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UDC 342.7:004

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## DEVELOPING DIGITAL COMPETENCE AND ITS IMPACT ON GENDER EQUALITY

Digital skills are increasingly becoming the basis of global competitiveness, job promotion and growth. Digital societies require digital competences if they are to ensure the full participation of people in social and working life. For high quality education at all levels, the Internet is of paramount importance, and the COVID-19 crisis and recent events in Ukraine have demonstrated, that most work can be done remotely using technology.

The leading factor that contributes to success in education, science, business and other areas of human life is the ability to quickly obtain information, analyze and evaluate its possible impact and benefits, as well as use it wisely for their own purposes. All this becomes possible only with the formation of digital competence of the individual.

Digital competence is an integral characteristic of a person that dynamically combines knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes regarding the use of digital technologies for communication, personal development, learning, work, participation in public life, according to the field of competence.

However, just as digitalization and digital competence can help in everyday life, so can negative impacts, limitations and shortcomings.

Social and gender norms and deep-rooted gender stereotypes prevent women and girls from taking advantage of the many opportunities offered by digital technologies for personal and professional growth. Technology-based gender-based violence is a progressive phenomenon exacerbated by the widespread use of social networks and digital platforms, as well as by women in politics, civil society and human rights. There are still few women among digital decision-makers.

The development of digital competence can go hand in hand with advances in gender equality. In essence, bridging the gender gap in digital competences and beyond begins with recognizing that women and men are equal and deserve full participation in all aspects of the economy and society. These efforts begin with breaking down stereotypes, providing equal opportunities and recognizing the powerful potential of an egalitarian society in which everyone can prosper.

**Keywords:** competence, digital competence, gender equality, digitalization, digital technologies

Отримано 10.06.2022