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### **FEATURES OF GENDER EQUALITY AMONG POLICE OFFICERS**

Gender equality in law enforcement agencies is an urgent issue that requires comprehensive research. Police officers play an important role in society and ensuring equal opportunities for women and men in this profession is a key aspect of building a just and democratic society.

The process of establishing gender equality as an integral part of state policy revealed an urgent need for a comprehensive analysis of the situation of women in law enforcement agencies. This is due to the need to develop effective measures to prevent the violation of their rights. Particular attention is paid to the identification of universal problems faced by female police officers in different countries. Studies initiated in the USA and Western European countries as early as the 1980s indicate that the main focus was initially on increasing the number of women in the police force and their adaptation to a specific male environment. Subsequently, the studies became more detailed and covered the issue of selecting women for various positions and overcoming barriers in their career growth [1].

In male-dominated police organisations, women often face difficulties in finding support networks and mentors to help them advance in their careers. Issues such as equal pay, reproductive rights, sexual violence, child care issues and the underrepresentation of women in STEM fields are examples of gender policy areas that reflect societal barriers that affect women's opportunities in various professions, including law enforcement. The lack of atmosphere can slow the advancement of women in law enforcement, they lack the mentoring and guidance that is critical to

navigating their roles. Female officers may face obstacles in advancing their careers if they do not have access to mentoring. Discrimination can result in them losing out on information, networking opportunities and career development resources that their male counterparts take for granted. Additionally, the lack of role models and mentors in law enforcement can contribute to feelings of isolation among female officers [2].

Overall, the culture of police organizations continues to silence, demean and marginalize women and "women" and creates gendered realities such as difficulties in recruiting, promoting and retaining women; difficulties in establishing systems and procedures to safely and fairly address sexual discrimination and harassment, and gender segregation and expectations of policing, where men tend to be associated with more prestigious policing, and are expected to be able to work unencumbered by parental/family responsibilities, while women are associated with less prestigious caring and "soft" roles and are expected to be burdened with parental/family responsibilities. Not only were these gendered expectations a major obstacle to women's advancement to leadership positions, but when they were included, they were often positioned as moral guardians, with the hope that their presence would mitigate some of the problematic aspects of masculinization [3].

Achieving gender equality in law enforcement agencies of Ukraine is a difficult but achievable task. It is important to understand that this is a process that requires long-term and systematic efforts on the part of the state, law enforcement agencies and civil society.

Our country adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), joined the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (PDPA) at the 4th World Conference on Women (1995) and ratified key human rights treaties, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1980), and its Optional Protocol. The Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, signed in 2014, obliges to guarantee equal opportunities for women and men in the fields of employment, education, training, economy, society and decision-making. Gender equality is enshrined in the Constitution of Ukraine [8]. The legislative framework of Ukraine regarding gender equality also includes the Strategy and Action Plan in the field of human rights, adopted in 2015, the purpose of which is to guarantee equal rights and opportunities for women and men in all spheres of life. The Government's adoption of the National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2016 and 2018 – updated version) is an important step towards the implementation of the "Women, Peace, Security" agenda in Ukraine [6].

Finally, in 2017, Ukraine amended the legislation on the prevention of domestic violence, criminalizing this crime, which is in line with the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and

combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), which has not yet been ratified [5].

It is important to understand that gender equality is not only a question of justice, but also a question of the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies. Research shows that police units with more women are more effective in investigating violent crimes and have better relations with the public.

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## **FOREIGN EXPERIENCE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**

This abstract examines foreign experience of law enforcement agencies. It focuses on practices from the United States, Germany, Japan, and Canada. The aim is to identify strategies that can improve law enforcement in Ukraine. These improvements are necessary as Ukraine works on reforms to increase public trust and operational efficiency.

In the United States, community policing is an important strategy. This approach builds strong ties between police and the communities they serve. Officers cooperate with residents to identify and solve local problems. This proactive engagement enhances public safety and trust in