

Comparative assessment of women unemployment and poverty in European Union

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Abstract

High unemployment and poverty rate is one of the sorest social and economical problems those interfere relevant application of advantages provided for women by economics. After having analyzed the change trends of women unemployment and poverty rate, under the article it is sought to define their inter-correlation. Scientists' approach towards the links of unemployment and poverty differs even though it is most frequently highlighted that unemployment is one of the main reasons of poverty. However, the link assessment of the women unemployment rate and women at risk of poverty rate disclosed that there exists strong direct interrelationship not in all 28 countries of the European Union. It is also defined that currently, women unemployment rate in 28 countries of the EU, is lower than men; however, their risk of poverty rate outweighs the indicator of men.

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1. Introduction

Although the system of free market theoretically provides with a possibility to seek for economical independence for all citizens, the unstable economical situation, changes in the structure of labor market and work, altering national political, legal, cultural and institutional environment, etc., frequently decrease persons' possibilities for integration into labor market. The mechanism of labor market functioning is complex, thus there always appear persons, who face with a problem of involuntary job loss or failure to find a job, and the unemployed person has a greater possibility to join the destitute.

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Poverty is a factual problem that brings some trouble into the life of many people and restrains human's possibilities to lead life under relevant conditions. Thus, states, seeking to implement their political, economical, demographical, cultural and other aims, cannot exclude from society not taking into consideration human, residing in them, needs and look for ways how to decrease the spread of poverty. Reducing unemployment and alleviating poverty are key policy goals in many countries. However, despite legal act in force, regulating the following field, there are still a lot of persons, particularly women, who risk appearing at the poverty level.

The hidden gender poverty gap, women's economic dependence within families, the organization and distribution of resources in the household became the subject of a number of recent research studies and analyses (Tarkowska, 2002). Scientists (Ajakaiye & Adeyeye, 2002; Agénor, 2004; Bastos, Casacab, Nunesc, & Pereirinha, 2009; Bradshaw & Finch, 2003; Bukšnytė-Marmienė & Vaitkūnienė, 2012 Callan, Nolan, & Whelan, 1993; Kangas & Ritakallio, 1998; Keršienė, 2011; Layte, Maitre, Nolan, & Whelan, 2001; Nolan & Whelan, 1996a; Perry, 2002; Šileika & Bekerytė, 2013; Townson, 2009; Whelan et al., 2002; and others) analyze unemployment and poverty, their reasons, inter-links and look for reasons that cause a worse women status in comparison with men, etc. However, there is a lack of statistic data in the analysis that discloses the extent which women unemployment is related to their higher risk to join the destitute.

The research aim – having analyzed change trends of women unemployment and risk of poverty rate to compare the obtained outcomes in the countries – members of the European Union.

The research objectives:

1. To analyze reasons of unemployment and poverty under a theoretical aspect.
2. To analyze changes in women unemployment rate and the women at risk of poverty rate in the countries – members of the European Union.
3. To assess links between women unemployment rate and women at risk of poverty rate.

The research methods: the analysis of scientific literature, synthesis, comparison, summary, descriptive statistics, time series, correlative – regressive analyses, Min–Max indexes, and mean indexes.

2. Theoretical issues of unemployment and poverty

The job plays an important role for the formation of personal identity, conditions its self-esteem, self-consciousness, sometimes the main ambition in life and protects against poverty and social exclusion. However, individuals more frequently face integration problems related to labor market in the contemporary and fast changing world.

Labor market is formed when there 'take place production processes and there is carried out the satisfaction of work, as a factor of production, need' (Raškiniš, 2008). According to Šileika and Andriušaitienė (2007) labour market can be described as market subsystem, its compound part where purchase-sales object is a specific good – potential employee.

Following the scientists' approach (Nikiforova, 1991; Borjas, 2010; Bosworth, Dawkins, & Stromback, 1996; Martinkus, Beržinskienė, 2005; Šileika & Andriušaitienė, 2007), labor market not only is the finding of a relevant workplace for an employee and selection of relevant employees; labor market is defined as a place where an employer, employee and jobseeker interact together in order to solve the issues related to payroll, working conditions, time, level of qualification, work intensity and volume, social benefits and guarantees, etc.

In accordance with the scientists (Beržinskienė & Juozaitienė, 2011; Beržinskienė & Rudytė, 2008; Martinkus & Beržinskienė, 2005) who analyze the issues of labor market it would be ideal if in the labor market there were as many workplaces as willing ones to work, and the labor agreement was completed in case a vacancy and person's appearance comply with each other. However, due to the dynamics, indeterminacy and different expression of labor market, it is not perfect or ideal as there are present quite many obstacles that encumber potential employees' possibilities to integrate into the labor market. Disproportions those emerge between labor supply and demand, cause unemployment problems.

Following the approach by Beržinskienė and Rudytė (2008), the indicator of unemployment rate reflects negative outcome of employment. Unemployment rate is an economical indicator that shows which part of labor resources

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