

Gender Policy in Local Governments: How to Improve Development Road?

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ABSTRACT

The paper focuses on mainstreaming gender equality goals at the level of local government. On the part of local government, this requires foremost the using these different needs to inform all local governance processes – policymaking, planning, budget allocation, Programme development, local service delivery and performance monitoring – in order to directly address existing gender inequalities. The authors proposed a methodology for assessing the gender orientation of local management systems, which is designed in the following parameters: Gender Focal Point (in the organizational structure), gender-sensitive leadership style, gender budget, gender statistics, and gender planning, gender-responsible performance. The use of qualitative characteristics of gender orientation in the local management system allows for both internal introspection and external monitoring. The analysis technique is proposed to the gender content of the municipality website and applied to the Vienna website as a “best practice” of city governance. The model was tested by assessing the gender mainstream practices of local government bodies in Ukraine. In addition, a comparative analysis, and monitoring of the websites of the municipalities of cities with a population of one million in Ukraine (Kyiv, Kharkiv, Dnipro) was carried out. This will allow municipalities to design an individual trajectory for improving gender-mainstreaming practices.

Keywords: Gender mainstreaming, Local Governance, Feminine and masculine logical Systems, Municipality website, Equal access, Gender responsibility

INTRODUCTION

Gender equality goals are key elements of a good local governance. Local authority represents the level closest to the people and is a good place to promote models of governance that strive

for a truly egalitarian society. There is a unique position to capitalize on the huge opportunities offered by women's participation across all levels of society. In particular, the women who work and are financially independent have greater control over their own lives and bring positive political and economic contributions to their extended families, their communities and their countries. That is the way the communities must allow women and girls to take up their rightful places in local governance systems. Nevertheless, the road to women's empowerment still features some major obstacles. The different needs, interests, priorities and concerns of women and men, girls and boys as citizens are not properly considered. On the part of local government, this requires foremost the using these different needs to inform all local governance processes – policymaking, planning, budget allocation, programme development, local service delivery and performance monitoring – in order to directly address existing gender inequalities. In such a situation, scientific and practical developments in assessing the gender maturity of municipal government become extremely valuable.

Gender-responsive Local Governance

Gender-responsive local governance is about making sure that all local governance processes, procedures and systems are developed and implemented in ways that take into account the different needs of women and men. Therefore, it is not just about including more women in local governance processes – although achieving gender balance at all levels of local governance is an important first step. It is about making sure that in all its activities, local governments take into account gender inequalities, and address as well as reduce these through their policies, programmes and activities (Conley, 2010; Näslund-Hadley, 2008). Effective implementation of gender mainstreaming technologies requires an appropriate level of “gender maturity” (Fesenko, 2017) and an appropriate “response” to the management system.

A special place among the gender approaches to the assessment of the maturity of management is occupied by web-analyze. The gender perspective should be visible content on the official websites of local communities. Among the best practices for introducing gender mainstreaming approaches to the project management system is the experience of Vienna (Bauer, 2013). The city administration created a “Gender Focal Point (GFP)” to implement gender mainstreaming in all areas of governance, which in turn ensured: equal access to public administration services, openness budgeting processes, and a high level of gender culture. The main function of GFP is “gender filtering” of proposed decisions. It is this municipal structural unit that checks: the needs of various gender groups are taken into account; how the implementation results will affect different gender groups, to what extent, etc. GFP engages experts in gender mainstreaming (gender budgeting, gender audit, gender planning) to make informed and balanced decisions in accordance with the specifics of the problem being solved. In addition, GFP

provides financial confirmation of the fairness of the distribution of budget funds for the implementation of project activities.

The city's official website indicates the priority of integrating gender mainstreaming approaches into Vienna's governance system. The third link on the main page of the section "Politics & Administration" (Figure 1) is gender aspects (Gender Mainstreaming).



Figure 1: The official website of the Vienna municipality

Vienna's gender mainstreaming approach is based on five principles.

1. Application of gender-sensitive language to all forms of documents, telephone directories, texts on the internal network and the Internet, advertising messages and news. Gender-sensitive choice of images is used in the preparation of visual materials.
2. Collection and analysis of data on specific gender issues. Gender segregation of all data (as far as possible) with the separation of social aspects (age, ethnicity, income level, level of education) is envisaged. Gender-sensitive statistics, analytics is a mandatory component of determining the status quo.
3. Equal access and access to services. All municipal services are evaluated taking into account the differences in their impact on women and men, namely:
 - who is the user of the service (woman, man);
 - differences in the needs of women and men;
 - the degree of consideration of the differences in the circumstances of women and men in the planning and design of services;

- the level of access of all target groups to the same sources of information;
 - which gender group of users is most discriminated against in provision of services;
 - accessibility and accessibility barriers (inclusiveness) provision of services.
4. Women and men are equally involved in decision-making at all levels. The principles of gender balance are guided in the formation of working and project groups, the composition of commissions and advisory councils, as well as in the organization of events (selection of speakers, participants of the event). It is important that workplaces are also “free of gender barriers” (for example, adequate lighting, architectural and spatial barriers, the availability of a children’s room, etc.).
 5. Integration of gender-sensitive decision-making tools. The main tools of gender-oriented management are considered to be “quality management” and “gender budgeting”. Focusing on the differences in the circumstances of women and men in design decisions provides an increase in the value of project results, and the efficiency of the use of human and financial resources.

Municipality Website: A New Dimension of Assessing the Gender Maturity of the Management System

Website is a necessary element of effective activity of any organization in the conditions of development of modern information technologies. In particular, the Internet resources of the municipality perform a number of important functions, namely: dissemination of information about the activities of the municipality, as well as the provision of services to citizens.

The creation of an information resource for the municipality, which is focused on ensuring safe and high-quality living conditions for every inhabitant (regardless of gender and gender +), is one of the urgent tasks of the municipality. A well-designed municipality website provides comprehensive information on the implementation of gender principles both at the level of individual initiatives and at the level of the organization as a whole. For instance:

- inclusion of a gender component (gender sensitivity) in city development strategies;
- observance of gender partnership (gender participation) in the organizational structure of the municipality, city council, deputy commissions, teamwork (Akirav, 2021; Holman, 2017);
- implementation/conduct of gender audit and monitoring as a systematic activity;
- implementation of programs to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men;
- demonstration/achievement of the best results of the implementation of gender mainstream

- technologies/practices, benchmarking of gender-responsive management;
- provision of gender-sensitive services, achievement of gender-balanced results/products of projects;
- maintaining gender balance/equity in financing resilience and mobilizing resources is the foundation of a strong and sustainable city development.

The author’s approach is based on an attempt to assess the level of gender mainstreaming in the municipal management system by analyzing the context of its official website. To this end, it is necessary to develop a model of rapid assessment of gender maturity of the website of the municipality in compliance with the gender principle of “gender-balanced management and leadership”. It is proposed to assess the gender maturity of the municipality’s website in the following categories:

1. Mission and strategic planning;
2. Management structure and management styles;
3. Ability to adapt;
4. Partnership and cooperation;
5. Role in the sector;
6. Provision of services.

Characteristics of municipality website content for each of the six categories are proposed in Table 1. The assessment of gender maturity of a municipality website can be carried out using the following scale: “0” – non-compliance with the criterion (information is not available on the website); “1” – compliance with the criterion (information is posted on the website).

Table 1: General structure of parameters for assessing gender maturity of the municipality’s website

Categories of gender maturity	Characteristics of the gender content of the municipality’s website
1. Mission and strategic	1.1. Mission and development strategy contain a gender component (takes planning into account gender diversity) 1.2. Authors-developers of strategic plans, projects, programs are representatives of different gender groups
2. Management structure & management styles	2.1. The presence of a separate structural unit “Gender Focal Point” 2.2. Mayor’s Gender Adviser or Local Gender Representative 2.3. Observance of gender balance in the composition of the top management of the municipality, the deputy council and professional commissions (gender profile of the decision-maker)

Table 1 contd....

Categories of gender maturity	Characteristics of the gender content of the municipality's website
3. Ability to adapt	2.4. Availability of procedures (regulations, rules) for the prevention of gender-based discrimination and conflict resolution on the basis of gender (gender+) 2.5. Center for empowering victims of gender-based violence 3.1. Report on the results of gender audit of management and management style. Gender portrait of the municipality 3.2. Gender segregation of statistical data (including gender+) 3.3. A system of measures for the inclusion / integration of the principles of gender equality, gender-segregated statistical data in decision-making processes, implementation of projects and programs
4. Partnership & cooperation	4.1. The municipality has regular contacts (actively participates) in associations of equal rights and opportunities at the international, national levels, as well as with municipalities in other cities 4.2. Implementation of the local program for ensuring equal rights and opportunities within the framework of the implementation of the national social program for ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men 4.3. The municipality encourages businesses (advertising campaigns) to be socially responsible (including non-discrimination, inclusiveness, women's empowerment) 4.4. Partnership with non-governmental public organizations in the implementation of projects (initiatives) to achieve gender equality
5. Role in the sector	5.1. The municipality demonstrates an active position in the implementation of gender strategies
6. Provision of services	6.1. The municipality improves the qualifications of workers in the application of gender-oriented practices in accordance with the areas of application (construction of infrastructure facilities, city improvement, development of public transport, etc.) 6.2. The municipality has gender-sensitive service standards that meet the best international practices / standards for providing quality municipal services 6.3. The municipality demonstrates the ability to use methods / tools of gender-oriented management for the development of new projects, programs, services 6.4. Information on information events, trainings, schools on the implementation of gender equality principles 6.5. Information on information events, trainings, schools on the implementation of gender equality principles

The proposed methodology for assessing the gender orientation of the municipality website should become an effective tool for enhancing the gender culture of the municipality's management system. The use of qualitative characteristics (Table 1) allows municipalities to assess (self-assess), establish "the state as it is", and outline the trajectory for improving municipal services, urban infrastructure, and the quality of life in the city.

Monitoring the Gender Orientation of the City Management System

The empirical base of this study was formed by content information posted on the official websites of Vienna (Austria), as the best world practice, and the three major cities of Ukraine – Kyiv, Kharkiv and Dnipro.

Vienna – a model city for Gender Mainstreaming (Bauer, U.). There is a functional unit The Integration and Diversity Department (Gender Mainstreaming), which is responsible for the systematic implementation of gender initiatives and projects in the organizational structure of the municipality (Figure 2a). This unit carries out activities aimed at raising community awareness of gender (inclusion, human orientation), the formation and transfer of knowledge, as well as the development of methods of gender-sensitive assessment and reporting on urban project and programs. "Gender Mainstreaming" webpage contains separate tabs: "Equality action plan", "Examples", "Objectives", and "Principles".

It is important that on the first (main) page of the municipality's website, it is the GFP unit that informs the public about municipal services during a coronavirus pandemic COVID-19. The section "Health & Social Services" contains a separate web-page "Integration and Diversity" (Figure 2b), which contains information on municipal counseling services for immigrants, refugees (including women, families, elderly migrants, youth).

The results of the monitoring of integration and diversity (tab "Facts and figures") have become of particular value for this study. The document (Integrations- & Diversitäts- monitor Wien, 2020) presents factual data in the context of: 1 – Demography and migration law; 2 – Equality and participation; 3 – Education; 4 – Employment and labor market; 5 – Income and social security; 6 – Health; 7 – Housing; 8 – Public space and coexistence. These data are an important basis for decision-making, policy-making, and contribute to the objectification of public discussions on migration and gender mainstreaming.

The webpage "Women" also deserves special attention (Figure 3). It is noteworthy that the organizational structure of the City of Vienna, in addition to the Integration and Diversity Department, there is the Municipal Department of Vienna Women's Affairs. It is responsible for creating conditions for a gender-just society and offers women and men equal opportunities to live and work. This municipal department conducts awareness-raising campaigns, develops

a – Web page structure “Gender Mainstreaming”

City of Vienna

Topics City map

Education & Research Business & Media Culture & History Environment & Leisure Health & Social Services Transportation & Urban Planning Living, Housing & Working

wien.at > English > Politics & Administration > Gender Mainstreaming

Bilingual Glossary
City Government
Elections

Gender Mainstreaming

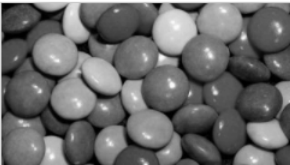

- Equality action plan
- Examples
- Objectives
- Principles

Immigration, Citizenship and Register Offices
Information and Communications Technology
International Relations
Organisation of the City Administration
Press and Information Services
Restitution Matters
Statistics

Gender mainstreaming in Vienna

Gender mainstreaming is a strategy pursued to achieve gender equality in society based on equal structures, settings and conditions for both women and men. Women and men are to enjoy the life they themselves determine.

[Department for Gender Mainstreaming](#)

Gender mainstreaming made easy

A manual of practical examples for more gender equality in the Vienna City Administration. [more](#)

Five principles

Gender-sensitive language and equal opportunities for the participation of women and men in all spheres of life are among the principles of gender mainstreaming. [more](#)

Objectives

Gender mainstreaming is to contribute towards a society of solidarity and gender equality. [more](#)

Examples

Equality of women and men must come to bear at several levels simultaneously. [more](#)

b – Web page structure “Integration and Diversity”

City of Vienna

Topics City map

Education & Research Business & Media Culture & History Environment & Leisure Health & Social Services Transportation & Urban Planning Living, Housing & Working

wien.at > English > Health & Social Services > Integration and Diversity

Child and Youth Welfare Service
Childcare
Children's and Youth Ombuds-Office
Doctors and pharmacies
Health insurance
Help for refugees
Hospitals

Integration and Diversity

- Advice
- Arriving in Vienna
- Facts and figures
- Funding
- International networks
- Language courses

Vaccination
Women

Integration and Diversity

Information in other languages: [Deutsch](#)

During the Corona-Crisis the Municipal Department Integration and Diversity* (MA17) is offering a [multi-lingual Info-Service](#).

Integration is a process where the host society and migrants face a number of challenges and tasks. Integration aims at achieving equality and equal opportunities. Showing respect and acknowledging each other are vital factors in a successful integration process.

Arriving in Vienna

[Services for new migrants](#)
[Services for refugees](#)
[Integration assistance for persons entitled to asylum](#)

German language and basic education courses

[For adults](#)
[For women](#)
[For young people](#)
[For children](#)

Facts and figures

[Migration 2019 – Viennese population](#)
[Integration and Diversity Monitoring](#)

Contact

[Municipal Department 17 – Integration and Diversity](#)
[Municipal Department 35 – Immigration and Citizenship](#)

Figure 2: “Gender Mainstreaming” in the architecture of the official Vienna website

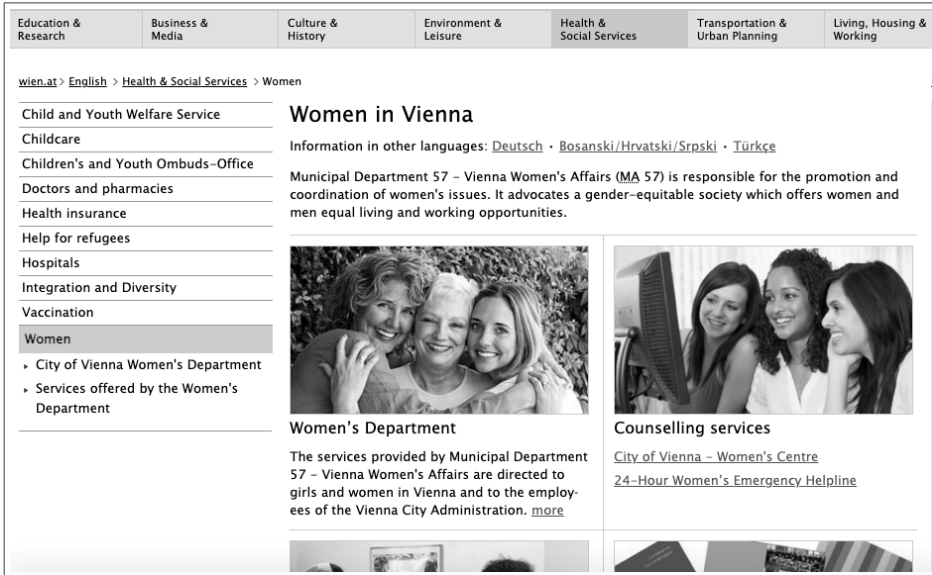


Figure 3: Web page “Women” of the official Vienna website

proposals to address various gender issues, identifies areas for action and participates actively in national and international working groups to promote equal living conditions for women and girls.

Municipal Department “Vienna Women’s Affairs” is implementing several projects. It conducts a gender audit of advertising and responds to complaints about sexism in the city’s visual space, as part of the interactive campaign “A clear position: against violence”.

An annual Women’s Award has also been introduced to improve the “visibility” of women’s achievements. The Department of Vienna Women’s Affairs cooperates with similar divisions of other cities in Central and Eastern Europe within the international network FemCities. This allows the exchange of best practices on regional and local policy issues for gender mainstreaming (Exchanging Best Practices, 2019). Ukrainian cities have not yet joined the international network FemCities, but they have some experience in implementing gender-mainstreaming practices at the local level.

Thus, when searching for the word “gender” on the website of the municipality of Kyiv, the system will offer most results on the topics “Kyiv and city authorities” – 37 results, “Benefits, subsidies and social protection” – 29 results, “Management” – 26 results (Figure 4). The Kyiv Municipality website on “Kyiv and the City Authority” and “Benefits, Subsidies and Social Protection” contains information (statistical data) on domestic violence, as well as municipal services provided to women victims of violence.

The screenshot shows the official website of the Kyiv City State Administration. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the logo of the city, the text 'Офіційний портал Києва' (Official portal of Kyiv), and 'Київська міська рада' (Kyiv City Council). There are also links for 'Версія для людей із вадами зору' (Version for people with visual impairments), 'Особистий кабінет киянина' (Personal cabinet of a citizen), and 'Стара версія' (Old version). Below this is a search bar with the text 'Київ та міська влада' (Kyiv and city authorities), 'Міські сервіси' (City services), 'Громадськості' (Community), 'Публічна інформація' (Public information), 'Для ЗМІ' (For media), and a search icon. The search results for the query 'гендер' (gender) are displayed, showing 89 results. The results are filtered by date (28.03.2002 to 10.03.2021) and type (News, Normative-legal acts, Announcements, Photo gallery, Articles, Online broadcasts, etc.). The first result is a news article titled 'У Києві планують створити новий притулок для жінок, які постраждали від домашнього насильства - 01 березня 2021, 13:59'. The article text mentions that the shelter will provide housing, food, and other support for women who have experienced domestic violence. Other results include statistics on domestic violence cases in Kyiv and information about the 'Gender Equality' center.

Figure 4: The official Kyiv website: search results for “gender”

The “Department for Interaction with Public Organizations of Veterans and Disabled Persons of the Department for Gender Issues and Interaction with Public Organizations for Disabled, War and Labor Veterans” performs the role of GFP in the structure of the Kyiv City State Administration. In addition, the job of a leading specialist of the monitoring department of the state of monitoring the interests of the executive body provides for gender legal examination.

The Municipality of Kyiv has experience in implementing gender-sensitive projects: “Forum of Equal Rights and Opportunities”, “Gender-Oriented Budgeting”, “Kyiv Woman of the Year Competition”, “Kyiv Gender Passport” and others, but the “critical mass” of gender mainstream municipal practices have not yet acquired.

Kharkiv is the second most populous city in Ukraine, a large scientific, cultural and industrial region. The structure of the Kharkiv municipality is not conceptually different from the Kyiv municipality. The implementation of the national social program to ensure equal rights and opportunities is entrusted to the Department of Social Policy (Figure 5). The Municipality of Kharkiv has been developing a portfolio of gender mainstreaming practices since 2003 (Project: Development and lobbying for the adoption of gender budgets – Implementation of democratic public policy, 2003). The city’s Gender Passport has been developed, and a network of University



Figure 5: The official website of the Kharkiv municipality

Gender Centers and the Gender Culture Center have been established. Lecture forums and trainings on gender issues are held regularly. Gender-sensitive projects become winners annually and receive funding under the Public Budget (Participation Budget) of Kharkiv city. A significant event in the introduction of a gender mainstreaming approach in Kharkiv municipal projects is the arrival of the Vienna City Council Commissioner (Bauer, 2013).

Dnipro is the fourth most populous city in Ukraine. According to the information posted on the official website, the Department of Social Policy is responsible for preventing domestic violence, ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men, and combating trafficking in human beings (Figure 6). The municipality has implemented a comprehensive program on family, gender policy, demographic development, prevention of domestic violence and combating trafficking in human beings for 2018–2022.

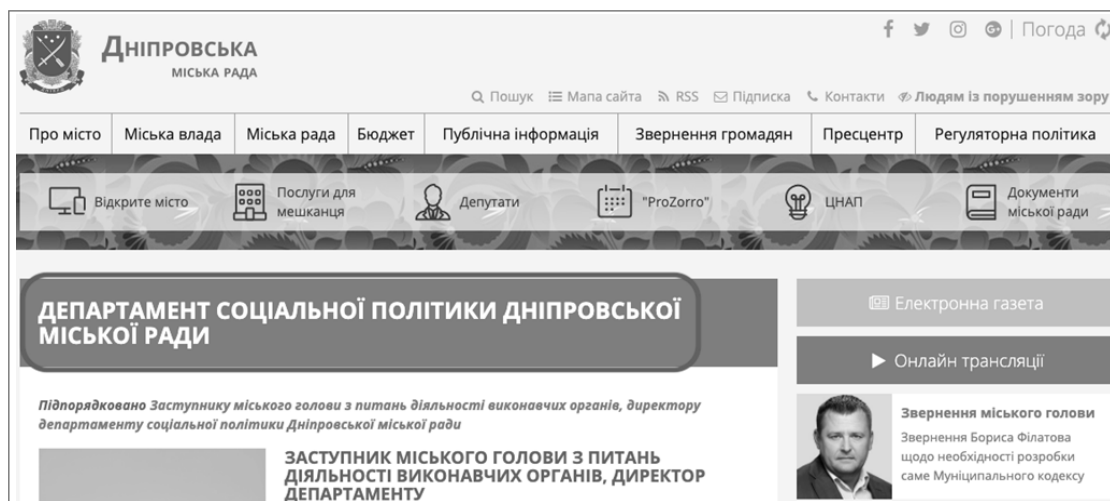


Figure 6: The official website of the Dnipro municipality

There are almost no search results for the query “gender” on the website of the Dnipro municipality. However, this does not indicate the absence of gender practices in the municipality, but the non-disclosure of information on the implementation of gender mainstreaming local initiatives. In particular, in December 2017, a gender audit of the accessibility of urban space was conducted (part of Dmytro Yavornytsky Avenue). At the same time, the Dnipro municipality website contains a significant amount of content on the implementation of inclusion projects in the field of education, sports and healthcare.

Detailed analysis of the municipality’s website and assessment of parameters (Table) allows visualizing the degree of gender orientation using a profilogram (Figure 7).

The proposed approach to assessing the gender orientation of the municipality’s website should become an important tool for improving the system of gender-oriented management of municipal projects and programs. The use of the parameters of the municipality’s website (Table 1) allows for an assessment (both self-assessment and external expert assessment) of the municipality’s activities in terms of implementing gender equality policy. Thus, the trajectory of improving the quality of the municipal system of gender-oriented management is outlined.

The developed methodology for assessing gender orientation should become an important tool for further integration of the principles of gender equality into the system of municipal governance (achieving gender-valued results, reducing the quality of life of the community). The use of qualitative characteristics of gender orientation of the local management system allows for both internal introspection and external monitoring. This will allow municipalities to design an individual trajectory for improving gender mainstreaming practices.

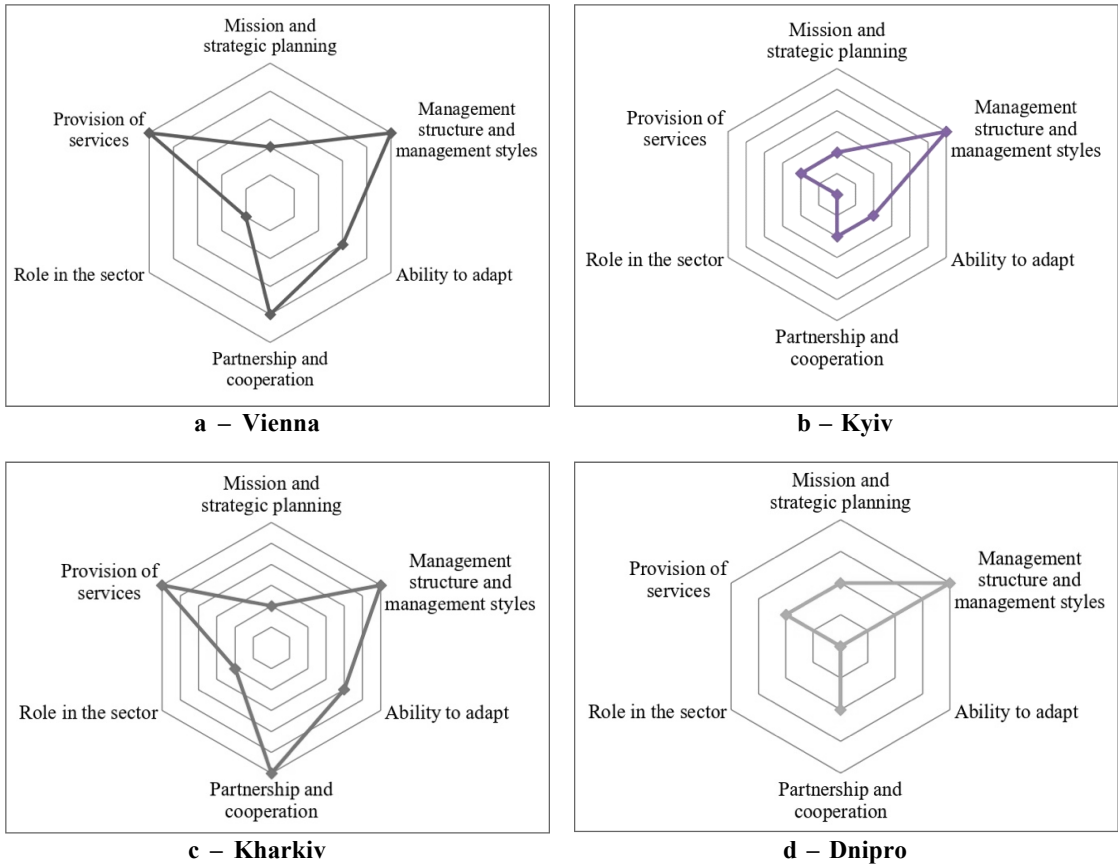


Figure 7: Profilogram of gender orientation assessment of the municipality’s website

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