

Gender Equality in the Context of Globalisation

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Abstract. The main aim of this paper is introducing the issue of global management and gender equality by comparison of Slovakia and its neighbouring countries belonging to European Union: Poland, Czech Republic, Austria, Hungary. The first part of the paper explains the basics of the globalization, global management, diversity, gender equality and Gender Equality Index. In the paper, the research methods and materials are introduced, followed by the analytical part comparing obtained data about the share of women in leading positions, rate of employed women and the ratio difference between wages of female and male workers in the same job position in chosen countries. In conclusion, based on the theoretical knowledge and the analysis of obtained data, new findings are summarized and suggestions for further research are proposed.

Keywords: Diversity, Globalization, Global Management, Culture, Gender Equality, Gender Equality Index

1 Introduction

The growing globalization trend results in the need to focus on the development of diversity and multicultural competencies for the effective management of organizations. This need has been accelerated in the context of opened borders, migration of people, usage of the online communication, virtual teams and an influx of foreign direct investment, which are the main consequences of globalization. As workplaces have become more diverse, multicultural and intercultural management competencies have gained on importance. According to Cagáňová, et al. [1], business society has the opportunity to learn and adopt a new way of social interaction. Globalization helps to to balance the differences between various states and nationalities, namely in financial, gender, racial, religious, human rights, economic and other areas. The equality differences are decreasing step by step. Thanks to various projects and groups focused on the mentioned issues are in progress.

The scientific activities at the Faculty of Materials Science and Technology in Trnava are also focused on the issue of gender equality due to active involvement in H2020 project Linking Research and Innovation for Gender Equality, with acronym CALIPER. This topic is at present still not enough discussed and dealt with in our country.

Fortunately, also membership in the European Union oblige states to reach common goal of gender equal rights on various levels, in public, business including leading managerial positions as well as in private life.

The particular parts of the paper are dedicated to the introduction of global management and gender equality issue. As part of the gender equality research is the comparison of Slovakia and its surrounding EU states based on the Gender Equality Index and the scores of political, economic and social power. For more thorough investigation, the scores of work and money domains are compared, too. The data are processed and the results of the various years and countries are compared and summarised.

2 Theoretical Background

The theoretical part of the presented paper is focused on the topics of global management and gender equality. The key terms are explained and obtained information are concluded at the end of each logical part.

2.1 Globalization

Globalization is an inevitable and irreversible process of converging the cultures and economies of different nations and states through trade in goods, services, capital and information [2]. Merriam-Webster Dictionary [3], defines globalization as „the act or process of globalizing; the state of being globalized; the development of an increasingly integrated global economy marked especially by free trade, free flow of capital, and the tapping of cheaper foreign labour markets“. According to World Hospital Organization [4], “globalization, or the increased interconnectedness and interdependence of people and countries, is generally understood to include two inter-related elements: the opening of international borders to increasingly fast flows of goods, services, finance, people and ideas; and the changes in institutions and policies at national and international levels that facilitate or promote such flows. Globalization has the potential for both positive and negative effects on development and health”. Following Fig. 1 illustrates the main areas affected by globalization.

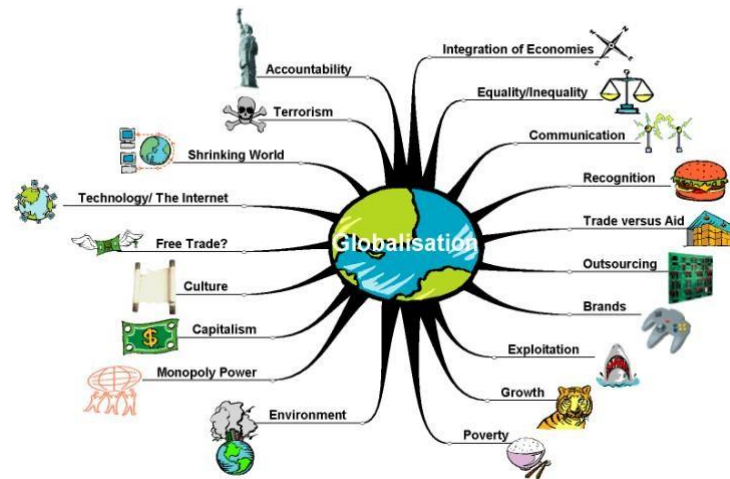


Fig. 1. Main areas affected by globalization [5]

As it can be seen in the Fig. 1, the main benefits of globalization are specified: increased possibilities in trading, as well as in transport, greater potential for education, greater employment opportunities, improved technology, means of communication and the internet possibilities which lead to easier communication and information sharing. Nowadays, globalization is possible by technology communication networks which “shrink” the world, internet access which helps people to learn new things and obtain data, growth of economic cooperation, such as trading blocs or unions and movement to free trade and travelling.

However, based on the actual state in the world, the authors have agreed that globalization increases the gap between the rich and the poor, leads to the dominance of global trade by the rich countries in the northern hemisphere of the globe, lack of opportunities for the poor to be able to have access to markets, which can lead to terrorism and monopoly power. Some of the listed areas, such as environment and culture or religion aspects can have either negative effects on the countries, especially when people do not understand the risks of these topics, as well as positive effects, when people apply into life the advantages of mentioned areas.

2.2 Global Management

As technology continues to connect the world, many organizations have taken advantage of the opportunity to conduct business globally. Global management combines knowledge of business, culture, history and social practices to help companies find their niches in the international business community and successfully work with other cultures [6].

Global management refers to the way an organization manages its business internationally, including its sales, marketing, hiring, finance and technology practices

[6]. In the new Industry 4.0 period new managerial competencies are required in global management. The required competencies include working in collaboration with robots, high qualification professions for automation technologies, big data systems development, as well as the creativity, interpersonal and communication skills in which, for now, human have advantage towards machines [7]. Global management has to deal with the modern technology practices and techniques involved in controlling and directing international organizations. Therefore, in successful global management system, all issues that arise, including those caused by international and global strategies, have to be covered [8].

Enterprises face an increasingly turbulent and complex global business environment. Enterprises today cannot be managed in the same way they were in the past. This new environment can be characterized by multiple political and economic systems, highly diverse skill and educational levels and divergent social values and norms. These factors require managers to reassess both the managerial role in general and management practices in particular [9]. Key to success in global management is the ability of managers to develop new global and multicultural management skills aimed at successful leadership of business across cultures. For achieving the success in global management, first, managers have to understand the role of continual on-the-job learning [9].

In conclusion, global management includes employee's management and operations in different states across the world, which means different time zones, different languages, different attitudes, different cultures and different technical progress. It also includes risk management and opportunities that arise by crossing political or cultural borders. Therefore, the uneven work under different laws and habits across the world lead to quite unpredictable way of dealing with the issue of globalisation in practice.

2.3 Diversity

According to DiStefano & Maznevski, with today's workforce demographics, the existence of culturally diverse teams is inevitable; and with today's competitive environment, companies cannot afford to forego their value. Therefore, the diversity aspect of management is considered in the presented paper Management activities include education within the team and providing support for the acceptance of and respect for various gender, societal, geographic, cultural, racial, political and economic backgrounds [10], [11].

Diversity management is much more than just a multicultural issue: it is about embracing many different types of people, who stand for different values and represent different genders, cultures, generations, ideas, and thinking [12]. However, reference Allen et al. [13] explains that diversity management is a part of human resource management. Diversity management consists of several steps. At the beginning, there is recognition, followed by effective deployment resulting in harmonisation of individual singularities of employee. When diversity management is set up correctly, managers can maximize the expertise and knowledge of employees. This way, the employees are able to fulfil organizational goals better [13]. Diversity can stem from

a wide range of factors including gender, ethnicity, personality, cultural beliefs, social and marital status, disability, or sexual orientation [14].

Therefore, it can be summarized that diversity is crucial part of globalised society. The successful global management members must keep in mind that successful global working team is based on understanding of diversity and ability to cope with diverse team members.

2.4 Gender Equality and Gender Equality Index

Gender equality implies that “the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men” [15]. Gender equality is not an issue that concerns only women but should bother and engage men same way as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as an issue of human rights and as an indicator of and a prerequisite for sustainable people-centred development [15].

According to UNICEF gender equality means that „women and men and girls and boys all enjoy the same rights, resources, opportunities and protections“[16]. Equality between women and men (gender equality) refers to „the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women’s and men’s rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female“. Unesco.org [17] explains that gender equality means „that women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and for contributing to, and benefiting from, economic, social, cultural and political development“.

Technological change and humanitarian emergencies are also confronting girls with new problems, while old problems – institutionalized biases, violence, poor learning and life opportunities – persist [16].

But although there are more women than ever in the labour market, there are still large inequalities in some regions, with women systematically denied the same work rights as men. work and unpaid care, sexual violence and exploitation, as well as discrimination in public office. Climate change and disasters continue to have a disproportionate effect on women and children, the same way as migration and conflicts do [16].

According to United Nations Development Programme [16]:

- Women earn only 77 cents for every dollar that men get for the same work.
- 35 % of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence.
- Almost 750 million women and girls alive today were married before their 18th birthday.
- Only 24 % of national parliamentarians were women as of November 2018, a small increase from 11.3 % in 1995.

In conclusion, gender equality is the equal valuing by society of the similarities and the differences of men and women, and the roles they play. It is based on women and men being full partners in their home, their community and their society [17].

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) is an autonomous body of the European Union. EIGE was initiated to help and give support to the gender equality issue. The activities include gender mainstreaming in all EU policies and the resulting national policies, to help with raising the awareness about gender equality within EU citizens and fight against discrimination based on sex [18].

The Gender Equality Index (GEI) is a tool to measure the progress of gender equality in the EU, developed by EIGE. The Index measures gender gaps that are adjusted to levels of achievement, ensuring that gender gaps cannot be regarded positively where they point to an adverse situation for both women and men. It assigns scores for Member States, between 1, total inequality and 100, full equality. It gives more visibility to areas that need improvement and ultimately supports policy makers to design more effective gender equality measures. The GEI consists of 6 core domains: time, work, knowledge, power, money, health and 2 additional domains: violence against women and intersecting inequalities. The GEI is counted out of 31 indicators for all EU countries. The measurement of gender equality is the basis of effective EU policy-making. Since its first edition in 2013, the GEI has monitored and reported progress by the offer of a comprehensive measure of gender equality tailored to the objectives of EU policy. The measurement reveals failures and progress, explores opportunities that can be done better to seize possibilities for change [18].

It is vital to give women equal rights, land and property, sexual and reproductive health, education and access to technology and the internet. Nowadays, there are more women in public office positions than ever before, but encouraging more women leaders will help achieve greater gender equality.

3 Methods and Materials

The main aim of the presented paper is to introduce the issue of global management and gender equality by comparison of Slovakia and its neighbouring countries belonging to European Union – Poland, Czech Republic, Austria, Hungary. The research data were collected from the EIGE database [19]. The source type is computed by EIGE using data collected by various organisations. For the best results the authors of the presented paper compared data that are available in all countries in the past ten years. From the available data, statistics of Gender Equality Index and in three fields of power – economic, social and political - were chosen, as well as the scores of work and money domains. For more detailed examination, specific numbers representing women in leadership position in the fields of economic power, social power and political power were chosen. The score of work domain shows the employment rate of women. The score of money domain is counted according to the ratio difference between wages of female and male workers in the same job position. The values for average of the all 28 states of EU are shown for better comparison.

3.1 Gender Equality Comparison in the Context of Globalisation

From the statistics available for every EU country for past 10 years, GEI and data related to the managerial indicators of chosen countries were selected, sorted and processed and evaluated into the graphic view.

The Gender Equality Index (GEI) is a composite indicator that measures the complex concept of gender equality and, based on the EU policy framework, assists in monitoring the progress of gender equality across the EU over time. In following graphical representation (Fig 2) Gender Equality Index of Slovakia and its surrounding EU countries are visible.

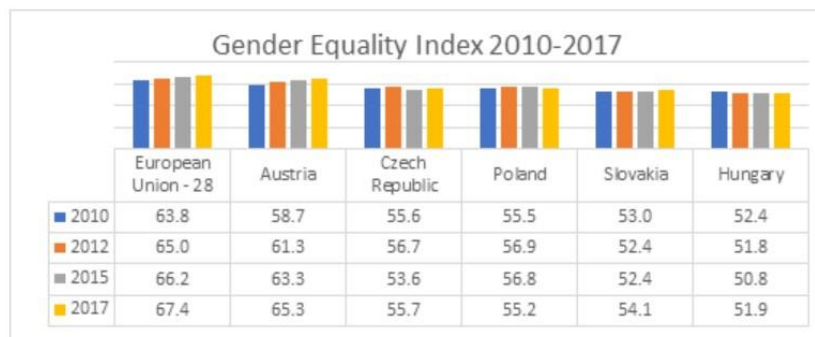


Fig. 2. Gender Equality Index 2010-2017 of chosen EU countries in % (own elaboration, based on EIGE [19])

As it can be seen in the graphical representation of the Gender Equality Index above, the overall GEI of EU 28 has increased almost linear tendency according to the difference between 2010-2017. The same tendency is copied by Austria. Nevertheless, Czech Republic measured slight dropdown in 2015, followed by its correction in 2017. Slovakia measured increase in 2017, but on the other hand, Poland measured right opposite in 2017 in comparison with Slovakia. Hungary has measured decreasing tendency over the years, with pitfall in 2015; however, 2017 has the increasing GEI.

Economic power can be broadly defined as the ability to control or influence the behaviour of others through the deliberate and politically motivated use of economic assets. Following graphical representation (Fig. 3) focuses on economic power which leadership is under female administration.

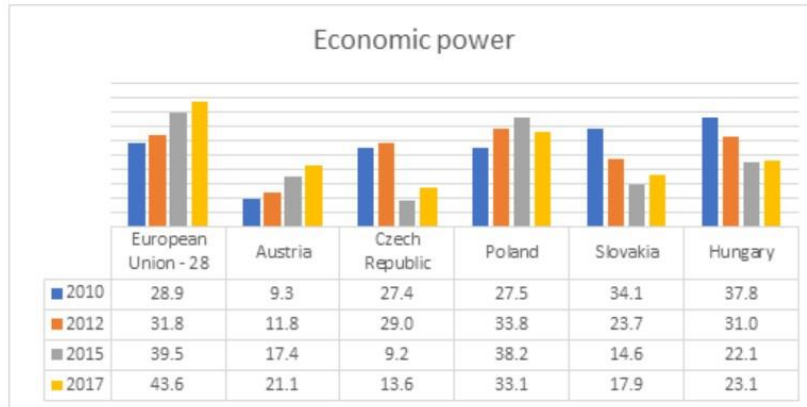


Fig. 3. Representation of women in economic power of chosen EU countries in % (own elaboration, based on EIGE [19])

In the presented graphical representation above is visible that the European Union has significant over-years increasing tendency in female economic power. The economic power of females can be represented as share of females in leading corporate positions, with a focus on its economic decisions. Austria keeps the same increasing overall tendency; although, Slovakia and Czech Republic show potentially the same results after the year 2012. As is visible, Hungary keeps the same tendency after 2012 as Slovakia or Czech Republic, with the pit in 2015 but since the years 2015 the index has been growing.

Social power is the potential for social influence. Following graphical representation (Fig. 4) introduce social power of females in society in Slovakia and its surrounding EU countries.

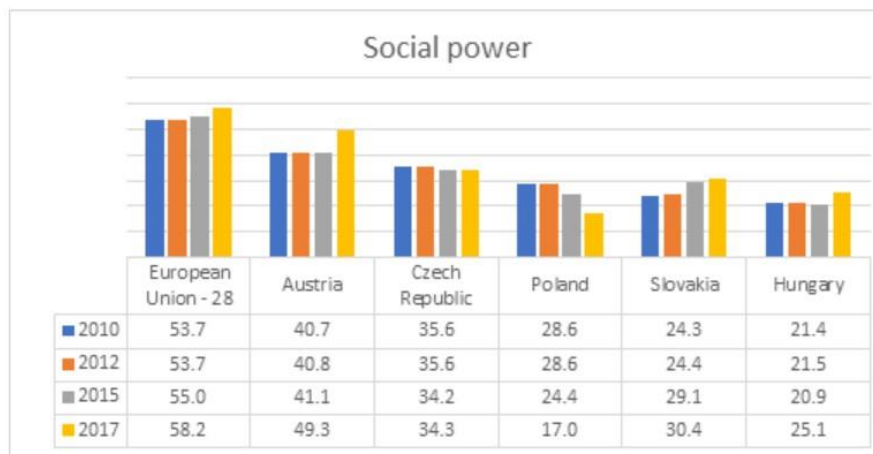


Fig. 4. Representation of women in social power of chosen EU countries in % (own elaboration, based on EIGE [19])

In the presented graphical representation of the social power is visible that the influence of females in the EU has an increasing tendency over time; however Poland has a decreasing results over the each measured interval. Austria and Hungary, on the other hand, have the stepwise growth in 2017 in comparison to previous years. Nevertheless, Hungary has only half of the increase in comparison to Austria. The Czech Republic keeps almost the same level of the index, but Slovakia keeps its growth in social empowerment of female over the years, which is a positive outlook for the future of the female equality in the social environment.

Political power is the ability to control the behaviour of people or influence the outcome of events. Political power enables people or groups to control the policies, functions, and culture of society. Following graphical representation (Fig. 5) shows the political power of females in Slovakia and its surrounding EU countries.

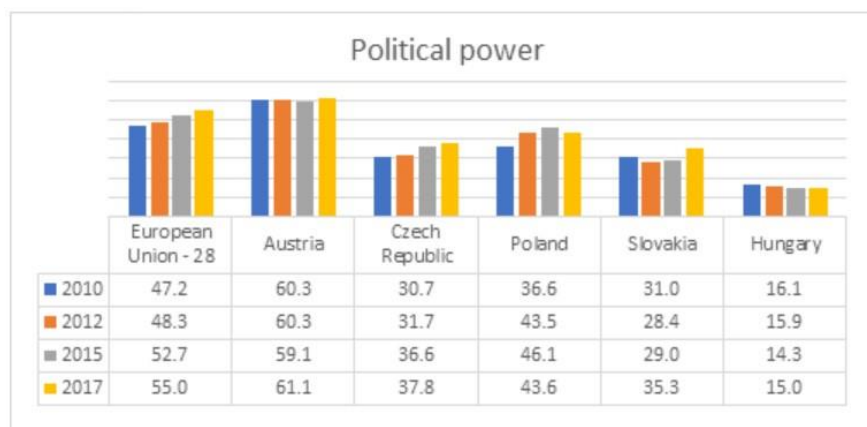


Fig. 5. Representation of women in political power of chosen EU countries in % (own elaboration, based on EIGE [19])

Political empowerment of females in the EU has slightly increasing growth. However, as it is shown in the graphical representation, where Austria has mostly the same results over time, the fitting curve would be the same in Hungary as well, however with lower resulting numbers. Czech Republic keeps its growth over time, as well as Poland with slightly lower results in 2017. Slovakia, nevertheless, had decreasing results since 2010 with step growth in 2017.

Work domain represents even distribution of job positions between genders. Following figure represents work domain index of females in Slovakia and its surrounding EU countries.

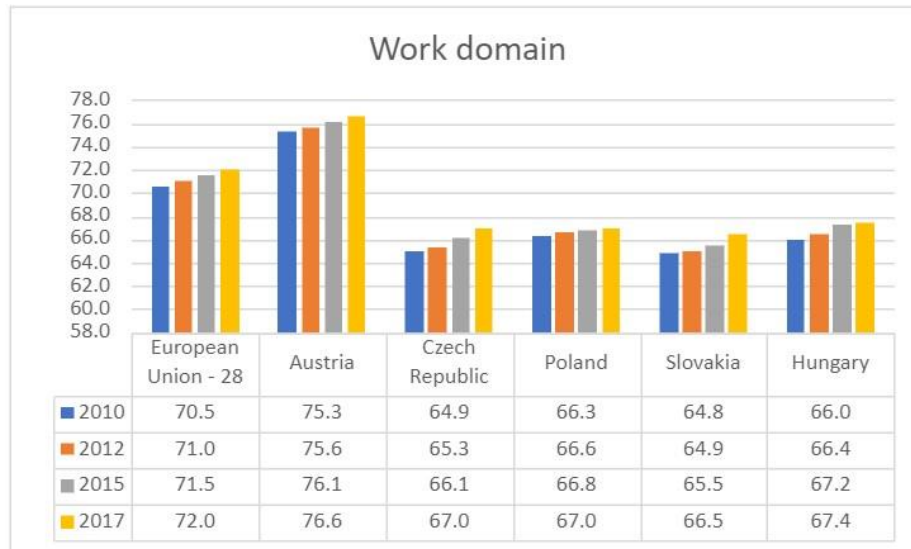


Fig. 6. Representation of work domain of chosen EU countries in % (own elaboration, based on EIGE [19])

Over the years 2010-2017 it is possible to notice clear near-linear increase of the index of work domain. This observed increase can be understood as positive evolution from the stereotypical attitude “male and female jobs” to the new era of equal genderless work opportunity. As is represented in the Figure 6, Austria has the highest rate of the work domain. Austria is, in average, 5 points above all EU countries, on the other hand it is clear that Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary scored almost the same results. However, Slovakia achieved the lowest work domain of all countries.

The money domain is the most observable demonstration of gender inequality in the real world. The European union is generating activity to decrease the gender wage gap between male and female employees.

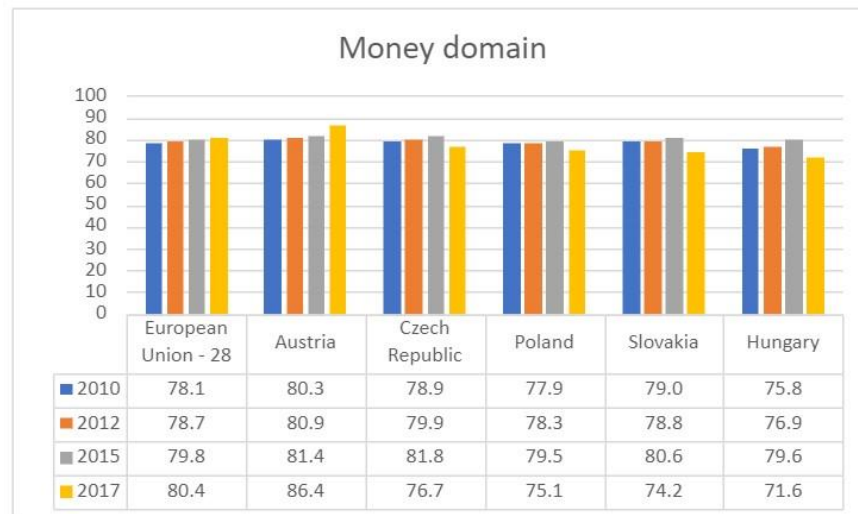


Fig. 7. Representation of money domain of chosen EU countries in % (own elaboration, based on EIGE [19])

The Figure 7 represents money domain of chosen EU countries. It is evident from the average European Union – 28 graph that money domain index in EU countries is quite high, therefore, the differences in the evaluation of male and female workers are small. However, after year-on-year increase, there is noticeable overflow in 2017 in countries of Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and Hungary. On the other hand, with Austria can be registered slight growth in comparison with the rest EU countries in average.

According to the provided dataset, within 2010 - 2017, Austria and Slovakia are the only countries that managed their Gender Equality Index rate rising. Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary have decreasing values during the examined time. Although, the Slovakia's index value is rising, the gain is more moderate than the EU 28 average across the entire research duration. Even though Austria's Gender Equality Index rate also remains lower than the EU 28 score, the progress is higher than the EU 28 average. The gap between Austria and the EU 28 has decreased over the past years.

The results of the Austrian achievement in gender equality are also confirmed by other studies. According to [20] in 2018 women held 34.4 % of seats in the Austrian Nationalrat. It took 100 years for women to claim about one-third of parliamentary seats. The expectation is that it would take at least another half-century to limit all gender imbalances in political representation [21]. On the other hand, the share of women in the Slovak parliament or government has not increased significantly over the years. While in 2009 women in parliament and government accounted for 18 % of all parliament and government officials [21], in 2020 that figure climbed slightly higher to 23.3 %. [22, 23]. Another evaluation, the Global Gender Gap Index 2020 processed by the World Economic Forum confirms that Austria, out of the studied countries, has the

best gender politics. With the score 0.744 took 34th place. In comparison, Slovakia achieved score 0.718 ranking 63rd out of 153 states [24].

4 Conclusion

The literature review, shows that with the growing globalization of the production, offered services, labour market and other fields, more and more enterprises create multicultural teams which are formed of employees from all over the world. This phenomenon is caused mainly due to the transnational nature of enterprises, but it is also affected by the lack of skilled labour in local labour markets. Modern world innovating enterprises search for employees from different cultures and environments to bring diversity to the workplace. Diversity introduces different viewpoints, ideas, knowledge, interests, and new dimensions [25]. The authors of the paper agree with Pechanová [26], that nothing can be fully understood in isolation, but everything must be understood as a dynamic and multi-layered system, as well as global management. Everything is in a certain relationship with everything, the functioning of the system consists of many simultaneous and interdependent actions of its elements. It is necessary to recognize the opportunities and threats of diversity arising from the global and multicultural environment.

By following the methodology of the presented paper, the Gender Equality Index and numbers representing women in leadership position in the fields of economic power, social power and political power were compared. The scores of work and money domains were compared as well for more detailed investigation, It can be concluded, that the number of females in leading positions are rising very slowly in general. From the chosen countries, best progress can be seen in Austria, followed by either the Czech Republic and Poland. Slovakia is in the second worst place; the worst results are measured in Hungary. There are still many opportunities how to reduce the differences in gender equality in managerial positions. The scores of work domain are the only one from the investigated data which all have increasing trend. All states, besides Austria, reached the lowest money domain scores in 2017.

From the collected data, the authors of the paper come to conclusion that from the chosen states, Austria is the most progressive country in gender equality in the context of global management. Even though the values of Austria are not the highest, they always have increasing or equal values with the exception of one small decrease of the political power in 2015.

For the further research continuous tracking of the obtained data and enlargement of the database is recommended. Also, the ways how to reach the gender equality in global management should be the key point of study in the field of gender equality.

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