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# ON THE PATH TO A GENDER-SENSITIVE PARLIAMENT: THE CURRENT SITUATION

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### More on the Program:



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## ON THE PATH TO A GENDER-SENSITIVE PARLIAMENT: THE CURRENT SITUATION

### Gender-Sensitive Parliaments Toolkit

Ukraine's European integration contributes to reforming all state institutions, including the Parliament, in terms of compliance with European standards of gender equality. Once the EU candidate status has been acquired, assessing the gender sensitivity of the Ukrainian Parliament becomes particularly relevant.

Use of the Gender-Sensitive Parliaments Toolkit developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) allows a comprehensive analysis of how well a parliament meets the current gender equality standards and is instrumental in identifying the key areas for improving legislation and practices. The toolkit covers five key “areas” of gender-sensitive parliaments, including equal opportunities for women and men to be elected to parliament, to influence parliamentary procedures, adequate coverage of women's interests and concerns in the parliamentary agenda, development of gender-sensitive legislation by the Parliament, and exercise by the Parliament of its symbolic functions in the context of gender equality.

### Assessment of the gender sensitivity of the Ukrainian Parliament

*The area “Women and men have equal opportunities to enter parliament” is about analyzing the conditions under which women and men can participate in political life, in particular in parliamentary elections. Indicators of the degree of parliament's gender sensitivity are legislative provisions on equal rights, presence of gender quotas, number of female and male candidates, as well as use of mechanisms to support women in the political sphere.*

### Main conclusions:

1. The principle of gender equality in political representation is not explicitly entrenched in the Constitution of Ukraine. However, Article 24 of the Constitution provides for equal rights and opportunities for citizens, thus creating a legal basis for ensuring equal rights of women and men in the political sphere.
2. The Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men” contains provisions on equal rights in political activities for women and men and also requires political parties to adhere to the principle of equality when compiling electoral lists of candidates.
3. The Electoral Code of Ukraine establishes gender quotas for electoral lists of candidates, requiring that every five positions in the list include at least two representatives of each sex.
4. Gender quotas have shown a positive effect on ensuring equal opportunities. Thus, in the 2019 parliamentary elections women accounted for 22.38% of the total number of candidates and 87 women were elected to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (20.52% of the total number of MPs).

5. Three political parties with more than 5% of seats in the Parliament are led by women: Servant of the People (Olena Shuliak), Batkivshchyna (Yulia Tymoshenko), and Holos (Kira Rudyk). However, only less than half of the major political parties have official women's wings or committees to support gender equality.
6. In Ukraine, there is currently no state funding mechanism specifically for women candidates, which creates a certain barrier to increasing women's participation in the political sphere.
7. Only two major political parties in Ukraine (Servant of the People and Batkivshchyna) have formally enshrined in their charters the principle of gender equality as well as support for initiatives and programs to increase the role of women in politics. Other parties do not explicitly refer to gender balance in their internal rules.
8. The charters of the parties Servant of the People and Batkivshchyna provide for support of initiatives and programs to increase the role of women in politics in accordance with the principles of gender equality.
9. Women's representation in parliamentary Committees remains low, despite efforts by certain parties to maintain gender balance in appointing officials.
10. In Ukraine, there is no separate mechanism or procedure for allocating public funds for female candidates in parliamentary elections, which may complicate their access to funding in election campaigns.
11. Gender-sensitive language is not used during interviews and in test materials for staff selection.
12. Quite typical is a gender imbalance in the composition of the recruitment selection boards, where there are significantly fewer women than men. For example, in the most recent recruitment selection board only 1 of the 9 members was a woman.

*The area "Women and men have equal opportunities to influence parliament" is focused on ensuring gender parity in parliamentary workplaces, in particular among the MPs and the staff of the Secretariat. First of all, this area assesses the extent to which women are represented in leadership positions: as Speaker of Parliament, leaders of parliamentary factions, heads of Committees, etc.*

### **Main conclusions:**

1. Men predominantly occupy key positions in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, in particular the position of Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and Deputy Chairpersons, which results from the lack of clear mechanisms for ensuring gender balance.
2. Only 5 of the 23 leadership positions in the Committees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine are held by women. In the main, women chair Committees on state-oriented and socio-cultural issues, while men control economic, infrastructure and defense Committees, which is indicative of the existence of stereotypes about roles in politics.

3. Although women make up about 70% of the employees of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, their number in leadership positions (25 out of 56) is low.
4. Of the 33 training events held in 2024, one was entirely dedicated to gender equality, which is a positive development for raising awareness of gender issues in the Parliament. Yet the lack of involvement of MPs in gender equality training indicates an insufficient level of priority of this aspect in their professional training and policy-making.
5. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has not developed any formal policy to prevent discrimination and sexual harassment in the Parliament – one which would provide for effective mechanisms for responding to such cases.
6. Gender-sensitive language is not used in official parliamentary communications.
7. The Ukrainian Parliament provides quite favorable conditions for MPs and employees with children. Financial support is provided to pay for the services of administrators of nursing rooms, to assist in combining professional duties with family needs.
8. Ukrainian legislation does not provide for a substitute/proxy voting procedure for MPs, as this is expressly prohibited by Article 84 of the Constitution of Ukraine.
9. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has not conducted an internal assessment of the gender pay gap in the past five years.

*The area “Women’s interests have adequate space in parliament” aims at assessing the extent to which parliament ensures the integration of gender equality issues into its daily work and legislative activities. Thus, the area covers the existence of specialized parliamentary bodies responsible for the implementation of gender equality, such as specialized Committees or women's factions.*

### **Main conclusions:**

1. The Equal Opportunities Caucus is the largest and most active association of MPs. The goal of the caucus is to promote advocacy for gender issues at the legislative level, but the lack of a separate caucus budget limits its effectiveness.
2. In the Ukrainian Parliament, there is a need to involve internal and external experts to prevent the drafting and adoption of discriminatory legal acts.
3. A positive point is the inclusion of the principle of gender equality in the Human Resources Development Strategy of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine until 2022, but the Strategy until 2027 requires further elaboration, including the development of a clear action plan.
4. The absence of an internal gender equality policy and of a specialized body for monitoring and analyzing internal practices for gender sensitivity in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine is indicative of the need to implement these mechanisms in order to ensure fair working conditions and gender parity.

5. The Ukrainian Parliament has no practice of gender-responsive budgeting – regarding state as well as domestic budgets; this indicates a lack of institutional support for integrating gender equality into financial policy.

*The area “The parliament produces gender-sensitive legislation” is about creating, implementing and monitoring legislation in order to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men. The section includes an assessment of the extent to which legislative activity reflects the interests of women and men and takes into account gender equality issues, since gender-sensitive legislation aims to contribute to the fight against discrimination, protect the rights of women and ensure their active participation in public and political life.*

### **Main conclusions:**

1. The Law of Ukraine “On Law-Making Activity” establishes mechanisms for developing gender-sensitive legislation, including mandatory gender impact assessment of normative legal acts at the stage of their preparation.
2. The legislative process in Ukraine provides for the introduction of gender quotas in the electoral process: the Electoral Code of Ukraine requires at least 40% of representatives of one gender on each electoral list of a political party.
3. Gender quotas enshrined in the legislation contribute to increasing women’s representation in the Parliament and in leadership positions, which is consistent with the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men.”
4. Ukraine ratified international agreements such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1981 and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) in 2022.
5. Ukraine is a party to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, but the country has not developed and approved a national strategy. However, other strategic documents embodying the principles of the Beijing Declaration are in force, in particular the State Strategy for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men by 2030.
6. Currently, Ukraine has no state funding mechanism for female candidates in elections.
7. Article 44 of the Law of Ukraine “On Law-Making Activity” provides for mandatory gender-legal examination for all draft laws to ensure compliance with Ukraine’s international obligations in the context of European integration. Aiming to increase the effectiveness of gender examination, Draft Law No. 5005 dated 02.02.2021 was registered; this provides for mandatory gender examination at each stage of passage of a draft law, which attests to willingness to implement a gender-sensitive approach to law-making.
8. As of today, less than half of the Laws adopted in Ukraine by the current Parliament have been subjected to a gender impact assessment by the

Ministry of Justice of Ukraine, which, in accordance with current legislation, analyzes already adopted legislative acts as well as draft acts for compliance with the principles of gender equality.

9. In Ukraine, there is no special body to oversee compliance with the principle of gender equality in the activities of bodies of state power; also, no budget is provided for monitoring compliance with the gender equality principle.
10. The Parliament provides no specific recommendations on the implementation of ratified international conventions, which may limit the full integration of international gender standards into the national legislation.

*The area “Symbolic function of parliament” in the context of taking into account the gender component is focused on the symbolism of the Parliament’s physical spaces, as historic buildings, halls, objects and decorative elements often reflect gender stereotypes in which leadership and power are associated with men, while women are represented by images of beauty or elegance. A gender-sensitive parliament should ensure that physical spaces are stereotype-free, comfortable and accessible.*

### **Main conclusions:**

1. The availability of nursing rooms in the Parliament is a positive step to support staff and MPs with children. However, the lack of gender-sensitive spatial planning reveals insufficient attention to the different needs of women and men.
2. The Parliament lacks clear rules on gender parity in spatial design and this limits the creation of an inclusive environment. Gender-balanced symbols and names can positively influence the perception of gender equality.
3. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine holds discussions on gender equality issues, but, as a rule, this is done in a limited format. It is necessary to introduce more creative initiatives that will raise public awareness of gender equality in the historical and social contexts.
4. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has no mechanism for regularly informing the public about parliamentary initiatives in the field of gender equality. Nor does the VRU website have a special section dedicated to gender equality.
5. A positive point is that the internal rules of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine include a requirement for proportional representation of women in delegations.
6. The findings not only reveal the current state of the Parliament’s gender sensitivity, but also serve as a basis for developing and prioritizing measures to further eliminate the identified problems in the field of gender equality.

## INTRODUCTION

European integration processes in Ukraine play an important role in reforming state institutions, ensuring compliance, inter alia, with European standards of gender equality. Now that Ukraine has been granted the status of a candidate country for EU membership, assessing the Parliament's gender sensitivity takes on particular importance, since gender-sensitive institutions are the basis for building a democratic society.

Nowadays, the assessment of the Parliament's gender sensitivity is gaining significance, serving as the basis for real changes towards ensuring equal rights and opportunities. The use of the Gender-Sensitive Parliaments Toolkit developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) allows a comprehensive analysis of the extent to which the Parliament meets modern gender equality standards and is instrumental in identifying the key areas for improving legislation and practices. Conducting an assessment of the Parliament's gender sensitivity not only provides an opportunity to analyze the current state of compliance with gender equality standards, but also serves as an important tool for implementing changes.

The conducted assessment helps to understand how gender equality issues are actually reflected in the Parliament's daily activities, how equal opportunities for women and men to be elected to the Parliament are ensured, and what steps are needed to implement gender-sensitive practices in the Parliament. Thus, the process of assessing the Parliament aims not only to identify the existing gaps, but also to stimulate practical steps and real changes for the purpose of implementing gender sensitivity.

## METHODOLOGY

The methodology for assessing the Parliament's gender sensitivity involves a questionnaire covering five key "areas" of parliamentary gender sensitivity, with several domains in each area. The questions address the following aspects of parliamentary activity:

- Area 1: Women and men have equal opportunities to enter parliament
- Area 2: Women and men have equal opportunities to influence parliament
- Area 3: Women's interests have adequate space in parliament
- Area 4: The parliament produces gender-sensitive legislation
- Area 5: Symbolic function of parliament

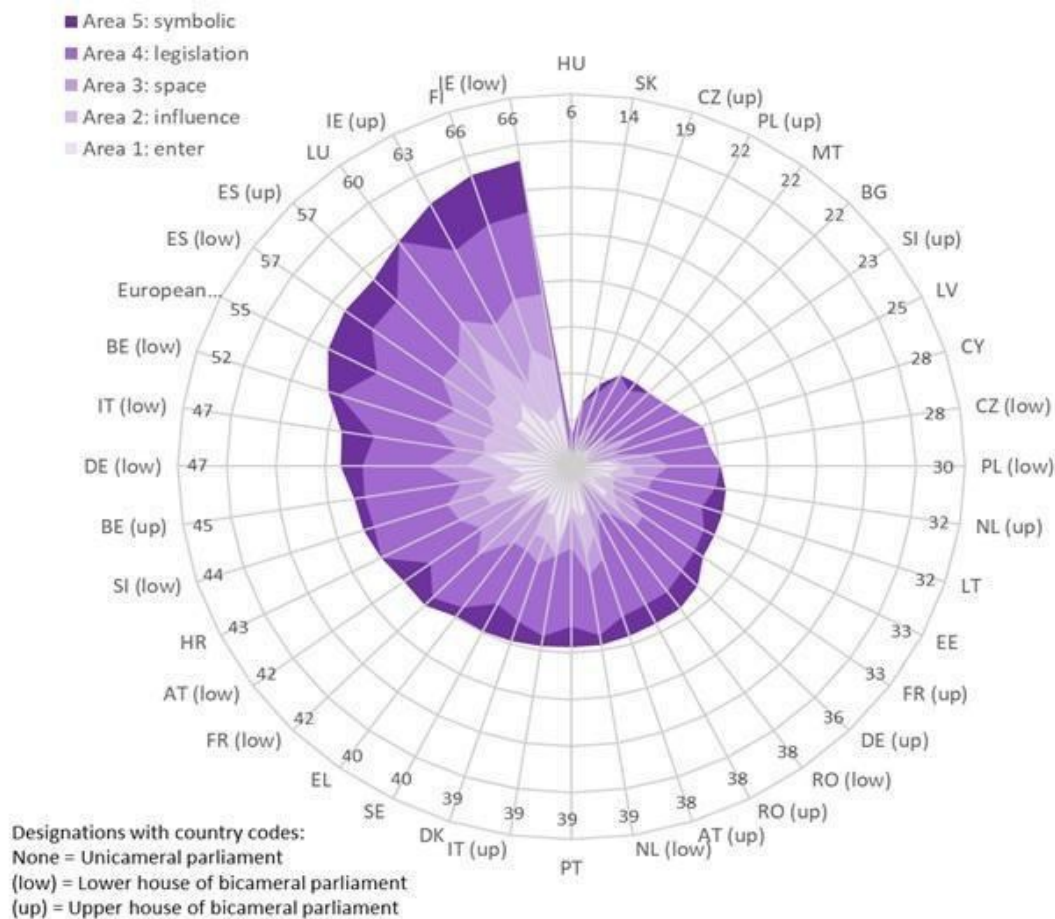
Each of these areas includes specific questions and indicators to be assessed.

The self-assessment procedure involves answering questions included in the questionnaire. There are several types of questions. The first type is a question with a simple "yes/no" answer. The second type is aimed at determining the number of women and men to whom a certain question applies. The third type is a question with a single answer option, where the respondent selects only one most appropriate option from a list of possible answers. The fourth type is a multiple choice, allowing the selection of all relevant options from the list.

Filling in the questionnaire ends in calculating the score in each of the five areas. The scoring system provides an assessment of the level of the Parliament's gender sensitivity in each of the aspects, which makes it possible to clearly see the strengths as well as to identify the areas that need improvement. The scoring model is based on the principle of equal weight of "areas" and indicators, which minimizes the advantage of some "areas" over others. Some indicators are given greater weight, to emphasize the importance of certain achievements (for example the real degree of gender balance in the Parliament). Based on the results of answers to questions in the questionnaire, the score is determined for each area; the scores are summed up to obtain an overall gender sensitivity rating.

***N.B.:*** *There are four versions of the questionnaire, which were designed for self-assessment by parliaments of different convocation types: European, national, regional with legislative function and regional without legislative function. There is also a shorter "general" version that can be filled in by external users: media representatives, nongovernmental organizations. All these versions differ slightly only in terms of presence/absence of certain questions.*

The latest assessment of the national parliaments of the EU Member States and the European Parliament was carried out by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) in the period from May to August 2023.



Gender sensitivity rating of parliaments in EU countries, 2023 (score out of 100).  
 Source: EIGA, Data collection on gender sensitivity of parliaments.<sup>1</sup>

Only six national parliaments in the European Union were able to achieve at least half of the maximum possible gender sensitivity rating. The parliaments of Ireland (lower house) and Finland have the highest gender sensitivity rating of 66/100, followed by the parliaments of Luxembourg and Spain, the European Parliament and the Belgian Parliament (lower house). The remaining national parliaments scored less than 50 points, with particularly low scores in Hungary (6/100) and Slovakia (14/100).

The results obtained after completing the questionnaire not only reveal the current state of gender sensitivity of a parliament, but also serve as a basis for developing and prioritizing measures to further eliminate the identified problems in the field of gender equality. Based on this methodology, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) has also developed a tool for preparing gender-sensitive parliamentary action plans.

<sup>1</sup>Gender Sensitivity Rating of Parliaments in EU Countries, 2023. European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGA), 2023. European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGA). URL: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/data-talks/gender-sensitivity-ratings-show-most-eu-parliaments-have-space-improvement-deliver-gender-equality>

The gender sensitivity assessment of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine was conducted using the Gender-Sensitive Parliaments Toolkit developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) as well as a detailed self-assessment questionnaire.

The results of the gender sensitivity assessment of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine indicate a medium level of integration of the principles of gender equality into the activities of the Parliament. The Parliament's overall gender sensitivity score was estimated at 41.8%, indicators being highest in the area of equal opportunities to influence the working procedures of parliament and lowest in the area of equal opportunities for women and men to be elected to parliament:

- Area 1: Women and men have equal opportunities to enter parliament – 28.9% (*low level*).
- Area 2: Women and men have equal opportunities to influence parliament – 51.5% (*medium level*).
- Area 3: Women's interests have adequate space in parliament – 43.0% (*low level*).
- Area 4: The parliament produces gender-sensitive legislation – 48.7% (*low level*).
- Area 5: Symbolic function of parliament – 31.6% (*medium level*).

## KEY FINDINGS

### AREA 1: Women and men have equal opportunities to enter parliament.

*The area “Women and men have equal opportunities to enter parliament”: is about analyzing the conditions under which women and men can participate in political life, in particular in parliamentary elections. It is important to note that this part of the questionnaire provides an opportunity to assess the extent to which the country’s legislative framework and electoral system have the ability to ensure gender balance among candidates for elective positions, as the framework and system play an important role in ensuring equal opportunities and can either support or hinder gender balance.*

*In addition to legislative aspects, the area examines cultural and social barriers that may limit women's opportunities to participate in electoral processes. This includes stereotypes about the role of women in society, the gender expectations and pressures that may reduce their activity in political life. It is important to assess the extent to which political culture promotes equal opportunities and what mechanisms can be introduced to overcome the barriers. Thus, special attention is paid to issues such as application of gender quotas, mechanisms for supporting women candidates and other tools that may influence the equal representation of both sexes in parliament.*

*Indicators of how gender-sensitive a parliament is include legislative provisions on equal rights, presence of gender quotas, number of female and male candidates, and use of mechanisms to support women in the political sphere.*

*One of the indicators of the level of the Parliament’s gender sensitivity is the presence of legislative provisions enshrining in the Constitution of Ukraine or in another normative legal act the principle of gender equality in political representation.*

The principle of gender equality in political representation is not explicitly entrenched in the text of the Constitution of Ukraine; however, Article 24 of the Constitution of Ukraine states that citizens have equal constitutional rights and freedoms and are equal before the law, and equal rights of women and men are ensured by providing women and men with equal opportunities in socio-political and cultural activities.<sup>2</sup> The Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men” (Article 15) establishes the principle of equal rights and opportunities in political activities for women and men, which is an important step towards ensuring gender equality in political representation<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup>Constitution of Ukraine. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/254%D0%BA/96-%D0%B2%D1%80>

<sup>3</sup>On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men: Law of Ukraine № 2866-IV dated 08.09.2005. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2866-15>

## FRANCE

On July 8, 1999, a law was adopted that supplemented the Constitution with a provision stating that “the law shall ensure equal access of women and men to electoral mandates and elective offices” and that political parties shall be obliged to “facilitate implementation under the conditions specified by the law.” This was an important step that replaced the “neutral citizenship” and “unity” approach with a gender-balanced model.<sup>4</sup>

As a result, in 2000 a law was adopted on equal access of women and men to electoral mandates and elective offices, which obliged parties to include 50% of representatives of each sex on their lists and provided for sanctions for failure to comply with this requirement.<sup>5</sup>

In particular, Article 15 states that political parties must take into account the principle of equal rights and opportunities for women and men in the process of compiling electoral lists of candidates. A key role in this issue is played by gender quotas enshrined in the Electoral Code of Ukraine and the Law of Ukraine “On Political Parties”. If a political party does not comply with the quota provided for by law, its list may be rejected, which serves as an additional mechanism for ensuring equal political representation.

According to Part 9 of Article 219 of the Electoral Code of Ukraine, when forming unified and territorial electoral lists, political parties must ensure that every five positions in the list (from number one to number five, from number six to number ten, etc.) include at least two candidates of each sex. If the number of candidates on the list is not a multiple of five, the last places are filled in accordance with the principle of alternating candidates of different sexes.<sup>6</sup> This provision is important for ensuring equal representation of women on electoral lists and guarantees that gender quotas have a real impact on the structure of the lists.

***N.B.:*** Before the electoral legislation was amended in 2019, a mixed electoral system had been in force in Ukraine. It provided for the election of half of the MPs under a majority system in single-member districts and the other half under a proportional system based on open party lists. Within the framework of the research and as of 2024, a proportional electoral system with open lists is in force in Ukraine, which is provided for by the Electoral Code of Ukraine. In accordance with that system, MPs

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<sup>4</sup>Gender-sensitive Parliaments. EIGE. URL: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gender-sensitive-parliaments/examples/area-1>

<sup>5</sup>International Institute for Democracy Electoral Assistance – IDEA (2005), Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers: A Revised Edition, International IDEA Handbook Series, Stockholm, p. 125-126. URL: <https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/women-in-parliament-beyond-numbers-a-revised-edition.pdf>

<sup>6</sup>The Electoral Code of Ukraine, № 396-IX dated 19.12.2019. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/396-20>

*are elected under proportional representation with open party lists, where voters can vote not only for a party, but also for a specific candidate on its list.*

It is worth noting that gender quotas applied in elections play a positive role in ensuring equal opportunities. Thus, according to available data, 1,339 women candidates were registered in the most recent parliamentary elections in 2019, which amounts to 22.38% of the total number of candidates, while the number of registered men candidates was 4,645, i.e. 77.62%. In the 2021 by-elections, the percentage of women candidates was significantly lower. In the March 28, 2021 by-elections, 34 candidates were registered, including 8 women (23.53%) and 26 men (76.47%). In the October 31, 2021 elections, the number of registered candidates was 45, including 8 women (17.78%) and 37 men (82.22%).<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, quantitative indicators point to an upward trend in women's participation in the electoral process.

### **CZECH REPUBLIC**

The NGO “Fórum 50%” has launched several projects to increase the representation of women in politics. One of these projects is a mentoring program bringing together Czech female politicians with women from Denmark and Norway who have successfully built a career in politics. The mentoring includes personal meetings and regular contacts. Moreover, two short courses were organized for 15 women candidates for the 2014 elections to the European Parliament.<sup>8</sup>

In the 2019 parliamentary elections, 87 women were elected to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, which amount to 20.52% of the total number of MPs, and 337 men. According to our analysis, as of 2024, 21.2% of the MPs are women; while this is indicative of progress compared to previous years, the share still remains insufficient to ensure full gender equality in the Parliament.<sup>9</sup>

### **GREAT BRITAIN**

In 2005, the Conservative Party launched the Women2Win program to increase the number of female candidates and support them through training and mentoring and help them to succeed. In particular, new

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<sup>7</sup> Reply to request for public information from the Central Election Commission dated 04.10.2024.

<sup>8</sup> Gender-sensitive Parliaments. EIGE. URL: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gender-sensitive-parliaments/examples/area-1>

<sup>9</sup>As of October 1, 2024, the MPs of Ukraine included 85 women, or 21.2% of the total number (401 MPs of Ukraine), and 316 men, or 78.8% of the total number.

selection procedures were announced with the aim of increasing the number of women and ethnic minority representatives in the party<sup>10</sup>.

Among the main political parties of Ukraine with at least 5% of seats in the Parliament, three parties are led by women (these include the parties Servant of the People (Olena Shuliak), Batkivshchyna (Yulia Tymoshenko) and Holos (Kira Rudyk); this indicates that leadership positions in political structures are still held mostly by men. Thus, less than half of the main political parties of Ukraine have an official women's wing or committee. For example, the Batkivshchyna party has a women's wing called Women of Batkivshchyna and the Servant of the People party has introduced the ZeZhinky initiative for supporting women's leadership. The presence of a women's wing in parties is an important mechanism for developing leadership qualities and forming women's initiatives in politics.

An analysis of the charters of the major political parties shows that three of the main parties have formally enshrined therein the principles of gender equality, while the internal documents of most parties do not provide for rules requiring that gender balance be taken into account.

*Thus, the charter of the Servant of the People party stipulates that, for the purpose of fulfilling its programmatic and statutory tasks, the Party may support initiatives and develop programs aimed at increasing the role and status of women in politics based on the principles of gender equality and gender democracy<sup>11</sup>. The charter of the political party All-Ukrainian Association "Batkivshchyna," subparagraph 5.1.4., paragraph 5.1, defines the minimum level of representation of women and men in the electoral lists of candidates for deputies of various levels. Also, methodological materials that are developed and sent to local party organizations emphasize compliance with gender equality (quotas) when implementing electoral procedures.<sup>12</sup> The statutory documents of the political party European Solidarity stipulate the need to facilitate the achievement of gender equality, active involvement of women in the political and public life of the country, and their empowerment. The political party's program clearly specifies the issues of equality of citizens and performance of state control over compliance with gender equality,*

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<sup>10</sup>Gender-sensitive Parliaments. EIGE. URL: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gender-sensitive-parliaments/examples/area-1>

<sup>11</sup>Charter of the political party "Servant of the People" (new version). URL: <http://kyiv-heritage.com/sites/default/files/%D0%A1%D0%BB%20%D0%9D%D0%B0%D1%80%202021-03-14%20%D0%A1%D1%82%D0%B0%D1%82%D1%83%D1%82.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Reply to request for public information from the political party All-Ukrainian Association "Batkivshchyna."

*constant monitoring of facts and study of the causes of possible discrimination.*<sup>13</sup>

The lack of a clear reference to gender balance in charters may contribute to a reduction in the level of parties' responsibility for adhering to the principles of gender equality, which is crucial for achieving fair representation.

As to women's representation in the Committees, its overall level is low, despite efforts by certain parties to take into account the principle of gender balance when establishing Committees.

Another important aspect is the issue of allocating public funds to female candidates. At present, Ukraine has no separate mechanism or procedure for allocating public funds specifically for women candidates in parliamentary elections.

It is important to note that the Parliament's gender sensitivity is also reflected in the way the internal processes of staff selection are organized. Thus, of utmost importance is the employment of gender-sensitive language during interviews and in test materials. An analysis of the use of gender-sensitive language during interviews and in test materials shows that this aspect is insufficiently taken into account and this may have a negative impact on the formation of a gender-inclusive environment.

Another aspect is gender imbalance in decision-making processes at the level of the competition commissions, where there are significantly fewer women than men. The most recent recruitment selection board consisted of 1 woman and 8 men. According to the explanation of the Human Resources Department of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the aforementioned ratio of women and men was the same among the members of the two previous competition commissions.<sup>14</sup>

### **Main conclusions:**

1. The principle of gender equality in political representation is not explicitly entrenched in the Constitution of Ukraine. However, Article 24 of the Constitution provides for equal rights and opportunities for citizens, thus creating a legal basis for ensuring equal rights of women and men in the political sphere.
2. The Law of Ukraine "On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men" contains provisions on equal rights in political activities for women and men and also requires political parties to adhere to the principle of equality when compiling electoral lists of candidates.

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<sup>13</sup> Reply to request for public information from the political party "European Solidarity."

<sup>14</sup>Reply to request for receiving public information from the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine dated 28.10.2024.

3. The Electoral Code of Ukraine establishes gender quotas for electoral lists of candidates, requiring that every five positions in the list (from number one to number five, from number six to number ten, etc.) include at least two candidates of each sex. This provision ensures the influence of gender quotas on the structure of electoral lists.
4. Gender quotas have shown a positive effect on ensuring equal opportunities. Thus, in the 2019 parliamentary elections women accounted for 22.38% of the total number of candidates and 87 women were elected to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (20.52% of the total number of MPs).
5. Three political parties with more than 5% of seats in the Parliament are led by women: Servant of the People (Olena Shuliak), Batkivshchyna (Yulia Tymoshenko), and Holos (Kira Rudyk). However, only less than half of the major political parties have official women's wings or committees to support gender equality.
6. In Ukraine, there is currently no state funding mechanism specifically for women candidates, which creates a certain barrier to increasing their participation in the political sphere.
7. Only two major political parties in Ukraine (Servant of the People and Batkivshchyna) have formally enshrined the principle of gender equality in their charters. Other parties do not explicitly refer to gender balance in their internal rules.
8. The charters of the parties Servant of the People and Batkivshchyna provide for support of initiatives and programs to increase the role of women in politics in accordance with the principles of gender equality.
9. Women's representation in parliamentary Committees remains low, despite efforts by certain parties to maintain gender balance in appointing officials.
10. In Ukraine, there is no separate mechanism or procedure for allocating public funds for female candidates in parliamentary elections, which may complicate their access to funding in election campaigns.
11. Gender-sensitive language is not used during interviews and in test materials for staff selection.
12. Quite typical is a gender imbalance in the composition of the recruitment selection boards, where there are significantly fewer women than men. For example, in the most recent recruitment selection board only 1 of the 9 members was a woman.

## **AREA 2: Women and men have equal opportunities to influence parliament.**

*The area “Women and men have equal opportunities to influence parliament” is focused on ensuring gender parity in parliamentary workplaces, in particular among the MPs and the staff of the Secretariat. First of all, this area assesses the extent to which women are represented in leadership positions: as Speaker of Parliament, leaders of parliamentary factions, heads of Committees, etc. Moreover, presiding over meetings of thematic parliamentary Committees by*

women and men is analyzed. Women often hold leadership positions in areas traditionally associated with “female” sectors, such as healthcare, social policy, culture and education, while key strategic areas, such as the economy, defense, internal affairs and international relations, predominantly remain under men’s control.

*The existence of formal policies and procedures aimed at preventing discrimination and sexual harassment in parliament is assessed to ensure a safe working environment.*

*The area also examines the issue of equal access to professional development and career advancement as well as the existence of policies ensuring equal pay for equal professional achievements. Particular attention is paid to the extent to which the work environment is conducive to combining professional responsibilities with personal and family life.*

The indicators of the Parliament’s gender sensitivity include the composition of its governing bodies and gender balance in the key positions. Equal opportunities for both sexes to hold high positions with a high level of responsibility have, among other things, a symbolic meaning, as they raise awareness of equal access of women and men to power. Currently, men constitute a majority in the Parliament’s governing structures, in particular in the position of the Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, among the Deputy Chairpersons and advisors to the Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Over the world, there is a practice of implementing measures to ensure gender balance during the official parliamentary procedure for appointment to the position of Speaker of the Parliament or Head of the Secretariat of the Parliament’s Speaker, in particular through the introduction of gender quotas or equal opportunities rules. However, none of these mechanisms are in place in Ukraine at present, which affects the actual gender ratio in the governing bodies of the Ukrainian Parliament, since the procedure for electing the Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (as well as the First Deputy and Deputy Chairpersons) is carried out by MPs’ voting on previously discretionarily selected candidates.

The Parliament’s gender equality indicators also involve data on presiding over meetings of parliamentary Committees and their distribution by type of political function. It is important to consider not only the total number of women and men in leadership positions in the Committees, but also whether there are gender “biases” in the distribution of positions by thematic sectors.

In the world, one can frequently observe a phenomenon when women occupy the same share of leadership positions as men do, but more often than not they are chairs of committees related to socio-cultural issues, while men hold positions in the economic and defense spheres. Data analysis indicates significant gender inequality in the leadership of Committees of the Ukrainian Parliament. Of the 23 positions of heads of Committees, only 5 are held by women, which emphasizes the low level of representation of women in key

political positions.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, there is significant gender segregation by type of Committee policy. Thus, women in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, on an equal footing with men, are heads of state-oriented Committees (in particular, women are heads of the Committees on anti-corruption policy; budget; integration of Ukraine into the European Union; and state building, local self-government, regional and urban planning). A woman is also the head of one of the Committees of socio-cultural orientation. No women chair Committees in the areas of infrastructure (transport, communications, environment, etc.) and economy (agrarian and land policy, finance, tax and customs policy). One of the main factors contributing to this imbalance is the lack of formal measures in Ukraine to ensure gender balance when appointing heads of Committees. Besides, such gender segregation can be explained by a combination of social, cultural and historical factors. Women heading state-oriented Committees work in areas where policy is more focused on social and intergovernmental issues, which include transformative social change, development of democratic institutions, diplomacy, development of strategic plans, and fight against corruption. These areas are traditionally associated with “soft” leadership and sociability, which in a cultural context can be closely associated with “feminine” qualities. In turn, economic and infrastructural issues are often associated with stereotypes about “masculine” knowledge and a practical approach to addressing problems.

Despite the significant predominance of women among the employees of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (603 women versus 273 men), balance is not as clearly observed in managerial positions and in the management of departments. Women occupy 25 out of 56 managerial positions, which indicates certain imbalance in representation at higher levels of responsibility. These figures are important, since ensuring equal opportunities for the promotion of women and men to managerial positions is crucial for the development of an inclusive and balanced parliamentary administration.

Gender equality training is an effective tool that promotes individual and collective transformation towards achieving gender parity and improving MPs’ understanding of the need to develop and implement measures aimed at ensuring gender equality. An analysis of training program indicators shows that in 2024 a considerable number of training events were held for employees of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine: 33, of which at least one program was fully dedicated to gender equality.

*This particular program, “Specifics of Conducting Gender-Legal Examination of Draft Laws in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine,” was developed by the Research Service of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine together with experts from the USAID program “RADA: Next Generation.” The program provided for conducting the training on three occasions: in February and March 2023 as well as in March 2024. It was attended by*

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<sup>15</sup>Official web-portal of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine: Committees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of 9<sup>th</sup> convocation. URL: [https://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/site2/p\\_komitis](https://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/site2/p_komitis)

*106 trainees, including 97 employees of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and 9 aides to MPs. Of these, 97 participants were women and 9 were men, which attests to active involvement of women in the training process. This is a positive step towards increasing the Parliament's gender competence, as well as ensuring that its work complies with European standards.*

Policies aimed at preventing discrimination, sexism and sexual harassment are essential for ensuring a safe and supportive working environment in the Parliament. They ensure that MPs and staff are not subjected to discrimination or abusive behavior, establish procedures for investigating such cases, and provide for sanctions for violating these policies. At present, however, no separate documents formalizing such policies have been developed in the Ukrainian Parliament. The inadmissibility of discrimination and sexual harassment is stated in general terms only, in the internal rules of procedure for employees of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Some general principles of protection of rights, including anti-discrimination provisions, are enshrined in the Constitution of Ukraine and in current Laws, such as "On Civil Service" and "On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men," but they contain no specific rules or procedures regarding warnings or sanctions for members of Parliament.

#### **EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

Rule 10 (6) – "Standards of conduct" of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament states that Members shall refrain from any type of psychological or sexual harassment and respect the Code of Appropriate Behavior for Members of the European Parliament in exercising their duties. The Code of Appropriate Behavior for Members of the European Parliament aims to ensure that Members of the European Parliament interact with all parliamentary staff with respect, dignity and courtesy, without any signs of bias or discrimination. Members are also expected to behave professionally and to avoid humiliating, offensive or discriminatory remarks or any other unethical or illegal actions in their dealings with the staff.<sup>16</sup>

Another important element of the Parliament's gender sensitivity is the use of gender-sensitive language in official communication. The use of gender-sensitive language means, for example, the use of feminine pronouns that help ensure the visibility of women in public spaces, including in professional and social spheres that may have historically been associated predominantly with men. This is especially important for state institutions, as they shape public communication standards through respect for diversity and inclusiveness, avoiding gender stereotypes. According to the assessment, the official rules and instructions of the Ukrainian Parliament do not use gender-sensitive language.

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<sup>16</sup>Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament. URL: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/RULES-9-2019-07-02-RULE-010\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/RULES-9-2019-07-02-RULE-010_EN.html)

Official communication is carried out in compliance with the general (constitutional) principles of equality of all persons, regardless of their sex or gender, as described in detail in the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men” and the Law of Ukraine “On the Principles of Preventing and Combating Discrimination in Ukraine.” The failure to use gender-sensitive language in official communication may indicate that the Parliament is not fully aware of the importance of gender-sensitive language and communication.

In parliamentary work, MPs are often faced with the need to constantly attend the Parliament’s plenary meetings and sessions, working groups and urgent voting, which can be conducted during non-regular hours. This often upsets the balance between work and personal life, especially for those who have children or have to attend to relatives who need care due to age or illness. In such conditions, an uneven distribution of care responsibilities can become a serious obstacle for women who wish to engage in political activity. The work of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine shows positive trends in maintaining a balance between family and professional roles. MPs and parliamentary staff have access to several types of family leave, including maternity leave, parental leave for both parents, adoption leave and carer’s leave. This right is regulated by the Law of Ukraine “On Vacations.”<sup>17</sup>

The regulation of working hours of MPs and parliamentary employees is carried out in accordance with the legislation. As of September 2024, the MPs’ working hours are determined in accordance with the Law “On Amending Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine Regarding the Schedule of Plenary Sessions of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.”

The working hours of employees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Secretariat are regulated by internal regulatory acts, namely: the Rules of Internal Service Regulations for Employees of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (approved by conference of the labor collective of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, minutes No. 1 of October 25, 2018) and the Collective Agreement of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine concluded on October 25, 2018 (as amended). At the same time, the general principles of regulation of working hours are determined by the Labor Code of Ukraine and the Law of Ukraine “On Civil Service.” Determining concrete working hours for MPs is important to ensure the structure and organization of their work. This adds clarity to activity planning, as well as contributing to greater transparency in the work of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. However, clearly defined working hours may limit the flexibility needed by MPs and parliamentary staff who combine professional and family responsibilities.

In terms of financial support, MPs and parliamentary staff can count on the remuneration of the nursing room administrator, which contributes to a level

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<sup>17</sup>Law of Ukraine “On Vacations.” URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/504/96-%D0%B2%D1%80#Text>

playing field for MPs and staff with children, creating a working environment that meets their family needs.

At the same time, Ukrainian legislation does not provide for a replacement/proxy voting procedure for MPs on family leave. Proxy voting is prohibited by law. Pursuant to Article 84 of the Constitution of Ukraine, voting at meetings of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine is to be carried out by MPs of Ukraine in person.<sup>18</sup>

The proxy voting scheme has been introduced in the parliaments of the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, Germany, France, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg.<sup>19</sup>

### UNITED KINGDOM

Proxy voting in the UK Parliament was first introduced for new parents in January 2019 as part of a one-year pilot project. The pilot project proved to be quite successful and was extended twice in 2020. Also in 2020, during the coronavirus pandemic, the list of those eligible to use the proxy voting mechanism was expanded. Thus, the House of Commons agreed to introduce a permanent proxy voting scheme for MPs who were absent due to childbirth, caring for a newborn child or complications related to childbirth. The decision was made in October 2022.<sup>20</sup>

As of October 2024, the proxy voting mechanism applies:<sup>21</sup>

- (a) to new mothers, new fathers and adoptive parents; or in circumstances where there have been complications related to childbirth or pregnancy; or in circumstances of miscarriage or baby loss;
- (b) in cases of serious long-term illness or injury, for the remainder of the current session; and
- (c) in cases of risk-based exclusion from the parliamentary estate\*.

To register a proxy vote, the MP must agree with another MP that the latter will represent the former as a proxy; submit by e-mail an application for the

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<sup>18</sup>Constitution of Ukraine – Title IV. Official online representation of the President of Ukraine. URL: <https://www.president.gov.ua/ua/documents/constitution/konstituciya-ukrayini-rozdil-iv>

<sup>19</sup>Information on proxy voting in other legislatures. Research and Information Service of Northern Ireland Assembly, 2020. URL: <https://www.niassembly.gov.uk/globalassets/documents/raise/publications/2017-2022/2020/procedures/6620.pdf>

<sup>20</sup>Proxy voting in divisions in the House. UK Parliament, 2024. URL: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8359/>

<sup>21</sup>Proxy Voting Scheme. UK Parliament, 2024. URL: <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/commons/proxy-voting-scheme/>

right to use the proxy voting scheme, supporting documents; and specify the period (date) during which the proxy will vote<sup>22</sup>.

\*This refers to temporary exclusion of Members of Parliament from the parliamentary estate in certain circumstances after a risk assessment. For example, if MPs are under investigation for sexual assault.

Although legislation on equal pay for equal work is in force in many countries, the gender pay gap remains a widespread problem, reflecting hidden gender stereotypes, discrimination and unequal access to career development. This gap makes it more difficult for women to achieve financial stability and reduces their contribution to the social and economic system. Reducing the gender pay gap is one of the main objectives of the European Union's gender policy. In a parliament that should set a positive example in the field of equality, conducting studies on the presence of a pay gap among its employees is a necessary step to identify and eliminate possible manifestations of inequality. However, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has not conducted such an assessment in the last five years.

### Main conclusions:

1. Men predominantly occupy key positions in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, in particular the position of Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and Deputy Chairpersons, which results from the lack of clear mechanisms for ensuring gender balance.
2. Only 5 of the 23 leadership positions in the Committees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine are held by women. In the main, women chair Committees on state-oriented and socio-cultural issues, while men control economic, infrastructure and defense Committees, which is indicative of the existence of stereotypes about roles in politics.
3. Although women make up about 70% of the employees of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, their number in leadership positions (25 out of 56) is low.
4. Of the 33 training events held in 2024, one was entirely dedicated to gender equality, which is a positive development for raising awareness of gender issues in the Parliament. Yet the lack of involvement of MPs in gender equality training indicates an insufficient level of priority of this aspect in their professional training and policy-making.
5. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has not developed any formal policy to prevent discrimination and sexual harassment in the Parliament – one which would provide for effective mechanisms for responding to such cases.

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<sup>22</sup>How to apply for the proxy voting scheme. UK Parliament, 2024. URL: <https://guidetoprocedure.parliament.uk/articles/B9fj5c19/how-to-apply-for-the-proxy-voting-scheme>

6. Gender-sensitive language is not used in official parliamentary communications.
7. The Ukrainian Parliament provides quite favorable conditions for MPs and employees with children. Financial support is provided to pay for the services of administrators of nursing rooms, so as to assist in combining professional duties with family needs.
8. Ukrainian legislation does not provide for a substitute/proxy voting procedure for MPs, as this is expressly prohibited by Article 84 of the Constitution of Ukraine.
9. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has not conducted an internal assessment of the gender pay gap in the past five years.

### **AREA 3: Women's interests have adequate space in parliament.**

*The area "Women's interests have adequate space in parliament":*

*aims to assess the extent to which the parliament ensures the integration of gender equality issues into its daily work and legislative activities. Gender-sensitive parliaments should ensure that gender equality issues are not only recognized, but also given due attention and priority at all stages of the legislative process. This means that special mechanisms should be created to effectively address such issues and the parliament itself should support their implementation at the level of legislative processes and internal procedures.*

*Thus, the area covers the existence of specialized bodies – committees or women's factions responsible for the introduction of gender equality. Such bodies ensure a systematic approach to the development and implementation of gender policy and the creation of a collective consensus about the equality issues by involving representatives of different political parties in the work of such a body. They can have different levels of influence – from formal committees to informal inter-party caucuses. Their main goal is to ensure that gender equality issues are a permanent part of the parliamentary agenda and do not remain on the periphery. Such bodies can conduct gender analysis of draft laws, monitor the implementation of gender equality policies, etc.*

*A key aspect of this area also includes an assessment of gender mainstreaming – an approach integrating a gender perspective into all aspects of parliamentary work. This means that issues of equality between men and women should be constantly on the agenda, during plenary meetings and in committee work. Institutional commitment to these principles also includes training parliamentary staff on gender equality issues and developing policies that promote equal opportunities for all parliamentary employees.*

Special bodies to address gender equality are important elements of the parliamentary system, providing a platform for effective advocacy on gender issues at the legislative level. They help to integrate gender perspectives into all policy areas, providing legislators with expert advice and information. Parliamentary structures in Ukraine have a special body dealing with gender equality issues – the Equal Opportunities Caucus. This caucus was founded on

December 6, 2011, and it is one of the first and largest caucuses in the Parliament<sup>23</sup>. Thus, about 90 representatives of the leading political parties of Ukraine – Servant of the People, Holos, Batkivshchyna and European Solidarity<sup>24</sup> – participate in the activities of this parliamentary caucus. The aim of the Equal Opportunities Caucus is to develop gender policy in Ukraine, empower women, and implement legislative initiatives on gender equality. Despite the fact that most political parties are represented in this organization, it has no separate budget to finance its activities. However, the Equal Opportunities Caucus is an extremely active parliamentary caucus that regularly communicates and holds meetings with external partners, the civil sector, etc.

The Parliament's interaction with experts in the field of gender equality – both internal and external – is crucial for ensuring an inclusive legislative process taking into account gender equality. Without such consultation, legal acts may arise that indirectly discriminate against or ignore certain groups of the population. In Ukraine, there is a trend towards partial involvement of external gender equality experts. The reason is that analysis of legislative acts for the purpose of ensuring constitutional guarantees of equality of citizens before the law, including regardless of sex or gender, as well as ensuring equal opportunities for men and women (in particular in accordance with the provisions of Article 8 of the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men”), is, inter alia, a component of the scientific-expert and legal assessments of draft laws of Ukraine and other legislative acts. However, even partial participation of such experts contributes to improving the quality of draft laws.

The Strategic Plan is a key document defining the Parliament's values, long-term goals and priorities. Incorporating gender equality into the strategic plan provides a systematic approach to promoting equal opportunities and inclusiveness in all aspects of parliamentary work. This helps to integrate the gender perspective into the legislative process, personnel policy and managerial decisions in practice. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has developed a Strategy for Building the Human Resources Capacity of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine until 2022, wherein gender equality is one of the main principles of the Strategy. It is also planned to develop in the near future a Strategy for Building the Human Resources Capacity of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine until 2027. However, in view of the lack of a clear plan to ensure gender equality in the Parliament, these initiatives remain fragmented and insufficiently systematic.

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<sup>23</sup>In the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the Inter-Party Equal Opportunities Caucus Has Been Created, 2011. Web Archive. URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20180901004747/http://rada.gov.ua/news/Povidomlennya/51938.html>

<sup>24</sup>Information on inter-party caucuses in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of 9<sup>th</sup> convocation. URL: <https://dostup.org.ua/request/61425/response/147024/attach/4/13885.pdf>

Another component of ensuring the Parliament's gender sensitivity is gender budgeting. This is a component of public resource management that combines the principles of budget policy with gender equality policy. This tool contributes to increasing the economic efficiency and effectiveness of budget expenditures that take into account the needs of both sexes. The Ukrainian Parliament has no practice of implementing gender-responsive budgeting in relation to the State Budget of Ukraine as well as to the Parliament's internal budget. Moreover, the absence of an internal body responsible for gender-responsive budgeting is indicative of insufficient institutional support and limited nature of initiatives to integrate gender equality into budgeting.

### SWEDEN

The Swedish Parliament issues a special separate appendix to the budget, which since 1988 has been reflecting the distribution of economic resources between women and men. This document analyzes economic inequality, including the distribution of work and income and the impact of social security on reducing the gender gap.<sup>25</sup>

The Parliament's internal gender equality policy can provide an approach to fair working conditions, including equal pay, gender-balanced staff recruitment, career development opportunities, etc. Moreover, the effective implementation of such a policy will require the existence of a specialized body to monitor and analyze the internal practices and approaches to gender sensitivity. At present, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has no gender equality policy and no specialized body responsible for promoting gender parity.

### SWEDEN

The Riksdag (Swedish Parliament) Administration's Equal Treatment Plan for 2014–2018 includes goals and measures to improve working conditions, balance between parental duties and work, harassment prevention, internal mobility and employment. The prevention of unjustified pay gaps is reflected in the salary survey conducted by the Administration. There is also a specific action plan to combat discrimination on the grounds of disability, aimed at improving accessibility.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>Examples of gender-sensitive practices in parliaments. EIGE. URL: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gender-sensitive-parliaments/examples/area-3>

<sup>26</sup>Examples of gender-sensitive practices in parliaments. EIGE. URL: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gender-sensitive-parliaments/examples/area-3>

## Main conclusions:

1. The Equal Opportunities Caucus is the largest and most active association of MPs. The goal of the caucus is to promote advocacy for gender issues at the legislative level, but the lack of a separate caucus budget limits its effectiveness.
2. In the Ukrainian Parliament, there is a need to involve internal and external experts to prevent the drafting and adoption of discriminatory legal acts.
3. A positive point is the inclusion of the principle of gender equality in the Human Resources Development Strategy of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine until 2022, but the Strategy until 2027 requires further elaboration, including the development of a clear action plan.
4. The absence of an internal gender equality policy and of a specialized body for monitoring and analyzing internal practices for gender sensitivity in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine is indicative of the need to implement these mechanisms in order to ensure fair working conditions and gender parity.
5. The Ukrainian Parliament has no practice of gender-responsive budgeting – regarding state as well as domestic budgets; this indicates a lack of institutional support for integrating gender equality into financial policy.

## AREA 4: The parliament produces gender-sensitive legislation.

*The area "The parliament produces gender-sensitive legislation" is about creating, implementing and monitoring legislation in order to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men. The section includes an assessment of the extent to which legislative activities reflect the interests of women and men and take into account gender equality issues, since gender-sensitive legislation aims to contribute to the fight against discrimination, protect women's rights and ensure their active participation in public and political life.*

*One of the key aspects is the gender impact assessment of new legislative initiatives, which is instrumental in identifying potential risks of gender inequality in draft laws. Moreover, it is important to analyze the implementation of international standards, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), into national legislation.*

The legislative process in Ukraine is regulated by the recently adopted Law of Ukraine "On Law-Making Activity," which defines specific mechanisms for the development of gender-sensitive legislation.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>On Law-Making Activity: Law of Ukraine dated 24.08.2023 № 3354-IX. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/3354-20#Text>

Ukraine has a clearly established legal mechanism aimed at ensuring gender equality, in particular through the introduction of gender quotas in the electoral process. Pursuant to Article 219 of the Electoral Code of Ukraine, each electoral list of a political party must include at least 40% representatives of one gender. This mechanism contributes to an increase in the number of women in the Parliament and in leadership positions, being in line with the provisions of Article 15 of the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men,” which establishes the use of quotas to ensure equal representation of the genders in the political process. The aforementioned legislative provisions create conditions for a more active involvement of women in the political life and contribute to their representation in leadership positions.

## BELGIUM

The Belgian Gender Equality Act of 2007 provides the legal basis for the mandatory identification of public funds earmarked for promoting gender equality and thus lays the foundation for gender-sensitive budgeting. It also introduces a “gender test” for each new policy measure. Furthermore, it obliges the federal government to define strategic gender equality objectives at the beginning of the legislative process for each policy area falling within its competence; the act also provides for a follow-up and evaluation of these actions.<sup>28</sup>

The state’s desire to ensure gender equality not only at the political level, but also in the social and economic spheres is evidenced by the existence in Ukraine of Laws aimed at strengthening gender equality. The current legislation covers several key areas, including combating gender-based violence, ensuring work-life balance, and supporting women in the decision-making process. Thus, Ukraine adopted the Law of Ukraine No. 1401-IX dated April 15, 2021 “On Amending Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine to Ensure Equal Opportunities for Mothers and Fathers in Childcare,” whose provisions on maternity leave correspond to EU Directive 2019/1158/EU.<sup>29</sup>

An important aspect of assessing the Parliament’s gender sensitivity in terms of drafting gender-sensitive legislation is the analysis of international legal norms in the field of gender equality and Ukraine’s progressive steps in ratifying them. Thus, Ukraine ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) back in 1981, which is an important step in ensuring gender equality.<sup>30</sup> In 2022, the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence

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<sup>28</sup>Gender-Sensitive Parliaments: Global Review of Good Practice. URL: <http://archive.ipu.org/pdf/publications/gsp11-e.pdf>

<sup>29</sup>Yaremko Y. Balance of Professional and Personal Life as an EU Standard in the Field of Gender Equality. URL: <https://jurfem.com.ua/balans-chastyna-1/>

<sup>30</sup>UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. URL: [https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995\\_207#Text](https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995_207#Text)

(Istanbul Convention) was ratified, which is a key instrument for preventing violence against women and domestic violence.<sup>31</sup>

Although Ukraine is a party to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, a national strategy for the implementation of these provisions has not been officially adopted. However, Ukraine has other strategic documents in force that embody the principles and goals of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, in particular: the State Strategy for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men by 2030, approved by Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Ordinance No. 752-r dated 12.08.2022; the National Strategy for Overcoming the Gender Pay Gap for the Period until 2030, approved by Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Ordinance No. 815-r dated 15.09.2023; the Strategy for Implementing Gender Equality in Education by 2030, approved by Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Ordinance No. 815-r dated 20.12.2022; the National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 “Women, Peace and Security” for the period until 2025, approved by Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Ordinance No. 1544-r dated 28.10.2020; and the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Concept of Communication in the Field of Gender Equality, approved by Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Resolution No. 79-r dated 27.01.2023.<sup>32</sup>

In Ukraine, Article 30 of the Law of Ukraine “On Law-Making Activity” provides for a mandatory assessment of the impact of a draft normative legal act on social relations, in particular taking into account gender and discriminatory impacts, which allows identifying possible inequalities in legislative initiatives already at the stage of their preparation. Moreover, Article 35 of this Law also draws attention to the use of language and style with regard to gender differences. Thus, already at the stage of preparation of draft laws it should be taken into account that nouns and pronouns should emphasize the gender differences of persons, which will ensure the gender neutrality of legislative texts.

More than that, Article 44 of the Law of Ukraine “On Law-Making Activity” provides for mandatory examination of a draft normative legal act for compliance with Ukraine’s international obligations in the field of European integration, as well as gender-legal examination and other anti-discrimination requirements.<sup>33</sup> It is important to note that this Law was adopted by the Parliament in 2023; understandably, so far there has been no information specifically about the practice of conducting gender-legal examination of draft normative legal acts.

Despite the existing progressive legislative provisions, it is important to ensure that a gender impact assessment and a gender-legal examination are conducted

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<sup>31</sup>Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention). URL: [https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/994\\_001-11#Text](https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/994_001-11#Text)

<sup>32</sup>Response to request for receiving public information from the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine dated 07.10.2024.

<sup>33</sup>On Law-Making Activity: Law of Ukraine № 3354-IX dated 24.08.2023: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/3354-20#Text>

at each stage of passage of a draft law. Thus, to address this issue, Draft Law No. 5005 dated 02.02.2021<sup>34</sup> “On Amending Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine to Ensure Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men, Combating Discrimination and Compliance with Ethical Standards by the MPs of Ukraine” was registered in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. The bill proposes amendments to the Law of Ukraine “On the Rules of Procedure of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine” which provide for mandatory gender impact assessment and gender-legal examination at each stage of passage of a draft law. By now, the bill has been recommended for consideration in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, which may be seen as an indication that another important step has been taken towards introducing a gender-sensitive approach to the lawmaking process.

In addition to the analysis of draft normative legal acts for gender impact, it is also important to analyze already adopted legislative acts for compliance with the principles of gender equality. Pursuant to Article 4 of the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men” and Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Resolution No. 997 dated November 28, 2018 “Issues of Conducting Gender-Legal Examination,” the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine (below, the Ministry of Justice) has the authority to conduct gender-legal examination of normative legal acts and draft acts in order to ensure compliance with the principles of gender equality in legislation. Gender-legal examination includes an analysis of documents for the presence of discriminatory provisions or sex-based biases and an assessment of compliance with international standards of gender equality. Based on the results of the examination, the Ministry of Justice may provide recommendations for amendments to eliminate gender discrimination and ensure gender-sensitive regulation of legal relations. To date, less than half of such laws adopted by the Parliament of the current convocation have been analyzed in Ukraine, which is due to the state’s insufficient capability to analyze a larger number of normative legal acts.

The issue of the existence of a specialized body to monitor compliance with the principle of gender equality in bodies of state power is an important criterion for assessing institutional capacity. However, at present Ukraine has no specialized body monitoring and controlling observance of gender equality in the activities of state authorities. The absence of such a body creates gaps in systematic oversight and complicates the implementation of policies aimed at ensuring equal opportunities. Moreover, there is no separate budget for the performance of gender equality monitoring functions, which may limit the financial capacity of initiatives in this area.

International conventions and agreements requiring regular compliance monitoring by the Parliament include the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Council of Europe

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<sup>34</sup>“On Amending Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine to Ensure Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men, Combating Discrimination and Compliance with Ethical Standards by the MPs of Ukraine”: Draft Law No. 5005 dated 02.02.2021. URL: [https://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4\\_1?pf3511=70987](https://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=70987)

Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention). Both these international agreements are important instruments in ensuring gender equality and protecting women's rights in Ukraine. The Parliament also pays attention to the provisions of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which contain key strategic directions in combating gender discrimination.

However, the issuance of recommendations by the Parliament on the implementation of ratified conventions in the field of gender equality has certain shortcomings. For example, there is no provision requiring that the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine must develop and approve any recommendations for the implementation of ratified international conventions; this may complicate the full integration of international norms into the national legislation.

Despite the existence of Laws regulating gender equality issues, at present the Parliament does not monitor the implementation of such Laws, which is due to the lack of relevant legal regulation and the fact that the Parliament is not empowered to do so.

### **Main conclusions:**

1. The Law of Ukraine "On Law-Making Activity" establishes mechanisms for developing gender-sensitive legislation, including mandatory gender impact assessment of normative legal acts at the stage of their preparation.
2. The legislative process in Ukraine provides for the introduction of gender quotas in the electoral process: the Electoral Code of Ukraine requires at least 40% of representatives of one gender on each electoral list of a political party.
3. Gender quotas enshrined in the legislation contribute to increasing women's representation in the Parliament and in leadership positions, which is consistent with the Law of Ukraine "On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men."
4. Ukraine ratified international agreements such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1981 and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) in 2022.
5. Ukraine is a party to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, but the country has not developed and approved a national strategy. However, other strategic documents embodying the principles of the Beijing Declaration are in force, in particular, the State Strategy for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men by 2030.
6. Currently, Ukraine has no state funding mechanism for female candidates in elections.
7. Article 44 of the Law of Ukraine "On Law-Making Activity" provides for mandatory gender-legal examination for all draft laws to ensure compliance with Ukraine's international obligations in the context of

European integration. Aiming to increase the effectiveness of gender examination, Draft Law No. 5005 dated 02.02.2021 was registered; this provides for mandatory gender examination at each stage of passage of a draft law, which attests to willingness to implement a gender-sensitive approach to law-making.

8. As of today, less than half of the Laws adopted in Ukraine by the current Parliament have been subjected to a gender impact assessment by the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine, which, in accordance with current legislation, analyzes already adopted legislative acts as well as draft acts for compliance with the principles of gender equality.
9. In Ukraine, there is no special body to oversee compliance with the principle of gender equality in the activities of bodies of state power; also, no budget is provided for monitoring compliance with the gender equality principle.
10. The Parliament provides no specific recommendations on the implementation of ratified international conventions, which may limit the full integration of international gender standards into the national legislation.

#### **AREA 5: Symbolic function of parliament.**

*The area "Symbolic function of parliament" (in the context of gender equality) is focused on taking into account the gender component as the Parliament performs its symbolic functions. Thus, the Parliament's historic buildings, halls, objects and decorative elements often reflect gender stereotypes in which leadership and power are associated with men, while women are represented by images of beauty or elegance. A gender-sensitive parliament should ensure that physical spaces are stereotype-free, comfortable and accessible.*

*Moreover, a separate aspect to be analyzed includes issues of communicating gender equality initiatives, using gender-sensitive language and ensuring gender balance in parliamentary delegations and events. The Parliament should take into account gender sensitivity in all aspects of its activities, emphasizing the equality of women and men both symbolically and practically.*

Physical space can affect the comfort and efficiency of work, especially for persons who need additional childcare facilities. The availability of nursing rooms or other childcare facilities provided by the Ukrainian Parliament is a positive step in supporting the family needs of employees and visitors. However, the lack of efforts to increase the gender sensitivity of physical space, i.e. taking into account the different needs of women and men in the planning, design and use of work or public spaces, reveals the absence of a comprehensive approach to ensuring a level playing field for all.

The choice of symbols, names, and images in institutions representing the state has an impact on public perceptions of gender equality. Gender-balanced representation in the Parliament's aesthetic design can contribute to a more inclusive environment that values the contributions of both men and women to the history and culture of Ukraine. However, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine lacks

any official rules or procedures for ensuring gender parity in naming premises, selecting ideas for artwork, or representing artists whose works and exhibitions are displayed within the walls of the Parliament, etc.

## ITALY

In 2016, a special room was created in Palazzo Montecitorio (the building of the Chamber of Deputies of the Italian Parliament) containing photographs of the first women to actively participate in the political representation of Italy at the national, regional and local levels. There are also three mirrors, one for each political position that has not yet been held by a woman (President of the Republic, of the Senate, and of the Council of Ministers). Under the mirrors, visitors can read the inscription “You can be the first”.<sup>35</sup>

A gender-sensitive parliament, through inclusive communication, is able to shape public perceptions of gender equality. Clear and open coverage of initiatives related to gender equality contributes to raising public awareness, which, in turn, influences the change of cultural norms, stimulating discussions and involving citizens in active participation in gender equality matters. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine systematically organizes round tables on gender equality and women’s rights. However, such events are limited to discussions in a narrow circle; there aren’t any other, more creative initiatives, such as tours of the Parliament, with guides telling visitors the history of female MPs, or exhibitions dedicated to famous women in the country’s history, etc.

The Ukrainian Parliament also lacks a systematic communication policy covering gender equality issues. The VRU website has no special section for citizens on gender equality issues. Neither is there a mechanism for regular dissemination to the public and civil society of information on the Parliament’s gender equality initiatives.

For effective and fair representation of the interests of all citizens at the international level, it is important to ensure gender balance in parliamentary delegations. Paragraph 9 of the Regulations on Permanent Delegations of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to Parliamentary Bodies of International Organizations stipulates that “a fair gender representation shall be ensured by including women MPs of Ukraine in the permanent delegation in proportion to women’s share of the actual number of MPs of Ukraine in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine or above that proportion.”

## Main conclusions:

1. The availability of nursing rooms in the Parliament is a positive step to support staff and MPs with children. However, the lack of gender-sensitive

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<sup>35</sup>Boldrini inaugurates the Women’s Hall in Montecitorio, 2016. Camera dei deputati. URL: [https://www.camera.it/leg17/537?shadow\\_mostra=24122](https://www.camera.it/leg17/537?shadow_mostra=24122)

spatial planning reveals insufficient attention to the different needs of women and men.

2. The Parliament lacks clear rules on gender parity in spatial design and this limits the creation of an inclusive environment. Gender-balanced symbols and names can positively influence the perception of gender equality.
3. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine holds discussions on gender equality issues, but, as a rule, this is done in a limited format. It is necessary to introduce more creative initiatives that will raise public awareness of gender equality in the historical and social contexts.
4. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has no mechanism for regularly informing the public about parliamentary initiatives in the field of gender equality. Nor does the VRU website have a special section dedicated to gender equality.
5. A positive point is that the internal rules of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine include a requirement for proportional representation of women in delegations.

### Questionnaire “Gender-Sensitive Parliaments” for national parliaments

The Gender-Sensitive Parliaments Toolkit (below, the GSP) is a self-assessment tool in the form of a questionnaire, developed by the European Institute of Gender Equality (EIGE) and aimed at assessing the level of parliament’s gender sensitivity.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union<sup>36</sup> defines the term “**gender-sensitive parliament**” as a parliament that responds to the needs and interests of both men and women in its composition, structures, operations, methods and work.<sup>37</sup> The policies and resources of such a parliament are aimed at promoting gender equality, eliminating material, structural and cultural barriers for women. Gender sensitivity enhances the effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy of a parliament.

The methodology is based on the assessment of parliament in **five key areas**, each of which includes indicators for measuring the main aspects of its activities:

- Women and men have equal opportunities to enter parliament.
- Women and men have equal opportunities to influence parliament.
- Women’s interests have adequate space in parliament.
- The parliament produces gender-sensitive legislation.
- Symbolic function of parliament.

These indicators make it possible to collect data on the involvement of women and men in political life and decision-making processes; to identify the level of involvement of women and men in various areas of parliamentary activity; to find out whether there are policies for ensuring gender equality and whether the parliament is working on the development of gender-sensitive legislation.

Assessment of the gender sensitivity of the Ukrainian Parliament – the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine – is a crucial mechanism for understanding the current state of taking into account gender equality principles in parliamentary activities, intended for developing effective tools for implementing such principles and, accordingly, for monitoring progress in achieving gender equality. In particular, it provides the possibility to identify areas requiring improvement and to assess the level of gender sensitivity in the organizational and procedural activities of the Ukrainian Parliament, which is an important stage in the process of institutional transformation related to European integration.

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<sup>36</sup>The Inter-Parliamentary Union is a worldwide organization of national parliaments that was founded in 1889. As of today, the Inter-Parliamentary Union has 181 members and 15 associate members. URL: <https://www.ipu.org/>

<sup>37</sup>Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments (2012), pp. 8–9. URL: <http://archive.ipu.org/pdf/publications/action-gender-e.pdf>

## AREA 1: Women and men have equal opportunities to enter parliament.

### **The area “Women and men have equal opportunities to enter parliament”:**

*This block is focused on analyzing the legislative and actual capabilities for women and men to exercise their passive electoral rights.*

*This implies analyzing the conditions in which women and men can participate in political life, in particular in parliamentary elections. It is important to note that this part of the questionnaire makes it possible to assess the extent to which the country's legislative basis and electoral system can ensure gender balance among candidates for elective positions, since they play an important role in ensuring equal opportunities and can either support or interfere with gender balance. Apart from the legislative aspects, the priorities of the analysis include cultural and social barriers that can limit women's capabilities to participate in electoral processes. This refers to stereotypes about the role of wives in society, gender expectations and pressure, which can reduce their activity in political life. It is important to assess the extent to which the political culture is conducive to equal opportunities and what mechanisms can be introduced to overcome these barriers. Thus, particular attention is paid to the establishment of gender quotas, mechanisms for encouraging women candidates and other tools that can influence equal representation of both sexes in parliament.*

### **1. Does the constitutional law or an equivalent legal framework directly refer to gender equality in political representation? (Answer: Yes/No)**

#### **No**

*The Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men” (Article 15) enshrines the principle of equal rights and opportunities in political activities for women and men, which is an important step for ensuring gender equality in political representation. In particular, Article 15 stipulates that political parties must take into account the principle of equal rights and opportunities of women and men in the process of compiling electoral lists of candidates.*

*The principle of gender equality in political representation is not explicitly entrenched in the text of the Constitution of Ukraine, but Article 24 of the Constitution of Ukraine states that citizens have equal constitutional rights and freedoms and are equal before the law; and the equal rights of women and men are ensured by providing women and men with equal opportunities in socio-political and cultural activities.*

## 2. Are gender quotas applied to your electoral system? (Answer: Yes/No)

### Yes

Gender quotas in Ukraine's electoral system are entrenched in Article 8 of the Law of Ukraine "On Political Parties in Ukraine" and in the Electoral Code (Article 219).

### 2a. What sanctions (if any) are applied in case of non-compliance with the quota? (Answer: choose a SINGLE option from the list)

- Legal sanctions (rejection of the list before the election)**
- Financial sanctions
- No sanctions

If a political party fails to comply with the quota provided for by the Electoral Code of Ukraine, such list may be rejected and not admitted for participation in the elections (Article 219).

As of September 2024, the electoral system used in the elections to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine is a proportional one.

### 2b. If the voting system is proportional, how is the gender quota applied? (Answer: choose a SINGLE option from the list)

- Zipping (alternating female and male candidates throughout the lists)
- Requiring that the top two candidates are not of the same sex
- 40:60 ratio every five positions in the list**
- At least 1 out of every group of 3 candidates must be a woman
- Other
- N/A

Pursuant to Part 9 of Article 219 of the Electoral Code of Ukraine, when forming unified and territorial electoral lists, political parties must ensure that every five positions in the list (from number one to number five, from number six to number ten, etc.) include at least two candidates of each sex. If the number of candidates on the list is not a multiple of five, the last places are filled in accordance with the principle of alternating candidates of different sexes.

### 2c. If the voting system is plurality/majority, how is the gender quota applied? (Answer: choose a SINGLE option from the list)

- 50% women candidates
- 40:60 ratio of different gender candidates
- At least 30% women candidates
- Other
- N/A

### 3. Number of women and men candidates in the last parliamentary election? (Answer: number of women (W) and men (M) whom the question concerns)

In the 2019 early parliamentary elections, the Central Election Commission (CEC) of Ukraine registered **1,339 women candidates**, which amounted to **22.38%** of the total number of candidates. There were **4,645 registered men candidates**, or **77.62%**.<sup>38</sup>

In the March 28, 2021 by-elections, 34 candidates were registered, including **8 women (23.53%) and 26 men (76.47%)**.

In the October 31, 2021 elections, the number of registered candidates was 45, of which **8 were women (17.78%) and 37 were men (82.22%)**.

### 4. Is there a mechanism to allocate public funds to women candidates? (Answer: Yes/No)

**No**

### 5. Number of women and men members of parliament? (Answer: number of women (W) and men (M) whom the question concerns)

As of August 29, 2019, the MPs of Ukraine included **88 women**, or 20.8%, and **334 men**, or 79.2%, of the total number of MPs of Ukraine who took the oath.

As of October 1, 2024, the MPs of Ukraine include **85 women**, or 21.2% of the total number (401 MPs of Ukraine), and **316 men**, or 78.8% of the total number.<sup>39</sup>

### 6. Number of women and men leading major political parties. (Answer: number of women (W) and men (M) whom the question concerns)

Major political parties are parties that have at least 5% of seats in the Parliament at the time of this research. Thus, according to the results of the 2019 parliamentary elections, the major political parties of Ukraine with at least 5% of seats in the Verkhovna Rada include: **Servant of the People; Opposition Platform – For Life; European Solidarity; Batkivshchyna; and Holos**.<sup>40</sup>

#### Three women

Women lead three major political parties of Ukraine. Among the parliamentary parties, women lead the following parties: Servant of the People – Olena Shuliak; Batkivshchyna – Yulia Tymoshenko; and Holos – Kira Rudyk.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>Reply to request for receiving public information from the Central Election Commission.

<sup>39</sup>MPs of Ukraine. Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine: official web-portal. URL: [https://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/site2/p\\_deputat\\_list](https://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/site2/p_deputat_list)

<sup>40</sup>Election results. IPU Parline: Global Data on national parliaments. URL: <https://data.ipu.org/parliament/UA/UA-LC01/election/UA-LC01-E20190721/>

<sup>41</sup>Political leadership. How Do Women Show Themselves as Party Leaders? Chesno. URL: <https://www.chesno.org/post/5802/>

**7. How many of the major parties explicitly reference gender equality in their internal rules? (Answer: choose a SINGLE option from the list)**

- All parties
- More than half**
- Half of the parties
- Less than half
- None

*The charter of the Servant of the People party stipulates that, for the purpose of fulfilling its programmatic and statutory tasks, the party may support initiatives and develop programs aimed at increasing the role and status of women in politics based on the principles of gender equality and gender democracy.<sup>42</sup>*

*The charter of the political party All-Ukrainian Association “Batkivshchyna,” subparagraph 5.1.4., paragraph 5.1, defines the minimum level of representation of women and men in the electoral lists of candidates for deputies of various levels. Also, methodological materials that are developed and sent to local party organizations emphasize compliance with gender equality (quotas) when implementing electoral procedures.<sup>43</sup>*

*The statutory documents of the political party European Solidarity stipulate the need to facilitate the achievement of gender equality, active involvement of women in the political and public life of the country, and their empowerment. The political party's program clearly specifies the issues of equality of citizens and performance of state control over compliance with gender equality, constant monitoring of facts and study of the causes of possible discrimination.<sup>44</sup>*

**8. How many of the major parties have a women's wing or committee? (Answer: choose a SINGLE option from the list)**

- All parties
- More than half
- Half of the parties
- Less than half**
- None

*For example, the Batkivshchyna party has a women's wing called Women of Batkivshchyna. The Servant of the People party has the ZeZhinky initiative for*

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<sup>42</sup>Charter of the political party Servant of the People (new version). URL: <http://kyiv-heritage.com/sites/default/files/%D0%A1%D0%BB%20%D0%9D%D0%B0%D1%80%202021-03-14%20%D0%A1%D1%82%D0%B0%D1%82%D1%83%D1%82.pdf>

<sup>43</sup>Reply to request for public information from the political party All-Ukrainian Association “Batkivshchyna.”

<sup>44</sup>Reply to request for public information from the political party European Solidarity.

supporting women's leadership. However, most parties do not have official women's wings or any similar structures.

**9. How many of the major parties have performed a gender equality assessment of their internal procedures within the past five years? (Answer: choose a SINGLE option from the list)**

- All parties
- More than half
- Half of the parties
- Less than half**
- None

Over the past 5 years, the leadership of the *Batkivshchyna* party has been actively supporting mentoring for women by encouraging them (voluntary quotas) to run as candidates for deputies of local councils, for leadership positions in local party branches. As a result of that work, 32% of the leadership positions in territorial party organizations are held by women. Among the total number of local deputies, 38.45% are women.<sup>45</sup>

In late 2021 and early 2022, a Gender Audit of the political party *European Solidarity* was conducted with the assistance of the National Democratic Institute (NDI).<sup>46</sup> The aims of that audit were as follows:

- to investigate various aspects of party activities for assessing the equality of rights and opportunities of women and men in the party;
- to outline additional opportunities for developing women's leadership (including through internal party policies and resources) and for increasing women's access to leadership positions; and
- to support the party in implementing strategies for achieving equal rights and opportunities for women and men in the party.

**10. How many of the major parties have internal rules that mention the importance of gender balance when assigning members and leaders to committees? (Answer: choose a SINGLE option from the list)**

- All parties
- More than half
- Half of the parties
- Less than half**
- None

When nominating candidates to the *Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Committees* under the deputy faction quota, the political party *Servant of the People* took into account the principle of ensuring gender balance. Thus, 20% of the positions

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<sup>45</sup>Reply to request for public information from the political party All-Ukrainian Association "Batkivshchyna."

<sup>46</sup>Reply to request for public information from the political party *European Solidarity*.

of heads of Committees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine elected under the quota of the deputy faction of the political party Servant of the People are held by women, which corresponds to the level of representation of women in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of 9<sup>th</sup> convocation. In particular, women MPs of Ukraine who are members of the deputy faction of the political party Servant of the People hold the positions of heads of the following committees: Committee on Anti-Corruption Policy; Committee on Budget; Committee on Social Policy and Protection of Veterans' Rights; and Committee on State Building, Local Governance, Regional and Urban Development.<sup>47</sup>

**11. Is ensuring gender balanced representation a criterion in recruitment processes? (Answer: choose a SINGLE option from the list)**

- Yes, for all parliamentary employees
- Yes, for certain positions
- No**

**12. Is gender-sensitive language used in selection interviews and/or test materials? (Answer: choose a SINGLE option from the list)**

- Yes
- Partly
- No**

*Using gender-sensitive language means, for example, using feminine pronouns.*

**13. Number of women and men in the last three recruitment selection boards? (Answer: number of women (W) and men (M) whom the question concerns)**

**The last recruitment selection board included 1 woman and 8 men).**

*According to a clarification from of the Human Resources Department of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Secretariat, the above ratio of women to men was the same among the members of the two previous selection boards.<sup>48</sup>*

**AREA 2: Women and men have equal opportunities to influence parliament.**

**The area “Women and men have equal opportunities to influence parliament”:**

*This block is focused on ensuring gender parity in parliamentary workplaces, in particular among the MPs and the staff of the Secretariat. First of all, the key issues include the extent to which women are*

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<sup>47</sup>Reply to request for obtaining public information from the political party Servant of the People.

<sup>48</sup>Reply to request for receiving public information from the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine dated 28.10.2024.

*represented in leadership positions: as Speaker of Parliament, leaders of parliamentary factions, heads of Committees, etc.*

*Moreover, presiding over meetings of thematic parliamentary Committees by women and men is analyzed. Women often hold leadership positions in areas traditionally associated with “female” sectors, such as healthcare, social policy, culture and education, while key strategic areas, such as the economy, defense, internal affairs and international relations, predominantly remain under men’s control.*

*When looking for answers to questions in this block, the tasks also include establishing the existence of formal policies and procedures aimed at preventing discrimination and sexual harassment in the Parliament, so as to ensure a safe working environment; analyzing issues of equal access to professional development and career advancement; the existence of policies ensuring equal pay for equal professional achievements. Particular attention is paid to the extent to which the work environment is conducive to combining professional responsibilities with personal and family life.*

#### **14. The gender of the VRU Speaker (Chairperson). (Answer: choose a SINGLE option from the list)**

- Woman
- Man**

*As of September 2024, the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine is Ruslan Oleksiiovych Stefanchuk.*

#### **15. Number of women and men members of the parliamentary bureau. (Answer: number of women (W) and men (M) whom the question concerns)**

**W 3**

**M 10**

*As of September 2024.<sup>49</sup>*

- First Deputy Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine – Oleksandr Serhiovych Korniienko*
- Deputy Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine – Olena Kostiantynivna Kondratiuk*
- Head of the Secretariat – Tetiana Anatoliivna Podolska*
- Deputy Head of the Secretariat – Maksym Mykolaiovych Khlapuk*
- Adviser to the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine – Ihor Volodymyrovych Kornat*

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<sup>49</sup>According to the online directory “Official Ukraine Today.” URL: <https://dovidka.com.ua/user/?code=24452>

- *Adviser to the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine – Ostop Volodymyrovych Kryvdyk*
- *Adviser to the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine – Ivan Yaroslavovych Kunets*
- *Adviser to the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine – Andrii Ihorovych Malyk*
- *Adviser to the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine – Mykhailo Leonidovych Nizhnikov*
- *Adviser to the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine – Nestor Omelianovych Proniuk*
- *Adviser to the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine – Vasyl Mykhailovych Rozhko*
- *Adviser to the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine – Oleksandr Mykolaiovych Starovoit*
- *Head of the Secretariat of the First Deputy Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine – Olena Mykolaiivna Martynenko*

The Parliamentary Bureau is a parliamentary body forming the administrative and organizational system around the Speaker of the Parliament (in Ukraine, the Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine). Pursuant to Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Resolution “On the Structure of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine,” in Ukraine such functions are performed by the Secretariat of the Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and the Secretariats of the Deputy Chairpersons.

## **16. Parliamentary committees chaired by women and men. (Answer: number of women (W) and men (M) whom the question concerns)**

**W 5**

**M 18**

*As of September 2024,<sup>50</sup> there were 23 Committees in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine:*

- *Committee on Agrarian and Land Policy – Oleksandr Vasylivovych Haidu*
- *Committee on Anti-Corruption Policy – Anastasiia Olehivna Radina*
- *Committee on Budget – Roksolana Andriivna Pidlasa*
- *Committee on Humanitarian and Information Policy – Mykyta Ruslanovych Poturaiev*
- *Committee on Environmental Policy and Nature Management – Oleh Volodymyrovych Bondarenko*
- *Committee on Economic Development – Dmytro Andriiovych Natalukha*
- *Committee on Energy, Housing and Utilities Services – Andrii Mykhailovych Herus*

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<sup>50</sup>Official web-portal of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine: Committees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of 9<sup>th</sup> convocation. URL: [https://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/site2/p\\_komitis](https://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/site2/p_komitis)

- *Committee on Public Health, Medical Assistance and Medical Insurance – Mykhailo Borysovykh Radutskyi*
- *Committee on Foreign Policy and Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation – Oleksandr Oleksandrovykh Merezko*
- *Committee on Ukraine’s Integration into the European Union – Ivanna Orestivna Klympush-Tsyntsadze*
- *Committee on Youth and Sports – Andrii Anatoliiiovych Kozhemiakin*
- *Committee on National Security, Defense and Intelligence – Oleksandr Mykhailovych Zavitnevych*
- *Committee on State Building, Local Governance, Regional and Urban Development – Olena Oleksiivna Shuliak*
- *Committee on Education, Science and Innovations – Serhii Vitaliiiovych Babak*
- *Committee on Human Rights, Deoccupation and Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories, National Minorities and Interethnic Relations – Andrii Viktorovych Zadorozhnyi*
- *Committee on Legal Policy – Denys Viacheslavovych Maslov*
- *Committee on Law Enforcement – Serhii Kostiantynovych Ionushas*
- *Committee on Rules of Procedure, Parliamentary Ethics and Administration of Verkhovna Rada’s Work – Serhii Vitaliiiovych Kalchenko*
- *Committee on Freedom of Speech – Yaroslav Romanovych Yurchyshyn*
- *Committee on Social Policy and Protection of Veterans’ Rights – Halyna Mykolaiivna Tretiakova*
- *Committee on Transport and Infrastructure – Yurii Hryhorovych Kisiel*
- *Committee on Finance, Taxation and Customs Policy – Danylo Oleksandrovykh Hetmantsev*
- *Committee on Digital Transformation – Mykhailo Valeriiiovych Kriachko*

**17. Chairs of committees in socio-cultural functions (health, education, social affairs, employment, family, culture, sports). (Answer: number of women (W) and men (M) whom the question concerns)**

**W 1**

**M 7**

*The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Committees in socio-cultural functions include:*

- *Committee on Humanitarian and Information Policy*
- *Committee on Public Health, Medical Assistance and Medical Insurance*
- *Committee on Youth and Sports*
- *Committee on Education, Science and Innovations*
- *Committee on Human Rights, Deoccupation and Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories, National Minorities and Interethnic Relations*
- *Committee on Rules of Procedure, Parliamentary Ethics and Administration of Verkhovna Rada’s Work*
- *Committee on Freedom of Speech*
- *Committee on Social Policy and Protection of Veterans’ Rights*

**18. Chairs of committees in basic functions (foreign and internal affairs, defense, justice). (Answer: number of women (W) and men (M) whom the question concerns)**

**W 4**

**M 4**

*The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Committees in the basic state-oriented functions include:*

- *Committee on Anti-Corruption Policy*
- *Committee on Budget*
- *Committee on Foreign Policy and Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation*
- *Committee on Ukraine's Integration into the European Union*
- *Committee on National Security, Defense and Intelligence*
- *Committee on State Building, Local Governance, Regional and Urban Development*
- *Committee on Legal Policy*
- *Committee on Law Enforcement*

**19. Chairs of committees in infrastructure (transport, communications, environment). (Answer: number of women (W) and men (M) whom the question concerns)**

**W 0**

**M 5**

*The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Committees in infrastructure include:*

- *Committee on Environmental Policy and Nature Management*
- *Committee on Economic Development*
- *Committee on Energy, Housing and Utilities Services*
- *Committee on Transport and Infrastructure*
- *Committee on Digital Transformation*

**20. Chairs of committees in economy (finance, trade, industry, agriculture). (Answer: number of women (W) and men (M) whom the question concerns)**

**W 0**

**M 2**

*The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Committees in economy include:*

- *Committee on Agrarian and Land Policy*
- *Committee on Finance, Taxation and Customs Policy*

**21. What gender balance measures are applied to the formal parliamentary procedure of assigning committee leaders? (Answer: choose a SINGLE option from the list)**

- Gender quota – min. 40%
- Gender quota – min. 30%
- Equal opportunity rules
- None of the above**

*Pursuant to Article 82 of the Law of Ukraine “On the Rules of Procedure of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine,” the heads of Committees, first deputy and deputy heads and secretaries of Committees are elected from a list as a whole, without discussion at a plenary meeting, by open roll call vote. The list of candidates for the positions of Committee heads, first deputy and deputy heads and secretaries, one candidate for each position, upon submission from the deputy factions (deputy groups) is to be approved by the Conciliation Council. The Law does not mention the application of a gender balance procedure when approving candidates.*

**22. What gender balance measures are applied to the formal parliamentary procedure of assigning parliamentary bureau members? (Answer: choose a SINGLE option from the list)**

- Gender quota – min. 40%
- Gender quota – min. 30%
- Equal opportunity rules
- None**

*The election of the Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada, the First Deputy and Deputy Chairpersons is regulated by the Rules of Procedure of the Verkhovna Rada and the Constitution of Ukraine, which provide for the election of MPs of Ukraine to these positions by the discretionary decision of MPs of Ukraine on the candidates nominated for the respective positions.<sup>51</sup>*

The Parliamentary Bureau is a parliamentary body forming the administrative and organizational system around the Speaker of the Parliament (in Ukraine, the Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine). Pursuant to Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Resolution “On the Structure of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine,” in Ukraine such functions are performed by the Secretariat of the Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and the Secretariats of the Deputy Chairpersons.

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<sup>51</sup>Reply to request for receiving public information from the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine dated 28.10.2024.

**23. Has training that includes a module on gender equality been delivered by the parliament – as an institution – to MPs in the current legislature? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**Yes**

*The Research Service of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, together with experts from the USAID Program “RADA: Next Generation,” has developed a special short-term advanced training program “Specifics of Conducting Gender-Legal Examination of Draft Laws in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.” Training under the special short-term program “Specifics of Conducting Gender-Legal Examination of Draft Laws in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine” for MPs of Ukraine, employees of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and aides to MPs was held on three occasions: February 14–16, 2023; March 22–24, 2023; and March 22–24, 2024. The training sessions within the framework of this program were attended by 106 students (45 attendees in 2024), of which 97 were employees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Secretariat (43 in 2024) and 9 were aides to MPs of Ukraine (2 aides in 2024). Out of the total number of students, 9 were men (6 in 2024) and 97 were women (35 in 2024).<sup>52</sup>*

**24. Does the parliament have mechanisms to prevent discrimination based on gender, such as code of conduct or anti-harassment policies? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**Yes**

*No standalone documents of this type have been developed. The inadmissibility of any discrimination, in particular on the basis of gender, as well as sexual harassment, is generally enshrined in the Rules of Internal Service Regulations for employees of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine; moreover, the aforementioned principles are part of the general principles of ensuring constitutional human rights and organizing civil service, including civil service in the Secretariat of the Parliament (see, in particular, the provisions of Part 5 of Article 19, paragraph 7 of Part 1 of Article 4 “Principles of Civil Service” of the Law of Ukraine “On Civil Service,” Article 24 of the Constitution of Ukraine, the provisions of the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men” and the Law of Ukraine “On the Principles of Preventing and Combating Discrimination in Ukraine”).*

A code of conduct is a set of principles, values, standards, or rules of conduct guiding an organization’s decisions, procedures, and systems in a way that promotes the well-being of its members and respects the rights of all stakeholders affected by its activities.

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<sup>52</sup>Reply to request for receiving public information from the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine dated 28.10.2024.

**24a. Does the code include sanctions for non-complying behavior? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

**25. Does the parliament have a formal anti-discrimination policy? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

*No standalone anti-discrimination policy has been developed. The inadmissibility of any discrimination is one of the general principles of ensuring constitutional human rights and organizing civil service, including civil service in the Secretariat of the Parliament (see, in particular, the provisions of Part 5 of Article 19, paragraph 7 of Part 1 of Article 4 “Principles of Civil Service” of the Law of Ukraine “On Civil Service,” Article 24 of the Constitution of Ukraine, the provisions of the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men” and the Law of Ukraine “On the Principles of Preventing and Combating Discrimination in Ukraine”).*

25a. If yes, does it explicitly refer to discrimination based on gender? (Answer: Yes/No)

25b. Does the policy include sanctions for non-complying behavior? (Answer: Yes/No)

**26. Is there an institutional policy in place against sexual harassment? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

*Investigation of complaints of sexual harassment of Secretariat employees by other Secretariat employees, as well as complaints of other illegal actions committed by other Secretariat employees or other persons in connection with or during the performance of their official duties, is carried out in accordance with the general procedure for investigating possible cases of violation of labor discipline, the Internal Service Regulations for Employees of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine; if such facts are confirmed, employees are brought to disciplinary responsibility.<sup>53</sup>*

26a. If yes, does it include sanctions for sexual harassment? (Answer: Yes/No)

26b. If yes, does the policy set in place a formal procedure for investigating sexual harassment complaints? (Answer: Yes/No)

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<sup>53</sup>Reply to request for receiving public information from the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine dated 28.10.2024.

**27. Are formal rules and standing orders written in a gender-sensitive language? (Answer: choose a SINGLE option from the list)**

- Yes
- Partly
- No**

*Official communication is carried out in compliance with the general (constitutional) principles of equality of all persons, regardless of their sex or gender, presented in detail, in particular, by the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men” and the Law of Ukraine “On the Principles of Preventing and Combating Discrimination in Ukraine.”*

*Using gender-sensitive language means, for example, using feminine pronouns.*

**28. Which of the following family leave options are available for MPs? (Answer: choose all relevant options from the list)**

- Maternity leave**
- Paternity leave**
- Parental leave**
- Adoption leave**
- Carer’s leave**
- No family leave options available

*Guarantees of an MP’s labor rights are established by the Constitution of Ukraine, the Law of Ukraine “On the Status of MP of Ukraine,” the Labor Code of Ukraine and other Laws of Ukraine (see paragraph 8, Article 20 of the Law of Ukraine “On the Status of MP of Ukraine”). Thus, an MP’s right to vacation is regulated by the Law of Ukraine “On Vacations.”*

*Family leave refers to the right to leave for family reasons and may include maternity leave, carers’ leave, adoption leave, etc.*

*a) Maternity leave: Leave from work for mothers in the period immediately preceding and following birth.*

*b) Paternity leave: Leave from work for fathers similar to maternity leave.*

*c) Parental leave: Leave after maternity/paternity leave, which can be taken by either parent.*

*d) Adoption leave: Excused leave accorded to employees for attending legal proceedings leading to adoption and like maternity or paternity leave, for a period after an adoption of a child.*

*e) Carers’ leave: Leave from work for workers in order to provide personal care to a relative, or to a person who lives in the same household as the worker, and who is in need of significant care or support for a serious medical reason.*

**29. Is there a procedure for substitution/proxy voting for MPs who are on family leave? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

*In-person voting is required by Article 84 of the Constitution of Ukraine: “Voting at meetings of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine shall be carried out by an MP of Ukraine in person.”*

**30. Is there an official regulation of working hours? (Answer: choose all relevant options from the list)**

- For parliamentary employees**
- For MPs**
- No

*For MPs and parliamentary employees, working hours are regulated by the law. As of September 2024, the working schedule of MPs was determined in accordance with the Law “On Amending Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine Regarding the Schedule of Plenary Meetings of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.”<sup>54</sup> The working hours of employees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Secretariat are regulated by internal rules, namely: Internal Service Regulations for Employees of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (approved by the conference of the labor collective of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, minutes No. 1 of October 25, 2018) and the Collective Agreement of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, concluded on October 25, 2018 (as amended). At the same time, the general principles of regulation of working hours are set out by the Labor Code of Ukraine and the Law of Ukraine “On Civil Service.” Important norms are also contained in the Law of Ukraine “On Vacations.”<sup>55</sup>*

**31. Are there any types of financial provisions to manage childcare? (Answer: choose all relevant options from the list)**

- For parliamentary employees**
- For MPs**
- No

*It is planned to pay remuneration to the administrator of the nursing room for children of parliamentary employees and MPs.*

*This issue concerns provisions exceeding the minimum established by the law.*

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<sup>54</sup>Law “On Amending Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine Regarding the Schedule of Plenary Meetings of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.” URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/893-20#Text>

<sup>55</sup>Reply to request for receiving public information from the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine dated 28.10.2024.

**Note:** The next block of questions applies to employees of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

**32. Number of women and men employed by the parliament. (Answer: number of women (W) and men (M) whom the question concerns)**

**W 603**

**M 273**

**33. Number of women and men in managing roles. (Answer: number of women (W) and men (M) whom the question concerns)**

**W 25**

**M 31**

**34. Number of departments/units led by women and men. (Answer: number of women (W) and men (M) whom the question concerns)**

**W 126**

**M 100**

**35. Have there been any training/mentoring programs to improve capacities of parliamentary employees in the last calendar year? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**Yes**

*During 2024, the Research Service conducted 33 educational events within the framework of advanced training programs for employees of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.<sup>56</sup>*

**35a. Did the training programs include a section dedicated to gender equality? (Answer: choose a SINGLE option from the list)**

- One or more program(s) are entirely dedicated to gender equality**
- Gender equality is a dedicated part of one or more programs
- Gender equality is not a dedicated part of any program but nevertheless taken into account
- Not covered

*One program, "Specifics of Conducting Gender-Legal Examination in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine," intended for MPs of Ukraine, employees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Secretariat and aides to MPs of Ukraine, is entirely dedicated to issues of gender equality.<sup>57</sup>*

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<sup>56</sup>Reply to request for receiving public information from the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine dated 28.10.2024.

<sup>57</sup>The Research Service of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, together with the USAID Program RANG, organized training under a specialized short-term advanced training program "Specifics

**36. Number of women and men who participated in the training programs. (Answer: number of women (W) and men (M) whom the question concerns)**

**W 542**

**M 241**

**37. Has the parliament conducted a study on the gender pay gap amongst its workforce within the last 5 years? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

37a. If yes, were the results of the pay gap study made public? (Answer: Yes/No)

**38. Are there any formal rules on flexible work arrangements for parliamentary employees (e.g. part-time, tele-working)? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**Yes**

*Rules on flexible work arrangements are in place for employees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Secretariat.<sup>58</sup>*

**39. Which of the following family leave options are available for parliamentary employees? (Answer: choose all relevant options from the list)**

- Maternity leave**
- Paternity leave**
- Parental leave**
- Adoption leave**
- Carer's leave**
- No family leave options available

*Family leave refers to the right to leave for family reasons and may include maternity leave, carers' leave, adoption leave, etc.*

*a) Maternity leave: Leave from work for mothers in the period immediately preceding and following birth.*

*b) Paternity leave: Leave from work for fathers similar to maternity leave.*

*c) Parental leave: Leave after maternity/paternity leave, which can be taken by either parent.*

*d) Adoption leave: Excused leave accorded to employees for attending legal proceedings leading to adoption and like maternity or paternity leave, for a period after an adoption of a child.*

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of Conducting Gender-Legal Analysis of Draft Laws in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine." URL: <https://research.rada.gov.ua/news/novyiny/73454.html>

<sup>58</sup>Reply to request for receiving public information from the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine dated 28.10.2024.

e) Carers' leave: Leave from work for workers in order to provide personal care to a relative, or to a person who lives in the same household as the worker, and who is in need of significant care or support for a serious medical reason.

### AREA 3: Women's interests have adequate space in parliament.

#### The area "Women's interests have adequate space in parliament":

*This block aims to assess the extent to which the parliament ensures the integration of gender equality issues into its daily work and legislative activities. **Gender-sensitive parliaments should ensure that gender equality issues are not only recognized, but also given due attention and priority at all stages of the legislative process.** This means that special mechanisms should be created to effectively address such issues and the parliament itself should support their implementation at the level of legislative processes and internal procedures.*

*Thus, the area covers the existence of specialized parliamentary bodies responsible for the implementation of gender equality, such as specialized committees or women's factions. These bodies can have different levels of influence – from formal committees to informal inter-party associations. Their main goal is to ensure that gender equality issues are a permanent part of the parliamentary agenda and do not remain on the periphery. Such bodies can conduct gender analysis of draft laws, monitor the implementation of gender equality policies, etc. A key aspect of this area also includes the assessment of **gender mainstreaming** – an approach that integrates a gender perspective into all aspects of the parliament's work. This means that issues of equality between men and women should be constantly on the agenda, during plenary sessions and during the work of committees. Institutional commitment to these principles also involves training parliamentary staff on gender equality issues and developing policies that promote equal opportunities for all parliamentary employees.*

#### 40. Is there a dedicated gender equality body in the parliamentary structures, for example a women's caucus, cross-party network, or committee? (Answer: Yes/No)

##### Yes

The Equal Opportunities Caucus is one of the first and largest caucuses in the Ukrainian Parliament; it was established on December 6, 2011, for developing Ukraine's gender policy, empowering women, and implementing gender equality in legislation.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>Information on caucuses in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of 9<sup>th</sup> convocation. URL: <https://www.google.com/url?q=https://dostup.org.ua/request/61425/response/147024/attach/4/13885.pdf&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1730749397283601&usg=AOvVaw1KRYOG8n3tcyppjcQ9v0Py>

**40a. How many parties that hold seats in the parliament have members in the gender equality body? (Answer: choose a SINGLE option from the list)**

- All parties
- More than half**
- Half of the parties
- Less than half
- None

**40b. Does the gender equality body have a dedicated budget for its activities? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

**40c. Can the gender equality body hold hearings or formally meet external stakeholders? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**Yes**

**40d. Did the gender equality body hold hearings or meet external stakeholders in the last calendar year? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**Yes**

**40e. Did the gender equality body hold internal networking activities (meetings with the speaker, parliamentary groups, or committees) in the last calendar year? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**Yes**

**41. What formally defined functions does the gender equality body have? (Answer: choose all relevant options from the list)**

- Informative (the body can collect information and/or investigate on specific cases)**
- Advisory (the body can give opinions and suggestions on parliament's work)**
- Legislative (the body can elaborate, discuss and propose laws)
- Control (monitoring and oversight of law enactments)
- N/A

**42. Number of women and men consulted as experts by committees or other working groups in the last calendar year. (Answer: number of women (W) and men (M) whom the question concerns)**

**Hard to say.**

**43. Have external gender experts been consulted by committees or other working groups in the last calendar year? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**Yes**

**44. Are parliamentary employees with gender equality expertise routinely consulted during legislative processes? (Answer: choose a SINGLE option from the list)**

- Yes
- Partly**
- No

**Note:** The answer “Partly” is due to the lack of regular consultations with parliamentary employees having experience in the field of gender equality. Today, expertise in the field of gender equality is not required for holding any position in the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. At the same time, the scientific-expert and legal assessment of draft laws of Ukraine and other legislative acts does provide for gender analysis as one of the formal components.

According to the response from the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Secretariat, the analysis of legislative acts for the purpose of ensuring constitutional guarantees of equality of citizens before the law, including regardless of sex or gender, as well as ensuring equal opportunities for men and women (in accordance with the provisions, in particular, of Article 8 of the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men”) is, inter alia, a component of the scientific-expert and legal assessment of draft laws of Ukraine and other legislative acts.<sup>60</sup>

**45. Has gender equality training (GET) ever been offered to MPs? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**Yes**

The Research Service of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, together with experts from the USAID Program “RADA: Next Generation,” has developed a special short-term advanced training program “Specifics of Conducting Gender-Legal Examination of Draft Laws in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.” Training under the special short-term program “Specifics of Conducting Gender-Legal Examination of Draft Laws in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine” for MPs of Ukraine, employees of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and aides to MPs was held on three occasions: February 14–16, 2023; March 22–24, 2023; and March 22–24, 2024. The training sessions within the framework of this program were attended by 106 students (45 attendees in 2024), of which 97 were employees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Secretariat (43 in 2024) and 9 were

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<sup>60</sup>Reply to request for receiving public information from the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine dated 28.10.2024.

aides to MPs of Ukraine (2 aides in 2024). Out of the total number of students, 9 were men (6 in 2024) and 97 were women (35 in 2024).<sup>61</sup>

**46. Number of women and men MPs who attended the last gender equality training. (Answer: number of women (W) and men (M) whom the question concerns)**

**W 0**

**M 0**

**47. Does the parliament's strategic plan explicitly mention gender equality? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**Yes**

*Gender equality is one of the principles of the Strategy for Building the Human Resources Capacity of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Secretariat the until 2022.<sup>62</sup> It is also planned to develop and approve the Strategy for Building the Human Resources Capacity of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Secretariat the until 2027.<sup>63</sup>*

**48. Does the parliament have a gender equality plan? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

**49. Has the parliament implemented any form of gender budgeting in relation to the national budget? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

*Gender budgeting is a strategy for achieving gender equality between women and men by focusing on how public resources are generated and spent. Gender budgeting has a threefold goal: to promote accountability and transparency in fiscal planning; to increase gender-responsive participation in the budget process, for example by taking steps to involve women and men equally in budget preparation; and to promote gender equality and women's rights.*

**49a. Is there an internal body in charge of gender budgeting? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

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<sup>61</sup>Reply to request for receiving public information from the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine dated 28.10.2024.

<sup>62</sup>Strategy for Building the Human Resources Capacity of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine until 2022. URL: <https://vrkadry.rada.gov.ua/uploads/documents/30815.pdf>

<sup>63</sup>Draft Ukraine Recovery Plan, p. 87. URL: <https://www.kmu.gov.ua/storage/app/sites/1/recoveryrada/ua/governance.pdf>

**50. Has the parliament implemented any form of gender budgeting in relation to the internal budget? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

**51. Is there a formal gender equality policy for parliamentary employees? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

**52. Is there a body within the parliament responsible for promoting gender equality among parliamentary employees? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

**53. Has gender equality training (GET) been offered to parliamentary employees in the last calendar year? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**Yes**

**54. Number of women and men parliamentary employees who attended the last gender equality training? (Answer: number of women (W) and men (M) whom the question concerns)**

**W 35**

**M 6**

*The number was calculated from the total number of participants in the training "Specifics of Conducting Gender-Legal Examination of Draft Laws in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine" in 2024.*

**55. Is there a budget allocated for implementing gender mainstreaming tools and positive actions in the current year? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

#### **AREA 4: The parliament produces gender-sensitive legislation.**

##### **The area “The parliament produces gender-sensitive legislation”:**

*This block is focused on creating, implementing and monitoring legislation in order to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men. The section includes an assessment of the extent to which legislative activities reflect the interests of women and men and take into account gender equality issues, since gender-sensitive legislation aims to contribute to the fight against discrimination, protect women's rights and ensure their active participation in public and political life.*

*One of the key aspects is the gender impact assessment of new legislative initiatives, which is instrumental in identifying potential risks*

of gender inequality in draft laws. Moreover, it is important to analyze the implementation of international standards, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), into national legislation.

**56. Are there any laws or legislative quotas in force to enhance gender equality in your country? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**Yes**

**57. If the country has laws enhancing gender equality, what are the main policy areas addressed with these laws? (Answer: choose all relevant options from the list)**

- Gender mainstreaming
- Gender-based violence**
- Work-life balance**
- Women and the economy
- Women in decision making**
- Gender and education, research, technology and innovation
- Gender and media
- N/A

Ukraine adopted Law of Ukraine No. 1401-IX dated April 15, 2021 “On Amending Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine on Ensuring Equal Opportunities for Mothers and Fathers in Childcare,” the provisions of which, in terms of parental leave, correspond to EU Directive 2019/1158/EU.<sup>64</sup>

**58. Has the country ratified the Convention on the Elimination of Any Form of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**Yes**

Ukraine ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The ratification took place in 1981, thus obliging the country to adhere to international standards for the protection of women's rights and ensuring gender equality in all spheres of life.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>64</sup>Yaremko Y. Balance of Professional and Personal Life as an EU Standard in the Field of Gender Equality. URL: <https://jurfem.com.ua/balans-chastyna-1/>

<sup>65</sup>General Recommendations #1-37 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. UN Women. URL:

[https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2018/03/cedaw-general-recommendations---ukraine\\_europe](https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2018/03/cedaw-general-recommendations---ukraine_europe)

**59. Is the country a party to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA)? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**Yes**

**59a. Has the country developed a national strategy for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA)? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

*In Ukraine, the main goals and steps to achieve progress in establishing gender equality, as set out by the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, are reflected in a number of normative documents in various spheres of public life. Thus, the following documents have been enacted: the State Strategy for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men by 2030, approved by Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Ordinance No. 752-r dated 12.08.2022; the National Strategy for Overcoming the Gender Pay Gap for the Period until 2030, approved by Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Ordinance No. 815-r dated 15.09.2023; the Strategy for Implementing Gender Equality in Education by 2030, approved by Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Ordinance No. 815-r dated 20.12.2022; the National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 “Women, Peace and Security” for the period until 2025, approved by Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Ordinance No. 1544-r dated 28.10.2020; and the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Concept of Communication in the Field of Gender Equality, approved by Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Resolution No. 79-r dated 27.01.2023.*

**60. Has the country ratified the Convention on Preventing and Combatting Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention)? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**Yes**

*Ukraine ratified the Istanbul Convention on June 20, 2022.*

**61. Has the parliament officially promoted a gender action plan or a national program for enhancing gender equality in the current legislature? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

**62. What are the main policy areas addressed in the gender action plan? (Answer: choose all relevant options from the list)**

- Gender mainstreaming
- Gender-based violence
- Work-life balance
- Women and the economy
- Women in decision making
- Gender and education, research, technology and innovation

- Gender and media
- None of the above**

**63. Are there any rules stating that gender impact assessment should be part of the legislative process? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

**63a. Are there sanctions for non-compliance with gender impact assessment requirements? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

**64. In the current legislature, what proportion (%) of enacted laws have been subject to a gender impact assessment? (Answer: choose a SINGLE option from the list)**

- All laws
- More than half
- Half of the laws
- Less than half**
- None

*Pursuant to Article 4 of the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men” and Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Resolution No. 997 dated November 28, 2018 “Issues of Conducting Gender-Legal Examination,” the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine (below, the Ministry of Justice) has the authority to conduct gender-legal examination of normative legal acts and draft acts in order to ensure compliance with the principles of gender equality in legislation. Gender-legal examination includes an analysis of documents for the presence of discriminatory provisions or sex-based biases and an assessment of compliance with international standards of gender equality. Based on the results of the examination, the Ministry of Justice may provide recommendations for amendments to eliminate gender discrimination and ensure gender-sensitive regulation of legal relations.*

**65. Do MPs or their staff have access to dedicated tools/guidelines to conduct gender analysis and gender impact assessment? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**Yes**

**66. Is there a dedicated body that oversees gender equality in government action? (Answer: Yes/No)**

*The oversight and control function is a means of holding public authorities accountable for their actions and ensuring that they implement policies in accordance with the Laws and Budget approved by the Parliament.*

**No**

**66a. Is there a budget for oversight of gender equality? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

**67. Which international conventions/agreements are regularly monitored by the parliament? (Answer: choose all relevant options from the list)**

- CEDAW**
- BPfA
- Istanbul Convention**
- None

**68. Does the parliament issue recommendations for the enactment of ratified conventions? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

**69. If there are gender equality laws in force, does the parliament periodically monitor the implementation of these laws? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**Yes**

**70. Does the parliament issue recommendations for the enactment of gender equality laws? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

**71. In the last calendar year, has the parliament held consultations with gender-oriented stakeholders, in order to support its oversight of gender equality function? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**Yes**

*Analysis of legislative acts for the purpose of ensuring constitutional guarantees of equality of citizens before the law, including regardless of sex or gender, as well as ensuring equal opportunities for men and women (in accordance with the provisions, in particular, of Article 8 of the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men”), is, inter alia, a component of the scientific, expert and legal assessment of draft laws of Ukraine and other legislative acts.<sup>66</sup>*

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<sup>66</sup>Reply to request for receiving public information from the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine dated 28.10.2024.

## AREA 5: Symbolic function of parliament.

### The area "Symbolic function of parliament" (in the context of gender equality):

*This block is focused on taking into account the gender component as the Parliament performs its symbolic functions. Thus, the Parliament's historic buildings, halls, objects and decorative elements often reflect gender stereotypes in which leadership and power are associated with men, while women are represented by images of beauty or elegance. A gender-sensitive parliament should ensure that physical spaces are stereotype-free, comfortable and accessible.*

*Moreover, a separate aspect to be analyzed includes issues of communicating gender equality initiatives, using gender-sensitive language and ensuring gender balance in parliamentary delegations and events. The Parliament should take into account gender sensitivity in all aspects of its activities, emphasizing the equality of women and men both symbolically and practically.*

### 72. Does the parliament have any childcare facilities, such as nursing or family rooms? (Answer: Yes/No)

**Yes**

### 73. Are there any official policies or efforts to enhance gender-sensitivity of physical spaces? (Answer: Yes/No)

**No**

### 74. Is security staff gender balanced? (Answer: Yes/No)

**No**

*The issue falls within the competence of the State Security Department of Ukraine, which provides protection of the administrative buildings of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in accordance with the Law of Ukraine "On State Protection of Public Authorities of Ukraine and Officials." According to the State Security Department of Ukraine, the ratio of women to men guarding the administrative buildings of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine is 98% men and 2% women.<sup>67</sup>*

### 75. Are there any rules or procedures to ensure gender balance when naming parliamentary spaces? (Answer: Yes/No)

**No**

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<sup>67</sup>Reply to request for obtaining public information from the State Security Department dated 27.11.2024

**76. Are there any rules or procedures to obtain a gender-balanced representation of subjects in paintings, statues and other decorations? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

**77. Are there any rules or procedures to obtain a gender-balanced representation in artists whose work is presented at the parliament? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

**78. Have there been any initiatives dedicated to gender equality issues/women's rights in the last calendar year on the parliament's premises (Answer: Yes/No)**

**Yes**

*Such initiatives may include, for example, tours with guides telling visitors the history of women in the parliament; exhibitions dedicated to famous women in the country's history, etc.*

**N.B.:** according to the Parliament's press service, the following events were held in 2024 (some of them took place outside the premises of the Parliament, but were held on the initiative or jointly with Committees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine):

- On February 13, 2024, a round table "Harmonization of the Legislation of Ukraine with European Standards in the Field of Combating Discrimination and Ensuring Diversity" was held, co-organized by the Committee on Human Rights, Deoccupation and Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine, National Minorities and Interethnic Relations, together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Office of the VRU Commissioner for Human Rights;
- On April 9, 2024, the Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on Integration of Ukraine into the EU, in cooperation with UN Women in Ukraine, held a discussion on "Gender Equality in Integration into the EU";
- On June 3, 2024, the Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on Human Rights, Deoccupation and Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine, National Minorities and Interethnic Relations held a public discussion of the Government's draft law on amending the Law of Ukraine "On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men";
- On July 30, 2024, the conference "Empowerment and Protection of the Rights of Roma Women through Effective Policy Implementation" was held, co-organized by the Committee of the Verkhovna Rada on Human

**79. Does the parliament's website have a section for citizens that addresses gender equality? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

**80. Does the parliament have a specific policy on gender equality in official communication? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

**81. Is information about gender equality related initiatives of the parliament systematically disseminated to the public and civil society? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**No**

**82. Is there an official policy in place for gender balanced parliamentary delegations? (Answer: Yes/No)**

**Yes**

*Yes, such a policy exists, since paragraph 9 of the Regulation on Permanent Delegations of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to Parliamentary Bodies of International Organizations, approved by Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Chairperson's Ordinance No. 1366 dated December 29, 2023, stipulates that "a fair gender representation shall be ensured by including women MPs of Ukraine in the permanent delegation in proportion to women's share of the actual number of MPs of Ukraine in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine or above that proportion."*

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<sup>68</sup>Reply to request for receiving public information from the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine dated 28.10.2024.

