

identify and inspect high-risk freight containers with minimum disruption to legitimate trade and business. The Control Units have regular access to experts and specialist mentor services and are encouraged to forge partnerships and links with the trade and business community. A comprehensive basis for Joint Port Control Units is established for the exchange of information and intelligence and use of risk assessment and targeting techniques to identify high-risk consignments for law enforcement scrutiny, without hindering free flow of legitimate trade.

The programme further aims to promote the formation of alliances between customs, trade and enforcement communities as a means of collectively preventing the abuse of legitimate commercial trade for the purposes of organized crime.

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FEATURES AND CHALLENGES OF APPLYING A GENDER APPROACH IN UKRAINE'S SECURITY SECTOR

The relevance of researching the application of a gender approach in Ukraine's security sector is due to the large-scale transformation of defence and law enforcement institutions in the context of military aggression, the transition to NATO standards, and the need to ensure equal access to service, career advancement, and decision-making for women and men. Gender integration has a practical dimension in terms of improving the effectiveness of operational response, optimising the use of human resources,

preventing discrimination and creating a safe environment within units, and is also linked to Ukraine's implementation of its international obligations under UN Security Council resolutions.

Due to traditional gender norms and stereotypes, the security sector is predominantly viewed as a male sector. At the same time, men risk injury or death in the line of duty, so most believe that women, as mothers, need to be protected from such danger. Norms regarding parental roles and responsibilities are reinforced by the fact that men rarely take leave to care for children or stay home with sick children.

However, attention should also be focused on achievements in this area in Ukraine's security sector. In particular, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine has been tasked with a set of objectives and functions for the implementation of a gender component in the work of management, personnel, structural units, missions and operations, higher education institutions with specific training conditions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, etc. [1, p. 8].

The representation of women in areas that were previously considered 'purely male' reflects real changes that have taken place at both the legislative and practical levels and are indicators of Ukraine's development as a state governed by the rule of law. The effective implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 'Women, Peace and Security', the provisions of the Constitution of Ukraine and legislation, the national plan 'Women, Peace and Security', the Law of Ukraine 'On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men' and other legislative acts guarantee citizens equal rights for men and women in all spheres of activity.

The results of this implementation can be seen in the increase in the number of women in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, who, on an equal footing with men, defend our state from enemy invasion. Women have gained access to military and police education, etc.

The implementation of the principle of gender equality contributes to the formation of a modern worldview of equal rights and opportunities for men and women, based on the humanistic principles of justice, freedom, equality and humanity.

During any acute social, political and economic crises, the development and implementation of gender equality policies serves as one of the effective mechanisms for consolidating society to solve various problems and overcome discrimination. Eliminating

manifestations of gender discrimination and preventing its recurrence in the future contributes to the unconditional recognition, realisation and guarantee of human rights and freedoms by the state. The implementation of this principle into legal reality as one of the most important features of a state governed by the rule of law leads to the recognition of every person, regardless of gender, as a higher social value [2, p. 5].

The introduction of gender equality in Ukraine's security sector means combining the experience, knowledge and interests of women and men in its activities. The inclusion of gender in the tasks and priorities of reforming Ukraine's security sector makes it possible to respond more effectively to the various security needs of society, to the changing nature and demands of the security sector, and to optimise operational efficiency and communication with the public [1, p. 7].

The implementation of international gender equality standards in national legislation and practice is a systemic process that requires a comprehensive approach and political will. The practical significance of integrating women into the armed forces is linked to the need to make effective use of human potential, especially in the context of demographic challenges and limited human resources.

The presence of women has its own characteristics, which are closely related to the individual traits and abilities of each particular woman. These characteristics not only enrich the security sector with new approaches to performing tasks, but also contribute to strengthening the morale and resilience of teams.

In stressful situations, women adapt quickly, keep a cool head and make informed decisions. Women are also distinguished by their high level of responsibility and attention to detail [3, p. 102].

The institutional framework for gender equality in the security and defence sector in Ukraine consists of: the President of Ukraine, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine, the Government of Ukraine, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, the Security Service of Ukraine, the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine, the Human Rights Commissioner of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy, local public authorities and others. Among the most effective tools and procedures for ensuring gender equality and implementing international legal standards in the

security and defence sector are, in particular, gender-legal expertise of normative legal acts, anti-discrimination expertise, the institution of gender advisers, etc.

The existing tools and procedures are considered to be somewhat imperfect and ineffective, as gender-legal expertise is conducted formally, and changes and amendments to legislation are rarely made based on its results, and there is no accountability. In contrast to gender-legal expertise, anti-discrimination expertise appears to be more effective, since if a draft regulatory act contains discriminatory provisions, it is returned for revision together with the conclusion [4, p. 201].

The implementation of gender equality principles in the security sector contributes to the expansion of the range of competencies and skills of personnel, the improvement of organisational culture and the socio-psychological climate of teams. Studies of the impact of gender on the effectiveness of units show that the involvement of women in tasks in areas of armed conflict increases the effectiveness of missions, especially in interaction with the local population, gathering intelligence and conducting stabilisation operations [3, p. 103].

The active reform of Ukraine's security sector has contributed to the implementation of the principle of gender equality in the security forces. The issue of gender correlation in law enforcement should be aimed not only at developing and adopting new guarantees to ensure gender equality in the security sector, but also at solving existing problems of equality between men and women by eliminating gender imbalances in the service, which will optimise service activities [1, p. 12].

Thus, the application of a gender approach in Ukraine's security sector is not a formal requirement, but a real tool for strengthening institutional capacity and increasing the resilience and effectiveness of defence and law enforcement structures. Taking into account different experiences, removing barriers to women's participation in decision-making, building a non-discriminatory personnel environment and integrating the standards of UN Security Council Resolutions create conditions for more professional management, proper accountability and respect for human rights, even in complex security circumstances.

This approach promotes the optimal use of human potential, strengthens public confidence in the security sector, and shapes a

modern model of service that meets the requirements of wartime and Ukraine's international obligations.

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DIGITAL INFORMATION AS A NEW TOOL OF EVIDENCE IN CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS

Digital information is increasingly used in criminal investigations. This is due to scientific and technological progress and new ways of committing offenses. The widespread use of computers, software, smartphones and the Internet by criminals has raised a number