Behind a successful man there is a strong woman, says an old saying. But what would happen if she would make a step forward and would not stand behind, but in the same line with the man? It sounds simple, but in reality this process meets many obstacles due to the stereotypes and attitudes promoted by the two genders.

You have probably heard that men are paid more than women throughout their lives. But what does that mean? Are women paid less because they have chosen lower paid jobs? Is it because more women work part-time than men? Or because women have more care responsibilities? What happens if women want to get employed? The situation is a typical one. For example, if you visit a site with job offers, you will pay attention to those ads that emphasize to the potential female employees that some companies need a: “SECRETARY, ASSISTANT MANAGER! With excellent communication skills, polite, having pleasant physical appearance”, and the CV (resume) must necessarily contain a photo that shall certify your appearance from top to toe. Or: “CASHIER/OPERATOR in an Electronic casino; careful and punctual” and the list is endless.

The gender inequality is the result of an institutionalized gender division and an example would be the technological education, where girls learn how to cook and make up clothes, while boys make various wooden objects. It is a problem when the child is not asked what he wants to do, even if it is more often observed that girls have desires which the society perceives to be normal just for guys. There are women working as engineers, programmers, flying in space. There should be no perception of a job for man or a job for woman (Viorica Antonov, 2011).

The gender equality is important for economic growth and is seen as crucial in accelerating the progress towards achieving the targets on poverty according to income and economic growth. The development of strategies which would facilitate both the active participation of women and men and the same opportunities on labor market is fundamental against social exclusion.

Since its independence and during the last decade, the Republic of Moldova has registered significant progresses in creating the legal framework for equality between men and women, as it is the Law No. 5 on ensuring equal opportunities between women and men, but it still has to work upon and improve the chapter regarding the consistency of legislation on non-discrimination in line with international standards. As evidence it is the Index of Gender Equality in Republic of Moldova (developed by a methodology different of European Index) on labor field which shows that in 2014 the gender equality deteriorated (63 points out of 100) compared to 2009 (70 points out of 100). The existence of gender discrimination in various fields, many of which made unintentionally, by simply ignoring the gender dimensions the most encountered form in Moldova (Viorica ANTONOV, 2011). Besides, studying this serious dilemma in its real dimensions in economy is practically impossible due to the inaccessibility of concrete information. This fact is also confirmed by the conducted research, for example, in Mingir village hall, where the earnings of officials do not differ.
example may be the fact that this year they changed the accountant (accounting officer) (previously it was female, and now it is male), but the salary is the same. But the situation becomes different if we want to point out the wage discrepancies in other institutions such as kindergarten, library, which data are held by the village hall. Therefore, the positions where we could make real comparisons (female educator and male educator) do not exist because of the lack of men in the education sector at local level (where wages are lower than in the economy real sector).

Considering that the interaction between supply and demand is always under the influence of fluctuations in the market economy and the indicators of employment pinpoint the feminization of some specializations and fields, I have decided to analyze the differences of earnings registered in case of employees in public sector and employees in private sector. It was interesting to perceive that there are different “degrees” of discrimination between private and public sector, the most significant salary discrepancies being concentrated in the best paid sectors. Although this situation has remained relatively unchanged, it is worrying that, in the best paid sectors, this fact considerably affects women. It is to note that, in the worst paid sectors, the wage gap increases and affects men. According to recent studies, in 2014, the value of yearly losses that were incurred by women due to salary differences amounted to 7,620 MDL, an invisible tax ranging from 57 150 MDL in publishing activities, 45 199 MDL in IT field and more than 30 000 MDL in business consultancy and financial sector. In 2015 women earn on average with 12.4% less than men (87.6% of average salary of men). Expressed as a numerical value, the gap has averaged over 543 MDL. Thus, the average salary for women amounted to 3,831.7 MDL and for men – 4,374.9 MDL. The level of payment for women is less than the one for men in most economic activities, the discrepancy ranging from 1.5% in transport and storage to 27.6% in financial and insurance activities (Bureau of Statistics of Republic of Moldova [NBS], 2016).

What are the causes of this dilemma in the Republic of Moldova?

The wage differences deepen once with the women’s age. This is explained by the fact that women largely withdraw from the labor market more frequently and for longer periods to take care of children/other family members. However, this means that, at the beginning of professional life, both women and men are equally competitive on the labor market, the inequities being determined by factors other than training of women (the statistical data on education level of employees in Moldova show that, on average, women have higher levels of formal training.) (Center “Partnership for Development”, 2015). (image1-2)

![Image 1: Education level of workers(% of total number of workers)](source: NBS, 2014)
The wage difference is also caused by the fact that the female employees negotiate a lower payment than the male ones. In Moldova, a study conducted in 2013 shows that the average wage for an unemployed man who would be willing to get employed was 3,700 MDL. Women, however, easily accept a salary of 2,900 MDL – a difference in ambition of 18%. For comparison, the average wage of a male employee in the sample was of 2,800MDL, of a female employee– 1,700MDL (Center “Partnership for Development”, 2015).

Another important factor influencing the economic growth is the different retirement age for men and women. The system rules allow women to retire earlier than men – women are allowed to retire five years earlier. The earlier retirement may seem a privilege, but it is a privilege which cost is earning the right to a lower pension. This cost may not be fully realized until the woman is not too old to change the decision to retire early. It also discourages the employers to hire or promote an older woman, worrying that she will retire soon.

Aside from those mentioned, there are other gaps encountered:
- although formally there exists gender equality, the social processes develop and progress so that women remain to be economically dependent on men, as well as from the point of view of the status they are also linked to men;
- women have a double burden (task): job and housework;
- existence of strong patriarchal stereotypes in society;
- organizations of women are still shy to have political influence, establishing a more consistent dialogue with global community than local one;
- insufficient human and financial resources in the field;
- under representation of women in leading positions (vertical segregation) contribute more significantly to the pay gap;
- unfair wage policy, which emphasizes the wage differences.

All these are significant causes, but the conclusion, however, is only one–the gender equality principles are not respected in the Republic of Moldova, as 80 percent of population does not understand what gender equality means, a high percentage of which are women themselves. Or, it means rights, equal opportunities and responsibilities.

As a result of those mentioned I will make some recommendations:
1. A wider access to nursery/ daycare services would help reduce the wage disparities;
2. The childcare leave shall be shorter, better paid and encourage fathers to benefit thereof;
3. The principle of equal payment for equal work must be defined in the legislation of the Republic of Moldova;

4. The Council on the Prevention and Elimination of Discrimination and Ensuring Equality should be empowered by law to conduct investigations related to discriminations and wage differences.

The gender dimension analyzed in this study on the participation of women in the workforce has revealed several problems with great resonance, such as: lack of information, lack of inequality, lack of men in education sector at local level etc. Therefore, to ensure better coordination between relevant mechanisms and entities at national and local level of employment, a priority is to establish the gender focal points within local government. Such initiatives must be accompanied by actions of removing the stigmatized approaches towards men and women in employment, in order to ensure a more balanced thinking about employment in terms of personality and professionalism and not of woman or man (Natalia LUPUSOR, 2009). Along with facilitating the access of both women and men in employment it shall be relevant to intensify the communication system among state institutions, institutions of private sector and institutions/organizations conducting studies and statistics in the field. The way of collecting statistical data on remuneration (including other benefits) should be improved depending on several characteristics: age, experience, positions, feature of institution etc. The availability of such data will be an important prerequisite for clear and consistent interventions that must be implemented by the authorities. In addition, the approach and recommendations that may result from improved quality of information will allow the implemented policy to be a successful and more than adequate one, since it will directly target the causes of the wage gap. Such arguments, as well as others arguments presented in this analytical note convince us once again that, although the social roles are learned, they always may be reconsidered and redefined. The possibility of such changes is very important and engages and involves each of us, men and women who experience the negative results of such exaggerations and simplifications.
Bibliography:


