



Attitudes Towards Women's Political Participation in Ukraine

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NDI Ukraine

Canada 



Overview

- Women are severely underrepresented in Ukraine's political life, particularly at the national level and sexism remains common in public discourse
- And yet, if you stop a woman in the street in Ukraine and ask if she is a victim of sexism or discrimination, you are likely to hear the answer 'No'
- NDI has used multiple research methods to try to answer some key questions:
 - Are women underrepresented because voters will not vote for them?
 - Do women associate themselves with political life?
 - Is the notion of gender balance in elected institutions unpopular?
 - How do political parties exercise their role as gatekeepers?
 - What do women leaders themselves say about the barriers they face?

Methodology

Several research methods were used around the October local elections:

1. National face-to-face surveys

- April 15 – May 16, 2015 (sample: 5,842)
- November 28, 2015 – January 5, 2016 (sample: 6,396, 833 conducted using tablets)
 - This enabled an experiment in Kyiv (607 interviews) to test reactions to male and female images

2. Analysis of candidate nominations and election results

3. Implicit Association Tests

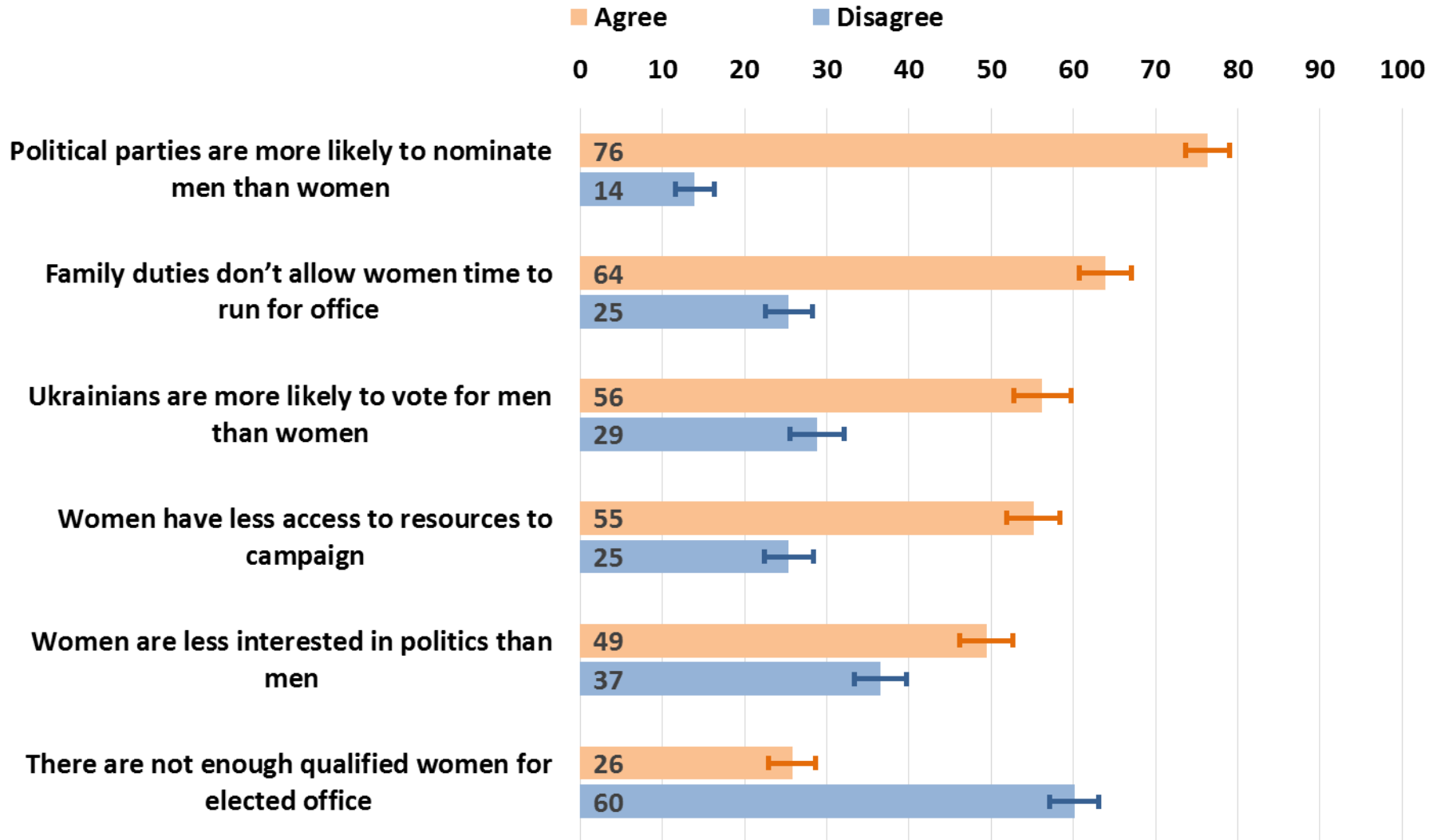
- Two tests were conducted back to back: family vs career and family vs politics
- 150 participants per city prior to each round of voting (750 total):
 - Kherson, Lviv, Odesa, Zhytomyr (October 18 – 22); Zhytomyr (November 8-9, second round)
- In addition, the research team contacted the participants after the local elections to ask about their actual voting behavior

4. In-depth Interviews with women leaders:

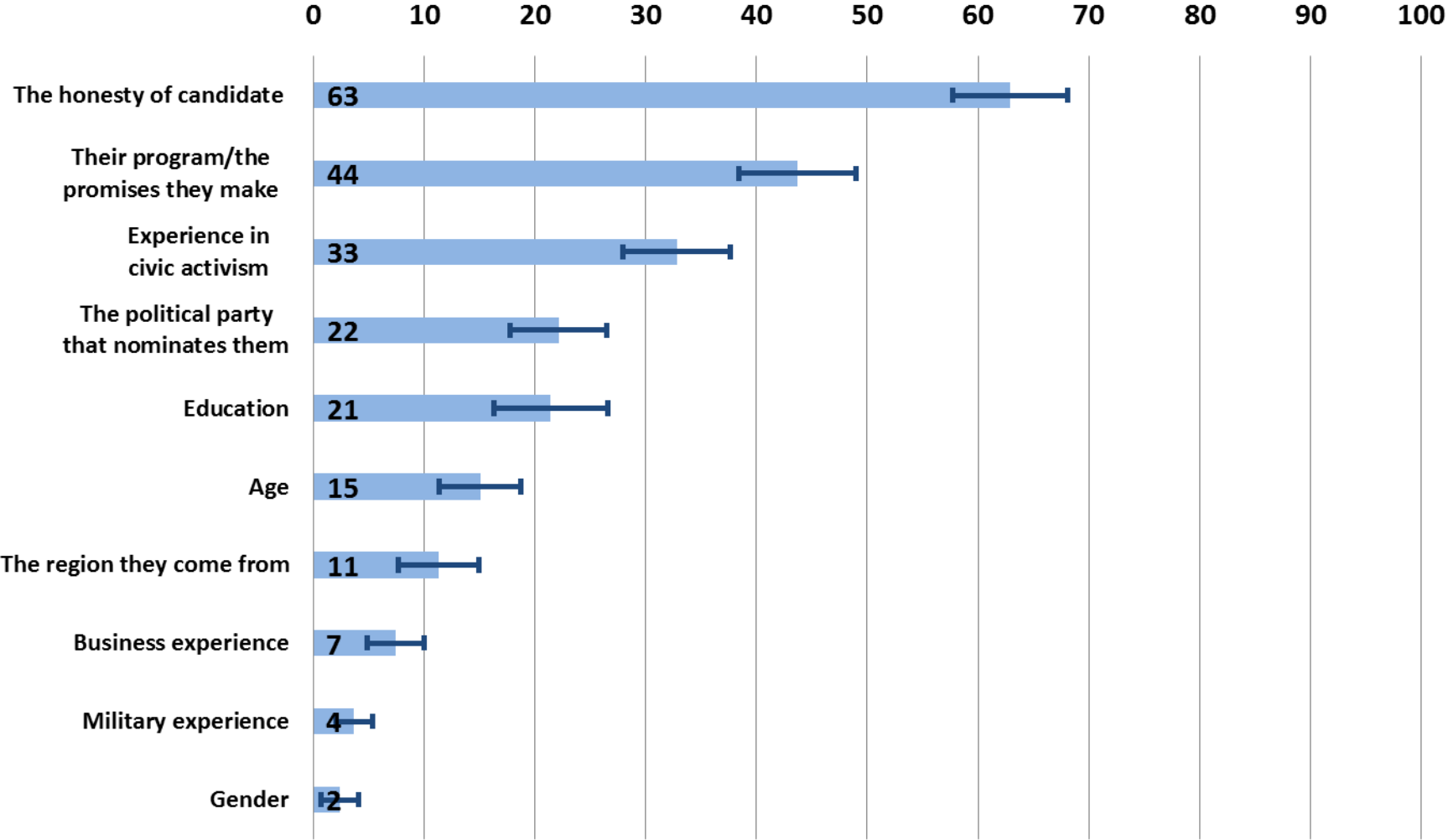
- 5 potential aspirants who decided not to seek nomination
- 5 who sought nomination but did not get it
- 5 who were nominated but lost
- 5 who won

Are women underrepresented because voters
won't vote for them?

Different reasons are given for the fact that there are fewer women than men in elected office in Ukraine. Which, if any of the following statements do you agree with? (q41)



When deciding which candidate to vote for in the local elections, what is important to you? (q14) (select up to three)



Voters' reactions to women candidates (IDIs)

- Almost every respondent said they did not feel any negative attitudes towards female candidates by the voters
- Discrimination was more often directed at the candidates' age (too young) or party affiliation, rather than their gender.
- **Some respondents said their gender helped them with voters because women were perceived to be less prone to corruption, more concerned with the public good, and more aware of the specific problems of the community**
- **"I myself have never voted for a woman. There is a stereotype that men are probably stronger, a little more ambitious."** *Female, Vinnitsa, considered nomination but did not seek it*
- **"There are certain stereotypes of perception still, but there is no negativity."** *Female, Zaporizhzhia, sought nomination but did not get it*
- **"There was more prejudice by age, experience or by family ties."** *Female, Kyiv, considered nomination but did not seek it*
- **"I've heard many times people questioning my age and asking me why I was doing this. They said I was too young."** *Female, Zaporizhzhia, ran for election and lost*
- **"Young voters absolutely do not look at gender, rather they evaluate the individual. This is a good change. I think that in the next elections the situation will improve, there will be more women and people will vote for them."** *Female, Vinnitsa, ran for election and lost*
- **"I was told that I was young, so I have to change something to show that I can deliver... The fact that I'm a woman, it helped, they also said that I'll think about people who need help, the elderly, the children and their education"**. *Female, Vinnytsia, ran for election and won*
- **"I think that voters were more loyal to women candidates than to men."** *Female, Kyiv, ran for election and lost*

Kyiv Experiment

The 607 Kyiv respondents had their responses recorded on a tablet device, enabling the randomization of questions and answers.

They were told: “Each of the following pictures is a lawyer who decided to get involved in politics to fight corruption.” and asked: “On a scale of 0 to 10 how likely would you be to vote for this person?”

Each respondent was then shown three pictures from one of the two groups (men or women). Therefore the participants were not aware that this was a gender experiment.

There was no significant difference in the ratings for male and female images.

Group 1:



Group 2:



Do women associate themselves with
political life?

Implicit Association Tests

- This is the first time that this method has been used to look at attitudes towards gender in Ukraine
- We did it because conventional research tools often provide ambiguous results:
 - Responses to some questions are increasingly progressive
 - There are few differences between the views of men and women on most gender questions in surveys
 - It is not clear to what extent these responses are real and drive actual voting behavior
- IATs enabled us to measure:
 - The extent to which women and men associate women with political life
 - Whether there are differences between the explicit and implicit associations of women and men with different roles
 - Whether actual voting behavior reflects these attitudes or not

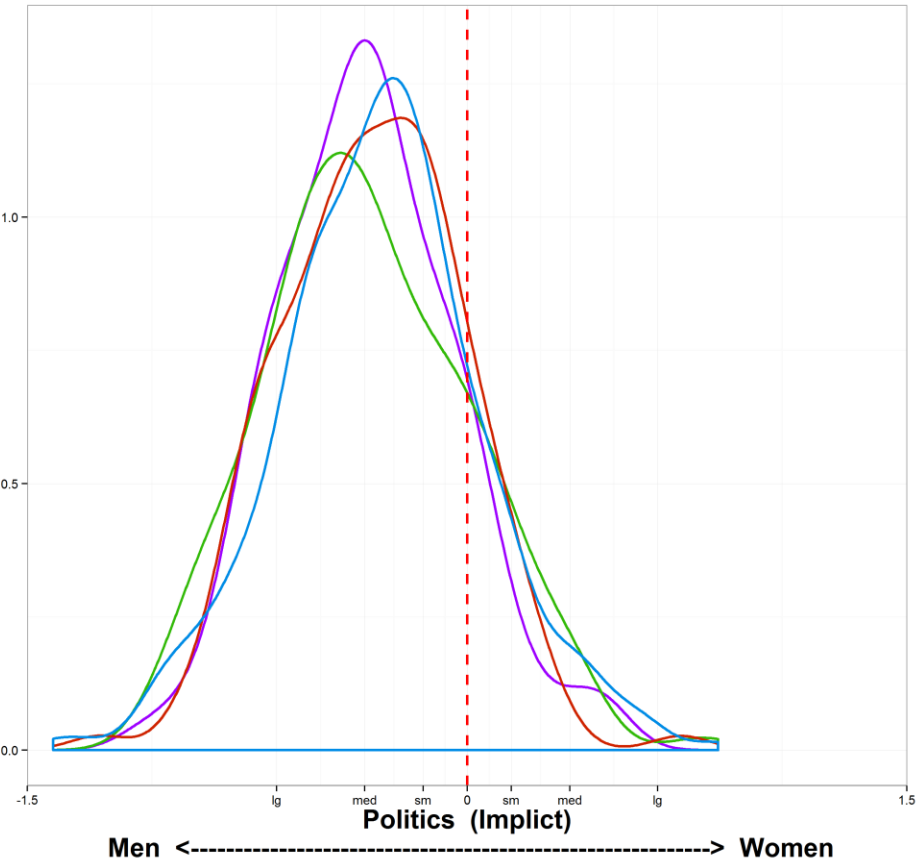
Key Results

- Most people do not associate women with political life
- Most people associate women more than men with family life
- Associating men with political life does not prevent people from voting for a woman candidate
- There were fewer gaps between implicit and explicit attitudes than expected
- Strong explicit resistance to women's political participation exists but it is rare (14% of our sample)
- Overall, these respondents want a more equal distribution of gender roles in family, professional and political life

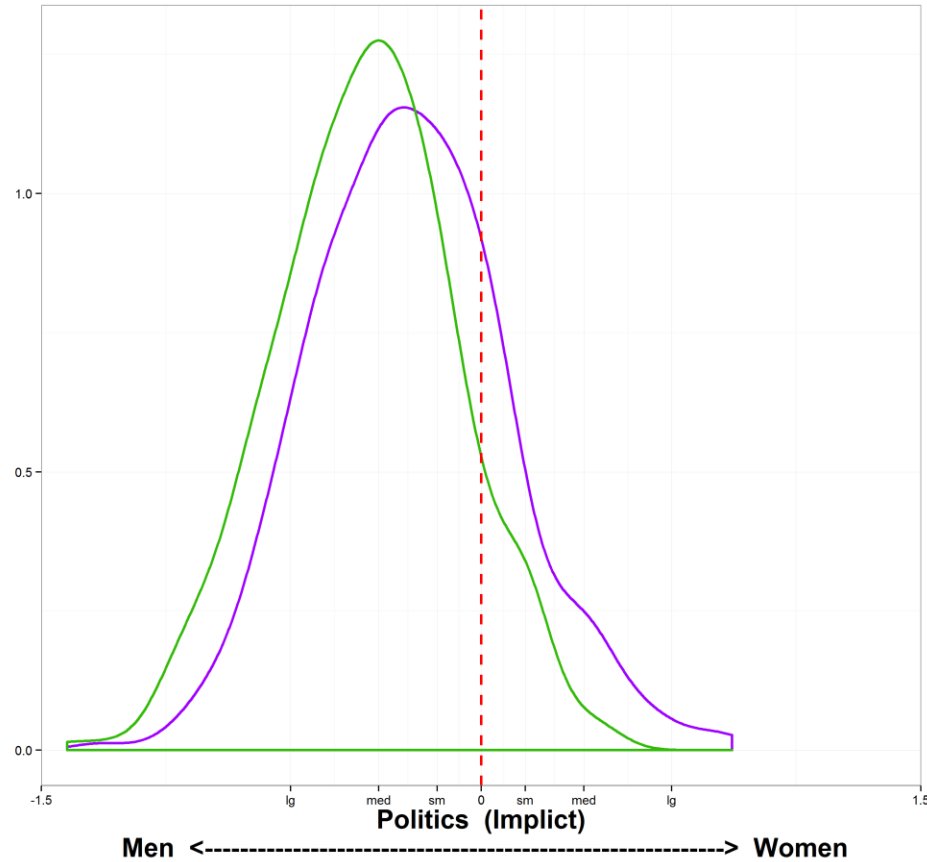
Gender and Politics

(Implicit)

City Kherson Lviv Odesa Zhytomyr



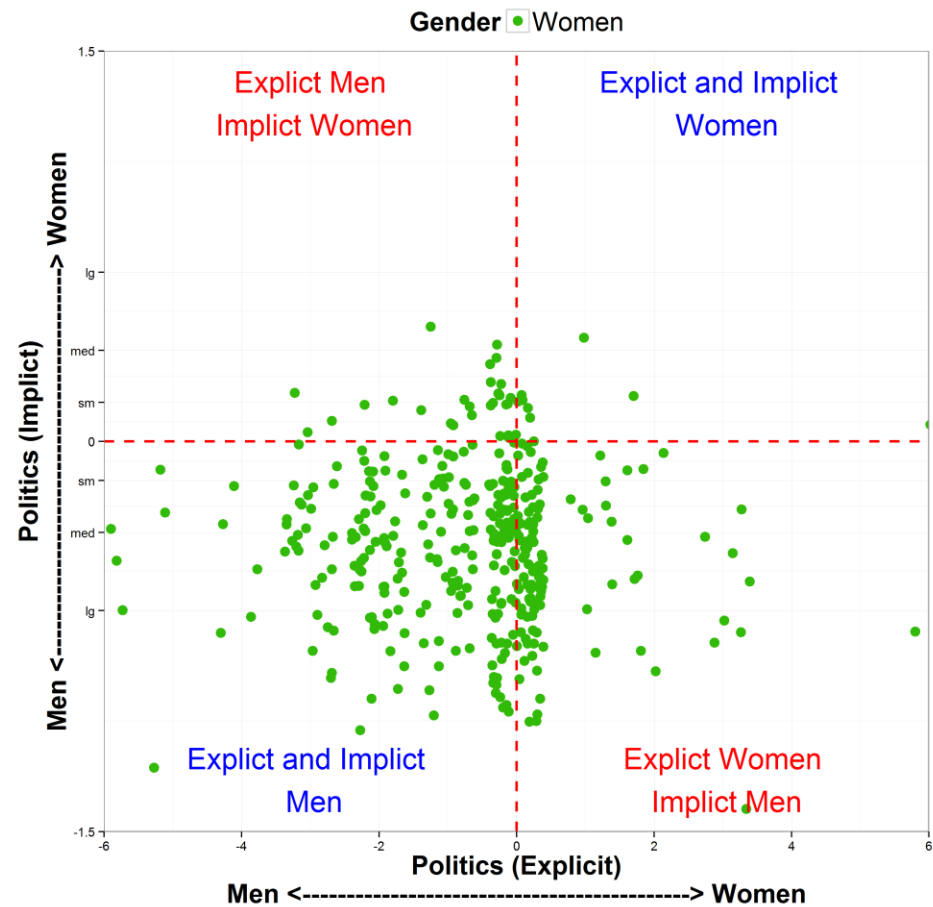
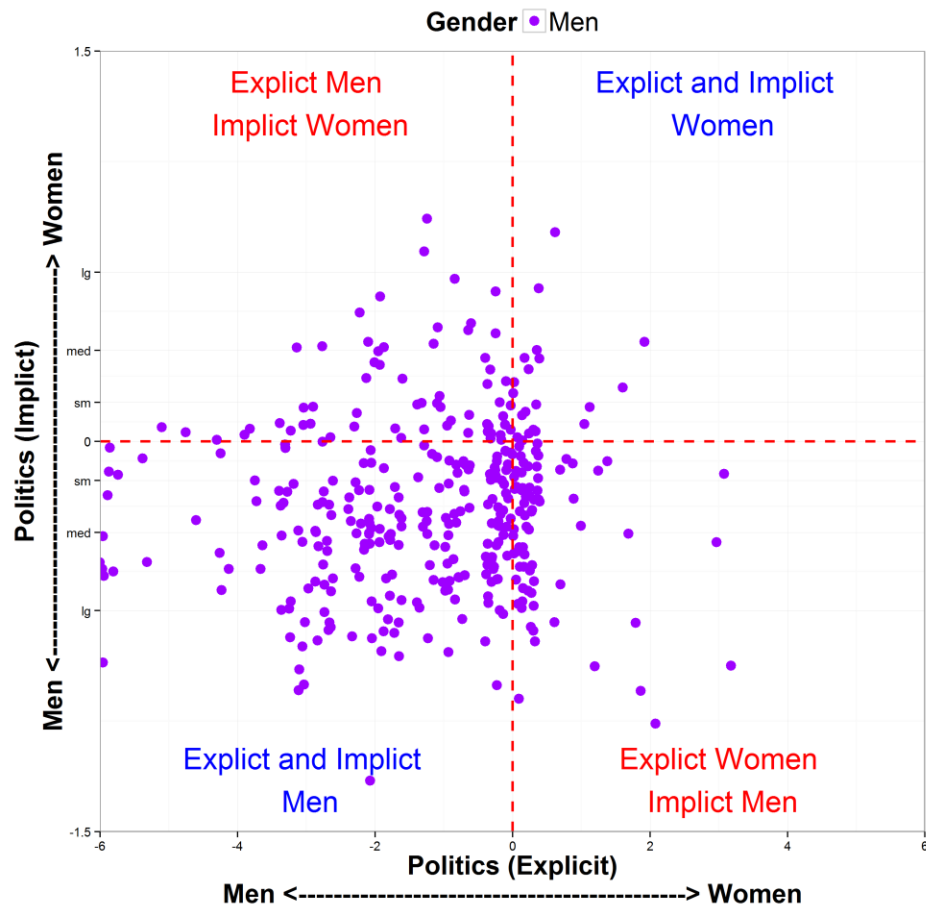
Gender Men Women



Gender and Politics

By Gender

(Explicit v. Implicit)



Mayoral Election Results - Zhytomyr

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60%

Serhiy Sukhomlyn(M) | BPP



Liubov Tsymbaliuk(W) | Batkivshchyna



Sydor Kizin(M) | Svoboda



Natalia Chyzh(W) | Samopomich



Natalia Leonchenko(W) | Opposition Bloc



Other Candidates



First Round

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60%

Serhiy Sukhomlyn(M) | BPP



Liubov Tsymbaliuk(W) | Batkivshchyna



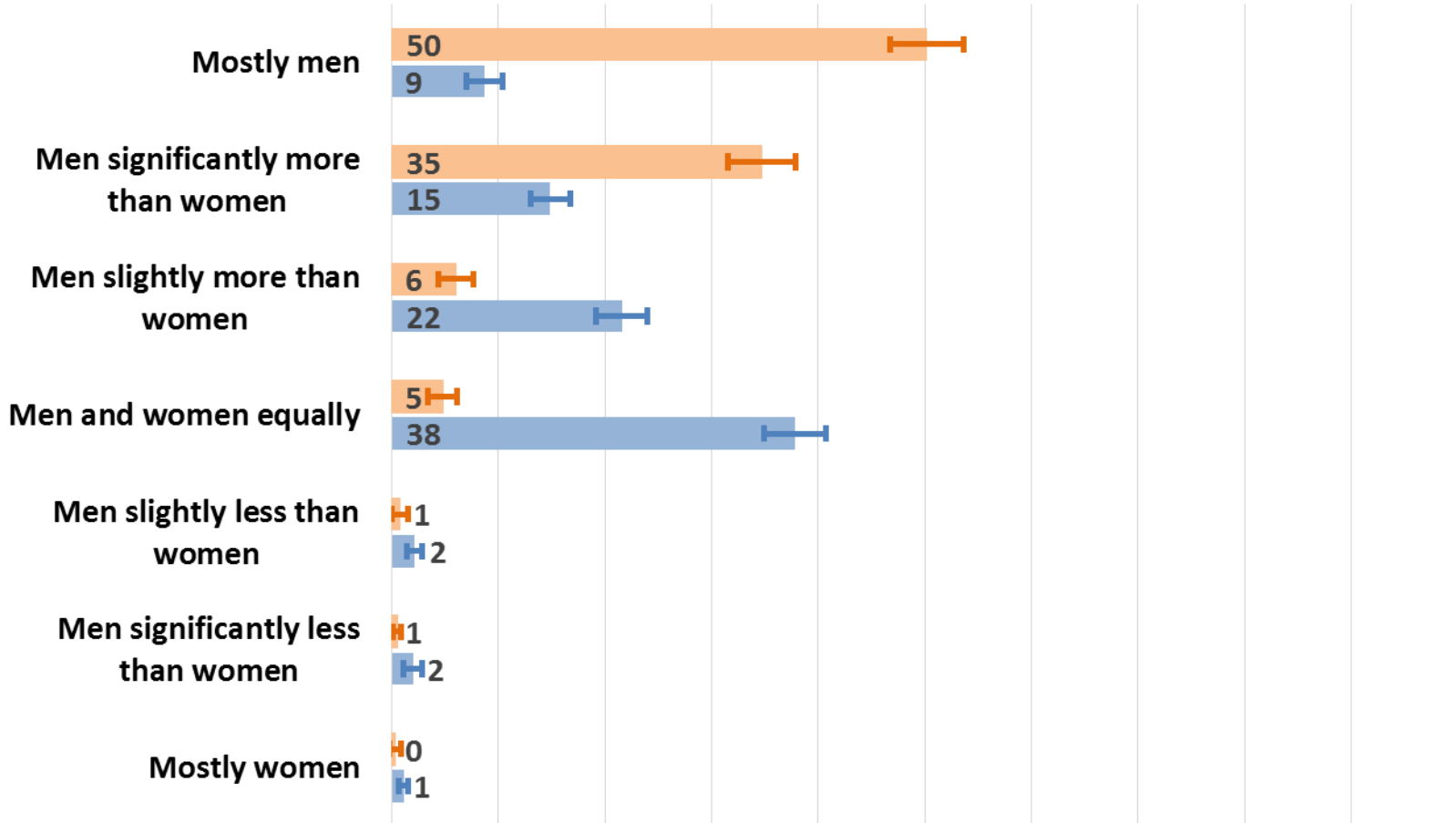
Second Round

Is the notion of gender balance in
elected institutions unpopular?

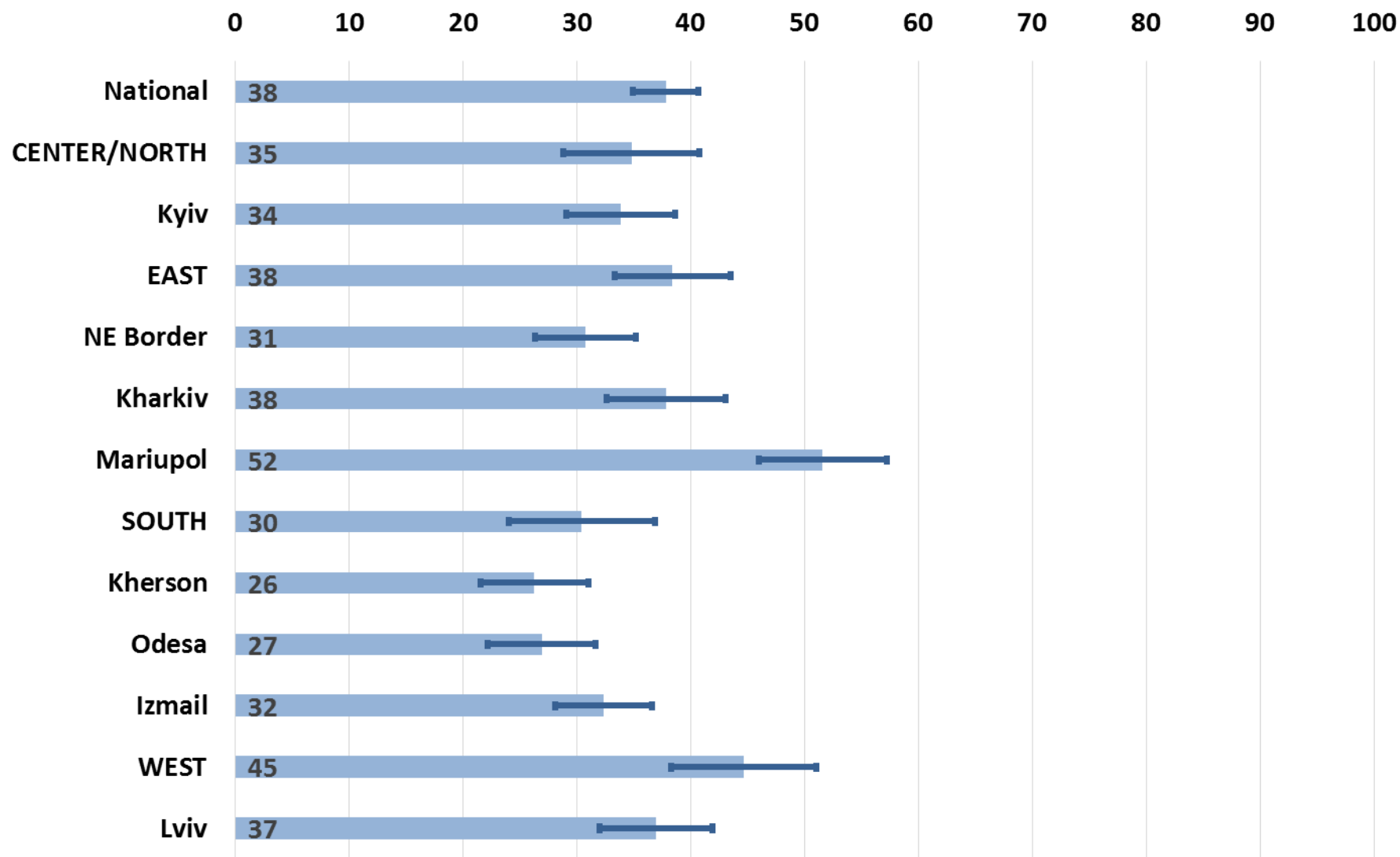
In your opinion, who is/should be more involved in political life, men or women? (q38, q39)

Current Situation Actual Preference

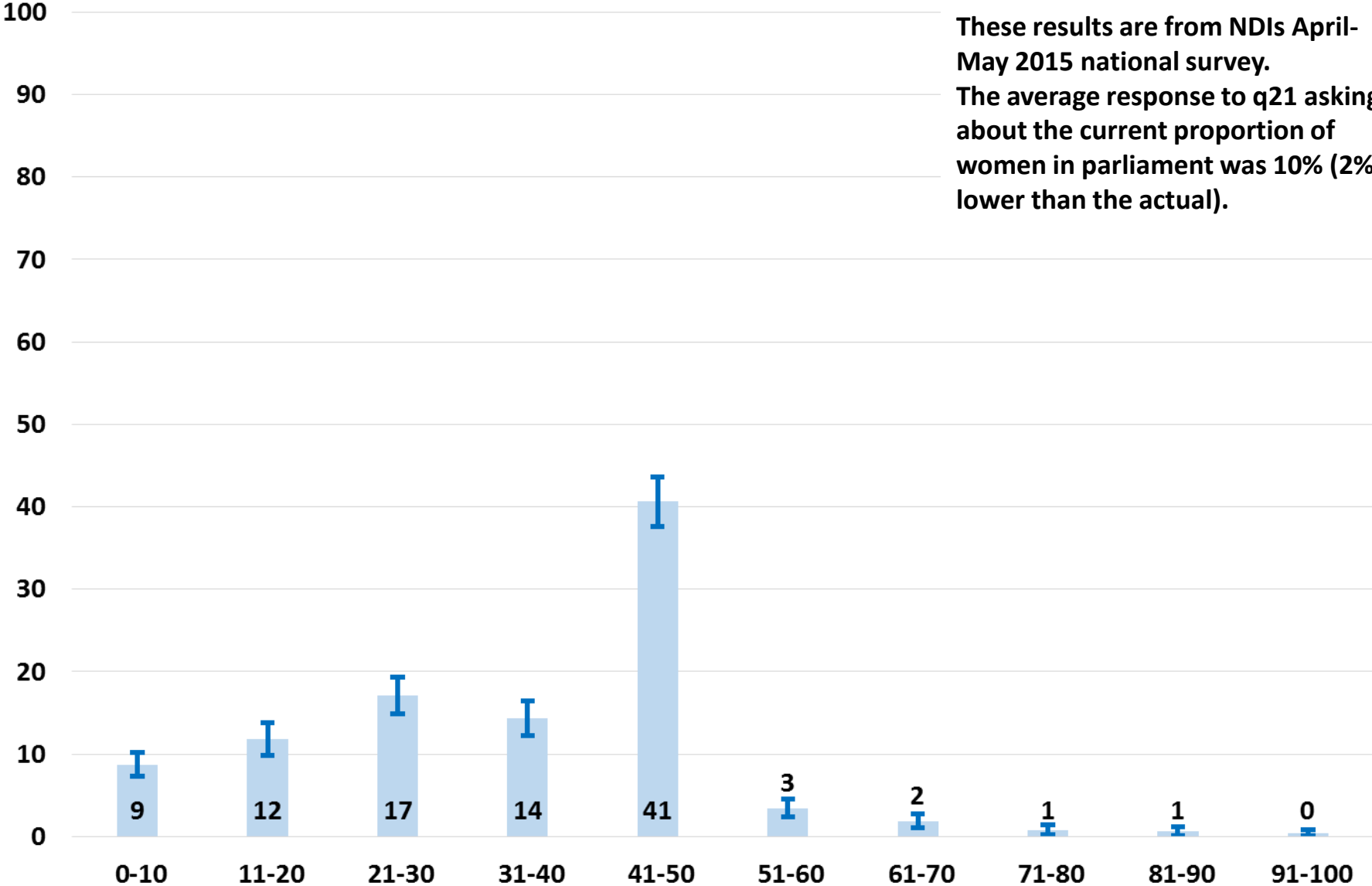
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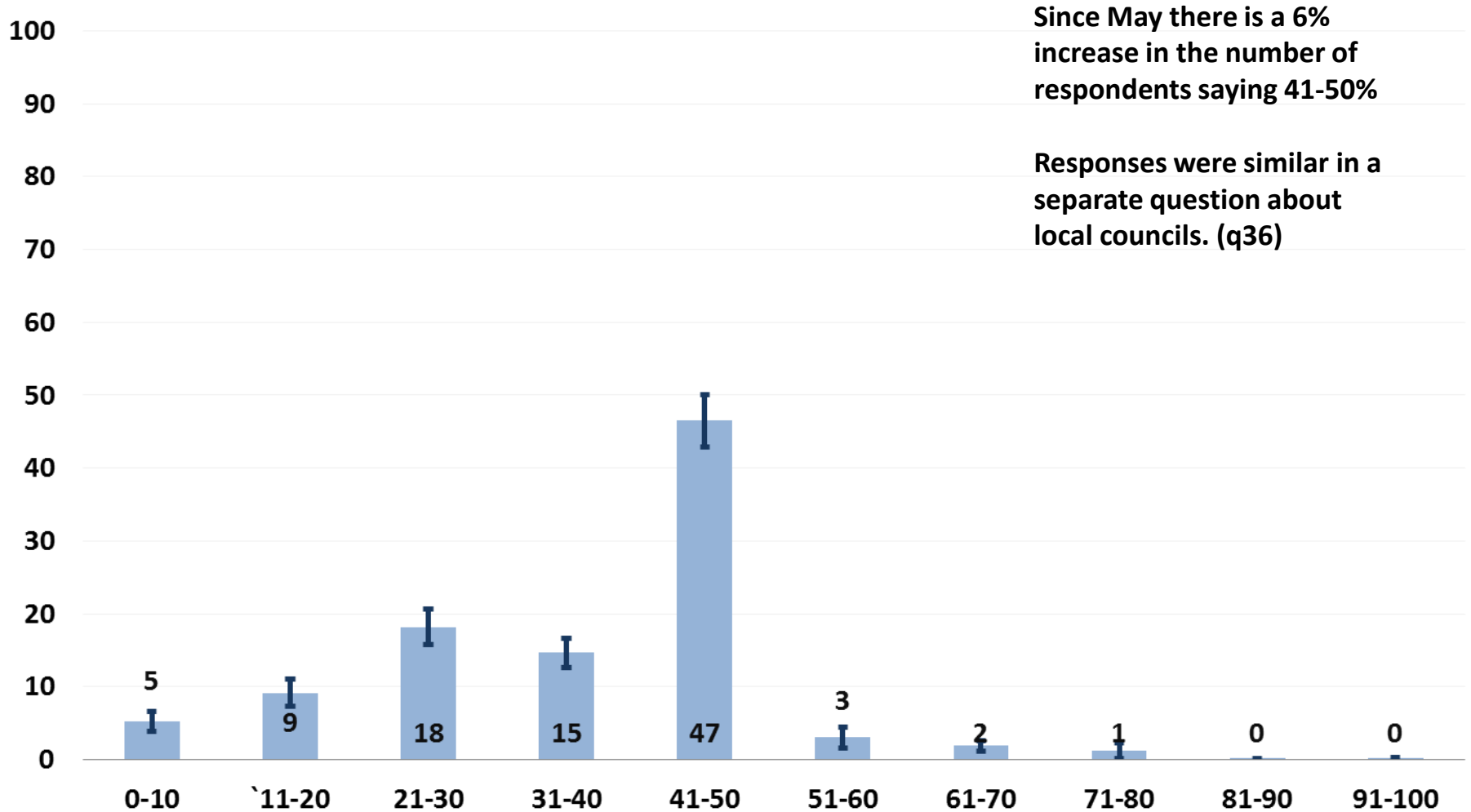
In your opinion, who should be more involved in political life, men or women? Men and women equally (q39)



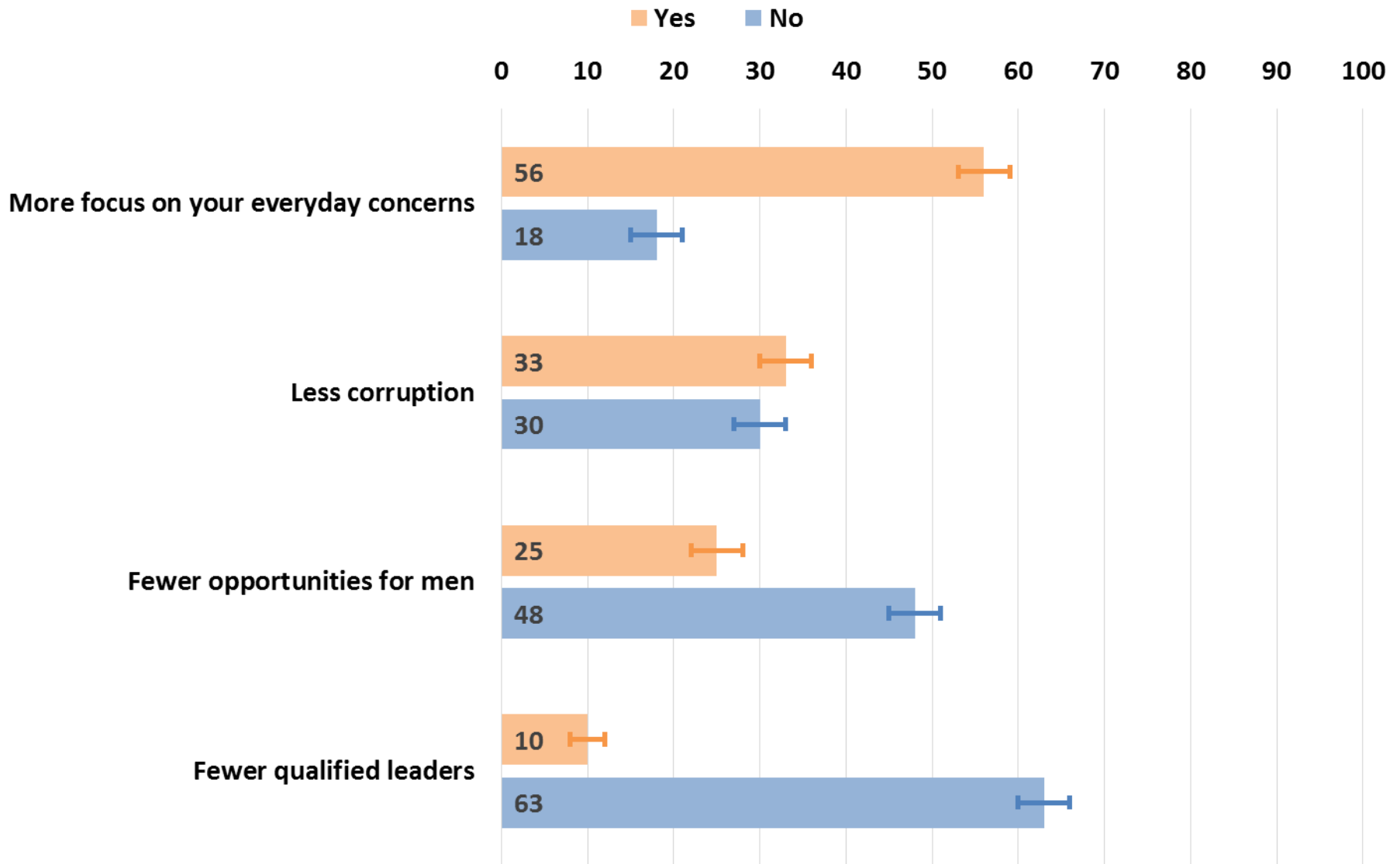
In your opinion, what would be the ideal percentage of women in the parliament? q22



In your opinion, what would be the ideal percentage of women in the parliament? (q22)



If there was an equal balance of men and women in elected office, in your opinion, would there be.... ? (q37)

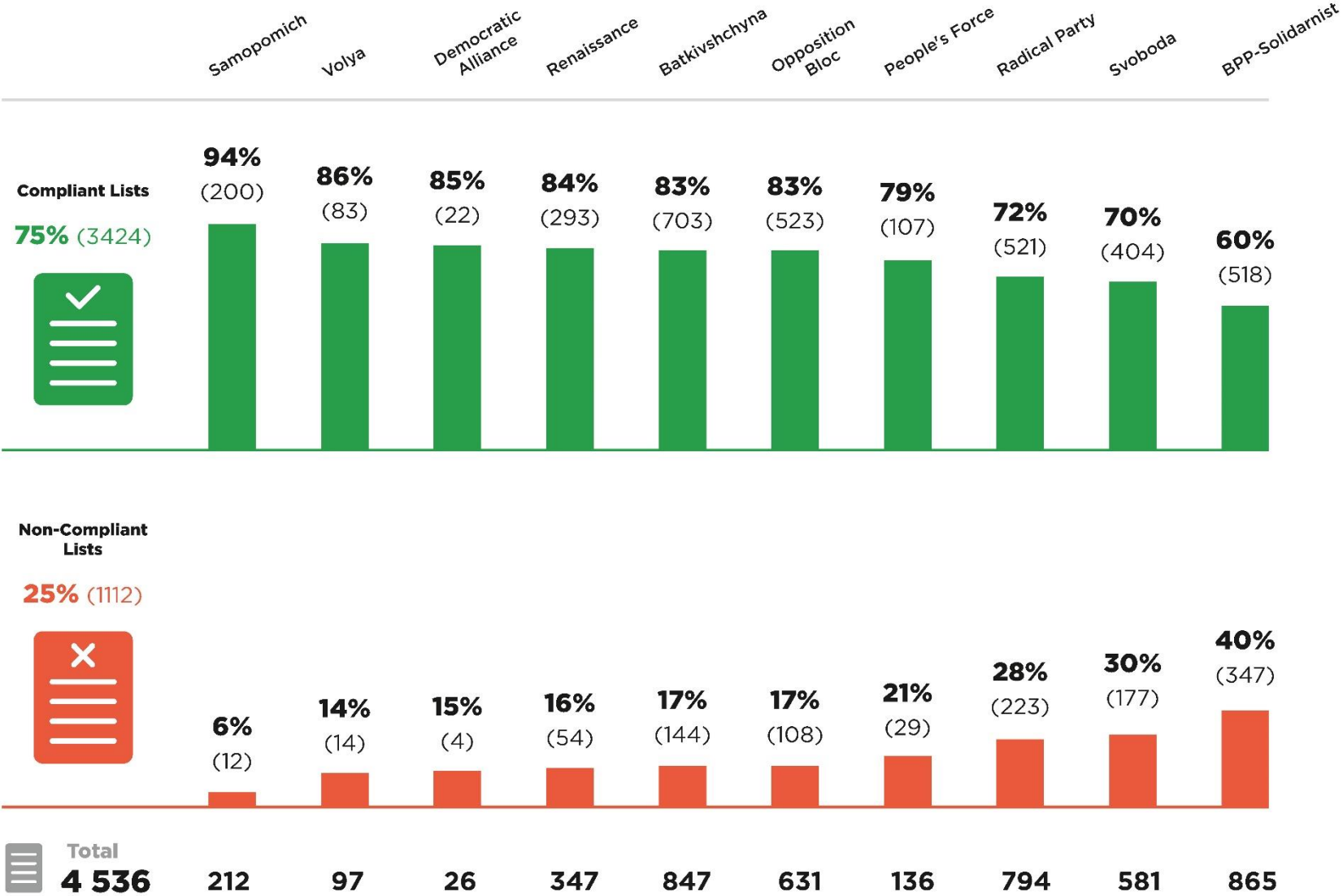


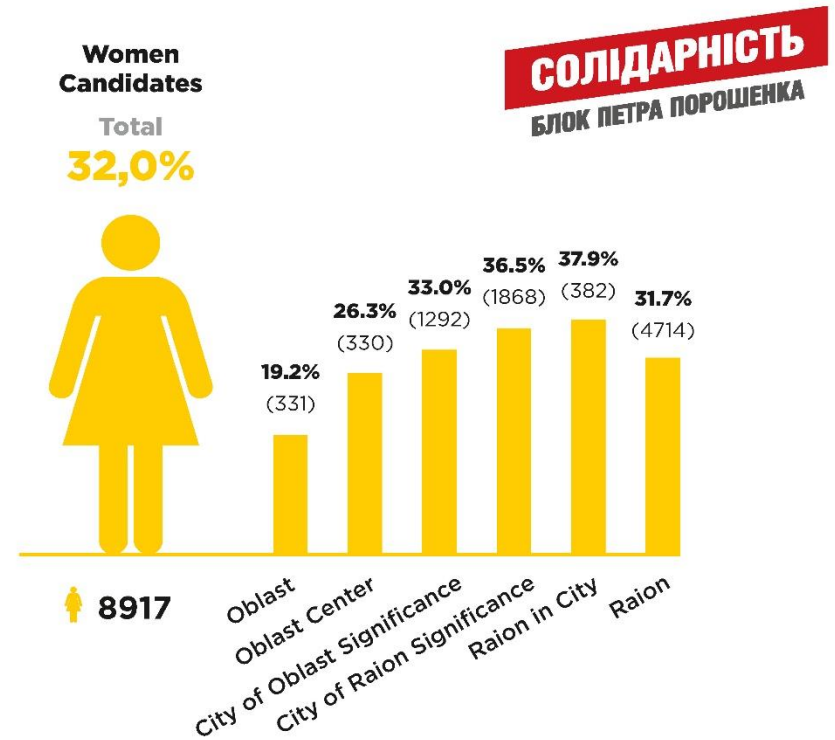
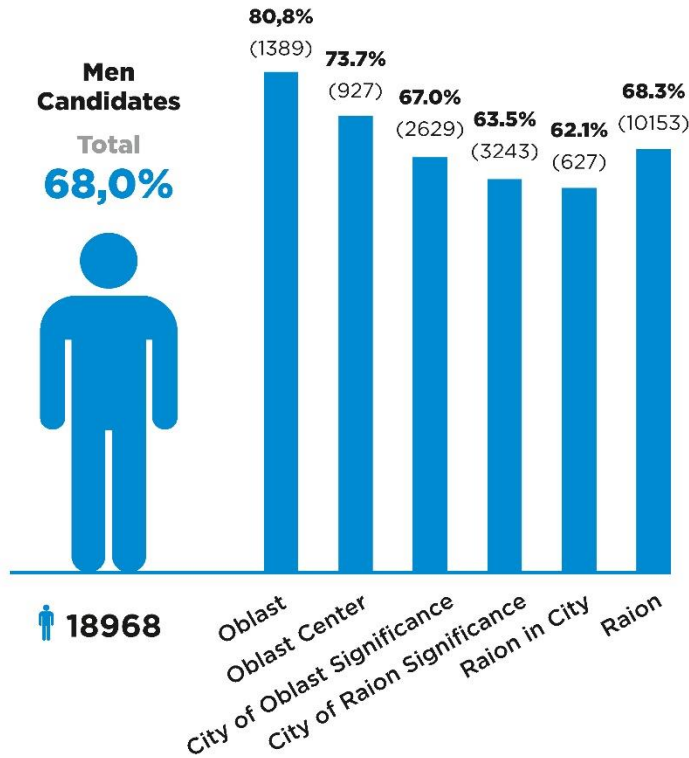
The role of political parties as gatekeepers...

Total Candidates Nominated by Party with Gender

	Total	Men	%	Women	%
Renaissance	10,297	6,252	60.7%	4,045	39.3%
Opposition Bloc	15,598	9,543	61.2%	6,055	38.8%
Volya	2,331	1,454	62.4%	877	37.6%
Batkivshchyna	25,950	16,235	62.6%	9,715	37.4%
People's Force	2,821	1,777	63.0%	1,044	37.0%
Samopomich	4,535	2,910	64.2%	1,625	35.8%
Radical Party	17,569	11,348	64.6%	6,221	35.4%
Democratic Alliance	460	297	64.6%	163	35.4%
Svoboda	12,795	8,549	66.8%	4,246	33.2%
BPP-Solidarnist	27,885	18,968	68.0%	8,917	32.0%

Gender Quota Compliance of Party Lists





TOTAL CANDIDATES

27 885



Oblast
1720



Oblast center
1257



City of Oblast Significance
3921



City of Raion Significance
5111



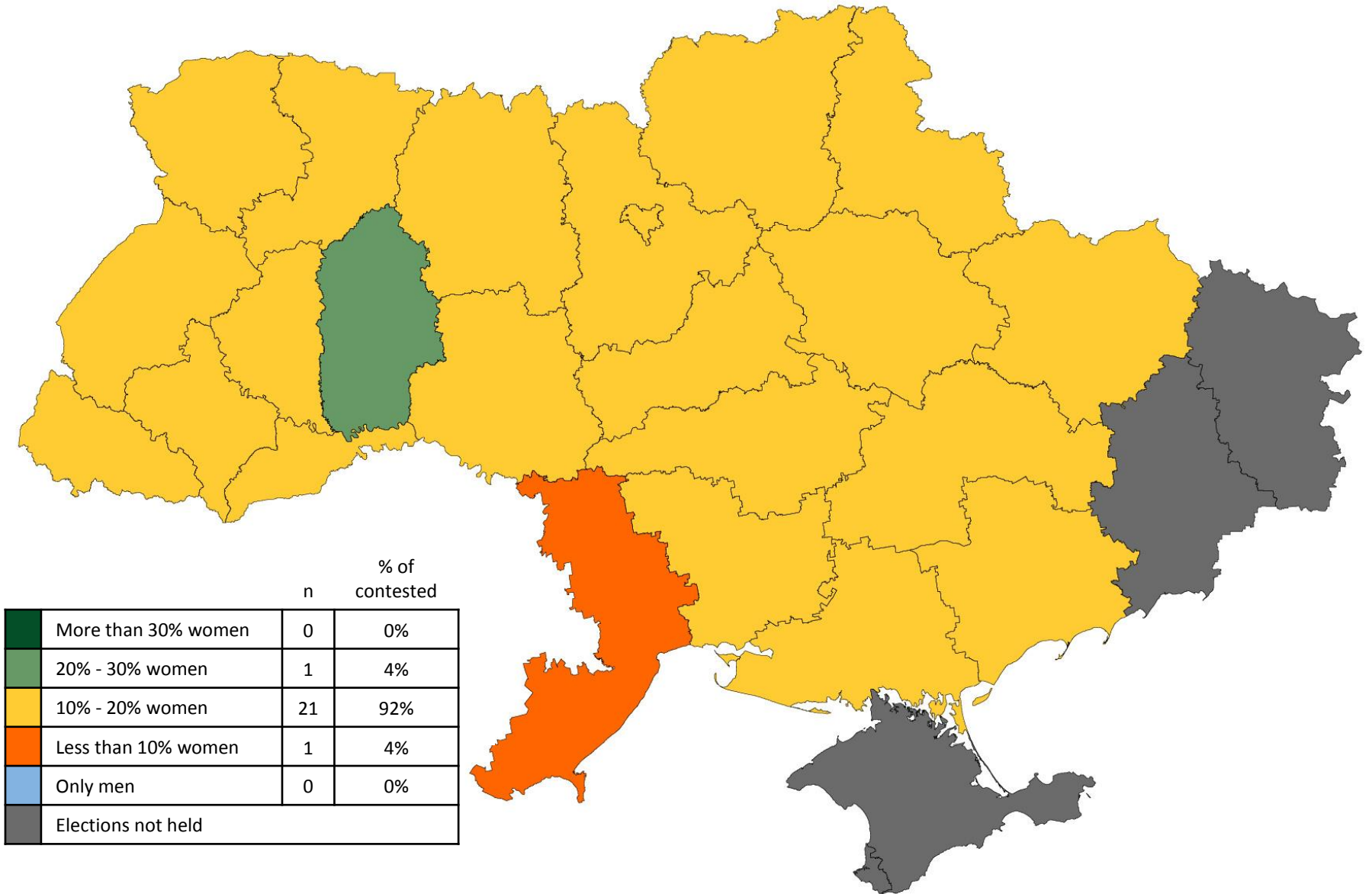
Raion in City
1009



Raion
14867

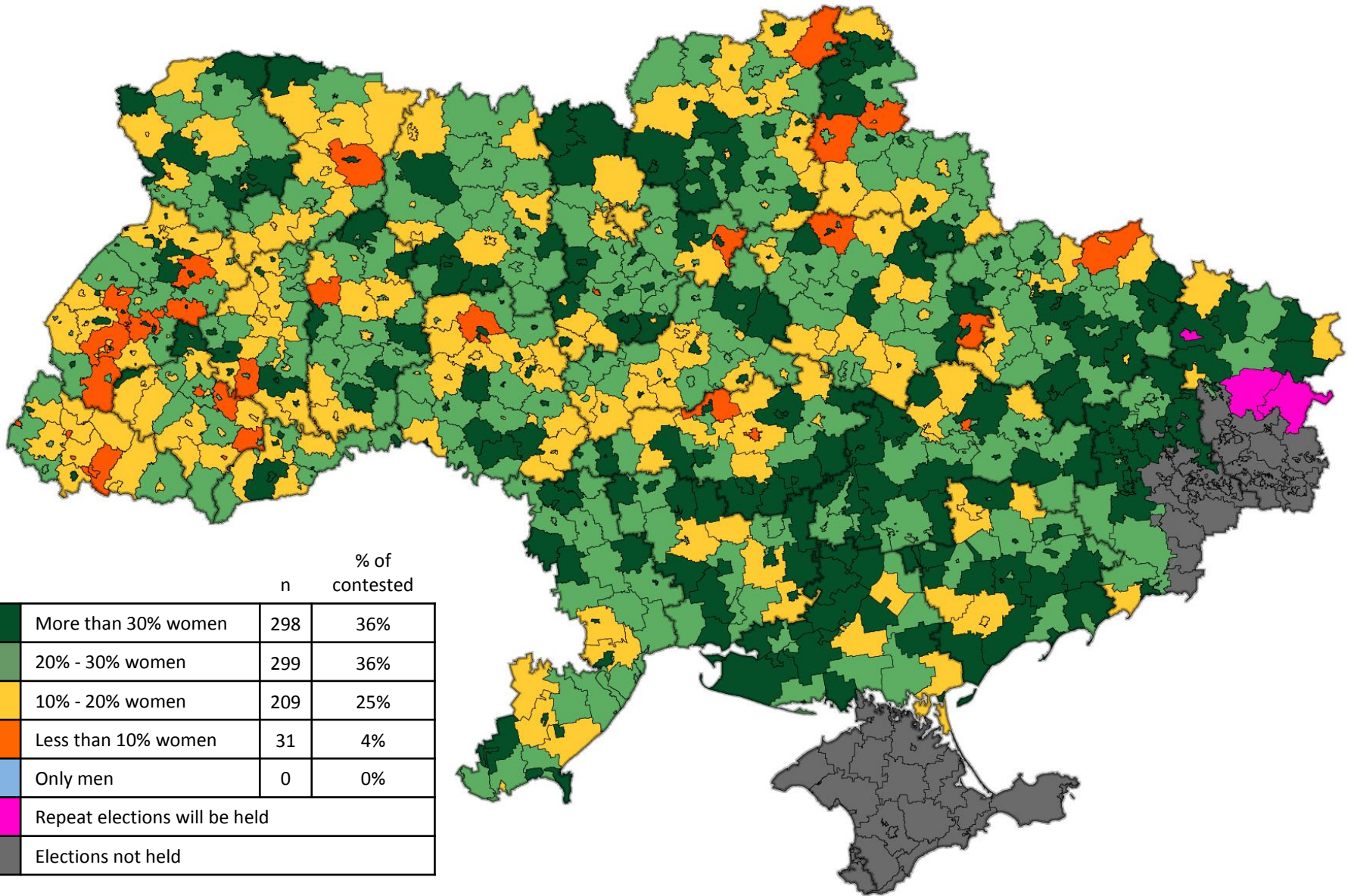
Oblast Council Results

Percent of Seats Held by Women



City and Raion Council Results

Percent of Seats Held by Women



	n	% of contested
More than 30% women	298	36%
20% - 30% women	299	36%
10% - 20% women	209	25%
Less than 10% women	31	4%
Only men	0	0%
Repeat elections will be held		
Elections not held		

In Depth Interview Results

5 women who did not seek nomination

5 women who sought nomination but did not get it

5 women who were nominated but lost

5 women who were nominated and won

Respondents were interviewed in October and November 2015 they come from a diverse groups of parties in the following regions: Zaporizhzhia, Kyiv, Lviv, Vinnitsa, Kirovograd and Aleksandria

Motivators: Public Service

- Desire to improve the community, provide better living conditions for future generations and accomplish a specific goal or project:
 - **“Over the years you gain experience, and you can't stay indifferent, as you see how the laws are changed for the worse... and this is what pushes you to get into politics and begin to influence it”.** *Female, Kirovograd, ran for election and lost*
 - **“If I walk the same streets, if I have exactly the same problems with household appliances burning down because of these electrical current fluctuations, if because of the new tariffs I have nothing to pay with, who but me should be defending the interests of people such as myself?”** *Female, Zaporizhzhia, sought nomination but did not get it*
 - **“I was supported by the congregation, the Father also asked me to enter the election to somehow control the process of land distribution”.** *Female, Kirovograd, sought nomination but did not get it*
 - **“Even in a nightmare I would not have dreamed that I'd ever go into politics. Because no one instilled in me a sense of respect for authority - as if it was something bad. But with these projects I now work on, I knew I could only fulfill them with the support on the regional level”.** *Female, Vinnytsia, ran for election and won*
 - **“I wasn't thinking of leadership. I was thinking more about how I could be useful”.** *Female, Vinnitsa, ran for election and lost*
 - **“I did not want to be in the Kyiv Parliament. I wanted to change what I can with this team”.** *Female, Kyiv, considered nomination but did not seek it*

De-motivators: Parties

- “I know party leaders, but I have not seen clearly stated programs or positions”. *Female, Lviv, considered nomination but did not seek it*
- **“In this case the party system stopped me.** Because since 2010 I have seen enough of the party system - when three people negotiate behind the MPs backs. Many people come there with some personal goals - someone makes a career, someone is trying to get the budget tenders” *Female, Zaporizhzhia, considered nomination but did not seek it*
- **“I realized that it will be all fiction. Even if I would win as a candidate, I knew that I would then be asked to give way to other candidates.** As there was such a mechanism in previous elections.” *Female, Vinnitsa, considered nomination but did not seek it*
- **“Leaders make decisions behind closed doors and the rest of the faction is supposed to follow along”** *Female, Zaporizhzhia, considered nomination but did not seek it*
- **“They have programs but they also play backstage games. I would join a party which would have clear rules of the game for everyone and a clear program”** *Female, Lviv, considered nomination but did not seek it*
- **“I don’t like all those behind the scenes games and dirt... I don’t want someone to organize everything for me and then tell me what to do, I don’t want to be a piece that plays secondary role in unclear schemes.”** *Female, Vinnitsa, considered nomination but did not seek it*

Relationship with the party

- Almost all respondents were approached by others, before they made the decision to participate or not in the elections:
 - **“We were considered by different political forces. In particular, I was approached by five different parties”.** *Female, Vinnitsa, considered nomination but did not seek it*
 - **“I was told ‘you must run,’ and I agreed”** *Female, Zaporizhzhia, ran and lost*
 - **“I liked this team very much. I was surprised and pleased to hear directly from the leader.”** *Female, Zaporizhzhia, ran and won*
- The parties’ policies played a crucial role in the decision to run:
 - **“I realized that if you want to really change something, then one is as good as none. You must join a team.** It should be a team, adhering to the same principles and the same thoughts as you.” *Female, Kirovograd, ran for election and lost*
 - **“I was nominated by the party to work on social issues... they are really defending the needs of simple, ordinary people. They are not cut off from life”.** *Female, Kirovograd, ran for election and lost*
 - **“There was no other way to get elected than with a political party, so I chose a political party which had women among the leadership”.** *Female, Vinnitsa, ran for election and lost*

Feedback on the 30% Gender Quota

- **The quota for the registration of the party was important. In order to pass this barrier and to be registered, the parties tried to meet these standards. Some did better than others.** *Female, Zaporizhzhia, sought nomination but did not get it*
- **“In the last elections only 20% of those who were in top of parties lists were women. So I can say that gender quota worked but partially. We’ve got better result but still not good.”** *Female, Lviv, considered nomination but did not seek it*
- **“[The quota] is positive. But the law is imperfect because there are no punishments or sanctions for not following quota. One court said that there should be sanctions, another said that shouldn’t.”** *Female, Vinnitsa, considered nomination but did not seek it*
- **“As an ordinary citizen who does not have legal training, I cannot understand the explanation of the Central Election Commission... It is not written there that it is recommended to nominate up to 30%, it says that there must be at least 30% . That’s not a recommendation but a demand.”** *Female, Zaporizhzhia, considered nomination but did not seek it*
- **“I realize that without the 30% gender quota there would be mostly men again and there wouldn’t be so many women.”** *Female, Vinnitsa, ran for election and lost*
- **“Why only 30% Why not 50/50?”** *Female, Kirovograd, ran for election and lost*
- **“We need minimum 50% women in Verhovna Rada. I am not a feminist, I worked in a factory for many years and I know that women can be better leaders and achieve better results holding major posts than men. But our women are not allowed to hold high posts for some reason.”** *Female, Zaporizhzhia, ran for election and won*

Reasons for winning and losing

- **“Those who worked in their district, who spoke to people, they won.”** *Female, Vinnytsia, ran for election and won*
- **“People really saw that we were a team, despite internal party competition, we went as a team. And this is what people need now. Not fighting or vilification of each other, but teamwork.”** *Female, Vinnytsia, ran for election and won*
- **“ We only had three and a half weeks. It is very little time to meet with residents of the district and have a proper campaign.”** *Female, Vinnitsa, ran for election and lost*
- **“I lacked a strategy. If I am going somewhere, I must understand where I'm going. I can not go just for the sake of moving. I need the big picture.”** *Female, Kyiv, ran for election and lost*