

## **Gender quotes in the political systems of the countries in transition such as republic of Serbia and Ukraine**

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**Abstract:** This article involves discovering of how the gender quotas system in modern political systems of countries in transitions such as Serbia and Ukraine, is functioning. The goal is to compare these two similar (by some indicators) countries in transition, which have different gender strategies in political sphere. This has been done by analysis the role of gender quotas system in the Serbian and Ukrainian politics. After completion of the analysis of political and legal basis of gender quotas, it becomes clear that Ukrainian and Serbian gender strategies in political life are very different, and Serbian way in this sphere is more successful. Through overview how it works in different political systems of the countries with post-Soviet history as Ukraine and Serbia, this research highlights the current trends of gender quotas implementation in the political system of countries in transition.

**Key words:** gender, gender equality, gender quotas, political system, gender politics.

Gender balance in the state structures of any democratically oriented country is the foundation of a stable and effective political system. When women are participating in the political process, it becomes more humane and socially oriented [6]. This fact is proven by many nations of the world, including political experience in Scandinavia countries.

However, there are countries where the situation with a equal representation of gender is rather contradictory and ambiguous. It means that, de jure these countries ratified all international agreements on gender issues, which define women's representation in government as a process important and necessary, but de facto there are no practical mechanisms that would help increase the number of women in policy. As a result, the percentage of women in power structures of these countries is nearly 10%.

The experience of European countries that have moved to the active implementation of gender equality in the political system, argues that this process needs to make the practical arrangements and mechanisms that would encourage the involvement of women in politics.

One of the most effective mechanisms for the implementation of gender equality in the political system is the implementation of a positive action policy. However, this issue is very delicate and requires thoughtful and reasonable steps. First, we must remember that the legislative strengthening of gender quotas in the political environment should occur only after a emergence of a sufficient number of competent, motivated to political action, women. Otherwise, implementation of the gender quotas will not lead to qualitative changes. Instead it will create a critical mass of incompetent politicians whose activities are destabilizing the political system. Secondly, in order to effectively implement a positive action is need to determine what kind of quota will be the most appropriate for this political system. For example, for countries in transition is the optimal gradual introduction of gender quotas to the electoral lists of political parties, followed by the next step at the subnational level, and if this is necessary, at the national level. And, thirdly, a prerequisite is that the policy of positive action is a temporary measure, which should be abolished when the goal is achieved. Therefore, it is worth noting that com-

petent temporary implementation of gender quotas in the political system can lead to the positive outcomes, especially if it is accompanied by the necessary informational and educational activities.

First of all, the implementation of a positive action is relevant for countries in transition, which are aimed at the formation of a democratic society. From another hand any democratic society should have a gender-balanced political system. A good example of practical implementation of the foundations of gender balance in the structures of government can be experience of Ukraine and the Republic of Serbia.

Serbia and Ukraine are orthodox (in the majority) countries with patriarchal type of political culture. Both countries promote European integration foreign policy vector, which actualizes some social issues, including the gender-balanced political system.

However, despite some similarities between these countries, the processes of gender equality implementation in Ukrainian and Serbian society are different. In particular, they have different experience of implementing positive action in political system.

After the 2000 election the number of women in the Serbian state structures was 12.4%. After the introduction of gender quotas the situation was significantly improved. Women should be a 30% of the seats in the electoral lists [3, p.2-3]. The electoral law of Serbia says that a list of candidates for election should be created with the 30% quotas. It was noted that the electoral lists must be formed on the basis of 1:4, that is, for each group of candidates with 4 persons in the list should be a candidate of the sex that is in the minority, and the number of candidate gender minorities in the electoral rolls should be at least 30% of the total number of applicants. If the electoral lists did not meet these requirements, they are considered illegitimate and presenter should have been obliged to make corrections to the list [8].

The practice of quota system helped to increase the number of women in the state structures [2, s.433].

However, despite the fact that the quotas as a mechanism of gender equality were legislative strengthening, discussions about implementation of positive action was quite sharp. Leaders of political parties are claimed that the women have a lot of personal responsibilities and they do not have time to engage in politics. That's why they never justify those 30% that they need to take [2, s.434]. Involvement of women in politics sometimes had only nominal in order to ensure the quota set by law. There is still a female politician in Serbian politics was an unusual and unpopular phenomenon. Road

to the leading political positions was much harder for her than for her fellow men. Places that were given to women in the electoral lists were almost impassable. The proportion of 1:4 did not determine a woman's place in the top four. Just as gender quota of 30%. Therefore, in the vast majority the places of women's candidates were less winning than their male counterparts. Men are strongly emphasized nominal position and low efficiency of gender quotas. The same idea is often promoted a mass media which formed skeptical perception of politically active women in society. In addition, a significant drawback of implementing the quota system was that the first had to be implemented an educational program for politically interested and active women. Because when Serbian women got resources in the form of 30% quotas in the electoral lists, they were unprepared for inclusion in the political processes of the country. Lack of management experience and appropriate education in this area contributed to the consolidation of women's NGOs (non-governmental associations). Women's NGO aimed at promoting gender equality society in the structures of political power, political and educational activities for women and support women candidates. The development of educational network that united politically active women and women who are interested in political processes was begun. Through various workshops, conferences, roundtables was highlighted the issue of combining personal responsibilities and women's political participation. It is through the effective activity of NGOs the qualitative renewal of the political elite in Serbia has begun. Women have begun to recognize their role and purpose in the formulation and implementation of policy decisions. In the biggest part of Serbian political parties the political active woman came to be perceived as a self-sufficient politician.

Political activity of women is justifying the 30% quotas, which they were provided. Women politicians in Serbia are the qualified specialists who combine professional and personal life. As of January 2013 the proportion of women who are members of the Serbian government was 28%. In addition, the positive result of gender equality is 32.8% of women in the Serbian Parliament. This percentage exceeds 30% by the UN, which constitute the critical mass, which is the minimum for a tangible impact on policy making in the country [1]. Obviously, the gender dynamics in Serbian policy encourages the implementing of positive action in party electoral lists and updating of gender issues in society.

Considering the Ukrainian political practice, it should be noted that in Ukraine experience implementing gender quotas is lacking. In December 2006, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted the "State Program of gender equality in Ukrainian

society until 2010" [5] (hereinafter - the Program). Adoption of the program was due to the need for further implementation of gender equality in the European integration aspirations of Ukraine, which became a priority after the change of the political elite in 2004. It is interesting that the Action Plan, which designed to implement the Program, has the point about correction of the electoral law and the Law of Ukraine "About Political Parties in Ukraine". This correction concerns the implementation of gender quotas as temporary special measures for strengthening equality between the women and men. However, any changes in the sphere of positive action did not take place in Ukraine so far. The draft amendments to the electoral law "About Political Parties in Ukraine" has not been agreed by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and postponed indefinitely. In this case, we can say that the Ukrainian public and political practice is still governed by the principle of traditionalism. This again suggests that the inclusion of gender equality in the political system is a complex and multifaceted process that must take place through a gradual systematic implementation of gender equality at all levels: legislative, institutional and value-motivational. Among the expected results of the Program, which had to be implemented by 2010 is "the development of parity democracy in Ukraine" [5]. However, 9.5% of women in the Parliament of Ukraine as of January 2013, shows that the principles of parity democracy in Ukraine are among the long-term prospects.

In addition to lack of legislation implementing of gender quotas in Ukrainian politics, the big problem is the gender-stereotyped thinking of Ukrainian people. A successful female politician is an exceptional phenomenon in Ukrainian society. In the public perception of the woman must perform the primary role of the mother, homemakers, helper for her husband. If women are fully carry out these functions they will not have time for self-realization and successful social and political career. Consequently, the woman who succeeds in the political environ-

ment is perceived as someone who has a problem in your personal life, or who is not properly performing her obligations, or unprofessional and nominal politician. Gender roles that define the place of women in society, the absence of the conditions for combining work and family responsibilities are cause of the low motivation for the most women take an active part in the political process. Under these conditions, the implementation of a positive action policy at any level will not bring any qualitative results. Percentage of quota to be provided to women will not justify itself in any way. In this instance, is an important work of women's NGOs which should provide informational and educational activities, organize a coordinated and active cooperation, transform public opinion on the women's role in society and motivate women to take a more active part in the social and political processes.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the process of introducing gender quotas in Serbian politics had some deficiencies which were subsequently rectified by the efficient activity of NGOs. Indeed, the Serbian legislation is active regulated on gender issues. This is confirmed by the legislative fixing of gender quotas in party electoral lists. In addition, virtually every document that governs the formation and function of political and governmental institutions in Serbia has the certain provisions that confirm the priority of the gender equality principle. Although the Ukrainian legislation and provides for the possibility of a positive action as necessary, but this point is mainly advisory and descriptive without specifying the basic procedural components. However, given some similarities between Ukrainian and Serbian political life, the experience of Serbia could be interesting for Ukraine. Thoroughly analyzed the experience of Serbia on establishing gender-balanced political system, it could be developed effective and efficient mechanisms for ensuring gender equality in Ukrainian political system (given the national peculiarities).

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**Гендерное квотирование в политических системах стран переходного типа  
на примере Республики Сербии и Украины**

**Аннотация:** В этой статье анализируется как система гендерных квот в современных политических системах стран с переходной экономикой, таких как Сербия и Украина, функционирует. Цель состоит в том, чтобы сравнить эти две аналогичные (по некоторым показателям) страны с переходной экономикой, которые имеют различные гендерные стратегии в политической сфере. После рассмотрения политико-правовых основ имплементации системы гендерных квот, становится ясно, что украинская и сербская гендерные стратегии в политической жизни очень разные, и сербский путь в этой сфере является более динамичным и эффективным. Это исследование рассматривает современные тенденции реализации гендерных квот в политической системе стран с переходной экономикой.

**Ключевые слова:** гендер, гендерное равенство, гендерные квоты, политическая система, гендерная политика