



ANALYTICAL REPORT ON THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

GENDER GAPS IN THE MUNICIPAL TRANSPORT SECTOR

Photo: She Drives / Iryna Oliinyk

Introduction

Gender equality in the municipal transport sector is a key element in ensuring social justice and sustainable development of the industry. Traditionally, municipal transport has been considered a “male” sphere; however, social changes, challenges arising from armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and the shortage of personnel require a reconsideration of entrenched approaches.

A study of gender gaps in the municipal transport sector was conducted within the framework of a project “Expanding the professional potential of women in the field of passenger transportation”. The “She Drives” project is being implemented by the NGO “Foundation for Institutional Development” at the initiative of the Ministry for Development of Communities and Territories of Ukraine, in partnership with UN Women in Ukraine and with financial support from the Government of Sweden.

Research objective

The main goal of the research is to analyze the factors contributing to gender gaps in the municipal transport sector and develop recommendations for overcoming them. Therefore, the key research objectives include:

- | Identification of barriers that hinder women’s access to the profession of a public transport driver.
- | Assessment of opportunities to eliminate gender imbalance in the sector, analysis of the potential for adapting working conditions, modernizing personnel policy and implementing vocational training programs.

| Analysis of factors influencing women’s career advancement in the transport sector, including the impact of gender stereotypes, social attitudes and traditional perceptions of gender roles.

| Development of recommendations to increase women’s involvement in the transport sector and promote equal opportunities, including practical steps to increase women’s involvement, such as improving working conditions, developing gender-oriented social packages and information campaigns.

Research methodology

The research was carried out in several stages.

Desktop analysis — a review of regulatory legal acts, international standards, and national policies related to gender equality.

Empirical analysis — surveys and interviews conducted with municipal transport workers.

Systematization and generalization of data — analysis of the collected data and formulation of comprehensive conclusions.

The research covered the following cities: Cherkasy, Chernihiv, Dnipro, Khmelnytskyi, Kryvyi Rih, Kyiv, Lviv, Mykolaiv, Poltava, Zaporizhzhia. In the process of the research, the geographic scope was expanded to include expert assessments of researchers from Lutsk, Ostroh, Rivne and Vinnytsia.

Key indicators of the analysis

The following types of indicators were used to assess gender gaps:

Economic — income level, social guarantees, bonuses and working conditions.

Sociocultural — public perceptions of women in the transport sector, gender stereotypes.

Technical — accessibility of training programs, working conditions, physical infrastructure for women.

Safety — level of physical and psychological safety at the workplace.

Results of the quantitative study

Key challenges

1. **Security factors**, including the impact of wartime conditions, identified as critical.
2. Possibility of obtaining **sick leave and parental leave for women with children**.
3. **Limited access to education** – lack of vocational training programs tailored to women.
4. **Stereotypes surrounding women's role in the transport industry** – the traditional perception of the driver profession as “male” significantly limits women's career opportunities.
5. **Lack of adapted working conditions** – insufficient availability of equipped places for rest and hygiene facilities.

Economic indicators

- | The income level of women in the municipal transport sector is **25–30% lower** than that of men.
- | Women are less likely to receive bonuses and have less access to management positions.
- | There is a lack of an equal social package (paid sick leave, parental leave).

Sociocultural factors

- | **70% of the women** surveyed reported that their professional activities are perceived by society as “atypical” for women.
- | Gender stereotypes contribute to hinder women's career advancement.
- | There is a lack of public support for women in professions within the transport sector.

Technical factors

- | Poorly adapted infrastructure (lack of women's toilets, rest areas).
- | Limited availability of training programs and retraining opportunities for women.
- | The recruitment system is oriented towards men.

Security factors

- | The full-scale invasion has introduced new challenges for women's employment, in particular due to the conscription of men and increased migration.
- | **78% of women reported** worsening working conditions due to security risks.
- | There is a lack of protection mechanisms against discrimination and harassment.

Main section. Detailed research findings

The quantitative aspect of the study was based on a structured online and telephone surveys with representatives of municipal transport enterprises in the project's target regions, specifically in the cities of Cherkasy, Chernihiv, Dnipro, Khmelnytskyi, Kryvyi Rih, Kyiv, Lviv, Mykolaiv, Poltava, Zaporizhzhia. The survey was conducted during September–October 2024..

The research group collected 7 responses from the management of municipal transport enterprises operating in the listed cities. Notably, all surveyed managers of municipal transport in these regions were men, serving as directors of enterprises.

In contrast, women were more frequently employed in administrative positions, including deputy managers, heads of specific areas, accountants, specialists overseeing innovative projects, as well as electric transport drivers (with fewer women working as bus drivers).

In parallel, a series of expert interviews were conducted with gender studies specialists, civil society activists and representatives of organizations engaged in promoting gender equality across various sectors. In total, the researchers conducted 9 structured interviews.

The expert pool was predominantly consisting of 7 female experts in the field of gender studies, 1 female manager from a municipal transport enterprise in Khmelnytskyi, and 1 male expert on gender issues..

As noted by researcher Oksana Yarosh (Lutsk) during the interview, the issue of protecting women's rights is predominantly addressed by women themselves, and men are less likely to act as experts in this area.

To attract a larger number of respondents, the study applied the "snowball" method: participants were asked to recommend partner organizations and experts competent in gender studies and municipal transport. This allowed for a more representative list of gender experts.

The electronic survey helped to systematize data on the involvement of women and men in municipal transport in the studied regions. The expert survey aimed to deepen the understanding of the concept of gender equality, analyze practical cases of its implementation and identify problems faced by women in employment.

The desk analysis, based on the review of publicly available data sources, allowed for a deeper investigation of the nature of gender gaps and the factors that determine them in the municipal transport sector.

According to the Global Gender Gap Report, in 2023, the gender gap in Ukraine was **18.6%**, which means that, on average, women earned **18.6%** less than men for the same work. In the global gender gap ranking, Ukraine ranked **66th out of 147 countries**.

The full-scale invasion significantly affected the situation on the labor market. According to the National Institute for Strategic Studies, due to ongoing military operations, many women are forced to give up their careers in favor of providing for the needs of households, especially when their husbands have been conscripted, killed or injured. This contributes to a rise in structural unemployment and a shortage of qualified personnel across various industries.

Despite this, women are increasingly employed in areas that were traditionally considered "male".

For example, in 2023, the State Employment Service recorded a notable increase in the number of women in the following professions: **driver; pumping machine operator; mechanical assembly mechanic; program-controlled machine operator**.

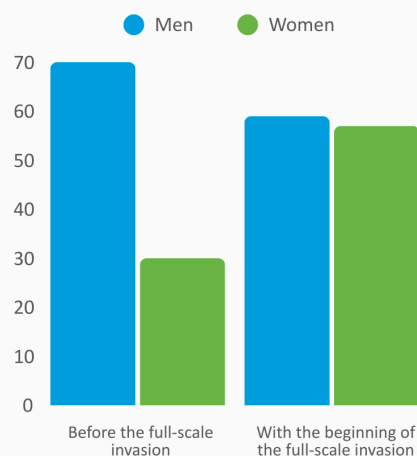
Employers involved in the study note that women show interest in working in the transport sector, but are often deterred by low wages, poor working conditions and monotony of work.

The shortage of personnel is forcing transport companies to reconsider their hiring practices and to cooperate with public and private initiatives for training and retraining of personnel.

Shifts in the labor market are even reflected in the wording of vacancies: increasingly, advertisements use the feminine form of the word "driver" instead of the masculine, or even exclusively feminine forms. This indicates a gradual breakdown of gender stereotypes in the professional sphere, although discriminatory requirements in vacancies still occur.

In summary, the full-scale invasion has become a catalyst for shifting the gender balance of the labor market, prompting society to reconsider established views on professional segregation and opening up new opportunities for women in the transport sector.

Impact of war on gender distribution in the transport sector



Barriers to women's employment in the municipal transport sector

As part of the survey conducted among representatives of the municipal transport sector in the cities of Cherkasy, Chernihiv, Dnipro, Khmelnytskyi, Kryvyi Rih, Kyiv, Lviv, Mykolaiv, Poltava, Zaporizhzhia the following main obstacles to women's employment in this sector were identified:

100%

Security factors associated with the full-scale invasion by Russia

43%

Limited access to sick leave and leave for women with children

57%

Lack of information about educational and employment opportunities in the sector

29%

Persistent stereotypes regarding the gender division of profession

The results of expert interviews also confirmed these trends:

78%

of experts identified safety issues decisive when choosing a place of work

89%

indicated the absence of a gender-oriented social package

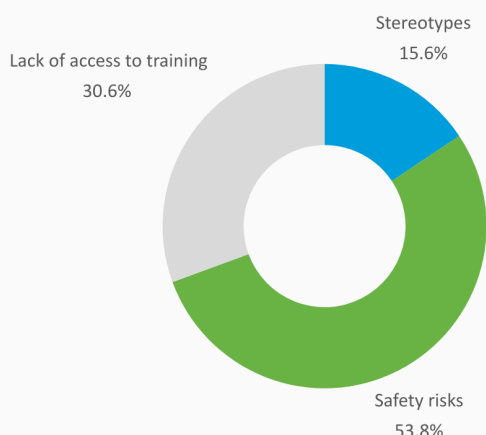
89%

noted the influence of social attitudes

67%

emphasized the insufficient level of awareness among women

Main barriers for women in municipal transport



Practical cases of municipal transport enterprises

Case 1: Gender stereotypes in professions



Scientist Maria Petrushkevych argues that the conventional division of professions into “female” and “male” is rooted in a patriarchal worldview. She emphasizes that public perceptions of the importance of professional activity have been shaped historically, and that stereotypes of women's career prospects still persist. She also emphasizes such phenomena as the “glass ceiling” and the “sticky floor” that hinder women's career advancement.

Case 2: Employment of women at the municipal enterprise “Electrotrans” (Khmelnytskyi region)



At the Electrotrans municipal enterprise in Khmelnytskyi, women make up 50% of the total number of employees. The full-scale invasion changed the gender composition of the enterprise: the mobilization of men created more vacancies for women.

The company actively trains women as trolleybus drivers, announces vacancies through the media, and uses gender-sensitive language in job postings. The enterprise also equipped a workplace for a mother who, after giving birth to a child, went back to work due to financial need. This included a changing table, toys, and an area for the child to stay.

Case 3: Retraining for volunteer work



Olena Tretyak, an accountant and volunteer, retrained as a heavy-duty truck driver as part of the Reskilling Ukraine project. She works in the Hospitaliers medical battalion, where truck driving is critical for delivering humanitarian aid. Olena notes that, in the context of a full-scale invasion, women are taking on new professions, which helps to break down gender stereotypes.

Case 4: Gender imbalance at the Lviv Electrotrans municipal enterprise

The company employs 826 people, of whom only 5.8% are women. They mostly occupy administrative positions, while managerial and technical positions remain predominantly male. Despite the shortage of bus drivers (approximately 100 vacancies), women are not employed in these positions, although some work as trolleybus drivers. A gender audit of the company revealed shortcomings in the infrastructure for women, in particular the lack of appropriate sanitation facilities.



Case 5: Poltava as an example of equal participation

Poltava Electrotrans employs 630 people, 52% of whom are women. Women hold not only administrative but also managerial positions, which indicates the company's commitment to promoting gender balance. The company's management supports initiatives aimed at attracting women to various positions and promotes their professional development.



Case 6: Challenges of the municipal trolleybus enterprise in Kryvyi Rih

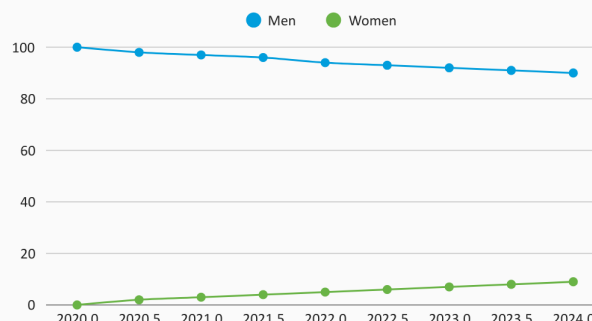
The Miskyi Trolleybus ("City Trolleybus") enterprise in Kryvyi Rih demonstrates an example of successful integration of women: out of 1,103 employees, 543 are women (49% of the team). Changes in the personnel structure are associated with the mobilization of men and the adaptation of personnel processes. Due to a consistent and proactive policy of engaging women (since the ATO period) and the subsequent implementation of information campaigns and cooperation with educational institutions, the enterprise succeeded in achieving a high level of gender balance. However, the audit also revealed a need to improve internal mechanisms for recording cases of discrimination and optimizing infrastructure (working areas, sanitation facilities, etc.).



The study shows that barriers for women still persist in the municipal transport sector, stemming from stereotypes, security risks and limited awareness.

However, positive cases, such as the "Electrotrans" and "Poltava Electrotrans" municipal enterprises, demonstrate opportunities for change and the creation of equal employment conditions for all.

Dynamics of gender representation in leadership positions



Main challenges in the municipal transport sector

Obstacles to women's employment (according to gender studies experts):

100%

Security factors related to full-scale invasion

43%

Limited access to sick leave and leave for women with children

57%

Lack of information about the possibility of training and employment in the sector

29%

Gender stereotypes about "male" and "female" professions

Obstacles from the perspective of municipal managers:

78%

Security factors

89%

Lack of gender-segregated social package

89%

Worldviews

67%

Insufficient level of awareness

Obstacles identified during the gender audit:

70%

Unequal access to infrastructure

60%

Lack of recreation areas adapted to the needs of women

78%

Insufficient attention to hygiene needs

78%

Failure to take into account gender specificities in sanitary areas

56%

Lack of adapted conditions for persons with disabilities

49%

Lack of mechanisms to address discrimination and harassment

39%

Unequal involvement of women and men in different professional fields

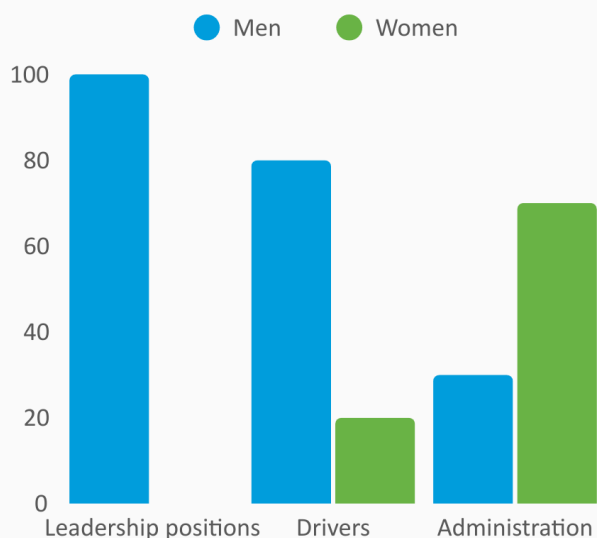
39%

Parental leave is mainly taken by women

59%

Formal attitude towards gender equality by company managers

**Gender distribution of employment
in municipal transport**



Suggestions for improving the situation

1. Development of gender equality policies for municipal transport enterprises.
2. Implementation of mechanisms for recording and responding to cases of discrimination.
3. Guaranteeing equal access to social packages regardless of gender.
4. Improving medical support and sanitary conditions at the workplace.
5. Taking into account the needs of employees regarding work schedules and rest.
6. Modernizing vehicles to reduce the physical load on employees.
7. Adhering to the principles of inclusion, in particular for persons with disabilities and veterans.
8. Considering the possibility of creating safe childcare rooms at the enterprises.
9. Implementation of specialized support programs for employees on maternity and sick leaves.
10. Conducting regular gender sensitivity training for management and staff.

Use of the research results

The findings of the study can be used to:

- | Develop gender equality policies in municipal transport enterprises.
- | Enhance professional development programs for women.
- | Integrate European gender equality standards into the transport sector.
- | Conduct gender sensitivity training activities for municipal transport employees.
- | Scale up national initiatives to ensure equal opportunities for women in the public transport sector.

Overall conclusion and recommendations

Ukraine has signed a number of international agreements to advance gender equality and women's rights. The Constitution of Ukraine and current legislation guarantee equality in all spheres of life. However, the reality remains challenging due to the full-scale invasion, economic crisis, and unstable political situation.

The study was conducted to identify gender gaps in the municipal transport sector and to propose solutions based on the principles of social justice.

The conducted research indicates that while the municipal transport sector in Ukraine demonstrates certain progress in advancing gender equality, significant challenges and barriers for women persist.

The full-scale invasion, economic instability and stereotypes regarding the distribution of professions continue to create additional difficulties in ensuring equal opportunities for men and women.

The level of women's employment in the municipal transport sector is increasing, largely due to the conscription of men, migration processes and the necessity to fill vacancies. However, despite the growing share of women in this area, critical issues remain unresolved.

These include compliance with proper working conditions, the need for infrastructural changes, the introduction of mechanisms for protection against discrimination, and support for family responsibilities of employees.

The analysis identified the following main challenges:

- | The lack of effective mechanisms for recording and responding to cases of gender discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace.
- | Insufficient attention to issues of social protection and support for employees on parental or sick leave.
- | Inadequate adaptation of working conditions to the needs of women (lack of necessary infrastructure, recreation areas, specialized sanitation facilities, etc.).
- | Persistence in stereotypical perceptions of professions and uneven involvement of women and men in various activities.
- | Insufficient information among women and the general population about opportunities for professional training and employment in the municipal transport sector.
- | Lack of effective mechanisms for maintaining gender balance in municipal transport enterprises.

Recommendations

As Ukraine prepares for bilateral screening under EU negotiating Chapters 14 (Transport) and 21 (Trans-European Networks), it is essential that gender equality considerations are integrated into the implementation of relevant EU acquis.

While the transport acquis does not explicitly regulate gender equality, cross-cutting EU principles — including those outlined in Directive 2006/54/EC on equal treatment in employment and the European Pillar of Social Rights — require member states to ensure non-discrimination and inclusion across all sectors.

Therefore, recommendations aimed at promoting women's participation in the municipal transport sector, improving workplace safety, and supporting career advancement for underrepresented groups should be viewed as complementary to the broader process of legal harmonization and sectoral reform.

To overcome the identified problems and create equal opportunities for all employees in the municipal transport sector, it is recommended to:

1. **Develop and implement** effective policies for gender equality at enterprises in the municipal transport sector (in accordance with WEPs principles and directives of the EU such as Work-Life Balance Directive (2019/1158/EU), the Women on Corporate Boards Directive (2022/2381/EU) and the Pay Transparency Directive (2023/970/EU), etc).
2. **Develop and implement** clear mechanisms for recording and responding to cases of discrimination on various grounds and cases of sexual violence in the workplace.
3. **Ensure strict** compliance with the social package provisions regardless of the gender of employees (fair remuneration based on the complexity of duties and responsibilities, payments for temporary incapacity for work (hospital payments), the ability to take parental leave for both mothers and fathers, as required).
4. **Ensure** proper access to medical services at the workplace, as well as constant medical support to monitor the health of employees.
5. **Ensure** the availability of proper hygienic working conditions (good condition of sanitation facilities, availability of cold and hot water supply, functioning shower rooms, availability of necessary hygiene products in toilets, confidentiality during toilets use, working locks on doors, availability of partitions that allow privacy and physical separation of space, etc.).

6. **Take into account and adhere** to approved work schedules in accordance with internal regulations, taking into account gender-sensitive approach. This includes a rest regime, lunch breaks, technical breaks, availability of sanitation facilities in places where such technical breaks occur.
7. **Ensure** modernization of vehicles to reduce physical workload on employees and facilitate their servicing with less physical effort.
8. **Establish** structured mentoring programmes for women employees in municipal transport enterprises to support their career development and facilitate their promotion into management positions. This will contribute to closing the leadership gender gap and foster a more inclusive and diverse organizational culture.
9. **Introduce** mandatory diversity and inclusion training for managers of municipal transport enterprises. The training should address not only gender equality, but also the inclusion of veterans, persons with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups to foster an inclusive workplace culture across all levels of the organization.
10. **Adhere** to the principles of gender equality, non-discrimination and barrier-free accessibility at enterprises¹.
11. **Ensure** the creation of children's rooms for employees with children, taking into account the security situation. Given that municipal transport enterprises are classified as critical infrastructure of cities, and operate in the environment involving active movement of vehicles and a large amount of technical equipment, which creates significant safety risks, especially for children, this issue requires a more thorough analysis. The presence of children in such an environment can increase the risks of emergencies and accidents².

However to bridge these gaps, municipal transport enterprises need external expertise, including from international and civil society organizations.

¹ Including in terms of employment of people with disabilities and veterans.

² Transport company employees would like to have children's rooms where they can leave preschool and school-age children for a certain period of time under the supervision of a responsible person. This should consider the possibility to create such spaces due to safety reasons.

Key areas of such support include:

- | **Supporting** transport companies in conducting gender audits to assess the level of equality and identify barriers for women in the transport sector.
- | **Facilitating** the implementation of gender equality policies through the signing and implementation of the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs).
- | **Conducting** information and awareness-raising campaigns aimed at overcoming gender stereotypes in the transport sector; highlighting the positive impact of involving women in the sector; and promoting best practices for gender equality in transport.
- | **Conducting** in-depth research on gender gaps in the sector.

Conclusion

Ensuring gender equality in the municipal transport sector is a key factor for the sustainable development of the industry and increasing the efficiency of enterprises.

Implementation of the proposed measures will contribute to improving working conditions, increasing the level of female employment, developing corporate social responsibility and creating an inclusive working environment.

Creating equal opportunities for women and men in this area will meet international standards, contribute to Ukraine's European integration and ensure the long-term socio-economic development of the state.

The project «Expanding the professional potential of women in the field of passenger transportation» is being implemented by the NGO Foundation for Institutional Development on the initiative of the Ministry for Development of Communities and Territories of Ukraine, in partnership with UN Women in Ukraine and under the financial support of Sweden.



Photo: UN Women / Ihor Svikolkin