

Warsaw, 08.11.2017

Minister of Family, Labour and Social Policy

Mr Sławomir Broniarz  
President of Polish Teachers' Union

Mrs Kinga Lohmann  
Director of Karat Coalition

Responding to the letter dated 16/10/ 2017 regarding the appeal to introduce changes in the names of professions included in the classification of professions and specialties for the needs of the labour market, so that the names include both forms, the male and the female, I present the following explanations.

The minister competent for labour issues is responsible for creating the classification of professions and specialties for the needs of labour market, and issuing regulations concerning the classification on the basis of the Act on promotion of employment and on the labour market institutions (art.4 paragraph 7b) after having consulted the ministries and social partners competent for a given profession or specialty. At present, the classification of professions and specialties from 2014 is in force, introduced by the Decree on *the classification of professions and specialties for the purposes of the labour market and the scope of its application*, amended by the Decree dated 07/11/ 2016.

The Polish classification of professions and specialties (KZiS) is based on the International Standard Classification of Occupations ISCO-08, created by the International Labour Organization (ILO). As a rule (similarly as in ISCO-08), the classification contains the names of professions in male form, while the names in female form - only in professions traditionally dominated by women.

At the same time, I would like to clarify that the name used in KZiS refers to a profession and not to a person, and it is independent of the male or female grammatical form, which can be used to define a person who performs a certain profession.

I would also like to kindly inform you that the problem of naming the professions in relation to gender as well as the problem of naming the professions of foreign origin, were consulted by the Minister of Labour with the Polish Language Council of the Polish Academy of Sciences during the work on the classification of professions and specialties in 2010.

In the opinion dated 12/11/2009, the document's mark: RJP-310 / W / 2009, the Polish Language Council confirmed the conformity of the professions' names used in the proposed classification of professions with the language rules of the Polish language and long-standing tradition. Linguists drew attention to this "**... not to equate two concepts: the names of professions in Polish**

**are expressed by nouns having a conventional grammatical form independent of the grammatical form of a person who performs the profession. It is so-called the generic form referring to everybody who performs certain profession...".** Using the names describing the professions' performers in two grammatical forms is, according to linguists, characteristic of unofficial Polish, especially colloquial one but does not appear in the official Polish language. According to linguists **"... the profession has no gender, the performer of a profession has gender..."**. The linguists of the Polish Language Council confirmed the above in their opinion dated 04/12/ 2012, the document's mark: RJP-333 / W / 2012, for which they were asked in relation to the classification's update at that time.

The above-mentioned view was also shared by the experts of the Institute of Labour and Social Affairs, who proposed the changes in the classification in 2010 and in 2012. In their opinion, having the professions' names in two grammatical forms, male and female, would reduce the readability of the classification, which is used by a wide range of users (public employment services, CSO, Social Insurance Institution, vocational schools, central institutions and organizations, professional associations, employers) .

In addition, changing the grammatical form or introducing the double naming of professions, as you suggest, can cause a much larger problem resulting from the fact that the classification is linked to other official documents and legal acts. Nomenclature of professions used in the classification of professions and specialties directly affects the nomenclature used in such documents as the classification of occupations in vocational education, the curriculum of vocational education, the teaching programs in a profession, the examination standards, the vocational education certificates, the forms used by the CSO and Social Insurance Institution, the information materials about professions (the briefcases on professions, the national standards of professional qualifications), etc. Introducing the proposed changes in nomenclature would entail the necessity to change the above documents as well as the electronic systems of the users of classification. It would cost a lot of money, impossible to estimate at that moment.

Taking into consideration the above, I would like to kindly inform you that there is no plan to modify the nomenclature used in the classification of the names of professions and specialties so that the document contains the male and female grammatical forms of professions.

I hope you find the above information and explanations satisfactory and comprehensive.

Your sincerely,  
Stanisław Szwed  
Secretary of State