

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN UKRAINIAN POLITICS

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List of abbreviations

BPP	Party “Petro Poroshenko Bloc “Solidarity”
CEC	Central Election Commission of Ukraine
EPP	European People’s Party
EU	European Union
IFU	Inter-Faction Union “Equal Opportunities”
UKROP	Political Party “Ukrainian Union of Patriots”
UN	United Nation
VRU	Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine



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Introduction

The aim of the research is to carry out the analysis of actions taken by Ukrainian political parties in order to increase the level of women involvement in the policies development and to identify the main challenges at the interparty and cross-party levels.

The reforms which are carried out in Ukraine after the Revolution of Dignity offer significant opportunities for the implementation of the best European and international practices in the field of gender equality. In particular, amendments to the electoral legislation pertaining to introduction of gender quotas offer the opportunities for increased involvement of women in political activity. On-going constitutional process makes it possible to incorporate the principles of gender equality in a new draft of the Constitution of Ukraine. The EU-Ukraine Association Agreement envisages implementation of a number of EU directives pertaining to non-discrimination and gender equality in Ukrainian legislation and daily practice. Administrative reform allows to raise the issue of vertical gender segregation in the state executive bodies. Local government reforms and decentralization process provide an opportunity to promote gender equality mechanism at the level of regions, districts, individual settlements, and amalgamated communities.

The system of decision-making in Ukraine needs a radical update in order to increase the women's involvement into politics which would open the way for the political elite renewal in the country. In particular, increase of women at senior positions in the governmental institutions may contribute to the improvement of the quality of state decision-making because it would provide for the more diverse experience to be taken into account.

This publication will be useful for policy makers, members of Ukrainian Parliament, leaders of political parties and persons responsible for the development of their strategy, gender experts and activists.

Representation of women in legislative bodies of Ukraine

1.1 Gender composition of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

Despite the relatively high achievements on equal rights and opportunities for men and women in Ukraine in the spheres of education and healthcare (as proved by the Global Gender Gap Report 2015¹, where Ukraine was placed in the first third of the ranking in assessing these spheres), achieving gender parity in the highest representative bodies of the country has been one of the most difficult tasks which the state faces.

To conduct the gender-sensitive analysis of the VIII Convocation of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine for the purposes of this publication the following data was examined:

- gender composition of the Parliament of Ukraine;
- representation of women in the governing body of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine;
- involvement of female deputies in the work of parliamentary committees (or standing commissions as until 1997 there were no committees in the Parliament of Ukraine)²;
- work of the Inter-Faction Union (IFU) "Equal Opportunities".

Gender composition of the Parliament of Ukraine

The period from the proclamation of independence by Ukraine (from 1991) has shown the gradual increase in the number of female deputies in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

Number of male and female deputies in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of different convocations

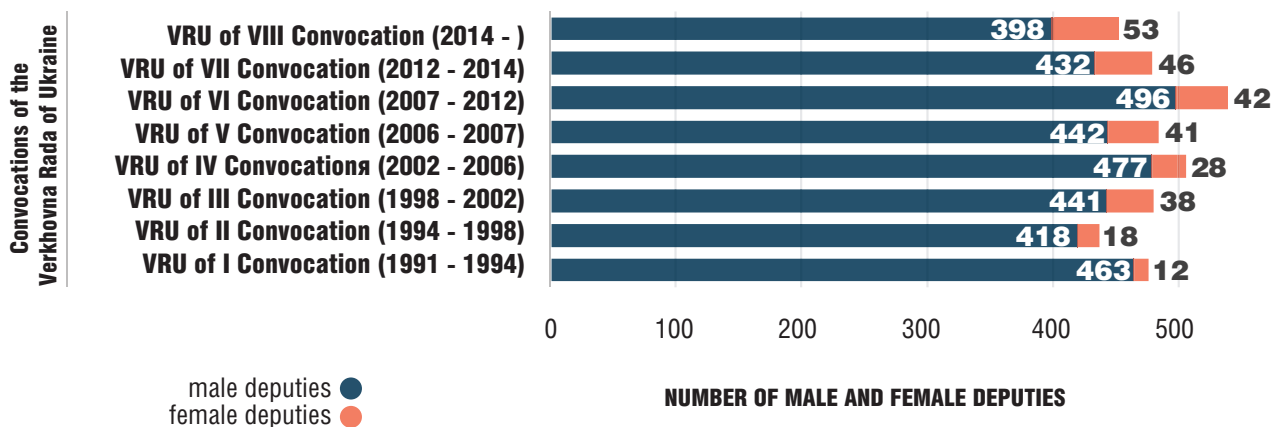


Fig. 1. The number of male and female Deputies in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of different convocations

The methodology of calculation: Because of the fluidity of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in course of one Convocation, the total number of Deputies may exceed the total number of mandates. In this regard, for the most accurate comparison of the females' representation in the Parliament of Ukraine of every Convocation, we have taken the total number of deputies and compared it to the total number of female deputies for the whole period of the Convocation.

In percentage terms, the representation of women in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine had also been gradually increasing.

Percentage of male and female deputies in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of different convocations

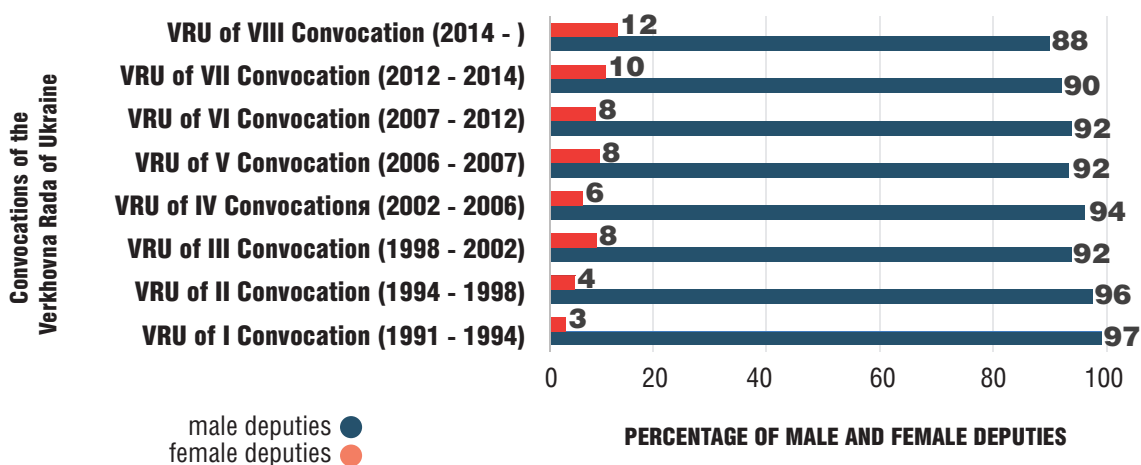


Fig. 2. The percentage of male and female Deputies in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of different convocations



In order to conduct a precise quantitative analysis of the representation of women in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, one should consider the electoral system, under which women were elected to the Parliament as Ukraine has faced the situation of frequent changes of the electoral system both at the national and local levels. In this context it's important to mention that it varied from the majority system to proportional one and even mixed (proportional-majority) system. The first elections were held under a majoritarian two-round system, when one deputy was elected from each constituency, and a run-off was held between the two candidates who received the highest number of votes if no candidate gained the absolute majority in the first round. The electoral law introduced in 1998 changed it to a proportional-majority electoral system, by which half of the deputies were elected in single-member districts, and half from the national party lists. According to the electoral law that governed the 2006 and 2007 contest, the proportional electoral system was used meaning that all the deputies were elected from the national party lists. For the elections of 2012 and 2014 the proportional-majority system was returned. The election system as well as the election entity configuration greatly influenced the number of women who gained the mandate in the Parliament.

The Convocations of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and electoral system	Total Deputies (males/females)	Elected under the nationwide electoral constituency		Elected under the majoritarian electoral constituencies	
		males	females	males	females
VRU of I Convocation (1990 to 1994) <i>majority election system</i>	475 (463/12)	X	X	463	12
VRU of II Convocation (1994 to 1998) <i>majority election system</i>	436 (418/18)	X	X	418	18
VRU of III Convocation (1998 to 2002) <i>proportional-majority election system (only political parties)</i>	479 (441/38)	219	23	220	15
VRU of IV Convocation (2002 to 2006) <i>proportional-majority election system (political parties and blocs of political parties)</i>	505 (477/28)	255	20	222	8

The Convocations of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and electoral system	Total Deputies (males/females)	Elected under the nationwide electoral constituency		Elected under the majoritarian electoral constituencies	
		males	females	males	females
VRU of V Convocation (2006 to 2007) <i>proportional election system (political parties and blocs of the political parties)</i>	483 (442/41)	442	41	X	X
VRU of VI Convocation (2007 to 2012) <i>proportional election system (political parties and blocs of the political parties)</i>	538 (496/42)	496	42	X	X
VRU of VII Convocation (2012 to 2014) <i>proportional-majority election system (only political parties)</i>	478 (432/46)	220	31	212	15
VRU of VIII Convocation (2014 to present) <i>proportional-majority election system (only political parties)</i>	451 (398/53)	201	51	197	2

Table 1. Gender composition of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine depending on the electoral system

During the parliamentary elections of the VIII Convocation, the proportional-majoritarian electoral system has been returned to action. Under the proportional representation in nationwide multi-mandate electoral constituencies 51 female deputies were elected (the general number of deputies who were elected in this way was 252) which amounts to 20%, while under the majoritarian electoral system in the single-mandate electoral constituencies only two female deputies were elected (of 199 deputies who were elected under the majoritarian electoral constituencies), which is 1%.

The data above shows that the system of proportional representation, which provides for the deputies to be elected based on party lists, has been the most favourable in the context of increasing the representation of women in the Parliament in Ukraine. However, the effectiveness of this system depends on the peculiarities of its performance and implementation. For instance, a requirement for the party candidate list to include 30 per cent of women will not be effective if they are placed at the bottom of the lists. A “zippered” list, in which every other candidate is a woman, may provide for the better prospects for women seeking election. At the same time, even

a perfectly “zippered” list may not achieve the desired results if the country uses an “open list” voting system, which allows voters to change the order of the candidates on the list. Open list voting often works to the disadvantage of women candidates unless women in the country are exceptionally well organized politically³.

However, the electoral system can only facilitate or hamper women's access to parliament, but it does not determine it. This issue depends largely on women's role in society and politics as well as on the behaviour of potential female candidates, political parties and voters in general. To be elected to the Parliament women have to overcome several obstacles:

- to achieve the right to be elected;
- to have the desire to stand for elections;
- to be chosen as candidates by the parties;
- to be elected by voters.

At present, almost all countries in the world have granted women the right to vote and to stand for election. However, there are still more men than women willing to do this. Women's desire to run for elections is fostered by a friendly socio-economic, cultural and political environment and by the backing of political parties and the civil society, particularly women's movements. The personal ambition of women to stand for elections may also depend on the prospects to be nominated and to be elected. The electoral system and gender quotas may influence such prospects and, thus, the willingness of women to stand for elections. The stage at which parties nominate their candidates for elections is most critical for women's access to parliament and data shows that in general women are under-represented already at the nomination level.

Representation of women in the governing body of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

By 2014, no woman has held the position of a Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, First Deputy Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, or the Deputy Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

The VIII Convocation of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has been a breakthrough in women representation in the governing body of the Parliament as on December 4, 2014, Oksana Syroyid⁴ was elected as the Deputy Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and became the first female deputy holding the leadership position in the Parliament. On April 14, 2016, due to the changes in the composition of the Parliament of Ukraine and its governing body, Iryna Gerashchenko⁵ was elected as the First Deputy Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. This is the highest position,

which has ever been held by a woman in the governing body of the Parliament of Ukraine. Thereby, two of three positions are now held by female deputies.

Still, a woman has never held the post of the Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine – the highest position in the governing body of the Parliament of Ukraine.

Involvement of female deputies in the work of parliamentary committees

With each new Convocation of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and a corresponding increase in the number of female deputies, a gradual increase in their representation in the standing commissions of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and since 1997 – in the committees of the Parliament of Ukraine and their governing bodies has taken place.

Convocations of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine	Total number of committees	Number of committees, where female deputies are represented	Number of female deputies – Chairpersons of committees	Number of female deputies – First Deputy Chairpersons of Committees	Number of female deputies – Deputy Chairpersons of Committees	Number of female deputies – Chairpersons of subcommittees
VRU of I Convocation (1990 to 1994)	23	6	0	no posts of First Deputy Chairpersons	no posts of Deputy Chairpersons	no subcommittees
VRU of II Convocation (1994 to 1998)	23	8	0			
VRU of III Convocation (1998 to 2002)	24	17	3	1	2	
VRU of IV Convocation (2002 to 2006)	24	17	1	1	2	8
VRU of V Convocation (2006 to 2007)	26	21	3	2	1	15
VRU of VI Convocation (2007 to 2012)	27	19	3	3	5	17
VRU of VII Convocation (2012 to 2014)	29	19	4	9	7	20
VRU of VIII Convocation (2014 to present)	27	18	7	5	6	16

Table 2. Representation of women in standing commissions and committees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

The female Deputies of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the VIII Convocation are part of 19 committees of 27 subcommittees⁶. While in the first two convocations female deputies did not chair any Standing Commission, in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the VIII Convocation they lead seven committees (*Committee on European Integration, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Committee on Science and Education, Committee on Public Health, Committee on Taxation and Customs Policy, Committee on Freedom of Speech and Information Policy and Committee on Social Policy, Employment and Pension Provision*), thus making up 30% of all committees. Female deputies held the post of First Deputy Chairperson of four Committees, post of Vice-Chairperson of Committee in 6 committees, and head 18 subcommittees.

It's important to mention that in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the I Convocation female deputies were presented only in the committees of social care and humanitarian assistance, and only starting with the III Convocation of the Parliament of Ukraine the situation has changed. Thus, in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the VIII Convocation, female deputies are represented in state forming, security, foreign affairs and economic policy committees. Still, there are no female deputies in the budget forming committee.

At the same time only in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the IV Convocation, the **Subcommittee on Gender Policy** under the Committee on Human Rights, National Minorities, and International Relations, was formed. The Subcommittee continued its work in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the VI Convocation, and in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the VII Convocation it had been transformed into **a Subcommittee on Gender Equality**, and in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the VIII Convocation to **a Subcommittee on Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination**. At all convocations of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, no man has ever participated in its work or headed it. Currently the subcommittee is led by Iryna Suslova (deputy elected from the Party "Petro Poroshenko Bloc "Solidarity" (BPP) party list).

Work of the Inter-Faction Union (IFU) "Equal Opportunities"

On December 6, 2011 for promotion of gender equality was created the Inter-Faction Union "Equal Opportunities". It is a voluntary association of people's deputies of Ukraine which has the aim of improving the position of women in society, activating a public dialogue on ensuring gender equality in various spheres of social and political life.

The Union operates on the principles of self-government, is open to the accession of other people's deputies and is set up to cooperate with the leadership of the Verkhovna Rada, parliamentary factions and committees, the Administration of the President of Ukraine, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, and other bodies of state power, Public organizations and associations.

The Inter-Faction Union “Equal Opportunities” is co-chaired by:

- 1) Alyona Babak (representative of Samopomich);
- 2) Svetlana Voitsekhovska (representative of People’s Front);
- 3) Maria Ionova (representative of BPP);
- 4) Olena Kondratyuk (representative of “Batkivschyna”).⁷

In order to unite and effectively coordinate the deputies’ efforts, civil society activists, and international organisations, working on issues of gender equality in Ukraine, on April 11, 2016 **Public Council on Gender Issues** has been established within the IFU “Equal Opportunities”. It comprises the deputies who are the members of the IFU “Equal Opportunities” and the representatives of the Ukrainian civil society organisations or individual experts and activists as well as representatives of the international organisations. The Public Council has the advisory status and aims to consolidate the efforts of the politicians, civil society and international community to promote the idea of the gender equality at the legislative level. The gender expert Larysa Kobelyanska has become the coordinator of the Council.⁸

According to the priorities of the Public Council, six thematic groups have been formed inside it (a representative of the IFU “Equal Opportunities” headed each group):

- 1) Political Participation Group (Olena Kondratyuk, Co-Chair of the IFU “Equal Opportunities”, representative of “Batkivschyna”);
- 2) Security and Peace Group (Mariia Ionova, Co-Chair of the IFU “Equal Opportunities”, representative of BPP);
- 3) Gender-Sensitive Parliament Group (Olena Sotnyk, member of the IFU “Equal Opportunities”, representative of “Samopomich”);
- 4) Expansion of the Rights and Powers in the Economic Sphere Group (Alyona Babak, Co-Chair of the IFU “Equal Opportunities”, representative of “Samopomich”);
- 5) Ratification and Implementation of the Istanbul Convention Group (Iryna Lutsenko, member of the IFU “Equal Opportunities”, representative of BPP);
- 6) Gender Education Group (Svitlana Voytsechovska, Co-Chair of IFU “Equal Opportunities”, representative of People’s Front).

In addition to the representatives of the Inter-Factional Union, a non-governmental organisation representative is coordinating each working group.

1.2 Gender composition of local elected governmental bodies

In Ukraine takes place the situation when the higher is the level of the representative body, the lower is the percentage of women there. According to the data of the National Democratic Institute, as of January 1, 2013 in 27

regions of the country, women made up 12% in the regional councils, 23% in district councils, 51% in rural councils and 46% in settlement councils. Similarly, the larger is the town, the fewer women are elected as its chairperson. At the level of cities with a special status (Kyiv and Sevastopol) and cities that are regional centres, since 1991 women were elected only twice to the position of a mayor (in Zhytomyr in 1996 and in Kherson in 1994) .

The local elections in 2015 were the first elections conducted under the requirement of the so called 30% electoral quota which provided that in the party electoral lists there should be no less than 30% of the candidates of the same sex. The detailed gender monitoring of the elections to the local governmental bodies in 2015 and gender analysis of newly formed regional and city councils was performed by the Committee of Voters of Ukraine, the results of which can be found in its Final Report⁹. On average, the percentage of women candidates in the party lists for the regional councils throughout Ukraine was approximately 29.6%. The quota standard was followed in 195 of 318 lists. The largest number of women candidates to 22 city councils was nominated by political parties “Batkivshchyna”, All-Ukrainian Union “Svoboda”, the Radical Party of Oleh Lyashko and UKROP.

Resulting from the gender analysis of 22 regional councils, 252 women and 1422 men were elected as deputies. The average level of women's representation percentage in the regional councils according to the results of the elections was 15%. As compared to the previous elections when women won 12% of mandates, the situation of gender balance improved slightly. However, this result does not correspond to the percentage of women among candidates to the regional councils that makes up 29.8%. Thus, women candidates had twice less chances to be elected to the regional councils than male candidates.

Ranking of the Regional Local Councils on the Number of Female-Deputies

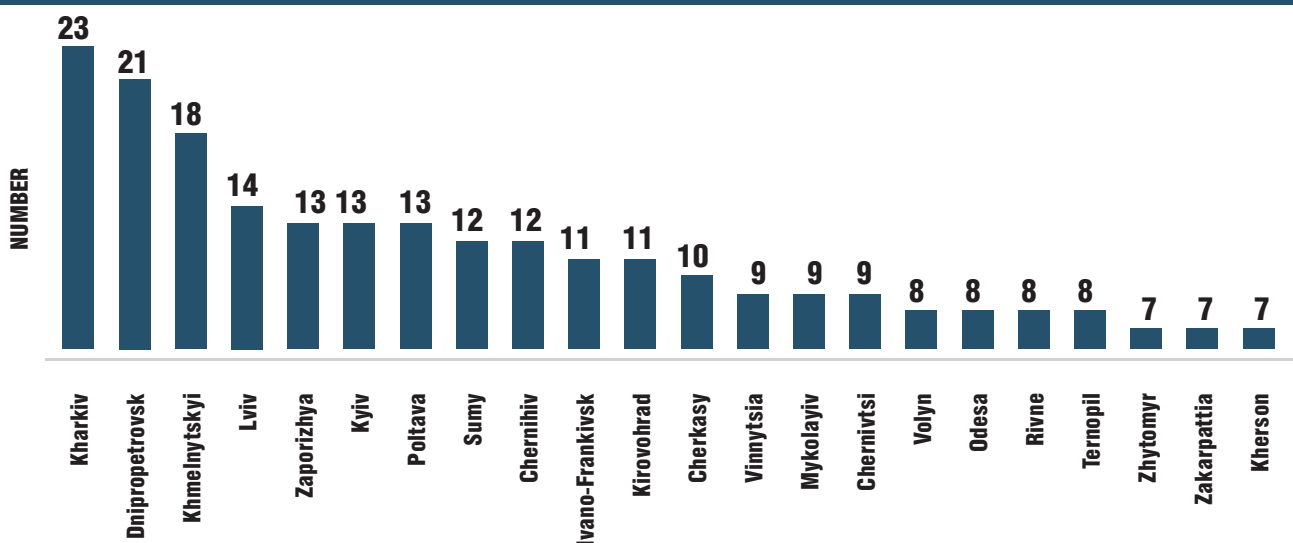


Fig. 3. Ranking of the Regional Local Councils on the Number of Female-Deputies

Given that the number of members of the regional councils differs and can make up to 64, 84 or 120 deputies, the rating of the regional councils in percentage according to the criterion of women representation percentage differs from the rating according to quantitative features. Thus, the highest number of women in percentage correlation took place in Khmelnytskyi Regional Council – 21%, and the lowest one – in Odesa Regional Council – 10%.

Ranking of the Regional Local Councils on the Percentage of Female-Deputies

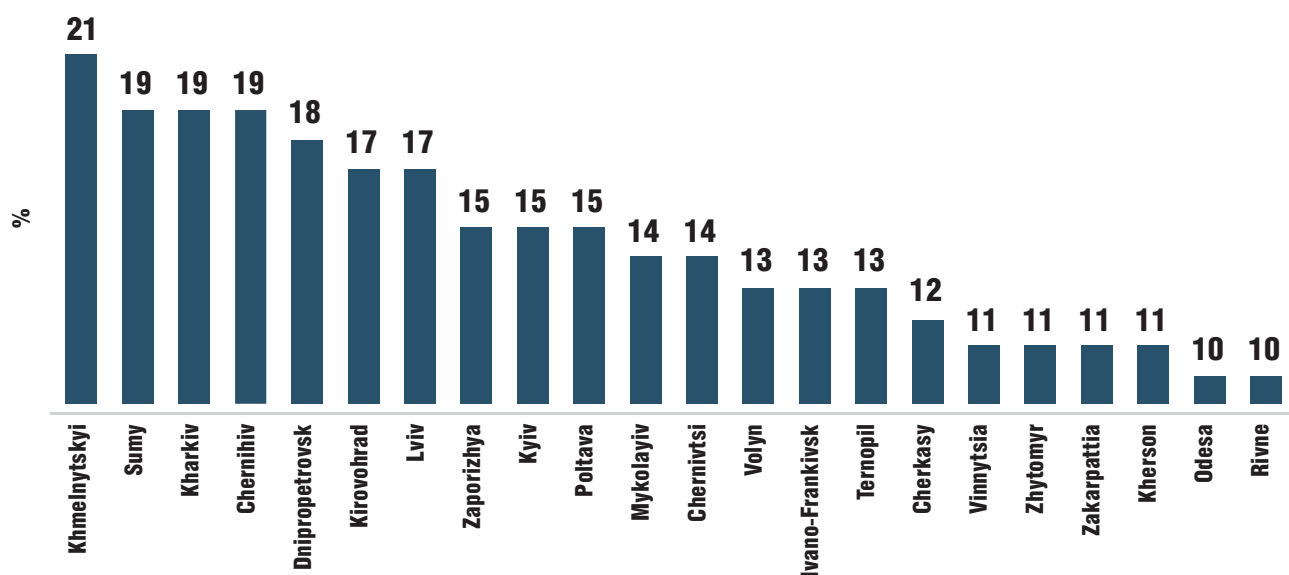


Fig. 4. Ranking of the Regional Local Councils on the Percentage of Female-Deputies

The results of the elections to the regional councils in terms of parties demonstrate the leadership of “Samopomich” Union political party, which managed to comply with gender quota in 8 of 23 regional councils.

1.3 Legislative initiatives on introduction of 30% gender quota representation in elected bodies

Currently existing in the field of gender equality in the electoral process legal framework has a number of gaps and does not provide a conversion of the legislative 30% gender quota in the electoral lists of parties to the real 30% women’s representation in elected bodies.

In accordance to the Constitution of Ukraine, it is sovereign, independent, democratic, social and legal state. An III Section of the Constitution is dedicated to the issue of elections; nevertheless. The detailed legal norms concerning the elections can be found in special laws, for instance: Law of Ukraine “On the Elections of the Members of the Parliament of Ukraine” of

17.11.2011, Law of Ukraine “On the Elections of the President of Ukraine” of 05.03.1999, or Law of Ukraine “On Local Elections” of 14.07.2015 (which has replaced the Law of Ukraine “On the Election of the Members of the Parliament of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, members of the local councils and village, town and city mayors” of 10.07.2010) .

In order to promote real equal opportunities for men and women for their participation in the electoral process, members of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the VIII Convocation had developed and submitted a draft Law of Ukraine No. 1456 “On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine (Regarding Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men in the Electoral Process)” dated December 12, 2014¹⁰. It involved setting limits on the number of members of the same gender in the electoral lists of candidates for parliamentary and local elections. In particular, the draft provided that the share of candidates of the same gender should not exceed 70% of the total number of candidates nominated by a political party or an electoral bloc. The Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights, National Minorities, and International Relations had recommended it to be assumed as a basis, and introduced on April 22, 2015 the corresponding draft resolution¹¹.

However the following observations were made by experts on legal and gender issues:

- It is difficult to follow the rules provided in the project if the number of candidates included in the party electoral list (after the first five) is not multiple to ten. For example, in a case when the party list includes 27 candidates you can determine the composition of the top five and the next two dozen candidates, but you cannot determine the gender of the last two candidates.
- The provisions of that draft Law should be followed by the changes in other legislative acts of Ukraine, such as the Law of Ukraine “On Political Parties in Ukraine” and the Law of Ukraine “On the Central Election Commission”, where the mandatory guidelines should be prescribed in a way that in each group of five candidates at least 2 persons must be of the same gender. Moreover. The clear mechanism of punishment in case of non-compliance with the rule should also be enacted.

Nonetheless, on July 14, 2015, the Parliament of Ukraine adopted a Law of Ukraine “On local elections” and on July 24, 2015 it was sent to the President to be signed. Nowadays it is enforced. The local elections of 2015 were held in accordance to the newly established system. It provides for gender quotas among the participants of the election – in a list should be at least 30% of candidates of the same sex. It is important to remark that in the first version of the Law, there were no provisions concerning the quotas. This amendment was proposed and stipulated by the Chairman of the

faction “Bloc of Petro Poroshenko “Solidaryty” – Yuriy Lutsenko – and was one of the 1548 amendments proposed by the Members of the Parliament and one of the only two that were adopted. Only 257 Members of the Parliament (from the total number of 422 and the number of 320 Members of Parliament who were present during the poll) gave their votes in favour of the adoption of the law. However, it still means that 60.90% of the Parliament supported such democratic changes.

It is worth mentioning that the requirement of the 30% gender quota was not accepted easily by the Ukrainian political elite. On September 23, 2015, the Central Election Commission of Ukraine (CEC) issued a Resolution no. 362 “On Clarification of the Application of Certain Provisions of the Law of Ukraine “On Local Elections” on the Registration of Candidates for Deputies of the Verkhovna Rada of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Candidates for the Deputies of Regional, District, City, Borough, Village councils, Candidates for Village, City Mayor and the Headman of a Village, Nominated by Local Organisations of Political Parties in Regular, Extraordinary and First Local Elections”. The Clarification to the resolution contained the following provision: “In accordance with Article 4 of the Law of Ukraine “On Local Elections”, representation of persons of the same sex on the electoral lists of candidates for deputies of local councils in multi-member constituencies must be at least 30% of candidates on the electoral list. However, among the prescribed grounds for refusal in registration of the candidate in deputy of a local council, village or city mayor, headman of a village in the first paragraph of the Article 46 of the Law of Ukraine “On Local Elections”, there are no such grounds. Considering this, refusal to register candidates in multi-member constituencies for elections of deputies of the Verkhovna Rada of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, regional, district, city and borough councils on grounds of non-compliance with provisions of the law on representation of persons of the same sex on the electoral lists of candidates for deputies of local councils in multi-member constituencies under paragraph 1 of Article 46 of the Act is not allowed”. Further this resolution was challenged and cancelled.

Still, such decision of one of the highest state bodies has testified the unwillingness of the old political system to accept changes and the need for more legal and social regulation of the issue of gender equality in politics, meaning the need to prescribe the detailed punishment mechanism in case of non-compliance with the requirement of the 30% quota for political parties.

Strategies of the political parties pertaining to increasing women opportunities in politics

2.1 *General analysis of the political party's system in terms of increasing women opportunities in politics*

Political parties play a key role in increasing the representation of women in Ukrainian politics. Under the current electoral system they have become a springboard for people to get into politics. On the other hand, while having political power, merely parties' representatives get the opportunity to influence the legislative changes aimed at increasing the involvement of women in Ukrainian politics.

For the purposes of this research the following parties were selected for the analysis:

- parliamentary parties (Petro Poroshenko Bloc "Solidarity", People`s Front, Opposition Bloc, Union "Samopomich", Radical Party of Oleh Lyashko, All-Ukrainian Union "Batkivschyna", and Vidrozhennya);
- non-parliamentary parties which have the broad representation in local councils (Ukrainian Union of Patriots "UKROP").
- non-parliamentary parties which plan to participate in the following parliamentary and local elections and already have their own development strategies (Democratic Alliance and Power of People).

Analysis of the party's activities in ensuring gender equality at internal party level shows that the best success in this area is achieved by the parties

of a new type that are trying to secure their existence on the democratic principles (Union “Samopomich”, Democratic Alliance, Power of People). There also exist parties which try to promote their own development strategies without a special attention to the principle of gender equality but including it in their strategic plans (Petro Poroshenko Bloc “Solidarity” and All-Ukrainian Union “Batkivschyna”). At the same time, the parties, which have no development strategies, have the worst performance indicators concerning the gender equality on interparty level (People’s Front, Radical Party of Oleh Lyashko, Vidrozhennya).

2.2 *Petro Poroshenko Bloc “Solidarity”*

The Charter of the Petro Poroshenko Bloc “Solidarity”¹² provides 30% quota for persons of the same gender in the electoral lists of candidates for the people’s deputies of Ukraine and the candidates to the regional, city and district councils in the multi-mandate electoral constituencies.

There is no mechanism on ensuring the women’s representation in the leadership positions within the party: the executive board of the Party – Central Board – consists of 51 members, among which only 6 are women amounting to 12%.

The Party has 29 registered local party organisations with legal status. Only two of them are headed by women: Kherson territorial Party organisation and Kremenchug city Party organisation. Another local organisation (Kyiv territorial Party organisation) has two co-chairpersons, including one man and one woman. Thus, women headed only 8.6% of the local party’s branches.

The party does not have separate women’s organisation or centre aimed at attracting more women to the political work and political activity. However, in July 2015 the party launched the creation of the women’s wing.

The faction’s leadership in the Verkhovna Rada consists of the Chairperson, his first deputy and his five deputies, including only one woman¹³. Thus, the proportion of women in the faction leadership is 14%. The party faction includes 142 people’s deputies (as for the August 2017), among them there are 14 women, representing 10%.

According to the results of the local elections in 2015, none of the party lists of the candidates to the regional councils had ensured the 30% gender quota. The best figure was achieved in Mykolaiv Regional Council, where among 15 deputies 4 are women, which is equal to 27%. However, in Rivne and Cherkasy regional councils the party has no women among the deputies at all.

2.3 Political Party “People’s Front”

The Charter of the Political party “People’s Front”¹⁴ provides 30% quota for persons of the same gender in the electoral lists of candidates for the people’s deputies of Ukraine and the candidates to the regional, city and district councils. The executive board of the party – Political Board – consists of 2 women out of 9 members, and there is no woman in the Military council of the party.

The party has 24 registered local party organisations with legal status, while only one of them is headed by woman (Kharkiv regional organization).

The party does not have separate women’s organisation or centre aimed at attracting more women to the political work and political activity. There is also no person responsible for gender equality in the party leadership.

The faction’s leadership in the Verkhovna Rada consists of the Chairperson, his first deputy and his four deputies, including only one woman¹⁵. Thus, the proportion of women in the faction leadership is 17%. The party faction includes 81 people’s deputies (as for the August 2017) with 11 women, which is equal to 14%.

The party did not participate in local elections in 2015, making it impossible to conduct gender analysis of party representation in the regional councils.

2.4 Political Party “Opposition bloc”

Political Party “Opposition bloc” provides 30% quota for persons of the same gender in the electoral lists of candidates for the people’s deputies of Ukraine and the candidates to the regional, city and district councils. The party is headed by two co-chairpersons with no women among them. The executive board of the Party – Political Executive Committee – consists of eight persons with no women among them too.

The faction leadership in the Verkhovna Rada consists of two co-chairpersons and two deputy faction Chairpersons among whom there is no woman. The party faction includes 43 people’s deputies (as for the August 2017) with 3 women, which is equal to 7%.

According to the results of local elections in 2015, none of the party lists of the candidates to the regional councils had ensured the 30% gender quota. The best figure was achieved in the Zhytomyr Regional Council, where among 7 deputies are 2 women, which is equal to 29%. However, in Zakarpathia, Sumy and Chernivtsi regional councils the Party has no women presented among the deputies at all.

2.5 Political Party “Union “Samopomich”

Charter of the Political party “Union “Samopomich”¹⁶ provides 30% quota for persons of the same gender in the electoral lists of candidates for the people’s deputies of Ukraine and the candidates to the regional, city and district councils in the multi-mandate electoral constituencies.

There is no information on the formation of the leadership positions within the party.

The Party has 129 registered local organisations with the legal status and 29 of them are headed by women amounting to 23% which is the highest level among the parliamentary parties.

The party does not have separate women’s organisation or centre aimed at attracting more women to political activity.

The faction leadership in the Verkhovna Rada consists of a Chairperson and two deputies and there is no woman among them¹⁷. The party faction includes 26 people’s deputies (as for the August 2017) , among which are 8 women, representing 31%.

This party is the only parliamentary entity that has fulfilled the 30% gender quota according to the results of parliamentary elections of 2014 and local elections in 2015.

Oksana Syroyid, representative of the party, has become the first woman who has been elected and appointed to the position of the Deputy Chairperson of the Ukrainian Parliament.

2.6 Radical Party of Oleh Lyashko

Radical Party of Oleh Lyashko provides 30% quota for persons of the same gender in the electoral lists of candidates for the people’s deputies of Ukraine and the candidates to the regional, city and district councils in the multi-mandate electoral constituencies.¹⁸

The party has declared the existence of 658 local party organisations, 133 of which are headed by women, which is equal to 20%.

The party does not have separate women’s organisation or centre aimed at attracting more women to political activity.

The faction of Radical Party of Oleh Lyashko¹⁹ in the Verkhovna Rada includes 21 people’s deputies (as for the August 2017) , among them there are 3 women amounting to 14%.

2.7 Political Party “All-Ukrainian Union “Batkivschyna”

The Charter of the Political Party “All-Ukrainian Union “Batkivschyna”²⁰ provides 30% quota for persons of the same gender in the electoral lists of candidates for people’s deputies of Ukraine at the national-level district. However, the charter does not provide gender quotas for regional, city, and district council’s candidates in the multi-mandate electoral constituencies. However, as the associate member of the European People’s Party (EPP), it declares that the party shares the ideological principles of the EPP such as equal rights for men and women provided by the EPP manifesto²¹.

Still, there is no mechanism on ensuring the women’s representation in the leadership positions within the party: the Presidium of the Party Council consists of 14 people among which are 2 women that make up 14%, and the Political Party Council consists of 53 members, among which there are only 7 women amounting to 13%.

The party has registered 26 local party organisations and 4 of them are headed by women, which is equal to 15%.

The leadership of the faction in the Verkhovna Rada consists of the Chairperson and a Deputy and is led by a woman – Yulia Tymoshenko.²² The faction includes 19 people’s deputies (as for the August 2017) , among which are 5 women amounting to 26%.

According to the results of the local elections in 2015, the party was able to ensure the 30% gender quota in Volyn regional council. At the same time, there is no woman-representative of the party in Mykolayiv and Zaporizhzhya regional councils. In other regional councils, this rate ranges from 6% to 29%.

2.8 The party “Vidrodzhennya”

The Charter of the party provides 30% quota for persons of the same gender in the electoral lists of candidates for people’s deputies of Ukraine and the candidates to the regional, city and district councils in the multi-mandate electoral constituencies²³.

The faction leadership in Verkhovna Rada consists of the Chairperson and two Deputy Chairpersons, among whom there are no women. The party faction in the Verkhovna Rada consists of 23 deputies²⁴ (as of August 2017), among whom there are no women.

According to the results of local elections in 2015, the Party was able to ensure the 30% gender quota in Khmelnytskyi regional council, where among 8 deputies there are 4 women amounting to 50%. At the same time, there

are no women-representatives of the party in Dnipro, Mykolaiv, Odesa and Sumy Regional Councils. In other regional councils, this rate ranges from 10% to 24%.

2.9 Political party “Ukrainian Association of Patriots “UKROP”

The Charter of the party provides 30% quota for persons of the same gender in the electoral lists of candidates for people's deputies of Ukraine and the candidates to the regional, city and district councils in the multi-mandate electoral constituencies. However, the new Charter of the Party is being discussed at the moment and it doesn't provide for the same rules meaning that the issue of gender equality has been removed from it.²⁵

There is no mechanism on ensuring the women's representation in the leadership positions within the party: the governing board of the party – Political Council – consists of 3 women (among 27 members), which amounts only to 11%.

The party has 24 local party organisations, three of which are headed by women (Rivne, Zhytomyr and Zakarpattia), that constitutes 13%.

The party does not have separate women's organisations or centres aimed to attract more women to political activity.

Political party “Ukrainian Association of Patriots “UKROP”²⁶ doesn't have the faction or group in the parliament, but has a broad representation in regional and municipal councils.

According to the results of local elections in 2015, the party was able to ensure the 30% gender quota in three councils: Kirovohrad regional council – 60%, Poltava Regional Council – 38%, Ternopil regional council – 33%. At the same time, there are no women in Kherson and Ivano-Frankivsk regional council.

2.10 Political party “Democratic Alliance”

Political party “Democratic Alliance” provides 30% quota for persons of the same gender in the electoral lists of candidates for people's deputies of Ukraine and the candidates to the regional, city and district councils in the multi-mandate electoral constituencies. The principle of gender equality is respected towards women representation in the leadership positions within the party: executive party board consists of four women (from 11 members), that amounts to 36%. The party has two co-chairper-

sons, one is a man – Vasyl Gatsko, and another one is a woman – Svitlana Zalishchuk.

It has 25 regional centres, 8 of which are headed by women, which constitutes 32%.

There exists a public organisation “Democratic Women Alliance”²⁷, which is a part of a political party “Democratic Alliance”. Its purpose is to ensure the equal opportunities for free individual development despite of gender.

Political party “Democratic Alliance” doesn't have the faction or group in the Parliament, while certain party members are people's deputies who became members of parliament on behalf of the other parliamentary parties (Petro Poroshenko Bloc “Solidarity” and “Samopomich”).

These parliamentarians are called “new faces” of the Verkhovna Rada of the VIII convocation, meaning that they have been civil society activists and have never been associated with any political party before becoming people's deputies in 2014.

The party development is dynamic and it's plans are to participate in the next elections at both parliamentary and local levels.

2.11 Political party “Power of People”

The Charter of the party provides 30% quota for persons of the same gender in the electoral lists of candidates for people's deputies of Ukraine, but there are no quotas for regional, city and district councils' candidates in the multi-mandate electoral constituencies.

There is no mechanism on ensuring the women's representation in the leadership positions within the party: the governing board of the party - Political Council - consists of four women (among 21 members), that is equal to 19%.

There is no information on the local party organisations.

The intra party organisation “Council of Women's Initiative”²⁸ was established in May 2016. The organisation aims at promoting gender equality within the party and women involvement in the work and policy-making of the party.

It doesn't have the faction²⁹, group or certain deputies in Parliament of Ukraine. However, according to the elections in 2015 the party got signifi-

cant representation in local governments: 220 seats of local deputies and 5 positions of mayors and village heads; approximately 25% of these positions are hold by women.

No.	Party or bloc	The total number of Deputies	Of them female Deputies	% female Deputies
1.	Petro Poroshenko Bloc "Solidarity"	142	16	11
2.	Political Party "People's Front"	81	11	14
3.	Political Party "Opposition bloc"	43	3	7
4.	Political Party "Union "Samopomich"	26	8	31
5.	Radical Party of Oleh Lyashko	21	3	14
6.	Political Party "All-Ukrainian Union "Batkivschyna"	19	5	26
7.	The party "Vidrozhennya"	23	-	-
8.	Political party "Ukrainian Association of Patriots "UKROP"	27	3	11
9.	Political party "Democratic Alliance"	11	4	36
10.	Political party "Power of People"	1	-	-

Table 3. The number and proportion of female Deputies in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of VIII Convocation

Impact of social and political transformation on involvement of women into Ukrainian politics

The events in Ukraine that occurred over the last few years have caused deep social and political changes in the country which has positively influenced the involvement of women into politics.

The issue of gender equality was irrelevant for the previous oligarchic political system, however after the Revolution of Dignity the transformation of values and increase in the understanding of the importance of the gender equality in the society can be traced. The Revolution has launched the public request for transformation of the existing political system where, i.e., women had no access to finance and media. It contributed to partial changes in the strategies of the already existing oligarchic parties, which are now obliged to meet the criteria of democratic political parties. Moreover, it has led to the formation of a number of new political initiatives aimed at development of political parties according to the democratic model from bottom to the top. So, the impact of available financial resources for access to politics decreased while the impact of the ability to defend the interests of community increased. This opened a social lifts for new actors in politics especially for women and by this actualized the issue of gender equality for political parties.

The following factors have also contributed to the rise of women involvement in political discourse in Ukraine:

- implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement;
- implementation of a reform of the civil security sector;
- implementation of a decentralization reform.

One of the most important elements is the fact that currently Ukrainian society is undergoing the gradual changes from values of "survival" relevant for the totalitarian systems to values of "self-expression" relevant for the democratic systems. The bearers of new values are the representatives of a new middle class and youth, the so-called "Ukrainian independence" generation. The appearance of these groups has become a pre-requisite of the social and political changes in the country in general. According to the results of the International Project "World Values Survey³⁰", the alternation of generations in Ukraine has caused changes in social values, particularly, gradual strengthening of the self-expression values and ideas of open society.

Conclusions and recommendations on strategies to improve gender balanced political representation

The Revolution of Dignity has opened a “window of opportunities” to increase the women representation in Ukrainian politics. First and foremost, it provides for the transformation of the political system from oligarchic to democratic, as well as the renewal of political elites.

In this regard it can be useful to take the following steps in order to foster the process of increasing women representation in political sphere:

At the level of general societal and political system:

- to develop the system of civic and political education on gender equality;
- to design the training programmes on women's participation in politics that are targeted both at women and men;
- to provide trainings and other types of support for women-candidates;
- to advocate the amendments to the Ukrainian legislation that promote the gender equality in the political domain and increase of female deputies in the elected institutions;
- to ensure equal gender representation in different parts of voting list to avoid gender inequality on the top of the list, which is more likely to be elected;
- to develop the civil society monitoring mechanisms of political parties' adherence to the requirements of gender quota providing that not less than 30% of persons of the same gender are included in the party lists during the electoral campaigns;
- to develop the mechanisms of reporting on violations of the requirement of the 30% gender quota in the electoral process;
- to implement penalties for political parties if there is no female-candidate according to the results of parliamentary elections of the regional, city or district councils;
- to implement the provision which implies the refusal of the Central Election Commission of Ukraine to accept documents for candidates' registration in deputies if there is no respect to gender quotas in the electoral list of the party;
- to develop financial mechanisms of responsibility for not following the relevant legislation;

- to advocate the improved media coverage of women candidates on the level equal to the men's coverage in the news reports.

At the parliamentary level:

- to establish the Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on Gender Equality and introduce the gender-based principle of rotation on the position of the Chairperson of this Committee;
- to implement a rule of election of a Co-Chairpersons of the Committees of the Verkhovna Rada on the gender basis;
- to implement the gender criterion on appointment of the male-deputies/female-deputies to the committees of the Parliament of Ukraine;
- to encourage the involvement of the male-parliamentarians to the activities of the Inter-Faction Union "Equal Opportunities".

At the level of local elected authorities:

- to promote the creation of gender-focused inter-faction unions in regional, city and district councils and to encourage male-deputies to take part in the activities of such groups;
- to promote the development of the platform "Equal Opportunities", which would unite and contribute to the experience exchange between the Inter-Faction Parliamentary Union "Equal Opportunities" and similar gender-focused inter-faction union at other levels.

At the parties' level:

- to foresee the principle of gender equality in the parties' foundation documents, in particular, to amend the Charter of the parties', providing at least 30% gender quota for persons of the same gender in the election lists of parliamentary candidates and in the election lists of the regional, district, city councils deputies candidates;
- to create a gender advisory position in the political parties' apparatus;
- to promote the creation of women's internal organisations or centres aimed at attracting more women to political activity;
- to implement a gender criterion for the senior positions appointments in the party factions in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and local elected bodies, as well as in the regional branches of political parties;
- to delegate deputies to work in the gender-focused inter-faction unions in the Parliament of Ukraine, as well as in regional, city and district councils;
- to provide special education and training for women-members of the party to increase their leadership potential.

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