

X-MEN – Masculinities, empathy and non-violence

CROATIA

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Introduction – about the X-MEN project

The ***X-MEN – Masculinities, Empathy, Non-Violence*** project is implemented in three countries of the European Union: Portugal, Spain and Croatia. In Croatia, the project is carried out by *Status M* in partnership with the *Center for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra* (Portugal) and the *CEPAIM Foundation* (Spain).

The goals of the X-MEN project are as follows:

1. To contribute to the understanding of the impact of COVID-19 on the lives of young people at risk and on their institutional environment.
2. To contribute to the prevention of gender-based violence and violence against children (which includes violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity) and the promotion of gender equality. This is achieved through a gender-transformative intervention, intended to change attitudes, behavior and knowledge of individuals, particularly young men (through educational and reflexive groups which foster reflection and action), while simultaneously promoting normative changes in the wider community through an advocacy strategy.
3. To improve the position of young people at risk or socially excluded young people by strengthening the capacities of experts through gender-transformative education programs which are aimed at the prevention of gender-based violence and the promotion of gender equality.
4. To bolster the institutional response by strengthening the capacities of relevant decision makers, as well as by strengthening the relationship between the academic community and civil society organizations in relation to the prevention of violence against women and young people. Accordingly, the project is also aimed at increasing the promotion of gender-sensitive prevention of violence through raising awareness, exchanging information and knowledge, and creating and expanding educational opportunities.
5. To contribute to the implementation of Agenda 2030, as well as European directives and national plans for the prevention of violence.

Methodology

The X-MEN project has a strong research component. The project team had a mixed-research approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methodology. The research was conducted in the period from June to October 2022. During June and July 2022, the team carried out a desk analysis, which included the survey of relevant public policies and strategies and institutional protocols, as well as the analysis of their implementation in the juvenile justice system in relation to **gender-based violence and the promotion gender equality**, with special reference to the **impact of COVID-19**.

The field research was conducted in the period from September to October 2022. Its implementation was conditional on getting consent from the Ministry of Justice and Public Administration. After the consent was obtained, the team contacted individual juvenile justice institutions and organized field visits. The field research in Požega Correctional Institution (juvenile justice institution for girls) was carried out in September, and in October the team visited Turopolje Correctional Institution (juvenile justice institution for boys). The field research included young people (girls and boys) and experts who work with them.

In October, an interview was conducted with two employees of the Ministry of Justice and Public Administration who are in charge of organizing and supervising work and treatment in the juvenile justice institutions. In the context of this project and research, the two participants are classified as decision-makers.

Quantitative approach

The researchers used a questionnaire created by the X-MEN project team, which was translated into Croatian for the purposes of the research in Croatia. The questionnaire was minimally amended to better suit the local context, but without altering the content of the questionnaire itself. Due to the characteristics of young people in the juvenile justice institutions, especially in Turopolje Correctional Institution (weaker literacy and lower intellectual abilities of young people), the application of the questionnaire required support from the researchers in the form of reading and clarifying the questions and, in some cases, also noting down the responses.

Qualitative approach

The qualitative part of the research referred to the implementation of focus groups with young people and experts in both institutions, as well as interviews with employees of the Ministry. For the purposes of conducting the qualitative research, focus group templates created by the project team were used, which were translated and modified to suit the national context.

Participants

The total number of field research participants is 44. Table 1 provides a more detailed description of the participants. All participants were informed in detail about the purpose and goal of the project and research and gave their verbal consent to participation.

A total of 9 young women and 5 experts, all female, from Požega Correctional Institution participated in the research. 24 young men and 5 experts (4 women and 1 man) from Turopolje Correctional Institution took part.

It is important to note that all participants eagerly participated in the research, especially young people who were happy to meet new people and take part in new activities. At the same time, the young women were more talkative and shared their experiences and thoughts more easily, readily and extensively.

Table 1 Number of field research participants

| Participants | Number/ Sex | |
|------------------------|--------------------|-------|
| Young people | 32 | |
| | M-23 | F- 9 |
| Experts | 10 | |
| | M-1 | F- 9 |
| Decision-makers | 2 | |
| | M – 0 | F- 2 |
| IN TOTAL | 44 | |
| | M-25 | F- 20 |

Desk analysis

Juvenile justice system in Croatia

Since the *X-MEN – Masculinities, Empathy, Non-Violence* project in Croatia focuses on the system of juvenile justice, more specifically on correctional institutions in which educational and correctional measures are carried out (in accordance with the Juvenile Courts Act (Official Gazette 84/11, 143/12, 148/13, 56/15, 126/19 - hereinafter JCA), it is important to initially give a brief overview of the juvenile justice system in Croatia. The focus of this overview are criminally responsible young people who committed criminal offenses or misdemeanors and were sentenced to a referral to a correctional institution (Article 7 and Article 16 of JCA).

First of all, it is important to touch upon the concept of criminal responsibility of children and young people. According to JCA, a person up to 14 years of age is a child and cannot be held criminally responsible. Persons between the ages of 14 and 18 are defined as minors (14-16 younger minors, 16-18 older minors) and are criminally liable. JCA also applies to persons aged 18 to 21 (younger adults). JCA incorporates relevant European directives related to the protection of the rights of children and young people who appear in the justice system as perpetrators of criminal acts and as victims. The directives include: *1. Directive 2011/93/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA; 2. Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA; 3. Directive (EU) 2016/800 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2016 on procedural safeguards for children who are suspects or accused persons in criminal proceedings .*

Children and young people can be participants¹ in the justice system if **they have committed a criminal offence or misdemeanor**, and if they are, according to LCJ and the Misdemeanor Act (OG 107/07, 39/13, 157/13, 110/15), criminally responsible. If they are criminally responsible (over the age of 14), in addition to the provisions of the previously mentioned laws, the provisions of the Law on Execution of Sanctions imposed on Minors for Criminal Offenses and Misdemeanors (OG 133/12) also apply, and police officers are obliged to treat them in accordance with the Act on Police Affairs and Powers (NN 76/09, 92/14). A criminally responsible child or young person is firstly invited, together with his or her parents or legal guardians, to the State Attorney's Office, if he or she is suspected of having committed a criminal offence for which the Criminal Code (OG 125/11, 144/12, 56/15, 61/15) foresees a

¹ A child or young person also can be a participant in the justice system if he or she are in the position of a victim of a criminal act or a misdemeanor, or as a party in a family civil law proceeding. Also, children are participants in the justice system in situations where one or both of their parents are serving a prison sentence.

prison sentence of up to five years or a fine. A child or a young person may be invited to the State Attorney's Office several times, and the State Attorney, in accordance with its powers, (along with the possibility of dismissing the charge) can apply any of the available measures according to the principles opportunity or efficiency, or forward the case to court. If the perpetrator of a criminal offence or a misdemeanor is a child at the age at which he or she cannot be held criminally responsible according to the law (up to 14 years of age), the provisions of the Family Law (OG 103/15, 98/19) and the Social Welfare Act (OG 157/13, 152/14, 99/15, 52/16, 16/17, 130/17, 98/19) apply. This means that the responsibility is transferred to the parents or guardians and the measures from the social welfare system are applied.

At the international level, there are a number of documents regulating the ways children and young people participate in the justice system which promote and encourage the practice of child-friendly justice (e.g. The Guidelines of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on Child-Friendly Justice, 2010). The Guidelines emphasize that the approach to every child and young person should be efficient and expedient, individualized, adapted to their age and focused on their needs and rights. When it comes to children and youth offenders, it is necessary to ensure that they have the right to a fair trial, protection of privacy, the right to information about the proceeding from the very beginning, and the right to active participation.

The measure of referral to a correctional institution

Article 7 of JCA defines the following educational and correctional measures:

1. court reprimand,
2. special obligations and duties,
3. intense care and supervision,
4. intense care and supervision with day stay in an educational institution,
5. referral to a disciplinary center,
6. referral to an educational institution,
- 7. referral to a correctional institution,**
8. referral to a special educational institution

Measures 6-8 (so-called **institutional measures**) are given when there is a more permanent and intensive need for a correctional intervention or treatment regarding a minor, ***along with the need for removal from his or her environment***. Institutional measures are applied as a last resort and may last, within the limits set by JCA, only as long as necessary to achieve the purpose of an educational measure.

Article 16 of JCA defines in more detail the measure of referral to a correctional institution. Paragraph 1 states the following: *Referral to a correctional institution will be ordered by the court when it is necessary to separate the minor from his or her environment and apply intense*

educational measures in view of significant behavioral disorders and insufficient willingness to accept educational influences. When deciding on the imposition of this measure, the court shall take into account the gravity and nature of the committed offense and the circumstance of whether educational measures or a juvenile prison sentence were previously imposed on the minor. Paragraph 2 refers to the duration of the measure and states: In the correctional institution, the juvenile shall remain for at least six months, and for a maximum of three years. The court shall examine every six months whether there are grounds to suspend this measure or to replace it with another educational measure (which is defined in more detail in article 18, paragraph 2 of JCA).

In Croatia, the measure of referral to a correctional institution is carried out in two institutions: Turopolje Correctional Institution (for boys) and Požega Correctional Institution (for girls). Both institutions are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice and Public Administration and are organized as special organizational units of the Directorate for the Prison System and Probation. The correctional institution in Turopolje is located in the village of Kuče, in the Zagreb County, in northwestern Croatia. The facility is located within the Penitentiary in Turopolje (a separate section for juveniles within a larger penitentiary complex for adult male prisoners). The correctional institution in Požega is located in the town of Požega, in the center of the Požega-Slavonija County, in eastern Croatia. The institution is located within the Penitentiary in Požega (a separate section for juveniles within a larger penitentiary complex for adult female prisoners).

Data on the number of minors in correctional institutions

In relation to the trends in the imposition of all measures against juvenile offenders, the total share of institutional measures is 34.2% (for younger juveniles) and 10.8% (for older juveniles) (Croatian Bureau of Statistics, 2022). In concrete numbers, a total of 20 institutional measures were given in 2021 (out of a total of 297 measures imposed on minors). The data does not state the exact number of male and female persons who were sentenced to institutional measures. The largest number of juvenile perpetrators committed criminal offenses against property (a total of 11 minors). Looking at the general trends in the imposition of institutional measures in 2021, it is evident that courts rarely opt for these measures, only when, given the gravity and nature of the offense, it is necessary to separate the young person from his or her environment. The relatively low figures are also in line with the general trends in the dynamics of juvenile crime in Croatia, which has shown a downward trend in the last 20 years (Ricijaš , Mandić, Lamešić , 2022).

According to the latest available Report on the State and Functioning Of Penitentiaries, Prisons and Correctional Institutions for 2020 (Ministry of Justice and Public Administration, 2021), it is possible to gain a more detailed insight into the number of girls and boys undergoing correctional measures. The data is segregated according to gender, age, as well

as the phenomenology of the committed criminal acts. In 2020, there were 83 boys and 13 girls who were referred to a correctional institution. At the very end of 2020, it was recorded that 44 boys and 7 girls were carrying out the measure. Regarding the age of young men in correctional institutions, most of them were aged 16-18 (25 of them), then 18-21 (18) and only one aged 14-16. It is similar for girls – most of them were aged 16-18 (5), and only one aged 14-16 and 18-21.

In relation to the committed offences, among young men and women who were in correctional institutions at the end of 2020, the largest number of perpetrators committed crimes against property (72.55%). This is followed by criminal offenses against personal freedom (7.84%), against human health (5.88%) and against sexual freedom (5.88%). It is interesting to note that the statistics related to the incidence of committed criminal offenses are presented jointly for both genders and there is no segregated data for boys and girls.

Objective of desk analysis

The goal of this desk analysis is to examine relevant public policies and strategies and institutional protocols, as well as their implementation in the juvenile justice system in relation to **gender-based violence and the promotion of gender equality**, with special reference to the **impact of COVID-19**. It is important to note that this analysis refers exclusively to the judicial system – specifically to the implementation of educational measures in the correctional institutions. According to recent statistical indicators for 2020 (Report on the State and Functioning of Penitentiaries, Prisons and Correctional Institutions for 2020, Ministry of Justice and Public Administration, 2021), there were 83 young men in Turopolje Correctional Institution and 13 girls in Požega Correctional Institution). The correctional institutions do not have their own websites, and information on internal protocols and regulations can only be obtained indirectly through the relevant ministry and different Ombudspersons' reports, or first-hand through direct contact with the experts employed in these institutions. The assumption is that in the later stages of the field research, the research team will be able to gain insight into the aforementioned policies, procedures and regulations and their implementation.

Sources and materials used

Initially, it is important to note that in relation to the terms *gender-based violence* and *gender equality* (as well as *gender-specific programs*, *gender-sensitive programs*), there are a number of documents and publications related to the general population of adults, and to a lesser extent related to the population young people². A review of the available literature did not find any publicly available sources specifically related to the population of children and youth in the justice system, i.e. in the correctional institutions. By further expanding the search to the population of children and youth in the system of educational institutions (outside the justice system – in the social welfare sector), no relevant documents were found in relation to gender-based violence and gender equality. Similarly, data on these topics and the impact of COVID-19 were collected primarily from different ombudspersons' reports and civil society organizations working on human rights.

The following sources and materials were used in this desk analysis:

² Examples: Handbook on gender mainstreaming and promotion of gender equality (2017), State Office for Gender Equality; Davorija, I., Matejčić, M. (2021): Reproductive justice for a fairer society, Association for Human Rights and Citizen Participation PaRiter, Rijeka; Cesar, S. (2021): Electronic sexual and gender-based violence in youth relationships, Handbook for teachers, CESI, Zagreb; Bijelić, N. (2021): Implementation of preventive programs and activities related to gender-based violence, gender equality and sexual and reproductive health in secondary schools in the City of Zagreb (school years 2020/21 and 2021/22), CESI, Zagreb .

1. Borić, I. Mataga Tintor, A. (2022): Participation of vulnerable groups of children. UNICEF Office in Croatia (in press)
2. Directive 2011/93/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA
3. Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA
4. Directive (EU) 2016/800 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2016 on procedural safeguards for children who are suspects or accused persons in criminal proceedings
5. Children on hold. Addendum to the report of the Ombudsperson for Children. (2021). Available at: <https://dijete.hr/hr/izvjesca/izvjesca-o-radu-pravobranitelja-za-djecu/#>
6. Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2022). Juvenile perpetrators of criminal offenses by type of decision in 2021. Available at: <https://podaci.dzs.hr/media/rrqet14q/psz-2022-1-2-maloljetni-po%C4%8Dinitelji-kaz-u-2021.pdf>
7. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (2002).
8. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child regarding the involvement of children in armed conflicts (2002).
9. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (2014).
10. EU Gender Equality Index 2021. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/news/gender-equality-index-2021-fragile-gains-big-losses>
11. Report on the work of the Ombudsperson for Children for 2020.
12. Report on the work of the Ombudsperson for Children for 2021.
13. Report on the work of the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality for 2020. Available at: [https://www.prs.hr/application/images/uploads/IZVJESCE O RADU 2020 Pravbra nit.pdf](https://www.prs.hr/application/images/uploads/IZVJESCE_O_RADU_2020_Pravbra nit.pdf)
14. Report on the work of the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality for 2021. Available at: https://www.prs.hr/application/images/uploads/Godisnje_izvješće_2021_FINAL.pdf
15. Report of the Ombudsman "Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on human rights and equality – Recommendations for strengthening resistance to future crises". (2022) Available at: https://www.sabor.hr/sites/default/files/uploads/sabor/2022-05-16/121402/IZVJ_PUCKA_PRAVOBR_UTJECAJ_EPIDEMIJE_COVID_19.pdf
16. Report of the Ombudsman for 2020. (2021) Available at: <https://www.ombudsman.hr/hr/interaktivno-izvjesce-za-2020/>.
17. Report of the Ombudsman for 2021 (2022). Available at: <https://www.ombudsman.hr/hr/interaktivno-izvjesce-za-2021/>

18. Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).
19. The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) (2014).
20. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006).
21. Human rights in Croatia: an overview for 2021 (2022), House of Human Rights Zagreb. Available at: https://www.kucaljudskihprava.hr/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/KLJP_GI2021-Online_2704.pdf
22. Ministry of Justice and Public Administration (2021). Report on the State and Functioning of Penitentiaries, Prisons and Correctional Institutions for 2020. Available at: https://www.sabor.hr/sites/default/files/uploads/sabor/2021-09-02/154102/IZVJ_KAZNIONICE_2020.pdf.
23. Family Law (OG 103/15, 98/19)
24. Procedure/instructions for the prevention and suppression of the epidemic of the corona virus (COVID-19) in the prison system (penitentiaries, prisons, correctional institutions, centers) (2020). Available at: <https://www.hzjz.hr/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Postupnik-Zatvorski-sustav.pdf>
25. Misdemeanor Act (OG 107/07, 39/13, 157/13, 110/15)
26. Ricijaš , N., Mandić, S. and Lamešić , L. (2022). Dynamics of juvenile delinquency in Croatia from 2000 to 2020. *Criminology & Social Integration*, 30 (1), 70-104. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.31299/ksi.30.1.4>
27. Sekol, I., Farrington, DP (2009). The nature and prevalence of bullying among boys and girls in Croatian care institutions: a descriptive analysis of children's homes and correctional homes. *Criminology and Social Integration*, 17 (2), 15-34
28. The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Human Rights and Equality – Recommendations for Strengthening Resilience to Future Crises (2022). Report of the Ombudsperson in cooperation with the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality, the Ombudsperson for Children and the Ombudsperson for Persons with Disabilities. Available at: <https://www.ombudsman.hr/hr/download/izvjesce-utjecaj-epidemije-covid-19-na-ljudska-prava-i-jednakost-preporuke-za-jacanje-otpornosti-na-buduce-krize/>
29. Act on the execution of sanctions imposed on minors for criminal offenses and misdemeanors (OG 133/12)
30. Act on Police Affairs and Powers (Official Gazette 76/09, 92/14)
31. Gender Equality Act (OG 82/08, 69/17)
32. Social Welfare Act (OG 18/22, 46/22)
33. Juvenile Courts Act (OG 84/11, 143/12, 148/13, 56/15, 126/19)

Results of desk analysis

Gender-based violence and gender equality in relation to young people in the justice system

Equality, i.e. equal opportunities and equal status of women and men, in Croatia is guaranteed by the Gender Equality Act (OG 82/08, 69/17). According to the EU Gender Equality Index for 2021, Croatia ranks 19th out of 27 EU countries. As stated in the overview of human rights in Croatia for 2021 (House of Human Rights, 2022), it has been six years since the last strategic document for gender equality has been valid. The last such strategy for achieving gender equality in Croatia was the National Policy for Gender Equality for 2011-2015. In 2021, the process of drafting the National Plan for Gender Equality for 2021-2027 was initiated. At the time of writing this report, the Plan has not been adopted.

Croatia is a signatory to the following international documents that are important in the context of the protection of children's and women's rights: Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (2002), Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child regarding the involvement of children in armed conflicts (2002), Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure (2014), The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) (2014), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006).

Publically available sources do not contain analyzes of gender differences and their impact on the development and well-being of children and youth, neither for the general population of children and youth, nor specifically for children and youth in the justice system. In relation to the justice system, as stated in Chapter 1, it is only possible to find data on the gender of minors in the correctional institutions. The most recent research in Croatia that dealt with the topic of violence in educational institutions in the social welfare system (Sekol and Farrington, 2009) did not include the topic of gender-based violence. More comprehensive research on the topic of violence, which also includes the correctional institutions, is not found in the available literature. There are several reports and papers on violence in prisons and penitentiaries that refer to the adult population (e.g. Rajić, 2017; Kovčo Vukadin, Mihoci, 2010). Therefore, the following paragraphs will present some data on topics related to gender equality, gender differences and specific information in relation to the gender perspective in order to get at least a partial insight into the topic.

In the annual reports of the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality for 2020 and 2021, it is pointed out that during the COVID-19 pandemic, there was an increased risk of domestic violence, with victims being predominantly women. In the report for 2021, it is stated that the COVID-19 pandemic has seriously threatened women's rights on many fronts. In the field of economic rights, many women feel pressured to reduce their paid work due to the

increased burden of unpaid care. There is also a greater risk of gender-based violence and femicide. In these reports, there are no special data or notes related to the population of children and young people.

Furthermore, a review of the reports of the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality and the Ombudsperson for Children revealed no specific data related to gender equality or gender-sensitive programs for children and youth. In the Report of the Ombudsperson for Children for 2021, chapter 4.1. *The rights of children belonging to national minorities* specifically refers to the need to re-examine traditional gender roles in Roma communities, apparently in relation to early marriage and dropping out of school by girls from the Roma national minority. Data from the study on the participation of vulnerable groups of children (Borić and Mataga Tintor, 2022) provide some information about gender differences, that is, the vulnerability and marginalization of girls and women of the Roma national minority. Gender inequalities and patriarchal patterns further distance girls of the Roma minority (partly also refugee and migrant girls) from the fields of education and employment. Girls have fewer choices and limited educational opportunities, are more involved in unpaid domestic work and give up education at an earlier age. Furthermore, no evidence of specific programs and strategies to deal with this risk has been observed in practice. Gender is also linked to other aspects of girls' vulnerability (such as poverty, minority ethnic background, inadequate parental care, etc.), which can make some girls and young women even more vulnerable.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation of educational measures in correctional institutions

Since the beginning of the pandemic in February 2020, a set of specific measures and activities has been undertaken to protect health and prevent the further spread of the COVID-19 disease in the entire prison system (prisons, penitentiaries, correctional institutions and centers). In this regard, the Ministry of Justice and Public Administration, in accordance with the recommendations of the Croatian Institute for Public Health and the National Civil Protection Headquarters, implemented increased monitoring of the health status of all prisoners and minors in the prison system. Additionally, precautionary measures were taken, which included increased personal hygiene of persons and spaces, procurement of additional protective equipment for infection control and the adoption of internal instructions on how to act in situations when infection is suspected (<https://www.hzjz.hr/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Postupnik-Zatvorski-sustav.pdf>). The following measures were valid for minors and adults in the prison system: (1) *limited right to visits (contacts were possible only via video and phone calls)*; (2) *restriction and prohibition of exits (including the exit privilege and going to work outside the penal body)*; (3) *cancellation of all group activities within the institution (unless they can be organized while maintaining social distance, in a larger room or open space)*; (4) *regular daily activities and spending time in the fresh air had to be organized while maintaining social distance*; (5) *enhanced personal and space hygiene measures and appropriate social distancing had to be maintained in areas where food was prepared and served*. Other recommendations were not specific to the prison system but were also implemented by employees and prisoners (for example, guidelines related to the use of protective masks, social distancing and regular hand washing). For confirmed COVID-19 cases and for persons who were in close contact with persons suspected of having the disease, the prison system had clear isolation and quarantine protocols for prisoners and minors.

More specific information about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the correctional institutions can be obtained from different Ombudspersons' reports and civil society organizations (for example, Human Rights House). It is clear that the epidemiological measures that were in force were the same for all persons deprived of liberty, without any concern about the specific context of juveniles in the correctional institutions. No publicly published data was found on the number of girls or boys infected with SARS-CoV-2 virus in the correctional institutions. All relevant reports and publications specifically point out that during the entire time when epidemiological measures were in force, minors in the correctional institutions did not get visits from family members and could only make contact with them through video calls (Human Rights House, 2020; Reports on the work of the Ombudsperson for 2020 and 2021) which further isolated them and posed a risk to their mental health. During the lockdown, minors' contact with their families and the outside world was completely cut off. Girls and boys could not use the privilege of leaving the institution,

nor visit their families (Children on hold, Addendum to the report of the Ombudsperson for Children, 2021). The measures also negatively affected minors' right to healthcare: boys and girls did not go to scheduled medical appointments and medical exams were largely canceled, except in emergency cases (Human Rights House, 2020; Reports on the work of the Ombudsperson for 2020 and 2021). The pandemic also had a huge impact on the dynamics of everyday life and activities in the institutions. All activities for young people run by external stakeholders (NGOs) were canceled. Similarly, officials who monitor the implementation of measures and sanctions did not visit the correctional institutions. This directly violated the rights of young people in these institutions (Children on hold, Addendum to the report of the Ombudsperson for Children, 2021).

Furthermore, the report of the Ombudsperson for Children for 2021 highlighted the ways how the pandemic affected the everyday lives of minors in Požega Correctional Institution. School took place exclusively online, while before the pandemic teachers from a local vocational college would come in person and teach girls in the Institution premises. The Ombudsperson for Children states that during the pandemic, for a prolonged period of time, minors were not allowed to receive visit, nor use the privilege of leaving the correctional institution. The girls were only allowed video calls, which took place once a week for 20 minutes or longer upon request. It is also important to point out that in 2021, Požega Correctional Institution suffered considerable material damage as a result of a severe hailstorm. After her visit to Požega, the Ombudsperson for Children concluded that that event had an adverse effect on the living conditions and the adequacy of the space where girls reside.

The effects of COVID-19 on the lives of boys in Turopolje Correctional Institution can be discerned from the findings of the Ombudsperson's report (Report on the work of the Ombudsperson for 2020). According to the report, during 2020, the Institution implemented the measures which prohibited visits and discontinued the boys' privilege of going out. Minors were able to contact their families only via phone and video calls. Classes were structured in such a way that the teacher's contact was limited to one or two students while maintaining physical distance. The Ombudsperson's report concludes that the pandemic has further aggravated the problems in the prison system, especially related to the suspension of group activities, as well as the activities run by external stakeholders, and the restriction of certain rights due to epidemiological measures (contacts with families, limited opportunities for education, work and spending free time, etc.). The Ombudsperson's report for 2021 gives no further information on the impact of COVID-19 on the life of minors in Turopolje Correctional Institution. The only incident that was highlighted in relation to the pandemic was the case of minors who drank disinfectant and required emergency medical intervention. The incident led to the tightening of security measures and the removal of disinfectants from the institution.

Based on the observed adverse impact of the epidemiological measures on adults and minors deprived of liberty, the Ombudsperson (2022) proposes two general recommendations. They refer to the adoption of protective measures which must be linked to epidemiological indicators, which the prisoners must be informed about in a timely manner. Also, even during the pandemic it is necessary that courts carry out monitoring of the implementation of prison sentences. It is evident that the recommendations refer to the entire prison system and there are no recommendations specifically targeting young men and women in the correctional institutions.

In conclusion, the changed circumstances related to COVID-19 have, to a certain extent, violated the individual rights of minors in the correctional institutions. In a special report on the state of children's rights during the pandemic, the Ombudsperson for Children pointed out that banning direct physical contact with family members and the outside world further deepened the existing isolation of girls and boys in the correctional institutions. Epidemiological measures and restrictions, as well as the overall (post-)pandemic context, contributed to the proliferation of risks to the mental health of young people in the correctional institutions. This vulnerable group of young people continues to be neglected since there are no institutional recommendations and measures which are specific for their context and age. Although it is not closely linked to the goals of this desk analysis, the structural neglect of this group of young people is also visible in the area of research. There is no available scientific research on the impact of COVID-19 on the physical and mental health of young people in the correctional institutions.

Conclusions of the desk analysis

Based on the insights obtained from the relevant documents, it is possible to sum up the following conclusions:

- There are no publicly available gender-specific analyses or gender-specific policies targeting children and youth, and gender-based violence in the justice system. It is possible to find only fragmented data in relation to these topics in different ombudspersons' reports and human rights civil society organizations.
- In Croatia, there is no data on how gender influences the decision of educational measures, the creation of work programs in the correctional institutions and specific treatments targeting girls and boys.
- The available statistics indicate the number of girls and boys in the correctional institutions, but the statistics related to the occurrence of committed criminal offenses is not segregated and there is no gender-specific data on the phenomenology of criminal offenses.
- Although the topic of menstrual poverty of women and girls in Croatia has recently gained traction in the public sphere (e.g. Davorija and Matejčić, 2021), there is no data on the availability, quality and choice of menstrual supplies for girls in the correctional institution. Likewise, there is no information about the possibility of obtaining and choosing contraceptives in the correctional institutions.
- There is some research on violence in educational institutions within the social welfare system, as well as the justice system at large. However, there is no research specifically targeting gender-based violence and young people in the correctional institutions. Gaining insight into the experiences of young people, as well as experts who work with them, would be particularly valuable.
- In the reports of the Ombudsperson for Children, as well as in some research focusing on children from vulnerable social groups, there is some gender-specific information, mainly in the context of the need to examine the impact of gender on the quality of life of girls and women in Roma communities, especially in relation to education and early marriage. There is no data on the specifics of Roma boys and girls in relation to the correctional institutions. It is important to address the issue of intersectionality of gender, ethnicity and other factors in the implementation of educational measures.
- All epidemiological measures during the COVID-19 pandemic were implemented universally for the entire population in the justice system, both adult prisoners and youth in the correctional institutions. Age and gender were not taken into account.
- No research is available on the impact of COVID-19, specifically on the course of treatment and the life of young people in the correctional institutions (the same is true for children in educational institutions in the social welfare system). However, the Ombudsperson's reports clearly indicate that for the duration of the most restrictive epidemiological measures (2020 and partly 2021), young people had limited contact with the outside world (mostly with family members with whom they

could not have physical contact) and could not leave the institution. Most of the programs for young people carried out by NGOs and other external partners were put on hold. In this sense, young people in the correctional institutions lived in increasingly restrictive conditions (with diminishing social contacts and no activities offered) compared to the period before the pandemic. One additional adverse consequence of the pandemic was the difficulty in exercising young people's right to health (cancelled medical appointments, etc.).

- Finally, it is important to highlight the specifics related to the location of the correctional institutions. Both institutions (in Turopolje and Požega) are located in the immediate vicinity of adult penitentiaries. It would be valuable to examine the impact of the proximity of adult male and female prisoners on young people in the correctional institutions.

Organization of work and care in correctional institutions – experts' perspective

This chapter will present the perspective of experts on the characteristics of the young people they work with, the organization of work in the correctional institutions, as well as their take on the key research topics (*masculinity, gender relations and violence, health and the impact of COVID-19, examples of good practice, perspectives of young people after leaving correctional institutions*). There are only two correctional institutions in Croatia, one exclusively for girls and the other exclusively for boys, so the following paragraphs will give separate accounts of the experts' perspectives from the two institutions in order to get a more vivid picture of the lives of boys and girls.

In addition to the perspective of experts who work directly with young people, this chapter also incorporated the data collected through interviews with two employees of the Ministry of Justice and Public Administration, who represent the perspective of decision-makers.

Turopolje Correctional Institution

General characteristics of young men

The experts at Turopolje currently work with 35 young men. They describe their **key features** as following: lower intellectual abilities, disturbed family relations, history of criminal offenses and mental health problems (which are present in approximately one third of young people). **Most of them are young Roma people** (over half of the wards), some of whom are the so-called urban Roma who come from families of a better socioeconomic status, and some of them are young men from poor Roma families, mostly from rural areas. Young Roma men often belong to different cultural circles and speak different Roma languages and dialects, which means that they do not understand each other (even though they are of the same ethnicity).

Young men most often come to the correctional institution from other institutional settings within the social welfare system and some come directly from their families. The reasons for their referral to Turopolje are related to criminal offenses, such as serious theft and burglary. The experts have noticed over the years that court proceedings against minors take too long and that young people arrive at the correctional institution too late, when their risks and needs are bigger and more complex.

Organization of work and care

Young people in the correctional institution are assigned, based on the initial assessment that takes place at the time of admission to the institution, into educational groups. Two educators are in charge of each educational group. In addition to educators, the team who work with

young people consist of a psychologist, teachers at the in-house school and judicial police officers who are in charge of security.

The correctional institution has a semi-open and a closed unit. In the semi-open unit, young people move freely, attend school and participate in leisure activities on the premises. Young people in the closed unit have limited movement. They each have their own room with a TV set, but they do not socialize with other young people. Some of the young people from the closed unit attend the in-house school.

The experts say that lately the young men who get referred to Turopolje tend to be "**more and more difficult**" and "**face multiple problems**", so it is challenging to form educational groups and organize dormitories in such a way to avoid potential conflicts. Due to the complexity of the problem they face, some young people have solitary accommodation.

There is a **lack of experts, especially educational rehabilitators, who can adapt educational content and materials** to the needs of young men at Turopolje, since a relatively large number of them have low intellectual abilities and experience difficulties in following the educational programs available to them.

Turopolje Correctional Institution regularly involves **external partners, mainly civil society organizations**, in its work (e.g. Association for Creative Social Work, Status M, Association Play, Association of Visual Artists, various religious groups, etc.). They organize different activities for young men: sports, workshops, graffiti jams, prayer meetings, etc. The experts state that they are pleased with the collaboration with external partners and that young people are happy to get involved in their activities.

When working with young men, the experts **take into account their gender in the sense that extra efforts are made to ensure that sports and physical activities are available to boys so they can "blow off steam"**. All young men are involved in some activities in their free time (sports, creative workshops, library). The psychologist runs individual and group sessions with boys on how to deal with anger, frustration and stress. Also, the experts assess that the jobs that young men are being trained for at Turopolje are "*masculine*".

No other gender-specific activities are carried out with boys. The experts state that other **activities in the correctional institution are universal**. When asked if there is a difference in the treatment and care for boys in comparison to girls, the experts state that "*they have no experience working with girls, so they don't know*". They believe that the development path of girls and boys in correctional institutions is similar, but they are reluctant to make definitive statements. They rather reiterate that they have not worked with girls and therefore cannot make a valid comparison. They believe that girls have more needs "*about make-up, clothes and pregnancy*" and that **young men are easier to deal with**. In relation to the level of security, the experts conclude that the correctional institution has a very high level of security, but they attribute this more to the number of young people than to their gender.

When assessing the level of participation of young people in the planning of treatment, the experts state that young people are familiar with the implementation of their educational measures. They maintain that over the course of the implantation of the measure, it is possible to make changes to the plan and program. The boys are assessed every month and, based on the assessments, they receive (or are stripped of) benefits and privileges. Every quarter, educators submit reports to the court. They also keep the so-called "risk tables" with security risk assessments.

When speaking about **young Roma men, the experts acknowledge that there are no specific treatment programs targeting this population.** The main principle is that the same rules apply to all, so they work towards helping these boys to adapt to the functioning of the correctional institution. Furthermore, the experts affirm that they try to have an individualized approach, but also insist that the rules are the same for everyone. They believe that "*Roma are easier to work with than other boys*", because they quickly adopt rules of behavior. However, the problems arise when they return to their communities because then they go back to their usual, disorderly and criminalized lifestyles.

The internal organization of jobs in the correctional institution foresees the position of a **Roma educational assistant.** The person who previously worked in this position left for a new job and since then the position has not been filled. The experts agree that this is an important position and it would be useful if a new person was employed for the job in the future. Furthermore, the experts requested training in the Romani language in order to better understand the young men, but the training has not been provided.

Relations

The experts say that young people in the correctional institution **get along relatively well.** They cite better spatial conditions at the institution as one of the contributing factors to good interpersonal relations. Since the correctional institution was renovated, young people have more space and fight less. Problems and conflicts usually occur with the onset of colder weather when the boys stay mostly indoors. They describe them then as "*wasps in a hive*". The experts say that, in general, **violence in some form is present daily in the correctional institution – it is mainly verbal violence, rarely physical.**

The experts point out that relationships between young men depend on various other factors, such as the size of educational groups (for example, the smaller the groups – the fewer the conflicts, and vice versa). Currently, the trend is to increase the number of boys in groups and, with colder weather and fewer opportunities for movement, the risk for conflicts gets bigger.

The relations between young men and the experts are assessed as good, or "*tolerable*", and they depend on the demands the experts have of the boys – when their demands are higher,

there are more conflicts. In educational work, the experts try to find a good fit between themselves and the groups of boys they work with. Whenever possible, **they form male-female educator pairs, but this is not always an option because the correctional institution employs more women (educators).**

The relationships between young people and judicial police officers and teachers are also assessed by the experts as mostly good.

Masculinity, gender relations and violence

The experts are aware of **numerous prejudices among young men, especially towards gay and Roma people.** They organize group meetings, screenings of films on the topic of discrimination, and individual sessions with the psychologist with the aim of raising awareness of young people. In relation to issues of gender, the experts notice a certain mistrust in young people and state that **they are not always aware that they are victims of discrimination and violence.** The experts also believe that young men are not, to a greater extent, victims of violence in their local community, and if they are, young people are not aware of it because they have normalized the role of the victim. The experts also state that young men mostly stick to their own social circle and don't go to places where they would be exposed to violence.

According to the experts, the **discrimination of Roma is not prominent** in the **correctional institution itself**, although young men of Roma origin predominate there. Some experts also notice that a number of Roma boys want to identify as "*whites*". This can be seen, for example, when they are being photographed. Some boys ask that their photos be lightened, so that they don't appear "*too black*". **Violence is more present in relation to deprivations, especially the ban on smoking in the correctional institution.**

When it comes to **sexual orientation, the experts note that a relatively small part of young men at Turopolje are gay**, that is, they express their sexual orientation relatively openly. In everyday work they see that **young men tend to be violent towards their gay peers** (insulting and making fun of them). When such incidences occur, the experts provide individual support to victims. They acknowledge that the position of gay young men in the correctional institution is very difficult, given the lack of acceptance by their peers and exposure to violence. The experts take special care of them in terms of protecting their physical and psychological well-being.

The experts are generally not familiar with gender-related issues. They state that **they did not have the opportunity to get training on the topics related to gender, gender-based violence and gender equality.** It was only managers who were trained on these topics, so they disseminated some of the knowledge and information to other employees. The topics of gender and gender equality, gender relations, etc., are not discussed in the correctional institution, neither among the employees, nor with the young people. In this context, the

experts mention Status M, as an organization which regularly runs workshops on these topics with the young men at Turopolje.

The experts say that they are **personally ready to work with LGBTIQ+ young people, but they also note that there are no internal procedures at the level of the correctional institution in relation to working with these groups**. As examples of potential problems, they cite cases of young people who identify as trans, and the issue of their placement in dormitories and educational groups, the use of sanitary facilities, etc. These issues are currently being regulated centrally, since there is an increasing number of such cases in practice. If they encountered such a situation in the correctional institution, the experts say they would turn to the competent ministry for help.

When it comes to the **experts' awareness and attitudes**, especially security officers, there is a manifest **need to sensitize them** to the specifics of the adolescent population, particularly of gender and sexual minorities. They also require training to develop communication skills in working with minors. Furthermore, there is a need to raise awareness about the overall role they perform in their work with young people. To young people, they are not *just* security officers, but also role models in their behaviors, attitudes and relations with other officers and young people. Although they are not in non-stop contact with young people like security officers, the same can be said of the majority of vocational teachers.

Health

The experts estimate that the **young men are generally in good physical health** and describe them as very resilient. This can be partly explained, according to the experts, by their lifestyle before coming to the correctional institution and the fact that their families paid less attention to their health. Most young men contract seasonal viral infections, and in the last few years, the experts remember only one young man with a serious medical condition. However, in contrast to relatively good physical health, **young people exhibit various problems with mental health**. There are cases of anxiety disorders, emotional and behavioral disorders, depression, mild mental impairments, psychosis, etc. A large number of young people also have **addiction problems**. A relatively large number of young people, due to mental health issues, **receive drug therapy**, and in some cases abuse of pharmacological therapy occurs.

The experts cite **inadequate psychiatric care for young people as a major problem**. Psychiatric care is provided to minors from Turopolje at the Psychiatric Hospital for Children and Youth in Zagreb, and to adults at the Prison Hospital. This level and intensity of psychiatric care is deemed insufficient and the needs of young people for continuous psychiatric support are great.

The experts assess **their own health and the health of other employees as generally good**, but individually, they have noticed, over the years, a deterioration in their health, which they

attribute to the challenges of working with young people in the correctional institution. Furthermore, they emphasize a **relatively high age of employees** (the youngest person is 38 years old), and a **relatively high level of work-related stress and burnout**. The experts believe that risky situations and “*risky generations of young people*” occur cyclically, but that the current situation is relatively favorable. However, years of working with young people in a correctional institution left their mark on their health.

In relation to the **COVID-19 pandemic**, the experts state that there were incidences of infection and illness among young people at Turopolje, but only with milder symptoms. Most young men were voluntarily vaccinated – some, surely, because vaccination was a prerequisite for leaving the institution. They also heard about cases of infection in the boys’ families, but they have no information about the deceased.

The pandemic had a negative impact on the dynamics of work in the correctional institution: visits were banned, contacts with the outside world were maintained via phone or video calls, there were no outings, fewer activities took place, masks had to be worn, quarantine was enforced, etc. Despite these disruptions, the experts highlight the level of maturity with which young people accepted the situation and insist that there were no incidents related to this. However, the experts admit that it was much more difficult to work during the pandemic. Travelling to work, for which they needed passes, presented a lot of problems during the lockdown period (spring of 2020). Cooperation with external partners was disrupted and their programs were not carried out, etc.

Some of the employees contracted the disease but there were no serious complications. The experts mention a colleague who died of heart failure, which may have been related to COVID-19, but they do not know for sure.

Good work practices

The experts **describe the work in the correctional institution as dynamic** and note how **important teamwork is**. They also state that treatment success rates among young men are relatively low. For the majority of young people, especially those who come from dysfunctional families, it is the correctional institution where they get real care and attention for the first time. They single out **cooperation with other institutions**, scheduling medical exams for the boys, occasional outings and the kind of activities and care that they did not experience before coming to Turopolje as important factors for success in work.

The experts believe that there is a **need for adequate post-penal care and monitoring** of young people after they leave the correctional institution, in order to ensure that they do not return to their risky environments, find a job, an apartment, etc. The issue, according to the experts, is that after the correctional institution, there is no suitable transitional support and aftercare system and many young people return to the same modality of life and risky behavior.

The experts believe that **more treatment activities and better coordination with other actors are needed in order to ensure additional support after the young person returns to their community**. During the young man's stay in the correctional institution, **more work-occupational activities are needed, as well as cooperation with external partners**. Young people especially like when outside guests visit the institution, and they often express their wishes about which people they would like to meet. Most often they are famous people and male role models, such as athletes, actors, etc. The experts also think it is necessary **to employ more treatment personnel, especially younger experts**, whom they believe would introduce new methods and modernize the work at the institution.

Požega Correctional Institution

General characteristics of young women

At the time of the field research, there were 11 girls in the correctional institution. The experts who work there describe the **"typical girl"** at Požega as following: she is **16-17-year-old with low self-confidence and poor self-image, aggressiveness and below-average intellectual abilities**. The girls usually grow up in unsupportive families which are most often beneficiaries of the social welfare system. Furthermore, most girls have **underdeveloped empathy and a tendency to see things from their own perspective**, without interest or concern for others. Very often, the girls have **addiction problems. Their educational status is low** and they have learning disabilities. Before being placed in the correctional institution, most of the girls spent some time in a social welfare institution.

The most common reasons for referring girls to the correctional institution are the following: committing criminal offenses, skipping school, promiscuous and problematic behavior, behavioral disorders, drug and alcohol abuse.

The young women at the correctional institution often suffer from anxiety and depression (especially during the period of adjustment to the correctional institution). Furthermore, test results very often indicate difficulties in reasoning, abstract thinking, problem solving, and reduced thinking flexibility and ability to remember and learn. Also, the majority of girls achieve a high score on the aggressiveness scale, but a smaller number of them behave aggressively. It is mostly verbal aggression or self-destructive behavior, while physical aggression is not so common.

Recently, an **increasing numbers of young women from the Roma minority get referred to the correctional institution**.

Girls' sexual development is premature, and they have poor knowledge about their own health and body, as well as contraceptive methods. In relation to sexual orientation, the experts say that **girls often experiment**. Some of them identify as gay during their stay in the correctional institution but, from later contacts with the girls after they leave Požega, the experts learn that most of them have male partners later in life.

Organization of work and care

The following services are available to the young women at the correctional institution: accommodation, food, health care, assistance with education, religious services, free-time activities, cooperation with the family. Since 2020, counseling and mentoring to young women before leaving the institution have been available through cooperation with Association Play. The daily rhythm of life, i.e. the daily schedule of activities is determined by the house rules. The institution has only women employees. Previously, there was a male educator and the **experts believe that it would be valuable to have male staff again at the institution**.

Conversations with the experts reveal that the most challenging situations in working with the girls are incidents and disciplinary procedures. Introducing novelties in work can also be challenging – innovation can sometimes lead to resistance, both from girls and employees. They also describe how the challenges of working with the girls change depending on specific situations, almost on a daily basis. The biggest challenge, according to the experts, is seeing the results of their work – the experts often question whether they have done everything they could for the girls. Some of the interview participants state that it was more challenging when they first started working in the correctional institution, while now, after many years of experience, nothing can surprise them. They also say that in the early days of their service they were afraid of physical violence from the girls, but they also point out that the girls are generally not aggressive towards them, so their fear has diminished over time.

Another challenging aspect of working with girls in the correctional institution is related to pregnancy and motherhood. The experts speak of very specific situations in which some of them accompanied girls during childbirth.

They also point to the girls' **psychological problems and mental health difficulties**. They refer to various incidents including self-harm, attempted suicide, swallowing various dangerous objects such as spoons, glass, etc.

As a **positive side of educational work**, they point out the feeling of satisfaction and fulfillment when they discover a talent in a girl, or when girls express their gratitude for or recognition of the attention and care they receive from them.

When discussing to what extent their work is adapted to the specifics of care for girls, they state that they have no experience working with young men, but in principle they believe that

it is easier to work with them than with girls. **Young women are assessed as more demanding to work with** because they are generally more sensitive and have more complex needs because of their biological specificities, but also because of the difficult family situations they come from. At the same time, the experts believe that the **development paths of girls and boys are similar, as well as their needs.**

The experts recognize the necessity of continuously assessing the needs of the girls to be able to adapt the treatment and the activities offered to the girls. For example, the girls said they wished for **more sports activities**, so the institution recently introduced a regular tabata workout for them.

Pregnancy and motherhood are recognized as important areas of working with the girls. Often, the young women come to the correctional institution pregnant, and after giving birth, the baby mostly stays with the mother in the institution. The experts point out that they inform and train the girls on pregnancy, childbirth and other related topics. They also note that Roma girls marry and become mothers earlier. When asked whether they have young women engaged in prostitution, the experts say they currently don't but there were some cases in previous years.

The experts point out that what the girls need the most after leaving the institution is the support in finding work and a place to live since many often return to their dysfunctional families. Although they organize workshops for girls on job-searching skills and employment opportunities, the experts recognize that after going out the girls are still left to their own devices and often do not know what to do. They mostly work seasonal jobs as cooks or waitresses.

Information about girls is kept in official registers and the data is segregated by age and gender. All information is consolidated at the level of the Ministry of Justice and Public Administration.

The experts also state how **in the justice system adult male and female prisoners have priority over young people.**

Relations

The experts state that the girls **argue and fight relatively often** and usually there is a lot of verbal tension. The girls are prone **to grouping and making cliques**, especially Roma.

It is stated that the **relations between the young women and the experts are mostly good** and that the girls sometimes get angry with the employees (or are nervous) when they don't get a benefit. They notice that the **girls feel close to the staff**, but also emphasize the importance of setting boundaries in the relationship. A lot of work is done individually with the girls, and the girls demonstrate a great need for physical contact with the staff.

Gender relations and violence

The experts are familiar with the term gender, but they do not know how to define it clearly.

Some of them remember having participated in workshops on this topic, but they can't clearly state the content. They use the term gender as a biological given ("*the way you were born*"), while in a later conversation they define it as "*the way you define yourself and decide for yourself*".

At the time of the research, according to the experts, there were no transgender people in the correctional institution but there had been one trans person a few years ago. They note that the reception of and care for transgender people is not regulated at all, and this is something they believe to be very necessary.

The experts think that **LGBTIQ+ topics are discussed a lot in the public, so the girls are also relatively well informed about these issues**, at least at the level of recognizing the topics.

They point out that **there is discrimination among girls, and Roma girls are particularly vulnerable**. Currently, there are no girls with disabilities in the correctional institution, but the staff is trying to raise awareness about this issue, too. They did workshops with the girls with the aim of demonstrating what it is like for people who are blind or in wheelchairs. They believe that girls are quite sensitive and considerate towards people with disabilities. According to their knowledge, the girls are not discriminated against outside the correctional institution. Workshops on the topics of discrimination and prejudice were carried out in the correctional institution.

The experts are also aware of the violence among the girls, but they believe it is not related to gender identity and is mostly verbal. In these situations, they talk a lot with the girls and try to quickly resolve conflicts and disagreements.

Health

In relation to the girls' health, the experts warn that, prior to their arrival at Požega, the **girls had had poor access to health services**. The girls rarely go to a dentist so many have dental problems. Similarly, they rarely go to gynecological exams even though they are sexually active. Some girls come to the correctional institution in the advanced stages of pregnancy, without ever having been examined by an ob-gyn. They also often come with various inflammations and infections.

Upon arrival, the experts note, **the girls often complain of being in a bad mental state and ask for sedatives and sleep aids**. The experts believe that girls manipulate a lot with the use of sedatives.

After admission to the correctional institution, every young woman gets a complete medical check-up at the local health center, including a mandatory gynecological exam. The girls

themselves decide on the use of contraception in consultation with a gynecologist. They don't have condoms in the correctional institution, nor do the girls ask for them.

When they need more extensive health care, the girls are placed in the Prison Hospital. **The girls are also provided with occasional psychiatric counseling, which is considered insufficient.** If hospitalization is necessary, minor girls are referred to the Psychiatric Hospital for Children and Youth in Zagreb, and adults to the Prison Hospital.

Some girls contracted COVID-19, with mild symptoms. Most of the girls were vaccinated voluntarily.

When it comes to the health of the employees, **the experts state that their work is stressful and that they need supervision.** Some of the employees have thyroid problems and high blood pressure. Part of the employees also contracted COVID-19, but with mild symptoms. There were COVID-19 cases in their families, but with no serious outcomes.

Regarding the dynamics of work during the pandemic, the experts recognize its **negative impact on the girls' right to getting visits and the privilege of going out.** The experts refer to that period as "*depressing*" and note how difficult it was to motivate girls in that time of uncertainty.

Good work practices

The experts at Požega speak of **good interpersonal relations, teamwork and diversity of colleagues** as advantageous in their work. **Networking and connections with external stakeholders** is also important. Working with the girls and ensuring a variety of activities for them demands **a lot of energy.** Good cooperation with the girls' families is also deemed important, and the experts note there is room for improvement in that area.

The key needs in relation to treatment work with the girls refer to **increasing the number of employees and improving the living conditions** (expanding the capacity and modernizing the space where the girls reside – new furniture, more IT equipment and a new vehicle). The experts especially emphasize the **importance of projects and activities carried out by partner NGOs.** To improve their own work, the experts would like to have the possibility of regular supervision.

Decision-makers' perspective

For the purposes of this research, an interview was conducted with the employees of the Ministry of Justice and Public Administration – from the Department of Special Programs for the Treatment of Prisoners and Juveniles, within the Service for Special Programs, Analysis,

Evaluation and Register of Prisoners and Juveniles, within the Treatment Sector of the Directorate for Prison Treatment. The interview focused on issues related to violence and gender-sensitive programs and procedures, and health.

Masculinity, gender relations and violence

The employees of the Ministry recognize that **there is violence in the correctional institutions**, and say that it is difficult to determine what is behind the violence and conflict. Their records keep the information about who were the participants in the conflict, but not information about the reasons.

The Ministry has **no special programs or procedures in relation to gender-based violence, nor specific programs that focus on gender relations or LGBTIQ+ issues**. There are general violence-prevention programs, but they are not gender-specific and they target sexual and gender-based violence only minimally. **Likewise, there are no programs specifically targeting men or women**, although the decision-makers believe that would be useful.

Aggression Replacement Training Program is currently implemented only in Požega Correctional Institution. At Turopolje, it is currently not running due to the lack of trained personnel.

There are no specific programs targeting the Roma minority. It should be noted that the need to employ a Roma educational assistant was recognized at Turopolje Correctional Institution. An expert – social therapist – with the knowledge of the Romani language should be hired but the position is currently vacant.

In relation to the availability of **training on the topics of gender, gender equality and gender-based violence**, the interlocutors mention the training organized by the Training Center of the Ministry of Justice and Public Administration, in cooperation with the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality and NGOs. The training aims to sensitize and raise awareness of the employees about gender equality and gender-based violence. The decision-makers note that some employees show a lack of understanding for, and even resistance to, these topics. **Not all employees have been covered by the training yet**, although all groups of employees (managers, treatment officers, safety officers, teachers) undergo training.

Currently, there are no transgender youths in the correctional institutions. The decision-makers admit **that the system is currently not fully prepared for the reception and care of LGB young people, and especially transgender and intersex people**.

In addition to these issues, the decision-makers are aware of the training needs of the staff at Požega in the field of addiction.

Health

Regarding the health of young people in the correctional institutions, the employees of the Ministry cite **mental health issues as a key problem**. They point to the need to establish a special psychiatric institution for young people in order to ensure their adequate care. Currently, there are not enough child and adolescent psychiatrists in the prison system so their services are outsourced.

During the pandemic, **work in the correctional institutions was difficult**, mainly due to restrictive measures which banned visits and temporarily put an end to the privilege of going outside the institution for the young people. However, some new good practices have been introduced, such as the possibility of video calls.

Characteristics of young people in correctional institutions – personal traits and daily life of young people

Turopolje Correctional Institution

Results of the quantitative research

Sociodemographic characteristics

A total of 23 young men participated in the quantitative research by filling out the questionnaire. The answer about the age was given by only 10 young men. The average age of the research participants is 17.2 years. The proportion of participants by age group can be seen in Figure 1.

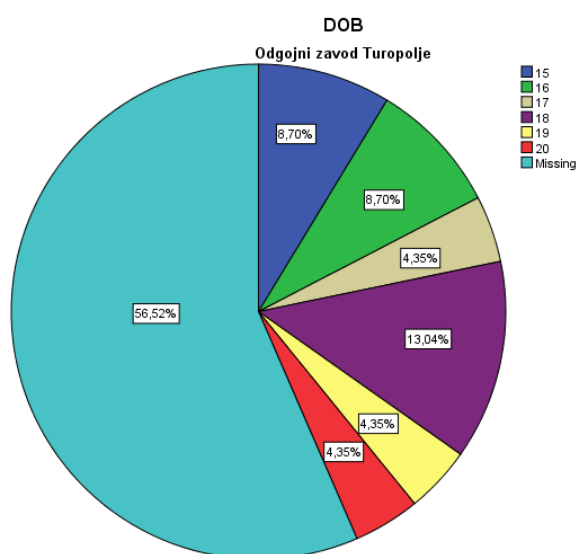


Figure 1. Proportion of participants by age group

Table 2 gives more detailed descriptive indicators of the age of the participants. Most of the young men who filled out the questionnaire are 15, 16 or 18 years old. The minimum age is 15, and the maximum is 20. The data on age should be taken with caution since a large number of young men (13 of them) did not answer this question. Regarding gender, all participants identify as male.

Table 2. Descriptive indicators of the age of the participants

| AGE | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|----------|----|-------------|
| 15 | 2 | 8.7% |
| 16 | 2 | 8.7% |
| 17 | 1 | 4.3% |
| 18 | 3 | 13.0% |
| 19 | 1 | 4.3% |
| 20 | 1 | 4.3% |
| In total | 10 | 43.5% |

**N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample*

In relation to nationality, young men could mark more than one answer. A total of 22 young men answered this question. Table 3 indicates the proportion of individual nationalities and ethnicities of young men. The majority of young men identify as Croats, followed by Roma, and one identifies as Bosniak. Likewise, two young men identify both as Croatian and Roma.

Table 3. Descriptive indicators of nationality of young men

| NATIONALITY | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|-------------|----|-------------|
| Croat | 16 | 66.7% |
| Bosniak | 1 | 4.2% |
| Roma | 7 | 29.2% |

**N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample*

Regarding the language/dialect they use, the young men could choose more than one answer. All of them (a total of 23) answered that they spoke Croatian. Also, 12 indicated that they speak the Romani language in addition to the Croatian language. Out of a total of 23 young men who answered the questionnaire, only 11 gave information about where they came from. The geographical areas include parts of northern, central and eastern Croatia – three young men are from Čakovec and Zagreb, the others from Hrastovljan, Narta, Našice, Rijeka and Vukovar. The next two questions aimed at defining the environment from which the young men come, that is, whether it is an urban or rural environment, whether they live in social housing, an illegal settlement or something else. A descriptive presentation by type of environment can be seen in Table 4. On average, the most common environment they come from is urban (43.5%), followed by rural (30.4%).

Table 4. Descriptive indicators of the environments from which young men come

| ENVIRONMENT | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|--------------------|----|-------------|
| Urban environment | 10 | 43.5% |
| Rural environment | 7 | 30.4% |
| Social housing | 3 | 13.0% |
| Illegal settlement | 2 | 8.7% |
| Other | 1 | 4.3% |
| In total | 23 | 100.0% |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

The next question was about the number of siblings, and the descriptive data for this question are presented in Table 5. All young men answered this question in the survey. It can be seen that the largest number of young men, a total of 78.3% (N=18), have four or more siblings, which tells us that they mostly come from large families.

Table 5. Descriptive indicators of the number of siblings

| NUMBER OF SIBLINGS | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|--------------------|----|-------------|
| None | 1 | 4.3% |
| 1 | 2 | 8.7% |
| 2-3 | 2 | 8.7% |
| 4 and more | 18 | 78.3% |
| In total | 23 | 100% |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

More than half of the young men (56.5%, N=13) had had previous experience with educational or correctional measures within the social welfare or justice systems, while 39.1% (N=9) answered that they had no such previous experience. The previous measures described in their answers include *investigation, remand prison, correctional institution, educational institution, children's home, prison*. A total of 10 minors (43.5%) state their experience of previous employment, while 56.5% (N=13) say that they have never been employed or done an internship. They describe the places where they worked or interned as following: *construction, waiter, factory, hair salon, kitchen, working with drugs, grill master, chimney sweeper*.

Education experiences

In this section, the participants answered questions about the school environment, and positive and negative experiences they had during their education, before coming to the correctional institution. The first question related to the information about which class they

attend, and they answered this question descriptively. The answers range from elementary school (1st, 5th, 6th or 8th grade) and high school (2nd or 3rd grade) to various training courses (chef, assistant cook...). It is important to emphasize that several boys, four of them, finished school.

The next two questions asked about what they liked and disliked about school before coming to the correctional institution. To both questions, the young men could mark several answers. The distribution of the most frequent answers in relation to their likes and dislikes is presented in Table 6 and Table 7. A total of 21 young men answered the question of what they liked the most about school. The most common answer “hanging out with friends” stands at 40.5% (N=15), followed by “school subjects” at 27% (N=10). The boys could write which subjects they liked at school. These are their answers: *Physics, History, Croatian, Geography, Mathematics, practical courses, everything, Physics and Chemistry.*

Table 6. Descriptive indicators of positive experiences at school

| POSITIVE SCHOOL EXPERIENCES | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|------------------------------|----|-------------|
| School subjects | 10 | 27.0% |
| Teachers | 7 | 18.9% |
| Janitors and cleaners | 0 | 0% |
| Breaks | 2 | 5.4% |
| Meals | 0 | 0% |
| Extracurricular activities | 1 | 2.7% |
| Hanging out with friends | 15 | 40.5% |
| I don't like going to school | 2 | 5.4% |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

According to the obtained data, the boys disliked various school subjects the most. This answer tops the table at 29.6% (N=8), followed by the answer “teachers” at 22.2% (N=6). When asked about which subjects they liked the least, the boys answered: *90% of them, nothing, Croatian, English, all of them, Mathematics.* A total of 22 young men answered this question, and the distribution of the answers can be seen in Table 7.

Table 7. Descriptive indicators of negative experiences at school

| NEGATIVE SCHOOL EXPERIENCES | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|-----------------------------|----|-------------|
| School subjects | 8 | 29.6% |
| Teachers | 6 | 22.2% |
| Janitors and cleaners | 2 | 7.4% |
| Breaks | 1 | 3.7% |
| Meals | 0 | 0% |
| Extracurricular activities | 4 | 14.8% |
| Hanging out with friends | 3 | 11.1% |

| | | |
|------------------------------|---|-------|
| I don't like going to school | 3 | 11.1% |
|------------------------------|---|-------|

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

Next, they were asked to indicate which situations they witnessed, were involved in, or experienced at school before coming to the institution (Table 8). A total of 22 young men answered both questions. Based on the obtained data, it is evident that most boys witnessed situations such as robbery (N=11, 15.7%), verbal aggression (N=10, 14.3%) and gang confrontations (N=9, 12.9%). Regarding their involvement in these experiences, the top ranked answers were physical assault (N=12, 18.2%) and robbery (N=9, 13.6%).

Table 8. Descriptive data on school experiences

| SCHOOL EXPERIENCES | Witnessing situations at school | | Involvement in or experiencing situations at school | |
|---|---------------------------------|-------------|---|-------------|
| | N* | PERCENTAGE* | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
| Physical attack | 8 | 11.4% | 12 | 18.2% |
| Robbery | 11 | 15.7% | 9 | 13.6% |
| Gang showdown | 9 | 12.9% | 6 | 9.1% |
| Verbal aggression (threats, insults, humiliation) | 10 | 14.3% | 7 | 10.6% |
| Isolation from peers | 1 | 1.4% | 3 | 4.5% |
| Racism | 6 | 8.6% | 5 | 7.6% |
| Homophobia | 5 | 7.1% | 5 | 7.6% |
| Fatphobia | 4 | 5.7% | 4 | 6.1% |
| Violence against girls | 2 | 2.9% | 2 | 3.0% |
| Violence in relationships | 3 | 4.3% | 1 | 1.5% |
| Xenophobia | 3 | 4.3% | 3 | 4.5% |
| I have never witnessed any of these situations | 2 | 2.9% | 3 | 4.5% |
| I don't want to answer | 6 | 8.6% | 6 | 9.1% |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

The experience of the correctional institution

In this area, the young men first had to answer the question of how long they have been in the correctional institution. The obtained data indicate that the majority of young men have been in the institution for 1 year or more (N=7, 30.4%), followed by the period of 6 to 9 months (N=6, 26.1%) and 3 to 6 months (N=6, 26.1%). The distribution of the results can be seen in Figure 2.

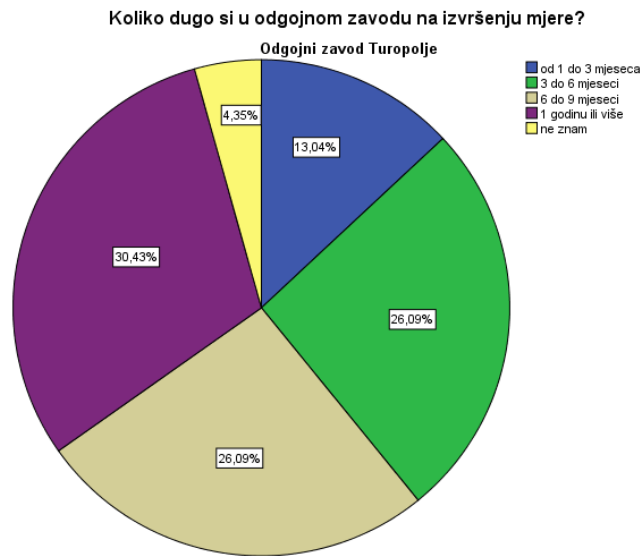


Figure 2. Length of stay in the correctional institution

The young men were also asked how they assessed the correctional institution measure which they were referred to by the court. 39.1% (N=9) of young men think that the measure is excessive, 34.8% (N=8) think that it is light, while a smaller part of them, 26.1% (N=6), think that the measure is just. Regarding the activities in which they like to participate the most in the correctional institution, the young men state the following answers: *workshop, none, gym, physical education, training, practice, computers, school, mosaic*. Among the activities in which they like to participate the least, the boys mentioned: *being on duty as the group monitor, external activities, garbage collection, mosaic, school, football, when someone provokes me and swears at me*.

The perception of institutions

The boys were asked to evaluate how the media report on young people and adolescents. The media were assessed as average and bad in equal proportions (both answers stand at 30.4%, N=7). Other answers are I don't know (N=4, 17.4%), very good (N=3, 13.0%) and satisfactory (N=2, 8.7%).

The work of the police in relation to young people and adolescents is assessed as predominantly bad (N=17, 73.9%), followed by very good (N=4, 17.4%) and I don't know and don't want to answer (both N=1, 4.3%)

The boys also rate the work of the justice system as bad (N=17, 73.9%), followed by good (N=2, 8.7%) and very good, I don't know and don't want to answer (N=1, 4, 3%).

According to the obtained results, the young men are dissatisfied by the work of the police and judicial system, while the media are perceived in a somewhat more positive light.

Results of the qualitative research

A total of 6 young men from Turopolje Correctional Institution participated in the **focus group**. The average age of the young participants was 16.5 years, the youngest being 15 and the oldest 18. They have been at Turopolje for a period from 12 to 19 months. Five young men were Roma minority.

They describe **their experience of the life in the institution as "like being tested every day"**, like they are constantly observed and assessed. They explain that their behavior is the most important aspect and it all boils down to collecting "*category points*" for potential benefits and privileges. Quality of life in the correctional institution depends on behavior categories: the better you behave, the higher category you are in. If you are in a higher category, you get more benefits and privileges – for example, a permission to go away for the weekend. The boys are divided into units, and in the description of their everyday life, they single out the monitoring duty and weekly chores they have to do. Reports on them are written every three months. **About their peers** at Turopolje, they say that some are well-mannered, some rude and some are okay.

The boys describe a typical day in the institution: they wake up, go to classes, do free-time activities and sports; they can also use computers or go to the gym. **They say that, since they have to spend months and, even, years at the institution, they feel like every day is the same.** They are dissatisfied with the low wages they earn for their work and the expensive products at the canteen.

They say that there are a lot of fights in the correctional institution, mostly over cigarettes. There are frequent conflicts and thefts of personal belongings in order to sell them for cigarettes ("*I'd give anything for cigs*", "*My mother sent me a jacket worth two hundred euro, and I gave it for three packs*"). Some get drug therapy. They also express dissatisfaction with the practice of collective responsibility, i.e. that everyone in the educational group bears the consequences of a single person's misbehavior. This can cause conflicts between them. The boys also say that they miss their families. They think that one of the disadvantages of living at Turopolje is "*having to see the same people every day*".

The young men also describe the **positive aspects of the institution**. They underline the fact that they have the opportunity to change their behavior and complete formal education and additional training ("*that's the most important thing here, whether you behave well and whether you finish school*"). They believe that the **purpose of the correctional institution is to improve them** (to behave better, to become well-mannered, cleaner, better, to stop stealing). Some also mention that they think more about the future since they have been in the correctional institution. They also note that the **correctional institution has good living conditions, and it is ordered and structured**. In this sense, they also mention the **importance of good relations with the security officers** (whom they colloquially call commanders) and state that they are always present, guarding them and maintaining order in the correctional institution.

Sociodemographic characteristics

A total of 9 young women participated in the quantitative research by filling out the questionnaire. The answer about the age was given by 8 girls. The average age of the research participants is 17.2 years. The proportion of participants by age group can be seen in Figure 3 and the exact age group distributions are shown in Table 9. All research participants at Požega identify as female.

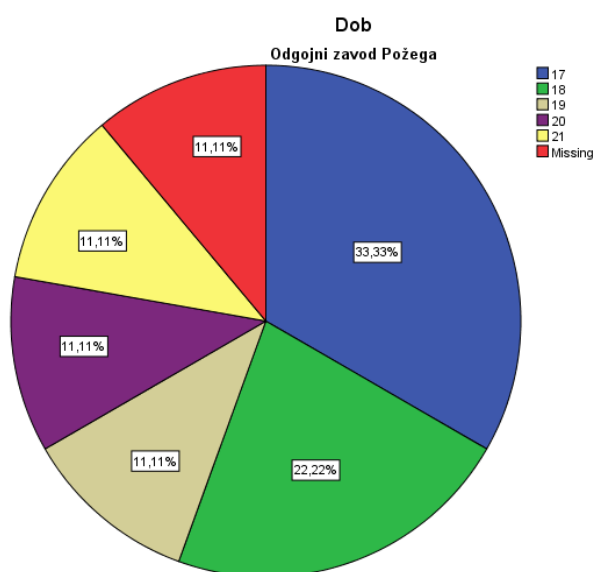


Figure 3. Proportion of participants by age group

Table 9. Descriptive indicators of the age of the participants

| AGE | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|-------|----|-------------|
| 17 | 3 | 33.3% |
| 18 | 2 | 22.2% |
| 19 | 1 | 11.1% |
| 20 | 1 | 11.1% |
| 21 | 1 | 11.1% |
| Total | 8 | 88.9% |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

Table 10 presents the proportion of the young women’s nationalities and ethnicities. The girls mostly identify as Croats and Roma, while one girl identifies as both nationalities.

Table 10. Descriptive indicators of girls' nationality

| NATIONALITY | N | PERCENTAGE |
|-------------|---|------------|
| Croatian | 5 | 50.0% |
| Roma | 5 | 50.0% |

Regarding the language/dialect they use, the young women could choose more than one answer. All of them (a total of 9) answered that they spoke Croatian. Also, five indicated that they spoke the Romani language in addition to the Croatian language. The geographical areas where they come from include parts of northern, central and eastern Croatia – two girls are from Čakovec and two from Koprivnica, the rest from Mursko Središće, Nova Gradiška, Slavonski Brod and Zagreb. The next two questions aimed at defining the environment from which the young men come, that is, whether it is an urban or rural environment, whether they live in social housing, an illegal settlement or something else. A descriptive presentation by type of environment can be seen in Table 11. On average, the most common environment they come from is urban and rural, while some of them also come from illegal settlements.

Table 11. Descriptive indicators of the environments from which the girls come

| MIDDLE | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|--------------------|----|-------------|
| Urban environment | 3 | 33.3% |
| Rural environment | 3 | 33.3% |
| Illegal settlement | 3 | 33.3% |
| In total | 9 | 100.0% |

**N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample*

The next question was about the number of siblings, and the descriptive data for this question are presented in Table 12. It can be seen that the largest number of girls, a total of 66.7% of them (N=6) have four or more siblings, which tells us that they mostly come from large families.

Table 12. Descriptive indicators of the number of siblings

| NUMBER OF SIBLINGS | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|--------------------|----|-------------|
| 1 | 1 | 11.1% |
| 2-3 | 2 | 22.2% |
| 4 and more | 6 | 66.7% |
| In total | 9 | 100% |

**N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample*

A total of 44.4% of the girls (N=4) had had previous experience with educational or correctional measures within the social welfare or justice systems, while 44.4% (N=4) answered that they had no such previous experience. The previous measures described in their answers include different educational institutions across the country. One girl did not

answer this question. Three girls (33.3%) mention their experience of previous employment, while 66.7% (N=6) say that they have never been employed or done an internship. They describe the places where they worked or interned as following: *apprenticeship at the student dorm, a coffee shop, children’s home in Osijek.*

Education experiences

The first question for the girls in this section also related to the information about which class they attend, and they answered this question descriptively. The answers range from elementary school (5th or 8th grade) and high school (3rd grade) to various training courses (chef, assistant cook...).

The next two questions asked about what they liked and disliked about school before coming to the correctional institution. To both questions, the young men could mark several answers. The distribution of the most frequent answers in relation to their likes and dislikes is presented in Table 13 and Table 14. Eight young women answered the question of what they liked the most about school. The most common answer “hanging out with friends” stands at 30.8% (N=8), followed by “school subjects” at 23.1% (N=10). The girls could write which subjects they liked at school. These are their answers: *everything, English, Mathematics, History, technical arts.* Those who preferred extracurricular activities singled out the following: *French, arts, and literary competitions.*

Table 13. Descriptive indicators of positive experiences at school

| POSITIVE SCHOOL EXPERIENCES | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|-----------------------------|----|-------------|
| School subjects | 6 | 23.1% |
| Teachers | 3 | 11.5% |
| Breaks | 4 | 15.4% |
| Meals | 5 | 19.2% |
| Extracurricular activities | 8 | 30.8% |
| Hanging out with friends | 6 | 23.1% |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

According to the obtained data, the girls liked the least their teachers, friends and extracurricular activities. A total of 7 girls answered this question, and the distributions of their answers can be seen in Table 14.

Table 14. Descriptive indicators of negative experiences at school

| NEGATIVE SCHOOL EXPERIENCES | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|-----------------------------|----|-------------|
| School subjects | 2 | 16.7% |
| Teachers | 3 | 25.0% |
| Breaks | 1 | 8.3% |
| Extracurricular activities | 3 | 25.0% |

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|-------|
| Hanging out with friends | 3 | 25.0% |
|--------------------------|---|-------|

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

Next, the young women were asked to indicate which situations they witnessed, were involved in, or experienced at school before coming to the institution (Table 15). A total of 8 young women answered both questions. Based on the obtained data, it is evident that most girls witnessed situations such as physical attacks (N=4, 16.7%), verbal aggression (N=3, 12.5%) and isolation from peers (N=3, 12.5%), or that they never witnessed any of these situations (N=3, 12.5%). Regarding their involvement in these experiences, the top ranked answers were physical assault (N=3, 21.4%) and verbal aggression (N=3, 21.4%).

Table 15. Descriptive data on school experiences

| SCHOOL EXPERIENCES | Witnessing situations at school | | Involvement in or experiencing situations at school | |
|---|---------------------------------|-------------|---|-------------|
| | N* | PERCENTAGE* | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
| Physical attack | 4 | 16.7% | 3 | 21.4% |
| Robbery | 1 | 4.2% | 1 | 7.1% |
| Gang showdown | 1 | 4.2% | 2 | 14.3% |
| Verbal aggression (threats, insults, humiliation) | 3 | 12.5% | 3 | 21.4% |
| Isolation from peers | 3 | 12.5% | - | - |
| Racism | 2 | 8.3% | - | - |
| Homophobia | 2 | 8.3% | . | - |
| Fatphobia | 2 | 8.3% | 1 | 7.1% |
| Violence in relationships | 1 | 4.2% | 1 | 7.1% |
| Xenophobia | 2 | 8.3% | - | - |
| I have never witnessed any of these situations | 3 | 12.5% | 2 | 14.3% |
| I don't want to answer | - | - | 1 | 7.1% |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

The experience of the correctional institution

The obtained data indicate that most girls have been in the institution for 1 year or more (N=5, 55.6%), followed by the period of 3 to 6 months (N=2, 22.1%). The distribution of the results can be seen in Figure 4.

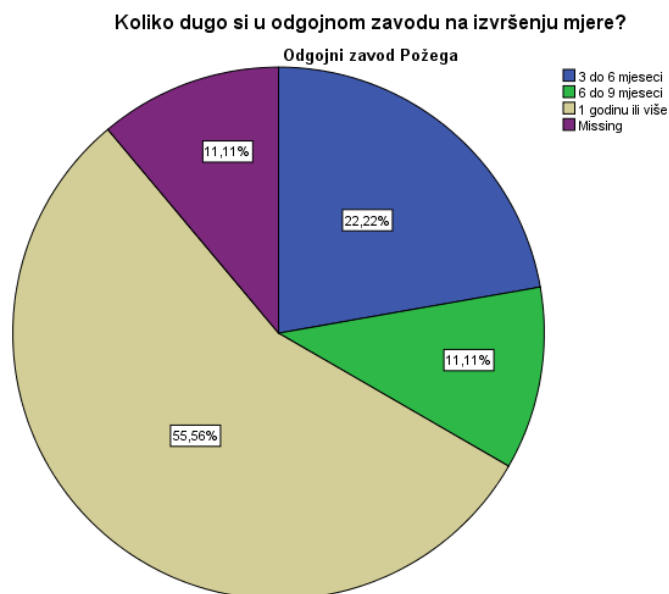


Figure 4. Length of stay in the correctional institution

The girls were also asked how they assessed the correctional institution measure which they were referred to by the court. 55.6% (N=5) of the girls believe that the measure is fair, while the other options (light, excessive and I don't know) have one answer each (N=1, 11.1%).

Regarding the activities in which they like to participate the most in the correctional institution, the young women state the following answers: *working out, drawing, watching movies and film workshop, flower-arranging workshop, social workshops, art workshops*. Among the activities in which they like to participate the least, the girls mention *arts and sports*.

The perception of institutions

The girls were asked to evaluate how the media report on young people and adolescents. Most girls said that they didn't know (N=3, 33.3%), This is followed by the answers good (N=2, 22.2%) and bad (N=2, 22.2%). The other two answers each stand at 11.1% (N=1): satisfactory and I do not want to answer.

The work of the judicial system in relation to young people and adolescents is assessed as predominantly good (N=3, 33.3%), but also bad (N=2, 22.2%). These are followed by the answers very good, satisfactory, I don't know and I don't want to answer (each at 11.1%, N=1). The highest percentage of girls also rate the work of the police as bad (N=6, 66.7%). Other answers (good, satisfactory and I don't know) stand at 11.1% each (N=1).

According to the obtained results, similarly to the young men's perception, the young women are dissatisfied by the work of the police and judicial system, while the media are perceived in a somewhat more positive light.

Results of the qualitative research

A total of 9 young women participated in the **focus group**. Their average age was 18 years, with the youngest being 16 years old, and the oldest 20. They state that during their lifetime they have been removed from their families and placed in different institutions many times. Three girls are Roma – they freely speak of their origin and openly identify as Roma. On average, they have lived at Požega Correctional Institution for about a year.

They describe the purpose of their placement at the correctional institution as an opportunity to finish school and change old habits and behavior (*"to fix the behavior that landed us here", "to change some habits such as... simply, to stop using drugs"*) and to learn how to live in a community. They say that they are mostly focused on completing tasks and assignments in order to get benefits and privileges. When describing the experience of living in the institution, they primarily emphasize **the lack of freedom** (*"it's terrible when you're locked up like this"*).

They point out that **life in the correctional institution requires a lot of adapting and making concessions**. They are aware of the extraordinary nature of the institutional environment and describe their lives as *"strange"* and *"unusual"*. The girls also state that before coming to the correctional institution, they primarily socialized with people older than them (*"I have never hung out with my peers, so it is strange that we are all here in one place"*).

Some of the girls have a positive view on their stay in the correctional institution (*"it can even be nice here"*), explaining that all the girls are different, so they can share experiences and learn from one another. They also **emphasize the important role of the educators** and positively reflect on their work (*"it's not bad, there are sad and beautiful moments, but the educators are very good and they work hard", "we have a lot of activities, movies, music, handicrafts"*).

The girls are **dissatisfied that they get to see their families rarely, they lack freedom and they would like to be allowed to smoke in the correctional institution**. Some of the girls also point out that they **lack privacy** and stress that sometimes they want to be on their own and away from everyone.

Masculinity, gender relations and violence

Turopolje Correctional Institution

Results of the quantitative research

This section of the questionnaire was aimed at assessing attitudes about gender, gender relations and violence, and behaviors in youth relationships. The first part of the question was aimed at assessing young men's attitudes about gender through 18 statements. Descriptive data can be seen in Table 16 and Table 17. The results show that the majority of the statements are evaluated positively by the young men, which can indicate the presence of gender stereotypes and prejudices. This can be seen especially in the claims related to the division of household chores and care for the family. Also, a high percentage of the boys expressed the opinion that they would never have a gay friend (N=17, 73.95%).

Table 16. Descriptive data on the attitudes about gender

| | Opinions | I agree N (%) | I somewhat agree N (%) | I disagree N (%) |
|---|---|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | The most important job of a woman is to take care of the house and cook for the family. | 14 (60.9%) | 3 (13%) | 4 (17.4%) |
| 2 | Men need to have sex more than women. | 12 (52.2%) | 2 (8.7%) | 6 (26.1%) |
| 3 | It is very important for a father to be present in the lives of his children, even if he no longer lives with his wife. | 15 (65.2%) | 4 (17.4%) | 1 (4.3%) |
| 4 | Man and woman must decide together what kind of contraception they will use. | 15 (65.2%) | 4 (17.4%) | 3 (13%) |
| 5 | I would never have a gay friend. | 17 (73.9%) | - | 5 (21.7%) |
| 6 | If someone insults me, I defend my honor even with force, if necessary. | 13 (56.5%) | 7 (30.4%) | - |
| 7 | To be a real man you have to be brave. | 17 (73.9%) | 2 (8.7%) | 2 (8.7%) |
| 8 | The couple must decide together whether they want to have children. | 19 (82.6%) | 1 (4.3%) | 1 (4.3%) |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

The other ten statements and descriptive data related to attitudes about gender can be seen in Table 17. Depending on the statement, the answers are quite divided and ambivalent. The

largest percentage of boys agree with the statement that "a real man has sex only with women" (91.3%) and "that both men and women are responsible for their children" (87%).

Table 17. Descriptive data on gender attitudes

| | Opinions | I agree N (%) | I somewhat agree N (%) | I disagree N (%) |
|----|---|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | Changing diapers, bathing and feeding the child is the sole responsibility of the mother. | 7 (30.4%) | 7 (30.4%) | 8 (34.8%) |
| 2 | A real man has sex only with women. | 21 (91.3%) | 1 (4.3%) | - |
| 3 | There are situations where a woman deserves to be beaten. | 6 (26.15%) | 2 (8.7%) | 13 (56.5%) |
| 4 | Both men and women can suggest using condoms. | 14 (60.9%) | 2 (8.75) | 6 (26.1%) |
| 5 | Avoiding unwanted pregnancy is a woman's responsibility. | 8 (34.8%) | 6 (26.1%) | 7 (33.3%) |
| 6 | When decisions are made at home, the man should have the last word. | 15 (65.2%) | 3 (13%) | 3 (13%) |
| 7 | I feel ashamed when I see a man expressing himself in a feminine way. | 13 (56.5%) | 2 (8.7%) | 5 (21.7%) |
| 8 | If a man and a woman make a child, the child is the responsibility of both. | 20 (87%) | 2 (8.7%) | - |
| 9 | I would get angry if my partner asked me to use a condom. | 5 (21.7%) | 7 (30.4%) | 9 (39.1%) |
| 10 | Women who carry condoms with them are easy. | 15 (65.2%) | 4 (17.4%) | 3 (13%) |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

Next, the young people were asked in which situations it is justified to be violent towards gay people. Descriptive indicators for each situation are shown in Table 18. According to the data, the largest percentage of the young men believe that it is justified to be violent when a gay person is "coming on to you" (N=18, 78.3%) or "staring" at you (N= 14, 69.9%).

Table 18. Descriptive data on gender relations and violence

| | Situations | Justified N (%) | It is not justified N (%) | I do not know N (%) | I don't want to answer N (%) |
|---|--|--------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | When he's coming on to you. | 18 (78.3%) | 2 (8.7%) | 2 (8.75) | 1 (4.3%) |
| 2 | When he's staring at you. | 14 (69.9%) | 4 (17.4%) | 2 (8.7%) | 3 (13%) |
| 3 | When he's kissing another man in public. | 11 (47.8%) | 4 (17.4%) | 6 (26.15) | 1 (4.3%) |

| | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|------------|----------|-----------|---------|
| 4 | When he acts in a feminine way. | 12 (52.2%) | 2 (8.7%) | 6 (26.1%) | 3 (13%) |
|---|---------------------------------|------------|----------|-----------|---------|

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

If they witnessed an act of violence against a woman, 12 boys (52.2%) answered that they would tell someone about the incident, 4 answered that they would not tell anyone (17.4%), while the rest said that they did not want to answer this question (N=3, 21.7%) or did not know (N= 2, 8.7%). In the following question, the young men were asked whom would they turn to if they witnessed an act of violence against a woman. Their answers can be seen in Table 19. The majority would tell a teacher at school (N=5, 21.7%) or would turn to an institution (N=4, 17.4%). When asked which institution, the boys say “the police”, “NGOs” and “I would deal with it myself”. Some also said that they did not know whom to turn to in that situation (N=4, 17.4%).

Table 19. Descriptive indicators of whom to turn to in case of witnessing violence against women

| Whom would I tell | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|------------------------|----|-------------|
| A teacher at school | 5 | 21.7% |
| A family member | 3 | 13% |
| An institution | 4 | 17.4% |
| I do not know | 4 | 17.4% |
| I don't want to answer | 5 | 21.7% |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

The next few questions in the survey were related to the young men’s experiences in youth relationships. A total of 16 young men stated that they were currently in a relationship (69.6%), 4 said that they did not want to answer this question (17.4%), while 3 answered that they were not currently in a relationship (13%). Next, the boys were asked how often they commit violent behaviors towards their male and female partners. Descriptive data are presented in Table 20. According to the obtained data, most young men say that they never commit the listed acts of violence towards their partners. However, it is important to note that some surveyed boys sometimes or often commit behaviors such as pushing, hitting, throwing objects, slapping, and threatening.

Table 20. Descriptive data on behavior towards the partner

| Situations | Never N (%) | Once N (%) | Sometimes N (%) | Often N(%) | I don't want to answer N (%) |
|---|-------------|------------|-----------------|------------|------------------------------|
| Slapping or throwing something that could hurt him/her in his/her direction | 14 (60.9%) | 1 (4.3%) | 4 (17.4%) | 1 (4.3%) | - |
| Pushing | 11 (47.8%) | 3 (13%) | 3 (13%) | 1 (4.3%) | 1 (4.3%) |

| | | | | | |
|--|------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Hitting her/him with something that could injure her/him | 14 (60.9%) | 3 (13%) | 1 (4.3%) | 1 (4.3%) | 1 (4.3%) |
| Punching, dragging, beating, hanging or burning | 18 (78.3%) | - | 2 (8.7%) | - | - |
| Threatening to use or using a firearm or knife | 16 (69.6%) | 1 (4.3%) | 1 (4.3%) | 2 (8.7%) | - |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

Next, the young men were asked if any of their friends use physical or psychological violence against their partner. Regarding physical violence, a total of 12 young men answered no (52.2%), while 9 of them said yes (39.1%). One young man did not want to answer this question. Regarding psychological violence, a total of 12 boys answered no (52.2%), while 10 said yes (43.5%). When asked about what they would do if they witnessed a friend being violent towards their partner, the majority of the young men said they would act during the situation (N=11, 47.8%) or call the police (N=6, 26.1%). Descriptive indicators for all behaviors can be seen in Table 21.

Table 21. Descriptive data on behavior in a situation when you witness violence from a friend towards their partner

| BEHAVIORS | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|--|----|-------------|
| I would act during the situation | 11 | 47.8% |
| I would talk to a friend after the situation | 5 | 21.7% |
| I would stop being his/her friend | - | - |
| I would call the police | 6 | 26.1% |
| I would call a teacher at school | - | - |
| I wouldn't do anything | - | - |
| I don't want to answer | 1 | 4.3% |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

Results of the qualitative research

The young men state that **there is no discrimination on the basis of ethnicity in the correctional institution**, and they refer to it somewhat humorously by saying "*Here at Turopolje, we are almost all Roma anyway*". **Violence and conflicts mostly occur because of cigarettes**, which are not allowed, so young people smuggle and sell cigarettes, and extort each other for cigarettes. Sometimes conflicts arise because of clothes, especially those of better quality and well-known brands. They state that **they solve situations of violence by themselves** and that the most important thing is not to be a "*snitch*" and rat on others to educators or security officers.

Požega Correctional Institution

Results of the quantitative research

In this section, the girls evaluated their own attitudes about gender, gender relations and violence, and behaviors in youth relationships. The first part of the question was aimed at assessing the young women's attitudes about gender through 18 statements. Descriptive data can be seen in Table 22 and Table 23. The results show that a smaller percentage of the girls agree with attitudes that support traditional gender roles and attitudes. They only somewhat agree that household chores are a woman's job, that having sex is more important to men, and that both men and women must decide together about contraception. A higher percentage of the girls (N=6, 66.7%) agree with the statement that the presence of the father in family life is important and that the couple must decide together whether they want to have children or not. Also, a relatively high percentage of the girls agree that they would have a gay friend (N=4, 44.4%).

Table 22. Descriptive data on attitudes about gender

| | Opinions | I agree N (%) | I somewhat agree N (%) | I disagree N (%) |
|---|---|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | The most important job of a woman is to take care of the house and cook for the family. | 1 (11.1%) | 5 (55.6%) | 2 (22.2%) |
| 2 | Men need to have sex more than women. | 2 (22.2%) | 4 (44.4%) | 3 (3.33%) |
| 3 | It is very important for a father to be present in the lives of his children, even if he no longer lives with his wife. | 6 (66.7%) | 2 (22.2%) | 1(11.1%) |
| 4 | Man and woman must decide together what kind of contraception they will use. | 4 (44.4%) | 4 (44.4%) | 1 (11.1%) |
| 5 | I would never have a gay friend. | 2 (22.2%) | 3 (33.3%) | 4 (44.4%) |
| 6 | If someone insults me, I defend my honor even with force, if necessary. | 5 (55.6%) | 4 (44.4%) | - |
| 7 | To be a real man you have to be brave. | 5 (55.6%) | 1 (11.1%) | 3 (33.3%) |
| 8 | The couple must decide together whether they want to have children. | 6 (66.7%) | 2 (22.2%) | 1 (11.1%) |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

The data in Table 23 indicate that the girls agree the most with the statement that both men and women can propose the use of condoms (77.8%), about the joint responsibility in pregnancy (88.8%) and feeling ashamed when a man behaves in a feminine way (66.7%). A

larger percentage disagrees with the statement that women who carry condoms are easy (66.7%) and that there are situations in which women deserve to be beaten (66.7%).

Table 23. Descriptive data on attitudes about gender

| | Opinions | I agree N (%) | I somewhat agree N (%) | I disagree N (%) |
|----|---|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | Changing diapers, bathing and feeding the child is the sole responsibility of the mother. | 2 (22.2%) | 2 (22.2%) | 2 (22.2%) |
| 2 | A real man has sex only with women. | 1 (11.1%) | 3 (33.3%) | 5 (55.6%) |
| 3 | There are situations where a woman deserves to be beaten. | 1 (11.1%) | 2 (22.2%) | 6 (66.7%) |
| 4 | Both men and women can suggest using condoms. | 7 (77.8%) | 1 (11.1%) | 1 (11.1%) |
| 5 | Avoiding unwanted pregnancy is a woman's responsibility. | 2 (22.2%) | 3 (33.3%) | 4 (44.4%) |
| 6 | When decisions are made at home, the man should have the last word. | 1 (11.1%) | 5 (55.6%) | 3 (33.3%) |
| 7 | I feel ashamed when I see a man expressing himself in a feminine way. | 6 (66.7%) | - | 3 (33.3%) |
| 8 | If a man and a woman make a child, the child is the responsibility of both. | 8 (88.9%) | 1 (11.1%) | - |
| 9 | I would get angry if my partner asked me to use a condom. | 4 (44.4%) | - | 5 (55.6%) |
| 10 | Women who carry condoms with them are easy. | 1 (11.1%) | 2 (22.2%) | 6 (66.7%) |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

Next, the girls were asked in which situations it is justified to be violent towards gay people. Descriptive indicators for each situation are shown in Table 24. According to the data, the largest percentage of girls believe that it is not justified to be violent towards a gay person when he kisses another man in the street (44.4%) and when he behaves in a feminine manner (44.4%).

Table 24. Descriptive data on gender relations and violence

| | Situations | Justified N (%) | It is not justified N (%) | I do not know N (%) | I don't want to answer N (%) |
|---|------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | When she's coming on to you. | 3 (33.3%) | 2 (22.2%) | 4 (44.4%) | - |
| 2 | When she's staring at you. | 3 (33.3%) | 3 (33.3%) | 3 (33.3%) | - |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|---|
| 3 | When he's kissing another man in public. | 3 (33.3%) | 4 (44.4%) | 2 (22.2%) | - |
| 4 | When he acts in a feminine way. | 2 (22.2%) | 4 (44.4%) | 2 (22.2%) | - |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

If they witnessed an act of violence against a woman, 8 girls answered that they would tell someone (88.9%). Only one girl answered that in that case she would not tell anyone (11.1%). When asked whom they would turn to in case they witness an act of violence against a woman, most girls said that they would tell a teacher at school. The young women who said they would turn to an institution specified the police. Descriptive indicators of the girls' answers can be seen in Table 25.

Table 25. Descriptive indicators of whom to turn to in case of witnessing violence against women

| Whom would I tell | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|---------------------|----|-------------|
| A teacher at school | 5 | 55.6% |
| A family member | 2 | 22.2% |
| An institution | 2 | 22.2% |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

The next few questions in the survey were related to the young women's experiences in youth relationships. Two girls said that they were currently in a relationship (22.2%), five girls stated that they were not currently in a relationship (55.6%) and two girls did not want to answer this question (22.2%). Next, the girls were asked how often they commit violent behaviors towards their partners. Descriptive data are presented in Table 26. According to the obtained data, most of the young women say that they never commit the listed acts of violence towards their partners. However, it is important to note that two girls said that they frequently engage in behaviors such as slapping, hitting, pushing and beating.

Table 26. Descriptive data on behavior towards the partner

| Situations | Never N (%) | Once N (%) | Sometimes N (%) | Often N(%) | I don't want to answer N (%) |
|---|----------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|
| Slapping or throwing something that could hurt him/her in his/her direction | 2 (22.2%) | 2 (22.2%) | - | 1 (11.1%) | 1 (11.1%) |
| Pushing | 4 (44.4%) | - | 1 (11.1%) | - | 1 (11.1%) |
| Hitting her/him with something that could injure her/him | 4 (44.4%) | - | 1 (11.1%) | - | 1 (11.1%) |
| Punching, dragging, beating, hanging or burning | 4 (44.4%) | - | - | 1(11.1%) | 1 (11.1%) |

| | | | | | |
|--|----------|----------|---|---|-----------|
| Threatening to use or using a firearm or knife | 4(44.4%) | 1(11.1%) | - | - | 1 (11.1%) |
|--|----------|----------|---|---|-----------|

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

The girls were also asked if any of their friends used physical and psychological violence against their partner. Regarding physical violence, a total of 5 girls answered no (55.6%), while two girls said yes (22.2%) and I don't want to answer (22.2%). Regarding psychological violence, 5 girls (55.5%) thought that none of their friends used psychological violence towards their partner, while 4 girls answered yes (44.4%). In situations where violence is present, most young women answered that they would call the police (N=5, 55.6%), while the rest would act during the situation (N=3, 33.3%). One girl would talk to her friend after the situation. Descriptive data for all behaviors can be seen in Table 27.

Table 27. Descriptive data on behavior in a situation when you witness violence from a friend towards their partner

| BEHAVIORS | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|--|----|-------------|
| I would act during the situation | 3 | 33.3% |
| I would talk to a friend after the situation | 1 | 11.1% |
| I would stop being his/her friend | - | - |
| I would call the police | 5 | 55.6% |
| I would call a teacher at school | - | - |
| I wouldn't do anything | - | - |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

Results of the qualitative research

The girls talk about situations of violence with relative caution, and some look back on earlier (before coming to the correctional institution) experiences of violence they endured at the hands of police officers, which included excessive use of force (pushing, pulling) in situations when they resisted the police. They say that they themselves behaved violently in these situations (e.g. pushing, hitting, biting). They did not talk about other experiences of violence, including violence in the family. They believe that **violence in society is often ignored**, especially violence among children, which adults consider "*children's play*". In situations of violence in the correctional institution, the girls can turn to the educators whom they think give them adequate protection and help in these cases.

Regarding **discrimination**, the girls state that **when they first come to the institution, there are more frequent arguments and conflicts between Roma girls and other girls**. They recount how the "*white girls*" insulted the Roma girls by saying that they're colored and they

smelled, and the Roma girls got back at them by saying that they were "white milk". After the initial quarrels, the girls accepted each other and the joint coexistence. Some girls state that they were **discriminated against by their peers because of the music they listen to** (*"if you listen to Nirvana, you are depressed"*).

The impact of the COVID-19 virus pandemic on the life of young people in correctional institutions

Turopolje Correctional Institution

Results of the quantitative research

The part of the research focusing on the areas of health, care and COVID-19 contains a total of 18 questions that cover a whole range of issues related to the mental and physical health of young people. The first question refers to attitudes about pregnancy and responsibility in that situation. Table 28 shows the proportion of individual responses to a certain statement. The views on contraception among the young men are divided and it is necessary to look at them separately in relation to each statement. The majority of the young men (N=10, 43.5%) agree that a girl who got pregnant should stop going to school. They also agree that the father should take responsibility when pregnancy occurs (N=11, 47.8%). When it comes to the need to use condoms in a stable relationship, the young men are divided about the issue.

Table 28. Descriptive data on attitudes

| | Opinions | I agree N (%) | I somewhat agree N (%) | I disagree N (%) |
|---|--|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | A girl who got pregnant in her teenage years should stop going to school to devote herself to pregnancy. | 10 (43.5%) | 5 (21.7%) | 5 (21.7%) |
| 2 | A teenage father does not have to take responsibility if his partner becomes pregnant. | 4 (17.4%) | 6 (26.1%) | 11 (47.8%) |
| 3 | It is necessary to use a condom, even if you are in a stable relationship with your partner. | 10 (43.5%) | 3 (13%) | 9(39.1%) |

**N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample*

The next question targeted the opinions about the methods of protection against sexually transmitted infections. According to the obtained data, it is evident that the largest number of young people (N=15, 65.2%) believe that condoms are a method that protects against sexually transmitted diseases. The other answers were the intrauterine device (N=3, 13%) and the contraceptive pill (N=1, 4.3%). Some boys (N=3, 13%) did not want to answer the question, while one (N=1, 4.3%) said he didn't know what STIs were. Furthermore, young men were asked about their attitudes in relation to gender roles and the use of contraceptives, doing household chores and taking care of children. The data in Table 29 show that most of the young men believe that both men and women should have equal responsibility in decision-making and care work. However, the proportion of the boys who think this is a woman's responsibility is also high.

Table 29. Descriptive data on attitudes

| | Opinions | Man N (%) | Woman N (%) | Both of you N (%) | I don't want to answer N (%) |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | Deciding on the use of contraception. | 5 (21.7%) | 7 (30.4%) | 9 (39.1%) | 1 (4.3%) |
| 2 | Doing housework. | 1 (4.3%) | 8 (34.8%) | 10 (43.5%) | - |
| 3 | Taking care of children. | 1 (4.3%) | 6 (26.1%) | 13 (56.5%) | - |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

The next question was about assessing the reasons and situations in which it is acceptable for young people to use drugs and alcohol. Descriptive data in Table 30 indicate that young men see the greatest justification for using addictive substances at parties with friends and to feel more relaxed (both 20.6%). In addition, a significant number of responses refer to the feeling of sadness as an acceptable reason for using addictive substances (as much as 17.5%).

Table 30. Descriptive data on reasons for using drugs and alcohol

| REASONS FOR USING DRUGS AND ALCOHOL | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|-------------------------------------|----|-------------|
| At parties with friends | 13 | 20.6% |
| To feel more relaxed | 13 | 20.6% |
| To get a boyfriend/girlfriend | 6 | 9.5% |
| When you are sad | 11 | 17.5% |
| When you are happy | 9 | 14.3% |
| To show my friends that I am strong | 5 | 7.9% |
| Not in any situation | 3 | 4.8% |
| I don't want to answer | 3 | 4.8% |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

The next question in the questionnaire referred to attitudes about the impact of the use of addictive substances on the lives of young people (Table 31). The results about the attitudes of young people regarding alcohol consumption, cigarette smoking and weed and marijuana smoking are worrying. It can be seen that young people mostly estimate that the use of these addictive substances does not affect their health.

Table 31. Descriptive data on attitudes about the use of addictive substances

| | Opinions | I agree N (%) | I somewhat agree N (%) | I disagree N (%) |
|---|--|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | Drinking alcohol in adolescence is not bad for your health | 14 (60.9%) | 4 (17.4%) | 4 (17.4%) |

| | | | | |
|---|---|------------|-----------|------------|
| 2 | Smoking cigarettes does not affect the health of young people | 10 (43.5%) | 5 (21.7%) | 7 (30.4%) |
| 3 | Weed/marijuana smoking affects the school and social life of young people | 14 (60.9%) | - | 9 (39.1%) |
| 4 | The use of cocaine affects the school and social life of young people | 11 (47.8%) | 1 (4.3%) | 10 (43.5%) |
| 5 | The use of synthetic drugs affects the school and social life of young people | 14 (60.9%) | 1 (4.3%) | 7 (30.4%) |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

The obtained data related to the access to addictive substances is also worrying. In this question, young people could mark several answers, and the descriptive indicators are shown in Table 32. Almost all young people said they had access to cigarettes and alcohol, while there is also a worrying number of young people who had access to drugs such as cocaine and hashish.

Table 32. Descriptive data on access to addictive substances

| ADDICTIVE SUBSTANCES | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|------------------------|----|-------------|
| Cigarettes | 18 | 18.0% |
| Alcohol | 19 | 19.0% |
| Weed/Marijuana | 16 | 16.0% |
| Cocaine | 10 | 10.0% |
| Hashish | 13 | 13.0% |
| Glue/other inhalant | 5 | 5.0% |
| Tranquilizers | 9 | 9.0% |
| Air fresheners | 9 | 9.0% |
| Nothing | - | |
| I don't want to answer | 1 | 1.0% |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

In relation to the frequency of access, the majority of the young men answered that they did not have access to addictive substances (Table 33), which is contradictory to the previous answers where they indicated that they had access to almost addictive substances. The fact that a large number of the young people (N=9, 39.1%) talk about consuming addictive substances every week is also worrying.

Table 33. Descriptive data on the frequency of access to addictive substances

| FREQUENCY OF ACCESS | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|---------------------|----|-------------|
| Never | 10 | 43.5% |
| Every day | 1 | 4.3% |

| | | |
|------------|---|-------|
| Every week | 9 | 39.1% |
| Sometimes | 1 | 4.3% |
| Rarely | 1 | 4.3% |

**N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample*

The next two questions refer to the boys' parents, i.e. whether the parents know that they use prohibited substances and whether the parents themselves have used addictive substances. 22 young men answered the question related to their perception of whether their parents know about the use of addictive substances. A total of 15 (65.2%) answered that their parents knew that they were using prohibited substances, while a total of 5 (21.7%) answered that their parents had no knowledge about that. Related to the parents' use of prohibited substances, the highest percentage of minors estimate that their parents do not use drugs (N=16, 69.6%). This is followed by the affirmative answer (N=4, 17.4%) and I don't know (N=11, 4.3%).

In this section, we were also interested in whether it is common for young people and teenagers to use drugs in the communities where the young men come from. All the young men answered this question. The data show that a total of 18 young men (78.3%) answered yes, two young men each answered no or I don't know (N=2, 8.7%) and one boy said he didn't want to answer (N=1, 4.3%).

In the area of health, the next section of the questionnaire referred to young people's mental health and the assessment of one's own mental health. The first question was about the young men evaluating their mental health today. Figure 5 shows descriptive indicators of their answers. 56.5% (N=13) of the young men rated their mental health as very good, followed by 17.4% (N=4) who said they didn't know and 13% (N=3) who rated their mental health as good. Finally, two young men assessed their mental health as poor (N=2, 8.7%), while one said it was neither good nor bad (N=1, 4.3%).

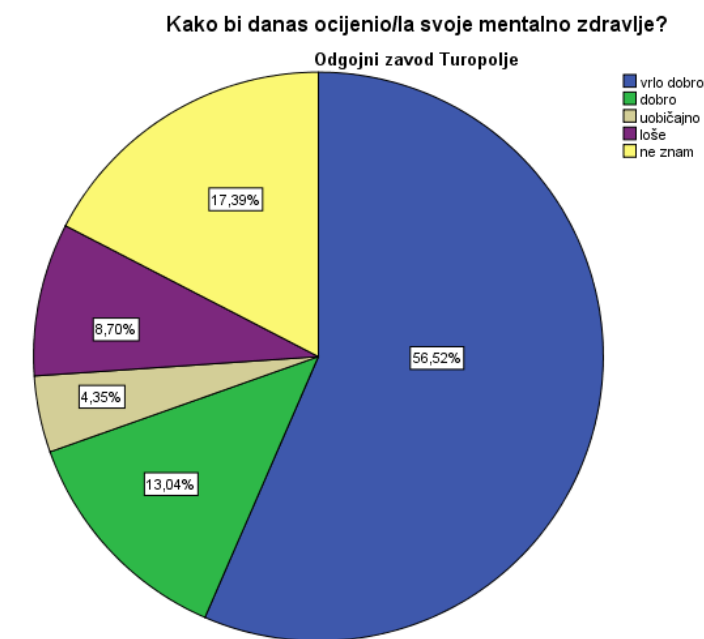


Figure 5. Presentation of descriptive indicators of mental health assessment

The next question was about assessing the feelings the boys have. All of them answered this question and they could choose more than one answer. Descriptive data can be seen in Table 34. Most of the boys feel sadness (N=11, 19.3%), which is followed by feelings of loneliness, abandonment, anxiety and constant sleeping (each individually N=6, 10.5%).

Table 34. Descriptive data on the presence of certain feelings

| FEELINGS | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|----------------------------------|----|-------------|
| Anxiety | 6 | 10.5% |
| Discouragement to perform tasks | 3 | 5.3% |
| Constant euphoria | 5 | 8.8% |
| Sadness | 11 | 19.3% |
| Solitude | 7 | 12.3% |
| Abandonment | 6 | 10.5% |
| Irritation by family and friends | 3 | 5.3% |
| Constant sleep | 6 | 10.5% |
| Other. Which? _____ | 1 | 1.8% |
| None of the above | 3 | 5.3% |
| I do not know | 4 | 7.0% |
| I don't want to answer | 2 | 3.5% |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

22 young men answered the question about taking medication. A total of 10 young men (43.5%) said that they take medication regularly, while 12 of them (52.2%) answered that they

do not take medication regularly. The young men could also enter the names of the medication they use and they listed the following: *Kineton, Llevopromalin, I'm on drugs, testosterone, Anavar, Dijanbol, Deca durabolin and Normabel.*

The last subtopic in this area was related to the impact of COVID-19 on the lives of the young men. In the first three questions, we were interested in whether the boys have had COVID-19, whether their family members have had COVID-19, and whether any of their family members have died of the disease. 52.2% (N= 12) of the young men stated that they have not had the disease, while 10 of them (43.5%) have had. Half of the boys (N=11, 47.8%) said that their family members have had COVID-19, while the other half answered no. Out of 22 boys, two of them answered that they had the experience of a family member dying due to COVID-19. Descriptive indicators are shown in Table 35.

Table 35. Descriptive data on COVID-19 experiences

| | QUESTION | YES N (%) | NO N (%) | I do not know N (%) |
|---|---|--------------|-------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Have you ever had COVID-19? | 10 (43.5%) | 12 (52.2%) | 1 (4.3%) |
| 2 | Has anyone in your family had COVID-19? | 11 (47.8%) | 11 (47.8%) | 1 (4.3%) |
| 3 | Has anyone in your family died of COVID-19? | 2 (8.7%) | 21 (91.3%) | - |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

The next question was about the impact of COVID-19 on their daily lives. The young men could mark several answers to this question, and the frequencies of the answers that were chosen the most of them are shown here. A total of 22 young men answered the question. Most of the boys said that that they had become more attentive to their health (28.1%) and that their parents had lost their jobs (21.9%). Descriptive data of other impacts can be seen in Table 36.

Table 36. Descriptive data on the impact of COVID-19

| IMPACT | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|---|----|-------------|
| Lost contact with family and friends | 3 | 9.4% |
| My family members or friends have died | 2 | 6.2% |
| I quit school | 1 | 3.1% |
| My parents lost their jobs | 7 | 21.9% |
| I felt lonelier and sadder | 3 | 9.4% |
| I became more attentive to my health | 9 | 28.1% |
| COVID-19 has not changed my life routine at all | 2 | 6.2% |

| | | |
|------------------------|---|-------|
| I do not know | 5 | 15.6% |
| I don't want to answer | 3 | 9.4% |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

The last question in this area was open-ended, and we were interested in how the young men imagine their lives after the pandemic. A total of 16 boys gave an answer to this question and here are some of them: *"the same as before", "normal", "as relaxed as before", "I don't know", "bad", "sad and tense", "only drugs and alcohol"*.

Results of the qualitative research

The young men state that their **overall health is good, except that they complain of pain in their lungs**, which they attribute to *"smoking all kinds of things"*. Since cigarettes are prohibited in the correctional institution, young people say that they resort to smoking toilet paper, old cigarette butts, etc. They think that their health is good because the institution is located in a forest, so they have a lot of fresh air.

The boys describe the life in the correctional institution during the pandemic as a "terrible, difficult" experience. It was unusual for them to have to wear face masks, and it especially bothered them that they could not go outside, nor could anyone come to visit them. While the strictest epidemiological measures were in force, they got tested every fifth day. All the young men were offered vaccination, and most of them got vaccinated because it made it easier for them to go out. Some say they got vaccinated as many as three times, even though they shouldn't have. They state that the frequent testing bothered them the most. Some young people say that they had COVID-19 with milder symptoms.

The boys also state that some members of their families got the disease, but mostly with no severe symptoms.

Požega Correctional Institution

Results of the quantitative research

The first question refers to attitudes about pregnancy and responsibility in that situation. Table 37 shows the proportion of individual responses to a certain statement. The data indicates that the young women's views are divided over the statement that a girl who gets pregnant must leave school (N=4, 44.4%). They largely agree that the father should also take responsibility when pregnancy occurs, and that it is necessary to use a condom even if you are in a stable relationship.

Table 37. Descriptive data on attitudes

| | Opinions | I agree N (%) | I somewhat agree N (%) | I disagree N (%) |
|---|--|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | A girl who got pregnant in her teenage years should stop going to school to devote herself to pregnancy. | 1 (11.1%) | 4 (44.4%) | 4 (44.4%) |
| 2 | A teenage father does not have to take responsibility if his partner becomes pregnant. | 3 (33.3%) | - | 6 (66.7%) |
| 3 | It is necessary to use a condom, even if you are in a stable relationship with your partner. | 6 (66.7%) | 3 (33.3%) | - |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

The next question targeted the girls' opinions about the methods of protection against sexually transmitted infections. The majority of the young women (N=7, 77.8%) believe that the condoms offer protection against sexually transmitted infections. In addition, two girls believe the same for the spiral (N=2, 22.2%). Regarding the issue of gender roles and the responsibility for condom use, household chores and childcare, the girls mostly answer that both men and women are responsible for these tasks. Descriptive data can be seen in Table 38.

Table 38. Descriptive data on attitudes

| | Opinions | Man N (%) | Woman N (%) | Both of you N (%) | I don't want to answer N (%) |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | Deciding on the use of contraception. | - | 1 (11.1%) | 8 (88.9%) | - |
| 2 | Doing housework. | - | 2 (22.2%) | 7 (77.8%) | - |
| 3 | Taking care of children. | - | 1 (11.1%) | 8 (88.9%) | - |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

Next, the girls were asked about what they think are the justified reasons for a young person to use drugs and alcohol. It is a question with multiple answers, and the girls' most common answers are related to feelings of happiness and sadness and having fun with friends. Descriptive data can be seen in Table 39.

Table 39. Descriptive data on reasons for using drugs and alcohol

| REASONS FOR USING DRUGS AND ALCOHOL | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|-------------------------------------|----|-------------|
| At parties with friends | 5 | 22.7% |
| To feel more relaxed | 6 | 27.3% |
| To get a boyfriend/girlfriend | - | - |
| When you are sad | 6 | 27.3% |
| When you are happy | 2 | 9.1% |

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------|
| To show my friends that I am strong | - | - |
| Not in any situation | 3 | 13.6% |
| I don't want to answer | - | - |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

Attitudes related to the use of addictive substances and their impact on health were evaluated in a very diverse and ambivalent manner. When it comes to the influence of cigarettes, alcohol and marijuana, the girls answered almost in equal numbers that they agreed and disagreed with the written statements. In the case of cocaine and synthetic drugs, a higher percentage of the young women agree that these drugs have an adverse effect on the health of young people. Descriptive data can be seen in Table 40.

Table 40. Descriptive data on attitudes about the use of addictive substances

| | Opinions | I agree N (%) | I somewhat agree N (%) | I disagree N (%) |
|---|---|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | Drinking alcohol in adolescence is not bad for health | 3 (33.3%) | 1 (11.1%) | 5 (55.6%) |
| 2 | Smoking cigarettes does not affect the health of young people | 4 (44.4%) | 1 (11.1%) | 4 (44.4%) |
| 3 | Weed/marijuana smoking affects the school and social life of young people | 4 (44.4%) | 3 (33.3%) | 2 (22.2%) |
| 4 | The use of cocaine affects the school and social life of young people | 6 (66.7%) | 2 (22.2%) | 1 (11.1%) |
| 5 | The use of synthetic drugs affects the school and social life of young people | 7 (77.8%) | 1 (11.1%) | 1 (11.1%) |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

In relation to the access to addictive substances, the data indicate that almost all girls had access to cigarettes, alcohol and weed/marijuana. Also, as many as 5 of them said that they had access to tranquilizers and hashish. Descriptive data for each substance can be seen in Table 41. The largest number of girls (N=5, 55.6%) say that they have never used any addictive substance. However, 33,3% (N=3) of the young women admit that they use every week. Descriptive data can be seen in Table 42.

Table 41. Descriptive data on access to addictive substances

| ADDICTIVE SUBSTANCES | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|----------------------|----|-------------|
| Cigarettes | 8 | 20.0% |
| Alcohol | 7 | 17.5% |
| Weed/Marijuana | 7 | 17.5% |
| Cocaine | 3 | 7.5% |
| Hashish | 5 | 12.5% |

| | | |
|------------------------|---|-------|
| Glue/other inhalant | 1 | 2.5% |
| Tranquilizers | 5 | 12.5% |
| Air fresheners | 3 | 7.5% |
| Nothing | - | - |
| I don't want to answer | 1 | 2.5% |

**N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample*

Table 42. Descriptive data on the frequency of access to addictive substances

| FREQUENCY OF ACCESS | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|---------------------|----|-------------|
| Never | 5 | 55.6% |
| Every day | 1 | 11.1% |
| Every week | 3 | 33.3% |
| Sometimes | - | - |
| Rarely | - | - |

**N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample*

The next two questions related to the young women's parents, i.e. do the parents know that the girls use prohibited substances and the girls' assessments of whether their parents themselves have used addictive substances. A total of 6 girls (66.7%) answered that their parents knew that they were using prohibited substances, while 2 girls (22.2%) said that their parents had no knowledge of this. One young woman did not want to answer (N=1, 11.1%). The majority of the girls say that their parents do not use drugs (N=6, 66.7%). The other options were selected by one girl each. The other options (yes, I don't know and I don't want to answer) were selected by one girl each (N=1, 11.1%).

In this section, we were also interested in whether it is common for young people and teenagers to use drugs in the communities where the young women come from. All the young women answered this question. The data show that a total of 5 girls (55.6%) answered yes. Two girls answered no and two didn't want to answer (N=2, 22.2%).

In the area of health, the next set of the questions referred to mental health and the girls' assessment of one's own mental health. The first question asked the girls to assess their mental health today and the answers are shown in Figure 6. Most of the young women rate their mental health as very good (N=6, 66.7%). Two girls (22.2%) say it is bad and one (11.1%) assesses her mental health as good.



Figure 6. Presentation of descriptive indicators of mental health assessment

The next question was about the assessment of feelings. The girls could mark more than one answer to this question and the data can be seen in Table 43. Most of the young women say that they feel sad (N=8, 27.6%) and lonely (N=7, 24.1%). This is followed by the feelings of abandonment (N=5, 17.2%) and anxiety (N=3, 10.3%).

Table 43. Descriptive data on the presence of certain feelings

| FEELINGS | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|----------------------------------|----|-------------|
| Anxiety | 3 | 10.3% |
| Discouragement to perform tasks | 2 | 6.9% |
| Constant euphoria | 1 | 3.4% |
| Sadness | 8 | 27.6% |
| Loneliness | 7 | 24.1% |
| Abandonment | 5 | 17.2% |
| Irritation by family and friends | 1 | 3.4% |
| Constant sleep | 2 | 6.9% |
| Other. Which? _____ | - | |
| None of the above | - | |
| I do not know | - | |
| I don't want to answer | - | |

*N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample

8 girls answered the question about the use of medication. A total of 4 girls (44.4%) answered that they use medication regularly, while 4 of them (44.4%) answered that they did not. The

young women were able to enter the names of the medication and they are the following: *Normabel, Sukoson, Diazepan, Sanval, Lexicitium, Eutirox and Estralopram.*

The last subtopic in this area was related to the impact of COVID-19 on the lives of the young men. In the first three questions, we were interested in whether the young women have had COVID-19, whether their family members have had COVID-19, and whether any of their family members have died of the disease. A total of 6 girls had COVID-19 (66.7%). The same percentage was obtained in relation to their family members' experiences and only one girl indicated that a family member died of COVID-19. Descriptive indicators can be seen in Table 44.

Table 44. Descriptive data of the COVID-19 experience

| | QUESTION | YES N (%) | NO N (%) | I do not know N (%) |
|---|---|--------------|-------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Have you ever had COVID-19? | 6 (66.7%) | 3 (33.3%) | - |
| 2 | Has anyone in your family had COVID-19? | 6 (66.7%) | 3 (33.3%) | - |
| 3 | Has anyone in your family died of COVID-19? | 1 (11.1%) | 7 (77.8%) | - |

**N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample*

The next question was about the impact of COVID-19 on their daily lives. The young women could mark several answers to this question, and the frequencies of the answers that were chosen the most of them are shown here. Most of the girls said that they felt lonelier and sadder (N=4, 28.5%), and that they lost contact with family and friends (N=3, 21.4%), while some said that COVID-19 did not change their life routine (N=3, 21.4%). Descriptive data of other impacts are shown in Table 45.

Table 45. Descriptive data on the impact of COVID-19

| INFLUENCE | N* | PERCENTAGE* |
|---|----|-------------|
| Lost contact with family and friends | 3 | 21.4% |
| My family members or friends have died | 1 | 7.1% |
| I quit school | - | |
| My parents lost their jobs | 1 | 7.1% |
| I felt lonelier and sadder | 4 | 28.6% |
| I became more attentive to my health | 2 | 14.3% |
| COVID-19 has not changed my life routine at all | 3 | 21.4% |
| I do not know | - | - |
| I don't want to answer | - | - |

**N=absolute number, Percentage=share in the entire sample*

The last question in this area was open-ended, and we were interested in how the young women imagine their lives after the pandemic. A total of 7 young women gave an answer to this question and here are some of them: "normal", "to return to the old", "unusual" and "good".

Results of the qualitative research

The girls state that their **physical health is better than their mental health, and in this sense they complain about the lack of freedom and privacy**. They also say that sometimes it is difficult for them to be in the correctional institution. In terms of physical health, they state that sometimes they "*get too many meals and calories from food*" and would **like more physical activities**, although it is difficult for them to motivate themselves to do physical activities. They believe that cigarettes, which are not allowed in the correctional institution, are good for their mental health, but bad for their physical health. At the time of the field research, only one girl was on regular drug therapy (Normabel), and the others said that they were taking medication as needed, and it was mostly sedatives.

Almost all the girls got COVID-19, only with mild symptoms. The infected girls were isolated in a separate bedroom and they also had a separate bathroom. They state that they enjoyed the time when they got the disease – they were not very sick, they had to drink a lot of tea, but everyone took care of them. They describe how they napped, watched TV, played board games, didn't have to do chores or study much. It felt "*as if you were on vacation*". The girls are "*not afraid of corona*", they describe it as a severe cold. Some of the young women said that they also experienced post-COVID symptoms.

All the girls said that their family members were infected (mother, brother, sisters, uncles). Some had mild symptoms, and some more severe. One girl lost two family members to the disease. Some girls had the experience of taking care of their family members during the pandemic.

During the pandemic and the epidemiological measures, the most difficult thing for the young women was not being allowed to get visits nor to use the privilege of going out. They state that they were bored during that period because no one from outside was allowed to the institution. They note that they would have liked to have more information about what was happening in the outside world. They protested the use of face masks because they thought it did not make sense, since all the girls were always together anyway. The girls also note that the pandemic has impacted their families. Some of their relatives have lost their jobs due to the closure of shops and restaurants.

It is also important to note that, while filling in the questionnaires and participating in the focus group discussions, some young women **asked additional questions about contraceptives (i.e. what is an IUD or a diaphragm)**. Some of them also asked for clarification of the terms sex and gender.

Young people's life perspectives after leaving correctional institutions

Turopolje Correctional Institution

The young men openly say that **they are not happy with their stay in the institution, and, consequently, neither with their current life.** They would be more satisfied if cigarettes and coffee were available to them (*"then there would be no scheming, we wouldn't have to sell our stuff"*), if the prices in the canteen were more affordable and if they had contact with girls. Regarding their plans for the future, young men **primarily want to "get out", finish school, get a job and have the opportunity to earn a decent living.** Some plan to return to their families and communities, while some wish to find work abroad. In the future, they would like to live peacefully, have a family and a house, a job and a car.

Požega Correctional Institution

The girls describe their wishes and intentions after leaving the correctional institution in different ways. Some girls say that they want to **spend time with their family and make up for the time they were apart** (*"go to the park, take my brother and sister for ice cream"*). Some of the girls lost close family members during their time at Požega, so they intend to go to the cemetery and say goodbye to their loved ones.

After leaving the correctional institution, **the young women intend to get in touch with their friends with whom they have lost contact. Most of the girls plan to finish high school, and some would like to go to college.** The girls also say that they want to have a **"mental rest" from the institution, to be alone in peace and free from structure and forced activities.** Some girls say that they are looking forward to getting a facial or going to a hair salon after leaving Požega. They would also like get their driver's license. **They intend to find a job,** and some plan to move abroad. They would like to work as hairdressers, wedding planners, soldiers. They say that they long for a peaceful life without further problems and they wish *"never to be back in the system"*. Part of the girls also express a desire for fun and hedonism – going out, smoking cigarettes, getting drunk and celebrating their freedom.

Findings

Based on the results of the field research and desk analysis, the following conclusions, and potential areas of intervention with the young people in correctional institutions, were highlighted.

- **Violence** is present in the correctional institutions every day and is manifested mainly as verbal violence, and, to a lesser extent, physical. Arguments and conflicts are a part of the young people's everyday lives. They are more common in the early phases of adaptation to the institution for girls, and in the winter period (when more time is spent indoors) for boys. Young men fight relatively often over cigarettes. **The way of dealing with peer violence is gender-specific** – girls more often turn to educators for help and support, while boys tend to solve conflicts on their own ("*no snitching*"). Instances of violence are less related to discrimination on ethnic or sexual grounds, and more to the **deprivations caused by life in a correctional institution** (inability to smoke or go out, lack of privacy...).
- The survey also revealed **gender-specific differences in relation to discrimination**: young men tend to discriminate more based on sexual orientation, and young women based on ethnicity, and in some cases in relation to the type of music. The results of the field research also indicate that young people feel discriminated against and perceive a negative public attitude towards them, especially by the police, but also within the justice system. Also, the data shows that both girls and boys experience different forms of discrimination related to place where they come from or their own behavior or characteristics which are perceived as unacceptable (for example, obesity, religion, mental health problems).
- **The context of the two correctional institutions** is also different. The correctional institution for young men has a larger capacity with several buildings, surrounded by a spacious outdoor area with trees. However, it is isolated and relatively far from the nearest town. The correctional institution for girls has a much smaller capacity, almost all activities take place in one building, and there is a relatively small yard next to the building. It is located in the town center. Life in the correctional institutions is characterized by deprivations and restrictions. The restrictions are somewhat greater at Turopolje – due to the larger number of boys, the architecture of the space, as well as the fact that the same facility also houses a juvenile prison for young men. Security officers (judicial police) – called commanders by the boys – also work at Turopolje, and their role and influence is very visible. Meanwhile, at the correctional institution for girls, the role and influence of security officers (so-called on-duty officers) is much less perceived. Both correctional institutions are located in the immediate vicinity of a prison for adults, which is potentially a risky factor for young people. There is also a need for better use of space that would allow young people more privacy, as well as more opportunities to fix the space according to their needs, wishes and interests.

- **In the current work programs and activities** with young people in correctional institutions, there is a lack of content focused on sex and health education, and on prejudice and discrimination, except through occasional activities carried out (before the pandemic) by external parties. Activities related to these topics are mostly situational and often do not amount to anything more than a thematic discussion. There are no gender-specific policies or procedures at the level of the justice system. Employees of correctional institutions are not sufficiently trained on the topics of gender, gender relations and gender-based violence and other related topics. It is important to work with young people on topics of gender roles, masculinity, femininity and sexual diversity. This should be approached very carefully, since a significant part of young people in the correctional institutions express negative attitudes towards people of different sexual orientations.
- Furthermore, there are no specific programs on **gender and ethnicity**. This is justified by the fact that all services in the correctional institutions are universal (targeting all). However, this can lead to a situation wherein the important influences of gender and ethnicity are not taken into account, as was confirmed by the results of the field research.
- **The COVID-19 pandemic had a particularly negative impact on the dynamics of life** in the correctional institutions, especially in terms of increased isolation of young people and decreased availability of services and activities carried out by external organizations. In this sense, both young people and employees are pleased with the fact that the epidemiological measures had been eased and greater cooperation with external partners is again possible. During the pandemic, when the correctional institutions were completely closed due to epidemiological measures, the experience of isolation from family and friends was particularly difficult for the young people. Now it is necessary to work on restoring these ties and to invest in maintaining social networks outside of the correctional institutions.
- **The needs (emotional, social, educational) of the young people in the correctional institutions are very complex.** Working with the young people there entails a systematic response to their needs through **comprehensive and mosaic interventions. The vulnerability of the young people in the correctional institutions is multiple and intersectional**, and there is a high probability that, to some extent, their complex needs and multiple vulnerability will adversely affect their future prospects. Therefore, it is important to invest in **programs and activities that will focus on their needs, but also strengthen their capacities for future life.**
- **Work programs in the correctional institutions** should be carried out in **close and continuous cooperation with and incorporating a spectrum of activities organized by external partners** (civil sector organizations, health and education institutions, etc.). This would enable more diverse programs and activities for young people, as well as the inclusion of a greater number of people who can serve as positive role models for the young people in the correctional institutions. Equally, cooperation with

external partners makes the life in the correctional institutions more dynamic, which is important from the perspective of the young people, as well as the experts who work with them.

- In relation to the areas of work with young people, it is important to ensure a **good variety of different educational programs** that will open opportunities for suitable and financially acceptable jobs for the young people. Also, considering their intellectual capacities and educational deficiencies, it is important to include educational rehabilitators in terms of adapting the educational content and learning methods in order to achieve better educational results.
- An important area of work is **emotions**, especially because a large number of the young people talk about sadness and loneliness. Most of the young people come from adverse and often dysfunctional family environments, and in this sense it is important to work on negative life events. It is also necessary to actively and continuously work **on self-image and self-esteem**, which are often damaged and can lead to negative choices and inadequate compensations (such as the use of addictive substances).
- **Relations with peers and important adults**, especially with experts and security officers with whom they are in closest contact, are also an indispensable area of work. It is necessary to work on competencies for the development of positive relationships, tolerance and respect.
- When it comes to **health**, in addition **to continuous care for physical health**, especially in terms of compensating for inadequate health care the young people had before placement in the correctional institutions (e.g. remediation of dental problems and long-term inflammations), it is important to **focus additional attention on the mental health of the young people**. Mental health is identified as one of the key areas in which the young people need continuous help from psychiatrists and/or psychotherapists, and which they do not receive to a sufficient extent. Many young people have various mental health problems, and some of them also take drug therapy, which they sometimes abuse.
- The field of **substance abuse** is also one of the important areas of work with young people. In addition to taking and abusing drug therapy (which is especially common among the boys), the young people are quite focused on smoking cigarettes, which are prohibited, so they come up with various ways to obtain cigarettes, which also encourages peer violence. In this sense, it is necessary to work on attitudes related to addictive behavior, as well as on the promotion of healthy lifestyles.
- In the context of promoting healthy lifestyles, it is necessary to take into account the fact that the young people's mobility is restricted. Additionally, the girls live in a relatively small space, so it is necessary to provide **a range of different physical activities**, especially for the girls.
- An important and essential aspect of working with young people is **health and sex education**. The young people are sexually active, but they lack knowledge about their bodies, contraceptives and sexually responsible behavior. In addition, when it comes

to sexual relations, it is necessary to work more with young people on the concepts and issues of gender roles and responsibilities for sexual life. At the same time, it is important to deal separately with the **topics related to violence in intimate relationships**. One should keep in mind that activities related to sex education and intimate relationships should also be linked to work on emotions and self-image, especially for girls. Self-image and attitude towards one's own body is an important aspect of girls' development.

- When it comes to girls, especially those who are mothers, it is necessary to develop programs and activities related to **motherhood and child care**.
- It is important to **diversify free-time activities**, especially through cooperation by external collaborators, from civil society partner organizations to volunteer activities carried out by students. It is also important to provide opportunities for socializing with positive role models outside of the correctional institutions, with the aim of expanding the social networks of young people. It is recommended to think about the possibility of developing mentoring programs, especially during preparation for discharge. It would also be interesting and useful to organize gatherings of young people with famous people from the world of sports and art, especially music, with whom young people can identify.

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Attachments

Questionnaire for young people

Introduction

This data collection survey was developed as part of the **X-MEN project**, with an estimated duration of 40 minutes.

This survey contains questions about different areas of your life, such as **experiences with school, health, care and COVID-19, violence, family, relationships**, etc. The survey is not a test to check your knowledge of the given topics and there are no right or wrong answers. It is important that you answer honestly with your opinion.

Complete the survey by marking an "X" in the blank boxes for the option that you feel is most appropriate for you. If you don't know or don't want to answer, check that option. Completing this survey is completely voluntary, you can choose not to complete it. There are no consequences for non-participation.

You are guaranteed confidentiality and exclusive use of the data collected here for the proposed research. Your identification will never be made public and the data will not be analyzed individually. A privacy environment is also guaranteed during survey submission.

c1 code: _____

c2 date: ____/____/____

PART 1 – SOCIO -DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1.1 Mark which educational institution you are in

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Turopolje Educational Institute |
| 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Požega Educational Institution |

1.2 How old are you? _____

1.3 What gender are you?

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Male |
| 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Woman |
| 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Else. Which one? _____ |
| 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't want to answer |

1.4 What nationality/ethnicity are you? (You can mark more than one option)

- 1 Croat _
- 2 Bosniak
- 3 Serb/ kinja
- 4 Roma/ kinja
- 5 Else. Which one? _____
- 9 I don't want to answer

1.5. What language/dialect do you speak? (You can mark more than one)

- 1 Croatian
- 4 Romany
- 6 Else. By which? _____

1.6. What city/town do you come from?

1.7. How would you define the environment you come from?

- 1 Urban environment
- 2 Rural environment
- 3 Social housing
- 4 Illegal settlement
- 5 Else. What? _____

1.8. How many brothers/sisters do you have?

- 1 Neither
- 2 Only 1
- 3 2-3
- 4 4 and more

1.9. Have you ever been on a disciplinary measure before?

- 1 That
- 2 Not

1.10. What measurements did you get and how many times?

1.11. Have you ever been employed or on an internship?

- 1 That
- 2 Not

1.12. Where did you work or have an internship?

PART 2 – SCHOOL EXPERIENCES BEFORE GOING TO THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

1.13. What class are you in right now?

- 9 I don't want to answer
9

1.14. What did you like most about school before going to the Educational Institute? (You can mark more than one option)

- 1 Subjects. Who? _____
2 Professors _
3 Janitor and cleaners _
4 Vacations, big and small
5 Snack
6 Additional classes/activities. Which ones?

7 Socializing with friends
8 I don't like going to school
9 Else. What? _____

1.15. What did you like least about school before going to the educational institution? (You can mark more than one option)

- 1 Subjects. Who? _____
2 Professors _
3 Janitor and cleaners _
4 Vacations, big and small
5 Snack
6 Additional classes/activities. Which ones?

7 Socializing with friends
9 I don't like going to school

1.16 . Which of these situations did you witness in the school you attended before coming to the educational institution ?

- 1 Physical attack
2 Robbery
3 Gang showdown
4 Verbal aggression (threats, insults, humiliation)

| | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|
| 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Isolation from colleagues |
| 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Racism |
| 7 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Homophobia (negative attitudes and feelings/discrimination against homosexuals) |
| 8 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fatphobia (negative attitudes and feelings/discrimination of fat people) |
| 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Violence against girls |
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Violence in relationships |
| 0 | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Xenophobia (negative attitudes and feelings/discrimination towards people from other countries) |
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | I have never witnessed any of these situations |
| 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't want to answer |
| 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

1.17 . Which of these situations were you involved in or did you experience at school before going to the educational institution?

| | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Physical attack |
| 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Robbery |
| 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Gang showdown |
| 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Verbal aggression (threats, insults, humiliation) |
| 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Isolation from colleagues |
| 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Racism |
| 7 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Homophobia (negative attitudes and feelings/discrimination against homosexuals) |
| 8 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fatphobia (negative attitudes and feelings/discrimination of fat people) |
| 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Violence against girls |
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Violence in relationships |
| 0 | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Xenophobia (negative attitudes and feelings/discrimination towards people from other countries) |
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | I have never witnessed any of these situations |
| 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't want to answer |
| 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

3 – EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE

1.18. How long have you been in the correctional institution for the enforcement of the measure

| | | |
|---|--------------------------|----------------|
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 to 3 months |
| 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 to 6 months |
| 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 to 9 months |
| 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 year or more |

- 5 I do not know
 9 I don't want to answer

1.19. How do you evaluate the measure that was imposed on you?

- 1 Easy
 2 Fair
 3 Exaggerated
 4 I do not know
 9 I don't want to answer

1.20 . What activities do you most like to participate in at the educational institution?

1.21. In which activities do you least want to participate in the educational institution?

PART 4 – GENDER AND VIOLENCE

1.22. Attitudes about gender

| Opinions | | I agree | | I somewhat agree | | I disagree | |
|----------|---|---------|--|------------------|--|------------|--|
| 1 | The most important job of a woman is to take care of the house and cook for the family. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 2 | Men need sexual relations more than women. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 3 | It is very important for a father to be present in the lives of his children, even if he no longer lives with his wife. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 4 | Man and woman must decide together what kind of contraception they will use. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 5 | I would never have a gay friend . | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 6 | If someone insults me, I defend my honor even with force if necessary. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 7 | To be a man you have to be brave. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 8 | The couple must decide together whether they want to have children. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 9 | Changing diapers, bathing and feeding the child is the sole responsibility of the mother. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 10 | A real man enters into sexual relations only with women. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |

| | | | | | | | |
|--------|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|
| 1 1 | There are situations where a woman deserves to be beaten. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 1 2 | Both men and women can suggest using condoms. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 1 3 | Avoiding unwanted pregnancy is a woman's responsibility. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 1 4 | When decisions are made at home, the man should have the last word. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 1 5 | I feel ashamed when I see a man expressing himself in a feminine way. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 1 6 | If a man and a woman make a child, the child is the responsibility of both. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 1 7 | I would get angry if my partner asked me to use a condom. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 1 8 | Women who have condoms with them are easy women. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |

Gender relations and violence

1.23. Is it justified to be violent towards homosexuals in the following situations:

| Situations | | It is justified | | It is not justified | | I do not know | | I don't want to answer | |
|------------|--|-----------------|--|---------------------|--|---------------|--|------------------------|--|
| 1 | When you feel like "shooting". | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 99 | |
| 2 | When he "stares" at you. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 99 | |
| 3 | When kissing another man or woman in public. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 99 | |
| 4 | When he acts feminine or masculine. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 99 | |

1.24. If you witness violence against women, will you tell someone?

- 1 That
- 2 Not
- 3 I do not know
- 9 I don't want to answer

1.25. Who would you tell?

- 1 teacher or specialist at the school you attend
- 2 To a family member

- 3 A certain institution. Whom? _____
- 4 I do not know
- 9 I don't want to answer
- 9

1.26. Are you in a relationship?

- 1 That
- 2 No (Go to question 1.28)
- 9 I don't want to answer
- 9

1.27. In relation to your partner, how often do you do some of these behaviors?

| | | Never | | Once | | Once | | Often | | I don't want to answer | |
|---|---|-------|--|------|--|------|--|-------|--|------------------------|--|
| 1 | Slap or throw something that could hurt, in his/her direction | 0 | | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 99 | |
| 2 | Push | 0 | | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 99 | |
| 3 | Hitting with something that could injure | 0 | | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 99 | |
| 4 | Hitting, dragging, beating, hanging or burning | 0 | | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 99 | |
| 5 | The threat or use of a firearm or knife | 0 | | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 99 | |

1.28. Does one of your friends use physical violence against his or her partner ?

- 1 That
- 2 Not
- 9 I don't want to answer
- 9

1.29. Does one of your friends use psychological violence (threats, insults, intimidation) against his or her partner ?

- 1 That
- 2 Not
- 9 I do not know
- 9

1.30. What would you do if you saw a friend abusing his or her partner?

- 1 You act during the situation
- 2 I would talk to a friend after the situation
- 3 I would stop being his/her friend
- 4 She called the police

- 5 I would call an expert/teacher/school director
 6 I wouldn't do anything
 9 I don't want to answer
 9

PART 5 – HEALTH, CARE AND COVID-19

1.31. For future situations, mark if you agree, somewhat agree or disagree.

| Opinions | | I agree | | I somewhat agree | | I disagree | |
|----------|--|---------|--|------------------|--|------------|--|
| 1 | A girl who becomes pregnant in her teenage years should stop going to school to devote herself to pregnancy. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 2 | A teenage father does not have to take responsibility if his partner becomes pregnant. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 3 | It is necessary to use a condom, even if you are in a stable relationship with your partner. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |

1.32. Which of these methods do you think protects against STIs (sexually transmitted infections)?

- 1 Condom
 2 The contraceptive pill
 3 Spiral
 4 Diaphragm
 5 It's not going to happen
 6 I don't know what STIs are.
 9 I don't want to answer
 9

1.33. Who do you think should be responsible for the next one?

| Opinions | | Man | | Woman | | Both of you | | He doesn't want to answer | |
|----------|--------------------------------------|-----|--|-------|--|-------------|--|---------------------------|--|
| 1 | Decide to use contraceptive methods. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 99 | |
| 2 | Doing housework at home. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 99 | |
| 3 | Caring for children. | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 99 | |

1.34. In what situations do you think it is acceptable for young people and adolescents to use drugs and alcohol? (You can mark more than one option)

- 1 At parties with friends
- 2 To feel more relaxed
- 3 To win a boyfriend/girlfriend
- 4 When you are sad
- 5 When you are happy
- 6 To show my friends that I am strong
- 7 Not in any situation
- 9 I don't want to answer

1.35. Regarding some situations that involve drugs, tobacco/cigarettes and alcohol in the lives of young people and adolescents, mark whether you agree, somewhat agree or disagree.

| Opinions | | I agree | | I somewhat agree | | I disagree | |
|----------|---|---------|--|------------------|--|------------|--|
| 1 | Drinking alcohol during adolescence is not bad for health | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 2 | Cigarette smoking does not affect the health of young people | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 3 | Weed/marijuana smoking affects the school and social life of young people | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 4 | The use of cocaine affects the school and social life of young people | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |
| 5 | The use of synthetic drugs affects the school and social life of young people | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | |

1.36. Which of these permitted or illegal substances did you have access to?

- 1 Cigarettes
- 2 Alcohol
- 3 Weed/Marijuana
- 4 Cocaine
- 5 Hashish
- 6 Glue/other inhalant
- 7 Tranquilizers
- 8 Air fresheners
- 9 None (go to question 1.47)
- 9 I don't want to answer

1.37. If you have ever used any legal or illegal substance, how often did you use it?

- 0 Never
- 1 Every day
- 2 Every week
- 3 Sometimes
- 4 Rarely
- 9 I don't want to answer
- 9

1.38. Do your parents know that you used prohibited substances?

- 1 That
- 2 Not
- 3 I do not know
- 9 I don't want to answer
- 9

1.39. Do you think your parents used drugs?

- 1 That
- 2 Not
- 3 I do not know
- 9 I don't want to answer
- 9

1.40. Is it common for young people and teenagers to use drugs in the area you come from?

- 1 That
- 2 Not
- 3 I do not know
- 9 I don't want to answer
- 9

1.41. How would you rate your mental health today?

- 1 Very good
- 2 Good
- 3 Usually
- 4 Bad
- 5 I do not know
- 9 I don't want to answer
- 9

1.42. Do you sometimes feel any of the above feelings? (You can check more than one option.)

- 1 Anxiety

- 2 Discouragement to perform tasks
- 3 Constant euphoria
- 4 Sadness
- 5 Solitude
- 6 Leaving
- 7 Irritation to family and friends
- 8 Constant sleep
- 9 The rest. Who? _____
- 1 None of the above
- 0 I do not know
- 1 I do not know
- 9 I don't want to answer
- 9

1.43. Do you take your medication regularly?

- 1 That
- 2 Not
- 3 I do not know

If you answered yes to the previous question, do you know the names of the medicines?

1.44. Have you ever gotten over COVID -19?

- 1 That
- 2 Not
- 3 I do not know

1.45. Has anyone in your family had COVID-19?

- 1 That
- 2 Not
- 3 I do not know

1.46. Has anyone in your family died of COVID-19?

- 1 That
- 2 Not
- 3 I do not know

1.47. How has COVID-19 affected your life routine? (You can mark more than one option)

- 1 Lost contact with family and friends
- 2 My family members or friends have died

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|
| 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> | I left school |
| 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> | My parents lost their jobs |
| 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> | I felt more lonely and sad |
| 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> | I became more attentive to my health |
| 7 | <input type="checkbox"/> | COVID-19 has not changed my life routine at all |
| 8 | <input type="checkbox"/> | I do not know |
| 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't want to answer |
| 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

1.48. How has COVID-19 affected your life routine?

PART 6 – PERCEPTIONS ABOUT INSTITUTIONS

1.49. As for reporting on young people and adolescents, how do you rate the work of the media in Croatia?

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Very good |
| 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Good |
| 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Satisfying, |
| 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Bad |
| 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> | I do not know |
| 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't want to answer |
| 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

1.50. In relation to young people and adolescents, how do you rate the work of the police in Croatia?

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Very good |
| 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Good |
| 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Satisfying, |
| 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Bad |
| 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> | I do not know |
| 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't want to answer |
| 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

1.51. How do you evaluate the work of the judicial system/courts in relation to young people and adolescents?

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-------------|
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Very good |
| 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Good |
| 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Satisfying, |
| 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Bad |

- 5 I do not know
- 9 I don't want to answer
- 9

PART 7 – CULTURE, SPORT, YOUTH IDENTITY AND FUTURE PROJECTS

1.52. What genre/style of music do you like the most?

1.53. Which group or artist do you identify with the most?

1.54. What sport do you like? (You can mark more than one option)

- 1 Football
- 2 Volleyball
- 3 Basketball
- 4 Handball
- 5 Athletics
- 6 Martial arts
- 7 Skateboarding / BMX
- 8 The rest. Who? _____
- 9 I don't like sports

1.55. Have you ever experienced any kind of discrimination? (You can mark more than one option)

- 1 Because of where you live
- 2 By origin
- 3 By skin color
- 4 Because of faith
- 5 According to socioeconomic status
- 6 Because of sexual orientation
- 7 Because of obesity
- 8 Due to physical and/or mental disability
- 9 For another reason. What reason? _____
- 1 I do not know
- 0
- 9 I don't want to answer
- 9

1.56. Have you ever discriminated against someone? (You can mark more than one option)

- 1 Because of where you live

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> | By origin |
| 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> | By skin color |
| 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Because of faith |
| 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> | According to socioeconomic status |
| 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Because of sexual orientation |
| 7 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Because of obesity |
| 8 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Due to physical and/or mental disability |
| 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | For another reason. What reason? _____ |
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | I do not know |
| 0 | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't want to answer |
| 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

1.57. What do you think is the most common idea that people have about adolescents and young people? (You can mark more than one option)

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Young people are rebellious |
| 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Young people are happy |
| 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Young people are irresponsible |
| 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Young people are creative |
| 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Young people are undisciplined |
| 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Young people are educated |
| 7 | <input type="checkbox"/> | The rest. What? _____ |
| 8 | <input type="checkbox"/> | I do not know |
| 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't want to answer |
| 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

1.58. What do you expect to do after the execution of the measure?

1.59. What is your main life dream?

1.60. How do you imagine you will achieve it?

Thank you for your participation!

INTRODUCTION

- Thanks for participation
- Briefly present research topics and researcher
- Briefly present conversation topics
- Present basic ethical principles - voluntary participation, data confidentiality

1. BLOCK OF QUESTIONS – daily work and life in a correctional institution (hereinafter CI)

- Introduce yourself (age, where you come from, what class you are, nationality...origin)
- How would you describe the young people who are placed in this CI? What are the reasons for accommodation in CI? Before being placed in the CI, did you already have any educational measures, were you placed in some institution, included in some program?
- How does life in CI look like? Describe your everyday life (education, leisure activities, leisure, difficulties)

2. BLOCK OF QUESTIONS – masculinity, gender relations and violence

- Have you ever been a victim of violence? What kind of violence? Share your experiences. (Check if the experienced violence by the police, juvenile gangs, private security guards services, dealers, robbers, peers, members family...)
- Have you witnessed / do you know of any form discrimination / violence related to gender, ethnic affiliation, sexual by orientation - in CI, before CI.
- What happened in these situations? What were the reactions and procedures by adults / experts?

3. BLOCK OF QUESTIONS – health, care, COVID-19

- How is your health - physical and mental? Are your health problems reported to CI and have you had them before coming to CI?
- Do you take any therapy, treatment? Which ones?
- Do you use some addictive substances? Are you taking medication? Regularly? Which ones?
- How did the pandemic affect your health? Your life in general? The life in CI?
- Have you had COVID-19? And your family members? Has someone you're close with died of the disease?

4. QUESTION BLOCK - perspectives for the future

- What you intend to do after you leave CI?
- Which one is your biggest dream / wish? How do you intend to accomplish it?

ETHNOFICTION

Ivan/ Marija (to encourage identification)

This is the story of Ivan/Marija. He/she is 15 years old and has been in an educational institution since 2021. Now we will create Ivan's/Marija's life story together.

INSTRUCTIONS: Participants are given photos of people, places, and situations, and they are encouraged to come up with Ivan's/Marija's life story based on their own experiences. At the end of the activity, we ask one participant to tell a story.

INTRODUCTION

- thanks for your willingness to participate
- presentation of the X-MEN project
- presentation of the researchers
- presentation of participants

1. BLOCK OF QUESTIONS – daily work and life in an educational institution (hereinafter CI)

- Can you briefly describe everyday life in CI? What does your working day look like in general? What are your most challenging moments?
- What is the profile of young people who are currently placed in your CI (gender, age, education, race, nationality, socioeconomic profile, sexual orientation, reason for placement, previous course of care)?
- What does life in CI look like from the young person's perspective? What are the possibilities/obligations/rhythm of work in relation to schooling, free time activities (see the difference between open and closed departments)?
- In relation to current wards – are their chronological and educational ages aligned?
- What conflict situations do young people most often have to deal with in everyday life in CI?
- What are the relationships between young people? What are the relations between young people and officials/employees (educators, teachers, judicial police)? Are there any conflicts, what kind of conflicts?
- What strategies do young people use to deal with different conflicts?
- Does CI cooperate with any external partners? Which ones? What activities are carried out by external partners?

2. BLOCK OF QUESTIONS – masculinity, gender relations and violence

- What is your understanding of gender?
- If the definitions offered by experts are aimed at women - ask: What do you think, does this definition also include men/young men?
- Have you ever conducted any activities (discussions, debates, etc.) on the topic of gender in CI? IF YES - who generally encourages and promotes these topics (how often are these activities carried out, are they isolated practices)?
- Are there activities on the topic of discrimination, stereotypes and violence related to gender, race/ethnicity and sexual orientation? (how often are these activities carried out, are they isolated practices)?
- Are you aware/do you notice any cases of discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, race, disability...? If yes, what is the response by CI in relation to that?

- Does violence (physical, psychological, sexual, institutional) occur in the institution, and is it related to sexual orientation or gender identity – including bullying and cyberbullying? What about ethnic/racial violence? If yes, what is the response by CI in relation to that?
- Do you know if this kind of violence occurs in situations where the wards stay outside the CI? If yes, what is the response by CI in relation to that?
- Do you know if there were such situations of violence in the life of young people before they were placed in the CI?
- Is there a division of jobs/activities with regard to gender? Are the activities adapted to the gender of minors?
- Do girls/boys have different needs when adapting to CI and when leaving CI? Name which ones. Do other characteristics such as ethnicity, race, "class"/origin affect this?
- How do you take gender into account when planning activities, services, and internal procedures? If NO - why not?
- Do you take into account the needs and experiences of young men and women in the **planning of activities** / services / procedures?
- Do you take into account the needs and experiences of young men and women in **the implementation of activities** / services / procedures?
- Do you collect data on the young people? Which data? Do you segregate them according to age and other characteristics (which)? What do you use this data for? Do you use them to create activities etc...?
- Is CI ready to work with young people of homosexual orientation, bisexual young people and transgender people? Do you have activities, services, procedures ready? Argue and give examples.
- Is there a different development path for boys and girls – how do they get to CI, which includes previous interventions before referral to CI?

3. BLOCK OF QUESTIONS – health, care, COVID-19

- In general, what are the key health problems of young people in CI?
- What are the possibilities in CI (and outside it) to respond adequately to the health needs of young people?
- What are the key health problems among employees?
- Has any of the employees had COVID-19? Has any of your family members had COVID-19? Have you lost a family member or loved one to COVID-19?
- Have any of the young people had COVID-19? Were there many cases of infection in CI? Do you know if their family members have had COVID-19?
- In what way did the pandemic affect the lives of young people in CI? Everyday life, activities, services?
- How did the pandemic affect your job/role in CI?

- What were the main challenges in daily activities, programs, etc. during COVID? What were your strategies for responding to the pandemic, coping with the pandemic? Were some services less accessible to young people - specify which ones. What difficulties did you encounter in your work at CI during the pandemic?

4. QUESTION BLOCK - good practices, challenges and perspectives for the future

- What are the good work practices in your CI? How does it stand out compared to other similar institutions?
- What are the key needs of your CI right now?
- What are the key needs of young people in CI?
- What are the key needs of young people after leaving CI? What kind of support do young people receive after leaving, when reintegrating into local communities (from your perspective and from the perspective of young people)? What should that support be?
- What are the key challenges of the work and functioning of CI? What should be improved?
- How useful are projects (like X-MEN) for CI and young people?