

STATISTICAL ASSESSMENT OF GENDER ISSUES IN SOCIAL AND LABOR SPHERE

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Abstract

The article presents the evaluation and statistical analysis of the gender-sensitive development of the social and labor sphere of the Republic of Belarus.

Keywords: gender, labor market, gender segregation, disaggregated statistics, equality

1 Introduction

Belarus commitment to and targeting at sustainable social and economic development dictates the buildup of human potential impossible without gender equality in society and economy.

Today, the importance of gender statistics reflecting the situation of men and women has become ever more evident. Its improvement is of great importance, as in the same socio-economic environment men and women have different needs and opportunities and face different problems. The possibility and reliability of solving these problems, development of an efficient national socio-economic policy (both at the national and regional levels), public information, key managerial decision making, elimination of existing gender stereotypes all depend on the scope and adequacy of statistical data.

2 The main indicators of gender statistics in the Republic of Belarus

Official gender disaggregated statistics in the Republic of Belarus is developed on national and subnational levels in the following areas: analysis of natural population movement and migration; education; labor and employment; health; crime study; public administration; family relations; child protection.

Gender disaggregated data are an efficient and indispensable tool for research into the causes and assessment of gender inequality in the country, reflection of existing gender asymmetry, analysis of possible effects of gender problems, development and introduction of necessary changes to the existing social and economic policy, etc.

Lack of statistical information on obstacles and difficulties faced by men and women in Belarus is one of the reasons for inadequate study of many gender issues. First and foremost, this is true for gender differentiation in wages, access to key resources, division of household work and professional segregation. This indicates the need to extend the national system of gender statistics indicators.

In the Republic of Belarus, gender disaggregated data are generally collected and processed by statistical authorities (based on results of population censuses, sample surveys, current records, special surveys, etc.) and state administration bodies authorized to maintain statistics on issues within their competence or competence of their subordinate organizations (for example, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Belarus).

3 Statistical evaluation of the gender imbalance of social development of the Republic of Belarus

More or less, gender segregation is present in the labor market of any country. Accurate assessment of this phenomenon requires a clear picture of its dynamics and processes in the labor market and in society generally that contribute to increasing or decreasing gender asymmetry in distribution of workers by sectors and occupations.

In this sphere gender-specific indicators include economically active population, female/male proportions by personnel categories, occupational groups, economic sectors, education level, age groups, and gross average monthly wage for separate industries.

Also, gender disaggregated data on registered unemployment (by unemployment time, education level, age, causes of dismissal, latest employment) are systematically reflected, as well as age- and sector-specific statistics on proportion of employed in hazardous industries and victims of industrial injuries. However, age-specific differentiation in wages depending on education level is not monitored.

Of total employed population at the beginning of 2015, women accounted for 49.6% (at the beginning of 1999 — 52.0%). As a result of reforms in the national economy, the number of public sector workers decreased from 57% in 1999 to 39% in 2015.

In recent years, proportion of women in traditionally “female” sectors has been increasing: in education — from 78.0% at the beginning of 1999 to 78.8% at the beginning of 2015, in culture and arts — from 70.7% to 70.9%. Proportion of women continues to be high in health care, physical culture and social welfare organizations (83.0% at the beginning of 1999 and 82.4% at the beginning of 2015), trade and public catering (75.9% and 66.5%).

At the same time, despite an insignificant reduction of proportion males continue to predominate in the forest and transport sector (more than 70%). In the largest sector — production — proportion of males increased from 50.8% at the beginning of 1999 to 58.6% at the beginning of 2015. A similar increase is observed in construction (from 76.6% to 84.0%).

In terms of personnel categories, as before men predominate in the total number of blue-collar workers (more than 56%), and women - among white-collar workers (about 70%). In recent years, the number of women in executive positions has increased from 44.2% of the total number of white-collar workers at the beginning of 1999 to 47% at the beginning of 2009.

Education level of women is generally higher than that of men, the situation being the same over a long period of time. About 60% of working women have tertiary and

secondary special education (about 40% of working men) (in 1999, 46.7% and 31.3%, respectively).

It's interesting to know, that in tertiary education there is a substantial gender asymmetry. In accordance with the International Standard Classification of Education, tertiary education includes specialized secondary education.

Women are more inclined to obtain complete general education and more often wish to obtain higher professional qualifications. Over the past ten years, tertiary education in the Republic of Belarus has become more feminized: at the beginning of 2015 females accounted more than 57% of total student population as against 56.24% in 1999.

High education level is a competitive advantage in the labor market; however, women face objective difficulties due to their greater involvement in child care.

In the Republic of Belarus, the right to equal remuneration for equal work for women and men is envisaged in the current Constitution of the Republic of Belarus (Article 42) and Labor Code. However, wages of females are on average less than wages of males. Gender-based difference in wages is usually explained by unequal distribution of males and females by occupations and sectors (horizontal segregation), inequality in wages within occupations and types of activity (vertical segregation), and the fact that women usually hold posts with less remuneration. Wage disbalance to the disfavor of women is in fact typical for all sectors. Thus, in December 2015, the ratio of female to male average accrued wages was more than 70%.

The gender wage gap is largely due to gender specifics of employment. More women than men are traditionally employed in economic sectors such as trade and public catering, education, health care, physical culture and social welfare, culture and arts, where wages are 7-30% less than average in the Republic, while in sectors such as industry, construction, transport where wages are quite high there are much more men than women.

It should also be mentioned that wages in the private sector are usually considerably higher than in the public sector (in December 2009 — by 12.1%), while a considerable number of women are employed in education and child care where state-run organizations prevail.

4 Conclusion

Analysis of gender issues in social and labor sphere makes it possible to identify measures that would help mitigate trends outlined above and identify key areas of socio-economic policy that would reduce gender gaps in some indicators under review.