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URBAN PLANNING FROM THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE (CASE STUDY FROM UKRAINE)

Nowadays the city landscape becomes the environment where human reproduction forms are creating and deploying as a human personality. The places for the comfortable life of citizens should be the key issue in the urban environment. City development strategy envisages the creation of good quality of life for all its inhabitants [12, s. 234]. Increased attention to the needs and requirements of the citizens can be successfully implemented only if the different requirements and needs of women and men are included in all products and services of the city. The gender inclusion in urban planning makes it possible to carry out specific research work of critical analysis and design of urban spaces [14]. The keyword “gender+” – not rigid categories of “women” and “men” but respect the people in all their diversity [13, s. 4–5].

Planning and organization of urban areas usually shows gender blindness in the Ukrainian cities (equal opportunities for women and men in access to services offered by the municipality has not been provided, quality daily lives of all the inhabitants of the city has not been supported). In Ukrainian cities, where live more than 70% of the population, there is gender ”hidden” discriminatory practices in the right to access to quality living space of “urban areas”. In the cities living space there is gender asymmetry, particularly in the way of providing the right to access to the “urban spaces” – the time and money spent to access: recreational areas (gardens, parks), educational and cultural establishments, health care facilities, shopping facilities, etc. The gender approach to city politics must involve the formation of friendly urban space (for children, women) [15].

Applying a gender perspective to urban planning is essential for thinking, designing and cities considering the diversity of experiences and needs which the population has. Urban development is seen as a process of creating gender justice, with users’ spatial requirements coming to the fore and becoming the starting point in the development of concepts and models for the future of urban structures of space and settlement to meet the concepts and strategies of sustainable development.

The main proposition of international urban gender studies demonstrates close connection of urban development and gender relations. There are many theoretical and practical works from different disciplines that incorporate gender perspective to urban studies. Social scientist V. Gutierrez deals with “indicators” for urban living conditions of women and men. Her indicators are based upon gender-sensitive spatial analyses uncovering and making aware the androcentric reflex in spatial planning. To create a critical mass for the topic led to research of the European network “Gender, Diversity and Urban Sustainability (GDUS)” [5].

Moreover, the handbook “Gender Mainstreaming in Urban Planning” contains a review of the vast practical experience in implementing the Strategy of Gender Mainstreaming made in Viennese city planning over the past 20 years. It determines: “Gender equality remains an important topic, as there are inequalities that are related to a person’s gender. Gender mainstreaming, a strategy that is also prescribed by the European Union, aims to counter these inequalities. The objective is to take into account the living and working conditions of women and men in planning, implementing and evaluating measures. Only if we recognize and consider these differences can we avoid unequal treatment” [2, p. 5].

UN-HABITAT is an organization that works from a gender perspective, and seeks to account for women's everyday life experience. This vision, inclusive with the rest of our society, considers the participation as an essential instrument in projects and sustainability as basic criteria of development [6].

Currently, emerging efforts exist of gendering evaluation in the field of urban planning and development. There are a diverse group of women architects and urban planners, interested in rethinking cities, neighborhoods and architecture in order to eliminate gender discrimination [8]. They work to build cities that reflect the diversity of our society by creating inclusive spaces [9]. The aim of this paper is to present the construction of a conceptual framework for gendering urban planning and to test it with examples within the Ukraine context.

The city environment has been presented by the different types of spaces, as it expresses ways to use existing locations of different gender groups. J. Beall said: “Stereotypical notions of nuclear families ± with male breadwinners journeying across town to work, and women as housewives caring for their children and elderly relatives in residential neighborhoods have never applied in some situations, and in others no longer apply. The separation of

home, work, and leisure is being challenged in cities, as women and men work to transform the urban environment” [1, p. 11].

Perception of the city by different social groups depends on their position in it, and folds in the practical development of the urban environment, and filling it with new social values. It is important that the city creates conditions for the everyday lives of women, especially for those who work and have small children. Cities have to offer qualitative spatial conditions for families to take into account the needs of parents (especially mothers) in child care. For example, women are more likely to use public transport, including traveling with a child in a baby carriage.

Women, regardless of whether busy career they have, or those who are unemployed, single or those who have a family, continue to be responsible for most domestic tasks: childcare, care for the elderly in families, shopping for the family and so on. All these things put pressure on their daily lives. The city can improve the conditions of daily life for women by developing gender-sensitive infrastructure areas: recreation areas (gardens, parks), institutions of education, culture, health care institutions, shopping facilities and more. In addition, the focus on urban areas where women have a sense of insecurity at different times of day should be determined. Therefore, there is an urgent need for more specific spatial planning of cities, because it is important to address discrimination against women.

Urban studies define the city as a place of mobility as a stream of everyday practices, and which distinguish cities between their repetitive phenomenological grounds. The focus of localization in defining space depends on what person "scale presence" we are interested in. Town planning represents the image of the town as experienced by its citizens and its visitors. The concept of urban space created by a complex impression: location, size, relief items etc. Thus, the space is a place that is practiced [14].

The street that was geometrically defined by planning, transformed into space by passers. At a time when a person moves in a particular segment of the street or riding on public transportation – impressions of the place will always be endowed with emotional connotations that can be transferred to the general attitude to the whole area around this point. Understanding of the city assumes the integration of two levels of urban space: on the one hand, there is the area of the city – buildings, squares and streets on the other – people who use all these elements in town and give them meaning. So the city as a complex entity that is

experienced, requires alternative descriptions and maps (“psycho geography” of urban spaces), including gender [10].

D. Parsons claimed that the city has always taken in conjunction with the emphasis on its personal life [7, p. 223]. In her study, she described Paris and London in the period between 1880 and 1940 years and demonstrated – what does it mean to be a woman in a city that is for her “most promising, sometimes unbearable, but never overpowering, providing a space in which woman can realize her identity and have her own author's voice” [7, p. 228]. Women were often stereotyped by “replacing women through various kinds of violence to the field of household, to the world of shopping, to the inner world of the sexual body”) [13]. Nowadays, women's urban consciousness, experienced women who care about their daily chores becomes of crucial concern in urban planning [14].

For the formation of gender competence in the field of urban planning municipal employees are offered special training [10]. The authors of this study were conducted gender training for Ukrainian municipal staff (Kharkiv and Chuguiv cities) where gender mapping was applied. Parts of this research were done within the project “Gender Audit of urban space”, which was conducted O. M. Beketov National University of Urban Economy in Kharkiv with the support Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Regional Office Ukraine & Belarus [11].

The idea of gender mapping is in taking the perspective of women and men. Maps of Chuguiv and Kharkiv cities made by participants of the trainings, demonstrate the specificity of space perception by women and men. “Men Maps” try to convey a dynamic image, to show the space that is absorbed by movement. Thus, the use of transport mediates the relationship of time and space, as a result distance on the territory is starting to understand though temporal terms. Imaginary routes can stretch or shrink depending on the convenience of car travel. Features of women urban space perception also could be explained by their specific social purpose, their involvement in reproductive labor (concern for others) [3, p. 33]. Women think about schools, hospitals, shops, recreation areas (parks) [12].

Thus, physical and institutional landscape of the city becomes part of the gender mapping. The town's decision makers must plan holistically to ensure the appropriate and accessible local provision of:

- public services (post offices, schools, nurseries, hospitals, social services);
- cultural and sports centers (cinemas, theatres, auditoriums, libraries);
- recreational facilities (parks, after school clubs, youth centers).

In addition, contemporary urbanism revives the tradition view the city from short (street) distance. The way streetscape is designed and looked after can have an important impact on the lives of women, for example:

- good lighting of streets and public places can help women feel and be more secure;
- pavements should be clear of obstacles and wide enough for pushchairs, wheel chairs, etc.

The city can help women to balance their private and family lives with their professional life by planning services to facilitate their daily chores, for example: ensure the provision of childcare facilities and nurseries [4, p. 60–61].

The analysis of Ukrainian urban planning on micro-territorial level is showed that women and their needs must be taken into account in the spatial planning, design, infrastructure and architecture of the city. Gender mainstreaming approach in urban planning is focused on the integration of gender equality in all stages of the planning process: from formulating the objectives to planning the measures and to implementing and evaluating them (design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation). The integration of “gender indicators of quality of urban space” in municipal politics of Ukraine cities will convert the “urban landscape” toward the harmonious combination of rights and opportunities for women and men to “living spaces of the city”. The orientation at what is needed for a good life entails the necessity to gear spatial development, under the sustainability concept, towards the life-immanent, daily requirements of men and women.

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