

UKRAINIAN ECONOMY IN WAR TIMES: BUSINESS DEFIES THE BOMBS. OCTOBER 2022



Authors:

Hlib Vyshlinsky, Executive Director
Maria Repko, Deputy Director
Yurii Gaidai, Senior Economist
Dmytro Goriunov, Senior Economist
Maksym Samoiliuk, Junior Economist

DATE:

October 20, 2022

CONTENTS

Introduction.....	4
1. War update.....	5
2. War damages.....	7
3. Economic update	9
4. Monetary and financial sectors update	11
5. Fiscal Gap	13
6. Special focus: Business expectations	17

The **Centre for Economic Strategy (CES)** is an independent research agency on public policy issues. The mission of the CES is to support reforms in Ukraine to achieve sustainable economic growth. The Centre contributes to the development of Ukraine's economic growth strategy, performs an independent analysis of the most critical aspects of national policy, and works on strengthening public support for reforms. It was established in May 2015.

Our principles:

- Economic freedom (liberalisation, deregulation, privatisation)
- Free and fair competition
- Reducing the role of the state by improving its effectiveness
- Information transparency and freedom of speech
- The rule of law and the protection of private property
- Healthy and stable public finances
- Knowledge-based economy

For more information on the CES, please contact Viacheslav Nozdrin, Communications Director (tel.: +380 44 492-7970, office@ces.org.ua).

Please visit our website www.ces.org.ua and follow the link on the social media [facebook.com/cesukraine](https://www.facebook.com/cesukraine) or twitter.com/ces_ukraine.

The **German Economic Team (GET)** advises the governments of Ukraine, Belarus*, Moldova, Kosovo, Armenia, Georgia and Uzbekistan on all aspects of economic transformation on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action. We work on a broad range of topics.

Berlin Economics has been commissioned with the implementation of the consultancy.

For more information, please visit GET's website (<https://www.german-economic-team.com/>) or contact Garry Poluschkin, Project Manager Ukraine poluschkin@berlin-economics.com

*Advisory activities in Belarus have been suspended.

Conclusions in this paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Centre for Economic Strategy and/or supporting organisations.

INTRODUCTION

Ukraine's economy is not falling as rapidly as predicted at the beginning of the war by a few institutions. In the first nine months of the year, Ukrainian GDP fell by 30%, according to preliminary data from the Ministry of Economy. This means that the most pessimistic forecasts that were made in the spring (up to 45% decline, as predicted by the World Bank) probably will not be realized. The current consensus forecast for the fall in 2022 is 33%. And even the destruction of energy infrastructure has not yet prompted economists to revise this forecast.

Prices are rising, but not as much as one could expect given the circumstances. Indeed, in September inflation was higher than in August, and overall, over 12 months consumer prices rose by almost a quarter. But given the dependence on imported energy, distorted value chains and currency devaluation, it could have been higher. Moreover, this is not only a problem for Ukraine - many countries around the world are experiencing record inflation this year. In the Baltic states inflation is at similar levels, and in Moldova, it is even higher. It is expected that by the end of the year prices in Ukraine will grow by less than 30%.

One of the reasons is the behaviour of entrepreneurs. The expectations of business representatives surveyed by the NBU regarding the prices of suppliers are much higher than their expectations regarding the prices of their own products. This implies that in the face of competition and declining demand, some of businesses may be willing to sacrifice profitability. Similar expectations are for the margins of retailers - they should decrease. It is notable that NBU decreased expected inflation for 2022 in their macroeconomic forecast, released on October 20, 2022.

In August, for the first time since the beginning of the year, more foreign currency was received than spent. This happened simultaneously due to the growth of exports, inflow of international aid and reduction of the financial account outflow. In September, however, aid inflows dropped to the lowest level since the beginning of summer. But this was not a problem in view of the record figure of August and the expectation of even higher aid inflows from Western partners in October. In total, since the beginning of the war, USD 22,6 billions of aid has been received, and another USD 15,2 billion has been promised.

However, a further increase in exports is questionable. At least, the export of agricultural products. The "grain initiative", which allowed Ukraine to export grain through Odesa ports, expires in a month. And although Ukraine and Turkey are interested in its continuation, the position of the state on which it really depends is currently unknown. In addition, next year the yield will be harvested from smaller areas, as farmers reduced sowing areas due to higher costs and security risks.

The major risk of autumn and winter - the destruction of energy infrastructure by missiles - continues to unfold. On October 10, the largest strike package since the beginning of the war took place, which led to destruction and damage to energy facilities in the capital and nine other regions. On October 17, there was another strike, but smaller. The risk has increased due to the supply of a large number of kamikaze drones and surface-to-surface missiles by Iran.

1. WAR UPDATE

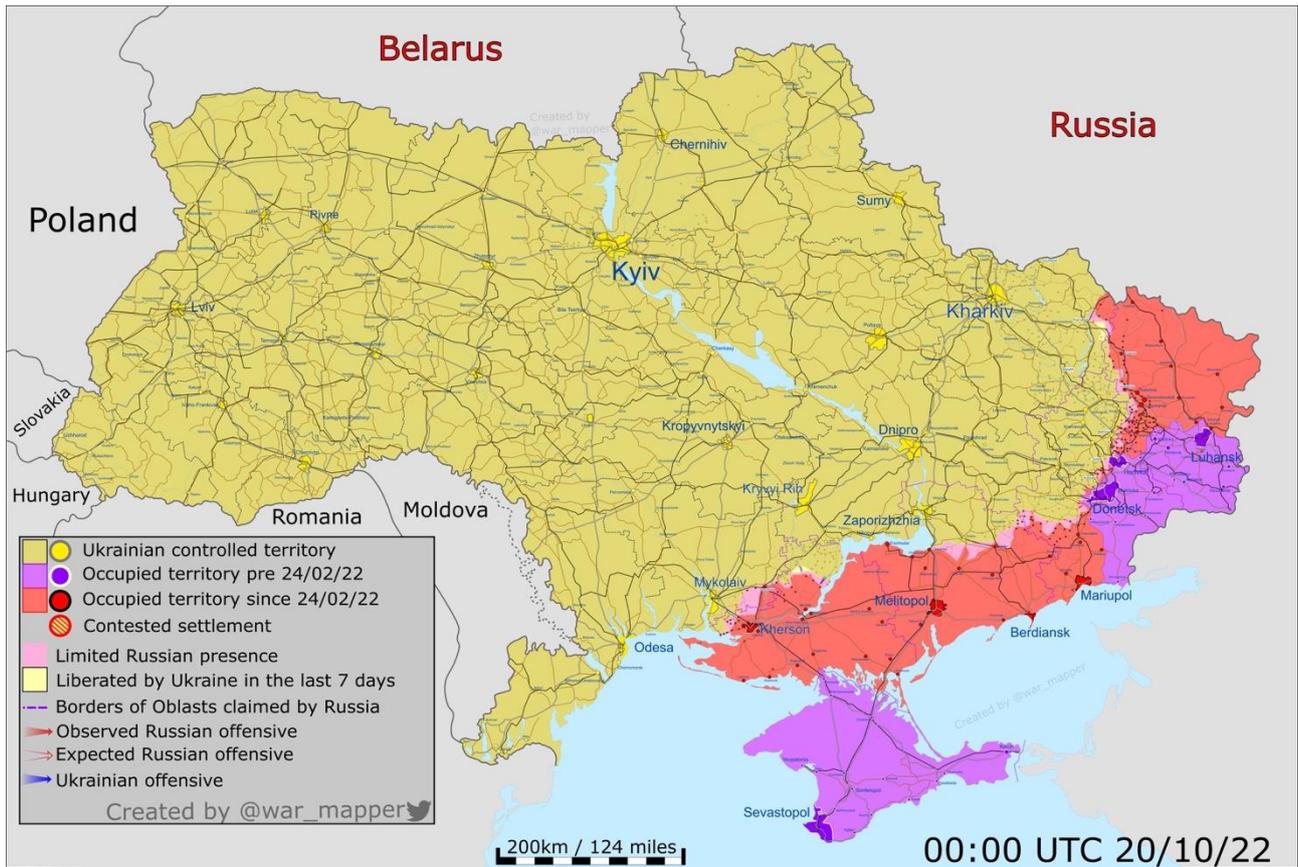
The last month has been full of news, primarily due to the events at the frontline. Ukraine's defence forces replicated the counteroffensive's success in the Kharkiv region in the north of Kherson and Donetsk regions. Russian troops are trying to build defences along the Luhansk region's administrative border and hold back the Ukrainian offensive on the temporarily occupied west bank of the Dnipro.

On September 21, 2022, President Putin announced the mobilisation in the Russian Federation; the same week, Russia declared the annexation of four regions of Ukraine. The absurdity of Russia's proclamation of its territories, which it does not even control, did not prevent Putin from threatening Ukraine and the world with nuclear weapons if Ukraine kept fighting the Russian aggression. However, the events at the front show that Russians understand the language of force best, and the only correct answer to all threats is to increase pressure on the aggressor.

In the early morning of October 8, 2022, an explosion on the bridge across the Kerch Strait partially destroyed the motorway part and significantly damaged the railway part. The 'Crimean Bridge', as the Russians themselves call it, is the longest bridge built by Russia and a source of pride for the Putin regime. The bridge is also an important logistical asset for the Russian war effort and its damage hampers the supply of the Russian troops in the south of Ukraine. The exact cause of the explosion is unknown, but Russia blamed it on Ukraine. Two days later, October 10, saw the largest Russian missile attack on Ukraine since 24 February, targeting civilians and civilian energy infrastructure. However, the Russians did not manage to cause critical damage to the energy system – after several days of rolling blackouts, power engineers managed to stabilise the energy system.

Life is returning to the de-occupied areas of Kharkiv, Donetsk and Kherson regions. Police, rescuers, representatives of local authorities, volunteers, communicators and postal workers are following closely behind the defence forces to restore everyday life as soon as possible. The national railway system, Ukrzaliznytsia, deserves to be the symbol of the speed of recovery: in just a few weeks after the liberation of the Kharkiv region and securing of the railway tracks in the area, it resumed high-speed trains from Kyiv to Kramatorsk, Donetsk region.

Figure 1. Russian invasion as of October 20, 2022



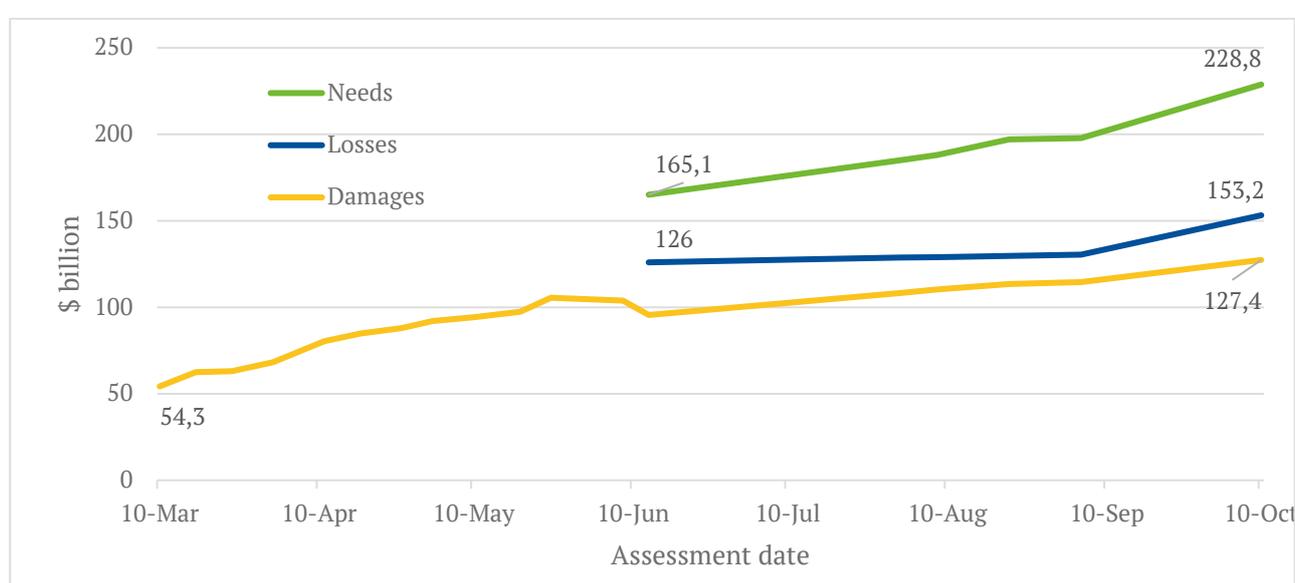
Source: @war_mapper based on information from open sources.

2. WAR DAMAGES

The estimate of the direct damages of Ukraine from the war (destruction and damage to physical assets) amounted to USD 127.4 billion as of beginning of October. This is USD 6.8 billion more compared to the estimate a month ago. Indirect losses (loss of income and additional costs) are estimated at another USD 161.8 billion (an increase of USD 19.7 billion). This is an estimate by the 'Russia Will Pay' project, in which CES participates.

The estimated recovery needs are USD 228.8 billion (an increase of USD 12.6 billion). The needs are not a simple sum of the previous two items, as direct damages are applied with increasing coefficients (to build new assets according to modern standards), while indirect losses are applied without a coefficient (for expenditures) and with a decreasing coefficient (for revenues, as here the needs are understood as replenishment of liquidity to restore operations).

Figure 2. Dynamics of economic losses estimates as a result of the war



Source: KSE / 'Russia Will Pay' project.

In general, since the beginning of these calculations, launched two weeks after the invasion, the estimates of direct damages have increased by 2.35 times. The calculation of indirect losses and recovery needs was initiated in the summer, but these estimates have also increased by 1.2 and 1.4 times, respectively. Nevertheless, in the dynamics, the data should be perceived as estimates for specific dates and not for the actual losses. This is due to the fact that the data are received with delays and vary for different areas. Some categories were added in the process as the methodology was developed gradually.

The methodology itself has also evolved. Initially, it was based on data from public sources and a whole set of different assumptions. In the summer, the calculation of losses in most areas was already based on data provided by the civil-military administrations on the area or at least the number of objects (this is the reason for the decrease in the estimate of direct losses in June). The methodology in some areas is still entirely analytical, but it has been improved (e.g., the peculiarities of subcategories and regions have been taken into account). Currently, the methodological framework covers the vast majority of assets affected by aggression.

Table 1. Damage, losses and recovery needs

Property type	Damages, USD bn	Losses, USD bn	Recovery needs, USD bn
Residential buildings	50.5	7.8	74.0
Infrastructure	35.5	14.5	51.3
Corporate Assets, Industry	9.9	30.3	19.9
Agribusiness and land resource	6.6	30.3	19.9
Mine clearance		8.6	8.6
Education	7.0	2.1	8.4
Energy	3.6	11.6	7.3
Social protection	0.2	6.4	6.6
Financial sector	0.1	6.0	5.9
Culture, tourism, sport	2.0	8.1	5.6
Vehicles	2.7	0.4	5.1
Retail trade	2.4	24.4	4.4
Public utilities	2.3	3.5	3.7
Health	1.6	2.7	2.5
Administrative Buildings	0.8	0.1	1.2
Digital Infrastructure	0.6	1.1	1.0
Environment	1.5		
Total	127.4	161.8	228.8

Source: KSE/ "Russia will pay" project, as of 05.10.2022.

3. ECONOMIC UPDATE

Falling GDP. According to preliminary data from the Ministry of Economy, in September, the real GDP of Ukraine decreased by 35%, as in August. In general, for nine months, the decline was 30%. These are the results of indirect methods of calculation and modelling, so they can still be clarified. The Ministry considered the growth of agricultural exports (both by sea and by rail), the gradual restoration of infrastructure and the stabilisation of fuel prices as positive factors. Among the negatives are unfavourable weather for agriculture (heavy rains in some regions), the shutdown of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant and the occupiers' actions in general.

Energy and fuel. The Parliament renewed the excise tax on fuel, the President signed the relevant law, and it has already entered into force. The excise tax will be EUR100 per m³ of gasoline, diesel fuel and substitutes, and EUR52 per m³ of gas. This is less than before the excise tax was abolished in the spring. The rate for the Ministry of Defence will remain at zero. The Ministry of Economy believes that this will not lead to higher prices because oil prices have fallen from USD 120 to USD 88 per barrel over the past three months. We note that it was obviously meant in comparison to the peak value. During July-September, prices for fuel and oil in Ukraine decreased by 9% (after an increase of 75% in February-June).

Ukraine continues to prepare for the heating season. According to the government, in early October, the readiness of housing and heating networks was 90%, and gas reserves in storage facilities reached 14 billion cubic metres. Naftogaz of Ukraine is working to diversify energy supplies. The opening of the new European gas pipeline Baltic Pipe, which connects Norway with Poland and has a capacity of 10 billion cubic metres per year, will also contribute to the diversification of gas supplies to Ukraine. Naftogaz has a preliminary agreement on 1 billion cubic metres from this pipeline. Also, the NJSK is considering the possibility of pumping hydrogen into storage facilities. Furthermore, the company plans to build nine thermal power plants and boiler houses that will run on biofuels and will be able to save 2 billion cubic metres of gas per year.

Provocations at Zaporizhzhia NPP continue. In addition to shelling, the aggressor detained the plant director Ihor Murashov, took him to an unknown location, and released him three days later. In addition, Rosatom created a legal entity for ZNPP. Meanwhile, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) started multilateral negotiations on establishing a safety zone at the plant. Poland even proposes to exclude Russia from the IAEA. It should be remembered that ZNPP has not been operating since September 11.

On October 10, the Russian Federation launched the largest missile attack on energy infrastructure since the beginning of the invasion. Facilities in the capital and nine regions were damaged, up to 30% of the system in total. As a result of the attacks, Lviv, Poltava, Sumy and Ternopil regions were left entirely without electricity, while the supply was partial in other regions. In the first three days, supplies had to be limited during peak hours. Electricity exports to the EU, which in recent months had provided considerable foreign exchange earnings, had to be temporarily suspended, but there was no need to ask for emergency assistance. The restoration of infrastructure continues.

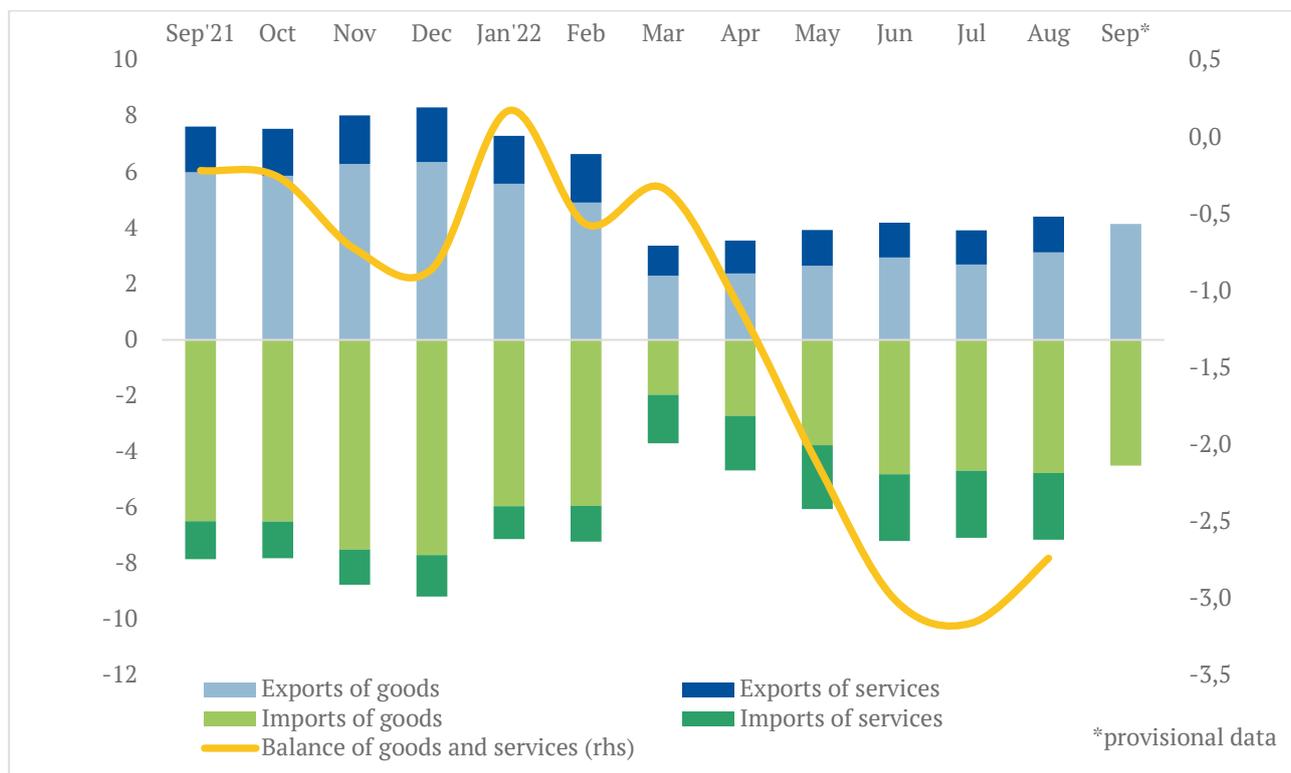
Agriculture. Grain harvesting is in progress. As of October 7, Ukrainian farmers harvested 33.3 million tonnes of major crops. 62% of the sown area has been processed. Harvesting of wheat, barley and rapeseed has been completed. The share of other crops is very different, the lowest figure is corn (2%). But the prospects for the next harvest, at least for winter crops, are not very optimistic. IMC Agro Holding forecasts that 1.2 million hectares have been sown, which is unlikely to exceed 2 million hectares (compared to 7 million hectares last year).

Since the beginning of the 2022/2023 marketing year, which began on 1 July, exports of agricultural products as of October 6 were at approximately 9 million tonnes. This is almost 40% less than in the same period of the previous year. More than half of it is the corn, there were also supplies of wheat and barley. Much of the grain is now exported by rail. For example, in the first three weeks of September, out of 3.66 million tonnes, Ukrzaliznytsia accounted for 2.25 million tonnes (more than 60%). This was due to the purchase of railcars and temporary storage facilities. They will still be needed, as the prospects for sea exports are currently unclear.

As of October 19, almost 8 million tonnes were exported under the 'grain initiative' (through the seaports of the Odesa region). This almost meets the expectations of the Ukrainian authorities (3 million tonnes per month). But in a month, it will end, and the prospects for its continuation, let alone expansion to Mykolaiv ports, are extremely vague. Earlier, Russia stressed that it was not very satisfied with the observance of its interests in this agreement.

External sector. In August, the balance of payments was positive for the first time since the beginning of the year, amounting to USD 3.3 billion (compared to a deficit of USD 0.3 billion in July). This was due to several factors. First, the current account improved (compared to July, the surplus increased from USD 1.3 billion to USD 2 billion), as exports and secondary revenues (primarily foreign aid) increased. Second, for the first time since the beginning of the year, the financial account also became surplus (USD 1.2 billion, while in July it was minus USD 1.6 billion).

Figure 3. The trade balance, USD billion.



Source: National Bank of Ukraine, Ministry of Economy.

4. MONETARY AND FINANCIAL SECTORS UPDATE

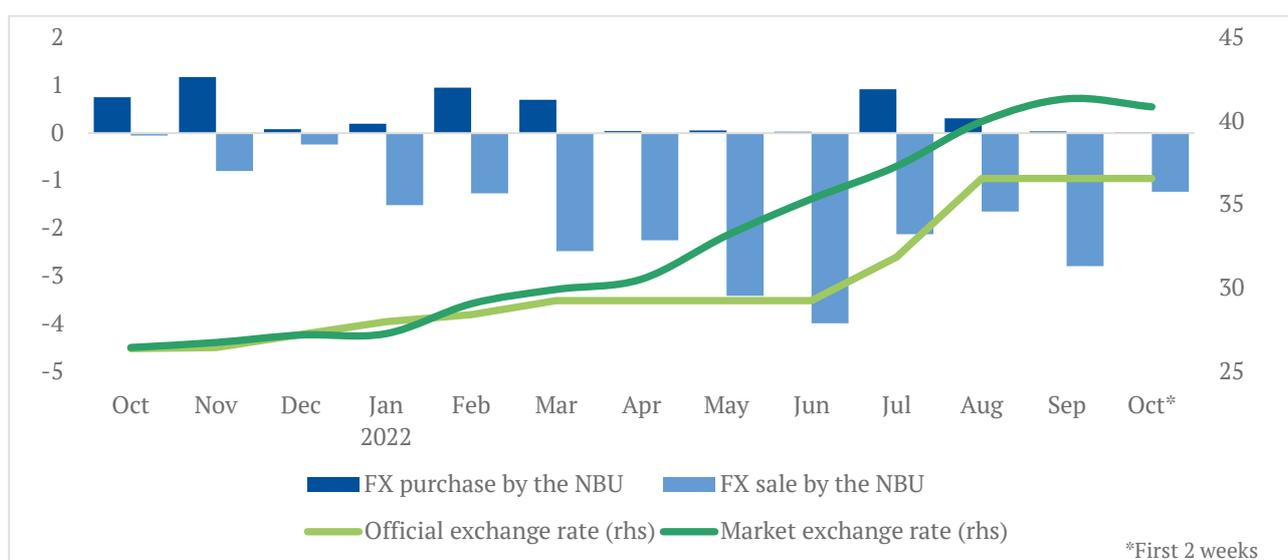
In September, inflation accelerated to 1.9% m-o-m against 1.1% in August. Overall, in annual terms, consumer prices in September increased by 24.6% (23.8% in August). As in previous months, prices for food products (+31.7% y-o-y) and transport (+41.1% y-o-y) increased the most. The most noticeable was the price increase for chicken eggs: in September, their price increased by 22.7% compared to August, and eggs also became more expensive in the first half of October. The price rise for such a major food product caused concern. The rapid rise in egg prices is caused by an interesting combination of several factors: the impact of Russian aggression, the seasonality of egg production and the rise in the price of chicken feed due to the resumption of grain exports.

Despite the fact that inflation in Ukraine is relatively high, it is acceptable in the conditions of a full-scale war and has every chance of staying under 30% by the end of 2022. In some European countries, annual inflation in September was similar to Ukraine's: 24.2% in Estonia, 22.5% in Lithuania, 22% in Latvia, and 17.1% in the Netherlands. Like Ukraine, these countries bear the inflationary burden caused by Russian aggression.

The official exchange rate in September remained fixed at 36.57 UAH/USD. The National Bank sold USD 2.8 billion of foreign currency during the month – more was only in June. The volume of currency purchases by the National Bank decreased to only USD 39 million. The NBU's foreign exchange reserves decreased by USD 1.5 billion over the month, to USD 23.9 billion as of October 1. This decline is not catastrophic; foreign exchange reserves may increase in October, as significant amounts of foreign financial assistance are expected to be transferred to Ukraine.

On the cash market, the hryvnia strengthened from 41.7-41.9 UAH/USD as of 15 September to 40.7-40.9 UAH/USD as of October 15. However, there is still a significant difference between the official and the cash exchange rate; this situation is not sustainable and sooner or later will require a change in the NBU's approach to exchange rate setting.

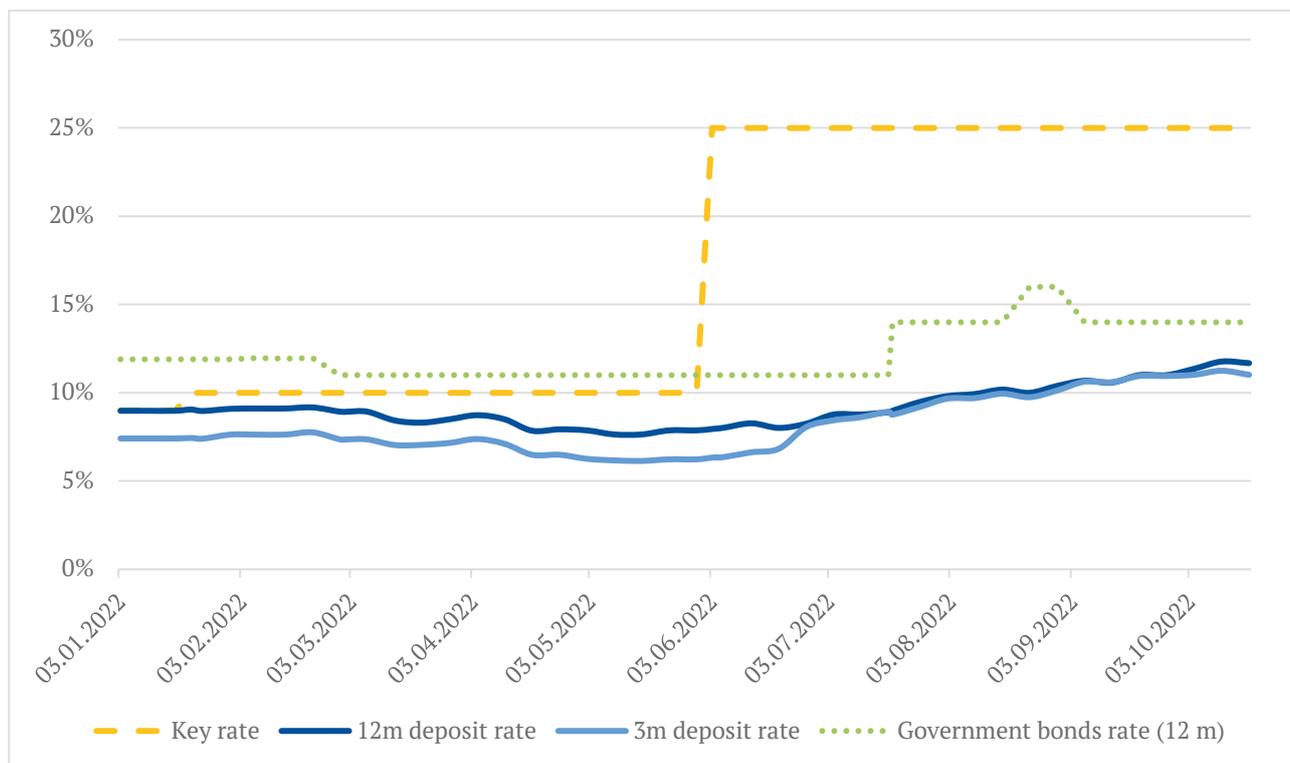
Figure 4. NBU foreign exchange interventions, in USD billion, and weighted average official and market exchange rates UAH/USD



Source: NBU.

The key policy rate remained at 25% p.a. and the yield on hryvnia government bonds mostly remained unchanged at 14%. On October 18, the Ministry of finance issued new 1.5-year bonds with a higher yield of 18.5%. Average rates on retail deposits (UIRD) continued to creep up slowly and reached 11.5%. Banks do not feel the need to attract household funds due to lending being almost absent, so they have no incentive to significantly increase their deposit rates.

Figure 5. NBU discount rate, rates on hryvnia consumer deposits (12- and 3-month) and weighted average level of yield on hryvnia government bonds, %, p.a.



Source: NBU, UIRD.

The news of the resignation of Kyrylo Shevchenko, the Governor of the National Bank of Ukraine, which he announced on October 4 mentioning health issues, came as a surprise. A few days later, the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine, together with the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office, notified Shevchenko of suspicion of illegal actions during the period when he was in charge of the state-owned Ukr-gasbank. Shevchenko is accused of causing losses to the bank in the amount of UAH 206 million over the period 2014-2019.

On October 7, Andriy Pyshnyi, who was the chairman of the board of Oschadbank in 2014-2020, was appointed as the head of the NBU. Pyshnyi faces huge challenges: he has to balance between ensuring the independence of the National Bank in the implementation of monetary policy and helping to finance the state budget through the purchase of new bonds.

5. FISCAL GAP

At the time of preparation of this report, only preliminary data of the State Treasury Service on tax revenues for September were available, limited to the description of the main sources of budget revenues.

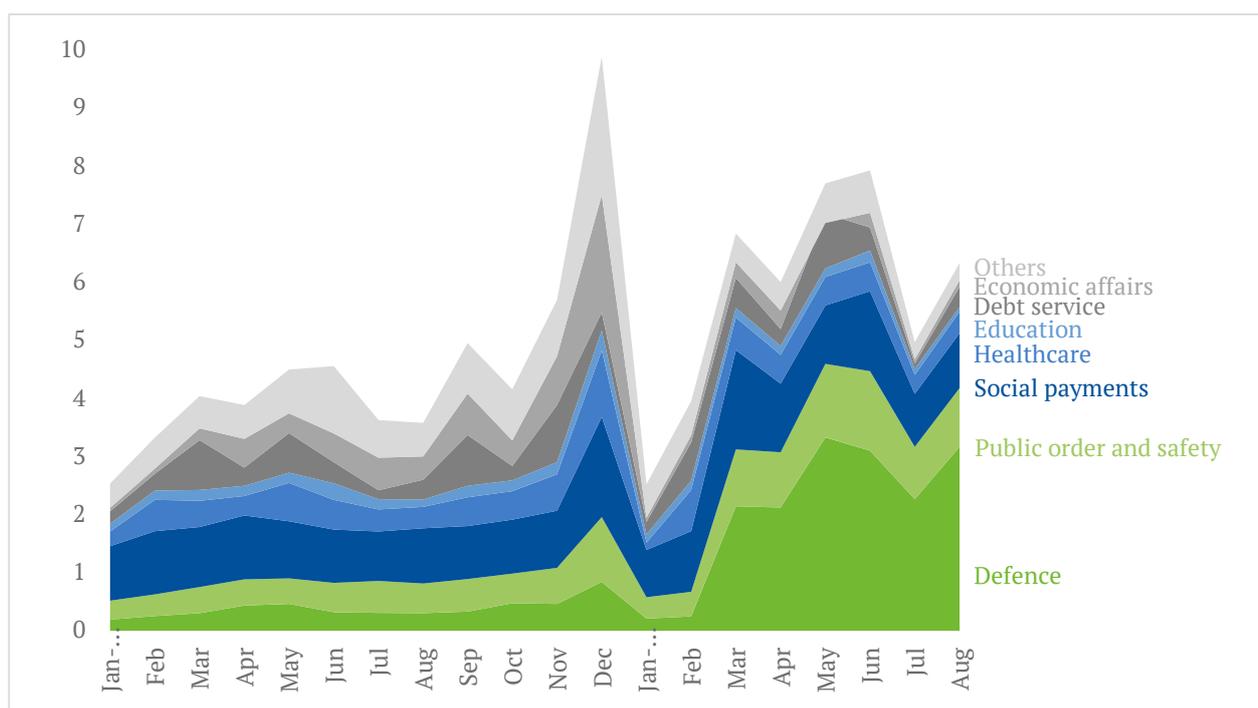
The main source of tax revenues remains VAT on imports, the revenues of which remained at the level of the previous month - UAH 26.3 billion. The VAT paid to the budget on domestic goods and services decreased by 9%, but due to the extremely small amount of compensation (UAH 1.6 billion), net revenues from "domestic" VAT increased and amounted to UAH 22 billion. Total revenues from excise taxes increased by UAH 800 million. In total, VAT and excise taxes brought 13% more to the budget than in August - UAH 57.5 billion.

Income from personal income tax increased by 2%, which is a good result given the reduction in military personnel salaries, which are a significant source of personal income tax, by 5.6%.

Also, in September, we observe a significant increase in the expenses, not funded by taxes or grants. The estimated volume of such funding, based on the figures of aggregate expenditures, budget deficit, tax and grant revenues published by the Ministry of Finance, amounted to UAH 64.8 billion, which is UAH 44.5 billion more than non-tax revenues in August, and UAH 55.4 billion more, than in July this year. To date, there is no public breakdown of this funding, the best probable explanation is that these expenses were funded from the costs, accumulated on the Single Treasury Account.

Expenditures of the general budget fund in September, according to preliminary information published by the Ministry of Finance, amounted to UAH 234.1 billion, which is UAH 21.4 billion more than the previous month. Most significantly increased the expenses for the support of the Armed Forces, +27%, up to UAH 190.2 billion, while expenses for military personnel salaries decreased by 5.6% and amounted to UAH 82.9 billion. Expenditures for social security, the implementation of the program of state guarantees of medical care and transfers to the Pension Fund remained at the level of August, with a slight increase. After the August jump in expenses on state debt service, September expenses under this article decreased by three times, to UAH 4.1 billion.

Figure 6. Consolidated budget expenditures by state functions, UAH billion.



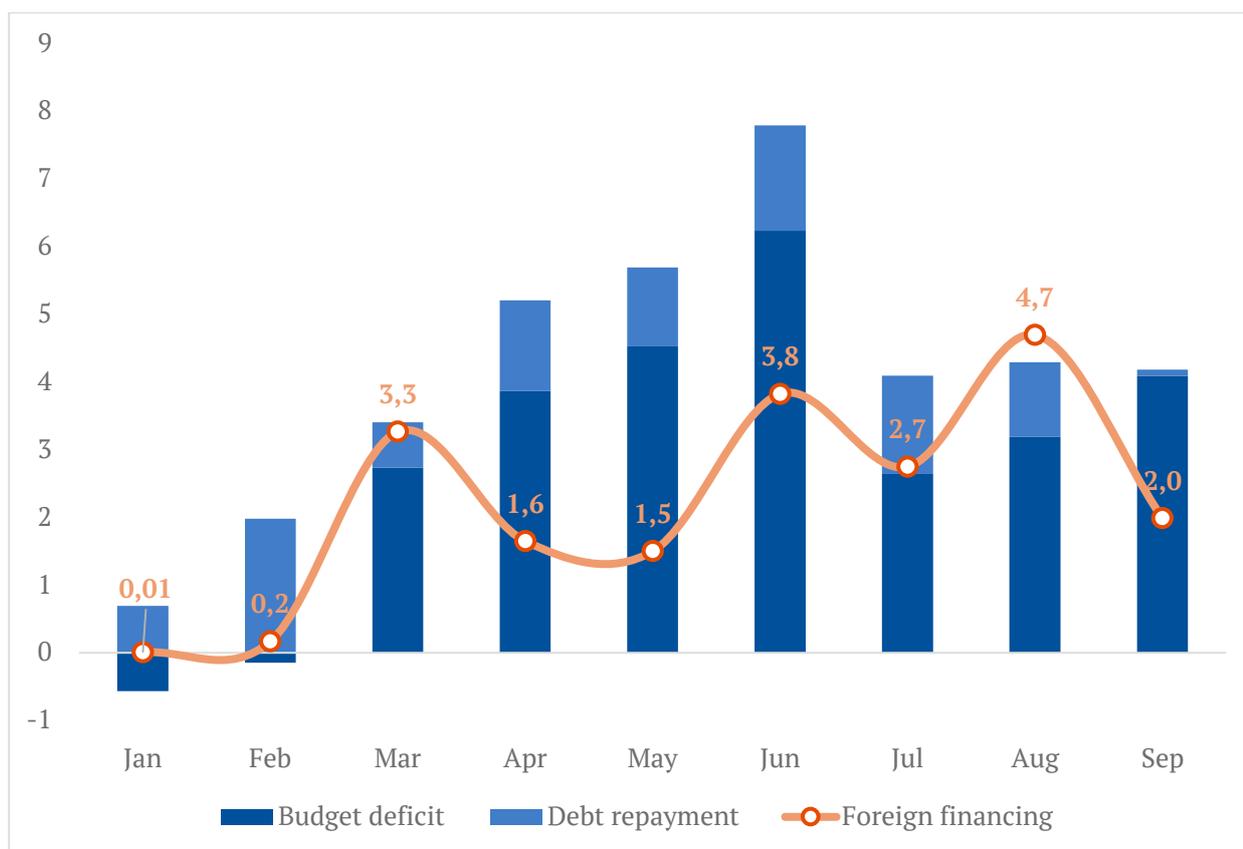
Source: NBU.

Foreign inflows fell again in September to USD 2 billion. The delay in financing is not critical – the inflows in August exceeded the needs of that month, and the volumes of aid should increase significantly in October. In nominal hryvnia terms, foreign aid helped to cover 59% of the additional budget financing needs from the beginning of the full-scale war until October 12 (compared to 57% as of mid-September). Another 27% of the needs were covered by the sale of domestic government bonds by the NBU (UAH 330 billion), and 14% by the sale of government bonds to other buyers (UAH 166 billion). As in previous months, in September the NBU limited monetary financing of the budget to UAH 30 billion per month; on October 18, the NBU printed an additional UAH 15 bn to support the Ukrainian budget.

The USD 2 billion that Ukraine received in September came from the US (USD 1.5 billion in grant aid) and the EU (EUR 500 million in grant aid). Another EUR 500 million was received from the European Investment Bank (EIB), but these funds were used to support Ukrzaliznytsia and Ukravtodor, so they are not included in the calculation of the actual budget aid.

During the first two weeks of October, Ukraine has already received USD 3.3 billion of foreign loans – EUR 2 bn from the EU and USD 1.3 billion from the IMF. Ukraine also received the second loan package of EUR 550 million from the EIB but, as the first one, it went directly to the critical infrastructure companies and not to the budget. About USD 1.5 billion more of budget aid may come from the United States – in total, the volume of disbursements in October may reach USD 4.8 billion, which will be an absolute record for the whole of 2022.

Figure 7. Inflows of foreign funds and financing needs, 9 months of 2022, USD billion¹

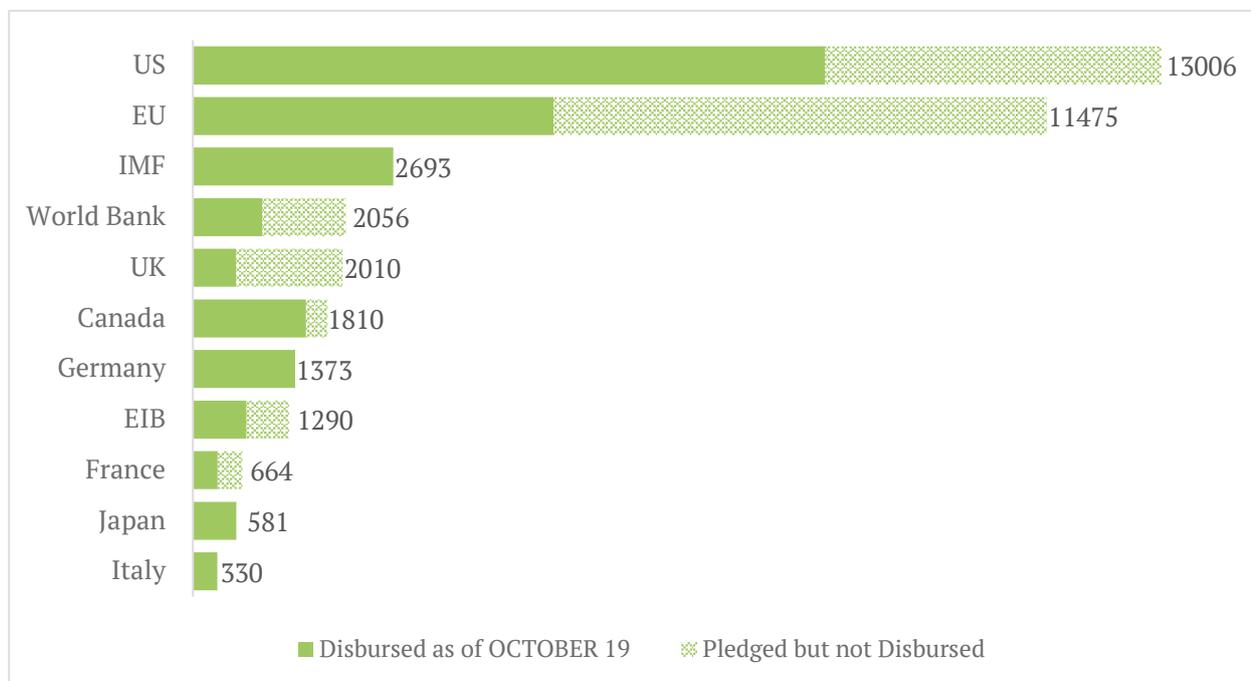


Sources: Ministry of Finance, NBU, CES calculations (we consider the financing of the state budget of Ukraine at the expense of grants from international partners to be deficit financing, not a source of revenue).

¹ For consistency and coherence, foreign grants were added to the budget deficit.

In late September, the United States increased the amount of aid promised to Ukraine by USD 4.5 billion, which is scheduled to be disbursed in three equal tranches (USD 1.5 billion each) in October, November and December 2022. In total, the amount of pledged aid to Ukraine has reached USD 37,8 billion,² USD 22.6 billion of which has already been disbursed. Grants make up 41% of the promised funding, loans and loan guarantees — 59%.

Figure 8. Main foreign donors to the state budget of Ukraine, USD million



Sources: Ministry of Finance, Kiel Institute for the World Economy, CES research.

Foreign aid is critical to cover the need for additional budget financing in order to close the budget deficit and repay debts. In partnership with the German Economic Team, we have calculated two scenarios for budget financing needs by the end of the year. According to the first scenario (scenario A), budget expenditures by the end of the year will be in line with those planned before the war, but with increased financing of defence needs; according to the second scenario (scenario B), the government will try to cut all non-priority expenditures as far as possible to free up as much money as possible for defence.

Under the current budget scenario (scenario A), we forecast that the budget deficit will reach USD 49.0 billion by the end of 2022 (35.8% of GDP). According to the savings scenario (scenario B), the budget deficit will reach USD 37.0 billion (27.1% of GDP) by the end of the year.

Ukraine will also spend about USD 14.1 billion on debt repayments in 2022. Most of this amount, USD 12.6 billion, will be spent on repayment of domestic debt. Another USD 1.5 bn will be used to repay external debts: this amount could have been higher, but thanks to the successful restructuring, the Ukrainian government managed to reduce debt repayments by 40% in 2022-2024, from USD 16 billion to USD 10 billion over this period.

² The amount of the promised US aid increased by USD 4.5 billion, but we also adjusted our calculations and reduced the promised US contribution by USD 2 billion according to the published information of the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine. The contribution of the EIB decreased by EUR 1050 million which did not go to the budget.

Taking into account debt repayments, the need for additional financing will reach USD 63.1 billion (46.1% of GDP) in scenario A and USD 51.1 billion (37.4% of GDP) in scenario B.

Foreign aid revenues, based on realistic forecasts of about USD 17 billion of disbursements in October-December, will only be enough to cover the financing needs under scenario B, i.e. under the condition of budget savings and reduction of non-priority expenditures. Thus, this scenario is optimal. More information about the study can be found on the website of the German Economic Team.³

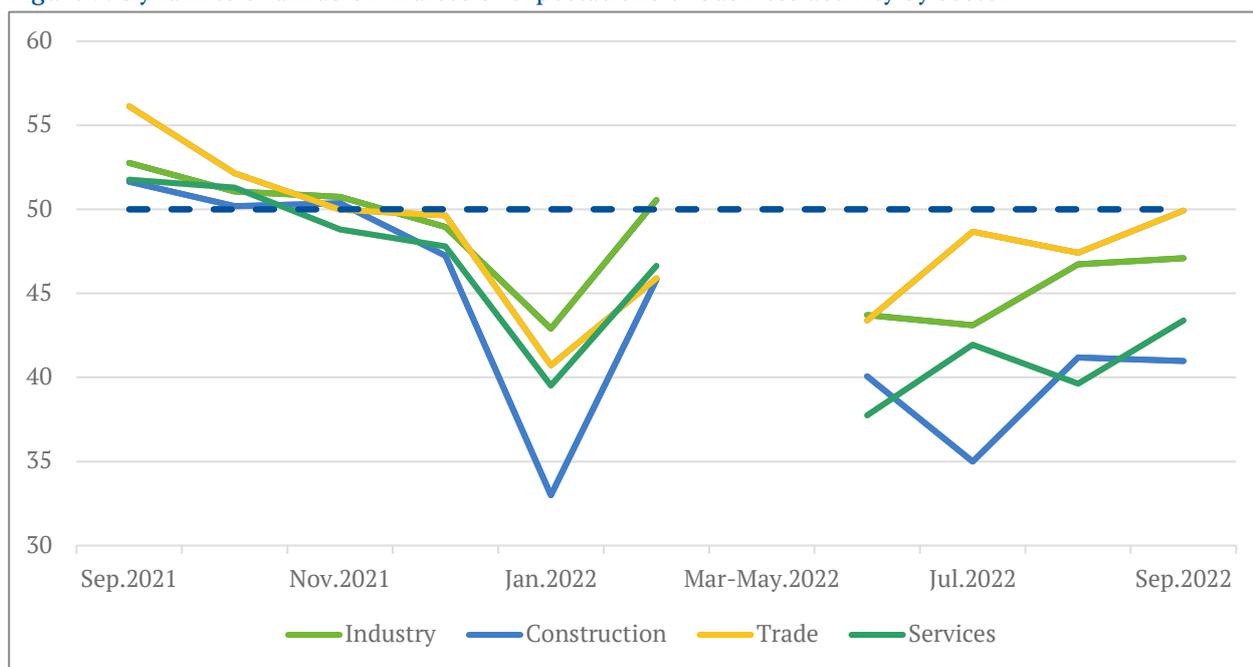
³ Short-term estimation of Ukraine's public finance stance – GET <https://www.german-economic-team.com/en/publication/short-term-estimation-of-ukraines-public-finance-stance/>

6. SPECIAL FOCUS: BUSINESS EXPECTATIONS

The state and dynamics of the Ukrainian economy largely depend on the adaptation of businesses to new circumstances and the expectations of entrepreneurs.

The National Bank of Ukraine has resumed the monthly survey of Ukrainian companies since June. The number of respondents (448 enterprises) and their distribution by economic sectors, company size and foreign economic activity enable an informative in-depth analysis of the answers received.

Figure 9. Dynamics of diffusion indices of expectations of business activity by sector⁴



Source: NBU.

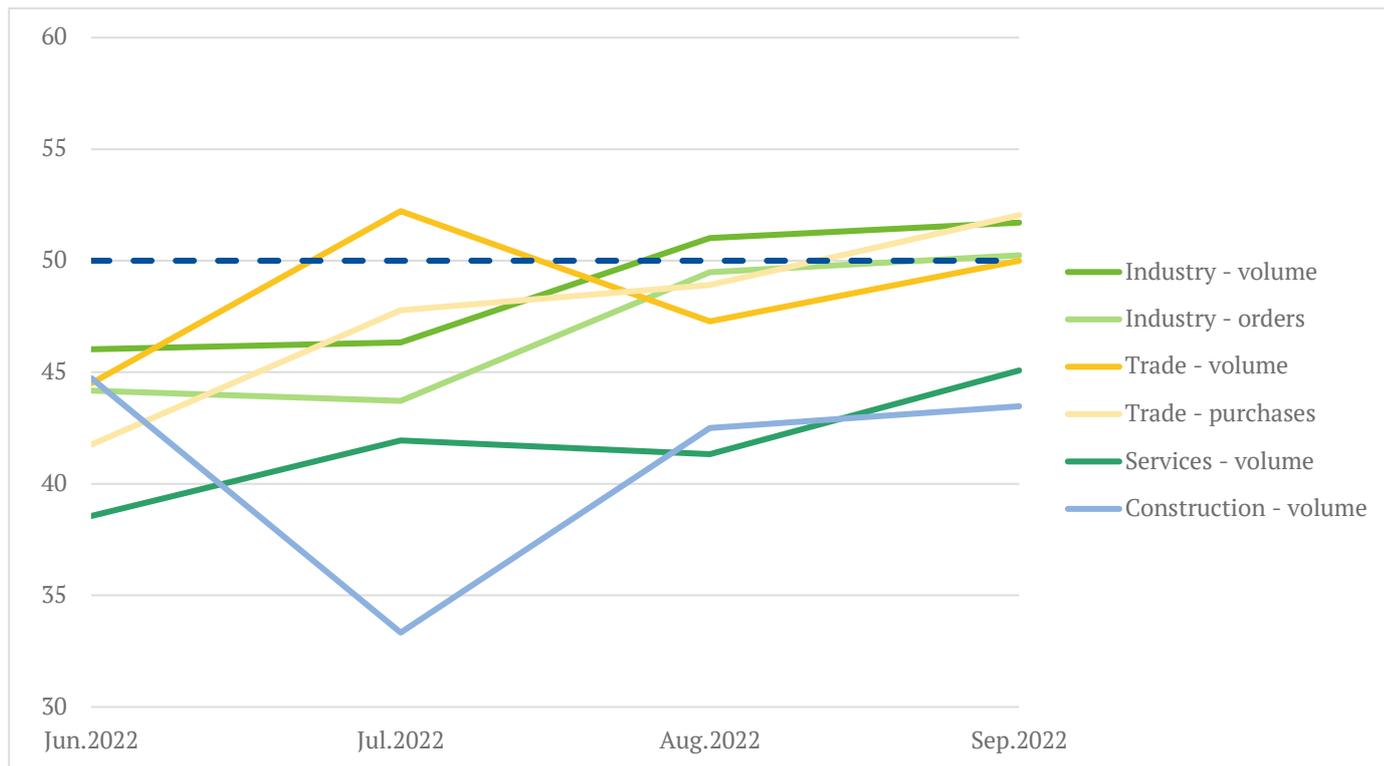
The balance of business expectations continues to improve, with the best performance in trade - the index of expectations in this sector has already reached a neutral level, for the first time since November last year. Only in construction have expectations barely improved over the past three months and remain largely negative.

The driving force behind the improvement is the optimism of industrial and commercial enterprises regarding the volumes of production/sales and new orders/purchases – all these indicators reached a positive balance of expectations (indices ≥ 50). At the same time, expectations regarding the volume of new export orders remain pessimistic – the index was 46.1, and respondents also expect a decrease in inventory.

Expectations for new orders in construction are the worst – after a long decline, just 13% of respondents expect an increase in the volume of new orders. However, only 17% expect a further decline, while 70% expect that the volume of new orders will remain unchanged. This indicates the likely stabilisation of the construction industry at a new, lower level of construction volumes.

⁴ The indices reflect the balance between positive and negative expectations, with values over 50 indicating prevalence of the positive expectations and below 50 – prevalence of negative expectations

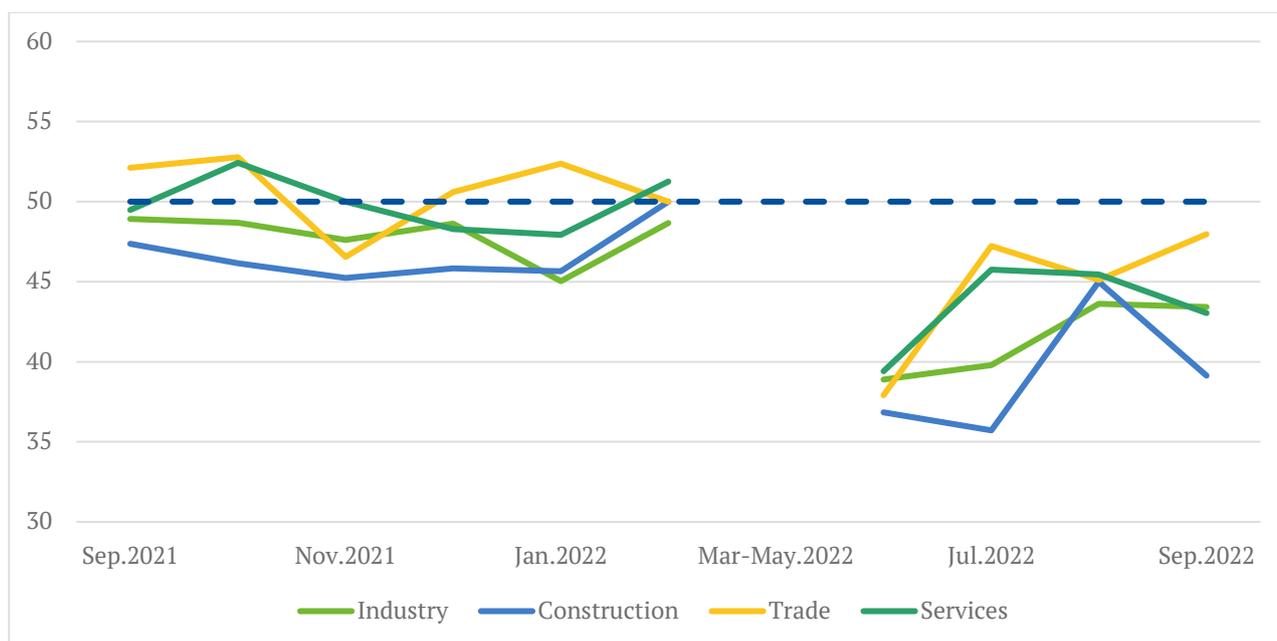
Figure 10. Dynamics of diffusion indices of expected volumes and new orders by sector



Source: NBU.

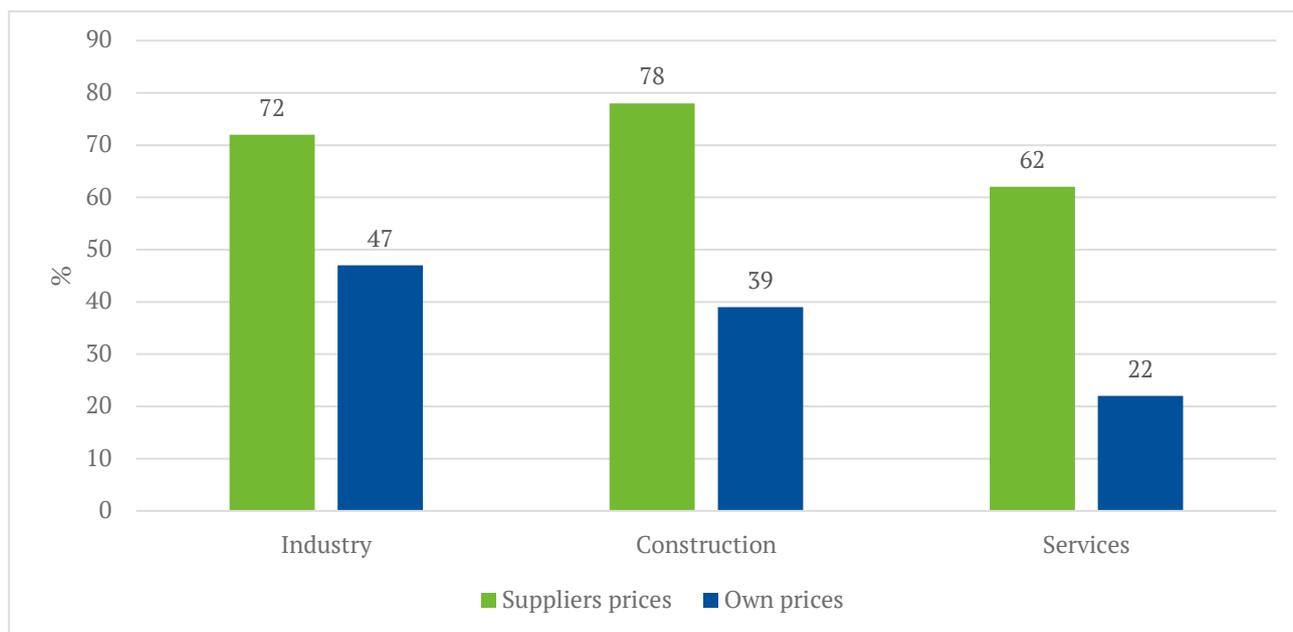
All business sectors expect a further decrease in the total number of employees. At the same time, if the situation in trade stabilises, none of the representatives of the construction business interviewed expects an increase in the number of employees in the coming month, more than 1/5 plan further reductions. At the same time, builders expect an increase in the cost of contractor services and a decrease in their availability.

Figure 11. Expectations of changes in the number of employees by sector



Source: NBU.

Figure 12. Percentage of respondents who expect an increase in supplier prices and own prices, by sector



Source: NBU.

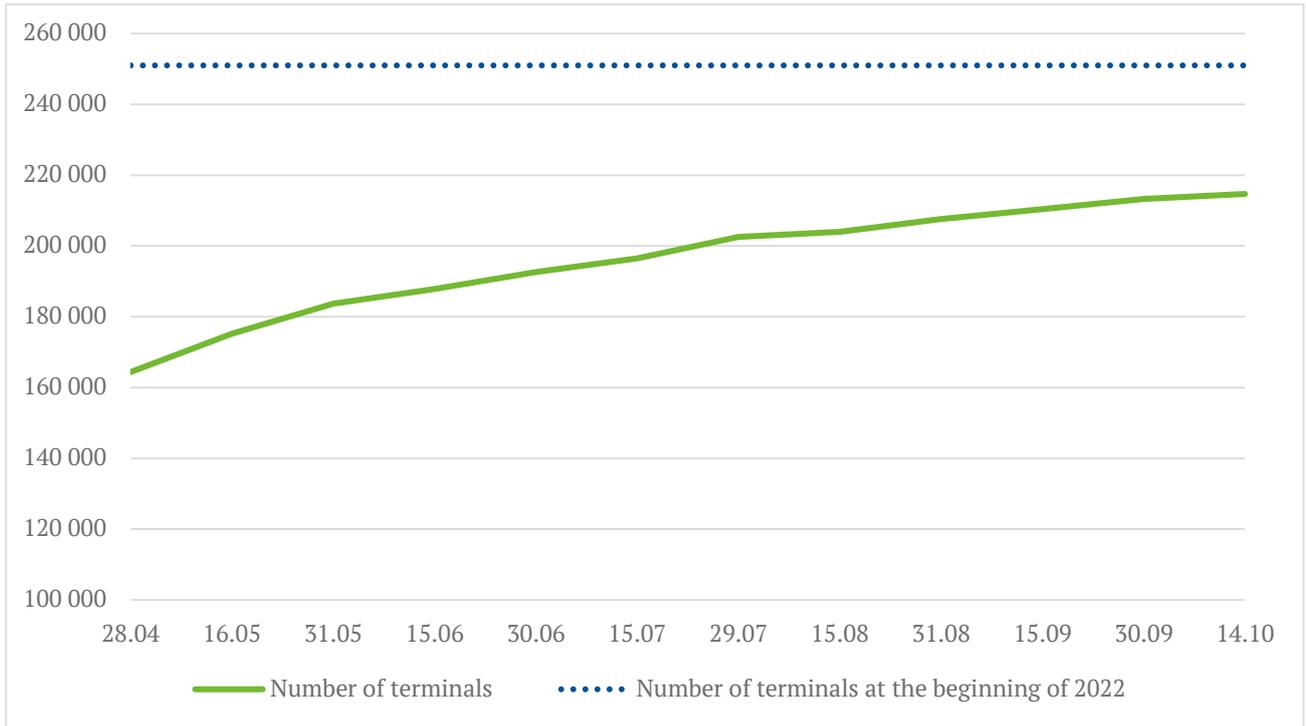
Respondents' expectations of supplier price increases significantly exceed expectations of their own prices' growth. This may indicate the readiness of the business to compete by absorbing the increase in cost at the expense of their profitability.

If this hypothesis is correct, such business sentiment will be a factor in restraining the inflationary spiral.

Similarly, only 8% of entrepreneurs expect trading margins to increase, and almost a third expect margins to decrease. We note that negative expectations regarding the margin in trade began to be recorded by the survey in the pre-war years as well.

The number of working payment terminals of Privatbank continues to grow and has already reached more than 85% of the pre-war level. Growth rates ahead of the recovery of Ukraine's economy testify to the further transition of entrepreneurs to cashless payments, which are attractive due to the ease of service during the war. However, this growth can partly be explained by the displacement of foreign and other state-owned banks from the market of payment networks, which was already observed during the summer. As of June 2022, almost 59% of working payment terminals belonged to Privatbank.

Figure 13. Number of working payment (POS) terminals of Pryvatbank



Source: PryvatBank.