FAMILY CARE AS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT SYSTEM BARRIER TO WOMEN'S POLITICAL ACTIVITIES IN SLOVAKIA ON THE EXAMPLE OF MUNICIPAL FEMALE-MAYORS

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Abstract: The paper deals with the low representation of women in politics, focusing on the barriers that impede their performance of the public function. On the basis of realized research among the municipal female-mayors, as the most significant system barrier to employment of women in politics proved to be the family care. The author defines this barrier and identifies how it shapes the political career of women.

Keywords: woman, politics, barrier, family, municipal female-mayor

Introduction

Differentiation of world in the public and private sphere belongs in terms of the structure to constitutive elements of modern society. As a public area has developed the sphere of politics, education, culture, science and the economy, and as a private sphere has constituted above all care for the family and household. While the public sphere is identified by the action of men, private sphere has developed as an area of activity for women. Dualism of public and private life is closely linked with the idea that men and women live in such a divided world in a different way. These divided worlds will never act as the equivalent to each other - their relationship is highly hierarchical. Private sphere represented by a woman is always in a subordinate position to the public sphere represented a man¹ Historically, women were excluded from the public sphere for long time, and they were not given the opportunity to participate in the power which occurred in this area.² Today, a woman does not belong only to the private sphere long ago, but she is a normal part of the public sphere. However, to think that the time when woman was assigned exclusively to the home area is gone does not correspond to reality.3 Despite the fact that the boundaries between these two worlds are not as clear as in the past, both spheres remain gender-differentiated. This is currently manifested mainly in the relationship between career and family life. While women are moving as if on the border between the two spheres of life, men continue to dominate the public sphere. New targets for women in the form of involvement in activities related to public life are not eliminating their traditional domestic duties. As problematic proved to be difficulties arising from women's' parallel activities in both spheres, which is usually referred to in sociology as the concept of the double burden⁴. In relationships where both partners are employed, mostly women spend more time caring for children and the household. Women at the same time act as paid workers operating in the public sphere, while the society expects them to do the unpaid housework.

Despite the fact that women are currently present at all levels of social space, they are still not represented in all its areas. The dominant masculine area where the presence of women is still significantly limited includes area of politics. Exclusion of women from this sphere of power has been for long time natural in the society, and although today is the participation of women in legislative and executive positions already considered as important⁵, their presence is not sufficient. The problem is that

¹ KICZKOVÁ, Z. 2011. Vzťah verejnej a súkromnej sféry z rodového hľadiska. In KICZKOVÁ, Z. (eds.), SZAPUOVÁ, M. (eds.): Rodové štúdiá. Súčasné diskusie, problémy a perspektívy. Bratislava: Univerzita Komenského, 2011. p. 183.
² The legal and social position of women and gender relations in past in the area of

women (also within the politics) are often concentrated more on lower (subordinate) positions in the hierarchy and rarely occupy high decision-making positions⁶. In Slovakia is a perfect example the function mayors of municipalities, which is within all kinds of politics mostly of represented by women. Even here, however, can be seen a number of obstacles which unable women to perform the public function free of problems.

1 Participation of woman in political life in Slovakia before and after 1989

The low participation of women in political life is still normal and accepted phenomenon in the Slovak society. A great role in this plays gender stereotypes that are usually defined as an idealized and simplified images and ideas of "typically" male and female characteristics, activities or behaviours that result in preventing or limiting the full personal development. Politics is regarded accordingly as strictly masculine domain in which women should not interfere. This opinion, according to some authors, results from Slovak traditionalism and patriarchal way of thinking, which is the heritage of rural social structure and have a significant impact on opinions about the role of women and men in the family and society. B

The situation regarding women's representation in political structures in the recent past was marked by the formally declared equality between men and women and the actual emancipation of women was proclaimed to be an important victory of the Communist Party politics. "In fact, the socialist women became victims of emancipation trapped in two full-time employment - at home and at work." Emancipation during socialism, however, was not the result of the women's movement fighting for equal rights and opportunities. Women gained more rights without any political struggle. The only official women's organizations operating in the country was Slovak Women Union, which was part of the Czechoslovak Women Union and had its branches at all levels. Like all other political or interest organizations during the socialist period, the Union was a member of the National Front, which was under the control and monopoly of the Communist Party. 10

Women's participation in the legislative power was secured through quotas. "The proposed share of women on candidate lists in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic was 30%, while majority of the women represented the working class and the agricultural sector and only a small symbolic number of women represented so-called 'working intelligence'. All male and female candidates were selected by the communist party and the election only confirmed their candidacy. Despite the relatively high number of women in the legislature their participation in politics was formal, as the Parliament or the government adopted 100% of a drafts prepared by the Communist Party. The election results, however, were always celebrated as a victory

² The legal and social position of women and gender relations in past in the area of contemporary is analysed in DUDEKOVÁ, G.: *Na ceste k modernej žene. Kapitoly z dejin rodových vzťahov na Slovensku*. Bratislava: VEDA, 2011. 774 p.

z dejin rodových vzťahov na Slovensku. Bratislava: VEDA, 2011. //4 p.
 3 See e.g. LIPOVETSKY, G.: Třetí žena: neměnnost a proměny ženství. Praha: Prostor, 2007. p. 267.
 4 FILADELFIOVÁ, J., KOBOVÁ, Ľ.: Glosár rodovej terminológie. [online]. 2014

FILADELFIOVA, J., KOBOVA, L.: Glosár rodovej terminológie. [online]. 2014
 [cit. 2015-11-11]
 http://glosar.aspekt.sk/default.aspx?smi=1&ami=1&vid=20
 Arguments for equal representation of women in politics are based on the principles

⁵ Arguments for equal representation of women in politics are based on the principles of participatory and representative democracy as an indicator of quality and degree of

democracy. Masculine monoculture and significant gender asymmetry of power indicates the risk of a insufficient or complete absence of a certain kind of representation of interests and experience in law and public policy. See HOLUBOVÁ, B.: Sihrmid správa o stave rodovej rovnosti na Slovensku za rok 2010. [online]. 2011 [cit. 2015-11-11] Available at http://moznostvolby.sk/wp-sustant/wight-4/2014/05/Sustant-Ro.2010-45

content/uploads/2014/08/Sprava_RR_2010.pdf

6 See e.g. situation in Slovakia CVIKOVÁ, J. (eds.): Aká práca, taká pláca? Aspekty rodovej nerovnosti v odmeňovaní. Bratislava: ASPEKT, 2007. 134 p.

7 PORUBÄNOVÁ, S.: Slovenská republika a rovnosť priležitostí mužov a žien: stav,

PORUBÁNOVÁ, S.: Slovenská republika a rovnosť priležitostí mužov a žien: stav, problémy, výzvy. Bratislava: Nadácia za toleranciu a proti diskriminácii, 2006. p. 6.

8. E.g. BITUŚÍKOVÁ, A.: Ženy v občianskom a politickom živote na Slovensku.
Banská Bystrica: Ústav vedy a výskumu Univerzity Mateja Bela v Banskej Bystrici,
zonace podace po

 ^{2005.} p. 105.
 BITUŠÍKOVÁ, A.: Ženy v občianskom a politickom živote na Slovensku. Banská Bystrica: Ústav vedy a výskumu Univerzity Mateja Bela v Banskej Bystrici, 2005. p.

^{40.} DSITUŠÍKOVÁ, A.: Ženy v občianskom a politickom živote na Slovensku. Banská Bystrica: Ústav vedy a výskumu Univerzity Mateja Bela v Banskej Bystrici, 2005. p. 40.

'socialist democracy' and compared with the low representation of women in politics in the 'capitalist countries'."1

After the fall of communism, women have had to face new social pressure which pushed them to return to the traditional role of women - family and children. "Some public officials welcomed the democratization and liberalization as the great opportunity for woman to be able to stop working, 'go back home' and devote their lives to children and families (...)."12 This approach, however, mainly for economic reasons, have not found many followers.

A high percentage of the female workforce in Slovakia was not reflected adequately on women's participation in political and citizen life. Since 1989, the number of women in political life drastically decreased and although in recent years, it is slowly growing in almost all areas of political and civic life, the current representation of women in political bodies of the Slovak Republic shows continuing de facto political marginalization of women in politics.

2 Representation of woman in the local government bodies

From all areas of politics communal politics should be the one that is closest to the citizens. It should enable the easiest participation of people. Despite this, however, the representation of women at this political level is rather low, which is regularly evidenced in the elections to municipal bodies. 13 However, it is still one of the few levels of women's political representation without significant digressive fluctuations.

In municipal elections in 2014 ran for mayor total of 8 760 people, 2 145 of which were women and 6 615 men. Number of men who were elected for mayors was decreased by 37 persons comparing to municipal elections in 2010. Number of women slightly increased; in 2010 municipal elections was elected 653 women, while in 2014 the number of women increased by 20. In the municipal elections in 2014, the citizens voted 1 211 mayors who were supported by specific political parties, and as independent was elected 1100 candidates. Compared with 2010, when 979 candidates were elected, this number increased. 15

Table: Gender composition of elected mayors 1994 – 2014. Source: Statistical office of the Slovak Republic

Year of municipal elections	Total number of elected persons	Of which women	Share of women in percent (%)
1994	2750	418	15.2
1998	2766	484	17.5
2002	2913	541	18.6
2006	2905	601	20.7
2010	2909	653	22.5
2014	2909	673	23.1

It is typical for the municipal politics that the mayors of small municipalities are women, and their number is decreasing with growing size of the town (so-called "funnel effect"). 16 Research has shown that women are approximately equally represented both in the traditional municipalities as well as a modern municipalities, and regional division, religion or ethnicity have no effect on the percentage of women. The only significant factor among the characteristics of the municipality resulting in

11 BITUŠÍKOVÁ, A.: Ženy v občianskom a politickom živote na Slovensku. Banská Bystrica: Ústav vedy a výskumu Univerzity Mateja Bela v Banskej Bystrici, 2005. p.

differentiating was the size of the municipality. 17 The usual interpretation of this state is that the mayor position in such municipalities, mainly regarding the power and the money, is not attractive enough. Elected representatives of small municipalities have available limited financial and human resources, but often exactly the same amount of responsibilities than in larger municipalities. Men prefer rather larger local governments since the property and personal substrate available here is larger. Women in small municipalities run for the office less for their personal gain and are more motivated by their desire to help the community. Reason for the higher representation of women in small municipalities may be also that the work of the mayor does not require a change of residence and is easily compatible with caring for a family. Since daily contact with the family is maintained, a conflict of private and public activity is weaker when working at the local level than in national positions.

Statistical data show that the development of representation of women in Slovak politics has been low over long period, and indicate that the patriarchal structures persist at all levels of political representation. Although the number of women is slowly and continuously growing especially in the local government bodies, even here the representation of women does not exceed 25%.

3 Barriers to Participation of women in politics

There is a number of theories based on research that seek to explain the low representation of women in politics. Reasons preventing women to be active in the public sphere is generally referred to as barriers. Some of the theories resort to seeking psychological barriers consisting mainly in the lack of interest of women in politics, their incompetence and lack of assertiveness. Other theories have a more systemic character, because they see the causes in the very nature of culture and society. Others see reasons in of the missing, incorrect or inadequate anchoring of legal measures aimed at increasing the participation of women in public affairs. Barriers to entry of women into political office can be seen in several factors related to the socio-cultural setting of the society. Some barriers are evident, and others more hidden and sophisticated related to the mechanisms and practices established by the ongoing public domination of men in this

Barriers to participation and representation of women can be generally divided in several categories:

- individual
- b) system
- institutional. 19 c)

The individual barriers include especially low self-esteem of women, lack of assertiveness, cooperation instead of rivalry, but also the lack of female solidarity. In some countries as a barrier to women's representation is considered education or lack of competence and skills. This fact, however, is apparently of little importance important in Slovakia as the level of education of men and women is very similar and in some indicators women reach even higher levels of education than men.20

Within the system barriers to entry of women into politics is most commonly listed family that plays the most important role in decision-making of women. Another factor is traditionalism as traditional values combined with patriarchal patterns of behaviour and thinking constitute strong support for maintaining prejudices and stereotypes, especially in rural areas and small towns. Preservation of old customs, spiritual and cultural

¹² BITUŠÍKOVÁ, A.: Ženy v občianskom a politickom živote na Slovensku. Banská Bystrica: Ústav vedy a výskumu Univerzity Mateja Bela v Banskej Bystrici, 2005. p.

<sup>41.

13</sup> HOLUBOVÁ, B. Účasť žien v politike – postoj, stav a perspektíva. [online]. 2010

[cit. 2015-11-11] Available at http://www.institutr.sk/download/b_holubova_5.pdf

14 HOLUBOVÁ B. Sáhrmá správa a stave redovej rovnosti na Slovensky za rok (ch. 2013-11-11) Available at http://moznostvolby.sk/wp-14 HOLUBOVA, B.: Súhrmá správa o stave rodovej rovnosti na Slovensku za rod 2010. [online]. 2011 [cit. 2015-11-11] Available at http://moznostvolby.sk/wp-

 [[]Ollinic], 2011 (Ed. 2013-11-11) Available at http://hiozinosvoibys.sc/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/sprava_RR_2010.pdf
 ¹⁵ Source: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (Štatistický úrad Slovenskej republiky)

¹⁶ See e.g. FILADELFIOVÁ, J. – RADIČOVÁ, I. – PULIŠ, P.: *Ženy v politike*-

dôsledok tranzície verejnej politiky? Bratislava: MPSVR SR, S.P.A.C.E, 2000. 134 p.

¹⁸ HOLUBOVÁ, B.: *Súhrnná správa o stave rodovej rovnosti na Slovensku za rok* 2010. [online]. 2011 [cit. 2015-11-11] Available at http://moznostvolby.sk/wpzuru. [online]. 2011 [cit. 2015-11-11] Available at http://moznostvolby.sk/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Sprava_RR_2010.pdf

¹⁹ BITUŠÍKOVÁ, A.: Ženy v občianskom a politickom živote na Slovensku. Banská Bystrica: Ústav vedy a výskumu Univerzity Mateja Bela v Banskej Bystrici, 2005. p. 106.

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BTUŚÍKOVÁ, A.: Ženy v občianskom a politickom živote na Slovensku. Banská Bystrica: Ústav vedy a výskumu Univerzity Mateja Bela v Banskej Bystrici, 2005. p. 106-108.

traditions is promoted through the very low level of social and geographical mobility and high social control within communities. A significant role plays the religion for which the role of women is mainly in the family. As a further barrier is often mentioned an opinion that politics is a male domain, or opinion that women are not interested in politics. But until women show sufficient interest in participating in politics, no quotas can help and the desired progress may not be even achieved.²¹

One of the institutional barriers to entry into politics is primarily the electoral system. It is based on proportional representation on the candidate list, which means that women have good chance of being selected. But the reality is that even with an increase in the number and proportion of female candidates on the candidate lists their representation is still not high. For low number of women at any level of politics in Slovakia bear the responsibility the political parties themselves, which have competence to compile a gender-balanced candidate lists. Parties declaring the democratic approach should pay attention that the candidate lists reflect the composition of the population they want to reach. ²²

4 Research

The topic of women's participation in politics is not sufficiently explored in Slovakia, and therefore detecting of experiences of Slovak female - politicians and their attitudes to political representation still it has meaning. Even more so in relation to municipal politics, that is still insufficiently addressed in our territory. The research results can be thus beneficial as a statement on the gender culture of our society. The purpose of the research was to identify the obstacles that impede or in any way diminish involvement of women in politics, and also determine how these barriers are lived and interpreted by female politicians themselves. Our research was based on personal experiences and views of women participating in municipal politics. The research was performed in a standard manner ensuring anonymity for respondents.

For the purposes of this research, qualitative research strategy was chosen, as it's clear advantage over the quantitative research strategy is precisely that it allows a deeper understanding of observed reality, and thus enables better reflection of the understanding, experiencing and creating of the social reality from people. Within it, it's in fact possible to acquire data in all its depth, without having to reduce them.

The basic criterion of selection was a woman - municipal politician. Randomly we addressed ten mayoresses of municipalities of different sizes located in the district of Banská Bystrica, Zvolen, Detva and Krupina, i.e. approximately in the middle of Slovakia. Other criteria were not taken into account in the selection.

For investigating of the obstacles to women's political activity, structured questionnaire with predetermined nine questions was selected, which served as a technique to collect data for this research. The questions concerned both general matters relating to the participation in municipal politics but also specific facts aimed at answering the main purpose of research – detecting of obstacles to women's political participation. The questions were composed as follows:

- 1. What are the motives, circumstances and facts that led you to run for mayor of the village? Have you run because of your own conviction, or based on some external stimulus (being addressed by a particular person, a community of people, political parties, etc.)?
- How long is the time period that you hold the post of mayoress for?

²¹ BITUŠÍKOVÁ, A.: Ženy v občianskom a politickom živote na Slovensku. Banská Bystrica: Ústav vedy a výskumu Univerzity Mateja Bela v Banskej Bystrici, 2005. p. 109-114.

109-114. 2²² BITUŠÍKOVÁ, A.: Ženy v občianskom a politickom živote na Slovensku. Banská Bystrica: Ústav vedy a výskumu Univerzity Mateja Bela v Banskej Bystrici, 2005. p. 115-121.

- 3. Have you consulted the candidacy for the post of mayoress with someone in your community? If yes- whom with and to what extent did you follow the opinion of this person / these persons?
- 4. What were the reactions of your community to your candidacy for the post of mayoress?
- 5. Do you see any obstacles in the exercise of your function?
- 6. Have you ever encountered, from the side of people with whom you come into contact with, emotionally tinged (positive / negative) reactions to what post you hold as a woman?
- 7. Has your life changed after taking the office of mayoress? If so-in what terms?
- 8. Do you have the ambition to engage also at a higher political level (regional politics, national politics)? If yes / no-why?
- 9. What is your marital status (single, married, divorced, mother)? If you are a mother, what is the age of child/children?

Answered questionnaire questions were thus our output data, which we subsequently analyzed and interpreted. The return of sent questionnaires was at 80%. Of these, it was found that three women had already previous experience in municipal politics, and, as it turned out in case of five of them, they are new to politics. Also, from the information available it could be concluded that all female - politicians interviewed are mothers of a child or children, while four of them have minor children and four of them are mothers of children over 18 years.

Family emerges as the most important element influencing the political career of addressed women also in our research. In this respect, we decided to give it a dominant attention and analyze it in the context of the political representation of women. Although some of the other obstacles to women's participation in politics were also documented, due to their insignificant occurrence in the responses of addressed women as well as the thematic focus and the required extent of the report, these will be discussed only marginally. Some representative quotes of the addressed mayors were used in verbatim transcription.

Questionnaires show that women's decision to enter politics is primarily based on the effort to improve several areas life of the community in which they live. Up to five addressed women decided to run because of their own conviction, two respondents did so on the initiative of citizens, and one respondent upon nomination by a particular political party. When considering the actual entry into politics, the support of husband and family was the key issue for all women. That was exactly what decided whether the woman shall or shall not run for the post. Should they not have the support, some respondents were willing to give up their political career. This fact is significantly shown by particular statement of one of the respondents that says in the questionnaire: "I ran because of my own conviction, but without the support of people around me, especially my husband, as well as number of citizens of the village, I would not go for it." Totally common were so called "meetings", i.e. women consulted the decision on the entry into politics with family. All mayoresses addressed consistently confirmed that they consulted their entry into politics with the closest persons. However, this approach is obviously not gender-specific and serious consultation of such a decision can be expected even in case a man enters politics. Since interviewed were the mayoresses, who had already previous experience in municipal politics, it is possible to determine or at least deduced that these family meetings are held in case any other candidacy to municipal authorities and it's not just a one-off. One of the respondents in this regard, said: "(...) before each election I consult with my family members whether I run or not. Their opinion is very important to me because it allows me to get feedback on coping my work commitments and the lack of time for them.

From the questionnaires it was found that the reactions of the immediate community to the nomination of addressed women for the post of mayor of the village were mostly positive. Only in one case addressed woman spontaneously stated that some of her

close ones tended to express certain worries or even concerns in connection with her possible future participation in politics. These result from the nature of the politics, which they considered "inappropriate for women". Their response is therefore clearly based on stereotypes according to which women are too fragile to participate in politics. Their doubts did not let the female - politician give in. The testimonies of respondents, however, indicated that all but one have never met with some negative reactions of community to what post they hold as women. This might also be caused by the fact that they all operate in the region, where the representation of women in municipal politics is relatively large. This is mainly in the district of Krupina²³, which is known by persistently high share of women in the post of Mayor. This state probably doesn't come strange or unusual to any of their male - colleagues, and they accept it.

Three of the respondents with regard to the specifics of their profession directly mentioned the tolerance of their closest ones in the questionnaires, as it significantly facilitates and fosters the execution of their function. The most notable seemed to be husbands' forbearance as for them wives' public activity often means a considerable interference with their private life. One of the respondents described it as follows: "(...) without the assistance of my husband, I would probably not handle the function of mayor. He is tolerant, understanding and willing to help. Can I rely on him in every aspect."

In questionnaires was also detected as a source of stress the relationship between political function and the raising of minor children itself. What attitude female - politicians have towards the possibility to adapt the exercise of political function with the care of children, is largely related to their own experiences. Up to seven of addressed municipal female-politicians either explicitly or implicitly stated that the decisive factor that affects coping of political work and family responsibilities is exactly the age of the child. One of the respondents assessed this state in the context of the stated like this: "My life has changed dramatically after taking the office (...). I am divorced, my son is independent, so my time is not limited by family. In mayoresses' families with small children, this work requires a great tolerance of partners. Family life is completely marked by our work." Those women who had at the time of their duty minor children, described the alignment of political activity with childcare as challenging and based on concessions on both spheres - private and public. Two of the addressed women said expressly that they entered politics only after their children become adults, and they no longer had the duty to care for them. It is quite a logical step, moreover, accepted by the society as female - politicians whose behavior is beyond the socially accepted standards leading to evasion of traditional gender roles, is many times criticized by individuals privately and publicly.

Statements of the majority of addressed women (six adressed women) also it indicated that for their time busyness, in some cases husbands themselves had to take over part of family duties. One of the addressed women even spontaneously stated that her husband had to do some housework, which, until then, he did so only occasionally. It is reasonable to assume that with such a change in the division of housework each partner might not agree, which may result in a larger and more open conflict between the political activities of woman and her family life. However, such case was not recorded in present research. Despite the help of individual family members in coping with family life from the part of mayors, however, responsibility for the private sphere largely remains their responsibility, although perhaps to a lesser extent than before starting a political career. One mayor commented as follows: "(...) After taking office, I certainly dedicate less time to my family and housework. I compensate it at least during the weekend, when I try to spend free time with family or doing housework.'

²³ SITA: V okrese Krupina aj po voľbách prevyšujú ženy starostky mužov. [online]. 2014 [cit. 2015-11-11] Available at http://www.teraz.sk/regiony/v-okrese-krupina-aj-po-volbach-zeny/107976-clanok.html Described facts indicate that in many Slovak families a woman is still largely responsible for the private sphere, and that she accepts this role. Part of female - politicians is therefore undergoing a double burden. They participate in activities in the public sphere and at the same time it is still expected from them to fully perform unpaid work at home as a partner, wife or mother. Heavy burden in the private sphere can be a significant limitation for women, whether in individual spending of free time or in completing various representation duties stemming from the exercise of their functions. This way, they are disadvantaged compared with their male colleagues who are confronted with such social expectations for the redistribution of their time.

The questionnaires show that addressed mayoresses do clearly recognize more difficult situation of women in politics. Interesting, however, was that although municipal female politicians tended to draw attention to the described injustice in unequal conditions between women and men, they considered quite obvious that the burden of caring for family and household remains on themselves. Questionnaires also did not disclose any idea about the equal responsibility of male partners for raising children and caring for the home. Respondents obviously got familiar with known gender stereotypes prevalent in our society with unwanted efforts to interpret them further. Strong social acceptance of such stereotypes can discourage women from achieving political career, because such work is seen as conflicting with their "priority" role.

The questionnaire information have also demonstrated that female – politicians don't consider municipal politics as their normal employment, but rather as a public service aimed at helping people in their village. Respondents also did not give much importance to almost any career prospects associated with the exercise of public functions, by which they completely excluded themselves from the eventual promotion to higher politics. To the possibility to apply for higher political function was answered either by resignation or by total dismissal. Certainly important part here was the possibility to be near the family and at least partially reconcile work and family life, which could only be done limitedly on higher position. Although women in the village are close to their family, to think that they would thus be able to devote to both private and public life, would be wrong.

Conclusion

From the research we carried out, as the biggest obstacle to women's participation in politics emerged the care for the family and household, exactly in accordance to traditional gender stereotypes. These stereotypes sighting the role of women especially in the private sphere certainly complicate the exercise of political function. Women who want to get involved publicly, in vast majority have to still handle all family matters. Thus, they are career - disadvantaged compared to their male colleagues, whose responsibilities associated with family are not as strong and therefore they have more opportunities to build a political background. Women thus do not even consider higher political functions, because apparently only the position of mayor in the municipality where they live, ensures them a sustainable contact with the family.

Seeking a remedy leading to a higher representation of women in politics at all levels shall not be easy. Namely it's a profound cultural change and its enforcement shall require targeted efforts of many public officials, as well as educational system, the media and also the public itself. However, never should be forgotten that important is not only how women are accepted, but also how do they accept themselves. And that may be another problem.

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