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ANALYSIS OF GENDER QUOTAS IMPLEMENTATION FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: EU AND REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA'S EXPERIENCE³

Abstract. Promoting gender equality and women empowerment has been one of the Millennium Development Goals of United Nations that nearly all world countries committed to achieve by 2015, including EU countries and Republic of Moldova. The slow progress towards this goal made it remain part of the UN agenda for the next 15 years. Due to that, it became necessary to analyze how an instrument like gender quotas can be used as some sort of last resort in this context in EU countries and in the Republic of Moldova. The purpose of the research is to analyze the experience of EU countries and Republic of Moldova on gender quotas as a tool for women empowerment and to see the opinions of employers and employees from Moldova on gender quotas. The research methods applied in the research include: legal analysis, induction and statistical analysis. The results of the survey on the opinions on gender quotas have shown that the views on gender quotas are mostly negative. Employers, even though recognizing their potential utility, have a pronounced reticence towards them, while opinions of employees were divided: some were optimistic and supported the idea, while others were sceptical that gender quotas have some potential for women empowerment and others pointed to other areas, like education, towards which more attention is needed for women empowerment.

Key words: decision-making position, employee, employer, gender quotas, international experience, Republic of Moldova.

JEL: J08, J7, J16, J83.

1. Introduction

Gender issues have grown in media coverage together with human rights movements. They are part of feminism agenda the origins of which lie at the French Revolution. Since then four waves of feminism have passed. The first wave

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of feminism that lasted from XIXth century until the beginning of XXth century concerned itself with obtaining the right to vote and the right for married women to have property. The second wave (after 1960s) was focused on fully getting legal and social equality of women and men. The third wave feminism (since 1990s) emphasized the diversity, including the differences between women. The fourth and current wave (since 2010s) focuses especially in issues of sexual assault and empowering women. The movement for equal rights in employment began with the second wave feminism. Since equal rights didn't correspond necessarily to equal possibilities the feminist movement later focused on getting equal opportunities to work for men and women. In this regard gender quotas come as a regulatory pushing mechanism meant to foster women empowerment, not focusing on their rights, but on opening opportunities to make up for the discrepancies of policies on fostering gender equality. Therefore, inequality between men and women has been always an argued and controversial issue. This type of inequality appears in different areas of human activity, mainly within enterprises when applying for a job or in terms of wages, in politics – referring to the representativeness of men / women in elective bodies, in education, etc.

The aspects of gender quotas have been widely studied by a number of scholars from abroad, among which can be mentioned: Verge T. and Fuente M. [Verge & Fuente, 2014], Krook M. and Norris P. [Krook & Norris, 2014], Pesonen S. et al., [Pesonen et al, 2009], Terjesen S. and Sealy R. [Terjesen & Sealy, 2016], etc. In the Republic of Moldova, the issue on gender quotas has a different approach, being based mainly on the existence of quotas within the political system, rather than in the economic activity.

2. Applied research methods and materials

For the analysis of the gender quotas in Republic of Moldova the gender-wise data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) of Moldova and from a survey about the perception of gender equality in the workplace conducted by the authors in the years 2018–2019 was used. 245 respondents from the Republic of Moldova took part in the survey, of which, by gender: the share of male respondents – 46.6%, female respondents – 53.4%; by age group: under 35 years old – 44.3%, from 35 to 50 years old – 32.1% and over 50 years old – 23.6%; by education level with higher education: licence/master degree – 57.3%, doctorate/postdoctorate – 42.7%; by activity sector: government sector – 59.2% of people, from private sector – 40.8% of respondents. Research methods that are applied in the scientific work include legal analysis of the laws of Republic of Moldova and EU about gender policies related to gender quotas, induction and statistical analysis of the NBS data.

3. EU experience of gender quotas

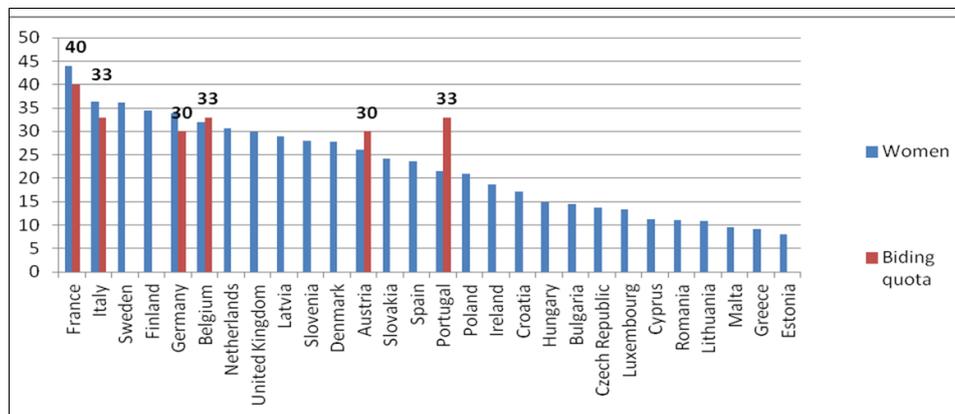
At the EU level, gender equality represents one of the fundamental values of the member states. The EU is dedicated not only to defending this right, but also to promoting gender equality within the Member States and across the world [Report, 2018: 7].

In order to enhance the issue of gender equality and increase the awareness of public opinion, business and politic environment on gender issues, the EU launched the Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality 2016–2019. Among the priority areas specified in the document can be mentioned the following ones: increasing female labour-market participation and the equal economic independence of women and men; reducing the gender pay, earnings and pension gaps and thus fighting poverty among women; promoting equality between women and men in decision-making; combating gender-based violence and protecting and supporting victims; and promoting gender equality and women's rights across the world [Strategic Engagement, 2015]. The key areas are essential for ensuring an equal treatment between men and women and erasing stereotypes related to the gender issues. At the same time, they will contribute in achieving the target set by the European Union of 75% of men and women engaged in job places and enhancing the involvement of women in participation on the labour market, thus diminishing the gap in employment.

Progress of these indicators has been monitored within annual reports dedicated to equality between men and women. Thus, the most recent report dated from 2019 [Report, 2019] presents the results of the EU's engagement for gender equality in terms of gender quotas. Express gender quotas within enterprises are not very established, except gender quotas for boardrooms, as women's position or representation within directory boards represents an important issue for the EU. Therefore, taking into account the third priority on promoting equality in decision making, the report mentions: "Despite some encouraging progress in recent years, the under-representation of women on corporate boards and in management positions remains an important challenge for EU Member States. This under-representation means that the potential of highly skilled and needed human resources remains untapped, as evidenced by the discrepancy between the high number of female graduates and their number in top-level positions. Women still face numerous obstacles on their way to reaching senior positions" [Report, 2019]. Thus, according to the latest data presented in the Report, the share of women involved in leading positions within the largest publicly listed companies registered in the EU Member States reached 26.7% in October 2018. With 44% of its board members being women, France is the only EU Member State with at least 40% of each gender at board level. In Italy, Sweden, Finland, and Germany, women account for at least one third of board members. In just under half of Member States (12), men still outnumber women by at least 4 to 1 (i.e. < 20% women). In Malta, Greece and Estonia, women account for less than 10% of board members.

The gender quota instrument has been introduced by many countries in various fields of activity in order to diminish the gap between men and women and increase the representativeness of a specific gender either in elective positions or in leading positions within enterprises.

Gender quotas within the boards of large companies from EU countries are established only in several countries. Thus, France has a targeted quota of 40%, Belgium, Italy and Portugal – 33%, Germany and Austria – 30%. These countries adopted a system of binding quotas. Other members of the EU have selected a different approach, mainly applying the quotas only in state-owned companies or no sanctions in case of non-appliance. On the other hand, Governments of such countries as Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Croatia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Romania and Slovakia did not consolidate their efforts in order to obtain a progress in this field (see *Figure 1*).



Source: European Institute for Gender Equality, *Gender Statistics Database (2019)*, <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs>

Figure 1. Share of women within the leading positions of the largest publicly listed companies from European Union, 2018, %.

Starting with 2010, the number of women in corporate boards has increased in many countries from the European Union. In Italy and France, the growth accounted for more than 30 p.p., while in Belgium and Germany this indicator reached more than 20 p.p. On the other hand, an insignificant progress has been registered in Croatia, Czech Republic and Hungary – less than 2 p.p. Negative progress has been registered in Lithuania (-2.3 p.p.) and Romania (-10.3 p.p.).

The issue of introducing gender quotas in politics has been widely debated for a long time. Therefore, member states of the EU have started to introduce step-by-step such a measure in order to increase women's participation in political life of the countries. In 2018, the presence of men is dominant in the legislative of every EU member state. On the other side, in terms of the representatives of

women in governments, France is on the leading position, having approximately 50% of representatives of both genders. Only three Member States have women as prime ministers: Germany, Romania and the UK. For the 2019 European elections, legislated quotas will apply in 11 countries (Belgium (the difference between the number of candidates of each gender should not be more than one), Greece (at least one-third of candidates from political parties must be with candidates of each gender), Spain (candidates of either gender should make up at least 40 per 100 of total membership), France (the difference between the number of candidates of each gender that a party or group of parties present for single-member constituency elections cannot be greater than 2%), Croatia (at least 40% of each gender), Italy (none of the two genders shall be represented in a percentage exceeding 60 percent), Luxembourg (quotas established at the party level, ranging from 33% to 50% for each political party), Poland (the number of candidates of each gender cannot be less than 35% of all candidates on the list), Portugal (a minimum representation of 33% of each gender), Romania (voluntary political party quotas, ranging from 25% to 30% of representation) and Slovenia (no gender shall be represented by less than 35% of the actual total number of female and male candidates on the list)) [Shreeves et al., 2019] [Gender, 2019].

4. Republic of Moldova's experience of gender quotas

Moldova ratified a series of international conventions on gender issues: the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (in 1994), ILO Convention on interdiction of Discrimination in Employment and Occupation (in 1996), ILO Convention on Equal Remuneration (in 2000). Through the *Government Decision No. 288 on the approval of the Millennium Development Goals in the Republic of Moldova until 2015 and the First National Report "Millennium Development Goals in the Republic of Moldova"* [Hotărârea, 2005] Moldovan Government approved Millennium Development Goals, one of which was to ensure gender equality and give women equal rights and opportunities. Extending women's participation in political and social life has been selected as a task for this goal. Various types of gender quotas have been selected as monitoring indicators: the share of mandates held by women in Parliament; leaders and senior officials from public administration authorities, economic and social organizations and the correlation between male and female wages.

4.1. Gender quotas in politics

At the end of 2009 a Government Decision was adopted regarding the approval of the National Program on ensuring gender equality for the years 2010–2015 [Hotărârea, 2009]. In the paragraph 63, this Decision proposes to operate with the harmonized set of gender-sensitive development indicators (60 types of indicators) in the context of the Millennium Development Goals, which were previously approved

by Decision No. 6 of the National Bureau of Statistics College on 26 December 2008. The performance and progress indicators that are included in the sphere of participation in the public and political decision-making process contain such indicators as: the share of mandates held by women in Parliament; the number/share of women and men, by residence areas, elected in municipal and local councils; the number of members of the Cabinet of Ministers by gender; the share of women in the number of civil servants in central and local public authorities; the number of managers and civil servants in functions of public dignity and economic units by gender and professional status (employees and non-employees). Following this Government Decision, a few laws were adopted or amended that introduced provisions of gender quotas in the public and political decision-making positions.

On February 9, 2006 the *Law on ensuring equal opportunities between men and women* [Legea, 2006] was adopted by the Parliament of Moldova, the purpose of which is to ensure the exercise of equal rights by women and men in the political, economic, social, cultural, other spheres of life, rights guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, with a view to prevent and eliminate all forms of discrimination based on the gender criterion. The paragraph (2) of the article 7 of this law compel political parties to keep the minimum quota of 40% for both genders in providing representation in governing bodies and representation of women and men in lists of candidates without discrimination based on gender. The provision of gender quota was introduced in 2016 by the Law Nr. 71 from 14.04.2016 for amending and completing some legislative acts [Legea, 2016].

Based on the *Law on the amendment and completion of the Law no. 294/2007 on political parties* [Legea, 2018] political parties have the right to receive annual funding from the state budget through the Central Election Commission. The amount of the allowances for this purpose is approved in the annual budget law, with the percentage share representing no more than 0.2% of the state budget revenues, except for the special purpose revenues provided by the legislation. Political parties in proportion to the number of women effectively elected to the office of deputy in Parliament on uninominal circumscriptions can get 5% from the amount of allowances from the budget.

The paragraph (4) of the article 46 in the *Law on Electoral Code* of the Republic of Moldova [Legea, 1997] establishes that political parties that will respect the quota of at least 40% of candidates to be women submitted to uninominal circumscriptions shall benefit from an increase of the budget support of at least 10% of the amount allocated for the budgetary year of that party and a multiplication factor for each female candidate elected in the uninominal circumscription according to the legislation on political parties and procedure established by the Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Moldova. The paragraph (1) of the article 86 in the same law stipulates that to be registered by the electoral council of the circumscription, the candidate for the uninominal circumscription presents subscription lists containing at least 500 signatures and up to 1000 signatures of the supporters with the right to vote in the uninominal circumscription where they intend to apply. By way of derogation from

this paragraph, a female candidate may be registered if she has signed at least 250 signatures and up to 500 signatures of the supporters with the right to vote in the circumscription where she is applying. The paragraph (6) of the article 46 of this law states that candidates' lists for parliamentary and local elections to be drawn up respecting the minimum representation rate of 40% for both genders.

Also, a mandatory minimum quota of 40% for both genders in the National Council of Participation is stipulated in the paragraph 11 of the *Government Decision on the Creation of the National Council for Participation* [Hotărârea, 2010], a condition introduced in 2012. The National Council for Participation is an advisory body, not a legal entity and was created as an expression of the will to recognize the value of the competences and to ensure the participation of the civil society and the private sector in the process development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review of strategic policy documents.

According to the article 27 of the *Law on the Government** from 31.05.1990 (which was abrogated in 2017) when Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova forms the Government it should respect a minimum quota of 40% for both genders [Legea, 1990].

In the new *Law on the Government* from 07.07.2017 the article 10 states that when drawing up the list of candidates for the Government, the candidate for Prime Minister must take into account the legislation in the field of equal opportunities for men and women, correlated with the criteria of professionalism and merit [Legea, 2017]. Here the gender quota is not mentioned, while other criteria like professionalism and merit are stressed.

Based on the data of the Central Electoral Commission [Comisia, 2019] the mandatory gender quota for candidates' lists of political formations that was stipulated by law was respected by all the formations that participated in the general elections on February 24, 2019 (first elections after which the respective law entered into force), but the optional gender quota for circumscriptions lists of candidates, purely arithmetically, only 2 political formations from 11 in total respected the optional gender quota, but it can't be said for sure if this was a deliberate decision or not, since the number of candidates was very small (1 woman from a formation; 1 man and 1 woman from another formation).

Even if both genders have each a share of 50% in the list of candidates for elections, in other words, arriving at a mathematical equality between genders in this aspect, the higher positions of people of either gender on the lists privilege the people on these positions in the detriment of the people in the lower positions of either gender, thus inequality is not completely eradicated, because equality and inequality are abstract concepts and, thus, unattainable completely in concrete terms.

Now, let us suppose that an amendment has been made to current Moldovan legislation to enforce a minimum quota of 40% for both genders to corporate boards of all institutions. Before that, an analysis of the situation of decision-making positions in terms of gender needs to be done, based on available data. In 2017, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) of Moldova created the Gender Pulse platform wherein gender statistics are presented in an interactive way.

Among other data, the platform contains data about the share of women's and men's participation in decision-making positions (as members of the Parliament, in ministerial positions, as deputies in judiciary, in police service and as rectors of higher education institutions), which is shown in the *Table 1*.

Table 1

Share of women and men in decision-making positions, %

		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Share of women and men as members of the Parliament	Women	20.8	24.8	25.7	19.8	19.8	19.8	18.8	21.8	20.8	21.8
	Men	79.2	75.2	74.3	80.2	80.2	80.2	81.2	78.2	79.2	78.2
Share of women and men in ministerial positions	Women	29.4	33.3	6.3	6.3	18.7	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	22.2
	Men	70.6	66.7	93.7	93.7	81.3	75.0	75.0	75.0	75.0	77.8
Share of women and men deputies in judiciary	Women	33.6	37.0	36.9	37.4	42.0	40.9	43.8	45.2	47.7	47.4
	Men	66.4	63.0	63.1	62.6	58.0	59.1	56.2	54.8	52.3	52.6
Share of women and men in police service	Women	9.1	8.9	9.2	9.8	17.9	18.3	17.1	17.4	17.9	18.8
	Men	90.9	91.1	90.8	90.2	82.1	81.7	82.9	82.6	82.1	81.2
Share of women and men as rectors of higher education institutions	Women	9.7	21.2	25.8	25.0	25.0	23.3	25.0	34.5	24.1	21.4
	Men	90.3	78.8	74.2	75.0	75.0	76.7	75.0	65.5	75.9	78.6

Source: developed by authors based on data of NBS from the GenderPulse platform [Aplicatia, 2017]

According to the data from the *Table 1* for 2017, a position of women most close to the gender parity was present only between deputies in judiciary in which 47.4% were women. In the period 2008-2017, the share of women has grown with 13.8 p.p. with occasional small yearly reductions. The biggest growth of the share of women was between 2011 and 2012 (with 4.6 p.p.). The share of women as members of the Parliament didn't change too much during the period 2008-2017, oscillating around 20-25%. The share of women in ministerial positions during the period 2008-2009 was about 1/3, but in the next 2 years, 2010-2011 the share fell suddenly to 6.3%, while in the following years the share rose to 1/4. The share of women in police service was below 10% during 2008-2010; afterwards it doubled and didn't change significantly during the following years. The share of women as rectors of higher education institutions was below 10% in 2009, but in the following year it grew to 20-25% and it remained practically the same until 2017.

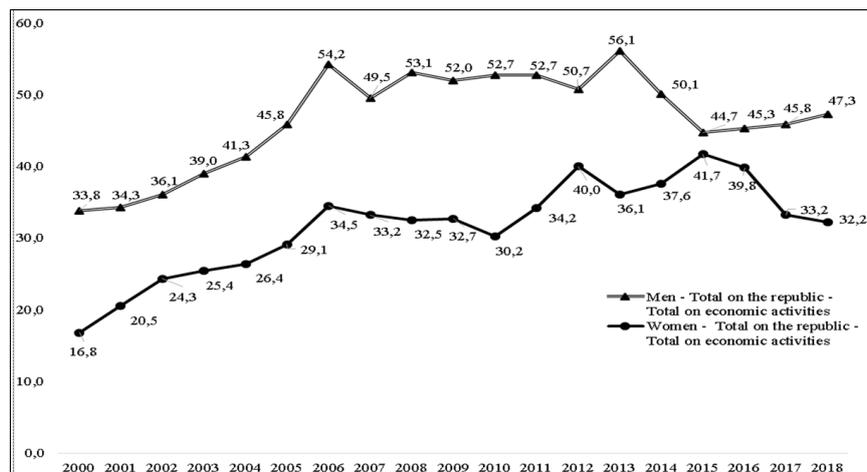
4.2. Gender quotas in economics

The *Law on ensuring equal opportunities between men and women* besides having provisions related to ensuring equal opportunities between women and men in the public domain, also has stipulations on ensuring equal opportunities between women and men in the social and economic domains (the articles 9-12¹). The law

contains general provisions for respecting gender equality, like banning: discriminatory information based on gender, refusal to hire motivated by familial obligations, unfounded refusal based on gender, unequal payment for equal amount of work, sexual harassment and other provisions that under-privilege people based on gender. Nevertheless, the law does not specify a concrete quota for either gender in decision-making positions in economic organizations.

The data from the National Bureau of Statistics will be used in order to observe the differences in the representation based on gender in decision-making positions. **Figure 2** shows the number of legislators, members of the executive, other senior dignitaries and officials of public administration, heads and senior officials of units, which include: legislators, executive members, other senior officials and heads of public administration; administrative and commercial managers; heads of industry and service units; heads of units in the hotel industry, commerce and other services. For the occupation the data are offered only in aggregate form.

The data from **Figure 2** show that there is a clear gap between men and women in decision-making positions; it narrowed in the period 2010–2015 following the active policies focused on gender equality, but from 2016 the gap began to increase, returning to values that were before 2010.



Source: developed by authors based on data of NBS [Biroul, 2000–2018]

Figure 2. The number of legislators, members of the executive, other senior dignitaries and officials of public administration, heads and senior officials of units by gender, total on economic activities in Republic of Moldova for the period 2000–2018, thousand persons

The gender gap between numbers of women and men in decision-making positions is larger in size in the organizations with private form of ownership than in those with public property as is seen in **Table 2**. The gap in the public organizations during the period 2000–2018 doesn't get bigger than 6.0 thousand persons in the favour of women (in 2015) or smaller than – 3.8 thousand persons in the favour of

men (in 2000). The years 2011–2017 are a period in which there are more women than men in decision-making positions in public organizations. In contrast to these organizations, the gap between men and women in the private ones is considerably bigger. During the period 2000–2018 this gap oscillated from – 8.9 thousand persons in 2015 to – 21.1 thousand persons in 2009. In public organizations the shares of men and women in decision-making positions during the nearly entire period 2000–2018 was no less than 40% (like the electoral quotas). In contrast to public organizations in the private ones the shares of men and women in decision-making positions were more polarized. Women had around a third of positions and men – circa 2/3. In case of adopting a gender quota for decision-making positions in public institutions the quota is more or less respected, but in private organizations it's far from that. The data clearly show a predominance of men in private organizations in decision-making positions. The opinions of employers and employees on the gender equality in this aspect would create a fuller picture on this gap and on the necessity of gender quotas.

Table 2

The number of legislators, members of the executive, other senior dignitaries and officials of public administration, heads and senior officials of units by gender and by the form of ownership of the organization, total on economic activities in Republic of Moldova for the period 2001–2018 and the gap between women and men, thousand persons, %

	Men, thousand persons		Women, thousand persons		The gap between women and men, thousand persons		The share of men*, %		The share of women**, %	
	<i>Pu p</i>	<i>Pr p</i>	<i>Pu p</i>	<i>Pr p</i>	<i>Pu p</i>	<i>Pr p</i>	<i>Pu p</i>	<i>Pr p</i>	<i>Pu p</i>	<i>Pr p</i>
2000	12.0	18.1	8.2	6.7	-3.8	-11.4	59.4	73.0	40.6	27.0
2001	12.1	19.1	10.1	7.9	-2.0	-11.2	54.5	70.7	45.5	29.3
2002	11.7	21.3	11.3	10.4	-0.4	-10.9	50.9	67.2	49.1	32.8
2003	10.5	25.4	10.9	12.7	0.4	-12.7	49.1	66.7	50.9	33.3
2004	12.3	25.9	11.4	13.1	-0.9	-12.8	51.9	66.4	48.1	33.6
2005	14.1	29.1	12.0	14.7	-2.1	-14.4	54.0	66.4	46.0	33.6
2006	13.2	37.7	14.8	18.1	1.6	-19.6	47.1	67.6	52.9	32.4
2007	13.5	33.3	13.0	18.7	-0.5	-14.6	50.9	64.0	49.1	36.0
2008	13.5	37.4	13.7	17.3	0.2	-20.1	49.6	68.4	50.4	31.6
2009	12.1	37.0	14.8	15.9	2.7	-21.1	45.0	69.9	55.0	30.1
2010	12.7	35.6	12.6	15.3	-0.1	-20.3	50.2	69.9	49.8	30.1
2011	12.0	37.1	13.5	17.6	1.5	-19.5	47.1	67.8	52.9	32.2
2012	10.6	35.9	15.0	20.7	4.4	-15.2	41.4	63.4	58.6	36.6
2013	12.9	39.2	13.9	18.4	1.0	-20.8	48.1	68.1	51.9	31.9
2014	11.3	32.8	14.5	18.6	3.2	-14.2	43.8	63.8	56.2	36.2
2015	10.7	27.6	16.7	18.7	6.0	-8.9	39.1	59.6	60.9	40.4
2016	8.8	30.0	14.7	19.7	5.9	-10.3	37.4	60.4	62.6	39.6
2017	10.7	27.1	12.5	15.9	1.8	-11.2	46.1	63.0	53.9	37.0
2018	13.2	28.6	11.9	15.7	-1.3	-12.9	52.6	64.6	47.4	35.4

Source: developed by authors based on data of NBS [Biroul, 2000-2018]

Notes: *Pu_p* – public property, *Pr_p* – private property

*The share of men in the total number of persons in decision-making positions

**The share of women in the total number of persons in decision-making positions

4.3. Analysis of some results of a survey on the gender issues in employment done by the authors

In order to observe the attitudes of employees and employers on some aspects of gender issues in employment, including gender quotas, a questionnaire was created within the STCU Project #6336 "Innovative approaches to applied computations and software development for gender equality regulation on labour market" as a part of its marketing stage, being addressed to employees and employers from Moldova. The project's main objective is the creation of an electronic platform that will perform gender analysis automatically. Here, in this paper, analysis will be focused on some pertinent commentaries of some respondents on gender quotas, as they are seen in **Table 3**. The majority of them have negative perceptions about gender quotas, stating that professional qualities may be overlooked while using the quotas. They may reduce the real capacity of employees, affecting work productivity, favour women against men without regard to merits as a form of positive discrimination, promote incompetence, demoralize men and create discontent and difficulties in the management of the company. Some respondents stated that gender quotas have a negative impact without mentioning the reasons for this. A respondent suggested that education represents a better tool for eliminating gender discrimination. Other respondents mentioned that applying gender quotas will make work more pleasurable since more women would work in the staff or that they help either gender to not be left behind.

Table 3

Commentaries on gender quotas from respondents

<i>Respondents*</i>	<i>Answers</i>
1	<i>"I will definitely resist their [gender quotas'] influence no matter how good is for women"</i>
2	<i>"First and foremost should be considered professional qualities"</i>
3	<i>"[Gender quotas] discriminate against men, promote incompetent women, complicate business management, reduce work productivity, demoralize men, generate discontent, diminish men's merits"</i>
4	<i>"It may weaken the real capacity of the workforce"</i>
5	<i>"It's more pleasurable to work"</i>
6	<i>"Eliminating discrimination is done through education"</i>
7	<i>"It is possible [by using gender quotas] to do more harm than good"</i>
8	<i>"I find it [to be] a form of positive discrimination"</i>
9	<i>"It ensures that no gender is left behind. As simple as that."</i>

Source: elaborated by authors based on data from the results of the survey

Notes: *1 – Male employer, over 50 years old, from private sector, with licence or master degree, with a company where most of employees are men, who knows about the existence of gender quotas, who finds difficult to answer if gender quotas are applied at his company at employment and who considers gender quotas not capable of improving existing ratio between women and men in the management of the companies

2 – Female employee, over 50 years old, from state sector, with licence or master degree, from a company where women are predominant, who doesn't know about the existence of gender quotas, who finds difficult to answer if gender quotas are applied at her company at

employment and who considers gender quotas not capable of improving existing ratio between women and men in the management of the companies

- 3 – Male employee, 35–50 years old, from private sector, with doctorate or postdoctorate degree, from a company where nearly all are women, who knows about the existence of gender quotas, who says that gender quotas aren't applied at his company at employment and who considers gender quotas not capable of improving existing ratio between women and men in the management of the companies
- 4 – Female employee, over 50 years old, from state sector, with doctorate or postdoctorate degree, from a company where women are predominant, who knows about the existence of gender quotas, who finds difficult to answer if gender quotas are applied at her company at employment and who considers gender quotas not capable of improving existing ratio between women and men in the management of the companies
- 5 – Female employee, under 35 years old, from state sector, with doctorate or postdoctorate degree, from a company where the numbers of men and women are nearly equal, who doesn't know about the existence of gender quotas, who finds difficult to answer if gender quotas are applied at her company at employment and who considers gender quotas not capable of improving existing ratio between women and men in the management of the companies
- 6 – Male employee, 35–50 years old, from state sector, with doctorate or postdoctorate degree, from a company where women are predominant, who knows about the existence of gender quotas, who says that gender quotas are applied at his company at employment and who considers gender quotas not capable of improving existing ratio between women and men in the management of the companies
- 7 – Female employee, under 35 years old, from state sector, with doctorate or postdoctorate degree, from a company where the numbers of men and women are nearly equal, who doesn't know about the existence of gender quotas, who finds difficult to answer if gender quotas are applied at her company at employment and who considers gender quotas not capable of improving existing ratio between women and men in the management of the companies
- 8 – Female employee, under 35 years old, from state sector, with doctorate or postdoctorate degree, from a company where most of employees are men, who doesn't know about the existence of gender quotas, who says that gender quotas aren't applied at her company at employment and who considers gender quotas not capable of improving existing ratio between women and men in the management of the companies
- 9 – Female employee, under 35 years old, from private sector, with licence or master degree, from a company where women are predominant, who knows about the existence of gender quotas, who finds difficult to answer if gender quotas are applied at her company at employment and who considers gender quotas capable of improving existing ratio between women and men in the management of the companies

5. Conclusions

In the case of EU countries the issue of introducing gender quotas in politics was largely debated for a long period of time. As a result, EU states have started to introduce gradually such a measure in order to increase women's participation in political life of the countries. The results have a long way to go, because in 2018, the presence of men was still dominant in the legislative of every EU member state.

In the case of Republic of Moldova, although numerous laws have been adopted and many amendments related to gender policies have been made, there is still a significant gap between men and women in decision-making positions either in politics, economics or other areas. As members of the Parliament, in ministerial positions, in police service, as rectors of higher education institutions men have the

majority, while as deputies in judiciary the share of men and that of women are nearly equal. The gap between women and men with regard to the number of legislators, members of the executive, other senior dignitaries and officials of public administration, heads and senior officials of units total on economic activities in Republic of Moldova leans towards men, while it narrowed in the period 2012–2015 following the adoption of some legislative acts regulating gender issues in the context of the National Program on ensuring gender equality for the years 2010–2015, from 2016 the gap began to enlarge again. In the Republic of Moldova the share of men and that of women is nearly equal in the management positions in the public sector, while in the private sector, the majority (circa 2/3) of those positions are occupied by men.

Gender quotas can be seen as a last resort instrument to help women use opportunities to climb the social ladder, when the legal provisions for equal rights don't have the necessary effects in women empowerment. The fears of people towards gender quotas include: overlooking professional qualities, positive discrimination, reduced work productivity and real capacity of workforce, favouring incompetence, demoralization of men, generating discontent and complicating organization management, diminishing men's merits. Other people stated that applying gender quotas will ensure that either gender will not be left behind and gender discrimination can be eliminated through education. That being said, mentalities, stereotypes are strong factors for unused opportunity regardless of gender, being gender quotas used or not.

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