



## Analytical review

# *“Gender Dimension of Education in the Kyrgyz Republic”*

**Проект «ДаткаЙым – Продвигаем гендерное равенство по-новому»**

**HERo – New narratives towards a gender equal society**

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# 1. INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS OF KYRGYZSTAN AND NATIONAL LEGISLATION TO ENSURE EQUAL RIGHTS AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

## 1.1. Review of international documents in the field of gender equality and inclusive education

According to Article 6 of the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic<sup>1</sup> international treaties that have entered into force in the manner prescribed by law, to which the Kyrgyz Republic is a party, as well as generally recognized principles and norms of international law are an integral part of the legal system of the Kyrgyz Republic. At the same time, "the norms of international treaties on human rights have direct effect and priority over the norms of other international treaties."

The right to education is one of the fundamental human rights recognized at the level of the international community and proclaimed in international documents.

Thus, in particular, they include:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948;
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966<sup>2</sup>;
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966<sup>3</sup> and Optional Protocols thereto;
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979<sup>4</sup>;
- Convention against Discrimination in Education, 1960<sup>5</sup>;
- Convention on Technical and Vocational Education 1989<sup>6</sup>;
- Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989<sup>7</sup>;

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<sup>1</sup>Enacted by the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic dated May 5, 2021

<sup>2</sup>The Kyrgyz Republic joined by resolution of the JK dated January 12, 1994 N 1406-XII

<sup>3</sup>The Kyrgyz Republic joined by resolution of the JK dated January 12, 1994 N 1406-XII

<sup>4</sup>The Kyrgyz Republic joined by resolutions of the Legislative Assembly of the JK dated January 25, 1996 Z N 320-1 and Assembly of People's Representatives of the JK dated March 6, 1996 P N 257-1

<sup>5</sup>The Kyrgyz Republic joined by resolutions of the Legislative Assembly of the JK dated June 8, 1995 Z No. 132-1 and Assembly of People's Representatives JK dated June 10, 1995 P No. 96-1

<sup>6</sup>The Kyrgyz Republic joined by resolutions of the Legislative Assembly of the JK dated June 8, 1995 No. 128-1 and V JK dated June 10, 1995 No. 91-1

<sup>7</sup>The Kyrgyz Republic joined by resolution of the JK dated January 12, 1994 N 1402-XII.

- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006<sup>8</sup> and etc.

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is the first global set of rights that all human beings enjoy. It notes that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights (Art. 1).

In accordance with paragraph 1 of Article 2 of the UDHR, every person must have all rights and all freedoms without any distinction, such as: in relation to race, skin color, sex, language, religion, political or other beliefs, national or social origin, property, class or other status.

Other rights proclaimed by the UDHR relevant to the purposes of this study include:

- the right to equal protection against any kind of discrimination, and from any kind of incitement to such discrimination (art. 7);
- to education (Article 26), and technical and vocational education must be publicly available.

**1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)** is also the most important international document in the field of human rights. It also contains a list of human rights, among which, for the purposes of the study, we can distinguish as follows:

- everyone's right to education. At the same time, secondary education in its various forms, including vocational secondary education, should be open and made available to everyone by taking all necessary measures and, in particular, the gradual introduction of free education (Clauses 1, 2, Article 13).

At the same time, the Covenant notes that “States undertake to ensure that the rights proclaimed in this Covenant will be exercised without discrimination of any kind, such as: with respect to race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other beliefs, national or social origin, property status, birth or other circumstances (Clause 2, Article 2 of the ICESCR)

According to Article 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966, all persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law. In this regard, discrimination of any kind must be prohibited by law, and the law must guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any grounds such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property status, birth or other circumstances.

In accordance with Clause 1 of Article 28 of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to progressively achieving the realization of this right on the basis of equal opportunity, they, in particular:

- a) introduce free and compulsory primary education;

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<sup>8</sup>Approved by the Decree of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic dated September 16, 2011 N 422

- b) encourage the development of various forms of secondary education, both general and vocational, ensure its accessibility to all children and take such necessary measures as the introduction of free education and the provision of financial assistance in case of need;
- c) ensure that higher education is accessible to all on the basis of the abilities of each by all necessary means;
- (d) ensure that information and materials in the field of education and training are accessible to all children;
- (e) take measures to promote regular school attendance and reduce the number of students dropping out of school.

Separately, the Convention reflects the position of the States Parties regarding children with disabilities. In particular, Article 23 notes that the states:

- Recognize that a mentally or physically handicapped child should lead a full and dignified life in conditions that ensure his dignity, promote his self-confidence and facilitate his active participation in society;
- Recognize the right of the handicapped child to special care, and encourage and ensure that, subject to the availability of resources, to the eligible child and responsible for the care of the child, assistance requested and appropriate to the condition of the child and the situation of the child's parents or other caregivers;
- In recognition of the special needs of the handicapped child, assistance shall be provided, to the extent possible, free of charge, taking into account the financial resources of the parents or other persons providing care for the child, and is intended to ensure that the handicapped child has effective access to services in the field of education, vocational training, medical care, rehabilitation of health, preparation for work and access to recreational facilities in a manner that leads to the fullest possible involvement of the child in social life and the achievement of the development of his/her personality, including the cultural and spiritual development of the child.

The main document in the field of ensuring gender equality is, of course, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979 (CEDAW Convention). By joining the CEDAW Convention, the state has committed itself to take measures to change the social and cultural patterns of behavior of men and women in order to achieve the eradication of prejudices and the abolition of customs and all other practices that are based on the idea of inferiority or superiority of one of the sexes or the stereotype of the role of men and women (Article 5). Article 2 of this international document emphasizes that the participating States condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue without delay by all appropriate means a policy of eliminating discrimination against women.

With regard to ***the right to education*** as an inalienable right of everyone, Article 10 of the CEDAW Convention states that States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure their equal rights with men in the field of education and, in particular, to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:

- a) the same conditions for orientation and choice of a profession or specialty, for access to education for obtaining diplomas in educational institutions of all categories, both in rural and urban areas; this equality is ensured in preschool, general, special and higher technical education, as well as in all types of vocational training;
- b) access to the same curricula, the same examinations, teaching staff of the same qualifications, school premises and equipment of the same quality;
- (c) removal of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging co-education and other types of education that will help to achieve this goal, and in particular by reviewing textbooks and school curricula and adapting teaching methods;
- d) the same opportunities for scholarships and other educational benefits;
- (e) equal opportunities for access to continuing education programs, including adult literacy and functional literacy programs, aimed in particular at closing any knowledge gap between men and women as soon as possible;
- (f) reducing the number of girls dropping out of school and developing programs for girls and women who drop out of school prematurely;
- g) the same opportunities to actively participate in sports and physical training;
- h) access to specific educational information to help ensure the health and well-being of families, including information and advice on family planning.

**Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women 1995 (BPA)**, also contains key points regarding the status of women in education. Paragraph 69 of the BPA sees it as a human right and an essential means of achieving goals such as equality, development and peace. “Non-discriminatory education benefits both girls and boys, and thus ultimately contributes to the development of more equal relations between men and women. Equity in access to and opportunity to receive education is essential if more women are to become active agents of change.”.... “Investing in formal and non-formal education and training for girls and women, with exceptionally high social and economic returns, has proven to be one of the best means of achieving sustainable development goals and economic growth that is both continuous and sustainable”.

The following are named as strategic goals in the field of education in the **BPA**:

- *Ensuring equal access to education*
- *Eradication of illiteracy among women*
- *Increasing women's access to vocational training, science and technology education and continuing education*
- *Development of non-discriminatory approaches to education and training*
- *Allocation of sufficient resources to carry out reforms in the field of education and monitor the progress of their implementation.*

The most important reference point for the Kyrgyz Republic was the Sustainable Development Goals (17 goals, hereinafter referred to as the “SDGs”), which, following the Millennium Development Goals, established, among others, the main directions that are needed in the field of education and gender equality. In particular, among them:

- [Ensuring inclusive and fair quality education and promotion of opportunities for lifelong learning for all](#) (SDG 4)

Achievement of this goal will ensure that all children receive free primary and secondary education in 2030. This goal also aims to ensure equal access to vocational training by addressing issues such as gender and social inequality in order to achieve universal access to quality higher education. The international community has a collective responsibility to ensure that every child in the world has the opportunity to learn. The fight to ensure education for all requires the mobilization of financial resources, as well as strengthening the fight against discrimination, child labor and child trafficking.

- [Ensuring gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls](#) (SDG 5)

Providing women and girls with equal access to education, health care, decent work and participation in political and economic decision-making will contribute to economic sustainability and benefit society and humanity as a whole.

**The Convention against Discrimination in Education**, Article 3 establishes that in order to eliminate or prevent discrimination .... states...commit to:

(a) repeal all legislative ordinances and administrative orders and stop administrative practices of a discriminatory nature in the field of education;

(b) take, if necessary, by law the measures necessary to eliminate all discrimination in the admission of students to educational institutions;

**Convention on Technical and Vocational Education of November 10, 1989** recognizes the need to make special efforts for the technical and vocational training of women and girls. The operation of the Convention concerns all forms and levels of technical and vocational education. In doing so, “the contracting States shall ensure that no person possessing the requisite level of knowledge for admission to technical and vocational schools shall be subjected to discrimination on grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religion, national or social origin, political or other beliefs, economic status, birth or any other grounds” (Clause 3, Article 2), as well as “take measures to ensure the right of equal access to technical and vocational education and equality of educational opportunities during the educational process” (Paragraph 1, Clause 4, Article 2).

## 1.2. Review of normative legal acts in the field of gender equality and education

**The Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic determines** the most important provisions concerning human rights in general and gender equality in particular. In the context of the study, the following norms can be cited:

- Human rights and freedoms are inalienable and belong to everyone from birth (Part 1, Article 23);
- The Kyrgyz Republic provides all persons within its territory and under its jurisdiction with the protection of their rights and freedoms (Paragraph 1, Part 1, Article 24);
- *Nobody* can be discriminated against on the basis of sex, race, language, disability, ethnicity, religion, age, political or other beliefs, education, origin, property or other status, or other circumstances (Paragraph 2, Part 1, Article 24);
- Special measures established by law and aimed at ensuring equal opportunities for various social groups in accordance with international obligations are not discrimination (Paragraph 4, Part 1, Article 24);



- In the Kyrgyz Republic, men and women have equal rights and freedoms, equal opportunities for their realization (Part 3, Article 24);
- It is prohibited to promote national, ethnic, racial, religious hatred, gender and other social superiority, calling for discrimination, hostility or violence (Part 4, Article 32).
- *Everyone* has the right to education (Part 1, Article 46);
- Basic general education is mandatory (Part 2, Article 46);
- *Everyone* has the right to receive basic general and secondary general education free of charge in state educational organizations (Part 3, Article 46);
- The state creates conditions for everybody to learn state, official and one international languages, starting from preschool education institutions to basic general education (Part 4, Article 46);
- The state creates equal conditions for the development of state, municipal, private and other forms of educational institutions (Part 5, Article 46);
- The state promotes the professional development of citizens in the manner prescribed by law (Part 7, Article 46).

Thus, the Constitution outlines the main directions that the adopted normative legal acts must comply with.

In accordance with Article 5 of the **Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Guaranteed State Minimum Social Standards"**<sup>9</sup>, the system of social standards includes, along with others, social standards in the field of education. They, according to Article 8 of the Law, consist of norms and standards that provide a minimum level of social protection for students at all levels of education. The following social standards are established in the field of education:

- preschool;
- school;
- primary, basic and secondary;
- primary, secondary vocational;
- higher professional.

Every citizen is required to receive primary, basic and general secondary education in state and municipal educational institutions free of charge.

The conceptual provisions laid down by the Constitution and the named Law find their development in the norms of sectoral legislation.

Education, according to Article 4 of the **Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Education"**<sup>10</sup>, is a priority strategic direction of the state policy of the Kyrgyz Republic and among the principles of its organization, along with others, are named:

- equality of rights of all citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic to receive a quality education<sup>11</sup>;
- mandatory and free of charge for every citizen to receive secondary education in state and municipal educational institutions;

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<sup>9</sup> Dated May 26, 2009 N 170

<sup>10</sup> Dated April 30, 2003 N 92

<sup>11</sup> At the same time, the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic speaks of the right of everyone to education

- the possibility of obtaining free primary, secondary and higher vocational education in state educational institutions within the requirements of state educational standards;
- the humanistic nature of education, the priority of universal human values in combination with national cultural wealth, the education of citizenship, diligence, patriotism and respect for human rights and freedoms;
- the secular nature of education in educational institutions;
- general accessibility of secondary general education, compliance of the education system with the levels and characteristics of the development and training of students; and etc.

The foundations of gender equality in education and other areas are laid down in the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic “On State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Men and Women”<sup>12</sup>. It establishes state guarantees for the provision of equal rights and opportunities to persons of different sexes in the political, social, economic, cultural and other areas of human life; designed to protect men and women from discrimination based on sex; aims to establish progressive democratic relations between men and women.

Article 5 of the said Law prohibits direct and indirect gender discrimination, and the latter, among other things, includes the reproduction of gender stereotypes through the media, education, culture, as well as the establishment of conditions, requirements that have caused or may cause negative consequences in the form of harm to persons of a certain gender.

The main regulatory legal acts regulating the field of education in the Kyrgyz Republic are:

- Law "On Education" dated April 30, 2003 N 92;
- Law "On preschool education" dated June 29, 2009 N 198;
- Law "On the status of a teacher" dated January 14, 2001 N 9;
- Law "On Primary Vocational Education" dated November 26, 1999 N 129, etc.

The norms of the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Education" are generally formulated as gender-neutral. Only Article 3 establishes the right of citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic to education, regardless of gender, nationality, language, social and property status, health limitations, type and nature of occupation, religion, political and religious beliefs, place of residence and other circumstances.

Fundamentally important in the Law is the norm according to which the state pursues a policy of social protection of children to involve them in the general educational process, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity and religion, educational achievements, socio-economic status and takes on state support orphans, as well as children with disabilities (hereinafter referred to as "Health Limitations").

Clause 1 of Article 5 of the **Law of the Kyrgyz Republic** “On preschool education” states that preschool children who are citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic, regardless of race, political, religious and other beliefs of their parents, gender, ethnic and social origin, property status, place of residence, language or other characteristics, have equal rights to receive preschool education in preschool educational organizations.

Article 1 of the Law contains the concepts "inclusion" - the process of working with children with special needs, as well as "inclusive education" - education that ensures its availability for vulnerable categories of children, including those with special needs, taking into account the creation of conditions for their learning.

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<sup>12</sup> Dated August 4, 2008

Article 4 of the Law calls for ensuring the right of every child to receive pre-school education, as well as early identification of the individual developmental needs of the child and the provision of appropriate special or inclusive education and related services.

According to Clause 1, Article 7 of the Law, among preschool educational organizations, a specialized kindergarten for children with disabilities stands out (disorder of speech, intellectual development, vision, hearing, musculoskeletal system).

The state standard "Preschool education and childcare" establishes that its implementation ensures "...accessibility and creation of conditions for each child to receive a quality preschool education for the implementation of inclusive education."

Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On the status of a teacher" is gender-neutral and does not contain special norms regarding inclusive education. Rules of Article 4, devoted to the principles of the teacher's pedagogical activity, only refers to the prevention of direct, hidden and (or) indirect discrimination, restriction of rights or provision of privileges to students on the basis of *gender*, race, language, *disability*, ethnicity, religion, age, origin, property or other position and other circumstances.

Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On primary professional education" is also gender-neutral, does not contain provisions regarding inclusive education.

Children's Code of the Kyrgyz Republic<sup>13</sup> proclaims that the state policy in the field of ensuring the rights and interests of children is aimed, among other things, at observing the principles of gender equality (Clause 4, Part 1, Article 6).

According to Parts 6, 7 of the Article 106 of the Code, for children with disabilities who are not able to receive education in educational institutions on a general basis, in accordance with the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic, as well as for orphans and children left without parental care, special conditions are created, including the opening of special groups, classes, state or municipal centers for rehabilitation, adaptation, providing them with free education, vocational training, social adaptation and integration into society. The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, represented by the authorized body in the field of education, annually provides a quota in state higher educational institutions for the education of persons with disabilities free of charge.

In accordance with Article 33 of the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On the Rights and Guarantees of Persons with Disabilities" (hereinafter referred to as "PWD"),<sup>14</sup> the state guarantees persons with disabilities the creation of the necessary conditions for access to information, education and training. Educational institutions, together with social protection and health authorities, provide preschool, out-of-school upbringing and education for children with disabilities, receive secondary general, primary vocational, secondary vocational and higher vocational education in accordance with an individual rehabilitation program.

The law also foresees forms of education, receiving pre-school education, school education, out-of-school education, primary, secondary and higher vocational education for people with disabilities, upbringing and education at home, vocational training and advanced training for people with disabilities.

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<sup>13</sup>Dated July 10, 2012 N 100

<sup>14</sup> Dated April 3, 2008 No. 38

To analyze the situation in the field of education with a view to ensuring gender equality, the following policy documents were selected:

1. National Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic to achieve gender equality until 2020, approved by the Decree of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic dated June 27, 2012;
2. Education Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2012-2020, approved by the Decree of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic dated March 23, 2012;
3. The Concept for the Development of Education in the Kyrgyz Republic until 2020, approved by the Decree of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic dated March 23, 2012;
4. National Action Plan for Education for All, approved by the Government Decree dated July 30, 2002 No. 504

**In National Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic to achieve gender equality until 2020** it is noted that the sphere of education plays one of the key roles in establishing gender equality. The presence of generalized knowledge and skills of an applied nature, ranging from the use of technology to the ability to communicate with one's own child, is an important component that ensures both economic growth and an increase in the quality of life in general.

**In Education Development Strategy in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2012-2020 (EDS)** it seems that its implementation will ensure the creation of an education system that prepares citizens who, among other things, will share the values of human rights and freedoms, gender equality, for which one of the tasks is to create a system of strategic planning and management in the education sector based on collection technologies and analysis of information, including on the basis of gender-disaggregated statistics. The percentage increase in the proportion of girls entering primary vocational schools is named as one of the main indicators of primary vocational education.

The EDS predicts that in 2020 the Kyrgyz Republic will ensure a significant improvement in the quality of education and the provision of training that meets the current level of social, political and economic development of the Kyrgyz Republic, equal access to quality education. The implementation of the EDS 2020 will ensure the creation of an education system that prepares citizens who, among other things, will have strong communication skills, as well as share the values of human rights and freedoms, gender equality, and respect cultural, ethnic and political diversity.

With regard to inclusive education (IE), its provision is named as one of the policy priorities. In the education system, by 2020, among other things, the integration of IE at all levels of education will take place, while maintaining specialized schools for children with disabilities. The indicators of primary vocational education include the number of developed inclusive programs for teaching young people outside of schools and people with disabilities.

**The concept of development of education in the Kyrgyz Republic until 2020** sees that “by 2020, the education system will allow inclusion of inclusive approaches to learning at all levels of education, with an emphasis on the education of children with special needs and children with disabilities.”

Thus, the analysis of legislation and law enforcement in the aspects of gender and inclusive education revealed the following main problems, for the solution of which the following recommendations are proposed:

	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Solution recommendations</i>
	consistency of the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic “On education” with the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic in terms of the right to receive basic general education	the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic “On education” in line with the Constitution to ensure the right of everyone to receive education
	legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic in the field of education is gender-neutral. Laws of the Kyrgyz Republic “On preschool education”, “On the status of teacher”, “On primary vocational education”, state educational standards, etc. contain general regulations, but do not contain mechanisms for ensuring gender equality	conduct a gender analysis of education legislation and make appropriate changes and recommendations
	lack of physical access for PWDs to most educational institutions	develop and approve Technical regulations for reconstruction and overhaul of educational facilities at all levels, taking into account the needs of people with disabilities

## 2. GENDER ASPECTS AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF EDUCATION: ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 2.1. Preschool education: issues and recommendations

Despite all the achievements in the field of preschool education (an increase in the coverage of children with preschool education (from 6.2% in 2003 to 22% in 2020) by programs of pre-school preparation, advanced training for teachers, approval of the State Educational Standard "Preschool education and child care", etc.), a number of issues with gender effects remain relevant. Among them:

- ***Low enrollment in preschool education<sup>15</sup>(22%)***

To date, there are 1,648 preschool educational organizations (PEOs) in the Kyrgyz Republic, educating 196,123 children. Of the total number of children attending preschools - 99,955 boys, 96,168 girls. Thus, the coverage of children depending on gender does not have significant differences.

<sup>15</sup>Official website of the National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic:  
<http://www.stat.kg/ru/statistics/obrazovanie/>

The low enrollment of preschool children is becoming more of a “female” problem, since the education, upbringing and care of children who do not attend preschool institutions falls mainly

on mothers, who are forced to endure, as a result, a decrease in their own economic activity, lose their qualifications, and, therefore, in the future experience great difficulties in finding a job, its performance, including career advancement and wages. Thus, the low enrollment of children in pre-school education exacerbates the problems of gender inequality as a consequence. Forced in the future to combine productive and reproductive functions, women, as a rule, have a lower level of wages.

- ***The gap in the enrollment of children in preschool organizations in rural and urban areas, as well as a regional gap***

The coverage of preschool children in urban areas is higher (29.1%) than in rural areas (20.2%)<sup>16</sup>.

Attendance at preschool educational programs correlates with mother's education: children of mothers with higher education are almost twice as likely to attend such programs compared to mothers with basic general education.<sup>17</sup>

- ***Gender imbalance in teachers of preschool educational organizations, contributing to the maintenance of gender stereotypes***

This imbalance originates from segregation in vocational education. Thus, the ratio of women and men among students of educational organizations in the specialty "Education" at the beginning of the 2019/2020 academic year was 88.1% and 11.9%, respectively.<sup>18</sup>, which indicates an increase in gender disparity (for example, at the beginning of 2011/2012, this ratio was 80.4% and 19.6%, and at the beginning of 2014/2015 it was 86.0% and 14.0%, respectively).<sup>19</sup>). At the same time, the number of teaching staff in preschool educational institutions in 2017 amounted to 10,927 people, of which 10,408 were women.<sup>20</sup>

- ***The issue of the quality of educational services provision in preschool educational organizations***

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<sup>16</sup>Official website of the National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic:  
<http://www.stat.kg/ru/statistics/obrazovanie/>

<sup>17</sup>Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2014: Final Report. - P. 147

<sup>18</sup>Women and men of the Kyrgyz Republic: Compilation of gender-disaggregated statistics. 2010-2019. P. 101 // <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-zhenshiny-i-muzhchiny-kyrgyzskoj-respubliki/>

<sup>19</sup>Women and men of the Kyrgyz Republic: Compilation of gender-disaggregated statistics. 2010-2014 2015P. 47 // <http://stat.kg/media/publicationarchive/534f0c98-fb76-4922-b8c1-6b8b8f44ba27.pdf>

<sup>20</sup>Education and Science in the Kyrgyz Republic: 2013-2017. – P. 48 // <http://www.stat.kg/media/publicationarchive/96f08785-4102-4037-9650-bfe7315eaa68.pdf>



Thus, at the end of 2017, the preschool educational institutions had<sup>21</sup> 7,267 people (66.5%) out of 10,927 employees. The advanced training of employees working in preschool education is not put on a systematic basis, which also affects women to a greater extent, since they are the vast majority of employees of preschool education.

Thus, the analysis of the gender aspects of preschool education revealed the following main problems, for the solution of which recommendations are offered:

	<i><b>Issues</b></i>	<i><b>Solution Recommendations</b></i>
	Low enrollment in preschool education (18.7%), including the gap in enrollment in rural and urban areas, as well as the regional gap, and the workload of state and municipal preschools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeted state funding for the opening of new preschool educational organizations (hereinafter - PEO), especially in rural areas</li> <li>• Expansion of public-private partnership when opening new preschools</li> <li>• Improving the taxation of preschools as socially significant objects and state regulation of marginal prices for services of private preschools</li> <li>• Development of a network of departmental and sponsored preschool educational institutions</li> <li>• Development of a quota system for children with disabilities in private schools</li> <li>• In the Decree of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic "On assessing the effectiveness of the activities of state executive authorities and local self-government bodies of the Kyrgyz Republic" dated February 17, 2012 N 105, by the criterion of the number of children attending preschools, in % of the total number of children, evaluate the effectiveness of not only the MES, but also LSG.</li> </ul>
	Gender imbalance in preschool teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Popularization of pedagogical specialties among young men;</li> <li>• Increasing wages for preschool workers</li> </ul>
	Insufficient competence of gender preschool workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender training of preschool workers to increase gender sensitivity on a systematic basis and as part of targeted training</li> <li>• Gender expertise of educational and methodological complexes and standards of preschool educational institutions</li> </ul>

<sup>21</sup>Education and Science in the Kyrgyz Republic: 2013-2017. – P. 50 // <http://www.stat.kg/media/publicationarchive/96f08785-4102-4037-9650-bfe7315eaa68.pdf>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inclusion of gender competence in the educational standards for the training of teachers for preschool educational institutions</li> </ul>
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## 2.2. School education: issues and recommendations

If at the beginning of the 2015/2016 academic year there were 2218 daytime general education organizations in the Kyrgyz Republic, then by the 2020/2021 academic year their number increased by 78 schools. The number of students in such organizations increased by 3.4% compared to the previous year.

In the current academic year, more than 82 thousand teachers are employed in general education organizations, of which more than 80% have higher education.<sup>22</sup>

School enrollment varies by grade level:

Number of students in daytime general education organizations by class (at the beginning of the 2019/2020 academic year) <sup>23</sup>				
	Total students	including		
		1-4 grades	5-9 grades	10-11 grades
Total, person	<b>1 311 478</b>	<b>639742</b>	<b>563 959</b>	<b>107 777</b>
<i>Girls</i>	646 060	311 843	275 424	58 793
<i>Boys</i>	665418	327 899	288 535	48 98
Percentage of total enrollment				
<i>girls</i>	49.3	48.7	48.8	54.6
<i>boys</i>	50.7	51.3	51.2	45.4

The highest is observed in elementary school (grades 1-4). At the same time enrollment in secondary school is declining (grades 5-9). At the beginning of 2019/2020, the ratio of girls to boys (in%) in grades 1-4 was 48.7/51.3, and by grades 10-11 it is 54.6/45.4. Thus, there is a downward trend in enrollment of children in school, especially among boys. Girls are more likely to be educated in upper secondary school.

In general, the following problems with gender effects can be traced in school education:

- Inequality in the enrollment of children in school education depending on gender, the level of education of the child, as well as on the territory***

<sup>22</sup>Official website of the National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic:  
<http://www.stat.kg/ru/statistics/obrazovanie/>

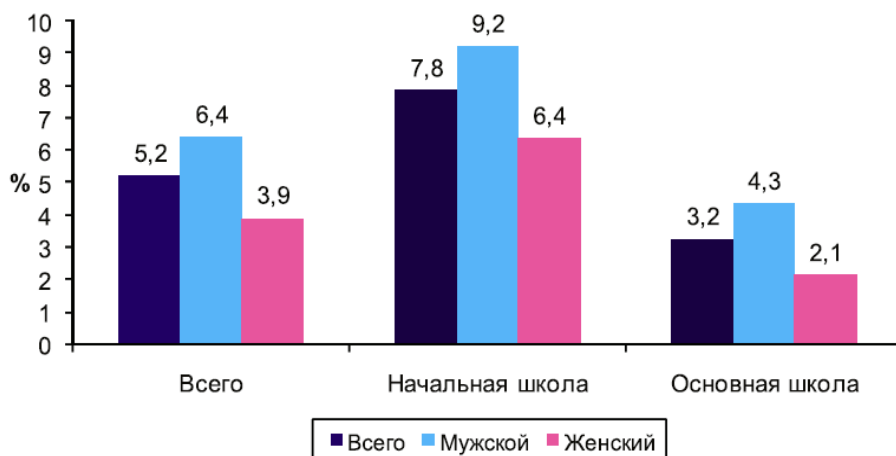
<sup>23</sup>Women and men of the Kyrgyz Republic: Compilation of gender-disaggregated statistics. 2010-2019. P. 94 // <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-zhenshiny-i-muzhchiny-kyrgyzskoj-respubliki/>



Studies conducted in Kyrgyzstan also show that in terms of the gender structure of schoolchildren in various age categories, there is a dependence of the size of the imbalance on the age of children, as well as on the territory of their residence.

The excess of the enrollment rate for girls over the corresponding indicator for boys is especially noticeable in Bishkek and Osh, in the Chui region surrounding the capital - in those regions where the number of children studying exceeds their statistical number.

As noted by experts<sup>24</sup>, the proportion of children not enrolled in school or dropping out of school at the primary and secondary levels of education is 7.8% and 3.2%, respectively. The chart shows the proportion of out-of-school children by gender and schooling level.



Доля девочек среди не посещающих школу детей несколько ниже, чем доля мальчиков (6,1% против 8,9%). Подобная ситуация характерна как для начальной, так и основной и средней школ, при этом процент отсева девочек из школы также более низкий.

The share of girls among out-of-school children is slightly lower than the share of boys (6,1% against 8,9%). This situation is typical for primary as well as basic and secondary schools. At the same time, the dropout rate of girls from school is also lower.

- ***The dependence of the reason for dropping out of the school system on the gender of the child and socio-cultural factors***

This is mainly due to poverty, the irresponsibility of parents and the early start of labor activity in order to earn money. Boys drop out of the school system, on average, more than twice as many as girls. Without proper educational training, they join the ranks of the unemployed. There are more homeless children and delinquents among them.<sup>25</sup>

Boys are more likely to want to continue their studies in vocational schools or are forced to join income-generating activities. It is noteworthy that in a number of regions a different phenomenon is observed: the enrollment of boys is greater than the corresponding figure for girls.

<sup>24</sup>Children not attending school in Kyrgyzstan. - Bishkek, 2008. - P. 16-18

<sup>25</sup>Kyrgyz Republic: Third Progress Report on Achieving the Millennium Development Goals MDGs. - P.35  
file:///C:/Users/admin/Downloads/KGZ\_Third\_MDG\_Progress\_Report\_2014\_RUS.pdf

This is typical for the two northern oblasts - Naryn and Issyk-Kul, as well as for all the southern oblasts of the country (Batken, to a lesser extent Jalal-Abad and Osh oblasts). Almost all oblasts (except Issyk-Kul) are oblasts with a low level of enrollment in basic education, but at the same time they are all subsidized. In Naryn oblast, there are two pronounced trends at the same time. The first is the general decline in the enrollment of children in basic school education, and the second is that the decline in the enrollment of girls is occurring at a faster rate. Boys leave school more for economic reasons, girls drop out of school due to certain traditions. One of them is early marriage: in Kyrgyzstan, 12.2% of girls marry before adulthood. Marriage before the age of 18 in rural areas is one and a half times more common than in urban areas.<sup>26</sup>.

Experts also note that one of the reasons for girls dropping out of school is the higher “value” of female labor in the traditional areas of agriculture for the south (growing and processing tobacco). In the northern regions, oriented towards animal husbandry, a greater contribution of male labor is required.

Working children, to varying degrees, lose their connection with school and interrupt the process of obtaining secondary education. As a result, a significant number of children enter the unskilled labor market.<sup>27</sup>.

The problems of enrolling children in education remain, apart from poverty and the need to earn money, the low responsibility of parents for the performance of duties towards children, the lack of measures to influence disadvantaged families and families at risk, high turnover and a shortage of inspectors for minors, the lack of psychologists, social teachers in educational institutions.

Thus, the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic practically does not allow influencing parents who prevent their children from attending school. Despite the presence in the Code of Administrative Liability (CAL) Article 65, sufficient law enforcement practice has not been formed. So, according to the specified article of the CAL, “non-performance or improper performance responsibilities on upbringing and education of minor (teenager) by a parent or other person who is entrusted with these duties as well as a teacher or other employee of educational, medical or other institution, obligated to exercise supervision over a minor - shall entail a warning or imposition administrative a fine of three to five calculated indicators.

Malicious non-compliance responsibilities on upbringing and education of minor (teenager) - entails the imposition of administrative fine from five to ten calculated indicators with the involvement of public work for eight hours”. If these actions entailed the systematic use by minors of alcoholic beverages, narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, or vagrancy or begging, as well as the commission by them of an act containing signs of a crime or intentional administrative offenses - entail the imposition of administrative fine from ten to twenty calculation indices.

***The vast majority of school teachers are women, which reinforces the stereotype that education is a "women's" business***

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<sup>26</sup>Kyrgyz Republic: Second Progress Report on Achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Second edition (updated and revised). B., 2010. - P. 25

<sup>27</sup>Kyrgyz Republic: Second Progress Report on Achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Second edition (updated and revised). B., 2010. - P. 25

In the composition of the teaching staff of general education schools, as in previous years, a gender imbalance continues to persist, due to the fact that teaching, as a profession, remains the prerogative of women.

At the beginning of the 2019/2020 academic year, the proportion of women in the total number of teachers was 85.3 percent, and men - 14.7 percent. At the same time, the number of women prevails both among primary school teachers (grades 1-4) and secondary (5-11) grades.

The dynamics of the number of teachers, excluding the level of education, is presented in the table. It shows that there is a trend towards an increase in the gender disproportion of teachers<sup>28</sup>.

	Всего, человек	в том числе		Удельный вес в общем числе учителей, в процентах	
		женщины	мужчины	женщины	мужчины
2015/2016	75 529	63 345	12 184	83,9	16,1
2016/2017	79 472	66 784	12 688	84,0	16,0
2017/2018	80 773	68 176	12 597	84,4	15,6
2018/2019	77 639	65 924	11 715	84,9	15,1
2019/2020	78 552	66 976	11 576	85,3	14,7

Since the majority of school teachers are women, it is obvious that they are the ones who are underpaid, which makes them more vulnerable. At the same time, the low salaries of school teachers prevent the influx of male teachers into schools, and those male teachers who work in schools tend to occupy leadership, and therefore higher paid positions.

The Education Development Strategy in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2012-2020 does not list as indicators the reduction in the disproportion in the gender composition of teachers, which contributes to the maintenance of gender stereotypes in education. Increasing the percentage of male teachers, combined with other factors, could help overcome gender bias and stereotypes.

- ***Insufficient gender sensitivity of educational standards, educational and teaching materials***

One of the criteria and indicators that ensure that educational literature meets the requirements of modernity is their gender sensitivity.<sup>29</sup>

The CEDAW Committee also drew attention to this problem.<sup>30</sup>, whose Concluding Observations on the Fourth Periodic Report of Kyrgyzstan states that the lack of gender expertise on a regular basis contributes to the formation of gender stereotypes.

- ***Insufficient gender competence of school teachers***

<sup>28</sup>Women and men of the Kyrgyz Republic: Compilation of gender-disaggregated statistics. 2010-2019. P. 98 // <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-zhenshiny-i-muzhchiny-kyrgyzskoj-respubliki/>

<sup>29</sup>Regulations and Practical guidance for evaluating the content and structure of a new generation of educational books. - Bishkek, 2006. - P. 42.

<sup>30</sup>Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the Fourth Periodic Report of Kyrgyzstan

It is also necessary to improve the qualifications of teachers, including in the area of gender sensitivity, and further analyze by gender the composition of teachers who have undergone advanced training both in their own pedagogical qualifications and qualifications in the field of gender sensitivity.

Thus, the analysis of the current situation in the field of school education from the point of view of gender aspects revealed the following key problems, for the solution of which recommendations are offered:

	<i><b>Issues</b></i>	<i><b>Solution Recommendations</b></i>
	Inequality in the enrollment of children in school education depending on gender, the level of education of the child, as well as on the territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving and institutionalizing the procedure for identifying, responding to and interdepartmental interaction on the facts of children dropping out of schools (through joint orders of ministries and LSGs or through a model Regulation of the Government)</li> <li>Improving the enforcement of the norms of legislation on the responsibility of parents for the non-receipt of basic general education by children</li> <li>Include as a criterion for the effectiveness of LSG activity the number of children attending school, as a percentage of the total number of school-age children.</li> </ul>
	Dropout of children, especially after grade 9 due to forced labor employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LSGs and social protection authorities to introduce targeted funding for low-income families whose children continue to attend school after grade 9</li> </ul>
	Dropout of girls due to forced entry into de facto marital relations, including as a result of kidnapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthening parental responsibility for early marriages</li> <li>Establish the responsibility of clergy for conducting marriage ceremonies in relation to minors</li> <li>Educational authorities and LSGs should carry out systematic information and preventive work among parents and the local population about the inadmissibility and negative consequences of early marriages</li> <li>Implementation at the local level of a system for detecting and responding to cases of school non-attendance by girls</li> </ul>
	Dropout of children, especially girls, due to the religious and cultural beliefs of parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving the enforcement of the norms of legislation on the responsibility of parents for the non-receipt of basic general education by children</li> <li>MES, when developing and adopting standards regarding the appearance of schoolchildren, be guided by the interests and rights of the child to receive education</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SAMK (Spiritual Administration of Muslims in Kyrgyzstan) to adopt a document on the need to ensure that parents receive general education for their children</li> </ul>
	Gender imbalance in the composition of school teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Popularization of pedagogical specialties among young men;</li> <li>Increase of school employees' salary</li> </ul>
	Insufficient gender competence of school staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender education of school staff to increase gender sensitivity systematically and through targeted training</li> <li>Gender expertise of teaching materials and school education standards</li> <li>Inclusion in the educational standards for the training of teachers for schools of gender competence</li> <li>Implementation of a system for monitoring the application of the acquired knowledge and skills by those trained in advanced training courses for teachers on gender education.</li> </ul>

### 2.3. Professional education: issues and recommendations

According to the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic “On Education”, professional education in the country is represented by the following stages:

- Primary vocational education (includes training, advanced training and retraining of skilled workers);
- Secondary vocational education (involves training and retraining of mid-level specialists on the basis of basic general or secondary general education);
- Higher professional education (includes training and retraining of bachelors, specialists and masters in order to meet the needs of the individual in deepening and expanding education on the basis of secondary general, secondary professional and higher professional education);
- Postgraduate professional education (involves the implementation of training programs for scientific and scientific-pedagogical personnel with academic degrees of candidate and doctor of science).

The number of primary vocational education organizations (PVEOs) in 2019 amounted to 99, however, the number of students decreased by 7.5% compared to 2017 and amounted to more than 29 thousand people.

The table presents data on the number of people studying in vocational education organizations.

2015/2016 2016/2017 2017/2018 2018/2019 2019/2020

Численность учащихся образовательных организаций начального профессионального образования	28 845	30 492	31 738	29 870	29 684
в том числе:					
девушки	8 590	9 152	9 926	8 966	8 960
юноши	20 255	21 340	21 812	20 904	20 724
Численность студентов образовательных организаций среднего профессионального образования	89 605	90 585	91 877	91 535	91 531
в том числе:					
девушки	50 539	51 079	52 250	51 402	51 573
юноши	39 066	39 506	39 627	40 133	39 958
Численность студентов образовательных организаций высшего профессионального образования <sup>1</sup>	199 505	175 430	161 406	164 585	183 778
в том числе:					
женщины	106 700	94 465	85 861	86 925	95 752
мужчины	92 805	80 965	75 545	77 660	88 026

<sup>1</sup> Включая филиалы ВПУЗов и стран СНГ.

In general, the following problems with gender effects can be traced in vocational education:

- ***The overwhelming majority of PVEO students, in contrast to secondary and higher vocational education, are boys, as well as the low attractiveness of vocational education for girls, in comparison with educational institutions of higher vocational education***

In the Education Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2012-2020, approved by the Decree of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic dated March 23, 2012, gender disproportion in personnel training was noted as a problem, when the number of workers in the country is significantly lower than the number of specialists with higher education. As one of the policy indicators in this document, the percentage increase in the share of girls enrolling in primary vocational education institutions is 30% for the base year 2011, +5% for the mid-term 2014, and +10% for the 2020 milestone<sup>31</sup>.

The number of boys in PVEO is more than 2 times higher than the number of girls. Consequently, the state spends more money on primary vocational training for men.

“Such “unpopularity” of the system of primary vocational education among girls and women occurs against the backdrop of a high level of unemployment, including among women with higher

<sup>31</sup>Education Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2012-2020, approved by the Decree of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic dated March 23, 2012



professional education, as well as against the background of almost 80% of the demand for graduates of the system of primary vocational education in local and external labor markets"<sup>32</sup>.

- ***Presence of restrictions in the right to free choice of professions for girls***

The list of professions for which training is conducted in educational organizations primary professional education, approved by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic (resolution of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic dated July 28, 2003 N 473 "On approval of List of professions of primary vocational education in the Kyrgyz Republic"). Moreover, the names of some professions initially contain gender stereotypes (for example: a crane operator, a miner, a mistress of the estate, a seamstress, etc.).

In the List of industries, jobs, professions and positions with harmful and (or) dangerous working conditions, where the use of women's labor is prohibited, approved by the Decree of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic dated March 24, 2000 No. 158; The maximum allowable load standards for lifting and moving weights manually, approved by the Decree of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic of December 2, 2005 No. 548, set absolute (a complete ban on the use of women's labor) and relative (a ban on loads in a certain amount) restrictions. The work of women is generally not allowed, for example, as a livestock slaughterer, explosives workers, dye worker, electric locomotive driver. The work of women is allowed, for example, with lifting and moving heavy loads, but taking into account the maximum permissible mass of goods.

Researchers of this issue note that one of the main reasons for the current situation is stereotypical ideas that believe that a "real" man is not afraid of dangers, does not complain about difficulties, etc. Thus, it is assumed that a priori male labor should be hard and harmful, and "Male" jobs are often reproduced in precisely this way<sup>33</sup>. This is especially evident in working specialties associated with the performance of physical work. Accordingly, health and safety issues are not a priority in such situations.

At the same time, the rationale for the prohibition of certain professions for women in connection with their reproductive functions (pregnancy, childbirth) does not stand up to criticism, because male reproductive health is also essential for procreation. Thus, this policy as a whole should be reviewed in the direction of improving working conditions and labor protection for all, especially in the context of the development of new production technologies that do not require only physical strength.

- ***Gender disproportions in the composition of students in vocational education organizations in various areas***

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<sup>32</sup>Report on gender gaps in access to training in the system of vocational education and employment opportunities for graduates of vocational schools (prepared by NGO "Innovative Solutions")

<sup>33</sup>See: Glushkova M., Moldosheva A., Tretyakov A., Tretyakova T. Gender Analysis of the Labor Market in Kyrgyzstan. Analytical report on the results of a study conducted within the framework of the ILO and the Government of the Netherlands project "Promoting youth employment through an integrated approach to decent work". Bishkek, 2007

The highest proportion of women prefer to study in such areas as consumer goods technology (88.6%), education (88.1%), healthcare (78.8%), culture and art (72.4%), service 58%. At the same time, it is rather low in such areas as energy (6.2%), mining (3.3%)<sup>34</sup>



As indicators of the achievement of priority policy areas in the EDS, the share of graduates employed under a contract concluded between educational institutions and the employing organization, the share of teachers who participated in advanced training programs are indicated, but there are no requirements for disaggregation by sex. Such data would contribute to the achievement of gender equality in the field of secondary vocational education.

One of the indicators for assessing priority policy areas in the EDS is the percentage of increase in the number of applicants admitted to the SVE organization, which at the initial level of 2011 is 3%, in the medium-term forecast for 2014 it is planned to be 15%, and by 2020 approximately 25%.

<sup>34</sup>Women and men of the Kyrgyz Republic: Compilation of gender-disaggregated statistics. 2010-2019. P. 98 // <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-zhenshiny-i-muzhchiny-kyrgyzskoj-respubliki/>



Thus, it can be stated with certainty that gender segregation in the labor market by industry originates from vocational education. Men make up more than 90% of workers in the mining industry, in construction, transport and communications, in the production and distribution of electricity, gas and water, and women - 76.0% of workers in education, 78.5% - in health care and the provision of social services<sup>35</sup>. To overcome this situation, the National Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic on achieving gender equality until 2020 states as one of the directions that “gender asymmetry with more advantageous positions of men will cease to be a key characteristic of the labor market in various sectors of the economy, which in turn will serve to reduce the vertical and horizontal segregation and will lead to the implementation of the principle of “equal pay for work of equal value”.

According to Clause 4 of Paragraph 4. Implementation of the goals and objectives of the National Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic to achieve gender equality until 2020, “at the level of institutional and procedural changes, opportunities will be explored and special measures will be applied to attract boys and girls to non-traditional specialties in vocational education institutions, as well as access to obtaining relevant qualifications and professions for women.

Changes in the level of representation will be observed in the reduction of segregation in the labor market and the reduction of the wage gap between women and men to 20%. As a result of the measures taken, traditional ideas about women's types of employment will be changed, women will master highly paid specialties and professions.

There are 57 higher educational institutions in the republic, of which 40 are state-owned, 17 are non-state.<sup>36</sup>. At the beginning of the 2014/2015 academic year, among the students of educational organizations, women accounted for 54.7%. Traditionally, the share of women studying is high in the following areas: education - 86%, life science - 81%, journalism and information - 78.1%, service sector - 68.4%, business and management - 53.8%, art - 57%, mathematics and statistics - 56.4%, while in transport it was only 9%.

- ***Lack of a systematic approach to the introduction of gender expertise in educational standards, educational and teaching materials***

In fact, the tool of gender expertise is not used in the process of developing educational standards, educational and methodological complexes in the system of vocational education. At the same time, even with a quick review of educational materials, visual means of their presentation, a gender bias is obvious in reflecting the roles of women and men in historical, social, economic, political, cultural, and other development. This, in turn, contributes to the perpetuation and reproduction of gender biases and stereotypes.

- ***Insufficient gender competence of teachers of vocational education organizations***

Increasing the gender competence of vocational education teachers is not mandatory and systematic, which in turn does not guarantee that they will not avoid discriminatory practices and the reproduction of gender biases and stereotypes in their work. At the same time, there is an

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<sup>35</sup>Ibraeva G., Karybaeva M., Kochorbaeva Z. Implementation of a gender approach in sectoral policies of the Kyrgyz Republic. Methodological guide. Bishkek, 2011. - P.47

<sup>36</sup>Official website of the National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic:  
<http://www.stat.kg/ru/statistics/obrazovanie/>

obvious lack of human resources and methodological support for advanced training courses on gender issues.

	<i><b>Issues</b></i>	<i><b>Solution Recommendations</b></i>
	Restriction of the freedom to choose a profession for girls, gender stereotyping of certain areas of study and specialties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out a gender analysis of the list of professions for which training is provided in educational institutions of primary vocational education (Government of the Kyrgyz Republic dated July 28, 2003 N 473) and make appropriate changes</li> <li>• Revise prohibitions and restrictions in the choice of professions in the direction of improving working conditions and labor protection for all, especially in the context of the development of new production technologies that do not require only physical strength</li> </ul>
	The vast majority of students in organizations of primary vocational education, in contrast to secondary and higher vocational education, are boys (the number of boys is more than 2 times higher than the number of girls). Lower attractiveness of vocational education, especially for girls, compared to higher vocational education institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion of working professions among girls through special campaigns, especially in rural areas</li> <li>• MES to introduce incentive mechanisms for heads of primary vocational education institutions that have managed to reduce the gender imbalance among students</li> <li>• Create an Internet portal with full information about the opportunities and benefits of obtaining different professions using special materials aimed at changing gender stereotypes and prejudices in relation to different professions</li> <li>• In the event of the revival of the system of educational and industrial complexes based on school education, ensure equal rights and opportunities for girls and boys to acquire a profession</li> </ul>
	Gender disproportions in the composition of students in institutions of secondary vocational education in various areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a gender-focused career guidance work to overcome gender stereotypes in relation to certain specialties (including the gender-correct language of information materials)</li> </ul>
	Lack of a systematic approach to the introduction of gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement a methodology for gender expertise of educational standards, educational and teaching materials</li> </ul>



	expertise in educational standards, educational and teaching materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give gender expertise the status of a mandatory procedure at the stage of development and approval of educational standards, educational and teaching materials</li> </ul>
	Insufficient gender competence of teachers of vocational education organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include in the list of topics of advanced training courses questions on gender</li> <li>• Develop methodological materials for advanced training courses on gender issues</li> <li>• Engage gender specialists to teach advanced training courses</li> </ul>

### 3. GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF THE METHODOLOGY AND ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND GENDER EXPERTISE OF EDUCATIONAL AND METHODOLOGICAL COMPLEXES

To date, there is a number of requirements for modern teaching and methodological complexes (hereinafter - TMC), developed for general education schools in Kyrgyzstan:

— ***to content:***

- compliance with the current state of the content of science
- systematization in the subject, logical and psychological terms
- and etc.

— ***to structure***

- implementation in the structure of the basic principles of the methodology of mental activity
- and etc.

— ***to the methodological development of content***

- Compliance with the requirements of modern didactics in the field of language (accessibility, correctness)
- Compliance with the methodological requirements for this subject of study
- Appeal to the material covered and the experience of students
- Managing the thought processes of students in the process of solving problems

— ***for design and printing***

- Ease of use of the textbook
- Paper quality
- A variety of illustrations (drawings, photographs, charts, diagrams)

After all, modern teaching materials carry not only educational and informational functions, but also have such functions as developing, systematizing, consolidating and self-control, integrating, self-education, coordinating, systematizing, etc.

To determine the compliance of the teaching materials with the requirements, 4 types of expertise are carried out, one of which is the Anti-discrimination and gender expertise:

- Scientific - on the basis of the relevant institutes of the Academy of Sciences or higher education institutions that have departments in the subjects of approbation
- Public expertise on the basis of the Coordinating Council for Standards and Quality of Education

- Scientific and pedagogical expertise on the basis of KAE, specialized higher education institutions
- Anti-discrimination and gender expertise

The methodology for conducting anti-discrimination and gender expertise of teaching and methodological complexes (hereinafter referred to as the methodology) intended for use in conducting anti-discrimination and gender examination of teaching and methodological complexes developed for secondary schools is approved by the regulation of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic (hereinafter - MES KR) on the procedure for conducting anti-discrimination and gender expertise of teaching and methodological complexes (order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 1096/1 dated September 16, 2019).

The methodology contains the legal and theoretical foundations of the competence-based approach in education, as well as general guidelines for conducting an expertise. In addition, recommendations are given for the expertise of educational standards through the assessment of educational results and thematic lines based on the presented competencies in the field of gender equality and social inclusion.

The methodology presents two lists of indicators: for assessing the content and assessing the visual accompaniment of this content. The indicators are neutral, evaluation conclusions are made based on the results of the analysis of the balance of indicators at the level of each paragraph (chapter, part, etc.) and the entire TMC as a whole. This list is provided to facilitate the work of an expert who needs to navigate the content of the materials. The list of indicators includes various questions, aspects for analysis, however, in each specific case, their application will depend on the profile and specifics of a particular teaching material. Justification for comments is given by each expert independently.

The methodology contains an appendix that includes an expert opinion consisting of (1) a table reviewing the content and illustrations in the TMC for stereotypes, biases, and missed opportunities; (2) tables of comments and recommendations based on the results of the anti-discrimination and gender expertise of the teaching materials for amendments; (3) expert's conclusions.

The methodology also contains the main terms and concepts that reveal the content of human rights, gender equality, social inclusion and non-discrimination. For the convenience of the expert, they are arranged in alphabetical order and grouped by meaning.

According to the general criteria specified in the methodology for the expertise of teaching materials in the field of gender equality and social inclusion, the expertise should take into account the scientific nature of the information presented in textbooks and educational materials and take into account modern knowledge about socio-cultural differences:

1. Human being and human society develop according to the laws of history, and not biological evolution, while the interaction of human being with the natural environment and certain biological patterns are an important part of this development;
2. Differences between people of different sexes are formed in the process of social interaction, and not as a result of natural factors;
3. Differences between people from different ethno-cultural groups depend on the social and historical conditions of their formation;

4. Inequality between people from different demographic categories, social, cultural and religious groups depend on the structure of social and economic relations and is formed in certain historical conditions that can influence the current situation (including factors such as colonization processes, regional division of labor, gender stereotypes, etc.).

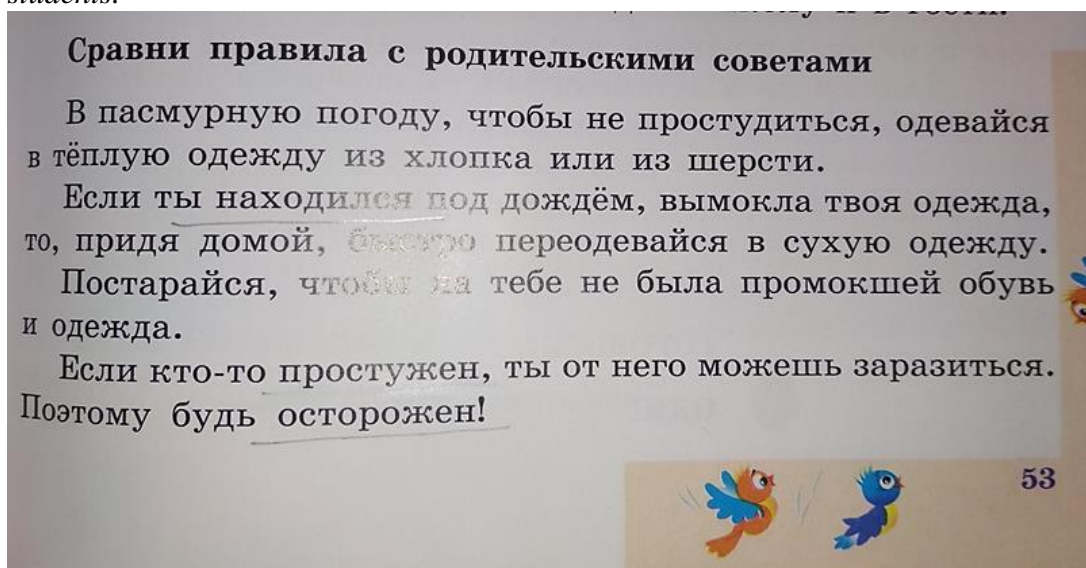
## INDICATORS OF ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND GENDER EXPERTISE

The methodology defines indicators for assessing the content and visual accompaniment of teaching materials:

### 1. Representations of gender/sex in text

- The number of female names and male names and the depiction of female and male characters (real and fictional) in the textbook should be balanced - 50% for each gender.
- Language forms (verbs, participles, etc.) must be balanced at a ratio of 50% for each feminine and masculine gender. For example, if it is impossible to use a noun to indicate gender, a verb or name can be used: "The doctor received the patient", "Officer Maria", etc. When addressing male/female persons, appropriate forms of address should be used, for example, "dear, respected, etc., "girls/boys", etc.

*Example: The use of only masculine nouns, verbs, adjectives and pronouns in the text, as in the text below, gives the impression that the author addresses and gives assignments only to male students.*

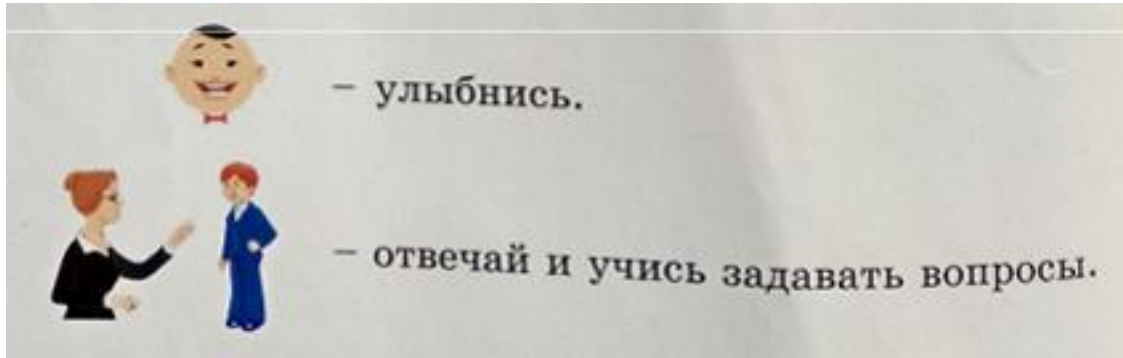


*It is necessary during the expertise to recommend that these sentences and tasks should be reformulated in such a way that children of both sexes can be addressed.*

- Texts and images inserted into exercises or proposed for reading should be balanced by gender of characters, heroes of artistic, literary texts (real and fictional) - 50% for each gender

Example: The use of only images of male students in the illustrations of symbols, as in the example below, makes girls "invisible" in the learning process and indirectly reinforces the stereotype of the leading role of men:





In such cases, it is necessary to recommend the authors to supplement the symbols with images of female students.

- When describing, mentioning in the text, depicting historical figures of different sexes. It is important to pay attention to whether there are cases of “forgotten” historical figures of one sex or another, more attention to the description of the historical significance of personalities of only one gender, provided that there were real historical figures of the other sex, but disproportionately less information is told about them or they are not mentioned at all.

*For example, a pilot expertise revealed that textbooks in Kyrgyzstan on social science and history are dominated by the approach of describing social development as a history of wars, conquests, stereotypes about the dominant position of men in political and power structures are reproduced, downplaying the role of women in the historical process. Practically no historical assessment of the centuries-old practice of gender discrimination is given, and in some cases, it is justified.*





Нүзүт бай

## 2. Gender characteristics

- Often, texts and illustrations that describe the behavior and feelings of the characters are focused on stereotypical ideas about masculine and feminine character traits. Girls, in general, throughout the book should not be presented as overly soft and emotional, and boys as aggressive and reasonable, including also other traditional qualities attributed to each sex. Recommended ratio: at least 50% non-traditional and non-stereotypical representations for each gender to create representations of the diversity of psychological traits and behavioral responses that depend on the personality of the person, and not on his gender.

## 3. Distribution of family roles and responsibilities

- Describing and illustrating family roles and responsibilities is also recommended in a 50% to 50% ratio of familiar and non-traditional family roles (men helping around the house, women making decisions, etc.)

Example: The illustrations below reinforce the stereotype about the distribution of gender roles in the family: “Woman is a housewife” (runs the house, does household chores), “A man reads a newspaper, a man should be informed about the situation in the community and the world (grandfather)”:





*In such cases, it is necessary to recommend, replace or supplement with illustrations that reflect the equal distribution of responsibilities in the household and examples of non-stereotypical gender roles.*

#### 4. Distribution of social roles

- In the social structure, girls and boys are assigned different roles with more or less room for choice - girls cannot fight, take leadership roles, etc. Care must be taken to ensure that these stereotypes are not reproduced. This is especially important for the development of boys, since often delinquent and aggressive forms of behavior associated with violence are included in the image of “ideal masculinity” or normalized.

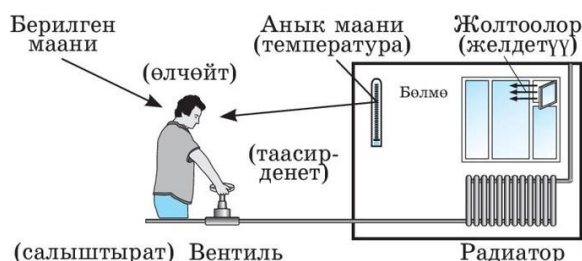


## 5. Professions or occupations

- Many gender stereotypes lead to imbalances in the labor market and access to various professions. During education, these stereotypes are reproduced due to the fact that boys are more encouraged to study natural sciences and mathematics, and girls in the humanities. As a result, for example, girls often have poorly developed abilities in spatial orientation (because they have not been trained enough), and boys have a poor understanding of their emotions and are unable to express them. When choosing a profession, these stereotypes continue to work, leading to uneven access to highly paid professions and income distribution.

There should also be a balanced reflection of leisure and recreation opportunities for people of different sexes.

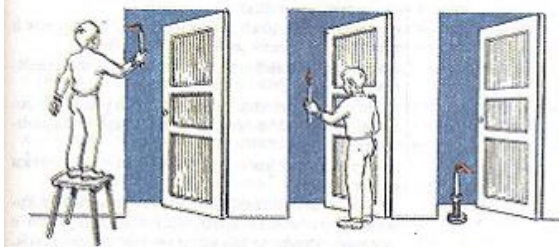
*In assignments, exercises, especially in hard sciences, the vast majority of characters are male, which reinforces the idea that science is a male sphere. Below there are some examples from existing school textbooks:*



**47-сүрөт.** Бөлмөдө абанын температура-сын жөнгө салуунун принциби.

## § 40. ДВИЖЕНИЕ ВОЗДУХА

Откройте дверь из тёплой комнаты в холодную или коридор. Поместите горящую свечу на пороге (рис. 67). Вы увидите, что пламя отклоняется в сторону тёплого помещения. Значит, тяжёлый холодный воздух распространяется из коридора в комнату по низу. Если же свечу поднять, то можно увидеть, что вверху у двери пламя отклоняется в сторону холодного коридора. Значит, вверху движется вытесненный холодным, более лёгкий тёплый воздух.



## 6. Representations of ethnic groups

- Mentions and descriptions, as well as images of representatives of the ethnic majority, names, as well as symbols and objects that are associated with the traditional culture of the Kyrgyz (yurts, komuz, kalpaks, etc.) should be balanced in the volume of the book in a ratio of not less than 70 % to 30% to the description of other ethnic groups and cultures, including residents of other countries and regions of the world.
- The texts/images inserted into the exercises or suggested for reading should be balanced by the ethnic and cultural affiliation of the characters in the ratio of 70%/30% for the Kyrgyz majority and other groups.

*A positive example of the image of ethnic diversity from a textbook for the 1st grade of secondary schools (Kubatalieva B., Abykanova A., Asanalieva M. Alippe (Primer):*

### МЕКЕНИМ — КЫРГЫЗСТАН



- No group should be presented as being at a more "advanced"/"higher" stage of development than another, or as having higher moral standards and cultural norms. This applies both to the ethnic majority and to descriptions focused on the “big brother” model, which is often played by European states, the USA, Russia, Japan, etc.
- Mentions and descriptions / images of representatives of ethnic minorities or other countries and peoples, names, as well as symbols and objects that are associated with traditional culture, the identity of different peoples (balalaika, skullcap, turban, etc.) should not be prevailing. Predominantly, members of other groups and cultures should be shown as doing similar things or solving similar problems.

## **7. Representation of vulnerable groups**

- Mentions or descriptions, as well as images of stereotypical behavior/situations in society in relation to children and/or adults with disabilities or special educational needs. These descriptions reflect the medical model of disability, in which a person with a disability is presented as someone who does not fit into the norm on various parameters (for example, for health reasons). The social model assumes an inclusive and adaptive role of communities and environments that help people/children with disabilities to take an active life position.
- Children and younger ones are described/illustrated as those who submit to authority and do not have the ability (or will) to defend their position
- Descriptions and references/images of older people should be balanced 50% to 50%: the traditional description of older people as in need of support and as active and productive members of society contributing to the development of the country
- Description/image of children as objects of care and obedience (even very small ones) should not exceed 15% of descriptions and references. Children are active and responsible members of any community, whose position is respected, and the ability to desire to perform certain duties is supported and encouraged.

## **8. Discrimination and inequality**

- Use of hate speech or incorrect designations/illustrations about racial, ethnic, social or minority groups without appropriate commentary (used in the text, not as an example).

Hate speech includes any negative or degrading connotations, even if they do not seem so at first glance, such as the expression “a person of Caucasian nationality” or references to the race of people that are not relevant to the context of the situation.

- Use of incorrect designations/images to address racial, ethnic, social or minority groups.

Incorrect names of groups that do not match and are not supported by representatives of the group itself may be incorrect (for example, in the USA it is customary to use the word “African American” and not Negro; in Europe it is written “Roma people”, not gypsies, in Kyrgyzstan it is customary to write even in Russian language "Kyrgyz", not "Kirgiz", etc.). In addition, it is incorrect to use modern group names in relation to peoples who lived in a particular territory many centuries ago. It is correct to write “ancient Greeks” or “inhabitants of Athens”, and not just “Greeks”, “representatives of the Uighur Khaganate”, and not “Uighurs”, etc.



- Mention or description/image of structural inequalities at the geographical level, issues of external and internal migration and its relationship to structural inequalities. The description of inequality should be accompanied by explanations of its occurrence - geographical or historical circumstances. For example, the high development of European countries is associated with centuries of colonization of other continents. Gender inequality does not depend on the desires and aspirations of the majority of women, but is determined by the conditions of development, upbringing and access to education. Migrant families are obviously in a more difficult situation than local residents, if not from a material point of view, then from the point of view of adaptation to new conditions, etc.

- Structural inequality and the problem of gender violence. It is important to pay attention to how the text describes / illustrates discrimination against girls and women. Normalization, justification of such discrimination is not allowed. Often, social science textbooks, history textbooks do not pay due attention to long-term gender inequality and discrimination and do not give a historical assessment, and vice versa, it is not noted how, thanks to what factors, positive changes occurred and the status of women improved.

In no case it is allowed to normalize, justify or romanticize gender-based or domestic violence; victimization of the victim. The use of literary, artistic works that describe/illustrate in one form or another gender, domestic violence, should be accompanied by appropriate questions for analysis and discussion of the inadmissibility of violence.

Sometimes in textbooks there are references to religious sources unnecessarily, or as factual data. For example, you can find a mention / illustration that Sanzhyra can be traced back to Noah and his sons, or parables of a religious nature.

## 9. Wars, conflicts and mass violence

- Unreasonable description / depiction of wars, conflicts and clashes between different peoples and other social groups, ethno-cultural and national communities. The presentation of history as a series of wars and conflicts normalizes armed confrontation as a way to resolve conflicts and problems (primarily, as a rule, economic ones). At the same time, the creative side of the historical process, cultural, technical and scientific achievements, changes in everyday life and lifestyle, the emergence of new professions and social roles are missed. Any description of war or conflict in a textbook should be justified by the logic of presentation related to development in the sphere of economy, politics or culture, while the idea of the development process should be the main one, and wars should be mentioned only, if necessary, prompted by the logic of this development.

Thus, texts and illustrations in textbooks can be gender-neutral (fictional or fairy-tale characters, animals, just iconography next to a question or important information). If they are not neutral, then a certain balance is needed in terms of the following criteria:

### Quantitative Criteria:

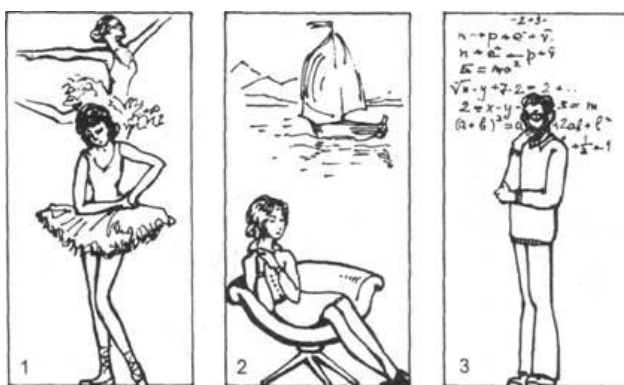
- The number of illustrations and texts where the heroes are boys and girls, men and women should be approximately the same;

- Illustrations and texts should include people of different ages, professions, social status;
- About a third of illustrations and texts (depending on the subject and level of education) should include representatives of ethnic groups that do not belong to the majority or belong to other socio-cultural spaces (for example, other countries, the future, etc.);
- The number of different images and texts should be balanced according to qualitative criteria (professions, social environment, family roles, etc.);
- At least a few illustrations and texts should be related to people with disabilities.

## Quality Criteria

### Gender characteristics

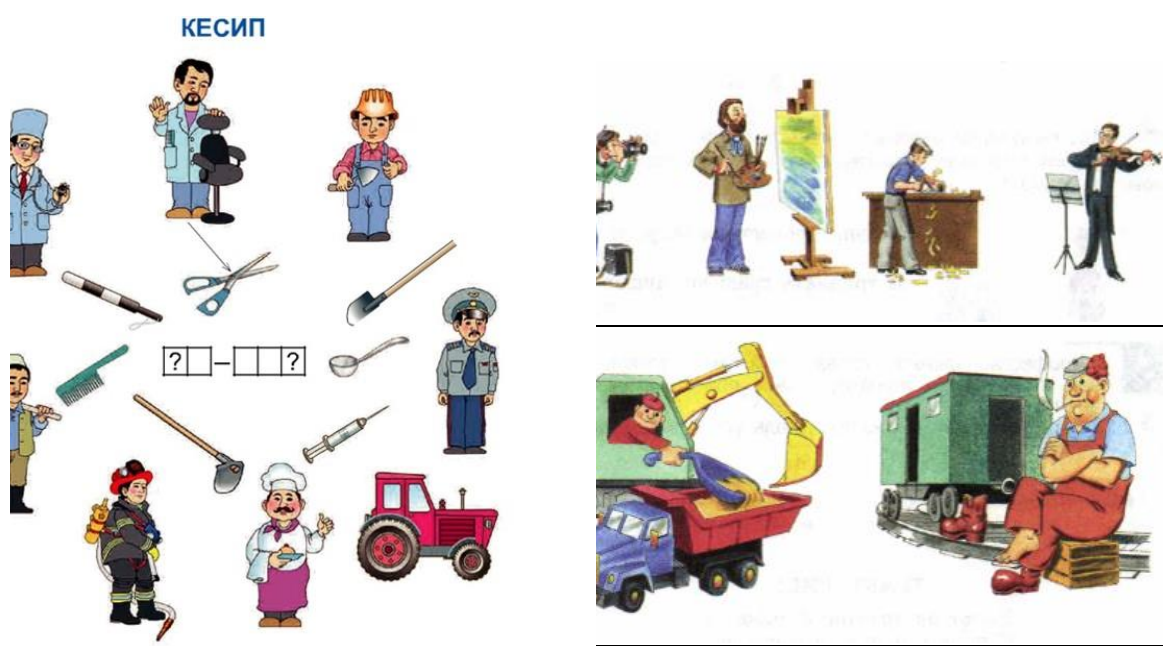
Illustrations and texts should not support gender stereotypes that relate to the so-called "natural" differences: the physical weakness of women compared to men, the increased emotionality of girls, the naughty behavior of boys, etc. The illustrations below are NOT CORRECT. Both men and women have all kinds of memory, but the picture emphasizes the logical nature of memory in men and the figurative nature of women. Both boys and girls can play football and jump rope. It would be better if people of both sexes were present in all the pictures.



## Gender roles and professional stereotypes

Illustrations and text should not show men and women in professions or occupations traditionally assigned to men and women in our culture. For example: only men are driving, a woman is driving a sewing machine, a boy is using a soldering iron or a wrench, a girl is using a watering can or a syringe, etc. It is necessary either to depict two people of the same sex in a similar context in one illustration or within one section, or to offer non-stereotypical images, for example, a male - teacher, doctor, cook, tailor, and a woman - driver, engineer, repairman.

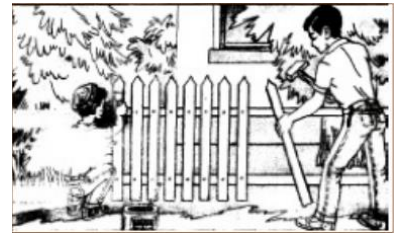
Examples of INCORRECT illustrations:



## Family roles and age roles

Pictures and descriptions of family members should not reinforce stereotypical family roles: mom and girls are cleaning, dad is either reading the newspaper or watching TV, or doing repairs with the boys. It is better if both boys and girls participate in the same activity. Besides, in the textbooks (especially, for elementary school) there are often illustrations of grandparents, which are also extremely stereotypical. Often grandparents are depicted in the context of the countryside and traditional occupations: the grandmother knits, the grandfather teaches his grandson to ride a horse. It is better not to tie generations to rural and urban lifestyles, and also to show the older generation to be more active and involved in social life, since most of the students' grandparents continue to work, even if they formally retired. Children in the illustrations are often depicted in a subordinate position or in a situation involving obedient or naughty behavior.

Examples of INCORRECT illustrations:



### Ethnocultural diversity

Illustrations and texts should contain representatives of various ethnic and cultural groups, and this should not necessarily be associated with the traditional markers of this group (national costume, type of activity, etc.) It would be nice if representatives of different groups were together in different settings - at work, at school, at a holiday, in the theater and other situations. People from different groups should not be unequivocally assigned to the same environment or employed in the same field of activity (for example, Kyrgyz in the mountains near the yurt or Uzbeks against the backdrop of flatbreads or fruits).

### Representation of people with disabilities

Illustrations and texts should include people with disabilities or children with special educational needs. In addition, it would be good to have images of accessible environment elements in textbooks: ramps, braille announcements, etc. People or children with disabilities should be portrayed as active members of the community, sharing activities or games with other children.

Examples of CORRECT illustration:





### Variety of social spaces

Texts and, especially, illustrations should reflect the balance of different spaces: urban, rural, industrial, domestic, natural landscape, etc. In some textbooks, especially for elementary school, rural pastoral landscapes with yurts and horses far exceed the number of illustrations with modern technology, buildings, transport, and even school life. Students should form visual representations of the various environments that exist in Kyrgyzstan and around the world.

#### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EXPERTISE OF EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

The goals and results specified in the standards determine the possibilities of social adaptation of students. For example, it is important to indicate in the standards such a level of knowledge of the state or official language (as non-native) that will allow school graduates to freely participate in public, social and economic life. Knowledge of culture and traditions cannot be limited only to knowledge of one of some cultures, as it will create an idea of the importance of some ethnic groups and the “minority” of others. Knowledge and practical skills in the field of law are necessary for graduates so that they can protect their rights and adequately exercise the civic activity. Existence in a diverse society must be reflected in standards, including perceptions of gender equality, cultural differences, as well as about the characteristics of people with disabilities. If the formulation of goals and results in the standards do not offer a real opportunity for successful social adaptation, they become a source of increasing structural violence.

Thus, educational standards should be analyzed in terms of the following criteria:

1. Educational goals and outcomes should be aimed at integrating students into society, and not at dividing society into segments;
2. Standards should be inclusive, not exclusive;
3. Educational outcomes should expand opportunities for social interaction, not limit them;
4. The results should be formulated in such a way as to stimulate critical thinking and flexibility of behavior, and not set a rigid position and unambiguous “right” or “wrong” opinion.

For the expertise conducting, all parts of the document containing the subject educational standard are viewed. The expert draws attention to the general provisions that formed the basis for the development of the standard and the characteristics of the learning environment (including the design of the office and additional teaching aids).

The table with thematic lines and educational results is evaluated within each proposed topic from the following positions:

- Does this topic allow you to include a discussion of issues of gender, ethno-cultural, religious, social diversity?
- Does the theme adequately address issues of gender, ethno-cultural, religious or social diversity?
- What should be added from the point of view of an expert in this topic so that the educational results are aimed at the formation of competencies in the field of gender equality, social inclusion and non-discrimination.

