

### Abstract

*Corruption is a major and systemic problem that has consistently undermined economic and social progress as well as the reform agenda in Ukraine. Aiming at more effective and accountable public institutions that respond to the needs of all persons, especially the most vulnerable, an evidence base of how men and women are affected by corruption are crucial for improving the country's policies and achieving sustainable development. International studies argue that women and men may be differently prone to corruption practices, perceive corruption in different ways and have different personal experiences of everyday corruption. The impact of corruption may also be gender-specified, making women more vulnerable to negative effects and consequences of corruptive practices. The objective of the study is to examine the relationship between gender and corruption and to propose ways to effectively promote gender equality, women empowerment, and corruption prevention. The analysis will focus on the different impact of corruption on men and women, taking into consideration demographic variables such as age, rural/urban, geographic region, etc. The proposed paper concludes with recommendations on how to address this issue and include it into gender and corruption-related awareness raising campaigns. The paper is based on desk review of international literature of gender and corruption, as well as secondary analysis of the population-based surveys (Global Corruption Barometer survey and recent Ukraine's surveys on corruption). Qualitative approaches to data collection were also used, including in-depth interviews with anticorruption experts, and on-line survey of local NGOs working in the field of anticorruption.*

**Keywords:** *corruption, gender, public perceptions, Global Corruption Barometer, Ukraine.*

### Introduction

Corruption remains one of the main obstacles to development, holding back economic and social progress as well as reducing governance transparency and the effectiveness of reforms. According to the most widespread definition, corruption is understood as the 'abuse of power by the authorities for private gain' (UNDP, 2008a). Depending on the actors involved and the sector, the abuse of power can involve political, business, or everyday corruption that arises when ordinary citizens and officials interact.

Significant levels of corruption are recognised as one of the most important development challenges in Ukraine, while international organisations emphasise the lack of power of domestic state institutions to counteract both these practices and the public's tolerance of corruption in daily life (OECD, 2017). While Ukraine ranks 130<sup>th</sup> out of 180 countries on corruption in the 2017 Corruption Perceptions Index (Transparency International, 2017), 87% of respondents in the Global Corruption Barometer survey negatively assessed the government's attempts to change this situation for the better, and only 14% of Ukrainians surveyed agreed that ordinary people are also able to make changes in this area (Global Corruption Barometer, 2016).

Although the wide-ranging efforts of anti-corruption structures are aimed at overcoming corrupt practices in domestic state institutions, considerably less attention is paid to studying the impact of such abuses on the wellbeing of the entire population and specific population groups. The scope of this problem is increasing in the context of deploying reforms in Ukraine,

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as the systemic crisis and state policy of austerity are negatively affecting the population's quality of life. In the process of structural transformation, women often encounter increased vulnerability, as manifestations of gender inequality can limit their opportunities in different areas of life. These limits include access to decent employment and salaries, political representation and decision-making, and can result in the emergence of discriminatory attitudes or the unequal division of family commitments between women and men (Gerasymenko, 2016). According to World Economic Forum estimates, the gender inequality level remains high in Ukraine and progress in this area is too slow. In particular, Ukraine was ranked only 61<sup>st</sup> out of 144 countries by the level of gender development in 2017, with the most problematic area being the political authority of women, including the level of representation in the national parliament and in senior executive positions in state administration bodies (WEF, 2017).

Vulnerability of women can be aggravated by effects of everyday corruption, as traditional social roles associated with taking care of disabled family members result in the increased importance for women of unhindered access to public services. With incomes lower than those of men, women are more dependent on the availability of state social guarantees, their 'generosity' and fair distribution. Finally, social and cultural barriers can determine differences in the attitudes of women and men to corruption, in the assessment of the severity of this problem, and in readiness to counteract to corruption. Therefore, the use of gender analysis should become an important part of anti-corruption strategies and programmes at both the national and local levels.

Accordingly, the objectives of this paper are to analyse the gender dimension of corruption in Ukraine. The findings of the study will make it possible to more effectively direct the joint efforts of all stakeholders to simultaneously combat corruption, promote gender equality, and empower women. The paper aims to answer the questions about differences in the perception of corruption between women and men, different impacts of corruption on women and men, corruption's contribution to increasing gender inequality in society, and integration of gender-sensitive approaches into anti-corruption strategies. This paper is based on the literature review on gender and corruption, and secondary analysis of the findings of sociological surveys that had not previously been explored from a gender perspective.

### **Conceptualising gender and corruption studies**

Over the past few decades, the issue of gender equality has been increasingly prominent on the agenda for international development; and the principles of non-discrimination and impartial treatment of citizens, regardless of gender, are enshrined in global policy frameworks (United Nations 2017). The most common definition of the concept of gender refers to the socially and culturally constructed values and roles inherent in representatives of different genders: males and females (UNESCO, 2004). At the conceptual level, this term reinforces the understanding that social expectations regarding the behavioural patterns, personal values and life priorities of men and women may differ. In turn, strictly defined gender roles and norms can cause manifestations of unequal treatment of women or men and limit their rights and opportunities to participate in public life.

Scientific debates on the role of the gender factor in corruption began at the end of the last century, when the authors of some behavioural studies drew the attention of the public to differences in the attitude of women and men to social issues. The findings of these studies demonstrated that women have a more responsible attitude to moral and ethical norms, show more empathy and willingness to help other people, are more generous in making economic decisions, and have a lower propensity to risky behaviour (Agerberg, 2014). Based on these

conclusions, the assumption was made that women are also more likely to relinquish private gain for the sake of welfare at the level of state governance. Therefore, the propensity to corruption or the willingness to counteract abuse of power may also be influenced by the biological and socially constructed differences between women and men. Accordingly, the increase in the number of women in national parliaments and senior government positions was seen as a key instrument for improving the transparency and efficiency of state administration (Dollar, 1999). Later, the evidence base for these arguments was considered insufficient, although the dispute about women's and men's 'natural' inclination towards corruption is still ongoing. In spite of the subsequent change of focus and methodological approach to research, this *first wave of gender analysis of corruption* is of great importance, as it has set the stage for an awareness of the need to incorporate the gender perspective into anti-corruption policy.

*The second wave studies* were based on international comparisons of the public perception of corruption, which enabled a gender analysis of corruption and the assessment of other factors related to the national context of individual countries. The findings have shown that gender differences in attitude towards corruption can significantly depend on institutional factors, such as the state system, the economic development of the country, the level of democracy, and widespread cultural practices and traditions that define gender norms and stereotypes (Seppanen, 2008; UNIFEM, 2006). According to some researchers, the lower involvement of women in corrupt practices can be attributed not so much to their personal preferences, but to the effect of external barriers related to the existence of male corporate networks that impede women's access to power (Goetz, 2007). Other researchers argue that the connection between corruption and the level of women's political representation seems to be irrelevant as long as other characteristic variables of 'fairness' of state institutions – the rule of law, plurality of views and freedom of speech – are taken into account (Sung, 2003). Thus, in democratic states, the low corruption level and parity of women in parliament are not necessarily interdependent findings, since in both cases progress is determined by the overall effectiveness of social institutions. In contrast, gender differences in the involvement in corrupt practices are likely to decline in autocratic regimes, as corruption is a social norm that all members of society adapt to (Esarey, 2013).

*The third wave of scientific discourse on gender and corruption* is connected with the recognition of the differences in the impact of corrupt practices on the lives of women and men, and hence the need to reject the gender-blind approach to the development and implementation of anti-corruption programmes and strategies. Numerous studies highlight the increased vulnerability of women to the negative effects of corruption, especially in areas such as healthcare, education, social and household services (UNDP & UNIFEM, 2010). These risks are associated with women's reproductive activity, which determines the need for specialised medical services, the imposition of the duty to care of under-aged children or disabled relatives, and the need to address a number of household issues related to sustaining the household. In addition to the direct impact of corruption on their lives, women more often become indirect victims of corruption, as they figure prominently in socially vulnerable categories of the population, whose welfare depends on state social policy measures and the targeted use of budgetary resources allocated for their support.

At this stage of the gender analysis of corruption, there is a recognition of the existence of specific, gender-based forms of corruption, such as the abuse of power for obtaining sexual services (Goetz, 2005). Other studies stress that sexual exploitation is a specific form of corruption to which women are much more vulnerable than men (UNDP, 2012). In particular,

according to international estimates, women account for more than 80% of human trafficking victims, who experience forced labour or sexual exploitation, suffer from forced marriages or organ trade (GTZ, 2004). Finally, the risks of corruption grow in conditions of instability, hostilities or humanitarian crises, while abuse of power during a crisis has disproportionate consequences for women, who are exposed to gender-based discrimination or gender-based violence by officials.

Recognition of the various effects of corruption on women and men which are reinforced by prevailing societal gender norms, and the manifestations of inequality and gender-based discrimination has drawn attention to the need for the systematic integration of gender analysis into the development of anti-corruption policies and vice versa. Accordingly, on the global level, there is an understanding of the importance of the simultaneous promotion of gender equality, empowerment of women, and implementation of anti-corruption programmes as mutually reinforcing development strategies. The need to focus on empowering women, supporting their economic opportunities, civic engagement, and attracting women to educational programmes with a special focus on the development of leadership capital, is recognised as a central element of strategies to overcome corruption and its negative effects (UNDP, 2011).

### **Gender differences in the attitudes of Ukraine's population to corruption**

Public attitudes to corruption enable us to assess the perception of the acuteness of this problem in society, the level of corruption in certain state institutions, and the willingness to be personally involved in fighting corrupt practices. The best-known tool for collecting such data is the Global Corruption Barometer sociological survey conducted by Transparency International in more than 60 countries.<sup>2</sup> In this survey the public expresses its subjective assessment of the level of corruption in the country, shares its experience of unofficial payments when receiving services, and evaluates the government's achievements in fighting corruption. The application of gender analysis to the findings of such a survey in 2008 qualified the assumption that women are more sensitive to corruption than men, more concerned about the level of corruption in society, more acutely aware of its manifestations, and more strongly affected by its negative effects on their own lives (UNIFEM, 2008).

The findings of this study have given rise to a discussion on the global gender differences in the tolerance of corruption (Swamy, 2000). International researchers argue that women are more likely to disapprove of bribery, are less involved in corrupt practices, and justify their use by other people to a lesser extent (World Bank, 2001). The largest gap in the public perception of corruption was found in social services sectors such as education, healthcare and housing. Researchers have estimated that in developed regions the number of women who believe that corruption in education is high is 1.3 times higher than men (UNIFEM, 2008). These findings are explained by the fact that women are more likely to encounter corruption within the country, since they are predominantly responsible for raising children and for their education.

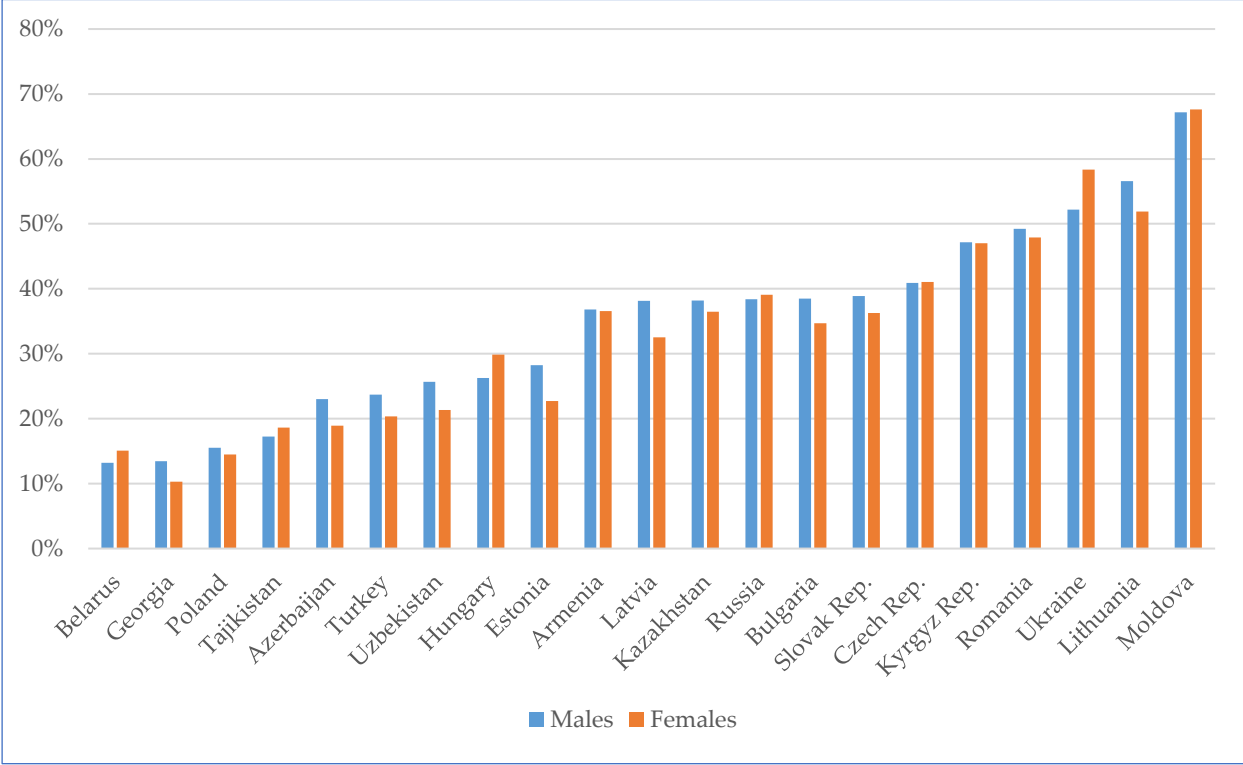
The findings of the last Global Corruption Barometer survey (2016) show that corruption and bribery are perceived by Ukrainians as one of the most important problems that the government needs to address. The respondents refer to the issue of economic development and public health as two of the most important priorities. Unfortunately, according to the public perception of the level of corruption held by both women and men, Ukraine stands out from other countries of the region, and is second only to neighbouring Moldova (Figure 1).

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/global\\_corruption\\_barometer\\_citizens\\_voices\\_from\\_around\\_the\\_world](https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/global_corruption_barometer_citizens_voices_from_around_the_world)

Interestingly, according to the public perception of the relevance of corruption, certain gender differences persist, as it is considered the most important problem in the country by 58% of female and 52% of male respondents. Also, a relatively larger share of women than men are concerned with the state of public health (50% versus 45%), while for men, issues related to economic development are more important (71% versus 67%). Significant gender differences in the public perception of issues such as unemployment, crime, the environment, political stability, education and infrastructure development are not observed.

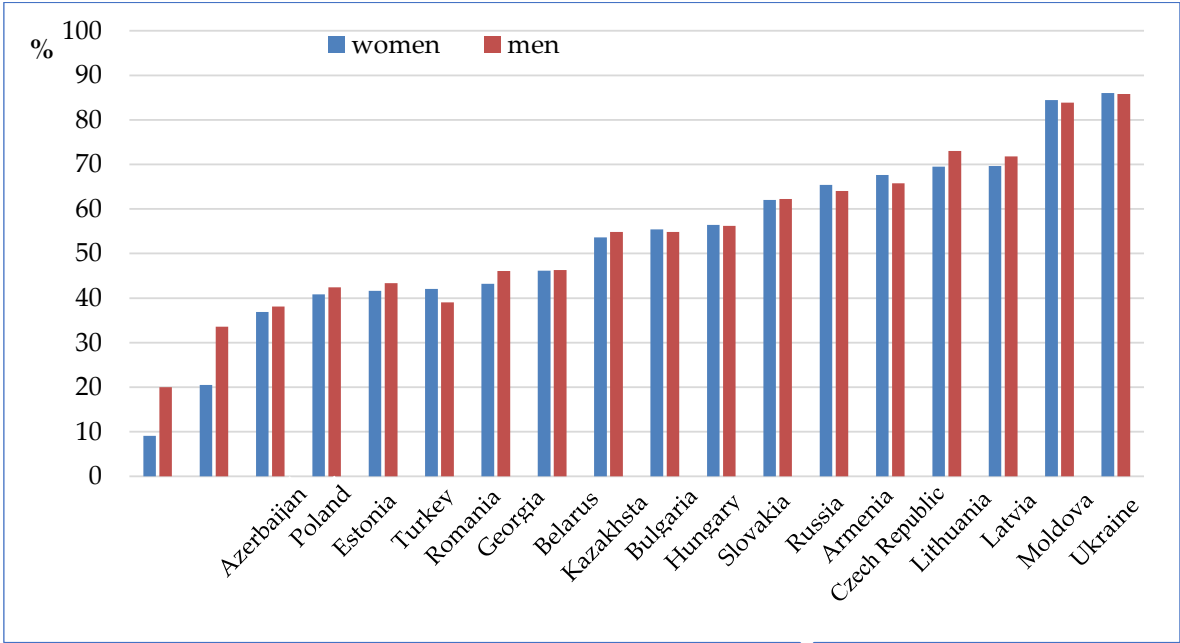
**Figure 1: Share of respondents who consider corruption or bribery as one of the main problems in their country.**



Source: 2016 Global Corruption Barometer survey

Despite the problem’s importance, according to the public assessment of the government's achievements in fighting corruption, Ukraine is behind other countries in the region. More than 80% of respondents in the 2016 Global Corruption Barometer survey said performance of government officials is bad or very bad (Figure 2), while the proportion of the population which agreed that ordinary people could also help effect change to overcome corruption was the lowest in the region. Statistically significant gender differences in the attitude of the public to these issues are not observed, so it can be assumed that corrupt practices have become so deeply embedded in the everyday life of the Ukrainian people that there is a certain consensus regarding their place in a society.

**Figure 2: Share of respondents who assess the government's achievements in fighting corruption in their country as bad or very bad.**



Source: 2016 Global Corruption Barometer survey

However, significant differences are observed when assessing the level of awareness of corruption among men and women. A gender analysis of the original data from the corruption survey carried out by GfK Ukraine in 2017 shows that a significantly smaller proportion of women (55%) admit that they are sufficiently informed about corruption compared to men (64%) (GfK, 2017). Less than a half of women (45%) believe that they have sufficient knowledge to assess the level of corruption in Ukraine compared to 54% of men; and a quarter of women and one third of men say they have sufficient information about government agencies that are authorised to fight corruption. Only 19% of women and 28% of men believe that they are well informed about the results of the work of anti-corruption bodies in Ukraine (Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Public awareness of corruption by gender (share of respondents who consider themselves sufficiently informed).**



Source: 2017 GfK survey data.

Slightly more men than women perceive corruption as a widespread phenomenon in society (83% against 78%, respectively), and believe that corruption exists in various social areas. Although some scholars suggest that women tend to notice corruption less in public institutions since they themselves form the majority of state employees, it is hard to agree with this when it comes to law enforcement agencies or military forces. Such tendencies are likely to be related to women's lower interest in the issues of corruption and women's less capacity to identify some of them in real life.

In total, the differences in the perception of corruption by women and men do not vary significantly in Ukraine. This may indicate that such abuses are so deeply rooted in society that they are perceived as a norm of everyday life. The survey's findings show that women are characterised by lower self-assessment of awareness on corruption than men; women also cannot always identify corrupt practices in public institutions. It can be assumed that these differences are due to the influence of prevalent gender norms that prioritise private life for women, while public activities are considered secondary for them. This may result in women being less interested in the socio-economic processes and phenomena taking place in the state, including the problems of corruption. The situation analysis in transition economies supports this assumption, as its authors explain the lower perceived level of corruption among women in the region by a 'renaissance' of the patriarchy in the post-Soviet society, when traditional social roles of women and their exclusion from 'male' corporate networks restrict opportunities to experience corruption (Michailova, 2009). At the same time, the sense of the "'acuteness' of the problem is increasing among women, who more often say it is one of the main challenges for the country. This gives grounds to suggest that women have an increased vulnerability to the negative effects of such abuses.

### **Impact of corruption on men and women in Ukraine**

Although debates on gender differences in the perception of corruption by the public continue, the claim that the effects of corruption on women and men are different is unanimously recognised by researchers. International organisations identify four interlinked areas of corruption that may have different effects on the lives of women and men: (1) access to basic services, markets and loans; (2) involvement in politics; (3) human rights violations; and (4) consequences of ineffective governance (Sida, 2015). In accordance with this framework approach, the following gender analysis was built to cover the following issues: (1) involvement in political life and decision-making; (2) access to socially significant services; (3) access to the labour market and resources; (4) human rights violations; and (5) consequences of weak governance in fragile states.

#### ***Involvement in political life and decision-making***

Equal access of women and men to political representation and to higher levels of governance is a fundamental prerequisite for the achievement of gender equality in society. This is because other opportunities for their social realisation also depend on women's participation in decision-making processes with respect to issues that are important for the development of government policy. At the same time, this includes the greatest challenges for promoting gender equality in Ukraine. With regard to the level of gender parity in parliament, the country is below established democracies and the global average (23.8% of women among parliamentarians globally as of April 2018).<sup>3</sup> Despite the fact that in 2013 gender quotas of at

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<sup>3</sup> Inter-Parliament Union (01.04.2018): <http://archive.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>

least 30% of representatives of each gender were allocated in national election legislation,<sup>4</sup> the number of women in the government did not increase significantly. As of April 2018, women made up only 12.5% of the parliament members (53 women out of 423 people's deputies). According to the gender monitoring data of the 2014 elections, 20 out of 29 political parties did not comply with this legislation requirement at all, and the lack of progress is linked not only to the lack of political will to implement gender reforms, but also to the lack of sanctions for non-compliance with this law (WCU, 2014).

Indeed, two-thirds of the respondents in the National Democratic Institute (NDI) survey in 2017 agreed that political parties are more likely to nominate men than women among electoral candidates, while half of the respondents admitted that women have lower access to resources in support of their own electoral campaigns (NDI, 2017). However, the importance of gender stereotypes that determine the sceptical attitude of Ukrainians to women in politics should not be neglected: more than half (53%) of respondents agreed that Ukrainians themselves are less likely to vote for women, 42% of them believed that women were less interested in politics than men, and 55% were convinced that family commitments mean that women have no time to participate in politics.

There is also a disproportionately low representation of women among senior government officials in the country. There are currently only three women out of the 24 government ministers (Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, Minister of Education and Acting Minister of Health). Women constitute nearly 28% of deputy prime ministers and ministers (18 women out of 68 officials), representing two of 19 state secretaries in ministries, or the CMU secretariat (almost 11%).

Although the low share of women in representative bodies is clearly contradictory to gender equality guidelines, there is no reliable research data that can provide evidence of the impact of gender parity in parliament on the reduction of state corruption. Current analytical reviews emphasise that although the gender factor is important, it is influenced by institutional factors such as the state system, the distribution of ruling political forces, gender norms and the culture of decision-making (UNDP, 2008b). The assumption that women are less inclined than men to participate in corruption at the state administration level is dispelled by the findings of a survey among Ukrainian state officials conducted in 2014 (Galustyan, 2014). Assessing the gender aspects of corrupt practices in the state service, respondents unanimously agreed that state corruption is more related to men, but solely because the officials who hold senior positions are predominately men. As noted by the participants of the focus group discussions that were held as part of the study: *'If there were more women in leadership positions, they would be involved in corrupt practices as well'*.

### ***Access to basic public services***

Although differences in the personal experience of women's and men's involvement in corruption and informal practices when using services may be interpreted in different ways, there are grounds to state that women's lives are disproportionately affected by the negative effects of corruption. The effects can also exacerbate manifestations of gender inequality already existing in society, creating additional obstacles for women's access to resources, services and opportunities. This link is determined by a number of factors which are becoming especially pronounced in Ukraine.

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<sup>4</sup> Article 8 of the Law of Ukraine 'On Political Parties in Ukraine' and Article 4 of the Law of Ukraine 'On Local elections'.



1) *In most societies, gender norms include women's overwhelming responsibility for family duties related to caring for children, the ill and the elderly.*

In Ukraine, particularly strong expectations about the division of roles in marital relations persist. While a husband is assigned the role of the 'breadwinner', the woman's obligations are to care for the family and housework. In particular, almost two thirds of respondents recognised that caring for children and family members who need constant attention is the responsibility of women (UNFPA, 2012). Most of the surveyed women also claimed that they were responsible for making decisions about running the household. Therefore, they often had to interact with providers of various services, such as educational, medical, social and housing. As a result, any barriers to accessing services necessary for a family member due to the abuse of power by officials primarily affect women who perform the functions of caregivers.

As the findings of international studies show, the lack of necessary services or the low quality of such services are also perceived by women as a part of corruption, as they relate this to the abuse of power and non-fulfilment of responsibilities by community leaders, who are authorised to take care of public welfare and to maintain infrastructure at a proper level in the territories entrusted to them (Sida, 2015). In this context, the rural population is particularly vulnerable: only 25% of female rural residents interviewed in the framework of a comprehensive study of rural women did not complain about the availability of medical services (UNDP, 2015). The rest of the female respondents complained about the remoteness of healthcare facilities and financial unaffordability of medical treatment and medicines (48% of respondents), lack of equipment and certain specialists. Women living in rural areas also encountered difficulties accessing social services, including placement in jobs and the provision of social assistance benefits.

2) *In certain periods of their lives women have significantly greater needs to access medical services caused by their reproductive activity.*

Women need specific health services during family planning and pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum period. Consequently, they may become particularly vulnerable to corruption during these periods, such as being subject to demands for bribes by medical personnel or to abuses from other service suppliers.

Unofficial payments related to receiving healthcare during pregnancy and childbirth are not only widespread in Ukraine, but also among the highest for the population of Ukraine. The findings of the 2012 study in Central and Eastern Europe countries showed that three quarters of respondents paid for childbirth services, and 57% of them made unofficial payments (Stepurko, 2013). In addition, 65% of patients paid for gynaecological services (almost 40% unofficially); these services were regarded as one of the most expensive. Respondents named receiving 'more attention' from a specialist (45%), improvement of care (25%), and other reasons such as increasing the availability of services (30%), as the main reasons for giving unofficial payments. It is noteworthy that the vast majority of patients were negatively affected by such practices, and about 41% of payers reported that an informal payment was made at the request of the service provider.

3) *The increased vulnerability of women to the negative effects of corruption is also determined by material factors. Thus, women with lower incomes than men are predominant among the poor and are at a higher risk of poverty.*

As a result, women's welfare depends much more on state social guarantees (social payments, pensions, subsidies) and unhindered access to services provided by public institutions. The abuse of authority in the targeted provision of these services increases individual vulnerability

of citizens, while corrupt practices at the macro level associated with the misuse of budgetary resources for social purposes reduce the social well-being of the entire population.

The average women's salary in Ukraine is traditionally lower than that of men. This is due to the gender-based 'vertical' occupational segregation, under which men predominate in managerial positions in all sectors of the economy, and the 'horizontal' segregation of the labour market, where women work in less prestigious and lower paid jobs such as education, healthcare, and the provision of social assistance. According to the State Statistics Service, the average salary earned by women was only 79% of that of men in 2017. Naturally, these gender differences are further reflected in women receiving lower pensions. This last problem is of particular importance in the context of women's vulnerability since there are more women in the older age groups due to longer life expectancy among women; and these are the main users of social services for the elderly. With lower incomes, women make up the majority of recipients of subsidies for housing and communal services, benefit recipients, and recipients of social assistance (Gerasymenko, 2016). Gender is a common denominator in many Ukrainian 'poverty profiles', which include single elderly women, unemployed women, and women who raise their own children. Finally, in a society where corruption and informal payments are considered common practice when receiving services, poor women cannot always afford to pay such fees and may be completely unable to access these services.

#### *Access to the labour market and resources*

Gender can also be a factor in business corruption, affecting business opportunities, the access of companies to markets and resources, and cooperation with regulatory authorities. There are numerous indications that female entrepreneurs face barriers when accessing business development loans, and it can be more difficult for them to obtain permits and licenses to start their own business.

In general, Ukrainian companies refer to corruption and access to finance as the biggest obstacles to doing business.<sup>5</sup> According to the Enterprise Survey of the World Bank (2013), corruption was identified as the main obstacle to doing business by 40% of companies with male top managers, and 28% of companies with female top managers. This proportion was significantly higher than the average perception of corruption in companies in Europe and Central Asia, where similar studies have been conducted. Moreover, about 99% of interviewed companies with male top managers expressed their expectations that they would have to give 'gifts' to authorised persons to obtain a government contract.<sup>6</sup> Almost twice the percentage of companies with male top managers than those with top female managers expected that they would have to make informal payments or give gifts to obtain an import license (44% versus 23%). However, a relatively higher percentage of companies with female top managers expected that they would have to give a bribe when obtaining a business license (44% versus 32% respectively) or solving 'certain problems' related to business activities (88% versus 70%).

#### *Human rights violation*

Corrupt institutions, especially law enforcement agencies and the justice system, also constitute threats in the context of protecting citizen rights, especially vulnerable groups of the population, who may encounter prejudiced attitudes and discrimination in society. At the same time, citizen rights can be violated; these include political rights (e.g. right to vote or representation), economic rights (e.g. employment opportunities, equal pay, professional

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<sup>5</sup> Enterprise Surveys, World Bank: <http://www.enterprisesurveys.org>

<sup>6</sup> The response to this question was given by a small number of companies with female top managers, so the findings of their survey are not taken into account in the analysis.

training and advancement, ownership and inheritance of property), and social rights (e.g. marital and family relations, guardianship over children, protection from domestic violence).

Gender-based discrimination remains a rather widespread phenomenon in Ukraine. Depending on a form of discrimination, 2% to 14% of respondents reported that they had personally encountered some form of gender discrimination or knew that their friends or relatives had encountered it (GfK, 2014). Among the manifestations of discrimination, the prejudiced attitude to women in employment (14% of respondents), lower salaries for women than men doing similar work, and insufficient representation of women in business (10% of respondents) are mentioned most often. In practice, the depth of discrimination can be significantly greater because it is a taboo topic, and due to the public's inability to recognise its manifestations.

The situation is exacerbated by the public's lack of awareness of its rights, of domestic legislation and the national mechanism for combating discrimination, and its distrust of organisations that aim to protect citizen rights. The level of awareness of gender equality laws among adult Ukrainians is relatively low. Women living in rural areas, women with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups of the population lack awareness of their rights and protections (GfK, 2014).

In a corrupt society, the inability of the judicial system to protect the rights of victims of discrimination contributes to the reproduction of a prejudiced attitude, effectively increasing their vulnerability to structural discrimination. Having limited access to resources, women are not always able to afford qualified legal services or stand against lawsuit defendants who use corrupt connections. Consequently, corruption limits the possibilities for the protection of the rights of women and men in cases of discrimination or prejudiced attitudes, and its gender effects restrict overall progress in advancing gender equality in society.

### *Consequences of weak government in fragile states*

The negative impact of corruption on the lives of citizens increases in the context of political instability or humanitarian crises caused by armed conflicts or large-scale natural disasters. Fragile states are characterised by the weak adherence of governments to the rule of law, and effective use of resources and protection of human rights. In the context of limited access to public services, the prevalence of corrupt practices and the scale of abuses is increasing, while the search for justice for those who encounter the abuse of power is complicated by the lack or the weakness of the justice system (Baraniy, 2005).

Human rights violations in the context of humanitarian crises may have different effects on women and men. In countries that are affected by armed conflicts or natural disasters, women constitute the majority of refugees and displaced persons while encountering specific risks and vulnerabilities. In situations where humanitarian mission personnel or emergency response personnel are mostly made up of men, opportunities for the abuse of entrusted power increase. Specifically, the risk of gender-based violence and other forms of exploitation of women, rises. Increased poverty due to lack of income and decent living conditions can lead to the prevalence of survival strategies that are unacceptable for people under normal circumstances. For instance, there have been reports of refugees and other vulnerable women and children being forced to provide sexual favours in exchange for products, safety or essential goods. Therefore, the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 'Women, Peace and Security' recommends that measures be taken to respond to the whole spectrum of violations of women's rights in conflict situations, including health, education, food, water, land, livelihood, citizenship, and access to justice and legal protection.

The armed conflict in eastern Ukraine and the formation of large-scale internal displacement of people render the problems with corruption in Ukraine particularly urgent. As of July 2018, more than 1.5 million displaced people from Donbas and Crimea were registered by social protection units in different regions of Ukraine.<sup>7</sup> According to the national monitoring system for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), women constitute 58% of IDP households (IOM, 2017).

Displaced women remain more vulnerable with regards to access to employment and income: according to the State Employment Service, they account for two thirds of all unemployed IDPs. It is much more difficult to adapt to new living conditions for these women than it is for men, since it is, they who become responsible for disabled family members under conditions of family separation and lack of external support. According to the findings of the gender analysis on respecting IDP rights, displaced women are additionally burdened with raising children,<sup>8</sup> and the number of women reporting that they lack income and are forced to economise is significantly greater than the number of men (Chumalo, 2017). The survey showed that IDP women contact all authorities and local service providers, human rights organisations, migration services, courts and law enforcement agencies more often than men. A noticeably higher percentage of displaced women than men encounter problems when dealing with social institutions, including requirements for additional documents, lack of clarification by officials, and lack of information on procedures for processing documents. Although this survey did not include questions about IDP's experiences with corruption, it can be assumed that it is women who are most vulnerable to such practices when dealing with officials.

### **Gender dimension of anti-corruption activities**

The gender dimension of corruption, as well as gender-specific forms of corruption call for the introduction of a gender perspective to policy, and for the formation of an anti-corruption policy in Ukraine. Considering different experiences of corruption, it can be assumed that women and men have different ideas about ways to prevent the abuse of power and increase the effectiveness of anti-corruption activities. However, women and men professionally engaged in anti-corruption activities can differentiate priorities, formulate strategies for their implementation, and identify specific enforcement actions.

For example, there are differences in how men and women understand the reasons for citizens reporting corruption encountered in their everyday lives (Figure 4). More Ukrainian men than women interviewed in the Global Corruption Barometer survey (2016) consider that people do not report corruption to competent authorities and believe that nothing will change (18% of men and 14% of women). However, women are more likely to worry about the negative consequences of reporting corruption. Of note, 15% of women (compared with 12% of men) agreed that people do not report corruption because it is too difficult to prove, and 16% of women (as opposed to 13% of men) associate the causes of not reporting corruption with the anticipation of possible negative consequences.

Some gendered differences can also be observed in the perception of measures that can increase the effectiveness of combating corruption. The men interviewed, especially entrepreneurs who usually represent the most active population groups, showed much more decisive attitudes than women on how to increase the accountability of corrupt officials. In particular, the need to make punishments for corruption more severe was emphasised by

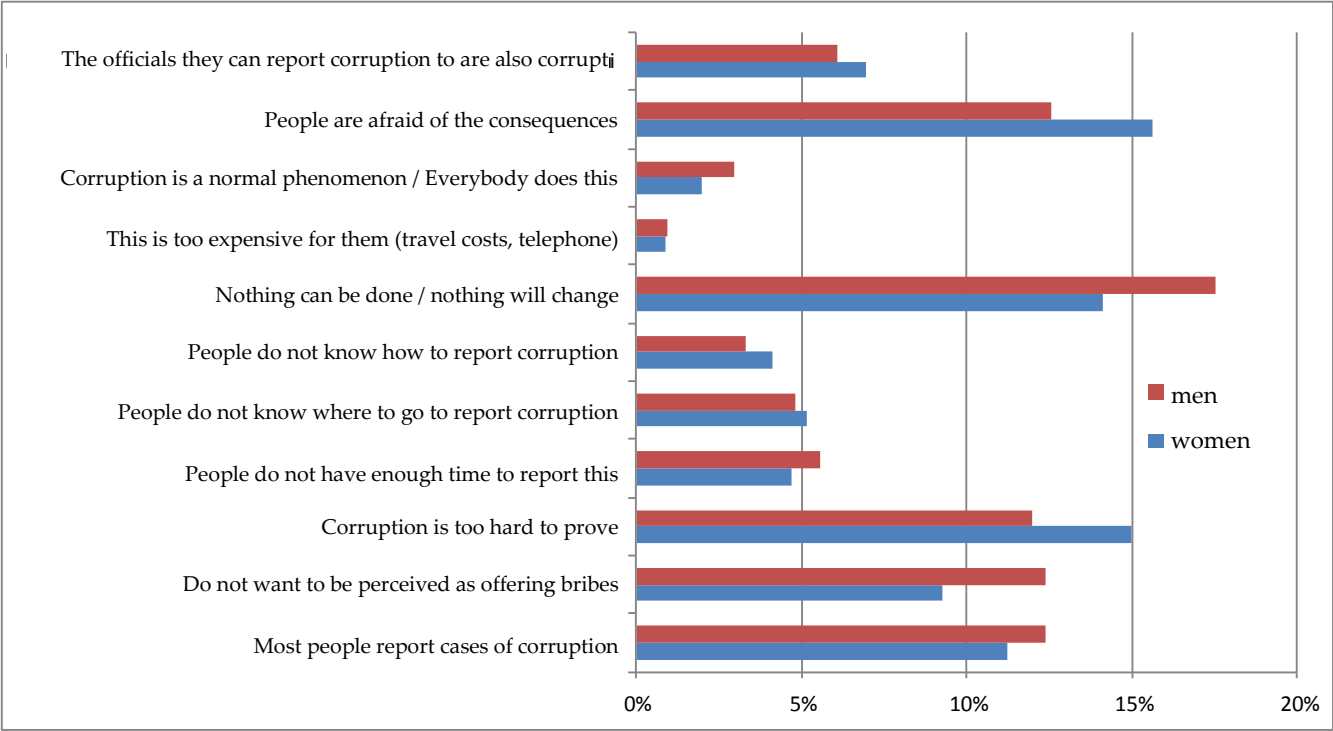
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<sup>7</sup> There are 1,515,128 displaced people registered by the Ministry of Social Policy: <https://www.msp.gov.ua/news/15569.html>

<sup>8</sup> 27% of men and 42% of women among IDPs live with children under 18.

every fourth man interviewed, compared to only 16% of women (GfK, 2017). The entrepreneurs who were interviewed in this study were even more determined to increase accountability for corruption (one-third of male entrepreneurs and 27% of female entrepreneurs). However, more women than men believed that it is important to change society’s mentality, to form a sense of personal responsibility among citizens, and to teach the next generation about the unacceptability of corruption (19% of women versus 10% of men).

**Figure 4: Breakdown of responses to the question: "Given your experience, what is the main reason people do not report cases of corruption they encounter?"**



Source: 2016 Global Corruption Barometer survey

Unfortunately, the willingness of Ukrainians to personally combat corruption remains significantly lower than in other countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. According to the 2016 Global Corruption Barometer survey, only 18% of men and 13% of women said they would feel personally responsible to report corruption if they became witnesses, while 16% of men and 14% of women stated that they would report a case of corruption, even if they had to spend the whole day in court in order to testify.

Gender analysis of anti-corruption activities at the nationwide level reveals some disparities in the structure of employees of anti-corruption bodies, including the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine (NABU), the Specialised Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office (SAP) and the National Agency for Prevention of Corruption (NAPC). As of May 2018, all three institutions were headed by men and men were overrepresented in senior management positions. Out of the three NABU deputy directors, only one was a woman, and 15 women held senior positions in the 23 structural units of the Bureau. It is striking that women predominantly become heads of those structural units whose activities are related to supporting activities, such as document processing, accounting and finance, public relations and communications.<sup>9</sup> The Head of the SAP and two deputies at the time of its establishment were men. The leaders of the NAPC are mostly men, as women only represent a fifth of NAPC

<sup>9</sup> <https://nabu.gov.ua/leadership>

members. Although the gender structure of the Agency staff was close to parity (52% of women and 48% of men), there were significantly more men in managerial positions (58%), while women occupied 55% of specialists' positions.

By contrast, public organisations and anti-corruption movements that operate locally are more closely characterised by a gender balance of activists and gender parity in leadership positions. These findings are based on the results of a survey of representatives of 21 anti-corruption associations and organisations that was carried out in this study. In particular, about half of the respondents reported that women and men were equally represented among workers or activists of their organisations, as well as in the key positions. One-third of the respondents said that women and men are equally represented in the group of the organisation's impact and in general among the activists of the anticorruption movement.

A lot of experts agreed that there are certain gender differences and personal motives, through which citizens are involved in anti-corruption activities. Most of the interviewed activists supported the assumption that men are more likely to be involved in anti-corruption activities because of their interest in political and socio-economic processes in the allocation of resources, including public finances. One-third of the interviewed activists believed that at the stage of education, men are more likely to choose those specialties that are needed in anti-corruption activities. On the other hand, much of the experts agreed that women are more likely to engage in combating corruption because of their sensitivity to injustices in society, the widespread experience of domestic corruption and vulnerability to the negative effects of corruption.

According to the interviewed activists, women and men may prefer different anti-corruption strategies: men are more likely to participate in the organised campaigns, protests, demonstrations, and they are also more likely to participate directly in litigation. Women, meanwhile, prefer the so-called '*saraphan radio*', informing the surrounding environment about known cases of corruption. The experts agreed that women and men are equally involved in signing petitions, collective demands, appeals of citizens, reporting corruption cases to regulatory bodies, and exposing corruption in the media and social networks.

In general, most of the interviewed activists supported the need to take gender differences into the experience of corruption when planning anti-corruption programmes and strategies. Although women were more unanimous about the feasibility of gender mainstreaming (80% of women surveyed), only just over half of the polled men supported this idea. Among specific tools and gender policies that will enhance the effectiveness of anti-corruption activities, the experts identified the following:

- observance of gender quotas in the electoral process at the national level;
- raising citizens' awareness of anti-discrimination legislation and the possibility of protecting their rights, including in the case of discrimination on the basis of sex;
- implementation of information campaigns aimed at changing traditional gender stereotypes, overcoming sexism in the information space;
- creating conditions for the harmonious combination of professional and family responsibilities by workers with children.

Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) is considered to be the most effective tool for ensuring gender equality, which will increase the accountability and transparency of the use of budgetary funds. In other words, GRB is a way of budgeting, which aims to increase the economic efficiency of budget expenditures by taking into account the needs of women and men from different social and demographic groups. According to commonly accepted approaches, the main components of the GRB process include: gender budgeting, sequential

changes in programmes and budgets, and system integration of GRB into the budget process. Starting from 2014, the project 'Gender Budgeting in Ukraine' is being implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Finance in Ukraine. Therefore, raising the awareness of anti-corruption activists about the opportunities and benefits of GRB at the local and national level, should be an important direction in strengthening the capacity of their organisations and associations.<sup>10</sup>

In general, the integration of gender issues into the programming of anti-corruption measures should include a number of cross-cutting recommendations, the implementation of which will lead to positive cross-sectoral implications:

- using gender-disaggregated data in activities planning, defining the system of basic indicators and target indicators of monitoring, evaluation of the effectiveness of implemented activities;
- conducting targeted research that should fill in the existing information gaps on gender aspects of corruption in Ukraine, using gender analysis in the process of assessing the needs of the population and identifying problem issues of anti-corruption policy;
- ensuring the gender balance among representatives of anti-corruption bodies, which will better take into account the interests and needs of both women and men.

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<sup>10</sup> <http://grbproject.org/>

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