Results of a qualitative stage of public opinion research within the framework of the Anti-Corruption Initiative and Enhancing Fiscal Transparency in the Energy Sector in Ukraine (Transparent Energy) project with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Inna Volosevych
Head of Social and Political Research Department
Inna.Volosevych@gfk.com

Anastasiya Shurenkova
Senior Project Manager of Industry and Strategic Research Department
Anastasiya.Shurenkova@gfk.com

Andrii Kravchenko
Researcher of Social and Political Research Department
Andrii.Kravchenko@gfk.com

20 December 2018
Methodology of the research: in-depth interviews with the representatives of expert and business environments

**Expert survey**

7 experts of the energy sector participated in the expert survey:

- Denis Sakva, the company Dragon Capital;
- Georgii Heletuha, a member of the Public Council at the State Agency on Energy Efficiency and Energy Saving of Ukraine;
- Serhiy Pinchuk, Support Office and Implementation of Reforms of the Minregion;
- Kotko Vasyl, Energy Association of Ukraine;
- Parashchii Aleksandr, Head of Analytical Department at Concorde Capital;
- Omelchenko Volodymyr, Director, Energy programmes at Razumkov Centre;
- Hennadii Riabtsev, manager of special projects at the Scientific and Technical Center "Psiheya"

**Business survey**

8 of the respondents participated in the survey of the business representatives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Size of business</th>
<th>Profile of the activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>Kyiv</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>They have a license for gas supply at a regulated tariff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>Kyiv</td>
<td>Medium-sized</td>
<td>They produce thermal and electric energy, supply thermal energy and hot water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>Medium-sized</td>
<td>Provides services and implementation of automated electricity counting systems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>Kharkiv</td>
<td>Medium-sized</td>
<td>Alternative energy (installation of solar panels, convectors)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td></td>
<td>They sell electricity to the end user</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>Medium-sized</td>
<td>They purchase natural gas and electricity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>Dnipro</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>They produce briquettes for heating, heat supply.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>Odesa</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>They use electricity and natural gas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Resume

- Defining the concept of transparency in the energy sector, the experts pointed out that the following principles should be implemented:
  - Awareness of the information that can actually be available;
  - Free access to the available information for all segments of the population (both the pool of expert and citizens);
  - Relevance (regularity of updating) of information;
  - Accessible manner of delivery of the information (which does not require significant expert knowledge to understand what it represents).
- Experts point out that the energy sector is currently unavailable and unclear (terra incognita) for most Ukrainian citizens, at the same time they rate their own awareness highly. Business environment female representatives who have regular access to the information also rate their own awareness highly, but they point out that it is necessary to know your way around the sources of information and their content, in order to get successful searches.
- Regarding the authorities, which should be responsible for providing information transparency in the energy sector, both experts and business representatives are unanimous in the fact that the executive authorities should do it in accordance with the legislation that has yet to be adopted. At the moment, the situation is such that each authority manages the information it owns and it does so at its own discretion (at the discretion of its leader). This situation is repeated in the responses of business representatives when they talk about their own informational openness, everyone consider themselves open, but publicly distribute only the information that they consider necessary (the decision is taken by the head).
- Experts estimate rather low the current general rules and requirements as well as the Government's efforts to ensure public access to information in order to meet the needs of energy market participants and consumers of energy services. On the contrary, business representatives are more satisfied with the current situation regarding informatization, while pointing out the positive tendency of informing and disclosure data.
- This situation (when technically the information is open, but in practical terms, it is difficult to find it, if you do not know where and what to look for) affects the level of awareness of market participants. The experts and business representatives have similar assessments of this level and they distinguish three segments: domestic consumers are the least informed, suppliers and regulators are the most informed, corporate consumers and other authorities – have the average level of awareness.
- The experts are almost unanimous in the opinion that the lack of transparency in the energy sector is a serious corruption risk, and transparency is the only way to fight against corruption. The representatives of business also see the direct connection with the level of disclosure of the industry and level of investment in this industry.
Survey of the representatives of the expert environment
Transparency and information
Transparency and information (1)

Defining the concept of transparency in the energy sector, the experts pointed out that the following principles should be implemented:
- Awareness of the information that can actually be available;
- Free access to the available information for all segments of the population (both the pool of expert and citizens);
- Relevance (regularity of updating) of information;
- Accessible manner of delivery of the information (which does not require significant expert knowledge to understand what it represents).

Experts point out that the energy sector remains currently unavailable and unclear (terra incognita) for most Ukrainian citizens.

Regarding the content of the information materials that should be available under the Transparency Program in the energy sector of Ukraine, the opinions of the experts differ, which indicates the lack of a unified position and unambiguous understanding. The following types of information are mentioned separately: general information, which reflects the actual state of the industry, including statistical reporting on the industry in general and on individual companies; strategic government decisions on the industry that are adopted and which are under discussion; tariffs and their clear justification; in general - all information relating to commercial or national secrets.

If there is no consensus between the experts on the actual information content, then the experts are unanimous in defining the components of transparency in the energy sector:
- **Relevance**, promptly updated information;
- Information is easy to find, its **availability**;
- The **comprehensiveness** of information in terms of logic - both in terms of the regulator and private companies;
- The correspondence of the information provided to the actual state of affairs in the industry and in private companies (**objectivity and completeness**).

Actually, it is suggested to use these components as criteria for transparency in the energy sector, evaluating each of them. It is suggested to use the method of interviewing experts as a method of evaluation at this stage of industry development.

While assessing the overall current level of transparency of the information, the experts rate it from 2 to 4 according to 5-point scale, the average score equals 2.9 by 7 observations.

The experts who gave the highest rates (4 points, two experts out of seven) support their choice with the fact that, first of all, they personally have access to the data; secondly, they evaluate highly the work of the Ministry of Fuel and Energy of Ukraine and NKREKP in the informatization area as the main providers of information in the sector.
Experts who rated it lower (2 points, three experts out of seven) mention the following problems: the difficulty of finding the information, the lack of information on the separation of supply companies due to energy reform, the absence of a clear definition of the status of secrecy (national, commercial, intellectual), which allows companies to hide the information, referring to the status of "secrecy".

The experts are not too optimistic about the prospect of raising the level of transparency of the information, because they do not see incentives for this. The experts are unanimous in their opinion that transparency of information can only be provided by law. The experts point out the following structures in the system of legislation, which should create incentives to increase the level of transparency of information in the energy sector: Parliament, NKREKP, structures of executive authority.

The Ministry of Energy and the Coal Industry (mentioned twice), the State Fiscal Service, the Prosecutor's Office, the Ministry of Regional Policy, the National Energy Regulatory Commission (NKREKP, mentioned twice), the Anti-monopoly Committee (mentioned twice), State Service of Geology and Mineral Resources of Ukraine were mentioned as the candidates. This indicates that the problem is still evolving, and even among experts, there is no clear understanding of how "Transparent energy" should be developed. Accordingly, the experts could not answer the question how to divide the powers between authorities in order to ensure transparency in the energy sector. There were single responses that the division of powers should be established by law.

According to one of the experts, public authorities should not be responsible for ensuring transparency, but only create conditions for the information to be revealed.

The experts also believe that ensuring the data openness is not the priority for the authorities. In particular, because of the lack of the law that would oblige them to do so.

Quotation: «In Ukraine, everything is decided according to the law. If there is such a requirement in the legislation, then there is a chance that it will be implemented. Therefore, I think that everything should start from the laws»

The experts are unanimous in the fact that executive authorities should ensure transparency, but they did not reach agreement on which body should be responsible for this.
Transparency and information (3)

While assessing the awareness of different market participants about the events that occur in the energy sector, the experts unanimously consider domestic consumers to be the least informed (the rates are from 1 to 3 according to a 5-point scale, an average score of 2.0).

According to the experts, the average level of awareness is demonstrated by corporate consumers and authorities (average rates are 3.6 and 3.3, respectively). Significantly, almost all experts, with the only exception, assessed the level of authorities’ awareness at the same level or lower than the awareness of corporate consumers.

The experts evaluate the awareness of regulators and supplier companies at the highest level (average rates are 4.7 and 4.3, respectively). Regulators received the most consistent rates from the experts (5 rates of “5” and 2 rates of “4”). The experts evaluated the awareness of supplier companies in the range of 3 to 5. 4 experts out of 7 rated the awareness of supplier companies lower than the awareness of regulators, 2 experts rate with the same highest score, and only one of them believes that the supplier companies are worse aware than the regulators.

Thus, we have three rather distinct clusters among the market participants: the least informed domestic consumers, the best informed suppliers and regulators, corporate consumers and other authorities - at an average level of awareness.

Different levels of awareness of the various participants is explained by the ease of access to data, in particular on the quality of energy products and the ease of perception of such information.

According to the experts, there is the data on the quality of energy products in the market, but the sources of the information are not transparent enough, the data are contradictory, and the lack of objectivity criteria does not allow to assess the completeness of data. The situation is slightly better in the electricity sector (especially, regarding the prices and tariffs), whereas in the heat power sector, the situation with the delivery of the information is worse.

Instead, only experts understand the information that is currently available on the market. The population is provided only with the information on tariffs and amounts to be paid.

Quotation: «I do not think that ordinary citizens understand it. And I do not think that it is really necessary for them to understand it»

Quotation: «It is impossible for the general consumer to figure out what is really going on»
Transparency and information (4)

Accordingly, the experts assess the current general rules and requirements for public access to the information, the disclosure of statistical and working information in terms of meeting the needs of energy market participants and consumers of energy services (4 ratings of “3” on a 5-point scale, 2 ratings of “2” and one rating of “1”), an average rating is 2.4. The reasons for the low ratings - the lack of the information precisely for the consumers, the inconsistency of data, no clear idea of potential users of the information, where and what information should be sought.

Quotation: «I do not observe any systematic work towards improving the collection of information about the quality of services»

Accordingly, the experts gave low ratings to the Government's efforts to ensure that consumers and energy market participants have access to quality and timely information. The average rate is 2.6 on a 5-point scale. However, the distribution of ratings regarding this issue is somewhat higher: two ratings of "1" (because this issue is not the priority for the government), two ratings of "3" and two ratings of "4" (information is available, although the access is complicated).

Quotation: «The Government. Because it refers to the regulation of various areas, regulation of the various sets of information that is found in many subjects of regulation»

The experts pointed out that currently, there is no authority responsible for the availability, relevance and completeness of the information on energy markets. The experts mentioned NKREKP (4 mentions) and the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Committee of the Verkhovna Rada on energy (1 mention each), among the authorities that make the greatest effort to ensure access of consumers and energy market participants to high-quality and timely information. But there is a slightly higher distribution of the answers to the question, which authority should make the best efforts to ensure information transparency: the NKREKP (4 mentions) is most often mentioned, The Ministry of Energy and the Coal Industry is mentioned twice, the Verkhovna Rada and the Government in general, as well as the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, the Ministry of Regional Policy, the State Service of Geology and Mineral Resources of Ukraine, and the Derzhspozhyvstandard are mentioned once each.
Anti-corruption strategy
Anti-corruption strategy

The experts are almost unanimous in the opinion that the lack of transparency in the energy sector is a serious corruption risk, and transparency is the only way to fight against corruption. Only one expert countered this thesis, stating that he had never personally heard that when speaking about combating corruption one talked about the transparency of energy markets. In general, the rest of the experts agree that lack of information means lack of control, but there is a single remark that the lack of transparency in energy sector is a somewhat formal corruption risk. However, even this skeptical expert believes that an anti-corruption strategy should include such an element as raising the awareness of market participants, while pointing out that it should be about "reducing information asymmetry" rather than raising awareness. The rest of the experts also agree with this thesis completely.

Most experts know the cases when false or incomplete information was provided in the energy sector, or the cases of withholding the information. Only one expert said that he is not aware of such cases and one was not sure that his information about such cases was true. The rest confidently replied that they were "of course, aware of" such cases. Two experts point out that no punishment has been established for concealing or providing false or incomplete information in the energy sector. The rest (three experts) say that penalties are established, but not for all cases, but only for some; they are formally established, but the cases of real punishment are unknown; or the punishments are inadequately lower, compared to public harm caused by concealment or distortion of information.

Quotation: «That's right... the more information, the more opportunities to get certain conclusions or suspicions about certain corruption actions»

Quotation: «Definitely... it is difficult to plan activities without proper information»

Most of the references about concealment or distortion of information spoken by the experts concerned the gas sector.
Information management
Information management

The experts point out that there is no single structure that would be a manager of information in the energy sector. Each body is the manager of the information, for which it is responsible. According to some experts, there are more than a dozen of such structures. The Ministry of Energy and Coal Industry, NKREKP were mentioned most often. In single cases, the following structures were mentioned as the managers of information in the energy sector, the State Service of Geology and Mineral Resources of Ukraine, the Antimonopoly Committee, the Ministry of Economy were mentioned separately. As an example of an effective information manager, several experts have mentioned Ukrenergo, as an authority that has a fairly complete system of information processing.

The experts are unanimous in the fact that the information in the energy sector is often provided in an incomplete or censored form. According to the experts, this practice is abused by all owners and managers of the information. However, the experts are not sure that it is done on purpose, most likely it's established practices of treatment of information.

Quotation: «This is a very common practice. This is the nature of our companies, ministries - to show only those data that are available, to demonstrate in the best light»

Similarly, the experts do not agree that the information managers deliberately release it in a form that significantly complicates or prevents its use. Although they report that there are such isolated cases.
Consumers of information
Consumers of information

The experts were asked a number of questions regarding their assessment of the gender distribution of consumers in terms of their interest, awareness in the energy sector, etc.

According to the experts’ estimates, there was no significant gender imbalance in the questions of how households consume the information: for most questions, the most experts answered, ‘people of both genders, equally’. However, women have never been mentioned separately in the response to the questions about the awareness, interest and saving. On the contrary, men were not mentioned separately in the responses to the questions about liability for paying bills, applying for subsidies and response to corruption cases.

Thus, women slightly prevail in the field of practical (payments, active actions), and men - in field of theoretical (awareness, interest) experience.

Let’s point out that all interviewed experts are men, so we can only assess the male point of view on gender issues.

However, the experts once again stressed the low awareness of the population about the energy issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Both genders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who is more often responsible for paying for housing and communal services bills in households?</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 answers</td>
<td>2 answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is more interested in the information about energy?</td>
<td>2 answers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4 answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is more aware of energy saving and energy efficiency?</td>
<td>4 answers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who tries to save energy more?</td>
<td>1 answer</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is more willing to respond actively to the cases of corruption in the energy sector?</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 answer</td>
<td>4 answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is more likely to apply for subsidies to pay for the housing and communal services?</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 answers</td>
<td>3 answers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quotation: «I can say that neither men nor women understand what is energy efficiency»

According to experts’ unanimous opinion, improving the level of public awareness and improving the quality of service, is possible due to the introduction of such tools as "customer office" and electronic digital signature. The experts evaluate such tools and means of communication as modern, progressive and beneficial.

Quotation: «The consumer's office is a great discovery. I think that most consumers will have access to such a tool in the nearest future. The next stage is a centralized office for all housing and communal services. An electronic digital signature is a good tool, but a relatively small number of people need it»

Regarding the blockchain, the experts also were unanimous that this technology should be implemented in the last turn after basic information needs are provided (first, it is necessary to ensure the availability of a high-speed Internet network in all households). But as a perspective tool, the experts evaluate it positively.
Survey of the representatives of the business environment
Transparency and information
Transparency and information (1)

The respondents perceive the concept of “transparency in the energy sector” from the perspective of their own business. The representatives of energy and related services supply companies evaluate transparency as rather high, as the rules of the game on the market are quite clear for them (“We openly obtain the license, receive agreed tariffs... public hearings are published on the NKREKP website... And the decisions are made at the open meeting of the NKREKP”), however, they realize that they have privileged position in comparison with the rest of society (“Everything is transparent for me, and it’s hard to say, how it looks from the outside”).

«On the contrary, the representative of a company that provides services of the service and the introduction of automated electricity counting systems, complains that “there is no general state policy, I mean, written out where we are going, where we are moving in the energy sector”. For the representatives of consumer companies, in the first place, transparency means the transparency and clarity of tariffs, and secondly, the ability to freely choose a supplier and monitor. These respondents say that it is still far from the full transparency, considering “black holes and black boxes that exist in the energy sector”. Also, these respondents attribute increased transparency to the fight against corruption.

According to their own perceptions about the definition and components of transparency in the energy sector, the respondents assess their level according to the 5-point scale. The estimates range from 1 to 5, the representatives of supply companies give the expected higher ratings:

Rating «5»: «From my position ... of the director of the power plant, I do not see any problems with transparency»;

Rating «4»: «In those cases when we encountered Oblenergo, nobody interfered»

The companies that are in the role of consumers, or put themselves in the place of consumers, assess the level of transparency low, particularly in the cases involving non-standard queries:

Rating «1»: «Speaking about public information that should be available then it is available. But if to register, submit a request on time and receive a response in 20 days - it's impossible!»;

Rating «2»: «Apparently, it is difficult for the consumer to understand this all, I mean, there is not more accessible information»
Transparency and information (2)

However, the respondents also admit that there is a tendency of improvement and the market is becoming more transparent. The key role in this is played by the process of information exchange between the market participants (suppliers and consumers), as well as regulatory and executive authorities. All respondents emphasize that this process becomes more and more comprehensible and constructive, in particular due to the latest electronic methods of information exchange. The information that was previously not available (e.g., information from a supplier) is received by the consumers.

Quotation: «The situation is changing, it is becoming more transparent, information is exchanged through the same official websites of state companies and other companies.»

The respondents gave the lowest ratings, with the significant gap (three ratings of “2”, one rating of “1”) the level of communication between consumers and authorities.

The respondents disagree about which authorities should be responsible for ensuring transparency of public energy policy. The most frequent answer is: relevant ministries or "some regulators", without specifying what exactly. But in any case, the responsibility is imposed upon the central authorities ("100% it should be the central government"). Several respondents mentioned the Ministry of Energy, the Verkhovna Rada, the Antimonopoly Committee, the NKREKP and the "Anti-corruption" Committee while answering the questions.

Accordingly, the respondents respond negatively to the question of whether in Ukraine, there is a clear division of powers between the authorities to ensure such transparency. However, they point out that perhaps, the legislation provides such a division, but they emphasize that it is formal and even suspect that there are "shadow parties".

Actually, according to the respondents, the presence of these "shadow" parties, affects the fact that the task of ensuring transparency in the energy sector is one of the last priorities of the authorities (the respondents are unanimous in such an assessment of priority).

Quotation: «In words, it maybe on the first, but in fact ... It is generally unprofitable for them, because then their… can decrease a lot… corrupt component»
Transparency and information (3)

The National Commission that carries out state regulation in the energy and utilities sectors is often mentioned by the respondents as an authority that is making the greatest effort to ensure transparency in the energy sector now as well as the authority that should make the greatest effort. In this respect, the respondents also mention the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Energy and the Antimonopoly Committee, as well as the undefined “the Government and relevant ministries”.

In general, businesses are indifferent to which authority will be responsible for ensuring transparency in the energy sector and awareness of market participants.

In general, the assessments of different market participants level of awareness of the respondents-representatives of business completely coincide in the assessments with experts in the energy sector: the awareness of domestic consumers received the lowest ratings, the awareness of corporate consumers and authorities is rated at the average level, the awareness of regulators and supplier companies - at the highest level (the latter two groups received ratings of "4" and "5"). Such distribution of ratings is a characteristic of the respondents in all sectors - both suppliers and consumers.

Regarding the ease of obtaining the information on the quality and prices of products and services in the energy market, the respondents unanimously emphasize that the information on prices is publicly available. While it is a problem to receive the information on the quality of energy products due to the lack of clear quality criteria.

Quotation: «Information about the quality of services [the consumer] will not receive anywhere ... In order to evaluate them»

It is difficult for the respondents to assess how comprehensible is the information for an ordinary consumers, since some of them are engaged in energy professionally. Therefore, their estimates are diametrically opposite, from "90% comprehensible" to "absolutely incomprehensible".

Quotation: «I find it very difficult to compare myself with the consumer, I am engaged in energy my entire life»

The respondents also point out that consumers should receive basic level of knowledge about energy products in order to be able to evaluate their quality.

Quotation: «People do not even understand that the product electricity has the following indicators: voltage, voltage deviation, frequency, number of black-outs...»
Transparency and information (4)

According to the assessments of information comprehensibility, the respondents’ recommendations for improving the situation vary. The group of the respondents who believes that "everything is clear" and "you can find everything online" does not see a problem and does not consider it necessary to do something.

Another group that believes that consumers do not understand the information, suggests to engage the media, to conduct awareness-raising information campaigns, and so on. But they emphasize that informing – has to be only one of the components in the development of the service system.

In general, according to the respondents, the average assessment of the current system of access to public, statistical and working information, according to respondents, slightly exceeds "3" points according to 5-point scale. The actual availability of the sources of information is pointed out as positive moment. The negative is the need to interpret what is stated in the formal language and the complexity of obtaining the necessary information from existing sources, as well as the lack of feedback from business in the field of informatization.

Quotation: «You can receive [the information] if you wish. It is another thing to understanding it»

Quotation: «There were no such sources in the past. They start to appear now, and we have already some information. But we are not able to influence all of this»
Business
The respondents quite differently assess the completeness, accuracy and relevance of official statistics: the representatives of supplier companies rate at "4" and "5" according to 5-point scale. Arguments: the information is available, it corresponds to the current situation and relevant. The rest of the respondents mainly rated at "3" (there is only one "2"). The claims or very specific, such as the impossibility of determining the cost of gas price, in particular Ukrainian. Or very amorphous (data are inaccurate and incomplete, there is something to work on). In order to improve the state of affairs, the respondents who have given the negative assessments, suggest to conduct an audit, a general change in the system of statistics and accounting, to introduce personal responsibility for not providing the data or providing false data.

Regarding the usefulness of data from official sources, the majority of the respondents gave positive assessments. Obviously, in fact, the availability of the information which until recently was inaccessible, causes the market participants positive emotions, in other words, such a state of affairs is still not perceived as routine and daily one. The respondents highly appreciate the opportunity to "evaluate the general picture of what's happening", "monitor the processes better," "approximately calculate whether they continue to lie or not" (quotations are in the quotation marks).

Similarly, the respondents do not see the problems with the level of information support. The majority of business representatives rated at "4" and "5" (according to the scale from 1 to 5, where "1" = "causes big problems", and 5 = "does not cause any problems"), claiming that they do not feel any problems.

Quotation: «Each individual, if he/she wants to cooperate, work, he/she will receive the information from any sources in order to achieve his/her goal, in order to work»

Only two respondents rated at "3": one due to the absence of a medium-term strategy for the market development, the second one - due to the lack of certain information and the absence of interaction with the consumer and dialogue in the "question-answer" mode.

The respondents assess their own openness to their consumers expectedly rather high. It is significant that the respondents-representatives of the enterprises that are electricity suppliers rated their own openness the highest. At the same time, one of these respondents admitted that they reveal "not all information, but all that is necessary. All that is needed is disclosed in full." The information on tariffs, black-out schedules, etc. is considered as "necessary" one. The rest representatives of the suppliers say that they reveal even disadvantages for themselves, including technical specifications and the environment.
The rest of the respondents who are energy consumers, mainly evaluated their own transparency on four points out of five. Lower ratings are based on the lack of protection of property rights, the risk of losing the client and the absence of well-established communication channels.

While assessing the extent of linking the level of investment to the level of transparency, the respondents were divided into two distinct groups: two respondents rated at the lowest “1” (from which the respondents usually abstain), while the rest of the participants of the survey rated at “4” and “5” as the highest degree of linkage.

The group of the respondents who consider that there is no connection, explains their opinion with the fact that, firstly, the suppliers in any case are not interested in disclosing the prime cost of the tariff, and it does not affect the level of investment, and secondly, the investment programs are primarily aimed at improving the quality of equipment and do not depend on the level of the information disclosure, but depend on the quality of monitoring over the use of invested funds.

The rest of the respondents think more globally and see the direct link with the level of information disclosure about the industry and the level of investment in this industry. However, they point out that the dependence may be nonlinear.

Quotation: “Not everything depends on the transparency of the industry. There are still ... trends, overall investment climate. But at the same time, transparency of the industry would contribute to attracting investment by 100%”
Consumers of information
Consumers of information

The respondents were asked to assess the gender dimension in several areas of consumer interaction with the energy industry. The most striking differences have been demonstrated regarding the issue of general interest in energy information (7 “male” responses, no “female” responses) and regarding the willingness to apply for subsidies to pay for housing and communal services (on the contrary, 6 “female” responses and no “male” responses).

Regarding other issues such as paying for housing and communal services bills, awareness of energy saving and energy efficiency, energy saving and readiness to respond actively to the cases of corruption in the energy sector, there were no significant gender differences in the respondents’ responses.

(Quotation). While arguing for their position on gender differences, only one respondent pointed out that "there is a traditional men's and women's work, and energy-related issues are obviously men's ones" (Quotation). However, taking into account the fact that all respondents said that men are more interested in energy information (one refused to answer), most of them share this point of view.

Regarding the rest of the questions, the share of the respondents mostly denies the gender differences in relation to the issues ("Men and women - we do not separate them, we are looking at the population"). Another share of the respondents indicates that women have to be interested in the issues of energy saving, saving and subsidies either because of their role in the family, as family budget managers, or because of the negative difference in income compared to men.

Quotation: «A man earned some money, brought it in the family, and the woman’s role is to figure out what to do with it»

Let’s point out that all respondents interviewed are men, so we can only assess the men’s point of view on gender issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Both genders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who is more often responsible for paying for housing and communal services bills in households?</td>
<td>2 answers</td>
<td>2 answers</td>
<td>3 answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is more interested in the information about energy?</td>
<td>7 answers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is more aware of energy saving and energy efficiency?</td>
<td>2 answers</td>
<td>1 answer</td>
<td>5 answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who tries to save energy more?</td>
<td>1 answer</td>
<td>3 answers</td>
<td>4 answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is more willing to respond actively to the cases of corruption in the energy sector?</td>
<td>1 answer</td>
<td>1 answer</td>
<td>6 answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is more likely to apply for subsidies to pay for the housing and communal services?</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6 answers</td>
<td>2 answers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thank you for your attention