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# GENDER SEGREGATION ON THE LABOUR MARKET: ROOTS, IMPLICATIONS AND POLICY RESPONSES IN BULGARIA

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## Introduction

The questions concerning gender segregation in employment are relatively new for Bulgaria. This is understandable, since before the economic and social reforms (which started in 1990), under the Constitution and the respective laws in force, genders were equal in employment, as well as in all spheres of social and economic life.

Following the understanding that “Segregation ... manifests itself in differences in gender patterns of representation within occupations (both classified by industries and by professional status) and within different employment status and employment contract groups”, and that “Gender segregation means that women and men to a certain extent work in different occupations or in different sectors or under different contractual terms and conditions”<sup>1</sup>, when speaking about segregation we mean *gender inequality on the labor market regarding employment and payment from the point of view of occupational positions and sectors of employment*. Within this understanding we have to say that the phenomenon exists at professional and branch level, predetermined by a number of objective and subjective factors and mainly by the specificity of the work to be done at the work place and the physical abilities of the genders.

With the changes in the social and economic conditions in the country the problem of gender segregation became a topic of discussion. The discussion has been provoked by:

- Higher female unemployment level and outlined difficulties in women’s reintegration to employment;
- The existence of gender pay gap;
- The absorption of problems regarding reconciliation of work and family and childcare problems.

The debates could not be defined as systematic in the public space. Mass media, researchers and non-governmental organizations debate different aspects of existing problems. The government and the institutions in charge of policy design and policy implementation, e.g. Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP), apply more systematic approach regarding these problems in the last years. The Demographic Policy, Social Investments and Equal Opportunities Market Directorate through the Equal Opportunities Department (EOD) within it carry out the development and coordination of the implementation of the state policy in the relevant fields.

The EOD is Secretariat of the National Council on Gender Equality. The Council has consultative functions. The coordination and collaboration between the governmental bodies and the non-governmental sector regarding gender equality issues is realized through it. It also

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<sup>1</sup> Indicators on Gender Equality in the European Employment Strategy, Jill Rubery, Colette Fagan, Damian Grimshaw, Hugo Figueiredo and Mark Smith, 2002,  
[http://www.mbs.ac.uk/research/europeanemployment/projects/gendersocial/documents/Indicators2001\(final\).pdf](http://www.mbs.ac.uk/research/europeanemployment/projects/gendersocial/documents/Indicators2001(final).pdf)

develops the state policy on gender equality and works for the promotion of gender equality as a part of the State policy.

The activities of the National Council on Gender Equality are set in its annual Action Plans (since 2002), which focus on updating the Ministries' priorities according to the main priorities of the Government.

Other tasks are related to raising the public awareness on gender issues, training in the field of protection of human rights and equal gender opportunities and the methods for achievement gender equality for different target groups, including human resource managers and experts and civil servants from the central and local administrations, responsible for implementation of gender equality policy. Special emphasis is placed on the implementation of gender mainstreaming in all areas of applied policy.

The state policy is supposed to guarantee prevention from and elimination of gender-based discrimination, to provide equal access to the labor market and economic activities, appropriate measures for reconciliation of work and family life. Education and healthcare, especially reproductive health, are areas of special concern as well as combating domestic violence and human traffic.

To ensure the efficiency of all measures and actions, it is necessary to realize regular impact assessment, monitoring and control of the implementation of gender equality policies. One of the tasks in this aspect is the identification of gender equality indicators, relevant to the indicators of EUROSTAT, which will be incorporated in a gender-disaggregated database.<sup>2</sup>

The academic circles<sup>3</sup>, where the discussion takes place, should be mentioned as well. The studied topics concern gender dimensions of labor market, employment and social security, gender aspects of working time; spatial mobility and gender inequality; gender pay gap, family forms and reproductively attitude and socio-economic marginalization of women, etc. The authors of the studies are mainly researchers from economic, sociologic and demographic institutes at the Bulgarian Academy of Science and NGO-s. However, the restricted financial resources of these circles do not allow regular studies on the topic of segregation. In this report we will outline some of the outcomes of such academic studies.

## **1. Trends in occupational and sectoral segregation**

Analysing the occupational structure of the employed people by gender from the angle of segregation, we expect to find out imbalances within the gender distribution of employed by occupational classes. Table 1 point out the existence of such imbalances, namely:

- In percentage among the professionals in 2006 women were twice less than men but among the technicians and associated professionals – twice more.
- Among service workers and shop and market sales workers in 2006 women were nearly three times more than men.
- Among plant and machine operators and assemblers in 2006 women were nearly three times less than men.

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<sup>2</sup> More information on <http://www.mlsp.government.bg/equal/pregled.asp>

<sup>3</sup> Different institutes at the Bulgarian Academy of Science, e.g. Institute of Sociology, Institute of Demography, Institute of Economics, etc.

**Table 1. Bulgaria: Occupational structure of employed people by gender in 2001 and 2006 (%)**

| Occupational classes                              | 2006  |      |       | 2001  |      |       |
|---|-------|------|-------|-------|------|-------|
|   | Total | Men  | Women | Total | Men  | Women |
| Total, including:                                 |       |      |       |       |      |       |
| Legislators, senior officials and managers        | 100.0 | 53,1 | 46,9  | 100.0 | 52,2 | 47,8  |
| Professionals                                     | 100.0 | 68,4 | 31,6  | 100.0 | 66,4 | 33,6  |
| Technicians and associated professionals          | 100.0 | 32,8 | 67,2  | 100.0 | 35,9 | 64,2  |
| Clerks  | 100.0 | 45,6 | 54,4  | 100.0 | 43,5 | 56,5  |
| Service workers and shop and market sales workers | 100.0 | 25,6 | 74,4  | 100.0 | 28,2 | 71,7  |
| Skilled agricultural and fishing workers          | 100.0 | 39,2 | 60,8  | 100.0 | 35,7 | 64,4  |
| Craft and related workers                         | 100.0 | 58,4 | 41,6  | 100.0 | 59,5 | 40,5  |
| Plant and machine operators and assemblers        | 100.0 | 72,9 | 27,1  | 100.0 | 68,2 | 31,8  |
| Elementary occupations                            | 100.0 | 69,0 | 31,1  | 100.0 | 71,7 | 28,3  |

Source: Labor Force Survey for respective years

- Among employed people with elementary occupations in 2006 women were twice less than men.
- The concentration of women by occupations in 2001 shows that 62,5% of all employed women were in four occupations, namely: professionals, technicians and associated professions, clerks and service workers and shop and market sales workers. In 2006 in these four occupations the share of women was 60.8% of total female employment, but with one more occupational group – that of elementary occupations, the total share became 72%. In other words, 72% of the employed women are concentrated in five occupations. The changes that happened between 2001 and 2006 should be considered unfavourable, since the distribution of women between occupations had become more uneven.
- Looking at the trends in the development of the event, comparing 2006 with 2001 data we confirm the tendency that the segregation within the years regarding women's representation both at high and low level positions had deepen.
- The national data are confirmed by gender segregation, measured through IP-index. According to this index Bulgaria ranks 20 out of 27 countries, which means that it is placed among countries with relatively high occupational segregation. The trend in the development of the occupational segregation covers seven years (2001-2007) and points out an increase in the index from 0.2711 in 2001 to 0.2785 in 2005 and 0.2935 in 2007.<sup>4</sup>
- A case study points out significant gender differences concerning the participation in decision-making process in policies, in the economy, in the public administration and the judiciary (as members of parliament, of government, high level managing positions, local authority, etc.).<sup>5</sup> In a comparative aspect, following the analysis of the EU survey,<sup>6</sup> we will find out that the percentage of women in national parliament in 1997 and 2007 has increased and under this indicator Bulgaria ranks 17 out of 30 EU countries. Concerning percentage of men and women senior ministers in national governments in 2007 the

<sup>4</sup> More about IP index see in "Indicators on Gender Equality in the European Employment Strategy", Jill Rubery, Colette Fagan, Damian Grimshaw, Hugo Figueiredo and Mark Smith, 2001, [http://www.mbs.ac.uk/research/europeanemployment/projects/gendersocial/documents/Indicators2001\(final\).pdf](http://www.mbs.ac.uk/research/europeanemployment/projects/gendersocial/documents/Indicators2001(final).pdf)

<sup>5</sup> The corridors of power, women and men in governance, 2005, Center of Women's Studies and Policies, [www.cwsp.bg](http://www.cwsp.bg)

<sup>6</sup> Women and men in decision-making 2007, EU.

country in ranked 18 (with 20% women and 80% men) out of 30 countries. Further the case study indicates that the percentage of women amongst ministers with an economic portfolio in 2007 was between 20-30% and regarding this indicator the country is in the same group as Norway, UK, Finland, Poland, etc. Almost the same is the percentage of women amongst the top two levels of civil servants in 2007 (20-30%). However, if we look at data presenting the distribution of managers by gender in 2001 and 2006, we will find out that women were 32.4% in 2001 and only 31,3% in 2001.<sup>7</sup>

The sectoral segregation based on 2006 data of distribution of employed people by economic sectors and by gender clearly outlines the feminisation of some sectors, where women predominate in employment, e.g. education, hotel and restaurants, financial intermediation, and health and social workers. On the other hand, there are number of sectors where men predominate and women are underrepresented, e.g. construction, transport, electricity and gas, etc. (table 2).

**Table 2. Bulgaria: Sectoral distribution of employed by gender in 2000 and 2006 (%)**

| Sectors                                      | 2006  |       |       | 2000  |       |       |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|  | Total | Men   | Women | Total | Men   | Women |
| Total  | 100   | 53,14 | 46,86 | 100   | 53,12 | 46,88 |
| Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing   | 100   | 64,51 | 35,45 | 100   | 67,57 | 32,43 |
| Mining and quarrying                         | 100   | 81,68 | 18,32 | 100   | 78,96 | 21,04 |
| Manufacturing                                | 100   | 50,41 | 49,58 | 100   | 51,96 | 48,04 |
| Electricity, gas and water supply            | 100   | 75,04 | 24,96 | 100   | 73,68 | 26,32 |
| Construction                                 | 100   | 92,26 | 7,74  | 100   | 87,20 | 12,80 |
| Trade, repair of motor vehicles and          |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| Personal and housing goods                   | 100   | 48,44 | 51,56 | 100   | 48,59 | 51,41 |
| Hotels and restaurants                       | 100   | 37,47 | 62,53 | 100   | 42,30 | 57,70 |
| Transport, storage and communication         | 100   | 74,26 | 25,74 | 100   | 75,04 | 24,96 |
| Financial intermediation                     | 100   | 32,48 | 67,52 | 100   | 38,34 | 61,66 |
| Real estate, renting and business activities | 100   | 56,90 | 43,10 | 100   | 53,79 | 46,21 |
| Public administration, social security       | 100   | 58,40 | 41,64 | 100   | 58,26 | 41,74 |
| Education                                    | 100   | 20,85 | 79,15 | 100   | 20,41 | 79,59 |
| Health and social work                       | 100   | 21,98 | 77,96 | 100   | 24,32 | 75,68 |
| Other sectors                                | 100   | 45,32 | 54,68 | 100   | 44,78 | 55,22 |

Source: LFS for respective years

Statistical data for 2005 based on NACE-2-digit sectors show concentration of women in several sectors, namely: health and social work; retail trade; education; hotels and restaurants; public administration; business activity, agriculture. In these sectors the share of employed women was 56,1%.<sup>8</sup> Using LFS data for 2006 we found out that 61,1% of employed women were concentrated in four sectors, namely: manufacturing, trade ..., hotels and restaurants, education. Quite a high share of employed women we find in manufacturing sector.

The question about sectoral segregation is quite tricky because of the special features of the work to be done, which predetermine to a high extent the sex of employed people. This is especially valid for countries where the technological level of the sector is underdeveloped. In this sense it is understandable why men predominate for example in construction sector and women in education, in health services or in manufacturing (textile, leather, food and beverage, tobacco industries, etc).

<sup>7</sup> Report on gender equality, 2008, EU.

<sup>8</sup> The concentration of men and women in sectors of activity, Statistics in Focus, 53/2007.

The sectoral segregation measured by IP index points out that Bulgaria ranks 12 among 27 countries, which means a relatively low level of segregation. However, the trends in the development of sectoral segregation for the period 2001-2005 indicates an increase from 0.1752 to 0,1924 or by 0,02 points. In 2007 the index reached 0,2078. Within the understanding that sectoral segregation is an indicator of the equality of distribution of male and female labour force between sectors the increasing IP index outlines that this distribution has become more unequal or that sectoral segregation within the pointed period has deepened.

During the years the increase in the inequality between male and female employment in favour of male deepens in some sectors, e.g. “mining ...”, “construction”, etc. It has decreased in agriculture but still remains high. The increase in inequality between male and female employment in favour of female labor force deepens in service sector and particularly in “Hotels and restaurants”, “Financial intermediation”, “Education” and “Health and social work”.

According to a case study on labour market gender dimensions there is a gender segregation regarding employment in new innovative and old traditional sectors. The conclusion is that male employment in the new, innovative, prosperous activities prevails, while women are pushed out to the traditional service activities, where the prospects for carrier development are limited.<sup>9</sup>

### **Some conclusions:**

1. The above analysis indicates that gender segregation exists and deepens over the years. Women’s access to certain occupations, e.g. legislators, senior officials and managers’ positions, seems to be limited, while they are over-represented among other positions, e.g. professionals. The occupational segregation over the years has increased both for high and low level occupations. Being a professional means relatively high level of education, which implies that the level of education is not the factor that impedes women’s promotion to higher occupational positions. Meanwhile, among employed people with elementary occupation women are twice less than men despite the upward trends. All this points out the need for more detailed studies of the link between the educational level of the genders and their occupational distribution.
2. Another conclusion concerns the overrepresentation of women among service workers and shop and market sales workers. This is a sector with relatively lower level of payment compared with the average for the country, which outlines a gender pay gap. As pointed above, women are better educated and in many cases their skill level (including education) is higher compared with the work they do. This means that women compromise with their skill level when accepting a job with lower skill request. A reasonable question is why do they do it?
3. The reliability of the data the analysis is based on is an important question, which should not be neglected, since the gender distribution by occupations and sectors is based only on available official data and excludes employed people in the so-called “unregistered economic activities”. In transition countries, and Bulgaria in particular, the percentage of employed in the “unregistered/grey sector” is not low, since according to same authors it represents about 1/3 of the registered employment. The agricultural sector is one, where unregistered employment is reported to be high. Thus, it seems not very reliable that only

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<sup>9</sup> Stoyanova, K. Gender dimensions of labor market, employment and social insurance (in Bulgarian). – Economic Thought, 2005/3, p. 34.

1/3 of employed in agriculture are women and the other 2/3 – men. Many women are engaged in the sector but are not registered as agricultural workers.

4. One last conclusion concerns the active policy, which has to better balance the gender dissemination between occupations and sectors. The deepening of the occupational and sectoral imbalances in the period 2001-2006 could mean that occupational and sectoral segregation have not been subject to a relevant policy or to any policy at all or that the applied policies were not effective.

## **2. Analysis of the factors contributing to segregation and of its implications**

### *2.a Overview of research*

Starting the analysis with the factors causing the gender segregation, we have to say that the research on the topic in the country is very limited. One of the reasons is that the segregation issue is relatively new for the country and has not been a subject of regular studies. There are very limited incidental studies on separate issues, which in many cases concern very narrow topics, e.g. work conditions or work time in separate sector and gender addresses case studies on employment. All these impede the analysis very much and limit the opportunities to present a comprehensive picture on the reasons for the existence and deepening of the gender segregation over the years.

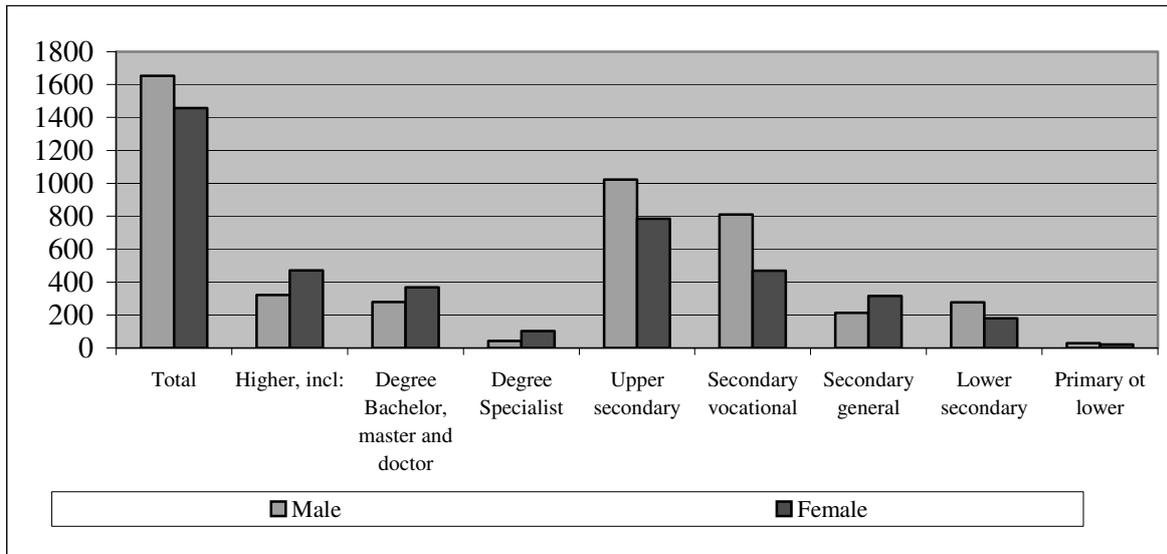
When numbering the reasons for the existence of occupational and sectoral segregation, we will list several hypotheses and try to prove them, based on the available information whether the hypothesis is confirmed. Among them are the level of education, the position in the hierarchy of employment; the effectiveness of the work; the mentality and cultural stereotype; the way women reconcile work and family (e.g. whether they prefer to work part-time), etc. We have to note that it is not possible to outline only one factor and in most cases the factors intertwine.

#### *The level of education as a factor for gender segregation*

The first hypothesis is that the lower level of education pushes off women from prestige and well-paid occupations and sectors. It is well known that the level of education is an important factor, which influences the distribution of the labor force by occupations. Education is closely linked to the conditions, under which one is hired for a certain job. Unfortunately, we miss data on education by gender and occupation, and that is why the analysis will be based on assumptions coming from the overall educational level by gender. Our studies point out that the educational level of women in Bulgaria is higher than that of men (figure 1).

As seen on the figure below, employed women with higher education are more than employed man. Women in employment with secondary general education are also more than men. On the contrary, employed men with upper secondary, lower secondary and primary education prevailed.

**Figure 1 – Bulgaria, employed people by gender and education in 2006**



Source: LFS, National Statistical Institute, 2006, p. 46.

The higher education of women could be a factor for feminization of some occupations, for example occupations, which request higher education, e.g. teachers. However, we observe occupational segregation also in occupations, which do not request higher education, e.g. nurses in health sector. This occupation needs upper secondary education and special vocational training. Thus, it becomes clear that based only on educational level we cannot explain gender segregation by occupations and sectors. However, it is obvious that the share of women with elementary occupations has been increasing over the period 2001-2006 or in numbers from 111 to 164 thousand women.

The fact that the lower paid group in employment is the better-educated group is a paradox, but in fact it illustrates the erosion of the value of the education. The precise assessment of the wealth of education and skill ability in the process of wage bargaining is a forthcoming process. We have to say that there is still post-socialist attitude regarding education in labour relations and that the wage bargaining system should be further developed so as to reflect the needed correlation between education and skill ability and to stimulate updating of educational and skill level of employed people.

The more precise analysis on the link between occupational and sectoral segregation and the educational level of employed people could be done in case we had micro data that might explain the preferences of the people to be employed in certain sector and to have certain occupation.

#### *The pay gap and the position in the hierarchy of employment*

Looking at the data in table 3 we have to say that one reasonable factor for occupation or sectoral segregation could be the pay gap and the position women have in the hierarchy of employment. Data in Table 3 outline that women as legislators, senior officials and managers are less by nearly 1/3. Meanwhile, in the pointed occupation the level of payment for women has been lower than that of men and the relation was 0,83%.

**Table 3. Employment and wages by gender and by occupations – 2002**

| Occupational classes                              | Employed people | Including male | Including female | Wage – average per month, BGN | Including Male average wage per month, BGN | Female-average wage per month, BGN |
|---|-----------------|----------------|------------------|-------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| Total, including:                                 | 1 609 317       | 786 378        | 822 939          | 283                           | 312  | 255                                |
| Legislators, senior officials and managers        | 84 725          | 51 723         | 33 002           | 564                           | 603  | 503                                |
| Professionals                                     | 221 129         | 70 295         | 150 835          | 376                           | 443  | 345                                |
| Technicians and associated professionals          | 242 763         | 82 857         | 159 906          | 330                           | 390  | 298                                |
| Clerks  | 124 776         | 27 810         | 96 965           | 240                           | 231  | 242                                |
| Service workers and shop and market sales workers | 148 303         | 64 495         | 83 808           | 166                           | 177  | 157                                |
| Agricultural and fishing workers                  | 3 883           | 1 969          | 1 914            | 190                           | 195  | 186                                |
| Craft and related trade workers                   | 268 788         | 184 259        | 84 529           | 267                           | 307  | 180                                |
| Plant and machine operators and assemblers        | 289 732         | 188 587        | 101 145          | 273                           | 296  | 228                                |
| Elementary occupations                            | 225 218         | 114 384        | 110 834          | 169                           | 174  | 164                                |

Source: NSI, Survey on wages, 2002; <http://www.nsi.bg/Labor/Labor.htm>.

Women are more in number as professionals and less paid than men, employed as professional. Women are less paid among people engaged with elementary occupations as well, which comes to say that in general women are less paid than men irrespective of the occupation. This means that there are other factors, which influence the gender pay gap.

One explanation is the difference in the wage structure. Within the male wage structure the components of “extra work” and “work on shifts” prevail over the same components in female wage structure. This means that men are more working extra hours or working on shifts than women are.

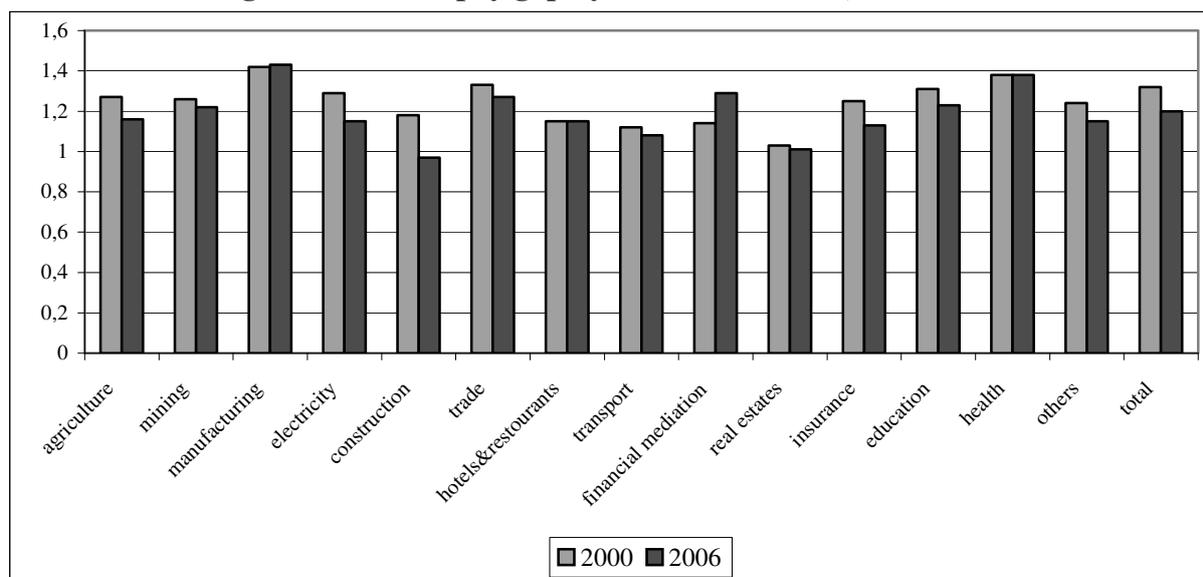
Gender pay gap by sectors of economic activity points out that for the period 2000-2006 the pay gap diminished in 9 out of 14 sectors (figure 2). An increase was registered in 2 sectors (manufacturing, financial mediation) and no changes occurred in two sectors (hotel and restaurants and health). However, despite the overall positive tendency of closure of the pay gap, it increases or stays stable exactly in the sectors where women predominate as employed – health, hotel and restaurants, manufacturing.

We have to say also that women are not only less paid, but they also compose the prevailing part among non-paid family workers. Thus, among 39,8 thousand people unpaid family workers in 2006 nearly 2/3 were women or in numbers – 26,6 thousand people. This case is not an incidental since in 2003 female unpaid family workers numbered 33,7 thousand people out of 52,8 thousand in total.<sup>10</sup>

To find out an answer of the question why women accept less paid job, we will look at the indicators for labour force participation by gender.

<sup>10</sup> LFS for 2006 and 2003, NSI, Sofia.

**Figure 2. Gender pay gap by economic sectors, 2000-2006**



Source: Wage structure survey, National Statistical Institute, 2006.

*Participation on the labor market as a factor for segregation*

Looking at the gender differences in labour market participation we have to outline that both gender indicators show increase in the studied period. However, women's rates in activity and employment continue to be below that of men and the unemployment female rate is higher than male unemployment rate (table 4).

**Table 4. Activity, employment and unemployment rates by gender – 2001-2006**

|       | Activity rate |      | Employment rate |      | Unemployment rate |      |
|-------|---------------|------|-----------------|------|-------------------|------|
|       | 2001          | 2006 | 2001            | 2006 | 2001              | 2006 |
| Men   | 52,4          | 56,7 | 41,8            | 51,8 | 20,4              | 8,6  |
| Women | 44            | 46,3 | 35,8            | 42   | 18,5              | 9,3  |

Source: LFS for respective period

The higher unemployment among women could be to some extent an explanation why they accept less paid job. However, in a 5-year period we observe significant increase in employment among women as well as men. The demand for labour in the last years increases significantly, and now the employers complain of labour shortage. It could be concluded that to some extent the increase of women's employment and respectively the decrease in unemployment was due to the segregation in employment by gender.

The status in employment by gender is also an interesting indicator, which could give a hint about the reasons the gender segregation deepens.

**Table 5. Employed people by their status in employment and by gender**

|      | Employers | Self-employed | Employees in private firms | Employees in public firms | Unpaid family workers |
|------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2001 | 2,1       | 6,9           | 46,2                       | 42,7                      | 1,9                   |
| 2006 | 2,2       | 6             | 57,1                       | 32,8                      | 1,8                   |

Source: LFS.

The most significant change in the status of employed people by gender for the studies period is the increase of women employment as employees in the private sector and the decrease of their share as self-employed. Thus, we may enlarge our previous conclusion that the decrease

in employment was due to increasing women in low paid sectors and in occupations less prestige with the identification of the private sector, where the new jobs were created.

### *Security of employment versus higher payment*

Regarding sectoral segregation, the concentration of women in low paid branches, e.g. textile industry, teachers, social care workers, etc., is linked to the low productivity of the sectors and the fact that the level of payment in the administration and public services (education, health, etc.) depends on the state/municipality budget. The financial restrictions limited the level of payment in the public services, where women predominated in employment. However, the employment in this area is more secure from the point of view of pension and health insurance. Whether the pattern of behaviour has changed since we have more women now employed in the private sector? One explanation is that during the studied period the government undertook a number of measures to stimulate the private sector to secure its workers by paying the insurances. One more explanation is that the shortage of supply of labour now makes employers interested in keeping their employees, including by offering more secure labour conditions and attractive packages of social insurances. Anyway, a fact is that the private sector opens new jobs, and in the dilemma whether to develop own business or to be employed in the private sector women preferred to work as employees in the private sector.

### *The pattern of employment and the segregation of employment*

There are some activities where women preferred to be employed because of the pattern of employment, e.g. teachers. In some cases the lack of fixed working time is important for women so as they easily reconcile their family engagement with the work, they do. In some cases women may prefer part-time work or work on shifts, which could be also a factor of importance when the sector or the occupation has been chosen. Such a hypothesis should be checked by statistics on the pattern of employment by gender.

Data point out that the percentage of temporary employment (people with temporary contracts) in the country in 2006 was about 7%, twice lower than the EU average.<sup>11</sup> The share of women employed under temporary contract (48,4%) is less than that of men, but the differences is not high. However, the share of women under probationary period in the private sector has been twice higher than that of men. Within a relatively low share of people, employed as part-time in Bulgaria (1,5% in 2006), the share of women employed as part-time was twice higher than men (66%). The quoted data confirm to some extent that the more flexible pattern of working time and work arrangement could be a factor influencing the occupational and sectoral segregation.

### *The need for training and retraining*

As mentioned above, in many cases women compromise more with employment conditions and their personnel characteristics as a labour force. The job shortage during a long transition period (of about 15 years) and the higher level of job demand were one of the reasons for compromises regarding payment and working conditions. We have to mention also that during the transition and the restructuring process many people face skill disqualification. They have to update their skill or their qualification. Many women managed to do this, but

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<sup>11</sup> Report on gender equality 2008, EU, p. 18.

some did not. As a result they have to fill jobs, which require lower education or less skilled labour. The very undeveloped system for life-long learning in the country impedes the qualification and skill adjustment of the labour force, including women. Data point out that among EU countries according to percentage of population aged 24-65 participating in education and training Bulgaria is ranked last but one.<sup>12</sup>

## *2.b Case study analysis*

Within this part of the report we would like to underline once again that there are no systematic studies on gender segregation as well as valuation of female jobs regarding change in pay, skill grading, employment and working conditions accompanying change in the gender composition of the labour force. Due to this in this part of the report we will present some outcomes of case studies performed in 2007 by the author for the purpose of a national report within EU/ILO project on decent work and employment conditions. Within this project the author did several case studies on employment conditions, including occupations and sectors where women predominate in employment – textile industry, teachers in secondary school and employees in a bank.

We will present here some outcomes of these case studies, which are relevant to the topic of this report – gender segregation.

### **Case study “Employment and working conditions of teachers”**

The employment in education amounts to 196 000 people or about 6% of overall employment in 2004. The trend of employment in the last 10 years was declining due to the ongoing system reform. Women prevail among employed people in the sector despite the low level of labour remuneration, intensive work and stressing working conditions. The main question we will try to answer is why women prefer to be teachers, bearing in mind the pros and cons of the occupation and the specificity of the branch.

The education system and primary and secondary school in particular had accumulated a number of problems due to delayed reforms. On one hand, the teachers worked under difficult and stressing conditions with low level of payment, on the other hand, the pupils and their parents complain on the low quality of teaching. Meanwhile, the dropout of children from school increases especially among some ethnic groups, e.g. Roma children. A number of problems concerning the financing of the system were pointed out and the capacity of the system to respond to the increasing requirements for building knowledge-based society.

Interviews with a director of a secondary school in Sofia, a chairman of trade union and a teacher were held for identifying the trends in the employment and working conditions of teachers. A semi-standardized interview was selected as survey tool.

The studied secondary school has almost 40 years of history. About 1000 school children are taught there in different natural and mathematical sciences like physics, chemistry, biology, mathematics, computer science, etc. The number of school children increases with the years. The school is a lyceum of Sofia University and most of its graduates are admitted to universities in the country and abroad. Some of the teachers are also lectors in the university. The school is financed by the municipal budget.

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<sup>12</sup> Report on gender equality 2008, EU, p. 19.

### ***The pattern of employment***

96 people work in the school, of whom 80 people are teachers and 16 people – non-teaching assistance staff. 76 people are employed on pay-roll determined on the number of school children.

- The permanent labor contracts prevail – 99% of the employees.
- 8 people are employed with temporary labor contract because they substitute people who are temporary absent from work.
- Labour contracts for one year are used when a person is employed for the first time. After the expiration of this year the contract may be reestablished or terminated.
- 10% of the employees are hired based on civil contracts – these are lecturers receiving honoraria and 2 teachers, who do not have full employment according to the normative requirements (they are teaching mainly foreign languages).
- One teacher teaches two subjects.

The interviewed people share some problems concerning the labor bargaining, namely:

- Because of the use of civil contracts the possibilities for more flexibility is limited due to the adopted form of planning of the needs for the entire school year, as well as the low remuneration of the additional hours (BGN 3.40 or EUR 1.7 per hour.)
- The impossibility to plan the number of teachers needed (depending on the number of students) in the beginning of the school year due to administrative reasons (lack of correspondence between the actual start of the school year and the financial school year) presses teachers to take additional classes, thus increasing the intensity of their work.
- However, the interviewed teacher stated high degree of job security. The employed teachers are secure and do not worry for their jobs. The working environment according to them is very good, when conflicts arise, the director, trade union representatives and teachers seek reasonable solutions together.
- This school is not characterized with high staff turnover and, despite the low remuneration, the overall environment of understanding and mutual support supposes staff stability. However, when the younger teachers find a better paid job, they often leave the teacher profession.

### ***Labour remuneration***

The employees in the educational institution have collective labour agreement, which is part of the branch labour contract of the teachers' trade union. The collective labor agreement is amended only at radical changes in the labour conditions. Almost 90% of the employees are covered by this agreement.

- The formation of wages of the employees in the education sector is set in a Regulation of the Ministry of Education and depends on the teaching length of service, the qualification degree and the work-load within regulated annual norm.
- The average level of teachers' remuneration is BGN 382, and over half of them (56%) receive wages higher than the average for the country.
- The non-teaching staff receives significantly less than the average for the country – 75%.

- The supplement for length of service is 1% for one year of service. For people with greater length of service this supplement may form even up to 25% of the wage.
- The additional work over the pointed norm is paid as lector hours (BGN 3.40 or EUR 1.7), which is very small.

### ***Working time duration, labor intensity and healthy working conditions***

Working time is determined based on norm within 648-720 school hours per year. It is worked 5 days/week with commitment of average 17-20 hours/week. The preparation for school lessons and the extra-curriculum work brings additional burden to the pointed hours.

- Additional commitment is often required for performance of school competitions, checking written works, etc., and this commitment is usually on weekends. The extra work cannot be paid due to the lack of legal background for this.
- As pointed above, although it is difficult to evaluate the labour intensity, it is beyond question that teaching implies highly intensive labour and the interviewed teachers confirmed this statement.
- Not all teachers have separate working place. However, risk evaluation of the work has been made in the school and budgetary funds for medical assistance have been planned.
- The main health problems related to teacher's labour are stress, overburdening of the throat, consequences from the work with computer particularly for computer science teachers.
- Another health problem is related to the overall environment, which poses risks due to the contacts with many people particularly during periods of virus infections.
- The general impression is for increasing trend of teachers' absences due to illness, as well as due to permanent health break-downs particularly for those with greater length of service.

### ***Access to training and qualification***

The access to training and qualification is related to the length of service. However, generally teachers are able to join various forms of professional improvement. Thus, for example in the 2005-2006 school year almost all teachers have attended computer science courses, organized by the Ministry of Education. The courses' duration was 1 month.

The usual system for raising the qualification is through courses organized by the Teachers' Training Institute. However, the teachers do not evaluate highly the quality of training in this system. The teachers do not have problems to access the training and receive diplomas for successfully completed training but they give low evaluation to the quality of training itself.

The work on various national and international projects, the exchange of experience with similar schools from the country and abroad are considered very successful forms. The considerable bureaucracy and administration have been pointed as impeding factors for the work on projects.

### ***Job and family reconciliation***

In practice the efforts in this area are concentrated on mothers with small children and the older women, so as to free them from early morning or late afternoon lessons and to let them choose the most convenient time for lessons. There are main compromises in the choice of teacher's profession but it becomes clear that there is a creative labor, motivated by professional devotion. Thus, the teachers who love their profession compromise with the low labour remuneration as well as with the poor working conditions and mostly with the rather intense and stressful teaching labour. The interviewed women shared their concerns that the profession has become quite feminized and as a main reason for that they point out the low level of remuneration. They also outline that the profession has been missing its social prestige.

### **Case study "Employment and working conditions in financial intermediation"**

Financial intermediation is one of the prosperous businesses in Bulgaria. The number of employed people increases over the years. In 2006 all employed people numbered 39,1 thousand people, of them 12,7% men and 26,4% – women, i.e. more than 66% of total employment are women.

The case study included interviews with the staff of a bank.

About the bank: The studied bank is one of the most modern and innovative Bulgarian banks with leading position in the electronic banking (Internet, PC, Phone, GSM), in corporate and retail business, in the introduction of new products. The branch network includes 123 branches in the country (Bank's sites), located in the major cities, as well as in some towns with economic potentials.

The following officials were interviewed with semi-standardized interviews for the purposes of the case study – the Director of the "Human Resources" Department, the Chairman of the trade union and a banking employee.

The number of employed people is about 2100, of which about 900 are employed in the central office in Sofia and the rest – in the bank branches in the country. The majority of the employees of the bank are women (over 70%). The staff is relatively young – the average age of an employee is 37 years.

### ***The pattern of employment***

The majority of the employed people are hired mainly through permanent labour contracts in full-time. However, the bank has quite flexible practice in hiring people: it offers 6-month "testing" contracts for the newly hired employees. After this period the contracts are transformed into permanent ones. In some cases "studying" contracts are offered and their duration is 15 days. The staff on leasing is another interesting form of labour relations. The civil contracts are used in lawyer services. The bank also has outsourced activities.

Temporary labour contracts are used during the summer holidays when pensioners who are ex-employees of the banking system are hired. The bank also performs summer internship programs and the well performing students may be hired at work.

The average duration of labor service is 8 years considering that the bank exists since 1993. The staff turnover is within 6% and its major form is voluntary leaving. The motives for this are usually the higher paid work or the possibilities for faster growth in the official hierarchy.

***The working time duration*** for most of the officials is 8 hours/day, 5 days/week. The working time for the offices in the shops, as well as for the Call Center, is uninterrupted within 7 days with different duration or on 24-hour schedule. The people working on such schedule are relatively few in number and the conditions of this labour are fixed in additional working agreements.

Extra labour is required in some departments like information technologies, repairing and communication, because these departments work beyond the bank's working time. This labour is additionally remunerated.

A bank employee shared that in campaign periods the working time may last for 10-12 hours. Later the employees may be compensated for this longer working time through leaves or depending on the agreement with the manager.

The bank recruits staff through internal contests for the vacancies and thus ensures development and succession of the staff. The bank also works with two private mediation agencies – one in Sofia and the other in Plovdiv, which monitor the labor market all over the country by selecting and supplying staff in compliance with the bank's requirements. The bank maintains a relatively rich database of applicants for work.

***The organization and intensity of work*** follow the modern banking forms. The work in the bank's branches is particularly intensive, responsible and strenuous, and especially in the units, which directly work with clients. The quality of work requirements increase continuously, as well as the number of offered products and services. The work is done with computers and modern software products and this engages the employees' attention and increases their tension particularly when they work with BGN and foreign currency.

***The working conditions in terms of the employees' health*** are relatively good compared with the average for the country and are continuously improving. The bank has own labour medicine unit. The legally required evaluations of the degree of risk on the working place are performed there. The standards for furnishing, equipment and working conditions comply with the legal requirements and the Working conditions' groups and the trade union organization perform the additional control. The bank's officials have life insurance and labour accident insurance. Medical treatment and prophylaxis are provided under a contract with a specialized clinic. The work creates risk for eye disorders and this is a special subject of staff prophylaxis. Analyses of the staff morbidity are drafted on annual basis and relevant recommendations are made for improving the conditions and health of the bank's officials.

An interviewed employee of the bank shared the opinion that the working conditions may be improved because the central office has relatively old computer equipment, the air-conditioning system does not manage to ventilate well the premises, in which relatively more women work – up to 10 people.

***The access to training and qualification*** is promoted through the development of annual training programs for the whole staff. In 2005 all bank officials passed twice internal and external forms of training. The total number of trained is 4088 people. Many officials of the bank had been studying on masters programs in the country and abroad. There are also long-term specializations in banking – 7 people have passed 2-year specializations and 19 people – 6-month specializations in the last two years. The short-term specialized seminars with duration 1-3 days are also often practiced. The internal banking education covers all the staff

of the branches and the introduction training for the newly appointed officials is obligatory. Foreign language training for certain positions is also actively performed.

**The wage** level is over the average for the country level and the average for the private banking sector level. The structure of remuneration includes 1/3 of flexible remuneration related to the amount of sales and the working results. The basic remuneration is determined based on scale, rules and the relevant system for basic remuneration. The gross remuneration is agreed based on bonus system. The social expenditures are also included – Christmas bonuses, individual benefits, etc.

The wage growth is planned for a 3-year period. Evaluations are made through certification of the employees and their growth in the official hierarchy is respectively promoted.

**Social dialogue is very well developed.** It is held between the bank managers and the trade union of the bank employees, in which 90% of the employees participate. The collective labour agreement is a form of social dialogue, as the collective labour agreement is renewed every 2 years. The consultations are the major form of settling labor disputes. The changes in the area of labour relations are agreed previously.

The reconciliation of work and family duties of the staff are encouraged through programs and additional payments for marriage and childbirth. Additional social benefits are granted in case of financial problems related to the health of the employees' children.

Based on the above mentioned we may conclude that the over represented of women in the banking sector is due to the relatively high level of payment and good working conditions. Employers preferred to engage well-educated women because they are stricter regarding their work engagement than men. Meanwhile, the employers offered relatively good working conditions and different stimulus that attract women. Compared with the rest of the sectors and occupations this sector provides better payment and better working conditions. Of course, work is often exhausted and overtime is not an occasional event. But the positive features prevailed and many young women consider the work in the sector as a success in their professional life.

### **3. Policy issues**

#### *3.a Overview*

Labour market segregation has not been a topic of special policy measures. There are a number of policy documents preventing against discrimination or dealing with equal opportunities, e.g. The Law Protecting against Discrimination (01.01.2004 State Gazette No 86, September 2003); The Labor Code, Act on Safety and Health at work, etc. There are also a number of strategies, programmes and plans for the implementation and the realization of the existing policies against discrimination. However, the segregation issue as a separate problem has not been discussed as a legal base or as a subject for more wide discussion in the society.

At executive power level the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (with the corresponding structure “Demographic policy, social investments and equal opportunities” Direction, where there is a special department “Equal opportunities”) is the national mechanism for gender equality, responsible for developing and coordinating the state policy on these matters in all areas.

At the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy there is a Consulting commission named “National Council on Gender Equality for the equal opportunities”, which was established in 2003, and is in charge to consult the annual National plan for encouraging the employment and coordinates the efforts for creation of administrative capacity in the area of the gender equality. Participants are representatives of the state institutions, as well as representatives of the social partners, non-government organizations and academic areas. To these institutions should be added also the structures of the civil society, and mostly of many non-government organizations, which actively work for illuminating the problems of gender inequality and maintain their lobbies for solving economic and social problems mostly of the women.

Bulgaria plans its employment policy through strategic and operative programs. Since 2002 in the country are developed annual national programs for action on the employment, and in the last two years are developed also National action plans for encouraging the gender equality (2005 and 2006). These plans point out the main actions for realization the state policy for encouraging the gender equality, as well as the action, which should be taken for guaranteeing equal opportunities in the access to economic activity, education and healthcare, more successful combining of family and professional obligations, for gender equality in the area of the state governance, as well as the mechanisms for observing and evaluating the effectiveness in applying the principle of equality and the influence of the civil society on the public tendencies.

The National plan for action and encouragement of gender equality foresees in 2006 the preparation of National long-term strategy in this area for the period 2007-2010.

The creation of a long-term employment strategy and the Annual National Action Plans on Employment (developed since 2002) allowed deeper reporting of the gender sign in defining target groups and the creation of programs and measures of active policies, which work for the activating of the risk groups.

A special chapter in the National action plans includes the creation of equal opportunities for labour activity of the genders. In the last few years, with the development and introducing of the horizontal approach concerning the gender equality, each chapter of the national plans includes gender characteristics as an obligatory element of the information and the actions. We have to say that the employment policy is relevantly designed and well-targeted in view of gender inequality. However, the segregation topic is not included in the content as a separate issue. The active policy of the labor market is more focused on employment reintegration and sustainability of employment as well as on its quality and productivity then on segregation or de-segregation.

The focus of the policy is on the following issues: increasing the awareness of the society regarding gender equality and training the state and local administration in the field of human management in protection of human rights; measures that could be applied to achieve equality; monitoring and control on the applied policies; implementing the Eurostat indicators on measurement the gender equality in the national statistical system.

The governmental policy on gender equality is applied through the National Action Plans in the pointed field. They include activities stimulating gender equality and diminishing the existing stereotypes about the role of men and women in social and economic life.

Gender equality is a target of the “Employment Strategy 2004-2010” as well. The strategy identifies women as a risky group regarding employment and points out the need of design and implementation of programs and measures aimed at better reconciliation policy so as to stimulate economic activity among women. The Strategy also outlines the need of development of policy concerning the equality of all social groups in the labour market.

In more concrete plan the progress of Program 12 “Equal opportunities”<sup>13</sup> is listed in “Report of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy for 2007” as follows:

- Realized are projects for increase of the informativeness and sensitiveness of the society to the problems of insuring conditions for equal access and equal participation in the public life. Four representative national studies of the public attitudes towards the equality and discrimination and the role of media in their forming (BAS) have been carried out, as well as many other at local level, like the field ethnological study in Nesebar, Zlatograd and Madan, the sociological study of “Skala” agency on request of Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation, etc.
- In the frames of the participation of Bulgaria in the “European year – 2007 for equal opportunities for all”, projects and programs, education for achieving equal gender opportunities for their access to the public life are realized. In the frames of the projects are prepared training materials, modules and logistic. Some concrete projects are realized, which are indirectly connected with the problems of segregation of the labor market:
  1. Project “Improving the capacity of the executive power bodies for guaranteeing the gender equality (2006-2007)” – 127 representatives of the central and local power, legal system, organizations, social partners, media, have been trained.
  2. Project “The youth thinks globally, acts locally on the issues of gender equality” – 4 youth forums and international final conference have been carried out.
  3. Project “Gender budgeting” – 6 regional training seminars and international final conference have been carried out.
  4. Project “Gender evaluation of the Bulgarian employment strategy” – 4 seminars and a national survey for implementing measures for encouraging the economic activity of parents with small children are carried out.

For the full and effective realization of the engagements during the Bulgarian chairmanship and in support of implementing the National Action Plan of the initiative “Decade of the Roma inclusion 2005-2015”, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy has realized many activities, like carrying out the X meeting of the International Management Committee of the initiative “Decade of the Roma inclusion 2005-2015”, a scientific conference entitled “Integration of Roma in the Bulgarian society” in January 2007 in Ministry of Labor and Social Policy in cooperation with Institute of Sociology at BAS, non-government Roma organizations and Roma leaders, representatives of the state administration, representatives of research teams, experts, journalists, regular monitoring of the implementation of the National Action Plan, information support to non-government organizations working for equal integration of Roma, for promoting the goals of the initiative and explaining the carried out in Bulgaria policy in this area, seminars for the Roma woman and for increase of the informativeness of the Roma community, sociological study and discussion on topic “Roma for the Roma” in the National Center for Vocational Training at the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, partnership and support to a TV show “Roma world”.

### *3.b Job evaluation*

The normative base of the labor relations views the necessity of evaluation of the work places in accordance with the worker’s gender. Practically there is a development of the activities on such evaluations in quite limited directions. For example, the evaluation of the work places in

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<sup>13</sup> [http://www.mlsp.government.bg/bg/docs/1500\\_PROGRAMEN\\_OTZET\\_2007.doc](http://www.mlsp.government.bg/bg/docs/1500_PROGRAMEN_OTZET_2007.doc).

Bulgaria is made mostly from point of view of the labor conditions. The acting legislation has many clauses concerning the work place and gender of the worker.

Regarding the wage setting machinery the work place is a subject of contracting when the main wage is contracted. Here the evaluation stops without discussing this work place concerning the gender of the worker. The additional payments to the wage are also not influenced by the gender of the workers, they are contracted according to the individual characteristics of the worker like length of work, or according to other parameters – for example, the overtime work is paid by the time, etc.

The gender characteristics of the hired workers are subject of working time, vacations and rests setting machinery. Here many clauses of the normative base concern the gender of the worker and mainly the women with small children or pregnant women. Part of these clauses concern the night work, shift work, duration of vacations, the overtime work, etc. Women with small children have many alleviations.

In the practice in Bulgaria there are no discussions on whether the work places are “male” or “female”. The policies focus on whether there are work places, whether there are more good work places and mostly whether there are “enough” work places compared with the labor supply. Even in branches with prevailing women labor force the work places are treated according to the legislations as work places, not as “female” work places.

### *3.c Skill Shortages*

Skill shortages become more and more obvious problem for the country. The relatively higher supply of labor during the past 15 years of transition somehow neglected the skill shortage, because employers had more opportunities to choose among all people who wanted to be hired the workers with more relevant skills, in accordance to their need. However, in the last two years, the supply starts to decrease and the demand increases, because of which skill mismatches become more obvious, and since 2007 the employers’ complaints about skill shortages become quite repeatedly. The main areas, in which skill shortages occur, are tourism, constructions, textile industry, etc. There is a shortage of nurses, cooks, maids, masons, shuttering workers, etc. Almost in all areas of economic activities employers complain that they have difficulties to find skilled workers. To attract workers, in many cases employers offer wages quite higher in comparison with the average wage level for the country. However, the skilled labour withdrawal from Bulgaria during the transition and know that the offered high, in many cases at EU level, wages are not sufficiently attractive for the people to come back. Meanwhile, the new entrants on the labour market miss work experience, and quite often employers state that they are not educated in accordance to market needs. However, all above mentioned treated the existing serious problem in general and not from the point of view of genders. The existing skill mismatches related to different branches and occupations but not to “men” or “women” occupations.

### *3.d Training*

Concerning training, we have to say that it becomes more and more important issue because of the objective needs of permanent updating of professional and qualification abilities of the personnel. In Bulgaria, after many years of neglecting training as an element of work organization and a major factor for increasing the competitiveness of the economy, now the problems of training, e.g. vocational training and matching supply and demand of skilled labour, continuing training of employed people, re-training, training of unemployed people,

integration of inactive people through relevant training and education, etc., are in the agenda of the policy-makers and in the focus of social debates.

The present attention of the society and the policy-makers on the discussed topic is a result of the accumulated problems in the area of education and vocational training that caused social tension and economic losses.<sup>14</sup>

Within quite well designed legal frame and institutions there are number of problems with vocational education, especially regarding access to training and the efficiency of the process.

Both national and international statistical data point out that people who participate in continuing vocational training (CVT) has been quite modest. In 2003 only 16% of population aged 25-65 had participated in any form of learning (formal, informal or on its own).<sup>15</sup> In numbers, this means about 1 288 000 people, which is 19.6% of the population of the country. By gender, these figures are 16% for male and 13% for female in 2005.<sup>16</sup> The majority of these people, 1 039 000, did that on their own by reading books, on internet, by listening to TV education programs, etc.

The share of enterprises, which have organized CVT for their employees, was 11.5% of total number of observed enterprises in 2004, while in 2002 it was 14.5%, and in 1999 – 16.5%. Enterprises with higher number of employed people were more inclined to organize CVT.

Although the share of enterprises offering CVT has decreased, the number of participants in CVT as a share of the total number of employed people increases. In 2004 this share was 14.2%, compared with 10.9% in 2002, and 12.7% in 1999. By gender, the share of men was 55.0%, while that of women – 45.0%, and this proportion is opposite to the structure of employed people, in which the share of men was 49.8% and that of women – 50.2%.

As far as unemployed people are concerned, their training is a part of the active labour market policies, and training and retraining programmes in particular. Data for these activities are collected from the National Employment Agency and we will quote the annual reports of this agency. We have to point out that depending on the programme, training often accompanies employment under specific ALM programme. In 2006 the number of unemployed people, included in courses of professional training, was 31153 people, which was by 11.8% more than in 2005. The number of professional training courses for unemployed people in 2006 was 1552. The trend is upwards, since in 2005 this number was 1268 and in 2004 – 902 courses.<sup>17</sup>

Labour offices also organized training courses for employed people, and their number was 247 in 2005 and 283 in 2006.<sup>18</sup> The number of participants increased in 2006, compared to 2005, but as a percentage of total number of employed people it is still insignificant (less than 1%).

In conclusion we will say that there are no direct or indirect training policies targeted to horizontal or hierarchical segregation. As seen from all mentioned above, training policy is directed more towards increase of the opportunities for access to training and towards increase of the efficiency of the process of training.

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<sup>14</sup> E.g. in September 2007 there was a strike of teachers, which continued for 33 days of very hard negotiations with the Government.

<sup>15</sup> LFS, Module Life-long Learning, 2003, National Statistical Institute.

<sup>16</sup> Eurostat, Harmonized Statistics Tables.

<sup>17</sup> Annual Reports, National Employment Agency, 2005 and 2006.

<sup>18</sup> Information Bulletin, National Employment Agency, 2005, MLSP, p. 23.

#### 4. Summary and recommendations

The analysis of the state and policy of the labor market in Bulgaria from point of view of the adopted understanding for “segregation” as “gender inequality on the labour market regarding employment and payment from the point of view of occupational positions and sectors of employment” shows that there is clear disproportion in the gender distribution of labour force by occupational positions and sectors of employment.

- Women labour force is concentrated in several sectors based on NACE-2-digit sectors, namely: manufacturing, retail trade, education, hotels and restaurants, health and social work, while male labour force is over-represented in construction, mining and quarrying, transport.
- We also see that the gender distribution from occupational point of view has been also unequal since more women are presented among service workers, shop and market sales workers, and technicians and associated professionals, while men are more often employed as legislators, senior officials and managers, and plant and machine operators.
- The next finding concerns the dynamic of the process and points out that between 2000 and 2007 the mentioned inequality has deepened. The IP index clearly outlined the process. This index has increased regarding occupations from 0,2711 in 2000 to 0,2935 in 2007 and regarding sectors from 0,1752 to 0,2078 in the same period.

We studied a number of factors, which could be in charge of the pointed segregation.

- We found out that the level of education is not a factor of primary importance, since women are better educated but are engaged in a less prestige positions. The sectoral distribution of employed people by gender pointed out that the level of payment in the branches, where women are concentrated, has been lower than in the branches, where men are concentrated.
- The analysis pointed out that the lower level of payment could be linked to the structure of wages, which differs by gender. The higher wage of male labor force is due to the bonuses they receive because of the more overtime work and night work they do.
- Although better-educated women more often compromise with their jobs, they have started to prevail between employed people with elementary occupation. One explanation can be the years, during which they have completely lost their professional abilities and knowledge, and that is why they agree on work that requires no professional abilities or knowledge.
- Our analysis outlines that participation of women on the labor market has been lower than that of men during the years, which means that women have been excluded from employment to a higher extent than men have. That is why they are more inclined to accept low paid work or work, which does not correspond to their educational level.
- Our case studies point out that in some cases the regional options to choose work are so limited that women accept any work offered. This was the case in the textile sector. The investments in this sector opened jobs in many towns and this was the only opportunity for women to enter employment.
- In some other cases, e.g. teachers, the professional vocation could be outlined as a main reason for keeping women’s over-employment in this relatively low paid profession with a stressing work conditions.

As far as policy issue is concerned, we have to conclude that segregation issue is not in the agenda of the policy-makers. Many of the discussed problems are subject of policy measures

and interventions but they are addressed as gender equality problems and not segregation problems.

The **recommendations** as an outcome of this study are the following:

- There is a need of more systematic and detailed analysis of segregation issue.
- There is a need of relevant systematic statistics in order to have a reliable data, on which the studies could be based.
- There is a need of more public debates on the issue in order to identify the deepness of the segregation and the significance of the problem.
- There is a need of more information and knowledge about the effects of the different policies used to diminish the extent of the segregation.

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