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FOR EASTERN UKRAINE

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Gender norms and stereotypes in eastern Ukraine:

The views of women and men

2018

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About UN Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index for Eastern Ukraine

USE is an analytical tool implemented on an annual basis and designed to improve the understanding of societal dynamics in eastern Ukraine. This helps to identify strategic entry points for policies and programs that contribute to strengthening social cohesion.

USE is based on the Social Cohesion and Reconciliation (SCORE) Index methodology, which was originally developed in Cyprus by the Center for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development and UNDP. For more information on USE methodology and to see the results of the first (2017) and second (2018) waves visit use.scoreforpeace.org

The findings in this paper are based on the results of the 2018 UN Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index for Eastern Ukraine (USE). The data captures the views of 6,000 residents of the five oblasts in the east of Ukraine (government-controlled areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, and neighboring Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhia oblasts).

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The views, conclusions and recommendations presented in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the UN or the European Union.

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Introduction

Gender norms and stereotypes exist in all societies – in the public as well as private spheres. Gender norms refer to ideas about how men and women should behave, while gender stereotypes refer to simplistic generalizations about attributes, differences, and roles of women and men. How we expect women and men to behave and act, and what is perceived to be acceptable and appropriate for a woman or a man may differ between regions and countries and between social and demographic groups. However, gender norms and stereotypes have a negative impact on the overall development of society by feeding and maintaining inequalities, including access to resources, services, and work, by upholding discriminatory policies and practices and by normalizing domestic violence.

This report is the first in a series of reports unpacking social cohesion in eastern Ukraine from a gender perspective. It presents data on gender norms and stereotypes in both the labor market and the private sphere and outlines the typical characteristics of women and men who support traditional gender norms and stereotypes in order to identify entry points for how these norms and stereotypes can be addressed.

Summary of findings

- The majority of both men and women support traditional gender norms, but only the majority of men supports gender stereotypes (i.e., these stereotypes are rejected by the majority of women).
- Supporters of gender norms and stereotypes (men and women alike) have a number of common characteristics that overall undermine social cohesion, including low tolerance toward minorities and marginalized groups, normalization of domestic violence, (self) isolation from social life, and civic pessimism.
- There are also differences between women and men who support gender norms and stereotypes, and those who do not, namely:
 - women with traditional views tend to be more anxious (see the definition in Annex A), of older age and have lower levels of income;
 - men with traditional views tend to hold more negative stereotypes, not only about men and women but also about other social and political groups, and exhibit greater levels of concern (fear) with internal political and social threats.

What is the level of support for gender norms and stereotypes?

There is strong support for traditional gender norms and moderate support for stereotypes in eastern Ukraine by both women and men (see Table 1). There is a slightly higher level of support for gender norms and stereotypes among older people than younger. The most significant finding is the higher level of support for gender norms (68 percent) compared to gender stereotypes (46 percent), and particularly the large difference in support for gender stereotypes between men and women (56 percent and 37 percent, respectively). The following sections unpack which norms and stereotypes are supported by women and men.

Table 1. Support for gender norms and stereotypes by sex and age, %

	Sex			Age group		
	Total	Men	Women	18-35	36-60	61+
Support for gender norms	68	72	64	66	67	71
Support for gender stereotypes	46	56	37	44	45	50

2018

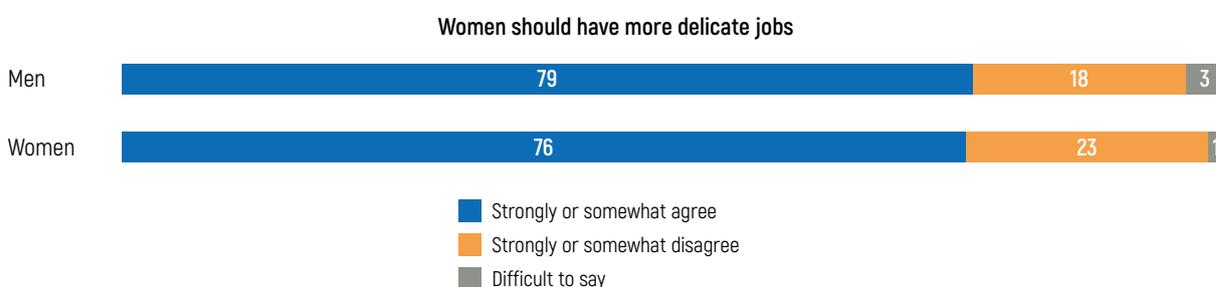


Gender norms: assigned responsibilities in business and family

Occupational segregation

Women and men report somewhat similar levels of support for the statement that women should have “delicate” jobs such as nurses, teachers, and receptionists (76 percent and 79 percent, respectively, see Figure 1). One possible explanation behind the high level of support for this statement may be that the norm that women should perform “delicate” jobs does not necessarily present women as inferior to men, nor does it imply that women are less capable or less intelligent. “Delicate” jobs may be perceived as being more suitable for women because the concept of “delicate” is widely understood as being focused on people-to-people contact (e.g., nursing) rather than working with inanimate objects (e.g., machines). This observation is also supported by the specific set of jobs and skills that women most self-identify with.¹ Moreover women tend to be perceived as being in need of “protection” against more physically demanding or more dangerous work.

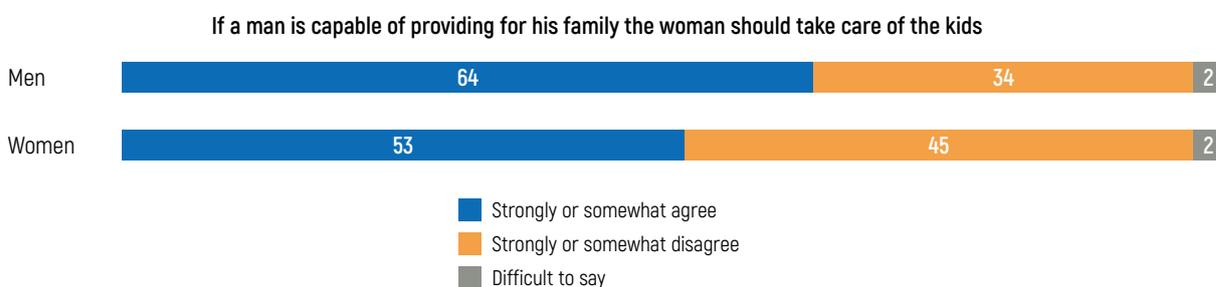
Figure 1. Support for gender norms in business, %



Division into breadwinners and caretakers

The level of support for a division of responsibilities within the family along gender norms is lower than the support for gender norms in the labor market, and the difference between women and men is also bigger. 53 percent of women and 64 percent of men believe that the man should provide for the family while the woman should take care of the children (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Support for gender norms in family, %



¹ More women than men report having skills in the services sector, while the reverse is true for manual labor types of occupations (see USE Report *Skills and economic security: self-assessment of women and men*).

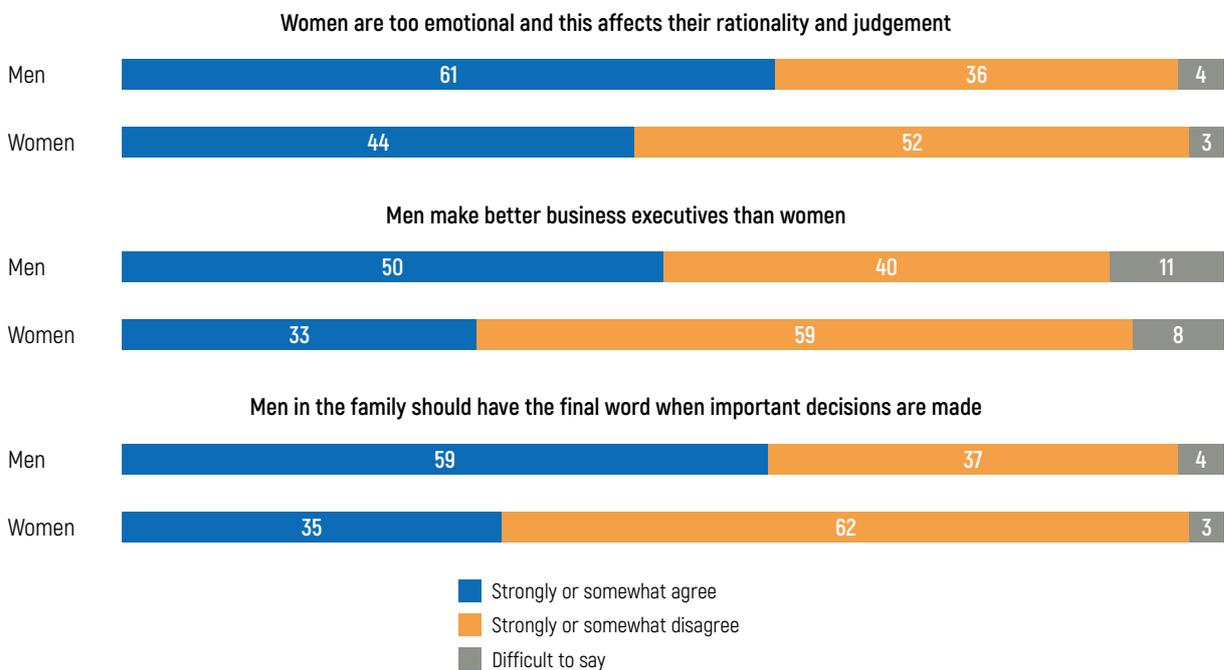


Stereotypes: decision-making roles

The stereotypes that men make better decision-makers and executives than women have less support among men and women than the gender norms presented above. Nevertheless, more than half of all men and one third of all women support such stereotypes, which are based on three distinct elements (see Figure 3):

- **Rational decision-making.** The statement that women are more emotional and that this negatively affects their judgement is supported by 61 percent of men and 44 percent of women.
- **Executive skills.** The statement that men make better business executives than women is supported by half of all male respondents, and one third of all female respondents.
- **Who's the boss.** The biggest difference between men and women is over the statement that men should have the final word in the family, with 59 percent of men and 35 percent of women agreeing with this statement.

Figure 3. Support of stereotypes, %²



Who supports gender norms and stereotypes?

To better understand how to address the presence of gender norms and stereotypes, this section outlines the main characteristics of the group of women and men who most strongly support traditional norms and stereotypes³ (see Table 2). Ten percent of women and 23 percent of men strongly support all gender norms and stereotypes, while 4 percent of men and 10 percent of women are strongly against them. The majority of men and women have mixed views; they either support some norms or certain stereotypes while rejecting others, or they do not report very strong support of or opposition to the traditional views.

Strong supporters of norms and stereotypes share characteristics that overall undermine social cohesion. Specifically, traditional views are strongly linked with negative characteristics such as the normalization of domestic violence, lower tolerance toward minorities and marginalized groups (especially LGBTI⁴), lower levels of civic activism and/or a lower sense of agency, and higher levels of civic pessimism. As for women specifically, those with strong support for gender norms and stereotypes tend to be more

² From here and onward the percentage may not sum up to 100% because of the rounding.

³ Women and men who support stereotypes are very likely to also support gender norms.

⁴ LGBTI – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/Transsexual and Intersex.

anxious, of older age, and have lower levels of income than those women who oppose these norms and stereotypes. Men in this category tend to have higher levels of negative stereotypes towards other social and political groups, and they also tend to be more concerned with internal political and social threats than those men who strongly reject gender norms and stereotypes.

Table 2: The biggest differences between supporters and opponents of stereotypes and norms among women and men is observed across the following factors:⁵

INDICATORS CHARACTERISTIC FOR THOSE WHO SUPPORT TRADITIONAL NORMS AND STEREOTYPES ⁶		
Only for women	For both women and men	Only for men
Low(er) level of income ⁷	Intolerance towards LGBTI	High fear of internal threats
Anxiety	Normalization of domestic violence towards women	High(er) negative stereotypes about different social and political groups
Old(er) age ⁸	Soviet nostalgia	
	Lack of sense of agency	
	Mental health stigma	
	Passive civic intentions	
	Civic pessimism	
	Justification of violence	
	Support for the Customs Union	
	Religiosity	
	Pessimism about economic opportunities	
	Less frequent contact with the EU supporters	
	Perceived threats of different social and political groups	
	Depression	
	Low(er) level education ⁹	
	Rural settlement ¹⁰	

* Definitions of the indicators are presented in Annex A.

- Civic behavior
- Intergroup relations
- Governance and human security
- Demographic indicators
- Psychosocial functioning

Conclusions

The findings presented in this report suggest that gender norms and stereotypes permeate to both the private and public sphere. Both men and women who support traditional gender norms and

⁵ The indicators below are more characteristic (have higher values) among supporters of norms and stereotypes. Conversely, the opponents of gender norms and stereotypes report much lower values for the same indicators. Indicators with the largest difference between these two groups are listed first in each of the categories.

⁶ Note that the indicators presented in the table are not necessarily predictors for holding of opposing traditional gender stereotypes or norms but taken together present a profile of those who support these norms and stereotypes. Further, there could be other important factors linked with the support of (or disagreement with) gender norms and stereotypes, which are not presented in this document.

⁷ About 65 percent of women in the category of supporters of norms and stereotypes reported that they lack money for food and or clothes, compared to 38 percent among those who oppose them.

⁸ About 43 percent of women in the category of supporters of norms and stereotypes belong to the age group 61 years and older compared to 19 percent among those who oppose them.

⁹ About 26 percent of women and men in the category of supporters of norms and stereotypes have higher education compared to 53 percent among those who oppose them.

¹⁰ About 28 percent of women and men in the category of supporters of norms and stereotypes are residents of rural areas compared to 18 percent among those who oppose them.



stereotypes tend to share some characteristics, which are counterproductive to intergroup social cohesion and thus to peaceful coexistence. Women and men in this group are less tolerant toward minority and marginalized groups, such as people identifying as LGBTI, are less active as citizens, and have a higher tendency to normalize domestic violence and social violence in general. Men, in particular, have higher persistence of negative stereotypes and of fear (of internal destabilization), which could undermine acknowledging the dignity of women and different social and political groups.

The strong support among both men and women for gender norms in the labor market (delicate jobs being suitable for women) and at home (division into breadwinners and caretakers) is limiting both the inclusion of women in the labor market and the types of jobs that both men and women are expected to perform (see e.g., USE report *Skills and economic security: self-assessment of women and men*) and subsequently have access to. More than half of all women and two thirds of all men support the division of men and women into breadwinners and caretakers. This has significant implications for both household economy and family coherence, as it both prevents women from becoming financially independent and fulfilling themselves outside the family boundaries, and limits opportunities for men to play a greater role in raising children. Moreover, the strong support among men and moderate support among women for the stereotype that men are better suitable for decision-making roles has negative implications for the promotion of women into leadership positions and subsequently access to high-paid jobs.

2018



Annex A: Glossary of terms

Active civic participation intentions – willingness to engage in civic and political matters to change current conditions in one's community using non-violent means

Anxiety – degree to which one feels anxious and insecure to such an extent that they find it difficult to stop worrying and to relax

Civic optimism – extent to which the present generation is believed to be in a better or worse position compared to past or future generations

Contact with various groups in society – frequency of direct contact with members of various groups in society with different political, social or geographical orientation.

Depression – degree to which one feels depressed or very sad

Destabilization expectations (internal) – fear that certain internal events (such as an increase in corruption or crime) would lead to violence

Economic opportunities – perceived availability of job opportunities in one's region

Health security – access to and affordability of medical services, basic and specialized

Justification of violence – propensity to justify violence in order to protect one's family, honour or livelihood

Mental health stigma – degree of prejudice toward those who suffer from mental health problems

Negative stereotypes about various groups – extent to which a person has negative stereotypes (in terms of personal qualities) of various groups

Religiosity – extent to which a religion plays a role in one's life

Self-confidence – degree to which one is confident in one's abilities and satisfied with oneself

Sense of agency – degree to which one feels that ordinary people can change things in their community

Social tolerance – degree to which one is tolerant toward different marginalized and minority groups in terms of personal interaction and/or acceptance in the community

Social threat – perception that an increase in the numbers of members of different political, social and geographical groups would be followed by fewer job opportunities, overall destabilized communities, increasing crime rates, and undermined unity

Soviet nostalgia – extent to which one regrets the collapse of the Soviet Union and believes that life was better before 1991

Support for the Customs Union – preference for Ukraine joining the economic union between Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia

Support for gender norms – extent to which traditional gender norms about women's career choices are supported

Support for gender stereotypes – degree to which traditional gender stereotypes in the household, in the workplace and job market are supported

2018

