



WOMEN'S EQUAL RIGHTS MOVEMENTS IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES IN THE 20TH CENTURY

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Annotation: the 20th century led to significant changes in the history of women's liberation movements in Europe. During this period, women actively campaigned for political, economic, social and cultural equality. This article deals more broadly with the key stages of women's liberation movements, their scientifically based arguments, the role of important individuals and organizations, as well as their influence in European Society.

Keywords: history, women's liberation, political process, suffrage, feminism, legal equality gender equality

Аннотация: двадцатый век привел к значительным изменениям в истории женского освободительного движения в Европе. В этот период женщины активно боролись за достижение политического, экономического, социального и культурного равенства. В этой статье более подробно рассматриваются основные этапы женских освободительных движений, их научно обоснованные аргументы, роль важных лиц и организаций, а также их влияние в европейском обществе.

Ключевые слова: история, освобождение женщин, политический процесс, избирательное право, феминизм, правовое равенство гендерное равенство

The 20th century was an important turning point in the history of women's liberation movements in Europe. During this period, women actively fought for political, social and economic equality.

In early 20th century Europe, women's liberation movements took shape as the first wave of feminism. This wave was primarily aimed at gaining women's suffrage. In 1906, Finnish women became the first people in Europe to gain suffrage, an important example for other European countries. In the United Kingdom, for example, women over 30 were allowed to vote in 1918, and in 1928 the right was extended to all adult women.

First-wave feminism focused on legal equality. Suffragettes (campaigners for women's suffrage) attempted to achieve their goals through mass demonstrations, pickets and even a hunger strike. In the United Kingdom, organizations such as the women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), led by Emmeline Pankhurst, played an important role in the process. Scientific studies show that these movements not only led to political changes, but also changed the social awareness of the role of women in society.

World War II (1939-1945) gave a new impetus to the women's liberation movements. As many men went to the front during the war, women took an active part in industry, agriculture and other fields. This strengthened the economic independence of women and led to a revision of their role in society. In Britain, for example, women worked in factories during the war years, and this experience was later used as an important argument for equality in the labor market.



The Universal Declaration of human rights, adopted by the United Nations in 1948, was an important step in the protection of women's rights. Article 2 of this document emphasized the Prohibition of discrimination on the basis of gender, which provided a legal basis for women's rights in European countries. The UN Declaration of the International Year of women in 1975 and the adoption of the Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW) in 1979 were significant international advances for women's rights.

Beginning in the 1960s, a second wave of feminism began in Europe. During this period, women fought not only for political rights, but also for social and cultural equality. Second-wave feminism drew on the slogan "personal is political", focusing on discrimination in women's daily lives, such as domestic violence, job inequality, and reproductive rights.

She analyzed the secondary role of women in society, revealing the socio-cultural roots of gender stereotypes. The work laid the intellectual foundation for the feminism movement in Europe. At the same time, the 1975 International Conference in Nairobi gave a new meaning to the concept of "gender equality", proposing that women be seen not only as legal equality, but also as a force actively involved in social progress.

Scientific research suggests that second-wave feminism significantly increased women's participation in the labour market in Europe. For example, according to a 2008 report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the employment rate of women grew but remained 17% lower compared to men. Inequality about work still remains an urgent problem.

In the second half of the 20th century, European women began to become more active in the economic and political spheres. For example, in Andorra, women gained suffrage in 1970, and in 2011, women had a majority in parliament, the first time this had occurred in Europe. In Finland, Tarya Halonen became the country's first female president in 2000, marking the success of women in political leadership.

In entrepreneurship, however, women still faced restrictions. A French study found that female entrepreneurs were about a third less active in seeking financial aid from banks than men. Entrepreneurial activity among women in Europe was 5.7%, well below the global average (11%).

Finland (1906): the first in Europe to gain women's suffrage. It became an important precedent for women's political participation in Europe.

Great Britain: women over the age of 30 were allowed to vote through the Representation of the People Act of 1918, which was extended to all adult women in 1928. Emmeline Pankhurst and her organization Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) played a central role in the process. The radical methods of the WSPU, such as the hunger strike and mass protests, attracted the attention of the government.

Germany (1919): upon the establishment of the Weimar Republic, women became eligible for suffrage, which was part of the post-World War I democratic changes.

The 20th century was an important period for women's liberation movements in Europe. While the first wave secured political rights, the second wave focused on social and cultural equality. Scientific research and international documents, such as the UN Declaration of human rights and CEDAW, provided a legal framework for women's rights. However, issues such as gender inequality, especially wage and entrepreneurial discrimination, remain



relevant. While European women have made significant progress towards equality today, the struggle for full gender equality continues.

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