



Building Healthy Intimate Relationships

*The Role of School: Evidence-based Policy Recommendations
for Adolescents' Empowerment*

November 2016



Gender
Equality
Awareness
Raising
against
Intimate
Partner
Violence

GEAR *against* IPV
Gender Equality Awareness Raising *against* Intimate Partner Violence

The GEAR *against* IPV Approach

The GEAR against IPV approach (**G**ender **E**quality **A**wareness **R**aising *against* **I**ntimate **P**artner **V**iolence) is a coordinated action of **primary and secondary prevention of Intimate Partner Violence in adolescents' relationships** through interventions in the school or in other settings, that are guided by specially designed educational material and are aimed at secondary school students' awareness raising and empowerment by specially trained teachers.

The main aim is to promote the development of **healthy and equal relationships** between the sexes and the development of **zero tolerance towards violence** by raising teens' awareness on:

- a) the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships
- b) the influence that gender stereotypical attitudes and socially imposed gender roles have on their relationships
- c) how power inequality between the sexes is related to psychological, physical and sexual abuse against women/girls and
- d) how adolescents can contribute to the prevention of all forms of gender-based violence.

The GEAR *against* IPV Educational Material

During the period 2010-2015, **National Packages**¹ have been developed and evaluated for **7 EU Member States**, after translation, completion and cultural adaptation of the **Master GEAR against IPV Package**.

Every GEAR *against* IPV Package, consists of a **series of 4 Booklets** that have been developed to support the organization, preparation, implementation and evaluation of teachers' training seminars and adolescents' awareness raising workshops (in school or other settings), aiming to primary prevention of gender-based violence.



Booklet I

GEAR against IPV Package: Gender Equality Awareness Raising against Intimate Partner Violence



Booklet II

Guidelines for Conducting a GEAR against IPV Teachers' Training Seminar



Booklet III

Teacher's Manual



Booklet IV

Students' Activities Book

Main Activities of the GEAR against IPV Approach

- A. Teachers' training seminars²
- B. Adolescents' awareness raising workshops "Building Healthy Intimate Relationships"³

Adolescents' Awareness Raising Workshops "Building Healthy Intimate Relationships"

In the context of the GEAR against IPV-II project⁴, which was implemented from 2014 until 2016 with the co-funding of the DAPHNE III Programme of the European Union, **65 "Building Healthy Intimate Relationships" Workshops** were implemented and evaluated where **1.478 secondary education students**⁵ from Greece (**GR**), Spain (**ES**), Croatia (**HR**), Cyprus (**CY**) and Romania (**RO**) were sensitized. The implementation of the Workshops was undertaken, under the supervision of each country's national coordinator, by 57 out of the 250 teachers who were trained in the context of the project.

¹ National Packages have been developed for Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Romania and Spain. Together with the Master GEAR against IPV Package, they are available at gear-ipv.eu/educational-material

² A short description can be accessed at the Policy Brief entitled: *Building Healthy Intimate Relationships. The Role of School: Evidence-based Policy Recommendations for Teachers' Trainings*. A detailed description of this activity and its outcomes is included in the respective report of each participating country (available at: gear-ipv.eu/training-awareness-raising/teachers-training-seminars)

³ A detailed description of this activity and its outcomes is included in the respective report of each participating country and can be accessed at: gear-ipv.eu/training-awareness-raising/adolescents-awareness-raising

⁴ **Gender Equality Awareness Raising against Intimate Partner Violence - II (GEAR against IPV II)** [JUST/2013/DAP/AG/5408]

⁵ Moreover, in Greece, Spain and Romania, 125 children/adolescents (65 girls and 60 boys), who were either hosted or visiting the facilities of organizations offering services to vulnerable and/or high risk groups (e.g. victims of abuse/neglect), participated in 16 Workshops that were implemented in these facilities by 16 properly trained teachers/ professionals.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Workshops conducted in 5 participating countries

			Country				
			CY	ES	GR	HR	RO
Participants (N)	Total		178	296	414	328	262
	Girls		102	144	214	183	165
	Boys		76	152	200	145	97
Age (years) ⁶	Mean		14,5	14,8	13,9	15,9	16,1
	Range		12-19	13-17	12-17	14-17,5	15-18
Teachers (N)	Total		5	8	22	12	10
Workshops (N)	Total		8	14	21	12	10
Duration	Meetings (N)	Total	90	146	293	98	86
		Range	8-14	10-12	8-19	2-15	5-14
	Teaching hours (N) ⁷	Total	122	146	423	161,5	146,5
		Range	13-24	10-12	13-26	12,5-15	13-17

The methodology of workshops implementation is entirely **child-centered**, aiming to motivate adolescents' voluntary and active participation:

- the teachers, having been properly trained, **do not teach**; they rather **create a safe space** where children are guided to explore and assess the issues under consideration and to “discover” and practice skills that will help them to develop healthy relationships and resistance to violence
- uses exclusively **active learning techniques**: through entertaining, interactional activities, the group of students discovers and evaluates the societal and personal attitudes about gender roles and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), understands the impact these attitudes exert on their own lives and their relationships, “invents” ways and exercises **life skills** for developing healthy relationships and resisting violence
- the active participation of the already sensitized adolescents' is further bolstered by additional activities such as National Conferences and Peers' Awareness Raising Campaigns:
 - **National Conferences**: two representatives from each adolescents' group along with their teacher-implementer participate, as **invited speakers**, in National Conference in order to present their work and the benefits they gained as well as to learn about other groups' work and experiences
 - **Peers' Awareness Raising Campaigns** regarding Gender Based Violence: following their own sensitization the Workshops' participants are invited –as experts in adolescent relationships- to create messages and products that will be included in an awareness raising campaign targeting the general adolescent population in each country.

In the context of the current project, adolescents created products⁸ delivering messages to their peers regarding how to build healthy, equal relationships, based on mutual respect and free from any form of violence, as well as about what one can do to resist to any form of violence that may face during his/her life. Students were free to decide the form of their product and they created drawings, collages, posters, songs, theatrical plays, videos, etc. Furthermore, adolescents participated in nominating the winning works, by voting in the respective competition that was held in each country.

⁶ Calculations are derived from samples smaller than the total number mentioned on the row “Participants” for Cyprus [158 students (70 boys and 88 girls)], Spain [233 students (118 boys and 115 girls)], and Croatia [286 students (120 boys and 166 girls)], due to missing questionnaires. With respect to Greece, data of students from an Evening Junior High School [13 students (9 men and 4 women)] were excluded because their ages included outliers (up to 43 years old).

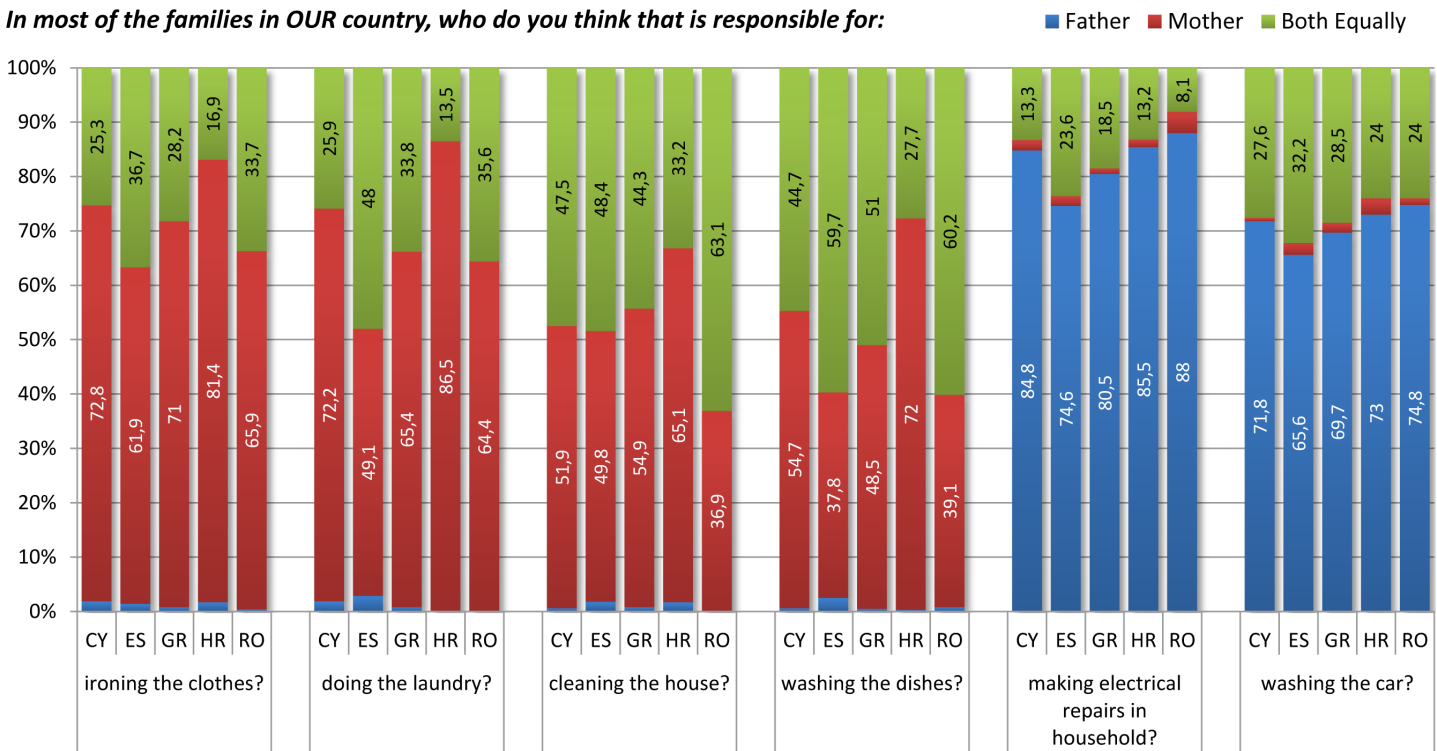
⁷ In Spain each teaching hour consists of 60 minutes while for all other countries 45 minutes.

⁸ In total, students created 80 products that are available, per country, at: www.gear-ipv.eu/campaigns.

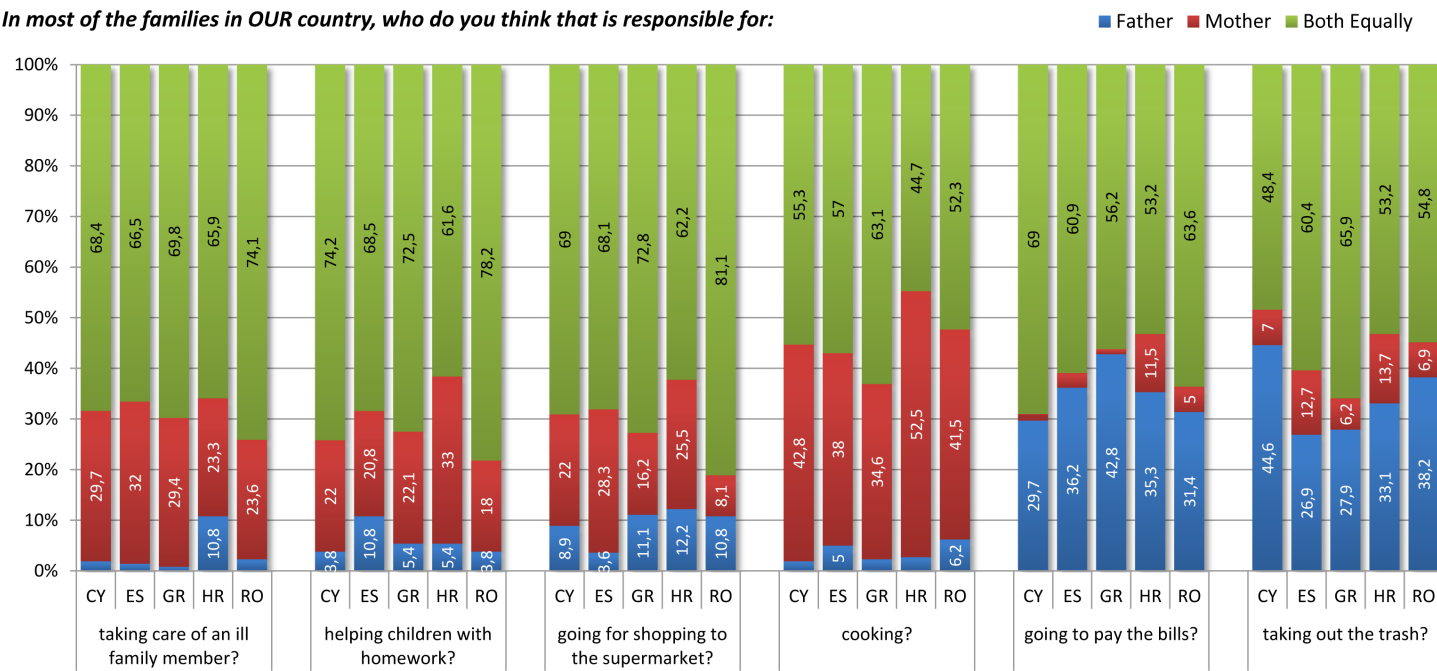
Necessity for Adolescents’ Raising Awareness and Empowerment

Because all children, boys and girls, see everywhere around them gender inequality, which is still intense, to be presented as something normal, given that...

...in most families, roles and responsibilities are unequally distributed; as a result, the majority of children across all countries...



...see women to clean up, wash dishes and clothes and ironing, whereas men to wash the car and make repairs

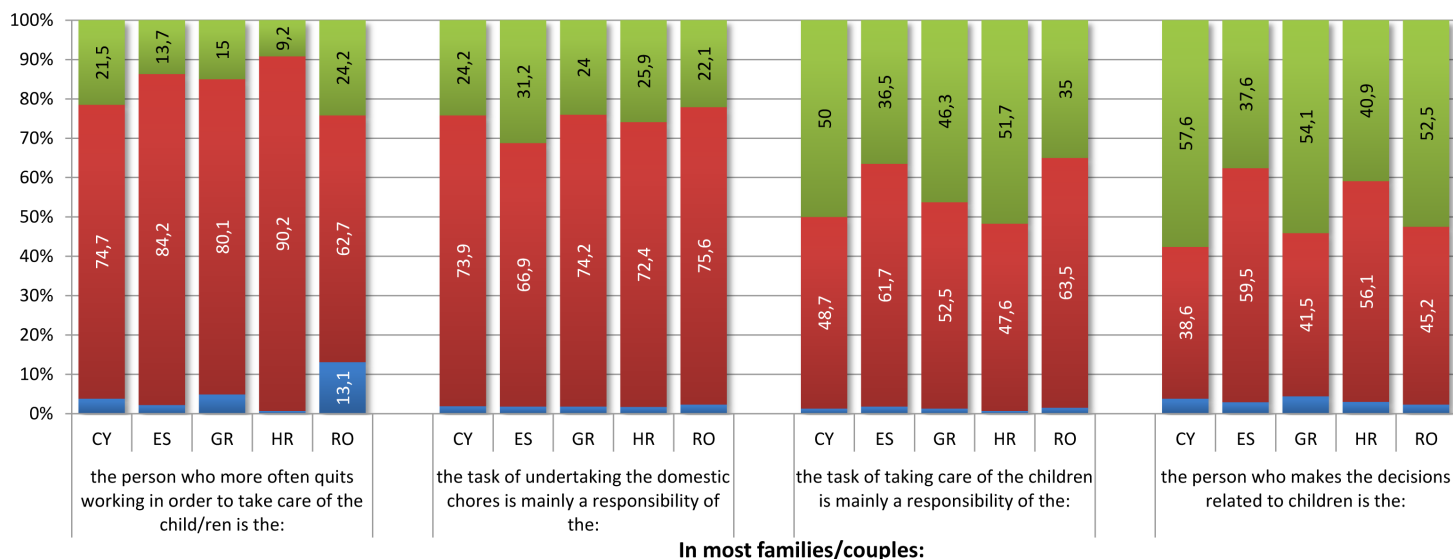


Even though the majority of children (5-8:10 children) see both sexes dealing with certain chores, there still is a significant percentage of children who see only women cooking (3-5 out of 10 children), taking care of a sick family member or helping children study (2-3:10 children) and shopping at the super market (1-3:10 children) are only assigned to women. Similarly, 3-4 children out of 10, see only men to undertake the tasks of paying bills and tossing the garbage bags.

...learn, through plain observation, that...

For each of the following statements, please check the box that, according to your opinion, describes better the situation in our country:

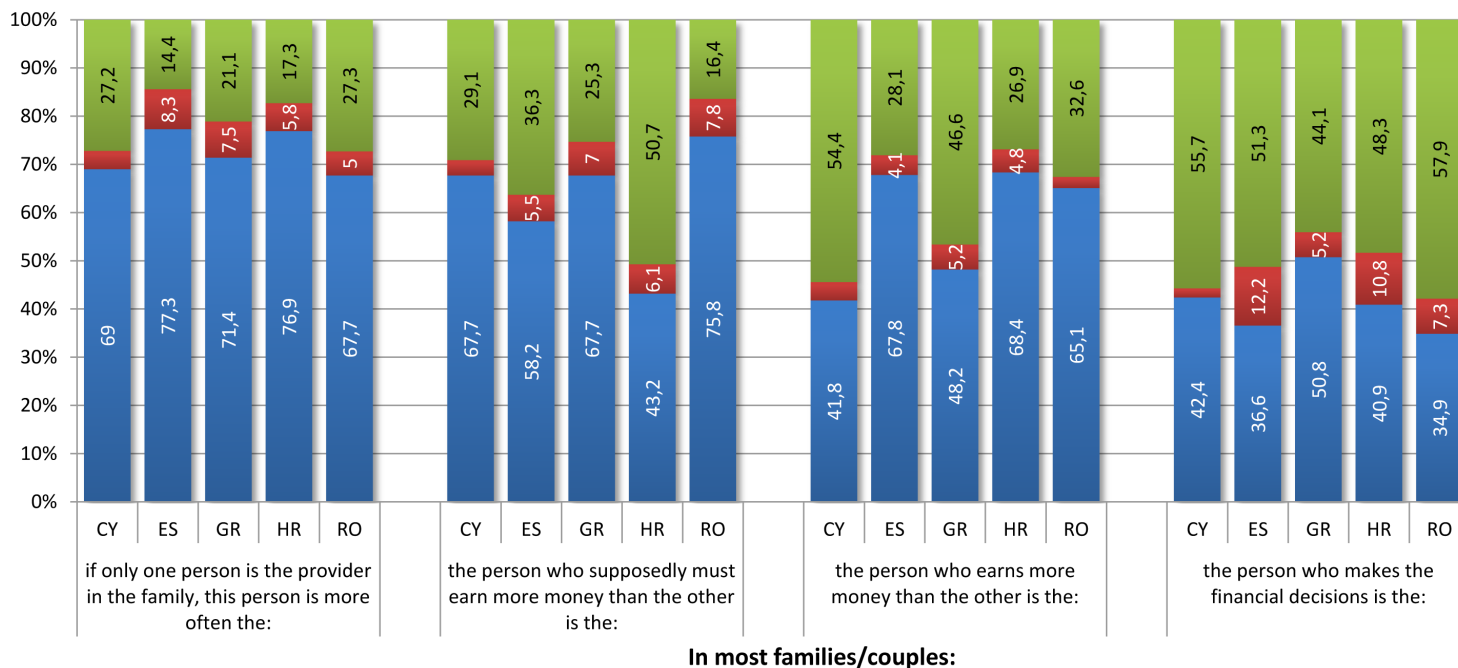
Father/Man Mother/Woman Both Equally



...issues and decisions regarding home and children are **women's responsibility**, while...

For each of the following statements, please check the box that, according to your opinion, describes better the situation in our country:

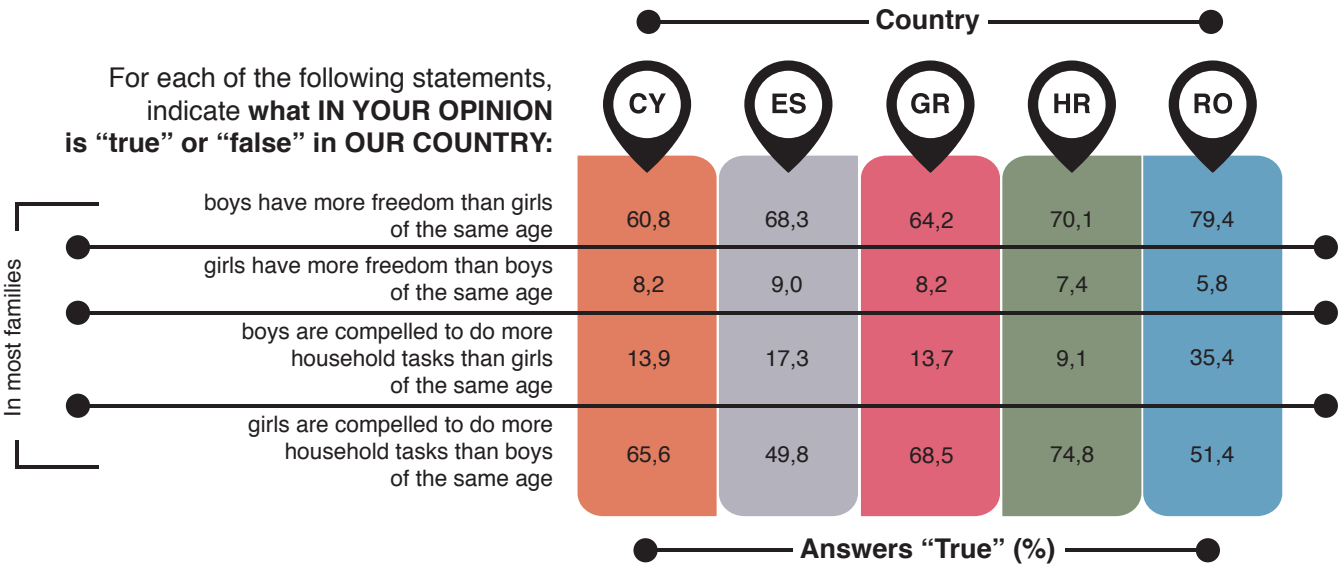
Father/Man Mother/Woman Both Equally



...financial issues and decisions are **men's responsibility**.

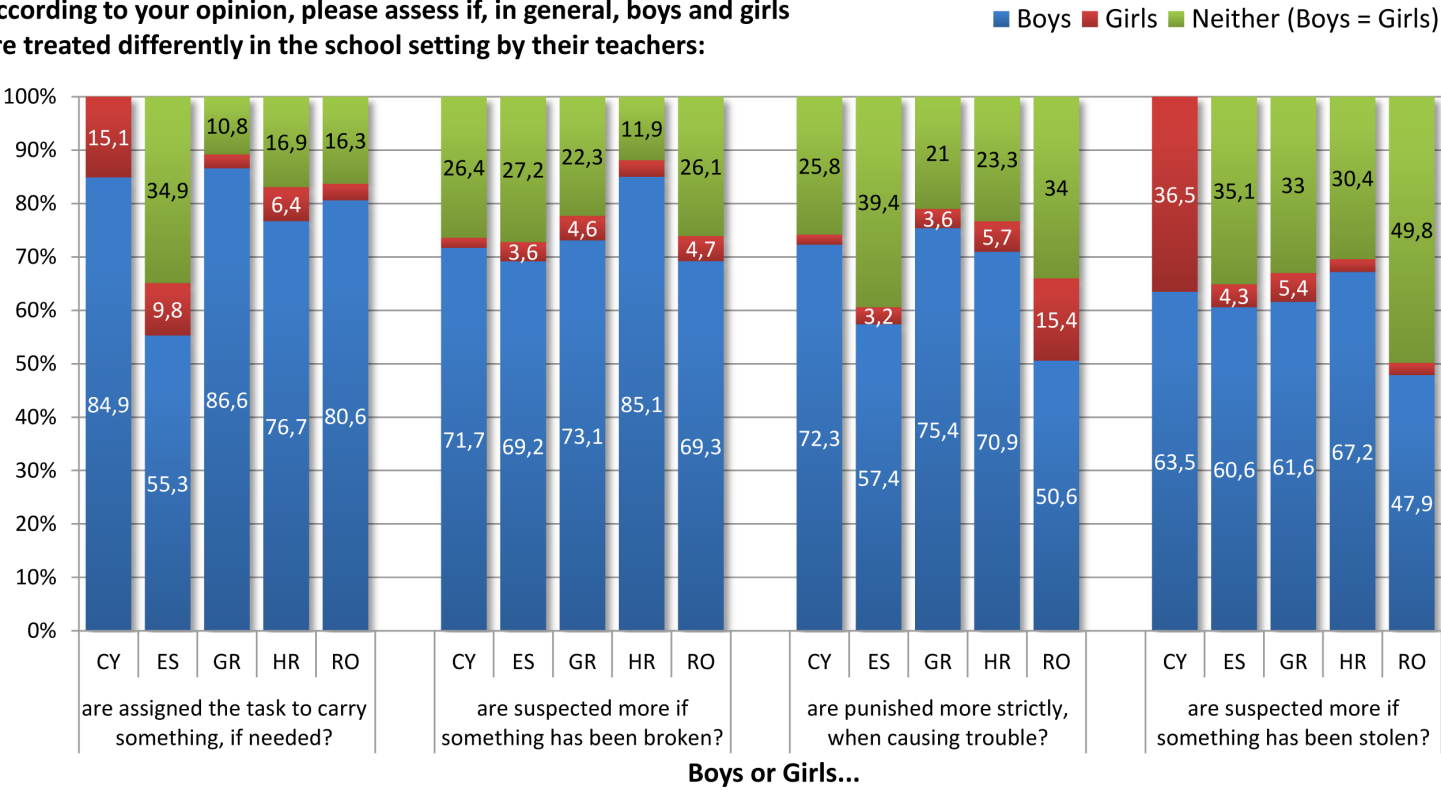
Because children, boys and girls, have already experienced gender inequality, through discriminative behaviours that they face daily...

...in their families, where it is considered normal, for boys to enjoy greater freedom whereas for girls to take up more responsibilities on house chores



...in their schools, where it is considered normal...

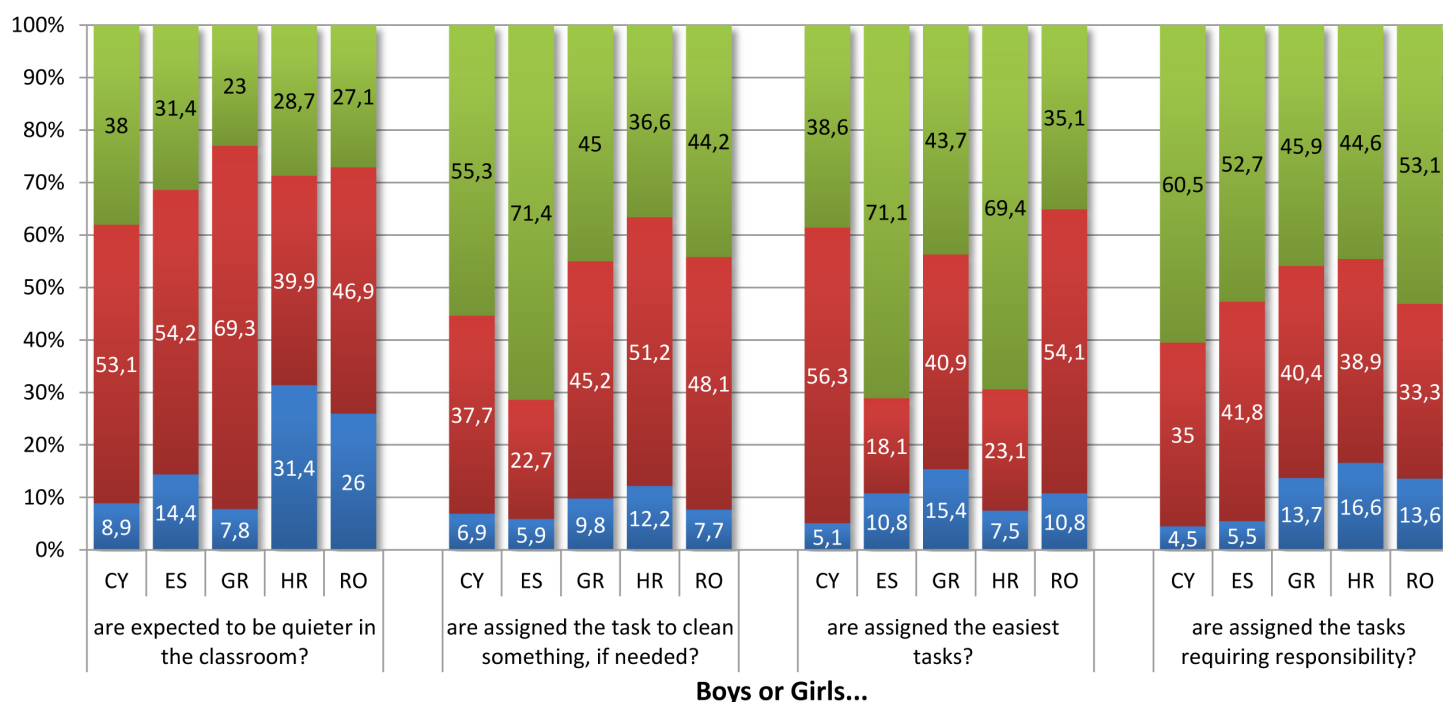
According to your opinion, please assess if, in general, boys and girls are treated differently in the school setting by their teachers:



...boys to be viewed as strong and troublemakers and are therefore asked to carry things, are the “usual suspects” when something has been damaged or stolen and are punished more severely in case of nuisance, whereas...

According to your opinion, please assess if, in general, boys and girls are treated differently in the school setting by their teachers:

Boys Girls Neither (Boys = Girls)



Boys or Girls...

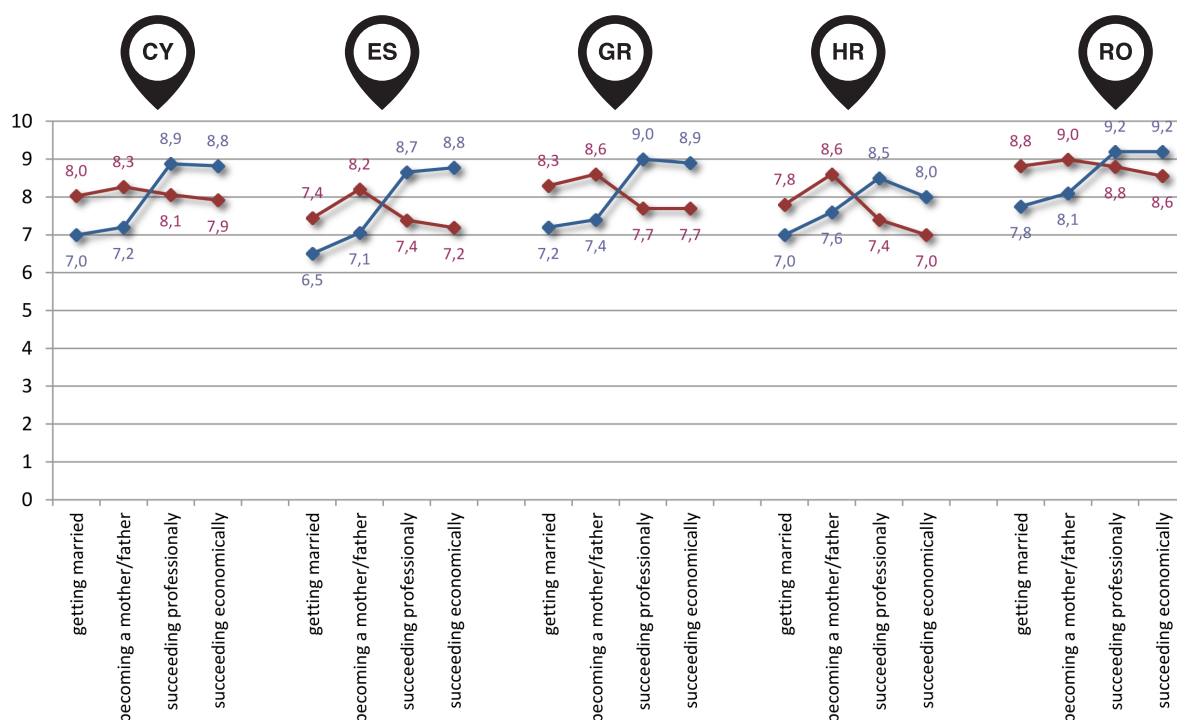
...girls are viewed as serious, responsible and tidy, but not clever or competent enough, and therefore, are assigned the corresponding tasks...

Because children of both sexes have already received multiple messages and are aware that the society they live in has formed different expectations for men and women, namely that...

...the most important goals are considered for a woman to become a mother and to get married whereas for a man to succeed professionally and financially

How important (0=not at all...10=absolutely) our society considers...

for a woman for a man

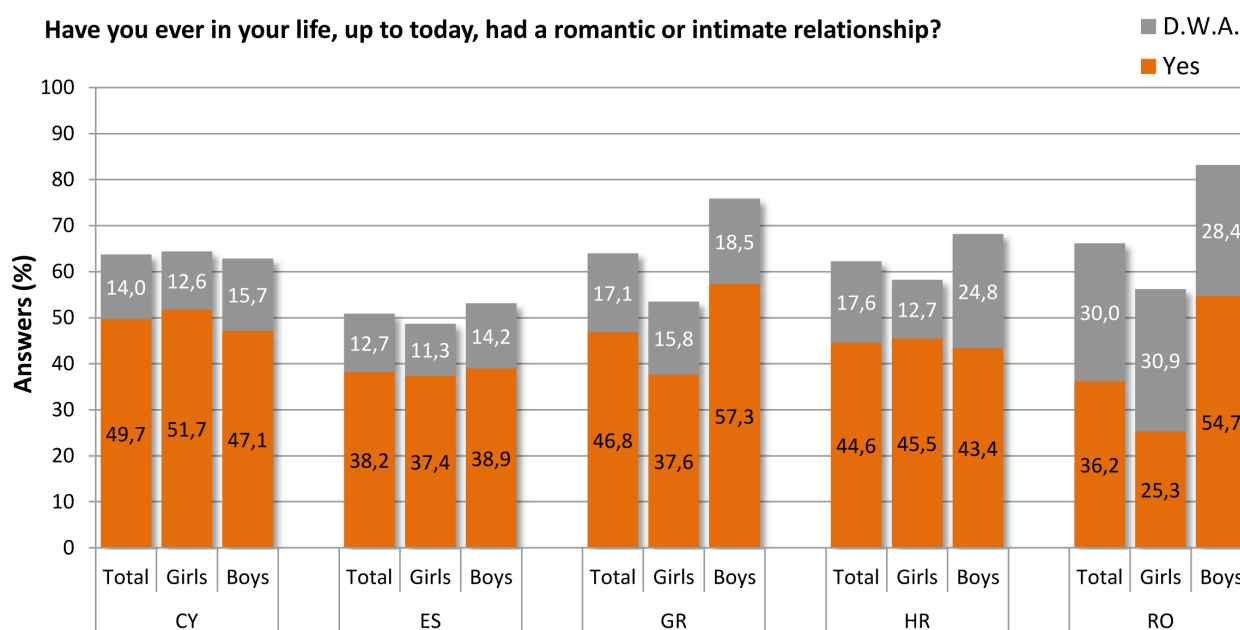


It is worth noticing that society's most salient gender goal is invested with most inflexible expectations, meaning that the importance attributed varies only slightly across countries: for women, having a child ranges from 8,2 (ES) to 9,0 (RO) and for men, succeeding professionally ranges from 8,5 (HR) to 9,2 (RO).

Another interesting finding is that in Romania all 4 women's goals are considered highly important (8,6 – 9), whereas the importance attributed by society to men's goals is similar to these of the other countries.

Because adolescents' first intimate relationships have already started...

Adolescents' reports showing that they have already formed an intimate relationship range from 36% (RO) to 50% (CY). These percentages may be considered underestimated, since 30% of adolescents in Romania and 13%-18% of adolescents in remaining countries replied "I do not want to answer" to this item.

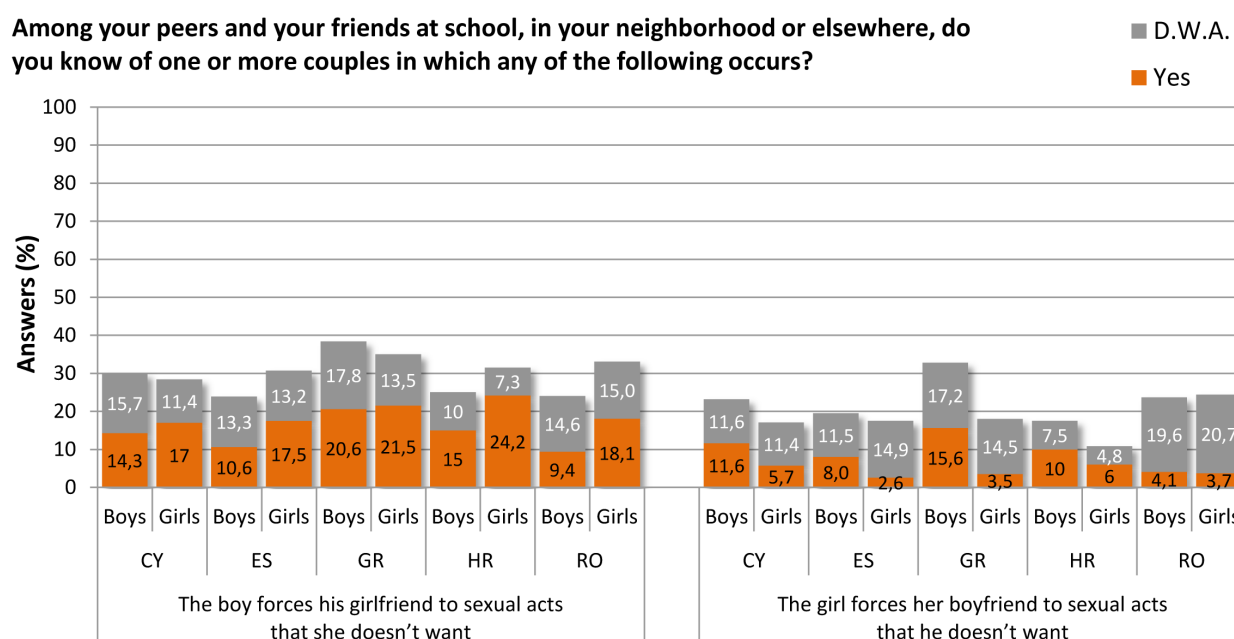


Boys reporting that they have already been engaged in an intimate relationship outnumber girls in Greece (57% vs. 38%) and Romania (55% vs. 25%), whereas boys' and girls' percentages are similar in the remaining countries. Boys (14%-28%) and girls (11%-31%) reply that "they do not want to answer" almost equally in all countries except Croatia (where boys with "I do not want to answer" responses are almost double).

Boys' **mean age of initiating their first intimate relationship** is 11,9 (CY) - 14,4 (RO) years old, while girls' respective mean age is slightly older [12,6 (GR) - 15,1 (RO) years old]. First partners' mean age for boys is almost similar to theirs' [12,2 (CY) - 15,0 (RO) years old], whereas for girls is, on average, older [13,5 (GR) - 17,9 (RO) years old] than theirs.

...in some of which IPV has already appeared and students report it, if asked, either indirectly...

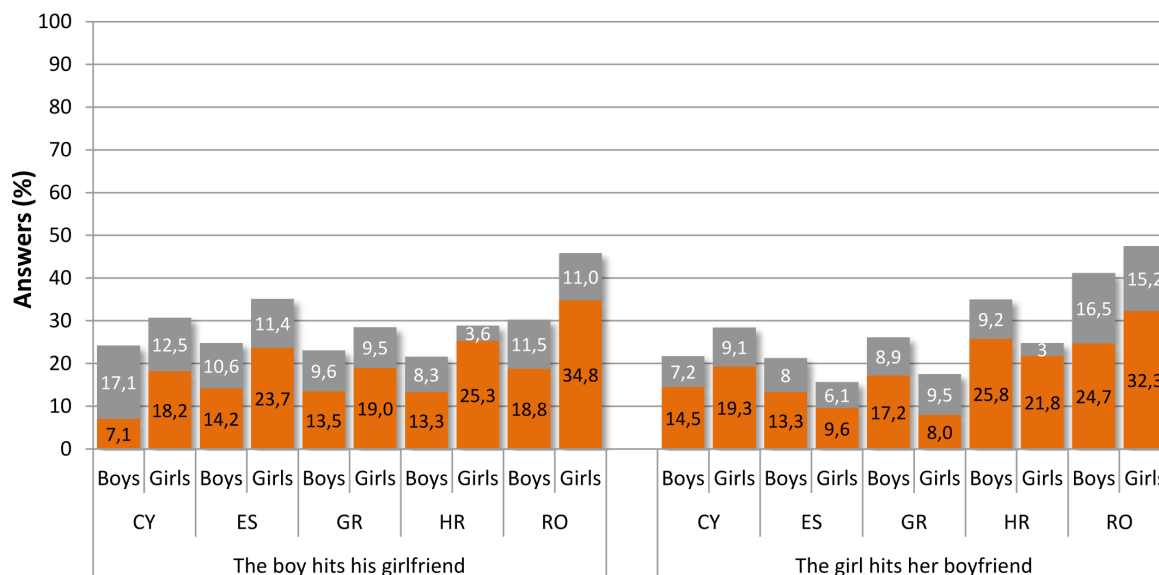
An alarming percentage of adolescents report that they **know of at least one couple** in which one partner abuses the other psychologically, physically or sexually. Specifically:



Seventeen to 24% of girls and 9% - 21% of boys report that they know of couples in which the boy forces his girlfriend to sexual acts that she doesn't want, whereas 3% - 6% of girls and 4% - 16% of boys report that they know of couples in which the reverse situation occurs.

Among your peers and your friends at school, in your neighborhood or elsewhere, do you know of one or more couples in which any of the following occurs?

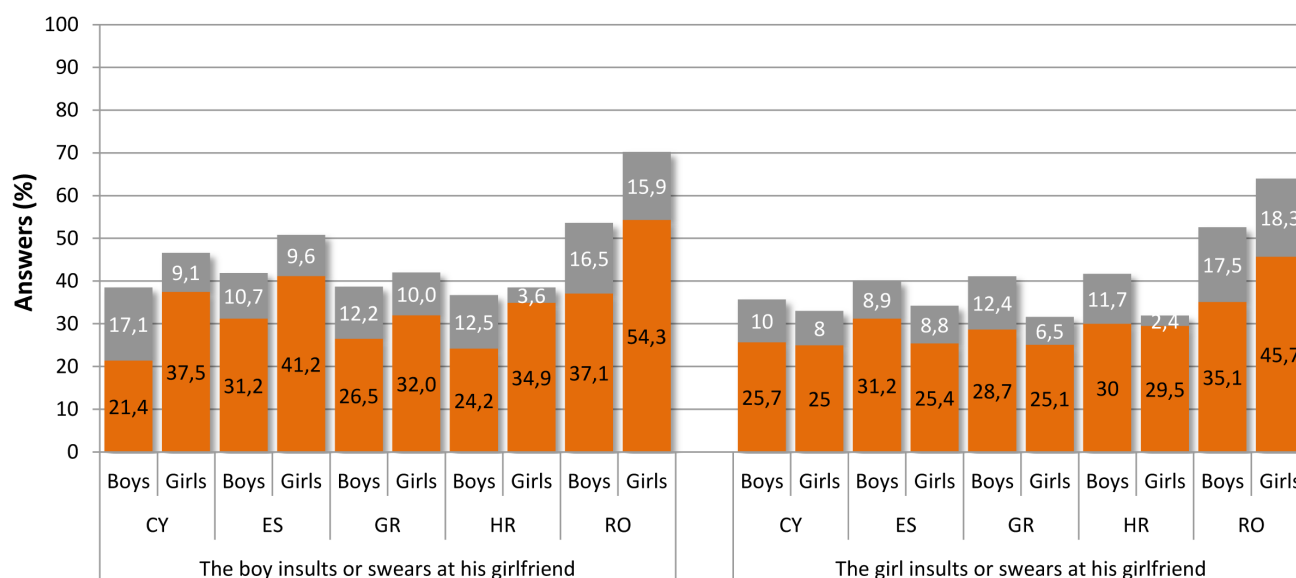
■ D.W.A.
■ Yes



Eighteen to 35% of girls and 7% - 19% of boys know of couples in which the boy hits his girlfriend while 8% - 32% of girls and 13% - 26% of boys know of couples in which the girl hits her boyfriend.

Among your peers and your friends at school, in your neighborhood or elsewhere, do you know of one or more couples in which any of the following occurs?

■ D.W.A.
■ Yes



Last but not least, 32% - 54% of girls and 21% - 37% of boys know of couples in which boys insult or swear at their girlfriends, whereas the respective percentages for adolescents knowing couples in which girls insult or swear their boyfriends are 25% - 46% for girls and 26% - 35% for boys.

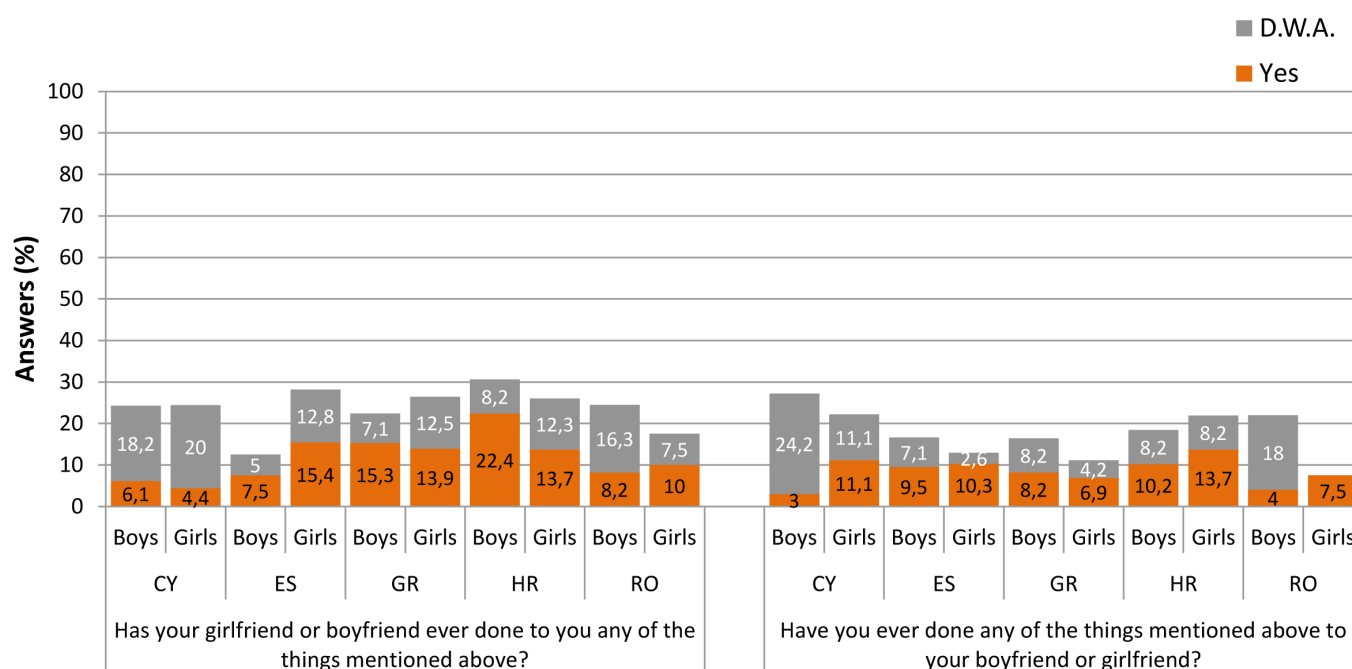
Two observations are worthy of note:

Adolescents' **responses tend to differentiate according to** their own and to abuser's or victim's **sex**: apart from few exceptions, a higher percentage of girls reports violent acts perpetrated by a boy towards a girl, whereas violent incidences perpetrated by a girl towards a boy are reported by boys to a great extent.

Apart from Croatian girls, adolescents' percentage replying "I do not want to answer" to questions of psychological and physical abuse is considerably high across all countries (6%-18% and 6%-15% of girls, 9%-17% and 7%-17% of boys) and even higher in questions of sexual violence (11%-21% of girls and 7%-20% of boys). This finding indicates that a) the aforementioned **indirect assessments of IPV magnitude** in adolescents' relationships may be **highly underestimated** and b) talking about this specific **issue is still a taboo**.

...or indirectly.

From the total number of children reporting to be having or to have had an intimate relationship, 5,1% (CY) - 17,2% (HR) of them also report to have suffered at least one of the aforementioned violent behaviors by their partner, while 5,6% (RO) - 12,3% (HR) of them report to have been the perpetrator of such a behavior on their partner. Again, it is worth noticing that a relatively high percentage of adolescents respond “I do not want to answer” (8,9%-19,2% in the IPV victimization item and 4,9%-16,7% in the IPV perpetration item), which in fact exceeds the percentage of positive responses in two countries [RO (only for boys) and CY (both sexes)].



With respect to adolescents' sex, higher percentage of girls from three countries (ES, GR, RO), report to have suffered (10%-15,4%) rather than perpetrated (6,9%-10,3%) violence. The same applies for boys across all countries as well, apart from Spain: 6,1% - 22,4% reports to have suffered and 3%-10,2% to have acted violently on their partner. However, this finding may need to be considered in combination with the percentages of children reporting “I do not want to answer”, since in 4 out of 5 countries, more girls [(12,5%-20% vs. 5%-18,2% of boys (CY, ES, GR, HR))] provide this answer to the victimization item and more boys [7,1%-24,2% vs. 0%-11,1% of girls (CY, ES, GR, RO)] to perpetration of IPV item.

Can we change all of these?

YES WE CAN!!!!

As long as boys and girls, together, realize that:

- *Socially imposed gender roles **are not a one-way street**: they are social constructs and adolescents **have the right to choose to modify them**, instead of comply with them*
- *Gender inequality and unequal distribution of power **are not normal**, rather they are closely related to intimate partner violence*
- ***Zero tolerance** is the most effective way for them to resist to IPV*
- *Healthy, free from every form of violence, relationships is **every human being's right***
- *Building healthy relationships and being zero tolerant to violence is a **choice that everyone can make***

HOWEVER, in order for all these to happen, the educational system should consistently provide students with opportunities to talk about these issues, to realize and understand the impact exerted on their lives and relationships and to be empowered so that to be able to challenge gender stereotypes, to resist to any type and source of violence and to make their own, healthy and safe, choices.



Effectiveness of “Building Healthy Intimate Relationships” Workshops

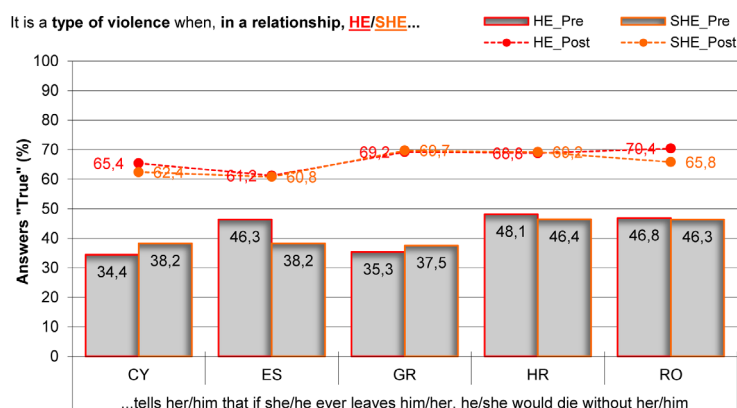
Adolescents’ knowledge was increased with respect to...

...types of IPV

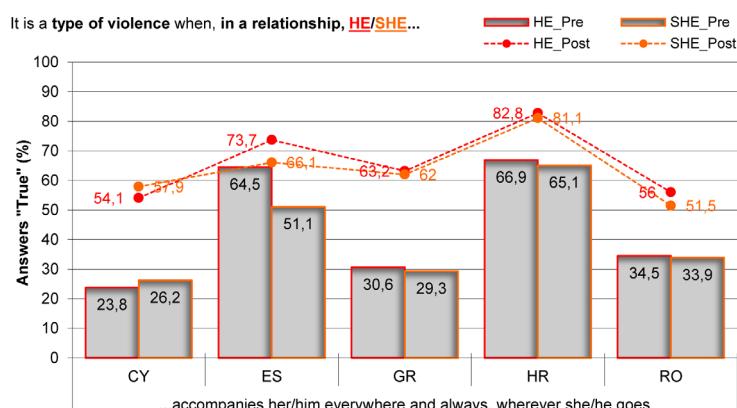
Before as well as after the end of the workshop, students were asked to assess 10 specific behaviours in regards to whether they constitute forms of violence when perpetrated in the context of intimate relationships by a male to his female partner and vice versa.

Before the workshop, a large percentage of students did NOT recognize that emotional blackmail (1) and controlling behaviours, either in the form of constant physical presence of the partner (2) or of verbal enforcement, constitute forms of violence, probably because they have been “taught” to misinterpret them as signs of interest and excessive love.

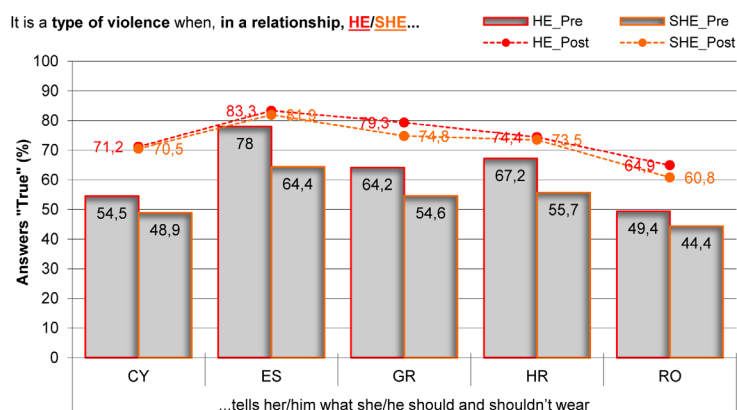
1. Before workshop participation, 3 - 5 students out of 10 were aware that emotional blackmail is a form of violence. When the workshop ended, the respective rate increased to 6-7 students out of 10.



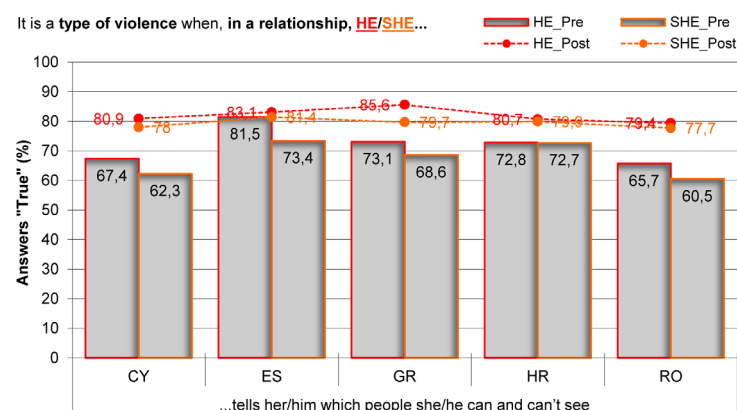
2. At the initial assessment, only 2-3 (CY, GR, RO) or 5-6 students (ES, HR) out of 10 realized that partner’s imposed presence around the clock is a violent behavior rather than a sign of interest. After the awareness raising workshop, 5-6 (CY, GR, RO) and 7-8 (ES, HR) out of 10 students shared the same view.



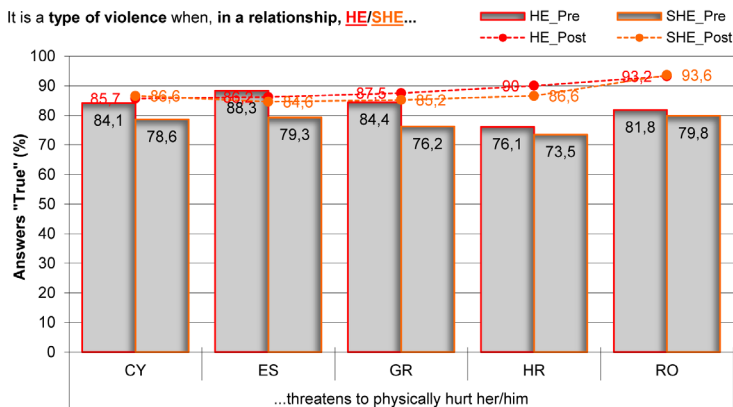
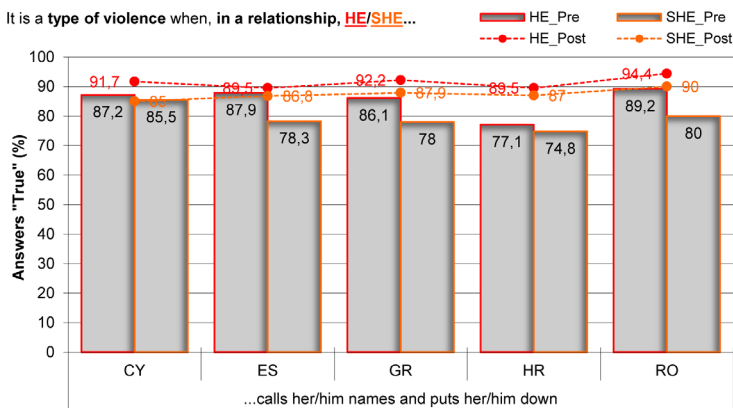
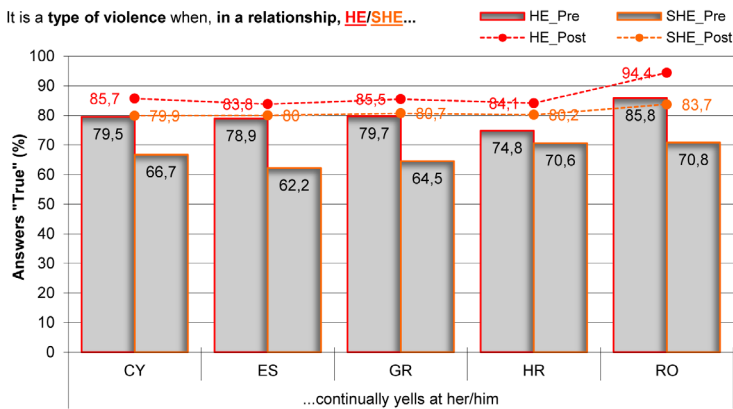
3. Before the workshop, more students considered this controlling behavior as a violent act when it is perpetrated by a male (5-8:10 students) rather than by a female (4-6:10 students). At the end of the workshop, 6-8:10 students thought this specific behaviour to be violent regardless of perpetrator’s gender, especially in three countries (CY, ES, HR).



4. Similarly, in their initial assessments, 7-8:10 students considered this behavior to be violent when perpetrated by “him” rather than “her” (6-7:10 students). At the end of the workshops, 8:10 students realized that controlling your partner’s social contacts is a form of violence regardless of the perpetrator’s gender. That was the case in all participating countries, apart from Greece.



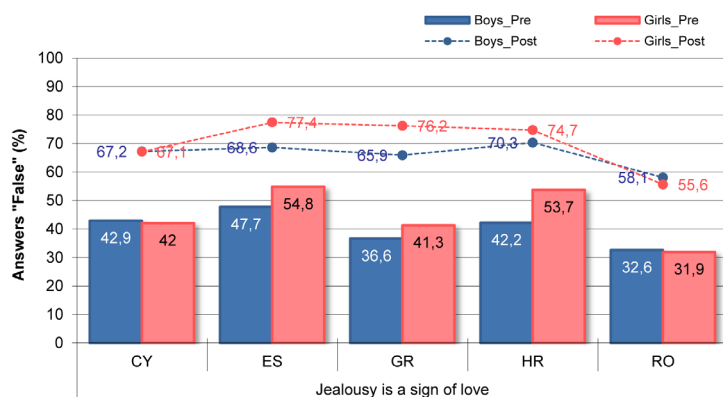
On the other hand, even before the workshop, the majority of students recognize as violent acts psychological abuse behaviors (5-6) and threats of physical harm (7), especially when perpetrated by a male against a female partner.



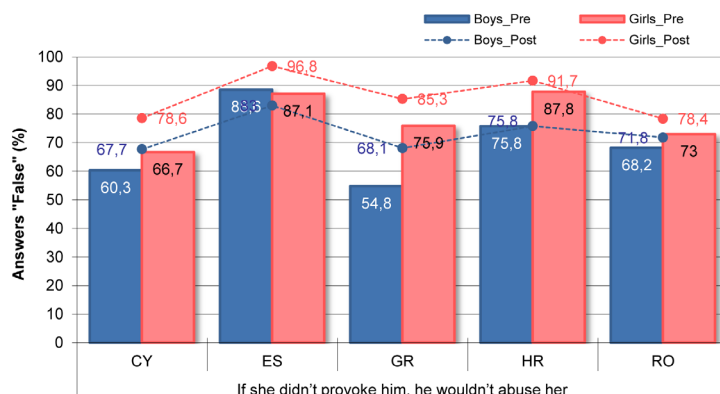
5. At the initial assessments, more students (8 out of 10) perceived this behavior as a violent one when perpetrated by a boy towards a girl rather than the opposite (6-7 out of 10 students). After the workshops, this discrepancy is reduced across all countries, apart from Romania, with 8 out of 10 students recognizing verbal violence regardless of the perpetrator's sex.

6. Degrading acts were identified as violent behaviours by 8-9 out of 10 students even before workshop participation [even though the percentages were slightly lower when the perpetrator was female (ES, GR, RO)]. At the end of the workshop, 9 out of 10 students perceived them to be violent acts regardless of the perpetrator's sex across all countries, apart from Cyprus.

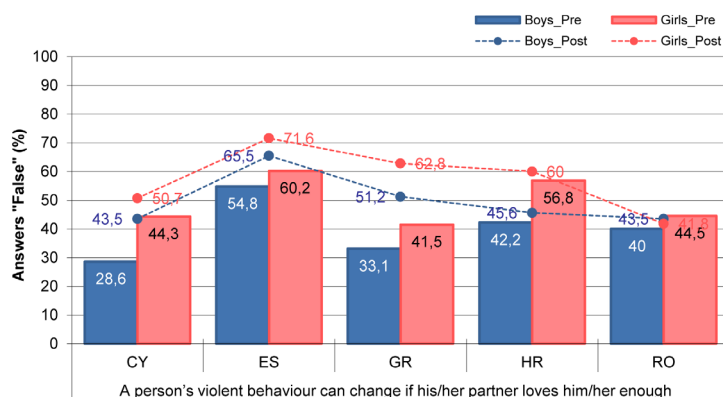
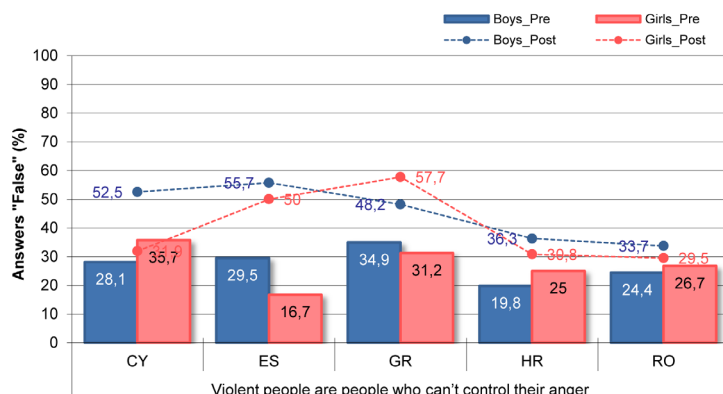
7. The same pattern applies to threats of physical harm: they are perceived as a form of violence by 8-9 out of 10 students when "he threatens her" compared to 7-8 out of 10 students when "she threatens him". When the workshops ended, 9 out of 10 students believed that threatening is a form of violence, no matter if the perpetrator is male or female.



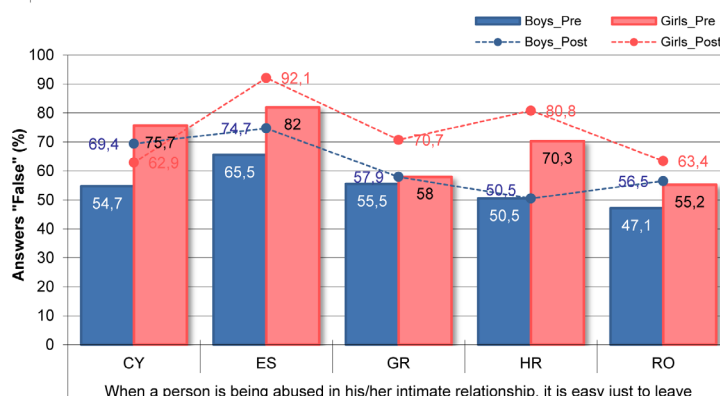
Higher percentages of girls than boys reject the myth of blaming the victim (rather than the perpetrator) not only after the Workshop (78%-97%) but also before it (67%-88%). Boys' rates manifest a great variation across countries during the initial assessment (55%-89%), that is significantly decreased at the end of the Workshop with 68%-83% of boys rejecting this specific myth.



In the same line, this myth takes the blame off the perpetrators and renders it to their inability to control their anger. It appears to be a rather strong myth since it is accepted by the majority of children before the Workshop and is rejected by only 2-3 out of 10. It is also rather resistant to change given that only 3-6 children out of 10 reject it at the end of the Workshop. It is worth noticing that in this item increase of correct answers is observed for boys (by 9%-26%) across all countries whereas girls' correct answers increase only for Greece and Spain.

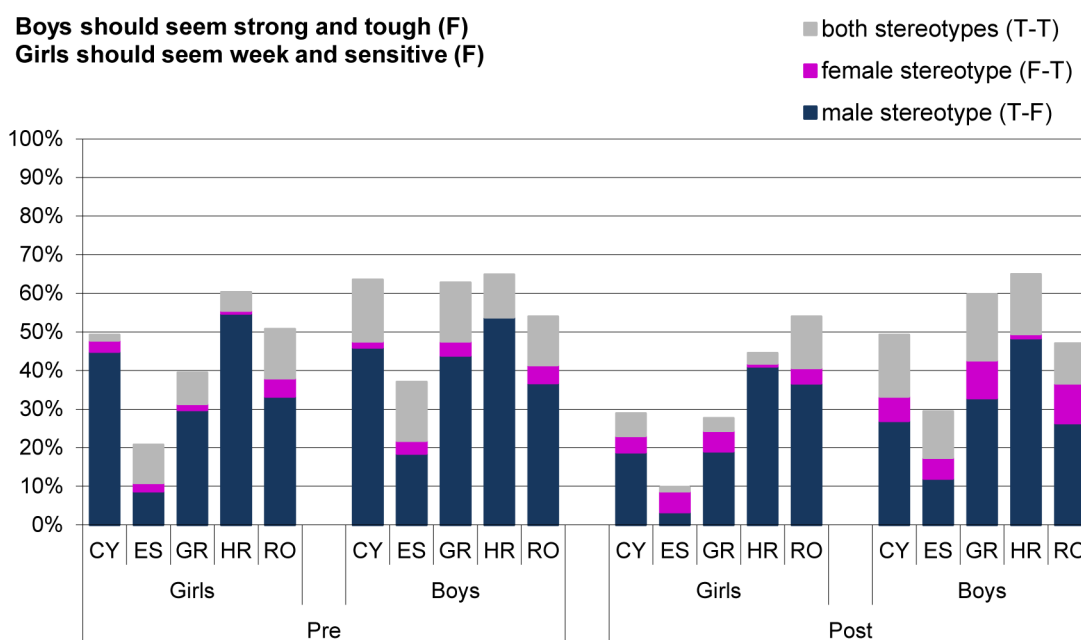


Although more than half of the children (47%-65% of boys and 55%-82% of girls) understand even before the Workshop that it is not easy for the victim to leave the violent relationship, this rate is increased after the Workshop mainly among girls (63%-92%) across all countries apart from Cyprus but also among boys (50%-75%) in Romania, Spain and Cyprus.



Adolescents' attitudes towards **gender stereotypes** were assessed before and after the Workshop via sets of questions that asked participants to indicate what is true or false, **according to their opinion**. The questions were formulated so that to be able, by pairing specific items, to explore both the male and female stereotype for each of the dimensions that were measured (e.g. "real men don't cry" and "real women don't swear"). Adolescents' **desired attitude** is to provide the **non-stereotypical response to both questions** of each pair. Indicative findings of four pair of questions are presented below.

With respect to the pair of questions "boys should seem strong and tough" and "girls should seem weak and sensitive", **two non-stereotypical responses**⁹ ("false") before the Workshop are given by 35% (HR) - 46% (RO) of boys and 40% (HR) - 61% (GR) of girls, apart from Spain that showed higher rates (63% and 79%). At the end of the workshop, there was an increase of non-stereotypical answers for all four countries [35% (HR) - 53% (RO) for boys and 46% (RO) - 72% (GR) for girls], with Spain making the exception once again presenting higher percentages (71% and 90% for boys and girls, respectively).



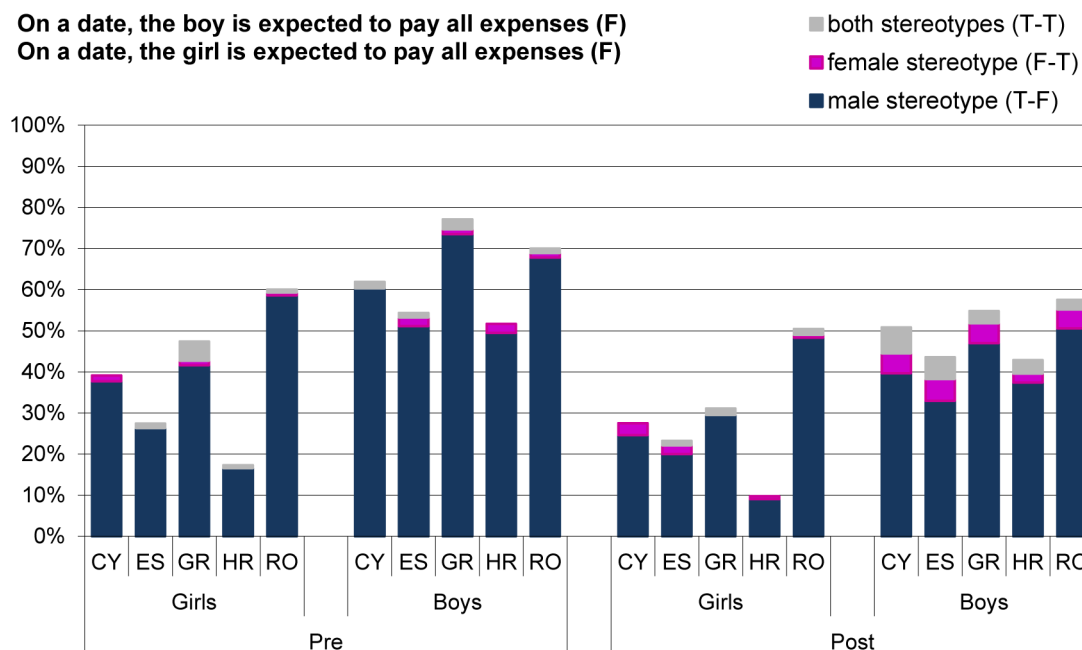
A stereotypical answer ("true") **to the question examining the male stereotype only** is initially provided by the 19% (ES) - 54% (HR) of boys and 9% (ES) - 55% (HR) of girls. After the Workshop, rates decline to 12% (ES) - 33% (GR) for boys of four countries apart from HR (48%) and to 3% (ES) - 19 (CY, GR) of girls of three countries, except for RO (37%) and HR (41%).

Two stereotypical answers ("true" to both questions) are initially provided by the 11% (HR) - 16% (CY) of boys and 5% (HR) - 13% (RO) of girls of four countries apart from Cyprus (1%). After the Workshop, boys' rates from all countries [10% (RO) - 17% (GR)] and Romanian girls' rates (13%) remain stable, whereas the respective rates for girls from the three remaining countries are almost nullified (1% - 3% for ES, HR, GR).

The greatest attitude modification is observed among Cyprian boys and girls; on the other side of the spectrum, Romanian girls and Croatian boys show the highest resistance to attitudes modification who, along with Greek boys, still hold a gender stereotypical stance at a percentage greater than 50%.

⁹ For reasons of simpler illustration, Figures present the stereotypical responses only. The percentage of children who provide non-stereotypical answers to both questions is equal to the balance of each column (up to 100%).

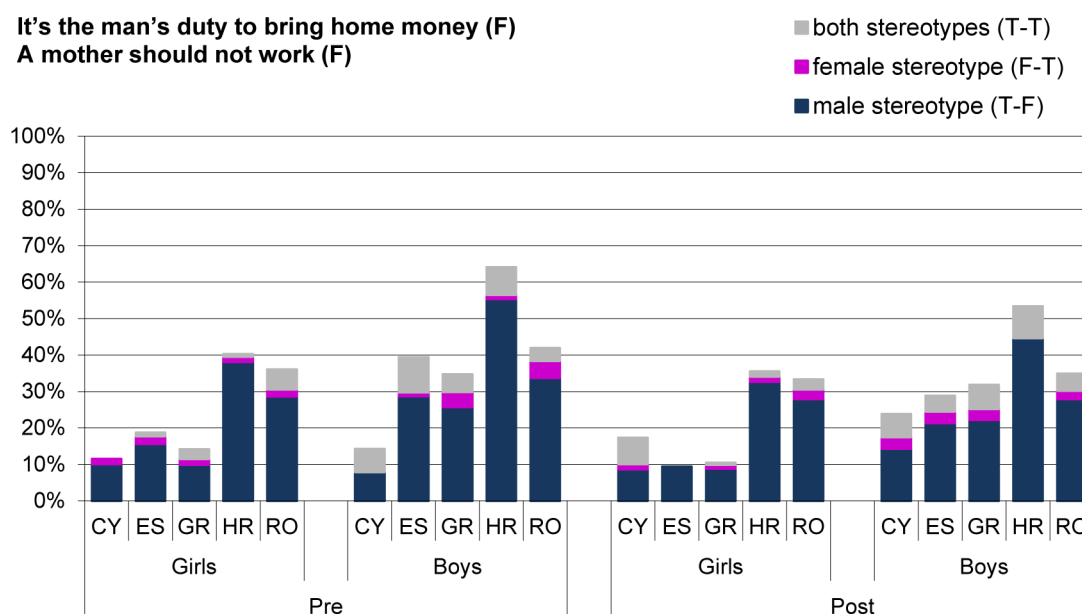
When asked “on a date, the boy/girl is expected to pay all expenses” before the Workshop, **the male stereotype** (“true” for the boy and “false” for the girl) is supported by 50% (HR) - 74% (GR) of boys and 17% (HR) - 42% (GR) of girls, except for Romania (59%). At the end of the Workshop, the respective percentages are decreased to 33% (ES) - 51% (RO) for boys and to 9% (HR) – 30% (GR) for girls of four countries, with the exception of Romania (45%).



The answer “**false**” in **both questions** is chosen by 23% (GR) - 48% (HR) of boys and 40% (RO) - 83% (HR) of girls before the Workshop, whereas, after its end, the rates are increased to 42% (RO) - 57% (HR) for boys and to 69% (GR) - 90% (HR) for girls of four countries apart from Romania (50%).

Greek boys and girls showed the greatest attitude modification, even though they still hold the strongest male stereotypical belief after Romania, since a 47% of boys and a 30% of girls think that on a date, the boy is expected to pay all expenses.

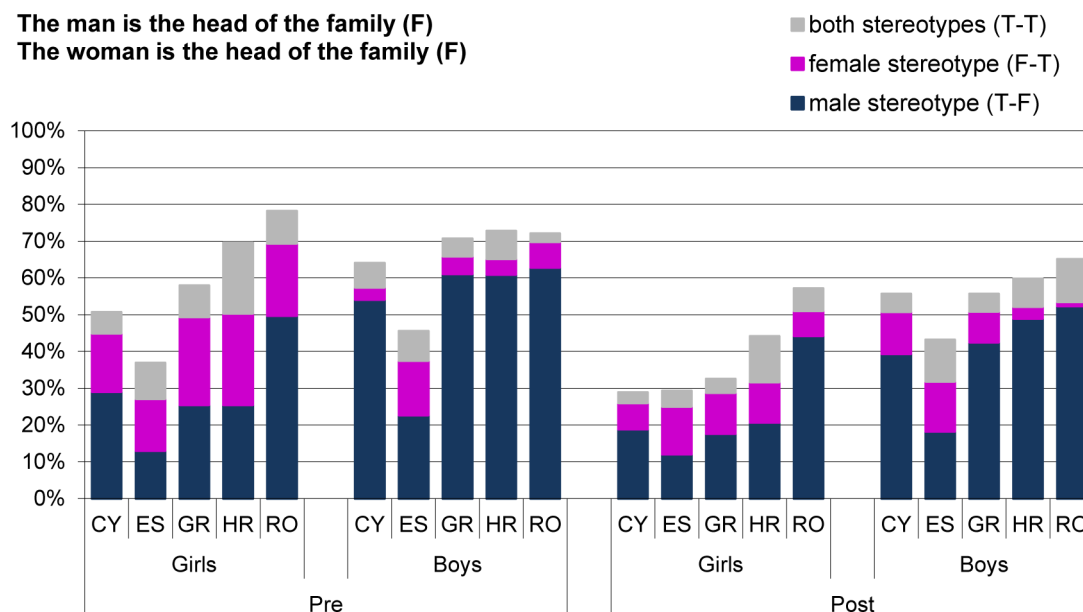
With respect to the set of questions “it’s the man’s duty to bring home money” and “a mother should not work”, 36% of Croatian boys and 58% (RO) - 86% (CY) of boys from the remaining countries together with a range of 60% (HR) - 88% (CY) of girls gave **two non-stereotypical answers** (“false”) before the Workshop. After the Workshop, these rates are slightly increased among boys [47% (HR) – 76% (CY)] across all participating countries apart from Cyprus but not among girls, except for Spanish girls only (91%).



The male stereotype of the **man-provider** in concert with the non-stereotypical attitude towards working mothers appears to vary significantly among countries since it is supported by 8% (CY) to 55% (HR) of boys, with rates from remaining countries ranging from 26% (GR) to 34% (RO). A similar picture is painted among girls who respond “true” to the item for the male and “false” to the item for the female, with percentages ranging to a lower extent among countries: from 10% (CY, GR) - 16% (ES) to 29% (RO) - 38% (HR).

These **beliefs** appear to be **very resistant to change** since, at the end of the workshop, a slight decrease is observed only among Spanish (9%) and Croatian (33%) girls. Slightly higher decreases are observed to Spanish, Croatian and Romanian boys who, yet still express these stereotypical opinions at high rates (ES: 21%, RO: 28%, HR: 45%).

Last but not least, **two non-stereotypical answers** (“false”) pertaining to the questions “the man/woman is the head of the family” are provided before the Workshop by 27% (HR) - 36% (CY) of boys and 22% (RO) - 49% (CY) of girls apart from Spain that manifested much higher percentages (55% and 63%). At the end of the Workshop, boys’ rates [35% (RO) - 44% (GR) and 57% (ES)] increase but girls’ rates raise even more [43% (RO) - 71% (CY)].



The **“leadership” of the family** seems therefore to be an issue for which robust stereotypical views have already been established, as the percentage of students who provide at least one stereotypical response before the Workshop exceeds 50% across all countries, apart from Spain, reaching up to 78% (RO girls). Moreover, these stereotypical attitudes seem to be exceptionally resistant to change: despite the modification revealed after the Workshop participation, stereotypical responses are provided by approximately 6:10 boys (56%-65%) across all countries except for Spain and 6:10 Romanian girls.

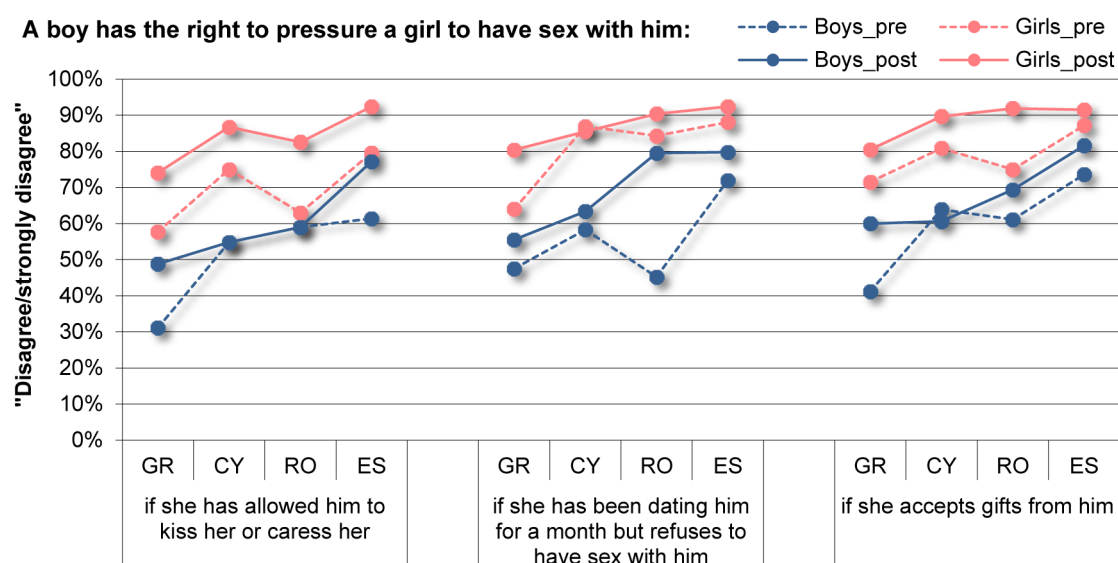
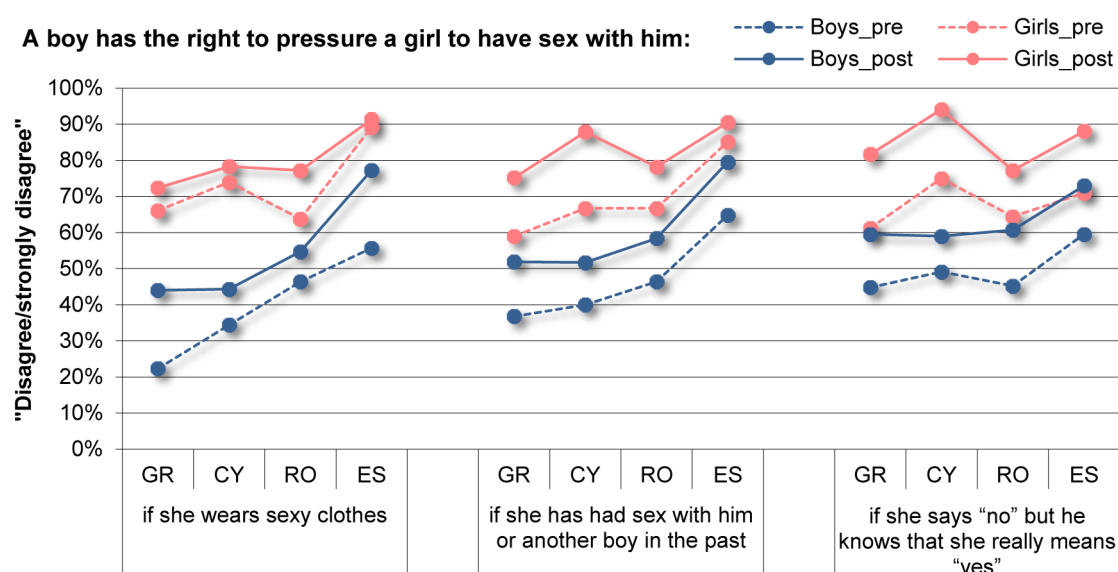
A thorough examination of these results reveals that a **stereotypical response** (“true”) **to the question regarding males only** is initially provided by 23% of Spanish boys and 54% (CY) - 63% (RO) of boys across remaining countries and 13% (ES) - 30% (CY) of girls, apart from those from Romania (50%). After the Workshop, though, percentages decline for both boys [18% (ES) and 39% (CY) - 52% (RO) in remaining countries] and girls [12% (ES) - 21% (HR) and 44% (RO)].

The reverse case, meaning a stereotypical response (“true”) **to the question regarding women only**, is manifested at much lower rates, mainly from girls across all countries [14% (ES) - 25% (HR)]. Such attitudes are expressed by almost negligible percentage of boys with the exceptions of Romania (7%) and Spain (15%). After the end of the Workshop, girls’ [7% (RO) - 13% (ES)] and Romanian boys’ (1%) rates are declined whereas boys’ rates across remaining countries either remain stable (HR, ES) or are increased (CY, GR).

Tolerance to IPV was assessed before and after the intervention by asking adolescents to rate to what extent they agree or disagree with statements describing conditions under which a boy or a girl has the right to hit¹⁰ his/her partner as well as conditions under which a boy has the right to pressure a girl to have sex with him. Adolescents' **desired attitude** is to disagree with all statements, meaning that they believe that physical and sexual violence are **by no means justified**.

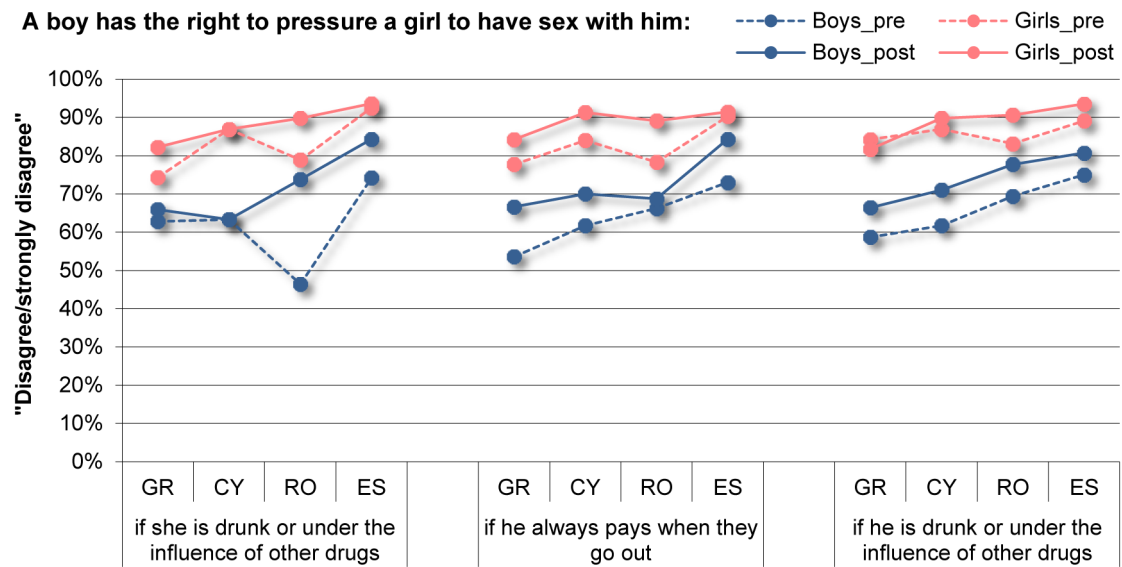
Before the intervention, boys appeared to be more tolerant to violence than girls across all questions and countries¹¹: only 2-6 (GR), 3-6 (CY), 5-7 (RO) and 6-7 (ES) in 10 boys respond "I disagree/strongly disagree" compared to 6-8 (GR, RO) and 7-9 (CY, ES) in 10 girls. **After the intervention**, the respective rates across all countries for both boys [4-7 (GR, CY), 5-8 (RO) and 7-8 (ES) in 10] and girls [7-8 (GR), 8-9 (CY, RO) and 9 (ES) in 10] are increased.

The increase manifested in adolescents' reported disagreements ("disagree/strongly disagree") after the Workshop indicates that adolescents' attitudes are genuinely modified towards the desired direction, meaning that a greater number of children become less tolerant to IPV. However, it should be noted that boys are still presented to be more tolerant to IPV than girls.



¹⁰ The questions regarding physical violence are not presented here.

¹¹ Data from HR are not presented because the initial rates of both boys and girls answering "I disagree/strongly disagree" not only were approximately the same across all questions (32-43% for boys and 43-52% for girls) but also they were not modified after the intervention.



In spite of the fact that, after the Workshop, a sizable increase in the proportion of boys expressing non-tolerant attitude appears, **quite a large percentage of Greek and Cyprian boys**, followed by the Romanian ones, **still believe that they have the right to pressure a girl to have sex with them** if she wears sexy clothes (5-6:10 boys), if she has had a previous sexual relationship or if she has allowed him to kiss or caress her (4-5:10), if he believes that she means “yes” although she says “no” (4:10), if she accepts gifts from him (3-4:10), if she has been dating him for long but refuses to have sex with him [2:10 (RO) and 4:10 (GR, CY)], if she (2-4:10) or he (3:10) is under the influence of alcohol or other drugs and, finally, if he always pays when they go out (3:10). In Spain, however, pressuring a girl to have sex is deemed justified by 3:10 boys only if he believes that she means “yes” although she says “no”; the remaining 8 conditions render justification by only 1-2:10 boys.

The **tolerance level of boys of Spain** after the Workshop is **similar to those of girls from the remaining three countries** (CY, GR, RO) regarding most of the statements (that are being acceptable by 1-2:10 girls), with the exception of Greek girls, where 3:10 still believe that a boy has the right to pressure a girl to have sex with him if she wears sexy clothes or if she has allowed him to kiss or caress her. Finally, special mention deserves to be made to the **almost zero tolerant attitudes manifested by Spanish girls** after the Workshop.

After the intervention, Spanish and Romanian boys’ attitudes exhibit levels of non-tolerance similar to those of girls of the same nationality prior to the intervention. Yet, in Cyprus and Greece, despite the increased rate of boys’ non-tolerant responses, they have just started to approach girls’ initial levels of non-tolerance. This finding indicates that it is essential for the intervention either to begin earlier (at younger age groups) or continue in a systematic way during the next school years in order to provide more chances to boys to modify their attitudes that are tolerant to IPV.

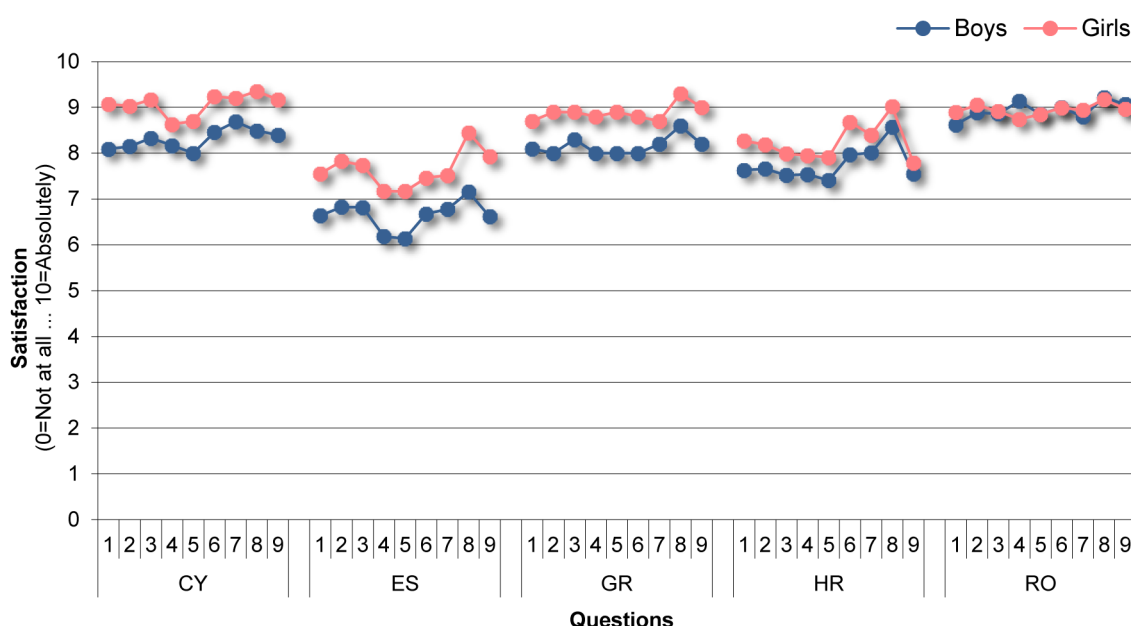
Adolescents' own opinions for the Workshop "Building healthy intimate relationships"

At the end of the intervention, students were asked to assess several aspects of the Workshop they participated in.

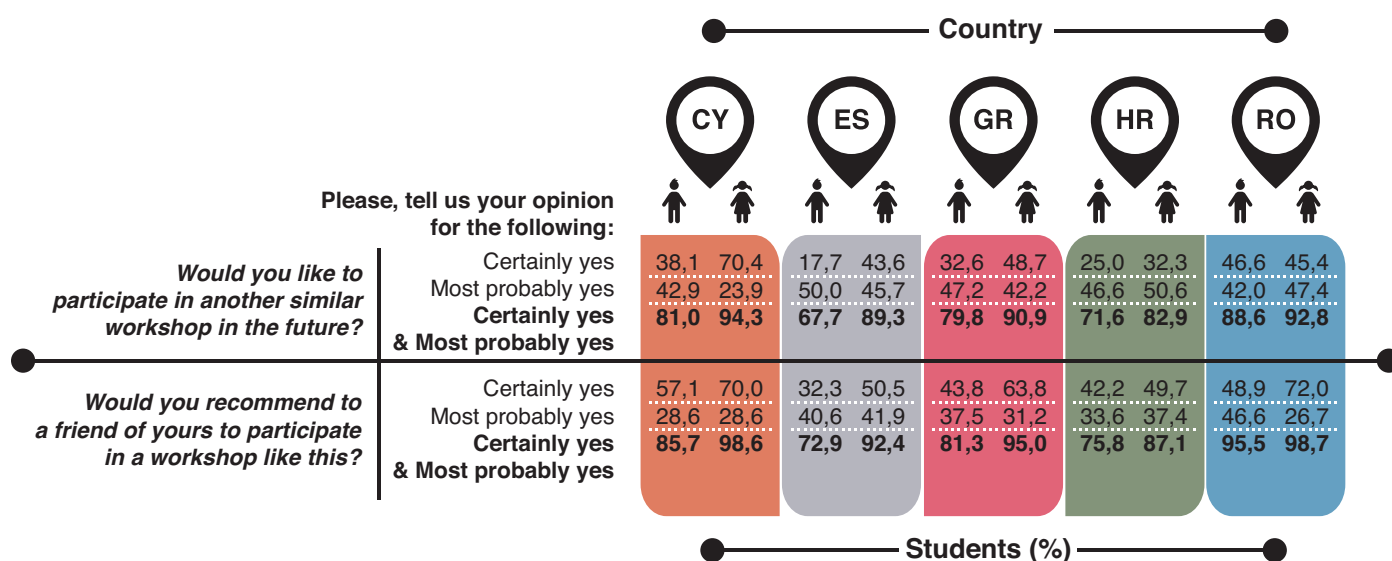
Personal satisfaction

On a scale of 0 to 10 (0 = not at all ... 10 = absolutely), please assess how satisfied you were with:

- 1.the workshop, overall?
- 2.the topics discussed?
- 3.the activities used?
- 4.the worksheets that you used?
- 5.the handouts that you were given?
- 6.the way that the workshop was conducted?
- 7.the way that the workshop was organized?
- 8.the adequacy of the teacher that conducted the workshop?
- 9.your personal participation in the workshop?

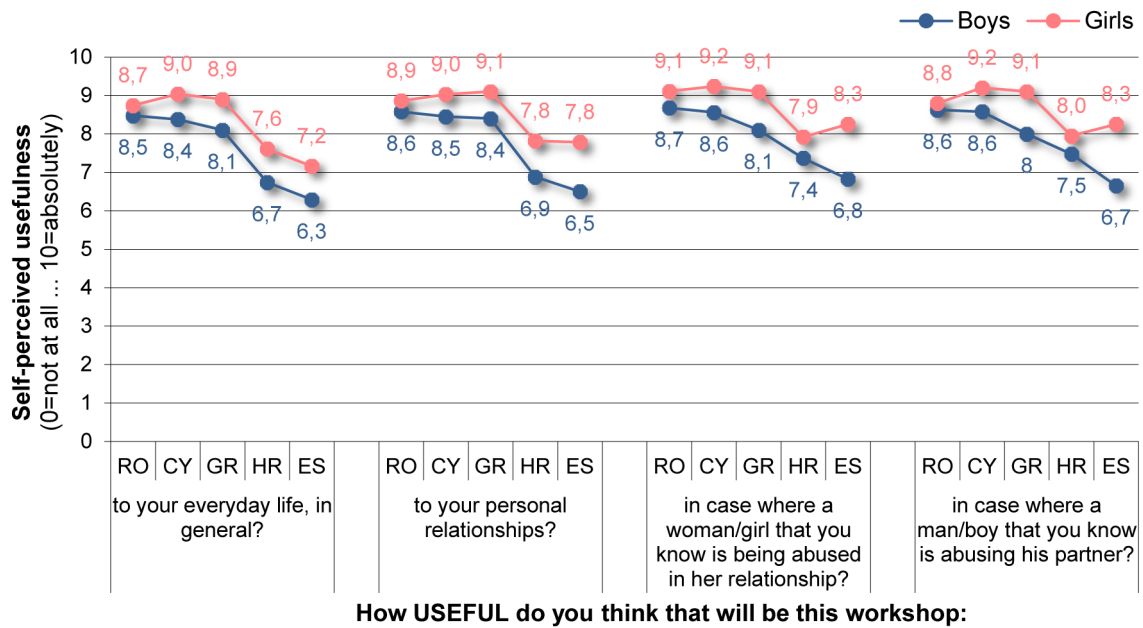


Students' **satisfaction** from the 9 aforementioned aspects of the workshop was exceptionally high (8 – 9,4) in three countries (CY, GR, RO), very high (7,4 - 9,0) in Croatia and fairly high (6,1 – 8,4) in Spain. Apart from Romania, **girls** (7,2-9,4) **reported higher levels of satisfaction** compared to boys (6,1-8,7) in all remaining countries.

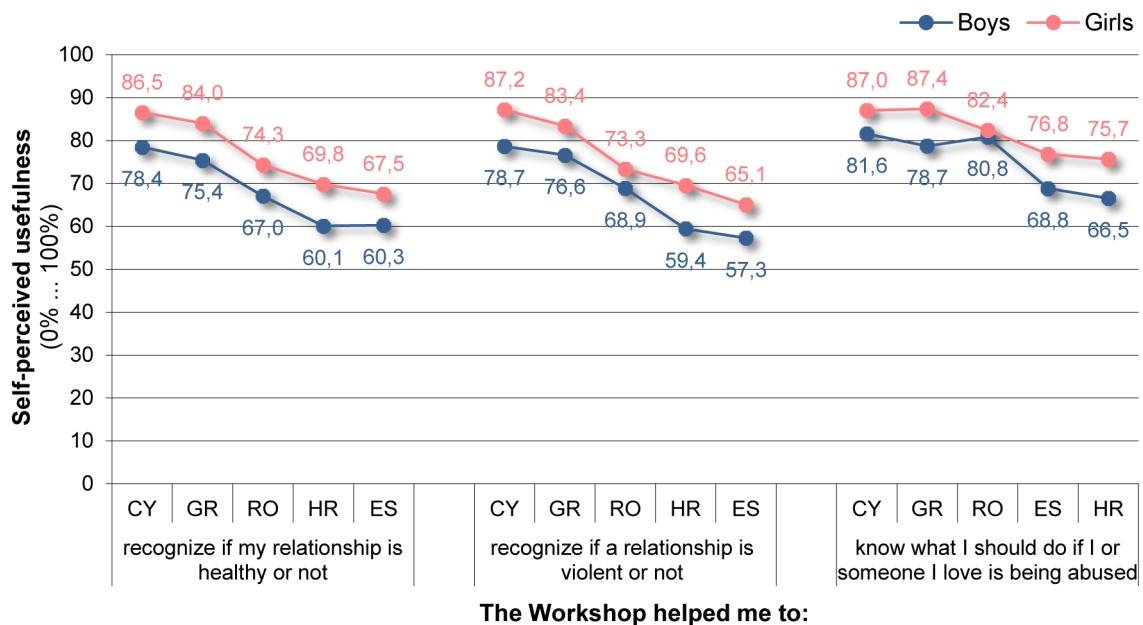


Students' high levels of satisfaction were also **evident in indirect measurements** across all countries: 8-9 out of 10 girls and 7-9 out of 10 boys declare that they would like to participate in a similar workshop in the future and that they would recommend (9-10 out of 10 girls and 7-9 out of 10 boys) this workshop to their friends.

Usefulness of the Workshop



When students were asked to assess **how useful** (0 = not at all ... 10 = absolutely) **they perceived the workshop will be** with respect to their lives, their relationships and in case a familiar person is being abused and/or is abusing somebody else, their mean scores were very high (8,5 – 9,0) in three countries (RO, CY, GR) and fairly high (6,7 – 7,8) in the remaining countries (HR, ES). Apart from Romania, **female students** tend to **assess higher the usefulness of the workshop**, compared to their male classmates.

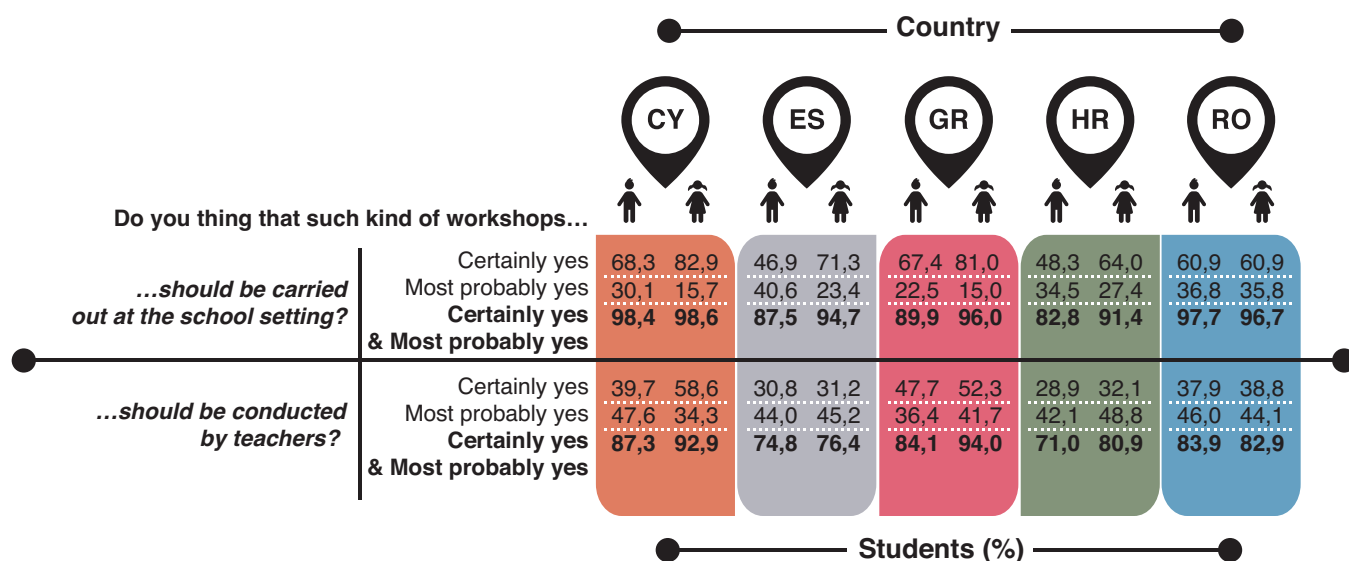


In the same line, students were asked to assess **to what extent** (on a scale of 0% to 100%) **the workshop helped them** to be able to recognize if their relationships are healthy and/or violent and to know what they should do if they are dealt with a violent relationship. Students' mean scores ranged from **fairly high** (61%-72,8%) in Spain, Croatia and Romania to **high** (80%-84,1%) in Cyprus and Greece, with girls providing higher scores (65,1%-87,4%) than boys (57,3%-81,6%) once again.

Adolescents recommend...

...such Workshops to be implemented at schools

Across all countries, the vast majority of children believes that workshops such as this one should be implemented in schools (9-10 out of 10 children in all countries) and should be conducted by their teachers (8-9 out of 10 children). Of note, no difference between boys and girls was observed in the total percentage of affirmative answers to these specific items in some countries [CY, RO and ES (2nd item)]. In the remaining cases [GR, HR and ES (1st item)], girls tend to respond affirmatively to a higher rate than boys.



...because, as they said...

“At this age, more personal relationships between the two sexes are starting and via this programme they will learn things that they don't know and that will help them”

“They must know from a young age how to build healthy relationships such as friendship in order to be able to transfer that to their life and their families”

“In order all to know such information and to know how to protect themselves”

“Because such programs are life lessons”

“Because violence starts from early ages and we must be informed”

“Because help very much students and can contribute to combating of violence in relationships”

“it corrects false attitudes on this subject”

“because all students must be informed”

“It is necessary to be informed from accurate sources of information that they cannot easily find in their social environment”

“Help young people to build healthy relationships and to select the right partners”

“Because sometimes relationships that are not healthy are being developed at our age”

“Children must be informed in order not to become neither victims nor perpetrators”

“Because anybody may find him/herself in that position and must know how to react”

“Because some children may already have a relationship and be abused”

“Because children improve their behavior”

“Because the school can change the stereotypes etc.”

“All children of both sexes must be aware about this topic because it is something very important in lives of all people”

“Because, I think that, children can express themselves to a teacher they trust in case they have queries and they also learn many things”

“Because they learn how to deal with violent relationships and that we must NOT be violent in a relationship”



Why should a Country adopt the GEAR *against IPV* approach?

Because...

...the **Council of Europe Convention** on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (**Istanbul Convention**) has been signed by **all EU Member States** as well by the **7 candidate and potential candidate countries** and has already been **entered into force** (Sept. 2016) **by 19 of them**.

...the educational system

- **cares for** children's and adolescents' safety, mental health and wellbeing
- **seeks** to promote gender equality
- **aspires** to hold a pivotal role in the primary prevention of gender-based and intimate partner violence in the future adults' general population
- **wishes** to be equipped with **properly trained teachers** who can contribute significantly in achieving the aforementioned goals

...the intervention is cordially welcomed and is highly accepted and appreciated by

- adolescents
- teachers
- schools
- adolescents' parents and the local communities

and the GEAR *against IPV* approach...

provides material that consists a **precise fulfillment of Article 14** of the Istanbul Convention on Education, whereas all included primary prevention interventions are directly related to **approximately all Articles of Convention Chapter III** regarding Prevention.

- **introduces, in education, gender equality as a violence prevention means**, by mobilizing teachers and providing them with the skills and "know-how" that are necessary in order to implement such primary prevention interventions
- **its effectiveness is evidence based**: it has already been implemented and evaluated in **7 countries and appears to be effective in** increasing teachers' and adolescents' **knowledge** and **modifying** attitudes that are stereotypical and/or tolerant towards gender-based violence
- **when integrated into the school curriculum, it enhances**
 - a) **the preventative character** of the intervention, as it conveys the message that schools and teachers do care about and take action towards gender equality achievement and elimination of violence from adolescents' relationships
 - b) **the sustainability** of such interventions, as teachers comprise a permanent "task force" at schools and, therefore, they can implement such interventions on a permanent basis
- uses exclusively experiential activities through which, adolescents **are not taught, but guided to explore** their personal gender stereotypical **attitudes** about gender roles and their impact to their own lives as well as to **"discover" and to exercise life skills** that will help them to develop healthy relationships, free from any form of violence
- **allows**, through trained teachers, **access to the general population of children and adolescents**, even in remote areas
- **improves** relationships among adolescents as well as the teacher-students relationship
- **deals with issues that adolescents are concerned with in their daily lives**, yet the school, teachers and parents "avoid to touch" because they do not know how.

Policy Recommendations

Since almost all children and adolescents attend school, **the educational system**, at all levels, is the ideal setting, where **properly trained teachers** can play a key role in the implementation of such **interventions targeting the general population**. The need for implementing in schools –even in primary education- interventions related to gender stereotypes and equality, as a means of primary prevention of gender-based violence it is, therefore, imperative.

Development of National GEAR against IPV Packages for countries where they are still not available.

Approval and institutionalization of the use of the National GEAR against IPV Package (Booklets II, III and IV) for the implementation of Workshops with adolescents by specially trained teachers and professionals providing services to adolescents.

Systematic teachers' training in using the GEAR against IPV educational material through training seminars implemented annually with a specific methodology¹² so as every school has at least one properly trained teacher who is qualified to implement the “Building Healthy Intimate Relationships” Workshops.

Systematic implementation of the GEAR against IPV Workshops in the educational setting through:

- the **appropriate use of the GEAR against IPV** (Booklets III and IV) educational material that provides the opportunity to use experiential, interactive and attractive activities, which promote children's voluntary and active participation
- students' sensitization on all Modules of the GEAR against IPV educational material
 - **during a whole school year** (e.g. two consecutive school hours per week) or
 - **during different school years** in classes of secondary education or among educational levels [e.g. implementing Modules 1-2 (Gender stereotypes and gender equality) in Elementary school and Modules 3 (Healthy and unhealthy relationships) and 4 (IPV – Awareness raising and ways of intervening) in Junior and Senior High School]
- creating the conditions that facilitate the annual implementation of the “Building Healthy Intimate Relationships” Workshops, preferably **incorporated in the school curriculum and in entire classes** (15-25 students), with mixed groups of boys and girls (minimum duration: 13 teaching hours)
- **evaluating the effectiveness** of the Workshops by the students who participated and teachers-implementers with the outcomes being used to monitor, update and improve the material and the process of implementation
- systematic provision of **support and feedback** to teachers during the Workshops' implementation by an organization specially qualified on issues of gender equality and gender-based violence against women and girls
- providing the opportunity to students **to create messages and artworks** at the end of the workshop aiming to launch an informational and awareness raising **campaign against gender-based violence** targeted to adolescents all over the country (via these initiatives schools contribute to community awareness raising through students' mobilization)
- conducting a 2-day Conference at the end of each school year with invited speeches being held from representatives of student participants and teachers-implementers of the workshops from various schools (one Conference per 20 groups).

¹² A brief description of the Teachers' Training Seminars and the respective recommendations are presented in the Policy Brief entitled: Building Healthy Intimate Relationships. The Role of School: Evidence-based Policy Recommendations for Teachers' Trainings (available at: gear-ipv.eu/training-awareness-raising/teachers-training-seminars).

Project Identity

Gender Equality Awareness Raising against Intimate Partner Violence - II - GEAR against IPV II
(JUST/2013/DAP/AG/5408)

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- Plataforma Unitària contra les Violències de Gènere, Spain
- The Smile of the Child, Greece



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