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**GENDER EQUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION
AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING
IN CENTRAL ASIA
TRENDS AND CHALLENGES
Final Report**



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Gender Equality in Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training in Central Asia - Trends and Challenges

Review Report

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Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AUCA	American University in Central Asia
CA	Central Asia
CAEP	Central Asian Education Platform
DG DEVCO	Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development
EC	European Commission
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
EU	European Union
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GEAR	Gender Equality in Academia and Research
GEP	Gender Equality Plan
GEMP	Gender Equity Model Programme
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
HE	Higher Education
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
ITC ILO	International Training Centre of the International Labor Organization
KR	Kyrgyz Republic
MS	Member State
MST	Mathematics, Science and Technology
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VET	Vocational Education and Training

Executive Summary

Introduction

This gender review of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Higher Education (HE) in Central Asia (CA) was launched by the European Union (EU) Central Asian Education Platform (CAEP) in response to the “Astana Declaration” adopted following the 2nd Meeting of Ministers for Education of the Central Asian Countries and the European Union. The objectives of the gender review were to study the current situation of Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (GEWE) in HE and VET in CA, to identify good practices for policies, methods and instruments supporting gender equality in the CA and the EU, and to establish a common basis for knowledge and understanding of gender relevant issues in HE and VET. The methodology applied for this gender review included desk review of policy and legal framework on gender equality in HE and VET of CA countries, existing studies, researches and statistics on gender equality in HE and VET; semi-structured interviews with relevant staff of the Ministries for Education. Given time and budget constraints, it was possible to conduct short gender reviews in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

EU policies on GEWE in education

Equality between women and men is a fundamental value of the EU. The Lisbon Treaty refers to equality between women and men as a constitutive principle of the EU. In 2016, the EU adopted the Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality for 2016-2019 which have outlined five priority areas of the EU to promote gender equality. In 2017, the EU introduced the New European Consensus on Development “Our World, Our Dignity, Our Future”, where gender equality is explicitly featured as a cross-cutting issue and a priority across all areas of action and a precondition for achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The EU has adopted a Gender Action Plan for 2016-2020 (EU GAP II) to ensure that gender is effectively mainstreamed in all EU external actions. In the area of education, in 2009 the EU has adopted the education and training 2020 strategic framework (ET 2020). The EU has also a gender equality strategy in research and innovation as part of the biggest EU Research and innovation programme Horizon 2020.

Current situation on GEWE in HE and VET in reviewed Central Asian countries and the EU.

In Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, women outnumber men in higher education and in research. In Tajikistan and Uzbekistan gender gap in equal access of boys and girls to VET and HE is persistent. In Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, men considerably outnumber girls in primary vocational education. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan establish strong guarantees of the right to education to everyone and stress importance of gender equality in the education in legislation and policies. However, these guarantees are not supported by strong implementation mechanisms. In Uzbekistan, policies and legislation do not fully establish formal commitment to ensure gender equality in VET and HE and promote gender education. By contrast, policy and legal framework of the EU in education and gender equality is supported by several practical tools and guidelines pertinent education sector policies and laws; institutional frameworks; content of education; teachers training; individual Universities and so on. Gender segregation in education and labour markets at the EU level and in the reviewed CA countries is a result of many factors specific for each country. However, a common pattern for the EU and CA countries is a choice of subjects of study that are perceived as traditionally “female” and traditionally “male”. As a result, men

mainly concentrate in STEM disciplines and women in EHW. Similar patterns are replicated in the labour market.

Selected good practices on gender mainstreaming in VET and HE in EU and Central Asia:

- Systematic gender mainstreaming approach in education sector introduced by the French government in 2012.
- Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) developed and implemented in 113 research organisations and universities in the EU.
- Protocol for preventing and tackling sexual harassment and gender-based violence is developed and implemented by the Paris Institute of Political Studies (Sciences Po) (Paris, France) as part of the EU-funded structural-change EGERA project.
- Injener Qyzdar (IQ) in Kazakhstan (Girls Engineers in Kazakhstan) introduced in 2018 to increase the number of women studying technical and engineering subjects.
- The Center for Critical Gender Studies in Kyrgyzstan established in the American University of Central Asia (AUCA)
- Gender Equity Model Programme for VET in Tajikistan is implemented by the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of Tajikistan and ADB in the framework of a Project on Strengthening Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

Main conclusions of the Gender review and recommendations:

None of the Central Asian countries under review has applied an effective system-wide approach to gender mainstreaming in education and research. Practices like gender audit of institutions, ministries, revision of human resource policies, or the adoption of temporary special measures to address gender inequalities are not systematically applied. None of the legislation of the countries reviewed envisages mandatory gender expertise. Methodologies of holding such gender expertise and capacities on how to hold such expertise are not fully developed in the public sector. Most of good practices on GEWE in VET and HE, except for those identified in Kazakhstan, were developed externally. Thus, sustainability of these practices raise concerns. Common challenge for all four countries reviewed is a structural gender inequality which perpetuates gender segregation in education and labour market in these countries. The following main recommendations are proposed as part of this Gender review of VET and HE:

- Introduce a system-wide approach to gender mainstreaming in education and adopt Gender Equality Plans for Ministries governing the education sector and VET and HE schools or institutions.
- Introduce compulsory mandatory gender expertise of education and training curricula, teaching and learning materials prior to approval, and review current and newly developing curricula, teaching and learning materials from a gender perspective to remove any gender bias and avoid reproducing stereotypes via education.
- Initiate and implement various strategies to encourage women to select “non-traditional” subjects of study through early professional job orientation and career guidance; demonstration of examples of women working in non-traditional jobs; encouraging parents to support their daughters in selection of non-traditional jobs; establishing incentives like scholarships, safe and healthy conditions of study and living outside of residence compliant with safety, hygiene and sanitation needs of girls and boys.

- Improve gender competence of Ministerial staff and teaching staff through mandatory gender equality courses, implementation of GEPs and other measures.

1. Introduction

This Gender review of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Higher Education (HE) in Central Asia (CA) was launched by the European Union (EU) Central Asian Education Platform (CAEP) in response to the “Astana Declaration” adopted following the 2nd Meeting of Ministers for Education of the Central Asian Countries and the European Union. The Astana Declaration reaffirmed the commitment of Central Asian Ministers for Education to ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning (article 3 of the said Declaration). Specifically, it was emphasised that Ministries for Education would welcome the exchange on how to avoid gender inequality in education and how education can contribute in addressing gender inequalities. In this respect, EU CAEP commissioned the review of the current situation of the gender equality and women’s empowerment (GEWE) in higher and vocational education and training in Central Asian countries. Besides, this Gender review was grounded on the analysis of the gender situation conducted in the framework of the Gender Study for Central Asia and commissioned by the Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO) of the European Commission (EC) in 2017/2018. Gender equality in education was not a main focus of the study. Nevertheless, its preliminary findings and recommendations on gender issues in education sector in all CA countries provided a starting base to explore the current status of gender equality in education in CA countries in more depth.

The objectives of the gender review were to study current situation of the GEWE in HE and VET in CA, identify good practices for policies, methods and instruments supporting gender equality in the CA and the EU, and establish a common basis for knowledge and understanding of gender relevant issues in HE and VET. The results of the gender review will be used to further discussion among policy makers, education practitioners and related stakeholders in the framework of the EU CAEP. EU CAEP engaged a team of experts led by a Report Coordinator and supported by country consultants. It was originally foreseen to conduct a gender review of all five Central Asian countries.

The methodology applied for this gender review included desk review of policy and legal framework on gender equality, HE and VET of countries of Central Asia, existing studies, researches and statistics on gender equality in HE and VET; semi-structured interviews with relevant staff of the Ministries for Education. A list of interviews conducted in countries presented in this report is attached as Annex 1. Based on the desk review, a data capturing document was developed to guide the country consultants in collection of data and conducting interviews. The Gender review covered the following areas:

- At system level: GEWE in education and the implementation practice in the CA countries and short assessment of data availability;
- At institutional level: Overview of tools and instruments in place to strengthen GEWE in education in both HE and VET institutions and in the governing state agencies/ministries in CA countries;
- At content level: Overview or examples for existing curricula, learning programmes etc. in CA which are e.g. gender sensitive or foster in any form gender equality;

- Cooperation between civil society institutions, HE and VET institutions and possibly enterprises or related business actors thus linking labour market needs with GEWE aspects.
- Good practices for policies, methods and instruments supporting gender equality in education both in the EU and in CA countries;
- Short coverage of EU policies provided in this field.

Upon data analysis, recommendations were developed and challenges identified for strengthening GEWE in HE and VET in selected countries of Central Asia. Findings as well as recommendations of the gender review of HE and VET are described in this report.

This Gender review had several limitations. This Gender review focused exclusively on VET and HE, because VET and HE are in focus of the EU CAEP. However, to mainstream gender in education effectively, a holistic approach targeting all levels of education (starting from the pre-school education) should be applied. Given time and budget constraints, it was possible to conduct short gender reviews in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The approach towards Turkmenistan was under consideration. In Tajikistan, interviews with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of Population were requested by the EU CAEP, but were not appointed by the said Ministries. In Uzbekistan, interviews with respective Ministries and educational institutions were also requested, but not appointed. The other limitation was that the study was not meant to be a comprehensive review, but rather was focused on taking stock on GEWE in HE and VET in Central Asian countries.

2. Current situation on GEWE in education at the EU level

This chapter will highlight key gender concerns in education at the EU level. It will also describe the EU policies that focus on GEWE in education.

2.1. Overview of the EU policies on gender equality and women's empowerment in education

Equality between women and men is a fundamental value of the EU. In this respect, the EU has adopted a range of directives, policies and strategies to promote gender equality between the EU Member States (MS) and outside the EU. The Lisbon Treaty¹ refers to equality between women and men as a constitutive principle of the EU. In 2016, the EU adopted a Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality for 2016-2019 which have outlined five priority areas of the EU to promote gender equality.²

In 2017, the EU introduced the New European Consensus on Development “Our World, Our Dignity, Our Future” which is aimed at implementation of the 2030 Agenda in partnership with all developing countries. It sets the framework of the EU and MS activities on development cooperation. Among the principles and values which EU will be guided in implementation of this New European Consensus, gender equality is explicitly featured as a cross-cutting issue and a priority across all areas of action and a precondition for

¹ The Lisbon Treaty was signed by the heads of state and government of the 27 EU Member States on 13 December 2007. It is intended to reform the functioning of the European Union following the two waves of enlargement which have taken place since 2004 and which have increased the number of EU Member States from 15 to 27. (<http://www.lisbon-treaty.org/wcm/the-lisbon-treaty.html>)

² https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/strategic_engagement_en.pdf

achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this New European Consensus the EU has a direct reference to ensuring access to quality education for all as a precondition for youth employability and long-lasting development and attaches particular importance to special attention to education and training opportunities for girls and women.³

As to development cooperation, the EU has adopted a Gender Action Plan for 2016-2020 (EU GAP II) to ensure that gender is effectively mainstreamed in all EU external actions. The GAP II introduced three thematic priorities and one institutional priority aimed at change of culture within the EU institutions. The four main areas of the EU GAP II are the following:

- ensuring girls' and women's physical and psychological integrity;
- promoting the social and economic rights / empowerment of women and girls;
- strengthening girls' and women's voice and participation;
- shifting the Institutional Culture to more effectively deliver on EU commitments.

One of the objectives under the thematic priority “Economic, Social and Cultural Rights - Economic and Social Empowerment” is focused on equal access for girls and women to all levels of quality education and VET free from discrimination. To facilitate effective implementation of the EU GAP II, the European Commission in cooperation with the International Training Center of the International Labour Organisation (ITC ILO), UN Women and Learn4dev⁴ developed a Resource Package on Gender Mainstreaming in EU

Equality between women and men (gender equality) refers to equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women.

The empowerment of women and girls concerns their gaining power and control over their own lives. To be empowered women and girls must not only have equal capabilities (such as education and health) and equal access to resources and opportunities (such as land and employment), but they must also have the agency to use these rights, capabilities, resources and opportunities to make strategic choices and decisions (such as is provided through leadership opportunities and participation in political institutions).

Source: Gender Equality Glossary of the UN Women Training Center, <https://bit.ly/2KISfV1>

³ The New European Consensus on Development “Our World, Our Dignity, Our Future” Joint Statement by the Council and Representatives of the Governments of the Member States Meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission, 7 June 2017.

⁴ Learn4dev is an international network of development organizations from different backgrounds. The network is not formalised. It exists thanks to the commitment of its members to contribute to more efficient aid. The essence of the learn4dev network are the Expert Groups which is created around a specific topic or common area of interest and is moderated by an Expert Group leader. Today the network counts 30 member organisations including bilateral donor organisations, multilateral organisations and international training and research centres. (<http://www.learn4dev.net/dashboard>)

Development Cooperation. This Resource Package provides practical tools to advance the 2030 sustainable development agenda and gender equality.⁵

In the area of education, in 2009 the EU has adopted the education and training 2020 strategic framework (ET 2020). ET 2020 is a forum for exchanges of best practices, mutual learning, gathering and dissemination of information and evidence of what works, as well as advice and support to policy reforms. There are four common EU objectives to address challenges in education and training by 2020: 1) making lifelong learning and mobility a reality; 2) improving the equality and efficiency of education and training; 3) promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship; 4) enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training. Gender is mainstreamed in the ET2020 and in relevant European funding programmes. In the 2015 based on the findings of the joint report of the Council and the Commission on progress in the implementation of ET 2020, the Commission and the Member States set new priorities for 2020 that included tackling the gender gap in education and promoting more gender-balanced choices in education.⁶

The EU has also a gender equality strategy in research and innovation as part of the biggest EU Research and innovation programme Horizon 2020. In the framework of this programme, the European Commission pursues three objectives:

- gender equality in careers, to remove possible bias and discrimination and ensure equal opportunities,
- gender balance in decision making bodies,
- integration of the gender dimension in research and innovation content, to ensure that the biological characteristics and the social/cultural features of both women and men are taken into account as relevant.⁷

Several tools were introduced to increase the number of women among researches, introduce work and family balance measures, establish gender equality plans. Some of them are explained in the section 4.1 below.

In 2016, the European Commission adopted a New Skills Agenda for Europe Working Together to Strengthen Human Capital, Employability and Competitiveness. Ten actions were developed to: 1) improve the quality and relevance of training and other ways of acquiring skills; 2) make skills more visible and comparable; 3) improve information and understanding of trends and patterns in demands for skills and jobs (skills intelligence) to enable people make better career choices, find quality jobs and improve their life chances. One of the actions is aimed at modernisation of VET system in the EU and making VET as a first choice.⁸

Review of implementation of the mentioned programmes by the EU MS demonstrated that gender segregation in employment and labour market is caused among others by gender stereotypes about role of women and men. There exist credible evidence that gender

⁵ Full package can be accessed at: <http://eugender.itcilo.org/>

⁶ Salanauskaitė (L), Reingardė (J) (2017), Study and Work in the EU: Set Apart by Gender Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States, Report, European Institute for Gender Equality p.29

⁷ <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/what-horizon-2020>

⁸ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223#vet>

stereotypes on roles of women and men cause and recreate gender segregation in education and labour market. These stereotypes have direct and indirect impact on gender segregation, such as the choice of study fields or occupations taken by women and men. The choice is made based on cultural and societal perceptions of appropriate jobs for women. Teaching materials may contain gender stereotypes and reproduce them among younger generations.⁹ Other gender concerns in education at the EU level are described in the following section.

2.2. Key gender concerns in education at the EU level

In recent years, in the EU there was a significant progress towards gender equality. Legal and policy environment as well as institutional frameworks contributed to the improvement of gender equality in the education and labour market in terms of equal participation of men and women in education and labour market. Despite this, gender segregation in education and labour market remains a deeply entrenched phenomenon for various reasons. In the EU labour market such phenomena as horizontal and vertical segregation, glass ceiling, leaky pipeline, sticky floor, implicit gender bias and gender pay gap are still persistent.

Gender segregation in education and training at the EU level is manifested by prevalence of men in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines and concentration of women in social science and humanities in both VET and HE. Over the last decade, there were no significant variations in share of men and women taking STEM and Education, Health and Welfare (EHW) disciplines in both VET and HE. At the EU level, there was a decrease in share of women among STEM graduates from 23 percent in 2004-2006 to 22 percent in 2013-2015. Women graduating in EHW remained at the same level, i.e. 21 percent in 2004-2006 and in 2013-2015.¹⁰

This gender segregation in education results in gender segregation in the labour market. At the EU level, in 2014 men were highly concentrated in such occupations as building and related trade workers (96.9 percent of all workers); metal, machinery and related trade workers (96.1 percent); science and engineering associate professionals (84.1 percent); science and engineering professionals (74.5 percent). Share of women in these occupations varied from 3 to 25 percent. As to women, they concentrated in such occupations like personal care workers (89.5 percent) and health associate professionals (80.1 percent). In such traditionally female-dominated occupations like teaching professionals and health professionals, women made up 69.4 percent and 70.7 percent, respectively.¹¹ During last decade, there were no major improvements in overcoming gender segregation in STEM and EHW occupations. The trend has been opposite at the EU level, i.e. share of men in EHW occupations decreased from 30 percent in 2004 to 26 percent in 2014. For women in STEM occupations, there was no significant change over the years. Since 2003, share of women in STEM occupations increased from 13 percent in 2004 to 14 percent in 2014.¹²

⁹ EIGE (2016), *Gender in Education and Training*, p. 5.

¹⁰ Salanauskaitė (L), Reingardė (J) (2017), *Study and Work in the EU: Set Apart by Gender Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States*, Report, European Institute for Gender Equality, p.33.

¹¹ *Ibid*, p.26.

¹² *Ibid*, p.56.

Defining gender segregation in education and occupations:

Gender segregation refers to the concentration of one gender in certain fields of education or occupations, which narrows down life choices, education and employment options, leads to unequal pay, further reinforces gender stereotypes and limits access to certain jobs while also perpetuating unequal gender power relations in the public and private spheres.

Most often gender segregation is viewed in terms of vertical (also referred to as hierarchical) and horizontal divides. **Horizontal segregation** occurs when women and men study different disciplines or work in different sectors or types of occupations. It is understood as the under- or over-representation of women or men in study fields, occupations or sectors. This contrasts with **vertical segregation**, which occurs as a result of women and men undertaking education at different levels or being under-represented in the jobs located at the top of a hierarchy of 'desirable' attributes such as income and prestige.

The '**glass ceiling**' refers to artificial impediments and invisible barriers that act against women's access to top decision-making and managerial positions in an organisation, whether public or private and in whatever domain. The term 'glass' is used because these impediments are apparently invisible and are usually linked to the maintenance of the status quo in organisations, as opposed to transparent and equal career advancement opportunities for women and men within organisations

The phenomenon known as the '**leaky pipeline**' results in an overwhelmingly men-dominated environment at the highest hierarchical levels, as women progressively abandon the chosen fields of work, not least due to a lack of progression in their careers

The '**sticky floor**' is used as a metaphor to point to a discriminatory employment pattern that keeps workers, mainly women, in the lower ranks of the job scale, with low mobility and invisible barriers to career advancement

'**Implicit bias**' refers to a lack of awareness of how the surrounding environment and processes can be discriminatory, even if the very best intentions on fairness and equality are in place. For example, women can be significantly disadvantaged by a gendered concept of 'merit', especially one that values a full-time, uninterrupted career trajectory or research success.

The **gender pay gap** could be viewed as a monetary 'facade' of gender segregation (Evans, 2002). It reinforces the trend that women and men continue to work in different jobs and sectors and within those in lower-valued and lower-paid occupations and positions (such as health, education, and public administration). The problem of the gender pay gap persists due to differences in the labour market participation of men and women. Reasons include (but are not limited to) vertical and horizontal segregation, under-valuation of women's work and an uneven distribution of caring responsibilities.

Source: Salanauskaitė (L), Reingardė (J) (2017), Study and Work in the EU: Set Apart by Gender Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States,

Despite feminisation of a teaching profession as demonstrated in the previous paragraph, women are poorly represented in decision-making positions in VET and HE institutions. This is also linked to lower share of women receiving PhD compared to men and lower share of women engaged in research (about 33 percent of researchers were women). Segregation in subjects selected persists at the PhD level and research. Men tend to select natural science and technology subjects and women are taking medicine and health science. Men are overrepresented in senior academic positions in most of EU MS. There is clear vertical gender segregation in academic and research institutions. Such phenomena as “sticky floor” and “glass ceiling” describe situation of women in achieving senior positions in universities. They extend not only to disciplines where women are underrepresented, but to those disciplines, where women outnumber men.¹³

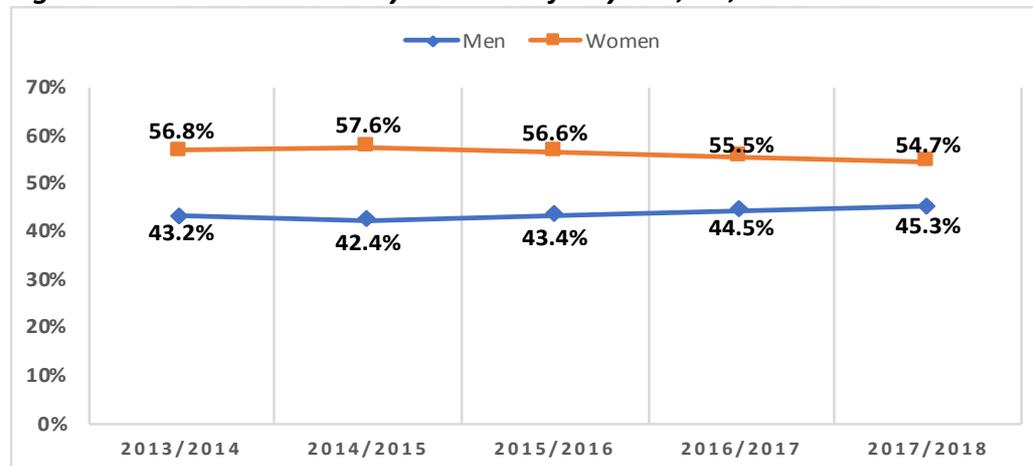
3. Current situation on GEWE in education in CA countries

This chapter will provide a short overview of the gender aspects of legal and institutional framework of HE and VET per country. It will also highlight gender issues in HE and VET in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

3.1. Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan has almost reached gender parity in access to education. In the last five years, the overall trend was that women outnumbered men in HE. In 2017/2018 academic year, 54.7 percent of all students enrolled to higher education institutions were women and 45.3 percent were men (Figure 1). Women represent the majority of students at higher education institutions: they make up 64 percent of those studying for masters’ degrees and 58 percent of those pursuing doctoral studies.

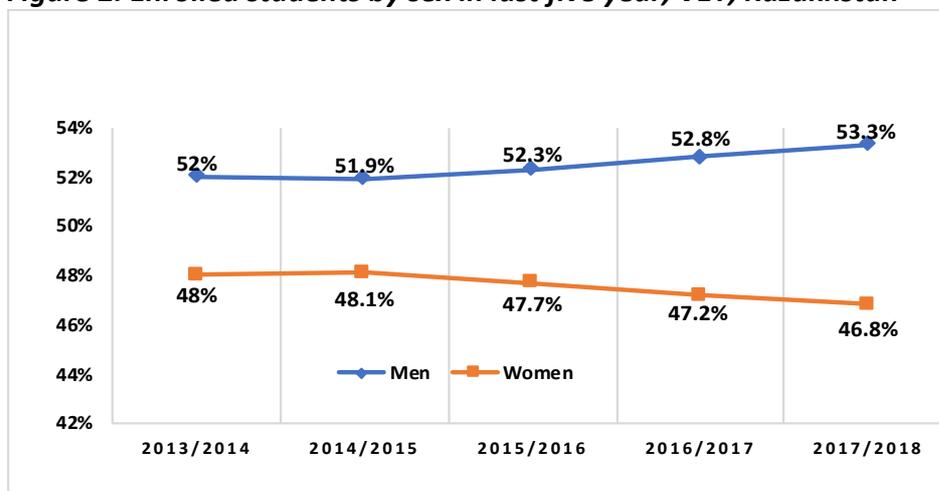
Figure 1. Enrolled students by sex in last five years, HE, Kazakhstan.



The opposite trend is observed in enrolment of men and women to VET. In last five years, the share of women enrolling to VET was decreased. Men slightly outnumbered women. In 2017/2018 academic year, 53.3 percent of all students were men compared to 46.8 percent of women. (Figure 2)

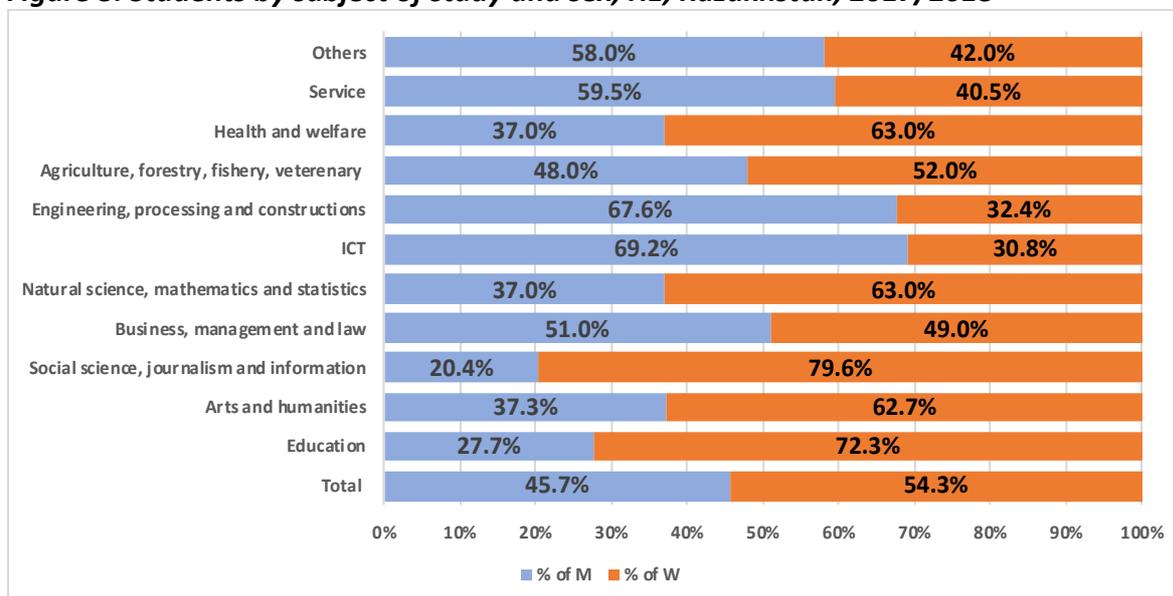
¹³ EIGE (2016), Gender in Education and Training, pp. 5-6.

Figure 2. Enrolled students by sex in last five year, VET, Kazakhstan



Patterns of education are correlated with the horizontal segregation of women in the labour market in Kazakhstan. At the level of HE, in 2017/2018 women were concentrated in traditional fields of study such as education (72.3 percent), health (63 percent), social science, journalism and information (79.6). In such fields like ICT, engineering and constructions women made up about 30 percent of all students. Men were concentrated in technical fields such as hydrocarbon, transport and energy industries.¹⁴ (Figure 3)

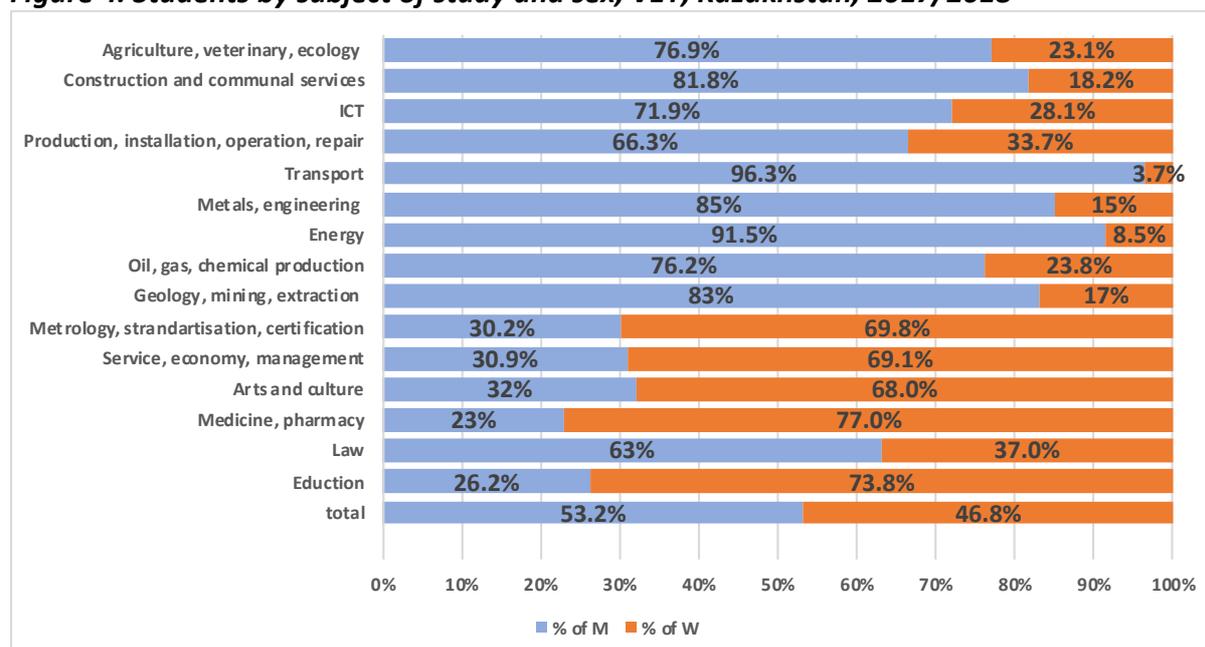
Figure 3. Students by subject of study and sex, HE, Kazakhstan, 2017/2018



In the VET, gender segregation in disciplines which men and women study is even more evident. Women concentrate in such areas of study like medicine and pharmacy, education, service, economic, management, arts and culture. In such sectors as energy, transport, men reach close to 100 percent of students. Other male-dominated disciplines are metals and engineering, mining and extraction, constructions and communal services. (Figure 4)

¹⁴ ADB (2013), Kazakhstan Country Gender Assessment. Mandaluyong City, Philippines: Asian Development Bank

Figure 4. Students by subject of study and sex, VET, Kazakhstan, 2017/2018



In this respect, despite reaching close to gender parity levels in higher education, Kazakhstan faces a challenge in addressing traditional patterns of choices of disciplines of education by boys and girls in VET and HE. In the future, such segregation in education results in horizontal segregation in the labour market and gender wage gap. This challenge can be resolved through the application of effective institutional mechanisms or a system-wide approach to gender mainstreaming in the education sector.¹⁵ In the chapter 5, an example for a system-wide approach to gender mainstreaming is presented.

Women have equal access to educational grants in higher education institutions. Of the 128.5 thousand students studying under grants, 60 percent were women. 49.5 percent of 1849 students who were awarded Presidential scholarship "Bolashak" to study abroad were women.

The Constitution of Kazakhstan establishes that a citizen has a right to receive free higher education in public higher educational institutions on a competitive basis. There is also a guarantee of non-discrimination and equality embedded in Kazakhstan's Constitution. This is also reflected in the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Education" (2007). Article 3 of this Law specifies that all citizens have equal rights to receive quality education and access education at all levels. The Law of Kazakhstan on State Guarantees of Equality Rights and Equal Opportunities of Men and Women (2009) specifically refers to guarantees of gender education (article 12). The Strategy "Kazakhstan 2050" presented to people in 2012 noted that conditions will be established to ensure that all girls of Kazakhstan will be able to receive quality education, a decent job and enjoy freedoms. Gender discrimination is prohibited. The focus of gender equality actions should be on ensuring gender equality in practice.

¹⁵ Gyuvon, P (2017), Public Administration Review. Review of Gender Policy in Kazakhstan, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, pp. 32-33.

In the education sector, the “State programme of education development of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011-2020” noted the feminisation of a teaching profession. 81.3 percent of all teachers were women. According to this programme the reasons of feminisation of a teaching profession were low salary of a teacher and lack of prestige of profession of a teacher. Thus, it was concluded that men were not interested in pursuing teacher’s education. At the same time, the perception that teacher was a traditionally “female” occupation was neglected by the programme. In 2015, the Ministry of Health and Social Development of Kazakhstan by Decree adopted a List of works where use of labour of women shall be prohibited and permitted limits of lifting and manual movement of weights by women.¹⁶ This list restricts opportunities of women to receive education in subjects which fall under prohibited works. The State Programme of Development of Education and Science in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2016-2019 was aimed at the establishment of equal access to education at all levels, including science. This State Programme did not fully integrate gender concerns of VET and HE in Kazakhstan. Specifically, the section on analysis of the situation in each level of education and science was not gender sensitive, sex-disaggregated data was not provided. Despite explicit state guarantee of gender education established by the Law on State Guarantees of Equality Rights and Equal Opportunities of Men and Women (2009), this State Programme did not include any measures on gender education. None of the targets of this Programme were gender-sensitive. The same observations were made about the State Programme of Education Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2011-2020.

Other key policy documents like the “Concept of family and gender policy of Kazakhstan until 2030” (2016) noted explicitly gender inequality issues in the education sector. It noted as an achievement that in 2016 in 38 higher educational institutions 60 elective courses on gender equality were introduced in such subjects like “education”, “humanities studies”, “law”, “social science, business and economics”. These courses are “Gender policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan”, “Introduction to gender theory”, “Constitutional and legal basis of gender policy”, “Gender and Feminism Studies”, “Gender psychology”, “Psychological Aspects of Gender”, “Introduction to gender equality”, “Gender Economics”, “Problems of protection of human rights”, “Culture and gender”, “Gender Sociology”, “Gender Policy” and others.

The Law ‘On Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities of Women’ (2009) explicitly guarantees gender education in line with gender equality policy (article 12). However, gender education has not been formally introduced into curricula at all levels of education. A “Review of implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2006-2016” demonstrated that it was foreseen to introduce gender components to all levels of education. Despite this, a systematic approach to gender-responsive education and mainstreaming of gender to education standards was not applied. There has been no systematic effort by the Government to introduce mandatory gender education into education including higher (tertiary) education.¹⁷ As mentioned above, considerable

¹⁶ This Decree No.944 was approved by the Minister in 2015 and amendments were introduced in 2018.

¹⁷ Ilyasova A. (2016) Report on Evaluation of the Gender Equality Strategy of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2006-2016, Gender Equality Strategy of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2006-2016 as cited in Gyuven, P (2017), Public Administration Review. Review of Gender Policy in Kazakhstan, Organisation for Economic Cooperation

number of gender courses were introduced in Kazakhstan's higher educational institutions in Astana, Almaty and in the regions. It has to be noted, that these were elective courses, and they were rarely selected by students. As it was mentioned above, gender segregation in the labour market is caused by women's and men's choices of traditionally "female" and "male" subjects in HE and VET levels. The above-mentioned strategic documents, however, do not fully outline a strategy or approach to be used in Kazakhstan to overcome this trend.

3.2. Kyrgyzstan

The legislation of Kyrgyzstan establishes several guarantees of the right to education and gender equality. The Constitution in its Article 45 specifies the right of everyone to education and notes the role of the state in establishment of conditions for the development of state, municipal and private educational institutions. Article 16 of the Constitution guarantees equal rights for men and women, and specifically refer to measures aimed at ensuring equal opportunities for men and women which should not be considered discriminatory. As to the education sector, several policies and laws were adopted to ensure the implementation of constitutional guarantees, specifically, the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic (KR) "On Education" (2003), the Law of the KR "On Status of Teacher" (2001), the Law of the KR "On Primary Vocational Education" (1999). The Law "On Education" establishes the right to education regardless of sex, ethnicity, language, social and material status, restrictions related to health, nature of activities, religious beliefs, political and religious convictions, place of residence and other grounds (article 8). The Law "On Status of a Teacher" enumerates principles of pedagogical activities of teachers. Amongst them, it mentions the prohibition of direct, hidden and indirect discrimination, restriction of rights or provision of privileges to students based on grounds of sex, race, language, disability, ethnicity, religious beliefs, age, origin, property and other status and other groups (Article 4). The Law of the KR "On State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities of Men and Women" prohibits direct and indirect gender discrimination. The indirect discrimination also includes the reproduction of gender stereotypes with use of media, education, culture and other ways which inflicted or may inflict negative impact such as harm to people of certain sex (article 5). These laws are gender neutral. They establish a set of strong guarantees of equality in education; however, these guarantees are not supported with effective implementation mechanisms.¹⁸

The legislation of Kyrgyzstan maintains from the Soviet times the prohibition of women to engage in hard, hazardous and heavy works. The Government of KR adopted a list of productions, works, occupations and positions with hazardous (or) dangerous working conditions where use of women's labour shall be prohibited (Resolution of the Government of the KR No.158, 2000). There are also maximum permissible norms of loads for manual lifting and moving of weights approved by the Government of the KP No.548 (2005) which establish full prohibition of use of women's labour and relative (depending on weight) restriction of use of women's labour. Such lists are developed based on stereotypical perceptions about male and female occupations and do not take into consideration

and Development, p.49; Association of Business Women of Kazakhstan (2016), Evaluation of the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2006-2016: sociological study, p.33.

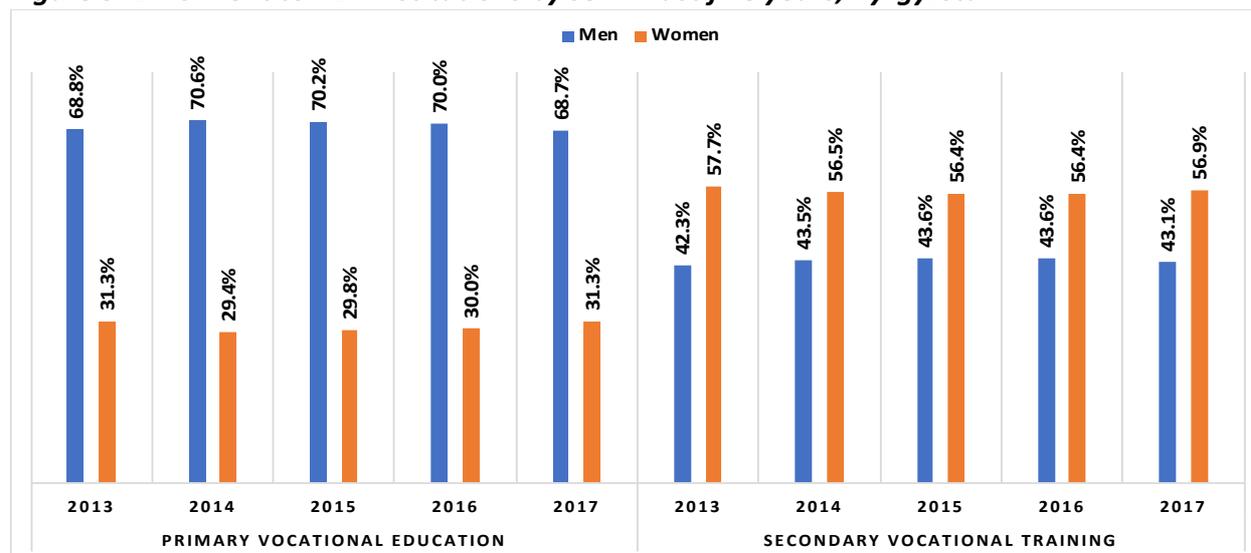
¹⁸ Kochorbaeva Z et al. (2016), Gender and Inclusive Assessment of Education in Kyrgyz Republic. Analytical Review, p.12.

occupation health and safety standards that shall be applicable to both, men and women.¹⁹ According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) such lists shall be repealed and countries should focus on gradual improvement of occupation safety and health of all working places to ensure that both, men and women work in safe working conditions and are able to compete for such jobs on equal footing. Such restrictions have direct impact on opportunities of girls and women to select occupations/subjects of studies in VET and HE institutions.

Several policies guide the development of education sector in the KR. These are the National Strategy of Sustainable Development for 2013-2017²⁰, the Strategy of Education Development in KR for 2012-2020 and the Action Plan on implementation of the said Strategy for 2018-2020.²¹ These policy documents recognise a direct co-relation between educational choices of women and their economic opportunities and resulting gender segregation at the labour market and respective, gender wage gap.

A review of statistical data demonstrates a high concentration of women in traditionally “female” occupations. In Kyrgyzstan, boys tend to enrol more to primary vocational education than to secondary vocation and higher education. For instance, at the level of primary vocational education, boys significantly outnumbered girls, who made up about 30 percent of all students enrolled during last five years. (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Enrolment to VET institutions by sex in last five years, Kyrgyzstan



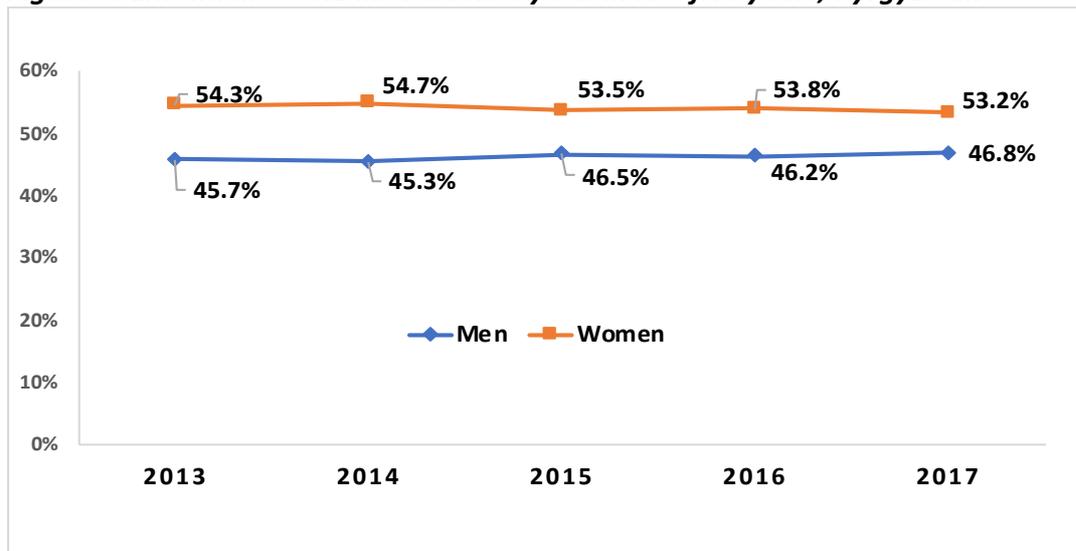
In secondary vocational education and higher education, women considerably outnumbered men. In secondary vocational education, share of men remained at the level of about 43 percent. (Figure 5). At the level of HE, during last five years some increase in enrolment of men was registered. Despite some decrease in women’s enrolment to HE in Kyrgyzstan, their share remains high and they still outnumber men enrolled to HE institutions. (Figure 6).

¹⁹ Ibid, p.39

²⁰ National Strategy of Sustainable Development of Kyrgyz Republic for 2013-2017, adopted by the Decree of the President on 21 January 2013, No 11. <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/61542>

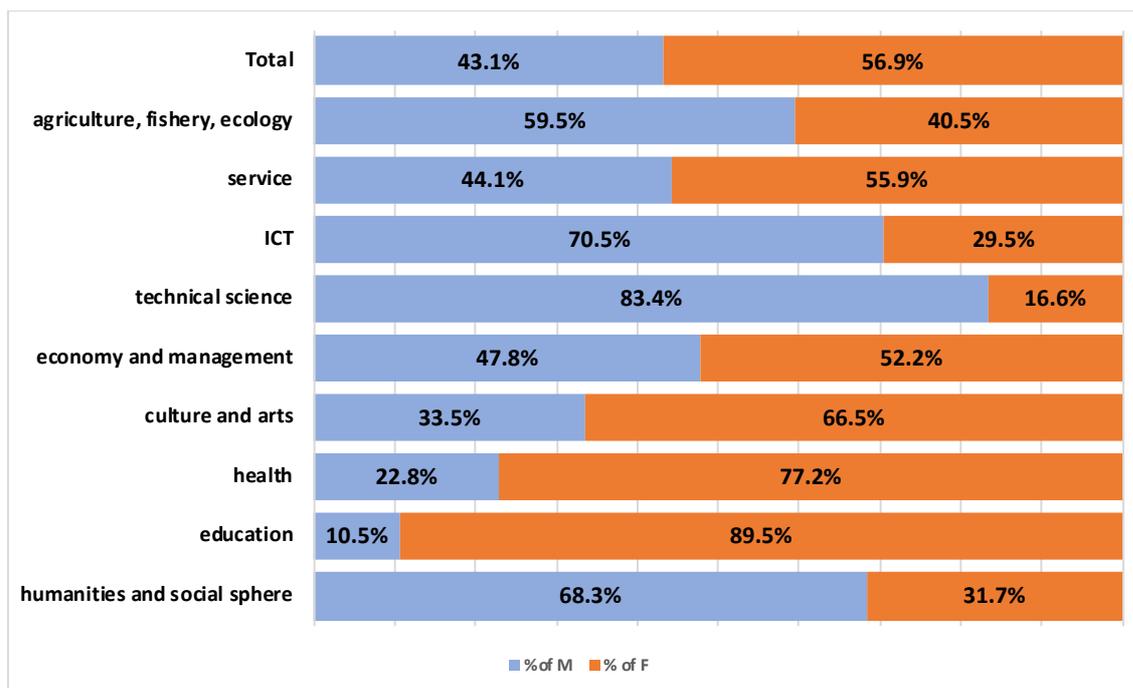
²¹ Adopted by the Resolution of the Government of the KR on 4 June 2018, No. 270, <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/92984?cl=ru-ru>

Figure 6. Enrolment to HE institutions by sex in last five years, Kyrgyzstan



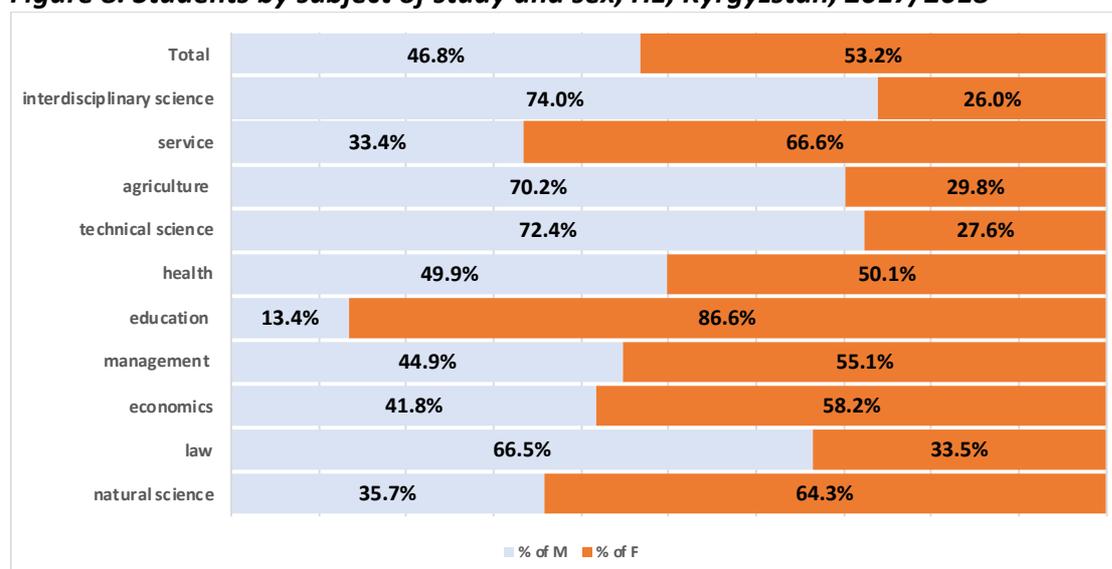
Girls tend to enrol in such subjects as education, health, economics and management. Men study specialized technical subjects, including agriculture. Gender wages in traditional “female” jobs are 2.5 times lower compared to “male”. Moreover, these jobs are mainly funded by the public sector. Thus, women are not fully benefiting from private sector development, where salaries are higher than in the public sector. As evidenced by data on students attending secondary vocational education in 2017/2018 academic year, girls heavily focused on such sectors as education (89.5 percent), health (77.2 percent) and culture and arts (66.5 percent). Boys selected for study traditional “male” subjects, ICT (70.5 percent) and technical science (83.4 percent). (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Students by subject of study and sex, secondary vocational education, Kyrgyzstan, 2017/2018



In HE, a similar trend is evident. In 2017/2018 academic year, women in Kyrgyzstan selected education (86.6 percent) and service (66.6 percent). Men outnumbered girls in majority of other subjects, particularly in technical science (72.4 percent) and interdisciplinary science (74 percent). (Figure 8). More women than men pursue research degree. Since 2013 women outnumber men in “*aspirantura*” (in old tradition, *aspirantura* was pursued to receive degree “candidate of science”) and “doctorate” studies. However, national statistics does not specify their subjects of study.

Figure 8. Students by subject of study and sex, HE, Kyrgyzstan, 2017/2018



Given the key gender concerns in VET and HE in Kyrgyzstan, the above mentioned policies have several focuses, specifically, one of the strategies is to encourage women to select non-traditional occupations for study and then, jobs. The National Strategy of the KR on achievement of gender equality until 2020 envisages change in this situation. It mentions

that gender asymmetry in the labour market when men have better standing will be overturned in the various economic sectors. It shall result in reduction of vertical and horizontal segregation and implementation of the principle “equal pay for the work of equal value”. The Strategy of Education Development for 2012-2020 targets to increase the share of girls enrolling to VET schools.

Thus, the KR is committed to address current gender inequalities in VET and HE. However, clear strategies that use international experience in this area are missing. For instance, there is a lack of system-wide approach to ensure gender mainstreaming in the education sector. Gender expertise of educational standards, training and methodological materials is not applied. Experts note that a rapid review of these materials revealed that they may reproduce gender stereotypes and perceptions. Besides, teachers are not fully gender competent, because the improvement of knowledge on gender issues is not systematic and not mandatory. Another challenge is the lack of strong human resource capacity and methodologies to build/improve gender competence of teachers inside the teachers training and the improvement of the qualification framework.²² The qualification framework for teachers should include gender dimensions in addition to knowledge of subject, specifically, a requirement of knowledge and skills in pedagogical practices to prevent and overcome gender stereotypes and gender-based discrimination and promote gender equality.

3.3. Tajikistan

The right to education for all is a constitutional guarantee in Tajikistan meaning that it is explicitly established by the Constitution in Article 41, where the state takes over the obligation to ensure fulfilment of this right. The Constitution establishes also a principle of non-discrimination and equality and specifies that all the rights and freedoms are provided to all without distinction on the basis of nationality, race, sex, language, religion, political convictions, and education, social or material status (article 17). This provision is reproduced in the majority of laws including the laws governing the education sector. There are five major laws related to education. The general Law of Tajikistan “On Education” (2013) sets the general framework for all levels of education in Tajikistan. This Law is gender neutral. It only refers to special conditions for children with special needs. The area of VET is governed by three laws: 1) Law on Primary Vocational Education” (2003) and the Law on Secondary Vocational education (2015). Both laws are gender neutral and extend special treatment only to people with special needs, orphans, underage, abandoned children. The third law is the Law “On Adult Education” (2017). It is aimed at the provision of various forms of adult education including formal, non-formal education and informal education with opportunity to validate skills and get the certificate. This Law is also gender neutral.

The Law governing the HE system is the Law “On Higher and Postgraduate education” (2009). It specifies that the system of higher education in Tajikistan is characterised by the principles of “multi-level” and “traditional education”. *Multi-level education* consists of (i) higher professional education leading to a Bachelor degree; (ii) higher professional education leading to a Master degree. *Traditional education* includes higher professional education leading to the degree “Specialist” (article 9). This law is also gender neutral as it doesn’t establish any special measures to advance enrolment of girls to higher education.

²² Kochorbaeva Z et al. (2016), Gender and Inclusive Assessment of Education in Kyrgyz Republic. Analytical Review, pp. 43-44.

Special guarantees on ensuring equal opportunities for men and women in education and science are established by the Law “On State Guarantees of Equal Rights of Men and Women and Equal Opportunities for their Exercise (2005). In Article 6 the following obligations of public and private educational institutions are specified:

- Ensure equal conditions for men and women in receiving basic general education, secondary vocational and higher education, all types of professional education and improvement of qualification for participation in education and science;
- Introduce special gender courses, enable development of research on gender equality, enabling gender education of nationals;
- Use educational curricula and textbooks which exclude propaganda of gender discrimination;
- Establish preferential conditions for girls from mountainous, rural areas for their enrolment to secondary vocational and higher education.
- All these guarantees are equally applicable to all types of education and improvement of qualification in military institutions.

However, these guarantees do not have an effective mechanism of implementation, and they mainly remain declarative. Gender courses, for instance, were not fully introduced to all educational institutions. A course on Women’s Rights was introduced into the curricula on Human rights protection of Law Faculty of the Tajik State National University. A special course on gender-based violence was introduced to the curricula of the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In the Public Service Academy optional courses on gender equality are provided. However, a fully-fledged revision of curricula and / or the introduction of mandatory gender courses across all subjects have not been undertaken to date. The Law on Teaching Literature (2014) establishes criteria of professional and public expertise of quality of teaching literature. It mentioned that one of the criteria of this expertise is the possibility to reflect issues of gender balance and ensure compliance with state educational standards (Article 14). It is a rather vague provision which doesn’t oblige to ensure that upon revision any gender stereotypes need to be removed. State education standards of secondary vocational education (2016) and higher professional education (2017) have no reference to ensuring promotion of gender equality in education.

Tajikistan has adopted a National Development Strategy 2030 and a Mid-Term Development Programme for 2016-2020 in line with SDGs. Both programmes mentioned gender inequality in HE and VET and committed to address them. However, special measures or references to achievement of progress supported by gender-sensitive situational analysis are not fully elaborated in the targets and specific strategies.

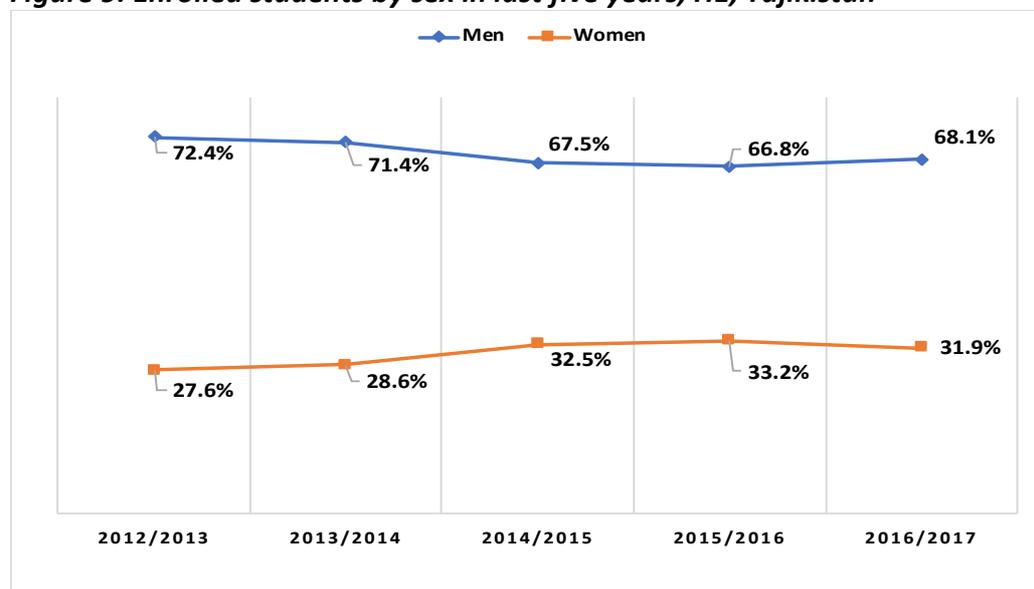
There are several policies specifically focusing on education. These are the Concept of Professional Education Development (2006), National Education Development Strategy until 2020 (2012), State Programme on Reform of TVET System for 2013-2020 (2012). These policy documents provide a gender analysis of the education sector and the access of girls and boys to various levels of education including VET and HE. However, at the level of strategic actions and targets they are gender blind.

Like Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan maintains the prohibition of use of women’s labour in certain occupations. In 2017, by its Resolution the Government of Tajikistan adopted a list of occupations where use of women’s labour is prohibited. This list also establishes permissible limits of manual lifting and movement of weights.²³ Such list restricts opportunities of women to receive VET and HE, and respectively, employment in prohibited sectors.

Based on the gender review of the legal and policy framework, it can be concluded that Tajikistan guarantees equal access to education for men and women. However, equal opportunities for access to education at all levels for women and men are not well-developed. Practical and effective mechanisms of enjoyment of state guarantees of gender equality in education are not fully elaborated and enforced despite the existence of evident gender disparities in access to education at all levels in Tajikistan.

Gender inequality in VET and HE is cumulated starting from the secondary education. There is a persistent gender gap in coverage of boys and girls by education at all levels. Compared to boys, girls have fewer chances to be eligible to access higher education as they are less likely to graduate from a secondary education. If, at the level of primary education, the gender parity index was 0.934 in 2016, at the level of basic education (5-9 grades) it was 0.923. At the level of secondary education (10-11 grades) gender parity index was already 0.838 in 2016.²⁴ Gender gap is widening following mandatory basic education. In this respect, enrolment of girls to higher education was almost three times lower compared to boys in 2012-2014.

Figure 9. Enrolled students by sex in last five years, HE, Tajikistan



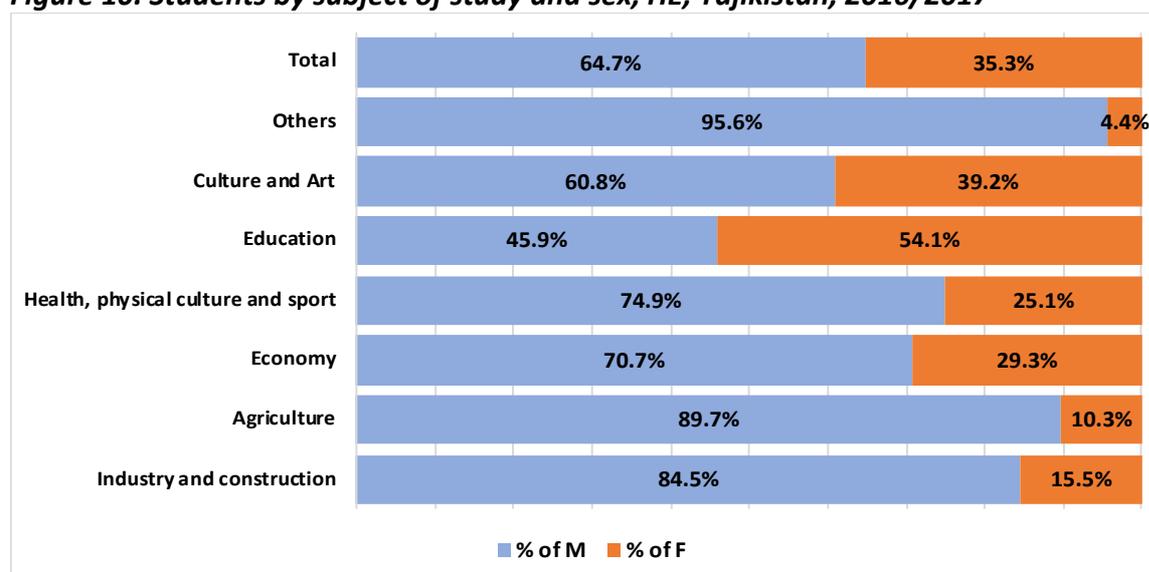
In the last five years, the share of girls enrolled to HE institutions was increasing steadily. In the 2015/2016 academic year, 33.2 percent of all students enrolled to higher educational

²³ Resolution of the Government of Tajikistan No.179 adopted on 4 April 2017.

²⁴ Agency of Statistics under the President of Tajikistan (2017), Education in the Republic of Tajikistan, pp.24-26

institutions were girls.²⁵ (Figure 9). It must be noted that reaching this target of enrolment of women to higher education was assessed as an achievement of the Tajikistan system of HE. This level of enrolment of girls to higher education was registered only in 1991, i.e. right after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.²⁶

Figure 10. Students by subject of study and sex, HE, Tajikistan, 2016/2017



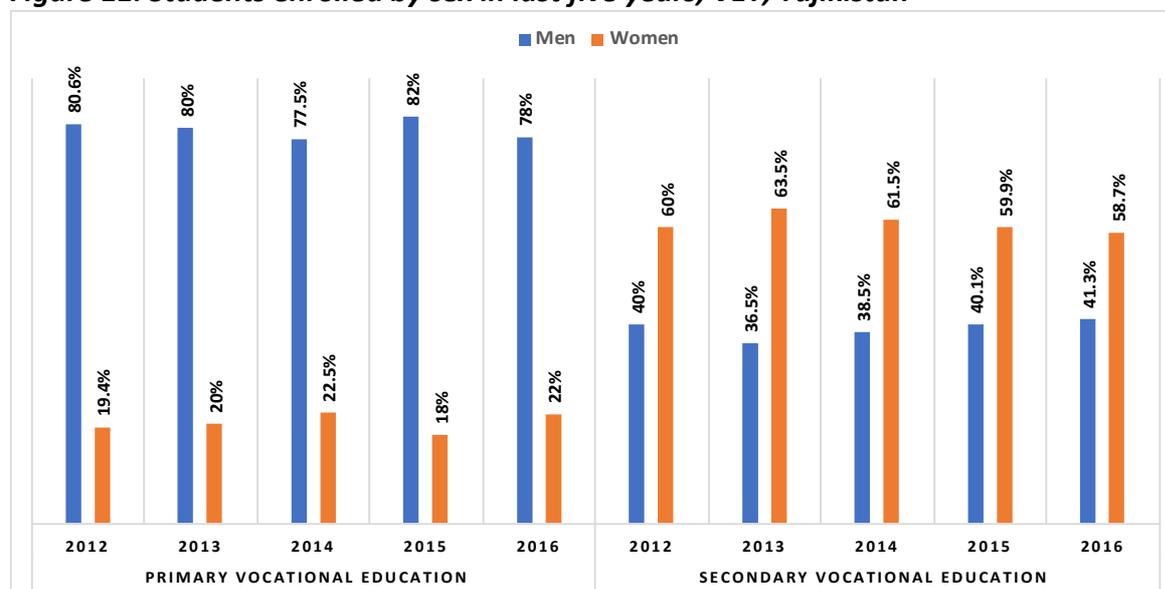
Due to stereotypes girls select traditional “female” occupations and later, this results in gender segregation in the labour market. At the level of HE, in 2016/2017 women largely concentrated in such subjects of study like education, culture and arts followed by economy. Men were highly present all fields of study except education. (Figure 10). There are other dimensions of inequality in access to higher education. There is prevailing rural/urban divide depending on income levels of families. In rural areas, the quality of education is much lower compared to urban areas. People from low-income families face difficulties in accessing higher education due to the commercialisation of the higher education system. In terms of income levels, access of men and women belonging to

²⁵ Agency of Statistics under the President of Tajikistan (2016), Women and Men in the Republic of Tajikistan, p. 80.

²⁶ National Report on Progress of Implementation of Strategic Goals of the National Development Strategy 2030 and Programme of Mid-Term Development for 2016-2020 in line with SDGs, draft report, August 2018, p. 42.

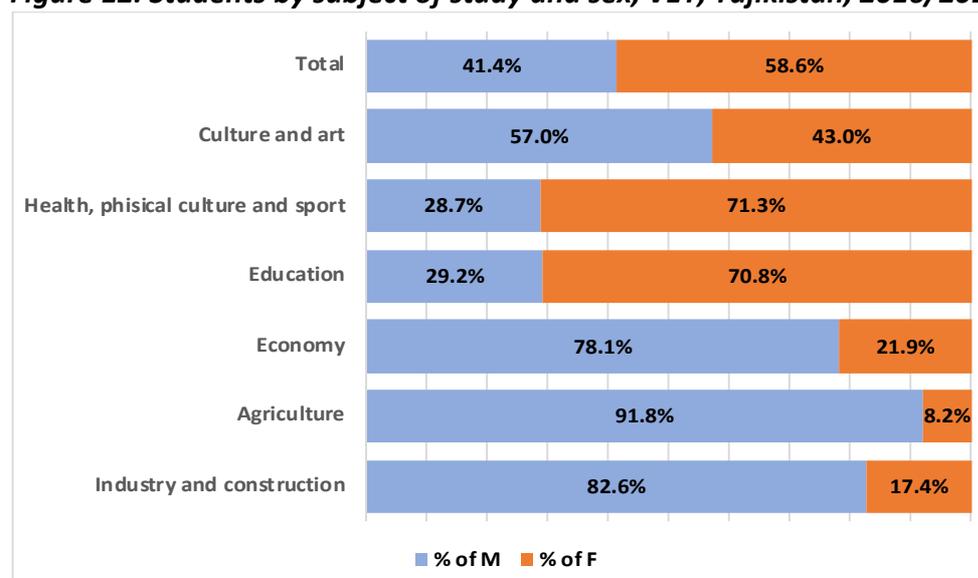
households with high consumption levels, are more likely to complete higher education compared to men and women belonging to households with low consumption levels.²⁷

Figure 11. Students enrolled by sex in last five years, VET, Tajikistan



In Tajikistan, the preferable choice of study for girls is a secondary vocational education compared to a primary vocation education, where boys outnumber girls in almost four times. In 2015, 59.9 percent of all students in secondary vocational education (68.900) were women (Figure 11). This high number of women is a result of their concentration in pedagogical and medical colleges, where participation of girls was almost 72 percent and 70 percent of all students, respectively. In higher educational institutions, women made up 28.8 percent of all the graduates (29.000). Women mainly studied education and culture, health and humanities studies. (Figure 12).

Figure 12. Students by subject of study and sex, VET, Tajikistan, 2016/2017



Short-term skills trainings are highly demanded by women. In 2016, through the Adult Education Centres under the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment, 80.292 people

²⁷ World Bank (2014), the Republic of Tajikistan. Tajikistan: Analysis of the Higher Education Sector, p.23

were trained. 60 percent of them were women and girls 15 years of age and older.²⁸ Despite such high demand of this type of vocational training by women, sex-disaggregated statistics on adult education is not collected and published. The Law “On Adult Education” (2017) has a special reference to the need of collection of statistics on adult education (Article 17). It requires to establish a state statistical reporting on adult education in Tajikistan that needs to be provided by all adult education centres, both public and private. However, such information was not publicly available.

3.4. Uzbekistan

The right to education in Uzbekistan is established by the Constitution, which in its article 41 stipulates that everyone has a right to education. The state ensures the provision of free general education. Schooling is under supervision of the state. Besides that, the Constitution establishes that men and women have equal rights (article 46).²⁹ The Law on Education (1997) ensures equal right to education to everyone regardless of sex, language, age, race, ethnicity, convictions, attitude to religion, social origin, types of actions, public standing, place of residence, length of residence in the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan (article 4). Currently, the education sector in Uzbekistan is being reformed. The new draft law on education and the draft law status of a teacher are being discussed.

Uzbekistan is committed to the achievement of SDGs including SDGs 4 and 5. To this end, in October 2018 the Cabinet of Ministers adopted national sustainable development goals and objectives that shall be achieved by 2030. It is foreseen by the end of 2030 to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls by ensuring that legislation and the practice of implementation of legislation complies with the principle of elimination of indirect discrimination. Besides, by the end of 2030 it is foreseen to provide all women and men equal access to affordable and quality secondary special, higher, professional and additional education.

In Uzbekistan, secondary special education is compulsory. The secondary special education begins after 9th grade, when boys and girls shall continue their education in 10th grade of secondary general school, or vocational college or an academic lyceum. Higher education is provided on free and fee-based basis. In 2017, Uzbekistan adopted an international standard of post-graduate education by introducing a PhD and Doctor of Science degree.³⁰ It also simplified the procedure of recognition of foreign degrees and diplomas.

Each year the President establishes an admission quota for higher educational institutions. In 2018/2019 this quota was the following: (1) for the bachelor degree – 69,200 persons including 17,654 under state grants (free) and 51,546 persons under paid and contract basis; (2) master degree – 5,903 persons including 1,552 under state grant and 4,351 under paid and contract basis; (3) bachelor degree in special correspondent departments – 11,765 persons including 15 under state grants and 11,750 under paid and contract basis.³¹ Since 2019 it is foreseen to repeal such an approach and permit higher educational institutions to

²⁸ Kuddusov, J. (2016), Obstacles in adult education/informal education of women and girls in Tajikistan, unpublished report.

²⁹ <http://www.lex.uz/acts/35869>

³⁰ Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On further improvement of the system of postgraduate education", No.UP-4958 adopted on 16 February 2017.

³¹ Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Admission to Higher Educational Institutions of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2018/2019, 4 June 2018.

define quota independently taking into account “prospective demands of economy and social sphere” and capacities of higher educational institutions.³²

Until recently, Uzbekistan had a special provision for those who completed compulsory military service. They were able to receive another 50 percent score in addition to scores they received during entrance exam to the higher educational institutions. This privilege was provided to former conscripts within the established quota for admission to the higher educational institutions. Obviously, such military service is compulsory for men, who eventually were main beneficiaries of such provision. This privilege was assessed as a discrimination of girls and Uzbekistan’s Vice-President declared that such provision was planned to be repealed.³³ Instead of the provision of such special measure to former conscripts within the existing quota, it was decided to introduce separate quota for former conscripts. Since 2019/2020 special separate quota will be introduced for former conscripts seeking enrolment to higher educational institutions.³⁴ In fact, such an approach is not particularly different from the previous approach. Given that men in Uzbekistan are obliged to undertake compulsory military service, it will turn out in practice that men will be main beneficiaries of this separate quota.

The strategic vision of the reform in the area of education is established by the National Program on Training of Human Resources. This program is aimed “...at radical reform of education sector, complete rejection of its ideological narrow-mindedness, creation of a national system for training highly qualified human resources at the level of developed democratic states that meets the requirements of high spirituality and morality”.³⁵ The program embarks on establishment of life-long learning and covers all stages of education, including VET and HE.

In 2014 the State Committee on Statistics of the Republic of Uzbekistan in cooperation with the Women’s Committee of Uzbekistan established a separate web-page on gender statistics. Nevertheless, obtaining access to reliable gender statistics in Uzbekistan is a major challenge. Current publicly available gender statistics lack globally identified indicators.³⁶ This concern is also relevant to the education sector, where available gender statistics also lacks globally identified indicators. During this gender review, gender statistics for the VET and HE in Uzbekistan that was found in public access was limited compared to other countries reviewed. For instance, it was not possible to find statistics of students in VET and HE disaggregated by sex and subject of study. In this respect, during this gender review it was challenging to access fully gender concerns in HE and VET in Uzbekistan using publicly available gender statistics.

Statistics on enrolment to VET and HE institutions found in public access, demonstrates a persistent gender gap.

Figure 13. Students enrolled by sex in last five years, VET, Uzbekistan, percentage

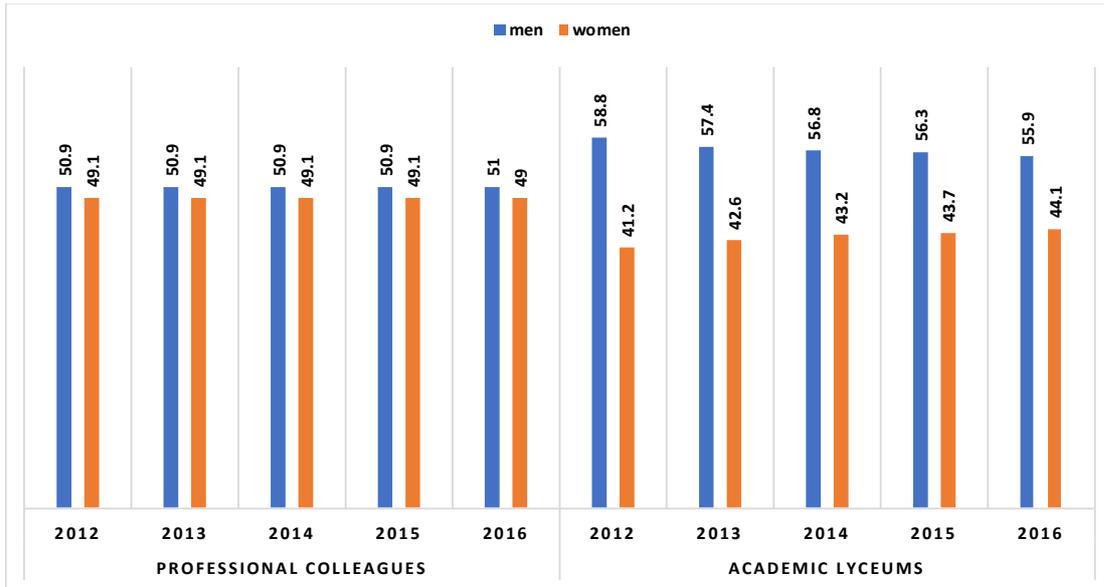
³² <https://kun.uz/ru/74548204>

³³ <https://www.gazeta.uz/ru/2018/08/31/privileges/>

³⁴ <https://kun.uz/ru/74548204>

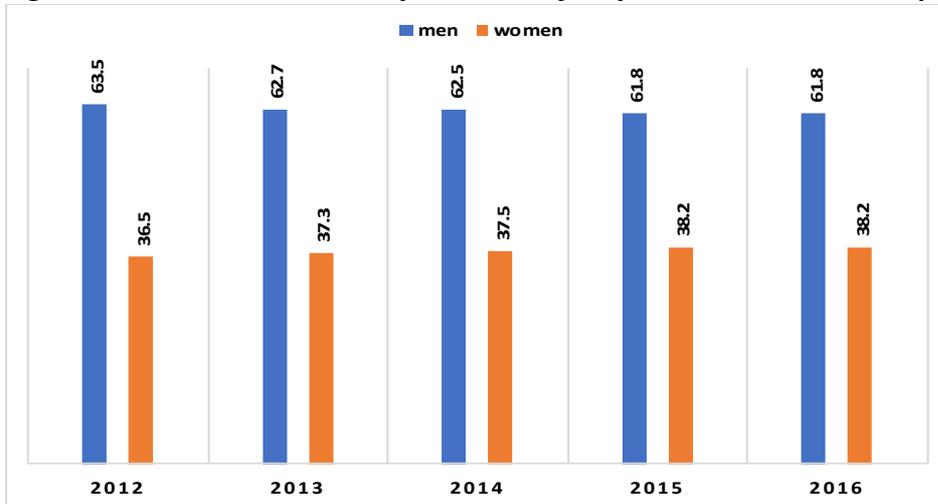
³⁵ National Program on Training of Human Resources, chapter 2.1.

³⁶ ADB (2018), Uzbekistan Country Gender Assessment, Update, p.9



As it was mentioned above, VET in Uzbekistan is compulsory. Figure 13 demonstrates that since 2012-2016 there was a persistent gap in enrolment of girls both in academic lyceums and professional colleagues.

Figure 14. Enrolled students by sex in last five years, HE, Uzbekistan, percentage



A similar trend can be observed in enrolment to higher education institutions. Despite small increase in enrolment of girls to HE since 2012 (by 2 percent), the enrolment of boys to HE is two times higher than of girls.

The reasons of this persistent gender gaps in enrolment to both, VET and HE are similar. Despite formal equality in access to education in Uzbekistan, there are several obstacles for girls to access VET and HE. One of the major obstacles are entrenched gender stereotypes about roles of women and men in families, society. The location of educational institutions (mainly in Tashkent, Samarkand, Andijan) and costs associated with accommodation and travel to location of the VET and HE institutions as well as costs of studies for HE are decisive

for making choices of continuation of education by girls and boys in families. Families, especially low-income, prioritize boys over girls in investing to education. Besides, age of enrollment to HE coincides with the traditionally appropriate marriage age for girls and families tend to prioritize marriages over higher education for young girls.³⁷

The production of gender statistics on enrolment to VET and HE by subject of study was introduced in Uzbekistan since 2017/2018 academic year. According to the available secondary sources of information women tend to select traditional subjects of study like education, health whereas men are concentrated in such fields like engineering, manufacturing, constructions.³⁸ Labor statistics confirm a similar trend. In the labor market, women are heavily concentrated in health, wellness, social welfare and education (81.6 percent), culture, arts, science (72.1 percent). Men are highly concentrated in construction (92 percent) and transport and communication (88.7 percent).³⁹ Like other countries reviewed, Uzbekistan still maintains a list of works with unfavourable working conditions on which use of women's labour shall be fully or partially prohibited. This list was adopted the first Deputy Minister of Labour and first Deputy Minister of Health in 1999. Respectively, women are not able to pursue VET and HE training in the occupations included to this list.

The reviewed legal and policy documents on VET and HE in Uzbekistan revealed that the said documents are gender blind. Despite formal commitment to ensure equal access of all to education (article 41 of the Constitution and article 4 of the Law on Education), legal and policy documents on VET and HE do not include any gender analysis of the situation in VET and HE in Uzbekistan. There is no commitment to introduction of gender education, revision of curricula from gender perspective, introduction of gender courses in VET and HE institutions. The desk review of available studies, researchers and assessment did not identify any course introduced to promote gender equality through VET and HE institutions. Besides, establishment of a separate quota for former conscripts to enter higher educational institutions which will result in more preferential treatment of men in access to higher educational institutions in fact is a manifestation of direct discrimination against women. Despite persistent gender gap in VET and HE institutions, these legal and policy documents do not specify any measures to overcome this gender gap and address root causes of inequality in access to VET and HE in Uzbekistan.

4. Good practice for addressing GEWE in education in the EU and in Central Asia

4.1. Existing initiatives and selected good practice at EU and EU MS level

In the EU, steps were undertaken to change the institutional culture of the Universities and mainstream gender in higher educational institutions and research. EU Universities were encouraged to start first from the gender audit of their institutions and then, develop Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) which outlined priorities to be addressed. The examples presented below are taken from the overview of the Horizon 2020 programme from the programme component, which focused specifically on gender equality in research and innovation strategy.⁴⁰

Systematic gender mainstreaming approach

³⁷ ADB (2018), Uzbekistan Country Gender Assessment, Update, pp.71-72.

³⁸ Ibid, p.72

³⁹ Ibid, p. <https://gender.stat.uz/ru>

⁴⁰ European Institute of Gender Equality (2016), Gender Equality in Academia and Research (GEAR) tool.

In 2012 the French government engaged in a more systematic gender mainstreaming approach to be endorsed by all ministries. One of the achievements of this strategy, coordinated by the Inter-Ministry Council for Gender Equality and the Ministry of Women's Rights, consists of an inter-ministry convention for the equality between girls and boys, women and men, in the educational system (*Convention interministérielle pour l'égalité entre les filles et les garçons, les femmes et les hommes dans le système éducatif*, 2013-2018). This approach aimed to achieve the following objectives: (i) Building and transferring a gender equality culture through mainstreaming gender equality in pedagogical programmes and curricula, and training the academic community. (ii) Strengthening education towards gender equality and mutual respect between girls and boys, women and men. This objective had to be attained through the refined monitoring of gender-based violence at school and improved education about sexuality in order to promote equality. (iii) Moving towards a greater gender balance in all disciplines and at all academic levels, by preventing any gender stereotype in the information given on respective curricula and disciplines, and actively fostering female participation in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Mathematics, Science and Technology (MST). This strategy was implemented by four ministries in charge of different components of the educational system, including the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Higher Education and Research, the Ministry of Employment, Lifelong Learning and Social Dialogue, and the Ministry of Agriculture. It is monitored by the Ministry of Women's Rights.

Gender Equality Plans (GEPs)

Funding agencies and research organisations, including universities, are at the forefront of implementing institutional changes, in particular through Gender Equality Plans. These plans are fully-fledged strategies including a gender audit of the organisation's practices, the implementation of measures and targets to address inequalities, and the monitoring of progress. In the Flagship Programme (FP) 7 and Horizon 2020, the European Commission has supported so far the implementation of GEPs in 113 research organisations and universities through 17 projects, with a contribution of around 39,1 million Euro. In collaboration with the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), the European Commission designed the Gender in Academia and Research (GEAR) Tool which guides academia and private and public research organisations in implementing such plans. It builds on existing practices in the Member States and Associated countries and on the EC funded projects.

Integrating a gender perspective in research and teaching - an award promoted by the University of Santiago de Compostela (ES).

Since 2010, a gender perspective award is being organised on an annual basis by the University of Santiago de Compostela (USC). The award aims to recognise and make visible existing research projects and teaching practices that stand out for integrating a gender dimension. Six prizes are awarded annually: three for teaching achievements (excluding gender-specific courses) and three for research projects in any field (which integrate a gender dimension in hypothesis formulation, research design, methodology, research processes or the dissemination and publication of results). The award is fostering synergies with other initiatives undertaken by the university such as gender training and conferences. The award is remarkably bringing more visibility to gender issues in research and teaching.

Furthermore, synergies were activated with other parallel initiatives (such as conferences and trainings) on which awardees have the possibility to share their research findings or how they managed to introduce a gender perspective in their teaching activity (including obstacles and resistances faced and how these were overcome).

Compulsory awareness-raising session for BA students of the University Paris 7 Diderot (France).

The University Paris 7 Diderot (France) delivers a 3,5-hour compulsory awareness-raising session on gender equality for first grade students as they enter the university (2.700 students/year). It applies to all components and faculties but medicine (law, economics and management, social sciences and humanities, literature and arts, sciences, technology, mathematics). The session is an integral part of the welcome programme of the university, which takes place in September and includes other events such as a forum of associations and a speech from the dean. The session on gender equality is the only event having academic content for which attendance is compulsory. Between 70 % and 80 % of registered students have attended this session since it was put in place (approximately 2.000 students). The session is divided into three parts: 1) distribution of a questionnaire on gender inequalities; 2) a general introduction to gender and sexual identities; 3) broadcast of a conference by neurologist Catherine Vidal: 'Does our brain have a sex?'. It is organised by the Gender Equality Service, established in 2010 as a central service of the university. This practice largely contributes to making gender equality culture an integral part of the institution's identity, bringing insights from research on gender and initiating the fight against gender bias and stereotypes at an early stage of the curricula of future researchers.

Protocol for preventing and tackling sexual harassment and gender-based violence

Paris Institute of Political Studies (Sciences Po) (Paris, France) Fighting sexual harassment ranked among the priorities of the GEP adopted by the university Paris Institute of Political Studies (Sciences Po) (Paris, France) as part of the EU-funded structural-change EGERA project. A comprehensive protocol was designed to monitor, report and take action about potential cases. This protocol targets all categories of users, including students, teaching staff, researchers and other staff. It aims at building an atmosphere based on mutual respect, to prevent any illegal behaviour and to offer victims or witnesses of gender-based violence or harassment a safe environment to report, ensuring the privacy of what they communicate. A monitoring unit consisting of 11 staff was established, who are in direct contact with the different categories of users of the university and the gender equality officers. The members of this unit receive training on a yearly basis. It also includes the dissemination, both in French and English, of guidelines on sexual harassment, as well as a dedicated hotline and postal address, permanently displayed on the internal information system of Sciences Po.

Gender lectureship: a model for mainstreaming in higher education

Following the rationale that gender mainstreaming is possible within every subject, in 2005, Linköping University (Sweden) created gender lectureships in order to assist its faculties on how to mainstream gender equality. The gender lectureships are established by the Vice-Chancellor and aim at actively contributing to mainstreaming gender within the content of study programmes and courses, and at developing pedagogical models for gender-sensitive teaching and gender equality in higher education. Education must be provided in such a way that women's and men's experiences and knowledge are developed in a gender-sensitive

way. This is important to counteract unequal power relations between women and men. During the last decade, gender lectureships have been contributing to continuous work on gender-mainstreaming at Linköping University. In practical terms, the gender lectureships provide resources, competences and sustainability to gender-mainstreaming work. It is a programme that continuously addresses gender issues within the structure of the university. It aims to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in all study programmes, including at PhD level.

In the VET sector, some emerging practices were identified, among them the “Women can Build” initiative funded by the EU in the framework of the Erasmus+ programme.

Women can Build

In July 2017, the Spanish Service for the Internalization of Education under the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport within the European programme Erasmus+ funded an initiative focused on the re-conception of Vocational Training towards an equal construction industry. This initiative is led by the Labour Foundation for Construction and by Spain, also the Agency for Employment of the City of Madrid. It involves partners from Germany, Belgium, France, Italy and Portugal. These partners join forces to overcome persistent barriers for gender equality in the industry. This project will be implemented for three years (until 2020). The following activities are foreseen:

- MOOC courses (Massive Open Online Courses) and a training manual focused on the gender equality competence development for trainers and mentoring skills for tutoring women in the construction sector, providing a recognition system to give value to this competence.
- Guidelines for VET centres to adjust internal mechanisms and training offer and methodologies within a global process of organisational gender equality competence development.
- An Action Plan with a roadmap and support services for companies towards gender balance, promoting an equal participation of women and men in all areas of work.
- A “learning-by-doing” model through an immersive training experience, in which a group of women will carry out the construction, on a small scale, of a nearly Zero Energy Building (nZEB), enhancing their employment options by learning “green” issues, as an important employment niche in the sector.

This is not a first initiative aimed at integration of women in construction sector. But they were mainly focused at the local level. “Women can Build” initiative aims to link main sectoral VET providers with public authorities and social partners of the industry beyond national roadmaps towards a change of paradigm in construction sector at the European level. The ambition is that this approach will be replicated in other sectors, countries or institutions.⁴¹

4.2. Selected good practice in Central Asia

In Central Asia, a comprehensive approach on mainstreaming gender in education and research is not yet established. As it was mentioned above, holding of mandatory gender expertise of all courses and curricula, teaching and learning materials is not yet introduced.

⁴¹ http://www.womencanbuild.eu/en/the_project/

Such practice like adoption of Gender action plans in the Universities and VET Schools is not common, as yet. Nevertheless, it was possible to identify several good practice in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. These examples are implemented with support of donors, civil society organisations and in some cases upon initiatives of management of the Universities and VET schools.

Injener Qyzdar (IQ) in Kazakhstan (Girls Engineers in Kazakhstan)

In 2018, the Eurasian Technological University in Kazakhstan introduced an initiative to increase the number of women studying technical and engineering subjects. For this purpose, the Rector of the University endorsed women's scholarships for engineering and technical subjects. The objective is to break stereotypes about female and male occupations. The scholarship called "Injener Qyzdar (IQ) will be introduced in 2018-2019. The scholarship will be awarded to girls studying such subjects as "mechanical engineering", "transport, transport techniques and technologies", "energy" and "information systems". This scholarship is funded by the University. This is a new initiative, and rules of assignment of scholarships are being developed and will be approved soon.

The Center for Critical Gender Studies in Kyrgyzstan

In July 2017, the American University of Central Asia (AUCA) opened the Center for Critical Studies in Kyrgyzstan. The Center operates under the funding of AUCA and funds for specific projects are raised from wide range of donors including United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), World Bank, Sexual Violence Research Initiative and so on. The Centre aims at the establishment of an innovative forum and research on gender, sex and sexuality issues. This Centre offers several programmes at the level of higher education and additional education. The Centre opened a Master programme on Gender Studies. There are also specialised gender courses introduced for programmes in Humanities and Science, MA in Sociology. As to further education, the Centre holds annual lectures on innovative and multidisciplinary approaches where researchers may present their works. The Centre also holds original research on gender issues. Students, lecturers, researchers closely cooperate with each other to undertake the research and disseminate data. Currently, the Centre implements the following Projects: 1) impact of expansion of rights and opportunities of communities on access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, services with focus on transgender men and women in Kyrgyzstan; 2) Fight with cultural violence in Kyrgyzstan through the use of innovative education and information technologies; 3) training manual: poverty, environment and gender; 4) sustainable development: environment and gender. As mentioned above, the Centre offers the first academic programme on gender studies in CA. This programme consists of multidisciplinary classes related to such issues as gender, sexuality. The programme is a mix of theoretical and empirical components.

School of Satellite Construction for Girls in Kyrgyzstan

This is an initiative of the civil society organisation Kloop Media and targets only girls.⁴² It was initiated by groups of girls from Kyrgyzstan who would like to construct the first satellite of the country. This group of girls would like to start constructions from the beginning, specifically, from studying of engineering and physics of orbital flights. Objective of this

⁴² <https://kloop.kg/kyrgyz-space-program-for-girls/>

schools is to create an environment where girls can study non-traditional occupations like robotics, space science, artificial intelligence and other related subjects. The School is purely funded through crowdfunding campaign. It is widely supported by social networks, information campaigns and encourages gender equality in education and professional development. Currently, girls study engineering and will continue soon with specialised trainings on satellite construction.

Gender Equity Model Programme for VET in Tajikistan

In 2016, the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of Tajikistan and ADB started a Project on Strengthening Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). The final Project outcome is to develop demand-driven, quality-assured, and flexible TVET system responsive to labour market needs. The project consists of four outputs, as follows: (i) TVET system methodology modernized; (ii) physical learning facilities in selected TVET institutions upgraded; (iii) access to quality TVET programs improved; and (iv) governance and management of TVET system strengthened. Gender is mainstreamed across all four outputs. In addition to that, under the Output III the Project established a Gender Equity Model Programme (GEMP). GEMP is aimed at promotion of enrolment of women and girls to VET with focus on non-traditional subjects such as agriculture and food industry; constructions; energy; tourism and services; transport and communication. GEMP selected 17 training programmes, of them 12 are non-traditional for women in Tajikistan (e.g. welder, plumber, electrician, finisher, track driver and mechanic, bricklayer and so on). GEMP developed a set of criteria for selection of girls and women to be enrolled to the GEMP. In essence, GEMP offers girls and women from vulnerable groups (low-income families, lonely women, single mothers and other girls and women whose vulnerable status is confirmed by the public authorities) to attend long-term and short-term vocational education and training in non-traditional occupation and assist in finding employment. The project established agreements between a girl/woman, lyceum/adult education center and employer to ensure that upon graduation, beneficiaries are able to practice their skills and find employment after the end of their engagement to GEMP. This agreement specifies that the employer is responsible for the provision of employment to a girl/woman recruited through the project, i.e. to provide a job for at least a six month period after termination of the agreement. GEMP provides scholarships for girls during period of internship. The Project pays fees for employment for training girls and women during internship. The salary of a girl/woman upon the termination of agreement is paid by the employer. The Project also plans to rehabilitate infrastructure of the selected VET schools. Trainings on gender equality, HIV/AIDs were provided to prospective construction companies. One of the preconditions for eligibility of participation in tenders for constructions works is participation in the gender training provided by the Project. During rehabilitation, construction companies have to ensure that buildings of VET schools, dormitories are responsive to safety, hygiene and sanitation needs of girls, and provide safe environment for boys and girls to study and live in the dormitory.

5. Challenges for Implementation

Both, EU and Central Asian countries established firm commitments to achieve gender equality in education in VET and HE in their constituting documents, legislation, policies and plans. However, EU and Central Asian countries face similar challenges of gender inequality in education which further translate in gender segregation in the labour market. At the EU

level, in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, women outnumber men in higher education and in research. Tajikistan still strives for ensuring equal access of boys and girls to VET and HE. In Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, men considerably outnumber girls in primary vocational education.

Gender segregation in education and labour market is evident at the EU level and in the reviewed CA countries. Gender segregation is a result of many factors specific for each country. However, a common pattern for the EU and CA countries is a choice of subjects of study that are perceived as traditionally “female” and traditionally “male”. As a result, men mainly concentrate in STEM disciplines and women in EHW. Similar patterns are replicated in the labour market. Despite enforcement of policies of equal pay for the work of equal value, gender wage gap is still persistent at the EU level. In Central Asian countries, gender wage gap is also a common feature in the labour market due to horizontal and vertical gender segregation in the labour market.

One of the main outcomes of this Gender review of the VET and HE system in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan is, that these countries establish strong guarantees of the right to education to everyone and stress importance of gender equality in the education. However, these guarantees are not supported by strong implementation mechanisms which by contrast were developed and enforced at the EU level. In Uzbekistan, policies and legislation do not establish formal commitment to ensure gender equality in VET and HE and promote gender education. Policy and legal framework of the EU in education and gender equality is supported by several practical tools and guidelines pertinent education sector policies and laws; institutional frameworks; content of education; teachers training; individual Universities and so on.

This review identified the following common challenges to gender equality in HE and VET in Central Asia:

- None of the countries under review has applied an effective system-wide approach to gender mainstreaming in education and research. Practices like gender audit of institutions, ministries, revision of human resource policies, or the adoption of temporary special measures to address gender inequalities are not systematically applied.
- None of the legislation of the countries reviewed envisages mandatory gender expertise. Thus, it was not conducted in development or adaptation of new curricula, teaching and learning materials and textbooks. Methodologies of holding such gender expertise and capacities on how to hold such expertise are not developed in the public sector.
- Most of good practices on GEWE in VET and HE, except for those identified in Kazakhstan were developed externally, e.g. with use of donor resources or in private institutions. Thus, sustainability of these practices raise concerns. The only specialised Center and MA programme on gender studies was identified in Kyrgyzstan in AUCA. This is the only HE institution in Central Asia, which provides professional education on gender issues and hold academic research on gender equality based on international standards.
- National capacities on gender equality in the Ministries and in VET and HE institutions require particular attention. Given the commitment of all CA states to implement SDGs

including SDG 5 on gender and SDG 4 on inclusive and equitable education and lifelong learning opportunities for all, gender competence of staff; gender statistics in education sector which also reflects vulnerable groups; effective and practical strategies aimed at achievement of de-facto gender equality in education should be a prerequisite for achievement of said SDGs.

- CA countries reviewed continue to apply restrictive regime on use of women's labour in selected occupations. Having such lists is contrary to international labour standards and as such, they pose a restriction on women's access to all VET and HE subjects of study.
- Common challenge for all four countries reviewed is a structural gender inequality which perpetuates gender segregation in education and labour market in these countries.

6. Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed as part of this Gender review of VET and HE:

- Introduce a system-wide approach to gender mainstreaming in education. Based on example of France such approach should be focused at i) Building and transferring a gender equality culture through mainstreaming gender equality in pedagogical programmes and curricula, and training the academic community. (ii) Strengthening education towards gender equality and mutual respect between girls and boys, women and men. This objective had to be attained through the refined monitoring of gender-based violence at school and improved education about sexuality in order to promote equality. (iii) Moving towards a greater gender balance in all disciplines and at all academic levels, by preventing any gender stereotype in the information given on respective curricula and disciplines, and actively fostering female participation in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Mathematics, Science and Technology (MST). Such an approach should be supported by robust monitoring and evaluation framework to assess progress of achievement of gender equality in education and through education. For this purpose, availability of gender statistics on coverage of boys and girls by all levels of education; enrolment of boys and girls at all levels of education; graduation of boys and girls at all levels of education starting from preschool; staff of educational institutions broken by sex, position and educational levels; enrolment and graduations by subjects of study in VET and HE, postgraduate education and research and so on is important to measure progress in line with SDG 4 and SGD 5.
- Adopt Gender Equality Plans for Ministries governing the education sector and VET and HE schools or institutions. These Gender Actions Plans shall have the following set of actions: 1) conducting impact assessments/audits of procedures and practices to identify gender bias; 2) identifying and implementing innovative strategies to remove any gender bias identified; 3) setting targets and monitoring progress via indicators.

A GEP can be broken up into different steps or phases, each requiring specific types of interventions.

1. An analysis phase, in which sex-disaggregated data is collected; procedures, processes and practices are critically assessed with a view to detecting gender inequalities and gender bias.

2. A planning phase, in which objectives are defined, targets are set, actions and

measures to remedy the identified problems are decided, resources and responsibilities are attributed and timelines are agreed upon.

3. An implementation phase, in which activities are implemented and outreach efforts are undertaken so as to gradually expand the network of stakeholders.

4. A monitoring phase, in which the process and the progress are regularly followed up and assessed. Findings from the monitoring exercise(s) allow adjustment and improvement measures and activities, so that the results can be optimised.

Source: European Institute of Gender Equality (2016), Gender Equality in Academia and Research (GEAR) tool, p. 8.

- Introduce compulsory mandatory gender expertise of education and training curricula, teaching and learning materials prior to approval, and review current and newly developing curricula, teaching and learning materials from a gender perspective to remove any gender bias and avoid reproducing stereotypes via education. To this end, develop a clear methodology of gender expertise, train a pool of public servants on holding gender expertise or engage experienced gender experts, civil society organisations for holding such expertise.
- Repeal legislation restricting women's opportunities to be engaged in all the jobs and occupations available in the labour market and, respectively, enrolling to subjects of study for these jobs and occupations. Instead of maintaining such restrictions, adopt strategies and roadmaps for gradual improvement of occupational safety and health standards of hard, hazardous and heavy works to ensure safety of both, men and women willing to work in such occupations.
- Initiate and implement various strategies to encourage women to select "non-traditional" subjects of study through early professional job orientation and career guidance; demonstration of examples of women working in non-traditional jobs; encouraging parents to support their daughters in selection of non-traditional jobs; establishing incentives like scholarships, safe and healthy conditions of study and living outside of residence compliant with safety, hygiene and sanitation needs of girls and boys.
- Promote more active engagement with civil society organisations and private sector on GEWE in HE and VET through use of their expertise on gender equality in development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policies in the field of HE, VET; support the establishment of models of cooperation between HE and VET schools and private sector to secure employment of girls trained in non-traditional sectors and others.
- Improve gender competence of Ministerial staff and teaching staff through mandatory gender equality courses, implementation of GEPs, advancing research on gender equality in the country, opening specialized master programs on gender studies and integration of gender courses across all the subjects.

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Kazakhstan

1. Ouataeva, L, Senior Specialist, Department of strategy, monitoring and coordination of activities of higher educational institutions of the Department of Higher and Postgraduate education of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
2. Konyrbaeva S., Assistant Professor of the Pedagogy Chair, Scientific and Research Institute of Social and Gender Studies of the Kazakh State Women's Pedagogical University;
3. Atash B., Senior Lecturer of the Pedagogy Chair, Scientific and Research Institute of Social and Gender Studies of the Kazakh State Women's Pedagogical University;
4. Shakirova S., Director of the Department on Scientific works and innovations, Kazakh State Women's Pedagogical University;
5. Temirbekova J., Rector, Eurasian Technological University;
6. Sher R., Director of the Republican Training and Methodological Center of Additional Education of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Kyrgyzstan

1. Tajybai A., Member of the Public Council of the Ministry of Education and Science of Kyrgyz Republic;
2. Kanybekova A., Research Department, American University of Central Asia;
3. Kim E., Head of programme "Psychology", American University of Central Asia;
4. Alyabieva V., Assistant of Head on Enrolment of Students, American University of Central Asia;
5. Beishembaeva A., Chief Inspector of the Agency of Primary and Secondary Professional Technical Education under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic;
6. Joldosheva A., Head of Psychology Chair of the Osh Humanitarian University;
7. Mamytova A., former rector of the Public Administration Academy under the President of Kyrgyz Republic;
8. Islambekova B., Senior Lecturer of the Postgraduate study department of the Kyrgyz National University after Balasagyn.

Tajikistan

1. Mirzoeva V., GEM Program Coordinator, ABD TVET Reform Program in Tajikistan;
2. Shokirova M., Head of Gender Program, Project Implementation Unit of the ADB TVET Reform Program in Tajikistan under the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of Tajikistan;
3. Kholova G., Gender Consultant, ADB in Tajikistan.