

СЕКЦІЯ «МУЛЬТИДИСЦИПЛІНАРНІ ПІДХОДИ»

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CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTING GENDER EQUALITY IN UKRAINE'S ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

The necessity of a reform of the academic environment in Ukraine has been recognized by scholars and practitioners. The system of research activity in our state has numerous deficiencies and gaps and is characterized by uneven development. Some of these problems are associated with the existence of gender inequality at the highest levels of the academic environment.

The Strategy for the Implementation of Gender Equality in Education until 2030 and the approval of the operational action plan for 2022–2024 for its implementation, adopted by the Order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 1163-r of 20 December 2022, emphasizes that the gender imbalance, inequality, segregation, and stereotyping present in society are reflected in the internal organizational practices of educational institutions; the stratification of pedagogical activity, and the asymmetry of teaching, pedagogical, and academic staff [1]. This necessitates conducting research devoted to gender parity in the fields of education and science.

Ukraine's gender legislation has been actively evolving for decades. Gender rights and freedoms are sufficiently detailed. However, the existence of rights and freedoms defined at the legislative level does not automatically ensure their implementation in social relations. In Ukraine, issues of gender imbalance are intertwined with the broader problems of uneven development of science and education.

The shortcomings and contradictions existing within the academic environment have for several years been the subject of attention at the highest state level. Recently, a number of attempts have been made to optimize the situation, which has become particularly acute following the onset of Russia's full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine.

Thus, on 28 January 2026, a new version of the Procedure for the Use of Funds Allocated in the State Budget to Support Priority Areas of Scientific Research and Scientific and Technical (Experimental) Developments, and the Scientific and Scientific-Technical Activities of Higher Education Institutions and Research Institutions, was approved. According to this version, such funding is provided taking into account the results of the state attestation of research institutions and higher education institutions with regard to their scientific (scientific and technical) activities. One of the indicators influencing the attestation results is the gender balance indicator. However, it should be noted that it is not related to determining the gender distribution in leadership positions within research institutions and higher education institutions. Indicator P9 assessment of gender balance (number of women among researchers and academic staff, doctoral candidates, and postdoctoral researchers at their primary place of employment) is used as a component of the List of Indicators for Assessing the Performance of Scientific (Scientific and Technical) Activities of a Research Institution/Higher Education Institution by Scientific Field and the Development Potential of that Field [2].

However, it is well known that the number of women researchers at the lower and middle levels of the academic hierarchy generally prevails. As of the beginning of 2023, according to the Report on the Quality of Higher Education in Ukraine and Its Compliance with the Objectives of Sustainable Innovative Societal Development, prepared within the framework of the National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance, women predominate among academic staff (60%). It is noteworthy that as the professional level increases, the proportion of women

decreases: among Candidates of Science and Doctors of Philosophy as of early 2023, it was 53%, while among Doctors of Science it was 20%. The authors of the Report noted an even more pronounced imbalance among academic staff without a scientific degree, where women dominate (71.3%) [3].

As the cited data demonstrate, the instruments currently used to determine the state of gender equality – recognizing its condition at the lowest levels of the academic system – do not make it possible to obtain objective information about existing gender disparities. Without disputing the methodological appropriateness of assessing gender balance, we believe that the application of a specific gender equality indicator (the number of women among researchers and academic staff per individual) [2] should be carried out separately at different levels of the academic hierarchy, which would make it possible to obtain an objective picture of gender disparities in terms of the presence or absence of barriers to women's advancement to higher levels of the academic hierarchy. At the same time, the UNESCO Gender Parity Index (GPI), calculated as the ratio of the number of females to the number of males, is no less informative [4; 5]. We support the view that this index may be applied to any sphere of social relations. The global GPI as of 2020 was 0.98, although in certain states its values differed from this figure [6].

We do not deny the expediency of applying other indices that constitute part of gender methodology. However, it should be noted that many of them include numerous economic, demographic, sociological, and other indicators, which require lengthy and complex research that does not always correspond to the dynamic changes occurring in society (an example of such rapid changes is Ukraine under conditions of Russian full-scale armed aggression). By contrast, UNESCO's Gender Parity Index (GPI) makes it possible to promptly obtain and use information on gender parity, thereby improving the quality of managerial decision-making within the system of science and education.

Determining the gender parity of governing bodies of all subjects within the academic environment is a lengthy and painstaking process; nevertheless, its

implementation is necessary in order to ascertain the real state of gender equality in the field under study. Within the scope of this work, we limit ourselves to determining the gender parity of selected subjects of the academic environment.

Of particular interest is the analysis of gender parity within the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and the national sectoral academies of sciences, which define the strategic vectors of fundamental research and ensure the consolidation of the intellectual potential of the entire academic environment for the purpose of sustainable innovative development of our state under contemporary global challenges. However, this important mission is carried out under conditions of a noticeable gender imbalance.

As we have established, as of February 2026, the Presidium of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, elected in October 2025, consisted of 57 members, including 2 women [7] (GPI – 0.03). This distribution generally reflects the number of women among the full members (academicians) of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine: 168 men and 7 women (GPI – 0.04).

As of February 2026, the Presidium of the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine consists of 24 persons, including 18 men and 6 women [8] (GPI – 0.33). It is noteworthy that at the lower levels of the academic hierarchy, educational sciences traditionally demonstrate greater involvement of women.

An interesting situation is observed in the fields of pharmaceutical and medical sciences, where the proportion of women researchers demonstrates high figures: 71% in pharmaceutical sciences and 65.8% in medical sciences [9]. The Presidium of the National Academy of Medical Sciences of Ukraine consists of 16 persons, including 15 men and 1 woman [10] (GPI – 0.06). It is also noteworthy that 13 out of 16 higher and postgraduate medical and pharmaceutical education institutions subordinate to the Ministry of Health of Ukraine are headed by men (GPI – 0.18).

However, not all components of the academic environment demonstrate such a significant gender imbalance. For example, of the 761 persons included by the National Agency for Higher Education Quality Assurance in the Register of Experts for 2026 [11], 331 are men and 430 are women (GPI – 1.3). The total number of researchers involved in research and development activities in full-time equivalent terms by type of economic activity for 2024 demonstrates a smaller but still significant share of women among researchers (16,430 men and 12,281 women, GPI – 0.75). At the same time, it should be noted that in the field of social sciences and humanities in 2024, the share of women researchers significantly prevailed (1,017 men and 1,549 women, GPI – 1.52) [12].

Our analysis demonstrates that applying the Gender Parity Index (GPI) to all subjects of the academic environment, including the highest levels of the academic hierarchy, makes it possible to identify the most significant variations in the number of women and men at different levels of governance in education and science and to obtain objective information about gender parity. Such information may serve as a basis for seeking managerial solutions aimed at eliminating barriers to women's advancement to higher levels of the academic hierarchy in the course of their professional and personal realization.

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