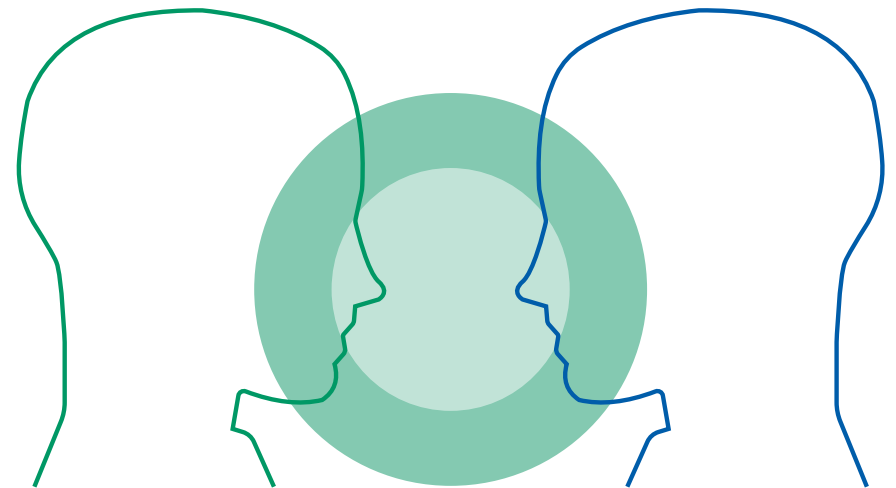


Project: Redefine gender transformative work
with men in Eastern Europe and South Caucasus

SURVEY

Men's Attitudes
to Gender Norms
and Domestic Violence



Chisinau, 2023



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Motto

'No boy is born violent or born to use violence. We make the violence that some men use. We can all make the loving, caring men the world needs.'
(Gary Barker, CEO and President of the Equimundo Center for Masculinities and Social Justice)¹

The Survey 'Men's Attitudes to Gender Norms and Domestic Violence' was carried on by Casa Marioarei within the framework of the Project 'Redefine gender transformative work with men in Eastern Europe and South Caucasus', financed by MAN Association from Sweden.

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¹ <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/stories/news/2023/12/talking-about-manhood>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The traditional gender roles and stereotypes still have influence on the tasks distribution between women and men in families, at workplaces and in society. It has been found out within the Survey 'Men's Attitudes to Gender Norms and Domestic Violence' that the approach to gender roles distribution in families is not univocal. On the one hand, there are recorded progresses, while, on the other hand, the gender stereotypes still persist in men. The majority of respondents – 53.26% agree (totally and partially) that a woman cannot do what a man does. Meanwhile, only 20.22% agree that career advancement may create difficulties in relations with husband.
2. A significant number of respondents, i.e., from 23.15% to 29.44% of those interviewed, had a neutral attitude to the issues touched on. As a matter of fact, being neutral means, in this context, that they have neither negative, nor positive attitude, live their own lives and are not concerned about other people's lives. Those from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities prevail, with certain exception, amongst respondents with neutral attitudes.
3. We should state a visible progress: only 9.44% of men agree (partially or totally) with the assertion that 'Women's place is only at home', if compared to the CDF Survey, when 90.5% of men considered that the most important issue for a woman was to take care of home and to cook for her family (CDF, 2015, p.13).
4. The issue of money, wages (finance) distribution is also an issue of power in families. Respectively, such situations when a woman has higher wages than a man, become annoying for many men. The Survey data showed that only about 9% of respondents agreed that a woman should not have higher

wages than a man, while one fourth – 25.17% – had a neutral position.

5. We should emphasize the detachment from traditional stereotypical attitude in the favor of both parents/partners' responsibility in breeding up children in families. This may be also due to the policies and practices for paternal leave promotion in the Republic of Moldova, to implementation of 'positive' parenting encouragement programs, and so on.
6. The notion of 'toxic masculinity' highlights certain behaviors and ways of thinking, which are often associated to a wide range of characteristics, from psychical and physical toughness to sexism and misogyny. Certain characteristics were attested, within this survey, to a greater or smaller extent, and there was established the gender stereotypes impact on 'toxic masculinity' developing.
7. In this regard, there was studied the stereotype as pertaining to the emotions management in men, namely – to the emotions expression. In other words, the assertion as if a real man never cries, creates barriers in emotional maturing/ development in boys/men. We should remind that about a half (49.21%) did not support but 28.54% supported this idea.
8. An important characteristic of men's image, which is influenced by the gender stereotypes, relates to their openness to ask for help or aid if needed. We should appreciate that the majority of respondents (45.84%) agree that a real man may need a help of a psychologist. However, a big number of those having a neutral position (30.79%) attests the persistence of a challenge in this regard.
9. An important benchmark is, in the context of this Survey, the challenge of control in gender relations. A need to control may cause conflicts in relations or domestic violence, it can affect career and life quality as a whole. We should mention in this regard that a big part of those interviewed (58.87%) showed disagreement to women's obedience to men.

10. We consider that a significant number of people with a neutral position concerning many masculinity-related issues (from 22% to 26%) attests the persistence of problems. Such a neutral position may possibly be a 'shield' for such people to hide their own emotions and attitudes.
11. The Istanbul Convention (2011) emphasizes that gender violence against women is a structural phenomenon, which is deeply rooted in unequal power relations between men and women². Respectively, men's attitude to this phenomenon is of a separate interest.
12. A controversial issue of the phenomenon of violence is the attempt to justify domestic violence/violence in couples, particularly, against women and children. The Survey results show that only 6.29% recognized the possibility of situations when a woman deserves to be beaten up by the partner; while 17.08% have an attitude that women provoke their partners to violence. This is a visible progress if compared to the CDF Survey data, when 41.1% of men attested that there were moments when a woman should be beaten up (CDF, 2015, p.14).
13. Meanwhile, the significant number of people with a neutral position concerning the violence-related aspects is worrying: from 15.73% to 27.64%. The majority of them are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities, with certain exceptions. In other words, a neutral position to violence-related situations may entail indifference (non-engagement) and tolerance. As correlated to the cases of violence, indifference may generate violence – through non-engagement in stopping and combatting it; so, it may lead to tacit complicity and indirect support. We should remind the importance of zero tolerance to domestic violence and gender-based violence, in compliance with international standards.

² The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence <https://rm.coe.int/168046253e>

14. Sexual violence is an extremely severe social phenomenon, with long-term consequences for victims. Imposing any acts of sexual nature whatsoever, without female partner's consent, is sexual violence. Recording the highest number of people with a neutral position within this survey, regarding the issue that a woman must always accept man's request for sex, points at a major challenge in this respect.
15. In the context of foregoing, there is also recorded the issue of sexual relations between partners, which is characterized as raping if there is no female partner's consent. Traditionally, this issue is very sensible, starting from the idea of marital duties in a couple.
16. Meanwhile, there has also been studied the men's attitude to the possibility to provoke a raping due to woman's clothing and behavior. Using such assertions, certain men want to transfer the responsibility for sexual violence acts from the perpetrator to the victim. The survey data show that 37.08% of respondents agree that woman's clothing and behavior can cause raping. Having stated a slight progress if compared to the 2015 survey, when more than 40 per cent of men mentioned that a woman was responsible for raping (CDF, 2015, p.15), we make a conclusion that it is important to strengthen the activities within this segment.
17. Traditionally, violence, particularly, violence against children, is associated with people disciplining. Accepting the idea of physical punishments possibility for children for educational purposes, by about one fourth (24.27%) of men, attests the persistence of a stereotype of parent's superiority, the attempt to substitute concepts, to decrease the corporal punishments impact and to perceive it as something normal.
18. The values and behaviors as learnt in families perpetuate for years. In cases of domestic violence, the impact thereof on children is disastrous. The personal experience of domestic violence participants was studied within this survey, while this issue was touched on with much care.

19. 12.58% of the total number of respondents recognized the impact of violence in their family in their childhood, and of the abuse against their mother on their personal attitude to their life partner and children. 23.82% preferred not to answer (a bigger number than earlier). Hence, it has been attested that the impact of domestic violence against children (as victims or witnesses) may be of long-term, thus modelling their behaviors and relations for the lifetime.

INTRODUCTION

The world around us has been quickly transforming. The significant changes at the global, regional or national level take place, on the background of multiple crises of the recent years (i.e., COVID-19, humanitarian and energy crises generated by the war in Ukraine, climate changes). The above phenomena directly and indirectly affect people's lifestyle, inclusively gender relations and roles in public and private life.

Hence, the surveys, which were carried on in many countries, inclusively in the Republic of Moldova, showed the disastrous impact of the COVID-19 pandemics on the population, when both women and men were affected but to a disproportional extent. For instance, the data attest the increase in the number of cases of domestic violence³ and the significant changes in the relations architecture both at the level of family institute and at the level of community and society.

Other surveys state the gender differences in the perception of risks as pertaining to climate changes⁴ and, as well, to resilience strategies (Damian-Timosenco, Bodrug-Lungu)⁵.

Meanwhile, we should remind that crises exacerbate those inequalities, which existed before⁶, inclusively, gender-based violence.

³ UN Women, 2020 The needs of women affected by domestic or gender-based violence and the systemic response to cases of domestic violence in the context of the COVID-19 crisis https://moldova.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20Moldova/Attachments/Publications/2020/RAPORT_VIOLENTA_COVID_0608_1.pdf

⁴ UN. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. General recommendation No. 37 (2018) on the gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change

⁵ DAMIAN-TIMOSENCO G., BODRUG-LUNGU V. Developing the climate resilience competence in teenagers. Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, Moldova State University. Chisinau: ArtPoligraf LLC, 2021. -224 p. ISBN 978-9975-3498-8-8.

⁶ Humanitarian Crises Continue to Exacerbate Gender Inequalities. <https://2022.gho.unocha.org/trends/humanitarian-crises-continue-exacerbate-gender-inequalities/>

Relying on the foregoing, we should specify certain aspects as characteristic of women and men's situation in the Republic of Moldova. Starting the very first days of independence proclaiming in 1991, the Republic of Moldova assumed the international and national commitment to ensure gender equality. Respectively, the national authorities took many actions, such as ratifying the international treaties or adopting the legal framework and the relevant regulatory enactments. We should mention, amongst the most important actions: ratifying the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1994, and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in 2021, the 1958 ILO Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention #111 in 1996, the 1951 ILO Equal Remuneration Convention #100 in 2001, the 2000 ILO Maternity Protection Convention #183 in 2006, and so on. Meanwhile, the authorities also assumed to realize the Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (particularly, Sustainable Development Goal 5 for gender equality achieving and empowering all women and girls).

A legal framework was adopted throughout the years, as dedicated to ensuring the equality between women and men, and preventing and combatting domestic violence; there were implemented various programs for gender perspectives inclusion into different fields, such as education, labor, health and social protection, justice, security and defense, and so on.

Ensuring gender equality is one of the priorities in the course of Republic of Moldova's accession to the European Union.

In 2023, the Republic of Moldova, together with Belarus and Armenia, was mentioned as a country ranking the highest in respect of gender parity in this region (WEF GGGR, 2023, p.6).⁷ According to the World Economic Forum indicators, this country was ranked the 19th amongst 146 countries, while the total scoring decreased by 3 points if compared to 2022 (WEF GGGR, 2023, p.11).

⁷ Global Gender Gap Report, 2023, p.6. https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2023.pdf

So, although there were recorded the progresses in this sphere and gender equality became a part of regulatory enactments and public policies, there are still reservations as pertaining to 'de facto' assurance thereof. Thus, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women notifies in the Concluding observations on the 6th periodic report of the Republic of Moldova about multiple challenges in this sphere, faced by the Republic of Moldova (CEDAW/C/MDA/CO/6)⁸, inclusively due to persistence of gender stereotypes.

Moreover, the importance of rethinking many gender equality-related aspects is figured out, from the perspective of intersectionality, inclusively of gender norms and relations, in the context of multiple crises this country faces.

In this regard, there are relevant and welcomed the results of the survey 'Men's Attitudes to Gender Norms and Domestic Violence', which was carried on in 2023 by Casa Marioarei Team, within the framework of the Project 'Redefine gender transformative work with men in Eastern Europe and South Caucasus'.

The survey goal was to identify the men's attitude to gender norms, relations with family member and domestic violence.

The ambition of the regional program within the project framework lies in contributing to reduction of violence and to increase of gender equality by transforming the stereotypical masculinity norms. The regional program objective engages the actors of the civic society in Eastern Europe (Republic of Moldova, Belarus) and South Caucasus (Georgia, Armenia) in an efficient co-operation for gender equality, masculinity norms redefining and violence prevention, in order to ensure women's rights and security.

The **project** goal is to increase the level of men's awareness and engagement in the children breeding-up and education process, as well as to share the household duties as a strategy for promoting gender equality and preventing domestic violence.

Project duration: 2023-2027.

⁸ <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3856669?v=pdf>

This Project aims to the following:

Drawing society's attention to the challenges as pertaining to gender violence, particularly, to domestic violence, and highlighting the importance of men's engagement in violence preventing and combatting, as well as the importance of father and husband's participation in children education and household duties,

Selecting groups of men wanting to get engaged in this project, to study and to bring changes into the society, and giving them the required knowledge. Forming a group of trainers to work with the men, who are open to changes, to give them knowledge and to train them as agents of changes.

Objective 1:

- Increasing the level of awareness in society about men's role in promoting gender equality and combatting gender violence, particularly, domestic violence,
- Stimulating the men and fathers' motivation to take part in discussions about gender equality, to get actively engaged in children breeding-up and education, and to increase the level of awareness of importance of their engagement into household duties and in parental skills development.

Objective 2:

- Improving the knowledge of a minimum of 5 local trainers, who will then teach and support future and current fathers wanting to build harmonious and healthy family relations.

Objective 3:

- Making aware of and promoting good practices in men, boys and fathers with regard to engagement in children education, household duties and harmonious communication in families,
- Increasing the number of publications in media and social media, by touching on such issues as men's roles in families, men's active engagement in the process of children breeding-up and education, gender violence, project events and activities.

Actions planned:

- Organizing meetings with potential partners, inclusively with representatives of the local public authorities, educational institutions, business entities, NGOs and other active persons, in order to select communities, which are open to cooperation,
- Carrying on a quantitative survey of men's attitudes to gender norms and domestic violence,
- Carrying on a qualitative survey via 13 focus groups of 10-12 participants each (young people, future fathers and fathers) from different regions of the country,
- Carrying on 3 regional workshops with 15 participants (young people, future fathers and fathers), to identify several future local enablers of activities with groups of men from their native communities,
- Forming a group of men (4-6), who will be local enablers having positive practices in gender equality promotion and advanced skills of communication with children, household duties distribution and non-conflictual education, so that they will serve as resources within this project,
- Training local enablers so that they will act as agents of changes and will organize 4 meetings each with the formed groups of 10 men in their native localities, in order to change such men's attitudes.

Expected Results:

- Increasing the level of information and awareness within the identified group of men, boys and current and future fathers, concerning gender equality and distribution of household duties, including children education,
- Executing a minimum of 5 cooperation agreements with local public authorities, public and private institutions, and NGOs,

- Training at least 5 men with positive practices in promoting gender equality, and with advanced skills of communication with children, household duties distribution and nonconflictual education, who agreed to be resources within this project,
- A minimum of 50 men participating in the discussions at workshops and in discussion groups,
- Improving the knowledge of a minimum of 5 local trainers, who are trained to continue their work with men at the next stages.

I. METHODOLOGICAL BENCHMARKS

The Survey 'Men's Attitudes to Gender Norms and Domestic Violence' was carried on by Casa Marioarei within the framework of the Project 'Redefine gender transformative work with men in Eastern Europe and South Caucasus', financed by MAN Association from Sweden.

The respondents were interviewed from July to October 2023.

There was carried on a prospective observational survey of transversal, quantitative and qualitative type.

The survey goal was to identify men's attitude to gender norms, relations with family members and domestic violence.

The survey objectives covered:

- ▶ Analyzing the respondents' attitude to social norms as pertaining to the role of men and women in society and in family,
- ▶ Identifying the toxic masculinity stereotypes,
- ▶ Identifying the connection between stereotypes and domestic violence,
- ▶ Exploring the personal experience of domestic violence and impact thereof on respondents' behavior.

Three categories of men took part in this survey: young men, who have no relations and no children; men in relations but without children; men in relations, with children.

Quantitative survey. The quantitative study was carried on via an opinion poll covering all three categories of men.

Aiming to achieve the proposed objective, there was developed a tool to gather the information in the form of a confidential questionnaire (please, find enclosed) named 'Men's Attitudes to Gender Norms and Domestic Violence', which is structured into two parts: 1. Respondent's Demographical Data and 2. Respondent's Attitudes Assessment. The questionnaire was focused on the following elements: respondents' attitude to social norms as pertaining to men and women's roles in society and family, toxic masculinity stereotypes, stereotypes and domestic violence connection, personal experience of domestic violence, and impact thereof on respondent's behavior. The questionnaire covered 36 closed-type questions, 6 of which were demographical questions about the respondent, 25 questions were to assess the attitudes, 3 questions were about personal experience of violence, and 2 questions were about respondents' vision of a need for creating a social network for men's communication. Respondents' attitudes were assessed via Likert scale allowing to get the respondent's opinion and their degree of expression at a scale from 1 to 5.

Certain questions about attitudes and stereotypes were taken from the national survey '*Men and Gender Equality in the Republic of Moldova: Based on IMAGES Methodology*', which was carried on by the CDF in 2015, and its goal was to identify the respondents' opinions in dynamics.

Aiming to assess the degree of data understanding and interpretation, the initial questionnaire version was tested within a pilot survey, on an eight-men sample. This action allowed to shape the questionnaire, to complete the answers, to correct the questions, which were construed ambiguously or were not understood by the respondents, and to develop final questionnaire version. The sample volume was calculated based on the following methodological operations of a social study:

- Identifying the general statistical collectivity,
- Calculating the survey sample.

The unique criterion for being included in the batch were adult men. 910,541 adult men were regarded as general statistical collectivity (N), based on the National Bureau of Statistics.

The representative study lot was calculated in EpilInfo 7.2.2.6 Program, section – 'StatCalc – Sample Size and Power', based on the following parameters: confidence interval – 95.0% of results significance, statistical totality – 910,541 adult men, phenomenon probability – 50.0%, design-effect – 1. Thus, were was obtained the batch volume of a minimum of 384 respondents. Hence, since the respondents filled out the questionnaires all by themselves, in order to keep the sample representativity, there was also considered the probability of non-answers, which was forecasted for this survey batch as a maximum of 10.0%. Finally, there was obtained the volume of the batch as adjusted for non-answers, of a minimum of 423 respondents.

Aiming to question the respondents in an easier way, the questionnaire was structured and administered on the Google Forms platform, thus ensuring an unlimited access thereto to potential respondents. As soon as the questionnaire was filled out, the obtained data were automatically introduced into the database for further statistical processing thereof. Aiming to simplify the access, the e-questionnaire was codified via QR code, which was individually scanned by each respondent. QR code and invitation to take part in the survey were disseminated via social media. A part of questionnaires was filled out when the discussions in focus groups started. Questionnaire filling-out was voluntary and anonymous, it lasted, in average, for 10-15 minutes. The respondent was informed in the questionnaire preamble that filling-out thereof was his consent to take part in the survey. All in all, 445 respondents took part in the quantitative survey.

Qualitative survey. The qualitative survey was carried on via workshops of focus groups, which included all three categories of surveyed men. All in all, 13 workshops of focus group were carried on from July up to and including September 2023, as follows:

Item No.	Locality	Conduct date	Number of participants
1	Chisinau Municipality	12 July 2023	11
2	Chisinau Municipality	13 July 2023	11
3	Chisinau Municipality	14 July 2023	11
4	Comrat Town	24 July 2023	10
5	Cahul Municipality	24 July 2023	11
6	Leova Town	25 July 2023	10
7	Cantemir Town	25 July 2023	13
8	Balti Municipality	26 July 2023	9
9	Drochia Town	26 July 2023	11
10	Soroca Town	26 July 2023	9
11	Ungheni Municipality	05 September 2023	12
12	Causeni Town	07 September 2023	12
13	Anenii Noi Town	07 September 2023	10

All in all, 140 men from all three scheduled categories took part in workshops of focus groups. Discussions at the workshops were held subject to the consent of all participants thereto. Only several participants refused to specify their personal data in the event presence table. However, they did not refuse to get engaged into activities. When starting the workshop, the trainers provided the participants, for information purposes, with the general data about the project, within which the activities were carried on, and also about the goal thereof. Then the participants were asked to scan QR code, and filled out an online questionnaire. Only several respondents encountered difficulties when accessing e-questionnaire, because they forgot the personal Google account password. Such respondents were given an opportunity to fill out the questionnaire in hard copy, and the data therefrom were manually introduced into the database. The same 25 questions were used

for discussions to assess the attitudes, and two questions about respondents' vision of a need for creating a social network for men's communication were also used from the quantitative survey part of the questionnaire. Such sequence of actions was followed in order to find proper opinions of respondents, as unaffected by discussion with trainers.

The goal of discussions on such questions was to complete the quantitative data with qualitative ones by redefining the respondents' arguments concerning the social norms as pertaining to the men and women's roles in society and family, to the toxic masculinity stereotypes, and to the stereotypes and domestic violence connection. The questions on the personal experience of violence and impact thereof on respondents' attitudes and behaviors were not touched on within such discussions. A special issue to be talked about at the end of discussions were the questions about the respondents' vision of a need for creating a social network for men's communication.

Information about the respondents:

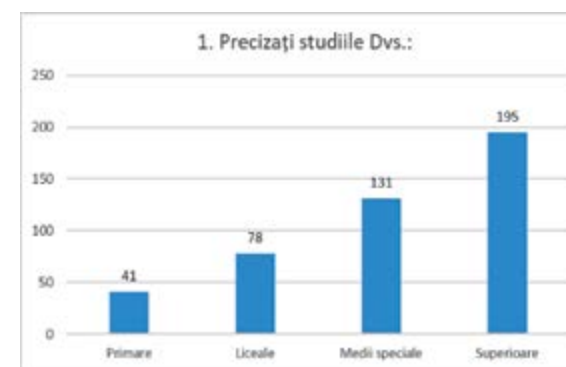


Figure 1. Respondents' education
(Please, specify your education)

Education:

- 43.82 – having higher education
- 29.44% – having specialized secondary education
- 17.53% – having lyceum education
- 9.21% – having elementary education

Professional status: 51.9% – unemployed people, 48.1% – employed.

Age categories: 63.37% – age group of 18-24 years; 18.20% – 25-35 years; 18.42% – 36-55 years.

Residence area: 61.34% – from urban localities, 38.66% – from rural localities.

44.04% of the total number of respondents did not benefit from trainings on domestic violence and gender equality before.

Considering the complexity of the issues studied, there was made a brief presentation of the notions used.

Attitudes are sensorial psychophysiological processes, which help us to recognize an item or a phenomenon. They may be defined as processes, with the help of which we gather, arrange and construe the information coming from outside. Meanwhile, attitudes are also primary images comprising the totality of information about specific attributes of items and phenomena, as a result of direct action thereof on the analyzer. They have a very important role in our both psychical and physical development.

Own attitudes always served as a basis for decisions in people, both for personal and professional ones. However, while individuals are becoming mature, they also become more and more complex and ampler. This means that the more information about the surroundings we have, the better we can be aware of it.

People are different because they think different, they have different life experiences and are influenced by different factors. The attitude-determining factors are: psychophysiological factors (cognition skills, emotions as instinctual reactions, body's multidimensional reaction to events, and so on), demographical factors (age, sex, marital status), socio-cultural factors (family, community, friends, church, cultural practices modelling the expression of emotions, stereotypes), and so on.

Gender norms are standards and expectations, to which women and men generally conform, within a range that defines a particular society, culture and community at that point in time. In everyday life,

gender norms are ideas about how women and men should be and act. Internalized early in life, gender norms can establish a life cycle of gender socialization and stereotyping (Eige, Glossary).⁹

Women and men manifest themselves in their *gender role*. These are social and behavioral norms, which, within a specific culture, are widely considered to be socially appropriate for individuals of a specific sex (Eige, Glossary).¹⁰ Gender roles often determine the traditional responsibilities and tasks assigned to women, men, girls and boys. Like gender itself, gender roles can evolve over time, in particular through the empowerment of women and transformation of masculinities.

Gender stereotypes are regarded as convictions, ideas or beliefs people have in a society with regard to attributes and behavioral expectations from men and women. Appearance of gender stereotypes is conditioned by the fact that from the historical point of view, the gender relations pattern was established so that gender differences stood above the individual differences or qualitative peculiarities in women and men (Bodrug-Lungu, p.23).¹¹

Masculinity is regarded as a range of man-associated qualities, behaviors and roles. Traditionally, masculinity is confused with aggressivity. Presently, the notion of '*toxic masculinity*' is more and more often used, as referring to socially built attitudes, and it describes the male gender role as being violent, dominant, aggressive, misogynic and sexual, who detests weakness, with a strong emphasis on self-confidence, and so on. Toxic masculinity means cultural expectations and aggressive behavior standards for men, which are maleficent not only to women and society, but to men themselves too.

'Violence against women' is understood as a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination against women and shall mean

⁹ Glossary https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1288?language_content_entity=ro

¹⁰ https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1114?language_content_entity=ro

¹¹ Bodrug-Lungu, V. Glossary and Conceptual Specifications 'Gender Equality and Education', 2019

all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life (Istanbul Convention).

'Domestic violence' shall mean all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occur within the family or domestic unit or between former or current spouses or partners, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim (Istanbul Convention).

A special attention needs to be paid to the answer option 'Neutral', in the context of this Survey, since it may have many interpretations. Having a neutral (invariable) attitude means not to be engaged and not to have an influence on anybody, with a specific opinion, this is almost a hands-off position. Meanwhile, if correlated with the phenomenon of domestic violence, the 'neutral' position is mainly associated with indifference or tolerance. In this regard, there are imposed explicit phrases: 'Indifference generates violence and cannot be supported'; 'Zero tolerance to violence!'

Meanwhile, we should remind that this survey is not scientific research, but it provides valuable information both to the specialists and to the wide public for understanding the tendencies in men's attitudes to gender norms and roles, and for identifying working strategies.

II. SURVEY RESULTS

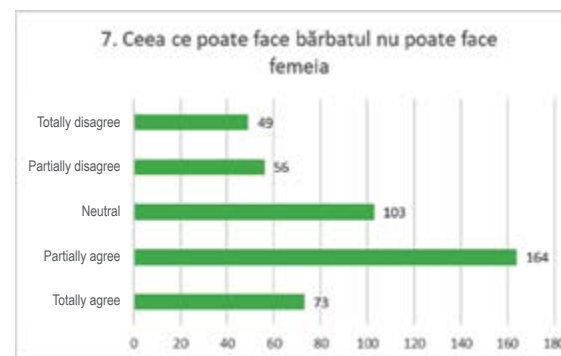
The quantitative survey results were structured according to the components, based on the questions put.

2.1. Respondents' Attitude to Social Norms as Pertaining to Men and Women's Roles in Society and Family

Gender norms create a social context for women and men's development. Gender norms guide the decisions, relations and behaviors of women and men under specific social conditions. Gender roles mostly determine the duties and tasks, which are traditionally assigned to women and men in society and in families.

Men's attitudes to the roles of women and men in society and in family are a major precondition for understanding the context of activities in the future.

As for the men and women's capacities to carry on activities, the results are as follows (figure 2):



The majority of respondents – 53.26% agree (totally and partially) that a woman cannot do what a man can do.

23.15% of those interviewed have a neutral attitude.

Only 23.59% disagree (totally and partially) with such a state of things.

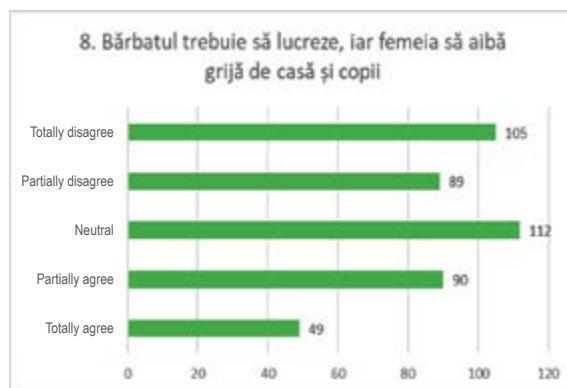
Figure 2. What a man can do, a woman cannot do

As correlated to age, residence and education, the majority of men, who answered positively, are from the age group of 25-35 years, they are from rural localities and have specialized secondary education.

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities.

When holding discussions in focus groups, the majority of participating men confirmed this opinion. However, they explained that they referred particularly to such activities that needed a huge physical power. Nevertheless, the participants were flexible enough in their approaches and accepted the trainers' examples when in the present-day society, women manage to cope with the activities, inclusively professional ones, which need a physical force, such as activities in the force agencies, army, sports, and so on. Moreover, certain participants had an opinion that women were doing better in some crafts that were traditionally attributed to men. Hence, the equal chances and women's right to show their skills in activities requiring physical power must be ensured in this respect too, all the more so, in a more and more mechanized society.

The respondents' attitudes to gender roles distribution in families are presented as follows (figure 3).



The majority – 43.59% – of those interviewed do not share the idea that a man must work, while a woman must take care of house and children.

25.17% have a neutral position with regard to this issue.

However, 31.24% support such a situation (partially or totally).

Figure 3. A man must work, while a woman must take care of house and children

As correlated to age, residence and education, the majority of men, who answered positively, are from the age group of 25-35 years, they are from rural localities, and have specialized secondary education.

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, both from urban and rural localities.

The discussions as held within focus groups confirmed the quantitative data, since the majority of participants consider that both life partners must work but a woman has the right to work and to professional development, while the activities as pertaining only to household and children would entail personal and professional degradation. Certain participants had an opinion that such an assertion might have been valid only during the first months of children's life, due to children's increased vulnerability and dependence on breast-feeding mother. Moreover, there were opinions asserting that a woman might have higher professional achievements than a man. The participants also had a positive opinion on paternal leave, asserting that the father's role was important in children's development. Such an opinion was shared both by men with children and by young men.

The problem of financial resources in families always was a very sensible issue. Moreover, this is often a problem of power and control in families. Figure 4 reflects the men's attitudes to money control in families.

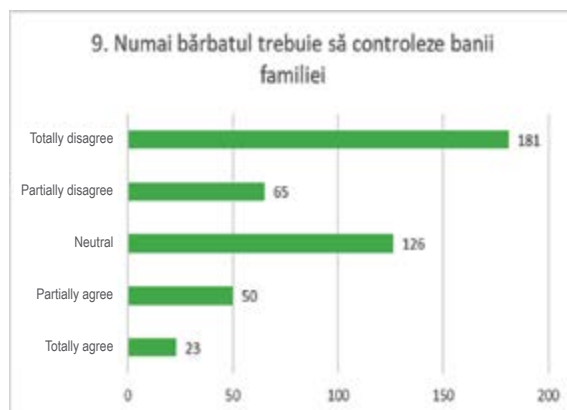


Figure 4. A man only must control family's money

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities.

When holding discussions in focus groups, the great majority of participants considered that both life partners had to decide on the way of family's financial means use, even though there were certain opinion asserting that women spent money in a less rational way.

The phrase 'Women's place is only at home' is used, in general, by men, for whom a woman turns to be either cleverer, or having much higher professional achievements/ more successful career. It also happens so that this message is addressed to women, who are in the beginning of their careers, in order to show them where they belong. Figure 5 reflects men's attitudes to this issue.

More than a half of respondents (55.29%) disagreed (partially or totally) with the idea that a man only must control family's money.

Meanwhile, 28.31% had a neutral position,

while 16.40% accept (partially or totally) such a situation.

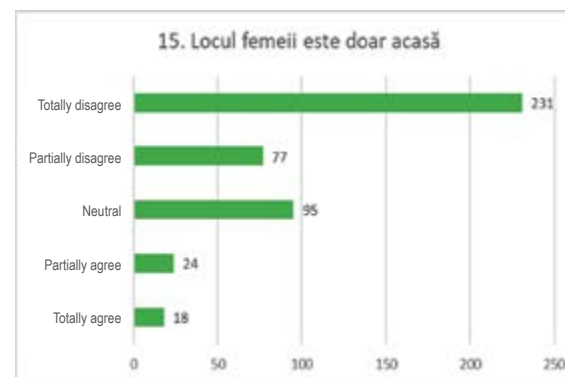


Figure 5. Women's place is only at home

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities. The participants confirmed the quantitative data within the focus groups and mentioned that both women and men had equal rights while certain women managed to make a professional career even better than certain men. Moreover, certain men mentioned that a woman, who dealt only in household duties, degraded.

Traditionally, the task to breed up children in families was seen as mother's primary duty. In this regard, father was more aimed to material support of the family. Figure 6 reflects the men's attitudes to this issue within this survey.

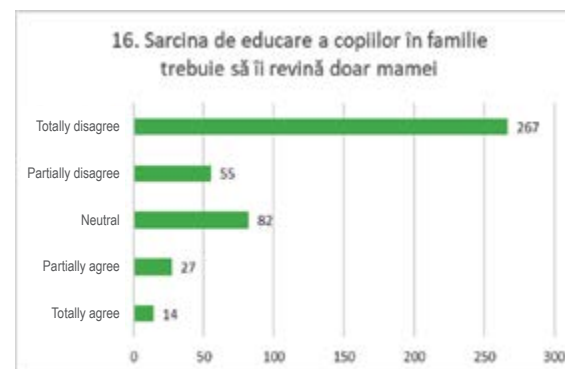


Figure 6. The duty to breed up children must be vested only on their mother, in a family

The great majority of those interviewed – 69.21% disagreed (partially or totally) with the assertion that 'Women's place is only at home'.

21.35% showed a neutral attitude.

9.44% agreed (partially or totally) with the assertion that 'Women's place is only at home'.

The great majority of respondents – 72.36% emphasized that the duty to breed up children in families was not only mother's duty.

18.43% remained neutral.

Only 9.21% agreed that the duty to breed up children had to be vested only on their mother, in a family.

Traditionally, Woman's career advancement was contraposed to family life. An 'argument' used in this regard was the explanation that this might affect woman's relations with her husband. Figure 7 provides the results of survey of woman's career advancement vs relations with her husband. When the discussions were held, the participants firmly disagreed with that myth and emphasized that children needed both parents as models, regardless of their gender, within the educational process, while father had an important role and might give something special to his child. Meanwhile, they also rendered an opinion that a man had to have the emotions of a father.

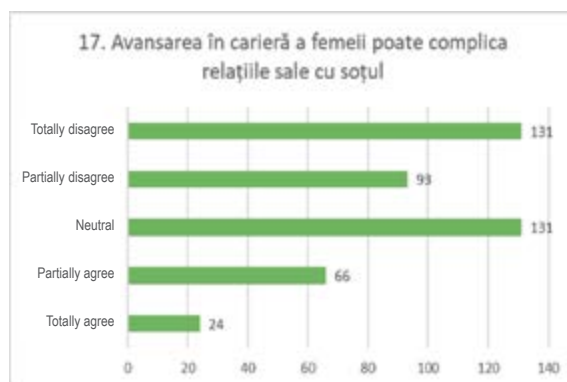


Figure 7. Woman's career advancement can worsen relations with her husband

As correlated to age, residence and education, the majority of men, who answered positively, are from the age group of 18-24 years, they are from rural localities, and have specialized secondary education and primary education.

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities.

The discussions with focus groups participants concerning this issue led to their opinions division. Thus, there were participants, who did not worry if their life partner would have advanced in her professional career. They asserted that such a circumstance would have been an extra motivation for a man to make efforts for his professional advancement. On the other hand, there were

About a half of respondents – 50.34% disagreed (totally or partially) with this assertion.

Meanwhile, a significant number – about one third (29.44%) held a neutral position.

20.22% agreed that woman's career advancement could worsen relations with her husband.

participants mentioning that woman's career advancement could worsen relations, in the present-day society, which was affected by certain stereotypes. Nevertheless, it was mentioned that such a stereotype should not limit a woman in her professional growth. Certain participants considered that certain men's ego served as a basis of this stereotype. Nevertheless, certain participants rendered an opinion that 'wealthier' women were naughtier, they entered a zone of discomfort caused by lower wages of their husbands and tended to terminate relations with their partner, but this entailed the growth in number of divorces.

The problem of wages (finance) is a problem of power too. As a rule, men assert themselves in families due to higher earnings, since it is normal that a man earns more than a woman, because he had to support his family. Respectively, the situations when a woman has higher wages than a man, become annoying for many men (figure 8). Moreover, certain men can see the attempts to compete here and the attack on man's traditional status.

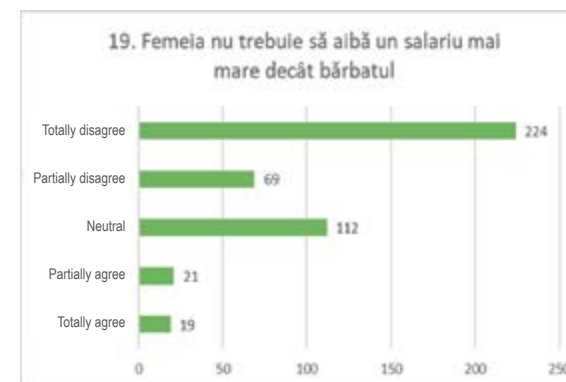


Figure 8. A woman must not have higher wages than a man

The great majority of those interviewed – 65.84% – disagreed with the idea that a woman should not have higher wages than a man.

Meanwhile, one fourth – 25.17% – have a neutral position.

8.99% – agree that a woman must not have higher wages than a man.

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities.

When holding the discussions, the majority of participants were not annoyed if a woman would have had higher wages, and many of them recognized that their wives had higher wages in their families,

but this did not affect their relations. On the other hand, there were participants, who seemed to be annoyed and asserted that women needed man's support but a strong woman did not need a man or hassled him, she did not look at men with lower incomes and was more prone to divorce. Paradoxically, the most distorted attitudes to these two questions showed the young men without relations.

The public gender roles have a significant impact on relations in families/couples. Despite progresses in the gender equality sphere, the stereotypical attitudes as if a woman cannot be a good leader, still persist in society. Figure 9 reflects the respondents' attitudes to this issue.

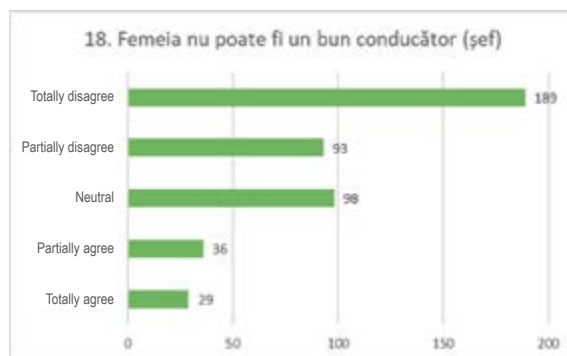


Figure 9. A woman cannot be a good leader (chief)

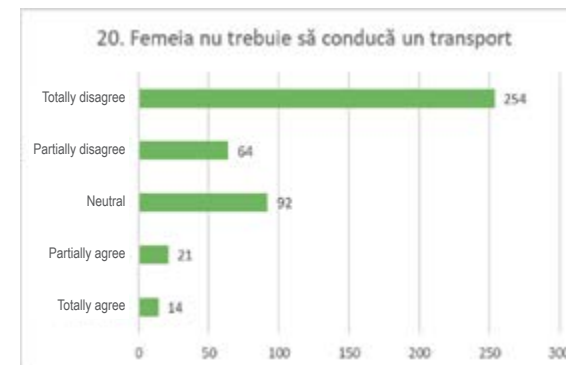
The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities.

The opinion of the majority of discussion participants disagreed with this assertion. They mentioned that the person's skills mattered and not person's gender, but women could even be better chiefs than men and that women were more patient. Meanwhile, certain participants considered that women might be good chiefs only in female teams.

Despite the surveys showing that 'Women drive neither better, nor worse than men'¹², the discussions of this issue still are held

¹² <https://t-times.ro/categorii/tiruri/femeile-nu-conduc-mai-bine-dar-nici-mai-prost-decat-barbatii>

in the public space, this being related to manifestation of gender stereotypes in society (figure 10).



The great majority – 71.46% – of respondents do not support the idea that a woman must not drive a vehicle.

20.67% – held a neutral position.

7.87% – emphasized that a woman should not drive a vehicle.

Figure 10. A woman must not drive a vehicle

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities.

The discussion participants rendered an opinion that it was mainly a stereotype and the thing, which mattered, was to have a valid driver license and required skills. Moreover, they emphasized that women usually drove more carefully and were less prone to speed up if compared to men. Certain participants emphasized that driving a vehicle made a woman more independent and mobile when fulfilling family duties. It resulted from the personal experience of certain participants that women caused more traffic problems than men.

Findings:

1. Gender roles distribution in families is not treated univocally. On the one hand, there are marked the progresses, while on the other hand, there still persist gender stereotypes in men. The majority of respondents – 53.26% agree (totally and partially) that a woman cannot do what a man can do. Meanwhile, only 20.22% agree that woman's career advancement can worsen relations with her husband.

2. A significant number of respondents, i.e., from 23.15% to 29.44% of those interviewed, had a neutral attitude. The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities, with certain exceptions.
3. As correlated to age, residence and education, the majority of men, who answered positively to questions about stereotypes concerning gender roles in families and in society, are from the age group of 18-24 years, they are from rural localities, and have specialized secondary education, with certain exceptions.

2.2. Respondents' Attitude to Toxic Masculinity-Related Stereotypes

The notion of 'toxic masculinity' is aimed to emphasize that certain behaviors and ways of thinking, which are often associated to masculinity, from psychical and physical toughness to sexism and misogyny, have a negative and often dangerous impact.

Traditionally, the image of a real man is associated with power. The attitude to the persisting stereotype 'A real man must always be strong' is shown in figure 11.

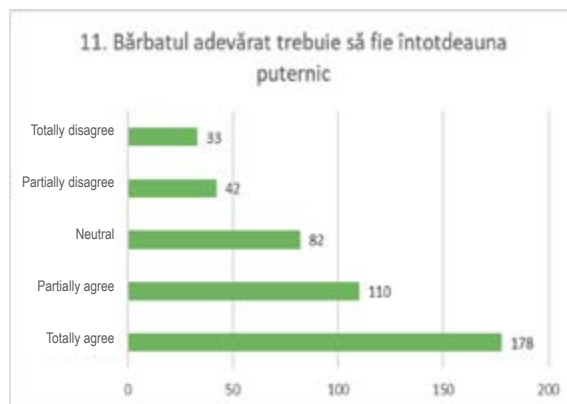


Figure 11. A real man must always be strong

The great majority of respondents – 64.72% emphasized that real man should always be strong.

18.43% had a neutral position.

Only 18.85% did not support this idea.

As correlated to age, residence and education, the majority of men, who agreed with this idea, are from the age group of 18-24 years, they are from rural localities, and have specialized secondary education.

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities.

The opinions of those men, who took part in the focus groups, divided when it came associating a man with power. A part of participants considered that it was a stereotype and that recognizing a weakness by a man needed a power too. Nevertheless, there were rather many voices that rendered an opinion in the favor of man's power, thus confirming the quantitative survey data. As for such people, a man should not cry, he was a family pillar and should be certainly strong, in order to protect his family.

One of the most wide-spread stereotypes relates to emotions management by men, namely to emotions exteriorization. In other words, such an assertion as 'A real man never cries', creates barriers in emotional maturing/development of boys/men.

Emotions gathering and failure to exteriorize them because of social pressure as based on gender norms can severely affect men's psychical health and may even entail the violent emotional discharge on the surrounding people (particularly, in families/couples), in 'stressful' situations. Figure 12 reflects the men's attitudes to stereotype 'A real man never cries.'



Figure 12. A real man never cries

About a half – 49.21% – of those interviewed emphasized their disagreement (partially or totally) with the traditional assertion 'A real man never cries.'

22.25% have a neutral position on this issue,

while 28.54% support (partially or totally) this idea.

As correlated to age, residence and education, the majority of men, who agreed with this idea, are from the age group of 18-24 years, they are from rural localities, and have elementary education.

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities.

The majority of men, who took part in the focus group, considered that men cried both because of pain and also because of joy, emotions were not shameful, while crying did not make them weaker and their manhood was not measured by power. However, certain participants, particularly young men without children, mentioned that if a boy cried and was hugged, he would become naughtier and weaker in his adult life. This is a paradox but certain participants, who shared that opinion, were hugged by their parents.

A great challenge as generated by gender stereotypes relates to men's capacity or openness to asking the surrounding people for help or aid if needed. In other words, the image of 'a strong man' excludes the 'weakness to ask for help'; there is promoted the accent, which is based on power, visible ego and self-confidence.

The Survey results as pertaining to this issue are found in figure 13.

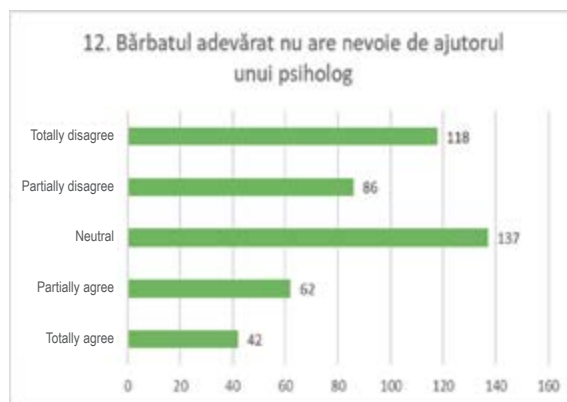


Figure 13. A real man does not need a psychologist's help

The majority of respondents – 45.84% accept that a real man may need help of a psychologist.

30.79% showed a neutral position.

23.37% of those interviewed support the idea that a real man does not need a psychologist's help

As correlated to age, residence and education, the majority of men, who agreed with this idea, are from the age group of 25-35 years; then there follows the age group of 18-24 years; they are from rural localities, and have specialized secondary education and primary education.

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities.

The opinions of the discussion participants divided when it came to this issue. Many of them considered that visiting a psychologist was not a shame if there was a need for psychologist's intervention. They compared such a visit with a visit to a doctor. Such participants pointed out that stereotypes disappeared with age and life experience. Nevertheless, there were certain participants of opposite opinion, which was even deeply rooted that men had nothing to do with psychologists.

Another stereotype, which was studied within this survey, was tied to men's capacity to conceive/give birth to boys (figure 14), which was often associated with the image of a real man.



The great majority of those interviewed – 68.99% affirmed this assertion.

23.37% had a neutral position.

Only 7.64% supported the idea that real men had only boys.

Figure 14. Real men have only boys.

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, particularly from rural localities.

To a greater extent, the discussion participants did not support this assertion and regarded it as an obsolete and absurd stereotype. Moreover, the young men segment did not even hear about such an assertion.

Traditionally, a real man's appearance is associated with a short down-to-nothing haircut. Long hair and accessories (earrings and so on) are less associated with the image of a real man. Figure 15 reflects the attitude to stereotype 'A real man does not have long hair or earrings.'



Figure 15. A real man does not have long hair or earrings

As correlated to age, residence and education, the majority of men, who agreed with this idea, are from the age group of 18-24 years, they are from rural localities, and have lyceum education.

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 25-35 years, followed by the age group of 36-55, from rural localities.

The discussions with participants highlighted a different attitude to long hair and earrings in men. Although the majority of participants, all the more so elderly ones, stood against long hair at first, many of them changed their opinion in the course of discussions, due to the trainers' examples. However, the situation with earrings was quite another, the majority of men had a negative and rigid attitude. Those young men, who took part in discussions, were more flexible in this respect. They mentioned that the style did not matter and that a man was free to choose to have long hair and earrings or not.

37.75% of respondents supported the perception of a real man, who did not long hair and earrings.

24.04% showed a neutral position.

38.20% affirmed the idea that a real man did not have long hair or earrings. They disagreed with that idea.

In the context of this Survey, the problem of control in gender relations is crucial one. The need to control may become overwhelming and exhausting, thus provoking conflicts in relations, career and life quality as a whole.



Figure 16. A woman must always obey to a man

A major part of those interviewed – 58.87% – disagreed with the idea that a woman should always obey to a man.

Meanwhile, 26.07% still had a neutral position on this issue.

15.06% consider that woman must always obey to a man.

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities.

In this respect, the majority of focus group participants stood for the equality of rights and opinions, considering that relations in couples should be based on esteem, reciprocity, understanding, communication, cooperation and respect of interests of both persons. Moreover, certain participants mentioned that control was a form of torture. Such opinions were uttered by men of all categories that were engaged in the survey.

Findings:

1. 'Toxic masculinity' is a notion with many faces. It highlights the 'damaging' masculinity or a negative impact on men and on surrounding people, which is generated by gender norms. While toxic masculinity is rooted in certain components of our culture, identifying it, understanding it and taking measures to a reduce it can contribute to a safer and healthier society.
2. Certain characteristics were confirmed to a greater or smaller extent, within this Survey. There was identified the gender stereotypes impact on 'toxic masculinity' development.

3. Although respondents' attitudes to many issues managed to overcome stereotypical approaches, the significant number of persons with a neutral position on many masculinity-related issues (from 22% to 26%) attests the persistence of problems. It is possible that a neutral position may be a 'shield' for such people to hide their own emotions and attitudes.

2.3. Respondents' Attitude to Stereotypes and Domestic Violence Connection

Traditional gender norms and stereotypical social attitudes contribute to gender inequality and to violence prevalence. Violence, which is generated in families, creates a violent society. Vice versa, a society accepting violence in the public life emphasizes the violent tendencies in families, thus handing them over from a generation to another (OSCE, 2019, p.19)¹³

One of the central issues of the phenomenon of violence is the *attempt to justify domestic violence/violence in couples, particularly against women and children*. Hence, a frequently faced stereotype is that 'Women provoke their life partner to violence' (figure 17). This formula of violence provocation justifies the acts of violence and transfers the responsibility onto the victim.



Figure 17. Women provoke their life partner to violence

55.28% do not agree (totally or partially) with the idea that women provoke their life partner to violence.

27.64% have a neutral position.

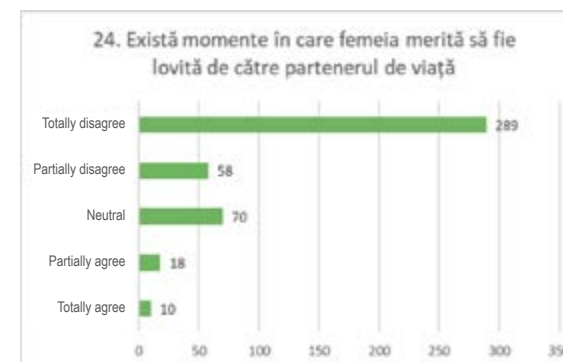
17.08% reproduce the attitude that women provoke their life partner to violence

As correlated to age, residence and education, the majority of men, who agreed with this idea, are from the age group of 18-24 and 25-35 years, they are from rural localities, and have specialized secondary education.

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities.

The opinions of focus group participants divided when it came to the idea that women provoke their life partner. The majority disagreed with that opinion and considered that both life partners were equally responsible for their incapacity to settle a conflict. Nevertheless, there were rather many participants, who rendered an opinion that women were more prone to provoke than men and that certain women released their negative energy when talking.

The attempt to justify violence is also seen in the formula as if 'There are moments when a woman deserves to be beaten up by her life partner' (figure 18), which actually relates to the responsibility transfer from the perpetrator to the victim.



77.98% do not agree that there are moments when a woman deserves to be beaten up by her life partner.

15.73% – had a neutral position.

Meanwhile, 6.29% recognize that there are moments when a woman deserves to be beaten up by her life partner.

Figure 18. There are moments when a woman deserves to be beaten up by her life partner

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities.

The majority of discussion participants mentioned that violence was not a solution and should not be applied in any form whatsoever. Moreover, it was mentioned that there were other ways to settle tense

¹³ Well-Being and Safety of Women, OSCE, Chisinau, 2019, p.19.

situations. Certain participants even asserted that a man showed weakness if he assaulted a woman, because he abused a physically weaker person. A participant recognized that in his childhood, he witnessed violence against his mother and that made him change his views and not justify violence. Regretfully, there were certain participants, who justified violence against women in the event of an adultery. Certain participants rendered an opinion that although a woman sometimes deserved being beaten up, violence could be tolerated in no cases.

Another justification of violence is poverty and, as well, reduced acknowledgment that this phenomenon exists in wealthier families too. Figure 19 provides the data on men's attitude to the stereotype that domestic violence occurs only in families from poor population segments.

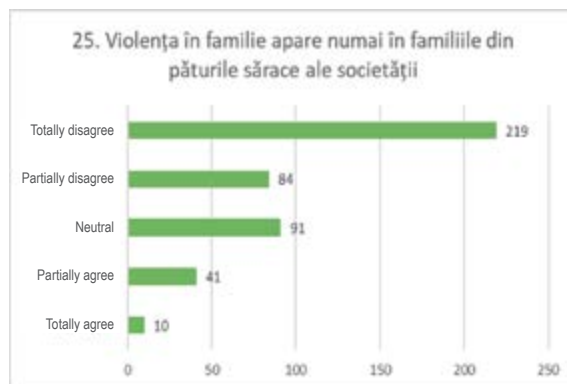


Figure 19. Domestic violence occurs only in families from poor population segments

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities.

The great majority of discussion participants considered that this was a myth. They asserted that violence occurred in all families, regardless of incomes. They emphasized in this context that cases reporting by victims from families with a high social status was very low. Only certain participants rendered an opinion that domestic

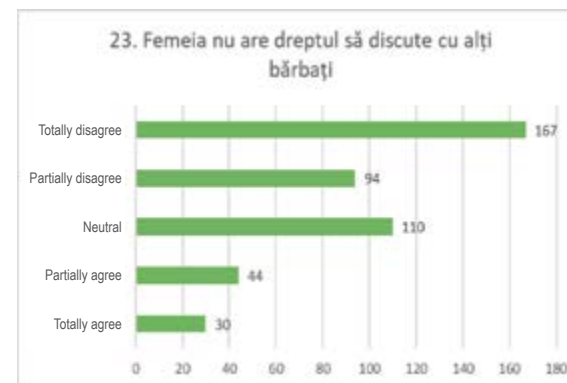
68.09% recognized that domestic violence occurred not only in families from poor population segments.

20.45% had a neutral position.

Only 11.46% accepted the idea that domestic violence occurred only in families from poor population segments

violence more frequently occurred in poor surroundings or in surroundings with alcohol abuse.

Domestic violence is based on power and control. Limiting the woman's right to communication, inclusively with other men, is manifestation of psychological violence. Figure 20 reflects the men's attitude to the stereotype as if a woman has no right to speak to other men.



58.65% disagree with the stereotype that a woman has no right to speak to other men.

24.72% have a neutral position.

16.63% agree (totally or partially) that a woman has no right to speak to other men.

Figure 20. A woman has no right to speak to other men

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities.

The great majority of focus group participants had an opinion that women often contacted other men at work or in everyday life and could not be limited in that regard. Those participants, who had a neutral position, explained it by limiting a talk if a woman flirted.

Regarding domestic violence as a private problem is an attempt to reduce its severity and to get it out of the society's sight. Figure 21 reflects the men's attitude to the stereotype that domestic violence is a private problem of a family.



57.30% do not agree that domestic violence is a private problem of a family.

24.49% have a neutral position.

18.21% support the idea that domestic violence is a private problem.

Figure 21. Domestic violence is a private problem of a family

As correlated to age, residence and education, the majority of men, who agreed with this idea, are from the age group of 18-24 years, from urban localities, and have elementary education.

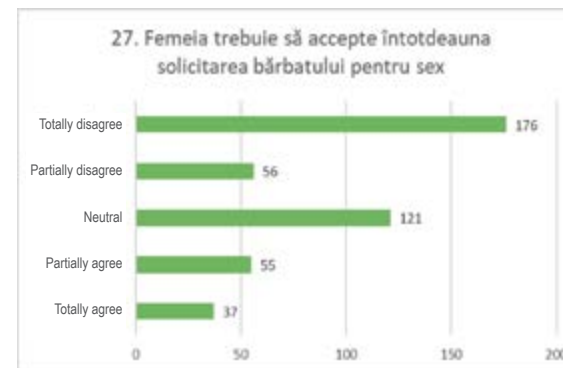
The persons from the age group of 18-24 years prevail amongst those having a neutral attitude to this issue, from rural localities.

Almost all discussion participants regarded domestic violence as a public challenge affecting the whole society. They mentioned that in case of domestic violence, the professionals should interfere as well as in case of any other crimes, while unstopped violence had a tendency to escalate with severe consequences, but violence in children's presence entailed perpetuation thereof in other generations.

Sexual violence is an extremely severe social phenomenon having long-term consequences for victims. Sexual violence is an unconsented sexual act or an attempt of act of sexual nature, which is practiced with another person without latter's free consent, regardless of relations between the perpetrator and the victim, under any conditions.¹⁴ Hence, *imposing any acts of sexual nature whatsoever is sexual violence.*

¹⁴ Eige, Glossary https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1185?language_content_entity=ro

Figure 22 provides the data on the men's attitude to the stereotype that a woman must always accept man's request for sex.



52.14% – do not agree that a woman must always accept man's request for sex.

27.19% have a neutral position.

20.67% agree that woman should must accept man's request for sex.

Figure 22. A woman must always accept man's request for sex

As correlated to age, residence and education, the majority of men, who agreed with this idea, are from the age group of 18-24 years, they are from rural localities, and have elementary education.

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities, and have lyceum education. The fact that the biggest number of persons having a neutral position on this issue within this Survey, points at a significant problem in this respect.

The great majority of focus group participants disagreed with this assertion. They said that both men and women had to have liberty to decide on sexual acts, and they also recognized that there even were physiological periods when sexual relations were not possible.

The foregoing context also covers the issue of sexual relations between partners, which if there is no consent of the female partner, may be characterized as raping. Traditionally, this issue is very sensible and it starts from the idea of marital duties in couples. The results of the men's attitude to this issue are provided in figure 23.



Figure 23. There is no raping between a husband and a wife

As correlated to age, residence and education, the majority of men, who agreed with this idea, are from the age group of 18-24 years, they are from rural and urban localities, and have elementary education.

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities, and have specialized secondary education.

The opinions of discussion participants on this issue were very similar to those on the previous question. Hence, almost all participants considered that marital raping existed but any unconsented sexual relations, even between spouses, become raping, and consent to marry did not tacitly suppose the consent to sexual acts. This opinion was probably positively influenced on by the fact that many of focus group participants were police officers and knew the laws, inclusively criminal laws.

Meanwhile, there was also studied the men's attitude to the possibility to provoke raping by women's clothing and behavior. So, certain men tried to transfer the responsibility for acts of sexual violence from the perpetrator onto the victim. The results of men's attitude to this issue are provided in figure 24.

51.46% consider that raping can exist between spouses.

Meanwhile, one fourth – 25.17% – has a neutral position with regard to this issue.

23.37% do not recognize the existence of raping between spouses (as a matter of fact, they agree there is no raping between a husband and a wife).

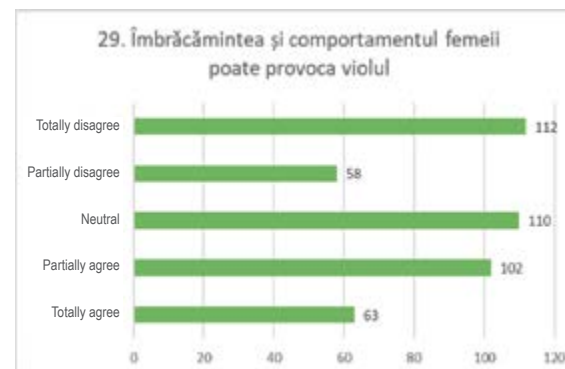


Figure 24 Woman's clothing and behavior can provoke raping

38.20% do not accept the idea that woman's clothing and behavior can provoke raping.

Meanwhile, about one fourth – 24.72% – have a neutral position.

37.08% of respondents agree (partially or totally) that woman's clothing and behavior can provoke raping.

As correlated to age, residence and education, the majority of men, who agreed with this idea, are from the age group of 18-24 years, they are from rural localities, and have elementary education.

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 and 36-55 years, from rural localities, and have elementary education.

As for this issue, the opinions of focus group participants divided into two relatively equal halves. A part of participants denied that victim's clothing and behavior might provoke raping, while the other part considered, sometimes rather categorically, that both clothing and flirt might provoke the perpetrator. Nevertheless, the men from the second category were somewhere convinced by the trainers, with the help of examples, which were provided in the course of discussions and which combated such a stereotype. This stereotype was mainly supported by the men from southern and northern regions of the country.

Traditionally, violence, particularly, against children, is associated with persons disciplining. Thus, there is an attempt to substitute notions and to diminish the impact of physical punishment, i.e., to present it as something normal. The results of the men's attitude to this issue are provided in figures 24 and 25.

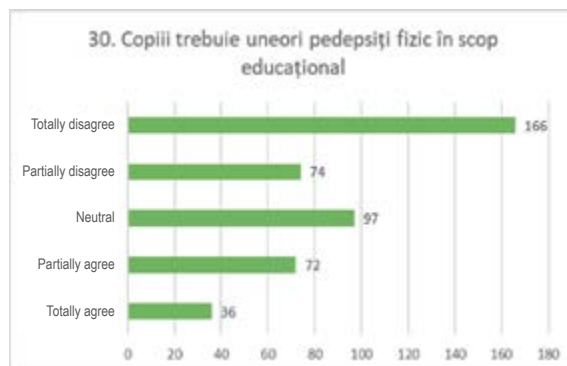


Figure 25. Children must be physically punished sometimes, for educational purposes

As correlated to age, residence and education, the majority of men, who agreed with this idea, are from the age group of 18-24 years, they are from rural localities, and have elementary education.

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities, and have lyceum education.

Discussions with participants highlighted a division, which was rather close to the quantitative survey results. Thus, the majority considered that violence was not a solution, it might be not tolerated and applying it against children might entail the perpetuation of that erroneous model of communication. Those participants uttered that a child should be punished if such a child deserved it, however, not through violence. On the other hand, certain participants mentioned that sometimes 'a slap' or 'a twig' did not do harm and even were necessary. Meanwhile, they also mentioned that in rural communities, parents had no time to care of their children education, so, they used such methods.

53.93% disagreed to justify physical punishment of children for educational purposes.

21.80 – had a neutral position.

24.27% accepted the idea of possibility to punish children physically for educational purposes.

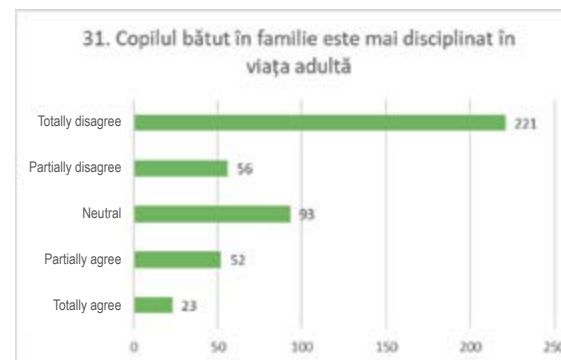


Figure 26. A child, who was beaten up in the family, is more disciplined

As correlated to age, residence and education, the majority of men, who agreed with this idea, are from the age group of 18-24 years, they are from rural localities, and have elementary education and specialized secondary education.

The majority of people having a neutral attitude to this issue are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities, and have elementary education.

The opinions of discussion participants on this issue showed that the majority did not support violence against a child in any form whatsoever, and regarded it as unacceptable. Moreover, certain participants even gave their own examples, asserting that they had not been beaten up in childhood, however, they succeeded in adult life. Moreover, they emphasized that a beaten-up child might become more violent or, to the contrary, more depressed and might assault parents in adult life. There were police officers amongst focus group participants, and they asked themselves rhetorically what difference would be between the violence they would apply against their own child, and the violence they documented as professionals. However, even in this event, there were supporters of violence against children, but to a smaller extent than within the previous issue.

62.25% of respondents disagreed (totally or partially) that a child, who was beaten up in the family, was more disciplined.

20.89% had a neutral position.

16.85% agreed (totally or partially) that a child, who was beaten up in the family, was more disciplined.

Findings:

1. The survey data show an explicit tie between stereotypes and domestic violence, while gender stereotypes contribute to generation of situations of violence.
2. A severe problem concerning the violence phenomenon is an attempt to justify domestic violence/violence in couples, particularly, against women and children. The Survey results show that 6.29% recognized the possibility of situations when a woman deserved to be beaten up by the partner, while 17.08% uttered the attitude that women provoked their partners to violence, while 18.21% supported the idea that domestic violence was a private problem.
3. A particularly sensible issue turned out to be sexual relations between partners. It was confirmed by the fact that 23.37% of men did not recognize the existence of raping between spouses. Traditionally, this issue is touched on through the prism of idea of marital duties in couples, despite female partner's consent.
4. Accepting the idea of physical punishments possibility for children for educational purposes, by about one fourth (24.27%) of men, attests the persistence of a stereotype of parent's superiority, and the diminution of corporal punishments impact and the perception thereof as something normal.

2.4. Respondents' Attitude to Personal Experience of Domestic Violence, and Impact Thereof on Respondents' Behavior

The family is an environment where a child is born, grows up and develops, and where the grounds for socialization are laid, by interiorizing the family and social values. Boys and girls see and learn norm and gender roles, go through and explore different experiences, both positive and negative ones, in families. The values and behaviors, which are learnt in families, perpetuate throughout

the years. In cases of domestic violence, the impact thereof on children is disastrous.

Exploring the personal experience of domestic violence is a sensible issue and it was touched on with a huge care. The results of the men's attitude to this issue are provided in figure 26.

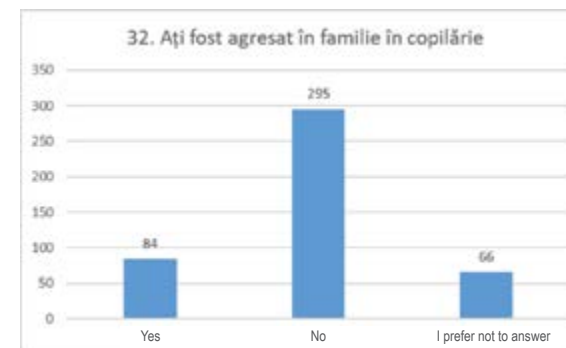


Figure 27. Where you assaulted in your family, in childhood?

18.88% of the total number of respondents dared to recognize their experience of being assaulted, they encountered in their families in childhood.

Meanwhile, 14.83% preferred not to answer.

66.29% denied such experience in their childhood.

Aggressive relations between parents deeply affect their children. Children learn domestic violence on such models. The results of the men's attitude to this issue are provided in figure 27.

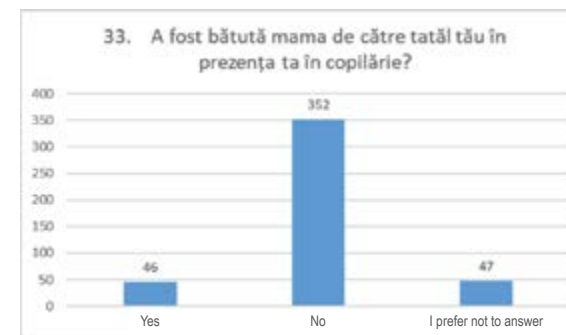


Figure 28. Did your father beat up your mother in your presence, in childhood?

10.34% recognized that they were witnesses of physical violence (beatings-up) from the part of their father against their mother, in their childhood.

The great majority – 79.10% denied such experience.

10.56% preferred not to answer to this question.

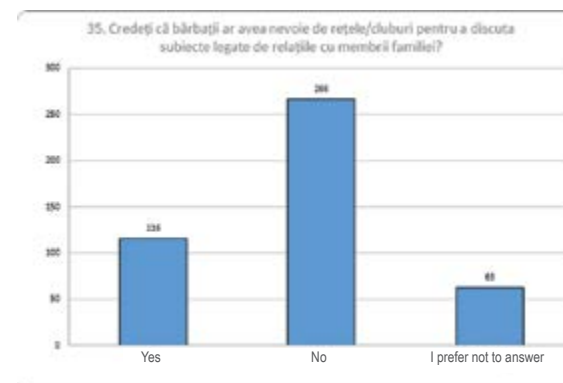
Since the issues as pertaining to violence experienced in childhood are of sensible nature, they were not discussed within the focus groups.

Findings:

1. The impact of domestic violence on children (as victims or witnesses) may be long-term one, thus modelling their behaviors and relations for the lifetime.
2. 12.58% of the total number of respondents recognized the impact of violence in family in their childhood and of their father's abuse against their mother, on their personal attitude to their own life partner and children. Here prevail the men from the age group of 18-24 years, from urban localities, having higher education.
3. 23.82% preferred not to answer (a bigger number than earlier). Here also prevail the men from the age group of 18-24 years, from urban localities, having higher education.
4. Informing the men about gender equality and domestic violence combatting, and modelling non-violent relations might possibly led to certain men's capacity to dare to recognize such situations.

2.5. Respondents' Opinions about the Need for Creating a Men's Network or Club to Discuss Sensible Issues

The survey respondents were called to render their opinion whether men needed a network or 'clubs' to touch on such sensible issues as relations between family members, domestic violence, household duties distribution and role of men in breeding up their own children.



59.78% considered that men did not need such communication media.

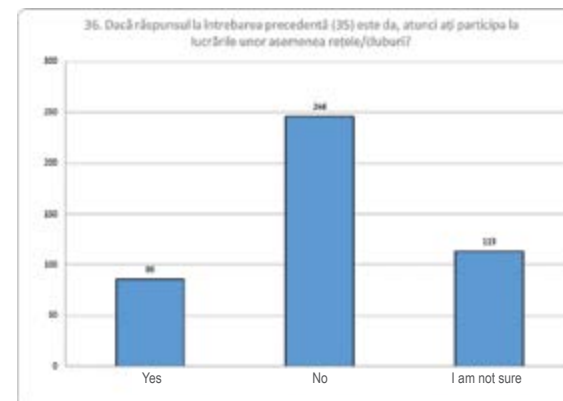
26.06% gave a positive answer.

14.16% preferred not to answer.

Figure 29. Do you think that men need networks/clubs to discuss issues as pertaining to their relations with family members?

The great majority of interviewed respondents considered that men did not need such media and communication tools. Probably, they were affected by the stereotypes as pertaining to 'a real man' or reticence in communication on sensible issues.

The majority (63%) of them are aged from 18 to 24 years, they are mainly inhabitants of rural communities (64%) and have lyceum education (74%).



55.28% would not take part in the activities of certain men-designed communication media.

19.33% gave a positive answer.

25.39% hesitated.

Figure 30. If the answer to the previous question (35) is 'Yes', would you take part in the activities of such networks/clubs?

More than a half of respondents would not take part in the activities of certain men-designed communication facilities, however, their share was lower if compared to the previous issue. Only every fifth respondent asserted that he would take part in such activities, while the number of undecided persons increased if compared to the previous question.

The structure of those, who would not take part in such activities, was similar to the previous questions. The majority were young men (61.34%) from rural localities (58.7%), with lyceum education (70%). As a matter of comparison, the profile of respondents, who decided to take part in such activities, was the following: a man aged from 36 to 55, from urban localities, with higher education.

Findings:

1. If compared to the quantitative survey, the discussions in focus groups showed another situation. Thus, the absolute majority of men participating in the interviews regarded as necessary a men-designed network for their communication. They expressed their readiness to participate in the similar activities in the future. Many of the participants also showed interest to be trained and to get actively engaged in organization of different activities with men from their communities.
2. There were identified certain age differences. Younger participants stood for more homogenous groups of men, from the point of view of age and social status. Their arguments were life experience and experience in relations with family members the elderly men had. Particularly, this argument was uttered by those young men, who wanted to organize such activities. They mentioned that it would be difficult for them to convince elder and more experienced men. To the contrary, elder participants considered that such activities should unite the men of all ages and of any social status. From their point of view, non-homogenous groups would be useful for all ages, all the more so for young people, thus ensuring better exchange of information and experience between the men-representatives of different age categories and social statuses.

III. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. This Survey results attest that traditional gender roles and stereotypes still have influence on duties distribution between women and men in families, at workplaces and in society.
2. The gender roles are distributed in families unequally. On the one hand, there are attested progresses, while, on the other hand, gender stereotypes still persist in men.
3. We should state the differences in approaches, opinions and attitudes of men, depending on the age group, place of residence and education. Thus, the men from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities, with secondary education, with certain exceptions, prevailed amongst the respondents showing stereotypical attitudes.
4. We should also state the decrease in traditional stereotypical attitudes to a negative impact of women's career advancement on their relations with husbands. Meanwhile, the neutral position of a significant number respondents points at this problem persistence. This may be a 'comfortable' situation for certain people, to hide their own emotions and attitudes.
5. Despite certain positive tendencies, the problem of money and wages (finance) distribution is still the problem of power in families. As a rule, men assert themselves in families because they earn more, and it is normal for a man to earn more than a woman because they have to support their family. Respectively, the situations when a woman has higher wages than a man become annoying for many men.
6. We should mention the detachment from traditional stereotypical attitudes in the favor of both parents/partners'

responsibility for their children breeding up in families. This may be due to the policies and practices promoting paternal leaves in the Republic of Moldova, due to implementation of programs encouraging the 'positive' parenting, and so on.

7. This survey explored certain characteristics as associated with the notion of 'toxic masculinity'. It was confirmed to a certain greater or smaller extent, and there was established the impact of gender stereotypes on developing 'toxic masculinity'.
8. In this respect, there were studied the stereotypes as pertaining to the emotions management in men, namely to emotions exteriorizing and men's openness to asking for help or aid if needed. We appreciate the non-stereotypical approach to the issues by the majority of respondents. Hence, we consider that a significant number of persons having a neutral position on masculinity (from 22% to 26%) attests the persistence of problems. Such a neutral position may be a 'shield' for them to hide their own emotions and attitudes.
9. Traditional gender norms and stereotypical social attitudes contribute to gender inequality and violence prevalence. The survey data show an explicit tie between the stereotypes and domestic violence, hence, gender stereotypes contribute to generation of violence situations.
10. Respectively, there was explored a severe problem as correlated with the phenomenon of violence, namely – the attempt to justify domestic violence/ violence in couples, particularly, against women and children. The Survey results show that only 6.29% recognized the possibility of situations when a woman deserves to be beaten up by the partner; while 17.08% have an attitude that women provoke their partners to violence, and 18.21% share the idea that domestic violence is a private problem.
11. A particularly sensible issue turned out to be sexual relations between partners. It was confirmed by the fact that 23.37% of men did not recognize the existence of raping between

spouses. Traditionally, this issue is touched on through the prism of idea of marital duties in couples, despite female partner's consent.

12. Meanwhile, the significant number of people with a neutral position concerning the violence-related aspects is worrying: from 15.73% to 27.64%. The majority of them are from the age group of 18-24 years, from rural localities, with certain exceptions. As correlated to the cases of violence, indifference may generate violence – through non-engagement in stopping and combatting it. We should remind the importance of zero tolerance to domestic violence and gender-based violence, in compliance with international standards.
13. The family is an environment where a child is born, grows up and develops, and where the grounds for socialization are laid, by interiorizing the family and social values. Boys and girls see and learn norm and gender roles, go through and explore different experiences, both positive and negative ones, in families. The values and behaviors, which are learnt in families, perpetuate throughout the years.
14. Accepting the idea of physical punishments possibility for children for educational purposes, by about one fourth (24.27%) of men, attests the persistence of a stereotype of parent's superiority and the attempt to decrease corporal punishments impact and to perceive it as something normal.
15. The personal experience of domestic violence by participants was studied within this survey. This issue was touched on with much care. 12.58% of respondents recognized the impact of violence in their family in their childhood, and of the abuse against their mother on their personal attitude to their life partner and children. 23.82% preferred not to answer (a bigger number than earlier). Hence, it has been attested that the impact of domestic violence against children (as victims or witnesses) may be of long-term, thus modelling their behaviors and relations for the lifetime.

16. The results of discussions with the focus groups confirmed more findings of the quantitative survey. The majority of men were open to discuss the issues as pertaining to their attitudes to the social roles of men and women. There were identified the differences in their approaches, opinions and attitudes, depending on their social status. Meanwhile, the participants, who priorly experienced domestic violence, showed distorted approaches to gender roles. Hence, there was confirmed the impact of violence in the family of origin on adult life.
17. Just in the same way, the absolute majority of participants regarded as necessary a men-designed network for their communication. They expressed their readiness to participate in the similar activities in the future. Many of the participants also showed interest to be trained and to get actively engaged in organization of different activities with men from their communities. Hence, we should state a beneficial impact of discussions in focus groups, which gave a space to the participants for discussions and reflections.
18. We should draw a conclusion that the results of the Survey 'Men's Attitudes to Gender Norms and Domestic Violence' are valuable materials for understanding better the issues as pertaining to the gender norms and stereotypes, men's behaviors and aspirations men. Meanwhile, based thereon, we shape out an important perspective for work in the sphere of gender equality promoting, and domestic violence and gender-based violence combatting.

The results of this Survey support the results of other surveys, and point at the fact that boys, who are witnesses of or suffer from violence while growing, have three or four times more chances to apply violence against a female partner when they are adult¹⁵.

¹⁵ <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/stories/news/2023/12/talking-about-manhood>

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. At this stage, the survey data point at the need for continuing the awareness campaigns about the roles of women and men, in all their diversity, particularly, in the family sphere, in the caring and education activities, in the everyday household duties, and so on.
2. Considering that a major part of men respondents having the stereotypical gender attitudes are from the age group of 18-24 years and from rural localities, there is imposed the rethinking of accents and contents of educational programs and awareness campaigns with an emphasis on the specificity of work with such men.
3. Considering that there are many answers of respondents having a neutral position on the phenomenon/situations of violence against women and children, we consider it opportune to touch on this issue deeply. As correlated with the cases of violence, indifference can generate violence through non-engagement and in stopping and combatting it, and this may lead to tacit complicity and indirect support. Meanwhile, the international standards explicitly require to promote a zero tolerance to domestic violence and to gender-based violence (GBV).
4. The role of education, inclusively that one of boys and men, inclusively through combatting relevant gender stereotypes, shall be valued.
5. The educational programs must be rethought so that there shall be discussed the development of masculine identity and feminine identity, the development of social and psycho-emotional resilience in girls and boys to multiple challenges in the course of their growth.

6. Traditional masculinity or toxic masculinity must be discussed so that no men are stereotyped. It should be recognized that masculine identity intersects with age, ethnicity, culture, gender identity and a range of other identities varying from an individual to another.
7. Men and boys shall be encouraged to ask for support and not to become reserved, not to choose to remain alone only because of being afraid to ask for help. Contesting gender stereotypes and touching on psycho-emotional problems may be difficult and one should not do it all by themselves.
8. Developing the programs to encourage men's engagement in caring activities, valuing the positive experience and sharing the benefits and importance of unpaid caring¹⁶ can serve as valuable tools in this direction.
9. Men shall be transformed from potential obstacles into active allies in promoting gender equality and preventing gender-based violence. Considering that the discussions about violence are often instigating and may be perceived by men as accusing ones, it is recommended to invite men to talk about their attitudes to the world and their identities as men, about their own experiences of violence and relations of family members/partners in couples. Hence, they will so see the real benefits they can get from supporting gender equality¹⁷, and they will also contribute to de-building stereotypes in society.
10. The programs for psychological aid and violence prevention shall be rethought, considering that men's violence is often determined by their traumatic childhood experiences. Besides this, there shall be also considered the need for helping men to manage their traumas and emotions, for instance, by counselling, interventions in couples, parental trainings, and so on.

¹⁶ van der Gaag, N., Gupta, T., Heilman, B., Barker, G., & van den Berg, W. (2023). State of the World's Fathers: Centering care in a world in crisis. Washington, DC: Equimundo.

¹⁷ <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/stories/news/2023/12/talking-about-manhood>

11. The creation and development of men's networks shall be supported, in order to exchange the positive experience, to carry on awareness activities and to offer capacities to their members and to the society as a whole.

Annex

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE

Men's Attitudes to Gender Norms and Domestic Violence

I. RESPONDENT'S DEMOGRAPHICAL DATA

1. Please, specify your education:
☐ Elementary education ☐ Lyceum education
☐ Specialized secondary education ☐ Higher education
2. Please, specify your professional status:
☐ Employed ☐ Unemployed
3. Please, specify what age category you relate to:
☐ 18 – 24 years ☐ 25 – 35 years ☐ 36 – 55 years
4. Please, specify the residence area:
☐ Urban area ☐ Rural area
5. Have you priorly attended the trainings on domestic violence and gender equality?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I do not need it
6. Do you need any trainings on domestic violence and gender equality?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I am not sure

II. RESPONDENT'S ATTITUDES ASSESSMENT

Please, render your opinion on the following assertions:

7. What a man can do, a woman cannot do
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
8. A man must work, while a woman must take care of house and children
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
9. A man only must control family's money
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
10. A real man never cries
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
11. A real man must always be strong
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
12. A real man does not need a psychologist's help
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
13. Real men have only boys
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
14. A real man does not have long hair or earrings
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree

15. Women's place is only at home
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
16. The duty to breed up children must be vested only on their mother in a family
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
17. Woman's career advancement may make her relations with her husband more difficult
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
18. A woman cannot be a good leader (chief)
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
19. A woman must not have higher wages than a man
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
20. A woman must not drive a vehicle
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
21. A woman must always obey to a man (she must not oppose to a man)
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
22. Women provoke their life partner to violence
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
23. A woman has no right to speak to other men
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree

24. There are moments when a woman deserves to be beaten up by her life partner
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
25. Domestic violence occurs only in families from poor population segments
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
26. Domestic violence is a private problem of a family (we do not wash our dirty laundry in public)
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
27. A woman must always accept man's request for sex
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
28. There is no raping between a husband and a wife
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
29. Woman's clothing and behavior can provoke raping
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
30. Children must be physically punished sometimes, for educations purposes
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree
31. A child, who was beaten up in the family, is more disciplined in the adult life
☐ Totally agree ☐ Partially agree ☐ Neutral
☐ Partially disagree ☐ Totally disagree

- 32.** Where you assaulted in your family, in childhood?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I prefer not to answer
- 33.** Did your father beat up your mother in your presence, in childhood?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I prefer not to answer
- 34.** If the answer to the previous questions (32, 33) is 'Yes', did such a behavior influenced on your attitude to your life partner and children?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I prefer not to answer
- 35.** Do you think that men need networks/clubs to discuss issues as pertaining to their relations with family members?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I prefer not to answer
- 36.** If the answer to the previous question (35) is 'Yes', would you take part in the activities of such networks/clubs?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I am not sure