

# Human Capital Development Strategy for the Defense Forces of Ukraine

## Gender Analysis

### Main Conclusions and Recommendations

The draft order of the Ministry of Defense provides for the approval of the Strategy for Attracting, Developing, and Retaining Human Capital in the Armed Forces of Ukraine for the period up to 2027 (hereinafter – the Strategy).

The draft order is available on the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine’s website. Comments and suggestions are accepted within 15 working days from the announcement's publication date, i.e., until September 18, 2024.

Since 1995, the Women’s Information Consultative Center has been working to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men. Since 2016, it has been actively cooperating on gender issues with the structural units of the security and defense sector.

The draft strategy as a whole addresses gender equality issues by assessing human capital development problems and suggesting ways to overcome them.

It is essential that the term “gender equality” is included in the section “Definition of Terms Used in the Strategy”.

The section on the socio-economic situation addresses the importance of innovative approaches to attract women and men to the Ukrainian defense forces. In searching for such approaches, ensuring that such inclusion is not a temporary measure but a fundamental principle of non-discrimination and genuine equality is essential.

The Operational Objective **1.4. Increase the efficiency of recruitment and manning the defense forces of Ukraine** includes a number of priority tasks, including measures to attract women to military service.

*Priority tasks:*

*Conduct comprehensive recruitment information campaigns aimed at different target groups based on gender, age, place of residence, education, and other criteria; and,*

*Increase the level of women's involvement in military service;*

It is important to mention that information campaigns will not be effective enough to bring about significant changes if women’s issues described above are not resolved. Further, one of the performance indicators towards achieving the strategic objective is an increase in the number of women in the military. To accomplish this goal, it is essential to take comprehensive measures, including those mentioned above.

The gender component must be included in the sections dedicated to developing military leadership and introducing effective mechanisms to motivate military personnel.

*Operational Objective 3.3. Develop military leadership*

*Priority tasks:*

*Develop women's leadership to increase the level of recruitment and retention of women in the military;*

*Performance indicators witnessing the achievement of the strategic objective:*

*A culture of relations between commanders and subordinates shall promote trust and mutual respect between different categories of servicemen and servicewomen, ensure gender equality, and prevent gender-based violence*

*Operational Objective 4.1: Implement effective mechanisms to motivate military personnel*

*Priority tasks:*

*Implement gender equality policy; prevent and counter gender-based violence;*

Yet, some aspects of the draft Strategy need to be further elaborated and made more precise.

The legal framework of the Strategy forms the basis of the document, so it should reflect the legal acts that are the key to specific implementation steps. We believe it is not enough to consider documents related to gender equality only as “other legal acts on security and defense of Ukraine regulating the formation and development of human capital in the Armed Forces of Ukraine.”

**We propose to supplement this section with the National Action Plan for implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325 “Women, Peace and Security” for the period up to 2025, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on October 28, 2020, Number 1544-p.**

**We propose to supplement the section detailing the causes of problem issues with human capital in the defense forces, and then the sections “Vision” and “Goal”, to address the factors outlined below:**

**Lack of popularization of military service and motivation to fulfill the constitutional duty to protect Ukraine equally for girls and boys, men and women in national-patriotic education and military professional orientation;**

**Low level of infrastructural facilities and material and technical conditions for women in the security and defense sector to meet their needs (Objective 5 Operational Objective 1.1 of the National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 “Women, Peace and Security” for the**

period up to 2025, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on October 28, 2020, Number 1544-p);

**Lack of an effective policy to combat sexism, sexual harassment, psychological and sexual violence, discrimination during recruitment, the performance of official duties, and participation in decision-making (Objective 7 Operational Objective 1.1 of the National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 “Women, Peace and Security” for the period up to 2025, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on October 28, 2020, Number 1544-r).**

**In the “Strategic, Operational Goals, Objectives, and Performance Indicators” section, we propose adding gender differentiation to ensure the unconditional implementation of gender equality principles (additions are underlined).**

The Operational Objective 2.2. *Develop a system of professional military education, integrate it with the military career management system* and the Operational Objective 3.1. *Establish a personnel management system based on the principles and approaches of NATO member states* are essential components of human capital formation in the Ukrainian defense forces, and their gender component should be reflected in the tasks and performance indicators.

**We propose to supplement this with the following provisions:**

**Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda and gender perspective under NATO standards in the educational activities of military universities;**

**The Women, Peace and Security agenda and gender perspective under NATO standards shall be introduced into the educational activities of higher education institutions;**

**Implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda and gender perspective under NATO standards in the preparation, adoption and implementation of personnel-related decisions;**

The system of health care for defense personnel, effective reintegration of servicemen and servicewomen into civilian life, and improving the quality of veteran policy in general—all these areas require consideration of the gender component. They largely concern people with family responsibilities, a significant share of which are women raising children on their own.

**The health care system for Ukrainian defense forces personnel shall comply with standard agreements adopted by NATO member states. It shall ensure the provision of quality pre-hospital and medical care in tactical conditions. The approach to the provision of hospital medical care within a single medical space shall be revised. Hospitals shall create conditions for persons with family responsibilities to stay with minors while receiving hospital care.**

**Strategic Objective 5: Ensure effective reintegration of servicemen and servicewomen into civilian life and improve the quality of veterans' policy**

**Operational objective 5.2. Develop a system of transition from military career to civilian life**

**Priority tasks:**

**Ensure proper adaptation conditions for people with family responsibilities;**

We emphasize that the Draft Strategy is laid out in a very professional manner, which makes it easier to make targeted recommendations related to the gender component.