

SECTION VI. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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THE PROBLEM OF LEGAL REGULATION OF THE INSTITUTION OF THE FIRST LADY IN THE USA, FRANCE AND UKRAINE

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One of the main problems in establishing the institution of the First Lady is the legal framework for this issue.

In the United States of America, the title of "First Lady" has no legal status, as it is not defined or enshrined in the constitution or legislation. It is an unofficial and traditional title that has evolved as a result of the country's historical development and socio-cultural customs.

The institution of the First Lady in the United States is based on a certain balance of traditions, customs and public expectations. The president's wife has no specific responsibilities, but she has the opportunity to choose the area of activity she wants to focus on based on her personal interests and life experience.

In the United States, there are only a few legally binding documents that mention the title of "first lady" and regulate the duties of this position. The first document is the White House Staff Hiring Act of 1987, which states that "assistance and services... shall be provided to the wife of the President in connection with the assistance she provides to the President in the performance of his presidential duties" [1]. This document enshrines the right of the "President's wife" to have her own staff in the White House to assist her in the performance of her duties and tasks.

Another document that mentions the president's wife is the 1989 Act on Ethics Reform [2], which sets out certain restrictions on the acceptance of gifts by public officials, including the president's wife.

When studying other countries that have adopted this title, it is worth noting France. Emmanuel Macron published the "Charter of Transparency" on his website in 2017, which explained the status of the wife of the head of state, Brigitte Macron [3].

Mrs Macron's missions, as defined in this text, are carried out within the framework of the Presidency of the Republic and together with the President of the

Republic. The wife of the head of state does not receive a salary and has neither her own budget nor an independent office: the two staff members provided to the wife of the President of the Republic are an integral part of the office of the head of state.

The publication of such a clarification of missions and resources is unprecedented. It does not create any new rights for the wife of the President of the Republic, but clarifies the contours of Brigitte Macron's public role [3].

At the same time, it is worth noting one feature of this document: the document does not contain the title "first lady", instead using the phrase "wife of the head of state" [4]. The document also states that she will not be paid a salary, and that the staff to assist her will consist of two advisers, a secretariat and her own office.

Today, the United States and France are the two countries that have legal confirmation of the importance of the First Lady's status. Ukraine is the next country to legalise the status of First Lady, and given Olena Zelenska's active role during the war, it has every chance of creating a strong institution.

From the very beginning of Volodymyr Zelenskyy's term, his wife intended to establish the Office of the First Lady to give her activities an official status. During a meeting of the European Business Association, Mrs Zelenska mentioned this factor as one of the main ones in her activities [5].

Thus, today the issue of the uncertainty of the status of the president's wife is an important problem related to women's participation in politics. A large number of first ladies of different countries are active, including internationally, but despite this, they do not have a legal framework that would regulate their duties.

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