

significant decrease in motivation under pressure and restrictions. In addition to the above, women face other barriers related to the lack of proper medical care and the negative impact on reproductive health. Established patterns regarding female roles also affect the personal lives of military women and harm personal relationships. The environment is not always ready to accept a woman's choice to serve in the military. Most women join the military without any special ambitions and hopes to build a career, however, despite the many obstacles and gender biases, they continue to serve, demonstrating that a military career is quite attractive for women [4].

In conclusion, the recognition of the importance of women in the military and efforts to facilitate their professional growth represent significant strides towards gender equality and the enhancement of military effectiveness worldwide. By actively engaging women in military roles, nations can tap into a broader talent pool, foster innovation, and adaptability, and ultimately build stronger defense forces capable of meeting the challenges of the modern world.

However, despite progress, significant barriers such as gender stereotypes, limited career opportunities, and lack of support persist, hindering the full realization of women's potential in the military. Overcoming these obstacles requires continued commitment from governments, military leadership, and society as a whole to address systemic issues and promote inclusivity and equal opportunity.

Ultimately, achieving true gender equality in the military will not only benefit individual women but also strengthen military institutions and contribute to broader societal progress. It is imperative to recognize and address the unique challenges faced by women in the military and create environments where all individuals, regardless of gender, can thrive and contribute to the defense and security of their nations.

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MODERN TRENDS AND PROBLEMS OF GENDER PARTICIPATION IN THE ARMY

Full-scale military aggression demonstrates that gender inequality can be situational and conditional. Conditions that existed in peaceful or semi-peaceful times before 2014 and from 2014 to February 24, 2022 (the day of full-scale invasion) are now impossible, and gender inequality in Ukraine, due to closed borders and mobilization of the male population, is simply unprecedented. Gender issues are part of the current level of modern discussions. However, the modern challenges and threats facing Ukrainian society add a particular sharpness to the perception of gender equality issues, gender stereotypes, leadership, and military aspects of this scientific topic [1, p. 85].

When we talk about gender, we often mean society's expectations of what roles men and women should fulfill. Gender is not just biological differences between men and women. Gender

theory assumes a change in social reality that meets the needs of the present and aims to ensure gender equality. Gender equality means equal legal status for women and men and equal opportunities to achieve it, allowing individuals of both genders to participate equally in all spheres of societal life. Experts believe that correcting gender stereotypes in society is more challenging than racial or ethnic prejudices [2, p. 36].

We consider gender aspects with an understanding of the concept of female leadership. As known, a leader is a person who influences a group of people and encourages them to work towards goals. According to the authors, female leadership is the ability of a woman to influence others to achieve goals, build social dialogue, achieve mutual understanding between authority and society, between individual social classes, strive for peace and harmony, and stabilize the political and economic situation. Additionally, female leadership is capable of humanizing social relations and ensuring peaceful conflict resolution [1, p. 26].

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Constitution of Ukraine. Article 3 of the Constitution establishes the equality of men and women in all spheres of life. In addition to this provision, gender equality is related to Articles 21, 24, and 51 of the Constitution of Ukraine. In particular, Part 3 of Article 24 of the Constitution of Ukraine is directly devoted to overcoming discrimination against women in Ukraine and emphasizes that equality of rights for women and men is ensured by providing women with equal opportunities with men in socio-political and cultural activities, in education and professional training, in work, and in remuneration for it [3, p. 7].

The issue of implementing gender equality in the Armed Forces of Ukraine today is extremely relevant. This is a purposeful, systematic, multi-sectoral management activity of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine and the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine to improve the model of communication in the modern Ukrainian army. It should be noted that state policy on achieving gender equality is implemented in accordance with international obligations and national legislation, including the Constitution of Ukraine. Thus, Article 24 of the Constitution of Ukraine states that every citizen of society, whether male, male, or female, has all social, economic, political, and personal rights and freedoms [1, p. 14].

Over the past ten years of war, which has been ongoing in Ukraine since 2014, the situation regarding women's participation in public-political life has changed significantly. Today, women are more involved in social processes, especially in politics and in the security and defense sectors. Support for ideas of gender equality is becoming increasingly noticeable at the level of public opinion.

Today, nearly 60,000 women serve in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, with 41,000 in military positions, nearly 19,000 as civilian employees, and 5,000 women serving on the front lines. They serve alongside men in mixed units. Ukrainian military veterans propose changing the status quo and creating combat units composed entirely of women. This initiative is intended to be an experiment that may have effects in the future.

Overall, over 80% of the population currently supports the idea of equality for women and men in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, compared to 2014. The components of gender equality in the Armed Forces of Ukraine include equal rights, freedoms, and responsibilities for servicemen taking into account physiological, psychological, and other gender-specific characteristics. The culture of relations with gender specifics and leadership style, taking into account gender aspects, sets standards for equal opportunities for men and women, which should be further developed.

It is worth noting that women also serve in the military in other countries around the world. This is not an isolated case, although today it is more of an exception than a rule. Some countries already have female (or predominantly female) units. For example, Israel has four battalions of light infantry, two-thirds of which are composed of women. They guard Israel's borders, but their duties do not include work behind enemy lines. In one of these battalions, an exclusively female armored unit was created to guard the border with Egypt [1, p. 48].

Military service in the United States is voluntary. The last draft for military service in the country occurred during the Vietnam War in the 1970s. At the same time, male citizens and immigrants are required to mobilize for military service. Women do not enlist for military service in the United States, but they can serve in the US military. In 2020, women accounted for 17 % of the total US military personnel (224,000 individuals). In 2021, the US House of Representatives proposed changing the law to also require women to register for military service, but this did not receive support [1, p. 56].

In most countries around the world, women can voluntarily enlist in the army. Spain, Sweden, the United States, and the United Kingdom have special military units composed of women. In some countries, women hold leadership positions in defense agencies and hold high ranks in the

military. For example, Ursula von der Leyen was the Minister of Defense of Germany from 2013 to 2019 – the first woman in this position. In 2008, American Ann Dunwoody became the first woman in United States history to achieve the rank of four-star general. Currently, over a hundred women hold the rank of general in the US Armed Forces [1].

The need to conscript women is driven by several factors. Firstly, it will contribute to increasing the number of military personnel and enhancing the country's defense capability. Military service should not be solely a male affair, as female experience and knowledge can be valuable and crucial for the successful defense of the country in combat operations. Secondly, conscription of women into military service will help change stereotypes and prejudices regarding the role of women in the army. This can contribute to improving gender equality in Ukrainian society, as women will have more opportunities for professional and personal development [2].

Unfortunately, the war in Ukraine continues. The number of women participating in active combat tasks, various forms of volunteer activities, and supporting the army directly on the front lines continues to grow steadily, indicating the undeniable leadership qualities of women.

In various activist and academic discussions, it becomes clear that existing gender and war studies do not provide answers in the context of Ukrainian realities. Speaking about the military situation in Ukraine, one cannot bypass the issue of the formation of the Ukrainian nation. This war, which continues, is Ukraine's struggle for independence, closely linked to national formation. Even Ukrainian women refugees do not want to appear as typical helpless victims. They act as those who seek freedom of choice (a sense of responsibility for their fate and a desire to participate in processes that change the world for the better) to be ambassadors of Ukraine in the world. In Ukraine, women are building their independence, actively participating in socio-political events, volunteering, and defending Ukraine, especially in combat positions. Women take their tasks seriously and, together with men, strive to bring Ukraine closer to victory. Under these circumstances, Ukraine is already considered by the world community as a unique state where, in practice, the abilities, skills, and aspirations of men and women are equally combined during combat operations to achieve peace and promote gender equality.

In conclusion, it is worth emphasizing that women play a significant role in the modern Ukrainian army. There is a persistent trend towards a significant increase in the number of women, and the geography of positions held by female servicemen is expanding significantly. However, to ensure gender equality in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, lawmakers need to improve the mechanism for considering the social gender specifics during military service. Furthermore, understanding gender equality in the military should not be seen as a mechanical identification of men and women but rather as taking into account the specificity of opportunities for individuals of different genders to participate in certain positions in the effective performance of their duties, with the most positive outcome.

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