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**GENDER OPPORTUNITIES IMPLEMENTATION STATE IN UKRAINE AND
WORLDWIDE AMID COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND SECURITY ASSURANCE**

*It was found that the COVID-19 pandemic has aggravated the range of existing
problems of women in different countries of the world, including Ukraine. Understanding
the nature of these problems will help state authorities to determine the priority actions
for their solution, and will make it possible to select better approaches to the way out.
This paper systematizes the main problems of gender inequality in Ukraine and contains
the rationale for the concepts of urgent and strategic ways to support women and men*

based on the experience of the OECD member states in order to ensure their fair and inclusive re-establishment amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key words: *gender opportunities, state of implementation, Ukraine, COVID-19 pandemic.*

Problem setting. Gender issues shall be taken into consideration when implementing present-day reforms in Ukraine. This shall lead to the improvement of economic, social and political opportunities for women and men, which is one of the priorities of our country. However the influence of such exogenous factors as the onset and spreading of the COVID-19 pandemic makes it possible to state that the implementation of these opportunities takes place synergistically, i.e. with the change of its vector in some bifurcation point. This, in turn, causes the intensification of the state's participation in determination of conditions necessary for comprehensive implementation of gender opportunities.

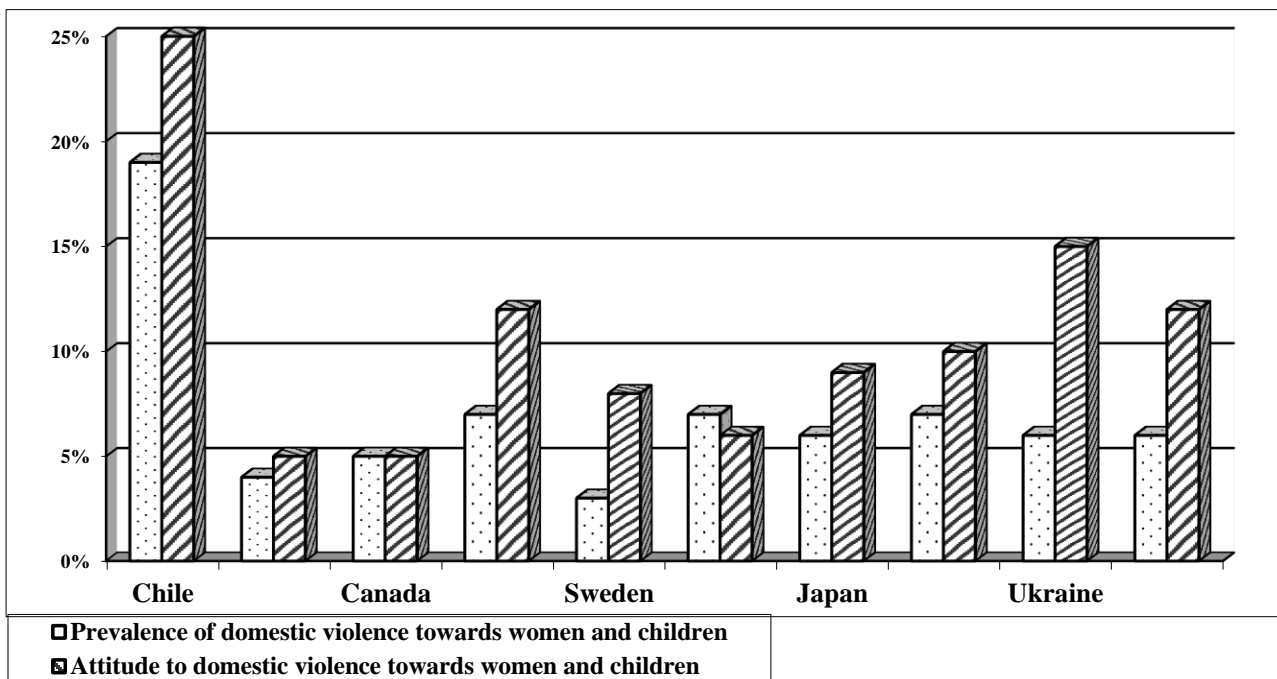
In this context, it is important for the state to develop and implement the measures intended to ensure the transformation of the indicated exogenous factors into the forecasted and controlled ones. Therefore, it is especially topical in this context to research the state of provision of gender opportunities in Ukraine and in the world amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recent research and publications analysis. The peculiarities of state gender policy were studied in the works by such national scientists as V. Buromenskyi, Yu. Halustian, L. Hren, N. Hrytsiak, S. Dombrovska, L. Kobylanska, O. Kulachek, K. Levchenko, I. Lopatchenko, L. Males, T. Melnyk, V. Moroz, S. Moroz, S. Oksamytna, E. Plisovska, N. Rymashevaska, M. Skoryk, O. Suslova and others [1; 2]. The aspects of implementation of gender opportunities were shaped by foreign researchers as well: R. Anker, T. Verlan, K. Delfi, M. Kimmel, J. Scott, H. Hartmann and others. Without prejudice to the significance of scientific groundwork, it should be noted that the problematic issues recently arising in the field of gender opportunities implementation, in particular in Ukraine, require the renovation of the approaches to the process of their implementation, i.e. taking the dictates of the times and society into consideration. Taking

the topicality of the indicated problem into account, there is a need to deepen the scientific research of the indicated issues.

Paper objective. The paper objective is to analyze the state of implementation of gender opportunities in Ukraine and in the world amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Paper main body. Gender inequality is a deep reason for many problems in all countries of the world, including Ukraine. These countries have encountered the importance of combating the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular from the perspective of the solution of gender problems. Moreover, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of provision of high quality data concerning its state with the purpose of effective implementation of gender policy and monitoring. The assessment of gender situation by way of real-time data collection is important for the detection of gender problems and quick response. In this context, it should be noted that the COVID-19 pandemic made it possible to indicate the extreme actualization of social and economic gender vulnerability in Ukraine and worldwide. Thus, *among the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic for men and women, the following ones should be indicated:*



Pic. 1. Influence of COVID-19 on the level of domestic violence towards women and children in 2019.

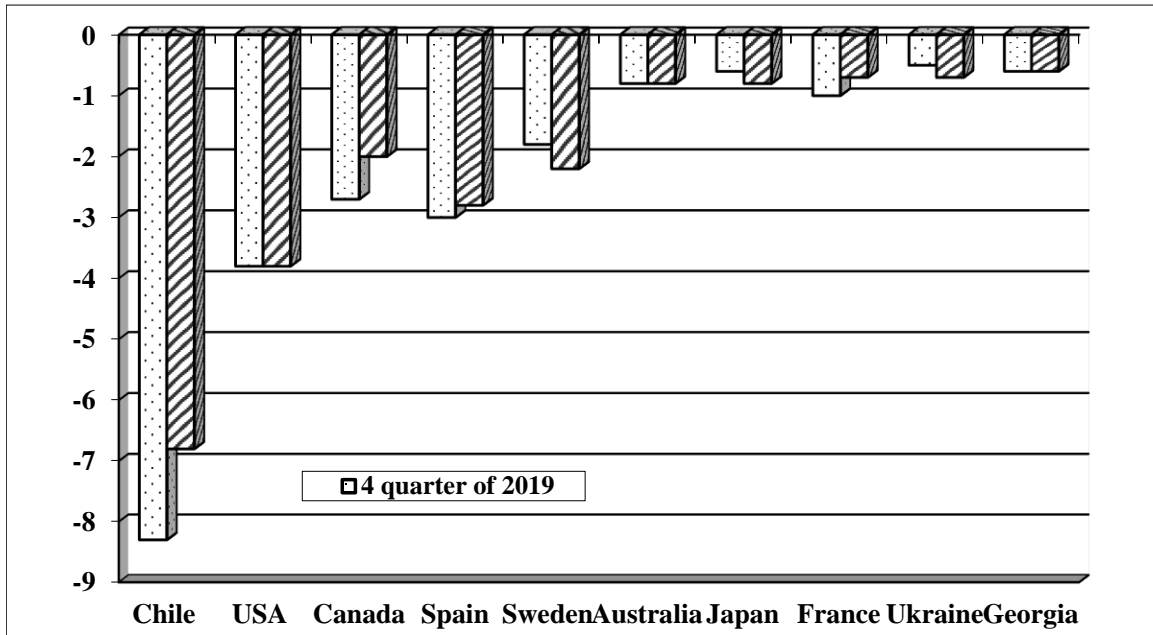
Source: formed based on [6]

Meanwhile, it should be noted that the COVID-19 pandemic had the biggest

influence on the functioning of health protection and care giving activities. According to the World Bank and the International Labour Organization [4], in 2020, many women were employed in such sectors of economy as textile industry and HoReCa, which suffered from the coronavirus crisis the most. Moreover, people working in the field of agriculture, which is an informal sector with unstable working conditions, have encountered the difficulties with own well-being. It should be also emphasized that due to the shortage of reliable child care services and gender limitations, women have to work on vulnerable positions more often. They have less access to social protection / healthcare. This, in turn, causes loss of productivity, restriction of financial opportunities for women and their unstable employment.

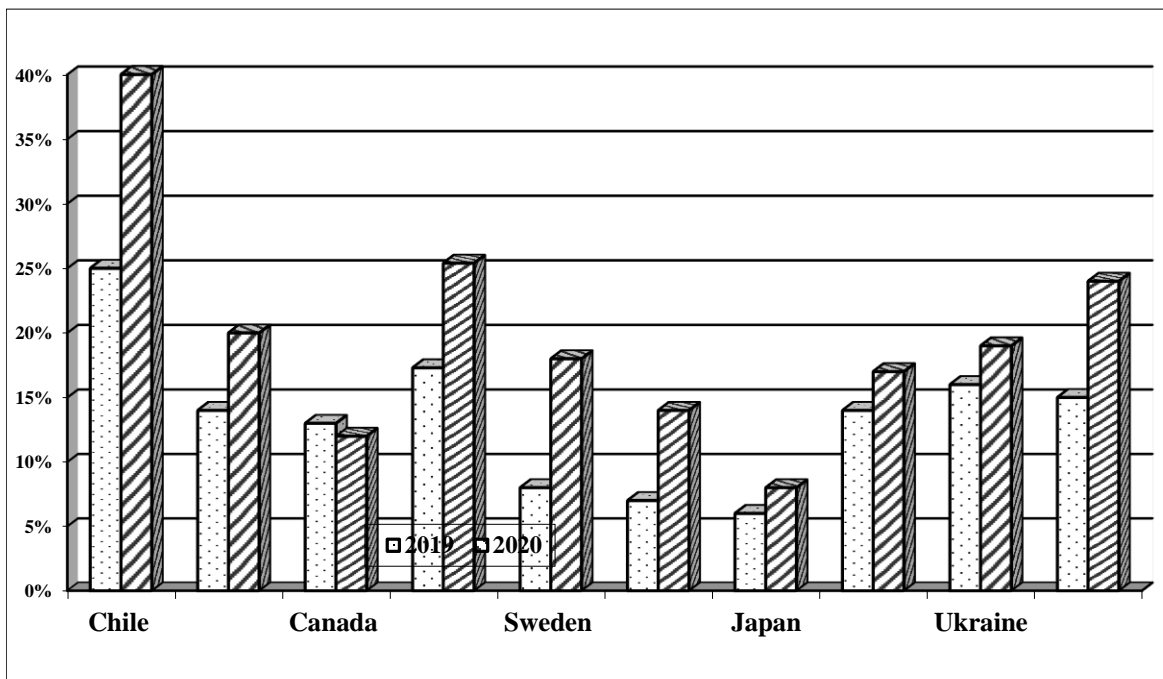
Tolerance of domestic violence towards women and children remains high. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the number of reports of domestic violence has increased by 50—90 %. This, in turn, caused the necessity to control those persons who resort to domestic violence towards women and children during the lockdown.

Meanwhile, the importance of monitoring of the situation with domestic violence spreading should be noted in those countries, where the level of this violence was one of the highest in the world before the beginning of the pandemic. Among these countries are those located in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, etc.). This situation is caused by the absence of the needed legal and institutional groundwork for the protection of the rights of women and children, as well as the limited access to shelters for victims of domestic violence.



Pic. 2. The state of changes in percentage ratio of employment level between the 4th quarter of 2019 and the 4th quarter of 2020 among people aged 15 to 64 based on gender in different countries of the world.

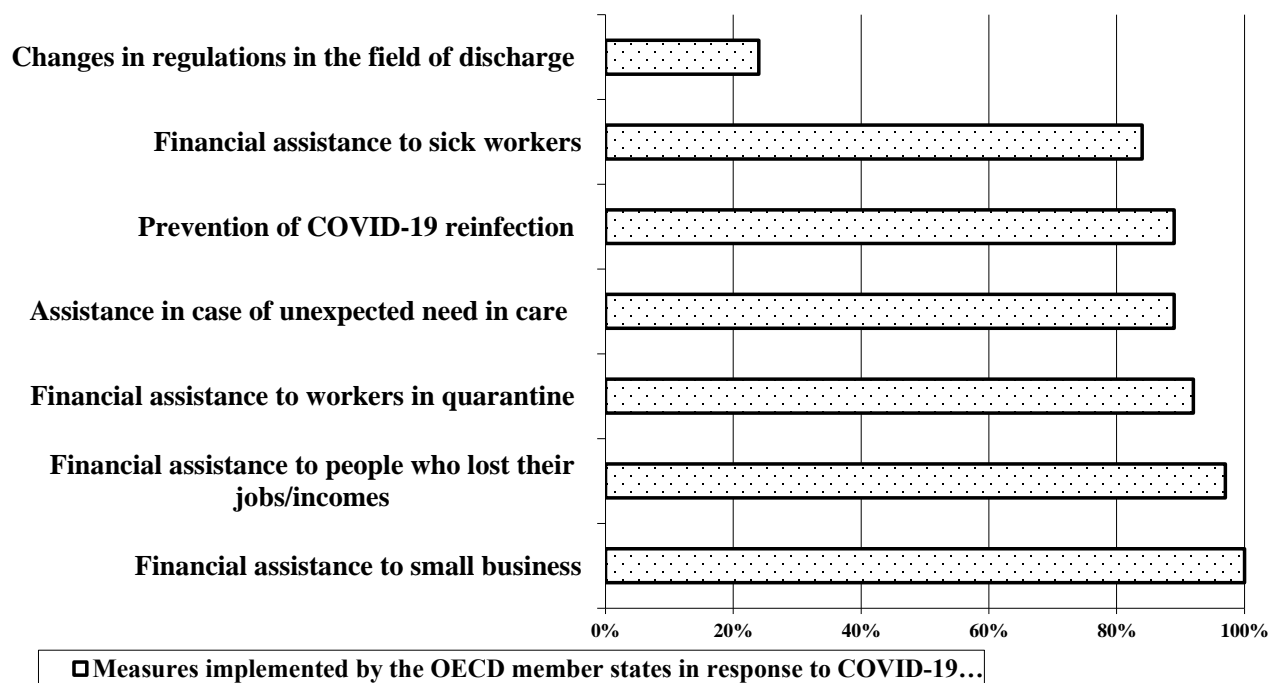
Source: formed based on [5; 7]



Pic. 3. Consequences of the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on gender pay gap (in %) in 2019—2020 in different countries of the world.

Source: formed based on [5; 6]

Pre-crisis pay gap between women and men in different countries of the world varies from 8 % in Japan to 28 % in Chile. Meanwhile, women in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe earn in average 30 % less than men. Due to the increase in the level of unemployment, reduction of working hours and decrease in salaries, there is a risk of the increase in gender pay gap. In addition, there is a sharp increase in the gap of unpaid leave for personal reasons, which may force women to leave labour market. Taking the available and latent problems with the implementation of gender opportunities into consideration, the Directorate for Employment, Labour, and Social Affairs under the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the range of COVID-19 response strategies was developed for the OECD countries. These strategies are aimed at the development of labour market and social policies with respect to gender equality (Pic. 4).



Pic. 4. OECD member states, which announced the measures of state policy in response to COVID-19.

Source: formed based on [8]

Based on the pictures 1—4, it is now important to implement urgent measures in

order to guarantee the implementation of gender opportunities for women in Ukraine, as the COVID-19 pandemic appeared as an unpredicted and exogenous factor, which in the future should be transformed into the controlled one. Taking the indicated hypothesis into account, it is possible to divide the state policy measures into two blocks. *The first block* (operational) of measures deals with the following:

1) provision of women who have lost their jobs and material and financial incomes, in particular with the increased size of unemployment compensation and widening of social insurance on unofficial labour market; the simplification of the access to information base (literature for low-income families, incomplete families); the provision of one-time payments to women who lost their jobs, as well as childcare vouchers; the provision of alternative governmental assistance to women working in medical and other social areas, which are influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic the most, etc.;

2) provision of women with own small businesses and self-employed persons with the allocated financial means in order to help their businesses to combat the consequences of the pandemic, the access to material assistance, especially if they have no right to obtain unemployment compensation;

3) the provision of women, including victims of domestic violence with medical assistance, opportunity to address to the shelters and centres of assistance during lockdown, as well as an active interaction with women and children in risk groups, their consulting (in particular, in the Kharkiv Centre for Gender Studies, Kyiv Centre for Gender Studies, Lviv Research and Development Centre “Woman and Society,” Centre for Innovation Technologies Development NGO, etc.); the use of remote court hearings in order lockdown not to prevent women’s access to justice, as well as to the mobile app Diia (which is important for the long term), similar to the Chinese app WeChat making it possible to obtain salaries online, to address the judge-bot for the protection of rights in domestic, economic and other issues (more details in [2]).

The second block (strategic) of measures stipulates the consideration of regulations of Beijing Declaration concerning the determination of, *first*, the ‘package’ of government

financing aimed at the elimination of consequences of COVID-19 pandemic, which must take gender issues into account. Thus, the state policy in the field of families and labour market must have resources necessary for the struggle against such problems as household duties of women and girls, care provision, etc.. *Second*, the ways to use digital solutions with the purpose of elimination of gender gaps. *Third*, the integration of civil society organizations into systems and structures dealing with gender equality. And *fourth*, the ways to eliminate deficit in representation of women in the state's decision-making processes. Women must play a critical role in recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic, and all policy-making bodies must favour this by supporting women in social life.

Conclusions. It should be emphasized — and our research started with this — that it is necessary to extend the opportunities of digital knowledge and skills. That is why this work determines the steps towards the provision of gender opportunities for the long term.

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