Understanding Dialogue in Ukraine

A survey-based study | Analytical report 2018
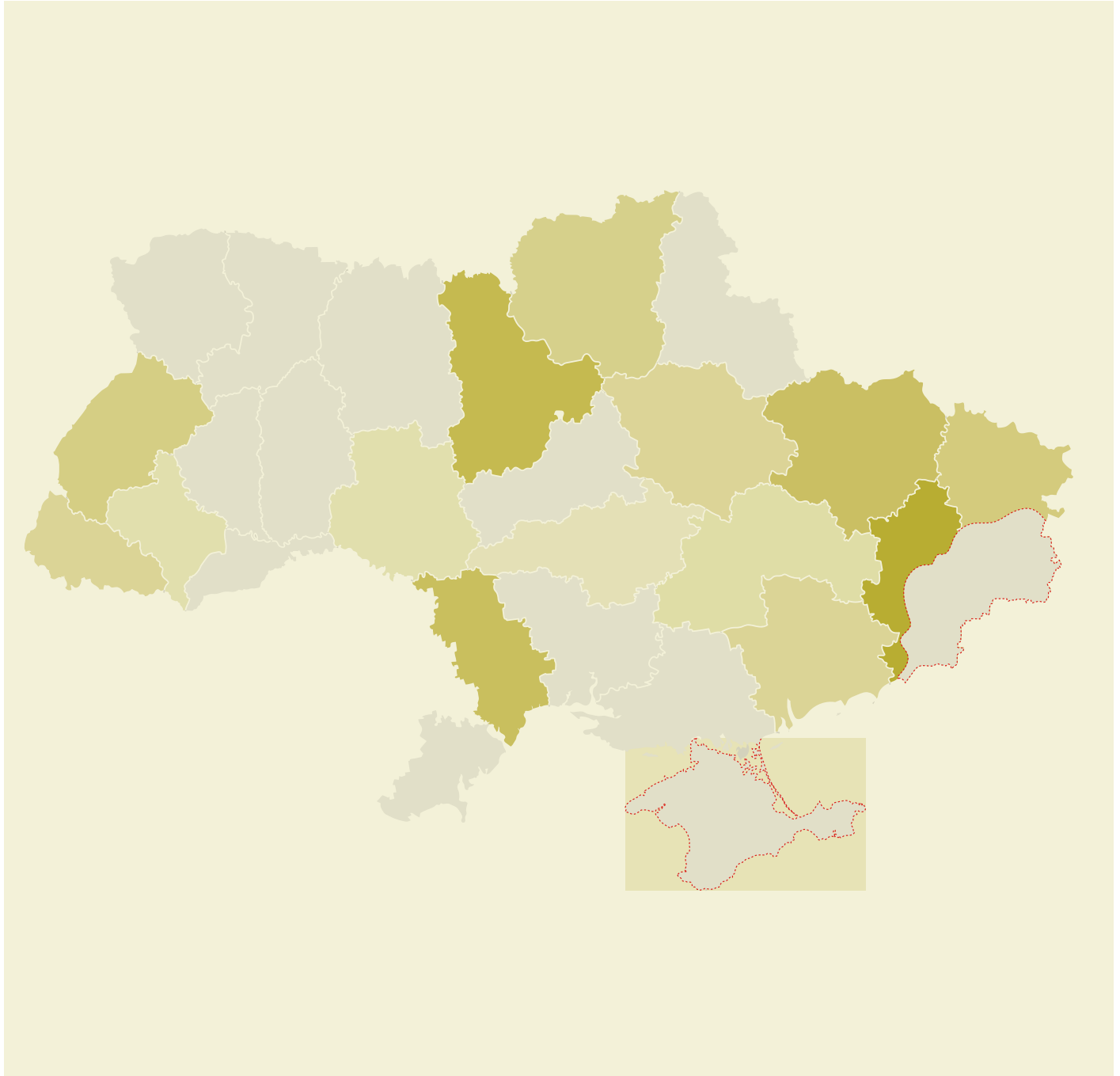
Understanding Dialogue in Ukraine: A Survey-Based Study
Mediation and Dialogue Research Center, Kyiv, 2018

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CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

109 respondents – dialogue participants excluding facilitators and conveners – from 17 oblasts of Ukraine took part in the survey and provided information on 157 dialogues conducted by 66 different organisations during the period 2014-2018.

The goal of the study was to obtain quantitative data in order to test hypotheses about the patterns and risks of track-three dialogues in Ukraine.[1] The survey results have confirmed hypotheses as to four patterns and partly confirmed hypotheses as to the remaining two patterns.

Pattern 1.
Lack of clarity in how the term "dialogue" is used

The research confirmed the hypothesis that practitioners and participants understand dialogue to include a wide range of concepts and that there is a general overuse of the term "dialogue" to label any public event. Despite respondents being given a definition of dialogue in the introduction to the questionnaire, 9.8% of respondents confused dialogues with trainings, round tables, psychological support groups, etc. 50.5% of respondents suggested that conveners of dialogues themselves do not clearly understand the concept of dialogue and organise events that are not, in respondents' views, dialogues.

Pattern 2.
Dialogues on technical issues outnumber those on identity or existential themes

The research confirmed the hypothesis that dialogues on technical issues (decentralisation and other reforms; interaction between authorities and citizens; social cohesion and problems of local communities; integration of IDPs, etc.) are considerably more frequent than existential dialogues (religion, historic memory, Ukraine's future; different identities of Ukrainian citizens; relations between Ukraine and Russia; conflict in the east of Ukraine, etc.) The number of technical dialogues has increased further in 2017-2018 compared to 2014-2015.

Pattern 3.
Dialogues are held more frequently in the east of Ukraine

The research confirmed the hypothesis that the majority of dialogues are being conducted in the government-controlled parts of eastern Ukraine, although the geography of dialogues has slightly expanded to other regions since 2015.

Pattern 4.
The vast majority of dialogues are between people holding mainstream political views

The research confirmed the hypothesis that the overwhelming majority of dialogue participants hold mainstream political views. 81.7% of respondents' most memorable dialogues did not include a single person with pro-Russian, anti-Maidan or anti-European views.

Pattern 5.
Women are well represented in dialogues and have their views heard in dialogues at the civil society level

The research partially confirmed the hypothesis about the insufficient qualitative influence of women in civil society dialogues. Women constitute 66% of participants and 65.2% of dialogue facilitators. 94% of respondents answered that women were actively involved in the discussions, and all their statements were taken into consideration by men.

Pattern 6.
Dialogues face underlying challenges that affect both their impact and sustainability

The research partially confirmed the hypothesis that dialogue is not fulfilling its potential in terms of reach and impact. On the one hand, 96.4% of respondents think that there is a need to conduct dialogues in their communities; 89% of respondents answered that their most memorable dialogue has improved their understanding of the views of other dialogue participants or improved relations with them. 76.2% of respondents assessed their participation in the dialogue as a positive experience. On the other hand, 75.2% of respondents pointed out problems that impede efficient dialogues, namely: low demand for dialogues by people as well as government; absence of facilitators on the ground and the lack of funding for dialogues; low level of information about advantages of dialogues; unsustainable approaches to implementation of dialogue projects and security problems during dialogues.

INTRODUCTION

The data for this survey of dialogue participants was gathered between March and April 2018 by the Mediation and Dialogue Research Center, Kyiv-Mohyla Academy.

109 respondents – dialogue participants excluding facilitators and conveners – from 17 oblasts of Ukraine took part in the survey and provided information on 157 dialogues conducted by 66 different organisations in Ukraine and abroad, from the first quarter of 2014 to the first quarter of 2018 (for the full list of organisations, see Annex 1).

The goal of the research was to obtain quantitative data in order to test hypotheses about patterns and risks in track-three dialogues in Ukraine, which had previously been formulated in an expert study on dialogue challenges in Ukraine (hereafter: the first expert study).[2]

The first expert study was conducted in 2016-2017 by a group of scholars from the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy and the Center for Peace Mediation, European University Viadrina, Frankfurt-am-Oder. By using a qualitative methodology of interviews and focus groups with Ukrainian and international experts, the study analyzed approaches to track-three dialogues after the 2013 crisis in Ukraine. The study identified six patterns that can be observed in the way dialogue is conducted in Ukraine, and proposed possible explanations for these patterns, as well as risks that could be associated with these patterns. The first expert study also formulated a set of hypotheses for further research into dialogue in Ukraine.

Continuing the research programme based on the formulated hypotheses, the present research sets out to study the following questions:

- How dialogue participants understand the concept of dialogue?
- What is the geographic spread of dialogue initiatives throughout Ukraine?
- What are the main topics and issues tackled through dialogue?
- To what extent do dialogues include women and people with non-mainstream political views?
- What is the impact and sustainability of dialogues in Ukraine?

The survey focused on civil society and people-to-people (Track III) dialogues involving the following participants: citizens, members of civil society organisations, representatives and staff of local authorities and administrations. For the purposes of this study, dialogue is understood as "facilitative dialogue", which is consistent with the concept used in the first expert study and in line with the understandings of dialogue of a large part of the professional community of facilitators in Ukraine.[3] The online questionnaire offered respondents the following definition of dialogue: "Dialogue is a specially prepared group meeting involving a facilitator, aiming to improve the relationships between the participants, to make decisions on joint actions or the resolution of a conflict." "One dialogue" was defined as one dialogue meeting on one topic over the course of one day or several consecutive days.

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[2] Kyselova & von Dobeneck, Track III dialogues in Ukraine: Major Patterns and Resulting Risks.

[3] See Standards of Dialogue: Definition and Principles, Institute for Peace and Common Ground, 2018, http://ipcg.org.ua/novosti/329.html

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The questionnaire for this study was developed in line with the hypotheses generated for each of the six dialogue patterns in the first expert study. The questions referred to personal experience of participation in dialogues, feedback about the one dialogue that was most memorable to respondents (hereinafter "most memorable dialogue"), as well as their general vision concerning dialogues in Ukraine. The majority of questions were multiple-choice, but allowed respondents to leave additional comments; two of the questions were open-ended (evaluation of the most memorable dialogue and impediments to dialogues).

A pilot survey and consultations with practitioners to test the research instruments were conducted – 15 interviews in total – before the online survey was launched.

91%
of respondents agreed to take part in a subsequent survey

The survey employed a non-representative random sampling of Ukrainian dialogue participants without gender or age limitations. All dialogues in the study had taken place since 2014 and were held either in Ukraine or abroad. Given the lack of direct access to respondents, the researchers used the snowball method to arrive at the final sample:

- Personal invitations with a link to a Google form were sent to the email addresses of dialogue participants (approximately 700 email messages were sent through partner organisations such as OSCE PCU and organisations of facilitators);
- An announcement of the research and a link to the Google form was posted on the website of the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy;
- Information about the research, incuding a link to the Google form, was posted on Facebook on two individual pages and in eight groups.

87%
of respondents expressed an interest in receiving the results of the study

The online survey was conducted from March 15 to April 15 2018 with a questionnaire in Ukrainian and Russian. The survey was anonymous, but respondents were given an opportunity, if they wished, to leave an email address. 91% of respondents agreed to take part in a subsequent survey; 87% of respondents expressed an interest in receiving the results of the study and left email addresses for these purposes. These numbers suggest a high level of interest among respondents in this topic.

Analysis of quantitative data was carried out through Excel spreadsheets. Coding and analysis of open-ended questions and respondents' comments were done with the help of NVivo software for qualitative data analysis.

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS OF RESPONDENTS

109 respondents from 17 oblasts of Ukraine (territories under control of the Ukrainian government) took part in the survey. Most respondents resided in Donetsk, Odesa, Kharkiv and Luhansk oblasts (for the full list of places of residence, see Annex 2).

69 of the respondents were women and 40 men – 64% and 36% respectively. 90% of respondents had a university degree. Most respondents were economically active: 60% of respondents were employed and 30% were private entrepreneurs. 42.3% of respondents were from cities with a population of more than 500,000; 25.2% were from cities with a population 100,000-500,000.

Number of dialogues in which respondents took part

Five or more **48%**

One **20%**

Two **21%**

Three **6%**

Four **5%**
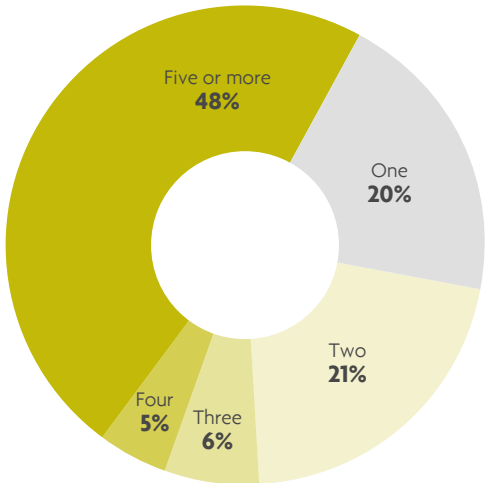
Socio-demographic indicators of women and men who responded to the survey

40-49 years

University degree

Works/private entrepreneur

Average level of economic well-being
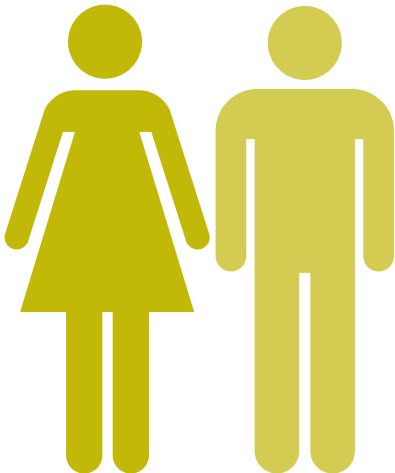
30-39 years

University degree

Works/private entrepreneur

Average/high level of economic well-being

ANALYSIS OF RESPONDENTS' ANSWERS

Pattern 1. Lack of clarity in how the term "dialogue" is used

The research confirmed the hypothesis that practitioners and participants understand dialogue to include a wide range of concepts and that there is a general overuse of the term "dialogue" to label any public event.

Despite respondents being given a definition of dialogue in the introduction to the questionnaire, 9.8% of respondents confused dialogues with other types of events, such as trainings, round tables, psychological support groups, as well as other events that could not be classified as dialogues. It is likely that many of the events that respondents in this study classified as "dialogues about mediation and dialogue methodology" were, in fact, trainings on practical mediation and dialogue skills. However, the anonymous online survey methodology does not allow us to test this assumption.

Half of the respondents suggested that conveners of dialogues themselves do not clearly understand the concept of dialogue and organise events that are not, in respondents' views, dialogues (50.5% of respondents agreed that "many events are currently being conducted under the label 'dialogue' but some of them are not dialogues in my understanding"). The respondents' descriptive com-

ments give some clues as to why this was the case. The respondents do not consider as dialogues those events that "become a conference, in which people just listen to speeches but do not want to solve the problem"; those events that lack "professional facilitation and mediation, [and] as a result – not all issues are worked out, not all participants can express and summarise their thoughts"; and those events where power-holders from the government dominate.

> **"Dialogue is when two or more people express their point of view and consider other views, find the right solution that suits all the participants. But in our case, anyone with a higher and more respectable position is the most important and most intelligent one."**

Some respondents suggested the concept of dialogues as being so-called "grant-eating" by some NGOs – applying for and using funds with the primary aim of maintaining their own organisation, rather than necessarily facilitating dialogue.[4]

> **"Dialogue is a fashionable word and donors give money for it."**

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[4] For more about reasons for the lack of clarity over the term "dialogue" and the risks of this pattern, see Kyselova & von Dobeneck, Track III Dialogues in Ukraine: Major Patterns and Resulting Risks, p. 5.

Pattern 2. Dialogues on technical issues outnumber those on identity or existential themes

The research confirmed the hypothesis that dialogues on technical issues are considerably more frequent than existential dialogues. The number of technical dialogues has increased further in 2017-2018 compared to 2014-2015.

The first expert study found that post-2014 dialogues in Ukraine could be roughly divided into two groups: "technical" and "existential". Technical dialogues deal with topics that aim at a specific result – solving a problem, reaching an agreement between participants, developing a joint document, strategy, etc. Existential dialogues (values-oriented dialogues or identity dialogues) are engagements between groups and people that look to improve understanding and acceptance among each other with a view to achieving a transformation of their relationship as a whole.

Analysis of survey responses provided

further depth to the technical/existential classification suggested by the first expert study, taking into consideration the current dialogue context in Ukraine. Dialogue is a flexible and creative process during which multiple topics might arise, in addition to the main theme announced by the dialogue conveners. It is, indeed, likely that "technical" dialogues also often raise some "existential" issues connected to values, political identities, attitudes towards others, trust building, etc. Without excluding this possibility and accepting that any classification of dialogues will always be imperfect, this study has grouped the topics of dialogues according to

their goals. Further, these subgroups were located along a continuum based upon the extent to which the dialogues attempted to achieve discrete, tangible solutions (technical end of the scale) or explore perspectives, identity and meaning (existential end of the scale). The resulting categorisation created six technical and six existential subgroups (for a fuller explanation of groups and codes, as well as sample topics, see Annex 3).

69.2% of dialogues in the survey were classified as technical dialogues, while 30.8% were classified as existential dialogues based on the topics suggested by respondents.

CHART 2

The number of technical and existential dialogues conducted in 2014-2018 (number of dialogues)

Methodology **7** — Reforms **27** — Government-citizens **13** — Communities **15** — ATO veterans/IDPs **24** — Inclusivity **22** | Religion **2** — The future **7** — The past **2** — Ukraine-Russia **7** — Political views **17** — Conflict in the East **14**

MORE TECHNICAL — MORE EXISTENTIAL
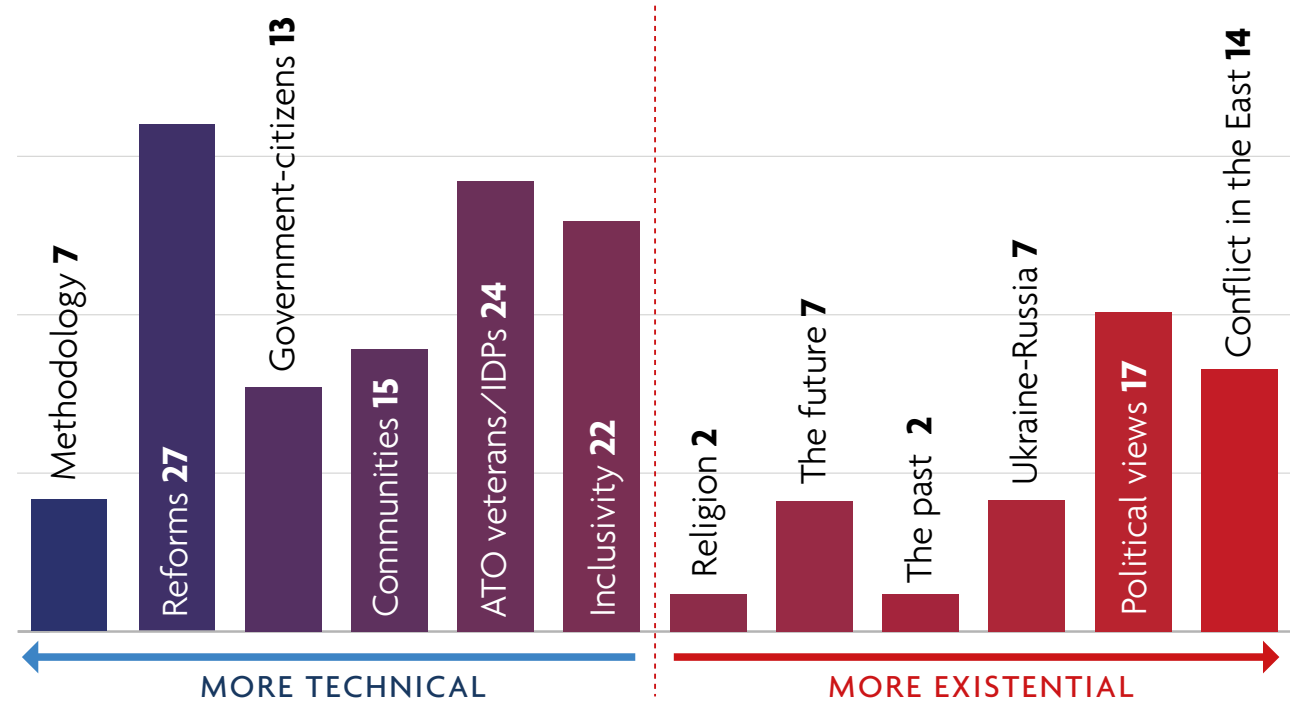
CHART 3

Dynamics of technical/existential dialogues (percentage)

Technical
Existential

Technical: 35.3 (2014), 72.7 (2015), 63.3 (2016), 76.1 (2017), 90.0 (2018)

Existential: 64.7 (2014), 27.3 (2015), 36.7 (2016), 23.9 (2017), 10.0 (2018)

2014   2015   2016   2017   2018
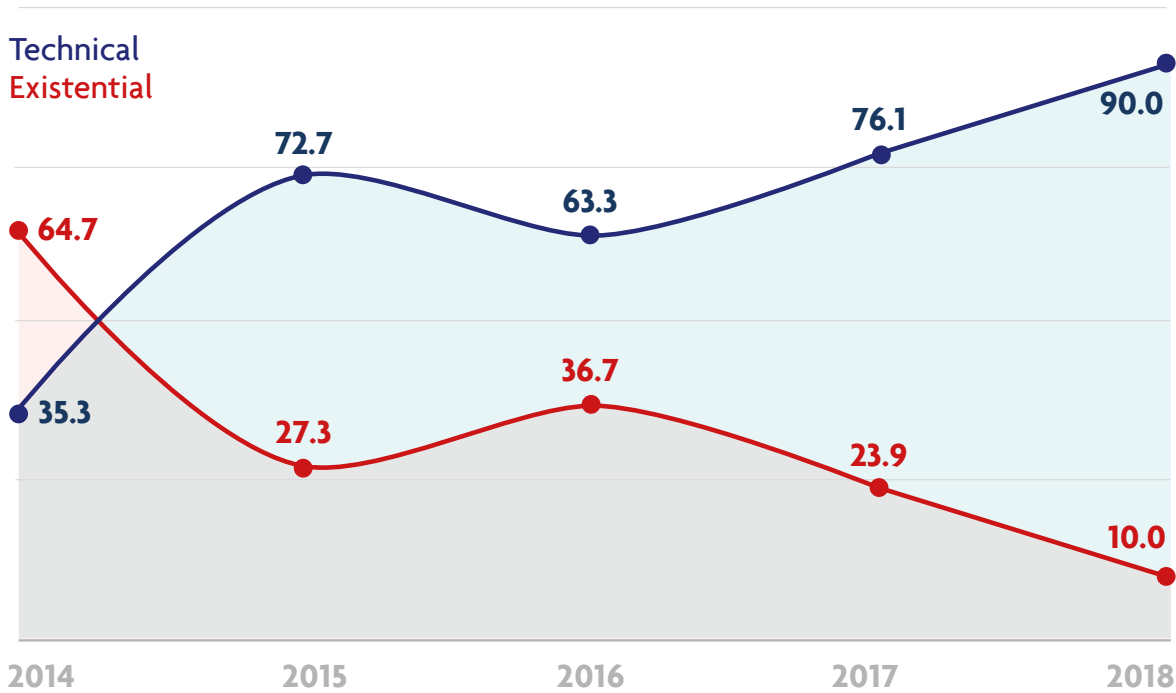
The survey captured dialogues that took place between 2014 and the first quarter of 2018. Not only did the results confirm the trend identified in the first expert study about technical dialogues outnumbering existential dialogues, but the gap between these two types of dialogues actually increased in 2017-2018.

Finally, in response to the question "what topics of dialogues would you like to see in the future?", respondents indicated an increased demand for dialogues on themes that could be considered technical.

Respondents to the survey showed a considerably higher demand for community dialogues (dialogues on cohesion and the resolution of concrete problems in local communities) and dialogues about reforms (decentralisation, education, health care, electoral reforms, and strategies of development).

In contrast, there was not a single request from respondents for dialogues to explore historic memory or relations between Ukraine and Russia.[5] The chart below compares percentage of all the surveyed dialogues that fall into a specific category with the percentage of dialogues demanded by the respondents in this category.

CHART 4

Demand for dialogue topics by respondents and conducted dialogues (percentage)

	Demanded	Conducted
Methodology	8.1	4.1
Reforms	19.8	27.4
Government-citizens	12.8	8.3
Communities	22.1	9.6
ATO veterans/ IDPs	7	15.6
Inclusivity	12.8	14.2
Religion	1.2	1.4
The future	4.7	4.1
The past	0	1.4
Ukraine-Russia	0	4.6
Political views	5.8	10.6
Conflict in the East	5.8	8.7

Technical — Demanded / Conducted
Existential — Demanded / Conducted

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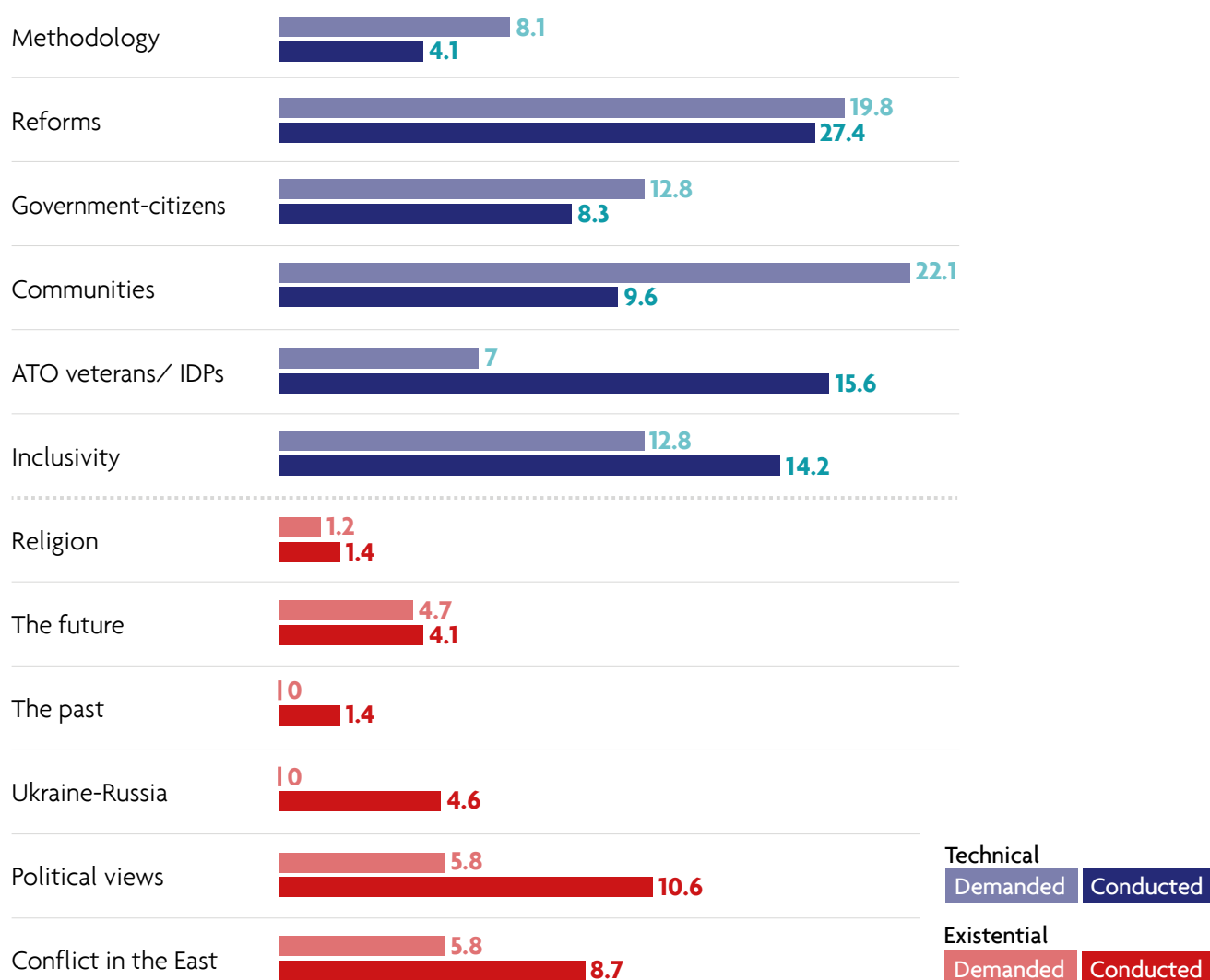
[5] For more about the reasons for the growing number of technical dialogues and the risks of this pattern, see Kyselova & von Dobeneck, Track III Dialogues in Ukraine: Major Patterns and Resulting Risks, p. 6.

Pattern 3. Dialogues are held more frequently in the east of Ukraine

The research confirmed the hypothesis that the majority of dialogues are being conducted in the government-controlled parts of eastern Ukraine, although the geography of dialogues has slightly expanded to other regions since 2015.

Technical dialogues remain prevalent in all regions of Ukraine except the South, where there is a larger share of existential dialogues. This can be explained by the specific conflict environment in Odesa and the work of the Odesa Regional Mediation Group.

Chart 5

Technical and existential dialogues divided by region (percentage)
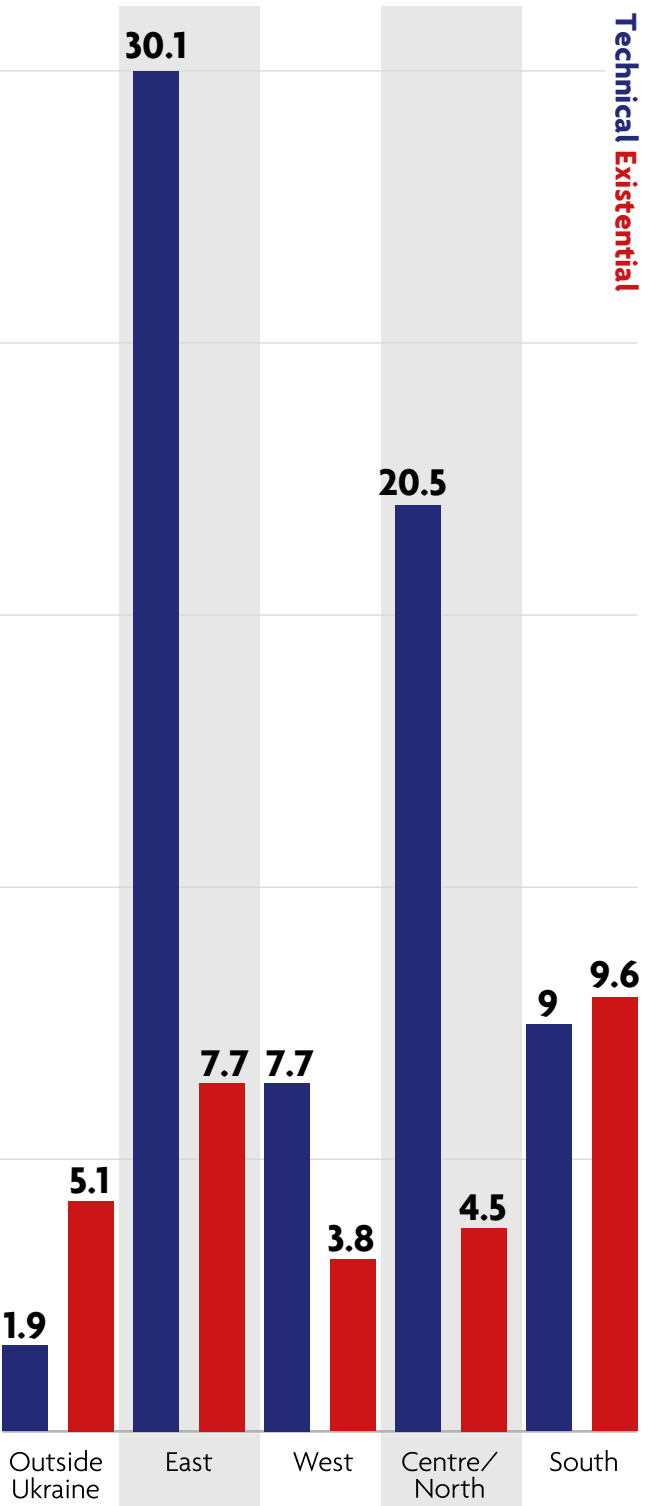
Technical Existential

Region	Technical	Existential
Outside Ukraine	1.9	5.1
East	30.1	7.7
West	7.7	3.8
Centre/North	20.5	4.5
South	9	9.6

The geography of dialogues expanded, on account of dialogues on topics that concern people in any region of Ukraine, namely issues of inclusiveness, tolerance, Human Rights (including rights of national minorities), issues of reforms and local communities. (For a full list of places where dialogues were held, see Annex 4.)

Map of dialogues: number of dialogues surveyed in each oblast in 2014-2018
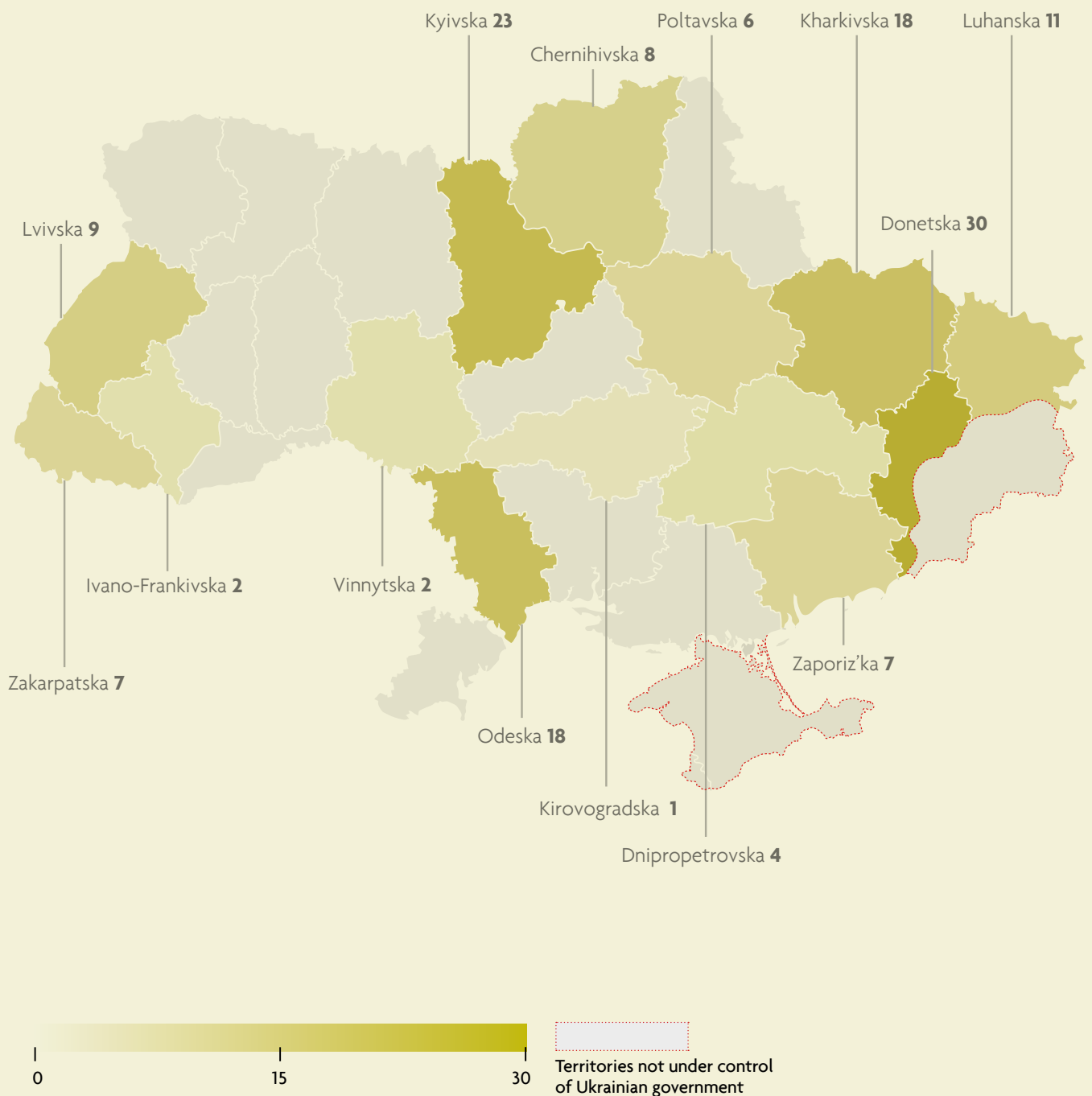
Kyivska **23**
Chernihivska **8**
Poltavska **6**
Kharkivska **18**
Luhanska **11**
Lvivska **9**
Donetska **30**
Ivano-Frankivska **2**
Vinnytska **2**
Zakarpatska **7**
Zaporiz'ka **7**
Odeska **18**
Kirovogradska **1**
Dnipropetrovska **4**

0   15   30

Territories not under control of Ukrainian government

Pattern 4. The vast majority of dialogues are between people holding mainstream political views

The research confirmed the hypothesis that the overwhelming majority of dialogue participants hold mainstream political views.

Only 19 of the dialogues mentioned by respondents as their most memorable dialogue included some persons with pro-Russian, anti-Maidan or anti-European views. This means that 81.7% of respondents' most memorable dialogues did not include a single person with such views, or else participants did not declare such views during the dialogue. This figure is even higher in the category of technical dialogues. More precisely, 91.9% of all technical dialogues did not involve a single person with pro-Russian, anti-Maidan or anti-European views, or else participants did not declare such views during the dialogue. These data confirm the hypothesis that the focus on technical dialogues does not contribute to the inclusion of Ukrainians with non-mainstream political views.

The survey also registered 17 dialogues that involved some participants from territories outside the control of the Ukrainian government; and 10 dialogues involving some Russian citizens as participants (respectively, 15.6% and 9.2% of the most memorable dialogues). However, owing to the political sensitivity of asking such questions, there is no information on the number of people in these categories.

It is likely that the categories of dialogue participants "people from non-controlled territories" and "citizens of Russian Federation" overlap to some extent with the category "people with pro-Russian, anti-Maidan and anti-European political views". Therefore, more research is required to clearly understand and differentiate between various groups of people

who are being excluded from dialogues in Ukraine.

The survey responses give some indication as to the factors that impede better inclusion in dialogues.[6] 22% of respondents answered in the affirmative to the statement that "dialogues usually involve people who have similar positions or values, and hot discussions about positions or values do not happen during dialogues". Some respondents suggested that this may happen because "it is more convenient for conveners" to select such participants. Nevertheless, most comments suggested that conveners do make efforts "to invite participants with alternative points of view", but that such persons do not show up because "they are afraid", they "do not have courage to express their opinions when they are a minority 'party' in dialogue", or they are not motivated to take part in dialogues because of their low civic activism.

> "People who want to change something come [to dialogues]. People who are not capable of dialogue don't come."

At the same time, the issue of non-inclusion of people with non-mainstream political views is not perceived by respondents to be a problem or an obstacle to dialogue. Only one respondent suggested that the obstacle to dialogue in his/her community is the "decreased number of people who hold roughly anti-

Maidan views and who are ready to take part in dialogues."

Moreover, the problems with including these categories of people in dialogues did not significantly affect the respondents' perception of the diversity of views in the dialogues. 78% of respondents did NOT agree with the statement that "dialogues usually involve people who have similar positions or values, and hot discussions about positions or values do not happen during the dialogues." 88.1% confirmed that dialogues included participants with opinions that were in conflict with their own on the topic being discussed; 61.5% confirmed that their most memorable dialogues included participants with political views other than their own.

The research reveals a paradox, whereby participants give a positive assessment with regard to the diversity of representation in dialogue meetings, while at the same time acknowledging significant underrepresentation of people with non-mainstream political views. This may be connected to the specific configuration of the hybrid conflict whereby conflict parties are not identifiable by any clear-cut characteristics, such as ethnicity or religion. Furthermore, there are many differences with regard to values and attitudes inside a wide group of people with mainstream views.

[6] For more about reasons for the exclusion of people with non-mainstream political views and the risks of this pattern, see Kyselova & von Dobeneck, Track III Dialogues in Ukraine: Major Patterns and Resulting Risks, p. 8.

Pattern 5. Women are well represented in dialogues and have their views heard in dialogues at the civil society level

The research partially confirmed the hypothesis that women are asymmetrically represented in dialogues. Women constitute the majority of participants and the majority of dialogue facilitators, and their participation is meaningful enough to influence decision-making processes during dialogues at civil society level.

"People listened attentively to each other irrespective of gender or manner of speaking."

The first part of the hypothesis about the quantitative representation of women in dialogues at civil society level has been confirmed.

According to the findings of this survey, women constitute:

66%
of dialogue participants

65.2%
of dialogue facilitators

64%
of respondents in this survey

The second part of the hypothesis, about the limited qualitative influence of women on decision making in dialogues at civil society level was not fully confirmed.

The qualitative participation of women in dialogues was measured both with respect to its procedural aspect (how actively women took part in the discussions) and its outcome aspect (whether their statements were taken seriously by men). 94% of respondents answered that women were actively involved in discussions and that all their statements were taken into consideration by men. This indicator is constant throughout the various categories of dialogue. Even in those dialogues where men constituted the majority of participants, 96% of respondents expressed the view that women were given the space to speak and that men also gave their words due consideration.

At the same time, the research did not have access to records of the outcomes of dialogues and therefore was not able to identify the extent to which women's perspectives were incorporated into the outcome. Some academic studies point out that the perception of women's participation in deliberative processes may differ from actual outcomes. Further research is required to identify how the gender dimension of issues is incorporated into dialogue outcomes and into implementation.

Furthermore, the qualitative influence of women in dialogues at higher levels (political negotiations, expert discussions on track one and track two, etc.) is likely to be different from the situation at the civil society level (track three). The high representation of women in civil society dialogues, therefore, should not be a reason for civil society to reduce its demand for greater women's representation in government or higher-level processes.

Pattern 6. Dialogues face underlying challenges that affect both their impact and their sustainability

The research partially confirmed the hypothesis that dialogue is not fulfilling its potential in terms of reach and impact. On the one hand, respondents believe that dialogue is generally a much-needed and effective tool for building trust and solving problems at different levels. On the other hand, they point out obstacles to dialogue being more broadly adopted in Ukraine.

96.4%

of respondents think that there is a need to conduct dialogues in their communities

89%

of respondents answered that their most memorable dialogue has improved their understanding of the views of other dialogue participants or improved relations with them (individual and relational level of impact)

Chart 6

Has your understanding of the views of other dialogue participants or the relationship with them improved as a result of the (most memorable) dialogue?
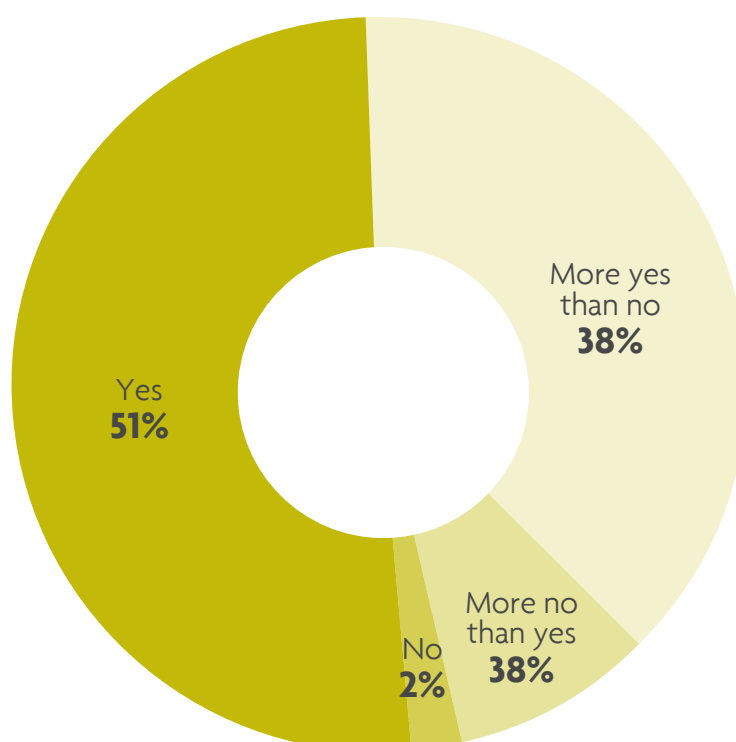
More yes than no
38%

Yes
51%

More no than yes
38%

No
2%

Respondents generally perceive dialogue as an effective opportunity to communicate with people holding different opinions. Based on an analysis of the most memorable dialogues, 88.1% of respondents indicated that there were participants with differing opinions on the topic of the dialogue. 61.5% of respondents confirmed that the dialogue included people who held political views different from their own.

The topics of the dialogues held in Ukraine in general correspond to local needs. 71.6% of respondents disagreed with the statement that "organisations that hold dialogues usually come to our place and conduct dialogues on topics that are not interesting or not relevant to our community". Those respondents who agreed with this statement (22%) indicated that the dialogue conveners often do not know enough and do not make enough efforts to study local problems; or that they might be engaged in "grant-eating".

> **"We should talk about the issues that are painful [relevant] for us, but not about issues which money is paid for."**

Overall, 76.2% of respondents assessed their participation in the dialogue as a positive experience and provided positive comments about various aspects they liked in the dialogues they participated in.

> **"High level of organisation, professional approach, dynamism, involvement of all participants, an interesting format (rotation of groups on different topics)."**

> **"All those who were present were listened to. Positive results – most of the issues were resolved straight away during the dialogue, other issues are actively being dealt with now. We worked out the mechanisms of interaction, the dialogue will be conducted systematically."**

> **"I began to better understand those who have different opinions and to make efforts to see the situation through the eyes of different participants. And I practise it now. This dialogue clearly influenced my understanding and attitude towards everything that was going on, not only with respect to the dialogue topic but also in general, with respect to relations between the people in the country. This helps me now in my work as a tourist guide, when I have to talk about complex historical issues with people from different parts of the country and from abroad."**

Pattern 6. Dialogues face underlying challenges that affect both their impact and their sustainability (continued)

At the same time, about 14% of respondents indicated certain factors that they found to contribute to a negative experience. In sum, the research identified a series of factors, which participants noted as key components to a successful dialogue; and the absence of which led to an overall negative experience. Thus, the three most important things that participants notice and value in dialogues are the following: the opportunity to be heard; effectiveness - concrete results of dialogue; and the professionalism of the facilitators.

Factors that respondents liked or disliked in the most memorable dialogue (number of comments)

Factor	Negative	Positive
Opportunity to speak, be heard, talk about needs	0	23
Effectiveness - concrete result	3	18
Professionalism of facilitators	5	14
New knowledge, new networks	0	9
Participants were ready to cooperate	1	8
Relevance of the topic	1	7
Systematic approach to dialogues	3	2
Participants moderated their emotions	4	0
Participants felt secure during dialogue	1	1
Broad representation of participants	1	1

✕ the absence of which or problems with which contributed to a negative view of dialogues
✓ contributing to a positive view of dialogues

Pattern 6. Dialogues face underlying challenges that affect both their impact and their sustainability (continued)

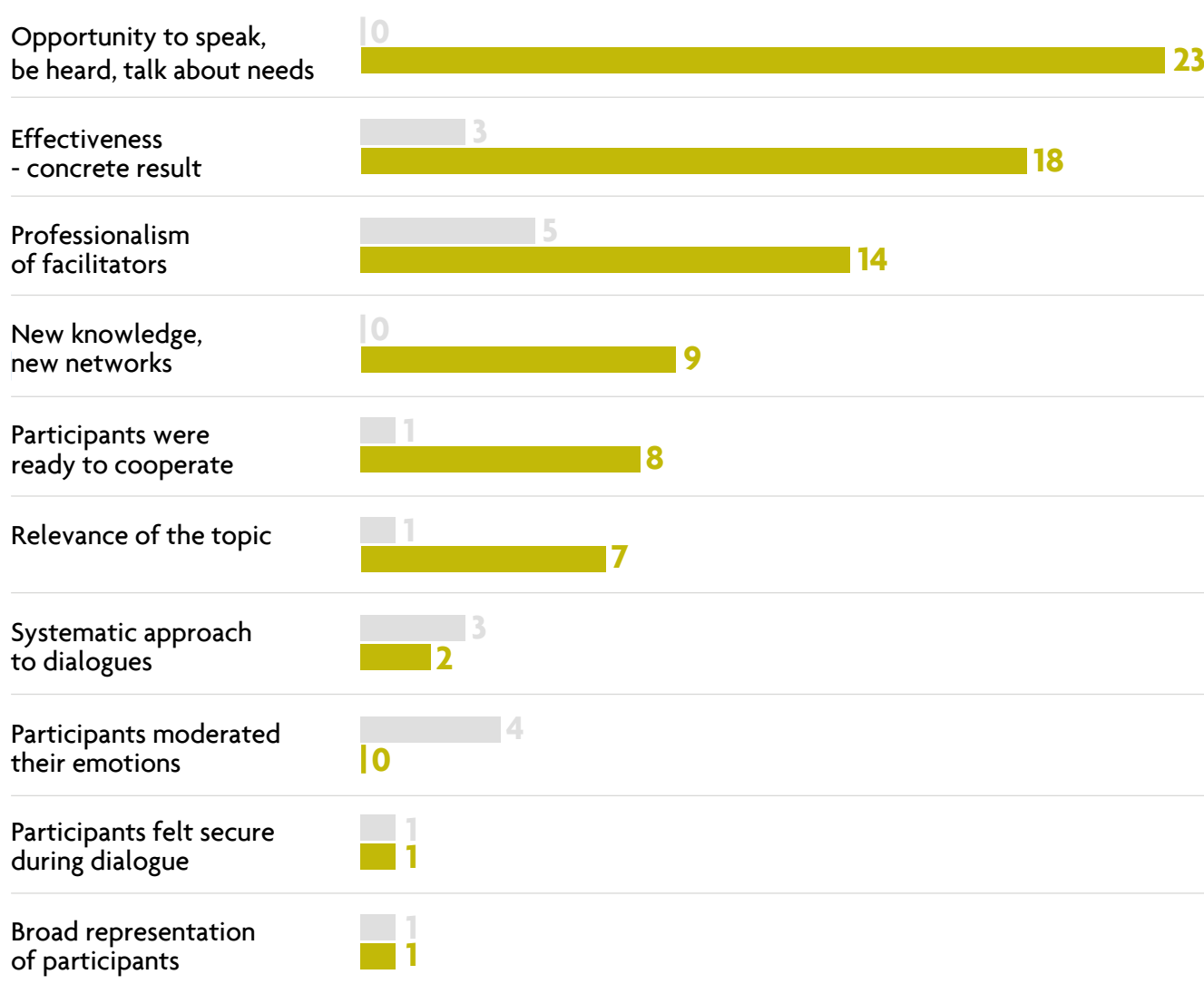**The opportunity to be heard** was expressed by the respondents as follows: "the opportunity to talk about different views"; "dynamism, involvement of all participants"; "opportunity to be in their shoes"; "the path to the hearts of participants – feelings, needs, understanding"; "understanding that there may be another point of view, that a person has experienced something in this matter and you need to be more empathic towards others"; "representatives of various levels of government and representatives of civil society shared opinions and experiences which made it possible to study the problem and potential solution in a broader way".

The effectiveness of the dialogue, according to respondents, is evidenced by its ability to achieve concrete results. For example "a lot of questions have been resolved"; "government began to hear the veterans"; "a mechanism of interaction has been developed"; "a consensus has been found"; "solutions have been found"; "the process of unification of local communities into an Amalgamated Territorial Community (OTG) has been completed"; "a government project has been developed"; "a joint plan has been developed"; "a memorandum on further cooperation has been agreed"; "a systematic mechanism for interaction and long-term joint activities has been developed"; "a specific document for a profile ministry has been drafted".

The findings suggest that respondents overwhelmingly see a "tangible result" as a key indicator for success for a dialogue, since none of the respondents mentioned improvement of attitudes to other people, relationships with other participants, or the building of trust as a result of dialogue.

Professionalism of facilitators was seen as key to a well-structured process. This can be evidenced through clearly articulated and comprehensive goals, thorough preparation, the appropriate selection of relevant participants, facilitators not imposing their views on participants, the ability of facilitators to move the group from escalation to constructive communication, etc.

Chart 8

Impediments to dialogues (number of comments)

Societal distrust	4
Problems with security during dialogues	4
Lack of systematic implementation approaches	5
Corruption and state policies	6
Insufficient information about dialogues	10
Problems with funding and availability of facilitators	14
Low demand for dialogues	26

distrust; and the lack of a dialogue culture in society as impediments to dialogues. Most respondents viewed the problems with dialogues in the context of people, citizens, or local communities, and considered the lack of demand for dialogue as the main problem. The lack of demand was detailed as the lack of desire to enter into dialogue; lack of interest in dialogue; insufficient dialogue skills; lack of time that people spend on dialogue; and the low civic activism of people in general.

The second most important impediment to dialogues in Ukraine referred to the lack of dialogue facilitators on the ground and the problems of funding of dialogues (convening of dialogues, logistics, payment of honorarium to facilitators).

Respondents were asked to describe in their own words what problems and barriers to dialogue they see at track three (civil society level).[7] 23.8% of respondents did not see any obstacles to conducting dialogues in their communities. 75.2% of respondents pointed out impediments that prevent dialogue from being effective.

Analyzing the problems and obstacles that respondents see for dialogues, it is necessary to note the positive attitude of the respondents towards the prospect of dialogues. Only one

respondent expressed disappointment in dialogues as a whole, leaving the following comment: "Dialogues are now a means to make money; this is not a way to solve problems. It does not help anyone." All other respondents considered that dialogues gave value and identified problems that could be treated or overcome. Furthermore, as a general trend, respondents did not blame the state or society for the problems that dialogue initiatives encounter. Only a few respondents considered corruption; governmental policies; public

The third group of problems had to do with insufficient information of people and local government about the benefits of dialogue. This was classified separately from "demand for dialogue". Indeed, without knowing what dialogue is, it is impossible even to have a desire to use it. These problems are not insurmountable, which gives hope for the further development of dialogues in Ukraine.

[7] For the problems of dialogues identified by experts, see Kyselova & von Dobeneck, Track III Dialogues in Ukraine: Major Patterns and Resulting Risks, p. 10-11.

IMPLICATIONS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings of the research project "Survey of Dialogue Participants 2018" have generally confirmed all the dialogue patterns identified in the 2016-2017 expert study; produced a more nuanced picture and deeper understanding of dialogue processes within specific Ukrainian context at civil society level; and allowed the possibility of proposing the following implications for the practice of and research into dialogues:

Pattern 1. Lack of clarity in how the term "dialogue" is used

The finding that the population does not yet understand the concept and principles of dialogue is in no way unexpected. More troubling was the reflection by dialogue participants on the misuse of the concept of dialogue by conveners when it comes to the naming of their events. Thus, it is more important that donors and conveners of dialogue events are able to differentiate between professionally facilitated dialogues, on the one hand, and dialogue-related and peacebuilding activities such as trainings, debates, strategic communication events, art projects, street festivals, exchanges, etc., on the other hand; and, consequently, apply different principles and implementation strategies to these two types of activities. Conveners and facilitators are advised to clearly articulate to participants the goal, objectives and expected results of their events at every stage of the process.

Pattern 2. Dialogues on technical issues outnumber those on identity or existential themes

Increased focus on technical issues and the low request for existential dialogues identified by this study do not imply an automatic imperative for practitioners to increase or decrease the number of dialogues in one or the other category. It is likely that the prevalence of technical dialogues reflects the strategic choice of dialogue actors. Yet, apart from pragmatic reasons for such a choice, it is important that dialogue actors are conscious of and, where appropriate, explicit about the theories of change that underpin their approaches. This is particularly important in cases where dialogue conveners are looking to make an impact on the hybrid conflict in Ukraine, which requires both working on the cessation of violence and engagement with the wider societal processes of democratisation in the country as a whole.

Pattern 3. Dialogues are held more frequently in the east of Ukraine

While the geographic focus of dialogues in the eastern part of government-controlled territories remains justified due to the ongoing armed conflict, the expansion of the geography of dialogues to other parts of Ukraine is a positive sign. Such work can help to deal with polarisation between regions in Ukraine by creating shared experiences among Ukrainians of ways in which issues can be addressed and resolved in a non-confrontational manner. Furthermore, there is potential to expand the experiences and learning of practitioners gained in the east to dialogues in other parts of the country.

Pattern 4. The vast majority of dialogues are between people holding mainstream political views

The focus on the inclusion of people with official political views in dialogues remains problematic. This study has identified that dialogues on technical issues do not promote the inclusion of people with non-mainstream political views in social change. Although this study has confirmed that the hostile political environment provoked by hybrid threats of Russian aggression and the low civic activism of people with non-mainstream political views continue to hold back their inclusion, it has also identified that some strategies of dialogue facilitators and conveners might have been a contributing factor to such exclusion. Thus, it is important that technical dialogues, when used as strategic entry points or sequencing mechanisms within broader peacebuilding approaches, should not be used as an excuse to continually exclude parts of the population who hold controversial views. Dialogue conveners and facilitators have to develop a broader vision about how this group of people can be involved at a later stage or in other ways. More research is required to help practitioners both develop this vision of inclusive dialogues and come up with more practical methodologies for identifying and engaging people with non-mainstream political views in dialogues.

Pattern 5. Women are well represented in dialogues and have their views heard in dialogues at the civil society level

This study has confirmed that dialogue at track three is an effective mechanism for the inclusion of women in social change processes in Ukraine, both in terms of quantitative representation and qualitative impact on decision making. However, if, despite such favourable conditions at civil society level, women remain excluded from higher political levels (track one and track two) or the final outcomes of dialogues at civil society level remain unimplemented or uninstitutionalised, this might still pose a risk to women's empowerment and inclusion in peace processes in Ukraine. Further research is required to understand these issues.

Pattern 6. Dialogues face underlying challenges that affect both their impact and sustainability

Although this study has identified that dialogue overall is seen as an effective tool for trust building, problem solving and conflict resolution, its practical implementation faces many obstacles. Respondents in this survey – ordinary citizens and civic activists – see these impediments not so much as deficient operational strategies, but rather as more fundamental things – the lack of demand for and information about dialogue, as well as the lack of resources to initiate dialogues. However, these basic impediments are not insurmountable. Only a very few respondents indicated the impossibility of dialogues due to societal distrust or deficient state policies; the majority indicated problems that are amenable to specific measures like informational, educational and awareness-raising campaigns for the government and civil society, and the implementation of effective mechanisms for the funding of dialogues and connection of local needs to facilitators.

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Annex 1.
Organisations that conducted dialogues in 2014-2018
Answers of respondents[8]

Organisation	Number of dialogues
OSCE	26
Odesa Regional Mediation Group	18
UNDP	13
Institute for Peace and Common Ground (IPCG)	11
NGO "Women's Initiatives"/IPCG	7
NGO Information Center "Maidan Monitoring"	6
Laboratory of Peaceful Solutions	6
Peace Engineers	5
OWEN/Swisspeace	4
Representatives of local government and self-government: Bakhmut, Pyriatyn, Pokrovsk, Severodonetsk	4
Association of Ukrainian Christian Consultants / Society of Christian Consultants	3
NGO "Impulse"	3
NGO "UAR"	3
Caritas	3
Chernihiv Human Rights House	3
IREX/GURT	3
World Health Organisation	2
Dobrobut Ukraine	2
NGO "DOBRO"	2
NGO "Patriot"	2
NGO "U yednanni syla"	2
Youth Council	2
Office of the Council of Europe in Ukraine	2
Postupovy Gurt Frankivtsiv	2
Agriteam Canada	1
Minregionbud	1
Art project German Foundation	1
Association for HIV/AIDS Ukraine	1

Organisation	Number of dialogues
Free University of Maidan/Maidan Monitoring	1
All-Ukrainian public center "Volunteer"	1
NGO "Ideas for change"	1
NGO "Family Protection"	1
NGO "Women's Information and Advisory Center"	1
Civic Association of Maidan	1
Donetsk Dialogue	1
Erasmus +	1
Narva College of the University of Tartu	1
Initiatives for Change	1
Club Mrija	1
Kolo Doviry Maidanu	1
League of Interns	1
Municipal authorities of Europe	1
Renaissance Foundation	1
Narodni diplomaty	1
Nova Krajina	1
Osnovy Svobody/Foundation for Freedom	1
Parliament of Religions of the World	1
Theater for Dialogue	1
Yaroslav the Wise Law University	1
ICA Ukraine	1
International Alert	1
PATRIR	1
UNICEF	1
UN Women Ukraine	1
Civil society representatives	9

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Annex 2.
Respondents' place of residence

Oblast of residence	Number of respondents	Percentage
Chernihivska	1	0.9
Chernivetska	4	3.6
Dnipropetrovska	5	4.5
Donetska (under control of the Ukrainian government)	21	19.8
Ivano-Frankivska	1	0.9
Kharkivska	14	12.6
Khersonska	1	0.9
Khmelnytska	1	0.9
Kirovogradska	1	0.9
Kyivska	16	15.3
Luhanska oblast (under control of the Ukrainian government)	11	9.9
Lvivska	4	3.6
Odeska	14	12.6
Poltavska	7	6.3
Vinnytska	1	0.9
Zaporiz'ka	6	5.4
Zhytomyrska	1	0.9
Total:	**109**	

Annex 3.
Codes and examples of dialogue topics

TECHNICAL DIALOGUES		
Topics	**Code**	**Example**
Methodology of dialogue or other conflict resolution tools	Methodology	Conflict and tools of its resolution Dialogue at a crossroads – from societal challenges to consolidated efforts
National reforms or development of Donetsk and Luhansk regions	Reforms	Decentralisation and health care reform Strategic plans of development of Donetsk region
Interaction between authorities and citizens	Authorities-citizens	How to ensure that decision making in town takes into account opinions of the local community? Interaction of police and the local community
Social cohesion in communities and solving specific problems at community level	Communities	A missile struck a gas pipe and four villages are without gas. When will we have gas? Interaction in local community
Integration of ATO veterans and internally displaced persons (IDPs)	ATO veterans/IDPs	Adaptation and socialization of IDPs in town X. Engaging ATO veterans into local community
Inclusiveness / minority rights (e.g. disabled people, women, minorities) not related to the conflict in the East	Inclusiveness	Opportunities for multilingual education: pupils, teachers, local community Role of Roma women in Ukrainian society

EXISTENTIAL DIALOGUES		
Topics	**Code**	**Example**
Interreligious dialogue	Religion	Dialogue between religious denominations in Ukraine
The future of Ukraine, different scenarios of Ukraine's development	Future	Constitutional and political future of the country In what country would you like to live?
Historical events, historical memory	Past	9th of May: Touchpoints Historic memory
Different political views or identities in Ukraine	Political views	Values of Maidan and Anti-Maidan Hate speech
Relations between Ukraine and Russia, Ukrainian and Russian citizens/civil society	Ukr-Rus	Relations between Russia and Ukraine Russian-Ukrainian relations
Conflict in the East (for example, reconciliation, conflict resolution, safety at contact line, etc.)	Conflict East	Introduction of peacekeeping mission in the Donbas What are Ukrainians fighting for in the Donbas? In search of pathways to peace in the Donbas

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Annex 4.
List of places where dialogues were held

Region	Oblast	Place	Dialogues (number)
OUTSIDE OF UKRAINE		Georgia	2
		Lithuania, Vilnius	1
		Belorus, Minsk	4
		USA, Salt Lake City	3
		Turkey, Istanbul	1
EAST	Donetska oblast (governmentally controlled area)	Dobropillya	3
		Bakhmut	3
		Slovyansk	1
		Kramatorsk	8
		Mariupol	6
		Bilyts'ke	1
		Pokrovsk	5
		Soledar	3
	Luhanska oblast (governmentally controlled area)	Rubizhne	1
		Lysychansk	2
		Severodonetsk	7
		Toshkivka	1
	Kharkivska oblast	Kharkiv	14
		Chuguev	2
		Nova Vodolaha	2
SOUTH	Odeska oblast	Odesa	18
	Dnipropetrovska oblast	Dnipro	4
	Zaporiz'ka oblast	Zaporizhzhia	5
		Melitopol	2
WEST	Lvivska oblast	Briukhovychy	1
		Slavske	1
		Pidgorodtsi	1
		Skole	1
		Lviv	5
	Zakarpatska oblast	Izky	1
		Uzhhorod	6
	Ivano-Frankivska oblast	Ivano-Frankivsk	2
CENTRE/NORTH	Kyivska oblast	Kyiv	23
	Vinnytska oblast	Vinnytsia	1
		Tulchin	1
	Kirovogradska oblast	Kropyvnytsky	1
	Poltavska oblast	Pyriatyn	6
	Chernihivska oblast	Chernihiv	8