

# GENDER DISTRIBUTION IN THE SYSTEM OF STATE AND CIVIL SERVICE IN THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

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**Abstract.** The article is devoted to the study of gender distribution in the state and civil service in the Republic of Kazakhstan. The paper analyzes the domestic institutional and regulatory framework for the state's gender policy, as well as foreign development indices. The existing problems in establishing gender equality in the labor sphere are identified. The article deals with official statistics, survey data and recommendations of international organizations on gender equality.

**Keywords:** gender, civil service, gender policy, public service, gender equality, employment, labor market.

**Аңдатпа.** Мақала Қазақстан Республикасындағы мемлекеттік және азаматтық қызметтегі гендерлік бөлуді зерттеуге арналған. Жұмыста мемлекеттің гендерлік саясатының ішкі институционалдық және нормативтік базасы, сондай-ақ шетелдік даму индекстері талданады. Еңбек саласындағы гендерлік теңдікті орнатудағы бар проблемалар анықталды. Мақалада ресми статистика, сауалнама деректері және гендерлік теңдік бойынша халықаралық ұйымдардың ұсыныстары қарастырылған.

**Түйін сөздер:** гендер, мемлекеттік қызмет, гендерлік саясат, мемлекеттік азаматтық қызмет, гендерлік теңдік, жұмыспен қамту, еңбек нарығы.

**Аннотация.** Статья посвящена изучению гендерного распределения на государственной и гражданской службе в Республике Казахстан. В работе проанализирована отечественная институциональная и нормативно-правовая база гендерной политики государства, а также зарубежные индексы развития. Выявлены существующие проблемы по установлению гендерного равенства в трудовой сфере. В статье рассматривается официальная статистика, данные опросов и рекомендаций международных организаций по установлению гендерного равенства.

**Ключевые слова:** гендер, государственная служба, гендерная политика, государственная гражданская служба, гендерное равенство, занятость, рынок труда.

## Introduction

In scientific discourse, the gender approach is understood from different perspectives: as a study of the sociological, political, and psychological differences between men and women in society. Such as gender mainstreaming, which represents the distinctive features of gender behaviour; as a practice of influencing two socio-demographic groups for managerial and other decisions.

Social groups and cultural traditions determine the roles of women and men. To a large extent, their roles impact the sphere of

work and the conditions men and women perceive as inherent through their activities, assignments, and responsibilities. This division of labour is based on factors such as age, race, ethnicity, religion, and culture and is influenced by socioeconomic classes and the political environment. Such divisions change over time. Biological differences between men and women occur because of their distinctive physiological characteristics, such as their skeletal muscle structure or reproductive functions. These differences are certainly relevant to the workplace. The issue of gender inequality in different spheres of life has always been relevant.

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However, the spread of democratic values in many parts of the world in the 1990s contributed to the development of the value of gender equality in societies. For States, therefore, the formulation of gender policies and their implementation find positive democratic principles in the public consciousness, which makes the systematization and consolidation of traditions relevant. State and society's disregard for gender policy violates the foundations of the democratic system. The effectiveness of civil society institutions reduces the value of the democratic system, lowers its status, and creates distrust of the political system's democratization process. Therefore, in practice, the gender approach is the process of evaluating any activity from the point of view of interests, needs, and peculiarities of gender. Its main objective is to achieve gender equality as equality not only of the rights and freedoms of men and women but also of their equal opportunities for realizing personal and professional qualities and as equality in the expression of interests, views, judgments, having equal access to certain resources: economic, social, powerful.

Since independence, Kazakhstan has taken several measures to strengthen the institution of gender equality. Since acceding to the Beijing Declaration in 1995, the State has made a deliberate effort to formulate a gender policy. In December 1998, the National Commission on Women's Affairs and Family and Demographic Policy was established by presidential decree, and advisory and advisory bodies are functioning in the regions. The Concept of Gender Policy for 2006 and the Strategy for Gender Equality for 2006-2016 have been adopted and implemented, making it possible to take further steps to create and improve national legislation for gender equality.

Based on the concept of family and gender policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2030, it may be noted that the objectives of the State gender policy are to achieve equal rights, benefits, responsibilities, and opportunities for men and women in all spheres of society, Overcoming all forms and manifestations of gender-based discrimination (Concept of family and gender policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2030, 2022).

In this sense, the «Public Service» in terms of gender approach, is a clear

hierarchical system with a certain socio-professional environment where the formation occurs. Formation and improvement of the professional activity of male and female civil servants, taking into account their status role, value-orientation and personal characteristics.

The task of the state bodies is to move from a «bureaucratic» model of relations between the state and society to a proactive and service model (Concept of development of public administration in the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2030, 2021). In this context, the demands on public servants are increasing; they must be effective, adaptable, result-oriented, and responsive to the population's social demands. The internal environment of the public service plays an important role here, in which the dignity, work, and time of public servants are fundamental values that enable them to reach their full potential. As part of forming a «humancentric» model of public administration, improving the quality of human resources and the professionalization of the state apparatus requires the improvement of gender equality in the civil service.

In today's world, the foundation of a strong and successful organization is gender equality based on the values of democracy.

Cassandra Colbert, Head of the IFC Regional Office in Central Asia, said: "As our research shows, gender diversity can help improve decision-making, ensure long-term sustainability, and increase the profitability of companies".

A study by Deloitte Consulting Company identified the most important global trends in human resource management, showing the global importance of gender equality research in the labour market (International trends in personnel management, Deloitte, 2021).

The works of foreign scientists such as F. Blau and L.M. Kahn (1992, 2007) and J. Hansen and R. Wahlberg (2000), N.N. Korostleva (2015), Z. Hotkina (1992), G. Serzhan. (2020), Baisakova 3. (2022) are devoted to the issues of developing gender equality in the labor market and its individual elements.

In order to increase the involvement and efficiency of human resources, the Kazakh State Service should also pay attention to creating a favourable working environment in State bodies, Supporting

professional development, and protecting civil servants' labor rights. The purpose of this study is to determine the level of gender distribution in the system of public administration in the Republic of Kazakhstan. To achieve this goal, the following tasks were set:

- to analyze the dynamics of development of the gender policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
- identify the degree of gender asymmetry in the state and civil service;
- develop proposals and recommendations for overcoming gender asymmetries in the state and civil service.

### Research methods

The research methodology is based on a review of existing legal acts and strategic documents, the study and analysis of foreign and Kazakh experience in the development of gender equality. To identify factors influencing the gender gap, we studied national statistics and global gender indicators developed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the World Economic Forum (WEF). It also provides data from an anonymous questionnaire survey about common gender stereotypes in society, was conducted among young people in the cities of Almaty (40%), Shymkent (31%), Aktobe (29%). Two hundred respondents took part in the survey. The age of respondents is 18-20 years old (51%), 21-23 years old (22%), 24-26 years old 6%, and over 26 years old (21%)—number of respondents by gender, male (44%), female (56%). The data and results presented in this study are based on a quantitative research approach.

### Findings of research

The Republic of Kazakhstan has taken several measures to strengthen the institution of gender equality. In 1995, it acceded to the Beijing Declaration and adopted a policy of gender mainstreaming. In December 1998, the National Commission on Women's Affairs and Family and Demographic Policy was established by presidential decree, and advisory and advisory bodies are functioning in the regions.

In September 2015, Kazakhstan committed to implementing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, in

which 12 of the 17 goals were gender-sensitive. One of the goals identified for sustainable development is: "Ensuring gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls" (ABC of women workers' rights and gender equality, p. 89.). It aims to eliminate all forms of gender discrimination and ensure equal opportunities and treatment for girls and women. These goals require national adaptation and integration into all State policies and objectives. The Concept of Gender Policy for 2006 and the Strategy for Gender Equality for 2006-2016 have been adopted and implemented, making it possible to take further steps to create and improve national legislation for gender equality. The main legislative act on gender policy is the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan, "On State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Men and Women," adopted in 2009.

A decision had been taken to develop gender budgeting approaches in Kazakhstan that would strengthen the social component of the State budget and ensure equal rights and opportunities for both sexes. In particular, Akmola region has implemented a pilot project to test approaches to the introduction of gender budgeting in the social protection, health, and education sectors for the evaluation of gender mainstreaming, Gender mainstreaming, and the gender impact of State programs.

A pilot study conducted in Akmola region revealed that the budget programs of the health sector did not take into account gender aspects (at the same time, there are separate budgetary programs for the protection of mothers and children, for the prevention and control of AIDS in the Republic of Kazakhstan and others). In education, there is a significant gender differentiation in the region, restricting girls from sports activities. Schools are dominated by sections that are highly attractive to boys. There is a significant gender differentiation in the employment of graduates.

Today, non-governmental organizations play a large role in the country's public and political life. According to the index of the World Economic Forum (hereinafter - WEF), Kazakhstan at the end of 2016 ranked 52nd out of 147 countries, at the end of 2020 - 79th out of 156 countries, at the end of 2022 - 65th out of 148

countries. Kazakhstan's rating on this indicator has declined significantly. According to VEF, indicators in the areas of political empowerment and socio-economic participation of Kazakhstan have an average level of gender gaps. In the long term, they may affect the competitiveness of national human capital (The Global Gender Gap Index 2022 rankings).

In connection with the facts mentioned above, the following problems can be identified:

- Kazakhstan's position in the international gender gap index has recently declined. The gender gap is greatest in terms of "political participation" and "economic participation and opportunity".

- There are no authorized bodies in the field of gender policy at both central and regional levels.

Ensuring gender equality is one of the factors for achieving sustainable development and effective economic growth. Despite the close attention of international organizations to the problems of gender inequality, professional segregation, underutilization of the potential and human capital of women in the economy, most countries are not able to overcome barriers to equal rights for men and women. Gender inequality in the labor market is observed all over the world, and Kazakhstan is no exception.

Kazakhstan's labour market is characterized by high female employment and the presence of skilled workers. While the unemployment rate for women was 5.5 % in 2016, it was 5.4 % in 2020, and women account for 49.1 % of all employees. There are 2,045.4 thousand self-employed people in Kazakhstan. Of these, 930.1 thousand are women, and 1,115.3 thousand are men. Thus, women account for 45.5 percent of all self-employed persons in Kazakhstan.

Traditionally, women are more vulnerable in the labor market, which was evident during the pandemic. According to a study conducted by "UN-Women" in Kazakhstan, in the first months of the quarantine, 22% of men and 26% of women lost their jobs in Kazakhstan (The impact of covid-19 on women's and men's and lives in Europe and Central Asia, 2020).

The average monthly nominal wage of women in Kazakhstan is 182.7 thousand

tenge, for men - 243.5 thousand tenge. The female-to-male wage ratio increased from 69 % in 2016 to 75 % in 2020. The wage gap between women and men is 25 %. In comparison, the gap is 3.4 % in Belgium, 4.8 % in Norway, 5.6 % in Germany, 12.3 % in the United Kingdom, 16.1 % in Canada, 17.7 % in the United States, 20.3 % in Latvia, 22.5 % in Japan, 22.7 % in Israel, 31.5 % in South Korea (Concept of Family and Gender Policy Kazakhstan 2030).

A 2019 KPMG Australia study estimated the share of factors (drivers) that contribute to the gender pay gap: discrimination, gender stereotypes, and biases in recruitment and pay decisions (39% of the gender gap); interruptions in women's professional careers (25%); employment of men and women predominantly in different sectors of the economy: there are areas dominated by women's work with mainly lower pay (occupational and occupational segregation) (17 %).

In Kazakhstan, this ratio is because men are mostly employed in industry (oil and gas, mining, manufacturing), transport, and construction, where wages are higher than the national average. Women's employment is often prohibited in these sectors because of severe and harmful factors.

There has been little change in sectoral gender segregation. Women accounted for over 70 % of health, education, and social protection employees, while women's representation in the financial and public sectors was just over half. Traditionally, these sectors are less profitable than "men's industries", such as construction, oil and gas, mining, transport, etc. According to 2020 data, women account for 23.3 % of construction, industry - 23.3 % 31.7 %; agriculture, forestry, and fisheries 42.4 %; transport and storage 23.3 %; professional, scientific, and technical activities 49.9 %; education 72.1 %, health 72.3 % (Concept of family and gender policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2030).

There has been no change in sectoral gender segregation. Women accounted for more than 70 % of health, education, and social protection workers, and over half of those in the financial and public sectors were women. Traditionally, these industries are less profitable than "men's", such as construction, oil and gas, mining, transport,

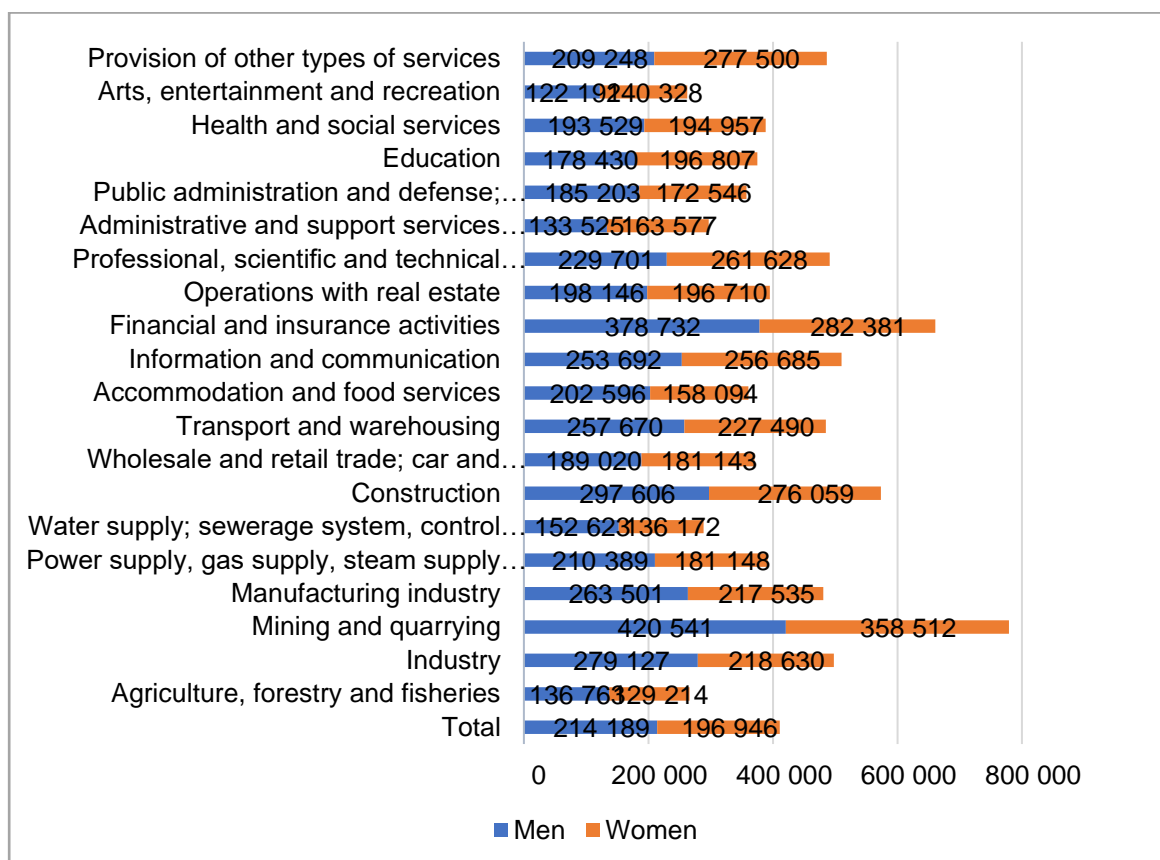


etc. According to 2020 data, women account for 23.3% of construction, industry - 23.3% 31.7%, Agriculture, forestry and fisheries - 42.4 %, transport and storage 23.3 %, professional, scientific and technical activities 49.9 %, education 72.1 %, health care 72.3 % (Concept of family and gender policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2030).

One of the reasons for the existing gender imbalance in the professional sphere is the widespread stereotypes about the presence of "male" and "female" professions. In 2022, in 13 out of 20 economic activities, men's salaries were

higher than women's, according to the Bureau of National Statistics. The exceptions were the following areas (Data from the Bureau of National Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan) (Picture1):

- activities of administrative and support services;
- education;
- arts, entertainment and recreation;
- health care and social services;
- professional, scientific and technical activities;
- information and communication;
- sphere of other services.



Source: Bureau of National Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan

**Picture 1 - Median salary of employees by regions of the Republic of Kazakhstan**

In 2021, amendments were made to the Labor Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan within the framework of the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On amendments and additions to some legislative acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan on social protection of certain categories of citizens" The abolition of the list of jobs in which the employment of women is prohibited. The decision to abolish it is a progressive one aimed at ensuring equal rights and opportunities for men and

women in the field of labor (Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Social Protection of Certain Categories of Citizens).

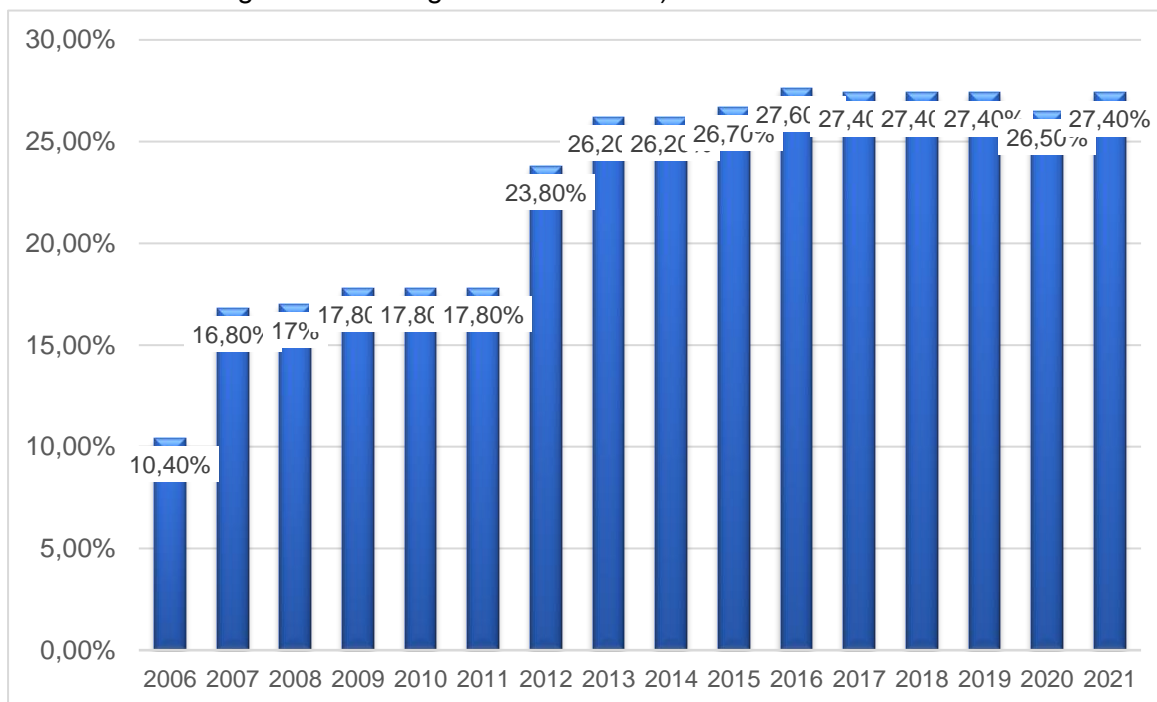
The reasons for the gender gap in the labor sphere, according to the studies of the London School of Economics, lie in the role of women in the family. In a patriarchal system, women have to spend more time caring for children, cooking, cleaning and other household chores. In this regard, they are more likely than men to take part-time

jobs, as well as jobs related to the service sector, where communication skills are used more intensively than physical strength. (Ngai & Petrongolo, 2013.) The decision to work part-time may seem voluntary, but for many women it is the only way to balance work and family needs. According to the World Bank, women in Kazakhstan spend 3 times more time on housework than men. Another reason for the gender gap in the workplace is unequal pay, again linked to caregiving responsibilities. The birth of a child is associated with a decrease in wages due to interruption of service and maternity leave. There are opinions about mothers that they are less promising and ready to work, compared to men. It is believed that fathers are more in need of earnings, therefore are more loyal and hardworking, and therefore deserve additional wages. Whatever a woman's job, how much she earns, and whatever she desires, she still has the primary responsibility for family and housework, although more educated women with higher earnings are

increasingly delegating these responsibilities, at least partially. According to the results of an anonymous questionnaire survey conducted among the youth of three cities, 26.8% of respondents recognized the stereotype "Employers create obstacles in hiring women because they are afraid that they will go on maternity leave at any moment" as one of the most common in Kazakhstan society.

The right to take part in the conduct of public affairs, to be admitted in one's own country on general terms of equality to public service is also not exercised at the proper level.

In the years since the implementation of the gender strategy, there have been significant changes in the number of women in elected bodies. Thus, in the Majilis of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in the first year of implementation of the Gender Strategy (2006), the share of women was 10.4 %, and in the final year (2021) it increased to 27.6 % (Strategic Planning and Reform Agency data) (Picture 2).



Source: Strategic Planning and Reform Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan

**Picture 2 - Share of seats held by women in the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan**

In 2020, amendments were adopted to the laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On elections in the Republic of Kazakhstan" and "On political parties",

according to which party lists are formed, taking into account at least 30 % representation of women and youth. Because of the amendments, the proportion

of women in the Majilis of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan is 27.1 %, and in local representative bodies at all levels, it is 30.5 %. Only Nur Otan (Amanat), in the Majilis 31% of women, observed this quota for women in 2021. The Ak Zhol party lost 17% of the seats, as it had previously held 42% of women, The People's Party of Kazakhstan elected 20% of women to the Majilis.

However, early elections to the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan are scheduled for March 19, 2023. And the Central Election Commission has already completed the stage of registration of candidates for deputies of the Majilis of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan and maslikhats of all levels. Thus, 281 candidates are included in 7 lists of political parties applying for mandates of deputies of the Majilis of the Parliament of the country. Each political party meets the required representation of women, youth and persons with disabilities. In general, these categories account for 38.1% of all party lists. The average age of candidates is 45.7 years, 19 candidates under the age of 29, 80 women (28.5%), 201 men. The elections have not yet taken place, and it is not known whether all these parties will enter the parliament, however, the total number of women candidates is not even 50% of the total, which indicates that Kazakhstan is only on its way to supporting the participation of women in politics and government (On results of registration of party lists, drawing of lots, accreditation of foreign observers and election campaign 2023).

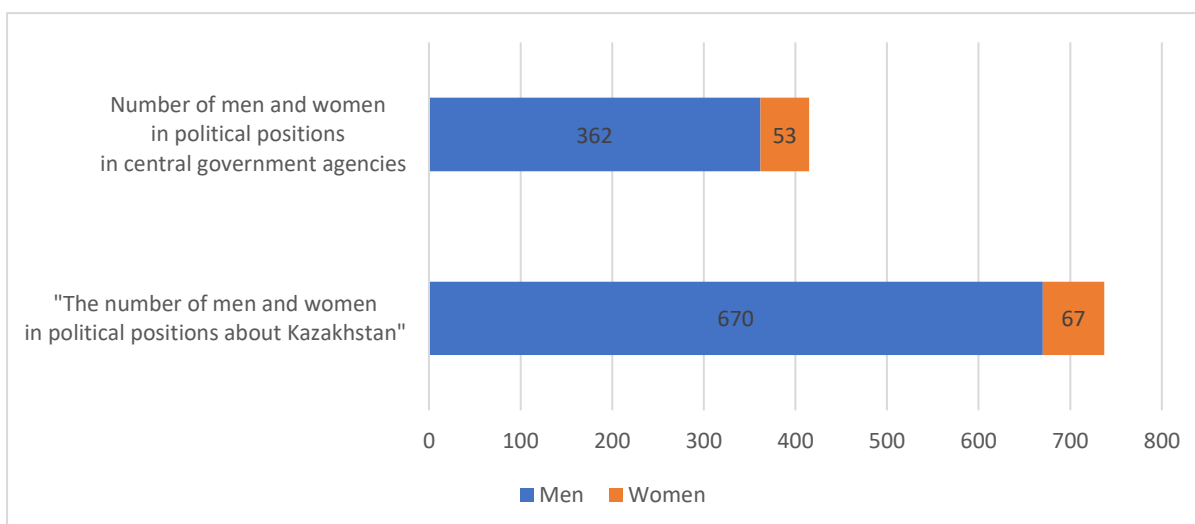
Women and youth make up a little more than half of the population of Kazakhstan and their interests should be represented. They bring a slightly different agenda to politics - they raise more issues that are social. Simply because they face problems in these areas more often and make them more visible. In addition, this, in turn, increases the efficiency of government structures. Ideally, the system of party building, inclusion in party lists for election to the lower house of parliament should be based on the principle of meritocracy (the principle of management, according to

which leadership positions should be occupied by the most capable people, regardless of their social origin and financial wealth). It follows that experience and age do not equal efficiency. Therefore, quotas will allow worthy candidates from among women and youth to get the opportunity to be represented in the legislative branch of government.

Gulzada Serzhan's survey of women deputies of different levels, described in the report of the study «Women in politics and decision-making in Kazakhstan», identifies one of the reasons for the low representation of women in the political sphere, namely «low competitiveness, lack of ambitions to overcome and withstand competition» (Serzhan, 2020).

As of 1 January 2021, women accounted for 55.5 % of the total (49,031 out of 88,409), of whom 8.9 % were political (65 out of 728), 11.4 % "A" administrative" and 55.9% "B" (48,957 out of 87,602). The share of women in senior positions in the civil service is 40 % (9,531 out of 23,959). But a year later, this figure dropped. As of February 1, 2022, about 50 thousand women work in the civil service in Kazakhstan, which is approximately 55% of the total number of civil servants or 50,491 - that is, more than half. However, at the same time, the proportion of women in leadership positions is less, that is, 39.5% (9,569 out of 24,209). There are even fewer women among political civil servants: 9.3%, among administrative civil servants of corps A - 4.1%, corps B - 55.3%. These are 49,584 women out of 89,000 active civil servants.

There needs to be a positive dynamic in the representation of women in the field of political civil service. Of the 728 active political civil servants, 67 or 8.9 % are women (9.7 percent in 2016). The proportion of women in the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan is 9%. In comparison, more than 60% of the government members in Spain and Finland are women. Austria, Belgium, Sweden, 57.1%, Canada, 51.4%, France, Finland, and Spain, 50%, respectively. The global average of women in national Governments is 21.9 %. (Data from the Strategic Planning and Reform Agency) (Picture3).



Source: the Strategic Planning and Reform Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan

**Picture 3 - Proportion of women among political civil servants of the Republic of Kazakhstan**

There has been little change in the representation of women in senior positions in local (territorial) executive bodies. As of April 2022, the proportion of women holding the region's mayor post was - 5.9% (1 out of 17). For thirty years of independence, only one woman held the post of regional mayor. The proportion of women deputy mayors in all 17 regions is 9.3%. Women accounted for 9.5 percent of the total number of the mayor of regions, the capital, cities of republican significance, and their first deputies.

There has been an increase in the proportion of women in the quasi-state sector at the decision-making level from 23.6 % in 2018 to 36.1 % in 2020. However, the proportion of women in technical and industrial management is below 30 %.

It should be noted that, on instructions from the Head of State, efforts are being made to increase the proportion of women to 30 % in the governing bodies of companies with State participation.

Thus, the following problems can be singled out as reasons for the underrepresentation of women in the upper levels of power and in the composition of civil servants:

- Presence of stereotypes in the society that impede the advancement of women in public service. Patriarchal norms established gender stereotypes are still dominant in the worldview of both the male and female parts of Kazakhstani society.

- The need to combine professional activities with family obligations negatively affects the career development of women rather than men, which leads to less representation in the state and civil service.

- There is an imbalance in the representation of women by areas of activity in government bodies in the quasi-public sector.

- The mechanism of control or sanctions for non-compliance with the quota has not been developed, that is, parties may not ensure the preservation of deputy seats for women.

- The proportion of women in party lists depends entirely on the policies of the parties and it may well turn out that young people, among whom there will be very few women, will fill the quotas.

One of the reasons that prevent women from moving up the career ladder and holding high positions is gender stereotypes that have developed in society. According to the data of a questionnaire survey conducted among the youth of the cities of Almaty, Shymkent and Aktobe, to the question "Among the indicated gender stereotypes, which five main gender stereotypes would you call characteristic of Kazakhstani society?", Respondents chose stereotypes associated with work, education, professions and social roles that men and women should be engaged in (The results of an anonymous questionnaire survey about "Actual gender stereotypes in the society of Kazakhstan") (Table 1).



**Table 1 - Stereotypes related to work, education, professions and social roles that men and women should play**

№	Stereotypes related to work, education, professions and social roles that men and women should play	Total %	Men	Women
1.	Stereotypes related to work, education, professions and social roles that men and women should play	50%	16%	34%
2.	Men are better suited to political leadership than women	28,8 %	11%	17,8%
3.	A woman can never be president in Kazakhstan	24,8%	12,8	12%
4.	Men are better at business management than women	41,1%	16,1%	25%
5.	In a job-poor country, men are more eligible to work than women	35,8%	11,4%	24,4%
6.	Being educated is more important for men than for women	34,1%	22,9%	11,2%
7.	For men, work is typical in law enforcement agencies, and for women - in the field of education and health care	42,6 %	18,3%	24,3
8.	A man should have a higher income than a woman	41,1%	25%	16,1%
9.	Being an assistant to the boss is more suitable for women. It's not a man's job	35,8%	11,4%	24,4%
10.	In the process of employment, men have advantages in employment compared to women	23,2	20,7	22,0

*Source: The results of an anonymous questionnaire survey about "Actual gender stereotypes in the society of Kazakhstan"*

The purpose of this survey was to identify the most common gender stereotypes in the minds of young people in modern Kazakhstan society. Based on the results of the survey, widespread gender stereotypes in modern Kazakhstani society were identified. Moreover, in this regard, it can be noted that gender stereotypes are widespread in the three cities studied (Almaty, Shymkent, Aktobe). The proposed 21 gender stereotypes are typical for all three regions. Traditional gender stereotypes have formed in the society of modern Kazakhstan. The social roles of men and women are subject to gender stereotypes. The analysis of stereotypes about men shows that traditional ideas about men are still stable. Men tend to be responsible for the financial support of the family. Most of the activities outside the home are characteristic of a man. Men are assigned roles such as breadwinner and worker. In addition, there are

widespread stereotypes that men dominate professions such as politics and business. One of the strongest stereotypes is the traditional attitude towards the life responsibilities of a woman. The social role of women is still centered on the family and the home. According to prevailing stereotypes, women still do not have a priority in terms of work and education in the public mind. Women themselves are very susceptible to stereotypes, and this factor hinders the realization of women's rights and their consolidation. Thus, according to Z. Baysakova, "At present, the expansion of women's consolidation is hindered by such reasons as female conservatism, female competition, unwillingness to give in to a rival, even if she puts forward a noble task, for the sake of which one could unite efforts." (Baisakova, 2022).

Due to the existing problems with the observance of the right of a woman to

participate in the affairs of the state in the Republic of Kazakhstan, today non-governmental organizations play a large role in the socio-political life of the country. Until today, some 300 non-governmental organizations have been actively involved in protecting women's rights and interests. Women hold 32.4% of leadership positions in trade unions and NGOs. Given the low representation of women in politics, such forums provide an important starting point for women to increase their voice of women in political decisions affecting their lives. Despite these opportunities, their level of influence is insufficient, and the Government still interacts with only a few representatives of NGOs and quasi-NGOs».

According to the «Union of Crisis Centers», 34 % of all NGOs in Kazakhstan deal with human rights, environmental protection, and gender policy. Approximately 2 million citizens benefited from their services, which included ensuring the well-being of women, promoting women's economic development, and assisting women victims of violence. However, for the women's movement to become an influential political force, it is necessary to unite women (Baisakova, 2022).

One of the reasons for the existing gender imbalance in the professional sphere is the widespread stereotyping of "male" and "female" occupations.

Economic opportunities for women are increasing. The joint efforts of the National Commission for Women and Family and Population Policy and the competent State bodies have led to the developing of a dynamic sector for women's entrepreneurship. However, the economic empowerment of rural women, who lack access to public and public resources and services, requires special attention. According to the Bureau of National Statistics, one in three women living in rural areas of Kazakhstan is self-employed and receives income from subsistence farming, which includes personal consumption. Income, which includes personal consumption, initially prevents women from investing in human capital to return to the real economy.

The measures taken made it possible for Kazakhstan to take 26th place on the "Women in the labor force" indicator of the WEF Global Competitiveness Index.

## Conclusion

The study results show that in Kazakhstan, the participation of women in politics and decision-making is low (10%). There has been no significant change since accessing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1997. The measures taken by the State because of our research are considered insufficient or ineffective in comparison with the best practices recommended for the advancement of women in politics. Because of being unable to participate in politics and decision-making and not using much of their existing talent and experience, women in Kazakhstan have to occupy an alternative sphere of influence - leadership positions in non-governmental organizations. Women tend to occupy this niche on voluntary, unpaid, or low-paid social grounds. As a result, they are forced to have additional and/or unstable sources of income, which reduces women's opportunities for advancement in politics and decision-making. Political party leaders, for their part, hold the view that women and men are given the same opportunities and do not include gender issues in their programs. Such an approach does not create equal conditions for women, who have to make enormous efforts to overcome the obstacles created by gender stereotypes, the status of women in Kazakh society, with a high level of violence against women in general.

According to the data received, there are also few women in the leadership positions of the parties. However, most of the ordinary members of the parties not involved in decision-making are women. Today, there is no activity among women members of the party in establishing intra-party women's blocs and coalitions to promote women's rights and interests. There is also a lack of intra-party policies and programs to support and promote women at the decision-making level. Overall, women's participation in influencing policy is still limited.

The need to combine professional activities with family life hinders the development of women's careers, remains relevant and occupies key positions in the formation of gender asymmetry in the state and civil service in the Republic of Kazakhstan. Gender stereotypes prevailing in family upbringing and the process of education have an impact on the formation of

gender asymmetry in the labor market as a whole. As well as the problem of stereotypes in the choice of specialty and areas of study by girls, which is later reflected in the employment structure, characterized by the concentration of women in "traditionally female areas." Women employed in the field of education and medicine make up a huge layer. The moral support of society in the person of family, colleagues, the promotion of gender equality, as well as the presence of a kind of "role model" among women contributes to the transformation of gender stereotypes and overcoming gender asymmetry in the public and civil service.

Because of the above, the following recommendations can be made to improve the gender distribution in the system of public administration in the Republic of Kazakhstan:

- Systematic work with gender stereotypes is needed. From the very beginning, in the family, in kindergarten, at school, it is necessary to form modern competent ideas about the behavior of women and men, their place in society and responsibilities.

- It is necessary to introduce gender education, which in turn propagandizes and promotes gender equality and helps to overcome negative gender stereotypes.

- Introduction of a 50 % quota for the representation of women in all spheres of life and the separation of quotas for women in the concept of family and gender policy.

- Respect for women's representation at the local level and in the executive branch.

- The party's obligation to comply with the quota based on the results of the elections and the establishment of a mechanism to replace outgoing MPs with members of the same sex.

- Training and capacity-building for women who are selected at the decision-making and support levels (mentoring, mentoring, setting up offices to question and answer potential women leaders).

- Creation of a gender asset or reserve of women politicians who could become deputies at all levels (maslikhat, parliament) in the future.

- Women's NGOs, party representatives for formulating a unified gender policy, etc.

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#### **ҚАЗАҚСТАН РЕСПУБЛИКАСЫНДАҒЫ МЕМЛЕКЕТТІК ЖӘНЕ АЗАМАТТЫҚ ҚЫЗМЕТ ЖҮЙЕСІНДЕГІ ГЕНДЕРЛІК БӨЛУ**

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#### **ГЕНДЕРНОЕ РАСПРЕДЕЛЕНИЕ В СИСТЕМЕ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОЙ И ГРАЖДАНСКОЙ СЛУЖБЫ В РЕСПУБЛИКЕ КАЗАХСТАН**

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