

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN DEFENDING UKRAINE IN RUSSIA'S WAR: GENDER SOCIOLOGY PERSPECTIVE

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Women's resistance in war

- Agency vs. victimhood
- Different forms of resistance (military, volunteer, community, cultural, symbolic)
- Via analysis of women's participation in the war it's possible to understand better why and how the Ukrainian society resists
- Legacy of resistance since 2014 (9 years of war in Ukraine) and changes in the armed forces of Ukraine – professionalism and dignity as major values



Women's involvement in war could be analyzed as

Actors of resistance / via their **agency** and active participation in the different forms of activities



Victims of the situation / those who suffer and belong to the **vulnerable** groups



Women as a victims and vulnerable groups in the war



kogytova.com



Women's involvement as agents / actors of resistance



Gender equality in the Ukrainian society

At the national level, gender equality is guaranteed by:

- the Constitution of Ukraine (1996)
- the Law of Ukraine «On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities of Women and Men» (2005)

In the security sector:

- UNSC Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security;
- October 2020: second National Action Plan for the period of 2021-2025

At the international level, Ukraine ratified:

- the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW);
- the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention) in **July 2022.**

Euromaidan (2013-2014) and war in Donbas legacy

- **EuroMaidan protests 2013-2014:** Ukrainian women managed to challenge traditional gender roles (as caretakers and victims of a conflict) and reclaimed visibility, recognition, and respect as revolutionaries and volunteers.
- **War in Donbas since 2014:** women joined the front lines as volunteers, journalists, medical staff, and military (on combat positions).



Invisible Battalion sociological studies and advocacy campaign

Eight years of sociological research – 5 studies:

- "Invisible battalion": Women's participation in military operations in the ATO (2015)
- "Invisible battalion 2.0": Women veterans returning to peaceful life (2018-2019)
- "Invisible Battalion 3.0": Sexual harassment in the military sphere in Ukraine (2021)
- "Invisible Battalion 4.0". Women's access to military education (2022)
- "Invisible Battalion 5.0". Monitoring of recommendations and previous research results (2023)



Check webpage

<https://invisiblebattalion.org/>

Online course "**Gender equality and combating sexual harassment in the military**" (2021): 21105 received certificates, among them 84% – men, average age – 34.

Women in Ukrainian armed forces in figures

- December 2021 data of the Personnel Center of the Armed Forces of Ukraine: the total number of servicewomen is around **33,000** (or around 20 per cent).
- 2014–2021: **17,000** women became veterans of the war in Donbas.
- **9 women** from the Armed Forces of Ukraine died during the 2014–2021 war.
- **2018**: first Ukrainian woman obtained the military status of **general** – Lyudmyla Shuhaley.
- In 2018, the President of Ukraine, Petro Poroshenko, signed a **law on equal rights for women and men while serving in the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other military formations.**
 - equal opportunities for men and women to commit to military service,
 - equal access to positions and military ranks, and equal responsibilities in the performance of military service.



Successes of gender equality implementation in the security sector

- access of women to military occupations (among them combat ones);
- recognition of female veterans;
- gender equality in military legislation;
- improved protection of women from gender-based violence;
- access to military education at all levels has been opened for girls;
- gender training and education for staff;
- sociological research on different aspects of gender equality implementation, etc.



Answer to the question: Women should be granted equal rights with men to work in the Armed forces of Ukraine

Variants of answers	KIIS, September 2018, N=2026, %	Info Sapiens, April 2022, N=1000, %
I agree completely	24.0	44.0
I rather agree than disagree	29.3	35.7
I rather disagree than agree	18.9	12.9
I completely disagree	12.2	5.9
Difficult to say	14.3	1.3
Refusal to answer	1.4	0.2
Total	100	100

Are you personally ready or not ready to put up armed resistance to stop the Russian occupation of Ukraine? (Info Sapiens, N=1000, January 2023)

Variants of answers	Men, %	Women, %	Total, %
Completely ready	44,32	29,59	36,26
Rather ready	33,09	34,70	33,97
Rather not ready	8,55	16,58	12,95
Completely not ready	7,23	13,45	10,64
I am already resisting	5,00	0,12	2,33
I don't know / It's hard to say	1,82	5,54	3,86
Total	100	100	100

What kind of army should Ukraine introduce?

Variants of answers	KIIS, N=2026, September 2018, %	Info Sapiens, N=1000, January 2023, %
Enlistment of both men and women only voluntarily (enlistment by contract)	62,0	65,9
Conscription of all men and only of some women	10,6	12,8
Conscription only of men	17,0	12,0
Conscription of all men and all women	1,6	3,3
Other	0,4	4,0
Difficult to say	7,3	1,9
Refusal to answer	1,1	0,1
Total	100	100

Oleksandra Matviichuk, human rights defender, coordinates documentation of war crimes, “Tribunal for Putin” coalition



Nobel Peace Prize 2022
winner

Feminist and editor of Gender in Details online resource Tamara Zlobina supports #ArmUkraineNow



ODR: OPINION

Why we as feminists must lobby for air defence for Ukraine

We are critical of militarisation, but we believe pacifism will kill and that Russia's war crimes have left us with no option



[Darya Tsymbalyuk](#)

[Iryna Zamuruleva](#)

16 March 2022, 4.20pm



#FreeTheLeopards: Ukrainian politicians



Люстрація: @eng_moshkovsky_art

Ukraïner

As volunteers, women in Ukraine of different ages participate in a range of activities

- providing meals, clothes, medicines, protective gear, logistics, information, support, and fuel delivery;
- identifying and helping vulnerable individuals;
- documenting war crimes; and others.

Ukrainian women living abroad organize fundraisers and awareness-raising campaigns, contributing their various organizational, creative, business, and linguistic skills to the resistance effort.



"Stefania" by Kalush Orchestra (Eurovision 2022) contributes to the visibility of tens of thousands of Ukrainian female soldiers, who defend their country, their home, and their children now.



Thanks for your attention

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