

# YOUTH SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS



Обеспечение прав и выбора для всех с 1969 года

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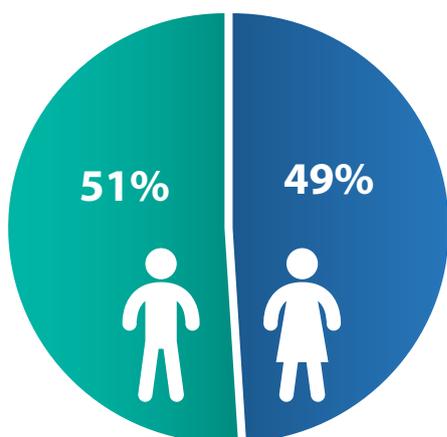
### Introduction

According to the legislation of Kyrgyzstan, the term “youth” refers to young people from 14 to 28 years old. They constitute about 30% of the population of Kyrgyzstan and it is expected that in 10 years the number of this group will increase by 18% and will reach a figure of just over 2 million people<sup>1</sup>. According to the UN classification, young people include those whose age ranges from 15 to 24 years old<sup>2</sup>.

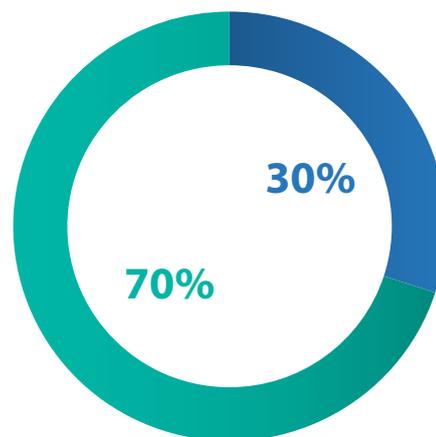
According to the National Statistical Committee in 2018, there are 1.6 million young people aged **14-28 in Kyrgyzstan, of which 51% are men and 49% are women.**

The age structure of the population of the Kyrgyz Republic is demographically young: the share of young people aged 14-28 years is a quarter of the total population. **One-third of young people (30%) live in urban settlements and two-thirds (70%) in rural areas.**<sup>3</sup>

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) consider youth policy as one of the key tools that form an important resource for social development - young people. It clearly states that young people, being in a period of active socialization, need effective support from the state and society in order to fulfill their capacity.<sup>4</sup>



- Women
- Men



- In urban areas
- In rural areas

1 Safeworld, 2019 Young Peoples Voices on Peace and Security in Kyrgyzstan, <https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources-ru/publications/1227-young-peoples-voices-on-peace-and-security-in-kyrgyzstan-ru>

2 <https://www.un.org/ru/sections/issues-depth/youth-0/index.html>

3 NSC, 2019, Youth in Kyrgyz Republic 2014-2018 <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-molodezh-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike-2014/>

4 Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

At the same time, it should be noted that while with regard to children the state has well-established mechanisms of Impact and guarantees a set of basic services, thereby ensuring the child development, there is lack of clear mechanisms of Interaction with regard to young people. While up to age 18 there is a guarantee of medical care and basic education, after age 18 young people can no longer count on many guarantees from the state. At the same time, the state cannot ensure the financial independence of young people so that they can pay for services on their own. This leads to problems of access to basic services, loss of faith in state support, and, ultimately, the discontent expressed in destructive behavior and social outbursts. Saying that young people are a strategic resource that ensures the further development of the country, the state does not try to support this social group in a targeted way. Young people, observing such dissonance between word and deed, are strengthened in their frustration and seek to find their own way, often the way of protest and destruction.

Today, the youth of the Kyrgyz Republic are poorly involved in the decision-making process at the local level. The gap between young people and local government generates young people's disbelief in the possibility of changing anything in their hometown and village.

At the same time, according to the Concept of Youth Policy, all youth policy efforts should be aimed at achieving the following results:

- young people are immediate participants in responsible decision-making;
- young people are healthy, knowledgeable, and skilled enough to pursue their interests;
- young people are capable of

- achieving financial sustainability;
- young people initiate and participate in the creation of conditions for their well-being;
- young people promote their interests by mobilizing members of society;
- the number of young people actively participating in development processes is increasing;
- young people are full and complete subjects of state and society development.

But in order to achieve these results, it is important to work beyond national level. Even on a greater degree, work is needed at the local level, which is closest to the community - at the level of LSG (local self-government) bodies. But the limited authority of LSG bodies and the low level of income of local budgets do not always allow LSG bodies to organize effective work with youth.

In this connection, it is recommended that the coming interventions be directed within the framework of positive development theory, which views youth as a partner. In this model, the responsibility for acquiring knowledge and experience is shared equally between young people and adults: I am the adult who creates the structure, and you, working in it, gain your own experience, and what you get for yourself as a result is up to you. Adults create the structure and events, while the degree of activity is the responsibility of young people. A key feature of the partnership model is the responsible participation of young people in the management of activities: young people are not only doers, but also make decisions together with adults, sharing responsibility for the consequences of the decisions made. The responsible attitude of young people is not formed immediately. It takes patience and effort on the part of adults, but in this case,

the results can exceed expectations and are very stable. It is the building of partnerships between youth and adults that the theory of positive development is focused on. The goal of effective relationships between adults and young people is for the latter to gain practical experience that enhances the potential of young people and helps them to become active members of society. Adults, in turn, get an opportunity to look at “old” problems in a new way, they get a charge of energy and a positive attitude, which young people have.

The concept of partnership implies that young people can freely participate in social and development processes. At the same time, such involvement should be active, voluntary and conscious.

This paper presents key areas of focus and provides key recommendations for each section.

## METHODOLOGY

The major aim of this desk review is to provide analysis in the sphere of Youth and Population Dynamics which covers the trends, gaps and their impact on the achievement of the 2030 Agenda goals.

### Main objectives:

- Identification of key Population and Youth Dynamics issues and their connection to relevant Sustainable Development Goals;
- Identify the most vulnerable groups, key stakeholders/actors and the capacity they need to take action;
- Provide recommendations for a transformative impact on the country’s implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The process of preparing the review assessed data for the period between 2016 and 2020, taking steps to track progress on the 6 SDGs (3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11). The review process was multi-sectoral, involving different stakeholders, and followed the principle of “leaving no one behind,” with a priority focus on vulnerable groups in the country.

The principle of “leaving no one behind” is a fundamental commitment of the 2030 Agenda and has been a driving force for sustainable development in the Kyrgyz Republic in recent years. The strategic human-centered policy framework in the Kyrgyz Republic has outlined a sustainable development vector for current and future generations, prioritizing the most vulnerable groups, which include families and children in difficult life situations, people living with HIV/AIDS, drug addiction and mental illness, victims of violence, people with disabilities, families and children, refugees and internally displaced people and migrants, children of migrants, convicts and people

released from detention, elderly people, women, youth, people living in remote rural areas with consideration of diverse cultural, ethnic and religious traditions. Putting into practice the commitment to “leave no one behind” means, above all, targeting the most vulnerable populations, ensuring that policies and programs are planned and implemented, gradually prioritizing those most in need.<sup>5</sup>

In the process of analysis, an assessment was conducted to determine which population groups are considered most vulnerable in the Kyrgyz Republic, what challenges they face, and how to address their needs and ensure their empowerment. The starting point of the analysis was the vulnerability identified by the UN in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for “...all children, youth, people living with HIV/AIDS, internally displaced people and migrants...”, with a special focus on women, girls and the poor.<sup>6</sup>

This desk review is a structured review of youth-related documents, reports, laws, regulations, and other normative and regulatory frameworks. Based on a review of UNFPA’s 2018-2021<sup>7</sup> strategic plan documents, the analysis examines the eight areas of life in which young people are most engaged: Economic Engagement, Gender Equality, Health, Education, Crime and Security, Youth Social and Political Engagement, and Information and Communication Technology.

5 UN, GIZ, 2020, National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals’ Achievement in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR\\_2020\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Report\\_Russian.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR_2020_Kyrgyzstan_Report_Russian.pdf)

6 UN, GIZ, 2020, National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals’ Achievement in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR\\_2020\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Report\\_Russian.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR_2020_Kyrgyzstan_Report_Russian.pdf)

7 UNFPA, 2017, 2018-2021 Strategic Plan [https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/DP.FPA\\_2017.9\\_-\\_UNFPA\\_strategic\\_plan\\_2018-2021\\_-\\_FINAL\\_-\\_17July2017\\_-\\_RU.pdf](https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/DP.FPA_2017.9_-_UNFPA_strategic_plan_2018-2021_-_FINAL_-_17July2017_-_RU.pdf)

## THE YOUTH POLICY CONCEPT

The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has developed a Youth Policy Concept for 2020-2030, which is a strategic document designed to respond to the challenges in the development of youth that Kyrgyz Republic is facing. The Concept is called to define the goals, priorities and tools of state youth policy. It is determined that Kyrgyzstan will strive to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by resolution 70/1 of the United Nations General Assembly on September 25, 2015. Youth is currently a strategic resource for the development of the state, with enormous socio-economic, cultural, creative and scientific potential.<sup>8</sup>

The main task of the youth development strategy is to build human capital. It is formed by investing in improving the level and quality of life of the population, including upbringing, education, health, knowledge, entrepreneurial ability, information support of labor, safety of citizens and business, economic freedom, as well as culture and art. The purpose of the Concept is to create an effective system of youth development, creating conditions for the implementation of state youth policy, the formation of an active citizenship and values of young people, providing a stable innovative development of the country, promoting the social development and self-development of young people.<sup>9</sup>

According to the Sustainable Development Goals Review, Kyrgyzstan has identified structural problems and a lack of resources to implement key areas of sustainable human development. The remarkable progress made on the MDGs,

8 2020-2030 Youth Policy Concept, dated October 18, 2019 # 562, <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/157204>

9 2020-2030 Youth Policy Concept, dated October 18, 2019 # 562 <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/157204>

including significant reductions in extreme poverty and hunger, access to primary education, significant reductions in child mortality and improvements in maternal health, have provided a solid foundation for the ambitious SDGs<sup>10</sup>. The implementation of the SDGs was reflected in the national development programs reflected in the National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018-2040, various programs and strategies in health, education, gender, youth, green economy, digitalization, regional development and others, which include social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainable development.<sup>11</sup>

In general, cross-cutting issues and approaches to addressing issues of health protection and promotion are not addressed at a sufficient level.<sup>12</sup>

The maternal mortality rate remains a key development problem, despite the positive dynamics that have been achieved in recent years. The field of child health care faces such problems as insufficient knowledge and practical skills of medical workers, as well as ineffective treatment and use of resources; lack of awareness of parents on child care issues.<sup>13</sup>

In spite of the fact that the country successfully keeps the spread of HIV infection on a sufficiently low level, there are several problems that can negatively impact the situation:

- a high level of stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV infection;
- lack of proper understanding of HIV;
- infection as a social problem.

Not enough attention is paid to reproductive health, reproductive cancer, and education of the population in this area.<sup>14</sup>

Considering the success of the development of the sphere of education, we can point out that relatively high expenditures of the state budget are due to the high proportion of spending (about 70%) on wages of employees in the education sector. This directly affects such problems in the education system as the content and quality of education, accessibility of education for various segments of the population, development of links with the labor market and others. The financial needs of schools in computers, current repairs, professional development of teachers, nutrition, textbooks are not sufficiently met.<sup>15</sup>

Socio-economic problems and poverty, unemployment, poor religious literacy and awareness create risks for women to be vulnerable. Crimes against the sexual inviolability of the person are characterized

10 UN, GIZ, 2020, National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals' Achievement in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR\\_2020\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Report\\_Russian.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR_2020_Kyrgyzstan_Report_Russian.pdf)

11 UN, GIZ, 2020, National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals' Achievement in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR\\_2020\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Report\\_Russian.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR_2020_Kyrgyzstan_Report_Russian.pdf)

12 UN, GIZ, 2020, National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals' Achievement in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR\\_2020\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Report\\_Russian.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR_2020_Kyrgyzstan_Report_Russian.pdf)

13 UN, GIZ, 2020, National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals' Achievement in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR\\_2020\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Report\\_Russian.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR_2020_Kyrgyzstan_Report_Russian.pdf)

14 UN, GIZ, 2020, National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals' Achievement in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR\\_2020\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Report\\_Russian.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR_2020_Kyrgyzstan_Report_Russian.pdf)

15 UN, GIZ, 2020, National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals' Achievement in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR\\_2020\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Report\\_Russian.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR_2020_Kyrgyzstan_Report_Russian.pdf)

by a high degree of latency, some crimes are of a declarative nature. A significant proportion of victims do not report violence they have experienced to internal affairs agencies. There have been successes in the area of women's economic empowerment, but many questions remain that require to be answered. Of particular concern is the decrease in women's participation in governance at the local level: first, because the diversity of needs related to women's daily lives, which is most clearly expressed at the local level, remains unexpressed in the political agenda of local government; second, the necessary human resource capacity for women's political participation at the national level is not being developed.<sup>16</sup>

The country's commitment to development-oriented policies, the creation of decent jobs, and the development of entrepreneurship is stated as the main goal of economic development and is enshrined in all major strategic documents. However, the country does not have significant financial, labor or natural resources, which significantly limits the implementation of development-oriented policies. The goal of combating unemployment may be practically unattainable, as employment is steadily, albeit slowly, declining. The overall economic situation does not allow for the creation of a sufficient number of jobs, and the available labor force does not always have sufficient skills and competence. It is especially difficult for people with disabilities, young people and women to find employment. The oversupply of labor resources is partially absorbed through active labor migration. As for young people, there has been no significant progress in achieving the task so far, despite some reduction in the youth unemployment rate.

<sup>16</sup> UN, GIZ, 2020, National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals' Achievement in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR\\_2020\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Report\\_Russian.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR_2020_Kyrgyzstan_Report_Russian.pdf)

Policies and measures aimed at stimulating and improving opportunities for vocational education and employment have not yet demonstrated high efficiency, as evidenced by the virtually unchanged share of young people who do not work, do not study, and do not acquire professional skills. The main obstacle to full protection of the rights of workers in the country and outside the country (migrant workers) is the high level of informal employment. Protection of the rights of migrant workers is ongoing, but the large number of irregular migrants complicates the implementation of protection.<sup>17</sup>

The efforts of law enforcement agencies alone cannot have a significant impact on reducing crime among young people. The current situation is also affected by the lack of involvement of all government agencies, the need for a comprehensive analysis of the causes of such crimes and the development of preventive measures.<sup>18</sup>

Each of these points will be discussed in more detail in the corresponding section of the analysis.

## 1. ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT

### 1.1 Employment and unemployment

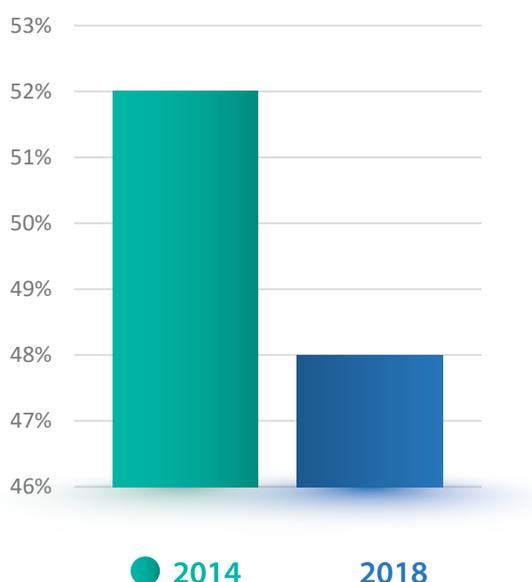
Labor market is an important part of economic and social life of society. Labor market problems are among the most important and their relevance is beyond doubt. It is the sphere of labor that becomes the key one for growth of domestic

<sup>17</sup> UN, GIZ, 2020, National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals' Achievement in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR\\_2020\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Report\\_Russian.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR_2020_Kyrgyzstan_Report_Russian.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> UN, GIZ, 2020, National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals' Achievement in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR\\_2020\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Report\\_Russian.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR_2020_Kyrgyzstan_Report_Russian.pdf)

economy, increase of its efficiency and level of competitiveness.<sup>19</sup>

The high growth rate of the working-age population is an important characteristic of Kyrgyzstan's labor market. In 2018, the youth labor force for 2018 was 741,500. According to the survey results, the youth labor force participation rate decreased from **52% in 2014 to 48% in 2018** <sup>20</sup>.



An oversupply of labor creates the problem of unemployment among the young population. Job creation is the most serious challenge for the Kyrgyz Republic for the next 10 years. An increase in the population requires a demand for labor. Otherwise, it will lead to increased unemployment in the republic, increased poverty, inequality, decreased consumption, social tension, etc.<sup>21</sup>

19 NSC, 2019, Analysis of the Current State of the Labor Market and Labor Productivity, <http://stat.kg/ru/news/analiz-sovremennogo-sostoyaniya-rynka-truda-i-proizvoditelnosti-truda/>

20 NSC, 2019, Youth in Kyrgyz Republic, 2014-2018. <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-molodezh-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike-2014/>

21 Demographic situation analysis in Kyrgyzstan, 2020.

The number of employed young people **from 15-28 years old is 661.7 thousand**, which constitutes 66.4%. Employed young people prevail in such activities as agriculture, **forestry and fish farming (19.96%)**, **wholesale and retail trade, repair of cars and motorcycles (16.96%)**, **construction (12.8%)** and **manufacturing (13.65%)**<sup>22</sup>.

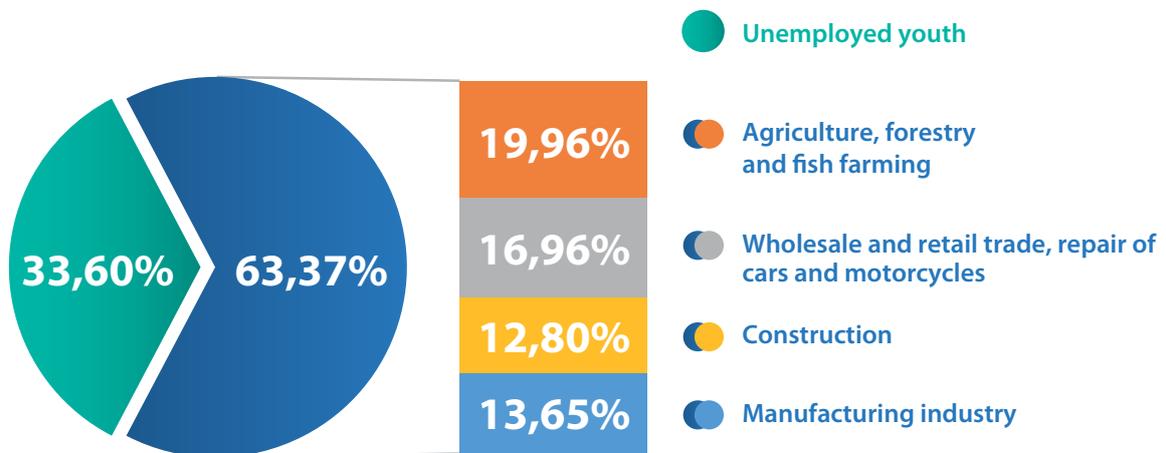
Labor market pressures and tensions arising from lack of work are reduced by job offers from the informal sector<sup>23</sup>. According to the NSC's indicators of 2018, those employed in the informal sector aged 15 and older are 1,686,900, i.e., 66.4% of the economically active population. According to the World Bank, 68% of the employed are working in informal sector. According to 2018 data, 577,300 informally employed people aged 15-29 years old are 35% of the total population. The highest percentage of informal employment is observed among young people aged 25-29 years - 273.1 thousand people. The share of those employed in the informal sector to the total number of those employed among the population aged 15 and over is 70.4%. The highest percentage of informal employment to total employment is **among youth - 90.1% for those aged 15-19 years, 81.1% for those aged 20-24 years, and 71.6% for those aged 25-29 years**. Thus, we can conclude that the younger a person is and the less work experience, the more likely he/she is to be employed in the informal sector.<sup>24</sup>

There is a disproportionately higher rate of unemployment among young people than in the population as a whole.

22 NSC, 2019, Youth in Kyrgyz Republic 2014-2018 <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-molodezh-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike-2014/>

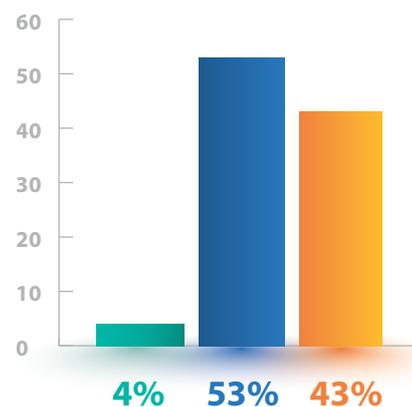
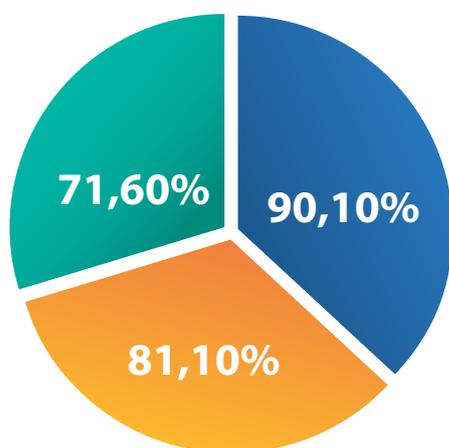
23 NSC, 2019, Youth in Kyrgyz Republic 2014-2018 <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-molodezh-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike-2014/>

24 Youth development institute, 2020, Youth informal employment in Kyrgyzstan <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ksTYW7Ek106QSeMFHlgGiUkZPg26YIEd/view>



The unemployment rate among youth aged 16-29 was 33.6%. The number of unemployed youth aged 15-28 years was about 80,000 in 2018. Of them youth aged 15-17 years were 4%, 18-23 years were 53%, and 24-28 years were 43%.

The unemployment rate in urban settlements is slightly higher than in rural areas (14% vs. 9%). The unemployment



- Youth between 15-19 years old
- Youth between 20-24 years old
- Youth between 25-29 years old

- Youth between 15-17 years old
- Youth between 18-23 years old
- Youth between 18-23 years old 2

rate among women is 6 percentage points higher than among men. The high level of unemployment is observed among young people with incomplete higher and primary vocational education - 23% and 13%<sup>25</sup>.

The share of unemployed or undocumented workers in the South is significantly higher than in the North. This fact is explained by better access to higher education in the North. Southern regions show higher average entrepreneurial incomes (66%) and wages (3%) of young people than Northern regions. A third of young people are registered as employed, 12% of them are employed in the household, which as a rule was not paid and is more common in rural areas.<sup>26</sup>

University of Central Asia research shows that most available jobs for young people do not require higher education. Rural areas provide temporary (seasonal) jobs in crop and livestock production, food processing, and some services. Urban areas create more jobs with higher wages and more intensive work in services, manufacturing, and construction. According to the study, potential products and services for the youth labor market are as follows:

- for urban areas: construction, clothing, catering (cafes and restaurants), services (beauty salons, auto repair and car wash), retail trade; and pharmacies.
- for rural areas: production of agricultural products (cotton, grapes, potatoes, milk, meat, apricots)<sup>27</sup>

**Youth entrepreneurship** is an important resource in the development of small and medium-sized businesses, since young entrepreneurs are considered to be more receptive to innovation and risk-taking in business. According to surveys, a large part of the young population demonstrates an unpreparedness to engage in entrepreneurship. Survey data show that 32.2% of respondents gave a categorical answer “Absolutely not ready”, those who found it difficult to answer - 21.1%. Among the reasons preventing young people from starting their own businesses are the lack of appropriate education and inaccessible and expensive loans.<sup>28</sup>

### Causes

Thus, the level of unemployment among young people is high due to several factors: low wages, lack of jobs in places of residence, difficult to access limited information about vacancies, lack of professional knowledge and skills, and lack of professional experience - this factor is one of the main reasons for the low level of employment among young people. It is difficult for young people to find a job, because unlike experienced professionals, young people do not have enough knowledge, necessary skills and experience<sup>29</sup>. The reasons for this difficulty are related to the lack of proper experience or qualifications, young people have difficulty finding employment, and are more at risk of job loss. In addition, in addition to the low level of qualifications, the lack of skills of socio-economic adaptation, is another problem. It is difficult for young people to join a team, to “sell” themselves

25 NSC, 2019, Youth in Kyrgyz Republic 2014-2018. <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-molodezh-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike-2014/>

26 UCA, 2019, The Analysis of Youth Market trends <https://www.ucentralasia.org/Content/Downloads/IPPA-WP52-Eng.pdf>

27 UCA, 2019, The Analysis of Youth Market trends <https://www.ucentralasia.org/Content/Downloads/IPPA-WP52-Eng.pdf>

28 Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

29 Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

in the labor market, as well as to show their communication skills<sup>30</sup>.

Such data indicate weak and insufficient coverage of programs for vocational guidance and promotion of youth employment, as well as the mismatch between the education system and the needs of the labor market, lack of regulation and lack of study of the labor market<sup>31</sup>.

## 1.2 Migration

The change in the total population of the country is significantly influenced by migration. Labor migration has an impact on the labor market of Kyrgyzstan, significantly easing tensions in it<sup>32</sup>. Low demand for labor and inflation are forcing young people to look for work outside the country. As a result, Kyrgyzstan is losing the able-bodied active population and potential of the country. Thus, the number of young people who left the country in 2018 was 2,090. According to expert estimates, 650,000 to 750,000 citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic are working outside the country. Most of them are young people aged 18-29 years old (46%). The largest number of Kyrgyz nationals stay in the Russian Federation<sup>33</sup>.

Labor migration can become alternative for employment in the internal labor market. The problem of increase of able-bodied population and lack of opportunities to provide jobs, as well as the demand for

migrants in the recipient countries can be resolved by population outflow from Kyrgyzstan in pursuit of employment<sup>34</sup>. Thus, the problem of labor surplus can be solved, which in turn can affect the increase in wages in the country. In addition, remittances have the effect of increasing the demand for goods and services in the country<sup>35</sup> and, in general, migrants' remittances significantly improve living conditions in the country<sup>36</sup>.

In general, migration gives young people the opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills, as well as to fulfill their potential abroad. However, the question remains whether this is in demand at home:

- The potential return and successful integration of highly skilled and educated migrants has a positive effect;
- The impact on human capital of the return and successful integration of low-skilled migrants is questionable, since the skills they acquire in migration relate to low-skilled sectors such as construction, trade and services.

Most migrant workers acquire general cultural characteristics rather than professional knowledge: improved communication skills, and the ability to build working and social relationships. This positive but limited experience is due

30 Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

31 Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

32 UNFPA, 2020, Young Population and High Demographic Growth Rates, [https://kyrgyzstan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Policy\\_brief\\_2\\_eng.pdf](https://kyrgyzstan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Policy_brief_2_eng.pdf)

33 NSC, 2019, Youth in Kyrgyz Republic, 2014-2018. <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-molodezh-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike-2014/>

34 NISR, 2018, Extended migration profile, 2015-2018 <https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/Migration-Profile-2018-in-Russian.pdf>

35 NISR, 2018, Extended migration profile, 2015-2018 <https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/Migration-Profile-2018-in-Russian.pdf>

36 IOM, 2019, External Youth Migration in CA countries, [https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/external\\_youth\\_migration\\_ru.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/external_youth_migration_ru.pdf)

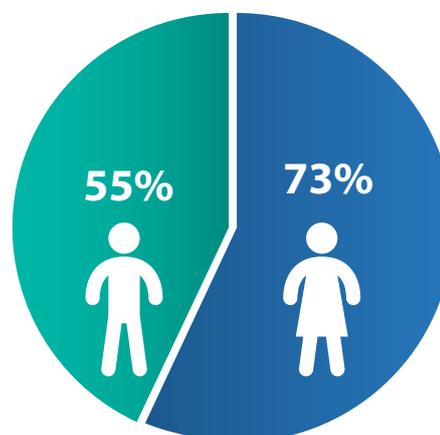
to the fact that they are engaged in low-skilled jobs that do not require specialized knowledge.<sup>37</sup>

If the socio-economic situation in the country does not change, remittances will continue to be used for the daily struggle with poverty, leaving no opportunities to invest in human capital. If the quality of education does not improve in rural areas, then emigrating young people will initially have low chances of getting more qualified jobs in destination countries and fewer opportunities for professional growth.<sup>38</sup>

### 1.3 COVID-19 impact on economic situation

In May 2020, UN Women initiated a rapid gender analysis of the effects of COVID-19 and additional recommendations were provided by the Regional Office of the UN Population Fund. According to the analysis, 10% of respondents lost their jobs as a result of restrictive measures, they found themselves in the most difficult economic situation. It is noteworthy that 75% of female employees switched to a remote work schedule. This compares to 63% of men. 34% of men and 19% of women continued to go to work. There are twice as many women among those who work from home, just as there were before the epidemic. That is, women in Kyrgyzstan to some extent adapted to the new conditions and some of them were able to work “remotely”. **73% of male respondents and 55% of female entrepreneurs and self-employed noted that their business was unregistered.**

This category of citizens was more affected by the consequences of the measures introduced to combat the epidemic. The



- Men
- Women

spread of COVID-19 had a strong impact on the business of respondents in almost half of cases (47%), in 13% of cases the business stopped completely. Men were more likely to report the impact of COVID-19 on business than women. As a result of COVID-19, men had the highest percentage of decreased income in agriculture, own business, and paid work. Women had the largest decreases in cash income from people living abroad (migrant remittances) and family/own business income. For vulnerable groups and families with many children, all these “losses” from family budgets were even more tangible.<sup>39</sup>

37 IOM, 2019, External Youth Migration in CA countries, [https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/external\\_youth\\_migration\\_ru.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/external_youth_migration_ru.pdf)

38 IOM, 2019, External Youth Migration in CA countries, [https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/external\\_youth\\_migration\\_ru.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/external_youth_migration_ru.pdf)

39 UNFPA, UN Women, 2020, Survey Report: Impact of COVID-19 on Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/RUS\\_Gender%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20COVID-19%20impact\\_May%202020\\_final.pdf](https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/RUS_Gender%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20COVID-19%20impact_May%202020_final.pdf)

The quarantine left hundreds of thousands of migrant workers without income, for whom working in Russia was the only way to feed their families back home. Many have begun to return home, where there is even less chance of normal employment. Kyrgyzstan is one of the most remittance-dependent countries in the world, and mass repatriation threatens the economy, and thus ordinary people, with great losses.<sup>40</sup>

Remittances not only account for about 30 percent of the country's GDP, but they are a major source of income for many households and contributed to an 11 percentage point decrease in the national poverty rate in 2019, meaning that 715,000 people rely on them to escape poverty. As a result of the Central Asian pandemic, 83 percent of migrants either lost their usual income or had their income reduced, and among those who lost their jobs, 90.2 percent were unable to remit money back home.<sup>41</sup> A recent assessment showed that 85% of families receiving remittances from family members overseas have experienced a decline in remittances. Therefore, while it is not quantifiable, it can be assumed that remittances have declined significantly in 2020. Together with rising unemployment and decreased purchasing power due to higher prices, the reduction or loss of income from remittances not only threatens the food security of vulnerable households, but also increases their risk of poverty.<sup>42</sup>

According to the SMC under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, more

than 750,000 Kyrgyzstani citizens are currently abroad. At the time of border closures, about 5,000 Kyrgyz citizens were stranded/isolated in destination countries and unable to return, as well as their families (especially children left behind in the country of origin), constitute another vulnerable group. The reasons for this situation are the expiration of migrants' terms of stay in the destination country, the reduction and termination of activities of organizations, firms under quarantine conditions. Lack of earnings, fear of contracting a viral infection and being abroad, far from family and friends during a pandemic make them vulnerable. Obviously, migrants in irregular situations, asylum seekers, exploited and trafficked persons may be particularly at risk of COVID-19 because their living or working environment may expose them to the virus without the necessary protection.<sup>43</sup>

#### 1.4 Vulnerable groups

The group with the greatest risk of unemployment are people living in the provinces, people with a secondary technical education, and young people. Other groups at risk, but to a lesser extent, are women, people living in urban areas, and people with some disabilities/chronic illnesses.<sup>44</sup>

The results show that unemployed people who have lost hope of finding a job are mostly found among people living in remote regions and in rural areas.

Another group is women and the elderly. Thus, continuous efforts are needed to reduce discrimination against women. The high prevalence of long-term

40 BBC-news, 2020, Coronavirus Brought the Migrants Home <https://www.bbc.com/russian/features-53167907>

41 WFP, 2021, The Food Security Situation in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000124522/download/>

42 WFP, 2021, The Food Security Situation in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000124522/download/>

43 UNFPA, UN Women, 2020, Survey Report: Impact of COVID-19 on Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/RUS\\_Gender%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20COVID-19%20impact\\_May%202020\\_final.pdf](https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/RUS_Gender%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20COVID-19%20impact_May%202020_final.pdf)

44 Bernab and Kolev, Identifying Vulnerable Groups in the Kyrgyz Labor Market: Some Implications for the National Poverty Reduction Strategy.

unemployment and discouragement among women is indeed a sign of that gender inequality in Kyrgyzstan.<sup>45</sup>

The situation on the labor market in Kyrgyzstan for people with disabilities is also not favorable. According to various estimates, 80-85% of people with disabilities of working age are unemployed and excluded from the labor market.<sup>46</sup> According to the Ministry of Labor and Social Development, when trying to find a job, people with disabilities face direct and indirect discrimination. Employers treat job applicants negatively because they have a disability.<sup>47</sup>

For example, in 2017 the approved employment quota for people with disabilities nationwide was 690 jobs out of 43,800 vacancies reported to state employment services. Moreover, 97 people, which constitutes only 14% of the annual quota, were actually employed.<sup>48</sup>

### 1.5 Key actors and recommendations:

The Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Kyrgyz Republic is the central body of state administration that implements state policy and manages labor, employment, and social protection, as well as coordinates

the activities of other state administration bodies in these areas.<sup>49</sup>

The Ministry of Economic Regulation of the Kyrgyz Republic is an authorized state executive body in the field of fiscal, tariff and licensing policy, technical regulation and metrology, tourism, and trade. One of the main tasks of this ministry is to participate in the implementation of economic regulation based on the operational analysis and forecast of socio-economic development of the Kyrgyz Republic.<sup>50</sup>

Department of labor protection and labor relations monitors compliance with the established procedure of investigation and registration of accidents at work and occupational diseases, provides an opinion on the disagreement on the investigation of accidents at work, as well as investigates accidents at work in the prescribed order.<sup>51</sup>

State Employment Service under MLSLSD provides state services in the sphere of promotion of employment and protection from unemployment. Its structure includes the MLSLSD Employment Promotion Department, Bishkek City Department, territorial employment promotion divisions within the Social Development Departments.<sup>52</sup>

Territorial departments for the promotion of employment assist citizens in finding appropriate work, and employers in selecting the necessary workers, consulting

45 Bernab and Kolev, Identifying Vulnerable Groups in the Kyrgyz Labor Market: Some Implications for the National Poverty Reduction Strategy.

46 Soros Foundation, 2018, Realizing the Rights of PWDs to Work Through Activation of the "Dormant" Norms of the Law, [https://soros.kg/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Research-report\\_Shevchenko.pdf](https://soros.kg/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Research-report_Shevchenko.pdf)

47 Soros Foundation, 2018, Realizing the Rights of PWDs to Work Through Activation of the "Dormant" Norms of the Law, [https://soros.kg/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Research-report\\_Shevchenko.pdf](https://soros.kg/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Research-report_Shevchenko.pdf)

48 Soros Foundation, 2018, Realizing the Rights of PWDs to Work Through Activation of the "Dormant" Norms of the Law, [https://soros.kg/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Research-report\\_Shevchenko.pdf](https://soros.kg/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Research-report_Shevchenko.pdf)

49 Provision on the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Kyrgyz Republic, dated February 23, 2004, #86, <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/22090>

50 Provision on the Ministry of Economic Regulation of the Kyrgyz Republic, dated December 4, 2009, # №727, <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/90380>

51 Resolution on the Department of Labor Protection and Labor Relations, March 15, 1999, #149, <http://geti.gov.kg/upravleniya/upravlenie-okhrany-truda-i-trudovoykh-otnoshenij.html>

52 MLSLSD, Employment Promotion Portal, <http://zanyatost.kg/Page/PageShow/1002>

on labor and employment issues, vocational training, retraining and advanced training of unemployed citizens, the organization of paid public works, organization of vocational guidance for citizens to choose a career, employment, vocational training, analysis and prediction of labor market development.<sup>53</sup>

The State Migration Service under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic is a state executive body that implements state policy in the sphere of migration, including issues of immigrants, ethnic Kyrgyz and refugees. Some of its main objectives are the development and implementation of normative legal acts in the field of migration and control over their implementation; monitoring and evaluation of the migration situation in the KR and development of the system of organized employment of citizens abroad;<sup>54</sup>

International Organization of Migration (IOM) supports the government's efforts to develop comprehensive, evidence-based migration policies based on the protection of migrants' rights. It also works with partners in the international community to: assist in addressing the growing practical challenges of migration management; develop understanding of migration issues; promote social and economic development through migration; and protect the human dignity and well-being of migrants.<sup>55</sup>

USAID's Demilgeluu Jashtar Project (Youth engagement project) aims to increase the economic employment and civic participation of young people in the

Kyrgyz Republic. The goals and objectives of the project are to develop leadership and life skills of young people, promote youth participation in local development of their communities, increase youth participation in the labor market through the development of their professional and entrepreneurial skills.<sup>56</sup>

UNDP assistance aims to ensure long-term, sustainable, inclusive and gender-sensitive development-oriented policies and responsible institutions that support, productive activities, decent job creation, technological modernization and innovation. Program activities prioritize women, youth, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities.<sup>57</sup>

GIZ. Its "Youth and Women's Employment Promotion" project supports economically sustainable short-term vocational training courses for the unemployed, focused on subsequent employment in in-demand sectors of the economy, starting one's own business, and increasing the income of the unemployed population as a whole.<sup>58</sup>

Mountain Societies Development Support Foundation (MSDSP) in the framework of project called "Youth employment – Community Support Program". Through assessment and development of employment skills this project is aiming at equipping youth to actively participate in traditional and electronic economies.<sup>59</sup>

53 MLSD, Employment Promotion Portal, <http://zanyatost.kg/Page/PageShow/1002>

54 Regulations on the State Migration Service under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, December 11, 2015, #854, <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/98243>

55 IOM, 2019, [https://mfa.gov.kg/ru/main/page?page\\_id=2270](https://mfa.gov.kg/ru/main/page?page_id=2270)

56 USAID, 2017, "Demilgeluu Jashtar/ Youth Initiative Project", <https://www.usaid.gov/ru/kyrgyz-republic/fact-sheets/enhancing-employability-and-civic-engagement-youth>

57 UNDP, <https://www.kg.undp.org/content/kyrgyzstan/ru/home/sustainable-development.html>

58 GIZ, 2019, Promoting youth and women's employment [http://www.giz-employment.kg/improvement\\_prof\\_edu/](http://www.giz-employment.kg/improvement_prof_edu/)

59 MSDSP, Youth employment- Community Support Program, [https://www.infoik.net.kg/images/files/plan\\_ru.pdf](https://www.infoik.net.kg/images/files/plan_ru.pdf)

Based on SDG 8, “Promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”, the following recommendations are offered:

- Ensure and promote decent working conditions for young people and women, and modernize the existing labor inspection system.
- Development of state employment programs for the number of unemployed youth, as part of the development and selection of investment projects.
- To develop and promote measures of economic incentives for enterprises that attract interns and trainees.
- To intensify the work of the republican information portal with a database of available vacancies in the country, as well as to intensify the work of employment services for the development of informing unemployed youth about vacancies.
- To conduct a systematic analysis of the labor market in order to form forecasts of labor market needs, employers’ requirements.
- To develop measures for the initial vocational guidance of students and identification of their abilities. Strengthen the work on the training of primary professional and entrepreneurial skills.<sup>60</sup>

For the migration field. One of the main objectives of migration policy is to provide pre-migration training and protection for migrants, as well as to use the opportunities of the Eurasian Economic Union. Based on SDG 8 “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and

productive employment and decent work for all” and SDG 10 “Reduce inequality within and among countries,” the following recommendations are offered:

- Develop agreements between Kyrgyzstan and labor migrant-receiving countries to streamline pension and health care/insurance for Kyrgyz labor migrants in both the sending and receiving countries of migration.
- Review and develop cooperation mechanisms between government, NGOs and private organizations to support labor migrants at all stages of migration.
- There should be monitoring and analysis of labor market demand in receiving and sending countries in order to assist migrant youth
- It is necessary to ensure that young people are informed about labor migration, from the process of preparing to leave and finding a job to moving to the receiving countries, to the process of ending migration and integrating returned migrants into society.
- Conduct research on the impact of labor migration on young people, the demographic situation, the labor market, and the standard of living and quality of life of Kyrgyz citizens.<sup>61</sup>

## 2. GENDER EQUALITY

### 2.1 Economic opportunities for women

Young women have to overcome more barriers to accessing education, justice, health services, safety, and protection. These barriers can range from restrictions

<sup>60</sup> Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic., <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

<sup>61</sup> NISR, 2018, Extended migration profile, 2015-2018 <https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/Migration-Profile-2018-in-Russian.pdf>

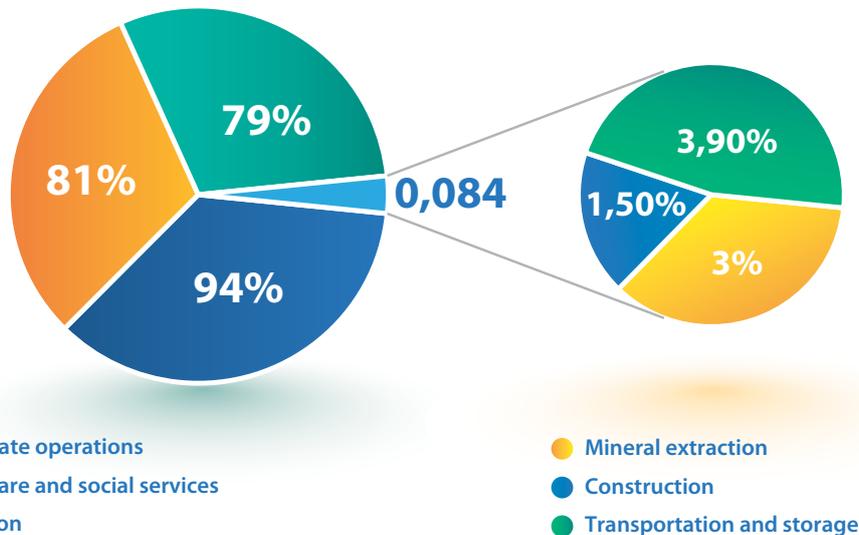
on movement and education to restrictions on attaining leadership positions in their communities or careers.<sup>62</sup>

The distribution of female and male employment by type of economic activity has significant differences due to their different physiological capabilities and established traditions.<sup>63</sup>

Women’s employment is highest in the service sector, where their share in total employment was predominant in activities such as **real estate operations (94%), health and social services (81%) and education (79%)**. Women were least employed in **mining (3%), construction (1.5%) and transportation and cargo storage (3.9%)**.<sup>64</sup>

### Reasons

The excess of the employment rate of men over the employment rate of women was observed in all age groups, but the most significant difference was in the 20-34 age groups. At this age, women most often leave their jobs due to childbirth<sup>65</sup>. The predominance of women in low-wage sectors is reflected in the significant wage gap between men and women, with women earning an average of 75.3% of men’s earnings in 2016. Girls’ tendency to study non-technical subjects limits their employment potential in well-paid jobs. Other contributing factors include the low representation of women in leadership positions, even in sectors where they dominate, and the widespread bias against women by many employers because of the



The general unemployment rate for the age group 15-28 in 2019 was 13.6% for women and 8% for men.

62 Saferworld, 2019, Young People’s Voices on Peace and Security in Kyrgyzstan, <https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources-ru/publications/1227-young-peoples-voices-on-peace-and-security-in-kyrgyzstan-ru>

63 NSC, 2020, Men and Women of the Kyrgyz Republic <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-zhenshiny-i-muzhchiny-kyrgyzskoj-respubliki/>

64 NSC, 2020, Men and Women of the Kyrgyz Republic <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-zhenshiny-i-muzhchiny-kyrgyzskoj-respubliki/>

economic cost of maternity leave. Another factor limiting women’s employment in certain areas may be related to the existence of a list of 400 occupations that are legally prohibited to women, ostensibly for health and safety reasons, but in reality many of the original intended restrictions no longer exist due to advances in technology and work

65 NSC, 2019, Youth in Kyrgyz Republic, 2014-2018 <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-molodezh-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike-2014/>

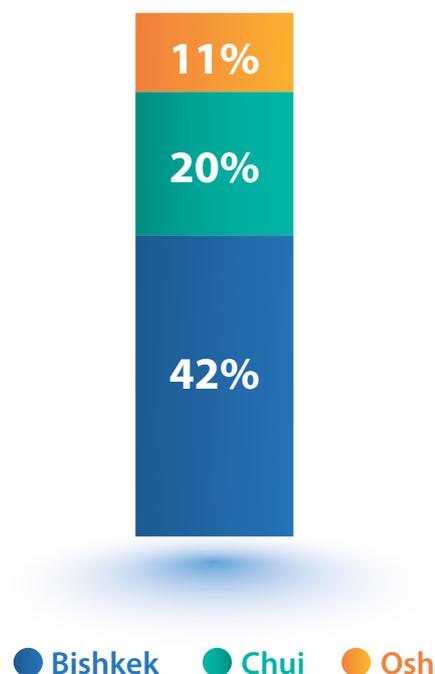
methodology. Another factor contributing to women's unemployment is the lack of subsidized childcare and public services, such as daycare centers, which in turn limits job choices for many women with young children or other caregiving responsibilities.

## 2.2 Gender violence

Young women are particularly vulnerable to certain forms of violence and discrimination. Conservative interpretations of tradition and religion often place women below men, assigning them certain supporting roles, mainly in the household. This has led to an increased risk of gender-based violence, including domestic violence, early or forced marriage, and bride kidnapping. It also limits their access to safety and protection, justice and legal rights, education, and health services. Domestic work responsibilities imposed on women limit their access to employment. Young women's identity depends, according to society, on their marital status. Thus, because of societal pressure, young women tend to start families at a young age, giving preference to marriage and refusing to obtain employment. In turn, limited access to education and employment increases the vulnerability of young women to poverty and violence<sup>66</sup>. **More than 20% of marriages in the Kyrgyz Republic are committed by kidnapping girls, the proportion of forced marriages is 6%.**

Bride kidnapping of women for marriage in rural areas is twice as frequent as in cities, and is associated with physical, mental and often sexual violence. According to a study conducted by AUCA, more than 60% of marriages performed in the last 15 years in rural areas were performed through bride kidnapping (ala kachuu), of which

## СЕМЕЙНОЕ НАСИЛИЕ



two-thirds were performed without the consent of the girl.<sup>67</sup>

In 2019, about 8,000 people applied to crisis centers and other specialized institutions providing social and psychological assistance to the population on cases of domestic violence, most of whom (85 percent) were women. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic, the number of temporary protection orders issued for domestic violence cases increased by 1.7 times in 2019 compared to 2015. Compared to 2015, the number of criminal cases initiated and sent to the courts for consideration on the facts of domestic violence increased by 2.7 times, mainly due to an increase in the

66 Saferworld, 2019, Young People's Voices on Peace and Security in Kyrgyzstan, <https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources-ru/publications/1227-young-peoples-voices-on-peace-and-security-in-kyrgyzstan-ru>

67 UN, GIZ, 2020, National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Kyrgyz Republic [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR\\_2020\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Report\\_Russian.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR_2020_Kyrgyzstan_Report_Russian.pdf)

number of cases of light and less serious harm to health.<sup>68</sup>

In 2019, internal affairs agencies of the republic registered 7,045 offenses related to domestic violence in the Uniform Registry of Crimes and Misdemeanors, of which more than 70% were domestic violence cases. The highest number of cases of family violence were in Bishkek (42%), Chui (20%) and Osh (11%) provinces.<sup>69</sup>

According to official data, violence increased by 65% compared to the same period last year. During the quarantine period, only 9% of respondents contacted hotlines for help and support, with the percentage of women contacting hotlines (12.5%) being 2 times higher than the percentage of men (5.8%).<sup>70</sup>

### 2.3 Impact of COVID-19 on women

#### General impact

Women's entrepreneurship. The situation with the spread of the coronavirus, the introduction of quarantine and the instability of the national currency has practically undermined the women's entrepreneurial movement. The particular vulnerability of this group of entrepreneurs is due to the fact that women's businesses are mainly concentrated in the service sector in the areas of beauty industry and trade. For this reason, one of the groups on

whose needs and requirements this study should focus is women entrepreneurs.<sup>71</sup>

Impact of pandemic on women's situation in the family. Increased burden of caring for family members, loss of daily wages, difficulty in finding additional opportunities to support children in the absence of another breadwinner, women with debt, paying off social housing loans.<sup>72</sup>

Situation with family (home) violence after the start of the COVID19 epidemic and the introduction of the state of emergency (SES) has worsened. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic, between January and March 2020, law enforcement agencies in Kyrgyzstan registered 2,319 reports of domestic violence. By comparison, this figure is 65 percent higher than during the same period in 2019. Ninety-five percent of victims are women between the ages of 21 and 50. The ACA estimates that most cases remain latent because, women refuse to be evaluated in the hospital for fear of getting infected. They refuse to report to law enforcement for fear that law enforcement will not take protective measures and she will have to be left alone with her aggressor again for an indefinite period of time. Being in isolation, the women have no opportunity to go to their relatives, endure economic dependence on their husbands, have no opportunity to pay their rent, etc. The termination of investigation and the work of the courts aggravates the situation of victims of violence, there is no possibility

68 NSC, 2019, <http://www.stat.kg/ru/news/okolo-85-procentov-obrativshihnya-v-2019-godu-po-faktam-semejnogo-nasiliya-zhenshiny/>

69 NSC, 2019, <http://www.stat.kg/ru/news/okolo-85-procentov-obrativshihnya-v-2019-godu-po-faktam-semejnogo-nasiliya-zhenshiny/>

70 UNFPA, UN Women, 2020, Research report: Impact of COVID-19 on Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/RUS\\_Gender%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20COVID-19%20impact\\_May%202020\\_final.pdf](https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/RUS_Gender%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20COVID-19%20impact_May%202020_final.pdf)

71 UNFPA, UN Women, 2020, Research report: Impact of COVID-19 on Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic [https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/RUS\\_Gender%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20COVID-19%20impact\\_May%202020\\_final.pdf](https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/RUS_Gender%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20COVID-19%20impact_May%202020_final.pdf)

72 UNFPA, UN Women, 2020, Research report: Impact of COVID-19 on Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/RUS\\_Gender%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20COVID-19%20impact\\_May%202020\\_final.pdf](https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/RUS_Gender%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20COVID-19%20impact_May%202020_final.pdf)

to provide urgent legal support, to go to the scene of the crime.<sup>73</sup>

### Impact on vulnerable women's group

Rural women. There is no way for most of them to switch to telecommuting, especially in mountainous and remote communities. For rural and remote women, online platforms and mobile consultations do not work because most of them do not have personal computers/tablets/mobile phones and do not have any ICT skills or even simple knowledge of how to use them. The epidemic occurred during the period of spring field work, due to the specific climatic conditions in most regions of Kyrgyzstan it is March and April that are the most active times for them. The emergency led to the fact that villagers were deprived of access to loans, seeds, fuel and lubricants. The failure of the sowing season makes it possible to predict a decline in agricultural production throughout the year, leading to a deepening of poverty. This will ultimately lead to a greater burden on women and an increase in all forms and types of violence.<sup>74</sup>

Women with disabilities and women with children with disabilities. They are usually more dependent on other family members. They need additional resources because they need medications, care products. Such families usually experience poverty and do not have opportunities to earn regular income.<sup>75</sup>

73 UNFPA, UN Women, 2020, Research report: Impact of COVID-19 on Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/RUS\\_Gender%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20COVID-19%20impact\\_May%202020\\_final.pdf](https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/RUS_Gender%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20COVID-19%20impact_May%202020_final.pdf)

74 UNFPA, UN Women, 2020, Research report: Impact of COVID-19 on Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/RUS\\_Gender%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20COVID-19%20impact\\_May%202020\\_final.pdf](https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/RUS_Gender%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20COVID-19%20impact_May%202020_final.pdf)

75 UNFPA, UN Women, 2020, Research report: Impact of COVID-19 on Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/RUS\\_Gender%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20COVID-19%20impact\\_May%202020\\_final.pdf](https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/RUS_Gender%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20COVID-19%20impact_May%202020_final.pdf)

## 2.4 Key actors and recommendations:

National Council for Women and Gender Development under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic is a coordinating, consultative and advisory body that coordinates the development and implementation of state policy on gender development issues, as well as analytical and expert work to elaborate coordinated decisions on gender development.<sup>76</sup>

Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Kyrgyz Republic is the central body of state administration that implements state policy and manages labor, employment, and social protection, as well as coordinates the activities of other state administration bodies in these areas.<sup>77</sup>

Ministry of Economic Regulation of the Kyrgyz Republic is an authorized state executive body in the field of fiscal, tariff and licensing policy, technical regulation and metrology, tourism, and trade. One of the main tasks of this ministry is to participate in the implementation of economic regulation based on the operational analysis and forecast of socio-economic development of the Kyrgyz Republic.<sup>78</sup>

Ministry of education and science of the Kyrgyz Republic is the central body of executive power, which develops a unified state policy in the field of education, science and scientific and technical activities, and exercises state control over the availability and quality of education, ensuring the

76 Regulations on the National Council for Women and Gender Development under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, May 2, 2012, #268, <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/93602>

77 Regulations on the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Kyrgyz Republic, February 23, 2004, #86, <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/22090>

78 Provision on the Ministry of Economic Regulation of the Kyrgyz Republic, December 4, 2009, #727, <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/90380>

constitutional right of citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic to education.<sup>79</sup>

Some international organizations and projects:

UNFPA supports the government in policy review, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of activities related to gender equality, in cooperation with other UN agencies.<sup>80</sup>

UN Women. The work of this agency in Kyrgyzstan is directly linked to the country's national priorities and the international commitments it has undertaken to ensure women's rights. The agency prioritizes initiatives and programs in areas fundamental to women's equality and to finding ways forward for both women and men: economic empowerment; the elimination of violence against women; peace, security and gender mainstreaming in humanitarian action.<sup>81</sup>

Based on SDG 5 "Ensuring gender equality and empowering all women and girls", the following recommendations are offered:

- Focus on training women in marketable skills, supporting women's participation in the labor force.
- Promote participation of women and girls in non-traditional occupations, which in turn will improve their economic opportunities and also challenge current stereotypes and the division of roles between women and men in society.
- Demonstrate continued commitment to promoting gender equality and the advancement of women.

79 Regulations on the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic, February 20, 2012, #119, <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/93804?cl=ru-ru>

80 UNFPA, <https://kyrgyzstan.unfpa.org/ru/node/9683>

81 UN Women, <https://eca.unwomen.org/ru/where-we-are/kyrgyzstan>

- Empowerment as an integral part of the government's development agenda, with
- Integrate gender equality into all laws, policies and programs.
- Ensure women's participation in decision-making through their enforcement of temporary special measures, such as quotas to increase the participation of women-including ethnic minority women-in public, economic and political life and other areas at the local and national levels.
- Ensure the participation of women in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of regional, local and sectoral development policies and programs.
- Implement legislative measures and special programs for the economic empowerment of women, including access to economic resources, economic education and technology.
- Constantly challenge and combat social and cultural stereotypes about women (their secondary role in the family and society), resulting in the promotion of discriminatory and traditionalist patriarchal practices.
- Measures should be taken to identify and remove systemic barriers to women's economic and political empowerment. In the case of the labor market, positive measures should include (i) holding employers accountable for hiring and other gender-discriminatory practices; (ii) creating an enabling environment for girls and young women to learn non-traditional subjects that will lead to well-paying careers in the new economy; (iii) providing adequate, affordable child care and preschool services to enable return to the workplace.
- Identify and actively support female role models who can inspire other

women to run for local or national office.<sup>82</sup>

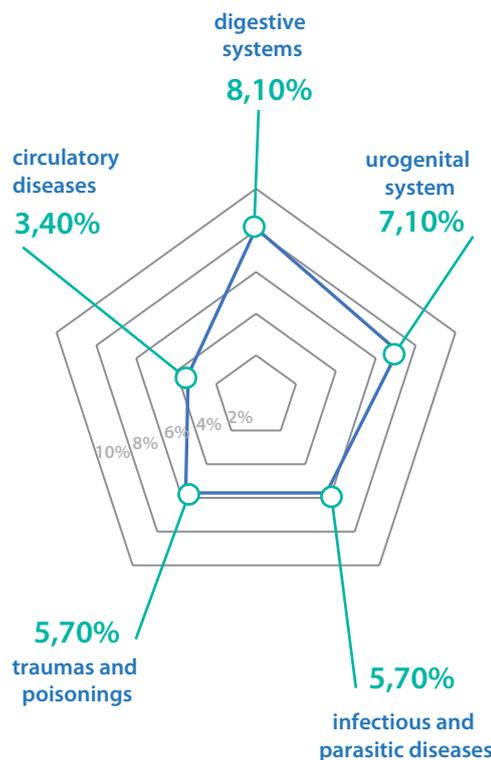
### 3.HEALTH

#### 3.1 General data (morbidity and mortality among children and youth)

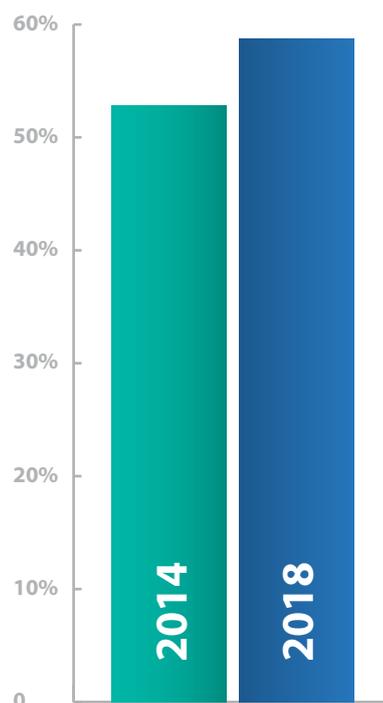
The area of health is not considered problematic for young people. Nevertheless, the health status of young people should be a priority in human development assessments. First, because a number of diseases are easier to prevent at a young age by raising awareness. Second, the lifestyles of young people can have an impact on health outcomes later in life.<sup>83</sup>

In 2018, **1.6 million cases of diseases were detected in the republic, of which more than 43% in children.** In 2018, respiratory diseases accounted for **37.5%**, digestive diseases **8.1%**, diseases of the genitourinary system **7.1%**, infectious and parasitic diseases **5.7%**, injuries and poisonings **5.7%**, diseases of the circulatory system **3.4%**.<sup>84</sup>

Over the last five years, the number of young people aged 14-28 years, who died, has slightly decreased and has averaged about 4% of the total number of deaths. At the same time, in recent years there has been an **increasing trend in the proportion of deaths among adolescents and young people aged 14-23 years.** Thus, in 2018 the share of deceased young people in this age group was **58.7%**, compared to **52.8%** in 2014.



THE PROPORTION OF DEATHS AMONG ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 14-23



82 ADB, 2019, Kyrgyz Republic – Country Gender Assessment, <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/546966/kyrgyz-republic-country-gender-assessment-2019.pdf>

83 Институт развития молодежи в Кыргызстане, 2017, Индекс благополучия и развития молодежи в Кыргызской Республике, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

84 HCK, 2018, <http://stat.kg/ru/news/otdelnye-pokazateli-zdorovya-naseleniya-v-2018-godu/>

The main causes of death among young people in 2018 were injuries, poisoning, and some other outcomes of external causes (42% of all deaths among 14-28 year olds). This class combines unnatural and violent causes of death, including homicide and suicide. Next are symptoms, signs, and abnormalities detected by clinical and laboratory tests (14%). Neoplasms were the third leading cause of overall mortality (9%). Diseases of the nervous system were the cause of death in 8% of the deceased, diseases of the circulatory system in 7% of the deceased.<sup>85</sup>

The main causes of death in children under five years of age are conditions arising in the perinatal period (in 2019 - 59.8% of the total number of deaths in children aged 0-4 years). These are followed by congenital anomalies (15.1%), respiratory diseases (10.7%), injuries, poisonings, and

other external causes (5.0%), and some infectious and parasitic diseases (3.2%).<sup>86</sup>

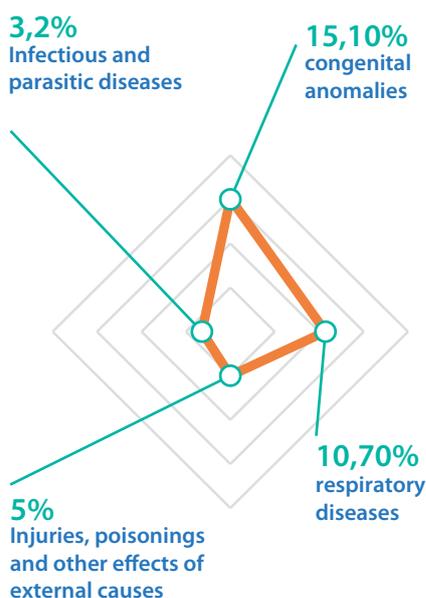
### 3.2 Sexual and reproductive age

#### Maternal mortality

Although the maternal mortality rate in Kyrgyzstan has been steadily declining, it remains high<sup>87</sup>. For example, in 2015 the maternal mortality rate per 100,000 births was 38.5%, and in 2019 it was 24.8%. Kyrgyzstan still has the highest maternal mortality rates among the CIS countries. In 2019, 43 women died from complications, pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period, or 25 female deaths per 100,000 live births. Of the total number of maternal deaths, 55.8% were reported in rural areas<sup>88</sup>.

Nowadays, the most common causes are chronic diseases, as well as complications, mainly related to the postpartum period and hypertensive disorders during pregnancy, so we should pay special attention to family planning and reproductive health.<sup>89</sup>

Reasons of deaths between 0-5 years old



#### Contraception and abortions

In addition, the data show an increase in the number of abortions. In 2018, 11,200 abortions were registered among young women aged 14-29. The greatest number of abortions (including mini-abortions) occurred in the 18-24 (52.3%) and 25-29 (47.2%) age groups, while about 1% of abortions at ages 14-17<sup>90</sup>.

85 NSC, 2019, Youth in Kyrgyz Republic 2014-2018. <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-molodezh-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike-2014/>

86 NSC, 2020, Men and Women of the Kyrgyz Republic <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-zhenshiny-i-muzhchiny-kyrgyzskoj-respubliki/>

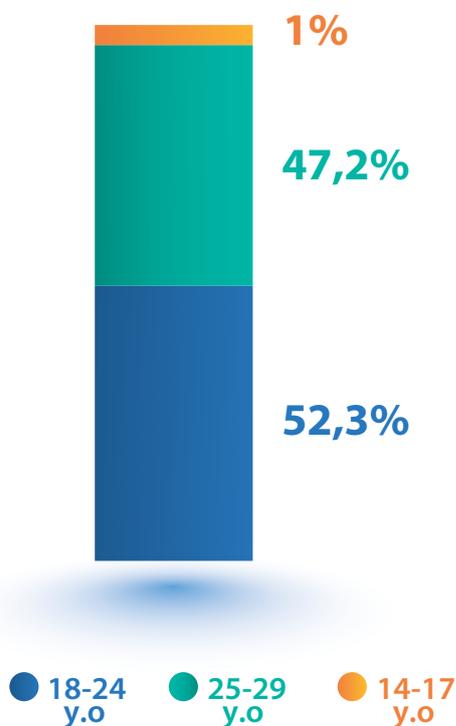
87 Demographic Situation Analysis in Krgyz Republic, 2020.

88 NSC, 2020, Population Health and Health Care in the Kyrgyz Republic <http://stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-zdorove-naseleniya-i-zdravoohranenie-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike/>

89 NSC, 2020, Population Health and Health Care in the Kyrgyz Republic <http://stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-zdorove-naseleniya-i-zdravoohranenie-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike/>

90 NSC, 2019, Youth in Kyrgyz Republic 2014-2018. <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-molodezh-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike-2014/>

### ABORTIONS AMONG YOUNG WOMEN



Reasons that contribute to this growth are: lack of permanent employment and economic hardship; lack of housing; medical conditions; young age and unpreparedness for motherhood; unwillingness to have children.<sup>91</sup>

Data on the number of women of reproductive age using contraception in Kyrgyzstan also shows an increase in the number of abortions among young women. Thus, from 2014 to 2018 the number of women using contraception decreased: from 514,000 young women in 2014 to 356,000 in 2018. Rates by age group dropped from 3% in 2014 for ages 14-17 to 1% in 2018; 18-24 year olds from 29.1% in 2014 to 22.7% in 2018; and rates increased for ages 25-29 from 21.6% for 2014 to 22.9 for 2018.

Hence, a significant decrease in the number of women using contraception at the age of 18-24 years has influenced the increase in the number of abortions among this age group (52.3% of abortions). Thus, abortions are one of the main methods of birth control and the population is insufficiently informed about family planning methods and safe contraceptives.<sup>92</sup>

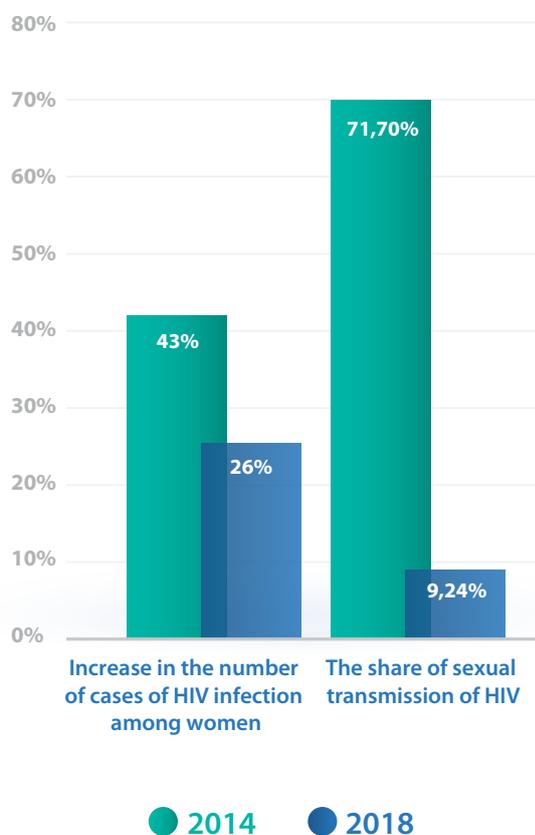
#### STIs

The number of people infected with HIV is growing every year in Kyrgyzstan, including an increase in infection among women. At the end of 2018, 1,923 young people living with HIV were registered with the Republican AIDS Center. In 2009, the incidence of HIV infection was more

91 Demographic Situation Analysis in Kyrgyzstan, 2020.

92 NSC, 2019, Youth in Kyrgyz Republic, 2014-2018 <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-molodezh-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike-2014/>

common among men in the age group of 25-29 years old and was mainly due to injecting drug use (91%).<sup>93</sup> However, now the share of sexual transmission of HIV increases significantly (**from 9.24% in 2009 to 71.7% in 2019**). There is also an increase in the number of cases of HIV infection among women. **While in 2009 women accounted for 26%, in 2019 they accounted for 43%.**<sup>94</sup>



In recent years there has been a steady downward trend in the incidence of syphilis among young people. In 2018, compared to 2014, it decreased threefold, amounting to 10 cases per 100,000 of population. However, it should be kept in mind that the

decrease in the incidence rate is primarily due to the low turnout of the population to medical organizations, which uses self-treatment or anonymous treatment in such cases. The highest number of syphilis cases among both women and men is in the age group of 25-29 years old. There is a tendency for women to have a higher incidence of syphilis than men.<sup>95</sup> In 2019, 74.7% of all syphilis patients were women.<sup>96</sup>

The incidence of gonorrhea among young people also tends to decrease. In 2018, compared to 2014, it decreased 4.2-fold, with 10 cases per 100,000 of population.<sup>97</sup> Of the total number of gonorrhea patients, men account for about 70%.<sup>98</sup>

The main factors of sexual transmission of HIV in the country were noted as: the high level of internal and external migration, many people do not want to use condoms for various reasons (trust the partner, decreased sensitivity, loss of erection, etc.), it was noted that the condoms distributed in the projects are not always in demand, in addition there is low awareness about the ways of STI transmission (there is an opinion that HIV and STIs are not transmitted through anal, oral sex), low level of responsibility for one's health, the fact that there is a lack of knowledge of the ways of HIV and STIs transmission (in the case of the people who do not have a condom).<sup>99</sup>

93 USAID, 2015, Research on HIV/AIDS in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2019-09/A%20study%20in%20HIV%20area%20in%20the%20Kyrgyz%20Republic%202015%20RUS.pdf>

94 NSC, 2020, Population Health and Health Care in the Kyrgyz Republic <http://stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-zdorove-naseleniya-i-zdravoohranenie-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike/>

95 NSC, 2019, Youth in Kyrgyz Republic, 2014-2018 <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-molodezh-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike-2014/>

96 NSC, 2020, Men and Women of the Kyrgyz Republic <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-zhenshiny-i-muzhchiny-kyrgyzskoj-respubliki/>

97 NSC, 2019, Youth in Kyrgyz Republic, 2014-2018 <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-molodezh-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike-2014/>

98 NSC, 2020, Men and Women of the Kyrgyz Republic <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-zhenshiny-i-muzhchiny-kyrgyzskoj-respubliki/>

99 UNFPA, 2017, Situation Analysis Report on Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment Services in Bishkek and Osh, [https://kyrgyzstan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/report%20STI\\_DA\\_03.05.19.pdf](https://kyrgyzstan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/report%20STI_DA_03.05.19.pdf)

It was also noted that the need for condoms is not covered by prevention programs, and the purchase of condoms of appropriate quality is not always affordable to representatives and the general population among others. And it was also noted that among the general population condoms are often not used with regular sexual partners.

### 3.3 Access to healthcare

The introduction of a single payer system in the financing of health care- contributed to the creation of a new financial and organizational structure aimed at a more efficient and equitable use of funds. At present, two programs determine the population's rights to medical care: the Program of State Guarantees for the Provision of Citizens with Medical and Health Care Services and the Additional Medicines Program for Outpatients. Both programs are financed through payroll contributions (mandatory health insurance) and general taxes, defined services that are covered and provided for free or require co-payment. Funding of the health care sector depends largely on the economic situation in the country.<sup>100</sup>

Counseling for STA is covered by health insurance. STI testing and STI medications are only partially covered for insured patients, and require a 50% copayment for medications.<sup>101</sup>

Rural doctors stated that STIs are not diagnosed and treated in primary care and that patients should be referred to larger facilities, such as family medicine centers or hospitals. In addition, there are no

100 WHO, 2020, Assessment of Sexual, Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent Health in the Context of Universal Health Coverage in Kyrgyzstan, <https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/Nurshaim.pdf>

101 WHO, 2020, Assessment of Sexual, Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent Health in the Context of Universal Health Coverage in Kyrgyzstan, <https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/Nurshaim.pdf>

laboratory services to diagnose STIs, which leads patients to go to the private sector. Medications for gonorrhea, chlamydia, and syphilis were reportedly available and covered by insurance for people with a 50 percent copayment. While HIV testing during pregnancy was officially covered by the state, it was also mentioned that it often cost 47 Kyrgyz soms plus a consultation fee.

102

Regarding pre and postpartum care, data showed informal cash payments in hospitals, which were common practice to receive better care. Key policy makers noted the poor quality of care in hospitals for vaginal births and cesarean sections. One stated that the proportion of cesarean sections has increased in recent years and that poor quality is one of the next factors in maternal mortality. More doctors in public and (especially) private hospitals are reportedly performing cesarean sections to avoid difficult situations and emergencies. **In 2018, out of 161,000 births, nearly 20,000 babies were born via cesarean section (a total of 12.5%), while private hospitals have reached a cesarean section rate of over 30%.**<sup>103</sup>

### 3.4 COVID-19 impact on healthcare

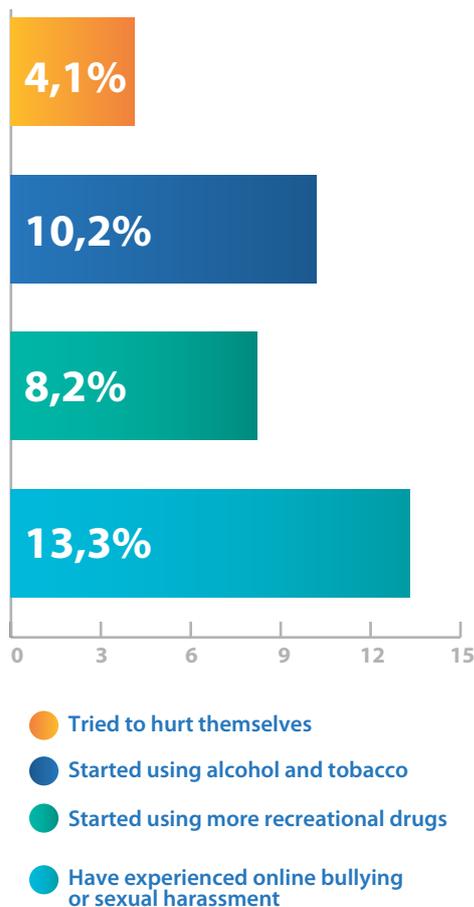
#### Youth and COVID-19

Since the coronavirus outbreak, there has been an increase in alcohol and tobacco use among young people ages 24-29. Adolescent girls (ages 15-18) suffered more from online bullying and sexual harassment than others and from trying to hurt themselves during the pandemic. Vulnerable populations experienced

102 WHO, 2020, Assessment of Sexual, Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent Health in the Context of Universal Health Coverage in Kyrgyzstan, <https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/Nurshaim.pdf>

103 WHO, 2020, Assessment of Sexual, Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent Health in the Context of Universal Health Coverage in Kyrgyzstan, <https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/Nurshaim.pdf>

significant hardship more than the main group of respondents: **13.3% experienced online bullying or sexual harassment; 8.2% began using more recreational drugs, 10.2% used more alcohol or tobacco, and 4.1% tried to harm themselves.**



Internet served as the main source of information on sexual and reproductive health and rights for young people during the pandemic.<sup>104</sup>

### Impact on people living with HIV, families with children with HIV.

The coronavirus pandemic has exacerbated the vulnerability of PLHIV.

104 UNFPA, 2020, Report on the results of a survey on the impact of COVID-19 on young people in Kyrgyzstan, [https://kyrgyzstan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/youth\\_covid-19\\_report\\_2020.pdf](https://kyrgyzstan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/youth_covid-19_report_2020.pdf)

They are among the high-risk groups for COVID-19. Many have had difficulty accessing ARV therapy, which is a life-saving therapy to suppress the HIV virus in the body. There was also limited access to viral load monitoring tests and other medical examinations and treatment. Many women with HIV in self-isolation have experienced stress, anxiety and fear, and have been subjected to domestic violence. Need additional medications, caloric intake. Such families usually experience poverty and do not have opportunities to earn regular income. Basically they need grocery bags, hygiene items. It is necessary to monitor their access to ARVs and other medicines, online self-help groups.<sup>105</sup>

### Immunization

According to the Ministry of Health, as of April 7, 849 people had been vaccinated. Now mostly medical workers are being vaccinated. According to Gulbara Ishenapysova, director of the Republican Center for Immunization, most vaccinated people report weakness, headache, fever, but no one has any serious side effects.<sup>106</sup>

According to Ishenapysova, from April 5-6 a number of regions must deploy vaccination points and begin the vaccination process. Now vaccination is going on only in Bishkek, Osh, Sokuluk and Ysyk-Ata rayons of Chui oblast.<sup>107</sup>

105 UNFPA, UN Women, 2020. Research report: Impact of COVID-19 on Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic,

106 Kloop, 2021, How is vaccination against COVID-19 performed in Kyrgyzstan, <https://kloop.kg/blog/2021/04/07/kak-prohodit-vaktsinatsiya-v-kyrgyzstane-mozhno-li-uzhe-sejchas-poluchit-privivku-ot-covid-19-obyasnyam/>

107 Kloop, 2021, How is vaccination against COVID-19 performed in Kyrgyzstan, <https://kloop.kg/blog/2021/04/07/kak-prohodit-vaktsinatsiya-v-kyrgyzstane-mozhno-li-uzhe-sejchas-poluchit-privivku-ot-covid-19-obyasnyam/>

### 3.5 Vulnerable groups

#### Maternal Mortality

There is the high demand for services for pregnant women, infants, and children as a consequence of Kyrgyzstan's high birth rate and large youth population. The provision of these services is mixed; although there have been some improvements in infant mortality reduction and childhood vaccination in rural areas, maternal mortality rates remain very high, and urban vaccination rates have declined. These variables are equally likely to reflect the quantity or quality of the services in question. Another serious problem is that children bear a disproportionate burden of income poverty.<sup>108</sup>

The high rate of maternal mortality is probably a reflection of inequalities in access to services and quality of these services. This is consistent with Kyrgyzstan's broader inability to maintain the high standards of medical care (in terms of infrastructure, services and staff) that existed during the Soviet era due to significant resource cuts. However, there is a shortage of staff, partly due to the large number of doctors leaving state hospitals to join the private sector or find work abroad. This problem is particularly acute for healthcare in rural areas.<sup>109</sup>

#### 3.6 Key actors and recommendations

The Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic is a state executive body, whose main task is to implement a unified state policy in the field of: protection and promotion of health; public health; ensuring equal physical and economic accessibility

108 OECD Development Pathways, 2018, Social Protection System Review in Kyrgyzstan, [https://www.oecd.org/countries/kyrgyzstan/Social\\_Protection\\_System\\_Review\\_Kyrgyzstan.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/countries/kyrgyzstan/Social_Protection_System_Review_Kyrgyzstan.pdf)

109 OECD Development Pathways, 2018, Social Protection System Review in Kyrgyzstan, [https://www.oecd.org/countries/kyrgyzstan/Social\\_Protection\\_System\\_Review\\_Kyrgyzstan.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/countries/kyrgyzstan/Social_Protection_System_Review_Kyrgyzstan.pdf)

of medical and pharmaceutical services to the population.<sup>110</sup>

Program of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic to Combat HIV Infection in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2017-2021. The State Program takes into account the stage of development of the epidemic and builds its priorities to prevent the further spread of HIV infection. Significant attention is paid to access to diagnostics, treatment, care and support for PLHIV, strengthening the health care system, as well as the coordination, management, monitoring and evaluation of the State Program.<sup>111</sup>

World Health Organization - Supporting policy development for sustainable health development through an integrated approach to health systems. This includes providing guidance, creating local linkages for technical cooperation, preparing standards and agreements, and ensuring public health harmonization and action during crises.<sup>112</sup>

UNAIDS Kyrgyzstan coordinates the international response to AIDS as a public health threat with the goal of completely defeating it by 2030 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>113</sup>

UNICEF supports the Kyrgyz government to improve child survival by identifying critical gaps in the health care system that impede effective coverage, access, and demand for evidence-based maternal and child health services, contributes to

110 Regulation on the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic of December 4, 2009 # 730, <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/90385>

111 Resolution On the Program of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic to Combat HIV Infection in the Kyrgyz Republic for 2017-2021, December 30, 2017, #852, <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/11589?cl=ru-ru>

112 WHO, <https://www.euro.who.int/ru/countries/kyrgyzstan/who-country-office>

113 UNAIDS, <https://www.unaids.org/ru/whoweare/about>

improving access to quality health care for the most vulnerable women and children.<sup>114</sup>

**UNFPA works on:**

- linking HIV/AIDS with sexual and reproductive health, including through rights-based policies and laws, strengthening health systems and integrated delivery of HIV and SRH services;
- prevention of sexual transmission of HIV and unwanted pregnancy, among key populations at higher risk of HIV infection, young people, and women and girls;
- protecting and promoting the sexual and reproductive health of women and girls.<sup>115</sup>

Based on SDG 3 “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages,” the following recommendations are offered:

- Quality and accessibility of health care for all should be promoted; focus on promoting and informing people about family planning methods and safe contraceptives.
- It is necessary to develop measures aimed at awareness of young people about HIV and instilling skills of safe sexual behavior.
- Special education, training and social support should be organized for young women and people on reproductive health, family health, family planning and safe contraceptive methods.
- Involve projects and programs of international organizations and NGOs working at the local level in

the area of health to promote healthy lifestyles and disease prevention.

- It is necessary to form healthy lifestyle skills among young people at all stages of the educational cycle. Develop a national program to promote and instill skills for healthy lifestyles, disease prevention and
- and the development of mass sports and physical training<sup>116,117</sup>

## 4. EDUCATION

### 4.1. School education

The growth in the number of young people is also inevitably associated with a marked increase in the number of schoolchildren. Every year the load on Kyrgyzstan’s general education schools increases. First of all, it is associated with a significant increase in the number of students<sup>118</sup>. Since 2014, the number of schoolchildren has increased by **23.2% from 1.2 million to 1.3 million in 2020**. At the same time, the growth in the number of teachers in Kyrgyzstan significantly lags behind the growth in the number of students and educational institutions. **The number of teachers grew by 12% from 73,000 in 2014 to 88,000 in 2020**.<sup>119</sup>

This indicator shows that the educational system of the republic clearly lacks teachers. For the education system to work properly, as the number of students increases, the number of schools and teachers must also increase. This problem, in turn, will require additional costs for the development of

114 UNICEF, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/ru/%D0%B2%D1%8B%D0%B6%D0%B8%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%B5-%D0%B8-%D0%B7%D0%B4%D0%BE%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B2%D1%8C%D0%B5-%D0%B4%D0%B5%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%B9>

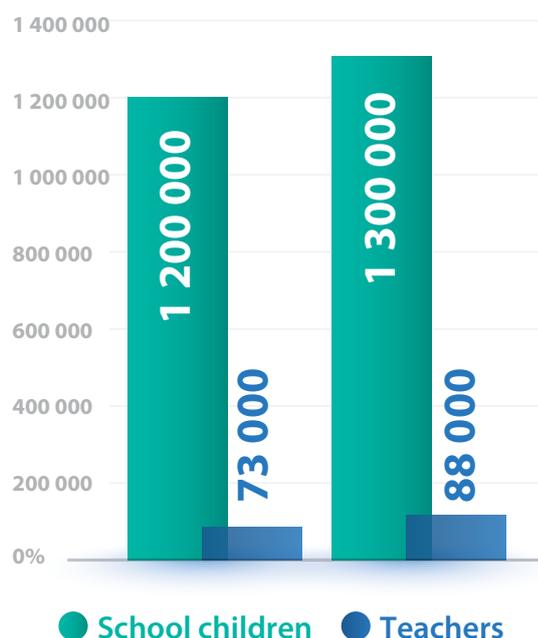
115 UNFPA <https://kyrgyzstan.unfpa.org/ru/node/9682>

116 Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

117 Analysis of Demographic Situation in Kyrgyzstan, 2020.

118 Analysis of Demographic Situation in Kyrgyzstan, 2020.

119 NSC, 2020, Women and Men of the Kyrgyz Republic <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-zhenshiny-i-muzhchiny-kyrgyzskoj-respubliki/>



school infrastructure and an increase in the number of school staff.

### Academic performance and quality

According to the tests conducted as part of the research of the Ministry of Education of the Kyrgyz Republic in 2017, the quality of school education is low. In 2017, tests were conducted for 8th and 4th grades of the republic as part of the project “National Assessment of Educational Achievement of Students,” in three subject areas: mathematics, reading and comprehension tests, and science<sup>120,121</sup>. The results for the country as a whole show that in all three subject areas the percentage of students who did not reach the basic level has decreased. However, the assessment results still show a low level of students’ knowledge. Thus, the percentage of eighth-graders who did not achieve the basic level in reading and text comprehension was 51.5%, in

120 MoES of the KR, 2017, National Assessment of Educational Achievement for Grade 4 Students (NAEA) – 2017 <https://edu.gov.kg/media/files/fa89cc70-d2ac-4419-9e22-651bdff187f8.pdf>

121 MoES of the KR, 2017, National Assessment of Educational Achievement for Grade 8 Students (NAEA) – 2017 [http://testing.kg/media/uploads/files/NOODU%202017/NSBA2017\\_8\\_Fin\\_Report.pdf](http://testing.kg/media/uploads/files/NOODU%202017/NSBA2017_8_Fin_Report.pdf)

mathematics - 64.9%, and extremely high in natural sciences - 76.6%.<sup>122</sup> Regarding the assessment of knowledge of students in grades 4 for 2017, the results also show a positive trend compared to 2009, but the indicators are still low. Assessment results showed that in the subject of homeland studies the percentage of students who reached the basic level was 53.1%, in reading and comprehension 59.8% and in mathematics 60.3%. Bishkek still holds the leading position, but the growth of results in all three areas is more noticeable in the regional centers and small towns. You can also see that the gap between Bishkek schools and rural schools is narrowing due to a more noticeable decrease in the percentage of students who did not reach the basic level. However, at levels above basic and high the percentage of students is most significant in Bishkek.<sup>123</sup>

### Causes

The knowledge that students receive at all levels does not meet modern requirements, as the curriculum in Kyrgyzstan is based on the Soviet educational program and standards. Thus, the factors that influence the low level of quality are:

- Insufficient supply of teachers in schools, as well as the presence of a high percentage of teachers with inadequate qualifications and professional level;
- Lack of standards and curricula that meet modern requirements;
- Non-fulfillment of approved state standards due to failure to provide schools with textbooks, learning materials necessary for teaching;

122 MoES of the KR, 2017, National Assessment of Educational Achievement for Grade 8 Students (NAEA) – 2017 [http://testing.kg/media/uploads/files/NOODU%202017/NSBA2017\\_8\\_Fin\\_Report.pdf](http://testing.kg/media/uploads/files/NOODU%202017/NSBA2017_8_Fin_Report.pdf)

123 MoES of the KR, 2017, National Assessment of Educational Achievement for Grade 4 Students (NAEA) – 2017 <https://edu.gov.kg/media/files/fa89cc70-d2ac-4419-9e22-651bdff187f8.pdf>

- Lack of quality modern educational materials;
- Limited access to information resources for teachers and students

<sup>124</sup>.

### School education coverage

School education coverage has increased to **99% in six years with a contingent of more than 1 million 268,000 students**. At the same time, it is very important that the attendance rate of basic general school has no gender imbalance practically until the 9th grade<sup>125</sup>. According to official data, about 6% of school-age children do not attend school. **Among older children (14-15 years old) the school enrollment rate is 74.8%, which means that about a quarter of all young people of that age are not enrolled in school (25.2%).**<sup>126</sup>

Children of 14-14 y.o



74,8%

25,2%

- School enrollment rate
- Not enrolled in school

There are some differences between girls and boys in enrollment. Girls more often get education within the framework of full secondary school (10-11 grades), while boys drop out of the education system after 9th grade. This is due to an increase in the number of young people who are forced to acquire a profession at an earlier age for material reasons. Some young people transfer to vocational lyceums (schools), secondary vocational schools, or short-term courses that prepare them to enter the labor market as soon as possible.<sup>127</sup>

The number of school-age children who have not started school remains at approximately the same level, but the structure of the reasons for non-attendance has noticeably changed: the number of those who do not attend school because of financial difficulties and family circumstances has increased, while the number of those who do not attend school because they are working has decreased. Over the past few years there has been an increase in the number of children with disabilities from birth to 18 years of age. **So, in 2013, their number was about 26 thousand children, in 2018. - About 30 thousand children. Coverage of children with disabilities is low - 11.7% of the total number of children with disabilities.**<sup>128</sup>

Among the other age group of young people (16-17 years old), the school enrollment rate is 62.1%, which means that just over a third of young people

124 Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

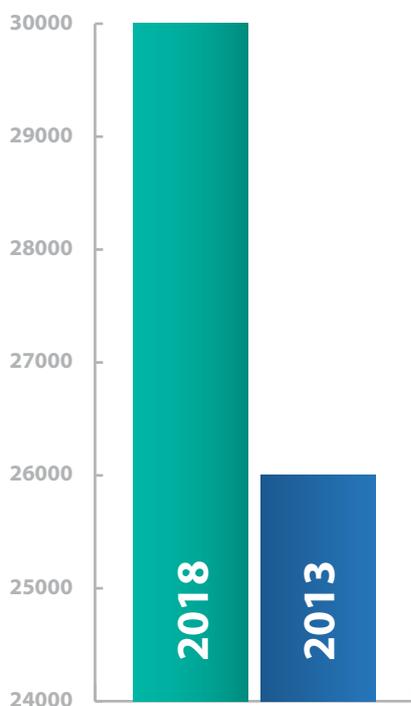
125 UN, GIZ, 2020, National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR\\_2020\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Report\\_Russian.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR_2020_Kyrgyzstan_Report_Russian.pdf)

126 NSC, 2019, Youth in Kyrgyz Republic 2014-2018 <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-molodezh-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike-2014/>

127 NSC, 2020, Men and Women of the Kyrgyz Republic <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-zhenshiny-i-muzhchiny-kyrgyzskoj-respubliki/>

128 UN, GIZ, 2020, National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR\\_2020\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Report\\_Russian.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR_2020_Kyrgyzstan_Report_Russian.pdf)

### Children with disabilities 0-18 y.o



of this age (37.9%)<sup>129</sup> are not enrolled in school or vocational education. This factor is influenced by problems related to the socio-economic situation of the family, including poverty, unemployment and migration. Lack of interest in learning is one of the reasons for non-attendance. Lack of teaching material, qualified teachers and a large teaching load does not allow students to study their favorite subjects. According to the results of comparative studies, Kyrgyzstan is a country with an extremely high school load.<sup>130</sup>

129 UN, GIZ, 2020, National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR\\_2020\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Report\\_Russian.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR_2020_Kyrgyzstan_Report_Russian.pdf)

130 Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

## 4.2 Professional education

In 2018, among the young population aged 14-28 years, 13.5% had higher or incomplete higher education, 2.7% had secondary vocational education, 50.5% had completed secondary general education, and 16.6% had basic general education (eight to nine years of school).<sup>131</sup>

### Higher education coverage

In 2018, there were 98 educational organizations of primary vocational education in the republic, which trained about 30,000 students, which is 4.7% more than in 2014. In 2018, the number of qualified workers who graduated from vocational lyceums increased by 30% compared to 2014. The number of students in educational organizations of higher professional education in the 2018/2019 academic year compared with the 2014/2015 academic year decreased by 23% and amounted to about 165 thousand people. Thus, among young people of student age, the coverage was 51.1%. Just under half of young people of this age remain uncovered (48.9%).<sup>132</sup> This is due to the fact that young people are more often choosing to study in colleges and professional lyceums, which should have a positive impact on the formation of a stable middle working class in the country.

<sup>133</sup>

The number of students with disabilities enrolled within the quota in higher education institutions is growing, albeit very slow (in 2016-2017 academic year - 14 persons with disabilities, in 2017-2018

131 NSC, 2019, Youth in Kyrgyz Republic 2014-2018 <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-molodezh-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike-2014/>

132 NSC, 2019, Youth in Kyrgyz Republic 2014-2018. <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-molodezh-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike-2014/>

133 UN, GIZ, 2020, National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR\\_2020\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Report\\_Russian.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR_2020_Kyrgyzstan_Report_Russian.pdf)

academic year - 13 persons with disabilities, in 2018-2019 academic year - 16 persons with disabilities). Half of the educational institutions of primary vocational education were renovated taking into account the needs of PWD.<sup>134</sup>

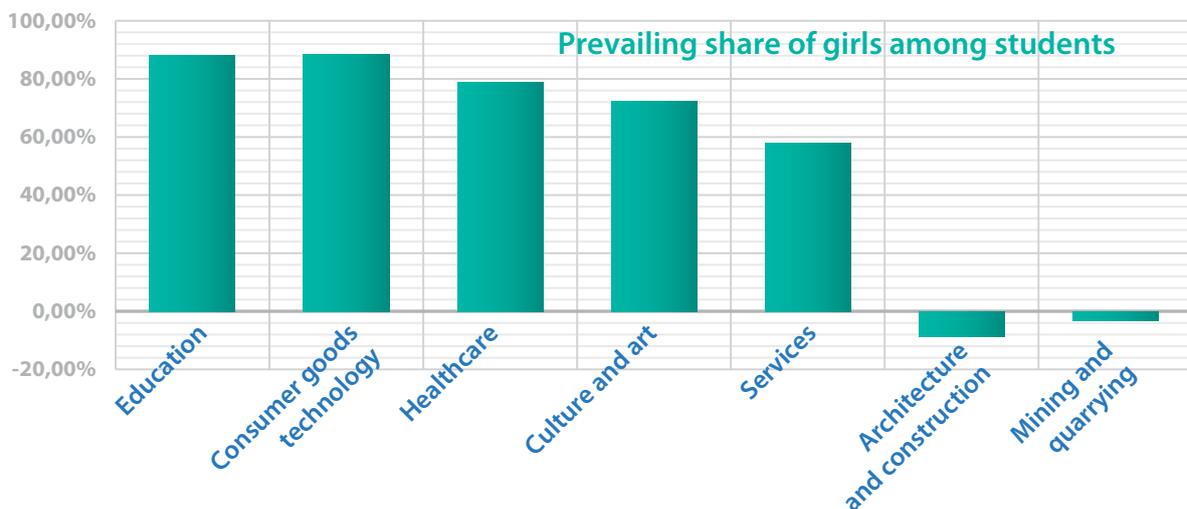
The gender disproportion among students in primary and secondary vocational education is related to personal choice. For example, the proportion of girls among students significantly prevails in such occupations as education (88.1%), technology of consumer goods (88.6%), health care (78.8%), culture and art (72.4%), and service (58%). At the same time, it is rather low in such specialties as architecture and construction (8.8%), development of minerals (3.3%).<sup>135</sup>

due to low household incomes, households allocate very little of their family budgets to the education of young people, and low-cost external loans for education are hardly available from banking and non-banking institutions.<sup>136</sup>

### Employment difficulties for graduates

It is not uncommon for people who have graduated from university to work outside their field of study. According to NSC reports, of the total number of unemployed youth, only about 14 percent find jobs that match their field of study. Very few manage to find jobs that are directly related to their profession.<sup>137</sup>

Thus, there is practically no interaction between educational institutions and the



The main factors influencing low enrollment are household responsibilities, work in businesses, or employment. Younger youth mostly work in family-owned businesses, while older youth are employed or self-employed. In addition,

labor market. As a consequence, graduates have no professional orientation because they do not know the situation on the labor market. The curriculum does not take into account and does not analyze the changes, requirements, and competencies required

134 UN, GIZ, 2020, National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR\\_2020\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Report\\_Russian.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR_2020_Kyrgyzstan_Report_Russian.pdf)

135 NSC, 2020, Men and Women of the Kyrgyz Republic <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-zhenshiny-i-muzhchiny-kyrgyzskoj-respubliki/>

136 Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

137 NSC, 2019, Education and Culture: Dynamic Tables <http://www.stat.kg/ru/statistics/obrazovanie/>

in the modern labor market. Low levels of education have major negative outcomes, including job and skill mismatches, low worker productivity, low income, increasing poverty, limited civic participation, youth unemployment, and labor migration.<sup>138</sup>

### 4.3 Impact of COVID-19 on EDUCATION

According to UNICEF, at the end of March 2020 more than 1.2 billion schoolchildren in 161 countries worldwide were not attending educational institutions, including 1 million 100 thousand schoolchildren in Kyrgyzstan (almost 20% of the population). Because of the Coronavirus situation, by March 20, 2020, all educational institutions in Kyrgyzstan, including schools, kindergartens and universities were closed for quarantine. Schoolchildren were given access to remote education through “online platforms, three national TV channels and two cell phone network applications free of charge.”<sup>139</sup>

#### General difficulties

Because of communication problems, and often teachers’ lack of laptops, most of them continued to use “non-digital teaching methods. Assignments were sent mainly via messenger to parents, who in turn sent photos of workbooks. This way of conducting “distance” work made life very difficult for both. The lack of the right equipment for each student and reliable access to the network has become a serious problem for many families in Kyrgyzstan. The vast majority of families had only one smartphone for all of their children. And the schedule of TV lessons did not take into

account the simultaneous education of several students from the same family.<sup>140</sup>

#### Difficulties for parents

At the same time, the burden on parents has grown tremendously. There are certain advantages in the fact that parents had to become active participants in the educational process, but in most cases it was a problem, as many of them continued to work remotely or away from home. Again, it was the parents of younger students who were hit hardest by distance learning. On their shoulders rested not only the issues of control and organization of the learning process, but also all the “logistical tasks”: sending completed tasks, connecting the child to the conference at the set time.<sup>141</sup>

#### Difficulties for teachers

The conditions of the state of emergency and quarantine in schools and universities placed an additional burden on the shoulders of teachers and university professors. They were urgently required to create educational materials in online format. At the same time, no training or special measures to increase their capacity had been undertaken. Psychological stress, the need to support their children and family obligations were compounded by the stress of having to do work for which they had no skills, no knowledge or even the most basic technical tools.<sup>142</sup>

138 CABAR.asia, 2020, Does the large number of universities in Kyrgyzstan affect the quality of higher education? <https://cabar.asia/ru/otrazhaetsya-li-bolshoe-kolichestvo-universitetov-v-kyrgyzstane-na-kachestvo-vysshego-obrazovaniya?pdf=21797>

139 Cabar.asia, 2020, Is the chosen model of distance learning in Kyrgyzstan justified?, <https://cabar.asia/ru/opravdana-li-vybrannaya-model-distantsionnogo-obucheniya-v-kyrgyzstane>

140 Cabar.asia, 2020, Is the chosen model of distance learning in Kyrgyzstan justified? <https://cabar.asia/ru/opravdana-li-vybrannaya-model-distantsionnogo-obucheniya-v-kyrgyzstane>

141 Cabar.asia, 2020, Is the chosen model of distance learning in Kyrgyzstan justified? <https://cabar.asia/ru/opravdana-li-vybrannaya-model-distantsionnogo-obucheniya-v-kyrgyzstane>

142 UNFPA, UN Women, 2020, Research Report: Impact of COVID-19 on Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/RUS\\_Gender%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20COVID-19%20impact\\_May%202020\\_final.pdf](https://kyrgyzstan.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/RUS_Gender%20Rapid%20Assessment%20of%20COVID-19%20impact_May%202020_final.pdf)

### Difficulties for students

Analysis by place of residence shows that, in general, household duties have a negative impact on the education of rural youth among students during quarantine. There is a difference between rural and urban youth among students and working youth; notably, primarily urban boys noted that their household responsibilities increased (13.2%). More boys than girls indicated that their household responsibilities had a negative impact on their learning. The increase in household chores is proportional to age: the older the youth, the more household chores affect learning.<sup>143</sup>

Rural boys among students mostly reported that lack of access to technology prevented them from continuing their education during quarantine (13.0%). Urban boys among students had fewer problems with access to technology (3.6%).<sup>144</sup>

## 4.4 Vulnerable groups

### People with disabilities

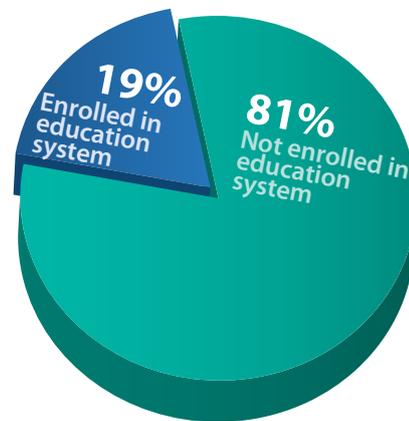
As of today, official statistics say that there are more than 31,000 children with disabilities between the ages of 0 and 18 in Kyrgyzstan. At the same time, only one fifth of children with disabilities are covered by the education system - 6,000 out of 31,000.

According to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic and the NSC data, there are more than 4 thousand first-time registered cases of disability among children diagnosed annually. But the statistics do not show the real picture, because 31 thousand people are only those who have official disability status,

143 UNFPA, 2020, Report on the results of the COVID-19 Youth Impact Survey in Kyrgyzstan, [https://kyrgyzstan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/youth\\_covid-19\\_report\\_2020.pdf](https://kyrgyzstan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/youth_covid-19_report_2020.pdf)

144 UNFPA, 2020, Report on the results of the COVID-19 Youth Impact Survey in Kyrgyzstan, [https://kyrgyzstan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/youth\\_covid-19\\_report\\_2020.pdf](https://kyrgyzstan.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/youth_covid-19_report_2020.pdf)

### CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN THE AGE OF 0 TO 18 Y.O.



i.e. who have a certificate of disability. But many parents do not go to the appropriate institutions to establish disability status for their children. And about 500 girls and 700-800 boys with disabilities will still not go to general education institutions every year. Until now, children with disabilities are treated with more of a medical approach, where the intention is to correct them, cure them, and bring them up to the standards of the surrounding world.<sup>145</sup>

Now experts are talking about a social approach, when the environment should be adapted to the needs of a person with disabilities. However, before introducing inclusive education, it is necessary to revise the regulatory framework and adapt it to the standards of inclusive environment.<sup>146</sup>

Every year the Ministry of Education and Science allocates 100 quotas for people with

145 Cabar.asia, 2019, Kyrgyzstan: People with Limited Opportunities for Education, <https://cabar.asia/ru/kyrgyzstan-lyudi-s-ogranichennymi-vozmozhnostyami-polucheniya-obrazovaniya?pdf=22765>

146 Cabar.asia, 2019, Kyrgyzstan: People with Limited Opportunities for Education, <https://cabar.asia/ru/kyrgyzstan-lyudi-s-ogranichennymi-vozmozhnostyami-polucheniya-obrazovaniya?pdf=22765>

disabilities in higher education institutions. But, as a rule, people with intact intellect and mostly with physical developmental peculiarities enroll there. And, of course, those who managed to complete a secondary education.<sup>147</sup>

#### 4.5 Key actors and recommendations:

Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic is the central body of executive power, which develops a unified state policy in the field of education, science and scientific and technical activities, and exercises state control over the availability and quality of education, ensuring the constitutional right of citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic to education.<sup>148</sup>

UNICEF assists the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic in increasing the enrollment of children, improving the quality of education and strengthening the effectiveness of the education system, but also ensuring the social-emotional development of children and improving global citizenship skills.<sup>149</sup>

Soros Foundation. In the framework of the project "Inclusive Education", the agency combines the resources of government agencies, the civil sector and educational organizations to implement tasks aimed at the development and implementation of a holistic model of inclusive education in the Kyrgyz Republic, ensuring the inclusion of children with special educational needs in the education system.<sup>150</sup>

UNESCO promotes a holistic and humanistic vision of quality education throughout the world and the realization of the universal right to education, and defends the central role of education in human, social, and economic development.<sup>151</sup>

Based on SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, the following recommendations are offered:

- Adopt new approaches to shaping education methodology and content, flexibly
- Respond flexibly to the needs of the labor market.
- It is necessary to develop measures to attract young people into teaching professions, as well as to pay attention to the quality of training of teaching staff.
- It is necessary to develop a system of quality control of school and vocational education at the expense of the state budget.
- It is advisable to strengthen the structure of personnel training and professional orientation among high school students.
- Improve the quality of education and learning outcomes; focus on pre-school, school and higher education.
- Strengthen the work on improvement of the system of teacher training and professional development of teachers and lecturers with the introduction of a new approach to teaching and methodology.<sup>152</sup>

147 Cabar.asia, 2019, Kyrgyzstan: People with Limited Opportunities for Education, <https://cabar.asia/ru/kyrgyzstan-lyudi-s-ogranichennymi-vozmozhnostyami-polucheniya-obrazovaniya?pdf=22765>

148 Regulation on the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic, February 20, 2012, #119, <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/93804?cl=ru-ru>

149 UNICEF, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/ru/%D0%BE%D0%B1%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B7%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%B5>

150 Soros Foundation, <https://soros.kg/nashi-priorityty/inklyuzivnoe-obrazovanie>

151 UNESCO, <https://ru.unesco.org/themes/obrazovanie-v-interesah-ustoychivogo-razvitiya>

152 Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

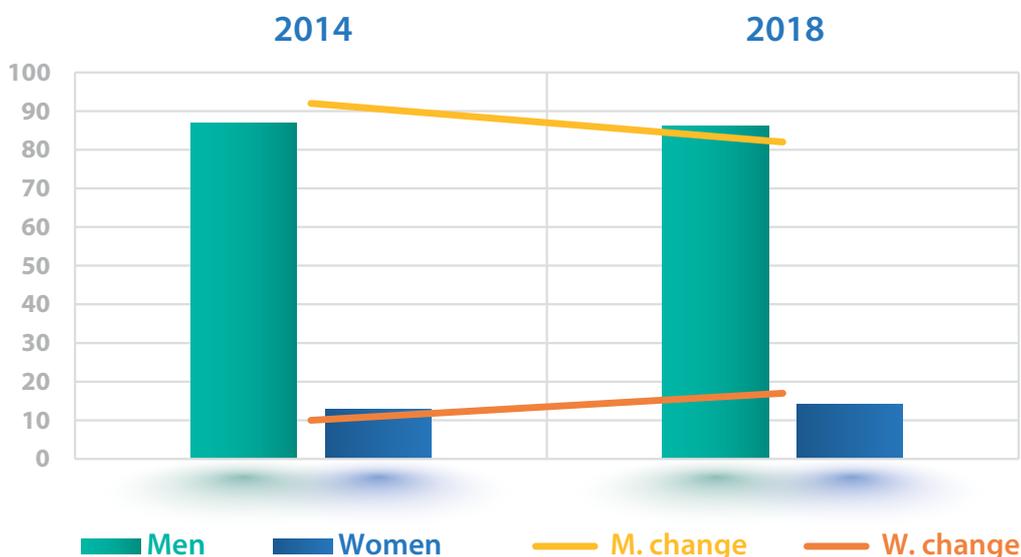
## 5. CRIME AND SAFETY

### 5.1 Crime

Looking at the area of crime against young people, their proportion remains significantly high. The number of persons who have committed crimes for 2018 is 9,748 young people between the ages of 14-29. Official statistics show that the proportion of young people in relation to the total number of offenders for 2018 remains very high and stable (about

share of pupils and students in the total number of persons who committed crimes in 2018 was about 4%.<sup>154</sup>

The opposite trends are observed in the dynamics of perpetrators by gender. **While the proportion of women who committed crimes increased from 13 percent in 2014 to 14 percent in 2018, by contrast, the proportion of men decreased from 87% to 86% percent during this period.**



49.7%). The proportion of 18-24 year olds who committed crimes in 2018 is almost twice as high as other youth age groups (ages 14-17 and 25-29). The most common offenses among youth are theft, robbery and robbery, hooliganism, and drug-related crime.<sup>153</sup>

Most of the crimes were committed by people who were not working or studying at the time of the crime (74%). The number of pupils and students who committed crimes increased by 1.5 times in 2018 compared to the previous year. At the same time, the

**The largest number of perpetrators of crimes accounted for Bishkek (27%), Chui (18%), Jalal-Abad and Osh oblasts (12% each), and the smallest for Naryn and Talas oblasts (3-4% each).**<sup>155</sup>

In 2018, there were 429 crimes per 100,000 population aged 14 and older committed by minors, almost 2 times more than in 2014. An increase in the number of crimes committed by juveniles was observed in all regions, except for Chui oblast, where

<sup>153</sup> NSC, 2019, Youth in Kyrgyz Republic 2014-2018 <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-molodezh-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike-2014/>

<sup>154</sup> NSC, Law and Order in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2019, <http://www.stat.kg/media/publicationarchive/74e01990-418c-4399-ad79-b235790fc8b7.pdf>

<sup>155</sup> NSC, Law and Order in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2019, <http://www.stat.kg/media/publicationarchive/74e01990-418c-4399-ad79-b235790fc8b7.pdf>



20% fewer crimes were registered during this period. The largest increase in the number of crimes among minors (3 times) was observed in Bishkek and Osh cities. The largest proportion of those who committed crimes at the age of 14 and older were in Bishkek (27%), Chui (over 15%), Jalal-Abad (over 12%) and Issyk-Kul (over 11%) oblasts.

<sup>156</sup>

### Causes

Unemployment and poverty are some of the main factors influencing youth criminality. Out-of-school and out-of-work youth make up the vast majority of young offenders. In addition, the weak work of law enforcement agencies on crime prevention also plays a role in the development of youth crime.<sup>157</sup> There is no systematic approach to crime forecasting, program development, as well as psychological counseling and meetings to prevent crime and develop awareness among youth.

<sup>156</sup> NSC, Law and Order in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2019, <http://www.stat.kg/media/publicationarchive/74e01990-418c-4399-ad79-b235790fc8b7.pdf>

<sup>157</sup> Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

The increase in juvenile crime, according to experts, is due to the fact that the country maintains a high level of migration (both external and internal), and above all the fact that more children and adolescents are being drawn into the sphere of organized crime. Such factors as the low level of socio-economic situation, high level of migration, dysfunctional situation in families, lack of proper parental control are the impetus for the growth of juvenile delinquency. Most offenses are committed by children often due to ignorance of the law - they do not think about the subsequent responsibility, because they do not know anything about it. In this regard, there is a need to create a system of prevention, which would explain to children their rights and obligations at an accessible level, since children often do not know their rights and, moreover, do not know how to protect them. One of the reasons for this situation is the insufficient capacity of specialists working with children on prevention, lack of knowledge of proactive methods of working with adolescents, psychological aspects of working with children and new, effective forms of interaction with minors.<sup>158</sup>

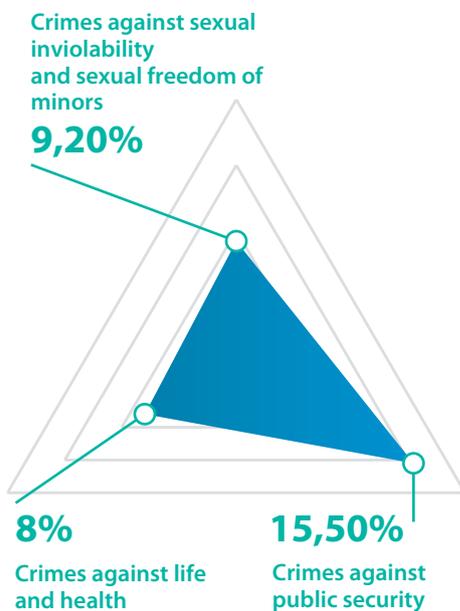
### 5.2 Violence and victimization

In addition, of great concern is the level of victimization by type of crime, where young people have a high likelihood of becoming a victim of.<sup>159</sup> For example, according to data from the Department of Legal Statistics and Accounting of the General Prosecutor's Office of the Kyrgyz Republic, 1,368 crimes committed against minors were registered in 2018, 1,107 cases in 2017, and 862 in 2016. Thus, the number of crimes increased by 28.4% in 2017 and 23.5% in

<sup>158</sup> Security and Crime Prevention Policy in the Kyrgyz Republic, 2019, <https://www.reforma.kg/media/post/postpdf/2019-11-19-1336908670.pdf>

<sup>159</sup> Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

2018. In addition, analysis by type of crime showed that more than half of the crimes committed against minors were property crimes - 859 or 48.5%. Crimes against sexual integrity and sexual freedom of minors were **138 (9.2%), crimes against public safety - 234 (15.5%), crimes against life and health - 121 (8%).**<sup>160</sup> Also, according to the NSC, there were 16,000 referrals to crisis centers and institutions that provide social and psychological assistance in 2018.<sup>161</sup>



### Causes

Crimes against young people are linked to the overall level of crime in Kyrgyzstan. Here a combination of socio-economic factors from the perspective of families and local communities play a role, such as: poverty and social inequality; low levels of

socialization, employment and education; imperfect public safety systems.<sup>162</sup>

According to the analysis, external and internal migration is one of the reasons for the constant increase in the number of crimes committed both against and by minors.<sup>163</sup>

According to the authorities, migration processes in the republic have led to the fact that underage children are left in the care of elderly grandparents, as well as in the care of relatives who, due to their advanced age and employment are not able to provide control over the activities of minors. According to the results of door-to-door visits conducted by IAD of the country, 79,000 children of external and internal migrants were identified. Of them 82% are in the southern regions of the Republic.<sup>164</sup>

According to the Ministry of Interior Security Service of the Kyrgyz Republic in 2018, 644 crimes or 47% of the total number of crimes committed against children were committed against children of migrants, and 425 crimes or 28% of the total number of crimes committed against minors were committed by children from migrant families.<sup>165</sup>

In addition to the problems associated with migration, the main reasons are

<sup>160</sup> Prosecutor General's Office of the Kyrgyz Republic, 2019, <https://www.prokuror.kg/files/docs/2019/overview-of-juvenile-delinquency-as-well-as-violence-against-children-in-2018.pdf>

<sup>161</sup> NSC, 2019, Youth in the Kyrgyz Republic 2014-2018, <http://www.stat.kg/ru/publications/sbornik-molodezh-v-kyrgyzskoj-respublike-2014/>

<sup>162</sup> Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

<sup>163</sup> Prosecutor General's Office of the Kyrgyz Republic, 2019, <https://www.prokuror.kg/files/docs/2019/overview-of-juvenile-delinquency-as-well-as-violence-against-children-in-2018.pdf>

<sup>164</sup> Prosecutor General's Office of the Kyrgyz Republic, 2019, <https://www.prokuror.kg/files/docs/2019/overview-of-juvenile-delinquency-as-well-as-violence-against-children-in-2018.pdf>

<sup>165</sup> Prosecutor General's Office of the Kyrgyz Republic, 2019, <https://www.prokuror.kg/files/docs/2019/overview-of-juvenile-delinquency-as-well-as-violence-against-children-in-2018.pdf>

insufficient educational work carried out by authorized bodies in the field of human values, aimed at improving the legal consciousness of citizens, strengthening the institution of the family; inadequate performance of parental responsibilities to raise children, lack of parental control; propaganda of the cult of violence and abuse in the media and Internet resources; unemployment of teenagers outside school hours, lack of free municipal services, and the fact that there are not enough children in school.<sup>166</sup>

As can be seen from the statistical indicators, the situation in this area has not improved. On the contrary, it is deteriorating, which indicates the insufficiency of measures taken, the main reason for which is the lack of proper interaction between the authorized bodies.<sup>167</sup>

### 5.3 Key actors and recommendations

Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic is a body of state administration and is designed to ensure public order, personal and public safety, and the fight against crime.<sup>168</sup>

UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) The “Get Involved in Life” project participates in developing and strengthening young people’s resilience to crime, violence, and substance use, developing their personal and social skills,

and improving their knowledge of the risks associated with these phenomena.<sup>169</sup>

UNICEF in Kyrgyzstan strengthens the child protection system, particularly in the areas of prevention of family separation, justice, and protection from violence and exploitation. UNICEF works to prevent and respond to violence against children and promotes equal access to justice for minors.<sup>170</sup>

- Based on SDG 16, “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and participatory institutions at all levels,” the following recommendations are offered:
- Strengthen and develop strategies and measures to reduce overall youth crime rates, youth victimization, increase youth trust in law enforcement, and increase the capacity of law enforcement officers to prevent crimes against youth.
- Develop a systematic approach to educating children and youth about radicalism, extremism and terrorism.
- Work on reduction and prevention of extortion and other types of violence in educational institutions.<sup>171,172</sup>

166 Prosecutor General’s Office of the Kyrgyz Republic, 2019, <https://www.prokuror.kg/files/docs/2019/overview-of-juvenile-delinquency-as-well-as-violence-against-children-in-2018.pdf>

167 Prosecutor General’s Office of the Kyrgyz Republic, 2019, <https://www.prokuror.kg/files/docs/2019/overview-of-juvenile-delinquency-as-well-as-violence-against-children-in-2018.pdf>

168 Decree on the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic of July 6, 2000 # 402, <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg>

169 UNODC, <https://www.unodc.org/centralasia/en/news/unodc-supports-institutional-development-of-trafficking-in-persons-coordination-councils-in-kyrgyzstan-ru.html>

170 UNICEF, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/ru/%D0%B7%D0%B0%D1%89%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B0-%D0%B4%D0%BB%D1%8F-%D0%BA%D0%B0%D0%B6%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%B3%D0%BE-%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%B1%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%BA%D0%B0>

171 Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

172 Prosecutor General’s Office of the Kyrgyz Republic, 2019, <https://www.prokuror.kg/files/docs/2019/overview-of-juvenile-delinquency-as-well-as-violence-against-children-in-2018.pdf>

## 6. YOUTH SOCIO-POLITICAL ACTIVITY

### 6.1 Youth participation

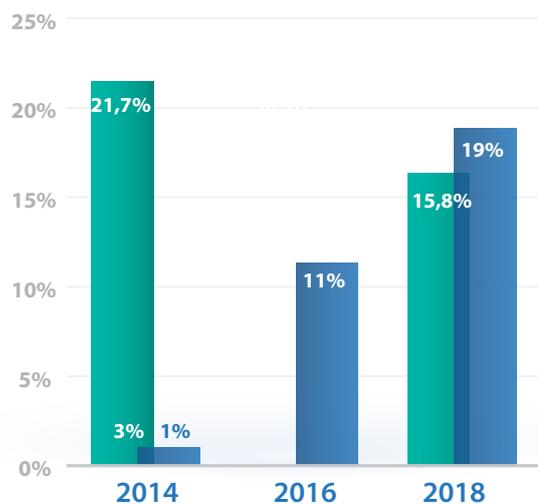
The cumulative rate of participation in socio-political activities is 18.4%, which means that a large part of the young population of Kyrgyzstan shows very little interest in political, public, municipal and state activities. The indicator related to participation of young people in elections is less than half of young people, in the vast majority as voters, but not as observers and candidates. The indicator of membership in parties - 1.8%, the indicator of young people working in the civil service and local councils is only 0.2%. Participation in social activities, in particular in volunteering is 12%. The reasons for such low rates are lack of appropriate competencies necessary for political, public, municipal work, as well as low or insufficient pay.<sup>173</sup>

The young generation has good potential to participate in political, social, and civil change. To fulfill this potential, it is necessary to encourage youth civil engagement by training young people in life skills and preparing them for the labor market. Young people's opinions and interests are poorly considered in the final decisions due to their weak participation. The first decision-making skills are acquired in the family, later in school and in educational institutions. There is a very low level of youth participation in financial and management issues in educational institutions, as well as participation in leadership elections.<sup>174</sup> In addition, practice shows that at the level of

local government, young people are poorly involved in village gatherings, kurultais (people's gatherings) and other events. As for the national level, the level of youth involvement in the decision-making process also remains very low. Such a passive civil position is alarming and requires the creation of incentives for young people to participate in public activities.<sup>175 176</sup>

### 6.2 Participation of women

Despite measures to promote women's leadership, the number of female MPs in the Jogorku Kenesh of the Kyrgyz Republic decreased **from 21.7% in 2014 to 15.8% in 2018**. Women's representation in local representative bodies also decreased **from 19% in 2016 to 11% in 2018, with a quota of 30%**.



- Reduction of women MPs in the Jogorku Kenesh of the Kyrgyz Republic
- Reduction of women in local bodies of representative authority

173 Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf>

174 PeaceNexus, 2017 Youth, Peace and Security in Kyrgyzstan: A Contribution to the Study of Youth, Peace and Security Progress under the Resolution. 2250 UN SC, [https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2018-04/6.%20FGD\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_SFCCG%20%28Russian%29\\_0.pdf](https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2018-04/6.%20FGD_Kyrgyzstan_SFCCG%20%28Russian%29_0.pdf)

175 Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf>

176 Saferworld, 2019, Young people's voices on peace and security in Kyrgyzstan <https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources-ru/publications/1227-young-peoples-voices-on-peace-and-security-in-kyrgyzstan-ru>

The greatest imbalance is observed in the state and municipal service at the level of political (the number of men exceeds the number of women by more than 7 times) and special positions (1.6 times). Even greater imbalance exists in political positions in municipal service: out of 513 jobs women fill only 20 positions or 3.8%. In the political sphere, the relatively high percentage of women at decision-making levels, achieved, among other things, through the introduction of gender quotas, proved difficult to translate into real change.<sup>177</sup>

It is especially alarming that women's participation in local government is declining: first, because the diversity of needs related to women's daily lives, which are most clearly expressed at the local level, remains unexpressed in the political agenda of local government; second, the necessary personnel capacity for women's political participation at the national level is not being formed.<sup>178</sup>

### 6.3 Participation of PWD

Employment of PWDs is provided by the state employment service agencies. Their referral for employment in a specially created or quota workplace is mandatory for the employer. According to Articles 314, 315 of the Labor Code of the Kyrgyz Republic, the state employment service agencies with the participation of public organizations of persons with disabilities develop, and local governments and local state administrations approve regulations on quotas for jobs for persons with

disabilities in an amount not less than 5% of the total number of employees.<sup>179</sup>

The MLSD developed a draft normative-legal act, which was submitted to the Office of the Government. According to its information, the draft provides for a norm and quota for the employment of citizens with disabilities in the state and municipal services. Unfortunately, this norm is not enforced, both by state bodies and non-state bodies.<sup>180</sup>

In addition, in Kyrgyzstan, the Constitutional Law on Elections currently requires participating political parties to consider the representation of at least 15% of candidates with different ethnic backgrounds and at least 2 candidates with disabilities when determining the list of candidates.<sup>181</sup> However, there is insufficient participation of women, ethnic minorities, and PWDs as candidates in the elections, and for the latter category of citizens there are also difficulties to participate in the voting. The legislation establishes norms on representation of women, national minorities, as well as youth and people with disabilities during the election of members of Parliament and deputies of local councils. But in practice, these norms are not maintained after the election and during the registration of deputies.<sup>182</sup>

177 UN, GIZ, 2020, National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR\\_2020\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Report\\_Russian.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR_2020_Kyrgyzstan_Report_Russian.pdf)

178 UN, GIZ, 2020, National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR\\_2020\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Report\\_Russian.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR_2020_Kyrgyzstan_Report_Russian.pdf)

179 MLSD of the KR, 2019, <https://mlsp.gov.kg/informacziya-o-provodimoj-rabote-po-sodejstviyu-trudoustrojstvu-lovz/>

180 Cabar.asia, 2021, Kyrgyzstan: Political will is hindering the socialization of people with disabilities, <https://cabar.asia/ru/kyrgyzstan-problema-sotsializatsii-lyudej-s-osobennostyami-upiraetsya-v-politicheskuyu-volyu>

181 Constitutional Law of the Kyrgyz Republic on the Election of President of the Kyrgyz Republic and Deputies of Jogorku Kenesh of the Kyrgyz Republic of July 2, 2011 #68, [https://shailoo.gov.kg/ru/konstitucionnye-zakony-kr/konstitucionnye-zakony-kr/O\\_vyborah\\_Pr-1913/](https://shailoo.gov.kg/ru/konstitucionnye-zakony-kr/konstitucionnye-zakony-kr/O_vyborah_Pr-1913/)

182 UN, GIZ, 2020, National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Kyrgyz Republic, [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR\\_2020\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_Report\\_Russian.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26372VNR_2020_Kyrgyzstan_Report_Russian.pdf)

## 6.4 Key actors and recommendations

The Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic is the central body of executive power, which develops a unified state policy in the field of education, science and scientific and technical activities, and exercises state control over the availability and quality of education, ensuring the constitutional right of citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic to education.<sup>183</sup>

State Agency on Youth Affairs, Physical Culture and Sports under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. The main objectives of the Agency are: to ensure the direct participation of young people in the formation and implementation of state youth policy, support their socially significant and innovative initiatives; to develop measures to create the necessary conditions for the realization of the economic, intellectual and spiritual potential of young people in the interests of society.<sup>184</sup>

UNICEF has launched a special youth program that aims to improve the lives of young people by developing their life skills and civil competence, and by empowering women and young people to participate in solving problems that are important to them.<sup>185</sup>

USAID's Demigeluu Jashtar Project works to increase the economic involvement and civil participation of young people in the Kyrgyz Republic. The project aims to increase youth civic participation and improve youth

preparedness for opportunities in the labor market.<sup>186</sup>

Based on SDG 16, "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and participatory institutions at all levels," the following recommendations are offered:

- Provide by law for youth quotas in local government.
- Create a system of introducing in educational institutions the practice of holding events aimed at the formation of civic position, activism in solving the problems of society and youth.
- Provide access for young activists to the processes of discussing important political issues of interest to young people.
- Develop a system for enhancing the potential of young people in state and municipal service, ensuring career growth.<sup>187,188</sup>

## 7. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICT)

### 7.1 ACCESS TO ICT

The sphere of information and communication technologies in the Kyrgyz Republic is developing dynamically, but it is also obvious that the country still lacks infrastructure and information technology,

183 Regulation on the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic, February 20, 2012, #119, <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/93804?cl=ru-ru>

184 Regulation on the State Agency for Youth Affairs, Physical Culture and Sports under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic of December 2, 2015 # 819, <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/98220>

185 UNICEF, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/ru/%D0%BE%D0%BA%D0%B8-%D0%B8-%D0%BC%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%B4%D1%91%D0%B6%D1%8C>

186 USAID, <https://www.usaid.gov/ru/kyrgyz-republic/fact-sheets/enhancing-employability-and-civic-engagement-youth>

187 PeaceNexus, 2017 Youth, Peace and Security in Kyrgyzstan: A Contribution to the Study of Youth, Peace and Security Progress under the Resolution. 2250 UN SC, [https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2018-04/6.%20FGD\\_Kyrgyzstan\\_SFCG%20%28Russian%29\\_0.pdf](https://www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2018-04/6.%20FGD_Kyrgyzstan_SFCG%20%28Russian%29_0.pdf)

188 Saferworld, 2019, Young people's voices on peace and security in Kyrgyzstan, <https://www.saferworld.org.uk/resources-ru/publications/1227-young-peoples-voices-on-peace-and-security-in-kyrgyzstan-ru>

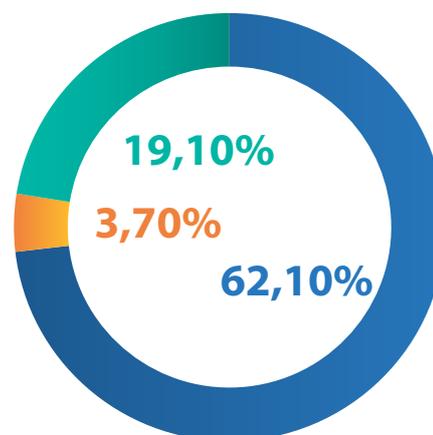
especially in rural areas. We should recognize the generally low level of Internet access among young people, even taking into account the uptrend of the past few years.<sup>189</sup>

At the end of 2016, Internet access coverage in Kyrgyzstan for the entire population did not exceed 34.5%. Internet coverage indicator is higher among young people, especially those in urban areas. Young people's access to mobile communications has increased significantly over the past few years. According to surveys, 74.9% of young people use cell phones daily, including 48.3% who use smartphones. The affordability of communication services for young people is an important determinant of access to ICT in the Kyrgyz Republic. According to the survey data, **for 62.1% of young people, communication services are accessible or quite accessible. Communication services are not available at all for 3.7% of respondents and are not always available for 19.1% of respondents.**<sup>190</sup>

### Causes

Affordability of services in terms of cost is one of the two most important barriers to expanding Internet access in Kyrgyzstan. The cost of mobile access in Kyrgyzstan averages 10% of monthly per capita income.<sup>191</sup>

The public education system does not provide most students with the necessary technical ICT skills for continued success in learning, employment, and society. Skills include using a computer, tablet



- communication services are available or quite available
- Communication services are not available at all
- not always available

and other basic devices, working with electronic documents, e-mail, searching for and processing information online, and knowing basic software. According to the survey, only 29.9% of respondents agree that their educational institution provides all the necessary technical skills, while 65.4% of respondents believe otherwise.<sup>192</sup>

Young people's access to the Internet within the state educational system remains low. The low level of access is due to the underdevelopment of ICT infrastructure in the regions, the low level and quality of provision with computers and other technical means that require access to the Internet.<sup>193</sup>

189 Youth Policy Concept for 2020-2030, October 18, 2019, #562, <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/157204>

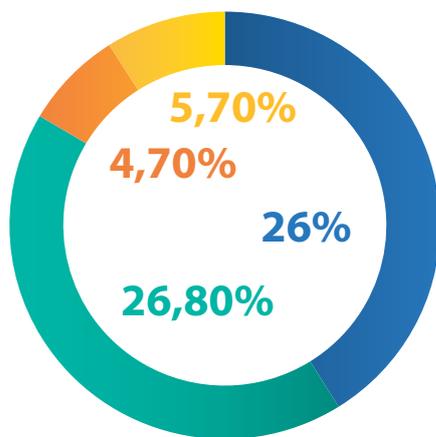
190 Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

191 Youth Policy Concept for 2020-2030, October 18, 2019, #562, <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/157204>

192 Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

193 Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

The reasons for poor technical training of students and low access barriers remain: the low level of technical training in the education system, technical equipment, the general underdevelopment of the national ICT infrastructure, the lack of budgetary funds. The use of the Internet by young people for self-development, information education and civic engagement remains at an extremely low level in the Kyrgyz Republic. According to the survey, **only 26% of respondents use the Internet to access educational resources, and only 26.8% of young people use the Internet to access news and information resources. In addition, only 4.7% of respondents use the Internet for civic participation in the online space, and only 5.7% use it to receive public services.**<sup>194</sup>



- Use the Internet to access educational resources
- Access news and information resources
- Use the Internet for online civic participation
- To obtain government services.

<sup>194</sup> Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic, <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

## 7.2 COVID-19 and ICT

There is extreme inequity in access to the technology and materials needed to continue learning while schools are closed. Similarly, children and students with limited support for learning at home have almost no means to support their education. Providing a variety of learning tools and accelerated access to the Internet for every school and every child is critical. In Kyrgyzstan, schoolchildren and students have been offered a variety of distance learning opportunities through a variety of channels, such as television, the Internet, and cell phones. But for the most vulnerable children, there are difficulties in distance learning. Therefore, it is important to take an assessment of how different children in different situations were able to access and learn remotely when schools were closed.

<sup>195</sup>

## 7.3 Key Actors and Recommendations

The Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic is the central body of executive power, which develops a unified state policy in the field of education, science and scientific and technical activities, and exercises state control over the availability and quality of education, ensuring the constitutional right of citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic to education.<sup>196</sup>

2018-2040 Strategy «Taza Koom-Jany Door» is aimed primarily at the implementation of ambitious but achievable tasks for the development of the economy of the Kyrgyz Republic, the implementation of which will be possible through the development and widespread introduction of digital technologies, programmatic approach to strategic planning, as well as

<sup>195</sup> UNICEF 2020, Global Recognition of Kyrgyzstan's Efforts in Distance Learning

<sup>196</sup> Regulation on the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic from February 20, 2012, #119, <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/93804?cl=ru-ru>

progressive specialization of the country's economy.<sup>197</sup>

UNDP “Digital Skills and Opportunities” as part of the project “Digital Kyrgyzstan 2019-2023” is modernizing the system of higher and secondary education for human development through improving educational standards, skills and knowledge in students and schoolchildren necessary for their future successful employment in the digital economy.<sup>198</sup>

Based on SDG 4, “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all,” the following recommendations are offered:

- Expand investments and efforts to develop ICT infrastructure, digital services, Internet and mobile penetration, and general digital, information literacy;

- Eliminate the causes and barriers that affect the final cost of communication services to the population, to improve the accessibility of services and technical means for employed, student and vulnerable youth, especially in remote regions of the country;
- Revise the system of training of students within educational institutions, as well as standards of educational services, taking into account the full range of necessary digital skills for full participation, competitiveness of graduates in regional and global labor markets.<sup>199</sup>

197 Sustainable Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic, 2018-2040 [http://www.president.kg/files/docs/Files/proekt\\_strategii\\_final\\_russ.pdf](http://www.president.kg/files/docs/Files/proekt_strategii_final_russ.pdf)

198 SCIT, The Concept of Digital Transformation “Digital Kyrgyzstan”, 2019-2023, <http://ict.gov.kg/index.php?r=site%2Fsanarip&cid=27>

199 Institute for Youth Development in Kyrgyzstan, 2017, Youth Well-Being and Development Index in the Kyrgyz Republic <https://www.unicef.org/kyrgyzstan/media/1861/file/Youth%20Wellbeing%20and%20Development%20Index%20in%20Russian.pdf.pdf>

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