

STUDY



PERCEPTIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Chisinau 2018

STUDI U

PERCEPTIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Based on the qualitative and quantitative study, excluding the Transnistrian region.

Data collection during July – September 2018

CHISINAU 2018



**MINISTRY OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF DENMARK**
Danida



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Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
DNK	Do not know
EU	European Union
FG	Focus Group
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
II	In-depth interview
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
LPA	Local Public Authority
NHIC	National Health Insurance Company
NR	Non-response

Introduction

Human rights' assurance has long ago exceeded the stage of embedding international standards in the national legal framework. Most of the UN human rights monitoring mechanisms have established in their concluding remarks after reviewing the Republic of Moldova in 2016 – 2017 that the legal framework in the country generally meets the human rights standards set at the international level.

At the same time, backlogs were registered in relation to rights' implementation.

Different measurement methods may be used for assessing the extent to which human rights are ensured. As a rule, human rights – specific indicators are used. Indicators may be objective or subjective, being process- or result-oriented. Usually, a set of indicators of different level is used to measure the level of human rights' observance, as every type of indicators has its strong and weak sides.

The perceptions of rights' holders regarding the level of their own rights' fulfillment generate subjective indicators, which being correlated with objective indicators may provide a clear picture of the current situation, as well as potential ways of improving the given situation.

The aim of this study was to measure the fulfillment of human rights in the perception of rights' holders, thus obtaining subjective indicators for measuring the level of rights' assurance in the Republic of Moldova. Taking into consideration the interdependence of rights through correlation of some indicators, attempts were made to identify the cause-effect links between the backlogs related to different rights' assurance.

The analytical process was focused on assessing the trends registered among the perceptions of rights' holders in relation to the level of their own rights' assurance over the last two years, by comparing the data obtained in 2018 with the data of a similar study performed in 2016.

The theoretical basis for formulating the questionnaire for assessing the level of different rights' observance was the content framework related to human rights and obligations related to fundamental rights. Hence, the so-called 3AQ formula (Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability, Quality)¹ was used in relation to the normative content of economic and social rights. In line with the availability criterion, the rights' assurance system should be composed of institutions, which are able to provide the relevant services. The availability implies the existence, in principle, of institutions that provide services in the area of a specific right.

Accessibility implies that if there are institutions that provide services, they should be accessible for rights' holders with no discrimination. Accessibility is composed of four interrelated terms: non-discrimination, physical accessibility, affordability, and information accessibility.

Acceptability refers to the fact that services should take into consideration the cultural or context peculiarities of the rights' holder, for the last one to be able to accept the suggested services.²

Quality is the element, which substantiates the social and economic rights. It is not enough for services to be available, accessible and acceptable. If these are of bad quality and inefficient, all the efforts for establishing them are in vain.

In relation to State's obligations to ensure human rights, the following conceptual framework was taken into account when developing the questionnaire:

The obligation to observe, which focuses on the interdiction for the State to interfere through its agents with human rights;

¹ Availability, Acceptability, Accessibility, Quality

² See the General Comment 14 of the UN Committee for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights regarding the right to the highest health standard, available in English on: http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2f2000%2f4&Lang=en

The obligation to protect, which implies the fact that the State should prevent violation of rights by third parties, who are not its agents. In this case the focus is on preventing violation and provision of remedies when a person governed by private law, for instance, violates the economic and social rights;

The obligation to fulfill, which means that the State not only should abstain from violation of rights by interfering with status quo, but also facilitate, deliver and promote rights' observance.

Executive Summary

This study is composed of three analytical chapters, which include findings resulting from research, including conclusions from the perspective of the most pointed-out trends related to observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the Republic of Moldova. The general outline of the study is:

Chapter 1 – Level of information of the Republic of Moldova population about human rights.

The chapter contains qualitative and quantitative information regarding: a) the level of population information about human rights; b) accessibility of information regarding human rights; and c) level of activism among the population in the Republic of Moldova. This chapter reiterates the findings of the previous study related to the reduced level of population information about human rights, especially for specific groups. Limited accessibility of information is mentioned, as well. Over half of respondents consider that there are certain linguistic impediments in relation to the information about human rights. Bureaucracy is considered to be a barrier to free access to information on human rights. Apparently, people feel unsure in relation to the knowledge they have in the area of human rights – this fact may be determined by the way in which the messages and information about human rights are delivered, but also by the content of this information. More than half of respondents consider that there is lack of knowledge among the population regarding the human rights. Only 10% of respondents consider that they are very well informed about their own rights. Although there is a decrease in the number of respondents considering themselves to be well informed in 2018 as compared to 2016 (10.3% as compared to 11.1%), there is, however, an increased number of respondents who consider themselves to be rather informed (42.6% as compared to 41.5%). It is very important that there is a significant drop in the share of citizens considering themselves to be not at all informed (12.2% in 2018 as compared to 16.5% in 2016).

Apparently, the average level of knowledge in the area of human rights also determines a rather low level of civic activism and rights' claim actions. However, the level of activism is not the direct result of knowledge about human rights.

It is relevant that citizens prove to have a high level of trust for rights' protection institutions, such as the law enforcement bodies, public administration bodies, national institutions for human rights' protection, civil society organizations. Hence, a means for fostering civic activism would be the intensive and systematic promotion of information about human rights, especially by public authorities; undertraining measures to increase the level of trust for state institutions, increasing the level of knowledge about human rights, acknowledgement of human rights' values.

The following is recommended to increase the level of citizens' information about human rights:

- for the human rights' promotion actions to be focused on different categories of public, so as to be accessible from linguistic and informational point of view;
- to take into account the peculiarities of information sources used by the target groups when selecting the channels for conveying the information about human rights;
- to remedy the existing discrepancies among the groups, for instance, persons from rural area, elderly people, women and ethnic-linguistic minorities.

Chapter 2 – Role of institutions in observing human rights and the system of human rights’ protection.

This chapter analyzes the role of institutions in observing human rights from the perspective of human rights’ protection system.

The role of state institutions in observing human rights is rather well acknowledged by the population. The 2018 results on population perception related to the institutions, which could improve the situation regarding the human rights’ area are similar to those from 2016. Hence, the Parliament and the Government are in the top of the ranking. The reply option “every individual citizen” used by 77% of the respondents is rather remarked in 2018. In spite of these results, the Parliament and Government remain to be on the first place in relation to violation of human rights, as two thirds of respondents consider that these institutions violate human rights to a large extent.

Women, urban inhabitants, persons aged over 45 years old, and ethnic-linguistic minorities have the highest expectations from the Parliament in relation to rights’ assurance. The same goes for the Government – just the persons with low incomes are added here.

The respondents are not satisfied with the quality of current public policies (only 20% are satisfied to a great extent with them). Hence, the backlogs in mainstreaming human rights-based approach in drafting and implementing policies in social and economic areas determine the negative perception of the population regarding the observance of economic and social rights.

Chapter 3 – Level of observance of human rights in the Republic of Moldova.

This chapter reconfirms the need to pay high attention to the principle of equality and nondiscrimination, taking into account the specific problems encountered by different vulnerable and marginalized groups and persons, including persons with disabilities, LGBT persons, persons living with HIV, Roma people and non-citizens. One of the concerning findings is that the population perception about the level of human rights’ observance is mostly decreasing. About 68% of respondents consider that human rights are violated systematically. The right to fair trial, right to social protection and right to health were mentioned by respondents among the most frequently violated human rights. These rights are ensured to a smaller extent in case of persons from under-represented groups, hence deepening the systemic inequalities as an effect.

Methodology of the study

The study on perceptions of the Republic of Moldova population regarding the human rights is complex and includes several important research stages:

1. **Qualitative study**, which included:

- ▶ The qualitative analysis was based on discussions carried out within 10 focus groups. A number of 5-10 representatives from each of the groups of persons presented in the table below participated in every focus group:

The results of the qualitative analysis were systematized by types of rights/questions tackled with each of the minority groups participating in the focus groups.

No. of the group discussion	Group	Date	Number of participants	Breakdown by gender	
				Men	Women
FG1	Persons with disabilities	16.07.2018	9	6	3
FG2	Persons living in the security zone	17.07.2018	9	3	6
FG3	Minorități religioase	18.07.2018	9	5	4
FG4	LGBT persons	19.07.2018	10	6	4
FG5	Persons living in rural localities	20.07.2018	10	4	6
FG6	Persons living with HIV	23.07.2018	10	7	3
FG7	Persons of Roma ethnicity	24.07.2018	9	4	5
FG8	Victims of domestic violence	25.07.2018	5	0	5
FG9	Ethnic minorities	26.07.2018	5	2	3
FG10	Non-citizens	31.07.2018	6	5	1

- ▶ 14 in-depth interviews with specialists from the human rights' area, and 5 interviews with the representatives of the vulnerable groups from the perspective of human rights' observance.

The aim of the qualitative study was to understand, based on some focused discussion, the problems encountered by every group individually, the way in which they interact and if they have or not trust for authorities which could protect their rights. At the same time, what rights are more frequently violated, what is the experience of their community and how they see an improvement of the way in which their rights are observed.

2. Quantitative study included a representative sample of 1000 persons from the Republic of Moldova, except for the Transnistrian region. The sample was representative at the national level, as well as for sex, age groups, regions, areas of residence and ethnicities. The sample was extracted based on the strata composed from areas (rural/urban), regions (North, Center, South, Chisinau, ATU Gagauzia) and size of locality (big municipalities, cities with over 20 thousand persons, cities with 10-20 thousand persons, cities with 5-10 thousand persons, cities with under 5 thousand persons, communes with over 5 thousand persons, communes with 3-5 thousand persons, communes with 1-3 thousand persons and communes with under 1 thousand persons). The results of the population census from 2004³ and 2014⁴ were used for sampling procedure, as well as some current data of the National Bureau of Statistics.⁵ Persons aged 18 years old and over were selected for interviews. The interviews were carried out based on CAPI method (direct interviews with the respondent, using the tablet for questions and answers). Three weighting criteria were used for data processing so as to adjust the structure of the sample to that of the population. The subsequent analysis of the results shows that this weighting did not change significantly the final results. The weighted variables are: sex, area of residence and ethnicity. Hence, the share of women in the sample was weighted to that at the national level; the share of urban population and that of the ethnic minorities was increased a little bit. For convenience, the results were generated according to five selection variables; hence the answers to questions may be followed by the entire sample, but also per each group of segmentation variables, individually. The maximum sampling error is $\pm 3.1\%$, but taking into account the structure of the sample, the data of the study are practically identical with the real perception of the population.

³ <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&cid=295&id=2234>

⁴ <http://www.statistica.md/pageview.php?l=ro&cid=479&>

⁵ <http://statbank.statistica.md/pxweb/pxweb/ro/20%20Populatia%20si%20procesele%20demografice/?rxid=b2ff27d7-0b96-43c9-934b-42e1a2a9a774>

The aim of the quantitative study was to find out the perception of the population regarding the way in which their rights are observed. In particular, based on the segmentation variables, the answers of the following groups may be followed, which may be vulnerable in relation to observance of human rights.

For many questions from the quantitative study, the segmentations allow finding out certain discrepancies in relation to persons' perceptions and attitudes about human rights' observance, depending on the group they are a part of.

Sample structure:

Variable	Category	Non-weighted sample		Weighted sample
		Persons	%	%
Sex	Men	392	39.2	46.0
	Women	608	60.8	54.0
Age+	18-29 years old	301	30.1	30.3
	30-44 years old	253	25.3	24.4
	45-59 years old	229	22.9	23.3
	60 and over	217	21.7	22.0
Education	Primary	16	1.6	1.7
	Gymnasium	198	19.8	19.1
	Vocational school	225	22.5	23.0
	Lyceum	134	13.4	13.5
	College	174	17.4	17.8
	Undergraduate	232	23.2	22.8
	Post-graduate	8	0.8	0.8
Number of family members	NR	13	1.3	1.3
	One person	137	13.7	14.1
	2-3 persons	392	39.2	40.1
Number of minors in the household	4 and over persons	471	47.1	45.8
	None	541	54.1	55.6
	One	221	22.1	21.6
	Two	173	17.3	16.7
Main activity	Three and over	65	6.5	6.1
	Own business	28	2.8	2.8
	Director, Deputy Director	4	0.4	0.3
	Employed in non-agricultural area	226	22.6	23.1
	Employed in agriculture	36	3.6	3.7
	Occasional worker (daily worker)	65	6.5	6.6
	Unemployed (looking for a job)	42	4.2	4.5
	Pupil/student	76	7.6	7.7
	Pensioner	205	20.5	20.4
	Housewife	164	16.4	15.0
	Working abroad	71	7.1	7.5
	Other	67	6.7	6.5
NR	16	1.6	1.9	

Language they usually speak at home (declared)	Romanian	364	36.4	34.5
	Moldovan	425	42.5	40.0
	Russian	139	13.9	16.2
	Ukrainian	17	1.7	2.2
	Bulgarian	22	2.2	2.9
	Gagauz	26	2.6	2.9
	Other	6	0.6	1.3
Ethnicity (stated)	Romanian	99	10.0	9.3
	Moldovan	747	74.7	70.6
	Russian	37	3.7	4.9
	Ukrainian	44	4.4	5.8
	Bulgarian	22	2.2	2.9
	Gagauz	39	3.9	4.9
	Other	12	1.2	1.7
Monthly personal income (stated)	Under 1000 MDL	149	14.9	14.3
	1001-1500 MDL	169	16.9	16.5
	1501-2000 MDL	143	14.3	14.6
	2001-3000 MDL	115	11.5	11.3
	3001-5000 MDL	153	15.3	15.4
	Over 5000 MDL	126	12.6	13.4
	NR	145	14.5	14.5
Language of the interview	Romanian	808	80.8	76.5
	Russian	192	19.2	23.5
Total		1000	100	

Note. 1. The report includes the results for some rights, which were not included in the questionnaire applied in the quantitative study. These results derive from the group discussions, in-depth interviews with experts and were mentioned by the participants as being important.

2. In the report data from the quantitative study is analyzed and by certain sub-categories (sex, age group, education, occupation, residence area, etc.). These data can be obtained upon request from the People's Advocate.

Methodological recommendations: It is recommended to carry out the study with a frequency of once per two years or more often, so as to be able to follow up the results in dynamics and to have a general picture for the country in relation to human rights' perception in the Republic of Moldova.

CHAPTER 1

Level of information of the Republic of Moldova population about human rights

1.1 Level of population information about human rights

One of the determinant factors in promoting human rights is the ability of rights' holders to claim their rights. The rights' claiming may have a systemic nature provided that rights' holders know and understand that their rights are correlated with State's obligations.

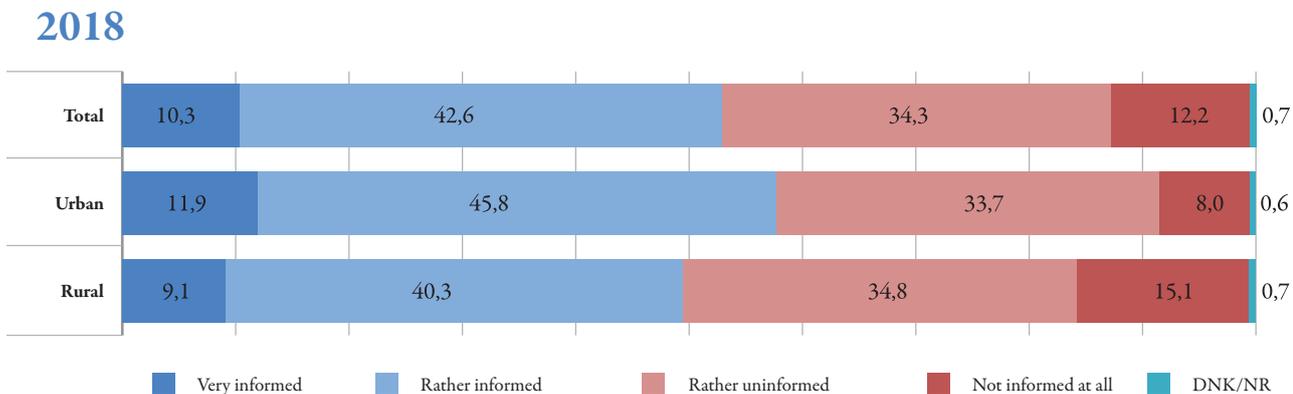
The obligations of the State in relation to rights' assurance does not limit themselves only to abstaining from violation of rights, but also contain the pro-active side, which implies informing people about their rights and ways of defending the violated rights.

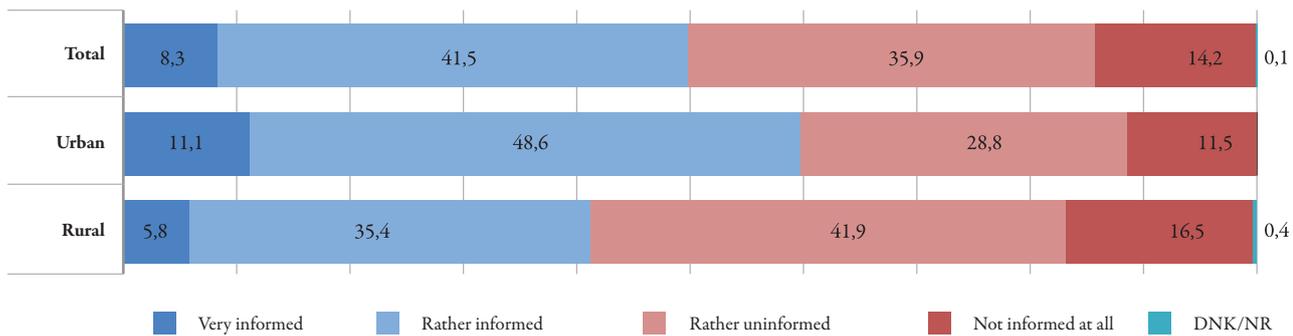
Revealing the level of population information about human rights does not only provide a general picture about the level of information, but also provides information about the potential interventions for human rights institutions and state authorities. For instance, what are the most used information sources, how accessible the information is, including for different groups.

It is also necessary to analyze the existing disparities related to the level of information. As a rule, the disadvantaged groups have a lower level of information, hence needing additional efforts, including positive actions, in this respect.

When analyzing the level of population information about human rights it may be concluded that the situation did not change in the Republic of Moldova as compared to the level registered in 2016. Overall, there is even a slight decrease of the share of people considering themselves to be very well informed in 2018 compared to 2016 (10.3% as compared to 8.3%), and there is an increased share of people considering themselves rather informed (42.6% as compared to 41.5%). A positive aspect would be the significant decrease of those who consider themselves to be not informed at all (12.2% as compared to 14.2%). *Figure 1.*

Figure 1. Level of population information about human rights, 2018 as compared to 2016, %





From structural point of view, men, urban inhabitants, young people under 29 years old, and representatives of the majority ethnic group consider themselves to be better informed about human rights. A higher share of people not informed at all about human rights is registered among the ethnic-linguistic minorities (18.1%).

These figures show that the access to information about human rights is not universal. Men from urban area and majority ethnic group are more privileged in obtaining access to information. The disparities' cause should be determined for each characteristic of the privileged group so as to identify solutions adjusted to determining factors. Respectively, when drafting state policies and population information programs developed by civil society organizations, it is necessary to consider the determining factors of the existing differences, so that the outcome of their implementation has a proportional impact.

One of the participants in the qualitative study tried to provide a hierarchy of the level of knowledge: [FG9 - F3]: *“Now, as a teacher, I can say that they are taught. [...] there are statistics by age categories, and 50% of those aged 40-75 years old, 81% of those aged 18-30 years old, and 67% of children aged 12-17 years old know their rights, and only 33% do not know their rights. They know that there are rights, especially children”*.

The experts participating in the qualitative study mentioned that information about human rights is available. Nevertheless the availability of information does not necessarily ensure the absorption of information by the population. Some experts perceive that there is a lot of information, but the problem is related to the information form and the way in which it is conveyed to the target population. Sometimes the concept of human rights is communicated to the public in a wrong way. Others stated that the available information is not sufficient.

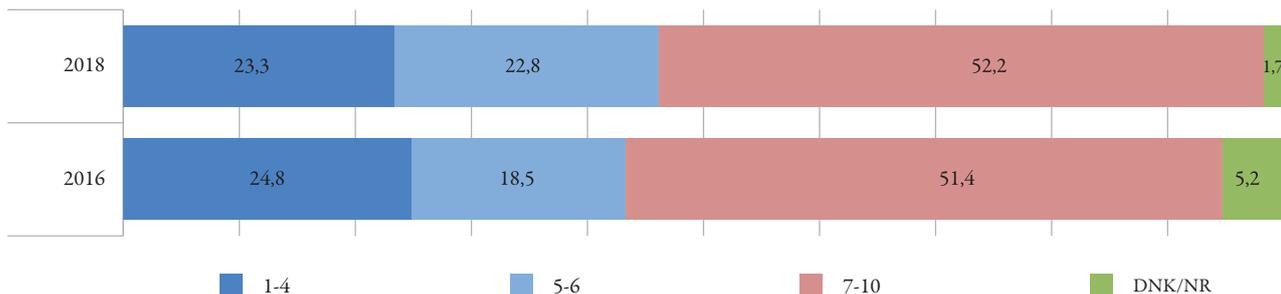
Those who mentioned that there is enough information about human rights specified that although there is sufficient information, people have a low level of interest to look for it, study it, and understand it.

While those who mentioned that there is not enough information stated that they have noticed this after becoming members of the organizations, which they represent. Hence, one of the ways to increase the level of knowledge about human rights would be civic involvement within organizations protecting vulnerable groups against violation of human rights.

Although about 42.6% of the population self-assessed itself as being rather informed, more than half of population stated that they do not have knowledge about human rights. The uncertainty regarding the knowledge in this area may be determined by the complexity of the area, but also by the fact that more discussions are registered about certain rights (such as, the right to a fair trial), and less discussions about other rights (such as the right to a clean environment).

The quantitative study revealed that most of the population considers that they lack knowledge in the area of human rights. This level is relatively weaker as compared to 2016, so 52.2% as compared to 51.4% of population consider that there is lack of knowledge in the area of human rights in the Republic of Moldova. Only under a quarter (23.3%) of respondents, which is less than in 2016 (24.8%), do not agree with this statement, considering that population actually knows well people's rights. *Figure 2*

Figure 2. Is there lack of knowledge about human rights among the population? 1- fully disagree, 10 - fully agree, 2016 and 2018, %



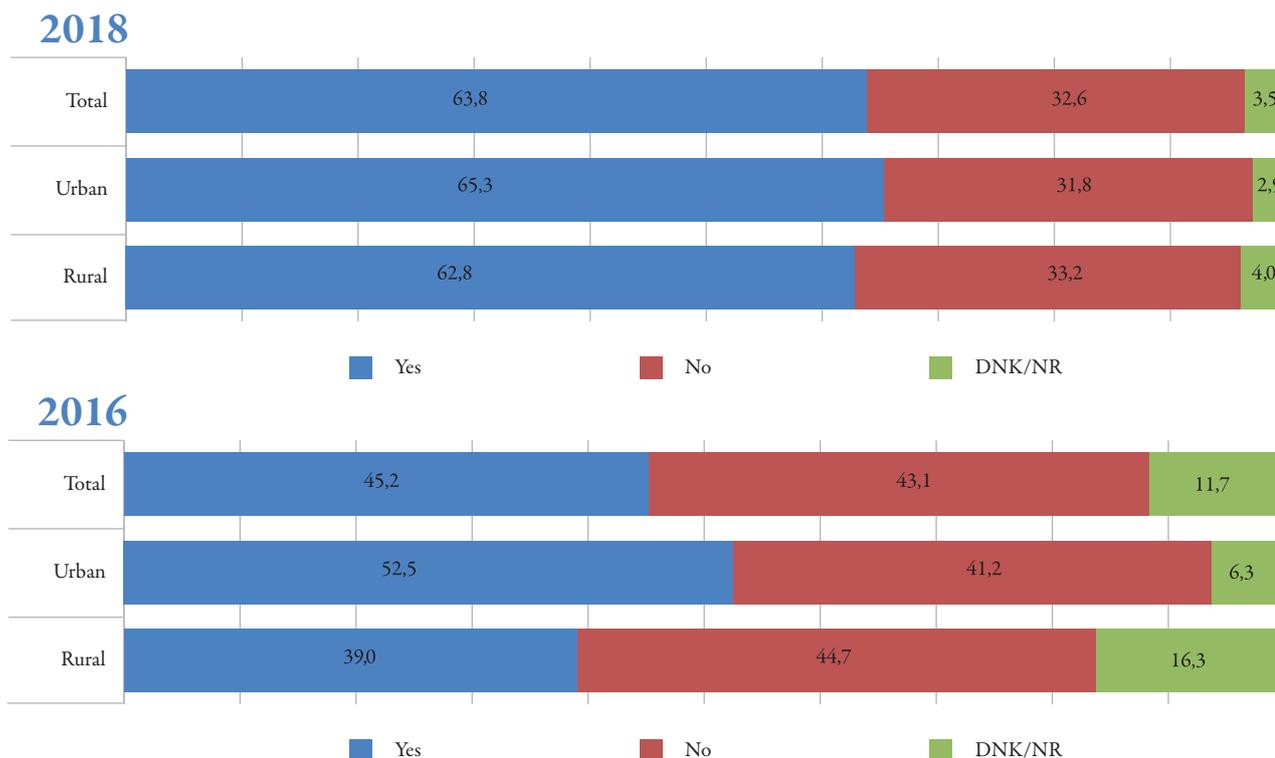
Pupils and students seem to be better informed about observance of human rights as compared to other categories of population, according to the participants in the qualitative study.

1.2 Accessibility of information about human rights

The level of knowledge about human rights depends on a number of factors. Accessibility is one of the most important factors. In principle, the availability of information does not guarantee its assimilation by the public, if the information is not adjusted to the needs of different categories of persons. Hence, the accessibility of information becomes an important aspect for identifying the potential factors to deliver the information to recipients.

The quantitative study registered a significant progress as compared to 2016 in relation to accessibility of information in the area of human rights. Hence, 63.8% of the total interviewed respondents in 2018 consider that the information about human rights and possibilities to protect them is accessible, as compared to 45.2% in 2016. As well, there are no significant divergences induced by respondents' area of residence. Thus, access to information about human rights became significantly easier in rural areas and a little bit better in urban areas, as compared to the situation registered two years ago. *Figure 3*. There are certain age-based differences, as a significantly higher share of young people (77.2%) considers that the information about human rights is accessible, as compared, for instance, with persons aged over 60 years old (48.7%). Similarly, the ethnic-linguistic minorities consider that they have a more limited access to information about human rights (47%) as compared to the majority population (68.1%).

Figure 3. Do you think that information about human rights and possibilities to protect them is accessible? 2016 and 2018, %.



Internet was not perceived as an important source of information in the area of human rights during the survey carried out in 2016, but it became the second top important source of information in 2018, being brought over just a little by other mass-media sources (printed press, TV and Radio). It should be mentioned that cumulatively, almost all respondents in 2016 and 2018 mentioned mass-media and/or internet as a source of information about human rights.

According to the current study, people refer more frequently to relatives, acquaintances, and work colleagues for information, and to a lower extent to lawyers and attorneys.

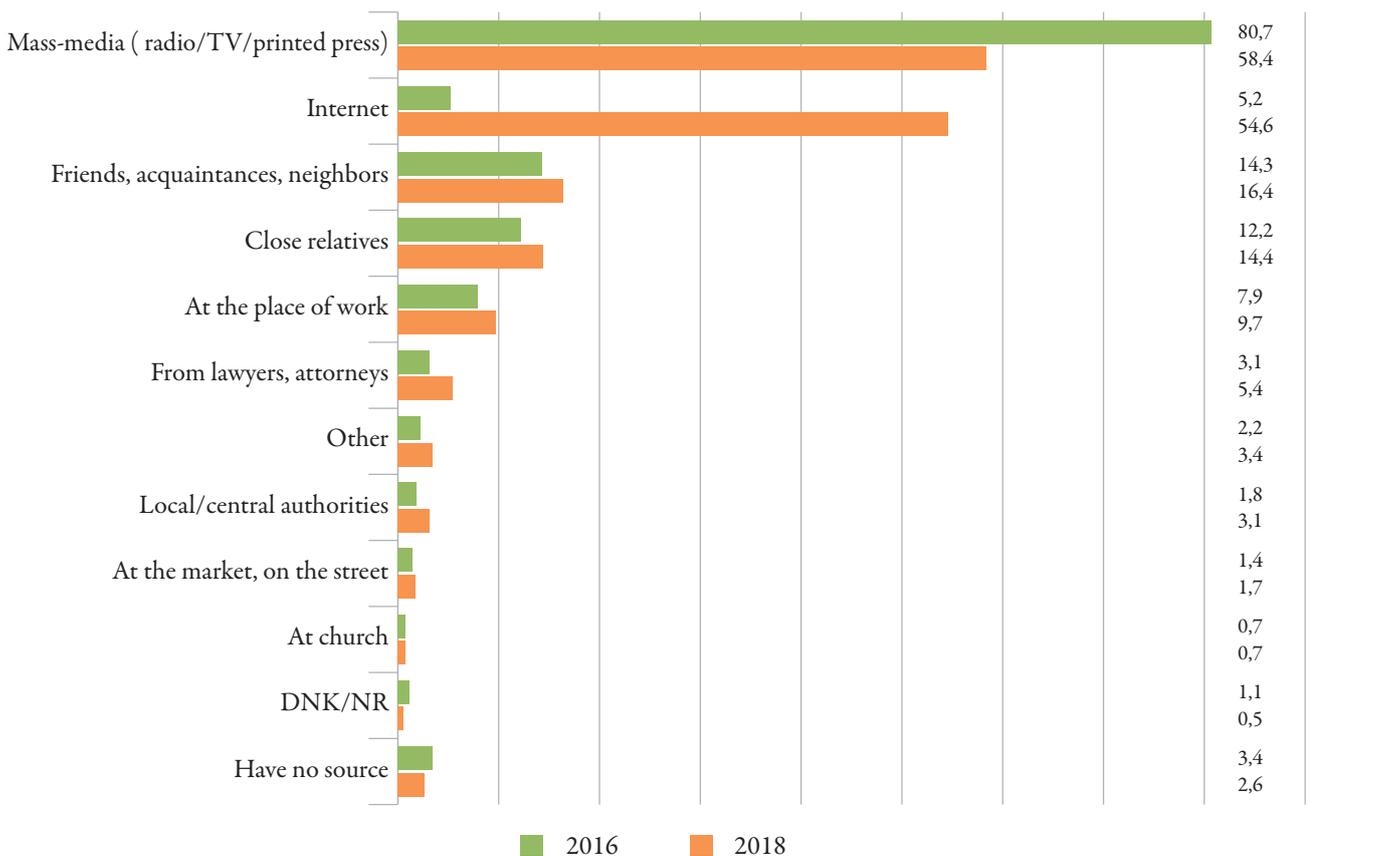
The church, which enjoys the highest level of trust from the population, as an institution, practically does not represent an information source about protection of human rights in the Republic of Moldova.

The majority of experts in the qualitative study mentioned that the information about human rights is not clear because of the complicated notions it contains. At the same time, they stated that people from rural localities and small towns are less informed.

Some experts consider that there are linguistic barriers for understanding the information in case of Roma minority and other ethnic minorities, as well. Experts mentioned that information is less accessible for persons with disabilities and elderly people. In case of the elderly, the experts stated that they get informed mainly from TV and respectively have an influenced opinion.

Opinions were expressed that there is a lot of false information and people get lost in it, as well as that people do not have the culture of getting informed. *Figure 4.*

Figure 4. From what sources do you get information about human rights and the possibilities to protect them? 2016 and 2018, %, multiple choice.



Mass-media, as the most important source of information, according to the quantitative study – is more characteristic for rural areas, elderly people and persons with low incomes; while Internet is the main source of information for respondents from urban areas, for young people, majority population, and for persons with high incomes. From the ethnic perspective, minorities refer to work colleagues, friends, neighbors, acquaintances, lawyers, and attorneys more frequently than to the representatives of majority ethnic group.

That participants of the qualitative study stated that they get informed about human rights from one or more sources of information. The most important information channels included: internet; television, radio; members of organization representing them; community mediators (Roma community); district centers; and Ombudsman. Participants think that many people get informed from neighbors, relatives, and friends by taking over information which is most of the time untruthful, in their opinion.

According to the conclusions of the perceptions’ study, for the information about human rights to be accessible to the groups which currently have limited access to available information, it is necessary for this information to be adjusted to the specific needs of elderly people, rural inhabitants, and ethnic minorities. There are different causes inducing lack of information accessibility for each of the respective categories. For ethnic minorities, for instance, it could be limited linguistic accessibility. Hence, the information should be distributed in their case in a language they understand. Elderly people and rural inhabitants perceive less the information about human rights because of the rather sophisticated and unclear for them terms that are used.

As for the channels distributing the information about human rights – Internet and TV are the most frequently used ones, especially in hours of maximum audience. Thus, as suggested by some participants in focus groups, the information is more rapidly distributed namely through these channels.

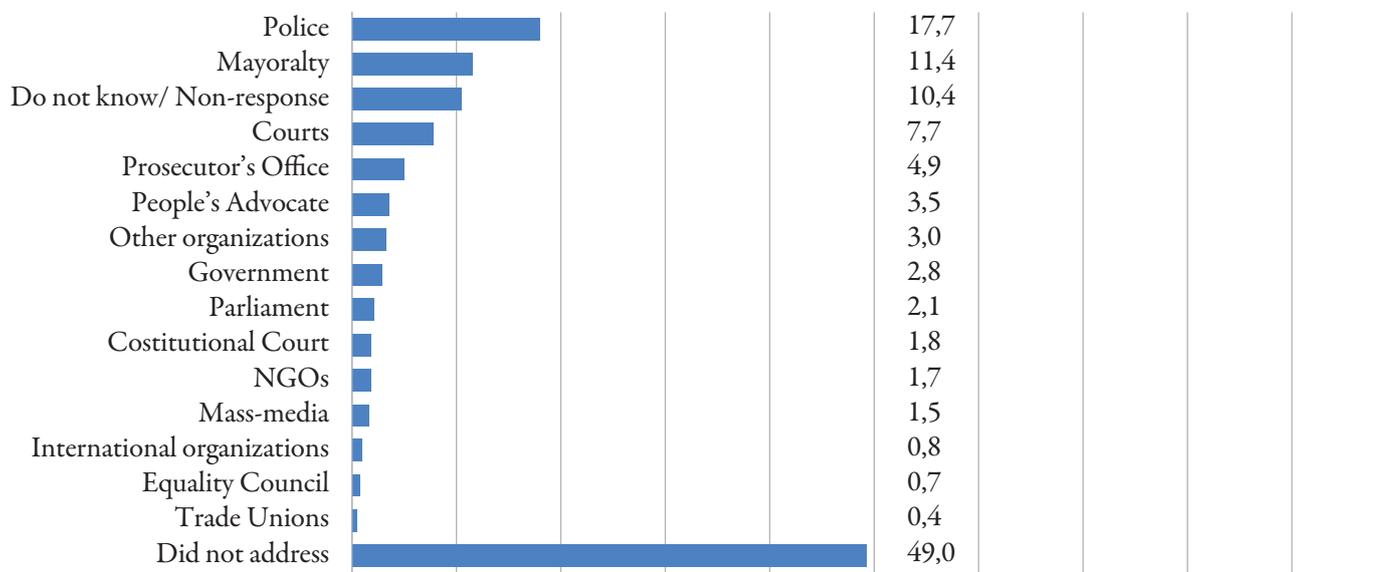
The focus-group participants have also suggested that there should be an information service, which would refer interested persons to a relevant institution, which subsequently would provide an answer to the question. Hence, it is really necessary to have a more consistent involvement of the State in educating/informing the population about human rights. At the same time, the modality of teaching human rights in schools should be changed according to the participants of focus groups. They think that it would be better to teach in schools about specific ways to be used for solving the situations when human rights are not observed.

1.3 Level of population activism in the Republic of Moldova

The activism is the tool through which human rights become real. A society with a low level of activism and with right holders not claiming their human rights cannot be a vibrant and developing society.

The data show that 49% of the respondents prefer not to go to any institutions whenever encountering situations when their own or others' rights are violated, Most of those who refer to an institution (51%) mainly go to Police or Mayoralty, and a few – to Court or Prosecutor's Office. The share of those addressing other state institutions or mass-media and NGOs is very low. *Figure 5.*

Figura 5. In case you addressed an institution in relation to the violation of a right, what institution did you address?, 2018, %



Over the last two years, only 9.8% of respondents went to a court, of which half (49.5%) were not satisfied at all with this experience and only 30.9% stated that they were satisfied to a great and very great extent. This fact shows that courts currently do not represent trusted institutions for the majority of population as related to the expectations regarding human rights' observance. *Figures 6-7.*

Figure 6. Did you go over the last 2 years to a court?, 2018, %

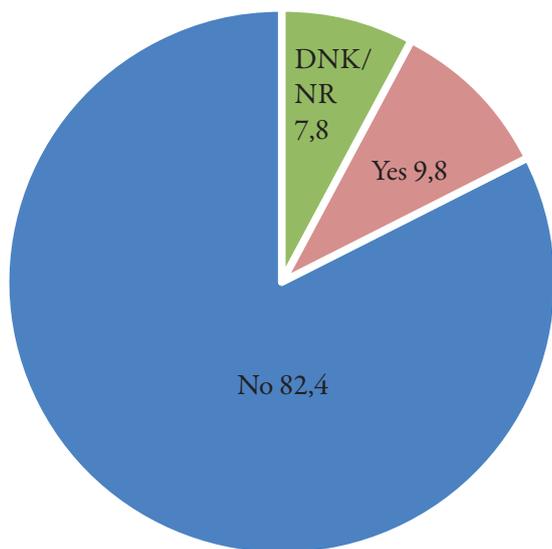
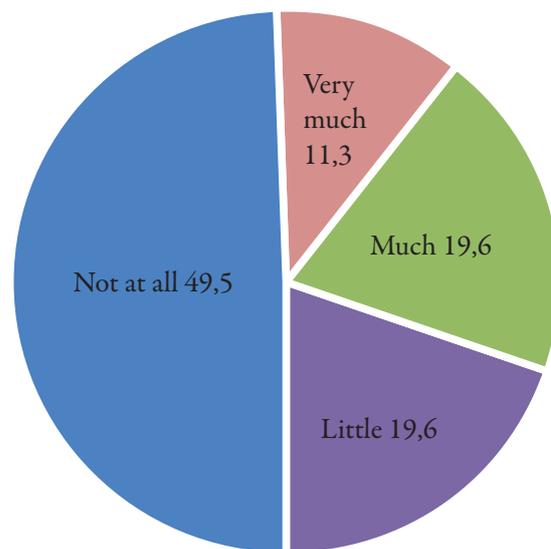


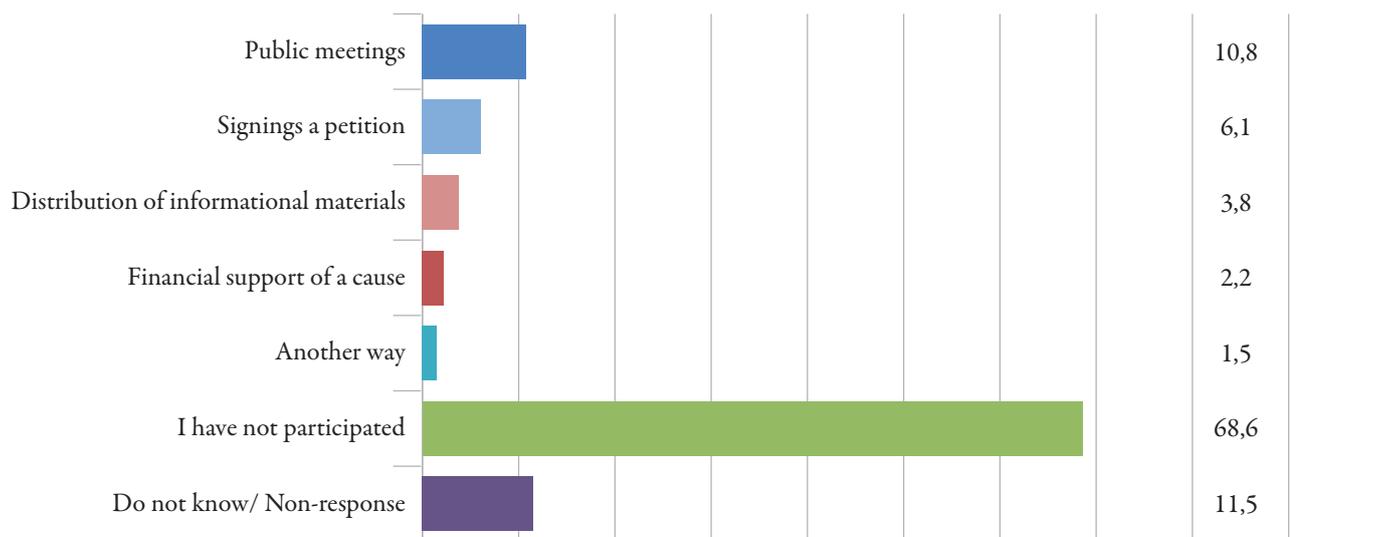
Figure 7. If you went to a court, how pleased were you with this experience? 2018, % of those who referred to a court.



Men (11%), rural inhabitants (10.3%), persons aged 30-44 years old (11.8%), and persons with very low incomes (10.6%) have referred to courts more frequently. People aged over 60 years old (5.5%) went to the courts the least. The higher share of men addressing the courts may be explained when correlating with the information about the level of population information about human rights, as they consider themselves to be more informed and respectively they claim for their rights to a greater extent. Rural inhabitants' addressing the courts may be explained by the fact that their overlapped vulnerabilities lead to a more frequent violation of rights, and this fact determines the more frequent referral to courts. While the lower level of elderly peoples' referring to courts is determined by the inaccessibility of information in the area, as well as their informal withdrawal from social life when reaching the retirement age. Respectively, the more socially inactive a person is, the lower the rate of claiming the rights in the court.

Another dimension of civic activism would be the involvement in public events, meetings and associations for a certain cause. The data of the study have revealed that a big part of the population (68.6%) has not recently participated in any event for human rights' protection, and 11.5% did not answer this question. Most frequently people attended some public meetings (10.8%) and signed petitions (6.1%). *Figure 8*

Figure 8. Have you participated over the last two years in any activity for human rights' protection? (multiple answer), 2018, %

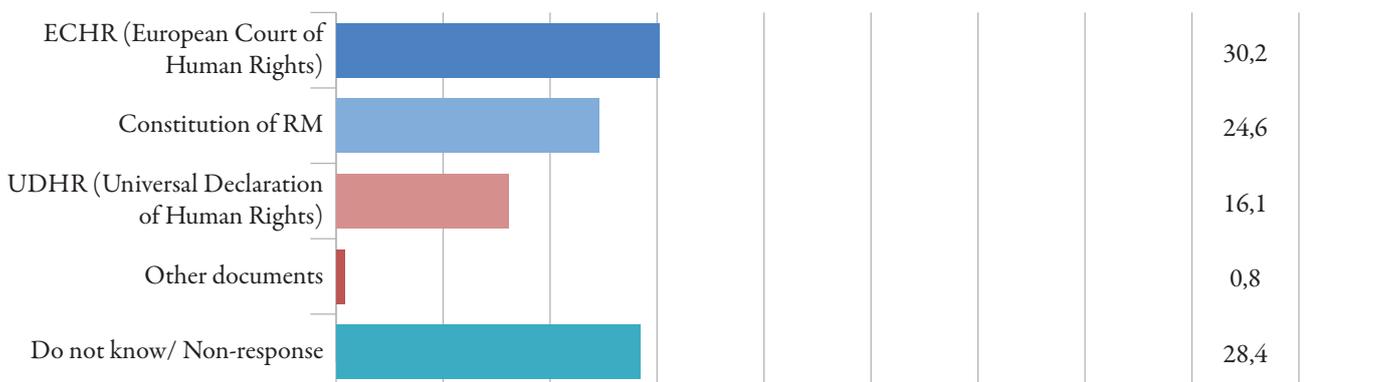


The most passive in protecting human rights are people from rural area (72% did not participate recently in any action), persons aged over 60 years old (75.4%), and the representatives of the majority ethnicity (71.1%). Note: *the representatives of minorities registered a lot of non-responses for these questions, hence they also may be deemed as being passive.*

The most active in participating in meetings would be the persons aged 45-59 years old (13.4%) and persons with incomes of 3-5 thousand MDL (17.8%), while the ethnic-linguistic minorities – at a very small extent (6.1%).

Most of the respondents consider the European Court of Human Rights to be the main document in the area of human rights (30.2%), although in reality it is an institution. The second in the top is the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova (24.6%), and 16.1% mentioned the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to be the fundamental document in this area. *Figure 9.* The closest to the correct answer were the persons under 29 years old (23.8%) and people from urban areas (21.5%), hence revealing that ordinary people are not sufficiently informed about this document and answer mainly based on the available knowledge and information. For instance, many people know that the ECtHR is a court to which they can go if their rights were violated, and justice sector in the Republic of Moldova did not make justice to them.

Figure 9. What is the main international document on human rights, in your opinion? 2018, %



The analysis of information provided during the focus groups pointed out that the meetings / marches represent in the perception of those who have attended such events and would attend more a modality through which things can be changed in a society. The highest level of participation in protests was registered among the people from the security zone, people living with HIV/AIDS, and persons with disabilities. The reason for not participating in public actions and opting for not attending them in future is the fear that they will have to suffer because they participate (will be dismissed), or they just do not consider it important to participate in marches.

CHAPTER 2

Population perceptions regarding the role of institutions in ensuring the observance of human rights and the system of human rights' protection

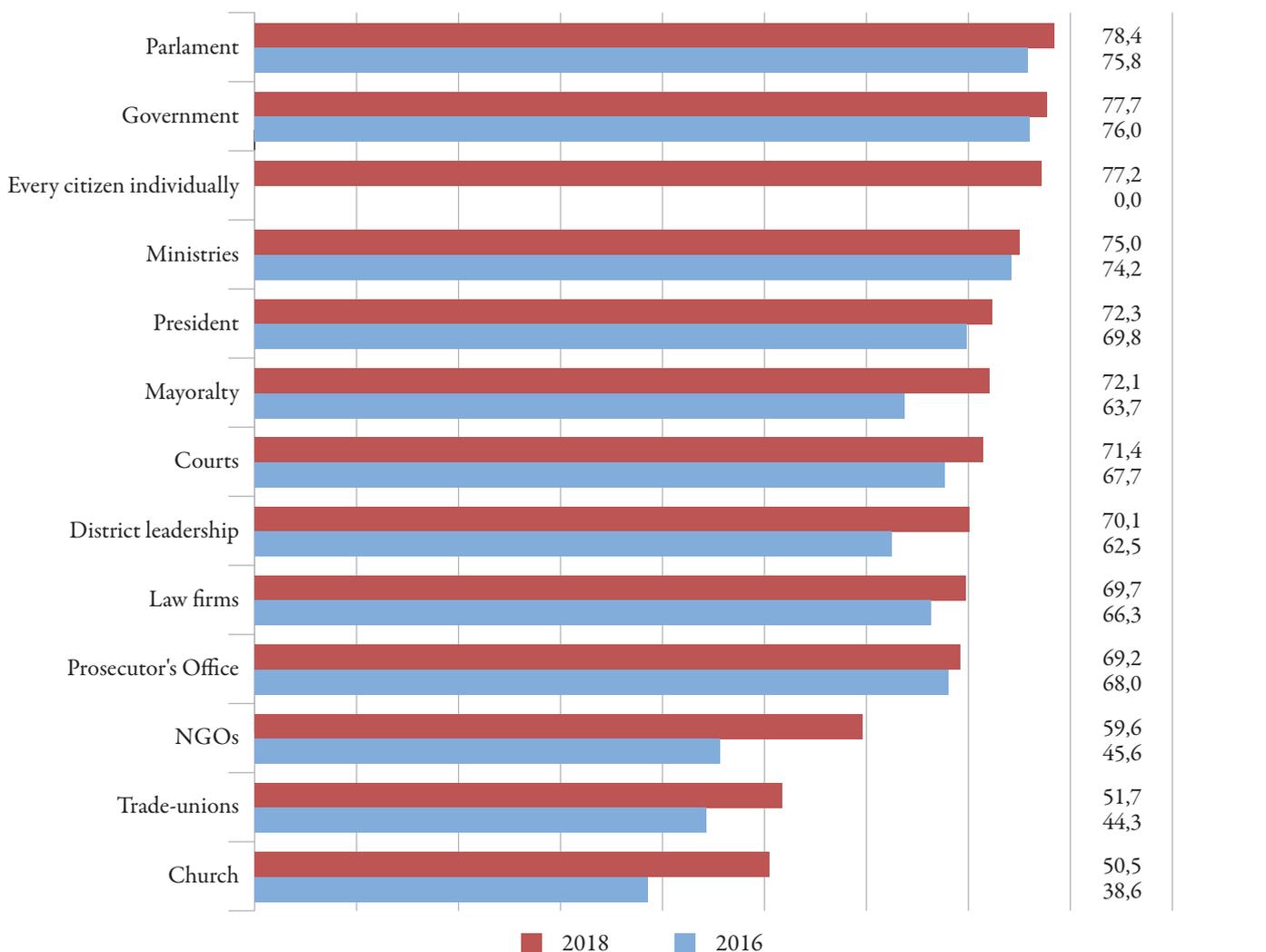
2.1. Role of institutions in observing human rights

Taking into account that human rights-based approach implies the existence of two categories of subjects – rights' holders and obligations' bearers; the assurance of human rights' observance is first of all the task of the national authorities. The institutions with wider competences and political weight are the entities, which may induce the biggest impact on rights' assurance. According to the results of the study, the population of the Republic of Moldova perceives correctly the possibilities of different institutions to increase the level of fundamental rights' observance.

Just like in the study carried out in 2016, according to the respondents, in 2018 the Parliament (78%) and the Government (78%) are still the main two institutions, which may improve the situation related to human rights in the Republic of Moldova.

Because the rights' holders may also influence the extent to which the authorities observe human rights, besides being just recipients of benefits, the current study has included the option “every citizen individually”, which ranked on the third place with 77%. Hence, the fact that the way in which the human rights are observed in the Republic of Moldova depends on every citizen individually is really acknowledged. *Figure 10*

Figure 10. To what extent do you consider that improvement of the situation in the area of human rights depends on ...? 2016 and 2018, % (answers: to a great extent)



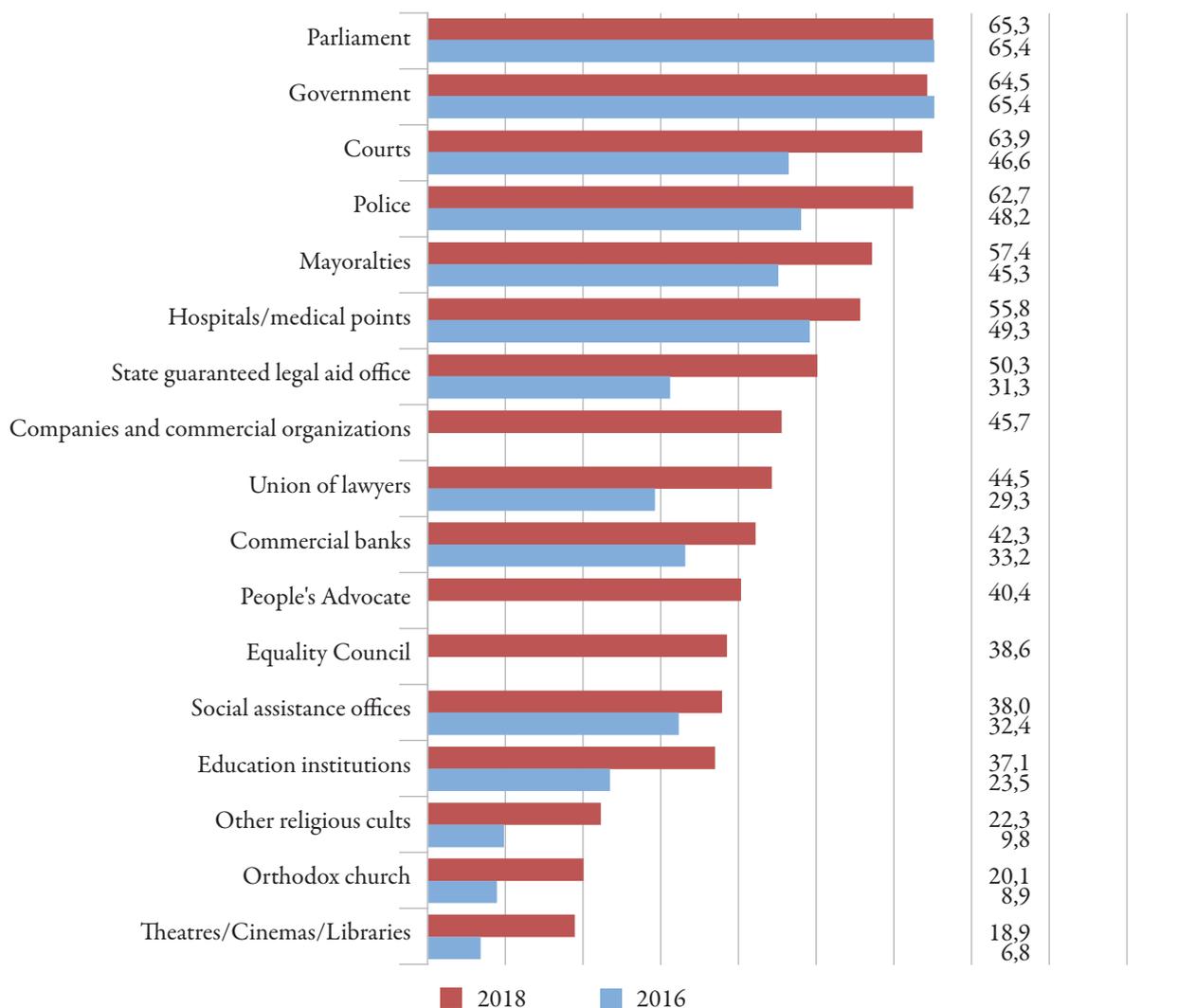
According to respondents' perception, the improvement of the situation regarding human rights depends the least on NGOs, trade unions, and church. The results in this case are similar to those from 2016.

Women, rural inhabitants, persons over 45 years old and ethnic minorities have the greatest expectations for the Parliament to ensure the observance of human rights. The same expectations are registered for the Government, with the list being completed with people with low incomes.

In relation to violation of human rights, the respondents think that Parliament and Government (in the study from 2016 these two were included in a common category) are on the first place. Hence, about two thirds of respondents consider that these institutions violate human rights to a great extent. At the same time, the respondents have expectations from the Parliament and from the Government in relation to improving the situation related to human rights.

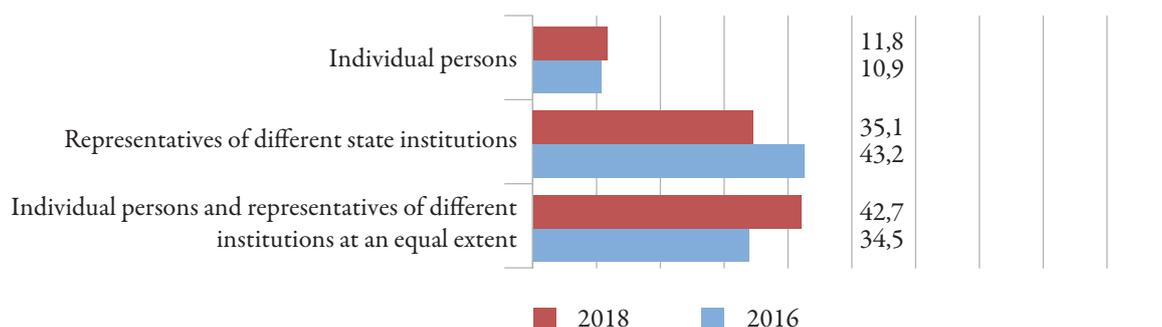
Courts and Police are other two institutions that violate human rights (in the opinion of over 62% respondents). The Orthodox Church, and the representatives of other religious cults, theatres, cinemas and libraries violate the least human rights, according to the respondents. *Figure 11.*

Figure 11. To what extent the following institutions violate human rights? 2016 and 2018, % (answers: to a great extent)



When tackling the problem of human rights' violation through the institutional or individual perspective, it may be noted that about 12% of respondents consider that certain persons violate the rights. As compared to the study carried out in 2016, when the share of those considering that representatives of different state institutions are responsible for violation of human rights prevailed, in 2018 the situation is different – a higher number of respondents consider that responsibility is equally distributed between individual persons and representatives of public institutions. Hence, as compared to what was registered two years ago, the institutional perception remained practically unchanged, while the perception related to the individual responsibility of persons for violation of human rights has increased. *Figure 12.*

Figure 12. Who would violate human rights more frequently? 2016 and 2018, %



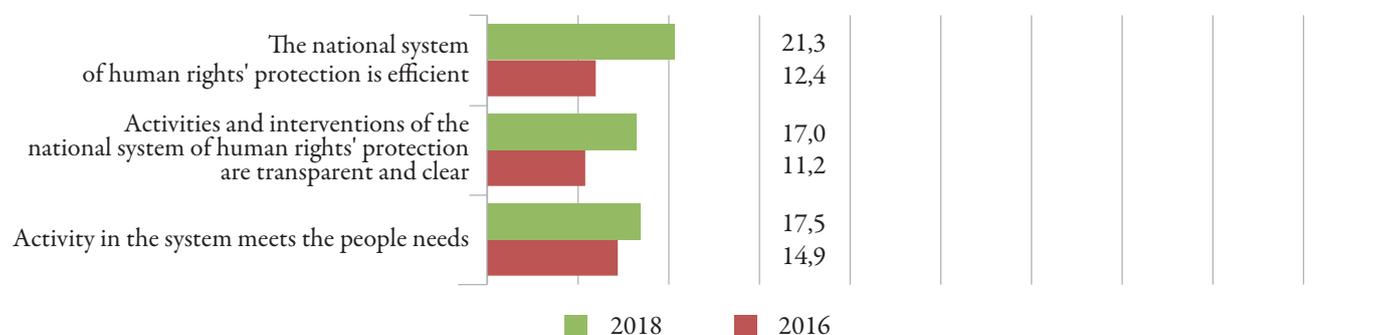
From the viewpoint of the share of people claiming their rights, it may be noted that men (46%), who more frequently claim their rights in courts, get more frequently in contact with institutions and consider themselves to be better informed about their rights, focus more on the responsibility of the institutions and less on human factor. Women have an individual-focused approach. They associate more frequently an institution with the persons working there. The persons who said they do not know their rights or had the perception they have little knowledge about human rights where those who considered that institutions are violating their rights to a large extent. The most vulnerable to institutions are the categories of population with the lowest level of knowledge about human rights. This fact proves that the lower the level of knowledge, the higher the probability for human rights to be violated or for the rights' holder to perceive them as being violated.

The rural inhabitants (45.5%), the persons over 60 years old (49.8%) and people with high incomes (47.1%) are especially unsatisfied with the representatives of public institutions.

2.2. System of human rights' protection in the Republic of Moldova

From the perspective of human rights-based approach, the system of human rights' protection should, first of all, respond to the needs of rights' holders, meaning the people. The functionality of the human rights' protection system may be assessed both: from a strictly institutional perception, but also through an assessment of people's perspective about the efficiency of the system. Just like in 2016, the big majority of the population has a pessimistic attitude towards the way in which human rights are protected in the Republic of Moldova. A share of 17.5% of respondents agrees to a great extent that the activity in the respective system meets the people's needs. About the same number of respondents consider that the activities in the human rights' protection system are transparent and clear. 21.3% consider the system of human rights' protection to be efficient. *Figure 13.*

Figure 13. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the human rights' protection system? 2016 and 2018, %. (answers: to a great extent)

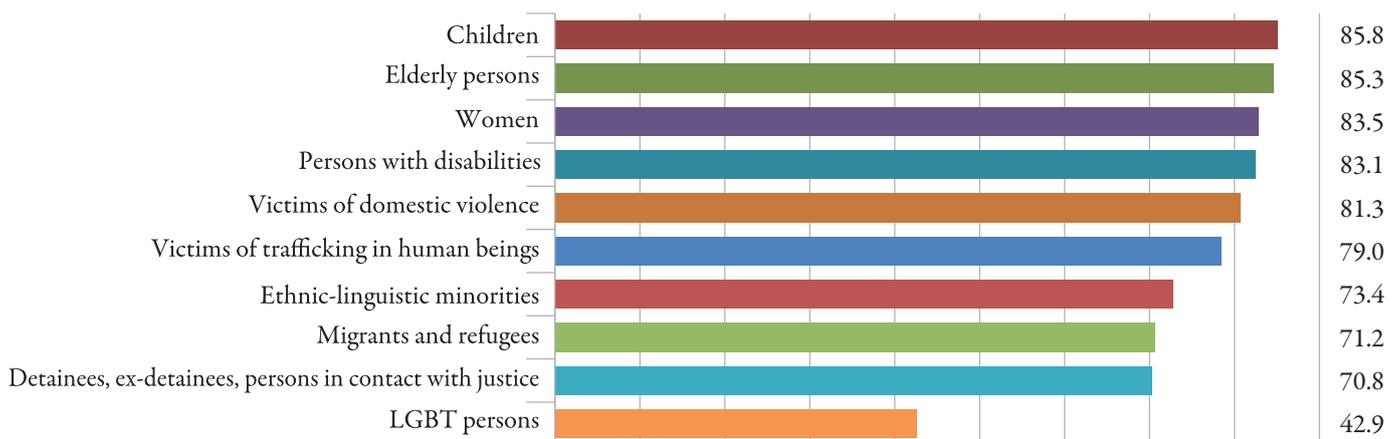


According to respondents' opinion, children, elderly persons, women, persons with disabilities, and victims of domestic violence need the biggest attention from the perspective of human rights' protection. This opinion is shared by over 80% of respondents.

Special attention should be rather provided to children (85.8%), elderly people (85.3%), women (83.5%), persons with disabilities (83.1%) and all the other groups in a decreasing order. Figure 14.

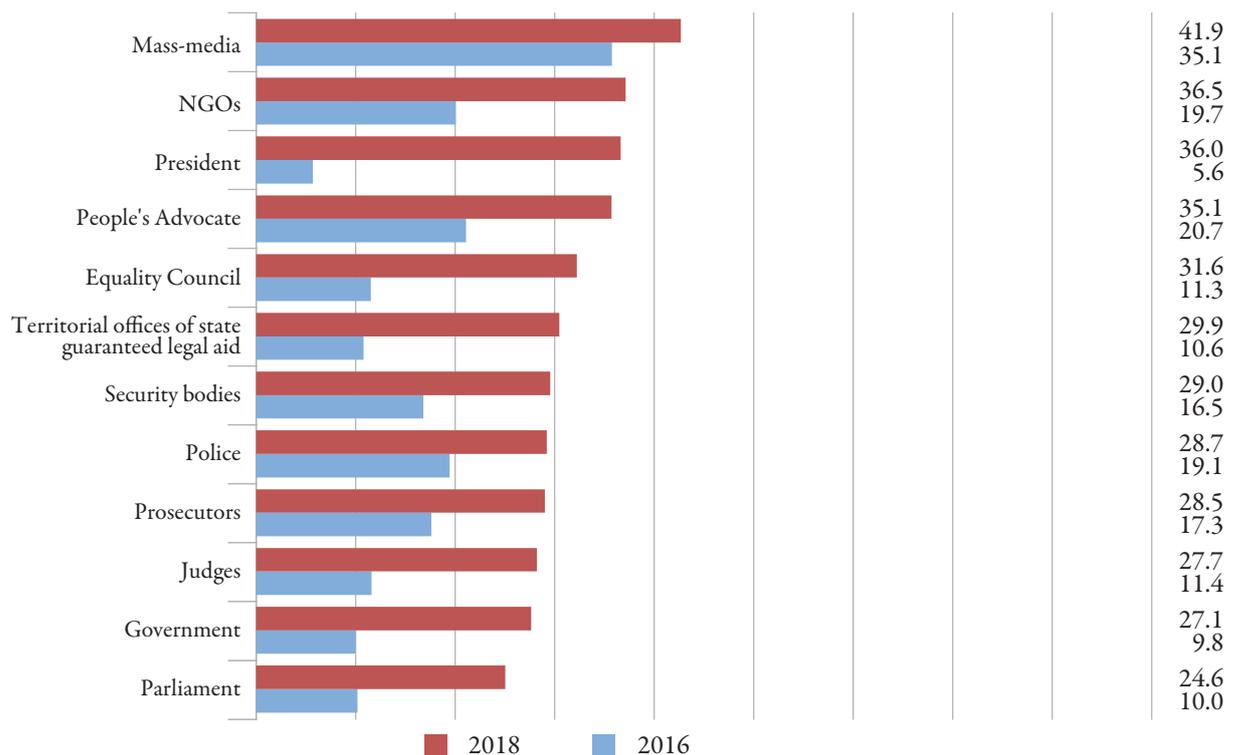
According to women, urban inhabitants, persons over 60 years old, ethnic minorities and persons with low incomes – special attention should be paid to the rights of elderly people. A higher level of awareness related to the need to observe the rights of people with disabilities is registered among women (62.6% - „10” – very much), urban inhabitants (65.9%), persons over 60 years old (66.7%), persons with low incomes (65.7%), and representatives of ethnic minorities (67.6%). With some exceptions, the same categories are also more sensitive related to paying more attention to observing human rights of other categories of persons, mentioned in *Figure 14*.

Figure 14. How much attention should be provided to human rights for the following categories? 2018, %. (answers: a lot and very much)



Although the respondents' answers regarding the way in which the institutions ensure human rights' observance were different as compared to 2016, there is a general trend towards improving for population perception in this respect over the last two years. Hence, mass-media remains on the first place, as an institution which ensures the observance of human rights (41.9% as compared to 35.1%). The role of NGOs seems to be more significant currently (36.5%) compared to 2016 (19.7%), and registered the biggest increase. The President is on the third place with 36%, although in 2016 he was on the last place with 5.6%. Thus, according to the perceptions of the respondents, the presidential institution witnessed a real transformation from an entity, which does not deal so much with human rights into the most important state institution trusted by the population in relation to observance of human rights. At the opposite pole are the Government and Parliament. Also, the Police, Prosecution Service and Judges register low levels of population trust. *Figure 15*.

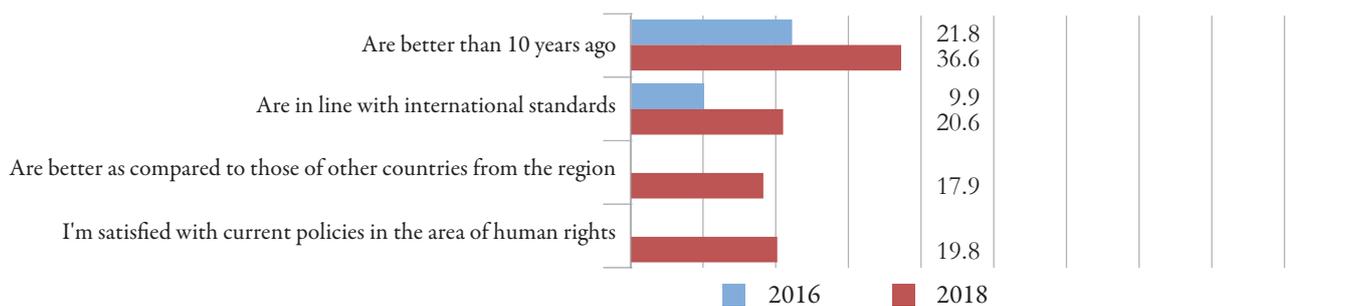
Figure 15. To what extent the following institutions ensure human rights' observance? 2016 and 2018, % (answers: to a great or very great extent)



According to the results, women, persons over 45 years old, ethnic minorities and people with low incomes have the biggest expectations for the President to ensure human rights' observance. In general, the answers correlate a lot with the attitude of persons to the need of human rights' observance in general by categories of respondents, the only difference occurs just in the percentage of those who consider that an institution should contribute to a greater or smaller extent.

Just like in 2016, in 2018 the population from the Republic of Moldova continues to have a not very good opinion about policies in human rights' area. Only 36.6% consider that these are better than 10 years ago and 20.6% consider that these are much in line with the international standards. Also, the current policies in the area of human rights are not considered to be better than those of other countries in the region and the general satisfaction level related to these policies is low - with only 20% of respondents being satisfied with them to a greater extent. An explanation for this situation would be the lack of public's knowledge about policies in the area of human rights. *Figure 16.*

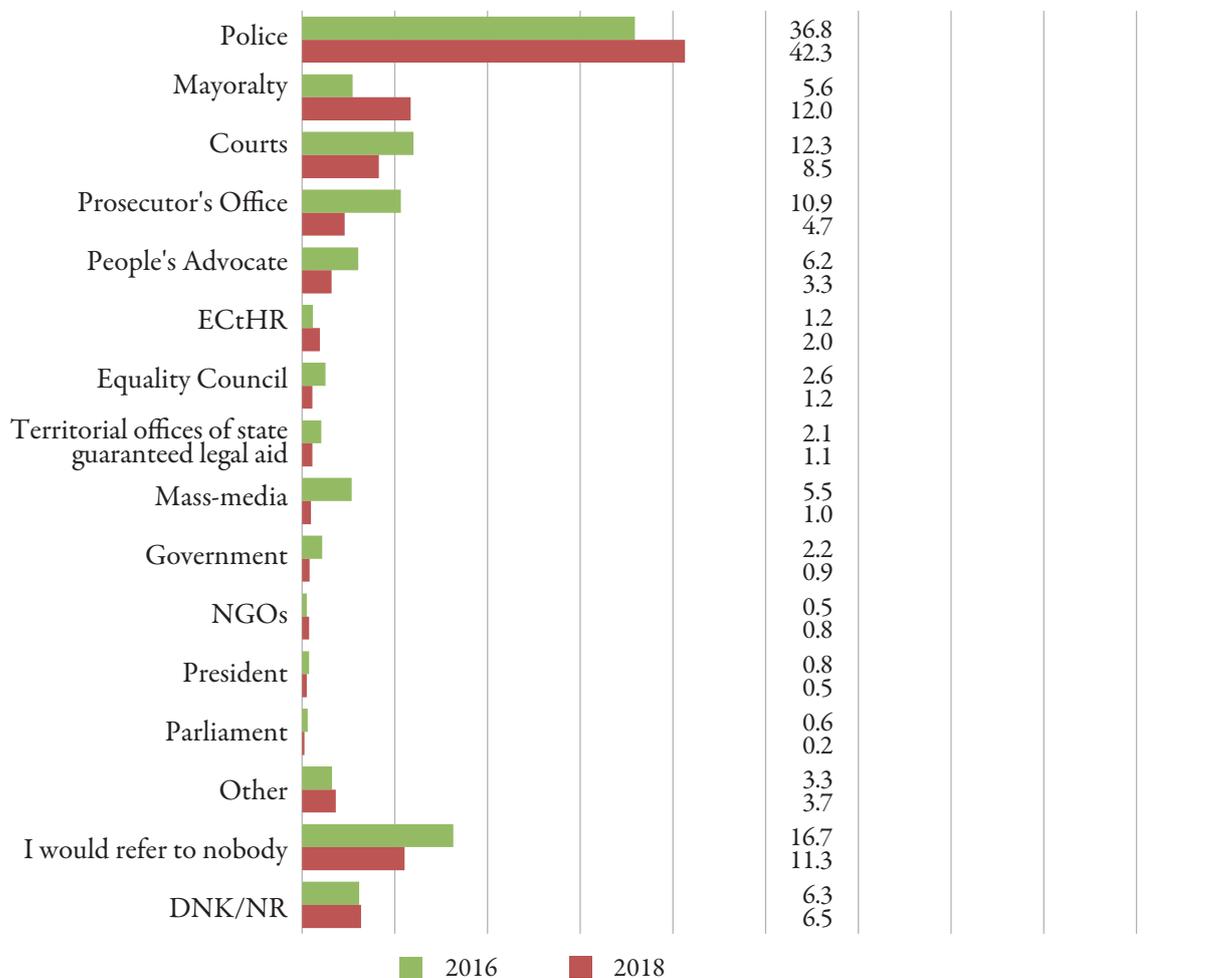
Figure 16. To what extent do you agree with the current policies in the area of human rights in the Republic of Moldova? 2016 and 2018, % (answers: to a great and very great extent)



It should be mentioned that although 36.6% of respondents stated that policies in human rights' area got improved over the last 10 years, the majority of them graded with „7” or „8” on the scale from 1 to 10. So there were fewer extreme positive/appreciative answers, hence denoting that respondents perceive this improvement at the limit. Likewise, there are a lot of extremely negative answers, meaning grades of „1”, hence denoting that there is a group of 13% of the population which is extremely displeased with the current policies in the area of human rights. This group of persons is homogenously distributed at the population level.

In case of violation of human rights, it is most likely for a person from the Republic of Moldova to call the Police (42.3%), and secondly to refer to the mayoralty; 8.5% of respondents would go to the court, and 4.7% - to the Prosecutor's Office. *Figure 17.*

Figure 17. Where could you refer, first of all, if your or your relatives' rights were violated? 2016 and 2018, %, one single answer



A higher level of trust is registered in 2018 for police as compared to 2016 and an important decrease of trust for judges and especially, for Prosecutor's office. In 2016 about 5.5% would refer to mass-media, while currently just 1% would do it, hence denoting the changed role of mass-media in covering in the media the way in which human rights are observed.

It would be more men than women going to the Police – the difference is insignificant; as well as rather urban population than rural one. According to the age groups – those aged 30 – 44 years old would be more likely to contact the police, as well as the representative of majority ethnicity and persons with high incomes.

Persons from urban area (9.7%) and those with incomes of 1500-3000 MDL per month (11.9%) would most likely go to the court. Men (6.1%), urban inhabitants (6.1%), persons aged 30 – 44 years old (6.3%) – registered the highest level of trust for the Prosecutor's Office. And young people aged 18-29 years old (3.4%) and urban inhabitants (3.2%) would most likely go to the ECtHR. The most passive ones (who would go nowhere), would be the persons over 45 years old and people with very low incomes.

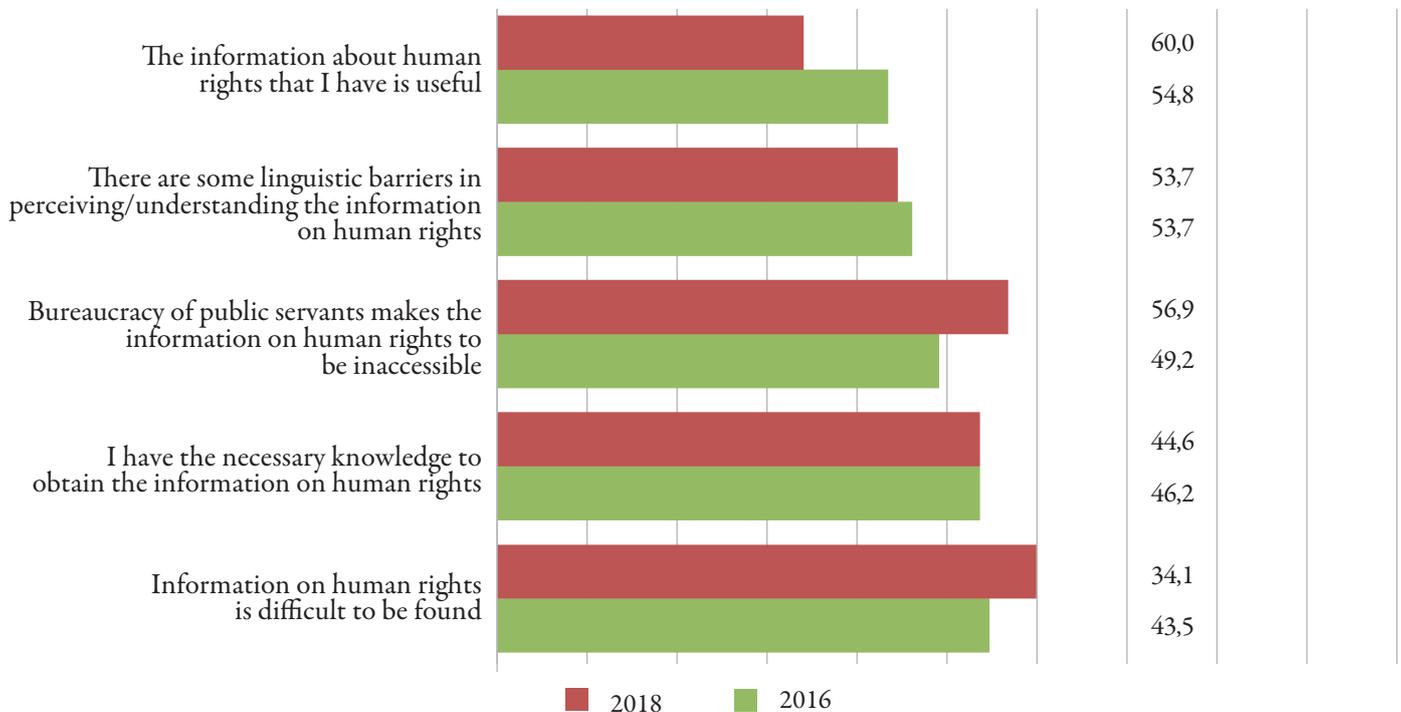
CHAPTER 3

Level of observance of human rights in the Republic of Moldova

3.1. Perceptions on human rights observance in general

As compared to the study carried out in 2016, there are no significant differences regarding the way in which the information about human rights is perceived and received by citizens. Hence, 60% consider that the received information is useful for them, a little bit more than half of respondents (53.7%) consider that there are certain linguistic impediments related to human rights. A big share of respondents consider bureaucracy to be a barrier in free access to information on human rights, and less than a half (44.6%) consider that they have enough knowledge to access the information about human rights. As compared to 2016, a significantly smaller share (34.1% as compared to 43.5%) considers that in general it is difficult to find information about human rights. *Figure 18*

Figure 18. To what extent do you agree with the following information on human rights? Answers of "to a (very) great extent": 2016 and 2018, %



Young people, ethnic-linguistic minorities and persons with high incomes are those who consider to the greatest extent that the information regarding human rights is useful. Ethnic minorities also consider to the greatest extent that there are linguistic impediments to understand the information about human rights. Persons from urban areas and ethnic minorities perceive bureaucracy of civil servants as a barrier to obtaining information about human rights. This situation may be explained by the fact that these persons most frequently claim their rights or try to be informed.

There is a gender difference in relation to the way in which the respondents consider that they have enough information for claiming their rights in an independent way. Men more likely than women would do this. Young people under 30 years old would act in a similar way.

The difference is rather significant from the ethnic criterion perspective. Hence, the ethnic minorities consider that they have less knowledge to be able to claim their rights. The same situation is registered for persons who earn less than 3000 MDL per month. The accessibility of information is more limited for persons with low incomes (under 3000 MDL), for those from rural area and for elderly people.

Referring to the traditions of a country, most of respondents (46.5%) stated that such traditions may limit human fundamental rights, especially for certain social groups, while 40.9% do not agree with this statement. *Figure 19*. It is mainly the young people (49.7%), the majority population (48.2%), and persons with high incomes (55.3%) who support this statement, and this correlates with the groups of persons who, in general, are better informed and possibly follow traditions to a lower extent.

In relation to use of torture, most of the respondents (40.7%) consider that torture cannot be justified in any situation. At the same time, almost half of respondents would accept torture in certain conditions, for instance, as a measure for protecting other persons' life (21.5%). *Figure 20*

Figure 19. Do you consider that the traditions of a country may justify the limitation of human fundamental rights of certain social groups?, 2018, %

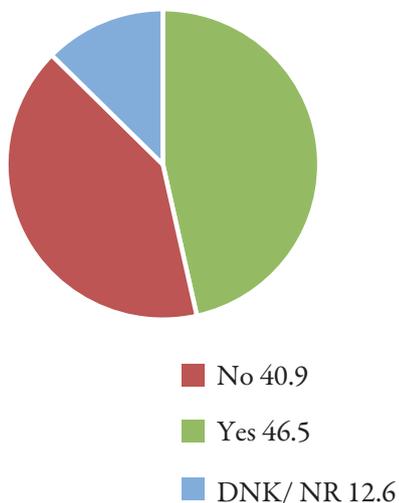
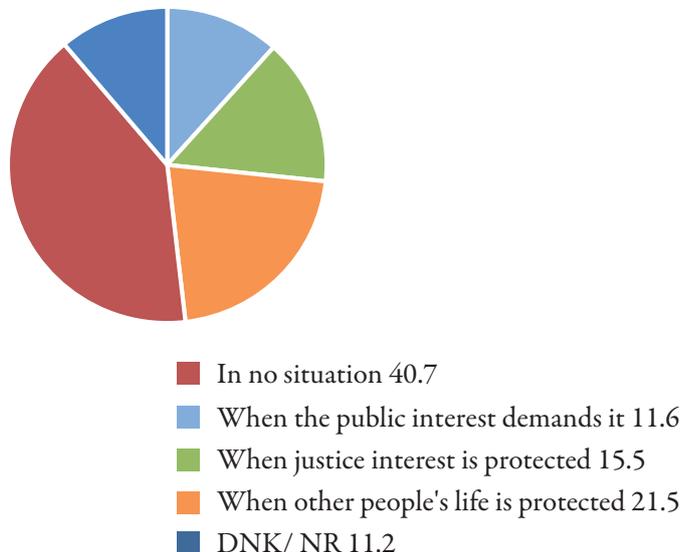


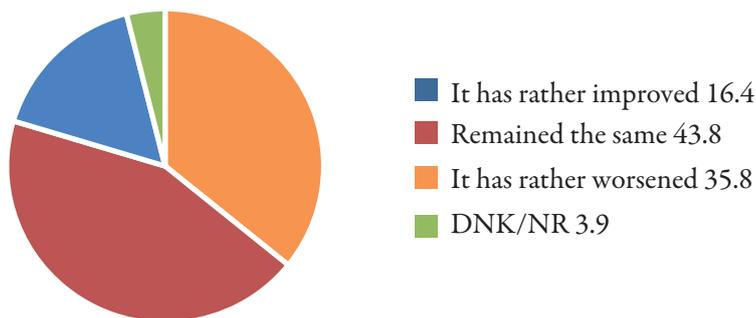
Figure 20. In what situations is torture use justified?, 2018, %



The categories of people, which are highly against the use of torture are: people from urban area (42.6%), persons over 60 years old (44.1%) and persons with high incomes (48.3%).

As compared to 2016, more respondents noted that the situation regarding human rights has rather worsened (35.8%) than improved (16.4%). On the other hand, less than half of respondents consider that the situation did not change (43.8%). *Figure 21*.

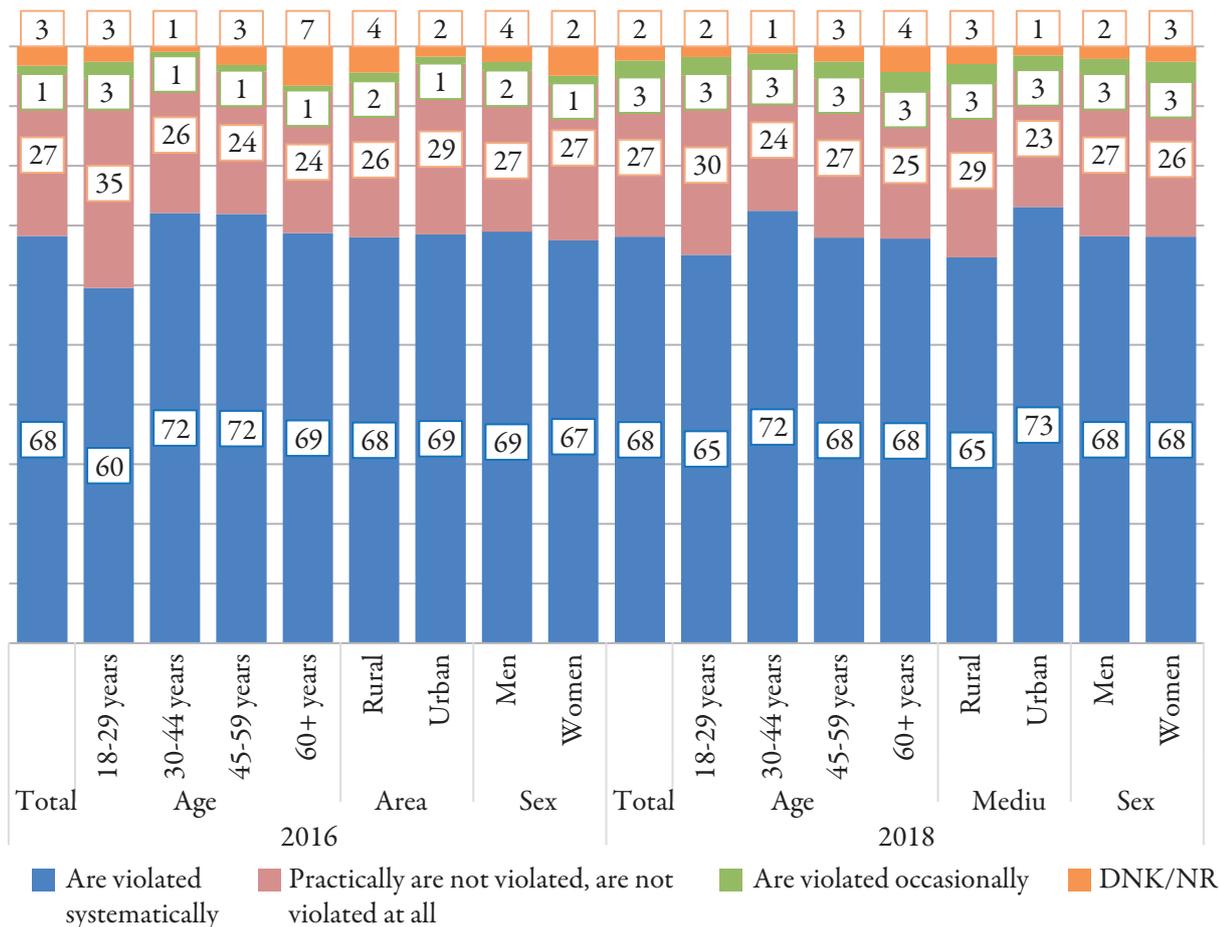
Figure 21. How would you appreciate the situation on human rights observance in the Republic of Moldova currently as compared to 2016?, 2018, %



The most optimistic in relation to the change for the better of the situation regarding human rights in the Republic of Moldova are: persons from urban area (37%), persons aged 30-44 years old (41.9%) and very poor persons (38.7%).

Just like in 2016, the share of those who consider that human rights are not violated at all in the Republic of Moldova is very low (5%). An important majority – 68%, like in 2016, consider that human rights are systematically violated in the Republic of Moldova. *Figure 22.* In 2018, the following categories of persons consider that human rights are systematically violated: persons aged 30-44 years old (72%), persons from urban area (73%), and persons of majority ethnicity (70%). By contrast, ethnic minorities consider at a much lower level (60.6%) that human rights are systematically violated, although many of them consider that these are violated also occasionally.

Figure 22. How frequently, in your opinion, are human rights violated in the Republic of Moldova? 2016 and 2018, %



Like in the study from 2016, the main right needing the attention of the society is the right to health, but the share of respondents who have expressed this opinion in 2018 was higher (71.6% as compared to 61%). This fact denotes that the problems related to the healthcare system got multiplied and more and more persons consider that namely the right to health is a vulnerable one. The second in the top is the right to education – 43.5% of respondents (a significant increase as compared to the results from 2016) listing it among the two most sensitive rights which are worth more attention. *Figure 23.*

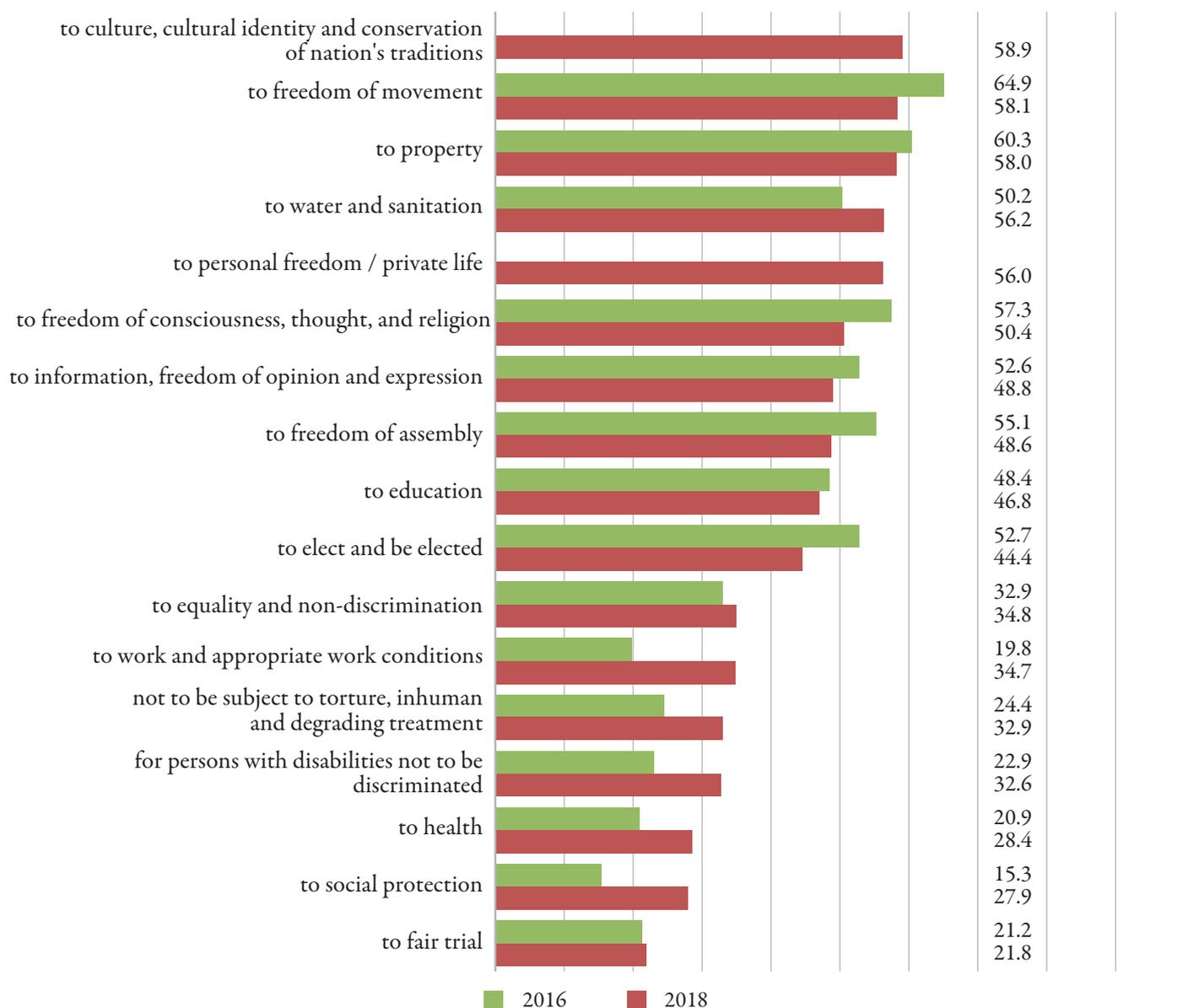
Figure 23. What would be in your opinion the three main human rights and freedoms in Moldova, which would need more attention from the society? 2016 and 2018, %, multiple answers



When disaggregating the data, it may be noted that women (46.8%) consider more than men (39.6%) that the right to education needs special attention. Women, but also persons with low incomes claim the right to health. The right to social protection is mainly claimed by ethnic minorities, just like the right not to be subject to torture. At the same time, the majority population would rather demand a higher level of attention for the right to information and freedom of expression, than the ethnic minorities.

According to the respondents, the most respected rights and freedoms list: the right to culture and cultural identity (58.9% - it was not included in the study from 2016), the right to free movement (58.1%), the right to property (58%), the right to personal freedom and private life (56% - it was not included in the study from 2016). The share of those who consider that the right to free movement is one of the most respected rights has decreased as compared to the data registered two years ago. Similarly, there is a decreased share of those who consider that freedom of assembly, right to be elected, right to information, right to freedom of opinion and of expression are among the most respected rights in the RM. It may be assumed that some regress was registered in these areas in relation to observance of human rights. The least observed right is the right to fair trial – only 21.8% of respondents consider that this right is observed. *Figure 24.*

Figure 24. To what extent the following rights and freedoms are observed in the Republic of Moldova? 2016 and 2018, % (answers: very great extent and great extent)



From the perspective of respondents' categories, it may be noted that ethnic minorities consider that the right to education is observed (45.3%) in a more significant way than the representative of the majority ethnicity (36.5%). Also, ethnic minorities consider to a greater extent (36.8%) that the right to social protection is not observed, while the perception in relation to observance of the right to culture and cultural identity is the same among the majority population and minority ethnic groups.

The observance of the right to equality and nondiscrimination is perceived differently. Hence, men consider to a greater extent than women that equality is observed. Likewise, persons with higher incomes consider to a greater extent than persons with low incomes that equality is observed. This fact denotes that women and persons with low incomes feel to a lower extent that the right to equality and nondiscrimination is observed.

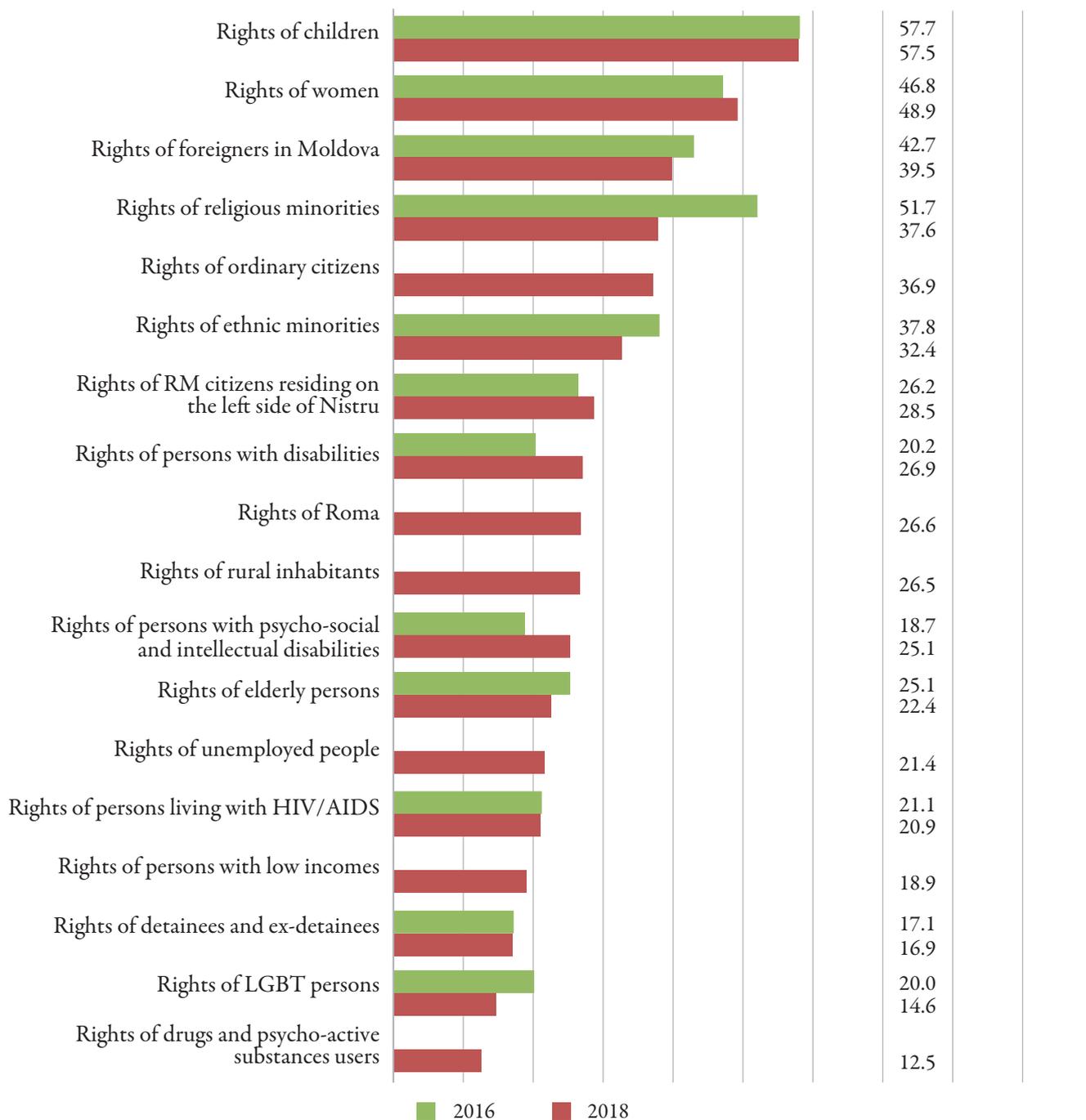
According to the analysis of the collected data, women, urban population, elderly people, and persons with high incomes are more sensitive towards the right to information. These groups consider that the right to information is observed to a lower extent.

Just like in 2016, in 2018, according to the respondents' perception, children's right is the most observed one - 57.7% of respondents agreeing with this statement to a great or very great extent; being followed by women's rights with 46.8%. A significant decrease as compared to 2016 is noted for those who consider that religious minorities' rights are observed.

There is a slight improvement regarding the perception on the observance of rights of persons with physical disabilities and the perception on the protection of rights of LGBT persons got worse.

In general, in respondents' opinion, the least observed would be the rights of drug users and consumers of active-psychotropic substances (12.5%), the rights of LGBT persons (14.6%), detainees and ex-detainees (16.9%) and the rights of persons with low incomes (18.9%). It should be noted that the study from 2018 has included more categories of persons in the respective question. *Figure 25.*

Figure 25. To what extent the rights and freedoms of the following groups of persons are observed in the Republic of Moldova? 2016 and 2018, %. (answers : "very great extent" and "great extent")



Women consider to a lower extent (42.1% - at all) than men (37.8% - at all) that their rights are observed. It is surprising, but rural population consider to a lower extent than people from urban area that their rights are not observed. Persons with very low incomes (under 1500 MDL/month) consider more than others that their rights are not observed. The same goes for elderly persons.

The perception that the rights of the LGBT community are violated is mainly shared by men, urban population, persons under 44 years old, majority population, and persons with high incomes.

The opinions of the interviewed experts were very different in relation to observance of human rights in general. According to some of them, the situation has worsened as compared to the previous years. These experts consider that the programs, which are implemented are just formal and there is no de-facto benefit from such programs' implementation. The experts have also pointed out that the judiciary system is more deficient than in the previous years.

In others' perception, the situation related to human rights has developed into a positive direction as compared to the situation, which existed several years ago. The following reasons were brought in this respect:

- people are more informed about their own rights and they can protect themselves better;
- the professionalism level of police employees has increased,
- the public persons are more involved in different campaigns to break social stereotypes,
- social inclusion programs are implemented, and other.

Perceptions were registered within the study according to which the current situation related to human rights is apparently better than it used to be several years ago. This fact is valid only for the ordinary citizen, in their opinion. As for the citizens who do not like the governance, the situation has worsened. One of the provided examples related to the recent local elections in Chisinau (election of general mayor), which in experts' perception has proved once again that justice is much more deficient than in the past years.

[IPE10]: *"5 years ago it was bad, and now it is even worse. Abuses, arrests. Prosecutors guided by the politics and make the judiciary system to be sick. Justice is selective. [...] No results are seen."*

Referring to the positive aspects of human rights' observance, the following achievements were mentioned by experts:

- legislative amendments related to the rights of persons with HIV+, LGBT, persons with disabilities, and others,
- increased level of information about the HIV+ persons,
- increased level of acceptance of persons with different forms of disability (social inclusion), as well as of those with HIV+,
- more and more persons infected with HIV get out of anonymity, for instance the campaign "My status is not a secret",
- involvement of influent public persons in different information campaigns/marches, such as: "Fearless", ambassadors of the Red Ribbon.

Referring to the dynamic perspective on human rights in the next two years, the experts pointed out that this period of time is too short so as to be able to talk about any important changes. Nevertheless, in their perception, the situation depends a lot on the political will. There were also opinions according to which the situation could get worse or could stay as it currently is.

There were also perceptions according to which human rights observance will depend a lot on the society; the experts has pointed out the fact that people are those who are, first of all, responsible for change.

According to the experts. The most vulnerable social group is the one including the persons with disabilities, followed by the group of LGBT persons and those of Roma ethnicity. According to the study, these minorities are subject to violation of many rights, but most of all, these minority groups feel the negative influence of social stereotypes. Every vulnerable group may have sub-groups, in this respect.

As the persons from the vulnerable groups are very much affected by the fact that they are discriminated, some experts recommend to increase the level of society's acceptance/tolerance by developing a social approach towards these minorities.

The detained persons; elderly persons – pensioners; persons with low incomes and low level of education; rural population; and persons living with HIV were also mentioned in the category of vulnerable groups.

[IPE5]: *“If the person is with disability, a woman and of Roma ethnicity, the discrimination is triple.”*

[IPE9]: *“People should not be tolerant, they should accept others just as they are, as people have the same rights regardless of the category they are part of.”*

According to the participants attending the group discussions, the most vulnerable social groups would be the persons with social needs, Roma ethnicity persons, persons from the LGBT group and pensioners. There were also opinions that this category also includes persons living with HIV, women, children left behind, and Russian-speaking persons.

[FG4 – B3]: *“Roma people, Russian language speakers”.*

[FG3 - B2]: *“The most vulnerable are the elderly people, as a young person... may do something, while an old person has nothing but the pension, which is very small”.*

[FG3 - B5]: *“Old people and children. The attitude towards them ...”*

[FG6 - F1]: *“Of course the persons with disabilities, especially those who are not moving, and this is sad. The child does not move, and he is 7 years old, and you cannot get into the health center, and how to get there to take the tests. So I have to take his blood all by myself and to run through the center, when actually somebody else should do it”.*

[FG7 - F4]: *“The elderly persons. It is not that I think so, I know it because I saw it. As no much attention is paid to them. When we called the ambulance for the grandmother and they were asking her age. And I told them the age, and they said that they do not provide help as she is already on her way to ... and they do not have interest in her, because she is an old person. They do not have the interest to save her”.*

[FG8-F1]: *“Women and left-behind children. And violence, in school”.*

[FG9 - B2]: *“As I told you, according to the official reports, LGBT. Their rights are violated in Moldova.”*

[FG9 - B2]: *“Roma people, women, I know”.*

[FG9 - F3]: *“Elderly people”.*

[FG9 - F1]: *“I consider that persons with HIV – if the status of these persons is known, all the roads are closed for them. They cannot get employed and cannot receive health services. Their rights are also very violated in Moldova.”*

[FG9 - B1]: *“Persons with disabilities. First of all, there are no living conditions for people with disabilities. Not so many conditions for those living in wheelchairs, even here in Chisinau, let alone the suburbs and villages. There are no access ramps for them to go up and down. Yes, there are some ramps in the underground passages, but how to cross the street, you have to jump. And this is very sad”.*

Referring to the consequences of non-observing human rights, the majority of participants attending the group discussions noted that the non-observance of human rights would have migration level increase as a consequence. And there were also opinions that when rights are not observed, the level of envy among people grows, corruption increases, as well as mistrust in the state.

During the in-depth interviews, the experts mentioned migration level increase as an inevitable consequence of non-observance of human rights. The increasing level of corruption and authoritarian-totalitarian regime presence were also mentioned as long-term consequences.

One of the experts stated his opinion about the long-term consequences of violation of the rights of persons living with HIV and drug consumers. In his perception, the systematic non-observance of minorities' rights (discrimination, healthcare, social) increases the risk of a growing number of persons infected with HIV in the society.

[IPE9]: *“I have noticed that a lot of persons leave the country because they do not see any perspective. They do not see a future for their children. The right to a decent living is violated, as well as the one to fair trial. Many of my colleagues and acquaintances, who could contribute in the area of observing human rights in Moldova are just leaving the country”.*

3.2. Right to education

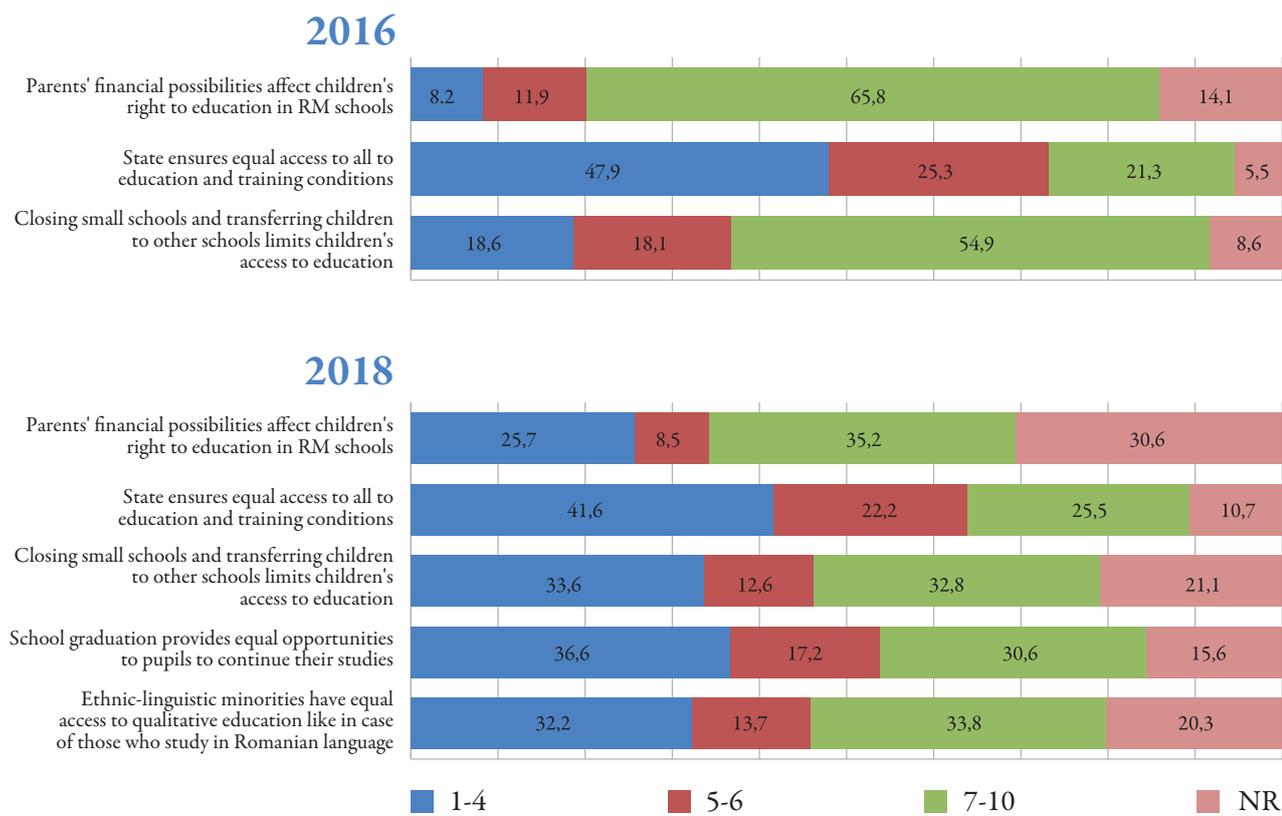
Based on the provisions of the International Covenant for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and of the General Comment No. 13 of the UN Specialized Committee⁶, the right on education includes the right to primary and secondary education. The rights’ frame of rights’ holders and obligations’ bearers fits the 3AQ formula and the obligation to observe, protect and implement the law.

If in 2016, the respondents agreed to a great extent with the statements that parents’ financial possibilities affect (negatively) the right to education in the schools from the Republic of Moldova (66%) and that closing small schools and transferring children to other schools limits children’s access to education (55%), in 2018, a significantly lower number of respondents agreed to a great extent with these statements (35% and 33%, respectively). This fact denotes that these problems are not as stringent as they used to be two years ago. Nevertheless, from methodological point of view, it should be mentioned that the non-response rate for the survey carried out in 2018 was higher for these two questions than in 2016, and this partially explains the difference between the results.

In 2018, only 26% of respondents agreed to a greater extent with the statement that the State ensures equal access to education and to training conditions for all, which is a better result than the one registered in 2016 (21%), but it also denotes that in 2018, in general, the State does not provide access to education, as about 42% of the respondents agree with this statement. *Figure 26.*

⁶ See General Comment in English at: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en&TreatyID=9&DocTypeID=11

Figure 26. Assess on a scale from 1 (to a very small extent) to 10 (very great extent), to what extent do you consider that ... (2016 and 2018, %)



According to the perception of the interviewed persons, the right to education is mainly violated in relation to Roma persons. They stated that such stereotypes as “Roma do not go to school” exist in the society. In their opinion, authorities do not insist on Roma children attending school. [IPES]: “Another stereotype spread by the Police itself is the so-called “tradition” among Roma people not to enroll their children in school. According to the statistical data, about 57% of Roma children are enrolled in schools”.

In spite of the fact that preschool education is not integrated in the right to education, the lack of kindergartens and other services of preschool education was one of the main concerns of the participants in the qualitative study. The interviewed persons mentioned that because of the limited number of places, many children do not go to kindergarten.

At the kindergarten level, the biggest difficulty was noted in relation to enrolling children in kindergarten, informal payments paid in the kindergartens, insufficient number of kindergartens in the locality, lack of strictly necessary endowment for a good operation.

The following findings were mentioned in relation to primary and secondary education in the context of the quality of the right to education: overloaded curriculum, many useless training subjects, lack of training subjects which are necessary for acquiring life skills, insufficiently trained teaching personnel.

Corruption and bureaucracy were laid down as factors that impede access to qualitative education.

In participants' perception, the right to education is violated especially in relation to:

- Persons with disabilities. In this respect, reference was made to the inclusive education system, which was not well thought until the end. The mentioned problems included lack of teaching personnel taught to manage the situations occurring

among ordinary children and those with special educational needs, big number of children in classes, overloaded curriculum, and insufficient number of teaching personnel to provide home-based support.

- People of Roma ethnicity. In this respect, the participants mentioned that the majority of Roma children do not attend kindergartens; and have language barriers, hence perceive the training material with more difficulty in the school educational institutions. At the same time, the people present in focus groups mentioned that education problems in case of Roma children increase in a chain.

The FG with non-citizens came up with two contradictory opinions related to the right to education. Some had a positive perception of education in RM, which, in their opinion, is affordable both in schools and universities. Others had a negative opinion.

In general, all the participants had the perception that there is a lot of corruption in the system. At the same time, they think that children from educational institutions (1-12 grades) should be divided by age – I – IV grades in one institution, V-VIII grades – other institution, and IX – XII grades – a different institution.

According to some of the participants, pupils have a lot of rights and they do not know their obligations, and that they violate their right to education themselves due to their attitude.

[FG7 - B1]: *“In Roma families [...] most children do not go to the kindergarten, [...] as they levy payments and people have no money to pay them. And when the child goes to the first grade, he cannot communicate and understand clearly what the teacher says, as they communicate in Romanian.[...] hence they already feel themselves uncomfortable ...”*

[FG7 - F3]: *“The main problem is the kindergarten. Now only 28 kids go to the kindergarten, while we have 75 children of this age. And those who attend the kindergarten, 28, stay there only until 12 o'clock. So they do not stay there for 10 hours, and slip there, because there is no sewerage”.*

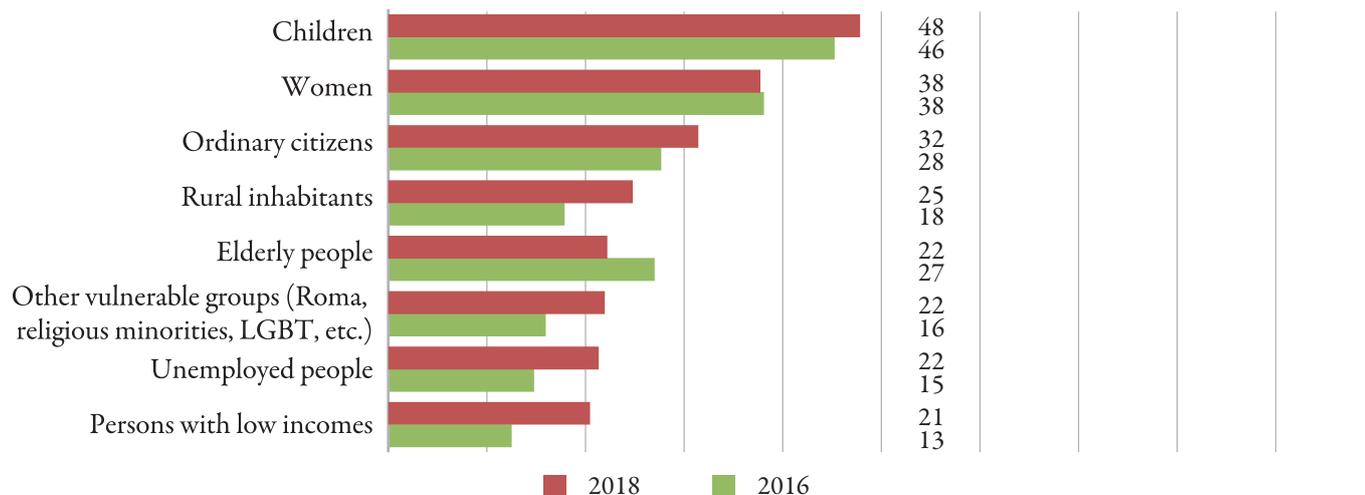
[FG4 – B1]: *“In relation to the right to education, we are not educated correctly since our childhood. We do not have teachers to teach us correctly. [...] Why do we have conflicts in the minibuses? Why do we have this attitude towards LGBT person? Because of lack of knowledge. [...] Our children are not prepared for life in schools. They are trained like robots to know some automated things in geography, chemistry, mathematics”.*

[FG10 - B5]: *“[...] I think that it is a mistake for children from 6 to 18 years old to be in the same school. Every age group has different physical and psychological development and it is a little bit more difficult for teachers to work with different ages”.*

3.3. Right to healthcare

Overall, the population perception regarding the right to healthcare, almost for all the categories of persons, has improved as compared to the results registered in 2016. On the other hand, in absolute values, the situation is practically as bad as in 2016. Less than half of respondents stated that children's rights to health are observed to a great or very great extent. Women's rights – only 38%, ordinary people's rights – only 32%, and the rights of persons with low incomes, unemployed people and some vulnerable groups – only 21-22%. This fact denotes serious problems regarding the perception related to the right to health, especially for the socially vulnerable groups. *Figure 27.*

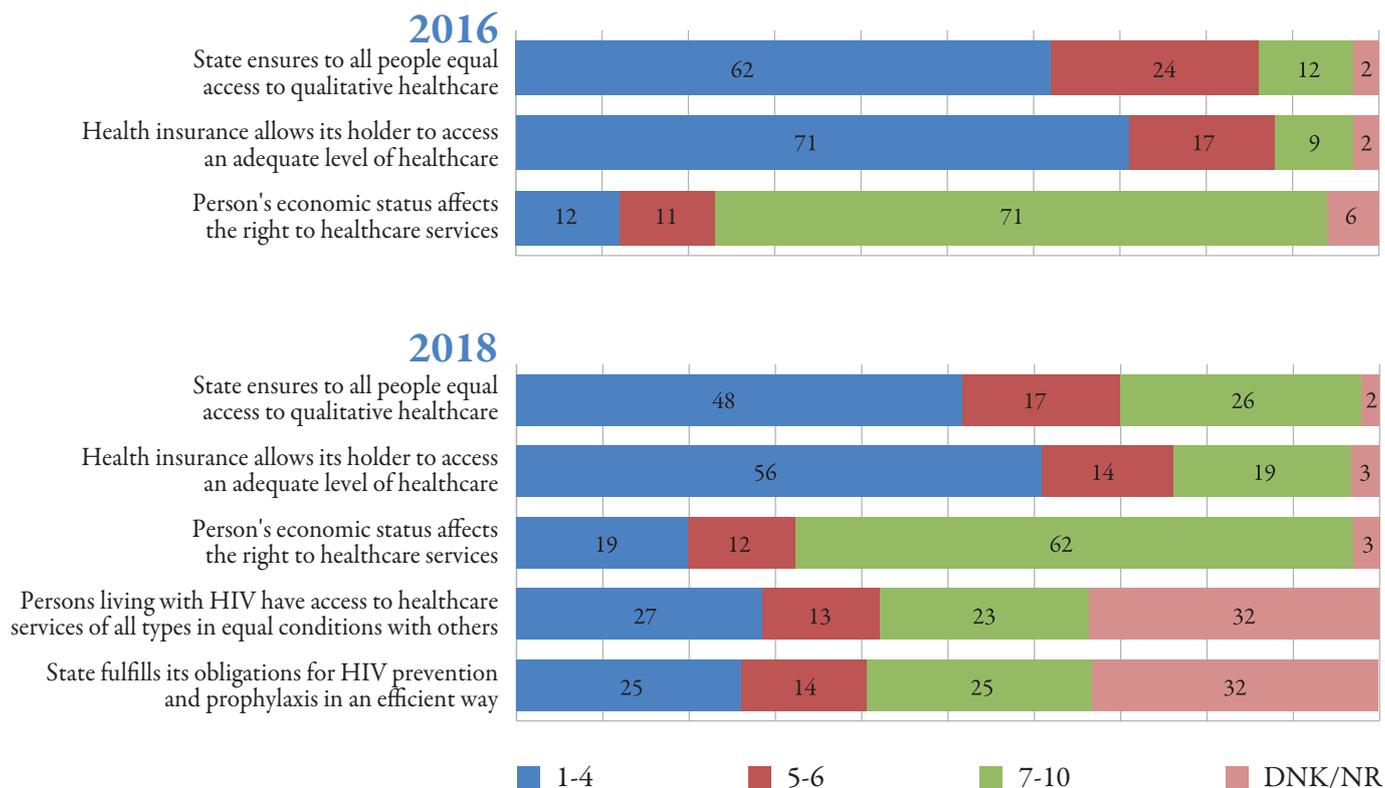
Figure 27. To what extent do you consider that the State ensures the right to healthcare for the following categories of persons in the Republic of Moldova? 2016 and 2018, %. (answers : "to a great extent" and "to a very great extent")



When disaggregating data, it may be noted that women and persons aged 45-59 years old rather consider that their right to health is violated. Children’s right is perceived as being less ensured by the State among women, persons aged 30-59 years old and persons with low incomes. State’s observance of the rights of people from rural area is less perceived by women, ethnical-linguistic minorities, and persons with incomes between 3 and 5 thousand MDL. The persons from the rural area have the same perception as the majority in relation to State’s assurance of these rights. Unemployed persons, women, and persons from urban area, young people, and ethnical-linguistic minorities – they consider to a lower extent that the State observes the rights. People earning between 3 and 5 thousand MDL consider the most that the right of persons with low incomes is violated. Of the same opinion are women, persons from urban area, but also ethnical-linguistic minorities.

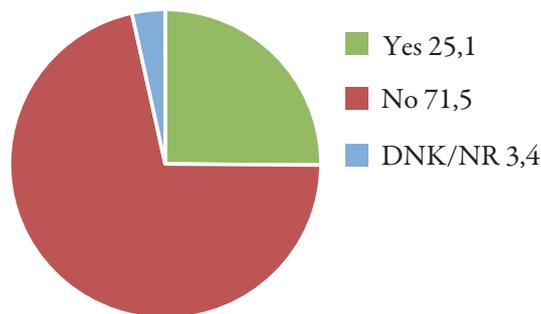
Respondents’ rather negative attitude towards the way in which the right to health is observed is shown in *Figure 28*, according to which 62% of respondents mention that a person’s economic status affects the right to health protection, 56% - that the health insurance does not provide its holder with an adequate level of medical services, and 48% noted that the State does not provide equal access to qualitative medical services to all. These statements may be less vehement than the ones in 2016, nevertheless denoting a major dissatisfaction with the health system in general, and also a general dissatisfaction with the right to healthcare. As for the persons living with HIV (questions included only in the study from 2018), only about a quarter of respondents consider that these persons have access to health services and that the State fulfills its obligations to prevent efficiently HIV. The share of those who have a contrary opinion is almost the same and about one third of respondents did not answer these two questions.

Figure 28. Assess on a scale from 1 (fully disagree) to 10 (fully agree), to what extent do you agree with the following statements? 2016 and 2018, %



Only one quarter of the total number of respondents have benefited over the last four years from sexual and reproductive health services (25.1%). Gender differences are significant, hence only 12% of men and 36.3% of women have benefited from such services. From age perspective, the majority are persons aged up to 44 years old and representatives of the majority ethnic group. Persons with high incomes rather benefit from such services, as compared to those with low incomes. *Figure 29.*

Figure 29. Have you benefited over the last 4 years from sexual and reproductive health services (gynecologist, urologist, etc.)? 2018, %

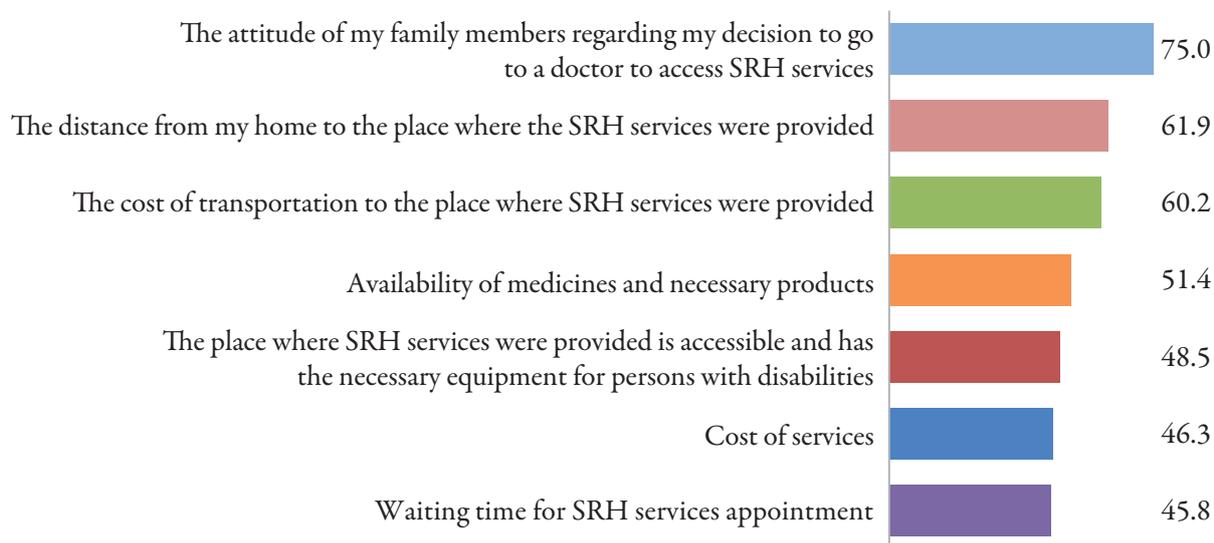


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About three fourths of those who benefited from these services are satisfied with the attitude of family members as a result of the decision to call upon a specialist, 62% are pleased with the location of institutions that provide SRH services 60.2% are pleased with the (low) transportation cost to the place where the services are provided and 51.4% are satisfied with the availability of medicines and necessary products.

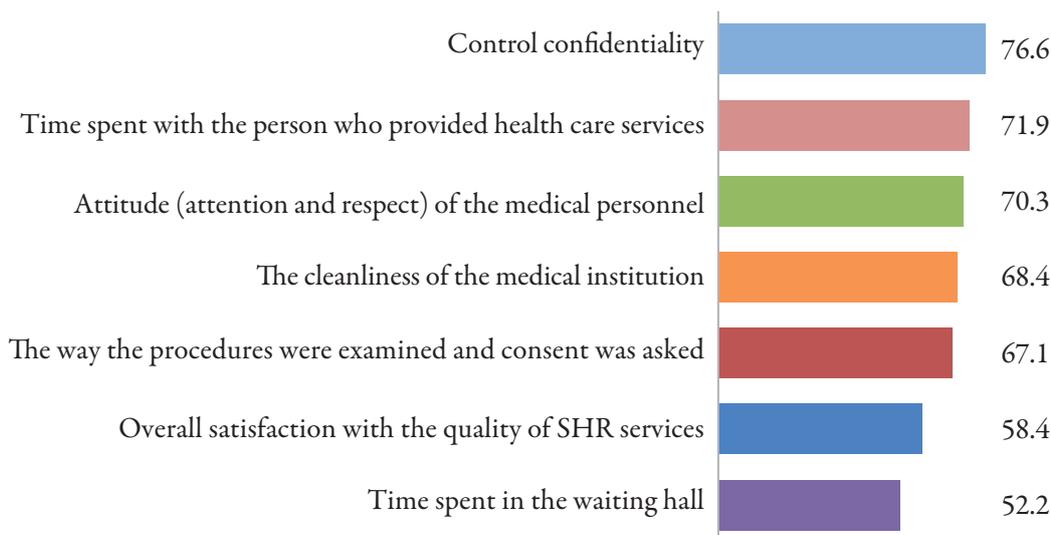
Less than a half of respondents were satisfied with the place where the SRH services are provided, their costs and waiting time. *Figure 30.*

Figure 30. Assess the level of satisfaction with the access to SRH services, referring to the last time you have received such services?, (satisfied answers), 2018, % of those who have used SRH services



In relation to the quality of services, most of respondents are satisfied with control confidentiality (76.6%), time spent with the person providing these services (71.9%), and the attitude of the medical personnel (70.3%). They are less satisfied with the time spent in the waiting hall (52.2%) – which seems to be the most disturbing aspect in the process of getting these services. *Figure 31.*

Figure 31. Assess the level of satisfaction with the quality of SRH services, referring to the last time you have received such services?, (answers “satisfied” and “very satisfied”) 2018, % of those who have used SRH services



Women are less pleased than men with the general quality of the SRH services, and the ethnic-linguistic minorities are less satisfied with such services than the representatives of the majority ethnicity. The level of satisfaction increased depending on the respondents' incomes.

As for the way in which the right to health is observed, the experts' opinions are divided. Some consider that the situation is not ideal, but it is good, while others think that that this right is much violated.

The experts had a relatively good perception about the situation regarding the right to health, referring to the persons living with HIV and persons with disabilities aged under 18 years old who are provided free of charge treatment and assistance.

It was mentioned during the study that Roma people are discriminated when they request healthcare services. At the same time, it was pointed out that socially vulnerable persons of Roma ethnicity often do not benefit of adequate healthcare services.

Some experts mentioned that the right to qualitative medical services is violated in the penitentiary institutions. In this context, the experts have pointed out that due to this a big number of detained persons are passing away.

Others mentioned that the provided medical services are not professional.

[IPE3]: *“There are fewer and fewer situations with violation of the right to health in case of the persons living with HIV, whose situation is in general a good one.”*

[IPE5]: *“The stereotypes should be blamed, because when a Roma person goes to the doctor, he/she receives less attention than the rest of the people”.*

[IPE17]: *“There is lack of qualitative medical services in the penitentiary system. This is a major problem, due to which a big number of persons pass away in detention”.*

[IPE10_2]: *“There are no professional medical services, as the medical workers do not give the place to the young ones, they do not want to get retired”.*

The participants of the focus group are mainly displeased with the current healthcare system. The main dissatisfactions are related to:

- Waiting period to get a consultation.
- Waiting period to get an appointment with the specialist.
- Long waiting period to get the first medical assistance.
- (Negative) attitude from the medical workers.
- Corruption in the system.
- Bureaucracy.
- Difficulty to access investigations and tests.
- Unprofessional workers.
- Expensive and wrong treatment.
- Going from one person to another so as to get the acceptance for a specific investigation /treatment.
- Deficient sanitary system in certain hospitals.

There were also opinions that the right to healthcare is limited because there are no ambulances in some rural localities, and when somebody calls for the ambulance, it comes with big delays from the city.

During the in-depth interviews, the persons mentioned that the right to health and healthcare is much violated in rural areas, in the penitentiaries, as well as in Transnistria.

According to some respondents, the right to health is ensured only when, as patient, you prove that you are entitled to free-of-charge treatment, or if you threaten that you will contact somebody from the ministry.

The non-residents think that the healthcare system in the RM – both, the private and public one, does not inspire trust. They stated that there are many contradictory opinions regarding the same symptoms. Hence, the non-residents residing in developed states are more tempted to get hospitalized, if needed, outside the country, and not in a hospital from the Republic of Moldova.

[FG1 - F1]: *“I have waited for about 4 hours to get to the doctor. I had an appointment at 16.00 and I entered the office at 19.00 o'clock.”*

[FG3 - F4]: *“In the city I live in, this is limited, as we have just one health center. And also we do not have an ambulance and we have to wait for the ambulance to come from the city”.*

[FG5 - B1]: *“The health system is very cumbersome, corrupt and bureaucratic”.*

[FG9 - F1]: *“Many people, the majority actually, when ending up in the hospital ... they get stressed and have fears, and people just respect the doctors' wish, not knowing that everything should be provided free of charge. [...] Hence, when you get hospitalized, you should point attention to the fact that you know your rights, and if not, the Ministry of Health should provide for”.*

[FG6 - F1]: *“Because the test is made, but the result should be waited for 2 weeks, instead of taking all the tests in one day and getting all the necessary referrals, I spend like 2 weeks de facto”.*

[FG6 - B6]: *“To get to a specialist, first you have to go to the family doctor, to get an appointment, and the family doctor gives you a referral and all this system with getting appointments and appointments. And what to do if you have an acute disease?! Either you die, or it gets chronic, 2 months minimum!”*

[FG6 - F1]: *“The system functions in such a way, that it is better to pay and go immediately”.*

[FG6 - F1]: *“A lady passed away in the hospital, she was over 50 years old, and she was the mother of 6 children. So how she got it? She had blood transfusion, and we tried to explain that it is HIV, and she could not understand what disease this is. Maybe it is better like this, as she did not get sad about it. When she was asking what it is, it is something chronic, and that’s it”.*

[FG7 - B1]: *“The majority of Roma people do not have health insurance, except for pensioners and children. [...]. All give money and all take bribes, in this respect, but when they see a Roma person, at least as I am, prettier, they start asking for money. More money. Yes, because they know that these people do not have health insurance, have nothing, but they come to the hospital when there is an emergency and thus they use this opportunity”.*

[FG9 - F1]: *“I would like to say that it all depends on knowing your personal rights. The medicines will appear if you ask for them. Meaning, that as a person who pays the taxes, if I am a pensioner, I do not pay them, but I am entitled to healthcare, covered by the State, and as medicine is free of charge ...”*

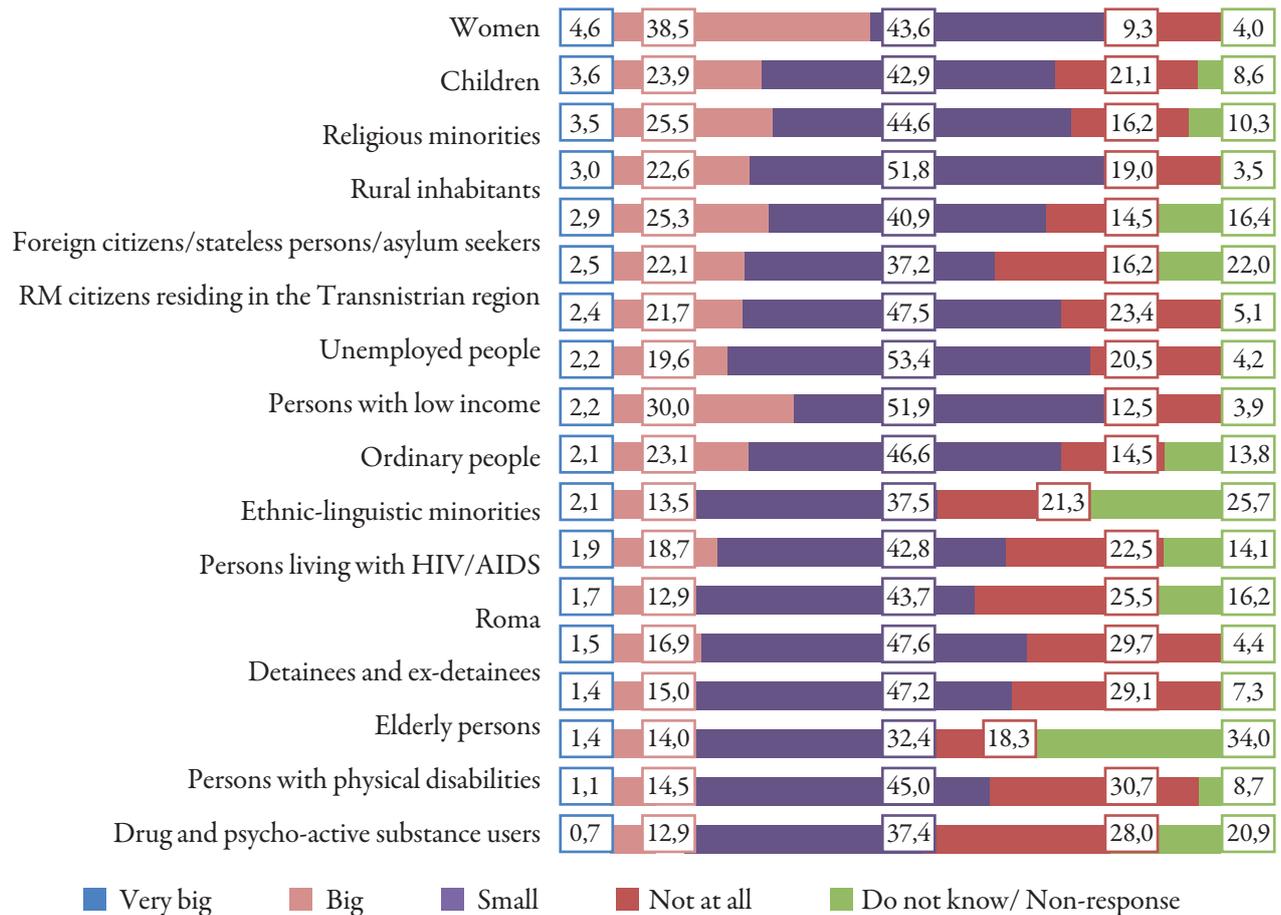
[FG10 - B5]: *“If it is private, yes. But over there again, you cannot be sure 100%. If it is public, I am sure at 20%, and if it is private – 60%.”*

[FG10 - B1]: *“If I have to get hospitalized, I will not go to the hospital, here, in Moldova. Even to Med Park, or any other place. Here in Moldova, unlike France, doctors may have different opinions. A doctor aged 50 – 60 years old has an opinion, and the one aged 30 years old – another opinion”.*

3.4. Right to work and labor protection

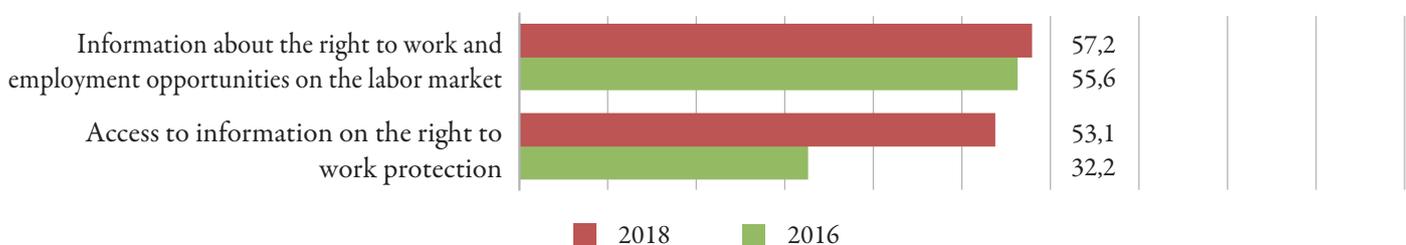
In respondents’ opinion, the right to work is respected the most in the case of women, 4.6% consider that it is observed to a very great extent, and 38.5% - to a great extent, which is significantly more than in case of other categories of persons. In relation to children, the question from the questionnaire referred to children up to 18 years old who work, especially the pupils or students working part-time. At the same time, the right to work is mostly violated in case of persons with psycho-social disabilities (30.7%), elderly persons (29.7%), persons with physical disabilities (29.1%), drug users (28%), detainees and ex-detainees (25.5%). *Figure 32.*

Figura 32. To what extent do you think that the state ensures the right to work for the following categories of persons in the RM?, 2018, %



Just like in 2016, more than a half of respondents stated that they would need more information about the right to work and employment opportunities. This percentage is very high, considering that not all the respondents are employed on the labor market, many being pensioners or housewives. This fact denotes a very big interest from the citizens towards labor legislation and for protection of the right to work. Unlike the results from 2016, a big number of persons (53.1%) also need access to information on the right to labor protection. *Figure 33.*

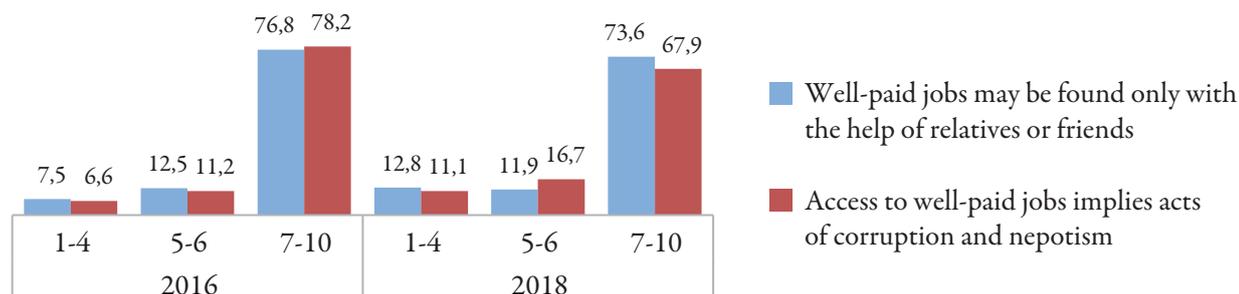
Figure 33. To what extent do you need ...? 2016 and 2018, %. (answers - great extent and very great extent)



Referring just to the share of those who have graded with 10 out of 10 (very great extent), it may be noted that those from urban area (26.8%), those aged 30-44 years old (36.6%) and those with high incomes (35.2%) would need information regarding the right to work and employment opportunities, this being in general the more active population of the country. As for access to information, the situation is similar.

Just like in 2016, the perception regarding the poor and limited access to well-paid jobs still persists. If the share of those who consider that a good job may be obtained only through nepotism or corruption (from 73.6% to 67.9%), than the perception that well-paid jobs can only be found with the help of relatives and friends has increased from 76.8% to 78.2%. Actually, these results denote that only a small group of persons, which is nevertheless bigger than the group registered in 2016, perceive the employment perspectives based on merits and in transparent conditions, while the big majority – do perceive this situation differently. *Figure 34.*

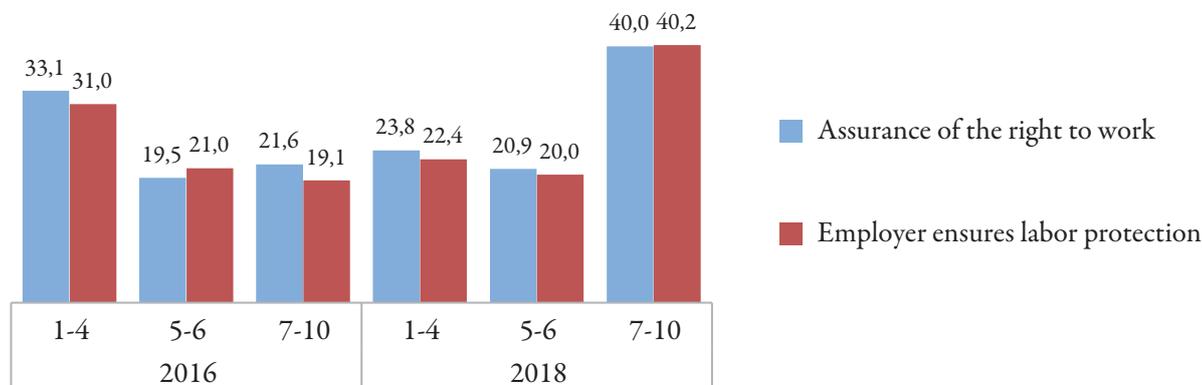
Figure 34. Assess on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 10 (very much), to what extent do you agree with the following? 2016 and 2018, %



Analyzing all the answers with “10” (to a very great extent), we may see that there are no significant differences by categories of persons in relation to the way in which answers were provided to the question related to getting employed with the assistance of relatives or friends. In general, women, those aged 30-44 years old and those with low incomes tend to believe more that this is a determining factor in finding a job. The situation is similar from the viewpoint of nepotism and corruption.

At the same time, once recruited, the persons perceive that their rights to work as being rather ensured than not ensured. About 40% consider that the rights to work and labor protection are ensured to a greater extent and only 22-23% - to a small extent or at all. The study from 2016 shows a different situation. Nevertheless the results from 2018 comply with the general perception of respondents that the rights to social protection have slightly improved. *Figure 35.*

Figure 35. Assess on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 10 (very much), to what extent do you consider that the following is ensured for you? 2016 and 2018, %



Analyzing the extreme answers from “1” – not at all and “10” – very much, it may be noted that a higher polarization of answers exists in the urban area, registering higher shares for each of the two options. The least pleased with the observance of the rights to work are the elderly persons (15% - at all), ethnic-linguistic minorities (13.6%), and persons with very low incomes (14.4%), as well as urban population (11.7%).

The results from the qualitative study reveal that according to the respondents’ perception, the right to work is mainly violated in case of persons of Roma ethnicity, persons living with HIV, and persons with disabilities.

The reason mentioned by the experts as inducing the violation of this rights is:

- discrimination and stereotypes – in case of Roma community, LGBT, persons with special needs;
- lack of society information – in case of persons living with HIV.

The experts think that the LGBT persons hide their identity because of the fear to not be accepted at the place of work and to be dismissed subsequently. As for the persons of Roma ethnicity, the experts think that a Roma person has to undertake a lot of efforts so as to be accepted by the employer.

In case of persons with special needs, the experts think that their right to work is violated – these persons are hardly accepted to work. At the same time, the experts recognize the fact that entrepreneurs are entitled to select what is better and more appropriate for them. Hence, in their perception, the employers who employ persons with special needs should be promoted, for such social recruitments to become a trend.

[IPE2]: *“There is a law stipulating that LGBT persons cannot be discriminated at work, nevertheless if their orientation is found out, pretexts appear for them not to be accepted. The transgender persons are not accepted in general in any area, as their documents show their orientation, and the State does not want to approve the performance of such acts.”*

[IPE5]: *“Roma people are discriminated in employment. All the Roma students who have graduated from law faculties or language faculties were not accepted to work, and those who finally got accepted, have undertaken a lot of efforts.”*

According to the representatives of the ethnic-linguistic minorities who have participated in group discussions, their right to work is limited/violated. The following groups were identified during the group discussions, whose rights to work were more often violated:

- Persons with disabilities;
- Roma people;
- Persons from the LGBT group;
- Persons of different ethnicities;
- Persons living with HIV;
- Persons from rural localities.

The majority of persons with disabilities participating in the focus groups were really indignant with the fact that they are directly rejected when submitting the documents to get employed, as well as with the fact that employers just promise them to analyze their candidature and that subsequently they will be called.

According to the respondents, the employers hesitate/refuse to recruit persons with special needs, because:

- there are additional expenses for ensuring their access to the work place;
- there are expenses related to the adaptation of the place of work to their needs;

- they are imposed by law to ensure reduced working hours program (6 hours),
- the persons with special needs are frequently absent from work due to sick leaves, etc.

The respondents added in relation to limitation of the right to work of persons with special needs that even if the disability form of a person with special needs is not visible, the employer gives up employing this person immediately when seeing that the health insurance is active due to disability.

Some of the persons with a disability degree recognized that they have changed their work record just to exclude the possibility for the employer to be influenced by the disability form before taking the recruitment decision.

The participants have also mentioned about the limitation of the right to work and labor protection in case of work accidents. In such situations the employers do all their best not to pay for the allocation envisaged for professional diseases, and hide the evidence.

The participants noted that the right to work is limited in case of young persons who are lacking experience – the recruitment announcement indicates a compulsory length of work experience of minimum 1-3 years; as well as in case of persons over 40 years old.

Another situation perceived by the national minorities as a limitation for the right to work would be the intentional delay to sign the employment documents so as not to pay the salary during the trial period.

There were also opinions that there are few places of work in rural localities, and because the job offer is very low, persons accept getting employed in positions, which are inferior to their qualification.

[FG1 - F2]: *“I was provided the disability degree, and I have changed by work record, as you cannot go anywhere with the work record mentioning that you are disabled... Who needs a disabled person?!”*

[FG1 - F2]: *“Well, look at my example, they know that there was a work accident at our enterprise, and they should provide me a professional disease category, but they have destroyed all my documents. And now I came and asked them to employ me back”.*

[FG1 - F3]: *“I have graduated the courses of haircutter and cosmetologist, and I went and went to different interviews... And they saw that I am a person with disabilities and they were saying that they will call me back, and they never did”.*

[FG6 - B2]: *“I went to the boss and he told me: “You cannot work anymore and you have a disability degree, and we do not have work just for 6 hours, so when they will free you from your disability degree, come back”. And I told him: “But it is forever?”, “Well, it means that you will not come back!”*

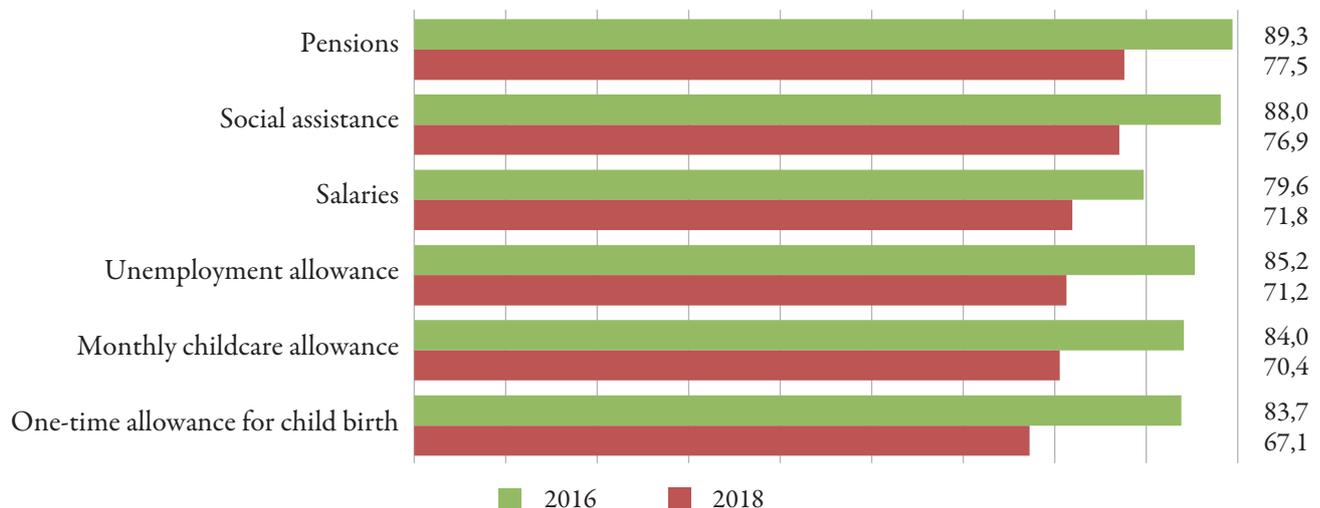
[FG1 - B1]: *“And the working place should be adjusted for the person with disabilities, and the businessmen are not interested and they better pay some money to the state instead of ensuring a place of work for the person with disability. They rather violate the legislation than providing a job to the person with disabilities, as the person with disabilities is more often in the hospital, he should work just for 6 hours, and the salary is the same. And they do not want them ...”*

[FG4 – F2]: *“There is also the problem of age. The older people are not even taken into consideration at recruitment. I am 40 years old, and they even do not study my CV if I want to get employed. My mother is a cook, and when she turned 50 years old, they told her that she is old, and she cannot find a job anymore. Only in different dubious premises, where they would cook chicken from morning to night. And that’s it”.*

3.5. Right to social protection

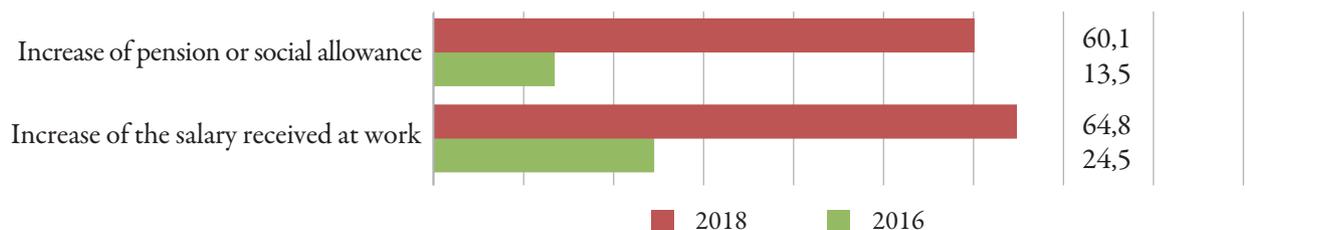
As compared to 2016, the share of those who consider the amount of the pensions, salaries and different other allocations and payments to be very small to ensure a decent living has decreased. However, the number of those who consider these revenues to be insufficient is very high. The respondents are the least pleased with the amount of the pension (77.5%), as well as with the value of the one-time allocation for child's birth, it is just that their share is lower (67.1%). *Figure 36.*

Figure 36. To what extent do you consider that the average level of the following ... provides an adequate level of living / social protection for persons? 2016 and 2018, %. (answers: low extent or not at all)



Unlike the results of the study from 2016, the majority of respondents stated in 2018 that the eventual increase of the salary or pension would ensure a better protection of social rights. This fact also correlates with other results, which denote a better perception of the population regarding the right to social protection, in general. *Figure 37.*

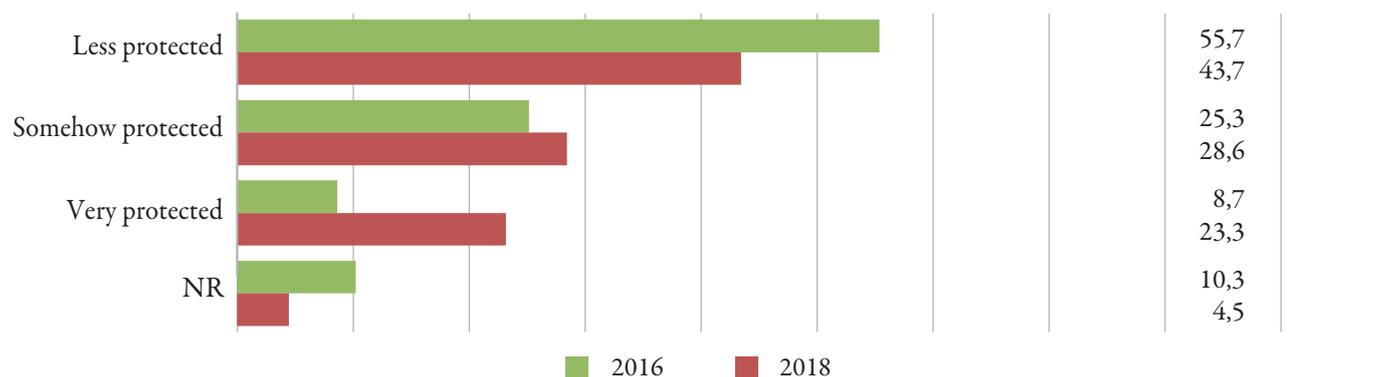
Figure 37. To what extent would the following ensure the right to social protection? 2016 and 2018, % (of all the answers)



Persons from rural area, persons aged 30-44 years old and those over 60 years old, persons with low incomes consider to a greater extent that increasing the salary will provide a higher level of respect towards the right to social protection. At the same time, the pensioners and the persons with low incomes consider to a greater extent that the increase of pension or social allowance would ensure a better protection of their social rights.

A slight improvement of the general perception of the population that their rights are protected by public authorities is registered in relation to socially vulnerable persons (23.3% in 2018 compared to 8.7% in 2016). Nevertheless, the biggest part of respondents (43.7%) continue to consider that the rights of this category of persons are practically not protected at all by the state authorities. Only 23.3% consider that the respective rights are protected at an adequate level. *Figure 38.*

Figure 38. To what extent do you consider that the rights of socially vulnerable persons are protected and fulfilled by the state authorities? 2016 and 2018, %

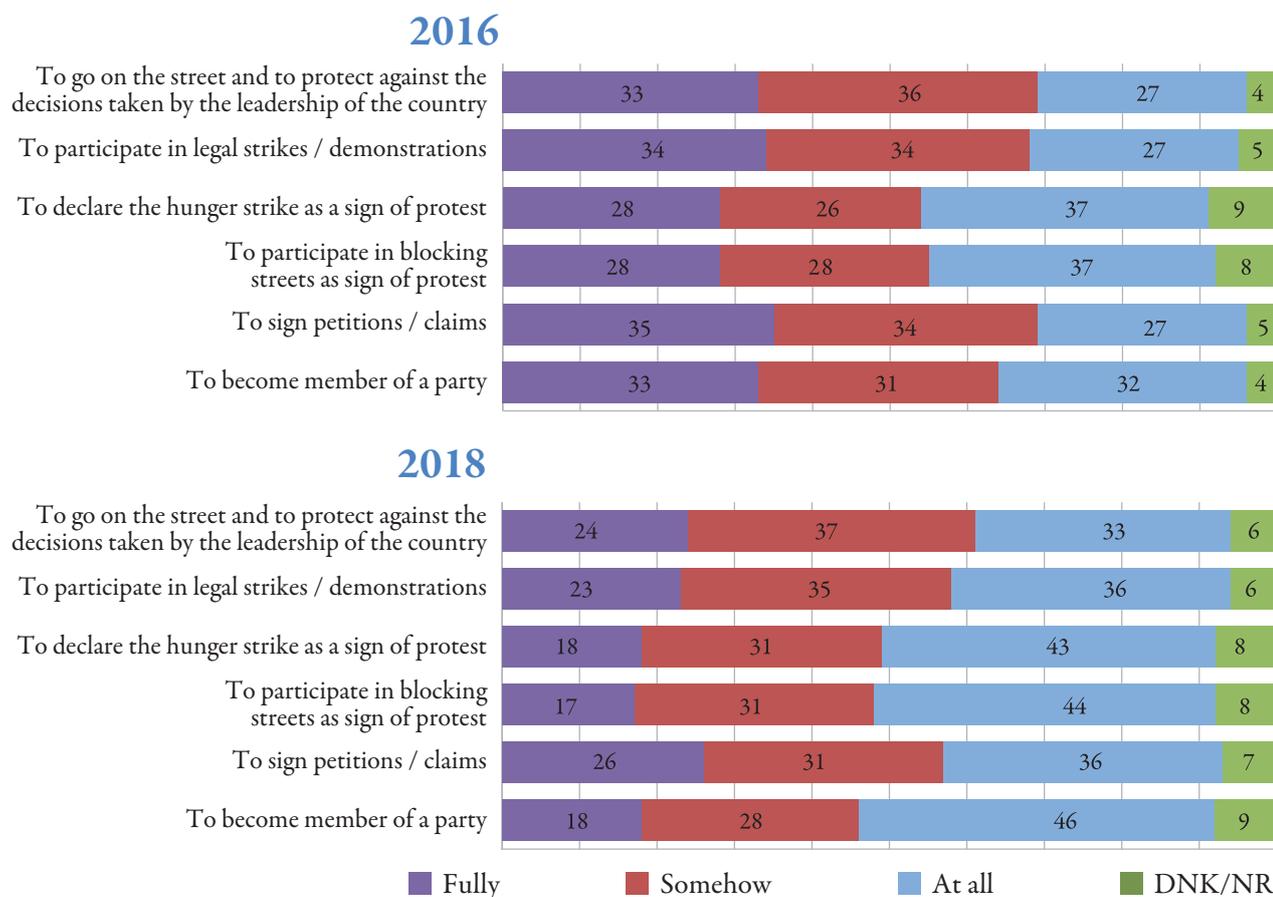


3.6. Freedom of assembly and association

In 2016, a big part of the population of the Republic of Moldova was participating in civic actions or protest actions, in different forms. If in 2016, about one third of the population would have participated in various protest actions, in 2018, less than a quarter of the population said that they would participate in a certain protest action. Most of the people (26%) would sign a claim or a petition - which is by 9 p.p. less than in 2016; would go on the street (24%) and would participate in legal strikes or other types of demonstrations (23%). The data show, in general, a decrease of civic activism and willingness of the population to get involved in the decision-making processes.

The attractiveness of political parties has decreased as compared to 2016, when 33% would have agreed to a great extent to become a party member, while in 2018, only 18% would do the same thing. At the same time, more and more respondents have a nihilist attitude towards meetings and protests, up to half of them do not accept at all to participate in the situations described in *Figure 39*.

Figure 39. Do you feel free to participate in or to do the following? 2016 and 2018, %

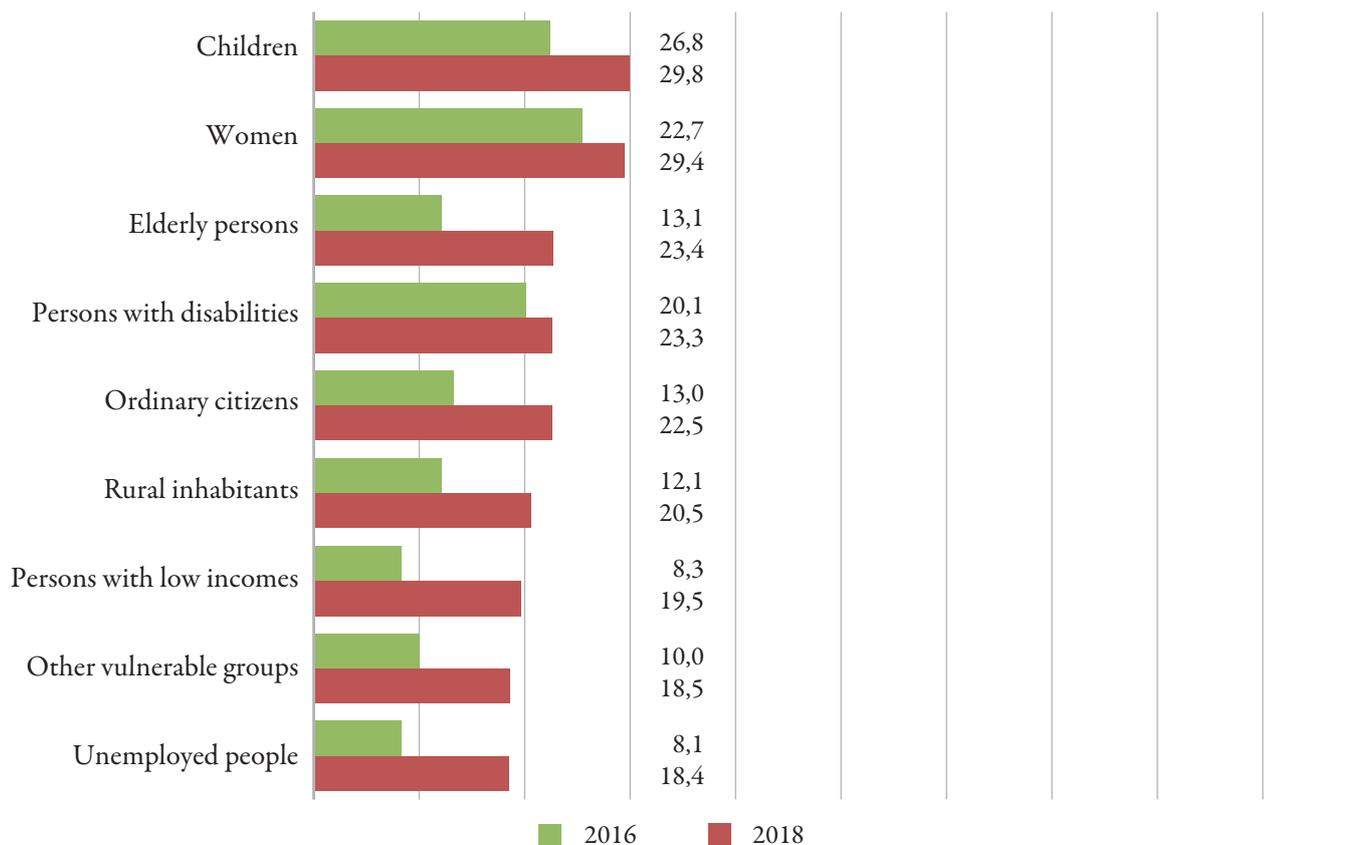


More protesting attitudes are registered among the majority population, as compared to the national minorities and among the population with low incomes. The age segment of 30-44 years old is less inclined to protest as compared to the young persons and people who are over 45 years old. The same picture is registered in relation to participation in legal strikes and demonstrations. The hunger strike would be an option mainly for persons aged over 45 years old, representatives of the majority ethnic group and persons with low incomes, and more for men than for women. The same categories would be also more willing to be part of actions involving blocking of streets as form of protest, as well as to write petitions and claims. Men rather than women, as well as persons aged 45-59 years old, representatives of the majority ethnic group, and persons with low incomes, but also those with high incomes would rather become members of a party.

3.7. Right to a fair trial

According to the respondents, children and women are being ensured to the greatest extent with the right to a fair trial. The unemployed people, persons with low incomes and other vulnerable groups, including LGBT persons, religious minorities and Roma people would be at the opposite extremity. In absolute figures, however, even though the situation has changed a little bit for the better as compared to 2016, a prevailing negative perception continues to be registered in relation to the way in which the right to a fair trial is observed, regardless of the category of persons. The big majority of respondents consider that this right is not fully ensured. *Figure 40.*

Figure 40. To what extent do you consider that the right to a fair trial is ensured for the following categories? 2016 and 2018, %. (answers: "to a very great" and "great" extent)



The right to fair justice is very frequently violated in the Republic of Moldova – this was the opinion of the persons participating in the focus group, as well as of the persons involved in the in-depth interviews.

They have stated that there is corruption in the judiciary system, that trials are postponed and delayed, that there is no judicial ethics, and that there are criminal cases started upon order.

The participants have also mentioned that they do not trust the judicial system in the Republic of Moldova.

[FG6 - B6]: *“When the divorce process started with my wife, a policeman called me and gave me a piece of paper and I asked him what it was about, and he told me to read it, but it was all in Moldovan language. I have asked for an interpreter, and they told me: “No, you should understand Moldovan language”, and I told them that I do not understand it, and I have asked for a lawyer”.*

[FG8-F2]: *“The policeman asks very frequently: “You have a boy. Why doesn’t he bit his father?” And I am telling him: “What is this question about?”*

[FG8-F3]: *“Let me tell you about my situation when I was paying for a very expensive lawyer, and his lawyer was paying my lawyer for the last one to undertake nasty things against me. You have asked me why I didn’t do something. Well I did not have money. Somebody told me: “Stop and invest in your children!” as the children were suffering. His lawyer had a lot of money, he was making money with sacks”.*

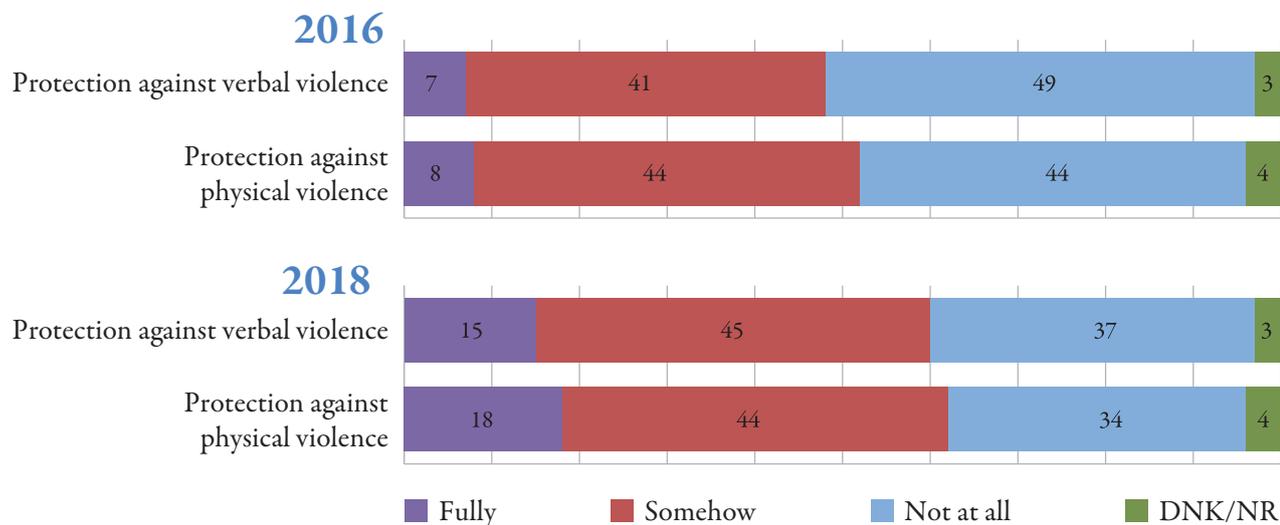
[FG9 - F3]: “Justice, laws are not working. There are those who are violating human rights, those who do not observe the right and do not let people enjoy their rights, as they are confident that they will not be punished. If he knows that he will be punished, he would not violate. Laws are not working here. Just not working!”

[IP15]: “I complained when I was detainee, as my right to state-guaranteed healthcare was violated, although I have the disability degree of category 2. The employees of the penitentiary punished me because I was writing complaints. If you complaint, you become the enemy of the State and problems are organized for you, invented through law. It is better not to complain”.

3.8. Right to life, physical and mental integrity, individual freedom and personal safety

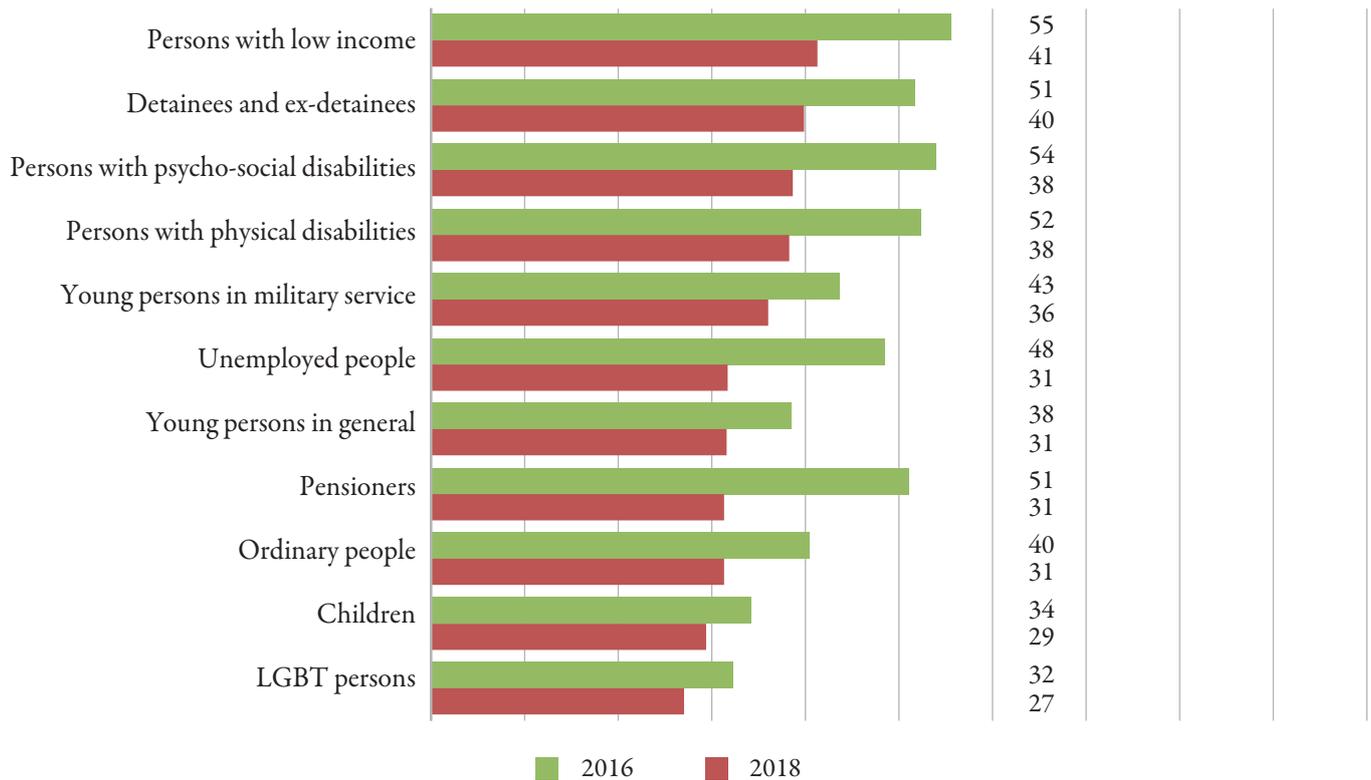
There is a slight improvement in the perception on ensuring persons’ safety, thus more than 60% of respondents (as compared to 2016) consider that personal security is ensured at least to a certain extent and about one third of respondents consider themselves to be very vulnerable and they have the perception that no security is ensured against physical and verbal violence. The respondents did not make significant difference between protection against verbal or physical violence, these two threats are mentioned with the same level of risk. *Figure 41.*

Figure 41. To what extent do you consider that personal security is ensured? 2016 and 2018, %



The right not to be subject to torture is most frequently violated in case of persons with low incomes, detainees and ex-detainees, as well as persons with disabilities. This is the opinion of about 38-41% of respondents. The situation is a little bit better as compared to 2016, when the share of those who think that this right is violated was significantly higher. The right to not be subject to torture is violated to the lowest extent in the case of children and LGBT persons. *Figure 42.*

Figure 42. How frequently do you consider that the right not to be subject to torture, inhuman and degrading treatment is violated for some categories of persons in the Republic of Moldova? 2016 and 2018, % (answers "very often" and "often")



The results of the qualitative study have shown that the right to safety and right to fair justice are some of the most violated rights in the Republic of Moldova. According to the participants, the law enforcement bodies do not inspire confidence, many public officials are appointed based on the “nepotism” principle, people are afraid to ask for justice to be performed. At the same time, the experts stated that the law enforcement bodies violate the law themselves.

The experts mentioned that the situation is even worse in the Transnistrian Region, where the population is harassed and pressed by the security services.

[IPE2]: “Many members of the community are afraid to go to the police and to disclose their orientation. It is more complicated in the districts. To organize the events about LGBT is like disclosing to everyone your sexual orientation and this induces fear. A boy told us that he was physically and sexually raped because of disclosing his orientation. There are LGBT teenagers in schools and they live with fear”.

[IPE17]: “There is no rule of law in Moldova, the legislation is not observed, it is not enforced.”

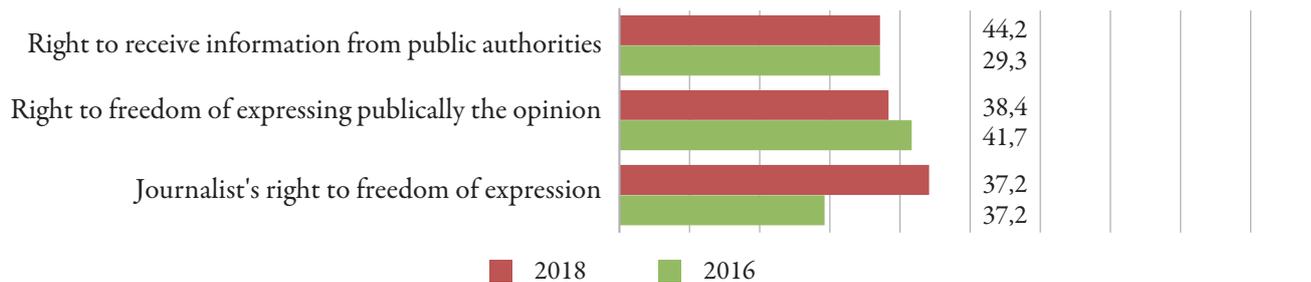
[IPE17]: “For some time, arrest is not anymore an exceptional measure, but a rule”.

[IPE10_2]: “The nepotism in the legislative area does not allow the citizens to complain”.

3.9. Right to information, freedom of opinion and expression

Over the last two years, citizens started considering to a greater extent that their right to information, freedom of opinion and expression is observed. Just like in 2016, about 62.8% mention that the journalist’s right to freedom of expression is not observed and 37.2% consider that the journalists are ensured the right to freedom of expression, which actually means that in many cases this right is not ensured. The right to receive information from public authorities is much better perceived by respondents at the present moment (44.2%) as compared to 2016 (29.3%), which reveals an easier, more rapid and more transparent access to public information. On the other hand, the right to freedom of public expression, without any negative consequences has regressed - as fewer respondents than in 2016 consider that this right is observed (41.7% in 2016 to 38.4% in 2018). *Figure 43.*

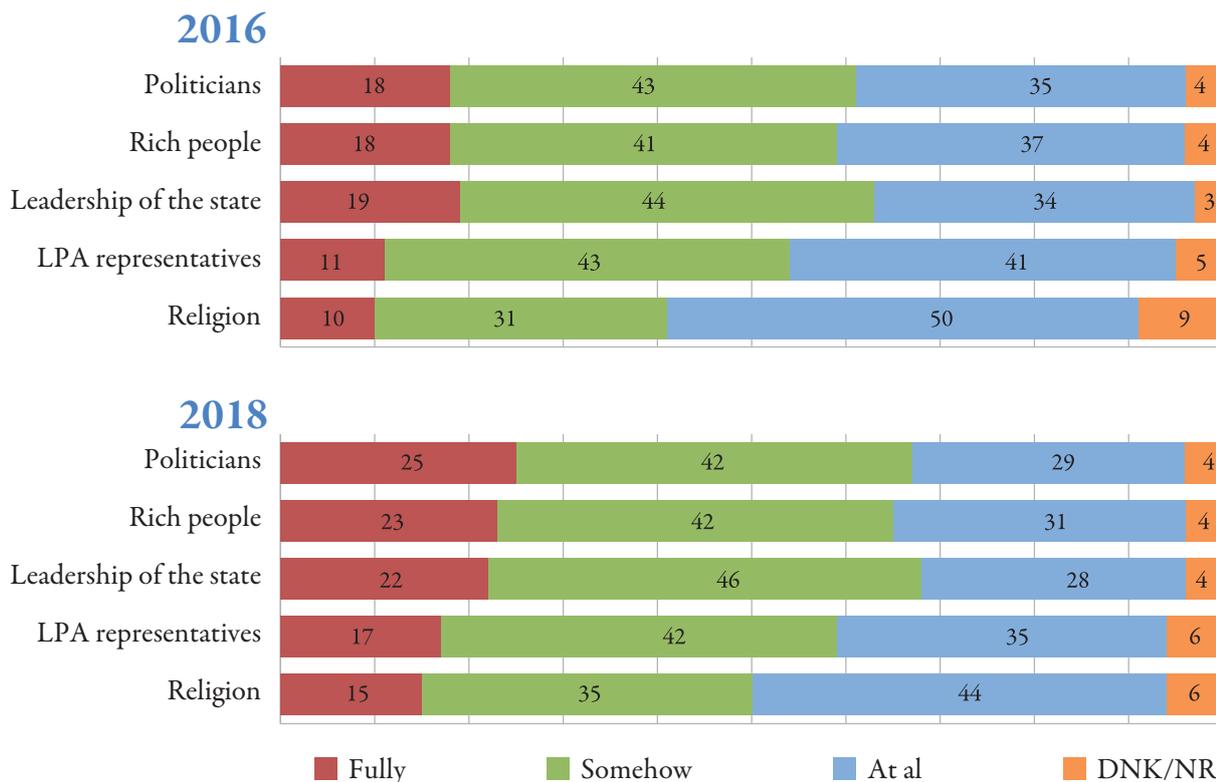
Figure 43. To what extent the following rights are observed? 2016 and 2018, %. (answers 7-10 - to a big extent)



Analyzing the answers from “1” – not at all and “10” – to a great extent, it may be noted that men feel free to a greater extent to express their opinion. Persons aged over 60 years old and ethnic-linguistic minorities also consider that this right is observed to a greater extent in their case, than in case of other categories of persons. The persons with high incomes consider to a greater extent that the journalists’ rights to freedom of expression are observed, while men and persons from urban area consider that these rights are not observed at all, as compared to women and persons from rural area.

The Republic of Moldova citizens continue not to feel themselves free to express their (critical) opinion in front of different persons or groups of persons. People feel free to a greater extent to criticize politicians (25% - to a full extent), and to a smaller extent – religion (15%). As compared to 2016, things have developed a little, so more people feel themselves free to express their opinion and there are fewer people who would not criticize at all somebody from the categories mentioned in *Figure 44.*

Figure 44. To what extent do you consider that it would be risky for you personally to express your opinions about...? 2016 and 2018, %



According to the interviewed persons’ perception, the right to freedom of expression is declining. In their opinion, citizens do not talk about certain situations because of fear. They also state that many persons hide their identity or do not express their opinion in public because of the fear not to be accepted or even to be aggressed.

[IPE8]: “The right to freedom of expression means anyone’s right to freely express himself/herself and the situation in this respect is worsening, due to the autocratic political regime and deep political control”.

[IPE8]: “Human rights are violated in relation to freedom of expression, because of persecution of those who are in the opposition to the ruling party”.

[IPE2]: “I think that very competent persons, from professional point of view, just hide their sexual orientation because they are not sure that their gender identity will be accepted. Homophobia is expressed in very cruel ways. Many get married with persons of opposed sex and have unhappy marriages, just not to disappoint their parents. Actually this identity does not change the human being, does not violate the law”.

According to the experts, the information is distorted, some types of information are not made public intentionally and the media channels broadcast the information in a selective way. The experts have also mentioned that there are linguistic barriers to perceive information in case of ethnic minorities”.

[IPE17]: “[...] a lot of persons in detention pass away and this information is not made public, just in some single cases, when some data leak to mass-media”.

[IPE2]: “[...] The majority of those who use Internet read false news, and people from villages are told lies at every step”.

At the same time, the participants in focus groups have different opinions regarding this topic. Some considered that they are free to express their opinions, both within their families, as well as in the society, others – more in the society or more in the family, and many consider that they do not feel free to express their opinions in any environment.

Persons from ethnic minorities group and those from the group of non-citizens, and namely the non-citizens from the Republic of Moldova with residence in other developed/civilized states mentioned that they feel free to express their opinions.

The participants from the ethnic minorities group who do not perceive any personal limitations for freedom of expression think that the residents of the Republic of Moldova, regardless of their ethnicity, should know Romanian language so as to be able to interact with the personnel of the institutions they refer to.

Those who have stated that they are more reserved when expressing their opinion within the family justified this with the fact that they do not want for conflicts to emerge as a result of opinion difference between generations, and those who are reserved to express their opinion in the society have justified this with their education.

The persons of Roma ethnicity, those from the LGBT GROUP, employees, and persons from rural localities have expressed the perception that the right to freedom of expression is violated in the Republic of Moldova.

According to the participants, the cause inducing this feeling of Roma people of being limited in expressing freely their opinions would be the stereotypes existing in the society about the Roma people, as well as the spoken language; in case of the LGBT persons – the fear not to be accepted at a place of work, the fear to be avoided or even ill-treated; and in employees' case – the fear to remain jobless.

Some persons from the ethnic minorities group perceive the linguistic barrier as a limitation for freedom of expression, and in case of the persons living with HIV/AIDS – people's attitude, the fear of HIV+ persons.

[FG9 - F1]: *"I never hide my opinion. If something bothers me, I am saying about this. Everywhere, not only at home. Without shouting, without quarrelling, without nothing. I always say about my personal opinion. [...] I never quarrel, but I am expressing my opinion. We never end in conflicts, because we consider that the person that lives in Moldova should know the language at least at the level necessary to explain something in the health center, because if the person does not speak the language – and is not obliged to know the Russian language; because the person lives in Moldova, and I am obliged to explain what problem I have, as I have come to ask for help. This is my opinion"*

[FG10 - B5]: *"Maybe you, the Moldovans fear, I do not fear [...] Once I have written a petition to the General Prosecutor. I was invited to come and talk and I told them that with you, the prosecutors and judges a person may talk about the case-law just like talking about nuclear physics to a potatoes seller in the central market. And I told the General Prosecutor about this, and I do not care if he gets angry or not"*

[FG9 - B1]: *"Free. I feel safe. But in the family I try to be more reserved [...]. The difference between generations plays a role here and I am the type of person who does not like conflicts. There is Between generations ... Every generation has its vision, and if there is no coincidence in opinions, I better abstain [...]."*

[FG7 - F2]: *"We have now a plant in Hincesti. And there is a girl there, and she does not look like Roma. And she got employed, and she did not say about her nationality"*

[FG7 - B4]: *"But how come Roma, and not looking like Roma, for instance the color of skin, and many of them hide the fact that they are Roma. It happens like this in 80% of cases"*

[FG4 - B3]: *"I am annoyed with the fact when I go with friends in vacation abroad, in EU, it does not matter, and they feel there openly and freely and when they get back they become totally other people"*

[FG5 - B1]: “You know, because of the needs, debts, deficit, they do not have the courage to claim their rights ... they just do nothing and are pleased with what they have”.

[FG5 - B1]: “When I was a student, I was working at the milk factory and I was very displeased when the electricity got more expensive, and the taxes increased and I suggested to get on a strike and all agreed. But when the hour X has come, only 3 persons have come. Three persons! Where are the rest? They are missing ... “You see, I have a credit and I am afraid not to get dismissed.” Nevertheless the boss heard us and we gathered all in the canteen and they told us that those who do not agree with something, should resign”.

[FG3 - F1]: “If we want to go to a protest, they tell us that if we go to protest, we will have problems”.

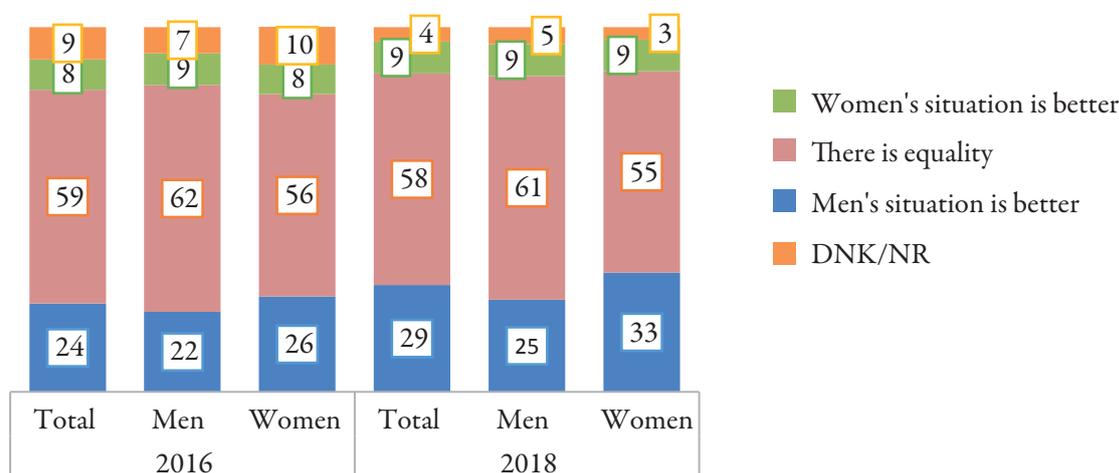
[FG8-F3]: “We have 1001 rights, we, the doctors, but we do not know them [...] but when I tried to apply them, they were telling me to keep my mouth closed: “Shut up!” Even when at work: “Shut up there, if you want to have a place of work!” I have learned to keep silence, I am not shy, but I'd better keep silence”.

[FG6 - B6]: “And when I talk to the guys that I am volunteer at HivSida, I already see that they get scared and if I had a problem, the entire district would know. So people are different, the word of mouth, and rumors spread out, so it is not worth”.

3.10. Right to equality and nondiscrimination

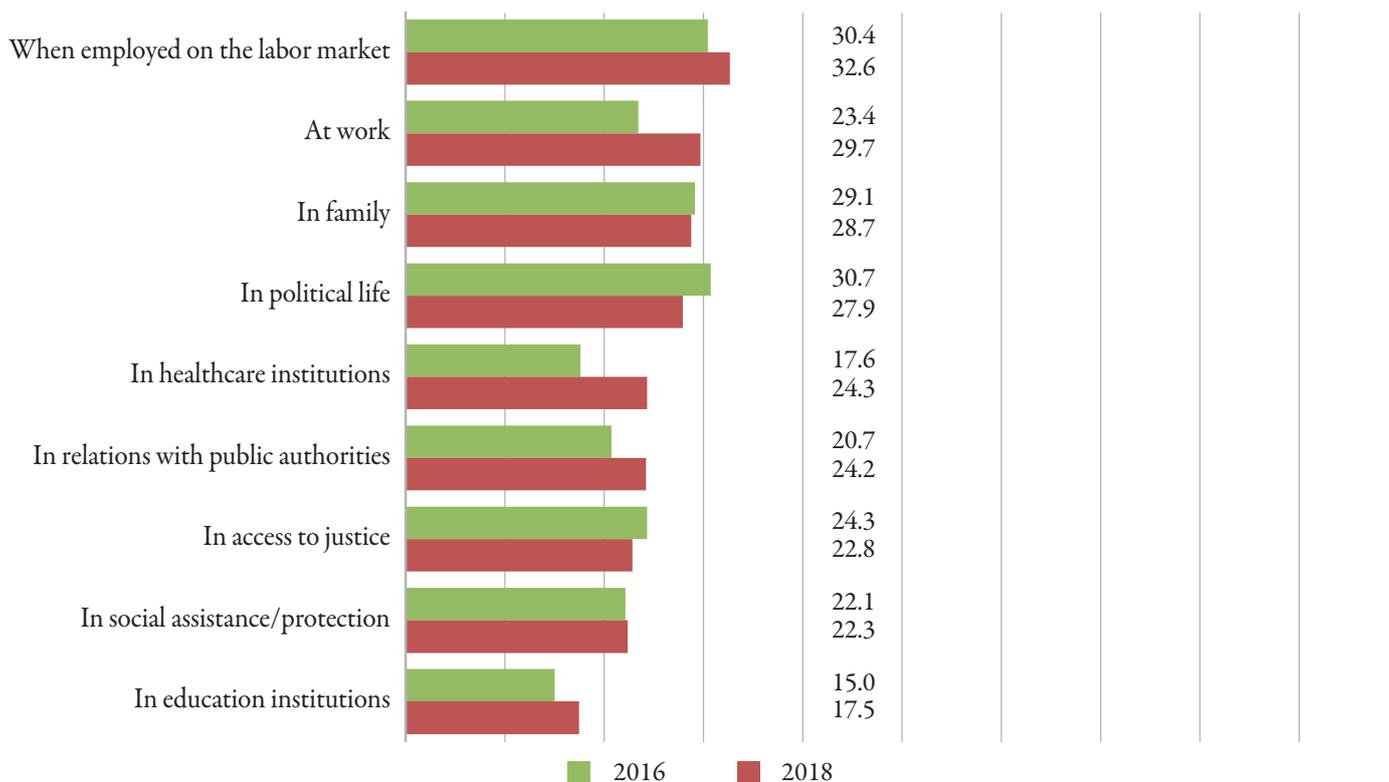
Just like in the study carried out in 2016, the majority of respondents (58%) consider that, in general, there is equality in rights between men and women. Men to a greater extent (61%) than women (55%) expressed this opinion. It should be noted, however, that this difference is not significant. When analyzing inequalities, it may be noted that they are mainly in men’s favor. Hence one third of women consider that men’s rights are observed and only 9% of women state a contrary opinion. As compared to 2016, although there are no significant changes in relation to the results per total, women perceive that they have fewer rights than men. *Figure 45.*

Figure 45. What is your opinion about equality of chances between men and women? 2016 and 2018, %.



In respondents’ opinion, women’s rights are most frequently violated when getting employed (32.6% - frequently and very frequently) and at work (29.7%). Rather many respondents also think that women are discriminated in the family and in the political life. Women feel less discriminated in the educational institutions (17.5%) and the area of social protection and assistance (22.3%). *Figure 46.*

Figure 46. In your opinion, how often are women discriminated in the following contexts? 2016 and 2018, % (answers: "very often" and "often")



There are certain gender differences, hence women rather more than men consider that they are discriminated in these contexts.

In general, the respondents consider that women rather have than don't the same opportunities as men for professional and personal achievements, 34% of the total number of respondents providing a score of "10" – fully agree, and 16% - "9", hence showing a strong support for this statement. *Figure 47.*

Figure 47. To what extent do you agree with the following (where, 1-fully disagree, 10 - fully agree)?, 2018, %



Moreover, there are no major differences related to answers depending on the sex of the respondent. The biggest supporters of equality in opportunities are persons aged 45-59 years old (38.5% - "10") and ethnic-linguistic minorities (38%). Nevertheless, the opinions were very polarized when asked if women are not interested and do not wish to use all the available opportunities.

When analyzing by categories of respondents, it is noted that the representatives of ethnic-linguistic minorities would rather support the fact that women do not fully fulfill the opportunities. The persons with low incomes also tend to think in this way, although, in general the opinions are much divided.

In experts' perception, the most discriminated would be the persons from LGBT community, Roma people, HIV+ persons, as well as women. The respondents stated that due to discrimination, people either are not employed, or are not accepted in certain public places, or are avoided by the society.

According to the interviewed persons' opinion, in case of domestic violence, especially in rural localities, women are discriminated. In their perception, the society has a patriarchal structure and women are limited in a number of social rights.

[IPE2]: *“Owners of different places refuse to accept LGBT community persons in their premises”.*

[IPE3]: *“Women encounter domestic violence, the law enforcement bodies react inadequately and because of the stereotypes from rural localities, there are frequent cases when women-victims take over the abusers' guilt”.*

[IPE4]: *“The patriarchal structure of the country is very well pronounced. The religious class undertakes actions to reduce women's rights. There is a persisting risk for conservative governments to appear, which limit women's rights. The Family Congress which will be organized in September under the umbrella of the President of the country, has many priests as supporters, with the aim to promote the traditional family, limiting women in a number of social rights”.*

The participants in the focus group have mainly expressed the opinion that the right to gender equality is not respected in the Republic of Moldova, and that there is discrimination in the country.

Nevertheless, there were also opinions according to which, there is a trend for women to have equal rights as men and although there are a lot of discussions about it, the society continues to be patriarchal. Hence, men assume themselves the decision-making role and women the role of growing children, staying in the kitchen and other.

The participants aged up to 25 years old have stated that they support the observance of the right to gender equality and consider that both, women and men are personalities. In their opinion, the observance of this right induces benefits for both parties. Hence, they mentioned the increase of men's life expectancy as an indirect benefit of this way of thinking (by reducing the pressure of being responsible for the material situation of the family)

The participants had different opinions about gender equality. Some said that men are more disadvantaged/discriminated than women. For instance, the announcements based on which dwelling space is offered in temporary rent only to females, as well as the dress code restrictions/price differences imposed by some venues for males.

Most of opinions were mentioning that actually women are disadvantaged/discriminated. In participants' perception, women are discriminated at work, in society, when running for a higher position, as well as in their own families.

When talking about gender discrimination, the participants also mentioned domestic violence. In their opinions, such social stereotypes as men being superior to women, that men are the ones to lead/decide, many times lead to domestic violence.

According to participants' perception, women from rural area are more discriminated than those from urban area. They mentioned as a reason the fact that rural women deal with all domestic works, including the ones involving bigger physical efforts.

[FG4 – B1]: *„[...] I will insist on access to the night clubs according to a dress-code. I think that this is not equal. And I would close the brackets here, because this is a very broad topic. And the prices for girls and boys, that boys have to pay more. And access, that you have to wear high heels, this is discrimination”.*

[FG4 – B6]: *“I was thinking about the space renting announcements: many of them write that dwelling is rented only to girls, very rarely to boys”.*

[FG4 – F4]: *“I got employed not so long ago just near my house, and there were two vacancies, to make candy floss and to run the merry-go-around. And it was not written if they need girls or boys. So I and a boy came. Because the woman is supposed to cook, although in case of the merry-go-around the person had just to press a button, they have given the job to the guy”.*

[FG4 – B2]: *“A man started quarrelling in the minibus. “You are a woman and you have to keep silent! Do not talk in Russian! Go to Russia if you talk Russian!”; and with a lot of sexism, that if you are a woman, you have to shut up and stay in the kitchen. It all ended with a fight, because a man started to defend the woman, starting to calm down the spirits.*

[FG9 - B2]: *“Because we are heading towards equality, we make steps, but there is no equality, because of men – we live in a patriarchal society, where men have the decision-making role, while the woman is somewhere there. Women are not considered to be humans, only women and having a lot of functions, while the man has the right to all he wants. No, I do not agree with this. Categorically, because women have personality”.*

[FG6 - F2]: *“I just imagine for my man to stay home and for me to love him. The man should work and maintain his family. I am not interested in this, he should do things and earn money. I need a man who can sustain his family”.*

[FG7 - B4]: *“Over the last years, it seems that women are more educated. I have studied, while you did not. So we are heading towards the situation when women are more educated, and men are less. 10-15 years ago there were no women in management, while now, there are more and more of them”.*

[FG8 - F1]: *“I would like to tell you that we are missing the right to equality between husband and wife. Absolutely! And this leads to violence and to violation of women’s rights. For instance, the 8 hours per day that I work, the man also works them, but the man comes home and I have to undress him and cook for him. He watches TV while I have to stay in the kitchen and after the dinner I have to wash the dishes, and afterwards to take a shower, and also the sexual rape at midnight, willingly or unwillingly, you have to, and if you don’t give them the possibility, the entire house will be on fire”.*

3.11. Right to clean environment

According to the perception of the participants attending the in-depth interviews, the right to a clean environment is violated without ordinary citizens’ acknowledging it. In their opinion, there is no ecological culture among the population. The experts think that the situation is rather serious in certain rural localities, which are missing the sewerage and sanitation systems.

Some participants of group discussions mentioned that the citizens’ right to a clean environment is violated in the Republic of Moldova. They referred to the fact that there is no culture among the population for a clean environment, as well the waste collection and domestic waste sorting is not ensured.

[FG5 - B2]: *“I am disturbed with the condition of the environment in which we live, as the environment is either clean or not [...] there are plastic bags everywhere... Just sweeping in the courtyard and getting the waste out of it. [...] and in capital constructions, the waste is just thrown on the road, in the ravine ...”*

[FG7 - B4]: *“And we... the ones who breed animals, do you know what we have to deal with? We have no place where to take the waste. We gather it, but where to take it to? So few people breed animals. And even this few people have no place where to take the waste”.*

3.12. Right to property

The analysis of perception regarding the property right has revealed that fact that this right is violated especially in case of the persons living in the security zone. The inhabitants of the security zone have stated that even though the land fields belong to them, they can process the land only after concluding a contract with the administration from Dubasari. There was mentioned also the fact, that there are unclear things related to the land fields of the persons who have left abroad, as well as of those who have passed away. The persons from the security zone also mentioned that they have difficulties when they need to transport their own harvest from the right bank of the River Nistru to its left bank.

Some of the participants mentioned that the right to property is violated also in case of persons with mental deficiencies.

[FG2 – F2]: *“The fact is that the land fields are ours, legally, but they just do not recognize a person’s private property, they don’t have something like this” (security zone).*

[FG2 - F2]: *“They have to conclude a contract with the administration from Dubasari, if they want to process the land, I mean our citizens. Even though they have Transnistrian passport, they have to conclude a contract with the administration. Afterwards the procedure starts. We submit Moldovan documents confirming the property right, lease contracts, if there are. And they verify the files, they also have a system of verification and if everything is OK and in order, they give you a certificate for 20 years to process the land. “[...] there is a problem with the people who have passed away, there are many of them. There are also many persons who have left the country and their land plots just stay as they are, but we go and discuss, negotiate with the Reintegration Bureau to see what to do with these land fields. But, if there are no documents, they do not give you that certificate (security zone)”*

[FG1 - B1]: *“Personally in my case, yes I know situations. Persons with mental disabilities with apartments ... there are sometimes situations when some persons acting in bad-faith cheat them and take their flats... There are many cases”.*

[FG2 - F6]: *“My parents have a vineyard there after the road and we wanted to get back with some sacks of grapes and they did not allow us. Of course you have to look for a modality, because it is your product, you cannot just leave it there and people look for paths to take them through valleys, and they hide their sacks of maize. It is a real discomfort! And I think that it is not correct, as people have worked, it is their land and they have to process that land and take their products”.*

3.13. Right to free movement

As a result of analyzing the perceptions of the participants attending the focus groups, it was noted that the right to free movement is violated in case of non-citizens and persons living in the security zone.

The non-citizens were dissatisfied with the fact that the verification procedure at Customs lasts in their case for long time; as well as with the fact that their travel documents issued by the Republic of Moldova are not being recognized; that the stay permit is issued to them with difficulties; and that they need a visa for travelling. They mentioned that the biggest difficulty that they encounter is at the border with Romania.

In case of persons from the security zone, the right to freedom of movement is limited at the internal Customs crossing points. In their opinion, this procedure creates discomfort, loss of time and money.

[FG10 - B4]: *“I did not have any problems with Moldovan people, they are very friendly. We have problems only in certain areas / situations, for instance with the travel documents. When I went to Romania with the travel documents issued by the Republic of Moldova, they treated us as if we were terrorists”.*

[FG10 - B2]: *“I left to Constanta, but it was possible to leave only with a visa. The main problem when travelling refers to the border with Romania. December last year I made a French visa for 2 years and the border police from Moldova were astonished and asked me how I could open a visa for such a period. And I told them that I have opened this visa in Tunis Embassy. And with this visa I am obliged to wait for several hours so as to be verified.”*

[FG2 - F3]: *“We had to go with all the cards to the territorial house, respectively we had to go through all those Customs posts. We took the risk and we got there, and it is necessary to register the car, passengers. And there were about 500 work cards, and they were in boxes. And they asked us what we are transporting as they did not know if they have the right to let us take them”*

[FG2 - F6]: *“At least once per month I go there even if the cash machine does not allow us passing here. We have to take the ferry boat, and this is about 70 km up to Cocieri and this is loss of time and additional resources, and discomfort”*

3.14. Right to vote

In relation to observing the right to vote, the respondents had positive opinions. In their perception, a lot is done so as to ensure the security of vote, as well as for informing the population about the voting procedure. The experts mentioned that the polling stations are accessible to all the voters: they are equipped with access ramps for persons with disabilities, with special magnifying lens, and the voting ballots are adapted to the Braille language.

In relation to the recent situation on the election of the General Mayor of Chisinau, some experts did not want to express their personal opinions, although they did not deny the fact that there were reasons for invalidating the local elections.

Some experts came with the suggestion to introduce the subject on human rights as a mandatory and not optional one, as well as the idea to pay more attention to training the teachers who will teach it.

[IPE8]: *“I would prefer for the introduction of the lesson about human rights to be compulsory, and not optional, hence it is necessary for teachers to be well trained. And here the NGOs should assume themselves an important role”*

In general, the participants had good opinions about the voting procedure. In their opinion, the access to polling stations is ensured, the ballot papers are adapted for persons with eyesight deficiencies, and there are special lens for persons with eyesight impairments.

Some participants were dissatisfied with the procedure according to which those who are voting get a stamp in their IDs, as well as with the fact that they were not included in the voters' lists. But, most of all, the participants were displeased with the fact that their vote does not matter, and they referred to invalidation of elections of Chisinau municipality mayor.

[FG1 - B1]: *“Yes, the very last time, they came with the ballot box at my house”*

[FG5 - F1]: *“I have been limited in voting. I was not even included in the list. But I have voted, as I told them that I am still alive”*

[FG3 - B5]: *“There are a number of violations of rights, and the very last episode was with violation of the right to vote. And entire city votes, and afterwards they say that it is not valid! So the question appears what we can do, when our right is violated?”*

[FG6 - B2]: *“Yes, of course. Anyway they will elect somewhere over there, so why do I need this headache. Even if I vote here, the one will be elected there”*

[FG6 - F2]: *“Why to put a stamp in the ID document? Just register in the computer, without dirtying the ID”*

[FG7 - B4]: *“Yes, and I will never go again. Why they have mocked at my vote, and all people's vote. I went to vote and afterwards what Plahotniuc did”*

[FG7 - F4]: *“Before voting there is a buying campaign. They go to more vulnerable persons or ethnic minorities, or elderly persons, the group of persons who are easier to be bought and they give them things, like a package of some buckwheat or something like this, and please vote for this party”.*

3.15. Right to freedom of conscience, thought and religion

The participants attending the focus groups had the perception that the situation regarding the observance of the right to religion is good. At the same time, it was mentioned that the right to religion is limited when it is requested to organize religious services in public places, as well as in case of wearing specific clothes, like in case of certain religions, for instance wearing „hijabs” in case of Muslims. It was also mentioned that our society has the perception that Christian Orthodox religion is the religion of the entire society and that it holds the monopole over all other religions, as well as it is privileged.

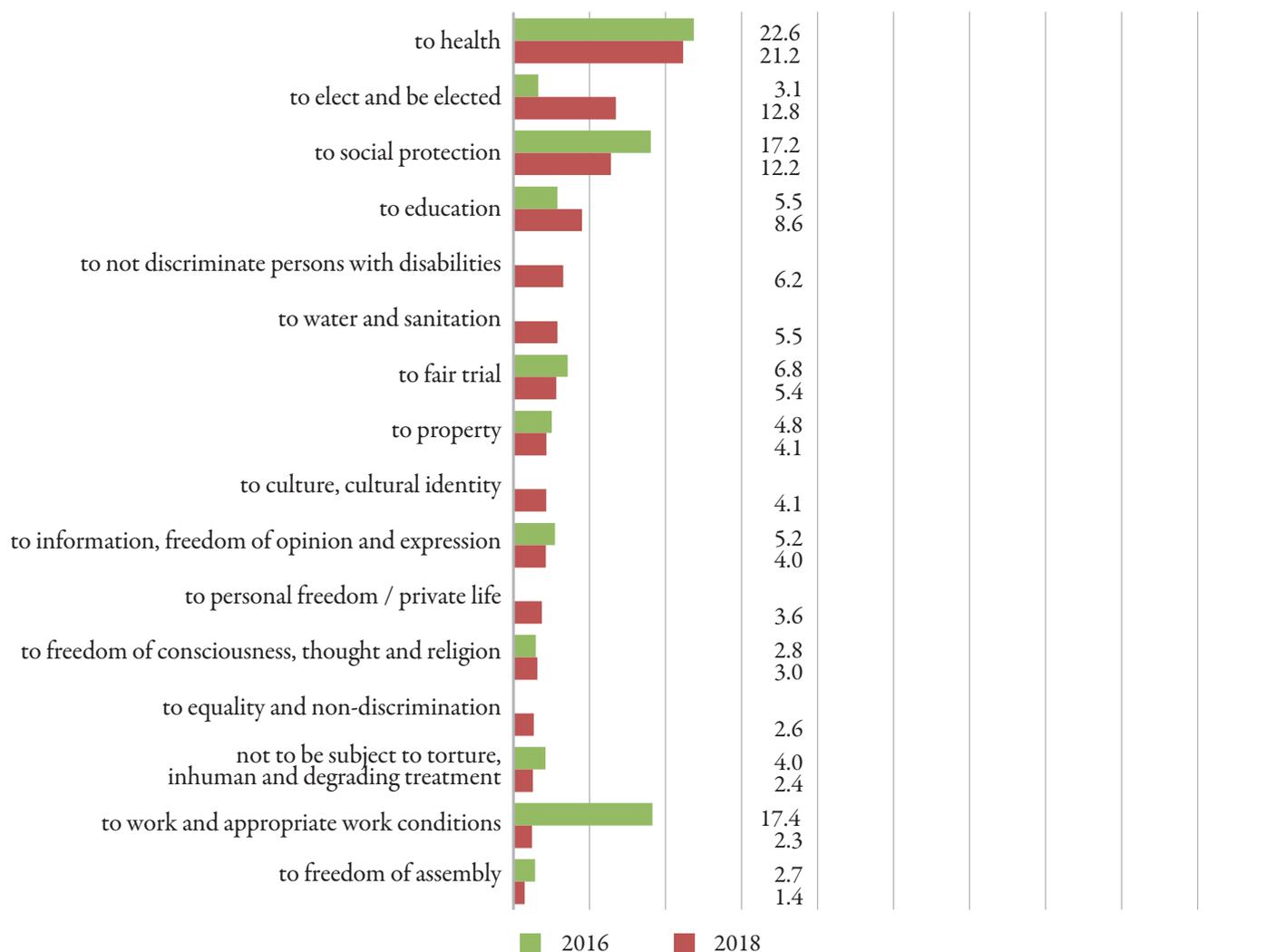
[FG3 - B4]: *“An impression was created in our society, that if we were born as Orthodox Christians, it means that this is our religion. I am talking now only about the Christian confession. Over the last period of time, things are better even if we encounter some problems related to our religious freedom. A specific example would be that sometimes the mayoralties do not perform their duties hence violating our right to organize religious services in public places. We request for this right to be observed, but we do not get the permission”.*

[FG3 - B3]: *“[...] I respect his belief and his right to freedom of conscience, right to religion. And this opinion is not shared by the State. When I refer to the State, I also refer to schools, where they do not allow the Muslim girls to wear “hijabs”. So they allow icons in schools, or having churches in school courtyard, but to have another religion... no. I think that it is a problem when a religion has a monopoly and is privileged. I think that there should be clean competition among the religious cults, because it is a competition and I think that this is ok. But I like when it is a healthy competition! When the state structures start involving in this competition, it is unhealthy already. Some members of ours were even retained for several months being under some charges. A person has even received political asylum in USA because of this, as freedom of religion is observed there. Comparing with other countries, and I talk about developed countries, here the rights are violated rather seriously, and I refer to the freedom of religion. If I stay nicely at home, and I pray, and I read from the writ that I believe in, everything will be ok, but if I start talking ...”*

3.16. Most frequently violated rights

About half of the total number of respondents stated that at least one of their rights was violated over the last two years. Just like in 2016, the study from 2018 show that the most violated right is the right to health, mentioned by 21.2% of respondents. As compared to 2016, there is a big increase of the share of people considering that their right to vote and be elected has been violated (from 3.1% to 12.8%), and this fact may be correlated with the invalidation of Chisinau general mayor’s election of this summer. The least violated rights would be: the right to freedom of association (1.4%), the right to work and adequate work conditions (2.3%), the right not to be subject to torture (2.4%) and the right to equality and nondiscrimination (2.6%).
Figure 48.

Figure 48. What rights of yours have been violated over the last 2 years? 2016 and 2018, %, multiple answer



When analyzing by categories of respondents, right to health is most violated in case of women (23.9%) and persons with very low incomes (26.9%), the right to education - in case of persons up to 29 years old, as well as persons from urban area.

The results of in-depth interviews revealed that the majority of experts think that the most violated right is the right to fair trial. Another systematically violated right is the right to decent living. Because of non-observance of this right, the national minorities are double discriminated, mentioned the experts.

The interviewed persons have included in the category of the most violated rights the right to work, right to expression, information, right to health, and right to private life.

There was also the perception that the most violated right is the right to education. In this case, reference was made mainly to Roma people.

[IPE9]: [...] in case of persons with hearing impairment – the right to education and right to work. In case of persons with eyesight impairment: the right to education and right to physical accessibility, in case of persons with mobility deficiency – access to education, access to a place of work, and access to a public institution”.

[IPE17]: *“The right to a fair trial is actually one of the most violated rights. As long as this right is not observed, all the other rights are violated as well. The judicial system is not credible at all, it is very deficient”.*

The majority of persons participating in the focus group, as well as the majority of persons interviewed during the in-depth interviews had the perception that almost all rights are violated in Moldova. Among the mostly seriously violated rights would be the right to justice and fair trial, the right to health, the right to education, as well as the right to freedom of expression and equality of chances. There were also perceptions that the most violated rights are the right to religion and religious gatherings, the right to identity, and the right to safety.

As a result of the group discussions, the conclusion was that the most violated rights are:

- In the perception of the persons living in the security zone - the right to free movement, right to property, and right to health;
- In the perception of the LGBT persons – the right to freedom of expression and the right to safety;
- In the perception of the Roma minorities representatives – the right to freedom of expression, the right to education, the right to a decent living, and the right to health;
- In the perception of the persons with special needs – the right to work and the right to decent living;
- In perception of persons from rural area – the right to a decent living and the right to health and healthcare.

Mainly the persons from the security zone and the non-citizens expressed an optimistic perception. The persons with special needs also have mentioned some good results in this direction. The representatives of other minorities participating in the study had a more negative perception.

The following was mentioned among the good aspects:

- Access of persons with disabilities to public transportation (ramps);
- Organization of meetings between persons with special needs and representatives of state bodies;
- Simplification of procedures for circulation in the security zone (the number of Customs points has decreased, the quantity of products that citizens can cross with towards the other side has increased, etc.)
- Collaboration of other states’ authorities with those from Moldova (police from Moldova worked with Italian Embassy to organize the carabinieri’s system);

Those with a negative opinion about the current situation regarding the human rights mentioned the deficient judicial system as a reason. There were also negative opinions regarding the inclusive system of education. The participants mentioned that persons with disabilities encounter more learning difficulties through the inclusive system.

[FG5 - B2]: *“The right to education, and the effect of education is the personal culture. Education is mainly formal.”*

[FG5 - F5]: *“The right to a decent living”.*

[FG4 – B3]: *“For me, the right to freedom of expression is the biggest problem in the society, and not the spoken language, the road, and the collectors”.*

[FG4 – F2]: *“I think that all the rights are violated, not the majority, but absolutely all of them. I cannot talk for all the people, but I consider that we also lose because the LGBT persons’ right to freedom of expression is violated. We lose the right to healthcare. The right to provision of services in public transportation, shops, etc. When people notice that you are gay or lesbian according to invented clichés, it is a catastrophe”.*

[FG3 - B3]: *“The right to health, health insurance, accessibility of these services. In Chisinau, there is a choice where to get treatment, while others do not have these facilities. Another disaster is the observance of rights to social services. Different people work within state institutions, and corruption intervenes and it turns that those who have receive more, and those who don’t remain with nothing”.*

[FG3 - B3]: *“Currently, for me, the most violated rights in the Republic of Moldova is the right to religion, while for the society – the right to a decent living. The right to health also is very important and is frequently violated here in Moldova.”*

[FG2 - F3]: *“We will talk nevertheless about our problem, that we do not have access to all out properties and freedom of movement. This is the global problem for us” (security zone).*

[FG2 - B3]: *“I do not even know what to say, it seems that all have problems. The one who is in power has rights. On average, I would say that all rights are violated”.*

[FG2 - B2]: *“All the information is incorrect, all inform the people as they need”.*

[FG7 - B4]: *“Yes, security. I have passed through the 90s and it was much better then. And now with Europe, police is worse than bandits”.*

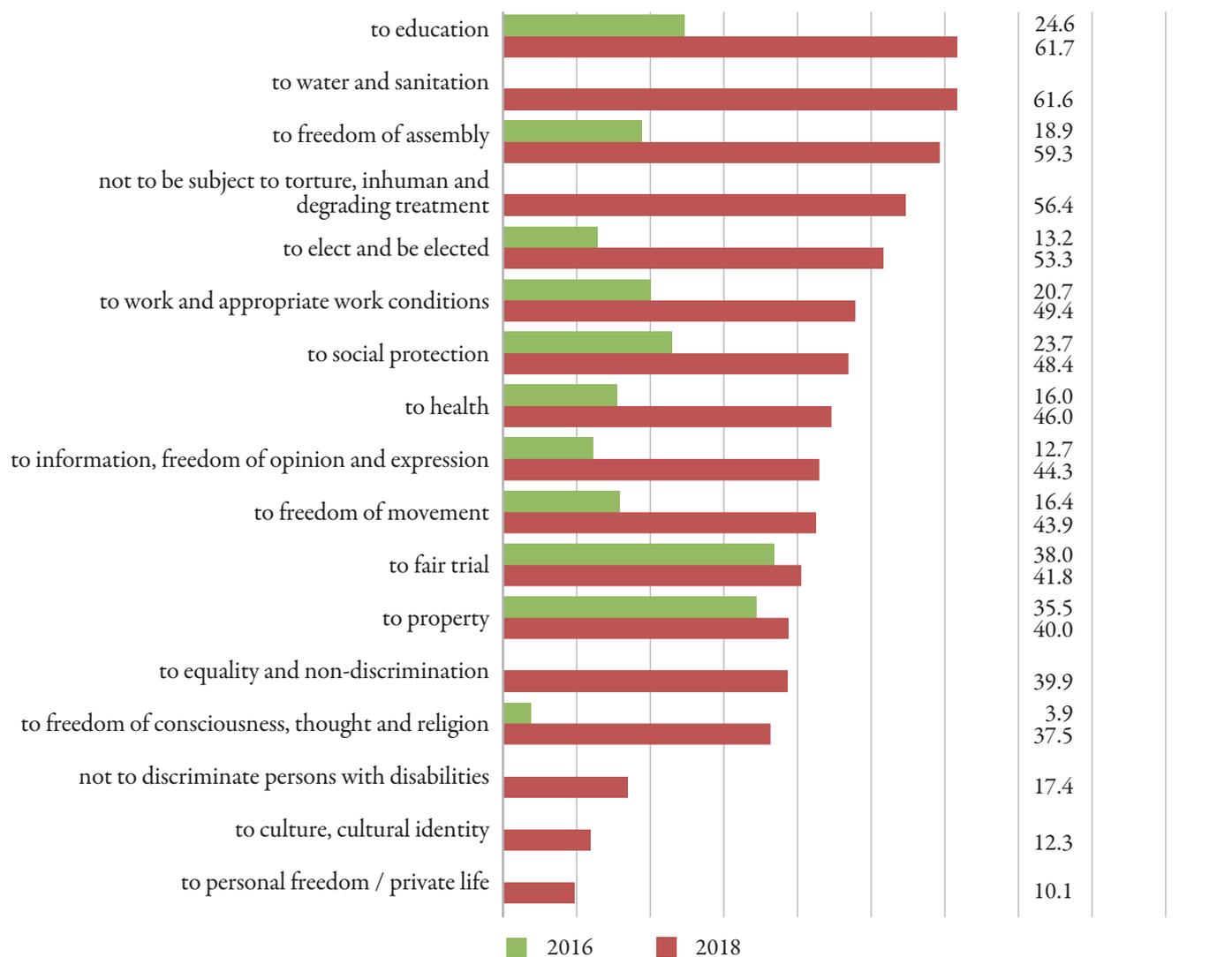
[FG7 - B1]: *“I would add about all that is done, or more exactly what is not done. I’d say the right to life, it seems that absolutely everything that is done is done against people, for people not to feel that they live, not to see the perspective of their children, they do not see the real perspective, people have no hope in life. People have a very low hope in life”.*

[FG8 - F1]: *“It is worse! They have stolen our right to vote (...), the right to freedom of expression was stolen, we work more in a forced way, more in an unpaid way. It is worse! Justice is worse ...”*

3.17. Claiming Rights

As compared to the results of the study carried out in 2016, the share of those who have stated that they tried to protect their rights has increased significantly. By some types of violated rights, such as right to education, sanitation, freedom of assembly, not to be subject to torture, to elect and be elected – more than half of those who consider that this/these rights were violated in their respect, tried to protect them or to claim them. *Figure 49.*

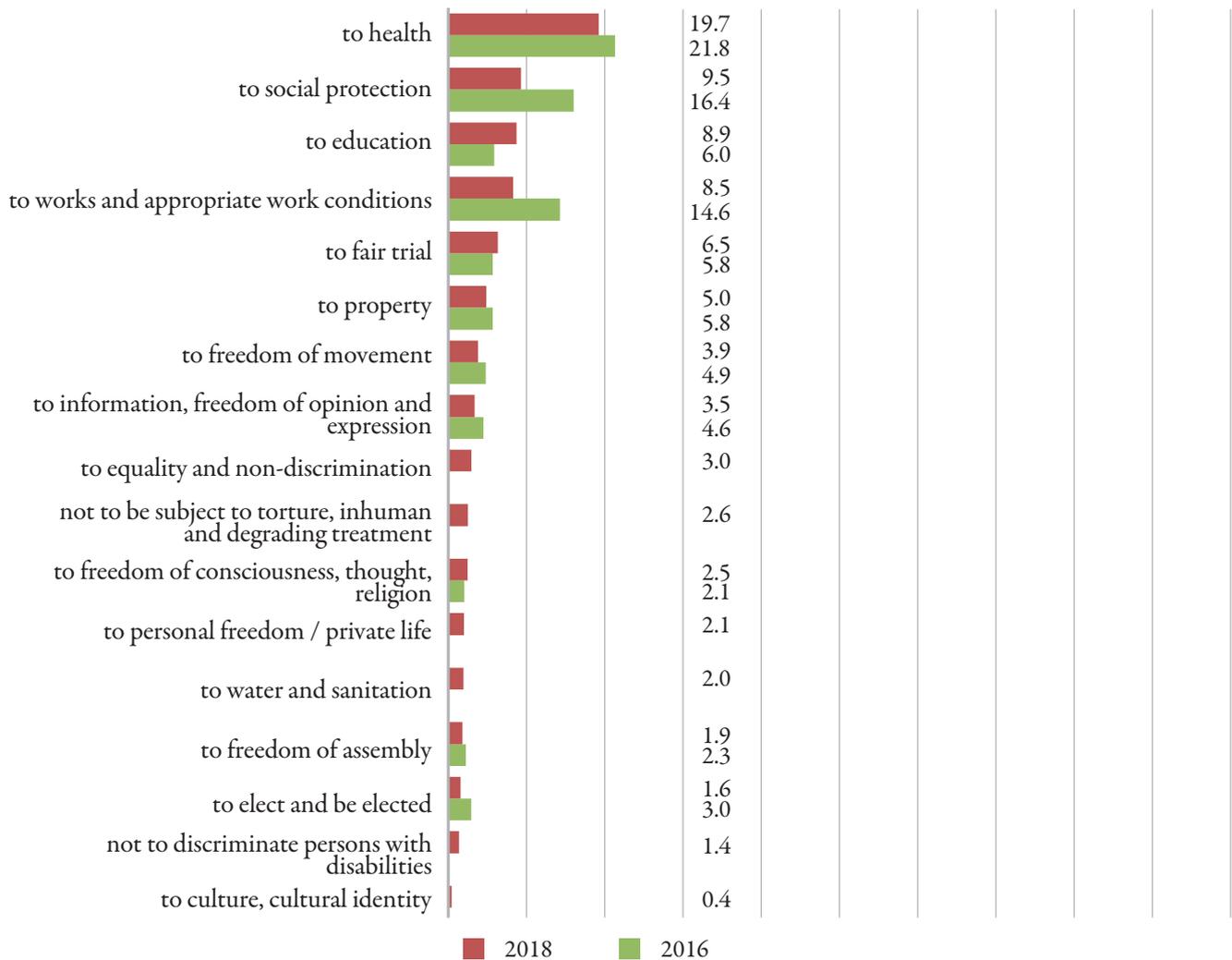
Figure 49. Did you try to claim/protect the respective rights if they were violated? 2016 and 2018, %. (answers only for those who's respective right was violated)



Compared to other respondents, the least claimed right by the persons with disabilities is the right to not be discriminated, the right to culture and cultural identity, as well as the right to personal freedom and private life. It should be mentioned that some results are not significant from statistical point of view, as the shares are calculated from a very small number of cases.

Referring to relatives and acquaintances, the respondents mentioned that in general, the same rights are violated as the ones identified in the study from 2016. The most frequently violated right is the right to health (19.7%), followed by the right to social protection (9.5%), but in significant decrease as compared to 2016 when it was 16.4%). The share of those who consider that their relatives' and acquaintances' right to adequate work conditions has decreased (8.5% as compared to 14.6%). It should be mentioned that the right to elect and be elected is not among the first ones, when talking about other persons, although it is important in relation to the individual respondents. *Figure 50.*

Figure 50. What rights were violated in case of your relatives or acquaintances over the last 2 years? 2016 and 2018, %





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