

## Women at the Universities in BiH

"Glass ceiling" and cosmetic reforms

Writes: Milena Karapetrovic

According to statistic information it is visibly that in BiH graduated more women than men, but if we go further across specialistic, master's to doctor's level that number is rapidly reduced. When we speak about employees at the University, there are two times more men than women.

In academic circles in BiH almost there are not bigger discussions about problem of women's inequality, many people are persevered in a statement that women today actually realized goals which were drawn by women's movements, and that there are no more reasons to speak about it. It is clear that women are in much more better position than for example before 100 years. In the meantime, women fought alone suffrage mostly in the first half 20 century, and since then they included in bigger measure in educational system. Only in second half of the century they came more to the expression, and they have open spaces at the universities to act with scientific investigation work. That brought to big discussion about gender and sex question, and to creation new terminology and making connection of new paradigm in humanistic sciences. Opening of new field investigation led to forming academic programs which act with questions about woman and work generally. All this contributed that women, but men, too, be more conscious of the importance participation in creating society in which all will be really equal. The question women right for long time ago is not only thing of women's group and unions, they have already become part of declarations, conventions, legal decisions, and official politics in democratic societies. That shows how much "women's" question it is not only women's anymore and what is very often misconception still today, than question from big importance for each society and state on the whole.

Women's question in BiH becomes socially question under pressure how international community, and so under domestic and civil public. Component of sex equality or gender indiscrimination builds in politic documents. Even, in year 2003 was brought Law about sex equality in BiH as an act of political recognizing inequality women and men in BiH and readiness to work at creating society equal possibilities for both sexes. However, a lot of problems are left unsolved. One from them is marginal position of women at the Bosnian and Herzegovina's universities.

Bigger number of women registers and finishes faculties

Statistic institutions (state's and entity's) started immediately with implementation of the Law about sex equality in BiH, and the result of that are bulletins which show statistic facts per sex. Entity's statistic institutions give picture of population at sex base in regions: education, social protection, employment, choice, legislative and executive government, violence, and criminal, in annual publications "Women and men in RS/FBiH". Here, it is especially interesting for us to perceive gender statistic which is related on education, and primarily academic, then number of employees in educational institutions.<sup>1</sup> In academic year 2004/2005 in Federation BiH was enrolled 58.834 students from who is 26.497 men and 32.337 women. In Republic of Srpska was enrolled 24.522 students from is 10.566 men and 13.956 women. Something what is definitely noticeable at the first sight is that at the universities in BiH partly accordance with evaluation sex structure of population it is enrolled more female students than male students. That trend is showed also on number of graduated, even with something more difference in benefit of female students. We must mention that something what

definitely generally gets worry in Bosnian and Herzegovina's society it is still further low total number of students, and from that especially small number those who graduated and that the most often after regular deadline for finishing studies.

According information from year 2004 in RS in total graduated 1634 students from who are 669 men and 965 women, and in FBiH 5.203, from who are 2.168 men and 3.035 women. And this fact actually goes in contribution to numerous statements that women in Bosnian and Herzegovina's society are completely equal and even they have advantage in regard to men.

Women work smaller paid job

We can find arguments which go in benefit to previous statement by watching other statistic facts in education, for example, those about employment in year 2004/2005. In pre-school institutions in FBiH it was in total 1.352 employees, from who are 155 men and 1.197 women, and in RS at the same time worked 793 persons, from who are 67 men and 726 women. If we follow further for same school year but for primary schools, the facts say that in RS was in all 7739 employees from who are 2606 men and 5.133 women, and in FBiH 14.507 employees from who it was 4.754 men and 9.753 women. At the level of secondary schools state showed in numbers looks like this: in FBiH worked 7.881 persons, from whom 3.939 men and 3.942 women, and in RS in all 3.011 persons from whom 1.402 men and 1.609 women. That what is clear at the first sight is that more women than men employed in pre-school institutions, and that proportion although reduced is continued in primary schools, and in secondary schools mostly there is equal number of employees men and women. It should not forget that in these institutions still today work persons with lasting several years experience and that they their education finished 15 years ago, when for employment asked diploma from high schools only, and today it is necessary four years faculty's education. For work in secondary schools either before or today it was necessary finish faculty. That exactly tells two things, in this case at example of education.

---

1. Facts in text are taken from next sources: "Gender Bosne I Hercegovine", theme's number 3, 2007, page 32-40, Agency for statistic Bosnia and Herzegovina, <http://www.bhas.ba/>, "Muskarci I zene u Republici Srpskoj", theme's number 3, 2006, page 16-27, Republic Institution for statistic RS, <http://www.rzs.ba/>, "Zene I muskarci u Federaciji BiH", theme's number 3, page 53-78, Federal union for statistic FBiH, [www.fzs.ba](http://www.fzs.ba)

Women in previous centuries in bigger measure were finished high schools, and in bigger measure than men, and faster were decided for employment. Women also worked and work in bigger number in institutions in which is smaller salary, in a view of that is word about budget's users which income is determined according coefficient on the basis of level of education.

Men's and women's professions

Hidden information in all these is that there is traditional determination men's/women's professions, and that was customary that women are made up their mind for jobs in educational system, serve activities, and regions in which is

asked care for others. That is still continued we can illustrate with facts from FBiH for academic year 2005/2006 where is made register "men's" and "women's" faculties. In this way expressively are "women's" high school institutions: Pedagogical academy with 93% of women and Pedagogical faculty with 76%, and such percent of women is at Defect logical faculty and High medical school. There are more from 70% female students at Faculty of humanities, and about 60% female students there are at Law faculty, Faculty of political sciences, at Medical faculty. Expressively "men's" faculties with more than 80% men are: Faculty of information technology, Machine's faculty, School of electrical engineering, Faculty for physical upbringing and sport. Only about 25% female students are at Mining-technological, College of engineering, School of forestry, Agronomy's faculty.

## Vertical segregation

According to statistic facts it is noticeable that in BiH are graduated more women than men, but how it is gone further through specialistic, master's till doctor's level that number is suddenly being reduced. When we speak about employees at the universities there are two times more men than women, and inside that information that what improves average is number of collaborators (male/female), while still there are a lot of more professors than female professors.

Presented with numbers it looks like this: at high school institutions in FBiH in all employed teaching staff is 4.612, from whom are 2.293 men and 1.619 women, in RS total number of employed is 2.499, from whom are 1.697 men and 802 women. The biggest difference in benefit men is showed just at high levels, so for example in RS with doctor's title in academic year 2004/2005 worked 1008 men and 228 women. In FBiH that proportion is 767 men and 278 women, with fact that is separated column for exterior collaborators where proportion is 1.695 men and 792 women. These dates show us in which measure and on which way expressed sex inequality at us, then we can speak about vertical segregation. For this phenomenon even from middle 80th year's last century it is used term "glass ceiling". In the shortest, it represents limit till which women the most often progress in career, and behind that limit are exactly managerial positions, as well as work places which demand long lasting education and represent positions with bigger influence. In case of work at university it is work about long-lasting education which demands postgraduate study and lasting several years work at compilation doctor's thesis (now according Bologna's reform, finished previously three year study), then continued specialized training, participation in science-investigation projects, writing science's works, participation at science gathering and conferences. In regarding that in Bosnian and Herzegovina's society still dominates traditional type of the family in which woman without distinction at job with she does, she should take over the biggest part of obligations in house and upbringing children, it is clear that still at the beginning in unequal position, then she is rather alone gave up of her career. Rare cases definitely show that is possible that women realize both, but that is mostly realized only with hole-hearted closer family. With that is actually showed that is role of state and society still at high level, then that mechanisms sex equality only should institutional start act in order to woman from beginning could be prepared for equal participation in public sphere.

## University

Universities in BiH burdened with inheritance from the past and with beginning escorting Bologna's reform they are still at beginning to truly changes. Analyses and views of condition which have been working either international or domestic organizations which have being acted with education, generally show on few main problems at universities. Within alone teaching still is the biggest obstruction staying at traditional way of teaching and in hard set frame disciplines, what still means assimilation information from literature often elder date and make impossible innovative access to knowledge from different sources. That is definitely partly conditioned either financial means of the universities because the libraries have the limited funds, or hardly approachable expensive bases of information. Reticence of university influence with big part on slow change of such condition, international exchange as well as specialized training of female/male professors either female/male students in abroad still is not realized in good measure, and attitude of all female/male members hardly is changed of academic community about that what exactly means be part of academic community.

## Gender study

According to article 6 of the Law about sex equality in BiH it is said on which way is possible fight against women discrimination. The case is about introduction contents which promote sex equality. Even, superficial inspection in teaching plans and programs, especially at universities of social science, shows that only here and there we can perceive programs which are related on question women rights, sex equality, and feminism theory. That first of all is related at the second cycle studies according Bologna's declaration, and first such studies are opened in year 2006 at University in Sarajevo in the Center for postgraduate's interdisciplinary studies.

In the statement about legitimacy of starting this program stand: "Within bologna's process of reform university in BiH are ignored those documents which obligated EU universities that in their educational programs take care about either specific education perspective, or about gender aspects modern interdisciplinary knowledge. MA program interdisciplinary gender studies thoughtful as correcting of this serious lack in process reform of University.<sup>2</sup> Women's and gender studies are part of the program world's universities already three centuries, and at our universities represent just innovation. That what is new "new" from one side exactly can be attractive to female/male students who want to meet with new interdisciplinary accesses in investigation, and from the other side create resistance because still there are a lot of stereotypes and prejudice about research work and need raising consciousness about women equality.

## Real and not cosmetic's reforms

Gizela Bok germanium female historian points out how much is important that male/female theoretician still act with problem relation women and men in modern society. "Citizenship, human rights and question how will they form in further process European integration - with those such different meaning for women from particular countries and for those from countries out of EU who live in Europe - they are at agenda gender studies same as relation European according to out European world. Question of relation human rights and women rights is especially in global frame, exactly today actual again - personal security, right on life, freedom of movements, physical integrity and protection of private - on that way how they contented in Agreement of United nations (1966) and European convention

<sup>2</sup> Curriculum for master's program "Rodne studije", Center for interdisciplinary postgraduate studies University in Sarajevo, year 2006, [www.cps.edu.ba/rodnestudije.html](http://www.cps.edu.ba/rodnestudije.html)

about human rights (1950), as well as social rights (European union 196, United nations 1966) for women can have difference meaning than for me,...<sup>3</sup> In BiH we are just at the beginning of the way - Law about sex equality it is passed but its real value only will show in implementation. It is clear that in educational system that job just lies ahead. University definitely can and should has leader's position in that, as a place from where come new initiatives and from where it should start changes in whole Bosnian and Herzegovina's society. For now we are just at base level - to show in which measure women are as scientists and theoretician participated in creating new courses in science, and not to avoid their contribution, to move from stereotype about woman as intellectual more inferior and what is shown on many indirectly ways, that women alone come face to face with prejudice which still govern about them and work on that to remove them, that with change of teaching plan and programs in curriculum not do only cosmetic change than further move to increasing of consciousness generally about human rights and with that women rights.

3 Bok Gizela:| Women in history of Europe (from middle century till today), Belgrade: Clio, 2005, page 410