

Unfinished revolutions: The post-Soviet crisis of governance in Ukraine

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Abstract

None of the three revolutions in Ukraine's modern history as an independent state has been able to both solve the problem of political representation and undertake the task of building sustainable democratic institutions. Ukraine's scores from the Berggruen Governance Index (BGI) between 2000 and 2019 show the ups and downs of state capacity and democratic accountability and illustrate not only how the revolutions remain unfinished but also how the country seems to be unable to consistently advance state formation. Ukraine has yet to find a stable developmental path. Accordingly, BGI scores show that Ukrainian politics and society continue to have difficulty advancing towards a corridor of good governance, where state capacity and accountability reinforce each other and enhance public goods provision. Instead, Ukraine is alternating between authoritarian and democratic development patterns. However, the Russian invasion that began on 24 February 2022 has contributed to uniting and consolidating Ukrainian society and politics and could considerably push the nation-building process forward.

Beginning in the late 1980s, the Soviet Union dissolved in the wake of nationalist movements in its constituent republics. In Ukraine, this process was fuelled by an October 1990 student-led protest wave known as the Revolution on Granite, which demanded the country's disentanglement from the Soviet Union. Ukrainian leadership then declared the country sovereign and proclaimed independence in 1991. The move was approved in a referendum by an overwhelming majority of the population and made the former chair of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Leonid Kravchuk, Ukraine's first president. Kravchuk took a pro-European, pro-NATO stance and pursued disposal of the country's nuclear weapons.

Ukraine's subsequent transition from communism to capitalism has been characterised by political cleavages and intense conflicts about the direction of institutional and economic development. At the same time, Ukraine suffered from a 'crisis of political representation' that has prevented successful post-Soviet nation-building, at least until Russia invaded in 2022 (Ishchenko & Zhuravlev, 2021). Despite earlier tendencies towards

semi-authoritarianism and paternalistic social welfare distribution, the country has since the Orange Revolution in 2004 made some moves towards democratisation and liberalisation. However, it has struggled with a declining population, high levels of corruption and low public investment. Political cleavages have remained stark, in particular, the divide between pro-Western, liberal attitudes, on one hand, and pro-Russian, conservative attitudes, on the other. This division has long historical roots and is roughly represented geographically in a split between the western and (south-) eastern parts of the country, with the latter bordering Russia and the former Poland and, thus, the European Union.

When measuring governance in Ukraine, none of the three dimensions of the Berggruen Governance Index (BGI)¹ improves sustainably between 2000 and 2014/2015 despite short-lived positive trends (see Figure 1). However, since 2014, democratic accountability and since 2015, state capacity show clear improvement (between 8 and 10 points). Having experienced three revolutions within the first 25 years of its independence – the Revolution on Granite of 1990, the

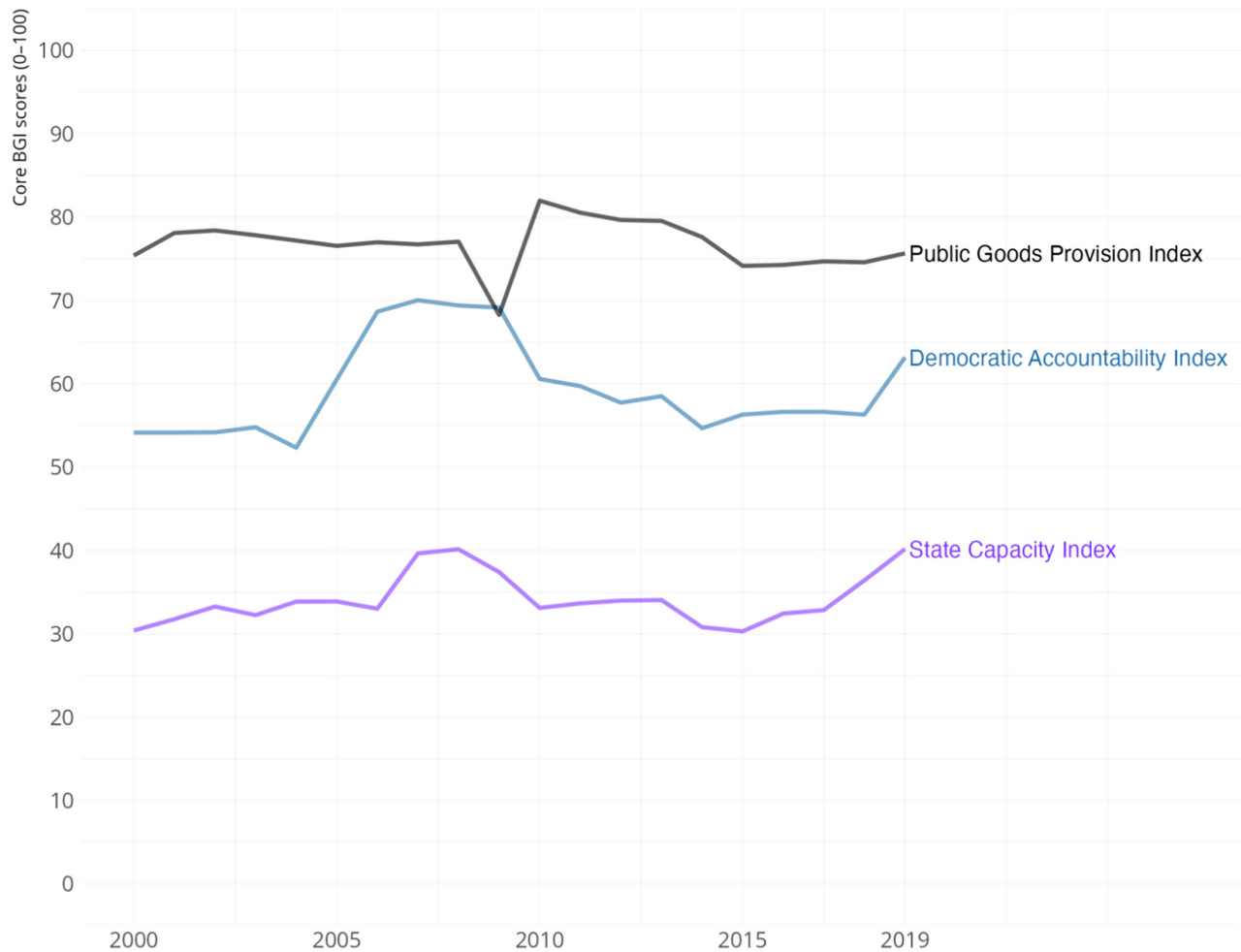


FIGURE 1 Development of Ukraine's BGI scores, 2000–2019. *Source:* Berggruen Governance Index 2022.

Orange Revolution in 2004, and the Euro-Maidan (or Revolution of Dignity) in 2014 – Ukraine has yet to find a stable developmental path. Accordingly, BGI scores show that Ukrainian politics and society continue to have difficulty advancing towards a corridor of good governance (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2019), where state capacity and accountability reinforce each other and enhance public goods provision. Instead, Ukraine is alternating between authoritarian and democratic development patterns. However, the Russian invasion that began on 24 February 2022 has contributed to uniting and consolidating Ukrainian society and politics and could considerably push the nation-building process forward.

BGI scores before 2004 show signs of Ukrainian leaders overestimating their state's capacity while undervaluing the role of democratic accountability for public goods delivery and good governance, thus, being tempted by the autocratic fallacy that democratic accountability was unnecessary (Anheier et al., 2022: 37). Formally, being a democracy since 1990, the state had not succeeded in building up sustainable democratic institutions in the first decade of independence. Thus,

at the beginning of the new millennium, state capacity (BGI 30 in 2000) and democratic accountability (BGI 54 in 2000) were only weakly developed. However, public goods provision (BGI 75 in 2000) was above the global average. This situation of weak checks and balances and a constrained civil society was not sustainable and led to the Orange Revolution in 2004, after which state capacity (BGI 40 in 2007) and accountability (BGI 70 in 2007) began to improve.

However, the societal upheaval also did not solve the problem of political representation, with the new democratic regime still leaving most Ukrainians disconnected from the policy and public spheres (Ishchenko & Zhuravlev, 2021). Partly, this points towards the trap of the democratic fallacy,² when the newly appointed, democratic leaders rely too much on the democratic image of the state and do not succeed in improving its capacity to function. Thus, BGI scores for public goods provision still show no signs of change after 2004 despite improvements in the other BGI dimensions, indicating the inability of state–society relations to have a sustainable impact on the country's development path.

As a result of these unresolved problems, but also a severe hit from the global financial crisis, Ukraine witnessed another regime change in 2010. Ukraine returned to a more illiberal and Russia-leaning government under Viktor Yanukovich's tenure, which coincides with BGI scores of state capacity (BGI 31 in 2014) and accountability (BGI 55 in 2014) dropping again to their low pre-2004 plateaus. BGI scores for public goods provision still do not considerably improve during that period, which again partly reflects the autocratic fallacy argument. The continued lack of representation led to the next revolution, namely the Euro-Maidan, in 2014, which again failed to bring sustainable change in quality of life.

While returning to a democratic, pro-Western stance, the new regime under Petro Poroshenko and currently Volodymyr Zelenskyy was also not able to solve the persistent problems of administrative cooptation and corruption. What is more, the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula by Russia in 2014 and the war in the eastern territories of the Donbas put severe constraints on budgetary and political capabilities for improving governance. Post-2014, BGI scores for all three dimensions

seem to indicate that Ukraine could escape the democratic fallacy in the future. The regime's increasingly democratic stance (BGI for democratic accountability improves 8 points between 2014 und 2019) coincides with a 10-point improvement for state capacity. However, this aligned growth has not yet linked with an improvement of public goods provision. Despite better conditions, there remain several obstacles on Ukraine's paths into the 'narrow corridor' of good governance.

1 | STATE CAPACITY

Similar to other newly independent post-Soviet countries, Ukraine's population suffered deeply from the transition to a market economy during the 1990s, with GDP per capita³ decreasing by more than half, from US\$1597.5 in 1989 to US\$635.8 in 1999. The economy that was based on a traditionally large agrarian sector on the one side and heavy industry in the eastern parts of the country, particular in the Donbas, on the other side, was hit by particularly heavy turmoil in its first decade of independence. Continuous political conflicts

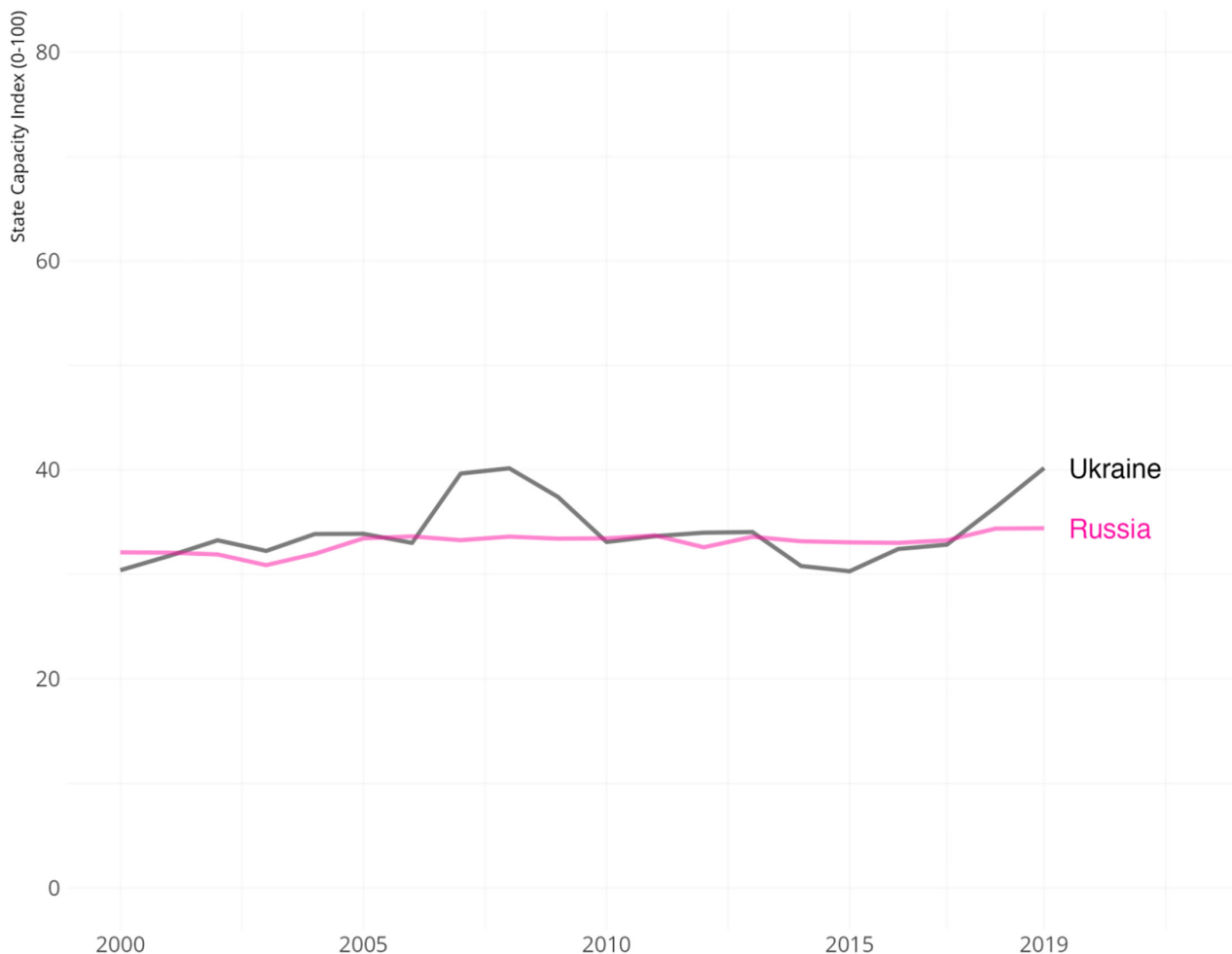


FIGURE 2 State capacity in Ukraine compared to Russia, 2000–2019. *Source:* Berggruen Governance Index 2022.

and power struggles, hyperinflation and corruption led to economic decline. This disarray also blocked the development of functional administrative institutions that could implement necessary reforms (Sutela, 2012). What is more, the political instability and weak administrative systems allowed former Soviet elites to hold on to power and exploit state assets. The privatisation of large-scale industries and other state property created a new and powerful business class, the oligarchs that held and still hold political power with exceptional access to administrative rents (Dabrowski, 2017). Thus, Ukrainian crony capitalism hampered the development of state capacity, a pattern not too dissimilar from other post-Soviet countries such as Russia⁴ or Belarus (see Figure 2).

At the beginning of the new millennium, Ukraine's state capacity was already at a low level due to political instability, the oligarchs' cooptation of state administration and widespread corruption. Despite considerable economic upheaval between 2000 and 2008, capability to transfer the income into productive state policy remained on a low level compared to Russia due to dysfunctional tax policy, a high level of endemic corruption and tax evasion. Following the Orange Revolution in 2004 Ukraine's BGI score for state capacity shows initial signs of improvement, when the score rose from 34 in 2004 to 40 in 2009, only to fall again to its pre-revolution position (33) by 2010. This indicates the effect of an 'unfinished' revolution, when

political, economic and administrative reform projects were started, but the government of revolutionary President Viktor Yushchenko was unable to sustainably implement them. The rise of Viktor Yanukovich, a pro-Russian candidate, in 2010 did not reverse the trend, but also did not improve the situation, which played a role in the public upheaval against his regime during the Euro-Maidan protests of 2014. However, the subsequent violent conflict with Russia, which saw the Russian annexation of Crimea and a separatist war in the Donbas, coincides with a slight upward trend of the BGI score for state capacity up to 2019. This indicates that persistent crisis tends to have a consolidating effect on public management, a circumstance that arguably links the Ukrainian case to war-centred approaches to state formation which see internal and external warfare as contributors to the making and consolidation of nation states.⁵

As seen in Figure 3, the BGI sub-indices for state capacity show a quite uneven development between 2000 and 2019. At the beginning of the 2000s, fiscal capacity improves considerably from 25 in 2000 to 42 in 2003 only to fluctuate around that rather low level through the rest of the observation period. In a context of economic instability combined with political and financial crises, in contrast to Russia, Ukraine has experienced strongly fluctuating inflation that was high (28%) in 2000, rose to 25% in 2009 with the global financial crisis, and exploded to 48% in 2015 following

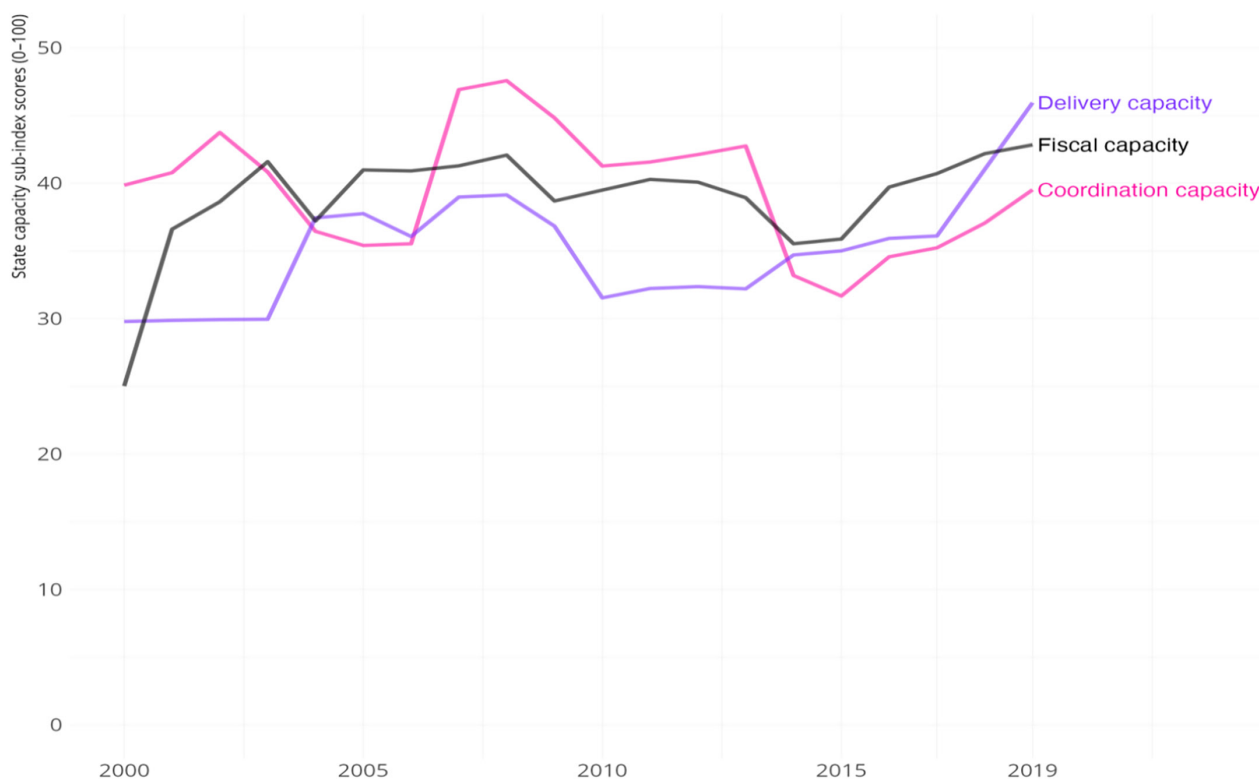


FIGURE 3 State capacity in Ukraine, by sub-indices, 2000–2019. *Source:* Berggruen Governance Index 2022.

Russia's annexation of Crimea and armed conflict in the east (see Figure 4).⁶ Still, the economic outlook at the beginning of the 2000s was relatively positive because until 2007 real GDP growth averaged about 7.5%, one of the highest growth rates among transition economies. Furthermore, high prices for steel on global markets brought in significant income, which accounted for 40% of Ukraine's exports and 15% of GDP at the time. However, this, together with cheap energy prices, resulted in fiscal policy decisions to sharply expand mainly public sector wages, which boosted consumption but strained state finances. Ukraine was hit hard by the 2008 global financial crisis, as steel prices dropped by 80%, while Russia, Ukraine's main energy supplier, raised prices for oil and gas, putting the tax administration under severe pressure (IMF, 2011, pp. 6–8). What followed was a threefold crisis in 2008–2009, when global demand for steel fell, the domestic economy shrank drastically and the banking system failed, causing a severe funding and fiscal crisis in 2009, with interest payments dropping and central bank reserves dissipating (IMF, 2010, p. 4). This was when the Ukraine's government turned to the IMF for support. Despite a gradual recovery from 2009 onwards, needed institutional

reforms and policy changes remained largely on hold due to sharp political divisions and conflicts within the government.

Constant political conflicts within the government and between the parties in the parliament contributed to a low BGI score for the sub-index of coordination capacity between 2000 and 2019, which stays well below the global average of 54. Cronyism and oligarchs' capture of public administration considerably weakened the bureaucracy's functioning, while social and infrastructural spending decisions were made based mainly on the particularistic interests of those in power. Incidentally, BGI scores for coordination capacity showed signs of improvement in the first few years following the Orange Revolution in 2004, only to turn downwards again, indicating the good intent but also the failure of that revolution to sustainably change the country's governance. However, following the Euro-Maidan in 2014, decentralisation reforms strengthened local governments and their fiscal sustainability,⁷ which has put coordination capacity back on an upward path.

BGI scores for the delivery capacity sub-index show a similar dynamic as for coordination capacity: with the regime change due to the Orange Revolution in 2004, delivery capacity increases but declines again in the

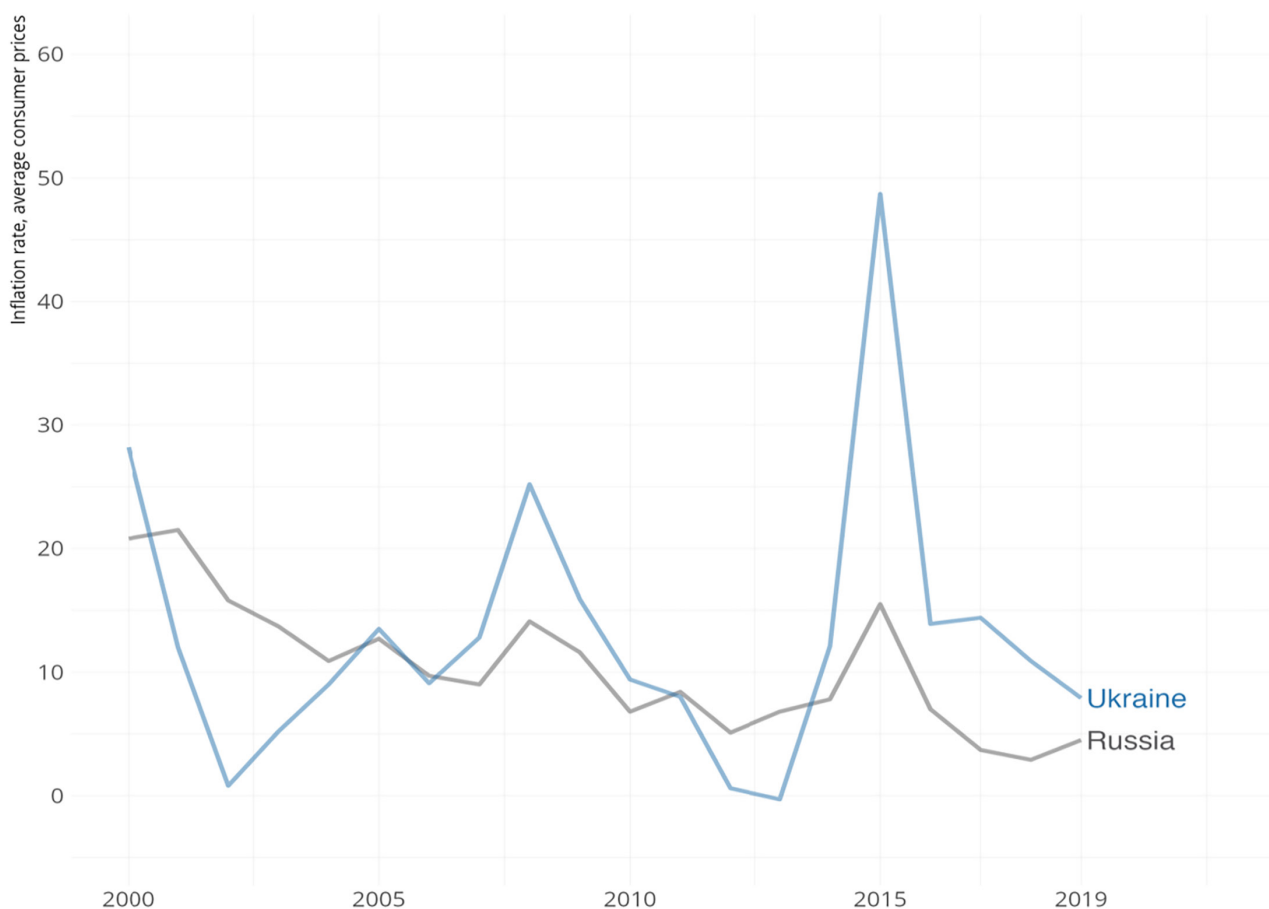


FIGURE 4 Inflation in Ukraine and Russia, 2000–2019. Source: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.LE00.IN?end=2019&locations=UA-RU&start=1980&view=chart>.

years before the next revolution in 2014, after which it started increasing again. On the one hand, this coincides with a drastic drop of real GDP due to the 2008–2009 global financial crisis, which severely limited government spending.⁸ On the other hand, it reflects the country's difficulties in solving its endemic corruption problem and dysfunctions in the judicial system. Indeed, unchecked corruption within both the administration and government was one of the main grievances of the Euro-Maidan protests. Moreover, the deadly crackdown on the protesters at that time highlighted the flaws in the judicial and law enforcement systems. Though the post-Maidan government under Petro Poroshenko enacted reforms to combat corruption, they remained only partially implemented. Still, improvements have been made in the judicial sector when a new Supreme Court began its work in 2018 (Freedom House, 2019).

What is more, improved BGI scores for delivery capacity since 2014 coincide with Ukraine's efforts to establish a legal framework to fight corruption and corresponding entities, including an anti-corruption tribunal.⁹

Consequently, the score of the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)¹⁰ for Ukraine improved between 2014 (26 on a 100-point scale) to 2018 (32). The measures included the creation of new national anti-corruption agencies, public procurement reform, requirement of e-declarations for public officials, political party finance reform, energy tariff reform, and reform of the management of state-owned enterprises. However, Transparency International and others have warned that the anti-corruption infrastructure is not robust enough, with the responsible bodies lacking stability and authority, as well as sufficient human and financial resources.¹¹

2 | DEMOCRATIC ACCOUNTABILITY

Ukraine's 1996 constitution established a semi-presidential republic, but the country has failed so far to establish a stable and transparent democratic regime. Despite the two consecutive social revolutions in 2004 and 2014, Freedom House's Nations in Transit scores put the country consistently in the category of

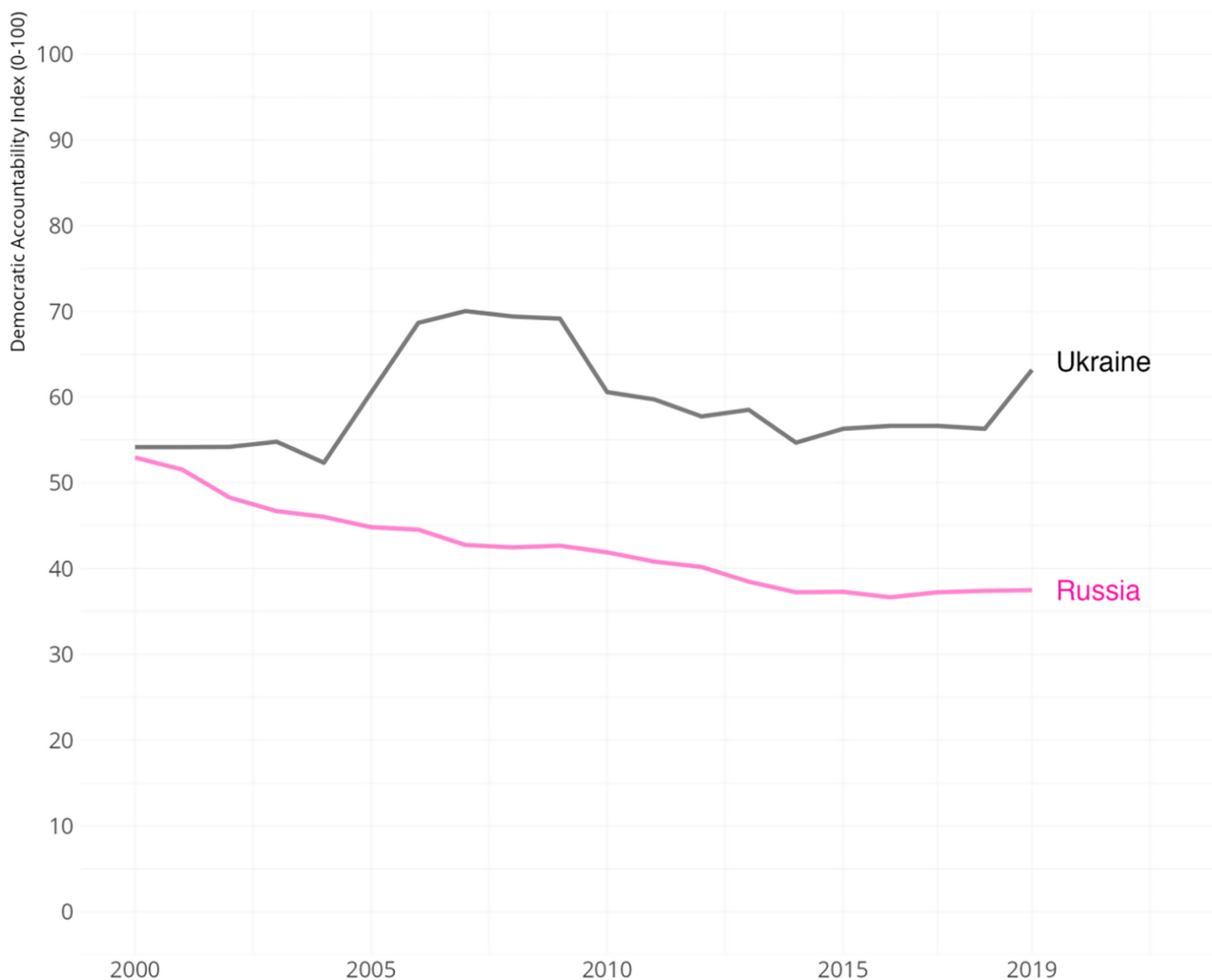


FIGURE 5 Democratic accountability in Ukraine compared to Russia, 2000–2019. *Source:* Berggruen Governance Index 2022.

'transitional or hybrid regime' (Freedom House, 2022b). Also, the state of political rights and civil liberties is far from satisfying. The Freedom in the World score, also published by Freedom House (2022a), has assigned Ukraine only a 'partly free' label since it began to be covered in the 2017 report.

While Russia's accountability score drifts down over the first 20 years of the new millennium, Ukraine's shows clear improvement after the Orange Revolution in 2004 and until 2009, reaching a peak score of 70 in 2007 (Figure 5). The 2004 public protests put a new pro-democratic government under President Viktor Yushchenko into power and paved the way for a broad institutional reform programme. However, pro-Russian incumbent Viktor Yanukovich, who lost power as prime minister in 2004, was elected president in 2010. Under his government, democratic accountability fell again almost to the level of 2000 (55 in 2014). The events of the Euro-Maidan protests in 2014 swept him out of office for the second time, but the new President Petro Poroshenko and his government were not able to improve accountability to any considerable extent.

Only the arrival into office by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and his parliamentary allies in 2019 coincided with a swing of the BGI index back in the upward direction (63 in 2019).

Despite an overall improvement of 9 points between 2000 and 2019, ups and downs along the developmental paths of all three sub-indices for democratic accountability demonstrate the impact of institutional shortcomings (see Figure 6). The below global average scores for the BGI sub-index for institutional accountability (47 in 2000, 46 in 2012) reflect the rather weak state of institutional oversight and control over the government. In particular, the Yanukovich government tightened control of the executive over courts and severely limited the competencies of the Supreme Court to mere symbolic functions. Moreover, political trials sought to prosecute leaders of the opposition at that time (Nekoliak, 2020).

BGI scores for electoral accountability show an ultimately positive trend (from 61 in 2000 to 70 in 2019), with most of the post-Soviet elections being conducted in a transparent and free manner, complying with international standards. However, electoral accountability is

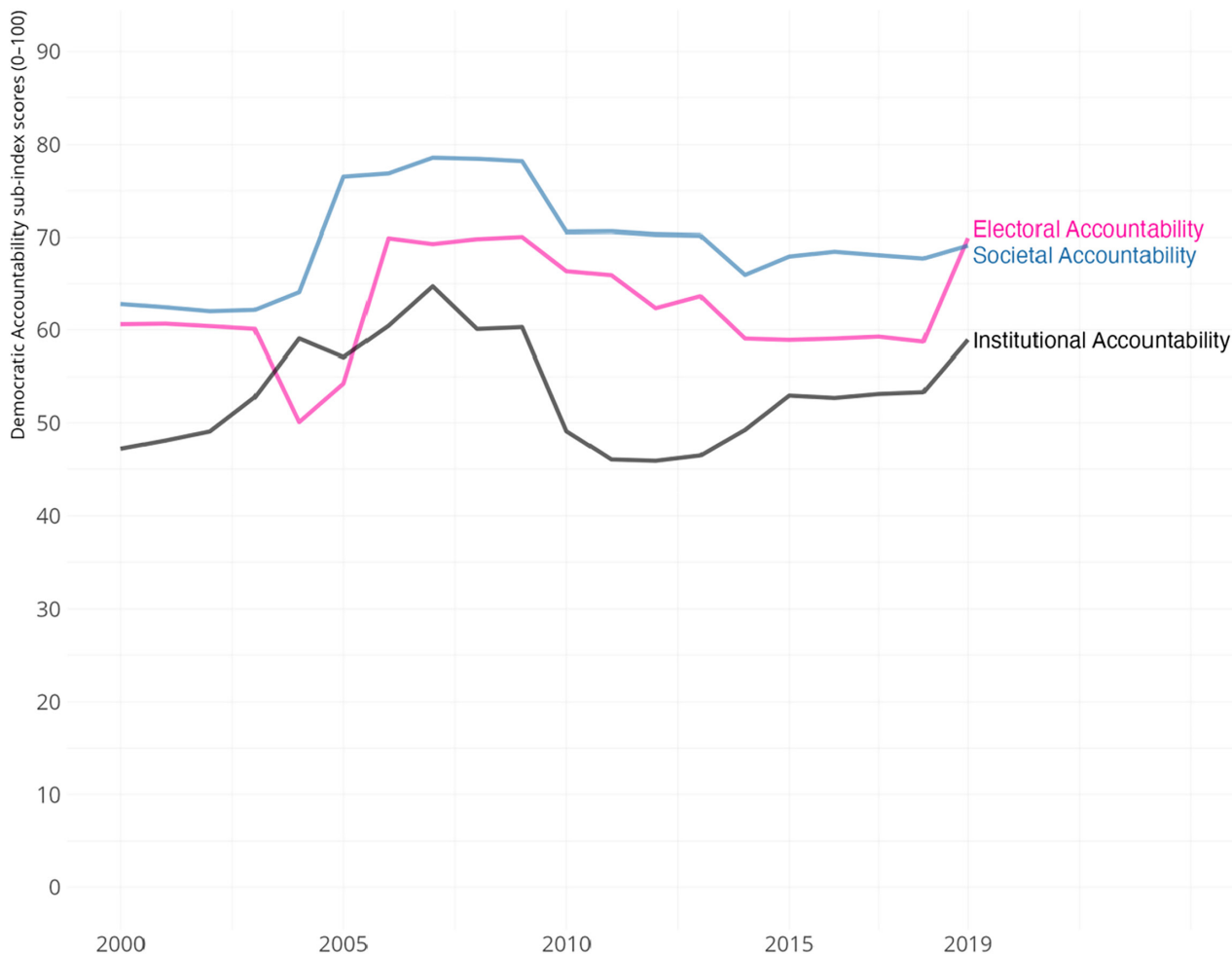


FIGURE 6 Democratic accountability in Ukraine, by sub-indices, 2000–2019. *Source:* Berggruen Governance Index 2022.

not at as high a level as some of the best-performing post-Soviet democratic regimes (e.g., BGI sub-index scores for Estonia already at 90 in 2000 and then at 93 by 2019). One of the main reasons is that the Ukrainian political party system has been quite unstable, not unlike other post-communist countries (such as Latvia, Poland, or Russia), with many parties vanishing and being newly founded, a situation that gave and still gives oligarchs and business groups plenty of influence and lobbying power. In addition, businesses often ‘sponsor’ members of parliament, making the electoral and legislative process even more vulnerable to corruption and the influence of lobbying groups (Dabrowski, 2017). Some elections have been criticised by international observers because of the use of administrative resources to favour the incumbent candidate, registering of ‘technical’ candidates in order to divert voter attention from opposition candidates, and illegal stuffing of ballot boxes (OSCE, 2004). Electoral fraud during the 2004 presidential elections sparked the Orange Revolution (Kuzio, 2005), while the 2012 parliamentary elections were internationally deemed rigged (OSCE PA, 2012).

A similarly contradictory picture appears in the trends of the BGI sub-index score for societal accountability. The score climbs above the global average after the Orange Revolution in 2004, but falls in the wake of Viktor Yanukovich's government between 2010 and 2014 and then stagnates, though still at a higher level than in 2000.¹² Ukrainian society of the post-Soviet era is no stranger to social mobilisation and mass upheaval against authority. For example, student protests in Kyiv against the communist leadership in 1990 (Revolution on Granite), miners' strikes in eastern Ukraine in 1993, the Orange Revolution in 2004, and, eventually, the Euro-Maidan in 2014, all drove chief executives out of power (Way, 2014).

The initial success of the two revolutions in 2004 and 2014 was due in large part to Ukrainian civil society. During the first decade of the new millennium, civil society organisations (CSOs) were mostly ignored by the state. At a time when only 15% of CSOs' budgets came from state-related sources, international donors had a crucial impact. State–civil society relations improved following the Orange Revolution, but in particular, under the Yanukovich regime from 2010 became paradoxical. On

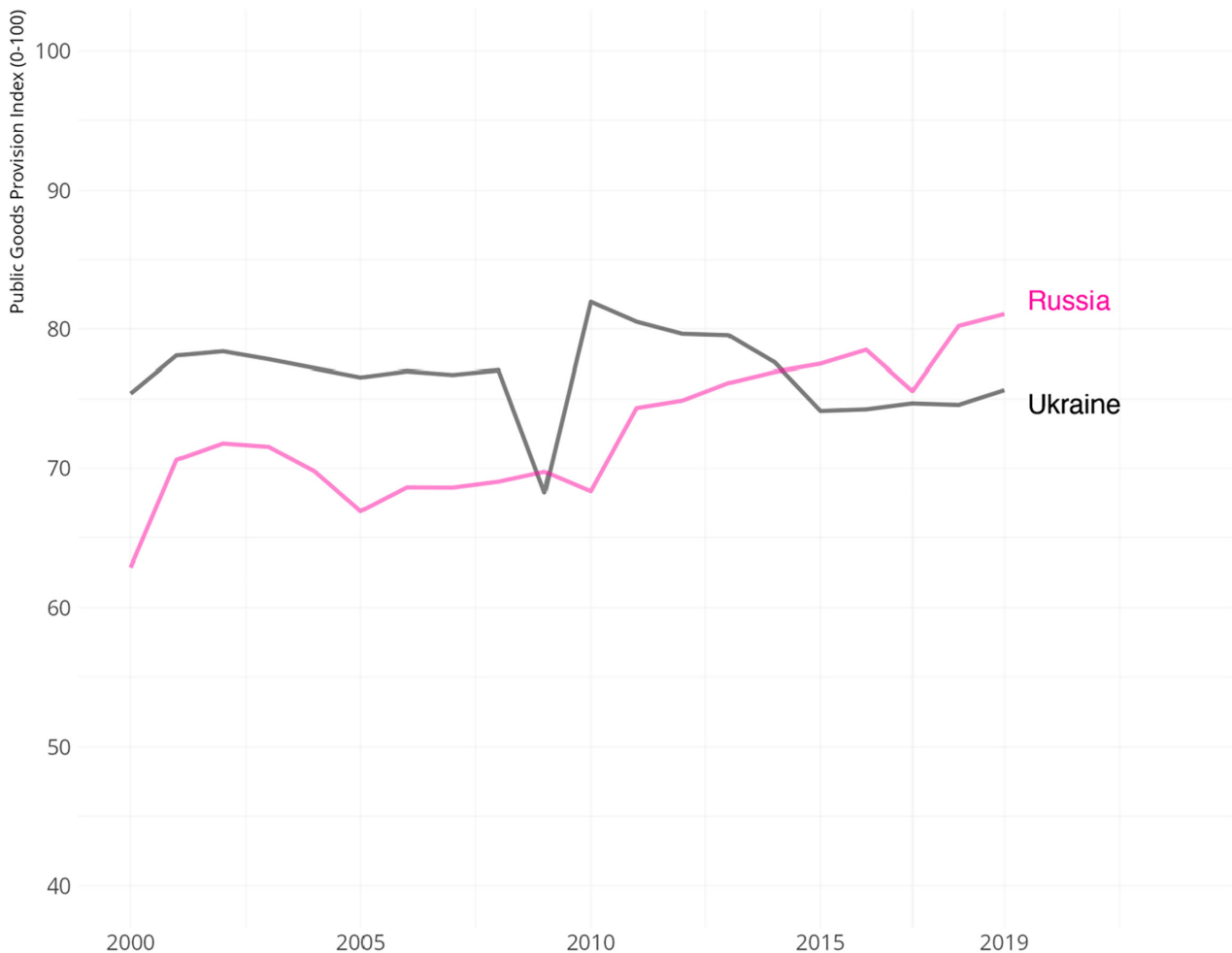


FIGURE 7 Public goods provision in Ukraine compared to Russia, 2000–2019. *Source:* Berggruen Governance Index 2022.

one hand, domestic funding for CSOs increased, cooperation with (particularly local) authorities improved, and many obstacles for their activities were removed with the law 'On public organizations' in 2012 (Stewart & Dollbaum, 2017, p. 212). On the other, the government under Yanukovich hampered the engagement of volunteers in CSO activities with a law 'On volunteer work' in 2011, on top of obstacles due to the tax code.

In the years leading to the Euro-Maidan protests, civil society had built broad coalitions nationally but also, in particular, with international counterparts, and was more and more engaged in monitoring the state's activities. The resulting growing public trust led civil society actors to play a crucial role in the revolutionary events of 2014. Moreover, since the association agreement with the European Union (EU) in 2014 established new and broad access for civil society actors to the political decision-making process, many activists engaged in political activities in order to ensure the implementation of reforms and transparent governance in the post-Maidan period (Stewart & Dollbaum, 2017).

Still, freedom of expression and civil society activities have remained tenuous since 2014. The new

political role of civil society actors has been resisted by political and economic elites seeking to preserve the status quo (Lough & Solonenko, 2016). But in the context of civil war raging since 2014, due largely to Russia's backing of separatists in eastern Ukraine and on the Crimean Peninsula, civil society has also contributed to the polarisation of Ukrainian society. Freedom House lowered Ukraine's civil society rating from 5.75 in 2016 to 5.00 in 2018 due to the emergence of violent, extremist organised groups, frequent assaults against activists and human rights defenders, and unpunished attacks on journalists and members of minorities (Freedom House, 2016, 2018b). Far-right groups 'outside the state', such as the paramilitary Right Sector, hardcore soccer fans and vigilante groups, which mostly emerged during the Euro-Maidan protests, promote public violence and social division when fighting the police or harassing protesters, which is undermining Ukrainian democratic development (Likhachev, 2018; Way, 2014).

Media freedom is also problematic in Ukraine. Before 2014, state pressure and governmental interference in political news coverage were widespread, though the

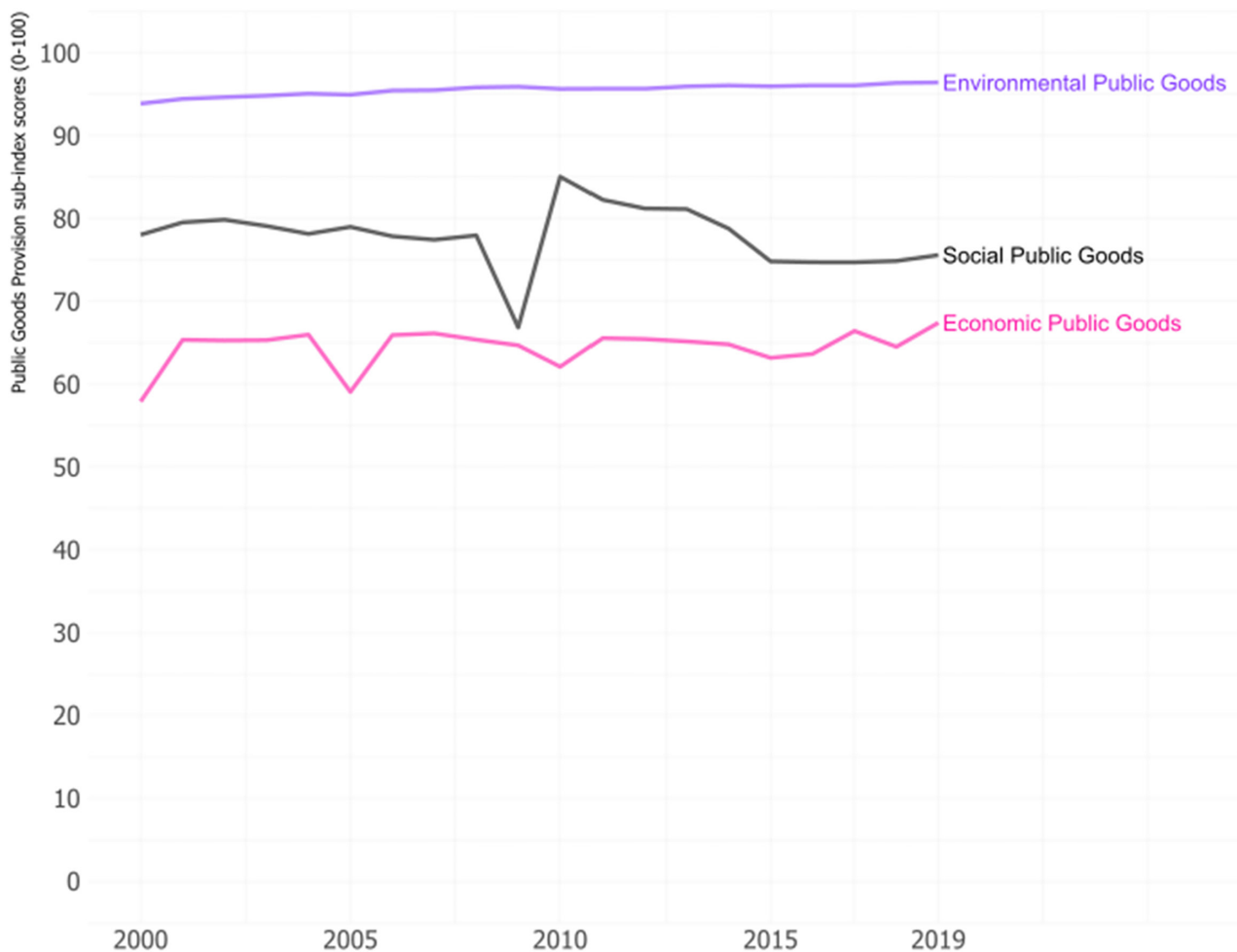


FIGURE 8 Public goods provision in Ukraine, by sub-indices, 2000–2019. *Source:* Berggruen Governance Index 2022.

media market has since become generally diverse, free and competitive. However, oligarch-owned networks are still very influential and are able to impact political and ideological agendas.¹³ Besides that, the government has restricted Ukrainian's access to Russian media platforms and news outlets since the conflict in the Donbas worsened (Freedom House, 2018a). Journalists and civil society activists have come increasingly under attack in the post-Euro-Maidan period, some of them even killed. Media professionals and organisations also face harassment and violence. Freedom of expression has been threatened as well with attacks on ethnic and sexual minorities (Freedom House, 2017).

3 | PUBLIC GOODS PROVISION

Despite suffering from two heavy economic recessions in 2008–2009 and 2013–2015, public sector corruption and weak institutions, Ukraine shows relatively stable public goods delivery, mostly above the global average of 70, indicating stagnation on a rather high

plateau. Until 2014 Ukraine's scores were higher than Russia's (see Figure 7) and most years even comparable to those of the Baltic States, whose public goods indices range between 76 and 85/91 during the same period. Two marked declines in public goods provision coincided with, first, the global financial crisis in 2008 and, second, the separatist war in the eastern territories since 2014: both events placed severe restraints on public social spending. However, the Ukrainian economy proved to be quite resilient, recovered after each recession quickly and stabilised public goods provision.¹⁴

Between 2000 and 2019, the BGI scores for the sub-index of social public goods delivery remains on a rather high level (see Figure 8) and generally above the global average. As in Russia, this coincides with a positive development of life expectancy after the devastating and crisis-ridden 1990s (see Figure 9). A particularly strong improvement can be observed after 2008 as Ukraine rebounded from the global financial crisis. Educational attainment and gender equality are already relatively well developed, largely as a legacy of the Soviet era,

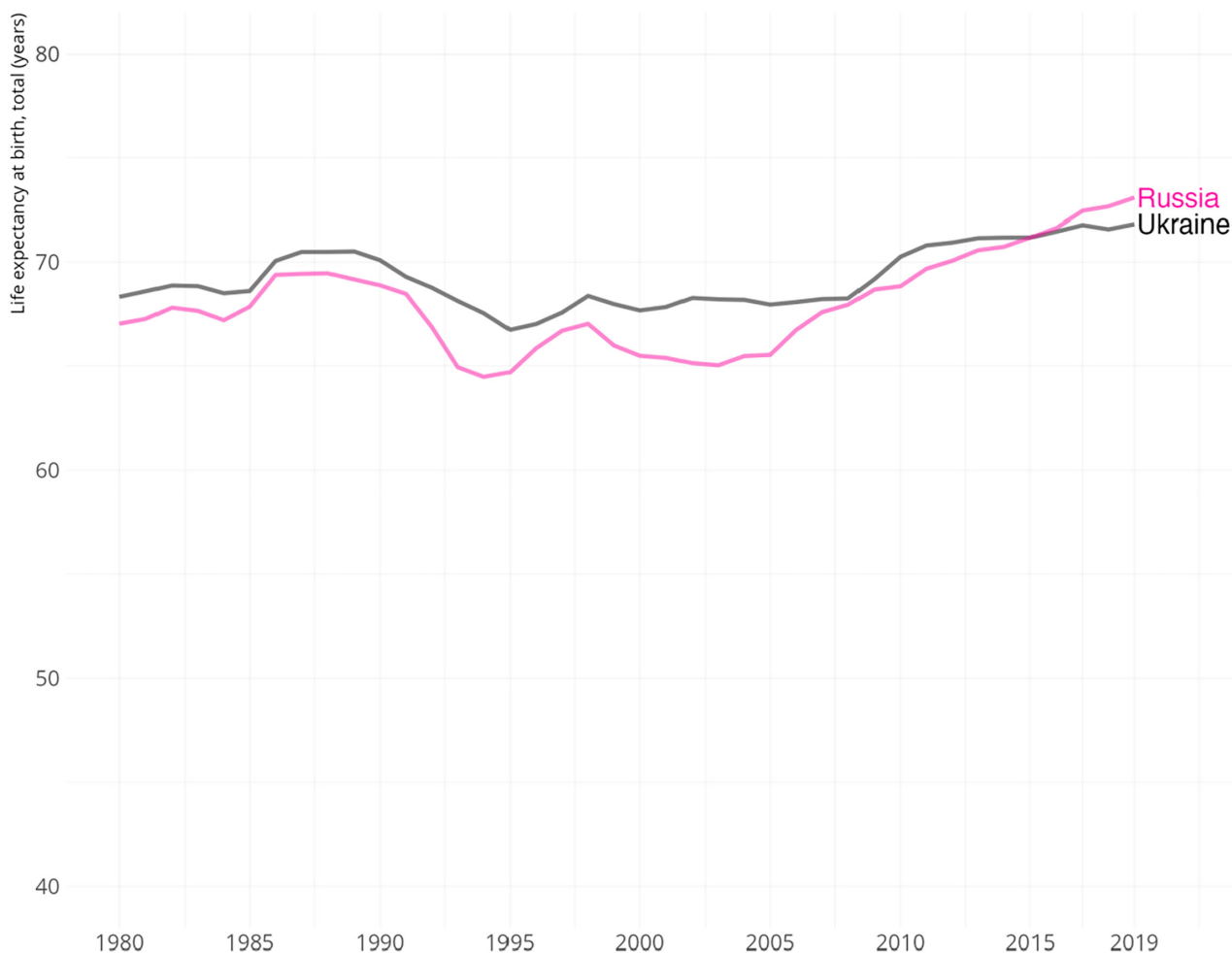


FIGURE 9 Life expectancy at birth, total (years) – Ukraine, Russian Federation 1980–2019. Source: World Bank <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.LE00.IN?end=2019&locations=UA-RU&start=1980&view=chart> (accessed May 16, 2023).

which created a broad and inclusive educational system and female inclusion in the labour market. Ukraine scores decently on the World Economic Forum's 2020 Global Gender Gap index, taking rank 59 of 153 globally and rank 12 among 26 East European and Central Asian countries (World Economic Forum, 2020).

The delivery of economic public goods has improved over the observation period, but perhaps not to its potential, hampered by several factors. Firstly, Ukraine's economy is not very diversified: in 2017, agriculture accounted for about 12% and heavy industry for roughly 27% of its GDP.¹⁵ Secondly, despite being generally accessible and free by law, the quality of health care has been problematic since the country's independence. Low levels of state funding for health institutions such as hospitals and low staff salaries leave the health sector vulnerable to bribery and individual additional charges, while policy reform initiatives have gone nowhere (Mendel, 2017). A state insurance programme introduced in 2017 might change the situation in the future.¹⁶ What is more, about a quarter of the labour force is active in the informal sector, excluding these workers from state welfare provision (ILO, 2018).

During the whole observation period, the delivery of environmental goods remains on a high level (BGI score between 94 in 2000 and 96 in 2019) due to broad access to clean fuels and high energy production and consumption. Since 2013, Ukraine has been implementing environmental legislation adapted from the European Union via a National Environmental Action Plan while relating environmental policy to national security (European Environment Agency, 2018).

4 | CONCLUSION

Ukraine returned to a democratic trajectory after the Euro-Maidan in 2014, but the stability and security of the post-revolutionary governments and the country's fragile institutions were seriously challenged by the separatist war in the Donbas and even more by the Russian invasion on February 24, 2022. As a result of the continuing war with Russia, public goods delivery is severely limited. Up to May 2023, the country's inhabitants are facing food insecurity and the need for life-saving assistance due to obstruction of food production caused by labour shortage, infrastructure damage and difficult access to fields.¹⁷ But with many thousands of fatalities and injured, and with masses of outward migration, internal displacements and workplace destruction, the social impact of the war has already been devastating and makes it that much more difficult to provide sufficient public goods.

Whether the conditions to achieve and continue on a trajectory of improving governance exist is hard to say. Francis Fukuyama (2011, p. 34) called the

Ukrainian process of regime change from an authoritarian to a democratic government 'a long, costly, laborious, and difficult process of institution building'. None of the three revolutions in Ukraine's modern history as an independent state has been able to solve both the problem of political representation and the task of building sustainable democratic institutions. BGI scores between 2000 and 2019 show the ups and downs of state capacity and democratic accountability and illustrate not only how the revolutions remain unfinished, but also how the country seems to be unable to consistently advance state formation. Apparently, the Ukrainian state and society are not (yet) able to support and constrain each other in sustainably constructive and positive terms so as to put the country within the 'narrow corridor' towards good governance.¹⁸

However, the shock and tragedy of the war might be able to transform this inconsistent developmental path into a more stable upward trajectory. Despite prospects of huge economic and social difficulties due to roaring inflation (26% in January 2023), budget priority for military and security expenses (Wilk & Zochowski, 2022) and the negative impact on industry and the labour market (Tooze, 2022), the war may contribute to consolidating state–society relations and solving the problem of political representation. After more than a year of defending their country, Ukrainians have become less politically divided, and national identity is thriving (Economist, 2023). It seems like Ukraine is finally on a path towards sustainable democratic state formation. However, war-induced economic decline, destruction of social infrastructure, liberalisation of the labour market and rising unemployment make life for all, but in particular for the poorest parts of population, even more precarious and make efforts to ensure social protection and provide public goods even harder (Lomonosova, 2022). This may disrupt the country's developmental direction yet again.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

There are no conflicts of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are openly available at <https://governance.luskin.ucla.edu/datasets/>.

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ The Berggruen Governance Index is a collaborative project between the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs and the Berggruen Institute examining, as of 2022, the performance of 134 countries in key areas over a 20-year period to advance understanding of why some countries are governed more effectively and enjoy a higher quality of life than others. See the articles 'Introducing the Berggruen Governance Index: I. Conceptual and Methodological Framework' and 'Introducing the Berggruen Governance Index: II. Initial Results 2000–2019', both by Anheier, Lang and Knudsen, in this special issue. The full dataset is available for download in various formats at <https://governance.luskin.ucla.edu/datasets/>. A data exploration tool offers readers a variety of ways to examine the data; available at <https://governance.luskin.ucla.edu/index/>.
- ² 'Democratic fallacy' assumes that democracy is sufficient for improved governance performance but fails to take into account that a sufficient and resilient state capacity is needed for improved public goods production (Anheier et al., 2022, p. 41).
- ³ See <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?end=2019&locations=UA&start=1987>.
- ⁴ For more details on BGI findings on Russia, see the article, 'Debunking the Autocratic Fallacy? Improving Public Goods in Russia,' by Fröhlich (2023), in this special issue.
- ⁵ Bellicist arguments about state formation have been developed in particular by Charles Tilly (1992).
- ⁶ <https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/PCPIPCH@WEO/UKR/RUS/>.
- ⁷ The decentralisation reform helped to move Ukraine's Local Democratic Governance rating from 2.75 in 2016 to 3.25 in 2018 (on a 7-point scale). This rating is assembled and published by Freedom House (2016, 2018b) within its annual Nations in Transit reports.
- ⁸ Ukraine's annual GDP growth rate was –15.1% in 2009 (<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?locations=UA>), much lower than in other developing and emerging economies, e.g. in the CES region –3.7% and in CIS (to which Ukraine belongs) –6.6% (Dolphin & Chappell, 2010, p. 3).
- ⁹ Strengthening Ukraine's anti-corruption and judicial infrastructure to safeguard the recovery, accessed at: https://baselgovernance.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/ti-ukraine_2.pdf.
- ¹⁰ The CPI is produced by Transparency International and compiles 13 separate indices by 12 independent institutions, which collect data on experts' perception of corruption in the public sector (politics and administration), <https://www.transparency.de/cpi>.
- ¹¹ Strengthening Ukraine's anti-corruption and judicial infrastructure to safeguard the recovery, accessed at: https://baselgovernance.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/ti-ukraine_2.pdf.
- ¹² Ukraine's societal accountability scores started and ended the observation period lower than those of other post-Soviet countries.
- ¹³ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/ukraine/>.
- ¹⁴ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?end=2019&locations=UA&start=2000>.
- ¹⁵ Data for 2017, CIA Fact Book: <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/ukraine/>.
- ¹⁶ <https://en.interfax.com.ua/news/economic/374455.html>, accessed March 19 2023.
- ¹⁷ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/ukraine/>.
- ¹⁸ The argument is made in reference to Acemoglu and Robinson (2019, pp. 26–7).

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