



From
the People of Japan

 **Norway**



**GENDER EQUALITY
AND RESILIENCE IN
UKRAINE'S ENERGY SECTOR:**
Pathways to Transformative Employment
and Leadership Amidst War

October 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The energy sector in Ukraine stands at a critical juncture, grappling with the challenges posed by a predominantly male-dominated workforce and the exacerbated gender inequalities resulting from ongoing conflict. This gender analysis report, prepared with the collaboration of key stakeholders and guided by the principles of the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2025 and the UNSCR 1325 Women in Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, provides a comprehensive overview of the current state of gender dynamics within Ukraine's energy sector. The report underscores the vital importance of integrating gender perspectives into energy policies and practices to foster a more resilient, efficient, and inclusive sector.

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right but also a crucial driver of economic growth and sustainable development. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), highlight the necessity of gender-responsive approaches to achieve equitable and sustainable energy solutions. Despite some progress, women remain significantly underrepresented in leadership and technical roles within the energy sector in Ukraine, facing barriers such as gender pay gaps, limited career advancement opportunities, and entrenched cultural stereotypes.

This report provides an in-depth analysis of these challenges, exploring the impacts of the conflict on gender roles and the essential contributions of women to social cohesion and resilience. It identifies both the strengths and weaknesses of the current landscape, offering a strategic vision for leveraging opportunities and addressing threats. Through targeted recommendations, the report aims to guide policymakers, industry leaders, and community stakeholders in creating a more gender-inclusive energy sector that harnesses the full potential of women's contributions to Ukraine's socio-economic recovery and sustainable development.

Key Findings:

- The Ukrainian energy sector faces severe psychological strain on its workforce due to the ongoing war, which can be addressed by prioritizing gender equality, diversity, and inclusion initiatives to create a supportive, resilient work environment that mitigates stress and promotes well-being.
- Ukraine has made progress in gender equality, with women increasingly taking on diverse roles in public life, including the energy sector. However, more efforts are needed to enhance women's leadership and address the gender pay gap.
- Gender stereotypes and traditional norms in community, families, work culture limit women's opportunities, even more so in the energy sector. Campaigns and community initiatives are necessary to transform these norms.
- Notwithstanding, the energy sector in Ukraine shows a gradual increase in women's participation, although they remain underrepresented, especially in leadership positions. Gender pay gaps and cultural norms continue to pose challenges.
- Educational and career choices for women and men are affected by traditional, deep-seated cultural images and pressure from society. There is a need to promote STEM education among girls and promote updating educational materials at schools to challenge traditional gender norms.
- In addition, the war has exacerbated gender inequalities, affected women's employment and increased their caregiving burdens. There is a need for gender-sensitive recovery plans to address these challenges.
- Gender considerations must be integrated into national policy-level recovery efforts. Women's involvement in green recovery and sustainable development is essential.
- Women's active participation in local communities and private energy sector entities is not just important, it's crucial. Their role in social cohesion and resilience during wartime is undeniable, and their involvement is vital for recovery efforts.

1. INTRODUCTION



The energy sector, generally, and particularly in Ukraine, is male-dominated. However, **equal women's involvement** is essential for achieving the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs), particularly SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) and SDG 5 (Gender Equality). Empowering women in the energy sector can help expand **access to clean and affordable energy** services, **promote sustainable development**, and advance **gender equality and women's rights**. Recognizing the importance of gender equality in the energy sector, policymakers and international organizations have increasingly prioritized efforts to promote women's participation and leadership. The **United Nations Development Programme** (UNDP) **works with governments and partners to mainstream gender considerations in energy** policies, programs, and investments, aiming to create an enabling environment for the empowerment of women and girls and gender-responsive energy solutions in line with **UNDP Gender Equality Strategy¹ 2022-2025** and the **10-Point Action Agenda²**.

The current document presents an analysis of gender in employment opportunities and leadership in the energy sector, along with recommendations to promote the empowerment of women in the industry, based on a SWOT analysis. It can lay the ground for the development of an action plan for joint programmatic interventions with the Government of Ukraine and interested

partner organizations. The document has been prepared in line with the Women's Empowerment Principles³ proposed by UN Women and the UN Global Compact⁴, including; establishing high-level corporate leadership for gender equality; treating all women and men fairly at work, promoting respect and support for human rights and non-discrimination; ensuring the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers; promoting education, training and professional development for women; implementing enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women; promoting equality through community initiatives and advocacy; measuring and publicly reporting on progress to achieve gender equality.

It also reflects the requirements of the fourth pillar of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS). This aims to ensure that post-conflict relief and recovery efforts incorporate a gender perspective, which is critical for addressing the gender-specific impact of war. Empowerment of women and girls in the energy sector is at the core of the fourth pillar. Nexus of the WPS and reconstruction and recovery efforts must enable synergies and maximization of impact towards broader human security, both for women and men in Ukraine⁵ on “New threats to human security in the Anthropocene: demanding greater solidarity”.

1 UNDP, https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-09/UNDP_Gender_Equality_Strategy_2022-2025_EN.pdf

2 UNDP, <https://www.undp.org/publications/10-point-action-agenda-advancing-gender-equality-crisis-settings-10paa>

3 <https://www.weps.org/>

4 <https://unglobalcompact.org>

5 UNDP, <https://hs.hdr.undp.org/>

Given the ongoing full-scale invasion of Ukraine that began in February 2022, it is crucial to consistently consider the intersection of gender and conflict issues in Ukraine. We need to ensure that the design and implementation of gender policies go beyond the traditional goals of promoting gender equality, empowering women and girls, addressing structural barriers and discrimination, and fostering gender-sensitive governance and institutions. c. Conflict-sensitive gender policies should be designed to address the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women and men during times of conflict. These policies should recognize that armed conflict disproportionately affects women and girls in unique ways and aim to mitigate these impacts while promoting gender equality and empowerment of women and girls.

The current analysis focuses on gender-transformative employment and leadership opportunities in the energy sector.

It includes recommendations to promote the empowerment of women in the energy sector from multiple perspectives. These include the gender workforce composition and workplace environment in the energy sector, educational attainment and career pathways, cultural norms and gender stereotypes, progress in gender equality especially in the energy sector, understanding and addressing the gendered consequences of the war in Ukraine, gender considerations in preparation for post-war inclusive recovery on the national policy level, the role of women in green recovery, and social cohesion and war-time resilience-strengthening of Ukrainian society. Methodologically, the analysis relies on desk-research and in-depth interviews conducted on-line and off-line in Kyiv in November 2023-March 2024 with women-leaders in Ukrainian energy sector, as well as internal discussions with the members of UNDP energy team and gender team.



2. THE CONTEXT

The energy sector has traditionally played a key role in Ukraine's economy. According to the USAID study on the gender aspects of employment in the energy sector in Ukraine⁶, the direct contribution of the two leading energy sectors to national GDP in 2018 was more than 9%, also these industries accounted for about 7.6% of total employment in the Ukrainian economy. Therefore, the conditions for the realization of human potential in this sector directly affect the welfare of a significant part of the economically active population of Ukraine, and due to the socio-economic efficiency of employment, they have a significant impact on the overall welfare of the population of Ukraine.

Before the war, when the official statistics were available, women made up the majority of Ukraine's population (22,528,292 women and 19,455,272 men out of the total number of residents), being also the majority in the age categories that form the basis of the economically active population (13,754,231 men and 14,713,803 women aged 15–64 years old). At the same time, the gender approach is not integrated into the sphere of labor and employment, further consolidating gender gaps in salaries and professional self-realization of female employees in the energy industry. Gender inequality in economic opportunities, alongside discrimination in recruitment and at work, have limited women's access to employment, incomes, and career promotion in Ukraine⁷.

The war in Ukraine has exacerbated gender inequalities in all spheres and caused

multifaceted consequences for its affected populations, including massive and continuous destruction of energy infrastructure. As shown in the Ukrainian Energy Damage Assessment Report⁸ and the UNDP energy damage assessment, Ukraine's energy infrastructures have been a target of continuous attacks aimed at disrupting access to electricity supply for millions of Ukrainians as well as to critical communal infrastructures, including heating, potable water, wastewater treatment and communication. From the third Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA) published in February 2024, recovery and reconstruction costs for the energy and extractive industries totalled USD 47 billion, while water supply and sanitation needs totalled **USD 11 billion**.

While no large reconstruction projects are planned until the end of the war, planning for recovery has already begun. To ensure that this **recovery is sustainable**, many stakeholders are now starting to underscore the importance **of foregrounding gender equality and empowerment** of women and girls in these efforts. This means recognizing that the damage caused by war is impacting women and girls differently than men and boys, and it implies acknowledging and reflecting their differing needs and priorities from the outset of reconstruction planning and implementation. This perspective has been acknowledged by donors and development partners in the Alliance for a Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Recovery of Ukraine, presented during the

6 USAID Energy Security Project (2021) Gender aspects of Employment in the Energy Sector of Ukraine - <https://energysecurityua.org/reports/gender-aspects-of-employment-in-the-energy-sector-of-ukraine/>

7 EU 4Gender Equality Reform Help Desk, July 2023, Country Gender Profile Ukraine

8 UNDP and World Bank, March 2023. *Ukraine Energy Damage Assessment* <https://www.undp.org/ukraine/publications/ukraine-energy-damage-assessment>

Ukraine Recovery Conference in Berlin in June 2024, and undersigned by UNDP.

In the beginning of the war, Ukraine even exported electricity to the EU in July-October 2022 due to lower consumption levels. The situation changed dramatically in October 2022, with targeted missile and drone attacks on the energy infrastructure. According to the National Security and Defence Council, the Russian military fired more than 1,500 missiles, drones and shells at the energy infrastructure of Ukraine during October-December 2022, and continuing in 2023-2024, causing destruction and loss of access to the assets located on the temporarily occupied territories. This left 12 million households, more than 90% of the population across Ukraine, suffering with no or limited electricity, disrupted water supplies and heating systems at a time when temperatures have fallen below zero in most parts of the country. By the end of December 2022 the average Ukrainian household had to endure five cumulative weeks without electricity from 10 October to the end of December 2022 alone, according to estimates from Ukrenergo, which is quite a striking contrast to the situation before the beginning of the full-scale invasion, when 100% of population had access to electricity, according to the World Bank⁹, and 94,9% had access to clean fuel for cooking, according to World Health Organization¹⁰.

Before the beginning of the full-scale invasion, women accounted for 27% of the energy sector workforce¹¹. Involving women at all levels and in all economic sectors, including energy, in the reconstruction effort means considering them as an active part of the labour force. For example, ensuring favourable working conditions and environments will be essential so that women can benefit from employment in the planning, construction,

and operation of new energy infrastructure. Specific skills-building programs, on-the-job training, or projects targeting the recruitment of women from communities where energy and other infrastructure projects will be developed could have a transformative impact, helping break down some of the barriers preventing women's access to employment.

Equal access to infrastructure in the short and long term depends on considering various factors, including the different livelihoods of women and men, their varying mobility paths and use of infrastructure, and the environmental and social impacts of infrastructure projects on diverse social groups. Given that a large proportion of women spend more time managing a household's well-being, they will likely have specific views¹² on household needs, including the design and placement of the home as well as concerns over affordability, accessibility, and physical safety. Women might also prioritize access to safe transportation, affordable energy, quality childcare, and health facilities and schools, which can lead to greater socio-economic opportunities for the household.

To ensure that post-war reconstruction is truly sustainable, it must consider and address the needs of all Ukrainians, with specific attention to those disproportionately affected by the war. This means acting in a conflict-sensitive manner and incorporating the gendered dimensions of recovery and reconstruction in relevant frameworks, programs, projects, and funding platforms that are developed or revised, and for this to take place across all sectors concerned. This is the only way reconstruction can be sustainable, just, and equitable. It also has the potential to become a driver for greater inclusion and equality for all Ukrainians in post-war recovery.

⁹ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EG.ELC.ACCS.ZS?locations=UA>

¹⁰ <https://ourworldindata.org/energy/country/ukraine#what-share-of-the-population-have-access-to-clean-fuels-for-cooking>

¹¹ German Energy Agency (DENA), https://www.energypartnership-ukraine.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ukraine/media_elements/Study_The_Role_of_Women_in_Energy.pdf <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/0345ca7a-8f77-5b4b-ae04-069d71b006e4>

¹² World Bank, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/29259>

3. GENDER WORKFORCE TRENDS AND WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT IN THE ENERGY SECTOR



According to the State Statistics Service by Country Gender Profile Ukraine from 2023 completed by EU 4Gender Equality Reform Help Desk, **the economic activity rate of working-age women (18-59 y.o.) in Ukraine was 56%** in 2021 (most recent data), 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. Women's economic inclusion was (and 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. **The full-scale war has had a huge impact on employment**, including on gendered patterns of employment. According to the Ministry of Energy, constant threats to critical infrastructure, coupled with the fear of targeted attacks on energy facilities as perpetuated throughout 2024, have created an environment of perpetual stress and anxiety for the energy sector workforce. These workers, who are responsible for maintaining the nation's energy security, operate under immense pressure, knowing that their work is not just technical but a vital component of national defense. **The chronic stress, fear for personal safety, and the overwhelming responsibility to keep the country's power**

grid functioning amid the war have led to widespread mental fatigue, emotional exhaustion, and a deteriorating sense of well-being. This situation not only hampers productivity but also undermines long-term mental health, creating a workforce that is strained and psychologically vulnerable.

According to CARE report¹³ 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. To mitigate the war's impact, some employers tried to implement flexible employment arrangements and payment strategies such as unpaid leave, part-time work schedules, decreased salaries and remote work, where feasible. 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.

According to the earlier mentioned report from EU 4Gender Equality Reform Help Desk, 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 **labor market (54%)**, in the **energy sector** fewer than one in four employees is a woman (**24%**). Moreover,

13 RGA, Ukraine, 2023 https://careevaluations.org/wp-content/uploads/RGA_Ukraine_2023_ENG.pdf

women tend to work in administrative roles. **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. 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.

According to the State Statistics Service, in 2021 Ukrainians spent 13.8% of their monthly income on utility services. 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. To respond to the 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.

The current regulatory and legal compliance in Ukraine doesn't sufficiently address the specific restrictions and obstacles faced by women in accessing equal employment opportunities in the energy sector. There is

a gap between formal norms and economic practices, as existing norms do not align with the real resources needed to implement them in the specific conditions of the industry, especially considering the specific needs of women with the required professional qualifications in the energy field. In addition, according to the same report, **women whose careers start at lower skill levels have much worse career prospects than men**. If, for men, long tenure at the lower levels of the professional qualification hierarchy is not typical, the average length of work experience for women exceeds half of the life expectancy of a typical Ukrainian employee. Women usually need a longer period of time to reach a certain career level than men. The slower rate of career advancement for women compared to men needs to be explained by studying the regulatory conditions, decision-making processes related to building a pool of potential candidates for higher positions, and the behavioral stereotypes that could impact the differing career progression of women and men. **Among women, there is also a larger share of those with career regress and those who have not improved their position** in the professional qualification hierarchy of the enterprise during their work. The lack of higher education poses a greater obstacle to career advancement for women compared to men. This indicates that, despite equal formal opportunities, men have a better chance of advancing in their careers due to informal selection processes such as rules, norms, procedures, and stereotypes that favor men. As a result, it is evident that women face more barriers in accessing higher-paying positions in the energy sector compared to men in similar roles.



4. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND CAREER PATHWAYS TRENDS INFLUENCING GENDER-RELATED CHOICES

According to the Gender Inequality Index 2021¹⁴, Ukraine ranks among the highest countries in terms of gender parity in education (27th rank). Following same Gender Profile Ukraine from 2023 almost 100% of boys and girls are literate, their involvement in education is equally balanced and high. However, **gender is not sufficiently mainstreamed in education policy at all levels**, or in curricula. This contributes, for instance, to the feminization of employment in the field of education, the preservation of gender stereotypes and discriminatory educational content at all educational levels. The Government 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.

Following the report from EU 4Gender Equality Reform Help Desk, educational institutions often do not adequately cater to the interests of girls in extracurricular

activities such as student clubs and sports sections. Additionally, female students do not reside in the dormitories of educational institutions, which may indicate a lack of sense of security. This lack of security could potentially hinder girls’ interest in pursuing careers in the energy sector.

According to the earlier mentioned Country Gender Profile Ukraine from 2023, the imbalances in the energy sector start 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.

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

Following the report on *Gender Aspects of Employment in the Energy Sector in Ukraine*¹⁵, for both women and men, **education in energetics does not play the role of a decisive driver of dynamic career**

¹⁴ [Gender Inequality Index | Human Development Reports \(undp.org\), https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII](https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII)

¹⁵ USAID (2021).

promotion. It is a necessary but insufficient condition for vertical occupational mobility, which creates **heavier career restrictions for women than for men.** As mentioned earlier, for women, the sixth and seventh levels of the professional qualification hierarchy is almost inextricably linked to the availability of higher education, and for men exceptions to this rule are more than twice as common. The above indicates a higher importance of formal factors of compliance with the requirements of the position as determinants of career growth for women than for men.

A positive example of UNDP's work in promoting women's representation in STEM is the systematic support of gender initiatives to involve women in ICT. Thus, in 2022, , the Ukraine Country Office, supported the Projector Institute initiative¹⁶ to provide scholarships for women to study creative specialties. In addition, the UNDP in Ukraine previously organized the Internship Programme at the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine for girls in STEM, as well as the Leadership Programme for women involved in digitalization processes. The second phase of the programme started in April 2024. It is being implemented in partnership with the CDTO Campus.

Solving gender issues requires the conceptual definition, formation, and implementation of gender policies as a basis for shaping gender culture and fostering the socio-

economic activity of both women and men. This necessitates the following actions in the near future:

- a) Providing guidance to students and young people in choosing professions without gender stereotypes, considering the demands and opportunities of the labor market.
- b) Promoting engineering education among girls and encouraging their participation in traditionally male-dominated professions such as law and finance. This involves launching information campaigns to increase women's interest in these professions and involving female role models.
- c) Enhancing the collection of statistical data on the education of women and men in vocational (technical) education institutions and higher education institutions regarding fields of study, age, and residence.
- d) Assessing the demand for engineering-related occupations among girls and establishing the need for creating suitable conditions for their education in educational institutions. This should also focus on providing equal living conditions for both boys and girls from urban and rural areas, considering their specific needs in dormitories and offering leisure activities that cater to the interests of both genders.

¹⁶ <https://www.undp.org/ukraine/press-releases/supporting-displaced-ukrainian-women-pursue-careers-stem-and-creative-fields>



5. GENDER NORMS, STEREOTYPES AND BIAS

Cultural norms and gender stereotypes most often serve as the driving or stopping factors for women and men to make and pursue their career choices.

In Ukrainian society, the division into conventionally "feminine" and "masculine" affects almost all spheres of life: clothes, toys, sports, alcohol consumption styles, food, literature - even in the advertising of car brands and shampoo you can see the comment "for real men"¹⁷. This is also very noticeable in the working environment. For instance, due to gender stereotypes, men feel pressured when choosing a profession: management positions approved by society or from the list "for real men" are accepted. If a man chooses a profession that he likes, but which is not included in the list of "male" professions, he may experience social rejection and ridicule. For instance, cosmetologist, nail artist or educator in a kindergarten.

Ambitions have been long time associated in Ukraine with male pursues, while family orientation has been considered as a "true woman" aspiration. It is often expected that men should be the primary breadwinners in a family and are encouraged to pursue careers that are traditionally seen as high-status and well-paying, such as in business, engineering, or IT, while women take primary responsibility for childcare and household duties, and even when working full-time, they are often expected to handle the majority of domestic tasks.

According to a UNFPA research¹⁸, more than

half of men believe that men should have the final word when important household decisions are being made (51%), that women are too emotional and this affects their judgment (54%), and that women should take care of the children if the man can provide (51%). One in ten men (11%) believe that a husband can discipline his wife to correct her behaviour. The biggest difference in the views of men and women centre around household decision making (51% of men and 28% of women believe men should have the final word), though a staggering proportion of women still support this statement. Over one third (36%) of men and 22% of women think that men should not cry, and 18% of men and 23% of women think that men cannot take care of children on their own.

There is a significant emphasis on the importance of motherhood for women. Women may face societal pressure to prioritize family and children over career ambitions, particularly after marriage, even though Ukrainian men and women can equally benefit from parental leave. According to UNFPA research in 2020, only 2% of men take parental leave. Answering to the question "Why not consider taking paternity leave, even if it would be economically beneficial for your family?" 42% mentioned that it is a woman's duty, 34% think it is unacceptable for a woman to support a family, and only 20% of men want to take paternity leave instead of their wife.

In certain male-dominated work environments,

¹⁷ <https://gre4ka.info/statti/76135-manikiurnyk-vykhovatel-dytsadka-kosmetoloh-yak-henderni-stereotypy-zavazhaiut-cholovikam-obraty-profesiiu/>

¹⁸ UNFPA (2020), <https://ukraine.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/prezentaciya-3.pdf>

like the energy sector, women may be treated as the “beauty of the enterprise”, someone who is weak and needs to be protected. Such an approach leads to more responsible tasks being handled by men and, as a consequence, fewer opportunities for the promotion of women. Not only in Ukraine but as a general tendency still existing in the world when people are asked about the stereotypical traits of leaders, they would tend to talk about self-confidence, assertiveness, taking charge, solving problems, inspiring others, risk-taking, and action-orientation — agentic qualities that are similar to the masculine stereotype¹⁹. At the same time, women are often stereotyped as being too emotional or sensitive, which is seen as incompatible with the rational and tough nature required for leadership roles. If the stereotypical leadership traits are those that are inherently associated with men, it's not surprising that there can be prejudice about who is selected as a leader.

With fewer women in leadership positions, there are fewer role models and mentors for aspiring women leaders. This lack of representation can perpetuate the cycle of bias and limit opportunities for women. The next section will show some positive examples of female leaders in energy sector that can serve as role models for gender equality initiatives.

Another constraint to pursuing career choices for both men and women in Ukraine is ageism. Young professionals suffer from age bias because they are frequently perceived as inexperienced and lacking the necessary skills for higher-level positions, while older workers may face bias the other way around, being considered as “boomers” not up to date with the latest technologies or industry trends, making it difficult for them to secure new positions or promotions. In 2021 the most famous job platform in Ukraine work.ua conducted research²⁰ with the purpose of identifying if job seekers face age discrimination during employment. The results were rather surprising - only one-fifth of the respondents were not affected by ageism at all, and 78% of the respondents noted that they had faced prejudice in one way or another due to age. According to this research, the most “attractive” age for employers in Ukraine is 20-40 years old. If intersecting with other factors, women may face even greater discrimination being in “non-attractive” age.

As seen from the above, gender stereotypes in the labor market are still deeply rooted in Ukrainian society, and only the systematic actions proposed below directed at changing mindsets and attitudes can enforce stronger and faster progress of gender equality in the labor market.

¹⁹ Forbes, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2021/01/26/female-leadership-overcoming-stereotypes-about-choosing-the-best-leader/>

²⁰ Work.ua, <https://www.work.ua/articles/work-in-team/2674/>

6. PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND INCLUSIVITY IN THE ENERGY SECTOR

Before the war, women accounted for 54% of Ukraine's population (23.69 million), and men accounted for 46% (20.45 million)²¹. 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).²²

At the international level, Ukraine **ratified major international documents on providing equal rights and opportunities for men and women**, in particular the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on "Women, Peace and Security" (WPS). Ukraine also adopted the second National Action Plan (NAP) for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 for the period 2021-2025. On June 23, 2022, the European Council granted Ukraine the status of a candidate for accession to the European Union which means that Ukraine should develop its gender politics further.

In the context of gender equality, Ukraine still has a long **way to go to achieve gender parity** intended as the equal contribution of women and men to every dimension of life, whether in the private or public sphere. Nonetheless, it should be noted that the levels of **gender inequality** can be considered **moderate**

compared to the other countries based on a selection of international indices and reports. For example, **The Global Gender Gap Report**²³, published annually by the World Economic Forum (WEF), provides a comprehensive assessment of gender disparities in various countries. In the 2023 report, Ukraine was ranked 66th out of 156 countries, with a score of **0.726** on a scale of 0 to 1, ranking it fifth in the region of Eurasia and Central Asia. The index of Ukraine **increased from 0.69** index in 2008 growing at an average annual rate of 0.29²⁴%. Economic participation and opportunity (#55), educational attainment (#56), health and survival (#45) seem to perform better than political empowerment (#87). The Gender Inequality Index (GII), developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), measures gender disparities in reproductive health, empowerment, and economic activity. In the 2023-24 Human Development Report²⁵, Ukraine's GI score was 0.188, ranking 48 out of 193, **with a good placement in terms of human development.**

Women's **political representation**, however, is one of the **poorest performing** area from a gender equality perspective. According to data from the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), as of the last update (2019), women held approximately 21%²⁶ of seats in the Ukrainian parliament (Verkhovna Rada). This places Ukraine's representation of women in parliament around the global average, but

21 World Economic Forum, <https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-gender-gap-report-2023/in-full/benchmarking-gender-gaps-2023/>

22 Statista, Ukraine, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/974733/life-expectancy-at-birth-in-ukraine-by-gender>

23 World Economic Forum, <https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-gender-gap-report-2023/in-full/benchmarking-gender-gaps-2023/>

24 KNOEMA datahub, <https://knoema.com/atlas/Ukraine/topics/World-Rankings/World-Rankings/Global-gender-gap-index>

25 UNDP (2024), <https://www.undp.org/arab-states/publications/human-development-report-2023-24>

26 Inter-Parliamentary Union, <https://www.ipu.org/parliament/UA>

still below the desired level of gender parity. At the same time, it is a clear progress and a positive trend, compared to 2004, when the indicator was 5%²⁷. As of April 2024, women held four out of 22 ministerial positions in the Cabinet of Ministers, including the first prime-minister and two out of four Deputy Prime Minister positions, overlooking economic development, European and Trans-Atlantic integration, reintegration of temporary occupied territories and social development. In the 2020 local elections, women's representation grew from 15.3% to 28%. This figure reflects the increased representation of women in large towns and cities, but a 12.6% decrease in local councils and 14.8% decrease in settlement, village, and city mayors.²⁸ A public opinion survey in early August 2022 found that 72 % of Ukrainians want to see a better balance between men and women in political life²⁹.

As of 2021 Ukraine's female labor force participation has been steadily decreasing since 2004, when the rate was 66%³⁰. Women work **mostly in services** (74%) while only 14% are working in industry and 12% in agriculture. This structure is very different from men, 49% of whom are working in services, 35% in industry, and 16% in agriculture. The share of women in **senior and middle management positions is 44%**, according to the same source. At the same time, there are still significant opportunities to enable women to achieve the highest leadership positions in economic organizations, particularly, in public sector, considering that women **headed only**

29% of all legal entities at the beginning of 2021, including 25% of private enterprises, 21% of farms, and 13% of public enterprises³¹. According to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, enterprises led by women have demonstrated the same level of resilience as those led by men according to a recent Assessment of the Impact of the War on Micro, Small-, and Medium-sized Enterprises in Ukraine³². Out of 36,000 small- and medium companies registered in Ukraine in 2023, 51% are run by women, according to the Minister of Economy³³. There is a positive response to measures to support women-led SMEs, e.g., as part of the government's eRobota (e-work) program of grant funding. Additionally, the State Employment Service has been implementing the Own Business programme since July 2022, which provides **microgrants** for starting or developing a business. Since the start of the programme, 12,000 individuals and individual entrepreneurs received microgrants, of whom 7,000 (**58%**) were women, according to the Ministry of Economic Development of Ukraine.

The **pay gap** between women and men in Ukraine has decreased by 7.4 percentage points since 2017 and currently stands at **18.6%** according to the First Deputy Prime Minister - Minister of Economy of Ukraine³⁴, well above the European average of 12.7%³⁵. In recognition of the importance of addressing this challenge, particularly, in times of war, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the National Strategy³⁶ for Bridging the Gender Pay Gap for the period up to 2030 and the

27 World Bank, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SG.GEN.PARL.ZS?locations=MH-UA>

28 CARE, https://www.care-international.org/files/files/Ukraine_Rapid_Gender_Analysis_Brief_CARE.pdf

29 NDI, <https://www.ndi.org/publications/opportunities-and-challenges-facing-ukraine-s-democratic-transition-0>

30 ILOSTAT, <https://ilostat.ilo.org/data/>

31 UN Women, <https://ukraine.unwomen.org/en/shcho-my-robymo/ekonomichne-posylennya-zhinok#:~:text=In%20Ukraine%2C%20there%20has%20been,female's%2057%20percent%20activity%20rate.>

32 UNDP, Center for Economic Recovery, Advanter, <https://www.undp.org/ukraine/publications/assessment-wars-impact-micro-small-and-medium-enterprises-ukraine>

33 The Economist, "As Ukrainian men head off to fight, women take up their jobs", Nov.12th 2023

34 The Government of Ukraine, <https://www.me.gov.ua/News/Detail?lang=en-GB&isSpecial=True&id=dec4c65b-0e93-4380-9787-39703dfa6ad0&title=TheGovernmentHasApprovedTheNationalStrategyForBridgingTheGenderPayGapUntil2030-InUkraineForThePeriodUntil2030#:~:text=Over%20the%20past%20six%20years,and%20currently%20stands%20at%2018.6%25.>

35 European Commission, [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Gender_pay_gap_statistics#:~:text=For%20the%20economy%20as%20a,in%20Estonia%20\(Figure%201\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Gender_pay_gap_statistics#:~:text=For%20the%20economy%20as%20a,in%20Estonia%20(Figure%201))

36 Order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated 15.09.2023 No. 815 "On Approval of the National Strategy for Overcoming the Gender Pay Gap for the Period up to 2030 and Approval of the Operational Action Plan for its Implementation for 2023-2025".

operational action plan for its implementation for 2023-2025; the relevant decision was adopted at the Government meeting on 15 September 2023. The strategy aims to reduce the gender pay gap to 5% and includes measures to overcome stereotypes and discrimination based on gender, improve legislation on equal pay, and create conditions for a convenient combination of family and professional responsibilities.

Overall, while Ukraine has made progress in some areas of gender equality, there are still significant **challenges** to address, particularly considering the need to attract women who have fled abroad after the beginning of the full-scale invasion **to return to Ukraine** and join reconstruction efforts. Continued efforts and policies focused on promoting the empowerment of women, reducing gender disparities, and fostering an inclusive society are essential for further advancing gender equality in Ukraine and for sustainable peace.

Ukraine has a number of **prominent women-leaders**³⁷ in the energy sector who serve as **role models**, including, Victoriia Hryb, People's Deputy of Ukraine, Member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Committee on Energy and Housing and Utility Services; Olha Babii, Commissioner of the National Commission Energy and Utilities Regulatory Commission NEURC, the first woman ever to hold this position; Yuliia Perchuk, Head of the Reform Support Team of the Ministry of Community and Territorial Development of Ukraine; Nataliya Mykolska, Member of the Supervisory Board of PJSC Ukrhydroenergo; Olga Bielkova, Director of Government and International Affairs at Ukraine's Gas Transmission System Operator (GTSOU); Olena Pavlenko, President of DiXi Group, a Ukrainian think tank that has been working in the energy sector since 2008, Olena Rybak, Managing Director of iC Consulenter in Ukraine, Member of the Board at European-

Ukrainian Energy Agency (EUEA) and many others. To attract young professionals to energy companies, the industry first needs female engineering graduates that are fit to step into the required roles. For women, one of the key reasons of not pursuing an education in engineering is the lack of representation. Female executives serve as the most visible advocates, highlighting gender diversity in the sector and the career possibilities within. Without a clear perspective ahead showing that it is indeed possible for women to excel in this sector in top positions, engineering programs are not even on the list of options for many young women³⁸.

There are some **positive examples related to the improvement of gender policies and practices in the energy sector**. The **Ministry of Energy of Ukraine, for instance, is gradually developing an infrastructure for gender-sensitive policy** making and implementation in the energy sector, in line with the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine³⁹, which is one of the framework setting documents; its implementation has not been stopped by the war. Structural adjustments to enhance capacity to support equal rights and eliminate gender-based discrimination have been implemented. Within the Ministry of Energy, as part of its implementation, an Advisor to the Minister of Energy of Ukraine on ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men, preventing and combating gender-based violence has been appointed; the Sector for Social Dialogue, Gender Equality and Combating Discrimination, a structural unit within the Department of Social and Labour Relations and Gender Equality has been established; a comprehensive modular training programme "Gender Equality in the Workplace" was implemented for the Ministry of Energy staff over a period of 5 months in 2023 as a response to the results of the gender audit performed in 2022;

37 USAid, <https://energysecurityua.org/news/role-of-women-in-ensuring-the-functioning-of-the-ukrainian-energy-sector-during-the-war/>

38 Boston Consulting Group, Women in Energy 2.0: Gender Diversity in the CEE-SEE Energy Sector <https://web-assets.bcg.com/8d/81/76c1d4ee47648792758c725355ac/women-in-energy-study-2023.pdf>

39 <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/924-2023-%D0%BF#Text>

gender Committee on Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men, Preventing and Combating Discrimination has been created and met for the first time 04.03.2024; training on the topic of gender-sensitive budgeting was provided for specialists of the structural units of the Ministry of Energy who develop budget programmes and practical advice and recommendations for each budget programme considered during the training was provided by the mentors. Every year, the Ministry of Energy analyses the budget programmes developed by the Ministry and provides information on the consideration of gender aspects when preparing the budget request in accordance with the Methodological Recommendations⁴⁰ on the Implementation and Application of a Gender-Sensitive Approach in the Budget Process. In addition to that, several research projects have been implemented, including the following: Women and Men in the Energy Sector of Ukraine; Gender aspects of employment in the energy sector of Ukraine; Involvement of women and men, young people, people who combine professional and family responsibilities in the programmes of preservation and development of labour potential of energy companies; Some gender aspects of the situation of energy sector employees during the war.

Another example is provided by **NPC Ukrenergo**, the national electricity transmission system operator, a state-owned enterprise with more than 7000 employees. **The company has reported an increase in the share of women in leadership roles from 24% in 2021 to 35% in 2022** thanks to the systemic implementation of Equal Opportunities Policy and the application of measures aimed at increasing the attractiveness of its brand as an employer open to women. For example, all the Company's vacancies use a gendered language and the description of the job announcement contains a text confirming that Ukrenergo, as an employer, guarantees equal

rights and opportunities to candidates and employees at all stages of cooperation with the Company. Additionally, the photographs used on Ukrenergo's career pages include both women and men of different age groups. According to its **Equal Opportunities Policy**, NPC Ukrenergo as an employer is obliged to carry out open and impartial recruitment based solely on professional competences and experience; to provide all employees with equal conditions and equal rights and opportunities; to provide all employees with the opportunity to harmoniously combine work, family and personal life; to provide fair, transparent and impartial remuneration; to provide equal opportunities for professional development and career growth for all employees of the company; to ensure the development of an open culture without discrimination on any grounds. To ensure the implementation of the above principles, the **Equal Opportunities Committee** was established to combat any form of discrimination, including gender discrimination. The Committee is gender-balanced, with 45% men and 55% women. Committee members represent different age groups, job levels and functions. All members of the Equal Opportunities Committee have been trained in Survivor-Centred Approaches to Workplace Sexual Harassment and Other Forms of Gender-Based Violence Besides, employees of the HR function were trained on the WEPs (**Women's Empowerment Principles**) after signing a memorandum of **cooperation** between NPC Ukrenergo and **UN Women**. Ukrenergo as a state-owned enterprise has legislative restrictions on hiring personnel located abroad, which narrows options in the labour market and encourages the company to take proactive steps towards further development of a culture of equal opportunities and inclusiveness. Their next steps are to create, implement and maintain a targeted and holistic action plan to develop a culture of equal opportunities and an inclusive environment. The company is currently

⁴⁰ Approved by the Order of the Ministry of Finance No. 1 dated 02.01.2019.

working on establishing a partnership in which, with mentoring support, it can implement the main objective of the programme, which will include, among others, intensifying efforts to close the gender pay gap.

Ukrenergo is not the only company in the energy sector showing progress in its gender practices. PJSC **Ukrhydroenergo**, Ukraine's main hydropower generating company, which administers many major hydropower plants along the Dnieper and Dniester rivers, has a female member of the Supervisory Board **and implements significant measures towards gender equality**, which is declared to be an integral part of the company's corporate culture. In April 2023 it took part in the month of the Transformative Approaches to Achieving Gender Equality in Ukraine⁴¹, a project initiated by UN Women, which consists of a series of workshops to help Ukrhydroenergo's team learn more about **promoting gender equality in the workplace, the impact and consequences of violence on the company's operations, the benefits of applying the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs), as well as develop initiatives, implement specific practical developments** and, if necessary, develop documents to build the corporate culture further and work effectively on gender equality, empowerment of women, inclusiveness and diversity. The program has received support at the highest level, with the First Lady of Ukraine, Olena Zelenska, and First Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine, Yulia Svyrydenko, coordinating it. Furthermore, as part of implementing the principles of diversity, equality, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB), Ukrhydroenergo signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine to implement the state's veteran policy. This agreement aims to create

conditions for veterans, including women and men, and young people in the hydro energy sector and support their employment⁴².

The third example is self-organization of women working in energy-related spheres in **NGO Womens' Energy Club of Ukraine (WECU)**⁴³, uniting more than 200 members, including experts, representatives of Ukrainian and international organizations working in Ukraine on energy sector reforms, Members of the Committee on Fuel and Energy Complex of the Parliament of Ukraine, energy business and NGOs. Their mission is to **provide women working in energy-related sectors with a communication and exchange platform for professional empowerment**, and their goal is **to bring together women professionals working in the energy sector** for a mutual beneficial cooperation to increase the percentage of women employed in the sector and to reduce a gender gap in energy sector in Ukraine. Their activities aim at awareness raising of the different stakeholders for equal opportunities for women and men in the profession; improvement of the quality of life for employees, especially through a paradigm change in the work environment; increase the percentage of employed women in all companies; revealing the challenges for women in the society in the industry; sharing experience; determining the positive influence of gender diversification. More information can be found in the studies "The role of women in energy: female empowerment in Eastern Europe and Central Asia" by the German Energy Agency⁴⁴ and Country Gender Profile Ukraine by Eu4genderequality Reform Helpdesk⁴⁵.

41 Ukrhydroenergo, <https://en.uhe.gov.ua/news/ukrhydroenergo-ambassador-state-owned-companies-implementing-gender-equality-and-womens>

42 Ukrhydroenergo, <https://en.uhe.gov.ua/news/gender-equality-and-creating-equal-opportunities-are-important-energy-sector>

43 <http://www.wecu.com.ua/en/>

44 German Energy Agency, https://www.energypartnership-ukraine.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ukraine/media_elements/Study_The_Role_of_Women_in_Energy.pdf

45 Eu4genderequality Reform Helpdesk, https://euneighbourseast.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/eu4genderhelpdesk_ukrainegenderprofile_2023-cgp_v3.pdf



7. UNDERSTANDING AND ADDRESSING THE GENDERED CONSEQUENCES OF THE WAR IN UKRAINE

Despite the **unabated destruction and devastation** caused by Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the war also opened new **doors for a leap in women's agency**. Ukraine is fundamentally **rethinking gender roles**, expanding the **opportunities** of its citizens, and serving as a model for other countries⁴⁶.

On one hand, the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine has caused **massive disruption of socio-economic activity**, damage to infrastructure, environment, and livelihoods of Ukrainian people. It has increased gendered challenges, including worsening inequalities and discrimination, compounding vulnerabilities, and increasing cases of violence against women and girls. According to UNHCR⁴⁷ and RDNA-3⁴⁸, as of December 2023, an estimated 5.9 million people were recorded as refugees across Europe from Ukraine. A majority of the 3.7⁴⁹ million have been **displaced** internally within Ukraine are women, with significant health, employment, shelter, education for their children, and sexual and gender-based violence protection **needs**. As of May 2023, of those displaced and out of the 17.5 million people in need of assistance, 56% are women and girls. As access to infrastructure and services is reduced, women's unpaid care burdens are increasing in their families and communities. Women's unemployment is rising, while an

estimated 60,000 women are in the armed forces, with some 5,000 fighting on the front lines.

At the same time, **the war has opened up additional opportunities for gender equality** and empowerment of women. Results of public opinion research demonstrate that Ukrainian society tends to choose **pro-European values of equality**⁵⁰. For example, **societal support** for the idea that women should be granted **equal opportunities with men to work in the armed forces** of Ukraine and other military formations has grown during the last four years (during which Ukraine has been at war with Russia): in 2018, 53% of respondents to a representative public opinion survey agreed with this statement, whereas in 2022, 80% of respondents agreed.

A broader examination of women's involvement in the current phase of the war could be approached and analysed from two major perspectives: victimhood and agency⁵¹. On the one hand, women are victims of the situation, those who suffer from war and belong to vulnerable groups, and those who are tasked with most of the care work. On the other hand, **women are also instigators and actors of resistance**: those who have agency and participate actively in a range of activities to support the resistance effort. Women's vulnerability and suffering will be attended

46 German Marshall Fund, <https://www.gmfus.org/news/russias-war-ukraine-and-womens-agency>

47 UNHCR, <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>

48 UN, <https://ukraine.un.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/UA%20RDNA3%20report%20EN.pdf>

49 IOM, <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/ukraine-internal-displacement-report-general-population-survey-round-14-september-october>

50 Sarah D. Phillips, Tamara Martsenyuk "Women's agency and resistance in Russia's war on Ukraine: From victim of the war to prominent force" <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0277539523000584>

51 Sarah D. Phillips, Tamara Martsenyuk "Women's agency and resistance in Russia's war on Ukraine: From victim of the war to prominent force" <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0277539523000584>

first, before turning to a discussion of how Ukrainian women are renegotiating gender roles and expectations as active participants in the war resistance and preparation for the post-war recovery.

According to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) report Understanding and addressing the gendered consequences of the war in Ukraine⁵², women have borne the brunt of the economic impact of the war. **The conflict has exacerbated pre-existing inequalities affecting women.** According to a UN Women report⁵³, “Ukrainian women face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination in accessing key productive resources such as land, credit, agricultural inputs and services, and are more likely than men to be in precarious, part-time, seasonal and low-paying jobs when engaged in rural wage employment.” In 2021, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization reported that whereas poverty rates in Ukraine did not significantly differ by gender, women were more likely to face multidimensional poverty – that is, poverty measured beyond monetary deprivations – with lower average incomes across the labour market and single female headed households being particularly at risk of poverty⁵⁴. According to the same report, “women also depend more heavily on social benefits and services because they are generally responsible for household management and caregiving in the family – a reflection of gender stereotypes.”⁵⁵ **The increased economic vulnerability** of women provoked by the conflict can also push some to exchange sex for money, resources or services (sextortion). This type of situation

increases the risks of sexual exploitation and abuse and human trafficking⁵⁶ and exposes women to unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections.

At the same time, when Russia attacked Ukraine on February 24, 2022, women were already taking an active part in the resistance, including volunteer activities around humanitarian aid, logistics, displacement etc., and in the military sphere where the number of women has nearly doubled during the last year. Between 2014 and 2022 the level of women’s participation in civil society building has increased quantitatively as well as qualitatively, with women becoming prominent in certain leadership roles and more visible spheres⁵⁷.

According to the results of a survey conducted by Info Sapiens in April 2022 and supported by the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), 65% of Ukrainian women reported intentions to help the Ukrainian victims of war in terms of caring for injured civilians and soldiers⁵⁸. 27% of women reported intending to join the Ukrainian forces in some type of combat role (for example, in fortified defence positions or in battles). Finally, 69 % of women intended to help the resistance by providing non-military support to the Ukrainian forces (delivering food, information, or ammunition). As noted above, **Ukrainian women have a substantial presence and play crucial roles in the Ukrainian government, and their roles and participation are increasing.** Diplomatic activities of the female MPs contributed enormously to mobilizing international institutions and foreign governments’ military and humanitarian support for Ukraine.

52 OSCE PA, <https://www.oscepa.org/en/documents/special-representatives/gender-issues/report-17/4717-pdf-2023-gender-report-understanding-and-addressing-the-gendered-consequences-of-the-war-in-ukraine-eng/file>

53 UN Women, <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/Policy-paper-Global-gendered-impacts-of-the-Ukraine-crisis-en.pdf>

54 FAO, <https://www.fao.org/3/cb4501en/cb4501en.pdf>

55 IBID

56 UN Women, <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/Policy-paper-Global-gendered-impacts-of-the-Ukraine-crisis-en.pdf>

57 Channell-Justice, E., Khromeychuk, O., Martsenyuk, T., & Zychowicz, J. (2021). Ukraine (finally) treats women’s activism seriously. The Ukrainian Quarterly, 2

58 Nordås et al., <https://blogs.prio.org/2022/04/ukrainian-women-engage-in-resistance-and-should-be-in-the-peace-talks-new-survey-evidenc/e/?fbclid=IwAR0P1e2fx7abo0UuWRZfxVk7TQ-aC6StUdVP6aQ3NxyGUg6pgH4N4MMDZJO>

Despite common assumptions that women ask for peace and are against militarization, Ukrainian women publicly asked for heavy weapons to protect Ukraine against Russia. Different hashtag campaigns like #ArmUkraineNow and #FreeTheLeopards were used by activists to draw the attention of the international community to Ukraine's need for heavy weapons.

A strong and important sign of **recognition of women's active roles in defence efforts** is the language President Volodymyr Zelensky uses during his daily video address to the nation, wherein he often thanks both the country's "zakhisnyki ta zakhisnytsi"⁵⁹ (male defenders and female defenders). Ukrainian feminists and gender scholars have been fighting for the usage of such gender-sensitive language for decades. This norm was finally adopted and approved as a part of Ukrainian grammar in 2019⁶⁰. So, this presidential habitude obtains special meaning as it legitimizes the gendered language and the feminization of nouns at the highest level of state authorities. At the same time, it underlines the linguistic visibility of women in the society at war. There are many visible ways in which women from Ukraine are active in the resistance and humanitarian aid efforts during the war. Ukrainian women of all ages participate in a wide range of activities: providing meals, clothes, medicines, protective gear, logistics, information, support, and fuel delivery; identifying and helping vulnerable individuals; documenting war crimes; and others. This is not the only illustration of **recognition of importance of gender equality by the country's leadership**, for example, in October 2023, the Ministry of Economy, together with the International Labour Organization and with the assistance of UN Women in Ukraine, with the participation of the First Lady of Ukraine Olena Zelenska, held an event

"Towards the Implementation of the National Strategy for Closing the Gender Pay Gap for the Period up to 2030 and the Contribution of Partners to this Process", where the National Strategy was presented and plans for its implementation were discussed.

Besides, it is worth noting the **general situation on the Ukrainian labour market** where the full-scale invasion has caused mobilisation and a significant worsening of the demographic crisis, and has led to an **unprecedented shortage of staff**, coupled with an immense level of uncertainty, both for men and women. Many men are required to serve in the military, which can lead to significant disruptions in their personal and professional lives. Media reports have indicated forced conscription in some areas, causing distress and fear among men who might not be willing to fight with limited access to healthcare service due to same fear of conscription.

Constant threats to critical infrastructure, coupled with the fear of targeted attacks on energy facilities, have created an environment of perpetual stress and anxiety. The chronic stress, fear for personal safety, and the overwhelming responsibility to keep the country's power grid functioning amid the war have led to widespread mental fatigue, emotional exhaustion, and a deteriorating sense of well-being, according to the Ministry of Energy. This situation not only hampers their productivity but also undermines their long-term mental health, creating a workforce that is strained and psychologically fragile. People employed in enterprises destroyed by targeted attacks, may face job loss, change or reduced income which can lead to additional deterioration of mental and physical health conditions and ability to continue social and economic activities, which also leads to increase of gender-based violence.

59 Olikier, , <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/ukraine/fighting-while-female>

60 Tyravskiy, <https://globalvoices.org/2022/09/20/gender-equality-in-ukrainian-language-feminine-forms-of-professions-now-given-full-recognition/>

These factors effect community structures and dynamics, leading to increased responsibilities for women. As a result, most companies have realized that creating conditions for women's work is not a fashionable fad that can be boasted about in various rankings but a very **practical thing that is essential to maintaining sustainable business development**, according to the interviews. New tangible additional employment opportunities open up for women, including in the energy sector, considering, that 95% of hundreds of thousands of conscripted persons are men, for example DTEK, the largest energy company who have accounted for about a quarter of Ukraine's energy generation, has reported that almost 5000 of their employees have been conscripted⁶¹ and the open vacancies need to be filled in. Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, the State Statistics Service has not published unemployment data. The Info Sapiens⁶² research agency makes its own estimates of the rate. According to them, in February 2024, the unemployment rate in Ukraine was 20.9% compared to ca. 30% in 2022. To indicate the magnitude of the turmoil in the labour market in energy sector, one can look at an example of Ternivka coal mine, as described by the Economist⁶³, where 600 men were conscripted, and to make up for the shortage about 300 women have joined, more than 100 of whom work underground –

the mine has employed women before, but none of them worked underground. However, the question then becomes: what happens once the war ends and men return. In other contexts, women have been displaced by the returning men and found themselves back in the household. The question for the future is how to prepare for that eventuality, which will require some reskilling or new job opportunities for the returning men, the women in the mines, or both.

Overall, **gender equality mindset has increased during wartime in both men and women since 2021**, from 6.0 to 6.5 according to Gender Snapshot / Findings from the Ukraine reSCORE 2023⁶⁴. Gender equality mindset in women is correlated with a higher sense of civic duty. The biggest decreases in gender stereotypes since 2021 were observed in the percentage of respondents who agree that women should have more delicate jobs (from 77% to 63% in the full sample), that men should not cry (from 41% to 28%) and that women should take care of children instead of working if the man can provide for the family (from 57% to 45%). These findings are crucial in the context of SDG Targets 5.1, 5.4, and 5.5. Yet **gender stereotypes clearly exist**, and gender equality mindset is higher in women than men.

61 Center for Economic Recovery, "Energy security: proposal for implementation of gender approaches" <https://recovery.org.ua/>

62 Center for Economic Strategy, <https://ces.org.ua/en/tracker-economy-during-the-war/>

63 The Economist "As Ukrainian men head off to fight, women take up their jobs", Nov.12th, 2023

64 Center for Peace and Democratic Development, https://api.scoreforpeace.org/storage/pdfs/Gender-report_01-36_3_web.pdf

8. GENDER CONSIDERATIONS FOR DEVELOPING INCLUSIVE NATIONAL RECOVERY POLICIES

Recovery and reconstruction process offers a **unique chance** to set Ukraine on the path of inclusive, stable and sustainable development. The gender dimension is particularly important in both the reconstruction and rebuilding of the physical environment as well as the support **and recovery of the full potential of Ukrainian citizens** – old and young, men and women. UNDP **works with the government of Ukraine and partners to mainstream gender considerations in energy** policies, programs, and investments, aiming to create an enabling environment for the empowerment of women and girls and gender-responsive energy solutions in line with **UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2025**⁶⁵ and **the 10-Point Action Agenda**⁶⁶.

Reconstruction of Ukraine will be a hugely challenging task and will have to involve massive resources. International support for channelling those funds to Ukraine and their effective use will depend on how **effectively and how fairly** they will be used. The application of **gender-responsive budgeting (GRB)** can help both in ensuring the efficiency of allocation of the funds, and in strengthening the legitimacy for the provision of support by the international community⁶⁷.

The RDNA3⁶⁸ estimates that up to US\$152 billion (€138 billion) in direct damage to buildings and infrastructure has resulted from nearly two years of war, with costs increasing

since then. With the support of its international partners, the Government of Ukraine has begun to carry out reconstruction and recovery efforts. According to UN Women⁶⁹, “the recovery and reconstruction of post-war Ukraine offers an opportunity to address many of the country’s longstanding inequalities between men and women. Despite the consequences of Russia’s full-scale invasion since 2022, the Government of Ukraine (GoU) has demonstrated that women’s rights and gender equality remain a priority through the adoption of gender-responsive policies and legislation in 2022-2023. It is crucial that these policies and legislative commitments are translated into action to deliver a gender-equal and inclusive society.

At the same time, the Government of Ukraine, donor governments and the United Nations (?) have sometimes been criticized by international organizations and Ukrainian civil society organizations for their insufficient efforts in gender equality and female leadership.

For instance, efforts to integrate a gender perspective into the National Recovery Plan have been made, and they were channeled through working groups. However, the performance of the working groups in terms of gender mainstreaming was uneven. **7 out of 24 thematic groups** (new agrarian policy, energy security, digitalization, the protection

65 UNDP, https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2022-09/UNDP_Gender_Equality_Strategy_2022-2025_EN.pdf

66 UNDP, <https://www.undp.org/publications/10-point-action-agenda-advancing-gender-equality-crisis-settings-10paa>

67 Free Network Forgee, “Rebuilding Ukraine: The Gender Dimension of the Reconstruction Process”, https://freepolicybriefs.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/fpbpolicypaper20230307_2-1.pdf

68 UN, <https://ukraine.un.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/UA%20RDNA3%20report%20EN.pdf>

69 UN Women policy brief, <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/policy-brief-gender-responsive-recovery-ukraine-introduction>

of children's rights, the protection of veterans' rights, the return of citizens, and social protection) were able to conduct gender analysis, considering available statistics, identifying gender gaps and proposing ways to address them. Those plans developed as part of this process were never officially adopted, although they were partially integrated into other strategic documents and government activities.

The Ukraine Facility⁷⁰ developed by the **European Commission** with the aim to support Ukraine's post-war recovery by providing €50 billion in financial assistance from 2024 to 2027 has replaced all previous plans for Ukraine's recovery. As of November 2023, gender mainstreaming has been thoroughly incorporated into the Human Capital section of the Plan, which identifies gender barriers to human capital recovery and the steps needed to overcome them.

During 2022-2024, three high-level conferences on Ukraine's recovery were held: the Lugano conference in July 2022, the London conference in June 2023, the Berlin conference in June 2024. Gender was underrepresented in the first two conferences, but the latest one in Berlin set a background with a strong cross-cutting gender component in the agendas of all the four pillars with a solidarity of different counterparts to commit to promoting gender equality and women's leadership in the recovery process. Particularly, focus on the care economy, more educational initiatives for women, including re-skilling,

strengthening legislation and policies, support to female-led NGOs, expanding the WPS agenda, integrating gender on local and regional levels, creating regional action plans on gender, creating new implementation plan for a National Strategy on Equal Rights and Opportunities. Another significant contribution of the Conference in Berlin was marked by the launching of the Alliance for Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Recovery, which aims to address gender disparities, ensuring a more inclusive future for all Ukrainians. This Alliance is a crucial step towards a more equitable future for Ukraine proposed by UN Women Ukraine and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany and includes collaborative efforts of governments, international organizations, civil society, and the business community, all working towards lasting gender equality and women's empowerment in Ukraine.

In September 2023, **the Platform for Gender Mainstreaming and Inclusion in Recovery**⁷¹ was established with the purpose of ensuring coordination and cooperation between ministries, other central executive authorities, MPs, civil society, business representatives, development partners, and international organizations to ensure gender equality and inclusion principles are appropriately implemented in the recovery process of Ukraine. The Platform will work closely with the Alliance to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive approach in the run-up to the next URC in Rome.

70 European Commission, https://eu-solidarity-ukraine.ec.europa.eu/eu-assistance-ukraine/ukraine-facility_en

71 Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/en/news/vidbulos-pershe-zasidannia-platfomy-zabezpechennia-hendernoho-meinstryminhu-ta-inkliuzii-u-vidnovlenni-pid-holovuvanniam-olhy-stefanishynoi>



9. THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN GREEN RECOVERY

A monopolistic market structure is the biggest obstacle to creating a sustainable and competitive energy market in all sectors except renewables. For example, the State Enterprise National Nuclear Generating Company “Energoatom” is responsible for operating all nuclear power plants in Ukraine and generates 55% of the country’s electricity, particularly in the category that requires constant, reliable power supply. PJSC “Ukrhydroenergo,” Ukraine’s main hydropower company, dominates the segment that provides flexible power, which can be quickly adjusted to meet changing demand. Meanwhile, DTEK, the largest commercial energy operator in the country, owns most of the coal-fired power plants and controls the segment that provides power that can be adjusted to some extent, but not as quickly as hydropower.

The gas sector suffers from similar structural challenges, the same as district heating, where the problems are further exacerbated by a lack of capacities on the municipal level from corporate governance to business development. Such market composition allows the actors to misuse the dominating market position. Multiple efforts of the Government of Ukraine to regulate and re-balance the market to prevent manipulations have not brought much progress, instead, contributing to growing debts in the system and further consolidation and monopolization.

In March 2024 the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the Ukraine Facility Plan, which will become the basis for the implementation of the EU’s financial support programme for Ukraine in 2024-2027. The Ukraine Facility Plan envisages the implementation of structural reforms in the

public sector, a number of economic reforms aimed at developing the business climate and entrepreneurship, as well as steps to develop priority sectors that can ensure rapid economic growth. The implementation of the Plan is expected to contribute to Ukraine’s European integration and further sustainable economic development.

The Ukraine Facility foresees the following priorities for the energy sector: energy security and the transition to low-carbon and renewable energy sources with the continuous development of energy sustainability by assuring transparent, timely and coordinated development of the sector, creating conditions for the development of renewable energy sources and attracting investment; integration into the EU market; post-war liberalization of gas and electricity markets; independent regulator; energy efficient and sustainable heat supply; energy efficiency of the building stock. Those reforms, including the introduction of targeted subsidies, should be designed, implemented, and communicated with consideration of gender aspects. Besides, the energy sector transition foresees stimulation of procurement and small power generation, which should also be done in line with the EU requirements and in a manner that enables equal access to women and men.

As well seen, the transition towards green energy is prominently present in the energy sector reform agenda. Focus on a green economy requires innovative solutions and innovative approaches, which also means that integrating gender considerations into green recovery efforts is not just a matter of fairness, but an essential for the effectiveness, sustainability, and inclusiveness of these

efforts. Women's participation in the renewable energy sector tends to be higher compared to traditional energy sectors such as oil, gas, and coal. According to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), women represent about 32% of the renewable energy workforce globally, compared to around 22% in the traditional energy sector. According to the same source, the representation of women in leadership roles may be slightly higher in renewable energy companies compared to traditional energy companies.

Ukraine is aligning its green recovery efforts with the European Green Deal, seeking cooperation and funding from the European Union and other international partners. Securing green financing through international grants, loans, and investments to support sustainable projects is important in reaching its goals. Demonstrating commitment to gender equality can attract international investments and partnerships, as many development organizations and donors prioritize gender-inclusive projects.

One of the important priorities of the Ukrainian Government in green recovery efforts is promoting energy efficiency improvements in residential and public buildings through insulation, modern heating systems, and energy-efficient windows and doors. There are initiatives to enhance energy efficiency in industrial processes, which can reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. Women's participation in the energy sector can enhance these efforts and lead to more environmentally friendly policies and practices, as women are often more attuned to the impacts of environmental degradation on communities. Women often play key roles in advocating for and implementing sustainable practices and their involvement in the energy sector can accelerate the transition to renewable energy sources, which is crucial for combating climate change.

Improvement of corporate governance of state-owned enterprises, also in the energy sector, is a part of the reform package. The issue of

diversity, particularly with regard to women's representation on corporate boards, remains a significant and timely concern. According to the data, among the 329 directors comprising the corporate governance index WHU-50, 70, or 21.3%, are women. This marks a second consecutive year of improvement, with the figure increasing from 19.4% in 2020 and 17.6% in 2019. Banks as well as companies listed on Foreign and Ukrainian stock exchanges, have shown notable progress in terms of gender diversity on their boards. In fact, the Ukrainian stock exchange boasted the highest percentage of female representation in 2020, with as much as 34% of board seats held by women.

The upward trend in female representation on corporate boards is encouraging, though there remains significant room for improvement. As the global conversation around diversity, equity, and inclusion continues to gain momentum, it is likely that greater attention will be paid to this issue, with the hope of achieving more equitable and diverse boardrooms.

In addition, the ongoing conflict in Ukraine has disproportionately affected women, who often bear the brunt of displacement, loss of livelihoods, and increased caregiving responsibilities. Environmental degradation exacerbates these challenges, making it crucial to consider gender, therefore, ensuring that women are represented in decision-making processes which helps to address the needs of the entire population and promotes social justice. By addressing the specific needs and potentials of women, green recovery initiatives can help build a more resilient, equitable, and prosperous society for all Ukrainians. Women bring unique perspectives and problem-solving approaches that can drive innovation in the energy sector. Their involvement can lead to the development of new technologies and methodologies. Empowered women can play a significant role in the adoption and dissemination of new energy technologies, particularly in rural and underserved areas.

10. THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN STRENGTHENING SOCIAL COHESION AND RESILIENCE DURING WARTIME IN UKRAINE

Women’s organizations exist in Ukraine and are active throughout the country. A variety of women-led organizations (WLOs), women’s rights organizations (WROs), and civil society organizations (CSOs) are all present in Ukraine. The 2014 Maidan Revolution generated high levels of civic activism, especially among young people using social media⁷². According to UN Women Rapid Civil Society Assessment ⁷³ **at least 64% of civil society organizations (CSOs)** in Ukraine have **continued** to provide services and interventions after Russia’s invasion. In most part CSOs have had to make significant adjustments to their programmes and operations in response to the crisis to provide services and interventions that they have not worked on before. Apart from existing registered groups, **many new grassroots initiatives** emerged in response to the war. These local organisations and initiatives have played and **continues to play a pivotal role** as first responders as they might be in places which international organisations cannot reach and as they have a good understanding of the needs in their neighbourhoods⁷⁴.

Women’s rights organizations and women-led organizations bring valuable skills and assets to localized humanitarian action and beyond. They are often able to gain **access** to hard-to-reach communities and those

most marginalized within them; they bring a strong understanding of the local context and the needs and realities of women, girls, and the community as a whole, and they offer crucial insight into how to engage with key stakeholders. Evidence and our experience also show that engaging young people in prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery will bring better, more localized, and more accountable responses⁷⁵. For instance, Women on Boards Ukraine is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to empowering women in leadership roles in Ukraine and advancing the presence of women in corporate boardrooms who aims to create a community where women uplift and support one another, foster inclusive decision-making in the board rooms, advocate for legislative changes in Ukraine that ensure equal opportunities, and promote the exceptional talents of Ukrainian professional women globally.

Broadly speaking, **social cohesion**⁷⁶, of which women are active participants and beneficiaries, is understood as the **interconnectedness and unity** among diverse social entities at national and local levels – individuals, social groups, and institutions – and the positive, collaborative, and harmonious interactions and relationships among those entities, in a

72 CARE, https://www.care-international.org/files/files/Ukraine_Rapid_Gender_Analysis_Brief_CARE.pdf

73 UN Women, <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/03/rapid-assessment-impact-of-the-war-in-ukraine-on-womens-civil-society-organizations>

74 The Kvinna Till Kvinna Foundation, <https://kvinna.tillkvinna.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/The-Kvinna-till-Kvinna-Foundation-A-feminist-response-to-Russias-war-in-Ukraine-Recommendations-to-the-International-Community.pdf>

75 ActionAid, <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/standing-our-rights-feminist-insights-ukraine-response>

76 Center for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development, https://api.scoreforpeace.org/storage/pdfs/PUB_SCOREUkr21_Social_Cohesion_Volume1.pdf

society, encompassing shared norms, values, and identities. Social cohesion literature often categorizes different elements as **horizontal** (between groups and citizens) and vertical (between citizens and state institutions). Horizontal relations refer to the interconnectedness, interactions, and social ties among individuals and groups within a community or a society. It encompasses the way people relate to one another, collaborate, and form networks across various groups. Horizontal relations reflect the organic connections and interactions within a society, highlighting the importance of interpersonal bonds, cooperation, and solidarity among individuals and groups. ReSCORE2023⁷⁷ measures horizontal relations using four indicators, namely, Community Cooperation (5.5 out of 10), Social Tolerance (5.7/10), Social Proximity (5.4/10), and Lack of Social Threat (6.9/10)¹, and concludes that the figures for these indicators stand at a moderate level, leaving room for improvement. **Local institutions and civil society organizations**, which are often **women-led**, particularly during wartime, can lead efforts aimed at boosting **Community Cooperation**, including through the drivers with relatively stronger influence (Community Cohesion, Civic Engagement, and Pride in Local Community Bonds). **Gender Equality Mindset** is a component and a direct contributor to the social **tolerance** indicator; considering the influence of Gender Equality Mindset on Social Tolerance, so targeted policy and programs on multiple levels involving multi-actor and multi-stakeholder

coordination could help cultivate it. Platforms for **interaction, including women and girls**, i.e., family hubs, children's play groups, or other community support groups, would help **intergroup harmony**.

According to the Ukraine Gender Snapshot⁷⁸, among all civic activities, **women are slightly more active** than men, e.g. **59%** of women are engaged in **volunteering or donations**, compared to 55% of men; similarly, **54% of women** and 51% of men are involved in **activities to improve their neighbourhoods**.

Local women's rights and women-led organizations are essential for maintaining **resilience within communities** and are **ultimately the ones who will remain and work towards the recovery** of the country long after international actors have disappeared. Despite this, women's rights and women-led organizations feel excluded from many local and national level decisions made about resource management, planning, and policy during wartime and about post-war recovery. As women's rights and women-led organizations have had to go into crisis response, few organizations have had the time and capacity for advocacy, reflection, **and strategizing** around the future. To ensure women's participation in key-decisions in the coming period it is essential that the international community fund local women's rights and women-led organizations to do advocacy work, and for the international community to insist on women's participation in key-processes related to Ukraine's future⁷⁹.

⁷⁷ Center for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development, <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/social-cohesion-ukraine-part-i-trends-based-rescore-2023-and-score-2021-indices-enuk>

⁷⁸ Center for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development, https://api.scoreforpeace.org/storage/pdfs/Gender-report_01-36_3_web.pdf

⁷⁹ The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, <https://kvinna.tillkvinna.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/The-Kvinna-till-Kvinna-Foundation-A-feminist-response-to-Russias-war-in-Ukraine-Recommendations-to-the-International-Community.pdf>

11. HIGH-LEVEL SWOT ANALYSIS FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN UKRAINE

SWOT analysis for conflict-sensitive empowerment of women in the energy sector in Ukraine

|  STRENGTHS |  WEAKNESSES |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancement of the role of women in the recovery process in Ukraine. • High education level of the Ukrainian population and willingness to increase economic potential. • Gradual increase of the presence of women in diverse roles in all parts of the public life, including in the energy sector, covering politics, business, and the NGO sector • Availability of role models, women in leadership positions in energy sector • Strong engagement of women in war resilience and preparation for post-war recovery processes, from local activists through leaders of civil and professional society to politics and state institutions, which is relevant for energy sector recovery. • Creation of female unions to support women in the energy sector • Consistent increase of gender equality index, which means continuous progress in gender equality. • Ratification by Ukraine of major international documents related to gender equality and adoption of national strategies and action plans addressing gender inequality and pay gap. • Increased interest of donors and international partners of Ukraine in mainstreaming gender agenda. • Ambitious plans of Ukraine for energy recovery, with perspectives of green and innovative solutions. • Increased activism in Ukrainian society and strong motivation for positive changes and EU perspectives. • Effective training and capacity-building programs are available for women, enhancing their skills and opportunities within the energy sector. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exacerbated gender inequalities due to war. • Decreased employment rates because of war crisis. • Lower employment rate of women and female underrepresentation in the energy sector in particular (• Low leadership representation of women , especially in male-dominated industries, as well as owning SMEs; • Deep-seated gender stereotypes and cultural constraints that lead to limited educational and professional choices as well as a weak work culture. • Gender pay gap, 19% in energy sector particularly. • Internal stereotypical and male-oriented organizational culture in the energy sector that limits female opportunities. • Safety concerns, destruction of physical and social infrastructure. • Limited presentation of women in education in STEM. • War-related losses of family members and relatives, homes and property, sources of income, etc., with added psychological constraints. • Mobilization of men and shifts in community structures and dynamics. • Additional burdens on women during the war, and wounded to , from caring for kids, the elderly, and the wounded to the reintegration of ex-combatants. • Relocation both as internally displaced persons and refugees and consistent inability to pursue a career. • Insufficient flexible instruments for locally-led women-led initiatives. • Insufficient financial resources to mainstream gender related initiative due to economic crisis and priorities of Ukrainian government to address immediate needs of population related to destructions and displacement. • Insufficient collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data, hindering effective monitoring and assessment of gender equality efforts, inclusively in energy sector. |

⊕ OPPORTUNITIES

- Opportunities to advocate for and implement stronger gender equality policies and regulations at the national and organizational levels in relation to international obligations and perspectives of the EU accession.
- Possibilities for enhancement of women leadership at all levels of society, including flexible funding instruments for locally and women-led initiatives.
- Utilization of gender-sensitive credit financing and state support programs to promote gender-sensitivity of private sector entities incl. women ownership in SME sector.
- Further advancement of skills development programs to provide women and girls with the necessary skills in STEM and training for employment in the energy sector.
- Potential to form partnerships between government, private companies, and NGOs could create opportunities for women to access employment and leadership roles in the energy sector.
- The recovery and reconstruction process involving the adoption of new technologies in the energy sector, providing opportunities for women to enter fields traditionally associated with innovation and modernization, including energy efficiency, corporate governance, green technologies.
- Launch of awareness campaigns to challenge stereotypes and promote the energy sector as an attractive career choice for women.
- Continuous global attention and spotlight on Ukraine's conflict presents an opportunity to showcase positive cases of Ukraine's women leadership and illustrate the importance of gender equality and empowerment of women in reconstruction efforts.

⚠ THREATS

- Intensive emigration abroad leading to a reduction in the pool of talent in the labour market, including among women and young people.
- Economic challenges that may limit funding and resources for gender equality initiatives in the energy sector. Political instability and shifting priorities in the aftermath of the conflict disrupting empowerment of women initiatives and policy implementation.
- Security risks associated with the conflict deterring women from pursuing careers in the energy sector, particularly in regions affected by violence.
- Disruption of education during the war for both boys and girls may limit their employment opportunities in the future.
- Resistance from within the sector and society due to entrenched cultural and societal norms against gender equality.
- High number of vulnerable groups adding complexity to affirmative action - limited financial resources and competing priorities in post-conflict reconstruction efforts may divert attention and funding away from initiatives focused on the empowerment of women.
- Political instability or changes in government policies that could negatively impact gender equality efforts.
- Resistance to gender equality initiatives from within the sector, including biases and opposition from male-dominated leadership and workforce. Despite efforts to promote gender equality, entrenched sexism and discrimination within the energy sector and the society at large, persisting, limiting women's advancement opportunities.
- Missed opportunities due to insufficient resources available for existing initiatives, platforms, and strategies aimed at the empowerment of women, e.g., Platform for Gender Mainstreaming and Inclusion in Recovery; National Strategy for Overcoming the Gender Pay Gap.



12. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS ON SUPPORTING AN INCLUSIVE RECOVERY OF UKRAINE'S ENERGY SECTOR

Support the Government of Ukraine agencies with the design, advancement, and implementation of strategies and action plans related to gender equality and the empowerment of women, in line with EU accession requirements and the principle of gender equality as a cross-cutting priority. This includes piloting innovations in the energy sector.

- Provide technical assistance for national initiatives in collecting gender-sensitive labor market statistics amid the full-scale invasion. Assist in implementing the National Strategy for Bridging the Gender Pay Gap until 2030, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 15.09.2023 N° 815, with a particular focus on the energy sector as a testing ground. Additionally, support the action plan of the Platform for Gender Mainstreaming and Inclusion in Recovery, utilizing the energy sector as a key area for piloting these efforts. Review existing policies and legal frameworks to identify areas where gender equality can be strengthened. Propose amendments or new policies that promote gender mainstreaming and ensure compliance with EU standards.
- Provide training, deliver communication campaigns, and produce and disseminate materials to sensitize 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.
- Support the creation of a repository to collect available gender modules/trainings and make these available for all government agencies. Develop new modules and training 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.
- Support the Ministry of Energy of Ukraine and the other agencies in the energy sector to perform gender audits and implement the action points from the gender audit, including those related to EU requirements and support with certification for Gender Equality Seal for Public Institutions⁸⁰.
- Provide technical assistance and expertise in designing and implementing gender-responsive strategies and action plans.
- Facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogues, workshops, and consultations to gather input and foster collaboration on gender equality initiatives in the energy sector. Engage with civil society organizations, women's groups, and other stakeholders to ensure inclusivity and diverse perspectives in strategy development. Establish mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of gender equality strategies and action plans in the energy sector. Regularly assess progress, identify challenges, and adjust strategies as necessary to achieve sustainable results.
- Align gender equality strategies and action plans with EU accession requirements and commitments. Leverage EU funding opportunities and technical assistance to support

⁸⁰ UNDP, <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2023-03/Brochure%20GES%20PI%20ENG.pdf>

gender equality initiatives in the energy sector. Support evidence-based gender action in energy sector.

- Support the Government of Ukraine with the continuation of developing and publishing gender statistics; collect and analyze sex-disaggregated data, e.g., in line with Eurostat requirements, using the European Institute for Gender Equality's (EIGE) methodology to report on progress. Further develop body of knowledge related to the nexus of 10-Points Agenda for GE in crisis⁸¹, Human Security and the WPS Agenda Relief and Recovery pillar for Ukraine, taking energy sector as a pilot.
- Collect data, including statistical data, on key gender equality indicators, as well as best practices for mainstreaming gender into recovery processes.
- Create a library repository of this data and best practices and disseminate it to all partners, including the Platform members and other organizations working in the field of gender equality and inclusion.

Support the development of ecosystems, networks, and actors promoting gender mainstreaming in a conflict-sensitive and locally owned manner. Enable inclusive work environments that prioritizes diversity, inclusion, and gender equality. Support to State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) and private sector entities in energy sector with performance of gender audits and gender impact assessments

- Provide expert support in developing programmes for employees and managers of organizations that aim to raise awareness of gender equality, discrimination and mental health in the workplace. This area of work is still quite new for many organizations, and very often the team implementing the programmes lacks knowledge; they have the desire, but limited understanding of how to implement assuring conflict-sensitive and inclusive gender action.
- Organize capacity building and training programs, including workshops and seminars on gender equality, gender audits, and gender impact assessments, training of key personnel within state-owned enterprises to carry out gender audits and assessments, providing access to online resources, toolkits, and e-learning modules on gender audits and impact assessments.
- Provide technical assistance and expert consultancy services to guide SOEs through the process of conducting gender audits and assessments. Develop and disseminate standardized guidelines and frameworks for conducting gender audits and impact assessments. Provide grants or funding opportunities specifically aimed at enabling private sector entities to conduct gender audits and implement gender equality initiatives.
- Establish mechanisms for monitoring of the effectiveness of the gender-related programs, enabling timely changes if something does not work or and upscaling if something works very well.
- Facilitate the sharing of best practices and successful case studies from other countries or sectors. Support certification of the selected public and private enterprises by the SEAL certification programme. Adopt certification guidance and tools for the energy sector. Develop and support gender-transformative practices and initiatives to change labour culture within energy sector
- Conduct awareness campaigns to highlight the importance of gender equality and the benefits it brings to business performance and workplace culture. Publish reports and case studies that demonstrate successful gender equality initiatives and their positive impact on business outcomes.

⁸¹ UNDP, <https://www.undp.org/publications/10-point-action-agenda-advancing-gender-equality-crisis-settings-10paa>

- Facilitate partnerships between public institutions, private companies, and international organizations to collaboratively promote gender equality, e.g. organize networking events, forums, and platforms to foster collaboration and share knowledge on gender equality initiatives. Support to creating platforms and peer-learning groups where like-minded companies can gather and share experiences.
- Provide training for organizational leaders on the importance of gender equality, how to champion it, and how to lead by example. Encourage leaders to make public declarations and commitments to promoting gender equality within their organizations.
- Advocate for and support the implementation of flexible work policies that help employees balance professional and personal responsibilities. Promote the adoption of policies that ensure equal opportunities for recruitment, promotion, and career development for all employees.
- Implement ongoing training programs on gender sensitivity, unconscious bias, and inclusive practices for all employees. Support the formation of employee resource groups focused on gender equality to provide a platform for discussion and action.
- Develop metrics to track progress on gender equality and integrate these metrics into the overall performance evaluation process. Establish regular reporting mechanisms to monitor the implementation and outcomes of gender equality initiatives and make necessary adjustments.

Develop and support initiatives that increase access of women and girls to trainings and STEM education

- Design and launch educational campaigns targeting women themselves to raise their awareness of gender equality and women's rights. The first step on this path is a reflection on identifying one's own limiting thoughts and internal barriers created under the influence of society, whereas one clearly understands what holds a woman back from fulfilling her own desires and prevents her from claiming something more. It should be done in a respectful, trauma and conflict-sensitive manner, as not everyone is expected to want to work in the energy sector or in leadership roles and prefer another pursuit of social approval. Utilize media outlets to promote positive stories and role models, and to challenge stereotypes about women in STEM.
- Support implementation of Strategy for the Implementation of Gender Equality in Education until 2030 and beyond, help 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.
- Collaborate with different stakeholders, including other UN agencies to implement initiatives on the envelopment and integration of gender-sensitive curricula that promote the participation of girls in STEM from an early age. Involve parents and guardians in awareness and educational programs to ensure support for girls pursuing STEM education.
- Establish mentorship programs that connect girls and young women with female role models in STEM fields. Provide career guidance and counseling to girls to encourage them to pursue STEM subjects and careers. Use STEM4ALL network for advocacy, research and mentorship that helps to promote gender equality and inclusion in STEM across the regions and beyond.

- Popularize and support the application of best practices⁸² for attracting women to energy, including organizing events to promote the energy sector, targeting schools with events, using recruiting targets to increase the share of female workers, widening recruiting pools, and highlighting the diversity of the required skills. Organizing site visits and science fairs can be other tools to boost interest in the energy sector's inner workings and increase girls' interest in this option.
- Create scholarship programs specifically for girls and women pursuing STEM education at various levels. Provide financial aid and grants to cover tuition, materials, and other educational expenses for girls in STEM programs.
- Encourage women to take up capacity-building courses in financial planning, project finance, logistics, and procurement specialization in this hour of need. To support the municipal corporations. Make them champions of green energy transition.
- Support schools and educational institutions in setting up well-equipped STEM labs and providing access to modern technology and resources. Develop and promote digital learning platforms that offer free or affordable access to STEM courses and materials. Support the establishment of extracurricular programs, such as coding clubs, robotics teams, and science fairs, that engage girls in STEM activities.
- Support the collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data to identify gaps and track progress in STEM education and career participation. Conduct research studies to understand the barriers to STEM education for girls and develop targeted interventions to address these challenges.
- Start with pilot programs in select schools or regions to test and refine approaches before scaling up. Establish robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks to assess the effectiveness of interventions and make data-driven adjustments.
- Engage local leaders and influencers to advocate for gender equality in STEM and to support community-level initiatives.
- Secure long-term funding and resources to ensure the sustainability of programs and initiatives in attracting women to STEM. Develop scalable models that can be adapted and replicated across different regions and educational contexts in Ukraine.
- Prepare for the return of conscripted men, which will require some reskilling or new job opportunities for the returning men, the women who took over their traditional roles in the industry, or both.

Design and implement interventions to transform gender norms, values, stereotypes and power structures in Ukrainian society

- Utilize television, radio, social media, and print media to run campaigns that challenge gender stereotypes, promote gender equality, and highlight positive examples of gender role models. Organize community events, dialogues, and workshops to discuss and challenge traditional gender norms and stereotypes.
- Develop programs for young people that focus on leadership, empowerment, and the importance of gender equality. Train teachers and educators on gender-sensitive teaching practices and how to challenge gender stereotypes in the classroom. Revise educational materials (from pre-school level onwards) to ensure text and images can also combat gender stereotypes.
- Conduct workshops for various stakeholders, including government officials, community leaders, and business executives, on the importance of gender equality and how to promote it within their spheres of influence.

⁸² Boston Consulting Group, <https://web-assets.bcg.com/8d/81/76c1d4ee47648792758c725355ac/women-in-energy-study-2023.pdf>

- Promote campaigns like HeForShe to engage men and boys as advocates for gender equality. Organize workshops and dialogues specifically for men and boys to discuss masculinity, gender norms, and how they can support gender equality. Highlight male role models who advocate for and practice gender equality in their personal and professional lives.
- Conduct comprehensive studies on gender norms, values, stereotypes, and power structures in Ukraine to inform policy and program development.
- Support art and culture projects that challenge gender stereotypes and promote positive representations of gender diversity. Partner with filmmakers and theatre groups to create productions that explore gender issues and promote gender equality. Encourage and support the publication of books, articles, and other media that address gender norms and promote equality. Organizing site visits and science fairs can be other tools to boost interest in the inner workings of the energy sector and increase interest of girls in this option.
- Provide funding and capacity-building support for NGOs working on gender equality issues, foster coalitions and networks of organizations working on gender equality to share resources, strategies, and best practices. Train civil society organizations in advocacy and campaigning to effectively promote gender equality.
- Develop and implement comprehensive programmes of female and male reintegration and involvement in the workforce in energy sector for veterans and including psycho-social adaptation, training and re-skilling.

Support women-led local NGOs and CSOs in promoting female leadership and participation in non-traditional areas, taking energy sector for piloting innovations.

- Treat Ukrainian women-led organizations and grassroots initiatives, inclusively those focusing on those operating in the energy sector, as equal and capable partners in humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding work. Involve them in a meaningful way in planning, distribution and management of resources, as well as in monitoring and evaluation of international projects. Include decent salaries in budgets for partner organizations.
- Support Ukrainian women-led organizations that promote female leadership and participation in non-traditional areas, including the energy sector, through short- and long-term sustainable funding, including core funding. These funding schemes, instruments, and modalities should be accessible, inclusive, and innovative, as well as entail a degree of flexibility to enable maximum results.
- Target companies/institutions to ensure they are ready to accept these girls/young women. E.g. increase access of women to internship (companies may need an incentive in some cases), or work with stereotypes of colleagues to engage young women in certain non-traditional activities (for example, climbing to roofs or electricity poles, repairing motors, etc. which male colleagues may want to help with but which will mean young girls will not be able to test and improve their skills).
- Facilitate networking events, conferences, or forums where women-led NGOs and CSOs can connect with stakeholders, share experiences, and forge partnerships. This can help them amplify their impact and influence in the sector. Ensure secure and safe spaces for representatives of women-led organizations for networking, communication, and experience exchange.
- Implement pilot projects in selected communities and energy sector entities to test innovative approaches to gender sensitization that are sensitive to conflict dynamics. Document and disseminate best practices and lessons learned from pilot projects to scale up successful interventions.

- Support women-led organizations to do advocacy work on key processes that are of importance for the future of Ukraine, including but not limited to the Ukraine Recovery Plan, the EU accession process, and the implementation of the Istanbul Convention.
- Offer to women-led NGOs and CSOs training programs, workshops, and mentoring opportunities focused on skills development in energy policy, advocacy, project management, and leadership. This can empower women leaders within these organizations.
- Provide technical expertise and resources to support women-led organizations in implementing energy projects, conducting feasibility studies, or navigating regulatory frameworks.
- Support advocacy efforts aimed at promoting gender-responsive policies and practices in the energy sector. Raise awareness about the importance of gender equality and women's participation in sustainable energy initiatives.
- Facilitate opportunities for women-led NGOs and CSOs to engage in policy dialogues, consultations, and decision-making processes related to energy policies and regulations. Support efforts to build organizational sustainability and resilience among women-led NGOs and CSOs in the energy sector. This may include support for strategic planning, fundraising, and governance.

Development and support of gender-transformative initiatives in green recovery process of Ukraine

- Assess the differential impacts of environmental policies and green recovery measures on women, men, and gender-diverse groups. Identify specific vulnerabilities, needs, and opportunities for empowerment.
- Raise awareness about the importance of gender equality in environmental sustainability and green economy transitions. Highlight success stories and best practices.
- Ensure equitable access to financial resources, grants, and funding opportunities for gender-transformative projects and initiatives in the green recovery process. Prioritize funding and support for women-led organizations and businesses that are promoting sustainable practices and innovations.
- Ensure diverse representation and participation of women, marginalized groups, and indigenous communities in decision-making processes and project implementation focused on green recovery.
- Integrate gender considerations into national and local environmental policies, climate action plans, and green recovery strategies. Ensure policies address gender disparities and promote women's empowerment in green sectors.
- Support research and innovation that integrates gender perspectives into green technologies, renewable energy solutions, and sustainable practices. Promote the use of technology and digital solutions to enhance women's access to green jobs, financial services, and information in the green economy.
- Allocate resources and provide funding opportunities specifically for gender-transformative projects and initiatives within the green recovery process. Offer technical assistance and support to organizations and stakeholders working to integrate gender considerations into their environmental and economic recovery efforts.