

політика в Україні загалом забезпечують дівчатам із сільської місцевості доступ до вищої освіти. Однак дівчата із села, через менші фінансові можливості сімей, більше орієнтовані на спеціальності, де є можливість безплатного навчання. Порівняно з дівчатами із міст, дівчатам із села загальнодоступним є вужчий перелік спеціальностей, оскільки вони часто отримують середню освіту нижчої якості. Важливою проблемою в Україні є малодоступність якісної вищої освіти для молоді із депресивних сіл, що породжує просторову нерівність і несправедливість.

Ключові слова: сільська молодь, дівчата, сільська місцевість, вища освіта, Україна

Highlights

- Differences in access to higher education for girls from urban and rural areas persist, although they are hidden;
 - Girls from depressed rural areas have the least access to higher education;
 - State policy on the education of rural youth should be more flexible and consistent.
-

1. Introduction

One of the fundamental requirements of the European Union, which is demanded from Ukraine on the way to its membership in this organization, is the reform of the higher education system. Ukraine has a large proportion of the population that has obtained higher education, but this education is not competitive compared to EU countries (Lugovyi, 2020). In addition, many young people do not work in the specialty they have acquired. For example, less than 20% of graduates in the specialty 'secondary education', which trains secondary school teachers (one of the specialties with the largest number of students), are employed in their field of study (Osvita.ua, 2024).

Expenses on education from the state budget are considered excessive, and their use is ineffective, especially under the conditions of a full-scale Russian invasion and partial occupation of the Ukrainian territory. Reforms in the sphere of higher education in Ukraine should take place considering the peculiarities of vulnerable groups of population to ensure the principles of social and spatial equality and justice.

Among the population groups that require special attention in the process of implementation of the state educational policy is the female population in rural areas. Since the second half of the 20th century thousands of rural settlements in Ukraine have been declining and depopulating, children have not had access to a high-quality secondary education, which results in limited opportunities for obtaining higher education. Rural youth often have access only to certain specialties, and they rarely master the most prestigious of them. In addition, they usually choose the nearest universities or institutions of professional and technical education, rather than trying to enter a prestigious university in the capital or a large regional educational centre. Under the conditions of significant predominance of women among the rural population of Ukraine, villages are undergoing a process known among scientists as "feminization of poverty" (Libanova, 2023). In many rural settlements, there is a growing percentage of single women with low income due to the employment in a budget sphere (jobs financed from the state budget or the budgets of territorial communities with a small salary) or retirement provision, who are constantly forced to additionally replenish their household budgets by means of physical labour in agriculture. On the other hand, the administrative-territorial reform with following decentralization encourages rural women to social activity in the field of management of territorial communities, or to start their businesses. Such changes in society also motivate female students from rural areas.

2. Research aim

The aim of the article is to establish educational priorities of girls from rural areas entering classical universities in large educational centres in Ukraine. Based on the Ivan Franko University of Lviv, the number and ratio of girls from the countryside who entered the bachelor's degree program during the last four years, their choice of specialty, factors that influenced such a choice, the geography of the applicants, etc. will be analysed.

3. Literature review

There are quite a lot of works related to the research problem, but they are often written from a slightly different point of view when compared to the topic of the article. In recent years, the largest number of studies devoted to the issue of higher education of rural girls have encompassed the countries of Asia (mostly – India and China) and Africa. Special attention is paid to the influence of racial and religious factors on the education of women from rural areas.

Scientists mainly focus on the following issues of higher education of rural girls:

- general problems of access to higher education for girls from the countryside and comparative aspects (countryside – city, girls – boys);
- barriers on the way of getting higher education;
- quality of higher education and the most common specialties chosen by girls from the countryside;
- motives for obtaining higher education;
- state policy concerning higher education obtained by women and generally by young people originating from rural areas.

The situation with the availability of higher education for girls from rural areas is related to the level of socio-economic development of the country, the level of urbanization, features of the socio-cultural situation in rural areas (including the influence of religion, ethnic aspects), state policy in the field of education. In economically developed countries, the degree of access of rural girls to higher education is quite high; however, it is of lower quality and not all specialties are equally accessible (Guérault, Jedlicki & Noûs, 2021; Gillon, 2022; Trancă, 2019; Verdugo-Castro et al., 2021; Weiss & Christin, 2022). In economically less developed countries with a low level of urbanization, education for girls with a rural background is often hardly available. For example, this aspect has been revealed by recent studies of such countries as India, Pakistan, and Honduras (Cardozo, 2021; Seeley, 2018). In some countries, scientists have noticed significant achievements in the availability of higher education for rural youth in recent decades (Alvarado, 2010; Elder, 2017; Kumar, 2021; Wasielewski, 2021; Weiss & Christin, 2022). In particular, in Central European states, e.g., Poland, which used to be part of the “socialist camp”, such success is closely related to joining the European Union, that has opened access to its multiple educational programs (Antonowicz, Wasielewski & Domalewski, 2022; Wasielewski, 2015; Wasielewski, 2021).

Most often scientists single out the following barriers to obtain higher education:

- the income level of rural households, the poverty of a significant part of rural population, the cost of education (Cardozo, 2021; Hasan, Murtaza, Shamshad & Imran, 2023; Khan, 2023; Mu, 2021; Naveen Kumar & Ashwini, 2018; Trancă, 2019; Wang, 2022);
- difficulties of employment in a specialty in rural areas, which demotivates young people to obtain higher education (Mu, 2021; Seeley, 2018);
- the amount of family members, in large families not all children receive higher education (Hasan, Murtaza, Shamshad & Imran, 2023; Wang, 2022; Wang & Chen, 2023);
- gender bias, prioritizing boys over girls when receiving higher education (Naveen Kumar & Ashwini, 2018; Radiowala & Molwane, 2021);
- low awareness of higher education opportunities among parents and potential higher education seekers from rural areas (Naveen Kumar & Ashwini, 2018).

Other specific barriers, which are also mentioned by scientists include: the irrationality of young people from rural areas (Mu, 2021); long distances to educational institutions (in countries with problems in transport development, such as safety and traffic frequency, where the youth from the countryside are oriented towards the nearest university) (Hasan, Murtaza, Shamshad & Imran, 2023; Naveen Kumar & Ashwini, 2018); negative attitude of a traditional society in some countries to obtaining higher education by girls (Cardozo, 2021; Patil, Y. & Suradkar, D., 2022); lack of ambition due to socio-cultural barriers (Radiowala & Molwane, 2021). Among important, but rarely mentioned reasons, the gender behaviour of mothers should be mentioned, i.e., whether they have or have not raised their girls based on gender equality (Wang, 2022).

In economically underdeveloped countries with a low level of urbanization, specific problems arise, such as: low rates of girls with rural background involved in the secondary education process, high level of their illiteracy (Cardozo, 2021); the absence or very small number of female teachers in universities (Cardozo, 2021); absence of self-sustainability among women – they are usually dependent on men, i.e., a father, a husband or a brother (Cardozo, 2021; Radiowala & Molwane, 2021).

Having summarized the problems (barriers, challenges) faced by women from rural areas in obtaining higher education, scientists have classified them into four broad categories: family problems; personal problems; infrastructure problems; society problems (Radiowala & Molwane, 2021).

In terms of the quality of higher education received by rural girls and their choice of specialties, it has been revealed that they still prefer school teaching and nursing professions (Gillon, 2022; Mu, 2021). Elite universities are almost inaccessible for them (Xie, Wang & Chen, 2010); and in states where there is a division into public (less prestigious) and private (elite) educational institutions, there is no chance to enter a private institution (Wen, Zhou, Zhang, & Hu, 2023).

As far as the reasons for entering a higher educational establishment are concerned, the following aspects can be singled out: the possibility of improvement; love in learning; development of rational thinking; increase in employment opportunities; learning a foreign language, particularly English; moving to a city for permanent residence, etc. (Friesen & Purc-Stephenson, 2016; Marsiglia et al., 2023; Seeley, 2018).

In terms of state educational policy, it is worth mentioning that most states take steps to support rural youth on their way to higher education (Weiss & Christin, 2022; Mu, 2021). However, in some countries, there is still a direct need for targeted interventions and policies to promote and expand access to higher education for rural youth (Weiss & Christin, 2022; Hasan, Murtaza, Shamshad & Imran, 2023; Hussien & Workie, 2023).

In particular, to provide girls from rural areas with equal educational rights and encourage them to obtain higher education, scientists recommend the following steps:

- improving the quality of education in rural secondary schools (Cardozo, 2021; Radiowala & Molwane, 2021);
- scholarship support for rural youth pursuing higher education (Kumar, 2021; Radiowala & Molwane, 2021);
- preferential credits to high school graduates from the countryside so that they can start their own business (in order to solve the problem of employment in rural areas) (Mu, 2021);
- stimulating the employment of graduates with rural background as university lecturers and other personnel (Mu, 2021);
- introduction of gender-related courses in secondary schools, which would teach children the ideas of gender equality (Wang, 2022).

“Harsh” actions of the authorities are also necessary in case of antisocial attitudes towards women in the countryside, in particular, direct restrictions in the family or local society regarding women’s higher education (Radiowala & Molwane, 2021).

There is scarce academic research available concerning the education of girls from the countryside in Ukraine. Unfortunately, due to the Russian invasion, Ukraine nowadays has other priorities for scientific

research. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, O. Kravchenko conducted a survey among rural girls studying at the pedagogical university in Uman, Cherkasy region. The researcher concluded that rural girls, in comparison to urban ones, were mostly raised in single-parent families (62% versus 78%), were less involved in the social and cultural life of the University (43% versus 70%), had significantly lower access to the services of a psychologist or a gynaecologist during their study at school, had less opportunities for family recreation and worse living conditions. The scientist concluded that female students from rural areas studying at higher education establishments were in need for socio-psychological support (Kravchenko, 2019).

In a 2015 study, I. Gubeladze investigated the differences in life priorities among girls and boys from rural areas. She discovered that among girls, the number of those who believed that it was better to live in the village than in the city was much lower than among boys, and, accordingly, the number of those who did not plan to stay in the village, but to go to the city to study and later to live there, was higher (Gubeladze, 2015). Koleva N. drew her attention to the value aspect of career choices made by graduates of rural schools – in their opinion, professions common for rural areas were unattractive, which accordingly affected their educational priorities when entering higher educational institutions (Koleva, 2023). T. Gitis and co-authors (2020) established that in Ukraine, rural youth aged 15 to 24, compared to urban youth, participated much less in non-formal education – 61% versus 46% in 2019.

Much information is provided by annual national and international reports on the state of education, youth, gender issues and rural areas in Ukraine. A survey of young people in Ukraine on the eve of the Russian invasion revealed among the problems of rural young population aged from 14 to 29 their lower awareness of multiple topical issues of everyday life, as well as a greater demand for consulting services, especially for legal advice (Youth, 2021). Analytical centre “Cedos” (2020) in its sociological study “Choice of higher education after school” established that 39% of all first-year students in Ukraine did not have a higher education institution in their locality and were graduates from rural areas and small towns. Accordingly, for them receiving higher education was accompanied at the same time by a mandatory internal migration.

4. Research data

Due to the martial law in Ukraine, introduced after the start of a full-scale Russian invasion in 2022, the system of collecting and publishing annual statistical data on most public spheres of life has been tempered, some information is difficult to obtain, others are not published for reasons of state security. Therefore, the majority of statistical data are available only as of 2021, and scientists are obliged to focus on alternative sources of information.

For the article, the materials of the internal statistical history of four years of admission campaigns at Ivan Franko National University of Lviv (hereinafter – LNU) stored by the admission committee of the institution, have mainly been used. The administration of the university has kindly agreed to this. Used materials include partially published information in official documents of the university, the rector's and faculty deans' reporting speeches, the most important data that are also transferred to the regional and national statistical bodies of Ukraine for generalization (Statistics of Ukraine, 2024; Statistics in Lviv region, 2024).

It is possible to obtain information about the place of study of future students from the documents that they provide during their entry, e.g., the certificate of complete general secondary education, which contains information about the location of the school that the applicant graduated from. Besides, partial access to information about the number of students, graduates of rural schools, who entered the university in 2020–2021 is also available due to the introduction by the Ministry of Education of Ukraine so-called “rural coefficient”, i.e., the coefficient by which the competitive score received by the rural entrants who in the year of admission obtained a full general secondary education in an educational institution located in the village, is multiplied. It was introduced specifically to support young people from villages aiming at obtaining higher education. Since 2022, it has become inactive due to the Russian invasion.

In the article, admission data of the last four years (2020–2023) were used, admission in 2019 involved a significantly different method of collecting applicants' data; therefore, materials about applicants of this year (as well as previous ones), which are stored by the admission committee of the university, do not provide an opportunity to properly distinguish students who have graduated from rural schools.

Other available educational statistics used in the study includes annual results of admission to higher education institutions of Ukraine, which are posted on several specialized Internet resources, the most famous of which is the website of the Unified State Electronic Database on Education (EDEBO, 2024). Ratings of all secondary schools of Ukraine, necessary for understanding the educational situation in rural areas, are published by such Internet resource as "Osvita.ua".

5. The research context

5.1 Rural women in Ukraine

The permanent rural population of Ukraine in 2021 was estimated at 31% of the total population of the country (12.620 million people) (Number of present Population, 2021). However, its distribution by regions was quite heterogeneous: in most western regions (Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Rivne, Ternopil, Chernivtsi), the percentage of rural residents was higher than 50%, while in eastern regions (Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kharkiv, Luhansk, Donetsk) – it was less than 20% (Resident Population, 2021). In the Lviv region, this number was about 40% (Fig. 1). 30% of Ukraine's female population live in rural areas (6.570 million people, 2021). The average age of the female population in 2021 was 44.7 years (39.4 years for men).

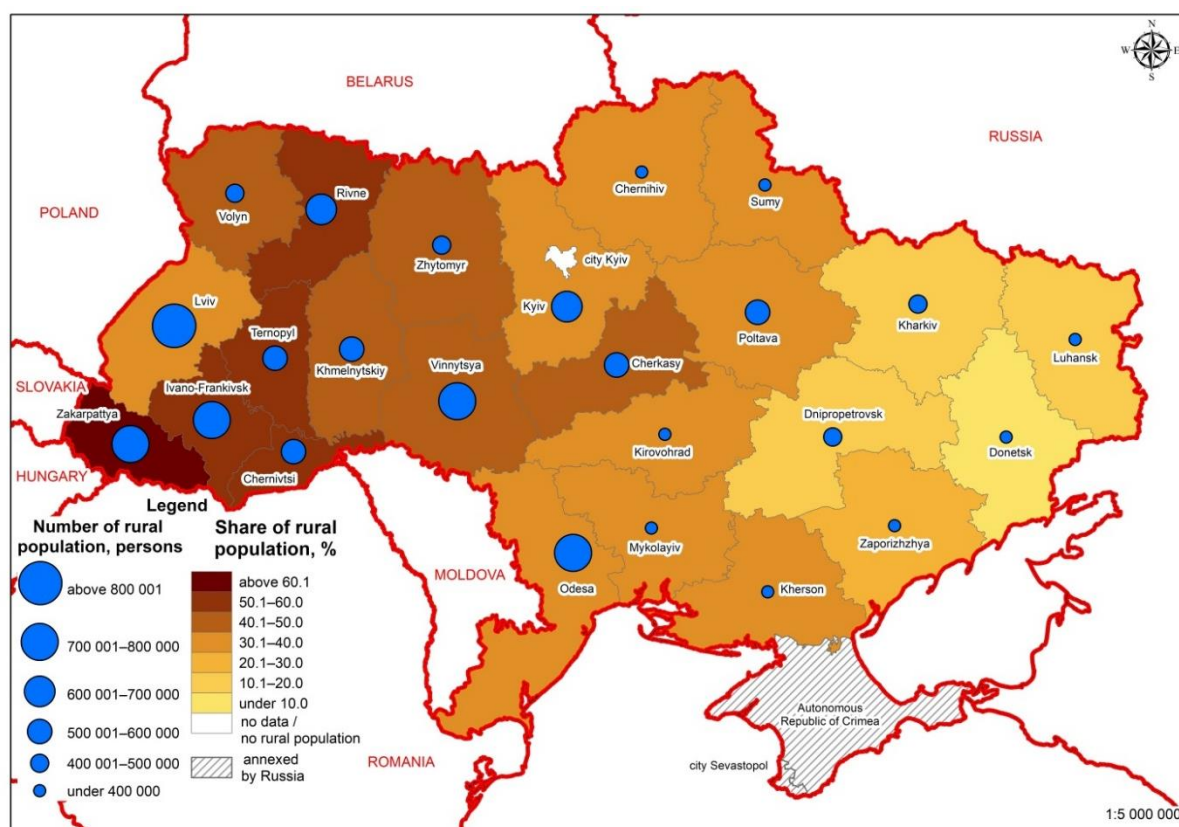


Fig 1. Rural population of Ukraine by regions (2021). Source: by the author based on State Statistics Service of Ukraine

As early as after the Second World War, a significant predominance of women over men in the structure of population in Ukraine was established, in 2021, there were 1157 women for every 1000 men. In rural areas, this proportion estimated at 1100 women to 1000 men, in cities – 1183/1000. The rural population of Ukraine depopulates faster than the urban population, and migration sentiments are significantly

higher there. However, rural women in Ukraine, compared to urban women, are better provided with some basic elements: housing (m²/person), the opportunity to diversify their sources of income, intergenerational family cooperation, career opportunities, that have appeared due to the implementation of decentralization reform, the activation of entrepreneurial initiatives.

In rural areas of Ukraine, the level of education of women is higher than that of men (Census, 2001). However, established stereotypes and behavioural aspects regarding the gender distribution of roles in the labour market are more conservative in the countryside than in cities. Under the conditions of Russian aggression, the demand for employing female population has many features, as stated by E. Libanova (2023). Undoubtedly, the role of the female labour force in the country's economy will continue to grow. At the present stage, rural women demonstrate a growing subjectivity in various spheres and, obviously, that is why rural girls in Ukraine are highly motivated to study.

5.2 Lviv National University in the system of higher education

Ivan Franko National University of Lviv is one of the leading higher educational institutions in Ukraine. Every year, it is traditionally included in the top three or five in the ranking of state universities according to the enrolment of students in bachelor's and master's degree programs, indicators of scientific activity, etc. The university is also included in the international rankings of universities (QS World University Rankings, Times Higher Education Ranking), although its positions in these rankings are not high, which is characteristic of all higher educational institutions of Ukraine. Students from all over the country enter LNU, but the majority of them come from western regions of Ukraine. The percentage of foreign students is small.

In Ukraine, most universities can be conventionally classified into one of three large groups (classical, technical, specialised). According to the list of educational programs, LNU is a classical university, it mainly offers the study of social, humanitarian, and natural sciences, there are almost no technical science programs, agricultural sciences, medicine, veterinary medicine, and some others are also not available.

5.3 Peculiarities of admission to institutions of higher education

Ukraine provides all children with access to free secondary education. It is also possible to attend private fee-paying secondary schools, mostly found in large cities. After receiving secondary education, students apply for a bachelor's degree program based on the results of test exams. Until 2022, they were called "external independent assessment" – isolated exams in main school subjects taking place on different days; with the beginning of the Russian aggression due to security issues, it was replaced by the so-called "national multi-subject test" – all exams are taken on the same day. This test initially included three basic school subjects, but in 2024, another subject at entrants' choice was added.

Students with high scores according to the competition results can apply for the so-called "budget place", i.e., free study, financed by the state, with the possibility of receiving a scholarship in case of successful study. However, the number of budget places is limited depending on the specialty and institution of higher education. In addition, the state establishes the minimum admissible competitive score, according to which the entrant can receive a recommendation for study at the state's expense. Students with low test scores or those who are not satisfied with the offer of a budget place can study on a fee-based basis.

Students in Ukraine have certain support from the state. In addition to the opportunity for the best students to study for free and receive a small scholarship (less than 50 euros), they also can live for a small fee in a student dormitory (for those who come from settlements located more than 50 km from the university), have a 50% discount for public transport (except during the summer holidays) and some other benefits. There are also preferences for vulnerable groups of entrants, those with disabilities, orphans, children whose parents are fighting at war, children from war zones, etc.

In recent years, entry to higher educational institutions has been significantly affected by the COVID-19 and Russian aggression. The pandemic reduced to some extent the geography of applicants to leading universities because parents were afraid to send their children to study at a university that is

geographically distant from their place of residence (according to the Ukrainian law, high school graduates are minors, because they are not yet 18 years old). Similar behaviour of parents was observed during the first year of the Russian aggression when the missile attacks of the Russian troops on major cities of Ukraine were especially powerful. In addition, after February 24, 2022, massive population migration occurred in Ukraine; up to 150,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) settled in Lviv alone (Lozynskyy et al., 2023), and more than a million in Western Ukraine overall (UNHCR, 2023).

6. Results

In recent years, LNU has maintained a leading position in the state in terms of the number of entrants enrolled in the first year of the bachelor's degree program. Every year, on average, about 5,000 people enter this institution, which is a very high indicator for Ukrainian higher schools. Among entrants, the ratio of girls is significantly higher than that of boys, in 2023 it is estimated at 70.74% and had a growing tendency (Fig. 2).

The separation of faculties and specialties into predominantly “male” and “female” is still preserved. The largest number of girls choose to study at the faculties of pedagogical education, foreign languages, philology, and journalism, in all of them their percentage is over 90% (Tab. 1). There are few faculties in LNU where boys predominate among the entrants. These are the faculties of electronics and computer sciences, applied mathematics and informatics, physics and geology, i.e., 4 out of 19. However, at some of these faculties, there is a tendency towards an increase in the number of girls, especially at the faculty of electronics and computer sciences. This is partly due to the growing popularity of the IT sector in Ukraine, because of plentiful job vacancies and high salaries.

There are faculties where the number of girls from rural areas is much higher than the average – pedagogical, biological, historical, chemical faculties and the faculty of financial management and business (Tab. 1). On the other hand, at the faculties of electronics and computer technologies, applied mathematics and informatics, philosophy, law, international relations, the number of girls from rural areas is the smallest. The largest number of girls who graduated from rural schools, study at the Faculty of Economics. It enjoys a wide popularity among all applicants due to a large choice of specialties and educational programs available and an increased popularity.

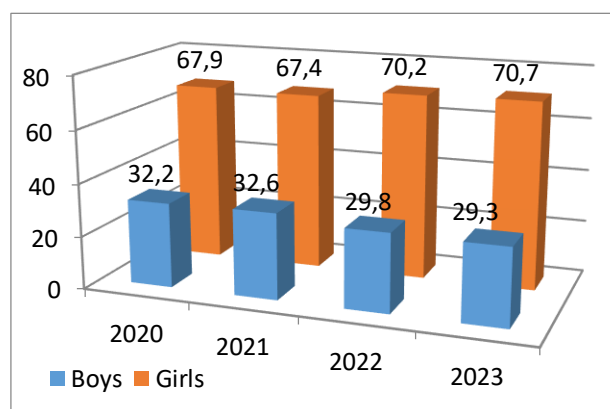


Fig 2. Distribution of entrants enrolled in the first year of the bachelor's degree program at Ivan Franko National University of Lviv in 2020–2023 according to gender, [%]. Source: by the author based on the admission committee of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv

The percentage of rural girls among all entrants in 2020–2023 was 16%, a growing tendency. The ratio of urban girls to rural girls in 2020–2023 was approximately 3 to 1, for example, in 2023 – 75.9% vs. 24.1% (Fig. 3).

Tab 1. Distribution of rural girls enrolled in the first year of the bachelor's degree program at Ivan Franko National University of Lviv in 2020–2023 by faculties, %. Source: by the author based on the admission committee of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv

Faculty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Applied mathematics and informatics	1315	38.2	80	6.1	15.9	2.5	80.0
Biology	576	81.4	151	26.2	32.2	4.8	76.2
Chemistry	170	65.9	34	20.0	30.4	1.1	97.1
Culture and arts	449	80.8	80	17.8	22.0	2.5	42.5
Economics	3220	66.8	472	14.7	21.9	15.0	26.1
Electronics and computer technologies	1244	21.9	53	4.3	19.4	1.7	45.3
Financial business and management	837	68.6	175	20.9	30.5	5.5	13.7
Foreign languages	2103	92.1	399	19.0	20.6	12.6	39.8
Geography	973	68.5	184	18.9	27.6	5.8	59.2
Geology	108	33.3	12	11.1	33.3	0.4	91.7
History	761	63.3	162	21.0	33.6	5.1	75.9
International relations	1457	74.5	169	11.6	15.6	5.4	21.9
Journalism	702	86.8	150	21.4	24.6	4.7	44.7
Law	1900	62.6	214	11.3	18.0	6.8	39.2
Mechanics and mathematics	454	55.1	57	12.6	22.8	1.8	91.2
Pedagogical education	920	97.4	343	37.3	38.3	10.9	65.6
Philology	1298	90.8	308	23.7	26.2	9.7	63.0
Philosophy	928	77.3	93	10.0	13.0	2.9	31.2
Physics	258	34.5	18	7.0	20.2	0.5	94.4
University	19673	69.0	3154	16.0	23.2	100.0	48.3

1 – number of entrants; 2 – percentage of girls; 3 – number of girls having graduated from rural schools; 4 – percentage of girls having graduated from rural schools out of the total number of entrants of both sexes; 5 – percentage of girls having graduated from rural schools out of the total number of girls; 6 – the share of the faculty according to the total number of girls having graduated from rural schools, %; 7 – percentage of girls having graduated from rural schools and been admitted to a budget-funded form of education, out of their total number.

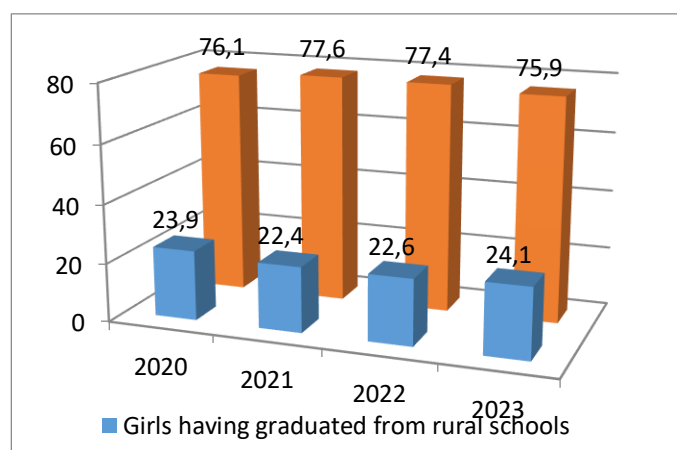


Fig 3. Distribution of girls enrolled in the first year of the bachelor's degree program at Ivan Franko National University of Lviv in 2020–2023 by the location of the acquired secondary education [%]. Source: by the author based on the admission committee of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv

In 2023 at LNU, depending on the specialty, the fees of contract tuition ranged from Ukrainian hryvnia 28,607 (665 euros) for one year of study in unpopular specialties up to Ukrainian hryvnia 46,289 (1074 euros). The average wage in Ukraine at the time of entry in 2023 was 348 euros per month. About a half of female graduates from rural schools study on a budget form of education – 48.32%. At some faculties, about 90–100% of female graduates from rural schools study at the state's expense, but these are mostly unpopular faculties where budget places are “easy” for admission, and which are chosen only because of free education (geology, physics, chemistry). On the other hand, relatively few girls from rural areas study for free at prestigious faculties (international relations, financial and business

management, economics). However, this indicator also depends significantly on the number of budget places at the faculties.

In the distribution by specialties, according to the list suggested by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, the largest number of female students from rural areas is involved in educational programs from such groups as “Business, management and law”, “Arts and humanities” and “Education”. However, the largest percentage of them is in the field of “Education”, followed by “Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics” taking the second place (thanks to biology), and finally “Business, management and law” occupying the third place (Tab. 2; Fig. 4). Girls from rural areas choose “Education” specialties 2.4 times more often than girls from the city (Fig. 5).

Tab. 2. Distribution of rural girls enrolled in the first year of the bachelor's degree program at Ivan Franko National University of Lviv in 2020–2023 by fields of knowledge. Source: by the author based on the admission committee of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv

Field of knowledge	1	2	3	4
Education	1467	612	41.7	19.4
Arts and humanities	3414	739	21.7	23.4
Social sciences, journalism and information	2995	548	18.2	17.4
Business, management and law	3537	795	22.5	25.2
Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	982	253	25.6	8.0
Information technologies	598	92	15.8	2.9
Engineering, production and construction	75	10	14.6	0.3
Health care and social security	133	29	22.0	0.9
Services	373	75	20.2	2.4

1 – number of female entrants, 2 – number of female entrants who graduated from rural school, 3 – percentage of female entrants who graduated from rural schools out of the total number of girls, 4 – percentage of the specialty in the total number of girls who graduated from rural schools.

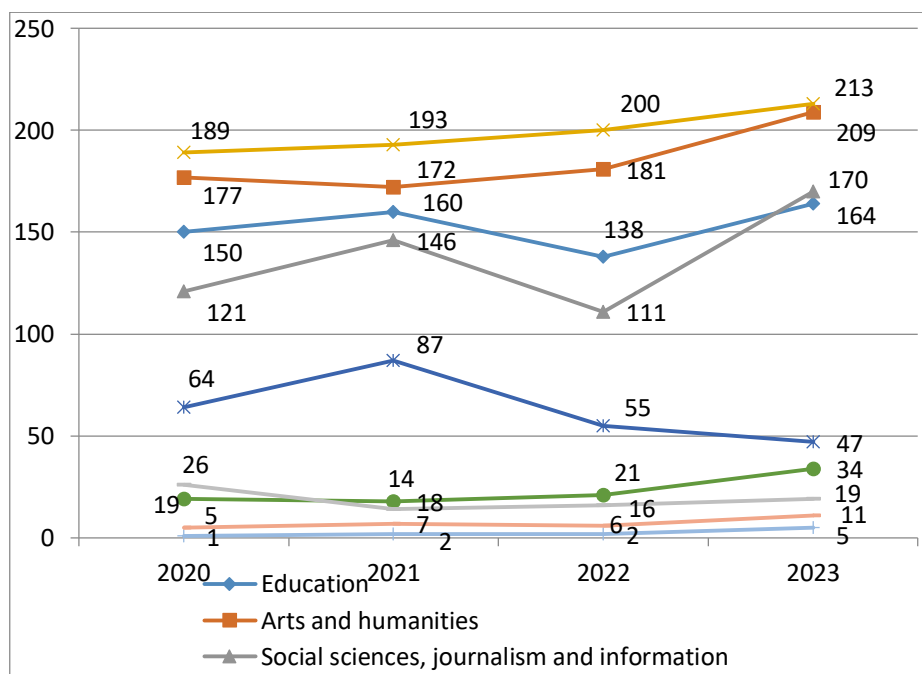


Fig 4. Dynamics of distribution of rural girls enrolled in the first year of the bachelor's degree program at Ivan Franko National University of Lviv in 2020–2023 by fields of knowledge. Source: by the author based on the admission committee of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv

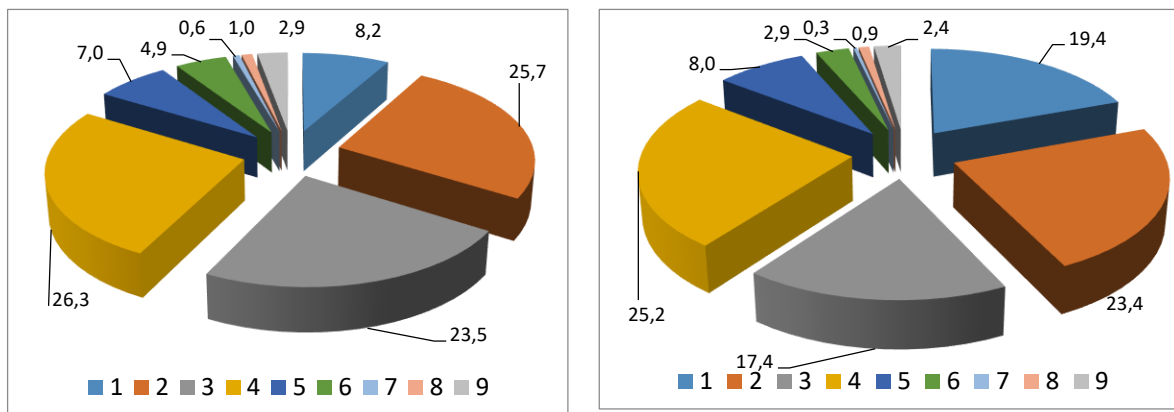


Fig 5. Distribution of girls enrolled in the first year of the bachelor's degree program at Ivan Franko National University of Lviv in 2020–2023 by field of knowledge (on the left– girls from the city, on the right – from the village) [%]. Source: by the author based on the admission committee of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv

1 – education, 2 – arts and humanities, 3 – social sciences, journalism and information, 4 – business, management and law, 5 – natural sciences, mathematics and statistics, 6 – information technologies, 7 – engineering, production and construction; 8 – health care and social security, 9 – services

The absolute majority of entrants, including girls from rural areas, graduated from schools in Lviv region – 59.2% in 2020–2023 (Fig. 4). The percentage of entrants from regions adjacent to Lviv is relatively high – Rivne region (4.9), Volyn region (6.1), Ivano-Frankivsk region (7.5), Zakarpattia region (5), Ternopil region (4.5) (Fig. 6, 7), even though in all these regions there are universities that offer programs usually chosen by girls from the countryside. With the beginning of the Russian aggression, there are tendencies towards an increase in the number of immigrants from other regions of Ukraine, especially those that were most affected by the Russian aggression. The number of students from rural areas, located in remoteness from the Lviv region, who entered LNU is low, both among boys and girls. It is much lower than the number of rural residents in these regions.

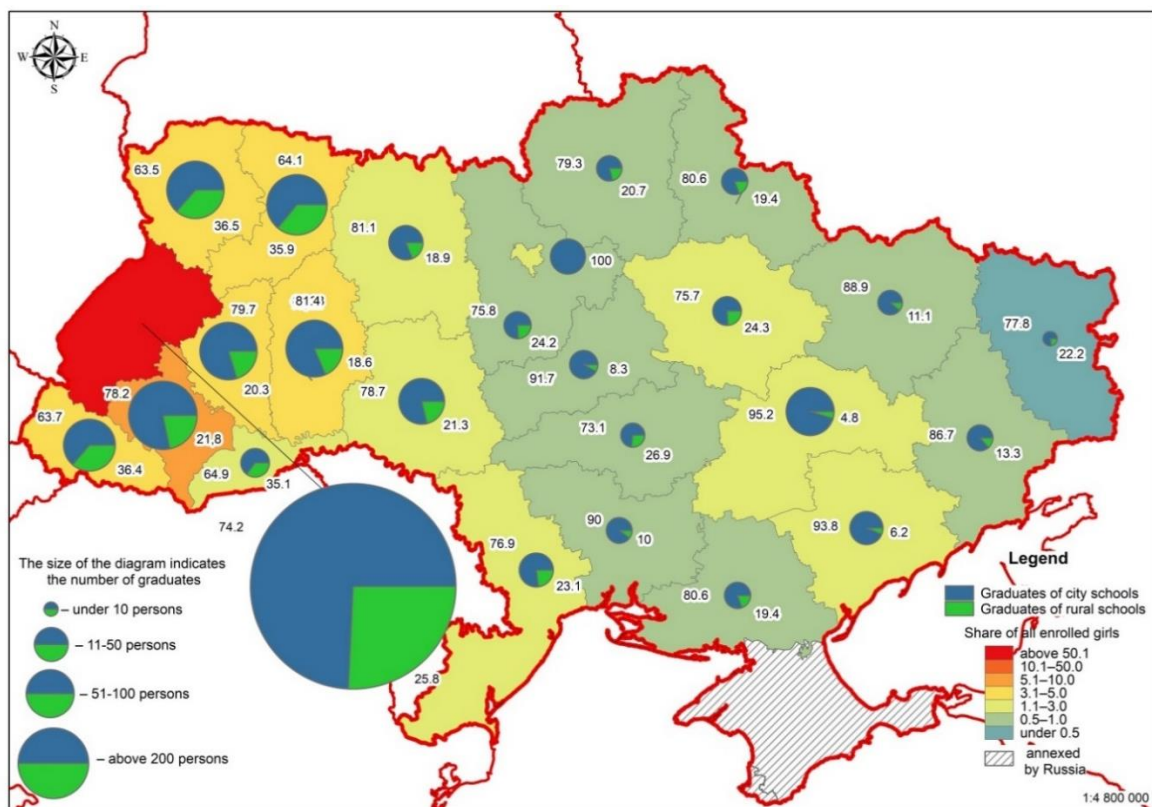


Fig 6. Distribution of entrants enrolled in the first year of bachelor's degree program in LNU by region where secondary education was obtained (2023). Source: by the author based on the admission committee of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv

The geographical distribution of female applicants from rural areas of Lviv region entering LNU shows that most of them are people from villages that are located close to Lviv, in its suburban zone, (Zymna Voda, Pidberiztsi, Obroshyno, Solonka, Sokilnyky etc.); villages near other large towns of the region; mountainous territorial communities (south of the region). Every year, a large number of rural settlements in the Lviv region do not have representatives among the applicants to LNU (Fig. 8)

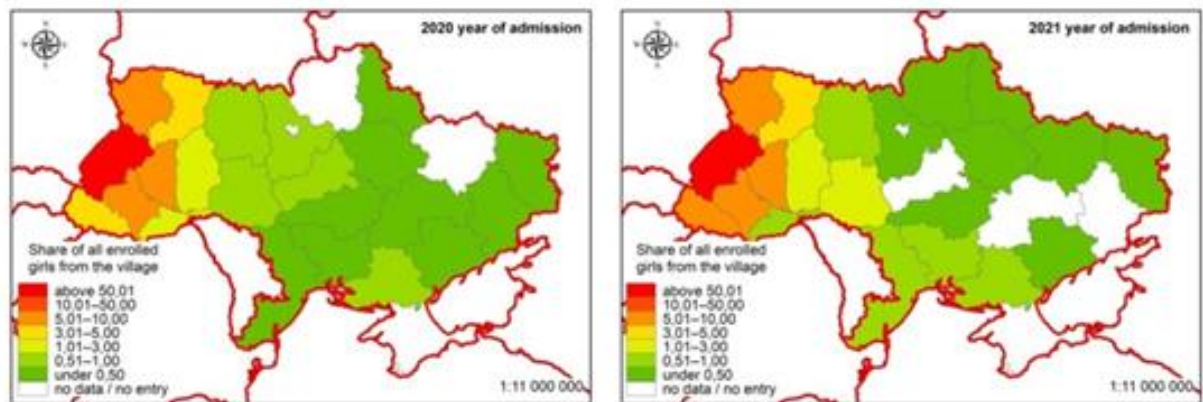


Fig 7. Distribution of girls who graduated from rural schools and were admitted to the first year of bachelor's degree program in LNU by region (2020–2021) [%]. Source: by the author based on the admission committee of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv

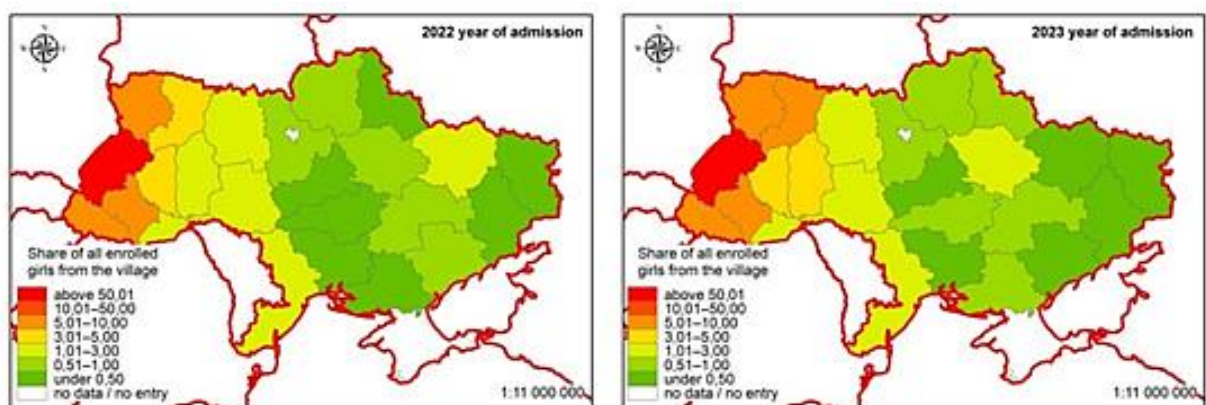


Fig 8. Distribution of girls who graduated from rural schools and were admitted to the first year of bachelor's degree program in LNU by region (2022–2023) [%]. Source: by the author based on the admission committee of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv

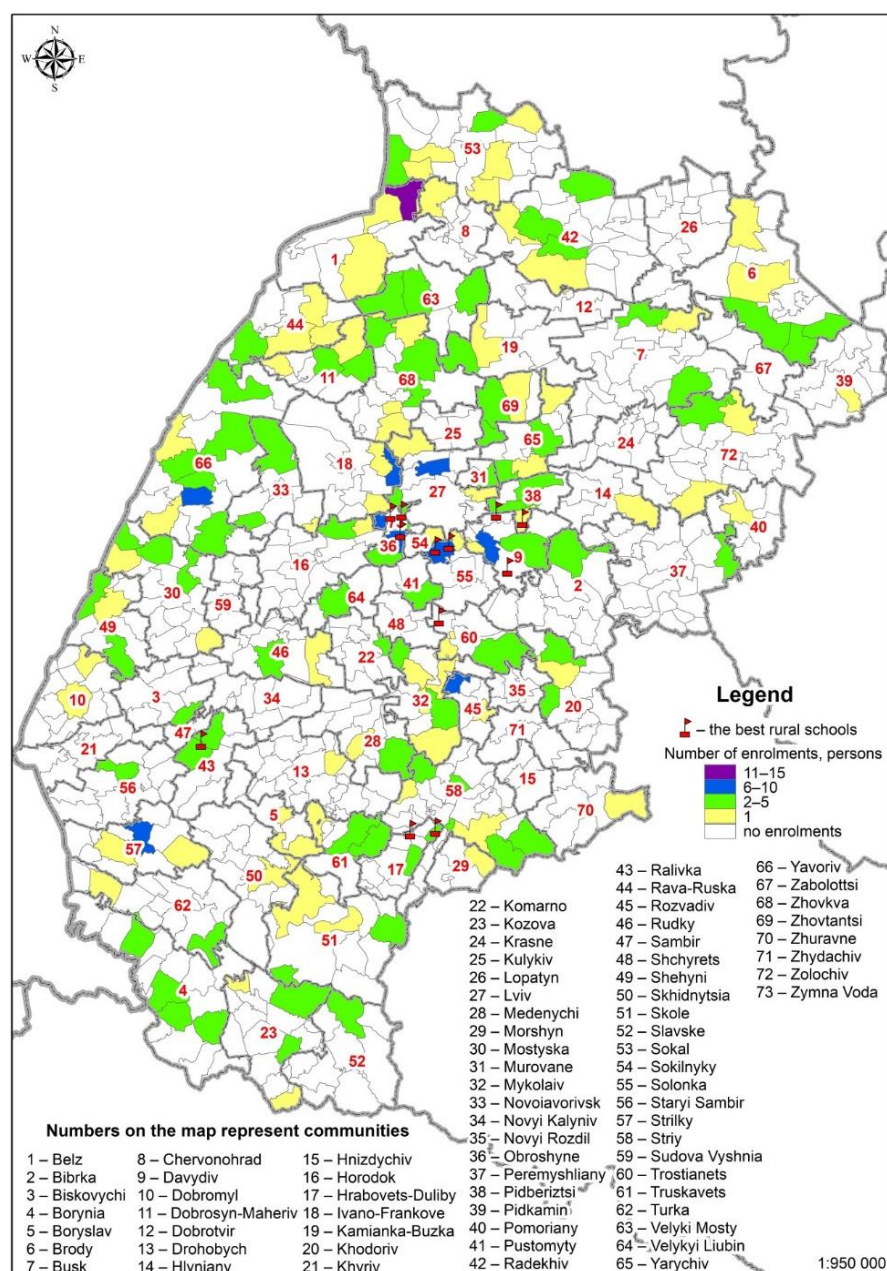


Fig 9. Distribution of girls from Lviv region who graduated from rural schools and were admitted to the first year of bachelor's degree program in LNU by community (2023). Source: by the author based on the admission committee of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv and Osvita.ua (Rating, 2024)

7. Discussion

It would be wrong to state that girls from rural areas do not have access to higher education in Ukraine. Many of them study even at the most prestigious universities and get the most prestigious specialties, but for most of them, the list of available specialties is usually quite narrow. In addition, if to take into consideration the level of urbanization in Lviv region, the Western part of the country, overall Ukraine as well as the gender structure of the population, it can be affirmed that high-quality higher education is much less accessible for girls from the countryside, than for girls from urban areas. The possibility of their admission to prestigious universities, such as LNU, is due to several interrelated factors, such as:

- educational: quality of education in rural schools;
- financial: family income;
- geographical: the location of the rural settlement;

- social: the need to adapt to urban living conditions;
- informational: availability of information on the possibility and conditions of obtaining higher education.

In particular, the level of education in rural schools is lower than in urban schools. This is confirmed by annual school ratings, which are formed based on the results of tests taken by the school graduates for entering higher educational institutions. For example, according to the results of 2023, among 50 best secondary education institutions in Lviv region (excluding the regional centre of Lviv), only 11 were rural schools (Rating, 2024). Quality tutoring was also less available for rural youth compared to the urban one. Therefore, nearly 70% of urban students get the passing scores, apply, and eventually enter higher educational institutions, compared to only 40% of rural students (Gitis et al., 2020).

In general, the best opportunities for entering prestigious universities are provided for the girls from large villages located not far from Lviv, or near other larger towns of the region (Chervonohrad, Stryi, Sambir), where the economic and demographic situation is better and there are many good secondary schools. In addition, mountainous territorial communities (in the Ukrainian Carpathians) are singled out, where the demographic and economic situation in rural areas is much better than in other parts of the region (Lozynskyy, R. & Zubyk, A., 2022).

It is also worth mentioning that Lviv, as the regional centre, is traditionally associated with a high level of secondary education provided. For many years, Lviv ranks first among all regional centres of Ukraine in the rating of its secondary schools, leaving behind Kyiv, the capital (Rating, 2024). Therefore, Lviv schoolchildren have the best opportunities for admission to LNU.

An important problem is the inaccessibility of higher quality education for rural youth, including girls, who live in declining rural settlements where depopulation has been occurring for decades. In such villages, there are usually few young people, the schools are understaffed and provide not a very high-quality education, where one teacher teaches several subjects. After attending such schools, and there are 2/3 of them in Lviv region, for years no one has been able to enter LNU. Attempts of state or regional authorities to consolidate rural schools, to open larger schools based on several small ones in a more promising village, face the resistance of the local population, which considers the presence of a school to be one of the main factors preventing the final decline of the village.

The list of specialties which girls from rural areas usually choose is narrower than that of girls from cities. The biggest part of them is enrolled in educational programs, the graduates of which receive the profession of teachers in schools and educators in preschool institutions. Such a trend has not been observed in Ukraine for decades. Usually, it is much easier to enter such specialties, even with a low competitive score for admission to a higher education institution. Such specialties have a special support from the state, there are many “budget” places there, that is, there is an opportunity to get education at the state’s expense, and for the best students to receive a small scholarship. There are quite a lot of teaching vacancies, which can be found both in a native and neighbouring village, in the nearest town, or even in Lviv, that is, there are employment opportunities. In addition, the profession of a teacher or educator is still quite prestigious in rural areas (unlike in the city). In recent years, before the Russian aggression, the central government pursued a policy of gradual increase of teachers’ salaries. Additionally, in the countryside, there are significant opportunities to diversify the sources of income. Tuition fees for education-related specialties are also significantly lower than in other faculties.

The situation with the admission of female rural school graduates to the educational programs of the most prestigious faculties of LNU, such as law and international relations to a lesser extent faculty of economics and of financial management and business, is specific. The competition for these faculties is the highest, it is difficult to get free budget places, and tuition fees are high. In addition, such specialties as “Law”, “International Relations”, “International Law” and “Public Management and Administration” are additionally regulated by the state, and for admission, the applicant must get a higher minimum competitive score of 150 out of a possible 200 (for other specialties – 130).

However, it cannot be stated that they are generally inaccessible to graduates of rural schools, quite a lot of them enter these faculties every year. Three factors contribute to this:

1. Firstly, mostly girls from suburban villages of Lviv are admitted, that is, they live in urbanized areas, have access to high-quality secondary education, or use the services of good tutors before taking admission tests for entering higher education institutions;
2. Secondly, many female graduates of rural schools have the financial capabilities to study at prestigious faculties on a fee-paid basis, because one of their parents or other relatives is employed in one of the European countries (labour migration). Having no adequate opportunities to invest in business in Ukraine, they invest in their children's education;
3. Thirdly, those female graduates from rural schools who can apply for special admission conditions (benefits, quotas) in education, which allow them to enter the higher educational establishment without general competition, or receive an additional budget place, often choose the most prestigious faculties.

The situation is unique with admission to specialties related to the so-called STEM education: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. There are almost no girls from rural areas and girls in general, studying natural sciences (physics), engineering and technology, mathematics, there are few of them studying computer sciences. These sciences are traditionally considered "masculine" in Ukraine. In addition, in many rural schools, teaching Mathematics at high school is at a critically low level, and to enter the programs listed above, one needs to have high passing test scores in this subject. According to a study conducted in Ukraine in 2022 by PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment), the difference in mathematics scores between Ukrainian 15-year-olds from urban and rural areas was 92 points (506 vs. 414). This means that children living in rural areas, according to the calculations, needed an additional 4.5 years of study in mathematics to reach the level of knowledge of students studying in urban schools (Results, 2024). Many girls from rural schools, as well as boys, agree to be enrolled in any program that offers a free budget place and that doesn't include study of Mathematics.

Another peculiarity of admission of girls from rural areas is that they choose faculties and specialties where it is traditionally considered "easier" to study, e.g., history, geography, etc. This is due to lower quality of secondary education they receive. At faculties with more complex educational programs, there is a possibility of failing to complete studies, being expelled due to unsatisfactory grades.

Due to financial problems, low quality of secondary education, and some other factors, girls from rural areas focus primarily on the nearest local university (Guérait, Jedlicki & Noûs, 2021). For example, in Ivano-Frankivsk, the neighbouring region of Lviv, such local institution is Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University. The percentage of the rural population in the region is higher than in the Lviv region, 57.4% against 39% in 2021. Precarpathian University should also be regarded as classical, although it offers a shorter list of educational programs than LNU does. According to the data kindly provided to us by the admissions committee of Precarpathian University, the percentage of girls from rural areas among all first-year students who were enrolled in bachelor degree program in 2023 was 46.2% (at LNU – 17.1%), and their ratio among all girls estimated at 68.8% (LNU – 24.13) (Tab. 3).

Tab 3. The number of female students enrolled in the first year of study to a bachelor's degree program at Ivan Franko National University of Lviv and Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University (2023). Source: by the author based on the university admission committees' data

	National University of Lviv	Precarpathian National University
Admitted students, total	5110	3035
Admitted girls, total	3614	2038
Ratio of girls, %	70.7	67.2
Admitted girls from rural schools	872	1403
Percentage of girls from rural schools to all entrants	17.1	46.2
Percentage of girls from rural schools to all female entrants	24.1	68.8

In general, analysis of education choices of female graduates from rural secondary schools proves that most of them do not intend to return to the countryside after completing their studies, because most professions they choose, are not applicable in the countryside. Education orientations of girls from the countryside are similar to those of urban school graduates, but they are obliged to make corrections due to limited opportunities.

However, even if they stay in the city, many of them will not work in the specialty chosen during their admission to LNU. In general, a peculiarity of higher education in Ukraine during the last decades is a high number of graduates who later do not work in their field. Young people receive higher education only for benefits, to avoid the army service (boys), to move from the countryside or a small town and, through living in a dormitory for four years to finally find a job and “get settled” in the city. Even the majority of girls from rural schools who chose teaching professions are not planning to work in their field. Research of Ukrainian scientists shows that less than 20% of those who chose the profession of a teacher sooner or later are employed at schools. The shortage of teachers in rural areas has already become a “chronic” problem (Problems, 2024).

In general, rural girls in Ukraine do not face any institutional or customary restrictions on higher education. This feature aligns Ukraine with other European countries, including EU member states (Weiss & Christin, 2022; Trancă, 2019). Moreover, in rural Ukraine, it is even considered more important for a girl than a boy to obtain higher education (Gubeladze, 2015). However, several factors significantly limit the choice of specialty for girls who want to pursue higher education. The most important factors are the significantly lower performance of children from rural areas in secondary school in mathematics and science, the lower financial capabilities of families, and the need for psychological adaptation to urban living conditions (Kravchenko, 2019; Results, 2024). In addition, the problem of access to education for girls from depressed villages remains. Probably, all post-socialist states that did not pay due attention to the issue of overcoming uneven spatial development in the past have had such problems (Antonowicz, Wasielewski & Domalewski, 2022; Wasielewski, 2021). These problems of rural youth are mitigated when families have migrants working in EU countries. They invest the money they earn in their children’s education, including the most prestigious.

8. Conclusions

A wide list of specialties and a state educational policy in Ukraine generally provide girls from rural areas with higher education, even at prestigious institutions such as LNU. However, their entry possibilities are significantly different compared to those of girls from cities, especially large ones.

1. First of all, girls from rural schools located near Lviv, in its suburban area, or near other large towns, i.e., from semi-urban areas, enter LNU, while girls from more remote depressed villages lack such an opportunity.
2. Girls from rural schools are more limited in their choices, compared to girls from cities, mainly due to the lower financial capabilities of the family and lower quality of the secondary education received. They often choose a specialty only because there is free place or it is easier to study there (the profession of a high school teacher, humanities).
3. If financial capabilities allow, or when there is some special condition upon admission (quota, benefit), they choose the most prestigious specialties (law, international relations), to finally move from the countryside to the city.
4. Mainly girls from villages situated in Lviv and neighbouring regions enter LNU, the more remote regions are slightly represented; young women are mostly oriented to the local university.

Considering the established educational priorities of rural girls when entering LNU, it can be assumed that there is a high proportion of those studying for a specialty in which they will never work; it is much higher than among girls from cities.

Based on the results of the study, it is necessary to state once again that the problem of depressed villages in the country remains unsolved, which creates spatial inequality and injustice in the access to education for young people from these settlements. It would be possible to solve this problem with the joint efforts of local, regional and state authorities because it is a complex problem. State policy regarding rural youth, especially girls and from the villages, should be more flexible and consistent. It would be appropriate to implement a state policy to support those communities that offer their programs to support rural youth seeking higher education, including girls, and these programs should provide payment for their educational needs with the prospect of further employment in the community.

Targeted programs for improving the quality of education in secondary rural schools in natural and exact sciences must be approved. A comparatively low level of training of rural youth in Mathematics and some other disciplines limits their access to STEM education specialties and contributes to the preservation of the separation of specialties in universities into conventionally “female” and “male” according to the entrants’ gender structure.

In the context of reformation in the field of higher education, which is currently taking place in Ukraine and involves a partial replacement of governmental order with a system of grants for the best school graduates, it is necessary to consider the existing state of rural youth, especially from depressed villages.

Further studies should be focused mainly on two directions; firstly, the educational behaviour of girls with a countryside background when entering other but classical educational institutions (polytechnic; specialized, especially agricultural; private); and secondly, their priorities when entering a master’s degree program and employment.

Acknowledgments

The authors of the article are grateful to the first vice-rector of Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, as well as to the admission committee of Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, for agreeing to provide the materials of the universities’ internal statistics on the admission campaign for writing this article.

Academic references

- [1] Alvarado, B. (2010). Voices and agencialities in the education of young rural Andean women. *Revista Electrónica de Investigación Educativa* 12(2), not paged.
- [2] Antonowicz, D., Wasielewski, K. & Domalewski, J. (2022). The impact of system contraction on the rural youth access to higher education in Poland. *Tertiary Education and Management* 28, 209–222. DOI: 10.1007/s11233-022-09095-7.
- [3] Cardozo, R. (2021). Rural women and higher education: opportunities and interventions. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts* 9(7), 427–430.
- [4] Elder, A. M. (2017). Identity and Community in Rural Higher Education: Creating New Pathways to Women’s Leadership in Oaxaca, Mexico [master thesis]. Portland State University. DOI: 10.15760/etd.5561.
- [5] Friesen, L. & Purc-Stephenson, R. (2016). Should I Stay or Should I Go? Perceived Barriers to Pursuing a University Education for Persons in Rural Areas. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education. Revue canadienne d’enseignement supérieur* 46(1), 138–155. DOI: 10.47678/cjhe.v46i1.185944.
- [6] Gillon, K. E. (2022). Rural Women, Higher Education, and the Mixed Legacies of Early 20th Century Domestic Science Initiatives. *Journal of Women and Gender in Higher Education* 15(3), 293–307. DOI: 10.1080/26379112.2022.2100999.

- [7] Gitis, T., Evseichuk, A., Spirato, A. & Andriychuk, M. (2020). Рівень освіти в Україні: дослідження динаміки у контексті забезпечення якості робочої сили. *Економічний вісник Донбасу* 3, 222–228.
- [8] Gubeladze, I. G. (2015). *Сільська молодь у місті: пошук ідентичності: монографія (Rural youth in the city: search for identity: a monograph)*. Kyiv, Millennium.
- [9] Guéraud, É., Jedlicki, F. & Noûs, C. (2021). L'émigration étudiante des "filles du coin": Entre émancipation sociale et réassignation spatiale. *Travail, genre et sociétés* 46(2), 135–155. DOI: 10.3917/tgs.046.0135.
- [10] Hasan, S., Murtaza, G., Shamshad, T. & Imran, M. (2023). Challenges regarding access to higher education among rural women in Punjab Pakistan: Impact & Implication. *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 11, 2624–2630. DOI: 10.52131/pjhss.2023.1102.0554.
- [11] Hussen, N. & Workie, D. (2023). Multilevel analysis of women's education in Ethiopia. *BMC Women's Health* 23, 197. DOI: 10.1186/s12905-023-02380-6.
- [12] Khan, S. (2023). Female education and marriage in Pakistan: The role of financial shocks and marital customs. *World Development* 173, 106413. DOI: 10.1016/j.worlddev.2023.106413.
- [13] Koleva, N. (2023). Педагогічні умови формування у молодших школярів ціннісного ставлення до професій сільської місцевості: In Kichuk, Y., ed., *Вища освіта у міждисциплінарному вимірі: від традицій до інновацій* (pp. 52–55). Izmail State University of the Humanities.
- [14] Kravchenko, O. (2019). До питання соціально-психологічного супроводу студенток із сільській місцевості в умовах закладу вищої освіти. *Innovative Pedagogy* 10, 148–154. Available online at: http://www.innovpedagogy.od.ua/archives/2019/10/part_3/36.pdf.
- [15] Kumar, V. (2021). Challenges of Rural Women in Pursuing Higher Education. *Asian Journal of Economics, Finance and Management* 3(1), 428–435.
- [16] Libanova, E. M. (2023). Гендерні відмінності на ринку праці: уроки Клаудії Голдін для України *Bulletin of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine* 12, 47–60. DOI: 10.15407/visn2023.12.04.
- [17] Lozynskyy, R., Pantyley, V., Zubyk, A. & Smaliychuk, H. (2023). The effects of internal displacement on the host border regions (case study of the Lviv Region of Ukraine). *Europa XXI* 45, 4. DOI: 10.7163/Eu21.2023.45.4.
- [18] Lozynskyy, R. & Zubyk, A. (2022). Transformation of the Rural Settlement Network in the Carpathian Region of Ukraine (1989–2020). *European Countryside*, 14(2), 281–301. DOI: 10.2478/euco-2022-0014.
- [19] Lugovyi, V. (2020). Поточний стан вищої освіти в Україні: проблеми, причини, перспективи. *Вісник Національної академії педагогічних наук України*, 2(2), 1–4. DOI: 10.37472/2707-305X-2020-2-2-11-2.
- [20] Marsiglia, F., Campos, A., Wu, S., Nuño-Gutiérrez, B., García-Pérez, H. & Glick, J. (2023). Exploring the association between educational aspirations and intentions to migrate among youth in Central Mexico by gender. *International Journal of Social Welfare* 33(3), 579–590. DOI: 10.1111/ijsw.12625.
- [21] Mu, X. (2021). Chinese rural female students' access to higher education. *International Journal of Frontiers in Sociology* 3(12), 95–108. DOI: 10.25236/IJFS.2021.031213.
- [22] Naveen Kumar, M. & Ashwini, S. (2018). Challenges for rural girl students in higher education: a study in Mysuru district. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research* 5(5), 1038–1050.
- [23] Patil, Y. & Suradkar, D. (2022). Constraints analysis of rural women in girls higher education. *The Pharma Innovation Journal* 11(6S), 2562–2565.
- [24] Radiowala, A. & Molwane, M. (2021). A study on the challenges faced by rural women in accessing education. *Journal of Scientific Research* 65, 13–17. DOI: 10.37398/JSR.2021.650402.

- [25] Seeley, C. (2018). The pursuit of education by women in rural Honduras. *Journal of Research Initiatives* 4(1), Article 2.
- [26] Trancă, L.-M. (2019). Critical aspects regarding the access of students coming from rural areas to university qualification in social sciences. *Journal Plus Education* 1, 64–71.
- [27] Verdugo-Castro, S., García-Holgado, A., Sánchez-Gómez, M. & García-Peñalvo, F. (2021). Multimedia Analysis of Spanish Female Role Models in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. *Sustainability* 13(22), 12612. DOI: 10.3390/su132212612.
- [28] Wang, X. & Chen, B. (2023). Investing in sons or daughters? The educational aspirations of rural parents in China. *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 45(1), 101–118. DOI: 10.1080/01425692.2023.2274817.
- [29] Wang, Y. (2022). Women's opportunity of education in rural China. In *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research* 637 (pp. 1142–1146). Amsterdam: Atlantis Press. DOI: 10.2991/assehr.k.220131.207.
- [30] Wasielewski, K. (2015). Changes in higher education and the value of education from the perspective of rural areas. The case of Poland. *Scientific Papers Series Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural Development* 15(4), 381–389.
- [31] Wasielewski, K. (2021). Proces demasyfikacji uniwersytetu a obecność młodzieży wiejskiej w jego strukturze. *Youth in Central and Eastern Europe* 8, 50–62. DOI: 10.24917/ycee.2021.12.52-60.
- [32] Weiss, J. & Christin H.-F. (2022). The more rural the less educated? An analysis of national policy strategies for enhancing young adults' participation in formal and informal training in European rural areas. *Youth* 2(3), 405–421. DOI: 10.3390/youth2030030.
- [33] Wen, W., Zhou, L., Zhang, M. & Hu, D. (2023). Urban/rural disparities in access to elite higher education: the case of Tsinghua University. *International Journal of Chinese Education* 12(2), not paged. DOI: 10.1177/2212585X231189338.
- [34] Xie, Z., Wang, W. & Chen, X. (2010). A study of women's access to higher education in rural and urban China. *Chinese Education & Society* 43(4), 32–40. DOI: 10.2753/CED1061-1932430403.

Other sources

- [35] Cedos (2020). Вибір вищої освіти після школи (The choice of higher education after school). *Cedos Analytical Center*. Available online at: <https://cedos.org.ua/researches/vybir-vyshchoi-osvity-pislia-shkoly-zvit-za-rezultatamy-doslidzhennia>.
- [36] Census (2024). *Всеукраїнський перепис населення, 2001 (All-Ukrainian population census, 2001)*. Available online at: <http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua>.
- [37] EDEBO (2024) ЄДЕБО. *Єдина державна електронна база з питань освіти (Unified state electronic database on education)*. Available online at <https://info.edbo.gov.ua>. Accessed 3 April 2024.
- [38] Number of present Population (2021). *Чисельність наявного населення України на 1 січня 2022 року. Статистичний збірник (Number of present Population of Ukraine as of January 1, 2022. Statistical publication)*. Kyiv, State Statistics Service of Ukraine. Available online at: https://ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat_u/2021/zb/05/zb_chuselnist%202021.pdf.
- [39] Osvita.ua (2024). Менше ніж 20 % випускників педагогічних вишів ідуть у професію (Less than 20 % of teacher education graduates enter the profession). Osvita.ua. Available online at: <https://osvita.ua/school/91682>. Accessed 6 August 2024.
- [40] Problems (2024). Проблеми й потреби молодих учителів: чому молодь покидає професію (докладна аналітика) (Problems and Needs of Young Teachers: Why Young People Leave

the Profession (detailed analysis)). *NUS. New Ukrainian School*. Available online at: <https://nus.org.ua/articles/problemy-j-potreby-molodyh-uchyteliv-chomu-molod-pokydaye-profesiyu-dokladna-analytyka>. Accessed 3 April 2024.

- [41] Rating (2024). Рейтинги шкіл України (Ratings of schools in Ukraine) *Osvita.ua*. Available online at: <https://osvita.ua/school/rating>. Accessed 3 April 2024.
- [42] Resident Population (2021). *Розподіл постійного населення України за статтю та віком на 1 січня 2022 року. Статистичний збірник (Resident Population of Ukraine by Sex and Age, as of January 1. Statistical publication)*. Kyiv, State Statistics Service of Ukraine. Available online at: https://ukrstat.gov.ua/druk/publicat/kat_u/2021/zb/06/zb_rpn21_ue.pdf.
- [43] Results (2024). Результати міжнародного дослідження якості освіти PISA-2022 (Results of the international study of the quality of education PISA-2022). *Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine*. Available online at: <https://mon.gov.ua/news/rezultati-mizhnarodnogo-doslidzhennya-yakosti-osviti-pisa-2022>. Accessed 6 August 2024.
- [44] Statistics in Lviv region (2024). *Головне управління статистики у Львівській області (Main Department of Statistics in Lviv region)*. Available online at: <https://www.lv.ukrstat.gov.ua>. Accessed 2 April 2024.
- [45] Statistics of Ukraine (2024). *Державна служба статистики України (State Statistics Service of Ukraine)*. Available online at: <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua> Accessed 2 April 2024.
- [46] UNHCR (2023). *Lives on hold: Intentions and Perspectives of Refugees and IDPs from Ukraine*, 4, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Available online at: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/101747>.
- [47] Youth (2021). *Молодь України 2021. Результати репрезентативного соціологічного дослідження становища молоді в Україні (Youth of Ukraine. Results of a representative sociological study of the situation of young people in Ukraine)*, Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine. Available at: https://mms.gov.ua/storage/app/sites/16/Molodizhna_polityka/rezylt/molod2021.pd.