

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

**IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE ACTIVITIES
OF THE GOVERNMENT COMMISSIONER FOR GENDER
POLICY AND THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNMENT
COMMISSIONER FOR GENDER POLICY ON THE PROMOTION
OF GENDER EQUALITY IN UKRAINE
(2018–2025)**

Prepared by Open Space Works
Ukraine at the request of the
Ukrainian Women's Fund

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INTRODUCTION

This document presents a concise summary of the key findings from the impact assessment of the activities of the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy and the Office of the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy on the development of state gender policy in Ukraine during 2018–2025.

The assessment was conducted between November 2025 and January 2026 by Open Space Works Ukraine, commissioned by the Ukrainian Women’s Fund.

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The purpose of the assessment is to provide a comprehensive analysis of changes in the field of state gender policy between 2018 and 2025, as influenced by the Government Commissioner and the Office. Particular attention is given to the analysis of challenges in the implementation of state gender policy, based on stakeholder interviews, as well as to the identification of priorities and recommendations to inform the institution’s future work.

We express our sincere gratitude to all respondents for their openness, trust, and time dedicated to participating in the study. We also thank the Office of the Government Commissioner for providing the necessary documentation and for its interest in the practical application of the assessment findings.

We extend our special thanks to the Ukrainian Women’s Fund, and personally to Nataliia Karbovska, for supporting this study and for their long-standing work in advancing gender equality in Ukraine.

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METHODOLOGY OF THE ASSESSMENT

The impact assessment was conducted using qualitative data collection and analysis methods, including a review of legal and regulatory acts, strategic documents, reports, and communication materials of public authorities, as well as the conduct and analysis of 33 semi-structured interviews with representatives of central, regional, and local government authorities, Parliament, civil society, development partners, and advisers on ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men.

Given that this is the first systematic assessment of the impact of the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy, the team applied the Most Significant Change (MSC) approach. This enabled the identification of key transformative shifts in state gender policy, institutional mechanisms, and their implementation practices. The analytical framework of the assessment is grounded in the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men” and the Regulation on the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy, which defines the mandate, functions, and responsibilities of the Commissioner. The assessment is structured around the five core tasks outlined in the Regulation.

The assessment combined accountability and learning functions, with a clear focus on analysing stakeholders’ perceptions of the institution’s impact. This made it possible not only to document formal results but also to examine how these results are interpreted by partners involved in shaping and implementing state gender policy.

It is important to note that this assessment is not a performance report of the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy and the Office, nor does it aim to provide a comprehensive inventory of activities, initiatives, or partnerships implemented during 2018–2025. As the study relied on qualitative methods and respondents’ perspectives, opportunities for quantitative generalisation were limited. The absence of clearly defined baseline indicators at the outset constrained the ability to trace direct causal links between actions and observed changes. Some findings are based on expert assessments of stakeholders, which implies a degree of subjectivity. Due to the scale of the partnership network and time constraints, not all forms of engagement were covered. Finally, impact at the level of end beneficiaries was beyond the scope of this assessment and requires dedicated research.

CONTEXT

The impact assessment of the activities of the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy covers the period 2018-2025 – a time of profound regulatory, strategic, and security transformations in Ukraine. During this period, not only the instruments for implementing gender policy evolved, but also its content, priorities, and position within the system of public administration: shifting from a predominantly thematic approach to an integrated, cross-sectoral framework shaped by the context of full-scale war and European integration commitments.

The constitutional foundation of gender policy in Ukraine remains Article 24 of the Constitution of Ukraine, while policy development is guided by specialised legislation and international commitments, including CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action, and the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Key strategic advances in the field of gender equality during the assessment period include the ratification of the Istanbul Convention (in force in Ukraine since 2022) and the adoption of the State Strategy for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men until 2030 (the State Strategy), which institutionalised gender mainstreaming as a mandatory approach and strengthened the focus on intersectionality and impact assessment of policy decisions. Throughout the analysed period, gender integration has increasingly been embedded as a cross-cutting principle of policymaking, extending to the social, economic, educational, and information sectors, as well as to the justice system, the security and defence sector, and beyond. In parallel, sectoral strategies and methodological frameworks have been developed, alongside tools for gender-responsive budgeting and mechanisms to support the reconciliation of family and professional responsibilities.

The full-scale invasion became a defining factor in shifting thematic priorities, with increased focus on conflict-related sexual violence, the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 agenda, gender-responsive recovery, and women's participation in decision-making in the security and reconstruction sectors. As a result, gender policy has evolved from addressing individual issues to the systemic integration of a gender perspective across key state processes. In this context, stakeholders characterise the activities of the Government Commissioner and the Office as proactive – driven by initiating change, integrating gender considerations into regulatory frameworks, and ensuring interagency coordination.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE ASSESSMENT

TASK 1.

PROMOTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A UNIFIED STATE POLICY ON EQUAL RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN AND MEN

During 2018–2025, the activities of the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy contributed to notable shifts in the regulatory framework, institutional capacity, and public discourse. The key results, challenges, and priorities for further development are presented below across three interrelated dimensions: implementation of a unified state gender policy, its communication, and the development of gender competencies.

12 KEY CHANGES IN GENDER POLICY ATTRIBUTED TO THE INFLUENCE OF THE GOVERNMENT COMMISSIONER

According to stakeholders, the activities of the Government Commissioner have contributed to systemic shifts across key areas—from the normalisation of gender issues in public discourse to the establishment of new institutional mechanisms and practices.

- 01 Mainstreaming gender in governance and public discourse.** A shift has occurred from marginalisation of gender issues to the legitimisation of core concepts and tools among a broader range of actors. An additional marker is the increasing use of gender-sensitive language and feminised professional titles in public communication by officials.
- 02 Adoption of the State Strategy for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men until 2030.** This established the need for a unified state policy aimed at ensuring equal rights and opportunities across all spheres of society.
- 03 Establishment of an operational institutional mechanism for ensuring equal rights and opportunities.** Between 2018 and 2025, approaches, processes, and formats of cooperation were developed with central executive authorities, regional administrations, civil society, and development partners. The institution is perceived as a tangible governance and political lever, strengthening the legitimacy of gender policy, particularly at the local level.
- 04 Systemic strengthening of the legal and regulatory framework and implementation tools.** The focus shifted from isolated documents to a more coherent system of strategies, programmes, action plans, and methodological guidance. A defining feature is participatory policymaking and a human-centred approach.

- 05 Ratification of the Istanbul Convention as a landmark legal development.** This milestone is linked to the existence of the institution and its coordination and advocacy role in cooperation with civil society and international partners.
- 06 The National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 as an operational policy and coordination framework with a strengthened local dimension.** A transition occurred from a general framework to a more instrument-based approach (including indicators, coordination mechanisms, and broader engagement of local authorities and civil society organisations). After 2022, the approach was adapted to wartime realities, expanding target groups and thematic areas (including transitional justice, recovery, and resilience).
- 07 Prevention of and response to gender-based violence as one of the most institutionally structured policy areas.** Alongside strengthened legal frameworks and expanded specialised services, systemic gaps remain, including insufficient comprehensive services – particularly in rural areas – as well as shortages of qualified professionals and high risks of burnout.
- 08 Rapid development of policy responses to conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) and the establishment of an interagency support architecture for survivors.** Stakeholders highlight coordinated response mechanisms (including international accountability), the work of the Interagency Working Group, and the adoption of dedicated legislation in 2024 on survivor status, interim reparations, and damage registration. International advocacy for a survivor-centred approach and the inclusion of survivors in global processes are also emphasised.
- 09 Gender-responsive recovery as a new practical policy framework. A shared language and toolkit for integrating gender into recovery processes have been developed.** Institutional anchors include the Gender Mainstreaming and Inclusion Platform in Recovery, the Civil Society Advisory Panel, the “10 Blocks of Gender-Inclusive Recovery” framework, and the international Alliance for Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Recovery of Ukraine (URC 2024).
- 10 Institutionalisation of gender audits and territorial safety audits as governance practices.** A key shift is the transition from one-off assessments to regular, cyclical audits and tracking of change over time.
- 11 Strengthened engagement of civil society and increased visibility of the women’s movement.** Interaction has evolved from formal consultation to substantive participation of civil society organisations in policymaking and implementation. A partnership-based approach is seen as an important institutional practice that enhances both the quality of decisions and the public legitimacy of gender policy.
- 12 Increased engagement of development partners in advancing gender equality.** This includes their systematic involvement in implementing the Women, Peace and Security agenda (NAP 1325), supporting projects on prevention and response to CRSV, providing assistance to survivors, and strengthening civil society capacities.

KEY FINDINGS ON THE COMMUNICATION DIMENSION OF IMPLEMENTING A UNIFIED STATE GENDER POLICY

The communication dimension in 2018-2025 reflects a combination of qualitative progress and structural constraints. Gender issues have been gradually normalised within governance discourse, sensitivity among regional media has increased, substantive public formats (including publications, conferences, and thematic campaigns) have developed, and official information resources have been established. At the same time, the absence of a comprehensive long-term strategy, limited integration into national media, and the personalisation of communication constrain the scale and sustainability of public impact.

- 01** **Gradual mainstreaming of gender issues in public discourse.** Respondents note increased gender sensitivity in regional and local media, wider use of feminised professional titles, and a decline in overtly sexist content. These changes are associated with the combined influence of state policy, civil society engagement, and European integration processes.
- 02** **Strong personal visibility and cross-sector engagement of the Government Commissioner.** A strategy of broad presence across sectors performs a signalling function, legitimising gender issues as part of the state policy agenda.
- 03** **Development of information resources.** The launch of the “Gender Equality” section on the Cabinet of Ministers’ website, along with thematic online platforms (particularly in the area of the Women, Peace and Security agenda), marked important steps towards institutionalising communication. However, these resources remain largely oriented towards professional audiences and have not evolved into tools for mass communication.
- 04** **Publications, methodological materials, and public presentations as effective formats for communicating complex issues.** The production of books and methodological materials – particularly in the area of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) – is seen as one of the most substantive and sustainable communication channels. These outputs contribute to building a shared understanding of complex issues and create practical entry points for regional-level work.
- 05** **Thematic information campaigns and coordination around key dates.** Specific campaigns (including those marking the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict) have enabled message alignment and coordination across public authorities. However, their event-driven nature limits their long-term communication impact.
- 06** **Fragmentation and limited integration into national communication strategies.** Despite positive developments, national-level communication remains unsystematic. The visibility of gender issues in mainstream national media is limited, and access to information often depends on individual interest.

- 07 Personalisation of communication and limited institutional sustainability of channels.** For many stakeholders, social media accounts of the Government Commissioner serve as the primary source of information. While this ensures timeliness, it reinforces the personalisation of communication and complicates systematic access to information. There is a clear need for regular, structured public reporting.
- 08 Shrinking external media space.** The decline in specialised gender-focused media (including due to reduced donor funding) has narrowed the space for consistent public articulation of state positions, further concentrating communication within a limited number of channels.

KEY FINDINGS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF GENDER COMPETENCIES

Between 2018 and 2025, the development of gender competencies evolved from isolated training initiatives into a more systemic model combining a conceptual framework, scaling of training, and scientific and methodological support. Gender competence has gradually been integrated as a component of professional standards in the civil service and local self-government, notably through the Higher School of Public Administration, regional training centres, and higher education institutions. Key achievements include a significant expansion of training opportunities and the development of a methodological base, parts of which have been institutionally formalised as mandatory for application.

- 01 Scaling of training and quantitative outreach.** The volume of training for civil servants across key areas of gender policy has increased significantly, including the Women, Peace and Security agenda, prevention of and response to domestic and gender-based violence, and conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). This reflects the institutionalisation of gender issues within professional development systems.
- 02 Systemic development of methodological and training frameworks.** A broad body of research, analytical materials, manuals, and training programmes has been developed across key policy areas, some of which have received formal institutional endorsement. This provides a foundation for the sustainable development of competencies.
- 03 Predominantly formal and дистанційний character of a large share of training.** Despite wide coverage, a substantial portion of training is delivered online and remains largely formal in nature, limiting the depth of learning and the practical application of knowledge.
- 04 Limited engagement of senior leadership in gender competency development, particularly in offline formats.** Training is not systematically mandatory for individuals in managerial positions, which constrains the strategic integration of gender approaches into decision-making processes.

KEY CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF **TASK 1**

- 01** **Risk of rollback** due to insufficient institutionalisation of achieved results; the risk of reverting to a narrowed understanding of gender policy focused on “traditional roles,” with programmes formally maintained but substantively altered.
- 02** **Limited understanding of policy tools** (particularly gender mainstreaming) and weak practical implementation, even where formal support exists.
- 03** **Limited access to information and data**, insufficient transparency at the regional level, and a lack of gender-disaggregated data (particularly in the security and defence sector), creating a gap between policy commitments and practice.
- 04** **Insufficient budgetary funding**, absence of targeted budget programmes, and reliance on donor/project-based resources; challenges of attribution, where relevant activities are not recognised as part of the implementation of the NAP 1325 or broader gender commitments.
- 05** **Limited institutional capacity and overburdening of the Office**, including a mismatch between the breadth of the mandate and available resources; weak formalisation of internal procedures and coordination; risks to institutional memory and partnerships.
- 06** **High dependence on individual leadership** (personal networks, expertise, visibility), creating risks for continuity during personnel changes.
- 07** **Fragmentation and personalisation of state communication**, with low visibility in mainstream communication channels.
- 08** **Barriers to the development of gender competencies.** Despite the scaling of training, systemic constraints persist: formalistic participation (particularly in online formats), shallow knowledge uptake, and difficulties in practical application. Additional factors include staff turnover, persistent biases and stereotypes, and limited engagement of individuals with actual decision-making authority (including leadership of regional administrations and their deputies). The absence of systematic needs assessments further limits the practical relevance of training programmes.

PRIORITY AREAS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF **TASK 1**

- **Institutional sustainability and continuity.** Priority actions include establishing foundations for succession (including preparation for transfer of responsibilities), formalising the mandate, functions, processes, and roles of the Office, and reducing dependence on individuals. Strengthening systematic public communication, regular reporting, and transparency is critical (including annual reports as tools for accountability and institutional memory), alongside periodic performance assessments independent of specific office holders.
- **Financing and budget sustainability.** Advocacy for dedicated budget programmes, at minimum for key areas (including the NAP 1325 and core gender policy instruments). Development of standard models/templates for regional and local levels (e.g. targeted programmes or budget programme passports), as well as methodological guidance to facilitate the integration of gender priorities into regional and local budget processes.
- **Policy localisation and strengthening engagement with communities.** A shift in focus towards territorial communities as the key level where policy translates into services and practices. Systematic localisation of national and international frameworks, with adaptation to local mandates and contexts, alongside strengthening the capacities of local actors and coordinators responsible for implementation.
- **Inclusiveness and participation.** Consistent promotion of gender-sensitive approaches that take into account wartime realities and the differentiated impact on diverse groups (including veterans, internally displaced persons, persons with disabilities, families of military personnel, Roma women, and families of those killed or missing). Development of inclusive consultation formats and meaningful engagement of underrepresented groups in needs assessment, decision-making, and impact evaluation – particularly at local and regional levels.
- **Systemic development of gender competencies.** Strengthening the training of experts; formalising mandatory training requirements for civil servants and local government officials. Reorienting towards in-person, practice-oriented formats, with a focus on values and case-based learning. Integrating gender sensitivity into recruitment and performance evaluation processes. Updating programme content (including who delivers training and how), and developing peer-to-peer approaches through the preparation of an internal cohort of trainers among civil servants. Embedding gender as a cross-cutting component across all education and professional development programmes, and ensuring competency development throughout the entire education cycle – from basic to higher education, including the development of specialised master’s programmes.

TASK 2.

PARTICIPATION, WITHIN THE MANDATE, IN COORDINATING THE WORK OF MINISTRIES, OTHER CENTRAL AND LOCAL EXECUTIVE AUTHORITIES TO ENSURE EQUAL RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN AND MEN

During 2018–2025, the coordination role of the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy and the Office became one of the key elements of the institutional mechanism of gender policy. A combination of vertical and horizontal coordination was established through formal instruments (the Commission, interagency working groups, protocol decisions, official communication) and network-based formats (the network of advisers, regular meetings, and ongoing communication channels). At the same time, the effectiveness of this mechanism remains uneven across levels of government and is significantly dependent on the resource capacity of the Office, regulatory leverage, and the managerial position of leadership.

KEY FINDINGS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TASK 2

- 01** **The institutional architecture of coordination has significantly strengthened.** The formalisation of responsible actors and interaction procedures has shifted the gender policy mechanism from a declarative to a more operational model and established a basic institutional logic of interaction across levels of government.
- 02** **The Government Commissioner performs a policy integrator function.** The role includes ensuring interagency coherence, linking international commitments with national policy decisions, and providing methodological support to central executive authorities.
- 03** **Formalised interagency coordination mechanisms have been established.** The Commission on Coordination of Interaction between Executive Authorities and interagency working formats have become key mechanisms for aligning positions, monitoring implementation, and coordinating across thematic areas, including recovery.
- 04** **The Office and designated gender focal points act as key drivers of the mechanism.** Gender advisers/coordinators at the regional administration level ensure the translation of national priorities into regional practice and serve as the operational backbone of the mechanism locally.
- 05** **Horizontal professional interaction has been developed through the Network of Gender Policy Advisers.** Regular meetings, working communication channels, and training formats facilitate the alignment of approaches and the rapid dissemination of practices across regions and institutions.
- 06** **Formalised and offline formats are the most effective.** Formats with clear procedural frameworks ensure more consistent engagement of public authorities, while in-person interaction strengthens trust and improves the quality of coordination.

KEY CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TASK 2

- 01 **Limited resource and regulatory capacity at the central level.** A shortage of human resources and insufficient regulatory leverage reduce the systemic nature of coordination and do not ensure mandatory consideration of recommendations.
- 02 **Weak institutionalisation at the community level.** The integration of gender issues into broader social and humanitarian functions, without dedicated structures, and the advisory nature of assigning responsible persons lead to uneven implementation and gaps in vertical coordination.
- 03 **Vulnerability of the adviser system.** Unclear mandates, interaction procedures, and selection criteria make the effectiveness of the role highly dependent on individuals and managerial will.
- 04 **Formalisation without impact.** Some consultative and advisory bodies operate formally, without real influence on policy or implementation.
- 05 **Fragmentation and weak cross-sectoral alignment.** Parallel initiatives and the absence of a consolidated understanding of responsibilities across institutions and levels of government reduce strategic coherence.
- 06 **Dependence on the human factor.** The effectiveness of coordination is largely determined by leadership commitment and the individual motivation of responsible actors.

PRIORITY AREAS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TASK 2

- **Systematisation of coordination and a shared strategic vision.** Development of integrated coordination formats, aligned roadmaps, and a clear architecture of roles and responsibilities across levels of government.
- **Strengthening the regulatory status of advisers.** Clarification of mandates, accountability procedures, and minimum qualification requirements to reduce dependence on individuals.
- **Support for horizontal professional networks.** Development of stable platforms for exchange of practices and professional coordination, particularly within the civil service system.
- **Strengthening the regional vertical.** Institutionalisation of stable coordination points at the regional level and the establishment of minimum standards for organising gender-related work within oblast state administrations and communities.

TASK 3.

MONITORING THE CONSIDERATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF GENDER EQUALITY BY THE CABINET OF MINISTERS OF UKRAINE IN THE ADOPTION OF NORMATIVE LEGAL ACTS

Between 2018 and 2025, there was a significant strengthening of the procedural integration of the gender component into the government's law-making cycle. Gender legal review and monitoring of draft acts of the Cabinet of Ministers became systematic, were institutionalised within regulatory procedures, and supported by a developed methodological framework. At the same time, the effectiveness of these mechanisms remains strongly influenced by the broader politico-institutional context, including parliamentary dynamics, the human resource capacity of public authorities, and the coherence of the regulatory framework.

KEY FINDINGS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TASK 3

- 01 Institutionalisation of gender legal review.** Following updates to the regulatory framework in 2018-2019, gender legal review was integrated into the procedures for drafting government acts. Mandatory assessment of the impact of draft acts on ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men was introduced, alongside checklists and methodological guidelines.
- 02 Systematic monitoring of draft acts of the Cabinet of Ministers.** The Office of the Government Commissioner monitors all draft acts submitted to the Government. Each year, between 1,800 and over 3,000 documents are reviewed. A decrease in the number of comments, alongside a consistently high volume of reviewed acts, indicates a gradual improvement in the quality of drafting by line ministries.
- 03 Shift from reactive to preventive influence.** Engagement of the Office in working groups at the drafting stage, as well as in strategic sessions and cross-sector consultations, enables the integration of gender considerations before submission of draft acts to the Government, thereby improving the quality of regulatory decisions.
- 04 Development of an analytical and methodological base.** The preparation of analytical materials and publications on gender policy within normative legal acts has provided a systematised overview of legislative evolution and confirmed the cross-cutting nature of gender integration across different areas of public policy.

KEY CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TASK 3

- 01 **Political sensitivity and parliamentary dynamics.** The advancement of gender equality legislation is complicated by the politicisation of terminology, competing legislative priorities in a wartime context, and the complexity of inter-institutional compromises. This slows down the adoption of even well-prepared and coordinated initiatives.
- 02 **Instability of human resource capacity.** Staff turnover and a shortage of specialised expertise within public authorities undermine the consistency of gender legal review and reproduce recurring gaps in draft acts. The quality of gender integration often depends on the presence of specific competent individuals.
- 03 **Incoherence of the regulatory framework and weak enforcement mechanisms.** Contradictions and ambiguities in certain provisions, as well as insufficient specification of accountability mechanisms, create a gap between the formal recognition of the principle of equality and its practical application.
- 04 **Asymmetry across stages of the law-making process.** Gender legal review is more formalised at the government stage, while its institutionalisation at the parliamentary and presidential stages remains limited, creating inconsistencies in the consideration of gender aspects.
- 05 **Resource constraints at subnational levels.** The advisory nature of certain decisions, combined with staffing and budget limitations at regional and local levels, results in uneven capacity to implement gender requirements across levels of governance.

PRIORITY AREAS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TASK 3

- **Operationalisation of the principle of gender equality.** Development of practical methodological tools and guidance for different levels of government, with clear algorithms for integrating the principle of equality into normative legal acts.
- **Modernisation of the regulatory framework, including revision of the core law.** Adoption of an updated version of the Law of Ukraine “On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men” is seen as a key step to systematise approaches and address existing gaps.
- **Strengthening the binding nature of standards.** Transition from advisory approaches to formally established mandatory requirements to ensure consistent implementation of gender integration.

- **Institutional expansion of gender expertise.** Strengthening gender legal review at the parliamentary and presidential stages of the law-making process to ensure continuity in the application of gender principles.
- **Institutionalisation of preventive working formats.** Formalising the practice of strategic sessions and early interagency coordination as a regular component of preparing regulatory changes.

TASK 4.

PARTICIPATION IN SUPPORTING THE PRIME MINISTER OF UKRAINE IN REPRESENTING THE CABINET OF MINISTERS OF UKRAINE AT INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS AND FORUMS

During 2018-2025, the international role of the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy evolved from primarily implementation-focused engagement in international mechanisms to a more strategic and political function. The institution ensures Ukraine's representation in key international platforms (including the United Nations, the Council of Europe, and the OSCE), coordinates the fulfilment of international commitments, and facilitates the integration of international standards into national policy. After 2022, the international dimension gained additional significance – as a tool for mobilising support for Ukraine, advocating for accountability for war crimes, and promoting gender-responsive recovery.

KEY FINDINGS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TASK 4

- 01 **Institutionalisation of international representation.** Systematic participation has been ensured in international mechanisms (including the UN Commission on the Status of Women, Council of Europe mechanisms, and the Women, Peace and Security network), alongside the preparation of national reports and implementation of recommendations from monitoring bodies, particularly under CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention.
- 02 **Alignment of national legislation with international standards.** Support has been provided for the ratification and implementation of international conventions (notably the Istanbul Convention), cooperation with the ILO to align labour legislation with international standards, and engagement with GREVIO and other monitoring mechanisms.
- 03 **International advocacy in the context of war.** Since 2022, international platforms have been actively used to advocate for accountability for conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), mobilise international support, and advance the Women, Peace and Security agenda. The signing of the UN Framework of Cooperation on preventing and responding to CRSV and supporting survivors has been a key milestone in this area.
- 04 **Integration of a gender perspective into the international recovery agenda.** Gender equality was embedded as a “build back better” principle (URC 2022), and at URC 2024, the Alliance for Gender-Responsive and Inclusive.

Recovery of Ukraine was launched, bringing together international partners and aligning with the national Platform for Gender Mainstreaming and Inclusion in Recovery.

- 05 **An institutional entry point for international partners.** The existence of a designated government counterpart has facilitated coordination of international technical and financial assistance, including through co-chairing the Gender Equality Sector Working Group.
- 06 **Development of a recognisable international positioning.** An institutional brand associated with consistency and expertise in gender equality has been established, strengthening Ukraine's international standing and agency.

KEY CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF **TASK 4**

- 01 **Limited visibility and fragmented perception.** International engagement is often perceived through individual events rather than a clearly articulated overarching framework or strategic narrative, reducing its visibility and systemic understanding.
- 02 **Insufficient forward-looking strategic planning of international processes.** Preparation for key international events is not always timely and structured, limiting the potential for synergy between government and civil society actors.
- 03 **Insufficient institutionalisation of the gender dimension in EU integration.** There is a risk that gender equality remains peripheral in the EU accession process without structured integration into sectoral policies.
- 04 **Absence of a comprehensive roadmap for implementing international standards.** A more formalised approach is needed, with clearly defined legislative changes, responsible institutions, and monitoring mechanisms, to avoid gaps between international commitments and national implementation.

PRIORITY AREAS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF **TASK 4**

- **Strategic positioning within the European integration process.** Clear institutional anchoring of the role of the Government Commissioner in coordinating the gender dimension within EU accession negotiations and related reforms.
- **Strengthening the systemic nature of international advocacy.** Development of long-term strategic planning for participation in international platforms, supported by a coherent and coordinated state position.
- **Using international commitments as a tool for domestic advocacy.** More active use of international standards to advance internal reforms, particularly in the areas of gender-responsive recovery and inclusive policies.
- **Strengthening the symbolic and historical dimension of international positioning.** Promoting the historical continuity of the Ukrainian women's movement and human rights traditions as part of Ukraine's international image.

TASK 5.

COOPERATION AND INTERACTION WITH CIVIL SOCIETY ON ENSURING EQUAL RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN AND MEN IN ALL SPHERES OF SOCIETY

During 2018-2025, cooperation with civil society emerged as one of the most stable and effective components of implementing state gender policy. Engagement has moved beyond ad hoc consultations and evolved into a partnership model in which civil society acts not only as an implementer of initiatives but also as a co-creator of policy, a source of expertise, and a repository of institutional memory. At the same time, this model largely relies on trust and informal relationships, which provide flexibility but also create structural limitations.

KEY FINDINGS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TASK 5

- 01 Institutionalisation of regular interaction formats.** Sustainable working formats have been established (meetings, consultations, working groups), along with the practice of involving civil society organisations in the development of normative legal acts, strategies, and monitoring processes.
- 02** Launch of the National Platform “Equal Rights and Opportunities.” The Platform (established in 2019) has become a mechanism for structured engagement of civil society in policymaking. In the area of recovery, an additional instrument is the Civil Society Advisory Panel under the Platform for Gender Mainstreaming and Inclusion in Recovery.
- 03 Partnership model based on trust and expertise. Interaction is largely perceived as equal and substantive.** Civil society organisations play a key role in advancing complex agendas (including CRSV and the Women, Peace and Security agenda), shaping policy priorities, and developing expert solutions.
- 04 Role of the Ukrainian Women’s Fund as an institutional intermediary.** The Ukrainian Women’s Fund provides organisational support to selected cooperation formats, maintains stable communication channels, and strengthens the regional dimension of engagement, enhancing the political weight of initiatives at the local level.
- 05 Flexibility of cooperation formats.** The combination of formal mechanisms (such as memoranda and platforms) and informal practices enables rapid response to emerging challenges and supports a dynamic dialogue.

KEY CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TASK 5

- 01 **Limited institutional capacity of the Office.** Limited human and organisational resources constrain timely communication and create barriers to entry for new partners, particularly regional initiatives and international actors.
- 02 **Asymmetrical access to engagement.** Coordination formats are more accessible to organisations with prior cooperation experience, resulting in uneven inclusion of new or regional actors.
- 03 **Uneven structuring across thematic areas.** Coordination models similar to the Women, Peace and Security framework remain exceptions and are not consistently replicated in other policy areas, including recovery.
- 04 **Limited formalisation of procedures.** The flexibility of the partnership model is accompanied by low predictability for new stakeholders and complicates long-term strategic planning.

PRIORITY AREAS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TASK 5

- **Enhancing transparency and predictability of engagement.** Clearer participation rules, open selection criteria, and balanced regional representation.
- **Expanding the circle of partnerships.** More active engagement of new, regional, and sectoral actors beyond established networks.
- **Development of thematic expert formats.** Strengthening sector-specific collaboration to address concrete policies and reforms.
- **Strengthening synergies with international partners.** A more proactive leadership role in agenda-setting and coordination of international support in partnership with civil society.

