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**Positive Action in the EU Gender Equality Law:
Potential and Challenges in the Czech Republic**

Pozitivní akce v genderové legislativě v EU:
potenciál a výzvy v České republice

Disertační práce

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Abstract

This presented study provides results of an extensive research regarding the codification, interpretation and the use of positive actions within major international organisations and selected national states with aim to assess their possible applications in the Czech Republic (CR). This work is divided into three interrelated parts comprising 1) theoretical and conceptual clarification of the principles of gender equality, anti-discrimination, and positive actions; 2) comparative analysis of the codification and the use of positive actions in three major international organisations - the UN, the COE, and the EU; and 3) codification and possibility of use of positive actions (more concretely quotas) in the fields of political and economic representation in the CR and assessment of their constitutional compatibility.

This presented research is based on the intra-disciplinary legal, sociological, and political science approach. This work thus relies on the primary and secondary national and international legislation; theoretical work in the field of anti-discrimination, as well as women in leadership literature; and opinions and views of norm-makers in this field as extracted through the minutes of meetings, interviews, and articles published in the media. This work used methods of description and compilation while analysing basic legal concepts; and method of comparative analysis when assessing codification and use of positive actions in selected organizations and states. Furthermore a content analysis was applied in order to analyse related public debate, speeches and interviews. The added value of the research resides in a comprehensive and up-to-date overview of codification and interpretation of positive actions by the major international organisations. Secondly, the study provides an analysis and evaluation of the use of positive actions in selected states and assessment of their possible application in the specific context of the CR, as one of the Central European states that has witnessed a long term political resistance to such measures.

Key words: gender equality in decision-making, positive actions, quotas