



# Five government reforms: how to get public support

A brief preliminary report

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**A representative survey of Ukrainian citizens was conducted within the project "Critical Thinking Against Populism" initiated by the Center for Economic Strategy with the support of the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Ukraine.**

The survey was conducted by GfK Ukraine using telephone interviews and focus groups.

2070 interviews were conducted on key reforms - pensions, education, medicine, land and privatization. In order to optimize the duration of the survey, each respondent evaluated in average two randomly selected reforms. In addition, 10 focus groups were held in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Lviv, Lubny - two for each of the reforms. The survey was conducted in July-September 2017.

The sample is representative to the adult population of Ukraine by gender, age, region of residence and the size of the settlement (excluding occupied and uncontrolled government territories). The maximum theoretical sample error is 2.2%.

**Sampling error for reform:**

Assessment of pension reform: 816 respondents were polled, the maximum theoretical error of the sub-sample was 3.4%

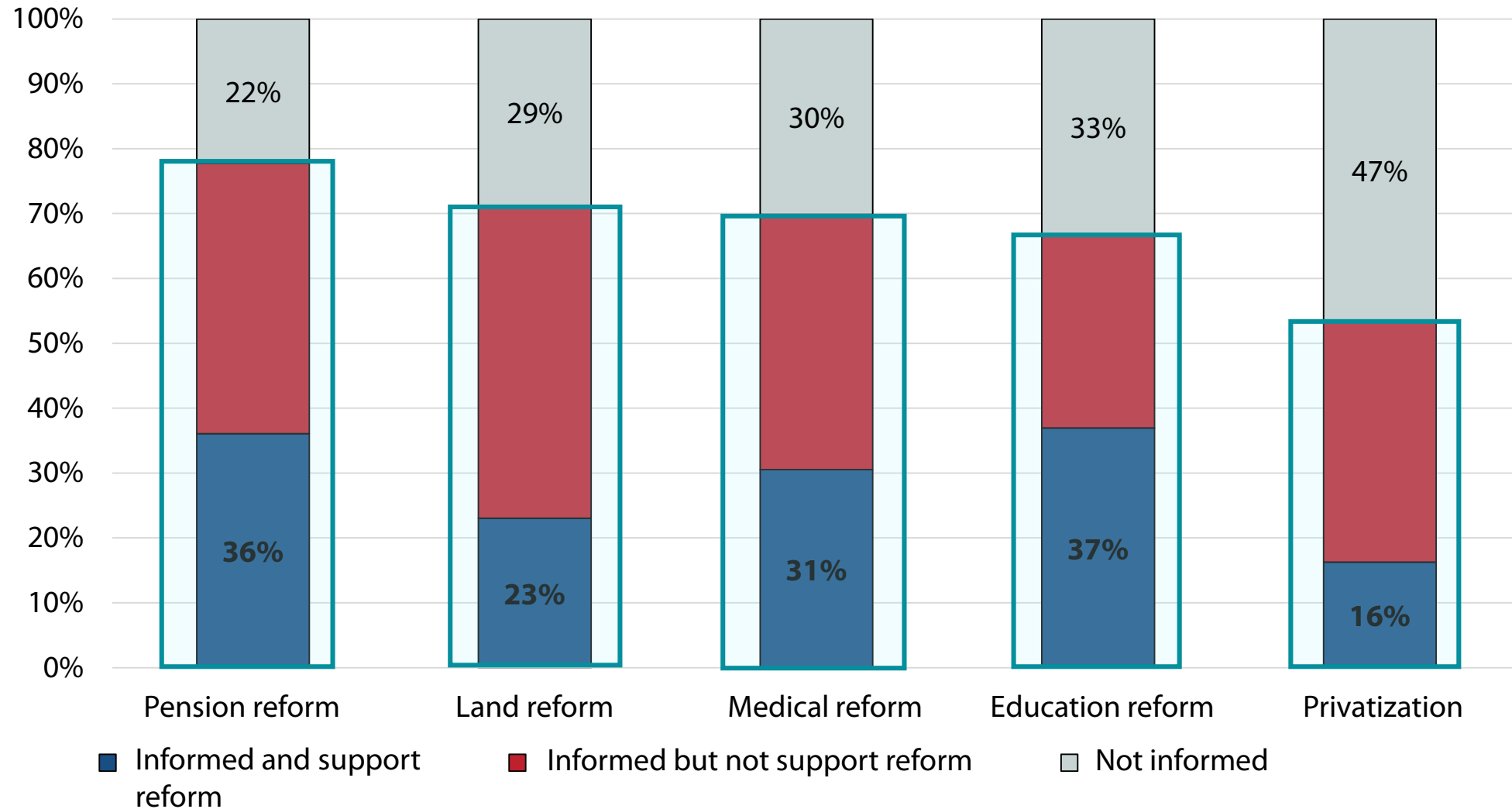
Assessment of medical reform: 837 respondents were polled, the maximum theoretical error of the sub-sample was 3.4%

Assessment of education reform: 848 respondents were polled, the maximum theoretical error of the sub-sample was 3.4%

Estimation of privatization reform: 847 respondents were polled, the maximum theoretical error of the sub-sample was 3.4%

Assessment of land reform: 833 respondents were polled, the maximum theoretical error of the sub-sample was 3.4%

# Awareness and support of reforms by citizens



## Mainly:

- Awareness of the population regarding the essence of the reforms is different: the least people know about privatization, the most - about pension reform.
- Citizens who do not support reforms in general, often support their separate aspects.
- People demonstrate the lowest support for the land reform and privatization.
- The only social and demographic factor that positively influences the support of all reforms is welfare

## What are we doing?

- Actively talking about the benefits supported by citizens.
- Analyzing risks and searching for counterarguments.



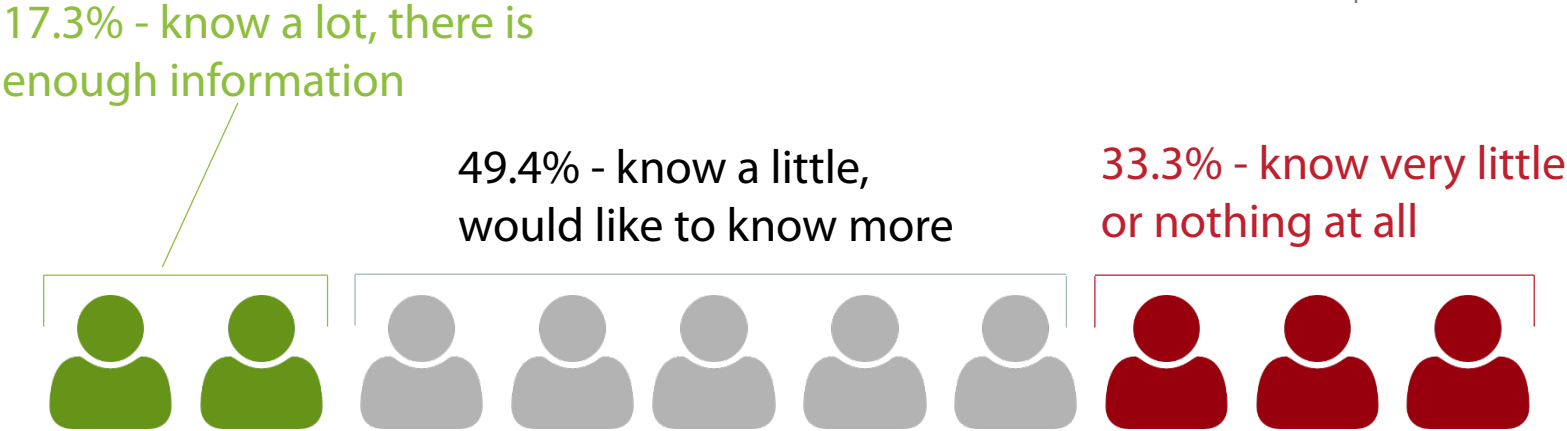
Education reform

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# Education reform. Awareness and support of the population

## AWARENESS:



## LEVEL OF SUPPORT AMONG THOSE WHO KNOW:



# Education reform. Statistically significant factors

Those who's supported these theses tend to support the reform in general

The local budget must spend on construction, repair and school equipment, while the state budget money should only cover teacher's salaries and textbooks.

## Features of perception:

Education reform support correlates with decentralisation support. People are well-informed, the local authority is trusted more than the central one.

## Communication Features:

Communicating the positive effects of decentralisation has to be expanded.

The risk - theft of funds. Counterarguments - it's easier to control local authorities.

**Focus group thesis:** *"If someone is stealing at the central level, then on the local level, then at school, it's better to do this at school straight away, there will be less stealing in general"*

For a teacher, a child should be an equal partner, not a subordinate.

## Features of perception:

The thesis has a very strong support. It correlates with the support of the reform. Most likely, people are aware of this part of the reform, it is well communicated.

## Communication Features:

It is worth telling the specific plans and details - how exactly teachers will be re-educated, at what cost, and so on.

The risk - teachers may not adapt.

Counterarguments - certification, training.

**Focus group thesis:** *"Children should not be afraid to go to class, because teacher throws notebooks and books"*

# Education reform. Statistically significant factors

Those who's supported these theses tend not to support the reform in general

Even good ideas in the domestic education system can not be properly implemented.

## Features of perception:

The thesis illustrates the general people's disbelief in reforms (30% of those, who are completely against the reform, do not believe that something will change for the better).

## Communication Features:

Communication of real successful results is the way to overcome disbelief (by focus group results).

There needs to be communication of specific detailed plans of reform implementation.

Individual steps that are implemented and constant.

**Example from the UK:** *"The government's £ 41m funding over four years will be used to train 700 teachers to support schools in math, to buy books and pay for teachers, so teachers can be trained. »*

12 years of secondary school is too much.

## Features of perception:

This is a widespread spontaneous answer of respondents who do not support reform - a high level of resistance. At the same time people require simplification of the program, quality of education improvement and development of professional skills.

## Communication Features:

It is worth communicating only in conjunction with the simplification of the program and quality of education improvement: "Thanks to 12 years of training, the program can be simplified without losing quality, also adding a more professional orientation and profile education."

**Focus group thesis :** *"Who cares if this is like in Europe? It's not good for boys. If not accepted to the university you join the army. "*

# Education reform. Risks and benefits.

What to say to persuade people to support the reform?



## Key benefits by the level of support:

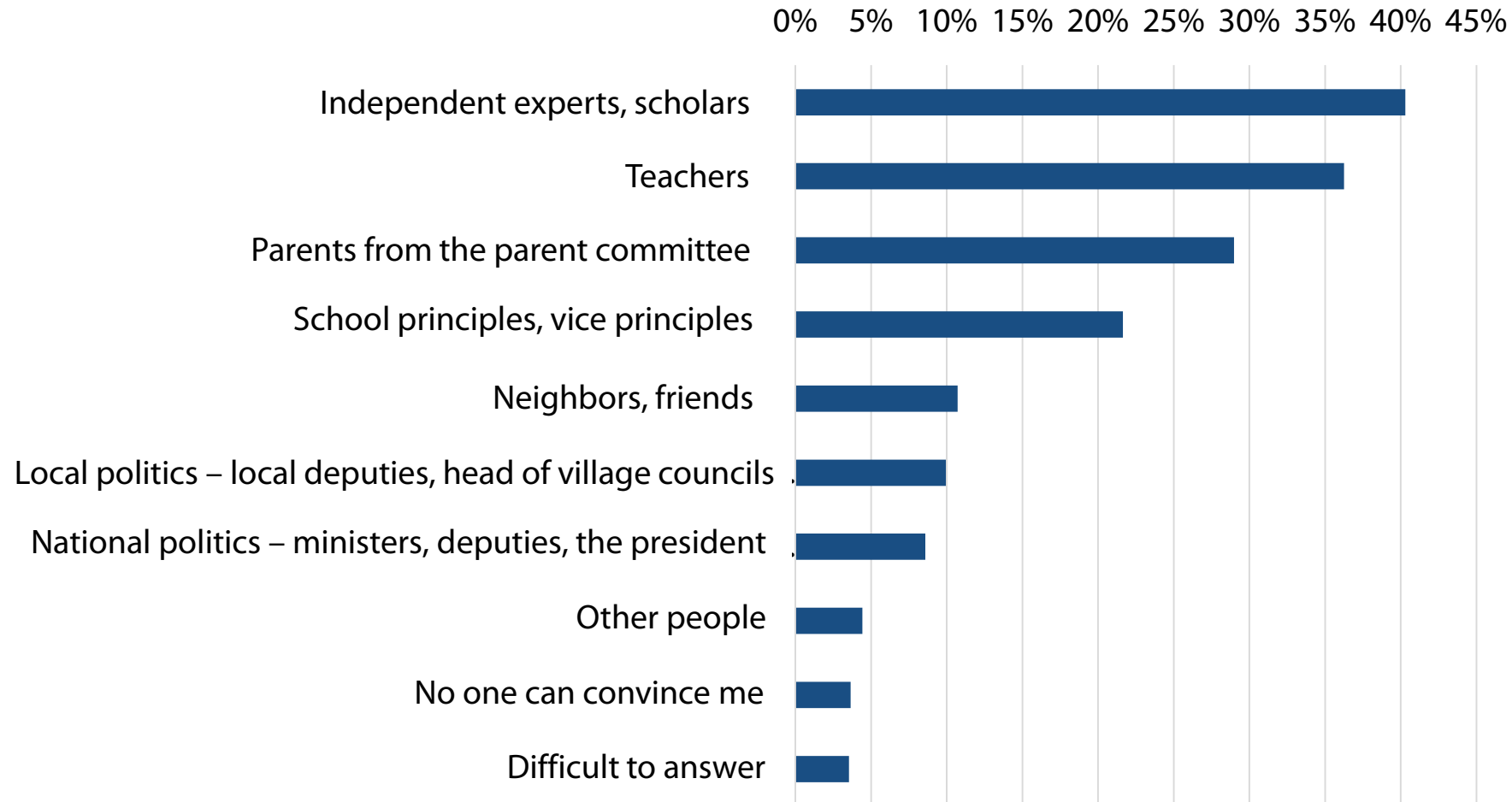
- The ability to apply knowledge in practice is more important than having a lot of solid academic knowledge (**86% agree**)
- Children have to choose subjects (except compulsory) with respect to their predisposition (**85% agree**)
- There needs to be more professional guidance in the high school at the expense of regular lessons (**81% agree**)

## Key risks by the level of support:

- The lack of funds to carry reform will stop it halfway and will only make it worse (**71% agree**)
- If you give more authority to local government - they will start stealing and communities will not be able to control it (**66% agree**)
- Greater financial autonomy of school directors will lead to misappropriation of funds (**65% agree**)
- **Need constant communication of counterarguments !**

# Education reform. Who should speak?

Whose opinion could convince to support the reform?



- Very common among citizens are theses regarding long-term changes that are overdue, but the level of awareness in the details of the reform is very low, so people support the need for change.
- And this is the only reason they support the reform. It is important in communication not to discourage such people by offering them theses which they tend to agree with.
- Regional support specifics also exist.

## **Regional specifics of communication:**

Theses on European vector of development and breaking away from the USSR are relevant only for cities, not for villages.

Computerisation and salary for teachers are important in villages

There is a widespread negative relation towards reference schools in villages

Villages require simplification of programs, but in the cities, about as many people want simplification, as those against simplification because of the risk of lowering the quality of education



Pension reform

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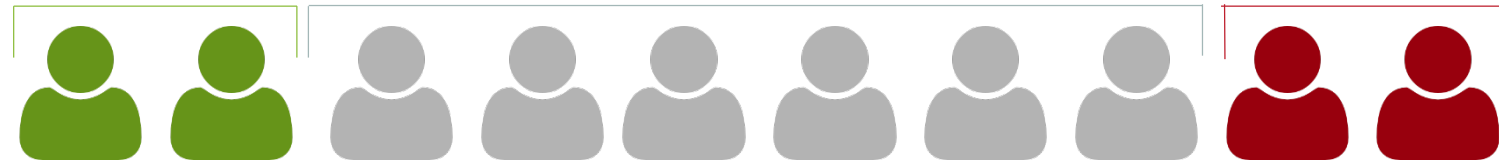
# Pension reform. Awareness and support of the population

## AWARENESS:

20% - know a lot, there is enough information

58% - know a little, would like to know more

22% - have not heard anything about reform



## LEVEL OF SUPPORT AMONG THOSE WHO KNOW:

46% - support

4% - difficult to answer

49% - do not support



# Pension reform. A statistically significant factor

Those who's supported this thesis tend to support the reform in general

- When required years of service will be increased, fewer people will retire, so the more money will be left in the Pension fund

## Features of perception

Supporting the thesis means that the respondent is aware of the problem of the limited resources in the Pension fund, and also believes that this problem should be solved by more equitable distribution of the fund.

In our opinion, this result can also be interpreted as making reform more attractive to those who consider justice to be more important than equal access.

## Features of communication

Limited resources of the Pension fund and the imbalance of the age pyramid should be more actively discussed.

The deficit of the pension fund should be suggested to be solved at the expense of a fair distribution in its funds after the implementation of the reform.

Obviously, the reform will be less attractive for those Ukrainians who are employed or were employed unofficially. Therefore, it is expedient to offer them a solution, for example, in the form of purchasing the required years in service.

- **Important!** There is a statistical dependence on the support of the reform with agreeing that the opinion of national politicians (ministers, deputies, the president) could persuade support for pension reform.
- This can mean success of the reform communication and the presence of a group that is ready to continue taking up government facts.
- *"So far we believe Groysman. He said that he would give 3200 – he did. He said that if he would not make a pension reform - he will retire - I believe him."  
(From the focus group, Lviv)*

## Key benefits by the level of support:

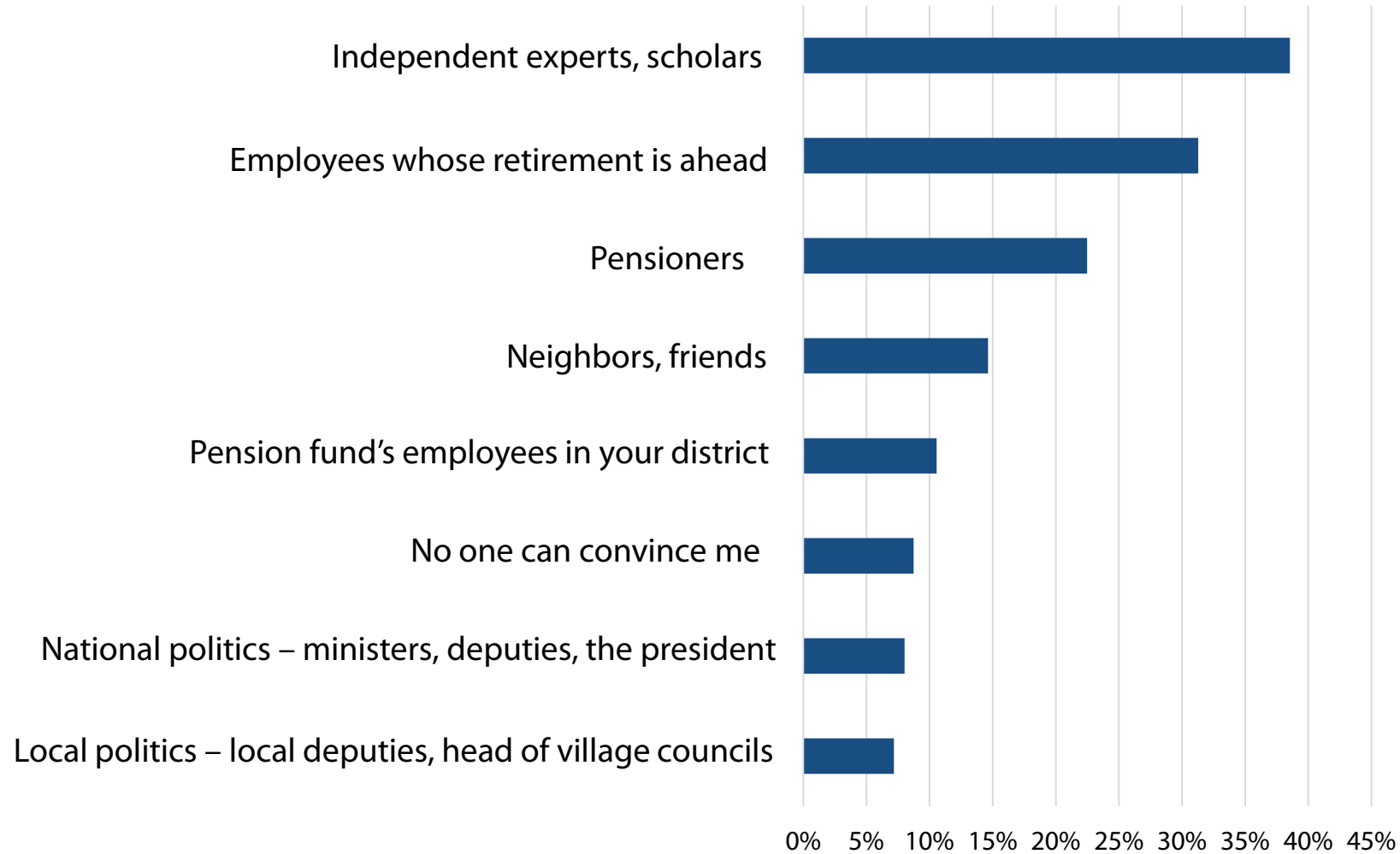
- Pensions will be indexed annually according to the increase of price level **(90% agree)**
- Long-established pensions will be increased according to new higher average salaries **(85% agree)**
- Increase in the length of service requirements are fair, those having more years in service and paid to the pension fund for longer, those are the ones who should receive pensions earlier **(84% agree)**
- An increase in work experience means that more people will try to get an official job instead of informal employment in order to have years in service. So more people will pay taxes (SSC), have more money in the pension fund and pensions will be higher **(68% agree)**

## The most supported statements (for and against):

- Entrepreneurs and farmers also have to pay to the pension fund, since they will also receive pensions **(91%)**
  - Retirement age cannot be raised - in Europe, where the retirement age is 63-67, a very different life expectancy, people will simply not survive until retirement **(83%)**
- BUT**
- It is important to have the pension system balanced and Ukraine does not get into debt for future generations, even if pensions will be low and retirement age will be higher **(79%)**.
  - Pensions for everyone should depend on wages and years in service equally, not on when a person retired long time ago or recently **(74%)**

# Pension reform. Who should speak?

Whose opinion could convince to support the reform?



- The pension reform communication works well around the topic of **justice**. This applies equally to both absolutely positive modernisation and indexation of pensions for citizens, and the dependence of the retirement age on years in service, the de-shadowing of salaries and pension contributions of entrepreneurs and farmers.
- *"Justice is being restored, I do not want a person who does not pay taxes to receive the same as me." (From the focus group, Kharkiv)*
- The stereotype of the inexpediency of raising the retirement age is balanced by the same stereotypes as the inexpediency of the accumulation of debts and taxes, which can be used in communication.
- Discussion on introducing the second level of the pension system should consider negative perception of additional statutory contributions from the wage of a larger pension in the future - society has no confidence in Ukrainian pension funds.

## Socio-demographic features

- The smallest support for the reform is among middle-aged people (36-55), and high among retirees, which points out on a good understanding of the substance of the reform
- The older the respondent, the more he supports the increase in requirements for years in service as a tool for the de-shadowing of employment.



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Medical reform

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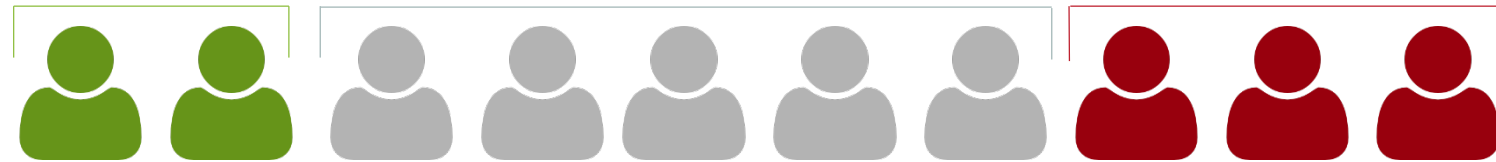
# Medical reform. Awareness and support of citizens

## AWARENESS:

15.5% - know a lot, there is enough information

54.3% - know a little, would like to know more

30.2% - have not heard anything about reform



## LEVEL OF SUPPORT AMONG THOSE WHO KNOW:

43,7% - support

4% - difficult to answer

52,3% - do not support



# Medical reform. Statistically significant factors

Those who's supported these theses tend to support the reform in general

Hospitals in which few patients are treated will be reorganised: smaller building, doctor on call, closing and transferring patients to another hospital, development of which will be supported by saved funds

## Features of perception

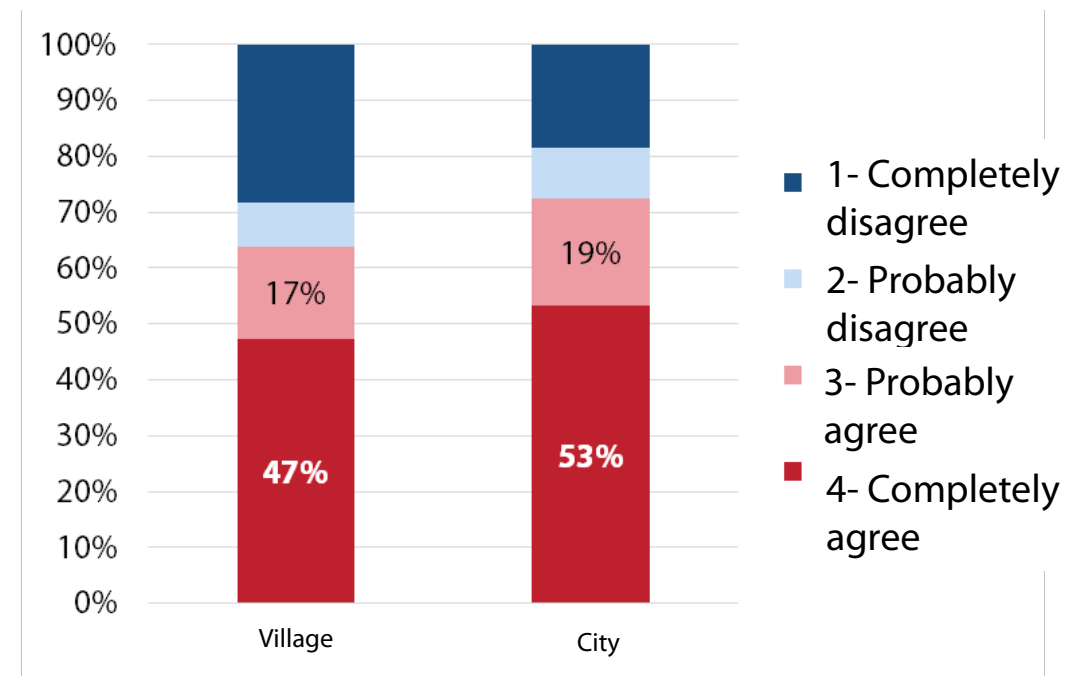
The thesis has very weak support (38%), which is important to increase: those who agree with it tend to support the reform in general, and vice versa.

## Features of communication

The risk - villages will have no hospitals left. Counterarguments - medicine in a village can be organised more efficiently using same money. In addition, it will release funds for high-quality equipment. The risk is considered to be more real for urban residents. So there is an information gap.

It is worth letting know, specifically, how medicine can be organised in villages.

EVALUATE HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE THAT SUCH RISK IS REAL?-  
"VILLAGES WILL HAVE NO HOSPITALS"



# Medical reform. Statistically significant factors

Those who's supported these theses tend to support the reform in general



Official clear and transparent rates of payment for each medical service

## Features of perception

The thesis has 76% support, due to the fact that 87% of people understand that medicine in Ukraine is not free. They are ready to switch to the paid medicine to pay officially and understandable amounts.

## Features of communication

The risk - now it will be necessary to pay twice - for treatment, and bribes. Counterarguments - the patient should know what part he has to pay and what part should be paid by the state; complain to the NHSU (National Health Service) when the rights are violated.

Every citizen will be able to choose his own family doctor who will monitor the patient's health, if necessary, transfer the patient to specialized doctors.

## Features of perception

The greatest support (**88% agree**). Respondents believe that competition will provide a real incentive for improving quality of health services

**Focus group thesis:** *"If I go to one doctor, he will know all of my illnesses"*

# Medical reform. Statistically significant factors

Those who's supported these theses tend not to support the reform in general

Now it is necessary to pay twice - for treatment, and bribes

The financial position of the family is a more significant factor than the support of individual theses

## **Communication Features:**

For respondents, the NHSU's reputation is very important. Its task is to deal fairly and effectively with complaints from doctors / hospitals that require an unjust payment. It is very important to communicate the existence of an effective mechanism for processing complaints.

**Focus group thesis:** *"Doctors will still ask for bribes. Because they get used to take it in form of a grain, or something else, they will expect it."*  
*"A good doctor, which everyone will want to get an appointment with, will be taking bribes"*

## **Features of perception:**

The less financially secured a person is, the more he is aware of the essence of medical reform and the less he supports it.  
Thus, socially unprotected people believe that they will have less access to medicine.

## **Features of communication**

Conjunction should be highlighted with the "Available medications" program, as well as show real examples of how people's spending on medical services is reduced, most often used by the least prosperous.

# Medical reform. Risks and benefits.

What to say to persuade people to support the reform?



## Key components of the reform by the level of support:

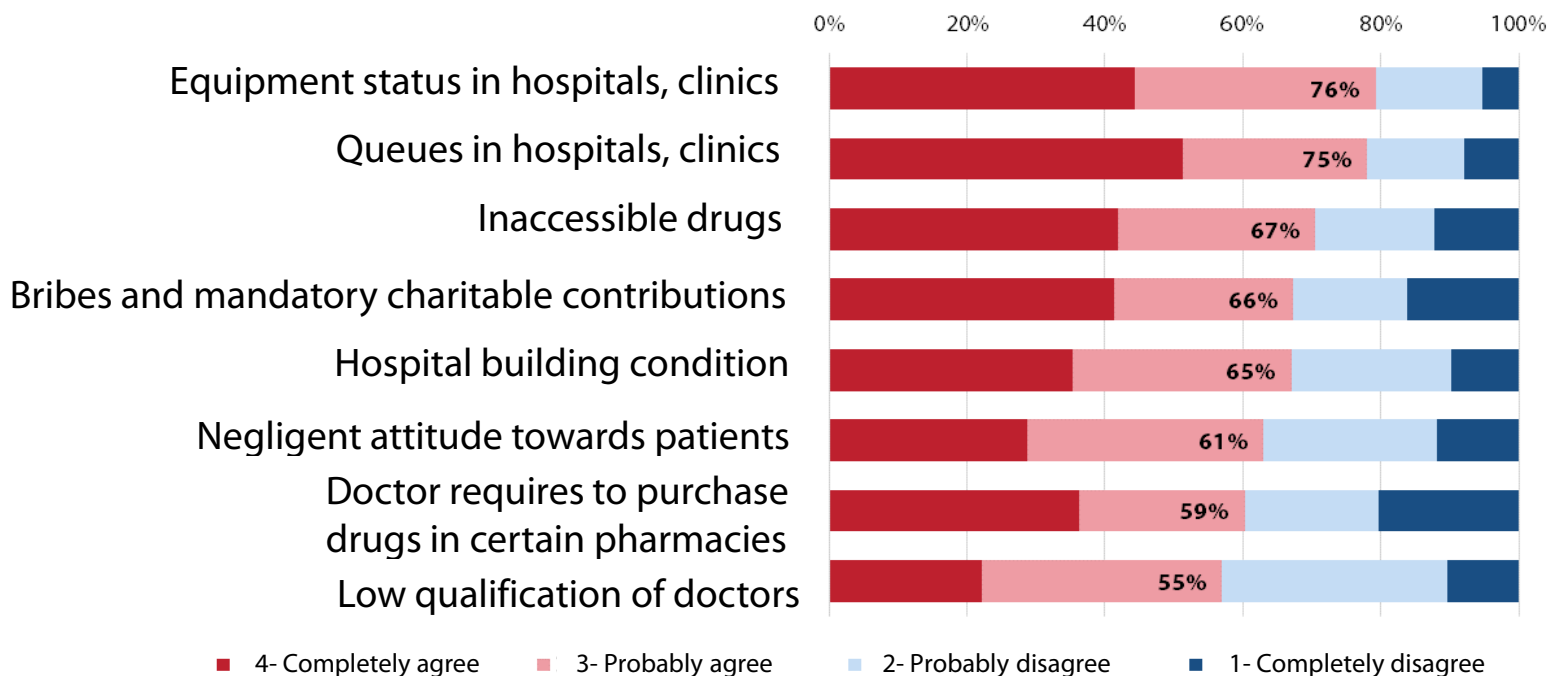
- Every citizen will be able to choose a family doctor who will monitor the patient's health, if necessary, refer the patient to specialised doctors **(88% agree)**
- The state will fully pay for a family doctor and emergency care, pregnancy and childcare **(87% agree)**
- The principle "money follows the person" implies that a patient can choose his own doctor and hospital **(88% agree)**
- The argument - "Quality hospitals will have money to upgrade equipment and repairs" - **has a support of 85%**

## Key risks by the level of support:

- Villages will end up having no hospitals **(68% agree)**
- Money will be taken away from regions and will be given to the National Health Service, where it will be stolen **(68% agree)**
- If medical services do not improve and yet co-payment is implemented – it results in patients overpaying for poor quality services **(65% agree)**
- Risks 1 and 2 are closely related to the decentralization process. It is necessary to communicate that the villages themselves (and not the central government) will choose how to organize their medical services.

# What is the most worrying in the current system

EVALUATE HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE THAT ALL OF THESE PROBLEMS ARE OF REVELANCE TO UKRAINIAN MEDICINE?



**Most reasons “for” the reform are related to a desire to change the current state of the system (31% of support).**

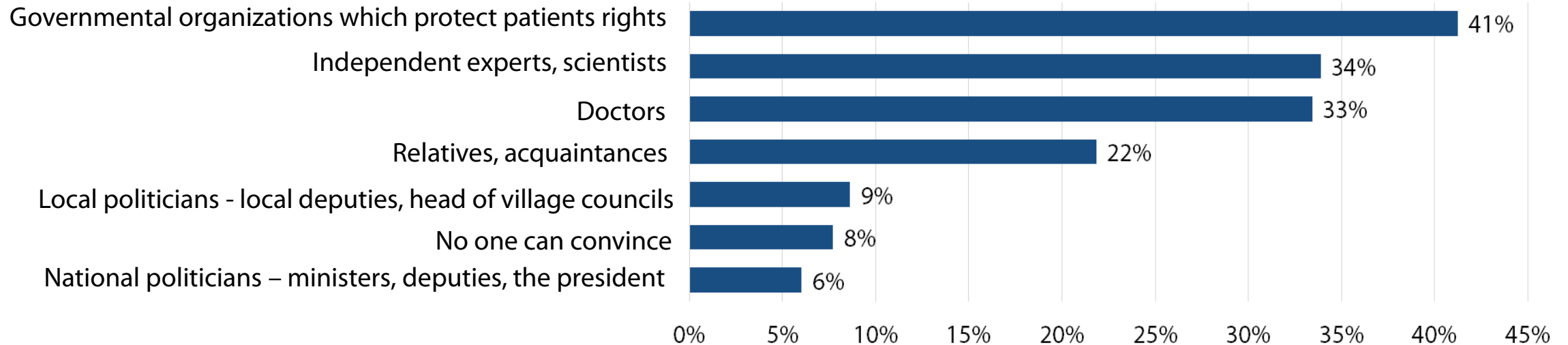
Therefore, one needs to look at what worries the citizens in medicine, know what changes can be made as a result of the reform.

### Main problems:

- Equipment status in hospitals and queues.
- Inaccessibility of drugs and bribery worry people more than the low qualifications of doctors.

# Medical reform. Who should speak?

## Whose opinion could convince to support the reform



**Young people** are more likely to listen to independent experts and scientists (41% among people aged 18-35), by the way, this category of people is the least informed about the reform.

The position "**No one can convince me**" refers more to those who support the reform (14% - among supporters, 2,5% - among opponents)

Those who listen to national politicians' thoughts tend to support the reform. Thus, the NHSU team communicates reform pretty well.

2% of people **personally indicated** that they would listen to **patients'** thoughts.

In general, by supporting the medical reform, people simply support the fact of a need for change (82% of respondents lowly assess the quality of current medicine).

Communication of benefits of the medical reform should inform **improvement of equipment in hospitals and expansion of access to treatment for unprotected layers.**

There are socio-demographic peculiarities that need to be taken into account.

## SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES:

- **Young people** are least informed about reform - 42% have not heard anything about it (against 30% of ignorance in general)
- **Young people** are most likely to listen to NGOs, independent experts, scientists and doctors.
- 11% of people with an income less than 2800 UAH believe that medicine is free (compared to 6% in total) – which means that at the moment there is a certain targeting of healthcare financing



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Land reform

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# Land reform. Awareness and support of citizens

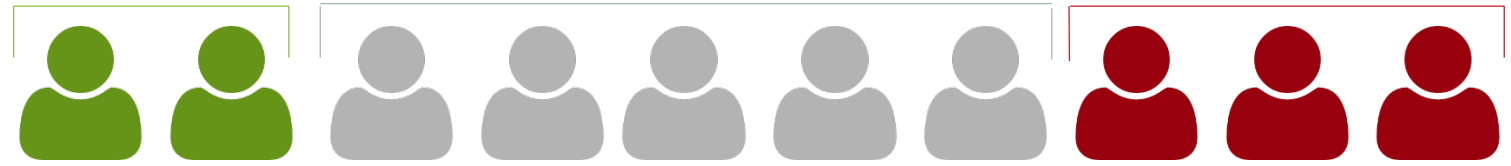


## AWARENESS:

18.8% - know a lot, there is enough information

52.4% - know little, would like to know more

28.8% - have not heard anything about the reform

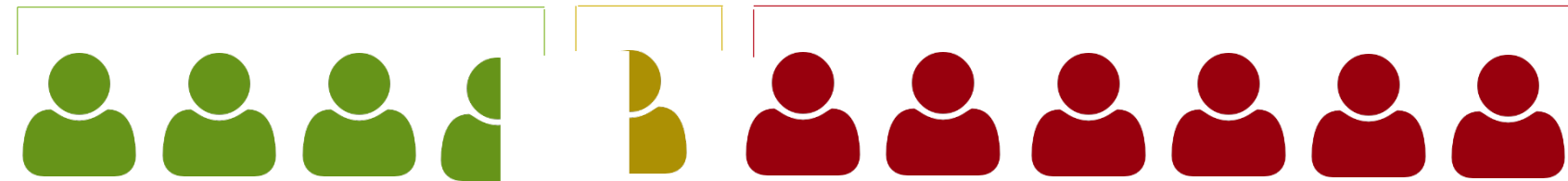


## LEVEL OF SUPPORT AMONG THOSE WHO KNOW:

32,4% - support

3% - hard to answer

64,6% - do not support



# Land reform. Statistically significant factors

Those who's supported these theses tend to support the reform in general



- Because of the moratorium, there is no land market, hence the price of land shares is undervalued, opening the market will increase the rental price.
- Lifting the moratorium will allow people to get loans secured by land - farmers will receive funds for business development.
- Lifting the moratorium will contribute to the fact that the land will be cultivated by the one who owns it. Gardening, berry growing, irrigation will be developed - which will bring more profit in the long run.
- The moratorium deprives owners of land shares of the right to dispose their property, in particular to sell it.
- If the moratorium is canceled, the owner will invest in storage and processing - this will create jobs in the village.

## Features of perception

In support of the reform, there are two groups of abstracts, those which influence the improvement of the welfare of share holders, and those that will positively influence the development of the village and agriculture.

## Features of communication

We need to talk about the benefits to tenants from the growth of rental income.

It is necessary to speak about the advantages that land will not be handled by the lessee, but by the owner who will be able to buy it. So the owner will be more interested in the rational use of land resources.

# Land reform. Statistically significant factors



Those who's supported these theses tend not to support the reform in general

- Part of the villagers will lose their job, they will leave the village.
- Land oligarchs will buy the whole land, because farmers will not have money to buy it.

## **Features of perception**

There are negative stereotypes regarding the purchase of land by large agro-holdings after opening of the market. Since agricultural holdings are more efficient, they do not require a large amount of labor. Citizens fear that people will be forced to leave the village because there will be no work.

## **Need to communicate**

Restrictions placed on reform, and the same criteria for limiting monopolisation - purchase of land by the limited number of individuals.

The opening of the land market as one of the components of agricultural reform, which aims to increase the number of jobs in the countryside.

Government cooperation with banks to create bank products to finance the purchase of land by farmers.

# Land reform. Risks and benefits.

What to say to persuade people to support the reform?

## Key benefits by the level of support:

1. If the moratorium is lifted, the owner will invest in storage and processing - this will create jobs in the village **(69% agree)**
2. Lifting the moratorium will contribute to the fact that the land will be handled by the one who owns it. Gardening, berry growing, irrigation will be developed - giving greater profit in the long run **(66% agree)**
3. Lifting the moratorium will allow to obtain loans secured by land - farmers will receive funds for business development **(62% agree)**
4. Because of the moratorium, land is not cultivated by landlords, but by tenants who planted crops causing the depletion **(62% agree)**

### **Important features!**

Support for possible options of opening the land market:

**Opening with restrictions.** For example, purchase and sale only for individuals, maximum volume - 200 hectares per person **(33% agree)**

**Phased opening of the market** (for example, state land should be sold first, then private land should be sold to individuals, after that to legal entities, then to foreigners) **(27% agree)**

**State purchases land** from land shareholders at the expense of the budget, that is, taxpayers **(18% agree)**

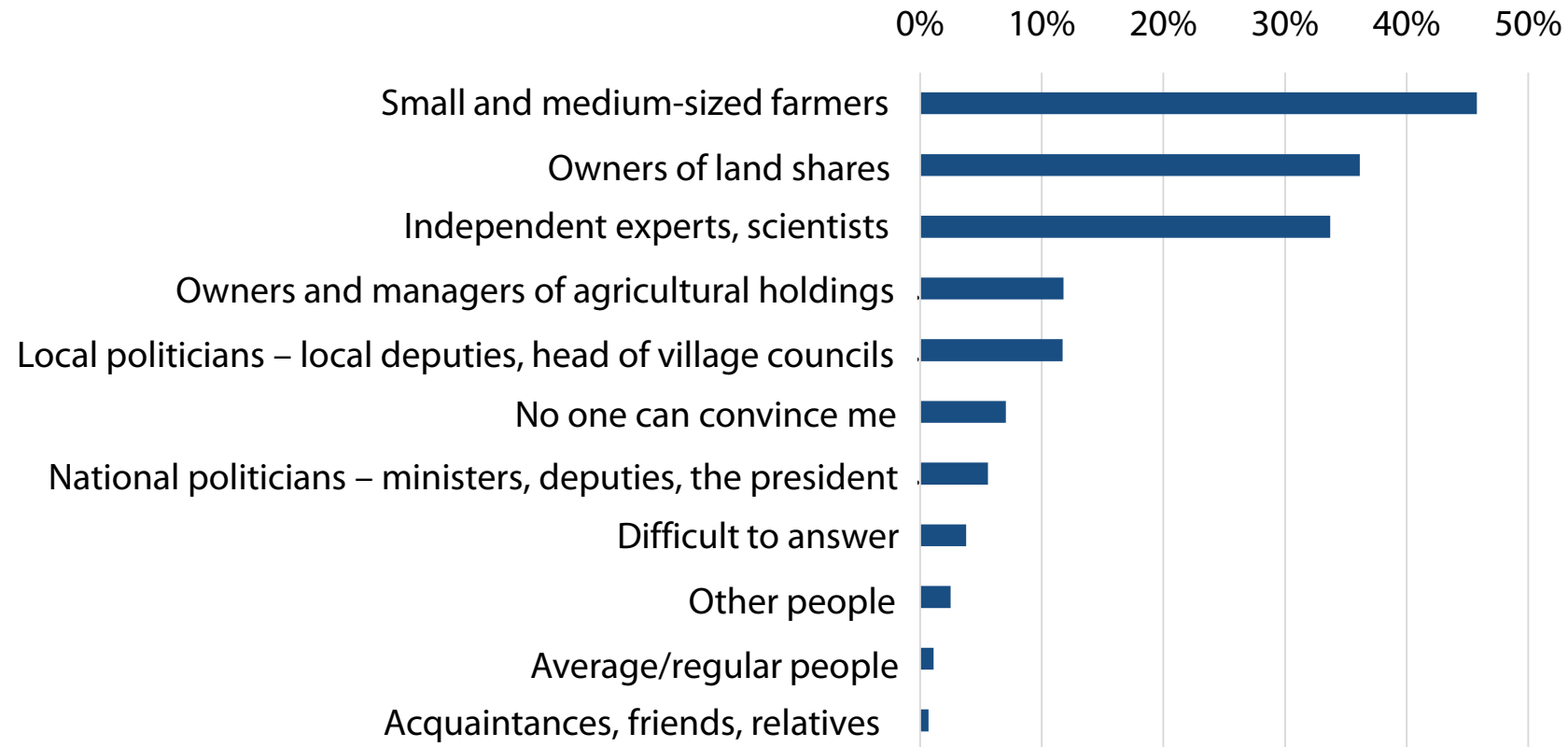
**Less productive economy of small farmers** who own their business and create more jobs (64%) is better than productive agriculture, where large agricultural holdings invest heavily in land and machinery in order to increase yields

## Key risks by the level of support:

1. Citizens do not understand what the buying and selling procedure will be. So, fraud and raiding will rise **(77% agree)**
2. Land oligarchs will buy all the land, because farmers do not have money to buy it **(73% agree)**

# Land reform. Who should speak?

## Whose opinion could convince to support the reform?



## **Key theses communications:**

Improvement of the welfare of land share holders, development of agriculture due to the fact that the land will be cultivated by the owner, not the lessee.

Opening the land market will increase the rent for shares. The owner, unlike the tenant, is interested in more rational use of land, he will also be more interested in long-term investment, job creation.

For respondents, it is important that farmers, rather than oligarchs, have access to land after withdrawal of the moratorium.

## **Important:**

Lifting the moratorium should be taken in a package with other laws designed to promote the development of agriculture, farming, more rational land use.

It is necessary to protect the owners of shares from fraud and raiding after the opening of the land market.

## **Socio-demographic features**

- Wealthy and young respondents tend to support the land reform more.
- Young and more wealthier people are also more likely to support the stepwise market opening.



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Privatisation

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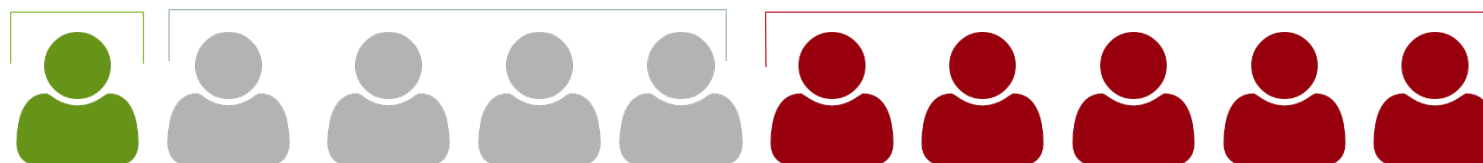
# Privatisation. Awareness and support of citizens

## AWARENESS:

12.4% - know a lot, there is enough information

41% - know little, would like to know more

46.6% - have not heard anything about the reform

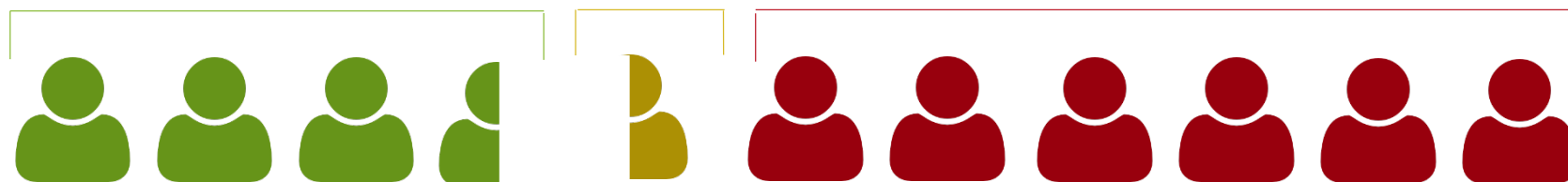


## LEVEL OF SUPPORT AMONG THOSE WHO KNOW:

30,5% - support

3,5% - difficult to answer

66% - do not support



# Privatisation. Statistically significant factors

Those who's supported these theses tend to support the reform in general

Privatisation is the source of funds for filling the budget that can be spent on social goals

## Features of perception

Respondents say that it is more important to attract a strategic investor than to get the maximum price. But those who believe that privatisation will enable additional funds for social purposes, are more likely to support reform.

*Opportunity of using privatisation funds for social purposes to make the reform more relevant and relevant for part of respondents. So these costs can change the attitude to privatisation.*

## Features of communication

It is important to emphasize that the funds from privatisation will not go to the abstract state budget, but can be spent on specific purposes. And the positive effects of these costs average Ukrainians will feel for themselves.

A private owner is more efficient than the state

## Features of perception

Despite the fact that respondents give low support of privatisation, they agree that a private owner is more efficient than the state.

In our opinion, we must agree that privatisation has risks, but we should also recall that risks of retaining state property lead to further inefficiency.

## Features of communication

Communication about privatisation should begin with a discussion of what is more efficient - private property, or state.

Given that a private owner is perceived as more effective, communicating privatisation should be a change of ownership from less to more efficient.

# Privatisation. Statistically significant factors

Those who's supported these theses tend not to support the reform in general

Corruption in state-owned enterprises can be overcome without privatization, if there is a will

## Features of perception

Respondents have negative stereotypes regarding privatisation.

The stronger the stereotypes, the more people believe in the possibility of overcoming corruption in state-owned enterprises and tend not to support privatisation.

## Features of communication

It is necessary to appeal to support the thesis on greater effectiveness of private property in relation to the state.

It is also necessary to say that even the temporary overcoming of corruption does not alleviate the risks of its renewal for changes in the political elite. The only way to completely get rid of it, is to privatise enterprises.

At the same time, we should also remember that strategically important enterprises will remain in state ownership. In order to eliminate corruption risks, corporate governance reform will be implemented on them.

# Privatisation. Statistically significant factors

Those who's supported these theses tend not to support the reform in general

Corruption in state-owned enterprises can be overcome without privatization, if there is a will

## Features of perception

Price questions have a direct impact on the welfare of citizens, so the expectation of their change can negatively affect the perception of reform.

## Features of communication

In competitive markets, one player can not influence prices, therefore prices after the privatisation will not change.

In those markets where monopolies operate, there are regulators (for example, NEURC and AMCU) regulating the prices and tariffs of such companies. So they will not be able to change prices themselves.

Foreigners will buy state-owned enterprises to close them, thus destroying competition

## Features of perception

The respondents have a negative stereotype regarding the ownership of Ukrainian resources in the hands of foreigners (enterprises, land), which is often heated by populists.

## Features of communication

It is necessary to give examples of successful Ukrainian enterprises, where owners are foreigners – the attitude towards employees, the level of salaries, investments, creating workplaces.

## Key benefits by the level of support:

1. Politicians steal money from state-owned enterprises, and then use this money to finance elections. As a result, honest politicians have little chance of winning the elections (**84% agree**)
2. Private enterprises invest much more in new technologies, expand production, create more jobs than state-owned enterprises (**74% agree**)
3. Under the state ownership, enterprises are often plundered, which a private owner will not allow (**74% agree**)

## Key risks by the level of support:

1. Corruption in state-owned enterprises can be overcome without privatisation, only if there is a will (**86% agree**)
2. Privatisation conditions will be adjusted for particular oligarchs to enable them to buy state-owned enterprises at a low price (**80% agree**)

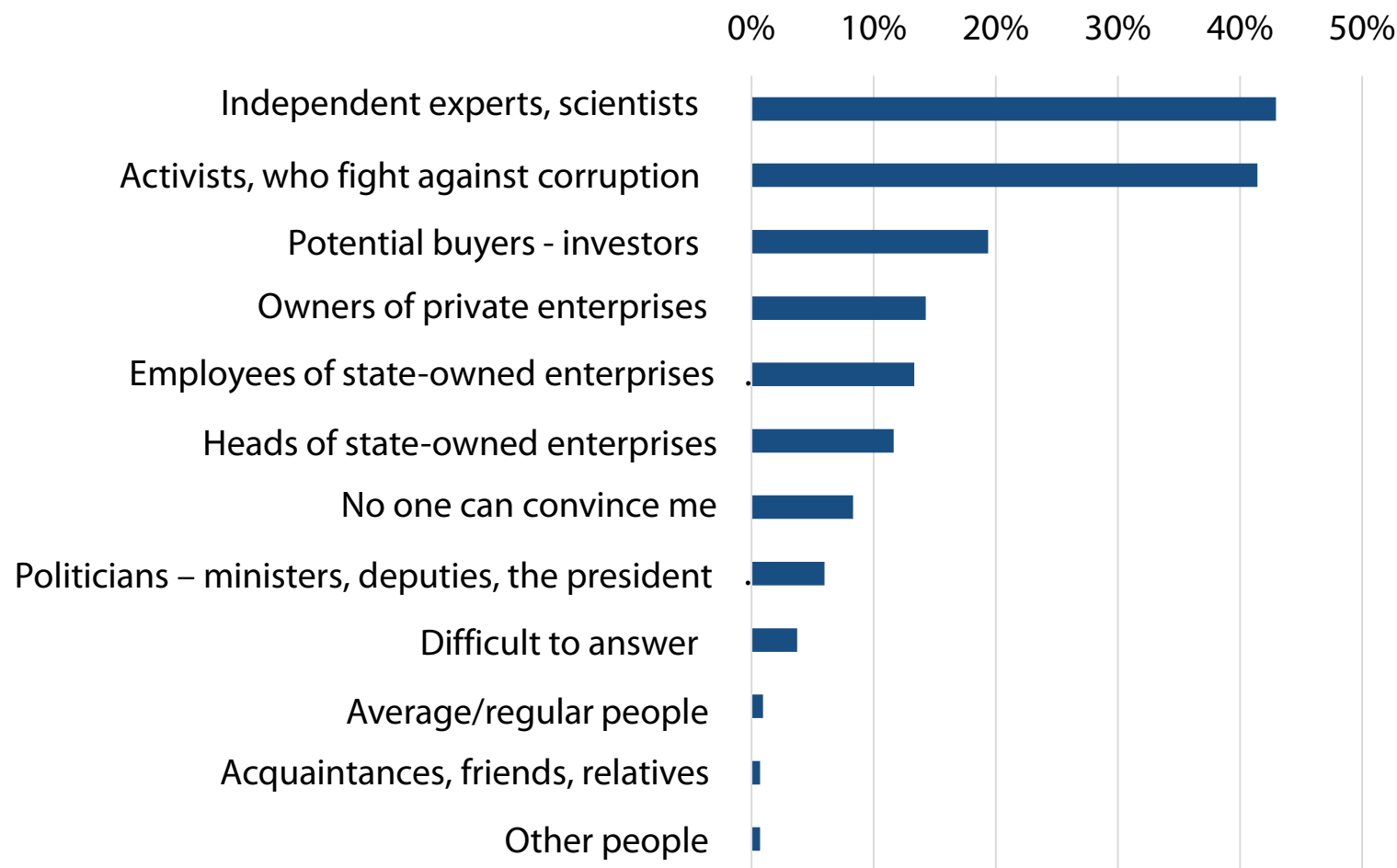
### Important features!

The most important thing during privatisation is to engage a strategic investor with experience and development plan, rather than get the maximum price for an enterprise (**86% agree**)

The state must retain strategic enterprises and buy everything from them, rather than privatise all enterprises, and should also procure necessary goods and services under a competitive procedure from private enterprises (**78% agree**)

# Privatization. Who should speak?

Whose opinion could convince to support the reform?



- The communication of privatisation reform should be based on a comparison of private and state ownership, since most respondents support the benefits of private property.
- It is necessary to say that privatisation is the only way to prevent corruption in the long run. Because even if it is overcome in the short term, risks of state property abuse remain.
- Ukrainians want to see privatisation of strategic investors that will develop businesses. At the same time, the greatest risk is the opaque sale under special conditions of the oligarchs enterprises, and the government must ensure and speak about the transparency and openness of the competitions to all investors.

## **Socio-demographic features**

- Senior respondents are more knowledgeable about privatisation
- Young and more affluent are more inclined to believe that a private owner is more efficient than the state
- Also, young and more affluent tend to lessen the risks of privatisation



Everything will be fine! 😊

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