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## **Economic impact of international gender agreements on the labor market of the Republic of Kazakhstan**

### **Abstract**

*Object:* To study the economic impact of international gender agreements on the labor market in Kazakhstan, identify existing barriers to their implementation and formulate recommendations to improve gender equality and strengthen the country's economic performance.

*Methods:* Analysis of specialized scientific literature and legal framework, theoretical and practical methods of research, generalization and forecasting.

*Results:* The analysis of the implementation of international agreements on gender equality in Kazakhstan revealed certain trends. There had been improvements in women's access to education and representation in politics, but challenges remained with regard to equal employment opportunities, which required additional efforts to ensure real gender equality.

*Conclusions:* Over the past three years, Kazakhstan has made significant progress in ensuring equal opportunities in education, health and the labour market. However, certain difficulties have been identified in the implementation of international agreements, which the authors are trying to analyse. The article offers concrete ways to improve gender policy in Kazakhstan — a list of priority measures that, in the opinion of the authors, will significantly improve the current situation in this field.

**Keywords:** Kazakhstan, gender gap, international agreements, gender equality, employment, sustainable development goal, labor market

### **Introduction**

Since gaining its independence, Kazakhstan has consistently followed the process of ratifying the international agreements and conventions submitted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations (UN). These instruments include, inter alia, the ILO Convention «On Discrimination in Employment and Occupation», the ILO Convention «On Equal Treatment and Opportunities for Men and Women Workers: Workers with Family Responsibilities», the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the Declaration «Transforming our World: Sustainable Development Agenda (SDG) 2030». (Lipovka, 2019).

The Constitution and the Labour Code clearly establish equal rights and opportunities for men and women. In 2009, the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan «On State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men in the Republic of Kazakhstan» was adopted, which confirms the provisions of the Constitution and the Labour Code.

In 1995, the Council for the Family, Women and Population Policy had been established, followed by the National Commission for Women and Family and Population Policy, which incorporated equal rights and opportunities for men and women.

The «First Gender Policy Strategy» was adopted in 2003, the «Gender Equality Strategy of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2006–2016» in 2006 and the «State Gender Policy Programme for the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2030» (hereinafter referred to as the Programme) in 2016. The adoption of the Programme underlines the importance of addressing gender inequality at the State level. One of the

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objectives of the gender policy is «to ensure equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities for men and women in all spheres of public life and to eliminate all forms of discrimination and gender-based violence».

On the basis of the above, we can conclude that a gender policy has been implemented in Kazakhstan, that national legislation is in accordance with international agreements, that responsible bodies have been established and that programmes and strategies have been developed. Official human rights statistics on gender equality show clear efforts to address discrimination.

The purpose of this study is to identify the compliance of the State gender policy with international agreements and to identify problems that need to be addressed. Emphasis is placed on the relevance and effectiveness of measures to achieve gender equality in society, and an analysis is made of measures and programmes already introduced in the field of gender equality for women and men. The study provides information on the State's current policy and programme to promote gender equality in Kazakhstan and reveals the problems and difficulties encountered in implementing international agreements.

### *Literature review*

The study of gender equality as an academic and social concept began at different times in different countries. However, some of the first studies and discussions on this topic have their roots in the United States and Western Europe in the 1960s and 1970s.

In the United States, the feminist movement has played an important role in the study of gender issues and gender inequality since the 1960s. Books, articles and research by activists and scholars have contributed significantly to understanding gender equality issues.

In Europe, too, there has been much discussion about gender issues. In Western Europe, feminists and activists began to draw public attention to gender inequality in the 1970s and 1980s.

The global agenda for change, intent, purpose and overall goals were generally defined with the publishing of the Brundtland Report (1987), and the progress since then entered a new phase when the SDGs were adopted by the UN as the 2030 Agenda, while SD has been adopted across several economic policy fields in order to define specific objectives and goals. While highlighting SD challenges and opportunities, studies have included the gender dimension to a lesser extent, as illustrated in the existing literature that concerns the SDGs (Magendane & Kapazoglou, 2021; Scharlemann et al., 2020).

Gender inequality is pervasive across the world and women experience a series of disadvantages, in comparison to men. Yet, SD requires that we should all enjoy equal rights and be able to appreciate lives, free from violence and discrimination (UN Women, 2020). There has been progress in some areas of discrimination, e.g., more girls in education, fewer girls forced into marriage, and more women in leadership roles, but policy decisions related to education, health and other sectors continue to take place in gendered contexts (Morgan et al., 2020). A situation where approximately half of the population is denied equal opportunities, equal participation in decision-making, and equal access to resources, education and employment will contribute to severely inhibiting SD and global prosperity (Dugarova, 2018).

Thus, and through SDG5, gender equality is rightfully at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for SD (UN, 2015), recognised as an essential human right and important enough to be a goal in its own right, among other 16 SDGs. Its significance is such that it constitutes a cross-cutting theme spanning all the other 16 SDGs, with a total of 45 targets and 54 indicators gender-related. It is suggested that not only is SDG5 critical to all the other SDGs, with gender inequality being an obstacle to progress, but that it has the potential to serve as an SD accelerator, with a positive multiplier effect, to speed up the progress of the 2030 Agenda (UNSDG, 2018). Gender equality and women's empowerment should have a catalytic effect on human development (Odera & Mulusa, 2020) if gender is in fact actively addressed across all SDGs.

Hillary Charlesworth, a renowned scholar of international law and human rights, has conducted extensive research on international instruments on gender equality. Its work focused on the analysis of legal mechanisms to protect women's rights and advance gender equality in the context of international law (The best lawyers, 2012).

Charlesworth discussed the significance of international instruments such as the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (UNEDC) and their impact on the development and implementation of gender equality policies and legislation at the national level. It has identified these instruments as a fundamental tool for protecting women's rights and achieving gender equality.

Charlesworth also examined the role of international organizations and monitoring mechanisms such as the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and their contribution to the

monitoring and evaluation of States' implementation of their gender equality obligations under international instruments.

Her work and research have helped to highlight the importance of international instruments on gender equality in the context of developing and developing legislation to protect women's rights and achieve gender equality at both the international and national levels.

The work of Christine Bershaw, who has researched international law and human rights, has also drawn attention to the importance of international instruments in the context of gender equality and women's rights.

Its work focuses on:

- Bershaw emphasizes that international instruments and standards on gender equality play a key role in creating a basic normative framework that protects women's rights and promotes gender equality in the global arena.

- She discusses how international organizations such as the UN and their entities actively contribute to the development and implementation of international instruments focused on the protection of women's rights and the setting of gender equality standards.

- She discusses the importance of integrating international instruments on gender equality into national legislation to ensure their effective implementation and the protection of women's rights on the ground.

- Bershaw analyses the effectiveness of the application of international treaties in different countries and contexts, highlighting which aspects of these standards work better and where improvements are possible (Jesstopia Wiki, 2021).

Charlotte Bauer, an outstanding scholar in women's rights and human rights, has had a significant impact in advancing gender equality in the international arena. Her outstanding work and diplomatic activism in the field of women's rights made her a key figure in the formation of international standards on gender equality and contributed significantly to the development of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (AARP, 2008).

Charlotte Bauer emphasized the importance of intersecting identities in the struggle for gender equality. She argued that women of different races, classes, sexual orientation and gender identity faced unique obstacles that could not be fully understood or addressed without taking these intersections into account.

Bauer also stressed the importance of including women's voices in decision-making. She argued that women should be represented at all levels of decision-making, from local to global, to ensure that their unique perspectives and experiences were taken into account.

In her works, Bauer often referred to international treaties such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) as important tools for promoting gender equality. She argued that these instruments provide important legal and policy tools to address gender inequality at the national and international levels (Academia, 2019).

Overall, Charlotte Bauer's work on gender equality and international treaties demonstrated her deep understanding of the complexity and diversity of gender equality issues. Its contribution in this area continues to influence current discussions and practices on gender equality.

It should also be taken into account that the adoption of a number of international instruments on gender equality has had a significant impact on the world and national policies in many countries:

- 1) Many countries have amended their laws and policies to meet international standards of gender equality, improving the legal protection of women's rights, their participation in political and economic life, and their protection from discrimination.

- 2) The adoption of these instruments has stimulated greater awareness of gender equality issues and its importance in society. This has facilitated educational programmes and campaigns to combat prejudices and stereotypes.

- 3) The adoption of these instruments has strengthened international cooperation on gender equality. Many countries have begun to cooperate more actively in this area, sharing experiences and best practices.

- 4) The pursuit of gender equality is often accompanied by improved access to education, health, employment and other resources for women, which contributes to their well-being.

- 5) The adoption of international instruments has had an impact on increasing the representation of women in politics and business in many countries.

These are just some of the many implications of the adoption of international instruments on gender equality. The real changes in each country may vary depending on the political, cultural and economic context.

The study of gender equality in Kazakhstan began mainly within academic and scientific circles, activist groups and public organizations in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. This work was aimed at analysing and understanding problems related to gender inequality in society and the national context of Kazakhstan.

In addition, international organizations such as the United Nations and other non-governmental organizations have actively promoted research and initiatives on gender equality in the country. They have supported and conducted research, funded programmes and projects to support gender equality and the advancement of women in Kazakhstan.

Over time, interest in the study of gender equality in Kazakhstan has grown and this issue has become an important part of academic and scientific research, educational programmes and State strategies. Activists, scientists, educational institutions and State bodies make a significant contribution to the study and promotion of gender equality in Kazakhstan.

### **Methods**

This material is based on scientific research papers and regulatory documents, which are a reliable source of information in scientific work. During the study, data on the law of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated December 8, 2009 № 223-IV «On State guarantees of equal rights and opportunities for women and men in the Republic of Kazakhstan», «The State Gender Policy Program of the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2030» approved by the decree of the president of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated September 13, 2021 № 659 were studied and analyzed. The implementation of the international treaty «The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development» adopted in the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2015 and the Declaration of the Beijing platform of actions in 1995 was thoroughly studied and a number of analytical work was carried out.

The authors used both general theoretical and practical research methods, combining them to analyze the impact of gender equality on the socio-economic development of the country. General theoretical research methods were based on data analysis, synthesis and generalization. Methods of content analysis and comparative analysis were used to analyze research papers and regulatory documents. Methods of induction, deduction and prediction were used to formulate the hypothesis. Practical research methods based on Internet surveys allowed us to test the hypothesis and offer recommendations for achieving gender equality.

### **Results**

Our analysis of the implementation of international treaties on gender equality in the Republic of Kazakhstan allows us to draw a number of important conclusions:

1) Effectiveness of activities and programmes: The analysis made it possible to see the effectiveness and impact of specific activities undertaken to achieve gender equality. This includes the evaluation of programmes introduced in the fields of education, health, political participation and other areas.

2) The role of State institutions and organizations: The analysis assesses the role of governmental and public bodies in the implementation of gender equality treaties. This includes the effectiveness of legislative changes, the implementation of State programmes and the activities of public organizations.

3) Monitoring and evaluation: Assessing the effectiveness of gender equality programmes and activities requires systematic monitoring and evaluation. An important conclusion may be an assessment of the existence of a monitoring system and methods for assessing the results of policies introduced.

In the process of monitoring the implementation of international agreements on gender equality in Kazakhstan, some problems arise:

- Lack of data on gender equality: it is possible that certain aspects of gender equality may not be sufficiently documented or reflected in official statistics. This may include data on wages, access to education, health and women's participation in politics and business.

- Lack of funding and resources: Limited financial resources may be an obstacle to comprehensive monitoring and research on gender equality.

- Lack of a single focal point: some problems may arise due to fragmented monitoring mechanisms and the absence of a single focal point, which may hamper data collection and analysis.

- Lack of public feedback: the public may not always be fully involved in the monitoring process, and its involvement in identifying or reporting problems may be limited.

These aspects can be analysed in depth to provide a more complete picture of the implementation of international agreements on gender equality in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

### *Discussions*

Gender equality — legal status ensuring equal rights and opportunities for men and women and effective access to political, economic, social, social and cultural life, regardless of gender (Zakon Respubliki Kazakhstan «O gosudarstvennykh garantiyakh ravnykh prav i ravnykh vozmozhnostei muzhchin i zhenshchin », 2009).

With the agreement of the Republic of Kazakhstan and other countries, an ambitious Agenda aimed at establishing and developing gender equality was adopted on 2 August 2015. The initiative included 17 new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with 169 targets. The main objective of the programme is to address poverty, inequality, prosperity and environmental protection by 2030. Specifically, the fifth objective focuses on gender equality, and a detailed discussion of this aspect is proposed below (UN Women, 2018).

Sustainable Development Goal 5 of the United Nations seeks to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Its main objective is to eliminate all gender-based discrimination. The objectives of this Goal in the context of women and girls include effective measures to eliminate multiple forms of discrimination and violence in both the public and private spheres, as well as the prohibition of harmful practices. Additional aspects in this context include recognition of unpaid domestic work, equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making, and access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (Mikhaleva, 2022).

In Kazakhstan, the second Voluntary National Review of the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 (hereinafter referred to as the Review) was prepared in 2022. The document analyses the implementation of the goals and objectives set by the United Nations. In the three years since the 2019 review, Kazakhstan has made significant progress in building a society with equal rights and opportunities, including:

- 1) In 2021, Kazakhstan officially joined two global coalitions dedicated to combating gender-based violence and promoting economic justice and justice.
- 2) Legislation has established a mandatory quota of 30 per cent for the representation of women and youth on party lists and for the distribution of seats.
- 3) As part of the legislative changes, the list of occupations restricting women's employment has been abolished.
- 4) Women's entrepreneurship development centres have been established in various regions of the country.
- 5) Accountability and sanctions for violence against children strengthened (Economic Research Institute Qazaqstan, 2022).

At the end of 2021, the Republic of Kazakhstan approved a plan for the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, 2122, 2242, 2467. Under the Plan, international negotiations and consultations on disarmament, non-proliferation and international security are expected to involve women staff in the diplomatic process (Economic Research Institute Qazaqstan, 2022).

According to the analysis, Kazakhstan pays special attention to creating conditions for ensuring reproductive health for both men and women. In 2020, the Head of State, in his Address to the People of Kazakhstan, entrusted the Government with the implementation of a special programme called «Ansagan Sabi». In 2021, more than 7,000 women underwent In-Vitro Fertilization (IVF) under this programme, more than 3,000 pregnant women were registered with the medical service and some 360 babies were born (Economic Research Institute Qazaqstan, 2022).

There is a high level of women's employment on the labour market, which indicates the presence of a significant number of qualified professionals. Currently, the share of women among employees is almost half (49.1 %). Despite this, however, women earn significantly less than men. Women are mainly employed in the fields of education, health, social services and culture, where the pay level is significantly lower than the national average. At the same time, men are predominantly employed in industrial sectors such as oil and gas, mining and manufacturing, as well as in transport and construction, where wages are above the national average (Economic Research Institute Qazaqstan, 2022).

An additional area in which women's influence on decision-making is reflected is civil society. There are 22,398 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the Republic of Kazakhstan, of which more than 500 specialize in issues related to family and gender policy, with a significant impact on the empowerment of women. Of these, 8,220 (36.7 %) are run by women. A national network of women's leadership schools, comprising almost 70 NGOs, is active (Economic Research Institute Qazaqstan, 2022).

It may also be noted that in 2020 the Republic of Kazakhstan and the United Nations signed an agreement on cooperation for sustainable development for 2021–2025.

The cooperation framework will be the main document of joint activities between Kazakhstan and the United Nations for the next five years. It includes three pillars: human development and equal participation; effective institutions, human rights and gender equality; sustainable environment and inclusive economic development (Ministerstva inostrannykh del Respubliki Kazakhstan, 2020).

In the ranking of countries according to the gender equality index (hereinafter referred to as the rating), we can see the effectiveness of the measures taken to eliminate gender inequality, which are indicated in the 1st figure.

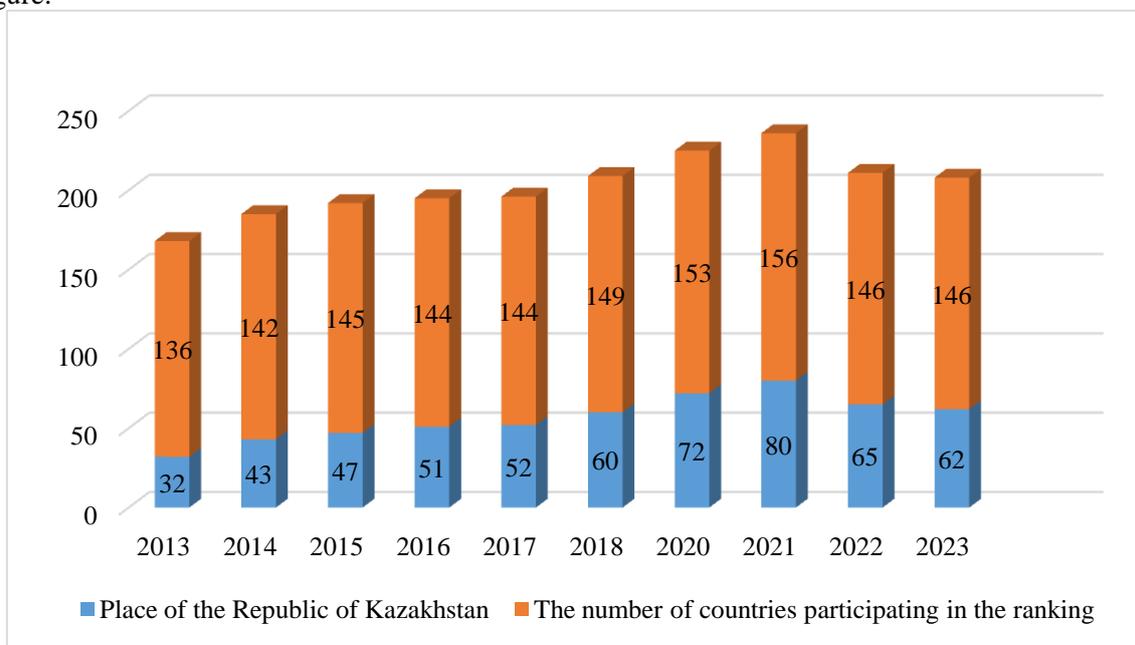


Figure 1. Ranking of countries on the gender equality index

Note — compiled by the authors according to the data of the source (World Economic Forum, 2023)

Analyzing the data in the figure, we can say that Kazakhstan over the last 3 years improves its position in this rating. The ranking takes into account equal political opportunities, equal access to education, health and survival, gender pay gap and equal opportunities in the labour market. From 2013 to 2021, Kazakhstan witnessed a negative trend towards the establishment of gender equality in areas of human life. However, since the adoption of the United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development to 2030, progress has been made. In 2022, Kazakhstan improved its performance on gender inequality and rose from 80 to 65 in the global ranking.

It should be noted that, within the criteria under consideration, Kazakhstan has achieved full equality in access to school and vocational education for both sexes, representing an outstanding indicator in this area. The high scores were also recognized in the context of the health and survival criteria, which include healthy life expectancy and gender equality at birth. The country ranked 27th and 44th respectively.

With regard to opportunities in the labour market, Kazakhstan ranks 46th on the criterion of equal wages for the same amount of work, 51st on the level of participation in the labour force, and leads in the first place in the equal representation of women among highly skilled and semi-skilled workers.

It should be noted, however, that on the criterion of equal access to political rights and opportunities, the country ranks relatively low at 103 out of 146 countries. This dynamic is characteristic of the entire Central Asian region, emphasizing the importance of the active involvement of women in the highest political representative and executive bodies (Ministerstva truda i sotsial'noi zashchity naseleniya Respubliki Kazakhstan, 2022).

Analysis of the data presented shows that Kazakhstan improved its position in the world ranking of gender equality in 2023, rising from 65th to 62nd place from 146 countries. The country's gender equality index was 0.721, indicating progress towards reducing gender inequalities. Despite the positive trend, the country can still strive for additional efforts to achieve higher index values and full gender equality (Ranking.kz, 2023).

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 is an important strategic document for the development of gender equality policies. The Republic of Kazakhstan actively participated in this international event, adopting relevant commitments and integrating the principles of the Beijing Declaration into its national policy (UN Women, 1995).

The Beijing Declaration included a strategic plan of action to eliminate discrimination and violence against women and to advance their status in various spheres of public life. The Platform for Action is a complementary document that specifies measures and strategies to achieve the stated goals. These documents highlight the importance of women's participation in decision-making, equal opportunities in education and health, and the prevention of violence based on gender stereotypes.

Kazakhstan, in its efforts to implement the principles of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, has undertaken a number of significant activities and initiatives to strengthen the status of women and achieve gender equality, including (UN Women, 2018):

1) The Republic of Kazakhstan is systematically implementing its National Strategy «Kazakhstan-2050», within the framework of which measures to ensure gender equality in key areas such as education, health and the labour market are being actively introduced.

2) State efforts are aimed at actively increasing the participation of women in the political life of Kazakhstan. Instruments such as quotas and other incentives were an important part of the strategy to encourage women to participate in elections and to occupy important positions in government.

3) Kazakhstan is taking measures to guarantee equal access to education and health care for women and men. These measures include programmes to address gender inequalities in the education system and to improve women's access to quality health services.

4) Kazakhstan has taken effective steps to prevent and combat gender-based violence. The introduction of appropriate laws and measures helps to prevent and punish incidents of violence.

5) The implementation of special education and information campaigns on gender issues aims at raising public awareness and contributes to changing stereotypes, creating a more inclusive and equal society.

These works underline Kazakhstan's desire to create a society where women and men can fully participate in economic, political and social life, and gender equality is an integral part of the national development strategy.

In order to quantify the progress made in Kazakhstan in all items of the list of such works, it is possible to see the indicators of the index of gender inequality (UNDP, 2022).

The Gender Inequality Index (GII) measures gender inequality in three key areas — reproductive health, empowerment, and the labour market — for many countries, within data of reasonable quality. It measures the losses in potential human development caused by the inequality between women's and men's achievements in these dimensions (UNDP, 2022). In the course of this study, according to data from the Bureau of National Statistics of the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan, an analysis of the index of gender inequality in the Republic of Kazakhstan, which is presented in table 1.

Table 1. Constituent indicators of the index of gender inequality in the Republic of Kazakhstan

Year	Gender inequality index	Constituent indicators:							
		Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 live births)	Birth rate (per 1,000 women aged 15–19)	Seats in the Majilis of Parliament, gender ratio		Proportion of population aged 15 and over with at least secondary education		Percentage of economically active population of working age	
				men	women	men	women	men	women
2013	0,375	12,6	33,64	0,738	0,262	0,845	0,849	0,842	0,794
2014	0,372	11,7	34,72	0,738	0,262	0,853	0,858	0,845	0,788
2015	0,369	12,8	30,83	0,733	0,267	0,860	0,866	0,849	0,792
2016	0,370	12,7	32,13	0,724	0,276	0,875	0,868	0,851	0,784
2017	0,350	12,5	24,93	0,726	0,274	0,876	0,884	0,850	0,785
2018	0,351	13,9	23,90	0,724	0,276	0,884	0,892	0,854	0,803
2019	0,351	13,7	23,20	0,726	0,274	0,891	0,901	0,860	0,802
2020	0,426	36,5	22,92	0,735	0,265	0,899	0,901	0,852	0,786
2021	0,441	44,7	23,80	0,726	0,274	0,906	0,918	0,857	0,792
2022	0,357	17,0	19,70	0,731	0,269	0,914	0,927	0,853	0,787

Note — compiled by the authors according to the data of the source (Bureau of National Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2022)

Analysis of the data shows that some indicators of gender equality have improved between 2013 and 2022, and there is instability in certain indicators after 2020, which requires further research to identify the causes and take appropriate measures to improve the situation. Let us move on to the analysis of each indicator, including:

1) The index of gender inequality in Kazakhstan ranges from 0.350 to 0.441 between 2013 and 2022. The lowest point was in 2017 (0.350) and the highest was in 2021 (0.441). This points to a pattern of gender inequality, but in general inequality remains high.

2) The maternal mortality rate fell by 50 per cent between 2013 and 2022, indicating successful measures to improve health and medical care for pregnant women.

3) The fertility rate (per 1,000 women aged 15–19) fell by about 30 per cent between 2013 and 2022, which may reflect a more informed decision to start a family and have children among young women.

4) The ratio of men to women in the Majilis of the Parliament has remained stable at over 70 per cent since 2016. This reflects a desire to ensure the participation of women in decision-making.

5) The percentage of people in secondary education is increasing from 2013 to 2022, indicating improved access to education in the country.

6) The economic activity of the population of working age, especially women, remains high, but there has been a slight decrease after 2020 (Bureau of National Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2022).

The clearly shows that the tasks outlined in the Beijing Declaration are being carried out in a positive direction every year in Kazakhstan.

Changes in the labor market from 2013 to 2022 after the introduction of international agreements are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The main indicators of the labor market of the Republic of Kazakhstan by gender

Year	The unemployed population is in the thousands		The employed population is in the thousands		Gender pay gap, tenge	
	men	women	men	women	men	women
2013	210,0	260,7	4 389,4	4 181,3	129 382	87 677
2014	195,9	256,0	4 389,3	4 120,7	144 183	96 545
2015	199,6	254,7	4 371,2	4 062,1	151 694	99 911
2016	203,9	241,6	4 440,4	4 113,0	169 352	116 108
2017	205,3	237,0	4 458,9	4 126,3	179 575	121 793
2018	202,1	241,6	4 474,7	4 220,3	195 959	129 039
2019	204,3	236,3	4 535,4	4 245,4	222 514	150 779
2020	209,6	239,2	4 519,5	4 212,5	243 524	182 679
2021	201,7	247,9	4 554,9	4 252,2	281 239	220 160
2022	208,1	250,2	4 673,3	4 298,3	355 296	265 762

*Note — compiled by the authors according to the data of the source (Bureau of National Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2022)*

Over this period, unemployment population for both genders generally decreased, although they fluctuated slightly, with men's unemployment falling from 210,000 in 2013 to 208,100 in 2022, and women's unemployment declining from 260,700 to 250,200. The employed population saw a steady increase, particularly among women, whose numbers rose from 4.18 million in 2013 to 4.30 million in 2022. Men's employment also grew from 4.39 million to 4.67 million over the same period, reflecting an overall improvement in labor market conditions following the introduction of international agreements.

Based on the data for the period from 2013 to 2022, we note the trend of increasing wages for both men and women. However, in each of the years under review, men's wages significantly exceed women's wages. For example, in 2013, men's wages were 129,382, while women's wages were 87,677. This means that the wage gap between men and women was 41,705, or about 32.2 % of men's wages.

Similarly, in 2022, men's wages were 355,296, while women's wages were 265,762. This means that the wage gap between men and women was 89,534, or about 25.2 % of men's wages.

Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, employment figures and wage differences have generally improved, suggesting that the introduction of international agreements may have contributed to enhancing the labor market conditions in the country. However, persistent gender disparities in unemployment rates and wages highlight the ongoing need for targeted policies to achieve greater gender equality in the labor market.

The situation on the labor market in Kazakhstan has improved markedly after the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) The UN in 2015. The data shows that between 2013 and 2022, there was an increase in employment and wages for both groups, despite the persistent wage gap between men and women. The introduction of international agreements related to the SDGs has stimulated the development of national programs and strategies aimed at improving working conditions and increasing employment for both men and women.

According to the Voluntary National Review of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2022 on the implementation of the UN SDGs, in the coming years, the following works will be carried out by interested state and public bodies in accordance with the provisions of international treaties:

1) Strengthening the institution of the family by building family relations based on the principle of equal partnership between men and women, ensuring equal distribution of parental responsibilities in the field of upbringing, education and development of children, as well as care and support for the elderly.

2) Increasing the accessibility and focus of state social support for families.

3) Prevention of domestic violence against children and women.

4) Strengthening the Institution of Gender Equality.

5) Economic and political empowerment of women.

6) Promoting gender education and women's active participation in peace and security.

7) Consideration of gender-sensitive budgeting mechanisms (Institute of Economic Research of Kazakhstan, 2022).

At present, despite significant progress in gender equality in the spheres of life, there are still challenges in the field of gender equality that require attention and solutions that have yet to be addressed:

1) Unequal employment conditions, wage differences between the sexes and the participation of the economically active population in the labor market. In the field of employment, there are cases of discrimination against women based on their gender.

2) The underrepresentation of women in politics, especially at the highest levels of government. 55 % of civil servants in Kazakhstan are women, but men predominate in senior positions.

3) Support the creation of equal opportunities for women in the economic sphere, including entrepreneurship and financial independence.

Solving these problems requires a comprehensive approach from the State, public organizations and international partners. In this regard, the following recommendations are proposed to improve gender equality in the Republic of Kazakhstan:

1. The authorized body in the field of labor should implement stricter measures of control and transparency in the field of employment in order to ensure wage equality and eliminate discrimination based on gender. Conduct regular audits and inspections of companies, as well as implement awareness-raising and training programs for employers.

2. The Agency for Civil Service Affairs should develop and implement quotas for women at all levels of political and public authority, as well as support leadership and mentoring programs for women. This will help to increase their participation in decision-making and ensure a more balanced representation in senior positions.

3. The authorized body in the field of employment should create programs and initiatives to support women's entrepreneurship, including financial grants, consultations and training for women who want to start their own business. Ensure equal opportunities for women in the financial sector and promote their economic independence.

These recommendations will help eliminate existing problems and contribute to the improvement of the status of women in Kazakhstan, which, in turn, will have a positive impact on the labor market and increase the country's position in the world rankings of gender equality.

### ***Conclusions***

In conclusion, Kazakhstan has made significant progress in achieving gender equality, especially over the past decade, through the implementation of international agreements and national policies. The country has improved its ranking in the global gender equality indices, demonstrating progress in education, health and labor market participation. Nevertheless, the implementation of the principles of gender equality in the country remains underdeveloped compared to advanced countries such as Iceland, Finland, Norway, Sweden, etc. both qualitatively and quantitatively (World Economic Forum, 2023).

The scientific novelty of the study lies in the fact that a comprehensive analysis of changes in gender equality indicators in Kazakhstan was conducted for the period from 2013 to 2022, which allows us to identify both positive trends and instability of individual indicators after 2020. This, in turn, makes it possible to identify new challenges and problems that have arisen in the field of gender inequality, such as gender differences in wages and employment, which require further research and the development of targeted measures.

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**Халықаралық гендерлік келісімдердің Қазақстан Республикасының еңбек нарығына экономикалық әсері**

**Аңдатпа**

**Мақсаты:** Халықаралық гендерлік келісімдердің Қазақстандағы еңбек нарығына экономикалық әсерін зерделеу, оларды іске асырудағы бар кедергілерді анықтау және гендерлік теңдікті арттыру және елдің экономикалық көрсеткіштерін нығайту үшін ұсынымдарды тұжырымдау.

**Әдісі:** Бейінді ғылыми әдебиеттерді және нормативтік-құқықтық базаны талдау, зерттеудің теориялық және практикалық әдістері, жалпылау және болжау.

**Қорытынды:** Қазақстанда гендерлік теңдік туралы халықаралық шарттардың іске асырылуын талдау барысында белгілі бір үрдістер анықталды. Саясаттағы әйелдердің білімі мен өкілдігіне қол жетімділіктің жақсаруы байқалады, бірақ тең еңбек мүмкіндіктері проблемалары қалады, бұл нақты гендерлік теңдікті қамтамасыз ету үшін қосымша күш-жігерді қажет етеді.

**Тұжырымдама:** Соңғы үш жылда Қазақстанда білім беру, денсаулық сақтау және еңбек нарығында тең мүмкіндіктерді қамтамасыз етуде айтарлықтай прогресс байқалады. Алайда, халықаралық келісімдерді жүзеге асыруда мақала авторлары талдауға тырысатын белгілі бір қиындықтар анықталды. Мақалада Қазақстандағы гендерлік саясатты жақсартудың нақты жолдары-авторлардың пікірінше, осы саладағы ағымдағы жағдайды айтарлықтай жақсарту алатын бірінші кезектегі шаралар тізімі ұсынылған.

**Кілт сөздер:** Қазақстан, гендерлік алшақтық, халықаралық шарттар, гендерлік теңдік, жұмыспен қамту, орнықты даму мақсаты, еңбек нарығы

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## Экономическое влияние международных гендерных соглашений на рынок труда Республики Казахстан

### Аннотация

**Цель:** Изучение экономического влияния международных гендерных соглашений на рынок труда в Казахстане, выявление существующих барьеров в их реализации и формулирование рекомендаций для повышения гендерного равенства и укрепления экономических показателей страны.

**Методы:** Анализ профильной научной литературы и нормативно-правовой базы, теоретический и практический методы исследования, обобщение и прогнозирование.

**Результаты:** В ходе анализа реализации международных договоров о гендерном равенстве в Казахстане выявлены определенные тенденции. Наблюдаются улучшения в доступе к образованию и представительстве женщин в политике, но остаются проблемы с равными трудовыми возможностями, что требует дополнительных усилий для обеспечения реальной гендерной равноправности.

**Выводы:** За последние три года в Казахстане наблюдается значительный прогресс в обеспечении равных возможностей в сферах образования, здравоохранения и на рынке труда. Однако в реализации международных соглашений выявлены определенные трудности, которые авторы статьи пытаются проанализировать. В статье предложены конкретные пути улучшения гендерной политики в Казахстане — список первоочередных мер, которые, по мнению авторов, смогут существенно улучшить текущую ситуацию в данной области.

**Ключевые слова:** Казахстан, гендерный разрыв, международные договоры, гендерное равенство, занятость, цель устойчивого развития, рынок труда

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