

## ANALYSIS OF THE STATE STRATEGY FOR ENSURING EQUAL RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN AND MEN UNTIL 2030

The State Strategy for ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men until 2030 (hereinafter – the Strategy) was approved by the **resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of August 12, 2022, № 752-p**.

The approval of the Strategy arises from the need to “*ensure implementation of a uniform state policy to achieve equal rights and opportunities for women and men in all areas of public life, and improvement of the mechanisms of its integration*”.

The Strategy provides the analysis of the current state, main issues, and trends in the following areas (defined by the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action):

- state mechanism for ensuring equal rights and opportunities,
- participation in decision-making,
- multiple discrimination,
- gender-based violence,
- gender equality in conflict prevention and post-conflict recovery,
- poverty,
- education and training,
- healthcare,
- gender equality in mass media,
- economic opportunities,
- environment.

As mentioned in the section on gender equality in conflict prevention and post-conflict recovery:

*“Some positions remain inaccessible to women, in particular, officer positions related to the use of poisonous substances, as well as on submarines and surface ships, in the management of submarine brigades, except for the specialties of morale, psychological and medical support”*

*“There are sporadic cases of violence and sexual harassment against women in law enforcement agencies and female military personnel”*

The implementation of the Strategy, as stated, will contribute to the “*application of a comprehensive approach in the implementation of the state gender equality policy and consolidation of efforts of central and local executive authorities, self-government bodies, civil society institutions, economic entities to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men and overcome the consequences of a full-scale war*”.

Taking into account the challenges of a full-scale war on the territory of Ukraine, the Strategy entails:

- gender mainstreaming in humanitarian aid and post-conflict recovery of Ukraine,
- women’s participation in recovery processes, including decision-making at all levels (from national to community level),
- building capacity of civil servants on gender mainstreaming in recovery processes.

The Strategy contains **4 strategic goals** (as well as operational goals, and activities to them):

**1.** The national mechanism for ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men functions effectively and has the capacity to support the formation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of gender equality policies in various spheres of public life and at all levels;

**2.** Women and men are free from violence, including violence related to hostilities and armed conflicts, have equal access to justice, and participate equally in peacebuilding and post-conflict recovery;

**3.** Women and men enjoy equal rights and opportunities for human development in the field of education, health care, social protection, culture, and sports;

**4.** Women and men participate equally in various spheres of economic activity, benefit from the results of sustainable economic development, and have equal access to all types of economic resources.

*“Insufficient representation of women among military personnel and law enforcement officers, especially at the decision-making level” and “insufficient provision of decent working conditions for women and equal opportunities with men in the security and defense sector”* are mentioned as key challenges that achievement of strategic goal 2 shall address.

**Operational goal 2.2** provides for the following activities:

- creation of conditions for the increased women’s participation in international missions for the settlement and resolution of conflicts, official negotiation, etc.;
- expanding opportunities to involve women affected by war and armed conflicts, and public associations working in the field of human rights protection and/or representing various groups of women, in the processes of response to armed aggression, post-conflict recovery, and peace-building at the national level, at the regional and local level to build peaceful and inclusive communities, overcome security challenges;
- ensuring decent working conditions for women and equal opportunities with men in the security and defense sector; increasing the representation of women among military personnel, rank-and-file and senior officers, law enforcement officers, judicial bodies, and the prosecutor's office.

The Strategy is supplemented by the **Operational Plan for the period 2022-2024**, including tasks, activities, indicators by years, and implementors.

Even though women face a wide range of issues in the sphere of passing military service, the Operational Plan focuses mostly on increasing the number of women in the defense sector and peacekeeping operations. This problem demonstrates a low level of involvement of defense actors in the preparation of the strategy-level documents and abilities to implement their activities.

**The Ministry of Defense has been identified as the implementor of 3 tasks only, being a chief implementor of 2 of them:**

- developing monitoring indicators for women’s participation in international peacekeeping missions (in 2023) together with the Armed Forces, National Police, and National Guard.
- assessment of the impact of HR policy on increasing the representation of women among military personnel, rank-and-file and senior officers, law enforcement officers, in judicial bodies, the prosecutor's office, in particular at the decision-making level (in 2023) together with the MoI, Armed Forces, Prosecutor General’s Office, Security Service, and other relevant actors.

**Thus, implementation of tasks focuses on monitoring and evaluation activities, not specific measures, that could have an impact on the representation of women in the defense sector on different levels.**

The Operational Plan also includes activities related to **NAP 1325**, such as the introduction of amendments and the development of unified monitoring templates (in 2022), annual reports on implementation, and mid-term evaluation of NAP 1325 in 2024.

The text of the Strategy and the Operational Plan has been complemented with references to the challenges in the light of war. Yet, the tasks related to **CRSV prevention and response**, for example, have been mentioned in the same list together with other types of GBV, such as domestic violence. The only task, related exclusively to CRSV, is developing the CRSV early warning matrix of indicators (in 2024).

Another concern is that **changes to local programs on ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men, based on the approved Strategy, shall be implemented only after the termination or abolition of martial law (as mentioned in the text of the CMU Resolution), which can take years.**

No defined amount of cost is directed to financing activities of this Strategy. Only mentioned, that **activities of the Operational Plan will be implemented within the limit of expenditures provided for in the state and local budgets for the relevant year, and other sources not prohibited by law.** By the 15<sup>th</sup> of September, the first draft of the budget would be presented in Parliament. As of now, funding for all activities, which are not relevant to defense or social payments, is cut. Thus, without advocacy, there is a huge risk, that activities of this Strategy will be not funded at all.