



HUMAN RIGHTS,
DEMOCRACY
AND THE RULE OF LAW

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

DROITS DE L'HOMME,
DÉMOCRATIE
ET ÉTAT DE DROIT

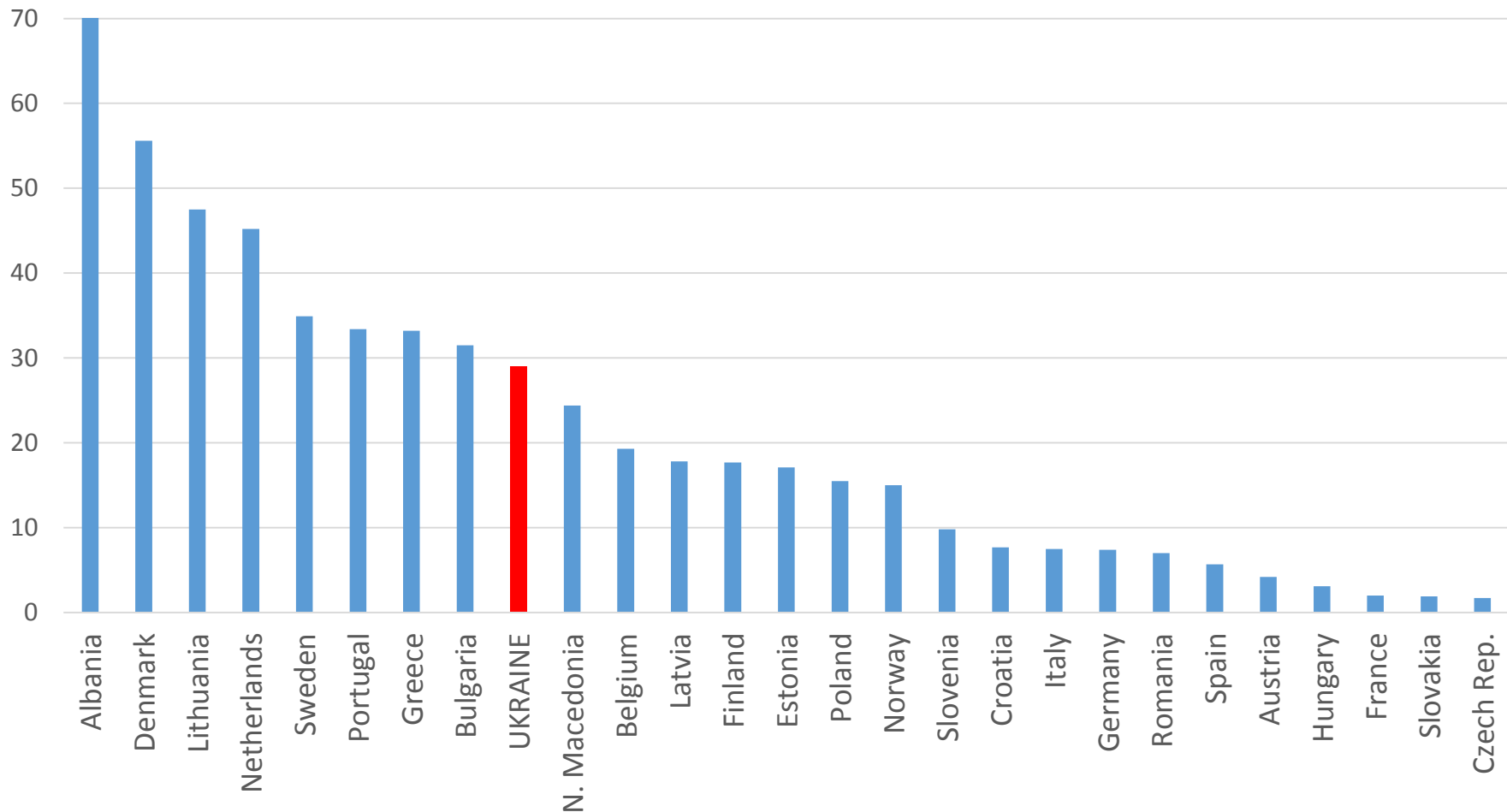
Impact of the decentralisation reform on national minorities in Ukraine in the selected regions: Chernivtsi, Odesa and Zakarpattia oblasts

- Mostly on-line study due to pandemics restrictions
- Sources of information:
 - Survey of public opinion
 - Collection of data on ethnic structure of local politicians and administration
 - 39 in-depth interviews in 3 oblasts (some with multiple respondents)
 - Local councillors and elected heads of administration
 - Regional state administration, oblast councillors
 - NGOs (incl. minority organisations)
- Selection of oblasts due to ethnic composition
 - The highest proportion of non-Ukrainian residents except of Crimea (incl. Sevastopol), Donetsk and Luhansk

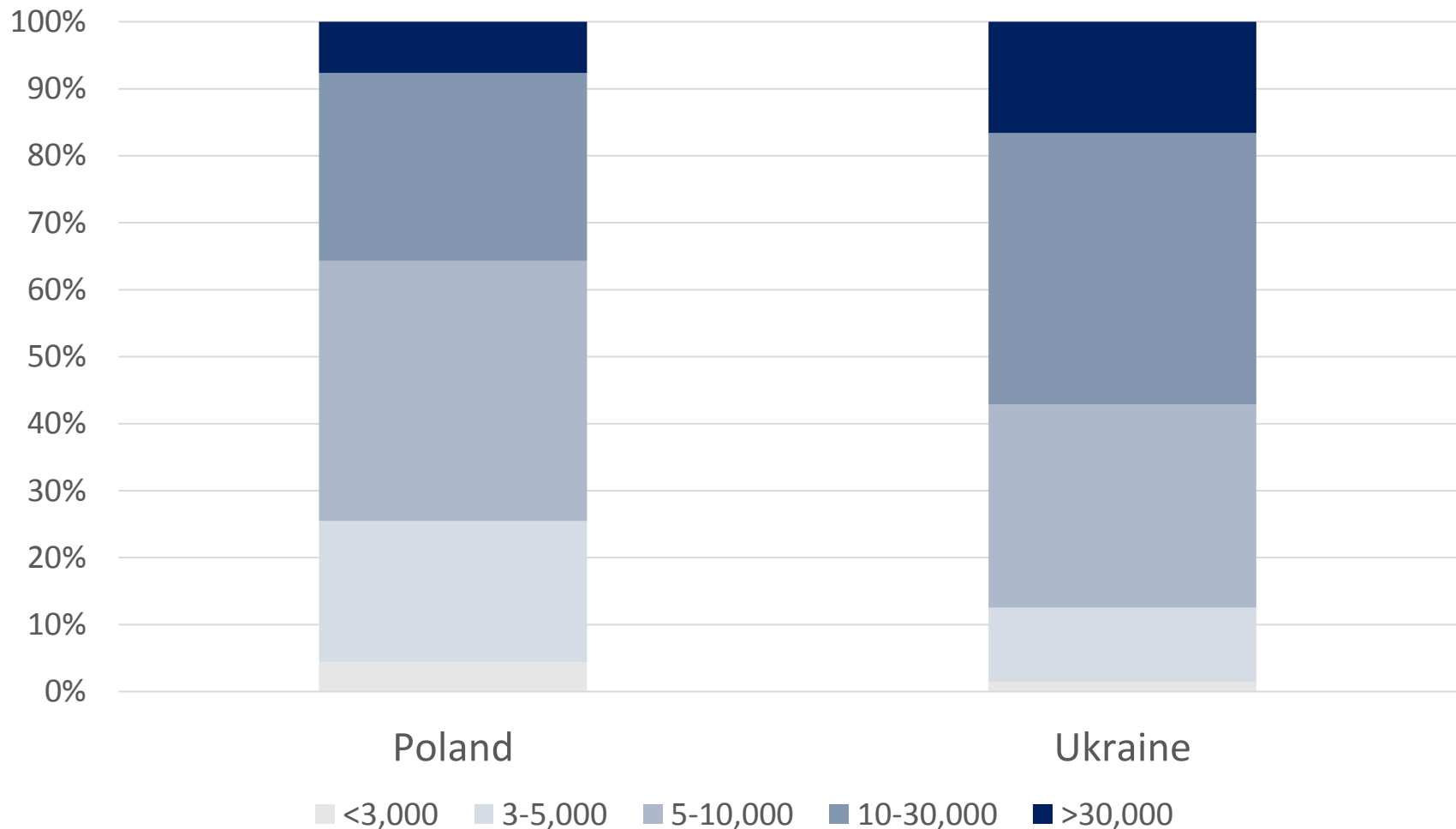
- In several cases:
 - Lower representation of non-Ukrainian minorities in local authorities (councillors, heads of administration)
 - Lower share of students in schools teaching in other languages

- **Decentralisation reform – territorial amalgamation**
- Municipal tier – from over 11,000 (incl. occupied territories) to 1,470 (incl. Kyiv City) in 2015-2020 period
 - Reduction by ca. 5,000 in the voluntary phase
 - Further reduction by further ca. 5,000 in compulsory phase
 - Only 19 local governments with less than 3,000 population (the smallest ca. 1,800)
 - Mean population size increase from just over 4,000 to 29,000 persons, (including Kyiv City), median size 11,600
- Rayon tier (incl. cities of oblast significance) from over 600 to 136
- Municipal tier – one of the most radical amalgamations in Europe in 21st century (only Georgian 2006 reform was more radical)

Mean size of municipal governments in European countries

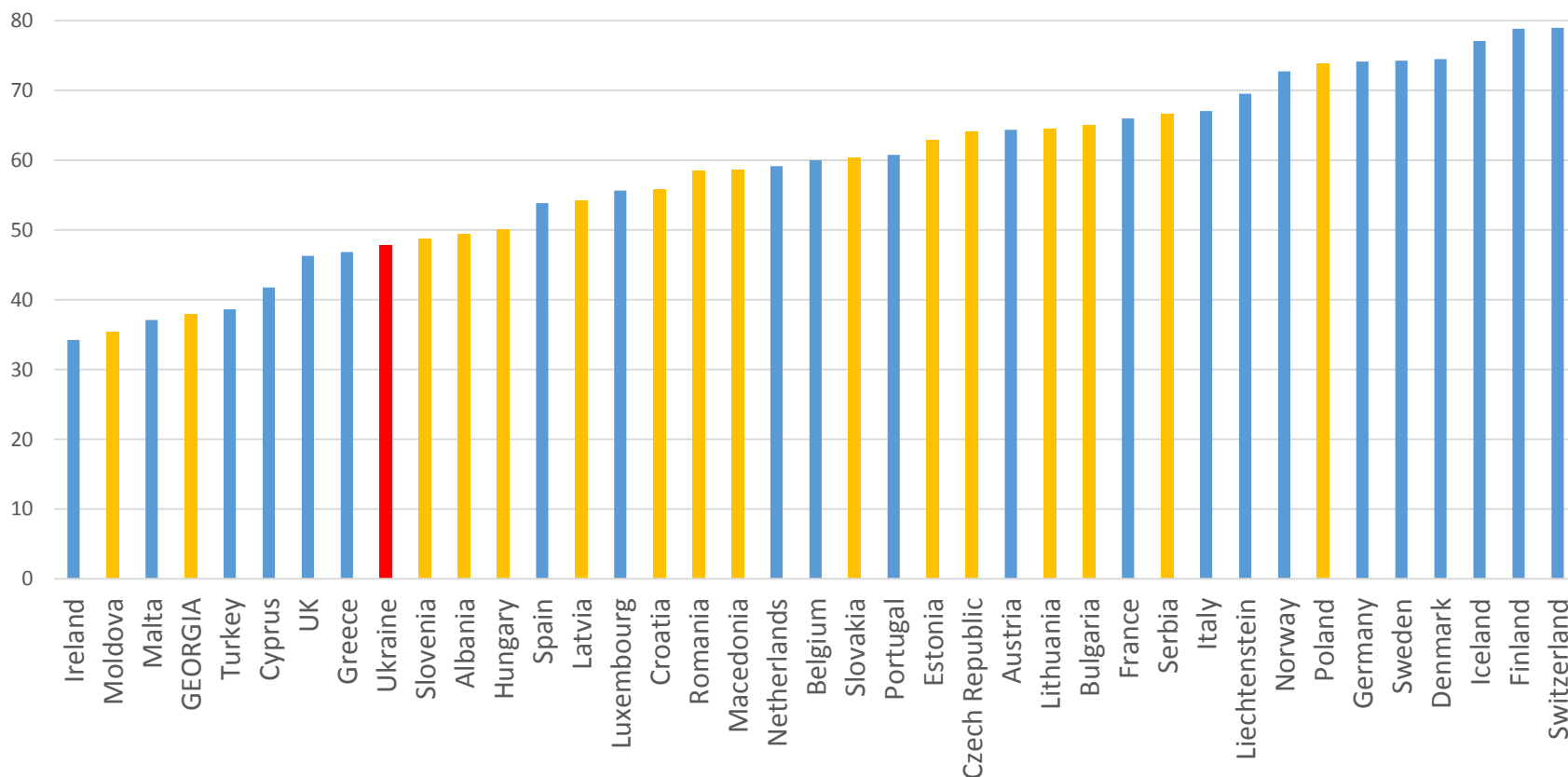


Structure of municipal governments by population size



- **Not only the mere fact of amalgamation**
- Large proportion through the voluntary (incentivized) process
- Significant functional decentralisation (taking over most of former rayon functions)
- Financial reform
 - New sources of revenues
 - Inclusion in the inter-governmental transfer system
- General increase in the level of local autonomy

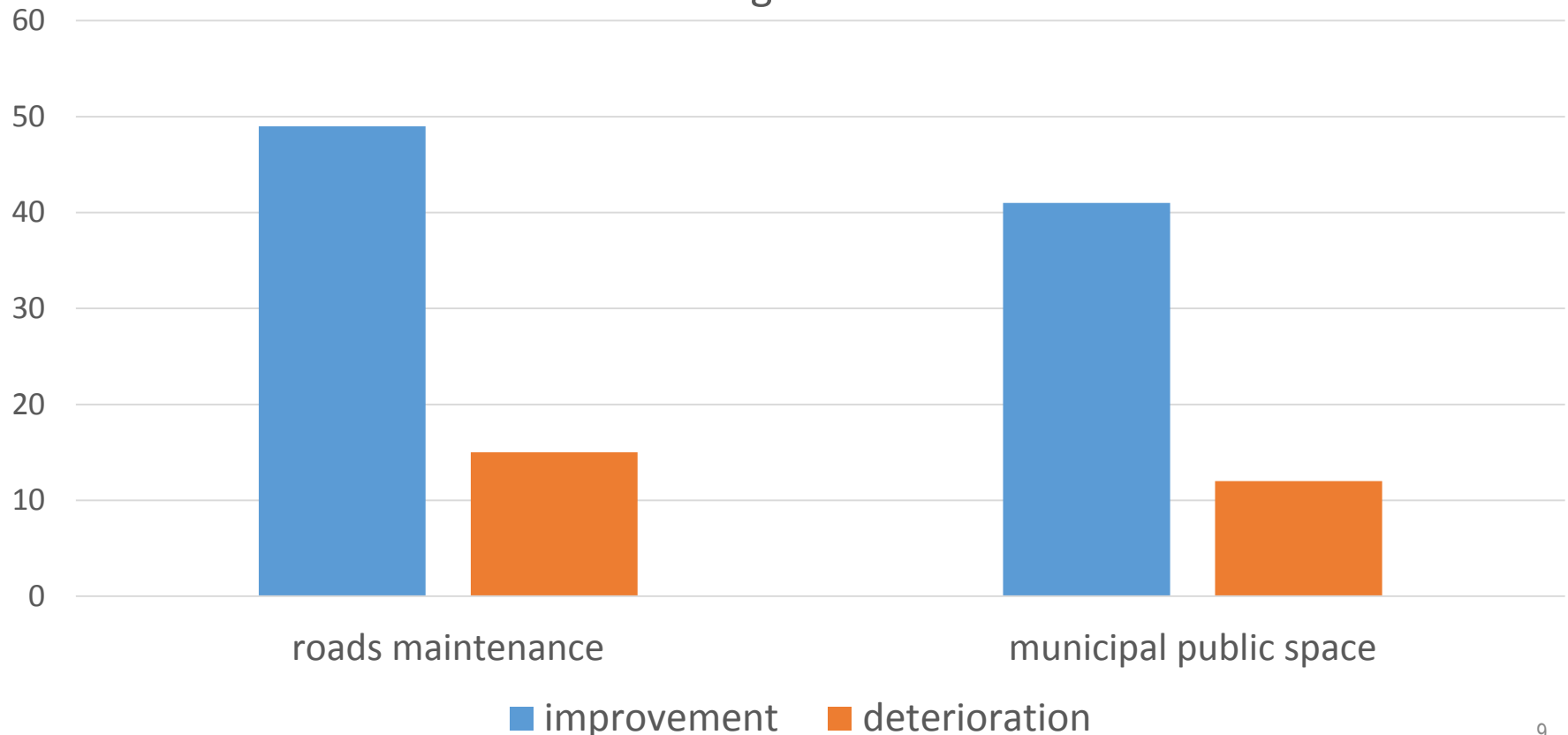
Local Autonomy Index - 2014



2020?

- Decentralisation reform largely positively assessed through public opinion and local elites. e.g.:

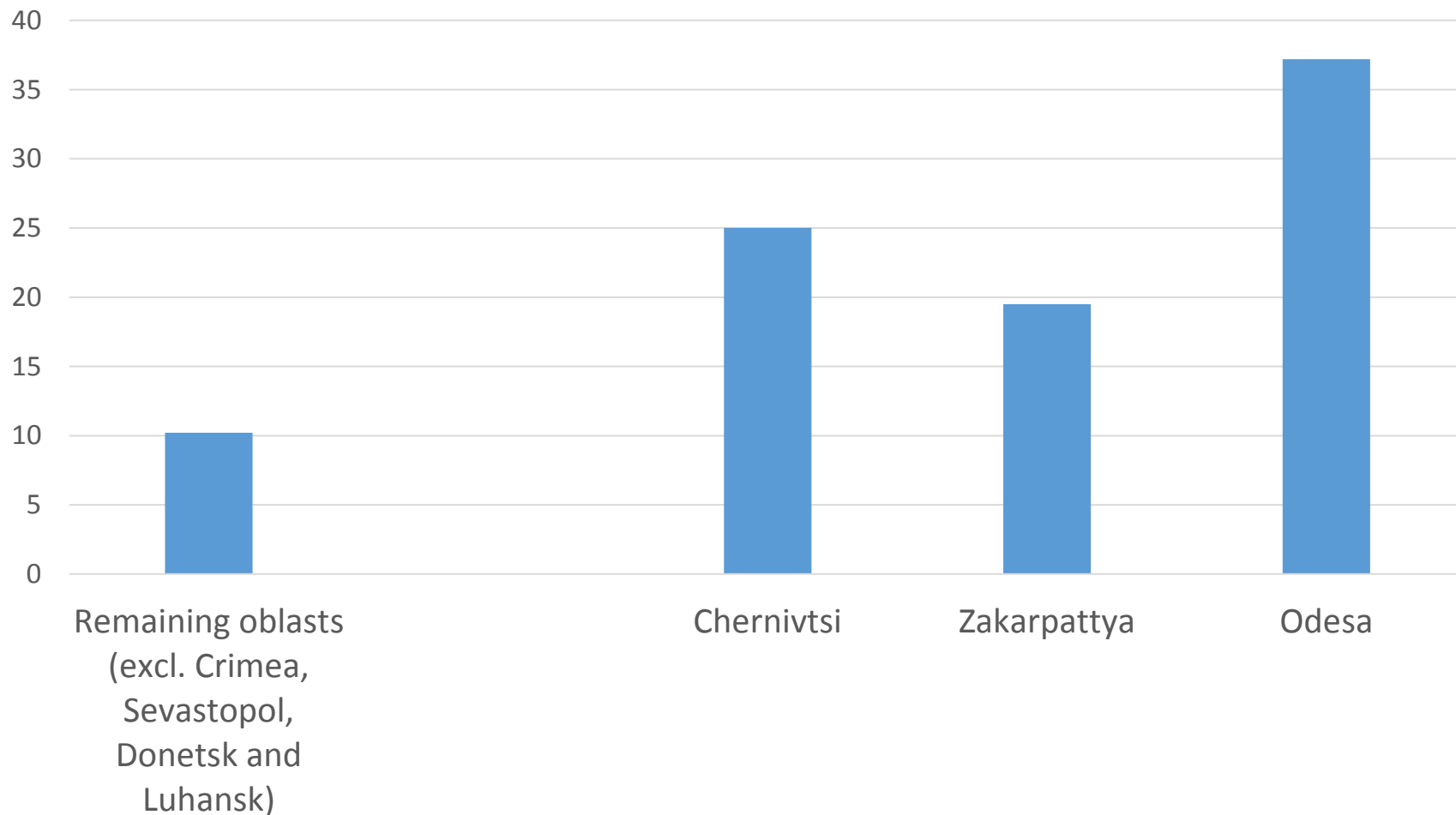
Public opinion on changes in local public services after amalgamation



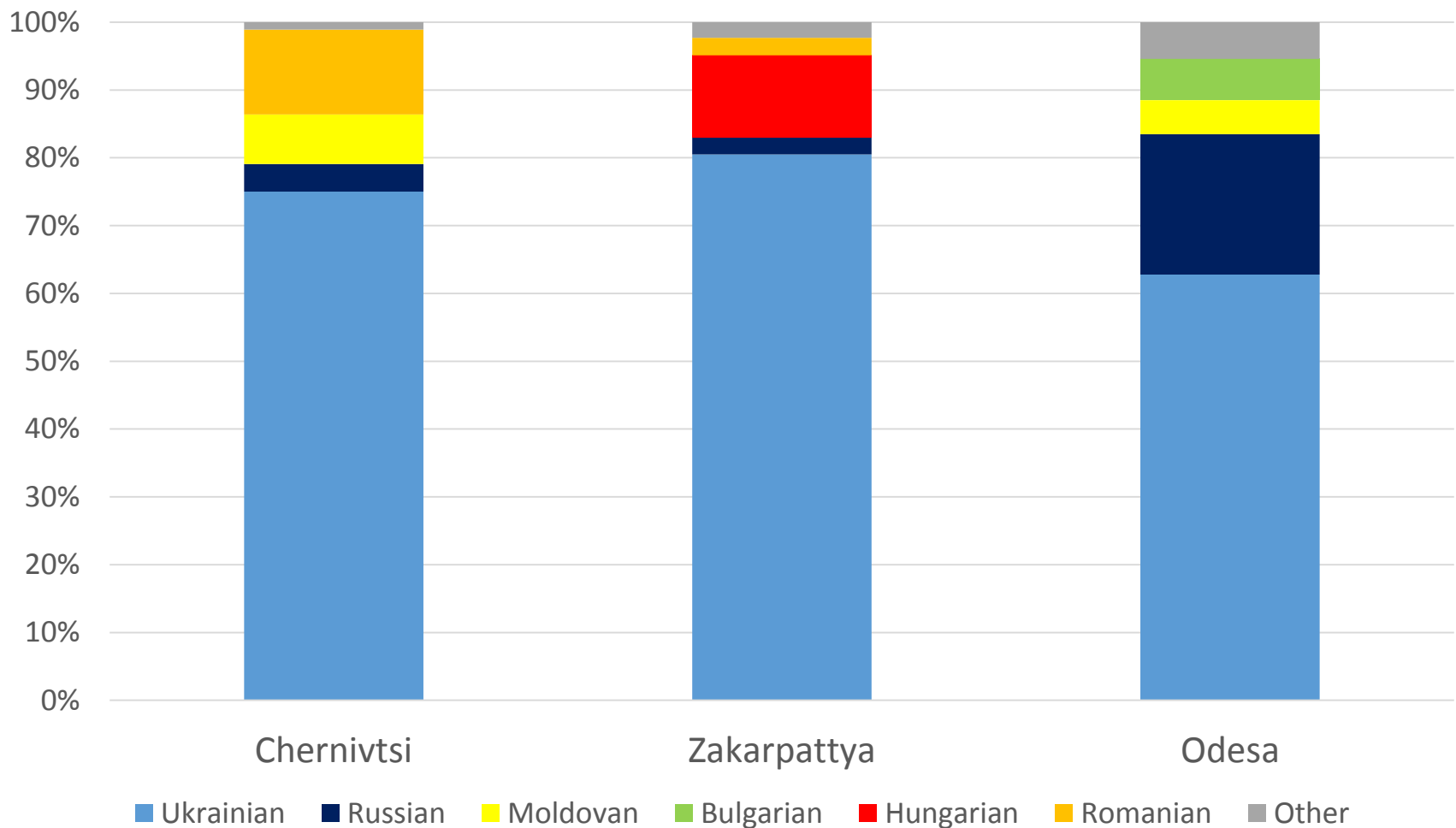
- National minorities (concentrated in particular territories) may have a bigger impact on provision of services due to functional and financial decentralisation which are of a key importance for everyday life of local communities
- Critical comments
 - Not sufficient information in the initial stage
 - Fear of unemployment among formal local public administration
 - New election rules for a 10,000+ voters'

- Representatives of polyethnic ATCs in all the target regions were more likely to share a positive attitude toward the reform outcomes than representatives of regional or national minorities' NGOs
- Confusion over distinguishing impact of decentralisation and other (parallel) interlinked, but separate reforms – education, health care
- Increasing level of interest in consultative mechanisms and instruments of civic participation
 - positive examples identified in the three oblasts are individual initiatives rather than the outcome of a coordinated and comprehensive strategy

Proportion of citizens of non-Ukrainian nationality

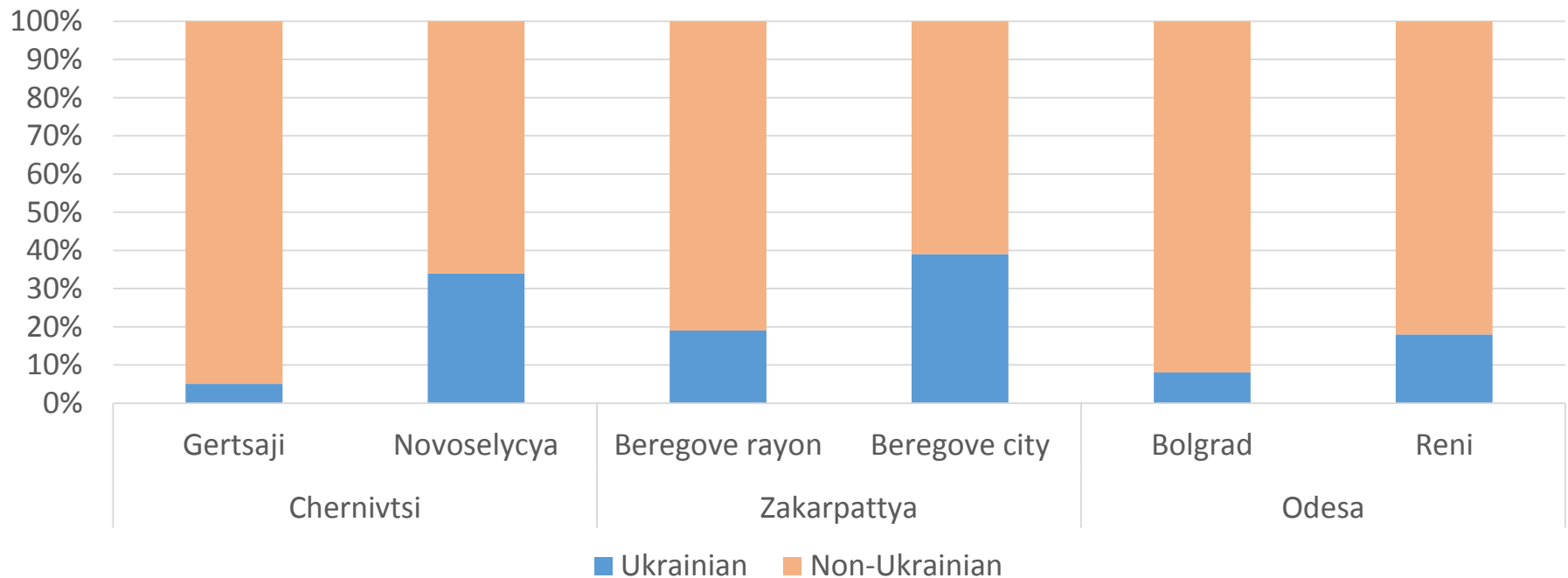


Ethnic structure of 3 researched oblasts (2001)



- In researched oblasts 13 rayons in which ethnic Ukrainians constituted less than half of populations
 - 3 in Chernivtsi
 - 2 in Zakarpattia
 - 8 in Odesa

Ethnic composition of population in selected rayons



- Recommendations – 1
- Monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of the decentralisation reform
- Ensure clear division of powers and responsibilities between the State and local authorities as well as between different tiers of local government
- Consider revision of legislation relating to local elections to ensure representation of all communities in local elected assemblies
- Improve legal framework on sub-municipal units protecting identity and representing interests of small communities

- Recommendations - 2
- Enhance financial and legal instruments to ensure availability and quality of education at schools teaching in minority languages
- Strengthen legal framework on the protection of national minorities
- Expand legal framework on participatory democracy, promote use of the existing relevant tools and enhance targeted capacity building and awareness raising interventions

