



Министерство национальной экономики  
Республики Казахстан  
Комитет по статистике



MAIN FINDINGS OF DATA ANALYSIS  
FOLLOWING THE FIRST WAVE OF THE  
**GENERATIONS AND GENDER**  
SURVEY IN THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Министерство национальной экономики  
Республики Казахстан  
Комитет по статистике



## Executive Summary

Main findings of data analysis  
following the first wave of the

# GENERATIONS AND GENDER

Survey in the Republic of  
Kazakhstan

## THE TEAM INCLUDED:

**Oxana Sinyavskaya**, CandEcSc, Deputy Director, Institute for Social Policy, Higher School of Economics (National Research University)

**Vladimir Kozlov**, CandEcSc, Associate Professor, Research Fellow, Institute of Demography Higher School of Economics (National Research University)

**Anna Cherviakov**, Research Fellow, Institute for Social Policy, Higher School of Economics (National Research University)

**Tatiana Gudkova**, Junior Research Associate, Institute for Social Policy, Higher School of Economics (National Research University)

**Darya Kareva**, Junior Research Associate, Institute for Social Policy, Higher School of Economics (National Research University)

Coordination of analysis and expert support to report preparation was provided by:

**Gaziza Moldakulova**, National Program Officer, Population and Development, UNFPA

## National survey under the “Generations and Gender” programme in Kazakhstan

The multifaceted transformation of the family as a social institution requires close attention of the state and society. Moreover, it necessitates helping families to maintain and strengthen ties between their members. To solve these and many other problems, it is necessary to have a better understanding of the causes that underlie recent demographic trends (UNECE).

The International “Generations and Gender” survey, initiated by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) in 2004, is designed to collect data to improve understanding of the country’s demographic and social development and the factors that determine it. This survey allows to identify and explain the causes of demographic trends, the formation of families, marriage and partnerships, the reproductive intentions of people, family and gender values, and responsible parenthood.

This publication presents the results of the analysis of the data of the first wave of the “Generations and Gender” survey in Kazakhstan, carried out in 2018 and commissioned by the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan’s Statistics Committee of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan with the technical support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

The information provided will help determine the necessary support for families in the opportunity to have the desired number of children and strengthen inter-generational relations, effectively maintain the quality of life of older people, and identify factors affecting the demographic behaviour of people, including population migration.

With the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Kazakhstan, an international group of experts from the Center for Comprehensive Social Policy Research at the Institute for Social Policy (Moscow, Russian Federation) was involved in analyzing the results of the national survey “Generations and Gender”. The involved international experts have extensive experience in analyzing the “Generations and Gender” databases and developing thematic analytical reports based on a study prepared for the government of the Russian Federation.

The publication is intended for a wide audience, including government and political decision makers, representatives of various branches of government, demographers, economists, sociologists, political scientists, business and the scientific community.

*Views expressed in this publication are those of the authors  
and they do not purport the opinions or views of UNFPA,  
United Nations or related agencies*

The Republic of Kazakhstan like other countries with a similar level of socio-economic development is going through the transformation of age distribution with an increasing proportion of older people considerably due to declining mortality.

According to vital statistics, the proportion of people aged 60+ in Kazakhstan dropped from 10.2% to 8.2% in 1950–1980, then started to rise and achieved 10.6% in 2015 and 11.6% in 2019.

According to UN's population prospects, the growth rate for people aged 60+ will accelerate achieving 15.3% by 2030; 20.1% by 2050; and 26.4% by 2085<sup>1</sup>. The ratio between active population aged 20–64 and those aged 65+ the majority of whom are not working will be cut almost by half. Though the population of the country is apparently younger than in some neighboring countries such as the Russian Federation, Belarus, Ukraine, Armenia, Moldova and will grow old slower than for instance in Azerbaijan or Uzbekistan, a two-fold increase of prevalence of older population and two-fold decline of dependency ratio is a serious challenge to social and economic institutions.

Within a context of the ageing population, more emphasis is made on youths, on the one hand, and human capital possessed by younger generations because they predetermine future socio-economic development of the country. On the other hand, on the way intergenerational relations are changing such as to what extent human, cultural and social capital of the older generation is captured.

Another challenge to socio-political development of the country in the context of ageing population is inability of existing statistics to get insights into the mechanisms of family making, specificities in the relationships of parents and children, men and women, those who are able to work and elderly people in various types of families, as well as interfamily support networks and forms in the Republic of Kazakhstan. Without such understanding, it is difficult to offer new efficient tools of demographic and family policy to mitigate challenges and prominence of ageing in the country. Such situation spurs a real need for new data.

Generations and Gender Survey is a proven source of such data; it had been delivered since 2004 in 20 European and four non-European countries in the framework of Generations and Gender Program under auspices of the UN Economic Commission for Europe<sup>2</sup>. Among ex-USSR countries, at least one wave of GGS was held in Belarus, Georgia, Lithuania, Russia, and Estonia<sup>3</sup>.

This report results from the analysis of data collected in the first wave of GGS in Kazakhstan in 2018 according to the task set by the Government of Kazakhstan to the Statistical Committee of the Ministry of National Economy with technical support from UN Population Fund.

The survey sample included **14,829** respondents aged 18–79. A standardized personal interview was used with tablet-based questionnaires. Also, the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute, the key coordinator of GGP, provided technical support to data harmonization and development of survey database.

The report was prepared by a team of international experts involved in analysis of data from similar surveys in Russia, Georgia, Estonia and Lithuania.

<sup>1</sup> <https://population.un.org/wpp/Download/Standard/Population/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ggp-i.org/about/>

<sup>3</sup> It is planned in Moldova in 2021.

# 1. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS IN THE GENERATIONS AND GENDER SURVEY IN THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN



## AGE AND GENDER STRUCTURE OF THE POPULATION

In Kazakhstan, GGS found that 53.0% of adult population were women and 47.0% - men. These figures are consistent with statistical yearbook "Preliminary Data of 2018" published by the Statistical Committee under the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan (51.6% and 48.4% respectively).

According to the survey, the proportion of the urban population is **60%**, and that of the rural population is **40%**.<sup>4</sup> Such ratios of urban and rural people are close to published data as well: 58.2% and 41.8% respectively. We may conclude that the survey is representative of the overall population in the country in terms of key socio-demographic characteristics.

When compared to other countries of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) Kazakhstan is characterized by a rather high prevalence of children under 18 and youths against a relatively small share of people aged 65+. As of 1 January 2018, the share of people aged 65+ in total population is 7.3% in Kazakhstan while the EAEU average is 13.5%. However, according to UN prospects<sup>5</sup>, the proportion of people aged 60+ in Kazakhstan will achieve 15.3% by 2030 and 20.1% by 2050, i.e. more than in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. Based on these data we can conclude that although population in Kazakhstan is not perceived as old compared to other countries, in the near decades the total number and share of older people will grow to pose new challenges for a social policy concerning such group of population.

## DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY PLACE OF BIRTH AND PLACE OF RESIDENCE

GGS was held in **14** regions and **2** major cities (Nur-Sultan, the capital, and Almaty) of Kazakhstan<sup>6</sup>. The most significant gender discrepancy (women outnumber men) was found in Karaganda, Aktobe, East-Kazakhstan, West-Kazakhstan regions and in the capital Nur-Sultan. While men outnumber women in South-Kazakhstan, Atyrau and Kostanai regions.

Over 90% of respondents were born in Kazakhstan; 3% - in Russia; 2.1% - in Uzbekistan. Place of birth of other respondents (2.4%) included Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Estonia, etc. The largest proportion of those who were born in Russia live in the Northern and Central Kazakhstan, while the smallest - in the Southern Kazakhstan. By contrast, in the Southern Kazakhstan the proportion of people born in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan is higher than in other regions. The proportion of those who were born outside of Kazakhstan and who live in Nur-Sultan and Almaty is below 5%.

<sup>4</sup> Persons with unknown type of settlement are excluded from analysis of this indicator.

<sup>5</sup> <https://population.un.org/wpp/Download/Standard/Population/>

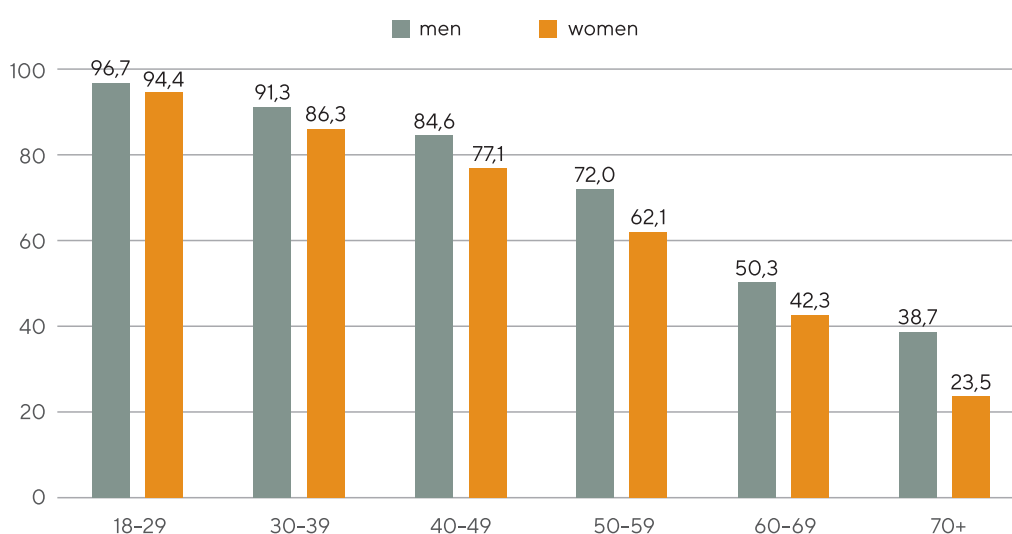
<sup>6</sup> Respondents' current places of residence were divided into the following macro-regions: Eastern (East-Kazakhstan region); Western (Aktobe, Atyrau, West-Kazakhstan and Mangistau regions); Northern (Akmola, Kostanai, Pavlodar and North-Kazakhstan regions); Central (Karaganda region); southern (Almaty, Jambyl, Kyzylorda and South-Kazakhstan regions). Nur-Sultan and Almaty were distinguished as a separate category.

The number and proportion of migrants coming to Kazakhstan in each age cohort is decreasing compared to older one. Among people born in 1950-ies and older, every fifth respondent was born outside of Kazakhstan – in Russia, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Estonia, etc., while among generations born in 1960-ies, 1970-ies and 1980-ies persons from other countries is fewer than 10%. The smallest proportion who was born outside but lives in Kazakhstan is among youths aged 18-29 (3.4%).

## HEALTH CHARACTERISTICS

GGS does not provide questions for objective health assessment; however, it envisages self-assessment of respondents' health based on socio-economic and demographic status. The survey showed an expected decrease in the proportion of respondents with good and very good health progressively with age in Kazakhstan (Fig. 1). For example, it drops from 96.7% for men in age group 18-19 to 38.7% in age group 70+. In the oldest age group, only 6.8% respondents report bad or very bad health, and more than 50% report satisfactory health. Among women, it drops from 94.3% to 23.5% in respective age groups, and over 20% women aged 70+ report bad health.

The fact that despite a longer life expectancy the self-assessed health of women is worse than men is common not only in Kazakhstan but in Russia as well. Russian researchers looking into the problem in detail explain such gaps by the unwillingness of men to visit doctors and take treatment until a disease progresses to an advanced stage when the probability of death becomes quite high. However, despite similar life expectancy, availability and quality



**Figure 1** – Respondents with a good and very good health by gender and age groups

of health services, the differences in self-assessed health between people in Russia and Kazakhstan are huge. People in Kazakhstan assess their health better than Russians, and thus they are close to most advanced countries such as Switzerland or Nordic countries. In addition, GGS respondents had a very low prevalence of chronic diseases; it is much lower than in countries with a similar income level.

## RELIGIOUSNESS AND CONFESSIONS

According to GGS, **63%** respondents aged 18-79 report to be Muslims; **27%** - Christians, **6%** - other religions, and **4%** - agnostics, atheists or refused to answer. Age distribution of the population by religions reflects historical and geographical specificities of Kazakhstan: Christians prevail among older people where the proportion of those who came to Kazakhstan from other republics of the USSR is higher, while Muslims are much younger. In the age group 70+ Christians are 56%, and Muslims - 36%; in the age group 60-69 the proportion is almost equal (Christians and Muslims are approximately 45% each), and among youths (18-29 years) Muslims are 73% and Christians - 18%. From regional perspective, Christians outnumber Muslims in the northern and eastern macro-regions bordering with Russia; both groups are almost equal with minor predominance of Muslims in the central macro-region; while in the southern, westerns macro-regions and in Nur-Sultan and Almaty the proportion of Muslims is much higher. At the same time, even in the northern Kazakhstan the Muslims outnumber Christians in the youngest age group. In rural areas, Muslims prevail in all age groups, though in the age group 70+ such prevalence is minor.

The extent of religiousness was assessed by respondents answering the question about how religious they were<sup>7</sup>. In the age group 18-79, 13.4% respondents assessed themselves as very religious, 28.8% - religious, 34.8% - moderately religious, 14.4% - hardly religious, and another 6.7% - not at all religious. In general, urban population is less religious than rural. By regions, the most religious respondents live in the southern macro-region (41.7%), while the least religious ones live in metropolitan cities (9.6%, however, the group of religious respondents prevail in this region - 39.7%) and in the northern region (13.4%), especially in the age group 40-69. Views about the role of religion among youths aged 18-29 are more polarized compared to other age groups translated into a relatively high proportion of hardly religious (13%) and very religious (27.6%) persons. Very religious respondents are especially prevalent among rural youths (18-29) - over 37%, and in the southern Kazakhstan - 45%.

<sup>7</sup> 11-score scale was recoded into five groups and a separate group for those who did not know (1.9% of all respondents).



## MARITAL AND PARTNERSHIP STATUS OF RESPONDENTS

GGs in Kazakhstan followed international recommendations and used “partnership” category, “for which a partner is defined as a person with whom the respondent has an intimate relationship, regardless of whether they live together at the time of the interview and whether they are married or not” We analyzed 7 types of marital and partnership status (in addition to marital status distinguished by the Statistical Committee)<sup>8</sup>. In addition to legally defined marital state (civil marriages) we reviewed such alternative living arrangements as non-marital cohabitation (without being married), and so-called LAT when partners live apart from each other.

The GGS found that **65% men and 57% women** have current partners, with the rare exception of living in a separate household (3%). Marked differences are observed among men and women depending on the respondent’s age. Over 70% men have partners at all ages, except the youngest age group (18-29) and the oldest age group (70+). Only every third youth aged 18-29 has a partner. It is different with women. Every second young woman aged 18-29 has a partner; the largest proportion of women with partners in the 30-39 year old age group (approximately 75%); at 70+ only every fifth woman has a partner (against 67.3% men of the same age in partnership) due to widowhood of women: at 60-69 every third woman is a widow, and at 70+ – every second woman.

Informal unions among Kazakhstanis co-residing with a partner in the same household are rare for the country (fewer than **7% men and 8% women** are in cohabitations). Cohabitations are more common to men in the youngest age group (18-29) – 8.5%, and to women in mature age (40-49) – 10.1%.

In general, **93% men and 92% women** perceive living with a partner in the same household as a civil marriage, and we do not observe any extreme transformations in family and marital relations.

## NUMBER OF CHILDREN

GGs is a unique source of important data on number of children born not only by women but men as well because this indicator is not addressed by the population census or many sample surveys. Average number of children born by each respondent is 1.61 for both genders: 1.52 for men and 1.69 for women. However, these data may not be used because many respondents had no reproductive intentions due to a young age. It would be more correct to consider number of children born by certain woman’s age separately and this will be discussed in detail in section four of the report.

<sup>8</sup> 1) civil marriage, 2) cohabitation, 3) living apart together (LAT), 4) divorced and separated, 5) widowed, 6) single never married, 7) had a partner but the outcome of the union unknown.

## HOUSEHOLD SIZE AND COMPOSITION; HOUSEHOLD TYPES

Each respondent in the GGS represents one household, i.e. the survey contains data of **14,829** households in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Households consisting of 2-3 members generally prevail throughout the country. **Average household size is 3.3**. However, by age groups the household structure looks different. While every third person aged 30-39 years lives in an extended household (more than 5 members), almost every second respondent aged  $\geq 70$  lives alone.

Household structure by the number of co-residing household members significantly varies depending on the region. Extended households of 5-6 and more members are more prevalent in the Southern (14.7% and 23.5%) and Western (11.1% and 13.0%) regions of Kazakhstan, while single-person households are specific to Eastern (31%) and Central (26.4%) regions. Households with 2-3 members prevail in the Northern region and in Nur-Sultan and Almaty (29.7% and 21.7% against 25.2% and 25.7% respectively).

The authors of this report distinguished 8 household types from the set of questions in the questionnaire about composition of a household according to presence or absence of a spouse/partner, children under 18 and relatives in the households.

We found that every fourth Kazakhstanis lives in a household consisting of a couple with children without relatives, i.e. a nuclear family with children. The proportion of those who live alone is high as well – 18.6%. 14% respondents live without a partner and children but with relatives. Extended households made an equal input to the household structure in Kazakhstan representing 12.8% respondents who have a partner, children under 18 and relatives, as well as 12.4% nuclear families without children and relatives. The proportion of households with co-residing partners and relatives but without children under 18 is 9.3%; single parents with children under 18 and relatives – 5.5%. Fewer than 3% respondents live in households of single parents with children under 18 but without relatives.

## EDUCATION STRUCTURE OF RESPONDENTS

EDUCATION IS ONE OF THE KEY PRIORITIES OF NATIONAL POLICY IN KAZAKHSTAN. It should be noted that **EDUCATION EXPENDITURES IN KAZAKHSTAN IN 2013-2017 AMOUNTED TO 2.8-2.9% OF GDP AND THIS IS HIGHER THAN IN RUSSIA OR ON AVERAGE IN EAEU**. Despite some lagging behind from Kyrgyzstan and Belarus by education expenditures, Kazakhstan is in the middle of EAEU rating of education index<sup>9</sup> pointing to quite an efficient use of expenditures in this field [Mizintseva, Chavykina, 2017].

GGs found that the majority of adults in Kazakhstan (60.2%) had secondary general or secondary vocational education; almost 33% had higher or post-graduate education; 8.5% had primary or lower level education. By age groups, individuals aged 18-29 and especially 30-39 years have the highest level of education. Youth generations have more opportunities to get higher and post-graduate education than generations of their parents and grandparents.

## ACTIVITIES OF RESPONDENTS AND LABOR MARKET

According to official statistics, the labor force participation rate in Kazakhstan is one of the highest (70%) among EAEU member-states outperformed by Belarus [Statistical Yearbook of EAEU, 2018]. Despite significant decline of employment rate in 2013-2017 the reported unemployment rate in Kazakhstan is the lowest in EAEU and was decreasing during the surveyed period [Statistical Yearbook of EAEU, 2018].

GGs found that **the labor force participation in total population aged 18-79 was 76.5%** - even higher than in official data. However, it is wrong to use GGS data for the analysis of unemployment and employment because the methodology to measure these indicators differs from methodologies used in official statistics and the objective of the survey was different as well. This survey measures current self-determined status of a respondent at the time of the survey to give clues to certain models of socio-demographic behavior: decision-making about births, intergenerational and gender relationships.

<sup>9</sup> Index of UN Development Program calculated as adult literacy rate and combined gross enrollment ratio: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/education-index>

By type of activity, 51.4% respondents are employed; 6.2% are self-employed or engaged into family business; 6.0% are students; 17.1% are retired or ill for a long time; and almost the same number are unemployed. Among women, the prevalence of employed and self-employed is lower; but the proportion of unemployed and homemakers, retired and ill for a long time is higher. In rural areas, the proportion of employed is lower but the prevalence of self-employed and engaged into family business, as well as unemployed and homemakers is higher.

## INCOME OF RESPONDENTS

The most prevalent source of income in total sample of respondents and in all age groups, except for 60–69 and ≥70 is **earnings from paid work (reported by 55.8% respondents)**. In older age groups the main source is retirement **pension: 80.3% respondents aged 60–69 and 96.0% respondents aged ≥70**.

Earnings from paid work contribute most to individual income of respondents (of all sources) (81.0% in total sample), followed by retirement pension (13.3%); contribution of other types of benefits (disability, unemployment, etc.) is very minor in total income. Data from the Statistical Committee in 2018 showed prevalence of earnings from paid work and important contribution of retirement pensions in monetary income structure as well. Such distribution by sources is peculiar to all EAEU countries and the contribution of earnings from paid work in Kazakhstan is one of the highest among EAEU member-states [Statistical Yearbook of EAEU, 2018].

Distribution of respondents by quintiles of average per capita income (20-percent groups) showed that single parents with children and relatives were at highest risk of financial disadvantage (28.6% of such households were in the first quintile of per capita income; 46.8% – in the second quintile). The wealthiest are couples without children and relatives (36.1% of such households are in the fourth quintile, and 26.5% – in the fifth quintile), as well as couples with children and without relatives (29.2% and 30.6% households are in the fourth and fifth quintiles respectively).

## HOUSEHOLD POSSESSIONS

According to subjective assessment of household's material well-being, we found that every fourth respondent experienced financial difficulties, two fifths had some difficulties. Households of single parents with children under 18 residing without relatives were more likely to have financial difficulties than other household types.

In terms of deprivations, the GGS found that the biggest problems faced by respondents were related to paying for a week's annual holiday away from home and replacing any worn-out furniture. Absolute majority did not have difficulties with keeping home adequately warm; buying new clothes; eating meat, chicken or fish every second day. Four-fifths could invite friends or family for a drink or meal at least once a month. Except for keeping home adequately warm and having balanced diet, people older than 70 felt themselves more deprived which was common not only for Kazakhstan but Russia as well. Families of single parents and children under 18 residing without relatives had the least opportunities to satisfy the above needs.

The proportion of those who have overdue bills is quite low. People had outstanding utility bills more often (14%). Mortgage payments and rent for accommodation are almost never missed. Families of single parents and children under 18 residing without relatives are more likely to have overdue bills.

The use of income and property criteria showed that [households consisting of single parents and children under 18 residing without relatives had the highest risk of vulnerability](#). Such risk was also rather high in households with children without other relatives, in single-parent families with children and other relatives and in households of lonely elderly people.

Respondents aged 30-39 are more likely to have property than other age groups, the average price of their immovable property is higher than others. Youths aged 18-29 and the elderly aged 70 and older are least likely to have property. Immovable property of the lowest average market price is owned by respondents residing with children under 18 without a partner/spouse and relatives, while the highest – by lonely people.

[Accumulative pension reform in Kazakhstan allowed a significant part of adults to form at least some kind of savings. It stands to reason that pension accounts \(40.8%\) and bank deposits \(19.6%\) are the most used forms of savings.](#)

Youths under 29 and people of the retirement age are less likely to have personal pension accounts than people aged 30-59. Such accounts are most prevalent in the Central Kazakhstan and in Nur-Sultan and Almaty, and least prevalent in the Eastern Kazakhstan. The higher is respondent's average per capita income the more likely he/she will have a pension account.

People aged 30-39 are more likely to have bank and short-term accounts, savings accounts (deposits) than people aged 50 and older. People living in principal cities (Nur-Sultan and Almaty), Central and Southern Kazakhstan are more likely to have bank deposits than in Eastern Kazakhstan. Such savings are more prevalent among the wealthiest respondents.

## HOUSING CONDITIONS

Possession of stocks, government or corporate bonds is not widely practiced in Kazakhstan: less than 1% respondents had such assets.

Nearly 50% respondents live in dwellings consisting of 2 or 3 rooms. Couples with children and relatives are more likely to live in a dwelling consisting of 5 or more rooms than other types of households. That means availability of housing to respondents. Relative constraints of housing conditions in large households are found in the Eastern and Central Kazakhstan, as well as principal cities such as Nur-Sultan and Almaty. In these regions, large households consisting of 5 or more members are more likely to live a 3-room dwelling. This trend was not observed in the Southern and Western Kazakhstan.

Respondents are more likely to own housing (**81.9%**). Respondents aged 18-29 (**26.4%**), single parents with children under 18 without relatives (**26.9%**) and couples with children without relatives (**19.9%**) rent housing more often than other types of households. In Nur-Sultan and Almaty, only three-fifths of respondents own housing, in the Central Kazakhstan - three-fourths, in other regions - 86.9% on average.

Almost half of the respondents have been living in current dwelling for over 15 years; while people older than 70 - for over 30. Youths change place of residence more often than other age groups. Particularly, young women are less likely to stay in a household of their relatives rather than young men. Young families continue living with relatives even after the birth of children; it is girls who move to the house of her spouse/partner.

Only one tenth of the respondents reported dissatisfaction with dwelling. Though half of the respondents were absolutely satisfied with dwelling. The more people and children under 18 live in a household, the higher is complete satisfaction with dwelling. Those who live with relatives, partner/spouse and children (65.4%) are more likely to be fully satisfied with dwelling.

## 2. YOUTHS



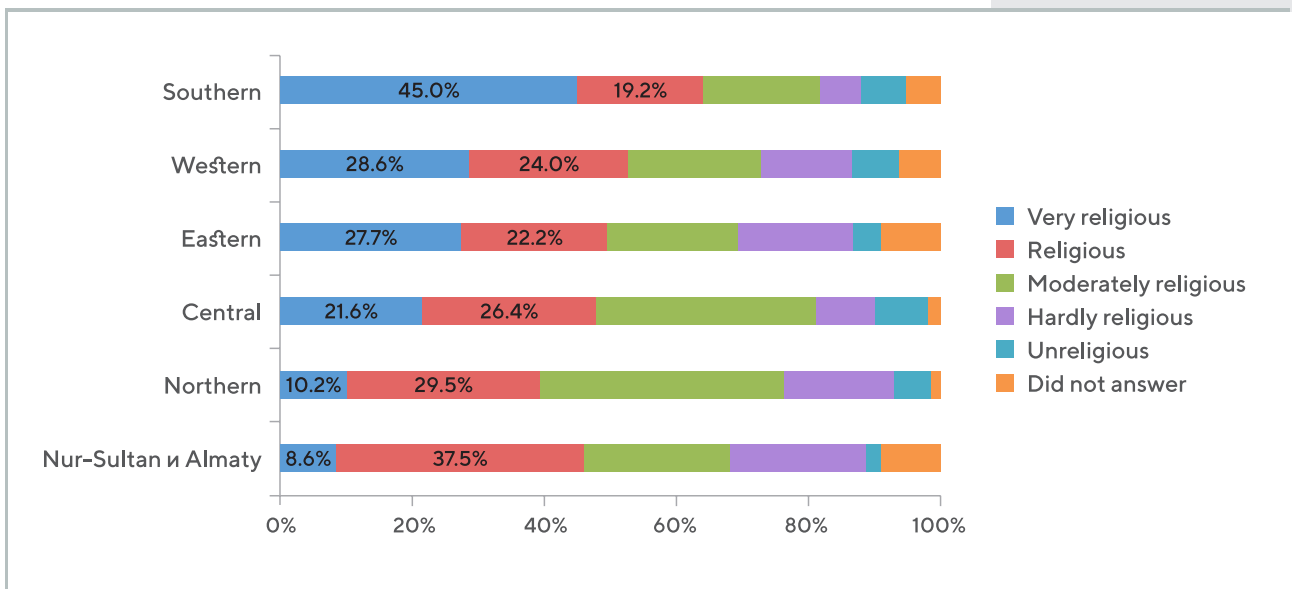
Population in Kazakhstan is relatively young. GGS of 2018 laid the ground for the analysis of key socio-demographic and socio-economic characteristics of this social group which included respondents aged 18-29 born in 1989-2000 (3,978 respondents or 27% of all respondents aged 18-79).

GGS found that the majority (**72.8%**) of young people in Kazakhstan were Muslims; **17.9%** - Christians; **6.0%** belonged to other religions; and **3.4%** were unreligious or refused to answer that question. Distribution of youths by confessions has a strong regional gradient. Over 80% of youths of Islamic confession were found in Nur-Sultan and Almaty and in the southern macro-region. Prevalence of young Muslims is slightly above 50% in the northern, eastern and central macro-regions. The proportion of young Christians is higher in the same regions: one third in the eastern and central regions and almost half (43%) in the northern macro-region.

In terms of religiousness, youths in Kazakhstan follow the same trends as general population. Men aged 18-29 are more religious than women of the same age. 37.8% of rural youths report to be very religious; however, the proportion of unreligious youths is higher than in the cities (7.4% against 4.9% respectively). Regional diversity is very prominent: 45.0% youths in the southern macro-region are very religious, another 20% are religious; while in the northern macro-region these groups are 10.2% and 29.5% of all youths respectively (Fig. 2). The least proportion of very religious youths (8.6%) is in the capital cities along with quite high proportion of religious youths (37.5%).

18-29 years is the age of active family building: young people get married and give birth to children. However, the GGS found that **42.4%** people aged 18-29 had a partner though it was lower than in general population. In Nur-Sultan and Almaty, the proportion of young people without a partner is much higher probably due to the fact that metropolitan youths are more involved into education and career development and delay building a family. Young people are formally married in nine of ten cases which is consistent with similar indicator in overall sample. Cohabitation in the absence of registered marriage is more likely in urban areas and among unreligious young people. Cross-country comparisons of marital status of youths according to census data show that prevalence of legally married men and women aged 20-29 in Kazakhstan is lower than in other CIS countries, while the divorce rate among young people is minor [Tscherbakova, 2014].



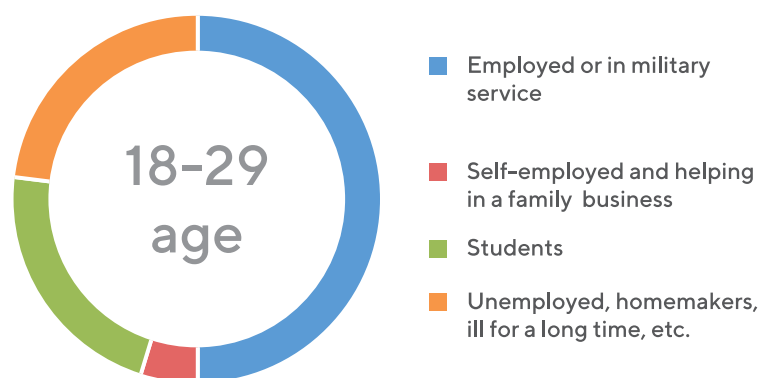


**Figure 2** – Religiousness of individuals aged 18-29 by macro-regions, %

Youths in Kazakhstan are characterized by quite a high level of education and participation in the labor market. According to the survey, **34.1%** youths had a higher or post-graduate education; **57.6%** had secondary general or secondary vocational education; **8.3%** had primary or lower level education only. 22.2% respondents aged 18-29 are current students of secondary vocational or tertiary schools meaning that educational capacity of these generations is even higher.

54.3% of all youths were employed (hired or self-employed). 23.5% of young people are neither employed, nor students; they include unemployed, homemakers, persons ill for a long time, disabled persons and other categories of the unemployed (Fig. 3).

Urban/rural and regional differences are significant in education and employment status of youths. The proportion of urban young people with higher and post-graduate education is over 40%, while that of rural youths – 23.4%. The situation in terms of education level and employment of youths is most favorable in the capitals, central and eastern Kazakhstan. In Nur-Sultan and Almaty, over 50% of persons aged 18-29 have higher or post-graduate education, while 31.3% of youths are current students. The situation in the southern Kazakhstan is worse with the lowest proportion of young people aged 18-29 years with higher and post-graduate education compared to other regions (26%) and the highest proportion of persons with primary and lower level education (12.6%); the proportion of unemployed and homemakers is the highest; there is a quite high proportion of self-employed. Despite initiatives of the Government of Kazakhstan to expand access to education, inequality remains quite high compared to Russia and Eastern and Western Europe. Education opportunities are limited primarily for individuals from low-income families who are more likely to live in rural areas, including in the southern Kazakhstan.

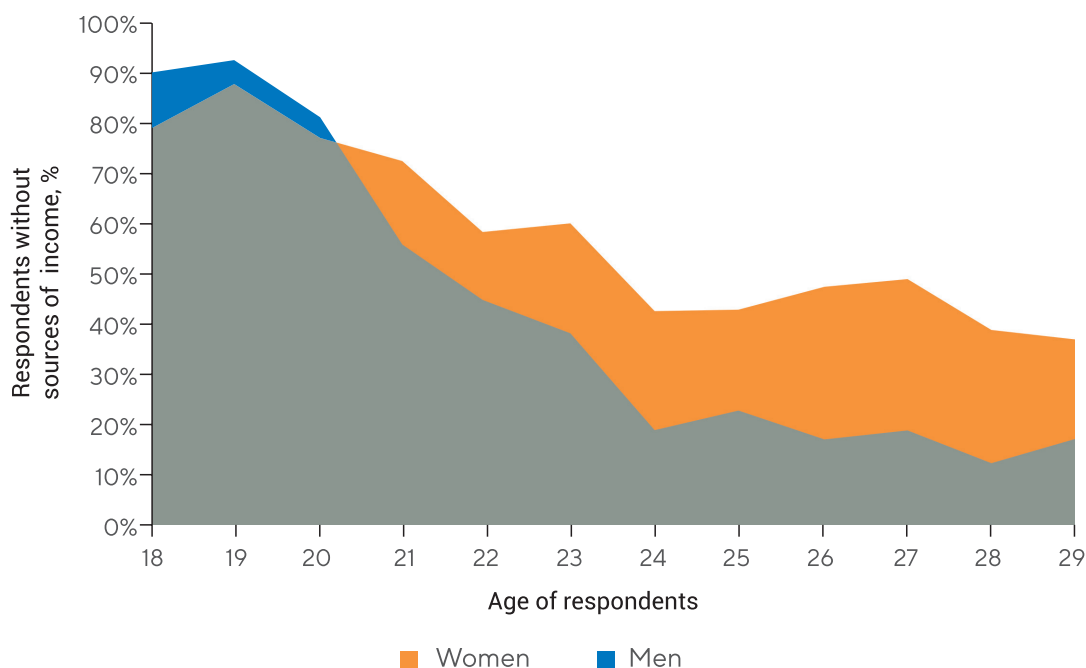


**Figure 3** – The structure of youths aged 18-29 by type of activity, %

The number of the employed is higher in urban rather than rural areas. From regional perspective, the highest employment rate of youths is in the eastern (64.6%), northern (64.3%), central (61.8%) and western (61.0%) macro-regions. The lowest employment rate is in Nur-Sultan and Almaty (49.8%) and southern macro-region (47.8%, including hired workers – 41.1%). The number of students is relatively high in both regions (31.2% and 23.2% respectively), as well as the number of the unemployed (26.1%) in the southern region.

Social profile of unemployed youths differs depending on the region. The number of youths with low level of education prevails among the unemployed in the southern region and they are likely to face difficulties at the time of job placement due to low education status and deficit of jobs (especially in rural areas). In smaller and metropolitan cities, youths with higher education may be unemployed more frequently, and they may include unmarried women with children who may be unemployed not necessarily due to the absence of suitable jobs or unavailability of preschools but due to prevalent conservative perceptions of gender roles in a family where husband is breadwinner, while wife is homemaker and mother.

Differentiation of youths by income is largely attributable to the level of education and participation in the labor market, as well as family status – cohabitation with parents, partner, availability of children. Compared to the whole population, the proportion of respondents who did not specify any own sources of income is higher as may be explained by cohabitation with parents, studies in secondary vocational and higher education institutions and absence of job until a certain age. The trends for men without any income follows the employment trend with drastic decline by 21 to less than 60% and by 24 to almost 20%. This indicator is decreasing more smoothly without leaps among women, never falling below 40% all the way to 29. More importantly, at 26-27 years the proportion of women without own income is increasing (Fig. 4) due to entry from the labor market after marriage and birth of children. Some women may get married and bear children never entering labor market and correspondingly they do not obtain the right to paid maternity leave and higher childcare benefits.



**Figure 4** – The share of respondents who did not specify sources of income in total number of respondents, by age, %

In the structure of individual incomes of youths, earnings from paid work are the most prevalent – 86.2%. Young people with higher or post-graduate education have higher salaries, and the employment income is the highest in the structure of their income, while other incomes (study benefits, earnings from subsistence farming, financial support from relatives) are lower than among individuals with secondary general or secondary vocational, preschool or primary education. *Youths from the capital cities and western region are more likely to have relatively high salaries unlike young people in the central, northern and southern Kazakhstan.* The southern region is distinguished for a high proportion of other incomes in individual incomes of youths.

Young people in eastern, western and northern Kazakhstan are more likely to have a relatively high average per capita income (the employment rate is higher in these regions as well). Nur-Sultan, Almaty and central Kazakhstan are characterized by a high differentiation of average per capita income of young people. Youths from the southern Kazakhstan are more likely at risk of low income, in this group the proportion of respondents who did not specify any source of income was high, average per capita income shifted towards lower values (the first and second quintile), other incomes were significant in the individual income structure of youths.

The following may be RECOMMENDED to improve socio-economic position of youths in Kazakhstan.

Firstly, in the context of sustained limited and unequal access to secondary vocational and higher education it seems reasonable to propose development of free-of-charge programs of secondary vocational and higher education, short- and mid-term courses on specialties in demand. Greater coverage of youths by such programs would facilitate employment of young specialists and decline in unemployment, especially in the southern and rural regions.

Secondly, reduction of unemployment in young age groups would require measures to encourage employment of youths with a high educational potential.

Thirdly, compared to other EAEU countries, the proportion of rural youths is high in Kazakhstan, young people move from villages to cities due to inadequate quality of life; therefore, it is essential to provide educational, cultural, sports and leisure infrastructure to raise quality of life for rural people.

Finally, we would point to young people who confess other religions outside of Christianity and Islam as under a potential risk. This category of youths is quite diverse: it includes young people with higher as well as with primary education and lower; young people with high and low average per capita income. High unemployment rate among followers of other religions flag a relatively adverse socio-economic position of this population that may be caused by a different degree of inclusion of young people into economic and social life of Kazakhstan. Moreover, compared to young Muslims, Christians and unbelievers, followers of other religions care less of their future. Probably, the absence of plans for the future is driven by current problems to be addressed and unclear growth prospects.

### 3. PARTNERSHIP FORMATION AND DISSOLUTION AND FAMILY VALUES



No major changes occurred in the marital status distribution in Kazakhstan in the past 10 years. Compared to census of 2009, the proportion of married men grew by 2.2 p.p. and dropped by 1 p.p. for women (Table 1); while the proportion of men who were never married dropped by 3.1 p.p. and grew by 1.2 p.p. for women. The widowhood has slightly dropped as well: by 0.3 p.p. for men and 1.4 p.p. for women. The proportion of divorced and separated men and women has slightly grown – by 1.3 p.p. and 1.1 p.p. respectively. The proportion of widowed women remains more than 5 times higher than the proportion of widowed men; the share of divorced and separated – almost twice.

*Table 1 – Distribution by marital status, %*

Marital status	Men		Women	
	2009	2018	2009	2018
Married	57,1	59,3	52,2	51,2
Widowed	2,5	2,2	12,7	11,3
Divorced	3,5	4,8	7,0	8,1
Never married	36,9	33,8	28,2	29,4

*Note – data from census of 2009 [Analytical report ..., 2011, p. 29] and Generations and Gender Survey of 2018.*

Analysis of relationships between partners in Kazakhstan from GGS data found that **for 90% people in Kazakhstan, irrespective of gender and age, partnership meant a civil marriage.** Other forms of partnership such as cohabitation, LAT are very rare. Remarriages are not prevalent either.

98% youths start a family life from scratch (first partnership). Breakup of unions is quite rare among youths (less than 2% in men and 3% in women). The dissolution of the marriage peaks in the age cohort 40-49 and 50-59 of men and women born in 1960-70-ies. Having children in the family does not reduce the divorce risk – over 85% agreed that it is all right for a couple with an unhappy marriage to get a divorce even if they have children.

Reasons for the dissolution of marriage can include disagreement in a family on a number of issues. The most frequent disagreements in families occur because of money: spouses/partners in every fifth family have disagreements on financial issues. The second largest cause of family conflicts is child-raising issues – **18.6%** followed by use of leisure time (**15.5%**) and relations with friends (**14.7%**). **14%** families have disagreements on household chores. Relations with parents and in-laws cause conflicts in every tenth family. Having children is not a cutting issue for partners (8.5%). Families with unmarried (cohabiting) couples are more likely to have disagreements (by 2.1-5.5 p.p.) than families with married couples on all the above issues except for relations with parents (no difference) and child-bearing issues. The latter is more an issue for spouses (in civil marriages).

Widows and widowers have the most negative effect on marital status distribution by age among women and men. The proportion of widowed increases with age but their contribution to changes in the marital status distribution is not significant compared to women. Such gender differences may be caused by high mortality rate among men, especially in the above working age, and probably by existing social norms limiting remarriages in elderly age. More than 50% widowed Kazakhstanis aged 50+ live in lonely households, and this

proportion grows with age. Living alone as shown in foreign studies [Petersen J., et al. 2018; van Broese Groenou 2014] is one of the main factors of social exclusion of the elderly leading to a significant drop in satisfaction with their lives. Considering for existing social norms with regard to remarriages in elderly age and ageing trends the problem of lonely elderly people may become a serious challenge for the country.

In this regard it may be recommended to the Government of Kazakhstan to promote a robust policy of social inclusion of older-age people through the development of volunteering activities in the interests of older generation and with the involvement of older-age people (“silver volunteering”), social tourism, leisure and cultural activities, support to bottom-up initiatives for the development of intergenerational relations, etc. Development of social and psychological services at healthcare and social institutions visited by older people might be useful as well.

The apparent benefit of GGS is questions about family values which become relevant in light of adopted Family and Gender Policy Concept in the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2030 with one of the dimensions devoted to strengthening family values.

Review of family values found that over 90% of people in Kazakhstan of any age and gender perceive “marriage as a lifetime relationship and should never be ended”. However, approximately 60% men and women agreed that marriage was an outdated institution, and other 70% thought that it was all right for an unmarried couple to live together even if they had no interest in marriage. Almost one third of population supported homosexual couples. This is an evidence that along with traditional values people in Kazakhstan have quite progressive views on worldwide trends of marital and family behavior (but not changing their behavior at the same time).

In general, partnerships in Kazakhstan are characterized by a high satisfaction and adequate stability. Over 97% families are satisfied with relationship with partners, and 77.6% are completely satisfied (maximum score). Kazakhstanis in over 95% families never intend to break up with their partners/ spouses. Values shape future behavior of population. Since traditional values remain strong in the country, we do not expect revolutionary changes in family and marital relations in the near future.

## 4. BIRTH RATE AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH





## REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

The Republic of Kazakhstan like other countries with similar or higher level of socio-economic development experiences a process of delayed first-birth. According to the Statistical Committee of the Ministry of National Economy of Kazakhstan, *a childbirth age of a woman (on average, any sequence) has grown by approximately one year from 27.8 to 28.7 (from 28.1 to 29 in urban areas, and from 27.4 to 28.3 in rural areas) during 2014-2018*<sup>10</sup>. This brings up a question to what extent delayed childbearing enables people to implement their reproductive intentions, and whether it is a barrier to reproductive health worsening with age.

GGs contains unique data for Kazakhstan on self-assessments of reproductive health unavailable in other surveys. For example, the recent MICS (Multi-indicator Cluster Survey) in Kazakhstan in 2015 did not dwell on reproductive health issues such as problems with conception and childbearing. Dataset of GGS enables verification of contraception data obtained from MICS 2015 and other surveys.

According to GGS data, in Kazakhstan the proportion of respondents who reported problems with reproductive health<sup>11</sup> grows with age (Fig. 5) as expected from 1.5% (1% - men and 1.9% - women) at 18-29 years to 54.6% at 60-69 years and expectedly high 83.9% at 70+ years. However, the fact that only 6% women and fewer than 3% men aged 30-39 report serious problems with reproductive health means that there is no reason to be alarmed because of delayed child-bearing to later age as this process does not lead to acceleration of problems with reproductive function yet. Therefore, there is no need for measures to facilitate marriage and early childbearing as an excuse of preventing potential infertility in older ages occurring due to delayed parenthood.

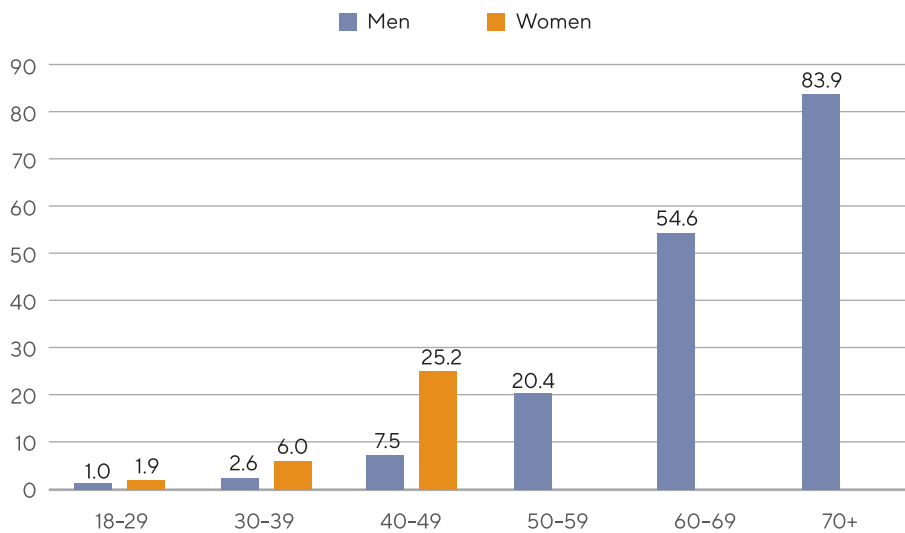
It should be noted that self-assessment of reproductive health at the age 50+ was performed among men only. Therefore, gender differences in this indicator may be analyzed for younger ages only where data is available for both genders. However, even by 50-59 years only 20.4% men report any problems.

Respondents' perceptions about reproductive capabilities of a partner/spouse<sup>12</sup> are even more optimistic than self-perceived capabilities (Fig. 6). On top of all, by the end of reproductive period (up to 40-49) unlike self-assessed reproductive health the gender differences are almost not existing with regard to capability of a partner/spouse to have children.

<sup>10</sup> Demographic Yearbook of Kazakhstan, 2014-2018, available at: <http://stat.gov.kz/edition/publication/collection>

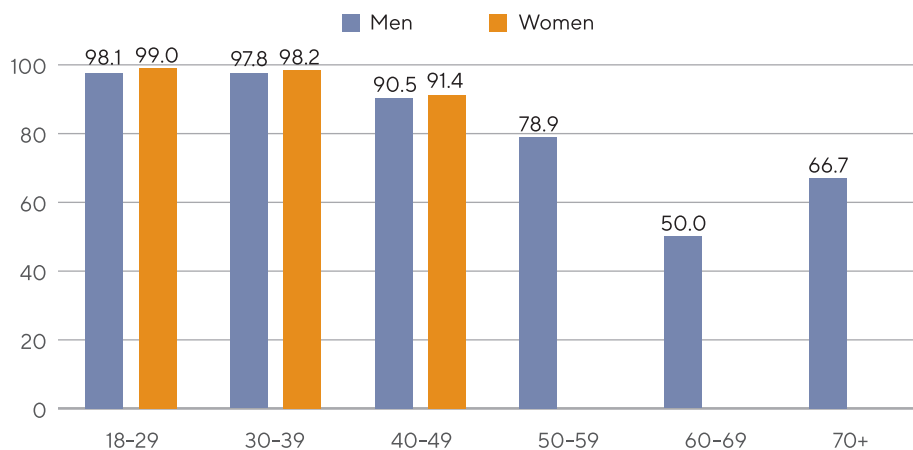
<sup>11</sup> In this survey, respondents having problems with reproductive health are those who reported to definitely have a problem and those who reported to probably have a problem.

<sup>12</sup> Response options: partner probably and definitely can have children.



**Figure 5** – Reports of having problems with reproductive health, by gender and age

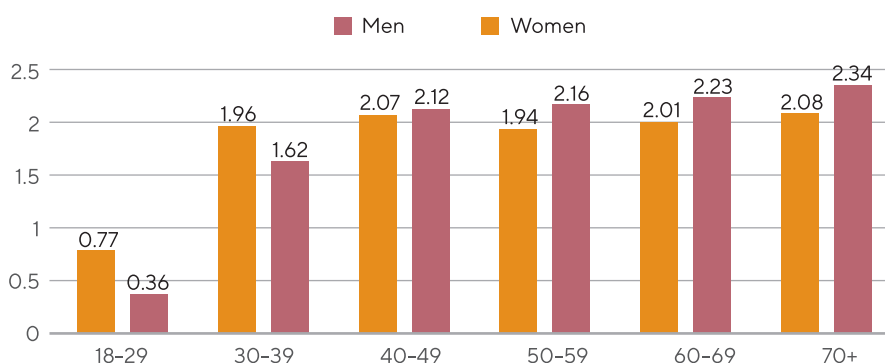
Unfortunately, only few respondents who reported problems with reproductive health tried to address these problems (seeking treatment). It seems that on the surface reproductive health (especially self-reported) of people in Kazakhstan does not raise concerns but at the same time people who were found to have problems do not get a move to address them or have no opportunity to do so.



**Figure 6** – Partners who can have children from the respondents' point of view, %

## NUMBER OF CHILDREN

Figure 7 shows that by 18-29 years the number of children per 1 woman is 0.77, by 30-39 years - 1.96, and by 40-49 years - 2.07 achieving the replacement level, and the number of children per woman among female respondents in this age will be somewhat higher than in older women (50-59 and 60-69 years) - 1.94 (lower than in women aged 30-39 who did not complete reproductive history) and 2.01 respectively. The highest fertility rate is in women of the oldest generations (70+) - 2.08. However, considering for technological advances women aged 40-49 did complete their reproductive histories yet, and the generation born in mid-1970-80-ies could demonstrate the highest birth rate among the surveyed women's cohorts.



**Figure 7** – Number of children per woman and per man to a certain age according to GGS

There are a number of objective reasons behind: for instance, changes in ethnic composition of the country in favor of ethnicities with higher child-bearing norms, as well as severe transformational economic crisis preventing women born in 1960-70-ies to realize their reproductive intentions. A recent family policy of the government might play a role as well.

Total fertility rate varies according to a woman's marital status, education, employment and locality. By partner status, the highest fertility rate is among women who at the time of the survey were legally married - 2.28; while women without partners bore 1.03 children only, and women in unregistered marriage - 1.37.

Educational differentiation of reproductive behavior is observed among women with higher education and all others. If women with low (primary or lower) and secondary education did not differ by the number of children born: 1.89 and 1.8 respectively (with age adjustment taking into account increasing level of education from generation to generation the differences will probably disappear), the average number of children born by women with higher education is much lower – 1.46. Employed (at the time of survey) women have fewer children (1.5) as well, probably due to delayed child-bearing.

Differences between urban and rural areas are substantial and they partly accumulate by level of education, employment status, and religiousness. **Fertility rate is 1.43 and 2.18 for urban and rural women respectively.** However, even when socio-demographic and economic characteristics are controlled the differences between urban and rural women persist despite some alleviation leading to the conclusion that location impacts birth rate indeed.

It is necessary to highlight impact of religiousness and confession on fertility rate. With growing role of religion in public life in Kazakhstan the birth rate would grow for women of all age groups. Fertility rate among Muslim women is higher in all age groups. Fertility rate of Christian women is higher than in respondents who did not specify religious status (except for 30-39-year-olds). When other factors are under control the birth rate would be significantly higher in the populations who report to be very religious.

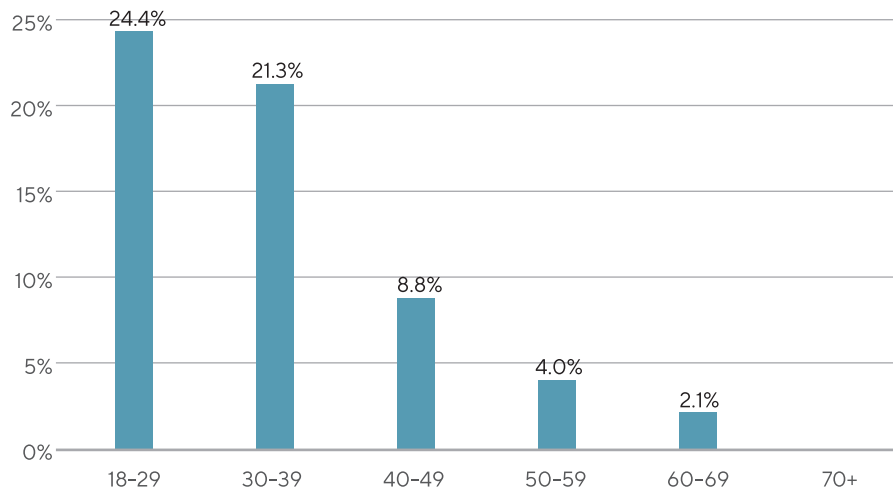
Religious differences and different level of urbanization facilitate essential regional differences in birth rate among areas of Kazakhstan. If other conditions are equal, the fertility rate would be the highest in the south for all age groups except for the oldest one.

## REPRODUCTIVE PLANS AND INTENTIONS

Actual and expected number of children is an important indicator. Expected birth rate may be assessed in the GGS in Kazakhstan from responses concerning intentions to have a child during 3 years (the most responses provided to this question)<sup>13</sup>. **24.4% respondents aged 18-29 and 21.3% respondents aged 30-39 are willing to have a child in the next 3 years.** Downward trend is caused by the fact that reproductive plans of people after they are 30 are mostly realized.

Willingness to have a child in the next 3 years will be higher among those respondents who have no children yet. **Persons willing to have a child amount to 43% in the age group 18-29, and 56% in the age group 30-39; of them 43% and 60% men and 43% and 51% women respectively.**

<sup>13</sup> The response is counted as affirmative if a respondent affirms that he/she is definitely or probably willing to have a child in the next three years.



**Figure 8** - Willingness to have a child in the next three years depending on respondent's age

46% childless respondents with higher education are willing to have a child in the next three years (28% respondents with lower level of education and 40% - secondary education). Approximately 75% lawfully married childless respondents intend to have a child in the next three years (72% men and 78% women).

## MEASURES FOR PRONATALIST FAMILY POLICY

Current fertility in Kazakhstan measured by total fertility rate (TFR) is higher than replacement rate. More accurate estimations of real cohorts fertility based on vital statistics and census hold out a hope for a relatively quick population growth. Indicators estimates in the GGS were lower than total population data due to lower cohort birthrate of elderly respondents (below replacement rate). However, higher birthrate of younger population is not very different from vital statistics and inspire the hope to achieve a replacement level.

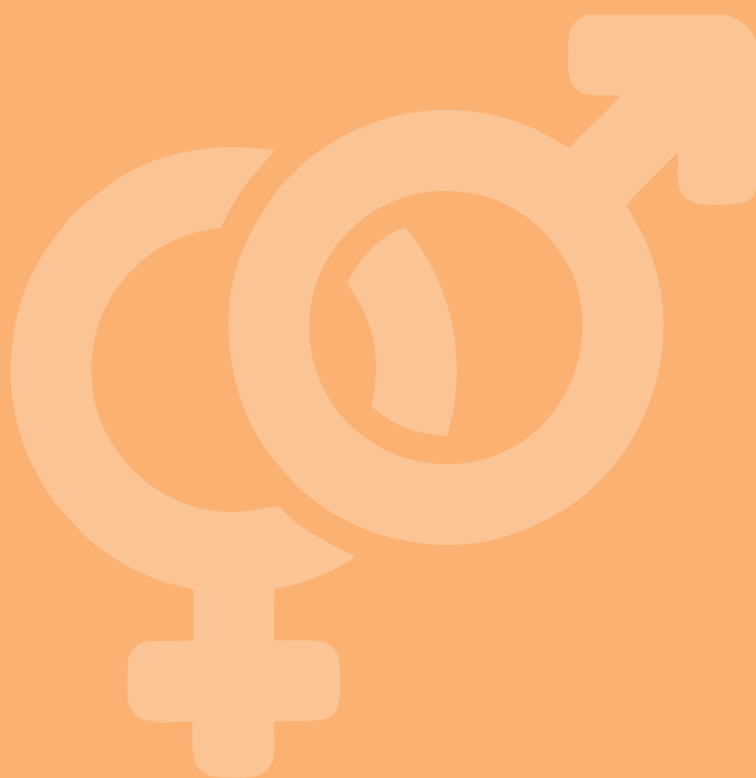
Review of the survey data suggests that government policy may have an additional impact on categories with a relatively low fertility such as urban residents (including capital cities), people with a high level of education, representatives of ethnicities confessing Christianity. Extending opportunities to have a work-family balance would be needed for such populations. At the same time families with lower level of education and income likely living in rural areas mainly in the south and west of the country may have no problems with

realization of reproductive intentions but they may face a problem of poverty and accessibility of education for children. Otherwise, if socio-economic problems are not addressed and solved, and taking into account strong religiousness of such families a risk of exclusion and radicalization is high.

It is important for the government policy to shift from just pronatalist policy to a more targeted programs enabling realization of reproductive plans for the educated and employed people and improving quality of human capital of children and parents, among families with currently low level of human capital and income as well.

GGS confirmed the current trend derived from vital statistics on postponed child-bearing to older age in Kazakhstan. This process is observed in many other countries. Advanced countries faced it several decades ago while ex-USSR countries experience processes similar to those in Kazakhstan now. In Russia, these processes led to demographic policy focused on encouraging earlier child-bearing. However, experience of Russia and other countries suggests that these measures, as well as encouraging earlier marriages put a strain on public finance but fail to increase final number of children in real cohorts. At the same time, shifting the calendar of child-bearing they may augment risks of poverty in families with children and undermine trust to government policy due to unacceptance of it by educated youths. In addition, overall long-standing experience of countries with pronatalist demographic policy would not provide a direct answer to the question about the impact of financial incentives on the birth rate. From experience of some countries we may assume a more straightforward connection between birth rate and positive trend (not level!) of income and inclusive economic growth. However, these connections should be explored in detail.

## 5. GENDER VALUES, GENDER EQUALITY AND RESPONSIBLE PARENTING



In the past decades, gender equality has become a live issue in international and national agendas due to the following reasons such as [recognition and protection of rights of women as productive members of society who may become vulnerable as a result of cultural traditions and at certain stages of life \(when they bear children or stay without earner in the family\)](#); [acknowledgement of an important role of women as workers and mothers of growing generation](#); and understanding that in present-day society women often fulfil themselves in both dimensions simultaneously, and the number of children, women can have, depends on how they attain equality in private and public life, and how easily they can combine child care with paid employment. In advanced countries, birth rates close to replacement rates are demonstrated by countries which achieved equity in a family. Psychologists proved an important role of fathers in parenting from the birth of children which opens a new dimension to explore gender equality.

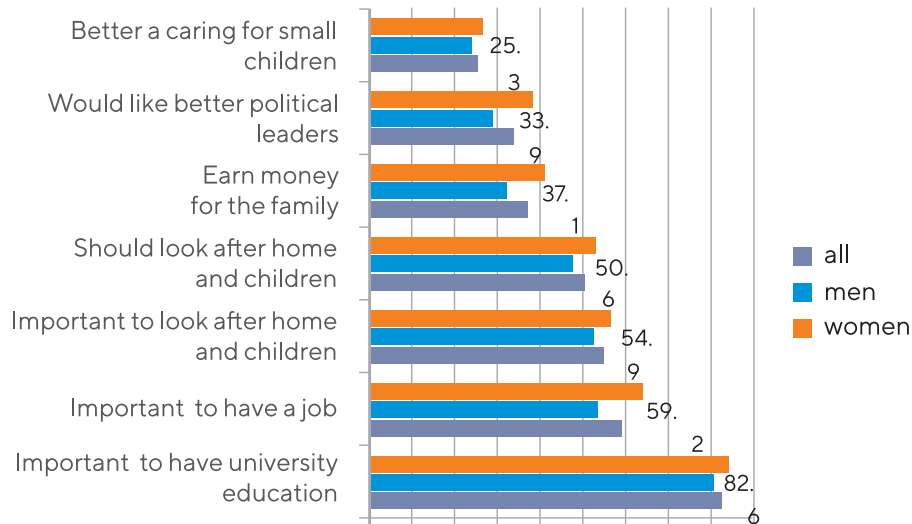
GGS explores gender equality from the perspective of norms (agreement or disagreement with a number of values), and real behavior (in private life, family – distribution of household duties, child care, the way household budget is managed; and in public life – who has activities in a family) and satisfaction with the existing gender-based distribution of duties.

## GENDER VALUES

Analysis of responses concerning the perception of norms by people in Kazakhstan about rights and obligations of men and women in family and society suggests that gender equality is realized in the right to higher education (Fig. 9.). 82.6% of respondents agree with this statement, including 80.7% men and 84.4% women. In contrast, questions about whose task it was to earn money for the family (only 37.1% respondents said that it should be both sexes equally), who would make better political leaders (33.9% respondents said that gender did not matter), and who was better at caring for small children (25.3% respondents said that it should be both sexes equally) are not gender-neutral. The first two are traditionally pertaining to men, and the third one – to women.

Education, income and religion differentiate perceptions of rights and duties of men and women most. On average, Muslims have more traditional perceptions of gender roles. Relation of egalitarian values with a higher level of education is more expressed in the right to education, work and gender roles in partnership. However, people with higher education are more likely than persons with secondary education to think that men would be better political leaders. Younger people (below 30) are more likely to acknowledge an equal value of university education for both sexes; however, more of them think that work is more important for men and men should earn money for the family. While looking after the home and children would be more important for women and even be their duty.



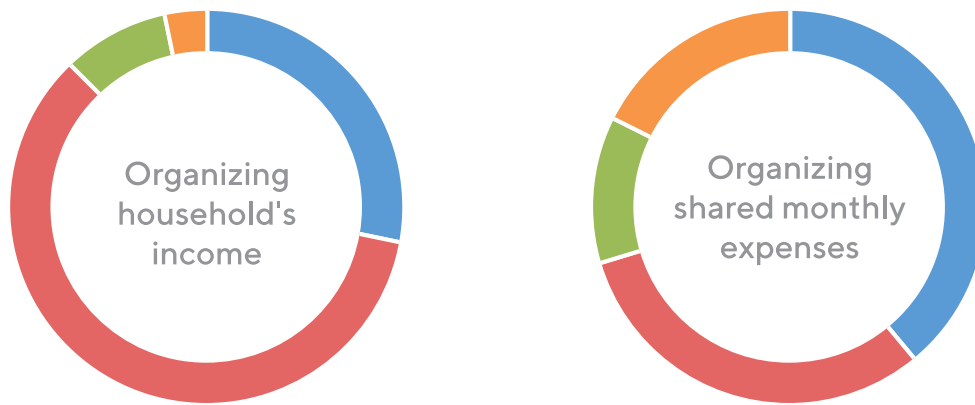


**Figure 9** – Respondents who share egalitarian perceptions of gender roles meaning that they think that the above factors are equally important for men and women

## GENDER EQUALITY IN THE FAMILY: HOUSEHOLD DUTIES AND BUDGET

In general, shared family budget model dominates (69%) in the sample of cohabitating partners, including 60% households where partners/ spouses pool money together, and each takes out what he/she needs (Fig. 10). However, only one partner (most likely a man - 15-17%) manages family money in every fourth household (woman - 12%). In younger ages, especially below 30, a husband would be more likely (20-22% partnerships) to manage all money and give a wife her share.

Unemployed women strongly depend on the partner's decisions concerning the family budget. Interestingly, women-homemakers would be more likely to manage money. Such difference between unemployed women and homemakers with greater vulnerability of the former and relatively bigger role in family decision-making of the latter can be seen in other matters as well suggesting different reasons and family circumstances behind such status of women in the labor market.



- One partner manages all the money and gives his/her partner/spouse his/her share
  - Partners/spouses pool all the money and each takes out what he/she needs
  - Partners/spouses pool some of the money and keep the rest separate
  - Other
- One partner pays everything alone
  - Both partners/spouses pay approximately equal shares
  - Both partners/spouses pay relative to personal incomes
  - Both partners/spouses pay some but there is no fixed rule

**Figure 10** – Distribution of respondents who have partners according to the way they organize household income and monthly expenses

Monthly expenses are shared by both partners in 61% cases: partners/spouses in 31.5% partnerships pay equal costs; 17.9% – they do not have any fixed arrangement concerning expenses; while in 12% partnership the share of costs would depend on the income of individual partner (Fig. 10). However, in 39% cases, all costs are paid by one partner/spouse only. Age, education and position in the labor market are significant factors influencing how monthly expenses are organized. In younger generations, men would pay for everything in every third partnership, while at 50-69 years –women would pay for everything in every fifth partnership. Shared budgets would become more common with age.

Concerning decision-making on a wide variety of issues, shared decision-making would be more likely concerning the way how children are raised (85-86% couples), expensive purchases for the household (76-77%), routine purchases for the household (47-51%). Decisions on the time each partner spends in paid work are more individual (people may not be free to decide how much time to spend at work). Gender differences are evident here. A man decides on the time he spends at work in half instances; or jointly with partner/wife in every third instance; while women decide themselves in 37-38% instances, jointly with partner/spouse in 40%; or a man takes this decision for her in 16-17% cases.

Unlike decision-making, routine household chores are the duty of women in the first instance. Both partners/spouses organize leisure time together (77-79% couples). 37-41% couples equally pay bills and keep financial records in the household, 24-32% couples – doing small repairs in the house (greater differences in responses of men and women are distinguished here), 10-13% – vacuum-cleaning the house. The most significant contribution of men in household chores would include small repairs in the home only (48-60% couples) and partly – paying bills and keeping records (22-29% couples). Other tasks such as doing the laundry, preparing daily meals, vacuum-cleaning are done predominantly by women.

## GENDER EQUALITY IN THE FAMILY: RESPONSIBLE PARENTING

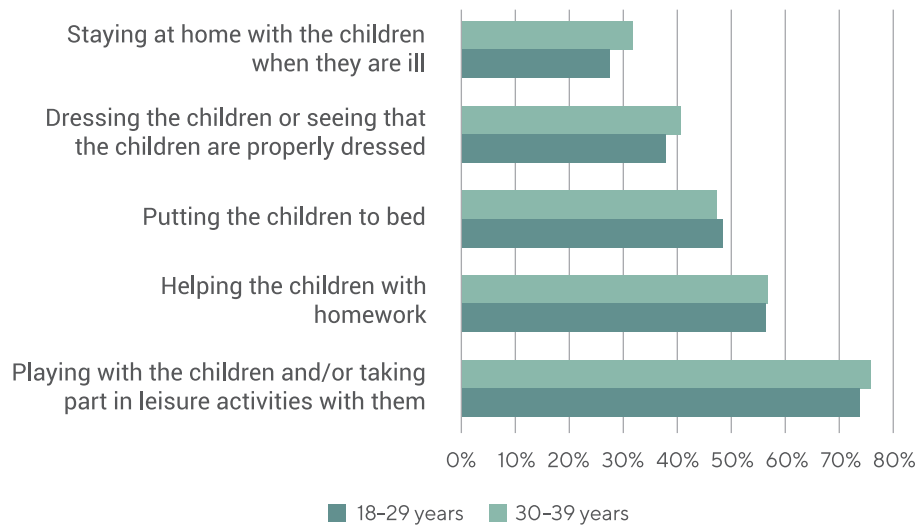
A high value of children and focus on the importance of family in the society in Kazakhstan should be noted irrespective of gender and age of respondents. 86.3% men and 90.6% women think that a woman has to have children in order to be fulfilled. Likewise, 86.2% men and 84.3% women believe that a man has to have children in order to be fulfilled.

Society is trying to adapt to current socio-economic changes such as greater diversity of partnership forms, greater instability of marriages than several decades ago, and greater employment of men and women. On the one hand, they keep traditional perceptions of how to rear children well and right. 96% men and 96.2% women think that a child needs a home with a father and a mother to grow up happily. Even in the youngest ages – up to 30 years – 94.8% men and 95.3% of women agree with this statement. On the other hand, recognizing value of children in a woman's life, 82.5% men and 87.3% women agree that a woman can have a child as a single parent without a stable partnership.

Likewise, on the one hand, 84.5% men and 87.7% women think that a pre-school child is likely to suffer if his/her mother works; and 80.7% men and 81% women believe that a pre-school child is likely to suffer if his/her father works long hours. But on the other hand, 90% of men and 92.6% of women agree that a working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work.

Care for children under 14 remains a duty for women. Women are more likely to stay at home with children when they are ill; dress children or see that the children are properly dressed; put children to bed and often help children with homework. Only 3% of men with children under 14 do these tasks largely.

However, if we look into areas where men are involved in child care equally with women, the involvement of both parents into rearing children would become more prevalent (Fig. 11). Over  $\frac{3}{4}$  couples with children under 14 where men are under 40 men are playing with the children and/or taking part in leisure activities with them. In more than half cases, they are helping with homework. In less than half cases, they are putting the children to bed. On rarer occasions men are involved in to care for children when they are ill which may be a reflection of the collision between activities and parental functions: it is more difficult for a man as the earner in a family to take sick leave without damage to work.



**Figure 11** – Male respondents of a certain age with a partner who responded that child care duties were usually performed by a man or both partners equally

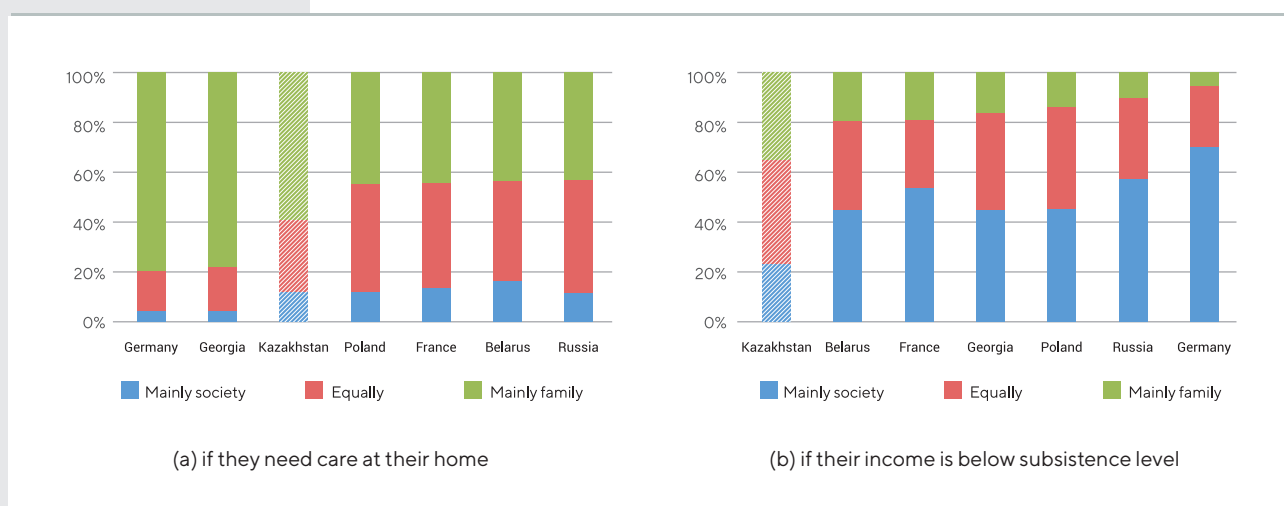
## 6. INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS



Intergenerational relationships within an extended family are important for any society though norms may vary in various cultures and on different stages of development of the same nation. GGS enables analysis of social norms related to whether adult children should support older parents (and what kind of support), or alternatively whether parents should support adult children, and grandparents help their grandchildren, and who – society or family – should take care of elderly people in need of care and provide financial support to older people who live below subsistence level. Another benefit of GGS is the ability to conduct cross-country comparisons of attitudes in Kazakhstan and other surveyed countries following the same methodology.

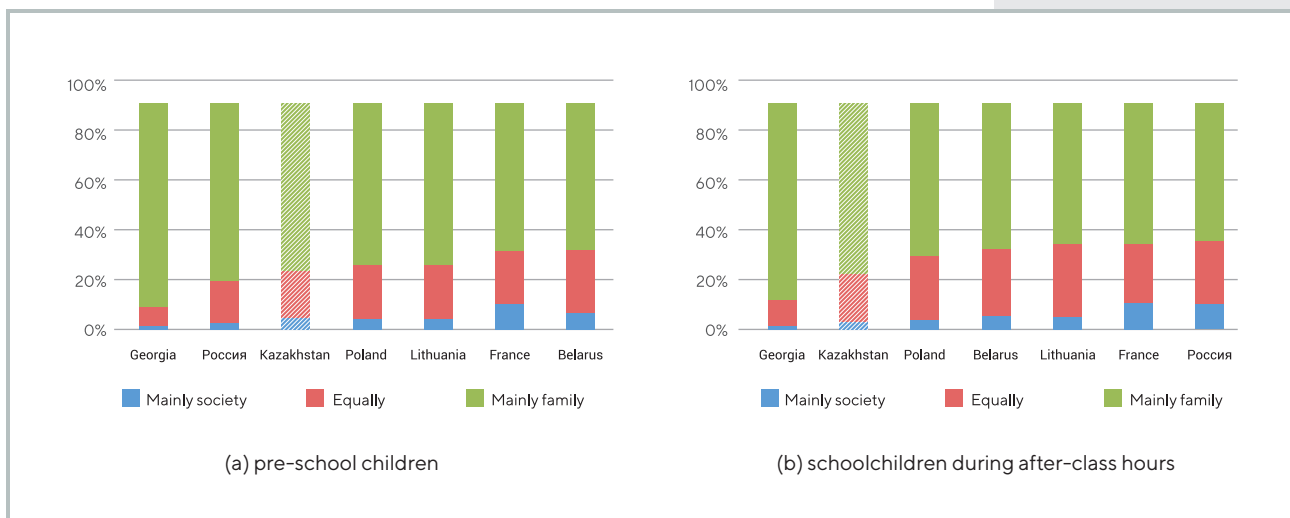
Family plays an important role in the lives of Kazakhstani people. If needed help and support for both to children and elderly relatives would primarily be provided by an extended family. With regard to care for older people in need of care at their home, 59% respondents of GGS in Kazakhstan tend to think that this is “more task for the family than for society” (Fig. 12-a). And only 12% would think that homecare is more a task for society than for the family. Interestingly that only two GGS countries would more likely to think that home care is the responsibility of the family than Kazakhstan – Germany and Georgia, though Germany has a well-developed comprehensive system of long-term care involving the government, church, charity organizations and family.

People in all surveyed countries tend to think that financial support to elderly people who live below subsistence level is responsibility of society. To a great extent it is driven by extensive development of pension schemes in the 20th century. In contrast to some ex-Soviet countries (Georgia, Russia and Belarus) and European countries (Poland, Germany and France), in Kazakhstan the proportion of people who think that support to poor elderly people is a task for society is the lowest (24%) but the proportion of people who think that financial support should be provided by family members rather than society is the highest (34%) (Fig. 12-b).



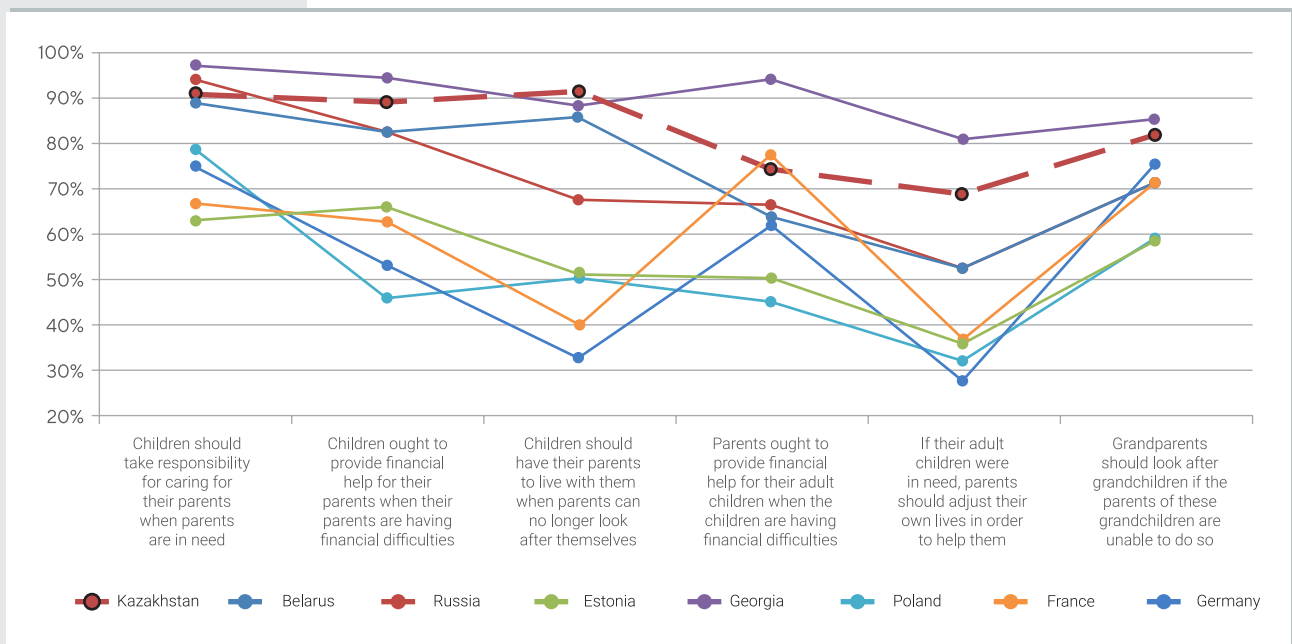
**Figure 12** – Views on who – society or family – should provide care/support to elderly people

People in Kazakhstan think that family should take care of children even more than of elderly people. In the survey, 74.3% respondents think that care for preschool children is mainly a task for the family than for society, and only 5.2% think that this is mainly a task for society. People would entrust care for schoolchildren during after-class hours on the family in the first instance (75.3%) rather than society (4%). Along with other surveyed countries, people in Kazakhstan demonstrate attitudes to the roles of family and society in rearing preschool children similar to other ex-Soviet and Central European countries (except for Belarus) (Fig. 13-a). However, people in many GGS countries would place responsibility to provide care for schoolchildren during after-class hours equally on family and society, while Kazakhstan demonstrates an explicit role of family (Fig. 13-b).



**Figure 13** - Views on who - society or family - should take care of children

Having such views on responsibilities of society and family for well-being of family members it is not surprising that compared to other countries Kazakhstan puts more emphasis on intergenerational mutual support (Fig. 14). Such social norms are peculiar to some other ex-Soviet countries participating in the survey, especially Georgia and Belarus, but they are different from norms prevalent in western European countries (Germany, France) and Estonia. Society in Kazakhstan formed an opinion that within the extended family it is necessary to support first of all old people and small children.



**Figure 14** – Comparison of values of intergenerational care in Kazakhstan and other countries participating in the Generations and Gender Survey

Respondents are almost unanimous, irrespective of socio-economic status, in supporting duties of adult children towards their elderly parents, such as have their parents to live with them when parents can no longer look after themselves (93%); take responsibility for caring for their parents when parents are in need (92%); and provide financial help when their parents are having financial difficulties (91%). 84% respondents agree that grandparents should look after grandchildren if the parents of these grandchildren are unable to do so. Economically inactive and unemployed respondents, who are mostly older age people, tend to the support of grandchildren by their grandparents by 5 p.p. more than the employed people. We observe that they are more likely than other age groups to emphasize importance of taking care of grandchildren.

Compared to responsibilities of children towards their parents respondents less likely though quite strongly support that parents ought to provide financial support to their adult children when the children are having financial difficulties (77%), adjust their own lives in order to help children if they are in need (72%). Such help is supported more often (by 6 p.p.) by more adult respondents. If we assume that older respondents associate themselves with parents while younger respondents – with children we can conclude that the former consider it more necessary to help to their children than it is expected from them.

Real nature of intergenerational relationships in the GGS can be understood from information about frequency of contacts between parents and children living separately, and between adult children and parents living separately, as well as satisfaction with relationships with adult children, parents and other relatives. Frequency of social contacts is important indicator for subjective well-being of people. Empiric studies show that social activity, particularly communication with relatives, has a positive impact on satisfaction with life and happiness of people [Baker et al., 2005; Haller, Hadler, 2006].



The analysis of frequency of contacts between elderly parents and adult children reveals that frequency increases with age of parents when older people seem to need some help – routine or care – from children. Absence of a partners/spouse (mainly due to death) increases frequency of contacts of a lonely elderly person with his/her children. For example, elderly married people aged 70 and older meet their children on average every five days, while lonely elderly people – every 2-3 days. In contrast, co-residing with anyone from adult children reduce contacts with other children. Similar to other countries, women have more intense intergenerational contacts than men. Older age women stay in touch with children more frequently than men. Both mothers and fathers see daughters living separately more frequently than sons.

Satisfaction with relationships between parents and children and between children and parents, as well as respondent and other his/her household members is very high. Majority of respondents are satisfied with relationships both with mothers and fathers, especially if parents are old. Male respondents are more likely to be satisfied with relationships with both parents than female respondents. Satisfaction with relationship with mother tends to be higher than with father. Compared to other age groups, youths (18-29) are more likely to be unsatisfied with relationships with parents; however, even in this age group these are 4% young men and 3% women who are not satisfied with relationships with mothers; and 12% men and 8% young women who are not satisfied with relationships with fathers. Probably, the observed differences are caused by the stage in the individual life course rather than a generational feature: it is normal to experience separation from parents in younger age. In other words, we may assume improved quality of relationships with parents in the subsequent waves of Generations and Gender Survey as respondents grow older.

In general, considering for views of people in Kazakhstan about intergenerational mutual help, frequent contacts and generally high satisfaction with relationship between children and parents we may assert absence of gap between generations of parents and children. Intergenerational solidarity remains strong in the Kazakhstan society.

Active Ageing Index may be calculated in future for a detailed analysis of elderly people in Kazakhstan and their capacity to active and healthy ageing. Generations and Gender Survey may be used as the basis for index calculation as it contains questions that allow calculating the bulk of index components. For example, current year data may be used for calculation of employment domain based on employment rate for the age groups 55 and older; partially – Participation in Society domain (within the family only – care to children and grandchildren, care for infirm and disabled), Independent and secure living domain (independent living arrangements, relative median income, no poverty risk, no severe material deprivation), Capacity for active ageing domain (healthy life expectancy at 55; mental well-being; social connections, education attainment).

Consequently, the Generations and Gender Survey contains definitely important information about socio-demographic and socio-economic characteristics and behaviors of people in the Republic of Kazakhstan complementary to the official statistics.

# REFERENCES

1. Analytical report. National Census in the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2009. Edited by A.A. Smayilov – Astana, 2011.
2. Demographic Yearbook of Kazakhstan, 2014-2018.- Nur-Sultan, 2019.
3. Мизинцева, М.Ф., Чавыкина, М.А. Динамика расходов на образование в государствах-членах ЕАЭС / Изв. Саратов. ун-та Нов. сер. Сер. Экономика. Управление. Право. 2017. Т. 17, вып. 3. С. 247-256. [M.Mizintseva, M. Chavykina. Progress of Education Expenditures in EAEU countries]
4. Labor Market in the Eurasian Economic Union. 2018. Analytical Review. 30 October 2019. Eurasian Economic Commission.
5. Statistical Yearbook of the Eurasian Economic Union; Eurasian Economic Commission. – М.: 2018. – 420 p.
6. Щербакoвa, Е.М. Молодежь СНГ: штрихи к демографическому портрету / Демоскоп Weekly. 2014. № 615-616.<http://demoscope.ru/weekly/2014/0615/barometer615.pdf> [E. Tscherbakova. Youths in CIS: demographic profile]
7. Baker L.A. Cahalin L.P. Gerst K. Burr J.A. Productive activities and subjective well-being among older adults: The influence of number of activities and time commitment // Social Indicators Research. 2005. 73. с. 431-458.
8. Gierveld J. D. J., van Broese Groenou M. Quality of marriage and social loneliness in later life //Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-being Research. – 2014. – С. 5309-5312.
9. Haller M. Hadler M. How social relations and structures can produce happiness and unhappiness: an international comparative analysis // Social Indicators Research. 2006. 75. с. 169-216.
10. Petersen J., et al. Longitudinal Relationship Between Loneliness and Social Isolation in Older Adults: Results from the Cardiovascular Health Study. Aging Health. 2016, August. Vol. 28 (5). P. 775-795.

