



# MAPPING UKRAINE'S DEMOCRATIC SPACE: PART 2

Civic activist perspectives on conditions in 40  
localities



Authors: Valentyn Hatsko, Myroslava Savisko, Andrii Darkovich

PeaceRep: The Peace and Conflict Resolution Evidence Platform  
School of Law, The University of Edinburgh  
Old College, South Bridge  
Edinburgh EH8 9YL

Tel. +44 (0)131 651 4566  
Fax. +44 (0)131 650 2005  
E-mail: [peacerep@ed.ac.uk](mailto:peacerep@ed.ac.uk)

PeaceRep.org  
Twitter: [@Peace\\_Rep](https://twitter.com/Peace_Rep)  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PeaceRepResearch>  
LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/peacerep/>

This research is supported by the Peace and Conflict Resolution Evidence Platform (PeaceRep), funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) for the benefit of developing countries. The information and views set out in this publication are those of the authors. Nothing herein constitutes the views of FCDO. Any use of this work should acknowledge the authors and the Peace and Conflict Resolution Evidence Platform.

The Peace and Conflict Resolution Evidence Platform (PeaceRep) is a research consortium led by the University of Edinburgh Law School. Our research is rethinking peace and transition processes in the light of changing conflict dynamics in the 21st century.

### **PeaceRep's Ukraine programme**

The Peace and Conflict Resolution Evidence Platform (PeaceRep) is a research consortium led by the University of Edinburgh Law School. Our research is rethinking peace and transition processes in the light of changing conflict dynamics in the 21st century. PeaceRep's Ukraine programme is a multi-partner initiative that provides evidence, insight, academic research and policy analysis from Ukraine and the wider region to support Ukrainian sovereignty, territorial integrity and democracy in the face of the Russian invasion. PeaceRep's Ukraine programme is led by the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) partnering with the Kyiv School of Economics (KSE) in Ukraine, the Leibniz Institute for East and Southeast European Studies (IOS) in Germany, the Institute of Human Sciences (IWM) in Austria and Jagiellonian University in Poland. Through our collaboration with KSE we work closely with researchers, educationalists and civic activists in Ukraine to ensure that policy solutions are grounded in robust evidence and are calibrated to support democratic outcomes.

## Background

Mapping Ukraine's democratic space research project aims to provide granular insight into the evolution and impacts of the war on Ukraine in different local geographies. It also aspires to identify spheres and groups of people crucial for resilience. The research focuses on the following spheres: (a) economic wellbeing and access to social infrastructure; (b) security; (c) governance and civicness. The selection of these spheres and the concurrent adoption of a framework incorporating three distinct criteria are motivated by the recognition that the most significant transformations within Ukrainian society are manifesting within these specific domains. Such a strategic approach is designed to facilitate a nuanced understanding of the evolving dynamics and the far-reaching implications of the war within Ukraine, contributing to a thorough grasp of the multifaceted challenges and opportunities facing the society and activists.

## About the Authors

**Andrii Darkovich** is a researcher of the Center for Sociological Research, Decentralization and Regional Development at Kyiv School of Economics Institute. In the center he researched the topics of state-society relations in Ukraine, including local democracy; cooperation between local self-governments and different actors; hromadas resilience; local elections. Andrii has graduated from the Master's Program "Public Policy and Governance" of the Kyiv School of Economics.

**Valentyn Hatsko** is a Data Analyst at the Center for Sociological Research on Decentralization and Regional Development at the KSE Institute. He is a PhD student in sociology at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv. Among his scientific interests are decentralization reform, hromada resilience, local governance, methodology of social sciences, statistical analysis, and sociology of religion.

**Myroslava Savisko** is the Head of the Center for Sociological Research, Decentralization and Regional Development at Kyiv School of Economics Institute. Her research interests focus on municipal development and resilience of Ukraine's communities in full scale war. Myroslava has got Master's Joint Degree from the University of Glasgow, University of Barcelona and University of Göttingen (specialty – "Global Markets, Local Creativities").

More information on the authors work can be found at:

<https://kse.ua/kse-impact/center-for-sociological-research-decentralization-and-regional-development/>

# Table of Contents

|   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>  | <b>6</b>                            |
| <b>INTRO.....</b>   | <b>ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</b> |
| <b>METHODOLOGY.....</b>   | <b>10</b>                           |
| <b>PART I. ECONOMIC WELLBEING AND ACCESS TO SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE.....</b>  | <b>13</b>                           |
| <i>Economic Conditions Perceptions Across Hromadas: affordability of living and employment opportunities are on the rise when compared to March 2023.....</i> | <i>13</i>                           |
| <i>Other economic challenges .....</i>  | <i>20</i>                           |
| Summary .....   | 20                                  |
| <b>PART II. SECURITY.....</b>   | <b>21</b>                           |
| <i>Military Training for Civilians .....</i>  | <i>22</i>                           |
| <i>Perceptions of Tensions in the Hromada.....</i>  | <i>23</i>                           |
| Summary .....   | 24                                  |
| <b>PART III. GOVERNANCE AND CIVICNESS .....</b>   | <b>25</b>                           |
| <i>Cooperation and Interaction with Local Government .....</i>  | <i>27</i>                           |
| <i>Challenges to Civic Engagement .....</i>   | <i>29</i>                           |
| Summary .....   | 32                                  |
| <b>CONCLUSIONS .....</b>  | <b>33</b>                           |
| <b>ANNEX.....</b>   | <b>35</b>                           |

# Executive Summary

This report provides a comprehensive analysis aimed at identifying critical areas where immediate support is essential for enhancing the resilience of specific localities. Through extensive research and data collection, key challenges have been pinpointed, shedding light on pressing issues that demand urgent attention:

## **Economic Well-being and Access to Social Infrastructure**

- Persistent price increases for food, fuel, clothing, and medicine signal pressing economic challenges faced by communities.
- Access issues endure in primary healthcare and emergency medical care, despite some improvements noted. Closure of municipal healthcare facilities and shortages of specialised medical professionals exacerbate these challenges, necessitating prompt interventions in healthcare infrastructure.
- Concerns about road infrastructure and public transportation demand immediate action to tackle declining quality and availability. The deterioration of municipal transportation services, evident in poor schedules, route cuts, reduced fleet size, and higher fare rates, highlights the urgent need to rejuvenate public transit systems.
- Reduction in education funding and declining quality of education due to the transition to online learning highlight the urgency of addressing infrastructure deficits and ensuring equitable access to learning resources.
- Inadequate infrastructure for people with disabilities points to deficiencies in accessibility and inclusivity measures, emphasising the imperative of enhancing community-wide support for individuals with diverse needs.

## **Security**

- Safety remains a concern for local experts, particularly in frontline or border areas and urban hromadas. Efforts to bolster safety measures and community policing are crucial for fostering a sense of security.
- While perceptions of local government effectiveness in addressing security issues remain relatively positive, there is room for improvement, especially in urban areas. Strengthening security measures, and coordination between local authorities and law enforcement agencies is essential.
- The focus on war-related security issues like missile attacks decreased in urgency, indicating a shifting focus towards societal issues such as cybercrime, petty crimes, domestic violence, and sexual harassment. Addressing these emerging security threats requires proactive local authorities measures and community engagement.
- Shelter availability and quality still fall below satisfactory levels. There is a need to invest in infrastructure and allocate resources to enhance shelter conditions.
- There's a connection between civilian military training participation and trust in local governance. Encouraging citizen engagement in national defence efforts through fostering trust in local authorities can strengthen both community resilience and national defence.
- A significant portion of respondents acknowledge tensions between social groups, particularly regarding the distribution of social support. Efforts to promote social cohesion and resolve conflicts between different groups, including internally

displaced persons, socially vulnerable groups, and veterans, are essential for fostering resilience and unity within communities.

### **Governance and Civicness**

- While opinions vary, a notable portion of respondents rate overall performance of local governance as moderate, indicating room for improvement. Criticism is prevalent regarding economic initiatives and budget management, highlighting concerns over the efficacy of economic policies and fiscal stewardship at the local level. Additionally, assessments of infrastructure services skew towards a less favourable view, indicating concerns about the quality and availability of essential facilities and services.
- Increasing activists' awareness of local budget spending correlates with more positive perceptions of budget efficiency. Therefore, efforts to improve transparency and provide information on budget allocation and spending are crucial for fostering trust and confidence in local government.
- There has been a notable decrease in cooperation with the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Municipal Militias, and security and law enforcement agencies, indicating a weakening of collaboration in the security and defence sector. Similarly, cooperation with civil society, public sector entities, veteran organisations, public councils, and volunteers has also experienced a moderate decrease. Efforts to enhance collaboration with these sectors are essential for maintaining security and promoting community resilience.
- The survey reveals significant barriers faced by respondents in interactions with local government, including time constraints (29%), lack of confidence in local government effectiveness (19%), and previous unsatisfactory experiences (14%). These factors contribute to distrust and doubt toward local authorities, constituting a third of all responses. Addressing these issues is essential to fostering trust, engagement, and participation in community decision-making processes.
- A substantial portion of activists report facing restrictions on citizen participation in local decision-making, highlighting challenges related to the closed nature of local government. Limited transparency, restricted access to decision-making processes, lack of consultation, and obstacles to influencing decisions contribute to frustration and hinder effective citizen participation. Addressing these concerns, including nepotism, persecution for expressing dissenting opinions, and functional challenges such as restricted tools for engagement, is crucial for enhancing citizen participation and accountability in local governance.
- The survey indicates varied perceptions regarding the likelihood of protests, with the third of local experts considering them possible. Individuals who perceive restrictions on citizen participation are more inclined to anticipate protests, particularly when restrictions are intentionally created. Strategies to address underlying barriers to participation and enhance inclusivity in decision-making processes are essential to mitigate the likelihood of protest activity.
- While a significant share of activists (21%) actively participate in public councils, others cite reasons for non-participation, such as not receiving invitations (21%), disappointment in the council's functioning (18%), and the absence of a public council in certain communities (15%). Addressing issues of inclusivity, communication, transparency, and effectiveness within public councils is crucial for promoting citizen engagement and democratic participation. Additionally, efforts to increase awareness and reduce personal constraints hindering

participation are essential for fostering a more inclusive and participatory community.

- A significant portion of activists within the hromada (42%) are aware of ongoing recovery processes, yet a majority (58%) remain uninformed. Of those aware, approximately half (46%) are actively involved, while the rest express interest in participating. A small minority of those aware have personally encountered cases of restrictions imposed by local authorities on residents' participation in these processes (12%), with financing for reconstruction being a significant obstacle, particularly affecting rural areas. Concerns over the lack of efficiency, transparency in fund distribution, instances of corruption, and over-regulation hindering participation in reconstruction processes need to be addressed urgently.
- A notable proportion of local experts (27%) encounter difficulties in accessing necessary information due to restrictions imposed by local authorities. Obstacles include challenges in accessing public information, delays, incomplete or unreliable information, and a lack of accountability from local authorities. Issues with the community's website, including difficulty locating information and inaccessibility for individuals with disabilities, are also highlighted. Additionally, concerns about banned broadcasts of council session meetings and restrictions on journalists' and citizens' access are raised. Efforts to address these barriers and ensure transparent access to information are essential for promoting accountability and citizen engagement.



# Introduction

Two years after the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine began, the ensuing war crisis continues to present unparalleled challenges to Ukrainian society. The invasion has precipitated far-reaching social and economic ramifications, exacerbated by widespread displacement, extensive damage to buildings and infrastructure, and an alarming rise in civilian casualties. According to data from the World Food Programme, 73% of households have insufficient economic capacity, defined as the ability to meet regular consumption needs, as indicated by household expenditure, falling below the minimum expenditure basket (MEB) based on the government's Factual Minimum Subsistence Level.<sup>1</sup> Massive displacement of people, widespread destruction of housing and infrastructure, and a sharp economic downturn have left a profound impact.

These adversities, alongside others, have both resulted in new disparities and exacerbated existing ones. Given these circumstances, understanding how these changes have influenced the lives of people in different regions and hromadas is imperative for comprehensive analysis and effective policymaking. To address these inquiries, we launched a second wave of the survey "Mapping Ukraine's Democratic Space in 40 Localities" within the same hromadas.<sup>2</sup> This survey aims to track the dynamics of changes and assess respondents' perceptions regarding new shocks and changes in Ukraine.

The report provides some granular insight into the evolution and impacts of the war on Ukraine in 40 different local geographies and focuses on the following spheres: (a) economic wellbeing and access to social infrastructure; (b) security; (c) governance and civicness. These sections illuminate the primary changes observed in the same set of questions between the first wave conducted from March to April 2023 and second wave directed in November 2023. A few new inquiries were added based on the key shocks and issues identified by activists during in-depth interviews in August 2023 and a consultation meeting in October 2023.

We specifically focus on governance and democratic practices within these hromadas, acknowledging the transformative impact of war and military law on these dynamics. This shift is deliberate for two key reasons. Firstly, there exists a prevalent argument suggesting that war often leads to a decline in democratic principles both during and after the conflict. Our research project, including forthcoming survey rounds, aims to provide real-time data to ascertain whether and to what extent this phenomenon is occurring in Ukraine at the local governance level. Secondly, robust democratic practices are closely linked to resilient and forward-thinking economies, which are vital for addressing inequalities.

Methodologically, the report uses insights from a network of key informants from 40 selected hromadas in Ukraine. The survey was conducted in November 2023.

---

<sup>1</sup> World Food Programme. (2023). Ukraine Needs Assessment: Food Security and Essential Needs. [https://fscluster.org/sites/default/files/documents/wfp-ukraine\\_needs\\_assessment\\_food\\_security\\_and\\_essential\\_needs\\_0.pdf](https://fscluster.org/sites/default/files/documents/wfp-ukraine_needs_assessment_food_security_and_essential_needs_0.pdf)  
World Bank, Government of Ukraine, European Union, and United Nations. "Ukraine Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment February 2022 – February 2023," March 2023. <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/099184503212328877/p1801740d1177f03c0ab180057556615497>.

<sup>2</sup> There were 4 hromadas that were substituted within the network. Some of the respondents were also changed within hromadas

# Methodology

## Key Informants Network

For our survey, we used our network of **119 local activists from 40 hromadas** as key informants for regular data capture. This network was created in 2023 for the first wave of surveys. Such approach was chosen for several reasons: a) the challenges of conducting representative sampling in situations of all-out-war; (b) the need for granular insights into local conditions which are hard to capture from large-n sampling alone; (c) the need to combine qualitative and quantitative methods to develop textured knowledge of the conditions in Ukraine's diverse geographical localities.

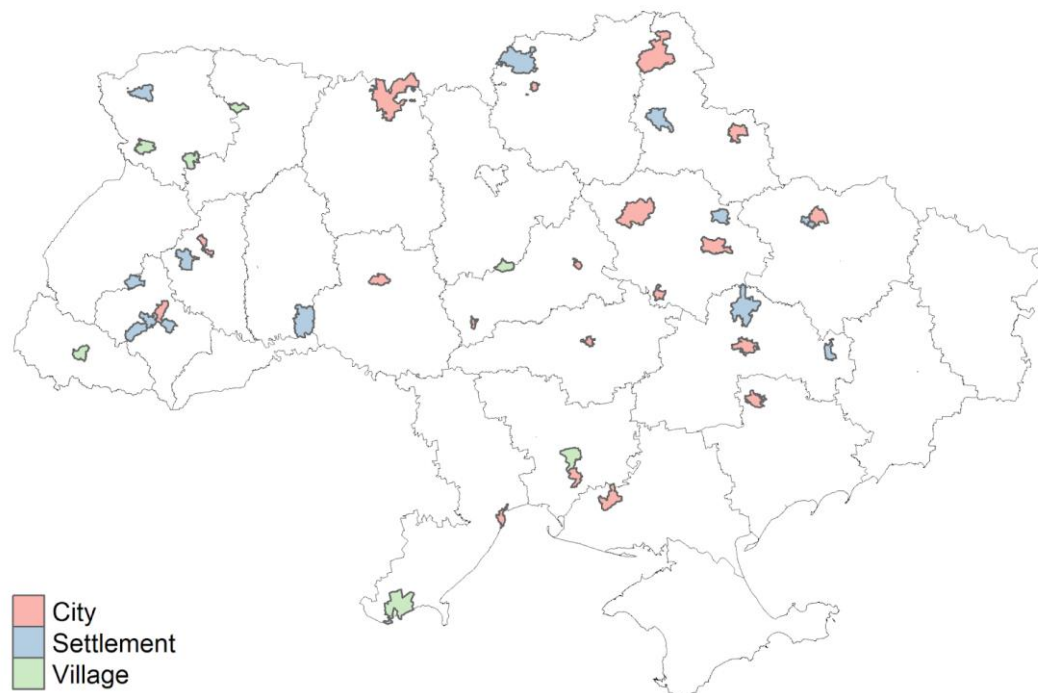
We sought to **build and develop a local research network of activists providing data points** on their localities through surveys and interviews. We looked for local activists from hromadas who would be able to assess the socio-economic and security situation in their hromadas, as well as the governance practices of local authorities. The primary requirement for respondents was that they had lived in hromada for at least 2-3 years (at least one year before the invasion) and had actively participated in hromada life, such as social, volunteer, or other projects. To ensure that we recruited the most suitable respondents, our screener questions also included queries about their occupation and their affiliation with civil non-governmental organisations and networks.

The aim was to build a network that drew together activists with local knowledge bases and experiences. These expertise — these grounded, expert insights on their localities — would then be fed into the research project for cross-national analysis. In light of this it was essential to our methodology that the local experts met these criteria and had a verifiable record of engagement with their local hromada in one form or another.

## Changes compared to the first wave

Following the initial wave, we implemented changes affecting **19% (23) of key informants**. These alterations were prompted by various respondent-related factors, including migration to different locales, shifts in expertise or employment, inadequacies in responses provided during the previous wave, and, regrettably, instances of mortality. Additionally, we replaced **the previous 4 hromadas with new ones** to enhance representativeness across oblasts, ensuring a **minimum representation of 1 hromada from each of the 22 oblasts**, excluding Donetsk and Luhansk due to security concerns, thereby accounting for urban-rural distinctions.

Map 1. Hromadas in which the survey respondents reside.



Moreover, in this wave, we adjusted the approach of certain questions and introduced thematic blocks of questions. These changes were influenced by **consultation meetings with members of the key informant network, which took place in October 2023**. During these meetings, they provided insights into the types of shocks experienced in their hromadas within our three main blocks and the primary challenges they currently face and incorporated a few questions about these shocks. Additionally, to ensure clarity and consistency, we unified the understanding of the most complex questions from the first wave with respondents. This measure aimed to guarantee that everyone comprehended the issues in the same way.

Furthermore, in some instances, we shifted from inquiring only about the current situation to asking about changes in the sphere observed by key informants in their hromadas. This adjustment provides us with a deeper understanding of the dynamics of change in questions that were asked for the first time.

The survey questionnaire comprised three main blocks: (1) economic well-being and access to social infrastructure; (2) security; and (3) governance and civic engagement. Within each block, some questions were **grouped into factors based on correlation metrics**. We believe this approach offers readers a more comprehensive understanding of the situation in hromadas and enables them to grasp the overall picture, rather than just isolated changes for each question.

The survey was conducted online via KoboToolBox platform in November 2023.

Table 1. Regional distribution of hromadas responses

| Oblasts                | Number of hromadas in oblast | Share of hromadas in oblast | Share in the general population of regions in Ukraine (prior to the invasion) |
|------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Poltava oblast         | 4                            | 60%                         |   |
| Kropyvnytskyi oblast   | 1                            | 49%                         |   |
| Cherkasy oblast        | 2                            | 66%                         |   |
| Vinnytsia oblast       | 1                            | 63%                         |   |
| Khmelnyskyi oblast     | 1                            | 60%                         |   |
| <b>Center</b>          |                              |                             | <b>16%</b>  |
| Dnipropetrovsk oblast  | 3                            | 86%                         |   |
| Kharkiv oblast         | 3                            | 56%                         |   |
| Zaporizhzhia oblast    | 1                            | 67%                         |   |
| <b>East</b>            |                              |                             | <b>9%</b>   |
| Sumy oblast            | 3                            | 51%                         |   |
| Chernihiv oblast       | 2                            | 57%                         |   |
| Kyiv oblast            | 1                            | 69%                         |   |
| Zhytomyr oblast        | 1                            | 66%                         |   |
| <b>North</b>           |                              |                             | <b>13%</b>  |
| Mykolaiv oblast        | 2                            | 52%                         |   |
| Odesa oblast           | 2                            | 91%                         |   |
| Kherson oblast         | 1                            | 49%                         |   |
| <b>South</b>           |                              |                             | <b>8%</b>   |
| Ivano-Frankivsk oblast | 4                            | 62%                         |   |
| Volyn oblast           | 3                            | 54%                         |   |
| Ternopil oblast        | 2                            | 55%                         |   |
| Zakarpattia oblast     | 1                            | 64%                         |   |
| Rivne oblast           | 1                            | 64%                         |   |
| Lviv oblast            | 1                            | 73%                         |   |
| <b>West</b>            |                              |                             | <b>21%</b>  |

Table 2. Distribution of hromadas answers by hromada type.

| Hromada Type               | Number in survey | Share in survey | Share in Ukraine |
|----------------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| City                       | 19               | 47%             | 28%              |
| Village / rural settlement | 21               | 53%             | 72%              |

## Part 1: Economic wellbeing and access to social infrastructure

The survey looked at how satisfied local experts are with their life in different areas over the last six months. It gives us a clear picture of what local informants think about their living conditions, safety, and overall satisfaction depending on where they live. The average scores help to see which areas they feel better or worse about, providing a simple way to compare how different regions are doing.

The distribution of ratings across all categories highlights the varied perceptions among residents based on their geographic and situational context (*Table 1*). While some areas show a more positive outlook, others, particularly **urban areas and frontline or border hromadas, indicate a more cautious view of the current situation.** The overall sample's mean score of 5.9 serves as a central reference point, suggesting a generally moderate level of satisfaction across the surveyed population.

### **Economic Conditions Perceptions: affordability of living and employment opportunities are on the rise when compared to March 2023**

The survey results from *Table 2* highlight changes between the first and second wave regarding perceptions of economic conditions. Key findings include:

- **A notable improvement in the affordability of living and rent**, suggesting that living and housing costs have become less burdensome for residents across rural, urban, frontline/border hromadas, and rear areas.
- An **improvement in employment opportunities**, particularly noticeable in urban areas and frontline/border hromadas, which points to a strengthening job market. While income levels saw a modest rise, the change was not as pronounced as in affordability or employment opportunities.
- Some improvement in the perception of the effectiveness of local government in creating conditions for economic development showed some improvement in urban hromadas but was still perceived more favourably in rural areas.
- No significant change in **the availability and accessibility of social programs remained relatively stable**, indicating no significant change in this area. This stability of perception could partially be explained by the possibility that participants in our sample might not be actively using social programs or may not be greatly aware of them.

Overall, the survey underscores significant improvements in affordability and employment, alongside modest income growth and stable social program availability, reflecting a generally positive shift in economic conditions across different areas.

Table 2. Economic Conditions Evaluation (rated on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is “very bad” and 10 is “excellent”)

|   | March 2023 | November 2023 |
|---|------------|---------------|
| Affordability of living                           | 3.9        | <u>5.2</u>    |
| Affordability of rent                             | 4.1        | <u>5.5</u>    |
| Employment opportunities                          | 3.1        | <u>4.3</u>    |
| Income level                                      | 3.5        | <u>4.1</u>    |
| Availability and accessibility of social programs | 5.3        | 5.5           |

### Perception of prices: rest and leisure, public transport and medicine have become more affordable, while utilities remain problematic

In both waves, the perception of rising prices for goods and services was common among respondents, yet notable shifts in perceptions occurred in specific areas from the first to the second wave.

The factor analysis of the cost of goods and services categorised goods into two main factors which could be named "Daily Essentials & Leisure" and "Housing & Utility Costs". Together these factors explain 46% of the variance in perceptions of prices of services and goods.

Table 4. Results of Perception of Prices Factor Analysis.

| Factor                     | Services/Infrastructures  |
|----------------------------|---|
| Daily Essentials & Leisure | Medicine, clothes, products, leisure, fuel, public transportation |
| Housing & Utility Costs    | Technical water, utilities, housing                               |

Across all regions, there was a **perceived slight slowdown in the rate of cost increases for "Daily Essentials & Leisure"** from the 1st to the 2nd wave, indicating a general easing of pressures related to the cost of living. Frontline or border Hromadas observed the most significant relief in perceived cost increases, likely due to stabilisation efforts or improved supply dynamics.

Table 5. Changes in the price of goods and services by community type and security status (on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is “absolutely unaffordable” and 5 is “completely affordable”).

|                            | Wave          | Total | Rural | Urban | Frontline or border hromadas | Rear |
|----------------------------|---------------|-------|-------|-------|------------------------------|------|
| Daily Essentials & Leisure | March 2023    | 4.44  | 4.51  | 4.36  | 4.47                         | 4.43 |
| Daily Essentials & Leisure | November 2023 | 4.09  | 4.13  | 4.06  | <b>3.96</b>                  | 4.16 |
| Housing & Utility Costs    | March 2023    | 3.66  | 3.59  | 3.75  | 3.57                         | 3.70 |
| Housing & Utility Costs    | November 2023 | 3.64  | 3.62  | 3.65  | 3.53                         | 3.69 |

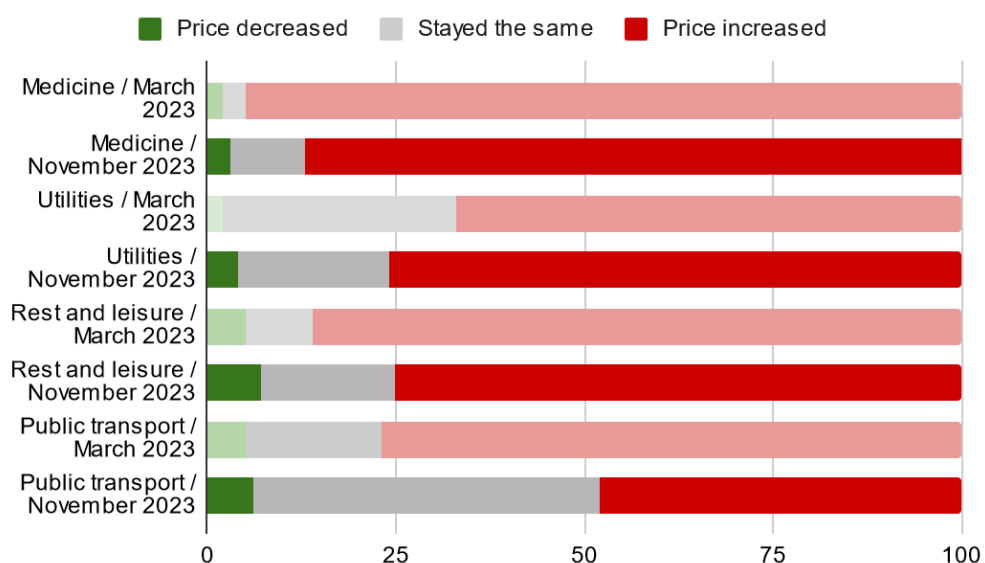
Let us delve into a detailed examination of the shifts within the category of "Daily Essentials & Leisure":

- A major change in perception was noted in public transport pricing; the first wave saw a majority perceiving price increases, but this trend reversed in the second wave, leading to a larger share of respondents perceiving prices as stable (48% to 77%).
- Similarly to transport more respondents perceive prices as remaining the same for rest and leisure activities than in the first wave.
- In the second wave, there remains a consistent trend of perceived price increases for food, fuel, clothing, and medicine, with approximately 90-95% of respondents reporting such increases, while for medicines, there is a slight shift towards more perceptions of price stability (from 3% to 10%).

The perception of changes in Housing & Utility Costs between the waves was subtle, indicating a relatively stable perception of cost increase for housing and utilities across all areas. However, in this category **Utilities saw a notable shift in perception, with an increase in the proportion of respondents perceiving utility costs as rising from the first to the second wave (from 67% to 77%), and a decrease in the proportion perceiving prices as stable (from 31% to 20%),** indicating a trend towards rising costs in maintaining household services over time.

Thus, despite a broader trend of inflation, **some sectors are showing signs of price stabilisation**, reflecting potentially changing economic conditions or consumer adaptation to the pricing over time.

Image 1. Changes in the price of goods and services. Items that experienced significant changes are shown.



In both waves, **the perception of rising prices for goods and services was common among respondents**, yet notable shifts in perceptions occurred in specific areas from the first to the second wave.

The factor analysis of the cost of goods and services categorised goods into two main factors which could be named "Daily Essentials & Leisure" and "Housing & Utility Costs". Together these factors explain 46% of the variance in perceptions of prices of services and goods.

Table 4. Results of Perception of Prices Factor Analysis.

| Factor                     | Services/Infrastructures  |
|----------------------------|---|
| Daily Essentials & Leisure | Medicine, clothes, products, leisure, fuel, public transportation |
| Housing & Utility Costs    | Technical water, utilities, housing                               |

Across all regions, there was a **perceived slight slowdown in the rate of cost increases for "Daily Essentials & Leisure"** from the 1st to the 2nd wave, indicating a general easing of pressures related to the cost of living. Frontline or border Hromadas observed the most significant relief in perceived cost increases, likely due to stabilisation efforts or improved supply dynamics.

Table 5. Changes in the price of goods and services by community type and security status (on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is "absolutely unaffordable" and 5 is "completely affordable").

|                            | Wave          | Total | Rural | Urban | Frontline or border hromadas | Rear |
|----------------------------|---------------|-------|-------|-------|------------------------------|------|
| Daily Essentials & Leisure | March 2023    | 4.44  | 4.51  | 4.36  | 4.47                         | 4.43 |
| Daily Essentials & Leisure | November 2023 | 4.09  | 4.13  | 4.06  | <b>3.96</b>                  | 4.16 |
| Housing & Utility Costs    | March 2023    | 3.66  | 3.59  | 3.75  | 3.57                         | 3.70 |
| Housing & Utility Costs    | November 2023 | 3.64  | 3.62  | 3.65  | 3.53                         | 3.69 |

Let us delve into a detailed examination of the shifts within the category of "Daily Essentials & Leisure":

- A major change in perception was noted in public transport pricing; the first wave saw a majority perceiving price increases, but this trend reversed in the second wave, leading to a larger share of respondents perceiving prices as stable (48% to 77%).
- Similarly to transport more respondents perceive prices as remaining the same for rest and leisure activities than in the first wave.
- In the second wave, there remains a consistent trend of perceived price increases for food, fuel, clothing, and medicine, with approximately 90-95% of respondents reporting such increases, while for medicines, there is a slight shift towards more perceptions of price stability (from 3% to 10%).

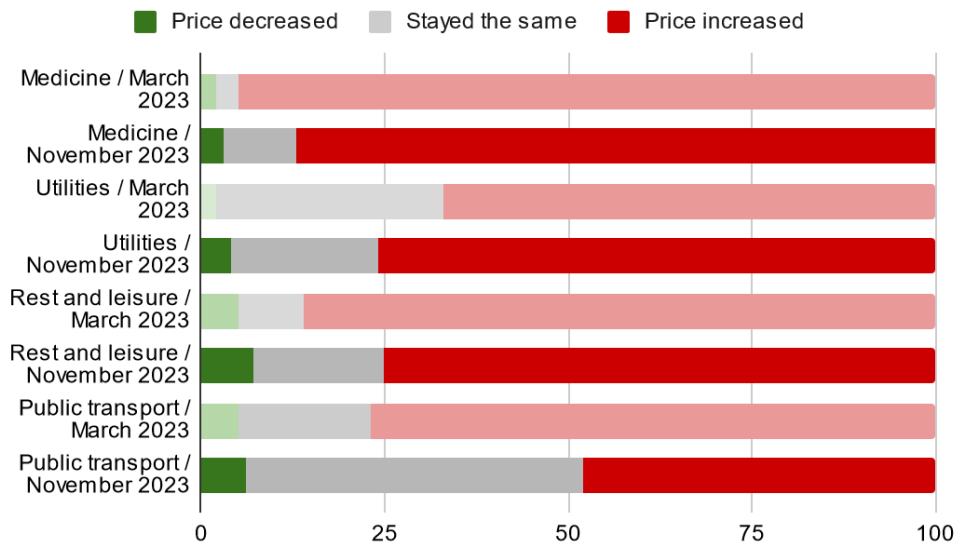
The perception of changes in Housing & Utility Costs between the waves was subtle, indicating a relatively stable perception of cost increase for housing and utilities across all areas. However, in this category **Utilities saw a notable shift in perception, with an increase in the proportion of respondents perceiving utility costs as rising from the first to the second wave (from 67% to 77%), and a decrease in the proportion**



**perceiving prices as stable (from 31% to 20%),** indicating a trend towards rising costs in maintaining household services over time.

Thus, despite a broader trend of inflation, **some sectors are showing signs of price stabilisation,** reflecting potentially changing economic conditions or consumer adaptation to the pricing over time.

*Image 1. Changes in the price of goods and services. Items that experienced significant changes are shown.*



### Access to infrastructure: increase in accessibility of electricity and connection

The results show changes in access to various services and infrastructure between the first and second wave of a survey. Overall, there is a noticeable shift in perceptions across different areas.

To distil perceptions of numerous services into broader categories, we conducted a factor analysis and extracted five factors. Each factor encapsulates a unique aspect of infrastructure and public service, together explaining a substantial 88% of the variance in perceptions of service availability.

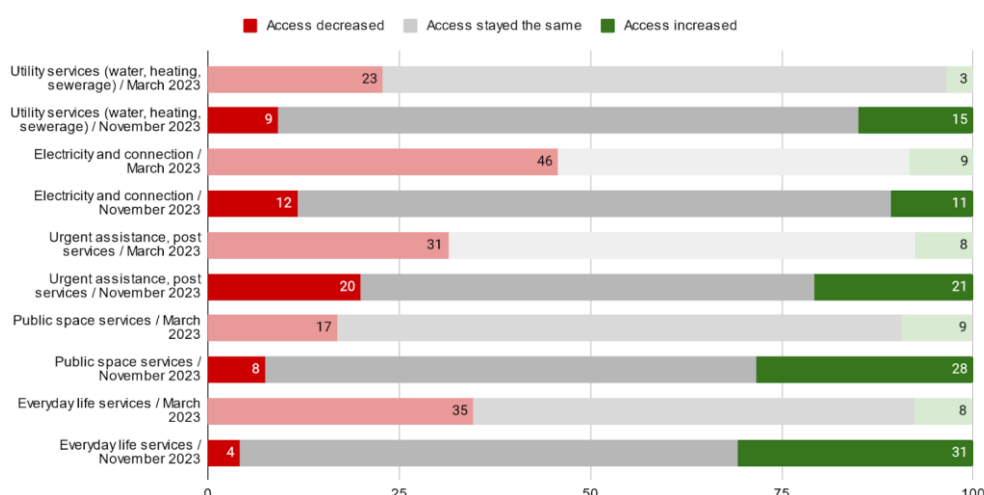
*Table 7. Results of Access to Infrastructure Factor Analysis.*

| Factor  | Services/Infrastructures   |
|---|--|
| Utility Services                              | Water supply, centralised heating, sewage                        |
| Connection Services                           | Phone connection, internet, electricity                          |
| Urgent Assistance Services and Postal Service | Healthcare, emergency services, fire services, postal service    |
| Public Space Services                         | Public parks, waste management, social services, roads, railroad |
| Everyday Life Services                        | Public transport, product shops, school education, pharmacy      |

**The perception of increased availability has risen across all categories** from the first to the second wave:

- Despite a decrease in the number of activists noting reduced access to various services, a significant portion still reported issues, particularly in “Urgent Assistance and Post Services”. Approximately one-fifth of activists expressed concerns about decreased access to these essential services. Among **the most problematic areas were primary healthcare and emergency medical care**, where access issues persisted despite overall improvements noted by some respondents.
- “Public space services” and “Everyday life services” experienced notable increases, rising from 9% to 28% and from 8% to 31%, respectively. This suggests a positive trend in the accessibility of these services, possibly reflecting successful efforts to improve or broaden their availability. However, activists frequently highlight concerns regarding road infrastructure and public transportation, with 34% reporting decreased availability of quality road infrastructure and 26% of public transportation.
- Stability is notably high in “Utility services”, with a consistent percentage of respondents reporting that access remained the same (74% to 76%). Similarly, in “Electricity and connection” services, there was a significant increase in perceived stability, with the proportion of respondents reporting unchanged access rising from 46% to 78%. These findings suggest a sustained level of service availability for these essential utilities, which is crucial for community well-being and development.

Image 2. Changes in the availability of the infrastructure and public services, %



When looking into sphere specifically, there are a few aspects to highlight:

- For public space services and everyday life services there is a marked increase in **access to roads, public transportation, leisure activities and education (both school and preschool)**

- Despite overall unchanged perception of utility services the assessment of heating and sewage remain low. The same trend is observed with **pharmacies and product shops** in “Everyday life services” that overall has improved but not these components.
- **Significant positive shifts were observed in the access to electricity, phone connections, and internet services.** There was a substantial drop in the number of respondents perceiving decreased access, coupled with a notable rise in those reporting increased access from the first to the second wave. Such difference could potentially be attributed to the fact that there were significantly more disturbances in provision of these services due to blackouts in the period prior to survey in March 2023 than before survey in November 2023.

In open responses activists have reported significant positive changes in the provision of public services and infrastructure by local authorities in the community:

- The Centers of Administrative Services have continued to expand, offering an increasing number of services to residents. These services now encompass a wide range of areas including residency registration, social services, land and real estate matters, civil status registration, passport services, and more. Additionally, the introduction of veteran assistants has further enhanced the support available for families of deceased veterans and veterans themselves within these centres.
- Plans to establish a "Resilience Center" to offer social services to vulnerable populations.
- Increased efforts towards creating inclusive opportunities for all citizens, such as making public spaces accessible for people with limited mobility.
- Introduction of mobile office services, enabling easier access to services for people with disabilities.
- Enhancements in the population notification system and the acquisition of generators for institutions in case of power outages.
- Establishment of reception and service centres specifically catering to internally displaced persons.
- Opening of municipal assistance centres tailored to the needs of veterans.

On the other hand, they have noted declines in various areas of public service provision as well:

- Closure of municipal healthcare facilities and shortages of specialised medical professionals, leading to reduced access to healthcare services.
- Reduction in education funding and declining quality of education due to the transition to online learning, particularly for schools unable to resume in-person classes due to the lack of adequate facilities.
- Deterioration of municipal transportation services, including poor schedules, route cuts, decreased fleet size, and increased fare rates, negatively impacting accessibility and reliability.

- Inadequate infrastructure for people with disabilities, highlighting deficiencies in accessibility and inclusivity measures within the community.

## Other Economic Challenges

The most frequently mentioned in open responses to the economic challenge in the hromada is the **lack of job opportunities**, stemming from the decline of private enterprises and the closure of factories associated with Russia. This has led to unemployment, which often goes unreported in official statistics as many unemployed individuals do not register with employment centres. Some activists note that job placement has become more difficult due to **age and gender-related mobilisation requirements**, as well as **opaque mechanisms for reservation of employees** liable for military service.

A **shortage of skilled professionals and labour**, particularly in traditionally "male" sectors such as service, labour, and engineering, due to mobilisation and migration abroad, poses another challenge. This shortage extends to professionals capable of attracting investment and planning community development, affecting the functioning of local government bodies.

Concerns about **low wages, low living standards, inadequate social benefits, and insufficient support for vulnerable populations** are also frequently mentioned economic challenges.

## Summary

From the perspective of local civic activists the data shows that Ukraine has been largely successful in maintaining its social infrastructure and state capacity in relation to services during the full-scale invasion. There is also an observed positive trend of improved perception of the economic situation by survey participants. The first shocks of the full-scale war have vanished, the situation has stabilised, specifically with respect to cost of living and employment opportunities. Despite these positive observations, there are a few aspects that have to be addressed: 1) the frontline and border hromadas continue facing the biggest challenges with respect to affordability of goods and services. 2) accessibility of utilities remains assessed lowly. Therefore, the focus of both the central government and international organisations should be specifically addressed to these areas and aspects.

## Part 2: Security

### General safety conditions

Between the first and second waves, **there were notable improvements in how activists perceived safety in the hromada**. While the sense of safety in communities saw a noticeable improvement, especially in frontline or border hromadas, both these areas and urban hromadas continued to rate safety the lowest, only marginally higher than 5 on a scale from 1 to 10. Rural areas, in particular, continued to feel safer compared to their urban counterparts, with substantial improvements in perceived safety in both contexts.

Table 7. Changes in the security conditions (on a scale from 1 to 10).

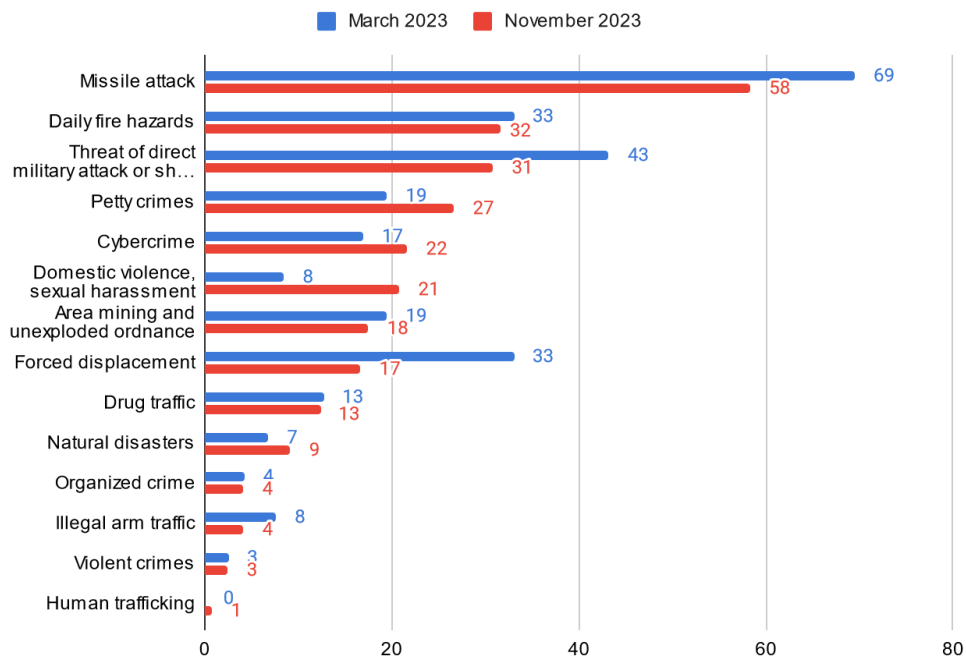
|   | March 2023 | November 2023 |
|---|------------|---------------|
| Safety Evaluation                           | 5.2        | 6.2           |
| Local Government Security Performance       | 5.9        | 5.7           |
| Assessments of the work of the local police | 6.7        | 6.4           |

On the other hand, **the evaluation of the effectiveness of local government in addressing security issues and the performance of local police was** less pronounced. While there was a slight reduction in the overall assessment, the perceptions remained relatively positive, especially in rural areas compared to urban ones. Assessments of the work of the local police vary between areas, but generally slightly decreasing due to decline among respondents from urban hromadas.

The perceived importance of security issues between the first and second waves among activists have changed significantly. While the concern for missile attacks remained the highest, it saw a decrease in urgency, mirroring a **broader trend of decreasing focus on war-related security issues** like direct military attack and forced displacement. Cybercrime is a notable exception as the only war-related issue from the given list that saw an increase in importance. Conversely, there was a **noticeable increase in attention towards societal issues**, including petty crimes, and especially domestic violence and sexual harassment, indicating a growing awareness and prioritization of these areas. It's important to note that respondents chose from the given list of concerns, so there could be additional concerns not mentioned here.

Image 6. Most important security issues for activists, %.

“What are the most important security issues facing people in your community right now?”



Between the first and second waves, there was a slight improvement in both the availability and quality of shelters/bomb shelters within hromadas. For shelter availability, the overall rating increased from 3.8 to 4.5, indicating a more positive assessment across all types of areas. In terms of shelter quality, the overall rating rose from 3.7 to 4.2, highlighting a slight improvement in the conditions of shelters. However, despite improvements there is still considerable room for enhancement as all ratings remain below the midpoint of the scale (5).

## Military Training for Civilians

As the war persists and appears likely to endure for the foreseeable future, an increasing number of civilians may find themselves needing to take up arms to defend their communities. Consequently, many Ukrainians who are not affiliated with the military are now seeking various training programs and preparatory courses.

In general, fewer than half of activists (42%) demonstrate awareness of civic military training in their hromadas. This could reflect either a low interest of activists in such training or the actual absence of civilian defence training in most hromadas. Urban hromadas demonstrate higher levels of awareness compared to rural ones: 47% of activists in urban areas express awareness compared to 37% in rural areas.

Results suggest a **strong influence from social circles influence on the participation rates in civic military training**: 38% of those with relatives or friends who participated have also participated personally, compared to none among those without such connections. However, even among those without relatives or friends who participated, the majority (83%) still consider participating in the future, indicating the potential impact of perceived social pressure on decision-making.

Activists who are aware of civilian military training predominantly have personal experience or consideration for participation: 30% have participated, 42% plan to participate, and 28% don't intend to participate. Notably, a significant majority (78%) of these activists have relatives or friends who have undergone such training. It's possible

that the percentage of individuals planning to participate is overestimated due to the fact that publicly expressing willingness to participate in military training could enhance one's public image and reputation as a responsible and patriotic citizen.

Furthermore, **individuals who participated in civilian military training or planning tend to hold a more favourable view of local authority** with a rating of 6.2 compared to 5.4 among those who expressed no interest. This implies that greater trust in local governance could serve as a motivating factor for citizens to engage in national defence efforts.

Table 6. Military training participation, personal and familiar

|  | Relatives or friends participated in military training | Relatives or friends haven't participated in military training | Don't know | Total      |
|--|--|--|------------|------------|
| Participated personally in military training | 38%  | 0%   | 0%         | <b>30%</b> |
| Plan to participate                          | 41%  | 83%  | 0%         | <b>42%</b> |
| Don't plan to participate                    | 21%  | 17%  | 100%       | <b>28%</b> |
| <b>Total</b>                                 | <b>78%</b>   | <b>12%</b>   | <b>10%</b> |            |

## Perceptions of Tensions in the Hromada

We asked respondents if they were aware of any instances of disagreements or tensions between people from different social groups in their community. Results indicate that a **significant portion of respondents acknowledge the presence of disagreements or tensions between social groups in their hromada (43%)**.

Many survey responses to the open question about conflicting groups and sources of tension highlight **conflicts arising from the distribution of social support** (mentioned in 7 hromadas). Disagreements often arise between internally displaced persons (IDPs) and local residents over various forms of assistance, including financial aid, psychological support, and state-funded scholarships. Some individuals contest the allocation of these benefits, leading to tension. Locals are proposing high rent costs for IDPs, indicating a growing concern over housing affordability. Furthermore, there are disputes among different socially vulnerable groups, such as IDPs, people with disabilities, and pensioners, regarding how support should be distributed and which groups should receive more state aid. Additionally, vulnerable subgroups, like families of soldiers, express dissatisfaction with the lack of support provided by local governments.

**Language also serves as a contentious issue**, with disputes arising between Ukrainian-speaking and Russian-speaking populations, particularly concerning the use of the Russian language (mentioned in 6 hromadas). Similar conflicts emerge between local residents in western regions and IDPs, primarily originating from Russian-speaking areas affected by the ongoing conflict.

Additionally, responses have highlighted **tensions rooted in religious affiliations** (mentioned in 4 hromadas). Specifically, activists have drawn attention to conflicts between parishioners of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Church of Ukraine. These tensions stem from perceived pro-Russian positions held by the Ukrainian

Orthodox Church and its subordination to the Russian Orthodox Church, which actively supports the Russian invasion.

Another **notable source of tension arises between soldiers, veterans, and civilians, driven by differing values and priorities** (mentioned in 4 hromadas). Soldiers and their relatives express negative attitudes towards civilian men, suspecting them of dodging the military draft and evading their public duty to defend the country.

**Conflicts between volunteers and local authorities have also emerged** (mentioned in 4 hromadas). Instances of local authorities appropriating volunteer aid and spreading disinformation about volunteer activities, accusing them of personal enrichment, have been reported.

## Summary

Similarly to economic well-being, the perception of the security situation has improved. Interestingly, there is an increase in attention towards societal security issues such as petty crimes, and especially domestic violence and sexual harassment. Therefore, if security was a bigger issue in the previous review for frontline and border hromadas now it is in urban hromadas, specifically in urban hromadas. Despite the fact that there are more societal security issues, there is no improved efficiency of local authorities and local police in addressing security issues.

The two new aspects studied in this research covers social tensions and participation of civilians in military training, both of blocks affecting the social resilience of the communities. Although the relative majority of respondents say there are no social tensions, there is a significant number of respondents who consider this as a challenge, specifically in urban hromadas.

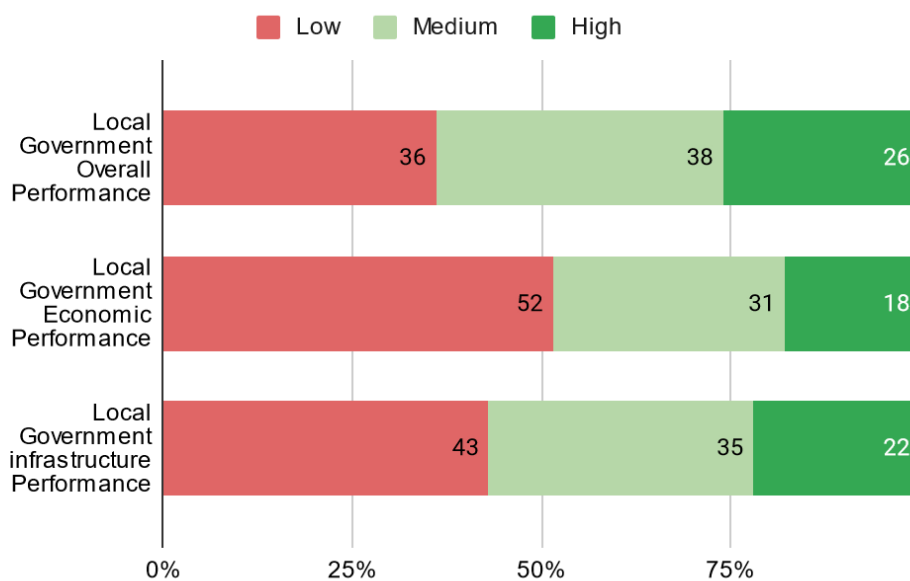


## Part 3: Governance and Civicness

### Perception of Local Government Efficiency

For the overall performance of local governance, opinions were varied but tended to cluster around the median, with a notable portion of respondents marking it as moderate. This suggests a balanced view, albeit with room for improvement, reflecting a recognition of efforts made as well as challenges remaining. In contrast, **assessments of the government's economic initiatives and budget management leaned more towards criticism**, indicating a prevalent concern over the efficacy of economic policies and fiscal stewardship at the local level. This is further underscored by the perception of infrastructure services, which also skewed towards a less favourable assessment, highlighting areas of concern regarding the quality and availability of essential facilities and services.

Image 9. Evaluation of Local Authority Performance.



The survey results for the **question regarding the local government's effectiveness in creating conditions for economic development and managing the local budget show no practical changes between the first and second waves**. In the first wave, a majority of respondents rated the local government's economic performance as low (55%), with 32% considering it medium and only 13% rating it as high. In the second wave, there's no significant change in perception: those rating it as low decreased to 52%, medium ratings remained close at 31%, and high ratings increased to 18%.

Translating these perceptions into numerical scores, there's a slight rise from 4.33 in the first wave to 4.71 in the second. However, this incremental change is not deemed statistically significant. This indicates that while there's a slight uptick in the perception of the government's economic performance, the magnitude of this change isn't enough to suggest a significant shift in public opinion.

In open questions activists mention that local authorities contribute to economic development by:

- **actively engaging in international cooperation and seeking assistance from international organisations and projects** like DECIDE, HOVERLA, UNDP, and ACTED. They collaborate with these organisations on various initiatives, including community strategy development, attracting investments, and community rebuilding efforts.
- **supporting local businesses** by addressing their concerns, providing land for agricultural activities, offering subsidies to farmers, and developing programs to support specific industries and entrepreneurship. They also provide training to entrepreneurs on grant applications and offer credit facilities to support business growth.
- **undertaking strategic planning and developing documents** such as community development strategies, recovery plans, and comprehensive development programs to guide economic development efforts.
- **infrastructure development and maintenance**, such as repairing roads, improving lighting, and ensuring water supply. This includes ongoing maintenance and repairs of infrastructure such as roads, which enhances transportation networks and logistics vital for economic activities. Additionally, investments in energy infrastructure, such as the creation of alternative heating systems, contribute to cost savings for both public institutions and businesses. Improving road networks also facilitates access to markets, thereby boosting local businesses and trade.

The data reveals a clear trend: **as activists' awareness of local budget spending increases, their perception of budget efficiency tends to become more positive.** Among those very well informed about local spending, a significant portion sees the budget as effective (53% combined for 'Rather effective' and 'Very effective'). In contrast, among those not informed at all, a majority (54%) perceive the budget as 'Very inefficient'. Interestingly, the category 'Hard to answer' is most prevalent among those not very well informed, indicating uncertainty or lack of clarity in this group. This pattern suggests that higher awareness of local budget spending correlates with more favourable views of its efficiency, while a lack of information tends to coincide with negative perceptions.

Table 8. How Local Budget Efficiency Perception is related to Local Spending Awareness

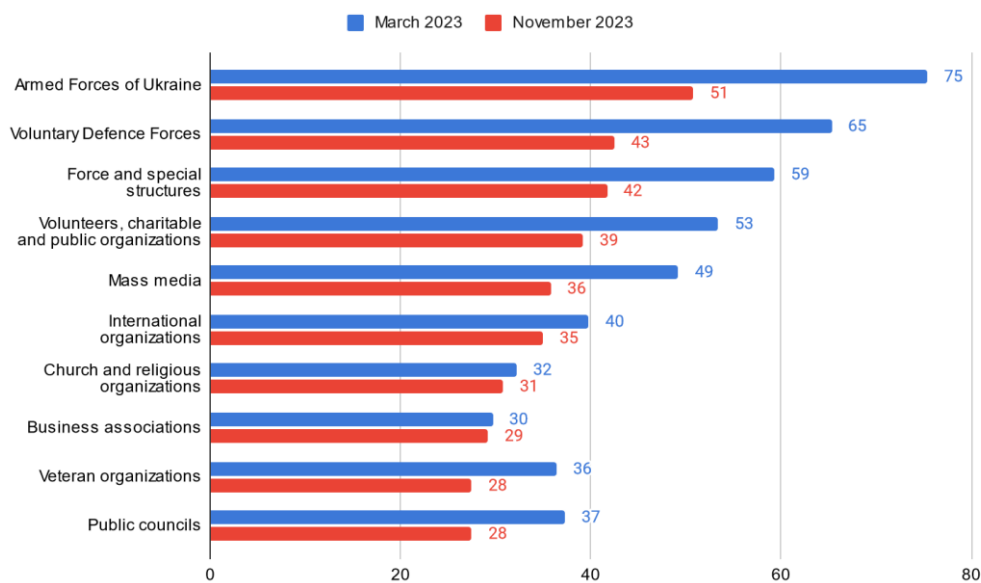
|                        | Very inefficient | Rather inefficient | Rather effective | Very effective | Hard to answer |
|------------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Very well informed     | 20%              | 27%                | 40%              | 13%            | 0%             |
| Somewhat informed      | 16%              | 38%                | 41%              | 2%             | 4%             |
| Not very well informed | 22%              | 28%                | 17%              | 0%             | 33%            |
| Not informed at all    | 54%              | 31%                | 15%              | 0%             | 0%             |

## Cooperation and Interaction with Local Government

The survey findings reveal shifts in cooperation between the local authorities and different hromada subjects across two waves of assessment. Initially, there was extensive cooperation with the Armed Forces of Ukraine, with the Volunteer Defence Forces (VDF), and with security and law enforcement agencies but these levels decreased notably in the second wave. These patterns suggest a **significant weakening in cooperation with the security and defence sector**.

Similarly, cooperation with civil society and public sector entities, specifically veteran organisations, public councils, and volunteers, charitable and public organisations also **experienced moderate decrease in systematic cooperation**. This suggests potential issues within community engagement and support structures. The mass media sector also experienced a moderate decrease in cooperation, indicating potential challenges within media-government relations or media access to information.

Image 11. Systematic cooperation between the local authority and the following subjects in community now, %



To distil perceptions of cooperation between local authorities and various hromada subjects into broader categories, a factor analysis was conducted. The analysis revealed two main factors that together explain a substantial 66.6% of the variance in perceptions of local authorities’ cooperation.

Table 4. Results of Cooperation Factor Analysis.

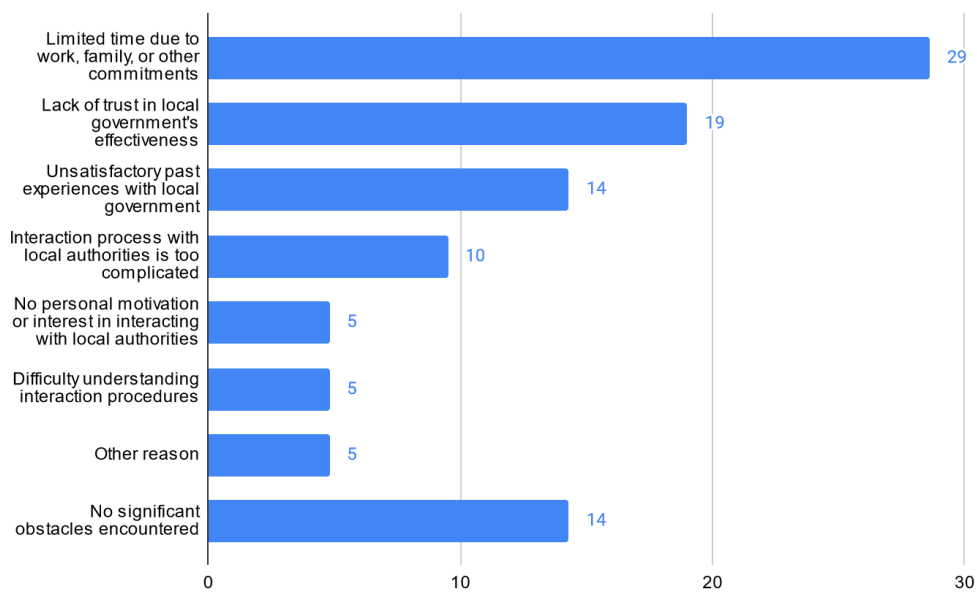
| Factor               | Services/Infrastructures  |
|----------------------|---|
| Civilian Cooperation | Civic councils; business associations; volunteers, charitable and public organisations; veteran organisations; international organisations; mass media; church and religious organisations. |
| Military Cooperation | Armed Forces of Ukraine; Voluntary Defence Forces; security and law enforcement; veterans organisations.  |

The majority of activists in our sample, comprising 82%, have interacted with the local government within the last half a year. Interestingly, there are no significant differences observed in the level of engagement with local authorities among activists across different areas.

The survey's findings underscore several significant obstacles hindering interactions with local government among respondents. Foremost among these is the **constraint of time**, as mentioned by 29% of participants, largely due to work, family, or other commitments. Additionally, a substantial 19% expressed **a lack of confidence in the effectiveness of local government**, with a further 14% citing previous **unsatisfactory experiences**. Together, these responses concerning distrust and doubt towards local authorities constitute a third of all responses, representing the most frequently cited factor.

Furthermore, 15% of respondents highlighted **the complexity of interaction with local authorities**. Of this, 10% found the overall process overly complicated, while an additional 5% struggled with understanding the procedures involved. Additionally, 5% of participants admitted to a lack of personal motivation or interest in engaging with local authorities. It's worth noting that only **14% of respondents reported no significant barriers encountered in their interactions with local governments**.

Image 12. Factors impeding interaction with local authorities in hromadas for activists who have engaged within the last six months, %



The data indicates a moderate satisfaction rating of 3.5 (out of 5) for interactions with local authorities or their representatives in the community over the past six months. Notably, rural areas show a higher satisfaction level, scoring 3.8, indicating a more positive perception of interactions with local authorities compared to urban hromadas. Conversely, urban areas exhibit significantly lower satisfaction levels, scoring 3.1, suggesting a less favourable experience with local authorities compared to both rural areas and the overall average.

Overall, the evaluations of corruption, nepotism, and monopoly remained relatively stable, suggesting no significant shifts in their perceived prevalence between the two assessment waves. This is interesting considering that cases of corruption are actively highlighted in the media, and polls show that corruption is a top concern for the Ukrainian population.

While there was a slight decrease in the perception of nepotism and corruption in urban areas, rural areas saw a slight increase in the perception of corruption.

## Challenges to Civic Engagement

### Participation in Decision-Making Processes

**A significant portion of activists declared that they face barriers or limitations to their involvement in community decision-making processes on the part of local governments:** 43% of respondents reported facing restrictions on citizen participation in local decision-making, while 58% reported no such restrictions.

Describing restrictions on the part of local authorities, activists highlight challenges related to the closed nature of local government, expressing concerns about **limited transparency** and **restricted access to information regarding decision-making processes**. It includes issues such as the absence of information about decision-making projects or decisions, as well as restrictions on access to information about government activities. Examples include decisions being announced and voted on without prior public disclosure, hindering timely reactions to potential instances of corruption within municipal governance.

Many respondents express frustration over their **inability to effectively participate in local government decision-making processes**. They cite instances where citizens are not consulted or involved in decision-making, leading to a sense of disempowerment and disenfranchisement. Additionally, some mention obstacles to influencing local government decisions and the **lack of responsiveness from authorities to citizen proposals and demands**. Instances of blocked citizen petitions and limited opportunities for public meetings or protests are highlighted as barriers to effective citizen involvement. Some mention systematic ignoring of citizen appeals and refusal by officials to meet with citizens.

**Concerns about nepotism or favouritism** within local government structures are frequently raised, indicating a lack of accountability and fairness in decision-making processes. Citizens also express worries about government persecution for expressing dissenting opinions and the arbitrary closure of citizen petitions without adequate responses. Respondents highlight various functional challenges that hinder citizen participation, such as restricted tools for engagement, inactive public councils, and a lack of consultation by local governments on critical issues. These barriers impede citizens' ability to actively contribute to decision-making processes and hold their representatives accountable.

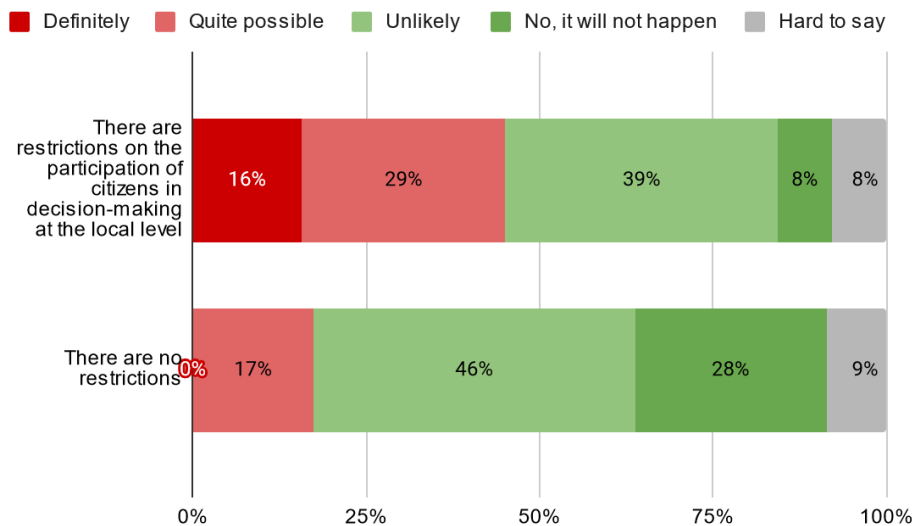
### Protests

In a country experiencing war, asking about personal plans to participate in protests can be sensitive due to safety concerns and potential repercussions from authorities, so we asked respondents how they feel about the probability of protests in their hromadas. **Overall, 19% of respondents believe that protests are unlikely to happen, while 43% consider them to be unlikely, 23% perceive them as quite possible, and 8% are confident that protests will take place.**

**Results suggest that individuals who perceive restrictions on citizen participation are two times more inclined to anticipate protests compared to those who perceive**

**no such restrictions.** Among those who believe that there are restrictions, a higher proportion, including 45%, perceive protests as likely or definite. In contrast, among those who believe there are no restrictions, only 17% perceive protests as likely or definite.

Image 19. Protest moods by reported presence of restrictions on the participation of citizens in decision-making, %



**The reasons behind barriers on participation in local decision-making influence perceptions of protest probability in the hromada.** Intentionally created restrictions significantly increase expectations of protest activity, with over half of respondents anticipating protests as quite possible. In contrast, barriers due to martial law are associated with a belief that protests are unlikely. However, even in the absence of perceived restrictions, a notable proportion still anticipates protest activity, albeit to a lesser extent.

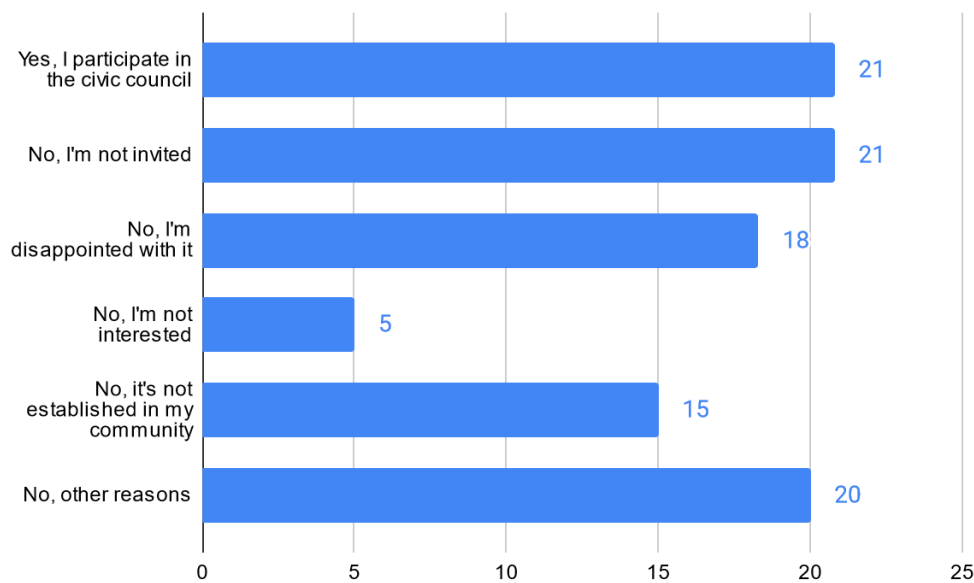
### Public Councils

A significant share of activists (21%) actively participate in the public council. However, others cite several reasons for non-participation, with the main ones being uninvited to this public body and disappointment in its functioning. **21% of individuals mention not receiving invitations to participate, indicating potential issues with inclusivity or communication within the community.** This highlights the importance of ensuring that all residents feel welcome and informed about civic engagement opportunities. For some individuals (**18%**), **disappointment with the council's performance stands as a significant barrier.** In the open questions, activists cite the fictitious nature of this public body in some communities and the non-transparency of its decisions as reasons for dissatisfaction with this democratic tool. This dissatisfaction highlights a need for improvement in the council's functioning to encourage greater community involvement.

Another notable reason is the absence of a public council in certain communities, as indicated by 15% of respondents. **This discrepancy is even more pronounced in frontline or border hromadas, where 21% of respondents cite the absence of a public council body, compared to 15% in the total sample.** This lack of infrastructure suggests a need to establish avenues for civic engagement in these areas.

While 20% cite miscellaneous reasons for their non-participation, such as personal constraints, lack of awareness, and heavy workload, it's clear that **addressing the main barriers—dissatisfaction, absence of infrastructure, and inclusivity—is crucial for promoting broader community involvement in local governance.**

*Image 21. Participation in a public council of self government body, %  
“Do you participate in the public council at the local self-government body of your hromada?”*



### Participation in Recovery Process

The analysis reveals that **42% of activists within the hromada are aware of the ongoing recovery processes, while a majority, comprising 58%, remain uninformed.** This discrepancy underscores the variegated nature of awareness across different localities, with urban areas and frontline or border hromadas typically exhibiting higher levels of consciousness, contrasting with rural areas and rear locales where awareness tends to be lower.

Of those aware of the reconstruction process, **approximately half of the activists (46%) are actively involved**, while the remaining half (52%) have expressed interest in participating. Only a small minority (2%) indicated no interest in participation.

**Only a small minority (12%) have personally encountered cases of restrictions imposed by local authorities on residents' participation in these processes.** The primary difficulty cited is **a lack of financing for reconstruction**, with rural hromadas being the most affected. Activists have expressed concerns about the **lack of efficiency and transparency in the distribution of funds for recovery projects.** They also voice concerns about **instances of corruption**, such as awarding reconstruction projects to affiliated companies without proper tenders or limiting access to tender participation. Additionally, activists highlight the issue of **over-regulation and excessive formal requirements** hindering participation in reconstruction processes.

## Accessibility of Data for Local Activists

The survey results indicate that a **notable proportion of respondents have encountered difficulties in accessing the information or data they need due to restrictions imposed by local authorities**. Overall, 27% of respondents reported facing such difficulties, while 36% stated they haven't encountered any obstacles, and 38% indicated they had no need for access to information or data.

Activists frequently encounter obstacles when attempting to access public information, often resorting to legal proceedings to obtain it. **Some information on the local council's website is either absent or blocked** due to martial law restrictions. The second most commonly cited barrier is the **disregard for requests made under the Law on Access to Public Information**, with delays in providing information being a common issue. Moreover, the information provided is often incomplete or unreliable. Activists also mention receiving formal responses to their inquiries that fail to address their requests adequately. Another problem is the **lack of accountability from some local authorities, who fail to report on their activities or publish decisions** made by the executive committee. Difficulties with the community's website are frequently mentioned, as it can be challenging to locate necessary information and is inaccessible to individuals with hearing or vision impairments. Additionally, activists raise concerns about **banned broadcasts of council session meetings and restrictions on journalists' and citizens' access** to them.

## Summary

Compared to the first wave there is a slight decline in systematic cooperation between local authorities and different stakeholders, interestingly the cooperation of local authorities with military entities still remains higher than with civil actors. On the one hand, such decline could be considered as a negative trend but taking into account that there are almost no changes in perception of corruption, nepotism and monopoly, it could signal simply returning to normality (not crisis regime of functioning). In such cases, it is vital to look at reasons that cause dissatisfaction among active citizens. Generally it is important to increase awareness on the local authorities actions, lift restrictions to participation in local decision-making and accessibility of data.

Table 11. Impact of Various Factors on Local Authority Satisfaction.

|  | Local Authority Satisfaction<br>(1 - very poor, 10 - excellent) |
|--|---|
| Interacted with local authorities (last 6 months)                                  | 5.6   |
| Haven't interacted with local authorities (last 6 months)                          | 5.2   |
| Restrictions on participation in local decision-making                             | 3.9   |
| No restrictions on participation in local decision-making                          | 6.8   |
| Difficulties in access to information due to local authority restrictions          | 3.8   |
| No difficulties in access to information due to local authority restrictions       | 6.4   |
| Perceive low chance of protests  | 6.0   |
| Perceive high chance of protests   | 4.5   |
| Aware of hromada reconstruction process  | 6.2   |
| Aware and involved in hromada reconstruction process                               | 6.4   |
| Not aware of hromada reconstruction process  | 5.2   |
| Heard about restrictions on resident participation in hromada recovery process     | 5.5   |
| Not heard about restrictions on resident participation in hromada recovery process | 6.3   |



# Conclusions

## Economic Well Being

- The survey highlights **enhancements in affordability and employment opportunities**, accompanied by moderate income growth and consistent accessibility of social programs, indicating an overall favourable change in economic circumstances across various domains. However, it's essential to emphasise that while there have been improvements from March to November 2023, the ratings, although indicating positive trends, **still persist at relatively low levels**. It is supported by statements of local activists that there is a **lack of job opportunities due to the decline of private enterprises, factory closures** linked to Russia and difficulties of job placement due to age or sex. is the predominant economic challenge. Additionally, there's a **shortage of skilled professionals in key sectors**, alongside concerns about low wages, living standards, and social benefits.
- **Primary healthcare and emergency medical care** remain **problematic** areas despite overall progress. However, there's a **positive trend** in the **accessibility of public space and everyday life services**, indicating successful efforts to enhance their availability. Concerns persist regarding road infrastructure and public transportation, with a significant portion reporting decreased access.
- Activists have reported several **positive changes in public service provision by local authorities**, including the expansion of Centers of Administrative Services, plans for a Resilience Centres, and efforts towards inclusivity. However, challenges persist, with declines noted in healthcare, education, transportation, and infrastructure for people with disabilities.

## Security

- Between the first and second waves, activists noted significant **improvement in their perception of safety** within their hromadas. However, the **effectiveness of local government** in addressing **security** concerns and the performance of the local police **remained unchanged**.
- The perceived **significance of security** issues among activists **shifted notably between** the first and second waves. While concerns about missile attacks remained prominent, they showed a **decreased sense of urgency, reflecting a broader trend of declining emphasis on war-related security** matters. Conversely, there was a noticeable **rise in attention towards societal issues**, notably petty crimes, domestic violence, and sexual harassment, signifying a heightened awareness and prioritization of these concerns.
- A slight **improvement** was noted in the **availability and quality of shelters/bomb shelters** within hromadas between the first and second waves. However, despite these advancements, there is still significant room for improvement, as all ratings remain on the lower side of the scale.
- The findings indicate a **notable influence of social circles on participation rates in civic-military training: 38% of individuals with relatives or friends who participated have also personally participated**, contrasting with no participation among those lacking such connections. Nevertheless, even among

individuals without relatives or friends who participated, the majority (83%) express consideration for future participation, suggesting the potential influence of perceived social pressure on decision-making.

- **43%** of respondents acknowledge the **presence of disagreements or tensions between social groups within their hromada**, while **58%** claim there are **no such tensions**. **Disagreements** often arise over the **distribution of social support**, particularly between **internally displaced persons (IDPs)** and **local residents**, **language differences**, especially between Ukrainian and Russian speakers, **religious affiliations**, particularly between different Orthodox churches.

### Governance and civicness

- Overall, the **evaluations of corruption, nepotism, and monopoly** remained relatively stable, suggesting **no significant shifts** in their perceived prevalence between the two assessment waves.
- The survey results for the **question regarding the local government's effectiveness in creating conditions for economic development and managing the local budget** show **no practical changes between the first and second waves**.
- The survey findings reveal shifts in cooperation between the local authorities and different hromada subjects across two waves of assessment. There is a significant **weakening in cooperation with the security and defence sector, and a moderate decrease in systematic cooperation** between civil society and public sector entities.
- **Overall, 19% of activists believe that protests are unlikely to happen, while 43% consider them to be unlikely, and 23% perceive them as quite possible.**
- **As respondent's awareness of local budget spending increases, their perception of budget efficiency tends to become more positive.** Among those very well informed about local spending, a significant portion sees the budget as effective (53% combined for 'Rather effective' and 'Very effective'). In contrast, among those not informed at all, a majority (54%) perceive the budget as 'Very inefficient'.
- **A significant portion of activists perceive barriers or limitations to their involvement in community decision-making processes:** 43% of respondents reported facing restrictions on citizen participation in local decision-making, while 58% reported no such restrictions. Moreover, **53% of activists, out of those who mention restrictions, note that they are created on purpose** and not caused by martial law.

# Annex

Table 1. Full sample of hromadas

| oblast                  | hromada name     | type  | respondents |
|-------------------------|------------------|-------|-------------|
| Vynnytska oblast        | Vynnytska        | urban | 3           |
| Volynska oblast         | Boratynska       | rural | 3           |
| Volynska oblast         | Zymnivska        | rural | 3           |
| Dnipropetrovska oblast  | Dniprovska       | urban | 3           |
| Dnipropetrovska oblast  | Magdalinivska    | rural | 3           |
| Dnipropetrovska oblast  | Petropavlivska   | rural | 3           |
| Zakarpatska oblast      | Dovzhanska       | rural | 3           |
| Zaporizka oblast        | Zaporizka        | urban | 3           |
| Zhytomyr oblast         | Ovrutska         | urban | 3           |
| Ivano-Frankivska oblast | Bohorodchanska   | rural | 3           |
| Ivano-Frankivska oblast | Ivano-Frankivska | urban | 3           |
| Ivano-Frankivska oblast | Otinivska        | rural | 3           |
| Ivano-Frankivska oblast | Solotvynska      | rural | 3           |
| Kyivska oblast          | Medvynska        | rural | 3           |
| Kirovohradska oblast    | Kropyvnytska     | urban | 3           |
| Lvivska oblast          | Zhuravnenska     | rural | 3           |
| Mykolayivska oblast     | Kostiantynivska  | rural | 2           |
| Mykolayivska oblast     | Mykolaivska      | urban | 3           |
| Odeska oblast           | Odeska           | urban | 3           |
| Odeska oblast           | Safianivska      | rural | 3           |
| Poltavska oblast        | Kremenchutska    | urban | 3           |
| Poltavska oblast        | Lubenska         | urban | 3           |
| Poltavska oblast        | Opishnianska     | rural | 3           |
| Poltavska oblast        | Poltavska        | urban | 3           |
| Rivnenska oblast        | Polytska         | rural | 2           |
| Sumska oblast           | Dubovyazivska    | rural | 3           |
| Sumska oblast           | Sumska           | urban | 3           |
| Sumska oblast           | Shostkinska      | urban | 3           |
| Ternopilska oblast      | Kozivska         | rural | 3           |

| oblast               | hromada name  | type  | respondents |
|----------------------|---------------|-------|-------------|
| Ternopil'ska oblast  | Ternopil'ska  | urban | 3           |
| Kharkiv'ska oblast   | Vysotchanska  | rural | 3           |
| Kharkiv'ska oblast   | Pisochyn'ska  | rural | 3           |
| Kharkiv'ska oblast   | Kharkiv'ska   | urban | 3           |
| Kherson'ska oblast   | Kherson'ska   | urban | 3           |
| Khmelnytska oblast   | Novoushytska  | rural | 3           |
| Cherkaska oblast     | Umanska       | urban | 3           |
| Cherkaska oblast     | Cherkaska     | urban | 3           |
| Chernihiv'ska oblast | Ripkyn'ska    | rural | 3           |
| Chernihiv'ska oblast | Chernihiv'ska | urban | 3           |

## About PeaceRep

PeaceRep is a research consortium based at The University of Edinburgh. Our research is re-thinking peace and transition processes in the light of changing conflict dynamics, changing demands of inclusion, and changes in patterns of global intervention in conflict and peace/mediation/transition management processes.

PeaceRep: The Peace and Conflict Resolution Evidence Platform

**PeaceRep.org** | **peacerep@ed.ac.uk** | Twitter **@Peace\_Rep\_**

School of Law, University of Edinburgh, Old College, South Bridge, EH8 9YL

PeaceRep is funded by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), UK

Consortium members include: Conciliation Resources, Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations (CTPSR) at Coventry University, Dialectiq, Edinburgh Law School, International IDEA, LSE Conflict and Civicness Research Group, LSE Middle East Centre, Queens University Belfast, University of St Andrews, University of Stirling, and the World Peace Foundation at Tufts University.

Cover Image: Free Radio Times

---

The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent those of the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), the Conflict & Civicness Research Group or the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). This document is issued on the understanding that if any extract is used, the author(s) and Conflict & Civicness Research Group should be credited, with the date of the publication. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the material in this paper, the author(s) and/or the Conflict & Civicness Research Group will not be liable for any loss or damages incurred through the use of this paper.

The London School of Economics and Political Science holds the dual status of an exempt charity under Section 2 of the Charities Act 1993 (as a constituent part of the University of London), and a company limited by guarantee under the Companies Act 1985 (Registration no. 70527).



Conflict and  
Civichness  
Research  
Group  
at **LSE** ■

**LSE IDEAS**  
Houghton Street  
London  
WC2A 2AE