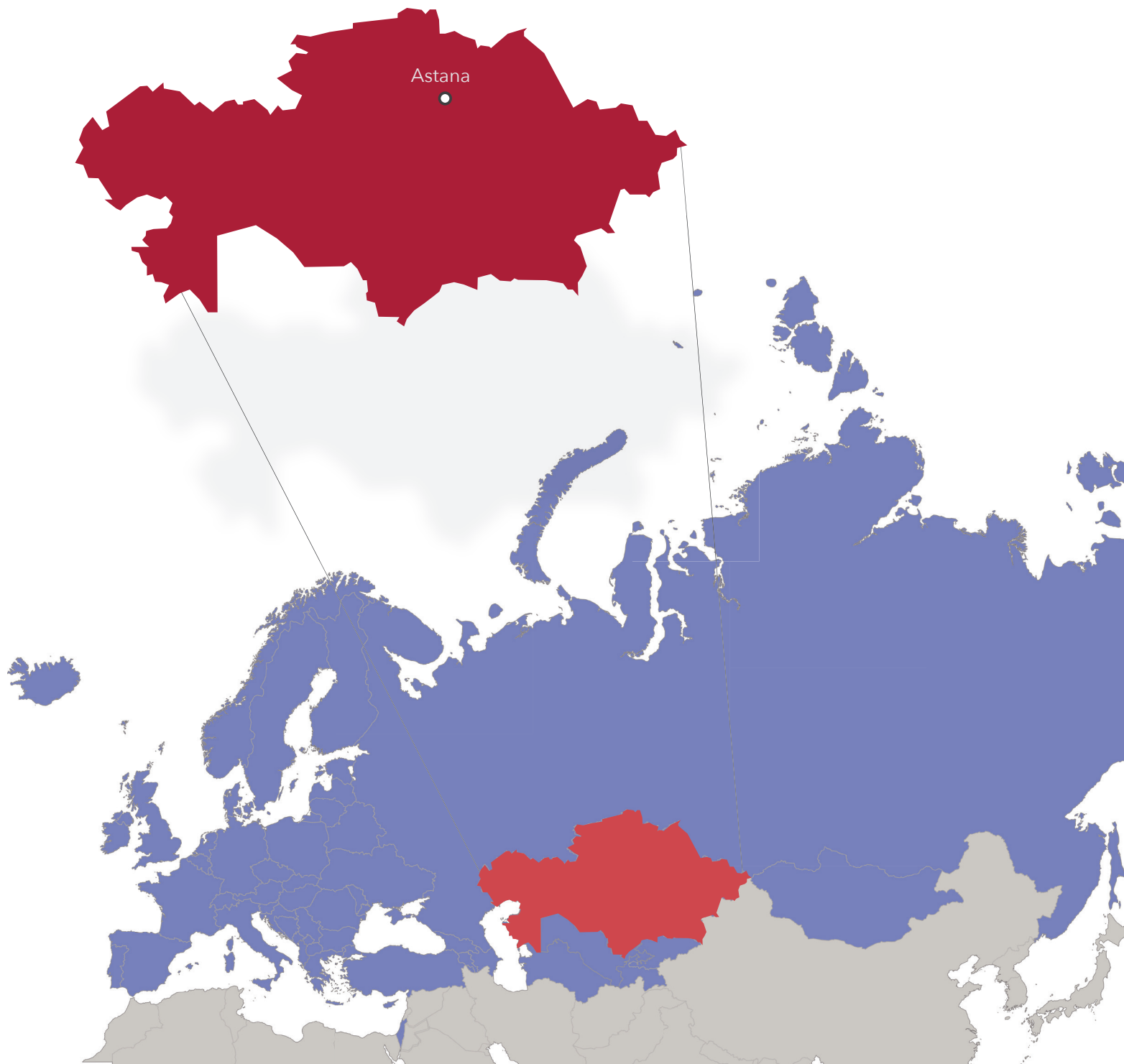


Sexuality Education in the WHO European Region

KAZAKHSTAN

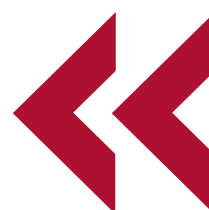


KAZAKHSTAN



Status of sexuality education

A number of laws and strategies in Kazakhstan include the right of children and adolescents to health education as well as their right to reproductive health protection. Sexuality education is currently not part of the school curriculum; however, the country is successfully piloting and introducing 'valeology' (the science of healthy living) as a school subject, which covers a number of sexual and reproductive health topics.





Laws and policies

Presently, no national policy or law explicitly supports the introduction of school-based sexuality education; however, a number of strategies and laws such as the Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Public Health and the Healthcare System (2009)¹ includes the right of children and adolescents to health education and protects their reproductive rights.

Implementation of sexuality education

Sexuality education is currently not part of the school curriculum, though elements thereof are included in other subjects. Topics related to HIV and sexually transmitted infections are taught in grades 7–9 (age approx. 13–15 years) under the subject ‘Basics of Life Safety’ and during biology classes. Issues related to violence, gender relationships and the creation of a family are integrated into the course ‘Knowledge of Oneself’ for learners² in grades 5–11 (age approx. 10–17 years).

More information on sexual and reproductive health (SRH) is provided within the pilot subject entitled valeology. This subject was introduced in schools in 1996. However, because of a shortage of trained teachers, opposition from parents and communities, and a weak implementation process, this subject eventually disappeared from the school curriculum. In 2012, as a part of the regional joint programme of the Government of Kazakhstan and United Nations agencies, UNFPA, in collaboration with the East Kazakhstan regional authorities, successfully piloted an educational project on SRH for students of selected colleges (secondary professional education) in this area. The pilot project included adapting the previously existing subject of valeology with an added special focus on SRH issues.

At a national meeting held in June 2016, it was agreed that valeology should be added to the mandatory curriculum of professional and technical educational institutions in Kazakhstan. During the period 2017–2020, the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with other partners, plans to work on including valeology in the national school curriculum.

Training of teachers on sexuality education

There is no systematic training of teachers in providing sexuality education. College teachers from pilot areas were trained in valeology, using specially designed teaching materials, and taught the classes in accordance with the developed teaching curriculum.

Sexuality education outside the formal school setting

Sexuality education is provided through the Y-PEER peer education network for young people, which is expanding in Kazakhstan. The Y-PEER network was launched in Kazakhstan in 2007, and its main objective is to strengthen and spread peer-to-peer education in the field of SRH and HIV prevention. The Kazakhstan Association for Sexual and Reproductive Health (KMPA, IPPF member association) also provides information for young people, parents and teachers concerning SRH. It hosts a hotline for young people on pregnancy and family planning issues.



Challenges

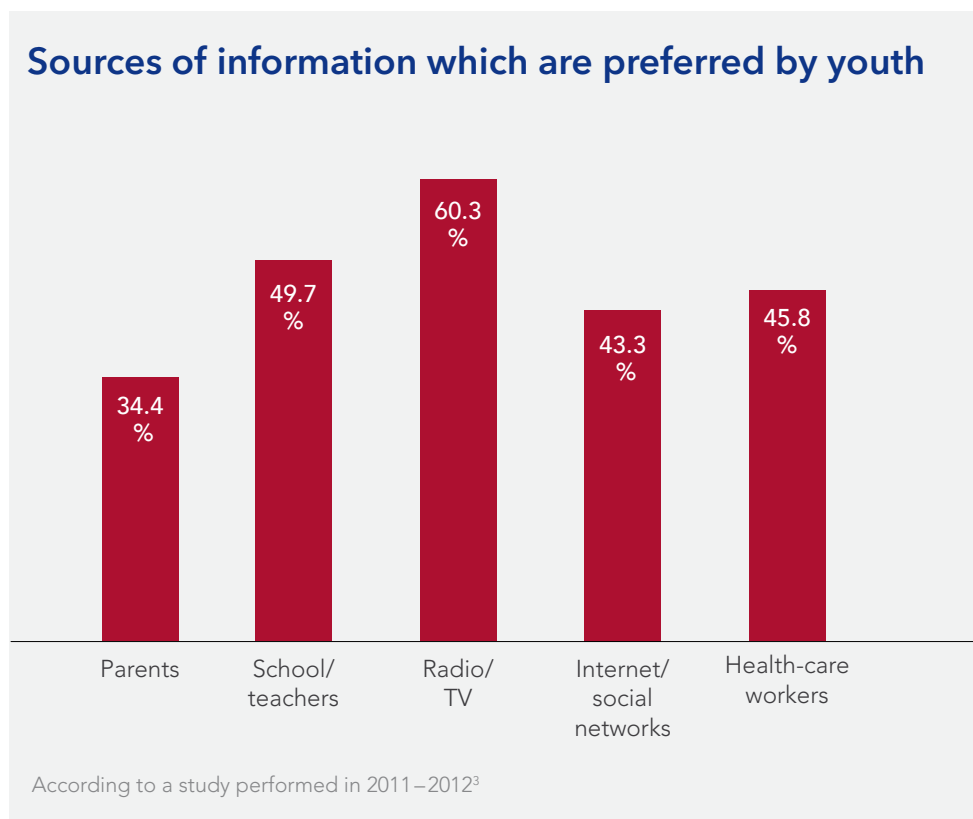
Despite the progress made, there is still opposition to sexuality education from teachers, parents, religious leaders and some politicians. The main argument is that sexuality education allegedly has caused the perceived increased interest in sex among young people.

Data

→ Youth-friendly health centres

Some 80 governmental youth-friendly health centres were established with the support of UNFPA, which provides free services to young people.

Sources of information which are preferred by youth





Kazakhstan

Country facts

Total population ⁴	17 161 000
Population aged 15–19 years (% of 15–19-year-olds in total population) ⁴	1 229 000 (7.2 %)
Government expenditure on education (% of GDP) ⁵	N/A
Youth unemployment rate (% of labour force aged 15–24 years) ⁶	5.1
Gender Inequality Index rating ⁷	0.202
Births per 1 000 women aged 15–19 years ⁸	27
% of 15-year-olds who have had sexual intercourse ⁹	N/A
Average age of mother at birth of first child ¹⁰	25

N/A: not available

For references go to last page

References / Definitions

- 1 Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Public Health and Health Care System. Astana: Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan; 2009 (http://adilet.zan.kz/eng/docs/K090000193_, accessed 25 March 2017).
- 2 **Learner:** a child or young person who is enrolled or attends classes in school, including primary (basic/elementary), secondary (middle) and high school.
- 3 'Analytical research on reproductive health of adolescents and young people aged 15–19 in urban and rural areas of the Republic of Kazakhstan and their knowledge and skills on safe behaviour'. (<http://group-global.org/sites/default/files/publications/Экономический%20форум.pdf>, accessed 25 March 2017).
- 4 Population by age, sex and urban/rural residence, 2016 [online database]. New York: United Nations Statistics Division; 2017 (<http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?d=POP&f=tableCode%3A22>, accessed 25 March 2017).
- 5 Human development report 2016: human development for everyone. New York: United Nations Development Programme; 2016 (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/2016-report>, accessed 25 March 2017).
- Government expenditure on education:** current, capital and transfer spending on education, expressed as a percentage of GDP. Range in the region is approx. 2.0–8.5.
- 6 Human development data, 2015 [online database]. New York: United Nations Development Programme; 2017 (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/data#>, accessed 25 March 2017).
- Youth unemployment rate:** percentage of the labour force population aged 15–24 years that is not in paid employment or self-employed, but is available for work and has taken steps to seek paid employment or self-employment.
- 7 Human development report 2016: human development for everyone. New York: United Nations Development Programme; 2016 (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/2016-report>, accessed 25 March 2017).
- Gender Inequality Index:** a composite measure reflecting inequality in achievement between women and men in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market. It varies between zero (when women and men fare equally) and one (when men or women fare poorly compared with the other in all dimensions).
- 8 Adolescent fertility rate (births per 1 000 women ages 15–19). Washington (DC): World Bank; 2016 (<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.ADO.TFRT>, accessed 25 March 2017).
- 9 Growing up unequal: gender and socioeconomic differences in young people's health and well-being. HBSC 2016 study report (2013/2014 survey). Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2016 (<http://www.euro.who.int/en/publications/abstracts/growing-up-unequal.-hbsc-2016-study-20132014-survey>, accessed 25 March 2017).
- 10 Mother's mean age at first birth. Index Mundi [data from CIA world factbook, various years] (<https://www.indexmundi.com/factbook/fields/mother's-mean-age-at-first-birth>, accessed 25 March 2017).