DESCRIPTION FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC (IN ENGLISH)

The aim of the research project is to identify and analyse socio-economic mechanisms that influence the scale of the phenomenon of occupational gender inequality. The geographical scope of the study includes highly developed countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The time scope of the empirical study covers the period between 1990 and 2015, which is based on the availability of statistical data.

The source literature provides a number of various definitions of occupational gender inequality, but none of them have met with universal acceptance. The researchers who deal with this problem (K. J. Arrow; H. Hartmann; B. Krug) often connect it to the imperfections of the labour market, which have their source in its institutional structure. On the other hand, it follows from the analyses carried out by S. Shulman or A. Giddens that occupational gender inequality should be perceived as a vicious circle of historical conditions and socio-cultural norms. A different perspective is presented by international organisations (UN, OECD, International Labour Organization, European Union), which treat occupational gender inequality as all kinds of differentiation, exclusion or preference in the use of fundamental rights and freedoms in the spheres of economic, political and social life. Therefore, it is justifiable to specify the scope of the studied problem and identify the measures which characterise it in pursuit of its detailed analysis in the studied highly developed countries.

For many decades, the different position of women and men in the occupational sphere has constituted an object of interest for social sciences, including economy. The forerunner of the study of the economic position of women was J. S. Mill, who pointed to the legal restrictions of women's access to education and gainful employment. F. Edgeworth, on the other hand, noticed that women were crowded in a small number of professions, which resulted in lower wages (crowding hypothesis). In the second half of the 20th century, the problem of women's economic situation became an object of wide interest for economists (G. S. Becker; L. Beneria), as a result of actions aimed at increasing the civil rights of formerly discriminated groups, including women, and the increased percentage of women on the labour market. The new perspective of research into occupational gender inequality is focused on socio-cultural factors (T. Piketty; G. Therborn), following the dynamic growth of sociological research within gender studies. As it follows from the analysis of source literature, the previous results are sometimes discrepant, which makes it difficult to draw general conclusions concerning occupational gender inequality. Most importantly, there are still no studies that would synthesise knowledge about the simultaneous effect of economic and socio-cultural factors on the phenomenon of occupational gender inequality in highly developed countries.

The research project is also crucial not only in the cognitive, but also applicational sense. This is because restricting occupational gender inequality has become the goal of many international organisations, such as: United Nations Organization, OECD, International Labour Organization and European Union, and a significant part of countries worldwide have undertaken to achieve this goal. However, reports compiled by these organisations conclude that in a number of countries the level of implementing ratified conventions remains insufficient (this also applies to some highly developed countries), which raises the question of which factors decide that these objectives are achieved to a limited extent. Through identification of the determinants of the scale of occupational gender inequality and determination of the strength of their effect on the discussed phenomenon, the research project will potentially arrive at efficient recommendations for state policy in this respect. Moreover, asking about the reasons behind occupational gender inequality is also vital for reducing the phenomenon of gender inequality in other aspects of social and economic life.

The nature of the research project is theoretical and empirical. The qualitative methods applied in the project will consist in critical analysis of literature and documents of international organisations, and deductive reasoning. The following quantitative methods are going to be employed: descriptive statistics, cluster analysis, canonical analysis and factor analysis. The Principal Investigator will also estimate econometric models of cross-sectional data and panel data models (fixed-effects, random-effects and Hausman-Taylor model).

The expected final effects of the research project include:

- publication of scientific articles in national and international journals;
- participation of the Principal Investigator in national and international scientific conferences;
- creation of a data base concerning occupational gender inequality in highly developed countries (in English) – this base will be available on the website of the Department of Macroeconomics and Development Studies of Poznań University of Economics and Business and on ResearchGate portal.