

Canada

UKRAINE GENDER ASSESSMENT 2014



August 2014

This report was produced with the financial support of the Government of Canada. The views and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the Government of Canada.

Ukraine Gender Assessment 2014

Kristin Haffert

August 2014



Canada 

Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems.



Ukraine Gender Assessment 2014

Copyright © 2014 International Foundation for Electoral Systems.

All rights reserved.

Permission Statement: No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system without the written permission of IFES.

Requests for permission should include the following information:

- A description of the material for which permission to copy is desired.
- The purpose for which the copied material will be used and the manner in which it will be used.
- Your name, title, company or organization name, telephone number, fax number, email address and mailing address.

Please send all requests for permission to:

International Foundation for Electoral Systems

1850 K Street, NW, Fifth Floor

Washington, D.C. 20006

Email: editor@ifes.org

Fax: 202-350-6701

About IFES

The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) supports citizens' right to participate in free and fair elections. Our independent expertise strengthens electoral systems and builds local capacity to deliver sustainable solutions.

As the global leader in democracy promotion, we advance good governance and democratic rights by:

- Providing technical assistance to election officials
- Empowering the underrepresented to participate in the political process
- Applying field-based research to improve the electoral cycle

Since 1987, IFES has worked in over 135 countries – from developing democracies to mature democracies.

For more information, visit www.IFES.org.

Table of Contents

Background.....	1
Overview.....	1
Windows of Opportunity and Vulnerability	3
Assessment Findings.....	8
Strategies to Promote Women’s Political Participation.....	27
Program Recommendations.....	31
Conclusion	36
Annex.....	38

Background

A society is able to reach its full potential in a world in which women and men are fully engaged as equal partners in their families, workplaces and communities. Based on international human rights standards and best practices, IFES promotes political participation, justice and equal rights for women and men around the world. IFES reflects these values in its programming and workplace culture. IFES promotes gender equity to identify and overcome entrenched patterns of advantage and disadvantage that are based on socially ascribed gender roles and stereotypes.

IFES Ukraine focuses on fostering dialogue on electoral reform, training electoral management bodies, gauging public opinion on progress toward democracy, and mentoring and supporting civil society activists. Most recently, IFES was instrumental in supporting the Central Election Commission (CEC) and election-monitoring organizations in the lead-up to the early presidential election on May 25, 2014, amid a tense and volatile environment. IFES public opinion surveys have been conducted in Ukraine for the past two decades including in 2014, making it the leading source of research on the political attitudes of Ukrainians. IFES understands the value of fostering greater debate about the representation of women and other underrepresented groups in political life in Ukraine and supports citizens and institutions to promote reform measures that strengthen the democratic process.

Overview

Despite the fact that Ukraine enacted progressive laws related to women compared to other post-Soviet countries, including on trafficking and domestic violence, its percentage of women in parliament has remained below 10% since independence, more than two decades ago. With only 9.44% female Members of Parliament (MPs), according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)¹, female representation at the national level is well below the global average of 21.9%.² Only one woman, the Minister of Social Policy, serves in government. Women's representation in locally elected government is significantly more robust, as is their participation in local election management bodies (EMBs).

The 2013 protests against Ukraine's abandonment of plans to sign an agreement with the European Union (EU) led to an interim president and early presidential election on May 25, 2014, that brought Petro Poroshenko to office. Clashes in eastern and southern regions of the country created rising tension leading up to the election, adding pressure on the political and security environment. Protests among the public and civil society groups has led to an initial set of suggested political reforms, the first step in the important transition from protests to an advocacy agenda that could pave the way for transformative political change. These suggested reforms also have the potential to accelerate opportunities for women's political leadership, which might otherwise take decades to realize.

Despite an opening for women to gain traction within political parties and in legislative positions in future elections, women have not engaged in targeted, collective advocacy to seize their

¹ http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/2331_E.htm

² <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>

golden moment. Ukraine's fragmented advocacy on behalf of women's issues and lack of a unified voice among women is part of the reason this is so. It stems from a Soviet legacy that rejects the notion that women are disadvantaged because of their longstanding dual roles as managers of domestic responsibilities and part of the workforce. Appearing throughout this report, is evidence of a belief, held by women and men alike, that equality has been achieved.. However, statistics tell a very different story. Current political reform proposals and continuing discussions present an opportunity for women to integrate their concerns into public debate on key issues, in the same way that new parties have seized the chance to gain traction amid the political and military crisis.

A fundamental underlying challenge to women gaining political power is that although women want change, they themselves are not yet convinced of the need to end male dominance of political institutions.³ Thus, there is a lack of visible momentum among women from civil society and political parties to work together to achieve reforms that benefit women — including a quota, which could be the most far-reaching reform for women. Meanwhile, an escalating military conflict is consuming the country's attention, and is largely portrayed in a gender-blind manner. The conflict has the potential to galvanize women for change; however, challenges to this include lack of a unified women's movement; lack of attention by the public to gender equality in economic, political and social life; and lack of technical assistance from international organizations on gender equality.

This report explores the impact of the legal system on women's political participation; current legal reform efforts; election administration; voter registration; women's participation in political activities; political parties; civic and voter engagement; political finance; and the role of conflict. It identifies windows of opportunities and vulnerability related to women's political participation; identifies strategies to promote women's participation and leadership; and lays out recommendations for the international community to execute these strategies through programs, partnerships, activities and research.

Methodology

IFES commissioned a gender assessment from June 19-27, 2014, that included interviews with a range of stakeholders including members of civil society, political parties, election commissioners, parliament, IFES staff and partners, and others (Annex 1). The IFES Gender Assessment Tool provided the framework for interviews. The assessment took place in Kyiv; select interviews were conducted with individuals from outside of the capital. The assessment was funded by the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD) for "Strengthening Capacity of Electoral Actors," which supports civil society organizations (CSOs) promoting measures that address women's underrepresentation in politics. Public opinion research conducted by IFES and others also informed the assessment.⁴

During the assessment, IFES co-hosted two meetings with the National Democratic Institute (NDI), which also contributed to the findings. At each, the consultant made a presentation and facilitated a discussion on electoral reform, specifically related to draft legislation on an

³ Findings from Eight Focus Groups of Women Voters from Ukraine, Lake Research Partners, NDI, 2013.

⁴ The National Democratic Institute conducted focus groups exclusively among women in 2012.

electoral quota. The first session (June 27) brought together key members of civil society working on gender and political participation, and the second (June 28) was with the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) Committee on European Integration (Annex 5). The latter took place at the initiative of the Equal Opportunities Inter-Faction Union (Equal Opportunities Caucus) of the parliament, which was established in 2011 to address gender equality.⁵ The workshops addressed how quotas have been applied technically and maximized in other countries, and addressed options for implementing an effective quota in Ukraine. The consultant's presentations also addressed a range of other special measures, including financial and media incentives and internal party reforms that have advanced women's electoral participation alongside quotas, or as a standalone measure (Annex 3 & 4). These meetings provided insight into the knowledge, needs and advocacy required to strengthen women's advocacy on electoral participation and a prospective quota.

Windows of Opportunity and Vulnerability

Significant opportunities to address the gamut of challenges facing women's access, participation and leadership in the political arena exist. The following chart highlights key barriers and windows of opportunity.

⁵ The caucus has not been consistently active, though it resumed activities at the end of 2012.

UKRAINE
Gender Analysis
Summary of Findings

ISSUE	WINDOWS OF VULNERABILITY	WINDOWS OF OPPORTUNITY
Legal System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electoral system does not favor women’s participation (proportional representation is best) • No special measure/quota is currently legislated • Weak political finance regulations and weak enforcement of existing regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women and men are equal under the law (Constitution & Electoral Law) • Legacy of progressive laws for women • Draft quota legislation (Draft Bill 3411) introduced in parliament • Proposals for a range of political reforms could establish greater legal protections for citizens (election law, political finance, decentralization, etc.) that lead to a more democratic political process – creating an opening for women’s greater influence in political processes • Opportunity for election reform measures to enforce and strengthen political finance laws • Political finance reform could include special measures to enhance competition for election and promote women’s participation in political parties • Equal Opportunities Caucus in parliament has worked on gender equality legislation; Women’s Commission/9subcommittee in parliament • Ukraine is party to several agreements that call for 30% women’s political participation that could serve as advocacy tools for reform (MDGs, CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action)
Election Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC does not have a gender policy • CEC has no staff person dedicated to addressing gender concerns • Gender-related disparities that may exist in the voting process as a result of gender are undocumented by electoral administrators • Weak oversight of existing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEC has five female Commissioners • High degree of participation by women in DECs and PECs • CEC has addressed gender in some instances — through tracking sex-disaggregated data of CEC and DEC members; training department addressed gender in voter outreach

	<p>campaign finance; no mandate for CEC to enforce laws, only report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence of political parties in election commissions • Addressing gender is not a priority of election officials 	<p>materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of exposure among officials about the impacts of gender on electoral administration • Opportunity to build the capacity of the CEC to monitor candidate finance
Voter Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated voter statistics; turnout based on sex is unknown • CEC does not view sex-disaggregation of statistics a priority • Electoral administration does not have an institutionalized capacity to identify disparities based on gender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal registration reduces voter-access issues that could impact women disproportionately • Women tend to vote in higher numbers than men • Sex is recorded in SVR, making sex-disaggregated voter-tracking easy • Voter information was recently updated with a new, centralized technology system and is comprehensive • Tracking and communicating enhanced voter statistics to citizens can add to the credibility of the CEC and the electoral process; provides long-term benefits to CEC, parties, civic groups, etc.
Women's Political Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of awareness in society that women are at a greater disadvantage to participate politically than men; denial of inequality • Public perception among women and men that leaders are men • Lack of hope in current political institutions • Apathy among women to compete for office • Double standard for women in politics/ women and men are not judged equally • Male-dominated politics, women opt for political participation in civil society • Not a strong, unified women's movement; fragmented advocacy on gender-equality issues • Lack of strong efforts by civil society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong support among voters for women's participation in politics • Public faith in women as political representatives • EuroMaidan fueled calls for reform that provide new opportunities for women to become engaged in politics • Media is exposing discrimination against women more frequently, raising awareness among the public • Young women are engaged in civil society • Cadre of locally elected women can mentor first-time women candidates, and/or could run for higher office

	<p>on promoting women’s political participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of strong advocacy skills among civil society and ability to apply them • Women in national politics have disappointed women voters • “Triple shift”/politics creates another demand in addition to family and professional responsibilities 	
Political Parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male-dominated; few influential women in leadership • Historically centralized • Lack of transparency, including in candidate selection and campaign finance • Corruption • No internal affirmative action measures; few commitments to promoting women in internal structures • Resistance to changing internal structures to promote women in party decision-making and leadership • Women’s wings are not integrated within party structures • Influence of money in dictating electoral success can reduce focus on issues and policy, which is how women can demonstrate value to the party • Lack of support for selecting women to be candidates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergence of non-leader centric parties with greater member contributions and opportunity for leadership positions • Women members participate more at the local level • Women’s structures exist in several parties • Training programs for women • Success of women candidates in SMD shows ability to garner interest among voters without always having strong party support • Women MPs can strengthen cross-party efforts to coordinate advocacy on a quota and other issues to improve women’s ability to compete as candidates for elected positions at the national and local levels
Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Averts attention from other issues, such as gender equality, which is already a low priority among voters and politicians • Lack of transition from women’s high level of participation in the events of EuroMaidan to a reform agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urgency for legal reforms that strengthen democracy, which can build faith among female voters • Increased media exposure of women during EuroMaidan movement • Women’s interests that brought them out during EuroMaidan events can be integrated into a reform agenda

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women recently gained new, high-profile positions in government • Conflict has gender-related implications and is influenced by gender — a fact can be used as an advocacy tool to argue for the importance of women in policymaking, making political institutions more representative and creating opportunity for changing policy debates • Women often approach conflict differently, which could have policy impact if their voices are heard • UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan has not been created to address women’s role in peace and security
Corruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are deterred from political participation because they believe the process serves other interests, not voters • Women unable or unwilling to compete with illegal influence of money in politics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are motivated by messaging that says women can “fix a broken system” • Voters are fatigued by corruption • Potential for election law and political finance reform • Opening for greater oversight by civil society and the CEC on finance • Voters believe women are closer to day-to-day issues influencing voters • New parties, open to operating differently from entrenched parties with a history of corruption • International attention on corruption

Assessment Findings

Legal System

Ukraine has afforded women far-reaching legal rights protected by legislation since independence. Its Soviet legacy laid the groundwork for the principle of gender equality, now enshrined in the Constitution. Deep inequalities persist, however, and discrimination against women is underexposed and rarely acknowledged by the public. Article 24 of the Constitution guarantees equal rights: “Equality of the rights of women and men is ensured by providing women with opportunities equal to those of men, in public and political, and cultural activity, in obtaining education and in professional training, in work and its remuneration.”⁶ Ukraine has demonstrated its commitment to equal rights by ratifying the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1981, which calls for women’s political participation and other protections. Ukraine signed CEDAW’s Optional Protocol on violence against women in 2003.⁷

Article 15 of the Law on Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men, passed in 2005 states that “[t]he equal electoral rights and opportunities of women and men shall be secured by the legislation of Ukraine. At the time of the nomination of the candidates for the People’s deputies in the multi-mandate electoral constituencies, the political parties and electoral blocs shall provide for the representation of women and men in the relevant voting lists. The electoral commissions shall exercise control over the fulfillment of this requirement.”⁸ However, there is no provision for implementation or enforcement of the law.⁹ Although the law prohibits discrimination against voters and candidates based on gender, the social and political environment creates fundamental barriers to women’s full participation in elections.

Ukraine’s law prohibits “privileges or restrictions of candidates on grounds of race, colour, political, religious or other view, gender, ethnic and social origin, property status, and place of residence, language or other features.”

Women’s participation in Politics and Decision-Making in Ukraine, Ukraine Women’s Fund

In an effort to meet the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that established a 30% target for women’s representation in parliaments globally by 2015, the government established the State Program on Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men in 2013 (valid through 2016), which outlines steps for achieving greater political representation of women,

⁶ Women’s Participation in Politics and Decision-Making in Ukraine: Strategy Paper, Ukraine Women’s Fund, 2011.

⁷ <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/reports.htm>

⁸ http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---ilo_aids/documents/legaldocument/wcms_127500.pdf

⁹ http://parlament.org.ua/upload/docs/Party_Report_Ukraine.pdf

among other domestic priorities.¹⁰ However, Ukraine has fallen short of the 30% target for women’s political participation in politics outlined in CEDAW and the MDGs. The Venice Commission, OSCE/ODIHR and the Council of Europe have produced documents that address the representation of women candidates.¹¹ Ukraine has also not yet developed a National Action Plan on implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325), which was unanimously adopted in 2000 to address women’s role in peace and conflict for the first time.¹² UNSCR 1325 “links the impact of war and conflict on women on the one hand and also promotes their participation in various peace and security processes such as in peace negotiations, constitutional and electoral reforms and reconstruction and reintegration on the other.”¹³

Legislative Reform

A legal reform proposal for a quota on women’s representation is the most compelling reform proposal up for debate at the moment because it could have far-reaching impacts on women’s political participation. In October 2013, legislation was introduced to guarantee a quota at all levels of elected government — parliament, local councils and mayoral seats. The draft law has been introduced and tabled. Although attention to gender as part of electoral reform or political finance reform could have a very significant impact on women’s access to the national legislature and other elected positions, the focus of MPs is primarily on the quota. MPs have not developed an advocacy plan to bring the bill to a vote and to pass; however, the joint IFES/NDI event in June was an important step in raising awareness about the technicalities of the bill and how it will (or will not) work in practice. Members of the Equal Opportunities Caucus, which has produced draft legislation on women’s empowerment and gender equality, proposed Draft Law 3411.¹⁴

Draft Law 3411 applies to the “Election of Deputies of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, local councils and village, town and city mayors.” For the PR seats, it mandates that the percentage of one sex not exceed 60% for the first five candidates included in the electoral list of each party; in each subsequent list of 10 candidates on the list of the party, the proportion of candidates of the same sex should be no more than 70%.¹⁵ Although the draft law includes a quota for all levels of elected government, the provision for its application can only be practically applied to lists and not to single-member district (SMD) seats, which require a different type of quota (one that addresses districts in the national constituency rather than political party lists). This makes the draft law unenforceable for SMD seats in its current form; SMD seats include mayoral and village and settlement council seats in addition to half of the parliamentary candidates. The draft law requires that the Central Election

¹⁰ Women’s participation in the policy-making bodies and in the decision-making process in Ukraine, NDI.

¹¹ http://parlament.org.ua/upload/docs/Party_Report_Ukraine.pdf

¹² http://www.peacewomen.org/themes_theme.php?id=15&subtheme=true

¹³ <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/cross-cutting-report/lookup-c-gIKWLeMTIsG-b-6239031.php?print=true>

¹⁴ Women’s participation in the policy-making bodies and in the decision-making process in Ukraine, NDI.

¹⁵ http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=48645

Commission (CEC) not register candidates if the party list does not meet the minimum requirements of the law.¹⁶

While Draft Law 3411 applies to the current electoral system, there have been three separate proposals submitted to the parliament to change Ukraine's election system entirely. This complicates the advocacy agenda of quota proponents. Depending on whether and which electoral system becomes legislation, Draft Law 3411 could become moot. Each new electoral reform proposal considers a combination of regional semi-open district elections and proportional lists closed to party selection.¹⁷ This could be favorable to women, provided a strong quota that guarantees the election of 30% women is included for the lists and includes list placement criteria and sanctions for non-compliance. The newest proposal divides Ukraine into 450 territorial election districts (TEDs) and also uses a list proportional system where parties nominate national lists. None of the proposals have become legislation yet, and only one includes a quota — a weak one that does not guarantee 30% women in the parliament. It proposes that just one in every five candidate positions on a party list be a woman, significantly below the global target of 30% established in 1995 by the Beijing Platform for Action, reinforced by CEDAW and most recently reinforced by the MDGs.

A new electoral system would require a different quota proposal from the current draft law and technical knowledge to design and align the quota with the proposed electoral system. It is not clear whether there is enough momentum to reform the electoral system prior to the next elections. Most MPs are focused on Draft Law 3411 because they prefer to maintain the current electoral system.

Election Administration

Women have a track record of high engagement in electoral administration, with their greatest involvement at the most local level. At the CEC or national level, women comprise four out of 15 members including one of two deputy chairpersons and the secretary.¹⁸ The CEC is a permanent organization, unlike the two remaining levels of administration, the District Election Commissions (DECs) and Precinct Election Commissions (PECs), which are formed for the campaign period. Party and candidate affiliation determine the composition of these temporary bodies. The influence of political parties on the composition of electoral commissions is a notable challenge to transparent elections in Ukraine.¹⁹ While IFES and others have stated the importance of depoliticizing the election commissions to strengthen the independence of the institution, such a move could also improve women's access to a process where they have less influence due to their status in political parties.

For the 2014 presidential race, the CEC reported that nearly half of the 3,380 DEC members were women: 48.59%. Women comprised 43.19% of chairs, 45.07% of vice-chairs, 66.67% of

¹⁶ http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=48645

¹⁷ IFES PowerPoint 2014 (internal)

¹⁸ Analysis of the Representation of Women in Election Administration in Eastern Partnership (EAP) Countries and Russia, March 20, 2014.

¹⁹ http://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/em/electoral-management-case-studies/ukraine-case-study/mobile_browsing

secretaries and 47.92% of DEC members.²⁰ Although the CEC did not track sex-disaggregated statistics for the PECs, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) reported that women were 71% of PEC members.²¹ Women were 66% of PEC chairpersons for the presidential and 72% during the parliamentary election.²² For the 2012 parliamentary election, the OSCE reported that the DECs were comprised of 56% women members, while PECs had 73% women members, including nearly all of the chairpersons.²³ As the level of election administration becomes more local, the scope of work becomes more technical — and this is where women are found in the greatest numbers.

The large presence of women as local election officials is consistent with the trend in Central and Eastern Europe.²⁴ Many countries report that women’s participation in elections is highest in performing functions that require the greatest detail or task-related activity. According to the OSCE, women comprise the majority of PEC members, the level at which votes are cast and ballots counted, and where decisions that may significantly impact the outcome are not made. The DECs certify results and adjudicate complaints, requiring a higher degree of decision-making responsibility; the DECs include fewer women and suffered from significant last-minute changes in composition (by candidates and parties) throughout the country preceding the 2014 presidential polls. Interviewees attest that the higher number of women members at the PEC level is due to both women’s availability and faith among the public that women will manage elections well. International observers have accounted for low compensation as the reason for women’s high participation at the local level.²⁵ It is also a global phenomenon that political parties are adept at using women as “foot soldiers” in elections — to knock on doors, host rallies and bake sales and count ballots. Political parties are often less adept at strategically leveraging women to galvanize voter support through women’s visibility as candidates and by engaging them substantively in internal decisions that affect party policy or campaign platforms, for example.

With the exception of the training department’s attention to gender, with support from IFES, no attention has been given to development of a gender policy or to facilitate gender equality in the leadership of the CEC. The increasing number of women in local commissions is used to argue, by electoral administrators and activists, that there is equality in electoral management bodies. Despite the steadily increasing participation of women election officials, which has exceeded men on many occasions, Ukraine does not have designated staff responsible for addressing gender-related issues. Such policies could maximize electoral integrity and further strengthen institutions administering elections and improve the overall process. Gender considerations incorporated into CEC training materials and gender-balanced training teams recruited by election-monitoring CSOs for the DECs and PECs, with IFES support, are the initial steps that have been taken. Measures such as these could further strengthen an electoral

²⁰ CEC statistics on May 2014 presidential election.

²¹ <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/ukraine/120549?download=true>

²² Analysis of the Representation of Women in Election Administration in Eastern Partnership (EAP) Countries and Russia, March 20, 2014.

²³ <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/ukraine/120549?download=true>

²⁴ Analysis of the Representation of Women in Election Administration in Eastern Partnership (EAP) Countries and Russia, March 20, 2014.

²⁵ http://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/em/electoral-management-case-studies/ukraine-case-study/mobile_browsing

process that received accolades from the international community for the 2014 election, but was not without its challenges.

According to CEC leadership interviewed, policies or data related to gender are considered excessive and not consistent with the needs of the country. Gender was mentioned only in the context of voter access, with officials saying that women have no barriers to voting in any part of the country. This demonstrates a lack of understanding that access to power and resources among men and women in the household and within the community extends beyond these realms — to civic participation and many other areas. Lack of a gender policy shows the lack of exposure by the Commission to the impact of integrated gender considerations and its ability to enhance credibility of the institution and its service to citizens.

Comparative information could help the CEC mitigate disparities related to gender roles, so that it might deepen its commitment to addressing gender gaps that improve the integrity of the electoral process. This would require that the institution closely and methodically examine its internal policies, implementation, and potential negative impacts on all aspects of the electoral process. The OAS Manual for Incorporating a Gender Perspective states “one way to account for gender differences and avoid any bias against women is precisely to achieve a gender balance in the composition of those institutions responsible for guaranteeing impartiality in the electoral process. Studies on access to justice have shown that the involvement of women within judicial bodies helps to ensure gender equality, through the incorporation of the gender-sensitive approach into the interpretation and resolution of cases. (Humanas, 2011).”²⁶

Voter Registration

Although the CEC could track voters by sex without major adjustments to internal processes, it is not a priority of the CEC to capture this information. A fundamental and preliminary step in making EMBs responsive to voters involves disaggregating data according to sex, a practice used by many EMBs globally. In Ukraine, voter registration is passive and continuous, using the centralized State Voter Register (SVR), which is managed by the CEC and updated on a monthly basis. The SVR, adapted from the civil registry, indicates the sex of a voter, but is not tracked during elections.²⁷ The CEC and others report that the gender breakdown of voters roughly corresponds with that of the population, but without sex-disaggregated voter data on turnout, this breakdown cannot be statistically validated. The fact that voter accessibility among women is not considered a problem is based on anecdotal evidence only, due to lack of sex-disaggregation of data.

The CEC’s lack of sex-disaggregated voter statistics does not afford the institution the chance to track voter behavior based on sex that could reveal important patterns across regions and other demographics. The IFES Global Survey of Women’s Organizations indicated that the most vulnerable women in Ukraine are living in rural areas (75%) and women with disabilities (50%). An issue that often makes women vulnerable is hindrance to accessing documents required to prove identity for voting.²⁸ The percentage of women who said they were very likely to vote in

²⁶ http://www.oas.org/es/sap/deco/pubs/manuales/Manual_gender_e.pdf

²⁷ <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/ukraine/120549?download=true>

²⁸ http://www.oas.org/es/sap/deco/pubs/manuales/Manual_gender_e.pdf

the 2014 elections was notably lower than that of men. It is important that the CEC have sex-disaggregated statistics on turnout to ensure that any artificial barriers that may unnecessarily influence participation be eliminated, if they relate to administration.

There could be gender gaps related to accessing polling locations based on legal, economic, cultural, social, logistical or other issues that impact women and men differently that could exacerbate this number that may be related to public opinion about the country's state of affairs.²⁹ Insecurity in the oblasts of Donetsk and Luhansk in the recent election impacted voter turnout; this could have been compounded by gender where the need to fulfill military duty by men, for example, decreased their availability to vote. Without sex-disaggregated data, overt or nuanced, gender-based discrimination affecting voter rights or participation remains unknown.

“...It is necessary to examine the legal guarantees of men’s and women’s right to vote, and to collect the corresponding data disaggregated by sex. Statistics on voting-age population and participation and absentee rates by sex are essential for this analysis. The aforementioned data must also be broken down by geographic area and by age and ethnic group. A comparison between this data and associated structural variables (economic and cultural) enables further analysis on whether differences in voting rates between men and women can be attributed to conditions related to gender equity.”

Manual for Incorporating a Gender Perspective into OAS Electoral Observation Missions (OAS/EOMs)

Women’s Participation in Political Activities

Women’s political participation in Ukraine conjures diverse and strong opinions. Persistent discrimination and strong attitudes about gender roles and political leadership reflect entrenched cultural biases that have been slow to change. Ukraine’s history as a Soviet republic afforded women opportunities to balance careers in a culture that placed high value on their contribution to family life. For example, women’s visibility in high-profile positions in the media and to some extent politics reinforces the perception that women can access high-level positions in any sector — if they try hard enough. Highly visible female political figures like Yulia Tymoshenko, the first and only female Vice-Prime Minister and Prime Minister of Ukraine, are often referenced in order to argue equal access of opportunity. Yet, few women are able to achieve high profile positions because of systemic barriers to competition related to gender roles and perceptions. The political arena has the lowest participation of women compared to other areas of public life such as civil service, media, and business.³⁰

Women’s political participation ranges significantly from the national to local levels; it is dramatically lower at the national level where influence is greatest. Women comprise 9.44% of the current parliament, an increase from 8.44% in 2007.³¹ Remarkably, the percentage of

²⁹ http://www.oas.org/es/sap/deco/pubs/manuales/Manual_gender_e.pdf

³⁰ Women’s Participation in Politics and Decision-Making in Ukraine: Strategy Paper, Ukraine Women’s Fund, 2011.

³¹ <http://www.ipu.org>

women in the national legislature decreased since independence and has never exceeded 10%, similar to the percentage of women in the parliaments of Syria, Yemen and the DRC, which have remarkably different social and cultural challenges. The 2014 presidential election featured two women out of 41 candidates.³² Statistics at the local council level are much more promising. As of January 1, 2013, in 27 regions women comprised 12% of oblast councils, 23% rayon councils, 51% village councils and 46% of township councils.³³

Women's low participation in legislative positions, particularly at the national level, is greatly influenced by their relationships to political parties. Women's membership in political parties and presence in elected positions are influenced by several of the same factors which include:

- lack of awareness of discrimination; corruption; and lack of hope in the current political system — leading to apathy;
- double standard in politics;
- male dominance in politics and greater attraction among women to civil society;
- lack of effective promotion of women's political leadership by civil society;
- lack of donor assistance on gender equality; and
- a triple burden of politics on top of personal and professional life.

The first is a *lack of awareness of discrimination* in society, in part due to the long history of women in the workforce and the veneer of equality in every day life. The perception that women have equality does not align with reality. In the IFES Global Survey of Women's Organizations, Ukrainian women's organizations ranked the two most critical issues facing women in the country to be the stereotypical image of women's role (87%) and violence against women in the private sphere tied with women's economic role (75%).³⁴ Even women publicly deny discrimination. When probed, however, most women explain in detail their personal experiences with discrimination within their family, at work and elsewhere. Alexandra Hrycak writes, "Soviet policies introduced a patriarchal division of labour that strengthened traditional gender roles while compelling women to shoulder many additional responsibilities, including full-time work. Arguably, it has been this conservative gender regime...that has led politicians, legislators, and employers in Ukraine to make discriminatory decisions about how women should prioritize domestic duties, paid work, and public activity."³⁵

The lack of compatibility between reality and perception causes friction when advocacy for women's political rights (and others) is discussed. This public denial is one reason for women's *apathy* toward engaging in politics and government; women are not convinced of the need to end the male dominance in political institutions, even though they want change. Women are disappointed that women in powerful positions are not leveraging "unique assets and perspectives" that women bring to politics and rather, are influenced by political parties and

³² <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/ukraine/120549?download=true>

³³ Women's participation in the policy-making bodies and in the decision-making process in Ukraine, NDI.

³⁴ IFES Global Survey of Women's Organizations, Key Findings from Ukraine, IFES Applied Research Center, 2012.

³⁵ [http://academic.reed.edu/sociology/faculty/hrycak/publications/jus-26\(1-2\).pdf](http://academic.reed.edu/sociology/faculty/hrycak/publications/jus-26(1-2).pdf)

political system to adopt masculine behavior.³⁶ Apathy also stems from *lack of faith in the system to create meaningful change because of widespread corruption*.³⁷ Focus groups among women conducted by U.S.-based Lake Research Partners, NDI and the Kyiv-based Razumkov Center for Economic and Political Research found that women's apathy related to political participation is "rooted in hopelessness, especially toward the prospect of change via elections." In 2014, women in higher numbers than men cited fraud as their reason for not voting; they believe their vote doesn't matter and that politicians don't care about voters. Women felt more strongly that the 2014 elections would not be free and fair; 25.1% of women compared to 22.7% of men said they thought the elections would be so flawed they would doubt the accuracy of the results. Also, 11.7% of women compared to 14.1% of men said they would not be free and fair at all.³⁸

Second, inequality creates *double standards* between men and women in politics. The double standards are based on societal perceptions of expected roles for women and men outside of politics. According to the nationwide IFES 2013 Public Opinion Survey, Ukrainians overwhelmingly support women as candidates (85%), election administrators (94%), civil servants (91%), members of political parties (88%), and heading a political party (81%). Yet about a third of the population does not believe that candidates with equal credentials are the same — because of their gender. When the public is asked specifically whether they view a difference between male and female candidates with equal credentials — 68% of men and 66% of women — report that they viewed no difference, leaving nearly a third of the population that considers gender in evaluating equally qualified candidates.³⁹ The survey conducted by Lake Research Partners and NDI showed "the desire to vote for a woman candidate is higher among women, though it still trails the number of women who say they prefer to vote for a man."⁴⁰ Therefore, the nearly one third of people who take gender into consideration despite all things being equal between candidates are putting women at a disadvantage in their choice. Throughout interviews, many people referenced the need for "quality" women in politics, not just a higher presence of women; yet, the quality of male candidates or MPs was not addressed in the same way.

The third factor in women's low political participation in political parties and legislative positions is their "accurate assessment" that men want to hold power, another deterrent and challenge to women's access. Focus group surveys cited the *dominance of men in controlling political processes* as one of the biggest barriers to women. The same survey showed that women "are realistic that men in positions of authority are not eager to share power."⁴¹ Women are also "disgusted" by sexist and inappropriate public remarks and behavior by male politicians.⁴² A growing public dialogue, thanks to civil society groups, has begun to create greater awareness about women's discrimination as a stronger watchdog for gender biases in the media, politics and other public fora that ultimately impact citizen opinion. Due to the domination of men in

³⁶ Findings from Eight Focus Groups of Women Voters from Ukraine, Lake Research Partners, NDI, 2013.

³⁷ Findings from Eight Focus Groups of Women Voters from Ukraine, Lake Research Partners, NDI, 2013.

³⁸ IFES April 2014 Ukraine Omnibus Survey data

³⁹ IFES Public Opinion in Ukraine 2013 Key Findings, December 2013.

⁴⁰ <https://www.ndi.org/files/NDI-Women-Survey-ENG.pdf>

⁴¹ Findings from Eight Focus Groups of Women Voters from Ukraine, Lake Research Partners, NDI, 2013.

⁴² Findings from Eight Focus Groups of Women Voters from Ukraine, Lake Research Partners, NDI, 2013.

politics, many women reject formal politics and often opt for *activism outside of the legislative arena, in civil society* — also common throughout the region and in many countries globally.

The fourth factor is the *ineffectiveness of civil society in advancing women's political leadership*. Civil society has high numbers of active women, who work at the local level on a range of issues, including on political participation. Women's organizations surveyed by IFES in 2012 rated women's CSOs working on women's political and civic participation as average in their effectiveness (71%) or completely/somewhat ineffective (14%).⁴³ While women have used their political voice in the NGO sector, a strong women's movement has not coalesced. Rather, women's groups work in parallel to one another, are generally not informed about each other's work, and lack an ongoing communication mechanism that might allow for exchange of their efforts in different parts of the country and even in Kyiv. The lack of coordination among women's groups or linkages between women in civil society with women in government or parties may be based on a trend where these constituencies did not interface in a regular way.⁴⁴ It is also likely due to lack of societal support for women's organizations.⁴⁵

Gender equality support in Ukraine by international organizations initially supported feminist and other women's and gender-equality organizations, but did not gain traction in Ukraine. International assistance to women in Ukraine started in the 1990s and was the first time Ukrainians addressed gender as a unique concern, largely influenced by the international community. Donor priorities didn't fit squarely with the concerns of Ukrainian women and clashed with their beliefs about equality. Post-independence, Ukraine saw a "noticeable decline in public participation in grassroots women's federations and other large non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and an increasing professionalization of women's-rights work in the hands of a small, closed elite."⁴⁶ While support from international donors helped some organizations raise awareness about gender equality, it created competition among civic groups vying for new resources allocated to gender in the newly independent Ukraine. Most importantly, support didn't provide the continuity needed to help create a foundation for a women's movement, leaving Ukrainian women and men committed to gender equality with less exposure to training, resources and information about the global women's movement.

The legacy of women's societal contributions has masked the realities of discrimination women still face. Although women in Ukraine have historically been perceived as balancing work and family effectively, a final reason for their lack of influence in politics results from the "double-burden" of greater family responsibilities and the "triple burden" that a life in politics creates. Women's legacy in the workforce makes this global issue even starker for Ukrainian women. Most women referred to the family sacrifices that accompany a life in politics. A 2013 IFES survey that asked the reason for less than 10% women's representation in parliament showed 51% of respondents believed it was because of women's family obligations. This underscores that power and resources at the household level influence the role of men and women in their

⁴³ IFES Global Survey of Women's Organizations, Key Findings from Ukraine, IFES Applied Research Center 2012.

⁴⁴ https://www.ndi.org/files/UKR_SenateForeignRelations_Testimony_Wollack_2014_06_05.pdf

⁴⁵ IFES Global Survey of Women's Organizations, Key Findings from Ukraine, IFES Applied Research Center 2012.

⁴⁶ [http://academic.reed.edu/sociology/faculty/hrycak/publications/jus-26\(1-2\).pdf](http://academic.reed.edu/sociology/faculty/hrycak/publications/jus-26(1-2).pdf)

community and may influence their decision to become candidates. Focus group surveys revealed women's view of their "power in the home" which is a strong, traditional role in the family unit. According to UNDP, women generally take on the majority of household responsibilities; 35% of women cited family problems as one of the main challenges to growth of their careers (compared to 8% for men). Nearly half of women in Ukraine take care of children, elderly and/or ill people, the highest index in Europe.⁴⁷ In 2013, "among the obstacles Ukrainians see hindering women's involvement in politics are household duties, lack of time" as well as limits to accessing money and political connections, compared to men.⁴⁸ Underpinning all of these factors is the reality that inequality based on gender is not immediately obvious to society and lives mainly in the subconscious of Ukrainian people.

Political Parties

Despite the very low number of women in the national legislature, no special measures or safeguards for women's participation in the election law exist beyond equal protection to participate, and few political parties have taken steps to promote women. Ukraine's mixed electoral system has 225 single-member districts for the majoritarian system and one nationwide constituency using closed party lists for 225 proportional representation (PR) seats (for the 2014 presidential election only 213 District Election Commissions were formed due to the political situation), 450 total seats.⁴⁹ For the majority system, candidates can self-nominate as independents or can be nominated by a political party. In the proportional system, candidates must be nominated by a political party that is registered with the Ministry of Justice.⁵⁰

Political parties form the backbone of Ukrainian politics in a centralized electoral system and wield a powerful influence on women's ability to compete. In 2012, women comprised 13% of candidates in leading political parties overall. The top Ukrainian political parties registered 303 women as candidates: 202 (16%) on party lists and 101 (10%) in SMDs. While the 13% women candidates was greater compared to 2007, it was still lower than in 2002 and 2006.⁵¹ In past parliamentary elections, women comprised only 7.1% (1998-2002) and 6.2% of candidates in (2002-2006), in either a mixed or majoritarian system. As of July 15, 2014, there are 44 women MPs in Ukraine in the following parties: UDAR – 7, Batkivshchyna – 12, Communist party – 6, Party of Regions – 5, Svoboda – 3, Non-faction MPs – 6, Sovereign European Ukraine – 2, and For Peace and Stability – 3.⁵²

⁴⁷ http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/Worldswomen/WW_full_report_color.pdf

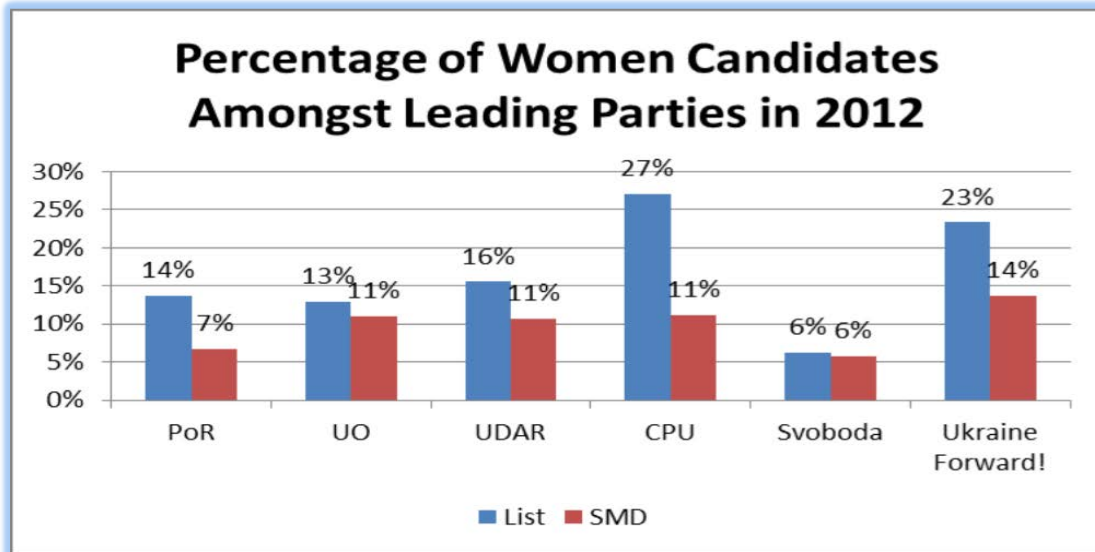
⁴⁸ Findings from Eight Focus Groups of Women Voters from Ukraine, Lake Research Partners, NDI, 2013.

⁴⁹ <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/ukraine/120549?download=true>

⁵⁰ http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/2331_B.html

⁵¹ Analysis of the Political Participation of Women in Ukraine's 2012 Parliamentary Election, NDI.

⁵² Women MPs in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, NDI. July 15, 2014.



Analysis of the Political Participation of Women in Ukraine's 2012 Parliamentary Election, NDI (2012)

Global research demonstrates that women are better able to compete in PR list systems or mixed electoral systems (second best) over majoritarian.⁵³ Therefore, Ukraine's mixed system should enable women to gain seats more easily in the proportional contest. On the contrary, women have indicated that it is easier to win in Ukraine's SMD seats — typically the most difficult electoral system for women to gain seats — than to get nominated for party lists. This is the case despite the fact that in 2012 the leading parties registered a significantly higher number of women in lists than in single-mandate constituencies (with the exception of United Opposition and Svoboda, which fielded a similar number of PR list and SMD candidates).⁵⁴

Political parties are at the crux of women's challenge to getting elected in the PR system. Following the 2014 election, women comprised 18 of the 120 seats on the Kyiv City Council, 10 from the party lists and eight from the single mandate districts, including one woman who was self-nominated. This election gave women only slightly fewer seats in the single mandate districts. Of the elected women candidates, 12 were from UDAR and each of the following parties elected one woman: Radical Party, Samopomich, Nove Zhyttia, Batkivshchyna and the Democratic Alliance.⁵⁵

Another factor thwarting women's ability to get elected on the PR lists, is closed lists with no quota and placement criteria for women, which could guarantee a much higher level of success. Within proportional systems, conventional wisdom says that women face better chances of victory with closed lists than open, but only when list placement qualifications are stipulated *and* when there are sanctions for non-compliance. Open lists are associated with more individualized competition and have the potential to create competition among members of the same political party.⁵⁶ Women's position at the top of a list (for winnable seats) versus the

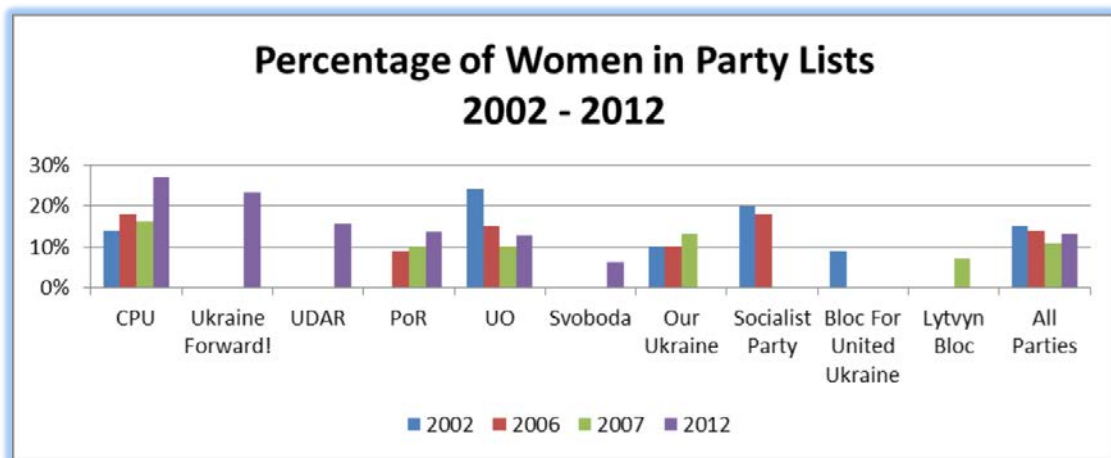
⁵³ <http://www.ipu.org>

⁵⁴ Analysis of the Political Participation of Women in Ukraine's 2012 Parliamentary Election, NDI.

⁵⁵ Women's Representation in the 2014 Kyiv City Council, NDI. June 4, 2014.

⁵⁶ http://www.quotaproject.org/publications/quotas_la_report.pdf

bottom is a critical determination of whether their inclusion is symbolic or meaningfully intended to lead to election. Political parties have not yet instituted internal quotas for list placement of women. The UDAR Party is an exception, showing a commitment to women in 20% of all leadership positions at all levels of the party, the only party to publicly announce a target. The party attained 15%, or 19 women, in its faction of 120 MPs in 2012. In the 2012 election, Batkivshchyna showed the greatest commitment to including women at the *top* of the list compared to other parties.⁵⁷ Prior to that — in 2002 — Batkivshchyna had more than 20% women candidates on its list.⁵⁸



Analysis of the Political Participation of Women in Ukraine's 2012 Parliamentary Election, NDI (2012)

While participation of women varies among parties, women hold few formal decision-making positions or informal positions that influence election outcomes. The IFES 2012 Global Survey of Women's Organizations showed that women's organizations rated political party organizations working on women's political and civic participation as completely/somewhat ineffective (86%). As the gatekeepers to political players and candidates, influencing internal processes requires understanding the rules of the game and, most importantly, access and influence. Women are not yet "insiders." Eight focus groups with women from urban and rural areas of Ukraine in 2013 revealed that women "felt the candidate selection process was unknown, limited to insiders, and that their opinions counted for little."⁵⁹ At the national level, parties are the most centralized and lack transparency in the candidate nomination process. Candidates must rely upon relationships within the party and with leadership, thereby creating layers of distance for women who are not close to the power center to influence their fate in becoming candidates. Lack of independent media, controlled by political or corporate interests, is another challenge to equalizing competition among male and female candidates in political parties or aspirant members.⁶⁰

Many of the new parties have rejected top-heavy, personality-driven management models traditionally held by parties, and are creating structures more conducive to broader

⁵⁷ Analysis of the Political Participation of Women in Ukraine's 2012 Parliamentary Election, NDI.

⁵⁸ Analysis of the Political Participation of Women in Ukraine's 2012 Parliamentary Election, NDI.

⁵⁹ Findings from Eight Focus Groups of Women Voters from Ukraine, Lake Research Partners, NDI, 2013.

⁶⁰ <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/ukraine/119078?download=true>

participation and less centralized power. Non-leader-centric parties have emerged, in some cases, as the result of former civic group activists such as Volya and People's Force, and tend to be more favorable to women members because of these new leadership structures that encourage diversity and participation of members. Of the parliamentary parties, Svoboda and the Communists are significantly less leader-centric than Batkivshchyna and UDAR. Democratic Alliance, among the new cohort of parties, has built its structure to enable women's decision-making and participation in political activities. In the recent Kyiv City Council election they received only two seats, and one went to a woman — 50% representation for the party.

Women's wings provide another avenue for creating a voice for women in the party, but they have not taken hold, as such, in Ukraine. Select parties have established women's wings, though most are registered as NGOs and their main activities are not directly related to the political party, or its decision-making. Rather, they tend to focus on charity or other community-related activities. Establishing NGOs enables parties to make what is often a symbolic gesture to women's engagement in party decision-making; meanwhile, as registered NGOs, the parties can access a different stream of resources. The Front of Change (which later joined Batkivshchyna) was the only party to officially establish a women's wing. Other parties like UDAR and Party of Regions opted for no special measures that change existing party structures and opted for "mainstreaming" party building and training activities with NDI. Other political parties have also participated in training for women members by NDI and have been presented with ways to engage women in their ranks. Yet, women generally comprise less than a quarter of regional branch trainings conducted by NDI.⁶¹ Most parties are reluctant to change their internal structures to accommodate guarantees for women's representation or leadership. Democratic Alliance, an outlier, established a women's wing (a registered NGO), but it focuses on making the political party family-friendly and appealing to female voters. Democratic Alliance has developed its own training program for women.

Political Finance

With corruption and the extraordinarily high cost of campaigns, as well as lack of transparency and oversight of campaign financing, women face multiple disadvantages when it comes to becoming candidates and winning campaigns. Transparency International states, "Both petty and grand scale corruption are flourishing. Among the institutions which are perceived by the public to be highly corrupt are political parties, legislature, police, public officials and the judiciary."⁶² Ukrainian law sets no limits on the total amount of contributions that go to a presidential candidate. Although individual contributions are limited, funds coming from the nominating political party or from the candidates themselves have no ceiling.⁶³ Women's participation at the national level is the lowest where campaigns require the highest degree of financial resources. Many senior politicians are aligned with male oligarchs and as a result can access large amounts of campaign funding, despite limits on individual campaign contributions. Having fewer personal resources than men on the large scale required for a campaign, women

⁶¹ One aspect of NDI's programs has been to help political parties mainstream gender – related to voter outreach and within the party structures.

⁶² http://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/nisarticle/ukraine_2011

⁶³ http://www.ifes.org/Content/Publications/Reports/2013/~/_media/Files/Publications/Reports/2013/Ukraine_Report_on_Campaign_Finance_Regulation_August_2012_Final.pdf

are already at a financial disadvantage in competing for seats where they are able to use their own resources.

Women's lack of influence in most parties limits their ability to garner resources from the party, and without special measures legislated, a commitment by parties to prioritize resources for female candidates, or increased oversight of political finance, they are at a disadvantage. This underscores the importance of accountability on campaign finance and enforcement of existing laws, at a minimum. A recently launched publication by IFES, Political Finance and Gender Equality, indicates that political finance laws, often intended to increase transparency and reduce the influence of wealthy candidates, can equalize opportunity among candidates, male and female, without an explicit focus on improving gender equality. With greater oversight of political party funding, the opportunity is removed for "behind-the-scenes deals and political influence trading that is characteristic of closed political cultures that customarily exclude women or that only include them in a formalistic sense."⁶⁴ Such measures can include "ceilings on total campaign donations and campaign expenditures; bans on particular types of campaign advertising; and transparency requirements."⁶⁵

"Generally, transparency undermines the ease of special interest access to political decision-making, which favors men over women, and renders the system more open to women interested in running for office. Increased transparency can also refute the advantages that candidates with access to illegitimate sources of funding may have in persuading political parties to nominate them."

IFES Political Finance and Gender Equality

The CEC is responsible for reviewing candidate disclosure forms and posting them on its website, but it currently has neither the mandate nor the capacity to effectively monitor compliance with existing laws on financial contributions and spending.⁶⁶ The IFES study explains "donation and spending limits will have no impact on the political process, or on the chances of women to effectively run for office, unless these limits are enforced." Ukraine suffers from weak enforcement of laws on political finance. The IFES TIDE Enforcing Political Finance Laws Training Handbook notes Ukraine's non-enforcement of campaign expenditures, saying "Officially documented campaign expenditures may be irrelevant, as they often do not reflect the real cost of the campaign...While the law stipulates mandatory disclosure of campaign funds, no penalty is specified for violation of the disclosure provisions."⁶⁷

⁶⁴ <http://www.ifes.org/Content/Publications/Reports/2013/~media/Files/Publications/Reports/2013>

⁶⁵ <http://www.ifes.org/~media/Files/Publications/White PaperReport/2014/IFES Political Finance and Gender Equality White Paper.pdf>

⁶⁶ <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/ukraine/119078?download=true>

⁶⁷ http://www.ifes.org/Content/Publications/Books/2005/~media/Files/Publications/ManualHandbook/2005/TIDE_Handbook_Enforcing_Political_Finance_Laws.pdf

Accountability that curtails illegal spending, such as through bribes or lack of reporting, could lead to increased competition on merit and policy positions, potentially creating greater opportunity for women to compete. This would also serve to create a process that might entice women and men alike to improve their faith in the political system, which they believe serves interests other than voters. Focus group surveys in Ukraine found that “even women who intended to vote expressed minimal faith in the outcome of the elections because of what they described as the inevitable corruption, voter fraud, and tendency of politicians to lose touch with their constituents.”⁶⁸ Compliance with existing laws is an important first step in building the integrity of the process and addresses a deterrent to women’s political participation. Addressing women’s access through public subsidies that prioritize parties that run women candidates, or that reward political parties financially based on the number of candidates who win (so that parties prioritize women candidates) are two approaches to leveraging public finance provisions.⁶⁹

Civic and Voter Engagement

Ukrainian voters walk a fine line between believing women bring different values and abilities to challenge the corruption and frustrating policy environment that the country has rejected, and holding deep biases that believe men should be the leaders in politics. People believe men are “better able to handle issues related to industry, jobs and corruption.”⁷⁰ Public opinion surveys show general support for women’s political participation. A poll conducted in November of 2012 by Lake Research Partners, the Kyiv-based Razumkov Center for Economic and Political Research and NDI, revealed specific voter beliefs related to how women and men would impact policy differently. The public believes women are “more warm, likable, honest, fair and just,” and consider them “better able to deal with issues of child care, education, health care, equal rights for women and containing the cost of living.” Women are also perceived as “better managers than men.” The same poll showed a belief that men are “more corrupt, out of touch, tied to oligarchs, prone to in-fighting and in politics for personal gain.”⁷¹ The public believes that women are more in touch with everyday issues and feel that men “have not solved the country’s problems.”⁷²

These opinions make a compelling case for political parties and civic groups to tap into existing research and conduct new public opinion research to generate interest, advocacy and party support and leverages perceptions based on gender. Gender gaps in political party preference in the 2012 election showed that 12.3% of women voted for the UDAR party compared to 5.5% of men, a significant gender gap. Party of Regions had a five-point gender gap in the same year, with more women than men voting for the party.⁷³ A clear opportunity for parties to further hone their messaging to voters using public opinion research has the capacity to improve parties’ ability to create greater distinctions among them where it may be less obvious and

⁶⁸ Findings from Eight Focus Groups of Women Voters from Ukraine, Lake Research Partners, NDI, 2013.

⁶⁹ <http://www.ifes.org/~media/Files/Publications/White PaperReport/2014/IFES Political Finance and Gender Equality White Paper.pdf>

⁷⁰ Findings from Eight Focus Groups of Women Voters from Ukraine, Lake Research Partners, NDI, 2013.

⁷¹ NDI Press release 2013

⁷² Findings from Eight Focus Groups of Women Voters from Ukraine, Lake Research Partners, NDI, 2013.

⁷³ IFES Public Opinion in Ukraine 2013 Key Findings, December 2013.

compete for voters whose opinions diverge based on gender. Lake Research Partners and NDI found that a special strategy is needed to challenge apathy, particularly among women who are unmarried, less educated and mothers of young children.⁷⁴

Ukraine's parties have not made an effort to distinguish themselves to blocks of voters in as targeted a way as they might, with the exception of the obvious pro-Europe or pro-Russian stance, in part because of the high level of corruption and influence of money on elections. Political parties are not sophisticated at targeting nuanced voting blocks, including the largest of them all: women. Sex-disaggregated survey data could determine voter gaps that allow political parties to refine their base of support and agenda and develop timely policy reforms that speak to voter concerns as the political landscape evolves. The Lake Research Partners and NDI 2012 Survey found that in the course of the survey, some groups shifted in their view that women in office is "personally important"; these were "people living in the Western region, those who believe the Communist Party best represents their views, mothers, and adults in their forties."⁷⁵ Parties have an unexploited opportunity to court women voters specifically through the candidacies of women in addition to targeted messaging to women of different demographics. A longer life expectancy of women and the robust participation of middle-aged women probably mean that those in that demographic in 2014 alone could significantly impact elections for the coming decades. Likewise, CSOs could use data to support issue-based advocacy.

Gender and Conflict

Women's sizable presence during the EuroMaidan movement may help move the needle for women in politics if women can: influence larger reform measures that will enhance Ukraine's democratic process; ensure that reforms address gender-related impacts; promote legal protections for women and affirmative action measures that promote underserved voices in the political process. This critical moment in Ukraine's history revealed the diminishing patience among citizens related to regional divisions, an economy in crisis, rampant corruption, and lack of confidence in political institutions.⁷⁶ While some reforms have been proposed in the "Revival Reform Package," specific concerns of women or mobilization as a group is not apparent in the proposed reforms that focus on broad democratic change.⁷⁷ Therefore, it is difficult to know whether an enhanced opportunity for a greater political voice will be exploited and to what extent. Women are a part of the momentum, but whether it will create greater gender equality through targeted means and in tangible ways remains to be seen.

During the events of the EuroMaidan, women gained greater attention in the media for taking on important activist roles including many that were beyond what might have traditionally been expected. The International Business Times reported that in addition to being very active in the

⁷⁴ Public Perceptions of the 2012 Elections & Women's Role in Politics and Government, Lake Research Partners and NDI, 2012.

⁷⁵ Public Perceptions of the 2012 Elections & Women's Role in Politics and Government, Lake Research Partners and NDI, 2012.

⁷⁶ IFES Global Survey of Women's Organizations, Key Findings from Ukraine, IFES Applied Research Center 2012.

⁷⁷ <http://www.ucipr.kiev.ua/menu/reform-package/lang/en>

“provision of medical services, food preparation and distribution, and information-gathering and dissemination, women also ‘manned,’ so to speak, the barricades in Kiev and...organized themselves into self-defense units in [the Ukrainian cities of] Kiev and Ternopil.”⁷⁸ Women were not only housewives, but also journalists, coming from the business community and from all walks of life. Natalia Karbowska, Board Chair of the Ukrainian Women’s Fund, remarked “[w]omen were really very diverse there — by age, social status, residence, level of salary, etc. And each of them had her own EuroMaidan, her reason for coming.”

On the one hand, the media covered efforts of groups like the Women Opposition Brigade, a female unit that trained women in self-defense for the purpose of participating in protests.⁷⁹ On the other hand, the media revealed the new profile of women leaders like former NGO leader Victoria Suimar, who assumed a spokesperson role on behalf of acting President Oleksandr Turchynov and was later appointed Deputy Secretary of the National Defense and Security Council. A few women were appointed to unprecedented high-level political roles such as 33-year-old Natalia Poklonskaya, who was appointed Attorney General to the Autonomous Republic of Crimea in March of 2014.⁸⁰ Following the events of EuroMaidan, some women declined positions in the transitional government. Suimar remarked that perhaps this period of crisis naturally created relationships between men and women, which further revealed the capacity of women to operate at very senior levels — and led her to a role in government that she hadn’t contemplated.

In Ukraine we have seen civil society, broadly defined as the self-organization of society, in vibrant action as citizens of different backgrounds and political commitments have worked together...EuroMaidan stands for social and political change, and for many women who have played immensely important and active roles in the protests, it represents a chance to change the gender culture of Ukraine -- traditionally a patriarchal society with strong gender role stereotypes. Let’s hope that these women’s voices, in all their diversity, continue to shape reforms in post-Maidan Ukraine.

Sarah Phillips, Professor, Indiana University

While the EuroMaidan activities were pivotal, at a moment in time, they are a reflection of ongoing activism by women in their communities in numbers nearly equal to men. The Ukrainian Women’s Foundation recently released an exhibit and publication called “EuroMaidan: Women’s Business” featuring important social initiatives that arose in the wave of EuroMaidan and now being implemented by civil society activists.⁸¹ An IFES Survey in April 2014

⁷⁸ <http://www.ibtimes.com/ukraine-girls-really-knock-me-out-women-playing-crucial-roles-euro-euromaidan-protests-1558508>

⁷⁹ <http://www.elle.com/news/culture/womens-opposition-euromaidan-protest-kiev>

⁸⁰ http://voiceofrussia.com/2014_05_16/photo-i-want-my-child-to-live-in-an-honest-country-Natalia-Poklonskaya-0985/?slide-1

⁸¹ <http://www.uwf.kiev.ua/en/>

gauged citizen involvement in neighborhood or community discussions, voicing opinions on issues, and the use of social media in the 12 months prior to the survey, which showed women participating in almost the same numbers as men. If this continued activism among individual women or small groups of women becomes sustained political organizing, reforms will be comprised of their input. This could lead to a platform for a stronger women's voice moving forward. Regardless, significant democratic reforms that open up processes to more citizens will create opportunities for women, can contribute to restoring their faith in the political system and may reduce their apathy.

UNSCR 1325

Key Actors responsible for implementation of UNSCR 1325 include: the Security Council; Member States; UN entities; the Secretary General; and parties to conflict.

Increased participation and representation of women at all levels of decision-making.

Attention to specific protection needs of women and girls in conflict.

Gender perspective in post-conflict processes.

Gender perspective in UN programming, reporting and in SC missions.

Gender perspective & training in UN peace support operations.

Despite women's activism in the EuroMaidan, there is an absence of a gendered aspect in the national dialogue about reform and about the conflict that is underway. Yet, military and violent conflict has a distinct and different impact on women and men — no matter where in the world.⁸² In Ukraine, the death of soldiers has been the focus of attention; yet there is now "wide acceptance of the fact that modern armed conflict has a disproportionate impact on women and girls even though most are not directly engaged in combat."⁸³ For the most part, interviewees made little or no connection between the political situation and the role that gender can potentially play in influencing or mitigating conflict, or the disproportionate impact of conflict relating to gender. In some cases, it was difficult for interviewees to stay focused on the topic of gender because of the conflict, demonstrating a lack of understanding of how gender roles are relevant to conflict. For example, access and security issues in the east were not raised as having a potentially greater impact on female voters. UN Security Council Resolution 1325 had not entered the political discourse.

⁸² <http://www.transconflict.com/2013/09/effects-conflict-felt-hardest-women-children-039/>

⁸³ <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/cross-cutting-report/lookup-c-glKWLeMTIsG-b-6239031.php?print=true>

A study on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 noted “the participation of women in peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding assures that their experiences, priorities, and solutions contribute to stability and inclusive governance (Heyzer, 2005, p. 54).”⁸⁴ Ukraine’s activists have been advocating largely as individual women in disparate groups; therefore, it is not surprising that women’s role in peace and security is not part of the national dialogue. It fits with the fact that women in Ukraine are not unified. Women came to EuroMaidan in large numbers, in part because of their lack of faith in the overall political process. Women have been at the forefront of peace movements that influenced formal peace processes in developed and developing countries in every region of the world. In Ukraine, some women protested as part of groups, as mothers and as individuals, but public protest was largely “gender mainstreamed.” Karbowska also commented about Ukrainian women, “...today it is important to show that women have already done a lot — and can do much more — to establish a dialogue, to achieve peace and help stabilize the situation in the country.” Women’s roles in Ukraine took shape as part and parcel of a larger mass movement, but their contribution and their motivation come from experiences influenced by gender — whether recognizable or not.⁸⁵

While differences between male and female opinions about the future of Ukraine are very similar, when specific issues are probed, some divisions become apparent. When men and women were asked whether they agreed with the statement, “Although recent events have brought out slight divisions between different groups of people in Ukraine, we all still live in one country and will be able to repair our divisions in the long run,” about the same number of women and men strongly agreed, but 3.3% of men compared to 1.9% of women strongly disagreed.⁸⁶ Gaps in public opinion between men and women could imply different approaches to policy and solutions to the conflict. Women appear to be more hopeless about the state of political affairs but more willing to believe solutions exist.⁸⁷ Currently, messaging is appealing to women that suggests they fix a broken system dominated by men.⁸⁸ This sentiment has the potential to unify women for change.

The conflict is rooted in the country’s divisions, which are closely tied to representation and composition of political and state institutions. A key question remains whether and to what extent the events of the EuroMaidan will continue and whether women can find enough individual strength and some collective solidarity to bring about key reforms, probably the most obvious point of entry for women’s engagement. Studies show that when a critical mass of women are in a deliberative body — or 30% — they are more freely able to share their opinions; therefore, an increase of women in parliament could lead to debate on different issues.

⁸⁴ http://operation1325.se/images/stories/women_peace_security_and_the_national_action_plans_-_september_9_1.pdf

⁸⁵ Survey results publicly available in the 2014 Public Opinion Survey were not sex-disaggregated.

⁸⁶ IFES Global Survey of Women’s Organizations, Key Findings from Ukraine, IFES Applied Research Center 2012.

⁸⁷ IFES April 2014 Ukraine Omnibus Survey data

⁸⁸ Findings from Eight Focus Groups of Women Voters from Ukraine, Lake Research Partners, NDI, 2013.

Strategies to Promote Women's Political Participation

Legal Reform

^ Ensure that legal reform measures create greater accountability, transparency and overall credibility of the political process, critical for improving women's participation. Lack of belief that the political process serves its citizens is a major deterrent for women to run for office.

^ Ensure that all legal reform — especially related to the elections, constitution, governance, security and reform of state institutions — maximizes the opportunity to engage citizens and promotes women's voice to broaden participation. The Revival Reform Package and others that may gain momentum should be analyzed to consider gender-related impacts that ensure reforms benefit women as well as men.

^ Reform the election law to establish a quota that ensures no less than 30%-40% of one gender at all levels of elected office — from parliament to the local level. The essential feature in the design of a quota is one that maximizes opportunities for the electoral system to increase the equality of outcome as opposed to increasing the number of women candidates competing.

^ Advocacy on behalf of a quota must take a dual track approach: 1) amend Draft Law 3411 so that it is effective in electing at least 30% women, and 2) prepare other quota scenarios that apply to electoral reform proposals currently under discussion (and new ones) likely to get traction. This will require technical expertise and planning in addition to effective lobbying strategies.

- A proportional representation (PR) system with closed lists and a quota with list placement criteria is most effective for women. Closed lists tend to benefit women.
- If a mixed system is continued, it should include a tailored quota with list placement criteria for the PR seats, a quota that can be applied to SMD seats in practice and/or other special mechanisms that make women more visible and financially competitive as for the SMD seats.
- A minimum of 30% women in parliament, target of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) ending in 2015, can only be achieved if a quota includes sanctions for non-compliance.
- The list placement mandate must ensure that women are placed high enough on the party list/in winnable seats in order to be elected.
- With 30% women in parliament, Ukraine will meet what is considered a “critical mass” of women — this is understood to be the threshold for women to participate more actively in a deliberative body.

^ Support advocacy efforts among women in parliament and in civil society to build a shared agenda for a quota which can serve as a basis for advocacy on other gender-equality issues.

- Advocacy for a quota should consider messaging that addresses the benefits of shared leadership among men and women as well as the fact that current Members of Parliament (MPs) have not addressed the country's biggest problems.
- Any special measure must be sensitive to public perceptions about gender equality, and consider language that addresses both genders (as Draft Law 3411 does by calling for no more than 70% of one gender in the first five seats).

^ Special measures in addition to quotas that effectively compensate for barriers to women's political advancement should also be considered. These may include financial incentives or penalties and media exposure for female candidates during the campaign period to increase their access to resources and/or visibility. Financial incentives for political parties that provide funding to female candidates could create far-reaching benefits for women competing for office, especially at the national level, in a system influenced heavily by funding.

Voter Registration

^ The CEC should track and analyze sex-disaggregated data to facilitate knowledge of voter behavior and increase the integrity of the process. Data collection and analysis by the CEC would benefit political parties and other stakeholders and provide greater opportunity to respond to voter behavior and preferences in a complex political environment.

Electoral Administration

^ The CEC should undertake a systematic evaluation of its internal policies and implementation practices that will yield information on the impacts of administering elections in a gender-blind fashion. Raising awareness of the CEC on the importance of executing a gender analysis of its internal and external functions may create investment among staff and/or Commissioners to explore their contributions to improving electoral integrity in Ukraine. Outcomes identified will provide a road map for a prospective gender policy for the CEC.

^ A gender policy would benefit the CEC in institutionalizing a mechanism to address the findings of the gender analysis by expanding on strengths and addressing weaknesses in the process as a result of gender.

^ Based on the needs identified in the gender analysis, the CEC should consider allocating funds for and hiring a full-time staff person(s) with gender and elections expertise to execute a prospective gender policy and ensure that it is integrated and implemented throughout the bureaucracy.

^ The CEC would benefit from comparative information about how electoral management bodies (EMBs) have adopted and implemented gender policies that mitigate disparities related to gender and the concrete improvements experienced as a result.

Political Parties

^ Reforms provide an opening for men and women in political parties to understand and convey how parties can “win with women.” Women tend to vote in higher numbers than men; have a greater life expectancy; and show differences of opinion on some policy issues, making them a critical target for party support.

^ Promote dialogue within political parties and civil society networks about how women and men contribute differently to policy decisions based on unique concerns. The complementarity of policy decisions made by women and men together can help advance the political, economic and social life of ordinary Ukrainians. Comparative information on how women’s policy perspectives have shaped policymaking in the region and elsewhere should be shared with a diverse set of policy-makers.

^ Promote political party platform development that is transparent, inclusive and responsive to citizens, which can be legislative initiatives in non-election periods. Democracies depend on political parties to aggregate the views of citizens. While women are not a homogeneous group, they have shared interests that could be exploited by parties if they can emphasize ideological and issue-based policy differences and create internal mechanisms to solicit the contributions of all political party members, namely women who comprise the largest part of the electorate.

^ Ensure that women can build fruitful relationships within political parties; contribute substantively to policy; and become integral to internal party decision-making and leadership structures.

^ Mainstream women’s structures of political parties at national and regional levels and encourage parties to be more systematic about inclusion in decision-making and promoting women into existing leadership structures.

^ Encourage parties to make internal commitments that ensure women’s participation in the leadership of the party, equal participation in party conventions, etc.

^ Promote overall improved internal political party communication and strong branches and operations at all levels to invite greater participation of women members.

^ In order for a genuine shift to take place among political parties, with regard to promoting women’s political participation, parties need to understand that their modes of operation, sexism and male dominance are counter to public perceptions that describe women as “closer to the issues” and more trustworthy, honest and well-positioned to address every-day issues.

^ Strengthen cross-party efforts among women MPs to coordinate on a quota and other issues through the Equal Opportunity Caucus. Provide ongoing support to the Equal Opportunity Caucus on policy issues and lobbying colleagues for support. Facilitate opportunities for female (and supportive male) MPs to develop a strategic advocacy agenda that can be drafted into legislation and integrated into the Revival Reform Package as well as new reform proposals.

^ Encourage the use of polling and survey data by political parties and civic groups advocating for reform to help refute stereotypes and root policy and advocacy in public opinion. With sex-disaggregated data from existing surveys and more targeted questions exploring divisions that break along gender lines, individual candidates, political party members, policy-makers and activists could leverage policy preferences that show variance on gender. Political parties can use research to address gender-related policy preferences in platforms.

Political Finance

^ Accountability related to existing political finance laws, including monitoring and enforcement of existing regulations, is critical to women's ability to compete. Enforcement of candidate reporting by the CEC will increase transparency, facilitate voter education and expand opportunities for greater competition, which will help women.

^ Political finance reform that increases transparency and reduces the ability of wealth to determine electoral outcomes is a critical measure for restoring public faith in the political process and paves the way for a greater emphasis on policy substance over purchasing power. Both of these issues resonate with women, who believe more strongly than men that political parties do not serve voter interests.

^ Financial sanctions or incentives for political parties that fail to comply should be included in new reforms, thus providing opportunities for women candidates to compete on PR lists and in single-member districts.

^ Political finance reform that caps contributions more significantly would help women compete with men on more equal ground.

^ Tying the provision of public funding (including that provided through TV, radio and newspapers) to the equal nomination of women and men candidates should be considered. Also ensure that within electoral systems that use party-list proportional representation, political parties are unable to circumvent the rules by nominating women only at the bottom of their candidate lists. Two approaches for leveraging public finance provisions are: addressing women's access through public subsidies that prioritize parties fielding women candidates and rewarding political parties financially based on the number of candidates that win (so that parties prioritize women candidates).

Advocacy

^ Support advocacy efforts to expose the double standard of women in politics and show how it perpetuates discrimination. Exposing biases and discrimination that take place on a regular basis and undermine women's ability to contribute equally is key to a more participatory democracy.

^ Ukrainian women are resistant to working together simply because they are women, underscoring the importance of messaging to women partners. Efforts to convene women should take into consideration use of messaging that motivates women in the current political environment. Women are motivated by "fixing a broken system." The public believes that men have not solved the country's problems, creating an opening for women to contribute substance

to reform options. Supporting collaboration among women should encourage identification of a common agenda by avoiding overt messaging on gender equality and using public opinion to motivate women to find where commonalities exist. Gender issues should also be framed in terms of promoting democracy and anti-corruption for the benefit all people.

^ Opportunities to convene women from civil society, regionally or nationally, to share efforts on promoting women's political participation and related projects are critical for building linkages between women's groups and initiatives that currently receive little opportunity for exchange.

^ Promote diverse cooperation across women from civil society organizations, parties and government to work together on reform by establishing an ongoing mechanism to meet regularly and exchange information on advocacy efforts related to gender-equality opportunities. The post-Maidan environment creates an opportunity to educate women about how reform measures might impact women and men differently. An environment of citizens calling for reform is an opportunity for women to coalesce around shared issues. A women's movement can be further cultivated, provided it respects a range of opinions reflected in the demographics of age, geography, etc..

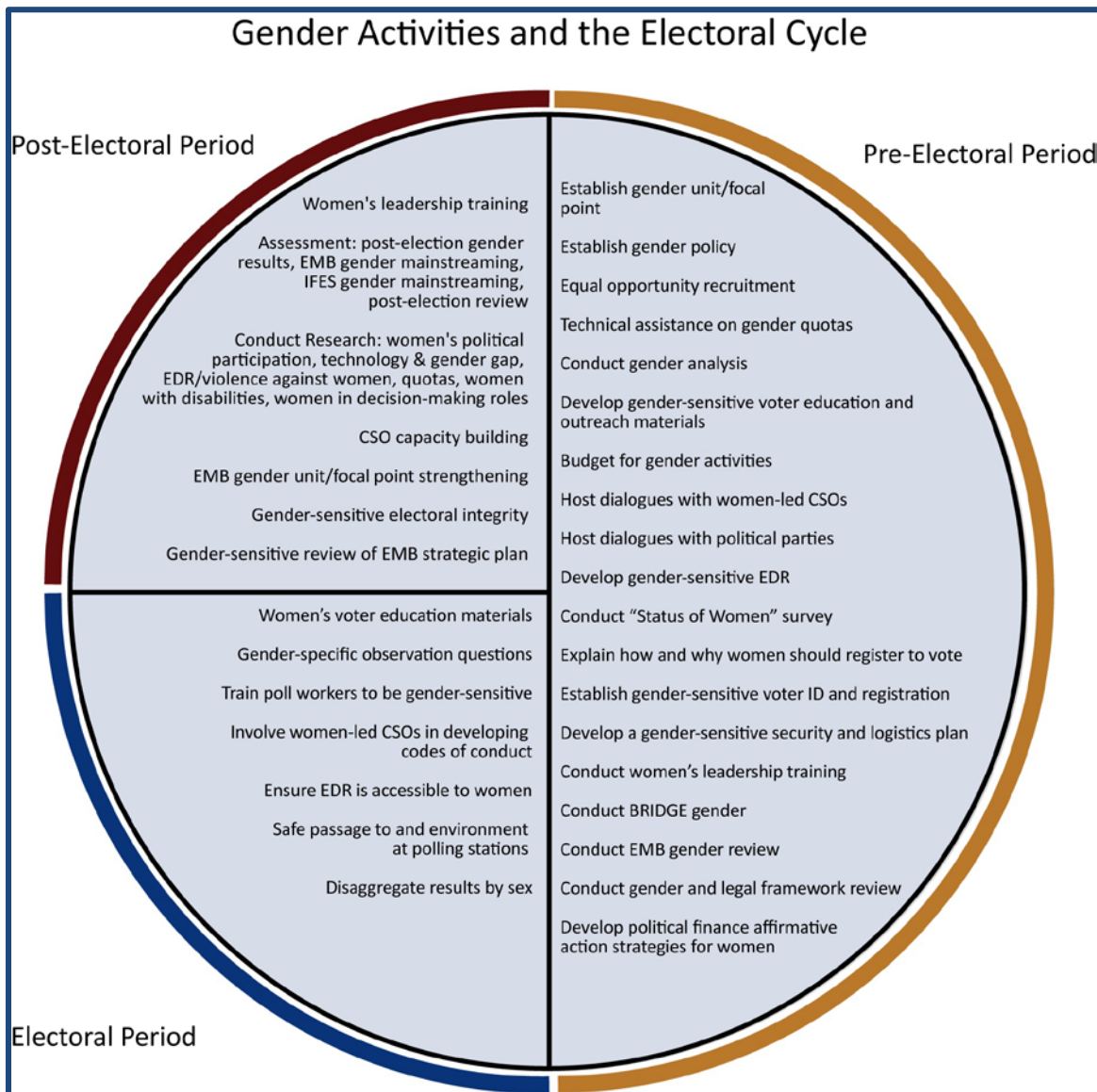
^ A political and military conflict provides an opportunity to educate voters about the gender-related implications of policymaking, strengthen arguments for more representative political institutions and establish a stronger foundation for a diversity of opinion and new approaches that may emerge based on gender roles. UNSCR 1325 can be used as an advocacy tool to support the participation of women in peace and security in Ukraine.

Program Recommendations

Within an environment of reform-minded political parties, individuals and NGOs, significant opportunities exist to create platforms upon which women can enter politics in greater numbers. EuroMaidan ignited participation by women in a socio-political movement that galvanized the country; however, the critical moment is now, when disparate protests and new initiatives must usher in policy change. As in any period of transition, there is a level of urgency for women to gain political traction that might otherwise take decades to achieve. The work of IFES on legal reform, civil society and public opinion research creates ideal alignment for IFES to support reform efforts that could be game-changers for women in the political arena. Measures that promote more democratic institutions and attempt to restore faith in the political system are just as important for women as efforts targeted directly at women.

New reform efforts require a gender analysis so that they do not miss the chance to promote opportunities for women or undermine women through gender-blind reforms intended to strengthen democracy. Offering support to the CEC in understanding the role of gender in strengthening election administration is a fundamental first step. This support should be combined assistance on technical legal drafting, gender analysis and advocacy skills for legislators and civil society activists seeking to secure an electoral quota for women.

Women’s electoral participation exists on a continuum and requires ongoing assistance, before and after elections, to women and the political institutions they must navigate. The following *IFES Gender Activities and the Electoral Cycle* provides a mapping of activities to better integrate gender in electoral support. The intersection of support on legal reforms, support to the CEC and to civic groups enables election- and non-election year programming that steadily builds women’s participation over time, particularly where IFES takes advantage of strategic intersections across programs to achieve this objective.



Fostering Dialogue on Electoral Reform

Women stand to gain from a host of potential reforms and, with the support of IFES, can be proactive about new laws that benefit women and men alike. The provision of technical

guidance on legal reform measures, including legislative drafting, best practices and analysis of quotas, must be central to IFES Ukraine gender-equality programming.

Draft Law 3411 has been proposed to apply a quota of 30% in the next elections at all levels of elected government. The draft law addresses the PR seats only, because the draft is formulated according to and only describes its application to lists. The quota has a weak list placement mechanism that has the potential to negate the intended benefits of a quota. MPs and civil society need support to ensure that a quota is passed that is aggressive and aligns with new electoral reform scenarios. (Presentations by the consultant provided an overview to the application of quotas in proportional representation and single-mandate systems.) Through collaboration during the assessment, Denys Kovryzhenko drafted a scenario that would elect at least 30% women using the most popular of the electoral reform proposals of those provided to parliament as of July 2014 (Annex 2).

- Provide advocacy training and/or ongoing support for MPs and civil society on electoral reform. Underscore the urgency of unified advocacy on a quota and legal drafting preparation for different scenarios. Convene constituencies (MPs, civil society, political parties) advocating for quota legislation to participate in a high-level workshop (or series) on advocacy.
- Support legislators with technical drafting expertise on the application of quotas in prospective election scenarios, as the election reform debate evolves. Address amending Draft Law 3411 to apply a more comprehensive quota in line with international standards.
- Share quota scenario drafted by IFES with MPs and provide a consultation on the logic behind the proposal (Annex 2).
- Launch a high-level public event with male and female MPs and other key stakeholders, to introduce the quota campaign. Involve women from civil society, parliament and from as many influential political parties possible. Consider the event as the launch of a series of high-profile events on priority legal reforms to create momentum for the quota and future collaboration on gender-equality-related reforms.
- Provide a paper on special mechanisms other than quotas that can be applied to promote women's political participation in Ukraine. The paper should include financial penalties and incentives that have been used elsewhere (i.e., reimbursement of candidate fees for women, changing the threshold of the party to compete, rewarding parties that exceed benchmarks of women candidates) because of the strong role that money plays in Ukrainian politics. It should also address increasing air-time and other proactive measures to increase visibility or competition. Support female MPs and civil society to advocate for other special measures and shape the debate.
- Assist civil society in conducting a gender analysis of the Revival Reform Package for the potential impacts of each measure on women or men.

Training Electoral Management Bodies

Support to the CEC on integrating gender must demonstrate how it will advance the work of the institution. It will be important for the CEC to understand the benefits of sex-disaggregated data collection, which improves the integrity of the process while enabling opportunities for greater analysis and overall sophistication of the political process.

- Assist the CEC in understanding the importance of addressing gender within the institution and how sex-disaggregated data, at a minimum, can serve as a starting point for a greater analysis of the electoral process.
- Provide gender integration 101 training for CEC staff and Commissioners for election management as well as the Gender Module of BRIDGE Training.
- Work with CEC on developing a pilot gender analysis of select policies. Support a collaborative process to review existing systems and practices to identify potential disparate impacts related to gender based on internal processes; share comparative EMB examples of how they can be improved, as a first step toward developing a gender policy. All policies or reforms within the CEC should address implications for women and men. Internal processes will indicate strengths and weaknesses of electoral administration such as indirect vote-buying or the complaint process.
- Work with CEC to anticipate enforcement of a quota, to ensure that it is prepared to execute a new law.
- Support the CEC in monitoring existing political finance laws that address campaign spending and establish greater accountability among candidates on reporting.
- Support MPs in understanding and drafting technical language on political finance reform provisions that would accelerate women's access to compete as candidates or that mitigate challenges (similar to support on the quota). Share comparative special measures that can be undertaken to equalize resources such as public financing, incentives for parties that exceed requirements to promote women, penalties, etc. Use the recently launched IFES Political Finance and Gender Equality publication.
- Continue to support the training department on gender-sensitive communications; include the training department in outreach to other CEC staff to help institutionalize gender awareness. Share models of how other EMBs have improved training and outreach to integrate gender concerns for concrete improvement of elections.
- Consider study tours for Central Election Commissioners on gender mainstreaming in election management bodies.

Gauging Public Opinion

IFES should adjust survey results to publicly show a gender breakdown of survey responses, especially on questions related to policy issues. Publication by IFES of sex-disaggregated survey

data could both set an example for others conducting survey research in Ukraine and demonstrate the value of deepening demographic knowledge about more than 50% of the population. Such data can also provide the CEC's partners — voters, NGOs, political parties — an opportunity to sharpen their knowledge about public opinion along gender lines, which may encourage greater sophistication in advocacy and public outreach efforts. To the extent that a gender breakdown shows strong gender differences, IFES will be better equipped to support its partners in maximizing opportunities to promote women's political participation.

- Conduct surveys that test nuanced perceptions about women candidates — among women and men — in order to educate civil society partners and political parties. Consider focus groups with women candidates — both successful and unsuccessful — to determine effective strategies used by women who were elected and how the international community can support future women candidates.
- Consider a comprehensive survey on attitudes toward women's political participation in order to determine how they can be shifted. Determine attitudes along gender lines on key topics related to the conflict, regional differences, solutions, security, corruption, etc. in order to show variances on policy opinions that might impact the future of the country if women were elected in greater numbers. Use relevant information to make a case to civil society groups and other partners for legal reform measures that promote women.
- Integrate gender-related questions in all ongoing or discrete surveys/polling.

Advocacy on Women's Political Participation

- Work with partners to conduct a gender analysis of the "Revival Reform Package" to improve election laws, procurement practices, education policy and access to public information, among other reforms.
- Conduct a basic or advanced advocacy workshop for civil society partners, using current reform proposals as examples, to strengthen skills for lawmakers. Provide assistance to civil society on issue-based, policy education and positions, and educate partners on the value of constituent interaction and using gender-differentiated data and survey tools to advance policies important to citizens.
- Provide an ongoing mechanism for women from the parliament, civic groups and parties — that care about gender in their institutions — to meet about critical policy issues (not on "women's issues"). Integrate a gender analysis into the meetings so that women become informed about and prepared to address the gender-related aspects of proposed reforms and draft legislation, party policies and platforms, as well as election platforms.
- Consider the Ukraine Women's Fund as a partner in implementing civil society projects that prioritize gender and explore opportunities for women from the east and west to

collaborate on women's political participation. UN Security Council Resolution 1325 is one advocacy tool to support women's engagement in peace and security.

- Consider a partnership with the IPU to support Ukraine's female MPs to institutionalize their collaboration and to benefit from the affiliation, comparative information, networking and other resources.
- Increase exposure of Ukrainian women politicians through regional and global conferences that highlight their profile abroad and within their own political parties.
- Identify male and female champions in civil society who recognize the double standard between women; partner with these champions — especially men — to build gender analysis skills so they are able to raise awareness on issues of concern to women.
- Determine whether interest exists among women's civil society groups to participate in a large women's conference to learn about each other's work and inform the reform agenda currently under discussion. An underlying theme of these gatherings should include unique impacts on men and women on policy.
- Establish an ongoing partnership with the Equal Opportunities Caucus on drafting bills and other technical guidance on legal reform.
- Conduct a presentation for women MPs and civil society on the new IFES Publication, Gender and Political Finance, tailored to Ukraine's political finance regulations and opportunities for reform benefiting women.
- Provide internal staff capacity training at IFES Ukraine on gender basics; understanding how gender impacts elections; gender policies and EMBs; and essential advocacy skills.

Conclusion

The post-EuroMaidan environment has the potential to provide women a political platform. Women have a chance to raise gender awareness through a discussion about the role women can play in achieving stability, as they become a greater portion of the country's lawmakers and leaders. At a minimum, democratic reforms on governance such as those related to the Constitution; anti-corruption measures; transparency and accountability; and legislative and political institutions all have the capacity to benefit women, to the extent that they embrace citizen interests and become more representative. However, taking gender considerations into account in the coming period will hinge on the extent to which women and men understand the role that gender can play in reforming institutions such as political parties and the legislature, and the extent to which women seize openings for making sure their concerns are made public — and are loud enough.

Ukraine's institutions greatly need to regain the faith of the public and will eventually need to show the economic yield and social benefits that people expect. Fundamental to this effort is reform that restores the credibility of the political process. Women came to Maidan to fix a system that is broken and dominated by men, and they are still motivated to do that. The extent to which women activists can understand and convince opinion leaders and citizens of the

importance of women's experiences in advancing reforms will determine how openings for women's political representation will grow. In a country where 83% of Ukrainians agree that politicians do not understand people like them, international organizations are well-poised to provide support. Reformers, including women, are in need of help to define a precise reform agenda that reflects the most democratic way forward while moving the country ahead.⁸⁹ Support to Ukrainian institutions must show specifically how institutions might become stronger as a result of analyzing the impacts of the electoral process on men and women.

The assessment showed that women and men experience political opportunities differently, resulting from social and cultural influences that define the role of men and women in Ukrainian society. By opening the door for women in positions of political influence, policies that benefit the economy, stability, health care, and others will, over time, become rooted, and opportunities for more democratic representation in Ukraine will grow. Statistics and research data are essential in helping those involved in the political process grasp inequities and confront biases that prevent women's robust participation in politics.

Building opportunities for women to convene on issues of concern is another critical component of international support to help jump-start women's political participation. Engagement with women leaders and women's organizations should respect their political differences, while helping them to identify common ground. It is likely that the deep frustration among women about the direction of the country can help them funnel their voice and become more visible to parties or civic groups, thereby increasing their chance of influencing political agendas; pushing for more democratic decision-making; and ensuring that their concerns are reflected as a constituency.

A worsening crisis and a political system comprised of leaders that do not accurately reflect or aggregate citizen interests has the potential to exacerbate a growing military and political conflict. Gender diversity that includes regional diversity could inject the political environment with new approaches to new and old problems. The conflict provides the chance to consider how the policy-making environment and state of the country may be different with broader participation of society in government and political institutions; it opens a pathway for a serious public dialogue on the importance of and how best to integrate women — who have had little voice in Ukraine's political leadership — in a meaningful way that can help the country move forward.

⁸⁹ IFES Public Opinion in Ukraine 2013 Key Findings, December 2013.

Annex

Annex 1 - Final Meeting Agenda

Annex 2 - Applying a Quota to Electoral System: Analysis

Annex 3 - Presentation for Verkhovna Rada Committee on European Integration and CSOs (English), *separate attachment*

Annex 4 - Presentation for Verkhovna Rada Committee on European Integration and CSOs (Ukrainian), *separate attachment*

Annex 5 - Verkhovna Rada Press Release

Annex 1: Final Meeting Agenda

Friday, June 20, 2014

10:00 – Oleksandr Chernenko, Committee of Voters of Ukraine, IFES's office

11:00 – Yuriy Klichkovskiy, former Deputy of Parliament, IFES's office

12:30 – Andriy Mahera, Deputy Head of the Central Election Committee (CEC)

17:30 – Kostiantyn Kvurt, Director of Internews-Ukraine

Saturday, June 21, 2014

10:00 – Catherine Cecil and Olena Yena of NDI

Monday, June 23, 2014

10:00 - 13:00 – Roundtable co-hosted with NDI with CSOs on quotas and special measures

Tuesday, June 24, 2014

11:00 - 14:00 – Roundtable co-hosted with NDI at the Verkhovna Rada on quotas and special
measures

15:00 – Olga Aivazovska, OPORA

Wednesday, June 25, 2014

11:00 – Rostyslav Pavlenko, Deputy of Parliament, UDAR Party

14:00 -15:30 – Catherine Cecil and Olena Yena

Thursday, June 26, 2014

10:00 – Irina Bohoslovka, former MP for Party of Regions, now independent

11:30 – Andrei Lynnyk, CVU and coordinator of IFES training program for DEC and PECs for
Kyiv region & PEC member

15:00 – Roundtable with women’s NGOs/IFES office

Larisa Magdyuk – Women’s Consortium of Ukraine (Kyiv)
Kateryna Levchenko – La Strada Ukraine (Kyiv)
Vitalina Sevryuk – NGO “Woman” (Zhytomyr)
Tetyana Bayeva – NGO “Gender Council” (Khmelnitskiy)

Friday, June 27, 2014

10:30 – Viktoria Siumar, a leader of Volya Party, and former deputy head of the National
Security Council

12pm – Zhanna Usenko-Chorno, CEC Commissioner, Batkivsheena

13:00 – Irina Lutsenko, current MP, Batkivshchyna

15:00 – Natalka Karbowska, Board Chair & Marta Kolomyets, Board member, Ukraine
Women’s Fund

16.00 – NDI Team

Annex 2: Applying a Quota to Electoral System: Analysis

The following proposal can be used by IFES to support the work of lawmakers advocating for greater women's participation in parliament. Reform of the electoral system is under discussion, yet proposals that have emerged to date do not include measures that would bring the percentage of elected women in Ukraine's Parliament in line with the UN Millennium Development Goal target of 30% by 2015. In light of this, Denys Kovryzhenko (IFES) drafted quota scenarios that could be applied to an upcoming election and align with existing proposals (and the current system). The suggestions below take into account the outcome of women's representation, and not just increasing the number of women candidates (which could lead to little increase in seats). These scenarios require that political parties pay greater attention to women as part of their candidate selection.

1. Parallel, closed lists (Current system)

Under the parallel (current) system for the parliamentary election, no quota currently exists. Draft Law 3411 which has been introduced in parliament includes mandatory gender quotas for the party lists: 60% of no more than one gender in first five candidates, 70% of no more than one gender in the next 10 candidates. If a party fails to comply with this requirement, the CEC will reject the party list.

For the proportional lists, the zipper rule (every other candidate on the list is a woman) can be applied to each party list. Instead of the 60% and 70% scenario, it would ensure equal participation of women candidates and increase the likelihood of their success as a result of guaranteed placement higher on lists.

For the Single Member District (SMD) component of parallel system, the ability to apply a quota becomes more complex and is not addressed in the current draft legislation, despite the fact that it states that the quota applies to all levels of government. Under this component, the representation of women could be promoted primarily through financial means (if the state provides public funding to political parties); a portion of such a funding can be allocated to those parties who pass the electoral threshold and ensure a percentage of candidates out of the total number of candidates competing in single mandate election districts nominated by that party.

Another option to address the SMD part of the electoral system is to legally require that political parties nominate a certain percentage of women from the overall number of candidates nominated in single mandate election districts. However, if this requirement is made legal, parties can nominate women in those districts where the party has a small chance of its candidates' being elected, i.e., this provision allows for political parties to circumvent the goal of increasing the number of women elected to parliament. Based on the important role of finance in Ukraine's political system, public funding that can enable their success is likely to be more effective (in SMD) in enhancing the competition of women in a way that increases their chance of election.

2. Closed list proportional system

A mandatory quota should use a zipper rule, similar to Draft Law 3411, and should include the mandate of a zipper provision that alternates women and men on lists. Lower thresholds for parties that ensure 50/50 or near parity would also apply here.

3. Single Member District (SMD)

SMD would apply Ukraine's district elections to all parliamentary seats. While it is unlikely that the parliament will return to exclusive use of SMD for the next parliamentary elections (see explanation in #1), the same proposal for SMD in the parallel system should be applied to all seats.

4. Semi-closed Regional District Elections & Closed Proportional Lists

The draft electoral system proposal by Rudkovsky provides for regional party lists and national party lists comprising candidates nominated under all regional lists. Currently, the draft includes a quota of one in five candidates to be a woman; however, it has no list placement criteria. In this electoral scenario, two main types of quotas can be applied: 1) for national lists: 60% for the first five candidates on the national list, combined with zipper rule; and, 30% of either gender for each 10 candidates on the list after the first five candidates; 2) for the regional lists: 30% of either gender from the total number of candidates on the regional lists, combined with the zipper rule (i.e., no more than two representatives of either gender can be placed on the list subsequently). If this requirement is not met, all the lists are rejected. For those parties who ensure a better balance, lower national thresholds can be applied.

Two other legislative proposals similar to the Rudkovsky draft are under discussion and can use the same methods of employing a quota as in the Rudkovsky draft.

5. National lists nominated by parties

A recent draft system has been proposed as an open list; however, its parameters do not meet the criteria of an open list proportional system. Under the draft, political parties will nominate national lists of candidates. The territory of Ukraine will be divided into 450 territorial election districts (TEDs). Each candidate on the party list will be assigned to one of the 450 TEDs. The voter will receive a ballot paper with names of the parties that nominated candidates in the given districts, the first 10 candidates on the national list of each party and the party's candidate nominated in that district. A vote will be cast only for one party list. This vote will also apply to the candidate nominated by that party in that district. Only parties that manage to pass 5% national threshold will be allowed to participate in distribution of seats.

After the number of the mandates given to each party that passed the threshold is established, the CEC will determine the candidates elected on the respective party lists. The priority in obtaining the seats will be given to the first 10 candidates on the party list. The remaining seats (i.e., total number of seats received by a party minus the first 10 candidates) will be distributed among the remaining candidates on the list in accordance with the number of votes received by

the party in the 450 TEDs (i.e., the candidates in the districts where the party received more votes will be given priority in receiving the seats).

For this system, the 50/50 rule should be applied to the first 10 candidates on the national list, and candidates of one gender should not exceed 33% for each 10 candidates that follow on the national list. The zipper method should apply to the full list. This system favors women the least in terms of improving their representation, compared to the other draft electoral systems, because voting in 450 TEDs is closed to party preference and has no quota (i.e., if one supports the party and party-assigned male candidate to the district, one will most likely vote for the party and male candidate; if the party doesn't want a woman to be elected, it can nominate her in the district where the party is unpopular). A situation where parties nominate women candidates in districts where they have no chance of being elected can not be avoided. To promote nominations of women candidates (those that increase women's chances), financial incentives such as those discussed in #1 for the parallel system can be applied.



VERKHOVNA RADA OF UKRAINE

Inter-Faction Union “Equal Opportunities”

5, Grushevskogo Str., 01008 Kyiv, Tel.: (044) 255 39 38

June 25, 2014

Press release

Election legislation should include gender-equality mechanism

Ukraine lags behind many European countries and even Arab states in women’s political participation, particularly at the highest political level. If state decisions taken in different spheres of public life during the years of independence resulted in the equal participation of women and men, Ukraine could prevent many major problems that hamper the country’s integrity and democratic development today.

This is why the new election legislation should open ways to a more balanced representation of women and men, thus bringing Ukraine closer to European principles of democratic governance.

These issues were discussed at the Verkhovna Rada Committee on European Integration on June 24, 2014. The workshop on the legislative mechanisms of gender equality in the election legislation was held on the initiative of the Inter-Faction Union “Equal Opportunities” in partnership with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI).

The workshop agenda included such issues as: Ukraine’s international commitments related to gender equality; introduction of the efficient legislative mechanisms of the balanced representation of women and men in state government bodies; ways of promoting cooperation between MPs and CSOs advocating for a gender-sensitive national policy; and promotion of women’s active participation in social and political life.

The workshop was conducted by Kristin Haffert, principal of Haffert Group and leading international expert on gender equality in politics. Ms. Haffert spoke on ways to include instruments of achieving gender equality into the reform agenda as an important component of a representative democracy. She examined the legislative mechanisms of gender equality, which

are considered suitable for different electoral systems, and suggested arguments for and against gender quotas under the different electoral systems: proportional, majoritarian, mixed.

MPs such as Liliya Grynevych, Maria Ionova, Iryna Lutsenko and Inna Bogoslovska, as well as NDI and IFES representatives and staffers of the Committee on European Integration and Committee on State Building and Local Self-Government participated in the workshop.

During the discussion, MPs emphasized the need to legislatively guarantee quotas in the election party lists. **Iryna Lutsenko** stressed the importance of Draft Law #3411 On Providing Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men in the Election process). (authors – Olena Kondratiuk, Iryna Gerashchenko, Mykola Tomenko, Arseniy Yatsenyuk, Vitaliy Klytschko) to be considered by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Iryna Lutsenko reminded attendees: “The draft law provides general gender balance on the level of not less than 30% and not more than 70% of representatives of one gender in the corresponding election lists; however, it is suggested that the share of representatives of one gender in the first fifth of the election list on the level be not more than 60%.”

Additionally, the draft law implies sanctions for non-fulfillment. Central Election Commission (parliamentary elections) and corresponding territorial election commission (local elections) will not permit documents to be registered by a candidate to the parliament or to local council in the all-Ukrainian constituency, if the share of the candidates of one gender in the approved election list does not meet the requirements.

Liliya Grynevych stressed the need to make the election lists more transparent. She said, “We should open the lists for people so they know not just the first 10 candidates.” She also pointed to the need to integrate the provisions of Draft Law # 3411, in particular the suggested monitoring mechanism, which guarantees the execution of the corresponding quota principle when forming party lists, into the new legislation in case Draft Law # 3411 is not considered before the elections.

Maria Ionova suggested that in addition to the legislatively guaranteed quota principle broad awareness-raising campaigns should be conducted to inform citizens about the perception of women in politics and to overcome stereotyped images. She also highlighted the internal party work to support women in politics.

Event participants agreed on the next steps, in particular how to strengthen cooperation between the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and CSOs with respect to the drafting and implementation of legislative initiatives on gender equality.

Secretariat of the Inter-Faction Union “Equal Opportunities”

255 34 28



Global Expertise. Local Solutions.
Sustainable Democracy.

IFES | 1850 K Street, NW | Fifth Floor | Washington, D.C. 20006 | www.IFES.org