



## ANALYTIC NOTE

# Social Life and Entertainment in Moldova

Leisure, social life<sup>1</sup> and entertainment activities<sup>2</sup> are indispensable components of the life of most people. Ultimately, the way people spend their time reveals the quality of life, the country's culture and level of development. In this analytical note, we will study the specifics of the social life and entertainment of the population of the Republic of Moldova. In particular, we will answer the following questions:

- How much time Moldovans allocate for social life and entertainment in comparison with nationals of other countries?
- Who are socializing and having more fun: women or men?
- What are the differences in the way how women and men socialize and have fun?
- Where does the country's population socialize and have fun more: in towns or villages?
- What are the differences in the social life and entertainment depending on the social status, levels of income and education?

<sup>1</sup> These include: time spent with the family, paying and receiving visits, parties, telephone talks, other social life activities or unspecified.

<sup>2</sup> These include: movies, theater and concerts, art exhibitions and museums, library, sports events, other entertainment and cultural events or unspecified.

In order to find answers to these questions, we will use the results of the Time Use Survey, carried out by the National Bureau of Statistics.

## How much time do Moldovans allocate for entertainment and socializing in comparison with citizens of other countries?

In the Republic of Moldova, about 13.4% of the entire day of a person is dedicated to social life and entertainment (or 3.2 hours a day on the average). This mainly encompasses spending time with the family (1.2 hours a day), other social life activities (1.1 hours a day), paying and receiving visits (0.4 hours a day)<sup>3</sup>.

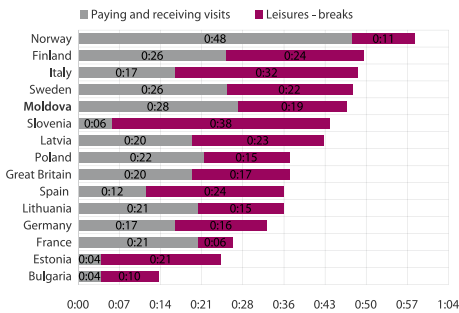
If compared with other countries, Moldovans dedicate relatively large amount of time for these activities. For instance, our nationals allocate an average of 28 minutes a day for paying and receiving visits, which is much higher than in other Eastern European countries (e.g. Bulgaria and Estonia

<sup>3</sup> Other activities from this category include: leisure-breaks - 0.3 hours a day; telephone discussions - 0.1 hours a day; parties - 0.02 hours a day.

– 4 minutes each; Slovenia – 6 minutes; Latvia – 20 minutes; Lithuania – 21 minutes; Poland – 22 minutes).

The amount of time allocated by Moldovans for breaks and leisure is close to the average of other European countries. The 19 minutes allocated for such activities in Moldova are less than in Slovenia (38 minutes), Italy (32 minutes) and Belgium (27 minutes), and more than the time recorded in Bulgaria (10 minutes), Lithuania (15 minutes) or Poland (15 minutes) (Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Time allocated for visits, receiving guests, parties and leisure in Moldova and other European countries, minutes a day**



Source: NBS and HETUS database (<https://www.h2.scb.se/tus/tus/>)

Though the nationals of other countries dedicate quite large amounts of time for cultural life as an indispensable part of their social life and entertainment (e.g. going to the theater, concerts, libraries, movies, etc.), Moldovans allocate an insignificant amount of time for such activities.

For instance, only 0.4% of the population went to cinema. On average, one of these people spends about 1.7 hours. At the same time, only 0.1% of the country's population went to theater or concerts, and the same percentage attended sports events.

<sup>4</sup> 'Time use survey highlights changing working conditions', European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2007.  
<sup>5</sup> 'How is the time of women and men distributed in Europe', European Communities, 2006.  
<sup>6</sup> 'American Time Use Survey – 2012 results', Bureau of Labor Statistics, June 2013.

## Who are socializing and having more fun: men or women?

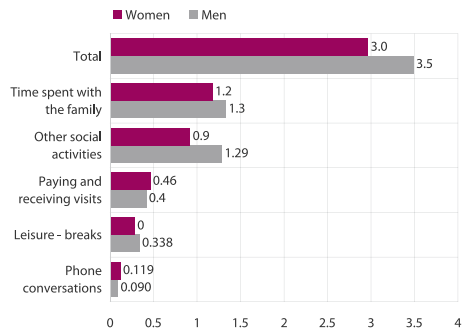
In Moldova, men allocate more time for entertainment and social life than women: 14.5% of the day (or about 3.5 hours a day) versus 12.4% (or about 3 hours a day).

This difference is noticed in EU countries as well, where the average duration of women's leisure time is by about half an hour less than men's<sup>4</sup>. However, Moldovans allocate less time for leisure time during the day than Europeans, where men allocate an average of 5-5.5 hours a day, and women 4.6 hours a day<sup>5</sup>.

More time for these activities is allocated in USA, where men have on the average 6 hours of leisure time a day, and women - 5.2 hours a day<sup>6</sup>.

In Moldova, men and women spend about the same period of time with the family<sup>7</sup> (1.2 hours women and 1.3 men), as well as for paying and receiving visits (0.5 hours women and 0.4 hours men). As for other social life activities<sup>8</sup>, men allocate an average of 1.3 hours a day, and women - 0.9 hours a day (Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Time allocated for the social life and entertainment, by sex, hours a day**



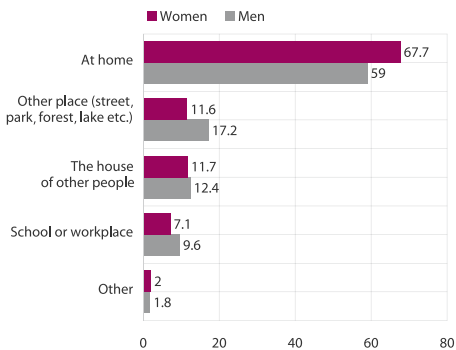
Source: NBS

<sup>7</sup> Time spent with children, parents and other family members without the presence of persons from other households.  
<sup>8</sup> Other social life activities include mainly face-to-face discussions on current topics.

Both women and men spend at home most of the time dedicated to social life and entertainment. However, the share of women who spend this time at home is higher than men's (67.7% versus 59%).

At the same time, men prefer, to a higher extent than women, to have fun and socialize outside the home (e.g. park, forest, other persons' home or even place of work) (Figure 3).

**Figure 3. Time allocated for the social life and entertainment, by sex and venues, % of the total time allocated for these activities during a day**



Source: NBS

Where does the country's population socialize and have fun more: in towns or villages?

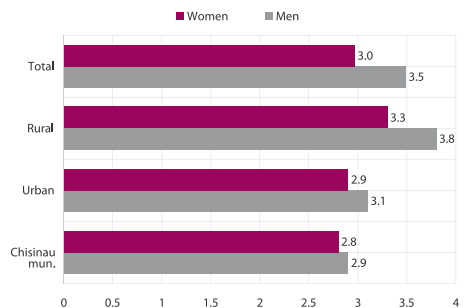
The largest gaps between women and men in terms of the time dedicated to social life and entertainment are found in rural areas.

Generally, the rural population allocate more time for these activities than the urban population (3.5 hours a day in villages compared to 3.0 hours in towns and 2.8 hours a day in Chisinau municipality). This may be explained by the closer links with the family, friends and neighbors, specific for small rural communities, as well to the limited economic opportunities, which determine their inhabitants to spend more time in the household.

Nevertheless, only 0.1% of the rural population goes to theaters (0.3% of the urban population) and only 0.3% of the rural population goes to movies (0.6% of the urban population). The limited access to such types of entertainment is caused by the lack of such institutions in villages, limited financial possibilities of the rural population, and the weak connections between villages and towns.

The rural men allocate on average 3.8 hours a day for socializing and entertainment activities, while women - only 3.3 hours. In the urban area and Chisinau municipality, the gap is less visible (Figure 4).

**Figure 4. Time allocated for the social life and entertainment, by areas of residence and sex, hours a day**



Source: NBS

One of the possible causes of these differences, found in the rural area, stems from the traditional organization of the household, present most often in these settlements. Thus, women are in charge of taking care of the household and family, allocating an average of 5.9 hours a day for this activity, versus the 3.9 hours allocated by men<sup>9</sup>, and hence have less time for social life and entertainment. Another explanation would be the lower availability of household appliances (e.g. washing machine, kitchen appliances, etc.), which could decrease significantly the time allocated by women for performing the household chores and taking care of the family.

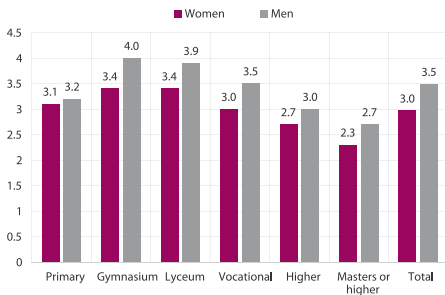
<sup>9</sup> Data of the Time Use Survey, carried out by the National Bureau of Statistics: [http://www.statistica.md/public/files/publicatii\\_electronice/Utilizarea\\_timpului\\_RM/Utilizarea\\_timpului\\_RM.pdf](http://www.statistica.md/public/files/publicatii_electronice/Utilizarea_timpului_RM/Utilizarea_timpului_RM.pdf).

The same gender difference was found in the EU countries, where women allocate about 4.2 hours a day for performing the household chores and taking care of the family, versus the 2.1 hours allocated by men<sup>10</sup>.

### How does the level of education influence the time dedicated to socialization and entertainment?

The time dedicated to the social life and entertainment is lower among people with a higher education. Thus, men and women with secondary education allocate 4 and 3.4 hours a day, respectively, for socialization and entertainment. This time amount diminishes with the increase in levels of education, so that men and women with post-graduate education allocate only 2.7 and 2.3 hours a day respectively for the social life and entertainment (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Time allocated for the social life and entertainment, by levels of education and sex, hours a day



Source: NBS

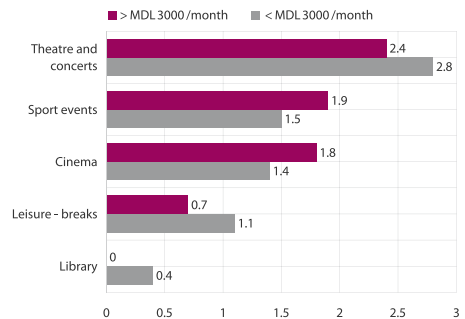
Additionally, figure 5 reveals the inverse relationship between the time dedicated to socialization and entertainment and the existing economic opportunities, which are associated directly with the level of education. Thus, persons with a higher

educational level have more employment opportunities, allocating more time for their professional life and hence less time for socialization and entertainment.

### Do the types of entertainment depend of the people's level of income?

The people with higher income allocate more time for movies and sports events. At the same time, people with lower income prefer theaters, concerts and libraries, and dedicate more time to leisure (breaks) (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Time allocated for some types of entertainment by the level of households' income, hours a day



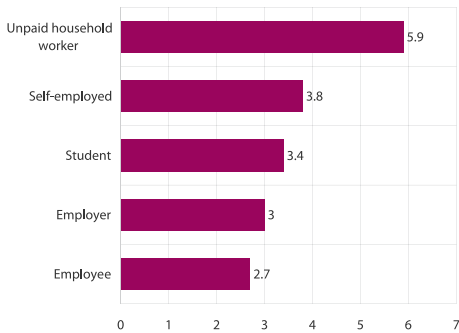
Source: NBS

Figure 6 reveals that the poorest people are more interested in cultural activities and reading. The amount of time allocated by these people for leisure-breaks and libraries may be explained by the fact that some of them allocate less time, or no time at all, for professional work (including the retired, students/pupils or housekeepers, etc.).

This assumption is confirmed by Figure 7, which reveals that the economically active people, either employees or employers, allocate less time to their social life and entertainment, as compared with the other categories.

<sup>10</sup> 'How is the time of women and men distributed in Europe', European Communities, 2006.

**Figure 7. Time allocated for some types of entertainment by the main activity of respondents, hours a day**



Source: NBS

## Conclusions:

- Moldovans allocate relatively large amount of time to social life and entertainment activities, as compared with other European countries. At the same time, the time allocated to cultural events (theaters, concerts, movies, etc.) is much shorter;
- Women socialize and have fun much less than men. These differences are visible in particular in rural areas, where women spend much more time performing the household chores and taking care of the family than men;
- The types of socialization and entertainment are different for women and men. Thus, while the first spend this time mainly within the household, men socialize and have fun mainly outside the household (street, park, forest, place of work, etc.);
- The population from villages spends more time for socialization and entertainment activities than the urban population. This is explained by the closer relationships with the family, relatives or neighbors, specific for small communities. However, in villages there is a larger gap between the time spent for socialization and entertainment by men and women than in towns;

- At the same time, the share of people who go to theaters, concerts or movies is several times lower in villages than in towns. This reveals the rural population's low access to such entertainment activities, and a scarce diversity of entertainment types in the respective settlements;
- Most of the time for socialization and entertainment activities is allocated by the categories of people with modest incomes: unpaid family workers or self-employed;
- The time amount and types of entertainment differ significantly by the levels of income and education. Thus, people with a higher educational level and higher income allocate less time for socialization and entertainment. At the same time, persons with more modest income allocate more time than the rest of the population to low-cost activities (e.g. going to the theater, library or leisure).

## Recommendations:

- It is necessary to promote actively different cultural forms of spending the leisure time and increase people's interest in cultural events. For that, open days or festivals could be organized periodically in theaters, museums and art galleries, encouraging the participation of various categories of population (by age, income, education, occupational status, etc.);
- The activities aimed at promoting cultural entertainment forms, in particular theaters, concerts and movies, should focus on rural settlements, where the access to these institutions is more limited than in towns;
- It would be appropriate to subsidize the prices for cultural activities for vulnerable categories of people (e.g. pupils/students, retired, persons with disabilities, etc.) by increasing the prices for the rest of the population. Implementation of a targeted subsidizing mechanism, in tandem with liberalization of the prices for the entry in theaters, museums, etc. would allow cultural institutions to improve their financial status, without limiting the

access of vulnerable categories to cultural life. This, in turn, will contribute to the modernization of the technical-material base of cultural institutions, increase the salaries in this area, build ramps and

other infrastructure elements for persons with disabilities, which will make these institutions more attractive for a wider range of the population.



This material has been developed on the basis of the Time Use Survey, conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics, with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and of the Swedish Government within the framework of the UN joint project "Strengthening the National Statistical System." The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent those of the institutions of the United Nations, Swedish Government or National Bureau of Statistics.

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Design: Ion Axenti

Picture: UNDP