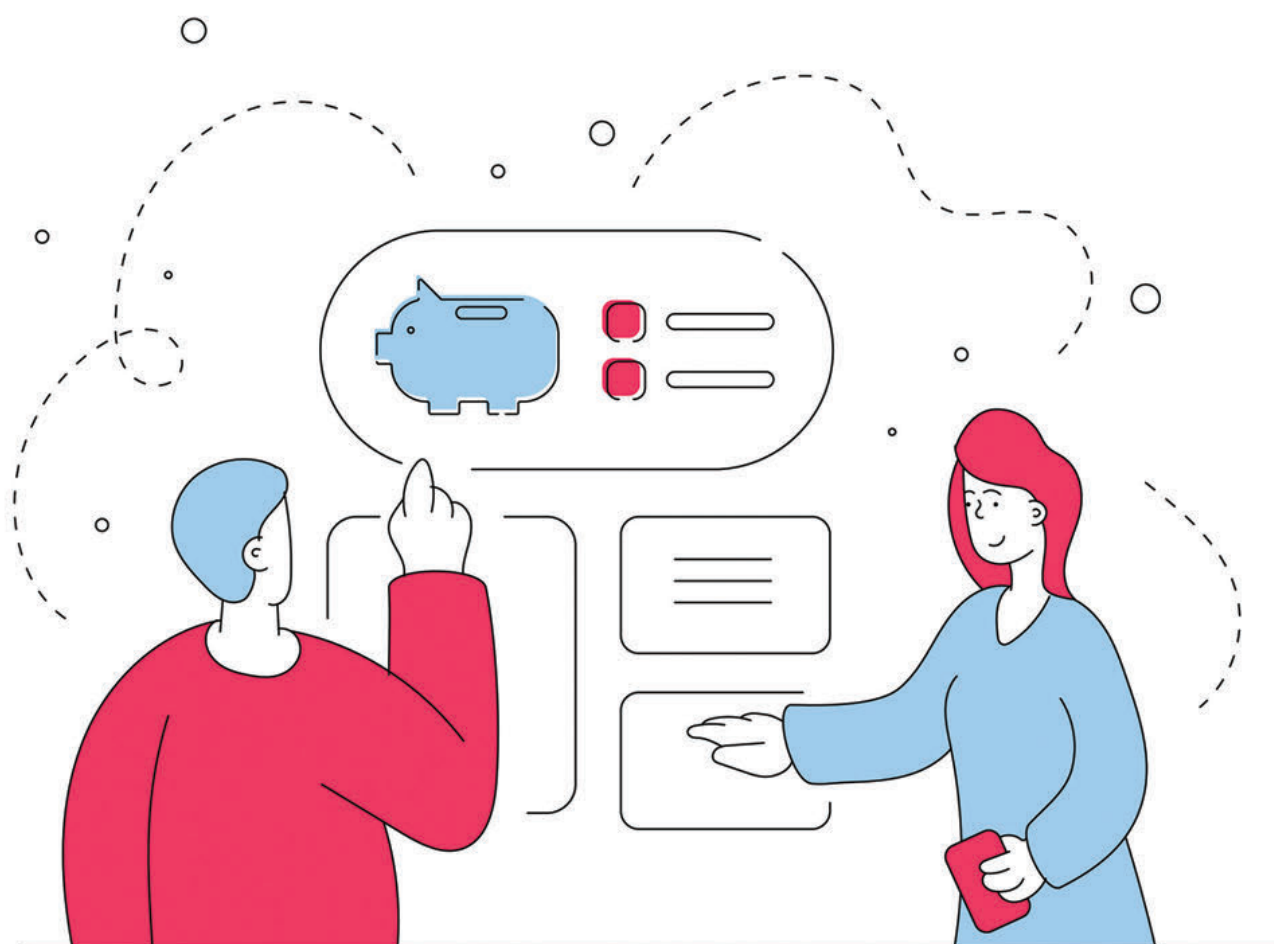


# **Guidance for Measuring Intra-household Power and Decision-making**





UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

# Guidance for Measuring Intra-household Power and Decision-making

Prepared by the Conference of European Statisticians Task Force  
on Measuring Intra-household Power and Decision-making



United Nations

Geneva, 2020

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This publication is issued in English.

United Nations publication issued by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

ECE/CES/STAT/2020/7

eISBN: 978-92-1-005545-1

ISSN: 0069-8458

## Preface

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All the major international policy frameworks on gender equality and development recognize the importance of equality between women and men in their ability to make decisions and to control and access resources. These frameworks point out that unequal power relations operate not only in the public world but also in the private sphere, within households.

However, while national official statistics often include indicators on power and decision-making, they are mostly limited to power and influence in the public sphere of life such as political representation and management of companies. Yet for someone to occupy a powerful public position, they must first be empowered in the private sphere of their own home. With this in mind, academic researchers have for decades examined the distribution of power in homes, looking at who usually makes decisions about a variety of matters, from routine grocery shopping to saving up for a car, and from seeing a doctor to visiting relatives.

The measurement of intra-household power and decision-making is not new, but has been brought into the fold of official statistics only recently. The present Guidance has been developed to support national statistical offices in developing such measurement.

The Guidance results from the work of a Task Force established by the Conference of European Statisticians in 2017. It proposes seven different dimensions of intra-household decision-making and offers suggestions of how these could be measured. It takes existing work in academic and applied development as a starting point. Then it argues that many of the commonly-used survey questions and indicators do not capture the complexities of lived experiences across a variety of cultural settings. Concrete recommendations emerging from the work are made, as well as proposals for further work on this complex issue.

The Guidance is a first step towards integrating the measurement of intra-household power and decision-making into national official statistics on gender equality. Quantifying the silent inequalities behind closed doors could help to shine a spotlight on them, providing policymakers with evidence to guide their efforts towards altering the imbalances.

The Guidance was endorsed by the 68th plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians in 2020.

UNECE is grateful to all the experts who were involved in the preparation of this publication.

## Acknowledgements

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The Guidance was developed and approved by the entire Task Force. Many individuals beyond the Task Force provided valuable comments and material, and their contributions are noted with thanks.

The Task Force extends particular thanks to the Department for Women and Gender Equality, Canada and to Statistics Canada for their leadership and commitment.

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

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CES	Conference of European Statisticians
CPE	Centre de la petite enfance (early childhood centre).
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
EDGE	Evidence and Data for Gender Equality project, UNSD
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
ELCOS	Encuesta Laboral y de Corresponsabilidad Social (Labour and social co-responsibility survey), Mexico
ENDIREH	Encuesta Nacional sobre la Dinámica de las Relaciones en los Hogares (National Survey on the Dynamics of Household Relationships), Mexico
ESS	European Social Survey
EU-SILC	European Union Survey of Income and Living Conditions
FSS	Family Structure Survey (Turkey)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GESIS	Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences
GGP	Generations and Gender Programme
GGS	Generations and Gender Survey
GSS	General Social Survey (Canada)
HH	Household
HILDA	Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
ILO	International Labour Office
INEGI	Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (National Institute for Statistics and Geography), Mexico
ISSP	International Social Survey Programme
ISTAT	Italian National Statistical Institute
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
NSO	National Statistical Office
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SWC	Department for Women and Gender Equality, Canada (formerly Status of Women Canada)
TurkStat	Turkish Statistical Institute
TUS	Time-Use Survey
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division

# Chapter 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 Importance and policy relevance

1. All the major international policy frameworks on gender equality, women's empowerment, and indeed on development more broadly, recognize the importance of power and decision-making for enabling women to become equal actors in society, with equal access to resources and equal possibilities to fulfil their potential. These include, among others, the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women<sup>1</sup>; the 1994 Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD)<sup>2</sup>; the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action<sup>3</sup>; and, most recently, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development<sup>4</sup>. The Beijing Platform for Action, for example, has a section on Women in Power and Decision-making as one of its twelve areas of concern. In the 2030 Agenda, governments committed to “ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making” (target 5.5) and to “recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through [...] the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family” (target 5.4).

2. But while each of these frameworks, in some way, refers to ‘all levels’ of decision-making or to the need for women and men to be ‘equal partners in public and private life’, it is nevertheless the case that power and decision-making have in fact been principally understood as features of the *public* sphere of life—at least insofar as they are expanded into specific policy actions, goals and targets, or statistical indicators. The explicit recognition in both the Beijing Platform for Action and the ICPD Plan of Action that “the power relations that prevent women from leading fulfilling lives operate at many levels of society, *from the most personal to the highly public*” (emphasis added) has not been seized upon by gender policymakers and has remained comparatively unexplored. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, for example, which now serves as the principal guiding framework for many national and international development efforts, calls, in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5, for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment all women and girls – yet power in the private sphere is largely absent from the globally-agreed indicator framework, with decision-making being measured by seats in national parliament and local government and by managerial positions (indicators 5.5.1 and 5.5.2). Of course, statistical indicators which shed quantitative light on the issues are not the only means of examining the topic: qualitative insights are also essential. But the weight that can be added to policymakers’ decisions by quantitative indicators means that this absence of private-sphere decision-making indicators from the international frameworks represents an important gap.

3. Many national statistical offices (NSOs) already produce statistics on topics variously referred to as ‘power and influence’, ‘women in decision-making’, etc., as part of their suite of gender statistics. Production of some of these is by now relatively commonplace. But, perhaps as a consequence of the positions taken in these international frameworks including the SDGs, they are almost universally limited to power and influence in the public sphere of life – political, civic and economic influence – measuring such things as women's representation in ministerial positions, parliaments, local governments, judiciaries, senior and middle management positions, top positions in universities and research institutions, gender balance among employees in different sectors and industries, etc. Other,

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<sup>1</sup> Available at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Available at [http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/programme\\_of\\_action\\_Web%20ENGLISH.pdf](http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/programme_of_action_Web%20ENGLISH.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Available at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/>

<sup>4</sup> Available at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

somewhat less common measures of women's power and decision-making include female voter turnout, political party membership, and women in decision-making positions in sports.

## 1.2 Rationale and mandate for action

### 1.2.1 Public and private gender inequalities may be mutually reinforcing

4. The absence of statistics on power and decision-making in the private sphere of life, within households, is not due to a view that the topic is unimportant. The international policy frameworks cited above, while construing power and decision-making as a public matter, do nevertheless call attention to the fact that gender inequality extends into all areas of human interaction and that inequalities inside and outside the home may be mutually reinforcing:

*“Inequality in the public arena can often start with discriminatory attitudes and practices and unequal power relations between women and men within the family...The unequal division of labour and responsibilities within households based on unequal power relations also limits women's potential to find the time and develop the skills required for participation in decision-making in wider public forums” (United Nations 1995, para. 185).*

5. Gender inequality in the distribution of power within households leads to women being disadvantaged economically, not only in terms of their immediate access to resources, but also in their ability to pursue opportunities outside the home – due to lack of time, competing demands arising from the demands of unpaid care (which can be associated with limited power in reproductive decision-making), lack of power to decide on whether, when or where to work, and circumscribed choices in education and training. Hence one knock-on effect of unequal decision-making power in a couple may be the social reproduction of gender inequality in the public sphere, as women find themselves less able than men to benefit from what appear on the outside to be 'equal opportunities' in access to education and the labour market. For this reason, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for “the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family” (target 5.4, measured in terms of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work), and the European Parliament resolution of 13 September 2016 on creating labour market conditions favourable for work-life balance<sup>5</sup> stresses the need to “promote equal sharing of responsibilities”: in both cases, *shared responsibility* need not be understood as limited only to responsibility for performing domestic tasks (which is how it is most often interpreted), but may extend to all the rights and duties in which power is exercised and decisions are made.

6. Relatedly, unequal power within the household may mask monetary poverty, since income is typically measured at the level of the household. If an individual does not have the power to decide how money should be spent or material resources allocated, then the total household income is less relevant to her or his own (and perhaps her or his family's) well-being than the actual resources at that person's disposal within the power structure of the household.

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<sup>5</sup> Available at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P8-TA-2016-0338+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>

## 1.2.2 Gender equality policies are more likely to work if they address causes as well as consequences

7. Policies aiming to decrease gender inequality, in any of its many aspects, are more likely to be successful if they can correctly identify the source(s) of those inequalities, so that they may target the *origins* of the social reproduction of inequality rather than only the *outcomes*. For example, a policy aiming to increase women's employment and income-earning opportunities might stumble if it is made in a vacuum, not taking into account cultural norms that limit women's freedom to make decisions about taking up employment. A programme to encourage women to enter further education programmes, similarly, might not be effective if women do not have free choice to avail themselves of those educational opportunities.

8. With specific reference to women in positions of power, policies whose ultimate aim is to increase the proportions female in these positions tend to operate through incentives, disincentives, targets and quotas. But this is only one side of the equation. Ultimately it is equality in domestic power structures that will enable women to decide to apply for such positions; to enter careers that might lead to such positions; to pursue education that might lead to such careers; to manage their time, energy and resources so that they are able to devote their efforts to such work. Without addressing this domestic side of the equation, the use of targets and quotas to achieve gender equality in public power and influence may be in vain.

9. It could be, then, that enhancing gender equality might best be fostered by not only focusing on aspects of the labour market, such as making working environments more woman-friendly, creating more incentives for female entrepreneurship, and introducing family-friendly policies to facilitate work-life balance. Focusing on intra-household dynamics could also help to create the conditions under which women both choose to, and are able to take up certain positions within the labour market.

## 1.2.3 Gender equality is an end in itself

10. Arguments for improving levels of gender equality in households are often formulated in instrumentalist terms – for example in terms of the benefits that might accrue to children if women had more say in making decisions about their health or education, or the society-wide economic benefits that might be seen if more women had the power to decide to sell their labour as they wish, or if there were more women in influential positions in politics and business. There are two problems with this tendency. The first is that, while clearly relevant and important in some developing country settings, this kind of instrumental argument can be rather distant from reality in highly industrialized countries where education is universal and childhood malnutrition is rare. Whomever takes the decisions in a household and however they are reached, it is unlikely (in the UNECE region) that they will result in children not going to school or not having enough to eat. A second problem with this perspective is that it leads to gender equality being viewed as a means to an end. While these kind of arguments could of course be helpful for those involved in advocacy trying to convince policymakers of the need for change, it must be borne in mind that gender equality is also, and most importantly, an end in itself. ***Hence, there is a case for producing statistics about gender inequality in power at the household level, irrespective of the many and varied societal impacts such inequalities might have, simply on the grounds that such inequality merits measurement in its own right.***

## 1.3 Impacts and added value

11. The foregoing section has argued that the measurement of intra-household power and decision-making is valuable, and that it has a mandate emanating from the international policy frameworks on gender equality. The Conference of European Statisticians (CES) Steering Group on Gender Statistics used these arguments in 2016 to develop a business case calling for the establishment of a Task Force on Intra-household Power and Decision-making; this was in response to wishes expressed by participants in several consecutive UNECE Work Sessions on Gender Statistics, as well as to needs identified during earlier work under the Steering Group during the production of the UNECE Indicators of Gender Equality (UNECE 2015).

12. The Task Force was therefore established by the CES Bureau in February 2017, with the objectives of making an inventory of indicators and sources and of providing recommendations to statistical offices on measuring the gendered dimensions of intra-household power and decision-making<sup>6</sup>. This publication is a report of the work undertaken by the Task Force.

13. The Task Force's planned activities and outputs included, among others, identifying gaps for which there are currently no adequate indicators and making proposals to fill such gaps.

14. Faced with budget and resource constraints, however, NSOs must make decisions about which statistics to produce based on cost/benefit trade-offs. It is therefore necessary to ask: since we already have available objective outcome measures, in most countries, to quantify gender inequality in unpaid household work, expenditure, labour market participation and reproduction, what additional policymaking potential would come from knowing *how such outcomes were decided upon*? Some potential responses to this question were identified in the UNECE publication 'Developing Gender Statistics: a Practical Tool'<sup>7</sup> (UNECE 2010, p. 72), which suggested that, among other things, statistically sound data on household decision-making could

- *"Create an environment through economic and social policies to enable women and men to fully exercise their human rights*
- *Provide equal access for women and their families to health care, nutrition, quality education at all levels, career and employment, community activities*
- *Change societal attitudes and community practices towards women's and men's role in household decision-making".*

15. It is likely that some household decisions are made in a more egalitarian way than others. Statistics would enable identification of these, which could in turn allow policymakers to consider targeted measures to increase gender equality and promote joint decision-making in those specific areas that are found to be unequal. Conversely, it is conceivable that there may be areas in which statistical analysis of decision-making finds that apparently gender-unequal outcomes are actually arrived at through consensus. This would be the kind of finding that existing final-outcome-based measures could not uncover, and would probably suggest different policy interventions than might be proposed from considering outcomes alone.

16. Hence, one element of the added value of indicators of intra-household power and decision-making is their ability to shed light on the dynamics behind the closed doors of the home which

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<sup>6</sup> Full terms of reference of the Task Force can be seen at <http://www.unece.org/statistics/networks-of-experts/task-force-on-measuring-intra-household-power-and-decision-making.html>.

<sup>7</sup> Available at [https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/publications/Developing\\_Gender\\_Statistics.pdf](https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/publications/Developing_Gender_Statistics.pdf).

contribute to the observable gender inequalities that are already measured—and in so doing, to help inform approaches to tackling those inequalities from their roots.

17. The added value of the work of the present Task Force also comes from the fact that it attempts to tackle a topic which is considered particularly challenging to measure. The focus until now on measurement of power in the public sphere outlined above is a result not only of a particular understanding of power, but also of the simple fact that it is easier to measure publicly observable, countable things such as seats in parliament or positions in the labour market, than it is to define and measure power within the household. Social norms, institutions and perceptions are by definition hard to conceptualize, define and measure. Both conceptual and methodological challenges, discussed in the respective chapters of this publication, make the measurement of intra-household power and decision-making difficult. Attempts have been made, but—as discussed in chapter 4 of this publication—have rarely moved beyond asking survey questions to the production of indicators, let alone to analysis of results. The work of this Task Force brings the statistical community a step closer to being able to tackle these challenges. Of course, the gendered dimensions of intra-household power and decision-making comprise a wide range of factors, some more easily quantifiable than others. The Task Force limited its work to the more easily-quantifiable aspects, while recognizing that a complete picture of this topic would require more work to untangle the more challenging areas.

## 1.4 Overview of the Guidance

### 1.4.1 Chapter 2: Conceptual background

18. This chapter sets out the scope of the topic, setting limits on which households are considered for the purposes of this work – namely, coresident heterosexual couples – and outlining what is understood hereafter by the main terms used in the title, namely decision-making and power. It makes clear that they are not synonyms, and that indeed the fashionable term ‘empowerment’ is worthy of much more careful consideration than it is often afforded.

### 1.4.2 Chapter 3: Current practices and experiences in measuring intra-household power and decision-making

19. The first part of this chapter the Task Force presents an overview both of current practices reported by countries represented in the Task Force (as well as others who responded to a broader request for such information), and of existing work identified through literature reviews and consultation among the international gender statistics community. The chapter finds that the topic is extremely widely covered in academic research; rather widespread in some specific applied fields that make use of social surveys (albeit often relying on a limited set of questions and/or on questions whose validity has not been deeply explored); yet rare and relatively undeveloped within official statistics.

20. The second part of the chapter, again drawing on experiences reported by countries in combination with extensive literature review, identifies the key methodological challenges to measuring intra-household power and decision-making, and offers suggestions for tackling them.

### 1.4.3 Chapter 4: Indicators of intra-household power and decision-making

21. The Task Force decided to decompose the topic into a set of dimensions and components, which are presented and explained in this chapter along with suggestions for indicators corresponding to each of them, and questions that could be asked in surveys to produce such indicators. Core and supporting indicators are proposed, and consideration is given to the specificities of each dimension such as appropriate survey vehicles, and modes, necessary contextual questions, and areas where cultural factors would make items especially relevant or irrelevant in some countries. Given the relative rareness of this topic to date among NSOs, there is little evidence available to permit the Task Force to state clearly what works and what does not, to argue that some indicators are more valuable than others, or that certain questions are the most appropriate. The content of this chapter is therefore to be viewed as suggestions, rather than firm recommendations.

### 1.4.4 Chapter 5: Selected test analyses of existing data

22. In this chapter, existing data from the Generations and Gender Surveys, and national surveys conducted in Belarus, Canada, Serbia and Turkey are analyzed by Task Force members in order to assess the potential of existing data to offer meaningful, policy-relevant insights into intra-household power and decision-making.

### 1.4.5 Chapter 6: Qualitative testing of selected survey questions

23. This chapter presents the findings of tests conducted in Canada to trial selected questions from four of the seven dimensions: union formation and sexual and reproductive decision-making; decisions about division of labour; decisions about children's upbringing and education; and financial decision-making. The chapter offers some important conclusions of relevance to all the dimensions, and gives rise to some recommendations applicable to all countries.

### 1.4.6 Chapter 7: Recommendations and further work

24. In this chapter the various recommendations arising throughout the preceding chapters are summarized. These include both overarching recommendations about the subject, and more specific methodological recommendations. Overarching recommendations include recognizing the complexity of household power and decision-making and therefore refraining from oversimplification by reusing the standard questions used in multi-topic household surveys in developing countries without adaptation; as well as avoiding the temptation to compile simple indices of decision-making without regard to unequal weight among different kinds of decisions. No concrete recommendations are put forth at this stage for specific question wording, but there are proposals for phrasing to avoid. Extensive qualitative testing is called for, with separate testing in any country planning to embark on data-gathering on this topic due to the likelihood of significant cross-cultural variation. Explicit recognition and acceptance of the subjective nature of questioning on this topic is recommended. The methodological recommendations made in the chapter include interviewing both partners in a couple as a 'gold standard' to aspire to, while recognizing significant limits of the feasibility of doing this; opting for self-administered data collection; recording interview conditions in survey metadata, such as the presence of others during the interview; adding questions to existing surveys, while paying attention to comparability when combining indicators drawn from different surveys and populations; giving due consideration to intersecting vulnerabilities rather than gender alone; examining possibilities for incorporating decision-making questions into longitudinal surveys; aiming for



production of indicators from all seven dimensions to give a comprehensive perspective of the issue, and prioritizing core indicators; and giving additional attention to dissemination and communication of decision-making indicators when they are produced. Considerable further work is considered necessary to progress beyond this exploratory stage in an emerging area. Future work should focus on four strands: qualitative testing; validity testing; data reduction to reduce the suggested indicator set (and the framework of dimensions and components) to a more manageable and standardized set; and continuation of international cooperation.

## Chapter 2 Conceptual background

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25. The topic area of household decision-making is very large, with a vast body of academic literature underpinning it. Only a part of the field can be considered potentially fruitful for the production of valuable official statistics, however. Mapping out the scope of the present endeavour entails first delimiting the term ‘household’, and then understanding what is meant by ‘power’ and ‘decision-making’ for the purpose of this work.

### 2.1 Delimiting ‘household’

26. The Task Force considered it necessary to limit the scope of the present work to **heterosexual coresident couple relationships in private households with or without children**. While recognizing the existence and growing importance of a plurality of household forms, it remains true that heterosexual couple relationships are a significant majority<sup>8</sup> and are therefore the most logical ground for concepts and methods to be carefully developed before attempting to apply them more broadly<sup>9</sup>. Much can be learned from other constellations than heterosexual couples, including findings that could potentially contribute to increased understanding of such couple relationships. This limitation in scope is therefore only a starting point, with a view to subsequent expansion, for example to same-sex couples or relationships to household members other than an intimate partner.

27. Furthermore, it is the situation of women *vis-à-vis* men that is at the centre of the present work, and this can best be examined in terms of the relationship between women and men in couples. Of course, there are important intra-household power dynamics between members of households other than partners (such as siblings, parents and in-laws), but to include these in the current work would be to mix gender dynamics with generational and other relationships.

28. The increasing diversity of household forms, including blended families resulting from partnership dissolution and reconstituted families, introduces challenges for measurement of dynamics within households. Decisions might take place within a household yet involve influences from people outside that household, such as non-coresident parents. Conversely, a coresident partner might not be a co-parent of the children in a household, and as such their involvement in making

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<sup>8</sup> For example, data from the Canadian census of 2011 suggest that 0.8 per cent of all couples in Canada were same-sex couples (source: [https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/dai/smr08/2015/smr08\\_203\\_2015#a1](https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/dai/smr08/2015/smr08_203_2015#a1)). It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to achieve appropriate coverage of such a small proportion within a general survey not specifically targeting or oversampling homosexual couples. Cortina and Festy (2014) note that the Generations and Gender Surveys, which have been used in the work of this Task Force, use sample sizes that are far too small to draw reliable conclusions about homosexual couples, especially given that such couples are identified not by a direct question but by comparing the recorded sex of the respondent and their partner, which is an unreliable method with a tendency to generate ‘false positives’ due to coding errors (Régnier-Loillier 2018).

<sup>9</sup> The Task Force recognizes that in limiting the scope of the present work to people identified in surveys as heterosexual women and men, some groups are excluded, notably individuals with a transgender or non-binary gender identity and those with a sexual orientation that is not heterosexual. Work currently being conducted under the CES Steering Group on Gender Statistics is endeavouring to tackle some of the statistical challenges entailed in including members of these communities in social statistics. By excluding them from the scope of the present work, the Task Force does not wish to add to the social exclusion of non-cisgender and non-heterosexual individuals, but intends simply to recognize that current statistical methods are not yet sufficient to adequately take them into account.

decisions about those children could be expected to be lower than for a co-parent. The Task Force acknowledges these issues but has not attempted to make recommendations about how to tackle them at this early stage of development of the topic.

29. It is worth noting that the chapters which follow refer to sex, rather than gender, although gender is the core characteristic of interest for this work. This is a result of the current state of development of social statistics, in which sex is usually collected as a proxy for gender. The ongoing work of experts under the CES Steering Group on Gender Statistics (see footnote 9) will inform future thinking and guidance in this regard.

## 2.2 Defining ‘decision-making’

30. Discussions among the members of the UNECE Steering Group on Gender Statistics which developed the terms of reference for this Task Force, as well as reviews of literature undertaken to inform the work, made it clear that the scope of the term ‘decision-making’ must be limited for the present purpose.

31. Decision-making is an extremely broad and complex phenomenon, especially when there is more than one actor involved, as is the case with couples reaching decisions. The taking of a decision can be thought of as having three interlinked aspects:

- a) **power processes:** *how* individuals influence the decision-making procedure, e.g. through persuasion, negotiation and bargaining
- b) **power outcomes:** *who* finally takes decisions (i.e., the *results* of the bargaining), and the extent to which spouses agree on those decisions
- c) **final outcomes:** e.g. actual expenditure, division of labour, reproductive outcomes, etc.

32. A power process could be, for instance, an explicit discussion between partners about a decision that needs to be made: for example, on which school to choose for their children. The power outcome might be that the female partner’s preferred school is chosen, overriding the preference of the male partner’s. The power outcome might also include the fact that the male partner is accepting of this outcome in spite of it not having been his preference. The final outcome would then be the actual school chosen for the children.

33. The first of these three, relating to *how decisions are reached*, is the subject of extensive study in psychology and behavioural economics. While the results of such study can be crucial for informing survey development to ensure that questions adequately capture underlying concepts, the power processes themselves are not the focus of interest for the present purposes (for example, how people attempt to influence others, what information they take into account to reach a decision, what trade-offs they make between their own and other people’s interests, etc).

34. As for the third aspect, the *final outcomes*, to a great extent these are already well covered by existing concepts and definitions, and well-defined indicators already exist: for example, expenditure patterns from household budget surveys, labour market outcomes from labour force surveys, reproductive outcomes from a variety of survey and administrative sources, and indicators of the division of paid work and of household labour from time-use surveys. They have the advantage of being objective, comparable, and already well defined – but they are measures of *final outcomes* of decision-making, as a *proxy* for intra-household power. Interpreting them as indicators of power requires making an unexamined assumption that they are a true reflection of the underlying bargaining processes that took place. For example, if gender differences in time spent on domestic

labour are taken as indicative of gender inequality, there is an assumption that the unequal division of labour was not mutually agreed-upon or that the decision was reached from unequal positions of power. For instance if one partner does more housework than the other, we take this as an indication that this partner somehow lost out in the bargaining process that decided the division of housework (or that there was no such explicit bargaining process, but that a division of labour corresponding to traditional gender norms was adopted by default, which equally would imply a gender-based power imbalance). This may well be true, but the assumption is not examined. Similarly, using expenditure statistics to examine intra-household power relies on an assumption that a greater proportion of household expenditure going towards health, food, education, children's needs etc. is necessarily a reflection of greater female power. While there is certainly a body of research supporting the notion that when given the chance, women will spend more money on these areas than men, this pattern is not immutable, and very likely varies over space and time.

35. This leaves the second aspect, concerning *who takes decisions* and *levels of spousal agreement*, as the focus for further investigation. This encompasses (but is not limited to) those indicators referred to in the concept note (para. 6c) as 'subjective measures'. In concrete terms, concentrating on this dimension of decision-making means focusing on such survey questions as "who usually makes decision X in your household?"; on questions about family budgeting and distribution of income; and on levels of spousal agreement or disagreement about family planning and reproduction.

36. As noted in the UNECE publication 'Developing Gender Statistics: a Practical Tool' (UNECE 2010 p. 72), "devising indicators for household level decision-making is ... complicated as the designation of a particular person as the decision-maker is seldom formal". Hence, the scope of this work includes consideration of how survey questions could be improved to better capture these concepts, which are subjective, dynamic and at times difficult for respondents to understand and for users to interpret.

## 2.3 Conceptualizing power and empowerment

37. The term 'women's empowerment' has become commonplace, even overused, in the arena of gender equality and sustainable development. While easily understood on the surface level – and often used simply as a synonym for women's rights, or for equal opportunities – empowerment is actually much more complex when efforts are made to unpack it. Such efforts have been made by many scholars, and the results of these undertakings have guided the present Task Force in conceptualizing what is to be measured in this work. Hence the current Task Force does not attempt to define any new conceptual framework for understanding empowerment, but rather it aims to situate the question of intra-household power within existing frameworks.

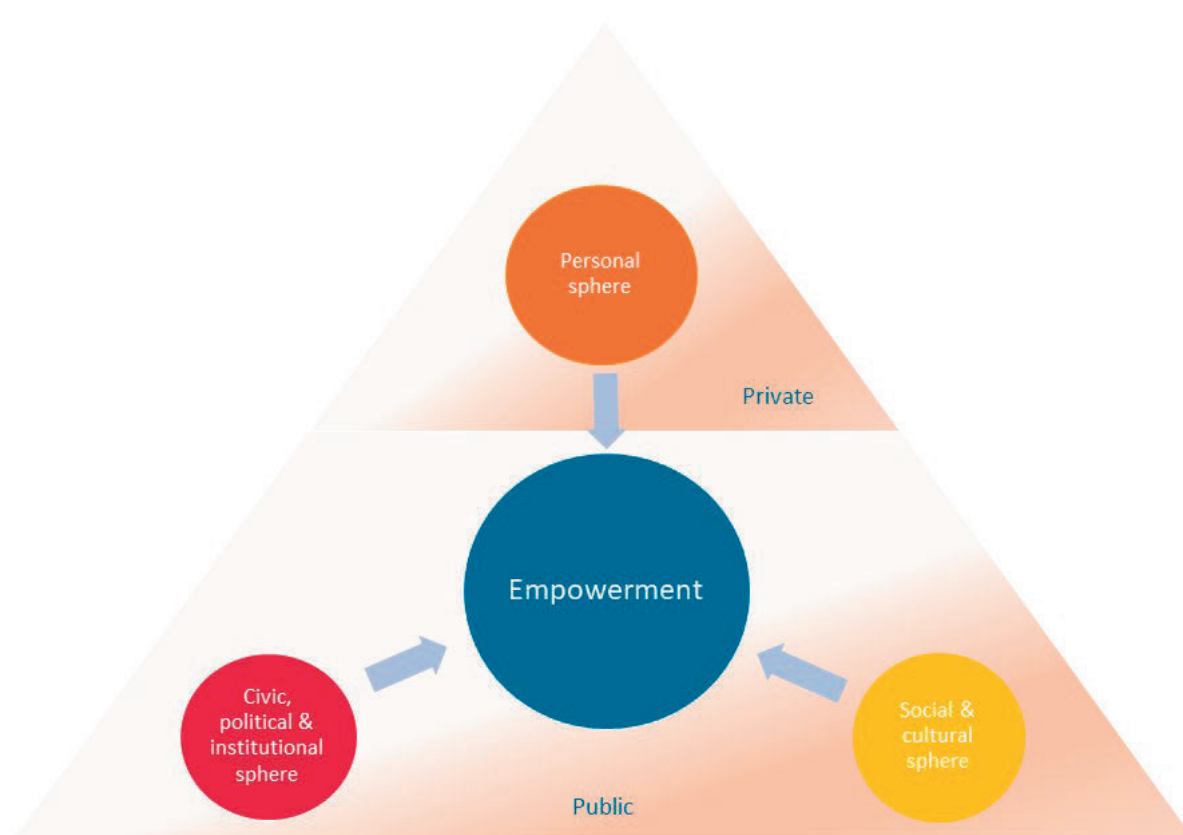
38. It is worth noting that one of the most widely-cited efforts to define the concept of empowerment and to deconstruct the ways in which it is measured, that of Kabeer (1999), emphasizes that empowerment is a *process*, as distinct from power itself, which is an *outcome* of that process. Hence the two should not be treated as interchangeable words for the same thing, although very often in practice they are treated as synonyms. Kabeer notes for example that someone with a lot of power to make decisions about their own lives has not necessarily been empowered, if they have always been in that situation and therefore were never disempowered.

39. Having said this, the realities of data gathering and measurement mean that usually it is only possible to use one-time measures to try and encapsulate something that is a process of change. Therefore in producing indicators of intra-household *power*, we are doing so with the underlying assumption that they tell us something about the potential for *empowerment*. That is, if we can

demonstrate a high degree of agency in some particular arena of decision-making, we assume that this means the people holding that power would be able to exercise choices and bring about change in the future. In essence, then, when proposing indicators and approaches for measuring intra-household power, we are suggesting them as *proxies* for empowerment.

40. Frameworks to conceptualize empowerment and, in particular, women's empowerment, abound, and although there is some diversity, there is general agreement that it should be conceptualized in terms of a set of spheres of empowerment, where a sphere refers to a locus of human experience and interaction. These spheres are in reality located on a continuum, but for the sake of conceptual clarity they can be construed as a set of discrete categories, ranging from those interactions that are closest to the individual to those that are furthest away: e.g. personal, interpersonal or familial or intra-household, social, civic, institutional, legal, and so on.

**Figure 1** *Interacting spheres of empowerment in public and private arenas*



41. The personal sphere encompasses all interactions that take place privately, between members of the same household, relatives and friends. Within this setting there are many different areas in which power can be exercised or limited – such as matters involving children, decisions about health, or power over finances. The extent of empowerment need not be similar across all of these areas. Chapter 4 below details seven such areas, or dimensions, in which information about decision-making may offer insights into variation in intra-household power.

42. Viewed as in Figure 1, it can be seen that empowerment is a wide-ranging phenomenon with many overlapping aspects, among which economic and intra-household power are both fundamental elements of the personal sphere. Without access to resources to translate desires and goals into actions (economic power), and without the power to take the decision to act upon intentions (intra-household decision-making power), other aspects of empowerment would founder. The two are necessary to *permit* empowerment: economic resources without the power to use them are

worthless, while freedom to act but nothing to act upon (i.e. no resources) just leads to frustrated wishful thinking.

## 2.4 Subjective aspects of power

43. Some aspects of power can be objectively measured. Access to and control over economic resources, human capital, legal rights, are all aspects for which clear definitions can be given, and statistical methods exist for many if not all of these. Yet power itself is both objectively experienced and subjectively felt. People's feelings about whether or not they can exercise choice and influence outcomes – not only 'objective' measures of whether they are truly able to do so – matter for an understanding of intra-household power. The power to spend a household's money on certain items rests both on *actual* and *perceived* permission to do so. The work presented hereafter therefore embraces the subjective nature of questions about who usually makes decisions in a household or how the household finances are organized. Even the word 'usually' may mean different things to different people, since household members' influence on decision-making is not a stable, fixed characteristic. Discordant responses between partners are not to be viewed as errors but as indications of different personal perceptions, which tell us something valuable about the respondents' feelings of power or its absence. If answers to questions about intra-household power and decision-making differ depending on who is being asked, this can provide useful information about the perspective of the respondent—a perspective which is important in affecting their ability to act. In combination with existing, objective, measures of power this can offer a more comprehensive view of power dynamics within households.

## Chapter 3 Current practices and experiences in measuring intra-household power and decision-making

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44. One of the first steps taken by the Task Force was to gather information from countries represented on the Task Force, asking them about whether they currently collect any data and produce any indicators on the topics identified as falling within the scope of the work. The responses received were analyzed to identify common themes and important observations such as those pertaining to methodological and data quality challenges, thematic gaps, and the variety of practices in the ways that data is gathered (in which surveys, what questions are used, etc.)

45. The findings of this initial exercise were summarized in a paper presented to the 2017 UNECE work Session on Gender Statistics which took place in Belgrade, Serbia, in December 2017<sup>10</sup>.

46. One of the main observations of the exercise was that current practice and experience was somewhat limited within the Task Force. Not many countries reported undertaking targeted collection of data on the topic, although several reported collecting some information in the context of surveys on other topics. Hence the group decided to broaden this information-gathering exercise by seeking input from other countries.

47. An online survey was developed<sup>11</sup> and broadcast through various platforms, principally at the 2017 UNECE Work Session on Gender Statistics during presentation of the paper described above.

48. Through this expansion of the information-gathering effort, information was received from an additional eight countries. The observations below are therefore based on the information provided from all responding countries, both within and beyond the Task Force.

### 3.1 Observations on current practice in NSOs

#### 3.1.1 Thematic areas for development

49. The information provided by reporting countries suggested a number of thematic areas in which there are gaps; either where questions are not asked, or where they are not thoroughly developed and so do not permit a detailed understanding of the power and decision-making dimensions. These include reproductive decision-making, health, labour force participation and child-related matters.

50. Questions related to satisfaction with the division of household labour or with the way decisions are reached seem also to be rare among responding countries and may require further development.

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<sup>10</sup> *Interim report on progress of the UNECE Task Force on Measuring Intra-household Power and Decision-making*, Working Paper 22 of the UNECE Work Session on Gender Statistics, Belgrade, Serbia, 29 November-1 December 2017, available from [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/ece/ces/ge.30/2017/nov\\_worksession/WP22\\_Turcotte\\_Hudon\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/ece/ces/ge.30/2017/nov_worksession/WP22_Turcotte_Hudon_ENG.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> See Appendix 1 for the full text of the questions asked in the survey.

### 3.1.2 Cross-cutting challenges

51. In addition to gaps in topic areas, the exercise revealed some overarching methodological issues.

52. First, if a harmonized approach is to be aimed for in order for countries to produce comparable data, it is important to consider the similarities and differences between questions used in different surveys, including their translational equivalence across languages.

53. Second, it is necessary to consider who should be the target population for questions regarding intra-household power and decision-making; specifically, the age, sex, and marital status of respondents. In some of the cases reported, only women are interviewed, while in others both women and men are interviewed. In some cases, only people who are living with their spouse or partner are asked questions regarding intra-household power and decision-making. This usually reflects response categories for “who decides” questions that are “couple focused” versus “household focused.”

54. Third, it is important to give some attention to the sampling unit and unit of analysis. The surveys analyzed in the current exercise take various approaches to sampling—some interview all respondents of a given age within a selected household, whereas others select a single individual within a household. In both cases, a single individual (e.g., a woman or a man in a couple) could be treated as the unit of analysis. Indicators of household power and decision-making could be calculated from the responses of only women, or only men. Alternatively, the answers of women could be compared with the answers of men. However, when responses are provided by only a single individual in the household, this could result in bias where data from women and men are collected from different households. It is arguable that collecting data from both partners in a couple could provide a clearer understanding of household power and decision-making dynamics. At the same time, it will be important to assess the added value of such an approach against the additional cost of interviewing multiple members of a household, and the likelihood of countries being willing to adopt this approach for surveys whose main purpose is usually something other than the measurement of intra-household dynamics.

55. Fourth, survey questions are not in and of themselves indicators. Few countries were able to provide any information about indicators produced using data collected from the surveys on which they reported. Chapter 4 is a response to this challenge.

56. Finally, responses from countries revealed a severe lack of routine compilation and/or dissemination of indicators derived from the rich variety of sources reported by responding countries, so there is a clear need not only for international standards for the definition and production of indicators of intra-household power and decision-making, but also for guidance on their compilation and dissemination. As with many topics in gender statistics, this is a particular challenge due to the variety of sources and breadth of sub-domains under consideration, meaning that users (such as policymakers, researchers and those involved in advocacy) may require extra guidance to lead them to the relevant information.



## 3.2 Existing initiatives related to measurement of intra-household power and decision-making

57. While the foregoing section examines concrete practice in data gathering in statistical offices, the Task Force recognized that existing work and valuable experience in this topic derives from far beyond NSOs. There is a vast body of academic literature on intra-household dynamics and resource allocation, on power and decision-making, on their relationships with gender equality, and on the measurement challenges associated with all of these sub-fields<sup>12</sup>. There is also considerable experience in data-gathering by entities other than NSOs, such as large-scale academic social survey programmes, international organizations and development agencies. While the following does not intend to be a detailed examination of these extensive bodies of literature, it does attempt to identify the key streams of existing experience from which the work of NSOs should learn and upon which it should build.

### 3.2.1 Agricultural surveys and censuses

58. Agricultural surveys, especially those with an emphasis on gender, often include a decision-making module with questions about who makes managerial decisions about crops, livestock and farm investments. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has developed a standardized decision-making module to incorporate into agricultural surveys, replacing the earlier approach which was to ask the respondent who the holder was and then assume that this person was the main decision-maker. Research on the validity and value-added of these questions (Global Strategy for Improving Agricultural and Rural Statistics 2017) showed that the previous approach masked variation and underestimated the agency of household members other than the named holder. This research also showed that, for these topics, the effect of permitting proxy responses was generally not significant in terms of producing discordant answers.

59. The current World Programme for the Census of Agriculture (FAO 2015) now includes as a new topic 'Intrahousehold distribution of managerial decisions and ownership on the holding', making specific mention of the fact that this can contribute to investigation of gender-based differences and can lead to improved gender sensitivity in policies and programmes.

60. The Evidence and Data for Gender Equality (EDGE) programme of the United Nations Statistics Division developed a survey for measuring asset ownership and entrepreneurship from a gender perspective<sup>13</sup>. The asset ownership element includes questions designed to identify ownership and rights to use household assets—that is, to sell, bequeath, rent out, use as collateral, improve or invest. These aspects, while not directly asking about decision-making, are clearly closely related in that they identify who within a household holds sufficient power over material assets to potentially make decisions about their use. Some of those countries which have conducted pilot surveys for this project also included a module on decision-making<sup>14</sup>. The questions used are similar or identical to those used in several other large-scale surveys (see following sections).

61. The Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index<sup>15</sup>, designed to measure empowerment, agency and inclusion of women in agricultural activities, includes decision-making in two of its five

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<sup>12</sup> See bibliography for examples.

<sup>13</sup> More information can be found at: [https://unstats.un.org/edge/publications/docs/Guidelines\\_final.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/edge/publications/docs/Guidelines_final.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> See, for example, South Africa: <https://unstats.un.org/edge/pilot/south-africa/SA%20Questionnaire.pdf> (p .23).

<sup>15</sup> More information can be found at: <https://weai.ifpri.info/versions/weai/>

domains (namely decisions about agricultural production and decision-making power about productive resources).

### 3.2.2 Demographic and health surveys, reproductive health surveys and nutrition and development programmes

62. Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and Reproductive Health Surveys (RHS) are large-sample population-based surveys conducted in many developing countries to provide data on health, nutrition and socioeconomic conditions to inform and monitor development programmes.

63. Five questions directly pertaining to intra-household decision-making are used in the standard women's questionnaire, with the explicit intent of examining this issue. These ask, "Who in your family usually has the final say on the following decisions: determining your own health care, making large household purchases, making household purchases for daily needs, visiting family and relatives, deciding what to prepare for daily meals?". Answers from three of these five are combined into an index of 'participation of women in household decision-making'<sup>16</sup> (the questions on daily household purchases and meal preparation are now excluded from the index, as they do not "yield valuable information").

64. In addition to these questions, both the women's and men's questionnaires include questions on financial decisions ("Who usually decides how the money you earn will be used?"; "Who usually decides how your (spouse's/partner's) earnings will be used?") and on health decisions ("Who usually makes decisions about health care for yourself?"). The women's questionnaire also contains questions on contraceptive decisions ("Would you say that using (not using) contraception is mainly your decision, mainly your (husband's/partner's) decision, or did you both decide together?").

65. While there is some variation in the choice of questions and exact wording used among surveys, the core set of questions is similar in most surveys that aim to inform or measure the impact of development programmes. The 'who usually makes decisions?' or 'who has the final say' format is used with a range of items, usually including making small and large purchases and making health decisions.

66. Research by Peterman et al (2015) examined the validity of these questions, including the extent to which their results correlate with other measures of agency and control over resources. They found that the wording and order of questions, as well as the nature of the survey preamble, could have a significant impact on the resulting data collected. Different ways of asking questions about the same topic—including asking people whose opinion would hold sway if there were a disagreement, and in an ideal situation who would make the decision—were found to lead to quite different answers. The research emphasized that sole decision-making cannot always be assumed to be superior to joint decision-making and that survey design must consider 'desired voice' rather than assuming *a priori* that all decision-making power is wanted.

67. Glennerster and Walsh (2017) discuss a number of concerns with the standard set of DHS questions, which they summarize as "They don't pass the 'Can I answer my own survey question?' test." That is, they are not sufficiently concrete and time-bound to make sense to respondents. For instance, "who usually makes decisions about healthcare for yourself?" could mean many different things to different people, depending on whether they are currently sick, whether they have the

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<sup>16</sup>More information on the index can be found at:

[https://www.measureevaluation.org/prh/rh\\_indicators/gender/wgse/participation-of-women-in-household-decision](https://www.measureevaluation.org/prh/rh_indicators/gender/wgse/participation-of-women-in-household-decision).

necessary financial resources to visit a doctor, and whether their partner is nearby or often away from home. The authors discuss the fact that comparison of very concrete scenario-based questions (“If you ever need medicine for yourself (for a headache, for example), could you go and buy it yourself?”) yield very different results than the generic questions: “In response to the standard question, 16 percent of women said they usually make decisions about their healthcare alone or jointly with their husbands. Given this response, we would call this group more empowered—yet nearly a quarter of this group also said they could not take a sick child to the doctor until their husbands came home.” On the other hand, they note the value of having internationally-comparable standardized questions, for which such generality is necessary.

### 3.2.3 European Union Survey of Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) ad hoc module on intra-household sharing of resources

68. The EU-SILC is a survey of EU member countries dealing with income, poverty, social exclusion and living conditions. Information is collected about both households and individuals. The survey includes both a core questionnaire and ad hoc modules on selected topics. In 2010, the ad hoc module was on ‘Intra-household allocation of resources’.

69. A number of country-specific analyses of the data from this module were conducted. Eurostat (2012 & 2013) and Nagy et al (2012) provide valuable analyses of what the module actually reveals about the measurement of this topic (whereas the national-level analyses largely take the data at face value).

70. The module centred on financial decision-making, with questions on how incomes are organized, on spending (although not all countries used these), and the feeling of being “free to spend”. It was found that the intended and actual interpretation of the questions did not always align, with matters being complicated by translation into national languages and adaptation of question wording. For example, “what proportion of your personal income do you keep separate from the common household budget?” was meant to be understood as the proportion not put into a common pot (whether real, such as a bank account, or a result of common understanding among household members). Yet the analyses found that sometimes it was interpreted as the proportion available to be spent on oneself, which is not the same thing. In some cases adaptations to question wording or prompts exacerbated this misunderstanding (e.g. France asked about the share of own income used for personal expenses such as clothing, leisure and personal savings).

71. The understanding of the question “Do you feel free (i.e. without asking the permission of other household members) to spend money on yourself for your personal consumption, your leisure activities and your hobbies?” was also found to be problematic, given that it rests on prior assumptions such as the availability of disposable income, so some respondents interpreted it in terms of their actual budget constraints while others imagined ‘in the absence of any such constraint’. How respondents interpreted ‘asking permission’ and whether this is distinct from consulting, asking the opinion, informing, etc., also varied and this can be assumed to have impacted the results.

72. Findings related to the EU-SILC 2010 module also included the fact that the validity of analyses about income pooling and sharing regimes is limited when only one respondent at the individual level is surveyed within a given household (if the intention is to obtain objective information about ‘true’ pooling or sharing regimes, rather than subjective interpretations of them).

### 3.2.4 Other survey programmes

73. This section describes some other large-scale multinational survey programmes which include questions that could provide information relevant to the measurement of intra-household power and decision-making. It is not meant to be an exhaustive list, nor is the intention to recommend the use of any of these questions specifically. Rather, they are the basis for inspiration and to draw attention to the fact that this topic is not a novelty: many initiatives already consider this topic, albeit not necessarily in ways that would make sense in the many of the settings of UNECE countries.

74. Details of some of the relevant questions asked in these surveys can be found in Appendix 3.

#### 3.2.4.1 *Generations and Gender Surveys (GGS)*

75. The GGS are cross-national, longitudinal panel surveys designed to be comparable across time and across countries. They cover a broad range of topics relevant to population researchers and social policymakers. Much of the survey questionnaire is designed to address issues related to gender equality and partnership quality, including some asking directly about decision-making, about disagreements and about how they are dealt with. There are also many questions looking at ‘final outcome’ measures (e.g. actual distribution of housework, childcare, etc.), as well as value orientation and attitude questions, which, viewed in combination with decision-making questions, can shed valuable light on this topic.

#### 3.2.4.2 *International Social Survey Programme (ISSP)*

76. The ISSP<sup>17</sup> is a cross-national collaboration programme, established in 1984, which conducts annual surveys on diverse topics relevant to social sciences. It is a non-profit academic organization. Currently, 45 countries are members of the ISSP. The coordinating institution is the GESIS-Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences in Germany. From 1994 the ISSP module ‘Family and Changing Gender Roles’ included a question on income management, and from 2002 more questions on decision-making were introduced, looking at income organization, distribution of housework and levels of disagreement about such distribution, decisions about bringing up children, decisions about weekend activities, and who has the final say in cases of disagreement.

#### 3.2.4.3 *European Social Survey Programme (ESS)*

77. The ESS was established in 2001 and is conducted every two years, using face-to-face interviews with newly-selected, cross-sectional samples. It is a multi-national programme conducted in more than thirty countries across Europe, under the auspices of the University of London. The survey measures attitudes, beliefs and behaviours, providing data for academic research<sup>18</sup>. Relevant questions in these surveys ask about the frequency of disagreement and about who ‘generally gets their way’ on decisions about expensive purchases and about the division of housework.

#### 3.2.4.4 *Living Standards Measurement Surveys (LSMS)*

78. The Living Standards Measurement programme is a programme of household surveys for developing countries, organized by the World Bank’s Development Data Group. The group provides technical assistance to NSOs for designing and carrying out these surveys, often in partnership with other international organizations as donors. They are multi-topic surveys, with a focus on measuring and monitoring poverty. The programme has existed since the 1980s and there are now more than

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<sup>17</sup> More information can be found at: <http://w.issp.org/menu-top/home/>.

<sup>18</sup> Information can be found at <https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/>.

100 survey datasets available, the most recent of which make use of modern practices such as geocoding, computer-assisted collection and even direct measurement using sensors.

79. There is not a single standard survey instrument—the surveys vary across countries and over time, although there are some topics common to many of them such as employment, income and expenditure, fertility, education, housing conditions, anthropometric measurements and agricultural practices<sup>19</sup>. Even so, this does not mean that there are standardized modules or questions on each of these topics that are identical in each survey.

80. The programme has an online dataset finder<sup>20</sup> which permits searches for surveys by topic and subject. One topic, intra-family relationships, has a secondary topic listed under it called decision-making. Under this are sub-topics on: assets; expenditures; education; health; fertility; work activities; other. However, almost all of those surveys listed as having a decision-making section in fact only contain questions about assets. Only the surveys from Nepal and Tajikistan have sections on decision-making about expenditures and education, and only Nepal has sections on decision-making about health or fertility. Some of the questions covering other decision-making topics are detailed in Appendix 3.

### 3.3 Methodological challenges identified from current practices and experiences

81. The underlying assumption that households operate as unitary entities simplifies, and arguably oversimplifies, the measurement of power and decision-making (e.g. Becker 1965). Households are assumed to be closed units in which resources are shared equally, and family members have the same preferences and agree on courses of action.<sup>21</sup> In effect, there is assumed to be no power differential within households on the basis of gender (and age), and decision-making is treated as harmonious.

82. The unitary conceptualization of households has been challenged, and in feminist discourse, households have been viewed as part of a wider system of male power, and therefore sites of gender (and generational) inequality in control over and access to resources.<sup>22</sup> Recognition of the existence of conflict within households requires a different approach to studying intra-household power and decision-making that takes into account the potentially-divergent perspectives of conjugal partners. In this chapter, we outline the main methodological challenges associated with measuring and analyzing intra-household power and decision-making.

#### 3.3.1 Sampling units: Individuals or couples within households

83. The ‘gold standard’ for collecting data regarding intra-household power and decision-making is a household survey in which couples are the sampling units, and interviews or questionnaires are

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<sup>19</sup> Information can be found at <http://surveys.worldbank.org/lsm/about-lsm>.

<sup>20</sup> <http://iresearch.worldbank.org/lsm/lsmssurveyfinder.htm>.

<sup>21</sup> Becker (1981) discusses an altruistic family in which the decision-maker internalizes individual members’ preferences and acts in a way that maximizes family welfare. Consequently the outcome (decision made or resource allocation) is independent of which member is the decision-maker as each member cares about other members’ wellbeing.

<sup>22</sup> Agarwal (1997) highlights issues with the assumption of a unitary household and stresses the importance of understanding how bargaining power within the household influences decision-making.

administered to the female and male partners separately—albeit simultaneously, ideally by interviewers whose gender matches that of respondents.<sup>23</sup> Even so, there are two challenges associated with this methodology: (1) it essentially doubles the cost of implementing a typical household survey because two individuals from each household are interviewed, instead of one, and (2) conjugal partners may provide discordant responses to the same questions.<sup>24</sup> An example of the latter comes from previous research on the division of domestic labour among opposite-sex married couples, showing that while both male and female partners (in this case, husbands and wives) accurately assess wives' contributions, husbands tend to overestimate their own (Lee and Waite 2005). How should discordant responses between partners be handled? Attempting to reconcile them is not to be advised, as doing so would involve privileging one partner's (or gender's) responses over another's on an *a priori* basis that may reflect unconscious bias. A preferable approach would be to include specific survey questions around negotiation, bargaining and decision-making processes and the level of agreement between conjugal partners on given decisions, such that a better understanding of the reasons for discordant responses between partners may be achieved. In fact, the discordance may itself be useful information, yielding important insights about gender differences in perceptions of given decisions and how they were reached.<sup>25,26</sup>

84. The alternative way of collecting data regarding intra-household power and decision making is a household survey in which currently married or cohabiting individuals are the sampling units. Proxy reporting is used in the context of interviews or questionnaires, meaning that one randomly-selected partner within the household provides information on behalf of both partners. It is crucial to collect information about the personal characteristics of both the respondent and his/her partner from the respondent, so that the determinants of intra-household power and decision-making can be examined.

85. The main challenges associated with household surveys in which the sampling units are individuals in couples are, first, that respondents are not married to/cohabiting with each other, and they therefore represent different households, and second, that respondents may provide inaccurate information about the household or his/her partner, or different information than his/her partner would have provided; and there is no way to validate respondents' responses as there is when both partners are surveyed (Drolet 2016). The same problems can arise in any instance where proxy answers are allowed—when dealing with subjective topics, it is impossible to know whether a proxy respondent has given the same response that the person concerned would themselves have given if asked directly. At a minimum, it should always be made very explicit when proxy responses have been permitted.

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<sup>23</sup> Kenkel (1961) found that female respondents were less verbose when interviewed by male interviewers instead of female interviewers.

<sup>24</sup> For example, Coates et al. (2010) studied Bangladeshi couples and found an average of 15 per cent of couples disagree in their responses about food security. See Uddin et al. (2017) for another study on discordant reports between couples.

<sup>25</sup> See Yavorsky, Kamp Dush, and Schoppe-Sullivan (2015) and Zagorsky (2003).

<sup>26</sup> Becker, Hossain, and Thomson (2006) noted that contraceptive use is an area in which there are higher rates of contradicting responses between spouses. Gasca and Becker (2018) used discordant responses between spouses to measure married women's use of contraceptives without their partner's knowledge. Story and Burgard (2012) found that discordant responses were negatively associated with reproductive health care use and had negative consequences for antenatal care.

### 3.3.2 Capturing internal dynamics

86. As discussed in chapter 1, intra-household power and decision-making includes both processes and their outcomes. For example, which conjugal partner (“who”) is primarily responsible for a given kind of decision within the household is a power *outcome* (i.e., it is static, although that is not to say that it cannot change over time). On the other hand, “how” or “why” that decision was reached reflects the power *process* (i.e., it is dynamic). While it is fairly straightforward to collect information on power outcomes, it is more difficult to develop questions that could capture the internal dynamics of households that give rise to decisions. Yet such information may be important, as it speaks to the policy levers that would have to be engaged to increase gender equality within households.

87. To better understand intra-household power and decision-making, it is worthwhile to consider gathering information pertaining to the following issues.

#### 3.3.2.1 Norms, preferences, values, and attitudes

88. Personal preferences, values and attitudes, many of which are shaped by gender norms, may play an important role in intra-household power and decision-making to the extent that they guide behaviour. It is therefore worthwhile to collect data on personal preferences and values and attitudes along with data on intra-household power and decision-making. Many such questions can be identified across a wide range of surveys, such as questions asking respondents the extent to which they agree with statements about the roles of women and men in society and in families, whether or not mothers should work outside the home, circumstances under which a respondent would feel that physical violence is justified, and so on.

#### 3.3.2.2 Past interactions and longstanding understandings or agreements

89. There may also be some “stickiness” or path-dependence to intra-household power and decision-making, in that the past experiences of couples systematically affect how and why they make decisions going forward. In this way, couples’ decision-making can be viewed as a repeated interaction, where previous results influence present and future processes and outcomes.<sup>27</sup> It follows that understanding internal dynamics of intra-household power and decision-making would benefit from survey questions pertaining to the history of the couple, longstanding agreements between conjugal partners as to expectations or intentions for various aspects of their lives together, and how the former informs their current and prospective decision-making.<sup>28</sup>

#### 3.3.2.3 Implementation power and orchestration power

90. Phipps and Wooley (2008) distinguish between implementation and orchestration power within households. In terms of financial decisions, implementation power takes the form of day-to-day money management, such as making routine purchases for the household (e.g., groceries). Orchestration power takes the form of control over longer-term money management and financial planning. It is not clear whether one form of power is more influential than the other in household

<sup>27</sup>For example, Lowe and McKelway (2017) tested how access to information on job opportunities affected married women’s labour market participation in India. They found that husbands’ had no incentive to withhold information and consequently targeting wives did not influence uptake.

<sup>28</sup>For example, Wiesmann et al (2008) found that couples often divided household labour implicitly and would maintain this division unless faced with a new situation or one partner was greatly dissatisfied with the division of labour.

decision-making, but it is worthwhile to explore whether there are gender differences in the type of power exercised by conjugal partners.

#### *3.3.2.4 Access to relevant information and tools*

91. Participation in decision-making presupposes access to information related to the course of action being considered and its potential consequences. Without such information, it may be the case that one partner defers to the other more-knowledgeable partner. The same distribution of power within households is inferred whether one partner chose not to participate in the decision-making process, or s/he did not feel capable of participating due to insufficient knowledge.<sup>29</sup> However, the root causes are different, and suggest different policy responses.<sup>30</sup> It may therefore be worthwhile to ask questions about whether the respondent has access to the necessary information to participate in decision-making for the household: for example, information about the household's incomes, savings and investments and knowledge about financial planning.

#### *3.3.2.5 Multigenerational households*

92. In some ethno-cultural communities, multigenerational households are common, and decision-making within these households may involve extended family members.<sup>31,32</sup> Response categories for questions on who makes various decisions may therefore need to be expanded beyond “mostly me,” “mostly my spouse/partner,” and “jointly.”

### **3.3.3 Internal dynamics**

93. The internal dynamics of households with respect to power and decision-making may be more amenable to measurement through qualitative methods of data collection, as opposed to quantitative ones.<sup>33</sup> For example, if the interview is conducted in person, the interviewer can observe the internal dynamics of the family as well as provide clarity when needed. While this would still be susceptible to bias, it could be a supplementary source of information to contextualize the decision-making.

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<sup>29</sup> For example, Xu and Zia (2012) found that there was a gender gap in both financial literacy and access to financial services.

<sup>30</sup> Alsop and Heinsohn (2005) note importance of separating existence of choice from use of choice from achievement of choice. For example, financial access – ability to open a bank account vs. actually having a bank account or attempting to have one.

<sup>31</sup> Intergenerational households are most prevalent in Africa and Asia, followed by South America (United Nations 2017). They are less prevalent in North America and Europe. However, as many countries are facing ageing populations, we may see greater incidence of intergenerational households and more research will need to be conducted. Economic conditions play a role in the formation of intergenerational families. In Canada for example fewer than five per cent of households have more than two generations, but there is a higher incidence of multi-generational households in immigrant and indigenous families (Statistics Canada 2017). In the United States of America, multigenerational households are positively correlated with lower income and with racialized status (US Census Bureau 2012).

<sup>32</sup> Several studies have documented the effects on intra-household power of living in multigenerational households: Cheng (2018) found that in China, the presence of in-laws had a negative effect on wives' decision-making power, whereas Bayudan-Dacuycuy (2013) found a positive effect in the Southern Philippines. Ganle et al. (2015) found that in Ghana 'communal decision-making' (i.e. the influence of both mother-in-laws' and husbands' viewpoints) was a significant barrier to accessing skilled maternal health care services.

<sup>33</sup> See Safilios-Rothschild (1970), Doss (1996), Blanc (2001), and Dito (2011) for examples of the benefit of qualitative data when measuring bargaining power, resource allocation, and decision-making.



### 3.3.4 Response bias

94. Response bias refers to a wide range of tendencies for individuals to respond inaccurately or falsely to questions, and it is prevalent in research involving self-reporting, such as structured interviews and surveys. Response bias may damage the validity of questionnaires or surveys.

95. Response bias may arise from various factors, all relating to the fact that individuals actively integrate multiple sources of information to generate a response in a given situation. As a result, almost any aspect of an experimental condition may influence how individuals respond. In terms of intra-household power and decision-making, five sources of response bias are particularly relevant.

#### 3.3.4.1 Self-selection

96. Self-selection bias occurs when respondents with certain characteristics are more likely to participate in a survey or provide valid (i.e., non-missing) responses to a given question by virtue of those characteristics. As a result, the sample on which the survey is based or data collected on a particular topic within the survey will be biased because respondents are systematically different from non-respondents, and therefore provide different answers. For example, respondents who do not openly discuss family formation and reproduction may be less likely to respond to questions about these matters. Assuming that the survey is optional, such respondents would be more likely to refuse to answer questions about family formation and reproduction than would other respondents.<sup>34</sup>

97. At all stages of the data collection process, steps can be taken to minimize sample-selection bias, such as developing a sampling frame that is representative of the target population; replacing missing values with reasonable estimates using the data collected (i.e., multiple imputation); using information from non-respondents to estimate the amount of bias present; using another data source to assign each respondent a weight that is the inverse of the probability of selection, such that s/he represents multiple respondents (i.e., weighting); and including the variable associated with selection to control for selection bias.

#### 3.3.4.2 Social desirability

98. Respondents may be inclined to select answers that reflect well on them because they are socially desirable. For example, in social contexts in which men are expected to make financial decisions for the household, both female and male respondents may be inclined to report that these decisions are made exclusively by the male partner, even when they are in fact made jointly.<sup>35</sup>

99. Social-desirability bias may also come into play when respondents have difficulty with recall (Kenkel 1976). When they have trouble remembering a particular decision and the process by which it was reached, respondents may provide information about who should have made the decision, as per the sociocultural context, rather than who actually did so.

100. The best strategies for minimizing social desirability bias are assuring respondents that there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers, and using more confidential methods of data collection, such as self-

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<sup>34</sup> Blanc (2001) notes that programmes and their corresponding studies that attempt to increase men's involvement in family planning choices will have effects that are biased upward, since men who are more eager to be involved will likely opt into these programmes. These men may also be more eager to discuss and respond to questions about reproductive decision-making; consequently, survey results would provide unrepresentative findings on the average male partner's views.

<sup>35</sup> Chant (2003) notes that internalized gender norms may cause respondents to conceal or downplay gender bias.

administered electronic questionnaires where the respondent is asked to select their answer option rather than speaking it aloud.

#### *3.3.4.3 Presence of others*

101. The presence of other household members, especially the spouse or partner, may influence how respondents answer questions, so respondents should be interviewed privately whenever possible. It may be preferable to administer surveys through self-administered questionnaires (whether paper, electronic or online), as opposed to in person or by telephone, to the extent that it gives respondents a greater sense of anonymity, and therefore encourages them to provide truthful answers.

#### *3.3.4.4 Characteristics of the interviewer/s*

102. The personal attributes of the interviewer, such as physical characteristics, demeanour and behaviour, may affect the likelihood that respondents participate in the survey, whether they answer certain questions, and the quality of the answers they provide. In the case of intra-household power and decision-making, the gender of the interviewer may be particularly relevant, given the sensitivity of many of the topics (Kenkel 1961). It may be the case that female respondents might provide more candid responses, especially pertaining to reproduction, when the interviewer is also a woman.

103. Whenever possible, it is preferable for the interviewer and respondent to have the same gender. In practice, of course, it is often difficult to predict who will be interviewed or to send two interviewers of different genders to interview a couple.

104. No matter who the interviewer is, it is important to ensure high-quality interviewer training, emphasizing the importance of neutral behaviour to reduce the likelihood of socially desirable answers or other interviewer effects. Specific training for potentially sensitive questions is essential.

#### *3.3.4.5 Question wording and order*

105. The wording and/or order of questions (or responses to a given question) may affect how respondents interpret and answer (i.e., 'context effects'). While questions can be presented in a way that provides context for respondents and helps them understand what they are being asked, questions can also be presented in a way that causes confusion or conveys partiality for one response over another. Suppose respondents are asked "Who should make decisions on large purchases in the family?" and then "Who does make decisions on large purchases in the family?" with the intention of separating normative from actual decision-making. Asking the normative question first may increase the likelihood that respondents will answer the following question in a way that aligns with social expectations, whether or not doing so is accurate for their household.

106. Based on qualitative testing of potential survey questions related to intra-household power and decision-making undertaken in Canada, respondents asked about who had "decision-making authority" found that terminology to be too dictatorial, even in cases where one partner dominated the decision-making process. As another example, respondents asked about the distribution of paid and unpaid labour reported confusion as to what those terms meant. Providing examples or prompts in the question could add clarity.

107. Bias arising from question wording and/or order can be minimized by pre-testing questions; putting questions pertaining to the same dimension of intra-household power and decision-making together, and separating those pertaining to different dimensions, such that respondents can focus on one topic at a time (although this is not always feasible if, for example, there is just a single block

of decision-making questions in a broader survey and the block deals with many dimensions); and arranging questions in sequential or temporal order.

### 3.3.5 Sensitive and complex topics

108. Certain dimensions of intra-household power and decision-making, such as family formation and reproduction and finances, deal with sensitive topics, and respondents may be reluctant or unwilling to answer surveys or questions on these topics, or they may underreport socially-undesirable behaviour. Previous research demonstrates that misreporting on sensitive topics is a process in which respondents edit the information they report to avoid embarrassing themselves in front of the interviewer or to avoid repercussions from third parties. A number of strategies can be employed to reduce underreporting and misreporting on sensitive topics, including placing sensitive questions late in the questionnaire, after rapport has been established between the interviewer and respondent (Bradburn et al. 1979; Bradburn et al. 2004; Knauper 1998); use of self-administered questionnaires; a “forgiving” preamble to sensitive questions; providing quality interviewer training; familiar wording (e.g., love-making vs. sexual intercourse); phrasing questions in a way that presupposes the behaviour under consideration; “ever” questions about behaviour instead of, or before, “current” questions. Pretesting questions before putting them into the field is crucial for sensitive topics, especially because what is considered to be a sensitive topic varies between countries, ethno-cultural communities, and households.

## 3.4 Conclusions and recommendations arising from review of existing experience

109. Indicators on intra-household power and decision-making are predominantly derived from questions based on respondents’ perceptions of a situation. Several choices around how indicators are produced can help to reduce variability and improve interpretability. As detailed throughout this chapter, it is recommended that indicators are derived from questions asked separately of both members of a couple in the same household. In the event that a single member of each household is randomly selected, it should be noted that some variation in the responses ascribed to women and men are likely due to the fact that responses are drawn from a single member of a couple.

110. Test analysis<sup>36</sup> suggests that there may be gender bias in responding to questions related to intra-household power and decision making. As such, it is recommended that indicators are calculated and presented by sex. This means that classification categories for the indicators will be produced from the perspective of both women and men in couples, for example, taking the form “Mostly the respondent, the respondent and their partner/spouse equally, mostly the respondent’s partner/spouse.”

111. In situations where sample sizes are too small to allow for analysis by sex, but where both members of a couple are interviewed, a second approach could include aggregating the responses of women and men. Coded classification categories would then generally take the form “Mostly the woman in the couple, the woman and the man equally, mostly the man in the couple.”

112. Different countries will have different policy interests, statistical needs and capacity for producing indicators on intra-household power and decision making. A broad set of indicators is

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<sup>36</sup> See chapter 5.

presented in the next chapter, organized into dimensions and components, with related survey questions detailed to provide a menu of options for covering the topic in considerable depth. Subsequently, a shorter set of indicators are suggested as a core set.

## Chapter 4 Indicators of intra-household power and decision-making

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### 4.1 Existing indicators of intra-household power and decision-making

113. The research conducted by the Task Force indicates that many national surveys, including those conducted by NSOs, do ask respondents questions about decision-making within the household, but there are few attempts to produce indicators.

114. As just one case in point, the Mexican ENDIREH (*Encuesta Nacional sobre la Dinámica de las Relaciones en los Hogares*, National Survey of Relationship Dynamics in Households<sup>37</sup>), includes a set of questions about ‘personal liberties’, asking female respondents who in the partnership or in the household usually takes decisions about her engagement in a number of activities. Published tabulations of the data include tables of absolute and percentage distributions of the main decision-maker for each activity<sup>38</sup>. As is typical for online data tabulations of this kind published by NSOs, it is up to the user to process the data if they wish to compute indicators (e.g. percentage of women who say that they alone or with their partner take the decisions for all the activities; or percentage of women reporting that they are involved in decision-making; or any kind of composite indicator constructed from the degree of reported decision-making power across several items).

115. Given the dearth of established indicators, it is not clear that survey questions in countries are necessarily designed with a clear goal in mind of the production of particular indicators—hence in some cases there might not be an especially strong rationale for keeping the survey questions unchanged. This can be interpreted as an opportunity since it may present the possibility for countries to align with the proposals made in the present publication, in the absence of strong reasons for maintaining their current practices.

116. The responses received from countries both within and beyond the Task Force indicate that this gap between survey questions and indicator production is a common phenomenon. At most, countries may produce indicators along the lines of ‘proportion of women who are involved (either solely or jointly) in making all the major kinds of decisions’, or conversely, ‘proportion of women who are not involved in any of the major kind of decisions’. For instance, countries which conduct Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) produce an indicator defined as the percentage of currently-married women “who say that they alone or jointly have the final say in all of the three main decisions (own health care, making large purchases, visits to family, relatives, friends)”, and another defined as the percentage of currently-married women “who say that they alone or jointly have the final say in none of the three main decisions (own health care, making large purchases, visits to family, relatives, friends)”<sup>39</sup>.

117. The aim of this chapter is to suggest some indicators which could be produced on the basis of already-existing survey data or with addition of the necessary questions into existing surveys. The chapter considers the small range of existing indicators and then makes proposals based on a set of

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<sup>37</sup> Survey description and tabulations available online at <https://www.inegi.org.mx/programas/endireh/2016/>

<sup>38</sup> *ibid*, see predefined table entitled ‘XIV. Decisiones y libertad personal’ (decisions and personal liberty), table 14.1.

<sup>39</sup> Indicator details available at <https://www.statcompiler.com/en/>

distinct dimensions that are considered important to the overall phenomenon of intra-household power.

118. The data-gathering exercises among countries represented on the Task Force and other countries responding to the online survey (see Appendix 5 at the end of this report) revealed a broad diversity of survey questions, leading to the possibility of a similarly broad range of indicators.

## 4.2 Proposed indicators

119. It is clear, as discussed in Chapter 1, that the concepts of power and decision-making are broad and encompass a variety of different conceptual areas. The Task Force termed these areas ‘dimensions’. The reviews of both current practices and of literature permitted the Task force to distil seven distinct dimensions.

120. The group does not argue that these seven encompass *all possible* areas in which intra-household decisions can be made. Discussions in international forums with participants from diverse regions of the world made clear that there are other areas in which decisions may be made—for example, decisions about migration and where a household lives; decisions about agricultural activity; decisions about resource use, etc. However, the seven dimensions identified here were considered to be of relevance to the countries of the UNECE region and beyond, whereas areas such as agriculture may be of limited relevance to many countries in the region.

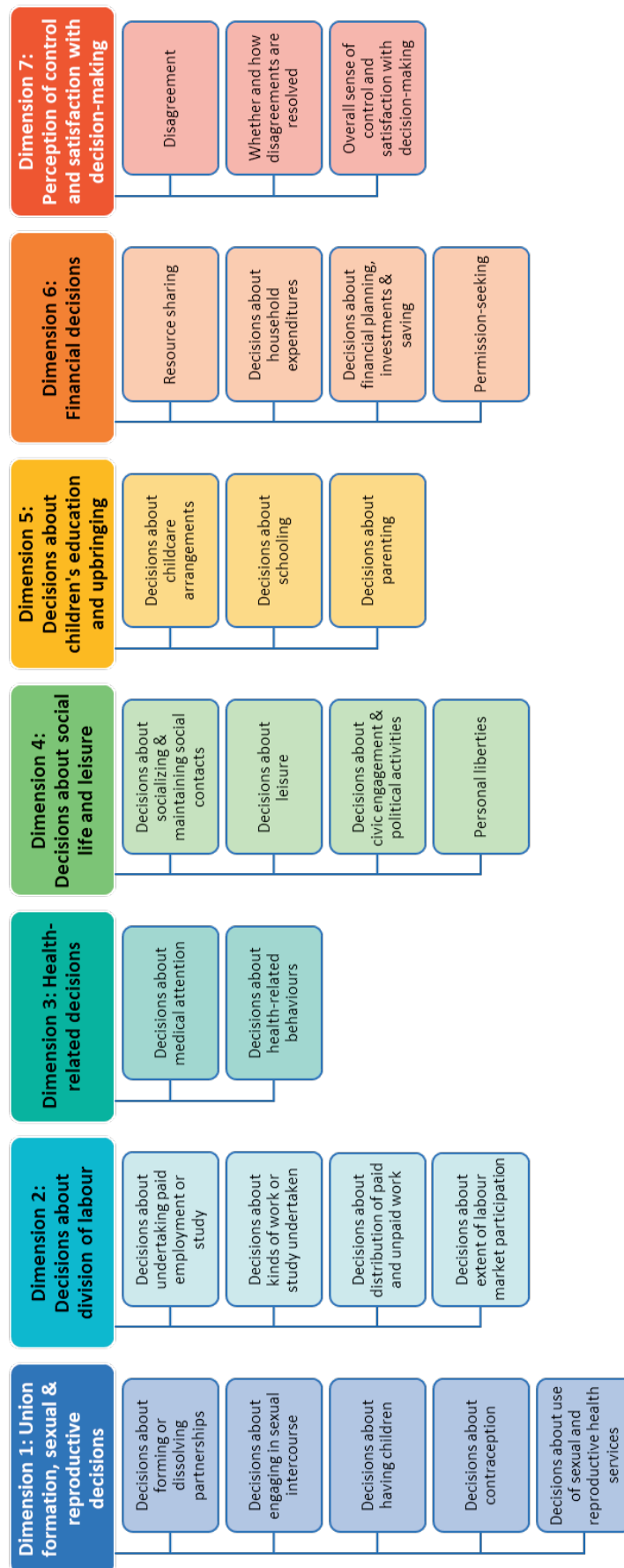
121. The dimensions are assumed to be conceptually distinct and practically independent, meaning that it would in theory be possible for a person to have the power to take decisions, as the sole, main or joint decision-maker, in any given dimension without it necessarily following that they must also be the sole, main or joint decision-maker in any other dimension. *This assumption has not been tested*, however, as this was not practically possible within the framework of the current Task Force. An important recommendation for future work is therefore that the conceptual distinctiveness of the dimensions would need to be tested. This would be valuable both on theoretical grounds and on practical grounds, as it would allow surveys to keep to a minimum the number of different items that need to be included to obtain a complete picture of the phenomenon.

122. For each dimension, a proposal is made below for a set of indicators. These are given under two headings: core indicators and supporting indicators. The core indicators are those considered by the Task Force to be the most conceptually central to the dimension under consideration, but also the most feasible in terms of production. That is, the Task Force aimed to not propose core indicators that would be particularly challenging to produce, even if they considered them as conceptually important. Core indicators are also limited to those considered by the Task Force to be concerned with decisions that lie more towards the ‘strategic’ end of the spectrum of all possible intra-household decisions, i.e. decisions which require or reflect more power within the household, while supporting indicators include those that deal with less strategic decisions.

123. Some of the proposed indicators are given with suggested disaggregations, e.g. by sex, by type of activity, by type of household purchases, etc. This implies collection of the necessary information either within the relevant questions or with background questions.

124. Figure 2 below shows the seven dimensions and the components contained within each:

**Figure 2: Dimensions and components of intra-household decision-making**



## 4.3 Dimension 1: Union formation, sexual and reproductive decisions

### 4.3.1 Description and relevance of this dimension

125. The ability to make decisions, either alone or with a partner/spouse, about whether and when to have children, and their number and spacing, is one of the most fundamental facets of gender equality. Reproductive decision-making does not just mean deciding whether and when to have children. It extends to decisions about the use of contraception; and decisions around accessing and using sexual and reproductive health services including abortion, family planning clinics, and care during and after pregnancy and childbirth.

126. In essence, for women the outcomes of such decisions amount to decisions about one's own body (and in many ways about the basic course of one's own life). Therefore, the intra-household distribution of these decisions—whether they are taken principally by one or other partner in a couple, or by both together (or indeed by other household members) reveals much about the power of people, and especially of women, to exercise control over their own bodies and their own lives.

127. The policy implications of this dimension of decision-making are wide-ranging. Decisions about having children, for example, will have an important impact on other aspects of people's life, including decisions about involvement in paid and unpaid activities, education, leisure, etc. Some decisions may be restricted along gender lines, for example how much young mothers will participate in the labour force, thus influencing policies to facilitate work-life balance (including paid maternal/parental leaves).

### 4.3.2 Components of this dimension

128. This dimension encompasses five components:

#### *Component 1: Decisions about forming or dissolving partnerships*

129. Limitations on making or ending partnerships can be reflections of major disempowerment or even gender-based violence. However, the Task Force identified a number of conceptual and practical challenges to including it in the present work. The power (or its absence) manifested in these kinds of decisions is not the power relationship between current partners. Arranged marriage, or limitations on dating, are concerned with power relationships between one partner and other people who may or may not be in the same household (e.g. parents or other family members). As for partnership dissolution, while intra-couple relationships are more likely to play a role in the decision-making, investigating this by asking a person in a current partnership would be challenging. Either such questioning would have to refer to a previous, already-dissolved partnership (whereas other area of the present work focus on current partnerships), or it would have to be hypothetical ("who would decide, or who would have the final say"?), which would be very hard for respondents to understand and answer and which may even cause offence. Given these conceptual limitations, combined with the fact that this component may have limited applicability in the context of many UNECE countries, it is therefore not considered further in this chapter. However, it is possible that some countries may consider it relevant to produce indicators related to decision-making about partner choice and freedom to end a relationship, which could be valuable for example as part of efforts to produce indicators of gender-based violence. If this area is pursued, countries would need to keep in mind the



specificities of legal systems such as the circumstances under which divorce is permitted, and the legal rights ascribed to parents following divorce or separation.

### *Component 2: Decisions about engaging in sexual intercourse*

130. This component captures individuals' abilities to make decisions about their sexual life. Being able to decide with whom and when to have sexual intercourse is essential to a person's ability to make their own decisions about the most private aspects of his/her life. These questions are relevant to all adults, not only those living in a couple at the time of the survey. For this work they focus only on current partnerships, since the decision-making processes for past partnerships may be drastically different. Questions on this component need to be asked in combination with those related to current contraceptive use and methods.

### *Component 3: Decisions about having children*

131. This component captures individuals' abilities to make decisions about being a parent or not, the type of families they will live in and how to balance work-life priorities. For women, it is also an indication of the level of control they have over their own body. With the massive entry of women in the labour force in the last few decades, family decisions (such as having children or not) are not made in isolation from other important dimensions of decision-making (including how it may affect paid employment). These indicators should be analysed in combination with indicators from other dimensions, and other characteristics of respondents (such as labour force participation). The focus of this component should be on decisions made within the current partnership, as the current decision-making process may be drastically different from past processes.

### *Component 4: Decisions about contraception*

132. This component aims to understand how explicitly decisions about using contraceptive methods are made within couples. It focuses on questions about the use of method (or not), not specifically on which method(s). The component indicators focus on how often the use of contraception is a joint decision within couples (and how it may have evolved over time).

### *Component 5: Decisions about use of sexual and reproductive health services*

133. This component focuses on how decisions are made regarding accessing and using services such as family planning clinics, as well as care during and after pregnancy and childbirth<sup>40</sup>.

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<sup>40</sup> The Beijing Platform for Action states "reproductive health care is defined as the constellation of methods, techniques and services that contribute to reproductive health and well-being by preventing and solving reproductive health problems. It also includes sexual health, the purpose of which is the enhancement of life and personal relations, and not merely counselling and care related to reproduction and sexually transmitted diseases" (United Nations (1995), para. 94). The particular aspect of this being considered in this sub-dimension is that related to making decisions about accessing care services.

### 4.3.3 Indicators and questions

#### *Component 1: Decisions about engaging in sexual intercourse*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
1.1.1	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that the decision to have sexual intercourse is always made jointly, by sex.	In your couple in the last 12 months, how often has the decision to have sexual intercourse been made jointly between you and your partner?	
1.1.2	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who can say no to sexual intercourse, by sex.	Can you say no to your (husband/partner) if you do not want to have sexual intercourse?	Demographic and Health Surveys

#### *Component 2: Decisions about having children*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
1.2.1	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who made own or joint decision about having a(nother) child, by sex.	Who in your household will make the decision on whether or not you will be having a(nother) child sometime?  Questions about already having biological or adopted child(ren) and about having had a medical procedure making it impossible for the respondent to have children will need to precede this question.	Canada qualitative testing.

#### *Component 3: Decisions about contraception*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
1.3.1	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for decisions about the use of contraceptive methods.	Who in your household made the decision on whether or not to use contraceptive methods?  Questions about the use and methods of contraception will need to precede this question.	Canada qualitative testing.

*Component 4: Decisions about use of sexual and reproductive health services*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
1.4.1	Proportion of women in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for decisions about breastfeeding.	<p>Who in your household made the decision on whether or not you would breastfeed your youngest child?</p> <p>Question to be asked of women only. It would be asked in combination with a question about whether or not the female respondent has breastfed (is breastfeeding) her youngest child. (A preceding question about the woman's and the baby's physical capability to breastfeed should also be considered.)</p>	
1.4.2	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for decisions about using and consulting family planning services.	<p>Who in your household made the decision on whether or not you would make use or consult family planning services (such as for help or advice with contraceptive use, sterilization, breastfeeding, etc.)?</p> <p>Question would need to be preceded by a question on whether or not the couple is using family planning services.</p>	
1.4.3	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for decisions about the sterilization of one spouse/partner.	<p>Who in your household made the decision on whether or not you/your partner would have an operation which makes it impossible to have a child/more children?</p> <p>Question would need to be preceded by a question on whether or not one spouse has been sterilized during the current relationship. Countries should pay attention to the use of 'sterilization' in the question wording, as the concept may not be understood by all respondents and may need to be replaced by a more colloquial term.</p>	

#### 4.3.4 Suggested core indicators

- Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that the decision to have sexual intercourse is always made jointly, by sex.
- Proportion of women in co-residing couples who can say no to sexual intercourse.
- Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who made own or joint decision about having a(nother) child, by sex.
- Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for decisions about the use of contraceptive methods.

#### 4.3.5 Considerations

134. The suggested indicators in this dimension require the collection of corresponding background or contextual information. That is, it would be necessary to ask additional questions in a survey in order for the proposed questions to make sense, or to identify the correct respondent set. Such background items include:

- Question about whether or not the respondent has had sexual intercourse in the last 12 months.
- Question about having had an operation or medical procedures that make it impossible for the respondent or the spouse/partner to have a child/another child.
- Questions about having (including wanting/not wanting to have) biological/adopted children and how many.
- Questions about whether or not the mother is breastfeeding or breastfed her youngest child, including questions about her ability and the child's ability to do so.
- Questions about whether or not the couple is using contraceptive methods.
- Questions about couples' use of family planning services.

135. It is important to bear in mind that these questions deal with very private and sensitive matters so they should be asked only when truly required and relevant to identify the necessary respondents. Similarly, many of the questions required to produce the proposed indicators are themselves sensitive and may impact upon non-response or response validity, not only for these specific questions but for the survey as a whole. Their relative advantages and disadvantages of their inclusion for the purposes of any given survey or research project must therefore be weighed prior to their inclusion.

### 4.4 Dimension 2: Decisions about division of labour

#### 4.4.1 Description and relevance of this dimension

136. The ability to take decisions about whether or when to undertake paid employment outside of the home, and the ability to decide about the nature of that work, are widely recognized as key facets of empowerment. If empowerment is understood as the capacity to turn wishes or preferences into actions, then being able to go out to work in the labour market is an important part of such empowerment because it both reflects and, importantly, permits some degree of autonomy. That is, first, only those with a certain amount of autonomy are in a position to decide to work outside the home; and second, by working outside the home, individuals generate income which may allow them

some material control over household resources, and which may also, to some extent, afford them power within the household to decide on the use of those resources.

137. This dimension is very closely linked to decision-making about financial resources (see dimension 6 below), since the relative contributions of household members to the income of the household is in part a result of their differential participation in the labour market; and in turn the amount of income that each person earns will impact on their power to decide on its use. The dimension is also connected to time use and the ways in which household responsibilities are distributed, since the amount of time a person spends working outside the home affects how much time they have available for domestic activities. From a policy perspective, the division of labour is important because initiatives aimed at increasing women's labour force participation and labour supply depend on women having both the power and the opportunity, given their share of domestic labour, within the household to do so. Also, if we know how and why couples make the decisions they do regarding the division of labour, we are in a better position to design policies to enhance work-family balance.

#### 4.4.2 Components of this dimension

138. This dimension encompasses four components:

*Component 1: Decisions about whether or not to undertake paid employment or study: both entering for the first time and returning after being out of the labour market*

139. This component will aid understanding some of the gender-based barriers to participating in the labour market and accessing education, reflecting social norms and stereotypes that influence gender differences in economic activity and inactivity. The component captures individuals' abilities to make decisions that enable them to generate income (or improve their earnings potential) and to be self-sufficient. Additionally, the decision to undertake study (or training) reflects the ability to increase one's human capital and improve one's labour market opportunities. The choice of who pursues study reveals expectations of what role in the division of labour each partner will play; since study increases earnings potential, the studying partner likely will, in due course, be the main breadwinner. This component will capture individual's autonomy as the ability to choose education or employment in itself requires some degree of freedom.

140. Both labour market decisions and education decisions have consequences for individuals, households and the economy. While these decisions are made at the individual level, consequences such as unfavourable dependency ratios and labour supply shortages are felt at the national level.

141. The decision to pursue study can reflect the past expectations and opportunities of an individual. As this decision might be made prior to the formation of a couple and their household, it can reveal the role an individual's past plays in his or her ability to participate in the labour market and to be empowered through this participation.

*Component 2: Decisions about the kinds of paid work or study undertaken by each partner*

142. This component captures individuals' abilities to realize their professional preferences and interests. While women's labour force participation has increased in many countries, there remains gender-based occupational segregation in which women often dominate in occupations that reflect the type of unpaid labour they perform. Thus measuring trends in the kind of work or study undertaken by each partner will reveal if gender-based occupational segregation persists as a barrier to women being fully empowered and able to pursue any paid work or study of their choice.

*Component 3: Decisions about the distribution between partners of time spent in employment and in unpaid work, including decisions about altering this in response to changes in circumstances, such as having children*

143. This component aims to understand how explicitly decisions about the division of labour were made as previous studies have shown that households rely, often unconsciously, on traditional divisions of labour. Also, it aims to understand how the status quo of the division of labour may not be what is best for the family and how the structure of gender roles persists such that a more equitable or efficient division of labour is not pursued.

144. While measures of quality of life often focus implicitly on paid labour through measuring GDP per capita, it is recognized that unpaid labour also contributes significantly to families' well-beings. There is often a gendered component to this division where women perform a disproportionate amount of unpaid labour even when they participate in the labour market at comparable levels to their male partners. In cases where the division of labour is somewhat equal initially, the birth of a child often leads to relapse into traditional divisions of labour. It is important to also capture how households adjust their hours as needed – for example, who stays home if a child is sick or who waits for the repairman. As the accumulation of these decisions affect earnings and career growth, patterns along gender lines (i.e. where the woman is more likely to adjust her work hours) can reflect the implicit prioritization of one spouse's career.

145. It is also important to consider types of unpaid labour performed. Research has shown that men and women tend to specialize in their unpaid labour with women tending to perform more routine tasks that cannot be performed alone, are time-sensitive, and are often performed simultaneously with other tasks (e.g. cooking dinner while watching children) whereas men perform more sporadic and more autonomous tasks (e.g. household repair-related duties). The division of labour also contributes to individual perceptions of well-being and research has shown that it is the participation of men specifically in the household tasks dominated by women that improves perceptions of fairness and satisfaction.

*Component 4: Decisions about part time versus full time labour market participation especially when returning after parental leave*

146. This component deals with the amount of paid labour each partner supplies. This component also relates to component three on the division of labour between paid and unpaid work as if one partner participates in full-time work while the other participates in part-time work, the part-time worker likely does more unpaid work. However, it is usually the partner who performs relatively more *paid* labour (which usually gives them relatively more earnings) that has more decision-making power even if both partners contribute equally when paid and unpaid labour hours are considered.

147. This component also needs to consider policies that make it more beneficial for mother's to take parental leave (for example, only having maternity leave benefits available) and reinforce the norm of child-rearing as a woman's duty. Internationally, countries without policies providing equal support for both genders tend to have more pronounced declines in women's labour market participation and labour supply after the child-bearing years. To better inform policy geared at encouraging women to return to the labour market at full strength, it is important to understand how households come to these decisions.

### 4.4.3 Indicators and questions

148. The best setting for questions on the division of labour is a time-use survey as data can be collected on a wide range of activities and a variety of measures can be constructed. Additionally, some time-use surveys may already cover these topics and if more detail is needed, they would make sense sequentially in a time-use survey. The questions regarding decisions on entering the labour market or study may be better suited to surveys on employment dynamics or surveys detailing education choices.

149. The main difficulty with attempting to capture how division of labour-related decisions are made is that many households do not explicitly have discussions about this and may be resigned to the status quo for various reasons (e.g. avoiding conflict or gender ideology that informs perceptions about what each partner should be doing). It is important that the questions feeding the indicators are phrased in such a way that they permit separating out decisions that were made consciously/explicitly from decisions that were made implicitly and persist because couples treat it as their equilibrium. For this reason, qualitative interviews should be used where possible to provide more context and to tease out the nuances of decision-making. For the suggested questions beginning ‘who in your household...’, answer options could be: mostly you; mostly my partner; shared equally; neither.

#### *Component 1: Decisions about whether or not to undertake paid employment or study*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
2.1.1	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for their own decision to undertake paid employment, by sex.	<p>Who in your household made the decision about whether or not you should work at a paid job or business?</p> <p>Who in your household made the decision about whether or not your spouse/partner should work at a paid job or business?</p> <p>If interviewing only one partner, use second question to infer decision-making authority for the other partner.</p>	Canada qualitative testing.
2.1.2	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for their own decision to undertake or continue studies, by sex.	<p>Who in your household made the decision about whether or not you should undertake or continue studies?</p> <p>Who in your household made the decision about whether or not your partner should undertake or continue studies?</p>	

*Component 2: Decisions about the kinds of paid work or study undertaken by each partner*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
2.2.1	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who made own decision about type of paid work, by sex.	This decision may be made prior to formation of couple so only considering individuals in couple may not reflect the decision-making dynamic accurately.	
2.2.2	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who made own decision about type of study, by sex.	Need to consider that parents of individuals may also play key role in this decision.  Like type of paid work, this decision is often made prior to formation of couple.	

*Component 3: Decisions about the distribution between partners of time spent in employment and in unpaid work*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
2.3.1	Proportion of co-residing couples in which distribution of paid and unpaid activities is a joint decision.	Who, most of the time, decides on how paid activities are distributed within your couple?  Who, most of the time, decides on how unpaid activities are distributed within your couple?	Canada qualitative testing.
2.3.2	Proportion of individuals who made decision on own amount of time spent working, by sex.	Who in your couple makes the decision on the amount of time you spend working at a paid job or business?  Who in your couple makes the decision on the amount of time your spouse/partner spends working at a paid job or business?	Canada qualitative testing.
2.3.3	Proportion of individuals who made decision on own amount of time spent on unpaid activities, by sex.	Who in your couple makes the decision on the amount of time you spend doing unpaid activities in the home (e.g. household chores, childcare, etc.)?  Who in your couple makes the decision on the amount of time your spouse/partner spends doing unpaid activities in the home (e.g. household chores, childcare, etc.)?	Canada qualitative testing.



*Component 4: Decisions about part time versus full time labour market participation*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
2.4.1	Percentage of men and women who have reduced their paid working hours (including to zero) since the birth of the youngest child in the household (up to 8 years old), individuals 20-49.	Reduction in paid work since birth of youngest child is taken as an indication that the reduction is in order to take care of the child.  Could be extended to cover unpaid care for other groups (older people, people with disabilities).	
2.4.2	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who made own or joint decision about taking parental leave, by sex.	Who made the decision about whether or not you took a maternity/paternity leave?  Who made the decision about whether or not the other parent took a maternity/paternity leave?  Need to consider that couples may not have this explicit discussion and may see the choice as obvious based on flexibility of job to take time off.  In some countries decisions are influenced by legally mandated quotas. Would therefore need to be adapted to ask about decisions to exceed basic quota.	
2.4.3	Proportion of individuals who decided own part-time or full-time work status.		No references identified.

**4.4.4 Suggested core indicators**

- Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for their own decision to undertake paid employment, by sex.
- Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who made decision on own amount of time spent working, by sex OR Proportion of individuals who made own decision regarding part-time or full-time work status, by sex.
- Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who made own decision about type of paid work, by sex.
- Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for their own decision to undertake or continue studies, by sex.
- Proportion of individuals who made decision on own amount of time spent on unpaid activities, by sex.

#### 4.4.5 Considerations

150. The suggested indicators in this dimension may require the collection of a considerable amount of corresponding background or contextual information. That is, it would be necessary to ask additional questions in a survey in order for the proposed questions to make sense, or to identify the correct respondent set. Such background items could include:

- Labour force participation and employment rates.
- Average number of hours per day spent on paid work.
- Part time and full-time employment.
- Types and quantities of unpaid work.

### 4.5 Dimension 3: Health-related decisions

#### 4.5.1 Description and relevance of this dimension

151. This dimension is concerned with the ability of household members to make decisions that affect their own health or the health of their dependent children in the home. This does not only mean visiting a doctor or having children vaccinated. The dimension is broader, extending to decision-making about lifestyle behaviours that affect health. For example, if a household member's autonomy is restricted they may not be able to decide for themselves to take regular exercise, especially if there are limitations on their movements outside of the home. While it might initially seem that this dimension is only relevant in developing-country settings, this is not necessarily the case. Decisions about the content of the family's diet, for example, can have a significant impact on health outcomes, whether or not the household is resource-poor. The focus of this dimension on decisions that can affect one's own health or that of dependent children is due to the fact that children may rely on adults to make such decisions on their behalf. Lifestyle decisions can of course affect the health of others in the household, including the partner, but it is assumed that there is some decision-making around this while for children there may be no such opportunity to be involved in making decisions.

152. While reproductive health care is obviously a subset of health care in general, the Task Force considered that decision-making about accessing and using reproductive health care is of sufficient importance and conceptual distinctiveness to be examined separately from other health-related decisions. It is also likely to be more closely linked with other elements of reproductive decision-making, such as partnership formation, family planning and sexual behaviour, than it is with decision-making about other aspects of health. Hence, this dimension excludes reproductive health decision-making which is instead incorporated in dimension 1.

153. The policy implications of this dimension include the fact that women's autonomy in health-related decision-making is known, in the field of development programming, to be closely linked with health outcomes, both for women themselves and for their children. Provision of primary health care services will be effective only if the target beneficiaries are able to avail themselves of the services. Policies to encourage healthy eating and exercise, similarly, will work only if the people targeted by those policies are free to adapt their behaviours accordingly.

## 4.5.2 Components of this dimension

154. This dimension encompasses two components:

### *Component 1: Decisions about medical attention*

155. This component deals with seeking and accessing medical care, including doctors, dentists and optical care, and obtaining medical supplies, both for oneself and for one's children. Such decisions capture the distribution of control over what or whom is considered important enough to merit medical attention, especially in countries or households where medical care is not provided by the state and therefore where such decisions involve a degree of prioritizing about expenditure. It also captures the extent to which partners are able to maintain privacy regarding their own health, since a person may need to reveal a health condition to a spouse in order for the decision to be made to seek care.

### *Component 2: Decisions about health-related behaviours*

156. This component deals with decisions about obtaining vaccines for oneself and one's children; decisions about healthy eating; and decisions about taking exercise for health. These are all aspects of control over one's own interactions with the physical environment to maintain or improve health.

## 4.5.3 Indicators and questions

157. There are relatively few existing survey questions and related indicators on health-related decision-making, other than those dealing with decision-making about reproductive health. Some of those which do exist, including some which are in rather widespread use, were considered by the Task Force to be too general to be well understood in the cultural contexts of most UNECE countries. For instance, the question in the Demographic and Health Survey women's questionnaire is "Who usually makes decisions about health care for yourself?". It is hard to envisage how respondents in an industrialized Western society might interpret and respond to this question, given the broad diversity of decisions that could fall within its scope (choosing and obtaining health insurance, choosing a care provider, seeking care in a specific instance, selecting among possible treatments, and so on). There are probably very few cases where most or all of these decisions are taken by anyone other than the respondent themselves, whether alone or in consultation with others. The Task Force felt that such a large majority of respondents would give the same response (always me or usually me) that this question would produce very little variance and therefore not yield useful results in many parts of the UNECE region.

158. Another existing type of question on health-related decisions is that used in violence against women surveys (e.g. UNECE 2011), which asks "Would you say it is generally true that he (the respondent's partner) expects you to ask his permission before seeking health care for yourself?". While this is close to the intended subject matter of this dimension, it is part of a battery of questions specifically designed to identify controlling behaviour, in all its various forms, and is therefore more relevant to the component 'personal liberty' covered under dimension 4. Similarly, the questions reported by Tajikistan in the Demographic and Health Survey include a question about whether getting permission to go to the doctor is a barrier to obtaining medical care—again this is designed to be part of a suite of questions examining spousal controlling behaviour.

159. The available questions and related indicators other than the general 'health care for yourself' ones are mostly specific to reproductive health. A 2016 review of literature pertaining to developing

countries (Osamor and Grady 2016) was not able to identify any study that examined decision-making about specific domains of health care other than reproductive health—such as immunization, hospital admission, or surgical procedures.

160. Because of this dearth of suitable existing questions and indicators, the proposals below are all suggestions for possible indicators and questions which would need to be extensively tested and refined before being recommended for broad use. It would also be necessary to examine them for collinearity and potentially exclude some of them as being superfluous on that basis.

*Component 1: Decisions about medical attention*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
3.1.1	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for choosing health care providers for oneself and for children (doctors, dentists, opticians, etc.), not including providers of maternal and postnatal care and birth attendants, by sex.	<p>Excludes maternal care as this would be expected to skew answers towards ‘woman only’.</p> <p>Only relevant in some country settings as in other countries there is no choice, health care providers are assigned (e.g. according to location).</p> <p>Who usually/the majority of the time makes decisions about the following issues in your household? [choosing health care providers, such as doctors, dentists, opticians, etc.]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always me</li> <li>• Usually me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse about equally</li> <li>• Usually my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always or usually someone else.</li> </ul>	No existing references identified.
3.1.2	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for deciding when a child needs to be taken to the doctor, by sex.	<p>Only relevant in some country settings, e.g. where there is a financial implication of taking a child to a doctor; where there are few doctors; where a trip to a doctor is a major undertaking e.g. due to distance or opportunity costs.</p> <p>Who usually/the majority of the time makes decisions about the following issues in your household? [taking children to see a doctor or other health care provider]</p>	

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always me</li> <li>• Usually me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse about equally</li> <li>• Usually my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always or usually someone else.</li> </ul>	

### *Component 2: Decisions about health-related behaviours*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
3.2.1	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for deciding about children's vaccinations, by sex.	<p>Who usually/the majority of the time makes decisions about the following issues in your household? [children's vaccinations]</p> <p>This includes decisions about whether, when and which vaccinations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always me</li> <li>• Usually me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse about equally</li> <li>• Usually my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always or usually someone else.</li> </ul>	No existing references identified.
3.2.2	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for determining the daily meals of the household, by sex.	<p>N.b. this is not the same as who does the food preparation or shopping or who does the cooking. Questions need to emphasize that it is about who determines what is to be eaten.</p> <p>Who usually/the majority of the time makes decisions about the following issues in your household? [deciding on the daily meals for the household]</p> <p>This means deciding what food to purchase, prepare and cook: the person who makes these decisions may not be the same as the person who performs these tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always me</li> <li>• Usually me</li> </ul>	Colombia DHS and Serbia TUS have similar but not identical questions about deciding what to prepare for individual meals.

<i>No.</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Example questions and observations</i>	<i>References</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse about equally</li> <li>• Usually my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always or usually someone else.</li> </ul>	

#### 4.5.4 Suggested core indicators

- Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for deciding when a child needs to be taken to the doctor, by sex.
- Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for determining the daily meals of the household, by sex.

#### 4.5.5 Considerations

161. The specificities of different country contexts for the provision of health care may add to the challenges of international comparison for this dimension in particular. The regulatory and administrative framework for health care provision and choice or assignment of providers, and requirements for vaccination of children (e.g. in order to attend public school) may have different influences on households' decision-making processes. For this reason these indicators are not proposed as core indicators here—albeit where they do apply, they could be very revealing about internal dynamics in households and in some settings could therefore be highly important.

## 4.6 Dimension 4: Decisions about social life and personal liberties

### 4.6.1 Description and relevance of this dimension

162. In comparison with some of the other dimensions discussed in this chapter, decision-making about social life and the use of leisure time may at first glance seem 'frivolous', or less important from the point of view of empowerment. However, the freedom to make choices about personal relationships clearly could have a significant impact on a person's quality of life.

163. Moreover, not all decision-making is necessarily a reflection of power within the household; on the contrary, the obligation to take responsibility for organizing the family's social life, arranging visits with relatives, sending invitations to events, planning children's extra-curricular activities, etc., could result from a lack of power to delegate or to share such tasks. Few would regard themselves as powerful if they find themselves taking decisions simply because no-one else will.

164. This dimension is concerned not only with socializing with friends and family, but also with decisions about engaging with the wider community. Hence political activities, volunteering, civic engagement and so on also fall within this dimension. Being able to act upon one's own political

opinions, such as by deciding for oneself whether and for whom to vote, is undoubtedly an important aspect of power.

165. Decision-making about social life also means taking decisions about spending time with people outside the household, such as going out with friends. Such decisions depend upon a certain degree of personal liberty; and the inability to make such decisions may amount to a denial of that liberty by a partner or other household member. In the extreme, this denial of liberty could be a form of violence. Women who are obliged to ask permission from their partner before going out alone, or whose partner has the final say over how they dress or style their hair, are obviously experiencing a curtailment of their power and may under some circumstances be victims of gender-based violence. Indeed, the denial of personal liberties by a partner is a core element of controlling behaviour, and as such there are established methods for measuring it as part of violence against women surveys.

166. This dimension is important, in part, because of the linkage between decisions taken within the household and the social status of those household members in the public sphere. That is, a person who lacks power to take decisions within this dimension at the household level has constraints set on their ability to interact with the community and to form social support networks and may as a consequence be disempowered outside the household as well as inside it.

167. There are various ways in which this dimension is relevant to policymaking. Given the linkage just described between private and public power, policies promoting women's empowerment outside the home, such as through civic engagement activities, may need to take into account intra-household power in this dimension. Policies aimed at prevention of gender-based violence may benefit from considering the ways in which power over a partner can be manifested as a curtailment of personal liberties.

#### 4.6.2 Components of this dimension

168. This dimension encompasses four components:

##### *Component 1: Decisions about socializing and maintaining social contacts*

169. This component deals with decision-making and planning visits to or by friends and relatives, as well as with decisions about the related tasks of maintaining contacts, organizing events and celebrations, and so on. It is intended to examine the gender divide that is often claimed anecdotally in such decision-making. It is important because the power to form and maintain social networks is a key to a person's ability to fit into the wider community and thus to take part in it. While closely linked to the freedom to actually maintain social contacts (dealt with below under 'personal liberties'), it is distinct in that this component is concerned with the planning and organizing of contacts and the related duties, while the personal liberties component is concerned with the possibility of having such contacts at all. While presented as distinct components here, it is possible that surveys would keep questions about them together for ease of interpretation by respondents.

##### *Component 2: Decisions about leisure*

170. This component is concerned with making decisions about how household members spend their free time, such as sports and hobbies, children's extra-curricular activities, and vacations. As for the previous component, it aims to capture a commonly-supposed gender divide in such decisions, as well as to examine whether more consequential decisions (such as spending a significant sum of money on a vacation) have a different distribution to less consequential ones.

*Component 3: Decisions about civic engagement and political activities*

171. This component looks at freedom to decide on voting and political behaviour, to participate in community affairs, to join civil society groups, etc. It captures the extent to which engagement with society is decided by individuals themselves versus by the influence of other household members.

*Component 4: Personal liberties*

172. This component covers decisions about personal behaviour such as going out of the house, seeing friends and family, and arranging one's appearance, for which decision-making by someone other than the person themselves can be construed as controlling or curtailing the person's liberty.

**4.6.3 Indicators and questions**

173. The existing range of survey questions and resulting indicators on the first two components of this dimension is rather diverse. Many surveys with a range of different purposes (Canada's General Social Surveys; Colombia's DHS; 'Life in Kyrgyzstan'; Serbia's Time-Use Survey; Turkey's Family Structure Survey; and the Generations and Gender surveys, to name a few) include questions on socializing and maintaining contacts and on leisure. The Italian Family and Social Subjects survey is an example in which several different elements of these two components are covered separately (friends, vacation destinations, use of free time). The Task force examined the wording of questions in all of these sources and others, to develop the suggestions below. Some were felt to be more easily understandable than others (of course bearing in mind that nuance may be lost when translating to English).

174. Survey questions dealing with the third and fourth components are covered in some detail in the Mexican surveys, ENDIREH and ELCOS, and individual questions on decision-making for civic and political engagement appear in several other surveys—although often in a somewhat general way, with phrasing such as 'to discuss community issues'. The wording used in the Generations and Gender Survey ('public activities and leisure time') was perhaps the most general of those identified by the Task Force and may be particularly challenging to respond to.

175. Violence against women surveys, including the UNECE survey module for measuring violence against women (UNECE 2011), include questions on controlling behaviour which correspond to some extent with the personal liberties component. However, the wording of such questions is not designed explicitly for measuring the distribution of decision-making. For example, "Would you say it is generally true that he [a current or former partner of the female respondent] tries to keep you from seeing your friends?" [yes/no] in the UNECE survey module is qualitatively different from the Mexican ENDIREH question, "Now I am going to ask you about the arrangements that you make with your husband or partner when you need to undertake some activities: if you want to visit your relatives or friends? [do you have to ask your husband's/partner's permission, do you have to tell him or ask his opinion, do you not have to do anything (doesn't go alone; goes with him, doesn't do it, other, doesn't apply)]".

*Component 1: Decisions about socializing and maintaining social contacts*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
4.1.1	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for making	Other similar questions were identified but were considered too general to be easily interpreted	Canada: General Social Survey



<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
	decisions related to organizing the household's social life, by sex.	<p>(e.g. who has more power to make decisions about friends? Who makes decisions about relations with relatives/neighbours?)</p> <p>Who usually/the majority of the time, makes decisions about the following issues in your household? [organizing the household's social life] for example, invitations for family and social occasions, outings, and keeping contacts?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always me</li> <li>• Usually me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse about equally</li> <li>• Usually my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always or usually someone else.</li> </ul>	on Family, General Social Survey on Canadians at work and Home (wording and response categories adapted).

### *Component 2: Decisions about leisure*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
4.2.1	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for making decisions about the household's use of free time, by sex.	<p>Who usually/the majority of the time, makes decisions about the following issues in your household? [what to do in your leisure time?] For example: sports, hobbies, outings, watching tv</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always me</li> <li>• Usually me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse about equally</li> <li>• Usually my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always or usually someone else.</li> </ul>	Adapted from Italy Family and Social Subjects Survey.
4.2.2	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for making decisions about holiday/vacation destinations, by sex.	<p>Who usually/the majority of the time, makes decisions about the following issues in your household? [holidays] For example where to go, where to stay, how long to go for, etc.</p>	Adapted from Italy Family and Social Subjects Survey.

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always me</li> <li>• Usually me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse about equally</li> <li>• Usually my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always or usually someone else.</li> </ul>	
4.2.3	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for making decisions about children's extra-curricular activities, by sex.	Who usually/the majority of the time, makes decisions about the following issues in your household? [children's extra-curricular activities] that is, organized activities that children do that are not part of their compulsory schooling, such as sports, arts, music etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always me</li> <li>• Usually me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse about equally</li> <li>• Usually my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always or usually someone else.</li> </ul>	No existing references identified.

### *Component 3: Decisions about civic engagement and political activities*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
4.3.1	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who make their own decision to vote, by sex.	When there is an election, who in your household usually decides whether you personally will cast a vote? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Me alone</li> <li>• Mostly me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse together</li> <li>• Mostly my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Only my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Mostly or only someone else.</li> </ul>	No existing references identified.
4.3.2	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that decisions on whom to vote for are their own or mostly theirs, by sex.	Only for those who report that they do/will vote. When there is an election, who in your household usually decides which political party or candidate you personally will vote for?	Adapted from Mexico ENDIREH combined with wording used in GGS

<i>No.</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Example questions and observations</i>	<i>References</i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Me alone</li> <li>• Mostly me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse together</li> <li>• Mostly my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Only my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Mostly or only someone else.</li> </ul>	and other surveys.
4.3.3	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that decisions about engaging in political matters are their own or mostly theirs, by sex.	<p>Who usually/the majority of the time, makes decisions about the following issues in your household? [your own personal participation in political matters]</p> <p>Such as joining a political party, running for political office, campaigning for a candidate, taking part in political demonstrations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Me alone</li> <li>• Mostly me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse together</li> <li>• Mostly my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Only my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Mostly or only someone else.</li> </ul>	Adapted from a combination of sources, principally Mexico ENDIREH & ELCOS.
4.3.4	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that decisions about participating in community matters are their own or mostly theirs, by sex.	<p>Who usually/the majority of the time, makes decisions about the following issues in your household? [your own personal participation in community matters]</p> <p>Such as being involved with charitable or religious groups, school parent-teacher associations, attending local council meetings, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Me alone</li> <li>• Mostly me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse together</li> <li>• Mostly my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Only my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Mostly or only someone else.</li> </ul>	Adapted from a combination of sources, principally Mexico ENDIREH & ELCOS.
4.3.5	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that decisions about taking on a community or leadership role are their own or mostly theirs, by sex.	<p>Who usually/the majority of the time, makes decisions about the following issues in your household? [your own personal involvement in community or political leadership activities]</p> <p>Such as running for civic or political office, leading a community, youth</p>	No existing references identified.

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
		or religious group, leading a school parent-teacher association or sports club, etc.] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Me alone</li> <li>• Mostly me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse together</li> <li>• Mostly my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Only my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Mostly or only someone else.</li> </ul>	

#### *Component 4: Personal liberties*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
4.4.1	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that they can decide by themselves or mostly by themselves to go outside of the home, by sex.	N.b. this question may be considered irrelevant in some country settings.  Who decides, the majority of the time, in the household or in your couple: [whether you can leave the house?] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Me alone</li> <li>• Mostly me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse together</li> <li>• Mostly my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Only my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Mostly or only someone else.</li> </ul>	Question from Mexico ENDIREH and ELCOS: response options adapted.
4.4.2	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that decisions about forming friendships are their own or mostly theirs, by sex.	Who decides, the majority of the time, in the household or in your couple: [whether you can make friends with someone?] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Me alone</li> <li>• Mostly me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse together</li> <li>• Mostly my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Only my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Mostly or only someone else.</li> </ul>	Adapted from Mexico ENDIREH.
4.4.3	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that they can decide by themselves or mostly	Would you feel free to see friends or relatives without asking permission of other household	Adapted from a combination of sources.

<i>No.</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Example questions and observations</i>	<i>References</i>
	by themselves to visit or be visited by friends and relatives, by sex.	members? Asking permission is not the same as informing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, always</li> <li>• Yes, usually</li> <li>• Sometimes</li> <li>• No, not usually</li> <li>• No, never.</li> </ul>	
4.4.4	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that decisions about their personal appearance are their own or mostly theirs, by sex.	Would you feel free to change your personal appearance, for example, your hairstyle, without asking permission of other household members? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, always</li> <li>• Yes, usually</li> <li>• Sometimes</li> <li>• No, not usually</li> <li>• No, never.</li> </ul>	Adapted from a combination of sources.

#### 4.6.4 Suggested core indicators

- Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for making decisions related to organizing the household's social life, by sex.
- Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for making decisions about the household's use of free time, by sex.
- Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that decisions on whom to vote for are their own or mostly theirs, by sex.
- Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that decisions about forming friendships are their own or mostly theirs, by sex.

#### 4.6.5 Considerations

176. For this dimension in particular, the survey vehicle used to administer questions is likely to have a profound influence on the answers given: a violence against women survey pertains to a very different population than a family survey, for example. When a household multitopic survey is used it could be possible to ask similar questions of both male and female respondents.

## 4.7 Dimension 5: Decisions about children’s education and upbringing

### 4.7.1 Description and relevance of this dimension

177. Several of the other dimensions discussed in this chapter include aspects of decision-making related to children—for example, decisions about their leisure activities (dimension 4) or about their health (dimension 3), or indeed, about having children at all (dimension 1). This dimension, however, is distinct from the others in that it relates to decisions of which children are the main subject, and about matters that specifically affect children<sup>41</sup>.

178. As for some aspects of dimension 4 (social life and leisure), the relationship between decision-making and power is not clear-cut and linear for this dimension. Being the main person responsible for decisions about children’s upbringing, care and education could indicate power, but it could also be a reflection of disempowerment in that the decision-maker is not able to share the burden of such responsibilities with others.

179. Policies aiming to shape children’s educational trajectories—such as whether they continue in school or which subjects they study—will be affected by the way that decisions about their schooling and upbringing are taken at home.

180. Family life has become more diversified in many countries, with both parents and children going through more family events such as union formations and dissolutions. The likelihood that, at some point in their lives, children and adults will live in a ‘non-traditional family’ (such as a one-parent family or a step/blended family) has increased significantly over the last few decades. This means that parents may have to make decisions for non-biological children, and that decision makers will not always be living in the same household as the children about whom they are making decisions.

181. In recent decades, with the massive entry of women (including mothers of young children) into the labour force, and thus the significant increase in families with both parents working outside the home, families have to make arrangements for childcare while parents are away working at a paid job. Decisions about the type of childcare arrangements can have lasting impacts on children. High-quality childcare services may better prepare children for school entry and thus reduce the risk of future educational issues. Some research has also suggested a link between with childcare services and secondary school attainment, and the likelihood of living in poverty during young adulthood. Furthermore, the choice of school for boys and girls, and the importance placed by their caregivers on educational attainment is also likely to have longer-term effects on social and economic outcomes for children.

### 4.7.2 Components of this dimension

182. This dimension encompasses three components:

#### *Component 1: Decisions about childcare arrangements*

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<sup>41</sup> ‘Children’ are understood to be defined according to the needs of the survey or the country, although this section is written with the assumption that co-resident, dependent children are the subject of discussion.

183. This component deals with how, if the decision is made by parents to seek such a service, the choice of daycare or care provider was made in the household. These decisions not only have long-term impacts on children and their education but are also closely related to decisions about the labour force participation of parents (especially mothers). The choice of daycare services is also related to personal preferences (e.g. other family members being the care provider) and to the household's financial situation (daycare can be costly).

### *Component 2: Decisions about schooling*

184. This component focuses on choice of school, choice of subjects, and the degree of emphasis placed on education and on academic achievement. These decisions are not isolated from how the educational attainment of boys and girls is perceived in different societies. Decisions about the level of education to be attained by children is instrumental for their future. It is also important to know who makes decisions about children's field of studies, since some of these decisions can be influenced by gender stereotypes.

### *Component 3: Decisions about parenting*

185. This component focuses on how decisions are reached in the household about rules and guidance for children. It focuses on who makes decisions about household rules (what is allowed or not, what is valued, etc.), about core values to be taught to children, and about the relationships they will have with people outside the household (going out with friends, for example). These decisions will influence children's behaviours in society and the construction of their social networks. As is the case for other components, the interest here is in who makes decisions, not who ultimately is responsible for applying the rules and for providing guidance.

## 4.7.3 Indicators and questions

### *Component 1: Decisions about childcare arrangements*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
5.1.1	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that they decide by themselves or with their partner/spouse the type of childcare for their youngest child, by sex.	Who in your household made the decision on choosing this type of childcare? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Me alone</li> <li>• Mostly me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse together</li> <li>• Mostly my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Only my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Mostly or only someone else.</li> </ul>	Canadian General Social Survey, 2017.

*Component 2: Decisions about schooling*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator name</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
5.2.1	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that they decide by themselves or with their partner/spouse the level of education their children should attain, by sex.	Who decides, in the household or in your couple: [the level of education your child(ren) should attain? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Me alone</li> <li>• Mostly me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse together</li> <li>• Mostly my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Only my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Mostly or only someone else.</li> </ul>	No existing references identified.
5.2.2	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that they decide by themselves or with their partner/spouse where their children will go to school, by sex.	Who decides, in the household or in your couple: [where your children will go to school (which school)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Me alone</li> <li>• Mostly me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse together</li> <li>• Mostly my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Only my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Mostly or only someone else.</li> </ul>	Adapted from Mexico ENDIREH.
5.2.3	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that they decide by themselves or with their partner/spouse which educational path (which courses or field of study) their children should take, by sex.	Who decides, in the household or in your couple: [which educational path (which courses or field of study) your children will follow? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Me alone</li> <li>• Mostly me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse together</li> <li>• Mostly my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Only my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Mostly or only someone else.</li> </ul>	

*Component 3: Decisions about parenting*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
5.3.1	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that they grant permission to their children to	Who, the majority of the time, in the household or in your couple:	No existing references identified.



No.	Indicator	Example questions and observations	References
	go out, either by themselves or with their partner/spouse, by sex.	[grants permission to your children to go out with friends or a partner? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Me alone</li> <li>• Mostly me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse together</li> <li>• Mostly my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Only my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Mostly or only someone else.</li> </ul>	
5.3.2	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that they provide rules and guidance to their children either by themselves or with their partner/spouse, by sex.	Who, the majority of the time, in the household or in your couple: [provides rules and guidance to your children? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Me alone</li> <li>• Mostly me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse together</li> <li>• Mostly my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Only my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Mostly or only someone else.</li> </ul>	Adapted from Mexico ENDIREH.

#### 4.7.4 Suggested core indicators

- Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that they decide by themselves or with their partner/spouse the type of childcare for their youngest child, by sex.
- Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that they decide by themselves or with their partner/spouse the level of education their children should attain, by sex.

#### 4.7.5 Considerations

186. Several context-setting questions would be necessary prior to asking decision-making questions for this dimension:

- “In the past twelve months, have you made arrangements for your youngest child to be looked after because of work or any other reason?” *Include childcare that is paid or not.* [answer options: Yes; No]
- “What is the main childcare arrangement you are currently using for your youngest child? Is it...?” [answer options: In the child's home; A home daycare; A preschool centre or a nursery school; A daycare centre; Before- or after-school programme; Another type of childcare].

187. This dimension may produce particular challenges in settings where it is common for children to live in a household without both parents (for example, after a divorce). It would be necessary to develop sufficient contextual background questions to ensure that the relevant respondents are targeted in surveys and that the decision-making questions apply to them. Similarly in such settings,

care must be taken in interpretation since there may be a significant proportion of ‘someone outside the household’ answers—indeed it may be necessary to add response options allowing for shared decision-making between the respondent and someone outside the household.

188. Some aspects of decision-making about children might be influenced by the sex of the child, especially in certain cultural contexts. It may therefore be valuable to record the sex of the children about whom decisions are made.

## 4.8 Dimension 6: Financial decisions

### 4.8.1 Description and relevance of this dimension

189. The dimension of financial decision-making and associated matters such as allocation of income and household budgeting is perhaps the most well-developed of the dimensions considered by the Task Force. It is fundamental to the concept of power within the household, since having the power to turn intention into action in many other spheres must surely be facilitated by having the power to access and dispose of material, often financial, resources. In many cases it might be impossible to act on intentions without such access—for example, to visit a doctor, to purchase food or clothing or to save for the future. In their most extreme form, limits to financial decision-making power could constitute a curtailment of personal freedom.

190. The dimension is concerned not directly with who actually makes purchases or takes other financial actions (such as buying or selling property), but with who decides what is to be purchased, or saved, and when. It extends to decision-making about how incomes are pooled, shared or divided. That is, irrespective of the relative amounts earned by partners, the decision to put all income into a joint account or to keep each person’s income separate is an indication of how the right to use those incomes is perceived. Furthermore, the dimension covers questions of control and permission-seeking to spend money, since even in cases where incomes are pooled together into one common pot, there may be different rights (either explicit or perceived) to spend, or obligations to ask or inform the partner before spending, especially if spending on items for personal use.

191. While this dimension has received much attention and is the dimension most widely considered in existing research, this is not to say that there is clear agreement on how to conceptualize or to measure these issues. Indeed, as noted previously, Eurostat concluded after analyzing the outcomes of the 2010 EU-SILC module on income pooling and sharing that the concepts were insufficiently understood and decided to discontinue collection of data on the topic (Eurostat 2013).

192. Notwithstanding the conceptual and methodological challenges surrounding this dimension, its centrality to the measurement of intra-household power is evident. Its relevance to policymaking arises from the fact that many policies aim, one way or another, to increase economic well-being, primarily through interventions that affect incomes. Without taking into account how those incomes can be accessed and used, such policies might not have the desired effects. Some very well-known development programmes have succeeded as a result of recognizing that incomes and the power to use them are not independent. For example, in the case of PROGRESA in Mexico, cash transfers were placed directly in the hands of women in situations where they would not otherwise have been able to access them (Fultz & Francis 2013). Conversely, other programmes aimed at increasing incomes have demonstrated unintended, negative, consequences on women’s ability to access household resources, such as the granting of group bank credits. Notably, one agricultural development programme aimed at promoting cash crops typically tended and sold by men resulted in women’s

reduced relative contribution to household income and concomitant reduction in power within the household (Rogers & Schlossman 1990).

193. Clearly, the policy implications of this dimension also concern efforts to alter the balance of power within households. Given the centrality of financial resources to the ability to access other kinds of resources, efforts to enhance equal decision-making surrounding use of incomes could potentially increase equality within households more generally.

194. An issue closely related to this dimension is that of asset ownership and disposal. The power to make decisions around obtaining or disposing of material wealth including land, housing, agricultural products, vehicles, etc is a key aspect of intra-household power in many settings. Asset ownership is challenging to measure because it is underpinned by legal frameworks, including customary law, that vary substantially from nation to nation. The complexity of measuring asset ownership and methodological recommendations for doing so are detailed in a recent report from the Evidence and Data for Gender Equality project (United Nations 2019). Given the comprehensive nature of this guidance, as well as its greater relevance to other world regions than the UNECE region, no attempt is made here to propose further indicators for decision-making on asset ownership and disposal. Countries wishing to produce a detailed suite of indicators on this dimension should keep in mind that a comprehensive picture of financial decision-making power would include indicators on asset ownership and disposal. Such countries are referred to the EDGE report for guidance on producing these.

#### 4.8.2 Components of this dimension

195. This dimension encompasses four components:

##### *Component 1: Resource sharing—pooling, dividing and distributing income*

196. This component deals with the physical inflow and outflow of incomes. It includes where incomes are deposited, how incomes are organized or distributed between partners, whose income is used for which expenditures, and who pays the bills, irrespective of whose income is used. It captures real or perceived physical control over and access to financial resources.

##### *Component 2: Decisions about household expenditures*

197. This component deals with who makes decisions regarding purchases for the household. It differentiates between routine household purchases and less frequent larger purchases. It captures gender-specialization in purchasing for the household.

##### *Component 3: Decisions about financial planning, investments and saving*

198. This component captures the extent to which an individual is involved in planning for their own and others' future financial security. This includes planning for educational expenses, as well as investment, retirement and estate planning. It also includes how funds are allocated within these different categories of investments and savings.

##### *Component 4: Permission-seeking*

199. This component deals with power relationships with respect to spending. Separate from physical access to financial resources, this dimension captures whether individuals must ask (or feel they must ask) for permission prior to spending, and under what circumstances. Although extremely

challenging to disentangle, it is not intended to capture the coordination of spending that could be considered everyday money management (i.e., informing one-another for the sake of avoiding overspending and ensuring that necessary purchases are made).

### 4.8.3 Indicators and questions

200. For this dimension in particular, certain questions depend upon background or contextual questions that would need to be asked first. Even though these background questions are not measuring power and decision-making *per se*, they are noted below before the corresponding tables of indicators, to draw attention to the fact that they are necessary to give context to the decision-making questions.

#### *Component 1: Resource sharing*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
6.1.1	Organization of household income, by sex.	<p>How do you and your partner/spouse manage your household income?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I manage all the money and give my partner/spouse his/her share</li> <li>• My partner/spouse manages all the money and gives me my share</li> <li>• We pool all the money and each takes out what we need</li> <li>• We pool some of the money and keep the rest separate</li> <li>• We each keep our own money separate</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul> <p>In Canadian testing nobody answered at the extremes and 'each take out what we need' was not well understood. These categories have been used in the past, but preliminary results suggest they may not work everywhere.</p>	Q3.16 Generations and Gender Survey, Generations and Gender Programme, 2015, and was used in Canadian qualitative testing.

#### *Component 2: Decisions about household expenditures*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
6.2.1	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for decisions on	Who makes decisions about the following issues in your household?	Adapted from Q3.15 Generations and Gender

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
	how to divide household expenses, by sex.	<p>[how to divide household expenses]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always me</li> <li>• Usually me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse about equally</li> <li>• Usually my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always or usually someone else.</li> </ul>	<p>Survey, Generations and Gender Programme, 2015.</p> <p>*Could be added as option to Q3.15 in GGS or other surveys using this question.</p>
6.2.2	<p>Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for decisions on household expenses, by type of expenditure and sex:</p> <p>a) Routine purchases</p> <p>b) Occasional more expensive purchases.</p>	<p>Who usually/the majority of the time, makes decisions about the following issues in your household?</p> <p>[routine purchases for the household]</p> <p>[occasional more expensive purchases for the household]</p> <p>(country-specific examples should be added as prompts to aid respondent understanding)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always me</li> <li>• Usually me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse about equally</li> <li>• Usually my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always or usually someone else.</li> </ul>	<p>Q3.15 Generations and Gender Survey, Generations and Gender Programme, 2015.</p>
6.2.3	<p>Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for decisions on whether to borrow money alone or equally with their spouse/partner, by sex.</p>	<p>Who usually/the majority of the time, makes decisions about the following issues in your household?</p> <p>[borrowing money]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always me</li> <li>• Usually me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse about equally</li> <li>• Usually my partner/spouse</li> </ul>	<p>Adapted from PA060 EU-SILC Module on Intra-household Sharing of Resources, 2010 and formatted to</p>

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always or usually someone else.</li> </ul>	response options from Generations and Gender Survey, Generations and Gender Programme, 2015.  *Could be added as option to Q3.15 in GGS or other surveys using this question.

### *Component 3: Decisions about financial planning, investments and saving*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
6.3.1	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible financial investment and planning decisions, by sex.	Overall, who is mainly responsible for making financial investment and planning decisions [for example, education planning, retirement planning, estate planning, buying and selling property or assets] on behalf of the family? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always me</li> <li>• Usually me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse about equally</li> <li>• Usually my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always or usually someone else.</li> </ul>	FM_Q01 Financial Capability Survey, Canada, 2014 with response options from Generations and Gender Survey, Generations and Gender Programme, 2015.
6.3.2	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for decisions on the use of joint savings.	Do you and your partner/spouse have any joint savings? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes</li> <li>• No</li> </ul>	Adapted from PA070 EU-SILC Module on

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [If yes...]</li> </ul> <p>Who is mainly responsible for making decisions on the use of joint savings?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always me</li> <li>• Usually me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse about equally</li> <li>• Usually my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always or usually someone else.</li> </ul>	Intra-household Sharing of Resources, 2010 and formatted to response options from Generations and Gender Survey, Generations and Gender Programme, 2015.

#### *Component 4: Permission-seeking*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
6.4.1	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that they “always” or “almost always” feel free to spend money on purchases just for themselves, by sex.	<p>Assuming that there are sufficient funds available... [i.e. limit to those who answer yes, there is discretionary income in the household] Would you feel free to spend money on yourself without asking permission of other household members? [asking permission is not the same as informing] This includes spending money on personal items, hobbies, leisure and anything else that is just for you...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, always or almost always</li> <li>• Yes, sometimes</li> <li>• Never or almost never.</li> </ul>	Adapted from PA090 EU-SILC Module on Intra-household Sharing of Resources, 2010.
6.4.2	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that they “always” or “almost always” feel free to spend money on purchases for children in the household, by sex.	<p>Assuming that there are sufficient funds available... Would you feel free to spend money on children in the household without asking permission of other household members? [asking permission is not the same as informing] This</p>	Adapted from PA100 EU-SILC Module on Intra-household Sharing of

No.	Indicator	Example questions and observations	References
		includes giving children pocket money, paying for personal items, hobbies and leisure and anything else that is just for the children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, always or almost always</li> <li>• Yes, sometimes</li> <li>• Never or almost never.</li> </ul>	Resources, 2010.
6.4.3	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that they “always” or “almost always” feel free to spend money to cover unexpected expenditures, by sex.	Assuming that there are sufficient funds available... Would you feel free to spend, without asking permission of other household members, when faced with an unexpected expenditure (e.g., a home or car repair is needed, an appliance has broken)? [asking permission is not the same as informing] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, always or almost always</li> <li>• Yes, sometimes</li> <li>• Never or almost never.</li> </ul>	

#### 4.8.4 Suggested core indicators

- Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible financial investment and planning decisions, by sex.
- Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who are primarily or equally responsible for decisions on the use of joint savings.

#### 4.8.5 Considerations

201. A contextual question would be necessary for this dimension to permit identification of respondents who have money available for discretionary spending (so that those who cannot spend money on themselves due to the absence of such available money are not conflated with those whose inability to do so is a result of limited power to use money that is available). This could be: “*After essential expenses for the household have been met, is there usually any money left over for discretionary spending, for example, to spend on items for yourself?*” [answer options: yes; no].

202. Contextual questions may also be needed to determine the existence of individual and joint bank accounts and to discover where the respondent’s and partner’s incomes are channelled when received. For example: “*Do you have bank accounts in your sole name only, held in joint names with your partner/spouse or do you have both sole and jointly held accounts?*” [answer options: Sole account only; Joint account only; Both sole and joint accounts; neither sole nor joint] and “*Including*



*income from all sources, such as salary, social assistance, pension, etc., which bank accounts does your personal income go to? Is it...?”* [answer options: into your sole account; into the sole account of your partner/spouse; into the joint account; not applicable, no income; other].

203. While not strictly a decision-making question, it may be valuable to ask respondents about their degree of satisfaction with the division of incomes and/or expenditures (see also dimension 7). This could be done, for example, with a question such as: “How satisfied are you with the way that household expenses are divided between you and your partner/spouse? [answers on a ten-point scale from “Not at all satisfied” ... to “Completely satisfied”].

204. Financial surveys cover many topics that are closely related to, but not exactly the same thing as, intra-household power and decision-making. The inclusion of decision-making questions in financial surveys would therefore add richness to such surveys, at the same time as offering a platform for asking about the various contextual factors needed to explore financial decision-making (for example, before asking about decisions on the use of savings, it is necessary to know whether there are any savings).

## 4.9 Dimension 7: Perception of control and satisfaction with decision-making

### 4.9.1 Description and relevance of this dimension

205. All of the foregoing dimensions give the initial impression of being objective. In reality, of course, they are subjective. Who takes decisions, or how the decision-making is shared, is rarely something that is stated explicitly among household members; it is not necessarily clear to anyone involved in making a given decision how much influence each party had in reaching it; the distribution of influence is unlikely to remain entirely the same every time a decision is made; and partners may therefore not share the same view about who was or is the ‘main’ or ‘final’ decision-maker.

206. There is also a subtle difference between identifying the person who holds the most sway in making a single important decision—the person who ‘has the final say’, to use the wording of some existing survey questions—and identifying the ‘main decision-maker’ for decisions that are taken regularly or repeatedly, such as shopping or planning social interactions. The distribution of power in these two scenarios could theoretically be rather different. In the former case, the person identified as being mostly responsible for the one large decision is the holder of some kind of authority, or in some sense a ‘winner’ if it is envisaged that there is an initial lack of concordance between the intentions of the two partners. For example, if one partner thinks the household should buy a new car and the other does not, then the partner whose desire prevails clearly holds more power with regard to that type of decision. In the latter case, looking at the main decision-maker for repeated decisions, one need not assume any kind of underlying discordance or that any partner holds authority over the other. One partner may be the main decision-maker not because they are ‘winning’ in any sort of disagreement, but because there is a division of labour in decision-making such that the other partner is simply not involved in decisions on that matter. The difference is subtle but important for interpretation, since “who calls the shots when you disagree?” says something different about intra-household power than “whose mental energy is devoted to this issue?”, with the former bringing to the fore the concept of perceived control, or lack of it, and the latter raising issues of perceived fairness and mental load.

207. Goldstein et al (2017) showed that across several African countries the responses of both members of a couple to the DHS decision-making question about who was the main decision-maker for major household purchases were in agreement only 53 per cent of the time. The remaining 47 per cent of the time, each partner reported that the other was the main decision-maker, or each reported themselves as the main one. Relatedly, Heffring (1980) discussed Role Taking Accuracy, a measure of congruence “to ascertain the degree to which individuals agree on the roles they are performing. It may be that the incongruency exists because one or both members are inaccurate role takers (i.e., they are not meeting the expectations of others involved in the decision) either because true disagreement exists or due to miscommunication during the decision making process” (p. 495).

208. The subjective nature of the issues in question need not be an impediment to their measurement, however. After all, the Task Force is concerned not only with decision-making, but more generally with intra-household power. For a person to truly be empowered they must perceive themselves as such. According to Pigg (2002) “the empowerment of individuals is rooted in the psychology of power, the effects of 'feelings' and perception of powerlessness” (p. 112). In order to take decisions about important household matters, a person must not only have the freedom to make those decisions, but know, indeed, feel, that they have such freedom. Hence, this final dimension is concerned with subjective perceptions of control over household decision-making.

209. The relationship between the degree of control over household decision-making and the degree of satisfaction is far from straightforward and relates to aspects of personal identity and to the process of internalization of roles (performed or expected) within the family. It cannot be assumed that there is necessarily a positive correlation between the extent of decision-making power, the amount of perceived control over household matters, and the degree of satisfaction experienced by individuals in partnerships. That is, it cannot be assumed without closer examination that the power to make decisions promotes self-perceived well-being. Research conducted by Gumede (2009) in South Africa does provide some evidence for such a link, suggesting that “decision makers are on average more satisfied with their life than other adults in the household” (p. 1).

210. There are several reasons why this dimension is important. First, it is at the heart of what many development policies and programmes are really aiming for. Their proximate goals—income generation, education, nutrition, agricultural development, and so on—are done with the ultimate objective of empowering people as a means of improving their well-being. Enhancing subjective perceptions of such empowerment is therefore a valid policy objective. Second, discrepancies between ‘objective’ measures of the distribution of decision-making power and reported satisfaction with that distribution might give important insights to policymakers. For example, if indicators in the preceding dimensions show a very low degree of involvement in decision-making by women, yet those same women report a high level of satisfaction with this situation, this would provide valuable context for those designing development interventions.

## 4.9.2 Components of this dimension

211. This dimension encompasses three components:

### *Component 1: Disagreement in any of the preceding dimensions*

212. This component includes context-setting elements that determine whether or not, how frequently and in what contexts there is disagreement between partners. The component is not intended to place a value judgment on the frequency of disagreement: indeed it would be impossible to do so since not disagreeing could in some situations reflect a lack of power. Instead this component is intended to be context-setting, in preparation for the other two components.

*Component 2: Whether and how disagreements are resolved*

213. Disagreement can be resolved (or not) in several manners. In some situations it may be easier to find a resolution than in others, and the modalities with which this is achieved can vary. This component aims to capture what happens in the event that disagreement exists, in order to identify behaviours that are indicative of having more or less power (capitulation, aggression, etc.).

*Component 3: Overall sense of control and satisfaction with decision-making*

214. This component is intended to capture a broad perception of how partners feel about the distribution of power in their household. The inclusion of this component arises from two considerations: first, that the correlation between the extent of decision-making power and the degree of satisfaction cannot be taken for granted and should be tested, as discussed above; second, that it could be supposed that decision-making power in some of the preceding six dimensions holds a greater weight in determining the overall perception of power than that in other dimensions, or even that one or more of these dimensions on its own correlates closely with the overall sense of power. If this is the case, then in the future it might be possible using multivariate analysis to reduce the number of dimensions, if it could be shown that only a few of them correlate with the answer to a single question about the overall sense of control or power in the household.

### 4.9.3 Indicators and questions

215. Task Force member countries reported quite a wide range of existing survey questions on one or more aspects of this dimension. The Generations and Gender Survey and the related Swiss Family and Generations Survey, as well as the Italian Family and Social Subjects Survey, ask about the frequency of disagreement with the partner on a range of topics, whereas Colombia reported that the DHS asked whether a partner had made important decisions without consulting the respondent. Several different approaches to finding out about the resolution of conflicts can be found, including a follow-up question when a respondent reports conflict in a particular matter (Mexico), to a more generalized question about how each partner typically reacts to disagreements, regardless of the subject matter (Switzerland). The range of available survey questions on overall satisfaction with decision-making is equally wide. This makes it challenging to propose any particular indicator or survey question. Hence a very general indicator (6.3.3) is proposed, with the intention that its degree of correlation with decision-making in the preceding dimensions be investigated in future.

*Component 1: Disagreement*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
7.1.1	Frequency of disagreement with spouse over the last 12 months, by sex.	<p>Within the last 12 months, how often have you and your partner/spouse had disagreements about:</p> <p>[sex; paid work; household chores; healthy eating of household members; use of leisure time; relations with friends and relatives; child-raising issues; money]*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• never</li> <li>• seldom</li> </ul>	Inspired by Generations and Gender Survey, but with items relating to the six thematic dimensions of decision-making.

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sometimes</li> <li>• frequently</li> <li>• very frequently.</li> </ul>	

\*This question could be used in one of two alternative ways: either it could be asked all at once, as presented here, or else each item could be presented as a follow-up question to the related decision-making question(s) in a survey. In either case, the choice of items would need to be adapted to correspond to the decision-making dimensions under consideration.

### *Component 2: Whether and how disagreements are resolved*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
7.2.1	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that they frequently or very frequently give in to their spouse when there is a disagreement, by sex.	<p>Only is answer to previous q is not 'never':</p> <p>... and when you and your partner/spouse have a disagreement about [item], how often do you, personally, [avoid discussion by giving in; discuss your disagreement calmly; argue heatedly or shout; refuse to talk about it]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• never</li> <li>• seldom</li> <li>• sometimes</li> <li>• frequently</li> <li>• very frequently.</li> </ul>	Inspired by and adapted from Generations and Gender Survey and Swiss Families and Generations Survey.

### *Component 3: Overall sense of control and satisfaction with decision-making*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Example questions and observations</b>	<b>References</b>
7.3.1	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that they make the most important decisions in their relationship, by sex (always, usually or equally).	<p>Who would you say is the person in your relationship [who makes the most important decisions]?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always me</li> <li>• Usually me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse about equally</li> <li>• Usually my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always or usually someone else.</li> </ul>	Inspired by and adapted from Generations and Gender Survey and Swiss Families and Generations Survey.

<i>No.</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Example questions and observations</i>	<i>References</i>
7.3.2	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that their opinion prevails when there is a disagreement in their relationship, by sex (always, usually or equally).	Who would you say is the person in your relationship [whose opinion prevails when there is a disagreement]? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always me</li> <li>• Usually me</li> <li>• Me and my partner/spouse about equally</li> <li>• Usually my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always my partner/spouse</li> <li>• Always or usually someone else.</li> </ul>	
7.3.3	Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that they are satisfied with the way that the most important decisions are taken in their household, by sex.	How satisfied are you with the way that the most important decisions are taken in your household? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0 “Not at all satisfied”...</li> <li>• 10 “Completely satisfied”.</li> </ul>	

#### 4.9.4 Suggested core indicators

- Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that they make the most important decisions in their relationship, by sex.
- Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that their opinion prevails when there is a disagreement in their relationship, by sex.
- Proportion of individuals in co-residing couples who report that they are satisfied with the way that the most important decisions are taken in their household, by sex.

## Chapter 5 Selected test analyses of existing data

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216. The Task Force decided that an important aspect of its work, in accordance with the terms of reference, would be to investigate the extent to which intra-household power and decision-making could be analyzed with existing data in selected countries, without proposing new surveys, new modules or even new questions to countries – recognizing that many countries are already facing challenges to meet existing data collection demands placed on them.

217. The objective of this strand of work was to see how well currently-available datasets in selected countries permit meaningful, policy-relevant analysis of intra-household decision-making. This chapter is not intended to be a fully comprehensive analysis of all available data from any given country, nor of data from all countries that produce any relevant data (indeed, there are many countries for which a small amount of analysis could be conducted, while there are relatively few offering the prospect of a detailed analysis). Rather, the chapter is meant to be indicative of what is possible and where there are limitations.

218. Four countries represented on the Task Force – Belarus, Canada, Serbia and Turkey – produced analyses of existing datasets to investigate what could meaningfully be said about intra-household power and decision-making. In addition, analyses were performed by the Task Force on data from the multi-national Generations and Gender Surveys (GGS), with the same aims.

219. The Task Force agreed on some common features for the analyses, keeping in mind the very different nature of each of the datasets. The analyses were restricted to descriptive statistics. It should be borne in mind that the analyses presented below were conducted by the countries themselves, not by the Task Force as a group, and therefore they may not in all cases accord with the practices and approaches recommended in this publication.

### 5.1 Generations and Gender Surveys

220. As noted in chapter 3, the Generations and Gender Surveys (GGS)<sup>42</sup> include a battery of questions on decision-making which represents one of the few explicit efforts to measure intra-household decision-making in a systematic way in multi-country surveys outside developing-country settings.

221. The analyses below relate to data from the first wave of surveys, for ease of analysis since this wave offers the largest number of country datasets. The same questions are also used in subsequent rounds of the survey, and the section on intra-household decision-making will also be maintained in the new version of the questionnaire developed for the GGS round in 2020<sup>43</sup>. The new questionnaire is supposed to ensure comparability both with the Fertility and Family Survey (the predecessor to the GGS, conducted in the 1990s) and with the previous GGS rounds carried out in the 2000s.

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<sup>42</sup> Full information available from: <https://www.ggp-i.org/>.

<sup>43</sup> The new questionnaire developed for the GGS round in 2020 will include an additional question in the section on decision-making: “How do you manage your monthly expenses that you have together (e.g. rent, food, etc.)?” [answer options: I pay for everything alone; my partner pays for everything alone; we pay for both in approximately equal shares; we pay for both relative to our personal incomes; both of us pay for some of them, but there is no fixed rule.]

222. The questions considered for analysis were the following.

- “We have already talked about the various tasks that have to be done in a household. Now I would like to ask you some questions about decisions. Who makes decisions about the following issues in your household?”
  - routine purchases for the household
  - occasional more expensive purchases for the household
  - the time you spend in paid work
  - the time your partner/spouse spends in paid work
  - the way children are raised
  - social life and leisure activities<sup>44</sup>

[answer options: always respondent (R); usually R; R and partner (P) about equally; usually P; always P; always or usually other persons in the household; always or usually someone not living in the household; not applicable].

- “How do you and your partner/spouse organize your household income?”

[answer options: I manage all the money and give my partner/spouse his/her share; My partner/spouse manages all the money and gives me my share; We pool all the money and each takes out what we need; We pool some of the money and keep the rest separate; We each keep our own money separate; Other].

### 5.1.1 Results

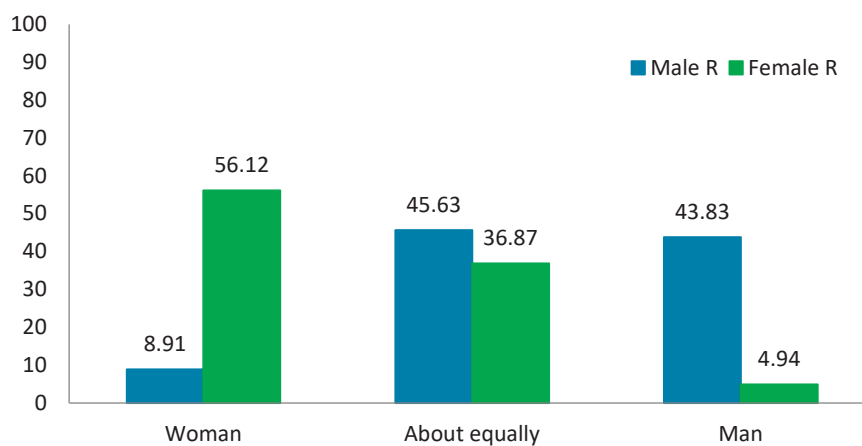
223. The analyses presented here consider combined data for all countries for which data are available<sup>45</sup>. Individual country-level analyses as well as analyses by geographical groupings of countries were also conducted but are not presented here for the sake of brevity. In general, the findings were broadly similar across countries, albeit with some individual country differences.

224. The following figures illustrate the distribution of reported main decision-makers in each of the decision-making areas covered in the GGS, by the sex of the respondent. This reveals not only the sex distribution of the main decision-makers in each area, but, perhaps more interestingly, the extent to which responses are consistent at the level of the survey population overall (it is not possible with these datasets to examine consistency at the level of actual couples, i.e. the extent to which both members of a couple report the same person as being the main decision-maker, since the survey includes responses from one person per household).

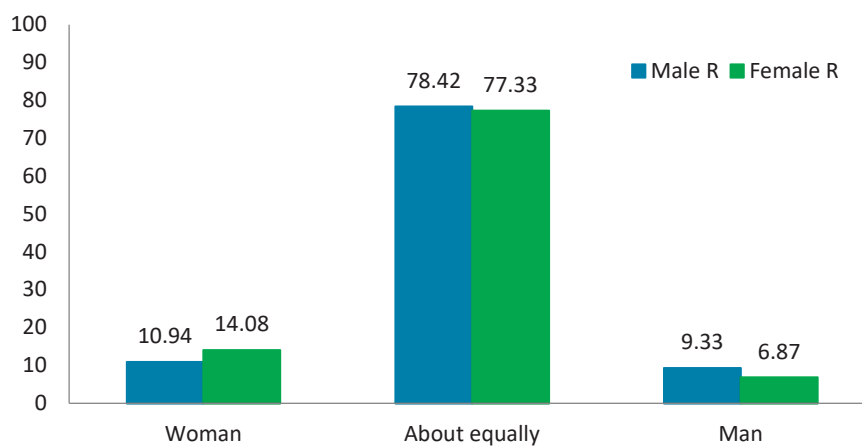
<sup>44</sup> The new questionnaire omits “social life and leisure activities”.

<sup>45</sup> Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, France, Georgia, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Sweden. Not all countries which conducted a wave 1 GGS used the decision-making questions, and in some cases different response categories were used. More detail can be found in Appendix 4.

**Figure 3:** *Usual decision-maker for routine purchases, by sex of respondent and sex of decision-maker, per cent*

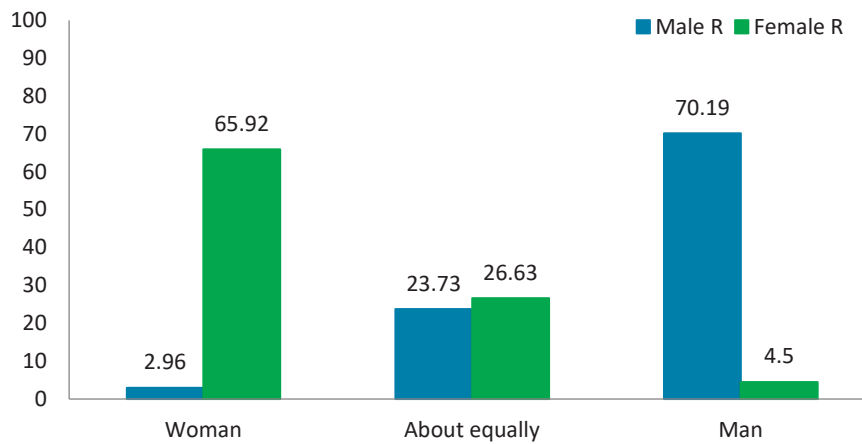


**Figure 4:** *Usual decision-maker for expensive purchases, by sex of respondent and sex of decision-maker, per cent*

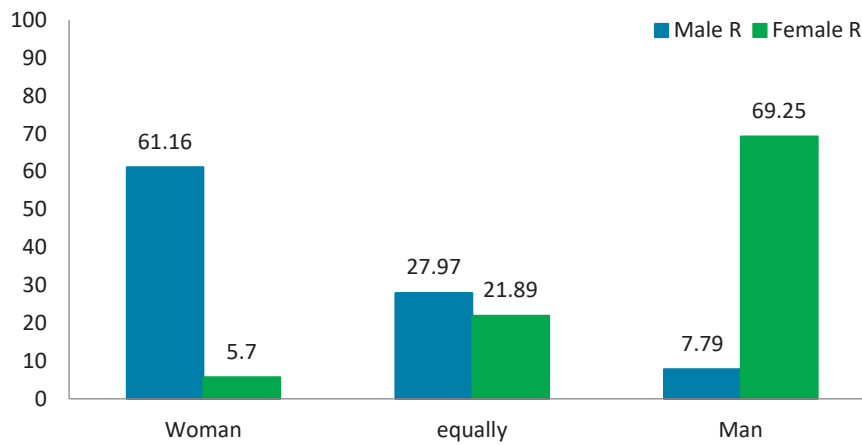




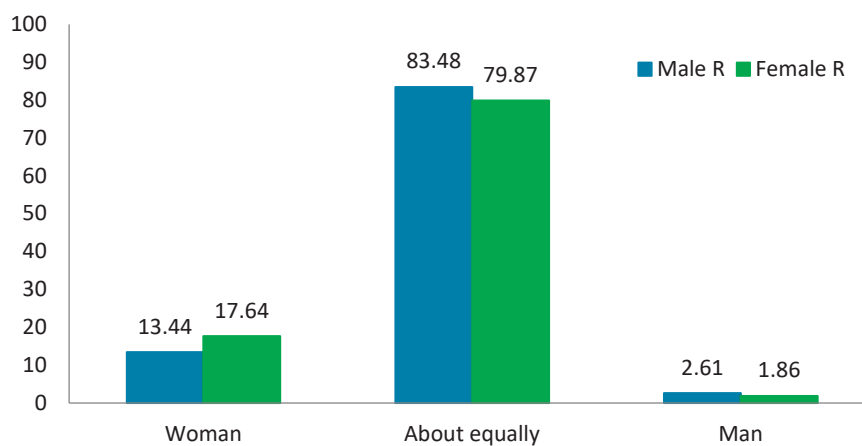
**Figure 5:** *Usual decision-maker about respondent's own paid work, by sex of respondent and sex of decision-maker, per cent*



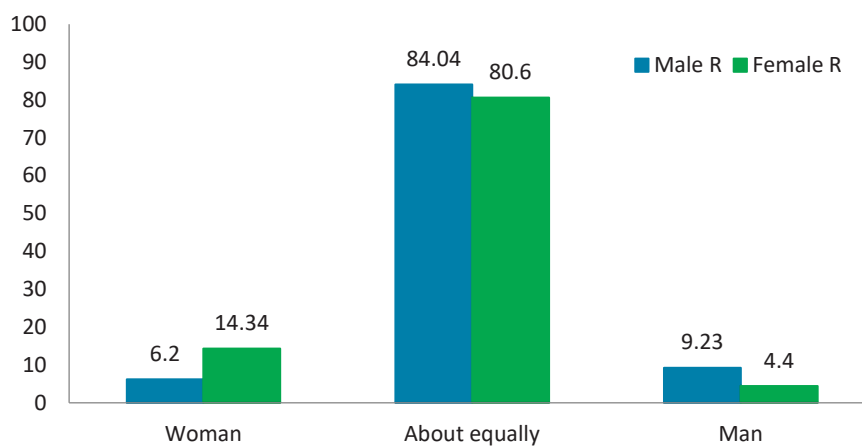
**Figure 6:** *Usual decision-maker about partner's own paid work, by sex of respondent and sex of decision-maker, per cent*

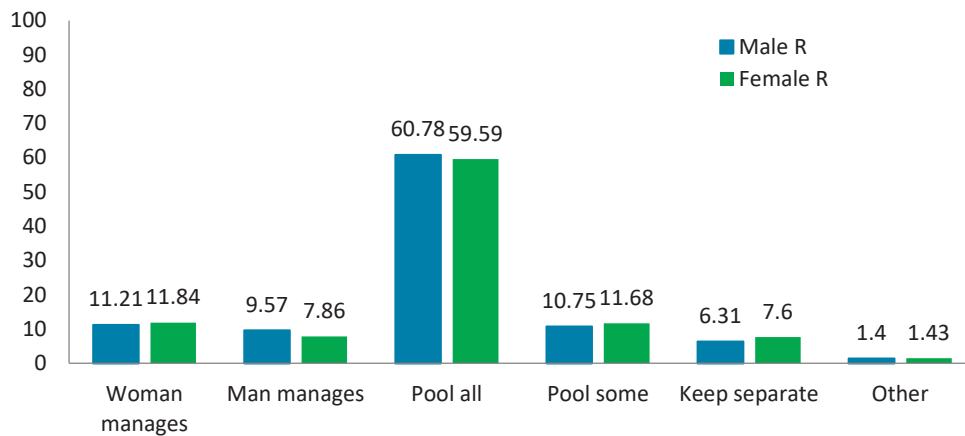


**Figure 7:** *Usual decision-maker about raising children, by sex of respondent and sex of decision-maker, per cent*



**Figure 8:** *Usual decision-maker about social activities, by sex of respondent and sex of decision-maker, per cent*



**Figure 9: Organization of household income, by sex of respondent, per cent**

### 5.1.2 Observations

225. The principal observation that can be made from these charts is that most decisions appear to be made jointly (and that this assessment holds true regardless of the sex of the respondent). The exception is decisions about partners' paid work which, unsurprisingly, are made primarily by the partner themselves. For the question on usual decision-maker for routine purchases, decision making seems to be rather equally spread over the three response options and dependent on the sex of the respondent.

226. In general, the country-level analyses (not shown) revealed that these patterns are rather similar across the countries. One notable exception is Italy. The correspondence between responses of male and female respondents e.g. regarding decisions about routine purchases or raising children are rather surprising. Unfortunately the dataset does not contain a variable showing the presence or absence of other persons during the interview (which may be part of the explanation).

## 5.2 Belarus

227. In 2019 a module on decision-making within the household was added to the annual household survey on living standards<sup>46</sup>. Relevant questions within this module included questions about the management of financial resources within the household, as well as the following questions:

- "Who is involved in making decisions about large purchases?"
- "Who is involved in making decisions about everyday purchases?"
- "Who makes decisions about the working hours of the woman (i.e. who decides on the participation of the woman in the labour market, and for how long she works)?"

<sup>46</sup> Information about sampling is available from: <https://www.belstat.gov.by/en/gosudarstvennye-statisticheskie-nablyudeniya/vyborochnye-obsledovaniya/vyborochnoe-obsledovanie-domashnih-hozyaistv/on-the-organization-of-sample-household-living-standarts-survey/> and a summary of the decision-making questions and results is available from [https://www.belstat.gov.by/upload-belstat/upload-belstat-pdf/vwbor\\_obsled\\_dom\\_hoz-prinyatie\\_resheniy-2019.pdf](https://www.belstat.gov.by/upload-belstat/upload-belstat-pdf/vwbor_obsled_dom_hoz-prinyatie_resheniy-2019.pdf) (both sources in Russian).

- “Who decides whether or not to increase the woman's level of education?”
- “Who decides on the woman's social activity (i.e. her social life and participation in leisure activities)?”
- “Who in the household makes important decisions to do with children’s upbringing?”
- “Who in the household makes important decisions to do with children’s education?”

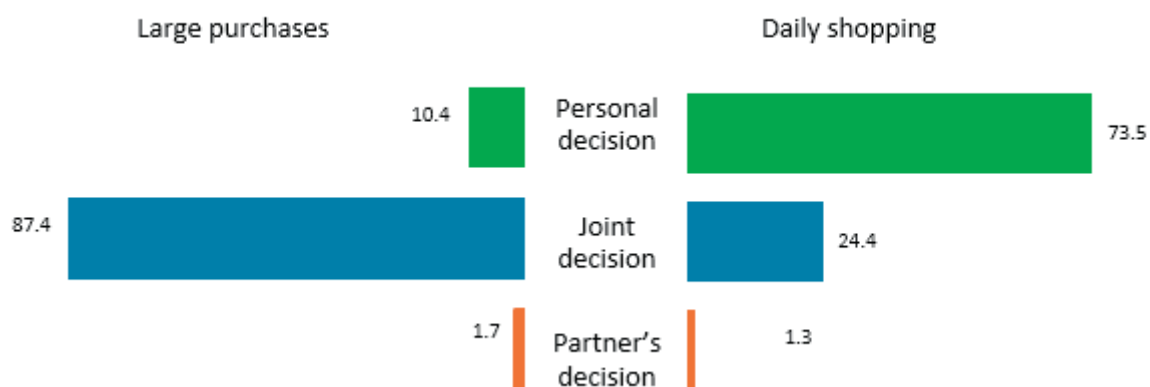
[answer options: own decision (i.e. respondent's decision); usually own decision; partner's decision; usually partner's decision; joint decision with partner; decision of other members of the household; decision of non-members of the household].

### 5.2.1 Results

228. The results considered here relate to 3,300 married women.

229. With respect to the management of household finances, a majority of such decisions appear, according to female respondents, to be taken jointly. Three-quarters of married women reported that such decisions are joint while only four per cent indicated that such decisions are taken by their partner. As the age of the responding women increases, the proportion who decide independently on the management of household finances increases and the proportion reporting that their partners make such decisions falls correspondingly.

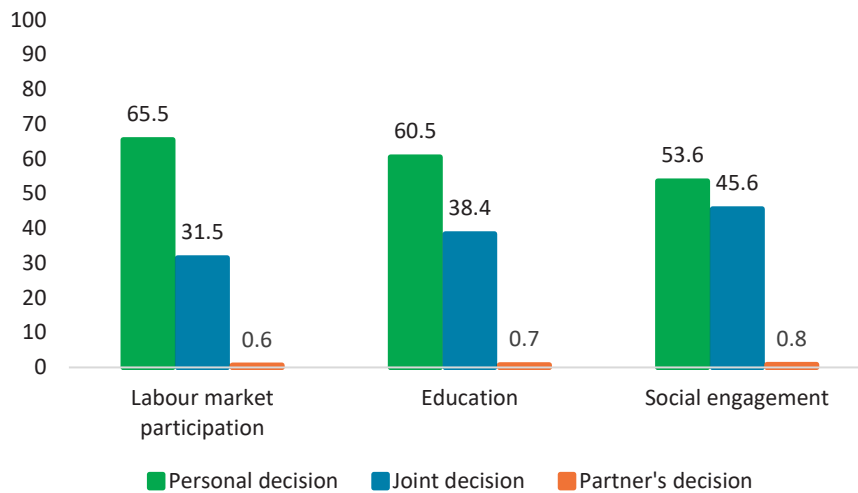
**Figure 10: Distribution of decision-making for large purchases and for daily shopping, female respondents, per cent**



230. When it comes to deciding on purchasing behaviour, women appear to make the majority of decisions about routine shopping while decisions on larger purchases are made jointly.

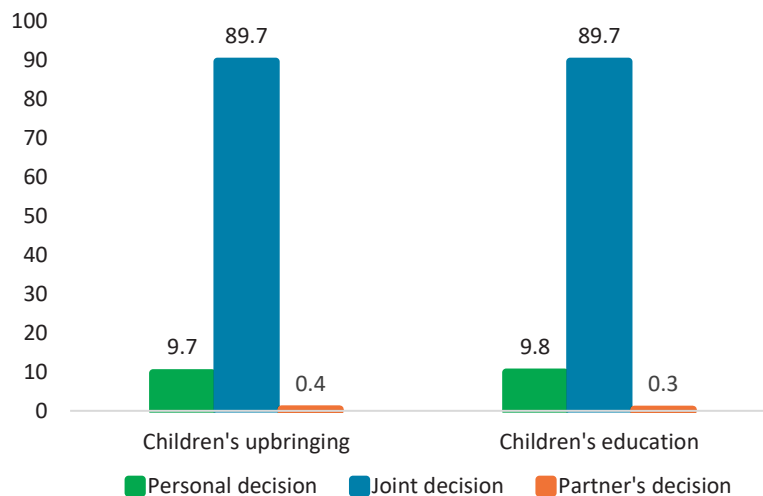
231. Women in Belarus also appear to be quite independent in making decisions that affect their daily interactions and activities: participation in the labour market, education and social life.

**Figure 11:** *Decision-making on women's labour market participation, education and social life, female respondents, per cent*



232. Almost 90 per cent of decisions about the upbringing and education of children in Belarusian families are, according to female respondents, taken jointly, with a further ten per cent taken by women.

**Figure 12:** *Decision-making on raising and educating children, female respondents, per cent*



## 5.2.2 Observations

233. The analysis of responses given by married women in Belarus reveals two things very clearly. First, a large majority of intra-household decisions appear to be made jointly between partners. Second, a very small minority are made independently by men (3 per cent of respondents reported that decisions on the management of household finances were made by their male partners alone, and fewer than 1 per cent for decisions on the education of children).

234. As was noted for the GGS data considered in the preceding section, the analysis of data from Belarus is limited by the fact that it considers only one respondent per household—in this case married women only. This is not to say that the responses are not 'true', but that they must be interpreted as

exactly what they are, which is a *perception* of how decisions are made in the household, according to the point of view of one family member, who cannot be expected to interpret their daily lived experience without some degree of subjectivity.

## 5.3 Canada

235. Test analysis was carried out by the Canadian Department for Women and Gender Equality. The analyses were conducted on 2011 data from the General Social Survey (GSS) on the Family<sup>47</sup> and from the 2014 Canadian Financial Capability Survey<sup>48</sup>. Both surveys had individuals as the sampling unit (aged 15+ in the former survey and ages 18+ in the latter). In the GSS the decision-making questions were asked of all individuals who were in a co-residential partnership (same-sex couples were not included in the analyses). The Financial Capability Survey asked decision-making questions of all respondents.

236. The analyses focused on household spending, and were guided by five research questions:

- 1) In Canada, are there gender differences in who makes decisions regarding routine daily household purchases versus occasional more expensive purchases?
- 2) Are age or employment status related to decision-making for daily/occasional purchases in couples?
- 3) Are there gender differences in who makes decisions regarding financial planning and investments?
- 4) Is the sex of the person mainly responsible for making investment and planning decisions related to whether the couple is saving for their child's education?
- 5) Do the responses of women and men converge?

237. The decision-making questions which formed the basis of these analyses were as follows:

General Social Survey:

- “Who in your couple/household mainly makes decisions regarding...?”
  - daily household purchases
  - more expensive purchases
- “Who in your couple/household mainly takes care of...?”
  - helping children with homework
  - organizing the household's social life
  - household finances and paying the bills.

Canadian Financial Capability Survey:

- “Who is mainly responsible for making financial investment and planning decisions on behalf of the family?”

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<sup>47</sup> Full information about the survey is available from <https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=getSurvey&SDDS=4501>.

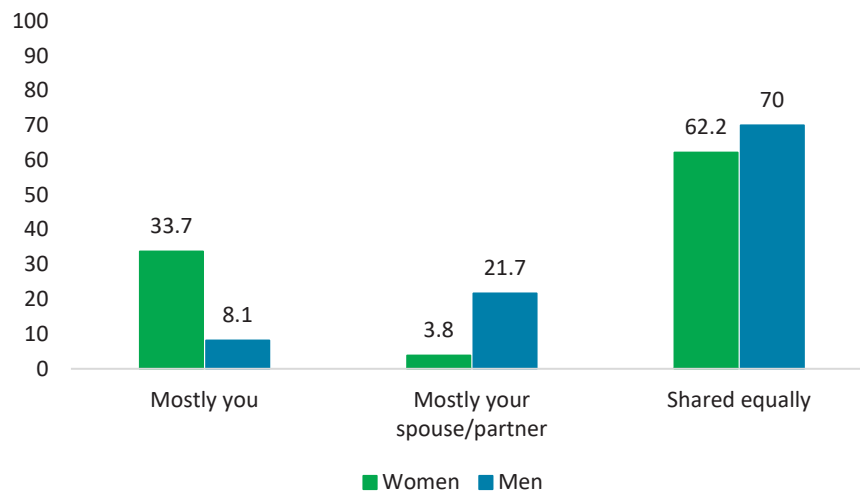
<sup>48</sup> Full information about the survey is available from <https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=getSurvey&SDDS=5159>.

## 5.3.1 Results

### 5.3.1.1 Daily household purchases

238. About 96 per cent of women report that either mainly they, or they and their spouse/partner equally make decisions regarding daily household purchases.

**Figure 13:** *Usual decision-maker about daily household purchases, by sex of respondent and sex of decision-maker, per cent*



**Notes:** Responses of “neither” are included in the calculation of distributions, but not shown.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2011

239. Most women and men say that decisions over daily household purchases are shared equally. Where the decision is not joint, women are more likely than men in couples to be responsible for such decisions: about one-third of women say that they are mostly responsible for these types of decisions, while about 22 per cent of men would agree (i.e. they report that their female partner makes such decisions).

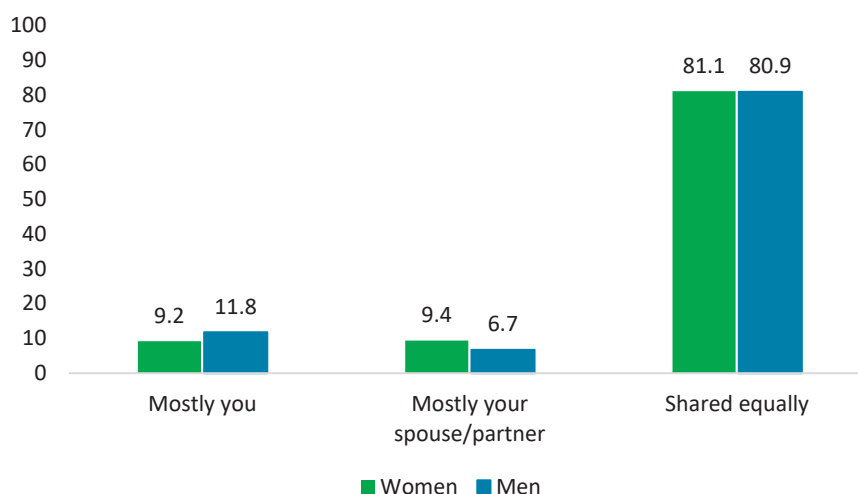
240. Analyses were also conducted on data broken down by age, to examine the extent to which the observed patterns vary across age groups. While the results are not presented here, it was found that with increasing age women become more likely to say that decisions are shared equally, whereas the opposite is true for men. Likewise, with increasing age, while women themselves become less likely to say that they mainly make decisions about daily household purchases, men do not seem to corroborate their view: with increasing age, men become more likely to say that their partner makes these decisions. This pattern is explained by responses from 25-to-54-year-olds, where there was a large difference in the proportion of women and men who reported equally sharing decisions—with men being more likely than women to report sharing decisions equally.

241. Data were also analyzed according to employment status. Employment status was not related to decision-making for household purchases for women, but men who were employed were less likely than those who were not employed to report being the main decision-maker.

### 5.3.1.2 More expensive purchases

242. About 90 per cent of women report that either mainly they, or they and their spouse/partner equally make decisions regarding occasional more expensive purchases for the household.

**Figure 14:** Usual decision-maker about more expensive purchases, by sex of respondent and sex of decision-maker, per cent



**Notes:** Responses of “neither” are included in the calculation of distributions, but not shown.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2011

243. When it comes to decisions about occasional large purchases, shared responsibility between partners is notably higher than for daily routine shopping. Women are equally likely to say that they or their spouse/partner mainly makes these decisions; men are more likely to say that they mainly make this type of decisions.

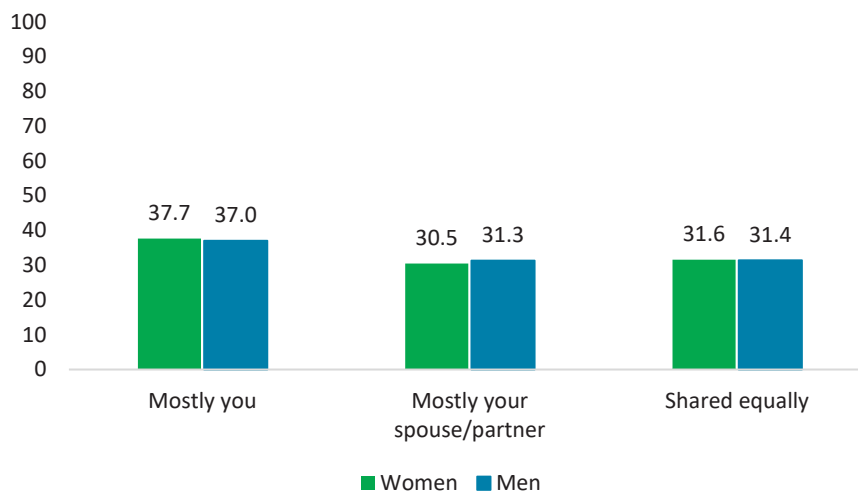
244. Both women and men who are employed are more likely than those who are not employed to state that they are mainly responsible for decisions regarding occasional more expensive purchases for the household.

245. Women were more likely to report sharing the responsibility for these decisions with age, and less likely to report that their spouse/partner made these decisions. This finding converged with data from men, indicating that with age, men become less likely to report being mainly responsible for these decisions.



### 5.3.1.3 Household finances and paying bills

**Figure 15:** Person who usually takes care of household finances and paying bills, by sex of respondent and sex of decision-maker, per cent



**Notes:** Responses of “mostly another household member” and “someone outside the household” are included in the calculation of distributions, but not shown. Sample is individuals living with their spouse/partner.

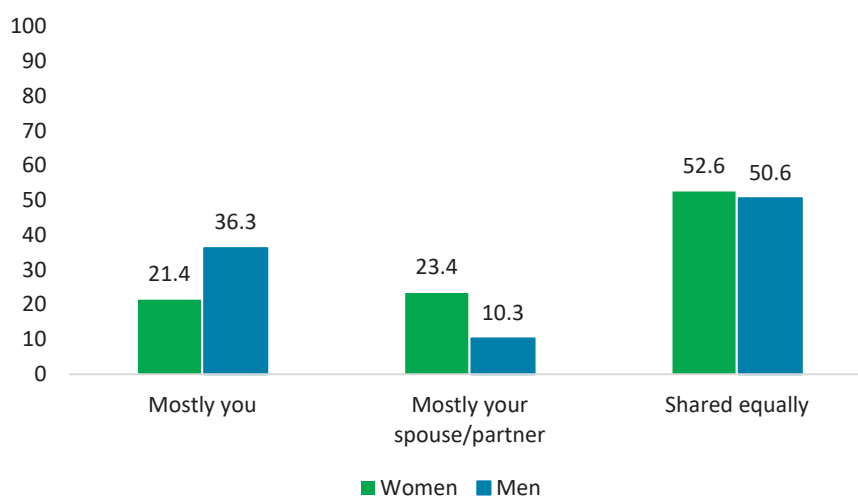
**Source:** Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2016

246. The tendency is for both women and men to report that they themselves mainly take care of household finances and paying the bills. This finding was consistent across two cycles of the General Social Survey (data from 2016 were also analyzed).

### 5.3.1.4 Financial investment and planning decisions

247. About 74 per cent of women report that either mainly they, or they and their spouse/partner equally make decisions regarding financial planning and investment.

**Figure 16:** *Person who is mainly responsible for making financial planning and investment decisions on behalf of the family, by sex of respondent and sex of decision-maker, per cent*



**Notes:** Responses of “other” are included in the calculation of distributions, but not shown. Sample is individuals who are married or in a common-law relationship.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Financial Capability Survey, 2014

248. The pattern observed here suggests that men perceive themselves as being more responsible for financial investment and planning decisions than women do.

### 5.3.2 Observations

249. As observed in the previous sections, these data examine responses from one individual in a household, reporting their perception of who makes decisions. It is worth considering whether the responses from women and men corroborate each-other, on an aggregate level. In a perfect scenario, where the responses of men and of women aligned perfectly, the heights of the two ‘shared equally’ bars in the preceding charts would be identical, while the heights of the ‘mostly you’ and ‘mostly your partner’ bars would be the inverse of one-another: when women say the they make most of the decisions, then men would say that their spouse/partner makes most of the decisions, and vice versa. Of course, the respondents surveyed here are not from the same couples or households so one could not expect exact convergence.

250. The analyses conducted suggest that there is some evidence that in Canada there are gender differences in who within heterosexual couples makes decisions regarding daily household purchases and occasional more expensive purchases. Whether these are good indicators of gender equality, which add value beyond what can already be gleaned from time-use data (e.g., unpaid work), remains an open question.

251. Some opportunity may lie in tracking an indicator of decisions related to financial planning and investment decisions: this is particularly relevant to Canada and other countries with an ageing population where gender differences in such decisions could have long-term impacts for gender differentials in economic security.

## 5.4 Serbia

252. Serbia conducted a diary-based Time-Use Survey (TUS) in 2010<sup>49</sup> (a more recent light time-use survey was conducted in 2015 using a diary with predefined activities, but no questions were asked that were relevant to the current topic).

253. The individuals' questionnaire contained two questions related to intra-household decision making. The first was:

- “Who decides how to spend the money you earn?”

[answer options: you alone; spouse/partner; together with spouse/partner; you with another member of the household; someone else].

254. This question relates to the degree of economic dependence or independence of the responding individual since it relates to money earned by that individual. It is concerned with both what this money is spent on, and how much money is spent. Decisions about the spending of the respondent's earnings not only reflect their personal autonomy but also sit within a broader picture of the total household expenditure and the structure of the household budget.

255. Data from this 2010 TUS show that the dominant answer for both sexes is that the decision is the consequence of joint decision-making (58.4 per cent). Among both men and women, approximately 30 per cent report making decisions about the spending of their own income by themselves, and overall the distribution of decision-making in this matter differs very little between the sexes.

Table 1: Distribution of decision-making about spending of own income, Serbia TUS 2010 (per cent)

	Respondent's sex		Total	
	Male	Female		
“Who decides how to spend the money you earn?”	You	31.2	27.6	29.6
	Spouse/partner	3.1	3.3	3.2
	Together with a spouse/partner	56.9	60.4	58.4
	You with another member of the household	8.3	8.2	8.3
	Someone else	0.5	0.6	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

256. The second question relevant for this analysis was:

- “Who in the household, in your opinion, usually decides on...?”
  - Matters relating to your health
  - Large purchases for the household
  - Daily purchases for the household
  - What will be prepared for meals
  - Visits to relatives or friends.

<sup>49</sup> More information about the survey can be found (in Serbian and English) from: <https://publikacije.stat.gov.rs/G2012/Pdf/G20126015.pdf>.

[answer options: you alone; spouse/partner; together with spouse/partner; you with another member of the household; someone else; not applicable].

257. Decisions relating to making large purchases for the household can be considered reflective of a relatively high level of economic power in the household. Focusing on this question, the table below shows that joint decision-making between spouses is the most common scenario reported by respondents, regardless of their sex. Women are somewhat more likely to take such decisions alone than men, according to the responses of both women and men, but the second most common response for both sexes is that ‘someone else’ (other than the respondent or their partner) takes such decisions.

*Table 2: Distribution of decision-making about large purchases for the household, Serbia TUS 2010 (per cent)*

	<i>Respondent's sex</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>		
<i>“Who usually decides on large purchases for the household?”</i>	You	14.7	18.2	16.5
	Spouse/partner	6.6	4.2	5.4
	Together with a spouse/partner	44.3	42.1	43.2
	You with another member of the household	14.3	16.0	15.2
	Someone else	19.5	19.0	19.3
	Not applicable	0.6	0.5	0.5
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>100.0</i></b>	<b><i>100.0</i></b>	<b><i>100.0</i></b>	

258. The foregoing demonstrates the potential for a gender-based analysis of intra-household decision-making in Serbia. While the two questions included within the TUS provide considerable material for analysis from a gender perspective, it should also be noted that the data can be disaggregated by other characteristics including status in employment, education, marital status, occupation, family structure, etc., each of which could enrich the analysis of gender relations.

259. These questions were included in the 2010 TUS of Serbia in order to provide data called for by the Serbian gender machinery. The questions were based on those used in the DHS. It is hoped that the same questions will be included in the 2020 TUS of Serbia.

## 5.5 Turkey

260. Turkey identified three surveys containing information relevant to the topic of this Task Force. The first of these is the Family Structure Survey (FSS), designed to investigate the family structure in Turkey, the lifestyles of individuals in the family and the values related to family life. The Family Structure Survey field application was conducted by face-to-face interviews via tablet computers, with all household members aged 15 years or older living at the sample household.

261. As a precursor to the test analysis on intra-household decision-making, analyses of the distribution of care work among household members (such as caring for young children, the sick and older people) confirmed that such work is undertaken primarily by women in Turkey, where low levels of institutional services exist to perform such care. The survey data also show that such care work is

generally accepted as the duty of women in Turkey. Analyses also showed that the distribution of household chores follows traditional gender lines, with washing, cleaning and cooking generally undertaken by women while repairs, paying bills and controlling finances is done by men. Daily shopping is done by both men and women.

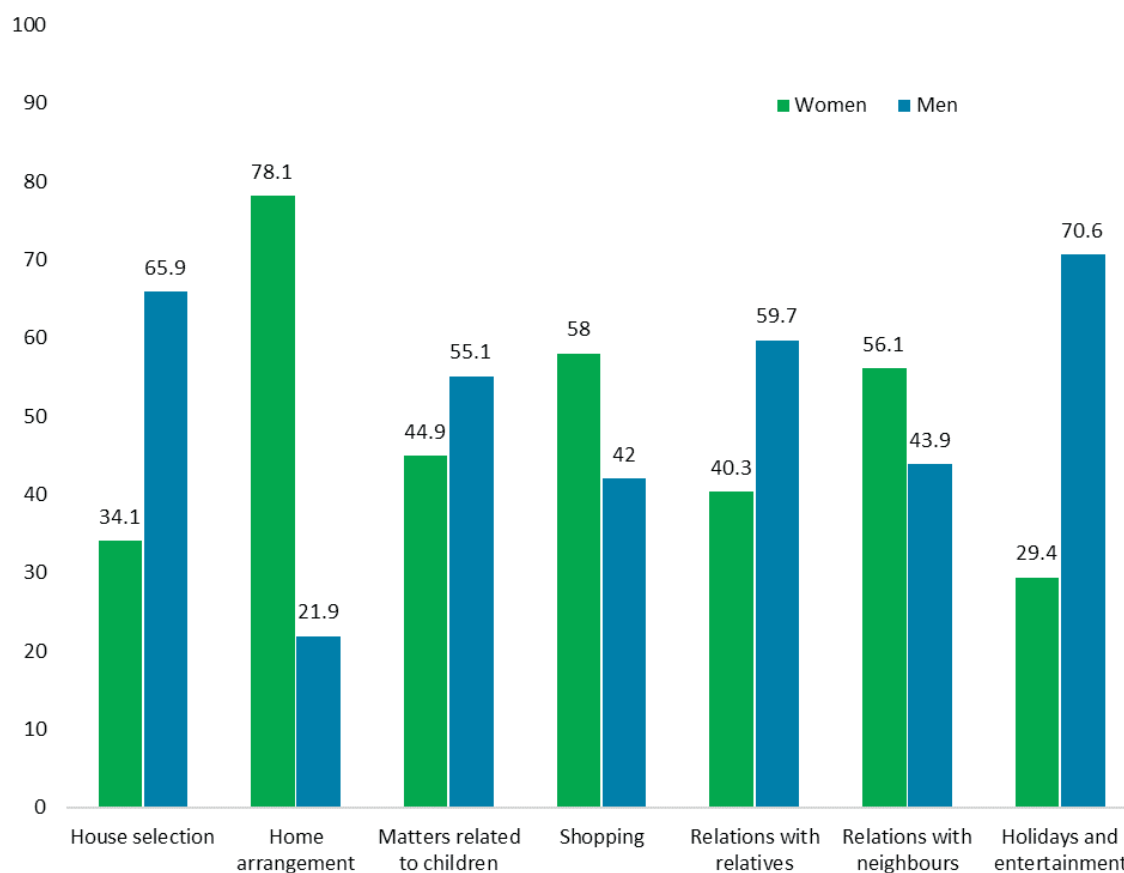
262. The survey also permits analysis of aspects of the distribution of power beyond the scope of the current work, such as attitudes towards women's paid employment and property ownership. It is important and valuable that these topics are all covered by the same survey, permitting a rich assessment of the situation regarding the distribution of power within households in Turkey. Clearly the topics are interlinked—women's labour force participation and their role in intra-household decision-making may each impact upon the other. However, for the sake of brevity and to maintain the focus on decision-making, the results of analysis of these broader topics are not presented here.

263. Against this background, the test analysis looked at data from this survey dealing with attitudes and decision-making in the home. These were analyzed by sex, age, education and marital status, family type, number of children, and place of residence.

264. The FSS contains one question in the household questionnaire concerning intra-household decision-making, with seven items:

- “Who makes the decision in your household about...?”
  - house selection
  - home arrangement
  - matters related to children
  - shopping
  - relations with relatives
  - relations with neighbours
  - holidays and entertaining?

265. The results from 2016 show that women are the main decision-makers in home arrangement (where the gender difference is large), shopping and relations with neighbours. Men, on the other hand, are more often the main decision-makers in matters relating to holidays and entertainment, choosing where to live and relationships with relatives.

**Figure 17: Usual decision-maker in household decisions, by sex of decision-maker, per cent**

266. The Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) is a sampling survey repeated every five years in Turkey and designed to produce data at the national level about fertility levels and variations, infant and child mortality, family planning and maternal and child health issues. For the DHS 2013, interviews were conducted with 11,794 households and 9,746 women of reproductive age (15-49).

267. Data on women's attitudes towards physical violence, controlling behaviours of husbands, and household decision-making roles contribute to an understanding of the factors determining women's status. It is thought that the questions about attitudes towards physical violence, controlling behaviours of husbands, and household decision-making roles were asked to women aged 15-49 in the survey can give an idea about the household power and decision mechanism in our society. These questions and their results are as follows:

268. In order to better understand attitudes towards gender roles, women were asked in the DHS-2013 whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of six statements about women's roles in the household, society, political life and about the education of male and female children. The statements for which they were asked if they agreed included: "the important decisions in the family should be made only by men of the family". Women are least likely to agree with the statement that "decisions in the family should be made only by men

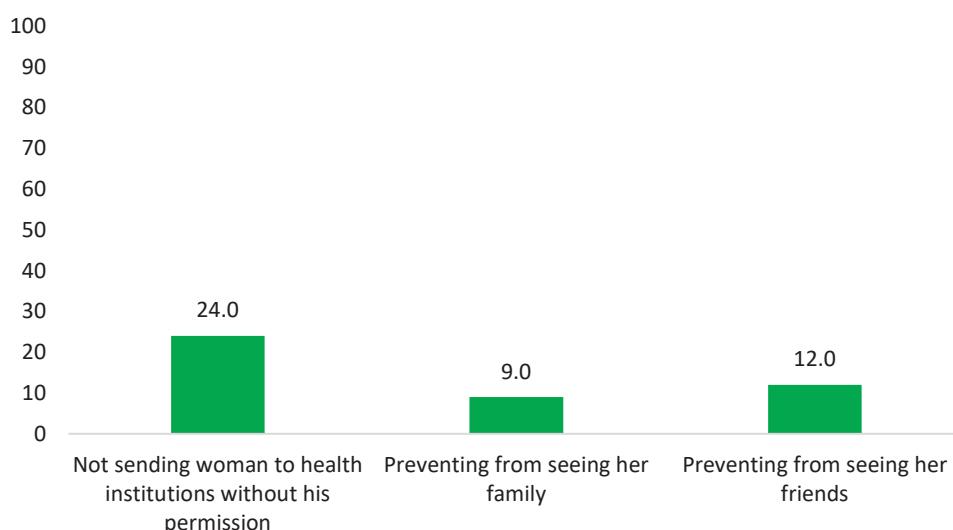
269. In the 2013 DHS, ever-married women and women who have marriage plans were also asked about selected controlling behaviours that they had experienced in their relations with their (last) husbands and husbands-to-be. The behaviours about which they were asked included: "preventing the woman from seeing female friends", "limiting her contact with her family", "insisting on knowing where she is", "distrusting her with money" and "accusing her being unfaithful". Women were asked

to categorize the frequency with which they experienced each behaviour (i.e., “often”, “sometimes” and “never”). The results show that the controlling behaviour women most often experienced involved the husband insisting on knowing where the woman is and preventing the woman from seeing female friends (33 per cent and 9 per cent, respectively).

270. The survey on “Domestic Violence Against Women in Turkey” was first conducted in 2008 and again in 2014. As a violence against women survey, it covered a range of topics related to various forms of violence (physical, sexual and emotional). The aspects of the survey relevant to the current analysis are controlling behaviours related to obtaining health care and to seeing friends and family.

271. The daily life activities of women such as the places they go and with whom, the clothes they wear, the people with whom they talk and the things they do, may be subject to control by a husband or intimate partner. While the survey considered a range of areas in which control may be exerted (blocking access to social networking sites, interfering with clothing, making accusations of unfaithfulness), the items most relevant for the present analysis are those related to limiting a woman’s ability to make decisions within the household. These decisions include seeking health care, seeing family, and seeing friends.

**Figure 18:** *Women reporting that they have been subjected to different types of controlling behaviours by their husband or intimate partner, Turkey 2014, per cent*



**Note:** Calculations are based on ever-married women aged 15-49.

## 5.6 Observations and conclusions from the test analyses

272. One of the overriding conclusions from the results shown above is that, from a methodological perspective, attempting to produce decision-making indicators using data from women and men who are not from the same couples presents clear challenges. It is not possible, for instance, to disentangle systematic gender differences in reporting (the *perception* of who decides) from actual differences in decision-making behaviour. Only when both members of the same couple are interviewed would it be possible to truly detect inconsistencies, and even then it would not be possible to make a pronouncement on whose responses are responsible for such inconsistencies and whose are in some sense ‘true’. One means of approaching this disentangling issue would be to try a yoked approach, in

which respondents could be linked to a 'surrogate spouse' within the sample, who has similar characteristics to the real spouse who does not feature in the sample (age, ethnicity, education, etc.)

273. A second common observation across the different countries conducting test analyses is that the existing availability of data, drawing on questions that are housed within different kinds of surveys with different purposes, sampling units and frequencies, permits only fragmented analysis of the topic at hand. Only a select few areas of decision-making are covered, and none can be analyzed in any appreciable depth. None of the volunteering countries would be able to produce indicators for all the seven dimensions of intra-household decision-making identified by the Task Force.

274. Part of the reason for this is that the different dimensions fit more comfortably within different kinds of pre-existing surveys: general household surveys, time-use surveys, gender-based violence surveys, or demographic and health surveys. It would be exceptionally challenging and probably unnecessary to attempt to combine questions pertaining to all the seven dimensions together into one single survey on decision-making—indeed, doing so would remove one of the great benefits of the current situation whereby decision-making questions are scattered among more wide-ranging surveys, which is that the decision-making questions and the other topics of each survey are mutually beneficial. The existence of decision-making questions can greatly enrich the possibilities for analysis presented by survey data (e.g. as in the case of the Serbian time-use survey, where the very small addition of the decision-making questions adds significantly to the analysis that could be performed on time-use data alone), while conversely the existence of other questions is valuable for the analysis of decision-making (as in the case of the Canadian and Turkish surveys, for example, where the context given by questions on labour force participation or on attitudes complements what is collected on decision-making and permits a nuanced analysis). This is an important conclusion since it leads to a recommendation that the simplest way to obtain data on intra-household decision-making is to add relevant questions to existing surveys, which in turn adds value to those surveys.

275. In conducting the test analyses on Canadian data, the researchers proposed that other types of research (qualitative and experimental) may be required to permit more in-depth analysis of intra-household decision-making.

276. A final observation stems from the fact that responses to some questions—such as in the Serbian time-use survey—appear to indicate a non-negligible share of decision-makers being someone other than one of the partners in a couple. This suggests that the current focus on the gender dimension of intra-household decision-making should not be viewed in isolation from other factors. Inter-generational relations and the ways that age, socioeconomic status and employment status may interact with gender and relationship status, for example, may also be important in some contexts. Hence it is important that these 'other' options exist as response categories, and it may even be valuable for the other person to be specified, as is the case in some countries' surveys. Recording background variables about the respondents and these other individuals may also be important.



## Chapter 6 Qualitative testing of selected survey questions

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### 6.1 Purpose

277. In early 2019 Canada undertook qualitative testing of potential survey content pertaining to intra-household power and decision-making. The specific objectives of the testing were:

- To obtain feedback from respondents on their overall impressions of, and reactions to, the content.
- To test respondents' ability and willingness to respond to the questions, including an assessment of the sensitivity of the questions.
- To test the cognitive processes of respondents in answering the questions. (i.e., did respondents understand specific concepts, terminology, questions and response categories? Did respondents have the information being requested and could they relay it accurately?)
- To determine the appropriateness and completeness of the response categories.

### 6.2 Methods

278. Face-to-face interviews were used to test potential survey content with respondents on a one-on-one basis. A total of 38 interviews took place in three Canadian cities—Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal—between 28 January and 20 February 2019. Most interviews were relatively short in duration, lasting between 30 and 40 minutes. The small number of respondents reflects the fact this initial stage of qualitative testing is the first among what could be many more stages of testing, with larger respondent groups.

279. Recruitment of respondents was carried out based on certain specifications. Recruiters aimed for a mix of respondents with different sexes, ages, linguistic profiles (i.e., English and French), levels of education and income, and family structures. Ultimately:

- Most respondents in each city were in the core working ages of 25 to 54.
- All respondents currently lived in a heterosexual couple (married or common-law), or they had done so some time in the past five years.
- About 10 respondents in each city had a child or children under the age of six.
- A few respondents currently lived in blended families.

280. An important limitation of this qualitative testing of potential survey content on intra-household power and decision-making is that the findings are not directly representative of all potential respondents from the target population. Therefore, any kind of inference should be made with caution.

## 6.3 Content and observations

281. Potential survey content pertaining to four of the seven dimensions of intra-household power and decision-making identified by the Task Force was tested: union formation and sexual and reproductive decision-making; decisions about division of labour; decisions about children's upbringing and education; and financial decision-making. It should be noted, however, that the content tested does not represent an exhaustive list of potentially relevant questions for each dimension.

282. Some questions and response categories were modified slightly after testing was conducted in the first city, Ottawa. The most recent question wording and order is presented here (unless otherwise stated) to avoid confusion, and specific recommendations pertain to that wording and order.

### 6.3.1 General impressions

283. Overall, respondents reacted positively to the questions asked of them. There were no major issues in terms of understanding or answering the majority of the questions. Participants would sometimes want to explain the dynamics between themselves and their partner in more detail, as if they wanted to somehow justify their responses, or maybe just ensure that they had clearly understood the intent of the questions. In any case, their interpretations of the intent of questions were generally correct.

284. Many participants commented that they found the questions to be very interesting as they made them take a moment to think about, or assess, how the different tasks and decisions were handled in their relationship. When asked, many respondents said they felt they were providing an accurate picture and that their spouse would likely provide similar answers.

285. Respondents expressed no concerns regarding the sensitivity of questions or confidentiality. A few respondents found the questions about contraceptive methods to be a bit surprising, mostly because they were not expecting these types of questions to come right after questions about household finances. They did not object to the questions *per se*, but to their placement *vis-à-vis* other questions.

286. Many respondents were asked if they felt that their answers would be consistent with those that their partner/spouse would provide to the same questions. Respondents generally felt confident that the interview would receive the same answers from their partner/spouse.

#### 6.3.1.1 Dimension 1: Union formation, sexual & reproductive decision-making

- “In the past 12 months, have you or your spouse/partner used any contraceptive method(s) to prevent a pregnancy?”

[answer options: Yes; No]

- “Who in your household made the decision on whether or not to use contraceptive methods?”

[answer options: Mostly you; Mostly your spouse/partner; Both yourself and your spouse/partner; Neither].

287. Some respondents who had been surgically sterilized were unsure whether or not that would be considered a “contraceptive method.” It would therefore be worthwhile to include examples of contraceptive methods in the question/s. Alternatively, these questions could be preceded by the following question: “Have you had an operation or medical procedures that makes it impossible for you to have a child/another child?”

- “Do you intend to have another/a] child sometime?”

[answer options: Definitely yes; Probably yes; Probably not; No, definitely not; Unsure]

- “Who in your household will make the decision on whether or not you will be having another child sometime?”

288. Some younger female respondents were appalled by the notion that someone other than themselves would decide whether or not they will have a/another child in the near future. In a similar vein, other respondents considered this last question to be outdated.

### 6.3.1.2 Dimension 2: Decisions about division of labour

- “Who in your household made the decision about whether or not you should work at a paid job or business?”
- “Who in your household made the decision about whether or not your spouse/partner should work at a paid job or business?”

[answer options: Mostly you; Mostly your spouse/partner; Both yourself and your spouse/partner; Neither].

289. The “neither” category was dropped after the first set of interviews in Ottawa, since it was never selected by respondents there. Respondents understood “mostly” as meaning “I/my partner/spouse made the decision more than half of the time”.

290. Respondents in Ottawa were presented alternative response categories to the ones listed above, which provide “always” options (i.e., “Always you,” “usually you,” “you and your partner/spouse about equally,” “usually your partner/spouse,” “always your partner/spouse,” and “always or usually someone else”). Respondents preferred the original set of response categories, with fewer options.

291. Respondents in Ottawa were also presented with these alternative questions:

- “Who in your household has the main decision-making authority on whether or not you should work at a job or business?”
- “Who in your household has more power in making decisions on whether or not you should work at a job or business?”

292. Many respondents expressed that they really did not like the use of the word “authority” which was felt to be too harsh (i.e. it sounds like the other person would not have a say at all). Although it was not as strong, quite a few participants also disliked the use of “power” in the second option, for the same reasons. Both words seemed to have a negative connotation to them. One respondent suggested using something like: “Who in your household takes the lead in making decisions on

whether or not you should work at a job or business?” Another one suggested using the word “influence” instead of “power.”

293. In the end, it was clear that the original questions worked best because they were easy to understand and inoffensive.

- “Who in your household makes the decision regarding the following:
  - The amount of time your spouse/partner spends working at a job or business?
  - The amount of time your spouse/partner spends doing unpaid work in the home (*e.g. household chores, childcare, etc.*)”

294. Respondents were puzzled by the first question (a) because they had never had a specific discussion with their partner/spouse about time spent on paid work; instead, each partner/spouse decided for him/herself. Respondents found the examples provided in the second question (b) to be useful for understanding what is meant by “unpaid work in the home.”

295. In Ottawa, respondents were presented with these alternative questions:

- “Most of the time, who decides on how paid activities are distributed within your couple?”
- “Most of the time, who decides on how unpaid activities are distributed within your couple?”

296. This question wording was not well understood by respondents, as they struggled to understand what was meant by “paid activities” and “unpaid activities” in the absence of examples. Some respondents understood “unpaid activities” (as opposed to “unpaid work”) to refer to volunteering. For this reason, the original question wording is preferable.

297. In Toronto and Montreal, the original set of questions was replaced with the following ones:

- “Who in your couple makes the decision on the amount of time you spend working at a paid job or business?”
- “Who in your couple makes the decision on the amount of time your spouse/partner spends working at a paid job or business?”
- “Who in your couple makes the decision on the amount of time you spend doing unpaid activities in the home? (*e.g. household chores, childcare, etc.*)”
- “Who in your couple makes the decision on the amount of time your spouse/partner spends doing unpaid activities in the home? (*e.g. household chores, childcare, etc.*)”

298. Although these questions worked well, they were repetitive.

- “Did you have a job or were you self-employed before the birth/adoption of your youngest child?”
- “Did the other parent have a job or was s/he self-employed before the birth/adoption of your youngest child?”

*if yes:*

- “Did you take maternity/paternity leave following the birth/adoption of your youngest child?”

- “Did the other parent take maternity/paternity leave following the birth/adoption of your youngest child?”
- “Who made the decision about whether or not you took a maternity/paternity leave?”  
[answer options: Mostly you; Mostly the other parent; Shared equally; Neither].
- “Who made the decision about whether or not the other parent took a maternity/paternity leave?”  
[answer options: Mostly you; Mostly the other parent; Shared equally; Neither].
- “Did you go back to work after your maternity/paternity leave for the birth of your youngest child?”  
[answer options: Yes; No]
- “Who in your household made the decision about whether or not you went back to work after your maternity/paternity leave?”
- “Did you return to the same job?”  
[answer options: Yes; No]
- “Did you go back to work full-time or part-time after the maternity/paternity leave?”  
[answer options: Full-time; Part-time]
- “Who in your household made the decision about whether or not you went back to work part-time or full-time after your maternity/paternity leave?”

299. The above questions were asked of respondents with a child or children, regardless of the age the children, in reference to their youngest child. Generally, respondents had no difficulty answering these questions, even if the relevant decisions were taken many years prior to the interview. However, some respondents stated that alternative courses of action were never discussed as a couple.

300. The questions are currently worded in terms of “maternity and paternity leaves.” It may be worthwhile to move toward generic terminology (i.e., “parental leave”).

- “What are the reasons why you went back to work part-time?” *Mark all that apply:*  
[answer options: You preferred to work part-time; Your spouse/partner preferred that you work part-time; You could only work part-time for child-related reasons; You were already working part-time before the maternity/paternity leave; Other reasons]
- “Are you still working part-time?”  
[answer options: Yes, working part-time; No, working full-time; No, no longer working]

301. The questions above were tested infrequently, as an existing Canadian survey (the General Social Survey) includes a similar question: “When you returned to work, what was the main reason

*why you worked part-time?*" [answer options: Financial situation permitted; employer permitted; gradual return, facilitate transition; work retirement; to stay longer with child/ren; did not find day care; sickness or disability.]

### 6.3.1.3 Dimension 5: Decisions about children's upbringing and education

- "In the past 12 months, have you made arrangements for your youngest child to be looked after because of work or any other reason?" *Include childcare that is paid or not.*

[answer options: Yes; No]

- "What is the main childcare arrangement you are currently using for your youngest child? Is it...?"

[answer options: In the child's home; A home daycare; A preschool centre or a nursery school; A daycare [or CPE50]; Before or after school programme; Another type of childcare]

- "Who in your household made the decision on choosing this type of childcare?"

[answer options: Mostly you; Mostly the other parent; Shared equally; Neither].

302. These questions were asked of all respondents with a child or children, regardless of the age of the children, in reference to their youngest child. Respondents had no difficulty recalling decisions about childcare arrangements, even when they occurred many years prior to the interview.

### 6.3.1.4 Dimension 6: Financial decisions

- "How do you and your partner/spouse manage the household income?"

[answer options: You manage all the income and give your partner/spouse his/her share; Your partner/spouse manages all the income and gives you your share; You pool all the income together and each takes out what they need; You pool some of the income together and keep the rest separate; You each keep your own income separate; Other].

303. In most cases, respondents felt comfortable picking one of the response categories provided. However, many respondents spent some time considering and then explaining how they managed their income, suggesting that the options provided did not perfectly reflect their arrangement. Notably, the first and second response categories were never selected by respondents.

- "Who in your couple mainly takes care of:
  - a) daily household purchases (e.g. grocery shopping)
  - b) occasional more expensive purchases for the household
  - c) the household finances and paying the bills
  - d) financial planning for the household (*e.g. making financial investment, borrowing money*)?"

[answer options: Mostly you; Mostly your spouse/partner; Shared equally; Neither].

304. Some respondents were unclear as to whether "taking care of" a given item meant doing it or paying for it. Question d presupposes that the couple engages in financial planning for themselves as

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<sup>50</sup> CPE: *Centre de la petite enfance* (early childhood centre).

a unit. Some respondents answered that they “shared equally” financial planning for the household, but clarified that they and their partner/spouse made their own decisions about savings and did not have joint savings.

- “What is your financial contribution for paying:
  - a) The rent or mortgage?
  - b) For groceries?
  - c) For child-related expenses such as childcare and clothing;
  - d) For electricity, heating, telephone, cable, Internet bills, etc.
 Do you pay: ...?”

[answer options: For all the amount; For more than half; For half; For less than half; Or you do not pay]

305. These questions performed well with respondents.

- “On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means you are not at all satisfied and 10 means you are very satisfied, how satisfied are you with the division of household expenses between you and your partner/spouse in general?”

[answer options: 0 “Not at all satisfied” ...10 “Very satisfied”].

306. Respondents liked the idea of a scale from 0 to 10 because it gave them more options to express themselves than a standard Likert scale.

- “Do you and your spouse/partner have joint savings?”

[answer options: Yes; No].

307. Originally, this question was worded as: “Usually, after essential expenses are paid, is there any money left that you and your spouse/partner can set aside for larger, unforeseen expenses or just savings?” However, respondents seemed to think that it presupposed that couples have a joint savings account. The decision was made to replace the original question with the one above, but it is not a full replacement since they do not address the same issues.

- “Who in your couple makes the decisions regarding the use of joint savings?”

[answer options: Mostly you; Mostly your spouse/partner; Shared equally; Neither].

308. Respondents who responded “yes” to the previous question were asked this question, which they found to be unproblematic to answer.

- “Assuming that there are sufficient savings available...
  - a) Would you feel free to spend money on yourself without asking permission of your spouse/partner? *For example, spending money on personal items, hobbies, leisure or anything else that is just for you.*
  - b) Would you feel free to spend money on children in the household without asking permission of your spouse/partner? *For example, giving them pocket money, paying for personal items, hobbies, leisure or anything else that is just for the children.*
  - c) Would you feel free to spend money on an unexpected expenditure without asking permission of your spouse/partner? *For example, fixing the car or a broken appliance.”*

[answer options: Definitely yes; Probably yes; Probably not; No, definitely not; Unsure].

309. Some respondents bristled at the word “permission” in the question, as they felt that it was paternalistic/maternalistic and demeaning. In Toronto and Montreal, certain respondents were additionally asked to provide the amount of money they would feel comfortable spending without consulting with their partner/spouse.

## 6.4 Conclusions and recommendations

310. The qualitative testing exercise in Canada permits some valuable conclusions applicable to all countries. It is important to ensure that question wording is understood well by respondents and that it gets to the intent of the question—hence ‘taking care of’ something may be problematic if respondents do not know whether this means paying for it, deciding to do it, or actually doing it. Words such as power and authority apparently are ‘loaded’ (Hippler and Schwarz 1986) and should be avoided. Similarly, it may be necessary to adjust wording towards more everyday terms rather than using the terminology of social sciences: ‘unpaid work’ is a term well understood in academia but may seem like a contradiction in terms to some respondents, while ‘distribution’ of household activities may be too far from the everyday understanding people have of their own lives to be correctly interpreted by respondents.

311. An overarching conclusion of the testing is that in many cases, for decision-making questions to make sense (and to ensure that they are directed at the respondents to whom they might apply), they must be preceded by contextual questions which set the scene: such as establishing whether or not respondents have children, their employment status, whether they have savings available, etc. This means that locating decision-making questions within the setting of a larger household survey is likely to be valuable since many such questions are already being asked anyway. A stand-alone survey on decision-making would need to include a great many contextual questions.

312. In applying the findings of this Canadian qualitative testing to other countries, it would be essential to take into account cross-national variation and cultural norms. For example, while this testing found that young women were taken aback to be asked about who decided on their childbearing, this may not be the case in all countries. Similarly, some of the tested questions revealed little or no variation, with some options never being selected by test respondents, meaning that the answer options or even the questions may not be so valuable in Canada—but the same questions may lead to more variation in answers in other countries (e.g. questions about labour force participation or financial decisions). This underscores the fact that qualitative testing is essential for all countries proposing to embark on the measurement of intra-household power and decision-making. While the lessons learned from the Canadian case provide valuable information for others, the cultural contexts of each country mean that not all of the conclusions will be internationally transferable.



## Chapter 7 Recommendations and further work

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313. Much of this Guidance has dealt with ideas and suggestions. There are also some concrete recommendations emerging from the work. Each has been raised within the foregoing chapters—the following is a summary of recommendations that have been discussed at length throughout the preceding chapters.

### 7.1 Overarching recommendations

314. Existing, commonly-used questions on intra-household decision-making may not be sufficiently nuanced or well understood by respondents to be freely re-used in all circumstances. As discussed in chapter 3, the most commonly-used questions may not be sufficiently time-bound and behaviour-specific to be easily (and similarly) interpreted by different respondents, especially when their cultural circumstances vary. Countries wishing to produce more comprehensive information on the topic therefore must recognize that power and decision-making are complex. There are many kinds of decisions taken within a household, covering many dimensions and carrying different weights in terms of the impacts on the household and its members; and the modalities of reaching each kind of decision cannot be assumed to all be the same. In particular, some kinds of decisions may be taken from a position of power whereas the duty to be the main decision-maker in other arenas could be a reflection of a lack of power. As such, this Task Force recommends that:

- a) the common survey questions used in multi-topic household surveys in developing country settings should not be applied to other settings without adaptation
- b) simple indices of decision-making based on combining all decision-making domains in a survey, with equal weight, should be avoided as they mask the unequal weights of different kinds of decisions in real experience, as well as the possible opposing forces of implementation and orchestration power (rights versus duties to make certain kinds of decisions).

315. At the current stage of development of this topic, no specific wording of questions or response categories can be recommended as being the ideal formulation. Such recommendations would need to be supported by considerable qualitative testing. The testing that has been conducted so far, as reported in chapter 6, suggests some general approaches and some terms to avoid in questions (such as the words ‘power’ and ‘authority’), but so far there is no consensus on the ideal phrasing of questions. Furthermore, countries must note that the interpretation and acceptability of different question wording is likely to vary across countries due to cultural differences. As discussed in chapter 6, qualitative testing is therefore essential for all countries proposing to embark on the measurement of intra-household power and decision-making. Nevertheless, international comparability should be one of the aims of producing indicators on this topic, and as such countries are encouraged to use broadly similar formulations to aid cross-country comparisons. The same applies within countries, across surveys, where the use of similar phrasing would permit the comparison of indicators deriving from a variety of data sources.

316. The likelihood of cross-country differences must also be taken into consideration in deciding which indicators are relevant to a given country. The broad variety of cultural contexts in the UNECE region means that indicators dealing with childcare arrangements, health care provision, division of paid labour, personal liberties, sexual behaviour and many more, will have different meaning and relevance in different countries, and in some cases it would be inappropriate or unacceptable to produce them or they would need modification to fit the context.

317. It is necessary for data producers acknowledge and embrace the subjectivity of this topic, and therefore of the responses that will be obtained in surveys. Hence incongruent responses (whether from two partners in a given couple, or in general across all respondents when asked whether they or their partner take decisions) should not be interpreted as meaning that one or other respondent or respondent group is wrong, or that the question is wrongly-phrased and eliciting misleading responses. Since power has both objective and subjective aspects, people's subjective feeling about whether or not they can take decisions cannot be discounted when trying to understand power. It is therefore recommended that these subjective questions be afforded due consideration in surveys, including those usually confined to more traditionally objective approaches (time-use surveys, household expenditure surveys, for example). The potential they have to add depth of understanding to data gathered through such surveys is considerable.

## 7.2 Methodological recommendations

318. The ideal scenario is **to interview separately both partners in a couple**. Where measurement of intra-household power and decision-making is one of the principal objectives of a study, this is recommended as the 'gold standard'. Nevertheless, the limitations that make this unlikely in many cases must be recognized.

319. Data collection should be through a **self-administered survey instrument**, whether paper, electronic or online. If decision-making questions are included in a mixed-mode survey, they should be administered in the mode that best protects the privacy of the respondent.

320. **The conditions under which an interview has been conducted** should be recorded as a crucial part of the metadata of any survey that covers decision-making. This is because the circumstances of the interview can be expected to have a significant impact on responses (not only for sensitive questions about violence and personal liberties, but also for a wide range of others where a respondent may be influenced by the presence of their partner or another household member).

321. The simplest way to obtain data on intra-household decision-making would be **to add relevant questions to existing surveys**, which in turn would add value to those surveys. The purposes of the investigation will determine the most appropriate survey vehicle into which decision-making questions should be incorporated in any given instance. Unless a full survey is to be conducted specifically devoted to the measurement of intra-household power and decision-making, it is likely that some questions would fit best into certain kinds of surveys and others into other kinds of surveys. When this happens, attention must be paid to the differences between surveys that may limit comparability of indicators produced from different sources.

322. Just as different surveys may be the best fit for different indicators, **different approaches to sampling** and to the population of interest may be appropriate depending on the nature of any given investigation. Sampled populations could be nationally-representative, but the measurement of intra-household power and decision-making could also be of particular interest for minority or vulnerable groups, permitting the study of intersectionality and multiple disadvantage.

323. Consideration should be given to incorporating decision-making questions into **longitudinal (panel) surveys**, perhaps on a rotating basis. This would make it possible to capture variations in decision-making within couples over time. This in turn would permit investigation into the extent to which decision-making responsibility shifts between women and men following changes in their socioeconomic characteristics such as employment and parenthood.

324. Recognizing that few if any countries would endeavour to produce all of the proposed indicators, it is suggested that a complete picture of the phenomenon of intra-household power requires **indicators from each of the seven dimensions**.

325. Furthermore, it is recommended that **the core indicators take priority**, with supporting indicators being added to these if a fuller analysis is desired.

326. Noting that several countries already include relevant survey questions in surveys but that few produce and publish indicators based on them, it is recommended that countries pay particular attention to **dissemination and communication**. This could take many forms, ranging from simple publication of indicators on decision-making to compilations of related indicators, analytical work or graphics and visual displays. This could in turn generate user interest and help to guide NSOs in refining their decision-making indicators to better meet user needs.

## 7.3 Further work

327. This guidance has demonstrated that the measurement of intra-household power and decision-making is in its infancy, and much remains to be done before it can be considered a well-developed area with clear concepts, robust methods and harmonized, comparable indicators. Qualitative research in academic settings continues to shed new light on the underlying concepts and the relationships between decision-making, bargaining power and resource allocation within households. Further work by NSOs in each of the following areas would help to develop the topic.

### 7.3.1 Qualitative testing

328. The testing of question wording, response options, question order, acceptability, mode effects and interviewer effects, necessary contextual questions and translation into different languages conducted in Canada should be complemented with testing by other countries, and extended to test a variety of survey vehicles. Testing should include respondents with a wide variety of socioeconomic and demographic characteristics, including members of blended and reconstituted families, to allow examination of the extent to which these factors influence understanding or acceptability of questions and with a view to eventually broadening the population to which the concepts may be applied.

### 7.3.2 Validity testing

329. Multivariate analyses should be conducted to investigate how far the proposed indicators can explain policy-relevant outcomes.

### 7.3.3 Data reduction

330. As in all data collection efforts, one goal should be reducing respondent burden by aiming for the most parsimonious possible set of indicators and therefore of survey questions. Factor analysis could be conducted to examine the extent to which the proposed indicators covary within the dimensions or indeed the extent to which the dimensions covary. An assumption of the foregoing work is that the seven dimensions are qualitatively different from one-another—but if it were found

that they are all measuring the same or similar latent variables, it would not be necessary to consider all seven dimensions independently.

331. Relatedly some stakeholders may wish to examine other possible dimensions of decision-making not included in the current work (such as decisions about disposing of assets; decisions about home location and migration; household-level decisions related to the environment, such as fuel use). In doing so, they may wish to explore the extent to which these covary with the seven dimensions proposed here.

#### 7.3.4 Continuation of international collaboration

332. Countries interested in implementing the recommendations contained in this guidance should continue to exchange experience, such as the results of qualitative testing and data analysis, practices used to include the topic in existing or new surveys, experiences with disseminating results and user feedback. Those already gathering data on some of the dimensions (or on closely-related areas such as asset ownership and disposal) should lead the way in sharing their findings and experiences with others. During consultation on this guidance, several CES countries (Canada, Colombia, Italy, Serbia, Slovakia) signalled an intention or potential future interest in conducting exploratory work related to this topic. It is important that such experiences continue to be shared internationally. In particular, countries should convene two to three years following the completion of this Task Force's mandate to exchange experience and review progress.

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This bibliography is the result of an extensive literature review by the Task Force. It extends well beyond material that is directly cited in the report, since much of the material was consulted for the existing research and methodological challenges sections. It is also intended that this bibliography should serve as a useful resource for countries exploring the possibility of producing indicators on intra-household power and decision-making.

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## Appendices

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### Appendix 1: Questions asked of Task Force members in initial data-gathering exercise

1. Does your country have, within official statistics, any survey, or survey module explicitly devoted to intra-household decision-making? If yes, please give details: (what survey/module? what respondents? what periodicity? other useful info).
2. Do any of your surveys include questions on the following? If you answer yes to any, please give details about the survey and the specific questions.
  - a) Reproductive decision-making (decisions about partnering, having children, using contraception, using SRH services)
  - b) Decisions about labour market participation (deciding about what and when to work, take time out or reduce hours for child/elderly care...)
  - c) Decisions about health care
  - d) Decisions about social life and use of leisure time
  - e) Decisions about children's education
  - f) Decisions about expenditure and saving (big purchases, routine purchases), family budgeting and distributional regimes (whether/how couple shares money, seeking permission to spend, etc)
  - g) Perception of control, degree of satisfaction with decision-making in any of the above categories, questions about how decisions are reached when there is disagreement.
3. How (if at all) are the data on these topics compiled and disseminated?
4. What challenges are you aware of in relation to these questions (interpretation by respondents, non-response, responses affected by presence of others, contradictory answers from partners...)
5. What surveys are you aware of outside of official statistics that include questions on any of these topics?

All countries represented on the Task Force were requested to provide answers to the following questions, developed collectively. Responses were received from Bosnia and Herzegovina (answered 'no' or 'no data' for all questions), Canada, Colombia, Italy, Lithuania, Mexico, Serbia and Turkey.

## Appendix 2: Online survey used to gather information on current practices in countries

The following survey was used to gather information from additional countries. The series of questions 4-8 is a loop which repeats up to three times depending on how many surveys the respondent names.

Responses were received from Austria, Georgia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Tajikistan.

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**All questions marked with asterisks are required. Your progress will be saved so you may return later if you exit the survey before you have completed it. You may also return to make changes to your response after you have submitted it.**

\* 1. Please enter the contact information of the person with the most knowledge of this topic in your organization

Country:

Name of organization:

Name of contact person:

Email address:

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2. Within your country's official statistics system, do any surveys include questions on intra-household power and/or decision-making?

- Yes
- No

*[if no, survey skips to question 23]*

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3. Please give the name of the survey with the most questions on intra-household power and decision-making in your country (if there is more than one relevant survey, you will be asked to repeat the following questions for each survey, up to a maximum of four different surveys)

4. Does {{Q3}} include questions on...? *Select all that apply*

- Reproductive decision-making (e.g., having children, having sexual relations, using contraception, using family planning or reproductive health services)
- Decisions about health care, excluding reproductive health care (e.g., when to see a doctor, type of treatment)

- Decisions about labour market participation (e.g., who works, type of work, hours of work, reducing hours or taking time off to care for children or elderly)
- Decisions about child-related matters (e.g., education, granting permission to children)
- Decisions about household finances (e.g., saving money, spending money, how money is distributed or shared within the household, need to obtain permission)
- Decision-making processes (e.g., how decisions are reached when there is disagreement) Satisfaction with decision-making processes in the household
- Other (please specify)

5. If available, please paste relevant survey content from {{Q3}} (questions, response options, etc) here:

Reproductive decision- making (e.g., having children, having sexual relations, using contraception, using family planning or reproductive health services)

Decisions about health care, excluding reproductive health care (e.g., when to see a doctor, type of treatment)

Decisions about labour market participation (e.g., who works, type of work, hours of work, reducing hours or taking time off to care for children or elderly)

Decisions about child- related matters (e.g., education, granting permission to children)

Decisions about household finances (e.g., saving money, spending money, how money is distributed or shared within the household, need to obtain permission)

Decision-making processes (e.g., how decisions are reached when there is disagreement)

Satisfaction with decision-making processes in the household

[Insert text from Other]

6. What best describes how often {{Q3}} is collected?

- Every year

- Every two to four years
- Every 5 years
- Every 10 years or more
- Not regularly collected
- Other (please specify)

7. Who is the target population for {{ Q3 }} (e.g., women only, men only, women and men, women and men in couples, all household members, one randomly selected household member)?

8. In addition to {{ Q3 }}, is there another survey in your country that includes questions on intra-household power and/or decision-making?

- No
- Yes: please indicate the name of the survey

*[questions 4-8 repeat for up to four surveys]*

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23. What challenges are you aware of in relation to asking questions on these topics (interpretation by respondents, non-response, responses affected by presence of others, contradictory answers from partners...) Please give details.

24. How (if at all) are data on power and decision-making topics compiled and disseminated? Select all that apply.

- Microdata files for public use
- Published data tables
- Published analysis (e.g., research report, article)
- Infographics
- Data are not compiled and disseminated
- Other (please specify)

25. Is your country or organization currently producing indicators on intra-household power and decision-making?

- No
- Yes: please give details
- 

26. What surveys are you aware of outside of official statistics that include questions on any of these topics? Please describe.

27. What do you perceive as some of the most important data gaps regarding intra-household power and decision making in your country or organization?

28. If you have any further information, comments or suggestions which may help the task force in its work, please give details in the box.

29. Are you happy for the task force to contact you to request more information about your answers to this survey?

- Yes
- No

## Appendix 3: Relevant questions in other international survey initiatives

### Generations and Gender Surveys

“We have already talked about the various tasks that have to be done in a household. Now I would like to ask you some questions about decisions. Who makes decisions about the following issues in your household?” [*routine purchases for the household; occasional more expensive purchases for the household; the time you spend in paid work; the time your partner/spouse spends in paid work; ]the way children are raised]*

“How do you and your partner/spouse organize your household income? Which of the items on this card fits best?”

- I manage all the money and give my partner/spouse his/her share
- My partner/spouse manages all the money and gives me my share
- We pool all the money and each takes out what we need
- We pool some of the money and keep the rest separate
- We each keep our own money separate
- Other.

“How do you manage your monthly expenses that you have together (e.g. rent, food, etc.)?”

- I pay everything alone
- my partner pays everything alone
- we pay both to approximately equal shares
- we pay both relative to our personal incomes
- both of us are paying some of them, but there is no fixed rule.

### International Social Survey Programme

The ISSP module ‘Family and Changing Gender Roles’ was conducted in 1988, 1994, 2002 and 2012. Family and Changing Gender Roles I (1988) did not include any questions related to intra-household decision-making and power, but Family and Changing Gender Roles II (1994) introduced a question about income management.

#### *Family and Changing Gender Roles II (1994)*

“How do you and your spouse/partner organise the income that one or both of you receive?” *Please choose the option that comes closest.*

- I manage all the money and give my partner his or her share
- My partner manages all the money and gives me my share
- We pool all the money and each take out what we need
- We pool some of the money and keep the rest separate
- We keep our own money separate
- Not married or living as married.

Family and Changing Gender Roles III (2002) included more questions relevant for the topic of intra-household decision-making and power.

“How do you and your spouse/partner organize the income that one or both of you receive?” *Please choose the option that comes closest.*

- I manage all the money and give my partner his or her share
- My partner manages all the money and gives me my share
- We pool all the money and each take out what we need
- We pool some of the money and keep the rest separate
- We keep our own money separate.

“Which of the following best applies to the sharing of household work between you and your spouse/partner?”

- I do much more than my fair share of the household work
- I do a bit more than my fair share of the household work
- I do roughly my fair share of the household work
- I do a bit less than my fair share of the household work
- I do much less than my fair share of the household work.

“How often do you and your spouse/partner disagree about the sharing of household work?”

- Several times a week
- Several times a month
- Several times a year
- Less often/rarely
- Never
- Can't choose.

“Who usually makes/made the decisions about how to bring up your children?”

- Mostly me
- Mostly my spouse/partner
- Sometimes me/sometimes my spouse/partner
- We decide/decided together
- Someone else
- Does not apply.

“When you and your spouse/partner make decisions about the following, who has the final say?”  
[Choosing shared weekend activities; Buying major things for the home]

- Mostly me
- Mostly my spouse/partner
- Sometimes me/sometimes my spouse/partner
- We decide together
- Someone else.

“Considering all sources of income, between you and your spouse/partner, who has the higher income?”

- My spouse/partner has no income
- I have a much higher income
- I have a higher income
- We have about the same income
- My spouse/partner has a higher income

- My spouse/partner has a much higher income
- I have no income
- Don't know.

### *Family and Changing Gender Roles IV (2012)*

“How do you and your spouse/partner organise the income that one or both of you receive?” *Please choose the option that comes closest.*

- I manage all the money and give my partner his or her share
- My partner manages all the money and gives me my share
- We pool all the money and each take out what we need
- We pool some of the money and keep the rest separate
- We keep our own money separate.

“Which of the following best applies to the sharing of household work between you and your spouse/partner?”

- I do much more than my fair share of the household work
- I do a bit more than my fair share of the household work
- I do roughly my fair share of the household work
- I do a bit less than my fair share of the household work
- I do much less than my fair share of the household work.

“When you and your spouse/partner make decisions about choosing shared weekend activities, who has the final say?”

- Mostly me
- Mostly my spouse/partner
- Sometimes me/sometimes my spouse/partner
- We decide together
- Someone else.

“Considering all sources of income, between you and your spouse/partner, who has the higher income?”

- My spouse/partner has no income
- I have a much higher income
- I have a higher income
- We have about the same income
- My spouse/partner has a higher income
- My spouse/partner has a much higher income
- I have no income
- Don't know.

“Who usually makes/made the decisions about how to bring up your children?”

- Mostly me
- Mostly my spouse/partner
- Sometimes me/sometimes my spouse/partner
- We decide together
- Someone else
- Does not apply.

## European Social Survey Programme

“Couples sometimes disagree about household and family issues. Using this card, how often do you and your husband/wife/partner disagree about...?” [how to divide housework; money; the amount of time spent on paid work]

- Never
- Less than once a month
- Once a month
- Several times a month
- Once a week
- Several times a week
- Every day
- Not applicable
- Refusal
- Don't know
- No answer.

“When you and your husband/wife/partner make decisions about the following, who generally gets their way on...?” [occasional more expensive purchases for the household; how to divide housework]

- Always me
- Usually me
- About equal or both together
- Usually my spouse/partner
- Always my spouse/partner
- Always or usually someone else
- Not applicable
- Refusal
- Don't know
- No answer.

## Living Standards Measurement Surveys

### *Nepal Living Standards Survey 2010*

Decision-making sections are included in modules on marriage and maternity history (female spouse of household head if head is male, or female household head), and credit and savings (for males: male household head or senior male household member if head of household is female)

“During the last 12 months did your household have to make a decision on ...”[TYPE OF DECISION]..? (yes/no)

“Were you involved in the most recent decision on ..[TYPE OF DECISION]..?” (a lot/ a little/ not involved)

“Who made the final decision on ..[TYPE OF DECISION]..?” (me/my spouse/both/other)

- Up to what grade should the children attend school
- Which school do the children go to
- Obtaining health care for self

- Obtaining health care during pregnancy
- How many children to have
- Which contraceptive method use
- Obtaining health care for children
- Spending on food
- Spending on major household items
- Selling household assets (including livestock)
- Which crops to grow
- To take loans
- How to use loans
- To migrate for employment
- How to use remittances.

### *Tajikistan Living Standards Survey 2007*

Household decision-making in module on subjective poverty and food security:

[Main decision-maker: Head of household; Individual male household member; Individual female household member; Collective male household members; Collective female household members; All members of the household; not applicable; Decides for him/herself]

Module on agriculture (respondent= most knowledgeable household member):

“Who makes decisions about the use of this plot?”

- What to grow in home garden
- What to grow on presidential land
- Where to shop
- Buying major items
- Whether or not to borrow money
- Lending money to others
- Children’s well-being
- Children’s school attendance
- Marriage of male household member
- Marriage of female household member
- Where male member should work
- Where female member should work
- How much to spend of household income
- How much to save of household income
- Where to invest household money
- A household member migrating to seek work
- How to use resources remitted from abroad
- Whether and where to sell agricultural produce
- How to use the money from agricultural produce.

### *Ethiopia socioeconomic Survey 2013-2014*

Module on non-farm enterprise:

“Who in the household makes decisions regarding the earnings from this enterprise?”

Module on other income sources:

“Who in your household kept/decided what to do with the money from...?” [SOURCE] (various income sources listed)

*Ghana - Socioeconomic Panel Survey: 2009-2010*

Section on women’s health: power relations. Opinion questions (asked of adult females and of adult males):

“The important decisions in the family should be made only by the men of the family.” (agree/disagree)

*Malawi Integrated Household Survey 2013; National Survey on Household Living Conditions and Agriculture 2014*

Module on time-use and labour:

“Who in the household controls/ decides on the use of [list of income sources]...?”

Module on gifts given out:

“Who in the household decided on the allocation of [item] given away to individuals outside your household (friends/family) during the last 12 months?”

Module on social safety nets:

“Who in the household controls/ decides on the use of assistance from [programme]?”

*Nicaragua Living Standards Measurement Study 2001*

Section on home-based businesses and own account workers:

“Which member of the household takes decisions or controls the [business/activity]?”

Section on agricultural activities:

“Which is the member of the household who takes decisions on the [unit of agricultural production]?”

*Timor-Leste Survey of Living Standards 2006*

Section on farming, livestock, forestry and fisheries:

“Who in this household makes the decisions about this plot of land?”

*Uganda National Panel Survey 2013*

Section on labour force status:

“Who in the household controls/decides on the use of [cash/in-kind payments/other income sources (listed one by one)] from the main job/secondary job during the last 7 days/last 12 months?”

Section on non-agricultural household enterprises/activities:

“Who in this household decides on the use of earnings from this enterprise?”

## Appendix 4: Details of Generations and Gender Wave 1 survey data used in test analysis

Table 3: Countries that participated in the GGS1

Country	Year	Comments
Australia	2005/2006	No access to data. <sup>1</sup> The national questionnaire provided on the GGP website does not include questions on decision-making in the household (GGS implemented as an add-on to an existing household panel survey HILDA).
Austria	2008/2009	
Belgium	2008/2010	
Bulgaria	2004	
Czech Republic	2005	
Estonia	2004/2005	Decision-making not included in the national questionnaire
France	2005	405c "time you spend in paid work" and 405d "time your partner/spouse spends in paid work" not included in the national questionnaire.
Georgia	2006	
German Turks (German sub-sample)	2006	
Germany	2005	
Hungary	2004/2005	Decision-making not included in the national questionnaire
Italy	2003	Different response options for Q405 used: 1) more R; 2) more P; 3) R and P about equally.  405c "time you spend in paid work" and 405 d "time your partner/spouse spends in paid work" not included in the national questionnaire.  Q406 not included.
Japan	2005	Decision-making not included in the national questionnaire
Lithuania	2006	



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<b>Country</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Netherlands	2002/2004	Decision-making not included in the national questionnaire
Norway	2007/2008	No access to data. <sup>1</sup> The documentation available on the GGP website suggests that the decision-making questions are included in the national questionnaire.
Poland	2010/2011	
Romania	2005	
Russia	2004	
Sweden	2012/2013	

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<sup>1</sup> The Task Force did not apply for Australian and Norwegian GGS1 data because the application contained a warning about longer application procedure in case of these two countries.

## Appendix 5: Inventory of surveys and survey questions on intra-household power and decision-making

On the basis of responses received from countries represented on the Task Force, countries responding to the wider call for information following the 2017 UNECE Work Session on Gender Statistics, and research by Task Force members, the following inventory of existing survey questions was compiled. It contains information about the surveys in which the questions are or were asked, the exact wording of questions and response categories. The information is organized by themes approximately corresponding to the dimensions of decision-making identified by the Task Force.

This cannot be considered a fully comprehensive inventory of all such surveys and questions in the UNECE region since not every country was asked to provide information, but rather it is intended as a tool to provide inspiration and guidance to countries considering the addition of such questions in their own surveys.

### Overview

Country	Survey name	Cycles	Target population of module(s)	Sampling unit	Reproduction and sexual activity	Health care	Labour market participation	Social life and leisure time	Matters related to children	Household finances	Process, Satisfaction
Canada	<a href="#">General Social Survey - Family</a>	2011, 2017	Women and men aged 15+ living with their spouse/partner	Individual				x		x	x
	<a href="#">General Social Survey - Canadians at Work and Home</a>	2016	Women and men aged 15+	Individual				x	x		
	<a href="#">Canadian Financial Capability Survey</a>	2014	Women and men aged 15+	Individual						x	
Colombia	<a href="#">Demographic and Health Survey</a>	Every 5 years	Women and men (questions on pregnancy and	Household members	x	x	x			x	x

Country	Survey name	Cycles	Target population of module(s)	Sampling unit	Reproduction and sexual activity	Health care	Labour market participation	Social life and leisure time	Matters related to children	Household finances	Process, Satisfaction
			contraception are women only)								
	<a href="#">Time-Use Survey</a>	2012-13, 2016-17	People aged 10+	Household members							x
Finland	<a href="#">Finnish Gender Equality Barometer</a>	1998 then every 3-5 years to 2017	Women and men aged 15-74	Individuals							x
Italy	<a href="#">Family and Social Subjects Survey</a>	2016	Women and men living in couples	Individual			x	x	x	x	x
Kyrgyzstan	<a href="#">Life in Kyrgyzstan</a>	2010, 2011, 2012, 2013	Women and men	Household members	x		x	x	x	x	
	<a href="#">Gender in the Perception of Society</a>	2015-2016	Women and men 18+	Household members			x		x	x	x
Lithuania	<a href="#">Population Policy Acceptance Study</a>	2001	Women and men							x	
	<a href="#">Fertility and Family Survey</a>	1994/1995 - only once	Women and men								x
Mexico	<a href="#">Survey on Relationship Dynamics in Households</a>	2003, 2006, 2011, 2016	Women aged 15+, married or in a union	Individual	x		x	x	x	x	x

Country	Survey name	Cycles	Target population of module(s)	Sampling unit	Reproduction and sexual activity	Health care	Labour market participation	Social life and leisure time	Matters related to children	Household finances	Process, Satisfaction
	<a href="#">Labour and Co-responsibility Survey</a>	2012	Women, some questions married or in a union	Individual	x		x		x	x	
	<a href="#">National Financial Inclusion Survey</a>	2012, 2015	Women and men, 18-70 years	Individual						x	
	<a href="#">Family Life Survey</a>	2002, 2005-2006 and 2009-2012	Women and men 15+	Households	x		x		x	x	
Serbia	<a href="#">Time-Use Survey</a>	2010	Women and men	Individual		x		x		x	
Switzerland	<a href="#">Families and Generations survey</a>	every 5 years	Women and men 15-79	Individual	x		x			x	x
Tajikistan	<a href="#">Demographic and Health Survey</a>	Every 5 years	Women and men	All household members	x	x	x			x	
Turkey	<a href="#">Living Standards Measurement Surveys</a>	1999, 2003, 2007, 2009	Women and men	Households, individuals, communities			x		x	x	
	<a href="#">Turkey Demographic and Health Surveys</a>	Every 5 years, latest 2013	Women aged 15-49	Individual	x		x	x			
	<a href="#">Family Structure Survey</a>	Every 5 years	Women and men aged 15+	Household members 15+					x	x	
	<a href="#">Domestic Violence Against Women in Turkey</a>	Every 10 years	Women aged 15-59	Individual						x	

Country	Survey name	Cycles	Target population of module(s)	Sampling unit	Reproduction and sexual activity	Health care	Labour market participation	Social life and leisure time	Matters related to children	Household finances	Process, Satisfaction
EU + Iceland, Norway and Switzerland	<a href="#">EU-SILC</a>	2010	Women and men aged 16+	Household members 16+	x		x			x	
At least one wave of surveys in 19 countries	<a href="#">Generations and Gender Survey</a> waves 1 and 2	2006	Wave 1 - women and men 18-79				x	x	x	x	x

## Union formation, sexual and reproductive decision-making

### Colombia

Survey	Question(s) on contraception use/method	Question(s) on conceiving/number of children	Question(s) on prenatal care	Question(s) on when to have sex
Demographic and Health Survey	<p>What is the main reason you are not using a contraceptive method to prevent pregnancy? (opposition to use: partner opposing)</p> <p>Have you ever been forced to use a contraceptive method against your will? (yes, no)</p> <p>Which person forced you?</p>	<p>After you found out you were pregnant, were you afraid to tell your partner? (yes, no)</p> <p>Was this pregnancy decision made with your partner? (yes, no)</p> <p>The decision on the number of children you have was (of yourself, of your partner, of both, another person -- specify)?</p>	<p>Why has no prenatal care been done? (Opposition: partner does not leave, parents do not leave)</p>	<p>Who in your household has the last word in the following decisions: have sex?</p>
	<p>What is the main reason you do not plan to use any contraceptive method in the future? (opposition to use: partner opposing)</p>			

Survey	Question(s) on contraception use/method	Question(s) on conceiving/number of children	Question(s) on prenatal care	Question(s) on when to have sex
	The decision to use (recent contraceptive method) was (of yourself, of your partner, of both, another person -- specify)?			

*Kyrgyzstan*

Survey	Question(s) on conceiving/number of children
Life in Kyrgyzstan	Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on how many children to have?

*Mexico*

Survey	Question(s) on contraception use/method	Question(s) on conceiving/number of children	Question(s) on when to have sex
Survey on Relationship Dynamics in Households	Who decides, the majority of the time, in the household or in your couple: whether contraceptives are used? (only you [the respondent], only your husband or partner, between the two but him a bit more, between the two but you a bit more, equally between the two, other people, doesn't apply) If response is "only the respondent", then also: And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?	Who decides, the majority of the time, in the household or in your couple: whether or not to have children? (only you [the respondent], only your husband or partner, between the two but him a bit more, between the two but you a bit more, equally between the two, other people, doesn't apply) If response is "only the respondent", then also: And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?	Who decides, the majority of the time, in the household or in your couple: when to have sexual relations? (only you [the respondent], only your husband or partner, between the two but him a bit more, between the two but you a bit more, equally between the two, other people, doesn't apply) If response is "only the respondent", then also: And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?
	Who decides, the majority of the time, in the household or in your couple: who should use the contraceptive methods? (only you [the respondent], only your husband or partner, between the two but him a bit more, between the two but you a bit more, equally between the two, other people, doesn't apply)	Who decides, the majority of the time, in the household or in your couple: how many children to have? (only you [the respondent], only your husband or partner, between the two but him a bit more, between the two but you a bit more, equally between the two, other people, doesn't apply) If response is "only the respondent", then also:	

Survey	Question(s) on contraception use/method	Question(s) on conceiving/number of children	Question(s) on when to have sex
The Labour and Co-responsibility Survey	If response is "only the respondent", then also: And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?	And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?	
Family Life Survey	Who decides in your household if you or your spouse/partner use birth-control (for not having children); respondent, spouse, son/daughter, mother, father, mother in-law, father in-law, brother, sister, brother in-law, sister in-law, grandparents, other- specify _____, does not know	Who decides in your household: about how many children to have? (interviewed woman, partner, sons/daughters, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister, brother, other relation, doesn't apply) <i>first two responses are recorded</i>	

*Switzerland*

Survey	Question(s) on conceiving/number of children
Families and Generations survey	<p>One question asks target person about her wish to have children and the wish of his/her partner. The reply options for the target person are: yes/no.</p> <p>Do you wish having a or another child in the next 3 years? Yes, certainly; yes, probably; no, probably not; no, certainly not</p> <p>Would you prefer a boy or a girl? Boy; girl; the sex of the child is not important.</p> <p>How many children do you wish totally?</p> <p>The reply options concerning the wish of the partner of target person are: S/he wishes a child now, S/he doesn't wish a child now nor later, S/he's still hesitating.</p>

*Tajikistan*

Survey	Question(s) on contraception use/method
Demographic and Health Survey	Are you or your partner currently using some method of contraceptive, to delay or prevent pregnancy? Have you ever spoken with a health worker or a specialist regarding family planning and methods used for contraceptive means?

*Turkey*

Survey	Question(s) on contraception use/method	Question(s) on conceiving/number of children	Question(s) on miscarriage/abortion
Turkey Demographic and Health Survey	Would you like to use a different method of contraception than the one you are currently using? If yes, what is the reason that you do not use that method currently? (One of the options is husband/partner's objection to this method) What is the main reason you are not using a method of contraception to avoid pregnancy? (One of the options is husband/partner's objection to this method)	Before you were pregnant, did you want to get pregnant, would you prefer to be pregnant later, or did you never want this pregnancy?  Before you were pregnant, did your husband want you to get pregnant, would he prefer you to be pregnant later, or did he never want this pregnancy?	Have you ever had an abortion or have you been willingly miscarriage? The number of these processes?  Who decided the last abortion? Did you desire this (last) pregnancy which ended in an induced abortion, did you desire to get pregnant later, or did you not desire it at all?

*EU+ Iceland, Norway and Switzerland*

Survey	Question(s) on contraception use/method
EU-SILC	<b>From Lithuania:</b> Who makes important decisions of general nature (e.g., about contracting a marriage, family planning, employment, work, changing place of residence, emigration, etc.)? More me; Balanced; More my spouse/ partner; No response.



**Labour**

*Colombia*

Survey	Question(s) on seeking permission/ having decision-power to work/study
Demographic and Health Survey	At some time your partner: has s/he forbidden you to work or study?

*Italy*

Survey	Question(s) on time spent at work
Family Structure Survey	Who, in your couple, has more power in making decisions regarding the following matters: the amount of time spent working? (more the woman, more the man, both equally, not applicable) Who, in your couple, has more power in making decisions regarding the following matters: the amount of time the partner spends working? (more the woman, more the man, both equally, not applicable)

*Kyrgyzstan*

Survey	Question(s) on seeking permission/ having decision-power to work/study	Question(s) on work-life balance and women's career
Life in Kyrgyzstan	Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on where male household member should work?	
Gender in the Perception of Society	Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on where female household member should work?	A woman cannot stay long at work, because she has household duties; completely agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, completely disagree, refuses to answer/ doesn't know the answer
		The career of a wife is as less important as the career of her husband; completely agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, completely disagree, refuses to answer/ doesn't know the answer
		A woman who gave birth to a child should leave her work and her career; completely agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, completely disagree, refuses to answer/ doesn't know the answer

Survey	Question(s) on seeking permission/ having decision-power to work/study	Question(s) on work-life balance and women's career
		The wife has to work along with her husband in order to support the family; completely agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, completely disagree, refuses to answer/ doesn't know the answer
		If a woman works, it has a negative impact on the family and children; completely agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, completely disagree, refuses to answer/ doesn't know the answer

*Mexico*

Survey	Question(s) on seeking permission/ having decision-power to work/study
Survey on Relationship Dynamics in Households	Who decides, the majority of the time, in the household or in your couple: whether you can work or study? (only you [the respondent], only your husband or partner, between the two but him a bit more, between the two but you a bit more, equally between the two, other people, doesn't apply) If response is "only the respondent", then also: And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?
The Labour and Co-responsibility Survey	Now I am going to ask you about the arrangements that you make with your husband or partner when you need to undertake some activities: to work for pay or remuneration? (do you have to ask your husband's/partner's permission, do you have to tell him or ask his opinion, do you not have to do anything [doesn't go alone; goes with him, doesn't do it, other, doesn't apply]) Who decides in your household: whether you can work? (interviewed woman, partner, sons/daughters, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister, brother, other relation, doesn't apply) <i>first two responses are recorded</i> Who decides in your household: whether you can study? (interviewed woman, partner, sons/daughters, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister, brother, other relation, doesn't apply) <i>first two responses are recorded</i>
Family Life Survey	Who decides in your household if you should work or not; respondent, spouse, son/daughter, mother, father, mother in law, father in law, brother, sister, brother in-law, sister in-law, grandparents, other- specify _____, does not know Who decides in your household if your spouse/partner should work or not; respondent, spouse, son/daughter, mother, father, mother in law, father in law, brother, sister, brother in-law, sister in-law, grandparents, other- specify _____, does not know

*Switzerland*

Survey	Question(s) on time spent at work
Families and Generations Survey	Which is the principal reason you would like to reduce your working hours? Answer options are not read by the interviewer, but one answer option out of seven is: The partner would like to work more or have more support for the child-care. Are there some more reasons? Same answer options like the question before, but they are not read, more answers are possible.

*Tajikistan*

Survey	Question(s) on seeking permission/ having decision-power to work/study
Living Standards Measurement Surveys	Which member of the household has the main decision-making authority where male member should work; head of household, individual male household member, individual female household member, collective male household members, collective female household members, all members of household, not applicable, decided for him/herself
	Which member of the household has the main decision-making authority where female member should work; head of household, individual female household member, individual female household member, collective male household members, collective female household members, all members of household, not applicable, decided for him/herself

*Turkey*

Survey	Question(s) on reasons why to work/ why not to work/ change work
Turkey Demographic and Health Survey	Reasons for leaving work - opposition of husband or parents

*EU + Iceland, Norway and Switzerland*

Survey	Question(s) on seeking permission/ having decision-power to work/study	Question(s) on time spent at work	Question(s) on work-life balance and women's career
EU-SILC	<p><b>From Lithuania:</b> Who makes important decisions of general nature (e.g., about contracting a marriage, family planning, employment, work, changing place of residence, emigration, etc.)? More me; Balanced; More my spouse/ partner; No response.</p> <p><b>From Latvia:</b> Decisions about labour market participation (e.g., who works, type of work, hours of work, reducing hours or taking time off to care for children or elderly)</p>	<p><b>From Latvia:</b> Decisions about labour market participation (e.g., who works, type of work, hours of work, reducing hours or taking time off to care for children or elderly)</p> <p><b>From Latvia:</b> (If person works less than 30 per week) What is the main reason of working usually less than 30 hours per week? Undergoing education or training, Personal illness or disability; Would like to work more hours but cannot find a job, Don't want to work more hours, Number of hours in all job(s) is considered as a full-time job, Housework, looking after children or other persons, Other reason.</p> <p><b>From Latvia:</b> for those who have changed a job during last 12 months or since last interview) Why did you change a job during last 12 months or since the last interview? Took up other job/wanted to seek a better job; Term of employment agreement ended, Obligated to stop by employer (business closure, redundancy, early retirement, dismissal etc.), Sale or closure of own/family business, Childcare or care for other dependent, Partner's job required us to move to another area or marriage, Other reason</p>	<p><b>From Latvia:</b> Decisions about labour market participation (e.g., who works, type of work, hours of work, reducing hours or taking time off to care for children or elderly)</p>

*GGS*

Survey	Question(s) on seeking permission/ having decision-power to work/study
Generations and Gender Survey	<p>Q405 (items c and d). Who makes decisions about the following issues in your household? a. routine purchases for the household; b. occasional more expensive purchases for the household; c. the time you spend in paid work; d. the time your partner/spouse spends in paid work; e. the way children are raised; f. Public activities and leisure time. Response options: always me; usually me; me and P about equally; usually P; always P; always or usually someone else; not applicable.</p>

**Health**

*Colombia*

Survey	Question(s) on power, control, seeking permission	Question(s) on receiving/requesting medical care
Demographic and Health Survey	Who in your household has the last word in the following decisions: taking care of your health?	What was the main reason why you did not request or receive medical care? (opposition: partner does not leave, parents do not leave)  What is the main reason why vaginal cytology has never been done? (opposition: partner does not leave, parents do not leave)

*Serbia*

Survey	Question(s) on power, control, seeking permission
Time-Use Survey	Who usually make the decision in household on: your health? (you, spouse/partner, together with the spouse/partner, you with another member of the household, someone else, does not apply)

*Tajikistan*

Survey	Question(s) on power, control, seeking permission	Question(s) on challenging factors for receiving/requesting medical care
Demographic and Health Survey	When you are sick and want to seek medical advice or treatment, indicate whether getting permission to visit a doctor? Is a big problem or is not a big problem  When you are sick and want to seek medical advice or treatment, indicate whether reluctance to go? Is a big problem or is not a big problem	When you are sick and want to seek medical advice or treatment, indicate whether distance to Medical Institutions? is a big problem or is not a big problem  When you are sick and want to seek medical advice or treatment, indicate whether getting the money you need for advice or treatment? Is a big problem or is not a big problem

## Social life, leisure and personal liberties

### Canada

Survey	Question(s) on social activities
General Social Survey on Family	Who in your couple mainly takes care of: organizing the household's social life, for example, invitations for family and social occasions, outings, and keeping contacts? (mostly you, mostly your [marital status], shared equally, neither)
	Who in your household mainly takes care of: organizing the household's social life? (mostly you, mostly your [spouse/partner/spouse or partner], mostly another household member, shared equally, someone outside the household, task is not done in the household)

### Colombia

Survey	Question(s) on social activities	Question(s) on shopping
Demographic and Health Survey	Who in your household has the last word on the following decisions: visiting family, friends, or relatives?	Who in your household has the last word on the following decisions: what food should be cooked each day?

### Italy

Survey	Question(s) on social activities
Family and Social Subjects Survey	Who, in your couple, has more power in making decisions regarding the following matters: friends? (more the woman, more the man, both equally, not applicable) Who, in your couple, has more power in making decisions regarding the following matters: places of holiday destinations? (more the woman, more the man, both equally, not applicable)

Survey	Question(s) on social activities
	Who, in your couple, has more power in making decisions regarding the following matters: what to do in the free time? (more the woman, more the man, both equally, not applicable)

*Kyrgyzstan*

Survey	Question(s) on social activities
Life in Kyrgyzstan	Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on negotiating with neighbours? Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on participation to discuss community issues?

*Mexico*

Survey	Question(s) on household on domestic activities	Question(s) on care of parents/in-laws	Question(s) on social activities	Question(s) on political activities	Question(s) on personal liberty	Question(s) on shopping	Question(s) on moving
Survey on Relationship Dynamics in Households			Who decides, the majority of the time, in the household or in your couple: when you want to or are interested in participating in the social or political life of your community? (only you [the respondent], only your husband or partner, between the two but him a bit more, between the two, equally between the two, other people, doesn't apply) If response is "only the respondent", then also:	Who decides, the majority of the time, in the household or in your couple: when you want to or are interested in participating in the social or political life of your community? (only you [the respondent], only your husband or partner, between the two but him a bit more, between the two, equally between the two but you a bit more, between the two but you a bit	Who decides, the majority of the time, in the household or in your couple: whether you can leave the house? (only you [the respondent], only your husband or partner, between the two but him a bit more, between the two but you a bit more, equally between the two, between the two,	Now I am going to ask you about the arrangements that you make with your husband or partner when you need to undertake some activities: if you have to go shopping? (do you have to ask your husband's/partner's permission, do you have to tell him or ask his opinion, do	Who decides, the majority of the time, in the household or in your couple: about moving house or moving to a different town? (only you [the respondent], only your husband or partner, between the two but him a bit

Survey	Question(s) on care of parents/in-laws	Question(s) on household on domestic activities	Question(s) on social activities	Question(s) on political activities	Question(s) on personal liberty	Question(s) on shopping	Question(s) on moving
			And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?	more, equally between the two, other people, doesn't apply) If response is "only the respondent", then also: And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?	other people, doesn't apply) If response is "only the respondent", then also: And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?	you not have to do anything [doesn't go alone; goes with him, doesn't do it, other, doesn't apply])	more, between the two but you a bit more, equally between the two, other people, doesn't apply) If response is "only the respondent", then also: And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?
	Now I am going to ask you about the arrangements that you make with your husband or partner when you need to visit your relatives or friends? (do you have to ask your husband's/partner's permission, do you have to tell him or ask his opinion, do you not have to do anything [doesn't go alone; goes with		Now I am going to ask you about the arrangements that you make with your husband or partner when you need to undertake some activities: if you want to participate in a neighbourhood or political activity? (do you have to ask your husband's/partner's	more, equally between the two, other people, doesn't apply) If response is "only the respondent", then also: And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?	other people, doesn't apply) If response is "only the respondent", then also: And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?	Now I am going to ask you about the arrangements that you make with your husband or partner when you need to undertake some activities: if you want to buy something for yourself or change your personal appearance? (do you have to ask	more, between the two but you a bit more, equally between the two, other people, doesn't apply) If response is "only the respondent", then also: And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?



Survey	Question(s) on care of parents/in-laws	Question(s) on household on domestic activities	Question(s) on social activities	Question(s) on political activities	Question(s) on personal liberty	Question(s) on shopping	Question(s) on moving
			him, doesn't do it, other, doesn't apply))	permission, do you have to tell him or ask his opinion, do you not have to do anything [doesn't go alone; goes with him, doesn't do it, other, doesn't apply])	bit more, between the two but you a bit more, equally between the two, other people, doesn't apply) If response is "only the respondent", then also: And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?	your husband's/partner's permission, do you have to tell him or ask his opinion, do you not have to do anything [doesn't go alone; goes with him, doesn't do it, other, doesn't apply])	
		Now I am going to ask you about the arrangements that you make with your husband or partner when you need to undertake some activities: if you want to vote for a party or candidate? (do you have to ask your husband's/partner's permission, do you have to tell him or ask his opinion, do you not have to do anything [doesn't go alone; goes with him, doesn't do it, other, doesn't apply])	him, doesn't do it, other, doesn't apply))	permission, do you have to tell him or ask his opinion, do you not have to do anything [doesn't go alone; goes with him, doesn't do it, other, doesn't apply])	bit more, between the two but you a bit more, equally between the two, other people, doesn't apply) If response is "only the respondent", then also: And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?	your husband's/partner's permission, do you have to tell him or ask his opinion, do you not have to do anything [doesn't go alone; goes with him, doesn't do it, other, doesn't apply])	
		Now I am going to ask you about the arrangements that you make with your husband or partner when you need to undertake some activities: if you want to vote for a party or candidate? (do you have to ask your husband's/partner's permission, do you have to tell him or ask his opinion, do you not have to do anything [doesn't go alone; goes with him, doesn't do it, other, doesn't apply])	him, doesn't do it, other, doesn't apply))	permission, do you have to tell him or ask his opinion, do you not have to do anything [doesn't go alone; goes with him, doesn't do it, other, doesn't apply])	bit more, between the two but you a bit more, equally between the two, other people, doesn't apply) If response is "only the respondent", then also: And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?	your husband's/partner's permission, do you have to tell him or ask his opinion, do you not have to do anything [doesn't go alone; goes with him, doesn't do it, other, doesn't apply])	

Survey	Question(s) on care of parents/in-laws	Question(s) on household on domestic activities	Question(s) on social activities	Question(s) on political activities	Question(s) on personal liberty	Question(s) on shopping	Question(s) on moving
				alone; goes with him, doesn't do it, other, doesn't apply))	go alone; goes with him, doesn't do it, other, doesn't apply))		
					Now I am going to ask you about the arrangements that you make with your husband or partner when you need to undertake some activities: if you want to form a friendship with someone? (do you have to ask your husband's/partner's permission, do you have to tell him or ask his opinion, do you not have to do anything [doesn't go alone; goes with him, doesn't do it, other, doesn't apply])		
					Now I am going to ask you about the arrangements that you make with your husband or partner when you need to undertake some activities: if you want to vote for a		

Survey	Question(s) on care of parents/in-laws	Question(s) on household on domestic activities	Question(s) on social activities	Question(s) on political activities	Question(s) on personal liberty	Question(s) on shopping	Question(s) on moving
The Labour and Co-responsibility Survey	Who decides in your household: about care of parents or in-laws, if they require it? (interviewed woman, partner, sons/daughters, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister, brother, other relation, doesn't apply) first two responses are recorded	Who decides in your household: about who does the domestic activities in the household? (interviewed woman, partner, sons/daughters, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister, brother, other relation, doesn't apply) first two responses are recorded	Who decides in your household: whether you can participate in the social or political life of your community? (interviewed woman, partner, sons/daughters, mother, father-in-law, sister, brother, other relation, doesn't apply) first two responses are recorded	Who decides in your household: whether you can participate in the social or political life of your community? (interviewed woman, partner, sons/daughters, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister, brother, other relation, doesn't apply) first two responses are recorded	party or candidate? (do you have to ask your husband's/partner's permission, do you have to tell him or ask his opinion, do you not have to do anything [doesn't go alone; goes with him, doesn't do it, other, doesn't apply])		

*Serbia*

Survey	Question(s) on social activities	Question(s) on shopping
Time-Use Survey	Who usually make decision in household on: visits to the cousins or friends? (you, spouse/partner, together with the spouse/partner, you with another member of the household, someone else, does not apply)	Who usually make decision in household on: what will be prepared for the meal? (you, spouse/partner, together with the spouse/partner, you with another member of the household, someone else, does not apply)

*Turkey*

Survey	Question(s) on social activities	Question(s) on shopping	Question(s) on marriage/divorce
Family Structure Survey	Who makes decisions in the household regarding: shopping, relations with relatives, relations with neighbours, holidays and entertaining	Who makes decisions in the household regarding: shopping, relations with relatives, relations with neighbours, holidays and entertaining	Who makes decision for marriage? (my decision with approval of my family, my decision without approval of my family, arranged marriage (my decision), arranged marriage (my family's decision, without my opinion), eloping/abduction, bride exchange, other)
Turkey Demographic and Health Survey			Who makes decision for marriage? (herself, partner, family) Who makes decision for divorce? (herself, partner, together)

*GGS*

Survey	Question(s) on social activities
Generations and Gender Survey	Who makes decisions about the following issues in your household? a. routine purchases for the household; b. occasional more expensive purchases for the household; c. the time you spend in paid work; d. the time your partner/spouse spends in paid work; e. the way children are raised; f. Public activities and leisure time. Response options: always me; usually me; me and P about equally; usually P; always P; always or usually someone else; not applicable.

## Children's education and upbringing

### Canada

Survey	Question(s) on education/homework for children
General Social Survey on Canadians at Work and at Home	Who in your household mainly takes care of: helping the children with homework? (mostly you, mostly your [spouse/partner/spouse or partner], mostly another household member, shared equally, someone outside the household, task is not done in the household)

### Italy

Survey	Question(s) on education/homework for children
Family and Social Subjects Survey	Who, in your couple, has more power in making decisions regarding the following matters: how to educate the children? (more the woman, more the man, both equally, not applicable)

### Kyrgyzstan

Survey	Question(s) on education/homework for children	Question(s) on naming the children	Question(s) on health/well-being of children	Question(s) on marriage of children	Question(s) on who decides how to raise the child(ren) and/family configuration
Life in Kyrgyzstan	Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on whether children attend school?  Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on whether children do their homework?	Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on how to name newborns?	Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on children's well-being/health	Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on marriage of female household members  Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on marriage of male household members	Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on whether son/sons participates in the fieldwork (main land plot)  Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on whether son/sons should do supporting work (home and kitchen garden)  Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on

Survey	Question(s) on education/homework for children	Question(s) on naming the children	Question(s) on health/well-being of children	Question(s) on marriage of children	Question(s) on who decides how to raise the child(ren) and/family configuration
					whether daughter/daughters participates in the fieldwork (main land plot)  Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on whether daughter/daughters should do supporting work (home and kitchen garden)
Gender in the Perception of Society					

*Mexico*

Survey	Question(s) on education/homework for children	Question(s) on health/well-being of children	Question(s) on who decides how to raise the child(ren) and/family configuration
Survey on Relationship Dynamics in Households	Who makes decisions in the household regarding: shopping, relations with relatives, relations with neighbours, holidays and entertaining		Who decides, the majority of the time, in the household or in your couple: granting permissions to your children? (only you [the respondent], only your husband or partner, between the two but him a bit more, between the two but you a bit more, equally between the two, other people, doesn't apply) If response is "only the respondent", then also: And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?)
The Labour and Co-responsibility Survey	Who decides in your household: about the care and education of the children? (interviewed woman, partner, sons/daughters, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister, brother, other relation, doesn't apply) first two responses are recorded	Who decides in your household: about the care and education of the children? (interviewed woman, partner, sons/daughters, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister, brother, other relation, doesn't apply) first two responses are recorded	Who decides in your household: granting permissions to your children? (interviewed woman, partner, sons/daughters, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister, brother, other relation, doesn't apply) first two responses are recorded
Family Life Survey	Who decides in your household your children's education: respondent, spouse, son/daughter,	Who decides in your household your children's health services and medicines; respondent,	

Survey	Question(s) on education/homework for children	Question(s) on health/well-being of children	Question(s) on who decides how to raise the child(ren) and/family configuration
	mother, father, mother in law, father in law, brother, sister, brother in-law, sister in-law, grandparents, other - specify _____, does not know	spouse, son/daughter, mother, father, mother in law, father in law, brother, sister, brother in-law, sister in-law, grandparents, other- specify _____, does not know	

*Tajikistan*

Survey	Question(s) on education/homework for children	Question(s) on health/well-being of children
Living Standards Measurement Surveys	Which member of the household has the main decision-making authority for children's school attendance; head of household, individual male household member, individual female household member, collective male household members, collective female household members, all members of household, not applicable, decided for him/herself	Which member of the household has the main decision-making authority for children's wellbeing; head of household, individual male household member, individual female household member, collective male household members, collective female household members, all members of household, not applicable, decided for him/herself

*Turkey*

Survey	Question(s) on who decides how to raise the child(ren) and/family configuration
Family Structure Survey	Who makes decisions about child-related matters

*GGS*

Survey	Question(s) on education/homework for children	Question(s) on health/well-being of children	Question(s) on who decides how to raise the child(ren) and/family configuration
Generations and Gender Survey	Who makes decisions about the following issues in your household? a. dressing the children or seeing that the children are properly dressed, b. putting the	Who makes decisions about the following issues in your household? a. dressing the children or seeing that the children are properly dressed, b. putting the	Who makes decisions about the following issues in your household? a. routine purchases for the household; b. occasional

Survey	Question(s) on education/homework for children	Question(s) on health/well-being of children	Question(s) on who decides how to raise the child(ren) and/family configuration
	<p>children to bed and/or seeing that they go to bed, c. staying at home with the children when they are ill, d. playing with the children and/or taking part in leisure activities with them, e. helping the children with homework, f. taking the children to/from school, day care centre, babysitter or leisure activities</p> <p>Response options: always me; usually me; me and P about equally; usually P; always P; always or usually someone else; not applicable</p>	<p>children to bed and/or seeing that they go to bed, c. staying at home with the children when they are ill, d. playing with the children and/or taking part in leisure activities with them, e. helping the children with homework, f. taking the children to/from school, day care centre, babysitter or leisure activities</p> <p>Response options: always me; usually me; me and P about equally; usually P; always P; always or usually someone else; not applicable</p>	<p>more expensive purchases for the household; c. the time you spend in paid work; d. the time your partner/spouse spends in paid work; e. the way children are raised; f. Public activities and leisure time. Response options: always me; usually me; me and P about equally; usually P; always P; always or usually someone else; not applicable</p> <p>Who makes decisions about the following issues in your household? a. dressing the children or seeing that the children are properly dressed, b. putting the children to bed and/or seeing that they go to bed, c. staying at home with the children when they are ill, d. playing with the children and/or taking part in leisure activities with them, e. helping the children with homework, f. taking the children to/from school, day care centre, babysitter or leisure activities</p> <p>Response options: always me; usually me; me and P about equally; usually P; always P; always or usually someone else; not applicable</p>

## Financial decisions

### Canada

Survey	Question(s) on expenditure decisions	Question(s) on resource sharing	Question(s) on asset ownership
General Social Survey on Family	<p>Who in your couple mainly makes decisions regarding: daily</p>	<p>Overall, how would you describe the way you and your [marital status] share household expenses? (equal with each of you paying half</p>	<p>Do you have bank accounts in your sole name only, held in joint names with your [marital</p>



Survey	Question(s) on expenditure decisions	Question(s) on resource sharing	Question(s) on asset ownership
	household purchases (mostly you, mostly your [marital status], shared equally, neither)	of all bills, equal with each of your covering specific expenses, determined according to your wages, determined based on who has the money when bills need to be paid, other arrangement - specify)	status] or do you have both sole and jointly held accounts? (sole account only, joint account only, both sole and joint or mortgage account)
	Who in your couple mainly makes decisions regarding: more expensive purchases for the household (mostly you, mostly your [marital status], shared equally, neither)	What is your financial contribution for paying: the rent or mortgage? You pay (for all, for more than half, for half, for less than half, Or you do not pay, Don't have a mortgage)	(Including income from all sources, such as salary, social assistance, pension, etc.) which bank accounts does your [marital status]'s own income go to? Is it (Into your sole account, into the sole account of your [marital status], into the joint account or mortgage account, no applicable - no income, other)
		What is your financial contribution for paying: the groceries? You pay (for all, for more than half, for half, for less than half, do not pay)	
		What is your financial contribution for paying: child-related expenses such as childcare and clothing? You pay (for all, for more than half, for half, for less than half, do not pay)	
General Social Survey on Canadians at Work and at Home	Who in your household mainly takes care of: the household finances and paying the bills? (mostly you, mostly your [spouse/partner/spouse or partner], mostly another household member, shared equally, someone outside the household, task is not done in the household)	What is your financial contribution for paying: electricity, heating, telephone, cable, Internet bills, etc.? You pay (for all, for more than half, for half, for less than half, do not pay)	

*Colombia*

Survey	Question(s) on expenditure decisions	Question(s) on resource sharing	Question(s) on power, control and permission seeking
Demographic and Health Survey	Who mainly decides how the money you earn is spent? (you, your partner, together with your partner, someone else)	On average, how much of your household expenses are paid off with what you earn? (almost nothing, less than half, half, more than half, all)	At some time your partner: has s/he supervised the way you spend the money?
	Who mainly decides how to spend the money your partner earns? (you, your partner, together with your partner, someone else)		At some time your partner: has s/he threatened you to take away the economic support?
	Who in the household has the last word in the following decisions: big shopping for home?		At some time your partner: has s/he taken over or taken away money or property (land, property, etc.)?
	At some time your partner: has the money needed for the house been spent (wasted)?		

*Italy*

Survey	Question(s) on expenditure decisions	Question(s) on resource sharing	Question(s) on power, control and permission seeking
Family and Social Subjects Survey	Who, in your couple, has more power in making decisions regarding the following matters: how to spend money for routine purchases (more the woman, more the man, both equally, not applicable)	How do you and your spouse/partner manage your income (earnings and benefits etc.) (you manage the money and give part of it to your spouse/partner, your spouse/partner manages the money and gives part of it to you, you put all your money together and each one take what s/he needs, you put only part of your money together - the rest is apart, everyone manages their own money, other)	Do you and your spouse or partner have current bank or postal giro accounts? (excluding company, business accounts, etc.) (no, yes)
	Who, in your couple, has more power in making decisions regarding the following matters: how to spend money for leisure (more the woman, more the man, both equally, not applicable)	How do you and your spouse or partner manage your common monthly expenses? (you sustain expenses completely, your spouse/partner sustains expenses completely, you both sustain expenses equally, you both sustain expenses in proportion to your income, you both sustain expenses without a fixed rule)	Can you tell to whom of the following persons each of these bank or postal giro accounts are registered (Interviewee, spouse/partner, sons/daughters, other persons)
	Who, in your couple, has more power in making decisions regarding the following matters: how to spend money for home (decoration, etc.) (more		

Survey	Question(s) on expenditure decisions	Question(s) on resource sharing	Question(s) on power, control and permission seeking
	the woman, more the man, both equally, not applicable)		
	Who, in your couple, has more power in making decisions regarding the following matters: how to manage savings (more the woman, more the man, both equally, not applicable)		

*Kyrgyzstan*

Survey	Question(s) on expenditure decisions	Question(s) on resource sharing	Question(s) on power, control and permission seeking
Life in Kyrgyzstan	Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on where to shop		Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on whether to lend money to others and how much money to lend
	Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on whether to buy major items (e.g. car, house)		Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on whether or not to borrow money from others and how much to borrow
	Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on how much kalym to pay for marriage		Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on how much money to present to relative on wedding/celebration/funerals
			Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on how much to spend of household income
			Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on how much to save of household income
			Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on where to invest household income
			Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on how to use remittances

Survey	Question(s) on expenditure decisions	Question(s) on resource sharing	Question(s) on power, control and permission seeking
Gender in the Perception of Society	<p>Ideally, how do you think who should make decisions on distribution of incomes in households (Choose only one): head of the household (individually), The one who earns more, The one who keeps the house, The decision should be made jointly, Each should dispose of their own income, Each member of household who earns money should be left under his/her control, All members put earned money together and then everyone takes as much as needed, Other - specify, Refuse to answer</p> <p>Who usually decides how the money that you earned will be spent; Myself, Another household member (Identify with code), Not household member, identify who _____, together will some household members, I do not earn money, Refuse to answer/doesn't know the answer</p> <p>Women in the family should be responsible for small daily purchases and the men should take decisions on major spending; completely agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, completely disagree, refuse to answer/doesn't know the answer</p> <p>If a child earns money, s/he has the right to spend it as s/he wants; completely agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, completely disagree, refuse to answer/doesn't know the answer</p>		<p>Which member of the family has the main decision-making authority on when and at what price to sell the harvest/livestock</p> <p>Do you know how much money your spouse/partner earns; I know exactly, to some extent, no, refuse to answer/doesn't know the answer</p>
			<p>Do you and your spouse earn approximately the same amount, (Only one Answer); The wife earns more, the husband earns more, Approximately the same, Respondent - a woman doesn't earn money, respondent - a man doesn't earn money, refuse to answer/doesn't know the answer</p>
			<p>If you have taken a loan, who made a decision to take a loan in your name; myself, my partner/spouse, other relatives, relatives of spouse/partner, together with a spouse or relatives, other - specify _____, refuse to answer/doesn't know the answer</p>

*Lithuania*

Survey	Question(s) on resource sharing
Population Policy Acceptance Study	How do you and your partner/spouse organise your household income? Response options: I manage all the money and give my partner/spouse his/her share; my partner/spouse manages all the money and gives me my share; we pool all the money and each takes out what we need; we pool some of the money and keep the rest separate; we each keep our own money separate; other.

*Mexico*

Survey	Question(s) on expenditure decisions	Question(s) on power, control and permission seeking	Question(s) on power, control and permission seeking	Question(s) on asset ownership
Survey on Relationship Dynamics in Households	Who decides, the majority of the time, in the household or in your couple: how money is spent or saved? (only you [the respondent], only your husband or partner, between the two but him a bit more, between the two but you a bit more, equally between the two, other people, doesn't apply) If response is "only the respondent", then also: And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?		Now I am going to ask you about the arrangements that you make with your husband or partner when you need to undertake some activities: if you want to buy something for yourself or change your personal appearance? (do you have to ask your husband's/partner's permission, do you have to tell him or ask his opinion, do you not have to do anything [doesn't go alone; goes with him, doesn't do it, other, doesn't apply])	
	Who decides, the majority of the time, in the household or in your couple: what to do with the money which you earn or have at your disposal? (only you [the respondent], only your husband or partner, between the two but him a bit more, between the two but you a bit more, equally between the two, other people, doesn't apply) If response is "only the respondent", then also: And does your husband or partner (respect or			

Survey	Question(s) on expenditure decisions	Question(s) on power, control and permission seeking	Question(s) on power, control and permission seeking	Question(s) on asset ownership
	<p>accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?</p> <p>Who decides, the majority of the time, in the household or in your couple: what to do with the money he earns? (only you [the respondent], only your husband or partner, between the two but him a bit more, between the two but you a bit more, equally between the two, other people, doesn't apply)</p> <p>If response is "only the respondent", then also: And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?</p> <p>Who decides, the majority of the time, in the household or in your couple: whether you can buy things for yourself? (only you [the respondent], only your husband or partner, between the two but him a bit more, between the two but you a bit more, equally between the two, other people, doesn't apply)</p> <p>If response is "only the respondent", then also: And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?</p>			
The Labour and Co-responsibility Survey	<p>Who decides in your household: what to do with the money you earn or receive? (interviewed woman, partner, sons/daughters, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister, brother, other relation, doesn't apply) first two responses are recorded</p> <p>Who decides in your household: what to do with the money that your husband or partner earns or</p>	<p>Who decides in your household: whether you can buy things for yourself? (interviewed woman, partner, sons/daughters, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister, brother, other relation, doesn't apply) first two responses are recorded</p>		

Survey	Question(s) on expenditure decisions	Question(s) on power, control and permission seeking	Question(s) on power, control and permission seeking	Question(s) on asset ownership
National Financial Inclusion Survey	<p>receives? (interviewed woman, partner, sons/daughters, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister, brother, other relation, doesn't apply) first two responses are recorded</p> <p>Who decides in your household: about economic support for parents or in-laws, if they require it? (interviewed woman, partner, sons/daughters, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister, brother, other relation, doesn't apply) first two responses are recorded</p>	<p>To dispose of your money, do you have to ask permission of anyone? (yes or no) If yes, who? (partner, a relative, another person)</p>		<p>Are you the owner of (yes or no): (cultivable land; cars or vans; the dwelling where you live; premises, warehouses or offices; stalls with a fixed or semi-fixed location; another kind of property -- please specify)</p>
Family Life Survey	<p>Who makes decisions on your clothes; respondent, spouse, son/daughter, mother, father, mother in law, father in law, brother, sister, brother in-law, sister in-law, grandparents, other- specify _____, does not know</p>	<p>To cover an economic emergency, would you be able to sell or rent your...? Why not?(You have to ask the authorization of your partner, relative or another person; the property is mortgaged; the property is shared or is in someone else's name; it is the subject of a legal dispute or intestate; other -- specify)</p>	<p>Who makes decisions on money that is given to your parents/relatives; respondent, spouse, son/daughter, mother, father, mother in law, father in law, brother, sister, brother in-law, sister in-law, grandparents, other- specify _____, does not know</p>	

Survey	Question(s) on expenditure decisions	Question(s) on power, control and permission seeking	Question(s) on power, control and permission seeking	Question(s) on asset ownership
	Who makes decisions on your spouse's/partner's clothes; respondent, spouse, son/daughter, mother, father, mother in law, father in law, brother, sister, brother in-law, sister in-law, grandparents, other- specify _____, does not know		Who makes decisions on money that is given to your parents-in-law/relatives of your spouse/partner; respondent, spouse, son/daughter, mother, father, mother in law, father in law, brother, sister, brother in-law, sister in-law, grandparents, other- specify _____, does not know	
	Who makes decisions on your children's clothes; respondent, spouse, son/daughter, mother, father, mother in law, father in law, brother, sister, brother in-law, sister in-law, grandparents, other- specify _____, does not know			
	Who makes decisions on important household expenditures (refrigerator, car, furniture, etc.); respondent, spouse, son/daughter, mother, father, mother in law, father in law, brother, sister, brother in-law, sister in-law, grandparents, other- specify _____, does not know			

*Serbia*

Survey	Question(s) on expenditure decisions
Time-Use Survey	Who decides about spending money that you earn? (you, spouse/partner, together with spouse/partner, you with some other household member) Who usually make decision in household on: large supplies for the household (you, spouse/partner, together with the spouse/partner, you with another member of the household, someone else, does not apply) Who usually make decision in household on: daily supplies for the household (you, spouse/partner, together with the spouse/partner, you with another member of the household, someone else, does not apply)



*Switzerland*

Survey	Question(s) on resource sharing
Families and Generations Survey	There is a question asking about how money is distributed or shared within the household. Reply options: 1 I manage the total household income and give my partner his/her part ; 2 My partner manages the total household income and gives me my part ; 3 We pool the total household income together and everyone takes what s/he needs; 4 We pool a part of the incomes together and dispose separately of the residual part; 5 We both dispose separately of our income; 6 Other

*Tajikistan*

Survey	Question(s) on expenditure decisions	Question(s) on power, control and permission seeking
Demography and Health Survey	Who usually decides how money will be spent, you, your (husband/partner), or you and your (husband/partner) together? Who usually decides how the money earned will be spent, you, your (husband/partner) or you and your (husband/partner) together?	
Living Standards Measurement Surveys	Which member of the household has the main decision-making authority for where to shop; head of household, individual male household member, individual female household member, collective male household members, collective female household members, all members of household, not applicable, decided for him/herself Which member of the household has the main decision-making authority for buying major items; head of household, individual male household member, individual female household member, collective male household members, collective female household members, all members of household, not applicable, decided for him/herself	Which member of the household has the main decision-making authority whether or not to borrow money; head of household, individual male household member, individual female household member, collective male household members, collective female household members, all members of household, not applicable, decided for him/herself Which member of the household has the main decision-making authority for lending money to others; head of household, individual male household member, individual female household member, collective male household members, collective female household members, all members of household, not applicable, decided for him/herself Which member of the household has the main decision-making authority on how much to spend of household income; head of household, individual male household member, individual female household member, collective male household members, collective female household members, all members of household, not applicable, decided for him/herself
		Which member of the household has the main decision-making authority on how much to save of household income; head of household, individual male household member, individual female household member, collective male household member, collective female household members, all members of household, not applicable, decided for him/herself

Survey	Question(s) on expenditure decisions	Question(s) on power, control and permission seeking
		male household members, collective female household members, all members of household, not applicable, decided for him/herself
		Which member of the household has the main decision-making authority on where to invest household money; head of household, individual male household member, individual female household member, collective male household members, collective female household members, all members of household, not applicable, decided for him/herself

### Turkey

Survey	Question(s) on expenditure decisions	Question(s) on power, control and permission seeking
Domestic Violence Against Women	Spending earnings freely (he decides how he will spend, she has to give a part of her earnings, she has to give all her earnings)	
Turkey Demographic and Health Survey		Do you have money that you can decide how to spend it all on your own?

### EU + Iceland, Norway and Switzerland

Survey	Question(s) on expenditure decisions	Question(s) on resource sharing	Question(s) on power, control and permission seeking
EU-SILC	Who makes decisions about everyday shopping? More me; Balanced; More my spouse/ partner; No response.	What is the proportion of personal income kept separate from the common household budget; All my personal income, More than half of me personal income, About half of my personal income, Less than half of my personal income, None, The respondent has no personal income	How do you and your spouse organize the regime of household finance; We treat all incomes as common resources; We treat some incomes as common resources and the rest as private resources; We treat all incomes as private resources of the person receiving it, We do not received any income in the household
	Who makes decisions on purchase of expensive consumer durables and furniture? More me; Balanced; More my spouse/ partner; Never made such decisions; No response.		How do you and your spouse Manage common household finances; One or more household members, At least one person inside and at least one person outside the household is involved in managing the common household finances, No person inside the household and at least one

Survey	Question(s) on expenditure decisions	Question(s) on resource sharing	Question(s) on power, control and permission seeking
	<p>Who makes decisions about important expenses for the child(ren)? More me; Balanced; More my spouse/ partner</p> <p>Can you decide independently about purchases for the child(ren)'s needs, including giving him(them) pocket money? Yes, always or almost always; Yes, sometimes; Never or almost never;</p> <p>Can you decide about expenses for your own personal needs, leisure activities, and hobbies? Yes always or almost always; Yes, sometimes; Never or almost never; No response.</p>		<p>person outside the household is involved in managing the common household finances, There are no common household finances</p> <p>Do you have access to a bank account; yes, no</p> <p>Who makes the decisions on borrowing money; More me, Balanced, More my partner, Never arisen</p> <p>Who makes the decisions on savings; More me, Balanced, More my partner, we do not have (common) savings, Never arisen</p> <p><b>From Latvia and Lithuania:</b> Who is managing the common household finances, i.e. keeping track of expenses, bills, loans and incomes concerning the household as a whole? Are there involved in managing the common household finances, 1. one or more household members 2. at least one person inside and at least one person outside the household is involved in managing the common household finances 3. no person inside the household and at least one person outside the household is involved in managing the common household finances 4. there are no common household finances 5. (if at least on household member is managing the common household resources)</p> <p><b>From Latvia:</b> How many household members are managing the common household finances? Do you feel free (i.e. without asking the permission of other household members) to spend money on yourself for your personal consumption, your leisure activities and hobbies? 1. Yes, always or almost always 2. Yes, sometimes; 3. Never or almost never</p> <p><b>From Latvia:</b> How much money do you usually spend monthly on yourself? Monthly amount, LVL (if person has personal income) What proportion of your personal income do you keep separate from the common household budget? 1. All my personal income 2. More than half of my personal income 3. About half of my personal income 4. Less than</p>

Survey	Question(s) on expenditure decisions	Question(s) on resource sharing	Question(s) on power, control and permission seeking
			half of my personal income 5. None (all income are included in the common household budget)

*GGS*

Survey	Question(s) on expenditure decisions	Question(s) on power, control and permission seeking
Generations and Gender Survey	Who makes decisions about the following issues in your household? a. routine purchases for the household; b. occasional more expensive purchases for the household; c. the time you spend in paid work; d. the time your partner/spouse spends in paid work; e. the way children are raised; f. Public activities and leisure time. Response options: always me; usually me; me and P about equally; usually P; always P; always or usually someone else; not applicable.	How do you and your partner/spouse organise your household income? Response options: 1 I manage all the money and give my partner/spouse his/her share; 2 my partner/spouse manages all the money and gives me my share; 3 we pool all the money and each takes out what we need; 4 we pool some of the money and keep the rest separate; 5 we each keep our own money separate; 6 other.

Perception of control and satisfaction with decision-making

*Canada*

	Questions on the dimensions
<b>Survey</b>	<b>Question(s) on chores</b>
General Social Survey on Family	How satisfied are you with the way chores are divided in your household? (very satisfied, satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, dissatisfied, very dissatisfied, does not apply to my situation)

*Colombia*

<b>Questions on satisfaction with relationship</b>	
<b>Survey</b>	<b>Question(s) on being consulted on decision-making</b>
Demographic and Health Survey	Have your partner or ex-partner ever: has s/he not consulted with you about important decisions for the family? (a. Ever – yes or no, b. In the past 12 months, yes or no)
Time-Use Survey	Do you share the household leadership (decision making, expenses, responsibilities, home administration, etc.) with one or more people in this household?

*Finland*

<b>Survey</b>	<b>Question(s) on being consulted on decision-making</b>	<b>Question(s) on satisfaction with relationship</b>
Finnish Gender Equality Barometer 2017	Do you feel you have enough say when making decisions within the family is concerned? Making decisions within the family refers to decisions that concern division of housework, parenting of children and finances, for example. 1) yes, in all things, 2) yes, in most things, 3) yes, in some things 4) hardly ever; 5) don't know	Have you recently felt that you shoulder too much of the housework?  Please choose one of the following that best describes your relationship with your (current) spouse/partner. 1) Very good; 2) Quite good; 3) Satisfactory; 4) Not good
		Do you argue with your (current) spouse/partner about the following? [sharing housework; childcare, transporting the children etc.; Taking time off work when the child is sick; Money; Time spent by you or your spouse/partner on personal interests and leisure activities]? 1) Often; 2) Sometimes; 3) Never; 4) Don't know

*Italy*

Questions on the dimensions						
Survey	Question(s) on chores	Question(s) on finance	Question(s) on reproduction	Question(s) on children/family	Question(s) on labour force	Question(s) on social life and leisure
Family and Social Subjects Survey	How often do you disagree with your spouse/partner on the following matters: how to share household work (often, sometimes, rarely, never, not applicable)	How often do you disagree with your spouse/partner on the following matters: how to spend money (often, sometimes, rarely, never, not applicable)	How often do you disagree with your spouse/partner on the following matters: having children (often, sometimes, rarely, never, not applicable)	How often do you disagree with your spouse/partner on the following matters: how to educate children (often, sometimes, rarely, never, not applicable)	How often do you disagree with your spouse/partner on the following matters: how his or her workload weighs upon your relationship (often, sometimes, rarely, never, not applicable)	How often do you disagree with your spouse/partner on the following matters: what to do in the free time (often, sometimes, rarely, never, not applicable)

*Kyrgyzstan*

Questions on the dimensions	
Survey	Question(s) on finance
Gender in the Perception of Society	Are you satisfied with the situation on how decisions on distribution of incomes in your household are made; Yes, No, Refuses to answer

*Lithuania*

	<b>Questions on satisfaction with relationship</b>
<b>Survey</b>	<b>Question(s) on resolving /dealing with conflicts</b>
Fertility and Family Survey	Q709 Who would you say is the person in your relationship (A) whose work/occupation is most important? (B) who takes the initiative in resolving quarrels or conflicts? (C) who makes the major decisions? (D) who provides the emotional support? (E) who has the major responsibility for earning money? Response options: 1 Almost excl. Me; 2 Mostly me; 3 Both equally; 4 Mostly partner; 5 Almost excl. partner.

*Mexico*

	<b>Questions on satisfaction with relationship</b>
<b>Survey</b>	<b>Question(s) on resolving /dealing with conflicts</b>
Survey on Relationship Dynamics in Households	And does your husband or partner (respect or accept or support your decision, fight or mistreat you, is indifferent (doesn't mind, doesn't participate)?

*Switzerland*

	<b>Questions on the dimensions</b>							
<b>Survey</b>	<b>Questions on satisfaction with relationship</b>	<b>Question(s) on being consulted on decision-making</b>	<b>Question(s) on chores</b>	<b>Question(s) on finance</b>	<b>Question(s) on reproduction</b>	<b>Question(s) on children/family</b>	<b>Question(s) on labour force</b>	<b>Question(s) on social life and leisure</b>
Families and Generations survey	Couples deal differently with important disagreements. When you have disagreements how often do you react by keeping your opinion	How often in the past 12 month did you have any disagreement with the partner on the following topics: housework; money; leisure activities;	How often in the past 12 month did you have any disagreement with the partner on the following topics: housework; money; leisure activities;	How often in the past 12 month did you have any disagreement with the partner on the following topics:	How often in the past 12 month did you have any disagreement with the partner on the following topics:	How often in the past 12 month did you have any disagreement with the partner on the following topics:	How often in the past 12 month did you have any disagreement with the partner on the following topics:	How often in the past 12 month did you have any disagreement with the partner on the following topics:

		Questions on the dimensions						
Survey	Questions on satisfaction with relationship	Question(s) on being consulted on decision-making	Question(s) on chores	Question(s) on finance	Question(s) on reproduction	Question(s) on children/family	Question(s) on labour force	Question(s) on social life and leisure
	private; discussing calmly to work it out; getting angry and shouting; banging the door and smashing objects; getting violent; going away. The reply options are never; rarely; sometimes; often; very often.	relation to your parents or parents-in-law; education of the children; wish to have children; relation to friends. The reply options are never; rarely; sometimes; often; very often; not concerned	housework; money; leisure activities; relation to your parents or parents-in-law; education of the children; wish to have children; relation to friends. The reply options are never; rarely; sometimes; often; very often; not concerned	housework; money; leisure activities; relation to your parents or parents-in-law; education of the children; wish to have children; relation to friends. The reply options are never; rarely; sometimes; often; very often; not concerned	housework; money; leisure activities; relation to your parents or parents-in-law; education of the children; wish to have children; relation to friends. The reply options are never; rarely; sometimes; often; very often; not concerned	housework; money; leisure activities; relation to your parents or parents-in-law; education of the children; wish to have children; relation to friends. The reply options are never; rarely; sometimes; often; very often; not concerned	housework; money; leisure activities; relation to your parents or parents-in-law; education of the children; wish to have children; relation to friends. The reply options are never; rarely; sometimes; often; very often; not concerned	housework; money; leisure activities; relation to your parents or parents-in-law; education of the children; wish to have children; relation to friends. The reply options are never; rarely; sometimes; often; very often; not concerned
	When you have disagreements how often does your partner react by keeping his/her opinion private; discussing calmly to work it out; getting angry and shouting; banging the door and smashing objects; getting violent; going away. The reply options are never; rarely; sometimes; often; very often.	Two satisfaction questions about the distribution of domestic work and of child-care in the couple. Answer options: very satisfied, quite satisfied, not satisfied at all. And then for both there's a following question: if you could, what would you change concerning the distribution of domestic work / child-care between you and your partner? Answer options not read by interviewer: Target person would like to contribute less in child-care, target person would	Two satisfaction questions about the distribution of domestic work and of child-care in the couple. Answer options are: very satisfied, quite satisfied, not so satisfied, not satisfied at all. And then for both there's a following question: if you could, what would you change concerning the distribution of domestic work / child-care between you and your	Two satisfaction questions about the distribution of domestic work and of child-care in the couple. Answer options are: very satisfied, quite satisfied, not so satisfied, not satisfied at all. And then for both there's a following question: if you could, what would you change concerning the distribution of domestic work / child-care between you and your	Two satisfaction questions about the distribution of domestic work and of child-care in the couple. Answer options are: very satisfied, quite satisfied, not so satisfied, not satisfied at all. And then for both there's a following question: if you could, what would you change concerning the distribution of domestic work / child-care between you and your	Two satisfaction questions about the distribution of domestic work and of child-care in the couple. Answer options are: very satisfied, quite satisfied, not so satisfied, not satisfied at all. And then for both there's a following question: if you could, what would you change concerning the distribution of domestic work / child-care between you and your	Two satisfaction questions about the distribution of domestic work and of child-care in the couple. Answer options are: very satisfied, quite satisfied, not so satisfied, not satisfied at all. And then for both there's a following question: if you could, what would you change concerning the distribution of domestic work / child-care between you and your	Two satisfaction questions about the distribution of domestic work and of child-care in the couple. Answer options are: very satisfied, quite satisfied, not so satisfied, not satisfied at all. And then for both there's a following question: if you could, what would you change concerning the distribution of domestic work / child-care between you and your



Questions on satisfaction with relationship		Questions on the dimensions					
Survey	Question(s) on being consulted on decision-making	Question(s) on chores	Question(s) on finance	Question(s) on reproduction	Question(s) on children/family	Question(s) on labour force	Question(s) on social life and leisure
		like to contribute more in child-care, target person would like his/her partner to contribute more in child-care, target person would like his/her partner to contribute less in child-care, other			partner? Answer options not read by interviewer: Target person would like to contribute less in child-care, target person would like to contribute more in child-care, target person would like his/her partner to contribute more in child-care, target person would like his/her partner to contribute less in child-care, other		
	Who in your couple appeases in quarrels; proposes activities; devotes him/herself and helps the other; suggests solutions to problems; gives tenderness. The reply options are always you; mostly you; you and your partner with the same frequency; mostly your partner; always your partner.						

Survey	Questions on satisfaction with relationship		Questions on the dimensions					
	Question(s) on being consulted on decision-making	Question(s) on satisfaction with your relationship	Question(s) on chores	Question(s) on finance	Question(s) on reproduction	Question(s) on children/family	Question(s) on labour force	Question(s) on social life and leisure
Generations and Gender Survey	When you have a serious disagreement with your partner/spouse, how often do you a. keep your opinion to yourself; b. discuss your disagreement calmly; c. argue heatedly or shout; d. end up becoming violent? Response options: 1 never; 2 seldom; 3 sometimes; 4 frequently; 5 very frequently	Indirect measure: this question follows right after the questions regarding decision-making: How satisfied are you with your relationship with your partner/spouse? (Scale from 0 (Not at all satisfied), 5 (neither satisfied nor unsatisfied) to 10 (Completely satisfied)).	Within the last 12 months, how often did you and your partner/spouse have disagreement about a. household chores; b. money; c. use of leisure time; d. sex; e. relations with friends; f. relations with parents and in-laws; g. child-raising issues; h. having children; i. drinking alcohol? Response options: 1 never; 2 seldom; 3 sometimes; 4 frequently; 5 very frequently.	Within the last 12 months, how often did you and your partner/spouse have disagreement about a. household chores; b. money; c. use of leisure time; d. sex; e. relations with friends; f. relations with parents and in-laws; g. child-raising issues; h. having children; i. drinking alcohol? Response options: 1 never; 2 seldom; 3 sometimes; 4 frequently; 5 very frequently.	Within the last 12 months, how often did you and your partner/spouse have disagreement about a. household chores; b. money; c. use of leisure time; d. sex; e. relations with friends; f. relations with parents and in-laws; g. child-raising issues; h. having children; i. drinking alcohol? Response options: 1 never; 2 seldom; 3 sometimes; 4 frequently; 5 very frequently.	Within the last 12 months, how often did you and your partner/spouse have disagreement about a. household chores; b. money; c. use of leisure time; d. sex; e. relations with friends; f. relations with parents and in-laws; g. child-raising issues; h. having children; i. drinking alcohol? Response options: 1 never; 2 seldom; 3 sometimes; 4 frequently; 5 very frequently.	Within the last 12 months, how often did you and your partner/spouse have disagreement about a. household chores; b. money; c. use of leisure time; d. sex; e. relations with friends; f. relations with parents and in-laws; g. child-raising issues; h. having children; i. drinking alcohol? Response options: 1 never; 2 seldom; 3 sometimes; 4 frequently; 5 very frequently.	Within the last 12 months, how often did you and your partner/spouse have disagreement about a. household chores; b. money; c. use of leisure time; d. sex; e. relations with friends; f. relations with parents and in-laws; g. child-raising issues; h. having children; i. drinking alcohol? Response options: 1 never; 2 seldom; 3 sometimes; 4 frequently; 5 very frequently.

		Questions on the dimensions							
Questions on satisfaction with relationship		Question(s) on satisfaction with your relationship	Question(s) on chores	Question(s) on finance	Question(s) on reproduction	Question(s) on children/family	Question(s) on labour force	Question(s) on social life and leisure	
Survey	<p>Question(s) on being consulted on decision-making</p> <p>Question(s) on satisfaction with your relationship</p>					<p>Follow up to question on division of tasks related to children. On a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 means 'not at all satisfied' and 10 means 'completely satisfied' and 5 means 'about average', what number best represents your satisfaction with the way childcare tasks are divided between you and your partner/spouse?</p>			



# Guidance for Measuring Intra-household Power and Decision-making

Unequal power relations operate not only in the public world but also in the private sphere, within households. This Guidance has been developed to support national statistical offices in developing ways to measure power in the private sphere, looking at who usually makes decisions about a variety of matters, from routine grocery shopping to saving up for a car, and from seeing a doctor to visiting relatives.

The Guidance proposes seven different dimensions of intra-household decision-making: Union formation, sexual and reproductive decisions; Decisions about division of labour; Health-related decisions; Decisions about social life and personal liberties; Decisions about children's education and upbringing; Financial decisions; Perception of control and satisfaction with decision-making.

Concrete recommendations emerging from the work are made, as well as proposals for further work on this complex issue.

The Guidance is a first step towards integrating the measurement of intra-household power and decision-making into national official statistics on gender equality. Quantifying the silent inequalities behind closed doors could help to shine a spotlight on them, providing policymakers with evidence to guide their efforts towards altering the imbalances.

The Guidance consists of the following chapters:

- Conceptual background
- Current practice and experiences in measuring intra-household power and decision-making
- Indicators of intra-household power and decision-making
- Selected test analyses of existing data
- Qualitative testing of selected survey questions
- Recommendations and further work

An inventory of surveys and survey questions on intra-household power and decision-making is also included.

The Guidance was endorsed by the 68th plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians in 2020.

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