

Ukraine's wartime recovery and the role of civil society

Chatham House survey of
Ukrainian CSOs – 2024 update

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**Pre-read for Berlin Ukraine Recovery
Conference (URC) 2024**

**Key takeaways and
summary of survey results**

Ukraine Forum

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Key points from the survey

This document presents the findings of a survey of 218 Ukrainian civil society organizations (CSOs), conducted online by Chatham House in May 2024. This 2024 update follows on from a November–December 2022 survey, the results of which were published in June 2023.¹ The focus of our latest survey is on recovery and reconstruction, on the role CSOs can play in assisting with that process, on the obstacles to their doing so effectively, and on how those obstacles can be overcome. For the full survey results and more on the methodology, see the Annex on page 15.

1. Amid the ongoing Russian war on Ukraine, a concerted Ukrainian and international effort is needed to replenish societal and individual resilience and embed the principles of resilience in recovery and reconstruction – both in the short term to support Ukrainian resistance amid current hostilities, and for a future post-war context.
2. Ukrainian civil society is already very active in supporting recovery. Kyiv-based CSOs report an improvement in the state’s effort to engage civil society compared to 2022. Volunteers remain the most trusted group among all social institutions. However, CSOs view the state’s cooperation in delivering recovery as inadequate.
3. CSOs are seeking a collaborative approach that would enable them to support and share the burdens of the state. They wish to ensure that the interests of vulnerable groups are considered, and that innovative solutions replace old ways of providing public services.
4. A prolonged war risks weakening the functioning and accountability of Ukrainian state institutions. Related to this are potentially increased risks both of misuse of recovery funds and of ineffective decision-making. Such risks indicate a need for civil society to take on a strong watchdog function at both the national and regional level. CSOs consider the need to modernize institutions and enforce the rule of law as priorities for Ukraine, both to ensure successful delivery of recovery projects and to enable wartime resilience.

¹ Chatham House (2023), *Chatham House Survey of Ukrainian CSOs*, June 2023, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/2023-06/2023-06-15-chatham-house-survey-ukraine-csos-ukraine-forum.pdf>.

5. The civil society sector is seeking special attention and cooperation from the Ukrainian state, the private sector and international donors around the issue of reintegrating veterans. This group stands out prominently as being in need of assistance and a new dedicated programme of policymaking. Also in need of special support is a wartime generation of children and youth whose education has been disrupted or interrupted by the war. CSOs view addressing both issues as critical to fostering social cohesion and resilience.

Recovery as the war rages

The Russian war of aggression against Ukraine is now in its third year. Following shattered expectations around the 2023 summer counteroffensive, Ukraine and its Western supporters are preparing for a longer war of attrition. The Western strategic objective of avoiding a great power war, an objective particularly emphasized by the US, has led to only incremental support for Kyiv and has resulted in the protraction of this conflict. Together with delayed US assistance at the start of 2024, this has enabled Russian forces to gain the upper hand on the battlefield, and has sustained the Kremlin's hopes that it will ultimately compel Kyiv to accept its war termination conditions. Given the determination of Ukrainian society² and Ukraine's political leadership to prevent a false peace on Russian terms, and given also the existential threat of Russian victory both for Kyiv and the wider European continent, the war is likely to continue for quite some time.

Given the determination of Ukrainian society and Ukraine's political leadership to prevent a false peace on Russian terms, and given also the existential threat of Russian victory both for Kyiv and the wider European continent, the war is likely to continue for quite some time.

This means that recovery must be financed and implemented even now, during the hot phase of the war. Ukraine's home front, its economy, energy system, and educational and healthcare services are all central to sustaining the war effort. In turn, Russia's war strategy consequently includes destructive missile strikes targeting civilian, economic and energy infrastructure, with the associated aims of crippling state revenues and causing a depopulation crisis. The estimated price tag for rebuilding Ukraine over the next decade – just on a conservative approximation – has already reached \$486 billion. This represents an increase of \$75 billion from a year earlier.³

² Eighty per cent of Ukrainians disagree that Ukraine should make territorial concessions in exchange for peace. Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (October 2023), 'Динаміка готовності до територіальних поступок для якнайшвидшого завершення війни' [Dynamics of readiness for territorial concession for faster ending of war], <https://www.kiis.com.ua/?lang=ukr&cat=reports&id=1301&page=2>.

³ World Bank (2024), 'Updated Ukraine Recovery and Reconstruction Needs Assessment Released', 15 February 2024, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2024/02/15/updated-ukraine-recovery-and-reconstruction-needs-assessment-released>.

A backbone of resilience

Sustaining the war effort and restoring Ukraine's territorial integrity require the total mobilization of society and the economy. Since the start of the war, Ukrainian citizens have demonstrated impressive activism in supporting the country's armed forces, emergency services and internally displaced persons (IDPs). These efforts continue, but two full years of war have taken a toll, and many people are experiencing exhaustion, war-related stress and declining levels of hope.⁴

Despite all the difficulties, Ukrainian civil society organizations (CSOs) remain committed and active. This document presents the key findings from the latest Chatham House survey of CSOs, aimed at tracking trends of civil society engagement in recovery.⁵ The survey was conducted in May 2024 to inform the Ukraine Recovery Conference (URC) that will take place in Berlin on 11–12 June 2024, and is largely a follow-on from a similar Chatham House survey conducted at the end of 2022 ahead of the 2023 URC in London.⁶

Ten years of Russian illegal occupation, of which the last two (since February 2022) have manifested as a full-scale, all-out war, have created new societal challenges for Ukraine; addressing these challenges requires collaboration and the concerted effort of all involved parties. CSOs responding to the Chatham House survey outlined several key societal challenges, listed below in order of importance:

1. Reintegrating veterans (supplying prosthetics, creating jobs, providing mental health support).
2. Strengthening unity within the country around the strategy for victory.
3. Supporting a wartime generation of children and young people in obtaining a quality education.
4. Solving the acute demographic crisis.
5. Introducing a functioning war-specific economy.
6. Reintegrating IDPs.

The survey findings show that, despite the ongoing high-intensity war, civil society remains active and involved in recovery. Nearly 80 per cent of respondents said that they are already implementing recovery efforts, both at the national and regional levels. Compared to 2022, the level of engagement in recovery in Ukraine's regions has increased significantly, rising by 21 percentage points.

CSOs are mainly working to assist the following cohorts: IDPs; children affected by war; the elderly; people with disabilities; and women (including those who served in the army, are victims of domestic violence or are struggling economically).

⁴ Gradus (2024), 'Психічне здоров'я та ставлення українців до психологічної допомоги' [Mental health and Ukrainian attitudes towards psychological assistance], March 2024, <https://gradus.app/uk/open-reports/mental-health-and-attitudes-ukrainians-towards-psychological-assistance-during-war>.

⁵ See Annex to this briefing note with the methodology and full survey results.

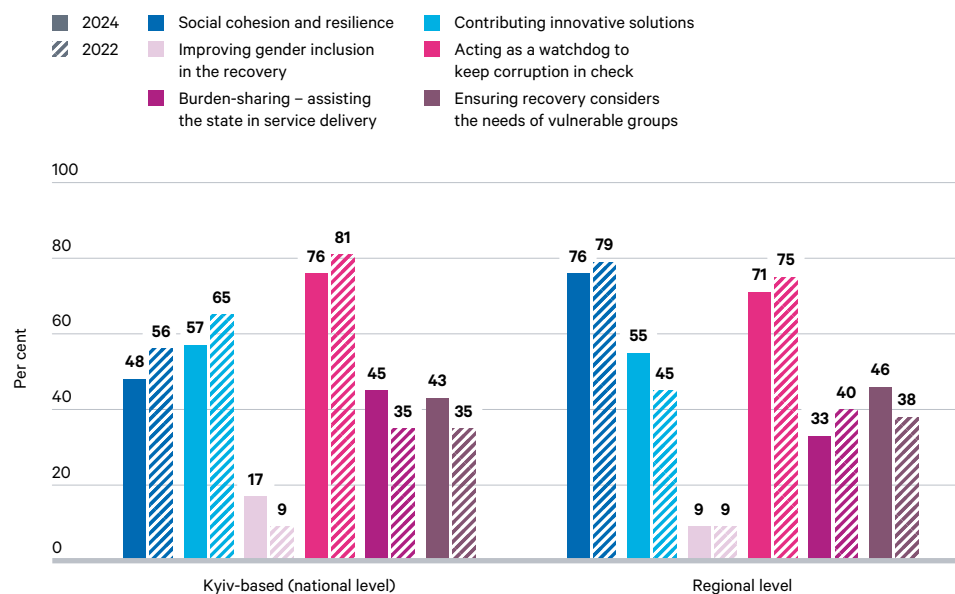
⁶ Chatham House (2023), *Chatham House Survey of Ukrainian CSOs*.

An increasing number of CSOs, especially at the local level, are also working to provide mental health support to various groups. This type of activity shows the largest increase, from 27 per cent of respondents in 2022 to 48 per cent in 2024. While many regional-level Ukrainian civil society groups are providing hands-on support to specific categories of citizens, the primary recovery-related activity of Kyiv-based and nationwide CSOs consists of planning recovery with the central government (around 60 per cent of respondents). This reflects the presence of a strong, independent community of experts and think-tanks in the capital.

Civil society aspirations

Similar to 2022, Ukrainian civil society responding to the survey in 2024 believes it can significantly contribute to social cohesion and resilience and in this way add value to the recovery.

Figure 1. What is the main value added to recovery for 2022 and 2024?



This self-assessment shows the high value placed on internal resilience. It also demonstrates CSOs' perception of such resilience as one of the key preconditions for Ukraine's staying power in the war. CSOs consider internal resilience to be the factor most likely to mobilize more Western assistance. The asymmetric nature of this war, in which Russia has overwhelmingly more human and economic resources, makes the transformative power of resilience particularly attractive to donors. Ukraine's democratic and partially decentralized political system enables a resilient approach to both governance and recovery. Chatham House research has argued

for embedding the principles of resilience into a wider recovery process.⁷ Such 'building back better' means that Ukraine could emerge out of this war with high-quality new institutions and human-centric policies that improve citizens' life satisfaction and standards of living.

The idea of establishing a resilience framework for recovery has strong support among Ukrainian CSOs. Ahead of the forthcoming URC in Berlin, 39 independent experts have partnered with the International Renaissance Foundation to produce an action document entitled *Vision for Resilience*.⁸ The document emphasizes the need for a whole-of-society approach to resilience that includes human security, institutions, the economy, the environment, community resilience and diversity. The Ukrainian government is also making a substantial effort to foster internal resilience. Its focus is on sustaining functional emergency services, improving access to public services via digital governance, rebuilding energy infrastructure, opening new trade routes, and protecting Black Sea navigation for critical commodities exports.

Nationwide, civil society groups believe that the reintegration of veterans is one of the key preconditions for societal cohesion, economic growth and human-centred recovery.

The latest survey provides further insights into which elements of resilience CSOs deem to be most in need of investment. Nationwide, civil society groups believe that the reintegration of veterans is one of the key preconditions for societal cohesion, economic growth and human-centred recovery. This emerged as the priority for regional-level domestic CSOs when they were asked what efforts would strengthen resilience. At the start of February 2024, the state register included 900,000 veterans, but experts estimate this number will grow to 4 million post-war. Poor levels of social services and weak integration into the labour market have forced the veteran community to create its own set of services and mutual support networks outside of the state. Veterans struggle with social adaptation, especially in smaller communities, with statistics showing growing levels of unemployment among this cohort.⁹

⁷ Lutsevych, O. (2023), *Giving civil society a stake in Ukraine's recovery: How government, citizens and donors can work together to embed trust in reconstruction*, Briefing Paper, London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, <https://doi.org/10.55317/9781784135768>.

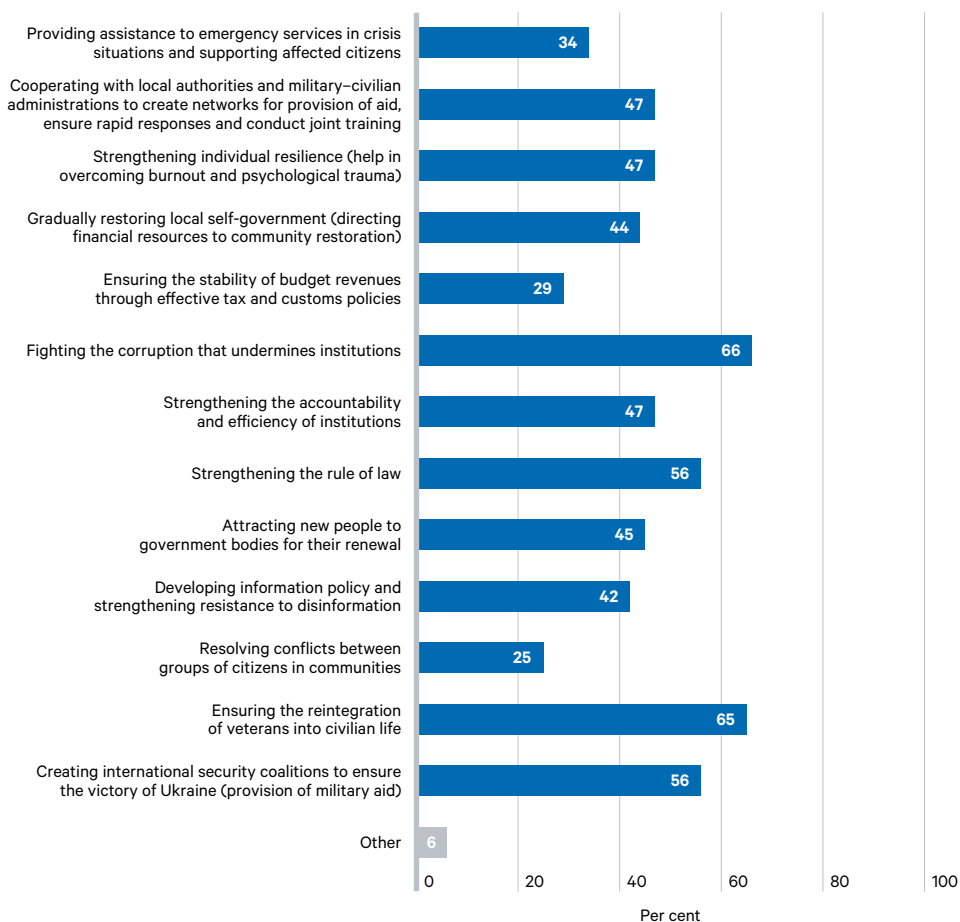
⁸ International Renaissance Foundation (2024), *A Vision of Resilience: Proposal for the civil agenda for URC – 2024*, https://www.irf.ua/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/eng_propozycziyi-shhodo-gromadskogo-poryadku-dennogo-do-urc-2024-kopiya.pdf.

⁹ Novyny Live (2024), 'Депутатка назвала кількість ветеранів війни в Україні та з якими проблемами вони стикаються' [People's Deputy of Ukraine names the number of veterans in Ukraine and the problems they face], 19 February 2024, <https://videos.novyny.live/warnews/deputatka-nazvala-kilkist-veteraniv-viini-v-ukrayini-ta-z-iakimi-problemami-voni-stikaiutsia-153865.html>.

All eyes on institutions

Ukrainian civil society strongly perceives wartime resilience as being linked to effective institutions and the rule of law. This agenda is seen as relevant nationwide, but Kyiv-based groups accord it slightly more importance. Fighting corruption, strengthening the rule of law, and making institutions accountable and effective all ranked highly in the survey as key elements of wartime resilience. Pushing for accountability emerged as a slightly higher priority for Kyiv-based civil society groups.

Figure 2. Elements of resilience



As in 2022, CSOs across Ukraine named the modernization of institutions as the top priority for recovery. This was followed by the need to rebuild infrastructure, and to provide support and incentives for businesses to renew economic activity. Civil society's sentiments regarding political structures reflect widespread popular demand for democracy, even in wartime. According to separate polling by the Democratic Initiatives Foundation, some 42 per cent of Ukrainians nationwide believe that only electoral democracy, the rule of law and independent courts can guarantee order in society. Only 19 per cent seek a personalistic 'strong man' leadership system.¹⁰

¹⁰ Democratic Initiatives Foundation (2024), 'Соціально-політичні орієнтації та проблеми мобілізації в Україні – загальнонаціональне опитування' [Socio-political orientations and mobilization problems in Ukraine – a nationwide survey], 25 April 2024, <https://dif.org.ua/article/sotsialno-politichni-orientatsii-ta-problemi-mobilizatsii-v-ukraini-zagalnonatsionalne-opituvannya>.

A strong focus on reform and institutions could enable Ukraine to use time during the war to build an effective recovery mechanism that wins the trust both of donors and of Ukrainian citizens. Post-war Ukraine could then be ready to receive much bigger amounts of funding into an already well-oiled and functional public investment 'machine'. The process of EU membership accession, due to start in late 2024, could facilitate the establishment both of a system aligned to EU standards and of a national development plan focused on community-driven recovery.

Resilience at the local level means ensuring viable cross-sectoral cooperation. Regional CSOs are especially eager to cooperate with local authorities and civilian-military administrations in creating networks for crisis support and rapid response. They are interested in participating in tabletop exercises to better prepare emergency responses; such exercises proved effective in preparing some Ukrainian cities ahead of the 2022 full-scale invasion. Regional CSOs are also eager to support emergency services and local populations in the event of disasters. Given the intensity of Russian drone and missile attacks, this is a great resource of community resilience.¹¹

Individual resilience and mental health

Thanks to the growing efforts of many experts, as well as First Lady Olena Zelenska, to raise awareness of mental health issues, individual resilience has come into sharper focus.¹² Such issues are particularly – though not uniquely – relevant for people involved in fighting and for those sustaining the home front. Independent experts are warning of the risks of depleted individual resilience.¹³ The new push to mobilize a larger fighting force and build troop reserves means that personal endurance and resilience are more important than ever. Some 47 per cent of CSO survey respondents believe it is important to support individual resilience and learn how to help those dealing with burnout and mental health issues, including trauma (see Figure 2, p. 6).

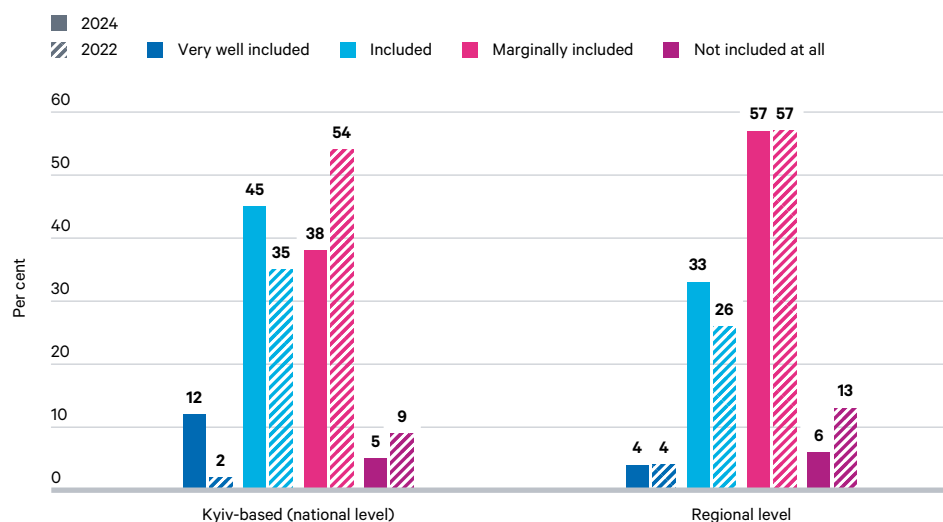
State engagement of CSOs in recovery

To date, despite the obvious advantages of civil society engagement, state institutions have struggled to design effective frameworks for civil society participation in recovery. Compared to 2022, the situation has improved at the national level but is stagnating in the regions. 57 per cent of Kyiv-based groups report very active or active state engagement in the recovery effort. This is a significant increase compared to 2022, when only 37 per cent gave such a positive response (see Figure 3, p. 8).

¹¹ In March 2024 alone, Russia launched over 130 missiles, 320 drones and 900 guided bombs at targets in Ukraine.
¹² Ти як? (2024), ['How are you?'], all-Ukrainian mental health programme at the initiative of First Lady Olena Zelenska, <https://howareu.com>.

¹³ Zerembo, K. and Yurchuk, Y. (2024), 'The Human Face of Ukrainian Resilience', CEES, State of the Region Report, 2024, https://sh.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1846696/FULLTEXT01.pdf?fbclid=IwAR3JrDl4rj_r9aN0VC40bbXlq7PvQ_SkWKX2seYEoCZDau3oVLRloHPsw6zI_aem_AcUQraFQ5gBi32ZgrnolZTmO21PFz7LFmP621o0SzTzKmrISL2grxvsIj_naWzn7AakoEEHujBQCxxMCUooeRdll.

Figure 3. What is the level of state engagement of civil society in recovery (Kyiv-based and regional)?



Those groups that consider themselves to be well engaged by the state report that the most useful ways for civil society to contribute to recovery efforts are as follows: participation in project design for Western funders; attendance at the URC; participation in working groups in government ministries; and CSO monitoring of recovery projects at the local level. Governmental efforts in 2023–24 to engage CSOs in developing the Ukraine Plan under the EU Facility, or under the Digital Recovery Ecosystem for Accountable Recovery Management (DREAM), have proven only marginally effective to date. Only 8 per cent of CSOs that responded to the Chatham House survey in 2024 thought the Ukraine Plan consultations were effective, and only 12 per cent currently see the new DREAM system as an effective civic engagement tool. The main issues are that DREAM is not connected to the allocation of funding, and looks like a collection of individual projects. However, more than a quarter of CSOs hope that DREAM could become more useful in the future.

At the regional level, the situation is less encouraging. National regulations do not mandate the consultation of local citizens or civil society when designing community recovery plans; such measures are only ‘recommended’.¹⁴ As in 2022, the majority of regional groups (63 per cent) report that they are either marginally involved or not involved at all by the authorities. The erosion of Ukraine’s programme of administrative decentralization may be contributing towards this assessment, as may the effects of martial law, which has increased the powers of civilian-military administrations. Limited Western funding and the need to mobilize more resources to support the armed forces have also led to a substantial decrease in the local

¹⁴ Legislation of Ukraine (2023), ‘Розроблення, реалізації та моніторингу плану відновлення та розвитку регіонів і планів відновлення та розвитку територіальних громад’ [Regulation on recovery and development of regions and communities], Cabinet of Ministers, 18 July 2023, <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/731-2023-%D0%BF#n36>.

tax base, which in turn diminishes capacity at the community level to implement recovery projects. Personal income tax is the primary source of funding for local budgets. However, starting from 2024, Kyiv has taken the income tax paid by armed service personnel away from local budgets. Some frontline communities have lost up to 60 per cent of their budget revenues.¹⁵

Obstacles to better cooperation

Both national and regional CSOs believe there is a lack of political will on the part of high-level authorities to engage with civil society in reconstruction. The continued Russian invasion aside, CSOs consider the key obstacles to proper cooperation with civil society to be (a) the lack of information about state recovery efforts and (b) a crisis management mode in government that requires rapid decision-making. The latest survey results do not record a substantial change from the situation in 2022, and the same impediments are in place now as then.

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Among Kyiv-based groups, there has been an increase from 43 per cent to 64 per cent in the proportion of CSOs reporting that a lack of information about state recovery is a problem. This is an even bigger issue for citizens, with data from other surveys covering four regions (Kyiv, Dnipro, Mykolaiv and Sumy) showing that only 4 per cent know about their community recovery plans.¹⁶ On a more positive note, the Chatham House survey shows that regional CSOs rate their own capacity to deal with recovery more highly than they did in 2022.

Advancing collaborative recovery

Overall, civil society groups are seeking a collaborative approach that would enable them to support and share the burdens of the state. They wish to ensure that the interests of vulnerable groups are considered, and that innovative solutions replace the old ways of providing public services. Both Kyiv-based

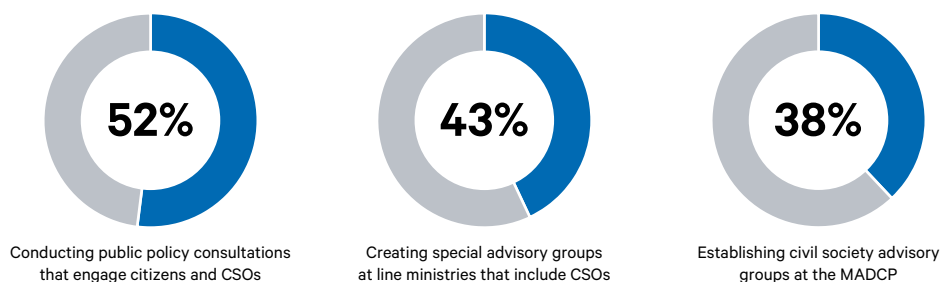
¹⁵ Shpulak, N. (2023), 'Військовий ПДФО: скільки втратять бюджети найбільших міст Хмельниччини та чого чекати їхнім жителям' [Military personal income tax: how much the largest cities in the Khmelnytskyi region will lose from their budgets and what residents can expect as a result], *Suspilne Media*, 17 November 2023, <https://suspilne.media/khmelnytskyi/619383-vijskovij-pdfo-skilki-vtratat-budzeti-najbilsih-mist-hmelniccini-ta-cogo-cekati-ihnim-zitelam>.

¹⁶ Мартупова, І. (2024), 'Люди хочуть, а влада гальмує: що українці знають про післявоєнне відновлення у своїх громадах' [People want it, but the government slows it down: what Ukrainians know about post-war reconstruction in their communities], Anti-Crisis Media Centre, 4 April 2024, <https://acmc.ua/lyudy-hochut-a-vlada-galmuye-shho-ukrayinczi-znayut-pro-pislyavoyenne-vidnovlennya-u-svoyih-gromadah>.

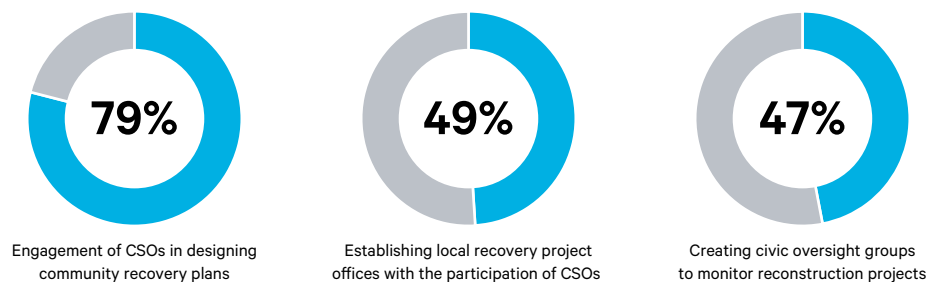
and regional groups want to contribute knowledge, insights and innovation as part of combined state and civil society working groups engaged in designing recovery policy or planning community rebuilding. They also seek a stronger voice at the Multi-Agency Donor Coordination Platform (MADCP), with 39 per cent nationwide supporting the creation of a civil society advisory group at the platform (see Question 10, Annex, p. 20).

Figure 4. What three models of effective engagement of civil society would you propose?

Kyiv-based CSOs see the following top three ways to engage:



Regional CSOs propose the following top three ways to engage:



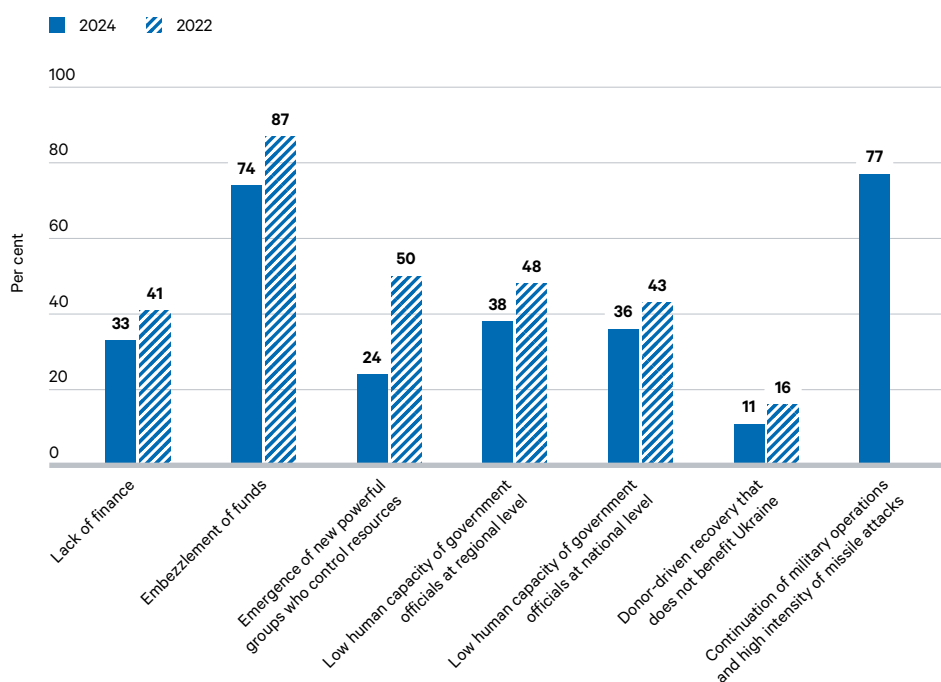
Western donors can play an enabling role by making cooperation between the state and CSOs a condition for funding, ensuring that international financial institutions cooperate with the sector, and earmarking dedicated funding streams for anti-corruption monitoring by civil society. At the regional level, many groups are seeking direct funding to deliver part of the recovery; they advocate for institutional rather than annual project support. It is encouraging to see that the EU Facility includes provisions to apply the European code of conduct on partnership, which could advance the culture of consultations and CSO engagement for projects financed by the EU.¹⁷ This practice is new for Ukraine, but 26 per cent of CSOs that responded to our survey already envisage it having a positive impact for engagement at the regional level (see Question 11, Annex, p.20).

¹⁷ Publications Office of the European Union (2014), 'The European code of conduct on partnership in the framework of the European structural and investment funds', January 2014, <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/93c4192d-aa07-43f6-b78e-f1d236b54cb8>.

Awareness of risks

Vladimir Putin's horrific war on Ukraine has left no community in the country untouched. Ukraine's lack of air defence, its small air force and the continued daily Russian bombardments remain critical risks for recovery efforts at this stage. Many emergency workers and energy engineers regularly risk their lives trying to recover people from the rubble of destroyed housing or to restore electricity in areas damaged in the conflict.

Figure 5. What are the main risks for recovery?*



* Note: The last answer option ('Continuation of military operations ...') was added in the 2024 survey and did not feature in the 2022 survey.

Security factors aside, the surveyed CSOs note other domestic risks for recovery. Given Ukraine's incomplete reforms, it is only natural that CSOs focus on governance. The leading concern after military factors is the risk of embezzlement or misuse of recovery funding. This sentiment is informed by frequent exposure of corruption. Although Ukraine has improved its rating in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index for 2023,¹⁸ this is not reflected in the Chatham House survey results. Three-quarters of surveyed CSOs (albeit down from 87 per cent in 2022) identify risks relating to the embezzlement of funds as a major concern.

Previous successes in establishing new anti-corruption agencies have enabled sporadically effective responses. In 2023, Kyiv regional authorities investigated 90 cases related to the alleged misuse of recovery funds.¹⁹ At the higher political

¹⁸ Transparency International (2024), 'Corruption Perceptions Index', <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2023>.
¹⁹ *Ukrinform* (2024), 'Розкравання на відбудові: торік на Київщині розслідували 90 проваджень' [Theft during reconstruction: 90 cases investigated in the Kyiv region last year], 29 January 2024, <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-vidbudova/3819802-rozkradanna-na-vidbudovi-torik-na-kiivsini-rozsliduvai-90-provadzen.html>.

level, three criminal investigations – led by the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine and the Special Anticorruption Prosecutor – are ongoing against members of parliament, involving accusations of bribery or attempted bribery in exchange for various contracts or preferential recovery projects in selected constituencies.²⁰ One of the cases has already been transferred to the High Anti-Corruption Court for prosecution.²¹

Survey respondents see current threats to the integrity of the recovery as coming more from within the system than from potential future vested interests that could emerge around cashflows of recovery funds. In contrast, there has been a 26-percentage-point drop nationwide in the share of CSOs worried about new vested interests capturing recovery resources (see Figure 5, p.11).

Fears about the capacity of national and local governments to implement recovery remain high, but have slightly decreased at the local level. However, many CSOs are still struggling to get access to training themselves. Among respondents to our survey, 55 per cent of Kyiv-based groups and 44 per cent of regional groups have had no opportunity to improve their skills for the design and implementation of recovery projects (see Question 16, Annex, p. 23).

Recommendations

Many recommendations that were prepared as part of earlier Chatham House analysis remain relevant, reflecting insufficient efforts by the state thus far to engage civil society in the recovery. For a detailed list of action points for the Ukrainian government, civil society and Western donors, please refer to the 2023 briefing paper *Giving civil society a stake in Ukraine's recovery*.²²

Ukraine's pre-war lessons on effective implementation of reforms have limitations in informing planning for the new future emerging now, during the war. This future is driven by reforms linked to the prospect of EU and NATO membership, by the need to 'decolonize' identity and popular opinion, and by the need to ensure the new systems and solutions that emerge from this crisis enable Ukraine to continue resisting Russian aggression. Civil society's own thoughts and actions further enable resistance and resilience. The sector is highly involved in supporting war-affected groups and building a vision of the future, but so far lacks systemic co-creation and implementation vehicles to meaningfully contribute innovative solutions at scale.

²⁰ Vodyanyu, A. (2023), "Мустафа просил научить пользоваться криптовалютой" Позиция нардепа Одарченко по делу НАБУ ["Mustafa asked to be taught how to use crypto." People's Deputy Odarchenko's position on the NABU case], *La Liga*, 22 November 2023, <https://finance.liga.net/cryptoeconomics/novosti/mustafa-prosil-nauchit-polzovatsya-kriptoy-pozitsiya-nardepa-odarchenko-po-delu-nabu>.

²¹ Matiash, T. (2024), 'НАБУ передала до суду справу нардепа Одарченка, який намагався підкупити Наема біткоїнами' [NABU has transferred the case of member of parliament Odarchenko to court. He was trying to bribe Mustafa with bitcoins], *Lb.ua*, 16 April 2024, https://lb.ua/society/2024/04/16/608739_nabu_peredala_sudu_spravu_nardepa.html.

²² Lutsevych (2023), *Giving civil society a stake in Ukraine's recovery*.

Given the key findings from the 2024 survey, the following additional action points are recommended:

Support rapid wartime recovery to boost internal resilience

The prolonged war and continued extreme pressure on Ukrainian cities, companies and citizens are refocusing the conversation in Ukraine from a narrative of post-war recovery to one of how to sustain and replenish resilience right now in wartime. The importance of this should be prioritized and clearly communicated by the national government, including through a transparent selection of target sectors and projects. At the local level, a comprehensive analysis of community resilience with the participation of civil society and government could help inform such policy. The global City Resilience Index could be especially useful as a tool at the local level,²³ while Chatham House's own Resilience Barometer is potentially more applicable as the basis for monitoring resilience at the national level.²⁴

Maintain positive reform momentum and increase inclusion

Since December 2023, Ukraine has officially held EU pre-accession status. CSOs and influential reform-minded government officials should use the momentum provided by Ukraine's membership candidate status and by the newly approved EU Ukraine Facility to advance reform efforts, while promoting integrity and inclusion. Monitoring the Ukraine Plan could be part of this.²⁵ So, too, could introduction of the European code of conduct on partnership, which should provide a catalyst for wider stakeholder consultations around public investments financed by the EU Ukraine Facility. Narrowing down Western conditionality around the rule of law to relaunch key institutions (the Supreme Court, the National Bureau of Investigation) would increase the chances of success.²⁶

Design institutions to implement Ukraine Facility funds at the local level

The EU's Ukraine Facility stipulates that €1.54 billion will be spent at a community level. This presents a practical opportunity to design transparent, accountable and effective institutions to manage those funds with community participation. This could be done through either the State Fund for Regional Development or the National Agency for Recovery. These institutions should receive dedicated support from donors and civil society to continue the pursuit of efforts to prevent and tackle corruption, including strong civic monitoring of central and regional offices. Progress in implementing the new Anti-Corruption Programme for 2023–25 at the State Agency for Restoration and Infrastructure Development should be sustained.

²³ City Resilience Index (2018), <https://www.cityresilienceindex.org>.

²⁴ Chatham House (2024), *Resilience Barometer: countering malign foreign interference: Methodology and results of a pilot study in Moldova*, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/2024-03/2024-03-22-resilience-barometer.pdf>.

²⁵ Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (2024), *Ukraine Plan 2024-2027*, <https://www.ukrainefacility.me.gov.ua/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/ukraine-facility-plan.pdf>.

²⁶ Lough, J. and Lutsevych, O. (2024), *Building long-term resilience in Ukraine: The battle with corruption in wartime*, Wilton Park Conference pre-read, February 2024, <https://www.astrid-online.it/static/upload/2024/2024-03-19-building-long-term-resilience-ukraine.pdf>.

Establish robust national and regional civil society and citizen engagement frameworks

The Ukrainian government should mandate consultations with citizens and civil society over the design and implementation of community recovery and development plans. This would also increase public awareness of local and national recovery efforts.

Establish an independent cross-sectoral recovery facilitation unit

Given civil society consensus around the critical societal issues posed by war, thematic task forces should be created as part of a recovery facilitation unit. Membership of these task forces should include civil society, government agencies, donors, members of parliament and private sector entities, with the aim of designing viable policies and actions to address critical issues. Key themes for task force action could include the reintegration of veterans, ensuring national unity and social cohesion, supporting the wartime generation of children and young people in obtaining a quality education, and addressing the demographic crisis associated with war-related casualties and high migration outflows of women and children. Operating in a similar way to the Reanimation Package of Reforms (RPR), such a network – with a secretariat – could consolidate collective thinking, provide feedback from target groups, contribute localized knowledge and apply pressure for urgent solutions.

Collect and promote best practice in recovery

It is important that lessons around best practice in implementing recovery at the national and local levels are documented, shared and celebrated. Independent assessments could be conducted by Ukrainian think-tanks or coalitions of CSOs. The findings could be compiled by the recovery facilitation unit and shared widely. Instances of corruption are often highlighted by the media, yet success stories of improvements in governance in relation to recovery rarely make front-page news.

Support social innovation

There is a strong desire among civil society to contribute to social innovation. Private foundations and venture philanthropists should invest in prototyping solutions for the most critical societal problems. Ukraine's recovery will be the defining European economic project of a generation. The 'societal innovation sandbox' approach could help not only Ukraine, but also other countries in the future. Ukraine is already a leading example of digital democracy; it could also champion innovation in social services, education, urban sustainability and mental health.

Take regional diversity into account

CSOs, especially those based in Kyiv, that are assisting communities to build resilience and recovery should always bear in mind that there is no 'one size fits all' approach. Ongoing war and the proximity of the northeast regions of Ukraine to aggressor or potential aggressor states (Russia and Belarus) continue to impede development prospects in those territories and communities. Each community is unique and has different human and economic resources. Ukraine's regions also face different security exposures. The civil society sector should improve its capacity for planning territorial development and should strengthen skills to run facilitated public consultations, conduct needs assessments, and harvest data from various sources to tailor its approach to each specific context.

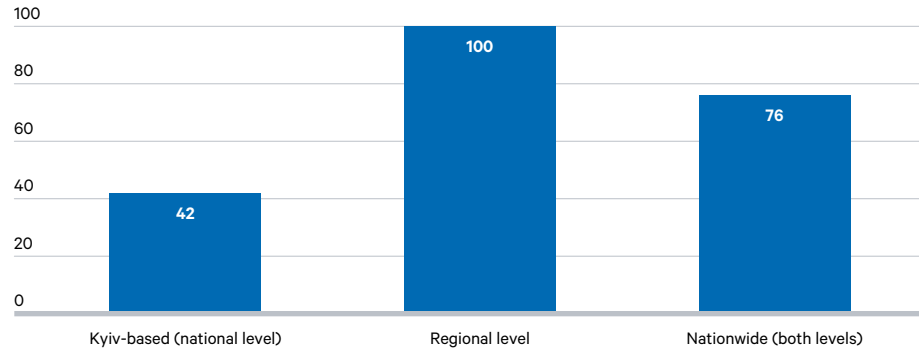
Annex: Survey methodology

To conduct the survey of CSOs, Chatham House partnered with the International Renaissance Foundation, the Initiative Center to Support Social Action (ISAR Ednannia), and five CSO coalitions (Network of Recourse Centres for Local Democracy, RISE Ukraine, the EU–Ukraine Civil Society Platform, Ukrainian Climate Network and Ukrainian Women Congress). The survey, conducted via SurveyMonkey in Ukrainian and made up of 16 structured questions and one ‘open’ question, was circulated to 585 registered CSOs. Of these, 218 organizations completed the survey (a response rate of 37 per cent). This is a similar response rate to that in 2022. The geographical distribution of CSOs that completed the survey was: Kyiv-based groups operating only or chiefly at national level (42); regional-level groups (100); and groups working at both national and regional level (76). For each of the 16 structured questions, respondents were asked to pick from a range of responses, with a specific instruction depending on the question (single choice; choose three; all relevant choices).

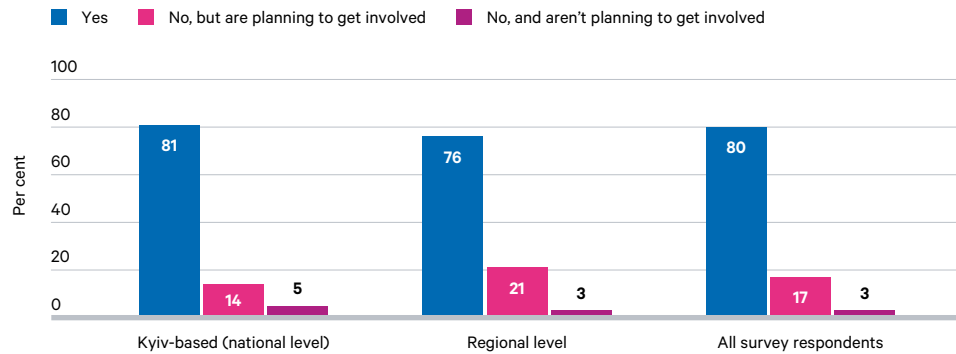
Most of the questions were repeated from 2022, but we added a few new questions on socially critical issues, key elements of resilience, and assessment of current models of civil society engagement by the government. We added women as a separate stakeholder group. For several questions, there was also a free-text field for ‘other’ responses. Chatham House’s team travelled to Kyiv to host a public discussion on 13 May 2024. The event, co-hosted with the International Renaissance Foundation, gathered civil society leaders to discuss the preliminary survey results and identify ideas for recommendations subsequently presented in this document.

The full list of structured responses is provided below.

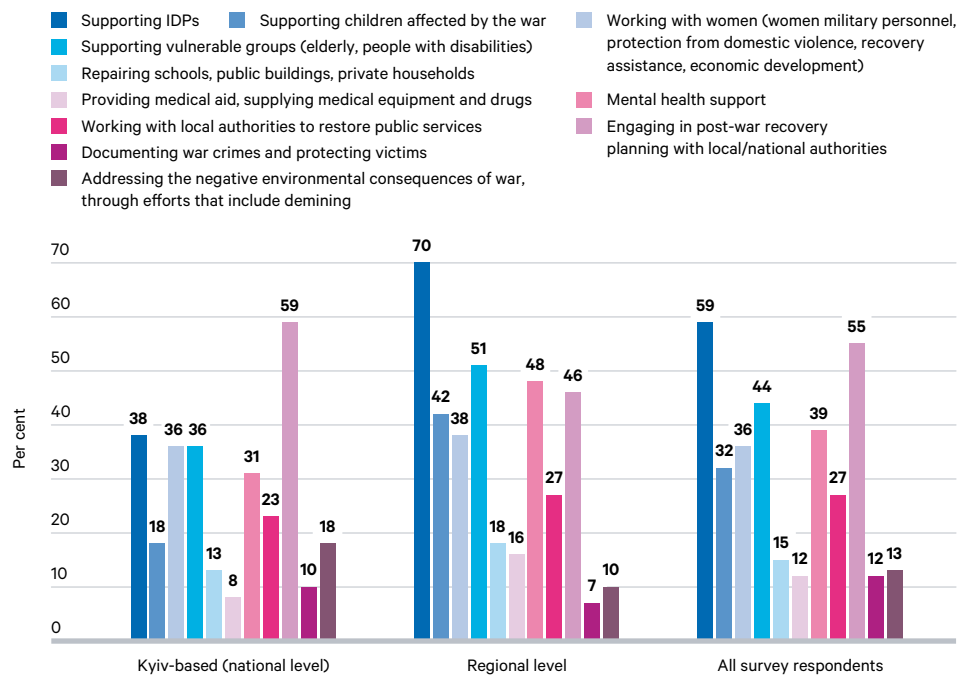
Question 1. Where does your organization primarily work? [single choice]



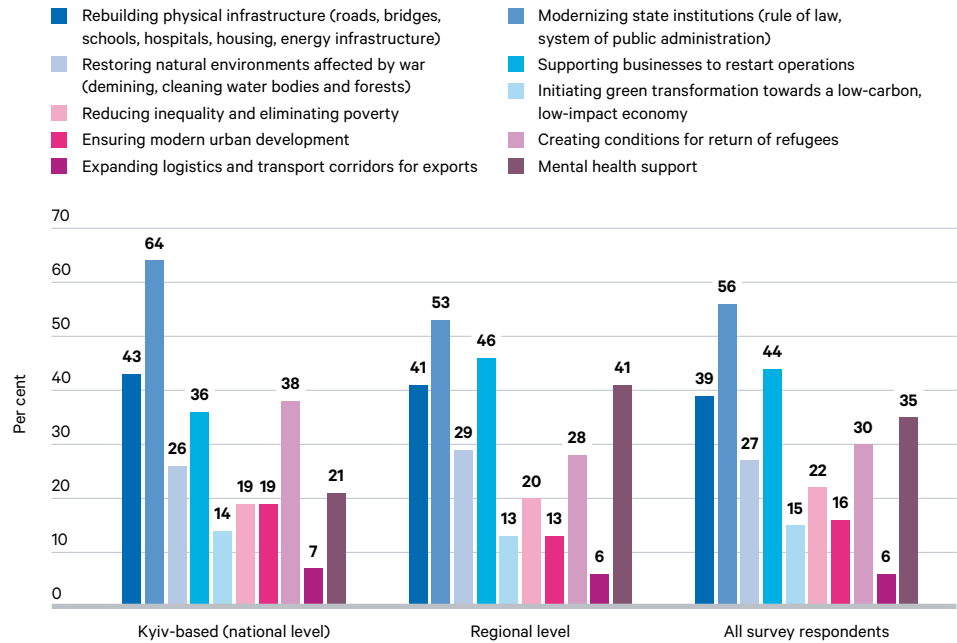
Question 2. Are you already involved in recovery efforts to repair the damage caused by the Russian invasion? [single choice]



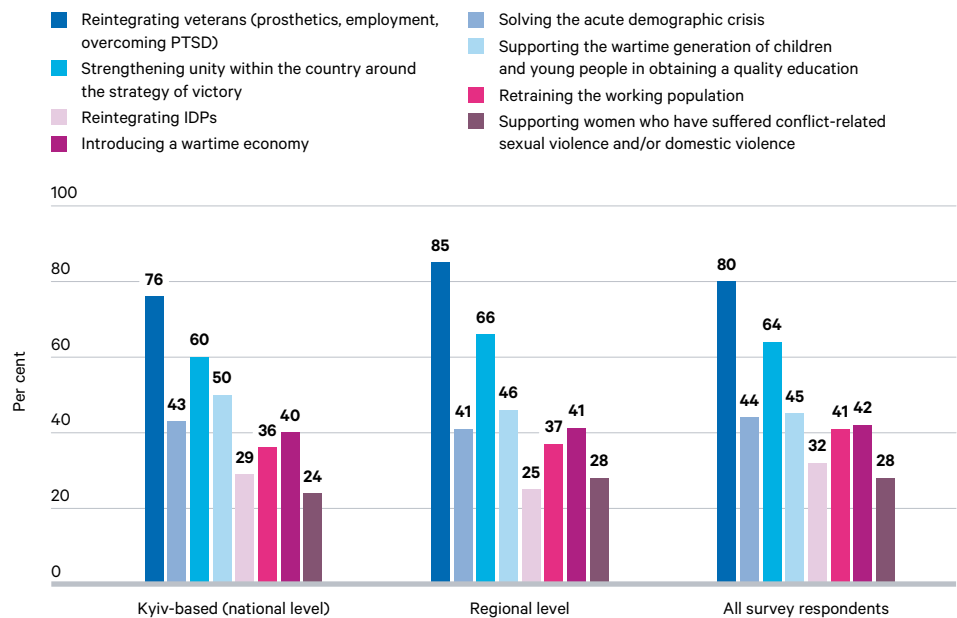
Question 3. If YES, what kind of activities have you been conducting since 24 February 2022? [multiple choice]



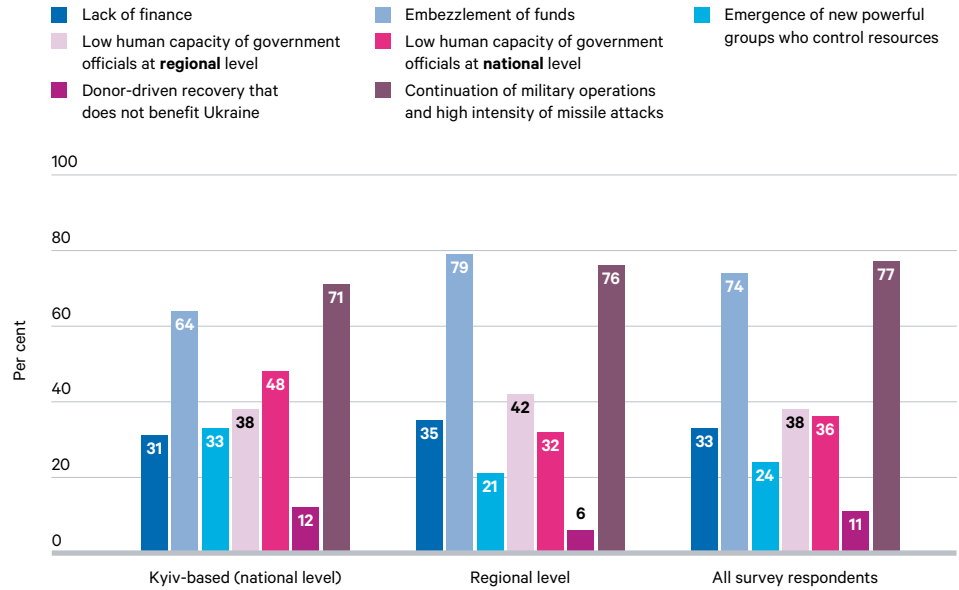
Question 4. Please select three priorities for recovery that should begin even while the war is ongoing



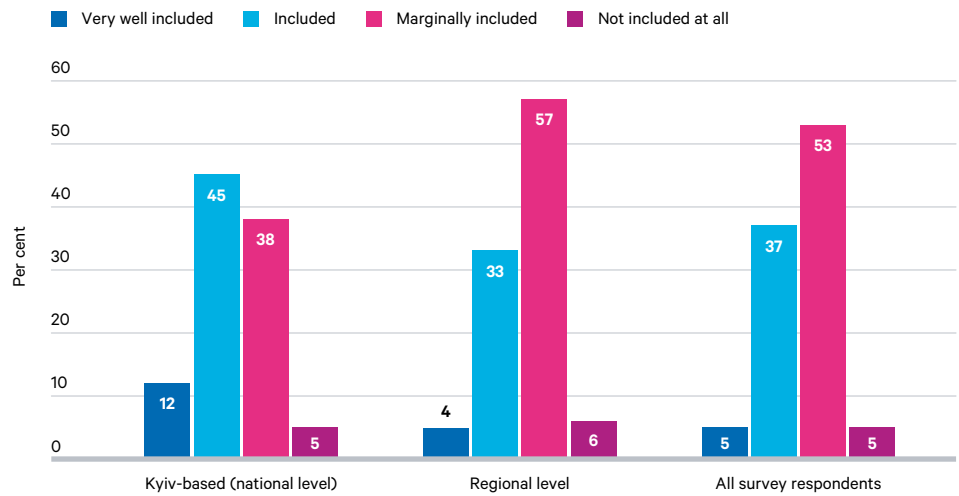
Question 5. What are the most pressing social challenges that should be addressed by the combined efforts of the government, business and civil society? [multiple choice]



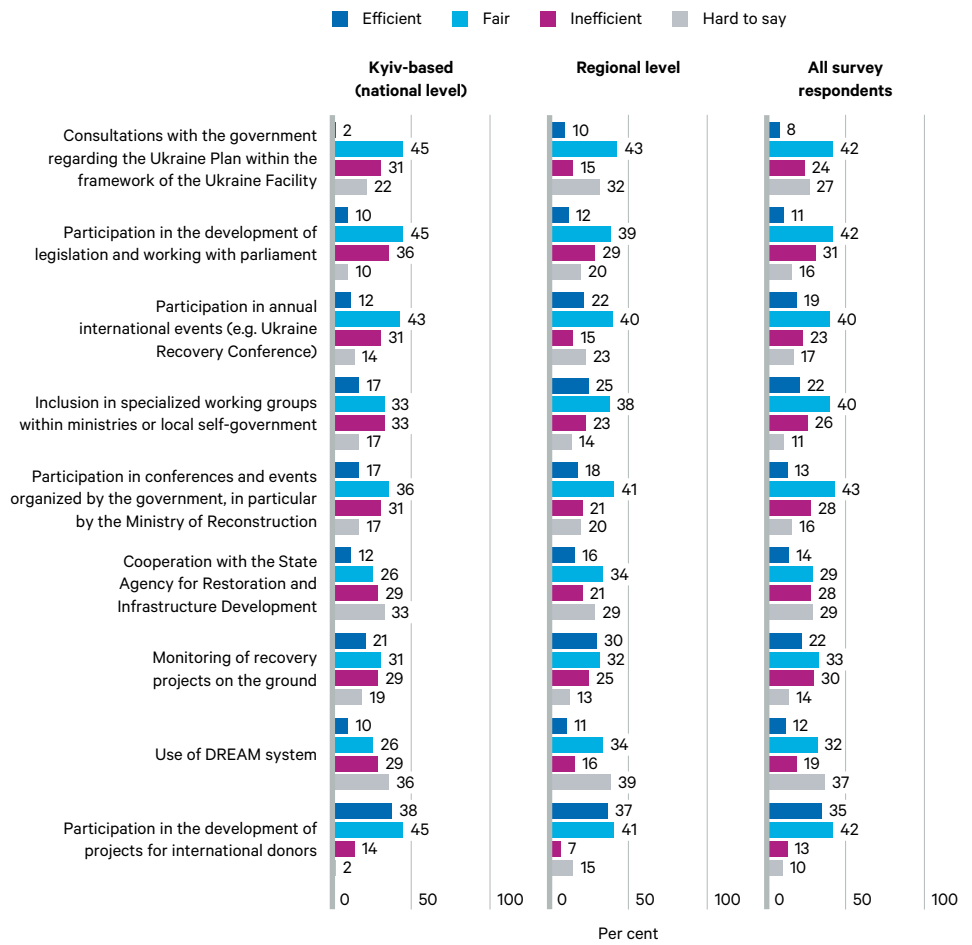
Question 6. What are the three top risks for rebuilding Ukraine? [choose three]



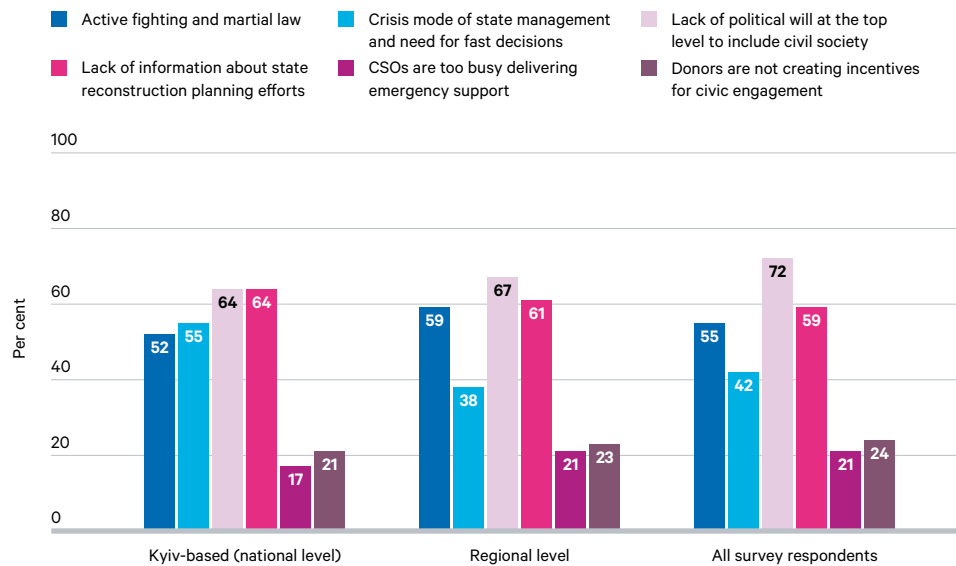
Question 7. How would you rate the inclusion of civil society in planning reconstruction to date? [single choice]



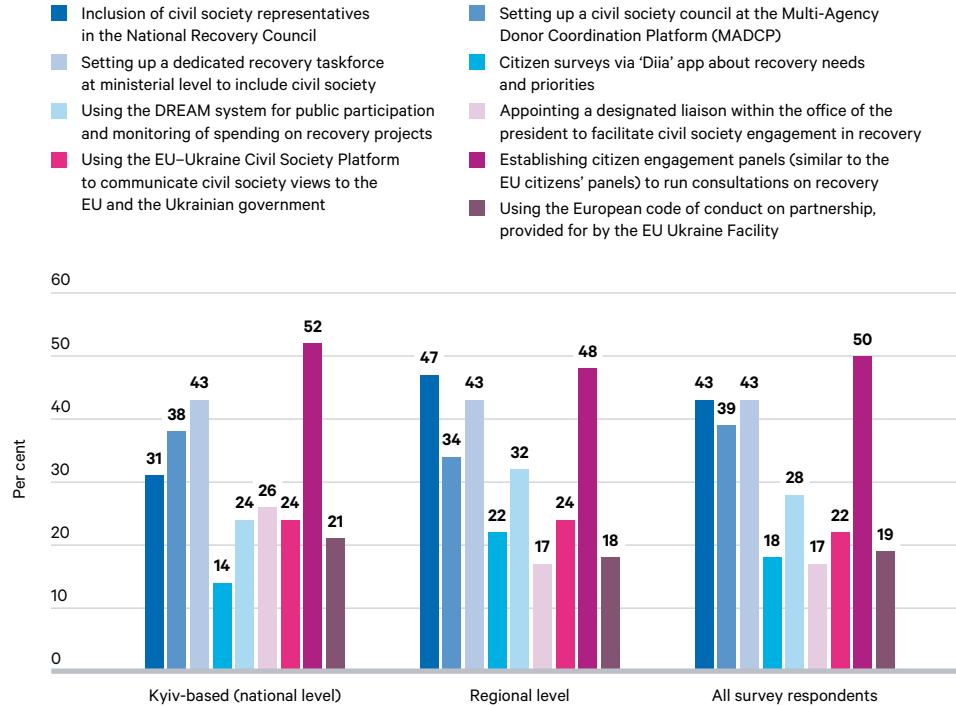
Question 8. How would you rate the existing formats for involving civil society in recovery? [rate each format]



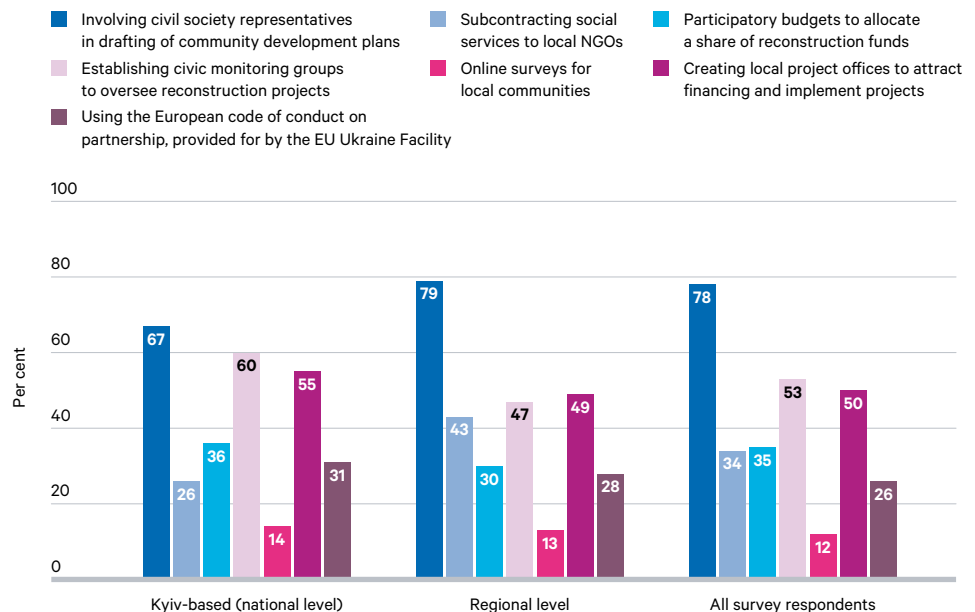
Question 9. What are the three main obstacles to stronger engagement of civil society in reconstruction at present? [choose three]



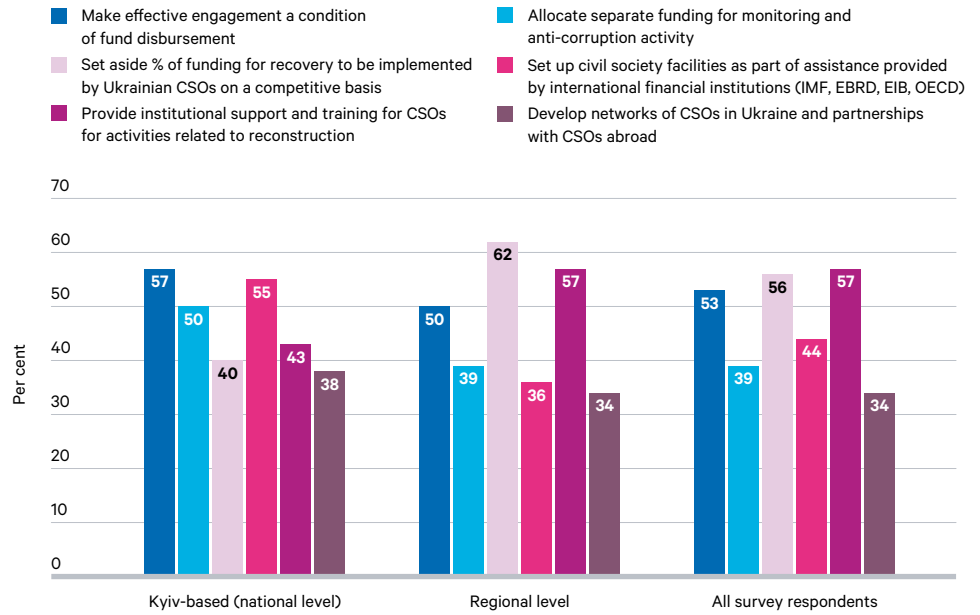
Question 10. What three models of effective engagement of civil society in recovery would you propose at present (under martial law) at national level? [choose three]



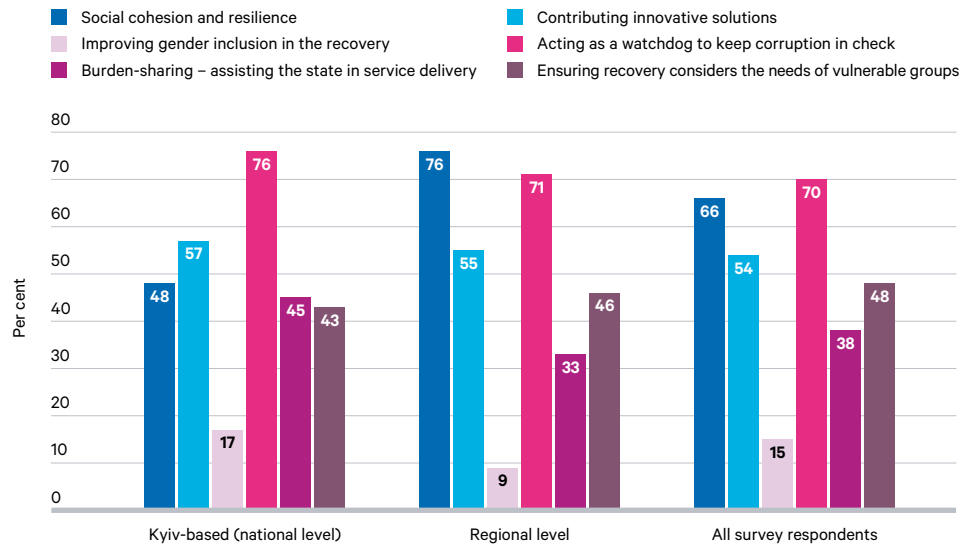
Question 11. What three models of effective engagement of civil society in recovery would you propose at present (under martial law) at regional level? [choose three]



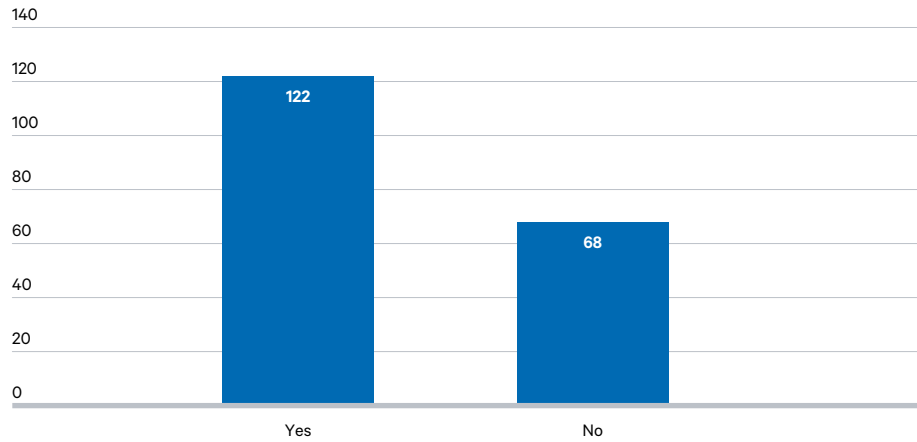
Question 12. How could external funders facilitate civil society engagement?
[multiple choice]



Question 13. What is the main value added of civil society engagement in Ukraine's recovery? [multiple choice]



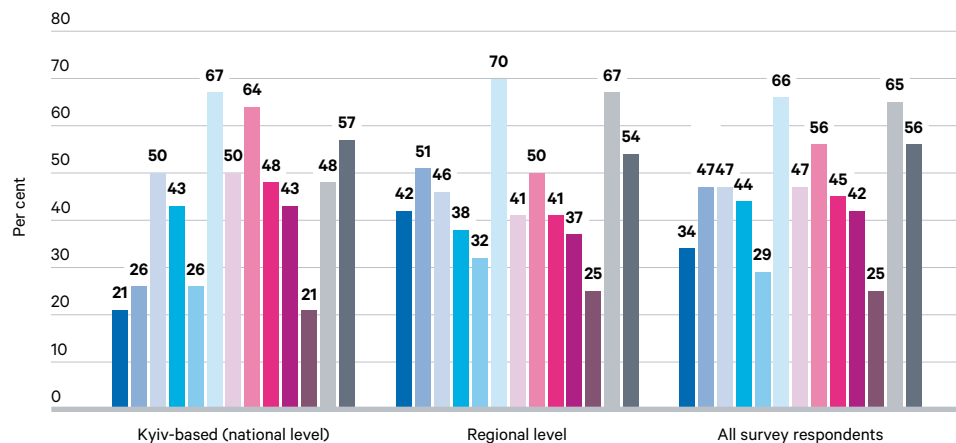
Question 14. Do you see certain risks and challenges related to CSOs' engagement in reconstruction processes? [open question]*



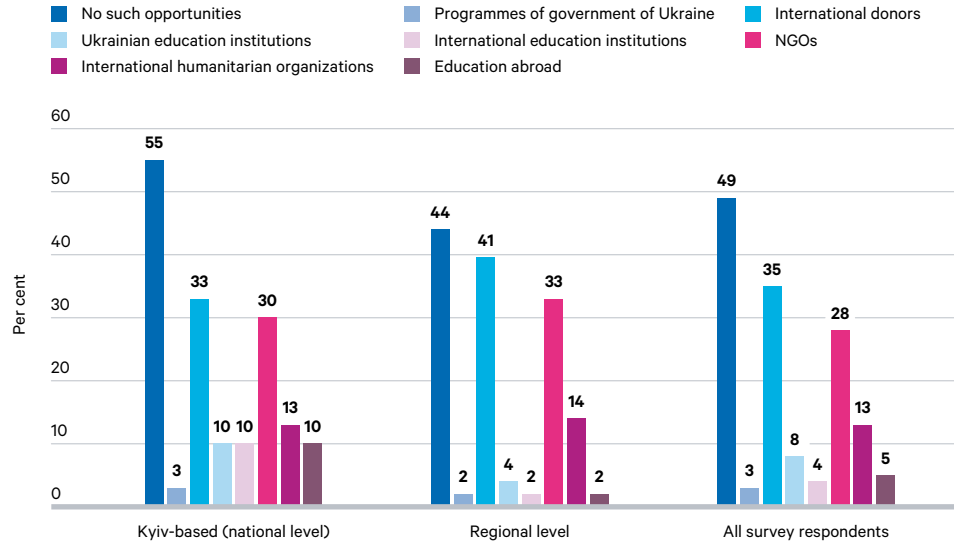
*Main risks cited by CSOs: lack of experience and knowledge, selective engagement of politically affiliated or government-funded CSOs, lack of coordination between CSOs, and lack of strategy for recovery.

Question 15. Which elements of societal resilience should be prioritized during wartime? [multiple choice]

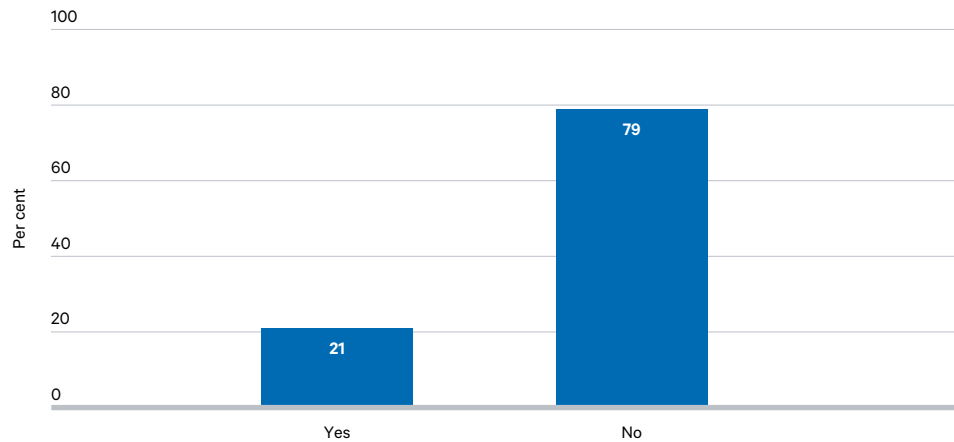
- Providing assistance to emergency services in crisis situations and supporting affected citizens
- Cooperating with local authorities and military-civilian administrations to create networks for provision of aid, ensure rapid responses and conduct joint training
- Strengthening individual resilience (help in overcoming burnout and psychological trauma)
- Gradually restoring local self-government (directing financial resources to community restoration)
- Ensuring the stability of budget revenues through effective tax and customs policies
- Fighting the corruption that undermines institutions
- Strengthening the accountability and efficiency of institutions
- Strengthening the rule of law
- Developing information policy and strengthening resistance to disinformation
- Attracting new people to government bodies for their renewal
- Ensuring the reintegration of veterans into civilian life
- Resolving conflicts between groups of citizens in communities
- Creating international security coalitions to ensure the victory of Ukraine (provision of military aid)



Question 16. Have you or members of your organization had the opportunity to upskill to manage recovery projects? If not, please select the appropriate option. If yes, please indicate who offered this training [choose one]



Question 17. Did you participate in the 2022 Chatham House survey of Ukrainian CSOs? [choose one]



About the author

Orysia Lutsevych is deputy director of the Russia and Eurasia Programme and head of the Ukraine Forum at Chatham House.

Orysia's research focuses on social change, the role of civil society in democratic transition in Eastern Europe and, most recently, democratic resilience to foreign encroachment. She is the author of several Chatham House research publications, including *Resilient Ukraine: Safeguarding Society from Russian Aggression* (with Mathieu Boulègue, 2020). Her media work includes contributions for the BBC, CNN, the *Guardian*, *The Times*, the *Financial Times* and the *New York Times*.

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