interpreting by a woman her life experience ; 2) they are not satisfied with the situation where institutional inequality of women exists; 3) they seek to do away with this inequality"<sup>6</sup>. According to O. Voronina, feminism is primarily "an alternative philosophical concept of socio-cultural development" today although for quite some time it has existed as the ideology of women's equality and socio-political movement for women's rights<sup>7</sup>.

It is worthy of note that if individual feminist views for the first time begin to sound like a protest against patriarchal attitudes in the classical tradition of philosophizing, then the feminist movement propagandizing the struggle for equal political, social and other rights with men is becoming massive by the middle of the 20th century. Sometimes the views of extreme orientation are clearly distinguished in the feminist movement: militant propaganda, calls for an open gender war with the irreconcilable confrontation of two genders<sup>8</sup>.

In the 1960s, three main trends of feminism were formed: liberal, radical and socialist ones. In our opinion, the concept of 'subjective diversity' is basic for post-feminism and it is important for understanding gender policy in conditions of political transformation. J. Scott remarked on this, "Modern feminist theories do not involve fixed relations between entities but treat them as inconsistent effects of temporary, cultural or historical specifics, and the dynamics of power. Neither individual nor collective identity exists without the *Other*; inclusiveness does not exist without exception, universal – without a rejected private, there is no neutrality that would give preference to any of the points of view that have someone's interests. Power plays a significant role in any human relationship. For us the differences mean a fact of human existence, a tool of power, an analytical tool."<sup>9</sup> Thus, the recognition of "subjective diversity undermined the classical

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<sup>4</sup> Rosalind Delmar, 'What is Feminism?', p. 9.

<sup>5</sup> Lucy Delap, *Feminist and Anti-Feminist Encounters in Edwardian Britain*, p. 382.

<sup>6</sup> Elaine Showalter, *The New Feminist Criticism...*, p. 69.

<sup>7</sup> О. А. Воронина. *Социокультурные детерминанты развития гендерной теории...*, с. 9.

<sup>8</sup> Lucy Delap, *op. cit.*, p. 391-392

<sup>9</sup> Дж. Скотт, *Отголоски феминизма*, с. 11.

liberal notion of the universal public policy subject existence, proving that 'the subject's story is the story of his/her identities'<sup>10</sup>.

The term *gender* was first introduced in the middle of the 20th century by psychoanalyst R. Stoller, and in the late 1960s and early 1970s the final delineation of the concepts of *gender* and *sex* took place: the term *sex* is used to understand the biological sex, while *gender* is understood as recognition of the social sex. According to T. Melnyk, introduction of the term 'gender' into scientific discourse became "quite a good technique capable of revising conceptually established ideas about the mechanisms of sexual inequality reproduction, the mechanisms of the power implementation, the gender-role structure of society which main features were patriarchal character and heterosexuality."

In social science, *gender* means socially determined roles, identities and spheres of activity of men and women, which depend not on biological differences but on the social organization of society. This position is reflected in the definition of gender as the everyday world of interaction between men and women embodied in practice, representations, customs; as a phenomenon that exists in the system of interpersonal relations, through which male and female as the basic categories of social order are created, approved and reproduced<sup>11</sup>; as an element of the sex – gender system, a set of mechanisms that helps society to transform "biological sexuality into the results of human activity and within which these transformed sexual needs are met"; as a social category that to a large extent "determines realization of human life aspirations, determines its place in social life and economy"; as a social structure rather than a stable biological characteristic, therefore "its characteristics are relations depending on time and circumstances," it is not only a component of an individual identity, but also "an aspect of a political and social system"<sup>12</sup>.

J. Scott called the 'social sex' or gender "the primary way of identifying power relations." J. Scott's publications contributed to overcoming the split between traditional (male) and new (female) history. Thus, not only the norms, stereotypes and identities but also the most important institutions of social control that

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<sup>10</sup> Ш. Муфф, *Феминизм, гражданство и радикальная демократическая политика*, [Feminism, Citizenship and Radical Democratic Policy], in *Введение в гендерные исследования: Хрестоматия*, Санкт-Петербург, Алетейя; Харьков, Изд-во ХЦГИ, 2001, Часть II, с. 216.

<sup>11</sup> Н. И. Абубакирова, *Что такое гендер?* [What is Gender?], in "Общественные науки и современность", 1996, № 6, с. 123.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, с. 124.

regulate unequal distribution of material and spiritual wealth, power and prestige in the whole society, class, group, etc., were the gender theorists' focus of attention. A historian-gender theorist unlike a psychoanalyst and sociologist places emphasis on the general socio-cultural and historical-cultural context in which a hierarchy of genders is formed. Therefore, she definitely highlights such issues as the relationship between the social and gender hierarchy, social and gender mythology and, consequently, between social and gender history<sup>13</sup>.

The critics of structural functionalism believed that the society needed reforms that would liberate women for genuine self-realization, not limited to gender-role theory, and this theory leaves behind the analysis aspects of social inequality, domination and suppression. From the point of view of criticism, the feminist movement will cause a change in the social and cultural plan that will lead to a system-wide reassessment of expressiveness

Consequently, the strategy of gender mainstreaming can be defined as an instrumental part of the consistent implementation of gender policies. Based on more in-depth indicators and standards, it provides an opportunity to consider more widely than feminism standards.

### **PROCESS OF INTRODUCING GENDER STANDARDS IN INDEPENDENT UKRAINE**

At the turn of the 1980-1990s Ukraine was in a situation of historical uncertainty, looking for a choice of development path. The Soviet model of the gender order was based on the principles of state paternalism that provided for support of the formal norm of gender equality on the one hand, and on the other one – on the hidden discrimination of women<sup>14</sup>.

The proclamation of democratic ideals in the early 1990s was accompanied by the spread of the 'women's rights' and gender equality discourse in Ukraine, primarily, among the activists of independent feminine organizations. Democratization processes that began in the post-Soviet space required a profound internal

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<sup>13</sup> Наталія Пушкарьова, *Від «Жіночих студій» до «Гендерних досліджень», від історичної фемінології до гендерної історії* [From Female Studies to Gender Studies, from Historical Feminology to Gender History], in *Гендерний підхід: історія, культура, суспільство*, Львів, ВНТЛ-Класика, 2003, с. 16-18.

<sup>14</sup> О. Здравомыслова, *Российская семья в 90-е годы: жизненные стратегии мужчин и женщин* [Russian Family in the 1990s: the Men and Women Life Strategies], in *Гендерный калейдоскоп. Курс лекций*, Москва, Academia, 2001, с. 475.

restructuring of relations between the authorities and citizens based on the recognition of human rights, in particular, the rights of men and women. As part of these changes, women should have an equal social status with men defending three groups of rights for themselves: political, socio-economic, and reproductive ones. At this very time gender outstrips feminism by making parallels between them.

Analysing contemporary gender relations in Ukraine it should be noted that their implementation takes place against the background of comparative analysis and reference to European models of gender policy institutional provision<sup>15</sup>.

Over the past decades, significant changes have taken place in the Ukrainian society in understanding and legitimizing gender relations, and steps are being taken to establish an institutional mechanism for ensuring gender equality. The gender is increasingly penetrating the sphere of political governance and management, becoming a real political power for development equality and peace. Such approach to politics implies its gender dimension – “the application of quantitative and qualitative assessments of men and women activities in politics, the characteristics of their masculinity and femininity, relations to determine the degree and level of political culture of their socio-sexual self-expression and self-realization, the effectiveness of political influence on all spheres of organization, management and planning of private and public life, effectiveness of influence on all directions of socio-political development, modelling and forecasting socio-political processes using the principles of justice, equality, peace and progress.” Women's involvement in politics can take place in two forms: firstly, it is integration, which involves women's mass participation in the political process that removes unnecessary tension not only between the sexes, but also in normative interaction between the spheres of public and private; and secondly, it is a marginalization in which women are not adequately represented in the power institutions, they are excluded from the decision-making process, forced to adapt to political decisions, anticipating patronage or affiliation<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> See: Михайло Корюкалов (Укладач), *Гендерна політика та інституційні механізми її реалізації в Україні. Національний огляд виконання Україною Пекінської декларації та Платформи дій і заключних документів Двадцять третьої спеціальної сесії Генеральної Асамблеї ООН* [Gender policy and institutional mechanisms of its implementation in Ukraine. National review of Ukraine's implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the final documents of the 23rd Special Session of the UN General Assembly], Вересень 2014 р. [https://www.uwf.org.ua/files/genderna\\_politika\\_ukr\\_web.pdf](https://www.uwf.org.ua/files/genderna_politika_ukr_web.pdf) (Accessed on 12.10.2017).

<sup>16</sup> К. Уэст, Д. Зиммерман, *Создание гендера* [Doing gender], с. 94.

Women's involvement in politics and gender policies are not identical concepts. T. Miller points out that gender policy is “the determination by the international bodies and states, political parties of the main gender priorities and fundamental values, principles and directions of activity, the corresponding methods and ways of their implementation aimed at establishment of equal rights, freedoms, creation of conditions, opportunities and chances, guarantees of equal social and political status of men and women, on the development of gender democracy and the formation of gender culture in the society.” Summarizing this approach, O. Yarosh points out that gender policy is “a set of legal and managerial measures aimed at ensuring equal legal and practical opportunities for women and men in society”<sup>17</sup>.

Ukraine has ratified the major international documents on equal rights and opportunities for men and women: the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, defining gender equality as the important component of further development and as one of the priorities of state policy. The democratic society should provide women and men with equal opportunities to participate in all spheres of life, including access to power. At the national level, gender equality is guaranteed, first of all, by the Constitution of Ukraine, the Labour Code of Ukraine, as well as by the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men” (2005), the State Program for Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men for the Period by 2016 and other legislative acts. But despite legislative regulation, the access of women to ‘big’ politics is still unsatisfactory<sup>18</sup>. According to the 2016 Global Gender Gap Report presented by the World Economic Forum, Ukraine occupies the 69th place on the Gender Equality Index (ranked among 142 countries)<sup>19</sup>.

In Ukraine, despite high educational and professional potential of women and the absence of direct contradictions with the UN Convention “On the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women” in the country's legislation, the quantitative representation of women in power structures is very low. The International Centre for Advanced Studies carried out an analysis to determine

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<sup>17</sup> Оксана Ярош, *Жіночі об'єднання України...*, с. 243.

<sup>18</sup> Т. О. Марценюк, *Жінки в українській політиці: виклики і перспективи змін*, с. 19.

<sup>19</sup> Юлія Біденко, Валентина Кисельова, *Гендерна політика в Україні: складний шлях від декларацій до позитивних дій*, in <http://hvylyu.net/analytics/society/genderna-politika-v-ukrayini-skladniy-shlyah-vid-deklaratsiy-do-pozitivnih-diy.html> (Accessed 02.11.2017).

correlation between the number of men and women represented at all levels of public administration in Ukraine (see Table 1). If women are present in the central organs of power, then the situation is close to the critical one in the regions<sup>20</sup>. For example, there is only one woman as a head of the regional state administration in Ukraine (Yulia Svitlychna, head of the Kharkiv regional state administration).

**Table 1, Ensuring Gender Equality in Ukraine (1990-2015)**  
(Share of women and men) <sup>21</sup>

Ratio	1990	2001	2004	2007	2011	2015
The gender ratio among deputies of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine	3/97	7/93	5/95	9/91	10/90	13/87
The gender ratio among deputies of the local councils	38/62	42/58	42/58	43/57	44/56	45/55
The gender ratio among deputies of the regional councils	9/91	11/89	15/85	19/81	20/80	30/70
The gender ratio among deputies of the district councils	18/82	21/79	24/76	27/73	28/72	30/70
The gender ratio among deputies of the city councils (regional level)	21/79	22/78	25/75	28/72	29/71	30/70
The gender ratio among deputies of the village councils	42/58	47/53	47/53	48/52	48/52	50/50
The gender ratio among deputies of the small village councils	42/58	47/53	48/52	49/51	50/50	50/50
The gender ratio among Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine members	n.a.	0/100	10/90	15/85	20/80	30/70
The gender ratio among high rank civil servants, (position ranks 1-2)	n.a.	15/85	17/83	20/80	25/75	30/70
The average salary ratio of women and comparing with general average salary, %	73	71	73	76	85	85

<sup>20</sup> О. В. Ковальова, *Гендерне квотування як напрям реалізації державної гендерної політики в адміністративно-політичній сфері* [Gender quotation as a direction of implementation of the state gender policy in the administrative and political sphere], "Південно-український правничий часопис", 2015, № 3, с. 6-9.

<sup>21</sup> *Цілі Розвитку Тисячоліття: Україна 2015* [Objectives of Millennium Development: Ukraine 2015], <http://www.ukraine2015.org.ua/tsil6> (Accessed 02.11.2017)

The number of women in the Verkhovna Rada increased to some extent during a transition period. After the 1994 elections there were 5.7% of women – members of the Ukrainian parliament, after the 1998 elections their share was 8.1%. However, according to the 2002 elections, the share of women among deputies even decreased to 5.1%.

Among 450 deputies of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine after the 2002 elections, men made up 94.9%, and women – 5.1%. The share of women and men elected by the party lists was 1:14. The ratio between women and men who were candidates for parliament varied considerably depending on the region: in Donetsk – 1:3; in the Kirovograd region – 1: 2.7; while in Lviv – 1:14; in the Transcarpathian region – 1:12 and in Vinnytsya region – 1: 9.65.

In 2002-2003, no woman was appointed a minister in the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. The lower is the level of public administration, the more open it is for women (the share of women among deputy ministers was 8%, among the state committee deputy heads – 4%, only some women were appointed chairpersons of state committees).

Among the civil servants, the share of women was decreasing in line with the increase of official positions (81% of female specialists and 52.5% of women who held positions of middle level executives). The share of women among senior civil servants (1-2 positions of managers) was only 14.7%, which indicated a low level of women involvement in the process of taking responsible state decisions<sup>22</sup>.

Only the Verkhovna Rada of the 8th convocation has the largest number of women in the history of independent Ukraine. Thus, 47 women were elected to the parliament, or 11.1% of the total number of deputies, during the 2014 elections to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. To put this in perspective, there were 9.9% of women (44) in the Verkhovna Rada of the previous convocation, and only 2.3% (11) in the Verkhovna Rada of the first convocation. Although the representation of genders in the parliament of the 8th convocation became more balanced comparing to the parliaments of previous convocations, in accordance with the UN Millennium Goals, Ukraine should ensure representation of women in the legislature at the level of not less than 15% of the members of parliament.

The issue of electing women starts with the party lists and political activity of women themselves. According to the survey data, the recent elections to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in 2014 showed: among 139 female members - 16 members were from the Petro Poroshenko Bloc that numbered 12%; 12 of 81 presented the People's Front (15%); 8 of 26 deputies – political party Samopomich

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<sup>22</sup> Т. О. Марценюк, *op. cit.*, с. 20.

(Self Reliance) (31%); 5 of 19 – from the Batkivshchyna (26%); 3 of 21 from the Lyashko's Radical Party (14%); 3 out of 50 were Independent deputies (6%); there were no deputies from the political parties Volya Narodu (The will of the people) and Vidrodzennya (Renaissance)<sup>23</sup>. Thus, only one political part Samopomich fulfilled the 30% quota of women in political party lists.

There are two women in this convocation of the Verkhovna Rada leadership - First Deputy Chairman Iryna Gerashchenko and Deputy Chairman Oksana Syroid – which a great achievement in solving gender issues. There was no woman in the parliament leadership before.

Four women are represented in the faction leadership, namely: Yulia Tymoshenko, head of the Batkivshchyna faction, Oksana Prodan and Iryna Lutsenko, deputy chairperson of the Petro Poroshenko Bloc faction and Viktoriya Syumar, deputy chairperson of the People's Front faction. There are no women in the eight Committees out of 21 (including the Budget Committee, Committee on Preventing and Combating Corruption, Financial Policy and Banking Committee). The largest number of female deputies is in humanitarian Committees.

There are six women in the Committee on Health Care and the Committee on European Integration. The women head the Committee on European Integration, Science and Education Committee, Health Care Committee, Freedom of Speech and Information Policy Committee, Committee on Social Policy, Employment and Pension Coverage, and Committee on Foreign Affairs. Six women are deputy chairpersons of the committees, and five are the first deputy chairpersons. Six more women are heads of the parliamentary subcommittees.

Having analysed the activities of female and male members of the Ukrainian parliament as of January 17, 2015, the OPORA public network concluded that women had participated in law-making two times more than men. Thus, on average, one woman was the author or co-author of the 15 bills, while the men – 7<sup>24</sup>.

But despite a number of issues and obstacles faced by women in politics, in recent years, several party associations were set up to raise awareness of gender equality. Thus, on December 6, 2011, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine announced creation of the Inter-faction association Equal Opportunities, which included 15

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<sup>23</sup> У новій Верховній Раді найбільше жінок за всю історію - КВУ [The New Verkhovna Rada Has the Largest Number of Women in History – CVU], <https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2014/11/12/7044034/> (Accessed 13.09.2017).

<sup>24</sup> В українському парламенті жінки працьовитіші за чоловіків [Women in the Ukrainian Parliament are more Industrious than Men], <http://www.civicua.org/news/view.html?q=2390965> (Accessed 13.09.2017).

female deputies and deputies of various parliamentary factions. They believe that the topic of gender equality is important for Ukraine, including the issue of its perceptions by the society and various political forces. Furthermore, in pursuance of the Law of Ukraine "On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men" 38 central executive bodies have the working expert groups on implementation of gender approaches. Advisers of the heads of regional state administrations have been appointed and they work on a voluntary basis in 20 regions of Ukraine. In the 17 regions of Ukraine, 21 gender centres have been established and operate now: in Vinnytsya (2), Volyn, Dnipropetrovsk, Zhytomyr (2), Transcarpathian (2), Kirovograd, Luhansk, Lviv, Mykolaiv, Odesa, Poltava, Sumy (2), Ternopil, Kharkiv, Kherson, Khmelnytskyi, and Chernivtsi regions<sup>25</sup>.

The Ukrainian women every year more actively apply for the positions in the National Police, in the volunteer corps and sign contracts to serve in the Ukrainian Army. The First Ukrainian Women's Congress was attended for the first time by the representatives of various spheres of life in November 2017. This kind of convention, in turn, gives hope for a greater opportunity to implement gender issues and to dispel the stereotypes of past years.

Thus, the evolution of gender issues in Ukraine has undergone a serious path to progress. The activity of public initiatives and promotion of this issue among politicians has given an opportunity to raise gender awareness.

## CONCLUSIONS

Consequently, the historical development of the vision of the women's position in society has gone the way from the struggle for rights to the advocacy of equality. This policy can be divided into three types: (1) a gender neutral policy uses knowledge of gender differences to overcome stereotypes about men and women and leaves the existing division of resources and responsibilities unchanged; (2) a gender-specific policy distinguishes between the practical needs of women and men and keeps the status-quo of gender inequality without change; (3) gender-transformation policy recognizes the specific needs of women and

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<sup>25</sup> Центр адаптації державної служби до стандартів Європейського Союзу, *Реалізація гендерної політики на місцевому рівні* (19 березня 2013 р.) [Center for Adaptation of the Civil Service to the Standards of the European Union, Implementation of gender policy at the local level (19 March 2013)], <http://www.center.gov.ua/component/k2/item/761-реалізація-гендерної-політики-на-місцевому-рівні> (Accessed on 06.10.2017).

aims to change the imbalance in gender relations towards equality. It is clear that changes are important for achieving equality, but they do not change the meaning and essence of gender inequality. The transformation of inequality into equality occurs as a result of the transition to a new quality of gender policy with sufficient quantitative changes. As a rule, these are radical and irreversible changes. The history of gender standards implementation in Ukraine began giving its results. And if a woman in power was an exception in the previous years, then in the upper echelons of power women's representation has significantly increased recently. Although the obvious progress is noticeable, the average European indicators are still a long haul ahead.