

Innovations in gender equality politics in the Baltic states: from woman to gender mainstreaming

ALINA ŽVINKLIENĖ

Lithuanian Center for Social Research, Goštauto St. 9, LT-01108 Vilnius

E-mail alinazvin@gmail.com

The main objective of the presented research is identification of innovations in contemporary gender equality politics in the Baltic states. Some principles of a new institutionalism approach are applied for the examination of the development of gender equality machinery in the Baltic states since 1940. It is argued that since 1990/91, innovations in gender equality politics are related rather to the concept of gender equality than to the institutional machinery of gender equality policy.

Keywords: gender equality politics, institutional machinery, innovations, the Baltic states

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary gender equality politics¹ in the Baltic states are developed within the frame rather imposed from the outside than locally originated. There is a clear relationship between both the Soviet Union or European Union initiatives and the construction of gender equality politics in the Baltic states.

The Soviet Union (1922–1991) was the first state in which the attainment of equality between women and men was a focus of the state's politics from the very beginning. Gender equality was an objective of European integration, further transformed into one of the values of the European Union (founded in 1957) by the Treaty of Lisbon of 2007 (EU treaties).

The Soviet gender equality policy was formulated on the basis of the approach known as the woman question (*zhenskiy vopros*). A gender mainstreaming approach is employed in the EU's contemporary gender equality policy.

Historically, the woman question refers to a complex of social problems related to the status of women-specific, gender inequality in the industrial capitalist society. Hence the solution of the woman question lies in advancement towards equality and implies the creation of conditions for social changes defined in terms of women's emancipation or liberation (The Great Soviet Encyclopedia 1979). Formulated more than a hundred years later, the gender mainstreaming refers to the principle of taking a systematic account of the differences between the conditions, situations and needs of women and men in all public policies and actions (Communication... 1996) of the post-industrial capitalist society.

¹ Here, politics refers to the theory and practice of the influence on elimination of the disparities between genders in society.

Taking into account that the ultimate strategic aim of both approaches, the woman question and the gender mainstreaming, is the achievement of equality between women and men, the outdated term “the woman question” can be renamed into more familiar women’s advancement or even woman mainstreaming.

In the Baltic states even a simplified comparison with the field of gender equality politics during the “Sovietization” of the recent past and the current process of “Europeanization” is hardly to avoid. Indeed, some actors of the Soviet gender equality politics are still active, since some generations of the Baltic people who experienced them are still alive.

Hence, the possible innovations in gender equality politics after the Baltic states regained independence in 1990/91 are examined in the article.

THE METHODOLOGY

Several postulates derived from the research based on new institutionalism approaches (Hall, Taylor 1996; Powell 2007) are used in the design of a theoretical framework of the research. First, any mechanism of social order can be defined in terms of an institution. New institutions are created or adopted using existing templates. The process of institutionalization depends on the power relations of the actors who manage it. Second, institutions are an integral part of a casual chain alongside the socioeconomic development and the diffusion of ideas. The social causation is ‘path dependent’. Third, the institutions engaged in common activities operate amidst both competitive and cooperative exchanges with other institutions.

An empirical framework includes a documentary analysis of available official documents related to the gender equality politics and the analysis of secondary sources.

“WOMAN MAINSTREAMING” IN THE BALTIC SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS (1940–1990/91)

Gender equality politics were formally analogous in all Soviet Socialist republics, however, effectiveness of their implementation was different in all of them.

The Soviet gender equality machinery created for the implementation of woman mainstreaming consisted of legal, state (Communist Party-parliamentary-governmental)² and non-governmental (women’s councils, Trade Unions, women’s studies) levels.

The legal level: the constitutional foundations of Soviet gender equality

Since 1918, the first national constitutions of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Russia guaranteed *de jure* equality between women and men. Since 1940, the Baltic states as a part of the Soviet Union adopted the two national Constitutions of 1940 and 1978 that in regard to the relationship between the state and the individual were actually a copy of the Soviet Constitutions of 1936 and 1977.

The Soviet constitutional doctrine proceeded *a priori* from the ideas: a) a total liquidation of the right to private ownership of the means of production is the *sine qua non* condition and an integral component of the constitutional principle of equality between women and men; b) it automatically leads to equality; c) the elimination of discriminative legislation places women in the position essentially equal to that of men (Zavadskaya 1994: 393).

² The Soviet constitutions did not recognize the principle of separation of powers. However, since the Constitution of 1936 a clearer distinction has been drawn between legislative and executive-administrative activities.

Like all constitutions, the Soviet one incorporated an actual political message that was detailed in the programs of the Communist Party, highlighted and fleshed out in the reports presented at the party congresses and in subsequent resolutions, decrees, etc. (Nikolaeva-Tereshkova 1979). The Constitution of 1936 ensured that “Women in the USSR are accorded equal rights with men in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life” and “the possibility of exercising these rights” (Article 122).

The Constitution of 1977 formulated gender equality as a fact, but also introduced the idea of equal access and opportunities into the concept of Soviet gender equality.

Women and men have equal rights in the USSR. Exercise of these rights is ensured by equal access to education and vocational and professional training, equal opportunities in employment, remuneration and promotion, and in social and political, and cultural activity; by special labour and health protection measures by providing conditions enabling mothers to work; by legal protection, and material and moral support for mothers and children, including paid leaves and other benefits for expectant mothers and mothers, and gradual reduction of working time for mothers with small children (Article 35).

The principle of gender equality in private life was also ensured by the state’s protection of the family, where “the spouses are completely equal in their family relations” (Article 53).

The gender equality article in the Soviet constitutions clearly indicates that womanhood and motherhood are interrelated and actually synonymous in the official Soviet gender discourse. The foundation of today named a pro-natalist or family oriented policy in the structure of Soviet social policy through the creation of a system of state support for mothers that includes maternity leave and the development of pre-school and out-schools institutions was set in the 1936 Constitution and developed in the 1977 one. The supplementary family assistance promised by the Constitution of 1977 (1978 in the Baltic states) was instituted in 1981–1983 (About Measures... 1981).

Alongside with an equal access with men and opportunities, the innovation in woman mainstreaming of the 1970s is the idea of gradually removing working mothers with small children from active participation in the labour market and providing them with support for the family. The state’s promise to secure part-time jobs for mothers can be interpreted as the development of women-friendly policies aimed at broadening and facilitating the Soviet woman’s choices.

Hence, pro-natalist, family-oriented or women-friendly policies were rather an integral than a separate part of gender equality politics.

The state level of Soviet gender equality machinery

In the Baltic states, implementation of Soviet gender equality politics started within the frame of socialist remaking of society in 1940, interrupted by the WWII, and later coincided with the restoration of the war-ravaged economy and industry. Tested in the older Soviet Socialist republics, the institutions of woman mainstreaming were adopted to the new republics of the Soviet Union. Formally, the time lag in institutionalization of gender equality between the old and new member republics of the Soviet Union had been made up by the mid-1950s.

Women’s departments analogous to the already abolished Women’s Department (*Zhenotdel*) in the center (Moscow) were created in the central committees of the national Communist

parties³. Women's departments were responsible for the implementation of gender equality policy at that time focused on a broad inclusion of women in public and production activities in the new Soviet Socialist republics. Branches of the republican Women's Department were also created on the local level. In the mid-1950s the republican women's departments were shut down as well when the governments of the Baltic republics declared that socialism had been built there. The responsibilities of women's departments were incorporated into the Department of Agitation and Propaganda and later into the Ideological Department of the central committees of the national Communist parties (Leinartė 2012).

On the parliamentary-governmental level (the Supreme Soviet) women's issues were incorporated into the responsibilities of various departments dealing with issues relating to the protection of work and health. The Permanent Commission on Women's Working and Living Conditions and the Protection of Mothers and Children attached to the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities was established in 1976 and charged with promoting active implementation of the decisions of the Soviet government and monitoring the observance of laws ensuring women's rights and interests by ministries and departments (Novikova 1981). Such commissions were established on all levels of state hierarchy – from local bodies to the Supreme Soviets of the national republics. In 1989 the Committee on Women's Issues, the Protection of the Family, Mothers and Children was established by the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union (Pukhova 1989).

The non-governmental level of Soviet gender equality machinery

The non-governmental level in the Soviet gender equality machinery is usually associated with organizations collectively known as women's councils (*zhensoviet*) and described in terms of women's movement. The main function of these councils was to monitor the implementation of labour legislation in relation to women. They were not necessarily established formally, but were often created on the initiative of women activists themselves. After the 1950s many women's councils operated on inertia and often self-disbanded.

In 1986 it was suggested at the 27th Congress of the CPSU that the women's councils in working collectives and places of residence should be restored. In the same year, however, they were re-institutionalized as a united system under the guidance of the Communist Party and the organizational and methodical supervision of the Committee of Soviet Women (Pukhova 1989).

Beginning in the early 1960s, the woman mainstreaming was actively promoted in the trade unions, which simultaneously led to a decrease in the importance of the women's council. Commissions for working with women were established at all levels and in the 1970s were renamed the Commissions on Women's Working and Living Conditions and the Protection of Mothers and Children. The primary branches of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions (VCSPS) were centrally located in all Soviet institutions. In reality the activities of trade unions and the Party and Komsomol organizations complemented each other and often overlapped.

A limited gender perspective was permanently incorporated into the humanities and social research conducted in the USSR. Beginning in the 1960s, gender issues as research objectives gradually overcame a narrow frame of scientific communism. The development of

³ Here is a widespread opinion that the shutdown of Women's Department of the Central Committee Secretariat of the All-Russian Communist Party signalled politically that the woman question was regarded as having been solved by 1930.

the women's topic in social research, mainly, in the sociology of work or the family sociology was stimulated by the establishment of sociological research institutions at the Academy of Sciences on both the All-Soviet and republican levels⁴. Nevertheless, Soviet women's studies dealing primarily with issues related to the changing status of women were very marginalized, fragmented and not centrally institutionalized. Institutionalization began when the problem-oriented council "Women's Social Activity in the Contemporary World" was established in the late 1980s at the Academy of Social Sciences under the CPSU Central Committee. Its principal aim was to become a center for the coordination of research on women (Pukhova 1989). Such councils were undoubtedly being planned for the Soviet Socialist republics as well.

Conflict resolution in the field of women's rights and gender discrimination during Soviet times

Formally gender discrimination was absent in the Soviet Union, however, the existence of gender inequalities and the state's guarantees to overcome it by protective measures for women were codified in the constitutions and related legislation. Today these protective measures are formulated in terms of either a positive discrimination or an affirmative action or the differentiation of rights.

The specific feature of the Soviet gender equality machinery was that both the state and non-governmental institutions were mandated to control the implementation of gender equality legislation and granted the individual a formal possibility to defend her/his violated rights on all institutional levels as well. In other words, non-judicial conflict resolution was executed in the departmental frame of participants of the litigation, however, the possible conflict of interest was formally eliminated by the possibility for both sides to pass all levels: from a local labour dispute commission⁵ to the such commission on the Ministry level, and over. Formally, the power of control and resolution of labour dispute was dispersed across all hierarchically subordinated institutions but most of individual disputes on the workplace were solved on the local level with a representative of a trade union being as a mediator, including disputes related to possible violation of women's rights and gender discrimination (inequalities). The final instance for labour dispute resolution was a (district, municipal) People's Court.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE BALTIC STATES (1990/91–)

Two political milestones in the construction of contemporary gender equality machinery in the Baltic states are clearly distinguished, i. e. assessment (1995–2004) that coincided with the Fourth UN Women's Conference in Beijing (1995) and entering the EU membership (2004) that to some extent coincided with the *European Year for Equal Opportunities for All* (2007).

In the context of international commitments to gender equality, the independent Estonia in 1991, Latvia in 1992 and Lithuania in 1994 (re)ratified the UN CEDAW, which the Soviet Union on behalf of its member republics ratified in 1981 (*Accession to CEDAW*). However, 1995 marks the formal re-addressing of national gender equality policies, based on the approach of woman mainstreaming at that time internationally defined in terms of women's advancement, to gender mainstreaming due to the adoption of the *Beijing Platform for Action* (BPFA) for improving the situation of all women without exception.

⁴ For instance, the institutional development of the current Lithuanian Social Research Center was initiated on 1 July 1964 when the Department of Sociology and Law at the Institute of Economics of the Academy of Sciences of the Lithuanian SSR was established (LSTC).

⁵ Established and reformed according to the provisions of the current Labour Code

The legal level: anti-discriminative laws in the Baltic states

Legally, there is not discontinuity in the state's commitment to gender equality in the Baltic states after the restoration of their independence in 1990/91. The Soviet Constitution lost its effect, but gender equality *de jure* was secured by the relevant articles that existed in the restored national pre-war constitutions and the new constitutions of Estonia (1992, Article 12) and Lithuania (1992, Article 29); Latvia kept the old one (1922, Article 91).

In Estonia the *Gender Equality Act* (GEA) was formally adopted for the utilitarian purpose of facilitating EU accession on 1 May 2004 (Pöldsaaar 2008). Latvia did not adopt a specific gender equality law and seems unlikely to do so. Documents produced during the accession by the Ministry of Welfare such as *The Gender Equality Initiative* (2001) and *Equal Opportunities for Everybody in Latvia* (2001) have remained at the draft stage. Latvia limited its legal commitment to gender equality policy to the *Labour Law* and the *Labour Protection Law* (2002), both of which incorporate the relevant European directives and contain the norms promoting gender equality (Rastrigina 2015). Lithuania adopted two antidiscriminative laws: the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (1998) and the Law of Equal Treatment (2003). These laws are permanently updated according to the EU directives.

After the entrance to the EU, the content of the legal level of (gender) equality machinery was developed due to the *acquis* and national preferences, i. e. gender as a separate ground of discrimination gradually merged in the broadening set of legally protected grounds of discrimination. In 2004, however, only Lithuania among the Baltic states signed and ratified the Optional Protocol to the CEDAW (1999), which establishes procedures for submitting individual and collective claims of violations of rights protected under the Convention (*Optional Protocol*).

The parliamentary, governmental levels, and mechanism for social dialogue on gender issues in the Baltic states

Formally, equality issues are incorporated in the activities of various parliamentary committees and commissions dealing with human rights and social affairs. However, there are attempts to establish a specific parliamentary institution dealing with gender equality. In Estonia, a draft resolution on the formation of a parliamentary study committee for analyzing gender equality was initiated in 2015; in Latvia, the Parliamentary Subcommittee on Gender Equality was established in 2003; in Lithuania, the Women's Parliamentary Group initially dealing with the promotion of the equal opportunities law was created in 1996.

The (re)involvement of governmental administrative bodies in the formation, development and implementation of contemporary gender equality politics was initiated by the action plans adopted by national governments and allocated to the ministries dealing with social security matters. The national ministries responsible for social security matters and newly created focal points within their structures became the key institution for the management of gender equality politics: in Estonia, the Gender Equality Bureau in the Ministry of Social Affairs was established in 1998; in Latvia, the Gender Equality Unit within the Department of European and Legal Affairs at the Ministry of Welfare was created in 2003; and in Lithuania, the Labour Market and Equal Opportunities Division at the Ministry of Social Security and Labour dates from 2001.

Such institution as the State Councilor (Advisor) on Women's Issues to the Prime Minister was realized only in Lithuania. Established in 1994, the position stimulated the process of institutionalization and consolidation of the Lithuanian women's movement. After the 1996 parliamentary elections, the position was abolished and then re-established in 2002, again abolished, and reestablished as the position of Advisor on Equality Issues in 2015.

The mechanism for the social dialogue between governmental and civil society organizations, i. e. the coordinating and consultative bodies for the initial adoption of BPFAs commitments, are the following: in Estonia, the Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Women's and Equal Opportunities Policies created in 1996; in Latvia, the Gender Equality Council charged with ensuring the implementation of gender equality policy at the highest level established in 2002 and reorganized into the Gender Equality Commission in 2010; in Lithuania, the permanent Inter-Ministerial Commission on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men as the primary structure for gender mainstreaming established in 2000.

The non-governmental level: trade unions, women's NGOs⁶, women's/gender studies centers

Today the trade unions are usually described as social partners. The context of restoration of independence was very damaging for political capacities of the contemporary trade union movement in the Baltic states. Women's sections are traditionally included in the internal structure of the largest national unions.

By 2004, all Baltic states chose an expert-bureaucratic model for implementing gender mainstreaming. The expert-bureaucratic model reflecting an "integrationist" approach that introduces a gender perspective into existing policy processes without challenging policy models actually legitimated premises for marginalizing women's advocacy NGOs and feminist/gender researchers (Molen, Novikova 2005: 151).

The first women's studies center in the Baltic states was founded in Lithuania in 1992, whereas such centers were created in Estonia in 1997 and Latvia in 1998.

Conflict resolution in the field of gender discrimination: the ombudsman institution

In the Baltic states, the stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy and the rule of law⁷ were also demonstrated by the restoration or creation of the ombudsman⁸ institution. All three Baltic states institutionalized an ombudsman institution dealing with discrimination on several grounds, among them gender, by 2007.

In 1999 in Estonia, the function of the ombudsman was entrusted to the restored Chancellor of Justice; the investigation of complaints of gender discrimination was formally the responsibility of the institution. In 2007, following the provisions of GEA, the Commissioner for Gender Equality and Equal Treatment was for the first time appointed to the office by the Minister of Social Affairs⁹. In Latvia, dealing with complaints on gender discrimination was formally the responsibility of the National Human Rights Office established in 1995 and reformed in the Ombudsman institution in 2007. In Lithuania, the Parliamentary Ombudsman Office was established in 1995. It created a precedent for the introduction of the specialized ombudsmen, including the Ombudsman on Equal Opportunities (for Women and Men) in 1999.

CONCLUSIONS WITH A FOCUS ON LITHUANIA

The conventional concepts of modernity as a rule confer a certain measure of authority on the practices of the most 'developed' states and exchanges under the aegis of international regimes encourage shared understandings that carry common practices across national boundaries (Hall, Taylor 1996: 952).

⁶ Theoretically, non-governmental (civic) organizations (NGO) are located in a unique position outside the market and the structure and functioning of the state.

⁷ The rule of law refers to the application of law to all members of society.

⁸ The Swedish word ombudsman denotes a person who investigates public complaints. The ombudsman as a constitutional institution is based on the principle of the separation of powers.

⁹ i. e. organizational ombudsman.

Since 1940s the significance of the Soviet Union on the international arena has been extremely strengthened by the victorious end of the WW2 and a principal involvement in the foundation and activities of the United Nations (UN), an intergovernmental organization to promote international co-operation. The Committee of Soviet Women aimed to unify the efforts of the women of the USSR and foreign countries in the common struggle for peace and security among nations and also was among the main channels for international dissemination and promotion of Soviet gender equality politics.

From the new institutionalism point of view, there has to be a little doubt about a significant impact of the Soviet Union on the design of contemporary international and, consequently, national gender equality politics. Thus, many of the individual rights established in the Soviet Constitution of 1936 were later included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) (Zavadskaya 1994), and the Soviet gender equality legislation in accordance with provisions of the Soviet Constitution of 1977 was even advanced in comparison with the UN's CEDAW (1979) (Tolkunova 1985).

In the Soviet Union, the (re)organization of the key institutions responsible for the creation and implementation of gender equality policy in the mid of 1970s and 1980s coincided with the declaration of the 1975 International Women's Year, the UN World Conference on Women in Mexico City (1975) and, respectively, in Nairobi (1985); both conferences and the conference in Copenhagen (1980) are connected by the UN Decade for Women (1976–1985) (*UN World Conferences on Women*). Hence, since the mid of the 1970s in the Baltic states, the modifications in gender equality policies are rather internationally constructed than merely formulated by responsible departments at the Central Committee of the Soviet Union Communist Party in Moscow.

Since establishment of the UN, the templates for gender equality politics are designed at the headquarters of the UN in either New York or Geneva and nowadays also of the EC in Brussels. From the Soviet experience perspective, there is some kind of a *déjà vu* of the Soviet democratic centralism in the EC's management politics. At the same time, the international documents mandated for implementation through legally binding international commitments are collective products of negotiations and political compromises between the actors involved.

In the early 1990s, the institutionalized and somewhat stagnated concept of gender equality in post-communist countries was reinterpreted by the Western (feminist) vision on gender equality and, consequently, a new terminology for identifying the actual state of women's affairs, i. e. deepening social inequalities, specifically, the terms of gender and discrimination. In accordance with the political and social economic context, such innovative topics as gender identity, family violence, human traffic and poverty were introduced in the public and academic discourses of post-communist countries.

The political promotion of gender equality in the public context hostile to feminist ideas needed a new title that would not be associated either with the recent Soviet woman mainstreaming or the present (radical) Western feminism. Ironically, it was the revitalization of the neglected notion of equal opportunities inscribed in the Soviet Constitution of 1977 and the Constitutions of Baltic Soviet Socialist republics of 1978. The concept of equal opportunities for women and men was recovered as innovation and became the "new" and simultaneously "neutral" concept that actualized gender equality issues and condemned the discrimination of women in the Baltic states¹⁰.

¹⁰ The reintroduction of the concept of equal opportunities in the Baltic states seems to correspond to the proposal of Nancy Fraser: "create another "postsocialism", one that incorporates, rather than repudiates, the best of socialism" (Fraser 1997: 4).

The reinterpretation of gender equality in terms of gender mainstreaming was also nationally promoted as the innovation set by the resolutions of the UN World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995).

The innovation in the concept of gender equality is, undoubtedly, legalization of fathers in the parental leave. In Lithuania, a father month instituted in 2006 can be seen as incorporation of the principle of equality in the family policy, and, consequently, as development of (Soviet) gender equality politics interrelated with the so-called pro-natalist, family-oriented or woman's friendly policies. At the same time, Lithuanian researchers argue that there is a very weak connection between the family policy and gender equality, i. e. family policymaking is not based on the paradigm of gender equality (Bučaitė-Vilkė, Purvaneckienė, Vaitkevičius, Tereškinas 2012: 232).

The accession (1995–2004) accelerated a process of revitalization and reformation rather than the created totally new national gender equality machinery for implementing a gender mainstreaming approach in the public policy in the Baltic states. The revitalization of gender equality policy was externalized in the centralization of the management of relevant governmental and non-governmental bodies. The goal was set but not actually realized in the late Soviet period. Consequently, the process of bureaucratizing participation (De Vries 2000) in gender equality policies has been (re)launched in the Baltic states, and the Weberian Iron Cage of bureaucracy which once established is among the hardest to destroy (Swedberg, Agevall 2005: 19) has gained a renewed impetus to challenge any promising intentions in the field of gender equality. For instance, by the mid-2000s in Lithuania, gender mainstreaming efforts had been made, but they were highly fragmented, confined either to a particular policy domain or to a specific program within a domain, and disconnected from the general governmental policy on gender (Taljunaite 2005: 1042).

In the common context of accession the three Baltic states expressed differing levels of enthusiasm for the (re)institutionalization of (gender) equality policy. The construction of this machinery was actually similar in terms of key institutions but different with respect to the time they were officially established.

Lithuania was the first among the Baltic states in understanding that gender equality is a useful tool for demonstration of advancement towards Europeanization, i. e. gender equality politics is somewhat of a complementary indication of modernity and democracy. The institution of the Ombudsman on Equal Opportunities (for women and men) was the first of its type in post-communist countries with a responsibility to ensure the rule of law exclusively in the field of gender equality. In fact, the institution of the Ombudsman on Equal Opportunities, in Lithuania at least, substituted the Soviet institutional mechanisms of the control on implementation of the principle of equality in public life by centralization of its control and enlarged an opportunity for the independent non-judicial conflict resolution based on the individual complaint in regard to possible (gender) discrimination in labour relations.

The differences between the Baltic states in the (re)construction of gender equality machinery were overcome by 2007, i. e. the European Year for Equal Opportunities for All.

However, 2007 celebrating European diversity in terms of gender, race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation also commemorates disappearing of gender (discrimination) from political and public attention. Hence, the ongoing apparent bureaucratization and marginalization of gender equality as a political goal of national public policies in the Baltic states actually corresponds to the current common trends in European gender equality policy detected by the research of the European Institute of Gender Equality (Effectiveness... 2014: 34–35).

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ALINA ŽVINKLIENĖ

Lyčių lygybės politikos inovacijos Baltijos šalyse

Santrauka

Straipsnyje nagrinėjami lyčių lygybės užtikrinimo mechanizmų raida Baltijos valstybėse nuo 1940 m. Pagrindinis tyrimo tikslas – atskleisti inovacijas dabartiniame lyčių lygybės mechanizme panaudojant naujojo institucionalizmo suvokimo principus. Teigiama, kad 1990–1991 m. lyčių lygybės politikos inovacijos iš esmės buvo susijusios su lyčių lygybės koncepcija, bet ne su instituciniais mechanizmais. Tam tikra lyčių lygybės politikos inovacija galima laikyti vadybos centralizaciją ir „dalyvavimo biurokratizaciją“, o nepriklausoma Lygių galimybių kontrolieriaus institucija atsakinga už individualių skundų, susijusių su galima diskriminacija, nagrinėjimu, yra tam tikra buvusių mechanizmų substitucija, adaptuota laisvos darbo rinkos sąlygoms.

Raktažodžiai: lyčių lygybės politika, instituciniai mechanizmai, inovacijos, Baltijos valstybės