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Report on implementation of

the Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination Policy of UHHRU

in 2016

In autumn 2015 the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union (UHHRU) has hired Gender Advisor[[1]](#footnote-1), who in cooperation with UHHRU’s leadership, developed the Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination Policy, implementation of which has started in 2016.

UHHRU undertakes obligation not only to follow the Policy and to promote it in the workplace and in the implementation of projects but also to hold internal information and education campaigns aimed at raising awareness about the Policy among members of the organization. Thus, as a result of the survey of female and male employees conducted in December 2015, it was decided to carry out three gender mainstreaming training sessions concerning: gender issues in general and in the labor market in particular; gender issues in the media, non-discriminatory language, sexist jokes; gender analysis methodology, and best practices of the policy of equal opportunities.

In spring 2016, these trainings were held. In July 2016, using online method, an anonymous survey of UHHRU employees about their attitude to the training sessions was conducted, as well as further proposals to the Gender Advisor’s work were given.

Based on results of this survey, we can note that the UHHRU leadership should pay more (additional) attention to the Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination Policy in order to prove their positive attitude to the Policy and willingness to implement its principles.

It was found that almost two-thirds of those UHHRU employees surveyed in July 2016 touched upon the gender equality theme in their work. First of all, this is cooperation with organizations dealing with gender equality, work on projects related to gender issues, and advising people on equal rights and opportunities. Therefore, professional knowledge in this field should be deepened, because interest to equal rights and opportunities in the survey was articulated.

Also, some female and male employees of UHHRU said that they did not attend any of the three proposed gender training sessions, primarily due to lack of time and workload. Thus, it would be appropriate to include gender aspects into other educational and training programs for staff to further inform them about the UHHRU’s Gender Policy.

Besides, in autumn 2016 UHHRU launched [a specialized project “Women human rights defenders who change Ukraine”](http://helsinki.org.ua/activities/spetsproekty/pravozahysnytsi-yaki-zminyuyut-ukrajinu/) (*link is in Ukrainian*), being a series of interviews with female human rights activists working in different spheres of social life. These interviews are placed at UHHRU’s website twice a month.

**Quantitative and Qualitative Indicators of Compliance with**

**Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination Policy**

**I. At the level of UHHRU’s Secretariat (Kyiv)**

1. **UHHRU’s Employees (female and male)**

*Table 1.1.* Quantitative indicators based on gender

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Total* | *Men* | | *Women* | |
| *Number* | *%* | *Number* | *%* |
| 70 persons  as of December 31, 2016 | 33 | 47 | 37 | 53 |

*Table 1.2.* Quantitative indicators based on age

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Total* | *Under 25 years old* | | *26-35 years old* | | *36-50 years old* | | *Over 51 years old* | |
| *Number* | *%* | *Number* | *%* | *Number* | *%* | *Number* | *%* |
| 70 persons  as of December 31, 2016 | 8 | 11 | 25 | 36 | 34 | 49 | 3 | 4 |

**2. UHHRU’s Awareness-Raising Activities on**

**Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination Issues**

*Table 2.1.* Information about in-house activities on gender equality and non-discrimination issues

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Title, date and place of an action* | *Purpose / Task* | *Audience: number of attendees (men / women)* |
| A series of training sessions on gender and non-discriminatory issues for female and male employees of UHHRU (February-April 2016) | *Purpose*: to convey the features of gender issues and relevant organizational policies to the staff.  The following topics have been covered:   * What should be known about gender? Three “secrets” for understanding of gender theory. * Gender inequality in the labor market. * Gender and non-discrimination issues in the media. The importance of sensitive and professional presentation of information. * Methodology of gender and anti-discrimination analysis of the state policy. * Best practices to implement the ideas of diversity and equality in organizational policies. * Presentation and discussion of the Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination Policy of UHHRU.   Before and after the training sessions, a questionnaire survey of UHHRU employees on their attitudes to gender training was conducted, as well as further proposals to the Gender Advisor’s work were given.  According to the respondents, gender training sessions helped clarifying various provisions of the recently adopted Gender Policy of the organization. | 6 training sessions were conducted in total (3 themes, each of it for 2 separate groups).  On average, 10 women and 5 men attended each of these events.  After the training sessions, some respondents indicated problematic aspects under UHHRU’s developed Gender Policy. In particular, the imbalance in leadership positions, reluctance of management to implement the Policy and so on. The rest of the respondents said that there were no problems with the implementation of gender equality at UHHRU.  Hence, opinions were ambiguous and sometimes contradictory that could be explained by different professional experience of employees, as well as obviously different levels of sensitivity to the subject.  However, some UHHRU employees said they have not attended any of the three proposed gender training sessions, primarily due to lack of time and workload. |

Also, in 2016 UHHRU participated in **“**[**the** **Ukrainian Corporate Equality Index 2016**](https://cei.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/index-2016-A4-eng-web.pdf)”, which is being a national survey of corporate policies, rules and companies’ practices regarding antidiscrimination in the workplace and support for equality and diversity in business (namely, there was analysed non-discrimination on grounds of gender, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity by employers working in Ukraine). It is worth mentioning that **UHHRU** [**took the 13th place**](https://humanrights.org.ua/material/indeks_korporativnoji_rivnosti_2016_khto_vijavivsja_chempionom) **in the rating** among over 150 involved commercial, governmental and civic organizations as well as recognised in the “best place to work” nomination.

*Table 2.2.* Information about public events on gender equality and non-discrimination issues

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Title, date and place of an action* | *Purpose / Task* | *Audience: number of attendees (men / women)* |
| Public event “Women human rights defenders: Portraits of Strength. Public conversation about women who change the history of human rights movement”  (June 30, 2016 the America House Kyiv) | Main goal was to present human rights movement existing in Ukraine and in the countries where the Human Rights House Network is presented, and in addition to discuss the challenges, which women human rights defenders face with in their professional activities. Along with that the objective of the event was to discuss general human rights challenges that arise in the post-Soviet region.  The event consisted of several parts.  The first part was dedicated to the public lecture of the famous Armenian human rights activist Lara Aharonian, during which she spoke about protection of women’s rights in the Caucasus, the smear campaigns and incitement to hatred against the activists as a manifestation of the reaction of the conservative society for social activity of women.  Then there was a panel discussion with participation of prominent women human rights defenders from Ukraine, Armenia and Norway. Also, there was presented a photo exhibition “Women Human Rights Defenders: Portraits of Strength”. | 45 persons:  39 women, 6 men |
| XII Ukraine-wide Human Rights and Active Citizenship School (August 8-15, 2016, Educational Human Rights House-Chernihiv) | During nine study days, participants were able to increase their knowledge on human rights philosophy and evolution, and mechanisms for their protection, learned to notice human rights and their violation in everyday life, increased understanding of tolerance and non-discrimination and mastered planning of effective activities in the field of human rights.  Besides, this year school enabled to try methods of a 24-hour marathon for development of **a human rights public action on combatting domestic violence,** which was held in Chernihiv on August 14. | 21 persons:  16 women, 5 men |
| Local training event on human rights issues “Introductory training on human rights for civic activists of Vinnitsa oblast” (December 10-12, 2016, Khmilnyk of Vinnitsa oblast) | The aim was to increase civic activity in the field of ​​human rights and public interests and create conditions for the formation of local network of human rights initiatives, working in small towns of Vinnitsa oblast. | 26 persons:  16 women,  10 men |
| Local training event on human rights issues “Human rights and gender equality” (December 14-15, 2016, Uzhgorod) | To raise awareness about the concept of human rights and certain standards of their protection. The main topic covered issues of non-discrimination and gender equality as well as gender-based violence and its consequences. There were studied international principles and national legislation on prevention of domestic violence. | 24 persons:  18 women,  6 men |
| Local training event on human rights issues “Human rights for everybody” (December 15-17, 2016, Kremenchuk of Poltava oblast) | The aim was to contribute to conflict resolution in Kremenchuk through a series of integrated local educational activities based on the principle of “Human rights are always on the agenda, human rights are everybody’s business.” | 53 persons:  33 women,  20 men |

**3. Securing Gender Parity in Decision-Making Bodies**

*Table 3.1.* Quantitative indicators based on gender in the UHHRU’s decision-making bodies

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Total* | *Management Board* | | *Auditing Committee* | | *Supervisory Board* | |
| *Women* | *Men* | *Women* | *Men* | *Women* | *Men* |
| As of December 31, 2016 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 5 |
| 33% | 67% | 67% | 33% | 0% | 100% |
| Adherence to the positive actions | No  (at least 40% representatives of the same sex) | | Yes  (at least 30% representatives of the same sex) | | No  (at least 30% representatives of the same sex) | |

**4. Participation in Public Events and International Trips**

*Table 4.1.* Quantitative indicators based on gender as to participation of the UHHRU in international trips

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Title, place and date of an event* | *Description of event* | *Total number of participants* | |
| *Women* | *Men* |
| Conference on the gender aspects of access of women and men to justice  (June 9, 2016, Kyiv)[[2]](#footnote-2) | There was presented an analysis of court decisions on protection against discrimination on the basis of sex, including statements of international and Ukrainian law on protection against sex-based discrimination, special regulations of international law ratified by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, case-law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) and provisions of the Ukrainian legislation. | Female lawyers of UHHRU’s Strategic Litigations Center | |
| Conference devoted to issues of sexual violence amid the armed conflict (Ukrainian context and experience of Bosnia and Georgia).  (May 23, 2016, Kyiv)[[3]](#footnote-3) | The event indicates that the Ukrainian public sector and civil society are getting more understanding that victims of sexual violence need extra help. | Female and male lawyers of UHHRU’s Strategic Litigations Center | |
| Regional training of the European Human Rights Advocacy Center (EHRAC) entitled “Combating violence against women through legal proceedings”  (June 21-23, 2016, Warsaw, the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights) | The program was focused on studying the strategic cases of domestic and sexual violence against women, case-law analysis of the ECtHR and the European Court of Human Rights and the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. The participants developed potential strategies for judicial protection of women’s rights at both the national and international levels, and discussed ways to overcome the problems of non-compliance of national legislation with international standards for the protection of women’s rights. | N/A | N/A |
| Roundtable on tolerance and minority rights (November 3, 2016, Kyiv) | N/A | 1 | 1 |

**5. UHHRU’s Analytical Products on Gender Issues**

*Table 5.1.* List of the UHHRU’s analytical products on gender issues

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Year* | *Title* | *Description* |
| 2016 | Specialized information project “Women human rights defenders who change Ukraine” that aims at strengthening the visibility of women in the human rights sphere of Ukraine.  *Available at the link:*  <http://helsinki.org.ua/activities/spetsproekty/pravozahysnytsi-yaki-zminyuyut-ukrajinu/>. | A series of interviews devoted to the female human rights activists working at the UHHRU/ cooperating with us. It also includes questions on the situation with gender-based violence and gender issues in the human rights movement.  Thus, 4 interviews with female human rights defenders – Sasha Delemenchuk, Olena Podolian, Yevhenia Bardiak, and Nina Khoma – were published during the year. |
| 2016 | Material on a gender-based violence  *Available at the link:*  <http://helsinki.org.ua/advices/7565/> | To mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (November 25) there was updated UHHRU’s website section devoted to the gender-based violence and giving advice on what to do if you face a violent behavior |

**6. Complaints on violation of the Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination Policy**

*Table 6.1.* Review of complaints on violation of the Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination Policy

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year | Number of filed complaints | Complaint summary | Decisions taken in relation to a complaint |
| 2016 | No complaints received |  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**II. At the level of UHHRU member-organisations (24 regions)**

**1. Gender aspect in the work of UHHRU’s public reception offices**

Totally, 37,270 appeals were received by the public receptions of UHHRU in 2016, including 18,829 appeals from men and 18 441 from women. 659 appeals touched upon violation of the right to family life and domestic violence, 204 appeals – issues of discrimination (including, gender-based).

In addition to providing legal assistance, public reception offices (PROs) also conducted awareness-raising activities. Below are given several examples of PROs gender-related/oriented activities.

**PRO in Sumy**

Lawyers of the reception office advised citizens on the matters that can be classified as a gender-based violence, in the following cases:

* According to a client, a man behaved in a cruel way with his wife and children in the family of their neighbors. The woman was in a difficult situation, needed legal assistance to address the issue concerning permission for the child to go abroad without consent of the other parent. The client received advice, information on the rights and opportunities of the woman to seek legal and psychological assistance.
* Legal advice on general issues of child protection in the situation in the family, where (according to an applicant) the mentally ill mother had a negative impact on a young child’s life, prevented his/her normal physical, spiritual and intellectual development. The information about Children’s Affairs Service of Sumy City Council was provided.
* A man’s behavior in a cruel way, violence in the family, keeping a minor child without the consent of the mother. The legal advice was provided; rights of the woman were explained; she was proposed to contact the police and the guardianship authority.
* A family, in which a convicted man (currently serving a term) behaved in a psychologically violent way against a woman; he threatened her through his friend for decision to divorce him. The family is being supported for several months; a statement about the divorce was compiled; advice on the trial process and applying to the police about the threats are being also provided.

Regarding awareness-raising gender-oriented activities:

On occasion of November 25 – the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women – the public reception office of UHHRU in Sumy, Advisor to the Ministry of Social Policy on IDPs in Sumy oblast, Sumy Psychological Crisis Service together with the Students’ legal clinic «PROGESTO» gathered together for a joint event – a roundtable “Combating violence against women”. They discussed such questions as “What is violence? What right a woman possesses? What types of violence exist? How to protect yourself from violence? Where to call in the case of violence against you?”.

It should be noted that a day before UHHRU PRO together with students conducted a survey of ordinary people on “What rights has a woman in Ukraine?” The results were discussed together with psychologists at the event. In addition, the results of survey on attitudes to violence in the family and society as a whole (namely the aspect of prejudice to the topic, were presented). This was the purpose of the event – to reflect the Sumy residents’ attitudes to some concepts, such as physical and psychological violence. Also, they were talking about the abuse of female internally displaced persons, and presented statistics on violence appeals to the National Police in the city, highlighted some cases of patrol calls on such challenges when a woman suffered from violence in the family[[4]](#footnote-4).

**PRO in Cherkasy[[5]](#footnote-5)**

On November 25, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, at the Bohdan Khmelnytsky National University of Cherkasy, the “Stop Violence” flash-mob was held (the organizers were Department of Primary Education of the University, the Centre for Gender Education of the Educational and Research Institute of Pedagogical Education, Social Work, and Art; social activists and representatives of PRO also joined the event). Also everybody had a chance to participate in the action, “stopping” violence by a reflection of his/her own palm on a paper.

Thus, during the event future professionals in primary and pre-school education showed their active civil position and express support in combatting such socially dangerous phenomenon as gender-based violence.

**PRO in Khmelnytskyi**

On February 19, 2016, at Khmelnytskyi Regional Employment Center, a seminar on gender issues involving a lawyer of UHHRU PRO, acting on the basis of “Podilska Legal League” NGO, members of Khmelnytskyi City Center for Social Services for Families, Children and Youth, and the Center for Employment and Unemployed. The aim of the event was to inform participants about ways of combating gender discrimination, implementation of state policy of gender equality in employment, and how the situation can be changed for the better, despite the “gender peculiarities”. Therefore, female participants were informed about the practical aspects of protection of their rights, in particular on how to apply to courts in the event of unlawful dismissal[[6]](#footnote-6).

On May 6, 2016, Khmelnytskyi City Perinatal Center hosted the event devoted to the Mother’s Day. The lawyer of PRO told future mothers about their future employment, social and other rights, the basic regulations for the protection of the right to motherhood and the responsibilities of parents to raise and maintain the children[[7]](#footnote-7).

**PRO in Chernihiv**

On April 5, 2016, in Chernihiv secondary school No 13 of I-III levels, lawyers and interns of the public reception held a mini-workshop for 8 grade school students. The agenda included information about human rights in general, presentation concerning the women’s rights in Ukraine, a mini-game with performances on everyday life stereotypes, and discussion of practical situations.

**PRO in Kramatorsk**

On November 27, 2016, there was held a roundtable “International day for the elimination of violence against women”. During event a lawyer of the public reception office discussed with the audience the current problems related to violence against women.

**PRO in Zaporizhia**

On November 15, 2016, a training session “Life without violence” was held in Zaporizhia Educational Complex No 109. 9-year school students provided answers to issues related to violence (including what violence is, its types, how to protect themselves from violence, where to call in the case of violence and how to prevent it); told about the rules of safe behavior in the Internet network; provided information on establishments, where children can receive qualified legal and psychological assistance in the case of violence, as well as about free legal aid in general and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

1. Gender Advisoris in charge for provision of information and advice on gender issues as well as support of UHHRU senior managers to carry out their responsibility on implementing gender mainstreaming in the substantive work and current programs/projects. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The forum was organized by the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine in cooperation with the USAID Fair Justice Project and the National Judicial Institute of Canada. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The event was organized by the Embassy of Sweden, the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation and the Child Protection Section (UNICEF). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <http://sumy.legalaid.gov.ua/ua/pres-tsentr/novyny/zakhyst-prav-zhinok-obhovoriuvaly-za-kruhlym-stolom> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <https://humanrights.org.ua/material/dinja_proti_kavuna_abo_osoblivosti_diskriminaciji_v_cherkasah> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <http://podil-liga.at.ua/news/bezrobitni_zhinki_diznalisja_pro_te_jak_ne_statu_thndjd_gendernoji_diskriminaciji/2016-02-19-263> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. <http://podil-liga.at.ua/news/naperedodni_dnja_materi_juristi_podilskoji_pravovoji_ligi_rozpovili_vagitnim_zhinkam_pro_jikh_prava/2016-05-06-294> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)