SALUS

Women leadership and management empowerment

Private Security

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GENDER GAP ANALYSIS,
THE NEEDS AND CHALLENGES OF WOMEN
ON ACCESS TO LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN THE PRIVATE SECURITY SECTOR


2024

CONTENT AND STRUCTURES

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st centurykey topics that occupy state policies, but also the activities of relevant stakeholders, such as non-governmental organizations, the academic community, the business community, etc. are inevitably topics of economic, security, health, climate interest, but in aspects of living and debates about further functioning, the topic of gender equality, that is, the equal inclusion of women in all social processes, is positioned high on the agenda of priorities.

Namely, women in the world represent 49.75% of the total population, and in the Republic of North Macedonia in the Census 2021, 50.4% of women and 49.6% of men participated, so it is quite logical that women can contribute to the development of democracies around the world in an appropriate proportion. However, the analysis of the statistical data on the equal participation of women in societies, on complete and equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men shows a significant disparity, the inequality between men and women, and even still present discriminatory, traditional and stereotypical policies and practices.

Precisely because of the unknown, the project entitled Salus-strengthening of women for leadership and management was initiated, which will be focused on private security service providers in North Macedonia, Slovenia, Serbia and Albania. This project is supported by the National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility and will be implemented within the Erasmus + program in the form of a strategic partnership for adult education.

This document entitled "Analysis of the gender gap, needs and challenges of women's access to leadership and management in the

private security sector" will elaborate the basic concepts of gender equality, management and leadership, will illustrate the role of women in security and especially in the private security and will address in detail the situations and challenges faced by women in accessing managerial and leadership positions in private security companies.

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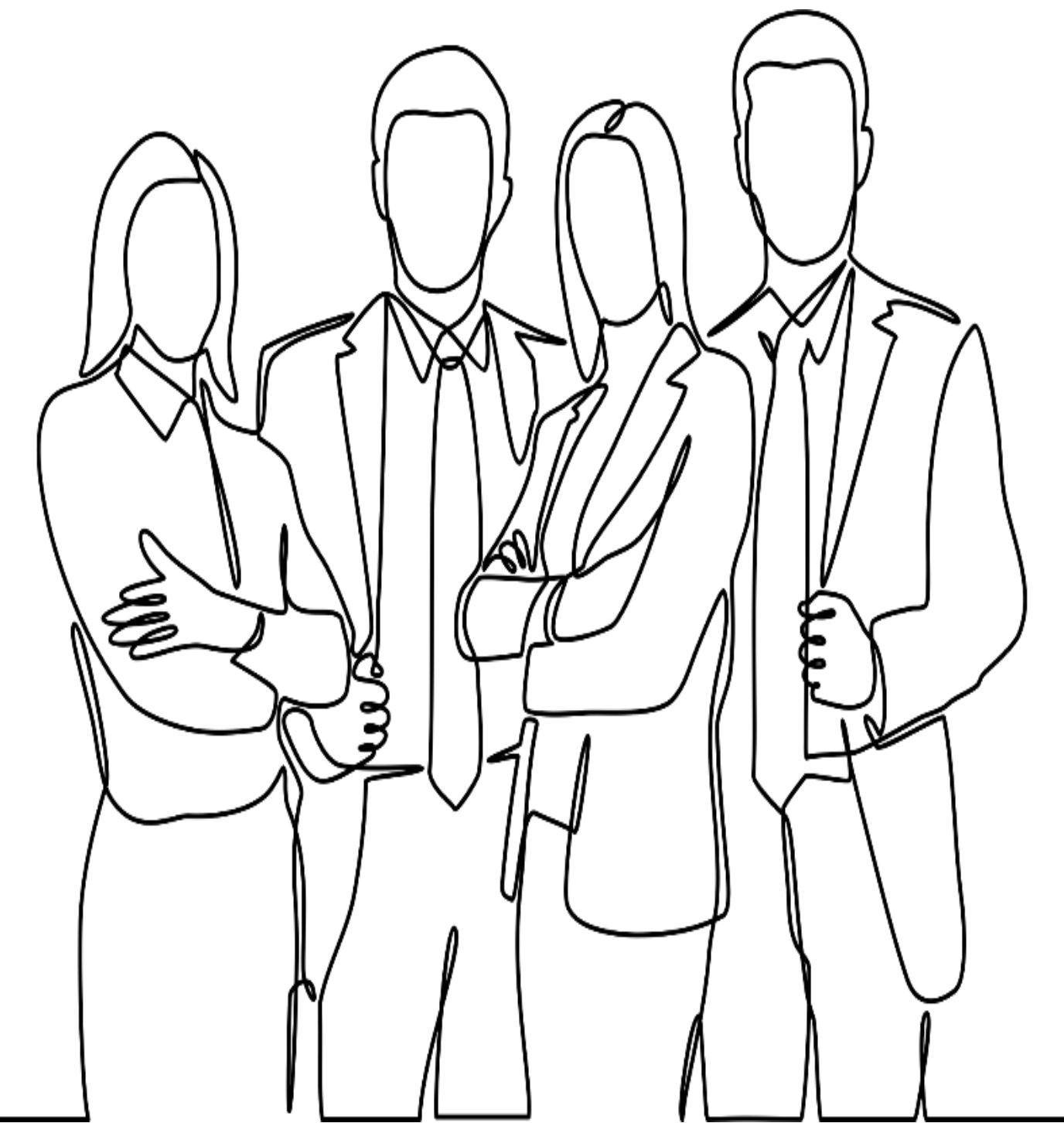
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PRINCIPLE OF GENDER EQUALITY

Gender equality is the principle that women and men enjoy the same rights and opportunities in all sectors of society. The fact is that men and women are biologically different, so in that sense, it isEquality does not mean that men and women will become the same, but that the rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men will not depend on whether they were born female or male. Gender equality means that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into account, thus recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. The equality of women and men is considered an issue in the field of human rights, but also a prerequisite and an indicator of sustainable development and democracy in which man is at the center.The principles of equality and protection against discrimination are part of the country's constitutional order, and the broad legal framework of national laws, strategies, programs and action plans directly regulates issues of equal opportunities, women's participation in the labor market and the prohibition of discrimination.

Understanding the gender equality of women and men is largely due to historical, economic, religious and other social institutions, events and creations. Hence, in order to achieve full equality of women and men it is necessaryeffective incorporation of gender perspectives in all social flows, policies and practices andjoint investments of various stakeholders, such as: state institutions, civil society, media, academia and others.

Achieving equality between women and men has become a major goal and an integral part of the international development agenda. The principle of gender equality embodies the idea that human rights cannot be realized without ensuring full and equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities to women and men.

This principle is guaranteed in several international treaties and in national constitutions and laws around the world. Gender equality is a comprehensive and long-term policy goal, and gender mainstreaming is a set of specific contexts, strategic approaches, as well as technological and institutional processes adopted to achieve that goal. Gender mainstreaming integrates gender equality components in national public and private organizations, in central or local policies, as well as in service and sector programs. In the long term, it aims to transform discriminatory social institutions and practices, recognizing that discrimination can be explicitly or implicitly embedded in a wide range of laws, cultural norms and community practices. Gender mainstreaming is essential to ensure human rights and social justice for both women and men.

Hence, it is necessary to point out that the most important strategies for achieving gender equality in international, national and institutional policies are gender "mainstreaming", that is, integrating the gender perspective and gender analysis. Gender "mainstreaming" (or "gender mainstreaming") was defined by the United Nations in 1972 as follows: "...the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned activity, including in the areas of legislation, policy or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy through which the concerns and experiences of women and men will become an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and social spheres, in order for women and men to benefit equally from them and inequality not to continue to exist. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality." At the same time, the term gender perspective means something broader than just focusing on women and men. The organization UN Women explains it like this: A "gender perspective" is a way of looking at or analyzing things that addresses the impact of gender on opportunities, social roles and interactions between people. This way of looking at things is what makes it possible to do a gender analysis and, consequently, to integrate a gender perspective into any proposed program, policy or organization."

In our country, the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2026 is the fourth strategic document in this area and the basic strategic document of the Republic of North Macedonia, which establishes a comprehensive framework for further activities in the direction of promoting gender equality and empowering women. The basis of the Strategy comes from the Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia, the Adoption of the Strategy is governed by the Law

on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, and is closely related to the Law on Prevention and Protection from Discrimination.

Regarding the situation with gender equality in the Republic of North Macedonia, according to the population data of the SSO for 2019, there are a total of 2,076,255 inhabitants in our country, of which an almost equal number of women (49.92%) and men (50.08 %).

According to the data published in the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2026, the Report on the Global Gender Gap of the World Economic Forum45 for 2020, North Macedonia is in 70th place out of a total of 153 countries, i.e. in 16th place in the region. In 2019 The Republic of North Macedonia has produced its first Gender Equality Index for 2015, according to which the Republic of North Macedonia is ranked 15th compared to EU member states, indicating that there is significant gender inequality and the country lags behind the EU average in achievement in the field of gender equality in almost all domains covered by the index. Individually, the biggest lag, compared to the EU average, is in the domain "Money" and the domain "Time", the smallest difference is in the domain "Health", and the only domain where the country has a better average than the EU is the domain "Power".

The main challenges in achieving gender equality in the Republic of North Macedonia are the low level of economic activity of women and the low participation of women in decision-making positions in the public and private sectors, as a direct consequence of the acceptance of traditional gender roles and stereotypes, the multiple and intersectional discrimination suffered by certain women, as well as the difficult access to certain social and health care services, the high rate

of violence against women and the lack of integration of the gender perspective in measures and policies at the national and local level.
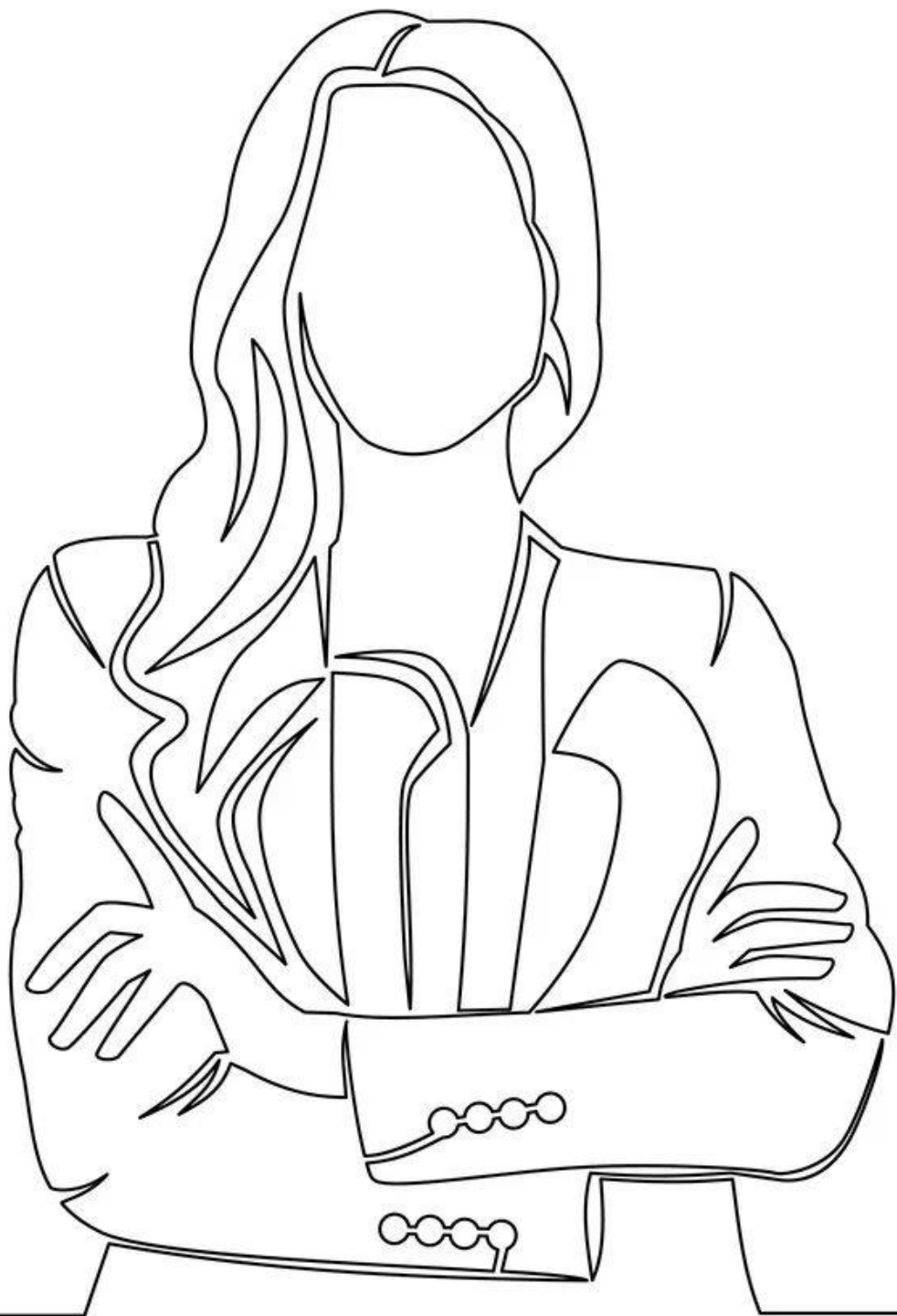
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TERM OF MANAGEMENT

The general concept of management is considered to be a universal activity and is not unique to economic areas, on the contrary, it is also practiced in the political, educational, security, etc. spheres. The literature in the field of management illustrates an extensive list of functions of modern management such as: planning, leading, organizing, coordinating, controlling, motivating, directing, ordering, informing, communicating, deciding, predicting, negotiating, creating, evaluating, etc. However, most authors agree that management has four main, basic, primary functions, such as: planning, organizing, directing and controlling.

Planning is considered the primary, that is, one of the most important functions of safety management. It is a process in which, before certain actions are taken, it is decided what will be done, how, when and who will do a certain activity. Planning, that is, helps to develop a consistent orientation to the unpredictable environment, allows stretching of the mind and exploration of different possibilities. Planning is a basic phase of the management process that helps predict the future and refers to activities of research, forecasting and decision-making about the basic objectives, policy, strategy, tactics and individual plans with which to ensure the realization of the set goals and policies .

Numerous researchers indicate that the basic terms associated with planning are: vision, mission, intentions and goals. The vision is considered to be a guide for motivating the organization that shows what the organization is aiming for in its functioning. Mission is the purpose for which the organization exists, it shows why the organization exists, it is closely related to the nature of the organization's work and the mission is closely related to the

organization's intentions. Objectives are the intended results of the organization.

The highest form of planning is strategic planning, whichis defined as a creative continuous process of abilities and knowledge that predicts the desired future and the necessary procedure and actions to achieve the vision of the future. Strategic planning serves to adapt to a changing environment and to determine priorities, but it is not a tool for solving all problems. It is a proactive process to shape the future, not just prepare for the future by addressing critical strategic issues and directing resources to the highest priority activities. Strategic planning is a process in which the priorities and goals that are considered the most important are determined, programs, projects and activities are defined through which the defined priorities will be achieved and the necessary funds are determined for the realization of the priorities through the budget process. Hence, strategic planning can be defined as a strategic, planning and disciplined process for making fundamental decisions.

Strategic planning is a tool through which strategies and policies are determined, decisions are made about key priorities and goals, and resources are allocated. It is considered one of the basic steps towards fulfilling the company's mission and vision, and in that sense every company should answer three basic questions. Regarding the mission: who and what are we, what are we doing now and why? Regarding the vision:shthat is what we want to be and do in the future and why? In terms of strategy: how do we get from here to there? In addition to the three presented key questions, the strategic planning process should offer an answer for: determination of goals to be achieved; defining indicators (measures to be taken) for realizing progress; determination

of sources of verification in terms of monitoring and evaluating progress, while the goals and indicators need to be: specific, measurable, ambitious, results oriented and with defined deadlines.

Organizing is a management function that aims to unite all the organization's resources (human, financial, physical, informational, etc.) in the direction of efficient and effective realization of goals and tasks. Namely, whenever two or more people work together to achieve the same goal, it is necessary that their activities be organized. In that sense, an organization represents a process of integrating, coordinating and mobilizing the activities of group members in the direction of fulfilling the common goal. Organizing is a process that initiates the implementation of plans through the allocation of jobs and work relationships, as well as the efficient allocation of resources to realize the identified and desired results, that is, goals. Hence, organizing is a process that coordinates human capacities, connects

all necessary resources and integrates them into a unified whole that is aimed at realizing specific goals.

In that sense, the organization process includes several steps: identification and distribution of work, establishment of reporting relationships and assignment of responsibilities. Certain authors represent organizing as a process through the following stages: determining activities, dividing activities into smaller tasks, grouping activities in a specific department, assigning activities to a specific sector or person, determining a responsible person/department for a specific activity, coordinating activities in different departments/sectors.

There is no unified definition of leadership as a function of management in theory, but it is considered that leadership represents a dynamic process of systemic, planned, organized guidance and of employees for the effective implementation of the organization's activities and the efficient use of human and other resources of the organization in the realization of the organization's goals.

Leadership in the security sector is a very complex and specific function, primarily due to the fact that security institutions must timely and realistically detect social developments, new, modern risks and threats and the entire security landscape, while at the same time developing internal, human qualities , attitudes and beliefs, culture of safety behavior in complex safety situations. In that sense, leadership in the security sector requires authoritativeness, efficiency, creativity, analysis, etc. for the purpose of institutional-organizational adaptation of the complex security environment in democratic societies.

Controlling is a managerial function that measures and evaluates the work in the organization and the fulfillment of the planned activities, thereby revealing possible errors and weaknesses that can further

serve as a basis for finding optimal solutions for improvement.

Controllingmeans a comparison of the actual realization with the planned realization. If a case of deviations or errors is determined, it is approached to reveal the causes and initiate corrective measures or activities to stop them and to prevent their repetition in the future with the ultimate goal of effectively implementing the organization's goals.The process of controlling should not be a dry monitoring of numbers and results, that is, a focused monitoring of data or maneuvering of the direction. On the contrary, controlling should be a process of managing the company as a whole by implementing decisions and actively receiving feedback in order to realize the company's goals.


It is considered that the control function of the management has the following tasks: to measure and evaluate the realization at a given moment, that is, the progress in the work process towards the achievement of the goals of the organization; to determine corrective actions; to assess standards; to optimize efficient use of resources; to reduce resource consumption; to ensure order etc.

Management extends throughout the entire structure of the organization and in that sense from a hierarchical perspective there are three levels of management: strategic (top) level, tactical (middle) level and operational (straight-line) level. Other authors use different vocabulary such as: chief executive managers, middle managers and first-line managers. In the category of strategic (top) level managers or chief executive managers, the hierarchically highest managers who define the objectives, policy and strategic determination of the organization at the strategic level are recognized. Managers at the tactical (middle) level deal with the tactics for the implementation of the policies and strategy determined by the top managers and they create guidelines for action for the managers at the operational level. And the direct managers (the direct managers, at the direct level, mostly heads of departments, etc.) are focused on the direct implementation of the organization's policies and the immediate execution of security tasks.

Managerial style is the way in which the manager implements his competence in the workplace and takes care of the achievement of the organization's goals. In that direction, the managerial style refers to the activities of planning and organizing the work, the way of doing the work, as well as the relations with colleagues and team members. Hence, it is considered that a key component of the managerial style is the behavior of the manager, what he says, the examples the manager sets, the body language and the general attitude of the manager to the position he performs.

To conclude, management represents an essential and key role for the efficient operation of companies, achieving success and fulfilling the set goals, vision and mission, which ultimately fulfills the expectations of all employees and contributes to general satisfaction.

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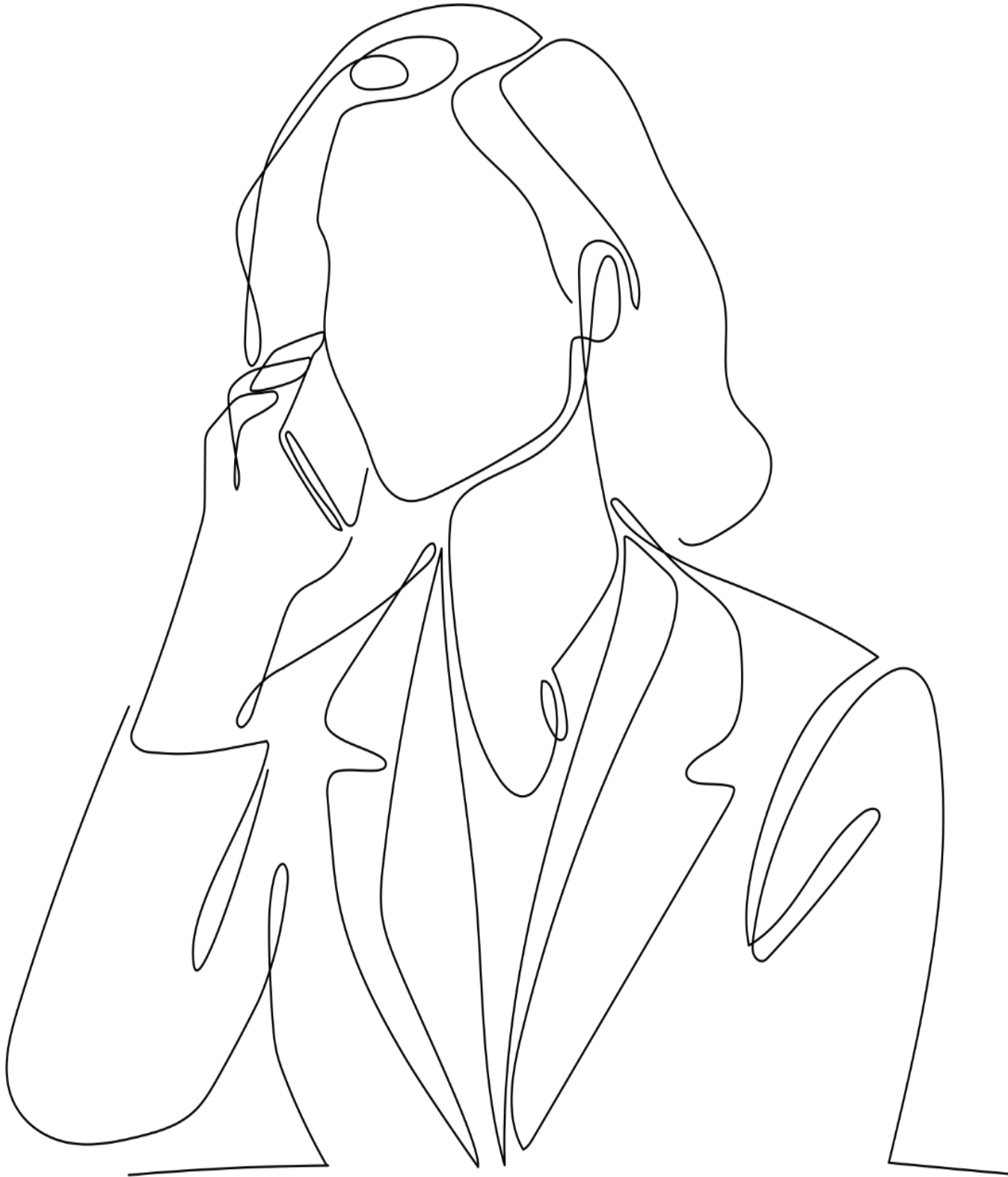
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DEFINING LEADERSHIP

The dynamics, modernization and globalization of economies, that is, of the operation of companies in the 21st century, is a complex process in which the responsibility for functioning and achieving results is located with managers, but at the same time with leaders in companies. There has long been an open debate about the concepts of management and leadership, where although there is similarity in a certain perspective, there are still significant differences between the capacities, views and practices of managers and leaders.

Namely, leadership is a process through which a person influences other persons to achieve a certain goal and leads the company in a coherent and cohesive manner. Leadership is defined as influencing people to strive voluntarily and enthusiastically towards the realization of a common goal. When talking about leadership, the importance of the people who follow the leader is emphasized, and hence the leader shows the direction towards which the employees follow him, helps them to see the future, motivates and inspires them to achieve the set goal. Namely, leaders possess specific personal characteristics: vision, integrity, firmness, decisiveness, trust, commitment, creativity, risk-taking, communication skills.

In science there are several different leadership theories, which are generally classified into 8 groups: Trait Theory, Great Man Theory, Contingency Theory, Theory Situational Theory, Participative Theory, Transactional Theory, Relationship/Transformation Theory, Behavioral Theory. However, the following stand out as the most relevant: Great Man Theory, Contingency Theory, Behavioral Theory and Transactional Theory.

According to the "Great Man" Theory, a leader is born and it is not possible for a leader to be created during life. In this sense, leaders are considered to have special, rare, innate qualities. Directly opposed to the "big man" Theory is the Behavioral Theory, according to which effective leadership skills, competencies and abilities can be learned and hence a leader can be created throughout life. Contingency Theory indicates that there are different leadership styles that can be used depending on a given situation. Transactional Theory indicates that effective leadership is based on a system and structures based on reward and punishment.

Leadership style is the leader's way and approach in giving directions for implementing plans and motivating followers. Already in 1939, 3 main styles of leadership were determined and they are accepted to this day: authoritative or autocratic, participative or democratic and delegated or free. Outstanding leaders are considered to apply all three styles appropriately to the situation, purpose,

environment, etc. in the direction of fulfilling the goal. Leaders with an authoritative or autocratic style tell followers (employees) exactly what needs to be done and how the leader wants the task completed, without seeking feedback from followers. The participative leadership style implies the inclusion of one of the followers, that is, the employees in the decision-making process, but the leader retains the final decision-making position. This leadership style provides benefits for followers/employees as well, in a way that enables participation in a team and contribution, and at the same time this leadership style contributes to the leader being able to make better decisions.

The third leadership style allows the delegation of decision-making from the leader to the followers/employees and is applied in cases where the leader has complete trust in the employees, however, the leader remains responsible for the decision made.

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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS
OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Considering all the presented aspects of management and leadership, although they can be considered to be the same, it is necessary to point out the significant differences between these two functions. Namely, it is considered that leaders focus on setting new goals for the company and set directions for their fulfillment, managers have shorter-term goals, are concentrated on planning and budgeting, maintaining order, procurement of resources and maintaining operations. Furthermore, the literature clarifies that managers are focused on controlling and solving problems, using formal power, and leaders are focused on inspiring and motivating employees, by sharing a vision, inspiring and motivating employees. Certain authors illustrate the difference between leaders and managers through their attitude to risk and indicate that managers try to avoid risk in operations, and leaders take risks and exceed them in their efforts to achieve the set goals. Namely, it can be said that leaders are creative, inspiring, flexible, courageous and independent, and managers are authoritative, consult, stabilize, analyze and thoughtful.

In the said discourse, it can be concluded that managers and leaders have a similar role in the company, but it is necessary to understand the difference between them. Namely, their primary mission is to control and influence employees in performing their work in the company for the purpose of achieving the company's goal. However, the method used by leaders and managers to achieve company goals is the most significant difference between them.

It is considered that most of the time the concepts of safety management and safety leadership are impossible to separate. In that sense, certain authors, such as Ridley (2021) indicate that charm, charisma, vision and other elements that are generally classified as leadership can contribute to a certain person making an impression at a security job interview, and even being hired. . However, it is precisely the characteristics of security management that will be decisive and will influence the way the company is managed and the value and longevity of the company. It is for this reason that certain authors point out that security managers are considered more important and necessary for private security companies and the security industry in general.

The table below shows the functions of leadership versus the functions of management.
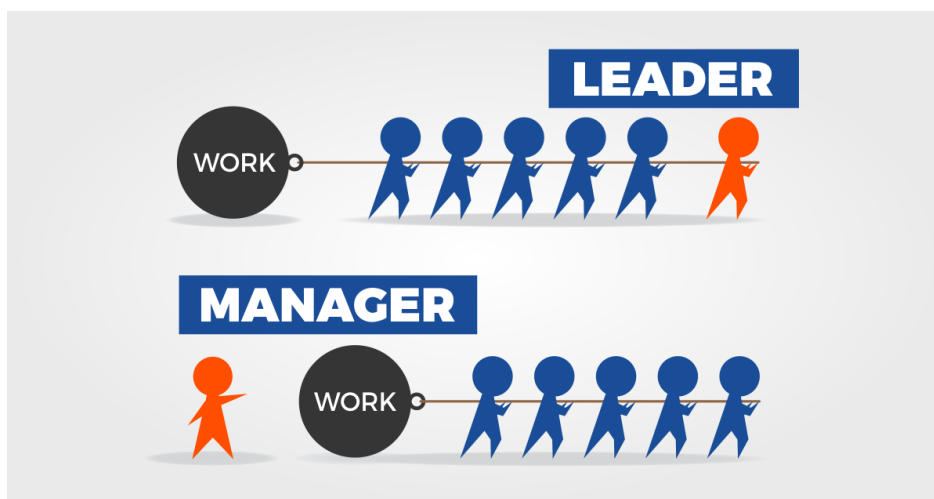
Table 1: Functions of leadership and management

	LEADERSHIP	MANAGEMENT
DETERMINING VISION	Sets directions and creates a vision; Creates strategies to fulfill the vision;	Plans, budgets Creates plans Determines resources
EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT	Aligns with followers; Communicates the vision and directions for fulfilling the vision; Determines a team and establishes guidelines for cooperation;	Organizing and securing employees; Structure maintenance; Delegates responsibilities; Delegates responsibilities;
EXECUTION, REALIZATION	It motivates and inspires; Encourages energy to overcome challenges; It satisfies human needs;	Control procedures; Identifies and solves problems; Monitor results;
RESULT	It promotes meaning and important changes	It establishes order and consistency

Source: Ali, 2013 cited in Jibreal (2021)

Hence, we will summarize that the role and importance of leaders in the company can be one of the key factors for the success of the company and therefore it is extremely important for every company to have leaders in different positions in its organizational structure, but of course it is necessary to have managers as well. , so they will jointly manifest synergy in achieving the company's goals and will ensure satisfaction and motivation among employees.

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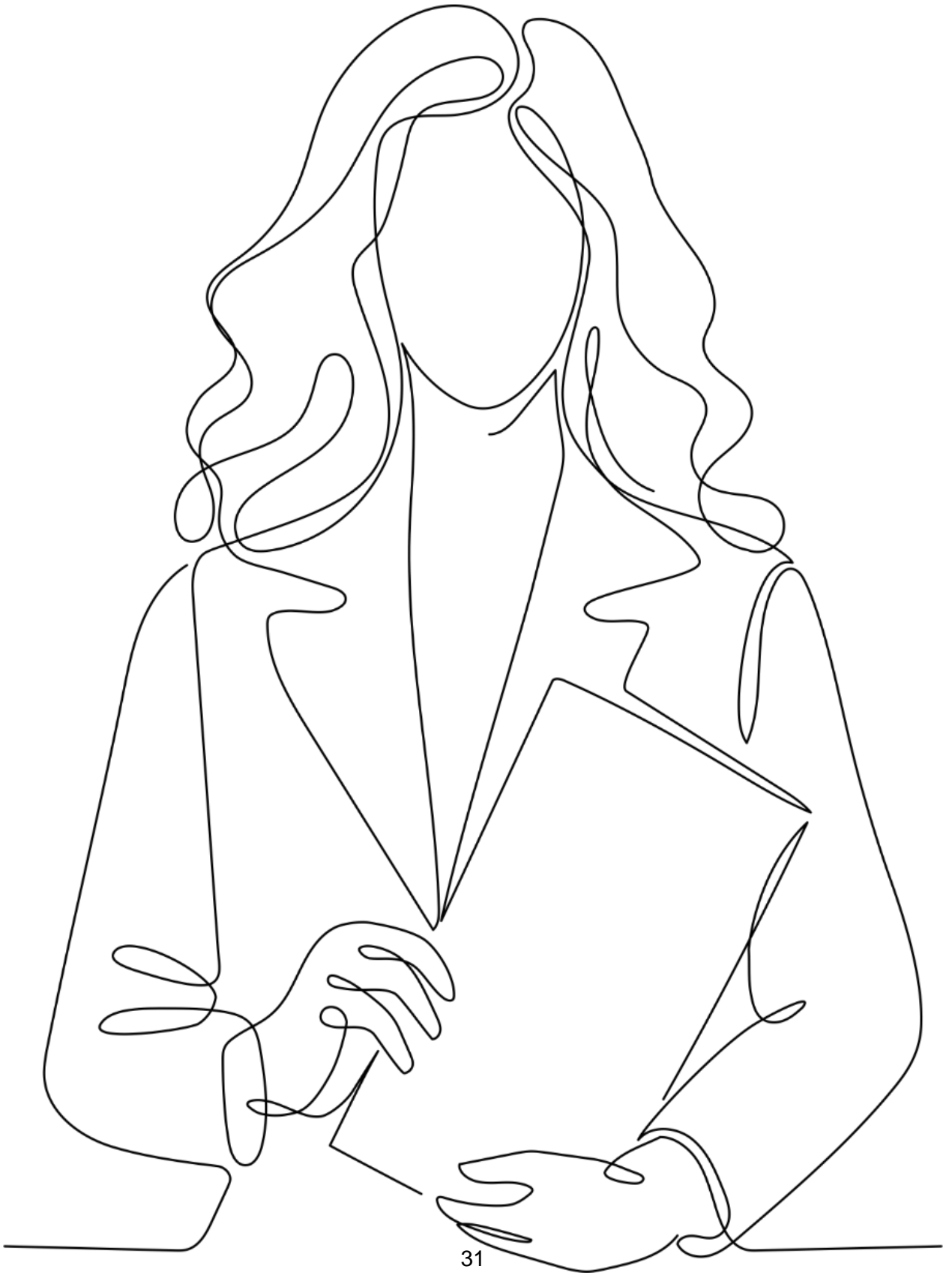
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CHALLENGES FOR WOMEN
IN MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP
IN THE COMPANIES

The labor market is generally structured according to the gender of the workforce. Research shows that women are more dominantly represented in lower positions, and men in higher management positions in companies. Such specific concentration is called gender segregation. Gender segregation can be analyzed from a horizontal or vertical perspective. In that sense, horizontal gender segregation indicates the representation of women in specific job positions, workplaces, while vertical gender segregation shows the representation of women at different levels of managerial positions.[1].

Namely, despite the fact that today women are generally more represented in the labor market and in the management structures of companies, in reality there is still an inequality between women and men in terms of representation in management and leadership, and hence, the significantly lower representation is clearly expressed of women in management positions.

Of course, it is indisputable that there are differences between men and women, which arise biologically from the neuroendocrine system of people and their physical health. Differences in gender dimorphism include differences in, for example, muscle mass, height, etc., in the central nervous system, etc. It is known that on average women have more gray matter in the brain, which enables better muscle control, sensory perception in terms of hearing, vision, memory, emotions, speech, etc. At the same time, men on average have larger brains, so the difference in gray matter between men and women loses significance in absolute terms as small or insignificant. But why is it

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[1]Sukalova, V. and Ceniga, P., Gender equality management in modern company management in the era of globalization, Globalization and its Socio-Economic Consequences, 2020

important to point out these differences in male and female anatomy? Because because of the difference in the patho-physiology of men and women, they behave differently[2].

Such differences are manifested in all spheres of life, and of course also in the workplace, as well as in terms of leadership and management in companies. Namely, due to variables in personal characteristics, men and women have different leadership and management styles. In general, it is considered that women are more risk-averse, have a higher sense of social responsibility and react based on emotions, while men generally have too much self-confidence, more optimism and react with action, with action[3]. Women are considered to have lower self-esteem on average, they are altruistic, they are considered more generous and offer more to the opposite party, they are less competitive, they have an aversion to inequality, they are strongly self-critical, etc.[4].

A 2019 LinkedIn study. shows that when women plan to apply for a job, they analyze all the required criteria. If a woman meets 4 of the required 5 criteria, it is generally decided that she will not apply for the job. In the same situation, men, if they meet only 1 of the required 5 criteria, generally apply for the job. This study indicates that women have much less self-confidence and are too self-critical, while men are self-confident and, at the same time, consider that what they possess as knowledge and/or skills is enough to begin with, and everything else they can learn and develop.

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[2]Gaytan, S., Gender and leadership: an approach to the differences between women and men in management, Huper Economic Journal, 2014
[3]Gorska, A., Gender differences in leadership, Studia I materialy, 136-144, Wydzial Zarzadzania UW, 2016
[4]Eckel, C., Gangadharan, L., Grossman, P. And Xue, N., The Gender Leadership Gap: Insights from experiments, Monash University, 2020

However, one should not get the impression that the only reason for the lower representation of women in leadership and managerial positions is exclusively the personal, biological or sociological-cultural characteristics of women. On the contrary, numerous studies show that women face stereotypes, beliefs or discrimination. It is often said that a woman should be twice as good at the workplace as a male colleague in order to be perceived as equally competent. Perhaps one of the most famous and exploited illustrations of gender stereotypes is the experiment that was done in 2003. at Columbia Business School, using a case study of Heidi Rosen, who was one of the first successful women to own a company in Silicon Valley, USA. Namely, Professor Frank Flynn assigned a group of students to analyze a case study in which the career achievements, networking skills, collaboration and leadership style of the company's chief manager were described. One half of the group was assigned by the professor to analyze the original case study of Heidi Rosen. And to the other half of the group, he gave exactly the same content of the case study, except that he replaced the name Heidi with the name Howard. The results showed that both groups gave the same competency rating to Heidi and Howard, but students liked Howard more and would be more likely to hire or work for Howard. Heidi was judged as selfish and unlikable.

Hence, unfortunately, it is clear that there are still barriers for women in their professional development, which depend on many factors. It is true that women should invest in their own advancement, in terms of strengthening self-confidence and developing personal skills. But unfortunately, a much bigger barrier for women is the environment, gender roles, stereotypes, prejudices, etc.

From the analysis of the state of economic activity of women in Macedonia (monitored through the entrepreneurial activity of women, employment, wages and unemployment, as well as the ownership and management representation of women) and the analysis of the strategic framework for the development of female entrepreneurship in the European Union, the following have been identified key issues:

- Insufficient representation of women in entrepreneurial activities;
- Insufficient representation of women in the ownership structure of enterprises and crafts;
- Underrepresentation of women in the labor market;
- Lower wages for women in similar jobs;
- Insufficient representation of women in management structures;
- Lack of statistical monitoring by gender;
- Insignificant investments in various activities to strengthen female entrepreneurship;
- Incoherence of activities to strengthen women's entrepreneurship;
- A general shortcoming is the absence of mechanisms for evaluating the performance of individual activities to support the development of women's entrepreneurship;

Insufficient coordination and cooperation between actors implementing public policies, programs and initiatives that contribute to the development of women's entrepreneurship, which makes it difficult or even impossible for the effectiveness of the renamed activities and the efficiency of the invested financial resources.

The following are considered obstacles that make it difficult to solve problems in strengthening women's entrepreneurship:

– The general policy of the state; Lack of affirmative measures that will enable the stimulation of women's economic activity and only the declarative attitude of institutions supporting women's entrepreneurship, without sustainable solutions to overcome the situation;

– Gender sensitivity of all active actors;

– Insufficient communication and coordination between government institutions, non-governmental sector, donor organizations and other interested parties in the field of joint representation and establishment of effective cooperation networks in order to improve the development of women's entrepreneurship;

– Cultural - social obstacles, primarily expressed through the traditional role of women in the family and the modern way of living that requires full involvement in social and economic flows, pressure from the environment for the place of women in the family;

– Perception of the environment for women in the business environment and insufficient awareness of the economic benefit from the development of female entrepreneurship;

– Insufficient number of kindergartens, social structure;

– Encouragement for starting a business;

– Insufficient access to finance (grants, loans, investment funds, investors, guarantee funds, business angels, etc.) and lack of financial assistance intended for the development of women's entrepreneurship;

– Access to information in general and access to information about opportunities for starting and running a business,

supporting businesses and underdeveloped entrepreneurial culture (lack of entrepreneurial skills, risk taking);

– Lack of knowledge and competences and lack of training programs for different target groups (e.g. potential entrepreneurs, start-ups, established businesses, marginalized groups, etc.) and Women's capacity, education of young girls as future entrepreneurs and lack of information (central information);


In general, the obstacles to women's participation in entrepreneurship, but also management and leadership in companies can be grouped as structural, economic and "soft".

➢ **Structural (contextual) obstacles**are based on traditional attitudes about the role of women in society, stereotypes about women in entrepreneurship; lack of support for women with two work engagements (family and profession), as well as a political-regulatory framework and its implementation in order to strengthen gender equality; Structural obstacles are the result of cultural heritage, value bases, lack of political will for consistent application

of the political-regulatory framework, and lack of infrastructure to support family life. Their removal requires political consensus, long-term activities in the field of education, but also changes to the regulatory framework (enabling various forms of employment and execution of business activities) and significant support for the development of institutions for the care of children and the elderly.

- **Economic obstacles** mean: Difficult access to financial resources; The insufficient number of contacts and non-networking; The scarcity of alternative forms of financing business ventures in Macedonia (lack of microcredit institutions, business angels, venture capital funds...)

- "Soft" obstacles include: Lack of access to networks of entrepreneurs; Lack of training and educational programs focused on technology-intensive ventures; Lack of role models, advice, mentoring; Perception of women regarding the lack of confidence, the capacity to take risks; Soft obstacles are overcome with greater involvement and integration of all institutions, the non-governmental sector and all active stakeholders working in the field of female entrepreneurship, through the development of structured programs to strengthen soft skills for entrepreneurship in order to overcome the existing situation.

Hence, it is extremely important to continuously work on the gender sensitivity of the public (education, media), but also to consistently incorporate the gender dimension into the functioning of society.
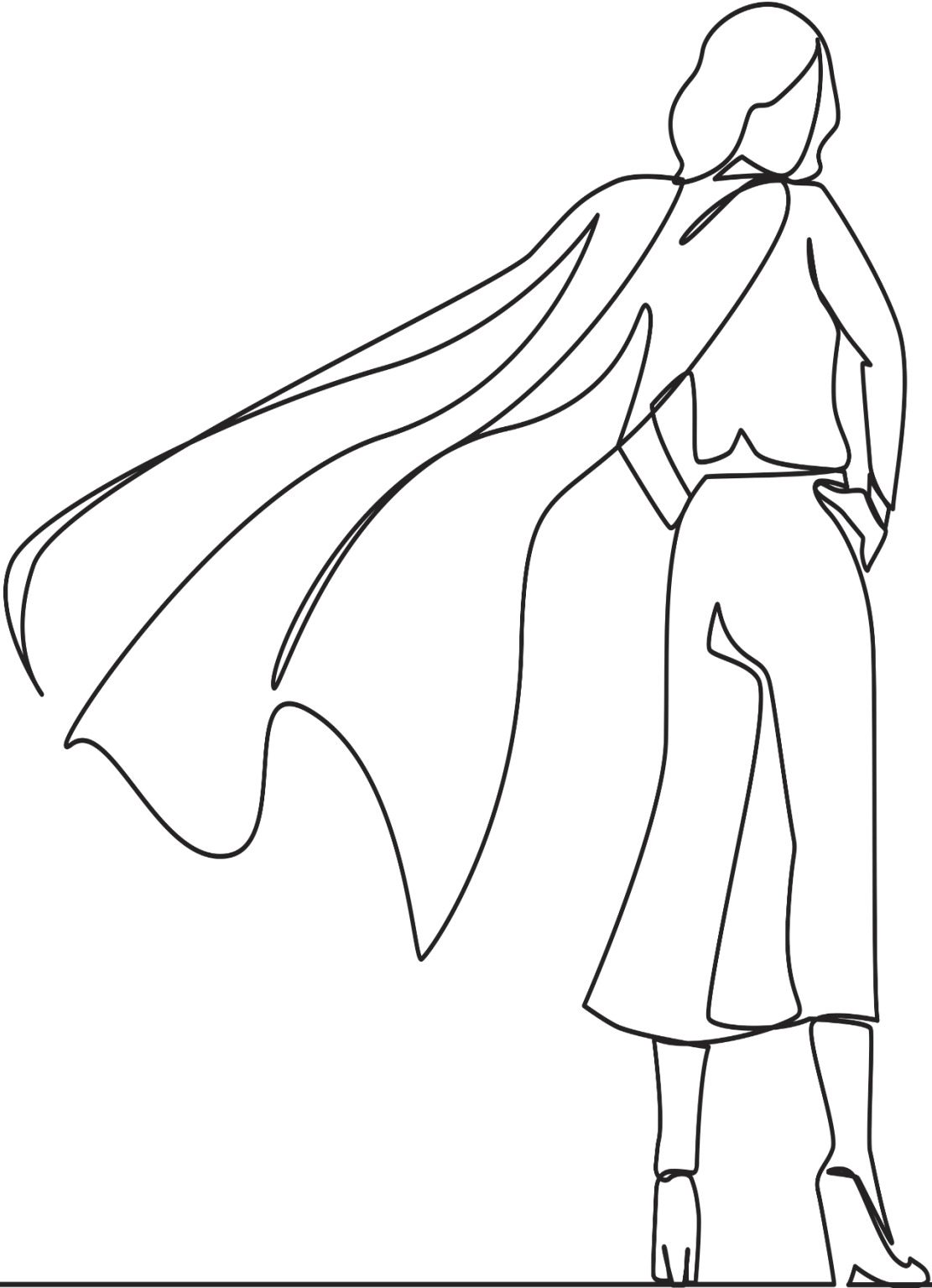
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WOMEN IN SECURITY AND THE PRIVATE SECURITY

In 2020, North Macedonia became a member of NATO, thus committing to apply the principle of gender integration in all policies and measures related to peace and security. In this sense, the most important document is Security Council Resolution 1325. The Women, Peace and Security Agenda was first introduced in 2000.

The National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on "Women, Peace and Security" NAP 2020-2025 covers five strategic objectives namely: leadership, inclusion, facilitation, protection and communication, training and education. In our country, the Ministry of Defense has adopted the Long-Term Defense Development Plan 2019-2028 and the Mid-Term Defense Development Plan 2020-2023, which include goals related to gender equality and the representation of women in this sphere.

In the private security sector in the Republic of North Macedonia, the Chamber for Private Security invested in the creation of gender-responsive policies. Namely, all data on public authorizations are gender sensitive, that is, there are records of conducted trainings, issued licenses and identifications for private security according to gender. In addition, a mapping of women in private security was carried out and the real situations and challenges, stereotypes, prejudices, discrimination based only on gender were determined. In that sense, the analysis of the data from 2023. shows that in the private security workforce, women are represented by about 8%. For comparison, research shows that in Great Britain in 2021 women were represented by 10.2%, and the highest representation of women in private security with 24.3% is observed in the United States of America.

In the context of management in private security companies in Macedonia, the analysis of the data in 2023 determined that in the legal

entities that provide this kind of service, there are 15% women in the main managerial position, i.e. managers. I willl conclude that the analyzes show worrying data and in that sense, today we are still at the beginning of a long road of struggle for gender equality, especially in an activity that is traditionally predominantly male.

In addition, the Chamber of Private Security allocates significant capacities in strengthening the position of women employed in the sector,first of all by improving their skills and competences, by organizing forums for the exchange of knowledge and experiences and discussions on sensitive topics. Various activities have been implemented, such as: Training for female leadership (in 2018) for members of the private security and the Ministry of the Interior; participation in the scientific expert forum "The gender perspective and the role of women in the reforms of the security system" in 2019, in 2021 a Web conference entitled "Women's leadership" was organized and in the same year the Declaration for the support of women's entrepreneurship was signed as part of a National Platform for female entrepreneurship in Macedonia. For 3 years in a row, the Chamber of Private Security has been present with its representatives and participates in the Women's Entrepreneurship Summit, and in 2022, such activities aimed at empowering women have been validated with the 2022 Best Practice Organizations Award for Women's Entrepreneurship.

As part of the efforts to improve the situation with gender issues in the private security sector, in 2023 the Chamber of Private Security is implementing a project entitled "Orange palm - united in activism against violence against women and girls". This project aims to efficiently and effectively unite the sector in activism to raise awareness against gender-based violence and send a loud and clear message of zero tolerance to any form of violence. The campaign has a dual purpose, the first is to inform

about gender stereotypes and prejudices in relation to performing private security with the intention of overcoming barriers and all challenges in the operation, and the second purpose is to invest in early recognition, prevention and reporting of violence against women and the girls in the process of the daily performance of the regular work tasks of the employees in our sector. Within the framework of this project, a seminar on gender issues, titled "Orange Flower" was organized for 100 women employed in private security. The project finalizes with the signing of the Declaration for the United Action of Private Security Agents Against Violence Against Women and Girls, which is signed by 64 companies that provide services and employ about 4,000 private security workers.

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CONCLUSION

The last decades in our country and the region have been marked by efforts to improve the normative framework and policies for gender equality, which affects the improvement of the position of women and the advancement of gender equality. However, gender inequalities continue to be expressed in all relevant areas for the achievement of equal social status, influence and well-being of women and men. Policies that promote gender equality generally include framework strategies, or action plans for gender equality, special national action plans for the implementation of UNSCR 1325, strategies to prevent discrimination, policies to prevent violence against women, and the establishment of system of gender responsive budgeting.

At the same time, in the systems of the economy, as well as in security, where private security companies operate, there are gender-sensitive mechanisms such as gender-separated records and certain policies related to ensuring equal working conditions. However, in practice it is necessary to consistently implement these policies that will take into account the potentials and needs of women and provide gender-specific forms of systematic support in the private security sector. Such support is necessary because it is only in the last few decades that women have started to get involved in the private security system.

To achieve full equality, support tailored to women's needs is needed, given that the system is tailored to men who are traditionally the majority in security as well as private security. Today, it is undoubtedly considered that the equal participation of women in private security contributes to the efficiency of private security companies, as well as to the entire security system and makes it ready for the challenges of the 21st century, and the gender perspective is one of

the important aspects of the reform of the security system, but also the prosperity of every society.