



Gender equality, balanced political participation and representation of women and men in post-war public and political processes in Ukraine: challenges and perspectives

Needs assessment
report

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Gender Equality, Balanced
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Needs Assessment Report

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1. INTRODUCTION

The transition on 24 February 2022 of the Russian war against Ukraine to a new phase of full-scale hostility poses new challenges unheard-of before for Ukraine. They include achieving a gender balance in political participation, and equal representation of women and men in public and political processes.

Gender equality is an important standard setting area and policy goal of the Council of Europe, and had already been supported in various ways by Ukraine by 24 February 2022. As a member of the Council of Europe since 1995, Ukraine is party to the European Convention on Human Rights and its provisions on gender equality. It is further influenced by sixteen recommendations on gender equality by the Committee of Ministers. The Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023, developed through the Gender Equality Commission with the active participation of Ukraine, sets out to achieve the advancement and empowering of women and the effective realisation of gender equality in Council of Europe member States by supporting the implementation of existing standards. As a party to several conventions (Istanbul Convention, Lanzarote Convention, Convention against Trafficking in Human Beings) containing provisions regarding discrimination against women and girls, Ukraine is required to adhere to international human rights standards impacting gender equality.

At the same time, the acceleration of European integration processes makes the issue of gender equality extremely important and relevant. After all, equal rights and opportunities for men and women is one of the fundamental principles professed by the European community. Ukraine, as a current candidate for membership of the European Union (EU) and as a future EU member, must meet certain standards, particularly regarding gender balance at all levels of leadership. Ratification of the Council of Europe's Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), which took place in July 2022, only solidified this commitment to combat gender inequality.

Thus, it is important to clarify how the war has affected equal opportunities for women and men; what issues they face today and what their expectations are for tomorrow. These and other questions are answered by the survey titled "Gender equality, balanced political participation and representation of women and men in post-war public and political processes in Ukraine: challenges and perspectives".¹ Some 124 experts expressed their opinions based on their experience of participation in public and political processes. The respondents were women and men: members of the Parliament of Ukraine, local councillors, local officials of the central government and local executive authorities, and civil society organisations (CSOs).

The survey results serve as the basis for this analytical paper that puts them in a broader legal and international context, analyses the current situation and models possible scenarios for the future. It presents a comprehensive interpretation of the issues at stake, allowing to take into account all its aspects and make realistic forecasts. This will also permit to further develop specific recommendations for different branches and levels of government, and their implementation will contribute to progress in achieving the gender balance objective in the public and political life of Ukraine.

1. The expert survey was commissioned by the Council of Europe and conducted by research company Sociopolis.

2. THE PRESENT SITUATION OF THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND MEN IN UKRAINE'S PUBLIC AND POLITICAL LIFE IN VIEW OF THE CHALLENGES AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE WAR

2.1. International legal instruments on participation of women and men in decision-making processes and their application during the war and post-war period

A number of international legal acts were developed after the Second World War, aiming at the universal protection of human rights and the rights of vulnerable social groups as an integral part thereof. Such documents were developed and adopted, *inter alia* under the auspices of the United Nations (UN) and the Council of Europe to establish a “gold standard” of human rights’ protection.

The First and Second World Wars also led to the development of a system of international humanitarian law at the universal level. It is a system of international legal norms and principles² to be applied during armed conflicts.

For the purposes of this study, it is proposed to focus on the human rights international legal acts of a general nature, in particular dealing with the equality of women and men in public and political life in peacetime, and those acts or standards that define specific approaches to the protection of women’s rights in the context of armed conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction.

International law pays considerable attention to the equal participation of women and men in all areas of public life and prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender to the highest degree.

2. In particular, it includes the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907, the Geneva Conventions of 1949 (Convention (I) for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field; Convention (II) for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea; Convention (III) relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War; Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War) and additional protocols thereto of 1977 and other legal acts.

At the universal level, the UN has developed a system of international acts dedicated to the protection of women's rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) states that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status. This principle was developed in the UN Convention on the Political Rights of Women (1952), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966).

The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) was the first international instrument to focus on the issue of discrimination against women on the basis of sex. The Convention, along with the need for "the adoption by States Parties of temporary special measures aimed at accelerating *de facto* equality between men and women", enshrines the obligation of states to give women, on equal terms with men, active and passive suffrage, the opportunity to participate in the development and implementation of public policies, and the right to participate in public and political life.

These commitments were further developed in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), the Global Agenda 2030 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (2015).

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security mainstreamed gender equality in the areas of peace and security. For the first time, women were officially recognised as active participants and "actors in the area of peace and security". Recognition of the gender-based impact of conflicts on societies led to a broader view of the concept of peace and security. The need to overcome systemic barriers to women's participation in decision making during conflict and post-conflict reconstruction was seen as a necessary precondition for peace. The resolution was based on two interrelated approaches – on the one hand, protecting women from violence, and on the other hand, strengthening women's participation in the political, public, military and economic sectors.

Since Resolution 1325 is quite broad, the UN Security Council has adopted additional narrowly focused resolutions to address specific issues in this area.³ They deal with combating sexual violence in conflict; monitoring and evaluation through the development of global indicators; combating the spread of extremism; and the introduction of gender-oriented early warning indicators to identify risks and threats. In pursuance of Resolution 1325, states shall adopt national action plans to implement its provisions at the national level.

In the context of women's participation in decision making, it is also important to note UN Security Council Resolution 1889 (2009) which emphasises the problem of women's exclusion from early recovery and peacebuilding processes, as well as the lack of adequate planning and funding. The Resolution calls for the development of a strategy to increase the number of women in decision making for conflict resolution.

3. UN Security Council Resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015), 2467 (2019) and 2493 (2019). A brief summary of these documents is available at www.un.org/shestandsforpeace/content/united-nations-security-council-resolutions-women-peace-and-security, accessed 1 October 2023.

Among the specific commitments presented in the Resolution, it is worth noting the following:

- deployment of gender advisers and women protection advisers to peacekeeping missions;
- promoting women's participation in decision making on economic and political issues, starting from the early stages of peacebuilding;
- oversight over the resources directed to women in post-conflict and recovery planning; financing activities for women's physical and economic security, healthcare, justice and the promotion of women's political participation.

At the European level, there is a regional system of international legal norms in the field of human rights developed by the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the EU. The Council of Europe plays a significant role in the development of international standards for the protection of human rights, including women's rights.

The prohibition of discrimination, and thus the need to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men, is established in Articles 1 and 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights (1950). Protocol No. 12 to the Convention states that "the principle of non-discrimination does not prevent State Parties from taking measures in order to promote full and effective equality, provided that there is an objective and reasonable justification for those measures". Therefore, states can legitimately apply special temporary measures, including during conflicts and in the post-conflict period, to achieve substantive equality. Such positive measures may include the introduction of a "gender quota", empowerment training or preferences for disadvantaged groups.

The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) (2011) focuses on combating violence against women in both peacetime and during armed conflicts, and specifically states that violence against women and domestic violence is rooted in gender inequality. The Convention recognises that continued human rights' violations in armed conflicts affecting civilians particularly affect women. This refers to cases of widespread or systematic rape and sexual violence, as well as trends of increasing violence against women both during and after conflicts.

Although the Council of Europe's Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023 does not directly address the impact of armed conflicts on gender policy, it sets forth "achieving balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making" as one of its strategic objectives. Achieving this goal in times of armed conflicts or post-conflict reconstruction is no less important than in peacetime.

A number of recommendations of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe are dedicated to the balanced participation of women and men in decision-making processes. Some of them, for example, Recommendation CM/Rec(2003)3 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making, are dedicated to general aspects of gender equality and ensuring parity representation of both sexes in public and political life. According to Recommendation CM/Rec(2003)3, balanced participation of women and men means that the representation of women or men in any decision-making body taking part in political or public life should be at least 40%. The recommendations emphasise the importance of taking into account the ratio of women and men when appointing representatives to international mediation and negotiation committees, especially in the case of peace negotiations or conflict resolution.

Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)17 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on gender equality standards and mechanisms also deals with parity representation of both sexes in public and political life, and conflict resolution. This document once again emphasises the need to ensure a minimum 40% threshold for representation of each sex in political and public life. At the same time, the existence of parity democracy is seen as a prerequisite and guarantee for further inclusion of the needs of both men and women in public policy.

Women's participation in conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction is objectively conditioned by two factors. On the one hand, women are much more likely to be internally displaced or become refugees; they are also particularly vulnerable during armed conflicts and occupation. On the other hand, women play a key role in rebuilding society and preventing further armed conflicts. Therefore, Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)17 notes the importance of ensuring a 40% threshold for balanced representation in conflict prevention, management and resolution, as well as for taking into account the specific needs of women in post-conflict reconstruction.

States may implement this policy through a number of measures, for example:

- activities to include women in structures and mechanisms aimed at reconstructing society in post-conflict situations, such as peace negotiation committees and other decision-making bodies, along with the regular evaluation of women's participation in these bodies;
- regular assessment and dissemination of information on cases of violation of women's rights during conflicts in order to reduce the number of such cases; active promotion of non-violent forms of conflict resolution;
- introduction of mechanisms for adequate consideration of the special needs and contribution of women and men in post-conflict society restructuring projects, etc.

In the context of this study, special attention should be paid to Recommendation CM/REC(2010)10 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the role of women and men in conflict prevention and resolution and in peace building.

Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)10 addresses the issue of balanced participation of women and men in decision making through the prism of conflict and peacebuilding. Generally speaking, the range of issues covered by the Recommendation is broader and concerns not only civil rights and freedoms of women and men but also social and economic rights, protection from violence and security aspects. The document emphasises that women and children constitute a significant proportion of civilian victims of conflicts, while women, compared to men, have less access to resources, power and decision making. Such access is limited both during and after conflict, although women's experiences of war and post-conflict reconstruction differ significantly from those of men. Women are often excluded from negotiations and their role in reconstruction is marginalised. The Recommendation focuses on key areas such as respect for human rights, non-violent conflict resolution, combating violence against women, balanced participation of women and men in decision making, and women's empowerment.

Awareness of the inextricable link between peacebuilding and conflict prevention, on the one hand, and balanced participation of both genders in public and political life, on the other hand, is a prerequisite for peace, security and economic development. At the same time, the effectiveness of peacebuilding processes is significantly increased if women are involved, especially when representing different social groups with different skills, competencies and experience.

During armed conflicts, women are subject to various forms of violence which often have a specific gender-based nature and may affect their public and political participation. Recommendation Rec(2002)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the protection of women against violence states that violence against women in armed conflicts, inter alia includes violations of women's human rights, particularly taking them hostage, forced displacement, systematic rape, sexual slavery, forced pregnancy and trafficking for sexual and economic exploitation. In this regard, member States should take additional measures to prevent violence in conflict and post-conflict situations. In particular, it is necessary to guarantee additional security measures for victims and witnesses while ensuring accountability for perpetrators of any kind of violence against women and children in accordance with international humanitarian law.

Resources are needed to strengthen women's participation in this area. First, it is necessary to support and fund CSOs that provide counselling and assistance to victims of violence during conflict and post-conflict situations. Second, such funding is also needed for programmes that apply a gender-sensitive approach while providing assistance to victims and focus on post-conflict recovery and repatriation.

In its work, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (the Assembly) has also focused on gender equality and resolution of armed conflicts. The Assembly's Resolution 1385 (2004) on conflict prevention and resolution: the role of women emphasises that the empowerment of women in conflict situations helps to prevent violence against women and crimes prohibited under the Geneva Conventions and protocols thereto, in particular rape, forced pregnancy and sexual slavery.

The existing connection between the level of support for women's rights and international peacekeeping is noted. International peace is not possible without a full understanding of the impact of armed conflicts on women and guaranteeing their safety.

Women's alternative approaches to conflict prevention are more focused on the grassroots and community level. Therefore, an important step to increase the role of women should be ensuring their representation in local, national and international bodies for conflict resolution. At the same time, there is a need for increased participation of women in conflict prevention, peacekeeping operations and post-conflict peacebuilding. In particular, women are often marginalised or excluded from negotiations and diplomatic initiatives aimed at ending armed conflicts, as was the case during peace negotiations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo and the South Caucasus.

To prevent conflicts it is important to empower local women and women's groups in areas where such conflicts are brewing and to support their policies aimed at avoiding armed conflicts.

In view of the status of Ukraine as a candidate for EU membership, it is worth noting the EU approaches to the regulation of these issues. In its Resolution 2000/2025(INI) on participation of women in peaceful conflict resolution, the European Parliament focuses on how conflicts affect women's lives. First of all, armed conflicts lead to a significant deterioration of socio-economic well-being, increased poverty and human trafficking. At the same time, the implementation of women's peace initiatives often faces significant risks (as was the case in Lebanon, Russia and Sudan). Specifically, women are marginalised or excluded from negotiations and other diplomatic processes aimed at ending armed conflicts (as was the case in Burundi, Kosovo and Tajikistan). In general, women's interests, priorities and rights are often ignored in formal negotiations.

Greater participation of women in decision making, conflict prevention and resolution, including increasing the number of women in the civilian, military and law enforcement components of peacekeeping operations, leads to better ties with local communities, which is important for creating

sustainable peace. Sustainable peace largely depends on the involvement of communities and civil society in the peace process – a process that can only be legitimate if women participate in it on an equal footing.

The European Parliament stresses the need to apply a gender equality analysis in the planning and implementation of conflict resolution policies. Attention should be paid to the trends of increasing social, economic and political marginalisation of women in the wake of conflicts, as well as to the opportunities for improving the situation of women as a result of the changing situation.

In the context of women's participation in decision making, the European Parliament recommends that member states, in particular:

Taking into account the European and Euro-Atlantic aspirations of Ukraine enshrined in the Constitution of Ukraine, it is important to note that Article 420 of the Association Agreement

- attract more women to the diplomatic service, in particular to senior positions; train women in the diplomatic corps in negotiation, facilitation and mediation skills;
- increase the percentage of women in delegations to national, regional and international meetings on peace and security, as well as in official peace negotiations;
- require international diplomatic peacekeeping teams to systematically consult women's civil society peacebuilding groups and organisations, making sure that their concerns and priorities are reflected in the official peace process;
- support the establishment and strengthening of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), including women's organisations, which are actively involved in conflict prevention and post-conflict peace and reconstruction work;
- ensure refugee women's right to self-determination through appropriate economic opportunities and equal representation in refugee committees and other decision-making bodies in refugee camps;
- ensure that both women and men benefit from reconstruction initiatives;
- provide financial resources for the political and economic empowerment of women in the post-conflict period.

between Ukraine, on the one hand, and the EU, the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) and their member states, on the other hand, establishes that co-operation between Ukraine and the EU is aimed, *inter alia* at ensuring gender equality and equal opportunities for men and women in employment, education and training; economic and social activities, as well as in the decision-making process; overcoming discrimination in all its forms and manifestations; empowering social partners and promoting social dialogue. The enshrined values are more relevant than ever in the context of Ukraine's post-conflict recovery.

To sum up, international legal instruments and standards regulate equal participation of women and men in decision making both in peacetime and during conflicts and post-conflict recovery. The international community recognises the specific and long-term impact of armed conflicts on all aspects of life, including on the participation of women and men in public and political life. At the same time, these standards require further implementation and resource provision at the national level.

2.2. National legislation and analysis of the current situation regarding the participation of women and men in public and political processes

A. Political participation of women and men in Ukraine: general context

Due to public democratisation processes and the government's policy of equal rights and opportunities, the period of Ukraine's independence has featured a trend towards increased participation of women in political life. The ratio between women and men in government, local authorities and the parliament has been dynamically changing since 1991. This can be seen clearly in the composition changes of the Verkhovna Rada (the unicameral parliament).

The share of women Members of Parliament (MPs) in the Ukrainian Parliament during the 1st convocation was only 2.5% (12 women); 2nd convocation – 4.1% (18 women); 3rd convocation – 8% (38 women); 4th convocation – 5.5% (28 women); 5th convocation – 8.7% (42 women); 6th convocation – 7.8% (42 women); 7th convocation – 9.6% (46 women); 8th convocation – 12% (56 women); and finally there are 92 women (20.9%) in the present 9th convocation.⁴

The changes in the level of representation of women and men in the Cabinet of Ministers are also quite fascinating in this respect. For example, from April 1991 to December 2007, the number of women in the government did not exceed 8.3%. There was not a single woman minister in any of the five governments operating during this period. From December 2007 to March 2020, the level of women's representation ranged from 2.7% to 31.6% at different times.⁵

4. Available at www.slovoidilo.ua/2021/08/23/infografika/polityka/30-rokiv-nezalezhnosti-yak-zminyuvavsya-hendernyj-sklad-verhovnoyi-rady, accessed 1 October 2023.

5. Available at www.slovoidilo.ua/2020/03/06/infografika/polityka/yak-zminyuvavsya-hendernyj-sklad-kabminu-chas-nezalezhnosti-ukrayiny, accessed 1 October 2023.

Significant changes in terms of balanced representation of both sexes at the level of parliament and in the local authorities are the result of the implementation of the relevant public policy and co-operation between the government and civil society. The introduction of so-called gender quotas at the legislative level has become an important development along with awareness-raising campaigns among voters, candidates for elected office and political parties.

Gender quotas are a temporary positive measure aimed at providing real opportunities for women and men to participate in the country's political life. As early as 2005, the Law of Ukraine on ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men referred to the need to ensure equal rights and opportunities in the electoral process.

Gender quotas in the electoral process were enshrined in the Law of Ukraine on political parties in Ukraine as late as 2013. The law⁶ required that the statute of a political party must include information on the size of quotas, thus determining the minimum level of representation of women and men on the party electoral list in the nationwide constituency, and it had to be at least 30% of the total number of candidates on the list. At the same time, the legislators failed to establish any sanctions for violation of this rule. As a result, at the 2014 parliamentary elections, political parties complied with this provision at their own discretion. Either women candidates were typically placed at the bottom of electoral lists or nominating parties generally did not comply with the 30% threshold.

In 2015, the Law of Ukraine on local elections enshrined the requirement⁷ for the representation of persons of the same sex on the electoral lists of candidates for local councils in multi-mandate constituencies at the level of not less than 30% of the total number of candidates on the list. The experience of holding local elections in 2015, as for the parliamentary elections in 2014, demonstrated that political parties were not held accountable for non-compliance with the established gender quota.

Although these rules did not establish any liability for non-compliance, the Law of Ukraine on political parties provided a mechanism of financial incentives for those parties able to ensure representation of persons of the same sex in parliament at a level not exceeding two thirds of the total number of MPs elected from the same political party. As a result, one of the political parties that participated in the 2014 parliamentary elections received additional funding for compliance with the gender quota.

The situation changed in 2019, when the new Electoral Code of Ukraine went beyond mere introduction of the requirement for balanced representation of women and men on the electoral lists of political parties, the nominating entities. It established the rule for alternation between women and men among every five listed candidates (for elections in communities with more than 10 000 voters) and, as importantly, established responsibility for non-compliance with the gender quota. Such responsibility entails refusal to register candidates from a political party that violates the relevant nomination procedure.

Women's political participation in Ukraine is also characterised by the fact that at lower administrative levels, such as town or village councils, women are much more represented than men, while at higher levels, such as oblast (region) councils, large cities, the central government or parliament, women

6. Paragraph 10, part 1 of Article 88, the Law of Ukraine on political parties in Ukraine.

7. Paragraph 2, part 1, Article 4 of the Law of Ukraine on local elections.

8. Part 9 of Article 219, Part 7 of Article 220 of the Electoral Code of Ukraine.

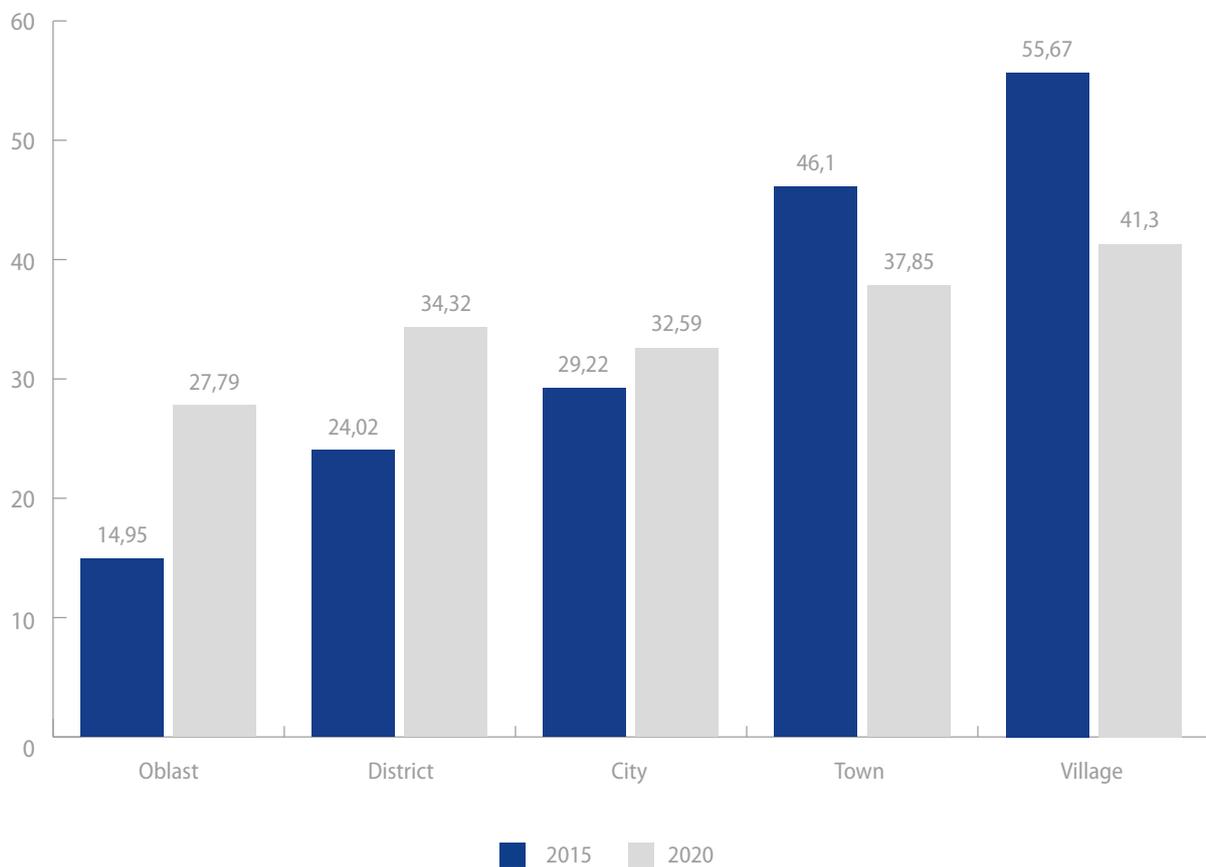
9. For more details about the relevant legislation and case law, see <https://rm.coe.int/review-of-judicial-practice/1680a39e80>, accessed 1 October 2023.

are significantly less represented than men. This results in the following correlation: the greater the access to resources at a particular administrative level, the lower the level of women's representation. Gradually, this trend began to change with the introduction of a mandatory gender quota.

This can be measured by looking at the results of the local elections in 2015 and 2020. Based on statistical data, it can be noted that during this period the number of women members of oblast, district and city councils slightly increased, while at the level of town and village councils the number of men members increased respectively.

Figure 1

Percentage of women elected in local councils in the 2015 and 2020 local elections¹⁰



10. According to the Central Election Commission of Ukraine. Available at www.cvk.gov.ua/actualna-informaciya/187243.html, accessed 1 October 2023.

Therefore, as we can see from the results of the 2020 local elections, the introduction of gender quotas and the responsibility for non-compliance allowed to achieve a more balanced representation of women and men in local self-government authorities at various levels.

Unfortunately, today there are no statistical data available on the participation of women and men belonging to vulnerable groups (for example people with disabilities, internally displaced persons (IDPs), representatives of the Roma community, etc.), although the issue of political participation of citizens belonging to disadvantaged groups is actively voiced by the civil society – Ukraine has political schools for Roma, people with disabilities, disadvantaged women and girls, etc.¹¹

At the same time, some MPs or members of local councils are known to have emphasised their affiliation with these groups during their election campaigns and in their further activities. Most often, it means affiliation of a politician to a certain national minority or indigenous people (for example, Crimean Tatars).

B. Public and political participation of women and men in Ukraine from February 2014 to February 2022 – the challenges of war

In the context of this study, it is important to examine how the war has affected public and political participation of women and men in Ukraine. First, the period from February 2014 to February 2022 will be considered.

Russia's war against Ukraine, which began on 20 February 2014,¹² on the one hand intensified public debate on the social roles of women and men, and on the other hand gave rise to new categories of the population who found themselves in dire straits, in particular IDPs, veterans and their families, persons who became disabled as a result of the war, lost their breadwinners, etc.

The "invisible battalion" study¹³ revealed problems related to women's participation in war, their participation in decision making and the future return to a peaceful life. Since 2014, there has been an increase in the number of women in the Armed Forces of Ukraine – from 16 500 women in 2014 to 32 500 in 2021.¹⁴ The increase in the number of women in the army has organically led to practical and legislative changes: on the one hand, regulatory restrictions on women's service on certain positions have been abolished, and on the other hand, public perception of women has begun to change – not only as "guardians of the hearth" but also as defenders and professionals who have specific needs, views and can contribute to policy making.

The study also paid attention to an earlier period – the Revolution of Dignity (2013-2014, also known as the Maidan Revolution or the Ukrainian Revolution). Although women were actively involved in the revolutionary events (for example, as members of "the Women's Hundred of Local Defence", "the Sister Hundred", "the Olha Kobylyanska Women's Hundred"), at that time they did not have wide access to decision making and their role was predetermined by the "patriarchal discourse". At the same time, Maidan women activists performed not only caretaking functions but also took part in protecting human rights, logistical, medical and media operations.

11. Academy of Girls' Leadership "GrowUP", Roma School of Public and Political Activity, School of Political Participation for Girls and Women with Disabilities "Liderka", and others.

12. Available at <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/337-19#Text>, accessed 1 October 2023.

13. Available at <https://invisiblebattalion.org/invisbat>, accessed 1 October 2023.

14. Available at <https://armyinform.com.ua/2021/12/04/skilky-zhinok-vijskovosluzhbovcziv-sluzhat-u-zbrojnyh-sylah-ukrayiny-novi-dani-kadrovgogo-czentru/>, accessed 1 October 2023.

Subsequently, a significant number of Maidan activists continued their public and political work in elected offices and in the civil society sector, as well as by serving in the armed forces and the public service. Some women veterans of the Russian-Ukrainian war participated in elections and became members of local councils at different levels and MPs. Men veterans converted their previous experience into political careers during 2014-2021, even to a greater extent than women, and such cases are quite common. At that time, women veterans rarely participated in politics.

There are little systematised data available on the participation of IDPs in public and political life, although in the period from February 2014 to February 2022, the government developed a legal framework¹⁵ which regulates the legal status of IDPs, as well as practical mechanisms for supporting their rights.

According to the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, as of 6 June 2016, some 1 785 740 IDPs were registered in Ukraine, of whom almost 1 100 000 women and 700 000 men.¹⁶

According to 2018 surveys,¹⁷ women IDPs were economically more vulnerable than men, as they were often financially dependent on their spouses or other family members; they had to support children more often than men; they were less present in the labour market and less likely to start their own businesses; they felt the shortage of funds significantly more than men IDPs and had to save more. The study revealed gender differences between women and men IDPs seeking medical care – the trend showed that women sought preventive care more often than men while men more frequently needed hospitalisation and rehabilitation.

At the same time, women IDPs, compared to men IDPs, were more active in protecting their rights and the rights of their family members – women more often personally addressed national and local authorities, human rights and humanitarian organisations. This may also indicate the additional burden that women IDPs bear as caregivers.

A number of CSOs advocating for the rights of IDPs have emerged since the beginning of the war in 2014. Such organisations have become an effective platform for the participation of IDPs in decision making at the national and regional levels (for example Hrupa Vplyvu (Group of Influence), Donbas SOS, etc.). IDPs were also actively involved in the work of co-ordination councils on IDPs. Such councils were established as advisory bodies, namely in Kharkiv city council, Kramatorsk city council, Luhansk oblast state administration and Zaporizhzhia city council.

As practice shows, the issues of the rights protection of IDPs are often considered as social ones, and therefore, they are stereotypically referred to as “women’s” issues in local self-government bodies and in parliament. This means that women MPs and council members mainly deal with this issue.

It is also important to pay attention to the issue of exercising voting rights by IDPs at that time. During the parliamentary elections in October 2014, IDPs (about 500 000 as of October 2014) could not exercise their right to elect a member of the Verkhovna Rada in a single-mandate district at their new place of residence if they had not officially changed their place of registration in the territory controlled by the Ukrainian government. In October 2015, some 1 345 100 IDPs were unable to participate in the local elections and vote for local council members, despite the relevant provisions of the Constitution

15. The Law of Ukraine on amendments to certain laws of Ukraine on strengthening the guarantee of the rights and freedoms of IDPs became effective on 13 January 2016.

16. Available at <http://global-national.in.ua/archive/13-2016/35.pdf>, accessed 1 October 2023.

17. Available at www.vplyv.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Zwit_pro_gendernyi_analiz_2018.pdf, accessed 1 October 2023.

of Ukraine guaranteeing universal and equal suffrage, and international standards¹⁸ Thus, for about six years, until the adoption of the Electoral Code of Ukraine in 2019, IDPs were limited in exercising their electoral rights.

The specific challenges of wartime have created the need to build an appropriate regulatory framework. Ukraine became the first country to develop the first National Action Plan 2020 for the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security back in 2016 during the war.¹⁹ In October 2020, the Second National Action Plan 2025 was approved.²⁰ As stated therein, the purpose of the National Plan is to create conditions for ensuring equal participation of women and men in overcoming conflicts, establishing peace, recovery processes, countering security challenges, systemic counteraction to gender-based violence and conflict-related violence.

The target audience of the National Plan includes a number of groups of people whose current status has resulted from the ongoing war, namely:

- IDPs;
- victims of conflict-related violence, including torture while in custody of illegal armed groups;
- persons who may be exposed to human trafficking, sexual violence, rape and torture;
- persons with disabilities, elderly people, low-mobility groups living in the areas close to the combat zone;
- persons who were in captivity and families of prisoners of war;
- residents of the temporarily occupied territories;
- families of combatants, servicemen and servicewomen, prisoners of war, missing persons and deceased servicemen;
- veterans and volunteers;
- professionals involved in the provision of assistance and rehabilitation, and persons making decisions dealing with conflict resolution and security issues;
- members of the security and defence sector who have suffered from gender-based violence, including psychological and sexual harassment;
- men and boys who are targeted by educational and other programmes.

18. Available at <https://helsinki.org.ua/prava-vnutrishno-peremischenyh-osib/>, accessed 1 October 2023.

19. Available at <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/113-2016-%D1%80#Text>, accessed 1 October 2023.

20. Available at <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1544-2020-%D1%80#Text>, accessed 1 October 2023.

In addition, the strategy on the prevention and countering of conflict-related sexual violence was developed in Ukraine in 2018. The strategy is closely linked to the above-mentioned national plans and includes four main components – understanding conflict-related sexual violence and information collection, prevention, protection and access to justice.

C. Political participation of women and men in Ukraine from February 2022 to present – full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation

With the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, the war gained impressive momentum and undoubtedly affected the country's public and political life. As of December 2022, according to the UN,²¹ more than 5.59 million people in Ukraine have been internally displaced, 3.7 million people require services to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, and 7.8 million people – mostly women and children – have fled Ukraine as refugees.

As of October 2022, the greatest needs of IDPs include financial needs (66%) and access to employment (30%).²² Some 75% of respondents indicated that their income declined since the beginning of the full-scale invasion. Among the biggest issues faced by IDPs are:

- search for affordable housing;
- employment and decent wages;
- language and cultural adaptation;
- inaccessibility of psychological support;
- shortage of social infrastructure.

The war has resulted in declining household incomes, rising unemployment, widespread underemployment, and deteriorating labour conditions. According to the forecast of the National Bank of Ukraine (as of October 2022),²³ nominal wages in Ukraine in 2022 will fall by 12.3% and real wages (adjusted for inflation) by 26.9%. The number of jobs in the labour market has decreased by more than half, with eight people unemployed per one available vacancy. The greatest losses were incurred by the service sector, where traditionally many women had been employed.

According to the Brief Gender Analysis of the situation in Ukraine,²⁴ as of March 2022, it was found that the full-scale invasion by the Russian Federation exacerbated the problem of gender-based violence, in particular, conflict-related sexual violence and human trafficking. Due to growing unemployment, women will be forced to move to informal sectors of the economy and will face issues with access to food, healthcare, education, government services, financial and humanitarian assistance, evacuation, etc. Persons with disabilities, members of the Roma community, elderly people and those who may be subject to multiple discrimination have even less access to resources.

The situation is also significantly affected by the fact that Ukraine has restrictions on travel abroad for men aged 18 to 60. This restriction affects families in general, when, for example, women with children, women with disabilities or representatives of national minorities cannot travel abroad on

21. Available at <https://reports.unocha.org/ru/country/ukraine/>, accessed 3 October 2023.

22. Available at https://gradus.app/documents/309/Gradus_Research_Internal_migrants_UA.pdf, accessed 3 October 2023.

23. Available at https://bank.gov.ua/admin_uploads/article/IR_2022-Q4.pdf?v=4, accessed 3 October 2023.

24. Available at https://ukraine.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/UNWomen_BRIEF_A4_2022_UKR-1.pdf, accessed 3 October 2023.

their own or evacuate, or do not want to leave men family members behind, which directly affects their safety and access to services. On the other hand, families where women have decided to go abroad experience separation and anxiety about the future of their family.

The study highlights active participation of women both in the military (the representation of women in the army has increased from 31 000 to over 38 000; the total number, including women working in civilian positions, is 50 000)²⁵ and in the public and political sectors. Women civil society activists, journalists and human rights defenders face greater risks to their personal security, including a greater threat of kidnapping and harassment. At the same time, women's influence on decision making, including negotiations, appears to be limited.

Simultaneously, according to public opinion polls²⁶ (as of August 2022), more than 70% of Ukrainians want to see a better balance of men and women in politics. This number has increased compared to December 2021, when the figure was 66%.

After the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the volume of charitable donations has grown significantly. Some 86% of Ukrainians have become donors of charities over the past year.²⁷ Their motivations to donate include: a sense of patriotism, the desire to contribute to solving important issues and the feeling of duty towards society. Participation in charitable and volunteer activities is gender sensitive. In-kind charitable donations were somewhat more often provided by women (70% women and 66% men), while both sexes donated money at approximately the same extent. Compared to women, men are more likely to personally join volunteer efforts (70% men and 63% women); participate in procurement and delivery of military aid (30% men and 21% women) and cyber volunteering (12% men and 8% women). Women are more likely to join information volunteering efforts (38% women and 23% men) and organise charity fundraisers (15% women and 10% men).

In general, gender inequality has increased significantly with the escalation of the war, when many women found themselves without access to basic resources, housing, income and communication means.

The media play an important role in shaping public opinion and providing equal access of women and men to decision-making processes. According to the Gender media monitoring from the Institute of Mass Information (as of May 2022), the presence of women in Ukrainian media has significantly decreased due to the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine and the war. On average, online media quoted women experts in only 16% of their publications, while men experts accounted for 84%. This number fell by 7% compared to the previous monitoring results of the Institute of Mass Information in the third quarter of 2021. Women featured as the main characters by 7% less than the year before and were generally present in only 22% of stories, while men featured in 78% of online media materials. Women experts appear much less in the comments on political topics. Most often during the war, women comment on economy and business (32.4% of all references to women as experts), as well as international affairs (20.3%). Of all the materials analysed where women appeared as the leading characters, 20.3% dealt with political topics; a similar share of mentions of women as victims featured in war-related materials and 9.4% of all mentions of women dealt with international affairs.

25. Available at <https://suspilne.media/295172-zinki-v-zsu-na-peredovij-5-tisac-vijskovosluzbovic/>, accessed 3 October 2023.

26. Available at www.kiis.com.ua/?lang=ukr&cat=reports&id=1135&page=1, accessed 3 October 2023.

27. Available at <https://zagoriy.foundation/publications/blagodijnist-u-chasi-vijni-kilkisne-doslidzhennya/>, accessed 3 October 2023.

In the context of the country's public and political life, it is worth noting that nationwide martial law was introduced on 24 February 2022. This was done to protect the territorial integrity of Ukraine and it will be in effect at least until February 2023.²⁸ Martial law allows to temporarily restrict constitutional human and civil rights as well as freedoms provided for in Articles 30-34, 38, 39, 41-44, 53 of the Constitution of Ukraine. This means that civil and political rights, among others, are subject to temporary legitimate restrictions.

The full-scale invasion also led to the revision of the existing regulatory framework and the adoption of new instruments for prevention of gender-based violence, violence against women and war-related sexual violence.

In June 2022, Ukraine made an important step towards advancing human rights and implementation of the Council of Europe standards, and in this way towards the European integration, by ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.

To provide assistance to victims of sexual violence related to the armed aggression, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and the UN signed a memorandum of co-operation between the government of Ukraine and the UN on preventing and combating sexual violence in war. In September 2022, the government prepared the implementation plan for the co-operation framework between the government of Ukraine and the UN on preventing and combating conflict-related sexual violence.²⁹

In October 2022, to follow up on this important step, the National Agency of Ukraine on Public Service approved a standard general short-term training programme for public servants and local government officials on the identification of and response to conflict-related sexual violence and assistance to victims.³⁰ These policy documents also focus on overcoming the long-term consequences of violence caused by the armed aggression of the Russian Federation. After all, in the future the post-war society will be at risk of facing a growing level of gender-based violence, unresolved issues of transitional justice and restoration of justice for war victims, which may affect the level of public and political participation of women and men.

At present, in the context of direct participation of women and men in decision making, attention should be paid to the quantitative indicators of representation of both sexes at the highest levels of national authorities.

As of December 2022, there were five women ministers out of 23 members of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine – two of them held the position of Deputy Prime Minister and one was First Deputy Prime Minister. In total, women make up 21.7% of today's government.

The National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine, which has 22 members, includes three women ministers *ex officio*: First Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine – Minister of Economy of Ukraine, Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine, and Minister of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine. Overall, the share of women in the council is 13.6%.

28. Decree of the President of Ukraine on introduction of martial law in Ukraine as of 24 February 2022 (with further amendments). Available at <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/64/2022#Text>, accessed 3 October 2023.

29. Available at www.kmu.gov.ua/news/ukraina-prezentuvala-plan-dii-z-protydii-seksualnomu-nasylstvu-ta-dopomohy-postrazhdalym-na-poliakh-henasamblei-oon, accessed 3 October 2023.

30. Available at <https://nads.gov.ua/storage/app/uploads/public/634/ee0/cc1/634ee0cc1e6f0996758396.pdf>, accessed 3 October 2023

At the beginning of the 9th convocation, the Verkhovna Rada included 87 women (20.9%). In December 2022, the number of women in parliament decreased to 79, due to transfers to other positions, such as the prosecutor general, ministers, judges of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine, head of oblast state administration, or voluntary resignation. There is one woman MP at the top level of the Verkhovna Rada who holds the position of deputy speaker of the Verkhovna Rada.

After the beginning of the full-scale invasion, some MPs, both men and women, began volunteering, returned to volunteering or joined the armed forces and other military formations.

During the first months of the invasion, due to restrictions on travel abroad for men, parliamentary delegations consisted exclusively of women MPs participating in the sessions of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and bilateral meetings abroad. Over time, rules were developed for men MPs to go on business trips abroad and the composition of the delegations became more gender balanced.

After the start of the full-scale invasion, First Lady Olena Zelenska began to play a special role in communication with Ukraine's international partners. The First Lady has represented Ukraine abroad since Volodymyr Zelensky, President of Ukraine, had been communicating with international partners exclusively on the territory of Ukraine or online since 24 February 2022 until December 2022. This seems to have a positive impact on shaping the perception of the role of women, as does the fact that the President of Ukraine often comments on the contribution of women to war efforts and uses gender-sensitive language.

It is important to note the extent to which women are represented in the agencies responsible for post-war reconstruction of the country and to which extent gender equality expertise is included in respective structures. For instance, in April 2022, the National Council for the Recovery of Ukraine from the Consequences of War was established as an advisory body under the President of Ukraine. The objective of this council is to develop an action plan for the post-war recovery and development of Ukraine, identify and develop proposals for priority reforms, and prepare strategic initiatives and draft regulations, which need to be adopted and implemented for effective work and recovery during the war and post-war periods. In December 2022, this council included eight women members *ex officio*: the Deputy Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine, four members of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and three MPs – Chairs of the Verkhovna Rada committees.

As of December 2022, there has been only one woman from among all the heads of oblast state administrations (who currently also serve as head of oblast military administrations).³¹ In addition, there are seven women among the heads of oblast councils.³²

In the context of this study, particular attention should be paid to local self-government bodies, namely the roles played by local council members and heads of communities during the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Community leaders and local councillors were the first to face the armed aggression and its consequences. In some regions (for example Kyiv, Chernihiv and Sumy), they directly participated in defending their communities with arms and fought in combat. Some women and men members of local councils joined the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

31. Head of Ivano-Frankivsk oblast state administration (also the head of the oblast military administration).

32. These are the heads of Zaporizhzhia, Kyiv, Lviv, Mykolaiv, Kharkiv, Khmelnytskyi and Chernihiv oblast councils.

Local authorities were actively involved in the organisation of territorial defence in the communities. They provided information, distributed humanitarian aid, evacuated residents, dealt with the consequences of shelling, accommodated victims in temporary housing, and took care of the needs of IDPs.

Local government officers in the communities that were or are under temporary occupation have been subjected to persecution and various forms of violence by the troops of the Russian Federation for refusing to co-operate with the occupiers. There are known cases of abductions and killings of the heads of communities and local government servants, local leaders, as well as members of their families.

On 7 March 2022, the Russian military killed Yuriy Prylypko, mayor of the Hostomel community in Kyiv oblast.³³ He was killed while distributing food to community residents.

The killing of Olha Sukhenko, head of the Motyzhyn community, as well as her husband and son, became known and documented after the liberation of the temporarily occupied districts of Kyiv oblast in early April 2022.³⁴ On 23 March 2022, Olga Sukhenko's family was abducted by the Russian military, held captive for 10 days, tortured and eventually killed.

Such war crimes as the killing of local communities' officials during the performance of their official duties may have a negative impact on the perception of political activity as dangerous, threatening to family members, and might generally lead to the reluctance of active citizens to run for office in the future.

As of April 2022, the occupation forces abducted and detained at least 13 heads of communities from seven oblasts of Ukraine (Kyiv, Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson and Mykolaiv).³⁵ There are known cases of abduction of members of local councils. At the end of August 2022, it was reported that a total of 50 local self-government officials had been abducted and eight of them were still in captivity at that time.³⁶ After the de-occupation of parts of Kherson oblast and the city of Kherson in November 2022, human rights activists documented the abduction of the heads of territorial communities and staff of local councils by the occupation forces and their deportation to the temporarily occupied territory.³⁷ These data are not final as some communities still remain under temporary occupation, so opportunities for documenting such crimes are quite limited.

Violence against civilians and local community leaders by Russian military personnel and mercenaries is undoubtedly a war crime. At the same time, it is noted that the use of sexual violence and torture has become a tactic of the Russian Federation's war against Ukraine precisely to intimidate people and suppress any resistance in the temporarily occupied territories.

There is a tendency among political parties to refocus the activity of party-based women's groups or women's movements from political needs to humanitarian needs of the population. Regarding the work of women as civil society activists and volunteers, the experts noted their key role in meeting

33. Available at www.unian.ua/war/rozdavav-hlib-golodnim-i-liki-hvorim-okupanti-vbili-golovu-gostomelskoji-gromadi-novini-vtorgnennya-rosiji-v-ukrajinu-11732209.html, accessed 3 October 2023.

34. Available at www.pravda.com.ua/news/2022/04/2/7336699/, accessed 3 October 2023.

35. Available at <https://uacrisis.org/uk/13-goliv-gromad>, accessed 3 October 2023.

36. Available at <http://ksza.ks.ua/news/society/99081-u-rosyskomu-polon-perebuwayut-8-golv-ukrayinskih-gromad.html>, accessed 3 October 2023.

37. Available at www.rbc.ua/rus/news/rosiyani-vikrali-ta-vivezli-dekilkoh-goliv-1669146862.html, accessed 3 October 2023.

the humanitarian needs of people and protecting human rights.³⁸ This includes evacuation of the population, organisation of food supply and satisfying basic household needs, access to health services, organisation of shelters, psychological and legal assistance. At the same time, women volunteers actively contribute to supporting the armed forces and meeting the needs of the military and veterans.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, on the one hand, has exacerbated the existing social inequalities and led to the deterioration of the social and economic status of many groups of the population, especially those vulnerable to multiple discrimination, and caused internal displacement of people within Ukraine and migration abroad in search of safety. On the other hand, since 2014, the perception of the role of women and men in state building and public life has changed at the institutional level in Ukraine. Women, although still lacking equal access to decision making, are increasingly active in the political, economic and military areas. Further implementation of the policy of equal rights and opportunities should be primarily aimed at eliminating the imbalance of women's and men's representation in decision-making processes and post-war reconstruction of Ukraine at all levels of government. It is inextricably linked to overcoming the consequences of violence that Ukrainian citizens, both women and men, boys and girls, suffered during the full-scale invasion by the Russian Federation.

38. Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/03/ukraine-protection-and-participation-women-essential-say-un-human-rights>, accessed 3 October 2023.

3. THE ROLE OF WOMEN AND MEN IN RESTORING PUBLIC AND POLITICAL LIFE IN POST-CONFLICT SOCIETIES – INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

The first half of the 20th century was marked by the campaign for human rights in a broad sense. Civil, political, social and economic rights emerged as a universal value belonging to every person from birth, regardless of gender, origin, property status, skin colour, health and other features. The drivers of this campaign were numerous movements for the rights of certain categories of people, which at that time of development of public and political life in Europe and the United States of America were limited in terms of recognition and exercise of their rights (for example, suffragism or the movement against racial segregation and discrimination).

The First and Second World Wars also had a significant impact on the development of the human rights system and modern international law, and international humanitarian law in particular. A number of key international acts in this area were developed as a response to the challenges of wartime and post-war crisis – the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights, etc.³⁹

The Second World War, with its all-encompassing nature, affected almost the entire population of Europe and caused dramatic changes in the lives of millions of women and men. According to researchers, wars, on the one hand, polarise gender roles of men and women, while the support of these roles by the public remains fundamentally stable despite the global economic and social changes caused by the war. However, on the other hand, wars mobilise human resources. They blur and weaken the clear boundaries of masculinity and femininity. During the war, women often fulfil “stereotypical” men’s roles (breadwinner, head of the family, sometimes they join the military action), while men, due to injuries or other traumas, find themselves in a weaker position. After the end of the war, there is a tendency to return to the pre-war lifestyle and restore “stereotypical” gender roles. For example, during the First and Second World Wars, women moved up the social ladder, mastering the

39. For more information about these and other international acts, see the section titled “International legal instruments on participation of women and men in decision-making processes and their application during the war and post-war period”.

formerly typical men's specialties, and at the same time men "moved up" by gaining the even higher social status of warriors.⁴⁰

However, the massive involvement of women in the workforce during and after the Second World War contributed to redefining the role of women in industrialised societies. In the medium and long term, these structural changes had an impact on women's economic empowerment and access to resources.

Further armed conflicts in the 20th century, in particular the war in the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia that took place between 1991 and 2001, as well as the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, gave rise to a new wave of human rights activism that contributed significantly to international instruments and legal structures, in particular by the establishment of UN international tribunals and the International Criminal Court, as well as the recognition of war-related sexual violence and rape as a war crime in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.⁴¹

War affects men and women differently and reinforces gender inequality. Men and women play different roles during armed conflicts and have different experiences of war. Men make up the majority of combatants and are more likely to die on the frontline. Women join the armed forces and other military formations in smaller numbers but die in greater numbers from indirect consequences of war, such as the collapse of social order, human rights violations, the spread of infectious diseases and economic devastation.⁴²

It is also worth considering the impact of armed conflicts on the economic and political situation in the countries at war.

With the majority of men directly involved in the armed conflict or military service and unable to return to their families, women are forced to lead their households in the new difficult economic realities with very limited support.

Women are disproportionately affected by the negative consequences of forced displacement caused by armed conflicts. Displaced women bear an unequal burden of caring for children and the elderly, and in some situations, women are forced to have sex in exchange for food and items that are required for survival for themselves and their children and, therefore, they are subjected to sexual violence.

There are also some specifics related to health, reproductive rights, gender-based violence and human trafficking. Countries affected by armed conflicts have consistently higher maternal and child mortality rates. Access to basic reproductive and maternal health services for poorer, less educated and rural families is significantly worse compared to other countries not at war. Documented high rates of sexual and gender-based violence are strongly linked to mental health disorders such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression.

The relationship between access to economic resources and the ability to participate in public decision making is important. According to some studies,⁴³ in post-conflict scenarios with high poverty levels (for example post-war Kosovo), about 30-40% of households were led by women. In such a situation, women heads of households, bearing the burden of poverty and solving related challenges daily at

40. Women from Central and Eastern Europe in the Second World War – gender specificity of experience in times of extreme violence. Available at <https://ua.boell.org/uk/2018/11/08/zhinki-centralnoyi-ta-shidnoyi-ievropi-u-drugiy-svitoviy-viyini>, accessed 3 October 2023.

41. Available at <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/RS-Eng.pdf>, accessed 3 October 2023.

42. Meagher, K., Attal, B. & Patel, P. Exploring the role of gender and women in the political economy of health in armed conflict: a narrative review. *Global Health* 17, 88 (2021).

43. Ibid.

the household level, have limited opportunities and time to engage in community governance or public and political life.

Perhaps due to this unique experience, women raise a wider range of issues in the course of political negotiations – they go beyond the scope of military actions and include social and humanitarian issues in the proposed agenda. Women involved in the negotiation process often advocate for other vulnerable groups and address development and human rights issues related to the root causes of conflicts. For example, in Northern Ireland, the Interfaith Women’s Coalition advocated for the inclusion of provisions on the reintegration of political prisoners, integrated education and mixed housing in the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement concluded on 10 April 1998 between the governments of the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom.⁴⁴

Today, women are seen not only as victims of conflict but also as agents of change. The “post-conflict moment” is increasingly seen as a moment of empowerment for women and therefore it is important to capture this “moment” in order to bring about positive change.⁴⁵ While the transition to peace and democracy provides unique opportunities for women to gain access to governance or increase their influence, this window of opportunity does not remain open for long.

Therefore, once the war is over, women’s participation in political and public life can contribute to a more lasting peace, reducing the likelihood of a return to conflict and taking a more inclusive approach to post-conflict reconstruction.

The experience of post-war public and political participation of women and men after the armed conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Georgia can also be useful for this study.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995), which ended with the conclusion of the Dayton Peace Agreement, influenced the development of social and political life in the country and the participation of women and men in decision making for decades to come.

The division of Bosnia and Herzegovina into two entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska, and the complex system of governance established by the peace agreement did not facilitate the involvement of youth, women and persons belonging to vulnerable groups in reforms and governance.⁴⁶ Inclusion was not a focus of the peace negotiations.

Regarding the trends among voters, the polls at the time showed that “Bosnians perceived official government politics during and after the war as chauvinistic, corrupt, nationalistic and, perhaps most critically, a man’s business.”⁴⁷ On the other hand, the humanitarian and NGO sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been a highly feminised space, with women activists positioning their work as

43. Там само.

44. Marie O'Reilly. Why Women? Inclusive Security and Peaceful Societies. October, 2015 (<https://www.inclusivesecurity.org/publication/why-women-inclusive-security-and-peaceful-societies/>).

45. Zarkov D. (2017). From women and war to gender and conflict?: Feminist trajectories. In The Oxford Handbook of Gender and Conflict (pp. 17-34) (<https://repub.eur.nl/pub/109336/>).

46. EU support for women’s political participation and leadership under the EU’s Gender Action Plan. A case study on Bosnia and Herzegovina (<https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/ba/undp-unwomen-baseline-study-on-barriers-to-political-participation-of-women-in-bih.pdf>).

47. Available at www.cambridge.org/core/books/war-women-and-power/F2A6FD1C3C6EE59ECA3F189862A32317, accessed 3 October 2023.

apolitical and moral in contrast to the corrupt, men-dominated space of official politics.⁴⁸ Therefore, gender stereotypes and prejudices about the roles of both sexes in public and private life also defined the political landscape. Gender-based violence during the war deeply affected all public and political processes in the country. Sexual violence, including rape against women and men as a war crime and a crime of genocide, was a characteristic feature of this conflict. At the same time, sexual violence against women occurred on a massive scale and was a means of warfare, including for intimidation of the civilian population.

In the post-war period, gender-based violence took on new forms and new patterns of victimisation emerged. The age of the victims of violence went down to the school age and the number of cases of violence involving small arms increased. The proliferation of these weapons was a direct consequence of the armed conflict, as many soldiers brought weapons and other explosive devices home after demobilisation. It is estimated that more than 50% of women over the age of 15 in the country have experienced some form of violence.⁴⁹

Separate attention should be paid to the experience of men combatants in a post-war society. First of all, after the conclusion of the Dayton Peace Agreement, about 300 000 combatants returned to civilian life within a few months. Former combatants formed NGOs (for example the Organisation of Combatants of Republika Srpska, the Unified Organisation of Veterans, etc.) that actively worked with political parties, the central and local governments. The Alliance of Demobilised Soldiers was established in 1998 with the support of one of the political parties. Former combatants were widely represented in various public associations ranging from trade unions to associations of IDPs.

At the same time, the ex-combatants faced significant socio-economic challenges, as their community was not homogeneous, including internally displaced men, men living in rural areas and other representatives of vulnerable groups. These challenges led to the formation of movements for social and economic rights of combatants in industrialised cities (for example, "Gentlemen, we are still alive!", "Workers not warriors").

On the other hand, due to the inability of the government to provide guaranteed benefits and compensation to men ex-combatants and family members of fallen soldiers, their community displayed mistrust to government agencies, increased violence and mass emigration.⁵⁰

During the armed conflict and in the post-war period, there were women's initiatives in the country aimed at solving humanitarian problems of the civilian population and the reconciliation process. Later, women activists countered marginalisation of public and political life of the country.

Since 1996, the movement for equal participation of women in political life intensified in the country. The "Nas je Vise" ("There are more of us") initiative which united 13 NGOs contributed to the application of the so-called gender quotas in the period until 1998 and the increase in the number of women in the parliament from 2% to 26% of the total number of MPs.⁵¹

48. Available at <https://newlinesinstitute.org/gender/thirty-years-on-gender-implications-of-a-potential-renewed-conflict-in-bosnia/>, accessed 3 October 2023.

49. Available at www.researchgate.net/publication/338923834_Drawing_on_the_continuum_a_war_and_post-war_political_economy_of_gender-based_violence_in_Bosnia_and_Herzegovina, accessed 3 October 2023.

50. Available at <https://shs.hal.science/halshs-00276224/document>, accessed 3 October 2023.

51. Available at <https://lup.lub.lu.se/luur/download?func=downloadFile&recordId=8930989&fileId=8930990>, accessed 3 October 2023.

In 1998, the provisional election commission adopted a minimum 30% gender quota for party lists. In 2000, this rule was codified in the Bosnia and Herzegovina Election Law and applied to all party lists in the 2000 national and municipal elections. In 2013, the gender quota in the electoral process were increased to 40% and became mandatory.

This result was achieved through the co-ordinated efforts of the civil society sector and the support of international partners. Subsequently, NGO networks were established in the country. For example, the Women for Constitutional Change Network advocated for constitutional reforms, focusing on promoting women's participation in private and public life, and the Bosnia and Herzegovina Women's Network promoted gender equality, peace and anti-militarism.

Today, in addition to changes to the electoral legislation, Bosnia and Herzegovina has adopted the National Action Plan "Women, Peace and Security", which is part of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality.⁵²

Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina still face numerous barriers in political life, including widespread patriarchal attitudes, violence against women and harmful gender stereotypes perpetuated by the media. For example, a 2017 survey found that half of men citizens and just over 30% of women believed that men were better political leaders.⁵³ A survey of Bosnian women politicians in 2019 found that 60% had experienced some form of violence and this number was even higher among younger women.⁵⁴

Summing up, although the balanced representation of women and men has not yet been achieved, and the consequences of the armed conflict affect the public and political climate in the country, gender equality policy has been consolidated at the institutional and legislative level. At the same time, the European integration process is an important incentive for the implementation of policies on equal rights and opportunities.

Georgia

The armed conflict in Georgia is special due to its protracted nature. The conflict has lasted since the early 1990s and encountered a new turn in August 2008 in the context of the Russian-Georgian war.

Since Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region (South Ossetia) are not under the effective control of Georgia, representatives of the Georgian government and international organisations, with the exception of the International Committee of the Red Cross, are denied access to these territories. This makes it difficult to monitor the observance of human rights and their protection in the occupied territories.

52. Available at <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/04/baseline-study-on-barriers-to-political-participation-of-women-in-bosnia-and-herzegovina>, accessed 3 October 2023.

53. Available at <https://measurebih.com/difference-in-development-priorities-of-male-versus-female-politicians-and-voters>, accessed 3 October 2023.

54. Available at www.wfd.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/wfd-study-violence-against-women-in-politics-in-bih-final.pdf, accessed 3 October 2023.

Despite the cessation of active hostilities, the threat still exists and negatively affects the lives of civilians. This is the restriction of freedom of movement and the process of “borderisation” of the occupied territories by Russian forces since the beginning of 2013. Restriction of freedom of movement negatively affects access of the population to education and healthcare and leads to violations of the property rights of citizens. This especially affects young people who face restrictions in the exercise of their right to education and continuing their education in the Georgian language in the unoccupied territory.

There are several aspects that significantly affect public and political life in the country. First of all, between 190 000 and 275 000 people in Georgia are internally displaced, that is approximately 6% of the total population.⁵⁵

There is a certain correlation between the experience of war and gender-based violence. More than 80% of IDPs report that they have “witnessed or directly experienced the conflict”. Former combatants were almost 2.5 times more likely to experience gender-based violence compared to those who had no military experience. Men and women who served in the military were also twice as likely to experience sexual violence or sexual harassment.⁵⁶

The exacerbation of nationalism and authoritarianism caused by the war was accompanied by the restoration of “the traditional, secondary role of women and the ‘hypermasculine’ role of men”.⁵⁷ Displacement and unemployment of men, post-conflict stress and trauma resulted in increased depression, alcohol consumption and crime, which in turn increased pressure on women.

Regarding the participation of IDPs in public and political life, IDPs are involved in policy making mainly through public activities and civil society, where women are disproportionately more active than men.⁵⁸ Due to their work and activism, women human rights defenders are at high risk of pressure and intimidation, especially online.

Regarding the political participation of women and men, currently the share of women in the parliament of Georgia is 19% of the total number of MPs, while at the local level (in local councils) this number is 24% on average.⁵⁹ The introduction of mandatory gender quotas on the lists of political parties in 2020 contributed to the achievement of such results.

At the same time, gender stereotypes about traditional roles of men and women are quite widespread in Georgia, and some political parties use them in their work. For example, such political parties as “Traditionalists – Our Georgia” and “Women’s Party” promote social guarantees for pregnant women and large families in order to stimulate birth rates in Georgia. In addition, there is a tendency to relegate and limit women’s experience and potential contribution to peace and security to the so-called women’s issues, such as family reunification, healthcare and education. In the 2008 parliamentary election, none of the political parties outlined their stance on gender equality in their election programmes. Out of 180 parties operating in the country at that time, only four were headed by

55. Gender based violence in Georgia – links among conflict, economic opportunities and services (<https://web-api.parliament.ge/storage/files/shares/Gender/kvlevebi/sxvadasxva/Gender-Based-Violence.pdf>).

56. Там само.

57. Juliet Schoield, Steven Schoofs and Hema Kotecha. Building Inclusive Governance: Women’s Political Participation in Conflict-affected Georgia (https://www.academia.edu/480960/Building_Inclusive_Governance_Women_s_Political_Participation_in_Conflict_affected_Georgia).

58. Promoting IDPs’ and Women’s Voices in Post-Conflict Georgia, Columbia University, 2012 (www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/40255924/promoting-idps-and-womens-voices-in-post-conflict-georgia).

59. Available at <https://www.idea.int/developmentzone.co/data-tools/data/gender-quotas-database/country?country=82>, accessed 23 October 2023.

women.⁶⁰ In 2018, Salome Zurbishvili – a woman and a former diplomat, was elected president of the country.

In 2011, Georgia adopted its first National Action Plan for the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution “Women, Peace and Security”. Currently, the national plans focus on the involvement of IDPs and conflict-affected women, youth and women’s organisations in peacebuilding, decision making, diplomacy and leadership.

In conclusion, armed conflicts and wars during the 20th century had a significant impact on the fate and living standard of people in Europe and other parts of the world. They changed gender roles and transformed the perception of the place and role of women and men in economic, public, political, and private life. Another important factor that has had a long-term impact on objective and subjective opportunities for civic or political participation has been the violence and war crimes committed against civilians during conflicts. One of the types of war crimes that disproportionately affected women and children was sexual violence, which was often used as a weapon of war against civilians.

Armed conflicts led to the emergence of new social groups such as veterans and IDPs, and increased the number of existing vulnerable groups (for example people with disabilities, single mothers or fathers and orphans). These social groups played an important role in shaping up the post-war society, both directly and indirectly through NGOs, political parties or trade unions, and became the focus of political interest of political actors.

60. Benchmarks, barriers and bridging the gaps: enhancing women’s meaningful participation and contribution to peace processes in Georgia (<https://euneighbourseast.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/un-women-studybenchmarks-barriers-and-bridging-the-gaps-enhancing-womens-meaningful-participation-an.pdf>).

4. GENDER-BALANCED PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN AND MEN IN PUBLIC AND POLITICAL PROCESSES OF POST-WAR RECOVERY OF UKRAINE – KEY CHALLENGES AND POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

European integration of Ukraine, the need to rebuild the country and reintegrate the liberated territories after the end of the Russian-Ukrainian war will require solving a number of issues. One of the most important issues will be to increase the socio-economic contribution of women, to ensure their wider inclusion in decision-making processes at all levels of government and local authorities, and involvement in planning and oversight over the allocation of resources.

Therefore, gender balance should become a driver of progressive changes in the status of women and men, and also a key to the rapid, complete and effective reconstruction of post-war Ukraine with a parallel “advanced modernisation” of its economy, politics and social structure.

The expert survey “Gender equality and balanced political participation and representation of women and men in political and public life in post-war Ukraine: challenges and perspectives”⁶¹ has been conducted to evaluate the capacity for balanced participation of women and men in the public and political processes of post-war reconstruction of Ukraine.

61. The expert survey “Gender equality and balanced political participation and representation of women and men in political and public life in post-war Ukraine: challenges and perspectives” was conducted by research company Sociopolis as commissioned by the Council of Europe from 16 September to 2 December 2022. The purpose of the expert survey was to evaluate the state of play and perspectives of ensuring the balanced participation and representation of women and men in public and political processes in Ukraine in the war and post-war period from the point of view of participants of these processes (representatives of state authorities and local self-government, activists, etc.).

The survey sample included the following categories of experts depending on the nature of their involvement in public and political processes in Ukraine:

- MPs;

- representatives of elected local authorities (members of oblast, district, city and town councils, mayors);

- staff of local executive authorities (local officials of the central government and executive bodies of local councils);

- representatives of public associations (including political parties, citizen associations, CSOs whose activities include the protection of women's rights and supporting the involvement of women in public and political processes, charitable organisations and volunteer initiatives).

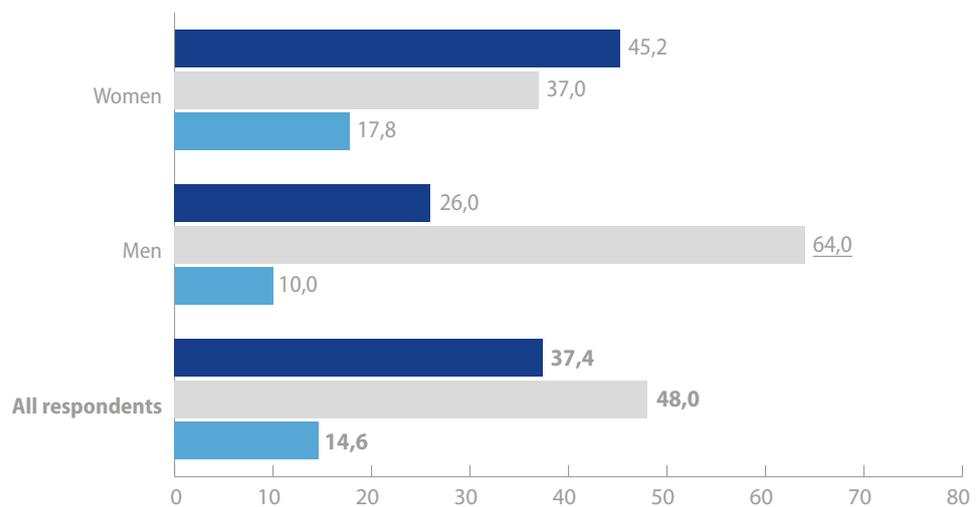
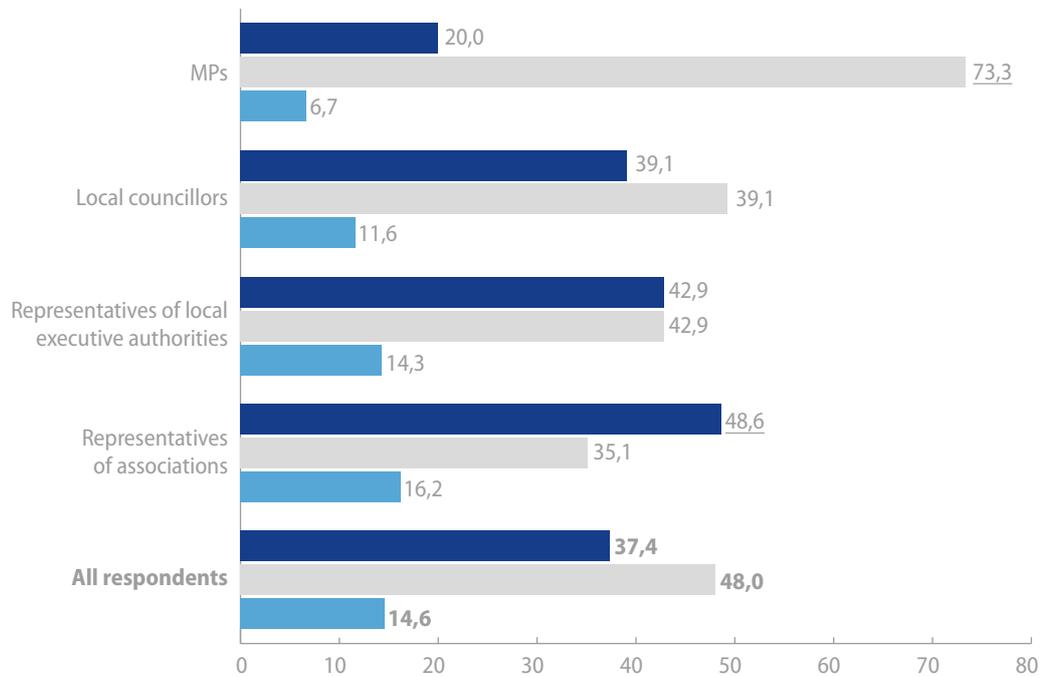
The expert survey aimed to achieve two main objectives. The first objective was to get information on the challenges and main scenarios for the implementation of the principle of equal rights and opportunities for men and women in the public and political sphere of Ukraine from persons who directly work in this area. The other objective was – considering the sample of experts used – to get information regarding the main attitudes, perceptions and stereotypes inherent in the communities involved in the preparation, lobbying and decision making, including on issues related to gender policy, and shaping the public perception of the gender equality principle. This section presents the main findings of the expert survey.

The results of the survey demonstrated a relatively high level of appreciation (3.9 points on a 5-point scale) for guaranteed rights and opportunities of men and women both in pre-war Ukraine and now (Table 1). There was a marked difference between the ratings of the experts from among MPs and representatives of CSOs. The former offered significantly higher and the latter significantly lower ratings for the level of protection accorded to the rights and opportunities of men and women in Ukraine both before 24 February 2022 and now.

The evaluation of changes between the present situation with observance of equal rights and opportunities for men and women in Ukraine and the pre-war period (Table 1) also shows clear differences between the opinions of experts from among MPs and CSOs. Some 73.3% of MPs believe that in general the situation in this area has not changed, while the relative majority NGO experts (48.6%) noted positive changes in terms of observance of the principle of equal rights and opportunities for men and women. The assessments of experts of different sexes on this matter also vary significantly: women mostly point to a certain improvement in the situation with the observance of equal rights and opportunities for men and women, while men say that there have been no significant changes in this area.

Table 1

In your opinion, to what extent has the situation with the observance of the principle of equal rights and opportunities for men and women in Ukraine changed compared to the time before Russia's full-scale military aggression on 24 February 2022?



of experts who responded

Significantly improved + Somewhat improved

Generally, it has not changed

Somewhat deteriorated + Significantly deteriorated

Note: Every underlined indicator in the tables of this text means a statistically significant difference from the average score.

The experts who reported positive changes compared to the pre-war period noted the following main manifestations of these changes: during the war, women defend the country on an equal footing with men; the share and role of women in leading positions in the army and government has increased; in conditions of war, mutual respect and mutual support of women and men is growing; there have been positive changes in the legislation on equal rights and opportunities for men and women.

It seems that the difference in responses offered by men and women in the sample of experts regarding this issue, as well as on a number of other questions in the questionnaire, has to do with significantly different personal experiences of the respondents. Women, compared to men, feel more strongly the impact of unresolved problems of (un)equal representation, institutional and informal barriers, stereotypes and gender discrimination. Regarding the differences between the opinions of experts belonging to different professional groups, it is likely that a significant part of MPs who are at the top of the political power pyramid are guided by the perception that “everything is equal and well-balanced”, while the representatives of civil society groups at the lower levels of the power triangle are guided by an opinion from the other side of the spectrum where “everything is unequal and unbalanced”. This opposition is manifested throughout the entire array of the data obtained.

Regarding regional differences in the opportunities for women and men to participate in public and political activities, about three quarters of experts are convinced that there are no such differences in Ukraine (and this expert assessment does not depend on gender and different professional background of individual groups of experts). Some 18% of experts believe that there are slight regional differences in the opportunities for women and men to participate in public and political work in Ukraine, whereas 7% of the surveyed experts note the existence of significant regional differences. In total, 25% of the surveyed experts indicated the existence of regional differences in the opportunities for men and women to participate in public and political activities.

As for the nature of such differences, experts noted in their comments to this question the objectively less favourable situation in the regions where military operations are taking place. Also, they describe the western part of Ukraine (somewhat more often), or the eastern and the southern parts of Ukraine (somewhat less often) as the regions with conditionally fewer opportunities for women in the public and political sphere.

Among the problems with observance of equal rights and opportunities for men and women in general, experts mainly identified issues in the sphere of labour relations, which according to 26% of respondents are the most acute ones at present. Some 15% of experts pointed out the insufficient representation of women in government (in particular in military administrations), as well as the low level of influence women have on important management decisions. From the point of view of 10% of the experts, the most dramatic problems are domestic violence, threats to personal security, and safe living and working conditions during war.

Other problems were also mentioned: the ban on travel abroad for men eligible for military service (8%); women overburdened with family and household duties (8%); issues related to women’s service in the army (8%); issues related to IDPs and social protection of the population (6%); stereotypes and sexism (3%); issues with the protection of equal rights and opportunities for men and women in the temporarily occupied territories (2%); and issues stemming from women’s stay abroad (2%). At the same time, a minority (20% of experts) stated that there were no problems in the area of observance of equal rights and opportunities for men and women or, in their opinion, such issues were insignificant.

Open-ended questions of the expert survey allowed to outline the range of problems that men and women engaged in public and political activities in Ukraine most often face under martial law. For women, these include biased, sexist treatment from men; limited appointments of women to leadership positions and excessive regulation of activities by men managers in the workplace; inequality between men and women in the field of labour relations; greater difficulty in finding a balance between family life and work; less practical experience in military matters; and stereotypes about the incompetence of women in military matters. At the same time, 25% of experts (23% of women experts and 26% of men experts) noted that in their opinion, currently there were no specific issues for women in connection with martial law.

The following problems were most often mentioned for men: restrictions on freedom of movement (travel abroad) due to martial law; military duty (while women enlist at their own will); social pressure to take part in the fight as “defenders by default”; increased demands and expectations to effectively solve all issues stemming from martial law; excessive professional workload; lack of resources, money and opportunities to solve issues that have arisen in connection with martial law. Some 31% of experts (28% of women experts and 35% of men experts) did not identify specific “men’s” issues or believed that there were no such issues.

A small number of experts argued that the inequality of rights and opportunities for women and men had significantly decreased because “the war has equalised everyone”. However, such a position is not common in terms of the overall expert assessment.

The topic of violence against women by combatants who returned from the war with psychological traumas and PTSD takes up a significant place in the experts’ reports on the most significant expected post-war “women’s” issues. In this case, a generally low level of ability of the expert community to identify gender-based sensitivity of post-war issues is observed. As a result, the issue that is common to both men and women is considered a specifically women’s issue. In general, the interviewed experts often did not distinguish between campaigning for equal rights and opportunities for women and men, and campaigning for the rights and opportunities for women specifically. All of this indicates a not relatively high level of awareness on gender issues among the actors of the public and political sphere of Ukraine (primarily government officials at the central and local levels) regarding gender equality.

Despite the existing problems, according to the majority of experts, the principle of equal rights and opportunities for men and women is generally observed in public and political life. The average score under this category is 4.0 on a 5-point scale. The average score under the category of observance of the above principle in certain areas in the public and political sphere varies from 3.8 (central and local authorities, political parties) to 4.7 (volunteer work).

All assessments given by women experts in this regard are lower than those of men experts. This is especially remarkable in case of the local offices of central government, local authorities and political parties. As with the previous questions, MPs were more “optimistic” than the civil society. Their assessments of the observance of the principle of equal rights and opportunities for men and women in wartime were significantly higher both in terms of public and political activities in general and in terms of the work of the central government, local authorities and political parties. All groups of experts showed solidarity regarding the high level of compliance with this principle by NGOs and volunteer organisations. Perhaps this is due to the high level of public confidence in these organisations. This situation has long been noted by sociologists and the trend has intensified even more with the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion on 24 February 2022.

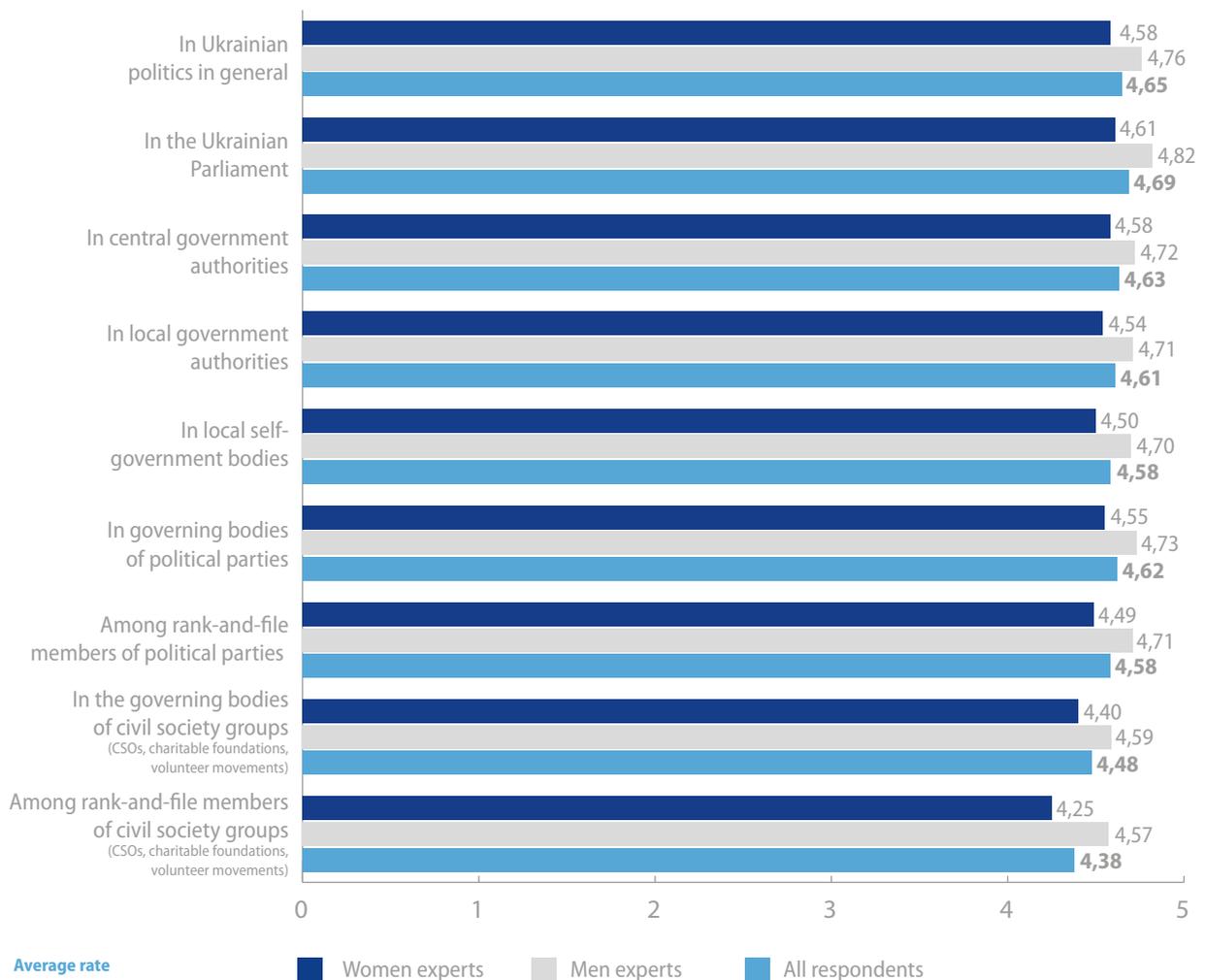
The level of representation of men in the main areas of public and political work was considered as high (4.4-4.7 points on a 5-point scale, depending on the domain of public and political activity) by the experts, while the level of representation of women was rated as significantly lower (3.5-4.4 points on a 5-point scale). Moreover, men experts generally gave higher ratings to the level of women's representation in various spheres of public and political life, while women experts' assessments of this issue, on the contrary, were significantly lower (Table 2). Interestingly, there were no statistically significant gender differences between the assessments of the level of representation of men in different areas of public and political life.

Table 2

In your opinion, at this moment, how good is the level of representation of men and women in the following areas of political and public activity? Please rate on a 5-point scale, where 1 means that the level of representation is quite low and 5 means that the level of representation is fair enough.

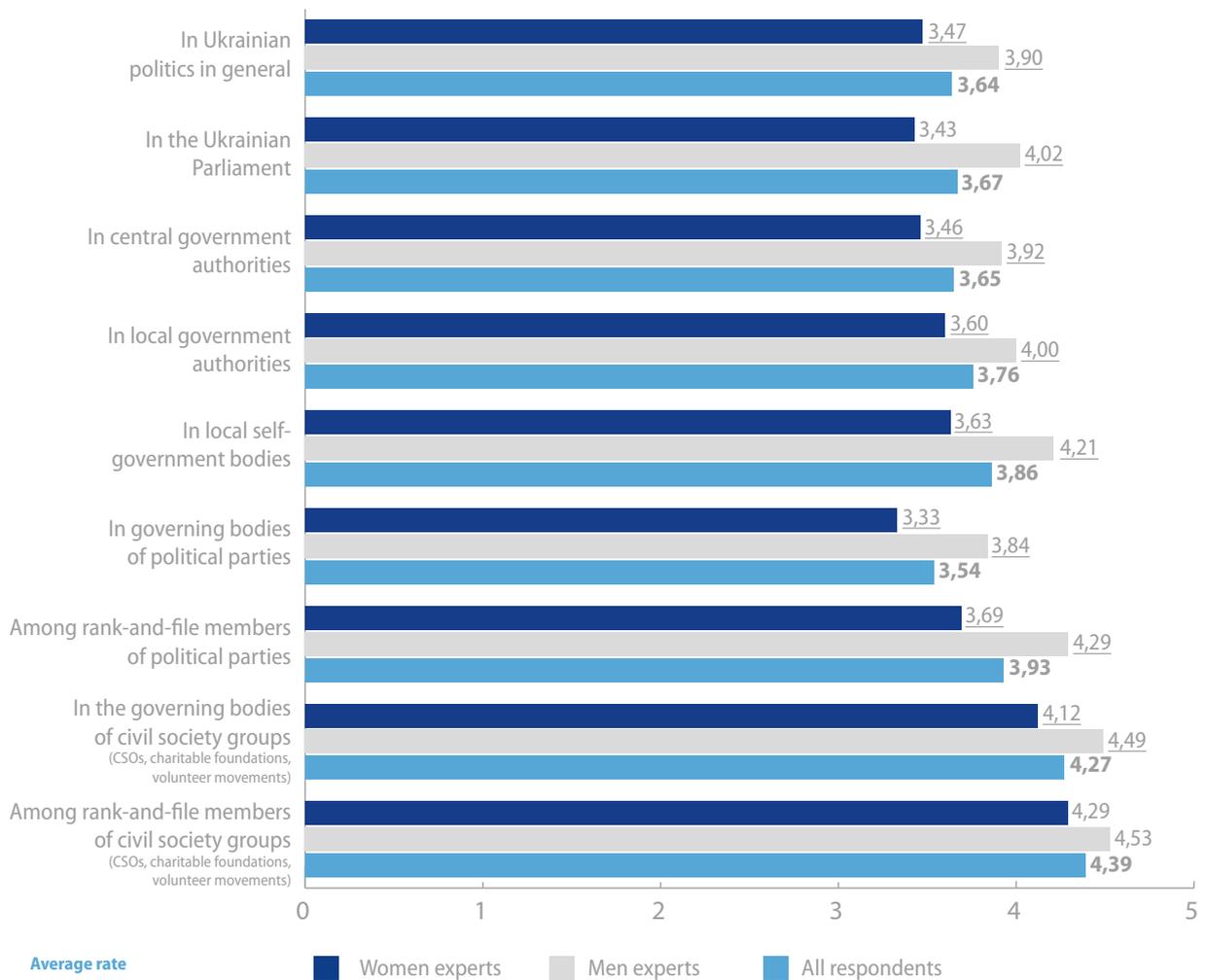


Level of representation and participation of men





Level of representation and participation of women



Compared to the experts from other groups, MPs gave higher estimates of the level of representation of both men and women in public and political life, while civil society representatives gave lower estimates of women's representation in Ukrainian politics in general, in the Verkhovna Rada, in the central government and local authorities, in the local self-government, and in the governing bodies of political parties.

The question is whether the lower level of women's political participation compared to men is based on systemic gender discrimination. The majority (58%) of the surveyed experts are convinced that there is no systemic gender discrimination in Ukrainian politics and public administration. At the same time, 27% of experts responded that systemic discrimination existed in Ukrainian politics and public administration and 13% indicated that there were isolated cases of unsystematic discrimination. Examples of systemic gender discrimination most often included discrimination against women when hiring into senior positions and women's insufficient visibility in decision making, as well as sexist discourse against women.

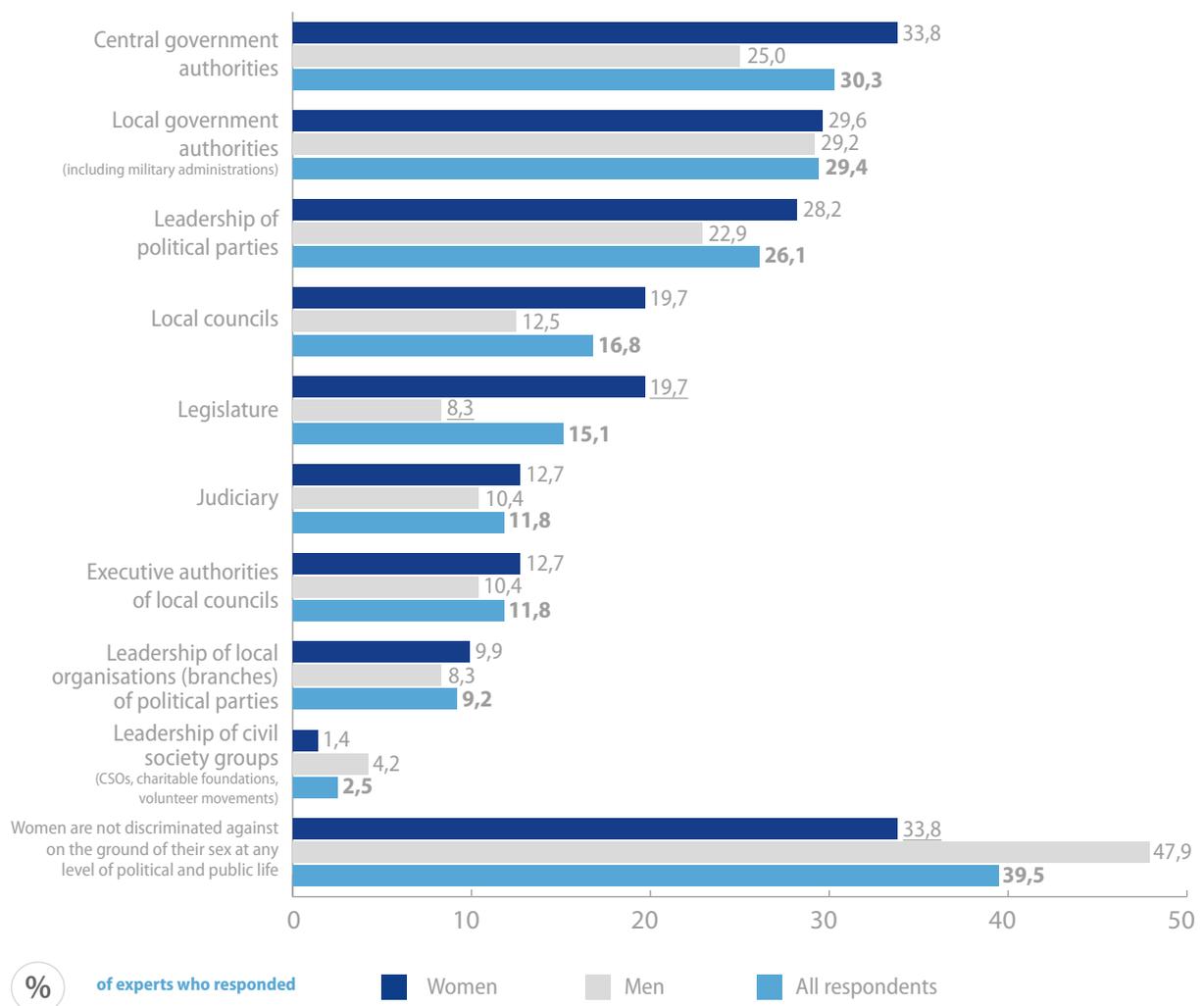
According to the experts, those cases of gender discrimination that occur are most often found at the central government and local authority levels, as well as in the management of political parties. The experts suggest that the lowest level of discrimination against women is observed in the governing bodies of CSOs. At the same time, almost 40% of experts (48% of men experts and 34% of women experts) believed that women are not discriminated against on the basis of their sex at any level of public and political life (Table 3). Such a high percentage, in some way contradicting both the data of human rights organisations and the experts' responses to other questions, can be explained by the fact that some experts do not identify the difference between formalising equal rights of women and men in legislation, and opportunities for their practical implementation in public and political life.

Table 3



In your opinion, at which level of political and public life do women face the most discrimination on the grounds of sex? Choose one or two options.

Levels of public and political life



Ukrainian MPs, compared to other experts, consider gender discrimination in the central government, including the judiciary, and within the management of political parties to be less widespread, while discrimination in the executive offices of local councils, on the contrary, is considered more widespread. Contrary to that, civil society actors consider the level of the local council executive authorities less problematic in terms of gender discrimination but they claim that the central government and local authorities (including military administrations) are the areas where women face discrimination most often. The highest percentage of those who believe that women do not face gender discrimination in the public and political life of Ukraine is observed among MPs and local officials.

According to the experts, the most effective exercise of women's right to participate in public administration and public decision making can be ensured by promoting political participation of women active in public life, and this idea is much more popular among men than among women, probably because it is a typical men's lift into politics; by implementing and monitoring compliance with existing legislation; by wider introduction of gender quota (the difference between women and men experts on this point is striking – 56% and 25% of support, respectively); through further improvement of the legislative framework; by establishing clear rules to combat discrimination in the workplace; by introducing mentorship programmes for women pursuing a political career (Table 4).

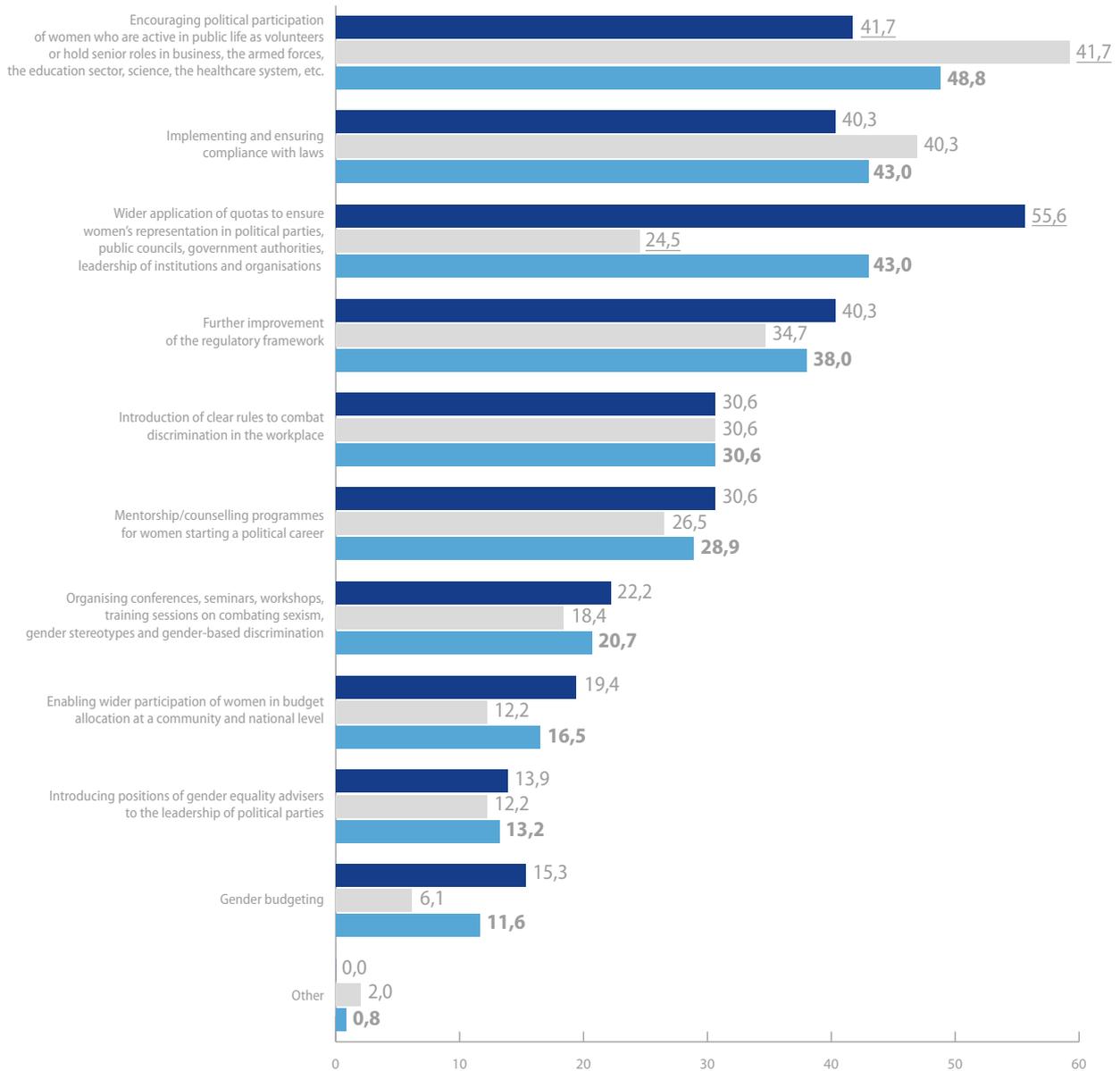


Table 4



In your opinion, what are the most effective tools to ensure women's right to participate in public administration and public decision making? Please select up to three answers.

Response options



of experts who responded

Women

Men

All respondents

Separate groups of experts differ significantly on the proposed measures. MPs consider the implementation and monitoring compliance with existing legislation (67%) and promotion of political participation of women active in public life (47%) to be the key measures; local councillors support the introduction of gender quota (51%); local officials of the central executive agencies are for promotion of political participation of women active in public life (54%) and introduction of gender quota (46%); and representatives of CSOs favour promotion of political participation of women active in public life (60%), and implementation and monitoring of compliance with existing legislation (49%). Taking into account the differences in gender and group affiliation of experts, the consensus areas for the exercise of women's right to participate in public administration and public decision making can be the promotion of political participation of women active in public life (volunteers, the armed forces, business, education, science, healthcare) and consistent implementation of existing legislation.

Based on the media and blogosphere analysis, as well as sociological research data, it can be argued that Ukrainian public opinion is characterised by a number of persistent concepts and common stereotypes related to the participation of women and men in public and political life. The expert survey found out how deep these common concepts/stereotypes (positive, negative and neutral) are rooted in the expert environment. The experts appeared to share some of these statements/assumptions:

“ predominantly men's and women's fields of activities objectively exist in a society ”

“ women and men have different roles in society, whether we like it or not ”

“ women and men have different roles in the family, whether we like it or not ”

“ when engaged in public and political activity, women are more responsive to the interests of ordinary citizens, if compared to men ”

“ women politicians are more likely to look for compromise and to resolve conflicts, if compared to men politicians ”

“ the higher the level of the managerial hierarchy, the less likely a woman is to hold a position at this level, if compared to a man with similar experience and competence ”

“ Ukrainian women find it easier to fulfil their potential in public activities than in politics ”

“ women and men have different experiences, so their equal participation in decision making helps to achieve a balance of public interests ”

“ publicly important decisions are more effective when both women and men are equally involved in decision making ”

women and men should be equally represented in government, in proportion to gender ratio of the country's population

Some experts believe that women are less prone to corruption and more people-centred, and that they better allocate resources due to their household experience. Family is seen to be a greater barrier to women's political careers compared to men. According to a significant number of experts, it is easier for women to realise their potential in public activities than in politics. The results to the survey show that women experts as well as civil society representatives are most likely to hold these opinions, and to the least extent are men experts and MPs.

The responses of the experts in Table 3 support the statement that the higher the level of the managerial hierarchy, the less likely a woman is to hold a position at this level than a man with similar experience and competence, or the so-called glass ceiling effect. This effect reflects one of the pillars of the patriarchal order, where leadership is reserved for men and executive duties are assigned to women (which was also noted by the experts in their comments).

In general, two consensus statements can be identified for all groups of experts:

publicly important decisions are more effective when both women and men are equally involved in decision making

Ukrainian women find it easier to fulfil their potential in public activities than in politics

The basic perception of the problems in question by the expert community is currently taking place through the lens of this vision. Accordingly, any measures related to the implementation of the principle of equal rights and opportunities for men and women in public and political life should take these attitudes into account, rely on them, and use them in information and media campaigns.

The common opinion among experts that it is easier for women to fulfil their potential in public life can be explained by the fact that this type of activity is much more accessible to participate in, requires less regulation, does not require the presence of background and ties within the Ukrainian political class, which is largely a closed community formed at the beginning of Ukrainian independence, and then replenished mainly by representatives of financial and industrial groups. With fewer resources available to active women compared to men, this encourages women to pursue public activities.

Besides the problems faced by men and women, motivation is an important factor in political participation. Two thirds of the experts believe that there are no significant differences in the motivations of women and men to enter politics. At the same time, 29% of respondents believe that such differences exist. Above all, there are differences caused by gender-based psychological traits, values, behavioural patterns and the stereotype that politics is not a women's field. At the same time, most experts rightly noted that differences in the motivation of political activism, even in the value-related and psychological nature in today's society, are mainly individual and not gender based.

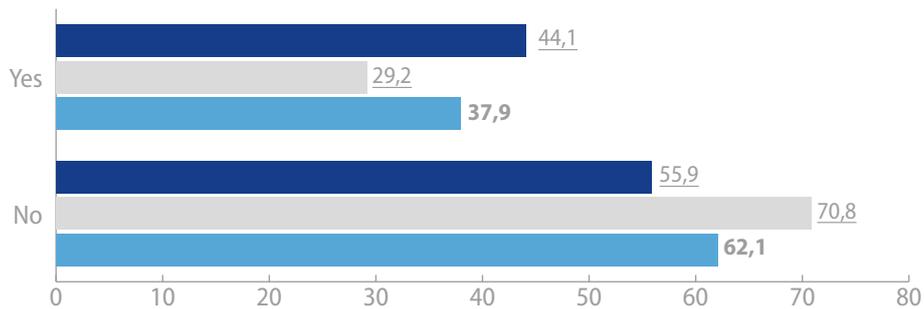
Regarding the assessment of the level of motivation to participate in politics, it is indicative that 62% of experts disagree with the statement that women politicians in Ukraine are more likely than men to abandon their political careers due to war-related circumstances. However, this answer has been offered by 71% of men experts and only 56% of women experts (Table 5). The share of

respondents who agree that women are more likely than men to abandon their political careers due to the war is even higher among civil society experts (47%).

Table 5



Do you agree that women politicians are more likely than men politicians to abandon their political careers due to war-related circumstances?



% of experts who responded

■ Women ■ Men ■ All respondents

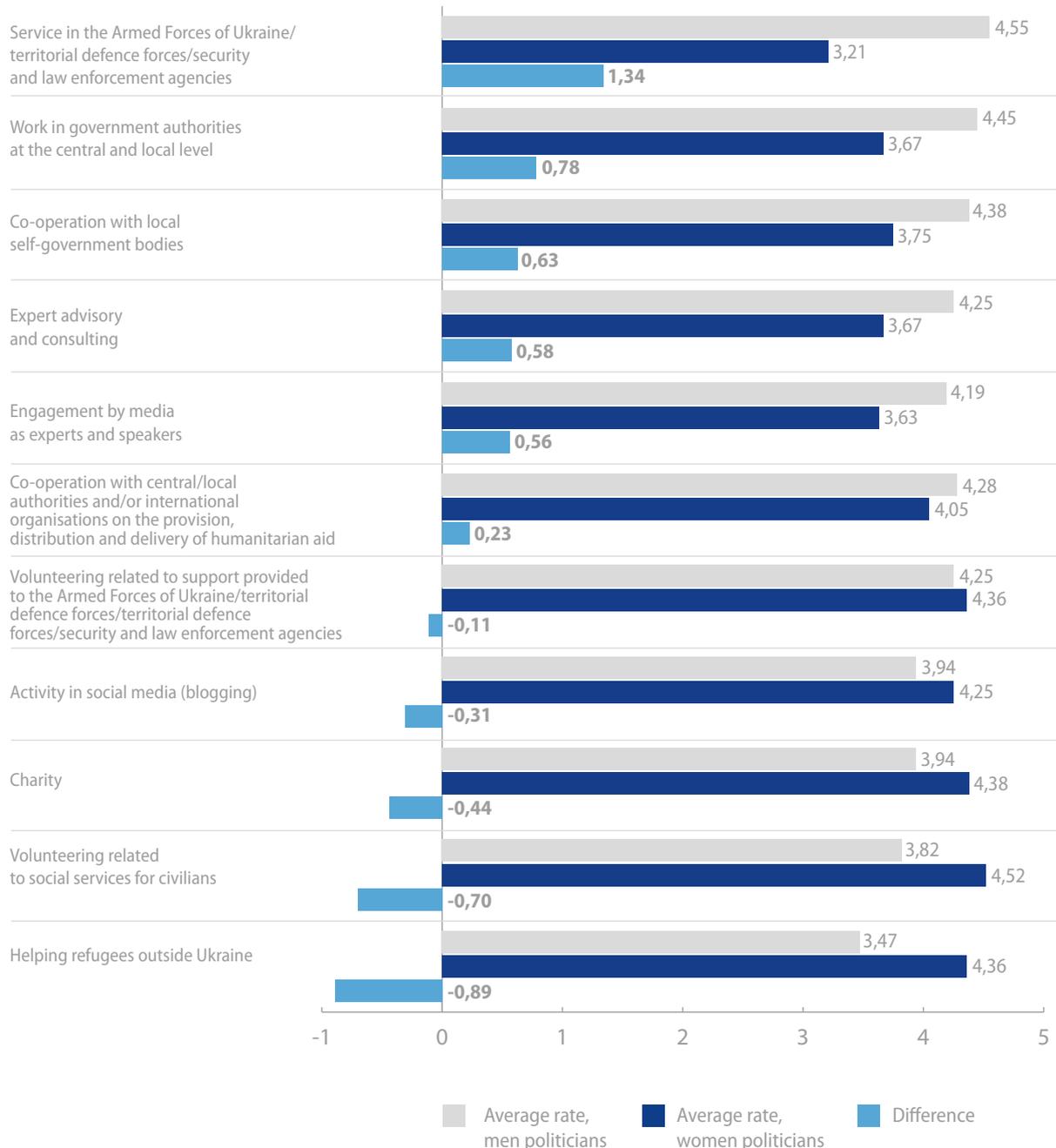
Thus, according to most experts, the motivation of men and women in politics is basically the same. And what can be said about their involvement in specific types of public and political life in the period after the start of the full-scale invasion by the Russian Federation? Experts evaluate this involvement quite highly (Table 6), but the experts' further answers point to some peculiarities in the types of activity that allow to qualify certain activities as conditionally men's or women's. Thus, the predominantly men's activities are service in the central and local authorities, co-operation with local authorities, advisory and expert activities (including in the media), service in the Armed Forces of Ukraine/territorial defence forces/law enforcement agencies, co-operation with authorities and organisations on the provision, distribution and delivery of humanitarian aid. Mainly women activities are blogging, volunteering, helping refugees outside Ukraine and charity.

Differences between experts of different sexes in ranking involvement in different types of public and political life are insignificant. The responses of experts of different categories depend upon the peculiarities of their public and political experience and are characterised by the fact that MPs estimate on average a higher level of involvement of both men and women in various types of activities, while representatives of the civil society have a lower estimate of women's involvement in all major types of activities, and local executive officials estimate the involvement of men and women in activities at a level lower than the overall expert sample.

Table 6

In your view, to what extent are Ukrainian politicians (women and men) engaged in the following areas of public and political life during wartime? In the table below, score a relevant area from 1 to 5, where 1 means a generally very low level of engagement and 5 means a generally very high level of engagement.

Area of activity



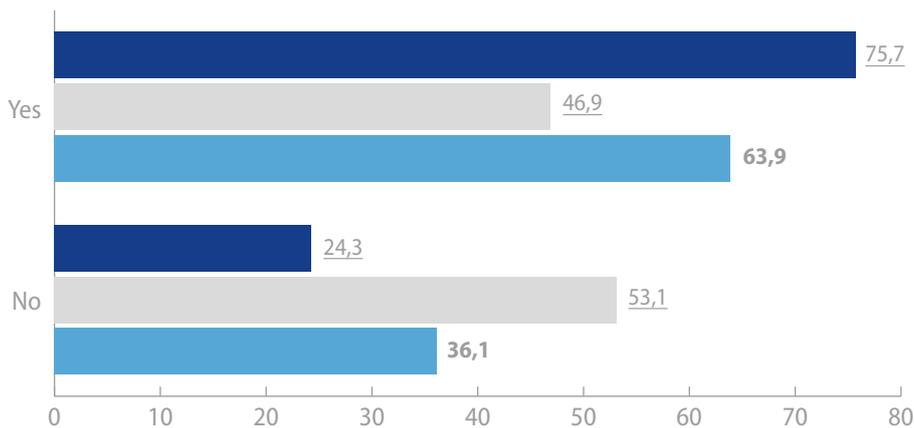
In general, the consensus opinion of all experts is that women are less involved in all types of public and political life which go beyond the stereotypical sphere of women’s competence when compared to men, and this largely reflects not only their perceptions but also the real state of play. Moreover, this situation is reproduced through a feedback mechanism: stereotypes lead to the rejection of certain types of activity and informal barriers (largely, these are stereotypes entertained by women themselves, as we have seen in the expert sample), and the resulting pattern of women’s public and political participation fuels the stereotypes. Thus, it is necessary to widely implement information and motivational programmes targeting women and men in order to change these stereotypical perceptions. The impact of stereotypes on public and political life cannot be quickly reversed but at least the impact of self-stereotyping on active women can be significantly reduced through targeted interventions. Especially effective in this sense should be programmes targeting the women who have a high potential for activism (volunteers, representatives of NGOs, military personnel, etc.), but who have problems with its implementation – leadership trainings, mentorship programmes for women pursuing political careers.

Almost 76% of women experts and only 47% of men experts expect the issue of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for men and women in Ukraine to become more relevant after the end of the war. A relative majority (53%) of men believe that the relevance of this issue will not grow after the war (Table 7). Representatives of the civil society and local councillors are the most likely to believe that this issue will become more relevant after the war, while Ukrainian MPs and local executive officials are the least likely to support it (Table 8).

Table 7



Do you expect the issue of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for men and women in Ukraine will be higher ranked on the agenda after the end of the war?



of experts who responded

Women

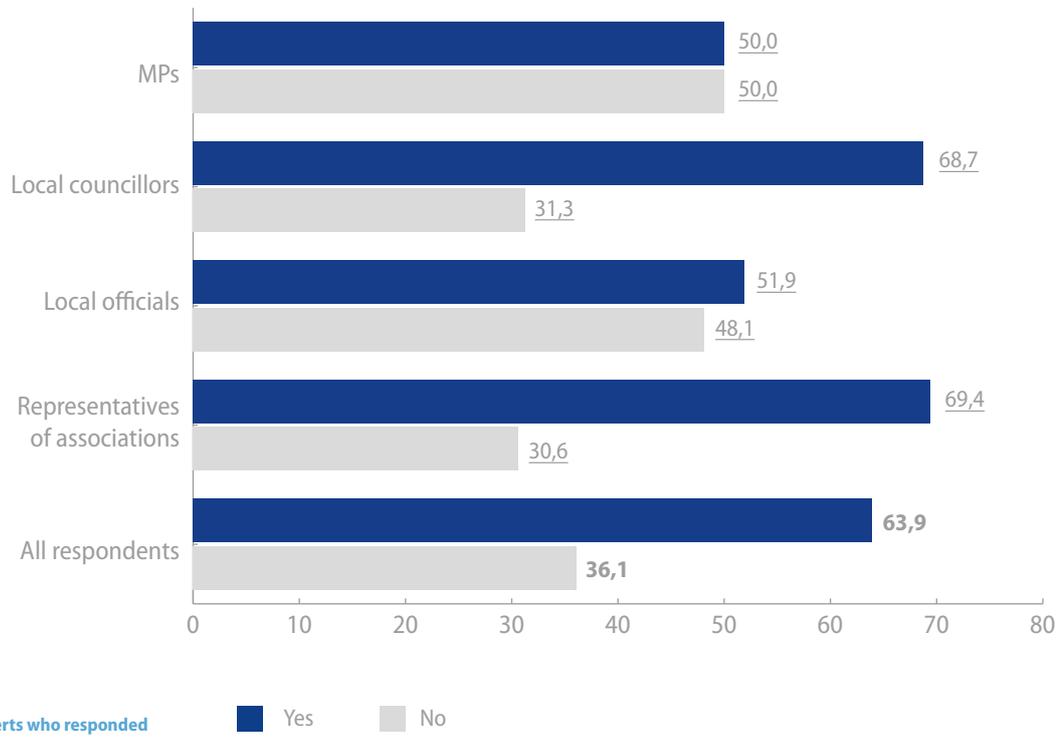
Men

All respondents



Table 8

Do you expect the issue of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for men and women in Ukraine will be higher ranked on the agenda after the end of the war?



As for the prospects of post-war changes in the role and status of women and men, almost half of the experts (46%) are convinced that no change should be expected in private life. The expectations are approximately the same in public and political life as 44% of the polled experts do not expect significant changes.

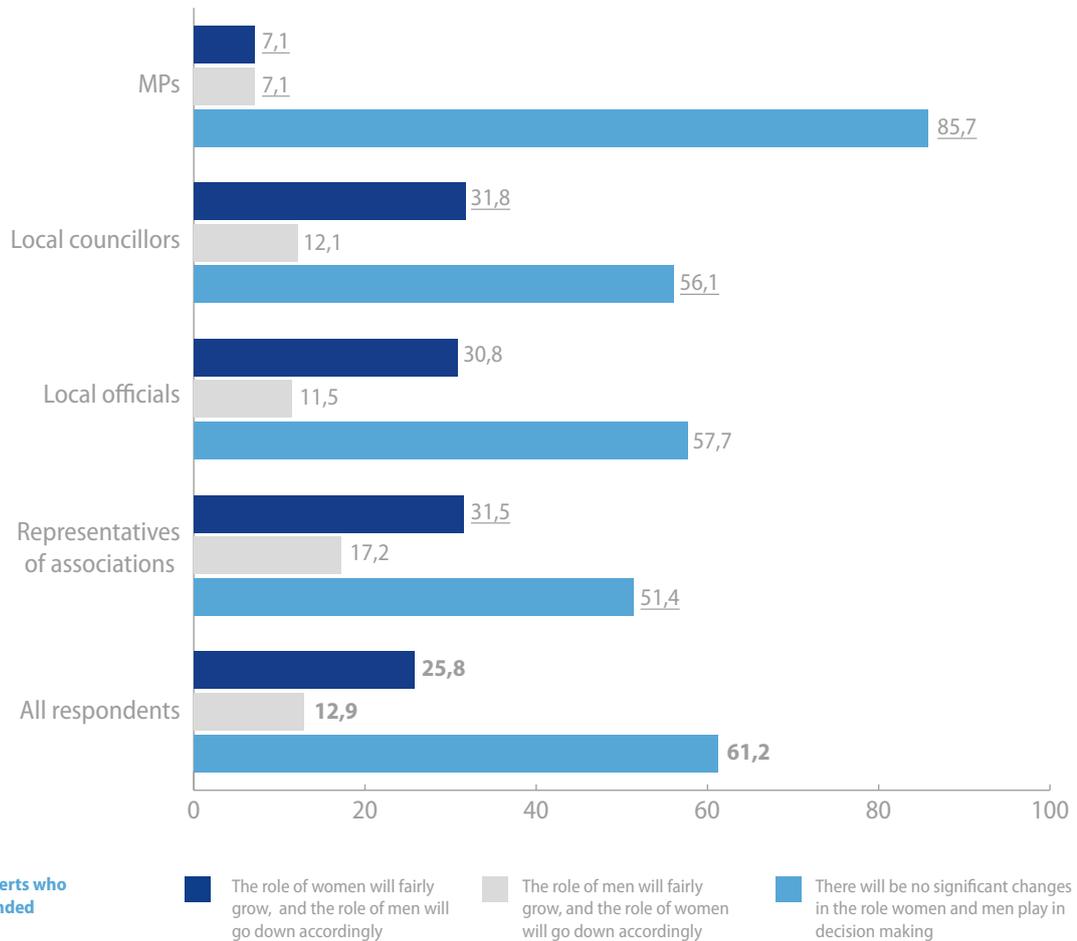
Among the expected changes, experts distinguish both positive and negative ones: improvement in respect for women’s and men’s rights and possible growth in the role of women; growing influence of men and the military on public and political processes in the country; increase in violence against women due to the spread of PTSD among men who return from the war; increase in the domestic burden on women. In general, the answers demonstrate high uncertainty of experts regarding future scenarios of post-war development, which limits the ability to make predictions about changes in the roles/status of women and men. In general, the relative majority of respondents believe that the social roles and statuses of men and women will remain the same as they are now.

Also, experts do not expect significant changes in the level of influence women and men will have on decision making compared to the present (61% of all respondents – 66% of men experts, 58% of women experts). The most sceptical are Ukrainian MPs, 86% of whom do not expect any significant changes in the influence of women and men on decision making (Table 9).



Table 9

In your opinion, how will the role of women and men change in decision-making processes in the central and local authorities in post-war Ukraine?



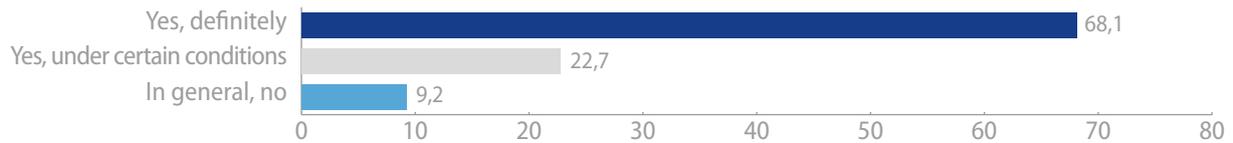
Thus, along with the expectations of mainstreaming equal rights and opportunities for men and women after the war, most of the experts do not expect significant changes that such mainstreaming will lead to. Therefore, we have tried to find out whether one can expect an alternative scenario due to the window of opportunities in politics for Ukrainians who showed active citizenship during the war (Tables 10 and 11). It turned out that about 90% of experts consider this possibility to be quite realistic for both women and men, regardless of whether they had any previous political experience. Moreover, there were no differences in assessments between men and women experts, as it was observed for a number of other issues. MPs consider this possibility to be the most likely (relative to men and women who have not been involved in politics) and local executive officials the least likely. The conditions for an effective launching pad in the form of volunteering/service in the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other law enforcement agencies are defined in the same way for women and men, and these are the availability of a proposal or demand from a certain political force and a person's desire to engage in political work.

Table 10

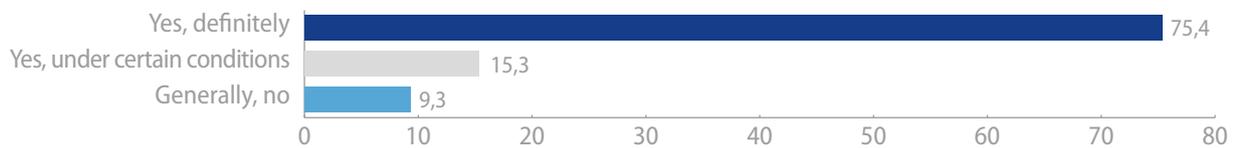
Do you believe that volunteering and/or service in the armed forces/territorial defence forces/ other security and law enforcement agencies during wartime can be a “launching pad” for the political career of women and men with no prior experience in politics in post-war Ukraine?



For women



For men



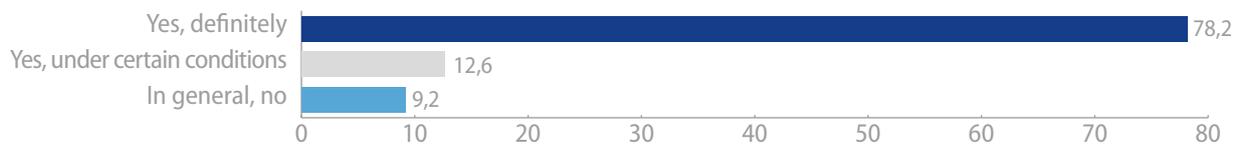
of experts who responded

Table 11

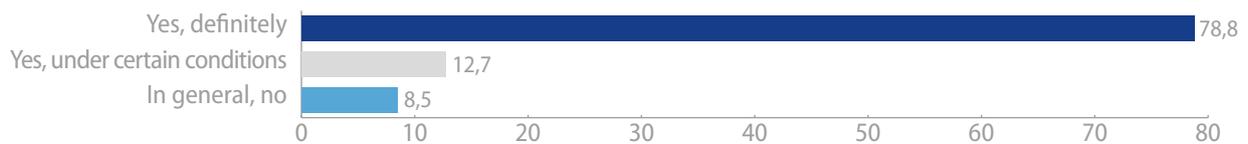
Do you believe that volunteering and/or service in the armed forces/territorial defence forces/ other security and law enforcement agencies during wartime can help to boost the political career of women and men who before the war and at the outbreak of the war had already worked for a government authority and/or were engaged into activities of political parties?



For women



For men



of experts who responded

The vast majority of experts responded that they were directly involved or familiar with the decision-making processes on the distribution of state and non-state humanitarian aid to the population. Experts generally share the view that there is parity in the participation of men and women, acting as local officials, in the decision-making process for the distribution of humanitarian assistance to the population. This is the view of 83% of all experts who were directly involved in or familiar with the distribution of humanitarian aid. However, 24% of women experts, 27% of MPs, 13% of local councillors, 20% of local executive officials and 21% of civil society representatives note that parity is observed only partially or not at all. Consequently, the problem of access of women officials to the distribution of humanitarian aid does exist to some extent and needs to be addressed.

The experience of interaction of experts with oblast, rayon state administrations and/or military administrations on issues related to political and public life, protection of people in difficult life circumstances (IDPs, people with disabilities, orphans, the elderly) and assistance to them is mostly positive but some local officials and civil society representatives also point to negative experiences. Learning from such experiences and finding ways to streamline the provision of assistance to vulnerable groups is an urgent task for further study.

After the war, we should expect an increase in the proportion and number of vulnerable groups of women and men who need not only social support from the state and civil society but also political protection of their interests. With regard to the most vulnerable categories of people whose limited opportunities could potentially become a barrier to participation in public and political life, the experts noted that these are primarily people with disabilities, both men and women. However, women experts and civil society representatives largely consider IDPs of both sexes as vulnerable groups (Table 12).

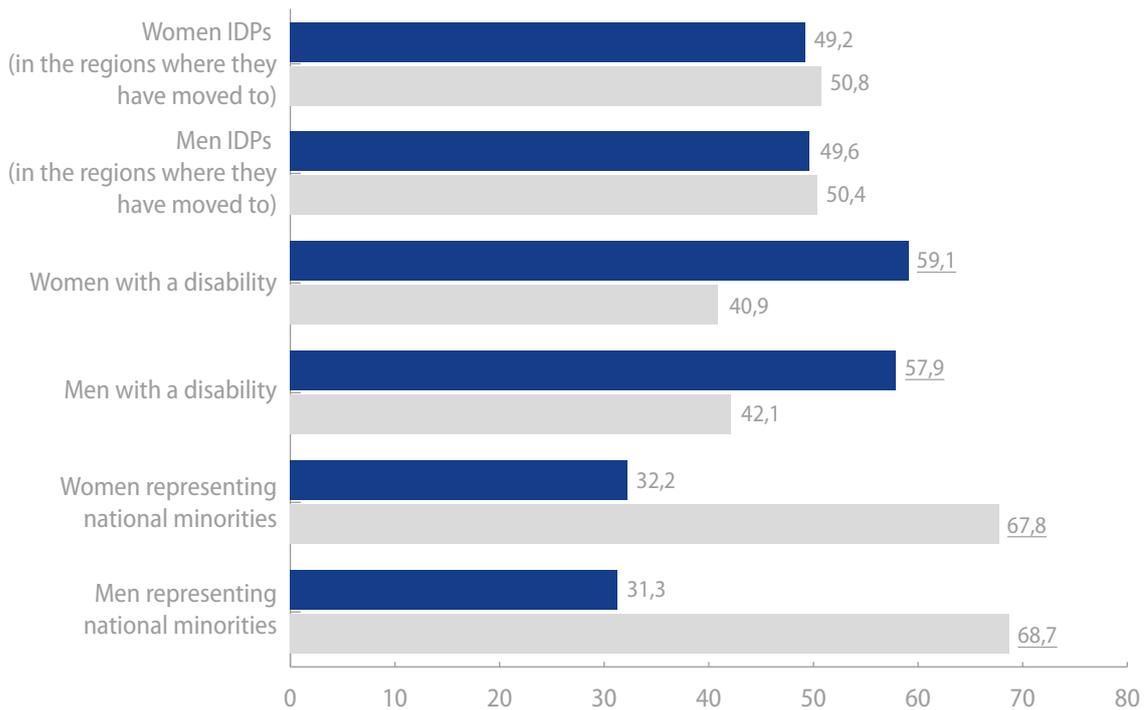




Table 12

In your opinion, is there a problem of limited opportunities for participation of the following groups of men and women in political and public life? If yes, how does it occur or manifest itself?

Groups of women and men



of experts who responded

Yes, there is

No, there is not

The differences in the answer to this question between men and women, as well as between various categories of experts depending on their public and political experience, in our opinion, are caused by different personal and group practices of the experts. The least sensitive to the issue of vulnerable social groups are experts coming from the local authorities. They are largely men with experience in business and management, who went through a tough school of competition in the 1990s, which influenced the formation of their views. Women representing civil society mainly belong to a completely different, younger generation, with experience of rapid development of the civil society from 2010 to 2020, and other values and attitudes towards members of vulnerable groups. In our view, a greater representation of the new generation of politicians, in particular women and members of vulnerable groups, will make it possible to draw more attention to the problems of these groups and to fully implement the requirement of inclusiveness in social assistance. The same applies to the work of local self-government and the distribution of humanitarian aid.

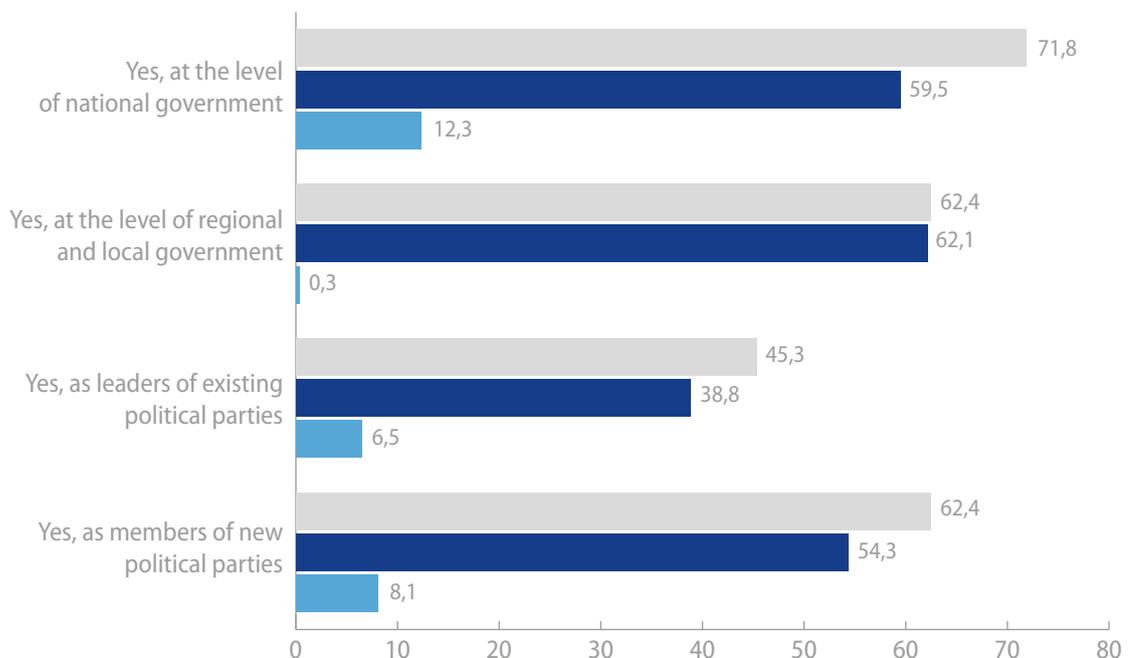
A separate block of open questions in the questionnaire was about men and women local government officers who found themselves in difficult life circumstances because of the war. Summarising the responses received from experts, we can state that for all local government servants who faced dire straits in wartime, the problems are similar, however, their solution will require a gender-sensitive approach, taking into account specific needs of women and men. The key problems in the order of urgency of their priority solution are 1) safety; 2) normal living conditions; 3) qualified psychological assistance; and 4) the ability to exercise their powers. The main conclusion is that the restoration of the full-fledged work of local governments in the de-occupied/frontline territories requires, first of all, ensuring their safety and normalisation of living conditions along with psychological assistance.

At the end of the expert questionnaire, there was an open question about the chances for a new generation of women and men politicians to come to power during the war and/or post-war reconstruction of Ukraine. The majority of respondents considered this possible both at the central and local levels of government (with an advantage at the national level for new men politicians compared to women politicians) but mainly as part of new political projects rather than through a change of the current political party leaders (Table 13).

Table 13



In your opinion, is there a chance that the next generation of men and women politicians will come to power in Ukraine as a result of the war and post-war reconstruction? More than one answer is possible.



of experts who responded

Men politicians Women politicians Difference

The demand for the emergence of new political parties as a niche for a new generation of women politicians is somewhat more relevant from the point of view of men experts, as well as MPs and representatives of the civil society. Local executive officials were the most sceptical about this possibility. MPs expect a new generation of politicians to come to power as part of new political projects at the national level and civil society representatives expect it at the regional level. Thus, from the point of view of three realistic scenarios of post-war political activity of men and women involved in volunteering and defending Ukraine during the war – 1) demoralisation and demobilisation; 2) autonomous radical activism; and 3) integration with the existing political system as part of new political projects – the experts preferred the third scenario.

The expert survey has shown an ambivalence of expert assessments, and significant divergencies inside the expert community regarding balanced participation and representation of women and men in public and political processes. On the one hand, the experts note the urgent demand for increased political activity of women and their equal participation in the management and distribution of resources, especially as they, along with men, are defending Ukraine from the aggression at the front and in the rear. On the other hand, the experts note the slow pace of changes and are uncertain about whether these changes can be sufficiently speedy in the future.

There is also a clear distinction between the often-polarised positions of Ukrainian MPs and NGO members, who represent the top echelon of Ukrainian politics and grassroots leaders, respectively. The former are loyal to the current status quo, they are conservative in relation to the methods of implementation of the principle of balanced participation of men and women in the public and political processes, and they are sceptical about significant changes in the implementation of this principle in post-war Ukraine. The latter consistently criticise the existing order, they have radical views regarding the methods of implementation of the principle of balanced participation of men and women in public and political processes (they favour total gender quota), and they are optimists about the prospects of implementing this principle during the post-war reconstruction and modernisation of the Ukrainian society.

However, both groups of experts, together with other groups, unanimously note the high potential of women and men who have proved themselves as civil society activists after 24 February 2022, a potential that will allow a new generation to enter Ukrainian politics from the local to the national level to renew it and bring it closer to a model of balanced participation and inclusiveness. With this model being implemented in Ukraine, it will allow to come to a modern developed society, which in one form or another is integrated into the European economic and political space.

5. FUTURE TRENDS OF SOCIAL CHANGES ACCORDING TO THE END-OF-WAR SCENARIOS

The full-scale phase of the Russian-Ukrainian war has caused major social changes in the Ukrainian society that will have far-reaching consequences. This also concerns gender equality and balanced participation of women and men in public and political processes, as well as in all processes related to peace building and reconstruction. If we can identify the trends and predict their development in the future, we would have a better understanding of the processes and the ability to affect them, so that post-war Ukraine is built as a state of equal rights and opportunities.

The war factor makes long-term and short-term forecasting extremely difficult. The duration, intensity and scale of hostilities will determine the nature and dynamics of social transformations in Ukraine, including the degree of equality between women and men in all spheres of public life, at the national and local levels.

We can distinguish three main scenarios of the course of hostilities for the short-time perspective (until the end of 2024) according to which possible changes can be modelled.

The first scenario (scenario I) is a victory of Ukraine within the specified timeframe (that is by the end of 2024 or earlier) as a consequence of defeating the Russian army on the battlefield and/or as a result of internal destructive processes inside the aggressor state. A binding prerequisite for the implementation of this scenario is the de-occupation of the entire territory of Ukraine within the borders as of 24 August 1991. In the framework of the proposed scenario, it is assumed that the war with Russia will be over for the long-term perspective and that martial law in Ukraine will be terminated or cancelled.

In the second scenario (scenario II), the war will not end and hostilities will continue with greater or lesser intensity. The optimistic version of this scenario foresees that the frontline will gradually shift towards the Ukrainian-Russian border (as of 24 August 1991); in the pessimistic version, there will be no significant improvements compared to the current frontline. If events unfold according to this scenario, martial law in Ukraine would not be terminated or cancelled within the indicated timeframe and therefore, the return of public and political life to peaceful conditions will be impossible.

The third scenario (scenario III) is a “freezing” of hostilities as a result of the transition from predominantly military to political means of overcoming Russian aggression. Under this scenario, the cessation of active hostilities on the frontline and shelling of Ukraine’s territory by the aggressor state might be expected. At the same time, the entire territory of Ukraine within the borders

of 24 August 1991 will not be de-occupied (although the number of de-occupied territories may increase compared to the present), and the task of liberating the other occupied territories will be transferred to the political plane and most likely “postponed” to a more distant future. The advantage of such a scenario is the cessation of active hostilities and, as a result, a reduction in military and civilian casualties. However, under such conditions, the task of repelling Russian aggression will not be fully resolved but postponed for the long term. Thus, there will be a constant probability of the resumption of active hostilities and, in general, uncertainty about the future development of the country. Under this scenario, martial law in Ukraine may be lifted (although under certain conditions, it may be extended throughout Ukraine or in some regions) and public and political life may return to peacetime conditions but not to the extent as foreseen in scenario I.

Sociological studies show that up to 90% of Ukrainians are not ready to make any territorial concessions for the sake of a quick end to the war with the Russian Federation.⁶² Thus, in the perception of the Ukrainian people, victory will mean de-occupation of all territories captured by Russia.

In accordance with Article 19, part 1, of the Law of Ukraine on legal regime of martial law, martial law precludes election of the President of Ukraine, as well as elections to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the Verkhovna Rada of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, and local self-government bodies.

Thus, representation of women and men in elected bodies will not change significantly, if at all. However, it is during the war that preconditions will emerge that will determine the further progress or regression of equal rights and opportunities for women and men in public and political life.



Gender balance in government authorities at the central level

The expert survey shows that a substantial number of respondents consider that equal rights and opportunities for men and women in public and political life in the central government are respected (3.79 points out of 5).

The level of representation of women in the Verkhovna Rada and central executive agencies is generally considered as acceptable (3.67 and 3.65 points out of 5, respectively). However, it is seen as lower than that of men (4.69 and 4.63 points out of 5, respectively).

Some 39.5% of respondents (33.8% of women experts and 47.9% of men experts) believe that women do not experience gender discrimination at any level of public and political life. However, 30.3% of respondents (33.8% of women experts and 25.0% of men experts) are convinced that such discrimination is greatest at the central level of state power.

At the same time, 59.5% of respondents (59.7% of women experts and 59.2% of men experts) believe that the war and post-war reconstruction of Ukraine will give a chance to a new generation of women politicians to come to power at the central level. However, the number of those who believe that a new generation of men politicians will come to power is much higher (71.8%) (75.0% of women experts and 67.3% of men experts).

Under scenario I, one can expect a fast-moving recovery of the political process, which will significantly renew the personnel of the central government and allow women and men to fulfil their potential in politics. At the same time, the level of representation will not reach parity but the number of women

62. Available at www.kiis.com.ua/?lang=ukr&cat=reports&id=1133&page=1, accessed 6 October 2023.

may increase compared to the current situation. This will form a new generation of politicians in which men will have more opportunities for professional fulfilment, particularly, in decision-making processes. Increasing the number of women politicians is also possible thanks to women with military experience.

Political parties are likely to attract to their ranks women and men who were active in significant public sectors during the war (volunteers, military, doctors, etc.). These people will become key in representing new and old party brands. Current politicians who were active during the war stand a good chance of keeping their mandates, consolidating their positions and strengthening their political structures.

Scenario I opens the way to accelerated European integration. This creates conditions for a rapid implementation of anti-discrimination policies as part of the overall reform package (by analogy with the ratification of the Istanbul Convention).

Under scenario II, prospects for the political process to recover are pushed back, making the possibilities for redressing the gender imbalance at the central level less certain. Moreover, as world experience has shown, prolonged wars make it difficult for women to maintain their positions in the public and political spheres. In this case, their bolstering is out of the question.

Under scenario III, forecasting changes in gender balance at the central level of state power becomes more difficult because it depends on many additional factors that are difficult to predict in the current circumstances.



Gender balance in local authorities and local self-government bodies

The degree of observance of equal rights and opportunities for women and men in the activities of local authorities and local self-government bodies is assessed as satisfactory – 3.79 and 3.90 points out of 5, respectively.

The level of representation of women in local authorities and local self-government bodies is estimated at 3.76 and 3.86 points out of 5, respectively, while the representation of men is much higher – 4.61 and 4.58 points out of 5, respectively (Table 2).

According to 29.4% of respondents, women face significant gender discrimination in local authorities, while discrimination in local councils is noticeable only for 16.8% of respondents (Table 3).

Some 75.4% of respondents do not see regional differences in the opportunities for participation of women and men in public and political life.

The expert survey demonstrates positive expectations regarding the advent to power of a new generation of politicians – women and men – in the authorities at the regional and local levels (62.1% for women, 62.4% for men) (Table 13).

Under scenario I, we can expect rapid realisation of the potential of women and men in local governance. Moreover, there are greater chances to get gender-balanced representation in local governments.

Under scenario II, the prospects for balanced representation of women and men at the local level deteriorate as the ongoing war deepens the gap between their economic capabilities. Vertical segregation will also increase, with the balance of power between women and men being distorted in favour of the latter.

Under scenario III, changes in gender balance at the local level may be diverse and difficult to predict. There may be an increase in women's representation in the local authorities or, on the contrary, a decrease or preservation of the status quo.



Gender factor in public activities and volunteer movement

After the Russian invasion of Ukraine, volunteering and public activities have significantly increased. The results of the expert survey show that the representation of both men and women in NGOs, charitable foundations and volunteer movements is high (4.38 and 4.39 points on a 5-point scale, respectively).

According to the respondents, women politicians are particularly involved in volunteer activities related to the provision of social services to the civilian population (4.52 points out of 5), charitable activities (4.38 out of 5), volunteer activities related to the assistance to soldiers of the armed forces/territorial defence forces/security forces (4.36 out of 5), assistance to refugees outside Ukraine (4.36 out of 5) and social media activities (blogging) (4.25 out of 5).

At the same time, men politicians have a slightly different hierarchy of involvement: service in the armed forces/territorial defence forces/security forces (4.55 out of 5), service in central and local authorities (4.45 out of 5), co-operation with local self-government (4.38 out of 5), co-operation with central/local authorities/international organisations on the provision, distribution and delivery of humanitarian aid (4.28 out of 5).

Some 68.1% of women respondents and 75.4% of men respondents believe that volunteering and/or service in the armed forces/territorial defence forces/security forces in general can be a launching pad for a political career in the post-war period.

Some 78.2% of women respondents and 78.8% of men respondents are convinced that such activities will help boost the political careers of women and men who, before the war and at the beginning of the war, were already working for the government and/or were members of political parties.

Under scenario I, one can expect to convert public activity in the volunteer sector into political dividends. The involvement of men in public activities at the central level and the availability of greater financial resources will provide them with better starting opportunities. However, women have more opportunities to interact directly with voters, shaping their public opinion. This will allow them to gain considerable credibility and to be elected to elected offices. However, the distribution of public activities into men's and women's ones will remain.

Under scenario II, the prospects for successful participation of public activists and volunteers in the political process at the central and local levels are becoming more uncertain, as there is a tendency to reduce charitable activity of citizens in the event of a protracted war. Accordingly, the trust of the voters in volunteers and public activists will decrease. Women's access to resources will decrease. In particular, they will have to play the role of breadwinners and family caregivers for a longer time in the economic crisis. This will reduce their competitiveness compared to men.

Under scenario III, it is difficult to predict the degree of success of the entry into politics through public activities and volunteering due to the uncertainty that will be typical for a “frozen” war.

At the same time, some public activists (women and men who will have the opportunity/right) will consider going abroad and continue their activities remotely.



Economic power as a factor of balanced political participation of women and men

The economic crisis caused by the war impoverishes the population and reduces the opportunities for socially active women and men to fulfil their potential.

According to the State Statistics Service, as of November 2022, inflation in Ukraine is 25.7%.⁶³ By the end of 2022, it is expected to reach 30% and the economy is projected to fall by 32%.⁶⁴

The economic capacity of women is aggravated by the recruitment of men in the army, which shifts all family responsibilities to women. The unstable working mode of schools and kindergartens often prevents women from focusing on their work, which affects their employability and remuneration.

Under scenario I, one can expect a revival of economic processes in the country, an increase in the number of vacancies, an increase in the population’s income and the acceleration of the reunification of families separated by war. In such circumstances, women and men are more likely to have equal economic opportunities in the public and political spheres.

Under scenario II, the stagnation of the economy will continue, with population incomes falling or remaining unchanged. In such conditions, the imbalance of economic opportunities between women and men will be noticeable.

Under scenario III, the economic crisis might deepen, severely affecting the gap in women’s and men’s economic capacities. The degree of the gap will depend, *inter alia* on the opportunities to attract investment.

Horizontal segregation will also intensify, deepening the gender imbalance in those areas of employment that are more profitable. There will be vertical segregation, which will lead to an increase in the number of men and a decrease in the number of women in decision-making positions. Opportunities for combining professional and family life will deteriorate sharply. This will push women out of the public sphere and limit men’s participation in raising children.

All this will cause significant regression in achieving equal rights and opportunities in public and political life.

63. Available at <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-economy/3631031-spozivci-cini-z-pocatku-roku-zrosli-na-257-derzstat.html>, accessed 6 October 2023.

64. Available at <https://bank.gov.ua/ua/news/all/natsionalniy-bank-ochikuye-spovilnennya-inflyatsiyi-ta-zrostannya-ekonomiki-z-nastupnogo-roku--inflyatsiyinyi-zvit#:~:text=:text>, accessed 6 October 2023.



Impact of internal displacement on gender equality in public and political life

As of December 2022, according to the UN, more than 5.59 million people were internally displaced in Ukraine.⁶⁵ At least 60% of them are women.⁶⁶

Mass internal displacement has led to an excessive burden on the infrastructure of host communities, increased competition between the residents and newcomers for jobs, children's access to schools and kindergartens, and affordable housing.

It is difficult for socially active IDP women and businesswomen to restore their social and property status in the new community and compete with the residents who have long lived in the area.

Under scenario I, it can be expected that a significant part of IDPs will return to their homes, provided that the infrastructure and housing in their settlements are relatively preserved, and that minimum safe living conditions are available. It is there that they will try to fulfil their potential in public and political life.

Under scenario II, the majority of IDPs will remain in their new communities. It will be important to involve women and men IDPs in the public and political life of the host communities, including their participation in local elections, running for elected offices and developing local public initiatives. Ensuring gender equality in these processes will make it possible to leverage the human capital of IDPs for the benefit of the communities and to mitigate potential internal tensions and social conflicts.

Under scenario III, significant emigration of IDP women as well as IDP men, who are not subject to restrictions on leaving Ukraine, from their new communities abroad is likely to happen. They are less likely to return to their original communities. This will mean a loss of some of the country's human capital, with complex negative consequences.



Family reunification

According to OpenData Bot, from February to August 2022, 9.3 million people left Ukraine because of the war, and 7.4 million returned. The top-3 countries that sheltered Ukrainians are Poland (41.8%), Germany (20.7%) and Czech Republic (12.9%).⁶⁷ The majority of persons seeking shelter abroad are women.

Families are separated when men stay in Ukraine while women and children go abroad. This leads to a whole range of negative consequences:

65. Available at <https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/ukraine/>, accessed 6 October 2023.

66. Available at https://razumkov.org.ua/uploads/article/2022_Gum.pdf, accessed 6 October 2023.

67. Available at <https://opendatabot.ua/analytics/ukrainians-coming-back>, accessed 6 October 2023.

- reduction of economic capacity of women living abroad who have dependent children;
- psychological trauma for all family members and especially for children;
- increased risks of divorce in the future;
- loss of human capital for the country.

A study by Gradus Research (October 2022) indicates that 77% of respondents who are currently abroad want to return at the earliest opportunity, though 72% of respondents have the opportunity to stay abroad.

The main constraints to return are:



71%

absence of safe living conditions



30%

no paid work



20%

absence or loss of home in Ukraine⁶⁸

Under scenario I, it is likely that the vast majority of women and children will return to Ukraine and adapt quickly to post-war life. In this case, some of the returnees will be included in the country's public and political life, which may contribute to a better representation of women and men in the public authorities, local self-government bodies and non-governmental sector.

Under scenario II, most people who have fled the war will remain outside Ukraine. The longer the war lasts, the fewer Ukrainians will return home. The forced emigration of millions of women will have a negative impact on the gender balance at various levels of government and in NGOs.

Under scenario III, a significant loss of human capital is likely due to the adaptation of women to life in host countries, as well as due to the departure of men after the end of martial law for reunion with their families. This will further deepen the problem of inequality between women and men in public and political life.

68. Available at https://gradus.app/documents/311/Gradus_EU_wave_11_UA.pdf, accessed 6 October 2023.



Risks of multiple discrimination

In times of war, the risks of intersectional discrimination based on sex, race, ethnicity, age and other grounds increase.

Particularly vulnerable groups are:

- internally displaced older women and men;
- elderly rural women and men;
- internally displaced women and men with disabilities;
- internally displaced women and men from national minorities.

Other combinations of multiple discrimination are also present.

The expert survey shows that factors of internal displacement, disability and belonging to national minorities can restrict participation of women and men in public and political life.

At the same time, the protection of the rights of persons subjected to multiple discrimination may become one of the key issues of activities for politicians and public figures in the coming years.

Under scenario I, the transition to a peaceful life after the end of the hostilities will focus the efforts of the state and the civil society on addressing the causes of discrimination against women and disadvantaged groups. This will intensify their participation in Ukraine's public and political life.

Under scenario II, multiple discrimination will deepen and cover other categories of the population. The longer the hostilities last, the more noticeable it will be.

Under scenario III, the factors that cause multiple discrimination will still be present, although some discriminatory practices may be mitigated. However, the problem will remain relevant for an indefinite period and resources to overcome it will be limited.

In all three scenarios, the inclusion of people who are subject to multiple discrimination in Ukraine's reconstruction process can be a major area of work, enhancing the inclusiveness of the post-war environment.

The European integration of Ukraine will also contribute to minimising discriminatory practices, as the state should implement reforms and European standards in the field of inclusiveness. This, in turn, should strengthen the representation in the local and central authorities of persons from the categories subjected to multiple discrimination.



Consequences of the war crimes of the Russian Federation

During the war, the army of the Russian Federation and illegal groups controlled by it massively committed war crimes, including rape as a weapon of war against the civilian population and Ukrainian military personnel. According to the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine,⁶⁹ as of 1 December 2022, more than 39 000 war crimes have been recorded.

From the first days after the invasion, the Russian army made sexual violence a tool of warfare. It became massive in the temporarily occupied territories – a sign of crimes against humanity and war crimes. In most cases, the victims were girls and women of all ages, from teenagers to the elderly, although men of different ages were also victims of sexual violence.

From the large number of recorded war crimes and crimes against humanity, it can be seen that sexual violence by Russian military personnel is not an initiative of individual military personnel or commanders but is mostly part of a purposeful system of intimidation and destruction of the civilian population in Ukraine targeting both the victims and the witnesses of such acts.

To date, 154 criminal cases have been opened regarding crimes related to sexual violence committed by servicemen of the Russian Federation.⁷⁰ According to the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union,⁷¹ there are 100 times more such crimes.

Representatives of local self-government bodies, state authorities and activists, as well as their family members, were subjected to persecution and violence (from kidnapping and torture to murder) by the armed forces of the Russian Federation in the temporarily occupied territories. As of December 2022, some of the victims are still unaccounted for or information about their captivity is unavailable.

In addition, the occupying forces of the Russian Federation are carrying out targeted missile attacks on infrastructure facilities and buildings of state authorities throughout the territory of Ukraine.

Thus, representatives of local self-government bodies, state authorities and activists face significant risks in their daily activities, especially in settlements that are under temporary occupation or close to the frontline.

In all three scenarios, it is imperative to ensure that war crimes are documented and investigated to further prosecute those responsible.

Also, an important step should be made with regard to the provision of gender-sensitive support and rehabilitation to persons affected by war crimes committed by Russian military personnel. In particular, representatives of authorities, local self-government and public activists need now and will require further psychological support, especially those who have survived temporary occupation, captivity or hostilities. This will contribute to further continuation of their participation in public and political activities.

In such conditions, the issue of rehabilitation and adaptation of women and men, boys and girls, victims of sexual, physical and psychological violence, as well as other war crimes committed by Russian military personnel, should be one of the key tasks of the authorities at both the national and local levels.

69. Available at <https://warcrimes.gov.ua/all-crimes.html>, accessed 6 October 2023.

70. Available at www.gp.gov.ua/ua/posts/prokurori-vstanovili-vze-154-fakti-seksualnogo-nasilstva-z-boku-viiskovoslužbovciv-rf-onovleno, accessed 6 October 2023.

71. Available at <https://helsinki.org.ua/articles/seksualnykh-zlochyniv-ymovirno-v-100-raziv-bilshe-nizh-v-ofitsijnyy-statystytsi/>, accessed 6 October 2023.



Gender-sensitive approaches to the rehabilitation of military personnel of the Armed Forces of Ukraine

After the demobilisation of the military personnel of the Armed Forces of Ukraine due to manifestations of PTSD, there is a high probability of an increase in the number of cases of violence in the society.

To be noted, more than 40 000 women currently serve in the Armed Forces of Ukraine in military positions. More than 5 000 of them are fighting on the frontline. Among them are commanders of batteries, platoons, vehicles and detachments of unmanned aircrafts, as well as snipers.⁷²

Some 66 000 women defend the country at the front and in the rear working for the Ministry of Internal Affairs – in the National Police, the National Guard, the State Emergency Service, the State Border Guard Service and the State Migration Service.⁷³

In all three scenarios, it is necessary to develop a mechanism for physical and psychological rehabilitation of military personnel that will take into account the specifics and problematic aspects for both men and women.

Systemic public policy to combat domestic and gender-based violence must also take into account the long-term consequences of the war. Although in the first half of 2022, compared to the same period last year, the National Police of Ukraine recorded a reduction in the number of cases regarding domestic violence by 27.5%,⁷⁴ the factor of domestic violence in Ukraine does not disappear with the start of the full-scale war. The reason for the decrease in the number of such cases may also be the ongoing war. Measures should be taken both at the national and local levels so that cases of domestic and gender-based violence are not silenced, but reported, investigated and prosecuted.

In this context, theoretical developments, selection of specialists who may implement them in practice and long-term funding programmes are essential.

It is highly likely that new NGOs will emerge to represent the interests of war veterans, both women and men. This area of activity may serve as another lift for a further political career. In this context, a balanced representation of women and men in such organisations is important as well as their attention to the problems of the entire veteran community.

Respondents to the expert survey mostly tend to believe that the role and status of men and women in post-war Ukraine's public and political life will remain unchanged (43.8%), 32.6% of respondents expect improvements, 9%, on the contrary, believe that the influence of men on public and political processes will increase, and 9% of respondents predict an increase in the influence on public and political life of the combatants and the military in general.

Among the experts, 30.7% believe that the maximum number of measures has already been taken to ensure equal rights and opportunities for men and women in the regulatory and legal sphere.

72. Available at www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-society/3593218-u-zsu-prohodat-sluzbu-ponad-40-tisac-zinok-pat-tisac-iz-nih-na-peredovij.html, accessed 6 October 2023.

73. Available at <https://nv.ua/ukr/ukraine/events/u-sistemi-mvs-pracyuye-ponad-66-tisyach-zhinok-novini-ukrajini-50260148.html>, accessed 6 October 2023.

74. Available at <https://life.pravda.com.ua/columns/2022/11/29/251536/>, accessed 6 October 2023.

Along with that, the experts pointed to the measures that need to be implemented in the legislative framework to ensure equal rights and opportunities for men and women in Ukraine:

- maintaining the existing and introducing new gender quota (24%);
- practical implementation and improvement of the existing legislative framework (14.7%);
- informational, explanatory, educational and motivational campaigns (12%);
- introduction of real liability and punishment for violations of equal rights and opportunities for men and women (6.7%);
- practical implementation of the Istanbul Convention (4%);
- advocacy of gender-based budgeting (4%);
- legally ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men in the security and defence sector (2.7%);
- ensuring equal rights in the field of childcare and upbringing (2.7%);
- improvements in the legislation on maternity leave (2.7%).

At the same time, the experts believe that the most effective ways to ensure the right of women to participate in public administration and public decision making are the following:

- encouraging the participation in politics of women who are active in public life as volunteers, hold senior positions in business, the armed forces, education, science, healthcare, etc. (48.8%);
- implementation and monitoring of compliance with existing legislation (43%);
- wider introduction of quotas for women's representation in political parties, public councils, public administration, management of institutions and organisations (43%);
- further improvement of the legislative framework (38%);
- establishing clear rules to combat discrimination in the workplace (30.6%);
- introducing mentorship programmes for women pursuing a political career (28.9%);
- organisation of conferences, workshops, trainings on combating sexism, gender stereotypes and gender discrimination (20.7%);
- expanding women's access to the distribution of the budgets of communities and the state as a whole (16.5%);
- introduction of gender equality advisers at the top level of political parties (13.2%);
- introduction of gender budgeting (11.6%).

Thus, the most favourable scenario for further affirmation of equal rights and opportunities for women and men is scenario I, which suggests a victory of Ukraine in the short term. It creates a window of opportunity for the formation of an inclusive public and political environment, particularly for the lifts to promote new people to power, balance the representation of women and men at all levels of government, increase the opportunities for multiple discriminated groups, address violence against women and increase the economic capacity of women.

Scenario II is less favourable as it continues over time and intensifies the negative trends caused by the war. These are primarily impoverishment of the population, unemployment, separation of families and the like. As a result, society may face a regression in achieving equal rights and opportunities for women and men. This will require more time and effort, even to restore the status quo that existed before 24 February 2022.

Scenario III contains much uncertainty. However, it will have a rather negative impact on the achievement of gender equality as martial law might be in force for a long time, although some manifestations of the war will not be felt as acutely as in its hot phase. The consequence will be a deepening of inequality between men and women in the economy, in labour relations, in public and political decision making, aggravation of the problem of domestic violence, threats to personal security and the like. This will create an entire range of obstacles to further progress towards an inclusive society. Overcoming them will require considerable time and effort in the process of further reconstruction of post-war Ukraine.



6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The women's rights movement played a decisive role in the 20th century when it did not only significantly improve the overall situation of women but also of other social groups of people who faced systemic discrimination. Discrimination of vulnerable groups of people, including gender-based discrimination, intensified at the time of armed conflicts of the last century, the most extensive and deadliest in the history of humanity. Therefore, international law after the Second World War started to pay considerable attention to equality of men and women in all sectors of social life, in particular by the prohibition of gender-based discrimination and the progressive introduction of positive actions for the advancement of women as well as standards to combat violence against women and gender-based violence. Equal rights and opportunities for men and women, balanced participation in public life, social and political activity, and public governance are enshrined in a number of international legally binding acts.

In general, the international legal framework includes specific mandatory provisions and recommendations to enhance the balanced participation of women and men in decision-making processes, in particular during armed conflicts, conflict settlement and post-conflict recovery. A person is regarded, at the war and recovery stages, as a multidimensional personality with a number of features such as age, gender, health, place of residence, nationality, ethnicity, financial standing, etc. One's identification with a particular group is closely linked to the person's opportunities to exercise one's rights.

Democratisation processes during the period of Ukraine's independence and the public policy of equal rights and opportunities have strengthened the role of women in the country's political life. It was further promoted with the introduction of gender quota for political party lists. Typically, women's participation in the political life is characterised by a limited number of women in leadership positions: the higher up the managerial hierarchy, that is with more access to resources and power on a certain level, the lower representation of women. In contrast, the lower level positions, with lots of technical work but limited opportunities to manage resources and make important decisions, are mainly held by women. However, with the beginning of the full-scale invasion by the Russian Federation of Ukraine, demand has increased for more active involvement of women in decision making and implementation of critical public decisions.

The large-scale stage of the Russia-Ukraine war caused dramatic social changes in the Ukrainian society in 2022 and had an impact on gender equality and balanced participation of women and men in public and political processes.

According to the main scenarios of the further development and completion of the Russian-Ukrainian war (see Chapter 5), we can expect many months of the armed stage of the conflict, and destruction of settlements in the war zone causing significant problems for civilians or making it impossible for people to stay in these territories until a full peaceful life is fully restored there. One can also expect destruction of infrastructure, economic decline and a drop in living standards, growth of the level

of violence, which has a stronger impact on vulnerable groups of people, particularly on IDPs and refugees, most of whom are women.

On the other hand, the internal consolidation processes, mobilisation and self-organisation of the civil society amid the external aggression have increased women's public activity, primarily in CSOs, the volunteer movement and charity work. For some politically active women, this could be a launching pad for their political career. Representation and the role of women in the armed forces and law enforcement agencies has increased, too, and this will enhance the role women play in public and political processes in Ukraine in times of conflict.

Any change in the government's gender balance during the war and post-war recovery can only take place after martial law is lifted and elections are held. Changes favouring balanced gender participation will largely depend on the war ending scenarios and post-war integration of Ukraine into the European political space. If the war is protracted indefinitely, any progressive changes in gender-balanced participation will be unlikely. The government and the public should focus all their efforts on maintaining the existing system of positive steps (e.g., gender quota) in the legislation and election process, and further strengthening these legislative mechanisms and their practical implementation.

The economic situation and women's economic empowerment in particular are important elements to ensure equal rights and opportunities for men and women. According to the suggested possible scenarios of the development of events, this aspect will keep deteriorating with increased cumulative social implications, and this will primarily affect women and vulnerable groups. It brings to the forefront the need to develop and implement the mechanisms of targeted gender-sensitive social assistance to vulnerable groups of men and women so as to eliminate gender gaps in remuneration, gender segregation of the job market, the gap in access to technologies and financial resources, including credit facilities. It is vitally important to create a conducive business environment for women, especially in communities with a large number of IDPs.

A deteriorating economic situation and increased social problems will most likely have a negative impact on public and political activity of women from vulnerable groups, affecting their level of participation in political and public life. Therefore, assistance provided to vulnerable groups should focus on women with active social and political standing, women representatives of local self-governments and NGOs. Women, particularly those from vulnerable groups, should have better access to the humanitarian needs identification process, to shaping and implementing the economic recovery public policy at the national level and in their communities.

Investigation of war crimes, including gender-based sexual violence committed by the troops of the aggressor state against civilians, remains one of the top priorities. One should not ignore the growth of gender-based violence in the rear. Unimpeded access to justice and law enforcement authorities for victims of war crimes, sexual violence and gender-based violence during the war must be provided. Response systems to violence against women and domestic violence should be adapted to the challenges of war time, taking into account the victims' inability to turn to law enforcement agencies for assistance in the occupied territories, their limited access to mobile phone communication and internet, and stigmatisation of violence. Rehabilitation, psychological counselling and social assistance to the victims are important and necessary elements of gender-sensitive policy in time of war and during post-war reconstruction.

Large numbers of IDPs, most of whom are women, have fled the war to safe areas and other countries, so Ukrainian families have to stay separated for a long time, which affects the moral and psychological state of men, women and their children. It adds a burden to the women with children as they have

to take care of their children alone. The war increases the risks of multiple discrimination for elderly people in rural areas, IDPs with disabilities, elderly IDPs, and women and men IDPs representing national minorities.

The number of women in the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other military formations participating in combat has significantly increased, thus a mechanism of physical and psychological rehabilitation needs to be developed for military service personnel that will take into consideration specific problems of men and women, both combatants and veterans.

Under any scenario of war evolution, NGOs, volunteer organisations and local authorities will continue to play a key role in dealing with negative effects of discrimination and implementing recovery programmes in close contact with the communities. It is of paramount importance to ensure access for women's organisations and human rights organisations to the development of these programmes from the very beginning of their drafting and at the needs assessment stage.

Ukraine's European integration policy and its EU candidate status should also help to eliminate discrimination as the country will continue reforms and implement the European standards of inclusivity and equality as part of the commitments it has undertaken and undertakes as a member of the Council of Europe. Gender integration should be one of the cross-cutting principles in public policy development and implementation.

Most of the experts believe that Ukraine now has the necessary legal framework on equal rights and opportunities for men and women, including in their public and political life. However, there is a problem with the proper practical implementation and application of many relevant legislative provisions. Therefore, it is necessary to work more systemically and intensely to develop and adopt necessary by-laws and introduce effective mechanisms enabling practical implementation of the legislation on equal rights and opportunities. The central executive authorities should obviously play a leading role in these processes, with active participation of the civil society.

The expert survey reveals that a level of awareness and competence in the public and political sector regarding the guarantees of equal rights and opportunities for women and men is not enough. Many public and political actors show inadequate understanding of the essence and specificities of the gender realm, supporting many gender stereotypes, confusing gender-based discrimination with other types of discrimination, and substituting the provision of equal rights and opportunities for women and men with the protection of exclusively women's rights and interests. It is not uncommon for representatives of Ukraine's public and political sector to deny the existence of the problem of equal rights and opportunities for women and men, or the existence of gender-based discrimination, or they consider this issue insignificant.

The expert community and NGOs that are actively working on gender equality issues and have profound knowledge of them are quite far away from the public administration environment, especially on the local level. Hence, it would be appropriate to enhance information awareness efforts regarding enforcement of equal rights and opportunities for men and women among officials of public authorities and local self-governments. The specific nature of this target audience's work and perception should be taken into account, in order to respectively adjust the format, means and methods of conveying information. We believe that it is the government institutions in charge of gender policy that should spearhead this activity in close co-operation with relevant NGOs.

The large-scale aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine has triggered or exacerbated a number of problems that are more or less gender-related and lead to the emergence or a considerable increase of certain vulnerable groups. These vulnerable groups include in particular the following men and women (this list is not exhaustive):

- military personnel and representatives of other law enforcement agencies participating in combat;

- wounded and sick soldiers and law enforcement officers (both demobilised and in active service);

- imprisoned military personnel and civilians;

- family members of military personnel and other law enforcement officers participating in combat;

- family members of military personnel and other law enforcement officers who have been discharged (including the wounded ones);

- family members of military personnel and other law enforcement officers who died in the war;

- IDPs, persons and citizens of Ukraine who are abroad as refugees or using temporary protection;

- Ukrainian citizens staying in the temporarily occupied territories;

- residents of the active hostility areas (or former hostility areas);

- central and local government officials that have stayed or are currently staying in the temporarily occupied territories, in combat zones and temporarily displaced persons (within Ukraine or in other countries);

- victims of war crimes, including victims of war-related sexual violence;

- men subject to military service whose professional activity or education largely depends on foreign travel opportunities.

The above list is not exhaustive. Each of these vulnerable groups includes both women and men who have their own problems. Thus, it would be necessary to undertake in-depth studies of the issues faced by women and men from vulnerable groups. The needs of these people should also be considered when developing and implementing the national policy of post-war recovery. It can be based on the collected and processed gender-disaggregated statistics and information that would be analysed with the focus on Ukraine's regions and specific communities.

On the other hand, engaging women and vulnerable groups of people should be done not only by reflecting their needs in regulation but also by encouraging their participation in NGOs and political movements.

Though the experts have been quite positive in their assessment of the current state of equal rights and opportunities for men and women in public and political life in Ukraine, there is no doubt that the required gender parity has not yet been achieved and more efforts must be taken. We believe that potential ways of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men in public and political life should preferably include encouraging and promoting political participation of women who are civil activists. This approach enjoys a stronger consensus among various categories of public and political actors, both among men and women, and it can more effectively engage women in political activity.

One of the major findings of the expert survey is the recognition by most experts of a major role played by NGOs (particularly volunteer initiatives and charities) in the public and political life of the country, especially at the time of war. Despite the undoubtedly positive impact of this trend on the public and political life in Ukraine, it is necessary to consider the related risks and challenges, such as transformation of the current potential of NGOs and their public support into political decisions that would bring about solutions to the existing national problems. The main way to achieve this transformation is to have civil activists join the government as a result of elections. However, no elections can be held under martial law, so other mechanisms should be developed and applied to ensure the influence of the civil society on the search for individual local and national solutions.

Inclusivity of public and political processes in the post-war society will also depend on the capability of political parties to ensure equal participation of women and men in their activities, as well as engaging men and women members of insufficiently represented groups to join the parties and eventually put them on the election lists. It is important for political parties to continue developing their internal structures aimed at enhancing the leadership of youth and women after the war. Women members of political parties should directly affect the development of internal policies, not only through the formal establishment of women's sections but also by designing mechanisms for nominating candidates for the election lists and appointing the party's governing bodies.

7. ANNEXES

ANNEX 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE EXPERT SURVEY RESULTS

The results of the survey showed a relatively high rate of expert assessment regarding the level of ensuring the rights and opportunities for men and women in Ukraine, both in the pre-war period and at the present time, namely, 3.9 on a 5-point scale.

However, the experts divide over the situation with equal rights and opportunities for men and women: a relative majority (48.0%) of experts believes that no changes are in place compared to the pre-war period. However, 37.4% of experts note that the situation has fairly improved. On the contrary, 14.6% of experts stress that the observance of the gender equality principle has worsened in Ukraine since the war broke out. Opinions of experts belonging to different sexes are divided though: the majority of women point to certain improvements whereas men state that no significant changes have taken place.

Among gender equality challenges, experts mention employment issues, which are the most pressing now, according to 26.3% of respondents. For 14.7% of experts, the most pressing issues include women's underrepresentation in government authorities (in particular, in military administrations), and a low impact of women on decision making. According to 9.5% of experts, domestic violence, threats to personal safety, and safe living and working conditions in wartime are major problems. Some 20% of experts believe that there are no gender equality problems, or that they are insignificant.

Despite the evident problems, most experts tend to believe that the principle of gender equality is generally observed in public and political life of Ukraine: the average score is 4.0 on a 5-point scale.

Representation of men in key areas of public and political life in Ukraine is rated high by experts (4.4-4.7 out of 5, depending on the area), while representation of women is rated much lower (3.5-4.4 out of 5, depending on the area). Notably, men experts tend to "overrate" representation of women, whereas women experts, on the contrary, "underrate" representation of women.

The majority (58.1%) of experts believe that there is no systemic gender-based discrimination in Ukraine's political establishment and public administration. Nevertheless, 26.7% of experts flag systemic gender-based discrimination in Ukrainian's political establishment and public administration, while 13.3% believe that discrimination occurs on a case-by-case basis but is not systemic in general. As examples of systemic gender-based discrimination, experts cite mostly discrimination against women in appointments to senior roles; a low impact of women on decision making (14.4%); sexist language against women (4.8%); and gender stereotypes (2.9%). However, almost 40% of experts (47.9% of men and only 33.8% of women) believe that women are not discriminated against on the basis of sex in any area of political and public life.

More than three quarters of experts believe that there are no regional differences in Ukraine in terms of opportunities for women and men to participate in political and public life.

A relative majority of experts (30.7%) believe that priority measures have already been taken in the regulatory framework to ensure equal rights and opportunities for men and women in Ukraine. Measures most frequently suggested by experts in response to a relevant open-ended question include: keeping and introducing more gender quotas; implementing and improving the regulatory framework; conducting outreach and training; and encouraging activities.

Considering differences by sex and group affiliation of experts, the following generally accepted solutions can be key to ensuring women's right to participate in public administration and socially important decision making: encouraging political participation of women who are active in public life (volunteers, armed forces, business, education, science, healthcare) and implementing consistently the laws already in effect.

The following beliefs are consensual for all groups of experts:

- *publicly important decisions are more effective when both women and men are equally involved in decision making;*
 - *Ukrainian women find it easier to fulfil their potential in public activities rather than in politics.*
-

The expert community's basic perception of the issues raised in this study is currently taking place through the lens of these beliefs. Accordingly, any measure focusing on implementation of the gender equality principle in public and political life should take into account and build on these beliefs in outreach and media campaigns.

About two thirds of experts believe that women and men are equally motivated to engage in politics. However, 28.9% of respondents note differences in the motivation of men and women. According to the experts, such differences can result from gender-based psychological traits, values, behavioural patterns, as well as a stereotype that "politics is not a women's business". The majority of experts fairly remark that the differences in the political activism motivation, even in terms of values and psychological traits, are mostly individual rather than gender-based in modern Ukrainian society.

According to the experts, so-called men's roles in political and public life are now mainly service in the armed forces/territorial defence forces/security and law enforcement agencies, work in government authorities at the central and local levels, co-operation with local authorities, expert advisory work and consulting (including in the mass media), co-operation with government authorities and organisations on the provision, distribution and delivery of humanitarian aid. "Women's" roles include volunteering, helping refugees outside Ukraine and charity.

Almost 76% of women experts and only about 47% of men experts expect that gender equality will be on Ukraine's post-war agenda. A relative majority of men (53.1%) believe this issue will not be more relevant after the war. Representatives of associations and local councillors expect more than MPs and officials of local executive authorities that gender equality will be more relevant in post-war Ukraine.

Almost half of the experts (46.2%) believe that there will be no changes in the role and status of men and women in private life after the war. Some 43.8% of experts do not expect significant changes in the role and status of men and women in political and public life.

The vast majority (about 90%) of experts believe that volunteering and/or service in the armed forces/territorial defence forces/other security and law enforcement agencies in wartime can be a "launching pad" for the political career of women and men regardless of whether they have had prior experience in politics.

Experts who are engaged in humanitarian aid distribution or are otherwise familiar with this process generally share the opinion that the parity of men and women representing local authorities is in place when distribution decisions are made, according to 83% of experts who answered this question. However, about 24% of women experts, 27% of MPs, 13% of local councillors, 20% of the representatives of local executive authorities and 21% of representatives of associations note that this parity is only partial or is not there at all. Therefore, this issue is pressing (although not pervasively) and needs to be addressed.

In total, 85% of experts have interacted with regional or district public and/or military administrations regarding public and political issues, protection and assistance to the people who find themselves in difficult life circumstances (IDPs, people with disabilities, orphans, the elderly, etc.). This experience of interaction was mostly positive, but the representatives of local executive authorities and associations mention some negative experiences as well. Learning the lessons and improving assistance provision procedures are some objectives for further research.

As to the most vulnerable groups whose limited capacity can potentially be a barrier to participation in public and political life, the experts note that these groups include primarily people with disabilities (both men and women). Moreover, the women experts and representatives of associations designate the displaced women and men as vulnerable groups that have limited opportunities to participate in public and political life in the regions to which they have moved.

All local officials, both women and men, who find themselves in difficult life circumstances in wartime face similar problems. Key issues in priority order are: 1) security; 2) normal living conditions; 3) psychological assistance; and 4) possibility to exercise their mandate.

The need for new political parties as a niche for the next generation of women politicians, which is a trend of the war/post-war period according to the experts, is somewhat more relevant for the men experts, as well as for MPs and representatives of associations.

ANNEX 2.

EXPERT SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The “Gender equality and balanced political participation and representation of women and men in post-war political and public processes in Ukraine: challenges and perspectives” expert survey was commissioned by the Council of Europe and conducted by research company Sociopolis (contract No. 8803/2022/11).

SURVEY PERIOD:

from 16 September to 2 December 2022, with the field phase lasting from 17 October to 12 November 2022.

SURVEY GOAL:

to evaluate the status and perspectives of the balanced participation and representation of women and men in political and public life in Ukraine in the war and post-war period from the perspective of immediate participants of political and public life (officials of government authorities, local self-government authorities, civic activists, etc.).

SURVEY TARGET AUDIENCE:

the immediate participants of political and public life in Ukraine (representatives of government authorities at the central and local levels, local self-government bodies, political parties, charitable foundations, volunteer initiatives, CSOs, including those focusing on the protection of women’s rights and the promotion of public and political participation of women).

PRIMARY SOURCE DATA COLLECTION METHOD:

semi-structured expert interview.

SURVEY MODALITY:

To ensure maximum representative sampling of the target audience, the survey was conducted in the following ways (at the expert’s choice):

- an online survey (the expert filled in the questionnaire online);
- a paper survey (the expert filled in and sent back a questionnaire sent to them in electronic or paper form).

EXPERT SELECTION CRITERION:

direct active participation in Ukraine’s political and public life (in particular, through their work for the government at the central and local levels, local self-government bodies and associations) in the period before 24 February 2022 and in the wartime after 24 February 2022.

TOTAL REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE:

124 experts.

REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE STRUCTURE:

To make a sample there were used the following metrics:

1. expert's affiliation with participants of political and public life in Ukraine;
2. political party affiliation;
3. the region(s) where the expert participates in political and public life;
4. expert's sex.

Against the first metric (expert's affiliation with participants of political and public life in Ukraine), the following four main categories of experts were selected:

- MPs of Ukraine;
- elected officials of local self-government bodies (regional, district, city, village councillors; mayors);
- officials of local executive authorities (government authorities at the local level or executive bodies of local councils);
- representatives of associations (political parties, civil society associations, including CSOs focusing on the protection of women's rights and the promotion of women's participation in public and political life; charities and foundations; volunteer initiatives).

Some experts selected for the survey entered several of the above categories at once (for example, civic activists who are local councillors; officials of local executive authorities who are local councillors, etc.). When analysing crosstabs on survey results by category of experts and the nature of their political and public activism, the researchers included answers of these experts into all attributable categories. For example, if a particular expert is a civic activist and a local councillor, their answers are taken into account in both the analysis of the answers of civic activists and the analysis of the answers offered by local councillors.

In total, the survey covers answers from 15 MPs; 70 local councillors (including 11 experts who are also officials of government authorities at the local level or executive authorities of local self-government bodies, and 12 experts who are representatives of associations); 28 officials of government authorities at the local level or executive authorities of local self-government bodies (including 11 experts who are also local councillors and three experts who are representatives of associations); 37 representatives of associations (including 12 experts who are also local councillors and three experts who are officials of the government authorities at the local level or executive bodies of local self-government authorities). If taken together, these numbers exceed the total number of experts covered by the survey (124 experts), since particular experts are included into two categories at once for reasons outlined above.

According to the second metric (political party affiliation), the experts selected to take part in the survey included members of all political parties represented in the parliament, as well as members of certain political parties that are not represented in parliament but are represented in local councils. In particular, experts who took part in the survey include members of the Servant of the People, European Solidarity, Batkivshchyna, Holos, Za Maibutne, Svoboda, Vitaliy Klitchko's UDAR, Symchyshyn's Team, Vilkul Bloc-Ukrainian Perspective, and other political parties. Meanwhile, the survey did not engage members of political parties banned in Ukraine as of the time of the survey. Experts with no political party affiliation are covered by the survey as well.

According to the third metric (the region(s) where the expert participates in political and public life), the experts selected to take part in the survey included representatives of all major regions in Ukraine: West, Centre, East and South. Moreover, the survey engaged officials of the government authorities at

the local level, local self-government authorities, associations whose activities are related to the areas newly liberated after 24 February 2022, and those whose activities are related to non-government-controlled areas as of and/or after 24 February 2022.

Against the fourth metric (expert's sex), the sample structure is as follows: women – 74 experts (59.7% of the total number), men – 50 experts (40.3%).

Mixed methods were used for sampling: purposive sampling and snowball sampling.

If an expert declined to participate in the survey, they were substituted by an expert with similar characteristics: type of public and political activity, political party affiliation, region of activity and sex.

SURVEY PHASES:

1. developing the questionnaire;
2. conducting a pilot survey (interviews with a small number of experts);
3. adjusting the questionnaire and survey methodology on the basis of the pilot survey results;
4. sampling experts;
5. conducting the main phase (interviews with the experts);
6. data coding, entry and statistical processing;
7. analysing and consolidating information, preparing the report.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The survey authors guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality to the participants of the survey. Personal data of the experts will not be published. The survey was in compliance with international standards and national laws on personal data protection and privacy. In particular, the authors used appropriate technical safeguards to prevent accidental loss, destruction, damage, alteration or disclosure of personal data during processing. All answers given by experts were used exclusively for research purposes and presented in the survey results only in a generalised or depersonalised form.

ANNEX 3.

EXPERT SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Sir/Madam,

Within the framework of the research study commissioned by the Council of Europe, research company Sociopolis conducts expert interviews to explore the current state of play and perspectives for ensuring equal rights and opportunities for men and women in political and public life during wartime and the post-war period. We kindly ask you as a person who is actively engaged in the political and public life of the country to take part in this questionnaire. We guarantee the confidentiality of the information provided by you, which would be used only for research purposes in summarised and anonymised form. The questions included in this questionnaire do not contain right or wrong answers but are aimed only at exploring and detecting challenges and possible solutions for ensuring a balanced participation of women and men in political and public life both at community and country levels. Your participation in this questionnaire will bring our victory closer and contribute to the reconstruction of Ukraine by joint efforts of women and men.

1.1. Your full name
1.2. Your principal place of employment
1.3. Your position
1.4. Are you a local councillor (oblast/rayon/city/town/village council)? If so, in which council?
1.5. Please indicate the administrative territorial units (an area) where you are active in political and public life
1.6. Your sex <input type="radio"/> 1 Woman <input type="radio"/> 2 Man
1.7. Your age at your last birthday
1.8. Your marital status <input type="radio"/> 1 Single <input type="radio"/> 2 Married <input type="radio"/> 3 Other:
1.9. Do you have children under 18 living with you? If so, how many?
1.10. Date of completion: / /

2. In your opinion, to what extent are equal rights and opportunities for men and women in general ensured in Ukraine at this moment (during wartime)? And to what extent were equal rights and opportunities for men and women ensured before the Russian invasion on 24 February 2022? Please rate it on a 5-point scale, where 1 means equal rights and opportunities for men and women are not ensured at all (were not ensured), and 5 means equal rights and opportunities for men and women are fully ensured (were ensured).

Extent to which equality of rights and opportunities is ensured now	
Extent to which equality of rights and opportunities was ensured before the Russian invasion on 24 February 2022	
Your comments:	
<hr/> <hr/>	

Note: In every "Your comments" box in this questionnaire, you can elaborate on your answer or make comments to the question.

3. In your opinion, to what extent has the situation with the observance of the principle of equal rights and opportunities for men and women in Ukraine changed compared to the time before Russia's full-scale military aggression on 24 February 2022? What exactly has changed?

- 1 Significantly improved
 2 Somewhat improved
 3 Generally, it has not changed
 4 Somewhat deteriorated
 5 Significantly deteriorated

What exactly has changed?

4. In your opinion, what are the major problems today (during wartime) regarding the equality of rights and opportunities for women and men?

5. In your opinion, to which extent are equal rights and opportunities ensured for men and women in public and political life in Ukraine during wartime? Please rate it on a 5-point scale, where 1 means equal rights and opportunities for men and women are not ensured at all and 5 means equal rights and opportunities for men and women are fully ensured.

Area of activity	Extent to which equal rights and opportunities for men and women are ensured
5.1. Public and political activity in Ukraine in general	
5.2. Activity of central government authorities	
5.3. Activity of local government authorities	
5.4. Activity of local self-government bodies	
5.5. Activity of political parties	
5.6. Activity of CSOs (in general)	
5.7. Volunteer activity	

Your comments:

6. In your opinion, at this moment, how good is the level of representation of men and women in the following areas of political and public activity? Please rate it on a 5-point scale, where 1 means that the level of representation is quite low and 5 means that the level of representation is fair enough.

	<i>Representation and participation of men</i>	<i>Representation and participation of women</i>
6.1. In Ukrainian politics in general		
6.2. In the Ukrainian Parliament		
6.3. In central government authorities		
6.4. In local government authorities		
6.5. In local self-government bodies		
6.6. In governing bodies of political parties		
6.7. Among rank-and-file members of political parties		
6.8. In governing bodies of civil society groups (CSOs, charitable foundations, volunteer movements)		
6.9. Among rank-and-file members of civil society groups (CSOs, charitable foundations, volunteer movements)		

Your comments:

7. In your opinion, is there systemic gender-based discrimination against both men and women in Ukraine's contemporary political establishment or public administration? If yes, please give examples of the respective violations.

8. In your opinion, at which level of political and public life do women face the most discrimination on the grounds of sex? Choose one or two options.

- 1 Legislature
- 2 Central government authorities
- 3 Judiciary
- 4 Local government authorities (including military administrations)
- 5 Local councils
- 6 Executive authorities of local councils
- 7 Leadership of political parties
- 8 Leadership of local organisations (branches) of political parties
- 9 Leadership of civil society groups (CSOs, charitable foundations, volunteer movements)
- 10 Women are not discriminated against on the grounds of their sex at any level of political and public life

Your comments:

9. In your opinion, are there any regional differences in Ukraine as to the opportunities for women and men to participate in political and public life (at different levels of such political and public life)? If yes, how do these differences play out? In which regions is the situation more favourable or less favourable for men or women?

- 1 In general, there are no regional differences in Ukraine as to the opportunities for women and men to participate in political and public life
- 2 There are slight regional differences in Ukraine as to the opportunities for women and men to participate in political and public life

What are the regions and what are the differences?

- 3 There are significant regional differences in Ukraine as to the opportunities for women and men to participate in political and public life

What are the regions and what are the differences?

Your comments:

10. What priority measures are needed in the regulatory framework to ensure equal rights and opportunities for men and women in Ukraine?

11. In your opinion, what are the most effective tools to ensure women's right to participate in public administration and public decision making? Please select up to three answers.

- 1 Further improvement of the regulatory framework
- 2 Implementing and monitoring compliance with existing legislation
- 3 Wider application of quotas to ensure women's representation in political parties, public councils, government authorities, leadership of institutions and organisations
- 4 Enabling wider participation of women in budget allocation at a community and national level
- 5 Mentorship/counselling programmes for women starting a political career
- 6 Encouraging political participation of women who are active in public life as volunteers or hold senior roles in business, the armed forces, the educational sector, science, the healthcare system, etc.

7 Organising conferences, seminars, workshops, training sessions on combating sexism, gender stereotypes and gender-based discrimination

8 Introducing positions of gender equality advisers to the leadership of political parties

9 Gender budgeting

10 Introduction of clear rules to combat discrimination in the workplace

11 Other

Your comments:

12. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following perceptions on a 5-point scale, where 1 is fully disagree and 5 is fully agree?

Perceptions	Score
12.1. Predominantly men's and women's fields of activities objectively exist in a society.	
12.2. There is a special "women's" style of management, which is different from a men's style.	
12.3. Women and men have different roles in society, whether we like it or not.	
12.4. Women and men have different roles in the family, whether we like it or not.	
12.5. Women and men have different roles in public administration, whether we like it or not.	
12.6. Women in government positions are less prone to corruption than men.	
12.7. Men in government positions are less prone to corruption than women.	
12.8. When engaged in public and political activity, women are more responsive to the interests of ordinary citizens, if compared to men.	
12.9. When engaged in political and public activity, men are more responsive to the interests of ordinary citizens, if compared to women.	
12.10. Women politicians are more likely to compromise and to resolve conflicts, if compared to men politicians.	
12.11. Women executives are usually less ambitious and less determined than men executives.	
12.12. Danger and challenges demotivate and discourage women politicians to a greater extent as compared to their men counterparts.	
12.13. Danger and challenges demotivate and discourage men politicians to a greater extent as compared to their women counterparts.	
12.14. In terms of personal traits, a woman politician is different from an "average woman" to a greater extent than a man politician from an "average" man.	
12.15. The balanced representation of women and men in the government authorities is not crucially important and it can have a negative impact on the effective governance.	
12.16. Women are better at managing and distributing resources and aid because of their experience within family.	
12.17. Men are better at managing and distributing resources and aid because of their professional experience.	
12.18. Having a family with children is a barrier for a successful political career of a woman.	
12.19. Having a family with children is a barrier for a successful political career of a man.	

<i>Perceptions</i>	<i>Score</i>
12.20. The higher the level of the managerial hierarchy, the less likely a woman is to hold a position at this level, if compared to a man with similar experience and competence.	
12.21. Ukrainian women find it easier to fulfil their potential in public activities than in politics.	
12.22. Ukrainian men find it easier to fulfil their potential in public activities rather than in politics.	
12.23. Women tend to be more publicly active during wartime and less active in the aftermath of the war.	
12.24. Men tend to be more publicly active during wartime and less active in the aftermath of the war.	
12.25. Women and men have different experiences, so their equal participation in decision making helps to achieve a balance of public interests.	
12.26. Publicly important decisions are more effective when both women and men are equally involved in decision making.	
12.27. Women and men should be equally represented in government, in proportion to gender ratio of the country's population.	
12.28. In these very challenging times, we need the "firm hand" of a man to run the country.	
12.29. In Ukraine, women working in central government authorities are paid less in general than men holding the same positions.	
12.30. In Ukraine, women working in local executive authorities or in local self-government bodies are paid less in general than men holding the same positions.	
13.1. What issues, in your view, are only or mostly specific to women (and not men) participating in political and public life in Ukraine during wartime?	
13.1.1. In central government authorities	
13.1.2. In local authorities/local self-government bodies	
13.1.3. In political parties	
13.2. What issues, in your view, are only or mostly specific to men (and not women) participating in political and public life in Ukraine in wartime?	
13.2.1. In central government authorities	
13.2.2. In local authorities/local self-government bodies	
13.2.3. In political parties	

14. In your view, to what extent are Ukrainian politicians (women and men) engaged in the following areas of public and political life during wartime? In the table below, score a relevant area from 1 to 5, where 1 means a generally very low level of engagement and 5 means a generally very high level of engagement.

<i>Area of activity</i>	<i>Women politicians</i>	<i>Men politicians</i>
14.1. Work in government authorities at the central and local level		
14.2. Co-operation with local self-government bodies		
14.3. Expert advisory and consulting		
14.4. Engagement by media as experts and speakers		
14.5. Activity in social media (blogging)		
14.6. Volunteering related to social services for civilians		
14.7. Volunteering related to support provided to the Armed Forces of Ukraine/territorial defence forces/security and law enforcement agencies		
14.8. Service in the Armed Forces of Ukraine/territorial defence forces/security and law enforcement agencies		
14.9. Co-operation with central/local authorities and/or international organisations on the provision, distribution and delivery of humanitarian aid		
14.10. Helping refugees outside Ukraine		
14.11. Charity		

Your comments:

15. Do you think there are differences in the motivation of women and men to engage in politics? If so, what are the differences? How can this motivation of both men and women be changed after the war?

16. Do you agree that women politicians are more likely than men politicians to abandon their political careers due to war-related circumstances? Why?

1 Yes 2 No

Your comments:

17. Do you expect that the issue of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for men and women in Ukraine will be higher ranked on the agenda after the end of the war?

1 Yes 2 No

Your comments:

18. In your opinion, how will the role and status of men and women change in post-war Ukraine?

18.1. In private life

18.2. In public and political life

19. In your opinion, how will the role of women and men change in decision-making processes in the central and local authorities in post-war Ukraine?

- 1 The role of women will fairly grow and the role of men will go down accordingly
- 2 The role of women will grow a bit and the role of men will go down accordingly
- 3 The role of men will fairly grow and the role of women will go down accordingly
- 4 The role of men will grow a bit and the role of women will go down accordingly
- 5 There will be no significant changes in the role that women and men play in decision making

Your comments:

20. Do you believe that volunteering and/or service in the armed forces/territorial defence forces/other security and law enforcement agencies during wartime can be a “launching pad” for the political career of women and men with no prior experience in politics in post-war Ukraine?

20.1. Women

- 1 Yes, definitely
- 2 Yes, under certain conditions (specify which conditions)
- 3 In general, no

Your comments:

20.2. Men

- 1 Так, безумовно
- 2 Yes, under certain conditions (specify which conditions)
- 3 In general, no

Your comments:

21. Do you believe that volunteering and/or service in the armed forces/territorial defence forces/other security and law enforcement agencies during wartime can help to boost the political career of women and men who before the war and at the outbreak of the war had already worked for a government authority and/or were engaged into activities of political parties?

21.1. Women

- 1 Yes, definitely
- 2 Yes, under certain conditions (specify which conditions)
- 3 In general, no

Your comments:

21.2. Men

- 1 Yes, definitely 2 Yes, under certain conditions (specify which conditions) 3 In general, no

Your comments:

22. Have you been directly engaged in, or are you familiar with, the decision-making processes on distribution of state and non-state humanitarian aid among the population?

- 1 Yes 2 No [go to question 23]

22.1. If you answered “yes” to the previous question, then, in your opinion, are men and women (representatives of local authorities) equally engaged in the decision-making processes regarding the distribution of state and non-state humanitarian aid among the population?

- 1 Always 2 In most cases 3 Partially and partially not
 4 In most cases not 5 Never

Your comments:

23. Have you ever interacted with regional or district public and/or military administrations regarding public and political activities, protection and assistance to people who found themselves in difficult life circumstances (IDPs, people with disabilities, orphans, the elderly, etc.)?

- 1 Yes 2 No [go to question 24]

23.1. If you answered “yes” to the previous question, how could you describe your experience?

- 1 Mostly positive 2 Positive rather than negative 3 Both positive and negative
 4 Negative rather than positive 5 Mostly negative

Your comments:

24. In your opinion, is there a problem of limited opportunities for participation for the following groups of men and women in political and public life? If yes, how does it occur or manifest itself?

<i>Categories of women and men</i>	<i>Yes, there is</i>	<i>No, there is not</i>
24.1. Women IDPs (in the regions where they have moved to)		
24.2. Men IDPs (in the regions where they have moved to)		
24.3. Women with a disability		
24.4. Men with a disability		
24.5. Women representing national minorities		
24.6. Men representing national minorities		

Your comments:

25.1. In your opinion, what problems that are specific only or mostly to women (not men) do the following groups of women face nowadays?

25.1.1. Women representing local authorities who stay in the occupied territories non-controlled by Ukraine

25.1.2. Women representing local authorities in the newly liberated areas

25.1.3. Women representing local authorities in the war zone and in the frontline areas under Ukraine's control

25.1.4. Women representing local authorities who have become IDPs or left the country

25.2. In your opinion, what problems that are specific only or mostly to men (not women) do the following groups of men face nowadays?

25.2.1. Men representing local authorities who stay in the occupied territories non-controlled by Ukraine

25.2.2. Men representing local authorities in the newly liberated areas

25.2.3. Men representing local authorities in the war zone and in the frontline areas under Ukraine's control

25.2.4. Men representing local authorities who have become IDPs or left the country

26. In your opinion, is there a chance that the next generation of women and men politicians will come to power in Ukraine as a result of the war and in post-war reconstruction? More than one answer is possible.

26.1. The next generation of women politicians will come to power

1 Yes, at the level of national government

2 Yes, at the level of regional and local government

3 Yes, as leaders of existing political parties

4 Yes, as members of new political parties

5 No, everything will remain as it is

Your comments:

26.2. The next generation of men politicians will come to power

1 Yes, at the level of national government

2 Yes, at the level of regional and local government

3 Yes, as leaders of existing political parties

4 Yes, as members of new political parties

5 No, everything will remain as it is

Your comments:

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.....

27. What is your political affiliation at present?

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28. If you have ever held an elected position or stood for election as party candidate, could you specify which party in particular?

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.....

29. Are you a member of any civil society organisations? If yes, which one(s)? What is your position in this/these civil society organisation(s)?

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30. Were you/are you engaged in voluntary activity during the war? If yes, what kind of activities?

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Our survey is over. Thank you for your participation!

The full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 and the ongoing armed aggression posed unprecedented new challenges to Ukraine. In particular, these challenges are related to ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men in public and political life and decision-making processes from the highest levels of power, local self-government to the civil society environment. The increase in the number of the population in unfavourable situation and suffering the consequences of war determines the need to find new ways as regards ensuring and implementing citizens' civil and political rights both in the electoral process and beyond it.

This study focuses on international standards and experiences of different countries regarding the role and participation of women and men in decision-making processes during armed conflicts, peace building and post-war recovery.

The authors consider possible scenarios of the development of events and analyze the impact of the war on the state of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men in Ukraine in the context of public and political participation, in particular, taking into account the factors of large-scale migration processes, the economic and social consequences of the war, the growing needs for the rehabilitation of veterans, as well as for overcoming multiple discrimination.

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