

GENDER-BALANCED LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION: IS IT POSSIBLE TO ENSHRINE IT IN LAW?

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ABSTRACT. The search for ‘high-quality’ human resources to support reforms in higher education, leadership in HEIs, and systematic education of new generation leaders with gender competencies is hampered by the problem of ‘gender asymmetry’ in leadership, with the dominance of ‘male faces’ at the level of top managers, which negatively affects the perception of the global community of higher education and HEIs as a ‘gender-unfriendly environment’, with the lack of equal opportunities for men and women to access leadership positions and decision-making processes. Despite the adoption of relevant legislation, unfortunately, there are no real mechanisms to ensure the development of gender-balanced leadership in higher education. Although there is a demonstration of a gradual movement towards ensuring gender representation of human capital in various spheres of public life, leadership in higher education still remains ‘defective’, which makes it necessary to analyse the problem in depth and find relevant solutions to the current needs. The article substantiates the expediency of using activities (three blocks) with presentability at three (national, regional and local) levels, the effectiveness of which is possible only in their combination, since they are resource-limited on their own. The blocks include: rule-making, institutional, and educational, which allows to form a standardised model of guaranteed gender-balanced leadership in higher education institutions, education of leaders with gender competencies to meet the human resources needs of the state, with prioritisation of measures to respond to the latest demands of the country’s human capital representation in various spheres of public life.

Keywords: gender, gender balance, legislation, higher education institution, regulatory model.

INTRODUCTION

The prioritisation of the main directions of modern state-building processes in Ukraine, directly related to the European and North Atlantic vectors, is inextricably linked to the focus on solving the problem of balanced representation of human capital in all spheres of public life, including the management aspect of each of them. This fully applies to the field of higher education as a component of education in general, with the regulation of the

principles of access to which in terms of removing any discriminatory barriers the issue has already been resolved, but in terms of access to senior positions in management, to management decision-making processes, there is still a 'latent gap', the consequence of which may well be considered the so-called 'gender asymmetry' in the management of higher education institutions, the existence of the stereotype of a "glass ceiling" for women, which, combined with security (both domestic and global) threats, significantly affects the motivation, quantitative indicators, migration (both internal and external) processes in the staffing of higher education in general, its attractiveness, competitiveness and sustainability. Under such conditions, it is important not only to preserve human capital, in particular in the field of higher education, but also to promote its 'qualitative development', including its managerial component.

Despite the adoption of a number of legal acts directly regulating social relations in the field of higher education, including those on the admission of persons to the management of the latter (and in particular at the level of higher education institutions), unfortunately, their content cannot be recognised as 'qualitative', and first of all in terms of the availability of tools that would guarantee a balanced (in terms of opportunities for admission of men and women) approach to holding managerial positions, to the formation of governing bodies that determine the vectors of functioning of higher education institutions. Highlighting the relevant issues as one of the priorities in the formation of a new 'basic legal act' for the development of higher education in the context of the implementation of European legal standards for regulating relations in the relevant area of relations, integration of the national higher education space (including its management component) into the European and world educational space, confirms the relevance, practical significance and importance for the development prospects of each state, and therefore the expediency of finding a regulatory model.

The purpose of the study is to propose a regulatory model for ensuring a gender-balanced approach to the formation of higher education institutions' management based on the analysis of available sources. The object of the study is the social relations that arise in the field of higher education, and in particular the management of higher education institutions. The subject of the work is a model of regulatory and legal consolidation of gender-balanced leadership in higher education institutions as a component of the priority actions of modern state-building processes. Given that the issue of gender (in the sense of identifying individuals by gender) both in general and in higher education (and in particular in its managerial aspect) attracts the attention of representatives of various scientific fields, the work was based on the works of scientists and specialists in public administration, sociology, political science. It is worth noting that there is a different 'depth' of research on this issue in scientific papers, as well as their 'connection' with the problem of leadership in higher education institutions.

In particular, E. Sokolova (2020) devoted her work to gender in the management of higher education institutions, focusing directly on the problem of 'gender top asymmetry', although without analysing possible solutions to the issue, models of normalising the principles of such a solution. Whereas, for example, T. Martsenyuk, I. Hrytsai, O. Batanov (2018) and others in their works investigate, albeit sometimes somewhat fragmentarily, the state of the current

legislative regulation of social relations of admission of men and women to the management of higher education institutions, to holding senior positions, to forming collegial governing bodies, although without outlining the prospects for eliminating gaps, improving the content of existing legal provisions both in general and in the context of prioritising areas of modern state-building. Instead, there are a number of collective works whose content is directly related to the analysis of promising areas of state-building and law-making processes, with the justification of prioritising gender (including balanced) representation in all spheres of public life without exception, although without focusing on leadership in higher education institutions. No less interesting are the works devoted to the resource of certain 'tools for ensuring gender balance', the practice of their use in various foreign countries, although without 'binding' them to leadership in higher education institutions.

A regulated gender-balanced model of leadership in higher education institutions is possible through the introduction of affirmative actions, including gender quotas, gender legal expertise of draft acts, gender monitoring, gender audit, gender portrait of a higher education institution (including the management of a higher education institution), their institutional support, and the formation of an educational space for the education of leaders with gender competencies. including the management of higher education institutions), their institutional support and the formation of an educational space for the education of leaders with gender competencies to meet the state's human resources needs for the post-war reconstruction period (Genderindetail.org, n.d.)

METHODS AND MATERIALS

The methodological basis of the study is formed by a combination of both general scientific and special methods of scientific knowledge. Among them is the method of dialectical analysis, which allowed to study the issue in its dynamics, focusing on the genesis of the degree of synchronisation of the processes of normalisation of the principles of gender equality in social relations in general and relations in the field of higher education (including responding to the latest challenges), the formation of 'gender asymmetry' in the management of higher education institutions and the actualisation of the problem of overcoming it. The use of special legal and logical methods allowed not only to identify the 'basic' thematic terminology, but also to form a thematic conceptual apparatus, with a correlation of scientific and regulatory analogues. The desk study of the source material allowed us to find out the degree of 'interest' of the scientific community and the legislator in the relevant issues, the effectiveness of its manifestation and the 'defectiveness' of the latter's forms in terms of finding the optimal model (doctrinal and normative) for ensuring gender-balanced leadership in higher education institutions. The comparative legal analysis allowed not only to thoroughly analyse the experience of foreign countries in fixing the principles of ensuring gender-balanced leadership in higher education, to identify positive practices, but also to substantiate the possibility and expediency of borrowing the latter in the national state-building and law-making processes, with an emphasis on the mandatory consideration of national needs and real-time challenges, eliminating the prerequisites for total, artificial copying. The method of expert assessments made it possible to identify the disadvantages and advantages of the three-block model of regulation and implementation of the principles

of gender-balanced leadership in higher education, with each block being represented at three levels - national, regional and local. Forecasting and modelling methods helped to formulate proposals on the content and form of the relevant normative model. All this made it possible to work at different levels of scientific perception, to consider the problematic issue in the context of the current state of affairs and in the future in terms of prioritising the latest challenges of time and vectors of state-building and law-making. The source base of the study is formed by a combination of current legislation regulating relations in the field of higher education (in particular, access to leadership positions, collegial governing bodies, and training of leaders with gender competencies), and the principles of gender policy implementation in the state as a whole. We also used research papers on gender issues in general, higher education, and certain aspects of gender balance in higher education management, as well as data from three major international indices that measure progress in achieving gender equality: the Global Gender Gap Report, the Gender Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Inequality Index (GII) (World Economic Forum, 2023).

The current legislation should be seen as a 'mix' of norms that set out the principles of anti-discrimination policy in higher education, access to higher education, and access to its management. These provisions are provisions-principles that play a fundamental role in the regulation of relations in the field of higher education.

Thus, in particular, among the 'basic' legal acts we can talk about: The Constitution of Ukraine (Article 24), the Laws of Ukraine 'On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men', 'On Principles of Preventing and Combating Discrimination in Ukraine', Decree of the President of Ukraine of 25 August 2015 No. 501/2015 'On Approval of the National Human Rights Strategy', Order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of 28 October 2020 No. 1544-p 'On Approval of the National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 "Women, Peace and Security" for the period up to 2025', 20 December 2022, No. 1163-p 'On Approval of the Strategy for the Implementation of Gender Equality in Education until 2030 and Approval of the Operational Action Plan for 2022-2024 for its Implementation', 12 August 2022. No. 752-p 'On Approval of the State Strategy for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men for the Period up to 2030 and Approval of the Operational Plan for its Implementation for 2022-2024' (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2022), December 2020. No. 1578-r 'On Approval of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Commitments of the Government of Ukraine undertaken within the framework of the Biarritz Partnership International Initiative for the Promotion of Gender Equality', No. 1128-r 'On Approval of the Concept of Communication in the Field of Gender Equality', CMU Resolution of 9 October 2020 No. 930 'Some Issues of Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men', etc.

It is also worth paying attention to international legal acts, including those that define '...the goals of sustainable development of the world we seek for all nations without exception', the provisions of which are focused on '...ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life'. In the context of prioritising areas for further development of the state, the Strategy for the Implementation of Gender Equality in Education until 2030, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 20 December 2022, No. 1163-r, the State Strategy

for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men until 2030 and the Operational Plan for its implementation for 2022-2024 were adopted, approved by the CMU Decree No. 752-p of 12 August 2022, the content of which ‘traces’ the focus on the ‘gender issue’, including in terms of gender leadership in higher education. In particular, the Strategy for Implementation of Gender Equality in Education until 2030 states that ‘... statistics and research data show a significant feminisation of the education sector (women’s representation is about 78.3 per cent), but the number of women and men differs at different levels of the educational hierarchy and at different levels of education.

While 98.3 per cent of teaching staff in pre-school education institutions are women, in higher education institutions, men make up almost half of the teaching staff’ (section “Target groups and areas of implementation”). At the same time, it is stated that ‘...gender stereotypes in human resources and educational management are an obstacle to both career and professional growth of female employees and lead to managerial decisions. There is a tendency for the share of women in education to decrease with career advancement. Women hold the positions of educators, teachers, lecturers, almost 40 per cent of directors of general secondary education institutions are men, 90 per cent of rectors of higher education institutions, and 83.3 per cent of ministers of education since Ukraine’s independence’ (section “Target groups and areas of implementation”). Despite this, there are still, unfortunately, no legal provisions that would directly provide guarantees for ensuring gender-balanced leadership in higher education, in the management of higher education institutions.

Aware of the importance of the gender issue for higher education and, in particular, for leadership in higher education institutions, it should be noted that the legislator continues to retain a fundamental approach to its regulation, leaving out the details of the principles of using any tools, guaranteeing their application, etc. In writing this paper, we also used data from three major international indices that measure progress in achieving gender equality, which are: The Global Gender Gap Report, the Gender Development Index, and the Gender Equality Index, GDI) and the Gender Inequality Index (GII), according to which in 2023 Ukraine actually demonstrated an overall positive trend in terms of ‘moving towards gender balance in all spheres of public life, namely ... 0.714 points (on a scale from 0.001 to 1, where 1 means full gender parity) and, accordingly, ranks 66th in the world ranking (out of 146 countries).’ However, unfortunately, ‘gender asymmetry’ still persists in leadership in higher education, in the management of higher education institutions - the positions of rectors of higher education institutions (more than 83%) are held by men, and the situation in the vice-rector’s corps is somewhat better (although still discriminatory), where 72% of positions are also held by men (EU for Gender Equality: Reform Helpdesk, 2023). This allowed us to conclude that the representation of women in the leadership of higher education institutions in Ukraine, both before and during the external armed aggression, remains insignificant, which allows us to consider the field of higher education, in terms of equal opportunities for men and women to access leadership positions and management decision-making processes, as an area that can be called ‘gender unfavourable’, which requires the expert community to focus on finding ways to overcome this state of affairs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the context of finding ways to solve the problems of human resources, ensuring equal gender representation, including at the level of leadership of higher education institutions and the systematic formation of its reserve with gender competencies, it is advisable to take activities with their conditional division into three blocks and representation at three (national, regional and local) levels. Their combination is: a) rulemaking (with the regulation of the principles of holding elected managerial positions and positions held by appointment by the head, formation of a personnel reserve for all managerial positions, formation of collegial governing bodies of higher education institutions, etc.) and introduction of relevant amendments and additions to the Law of Ukraine “On Higher Education”, adoption of relevant acts of regional and local rulemaking), b) institutional (with the introduction of permanent structural units in higher education institutions, with the

The issue of gender-balanced leadership, unfortunately, has not directly attracted the attention of legal scholars, especially with a focus on the gaps in the legal framework for the formation of management in higher education, and modeling proposals for the formation of such a framework to guarantee equal opportunities for women and men to access leadership positions, to participate in management decision-making processes, and to implement gender balance in higher education management, including at the level of higher education institutions.

Various individual aspects of the relevant problem were analyzed in their works by T. Martsenyuk, V. Horbatenko, T. Karas (2016), O. Batanov (2018), and others. However, either with an emphasis on the phenomenon of gender in general, or on certain issues of management in higher education, with fragmentary coverage of “gender asymmetry”, or only on certain tools for ensuring gender-balanced leadership, but not in the field of higher education, but, for example, in the electoral process, in local governments (for example, works by T. Karas, S. Oksamytna (2016), O. Batanov, N. Batanova, I. Hrytsai, (2018))

Paying attention, for example, to gender quotas in general and even studying their genesis in different countries, with the specifics of their normative consolidation, unfortunately, the resource of this tool is not considered at all in terms of manifestation in the management of higher education (for example, works by Shchyhelska, H., Potikha, O., Gabruseva, N., and Chop, T. (2021)) While studying the role of the institutional mechanism in ensuring the stabilization of gender balance in the management of public authorities, unfortunately, the same issue, with its manifestation in the management of higher education, with the analysis of the manifestation of its resource in the management of higher education, in higher education institutions, is not covered, which causes a gap in the scientific basis for rulemaking in the field of higher education and, in particular, leadership in higher education, causing “defects” in law enforcement, contributing to the stereotype of a “glass ceiling” for women in higher education management, in their access to leadership positions, to management decision-making processes, and, accordingly (the impact is indirect and global), to motivating them to manifest their unique potential in higher education, in the “quality” of higher education management, in the attractiveness of higher education in general for society.

In order to ensure gender-balanced leadership in higher education, it is advisable not only to regulate the fundamental principles of state policy implementation (as one of the

principles), but also to fix the principles of using the “gender symmetry toolkit” in higher education institutions, primarily gender quotas, gender legal expertise of drafts of all acts, gender statistical reporting, gender monitoring and audit, gender portrait of a higher education institution (portrait of leadership as its integral part), and others, with ensuring their integrated use.

References to gender legal expertise, gender audit, gender statistical reporting and other tools can be found in many existing legal acts. In particular, such provisions are contained in the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of November 28, 2018, No. 997 “Issues of Gender Legal Expertise”, Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of February 13, 2024, No. 155 “On Amendments to the Procedure for Conducting Gender Legal Expertise”, Order of the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine of 09.08.2021 No. 448 “On Approval of Methodological Recommendations for Conducting a Gender Audit by Enterprises, Institutions and Organizations”, Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine No. 1182 “On Approval of the Methodology and Criteria for Conducting a Gender Audit of Educational Institutions” of November 05, 2021, etc. At the same time, it is worth noting that there is no mention of “gender quotas” in relation to leadership in higher education institutions or higher education in general in the current legislation. Is it possible to introduce “gender quotas” for leadership positions in higher education institutions? Is it advisable to do so at all? Can this be considered a manifestation of discrimination? Won’t they play the role of so-called “opposition” (“resistance”) to the personal (competence) approach in access to leadership positions in higher education institutions and to management decision-making processes? (Global Compact Ukraine, 2024).

Although the current legislation of Ukraine does not contain a direct reference to “gender quotas” (with the phrase “gender quotas”), at the same time, another, alternative name for them (common in international practice (e.g., in Sweden, Finland, France, Ireland, etc.) - “positive actions” or “affirmative actions” - can be found in legislative acts. For example, the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men” defines “positive actions” as “...special temporary measures that have a legitimate objectively justified purpose aimed at eliminating legal or actual inequality in the opportunities of women and men to exercise the rights and freedoms established by the Constitution and laws of Ukraine” (Article 1 of the Law). Such actions are not considered “discrimination on the basis of sex” (Article 6 of the Law), and their application is possible for “...achieving parity of women and men in all spheres of society...eliminating the imbalance between the opportunities of women and men to exercise equal rights granted to them by the Constitution and laws of Ukraine” (Preamble of the Law). These provisions can hardly be recognized as perfect in content, since “...the Law does not regulate the content and mechanism of implementation of such positive actions, as well as responsibility for their absence, which turns the quoted principles of the Law...into declarative statements”. At the same time, these legal provisions are in fact the provisions that serve as the basis for the possible application of “gender quotas” as temporary targeted compulsory measures aimed at overcoming the existing gender imbalance in a particular area of social relations. Given that the relevant law applies to all spheres of public life in Ukraine without exception, it can be argued that its provisions on the possibility of applying “gender quotas” in higher education and management of higher

education institutions are quite realistic. A quota is “...widespread so-called affirmative action (positive discrimination) to increase the number of women in positions of power (positions). The policy of positive action, oriented against discrimination on the basis of sex, provides for special, usually temporary measures to overcome the consequences of discrimination that has occurred in the past or is still ongoing.” “...quotas are aimed primarily at overcoming ... structural factors of unequal access of women and men to management processes caused by historical preconditions that have consequences in modern life”. And this is indeed a tool that can be seen as a manifestation of “positive discrimination,” although, given its very temporary and forced nature, its implementation should be considered possible and even appropriate to “move forward” and overcome the stereotype of the “male face of higher education management.” Given that “gender quotas” are of different types, including: a) legal (mandatory), with their division into: constitutional and legislative, depending on the source of their fixation, b) voluntary, it is still advisable not only to justify their value, importance for the management of higher education institutions, with the intensification of legal education activities, the introduction of separate educational programs with appropriate thematic content, the education of leaders with gender competencies, the promotion and support of the activities of public organizations (the so-called “bottom-up movement”). The so-called “bottom-up movement”). This problematic issue can also be solved through the implementation of a set of measures of different levels, with the allocation of several blocks: regulatory (or rule-making), institutional and educational, with their content detailed at three levels: national, regional and local.

The normative block of activities should be focused on the search, development and implementation of a legal model to guarantee equal opportunities for men and women in access to leadership positions in higher education institutions, to management decision-making processes, with the actual formation of a legal basis for gender-balanced leadership in higher education institutions. This is entirely due to the introduction of amendments and additions to the current legislation of Ukraine, with the synchronization of relevant processes at all three of the above levels. The “movement” in resolving this issue can be multi-vector (as an alternative), both “bottom-up” and “top-down”, depending on who initiates these processes to prepare the relevant amendments and additions. If the “basic” option is the “bottom-up” model, then it is advisable to initiate the implementation of “pilot projects” on the basis of individual higher education institutions, with the implementation of the results of their implementation in the rulemaking activities of regional and national public authorities with relevant powers in the field of higher education. If the “basic” option is the “top-down” one, on the contrary, amendments and additions to the acts of the current legislation of Ukraine will serve as the basis for the adoption of acts of regional and local rulemaking. The first option allows to take into account the needs of higher education in the formation of gender-balanced management of higher education institutions, tested by time and challenges of society, and the demands of law enforcement (although with an emphasis on local or regional priorities). A top-down model covering the entire higher education system may contain “risks” due to the “imposition” of a single model, the effectiveness of which can only be determined over time, and in this aspect, this option and its results are “template”.

Regardless of which of the proposed options for moving forward with the rulemaking initiative is chosen, this particular block of activities should be focused on

a) to enshrine in the acts of current legislation (at all levels) the provision that all senior positions in higher education institutions should be formed with mandatory compliance with “gender quotas.” This provision should be observed both at the stage of application for participation in the competition and in the final “gender portrait of the management of higher education institutions.” Amendments should be made, in particular, to the Law of Ukraine “On Higher Education” (Articles 27, 32, 33, 34-43) to provide that the competitive procedure for any of the management positions is possible only if the candidates include representatives of both sexes. If only one person submits an application or if only one gender is represented among the candidates, the competition procedure is not continued and a new competition is announced. With regard to positions that are filled by appointment by the head of an HEI, it is necessary to enshrine the provision that the latter must adhere to a gender-balanced approach to the management of higher education institutions in general and ensure the formation of a “leadership line” (“leadership scale”) with mandatory gender balance in leadership positions (“head - first deputy”);

b) to regulate the principles of formation of all collegial heads of higher education institutions, with mandatory compliance with “gender quotas” (composition of the Academic Council, Scientific and Technical Council, Scientific and Methodological Council, Supervisory Board, Conference of the labor collective, personnel competition commission, etc, to ensure equal opportunities for men and women in representation in the relevant bodies, their participation in management decision-making, to “recognize the contribution of all to the common cause and ensure their visibility in those areas of activity where they are traditionally underrepresented” . The amendments should be enshrined in the Law of Ukraine “On Higher Education”, in particular in Articles 35-43.

c) enshrining in the same law (separate articles) provisions on the formation of a personnel reserve for each leadership position, at the rate of “two persons for each leadership position”, with representation of both sexes. This will contribute not only to motivating people to continuously develop themselves as a “competitive leader” but also to the sustainability of the formation of a “leadership corps” to solve a set of tasks, including innovative ones, in the context of the implementation of European integration and North Atlantic vectors of the country’s further development.

The study of gender statistical reporting of higher education institutions, analysis of gender portraits of the management of higher education institutions, indicates a “tendency to gender asymmetry”, with maximum expression at the level of “top management” positions of higher education institutions - rectors, directors. There is a smaller, though not significant, “gravity” at the level of vice-rectors and deputy directors, with the dominance of the “male face” of these positions. Moving “down” (“line of managerial positions”) demonstrates “approaching balance” and sometimes “imbalance” with the manifestation of “female face” (positions of deans, deputy deans, heads of departments, heads of structural units), which actualizes the need to regulate the principles of gender-balanced leadership in the management of higher education institutions in general. The formation of the relevant regulatory framework is necessary not only at the national level (provisions of the “basic”

legislative act in the field of higher education), but also should be synchronized with the results of regional and local rulemaking, taking into account the relevant regional needs and autonomy of higher education institutions. As the analysis of existing acts of higher education institutions (local acts) shows, such acts may include both improved and substantively updated Gender Equality Strategies of higher education institutions, Gender Equality Plans in higher education institutions, regulations on all collegial governing bodies of higher education institutions, regulations on the procedure for resolving personnel issues (holding managerial positions), etc.

To answer any doubts that the introduction of “gender quotas” (the best option is the “40 and 60” quota, without “binding” to what percentage should correlate with a particular gender) will result in gender discrimination, the following should be noted. Indeed, the relevant instrument is a kind of “positive discrimination”, but it is important to remember that in the relevant phrase, the emphasis should be not only on its second component (“discrimination”), but also on the first (“positive”), which causes its association with temporary, forced measures, targeted measures aimed at overcoming stereotypes, shaping consciousness, educating leaders with gender competencies, providing equal opportunities for representatives of different genders, recognizing the real contribution of women and men and increasing their “visibility” in those areas of activity in which they have been underrepresented for a long time, etc.)

The institutional block of activities is conditioned by the need to support the process of forming and implementing a model of gender-balanced leadership in higher education institutions, because it is important not only to adopt regulations but also, and most importantly, to ensure their application in an effort to maximize the effectiveness of the latter. There are three levels of implementation of this idea: national, regional and local. Institutional support will ensure consistency and sustainability of the entire process. If the “bottom-up” option is chosen as the “basic” one, it is quite acceptable to form a separate unit (department, office, etc.) within the structure of higher education institutions whose functionality is related to ensuring compliance with gender equality legislation (gender legal expertise, gender reporting, gender audit and monitoring, formation of a gender portrait of the higher education institution, advisory, methodological, etc. work), with the Commissioner for Gender Equality as its head. The separation of a structural unit will ensure compliance with the systematic, comprehensive approach of the higher education institution to compliance with the legislation on gender equality in general, including access to leadership positions and participation in management decision-making processes. Such an approach can ensure timely response to new challenges, demands and risks, while simultaneously identifying and implementing relevant measures. It is also advisable to create appropriate units within the structure of regional public administration bodies (for example, a division within the Department of Education and Science of the relevant regional state administration) and the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine to ensure coordination of activities to comply with legislation on gender equality in higher education, including leadership in higher education institutions.

For the systematic formation of a cohort of leaders with gender competencies capable of realizing themselves in leadership positions in higher education institutions, it is advisable

to implement an educational block of activities, with the introduction of educational components (e.g., “Gender Studies”, “Gender Leadership”) in educational programs for students of all levels of higher education without exception, thematic educational resources for research and teaching staff, managers of all levels in higher education institutions, persons included in the personnel reserve for managerial positions, persons with leadership ambitions and ready to realize them in higher education, etc., targeted thematic educational programs at the request of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, at the request of regional public administration bodies in the field of higher education. All this implies intensification of rulemaking both at the level of development, adoption (amendment) of the Higher Education Standards, other acts of rulemaking of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, and acts of regional and local rulemaking. To ensure the stability of the relevant activities and the fullest possible implementation of their results, it is advisable to create training centers on the basis of higher education institutions (in the regions), with the regulation of the principles of their formation, functioning, resource provision, etc. Implementation of such activities will help to create a reserve of current and potential leaders in higher education institutions, improve their competence, which will facilitate timely response to the staffing needs of the leadership in higher education institutions of the region and the state, with a constant search for forms and methods of work with human resources that are relevant to the requirements of the time, timely response to the requests of the country, region, higher education institution and ensuring sufficient opportunities for their gender-balanced model, with guaranteed equal opportunities. Each of the identified blocks of activities cannot be considered separately, since only in their unity are there sufficient opportunities to regulate the principles and guarantee the formation of gender-balanced leadership at the level of higher education institutions, timely resource response to the requirements of the time, eliminate risks in human resources and ensure the implementation of one of the strategic priorities of the state development, fulfillment of Ukraine’s international obligations - the practical implementation of the EU Action Plan III for Gender Equality (GAP III)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The search for ways to solve the problems of staffing, with guaranteed equal gender representation (in terms of gender distribution), including at the level of leadership of higher education institutions and the systematic formation of its reserve with gender competencies, seems to be expedient to use a whole cycle of activities, with their conditional division into three interrelated blocks and their representation at all three (national, regional and local) levels. The combination of the three blocks, namely: a) rulemaking (with the regulation of the principles of access to elected leadership positions and positions held by appointment by the head, the formation of a personnel reserve for all leadership positions, using the practice of “two persons in the reserve for each position, with representation of both sexes in the reserve), the algorithm for the formation of collegial governing bodies of higher education institutions (academic council, supervisory board, scientific and technical council, scientific and methodological council, competition commission, etc.

The formulated provisions may well be used in rulemaking activities both at the local level

- to regulate the principles of gender-balanced leadership in higher education institutions, to regulate procedural issues of admission of persons to leadership positions, to form collegial bodies of higher education institutions (supervisory boards, academic councils, scientific and technical councils, scientific and methodological councils, competition commissions, etc. These provisions may be of interest to higher education institutions in terms of determining thematic educational components for the formation of educational programs for training (retraining) of applicants, employees of higher education institutions who already hold senior positions or are in the personnel reserve, as well as for persons who wish to realize themselves in gender management in higher education. Also, the relevant provisions may be of interest to the legislator and other rulemakers (including at the state, regional and interregional levels) to regulate the principles of gender-balanced leadership in higher education, its monitoring, ensuring sustainability, as well as to educate leaders with gender competencies (in particular, to amend the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education"). The provisions will also be of interest to anyone interested in gender issues, given the specificity of its resource and the peculiarities of its manifestation in various spheres of public life.

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