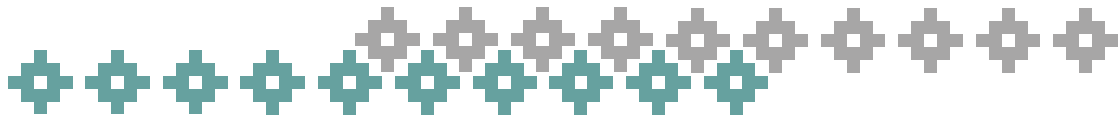


Profile of Women-Victims of Violence





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“Profile of Women-Victims of Violence”, 2016

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This analytical note is part of a **series of profiles related to women and girls** that belong to certain underrepresented groups from Moldova, who are coming from disadvantaged socio-economic or geographical backgrounds (*migrant women, women from rural areas, Roma women and women who are victims of violence*), those with special health conditions (*women with disabilities, women living with HIV or elderly women*) or who are less present in certain sectors (*women in elected and appointed positions, women in decision-making positions and women involved in the economic and business sector*).

The purpose of these profiles is to inform the public, based on evidences, about the advantages, capabilities and potential of women's groups that have been analysed and the contribution they can make to the development, their interaction environments, the opportunities that they benefit from or are deprived of, as well as the limitations and obstacles they face. The profiles include a factual analysis of the described vulnerable group (by its subpopulations) and its comparison with the opposite group (invulnerable) of women (sometimes also with the corresponding group of men). Quantitative and qualitative data from various available official (official and administrative statistics) and independent sources (studies, surveys) were combined and used.

The document is intended for decision makers, policy makers, civil society and the general public and aims at increasing the understanding of data and exemplifying the use of the multi-dimensionally disaggregated statistical data with a view to identifying the intervention measures necessary to promote equality, inclusion and cohesion, non-discrimination and acceptance of the underrepresented groups of women.

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“PROFILE OF THE WOMEN-VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE”, author MARIA VREMIS, UNDP & UN WOMEN, 2016.

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Abbreviations

- NBS – National Bureau of Statistics
- WLC – Women’s Law Centre
- MDT – Multi-disciplinary Team
- WHO – World Health Organization
- NPEGE – National Programme on Ensuring Gender Equality for 2010-2015
- NRS – National Referral System
- P.P. – Percentage Points

Introduction

Violence against women is recognized as a worldwide phenomenon, which is also present in the Republic of Moldova. The development and adoption of the National Programme on Ensuring Gender Equality (NPGE) for the years 2010-2015 by the Government of the Republic Moldova confirm the state's efforts as regards the alignment with the international standards promoting equality between men and women as well as preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

Currently, a new National Programme on Ensuring Gender Equality for the years 2016-2020 is being developed. It is designed to respond to the development trends of the relevant policies at the national and international level. The new document is to be connected to the priorities of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Gender Equality Strategy of the Council of Europe (2014-2017), the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence as well as to the Moldova-EU Association Agreement.

The importance of promoting these policies throughout the country is confirmed by the fact that Moldovan society continues to remain a patriarchal one, where women are exposed to gender stereotyping and traditional relationships between the sexes reduce the state's efforts in promoting and implementing policies for combatting any type of violence against women and affect the impact of policies that implement a comprehensive approach to equality between women and men.

In accordance with the Republic of Moldovan legislation¹, "Preventing and combatting family violence is part of the national policy for the protection and support of the family and represents an important public health issue to strengthen, protect and support the family and to ensure the observance of fundamental legislative principles regarding the family and the equality of opportunities between women and men regarding their human right to a violence-free life."

The present analytical note seeks to observe the phenomenon of violence against women, especially domestic violence, the forms of violence which exist within the Republic of Moldova's society, the factors leading to violence and its consequences.

¹ Law on Preventing and Combating Family Violence No. 45 as of March 1, 2007

I. Presentation of the group

The historically unequal power relations between men and women led to male dominance over women and the general discrimination against women in society, while the violence against women is recognized as one of the social mechanisms by which women are placed in a subordinate position before men². Because of their physiological and psychological peculiarities that distinguish them from men, but also of their culture of tolerance in terms of assuming the gender role since early childhood, women and girls are exposed to a greater risk of becoming victims of gender-based violence within the family, but also within society, the forms of which are expressed through physical abusive actions, which are of a sexual, psychological, spiritual and economic nature³. All these forms of violence result in moral and material damages, as well as repeated victimizations with distorted perceptions and attitudes regarding this phenomenon, essentially constituting a breach based on the sexual identity of the fundamental human rights, but also a major obstacle to the achievement of the principle of equality between women and men.

Violence itself, as a social phenomenon, implies two types of exposure - domestic violence (committed by the spouse/partner) and acts of violence produced by other persons against women outside the family within the community. The first form is encountered much more frequently. The NBS survey data on “*Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova*” reports that every 6th woman aged between 15 and 64 years (63.4%) over the course of her lifetime is subject to certain forms of domestic violence, while 5.9% of them are victims of violence outside the family. If the violence outside the family carries within itself a spontaneous character, then the domestic violence represents a cyclical phenomenon, which does not stop by itself and becomes increasingly more intense and severe over time. It should be mentioned that the woman’s area of residence, her social and economic status, civil status but also her age plays an important role on her vulnerability to domestic violence. Therefore, in order to better target measures aimed at preventing, counteracting and monitoring this phenomenon, the process of defining the profile of women-victims is extremely important. In this regard, the data of the same survey conducted by the NBS reflect that the most frequent victims of this phenomenon are the rural women (68.2%), the lifetime prevalence rate of violence on them being higher by 10.8 p.p. compared to that of the women living in the urban areas (57.4%). Moreover, the prevalence of violence cases during the last 12 months over the rural women (33.1%) is of about 1.8 times higher than that of urban ones (18.8%)⁴. These data are, in fact, reconfirmed by the official statistics of the Min-

² Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, 85th plenary session as of 20 December 1993, A/RES/48/104. <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>

³ Law on Preventing and Combating Family Violence No. 45 as of March 1, 2007

⁴ NBS / UN (2011). Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova. Based on that study the lifetime prevalence of violence in the last 12 months preceding the survey is presented. <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=350&id=3626>

istry of Interior, showing that 65.5 % of all notified cases of domestic violence (offences and incidents), which were recorded in 2014, occurred in rural areas⁵.

Domestic violence affects women from all **age** groups. According to the NBS study mentioned earlier, the highest share of women who are victims of various forms of domestic violence throughout their lives from the age of 15 upwards is found among those aged between 45 and 54 years (70.3%) and those who are 55-59 years old (69.1%). Moreover, more than half of the young women, aged 15-44 years, are also experiencing cases of domestic violence. Those who have most frequently faced cases of violence over their lifetime from their husband/spouse, former or current, were the divorced or separated women (84%) and the widowed (65.7%), and least frequently - those living in cohabiting relations (53.1%). A clear picture on the intensity of the respective phenomenon is being provided by the data related to the prevalence of domestic violence during the last 12 months, which show that 26.8 % of women aged 15-65, have experienced at least one form of domestic violence (psychological, physical or sexual) from the spouse/life partner in the last year. The most affected are the young women, aged 15-34 years old (over one-third of cases), while among the adult and elderly women the intensity of this phenomenon is slightly reduced, the prevalence rates varying between one-fifth and one-quarter of the cases⁶ (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Total prevalence rate of domestic violence (psychological, physical or sexual) committed by husband/partner over women's lifetime and during the last 12 months, by women's area of residence, age, and marital status, %



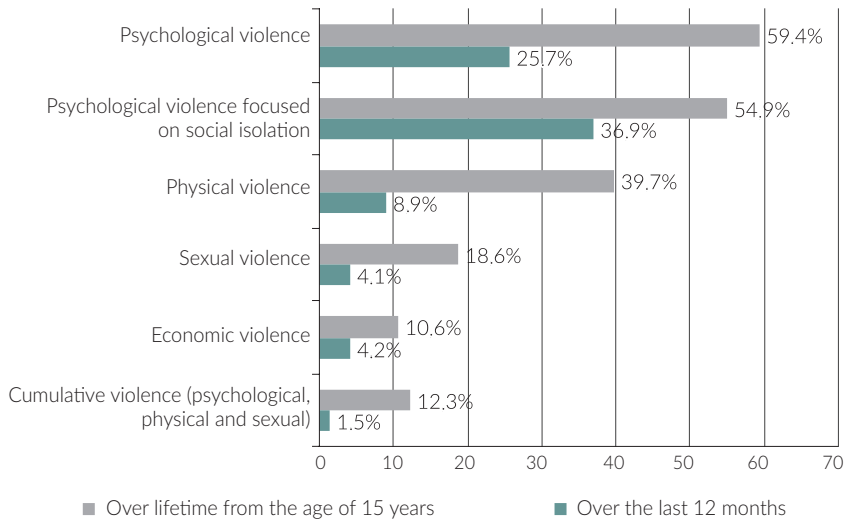
Source: NBS, "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova" survey, 2011

⁵ MIA (2015). Information regarding the results obtained by the criminal investigative bodies and the prosecution authorities of the Republic of Moldova in combatting crime, by years. http://date.gov.md/ro/system/files/resources/2015-03/decembrie_6.xls.

⁶ Ibidem.

The forms of domestic violence faced by women are multiple. Around 60 percent of them have experienced, at a certain point in their lifetime, psychological violence, 55 percent were subjected to psychological violence oriented toward social isolation, and every tenth woman, at least once, suffered from economic violence. In addition, approximately 40 percent of women had experienced physical violence at least once, and about 19% experienced sexual violence. At the same time, 12.3% of women have faced all three forms of violence (psychological, physical and sexual) at some point in their lives from their husbands/partners (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Prevalence rates of violence against women committed by husband/partner over women's lifetime and over the last 12 months, by forms of violence, %



Source: NBS, "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova" survey, 2011

The most common forms of domestic violence faced by women continue to be physical and psychological violence, which have both having a direct and significant impact on their health.

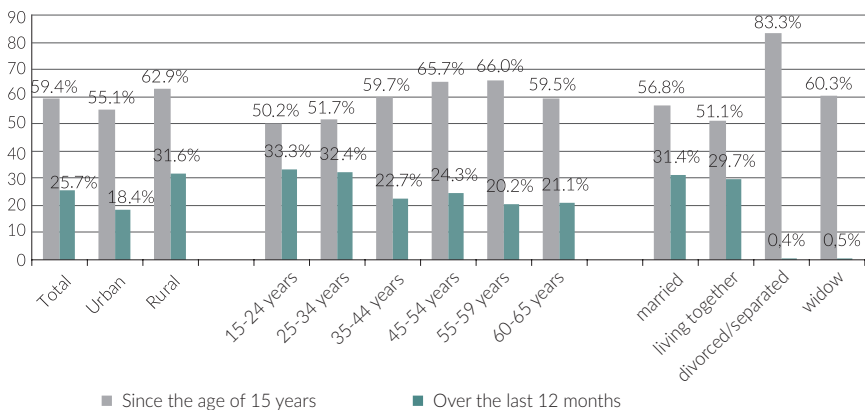
Psychological violence has long-term consequences that are generated by the post-traumatic stresses resulting in nervous and psychosomatic system disorders⁷. Moreover, a survey conducted at the EU level on the violence against women shows that, besides the major effects on the mental health of the woman, the multiple and repetitive forms of psychological violence undermine her autonomy, which is tantamount to the

⁷ Domestic violence between material and psychological consequences.

loss of independence into the private and family life⁸. It is worth mentioning that the socio-economic characteristics of the women suffering from these forms of violence do not differ from the general ones of the victims of this phenomenon (psychological, physical or sexual) that were outlined above. The most susceptible to this form of violence are rural women (62.9% over lifetime and 32% during the last 12 months) compared to those from urban areas (55.1% over lifetime and 18.4% during the last 12 months). Likewise, the most affected during their lifetime are the women aged between 45 and 59 years (66%), while the least affected are the young ones, from the 15 - 24 years age group. Nevertheless, the picture is completely different, from the perspective of the intensity of the phenomenon during the last 12 months, the data show that the prevalence rates of this form of violence decrease as women get older. Thus, on average, every third woman aged 15-34 years old confirmed experiences of psychological violence, while among women aged 55-65 years, such experiences were confirmed by every fifth woman.

Divorced or separated women (83.3%), widows (60.3%) and married women (56.8%) face the most cases of psychological violence during their lifetime, while those who are cohabiting suffer the least in this sense (51.1%). Thus, it appears that the lack of a formalized marital status represents, in a certain extent, a psychological factor causing the perpetrator to refrain from showing violence (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Prevalence of psychological violence committed by husband/partner over women's lifetime and over the last 12 months, by area of residence, age, and marital status of the woman, %

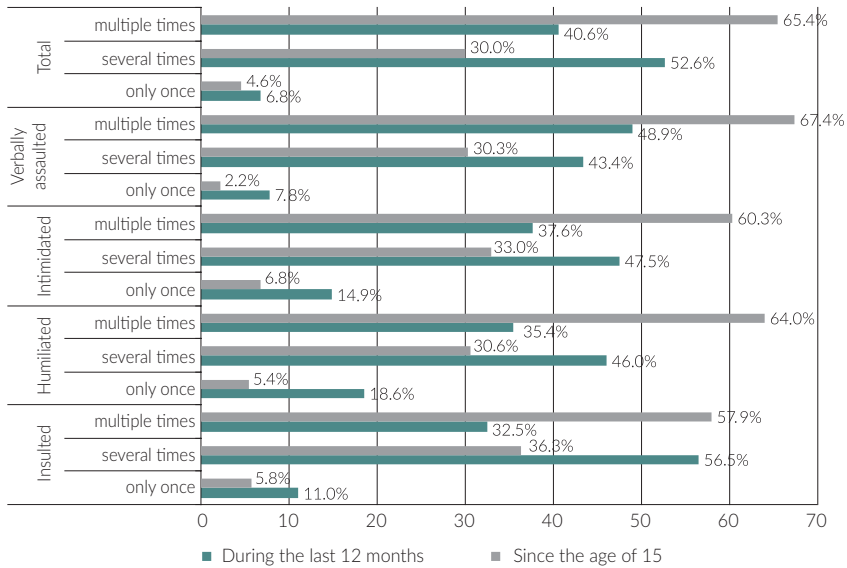


Source: NBS, "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova" survey, 2011

⁸ FRA (2014). Violence against Women Survey conducted at the EU level. Results in brief. http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2014-vaw-survey-at-a-glance-oct14_ro.pdf

The frequency of the psychological violence itself in the family varies from a one-off to repeated experiences, with the latter being prevalent. Thus, 65.4 percent of women were victims of multiple cases of psychological violence from their husbands/partners over their lifetime, and 40.6 percent during the last year. The very forms by which this phenomenon is expressed on women are ranging from verbal aggression (67.4% over lifetime and 48.8% during last 12 months) to humiliations (64% over lifetime and 35.4% during last year) and insults (57.9% over lifetime and 32.5% during the last 12 months) (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Distribution of women-victims of psychological violence committed by husband/partner, by its specific forms and frequency of cases, %

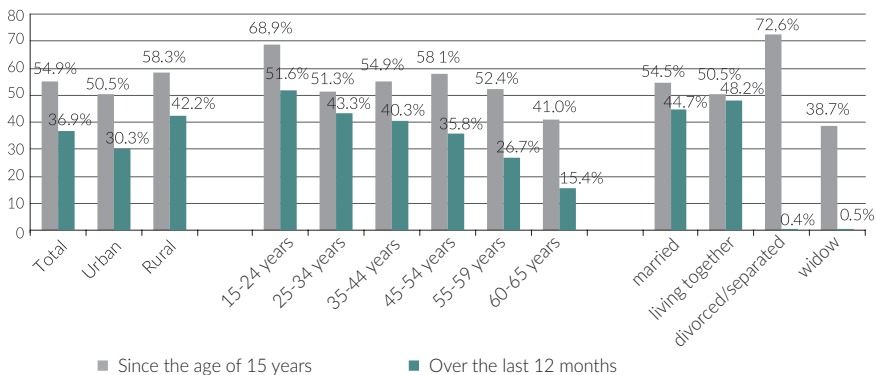


Source: NBS, "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova" survey, 2011

Additionally, women who are also frequently subjected to an exaggerated control from their husbands/life partners tend to **isolate themselves socially**. In this case as well, the most vulnerable to this form of violence are rural women (58.3% over their lifetime and 42.2% in the last year). The prevalence of this form of violence throughout their lifetime is the highest among young women aged 15-24 years old (68.9%), and the lowest among the older ones, aged 60-65 years old (41%). The intensity of this form of violence decreases as woman get older. While the prevalence of psychological violence

focused on social isolation during the last year among the young women, aged 15-24 years old, was 51.6%, the one registered among the older women, aged 45-54 and 60-65 amounted to 26.7% and 15.4% respectively. The most frequently subjected to this form of violence throughout their lives are divorced or separated women (72.6%) followed by married women (54.5%). Moreover, more than half of the cohabiting women (50.5%) also faced this phenomenon (Figure 5).

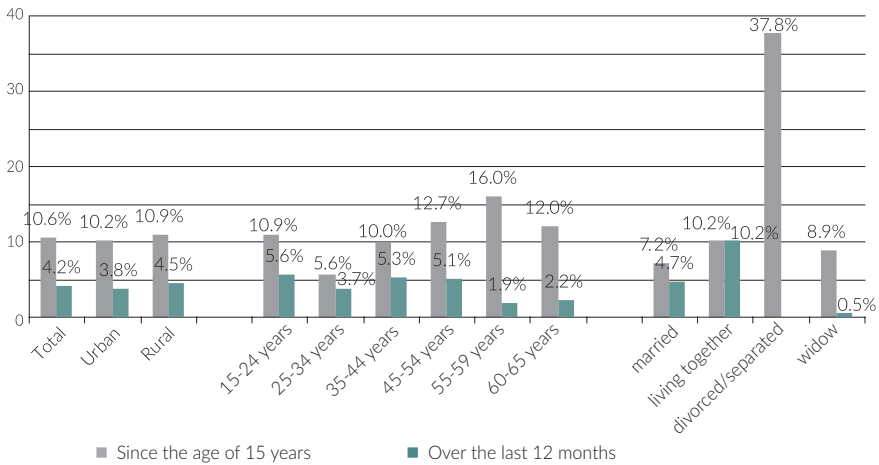
Figure 5. Prevalence of psychological violence aimed at women's social isolation, over their lifetime and in the last 12 months, by area of residence, age, and marital status of women, %



Source: NBS, "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova" survey, 2011

Another form of psychological violence is *economic duress*. Over 10 percent of women living in rural and urban areas have experienced at least once in their lifetime this form of violence. The highest prevalence rates of the phenomenon are attested among the women aged from 55 to 59 (16%), and the lowest ones among the women aged 25-34 (5.6%), which can be explained by the higher level of economic activity among them and the lower economic dependence on their husbands/partners. The situation is different from the perspective of the phenomenon's intensity during the last 12 months, the highest prevalence rates being found among the women aged 15-24 (5.6%) and 35-44 (5.3%) years old. Those who have experienced most frequently this type of violence over lifetime are the divorced/separated women (37.8%) and those cohabiting (10.7%), and less frequently - the married women (7.2%) (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Prevalence of the economic violence committed by husband/partner, according to woman's residence, age and marital status, %



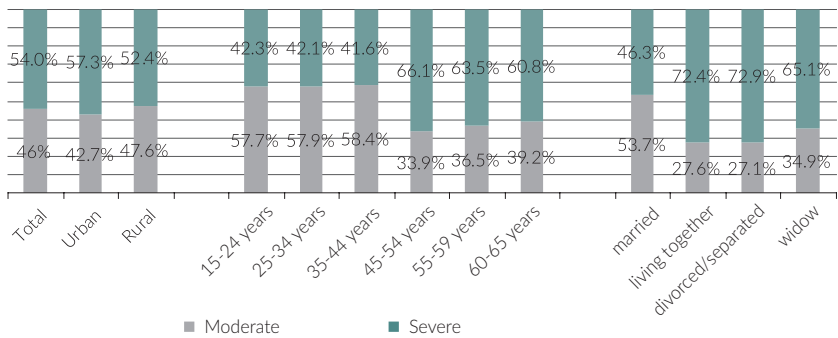
Source: NBS, "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova" survey, 2011

Physical violence is the second form of domestic violence with a destructive impact on women's health. The analysis of the given phenomenon, where the classification of the World Health Organization (WHO) on the degrees of severity of the physical violence forms⁹ was used, reports that the women from the rural areas (47.6%), are predominantly facing moderate forms of violence throughout their lives, while those from the urban areas (57.3%) are experiencing severe forms of violence. The prevalence of severe physical violence prevails among women aged 45-65 years (more than 60%), while among the younger women, those who are under 44 moderate level of violence prevails (55%). Most of the cases of severe physical violence over lifetime were recorded among the divorced or separated women (72.9%) and those in cohabiting relationships (72.4%), while the lowest among married women (46.3%) (Figure 7).

The frequency of cases involving various forms of physical violence over lifetime ranges from single episodes up to repeated situations. Every second woman is a victim of physical violence and has been subjected to at least one form of it several times in her lifetime. Approximately 42 percent of female victims reported cases of repeated slapping, while half of them admitted to have been bullied and hit for several times. More-

⁹ WHO classifies the forms of physical violence by severity into two categories: i) mild violence, including at least one of the "slapped" and "pushed, bullied, pulled by hair" cases, and ii) severe violence, which includes other forms of physical violence.

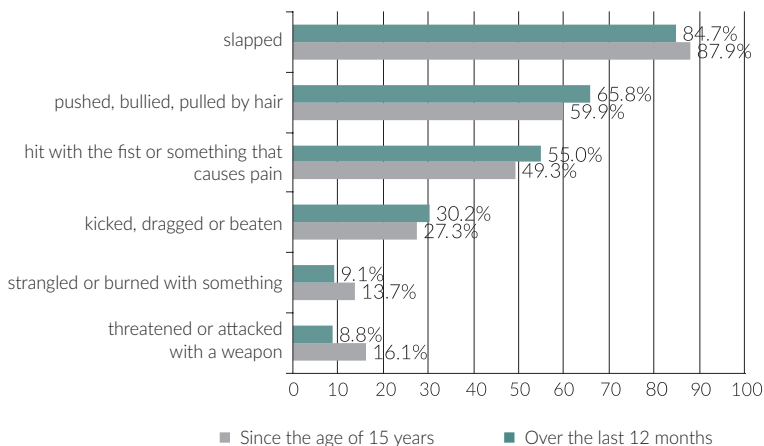
Figure 7. Distribution of women-victims of physical violence committed by husband/partner throughout their lives, by its degree of severity, residence, marital status and age groups, %



Source: NBS, "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova" survey, 2011

over, at least 20 percent of women had suffered from severe forms of physical violence, such as strangling and threatening with a weapon (Figure 8).

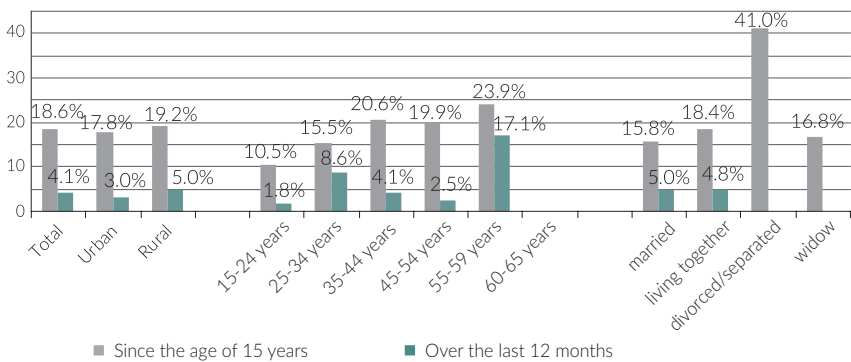
Figure 8. Share of women-victims of physical violence within the family by the husband/partner over lifetime and during the last 12 months, by specific forms of violence, %



Source: NBS, "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova" survey, 2011

Sexual violence that occurs within couples as a form of severe physical violence represents a specific problem that requires a separate approach within the policies meant to prevent and combat domestic violence. Therefore, the existing data report that about 19 percent of women aged 15-65 years old (19.4% from rural areas and 17.8% from urban ones) have been at least once victims of sexual violence from their husbands/partners, and approximately 4 percent of them have experienced such violence during the last 12 months (5% from rural areas and 3% from urban ones). The highest lifetime prevalence of this phenomenon is recorded among divorced or separated women (41%), and the lowest one among those married (15.8%). The probability of sexual violence cases' occurrence increases along with the ageing, the highest prevalence rates being recorded among the women aged between 35 and 59 years old (more than one-fifth of the cases) (Figure 9). As recalculated to the female population aged 15-65 years old, it can be assumed that annually over 50,000 women are subjected to sexual violence within couples, or more than 1,500 cases per 100,000 females are recorded. Against this background, the number of 10 rapes per 100,000 of the female population officially registered is completely insignificant¹⁰.

Figure 9. Prevalence of sexual violence committed by husband/partner over their lifetime and during the last 12 months, by women's area of residence, age, and marital status, %



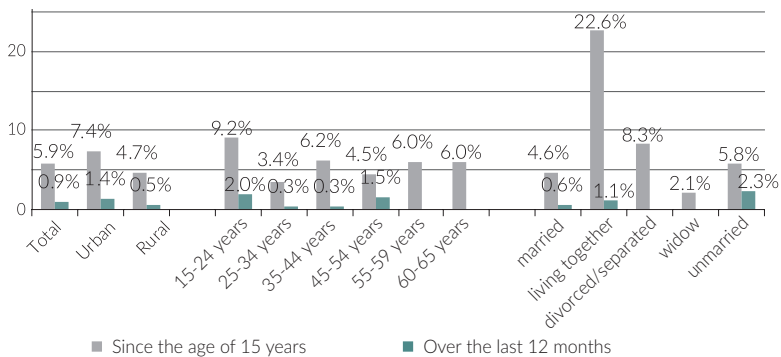
Source: NBS, "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova" survey, 2011

As regards violence against women by their husbands/partners, the frequency of **physical violence cases against women from other people** is much lower, representing a prevalence rate of approximately 6% over the lifetime and of only 1% during the last 12 months. Opposed to the domestic violence by husbands, where the most vulnerable are the rural women, in the case of this form of violence, the most exposed throughout

¹⁰ <http://statbank.statistica.md/pxweb/Database/RO/12%20JUS/JUS01/JUS01.asp>

life are the women living in the urban areas (7.4% over the life and 1.4% during the last 12 months). This form of violence decreases as women get older, registered the highest rates of lifetime prevalence among the very young women, aged 15-24 years (9.2%). The most frequently subjected to this form of violence are the women living in cohabitation relationships (22.6%), while the least affected are the married women (4.6%) and the widows (2.1%) (Figure 10). According to the character of its frequency, this kind of violence is, in most of the cases, a repeated form of abuse. Thus, 55 percent of women victims of this form of violence have had multiple experiences throughout their lives, over one-quarter have reported repeated cases, and only 18.4 percent have suffered only once¹¹.

Figure 10. Prevalence rates of physical violence against women committed by husband/partner over lifetime and in the last 12 months, by residence, age and marital status, %

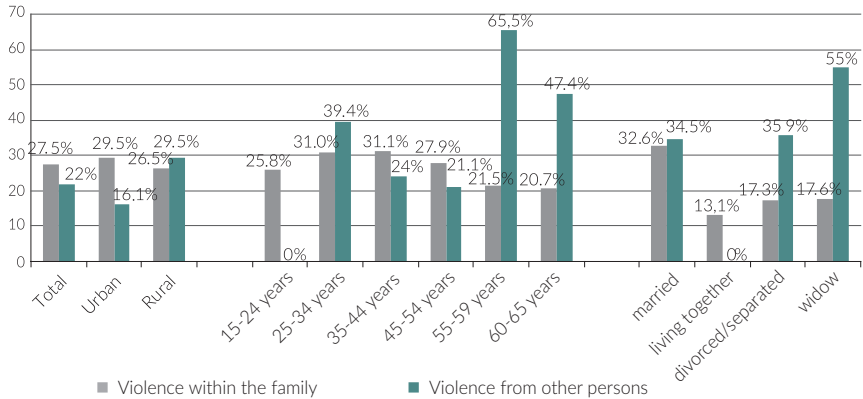


Source: NBS, "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova" survey, 2011

Despite the fact that there is a fairly high level of **reporting cases of violence** against women, a large number however, continue to be unreported. About one-third of women-victims of domestic violence and more than one-fifth of victims of violence by third persons have never reported the aggression they faced. Rural women are more open in reporting cases of violence by their husbands/partners (26.5%), but more cautious/conservative in reporting those produced against them by other persons (29.5%). Moreover, the highest level of underreporting of domestic violence is recorded among the women aged 25-44 years old (31%), and as far as the violence outside the family - among the elderly women aged 55-59 (65.5%) and 60-65 years old (47.4%). Married women are least frequently reporting domestic violence cases (32.6%), whereas widows

¹¹ NBS/UN (2011). Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova. <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=350&id=3626>

Figure 11. The degree of under-reporting by women-victims of violence by husbands/partners and other persons over their lifetime, by residence, age and marital status of women, %



Source: NBS, "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova" survey, 2011

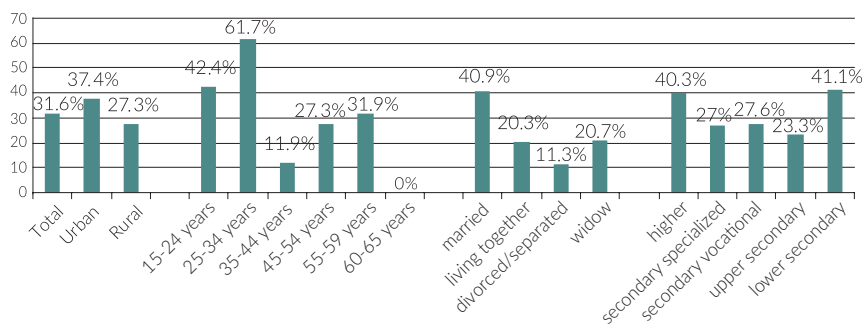
(55%) and divorced or separated women (35.9%) are the ones to report the least often cases of violence by other persons (Figure 11). The cases of domestic violence committed by husbands/partners, as well as by other persons, are most commonly reported by the parents of the victims (47.3%), (about one-third) and/or their friends (up to one-fifth).

At the same time, the degree of reporting acts of physical violence within the family varies depending on their severity, those of moderate physical violence being unreported by 42.1 % of women-victims, while the most severe are reported by 15.6% of them. The situation is different though in reporting cases of sexual violence, on average over one-third of the cases remains unreported, and in this regard urban women are more cautious (37.4%) compared to rural women (27.3%). The highest rate of unreported sexual violence cases within the family is recorded among the young women aged 25-34 (61.7%), and the lowest - among ones aged 35-44 years (11.9%). Those who least frequently report cases of sexual violence are married women (40.9%), the ones with secondary level education and those with higher education (40%) (Figure 12). Although women with a higher level of education are more familiarized with existing legal provisions in this respect (67.2%), the reporting rates among them are not always the highest¹².

¹² NBS/UN (2011). Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova. <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=350&id=3626>

The underreporting of cases of violence against women is influenced by a number of cumulative factors such as: (i) the traditional views of Moldovan society that perpetuate the social stigma, the shame and the convictions that if a woman is beaten or raped it means that she did something wrong and deserved it; (ii) the self-blame and the lack of self-confidence, in the possibility to change the situation, caused by the post-traumatic stress; (iii) the material dependence on the abuser and the fear of provoking revenge and even more frequent and intense cases of abuse; (iv) the underdevelopment of specialized services and insufficient knowledge about them, including about the protection measures that victims can benefit from; as well as (v) the low confidence for obtaining a real protection and support from the relevant institutions and organizations.

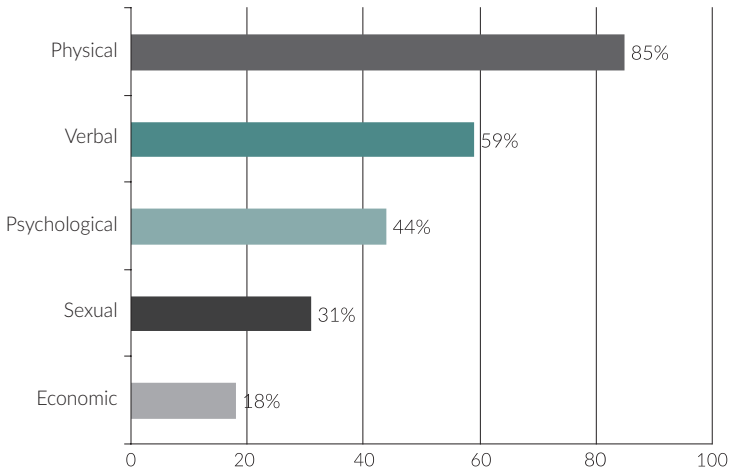
Figure 12. Degree of underreporting by women-victims of sexual violence within the family, by residence, age groups, marital status and education level, %



Source: NBS, "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova" survey, 2011

The low level of reporting cases of violence is largely influenced by the visions both of the victims and the aggressors as regards the reasons justifying the domestic violence against women. In this regard, the NBS data from the study on "*Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova*" show that female victims tend, mostly, to justify the violent behaviour of their husbands/partners by the challenges the latter are facing, while men tend to blame the women for what happened. Moreover, whereas most of the women recognize domestic violence as an important social issue, men do not consider it a problem as such. In addition, the majority of the victims of violence mentioned that they have not reported cases of violence because they do not know where to call and seek help.

Figure 13. Awareness of the forms of violence within families/couples among young people aged 18-35 years old, %

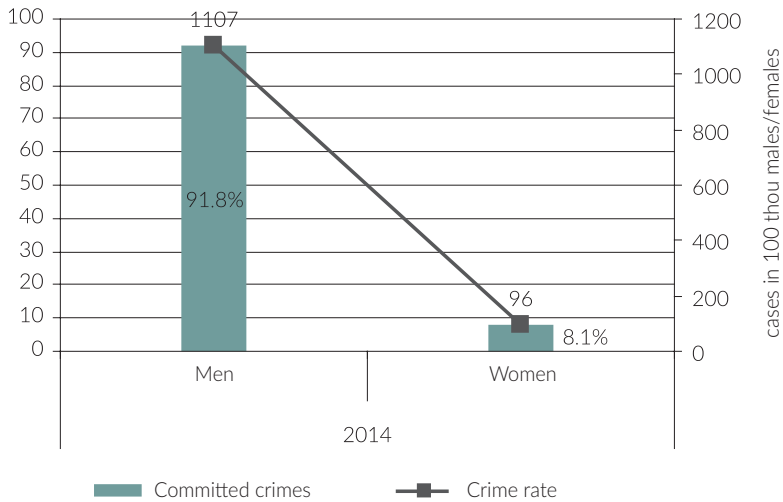


Source: CBS-AXA, La Strada “Opinions, perceptions and experiences of young people regarding family/couple violence”

For their turn, male offenders consider the attempt of their wives to ask protection from the police an act of betrayal, threat and humiliation that should not remain unpunished. Moreover, while acts of violence manifested against women outside the family are perceived as crimes that must be punished in accordance with the legislation in force, those occurred within the families, especially among the young ones, are not recognized as forms of violence.

In confirmation, the study “*Opinions, perceptions and experiences of young people regarding family/couple violence*” conducted by CBS-AXA in partnership with the “La Strada” Centre in 2014 shows that the most recognized/known form of violence within the family/couple is the physical one, declared by 85 percent of the young respondents aged 18-35. This is followed by the verbal violence - 59 percent. Other forms are less associated with the violence phenomenon by a great part of the young people interviewed during the study (Figure 13).

Figure 14. Crime rate among women and men, %



Source: NBS, Data Bank, 2014.

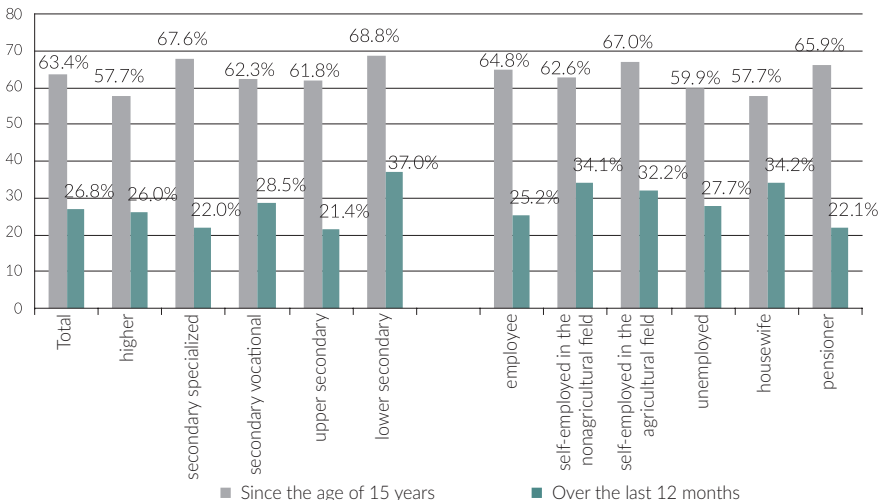
It is wrong to consider that women are just victims and never perpetrators of acts of violence. Statistics show that women also commit offences, but in a much smaller proportion than men. From the total offences registered in 2014, 8.2 percent have been committed by women, and 91.8 percent by men¹³. The crime rate among women is of 96 cases per 100,000 women, while the one of men amounts to 1,107 crimes per 100,000 men (Figure 14).

¹³ NBS, <http://statbank.statistica.md/pxweb/Database/RO/12%20JUS/JUS01/JUS01.asp>

II. Social capital and potential of the women-victims of violence

The human capital quality expressed by the educational level and the occupational status, as well as the existing economic opportunities has a considerable impact not only on women's capacities to participate in the formation of sustainable development results, but also on their vulnerability in terms of domestic violence, its toleration and the abilities to protect themselves. In this context, the NBS data from the study on "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova"¹⁴ show that the highest prevalence rates of domestic violence in women's lives are observed among women with general secondary education (68.8%) and specialized secondary education (67.6%), whilst the lowest ones are recorded among those with higher education (57.7%). This does not mean that the women with higher education are less vulnerable to this phenomenon, which is otherwise demonstrated by the relatively high prevalence rates of violence over the past 12 months (26%). From the employment status point of view, the highest rates of domestic violence manifested throughout the life are recorded among women who are self-employed in agriculture (67%), elderly females (65.9%) and female employees (64.8%), while the lowest prevalence rates are recorded among housewives (57.7%) (Figure 15).

Figure 15. Total prevalence rate of violence (psychological, physical or sexual) committed by husbands/partners over women's lifetime and in the last 12 months, by women's level of education and occupational status, %

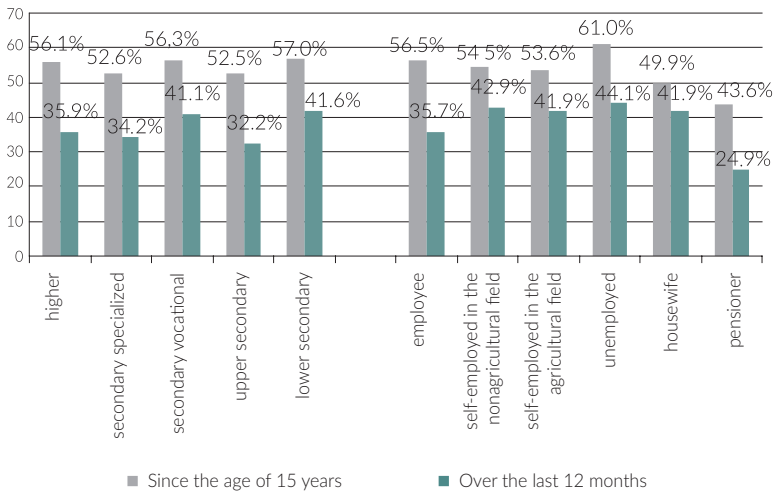


Source: NBS, "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova" survey, 2011

¹⁴ National Bureau of Statistics, 2011 <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=350&id=3626>

It should be mentioned that the same rates of prevalence of domestic violence are also maintained within its forms. An exception is the rates of prevalence of psychological violence focused on social and economic isolation where the differences related to the level of education and occupational status of women are insignificant, which leads to the conclusion that the level of education and the resources do not influence the vulnerability in this regard (Figure 16 a) and b).

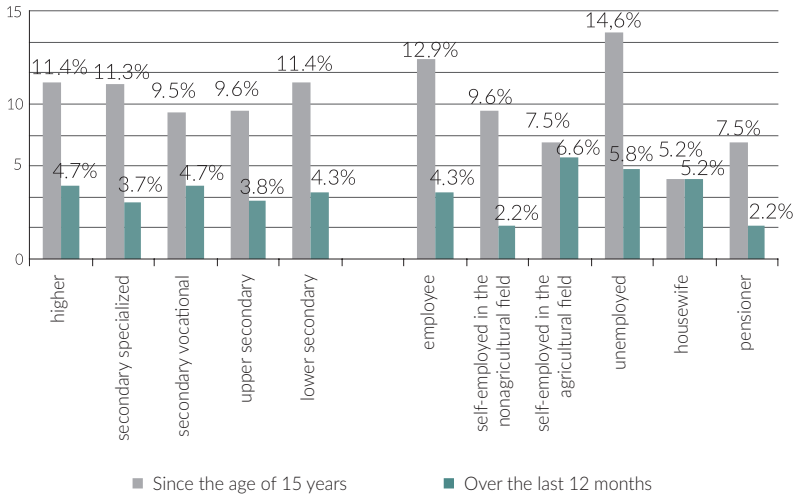
Figure 16 a). Prevalence of psychological violence aimed at social isolation, by women’s level of education and occupational status, %



Source: NBS, “Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova” survey, 2011

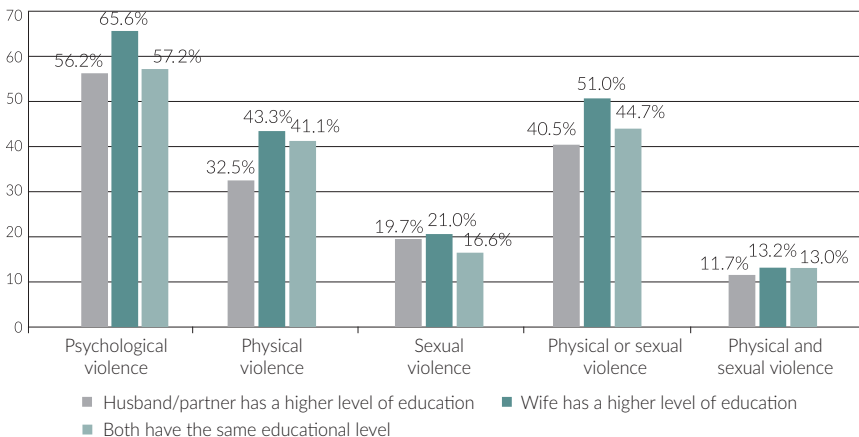
Over one-third of women who have been subjected to at least one form of domestic violence throughout their lives have a level of education higher than their partners, and every second woman-victim of violence has the same level of education as her spouse/partner. In general, the prevalence of the rate of violence is lower when the husband has a higher level of education or both spouses/partners have the same level of education (Figure 17). This can be explained by the fact that both spouses/partners are sharing the same values and attitudes or are able to find, more easily, resources to overcome the crisis situation, have a certain status, access to information, higher financial income, which allows them to survive after breaking the cycle of violence etc. without resorting to assistance and protection services.

Figure 16 b). Prevalence of economic violence committed by husband/partner, by women's level of education and occupational status, %



Source: NBS, "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova" survey, 2011

Figure 17. Prevalence of domestic violence forms by the difference between the levels of education of the spouses/partners, %



Source: NBS, "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova" survey, 2011

III. The interaction environment of the women-victims of violence

The family of origin represents the primary medium of interaction between women-victims of violence as well as the perpetrators, where different values, social norms, visions and attitudes toward violence are transmitted, including the domestic one. Data from studies carried out in the field report that, despite the social and economic transformations that have occurred in the last decades, the population's beliefs in traditionalistic-paternalistic system have largely remained, based on a series of stereotypes and beliefs about gender roles within the family and the community. In confirmation, the NBS data from the study on “*Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova*” report that 72.7% of women from rural areas and 68.5% from urban areas and also 69.9% of the women-victims of physical or sexual violence and 71.1% of non-victims support the idea and feel that the husband should be the head of the family. In this regard, the views of the women-victims of violence and non-victims do not differ essentially¹⁵. These visions, moreover, are confirmed also by the comparative study “*Discrimination Phenomenon in Moldova: A citizen's Perception*”¹⁶, where over 80% of its respondents (74% women and 91% men) believe that men are the head of the family and their duty is to bring money into the house and do the physically hard work, while women have to take care of the household, do housework and raise children. Most of the times, this social position which is traditionally attributed to man after marriage, is associated by men as being the “master of the woman,” forgetting the fact that marriage itself represents a partnership based on a voluntary union between man and woman. This, incidentally, is also one of the explanations for the origin of the psychological violence focused on social isolation expressed by an excessive control over the woman, where the latter must ask permission from the man to participate in various social activities and where her opinions are not accepted.

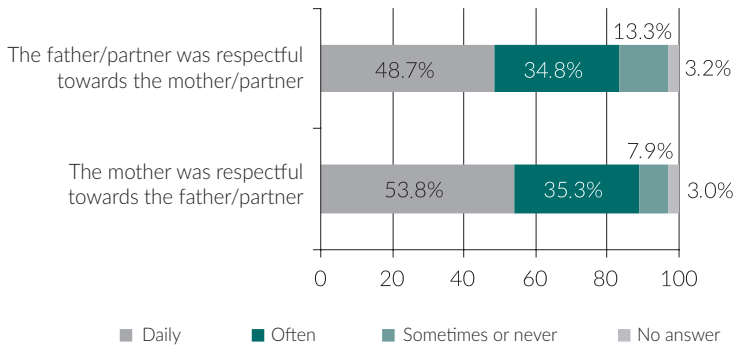
The degree of mutual respect within the men's families of origin, the frequency of cases of violence and its toleration by mothers, plays a significant role on the formation and transmission of attitudes in this regard. Thus, the data from the study carried out by the “Partnership for Development” Centre entitled “*Men and gender equality in the Republic of Moldova*”¹⁷ show that within the families of origin of people surveyed, the respect of fathers/spouses toward the mothers (48.7%) was lower than the one of mothers toward them (53.8%). Moreover, in the 13.3% of the cases, mothers were rarely or never treated

¹⁵ NBS/UN (2011). Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova. <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?!=ro&idc=350&id=3626>

¹⁶ IPP/Soros-Moldova/SOIR (2015). Moldovan people's perceptions on the phenomenon of discrimination: comparative study. <http://soros.md/files/publications/documents/Raport%20Nediscriminare%20analiza%20comparata.pdf>

¹⁷ PDC (2015). Men and gender equality in the Republic of Moldova. Based on the methodology IMAGES methodology. http://cdf.md/files/resources/B9/Studiul_B%20C4%83rba%20C8%9Bii%20C8%99i%20Egalitatea%20de%20gen%20C3%AEn%20Republica%20Moldova.pdf

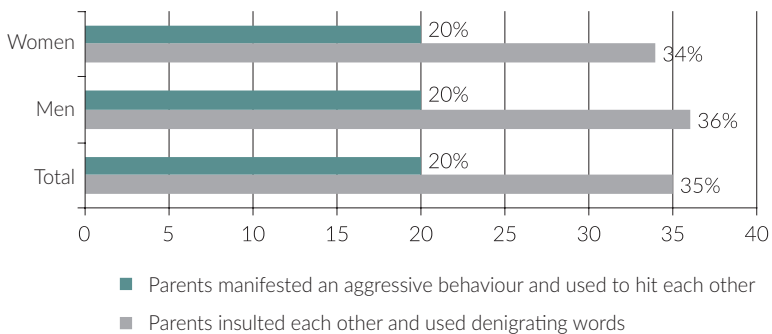
Figure 18. Degree of respect between parents within men’s families of origin %



Source: PDC “Men and gender equality in the Republic of Moldova”, 2015

with respect (Figure 18). Also, within the “La Strada” sociological survey “Opinions, perceptions and experiences of young people regarding family/couple violence”¹⁸, 35 percent of young respondents aged 15-34 years old reported that their parents injured each other and used denigrating words, while one-third of them said that their parents manifested an aggressive behaviour and used to hit each other (Figure 19).

Figure 19. Violent attitudes of the parents within the families of origin of the young people aged 15-34 years, %

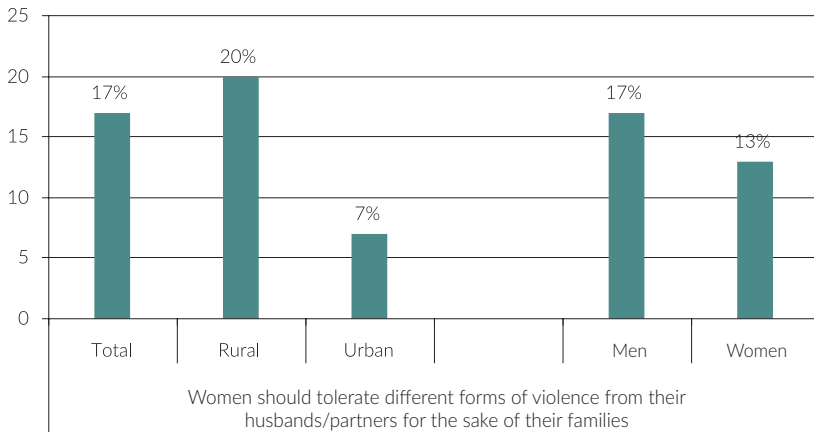


Source: CBS-AXA/La Strada “Opinions, perceptions and experiences of young people regarding family/couple violence”, 2014.

¹⁸ CBS- AXA/OAK Foundation/La Strada (2014). „Opinions, perceptions and experiences of young people regarding family violence”. http://www.lastrada.md/publicatii/ebook/Raport_Violenta_rom.pdf

The visions regarding the necessity of tolerating domestic violence by women are more pronounced among men. Thus, 27.7 percent of men and 17.5 percent of women who participated within the CPD study “*Men and Gender Equality in the Republic of Moldova*”¹⁹ expressed the opinion that women should tolerate violence in order to keep their families together. Moreover, 41.1 percent of men believed that there are occasions when the woman should be beaten, their share being more than twice as high than the number of women who agreed with this statement (19.1%). Similar visions have been also attested by the “*Opinions, perceptions and experiences of young people on couple/ domestic violence*” La Strada sociological study data, where 17 percent of the young respondents aged 15-34 agreed/totally agreed with the idea that women should tolerate different forms of violence from their husbands/partners for the sake of their families/couples. The proportion of the young people with such visions from rural areas (20%) is almost three times higher than those from urban ones (7%). These views are more pronounced by 4 p.p. among men (17%) than among women (13%) (Figure 20).

Figure 20. Visions of the young people on the necessity for women to tolerate domestic



Source: CBS-AXA, La Strada “Opinions, perceptions and experiences of young people regarding family/couple violence”, 2014

¹⁹ CDP (2015). Men and Gender Equality in the Republic of Moldova. Based on the IMAGES methodology. http://cdf.md/files/resources/89/Studiu_B%C4%83rba%C8%9Bii%20%C8%99i%20Egalitatea%20de%20gen%20%C3%AEn%20Republica%20Moldova.pdf

The experiences gained throughout childhood in the family of origin and in the community by women and men during the socialization process play a significant role on the formation of personal conduct at maturity, tolerance of violence and its replication. According to the NBS data on “*Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova*”²⁰, approximately 58.1% of women interviewed were abused, over their lifetime, by their natural fathers/stepfathers, while about 52% of them have been subjected to this form of violence several times. Moreover, 48% of the women were abused by their mothers/ stepmothers and about 34% by their brothers/sisters.

In addition, the La Strada study data on “*The realization of human rights of victims of domestic violence within the assistance and protection system of the Republic of Moldova*”²¹ report that the majority of the women-victims of domestic violence who were included in the survey came from families whose mothers, too, faced with such problems, which accustomed them to this phenomenon.

Another very important aspect that needs to be mentioned is the role that family plays in encouraging/discouraging women to report cases of violence, in supporting the reconciliation with the aggressor, or in carrying out all the actions necessary for stopping the acts of violence and/or holding the perpetrator liable. In this regard, the data from the NBS study “*Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova*” report that, besides the distrust in overcoming the problem (44.7%) and the shame (40.2%), the support from the family (19.5%) seems to be the third major reason for non-reporting cases of violence. In this regard, the percentage of rural women who do not report cases of violence and count on their family support is three times higher than the share of women from urban areas (28.1% and 8.5%). Moreover, the younger women are, the greater the support is. This kind of support is reduced as they age, which is explained by the loss of family members caused by the natural decrease (Figure 21).

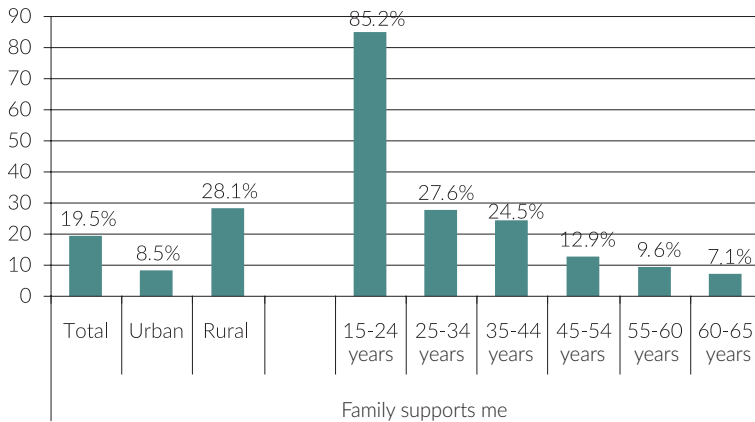
In comparison to the woman’s home family, the husband/spouse’s family represents the reference environment, but in relation to the community, it constitutes the secondary environment of woman’s belonging. Thus, coming up with a baggage filled with her own values and attitudes inherited from her own family, the woman is forced to accept and take on values and traditions existing in the husband/partner’s family, which does not preclude facing violent behaviour from the members of the new family. According to the data the NBS study “*Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova*”²², one-quarter of the women interviewed (25%) were, during their lifetime, subjected to multiple acts of physical violence from their father-in-law/mother-in-law, and 42.3% of them were physically aggressed by other members of the family.

²⁰ National Bureau of Statistics, 2011 <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=350&id=3626>

²¹ La Strada (2013). Study data on the realization of human rights of victims of domestic violence within the assistance and protection system of the Republic of Moldova. http://www.lastrada.md/publicatii/ebook/Violenta_raport_rom.pdf

²² National Bureau of Statistics, 2011 <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=350&id=3626>

Figure 21. Family support as a reason for non-reporting cases of violence



Source: NBS, "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova" survey, 2011

The community to which the woman belongs represents her reference environment, which plays an important role on the formation and perpetuation among its members of the perceptions and attitudes toward violence both within the family, as well as outside it. The data of the NBS study "*Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova*" show that the prevalence of physical violence against women **from other persons other than the spouse/partner** is a less widespread phenomenon. On average, approximately six percent of the total number of women included in the survey (7.4% from urban and 4.7% from rural areas) faced with such cases in their lifetime. This, however, does not mean that the rural women are facing such situations less frequently, but rather suggests the existence of more pronounced trends in reporting such cases among the women living in the urban areas. Most frequently subjected to physical violence outside the family are the young women aged 15-24 years old (9.2%), the prevalence of cases becoming lower as they age. Moreover, the aggressors are, most of the times, from the victim's immediate entourage, teacher/professor (7.2%), friends (6.4%), intimate partner (5.6%) and in only about 4 percent of the cases the perpetrator was a stranger²³.

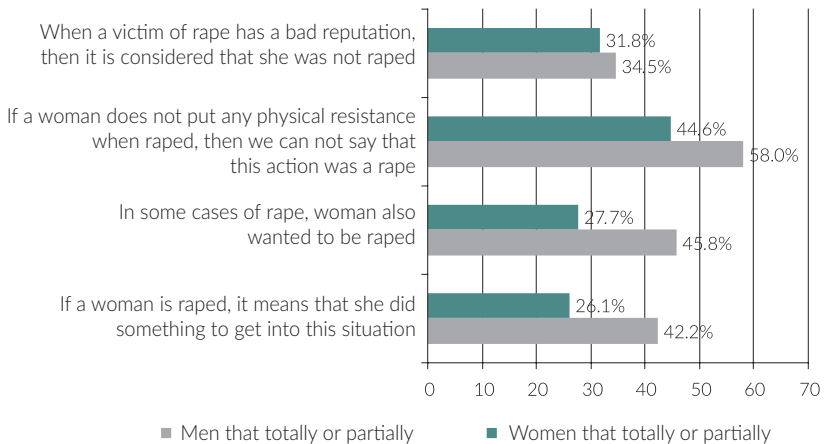
As for the degree of reporting possible cases of violence against women, identified by other persons, the survey data show that it is fairly low. Thus, more than one-third (35%) of the **young** respondents from the La Strada "*Opinions, perceptions and experi-*

²³ National Bureau of Statistics, 2011 <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=350&id=3626>

ences of young people regarding family/couple violence” sociological survey, said that they would not report such cases to anyone, while 15.2 percent of the men respondents from the CPD study “Men and Gender Equality in the Republic of Moldova”²⁴ said that they would never get involved in cases where a unknown person manifests a physically violent behaviour over a woman. In the cases where the abuser would be a friend, only 6.5 percent of men would call the police, while in the cases where the perpetrator would be a stranger, the share of men who would call the police is more than three times higher, namely 21.3 percent.

The community’s attitude toward rape as a form of sexual violence remains based on a series of stigmatized prejudices. According to 40% of the respondents²⁵, the woman is responsible for the occurrence of a rape, and in some cases, she wants this to happen, 58 percent believe that when raped a woman puts no physical resistance, then it cannot be considered rape, while 34.5 percent believe that such act should not be considered rape if the victim has a bad reputation (Figure 22).

Figure 22. Community’s attitudes toward rape, %



Source: CDF “Men and gender equality in the Republic of Moldova”, 2015

²⁴ CDP (2015). Men and Gender Equality in the Republic of Moldova. Based on the IMAGES methodology. http://cdf.md/files/resources/89/Studiul_B%C4%83rba%C8%9Bii%20%C8%99i%20Egalitatea%20de%20gen%20%C3%AEn%20Republica%20Moldova.pdf

²⁵ Ibidem.

IV. Opportunities that women-victims of violence benefit from or are deprived of

Currently, Moldova has a rather complex regulatory framework meant to ensure human rights, gender equality and, in particular, prevent and combat violence. In its turn, the institutional framework charged with preventing and combatting the phenomenon determined by the *Law on Preventing and Combatting Domestic Violence*²⁶ is also a wide one, comprising specialized public authorities from different administrative levels, consultative entities as well as specialized services and organizations working in the field. Moreover, the need to strengthen the inter-sector cooperation, including at different administrative levels, in terms of domestic violence intervention, resulted in the development and approval of a specific methodological framework in this regard within each involved sector (social protection, health, public order and security)²⁷, as well as in the formation of Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs) within the National Referral System (NRS). Nevertheless, the opportunities that women-victims and potential victims of violence, including domestic one, have in terms of benefiting from legally regulated protective measures continue to be reduced, being influenced by a number of factors such as: (i) the level of information as regards the relevant legal provisions and the existing rights; (ii) the degree of knowledge and awareness that domestic violence represents a punishable offence ; (iii) the low level of confidence in the possibility of obtaining safety and protection from the competent institutions, but also the dissatisfaction with the received assistance; (iv) the underdevelopment of the specialized social services for victims and perpetrators, and the level of information they hold about them.

The data obtained within the studies conducted in this area reflect that, despite the annual campaigns of information and public awareness on preventing and combating domestic violence, the population's awareness level as regards the existing legal provisions

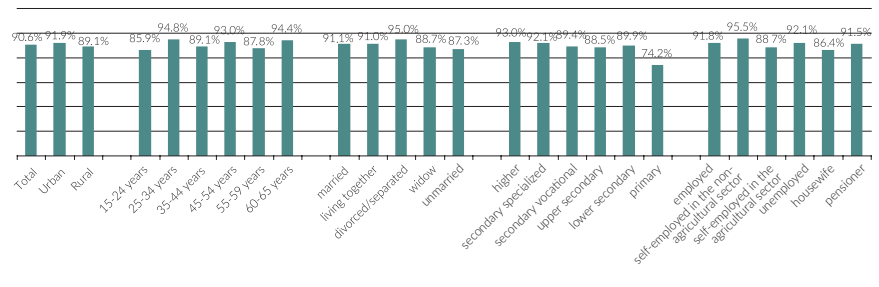
²⁶ The authorized bodies responsible for preventing and combating domestic violence are: a) specialized central public administration authorities (Ministry of Labor, Family, and Social Protection, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice); b) specialized local public administration authorities; c) social issue commissions attached to the local government authorities; d) centers/services for rehabilitation of victims and aggressors; of) other organizations with specialized activities in the field.

²⁷ MLSPF Order No. 22 dated February 9, 2012 approving the Instructions on intervention of the sections/divisions of social assistance, law enforcement bodies and medical institutions in cases of domestic violence; MLSPF Order No. 105 dated August 2, 2012 approving a set of instructions for local authorities on how to enforce their obligations in relation to preventing and combating domestic violence; MH Order No. 155 dated February 24, 2012 approving the instruction on the intervention of the medical institutions in cases of domestic violence; MIA Order No. 275 dated August 14, 2008 approving the new instructions on the police intervention to prevent and combat domestic violence.

in this area continue to be quite low. According to the NBS study “*Violence Against Women in the Republic of Moldova*,” only 42.2 percent of the interviewed women knew about the existence of the **Law on Preventing and Combatting Domestic Violence**, less informed in this regard being the rural women (36.2%) compared to the urban women (49.5%). The low level of information and knowledge in the field was also confirmed by the OSCE/La Strada study “*Existing practices on access to justice for victims of domestic violence and the realization of their right to legal assistance in the Republic of Moldova*”, according to which the majority of domestic violence victims found out about the relevant legislation and the rights they have only when they were placed in centres. Only one-quarter of victims interviewed who have received legal assistance, said they actually knew a little something about the legislation and their rights, because they have been informed by the law enforcement officials but, because of the state of crisis in which they were at the moment of reporting, few of them have been able to understand and memorize something about it²⁸.

Nevertheless, of the total number of women who said they knew about the Law, 9 out of 10 women confirmed that they also **knew about the existence of the protective orders**, provided by the given Law. There are no significant differences regarding the information level among the women-victims (91.7%) and non-victims (89.8%), but also among those living in urban (91.9%) and rural areas (89.1%). The awareness about the existence of the protective measures varies from 86 percent in the case of women aged 15-24 up to about 95%, in the case of the women aged 25-34 and 60-65 years old. Women with higher education show the highest level of information concerning the protective

Figure 23. Share of women who know about the existence of the protection order out of the total number of the interviewed women, who declared to be familiar with the Law No. 45, by residence, age groups, educational level, marital and occupational status, %



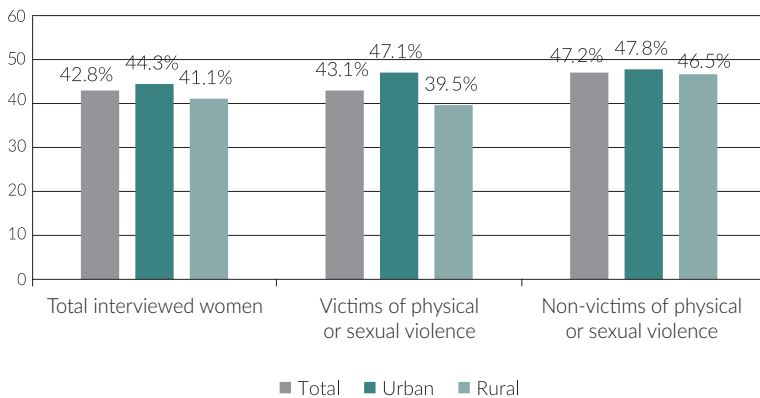
Source: NBS, “Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova” survey, 2011

²⁸ OSCE/La Strada (2014). “Existing practices on access to justice for victims of domestic violence and the realization of their right to legal assistance in the Republic of Moldova”. Study based on factual data. http://www.lastrada.md/publicatii/ebook/A5-Raport_DV_24_02_2015.pdf

measures (93%), while the lowest level is recorded among the women with primary education (74.2%). The least informed are the housewives (87%), while the best informed ones are the self-employed women in non-agricultural activities (95.5%)²⁹ (Figure 23).

The population's perceptions as regards the adequacy of the *Law on Preventing and Combatting Domestic Violence* in terms of its capacity to ensure real protection measures against violence are still quite pessimistic. Thus, according to the data of the NBS study "Violence Against Women in the Republic of Moldova," only 43 percent of the surveyed women (41.1% from rural areas and over 44.3% from urban ones) were of the opinion that the given law can provide a "de facto" protection against the domestic violence. The most sceptical in this respect are the women-victims of violence, of which only 41.3 percent believed that the Law in question is effective, but also the non-victim ones, of which only less than half (47.2%) were confident in the protective capacity of this Law. (Figure 24).

Figure 24. The share of women-victims and non-victims of physical or sexual violence who believe in the adequacy and effectiveness of the Law No. 45 to protect against domestic violence, by residence, %

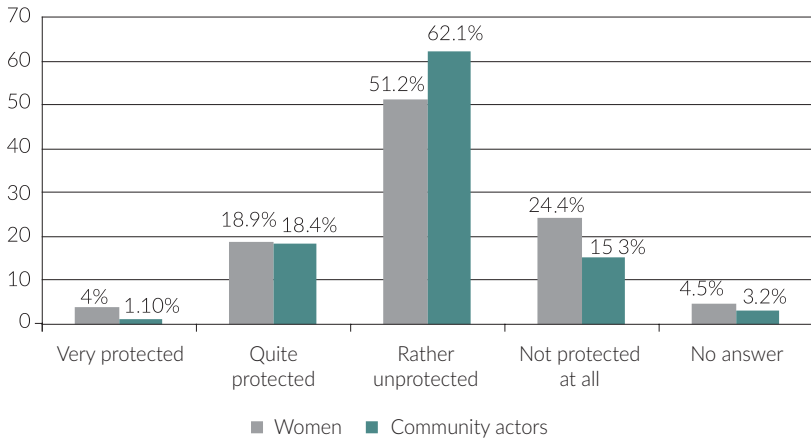


Source: NBS, "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova" survey, 2011

According to the representatives of the specialized public authorities at district and community levels, the protection offered by the given Law is only partial, since its implementation mechanisms need to be strengthened, making reference to aspects related to the obtaining and application of the protection orders as well as the lack of

²⁹ NBS/UN (2011). Violence Against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova. <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=350&id=3626>

Figure 25. The population's perceptions regarding the protection of women against domestic violence, %



Source: ADVANCE Project: "Domestic Violence and Its Prevention: Perceptions of the Phenomenon", 2015

specialized services for placement and rehabilitation at the local level. These findings are confirmed once again by the results of the *ADVANCE* study "*Domestic Violence and Its Prevention: Perceptions of the Phenomenon*,"³⁰ according to which about 73 percent of the interviewed women and over 77 percent of the community actors³¹ believed that the Moldovan women are not protected against domestic violence, including 21.4 percent and 15.3 percent respectively of them claimed that they are not protected at all. (Figure 25).

The access of women-victims and potential victims of violence, including domestic violence, to specialized social services is determined not only by the presence of these services within the community or their proximity, but also by the information level about the existence of those services as well as by the perception of the violence as a criminal offence. The data of the NBS study "*Violence Against Women in the Republic of Moldova*" show that only 62.8% of the women (63.5% from rural areas and 61.9% from urban ones), respectively 65.2% of women non-victims and 58.9% of women-victims knew about the existence of the Trust Line for women 080088008³².

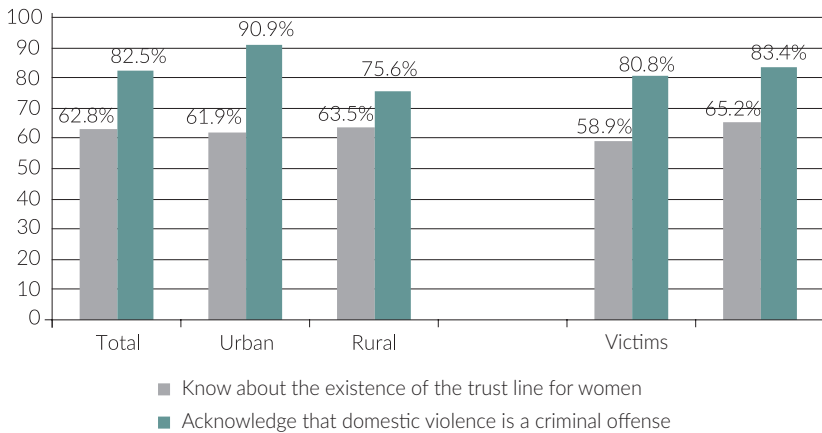
³⁰ Project Alleviating Domestic Violence and Abuse through New Community Efforts (ADVANCE) (2012). *Domestic Violence and Its Prevention: Perceptions of the Phenomenon*. Baseline survey conducted in the Cahul and Soroca districts.

³¹ According to the study methodology they were: at the district level - deputy mayors on the social field, specialists on social issues, chairmen of social development committees, heads of Social Assistance, Education, Youth and Sports departments, specialists from within social assistance departments; at the local level - mayors, secretaries, counselors, social workers, NGOs, educational institutions managers, economic agents, religious leaders, informal leaders.

³² The trust line for women, 0 8008 8008, is managed by the International Centre "La Strada" and operates from November 2, 2009.

Similar trends are observed also as regards information about the criminal character of domestic violence, and urban women were more informed in this regard (90.9%) versus rural women (75.6%) non-victims (83.4%) compared to victims (80.8%)³³ (Figure 26 a) and b). It should be noted that the awareness level is closely correlated with the education level of women, those with higher education being better informed about the existence of the Trust Line telephone (75.2%) and the criminal nature of the domestic violence (94.9%). On the other hand, the lowest level of information in this regard was observed among the women with secondary general education, of which only 51.2% knew about the existence of the Trust Line telephone, and 75% of the women with lower secondary education and 59.7% of those with primary education were aware of the fact that domestic violence is a criminal offence³⁴.

Figure 26 a). Level of information among women-victims and non-victims of physical or sexual violence about the trust line and the criminal nature of the domestic violence, by residence, %

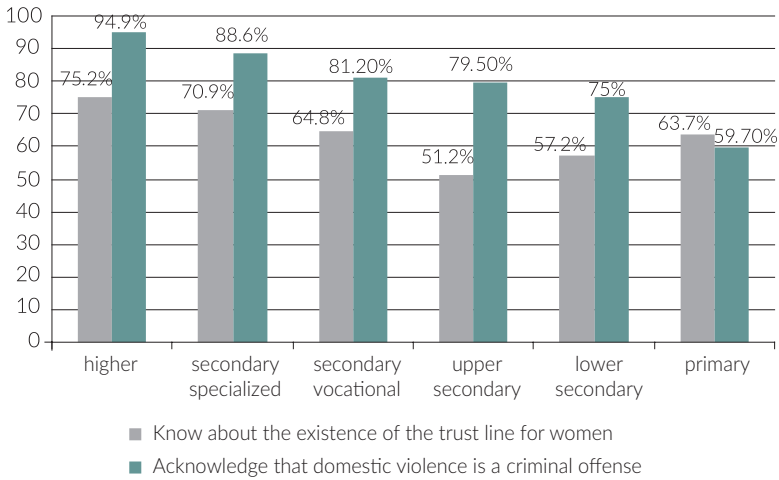


Source: NBS, "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova" survey, 2011

³³ NBS/UN (2011). Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova. <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=350&id=3626>.

³⁴ Ibidem.

Figure 26 b). Level of information among women as regards the Trust Line and the criminal nature of the domestic violence, by level of education, %



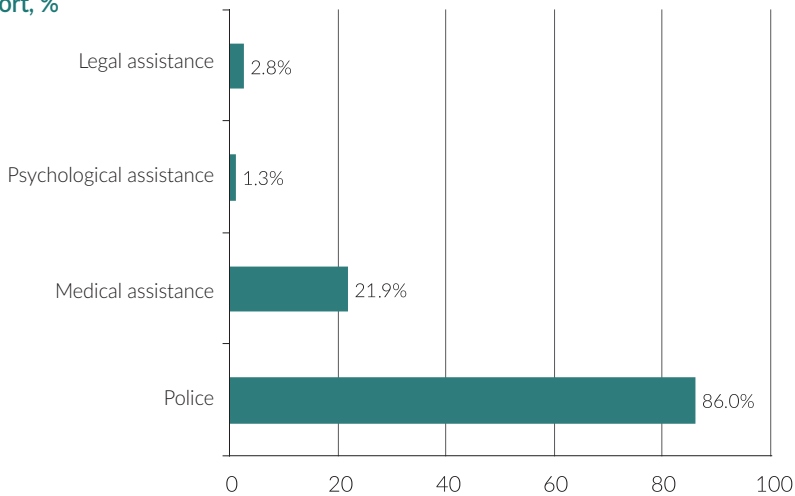
Source: NBS, "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova" survey, 2011

Although the majority of women-victims of domestic violence prefer to report the cases they were subjected to, to their families, relatives and/or friends, of the total number of victims who requested help from some authorities, the vast majority, 86%, have requested assistance from police, and approximately 21.9% from the health workers. The least amount resorted to legal (2.8%) and psychological aid (1.3%). None of the victims mentioned to have benefited from the services offered by the NGOs or the Social Assistance Service (Figure 27)³⁵.

According to the OSCE/La Strada study "*Existing practices on access to justice for victims of domestic violence and their right to legal assistance in the Republic of Moldova*," the extremely low level of legal knowledge significantly reduces the access of the women-victims of domestic violence to justice. Thus, they largely do not know what duties the police and the prosecutor have, they don't know that the crime of domestic violence is punishable by a fine and imprisonment. Moreover, the lack of information regarding the possibility of obtaining legal protection for free, which can be provided by NGOs

³⁵ Ibidem.

Figure 27. Share of women-victims of domestic violence who called for help out of the total number of the women who addressed the competent bodies for providing support, %



Source: NBS, "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova" survey, 2011

active in the field, often determines the victim (because of the lack of resources) to give up the idea of contracting the services of a defence counsel. Furthermore, judges mentioned that in the absence of a lawyer, victims of domestic violence rarely apply to courts by themselves, and those who manage to do this, are unaware of their rights, and need to be informed of legislation and have it explained, which they often do not understand³⁶. Although the *Law on Preventing and Combatting Domestic Violence* provides the right of the domestic violence victims to a primary and qualified legal assistance free of charge, guaranteed by the state³⁷, these are not found among the eligible categories for the given assistance under the *Moldovan Law on State Guaranteed Legal Aid*³⁸.

The access of women-victims to assistance and the protection measures and services against violence are also influenced by the level of involvement of competent authorities which has a major impact on the degree of satisfaction of support received and confidence in these institutions. The data of the study "*Violence against Women in the*

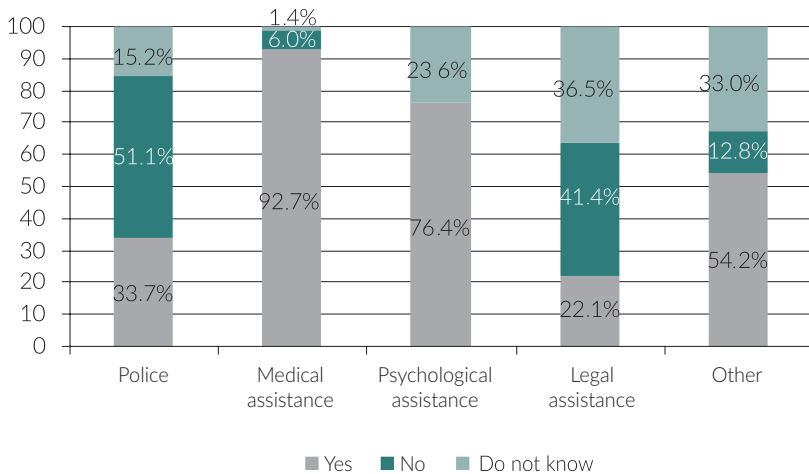
³⁶ OSCE/La Strada (2014). "Existing practices on access to justice for victims of domestic violence and the realization of their right to legal assistance in the Republic of Moldova". Study based on factual data. http://www.lastrada.md/publicatii/ebook/A5-Raport_DV_24_02_2015.pdf

³⁷ Art. 11 paragraph 5 of the Law No. 45 dated March 1, 2007, on Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence;

³⁸ Law No. 198 dated July 26, 2007 on State Guaranteed Legal Aid, <http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=325350>

Family in the Republic of Moldova” show that, despite the fact that police authorities are contacted most frequently by victims, the level of satisfaction with the support they provide is the lowest (33.7%). Among the main reasons for the dissatisfaction mentioned in this regard are: (i) lack of interest in solving the reported cases (74.8%); (ii) ineffectiveness of the provided services (57.7%) and (iii) treatment of the victims with rudeness, ignorance and unprofessionalism (32.5%) (Figure 28)³⁹.

Figure 28. Satisfaction degree of the women-victims of violence with the services provided by different authorities, %



Source: NBS, “Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova” survey, 2011

A number of these issues were also confirmed by the results of the thematic report “*Synthesis on Casework of Domestic Violence Manifestations*” prepared by the Institute of Parliamentary Advocates (Ombudsman), according to which among the main problems that led to Moldova’s condemnation by the ECHR were: (i) the failure of the sector operative officers to act promptly when they are informed about cases of domestic violence and even their biased attitude toward the perpetrators; (ii) the inability to remove the aggressor from home and ensure the execution of a protection order, and (iii) the failure to implement protection orders issued by the court. Therefore, victims are not sure that they will be protected by the police, and the fear makes them hesitate in using or renounce to the protection mechanisms provided by the state⁴⁰.

³⁹ NBS/UN (2011). Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova. <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=350&id=3626>

⁴⁰ People’s Advocate (Ombudsman) (2014). Thematic Report “Synthesis on Casework of domestic violence manifestations”. http://www.ombudsman.md/sites/default/files/document/attachments/cazuistica_manifestarilorde_violenta_domestica2014.pdf

The highest level of satisfaction among women-victims was referring to the services provided by the health workers (92.7%) and by the psychologists (76.4%) (Figure 28). Moreover, among the main reasons for the low level of satisfaction with the health services were the lack of interest and the poor conditions of the institution. As regards the legal aid services, the main reasons identified by over two-thirds of the women-victims (60.5%) were the lack of interest and ineffective management of the cases⁴¹. The degree of satisfaction with the involvement of the mayors and social workers is also quite low. According to the data of the OSCE/La Strada study “*Existing practices on access to justice for victims of domestic violence and the realization of their right to legal assistance in the Republic of Moldova,*” half of the assisted victims indicated that, even though the social worker and the mayor knew about the acts of violence in their family, they have not provided them with any information about their rights and the procedure related to their protection. In addition, it was mentioned that the social worker and the police officer often stopped conducting monitoring visits on the enforcement of the protection orders, which constituted a reason for dissatisfaction and low credibility⁴². Another important aspect influencing the way victims regard the capacity of social protection is seen in the underdevelopment of specialized social services for victims and perpetrators at the local level. At the end of 2014, there were 16 centres providing services to victims of domestic violence active at the national level, of which only one had refugee status in the Chisinau Municipality, the others being maternity centres or centres aimed at protecting the victims of human trafficking. There was only one centre of rehabilitation and re-socialization of the offenders⁴³.

⁴¹ NBS/UN (2011). Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova. <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=350&id=3626>

⁴² OSCE/La Strada (2014). “Existing practices on access to justice for victims of domestic violence and the realization of their right to legal assistance in the Republic of Moldova”. Study based on factual data. http://www.lastrada.md/publicatii/ebook/A5-Raport_DV_24_02_2015.pdf

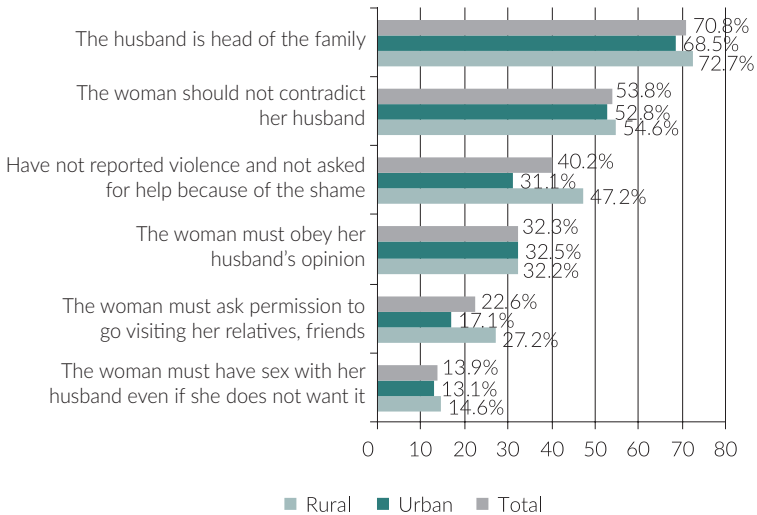
⁴³ Conclusions of the Roundtable: Mechanisms to combat domestic violence in Moldova: problems and solutions. <http://www.ombudsman.md/ro/content/masa-rotunda-mecanisme-de-combatere-violentei-domesticerepublica-moldova-probleme-si>

V. Limitations, barriers and obstacles faced by women-victims of violence in the society

The analysis carried out with regard to violence against women reports the complexity of the phenomenon caused by the plurality of determining factors such as: (i) historical-cultural, (ii) social, (iii) economic, (iv) psychological as well as (v) institutional, which also serve as barriers inhibiting the capacity of women to live in a safe and not abusive environment, as well as to fully participate to the formation and use of sustainable development results.

The **historical and cultural** factors form the basis of women's vulnerability toward the violence phenomenon. In particular, the persistence of stereotypes insisting on gender inequality, tolerance of violence, shame and social exclusion can be mentioned; these incidentally, ensure an intergenerational continuation of this phenomenon. The NBS

Figure 29. Perceptions and attitudes of women-victims and non-victims of physical or sexual violence as regards violent behaviour of the husband/partner, %



study “*Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova*” confirms the wide persistence of such perceptions are held even among women. Thus, 70.8 percent believe that the husband is head of the family, 32.3 percent accept the idea that it is necessary to obey the husband/partner even though they have a different opinion, 53.8 percent believe that women should not contradict their husbands in the presence of other persons, or that they should ask permission from their husbands to visit their relatives (22.6%) and what is more, to have sexual relations with their husbands even though they do not want this (13.9%) (Figure 29). It should be noted that the values of these indicators are higher in the rural areas⁴⁴.

Moreover, 40.2 percent of the women (47.2% from rural and 31.1% from urban areas) mentioned that the feeling of **shame** played a decisive role in not reporting cases of violence⁴⁵, thus becoming a factor that restricts the woman’s capacity to protect herself.

These findings are also supported by other studies conducted in the given field during recent years. Thus, the data of La Strada study on “*The achievement of human rights of the victims of domestic violence within the assistance and protection system of the Republic of Moldova*”⁴⁶ report that the feeling of shame and fear of being marginalized served as the main causes determining women-victims of violence not asking for assistance and protection.

Moreover, as was also mentioned in chapter III of this analytical note, violent behaviour and attitudes toward violence are based on childhood experiences, both of the victims and the aggressors, which ensure their perpetuation and replication at maturity. This confirms the worldwide findings and knowledge regarding the correlation between the physical violence experience in childhood and the perpetuation of this scourge from generation to generation. In this regard, the data of the study “*Men and gender equality in the Republic of Moldova*”⁴⁷ conducted by the Centre for Women’s Rights, report that over 70 percent of men participating in the research were subjected in childhood to physical violence and/or humiliation by their parents or other adults from the house, in the presence of other persons. Moreover, 22.1 percent of male respondents revealed that during childhood they saw how their mothers were sometimes beaten by husbands/partners, and in the families of 5.2 percent of men, this happened frequently or daily (Figure 30). Meanwhile, the number of men who have never seen their mothers being beaten is higher among the younger generations.

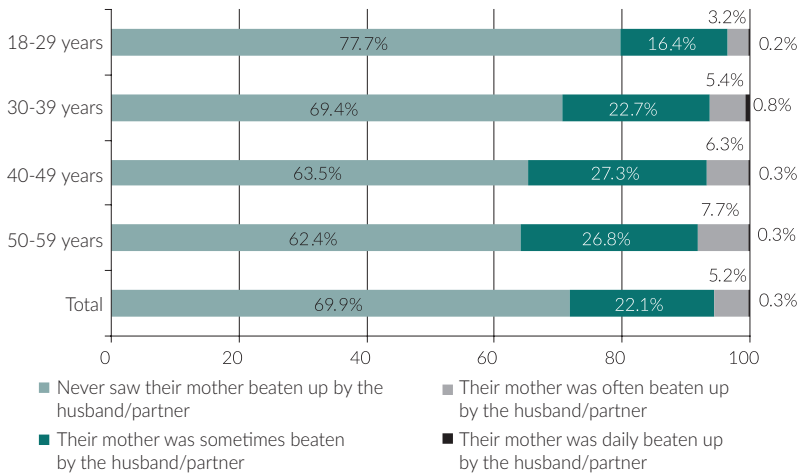
⁴⁴ NBS (2011). Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova. <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=350&id=3626>

⁴⁵ Ibidem

⁴⁶ La Strada (2013) Study on the realization of human rights of victims of domestic violence within the assistance and protection system of the Republic of Moldova. http://www.lastrada.md/publicatii/ebook/Violenta_raport_rom.pdf

⁴⁷ CDF (2015). Men and gender equality in the Republic of Moldova. Based on the IMAGES methodology. http://cdf.md/files/resources/89/Studiu_B%C4%83rba%C8%9Bii%20%C8%99i%20Egalitatea%20de%20gen%20%C3%AEn%20Republica%20Moldova.pdf

Figure 30. Percentage of the men who saw in childhood their mother being beaten by husbands/partners, %



Source: CDF "Men and gender equality in the Republic of Moldova", 2015

The historical-cultural factors are also associated with society's general tolerance toward the phenomenon of violence, which turns it into a phenomenon with a hidden nature reflected in women's preference to report cases only to the family, relatives and/or friends and only the severe cases to the competent authorities. The comparison of the prevalence of cases of violence measured within the NBS study, with the data relating to young people's perceptions who were interviewed during the La Strada survey would be recommended at this point⁴⁸. On the one hand, rural women are victimized more often than those from urban areas. For example, 30.1 percent of urban and 47.3 percent of rural women were subjected to physical violence over their lifetime⁴⁹. On the other hand, the urban youth have recorded an increased level of the phenomenon spreading within their community (46%) than those from rural areas (30%)⁵⁰.

For their part, the **social factors** persistent within the society, cumulated from several studies conducted in the field, are expressed through: alcohol consumption, jealousy, infidelity, lack of employment and poverty, lack of education, the inability to find a peaceful solution to conflicts. These factors have been highlighted in several studies. Thus, according to the NBS study "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova," 66.5% of the women-victims of physical and sexual violence, 38.7% of

⁴⁸ CBS-AXA/La Strada (2014). Opinions, perceptions and experiences of young people regarding family/couple violence. http://www.lastrada.md/publicatii/ebook/Raport_Violenta_rom.pdf

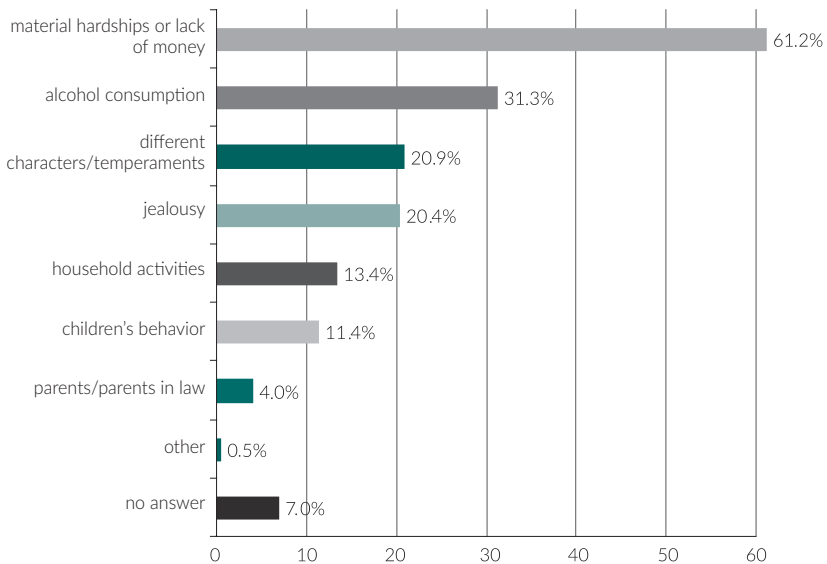
⁴⁹ NBS (2011). Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova. <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=350&id=3626>

⁵⁰ CBS-AXA/La Strada (2014). Opinions, perceptions and experiences of young people regarding family/couple violence. http://www.lastrada.md/publicatii/ebook/Raport_Violenta_rom.pdf

victims of physical violence and 30.2% of women-victims of psychological violence, have mentioned excessive alcohol consumption as the main reason for their husbands/partners acting violently toward them. Moreover, the lack of a job causing their husbands' stress/irritation and violent behaviour over the last year was stated as a reason by more than 23% of the victims of physical, sexual and psychological violence and 24.9% of the victims of physical violence. The third trigger for violent actions is family problems communicated by 41.7% of the women-victims of psychological and physical violence and by 43.6% of the victims of sexual violence⁵¹.

Likewise, the data of the CDF study “*Men and gender equality in the Republic of Moldova*” reflect that over two-thirds of the respondent women indicated consumption of alcohol as the main cause of a man's violence while one-third of men have invoked woman's consumption of alcohol and **infidelity as a reason for violence**. In this context, experts have pointed to the **complexes** that men have, but also the **inactions** of women for stopping the violent behaviour. Moreover, one-third of the male and female respondents have invoked the **inability to find a peaceful solution** to the conflicts as the reason for violence. Furthermore, **migration** has caused double repercussions for the domestic violence phenomenon, on the one hand, contributing to its increase, as

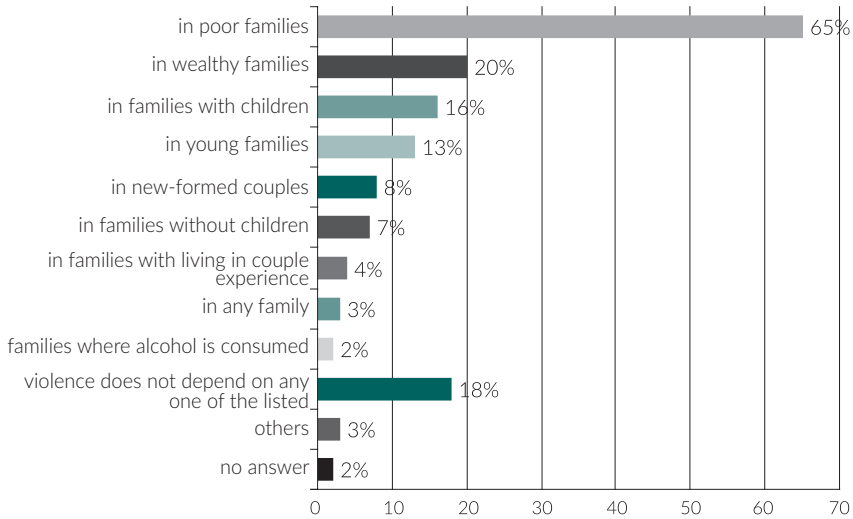
Figure 31. Causes leading to the occurrence of problems/quarrels within the respondents' couples



Source: ADVANCE project “Domestic Violence and Its Prevention: Perceptions of the Phenomenon”

⁵¹ NBS (2011). Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova. <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=350&id=3626>

Figure 32. Risk of violence within the family/couple, multiple answers, %



Source: ADVANCE project "Domestic Violence and Its Prevention: Perceptions of the Phenomenon"

evidenced by 35.6% of the women and 33.9% of the men. On the other hand, however, it generated an increased number of women who do not tolerate domestic violence, this being supported by 51.8% of the women and 42.1% of the men⁵² participating in the study.

Poverty and alcohol consumption as key reasons of the problems/quarrels that lead to violence were also highlighted by the data of the study "*Domestic Violence and Its Prevention: Perceptions of the Phenomenon*", conducted within the project Alleviating Domestic Violence and Abuse through New Community Efforts (ADVANCE), among the **women** from Cahul and Soroca districts in 2012 (Figure 31). **Young people** interviewed during the La Strada study⁵³ have also mentioned that an increased risk of violence persists in the poor families, the respective share being more than triple compared to other types of families/couples (Figure 32).

Another group of factors are the **economic** ones. Here we refer to the economic dependence of women to men because of the outdated labour market disparities, such as the

⁵² CDF (2015). Men and gender equality in the Republic of Moldova. Based on the IMAGES methodology. http://cdf.md/files/resources/89/Studiul_B%20C4%83rba%20C8%9Bii%20C8%99i%20Egalitatea%20de%20gen%20C3%AEen%20Republica%20Moldova.pdf

⁵³ CBS-AXA/La Strada (2014). Opinions, perceptions and experiences of young people regarding family/couple violence. http://www.lastrada.md/publicatii/ebook/Raport_Violenta_rom.pdf

inequality in employment and labour remuneration, which subsequently results in unequal pensions. Moreover, the women's succeeding on the labour market, as opposed to men, is affected by the fact that taking leave to raise children is almost exclusively done by women, which leads to an interruption of women's careers for several years. In this way, besides her income generating activities, the woman has a "dual career", taking on the burden of the unpaid work, which significantly reduces her leisure time. The data of the NBS survey on time use⁵⁴ by the population of Moldova report that the women's unpaid work in the household is on average 4.9 hours per day, being of 2.3 times more than men. If it could be calculated in macroeconomic terms, the amount of the unpaid work performed by women in households during one year would be equivalent to the Gross Domestic Product⁵⁵.

The economic dependence on an aggressive husband/partner is also one of the reasons discouraging the reporting of cases of violence. Thus, women are forced to endure the violence because they have no alternative, have no possibility to leave and rebuild their lives outside the abusive environment, namely, to maintain themselves and their children, to rent a house, especially in rural areas. Another complementary reason discouraging the reporting of cases to violence, from an economic perspective, is the fact that, very often, the victims of violence are put in a position to make a decision before deciding whether to denounce the aggressor or not, because they will be the ones to pay the penalties imposed on him⁵⁶.

As regards economically independent women, the data of the NBS study "*Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova*"⁵⁷ reflect that their status within the families continues to be an unequal one with reduced capacities for negotiation.. Over one-third of these women are victims of economic violence, while the violent behaviour of the spouses/partners is often generated also by their inferiority complex, rooted in the paternalistic visions of the society supporting the idea that the man is the head of the family and the main earner. In this context, 8 out of 10 women said they have experienced at least once in their lifetime the situation when their husband/partner refused to give the amount of money necessary to cover the current expenses of the household, and in the case of 4 out of 10 women, the husband/partner takes the money earned by them.

⁵⁴ NBS/UNDP/UN Women/Government of Sweden (2015). The importance of the unpaid work in the Republic of Moldova. Analytical note prepared based on the results of the study "Time use by women and men in Moldova"; http://www.statistica.md/public/files/publicatii_electronice/Utilizarea_timpului_RM/Note_analitice_rom/07_brosur_ROM.pdf

⁵⁵ Estimation compared with 2012, when the information for the study "Time use by women and men in Moldova" was collected

⁵⁶ La Strada (2013) Study on the realization of human rights of victims of domestic violence within the assistance and protection system of the Republic of Moldova. http://www.lastrada.md/publicatii/ebook/Violenta_raport_rom.pdf.

⁵⁷ NBS (2011). Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova. <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&idc=350&id=3626>

The *psychological barriers* are generated by the post traumatic stress and results in the inability of the victim to break the vicious circle of violence, fear, disorientation and dependence on the aggressor, self-blame and the lack of confidence in changing the situation, or the erroneous confidence in the possibility of solving the problem alone, including the distrust as regards the protection mechanisms and the institutions and organizations providing them. In this context, the data of the NBS study “*Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova*”⁵⁸ show that 44.7 percent of the women surveyed said they would not report cases of violence because these are their own problems and they are able to manage them by themselves, without resorting to the help of someone. In their turn, the data of the la Strada study on “*The realization of human rights of victims of domestic violence within the assistance and protection system of the Republic of Moldova*”⁵⁹ relate that the majority of the women-victims of violence, which were included in the survey, came from families where their mothers were also victims of this phenomenon, which created them a habit of distorting the perceptions regarding the normality in this regard. Thus, more than half of these women, although they were victims of domestic violence, have not requested assistance and protection because they did not identify themselves as victims⁶⁰.

The distrust of the women-victims of violence in the protection mechanisms and the safety they can provide also represents a key-determinant of the underreporting of cases of violence. Thus, the ADVANCE study “*Domestic Violence and Its Prevention: Perceptions of the Phenomenon*” suggests that **fear** is the main cause of the low degree of protection against domestic violence. Nevertheless, is it necessary to stress the fact that the feeling of fear refers not only to the aggressor. On the one hand, the fear to be punished by the aggressor emphasizes once more the lack of confidence in the system and the human rights protection bodies, while the fear related to the aggressor’s revenge is associated, in the victim’s vision, with the underdeveloped institutional framework (there are no institutions dealing with the protection against violence - 17.9%), but also with the distrust in such institutions (15.9%).

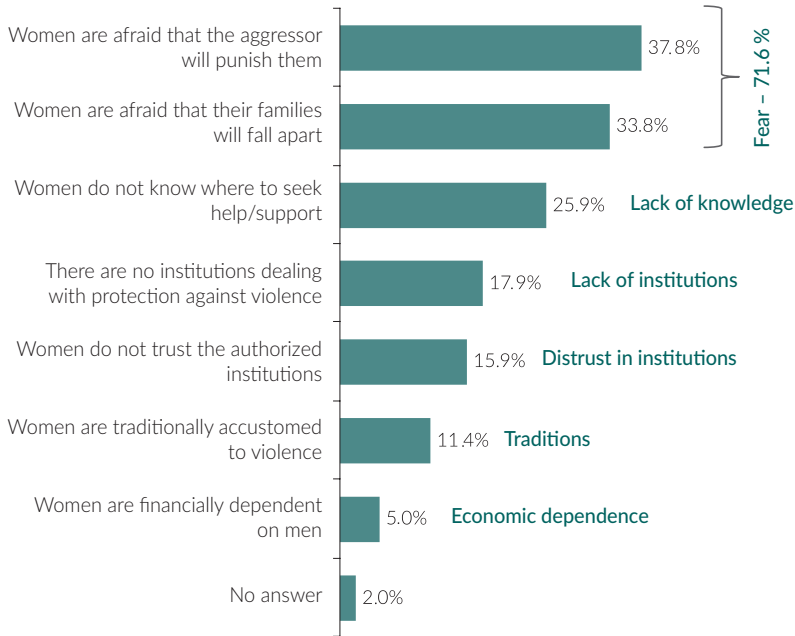
On the other hand, fear emerges also from the multi-dimensional dependence of the woman in conjugal relations, from an economic perspective and social control perspective. A third of the women surveyed associate the general fear of woman with a possible family break-up. This fear is largely based on the dependence of woman within the family, and is of a traditional nature, when the victim is more worried about the **financial security of the children**.

⁵⁸ NBS (2011). Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova

⁵⁹ La Strada (2013) Study on the realization of human rights of victims of domestic violence within the assistance and protection system of the Republic of Moldova. http://www.lastrada.md/publicatii/ebook/Violenta_raport_rom.pdf

⁶⁰ Authors’ calculations based on the La Strada study on the realization of human rights of victims of domestic violence within the assistance and protection system of the Republic of Moldova. http://www.lastrada.md/publicatii/ebook/Violenta_raport_rom.pdf

Figure 33. Psychological factors preventing the victim from breaking the vicious circle of domestic violence



Source: ADVANCE project "Domestic Violence and Its Prevention: Perceptions of the Phenomenon"

In almost all cases children remain in the custody of the mother who is responsible for their maintenance because of the lack of effective mechanisms making sure the father properly contributes to the material maintenance of the children after the divorce. Moreover, the traditional character of this factor, is highlighted within the study, makes it closer to another in that violence is not a new phenomenon for Moldova, but is reflected in the **historical traditions** of the society – “women are accustomed to violence” (11.4%) (Figure 33).

It should be mentioned that also the **insufficient information** and the underdevelopment, including the lack of the local specialized social services for the protection and assistance of the victims of violence represents a complementary factor that diminishes the reliability into the existing mechanism for protection and reporting cases.

Generalized from several studies and analyses conducted in the field, the **institutional barriers** faced by the women-victims of violence, including the domestic one, are expressed through: (i) the persistence and transposition of the patriarchal values at the institutional level which prevents tackling violence as a social problem and holding the perpetrators liable; (ii) the passive role adopted by some mayors, members of multi-disciplinary teams, but also social workers toward the cases of violence occurred within families and the community; (iii) the belated and often unbiased intervention of the representatives from the public order and security institutions in the reported cases; (iv) the inability of ensuring a *de facto* safety and protection because of the impossibility to isolate the aggressor from home, as well as to ensure and control, in these conditions, the execution of the protection order; (v) the failure to apply protective measures when issuing court protection orders⁶¹; the limited access to justice because of the inability of paying the court fees and hiring a lawyer caused by the ineligibility for obtaining state guaranteed legal assistance⁶²; (vii) the difficulties in gathering evidence while guaranteeing the confidentiality of the victim; (viii) the difficulties of starting the investigation of the cases, especially those related to psychological violence, because of the lack of psychologists in the rural communities, other trained specialists or some centres that could provide such probative expertise; and last but not least (ix) the underdevelopment of the network of specialized social services for the assistance and protection of victims and the aggressors' rehabilitation; (x) the inconsistency of the provided social services, as well as the minimization of their effect by placing the victim back into the abusive environment and (xi) the lack of an integrated monitoring system based on data and statistical indicators that would allow to follow up the phenomenon evolution in its entirety⁶³.

⁶¹ People's Advocate (Ombudsman) (2014). Thematic Report "Synthesis on Casework of domestic violence manifestations". http://www.ombudsman.md/sites/default/files/document/attachments/cazuistica_manifestarilorde_violenta_domestica2014.pdf

⁶² Law No. 198 dated July 26, 2007 on State-Guaranteed Legal Aid. <http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=325350>

⁶³ NBS (2011). Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova. La Strada (2013) Study on the realization of human rights of victims of domestic violence within the assistance and protection system of the Republic of Moldova. http://www.lastrada.md/publicatii/ebook/Violenta_raport_rom.pdf

Conclusions and recommendations

In the Republic of Moldova, violence affects women especially because of the entrenched stereotypes and beliefs regarding the traditional patriarchal gender roles within the family and society. The violence itself, as a social phenomenon, implies two forms of manifestation - domestic violence (committed by the husband/partner, other family relatives) and violent acts committed against women by other persons within the community, the first form occurring more frequently. Thus, according to the existing studies, every sixth woman has been subjected in her lifetime to at least one form of domestic violence, and about 6 percent of them faced violence outside the family, 12 percent of all women were subjected to several forms of violence (psychological, physical and sexual). Thus, as regards the domestic violence, the frequency of cases of physical violence committed against women outside the family is much lower.

The dimensions of violence against women in general and within the family in particular, continue to be underestimated. This is largely due to the fairly high degree of under-reporting caused by such factors as: (i) the stereotyped and stigmatized convictions of the society, shame; (ii) the post traumatic stress effects; (iii) the material dependence on the aggressor and the fear of worse abuse; (iv) the underdevelopment of specialized services, especially in rural communities, and the insufficient knowledge about the existing protection measures and (v) the reduced credibility in the protection-oriented capacities of the relevant institutions and organizations.

Rural women are predominantly subjected to domestic violence and a more pronounced lifelong prevalence of this phenomenon being observed among those aged 45-59. More than half of the younger women, aged 15-44, are experiencing outbursts of domestic violence. The educational level, as well as the employment and marital status correlate with the women's vulnerability toward the domestic violence. Thus, the most exposed in this regard are the women with lower educational levels, who are self-employed in agricultural activities, divorced or separated women and widows. Over one-third of women-victims who have suffered of at least one form of domestic violence throughout their lives have a higher level of education than their partners, while every second woman-victim of violence has the same level of education as her husband/partner. In general, the violence prevalence rate is lower when the husband has a higher educational level or both spouses/partners have the same educational level.

As regards violence committed against women outside the family, the most affected women over their lifetime are young urban women, with a secondary specialized or vocational education level, living in cohabiting relationships. The frequency of this form of violence is multiple, and the perpetrators are predominantly persons from the woman's entourage, namely parents, brothers/sisters, in-laws, relatives or teachers.

Women are facing multiple forms of violence, but the only acts recognized by the population are acts of physical or verbal violence, while slapping and the pushing are most often not even perceived as violent acts (even though every third woman was slapped and every fourth woman was shoved at least once over lifetime).

The family of origin, but also childhood experiences play a decisive role on the formation of visions and attitudes toward violence, its replication in adulthood and intergenerational transmission. Domestic violence committed against mothers can create a behavioural pattern and distorted perception in this regard among their daughters who, once they reach the age of maturity and find themselves faced with this phenomenon, do not, in the majority of cases, identify themselves as its victims.

Factors causing violence are multiple and interdependent, serving at the same time as barriers influencing the capacity of the women to live in a safe and non-abusive environment, as well as preventing them from fully participating in the formation and use of sustainable development. The *cultural-historical* factors are based on the persistence of stereotypes on gender equality, these being perceived by the women themselves as: adherence to their husbands' opinions even though they hold a different point of view, refraining from contradicting their husbands in the presence of others, asking the man's permission to go visit relatives etc. This group of factors is also associated with society's tolerance, in general, toward the phenomenon of violence.

Thus, in order to reduce the intensity of this phenomenon in the consciousness of the population, several **measures directed toward informing and promoting** gender equality and not tolerating violence as well as educating people in overcoming the stereotyped visions should be undertaken. In this context, an important role is expected to be played by the education system, the media and the civil society in the coming years.

Also extremely important are social factors, such as alcohol consumption, jealousy and infidelity, unemployment and poverty, lack of education and the inability to find a peaceful solution to conflicts, which have all been listed by studies conducted in the field as the main causes of problems/quarrels that lead to domestic violence. Moreover, migration as a social phenomenon, has generated double repercussions for the phenomenon of domestic violence, on the one hand, contributing to its increase, and on the other hand, resulting in a growing number of women who cannot tolerate such actions.

Another group of factors are the *economic* ones, such as the economic dependence of women on men because of existing disparities on the labour market, inequalities in terms of wages and employment, resulting in lower pensions. The successes achieved by women on the labour market, unlike men, are affected by the fact that leave for child-care is almost exclusively taken by women, which results in women's career ascension being interrupted for several years. Appropriate **labour market policies** that would exclude discrimination in employment, which *de facto* lead to disparities in labour re-

muneration, are necessary. Moreover, **active measures** that would **stimulate and support the equal participation** of spouses in the child-rearing process should also be included into the family-oriented policies. An example in this regard would be the experience of Sweden, which divided childcare leave between spouses/partners, giving them the option to choose the most convenient period. In addition, some effective and lucrative **mechanisms** that would oblige the husband/father to adequately contribute to the material maintenance of the family and children after the divorce, which would help reduce the acceptance of this phenomenon, should be implemented.

The *psychological* factors are caused by the post traumatic stress and results in the inability of the victim to break the vicious circle of violence, fear, disorientation and dependence on the abuser, self-blame and hopelessness, or the erroneous confidence in the possibility of solving the problem independently, including the distrust in the mechanisms of protection and the responsible institutions and organizations. In this context, it is necessary to develop and **strengthen the support and counselling services** provided locally, so that the prompt intervention in cases of post traumatic stress, meant to reduce repeated victimization as well as determine the degree of the caused damage, could be ensured.

In their r turn, the *institutional* factors faced by women victims of violence are expressed through: (i) the persistence and transposition of patriarchal values at the institutional level resulting in the adoption of a passive or sometimes formal role in approaching domestic violence, which, incidentally, reduces the victims' confidence in specialized institutions; (ii) the low level of information on their rights, which significantly influences access to the existing protection measures and services, including the access to justice; (iii) the poorly developed local specialized social services for victims and perpetrators.

Therefore, there is an absolute necessity for adopting a **comprehensive approach aimed at tackling this phenomenon**, which justifies once again the need for Moldova's accession to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combatting violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention⁶⁴), but also the implementation of the set of proposals formulated by civil society within the Gender Equality Agenda⁶⁵. Moreover, it is necessary to create an **integral monitoring system** based on statistical indicators and automated informational resources that would allow tracking the evolution of this phenomenon in its entirety as well as developing and targeting the data-based policies.

⁶⁴ The Istanbul Convention was adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on April 7, 2011. It was opened for signature on May 11, 2011 on the occasion of the 121st Session of the Committee of Ministers that took place in Istanbul. Following the 10th ratification operated by state of Andorra on April 22, 2014, the Convention entered into force on 1 August 2014. To date, the Convention has been signed by 20 states and ratified by 18 States Parties as: Albania, Andorra, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Denmark, Finland, France, Italy, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden and Turkey.

⁶⁵ Gender Equality Agenda. Proposals for the Governance Programme on Promoting Gender Equality 2014-2018. <http://cdf.md/rom/news/propuneri-pentru-promovarea-egalitatii-de-gen>

