



REPORT

RISK ASSESSMENT OF FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS

AFFECTING THE INCREASE
IN CASES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST
WOMEN IN THE ATU GAGAUZIA

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Introduction

International organizations, scientists and representatives of public communities are increasingly drawing attention to violence against women as an obstacle to sustainable development due to its high economic, social and political costs to the society¹. The rate of its spread also raises awareness and concern. For example, according to the results of a survey conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO) approximately every third woman in the world has experienced some form of intimate partner violence in their life in 2013. The prevalence of violence against women in the EU countries is slightly lower. For example, according to the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) in 2014 22% of women reported that they had been subjected to violence or abuse by an intimate partner². As for Moldova is concerned the rate of valence against women increased almost 10% in 2010³-2018 and according to the OSCE-led survey it is 73%⁴.

These negative trends and consequences have encouraged a large number of studies that identify factors that increase violence against women. Financial and economic factors are considered to play a significant role among them. The impact of these factors is observed in the following aspects.

First, there are many studies confirming that poor women⁵ and women who receive various allowances and benefits in the social security system⁶ are more vulnerable to abuse by an intimate partner. For example, according to the survey data

¹ Nata, D., Callan, A., Carney, P., Raghavendra, S. (2013) Intimate Partner Violence: Economic Costs and Implications for Growth and Development. *Women's Voice, Agency & Participation Research Series*. No. 3. New York: World Bank Group. available at: <http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/Gender/Duvvury%20et%20al.%202013%20Intimate%20Partner%20Violence.%20Economic%20costs%20and%20implications%20for%20growth%20and%20development%20VAP%20No.3%20Nov%202013.pdf> (access: 11 September 2020)

² Violence against women: an EU-wide survey (Main results). Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2015

³ In 2010 the national bureau of statistics of Moldova conducted the first national survey on the prevalence of domestic violence against women "Violence against Women in the Family in the Republic of Moldova". Available at: http://www.statistica.md/public/files/publicatii_electronice/Violenta/Raport_violen_fem_eng.pdf. (access 12 September 2020)

⁴ Well-being and safety of women: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (Moldova). available at: <http://www.ipsos-mori.com/terms>. (access 12 September 2020)

⁵ Riger, S., Krieglstein, M. (2000). The impact of welfare reform on men's violence against women. *American Journal of Community Psychology*. Vol. 28, pp. 631-647; Tolman, R. M., Raphael, J. (2000). A review of research on welfare and domestic violence. *Journal of Social Issues*. Vol. 56, pp. 655-682; Meier, J. (1997). Domestic violence, character, and social change in the welfare reform debate. *Law and Policy*. Vol. 19, pp. 205-263; Lloyd, S. (1997). The effects of domestic violence on women's employment. *Law and Policy*, Vol. 19, pp.139-167.

⁶ Kurz, D. (1998). Women, welfare, and domestic violence. *Social Justice*. Vol. 25, pp.105-122.

of the National Crime Victimization the experience of intimate partner violence among women in households with an income of less than \$ 10,000 is 19.9 per 1,000 people, which is about 4 times more than for women with an income of \$ 50,000 or more (4.5 per 1,000 people)⁷.

Second, the lack of alternative housing makes it impossible for a woman to escape from an abusive partner. Numerous studies show that this is one of the main reasons cited by women who leave shelters and return to an abusive partner⁸ for fear of facing even greater economic difficulties, including loss of property if they leave the relationship.

Third, research findings have revealed that the violence probability correlates with the level of education of women. Women with lower levels of education are more likely to experience intimate partner violence⁹. In this case the level of education determines a woman's ability and income from paid employment and, as a result, decreases the level of economic dependence on a partner, the degree of which also determines the likelihood of violence¹⁰ and its severity¹¹.

The exchange theory explains this fact by the opportunity of a partner to lose a woman's income in case of the violence or leaving the house. Consequently, the amount of loss of a partner, if a woman has few financial resources, is insignificant, which determines the possibility of various forms of violence as a means of controlling

⁷ Bachman, R., Saltzman, L. E. (1995). Violence against women: Estimates from the redesigned survey. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice. according to Sanders, C. K. (2014). Economic Abuse in the Lives of Women Abused by an Intimate Partner. *Violence Against Women*, Vol. 21(1), pp. 3–29.

⁸ Johnson, I. M. (1992). Economic, situational and psychological correlates of the decision-making process of battered women. *Families in Society*. Vol. 73, pp. 168-176; Menard, A. (2001). Domestic violence and housing: Key policy and program challenges. *Violence Against Women*. Vol. 7, pp. 707-720

⁹ Shiraz, M. S. (2016). The impact of education and occupation on domestic violence in Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of Social Welfare*. Vol. 25(4), pp. 339–346. Terrazas-Carrillo, E.C., Paula, T. (2014) Employment Status and Intimate Partner Violence Among Mexican Women. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, Vol. 30(7), pp. 1128-1152

¹⁰ Johnson, I. M. (1992). Economic, situational and psychological correlates of the decision-making process of battered women. *Families in Society*. Vol. 73, pp. 168-176. This dependence was also confirmed in a qualitative study by Sanders, C. K. (2014). Economic Abuse in the Lives of Women Abused by an Intimate Partner. *Violence Against Women*, Vol. 21(1), pp. 3–29, and during the implementation of the project We Go: Scaricabarozzi, R. Women's economic independence, a way out of violence: Policies and practices to promote women's economic empowerment to be able to leave violent relationships, 2017. available at: www.wegoproject.eu/documents (access 17 September 2020)

¹¹ Kalmuss, D. S., Straus, M. A. (1982). Wife's marital dependency and wife abuse. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 44, pp. 277-286 according to Sanders, C. K. (2014). Economic Abuse in the Lives of Women Abused by an Intimate Partner. *Violence Against Women*, Vol. 21(1), pp. 3–29.

the partner¹². These theoretical conclusions have been confirmed by a number of studies. Thus, the results of a qualitative study of 30 women who have experienced intimate partner violence revealed that the likelihood of violence depends on the degree of financial freedom of women. The latter is determined by the level of their income, employment opportunities, the availability and amount of loans and / or accumulated debts deliberately issued to women, the need to hide income from the partner¹³. Several studies have revealed a significant positive correlation between the level of financial security of women, including the prospects for their self-realization and the ability to independently resolve financial issues, and the likelihood of abuse from a partner¹⁴. Lambert L. C. and Firestone J. M. have found that women who are able to at least equalize professional status with their partner suffer fewer types of abuse than women with less prestigious and low-paid jobs than their partner¹⁵.

Consequently, women's economic status and increased economic independence reduce their partner's ability to control their behavior and increase women's ability to avoid violence¹⁶. Moreover, a level of economic independence can not only reduce violence in relationships, but also provide the necessary resources for a woman to leave her partner.

Fourthly, many studies focus on the level of stability of women's employment, which reduces the possibility of violence from an intimate partner, since it provides a stable level of income, reduces the likelihood of material difficulties, creates the possibility to obtain paid leave, access to the health care system, and the formation of

¹² Jasinski, J. L. (2001). Theoretical explanations for violence against women. In C. M. Renzetti, J. L. Edleson, R. K. Bergen (Eds.), *Sourcebook on violence against women*. Thousand Oaks, CA, pp. 5-21 according to Sanders, C. K. (2014). Economic Abuse in the Lives of Women Abused by an Intimate Partner. *Violence Against Women*, Vol. 21(1), pp. 3–29.

¹³ Sanders, C. K. (2014). Economic Abuse in the Lives of Women Abused by an Intimate Partner. *Violence Against Women*, Vol. 21(1), pp. 3–29.

¹⁴ Weaver, T.L, Sanders, C.K, Campbell, C.L, Schnabel, M. (2009). Development and preliminary psychometric evaluation of the domestic violence--related financial issues scale (DV-FI). *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. Vol. 24(4), pp. 569-585. Chronister, K. M., McWhirter, E. H. (2003). Women, domestic violence, and career counseling: An application of social cognitive career theory. *Journal of Counseling and Development*. Vol. 81, pp. 418–424.

¹⁵ Lambert, L. C., Firestone, J. M. (2000). Economic context and multiple abuse techniques. *Violence Against Women*. Vol. 6, pp. 49-67.

¹⁶ The conclusions were also confirmed by the results of a qualitative study by Sanders, C. K. (2014). Economic Abuse in the Lives of Women Abused by an Intimate Partner. *Violence Against Women*, Vol. 21(1), pp. 3–29, as well as by the results of a regression analysis of domestic violence among Mexican women Terrazas-Carrillo, E.C., Paula, T. (2014) Employment Status and Intimate Partner Violence Among Mexican Women. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. Vol. 30(7), pp. 1128-1152

savings and pension assets.¹⁷ In other words, stable employment creates a so-called financial cushion for women.

The significance of the above-mentioned financial and economic factors that increase the likelihood of intimate partner violence was also confirmed by the results of the OSCE-led survey on violence against women: Moldova. Therefore, these factors should be taken into account when developing tools to reduce violence against women in a particular region. For this purpose first of all it is necessary to determine the level of potential opportunities for women to exercise their economic rights in the country.

Risk assessment of financial and economic factors affecting the increase in cases of violence against women in the ATU Gagauzia

Salary is considered to be one of the main sources of income. It is no coincidence that UN experts, scientists and public community representatives currently consider the empowerment of women in the field of employment to be one of the main conditions for reducing violence against them and eliminating gender discrimination in a family and society in general.

According to the main international documents regulating the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and studies in the field of gender economy, the effective implementation of women's human capital is determined by the institutional environment that ensures gender equality. This refers to a system of legislation, contracts and informal rules that neutralizes the reproduction of traditional gender roles of men and women in the family and society as a whole. Its implementation determines the level of effectiveness of the current national mechanism for ensuring gender equality in a particular country and area of life of the population.

¹⁷ Adams, A. E., Tolman, R. M., Bybee, D., Sullivan, C. M., Kennedy, A. C. (2012). The Impact of Intimate Partner Violence on Low-Income Women's Economic Well-Being. *Violence Against Women*. Vol. 18(12), pp. 1345–1367.

Analysis of the completeness of the legislation of the Republic of Moldova regulating gender discrimination

As for the legislative framework is concerned, the Republic of Moldova has ratified the main international documents aimed at achieving gender equality between men and women in the main spheres of their life. In 2015 the UN sustainable development aims were adopted. To implement them national strategies and laws were approved, including those regulating domestic violence, sexual harassment, sexual and physical violence, and marital¹⁸. The legislation also provides equal opportunities for women and men in the implementation of their human capital in the national labor market, when creating their own businesses, and equal remuneration for work of equal¹⁹. As part of the implementation of the General recommendations of the UN Committee on the elimination of discrimination against women and the Beijing platform for action, Law No. 5-XVI of February 09, 2006 "on ensuring equal opportunities between women and men" and the national strategy for ensuring equality between women and men (2017-2021) were developed and approved. In the framework of the Soros Foundation project "Development of civil society in the ATU Gagauzia", with the support of the non-government organization (NGO) "Vesta" (Comrat) and the public association (informal) Alliance of Women of the South of the Republic of Moldova, a working group was created to develop a Gender Equality Strategy in the ATU Gagauzia, which includes 23 people (18 men and 5 women) from among representatives of local authorities, NGOs and victims of violence²⁰.

It is worth mentioning that according to the World Bank study "Women, Business and the Law 2020", formally the country's legislation provides 100% gender equality with the exception of pension legislation due to differences in the retirement age of men and women and labor legislation due to the lack of sanctions for sexual harassment at work. The country indicators for the first parameter are 25 points out of

¹⁸ The law on preventing and combating domestic violence (2007)"; the national strategy for preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence for 2018-2023; the law on social assistance and social services, which provides benefits to women victims of violence who have received a protection order; and measures to establish a coordinated network of institutions responsible for the protection, support and rehabilitation of victims of domestic violence

¹⁹ According to the research Women, Business and the Law. 2020. Washington, DC: World Bank.

²⁰ Addressing gender based violence in Chirsova village: situation analysis, 2020, p. 18

100 possible, and 75 for the second. Total value of the WBL index of the Republic of Moldova in 2020 is 84.4²¹. The country is ranked 61st out of 190 countries and has the same values as Tanzania and Togo, which lag behind it in their economic development²².

It is important to mention that the country's strategic documents contain gender-sensitive information in some sections. Thus, the national development strategy "Moldova-2030" presents a gender analysis of the use of time, wages by economic sector, consumption of medicines, etc., emphasizes the importance of taking into account the gender issue in the development of public policies in all spheres of life and increasing the responsibility of state bodies to ensure gender equality²³.

Analysis of the efficiency of the current legislation from the view point of women's economic rights and opportunities in the labor market in the region²⁴

One of the main indicators that reflect the degree of participation in labor activity and employment opportunities for women and men is the level of their economic activity (Table 1).

Table 1

Changes in the level of economic activity of men and women

Activity rate	2007 г.		2009 г.		2013 г.		2017 г.		2018 г.	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Whole country										
Age groups - total	47.8	42.2	46.2	39.7	44.5	38.6	45.3	39.04	45.8	41.0
15-24	23.6	17.7	23.7	19.1	23.2	17.8	21.1	17.8	21.9	19.6
25-34	56.4	52.8	57.6	48.0	53.9	44.9	50.7	43.7	49.7	45.0
35-44	63.0	65.9	61.0	63.0	56.9	63.8	59.0	60.4	55.8	60.6
45-54	66.0	67.3	62.5	63.5	60.5	62.3	58.5	63.4	60.2	63.0
55-64	63.7	41.6	57.1	35.4	51.4	32.2	56.3	36.7	57.4	39.8
65+	16.5	9.0	11.8	5.2	9.2	5.6	15.0	9.6	20.6	13.5

²¹ The maximum possible value of the WBL index is 100 in cases when national legislation ensures gender equality in all spheres of life of the population.

²² Women, Business and the Law. 2020. Washington, DC: World Bank.

²³ National development strategy "Moldova-2030". Approved by the government of the Republic of Moldova 08.11.2018, p. 119

²⁴ Due to the lack of details required for the data analysis in the context of women who have been subjected to violence, trends are identified for women in general.

Activity rate	2007 г.		2009 г.		2013 г.		2017 г.		2018 г.	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
South										
Age groups - total	41.6	37.1	41.1	36.2	34.6	32.9	45.3	39.4	38.0	33.7
15-24	18.1	13.8	18.9	14.8	17.5	14.1	21.1	17.8	14.7	12.9
25-34	43.5	42.7	44.0	43.8	33.8	33.9	50.7	43.7	34.1	33.9
35-44	53.8	60.5	56.3	59.3	44.6	57.6	59.0	60.4	46.8	49.5
45-54	62.9	63.3	60.5	59.3	50.6	56.7	58.5	63.4	55.0	58.9
55-64	61.6	34.0	55.1	33.6	47.5	26.5	56.3	36.7	56.5	34.5
65+	12.4	5.1	9.2	2.5	6.0	4.5	15.0	9.6	19.3	11.0

If we evaluate the level of economic activity in general for all age groups, it should be noted that it is significantly lower than in the EU countries. For example, in the EU countries the level of economic activity of women increased by 4.2% and was 67.9% from 2010 to 2019. At the same time, the highest values of this indicator in 2018 were in such countries as Iceland (84.6%), Sweden (81.2%) and Switzerland (80,2%)²⁵. These countries are leading the way in achieving gender equality:

Countries	Rating and value of the gender inequality index (UN, 2018) ²⁶	Rating and value of the global gender gap index (the World Bank, 2020) ²⁷
Switzerland	1 place (0.037)	18 place (0.779)
Sweden	2 place (0.040)	4 place (0.820)
Iceland	9 place (0.057)	1 place (0.877)

The level of economic activity of women and men during the period under investigation is decreasing and corresponds to fluctuations in the economic environment. The greatest negative changes are typical for the age groups that provide the maximum return on the implementation of human capital. This fact indicates the imperfection of the national and regional labor market.

The increase in the level of economic activity is observed only in the age group 65 years old and above. The low level of pensions increases the need to continue

²⁵ Eurostat. available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database?p_p_id=NavTreeportletprod_WAR_NavTreeportletprod_INSTANCE_nPqeVbPXRmWQ&p_p_lifecycle=0&p_p_state=normal&p_p_mode=view&p_p_col_id=column-2&p_p_col_pos=2&p_p_col_count=3 (access 14 August 2020)

²⁶ Human development perspectives tackling social norms: A game changer for gender inequalities. 2020. New York: UNDP. available at: http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hd_perspectives_gsni.pdf (access 14 August 2020)

²⁷ Global Gender Gap Report. 2020. Geneva: World Economic Forum. available at: <https://www.weforum.org/reports> (access 14 August 2020)

working after retirement. For example, in 2019 the average pension was 1674.2 lei. Since agriculture with lower wages is the largest share in the region, the average pension is less than the national average. The level of economic activity in the age group 65 years old and above increased more intensively among women. Due to the lack of data on the classes of causes of morbidity in the population by gender, a gender assessment of life expectancy and mortality rate for men suggests that a lower level of self-preservation behavior does not allow most men to continue working after retirement.

Overall, the level of economic activity of men is higher than the level of economic activity of women. At the same time, in the South statistical region, which includes the ATU Gagauzia, gender differences in the level of economic activity are slightly greater than in the country in general. Similar trends are also typical for the dynamics of the level of employment of men and women (Table 3), which may be a consequence of discrimination against women in the labor market.

The fact that the total number of enterprises increased during the analyzed period should be noted as a positive trend in the national and regional labor market (Table 2).

Table 2

Systematization of enterprises by type of economic activity, %

	2015 г.		2016 г.		2017 г.		2018 г.	
	Whole country	TAU Gagauzia	Whole country	TAU Gagauzia	Whole country	TAU Gagauzia	Whole country	TAU Gagauzia
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Total by all activities	51,21 6	1,360	52,32 0	1,388	54,31 3	1,496	56,46 3	1,636
Total by all activities,%	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	6.19	13.31	6.57	15.63	7.08	18.38	7.46	20.17
Mining and quarrying	0.23	0.22	0.22	0.14	0.22	0.13	0.21	0.18
Manufacturing	8.75	12.06	8.67	11.74	8.63	11.76	8.61	11.12
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	0.20	0.22	0.20	0.22	0.18	0.20	0.19	0.55
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	0.71	1.62	0.73	1.73	0.76	1.54	0.76	1.47
Construction	5.85	2.94	5.82	3.39	5.73	3.07	5.76	3.61
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	39.66	43.46	39.24	41.86	38.41	40.37	37.45	37.96
Transportation and storage	5.25	5.37	5.23	5.62	5.16	4.88	5.21	5.13
Accommodation and food service activities	3.41	4.34	3.46	3.82	3.52	3.94	3.58	3.73
Information and communication	3.88	2.06	3.89	2.23	4.06	2.01	4.18	2.02

Financial and insurance activities	2.06	1.18	2.10	1.22	2.14	1.14	2.13	1.22
Real estate activities	6.81	4.49	6.40	4.39	6.29	4.08	6.35	3.48

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Professional, scientific and technical activities	8.18	3.01	8.48	2.67	8.67	2.94	8.77	3.06
Administrative and support service activities	2.73	1.69	2.86	1.59	2.93	1.74	3.07	1.96
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	0.02	-	0.02	0.07	0.03	0.07	0.03	0.06
Education	0.79	0.37	0.82	0.36	0.84	0.40	0.86	0.55
Human health and social work activities	2.01	1.99	2.05	2.16	2.02	2.01	2.03	2.14
Arts, entertainment and recreation	1.11	0.44	1.07	0.22	1.08	0.33	1.06	0.49
Other service activities	2.16	1.23	2.17	0.94	2.25	1.01	2.29	1.1

Footnotes: The data up to 2014 are presented using another classifier of economic activities, and this fact does not allow to present longer time series.

The structure of economic activities for the period 2015-2018 in the ATU Gagauzia and in the country is considered to be stable in general. The increase in agriculture, hunting and forestry from 13 to 20% in the ATU Gagauzia is an exception. At the same time, the growth of agricultural crops yield and of the productivity of livestock and poultry in the period 2006-2019 was not stable and for some crops and products remains lower than for the country as a whole. For example, the yield of all fruit plantations increased from 10.8 hundredweight per hectare to 61.3, while in the country as a whole, this figure remains to be 89.3. The average annual productivity of eggs per a laying hen increased in 2019 compared to 2006 by 101 and amounted to 119, while in the country in general this indicator decreased from 230 to 192, but it remained higher than in the ATU Gagauzia. The yield of nut plantations for the period 2013-2019 almost did not change and was 6.3, but it was higher than the average Moldavian values (5.1). Among the positive trends are an increase in the yield of grape plantations for the period 2007-2019 from 19.7 to 83.6 (national average of 68.8), an increase in the average annual milk yield per cow from 2,612 liters to 6,933 liters (national average of 35,73 l), wool per 1 sheep from 2 to 7 kg (where as the national average was 2 kg). The increasing availability of technological modernization of farms within the framework of existing national programs,²⁸ in our opinion, will stabilize the achievements in increasing agricultural productivity in the region.

²⁸ For more information about the current state support measures, *See* Socio-economic analysis of the ATU Gagauzia

Besides, it should be noted that the share of manufacturing enterprises in the ATU Gaguzia is almost 4% higher than the national average, while the share of enterprises in the field of scientific and technical activities, on the contrary, is more than 5% lower. This fact can be a significant restriction to the development of the region in the knowledge economy. The decrease in the share of enterprises during the period under investigation has been observed in such types of economic activity as wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles; hotels and restaurants; real estate activities. A slight increase in enterprises operating in the sectors of increasing the quality of human capital in the ATU Gaguzia: education, health and social work; art, entertainment and recreation are tend to be positive. However, this process was accompanied by a reduction in the number of employees from 294 to 222 in the field of education and from 1888 to 1639 in the field of health and social work. These are considered to be traditional branches of women's employment, which indicates the reduction of women in the number of employees.

Considering the importance of implementing human capital in the national labor market, the authorities of the country and the ATU Gaguzia implement specialized programs, including the ones supported internationally. For example, the EU supports the implementation of the PARE 1 + 1 program, which finances the activities of 480 enterprises of migrant workers and / or their family members²⁹ In the framework the SARD program and with the help of the EU 250 new jobs were created in the ATU Gaguzia and Taraclia district, 107 people were trained in entrepreneurship in Sislab – the center of Comrat, and 33 of them received EU grants of up to euros 2,450 to start their own businesses³⁰.

An industrial Park in Comrat is considered to be one of potential opportunities for economic development of the region. The park includes such residents as the

²⁹ The PARE 1 + 1 program was prolonged up to 2021. available at: <https://www.odimm.md/ru/novosti/press-relizy/3802-%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B3%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%BC%D0%BC%D0%B0-pare-1-1-%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%BB%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%B4%D0%BE-2021-%D0%B3%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%B0> (access 15 August 2020)

³⁰ The support of agriculture and development of villages in the ATU Gaguzia and Taraclia region 2016 – 2018. available at: <https://www.md.undp.org/content/moldova/en/home/projects/support-to-agriculture-and-rural-development-through-promotion-o.html> (access 11 August 2020)

companies growing and processing fruit products, a photovoltaic park for the production of solar energy³¹, companies producing meat products and paper disposable cups³². The production capacity of the park allows creating more than 2.5 thousand jobs. According to gender segregation research of the labor market, these workplaces are more likely to be employed by men.

To reduce the level of gender segregation of the labor market in the region, NGOs are implementing projects aimed at supporting the employment and self-employment of women.

For example, the NGO "Association of women of the Gagauzia" provides advice on professional orientation and life skills development, as well as individual support for employment. For example, during the period under investigation, this organization paid almost 400 beneficiaries for professional training in the following specialties: driver, computer user, accountant, hairdresser, masseur, manicurist. After the consultation provided 217 people were employed. Only in 2014 almost 7,000 young women from the ATU Gagauzia were informed about their rights and opportunities to develop their professional skills/starting a small business. We emphasize that training and employment were mainly carried out in the so-called traditionally female specialties, which increases gender segregation in the labor market of the region, providing women with jobs with lower wages³³.

Meanwhile, particular attention is paid to women from socially vulnerable groups, including victims of violence. For example, within the framework of the project "Ending Gender-based Violence and Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals", grants were provided to create or expand the activities of existing organizations for the purpose of socio-economic reintegration of women affected by violence, increasing their level of economic freedom and financial independence from their partner. The projects are mainly aimed at providing various services in Chirsova village

³¹ A large solar power plant will be built in Comrat. available at: <https://point.md/ru/novosti/ekonomika/v-komrate-vozvedut-krupnuiu-solnechnuiu-elektrostantsiiu> (access 11 August 2020)

³² New residents in the Comrat industrial park. available at: <https://gagauzinfo.md/top2/52167-novye-rezidenty-v-promparke-komrata-uznay-kakie-eto-proizvodstva.html> (access 11 August 2020)

³³ Addressing gender based violence in Chirsova village: situation analysis, 2020, p. 52

(computer maintenance service, photo and video studio, beauty salon, motorcycle repair service). We emphasize that 2 of the 9 projects supported by the grant are aimed at maintaining a healthy lifestyle: fitness and yoga studio, psychological counseling room for children. Three projects are being implemented in the field of processing agricultural products, which, as it has been mentioned above, is very important for the region under investigation. It will increase both the value added created within the region and the level of profitability of all economic entities. It is important to note that one project is aimed at the production of traditional pastries. In case a recognizable brand is created, the technology will be developed to extend the sales period, and the products of this company will be sold on the foreign market and will be used to attract tourists to the region in accordance with the development strategy of the Republic of Moldova and the ATU Gagauzia. However, it should be noted that all projects are not science-intensive and do not involve high-quality human capital, i.e. they are focused on meeting the current, rather than strategic, needs of the region's economy. According to the analysis we have made, it typical for many projects aimed at opening startups by women who have been subjected to intimate partner violence, which are mainly implemented in the B2C (business to a consumer) sector, since they are focused on the existing professional skills of women.

In general we should confirm that implementation of the projects mentioned above does not lead to an increase in the level of employment of women and men (Table 3).

Table 3

**Structure of employment and unemployment of men and women
by the level of education**

	2007 г.		2011 г.		2015 г.		2018 г.	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Whole country Employment rate								
Level of education - total	44.8	40.5	42.1	37.1	42.3	38.4	44.2	40.0
Higher	67.4	65.9	63.1	56.4	60.5	54.5	61.1	53.3
Secondary specialized	56.0	57.4	51.3	50.1	46.8	45.1	45.1	41.7
Secondary professional	56.0	53.1	51.7	46.8	47.9	45.1	50.1	43.7
Secondary school	39.2	35.8	36.3	34.3	38.5	35.6	38.6	37.6
Gymnasium	32.1	27.8	28.9	23.8	33.0	27.8	35.6	34.5
Primary or no education	10.6	6.5	6.5	3.3	7.3	3.6	8.9	4.7

	2007 г.		2011 г.		2015 г.		2018 г.	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Whole country Unemployment rate								
Level of education - total	6.3	3.9	7.7	5.6	6.2	3.6	3.5	2.5
Higher	6.2	3.7	6.5	5.6	6.2	3.8	2.8	3.3
Secondary specialized	5.8	2.8	6.8	4.2	5.9	3.0	5.2	2.3
Secondary professional	5.6	4.2	7.8	5.9	5.7	3.1	2.9	2.9
Secondary school	6.8	4.6	8.9	6.7	5.3	3.0	3.6	1.9
Gymnasium	7.4	4.6	8.7	5.5	7.8	5.2	3.9	1.8
Primary or no education	4.5	1.1	5.2	5.6	4.7	3.7	9.9	2.8
South Employment rate								
Level of education - total	39.5	36.3	36.0	33.5	34.0	31.6	37.1	33.1
Higher	66.4	67.7	52.4	55.9	47.0	48.1	50.9	49.4
Secondary specialized	50.1	57.4	46.5	50.4	43.3	39.7	40.8	40.7
Secondary professional	52.3	52.0	48.6	41.1	39.2	38.9	44.2	38.4
Secondary school	33.1	32.9	25.5	29.1	31.1	28.1	35.8	33.2
Gymnasium	31.3	27.3	29.2	24.8	28.0	24.2	27.5	24.0
Primary or no education	11.3	5.6	7.8	4.0	6.5	2.4	11.9	6.8
South Unemployment rate								
Level of education - total	5.0	2.1	7.6	4.7	4.4	2.3	2.4	1.7
Higher	3.9	1.0	5.4	5.1	1.0	1.4	1.3	2.2
Secondary specialized	5.4	1.4	6.9	1.4	5.2	1.4	1.9	1.0
Secondary professional	3.7	1.9	7.5	6.1	6.0	1.6	2.0	1.5
Secondary school	7.2	2.8	7.9	4.1	2.7	2.4	2.6	1.6
Gymnasium	5.7	2.9	8.8	7.3	4.5	4.2	3.8	2.0
Primary or no education	2.2	-	14.8	9.4	6.8	11.3	5.6	-

The data presented in the table confirm that the opportunity to realize high-quality human capital in the Republic of Moldova is limited. The decrease in the employment rate for women and men with higher and secondary vocational education and an increase in the employment rate for men and women with secondary and primary education, as well as those without education indicate this fact. There were no alternative changes in the dynamics of unemployment depending on the level of education under the following circumstances. This, in turn, characterizes negative trends in the education system (Table 4).

As we can see from the table in comparison to the whole country the amount of girls getting higher education is decreasing in the ATU Gagauzia. The latter is a part of the South region. In future it may become an additional restriction for the economy focused on high quality of human capital. It also increases women's risk of becoming victims of domestic violence. Thus, according to the results of the "OSCE-led survey

on violence against women: Moldova" conducted in 2018, women with higher education are less likely to be physically or sexually abused by a partner (22%) than those who have not completed higher education (36%)³⁴.

Table 4

Dynamics of students in the system of education

	2008/09 уч.г.		2013/14 уч.г.		2016/17 уч.г.		2019/20 уч.г.	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<i>secondary vocational education</i>								
Whole country, people	16,059	8,211	12,352	5,896	13,345	5,635	10,628	4,045
sex distribution, %	66.17	33.83	67.69	32.31	70.31	29.69	72.43	27.57
TAU Gagauzia, people	520	137	476	186	640	177	655	292
sex distribution, %	79.15	20.85	71.90	28.10	78.34	21.66	69.17	30.83
<i>postsecondary vocational institutions</i>								
Whole country, people	14,361	18,322	13,463	15,788	14,179	15,632	13,305	15,586
sex distribution, %	43.94	56.06	46.03	53.97	47.56	52.44	46.05	53.95
TAU Gagauzia, people	409	418	422	413	453	441	540	485
sex distribution, %	49.46	50.54	50.54	49.46	50.67	49.33	52.68	47.32

The gender structure of unemployment by age group in the region generally corresponds to the national average (Table 5).

Table 5

Distribution of unemployed men and women by the education level

Age	2007 г.		2013 г.		2015 г.		2018 г.	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Whole country								
Age groups- total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
15-24	29.16	43.48	22.11	24.30	20.10	25.99	16.96	18.13
25-34	22.89	13.04	30.53	31.08	35.37	29.52	36.61	31.88
35-44	20.48	17.39	21.84	18.73	22.14	24.23	15.18	23.13
45-54	18.55	21.74	16.32	21.91	13.49	14.54	18.30	16.25
55-64	8.67	4.35	9.21	3.98	8.40	6.17	12.05	10.63
65+	0.24	0.00	0.26	0.00	0.51	0.00	0.89	0.00
South								
Age groups - total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
15-24	33.33	43.48	24.24	31.71	24.44	22.73	15.38	11.76
25-34	24.56	13.04	33.33	29.27	33.33	36.36	50.00	47.06
35-44	17.54	17.39	9.09	12.20	20.00	18.18	11.54	17.65
45-54	17.54	21.74	24.24	24.39	13.33	13.64	11.54	17.65
55-64	8.77	4.35	9.09	2.44	11.11	9.09	7.69	5.88
65+	0.00	0.00	1.52	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Footnote: The calculations have been done using the data of the National statistical office of the Republic of Moldova

³⁴ Well-being and safety of women: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (Moldova). 2019, p.63

The highest unemployment rate of both men and women is observed in the 25-34 age group with a significantly increase trend. This fact indirectly indicates the imperfection of the education system and its inconsistency with the dynamics of the labor market. It should be noted that in the South region, the unemployment rate among women aged 35 to 54 years exceeds the unemployment rate of men in this age group.

In addition, an increase in young people aged 15 to 29 years in the NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) group is considered to be a negative trend in the formation and implementation of human capital and, as a result, in the future opportunities for the development of the national economy.

Table 6

Men and women of the NEET group by place of residence, %

Statistical regions	2012 г.			2014 г.			2016 г.			2018 г.		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Share in the population of whole country	27.6	23.0	32.0	28.9	23.3	34.2	28.3	23.9	32.4	27.1	21.6	32.2
Urban	23.4	17.6	28.7	25.5	17.9	32.4	27.0	21.8	31.7	26.6	17.9	34.2
Rural	31.2	27.4	34.8	31.7	27.6	35.8	29.4	25.7	33.1	27,6	24.8	30.3
Share in the population of South	32.2	27.6	36.7	35.0	32.2	37.7	35.2	31.1	39.2	31.0	28.8	33.1
Urban	25.3	22.6	28.0	32.8	31.6	34.0	37.2	33.3	41.3	33.3	24.9	41.1
Rural	35.3	30.0	40.4	35.9	32.5	39.5	34.1	29.8	38.2	29.8	30.7	29.0

The amount of women among this group of young people is significantly higher than that of men. At the same time, the values of the indicators of the South statistical region are higher. The fact that in 2018 more than 40% of women living in urban areas in the South of the country were included in this group remains worrying.

In addition, only the proportion of young people with higher education in the NEET group increased significantly from 38.6% to 48.6% over the period 2012-2018. The process was also more intense among women. In 2018 55% of women with higher education between the ages of 15 and 29 did not work, study or participate in professional training activities. In our opinion, on the one hand, this indirectly confirms that the education system of the Republic of Moldova is not significantly upgraded, and the training of specialists still does not take into account the requirements of employers. On the other hand, the fact that graduates can not immediately find a job

after graduation, and are not in demand due to the lack of work experience confirms the imperfection of the national labor market.

The above mentioned negative processes that reduce women's opportunities to realize their human capital in the national and regional labor markets are accompanied by an increase in the gender pay gap.

Table 7

Dynamics of average salary during the period 2011-2018

Regions	2011 r.			2015 r.			2018 r.		
	gross average salary, lei		gender pay gap ³⁵ , %	gross average salary, lei		gender pay gap, %	gross average salary, lei		gender pay gap, %
	Women	Men		Women	Men		Women	Men	
Whole country	2856,60	3252,90	87.82	4235,20	4881,30	86.76	5800,70	6779,40	85.56
TAU Gagauzia	2313,6	2303,40	100.44	3442,20	3699,90	93.03	4682,90	4941,50	94.77

Larger gender equality in salary of men and women in the ATU Gagauzia can be characterized under the concept of "equality in poverty", since the average wage in the region is significantly lower than in the country as a whole. This conclusion is confirmed by the data about the dynamics of the structure of per capita income and household expenditures (Tables 8–9).

Table 8

Changes in the size and structure of per capita household incomes in the South region

	2006 r.		2018 r.	
	Average monthly income per capita, lei	Percent of total	Average monthly per capita, lei	Percent of total
Disposable income - total	740,1	100.0	2021,8	100.0
Employment	233,7	31.6	672,3	33.3
Self-employment in agriculture	212,6	28.7	267,2	13.2
Self-employment in non-agricultural sector	41,6	5.6	112,1	5.5
Property income	0,3	0.1	0,9	0.0
Social protection payments	97,2	13.1	535,1	26.5
..pensions	82,6	11.2	459	22.7
..child allowances	2,5	0.3	14,3	0.7
..compensations	4,5	0.6	-	-
..social support	-	-	14,3	0.7
Other incomes	154,7	20.9	434,1	21.5
..remittances	123,9	16.8	368,6	18.2

³⁵ The ratio of women's salary to men's salary (Calculated by us).

The share of income from wages has increased in the population's income structure. Negative trends in the dynamics of the structure of disposable income are: 1) twofold decrease of the income from self-employment in agriculture; 2) twofold increase of the share of social benefits primarily due to pensions; 3) the growth of the share of migrant remittances. It should be noted that there was a small, but systematic and stable preponderance of women in the structure of emigrants for the period 2006-2018. According to E. V. Tyuryukanova, feminization of migration flows is considered to be a characteristic feature of the latest stage of migration development. It happens due to a number of factors, the main of which is the relative increase in the share of the service sector in the structure of the modern economy, which employs more women. The service industry currently provides 2/3 of the world's jobs and is the main area of exploitation and overexploitation of migrant women's labor³⁶.

As for the increase in the share of social benefits is concerned, primarily due to pensions, using the data about the size of these benefits, we may come to the conclusion that the level of income of the population as a whole and the growth of poor households in the region are decreasing. It is known that the low level of income of the population does not provide an opportunity to make up for the health resources spent on the labor market and does not stimulate the growth of education capital and labor productivity. The low standard of living of the population is also indicated by the negative dynamics of the structure of consumer spending (Table 9).

The share of expenditures on food has not changed during the period under consideration and remained among the values that according to the scholars indicate the level of poverty of households in the region. This finding also confirms a reduction in the share of long-term expenditures on household appliances, reduced spending on eating out and entertainment. A slight increase in spending on household services is most likely due to an increase in prices for these services. In the long term, the increase

³⁶ Tyuryukanova E.V. Gendernye aspekty migratsionnoi statistiki [Gender aspects of migration statistics]. *Gendernoe neravenstvo v sovremennoi Rossii skvoz' prizmu statistiki* [Gender inequality in contemporary Russia from the view point of statistics]. M.A. Baskakova (ed.). Moscow, Editorial Publ., URSS, 2004. p.252

of the availability of household services could reduce the burden on women and, consequently, increase the opportunities to realize their potential in the labor market. The share of spending on alcohol and tobacco products has decreased by almost twofold. It may indicate the population's tendency to a healthy lifestyle, which in the future can become the basis for reducing the level of morbidity, mortality and increasing the life expectancy of the population.

Table 9

**Changes in the size and structure of consumer expenditures
by households in the South region**

Type of expenses	2006 г.		2018 г.	
	Average monthly expenses per capita, lei	Percent of total	Average monthly expenses per capita, lei	Percent of total
Consumption expenditures - total	841,6	100.0	2030,6	100.0
Food	412,4	49.0	987,5	48.6
Alcoholic beverages, tobacco	25,5	3.0	26,8	1.3
Clothing and footwear	88,6	10.5	218,1	10.7
Household maintenance	124,0	14.7	370,5	18.2
Dwelling equipment	43,8	5.2	71,7	3.5
Medical care and health	42,2	5.0	93,5	4.6
Transport	30,6	3.6	56,1	2.8
Communication	25,4	3.0	96,8	4.8
Entertainment	11,2	1.3	13,5	0.7
Education	1,7	0.2	4,9	0.2
Hotels, restaurants, cafes etc.	12,4	1.5	11,7	0.6
Miscellaneous	23,8	2.8	79,5	3.9

In general, the presented data about the labor market development dynamics, the structure of expenditures and income of the households indicate a low level of outcome from the human capital of the population, and the gap between labor market needs and education system of the Republic of Moldova and ATU Gagauzia. At the same time, the profitability of women's human capital is lower than that of men, which indicates the existence of discrimination against women in the social and reproductive sectors of the economy.

Moreover, the reduction in the availability of places for children under 3 years old to preschool institutions may become another restriction for paid employment of women (Table 10, 11).

Table 10

Dynamics of the amount of children and their provision with preschool institutions

Indicators	2015 г.			2018 г.		
	Whole country	UTA Gagauzia	s. Chirsova	Whole country	UTA Gagauzia	s. Chirsova
Number of institutions, people	1,461	60	2	1,484	58	2
Number of places for children, people	173,623	7,789	280	175,945	7,955	280
Number of children - total, people	149,936	7,854	348	149,513	8,012	339
Availability of places, ³⁷ %	86	101	124	85	101	121
Number of children of 0-3 years, people	47,306	2,661	138	47,718	2,842	133
Number of children of 4-5 years, people	68,119	3,558	136	68,207	3,546	145
Number of children of 6-7 years, people	34,511	1,635	74	33,588	1624	61

Table 11

Distribution of children in preschool institutions according to the age groups, %

	2008		2009		2011		2013		2015		2017		2019	
	up to 3 years old	3 years and more	up to 3 years old	3 years and more	up to 3 years old	3 years and more	up to 3 years old	3 years and more	up to 3 years old	3 years and more	up to 3 years old	3 years and more	up to 3 years old	3 years and more
Whole country	13.1	86.9	12.5	87.5	12.8	87.2	11.0	89.0	11.2	88.8	11.2	88.8	11.2	88.8
UTA Gagauzia	18.8	81.2	19.0	81.0	19.7	80.3	12.8	87.2	11.5	88.5	13.6	86.4	12.6	87.4

According to Table 11, the percentage of children under 3 years old attending preschool institutions during 2008-2019 decreased against the background of an increase in their number in the region and the country as a whole, with the exception of Chirsova village, where the number of children under 3 years old, on the contrary, decreased (Table 10). It should be noted that in general, the provision of places for children in existing institutions has not changed and it is 85% in the country, 101% in the ATU Gagauzia, and 121% in the village of Chirsova.

³⁷ Calculated by us

Another negative factor that may later become a factor of discrimination against women in the labor market is the low level of computer availability in the secondary education system and in households in the region (Table 12, 13).

Table 12

Computer availability for students of primary and secondary education

	Number of personal computers- total, unites				Pupils per one computer, persons			
	2008/09	2013/14	2016/17	2019/20	2008/09	2012/13	2016/17	2019/20
Whole country	19,097	21,346	27,537	32,561	25	23	19	18
UTA Gagauzia	882	1,064	1,427	1,755	27	27	20	19

Despite the increase in the number of computers in schools, their availability for schoolchildren is decreasing. At the same time, it is important to differentiate the presented data by the level of education, since their aggregation does not allow us to identify the entire range of problems. For example, if we consider the availability of computers in the EU countries in the system of primary education, the indicators of the Republic of Moldova fit into these values. There are 18 students per computer in average at the European level ISCED level 1. The average number of students per computer decreases significantly at the following levels of education, so it is 7 at ISCED 2 and 8 at ISCED 3 in average in the EU countries³⁸

The low rate of computers availability in the secondary education is not compensated by the availability of this equipment in the households of the region (Table 13).

Table 13

Rate of computer availability in households, per 100 households

	2006 г.	2009 г.	2011 г.	2013 г.	2015 г.	2017 г.	2018 г.
Chisinau	24	49	61	70	81	80	79
North	3	9	20	29	41	47	45
Centre	5	10	22	30	37	47	47
South	4	12	26	35	49	53	54

³⁸ Eurostat. available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database?p_p_id=NavTreeportletprod_WAR_NavTreeportletprod_INSTANCE_nPqeVbPXRmWQ&p_p_lifecycle=0&p_p_state=normal&p_p_mode=view&p_p_col_id=column-2&p_p_col_pos=2&p_p_col_count=3 (access 14 August 2020)

On the one hand, according to the table the rate of computers availability in households in the South statistical region, that includes the ATU Gagauzia, increased 13 times during 2006-2018 and almost corresponds to the national average values (56,25%). However, it lags far behind similar indicators in Europe. So, in 2017, in the EU countries, the provision of computers in households was 89%³⁹.

Eventually, the low rate of computers availability in the secondary education system and in the households of the region may become a significant obstacle to the formation of digital skills and competencies that are important for the modern economy. According to the results of numerous studies without appropriate educational programs, it will significantly impact the quality of human capital of women, who are less focused on the obtaining of knowledge at the level of an advanced user of personal computers. As a result, it may become one of the restrictions for women's paid employment in the long term.

According to the above mentioned analysis, we can conclude that the whole range of factors that can create conditions for increasing violence against women is presented in the ATU Gagauzia:

- low rate of economic activity of women;
- reduction in the employment rate of women in general including the traditionally female sectors of economy and the decrease of employment rate of women with higher and secondary vocational education;
- increase of the amount of women in the NEET group;
- growth in gender pay gap;
- decrease of the population income level and the growth of poor households;
- increase of social transfer amount in the structure of household income;

At the same time, such a negative trend as the deterioration of quality characteristics that reflect modern requirements for the education system may increase their effect in the medium term.

³⁹ Eurostat. available at: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database?p_p_id=NavTreeportletprod_WAR_NavTreeportletprod_INSTANCE_nPqeVbPXRmWQ&p_p_lifecycle=0&p_p_state=normal&p_p_mode=view&p_p_col_id=column-2&p_p_col_pos=2&p_p_col_count=3 (access 14 August 2020)

Gender stereotypes as a factor of low effectiveness of current legislation, implemented programs, and increased violence against women

Different scholars emphasize the increased chance of violence on behalf of an intimate partner in case of women's employment⁴⁰, their increased income, higher professional status or level of education⁴¹ in comparison to their partners. E.C.Terrazas-Carrillo, T. Paula explain the phenomenon of female employment by the embedded employment status in various contexts of life, including individual factors, the influence of family, social environment, culture, local and global economic conditions⁴².

A number of studies have revealed that women who receive microfinance assistance experience spousal violence much more often than women who do not participate in programs⁴³. The risk of violence in this case is explained by the prevalence of traditional norms of behavior, when a man cannot fulfill his role as the sole (the main) breadwinner and head of the family and restores his identity by demonstrating cruelty and violence⁴⁴. Moreover, the existing traditional gender norms justify the possibility of violence against women, so it is more likely in families with strict gender roles and less likely in relationships based on the principles of gender

⁴⁰ Terrazas-Carrillo, E.C., Paula, T. (2014) Employment Status and Intimate Partner Violence Among Mexican Women. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. Vol. 30(7), pp. 1128-1152

⁴¹ Tjaden, P., Thoennes, N. (2000). Extent, nature, and consequences of intimate partner violence. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice; Bott, S., Morrison, A., Ellsberg, M. (2005). Preventing and responding to gender-based violence in middle and low-income countries: A global review and analysis. The World Bank: Washington, D.C. Koenig, M. A., Ahmed, S., Hossain, M. B., Mozumder, K. A. (2003). Women's status and domestic violence in rural Bangladesh: Individual and community-level effects. *Demography*. Vol. 40, pp.269-288.

⁴² Terrazas-Carrillo, E.C., Paula, T. (2014) Employment Status and Intimate Partner Violence Among Mexican Women. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. Vol. 30(7), pp. 1128-1152

⁴³ See, e.g.: Sinha, D., Kumar, P. (2020). Trick or Treat: Does a Microfinance Loan Induce or Reduce the Chances of Spousal Violence against Women? Answers from India. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, pp. 1-27 available at: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0886260520957681> (access 15 September 2020) Dalal, K., Dahlström, Ö., Timpka, T. (2013). Interactions between microfinance programmes and non-economic empowerment of women associated with intimate partner violence in Bangladesh: A cross-sectional study. *BMJ Open*. Vol. 3(12), pp. 1-9; Angelucci, M. (2008). Love on the rocks: Domestic violence and alcohol abuse in rural Mexico. *Journal of Economic Analysis & Policy*. Vol. 8, pp. 1-41. Hughes, C., Bolis, M., Fries, R., Finigan, S. (2015) Women's economic inequality and domestic violence: exploring the links and empowering women. *Gender & Development*. Vol. 23(2), pp. 279-297

⁴⁴ Jewkes, R. (2002). Intimate partner violence: Causes and prevention. *The Lancet*. Vol. 359, pp. 1423-1429.

equality⁴⁵. It should be noted that gender behavior norm could differ even within one country. For example, S.Sabarwal, K.G.Santha, S.J. Jejeebhoy highlight significant differences in the attitude of men to women in different regions of India. These institutional differences are typical for many countries, including Russia.

In this regard, the extent and level of prevalence of certain types of gender stereotypes in relation to women in the Republic of Moldova will be assessed further in the article.

According to the data presented in 2020 in the UN report “Human development perspectives tackling social norms: A game changer for gender inequalities”⁴⁶, 90.6% of respondents indicated the presence of at least one prejudice against women, and 67.21 % of responders indicated at least two prejudices. Only less than 10% of the population of the country focuses on gender equality that is almost 2% lower than the global average. It is a matter of concern that 65.2% of respondents indicated that physical violence against women is justified. Negative attitudes towards women's opportunities in the economic and politics are considered to be significant as men have some privileges in terms of a limited number of vacancies and discrimination against women in business (58.33% and 60.33% correspondingly). In addition, every sixth respondent believes that higher education is more important for boys than for girls. The table also shows that the country's indicators are generally in line with the global average. At the same time, they differ significantly from Sweden, one of the countries that, as we have mentioned above, occupy a leading position in terms of the achieved level of gender equality.

Table 14

Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI)⁴⁷ structure and values

Countries	GSNI ₁ (share of people with at least 1 bias)	GSNI ₂ (share of people with at least 2 biases)	Share of people with no bias	Share of people biased by dimension			
				Political	Economic	Educational	Physical integrity
Republic of Moldova	90.06	67.21	9.94	60.33	58.80	16.73	65.20

⁴⁵ См. об этом подробнее: Hughes, C., Bolis, M., Fries, R., Finigan, S. (2015) Women's economic inequality and domestic violence: exploring the links and empowering women. *Gender & Development*. Vol. 23(2), pp. 279-297

⁴⁶ Human development perspectives tackling social norms: A game changer for gender inequalities. New York: UNDP, 2020 available at: http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hd_perspectives_gsni.pdf (access 20 August 2020)

⁴⁷ Compiled from: Human development perspectives tackling social norms: A game changer for gender inequalities. New York: UNDP, 2020 available at: http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hd_perspectives_gsni.pdf (access 20 August 2020)

Overall average	88.35	67.82	11.65	58.68	56.61	25.63	71.95
Sweden	30.01	10.75	69.99	16.05	9.16	2.61	14.13

It is significant to stress that attitudes towards reproducing gender discrimination in Moldova are more typical for men. At the same time, as for the manifestation of physical violence against their wives is concerned, both women and men believe that these actions are justified.

Table 15

**Distribution of Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI)
And its components according to gender groups**

Count ries	GSNI1 (share of people with at least 1 bias)		GSNI2 (share of people with at least 2 biases)		Share of people with no bias		Share of people biased by dimension							
							Political		Economic		Educational		Physical integrity	
	% of women	% of men	% of women	% of men	% of women	% of men	% of women	% of men	% of women	% of men	% of women	% of men	% of women	% of men
Moldova, Republic	88.38	91.92	58.62	76.77	11.62	8.08	53.72	67.68	52.27	66.06	12.70	21.21	61.16	69.70
Overall average	86.09	90.58	62.36	73.02	13.91	9.42	53.03	64.01	49.68	63.18	22.41	28.68	69.71	74.09
Sweden	28.31	31.71	7.75	13.75	71.69	68.29	14.60	17.51	6.94	11.38	1.36	3.87	13.55	14.72

The finding mentioned above, that justifies violence against women, is a consequence of the high level of patriarchalization of Moldovan society. Thus, according to the results of the “OSCE-led survey on violence against women: Moldova” conducted in 2018 almost half of women (45%) believe that their friends would agree that "violence against women is often provoked by a victim". Whereas, only 15% women in the EU shares this opinion. Similarly, two out of the five (40%) women believe their friends would agree that “women who say they have been abused often make up or exaggerate claims of violence or rape” compared to 20% in the EU. Half of women believe that their friends would agree that “a good wife should listen to her husband, even if she doesn't agree with him”⁴⁸.

Under these circumstances, the social environment of the family prefers not to interfere in situations of violence, considering it a private matter, and women decide these issues independently within the family. The prevalence of this attitude among

⁴⁸ Well-being and safety of women: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (Moldova). available at: <http://www.ipsos-mori.com/terms>. (access 12 September 2020)

women in the Republic of Moldova is almost four times higher than in the EU countries, and is 55% ⁴⁹.

It should be noted that these patriarchal attitudes are less common among young women. This fact allows us to conclude that there are some shifts to the egalitarianization of the behavior norms of men and women in the family. Similar results were obtained from a study conducted in Chirsova village in 2018⁵⁰.

A number of projects have been implemented in Moldova to reduce the level of patriarchalization of the population's consciousness. For example, in 2013, at the initiative and with the support of the "UN–Women", and the Association of Independent Press (API) supported the mass media that participated in the project "Organization and promotion of self-assessment of print and electronic media from the view point of gender perspective" to create objective images of women through training in the presentation of information from the point of view of the equal status of women and men in the private and public fields⁵¹. The NGO "La Strada" organizes the annual campaign "16 days of active struggle against gender-based violence". The aim of the campaign is to raise awareness of violence against women and change the perception of gender roles. In 2013, male athletes organized the action "sport against violence", condemning the violation of human rights, drawing public attention to the importance of addressing the problem of violence in Moldova⁵².

Among the prerequisites for changing the current situation in the field of gender equality and gender-based violence in particular, we could mention that according to the results of the investigation some employers in Chirsova village are ready to provide jobs to victims of domestic violence⁵³.

However, the analysis demonstrates that despite the implementation of specialized projects aimed at changing traditional gender norms of life towards their

⁴⁹ The same

⁵⁰ See. Addressing gender based violence in Chirsova village: situation analysis, 2020

⁵¹ Responses to the list of issues and questions with regard to the consideration of the fourth and fifth periodic reports Republic of Moldova, 2013, p.13

⁵² Well-being and safety of women: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (Moldova). available at: <http://www.ipsos-mori.com/terms>. (access 12 August 2020)

⁵³ Addressing gender based violence in Chirsova village: situation analysis, 2020, p.21

egalitarianization, the level of possibility and justification for the use of discriminatory practices against women, including in extreme forms of physical violence, remains high among the population. It is the consequence of the high level of gender inequality in the Republic of Moldova in general. In this regard several international organizations, scientists and experts emphasize that the reduction in violence against women correlates with the level of gender equality achieved in a country. For example, S. Nevala using the Agency for Fundamental Rights (2012) survey data has revealed that the level of gender equality in a country is one of the factors that determines the possibility of forced control over women (various forms of violence against women). The scientist stresses that gender equality helps to increase the level of disclosure of information about violence through the ability to practice frank conversation with other people⁵⁴.

In addition, it should be emphasized that in terms of gender equality the possibility of discrimination cases is limited including those sanctioned by the state.

Section conclusions

In general, when assessing the possibilities of expanding women's economic rights, it should be noted that the current national legislation of the Republic of Moldova does not ensure the creation of an effective mechanism for ensuring gender equality, including those in the labour market. This lack prevents the implementation of discriminatory practices against women.

First, according to the investigation results⁵⁵ women's awareness of gender equality policies and responses to gender-based violence, of their rights and opportunities to receive assistance in cases of violence, and men's responsibility for these actions remains extremely low. In our opinion, this is due to the lack of consistency and low coverage of public awareness-raising activities.

⁵⁴ Nevala, S. (2017). Coercive Control and Its Impact on Intimate Partner Violence Through the Lens of an EU-Wide Survey on Violence Against Women. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. Vol. 32(12), pp. 1792–1820

⁵⁵ Well-being and safety of women: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (Moldova). available at: <http://www.ipsos-mori.com/terms>. (access 12 August 2020); Addressing gender based violence in Chirsova village: situation analysis, 2020

Second, there is a lack of coordination between different ministries and agencies in implementing gender equality policies. Thus, persons authorized by national legislation to provide support to women victims of violence are subject to different levels of government. For example, most of the specialists working in the municipality of Chirsova village are subordinate to local authorities, while the social assistant and police officer are subordinate to the regional Department of social assistance and the police inspectorate located in the city of Comrat⁵⁶.

Third, the gender approach has not been integrated into the activities of all ministries and departments, and local authorities, including in Chirsova village, have not been informed about the policy in the field of gender equality and countering gender-based violence⁵⁷.

Fourth, the government of the Republic of Moldova does not have a Ministry responsible for ensuring gender equality in the country. On October 9, 2018, the mayor's decree No. 50-N/X established a specialized Commission in the ATU Gagauzia to combat violence against women, which included 17 members of state local structures and NGOs⁵⁸.

Fifth, national legislation regulates the use of sanctions only in cases of physical violence, while other forms of discriminatory practices, including psychological violence, are not regulated by law, and according to the World Bank report sanctions for sexual harassment at work are not provided⁵⁹. Furthermore, the labour inspectorate has not been legally assigned the function of monitoring the employer's compliance with the principle of equality between women and men⁶⁰, which does not imply the responsibility of employers in the event of discriminatory actions against women.

There is a problem with the proving the fact of psychological violence through forensic medical examination⁶¹ in the ATU Gagauzia and in the country in general.

⁵⁶ Addressing gender based violence in Chirsova village: situation analysis, 2020, p.8

⁵⁷ The same

⁵⁸ The same

⁵⁹ Women, Business and the Law. 2020. Washington, DC: World Bank.

⁶⁰ Responses to the list of issues and questions with regard to the consideration of the fourth and fifth periodic reports Republic of Moldova, 2013, p. 8

⁶¹ Addressing gender based violence in Chirsova village: situation analysis, 2020, p.21

under these circumstances it is difficult for victims to prove gender-based violence and / or discrimination, so it is no accident that in many countries the burden of proving gender discrimination is shifted from the victim to the perpetrator.

According to the “OSCE-led survey on violence against women: Moldova” conducted in 2018 women subjected to violence also paid attention to the low level of effectiveness of sanctions that are applied to men who have shown violence: 1) fines are usually issued, and they are paid from the family budget⁶²; 2) referral to community service for a minimum number of days does not protect the victim from the criminal; 3) low attendance at mandatory rehabilitation⁶³.

The restrictions mentioned above decrease the effectiveness of the current legislation to ensure gender equality in all spheres of life of the population. And due to this fact must become the foundation for creating conditions for the economic empowerment of women in the ATU Gagauzia, ensuring that the opportunities for violence against them are being reduced.

Successful practice cases

National legislation

According to the main international documents that regulate discrimination and violence against women, the formation of national legislation should be based on the following principles:

- gender mainstreaming in all regulatory and program-oriented documents, as well as in their implementation⁶⁴;
- providing the national gender policy mechanism with the necessary human, financial and technical resources for effective functioning⁶⁵;
- subordination of the national mechanism to the highest administrative level official in the Government – to a minister;

⁶² Well-being and safety of women: OSCE-led survey on violence against women (Moldova). available at: <http://www.ipsos-mori.com/terms>. (access 12 August 2020)

⁶³ The same

⁶⁴ Beijing declaration and platform for action dated 15.09.1995 (strategic aim D.1)

⁶⁵ Beijing declaration and platform for action dated 15.09.1995 (iss. 19); General recommendation of the Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women No. 6, 1988

- ability to impact government policy development in all fields⁶⁶;
- integration of the gender approach into in all ministries and departments at all levels of government, in the non-governmental and private sectors of the economy, and in the mass media⁶⁷.

Sweden could be considered as an example of national legislation that provides the creation of a comprehensive mechanism for ensuring gender equality. And as it has been demonstrated above it eliminates the possibility of violence against women.

Gender policy is coordinated by the Minister for integration and gender equality, the Gender Equality Committee, and the Parliamentary Commissioner (Ombudsman) on issues of opportunity equality. At the same time, the Minister for integration and gender equality coordinates the overall work of the Swedish Government in the field of gender policy, while the Gender Equality Committee and the Parliamentary Commissioner (Ombudsman) monitor compliance with the principles of gender equality at the regional and local levels, as well as enterprises and organizations) on the issues of equal opportunities⁶⁸.

The gender approach has been integrated into the activities of all ministries and departments, and some of them have established specialized sectors responsible for gender issues. For this purpose the Committee on gender equality has developed two guidelines for civil servants based on specialized research: 1) Guidelines for gender mainstreaming in public sector institutions⁶⁹; 2) Guidelines for gender mainstreaming: practical recommendations⁷⁰. The government of Sweden adopted a new strategy for gender mainstreaming in government agencies in 2011. This strategy suggests involving gender expertise in all draft laws, using gender analysis tools in the preparation of reports and reports, and also the application of gender analysis at every

⁶⁶ Beijing declaration and platform for action dated 15.09.1995 (iss. 201)

⁶⁷ Council of Europe: Committee of Ministers, Recommendation Rec (2002) 5 of the Council of Ministers to state members on the protection of women from violence, adopted on 30 April 2002 and the Explanatory note from 30.04.2002. available at: <https://www.refworld.org.ru/docid/55194ee64.html> (access 23 September 2020)

⁶⁸ New anti-discrimination legislation and new agency, the Equality Ombudsman. 2009. available at: <http://www.government.se/content/1/c6/11/80/18/884944c1.pdf> (access 17 April 2013)

⁶⁹ Stod, J. (2007). Gender Mainstreaming Manual: A book of practical methods from the Swedish Gender Mainstreaming Support Committee. available at: <http://www.government.se/content/1/c6/08/19/82/3532cd34.pdf> (access 29 April 2013)

⁷⁰ Bergquist-Mansson, S., Stod, J. (2007). Gender Equality in Public Services: Some useful advice on gender mainstreaming. available at: <http://www.government.se/content/1/c6/08/19/82/8efba817.pdf> (access 24 March 2013)

stage of the decision-making process. In this regard, Rubery J. emphasizes that while in most EU countries governments are only going through the explanatory stage of the importance of gender mainstreaming, in Sweden gender analysis has already become one of the main methods for evaluating the government performance⁷¹.

The vertical distribution of the gender approach has clearly been built at all levels of the government management. To this end, each administrative council has created positions of special experts on gender equality. They are in charge of territorial control over the progress and implementation of the state gender program, assist administrative districts in implementing a gender approach in the decision-making process, and are the main tool for evaluating the results of gender policy implementation at the regional level. The quality control of gender issues development in all 290 municipal and district councils is implemented by the Swedish Association of local authorities and regions within the framework of the sustainable development of gender equality program⁷².

The current national mechanism ensures a high level of dissemination of the ideology of equal gender rights in society. Thus, according to the Minister for integration and gender equality, about 90% of the country's population supports the policy of gender equality. This result has been achieved due to the high level of public awareness about the problems and consequences of gender inequality reproduction. For this purpose, the country has established a system of continuous gender education. The latter is a compulsory mandate of educational institutions. This state system of gender education is complementary to the current system of gender courses in Sweden, organized by representatives of non-governmental organizations. "Men are for gender equality"⁷³ is one of the largest non-government organisations. Its aim is to promote gender equality for men and boys by raising public awareness of men's issues and the consequences of reproducing traditional institutional roles for contemporary men. To

⁷¹ Rubery, J. Gender mainstreaming and gender equality in the EU: the impact of the EU employment strategy Industrial Relations Journal. available at: <http://eucenter.wisc.edu/omc/papers/ees/rubery.pdf> (access 25 April 2013)

⁷² Official site of Government Offices of Sweden available at: <http://www.government.se/sb/d/4096/a/171701> (access 27 April 2013)

⁷³ Men for Gender Equality. available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/men-and-gender-equality/methods-and-tools/sweden/activity-man-jamstalldhet-english-men-gender-equality> (access 29 September 2020)

achieve this aim the organisation has developed programs, so-called external and internal courses. The first courses are held in the form of lectures, seminars, trainings on a paid basis and are intended for a wide range of people – representatives of the public, employers, educational institutions, the second – for representatives of local groups and members of this organization in the form of distance and face-to-face training, are free of charge. Branches of the organization operate in each region (len). In addition, it should be mentioned that the organization fills in the state gender policy gaps, which is concentrated on the rights of women and girls.

A range of specialized programs is being implemented to increase the level of women's biased attitude to their own personal potential and opportunities for its implementation in the labor market. For example, according to the Gender Equality Strategy in the labour market and in business sector⁷⁴ the Swedish Government creates conditions for reducing the influence of gender stereotypes when choosing a profession and career. To this end, special educational programs are being implemented to transform conventional ideas about jobs, and special technologies have been created to increase girls' interest in natural sciences and information and communication technologies. In addition, special working groups have been set up to support women in starting their own businesses and a mentoring network has been developed, that includes more than 880 businesswomen.

On the one hand, the level of the efficiency of the national legislation is determined by the existence of sanctions. The main types of them are monetary fines, forcible termination of the initiated action, a ban on continuing activities, and forcible coercion to implement programs to ensure gender equality. For example, employers with more than 25 employees are required to submit reports to the Gender Equality Committee every three years on the organization and implementation of the gender approach at an enterprise. In addition, the Committee or the Commissioner for gender equality may request information from employers about the qualifications and salary of employees or persons applying for job vacancies, and their working conditions.

⁷⁴ Gender equality in the labour market and the business sector. 2009. available at: <http://www.government.se/content/1/c6/13/36/75/910bd4ad.pdf> (access 27 April 2013)

Employers are also required to provide the government representatives with access to workplaces where gender equality activities are directly implemented and to participate in discussions on these issues. In case of non-compliance with these regulations, employers are fined and forced to develop and implement gender equality programs. On the other hand, the level of performance of this system determines the availability of feedback. For example, since 1981, the Minister of integration and equality has had an advisory body consisting of more than 40 representatives of women's non-governmental organizations, political parties, employers and workers' associations, which meets four times a year. In addition, there is a high level of involvement of civil society representatives in determining the effectiveness and monitoring of the government's gender policy. For example, the Women's lobby in Sweden carries out the gender analysis of the budget⁷⁵. Besides, since 2009, representatives of non-governmental organizations can represent the interests of citizens who have been discriminated against in court.

The principles mentioned above have been integrated and are considered when implementing the National Strategy for Preventing and Combating Violence of Men against Women for 2017-2026. The strategy is emphasized to focus on the development and application of targeted, coordinated and effective actions to prevent violence, including its recurrence at all management levels. For this purpose, the functions of special experts on gender equality in district administrative councils as regional coordinators of its implementation have been clarified. The overall coordination is carried out by the Agency for Gender Equality, established in the Swedish Government in 2017. The strategy emphasizes that men are involved and responsible for ending violence, violating norms that justify violence, purchasing sexual services, and other restrictions on women's and girls' freedom of action and life choices. A range of training programs is being planned to be created for specialists involved in the implementation of the strategy, including the specialized courses

⁷⁵ Gender Budgeting. available at: <http://sverigeskvinnolobby.se/blog/projekt/analys-av-regeringens-budget> (access 7 May 2013)

focused on the formation of knowledge about men's violence against women and domestic violence in the education and training of relevant professional groups⁷⁶.

Programs

Examples of successful women's financial education programs

Economic education programs have recently received considerable attention from government agencies, major financial institutions, public organizations, and social service organizations. The formation of financial literacy skills allows people to gain confidence in their abilities to make balanced, responsible financial decisions and, as a result, become more economically independent⁷⁷.

One of the most successful initiatives for women's financial education is considered to be the programs REAP (ROW), The Moving Ahead Curriculum, IDA, implemented by various non-profit organizations with the support of the National Network for the Elimination of Domestic Violence (NNEDV) in the United States.

The READ (RAW) and The Moving Ahead Curriculum programs aim to promote economic development and increase the economic security of women who have experienced intimate partner violence. The curriculum consists of four blocks aimed at teaching in an interactive form setting financial goals, ways to increase a person's income, making a cost-of-living plan, studying investment strategies, features and limitations of credit programs, forming positive credit histories, etc.⁷⁸.

When having acquired basic financial literacy skills in the REAP program, a person can participate in the IDA program. The latter includes a savings program that helps low-income women who have been abused by an intimate partner to create assets (such as buying a home, starting a small business, getting an education, a vehicle) through the creation of individual development accounts (IDA). The program participants open savings accounts at a specific financial institution and make regular

⁷⁶ National strategy to prevent and combat men's violence against women. available at: <https://www.government.se/information-material/2016/11/fact-sheet-national-strategy-to-prevent-and-combat-mens-violence-against-women/> (access 27 September 2020)

⁷⁷ Jacob, K., Hudson, S., Bush, M. (2000). Tools for survival: An analysis of financial literacy programs for lower income families. Chicago: Woodstock Institute.

⁷⁸ Redevelopment opportunities for Women (ROW). available at: <https://familyforwardmo.org/how-we-help/redevelopment-opportunities-women/> (access 17 September 2020); The Moving Ahead Curriculum available at: (access 17 September 2020)

payments over a certain period of time. Then the funds in the ratio of 2:1 or 1:1 (the exact comparable amount depends on the state and the program) can be used to achieve the financial goal. Women can participate in the MAP program for 2.5 years to meet their savings goals and receive the appropriate funds to purchase assets.

Using the investigation results C.K. Sanders, T.L. Weaver, and M. Schnabel have revealed that the program participants are focused not only on the formation of basic financial skills, but also on training in financial planning strategies for the long term. Due to the participation in the program, women's financial self-sufficiency increases, contributing not only to their economic independence, but also to the improvement of their health level⁷⁹.

Examples of successful comprehensive support programs for women who have experienced intimate partner violence

To offset the identified negative consequences of the implementation of programs that provide funds⁸⁰, for starting their own business, including for women who have suffered from intimate partner violence, it is necessary to implement them with the following measures as:

- trainings on gender education and meetings with population groups in order to raise awareness about the consequences of violence and gender discrimination in general, establish constructive social interactions with women, including survivors from intimate partner violence, and formation of a gender-sensitive social capital of local communities that prevents the spread of discriminatory practices and condemns perpetrators of violence up to ostracism⁸¹;

⁷⁹ Sanders, C. K., Weaver, T. L., Schnabel, M. (2007). Economic education for battered women: An evaluation of outcomes. *Affilia*. Vol. 22, pp. 240-254.

⁸⁰ For example, Women's economic empowerment program (WEE), Transfer Modality Research Initiative (Bangladesh) Oportuni- dades (Mexico) Juntos (Peru) and others

⁸¹ Buller, A. M., Peterman, A., Ranganathan, M., Bleile, A., Hidrobo, M., Heise, L. (2018). A Mixed-Method Review of Cash Transfers and Intimate Partner Violence in low- and Middle-Income Countries. The World Bank Research Observer. Haneef, C., Stuart K., Muhammad M.H., Mohammad M.R., Tarit M.H. (2014) 'CLP's influence on dowry and violence against women on the chars', Chars Livelihood Programmes. available at: http://clp-bangladesh.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/2014-10-13b-CLPs-influence-on-dowryand-violence-against-women-on-the-chars_final1.pdf (access 17 September 2020)

- development of negative public attitudes towards violence and the unacceptability of discriminatory life practices via the mass media⁸²;
- psychological trainings aimed at developing women's leadership skills, developing communication skills, including conflict management technologies, increasing self-confidence, awareness of their own attitudes and prejudices, strong personal and professional qualities and skills⁸³
 - gender education of men, starting with the design stage of microfinance programs, which is aimed at preventing violence against women, including those participating in programs⁸⁴
 - development of network forms of interaction between organizations, that provide social services, employers, and centers for assistance to victims of violence⁸⁵
 - integration of the gender approach in the activities of all ministries and departments⁸⁶
 - development of an institutional environment in a region promoting egalitarian gender norms of interaction in the family and society in general⁸⁷
 - continuous monitoring of the impact of programs aimed at supporting women's rights and economic empowerment, and at the level of violence in a family and society in general⁸⁸.

⁸² See: Hidrobo, M., Amber, P., Heise L. (2016). The Effect of Cash, Vouchers, and Food Transfers on Intimate Partner Violence: Evidence from a Randomized Experiment in Northern Ecuador. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*. Vol. 8 (3), pp. 284-303.

⁸³ Ahmed, S.M. (2005) Intimate partner violence against women: experiences from a woman-focused development programme in matlab, Bangladesh. *Journal of Health Population and Nutrition*. Vol. 23(1), pp. 95–101; McWhirter, P. T. (2006). Community therapeutic intervention for women healing from trauma. *Journal for Specialists in Group Work*. Vol. 31, pp.339-351.

⁸⁴ Hughes C., Bolis M., Fries R., Finigan S. (2015). Women's economic inequality and domestic violence: exploring the links and empowering women. *Gender & Development*. Vol. 23:2, pp.279-297; Kim, J. C., Watts, C., Hargreaves, J. R., Ndhlovu, J. X., Godfrey, P., Morison, L. A., Pronyk, P. (2007). Understanding the impact of a microfinance-based intervention on women's empowerment and the reduction of intimate partner violence in South Africa. *American Journal of Public Health*, Vol. 97, pp.1794-1802.

⁸⁵ Hughes C., Bolis M., Fries R., Finigan S. (2015). Women's economic inequality and domestic violence: exploring the links and empowering women. *Gender & Development*. Vol. 23:2, pp.279-297

⁸⁶ For more details see: Scaricabarozzi, R. Women's economic independence, a way out of violence: Policies and practices to promote women's economic empowerment to be able to leave violent relationships, 2017. available at: www.wegoproject.eu/documents (access 17 September 2020)

⁸⁷ Sinha, D., Kumar, P. (2020). Trick or Treat: Does a Microfinance Loan Induce or Reduce the Chances of Spousal Violence against Women? Answers from India. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, pp. 1-27 available at: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0886260520957681> (access 15 September 2020)

⁸⁸ Hughes C., Bolis M., Fries R., Finigan S. (2015). Women's economic inequality and domestic violence: exploring the links and empowering women. *Gender & Development*. Vol. 23:2, pp.279-297

“WE GO” (*Women Economic-independence & Growth Opportunity*)⁸⁹ can be considered as one of the successful comprehensive projects. It was implemented by a network of non-profit organizations with the support of the European Union in seven countries (Italy, Spain, Greece, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Great Britain and Sweden) in the period 2016-2018. The project was intended to increase the effectiveness of support for women who have experienced intimate partner violence (IPV), conducted by the Centers for Combating Violence (AVC) in the direction of women's empowerment. To this end, a system of training courses for practitioners on the use of effective support tools and strategies and a system of specialized training courses (learning paths) for women who have been subjected to violence were organized to help identify and promote their personal and economic interests, strengthen their capacity and realize their human capital to achieve economic goals and independence. The training sessions included theoretical topics aimed at gender education of beneficiaries to understand the consequences of gender-discriminatory practices, and practice-oriented interactive seminars aimed at developing personal competencies and supporting social networks, developing skills for successful employment, starting your own business (self-employment/entrepreneurship) and IT skills. The project involved an inter-agency approach to comprehensive solutions of problems faced by women: lack of housing, provision of opportunities for child care, lack of self-motivation skills, lack of self-confidence, lack of knowledge of their advantages, etc. To this end, the project involved employment agencies, training centers, child care facilities, etc. Cooperation with various training centers has made it possible to provide women with certificates based on the results of training sessions to improve their employment opportunities. Important features of this project were women's assessment of the effectiveness of training sessions and focus on long-term life strategies that orient women to possible areas of self-realization after the project has been finished by women.

In December 2018 the project “We Go II” – Building Economic Independence: the way out of Intimate Partner Violence (will last till January 2021) was begun in 4

⁸⁹ Scaricabarozzi, R. Women's economic independence, a way out of violence: Policies and practices to promote women's economic empowerment to be able to leave violent relationships, 2017. available at: www.wegoproject.eu/documents (access 17 September 2020)

countries (Italy, Spain, Greece, Bulgaria). The project aims to empower women who have experienced intimate partner violence by strengthening local and national support systems, sharing European best practices, and building networks of cooperation between public services and private organizations, including companies.

Among the innovative tools for achieving these goals, we should mention the elaboration of individual plans for the development of social relations for women who have experienced violence, regular monitoring of women's needs and employment opportunities, the development of individual career development programs and job selection for beneficiaries, training for employers, the organization of horizontal and vertical meetings with a wide range of stakeholders, the development of strategic development plans by centers for combating violence, etc.

Conceptual ideas for potential projects to prevent violence against women in the ATU Gagauzia

Based on the above mentioned risk analysis of financial and economic factors that increase the cases of violence against women, the low effectiveness of the current national legislation to ensure gender equality in all spheres of society, the high level of patriarchalization of the population's consciousness, justifying discriminatory practices against women, including: in extreme forms, violence in the ATU Gagauzia with the aim of creating an effective mechanism to mitigate the likelihood of violence against women by promoting economic empowerment is possible through the implementation of the system of projects.

Development of a gender education system

To reduce the level of patriarchalization of the society, to increase the effectiveness of the implementation of gender legislation, including in the aspect of increasing women's opportunities for paid employment and self-employment, it is necessary to create a system of gender education, which should cover all economic entities involved in the process.

According to the recommendations on gender mainstreaming developed by the Committee on Gender Equality in Sweden, first of all, it is necessary to train

representatives of regional governments. The training programs for state authorities representatives should focus on the correspondence of gender education to the state development goals – the regulatory framework of the state, the ineffectiveness of the current dichotomy, possible results of work and the essence of gender analysis⁹⁰. It is possible to create a specialized training program aimed at the development of the skills of effective work with women suffered from violence in the relevant professional groups working with them in the framework of violence detection, rehabilitation programs, social assistance and support programs. In addition, by the analogy with the Long-term plan of targeted, coordinated and effective implementation of the National Strategy for preventing and combating violence of men against women for 2017-2026 in Sweden, specialized courses containing knowledge about men's violence against women and domestic violence can be included in higher education programs implemented at Comrat State University in majors that are involved in working with women who have experienced intimate partner violence.

Another entity involved in the gender education system should be business that discriminates against women by underestimating the return on women's human capital through the gender wage gap. In this case, the project can be implemented in the form of interactive training of employers and employees of the organization on how to apply the integrated gender approach effectively. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), gender audit⁹¹ is currently considered to be the most efficient and successful technology for the training. The aims of the gender audit are:

1. to disseminate information on the methods, rules and attitudes to gender issues that have made it possible to implement the integrated gender approach in the organization more efficiently;

⁹⁰ Bergquist-Mansson, S., Stod, J. (2007). Gender Equality in Public Services: Some useful advice on gender mainstreaming. available at: <http://www.government.se/content/1/c6/08/19/82/8efba817.pdf> (access 24 May 2013); Stod, J. Gender Mainstreaming Manual: A book of practical methods from the Swedish Gender Mainstreaming Support Committee, 2007. available at: <http://www.government.se/content/1/c6/08/19/82/3532cd34.pdf> (access 29 April 2013)

⁹¹ The main features of the approach are 1) systematic integration of the priorities and needs of women and men into social policy programmes to promote equality between them; 2) development of specific social policy measures to achieve equality, accompanied by the consideration of the effect on women and men already at the planning stage, followed by monitoring and evaluation; 3) organization (reorganization), improvement, advancement and evaluation of decision-making processes by persons involved in policy implementation, to integrate equality issues in all areas and at all levels. [Cit.by: Voronina O.A. *Feminizm i gendernoe ravenstvo* [Feminism and gender equality]. Moscow, Editorial URSS, 2004, p. 211].

2. to formulate the basic principles, criteria and benefits of implementing the integrated gender approach in the organization;

3. to determine how gender-sensitive the organization's personnel policy is, to assess the amount of resources allocated and spent on the implementation of the integrated gender approach in the organization;

4. to assess progress in the implementation of the gender equality action plans and, if necessary, to suggest changes;

5. to identify opportunities for further improvement and to suggest possible strategies for more effective implementation of the action plan.

The main result of the gender audit is to prepare a report that includes recommendations for improving performance and specific measures aimed at consistent implementation of the audit recommendations by the unit/organization⁹². It should be noted that the distinctive feature of the gender audit is the voluntary participation in it and the full approval and support of the management of the organization. The audit is educational and advisory, rather than supervisory, and allows the company's management to draw attention to hidden reserves for more efficient development. According to the experts of the ILO, the gender audit is often used as a starting point for the discussion of broader issues related to the very content of the work and functioning of the organization. Sometimes issues that go beyond gender concerns are raised, for example: the organization's overtime practices; delays at work; working under time constraints; the lack of active structures involved in the exchange of information, training and adaptation of acquired knowledge. This allows employers to compensate for losses from additional costs as a result of increasing the salaries of female employees of the organization.

The gender audit is aimed at preventing the manifestation of discriminatory practices towards women in general. However, it is possible to develop a separate project aimed at creating and implementing specialized training courses for employers,

⁹² Rukovodstvo po vnedreniyu gendernogo audita, osnovannogo na printsipe aktivnogo uchastiya [Guidelines for the implementation of gender audit based on the principle of active participation]. available at: <http://www.elprof.ru/materials/activity/organizatsionnaja-rabota/gender/gendernyyj-audit/rukovodstvo-po-provedeniju-gendernogo-audita-osnovannogo-na-printsipe-aktivnogo-uchastija/> (access 8 August 2014)

the result of which should be the creation of a sensitive workplace policy for women who have been subjected to intimate partner violence, eliminating the possibility of prejudice about their lower productivity, the possibility of dismissal of women during the rehabilitation period. A similar project was implemented in New York⁹³.

Minimization of the number of men and women who want to follow patriarchal norms of behavior is the result of the development of the system of institutions of gender education of the population, which involves changing the ways of solving specific individual problems of economic agents by forming a critical attitude to the existing patriarchal system of norms and values that have led to the current situation. According to the development experience of the institution of the gender education of the population abroad the most efficient norms of the education are 1) introduction of gender courses on continuous technology kindergarten – school – technical college – university; 2) creation of social advertising aimed at eliminating gender illiteracy; 3) development of special manuals explaining the main forms of gender discrimination and the mechanism for filing complaints⁹⁴; 4) production of demonstration films teaching the basics of gender methodology in accessible and exciting forms for the population; 5) introduction of specialized courses in the field of sexual relations in schools.⁹⁵.

Stabilization of egalitarian gender norms is impossible without gender education of media representatives, whose influence as a factor of norm formation has recently been particularly great. The journalistic environment is currently characterized by propaganda and imposition of gender stereotypes containing outdated ideas about gender roles and models, the manifestation of sexism, expressed in discriminatory assessments of various male and female qualities, the desire to cliché female and male

⁹³ For more details see: Adams, A. E., Tolman, R. M., Bybee, D., Sullivan, C. M., & Kennedy, A. C. (2012). The Impact of Intimate Partner Violence on Low-Income Women's Economic Well-Being. *Violence Against Women*. Vol. 18(12), pp. 1345–1367.

⁹⁴ It should be noted that this work in Russia is carried out by non-government women's organisations: See for example, Aivazova, S.G. *Osnovy metodiki raspoznavaniya i otsenki diskriminatsii zhenshchin na rynke truda* [Fundamentals of methods for recognizing and evaluating discrimination against women in the labour market]. Moscow, Eslan Publ., 2007. available at: URL:<http://www.wcons.org.ru/ru/files/book-2007.pdf> (access 14 August 2014)

⁹⁵ The courses are provided by the government of Sweden as part of the implementation of the National Strategy to Prevent and Combat Male Violence against Women for 2017-2026.

images, lack of understanding of terminology related to gender relations. It is possible to implement a specialized project involving gender training of journalists in additional education programs with the provision of documents. However, for the project to be effective in the long term, media outreach activities must be systematic. To this end, the frequency of these activities should be fixed in the relevant regulatory documents. “Gender equality strategy” may become such a document in the ATU Gagauzia.

Development of personal potential and business skills of the women who have been subjected to intimate partner violence

The analysis has revealed that women from socially vulnerable categories of the population, especially women, who have been subjected to violence, on the one hand do not have conditions for formation of competitive human capital, due to the restrictions in the access to educational services, on the other hand, they are tended to underestimate their personal potential and business qualities (e.g. behaviour stereotypes). In this case a project that includes a system of specialized training for women who have been subjected to violence can be implemented. The trainings will contribute to the identification and promotion of their personal and economic interests, strengthening of their capacity and realization of their human capital to achieve economic goals and independence. In this case the education technology “I – corporation” implemented by managers can also be used. It involves the situations when a person describes him/herself as a corporation assessing the strength and weaknesses including the neighbourhood surroundings. On the one hand, it would reduce the influence of gender stereotypes of behavior when women choose the areas of application of their human capital. On the other hand, it would precisely determine the trajectory of their training, for the implementation of which you can use the innovative tools used in the "We Go" project mentioned above. Within the framework of the project, similar to the "We Go" project, it is also possible to plan interaction with certified training centers to provide women with certificates based on the results of training to increase their employment opportunities.

It is possible to implement a financial literacy project for those women who are focused on startup realization. The aim of the project is to increase the level of financial security of women who have suffered violence from an intimate partner, training in effective technologies for the formation and management of personal finances, obtaining skills in personal economic and financial planning to achieve their goals.

The project can be extended for low-income women who have a permanent source of income, in the form of a separate project aimed at developing individual savings programs similar to the MAP program mentioned above. In this case, low-income women who have been abused by an intimate partner are assisted in creating assets in the form of buying a house, a vehicle, starting a small business, getting an education, through the creation of individual development accounts (IDA). The distinctive features of the project from the startup financing project are: 1) a wider range of achievable financial goals; 2) building women's skills for the wise management of the family budget, choosing a savings strategy to reach financial goals; 3) the creation of personal savings, which in the installed conditions of the project proportions, co-funded from the project funds for the purchase of designated assets. In this case, it is significantly important to activate the personal potential of low-income women, which eliminates the possibility of developing a dependent position in the case of providing assistance in the form of a grant or social benefit.

According to the conducted analysis the number of female students getting higher education is decreasing in the ATU Gagauzia. In long term it may enhance the women discrimination in the labour market as the quality of their human capital in the emerging knowledge economy will be uncompetitive. In this regard, one of the projects aimed at forming the capital of girls ' education can be a career guidance project that focuses them on obtaining higher education. The project can be implemented at schools among the students of grades 8 and 9. In addition, the project can also solve the problem of reducing the influence of gender stereotypes in choosing their profession and career, focusing, among other things, on the prospects of natural sciences and information technologies. Thus, the implementation of this project can contribute to reducing gender segregation in education and, subsequently, in the labor market of the region.

The project can be extended by a program for the creation of innovative enterprises by a group of women from socially vulnerable categories of the population with higher education. This enterprise should be focused on the involvement of highly qualified specialists with high wages, which, among other things, will solve problems with their migration to other countries or regions of the country. Graduates from the industrial college, which is being opened in the ATU Gagauzia with the support of the Turkish Government, and graduates of Comrat State University can be involved in training personnel for this enterprise. Girls participating in a career guidance project can get practical training or internships at this enterprise with the opportunity to be employed there after the receiving higher education. The operation of the enterprise should result into the production of high-tech products with high added value. The startup created in the framework of the project can be placed at the industrial part in Comrat.

Research projects

Investigation of the impact of microfinance project on the rate of violence against women in the rejoin can become one of these research projects. The importance of the suggested project is determined by the high level of patriarchalization of society, which, as we have mentioned above, is one of the factors of increasing violence against participants of microfinance programs. The project "Ending Gender-based Violence and Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals" currently being implemented in the ATU Gagauzia does not involve this assessment.

One of the methodological projects can be a project aimed at the development of an effective mechanism for coordinating the efforts of various departments, institutions, representatives of mayors, employers, the public, ensuring the provision of various forms of assistance and services to women who have been subjected to violence. The project should be functioning on the principle of a "single window", which increases the effectiveness of rehabilitation measures by minimizing transaction costs. Besides, this principle can be used to create methodological tools for the most effective forms of prevention of the likelihood of violence against women. The

synergistic effects of the project can also be the integration of a gender approach into the activities of all ministries and departments and the creation of an institutional environment in the region that promotes the consolidation of egalitarian gender norms of interaction in the family and society as a whole.

The conceptual ideas suggested above for different potential projects aimed at the development of women's ability to use their economic rights may become a part of a single comprehensive project that will create an effective mechanism for leveling the likelihood of violence against women in the ATU Gagauzia.