

# Rapid gender assessment of the situation and needs of women in the context of COVID-19 in Ukraine



COVID-19  
RESPONSE



# In Ukraine gender inequalities continue to persist in all spheres of public and private life

## Representation and decision making



Elected representatives in Verkhovna Rada



Cabinet of Ministers



Regional councils



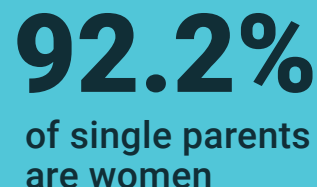
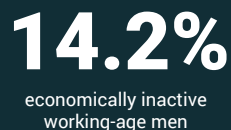
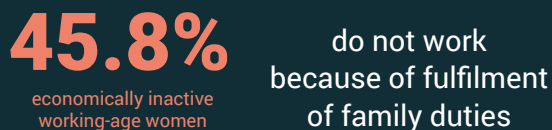
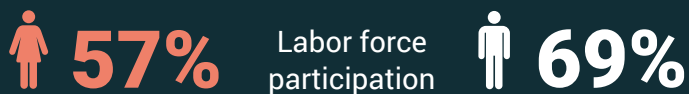
The research was conducted between 28 March and 7 April 2020 by means of online survey (3310 female respondents and 528 male respondents, 18+, from all regions of Ukraine) and semi-structured phone interview (77 female representatives of vulnerable groups from 7 oblasts of Ukraine)



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# Economy and income



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# Women constitute the prevailing workforce in the health sector fighting the COVID-19 pandemic



As front line responders, they are expected to endure the harsh work in fighting the virus and at the same time to care for their families when childcare, schools and other care facilities are not available.

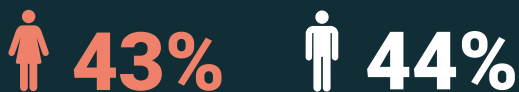
Yet, women make up only **20%** of the members of crisis committees established to coordinate response to COVID-19 pandemic



*“Since I am raising my daughter alone (she is at 4th grade at school), I am in constant emotional stress, as the child stays home alone: she eats, plays, does homework.”*

*Tetiana, 42,  
healthcare worker*

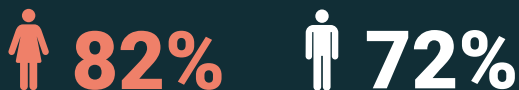
# Losing income and impact on livelihood due to the COVID-19 pandemic



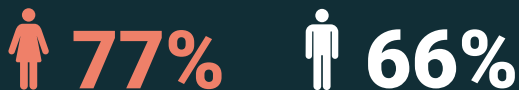
are concerned about the possible loss of their job



expect to receive no salary or income if the restrictions continue



will have to economise on food



will have difficulty paying rent and utilities



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# Most women working in health care and social service provision do not have – or have insufficient – personal protective equipment (PPE)

only **14%** of female healthcare workers have been fully provided with PPE

only **24%** of women working in trade, public transport, law enforcement and the judiciary, and social services have been fully provided with PPE

**60%** of female healthcare professionals have bought PPE at their own expense, in full or in part

**75%** of women working in other areas have bought PPE at their own expense, in full or in part



*"I have been given two masks for the whole period of lock-down, one single-use medical robe, which has already become multi-use [she laughs] and some shoe covers. They told us that, if we needed more, to buy them ourselves. I have worked as a nurse for years and my salary is minimal."*

*Natalia, 46, a nurse, Chernivtsi oblast*

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# Women more than men experience an increased burden of housework and care in the home

 **64%**  **44%**  
are spending more time in cleaning the house

 **53%**  **39%**  
in providing affective and emotional support to family members

 **51%**  **28%**  
in cooking



“

*“If a woman ends up being left on her own with young children (just imagine if there is a child with a disability!!!), then she has been deprived of everything – her dreams, her self-realization – and all she has left to her are pots, textbooks and lessons.”*

*Kateryna, 30, mother of three, one a child with a disability, Donetsk oblast*

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# Women more than men have faced additional challenges as a result of the closure of educational institutions



arranging their school-age children's education mainly on their own



relying on the assistance of their partners (in case it is not possible to work remotely)

at times mothers have to leave children alone at home, with older children or neighbours

“

*“I am raising a 4-year-old son alone. As the kindergartens are not operating now, I take him to work with me, or leave him with my women neighbours and relatives, even though I understand that this is not the right thing to do at this time.”*

*Olena, 39, raising a child alone, Luhansk oblast*



# Women survivors of domestic violence

Gender based violence:  
women constitute

**86.3%**

survivors of rape

**78.1%**

survivors of domestic violence

“

*“I happen to live in the same apartment with my ex-husband, whom I divorced 15 years ago. The two of us being in the same space at the same time creates psychological tension. Now he is starting to come after me again, saying unpleasant things to me... I used to be physically abused, and now I've again developed the inner fear that I had not felt for a long time.”*

*Olga, 65, Chernivtsi oblast*



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# Women's experiences



*"Yesterday I was making willow baskets and today I will go to a nearby village to barter them for potatoes, onions, carrots. Not to sell them, just to barter them. We have a hard life here in the camp, but I'd never have thought the situation would be so difficult for us."*

*Abla, 40, Roma woman, raising children alone,  
Zakarpattia oblast*

*"We will die of hunger soon, people are scared of us, they call us contagious, tell us to go away, say we should not leave the area of the camp."*

*Yelyzaveta, 40, Roma woman, Zakarpattia oblast*

*"I, as a woman with a disability confined to a wheelchair, am very worried about this category of people, especially women living in the rural areas. Due to the lack of physical accessibility of healthcare facilities, the lack of accessible diagnostic equipment, infections units, sluice rooms, hospitalization in case of coronavirus infection can be a terrible experience for persons with disabilities."*

*Valentyna Dobrydina, representative of the National Assembly  
of People with Disabilities in Chernivtsi region*



# Women's experiences



*"During the quarantine, only some women can come by foot or transport to the support centers to receive vital medicine – antiretroviral therapy. Few of them can call themselves a taxi to get there. But if they don't take medication on time, they may develop drug resistance."*

*Oksana Pchelnikova, Regional Coordinator of CO "Positive Women" in Odesa region*

*"My employer has now sent me home to lock-down without pay. He paid only for the first half of February, and he is not going to pay the rest of the month... But what am I to do? I live in rented accommodation, I have a young daughter, my husband is also unemployed, he was sent home too and did not get his full pay. We have nothing to pay the rent with, but we have to live."*

*Kateryna, 31, internally displaced person, Donetsk oblast*

*"I applied to continue carrying out my job responsibilities, but it was not granted. I am the primary carer for 3 children, the youngest is 6 months old, but I do not receive alimony and I live in the countryside. Because of COVID-19, I have had to take some of my annual leave."*

*Olga, servicewoman, 41, Donetsk oblast*



This rapid gender assessment of the situation and needs of women in the context of COVID-19 in Ukraine aims to collect quantitative and qualitative data on women's needs and on gendered specificities of the impact of restrictive measures on their everyday life, in particular those from vulnerable groups and facing multiple discrimination. The data were collected between 28 March and 7 April 2020.

The online survey was conducted with 3310 female respondents and 528 male respondents, 18+, from all regions of Ukraine, who live in different types of settlements (e.g. city, village) and have access to the Internet.

The survey was conducted through semi-structured phone interviews with 77 women from vulnerable groups from 7 oblasts of Ukraine (Volyn, Donetsk, Zaporizhia, Luhansk, Sumy, Kherson and Chernivtsi).

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Norwegian Ministry  
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