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COUNTRY GENDER PROFILE UKRAINE

EU4GENDEREQUALITY
REFORM HELPDESK

JULY 2023



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This publication was produced in the framework of the “EU 4Gender Equality Reform Help Desk” project, funded by the European Union and implemented by NIRAS. The Reform Helpdesk aims to ensure effective and equal results for women and men in six Eastern Partnership countries – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus**, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine – by expanding the use of gender analysis in decision-making and reforms.

[**The project does not provide support to the Government of Belarus; it only supports the EU Delegation and civil society].

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ATC	Amalgamated territorial community
CGP	Country Gender Profile
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CLIP	Country Level Implementation Plan
CMU	Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine
CRSV	Conflict-related sexual violence
CSO	Civil society organisation
EU	European Union
EUD	Delegation of the European Union to Ukraine
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GAP III	Gender Action Plan III of the European Union for 2021–2025
GBV	Gender-based violence
GDI	Gender Development Index
GEWE	Gender equality and women's empowerment
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GRB	Gender-responsive budgeting
IDPs	Internally displaced persons
ILO	International Labour Organization
KSU	Key spending unit
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MP	Member of Parliament
NAP	National Action Plan
NAPA	National Academy of Public Administration under the President of Ukraine
NAUCS	National Agency of Ukraine for the Civil Service
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NGU	National Guard of Ukraine

NPU	National Police of Ukraine
PAR	Public administration reform
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SES	State Emergency Service of Ukraine
Sida	Swedish International Development Agency
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and mathematics
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VRU	Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine
WPS	Women, peace and security
WRO	Women's rights organisation



1. INTRODUCTION

This Country Gender Profile (CGP) provides a snapshot of gender equality issues in Ukraine as of July 2023. It summarises achievements in the field of gender equality, as well as barriers to equality and gender inequalities that persist, analysing their root causes and suggesting recommendations to address them. This is an updated version of the Country Gender Profile developed in 2021 and follows the same basic structure.

While Ukraine was making good progress on advancing gender equality and women's empowerment, the full-scale Russia's invasion has completely changed the landscape. Overall, almost no major backlash to the gender equality agenda – which numerous gender experts and women's rights organisations (WROs) warned of – has been observed during 2022-2023. Gender equality remains one of the Government of Ukraine's priorities. Nevertheless, the war has brought multiple challenges that add to pre-existing gender inequalities in Ukrainian society – notably, the increase in the prevalence of gender-based violence, and the deteriorated access of different groups of women to necessary services, among others. Therefore, it is important to extend support to the Government and civil society to ensure that gender transformations are sustainable, and that women and men equally contribute to and benefit from post-war recovery and development processes in Ukraine.

1.1. Methodology

The methodology of this Country Gender Profile combines various types of methods to undertake its complex analysis of gender equality in Ukraine. Given that the scope of the assessment encompasses all aspects of gender equality in the country – including the public sector, the private sector, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), academia and public sentiment – the methods employed aim to provide a holistic overview of all the possible gender implications across key sectors.

The selected methodology seeks to enable the development of recommendations for the updated Country Level Implementation Plan (CLIP) of the European Union (EU) Delegation to Ukraine, alongside recommendations for the EU Delegation on supporting the Government of Ukraine (hereinafter referred to as 'the Government') and civil society on gender mainstreaming.

The methods used to develop this updated Country Gender Profile include a desk review and interviews/consultations with experts, officials, representatives of civil society and other stakeholders, as well as a peer review of the findings included in the updated Country Gender Profile. These methods are discussed in detail below.

The framework for the gender analysis methodology used here is rooted in the European Commission's Gender Action Plan III (GAP III) Brief no. 1, 'Gender country profile and gender sector analysis' of February 2021. The brief provides practical guidance on carrying out gender analysis in order to inform Country Gender Profiles. As requested by the brief, this Country Gender Profile:

- i) provides an account of the country's legal and political context related to gender equality;
- ii) identifies and documents key gender discrepancies, barriers and challenges, focusing on the thematic areas of the GAP III;
- iii) collects available gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data in all of the areas covered by the profile;
- iv) identifies key entry points and opportunities for gender interventions;
- v) provides an overview of specific conflict-related and pandemic-related gender issues;
- vi) maps key actors operating on gender equality; and
- vii) proposes conclusions and recommendations for the EU Delegation in terms of developing a Country Level Implementation Plan and supporting the Government and civil society.

1.1.1. Specific methods used

A **desk review** was the key method used for developing this updated Country Gender Profile. The desk review involved the analysis of available surveys, statistical data, legislation, assessments and reports on gender equality in Ukraine, including the gender-related aspects of the sectors listed in the outline. These sources cover the 2018–2023 period. Wherever possible, priority is given to the most up-to-date data and information. Official statistical data on demographics, education, employment, the gender pay gap, and access to decision-making in public service were augmented by surveys conducted by private research companies and international organisations. All available recent gender surveys produced by the Government, international development partners and other stakeholders were collected and their findings are summarised in this updated Country Gender Profile.

An important limitation is that after the full-scale Russian invasion, the Government (namely, the State Statistics Service) stopped publishing new official statistical data disaggregated by sex. Therefore, the latest official sex-disaggregated data available dates to the end of 2021. This lack of up-to-date sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics poses a challenge to gender equality interventions. Support is required for the collection and analysis of such data, in consultation with the Government and when national security concerns allow.

To corroborate and supplement findings from the desk review, approximately 20 interviews and consultations were conducted with gender experts, representatives of civil society (most notably women's rights organisations), the Government Commissioner for Gender Equality Policy and her Office, representatives of other government institutions, as well as representatives of international organisations and development partners. These interviews provided insights on specific issues related to gender equality in Ukraine.

Finally, the draft of the updated Country Gender Profile was peer reviewed by the EU4Gender Equality Reform Helpdesk's experts in Ukraine.

2. NATIONAL CONTEXT

2.1. Gender aspects of demographic situation

Because of the full-scale war, no official statistics on the population size has been available since early 2022. As of 1 January 2022, the population of Ukraine reported by the State Statistics Service was about 41 million people. Since the State Statistics Service stopped publishing statistics after 24 February 2022, the only available data on the population size is the estimate of the Institute of Demography and Social Research, which estimates that as of 1 January 2023, the population of the government-controlled part of Ukraine was 28–34 million people.¹ There is such a large deviation in this estimate because no concrete data is available on how many people have left Ukraine since 24 February 2022, and how many remain abroad.

As of May 2023, the Ministry of Social Policy has officially registered 4.9 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ukraine. However, according to the Government, the real number is estimated at about 7 million people.² According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), over 5.4 million people are displaced internally, and 63% of these internally displaced persons are women, while 37% are men.³

OCHA also estimates that more than 8.2 million refugees from Ukraine have fled to European countries,⁴ most of whom are women and children. Available surveys reveal similar findings, indicating that half of all Ukrainians who have gone abroad are children, while the majority of adults (83%) are women, largely between the ages of 35 and 49 (42%). According to the Institute of Demography and Social Research, 70% of Ukrainian women refugees have attained higher education.

¹ Danylov, O. 'As of January 1, 2023, the population of Ukraine was 28-34 million', *Mezha*, 7 April 2023. Available at: <https://mezha.media/en/2023/04/07/as-of-january-1-2023-the-population-of-ukraine-was-28-34-million/>.

² Pryshlyak, N. and V. Prokhorenko, 'Ukraine overcame the crisis threshold in terms of the number of IDPs: Vereshchuk clarified the figures', *UNIAN*, 3 April 2023. Available at: <https://www.unian.ua/society/vereshchuk-utochnila-skilki-vpo-zareystrovano-v-ukrajini-v-berezni-12167304.html>.

³ International Organization for Migration, *Registered IDP Area Baseline Assessment Ukraine – Round 21*, IOM, Geneva, February 2023. Available at: <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/ukraine-area-baseline-assessment-raion-level-round-21?close=true>.

⁴ OCHA, *Ukraine Humanitarian Response 2023: Situation Report*, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, New York, May 2023. Available at: <https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/ukraine/>.

Over 5.85 million Ukrainian refugees have registered for temporary protection or similar national protection schemes in different European countries.⁵ In addition, about 3 million Ukrainians have left or have been deported to Russia. As of March 2023, 50% of Ukrainian refugees 'definitely plan' to return to Ukraine, and 24% 'rather plan' to return. The most important supportive factors for their return are the end of the war (51%), and no fighting or airstrikes in their native city/region (34%). Economic factors are also important, including the opportunity to find a well-paid job (28%) and a higher standard of living in Ukraine (20%).⁶

Information from the Ministry of Social Policy reveals that the number of working Ukrainians (10.7 million) in March 2023 was roughly equal to the number of senior citizens (10.8 million) – a first in the country's history. These figures are up from 16 million and 12.2 million, respectively, in 2020.⁷ Due to the full-scale war and resulting demographic trends, this ratio is expected to deteriorate further.

Before the war, women accounted for 54% of Ukraine's population (23.69 million), and men accounted for 46% (20.45 million).⁸ The main drivers of this gender gap were the migration of young men, which outnumbered the migration of young women, alongside a huge difference between the life expectancies of women (76.2 years) and men (66.4 years) as of 2021.⁹ Moreover, 69.3% of Ukraine's population lived in urban settlements, while 30.7% lived in rural areas.

Negative population growth ratio is explained by the decrease in the number of births. While in 2021, a total of 271,000 children were born in Ukraine, in January–November 2022, only 195,000 children were born.¹⁰ A certain number of children were born to Ukrainian mothers outside Ukraine, but the exact number is unknown, as is the prospects of their returning to Ukraine in the foreseeable future.

From 24 February 2022 to 4 June 2023, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) recorded 24,425 civilian casualties in Ukraine (8,983 persons killed and 15,442 injured). Disaggregating this data by sex reveals that 4,030 men, 2,397 women, 276 boys and 215 girls were killed, while the sex of 31 killed children and 1,934 adults cannot yet be determined.¹¹ OHCHR recognises that these figures reflect the serious underreporting of casualties suffered by Ukraine's people.

⁵ UNHCR, 'Ukraine Refugee Situation', 18 July 2023. Available at: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>.

⁶ Mykhailyshina, D. 'What will stimulate Ukrainian refugees to return home', *Ukrainska Pravda*, 20 March 2023. Available at: <https://www.epravda.com.ua/publications/2023/03/20/698183/>.

⁷ 'Pension reform: Whether it is possible to switch to an accumulation system during the war', *Slovo i Dilo*, 21 April 2023. Available at: <https://www.slovoidilo.ua/2023/04/21/stattja/ekonomika/pensijna-reforma-chy-mozhlyvyj-perexid-nakopychualnu-systemu-vijny>.

⁸ World Economic Forum, *Global Gender Gap Report 2022*, WEF, Cologny, 2022. Available at: https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2022.pdf.

⁹ Statista, 'Ukraine: Life expectancy at birth from 2011 to 2021, by gender', 2021. Available at: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/974733/life-expectancy-at-birth-in-ukraine-by-gender>.

¹⁰ 'A third less registrations of newborns in 11 months of 2022', Opendatabot, 6 January 2023. Available at: <https://opendatabot.ua/analytics/birth-and-marriage-2022>.

¹¹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 'Ukraine: Civilian Casualty Update 5 June 2023', 5 June 2023. Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/news/2023/06/ukraine-civilian-casualty-update-5-june-2023>.

Specific demographic data on Ukraine's population – such on its sex and age structure, its distribution across rural and urban areas, and the percentage of households headed by women and by men, etc. – which was available before the full-scale war is no longer available in 2023. The most accurate means of collecting demographic data disaggregated by sex, age and other factors is the national census. No reliable demographic data will be available until the war ends.

2.2. Gender-sensitive country poverty profile

As of 2021, the poverty rate among women in Ukraine was 10.8%, compared to 7.9% among men. The largest share of the poor population (whose expenditures are lower than the actual cost of living) lived in small towns (32.4%) and rural areas (31.5%), while in large cities the share of the population below the poverty line was significantly lower (20.8%).¹²

Poverty has generally not been considered to be 'feminised' in Ukraine. This means that poverty rates have differed little by sex. However, many of the country's poverty profiles are gendered and women are more likely to face multidimensional poverty. For example, poverty rates increase with the number of children in a household, and households headed by single women are especially at risk of poverty. Older women may also become impoverished when they reach retirement age, due to a lifetime of lower earnings, smaller pensions and statistically longer life expectancy. Thus, the largest proportion of women living below the poverty line are elderly (35.6%). Rural women are especially vulnerable to poverty in its various forms – monetary poverty, multiple deprivations and social exclusion. In fact, many of these poverty risk factors are combined among the population of rural women. Indicators of ageing show that the largest group of older persons in Ukraine are women living in rural areas, and the share of widowed older women is higher in rural areas than in urban centres.¹³ Overall, only 36% of the poor were covered by social benefits' programmes in 2021.¹⁴

The full-scale war has sharply jeopardised Ukraine's progress in combatting poverty, while also making it impossible to collect reliable data on poverty levels in 2022–2023. The only available statistics are from a World Bank report quoted by The Guardian on 30 April 2023. According to the World Bank, poverty in Ukraine increased from 5.5% in 2021 to 24.2% in 2022, pushing 7.1 million more people into poverty, especially in rural villages.¹⁵

¹² State Statistics Service of Ukraine and UN Women, *Indicators for the Monitoring of Gender Equality in Ukraine: Monitoring Report 2021*, UN Women, Kyiv, 2022. Available at: https://ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat_e/2021/2021_GEIndicators-MonitoringRepor_ENG.pdf.

¹³ Ukrainian Centre for Social Reforms and United Nations Population Fund, 2014.

¹⁴ State Statistics Service of Ukraine and UN Women, *Indicators for the Monitoring of Gender Equality in Ukraine: Monitoring Report 2021*, UN Women, Kyiv, 2022. Available at: https://ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat_e/2021/2021_GEIndicators-MonitoringRepor_ENG.pdf.

¹⁵ Beaumont, P., 'Pawn shops and bread queues: Poverty grips Ukraine as war drags on', *The Guardian*, 30 April 2023. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/apr/30/ukraine-war-poverty-irpin-pawn-shops-bread-queues>.

As of the spring of 2022, financial and social support – including pensions, child benefits and disability benefits – were the only source of income for many Ukrainians. This was especially true for women-headed households, families whose members include persons with disabilities, and families whose members include elderly persons. This disproportionately affects women, who make up 72% of social protection recipients and the majority of older people and caregivers in Ukraine.¹⁶ During 2022–2023, many people have been receiving assistance, including cash, from humanitarian organisations.

In March 2022, the Government of Ukraine launched two important initiatives to improve financial support for the population. The first was one-time assistance of UAH 6,500 (equivalent to USD 220 at the time) for individual entrepreneurs and employees who lost their income due to the war. The only eligibility criteria was being registered as a person who pays the unified social contribution in any of the 14 regions in the country listed in Resolution #204-r of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine as of 6 March 2022. In 2022, approximately 5 million people received this form of assistance.

The second initiative was a monthly social support payment to displaced people across 14 regions of Ukraine (the number of regions was later reduced to 11). The vast majority of recipients are women and children. Adults receive a monthly payment of UAH 2,000, while children and persons with disabilities receive UAH 3,000. The only requirement to apply for this form of support is an internally displaced person's certificate. Almost all of the officially 4.9 million registered internally displaced persons in Ukraine are receiving this form of support from the Government.

As of March 2023, approximately 17.6 million people (49% of Ukraine's population) were in need of humanitarian assistance and protection. By population group, they include 6.3 million internally displaced persons (35.8%), 6.9 million non-displaced persons (39.2%) and 4.4 million returnees (25%). By sex, 44.6% are women, 32% are men, 11.4% are girls and 12% are boys. By age, 54.3% are adults, 23.4% are children and 22.3% are older people. Moreover, 14.9% of the people in need are persons with disabilities.¹⁷

As of June 2023, there were 8.255 million refugees from Ukraine, including 5.86 million refugees registered for 'temporary protection' or similar national protection schemes in Europe,¹⁸ through which they receive support from host countries. The humanitarian crisis has triggered exceptional levels of support and solidarity. Neighbouring governments have mobilised quickly, as have local communities in these countries. EU countries have rapidly provided temporary protection and access to jobs and services to Ukrainians. The UN humanitarian flash appeal for Ukraine is one of the largest and most generously funded ever.¹⁹ Public appeals in many European countries have also been very well supported.

¹⁶ UN Women and CARE, *Rapid Gender Analysis of Ukraine*, UN Women, Kyiv, 4 May 2022. Available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/05/rapid-gender-analysis-of-ukraine>.

¹⁷ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (on behalf of the United Nations Humanitarian Country Team and partners in Ukraine), *Humanitarian Response Plan Ukraine*, OCHA, Kyiv, February 2023. Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/ukraine-humanitarian-response-plan-february-2023-enuk>.

¹⁸ UNHCR, 'Ukraine Refugee Situation', 18 July 2023. Available at: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>.

¹⁹ Saez, P., *Navigating humanitarian dilemmas in the Ukraine crisis*, ODI, London, May 2022. Available at: https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/Navigating_Ukrainian_dilemmas_in_the_Ukraine_crisis.pdf.

2.3. Country ranking on international gender indices and ratings

The three major international indices that measure progress towards gender equality are the Global Gender Gap Report, the Gender Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Inequality Index (GII).

On the 2023 Global Gender Gap Report – a major international index produced annually by the World Economic Forum, which measures progress on gender equality – Ukraine's score is 0.714 (on a scale from 0.001 to 1, where 1 means full gender parity) and it ranks 66th of 146 countries.²⁰ In 2022, the country ranked 81st of 146 countries, while in 2021, it ranked 74th of 156 countries. Considering each dimension of the index separately, Ukraine is the farthest from gender parity in the spheres of political empowerment (with a score of 0.172 and a ranking of 87th). It fares somewhat better in terms of gender parity in educational attainment (with a score of 0.996 and a ranking of 56th), economic opportunities (with a score of 0.714 and a ranking of 55th), and health and survival (with a score of 0.976 and a ranking of 45th).

The Gender Development Index (GDI) measures gender gaps in human development achievements by accounting for disparities between women and men in three basic dimensions of human development – health, knowledge and living standards. A country's GDI value is obtained by calculating its Human Development Index (HDI) value separately for women and men, and then expressing the female HDI as a percentage of the male HDI.²¹ In Ukraine, the women's HDI value in 2021 was 0.776, while the men's HDI value was 0.766, resulting in a Gender Development Index value of 1.012.²² Considering the three dimensions of the index, women's human development in Ukraine is hindered by their considerably more limited access to economic resources. In 2021, Ukraine ranked 49th of 153 countries on the Gender Inequality Index (GII), with a GII value of 0.200. The key challenges which underlie Ukraine's ranking continue as in previous years, namely gender gaps in the labour force participation rate, and women's underrepresentation in parliament.²³

²⁰ World Economic Forum, *Global Gender Gap Report 2023*, WEF, Cologny, 2023. Available at: https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2023.pdf.

²¹ For details on how GDI values are calculated, see: <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/tr/UNDP-TR-EN-HDR-2019-FAQS-GDI.pdf>.

²² United Nations Development Programme, 'Gender Development Index: A 2022 statistical update', 2022. Available at: <https://hdr.undp.org/gender-development-index#/indicies/GDI>.

²³ United Nations Development Programme, 'Gender Inequality Index 2021', 2021. Available at: <https://hdr.undp.org/data-centre/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>.

2.4. Women's representation in decision-making

Since no elections have been conducted between 2021 and 2023, the information on women's representation in elected decision-making bodies in 2021 remains relevant today. Women leaders in Ukraine continue to face barriers and remain underrepresented, particularly at the national level in government, political parties and in parliament. In the current 9th convocation of the Parliament of Ukraine, 79% of members of parliament (MPs) are men, while 21% are women.

In 2013, a quota system was introduced to ensure that at least 30% of candidates for parliamentary seats are of one sex. However, this did not affect women's representation among elected MPs from political parties' lists, because no sanction was introduced for not complying with the quota. At the local level, the 30/70 quota system has been in force since 2015 for the electoral lists of candidates for members of local councils in multi-mandate constituencies. The new Election Code, in force at the national level since 1 January 2020, establishes a 40/60 gender quota for political parties' electoral lists. The parties cannot have their electoral lists registered with election committees unless they have at least two candidates of one sex for every five candidates on the list. While the next national elections are scheduled for 2024, if martial law continues in 2024, elections will be postponed.

Women's participation in local elected decision-making positions takes the shape of a pyramid – the lower is the level of authority, the higher the share of women. In October 2020, Ukraine's local elections took place and a 40% gender quota was applied. As a result, the number of women elected to local councils increased in Ukraine's last local elections. In regional councils, 27.8% of recently elected members are women. In district councils, women comprise 34.3% of members. In councils of settlements with more than 10,000 voters, women make up 32.6% of members, and in councils of settlements with up to 10,000 voters, they comprise 41.3% of council members.²⁴

At the amalgamated community level, the share of women in councils is 30%–35%, on average. However, women's representation as leaders of amalgamated territorial communities (ATCs) was as low as 18.9% in 2015, before decreasing further to 14.5% in 2016 and 14.3% in 2018.²⁵ After the latest elections in 2020, the percentage of women as heads of local councils is 16.6%.²⁶ Therefore, women tend to have poorer access to decision-making positions that are associated with resource control and distribution. The same kind of a pyramid is observed in the public service system, with low levels of women's representation among decision makers in executive authorities.

²⁴ Central Election Commission, 'Gender monitoring of local elections', 2020. Available at: <https://www.cvk.gov.ua/actualna-informaciya/187243.html>.

²⁵ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *Country Gender Assessment Series: Gender, agriculture and rural development in Ukraine*, FAO, Budapest, 2021. Available at: <https://www.fao.org/3/cb4501en/cb4501en.pdf>.

²⁶ Central Election Commission, 'Gender monitoring of local elections', 2020. Available at: <https://www.cvk.gov.ua/actualna-informaciya/187243.html>.

Although women generally predominate among civil servants, their representation declines in senior management positions. As of May 2023, there are five women among the 22 members of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, including three of five Vice Prime Ministers.²⁷ As of 2020, women accounted for just 33.3% of civil servants in 'A' grade positions (the senior level of the civil service). At the same time, women held 78.3% of positions of lowest 'C' grade (positions below heads and deputy heads of the structural units of ministries and other central executive and public authorities, heads of territorial units and the structural subdivisions of these public authorities, etc.), and 68.6% of 'B' grade positions (heads and deputy heads of regional, district public authorities, and heads and deputy heads of the structural subdivisions of public authorities).²⁸

One 'promising' indicator of gender equality in the judicial sector, and of women's access to decision-making more broadly, is the ratio of men and women among judges. In 2020, women accounted for 53.6% of all judges (a 1.8% increase compared to 2017). At the same time, women were more represented among judges of local courts and courts of appeal (54.6% and 52.8%, respectively), while men dominated among judges of higher specialised courts and the Supreme Court of Ukraine (58.1% and 58.9%, respectively). Among the leadership of judicial institutions, there are slightly more men, although this gap is not critical. Between 2015 and 2020, the share of women among judges of the Constitutional Court increased (from 7.1% to 13.3%). In the Supreme Court, 79 judges were women and 113 men as of the end of 2020, meaning that women accounted for 41% of Supreme Court judges.²⁹

In the diplomatic service, women's representation has also been gradually increasing. Between 2015 and 2020, the percentage of women among Ukrainian ambassadors increased from 4.4% to 13.9%.³⁰ As of the end of 2020, women were the heads of 23.2% of political parties and 28.1% of civil society organisations registered in Ukraine.³¹

After the full-scale invasion, authority was delegated to regional military administrations at the oblast, district and municipal levels. While no official statistics are currently available, experts note trends such as the further shrinking of women's representation in such military administrations, since these bodies are largely composed of the representatives of security and defence institutions which continue to be male-dominated.

²⁷ Government of Ukraine, 'Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine', 2023. Available at: <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/uryad-ta-organi-vladi/team>.

²⁸ State Statistics Service of Ukraine and UN Women, *Indicators for the Monitoring of Gender Equality in Ukraine: Monitoring Report 2021*, UN Women, Kyiv, 2022. Available at: https://ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat_e/2021/2021_GEIndicators-MonitoringRepor_ENG.pdf.

²⁹ State Statistics Service of Ukraine and UN Women, *Indicators for the Monitoring of Gender Equality in Ukraine: Monitoring Report 2021*, UN Women, Kyiv, 2022. Available at: https://ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat_e/2021/2021_GEIndicators-MonitoringRepor_ENG.pdf.

³⁰ State Statistics Service of Ukraine and UN Women, *Indicators for the Monitoring of Gender Equality in Ukraine: Monitoring Report 2021*, UN Women, Kyiv, 2022. Available at: https://ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat_e/2021/2021_GEIndicators-MonitoringRepor_ENG.pdf.

³¹ State Statistics Service of Ukraine and UN Women, *Indicators for the Monitoring of Gender Equality in Ukraine: Monitoring Report 2021*, UN Women, Kyiv, 2022. Available at: https://ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat_e/2021/2021_GEIndicators-MonitoringRepor_ENG.pdf.

2.5. Donor interventions and cooperation on gender equality and women's empowerment

In 2022–2023, international organisations and bilateral development partners/donors have been extensively involved in the rapid response to the humanitarian crisis caused by the full-scale invasion (see section 2.6 below for details).

Many have also continued strategic programmes aimed at developing the legal framework and institutional machinery on gender equality, building gender capacity, and supporting women's rights organisations, awareness raising and gender transformations in Ukraine. The key stakeholders involved in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in Ukraine continue to include the Parliament, the Government, international development partners and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Notable international partners include the EU Delegation, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the National Democratic Institute (NDI), International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the International Renaissance Foundation, the Heinrich Boll Foundation, and the Mukwege Foundation, among others. Major Ukrainian women's NGOs include the Ukrainian Women's Fund, the Women's Information Consultative Centre (WICC), La Strada-Ukraine, the Ukrainian Women Lawyers' Association (JurFem), Women's Perspectives, and the Ukrainian Foundation for Public Health, among others.

Key actors active in specific areas include the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), whose work includes a focus on empowering and protecting girls, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), whose work involves promoting women's rights, particularly the rights of women who are internally displaced and survivors of violence. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and other UN agencies are also active in their respective sectors of expertise in Ukraine. In addition, national women's NGOs actively work with various target groups, including Positive Women, Insight, Liga-life, and Chirikli, alongside regional women's NGOs, such as Vis (Vinnytsya), Successful Woman (Kherson), Parity (Zhytomyr), the Kharkiv Gender Centre, the Bureau of Gender Strategies and Budgeting, and many others.

2.5.1. EU Delegation interventions

The EU Delegation has been an active supporter of gender equality transformations across all sectors in Ukraine over the past few decades. Specifically, it continues to support gender mainstreaming in reforms, including the development of legal instruments, gender mainstreaming tools and capacity building.

It has helped integrate gender into the education system by supporting the gender-related examination of textbooks, through capacity building and the gender sensitisation of educators, and by promoting informal gender education formats. It also supports women's organisations on various topics – from countering gender-based violence to women's economic empowerment, as discussed below. Furthermore, the EU Delegation is engaged in dialogue with the Government on gender transformation at all the levels and in all sectors of governance, both directly and by supporting technical assistance projects implemented by international development partners and CSOs.

Ukraine is among the countries that the EU4Gender Equality Programme focuses on, and the EU4Gender Equality Reform Helpdesk project is supporting the Government to integrate a gender perspective in laws, policies and gender-responsive budgeting. Since the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war began, the Helpdesk has been providing assistance to the Government to mainstream gender in emergency and recovery policies; procedures of conducting and documenting the results of the medical examination of victims of sexual violence related to the armed conflict; and increasing civil servants' capacity to integrate a gender approach in humanitarian support, recovery and post-war development. The Helpdesk has also supported the Government on its path to meet EU gender equality standards through multi-stakeholder dialogue and the development of a road map.

The EU is also supporting UNFPA and UN Women to continue large-scale [projects](#) on promoting women's and men's equal share of domestic and child care responsibilities, championing responsible fatherhood, countering gender stereotypes, and preventing and responding to gender-based violence. In addition, UNFPA is working to increase gender sensitivity among the general population and support the Government to address gender-based violence.

Since full-scale war began, the EU Delegation has been supporting efforts to counter conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). Notably, it is supporting the Ukrainian Women's Fund (UWF) to improve the system of response to war-related sexual violence. This initiative's objective is to establish a legal framework that enables agencies to engage in targeted response activities. It seeks to create a strong and efficient system of collaboration, interaction, and referral among response providers and essential stakeholders who possess the necessary capabilities to offer specialized assistance to survivors.³² In addition, the EU Delegation is supporting the Prosecutor's Office to develop investigation protocols and undertake capacity building on the investigation of CRSV cases. Moreover, the negotiations are ongoing with the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict regarding a project to provide comprehensive support to survivors, in line with the Implementation Plan of the Framework Programme of Cooperation between the Government of Ukraine and the United Nations on the Prevention and Countering of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (see section 4.6 for details).

³² Ukrainian Women's Fund, 'RESILIENT TOGETHER: Improving the system of response to war-related sexual violence', n.d. Available at: <https://uwf.org.ua/en/resilient-together-improving-the-system-of-response-to-war-related-sexual-violence>.

In response to the effects of the full-scale war, the EU Delegation is supporting women's rights organisations that serve women and girls affected by the war. This is exemplified by a project implemented by the Bureau for Gender Strategies and Budgeting that assists vulnerable women from the occupied territories.

To facilitate knowledge generation, and strengthen expertise and advocacy on gender, the EU Delegation is supporting the Ukrainian Women's Fund to implement a project on gender think tanks' capacity development for advanced policy design, impact assessment, strategic advocacy, and specialised policy communications.³³ The aim is to enhance consultation and monitoring conducted by analytical centres in the implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement. Through the project, think tanks are strengthening their ability to utilise gender analysis in the development, analysis and monitoring of policies related to the transformations connected to the Association Agreement.

To promote women's economic empowerment, the EU Delegation in partnership with UNFPA have developed the WE Act project, focusing on a gender-sensitive response to the effects of COVID-19.³⁴ They are currently launching the WE Act-2 project that will facilitate the re-training and employment of internally displaced women. A targeted project to provide information technology (IT) trainings to internally displaced women is also in the pipeline.

2.5.2. Interventions by other international partners

UN Women's activities in Ukraine aim to secure gender equality in times of war by exercising its triple mandate of normative support, UN system coordination and operational activities to mobilize urgent and sustained action to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. UN Women continues to implement a number of major projects in these fields, including those aimed at government capacity building.

The National Democratic Institute (NDI) continues to implement projects on women's political empowerment at the national and regional levels, including 'Women Are 50% of Ukraine's Success'.³⁵ This social project aims to activate and support women in public and political life, balancing women's and men's representation in key positions in order to speed up the creation of a truly European model of society. NDI works with the Parliament of Ukraine, seeks to prevent and counter discrimination in the mass media and advertising, and supports women experts in various fields through initiatives like Povaha.³⁶

³³ Ukrainian Women's Fund, 'Network of gender think tanks: capacity development for advanced policy design, impact assessment, strategic advocacy, and specialised policy communications', n.d. Available at: <https://uwf.org.ua/en/network-of-gender-think-tanks-capacity-development-for-advanced-policy-design-impact-assessment-strategic-advocacy-and-specialised-policy-communications-2>.

³⁴ See: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=2962489434009255>.

³⁵ See: <https://50vidsotkiv.org.ua/>.

³⁶ See: <https://povaha.org.ua/>.

The Pohava campaign against sexism in the media and politics seeks to cover and respond to sexism-related cases in the Ukrainian media and at the political level. It works in the following areas: combating gender stereotypes, discrimination and misogyny; monitoring sexist expressions in public spaces and in the media, and promoting the principles of gender-sensitive journalism; monitoring legislative initiatives related to combating sexism, discrimination, and violence against women; promoting women's success stories; advocating for the Istanbul Convention; promoting gender equality and tolerance towards LGBTIQ+ persons; and countering anti-gender and anti-equality movements, gender-based violence and violence against female politicians and public activists. It has a wide network of contacts in the region, including but not limited to women's rights organisations.

USAID is consistently integrating gender approaches into every project it supports – from the financial sector to agriculture, and from health care to anti-corruption efforts. In 2023, it has presented its new Country Gender Assessment which will guide its programmatic activities on gender integration across its projects.

IFES works with the Central Election Committee and territorial election committees to ensure mechanisms for the balanced representation of women in elected bodies. This involves reviewing and providing recommendations on regulations, processes and procedures for each component of the electoral cycle for which election bodies are responsible.

Sida has supported several projects by UN Women, the National Democratic Institute and other development partners on gender equality and women's empowerment. Between 2014 and 2020, Sida financed one of the largest gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) projects in the world, the 'Gender-responsive budgeting in Ukraine' project, which had an impact on public finance management (PFM) reforms in Ukraine. Sida continues to work on building the Government's gender mainstreaming capacity to advance gender equality.

The Government-Donor Coordination Group on Gender has been active over the past several years. It is co-chaired by the Government Commissioner for Gender Equality Policy and a representative of the donor community. The group has effectively capitalised on the Government's growing commitment to the gender equality agenda, and coordinated efforts by international partners, including on avoiding the duplication of efforts and closing gaps in technical assistance. In 2022, it coordinated activities on urgent matters, such as the provision of humanitarian assistance across Ukraine and strengthening the mechanism to respond to conflict-related sexual violence.

Notably, coordination between the donors and the Government on gender equality interventions has grown stronger in 2022–2023. The Government has more say in the determination of donor priorities, and donors have improved their practices of aligning their programmes to the national/local context. These trends are observed at both the political (decision-making) and technical (implementation) levels.

2.6. Humanitarian support provided to the Ukrainian people

Between February and December 2022, humanitarian support reached 15.8 million people in Ukraine. As of May 2023, 17.7 million people continue to be in need.³⁷ Humanitarian aid from humanitarian organisations – including UN agencies and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) – is usually not distributed to affected people directly. Instead, it is distributed through national and local CSOs, including women's rights organisations. In 2022–2023, humanitarian response priorities were:

- Health, including the provision of primary healthcare services and items like trauma kits and first aid kits, as well as supporting healthcare facilities with oxygen compressors and vital pharmaceutical products.
- Cash support to meet the needs of affected populations, including internally displaced persons, refugees and members of host communities. Multi-purpose cash (MPC) assistance has been delivered via a variety of approaches, such as pre-paid cards and digital transfers, etc. to meet vital basic needs and protection services.
- Food assistance, including hot meals and using cash transfers like supermarket vouchers.
- Water, sanitation and hygiene, including ensuring safe drinking water, hygiene information and hygiene kits.
- Protection, including psychosocial support for affected people and stress management training sessions.
- Shelter, including the provision of bed linen, blankets, towels, kitchen sets, jerry cans and buckets for displaced people and host communities.³⁸

Key groups of affected people who receive humanitarian assistance are internally displaced families, people in or next to areas where hostilities are occurring, and residents of communities that host IDPs.

As Ukrainian women's rights organisations (along with other CSOs) had not previously been engaged in humanitarian work, they lacked knowledge and experience on humanitarian standards. In the initial days after the full-scale invasion, their work with affected people was somewhat chaotic. Nevertheless, many of these organisations have longstanding experience of addressing protection concerns, including gender-based violence and providing support to vulnerable groups. As most INGOs were not present in Ukraine in late February 2022 – and affected people did not receive aid from most such organisations until April – national and local CSOs, including women's rights organisations, alongside volunteers and local authorities became the first entities to provide support to people affected by the war, using their own enthusiasm, resources and skills.

³⁷ OCHA, *Ukraine Humanitarian Response 2023: Situation Report*, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, New York, May 2023. Available at: <https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/ukraine/>.

³⁸ Ukrainian Women's Fund, *Read between the Lines: Ukraine women's rights organisations' response to the full scale war, approaches and threats*, 2023 (not yet published).

From the very first day of the full-scale invasion, women's rights organisations were on hand to offer food, temporary accommodation, clothes, hygiene items, medicines, other basic essentials, psychological support and protection to internally displaced people and residents in areas where hostilities occurred. Women's rights organisations also provided life vests, clothes and medicines, among other support, to women serving in the armed forces, police, and other security and defence institutions.

After the initial weeks of a somewhat chaotic response, women's rights organisations began conducting regular needs assessments of affected people, which has since become a more institutionalised practice, especially when INGOs arrived and brought necessary resources to this end.³⁹ As of 2023, the response provided by women's rights organisations is two-fold – they both react to direct requests for aid and base their response/programming on the findings of needs analyses.

On a positive note, women's rights organisations in Ukraine are very actively learning – both from trainings offered to them by international partners, as well as from their own experiences – and sharing their experiences with one another. During 2022 and early 2023, women's rights organisations further intensified collaboration and attempts to coalesce into a unified movement. However, to achieve this, more resources need to be invested in networking and advocacy for gender equality and women's rights. At present, most resources are used to provide humanitarian aid to affected populations.

³⁹ Disasters Emergency Committee, *Real-Time Response Review of Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal 2022 for Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC)*, 2023 (not yet published).

3. LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. International and regional commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) and national legal framework on GEWE

3.1.1. International commitments

Ukraine ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1981. In 2017, the country submitted its eighth periodic report on the convention's implementation. Based on the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women received in 2017, Ukraine developed a National Action Plan (NAP) on the Implementation of the Concluding Observations. Not only is this unprecedented for Ukraine, but such National Action Plans are also quite uncommon worldwide. The plan's implementation was completed in 2021.

In December 2021, Ukraine submitted its ninth report to the CEDAW Committee, substantially grounded on the findings collected by monitoring the Nation Action Plan's implementation. The Committee reviewed the report during its session on 18–19 October 2022, and issued Concluding Recommendations on 31 October 2022. According to the Government of Ukraine, it does not plan to develop a National Action Plan on the Implementation of these Concluding Observations because other comprehensive National Action Plans on gender equality have recently been adopted in Ukraine (see section 3.2 on national gender policies for details).

In 2015, Ukraine committed to advancing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which includes several strategic objectives regarding risks of poverty and social marginalisation, as well as a recommendation to governments to formulate and implement policies that enhance women's access to decision-making, services and resources.

In 2020, Ukraine has developed and presented its Beijing+25 national report, highlighting key achievements during the previous five years under the Platform for Action's 12 critical areas.

Another important set of gender equality commitments is related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For Ukraine, closing gender gaps will be a key accelerator for achieving the SDGs. A UN-led Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) mission conducted in 2018 identified core issues that must be addressed in order to *"unlock the full potential of both women and men"* and boost sustainable human development in Ukraine. These issues include disparities in women's economic and political participation, and the persistence of discriminatory gender stereotypes.⁴⁰

The Government of Ukraine has adapted the Sustainable Development Goals to the national context, set targets and established relevant baselines for monitoring. In addition to national priorities, a series of consultations were held in 2016 to help localise the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs at the regional level. During these consultations, gender equality (SDG 5) ranked low among both national and regional priorities (in the lower third of the 17 SDGs). However, gender equality and gender stereotypes were raised in connection with several other goals, such as SDGs related to education, decent work and economic growth, infrastructure, inclusion, health (eliminating hunger), and small business development. This apparent contradiction indicates that national work has so far *"not emphasised gender equality as a tool for accelerating SDG progress."*⁴¹ Thus, gender equality and SDG 5 targets are not well-integrated in national policies – a key gap. Nevertheless, these targets are used for compiling gender statistics, as exemplified by the most recent 2021 compendium of 'Indicators for the Monitoring of Gender Equality' by the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, supported by UN Women.⁴²

In October 2020, Ukraine joined the Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC) – a global coalition of countries and international organisations that acts at the global, regional and national levels to support governments, employers' and workers' organisations, and other stakeholders to take concrete steps to reduce the gender pay gap. This was preceded by an assessment by the ILO in Ukraine on 'Compliance of national legislation, policies and practices with the criteria of the Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC)' in May 2019. Following Ukraine's accession to the EPIC, it began developing the Strategy for Reducing Gender Pay Gap (see section 3.2 on national gender policies).

3.1.2. Regional commitments

Regional instruments on gender equality that Ukraine is party to include the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (known as the Istanbul Convention) and the Biarritz Partnership for Gender Equality.

⁴⁰ United Nations, *Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support, MAPS Mission: Final Report 2018*, 2018, p. 60.

⁴¹ United Nations, *Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support, MAPS Mission: Final Report 2018*, 2018, p. 61.

⁴² State Statistics Service of Ukraine and UN Women, *Indicators for the Monitoring of Gender Equality in Ukraine: Monitoring Report 2021*, UN Women, Kyiv, 2022. Available at: https://ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat_e/2021/2021_GEIndicators-MonitoringRepor_ENG.pdf.

Ukraine signed the Istanbul Convention – which aims to combat all types of violence through a comprehensive and effective system of prevention, protection and accountability in 2011, and has made several attempts to ratify it. In 2017, the national law on preventing and combatting domestic violence was strengthened, including with a view to aligning the law with the Istanbul Convention’s provisions. Nevertheless, legal provisions in Ukraine continued to lack necessary mechanisms to ensure effective accountability for dealing with perpetrators and protecting survivors of violence. In 2020, a petition to act on the ratification of the Istanbul Convention was signed by 25,000 Ukrainian citizens. Civil society and international development partners also widely called for the instrument’s ratification.

Ukraine finally ratified the Istanbul Convention in June 2022, during wartime. It is emblematic that ratification took place one day before the decision granting Ukraine EU candidate status was expected. According to experts, the Istanbul Convention’s ratification was one of unofficial requirements for being granted this status. This proves that the principle of conditionality is effectively applied in advancing Ukraine’s reforms, including in the field of gender equality and women’s rights.

Ukraine officially joined the Biarritz Partnership for Gender Equality in September 2020, upon the initiative of First Lady Olena Zelenska. Under this instrument, Ukraine undertakes commitments to achieve progress in five areas: i) barrier-free public spaces that are ‘friendly’ to families with children and low-mobility groups, ii) teaching children the principles of equality between women and men, iii) the prevention of violence, iv) reducing the pay gap between women and men, and v) creating greater opportunities for men to care for children. In December 2020, the Government approved an Action Plan for the implementation of these commitments.⁴³ The Biarritz Partnership is yet another incentive for Ukraine to advance progress on gender equality in specific areas.

3.1.3. National legal framework

Since 1995, Ukraine has undertaken to uphold international commitments on the promotion of women’s rights, and has developed a national legislative and policy framework with the same goal. Ukraine’s entry into the European Union Association Agreement in 2014 provided additional impetus to advance gender equality commitments and ensure equal opportunities for both women and men.

The principle of equal rights of women and men before the law is enshrined in Ukraine’s Constitution of 1996 (Article 24), which provides for equal treatment (“no privileges or restrictions”) on the basis of sex, and applies to political and cultural activity, education and training, employment and social security. Article 24 also provides for special measures for the protection of women’s work and health, such as pension privileges and measures that allow women to combine employment and motherhood.

The adoption of the Law on Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men in 2005 marked an important legislative and policy milestone in Ukraine.

⁴³ See: <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/news/uryad-shvaliv-plan-zahodiv-z-realizaciyi-partnerstva-biarric>.

It indicates a shift from a focus on the formal aspects of equality (the absence of 'privileges or restrictions') to a proactive approach towards *"the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of gender [...and of] the imbalance between the opportunities of women and men to exercise equal rights,"*⁴⁴ and therefore, from a focus on equality of treatment to a focus on the equality of outcomes.

The adoption of the Law on the Principles of Prevention and Combating Discrimination in Ukraine⁴⁵ of 2012, propelled by the implementation of the EU-Ukraine Visa Liberalisation Action Plan, proceeded further in this direction. It equipped national gender machineries with a favourable legislative framework to operate in. In an attempt to comply with EU directives on non-discrimination, the law was further amended in 2014 and the Government has undertaken substantial work to apply and promote the principle of non-discrimination in practice.

In recent years, a number of specific legal developments have been put in place to promote gender equality. While Ukraine has no specific legal requirements for women's economic empowerment, the law that prohibited women from some 450 professions was abolished in 2017.⁴⁶ However, legislation on employment is gender-blind, rather than gender-sensitive.

In December 2017, Ukraine strengthened its legislation to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence, including by criminalising such violence. The legislation came into effect in 2019,⁴⁷ but the legal framework still has a number of important limitations and cannot guarantee necessary protection for women. In July 2019, the new Election Code was adopted. As noted above, it includes a 40% gender quota for political party lists for parliamentary elections, as well as for regional and local council elections. It includes a rule stipulating that two of every five candidates on party lists should be of a different sex than the other three candidates. For parliamentary elections, the quota will be applied in 2024. For local elections, the quota was applied in October 2020 (see section 2.4 on women's representation in decision-making).

One recent legal development in the field of gender equality is a package of amendments to legislation that extend fathers' entitlement to child care leave, adopted by Ukraine's parliament in April 2021.⁴⁸ The law provides for a 14-day period of leave for fathers in the first month after their child's birth, and introduces equal rights for men and women to parental leave until their child is three years old. Previously, the law only provided these rights to employed women, and did not extend these rights to women entrepreneurs or their partners. Now, an employed father has a right to leave which is not conditional on his partner's right to leave.

⁴⁴ See the Preamble of the Law: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/254%D0%BA/96-%D0%B2%D1%80>.

⁴⁵ See: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/5207-17>.

⁴⁶ See the Order of the Ministry of Health of 13 October 2017: <http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z1508-17>.

⁴⁷ See the Law of Ukraine on the Prevention and Countering Domestic Violence of 7 December 2017: <http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2229-19>.

⁴⁸ See the Law of Ukraine on Amending Certain Legal Acts on Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities of Fathers and Mothers to Childcare: <https://portal.rada.gov.ua/news/Povidomlennya/206881.html>.

As in the case of anti-discrimination legislation, the Ukraine-European Union Association Agreement triggered an active process of policy reform in the social sphere, informed by gender equality principles. This was initiated within the framework of Chapter 21, Section V, on 'Co-operation in the Field of Employment, Social Policy and Equal Opportunities'. Since 2014, quarterly reporting on the Implementation Plan of the Association Agreement has been undertaken. Meetings of the Expert Advisory Group on the implementation of the directions of Chapter 21 and Section III, 'Justice, Freedom and Security', take place regularly within the Government.

In February 2023, the Government Commissioner for Gender Equality and some MPs from the VRU Caucus on Equal Opportunities initiated the process of amending the legal framework related to parental leave. The goal of this legal reform is to create legislative prerequisites for the development of human capital and the economic recovery of Ukraine by shortening the duration of parental leave (which is currently up to 3 years), ensure that child care infrastructure is accessible to children under 3 years old, and to potentially find resources to ensure that parental leave is at least partially paid (as it is currently entirely unpaid). Based on consultations with stakeholders, a road map for the preparation of legal reform has been designed. It offers a comprehensive approach to reforming the legal framework on parental leave, including necessary surveys and opinion polls, consultations with employers, employees (trade unions), childcare facilities and international partners, alongside the analysis of international experiences and other steps. The roadmap is currently being discussed between the Government Commissioner, MPs, the ILO and UN Women.

Ukraine's Government, parliament and specific ministries continue to take the lead in developing and promoting new laws and amendments to legislation that strengthen the national legislative framework on gender equality. However, the international community, women's rights organisations or civil society organisations still have to conduct advocacy or even apply the principle of conditionality to ensure that certain legal frameworks – notably, on combatting GBV and CRSV – are adopted and implemented.

3.2. National gender policies

In 2021–2022, the Government of Ukraine was especially active in the development and adoption of national action plans, guidelines and other policy instruments on gender equality. As a result, a comprehensive and detailed programmatic framework on gender is currently in force to guide the activities of government agencies and regional/local authorities in the years to come. During wartime, the implementation of national gender policies has not been consistent across the Government, although there are numerous examples of high-level commitment and of progress. In general, the comprehensiveness, detailing and efficiency of national gender policies reflects certain improvements since 2021.

In August 2022, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (CMU) adopted the State Strategy for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities of Women and Men for the period up to 2030, and approved the Action Plan for its Implementation for 2022–2024.⁴⁹ The strategy contains four strategic goals (as well as operational goals and activities related to them):

1. The national mechanism for ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men functions effectively and has the capacity to support the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of gender equality policies in various spheres of public life and at all levels.
2. Women and men are free from violence, including violence related to hostilities and armed conflicts, have equal access to justice, and participate equally in peace building and post-conflict recovery.
3. Women and men enjoy equal rights and opportunities for human development in the fields of education, health care, social protection, culture and sports.
4. Women and men participate equally in various spheres of economic activity, benefit from the results of sustainable economic development, and have equal access to all types of economic resources.

Taking into account the challenges of a full-scale war in the territory of Ukraine, the strategy includes gender mainstreaming in humanitarian aid and post-conflict recovery, women's participation in recovery processes – including decision-making at all levels, from the national to the community level – as well as building capacity of civil servants on gender mainstreaming in recovery processes.

In December 2022, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted a Strategy for Implementation of Gender Equality in Education until 2030⁵⁰ and approved an Operational Plan for its implementation for 2022–2024. It aims inter alia at addressing the gender-based selection of fields of study at technical and vocational schools, and universities, which underlies horizontal gender segregation in the labour market and the gender pay gap.

In May 2023, the Ministry of Economy presented the draft of the National Strategy on Reducing the Gender Pay Gap for the period up to 2030 and an Action Plan for its Implementation. The strategy was developed through a series of multi-stakeholder consultations between the Government, employers, trade unions, civil society and gender experts to address the key root causes of the gender pay gap, including horizontal and vertical gender segregation, the unequal distribution of care work between men and women, and gaps in legislation on equal pay for work of equal value. The Government of Ukraine is also implementing the National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security for 2021–2025.

⁴⁹ Office of the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy, 'The Government has approved the State Strategy for ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men for the period until 2030'; 12 August 2022. Available at: <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/news/uriadom-skhvaleno-derzhavnu-stratehiiu-zabezpechennia-rivnykh-prav-ta-mozhlyvostei-zhinok-i-cholovikiv-na-period-do-2030-roku>.

⁵⁰ See: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1163-2022-%D1%80#Text>.

In December 2022,⁵¹ the National Action Plan was updated to respond to the challenges caused by the full-scale war. As such, it expanded the list of measures to provide effective and timely assistance to victims of conflict-related sexual violence. The National Action Plan also involves eliminating cultural barriers to enable women's full participation in matters of peace and security, in addition to preventing domestic violence and human trafficking, and awareness raising for survivors of gender-based violence.

Other relevant national gender policies include:

- the Action Plan to Implement the Obligations of the Government of Ukraine within the framework of the Biarritz Partnership International Initiative for promoting gender equality (Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 1578-r, 16.12.20);
- the State Social Programme for Preventing and Countering Domestic Violence and Gender-Based Violence for the period up to 2025 (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine resolution No. 145, 24 February 21); and
- the National Strategy for the Creation of a Barrier-Free Space in Ukraine for the period up to 2030 (Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 366-r, 14 April 2021).

Certain sectoral/agency instruments are also available, including the Gender Action Plan of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Gender Action Plan of the National Guard of Ukraine, among others.

National policies aim to address a wide-ranging set of issues that affect women and men. These include increasing their awareness of their legal rights, combating gender stereotypes, improving access to educational opportunities, medical services and basic infrastructure, and combating poverty. These instruments provide a roadmap for the implementation of specific actions to advance women's empowerment, and to help place gender issues higher up on the Government's agenda.

3.3. Gender mainstreaming in the National Recovery Plan

The Government's post-war recovery planning began soon after the full-scale invasion. The Decree of the President of Ukraine on 'Issues of the National Council for the Recovery of Ukraine from the War' of 21 April 2022 (No. #266/2022) established the National Council for the Recovery of Ukraine from the War to develop strategies, action plans, proposals for priority reforms and relevant regulations on recovery processes. To ensure the smooth operation of the National Council, 24 working groups were set up to cover all possible areas related to Ukraine's post-war recovery and development. The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine's Reforms Delivery Office has been acting as a secretariat to coordinate the work of these 24 working groups.

⁵¹ See: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1544-2020-%D1%80#Text>.

As early as May 2022, the Government Commissioner on Gender Equality Policy and representatives of the international community began advocating for gender to be mainstreamed into the recovery planning process. As a result, a brief (policy paper) on the need for gender mainstreaming in recovery planning – including arguments, specific steps and expected results – was prepared and sent to the secretariats of all 24 working groups, requesting them to include gender experts in all working groups involved in drafting the Recovery Plan. The gender experts were included, but the level of their involvement and of acceptance of their proposals and recommendations was uneven.

Certain working groups were responsive and effectively integrated proposals on gender equality into their respective sections of the Recovery Plan. Others largely ignored gender mainstreaming requirements and opportunities. It appears that sections of the Recovery Plan were more likely to be gender-sensitive when international development partners were active in the respective working groups and placed an emphasis on mainstreaming gender within the draft plan.

The first draft of the Recovery Plan was developed in June 2022 before the Ukraine Recovery Conference in Lugano, Switzerland, on 3–5 July 2022. The draft was rather gender-blind. Therefore, particularly to improve overall perception of the document among international partners, the Government mainstreamed gender into five recovery policy briefs and accompanying analytical materials that were circulated at the conference in Lugano. An important achievement of the conference was that ‘gender and inclusion’ was proclaimed one of seven principles of Ukraine’s recovery. This created avenues for continuing analytical and advocacy efforts for mainstreaming gender in the National Recovery Plan.

For the second iteration, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine’s Reforms Delivery Office sought proposals on the draft Recovery Plan from wide-ranging groups of stakeholders, civil society organisations and experts. The Government Commissioner supported by the EU4Gender Equality Reform Helpdesk coordinated the submission of proposals on gender mainstreaming by gender experts and women’s rights organisations on each of the Recovery Plan’s 24 sections.

In November 2022, the Reforms Delivery Office analysed the inclusion of proposals on gender mainstreaming in the Recovery Plan’s 24 sections. It found out that no more than 20% of the total number of proposals submitted were taken into account. The reasons for this included the need for more detailed or justified proposals, as well as a lack of understanding among decision-makers of the need to mainstream gender in the Recovery Plan.

For the third iteration, the Reforms Delivery Office prioritised seven areas for strengthened gender mainstreaming efforts. In view of the security situation – particularly attacks on energy infrastructure in the autumn and winter of 2022 – these priority areas were the new agrarian policy, energy security, digitalization, the protection of children’s rights, the protection of veterans’ rights, the return of citizens, and social protection.

Strengthened gender mainstreaming proposals were developed by the Centre for Economic Recovery, supported by the Embassy of the United Kingdom. These aim to:

- expand women's representation in professions in which they have traditionally been underrepresented, for example, energy, IT, agricultural professions involving the use of machinery and biotechnologies);
- increase women's access to resources, information, loans, etc., including for entrepreneurship in these industries;
- recognise women's contribution and increase their visibility in areas where they are underrepresented;
- overcome imbalances in social protection and support; and
- overcome the factors that lead to gender gaps – in particular, gender stereotypes regarding 'female' and 'male' professions, the ability of women to be successful entrepreneurs, and women's and men's roles in the family and society.

In March 2023, the Reforms Delivery Office hailed the proposals' relevance, confirming that they will be taken into account and provided to the sectoral working groups for consideration and use. Two factors underpinning the proposals' acceptance include strong advocacy and a good level of justification – as the proposals were informed by available evidence, including statistical data that shed light on gender barriers in seven areas.

The National Recovery Plan and its sections have not yet been approved by any official document – the drafting process and consultations remain ongoing. However, over 2022–2023, iterations of the Recovery Plan have been effectively replacing government policies and documents on reforms. According to unofficial feedback from public officials, the top leadership of Ukraine prioritises the recovery plans as action documents over and above strategies and national action plans which have been formally approved in recent years. Therefore, it is important to continue liaising with the Government, particularly with the Reforms Delivery Office, to strengthen work on gender mainstreaming based on available successful experiences.

Considering Ukraine's institutional and legal framework, alongside the EU Gender Action Plan III (GAP III), the EU Delegation is in a position to support gender mainstreaming in all areas/sections of the National Recovery Plan, as it continues supporting the Government in all relevant sectors/reforms.

3.4. Gender implications of decentralisation reform

Progress made on decentralisation before the full-scale invasion increased resilience in Ukraine. Greater resilience, in turn, has helped communities address the challenges posed by the war. Notably, communities had the necessary authority and resources to coordinate community security policies, alongside the processes of delivering humanitarian aid to internally displaced persons and local residents.

This included opening community humanitarian hubs, as well as cooperating with civil society organisations and international partners. However, the full-scale war led to suspension of the decentralisation reform in 2022. The Ministry of Development of Communities, Territories and Infrastructure was only able to get back to the decentralisation reform agenda in the spring of 2023.⁵² This process remains gender-neutral and does not capitalise on opportunities for gender mainstreaming. Notably, the draft law on service in self-government bodies – which was tabled with the Parliament on 31 December 2021 and which is considered a next big step in decentralisation reform – is completely gender-blind.⁵³

Women, including women's rights organisations, continue to be under-represented in local decision-making positions. As such, they are not in a position to influence reforms. Most local authorities still have a limited understanding of, or lack of experience in, conducting gender analysis or gender mainstreaming. The fact that local (regional and district) military administrations are responsible for leadership in many regions, especially in areas where hostilities are ongoing, also limits opportunities for women's rights organisations to influence local decision-making.

Yet another gendered impact of the war on decentralisation is that many regional, district councils and municipalities have been allocating funds from their budgets to support the Armed Forces of Ukraine. In 2022, this was a common practice across the country. This limits access to services for local residents and internally displaced persons, notably for women and families.

A range of projects implemented by development partners – including UN Women, the National Democratic Institute, USAID, Sida, and others – offer positive examples of gender mainstreaming in decentralisation. These projects include capacity building and expert support for gender-responsive governance, gender-responsive budgeting, gender analysis of budget programmes, and gender-sensitive services. The outcomes of these initiatives are associated with local financial decisions that benefit various vulnerable groups, including disadvantaged families and people with disabilities, among others.⁵⁴ It is important to resume and continue these initiatives after the full-scale war ends.

The localisation of recovery processes – in terms of the development and implementation of recovery plans at the regional and community levels – is also considered a promising area for support. Such localisation should also involve the application of a gender approach – gathering information about existing gender gaps at the regional or community level, developing measures to overcome these gaps, and including these measures in relevant recovery plans. To this end, it is important to involve gender expertise at the regional or community levels.

⁵² 'International partners help Ukraine to find solutions for strengthening local self-government during the war, - Vyacheslav Negoda', *Decentralization.gov*, 9 November 2022. Available at: <https://decentralization.gov.ua/news/15737>.

⁵³ See the draft Law on Draft Law on Service in Local Self-Government Bodies: http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=73563.

⁵⁴ Gender Budgeting in Ukraine Project, *Gender Budget Analysis of Programmes Financed from the State and Local Budgets in Ukraine in 2016: Summary*, European Union, Kyiv, 2016, p. 55, cited in USAID's 2017 Gender Analysis Report Ukraine, p. 56.

3.5. Institutional framework/machinery

The full-scale war has had almost no impact on the institutional gender machinery in Ukraine. At the institutional level, Ukraine's gender machinery is composed of:

- The Vice Prime Minister for European Integration, who oversees gender policy development and implementation.
- The Government Commissioner for Gender Equality, who is the key driving force for gender transformation at the legislative, strategic and executive levels across the Government of Ukraine.
- The Ministry of Social Policy, the central executive agency on gender policies.
- 56 authorised officials (usually the Deputy Heads of government agencies), who are responsible for the coordination of gender policies in their respective agencies.
- Over 30 structural units on gender equality in government agencies.
- Gender advisers in government agencies. Currently, there are over 90 gender advisers, including about 50 in the Ministry of Defence system.⁵⁵
- About 10 advisory councils and working groups in government agencies.
- 25 authorised officials (Deputy Heads of Regional State Administrations) in every region of Ukraine.
- 25 structural units of Regional State Administrations, which are responsible for gender policies. These are usually from the Department of Social Protection of the Population.
- Approximately 10 gender advisers to the Heads of Regional State Administrations.
- 25 regional advisory councils on the family, gender policy, and the prevention of gender-based violence and trafficking in persons.

The Parliament of Ukraine also has a Caucus on Equal Opportunities, and a number of MPs are extremely active at the personal and institutional levels in promoting equal opportunities, and addressing discrimination and sexism.

Similar to national gender policies, the performance of various government agencies in the field of gender equality has not been consistent throughout 2021–2023. Since wartime is associated with more manual control, rather than institutionalised practices of public administration, the role of the agencies' leadership in promoting (or, vice versa, side-lining) gender equality has increased. Gender championship within agencies is more associated with the attitudes and public statements of the heads of agencies more than was the case before the full-scale invasion. Positive examples of gender champions in 2022–2023 include the Minister and Deputy Minister of the Economy, who have been extremely persistent in developing and promoting the draft Strategy on Reducing Gender Pay Gap and ensuring gender equality among the recipients of small grants for entrepreneurs.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Horokhivska, A., 'The Armed Forces of Ukraine presented its team of advisers on gender issues', *UNN*, 4 May 2023. Available at: <https://www.unn.com.ua/uk/news/2026003-zsu-pokazalo-svoyu-komandu-radnikiv-z-gendernikh-pitan>.

⁵⁶ Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, 'The tendency to reduce the wage gap between women and men in Ukraine should become stable and irreversible, - Yuliya Svyrydenko', 12 May 2023. Available at: <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/news/tendentsiia-doskorochennia-rozryvu-v-oplati-pratsi-zhinok-ta-cholovikiv-v-ukraini-maie-staty-stiikoju-ta-nezvorotnoiu-iuliia-svyrydenko>.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs is another notable champion, who has called for supporting women in diplomatic careers, including in the appointment to the posts of ambassadors.⁵⁷ Another key champion is the Head of the National Agency of Ukraine on Civil Service (NAUCS), who persistently integrates gender into the training curricula for public officials. The Government Commissioner for Gender Equality Policy has also sustained her role as a gender champion, although her decisions are not binding upon other government agencies.

However, a critical concern remains about how the authorities and officials understand gender equality. The transition from formal egalitarian treatment (no differential treatment, and no privileges or restrictions) to the substantial equality of opportunities (the removal of barriers, and the recognition of indirect and systemic forms of discrimination and disadvantage), as described above in the context of legislative evolution, appears to also be occurring at the level of individual mindsets among government officials. This may be a reflection of a broader societal and cultural shift which is gradually taking place. Nevertheless, this transition remains incomplete, which appears to generate ambiguities in the interpretation – and especially the application – of equality principles in practice in terms of policy design, drafting and implementation. One example of this is a series of gender audits that all national/central executive agencies conducted in summer–autumn 2022 with the EU4Gender Equality Reform Helpdesk’s support. The detailed guidelines on gender audits were provided by Order No. 448 of the Ministry of Social Policy, approved on 9 August 2021. In 2022, the audit questionnaire was revised with the Reform Helpdesk’s support. Part of the gender audit involved a survey of public officials on gender equality in the public sector, conducted in two waves in 2022.⁵⁸ A total of 21,148 officials from 79 central executive bodies took part in the survey (71.3% of whom are women and 28.7% are men).

While survey participants are generally satisfied with technical working conditions, more than half of the respondents (62.7%) reported that they do not have the opportunity to work flexibly (flexible hours, working from home, etc.). Some 5.7% more men than women reported having such opportunities. The absolute majority of respondents (94.7%) believe that men and women have equal chances and opportunities to improve their qualifications and/or undergo professional training for further career growth. More than half (55%, both women and men almost equally) believe that adequate conditions for reconciling professional and family responsibilities are available. Just under half of the respondents (47.3%) would welcome the opportunity to bring their children to the workplace, a need reported by more women (51.1%) than men (38.1%). Although most respondents (82.5%) believe that men and women have equal opportunities to balance work and family responsibilities, far more men agree with this statement (52.9%) than women (38.2%). The survey also found that women are more likely to experience comments about their appearance, private and family life, humiliation, devaluing comments because of their gender, and sexual harassment. Readiness to seek help remains extremely low among both men and women.

⁵⁷ 'Kuleba promised to make every effort to increase the number of female ambassadors and leaders', *Slavo I Dilo*, 8 March 2020. Available at: <https://www.slovoidilo.ua/promise/82881.html>.

⁵⁸ See: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1h4ypRPImX_fsM5N8AgJtJzGhzu4qzZJG/view.

Only 0.7% of the 12% of respondents who reported facing various manifestations of discrimination and sexual harassment at the workplace sought help.⁵⁹

At the level of individual agencies, the implementation of gender audits is mostly formalistic ('ticking the box'). The working groups established within agencies to conduct gender audits largely have not analysed real manifestations of gender inequality at the workplace or their root causes. However, since gender audits are to be repeated regularly, training government workers on gender auditing can be expected to make this tool's use much more effective.

The prevailing understanding of gender equality within the Government of Ukraine is still one that merely considers the absence of open discrimination and differential treatment between the sexes. Translated into positive terms, it is understood to aim at – and manifest itself mainly as – numerical parity.⁶⁰ On the other hand, the ability of going beyond this, and considering how societal roles ascribed to women and men often place them in different positions in terms of access to equal rights and social benefits, is characteristic of a minority of government officials. It appears that most of these officials work in gender units or serve as gender advisers within the government system.

One solution to this issue is regular gender trainings for public officials. Importantly, in recent years such trainings have been provided not only by technical assistance projects (as in previous decades), but also by the National Agency of Ukraine on Civil Service (NAUCS). In 2020, a total of 643 civil officials (530 women, 113 men)⁶¹ received training on gender equality at the expense of the State Budget. According to discussions with NAUCS, in 2021–2022, the number officials trained increased further, which reflects the institutionalisation of gender training within the government system. In 2022–2023, the EU4Gender Equality Reform Helpdesk has been extensively supporting NAUCS to update its curricula on gender, and to mainstream gender in other curricula. This practice should continue to ensure that public officials develop a more progressive understanding of gender equality and translate this understanding into specific policies and actions.

To further strengthen Ukraine's national gender machinery, in February–April 2023, the Government – with the support of the EU4Gender Equality Reform Helpdesk – designed a roadmap for advancing gender equality according to the country's EU integration obligations. The roadmap's goal is to ensure that public authorities and local self-government bodies make managerial decisions taking into account the principle of gender equality. Expected results from the roadmap's implementation are:

- Analytical tools for gender mainstreaming are used in the Government's strategic planning.
- Gender is mainstreamed in the legal framework.

⁵⁹ See: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1h4ypRPlmX_fsM5N8AgJtJzGhzu4qzZJG/view.

⁶⁰ International Labour Organization, *Participatory Gender Audit of the Ministry of Social Policy*, ILO, Kyiv, 2019, p. 31.

⁶¹ State Statistics Service of Ukraine and UN Women, *Indicators for the Monitoring of Gender Equality in Ukraine: Monitoring Report 2021*, UN Women, Kyiv, 2022. Available at: https://ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat_e/2021/2021_GEIndicators-MonitoringRepor_ENG.pdf.

- Institutional gender mechanisms at the national and local levels operate in a cross-cutting, transparent and effective way.
- Public servants comply with the principle of gender equality in their activities.

While the roadmap has not been approved as a formal regulation, it outlines key priorities for the Government in terms of advancing gender equality in the coming years, and the Government will encourage international partners to use it to inform their programming in Ukraine.

3.6. Status and role of women's rights organisations: The impact of the war

Before the full-scale war, the landscape of Ukrainian women's rights organisations was diverse, comprised of about 1,000 registered entities (among about 160,000 CSOs in total), some originating in the early 1990s. Not all of these organisations were active, but according to the Ukrainian Women's Fund and UN Women, their partner networks comprised about 250 and 150 women's rights organisations, respectively. These are entities that conduct visible activities and engage with the Government, other women's rights organisations and international organisations. Over 2022–2023, about 150–200 women's rights organisations continue their operations after the full-scale invasion.⁶²

In addition, a certain number of women's interest groups have been established in 2022 and in early 2023, but there is no information on how many of them have been formally registered in the past 15 months.

Women's rights organisations have been a strong advocate of women's rights and gender transformations in Ukraine. However, since February 2022, the environment has become dramatically tenser for them, as well as for women activists and civil society at large. Specifically:

1. In the first months after the invasion, women's NGOs quickly reached the point of burnout and sorely lacked financial resources, as they worked around the clock to support to women affected by the war. Eventually, they became used to this burden, but humanitarian support is still largely provided by Ukrainian NGOs and volunteers, and financially supported by international NGOs and bilateral donors.
2. This situation prevents women's rights organisations from engaging in policy development and advocacy work, since they lack the time and human capacity required. Therefore, a backlash has been observed in terms the women's rights agenda – as the strategic, gender-transformative activities of women's NGOs, the Government and international development partners are put on hold.

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⁶² UN Women, *Rapid Assessment: Impact of the War in Ukraine on Women's Civil Society Organisations*, UN Women, Kyiv, 2022. Available at: <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/03/rapid-assessment-impact-of-the-war-in-ukraine-on-womens-civil-society-organizations>.

3. While women's organisations are involved in the coordination of certain humanitarian and CRSV-related processes, they are basically not part of peace and security processes, even at the community level, let alone national level discussions and decision-making. Women's perspectives largely remain unrecognised in the Government's decision-making in critical sectors.
4. Coordination between the Government and women's rights organisations on the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda remains sub-optimal, as do wider efforts across the humanitarian-recovery nexus. While coordination is gradually improving at the national level, it remains a challenge at the regional and community levels.

Although cooperation between women's rights organisations, the Government and local authorities is gradually improving, but women's organisations are still not included in policy design, decision-making or even the meetings of the authorities. When they are included, their voices are, in general, not adequately heard. Cooperation is largely confined to exchanging information about the needs of affected people – as local authorities register affected people, they are most aware of current statistics. One important particularity of Ukraine is that women's rights organisations have a history of engaging with security and defence sector institutions. The full-scale invasion had an ambivalent impact on this cooperation. It increased the need for cooperation, thereby opening new avenues of opportunities. But at the same time, it made security and defence sector institutions more closed and less open to cooperation.

International organisations have been an important partner for the women's rights organisations and a source of expertise and resources. Notably, they are a critical partner in advocacy vis-à-vis the Government, as international organisations request that gender issues be discussed and that gender experts/representatives of women's rights organisations be present at international high-level events. Therefore, advocacy by women's rights organisations at the international level is strong, but their impact on national policies is weak. Their dependence on international organisations/donors further increased with the start of full-scale war. They provide women's rights organisations with training, policies related to humanitarian standards, and no less than 95% of their funding. At the same time, a significant share of women's rights organisations are critical of the bureaucracy, protracted decision-making processes, reporting and visibility requirements and patronising attitudes of international organisations towards them. While this has been gradually improving over 2022, there is still scope for more flexibility and empowerment of women's rights organisations in terms of programme design and managing bigger budgets.⁶³

The full-scale war created new challenges and barriers for women's rights organisations in Ukraine. It completely changed the direction of activities, relationships with target groups, the authorities and international organisations/donors, as well as morale and the availability of resources. Overall, women's rights organisations are becoming stronger and more influential.

⁶³ Ukrainian Women's Fund, *Read between the Lines: Ukraine women's rights organisations' response to the full scale war, approaches and threats*, 2023 (not yet published).

However, this comes at the expense of them being extremely stretched and burned out.⁶⁴ They require resources and partnerships to return to their strategic activities – advocacy, protection and the promotion of women’s rights. The EU Delegation should consider extending support to women’s rights organisations for advancing the gender equality agenda and sustaining gender transformations in Ukrainian society.

3.7. Financing for gender equality and gender-responsive budgeting

In spite of the full-scale war, the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine (MoF) and key spending units (KSUs) continue to implement gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) at the national and local levels. The ministry issued Letters of Instruction for key spending units on state and local budgets with a recommendation to apply a gender approach when they design budget requests in 2023–2025. The Explanatory Note to the draft Law on the State Budget for 2023 includes information on applying GRB in budget programmes. It notes that GRB became especially necessary during the war and with limited budget resources, because it is extremely important to consider the situation, needs and interests of different groups of women and men, and to respond promptly to new challenges.

An analysis of budget requests shows that the number of gender-sensitive budget programmes has increased. During the preparation of the draft State Budget for 2023, gender aspects were already taken into account in 50 budget programmes (33 KSUs). By comparison, when the draft State Budget for 2022 was prepared, gender aspects were taken into account in 47 budget programmes (32 KSUs), and in 2021, in 41 budget programmes (29 KSUs).

When drawing up budget requests for 2023–2025, gender was mainstreamed in budget programmes by the following main key spending units: the Office of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Social Policy, the Ministry of Development of Communities and Territories, the Main Directorate of Intelligence of the Ministry of Defence, the National Agency for the Prevention of Corruption, the Accounting Chamber, and Regional State Administrations.

The key spending units responsible for local budgets also continue to mainstream gender in budgetary process, but it is not possible to track the number of gender-sensitive programmes at present.

Work on GRB has become somewhat less visible since 2020 when the ‘Gender-responsive budgeting in Ukraine’ project funded by Sida was completed.

⁶⁴ Ukrainian Women’s Fund, *Read between the Lines: Ukraine women’s rights organisations’ response to the full scale war, approaches and threats*, 2023 (not yet published).

The project provided expert support, and made public all legislative changes and achievements on GRB implementation. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Finance continues to work towards the sustainability and institutionalisation of GRB, even in the context of full-scale war.

This has been made possible by the range of regulations on gender budgeting developed by Ukraine between 2010 and 2020, which remain in force. Most notably:

- A gender-responsive approach is included in the Public Finance Management System Reform Strategy for 2022–2025 at the state and local levels (# 1805-p of 29 December 2021, adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers).⁶⁵ Each key spending unit is obliged to provide gender analysis for at least one budget programme per year.
- The Ministry of Finance of Ukraine, by a Decree on 2 January 2019, approved guidelines for the application of a gender-responsive approach in the budget process. These are used by key spending units and other budget process participants in order to take gender into account in planning, implementing and reporting on budget programmes.⁶⁶
- The Decree of the Ministry of Finance on Performance Indicators of the Budget Programme, No. 1536 of 10 December 2010, stipulates that quality indicators should highlight the benefits for society which the implementation of the budget programme will yield, including in terms of ensuring gender equality.⁶⁷
- The Decree of the Ministry of Finance on Reviews of State Budget Expenditures, No. 446 of 23 October 2019, stipulates that the results of the gender analysis of budget programmes should be taken into account when analysing the efficiency, effectiveness and economic feasibility of relevant state budget expenditures.⁶⁸
- The Decree of the Ministry of Finance on the Approval of Guidelines for the Preparation of Medium-Term Local Budgets in 2019, No. 130 of 29 March 2019, envisages the use of gender mainstreaming in the forecasting phase. This aims to reduce gender gaps, mitigate negative trends, and strengthen positive trends in the relevant field/sector in terms of meeting gender needs and gender interests.⁶⁹
- The Decree of the Ministry of Finance on the Procedure for the Evaluation of Budget Programme Effectiveness by Key Spending Units, No. 223 of 19 May 2020, envisages the use of gender budget programme analysis as one of the sources of information for:
 - performance evaluation;
 - the assessment of the effectiveness of public services and the satisfaction of the needs and interests of the recipients/users and the providers of public services, including by gender and other characteristics; and

⁶⁵ See the Strategy of Public Finance Management Reform 2022-2025: <https://www.mof.gov.ua/>.

⁶⁶ See the Decree of the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine on the Approval of Guidelines for the Introduction and Application of the Gender-responsive Approach in the Budget Process: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/rada/show/v0001201-19>.

⁶⁷ See the Decree of the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine on Performance Indicators of the Budget Programme: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z1353-10?find=1&text=%D2%91%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B4%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%B9#Text>.

⁶⁸ See the Decree of the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine on Reviews of State Budget Expenditures: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z1277-19?find=1&text=%D2%91%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B4%D0%B5%D1%80#Text>.

⁶⁹ See the Decree of the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine on the Approval of Guidelines for Preparation of the Medium-Term Local Budgets in 2019: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/rada/show/v0130201-19?find=1&text=%D2%91%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B4%D0%B5%D1%80#Text>.

- measures to improve the quality and efficiency of public services – such as studies on the needs and interests of the recipients/users of public services, including the introduction of relevant surveys (questionnaires) and by conducting gender budget programme analysis.⁷⁰
- The Letter of Instruction of the Ministry of Finance to key spending units on the preparation of budget requests for 2021–2023, as noted above, includes provisions on gender mainstreaming.
- Information on applying a gender-responsive approach in the budget process is included in the Explanatory Note to the Draft Law on the State Budget of Ukraine for 2021.

Spending units in charge of the state and local budgets regularly practise gender-responsive budgeting. As a result, the following actions have been taken:

- Between 2014 and 2020, more than 100 state budget programmes were analysed from a gender perspective, including programmes on agricultural policy, security and defence, education and science, health care, social protection and social security, youth policy, physical culture and sports, and culture and the arts.
- During the preparation of budget requests for 2021–2023, gender was mainstreamed by 29 key spending units (35%) of the state budget under 41 budget programmes.
- Among programmes financed by local budgets, 75% were analysed from a gender perspective, as a result of which 1,075 programmes became gender-sensitive in 2020.
- Based on the results of the gender analysis of budget programmes, the Ministry of Social Policy, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and the State Statistics Service of Ukraine amended more than 30 regulations on gender mainstreaming.

At the same time, major challenges in implementing gender-responsive budgeting include:

- Civil servants and local government officials continue to have low levels of awareness of gender equality policy. Although gender equality policies have been implemented over the past 25 years, and despite Ukraine's strong legal framework, a critical mass of civil servants and local government officials have distorted perceptions and do not share the goals and values of gender equality.
- The Ministry of Finance has a limited understanding of gender-responsive budgeting as a financial tool to increase budgetary efficiency, rather than as a tool to achieve the goals of gender equality and women's empowerment. Such an approach leaves behind strategic gender interests, particularly in terms of changing social norms that discriminate against women and restrict their access to certain areas of activity and decision-making, as well as hindering their personal fulfilment.
- There is a lack of legislative support for the use of gender-responsive budgeting. The requirements for the use of a gender approach in the budget process, which the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine has included in regulations, are of a recommendatory rather than mandatory nature. This prevents the use of gender-responsive budgeting in a sustainable manner.

⁷⁰ See the Decree of the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine on the Procedure for Evaluation of the Budget Programme Effectiveness by Key Spending Units: <https://ips.ligazakon.net/document/RE34929>.

- The formal use of performance-based methods has not yet become a powerful tool for ensuring the link between the financing of the budget programme and the final, socially significant outcomes expected from its implementation. As before, budget programmes largely focus on the maintenance of institutions, rather than on the provision of public services. It is difficult to trace in them a focus on meeting the needs and interests of women, men, girls and boys.
- The non-acceptance of changes by civil servants and local government officials is a challenge. Many are reluctant to change established approaches, procedures and formats in terms of the development of documents used in the budget process.
- Staff turnover leads to the loss of institutional memory, as well as decreased responsibility for previously made decisions.
- The lack of gender-disaggregated data and gender statistics poses an obstacle to conducting qualitative gender analysis of programmes funded by the state and local budgets.
- There is weak coordination between all stakeholders in terms of the cross-cutting, comprehensive integration of gender in strategies, policies, programmes and projects. As a result, the application of gender-responsive budgeting is not systemic. Instead, it remains at the discretion of individual spending units.

Nevertheless, gender-responsive budgeting has strongly entered the public finance management system at the state and local levels in Ukraine as it is oriented towards improving the targeting, efficiency and transparency of budgetary spending.

A full analysis of national public allocations and expenditures on gender equality objectives is not possible due to a lack of data and publicly available information that is accessible online, especially under martial law. Moreover, as there is no monitoring system to track and report on overall gender-responsive financing, it is also impossible to provide a rough figure of the total volume of financial resources that are invested in gender equality priorities by the Government of Ukraine.⁷¹

The National Action Plans on gender equality that are currently in force do not stipulate the allocation of funding from the state or regional budgets for gender equality priorities. The State Strategy for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities of Women and Men for the period up to 2030, the National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 for the period up to 2025, the draft Strategy on Reducing Gender Pay Gap for the period up to 2030, and the Strategy for Implementation of Gender Equality in Education until 2030 are all supposed to be funded from sources other than the state or regional budgets. That is, they are meant to be funded from the budgets of international development partners and civil society organisations. The Government only contributes financially to implementing these strategies and action plans by paying salaries to the staff of respective government agencies and providing space for events. This situation is unlikely to change until martial law ends.

⁷¹ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, *Advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in Ukraine through effective development co-operation and finance*, UN Women, Kyiv, 2021, p. 50.

4. GENDER ANALYSIS BY SECTOR

4.1. Gender and employment, and the gender pay gap

4.1.1. Gendered patterns in employment

Gender inequality in economic opportunities, alongside discrimination in recruitment and at work, have limited women's access to employment, incomes and career promotion in Ukraine. According to the State Statistics Service, the economic activity rate of working-age women in Ukraine was 56% in 2021, compared to 68.5% for men of the same age. The employment rate of working-age women was 50%, compared to 61% for men. In the same year, 55% of working-age women were employed full-time and 5% owned a business, compared to 66% and 9% of men, respectively.⁷² Women's economic inclusion is further influenced by their involvement in household duties, their higher likelihood of self-employment in the informal sector, the vertical segregation of labour which results in fewer women in leadership positions, and their higher likelihood of employment in the public service where salaries are generally lower, leading to horizontal employment segregation.

Legislation in Ukraine does not create any barriers or impediments for women or men to assume any position in any profession in the labour market, both in the public and private sectors. In 2017, the legal act which prohibited women from participating in some 450 professions was abolished, as noted above.⁷³ However, legislation on women's employment is gender-blind rather than gender-sensitive, as it does not address existing imbalances and women's underrepresentation in certain economic areas. The full-scale war has had a huge impact on employment, including on gendered patterns of employment. Since February 2022, employment rates and access to employment in both the private and public sectors have dramatically decreased for women and men all over Ukraine. Employees of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are considered to be more affected in the private sector.⁷⁴

⁷² State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 'Employment of the population by gender, type of area and age groups' (data for 2021), 2022.

⁷³ See the Order of the Ministry of Health of 13 October 2017: <http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z1508-17>.

⁷⁴ UN Women and CARE, *Rapid Gender Analysis of Ukraine*, UN Women, Kyiv, 4 May 2022. Available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/05/rapid-gender-analysis-of-ukraine>.

Businesses have been closed, put on hold and/or destroyed. Accurate figures on the number of Ukrainians who lost their jobs are not available. However, as of late March 2022, 42% of small and medium enterprises stopped working, 31% suspended their activities, and their employees stopped receiving salaries.⁷⁵ Most respondents of the Rapid Gender Assessment conducted by UN Women in March and April 2022 – both women and men – reported that either they themselves, their family members, or both, lost jobs and therefore, their livelihoods, or had their salaries/incomes cut. Internally displaced persons have been most affected. Some displaced people have sought jobs in host communities, but the job market in these areas were limited even before the war. In 2022, the number of available jobs was scarce.⁷⁶ While no sex-disaggregated data is available, a survey by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) among displaced people, the majority of whom are women, showed a significant decline in overall income and one-third of displaced households indicated that they had no income in March–April 2022.⁷⁷

A survey by the European Business Association (EBA) conducted in April 2022 revealed that only 17% of businesses were operating in pre-war modes. Another 16% limited their 'geography of activity,' and 19% were forced to close some businesses, offices or outlets. About 30% of companies were not operational. Despite this situation, most large companies tried to support employees – 68% paid salaries to their staff a month or more in advance, almost one-third reimbursed their staff for relocation, and almost one-quarter rented accommodation for employees in western Ukraine or abroad. However, one in five small or medium-sized businesses reported that they were no longer able to pay salaries to employees. The vast majority offered their employees unpaid leave, and only 8% simply laid off their workers.⁷⁸ To mitigate the war's impact, some employers tried to implement flexible employment and payment strategies such as unpaid leave, part-time work schedules, decreased salaries and remote work, where feasible. Women and men who worked remotely or whose work can be done remotely have been impacted least by the war. However, in the second half of 2022 and in 2023, employers – especially in the public sector – started requesting their employees to work from their offices or at least return to their regions. This has mostly affected women, as they predominate among those who have fled Ukraine or have been internally displaced to other regions.

Since the spring of 2022, Ukraine's unemployment rate has gradually improved. According to the National Bank of Ukraine, the rate is currently about 20% and is expected to decrease further to 18.3% by the end of 2023.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ 'In Ukraine, 42% of small businesses stopped working', Ukrinform, 15 March 2022. Available at: <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-economy/3429854-v-ukraini-pripinili-robotu-42-malih-pidpriemstv.html>.

⁷⁶ UN Women and CARE, *Rapid Gender Analysis of Ukraine*, UN Women, Kyiv, 4 May 2022. Available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/05/rapid-gender-analysis-of-ukraine>.

⁷⁷ International Organization for Migration, *Ukraine Internal Displacement Report*, IOM, Geneva, 1 April 2022. Available at: https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/IOM_Ukraine%20Displacement%20Report_R2_final.pdf.

⁷⁸ Zanuda, A., 'Business in times of war: What support is available from the government and how businesses are surviving', *BBC Ukraine*, 16 March 2022. Available at: <https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/features-60757453>.

⁷⁹ Mikhailov, D., 'By the end of the year, the unemployment rate in Ukraine will be 18.3% — NBU', *Suspilne Media*, 5 May 2023. Available at: <https://suspilne.media/467438-do-kinca-roku-riven-bezrobitta-v-ukraini-stanovitime-183-nbu>.

Since the State Statistics Service is not publishing up-to-date data on employment with sex-disaggregation at present, no information is available on women's and men's unemployment rates in 2023.

Gender barriers that continue from pre-war employment patterns include horizontal gender segregation in the labour market and informal employment. The most striking examples of horizontal gender segregation concern sectors such as IT, energy, education, the security and defence sector, construction, and certain jobs in agriculture. In IT, the percentage of women employees has been increasing over the past decade. Nevertheless, as of 2022, women comprised just 30.8% of employees and almost one-third of individual entrepreneurs (who are also *de facto* employees) in the IT industry. They are concentrated in administrative jobs in IT that involve lower pay and fewer opportunities for promotion.⁸⁰

In the energy sector, the percentage of women employees remains quite low. The latest available data indicates that women represented approximately 23–27% of workers during 2013–2017.⁸¹

In education, at the beginning of the 2020–2021 academic year, men accounted for just 12.9% of all teachers in general secondary education institutions and for 39.5% of all teachers in professional (vocational and technical) educational institutions.⁸²

In agriculture, professional horizontal segregation remains a critical barrier. Notably, very few women are involved among occupations related to the use of machinery and equipment (which are more highly paid), and men are far less involved in activities that involve a large amount of manual labour (except for heavy physical heavy work, in which they are involved). This situation is aggravated by the reduction in the number of men employed in rural areas because they have joined the Armed Forces, and the need to compensate for their absence. Although mechanisation equalises gender roles in agriculture, women's lack of technical skills prevents them from taking full advantage of mechanisation, especially in times of war.⁸³ Moreover, the full-scale war has increased the burden on women in rural areas, forcing them to effectively shoulder a quadruple burden – of engaging in professional activities/businesses, caring for family members, volunteering or engaging in community activities, and caring for the home. Despite this, the value of care work performed by women continues to be unrecognised. Similarly, women's contribution to rural development is not sufficiently recognised.⁸⁴

⁸⁰ Ivanova, K., E. Gogilashvili and M. Kalinichenko, 'Women in Ukrainian IT. What has changed in 10 years: Management positions, salaries, global trends', *Speka Media*, 14 February 2023. Available at: <https://speka.media/zinki-v-ukrayinskomu-it-shho-zminilosya-za-10-rokiv-kerivni-posadi-zarplati-svitovii-trend-pk0z59>.

⁸¹ Dyachuk, O., Y. Galustyan, V. Blizniuk, R. Podolets and G. Trypolska, *Women and men in the energy sector of Ukraine*, Heinrich Boll Stiftung, Kyiv, 2019. Available at: https://ua.boell.org/sites/default/files/genger_in_energy_report_2019.pdf

⁸² State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 'Employment of the population by gender, type of area and age groups' (data for 2021), 2022.

⁸³ Kyiv School of Economics, 'The impact of the war on Ukrainian agriculture', 2022. Available at: <https://kse.ua/ua/war-impacts-on-ukrainian-agriculture>.

⁸⁴ United Nations Development Programme, *Gender impact assessment of full-scale war on the agriculture sector in Ukraine*, UNDP, Kyiv, November 2022.

Such imbalances lead to a gap in wages and to stereotypes about 'female' and 'male' professions in several economic sectors. Stereotypes are often the cause of the imbalances mentioned above. However, at the same time, the unequal distribution of women's and men's roles in different economic sectors creates a reality that is perceived as normal, which reinforces stereotypes.⁸⁵

As in other countries in the region, there is little information on women's and men's engagement in the informal labour sector in Ukraine. Specifically, Ukraine's agricultural sector – which is known to account for a high proportion of informal employment worldwide – needs to be researched further. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), men have a more diverse employment profile, even in informal work, including in construction, while rural women have very limited options.⁸⁶ The full-scale war has further aggravated the challenge of informal employment.

4.1.2. Gender pay gap

Ukraine's State Statistics Service collects annual sex-disaggregated data on wages, both by economic sector and by region.⁸⁷ This information is calculated based on the results of the state statistical 'Observation of Enterprises on Labour-related Issues', which covers legal entities and separate branches of legal entities with 10+ employees. In 2021, the gender pay gap in Ukraine reported by the State Statistics Service was 18.6%. Over the past 7 years, the wage gap has decreased by 7.4%. In 2015, women's average wages were 26% less than the wages of men. As of the end of 2021, the greatest pay gap between men and women – where women earned 30% less on average – was observed in sectors such as arts, sports, entertainment and recreation; financial and insurance activities; postal and courier activities; and air transport. At the same time, there are a number of areas where this gap does not exist at all, or is minimal, most notably in education, water transport, and administrative and auxiliary services.⁸⁸

After 2021, no official data from the State Statistics Service on the amount of wages is available, but data exists from market research. For example, according to a study by the company DOU in 2023 on salaries in IT, women in various IT occupations earn 10–30% less than men.⁸⁹

Differences in wages are largely due to occupational segregation, with women concentrated in sectors with relatively high educational requirements but lower wages, primarily in the public sector.

⁸⁵ United Nations Development Programme, *Gender impact assessment of full-scale war on the agriculture sector in Ukraine*, UNDP, Kyiv, November 2022.

⁸⁶ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *National Gender Profile of Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods: Ukraine*, FAO, Kyiv, 2021, p. xvii.

⁸⁷ See the database of the State Statistics Service and its data on the average monthly salary of men and women, broken down by economic sectors: https://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/operativ/operativ2021/gdn/smzp_zs/smzp_zs_ek/smzp_zs_ek_21_ue.xlsx.

⁸⁸ State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 'Average monthly salary by sex and types of economic activity for the quarter', 2021. Available at: https://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/operativ/operativ2021/gdn/smzp_zs/smzp_zs_ek/smzp_zs_ek_21_ue.xlsx.

⁸⁹ Sabadyshina, Y. 'When looking for a job in IT, women indicate a 10-30% lower salary in their resume than men - Djinni analytics', DOU, 20 February 2023. Available at: <https://dou.ua/lenta/news/male-and-female-salaries-in-it/>.

System-related barriers lead to horizontal and vertical occupational gender segregation in the labour market, with women concentrated at lower remuneration levels. The National Strategy on Reducing the Gender Pay Gap for the period up to 2030 is expected to address key root causes behind the gender pay gap, including horizontal and vertical gender segregation, as well as the unequal distribution of care work between men and women. This will involve awareness raising campaigns targeting boys, girls and teachers, paired with career guidance, and encouraging employers to enforce equal pay policies. It is also important to note that there are significant limitations in sex-disaggregated data on wages in Ukraine. First, there is no representative data available about the share of the gender wage gap that can be explained by objective factors – such as education or occupational segregation – as opposed to discriminatory factors on the basis of gender.

Second, since a substantial part of Ukraine's economy is informal,⁹⁰ official wage statistics do not accurately reflect real wage differences between men and women. Certain businesses do not report their economic activities and, consequently, the salaries they pay their employees. Other businesses pay part of employees' salaries officially – usually amounts equivalent to the minimum wage – and report these payments. The rest is paid in cash, and is not reported or accounted for. Women are considered more vulnerable to such violations as they are less likely than men to negotiate for higher salaries.⁹¹ There is no credible way to measure this phenomenon and reliably assess the gender pay gap in shadow employment. Therefore, it is likely that the real pay gap between men and women is higher than the gap officially reported by the State Statistics Service.

4.2. Women's entrepreneurship

Women's participation in ownership and the top management of businesses is sub-optimal. Only 17% top managers in companies in Ukraine are women, and only 15% companies involve women's majority ownership.⁹² At the same time, women comprise up to 46% of individual entrepreneurs⁹³ whose businesses are smaller in size, and in which turnover and income are lower.

In 2020–2021, one of the most tangible external factors affecting business activity was the COVID-19 pandemic, which had a negative impact on the work of enterprises. According to research conducted by the Ukraine Investment and Trade Facilitation Centre with the support of the USAID Competitive Economy Programme,⁹⁴ 62% of

⁹⁰ Various estimates range from 30% to 50% of GDP.

⁹¹ Kovalevych, S. and I. Khoruzha, 'Particularities of legal regulation of work conditions of women', *Young Researcher*, Vol. 5, No. 1, May 2017, pp. 54–57.

⁹² World Economic Forum, *Global Gender Gap Report 2022*, WEF, Cologny, 2022. Available at: https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2022.pdf.

⁹³ United Nations Development Programme, *Women and Men at Managerial Positions in Ukraine: Statistical Analysis of Open Data of EDRPOU*, UNDP, Kyiv, September 2021.

⁹⁴ United States Agency for International Development, and Investment and Trade Facilitation Centre, *Ukrainian Female Entrepreneurship Profile: Research Results*, 2022. Available at: <http://tradedcentre.org.ua/eng/viewer?pdf=/upload/other/Ukrainian%20Female%20Entrepreneur%20Profile%202022-3.pdf>.

women entrepreneurs reported that the situation has worsened in the wake of the pandemic, although they continued their activities. In 2022, businesses had to overcome the impact of not only the COVID-19 pandemic but also the war. However, despite the greater number of challenges and obstacles, women entrepreneurs positively assess the state of Ukrainian business. Some 55% of women entrepreneurs have continued their activities despite the deterioration of the business situation and uncertainty about future prospects for development, 23% have 'survived/remained afloat', 6% are functioning at the same level with minor changes, and 6% have completely or partially suspended their activities and are considering whether to continue at all.⁹⁵

In 2021–2022, women entrepreneurs were most active in the service sector, which is associated with lower costs for opening a business – particularly for buying equipment and paying wages to employees. Overall, 44% of women entrepreneurs were active in service industries, 21% in trade, 10% in education, 8% in the creative industries, 5% in hotels, restaurants and cafes, 4% in construction, 4% in IT, and 3% in the agricultural sector. Only 10% of women entrepreneurs carry out activities across all of Ukraine, while the vast majority work exclusively in their own region, which limits the territorial diversification of clients.⁹⁶

For women in Ukraine, starting a business becomes easier every year. In 2022, 58% of the women did not find it difficult to start a business, compared to 35% in 2021. More than 50% opened and registered their businesses online through the Diia platform. However, certain fears appear common among entrepreneurs – including constant financial obligations, their financial burden, the threat of business loss, the risk of disappointing their family or others, high personal load (virtually 24/7), the threat of economic crisis (up to bankruptcy), personal emotional exhaustion, and being responsible if the business fails.

According to the by the Ukraine Investment and Trade Facilitation Centre, as many as 95% women entrepreneurs have reported that the war has affected their businesses. This impact includes a decrease in clientele (26%), forcing businesses to suspend their activities (18%), and a decrease in the number of orders (12%). Roughly 19% of women entrepreneurs reported suffering direct losses, while 78% have suffered indirect losses. Most experienced direct and indirect due to the war that amount to between UAH 100,000 and 5 million. To stay 'afloat' or develop during the war, 12% of women entrepreneurs have restructured their businesses, 12% have optimized costs, 8% have moved to e-commerce/online sales, and the same proportion have relocated their enterprises. According to women entrepreneurs, the most effective tools of state support for post-war business recovery include grant funding (25%), preferential taxation (23%) and simplified lending (18%).⁹⁷

Despite the encouraging numbers of entrepreneurial ventures, women entrepreneurs continue to face significant obstacles to starting and growing businesses, especially in the context of uncertainty, war and longstanding gender biases.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

The most significant difficulties they face include constantly changing business regulations by the ever-changing authorities (32%), the lack of available loans and sources of quick access to capital (27%), stereotypes in society about women's entrepreneurship (19%), the lack or irrelevance of public services that enable the rapid construction of production facilities (10%), and the insecurity of private property (8%). Nevertheless, the most important advantage women entrepreneurs have is the possibility of combining business activities with their personal lives.⁹⁸

The number of women entrepreneurs who report encountering gender stereotypes within the scope of business activities increased from 30% in 2021 to 54% in 2022. Prevalent stereotypes include the notion that 'business is not for women' (28%), 'women are the weaker sex' (22%), 'running a business is something frivolous and short-term' (17%), 'a young woman does not understand anything' (13%), and 'women should stay at home' (9%). At the same time, 9 in 10 women entrepreneurs claim that opportunities for the development of women's entrepreneurship are available in Ukraine. The key goals cited by women entrepreneurs who participated in the Ukraine Investment and Trade Facilitation Centre's survey include scaling up, increasing their customer base and increasing profitability, followed by attracting investment and expanding the activities of small businesses through franchising.⁹⁹

In 2022, the Ministry of Economy launched small grants for entrepreneurs to revive the economy. As of May 2023, 8,900 women submitted applications for grants (women comprised 46% of all applicants), and 1,840 women entrepreneurs received the grants (51% of all receivers). The average amount of the grants provided is UAH 223,000.¹⁰⁰

4.3. Gender and health

Before the full-scale war, several important surveys on the gender-related aspects of health were conducted, including a series of surveys on the results of health reform by USAID's Health Reform Support Activity (2020–2021) and the 'Gender Perspective of the Healthcare Sector of Ukraine' survey conducted by the EU-UNFPA WE ACT Women's Empowerment Action Programme in 2022. These surveys identify several critical imbalances that impact women's and men's effective access to health services, and their participation in Ukraine's health workforce. These include, but are not limited to, the following issues:

1. While women dominate among health workers (they account for over 80% of doctors and about 90% nurses), they are disproportionately underrepresented in decision-making in the health sector, as only 50% of chief doctors are women.

⁹⁸ United States Agency for International Development, and Investment and Trade Facilitation Centre, *Ukrainian Female Entrepreneurship Profile: Research Results*, 2022. Available at: <http://tradedecentre.org.ua/eng/viewer?pdf=/upload/other/Ukrainian%20Female%20Entrepreneur%20Profile%202022-3.pdf>.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, 'The tendency to reduce the wage gap between women and men in Ukraine should become stable and irreversible, - Yuliya Svyrydenko', 12 May 2023. Available at: <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/news/tendentsiia-doskorochennia-rozryvu-v-oplati-pratsi-zhinok-ta-cholovikiv-v-ukraini-maie-statyi-stiikoju-ta-nezvorotnoiu-iuliia-svyrydenko>.

In addition, although data on women's and men's average earnings in the health sector is not available, combining the average salary of a doctor, chief doctor and nurse with the gender ratio of these positions reveals that women in the primary health care system earn less than men.¹⁰¹ The distribution of informal payments among health professionals in different positions within the specialised health care system also tends to favour men. Further efforts to reduce the prevalence of informal payments, therefore, would contribute to lessening the gender pay gap in health care.¹⁰²

2. Women tend to take better care of their health than men. They seek preventive care almost twice as often as men, and dominate among those who contact health care system in case of diseases. Some 15% of men and 6% of women do not contact the health system at all when they experience diseases.¹⁰³ This is one key reason why men's average life expectancy at birth (66.4 years) is 10 years shorter than women's (76.2 years), according to data from 2021.¹⁰⁴

Younger patients visit health care providers for preventive visits more often than older groups. However, older persons seek treatment more often than younger populations when they are sick. While available data is not sufficient to identify the motivations for such discrepancies in health-seeking behaviours, it is clear that communication campaigns aimed at improving health literacy in Ukraine should take these issues into account when targeting different groups.

Different groups offer different reasons for their decisions not to seek health care for disease. Men tend to neglect their health and distrust doctors. Women, low-income persons and the elderly cite high out-of-pocket payments. Urban residents cite long waiting times, while rural residents identify limited transportation to health care facilities.¹⁰⁵

3. Primary health care provision is organised in such a way that different populations (women/men, different age groups, urban/rural residents, and persons belonging to vulnerable groups) largely have equal access to it. In particular, the location of outpatient clinics is reasonable, so that relatively equal (in different districts) numbers of patients are registered with them. Different groups of patients, including patients with medical and social vulnerabilities, tend not to face specific economic barriers to accessing health care. Cases of individual patients being unable to access primary health care due to vulnerabilities are not common.

¹⁰¹ NHSU, 'Salaries of health professionals: Briefing as of 9 September 2020', 2020. Available at: https://4vlada.com/sites/default/files/inline-images/20210517_%D0%B7%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%BF%D0%BB%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B0%20%D0%9D%D0%A1%D0%97%D0%A3.jpg.

¹⁰² United States Agency for International Development Health Reform Support Project, *Report on the findings of survey 'Behavior of primary healthcare providers in response to capitation'*, USAID, Kyiv, 2020.

¹⁰³ United Nations Population Fund, *Gender Perspective of the Healthcare Sector of Ukraine*, UNFPA, Kyiv, 2022. Available at: <https://ukraine.unfpa.org/en/publications/gender-perspective-healthcare-sector-ukraine>.

¹⁰⁴ State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 'Birth, death and average life expectancy in Ukraine for 2021'. Available at: http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/operativ/operativ2021/m&w/arh_nsotj_nas.htm

¹⁰⁵ Health Index Ukraine, 2020. Available at: <https://health-index.com.ua/>.

These should be addressed on a case-by-case basis rather than through systemic interventions.

Despite some progress, health facilities' buildings are not well-suited to the needs of patients with limited mobility. Buildings often lack ramps, accessible toilets and infrastructure to support blind or visually impaired people. This gap is especially critical in rural areas.¹⁰⁶

4. No significant sex or age-related discrepancies have been observed in the quality of care provided to patients. The financial situation of patients continues to be the key driver of being admitted to hospital, since the need for out-of-pocket payments (including informal payments) for in-patient care remains extremely widespread. Women make such payments somewhat more often than men. However, high out-of-pocket expenditures for in-patient treatment is a factor that prevents women, low-income groups and the elderly (compared to men, younger groups and more well-off patients) from receiving in-patient care.¹⁰⁷
5. Somewhat more women than men, twice as many elderly people as younger persons, and 2.5 as many low-income groups as high-income populations face the problem of medicines not being (financially) affordable.

The Affordable Medicines Programme is a good solution, as over a half of the women and men surveyed confirm that medicines have become more affordable after the programme's launch. As women and the elderly tend to be the most positive about the programme, it appears to have been effective in targeting those who need it the most. At the same time, sex and age gaps are observed among the programme's users. Women comprise 67% of its users, 63% of prescriptions have been issued to patients aged 65+ and 36% to age 40–64-year-olds. That is, people aged 0–40 almost do not use the programme at all.

Counter-intuitively, low-income groups spend more on medicines (from their own pocket) than middle and high-income populations. Conducting surveys on the reasons for this would help to identify possible red flags in the level of health literacy or the health conditions of low-income groups.¹⁰⁸

6. Informal payments are deeply rooted in Ukraine's health care system, as over 70% of patients of both sexes report making informal payments. Women make such payments somewhat more often than men, principally because women contact the health care system more often than men.

¹⁰⁶ United States Agency for International Development Health Reform Support Project, *Report on the findings of survey 'Behavior of primary healthcare providers in response to capitation'*, USAID, Kyiv, 2020.

¹⁰⁷ Health Index Ukraine, 2020. Available at: <https://health-index.com.ua/>.

¹⁰⁸ National Health Service of Ukraine, 'Dashboards: Statistics on Affordable Medicines programme e-prescriptions. Деталізація виписаних електронних рецептів за програмою реімбурсації («Доступні ліки»).' Available at: <http://nszu.gov.ua>.

The more critical the health service is, the higher is the likelihood of informal payments associated with it. What is even more alarming is that patients with vulnerabilities face corruption in health care – notably, informal payments are extorted from them – more often than other groups. This is also true for men (compared to women) and patients from high-income groups. While high-income groups pay higher informal payments weighted numerically, low-income groups and vulnerable persons spend a greater share of their income on informal payments than other social groups. According to patients, they payments are extorted from them more often than they offer such payments. At the same time, health care workers tend to deny that they extort or receive informal payments – only about 30% of workers admit receiving informal payments.

Groups with greater vulnerabilities – including lower-income groups – tend to hold more negative attitudes towards informal payments, largely because these represent a greater share of their income than the income of other populations.¹⁰⁹

The start of the full-scale war has worsened access to health care for both men and women. Since women comprise 83% of health care staff in Ukraine, they continue to play a central role as frontline responders in the current crisis. Yet, many medical workers, pharmacists and distributors have been displaced – either internally or to other countries – causing a reduction or absence in medical services and supplies. This has worsened access to already significantly damaged health care services, especially in areas directly affected by hostilities. Access is particularly affected by attacks against health facilities including hospitals and ambulances, as well as mined roads and a lack of transportation, especially in rural areas.

Ukrainian people continue to grapple with shock and overwhelming stress, unsure of how to move forward in their lives. The war's traumatic impact, coupled with the loss of loved ones due to injuries, deaths and destroyed homes, has left many deeply traumatized. Childhood and adolescent experiences of war carry especially long-lasting psychological and social repercussions. War-affected individuals face significant disparities in mental health compared to the general population. Children exposed to war endure or witness unimaginable violence, abuse and the loss of loved ones. Forced displacement and separation from family members further exacerbate their distress. In addition, the lack of access to essential services and education threatens their overall development.¹¹⁰

The war negatively has negatively affected access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), including maternal, newborn and child health care (MNCH). Multiple reports in the media have noted an increase in infections, the lack of medical care, poor nutrition and stress wrought by the war increasing the risks of premature births.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ United States Agency for International Development Health Reform Support Project, *Report on the results of the baseline survey, 'The volume of informal payments at the level of specialised health care institutions for four Health Guarantee Program priority services'*, USAID, Kyiv, 2021.

¹¹⁰ 'Press Release: Overcoming the Trauma of War. What SOS Children's Villages in Ukraine and Poland do to protect the mental health of children affected by war', SOS, 12 October 2022, Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/overcoming-trauma-war>.

¹¹¹ UN Women and CARE, *Rapid Gender Analysis of Ukraine*, UN Women, Kyiv, 4 May 2022. Available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/05/rapid-gender-analysis-of-ukraine>.

Women's access to gynaecological services has also declined. Challenges to hygiene are particularly acute for women in settlements where there is no regular water supply. In the first months of the full-scale war, many interviewed women spoke about the lack of menstrual hygiene supplies. Mothers of infants who moved to rural areas reported the unavailability of gynaecological services (in terms of their absence or the inadequate quality of services).¹¹² In this context, it is important to ensure comprehensive sexuality education and access to contraception, which empowers women, adolescents and young people to exercise their sexual and reproductive health rights, make informed decisions, prevent early pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, and challenge gender stereotypes and negative norms. It fosters respect, equality, diversity and consent, contributing to personal development, more equal societies, and the fulfilment of human rights, while also addressing patriarchal systems and toxic masculinity that perpetuate discrimination and violence against women and girls.

Over 90% of military personnel who seek health care are men. On a positive note, on 26 May 2023, amendments to legal framework simplified the work of military doctor commissions, which the military personnel and conscripts have long been complaining about. The challenges reported include limited access to health care for injured personnel, difficulties in being officially recognised as a person with disabilities, and protracted procedures for receiving medical certificates (both for military personnel and conscripts). The legal amendments expand the list of health care facilities that can provide services to military personnel and conscripts, while simplifying the procedure for receiving necessary medical certificates.¹¹³

In the autumn of 2022 and winter of 2022–2023, health care infrastructure was significantly damaged by shelling and blackouts. However, in the spring of 2023, access to health care gradually began returning to normal for both women and men. Although women and men have different health-related needs, sex is not a barrier to accessing health care in most cases in Ukraine. Nevertheless, when coupled with other factors – such as age, residing in rural areas, having children, lacking financial resources and other factors – it may become a barrier.

4.4. Gender and education

Gender inequalities in education have long been recognised both as a problem, and as a root cause of gender barriers in employment, entrepreneurship, access to decision-making and other fields. The full-scale war has affected access to education, especially for vulnerable groups. According to the Gender Inequality Index 2021, Ukraine ranks among the highest countries in terms of gender parity in education (27th rank).

¹¹² UN Women and CARE, *Rapid Gender Analysis of Ukraine*, UN Women, Kyiv, 4 May 2022. Available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/05/rapid-gender-analysis-of-ukraine>.

¹¹³ 'Zelensky simplified the process of passing the VLC and the processing of medical documents', *Kurs*, 26 May 2023, Available at: <https://kurs.com.ua/novost/1040383-zelenskii-uprostit-prohozhdzenie-vvk-i-oformlenie-meddokumentov>.

Almost 100% of boys and girls are literate, their involvement in education is equally balanced and high. Thus 92.7% of girls and 90.7% of boys are enrolled in basic secondary education, 86.1% of girls and 85.3% of boys in secondary education, and 88.8% of girls and 76.8% of boys in higher education.¹¹⁴ In legal terms, all subjects in Ukrainian universities and vocational institutions are equally open to women, men, girls and boys.

At the same time, access to education remains a problem for various groups of women and men, primarily those living in rural areas, Roma children, persons with disabilities, and those of pre-retirement age who need retraining.¹¹⁵ Limited access to remote education – that began with the COVID19 pandemic and continues now because of the full-scale war – is most common among low-income families, families with many children, children living in rural areas, children with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups of children and families.¹¹⁶

Gender is not sufficiently mainstreamed in education policy at all levels, or in curricula. This contributes to the feminisation of employment in the field of education, the preservation of gender stereotypes and discriminatory educational content at all educational levels. The Strategy for Implementation of Gender Equality in Education until 2030, adopted in December 2022, is expected to address these challenges. According to the report, 'Choice of higher education: gender analysis', by CEDOS analytical centre in 2019, almost the same percentages of female and male graduates of general education institutions are enrolled in higher education institutions. However, there are disproportions between the shares of girls and boys by field of study. In the 2021–22 academic year, women accounted for 25% of mathematics students, 19% of IT students, 74% of students in the field of education/pedagogy and 82% of medical students.¹¹⁷ Having more trained women in industrial sectors is critical for increasing women's participation in entrepreneurship, management and the workforce of industrial companies and processes. As such, the Government of Ukraine and international development partners may consider investing in initiatives that encourage young women to choose industrial professions, especially engineering, manufacturing and other science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)-related specialties.

According to the findings of a survey conducted by UNFPA in 2021, 'What Ukrainians are driven by when choosing a profession', 56% of Ukrainians believe that there are professions that are suitable only for men and only for women. Men agree with this statement more often (59%) than women (53%). This opinion is shared by a half of surveyed youth between the ages of 14 and 24.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ United Nations Development Programme, *Gender Inequality Index*, UNDP, New York, 2021. Available at: <https://hdr.undp.org/data-centre/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>.

¹¹⁵ See: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/752-2022-%D1%80#Text>.

¹¹⁶ UN Women and CARE, *Rapid Gender Analysis of Ukraine*, UN Women, Kyiv, 4 May 2022. Available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/05/rapid-gender-analysis-of-ukraine>.

¹¹⁷ State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 'Higher and professional pre-higher education in Ukraine in 2021: Tab 2.3 "Training of specialists in higher education at the beginning of the 2021/22 academic year by fields of knowledge according to the 2015 list"', 2021.

¹¹⁸ United Nations Population Fund, *What Ukrainians are driven by when choosing a profession: The results of national public opinion survey on key factors and stereotypes*, UNFPA, Kyiv, February 2021. Available at: https://ukraine.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/prezetation_tramplin_eng_3_1.pdf.

Although the share of textbooks that take into account an anti-discrimination approach increased by 42% in 2019, the quality of anti-discrimination textbooks is not always high, and discrimination based on gender persists in the study of subjects such as labour training and defence. Other problems reported by the Ministry of Education include the low level of gender sensitivity of educators, the lack of a comprehensive system of gender education, and the limited availability of special training/curricula for educators and policy-makers in the field of education.¹¹⁹ Notably, textbooks and curricula do not stipulate studying topics such as gender equality, harassment, the prevention of gender-based violence, sexual orientation or gender identity in schools.

A network of gender education centres operates in Ukraine. Such centres function in 40 higher education institutions, including in the cities of Dnipro, Zhytomyr, Zaporizhzhia, Kyiv, Kryvyi Rih, Lutsk, Mariupol, Nizhyn, Sumy, Ternopil, Kharkiv, Cherkasy and Uzhhorod. The network's aim is to unite the efforts of academics and practitioners to ensure the sustainable implementation of gender equality principles in education. However, the existing network of such institutions is insufficient and should be further strengthened and equipped with resources.

4.5. Women, peace and security (WPS)

The women, peace and security agenda became a critically relevant issue with the start of the full-scale war.

As of December 2022, there were 59,786 women serving in Ukraine's Armed Forces, 41,000 of whom were military personnel, and almost 19,000 were serving civilian workers. About 5,000 women took part in the hostilities, approximately 10% of whom joined the Territorial Defence Forces. Since February 2022, 101 women have died, 50 have gone missing, and more than 100 have been injured. More than 350 women have been awarded state awards, two of whom received awards posthumously.¹²⁰

In 2016, Ukraine adopted its first National Action Plan (NAP) on UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which was valid until 2020. Ever since, the country has taken action to improve women's participation in peace processes and the security and defence sector, including in terms of decision-making, as well as protecting women's rights related to conflict and post-conflict contexts.

Over the 2016–2020 period, a number of important achievements have been made. First, the idea that it is important to recognise and respond to the different needs of women, men, girls and boys in security and defence processes in order to strengthen the rule of law, democratic governance and gender equality has been promoted by various stakeholders.

¹¹⁹ See: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/752-2022-%D1%80#Text>.

¹²⁰ Ukrainian Women's Congress, 'Minister of Defence: Today Ukrainian women can realise themselves well in the Armed Forces', 2 December 2022. Available at: <https://womenua.today/news/ministr-oborony-sogodni-ukrayinski-zhinky-mozhut-dobre-realizuvatysya-u-zsu/>.

They include the authorities, law enforcement agencies, the armed forces, NGOs, the media, academia, civil society and the wider population.

Second, women's representation in the security and defence sector has increased. In 2018, dozens of positions in the law enforcement sector were opened for women, positions which women could not apply for before.¹²¹ Since the beginning of 2018, the Ministry of Internal Affairs has integrated gender into the process of collecting staff statistics. Sex-disaggregated data on 17 staff-related indicators is now available.

Since 2016, the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces have adapted some 300 military facilities to meet women's needs.¹²² In 2020, girls accounted for 13% of students enrolled in military universities,¹²³ a figure that is growing year on year. Military education institutions have also started to integrate a gender component into their curricula.

The share of women among law enforcement officers has also risen. As of the end of 2020, women accounted for 46% of the staff the Ministry of Interior. As of February 2023, the percentage of women among police officers increased to 28%, up from 25% in 2020.¹²⁴ At the end of 2020, the share of women stood at 34.7% in the National Guard, although only 8.4% of the National Guard's military personnel were women. Women also accounted for 38.4% of workers in the State Emergency Service, including 11% of emergency responders, and 51% of workers in the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine (SBGS), including 23% of its military personnel. They represented 79.2% of workers in the State Migration Service (SMS), where women's participation has traditionally been high, and 32.7% of those in the Security Service of Ukraine.¹²⁵ Positive dynamics are also afoot in decision-making. The number of women in decision-making positions rose – between 2017 and 2020 – by 4% in the National Police, reaching 17.7% in total, by 2% in the State Migration Service, reaching 61.0% in total, and by 1.5% in the National Guard, reaching 6.6% overall. Women's representation in decision-making also rose by 3% each in the State Border Guard Service and the State Migration Service, reaching 12.9% and 20.5%, respectively.

Other national-level achievements include the development and implementation of sectoral action plans on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the National Guard, alongside the integration of gender into the curricula of the Police Academy.

In 2020, the second National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security for the next strategic period (2021–2025) was adopted. To respond to the challenges of the full-scale war, it was extensively reviewed and updated in December 2022.

¹²¹ See: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/752-2022-%D1%80#Text>.

¹²² 'Women in the army are the professionals rather than something unusual', ArmyInform, 21 January 2021. Available at: <https://armyinform.com.ua/2021/01/zhinka-v-armiyi-ne-fenomen-a-fahova-profesionalka>.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ According to a presentation by the Head of the Human Rights Department of the National Police of Ukraine during the Strategic Consultation on Developing the Roadmap to Advance Gender Equality on 25 February 2023.

¹²⁵ State Statistics Service of Ukraine and UN Women, *Indicators for the Monitoring of Gender Equality in Ukraine: Monitoring Report 2021*, UN Women, Kyiv, 2022. Available at: https://ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat_e/2021/2021_GEIndicators-MonitoringRepor_ENG.pdf.

As the lion's share of WPS obligations are implemented at the regional and local levels, the process of localising these obligations is ongoing. Regional authorities in Ukraine are currently tasked with updating and intensifying the implementation of regional action plans on WPS. However, there is room for improvement in terms of regional capacity to develop and implement. Key issues in this regard are:

1. It is necessary to ensure that regional stakeholders have a strategic vision of the importance of gender mainstreaming in security and peace processes, as well as in wider regional recovery processes. This vision must go far beyond the number of women and men in regional authorities, the police, the army and other institutions.
2. Regional stakeholders need skills and tools to analyse regional/local contexts and identify the needs and challenges that women face in terms of peace and security.
3. Regional stakeholders require the capacity to translate this vision into action plans/policies that address existing challenges and empower women.
4. Regional stakeholders require improved coordination among themselves to maximise their inputs and impact.
5. Regional stakeholders require support and resources to implement their action plans and effectively address issues facing women in their regions and communities.

4.6. Gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence

Gender-based violence has long been a critical issue in Ukraine, and the full-scale war has further exacerbated this problem. According to a survey by UNDP, two in three women have experienced psychological, physical or sexual violence in their lifetime. Some 26% of women aged 15+ have ever experienced violence by an intimate partner, and 5% of women of the same age, by a non-intimate partner. Before February 2022, the most common forms of intimate partner violence included controlling behaviour (55%), abusive behaviour (53%), economic violence (20%), and using children to blackmail victims or abusing children (12%). Moreover, every second woman aged 15+ in Ukraine has experienced at least one form of sexual harassment.¹²⁶

According to a survey on 'Women's well-being and security', conducted by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and UNFPA in 2019, 67% of Ukrainian women who have suffered gender-based violence have experienced physical, psychological or sexual violence starting from the age of 15. According to the National Hotline for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, Human Trafficking and Gender Discrimination – which has been operated by La Strada-Ukraine since 1997 – out of almost 30,000 calls received in 2020, more than 96% concerned the prevention and countering of domestic violence and gender discrimination. The vast majority (84%) of these calls were made by women.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ United Nations Development Programme, 'Gender Profile Ukraine', 2020. Available at: <https://www.undp.org/ukraine/gender-profile-ukraine>.

¹²⁷ See: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/752-2022-%D1%80#Text>.

Since 2020, an increase in GBV has been observed. High levels of stress tend to increase levels of domestic violence as well. There is also a strong correlation between GBV and proximity to areas of hostilities. Before February 2022, 13% of women living near the 'contact line' had been robbed, mugged or extorted, 22% experienced a physical injury due to an accident, 24% experienced damage to their homes or property, 6% lost a loved one due to the war, and 17% witnessed someone being shot, wounded or violently attacked.¹²⁸

Since 2021, the State Social Programme for Preventing and Countering Domestic Violence and Gender-Based Violence for the period up to 2025 has been implemented. As of May 2022, 805 specialised support services for survivors of gender-based violence had been created (including at the expense of state subsidies in 2021). Of these services, 649 remained functional (43 shelters, 36 day centres for social and psychological assistance, 87 specialised services for primary social and psychological counselling, and 483 mobile teams delivering social and psychological assistance), while 156 suspended their operations, because of the full-scale war.¹²⁹

Ukraine's ratification of the Istanbul Convention in June 2022 is expected to further strengthen the legal framework, policies and practices of the Government in terms of preventing gender-based violence, supporting survivors and holding perpetrators accountable.

According to expert estimates and interviews with representatives of the Ministry of Interior, the full-scale war has led to the increased prevalence of gender-based violence due to rising levels of stress and post-traumatic stress disorder. Survivors' access to services has also been limited. As of May 2022, 19% of specialised support services for survivors of domestic and gender-based violence were not functioning. Among such services, 44% were located in the occupied territories, 28% temporarily suspended their activities, 21% did not start working before the introduction of martial law, and 5% performed other functions. Interviews with representatives of the Ministry of Interior indicate that these services are gradually resuming, but have still not reached pre-war levels.

Violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) persons is a major concern. These groups face various forms of violence, including physical, sexual and psychological abuse, often stemming from societal prejudice and discrimination. Statistical data from non-governmental and international organisations highlights a significant prevalence of hate crimes against the LGBTQI community in Ukraine. However, existing legislation and state policies have proven ineffective in combatting these crimes. While progress has been made in addressing violence against women, the provision of services for LGBTQI survivors has been relatively limited.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ United Nations Development Programme, 'Gender Profile Ukraine', 2020. Available at: <https://www.undp.org/ukraine/gender-profile-ukraine>.

¹²⁹ See: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/752-2022-%D1%80#Text>.

¹³⁰ Tekath, S., 'Hate crimes against LGBT people in Ukraine: "The attacks have become more and more organized"', *Genderized*, n.d. Available at: <https://genderz.org.ua/hate-crimes-against-lgbt-people-in-ukraine-the-attacks-have-become-more-and-more-organized>.

There is a need for more inclusive and comprehensive support systems to cater to the specific needs of these populations. Moreover, studies on violence against men and boys in Ukraine are extremely limited.

Human rights activists and women in Ukraine also experience harassment, both online and offline. Online harassment, including cyberbullying and threats, poses significant challenges for activists advocating for human rights and women's rights. This harassment not only undermines their work but also affects their safety and well-being. Notably, a study conducted in 2022 by Women in the Media, in collaboration with the Ukrainian Women's Fund, revealed that 53% of women media professionals experienced sexual harassment in their workplaces. Additionally, 33% reported witnessing their colleagues being sexually harassed, yet only 9% identified themselves as direct victims.¹³¹

Another issue is online violence against women during elections in Ukraine. According to a 2019 study conducted by IFES, online harassment and violence targeting women in Ukraine presents a widespread and detrimental obstacle to their political participation, perpetuating the dominance of male leadership in politics. The abusive content observed online reflects deeply ingrained social and cultural stereotypes, as well as prejudices and misconceptions regarding women's societal roles and involvement in civic and political affairs.¹³²

Conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) is a separate crime used by the Russian Federation as a method of warfare. As of January 2023, since the beginning of the full-scale war, prosecutors recorded 171 cases of CRSV, including 13 against children.¹³³ Given the exceptional sensitivity of the crime and the lack of access to the occupied territories, the real number of victims of CRSV is likely to be much higher. The impact of conflict-related sexual violence includes long-term trauma, physical injuries – such as fistula or sexually transmitted diseases – the loss of housing, opportunities and livelihoods, and the tearing apart of families and the social fabric. Since 2014, survivors have called for reparations, including guarantees of non-recurrence.

To respond comprehensively to CRSV, the Government and the UN Special Representative for the Prevention of Sexual Violence in Conflicts signed a Memorandum of Understanding in May 2022, setting out memorandum to prevent and respond to sexual violence. These include, in particular, support for developing and strengthening national policies and programmes to prevent and respond to sexual violence; strengthening the national health and social services' systems for survivors; and strengthening the rule of law and accountability for crimes of sexual violence.¹³⁴

¹³¹ See: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dhfWfHbKtkdAJV_GsQTfk7kueikKxuh7/view?pli=1.

¹³² Greg-Obi, O., I. Lylyk, G. Korzhov and O. Buchynska, *Online Violence Against Women in Politics in Ukraine: An IFES Assessment*, International Foundation for Electoral Systems, Arlington, VA, November 2019. Available at: <https://uam.in.ua/upload/medialibrary/fe3/fe394ac7aac5a5b23efae7682f010c8b.pdf>.

¹³³ Pryshchepa, Y., '171 cases of sexual violence by the Russian military have been registered in Ukraine — Olena Zelenska', *Suspilne Media*, 4 March 2023. Available at: <https://suspilne.media/amp/404252-v-ukraini-zareestrovani-171-vipadok-seksualnogo-nasilstva-z-boku-vijskovih-rf-olena-zelenska/>.

¹³⁴ Jurfem, 'Current Directions of Ukraine's Work in the Field of Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence and Providing Reparations to Victims', 6 March 2023. Available at: <https://jurfem.com.ua/aktualni-napryamky-roboty-reahuvannya-na-snpk-reparatsii>.

The Implementation Plan of the Framework Programme of Cooperation between the Government of Ukraine and the United Nations on the Prevention and Countering of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence¹³⁵ was approved in 2022. It serves as a basis for coordination between public authorities, international and non-governmental organisations for building a coordinated, transparent and effective system for combating sexual violence, including by providing reparations to victims of sexual violence.

4.7. Gender in the green transition

Gender in the green transition remains a topic on which limited data and statistics are available. The same is true for the gender-related impacts of full-scale war on the environment. While it is generally recognised that this impact is gendered, specific data, especially statistics, are lacking. This, in turn, impacts programming.

Gender issues in the green transition in Ukraine that are relevant in 2022–2023 include women's underrepresentation in decision-making about the green transition; the gender blindness of green transition policies, including those focusing on post-war recovery; women's limited access to education, professions and entrepreneurship related to the green transition; and possible limitations in women's access to natural resources and electricity, especially during the blackouts caused by the war.

Women's contributions to finding long-term solutions to climate change are often unrecognised, in part because women tend to be excluded from formal decision-making at the national level. Gender balance in Ukraine's energy sector is sub-optimal. If in general, there is a balance in employment and women make up about half of those employed in the economy (54%), in energy, fewer than one in four employees is a woman (24%).¹³⁶ Moreover, women tend to work on administrative issues. This imbalance starts with education – notably, a gender imbalance is observed among students of higher education institutions in energy-related specialties. For example, as of the beginning of the 2021–22 academic year, women accounted for 9.6% of students and 11.5% of graduates of higher education institutions majoring in electrical engineering.¹³⁷ An important root cause of this is gender stereotypes, whereby energy is considered a 'non-female' field. Indeed, 31% Ukrainians share the opinion that 'biotechnology, engineering and robotics' is a 'male' specialty.¹³⁸

¹³⁵ See: <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/>.

¹³⁶ Dyachuk, O., Y. Galustyan, V. Blyznyuk, R. Podolets and G. Trypolska, *Women and Men in Energy Sector in Ukraine*, Heinrich Boll Stiftung, Kyiv, 2019. Available at: <https://ua.boell.org/uk/2019/06/13/zhinki-ta-choloviki-v-energetichnomu-sektori-ukrayini-0>.

¹³⁷ State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 'Higher and professional pre-higher education in Ukraine', 2022. Available at: https://ukrstat.gov.ua/operativ/operativ2021/osv/vush_osv/arh_vuz_20_u.html.

¹³⁸ United Nations Population Fund, *What Ukrainians are driven by when choosing a profession: The results of national public opinion survey on key factors and stereotypes*, UNFPA, Kyiv, February 2021. Available at: https://ukraine.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/prezetation_tramplin_eng_3_1.pdf.

To increase the number of women among qualified specialists in the energy sector, special information and career guidance are needed to encourage women to choose professions and specialties in higher education institutions related to energy.

Women receive lower salaries than men in similar positions in the energy sector – earning only 79% of the average salary paid to men. The largest wage gap exists in the mining industry (63%). In the mining of hard coal and lignite, women earn 48% of the average earnings received by men.¹³⁹ Changes in the gender balance of new energy sectors are an ongoing trend. In 2019, women held 46% of administrative positions, 32% of senior management positions and 28% of technical positions in the renewable energy sector. However, barriers to women's advancement and gender pay gaps also exist in the sector.¹⁴⁰

According to the State Statistics Service, in 2021 Ukrainians spent 13.8% of their monthly income on utility services.¹⁴¹ The lower the level of a household's monthly income, the higher the share of utility services' costs in their expenses. Therefore, vulnerable groups are at significant risk of ending up in a state of energy poverty. Such risks are particularly significant for households headed by women, the elderly and large families.

According to international studies, energy consumers often lack technical knowledge about energy efficiency in households. In most countries (including Ukraine), women are more involved in housework, including electricity consumption, but participate less in energy-related decision-making. Research also shows that women pay attention to limit energy consumption more often than men, which contributes to energy savings in households. In addition to gender, other important factors that influence energy-saving behaviour are income levels, family composition and levels of education.¹⁴² There are no similar studies in Ukraine, but their results would be important to develop a communication campaign and messaging targeting different populations.

To respond to challenges of the war, including blackouts, the National Recovery Plan's section on energy security aims to support shared energy generation by assisting households and communities to install solar panels. There is a risk that limited knowledge, skills and stereotypes may lead women to be considered stakeholders who are less interested in shared energy generation. As a result, they may receive disproportionately less support from the Government to this end.

¹³⁹ Dyachuk, O., Y. Galustyan, V. Blyznyuk, R. Podolets and G. Trypolska, *Women and Men in Energy Sector in Ukraine*, Heinrich Boll Stiftung, Kyiv, 2019. Available at: <https://ua.boell.org/uk/2019/06/13/zhinki-ta-choloviki-v-energetichnomu-sektori-ukrayini-0>.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 'Demographic and social statistics/Income and living conditions', 2021. Available at: https://ukrstat.gov.ua/operativ/menu/menu_u/virdg.htm.

¹⁴² Shrestha, B., S. R. Tiwari, S. B. Bajracharya, M. M. Keitsch and H. B. Rijal, 'Review on the Importance of Gender Perspective in Household Energy-Saving Behavior and Energy Transition for Sustainability', *Energies*, Vol. 14, No. 22, 2021. Available at: <https://www.mdpi.com/1996-1073/14/22/7571>.

In recent years, women in the energy sector have established professional associations, such as the Women's Energy Club of Ukraine,¹⁴³ with the aim of improving their career prospects, knowledge and skills, as well as supporting each other in the industry. The EU Delegation can contribute to this trend by supporting necessary surveys, communication campaigns, career guidance, proportionate shared energy generation by female- and male-headed households, and professional associations of women in the green transition sector, as well as in other sectors where women are traditionally underrepresented.

4.8. Gender in digital transformations

Ukraine's information and communications technology (ICT) industry was immensely successful before the war, with some calling it the 'emerging tiger of Europe.' With more than 300,000 highly qualified workers, the sector contributed 4% of the country's GDP.¹⁴⁴ Ukraine is one of the largest exporters of IT services globally.

As of January 2023, there were 28.57 million internet users in Ukraine. Therefore, its internet penetration rate stood at 79.2% of the total population at the start of 2023, with 26.70 million social media users (53.1% of whom are women and 46.9% of whom are men).¹⁴⁵ The rate of internet usage among women is 70%, compared to 74% among men, 49.6% among persons with disabilities, and 32.1% among the elderly.¹⁴⁶

The level of use of public e-services in Ukraine increased from 53% in 2020 to 63% in 2022. Their use is at almost the same levels for women (63.8%) and men (63%), but there are significant differences between different groups. For instance, levels of using public e-services range from 75.7% among internally displaced persons, to 49% among persons with disabilities, and 33.5% among the elderly.¹⁴⁷ The mobile application Diia 2.0 allows Ukrainians to access nine digital documents in total. In general, over 50 government services are available online. The Diia portal provides the fastest business registration in the world, as a person needs only 1015 minutes to become an entrepreneur in Ukraine and 30 minutes to set up a limited liability company. The service has already been used by 250,000 private entrepreneurs and more than 2,500 companies.¹⁴⁸ On the Diia portal, a person can also obtain permits and licenses.

¹⁴³ See: <https://www.facebook.com/wecu.com.ua/>.

¹⁴⁴ The National Council for the Recovery of Ukraine from the Consequences of the War, *Draft Ukraine Recovery Plan: Materials of the "Digitalization" Working Group*, Kyiv, July 2023. Available at: https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/621f88db25fbf24758792dd8/62dadb0f931ea6867feb01cf_Digitalization.pdf.

¹⁴⁵ DataReportal, 'Digital 2023: Ukraine', 14 February 2023. Available at: <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2023-ukraine>.

¹⁴⁶ United Nations Development Programme and Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine, *Opinions and Views of the Population of Ukraine on Public Electronic Services: Analytical Report*, UNDP, Kyiv, September 2022. Available at: <https://www.undp.org/ukraine/publications/analytical-report-opinions-and-views-ukrainian-population-regarding-state-electronic-services>.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Communications Team of the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine, 'Going Digital as Ukraine's New Black', *Ukraine Now*, n.d. Available at: <https://ukraine.ua/stories/digitalization/>.

Moreover, Ukraine is a world leader in the number of services available online for the parents of newborns. The service 'eMalyatko' ('eBaby') allows parents to receive up to nine services related to a child's birth in a short period of time, which significantly eases the lives of mothers especially. The sustainability of e-services during the war has helped vulnerable people, including internally displaced persons and refugees, to have access to health care, administrative and banking services, as well as personal documents. For example, internally displaced persons can apply to obtain 'IDP status', change their registration address, and apply to receive government support for internally displaced persons.

Gender analysis of the prevalence of digital skills reveals that, among younger groups, no statistically significant differences are observed among women and men. However, among persons aged 40+, women are more likely than men to report a lack of digital skills required to use digital services (34% of women, compared to 20% of men).¹⁴⁹

Other relevant and representative studies on the level of digital literacy disaggregated by demographic characteristics are lacking, but proxy data (extrapolation of the results of related studies) indicates differences in levels of digital literacy. The overall assessment of citizens' digital literacy shows that 53% of Ukrainian citizens' digital skills are below the basic level. An analysis of the level of digital skills shows a strong relationship between age and digital literacy. In the 40-49 age group, people who do not have sufficient digital skills account for more than 50%, and in the 60 to 70 age group, 85%. However, 47% of citizens have expressed an interest in learning digital skills. In addition to general digital skills, low levels of digital skills exist among civil servants, medical and teaching staff – groups in which women predominate.¹⁵⁰

As of the beginning of the 2021–22 academic year, women accounted for 18.2% of students and 18.9% of graduates of higher education institutions in the field of IT. Over the past 10 years, the share of women among students in this field has practically not increased.¹⁵¹ As of 2022, women make up 30.8% of employees and almost one in three individual entrepreneurs (which is also a form of employment) in IT.¹⁵² Quantitative data is not available on the share of women among entrepreneurs in the IT sector (not including individual entrepreneurs). However, according to expert estimates, this share does not exceed 30%. One key reason for women's underrepresentation is the gender stereotype that IT majors are considered 'more masculine' (27% of respondents share this opinion, while 72% think these majors are equally suitable for both genders). In addition, 21% of parents encourage their children to choose a profession that is 'suitable for a boy/girl'.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹ See the National Economic Strategy until 2030: <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/npas/pro-zatverdzhennya-nacionalnoyi-eko-a179>.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ State Statistics Service of Ukraine, 'Higher and professional pre-higher education in Ukraine in 2021: Tab 2.3 "Training of specialists in higher education at the beginning of the 2021/22 academic year by fields of knowledge according to the 2015 list"', 2021.

¹⁵² Ivanova, K., E. Gogilashvili and M. Kalinichenko, 'Women in Ukrainian IT. What has changed in 10 years: Management positions, salaries, global trends', *Speka Media*, 14 February 2023. Available at: <https://speka.media/zinki-v-ukrayinskomu-it-shho-zminilosya-za-10-rokiv-kerivni-posadi-zarplati-svitovii-trend-pk0z59>.

¹⁵³ United Nations Population Fund, *What Ukrainians are driven by when choosing a profession: The results of national public opinion survey on key factors and stereotypes*, UNFPA, Kyiv, February 2021. Available at: https://ukraine.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/prezation_tramplin_eng_3_1.pdf.

Among girls and women themselves, these stereotypes may also be widespread. To increase the number of qualified women IT specialists, targeted information and career guidance measures are needed to encourage women to choose IT professions and IT-related specialties in higher education institutions.

Overall, imbalances in access to digital services are not directly caused by gender. Instead, gender intersects with other factors such as age, economic status, and residence in rural or remote areas. However, it is important to note that these factors are characterised by a gender dimension. When it comes to representation in the sectors that support and drive digital transformation, there is a clear divide between women and men – both among the workforce and in terms of decision-making. This is an area in which the EU Delegation should consider further interventions.

4.9. Distribution of household and care work between women and men: Cultural norms

Gender imbalances in reconciling family and professional responsibilities are a critical factor preventing women from entering the labour market, pursuing careers and taking up leadership positions across all sectors of the economy.

In Ukraine, the share of unpaid care and domestic work performed by men and women is unequal. Women spend twice as many hours (29 hours per week) as men (15 hours per week) on unpaid care and domestic work. When it comes to the time that women and men spend on caring for children, the difference is even greater – women spend 49 hours per week on child care, while men spend an average of 22 hours per week.¹⁵⁴

Parental leave is a striking example of the disproportionate sharing of care work. This form of a leave is given to a parent until their child turns 3. In about 95% of cases, mothers take parental leave, while fathers only take 3% of parental leave, while 2% is taken by grandparents and other carers. While salary levels are an important factor to consider when families decide which parent should take parental leave, stereotypes about women's primary role as caregivers remain widespread and often prevent men from taking parental leave.¹⁵⁵

Women's disproportionate burden of domestic work increased during the lockdown prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and then because of the full-scale war.

¹⁵⁴ United Nations Population Fund, *Masculinity today: Men's attitudes to gender stereotypes and violence against women*, UNFPA, Kyiv, 2018, p. 7. Available at: https://ukraine.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Masculinity%20Today%20Men%27s_Report.pdf.

¹⁵⁵ United Nations Population Fund and UN Women, *The role of men in caring for children – Survey results: EU4Gender Equality Together Against Gender Stereotypes and Gender-Based Violence Programme*, European Union, UNFPA and UN Women, Kyiv, 2021. Available at: <https://ukraine.unfpa.org/uk/omnibusEU4GE>.

As a result of the pandemic, 63.6% of women spend more time on household chores, and 74% provide child care largely on their own.¹⁵⁶ After the full-scale invasion, women's care work burden has increased as social services, medical, education and childcare facilities have been disrupted by the war. This is especially relevant for women-headed households who have to earn an income in addition to caring for children, and now must organise and control online education. For many women, their care roles also extend beyond childcare as they also care for older family members, some with chronic illnesses or disabilities.¹⁵⁷

Among single parents who raise children alone, 92.2% are single mothers who experience the double burden of household and care work alongside limited financial resources. In 2020, the ratio of time spent on unpaid household work (housekeeping, care for children and other relatives, etc.) by women and men was 2.1 to 1, which means that women spent twice as much time on such work as men. At the same time, there is a correlation between geographic location and burdens of care work. In urban areas women spend 257 minutes per day on unpaid household work, while in rural areas women spend 382 minutes on such work.¹⁵⁸

Unpaid work limits women's access to and opportunities for training, employment, career development, business development and income generation. Thus, stereotypes about women's traditional gender roles, reproductive roles and family duties of caring for children and other family members, as well as performing the bulk of household work, are detrimental to their professional and community activities.

These differences are deeply rooted in social stereotypes and cultural norms that are perpetuated and disseminated through advertising, the media, the education system, and within families, especially by older generations.

Compared to women's gender equality mindset, men are more likely to subscribe to gender stereotypes and the normalisation of domestic violence against women. Notably:¹⁵⁹

- 79% of men of all ages think that women should have more 'delicate' jobs.
- 62% of men think that women are 'too emotional' and that this affects their rationality and judgement (compared to 41% of women).
- 61% of men and 54% of women think that women should take care of their children instead of working if a man can provide for the family.
- 61% of men think that men should have the final word when important household decisions are made (compared to 37% of women).

¹⁵⁶ United Women, *Rapid gender assessment of the situation and needs of women in the context of COVID-19 in Ukraine*, UN Women, Kyiv, 2020. Available at: <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/05/rapid-gender-assessment-of-the-situation-and-needs-of-women>.

¹⁵⁷ UN Women and CARE, *Rapid Gender Analysis of Ukraine*, UN Women, Kyiv, 4 May 2022. Available at: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/05/rapid-gender-analysis-of-ukraine>.

¹⁵⁸ State Statistics Service of Ukraine and UN Women, *Indicators for the Monitoring of Gender Equality in Ukraine: Monitoring Report 2021*, UN Women, Kyiv, 2022. Available at: https://ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat_e/2021/2021_GEIndicators-MonitoringRepor_ENG.pdf.

¹⁵⁹ United Nations Population Fund, *Masculinity today: men's attitudes to gender stereotypes and violence against women*, UNFPA, Kyiv, 2018. Available at https://ukraine.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Masculinity%20Today%20Men%27s_Report.pdf.

- 13% of men think a husband can 'discipline' his wife to correct her behaviour.
- 7% of men believe that women should tolerate violence to keep the family together.

Because of these and other stereotypes, women still face numerous barriers to their full, equal and meaningful participation in society. Gender experts traditionally associate war/military activities with strengthening masculine and patriarchal attitudes in society. However, according to a survey conducted in November 2022 among people aged 15–34, no increase in the prevalence of gender stereotypes has been observed.¹⁶⁰

The impact of full-scale war on gender roles and stereotypes is ambivalent. On the one hand, war strengthens the perceptions of traditional roles of men as protectors and women as carers. On the other hand, the role of women in society and the country – primarily in the Armed Forces and in volunteering, as well as in the workplace and entrepreneurship, etc. – has shifted. While men have increasingly joined the Armed Forces, women have had to take on their roles, which they have done effectively. Women are actively participating in the Ukrainian war response and resistance. They serve in the Armed Forces, raise money to support the Armed Forces, provide humanitarian support to affected people, participate in diplomacy, act as frontline health care and social service workers, serve as educators, and engage in labour market and in entrepreneurship. It is important that women's contributions are fully recognised, and that opportunities for women's self-fulfilment and their enjoyment of their rights are sustained.

Gender stereotypes are less prevalent among women than men, including stereotypes perceived by some men and women to be about 'female privileges'. For instance:

- Only 15% of young women (and 24% of young men) believe that a man should fully provide for the family.
- 38% of women believe that only men should be conscripted, and 58% of women (vs 33% of men) agree that 'if men are subject to conscription, then women should be too'.
- 45% of young men and 21% of women believe that men make better political leaders.
- 35% of young men and 20% of women agree that a woman should, first of all, 'be a wife and a mother'.
- 31% of young men and 17% of women believe that men make better business leaders.¹⁶¹

On a positive note, the percentage of young people who disagree with such statements is always higher than 50%, and the prevalence of gender stereotypes among young people is lower than among older generations.¹⁶² Most young people agree that Ukraine needs further progress on gender equality, including legal and institutional changes in the field of employment, reforming educational curricula to make them gender-sensitive, legal and institutional measures to combat GBV, nationwide information campaigns to promote tolerance in society, and strengthening punishments for discrimination.

¹⁶⁰ Insight Ukraine, *Gender Stereotypes and Roles in the Eyes of Youth: Before and after the start of full-scale Russian aggression. Report on the results of the study*, Insight Ukraine, Kyiv, 2023. Available at: https://www.insight-ukraine.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/GS_2.pdf.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1. National context

The full-scale war is a factor that determines basically every process and dynamics of all types of relations in Ukraine, including those related to gender equality, women's empowerment and women's rights.

The full-scale war is having an ambivalent impact on gender equality. On the one hand, it has exacerbated existing inequalities and barriers and created new challenges for gender equality and women's rights. At the same time, as Ukrainian people and the State have been responding to these challenges, women's groups, the Government and women's rights organisations are gradually becoming stronger, and society is increasingly recognising the need to involve everyone – irrespective of sex, age and other factors – in the response to Russia's aggression and its effects. Another important aspect of the war's impact on gender equality is that updated official statistical data on numerous issues – starting from demographics – is lacking. There is no accurate estimate of Ukraine's current population size, let alone the age and sex-disaggregated structure of the population. Available estimates vary from 28 to 34 million people, depending on estimations of migration flows. The lack of statistical data is an important limitation for gender equality policy-making and programming by the Government and international partners.

Because of the full-scale war, approximately 17.6 million people are now in need of humanitarian assistance and protection, most of whom are women and children. For example, women account for 63% of the total number of 5.4 million internally displaced persons, according to OCHA. However, in terms of most demographic, poverty-related indicators and indicators related to access to services, the situation Ukraine's population differs not only by sex, but also by other intersecting factors, such as age, socioeconomic class, the location of residence (in rural/urban areas), sexual orientation and disability status. These intersecting factors contribute to gender inequality in Ukraine. This trend was observed before the full-scale war, and it continues in 2022–2023.

Ukraine faces considerable challenges which affect women's enjoyment of equal opportunities and rights, particularly women who face compound forms of discrimination. These challenges are rooted in patriarchal attitudes and stereotypes, patriarchal structures, and in deeply-rooted systemic gaps which have not been addressed. These include the weak rule of law, the sub-optimal capacity of the institutional mechanism on gender equality, and political will for gender transformation not being consistent across the Government.

Ukraine ranks 81st of 145 countries on the most recent 2022 Global Gender Gap Report, having fallen 22 places in the report's ranking since 2020. Considering each dimension of the Global Gender Gap Report separately, Ukraine is farthest from achieving gender parity in the area of political empowerment, followed by access to economic opportunities. Women's underrepresentation in public decision-making remains an issue, with women accounting for just 21% of MPs and 33% of top civil servants. Because of the full-scale war, the status and decision-making authority of regional and local military administrations has been strengthened, which further limits women's access to decision-making, because women are almost entirely unrepresented in these bodies.

International partners continue to support gender-transformative programmes, but in 2022–2023, their focus has strongly shifted to providing humanitarian aid to affected people. Women's rights organisations – just like other civil society organisations – are playing a critical role in delivering humanitarian aid to specific groups of affected people. While fully recognising that this job is crucial, women's rights organisations also express the need for more support so that they can continue their strategic activities, including protecting women's rights and advocating for sustainable gender transformations in Ukraine.

5.2. Legal and institutional framework

Gender equality is enshrined in Ukraine's Constitution, as well as in a specific law on gender equality. During the 2010s and early 2020s, a number of important legal amendments were put in place to advance gender equality in various fields, including elections, employment and in terms of combatting domestic violence. The most high-profile of these developments is Ukraine's ratification of the Istanbul Convention in June 2022. The fact that it was ratified one day before the EU decided to grant Ukraine candidate status proves that Ukraine's political will for gender transformations can be supported by EU integration considerations.

It is vital that national authorities – including the Government, parliament and specific ministries – gradually take ownership of these advances and become active in developing and promoting new laws, strategies and action plans on gender transformation in Ukraine, as well as resourcing and implementing them. For example, in 2022, two major national gender policies were adopted or significantly updated – the Strategy for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities of Women and Men for the period up to 2030 and the approved Action Plan for its Implementation for 2022–2024, and the National Action Plan (NAP) on the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security for 2021–2025. The latter was reviewed significantly to integrate the response to new WPS challenges caused by the full-scale war. Other important recent strategic documents include the Strategy for the Implementation of Gender Equality in Education until 2030, which was approved in December 2022, and the Strategy for Reducing the Gender Pay Gap, the draft of which was presented by the Ministry of Economy in May 2023.

During 2022–2023, international organizations and bilateral development partners have actively responded to the humanitarian crisis resulting from the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. These stakeholders have also continued strategic programmes aimed at promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment. Key participants include the parliament, Government, international development partners – such as the EU Delegation, USAID, UN Women, Sida, CIDA, NDI, IFES and UNFPA, among others – and local NGOs, including various Ukrainian women’s rights organisations.

To respond to challenges of the war, the Government has launched the recovery planning process. Since April 2022, a huge effort has been invested in developing Ukraine’s National Recovery Plan. While it has not been formally approved so far, the Government currently prioritises it over other policies and action plans, including those that have been formally improved. The Government Commissioner for Gender Equality jointly with the international partners and women’s rights organisations have been advocating for gender mainstreaming in the National Recovery Plan, but progress has not been consistent across the plan’s 24 sections. There is a correlation between the level of donor engagement in work on a specific section of the National Recovery Plan and the gender sensitivity of this section. As of May 2023, seven sections (on new agrarian policy, digitalisation, energy security, social protection, the protection of children, the protection of war veterans and the return of citizens) are relatively more gender-sensitive because they were extensively supported by international donors in terms of gender mainstreaming. As work on the National Recovery Plan continues, there is still room for further gender mainstreaming efforts in the other 17 sections of the plan.

Ukraine’s institutional framework for gender mainstreaming is being gradually developed, with gender coordinators and gender focal points available across most national executive agencies and in regional administrations. Gender units and advisory boards have been set up in certain agencies. Almost all of them have continued functioning during the full-scale war. However, the process of developing national gender machinery should be coupled with gender sensitisation and the capacity building of staff. In this regard, it is critical to note that the transition from formal egalitarian treatment (no differential treatment, and no privileges or restrictions) to substantial equality of opportunities (the removal of barriers, and the recognition of indirect and systemic forms of discrimination and disadvantage) is still at a nascent level.

Gender mainstreaming tools launched in Ukraine include the gender analysis of governmental policies and reforms, gender-focused legal expert assessments of laws and draft legislation, gender audits and gender-responsive budgeting. Gender auditing is a relatively new tool in Ukraine, and all national/central agencies first conducted gender audits in the summer and autumn of 2022. While guidelines on how to use gender mainstreaming tools are largely available, their meaningful use in practice remains limited. The reasons for this are related to officials’ sub-optimal capacity to use these tools, officials’ limited understanding of the benefits of these tools, and the absence of examples/cases and a database on how these tools to improve government policy-making and implementation. Coordination by the Ministry of Social Policy, as the Government’s gender focal point, also needs to be strengthened.

In February–April 2023, with the support of donors, the Government developed a roadmap for advancing gender equality in line with Ukraine's EU integration obligations. The roadmap focuses on further strengthening gender mainstreaming tools and practices, building the capacity of the institutional gender mechanism, and increasing public officials' gender sensitivity and knowledge so that they can effectively use gender mainstreaming tools. The roadmap is expected to guide future steps by the Government in terms of advancing the national gender machinery mechanism. As such, it can inform international partners' programming in this area.

5.3. Gender analysis by sectors

The full-scale war has had a huge impact on Ukraine's labour market, with the unemployed rate growing to 30% in the spring of 2022. The economy is now gradually reviving, but gender inequality still exists in economic opportunities, as does gender-based discrimination in recruitment and at work. These factors have limited women's access to entrepreneurship, employment, incomes and career progression. The gender wage gap is 18.6%, on average, and reaches 75% for some economic activities. Systemic barriers lead to horizontal and vertical occupational gender segregation in the labour market, with women concentrated at lower levels of remuneration. At the same time, men dominate in sectors characterised by low-skilled physical labour, such as mining, building and construction. This exposes them to dangerous and potentially harmful labour conditions. The greatest gender differences in earnings are recorded in sectors with the highest levels of remuneration, which are traditionally dominated by men – the sectors of finance and ICT.

While the full-scale war has strongly affected entrepreneurship in Ukraine, this impact is almost the same for men and women entrepreneurs. According to a survey in 2022, 90% of women entrepreneurs believe that Ukraine offers all possible opportunities for the development of women's entrepreneurship. Two significant challenges relevant for women are negative stereotypes about women entrepreneurs, as reported by 19% of the survey's respondents, and the unequal distribution of care work within households. The Ministry of Economy is acting as a champion by making specific efforts to ensure gender balance among entrepreneurs who receive small grants from the Government to run their businesses. The female-to-male ratio among grant recipients is 51-to-49.

One key reason for occupational gender segregation is the divide between the fields in which women and men pursue their education. Gender segregation in academic subjects – both in vocational education and in higher education – continues to have a direct impact on entrenched occupational segregation and women's concentration in lower-paid sectors. Having more women trained in industrial sectors is vital for increasing women's participation in entrepreneurship, management and the workforce of industrial companies and processes. Increasing women's participation in the fields which were traditionally male-dominated is also a response to the lack of qualified staff in energy, agriculture, IT and other sectors, especially due to the full-scale war.

National policies on gender in education and on reducing the gender pay gap aim to overcome the gender divide in fields of study. Therefore, the Government of Ukraine and international development partners may consider investing in initiatives that encourage young women to choose industrial professions, especially engineering, manufacturing and other STEM-related specialties, and encourage men to pursue professions in social work, education and health care. Other important initiatives should include reducing gender stereotypes in textbooks and promoting the topic of gender equality in education.

Difficulties in reconciling work and family life is another critical reason for gender imbalances. Women's disproportionate burden of care work prevents them from entering the labour market, pursuing careers and taking up leadership positions across all sectors of the economy. In Ukraine, women spend twice as many hours as men on unpaid care and domestic work, and mothers take parental leave in 95% of cases. The COVID-19 pandemic and the full-scale war has further increased the double/triple burden of work borne by women, especially women with children. A recent positive development is the extension of fathers' entitlement to child-related leave. The Government is also considering reforming parental leave, making it shorter (as now it lasts for 3 years), introducing stronger incentives for men to share leave with women, and making it at least partially paid. This reform aims to strengthen human capital and provide women with more opportunities to engage in productive activities, such as entrepreneurship or employment, while enabling men to reap the benefits of participating in caregiving.

In terms of health, significant gender imbalances exist in Ukraine, most notably a 10-year difference in life expectancy which disfavours men. Women face a number of barriers and burdens, both as health workers and as patients, including because of women's role as the primary caregivers of children and other family members. Men tend to neglect their health compared to women – notably, they make twice as few preventive visits to doctors and almost three times fewer visits when they have health issues. Gender analysis of health reform indicates that sex is not usually a barrier to accessing health care. However, when coupled with other factors, such as age and residence in rural areas, sex can become a barrier to effective access. Full-scale war has had a huge impact on health conditions and access to health care for both men and women, but specific surveys to measure this impact have yet to be conducted. Ensuring comprehensive sexuality education and access to contraception is necessary to empower women, adolescents and young people to exercise their sexual and reproductive health rights, make informed decisions, challenge gender norms, and foster respect and equality. This would contribute to personal development and a more equal society, while addressing discrimination and violence against women and girls.

The women, peace and security sector in Ukraine has witnessed especially significant progress over the past five years. Increasing numbers of women are joining the Armed Forces and law enforcement agencies. This is challenging long-standing occupational segregation that had relegated women to a marginal role in the security and defence sector. However, women continue to face challenges, including stereotypes against women in the security and defence sector, sexual harassment, and uniforms not being comfortable for women personnel as they were designed for men.

Understandings of the needs and perspectives of women and men in peace-building and recovery processes are improving. These perspectives are increasingly being reflected in national and regional strategies and action plans on women, peace and security. The full-scale war has further highlighted the importance of the WPS agenda, and the National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which was significantly updated in 2022 to reflect the context of full-scale war.

Gender-based violence remains a critical issue in Ukraine, with 2 in 3 women having experienced psychological, physical or sexual violence in their lifetime. Since 2020, the reported prevalence of GBV has increased, including because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the full-scale war. However, it is not known whether this increase represents more cases of actual violence, or the better reporting of cases. Ukraine's ratification of the Istanbul Convention in June 2022 is expected to further strengthen the legal framework, policies and practices of the Government in preventing GBV, supporting survivors and holding perpetrators accountable. Humanitarian partners are implementing dedicated programmes for survivors of GBV, but their reach is limited. Meanwhile, government services for survivors are also scarce. Violence against the LGBTIQI community in Ukraine is a concerning issue, with limited support services. There is also a lack of studies on violence against men and boys. Over half of women media professionals in Ukraine have faced sexual harassment in the workplace, and one-third have witnessed colleagues being harassed. Online harassment is another concern, which hinders women's political participation and perpetuates male dominance, reflecting deep-rooted stereotypes about women's societal roles.

Conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) is a separate crime used by the Russian Federation as a method of war. The Implementation Plan of the Framework Programme of Cooperation between the Government of Ukraine and the United Nations on the Prevention and Countering of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence was approved in 2022. It aims to improve interaction between public authorities, international and non-governmental organisations to build a coordinated, transparent and effective system for combating CRSV, including providing reparations to survivors.

The green transition and digital transformation are 'new' sectors for gender mainstreaming in Ukraine. Women have been traditionally unrepresented in the workforce of both sectors, as well as at the decision-making level and among entrepreneurs. Policies, programmes and initiatives in these fields are largely gender-blind. However, women's engagement in these sectors has increased in recent years. This is evident in the formation of new women's associations, such as the Women's Energy Club of Ukraine, and the increased share of women in the IT sector, which rose from 11% in 2011 to 31% in 2023. However, women still account for about 20% of students in professions related to the green transition and IT. Moreover, 27% of Ukrainians believe that IT professions are better suited to men than to women. In terms of digital transformation, other critical considerations for Ukraine include overcoming divides in digital literacy, access to and the use of digital services. While men and women equally use public e-services (63%), groups such as the elderly (33.5%) and people with disabilities (49%) have limited access to these services. Also, women aged 40+ report lacking digital skills almost twice as often as men of the same age.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Most of the recommendations made by the Country Gender Profile for Ukraine in 2021 remain relevant in 2023. The recommendations below reflect developments in the field of gender equality during 2022–2023, most notably those related to the full-scale war and its impact on gender equality dynamics in Ukraine.

6.1. Recommendations for the Government

1. Subject to national security concerns, resume collecting and publishing official statistics on indicators where sex disaggregation is available. Continue developing gender statistics. Specifically:

- Conduct consultations within the Government and – subject to national security concerns – resume collecting and publishing official statistical sex- and age-disaggregated data through the State Statistics Service, the collection of which was suspended in February 2022.
- Continue expanding the list of indicators on which data is collected with sex disaggregation. Identify priorities on new indicators in consultation with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and government agencies as the users of these statistics.
- Resume the publication and promotion of the biannual statistical digest, ‘Women and Men in Ukraine’ (the last publication was issued in 2021 based on data as of the end of 2020).
- Encourage public authorities to use available sex-disaggregated statistics (both the data of the State Statistics Service and the findings of gender assessments, surveys, and public opinion polls conducted by international partners and civil society organisations) in policy planning, including by integrating the requirement on analysing available sex-disaggregated statistics in the guidelines that regulate the development of by-laws, draft laws and draft action plans of authorities at the national and regional levels.
- Support regional authorities to update and disseminate regional gender profiles (currently available in all 25 regions) and encourage them to use data from these profiles in policy planning.
- Start planning the census to be conducted after the war is over, seeking technical and financial support from international partners for the census.

2. Integrate gender approaches in national and local recovery planning. Specifically:

- Meaningfully, systematically and transparently – rather than just to ‘tick the box’ – involve gender experts and women’s rights organisations in the development of national programmes/action plans, including recovery and reconstruction plans, especially in the efforts of working groups developing the sections of the National Recovery Plan.
- Make gender analysis mandatory in national and local recovery planning.
- Based on the experience of mainstreaming gender in seven sections of the National Recovery Plan (new agrarian policy, energy security, digitalisation, the protection of children’s rights, the protection of veterans’ rights, the return of citizens, and social protection), conduct gender analysis to identify gender inequalities and barriers (both caused by the full-scale war and pre-existing ones) across the board of the National Recovery Plan. Develop solutions to address these inequalities and barriers, and integrate these solutions in the strategic documents and action plans on Ukraine’s recovery.
- As far as regional/community recovery planning is concerned, involve gender experts and integrate solutions to regional/community-level gender barriers and inequalities in the respective recovery plans.

3. Continue to increase the gender sensitivity of public officials. Specifically:

- Provide training, deliver communication campaigns, and produce and disseminate materials to sensitise officials, with a view to facilitating their understanding of the connection between gender equality, the mission/mandate of public authorities, and the benefits of gender equality for beneficiaries.
- Address the issues of gender-based discrimination, sexual misconduct, sexual harassment and other forms inappropriate behaviour in public services by adopting a ‘zero tolerance’ approach. Develop or revise existing regulations to establish clear procedures for dealing with reports and cases. Systematically and periodically inform existing (and new) staff about these procedures through memoranda and circulars, information leaflets, and by providing training that explains what constitutes gender-based discrimination, sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment and other forms inappropriate behaviour, and how to recognise them.

4. Apply gender-responsive budgeting in a sustainable manner. Specifically:

- Introduce gender-responsive budgeting in the Budget Code of Ukraine.
- Ensure the mandatory use of gender-responsive budgeting by all key spending units.

5. Continue regular capacity building of public officials on gender equality topics. Specifically:

- Create a repository to collect available gender modules/trainings, and make these available for all government agencies. Develop new modules and trainings, and integrate these in the curricula for public officials. This should involve coordination between the Government, the National Agency of Ukraine for the Civil Service (NAUCS), the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) and other providers of in-house skills development programmes for public officials.

- Arrange for the systematic assessment of the knowledge and competence gaps/needs of public officials in terms of gender equality and gender mainstreaming tools.
- Strengthen the integration of gender mainstreaming requirements in the job descriptions of decision-makers (at the executive level) in public service, and encourage them to participate in gender training so that they are better able to undertake their professional duties.
- Develop targeted trainings on specific gender mainstreaming tools – such as gender analysis, gender audits, expert gender legal assessments, and gender-responsive budgeting – and provide these trainings to the public officials responsible for gender equality policies in central and regional authorities.
- Include competencies related to gender analysis, gender impact assessments, the use of gender statistics, and gender-responsive budgeting in the job descriptions of staff responsible for gender equality policies in central and regional authorities.
- Explore opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and the cascading of gender training and other capacity building initiatives in public authorities, so that there is the room to deliver peer-to-peer gender training both horizontally (in other departments/units) and vertically (in regional administrations).

6. Expand the practice of gender audits in government authorities and state-owned enterprises, and encourage private business to conduct gender audits. Specifically:

- Analyse lessons learned from the first wave of gender audits of central executive authorities conducted in the summer–autumn of 2022, and expand this practice to other public authorities and state-owned enterprises.
- Monitor the implementation of institutional gender equality action plans created after gender audits.
- Intensify training for representatives of public authorities and state-owned enterprises who are involved in gender audits to ensure that gender audits look at gender barriers, inequalities and root causes rather than at the numerical parity of women and men in the institution/enterprise.
- Make gender audits a regular exercise, so that the public authorities and state-owned enterprises repeat them every 2–3 years.
- Capitalising on the Strategy for Reducing the Gender Pay Gap, develop and implement incentives for private businesses that conduct gender audits.

7. Encourage the use of specific gender mainstreaming tools across government agencies. Use the roadmap for advancing gender equality according to Ukraine's Euro-integration obligations to guide the process of strengthening institutional machinery and gender mainstreaming tools and practices. Specifically:

- Continue developing methodological tools – such as report templates, checklists and guidelines – that will help public officials to conduct gender analyses, gender audits, gender expert legal assessments, and to plan and implement gender-responsive budgeting initiatives.
- Hold consultations to support the development and use of methodological tools (guidelines and instructions) by the Ministry of Social Policy and external experts, so

that these will be useful for public officials, including officials from other agencies. Ensure that these are (i) comprehensive enough to cover the foundations of gender equality and non-discrimination, and (ii) customised around specific policy issues/ areas which are relevant for individual working units.

- Create a repository of case examples and good practices of gender-sensitive and gender-mainstreamed policy documents that are produced across different public authorities (national and regional), as a way to recognise good performance, and to provide opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and the dissemination of good practices.
- Develop a framework for the systematic integration of gender-responsive budgeting principles in existing government processes related to budgeting for the provision of services to citizens in all areas.

8. Continue promoting gender mainstreaming in decentralisation reform. Specifically:

- Design and include, in the decentralisation reform, specific mechanisms to empower women in local decision-making – such as quotas, trainings, and self-support groups.
- Encourage territorial communities to conduct gender analysis within their communities, including by using the [Gender Equality Toolbox](#), in order to produce territorial gender profiles and use their findings in strategic and operational planning for community development.
- Facilitate the collection of success stories of gender mainstreaming in the decentralisation process, and disseminate these among territorial communities.

9. Intensify gender transformations in education. Specifically:

- As part of the Strategy for the Implementation of Gender Equality in Education until 2030 and beyond, plan and implement measures to encourage girls to pursue vocational, technical and higher education in STEM-related fields, and encourage boys to pursue education in pedagogy and social work-related fields.
- Expand the practice of gender expert assessments of school textbooks and other teaching materials.
- Strengthen the gender component and make it a mandatory part of the curriculum of in-house capacity building centres for teachers, with a view to increasing teachers' gender sensitivity.

10. Ensure gender-sensitive public healthcare provision. Specifically:

- Conduct assessments on various groups' access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health care, in different regions and types of settlement (urban/ rural) during the full-scale war, and take steps to improve access for vulnerable populations.
- Conduct capacity building activities for health care workers on providing pre-medical and medical care, conducting and documenting the results of medical examination of victims of gender based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence.
- Conduct assessments of female and male military personnel's access to medical-social expert assessments after being wounded, and take action to address identified problems.

- Conduct communication campaigns, especially targeting men, to encourage men to take care of their health, including by going for regular check-ups and practising healthy lifestyles.
- Develop and launch gender-sensitive mental health and psychosocial support for people affected by the war.
- Ensure comprehensive sexuality education and access to contraception for all groups of women, adolescents and young people.

11. Promote the women, peace and security agenda. Specifically:

- Continue communication campaigns for the wider population and sensitisation activities within security sector institutions to empower women in law enforcement agencies.
- Prepare and mobilise women, particularly of women's rights organisations, to take part in the processes of peace-building and reconciliation after the war ends.
- Regularly assess the needs of women personnel in the security and defence sectors. Review the standards applied to them (completion of service, conducting patrols, ammunition, working conditions, hygiene, SRHR and medical support, combating violence), and introduce changes and additions that take into account the needs of women in Ukraine's Armed Forces and law enforcement agencies, in line with the updated second National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

12. Strengthen the response to gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence. Specifically:

- To enable the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, strengthen the legal framework, and develop and adopt necessary gender-sensitive protocols and guidelines on identifying, investigating and prosecuting cases of gender-based violence.
- Build the capacity of law enforcement agencies to respond to gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence, in line with the updated framework.
- Conduct information campaigns to sensitise the general public on the issues of gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence, and advertise existing services for survivors.
- Strengthen services and infrastructure for survivors of gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence, and resume services that were suspended due to the full-scale invasion.

13. Consult with international partners, civil society organisations and donor organisations currently active in the country on issues related to gender equality. Explore opportunities to create synergies/secure resources and expertise for the implementation of specific interventions. Encourage donors to use the Roadmap for advancing gender equality according to Ukraine's Euro-integration obligations – once approved – to develop their gender programming with respect to strengthening Ukraine's institutional gender machinery.

14. Cooperate with civil society organisations, including women's rights organisations, and international partners on the implementation of the National Gender Strategy until 2030, as well as on other national policies on gender. Ensure that their programming is aligned with these strategic documents.

6.2. Recommendations for civil society, especially for women's rights organisations

1. Serve the interests of target groups by incorporating their voices and perspectives into programming and service delivery. Specifically:

- Conduct various types of analysis – including surveys, focus group discussions and statistical analysis – to identify the needs of target groups and their preferred channels of receiving information/services.
- Engage representatives of target groups in programming, advocacy, project planning and implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.
- Seek resources from humanitarian actors to provide humanitarian support to affected people, based on needs assessments and consultations with affected people.
- Strengthen contingency planning by elaborating on different scenarios – from business as usual to deteriorated hostilities and humanitarian crisis, and how the WROs can respond. In contingency planning, consider not also different scenarios related to the affected people and their needs, but also different options of institutional sustainability and development.
- Seek resources from international partners and private businesses to implement specific programmes and projects on gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Develop and implement coordination modalities – including both internal modalities (between WROs) and external modalities (between WROs, the Government, international partners and other stakeholders) – to better serve the needs of women and specific target groups facing compound discrimination.

2. Continue seeking opportunities for organisational development and capacity building. Specifically:

- Conduct organisational and individual needs assessment in terms of capacity building, with a focus on gender analysis, project planning and implementation, advocacy, communications, constituency building and gender-responsive budgeting.
- Continue building skills in providing humanitarian aid to affected people, security and defence sector, public administration and policy making, so that the WROs can better contribute to public policy making at the national and local levels.
- Seek and apply for programmes that aim to strengthen the organisational capacity of NGOs.
- Support individual capacity building opportunities for NGO staff and volunteers (e.g. trainings, exchange visits, study tours, and burnout prevention programmes).

- Explore and implement modalities for the digitalisation of NGOs and their work.
- For developing skills and capacity, strengthen the systems and practices of learning from own experience, sharing experience with other WROs and CSOs, and seek partnerships and support from international organizations/donors.

3. Strengthen organisational policies on preventing burnout and providing psychological support to staff, while seeking resources and support from international organisations/donors to implement these policies. Encourage staff to take care of themselves so that they are able to provide a response in the long-term, because the crisis will continue for several months or, potentially, for several years.

4. Focus on women's empowerment and on developing strategic solutions to address inequality and discrimination in civil society programming, with a focus on affected women. Specifically:

- Invest in women's digital, financial and civic literacy and agency, with a focus on specific target groups who face compound forms of discrimination, in terms of realising their rights and securing their basic needs.
- Support women's entrepreneurship by providing training, mentorship, grants, access to cooperatives and services for entrepreneurs, as well as by facilitating experience-sharing and association-building between women entrepreneurs.
- Support programmes that aim to engage men in household activities and caring for children and other family members.

5. Liaise with the Government, law enforcement agencies and other CSOs on promoting gender equality and women's rights. Specifically:

- Offer and conduct trainings on gender for public administrations, the police, armed forces, other security and defence sector institutions, and other CSOs.
- Conduct gender analysis of all public policy areas, especially humanitarian support, post-war reconstruction and recovery (across all 24 areas of the National Recovery Plan), security and defence reform. Develop and submit recommendations/proposals on gender mainstreaming in the legal framework, policies and action plans on all public policy areas.
- Conduct monitoring and advocacy to ensure the integration of these recommendations/proposals in the legal framework, policies and action plans on all public policy areas. To strengthen the effects of advocacy, partner with other CSOs and international organisations.
- Advocate for the inclusion of the representatives of women's rights organisations and gender experts in policy and decision-making by the Government and local authorities. Women's rights organisations should offer themselves as experts to the Government and local authorities, CSOs, international organisations and donors in terms of policy/programme design, so as to ensure that these policies and programmes are gender-sensitive or gender-transformative, and reflect women's voices.

6. Build coalitions of the CSOs working on gender equality and women's empowerment. Specifically:

- Identify priorities for coalition-building at the national and regional levels (for example, a national coalition around the women peace and security agenda, and a regional coalition on preventing and countering gender-based violence).
- Engage a wide spectrum of CSOs in these coalitions, including CSOs which represent people with disabilities, internally displaced persons, people living with HIV, and youth, among other groups.
- Seek opportunities for improving knowledge and skills, and for learning from Ukrainian and foreign experiences of coalition-building around women's rights, gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Seek resources from international partners and private businesses to support projects implemented by these coalitions to benefit women.
- Use the power of coalitions to advocate for gender equality and women's empowerment with the Government, as well as to raise public awareness of gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Undertake advocacy activities to expand women's access to, and influence over, public decision-making in all areas of political, social and economic development of the country, its regions and communities.
- Undertake advocacy activities to ensure that government programmes, strategies and action plans, at all levels, are informed by gender analysis and duly reflect women's perspectives and needs.

7. Strengthen the women's movement as a transformational tool for gender equality and women's empowerment, including in the context of the response to the war's impact. Specifically:

- Support dialogue between various groups of women activists – including inter-generational, inter-regional and intersectional dialogue – so that women activists with different backgrounds, visions and whose efforts focus on different issues can unite/join the women's movement.
- Capitalise on the experiences and accomplishments of coalitions of women's rights organisations to develop and strengthen the women's movement.
- Organise periodic consultations between women's rights organisations to identify priorities for the development of the women's movement.
- Engage CSOs working in sectors other than gender equality and women's rights in the women's movement, in order to expand its reach and maximise efforts.
- Establish non-governmental think tanks/analytical centres to produce research and provide policy advice on gender equality priorities to the Government and international development partners.
- Conduct regular public activities and strengthen the presence of champions for gender equality and women's empowerment in the media, including social media, to raise public awareness of the women's movement and encourage more women to join it.

6.3. Recommendations for the EU Delegation and other international partners

6.3.1. Gender mainstreaming in the Government

1. Share the findings of all gender assessments and surveys conducted by the EU Delegation and other international partners with the Government, women's rights organisations and other international partners, and consider publishing them openly on the Internet. This is especially vital since official sex-disaggregated statistics are not updated in Ukraine under martial law.

2. Support the Government on gender mainstreaming, including:

- Gender mainstreaming in post-war national recovery planning, specifically in terms of designing and including specific mechanisms in the National Recovery Plan to address gender inequalities and barriers – both pre-existing and those caused by the full-scale war.
- Supporting the involvement of national gender expertise to assist the Government to mainstream gender in national recovery planning.
- Increasing the gender sensitivity and build the capacities of public officials on gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Promoting the development and use of sex-disaggregated statistics, notably by expanding the list of indicators on which data is collected with sex disaggregation, as well as encouraging and building the capacity of public authorities to use sex-disaggregated statistics in policy planning and monitoring.
- Using specific gender mainstreaming tools, especially by providing technical support to build public officials' capacity to use these tools, and to develop new tools as needed.
- Conducting gender audits within public authorities and state-owned enterprises, and using the findings of these audits to develop and implement gender action plans at the level of individual institutions/enterprises.
- Institutionalising gender-responsive budgeting practices at the national and local levels.
- Mainstreaming gender in decentralisation and other reforms.
- Promoting the women, peace and security agenda, and strengthening the response to gender-based violence and conflict-related sexual violence.

3. Mainstream gender in donor programmes that support the Government in fields that have traditionally been treated as gender-neutral. These include climate change, digital transformations, education, economic empowerment, and health.

6.3.2. Support for civil society, notably women's rights organisations

4. Liaise with Ukrainian women's rights organisations as full-fledged partners. Change patronising attitudes and cooperation/partnership modalities when necessary.

Specifically:

- Recognise the capacity of Ukrainian women's rights organisations, notably the capacity to plan, and seek a real balance between their priorities and the priorities of international organisations.
- Actively, systematically and transparently involve Ukrainian women's rights organisations on a partnership basis, as well as involving gender experts in situation analyses, planning, implementation, and the evaluation of programmes that are already being implemented or that are planned to be implemented in Ukraine.
- Conduct consultations (directly and through women's rights organisations) with various groups of Ukrainian women on their needs – including elderly and young women, rural and urban women, women currently in Ukraine and abroad, women with disabilities, women affected by the war, women from ethnic minorities, and LGBTIQI persons.
- Expedite grant procedures and organisational capacity assessment procedures as much as possible, and reducing the requirements for organisations applying for grant competitions (while ensuring compliance with the principles of efficiency and integrity).
- Ensure the maximum possible flexibility of approaches, mechanisms and tools used by donors; regularly evaluating their relevance and effectiveness, while involving women's NGOs in such evaluations; and being ready to quickly change them if necessary.

5. Support the capacity building of women's rights organisations (based on the findings of respective needs assessments). Specifically:

- Support programmes to strengthen the organisational capacity of women's rights organisations.
- Support the digitalisation of women's rights organisations, including through trainings and grants for purchasing equipment and software, in order to make their work more effective.
- Facilitate the provision of training to women's rights organisations on a range of topics, such as gender analysis, project planning and implementation, humanitarian aid delivery, post-war recovery, advocacy, communications, and gender-responsive budgeting.
- Facilitate the provision of training to other CSOs on topics such as gender equality and women's rights in order to increase the gender sensitivity of their staff and volunteers, as well as to explore opportunities for gender mainstreaming in the sectors in which these CSOs operate.
- Support women's rights organisations to develop and launch policies on burnout prevention and self-care for staff.
- Allocate budgets to counter burnout among the staff of women's rights organisations, and sharing best practices for countering burnout in contexts of war/humanitarian crises.

6. Equip NGOs working in the field of gender equality and women's empowerment with the resources needed to address issues faced by women in all sectors. Specifically:

- Support grant programmes for NGOs to facilitate women's enjoyment of their rights and access to services.
- Allocate budgets for studies of the situation of women, as well as gender analyses and gender impact assessments. Share the findings of these studies, analyses and assessments with women's rights organisations and other stakeholders.
- Support experience-sharing between women's rights organisations on how to better address women's needs, and empower women to demand that their rights be upheld.
- Support CSOs to promote women's entrepreneurship, especially in 'non-traditional' sectors such as STEM-related sectors and the IT industry. To this end, provide training, start-up grants, mentoring and business support services – such as market analysis, value chain analysis, and facilitating access to production cooperatives, among other forms of support.
- Support programmes by women's rights organisations that seek to improve women's digital skills/digital literacy, with a focus on groups of women who face compound forms of discrimination, such as women living in rural areas, older women, women with disabilities, internally displaced women, and women affected by the war, among others.

7. Facilitate coalition-building between the women's rights organisations around their priority topics. Specifically:

- Facilitate the provision of training on coalition-building for women's rights organisations at the national and regional/local levels.
- Support coalitions of women's rights organisations to develop cooperation modalities and establish secretariats of their coalitions.
- Support the provision of grants to coalitions, so that they can jointly address specific issues faced by women and conduct advocacy activities to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Support civil society efforts to establish non-governmental think tanks/ analytical centres to collect sex-disaggregated data, produce research, and provide policy advice on gender equality priorities to the Government and international development partners.
- Allocate budgets for the networking activities of women's rights organisations and the development of the women's feminist movement, as well as for interaction between Ukrainian women's rights organisations with foreign and/or international women's/feminist organisations.
- Allocate budgets for advocacy projects by, and the activities of, women's rights organisations.
- Provide support, including financial support, to feminist initiatives submitted by unregistered associations (while ensuring compliance with the principles of efficiency and integrity).

6.3.3. Advocacy and consultations

8. Regularly consult with the Government, women's rights organisations, international partners and donors active in Ukraine on issues related to gender equality, their priorities and activities, in order to establish synergies. Specifically:

- Formalise the modalities for donor coordination and coordination with the Government on a wide spectrum of issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment (such as gender thematic groups and coordination boards).
- Seek opportunities to provide technical and financial support for the implementation of specific agenda items of Ukraine's national strategies and action plans on gender equality, in close coordination with responsible government agencies and women's rights organisations.
- Support the Government's implementation of the Biarritz Partnership and other international and regional partnerships and coalitions on gender equality (for example, the Equal Pay International Coalition, among others).

9. Ensure that gender is mainstreamed across all of the programmes and projects of international development partners in Ukraine, and that resources are allocated to promote gender equality and women's empowerment across all of their priorities. Ensure that donor-supported projects/programmes target different regions with an emphasis on women's rights organisations and initiatives. Ensure coordination between donors in order to cover all of Ukraine's regions. Conduct consultations with target groups to understand the contexts and needs of specific regions.

10. Continue advocacy vis-à-vis public authorities on the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment.





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