

# **BALKAN EPIDEMIOLOGICAL STUDY ON CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT (BECAN)**

FP7 DG-RESEARCH [CONTRACT NO: HEALTH-F2-2009-223478]



## **BECAN EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SURVEY ON CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT (CAN) IN FYR OF MACEDONIA**

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## INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

The Project “Balkan Epidemiological Study on Child Abuse and Neglect” (B.E.C.A.N.) run from September 2009 until January 2013 in 9 Balkan countries and was co-funded by the EU’s 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (FP7/2007-2013)<sup>2</sup> and the participating partner Organizations. The project’s coordinator was the Institute of Child Health, Department of Mental Health and Social Welfare, Centre for the Study and Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ICH-MHSW), in Athens (Greece), while the national coordinators for each of the participating countries were the following Organizations:

- Children's Human Rights Centre of Albania (Albania)
- Department of Medical Social Sciences, South-West University "Neofit Rilski" (Bulgaria)
- Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Sarajevo (Bosnia & Herzegovina)
- Department of Social Work, Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb (Croatia)
- University Clinic of Psychiatry, University of Skopje (F.Y.R. of Macedonia)
- Social Work Department, Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, Babes-Bolyai University (Romania)
- Faculty for Special Education and Rehabilitation, University of Belgrade (Serbia)
- Association of Emergency Ambulance Physicians (Turkey)

The project’s evaluation was conducted by Istituto degli Innocenti (Italy) and the project’s external scientific supervision was undertaken by Prof. Kevin Browne, Head of the W.H.O. Collaborating Centre for Child Care and Protection (United Kingdom) and Chair of Forensic Psychology and Child Health, Institute of Work, Health & Organisations, University of Nottingham.

The BECAN project included the design and realization of an **Epidemiological field survey** and a **Case-Based Surveillance study** in 9 Balkan countries (Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, F.Y.R. of Macedonia, Greece, Romania, Serbia and Turkey).

The 9 Epidemiological Surveys that were conducted aimed at investigating the prevalence and incidence of child abuse and neglect (CAN) in representative randomized samples of the general population of pupils attending three grades (the grades attended mainly by children 11, 13 and 16 year-olds). In addition, supplementary surveys were conducted to convenience samples of children that have dropped-out of school in countries where the drop-out rates are high for producing estimates of respectful CAN indicators at national level. Data were collected by two sources, namely by matched pairs of children and their parents, by using two of the ICAST Questionnaires (the ICAST-CH and the ICAST-P) modified for the purposes of the BECAN project.

The Case-Based Surveillance Study (CBSS) aimed at identifying CAN incidence rates based on already existing data extracted from the archives of agencies involved in the handling of

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<sup>1</sup> This report has been written by Marija Raleva, country coordinator of the FYR of Macedonia

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CAN cases (such as child protection, health, judicial and police-services and NGOs) in the same geographical areas and for the same time period as the epidemiological field survey. The collected data were related to the characteristics of individual cases such as child, incident, perpetrator(s), caregiver(s), and information concerning the family. At the same time, the CBSS targeted to map the existing surveillance mechanisms, where available, and to outline the characteristics of the surveillance practices in each participating country. Moreover, comparison at national level between inductance rates of CAN as found in field survey in one hand and in case based surveillance study on the other would produce evidence based estimates of the instantiation of the “iceberg” phenomenon regarding CAN, viz. that actual rates of the phenomenon are substantially higher than the number of cases actually known or provided for by services in the participant countries.

In addition, in the context of the BECAN Project were built National Networks of agencies (governmental and non-governmental) working in the fields of child protection from the areas of welfare, health, justice, education and public order. In total, 9 National Networks were developed in the participating countries, having more than 430 agencies-members. Last but not least, a wide range of dissemination activities were conducted which included the organization of National Conferences and one International Conference, scientific papers, announcements to scientific conferences and meetings, publications in press/media, publication of Reports, etc (more information about the project’s activities can be found at the project’s website: [www.becan.eu](http://www.becan.eu)).

Finally, BECAN aimed to include all aforementioned outcomes in terms of evidence produced, experience gained and networking of resources into comprehensive consolidated reports at national and Balkan level that could facilitate evidence based social policy design and implementation for improving child protection services and overall provisos.

The current Report describes in detail the methodology and the main results of the epidemiological survey conducted in the FYR of Macedonia to the samples of pupils attending the 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> grade of primary school, for the children attending 8 year primary school, and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade of secondary school (general and vocational) and their parents.

## A. GENERAL INFORMATION

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The data collection encompassed students attending fifth and seventh grade primary school in the 2010/2011 school year, as well as students attending second grade secondary school in the same 2010/2011 school year.

- The timeline of the national survey (start and end dates of the data collection): The national survey started on 15<sup>th</sup> of February 2011 and ended on 08<sup>th</sup> of June 2011.
  - Data collection was gradually implemented in the three geographical areas across the country, starting in the South-West region, then following in the North-East region and finally in the Central-South region. Due to the different dynamics of the school engagement and parental response to child participation, the time period necessary for finalizing the research was different in different areas. It took at least 1 month or even more from the moment of entering a single school to the end marked by collecting the parental questionnaires.
    - South-West region: starting on 15<sup>th</sup> of February 2010 until 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2011 in Prilep; 25<sup>th</sup> March – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2011 in Bitola and Demir Hisar; 05<sup>th</sup> of May – 30<sup>th</sup> of May 2011 in Struga;
    - North-East region: starting on 08<sup>th</sup> of March 2011 until 05<sup>th</sup> of June in Skopje; 07<sup>th</sup> of April until 15<sup>th</sup> of May in Kumanovo 2011;
    - Central-South region: starting on 06<sup>th</sup> of May until 04<sup>th</sup> of June 2011 in Veles and 09<sup>th</sup> of May until 30<sup>th</sup> of May 2011 in Strumica.
- Data collection was continuously implemented, without any interruption. But because of the fact that some activities happened typically at the end of the school year, (such as sport competitions, knowledge competitions and excursions) restricted some of the students, who otherwise would take part in the research, not to participate because of these activities (in happened in some schools in Skopje, in Veles and in Kumanovo).
- The research team was established at the University Clinic of Psychiatry, consisting of scientific researcher and – Professor Dr. Marija Raleva, child and adolescent psychiatrist, three regional researchers: Assistant Professor Izabela Filov, MD PhD in charge of South-East region; Aleksandra Coneva, MA social worker in charge of Central-South region and Liljana Trpchevska, MA, special educator, in charge of North-East region, all responsible for the organization and supervision of the research, as well as 11 field researchers: Florijan Naumov, clinical psychologist; Aleksandra Prosheva, clinical psychologist, Kadri Hadzihamza, MD, PhD, psychiatrist, Aneta Nachevska, clinical psychologist, Viktor Isjanovski, psychiatrist, Dimitrinka Jordanova Peshevska, psychologist, Florentina Hani, psychologist, Nedred Musliu, psychologist, Magdalena Chakaroska, MD, Acka Tushevska, MD, PhD student in special education, Jelena Stoimanovic, MD. But all members of the research team were also field researchers when the need for intensive field activities in terms of data collection were stressed.

## **B. ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

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### **1. Permission(s) to access schools**

The permission to access the schools had to be obtained from the Ministry of Education and Science, a procedure that lasted several months. We applied for the permission on 12<sup>th</sup> of May 2010 and got it in 16<sup>th</sup> of July 2010. For this purpose the coordinator had to prepare an elaborate of the project, presenting its aims, methodology (providing the instruments, letters of information and consent forms) and its outcomes. These materials along with the Letter of Support from the Faculty of Medicine, ensuring our institutional capacity and credibility to undertake this task, was submitted to the Ministry Department for Primary and Secondary Education. Two months later after their review of the documents we received the permission to access schools.

But, on the other hand, as the primary education is also part of Local Government, we had to inform the Counsellor for Education in each Municipality, and to acknowledge him/her with the research study in order to access schools.

The next level of obtaining, so to say, un-formal permission was the school itself. Principal of the school had to be informed about the research as well as the psychological-pedagogic service in each school, mainly being responsible for the contact and relationship with children and parents. In fact the school psychologist and school pedagogue were the key liaison persons for the field research, because the whole issue of trust and confidentiality of children and parents relayed on them.

- Ethical clearance of the research
  - We were not obliged to apply for ethical clearance, because it is not yet a mandatory process in our country. So, because we didn't have to obtain an ethical approval of the research by a competent respective committee/agency, the ethical clearance of the research was checked by the Ministry of Education.
  - In our request to the Ministry of Education, the method of asking for a consent (passive, active, none) had to be declared. We opted for passive/active consent, but the schools, in order to avoid possible "conflict" situations with parents, asked us to keep to the more rigorous proposal given to the Ministry of Education, asking for an active parental consent.
  - In some schools (especially in south west region) where the school authorities were not so strict to ask for an active consent, we applied the method of passive consent.
  - In secondary schools there wasn't any form of parental consent, since the children of 16 are considered as older minors, who can make decisions for themselves.

### **2. Field Researchers' Training**

The WP3 Field Researchers' Training was organized on 15.11.2010 and 17.01.2011, one and half working day (12 hours). The trainers for this training were the national coordinator - Marija Raleva, and regional researchers Izabela Filov and Liljana Trpchevska. We have fully trained 12 researchers, but 11 participated in the field research. There were 8 female and 3

male researchers, 6 of them being psychologists, 4 psychiatrists and 1 social worker. Three field researchers were Albanian speaking professionals and the rest were Macedonian speaking. The training was organized in two parts. The first part included content on: 1. General presentation of the BECAN study: objectives, activities, scope, time-frame; 2. Methodology of the epidemiological study on CAN; 3. Preparatory phase for an epidemiological study in context of BECAN; 4. Organization and coordination of BECAN research in schools across the country; 5. Introduction to the instruments: Child questionnaire; 6. Pilot study with 11, 13, 16 year old children. The choice of topics and presentations were based mainly on the translation of some of the presentation from the ToT workshop in Tirana, and parts of the Manual for field researchers.

The second part of the training, which lasted 4 hours was on the study with the administration of a self filling questionnaire and study with interviewing children with the same group of trainees. The training was based on role play in pairs of interviewee and interviewer going through the whole content of the questionnaire. Cards with different patterns of answers were shown to the interviewees, and some of them had instructions to disclose abuse in the family. It was expected from the interviewer to try to recognize the psychological experience of the interviewee by his/her expression and tone of voice, facial expression and willingness of the interviewee to continue answering the questions. If it was necessary to offer him/her comfort, understanding and talk about the abuse.

The training was evaluated by a pre-testing and after the training the post-training questionnaire translated in Macedonian. The evaluation showed that the trainees successfully accomplished the task, and that the role play part was very important for their experience with children, being in their shoes and recognizing and identifying their feelings.

We have added further sessions concerning the theoretical training on CAN during 4hours of additional training held on 21.01.2011. In this part short-term and long-term consequences of CAN were addressed, referring as well as psychobiological and developmental impact of CAN. Those additional theoretical parts of the training were led by experts in this field – Angelina Filipovska, child clinical psychologist and Kamka Paketchieva, MD, child psychiatrist.

We had assigned to the researchers additional post-workshop obligations. They were given parts of the Manual to prepare and present for the next workshop. The insight of the importance of the role plays while preparing for such a research was considered as valuable contribution to the development of the Researchers' Guidelines in which all the team was engaged. Much attention and discussion was given to different role plays and role reversals, from which certain recommendations for providing more opportunities for role plays in future trainings evolved. We observed some problems during quality checking of data collected from the interviews that our researchers had conducted. In fact we referred to possible problems of understanding and duration of each interview (estimated to an average of 1h, especially by 11 years old).

## C. METHODOLOGY

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### 1. Sampling Method – Sample

Please describe in detail:

- Our students' target population consisted of 11, 13 and 16 years old students attending 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> grade primary school and 2<sup>nd</sup> year secondary school. The estimated sample size was 1571 student which represent almost 2% of the student population, the recommended sample size by the coordinator was 2041 students, but the final sample size was 5649, which is almost 3 times more than previously recommended. We included 5649 pupils, attending 209 classes in 37 schools in the country and 2906 parents (Table C1.1.). The sampling method that we used was a combination of stratified cluster sampling (with schools as clusters) and two phase stratified cluster sampling (with schools as clusters in the first phase, and classrooms in the next phase) for the big schools.

Characteristics of the resulting sample:

- Children's age (3 strata: 11 yers old – V grade elementary school, 13 years old – VII grade , 16 years old – II grade secondary school). The distribution of students according to age/grade groups is like this: 11 years old constitute 25,91% (N=670), 13 years old constitute 30,59% (N=791) and 16 years old 43,50% (N=1125) of the total sample of students.
- Children's sex: The stratification of our sample by students' sex was like this: girls being represented more than half (N=1438, 55,61 %) and boys being represented less than half (N= 1148, 44,39%).
- Region (North-East, South-West and Central South-East). Three main regions are represented in the sample: in the North-East region there are 1030 students, in the South-West 1341 students and in Central South-East 215 students.
- Type of school (general and vocational – only for secondary schools); Secondary schools are situated in the towns and cities and are divided in two subgroups – general with 693 students and vocational with 432 students.
- Type of place (for V and VII grade – urban/rural). Urban/rural stratification was not entirely possible because secondary schools, being located in the towns and cities, could not be stratified as urban/rural. On the other hand trying to make the sample as representative as possible we included the stratification on the basis of type of school for secondary schools for several reasons. Rural population tend to gravitate towards vocational schools, also children with lower level of academic achievement, as well as children from families with lower level of education.
- Since it wasn't possible to apply urban/rural stratification to all ages (described above), the stratification of the sample on the basis of the data refer to 11 and 13 years old. The distribution of students considering urban/rural stratification of the student population is 26,08% (N=381) of the primary school group belonging to rural and 73,92% (N=1080)

belonging to urban population. This discrepancy is due to the fact that rural schools are much smaller than urban, with less students per grade than urban schools.

**Table C.1.1.** Number of schools, classrooms, pupils and their parents in the samples, by grade group and geographical region. (Total sample: 5649 pupils, attending 209 classes in 37 schools and 2906 parents)

Geographical Region <sup>1</sup>	Grade group												Parents
	11-year olds			13-year olds			16-year olds General school			16-year olds Vocational school			
	Schools	Class-rooms	Pupils	Schools	Class-rooms	Pupils	Schools	Class-rooms	Pupils	Schools	Class-rooms	Pupils	
North-East	15	50	1273	15	50	1338	3	14	464	1	2	73	1248
South-West	7	20	518	8	23	584	3	16	387	3	13	387	1442
Central-South-East	3	9	267	3	9	261				1	3	97	216
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>2058</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>2183</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>851</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>2906</b>

<sup>1</sup> North-East (Skopje, Kumanovo), South-West (Prilep, Bitola, D. Hisar, Struga), Central-South-East (Veles, Strumica)

<sup>2</sup> Schools for the 11- and 13-year olds grades were the same schools

## 2. Response rates

- Out of the total number of primary (28 schools) and secondary (12) schools that we contacted, only two school Directors of primary schools refused to participate in the research (for 11 and 13 years old) and one school Director of a secondary school (for 16 years old). The reasons were different: 1. Directors didn't wanted to be involved in a research without any benefit for the school; 2. Said that children had missed a lot of school hours for different reasons during the school year and could not afford more to lose; 3. Children were supposed to go on an excursion during that period, and had to work hard after that; 4. It was a period of evaluation of the work of students and teachers.
- Initially children's and parent's participation rates for BECAN WP3 research were very low (around 30%-35%) and the time period for waiting the parental consent (active consent) was very prolonged. So, in agreement with the National Advisory Board (NAB) we came to a decision to ask for passive consent in the remaining geographical area – South-West area, in order to reach the number of planned child/parent paired questionnaires in different grade groups.

After taking into consideration that 416 (7,36%) children were absent from school on the day of the implementation of the questionnaire, 2273 (40,24%) children had negative parental consent forms, and 27 (0,48%) refused themselves to participate, there was a total of 2933 (51,92%) children who completed the questionnaire. But after cleaning the data, the final children's sample size was 2586, i.e. the children's participation rate was 45,78% (Table C.2.1.).

All the parents of children who completed the ICAST-CH were also invited to fill in the ICAST-P questionnaire, but only 2072 (71,30%) of parents responded and sent back their



questionnaires. After cleaning, there were 1662 questionnaires left, thus the parental response rate was 57,19% (Table C.2.1.)

**Table C.2.1.** Pupils' and parents' samples, participation/response rates and reasons for samples' losses

	Grade group							
	11-year olds		13-year olds		16-General		TOTAL	
Pupils	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Sample size (registered pupils)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>2058</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>2183</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>1408</b>	<b>100,00</b>	<b>5649</b>	<b>100,0</b>
Absent from school	168	8,16	106	4,86	142	10,09	416	7,36
Negative parental consent form	1032	50,15	1241	56,85	N.A.		2273	40,24
Child's refusal					27	1,92	27	0,48
Completed ICAST-CH (valid & invalid)	858		836		1239		2933	
<b>Excluded ICAST-CH due to invalid completion</b>	188	9,14	45	2,06	114	8,09	347	6,14
<b>Participation rate (valid ICAST-CH)</b>	670	32,56	791	36,23	1125	79,90	2586	45,78
Parents	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Sample size<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>858</b>		<b>836</b>		<b>1212</b>		<b>2906</b>	
Completed ICAST-P (valid & invalid)	616	71,79	576	68,90	880	72,61	2072	71,30
<b>Excluded ICAST-P</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>28,41</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>16,84</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>13,98</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>19,79</b>
due to invalid completion	138	24,84	85	14,76	81	9,20	319	15,40
due to another reason <sup>3</sup>	37	6,01	12	2,08	42	4,77	91	4,39
<b>Response rate (valid ICAST-CH)</b>	426	49,65	479	57,30	757	62,45	1662	57,19

<sup>1</sup> Pupils registered to school

<sup>2</sup> Parents addressed in order to complete the ICAST-P were the parents of pupils who have completed the ICAST-CH and had no problem to give their parent the ICAST-P

<sup>3</sup> Parents return the questionnaire blank or almost blank

The difference in children's participation rate is obvious according to geographical region and type of consent. In the North-East region (mainly urban - city of Skopje and Kumanovo) and in the Central-South-West region (mainly rural) where active parental consent was needed, the study resulted in response rates of 26,85% and 23,48% respectively for 11 years old and response rates of 29,23% and 27,27% respectively for 13 years old. In the South-West region, where a passive consent was needed, the study resulted in response rate of 61,29% for 11 years old and 63,08% for 13 years old (Table C.2.2).

Adolescents aged 16, either coming from general or vocational schools, were free to decide themselves whether to participate in the study, which also influenced the response rate being 89,19% in the North-East region and 96,53% in the South-West region. The lowest participation rate among 16 years old is in vocational schools in North-East region, only 30,14% (Table C.2.2).

**Table C.2.2.** Description of pupils' sample, collected, excluded and valid ICAST-CH questionnaires, participation and response rates, by grade group and geographical region

Grade group	Geographical Region	Pupils' Sample		Completed ICAST-CH (valid & invalid)	ICAST-CH that excluded due to invalid completion	valid ICAST-CH questionnaires		
		N <sub>reg.</sub> <sup>1</sup>	N <sub>pres.</sub> <sup>2</sup>			N	P.R. <sup>3</sup> (%)	R.R. <sup>4</sup> (%)
11-year olds	North-East	1273	1147	446	138	308	24,19	26,85
	South-West	518	496	353	49	304	58,69	61,29
	Central-South-East	267	247	59	1	58	21,72	23,48
<b>TOTAL 11-year olds</b>		<b>2058</b>	<b>1890</b>	<b>858</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>32,56</b>	<b>35,45</b>
13-year olds	North-East	1338	1266	377	7	370	27,65	29,23
	South-West	584	558	390	38	352	60,27	63,08
	Central-South-East	261	253	69	0	69	26,44	27,27
<b>TOTAL 13-year olds</b>		<b>2183</b>	<b>2077</b>	<b>836</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>791</b>	<b>36,23</b>	<b>38,08</b>

16-General school	North-East	464	370	361	31	330	71,12	89,19
	South-West	387	375	371	9	362	93,54	96,53
	Central-South-East							
<b>TOTAL 16-GENERAL</b>		<b>851</b>	<b>745</b>	<b>732</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>692</b>	<b>81,32</b>	<b>92,88</b>
16-Vocational school	North-East	73	73	64	42	22	30,14	30,14
	South-West	387	356	356	33	323	83,46	90,73
	Central-South-East	97	92	88	0	88	89,69	94,57
<b>TOTAL 16-VOCATIONAL</b>		<b>557</b>	<b>521</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>77,74</b>	<b>83,11</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>5649</b>	<b>5233</b>	<b>2934</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>2586</b>	<b>45,78</b>	<b>49,42</b>

<sup>1</sup> **N<sub>registered</sub>**: Number of pupils registered to school

<sup>2</sup> **N<sub>present</sub>**: Number of pupils who were present in the classroom the day the ICAST-CH was administered

<sup>3</sup> **P.R.**: Participation Rate; it is calculated as a percentage of  $N_{\text{registered}}$ , indicating thus the percentage of the pupils' total sample that the survey managed to reach

<sup>4</sup> **R.R.**: Response Rate; it is calculated as a percentage of  $N_{\text{present}}$  in the classroom.

The parent's response rate was the lowest in the North-East region for almost all age groups, and the highest in the Central-South-East region. In general the lowest response rate by parents was for 11 years old, somewhat higher for 13 years old and the highest rate was for 16 years old in vocational school. But, nevertheless parents of 16 years old from vocational schools in North-East region had the lowest response rate of 32,81% (Table C.2.3.).

**Table C.2.3.** Description of parents' sample, collected, excluded and valid ICAST-P questionnaires and response rates, by children's grade group and geographical region

Grade group	Geographical Region	Parents' Sample	Completed ICAST-P (valid & invalid)	ICAST-P that excluded due to		valid ICAST-P questionnaires	
				invalid completion	another reason <sup>1</sup>	N	R.R. <sup>4</sup> (%)
11-year olds	North-East	446	290	101	33	156	34,98
	South-West	353	273	48	4	221	62,61
	Central-South-East	59	53	4	0	49	83,05
<b>TOTAL 11-year olds</b>		<b>858</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>49,65</b>
13-year olds	North-East	377	251	31	0	220	58,35
	South-West	390	271	51	10	210	53,85
	Central-South-East	69	54	3	2	49	71,01
<b>TOTAL 13-year olds</b>		<b>836</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>57,30</b>
16- General school	North-East	361	253	36	21	196	54,29
	South-West	343	240	17	5	218	63,56
	Central-South-East						
<b>TOTAL 16-GENERAL</b>		<b>704</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>58,81</b>
16- Vocational school	North-East	64	51	14	16	21	32,81
	South-West	356	264	8	0	256	71,91
	Central-South-East	88	72	6	0	66	75,00
<b>TOTAL 16-VOCATIONAL</b>		<b>508</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>67,51</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2906</b>	<b>2072</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>1662</b>	<b>57,19</b>

<sup>1</sup> Questionnaire returned blank or almost blank

The paired sample of children and parents consists of 1662 paired questionnaires, and the same number of parents questionnaires solely. The sample consists of 426 pairs of 11 years old and their respective parents, 479 pairs of 13 years old and their parents, 414 pairs of 16 years old attending general schools and their parents and 343 pairs of 16 years old and their parents (Table C.2.4.). According to geographical region majority of children come from South-West region, the region where a passive consent was used.

**Table C.2.4.** Children and parents paired samples, by children’s grade group and geographical region

Grade group	Geographical Region	Valid questionnaires		Valid ICAST
		ICAST-CH	ICAST-P	CH-P pairs
11-year olds	North-East	308	156	156
	South-West	304	221	221
	Central-South-East	58	49	49
<b>TOTAL 11-year olds</b>		<b>670</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>426</b>
13-year olds	North-East	370	220	220
	South-West	352	210	210
	Central-South-East	69	49	49
<b>TOTAL 13-year olds</b>		<b>791</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>479</b>
16-year olds	North-East	327	196	196
	South-West	362	218	218
	Central-South-East			
<b>TOTAL 16-GENERAL</b>		<b>689</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>414</b>
16-year olds	North-East	22	21	21
	South-West	323	256	256
	Central-South-East	87	69	66
<b>TOTAL 16-VOCATIONAL</b>		<b>689</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>343</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2582</b>	<b>1662</b>	<b>1662</b>

Taking into consideration the parental response rates and also supported by the researchers observations, the low response rate is due to several factors such as:

In sum, general factors that contributed to the low response rate according to our observations were:

- General distrust in the authority of the school and its changing rules;
- Resistance towards new practices and new ways of communication (written communication) and illiteracy of the parents;
- Culture of silence when family matters are being questioned;
- Occupation by work and not being able to answer the questionnaire;
- Attempt on the part of parents to avoid disclosure of abuse by children

**Specific factors:**

- Region; North-East region had the lowest response rate.
- Rural-urban distribution; mainly rural communities and big cities showed the highest resistance, and lowest response rate;
- Type of consent: active consent being connected with low response rate
- Field-coordinators organizational capacities and field-researchers involvement;
- Key role of the school (the headmaster, the teachers, the psychologists) and their involvement .

**3. Research Tools**

- The research tools that we had used in this research were the ICAST-P and ICAST-CH questionnaires developed by ISPCAN and adapted by the BECAN Consortium through consensus discussions and final decisions. We haven’t added any question that wasn’t discussed and accepted by the whole Consortium. In ICAST-P we have added the part of

the questionnaire addressing the adverse parental experiences and their attitudes towards CAN, as well as demographic part (all proposed by the Greek team). In the ICAST-Ch we have omitted the question 43.

Cultural validation of the ICAST-Ch & P questionnaires went through a process of cognitive testing of the instruments with peers from similar professions to finalize the questions in terms of clarity, simplicity, age appropriate wording, and avoiding the double negations and ambiguity of the translation into Macedonian and Albanian language. After cognitive testing the next step was focus group discussion and pilot testing. Children's focus groups were organized in such a way that there was one group of children on each respective age (11, 13 and 16) and parent focus group was organized with parents of 16 years old. There was one focus group with drop-out children. Focus groups contributed to further brush up the questions, as well as their structure and visual presentation in the questionnaire, the rationale about asking children such questions, children's thoughts, opinions and feelings. The pilot testing was organized in 3 primary schools (7 classrooms with 11 years old) and 2 secondary schools (3 classrooms with 16 years old) and their parents.

Observing the children while answering the questionnaire, we realized that it was difficult for some of them (usually 1-2 children per classroom) to stay focused on the questionnaire, especially at the end of it. There was a need to explain and intervene with that everyone should answer for himself/herself and not peeping in his/her neighbour questionnaire, not to comment loudly. Usually they reacted with laughing at some of the questions and wanted to see what the others have written. The pilot group with drop-out children had difficulties in understanding the questions because of the terms used, and also because of not being literate enough to read the questions. 16 year old students had no problems to understand and complete the questionnaire. On the average it took children one school hour (45 minutes) to fill in the questionnaire, but some of the 11 years old needed 60 minutes or even more.

#### **4. Data Collection & Fieldwork process**

- The steps that we had followed before the data collection were a standard procedure used for each school. First we contacted the school Director by phone informing him/her about the study and sending him/her the rationale, scope and purpose of the project and the scanned permission from the Ministry of Education and with some schools the permission of the Municipality Chancellor of Education (for 2 municipalities in the country, one of the municipalities in Skopje and in Struga). Then we arranged the first appointment in person with the Director and then with school psychologist and pedagogue explaining them in more details the procedure of the research itself (information letters, consent forms and procedure of collecting the parental response). All schools insisted on active consent from parents, except schools in Prilep and Bitola who relayed on the recommended form of parental consent.
- In general the process of data collection from pupils was organized after the collection of parental consents for child participation in the study which was a long and time

consuming effort. Our field researchers had visited schools several times in order to collect consents, although there was a prior agreement with the school psychologists to do it for us. In some schools it didn't work because of children's "forgetfulness" to bring back the consents, because of not been urged on time to do it and some school psychologists were not motivated to do it. On the day of the data collection, the students were organized in their own classrooms for self-completion of the distributed questionnaires. Usually the rooms were enough large to obtain privacy in answering questions, but in some cases students were closer to one another and could peep in their neighbor questionnaire. In few cases alternative method of data collection were used like interviews or guided completions for children unable to self-complete the questionnaire, especially for children with disabilities, who were unable to write down the answers themselves (there were few such cases). The teachers were informed not to be present in the classrooms during the data collection process, and they obeyed this rule without exception. On average there were two field researchers in the classrooms, but in some cases where the classrooms were large or we were previously informed that there are children with disabilities present additional field research would be present.

- After finishing the data collection form children questionnaires were delivered to parents by their child in sealed envelopes along with an information letter that informs them as fully as possible on the nature of the study, its subject and purpose as well as the procedures to be used, expected benefits to the participant and society, and there was also a statement describing procedures in place to ensure the confidentiality or anonymity of both parents and their children. Parents/guardians who had given consent to complete the questionnaire were asked to deliver it to the school by their child (in sealed envelopes). The only identification that parents' questionnaires had was a code to match their children's questionnaires.
- The process that was followed after data collection was that each team of field researchers after finishing data collection in one school filled in the Researchers' Reporting Forms. We had regular supervision meetings once in two weeks (or even more if necessary) to update on the progress of the field survey and problems encountered.
- The field researchers had visited schools 2-3 times on average, but in some cases even 5 times in order to collect parents' questionnaires. A lot of parents' questionnaires were never returned back, although they were urged to do so by the school psychologist or teacher. In schools where the staff (teachers and psychologist or pedagogue) had good and trustful relationship with parents it worked well, but in other schools it didn't work, and the response rate was very low.

## **5. Ethical considerations related to the fieldwork process**

- Privacy of data are guaranteed by the signing of the Agreement of Data Ownership, by the Consortium. The Macedonian National Board, UCP, the research team and the researchers themselves respect the ethical codes for researchers, principle of confidentiality and anonymity and take care of the personal data in a highly secure way.

During the whole process of data collection and keeping of data there wasn't any identified case of improper use of data or misuse of information.

- Participants in the research (students and their respective parents) were informed about limits of confidentiality in the Information Letter that was sent to them along with the Consent Form. Also their right to decline to participate and to withdraw at any point in the survey was mentioned. The limits of confidentiality were also mentioned but in a very discrete way, paying attention not to discourage parents consent and participation in the study. Children were informed during the data collection process in the classroom about their right to decline to participate and to withdraw at any point in the survey
- Parents and children who had participated in the survey were also given contact details of the coordinator of the survey, as well as advice, telephone numbers, addresses and names of specialized professionals in case they want to talk about anything related to the project's subject.
- Such a survey in a school setting with children of 11, 13 and 16 years was a responsible issue and it prioritized the importance of establishing relationship with the school, in the first place, with the head master of the school, the psychologist, the pedagogue, the social worker and the principal teachers of the classes that took part in the research, in order for children to feel safe and protected. This means that it was crucial to give support and to be aware of the need of building their capacity for dealing with problems of CAN. Because, questioning children for their past or actual experience of abuse and neglect puts a lot of burden to these professionals with the need of coping with the problem afterwards, when the researchers leave and give the floor to the potential reveal of abuse, stimulated by the questionnaire. So, in the Macedonian context the psychological-pedagogic service in school was well supported by the research team in terms of providing prior information and training for the mechanism of referral of children to the social services, as well as establishing continuous links with the Center for Social Work. The children, as well as school psychologists were given access to the counseling service if there was a need for such help. Also parents and children were given a telephone number in case they wanted to talk about issues connected to the questionnaire by phone to the team that has prepared the research.
- UCP and the research team is responsible to keep the completed questionnaires and the databases with the encoded information in a safe place with restriction of access only to authorized ones.

Informed consent by parents:

- the Informed Consent procedures that you followed [e.g. kind of consent (per age-group, if different), how you obtained parent's (non)consent for their child's and own participation in the research]
- The second level of obtaining consent were parents/guardians of children age 11 and 13 years. Usual guidelines for ethical conduct in research with children require procedure for

obtaining **informed consent** from a parent or guardian, who sign and return the consent form, specifically stating that they give permission for their child to participate, which is an **active consent**. If the consent form was not returned for any reason, we were not able to include the child in the study and in particular the possibility that the absence of parental consent might prevent children's views being heard in research, especially in relation to sensitive areas. Parents received Information Letters, in which the scope and purpose of the research was explained with cautiousness and were asked for their parental consent for their child's participation in the study. It took 10-14 days to collect consent forms from parents returned back by their children.

- Particularly in families concerning family violence and child abuse, parents and legal guardians might exercise their right to refuse consent in what they see as the "best interest" of their children, but they might also do so to protect the privacy of the family and to prevent children from revealing problems within the family - in effect, to censor or control the expression of children's views. It was not unusual in our research with active consent procedures, that parents used to forget, or for other reasons did not return the consent form, even though they might have no objections to their child participation. In such circumstances children were denied the right to decide for themselves whether or not they wish to participate.

**Table C.5.1. Type of consent per geographical area**

Geographical area		Type of consent		
		Active	Passive	None
North-East region	11 years	√		
	13 years	√		
	16 years			√
South-West region	11 years		√	
	13 years		√	
	16 years			√
South-East region	11 years	√		
	13 years	√		
	16 years			√

- The process designed and followed in case of a CAN case's disclosure: Our team has followed the Guidelines provided to the researchers as well as the opinion of the National Advisory Board in each situation of cautiousness, raised on our regular meetings or meetings on demand with the NAB. We had previously prepared the situation that in case of revealed abuse through the questionnaire to inform the psychological-pedagogic service and the headmaster of the school. They usually knew the pupils and had already information about them and their families. If the life or health of the child was endangered the local Center for Social Work had to be informed. The anonymity was of course important, but we were led by the confidentiality as a leading principle in the whole procedure (within the school and in the social service) and follow up the whole situation. Overall, there were two disclosures of physical abuse directly from children during the field research, both of them in Skopje, one in secondary school and the other one in primary school. A girl of 16, whose parents were divorced because of family violence very openly and directly disclosed the abuse she had suffered while the members of the family were together. The disclosure appeared that was already known to the school. She

was offered a telephone number to contact a specialized service in case she needed it. The second case was a boy of 11 whose father was alcoholic and from time to time used to beat him. Again this case was known to the school psychologist and the Center for Social Work was already contacted by the school. During the field research there were several cases when the field researches intervened, mainly when the child showed that it was difficult for him/her to go on with answering the questions. We offered them some time afterwards to talk in private and give possibilities to ventilate his/her feelings. Some of them accepted, and told stories of knowing other children being beaten by their parents. They received telephone numbers of the help service in case they needed it (or to give it to their friend). Those who didn't want to talk to anyone in that moment were offered the same possibility. But the anonymity of the child wasn't broken in any of these cases.

- The BECAN team along with the NAB and supported by the Ministry of Education decided to organize a National CAN Conference just for schools and related social services, to share the results of the study. Developing a “map” of the experience of CAN regarding each area that was included to offer further training to the schools that are facing severe problems of CAN on building their capacity to recognize, intervene and report cases to the Centers for Social Work (CSW), establishing firmer collaboration with CSW.



## D. RESULTS

### 1. Data analysis and Presentation of results

This population-based, randomized epidemiological study was implemented according to the currently prevailing requirements of research methodology. The BECAN study has delivered evidence-based data on the features of child abuse concerning socio-economical, age, gender and educational characteristics, regional differences and specific conditions applied in vulnerable populations. This study was conducted in children's general population, different from the most common methodology used to collect data on child abuse and neglect with the use of retrospective questionnaires filled in by adults.

**Table D.1. Demographics for children participated in the ICAST-CH survey, and information about their living conditions and their parents (Sample's size = 2586)**

	N	%		N	%
<b>Gender</b>			<b>Urbanicity of the place of residence</b>		
Girls	1438	55,61	Urban	2205	85,27
Boys	1148	44,39	Nonurban	381	14,73
<b>Grade group (typical age of attending pupils)</b>			<b>Nationality</b>		
11 y-o	670	25,91	Unspecified	317	12,26
13 y-o	791	30,59	Macedonian	1864	82,15
16 y-o, General school	692	26,76	Albanian	181	7,98
16 y-o, Vocational school	433	16,74	Roma	53	2,34
<b>Age (completed years)</b>			Serbian	35	1,54
10	27	1,04	Turkish	27	1,19
11	641	24,79	Vlaska	20	0,88
12	56	2,17	Other)	22	0,97
13	670	25,91	Don't want to answer	11	0,48
14	64	2,47	Don't know	56	2,47
15	13	0,50	<b>Religion</b>		
16	1016	39,29	Unspecified	248	9,59
17	93	3,60	Orthodox	1705	72,93
18	6	0,23	Muslim	489	20,92
<b>Flunked years in school</b>			Catholic	18	0,77
Unspecified	23	0,90	Other	52	2,22
No	2532	98,79	None	50	2,14
Yes	31	1,21	Don't want to answer	13	0,56
<b>Persons cohabitating with the child</b>			Don't know	11	0,47
Unspecified	9-22 <sup>1</sup>	0,35-0,85	<b>Parents' marital situation</b>		
father	2371	92,01	Unspecified	43	1,66
mother	2492	96,70	married	2275	89,46
stepfather (mother's spouse)	17	0,66	divorced/separated	140	5,51
stepmother (father's spouse)	15	0,58	never married	4	0,16
foster father	2	0,08	one parent is not living anymore	81	3,19
foster mother	3	0,12	both parents are not living anymore	2	0,08
mother's partner	3	0,12	Don't want to answer	9	0,35
father's partner	46	1,79	Don't know	32	1,26
grandfather	596	23,13			
grandmother	809	31,39			
male sibling(s)	1036	40,20			
female sibling(s)	1005	39,01			
other relatives	187	7,29			
other non relatives	15	0,58			

<sup>1</sup> 10 pupils did not answer whether they live with a sister or not, 12 for non relatives, 22 for other relatives and 9 for all of the aforementioned relatives

The demographic characteristics of children participating in the study show that 1438 (55,61%) are girls and 1148 (44,39%) are boys. According to age/grade group 25,91% are 11

years old, 30,59% are 13 years old and 26,76% are 16 years old coming from general and 16,74% are 16 years old coming from vocational schools. Majority of children live with their mother (96,7%) and less with their father (92,01%), 40% have a brother and 39% a sister, 31,39% a grandmother and 23,13% with their grandfather. Only 3,35% of children live either with their stepmother/stepfather or with mother's or father's partner and 7,29% with other relatives. Majority of the participants (85,27%) live in urban environments and 14,73% in rural environments. According to nationality 82% are Macedonians, 7,98% are Albanians, 2,34 Roma population, 1, 54% Serbians, 1,19% Turks and 0,88 Vlachs and according to religion 72,93% are Orthodox, and 20,92 are Muslim. Overall almost 90% of children have parents who are married, 5,51% have parents who are separated or divorced, and 3,19% of children have lost one parent because of death (Table D.1).

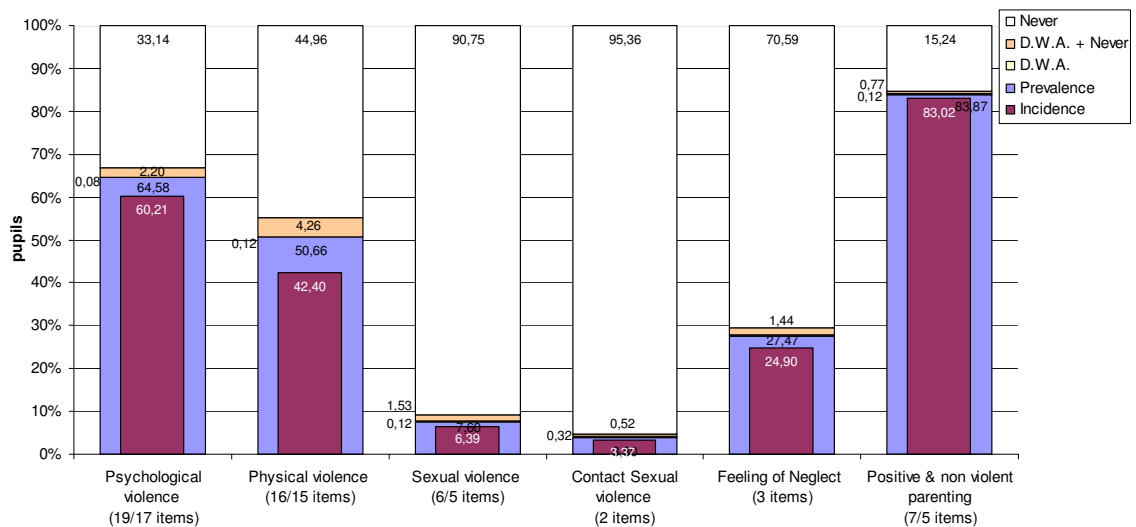
### **Prevalence and incidence rates of different maltreatment forms and positive parental behaviors**

In the beginning we wanted to check the internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) of the three scales of maltreatment (psychological, physical and sexual violence), feelings of neglect and of the positive and nonviolent parenting scales in our sample, and to see the level of reliability of our questionnaire for the sample we had. Cronbach's alpha for different scales both for prevalence and incidence is from 0,624 for contact sexual violence, which is the lowest and questionable to 0,852 which is good (Table D.2).

**Table D.2.** Internal consistencies (Cronbach's alpha) of 3 scales of maltreatment (psychological, physical and sexual violence), of the feeling of neglect and of the positive & non violent parenting scales

	<b>Prevalence</b>	<b>Incidence</b>
<b>Psychological violence (19/17 items)</b>	0,827	0,827
<b>Physical violence (16/15 items)</b>	0,852	0,852
<b>Sexual violence (6/5 items)</b>	0,772	0,772
Contact sexual violence (2 items)	0,624	0,624
<b>Feeling of neglect (3 items)</b>	0,712	0,712
<b>Positive &amp; non violent parenting (7/5 items)</b>	0,705	0,705

BECAN Study in the country has shown that the exposure of children to different maltreatment forms and to positive parental behaviors during their lifetime (prevalence) and during past year (incidence) follow the same pattern across lifetime (prevalence), but also in the last 12 months (incidence).



**Figure D.1.** Distribution of pupils' answers in regards to their exposure to different maltreatment forms and to positive parental behaviors during their life time (prevalence) and/or during past year (incidence) by scale.

**Note**

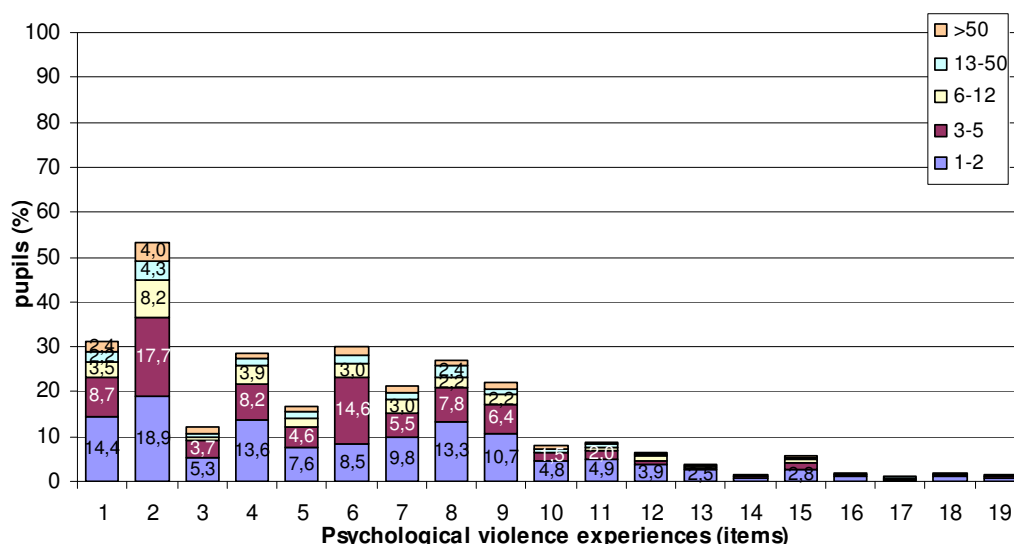
- Incidence:** percentage of children reporting any frequency score under “During the past year (previous 12 months)” in at least 1 item of the scale
- Prevalence:** percentage of children reporting having experienced at least 1 behavior of the scale during their entire life time (either in the past year or before)
- D.W.A.:** percentage of children answering “Don’t want to answer” in all items of the scale
- D.W.A+Never:** percentage of children answering “Don’t want to answer” in 1 or more items of the scale and “Never” to all other items of this scale
- Never:** percentage of children reporting that they have “Never” in their lives experience that they have “Never” in their lives experience none of the scale’s behaviors.

Lifetime prevalence and incidence of psychological violence has the highest rate among all forms of violent experiences. Almost 65% of children have at least once in their lifetime experienced some kind of psychological violence, more than half of the children (50,7%) have experienced physical violence, 27,5% have experienced feelings of neglect and 7,6% have experienced some form of sexual violence (Figure D.1). The incidence rate of same experiences is somewhat lower, but doesn’t differ significantly. Positive parental practices have been experienced by children in 83% during the last 12 months and almost equally during lifetime.

**Frequency of pupils’ exposure to each behavior (Incidence)**

Exposure of children to different experiences of psychological violence during the last 12 months (incidence), has been found in our sample as the most frequent experiences of all violent behaviors that children have suffered, experienced actively as a form of insults, name calling, threats, rejection – known as psychological abuse in a narrow sense of the meaning, or, more passive ways of experiencing behaviors such as ignoring, isolation, hatred – known as psychological neglect. Almost 53% of the children have experienced being insulted by being called lazy or dumb, 31% being shouted, yelled, or screamed at, 30% have their diary,

sms or e-mail messages read, 28% being ignored. Almost 7% had experienced that they were better dead or never been born, more than 9% were threatened with abandonment and 6% threatened with leaving the house. Almost 6% threatened to be hurt or killed, and almost 2% have been threatened with a knife or a gun during the last 12 months. The frequency of these violent experiences ranged from 1-2 to more than 50 times. Almost 46% of the children have been exposed to these behaviors from 6 to more than 50 times, and more than one fourth of children (25,65%) have been exposed to these behaviors ranging from several times a month to several times a week (Figure D.2.)



**Figure D.2.** Distribution of pupils' exposure to 19/17\* different experiences of psychological violence, by experience (item) and frequency they experienced it during the past year (incidence).

**Items\***

1. Shouted, yelled, or screamed at you very loud and aggressively?
2. Insulted you by calling you dumb, lazy or other names like that?
3. Cursed you?
4. Refused to speak to you (ignored you)?
5. **Blamed you for his/her bad mood?**
6. Read your diary, your SMS or e-mail messages without your permission?
7. Went through your bag, drawers, pockets etc. without your permission?
8. Compared you to other children in a way that you felt humiliated?
9. Ashamed or embarrassed you intentionally in front of other people in a way that made you feel very bad or humiliated?
10. Said that they wished you were dead or had never been born?
11. Threatened to leave you or abandon you?
12. Threatened to kick you out of house or send you away?
13. Locked you out of the home?
14. **Threatened to invoke ghosts or evil spirits, or harmful people against you?**
15. Threatened to hurt or kill you?
16. Did not get enough to eat (went hungry) and/or drink (were thirsty) even though there was enough for everyone, as a means of punishment?
17. Have to wear clothes that were dirty, torn, or inappropriate for the season, as a means of punishment?
18. Locked you up in a small place or in a dark room?
19. Threatened you with a knife or a gun?

**Scale**

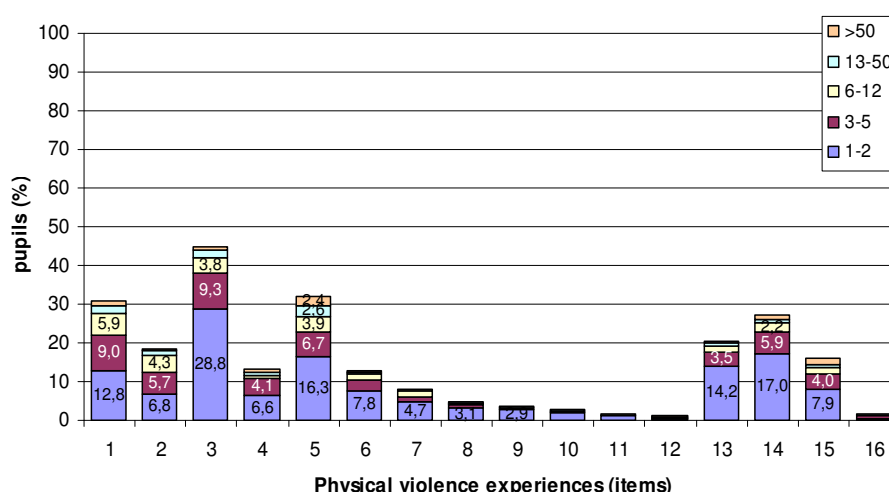
- 1-2 (once or twice a year)
- 3-5 (several times a year)
- 6-12 (monthly or bimonthly)
- 13-50 (several times a month)
- more than 50 (once a week or more often)

\* Items in bold had been excluded from the short-version of the ICAST-CH completed by the 11 y-o grade's pupils

Physical violence is widespread experience among children around the world experiencing wide range of practices by their parents with different intensity of hitting, kicking, shaking, beating, deliberate burning, strangulation, poisoning or suffocation.

In our study experiences of physical violence are the second most prevalent type of maltreatment of children with an incidence rate of 42,40% and prevalence rate of 50,66%. The most frequent experiences of physical violence among children are: being slapped (45%), spanked on the bottom with bare hand (32%), being pushed or kicked (31%), pulled by hair (27%), twisted by ear (20%). Almost 23% of children have suffered from more severe forms of physical violent experiences such as being hit by an object on the buttocks or elsewhere (13,5%), being “beat-up” (4%), being prevented breathing (3%), being burnt intentionally (1,8%), being tied up (0,56%) during the last 12 months (Figure D.3.).

In general 22,41% of all children have been exposed to physical violent behaviors from 6 to more than 50 times during the last 12 months, and 10,19% have been almost continuously exposed to these behaviors ranging from several times a month to several times a week (Figure D.)



**Figure D.3.** Distribution of pupils' exposure to 16/15\* different experiences of physical violence, by experience (item) and frequency they experienced it during the past year (incidence)

**Items\***

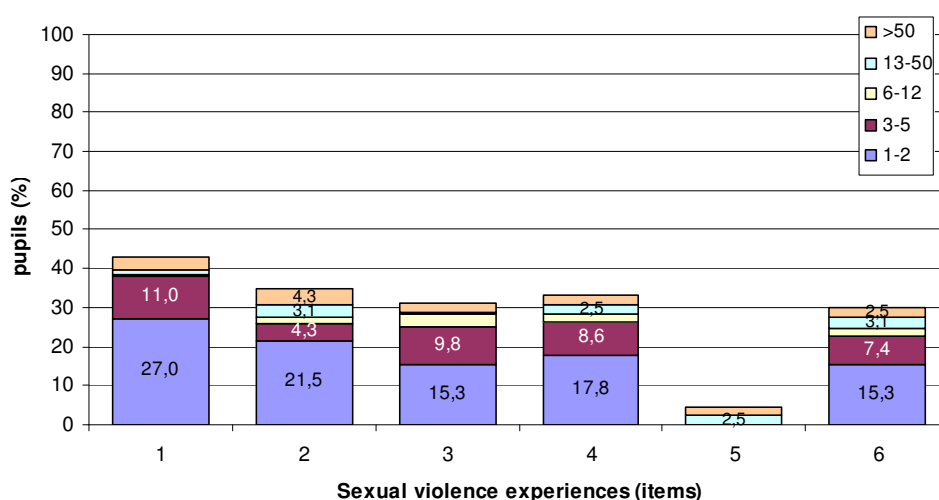
1. Pushed or kicked you?
2. Grabbed you by your clothes or some part of your body and shook you?
3. Slapped you?
4. Hit you on head with knuckle or back of the hand?
5. Spanked you on the bottom with bare hand?
6. Hit you on the buttocks with an object such as a stick, broom, cane, or belt?
7. Hit you elsewhere (not buttocks) with an object such as a stick, broom, cane, or belt?
8. Hit you over and over again with object or fist (“beat-up”)?
9. Choked you or smothered you (prevent breathing by use of a hand or pillow) or squeezed your neck with hands (or something else)?
10. Intentionally burned or scalded you?
- 11. Put chilli pepper, hot pepper, or spicy food in your mouth (to cause pain)?**
12. Tied you up or tied you to something using a rope or a chain?
13. Roughly twisted your ear?
14. Pulled your hair?
15. Pinched you roughly?
16. Forced you to hold a position that caused pain or humiliated you as a means of punishment?

**Scale**

- 1-2 (once or twice a year)
- 3-5 (several times a year)
- 6-12 (monthly or bimonthly)
- 13-50 (several times a month)
- more than 50 (once a week or more often)

\* The item in bold had been excluded from the short-version of the ICAST-CH completed by the 11 y-o grade's pupils

Overall 7,60% of children experienced some kind of sexual violence across lifetime, and 6,39% during the last 12 months (See Figure D.1). Sexual violence as defined in this questionnaire ranges from experiences of non-contact sexual violence, to experiences of contact sexual violence. Most common form of sexual violent behavior is exposure to sexual way of speaking and writing experienced by almost 43% of all children exposed to sexual violence. Items 2,3,4 (Figure D.4.) have been experienced by almost equal number of children (31-35%), and attempt of sexual intercourse against one's will has been experienced by 30% of all sexually abused children. Almost 62% of all sexually abused children have been abused by contact sexual experiences. The frequency of these experiences in majority of cases was once or twice, but in 41% it has happened 3-5 times, and in almost 29% of all sexually abused children it has happened once a month to few times a week.



**Figure D.4.** Distribution of pupils' exposure to 6/5\* different experiences of sexual violence, by experience (item) and frequency they experienced it during the past year (incidence)

#### Items\*

1. Made you upset by speaking to you in a sexual way or writing sexual things about you?
2. Made you watch a sex video or look at sexual pictures in a magazine or computer when you did not want to?
3. Made you look at their private parts or wanted to look at yours?
4. Touched your private parts in a sexual way, or made you touch theirs?
5. **Made a sex video or took photographs of you alone, or with other people, doing sexual things?**
6. Tried to have sex with you when you did not want them to?

#### Scale

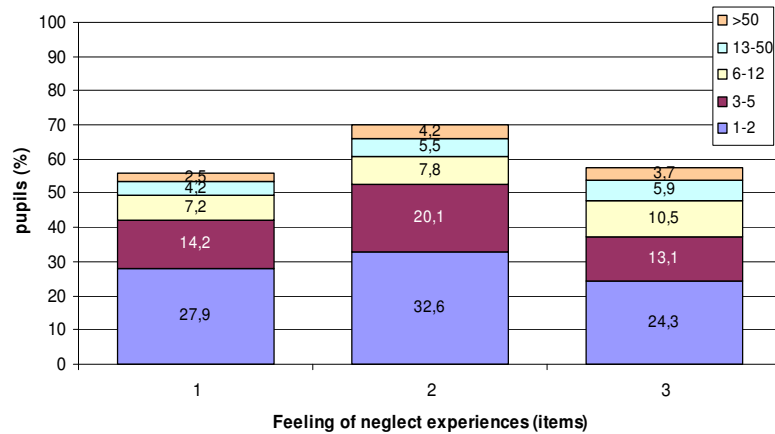
- 1-2 (once or twice a year)
- 3-5 (several times a year)
- 6-12 (monthly or bimonthly)
- 13-50 (several times a month)
- more than 50 (once a week or more often)

\* The item in bold had been excluded from the short-version of the ICAST-CH completed by the 11 y-o grade's pupils

Feelings of neglect reflect the failure of a parent/caregiver to meet the needs of a dependent child, satisfying his/her developmentally specific needs.

In general, 27,47% of children were exposed to different feelings of neglect across lifetime and 24,90% during the last 12 years. The most common experience of feelings of neglect was

the feeling of not being important, reported by 70% of all neglected children. Feelings of neglect have been experienced by 51,5% of all neglected children, 6 times to more than 50 times during the last 12 months (Figure D.5).

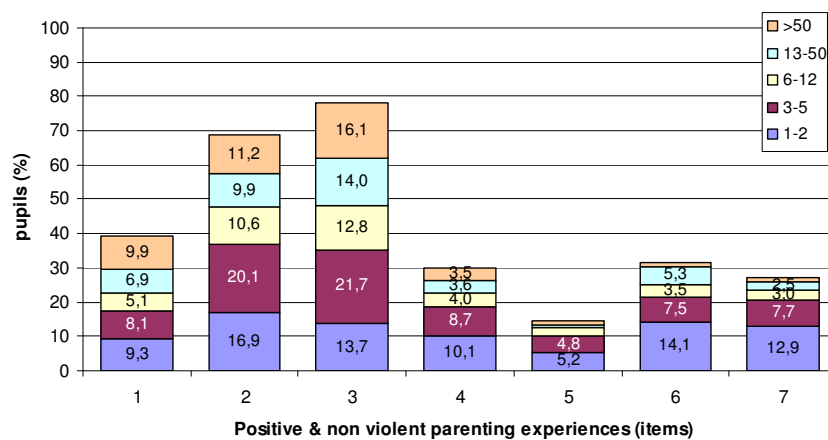


**Figure D.5.** Distribution of pupils' exposure to 3 different feelings of neglect, by feeling (item) and frequency they experienced it during the past year (incidence)

**Items**

1. You did not feel cared for?
2. Felt that you were not important?
3. Felt that there was never anyone looking after you, supporting you, helping you when you most needed it?

Positive parenting encompasses experiences of all non-violent alternative parenting practices used in the upbringing of children. These experiences have been felt by 83,87% of all children during lifetime, and by 83,02% in the last 12 months. The most common experiences of this type referred to parents, awarding the child for behaving well (78,3%), explaining the child why something was wrong (68,7%), telling to start or stop doing something (39,3%) as presented in the Figure D.6. However, the fact that almost 17% of children either never had had such experiences (15,24%) or didn't want to answer is concerning.



**Figure D.6.** Distribution of pupils' exposure to 7/6\* different experiences of positive & non violent parenting, by experience (item) and frequency they experienced it during the past year (incidence)

### Items\*

1. **Told you to start or stop doing something (e.g. start doing your homework or stop watching TV)?**
2. Explained you why something you did was wrong?
3. Gave you an award for behaving well?
4. **Gave you something else to do in order to distract your attention (e.g. to tell you do something in order to stop you watching TV)?**
5. Took away your pocket money or other privileges?
6. Forbade you something that you liked?
7. Forbade you to go out?

### Scale

- 1-2 (once or twice a year)
- 3-5 (several times a year)
- 6-12 (monthly or bimonthly)
- 13-50 (several times a month)
- more than 50 (once a week or more often)

\* Items in bold had been excluded from the short-version of the ICAST-CH completed by the 11 y-o grade's pupils

### Multiple victimization suffered by children

Results of multiple victimization that children have suffered show that in general 23,24% of tested children haven't been exposed to any form of violence during lifetime, and 28,1% during the last 12 months (Table D.3.)

**Table D.3.** Distribution of children by the number of different types of violence they had experienced during their lifetime (prevalence) and during the past 12 months (incidence)

Different types of violent experiences	Prevalence		Incidence	
	N	%	N	%
0	601	23,24	729	28,19
1	712	27,53	756	29,23
2	739	28,58	724	28,00
3	472	18,25	340	13,15
4	62	2,40	37	1,43
<b>Multiple victimization (2-4 types)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>1273</b>	<b>49,23</b>	<b>1101</b>	<b>42,58</b>

<sup>1</sup>. Multiple victimization was operationally defined as a child's exposure in more than one (up to 4) types of violent experiences, namely to psychological, physical and sexual violence as well as to domestic violence (items 11, 12, 13a and 14); the prevalence rate of the domestic violence scale is 26,41% (N=683), while its incidence 21,58% (N=558).

The prevalence rate of experiencing one type of violence by children is 27,53%, of two types of violence is 28,58 of 3 types of violence is 18,25 and of four types of violence 2,4%. The Incidence rate of experiencing one type of violence by children is somewhat higher and is 29,23%, three types of violence by 28%, four types of violence by 1,41% of children (Table D. 3.).

### Analysis of interaction of different variables

According to the results of 12 binary logistic regression analyses' conducted on the prevalence and the incidence of the 3 scales of violent behaviour, of the feeling of neglect scale and of the positive parenting scale it is shown that the main effects of gender are



significant on prevalence of sexual violence, on prevalence and incidence of feeling of neglect, (both for  $p < .001$ ), and on incidence of physical violence ( $p < .01$ ). Grade group / age had significant effect on prevalence and incidence of psychological violence, feelings of neglect and positive parental practices (for  $p < .001$ ), and on prevalence only of physical and sexual violence (for  $p < .001$ ). Geographical area had significant effect on prevalence and incidence of positive non-violent parenting (for  $p < .001$ ) and physical violence (for  $p < .01$ ) and on prevalence of psychological violence and feelings of neglect (for  $p < .05$ ). Urbanicity had significant effect on prevalence and incidence of contact sexual violence only (for  $p < .05$ ) (See Table D.4.)

**Table D.4.** Results of 12 binary logistic regression analyses' conducted on the prevalence and the incidence of the 3 scales of violent behaviour, of the feeling of neglect scale and of the positive parenting scale; the results of the analyses on the subscale of contact sexual violence are also illustrated

		Psychological violence	Physical violence	Sexual violence	Contact Sexual violence	Feeling of Neglect	Positive & non violent parenting
gender	<b>PR.</b>			<b>15.044****</b>		<b>12.486****</b>	
	<b>IN.</b>		6.575**			14.848****	
grade group	<b>PR.</b>	<b>31.879****</b>	<b>16.812****</b>	<b>22.400****</b>	<b>8.160*</b>	<b>84.115****</b>	<b>23.202****</b>
	<b>IN.</b>	28.052****				69.021****	24.379****
geographical area	<b>PR.</b>	<b>7.382*</b>	<b>10.155**</b>			<b>6.812*</b>	<b>23.506****</b>
	<b>IN.</b>		7.512*				49.288****
urbanicity	<b>PR.</b>				<b>4.961*</b>		
	<b>IN.</b>				5.462*		
gender x grade group	<b>PR.</b>				<b>9.088*</b>		
	<b>IN.</b>				9.742*		
gender x geographical area	<b>PR.</b>				<b>7.052*</b>	<b>8.334*</b>	
	<b>IN.</b>			7.746*	6.768*	7.997*	
gender x urbanicity	<b>PR.</b>						
	<b>IN.</b>						
grade group x geographical area	<b>PR.</b>	<b>19.364***</b>		<b>18.696***</b>	<b>14.760*</b>	<b>40.513****</b>	<b>31.730****</b>
	<b>IN.</b>	21.506****		18.389***	11.607*	39.478****	34.195****
grade group x urbanicity	<b>PR.</b>	<b>10.106*</b>					<b>14.049***</b>
	<b>IN.</b>	10.397*		7.920*			12.876***

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .005$ , \*\*\*\*  $p < .001$

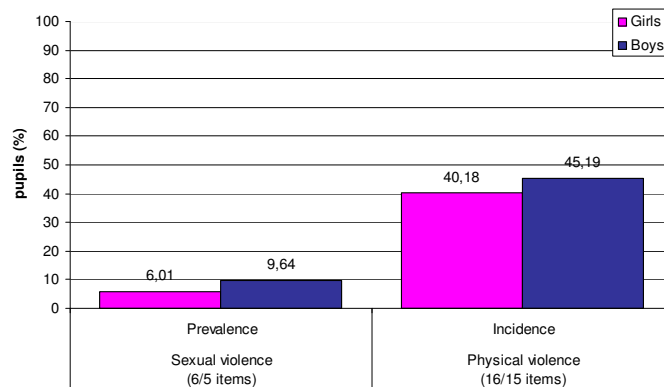
**PR:** Prevalence, **IN:** Incidence

**Note:** In the cells of the table are depicted the values of the Wald Chi-Square only for the main effects and the 2-way interactions that reached significance.

When it comes to interaction of different variables, a significant interaction between gender and grade group has been found on prevalence and incidence of contact sexual violence only (for  $p < .05$ ), interaction of gender and geographical area has been found for prevalence and incidence of contact sexual violence, feelings of neglect and for incidence of sexual violence (for  $p < .05$ ). Significant interaction between grade group and geographical area has been observed on prevalence and incidence of psychological violence, sexual violence, feelings of

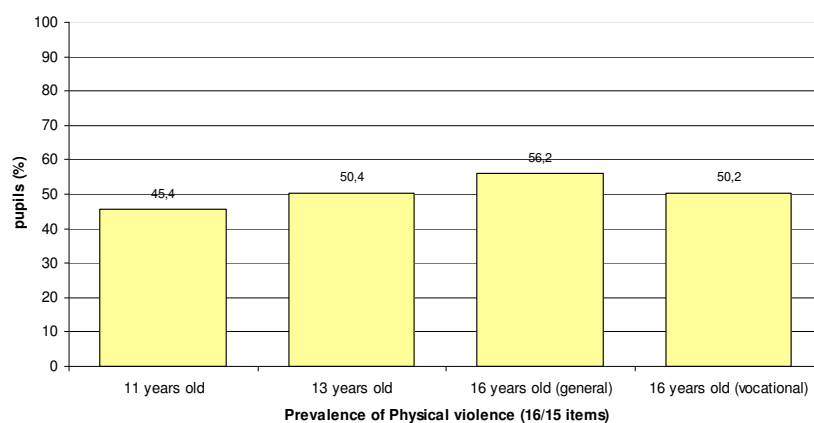
neglect and positive non-violent parenting (for  $p < .001$  and  $p < .005$ ) and contact sexual violence (for  $p < .05$ ). Interaction between grade group and urbanicity is significant for prevalence and incidence of psychological violence (for  $p < .05$ ) and for positive non-violent parenting (for  $p < .005$ ), and incidence only of sexual violence (for  $p < .05$ ) (See Table D.4.).

Significant main effects of **gender** show that boys were significantly more exposed to sexual abuse (9,64% versus 6,01%) and physical abuse (45,19% versus 40,18%) than girls (Figure D.7.).



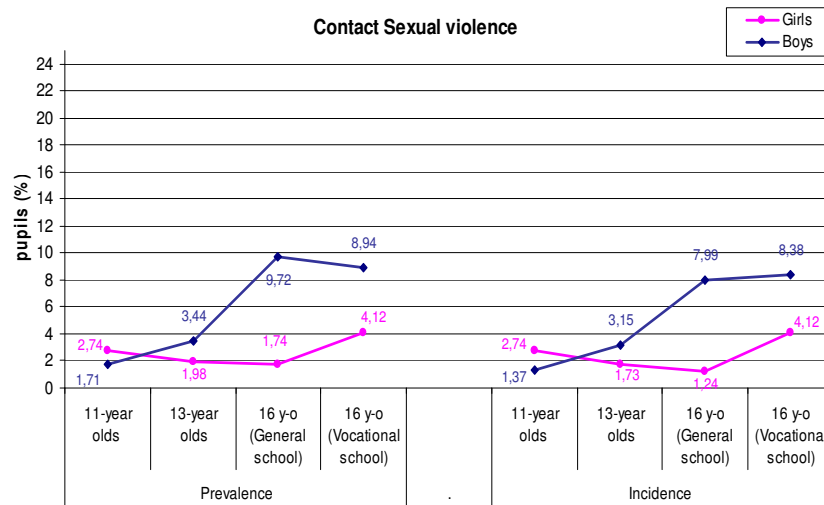
**Figure D.7.** Prevalence and incidence rates of pupils' exposure to violent behaviors by child's gender. (Only the scales for which the analyses revealed a significant main effect of gender and no significant interactions with gender are presented here).

Significant main effects of **grade group** (without any significant interaction), show that 16 years old children coming from general schools have been significantly more exposed to physical violence during lifetime (56,2%) than their 16 years old peers from vocational schools (50,2%), as well as 11 (45,4%) and 13 years old pupils (50,4%) (Figure D.8.).



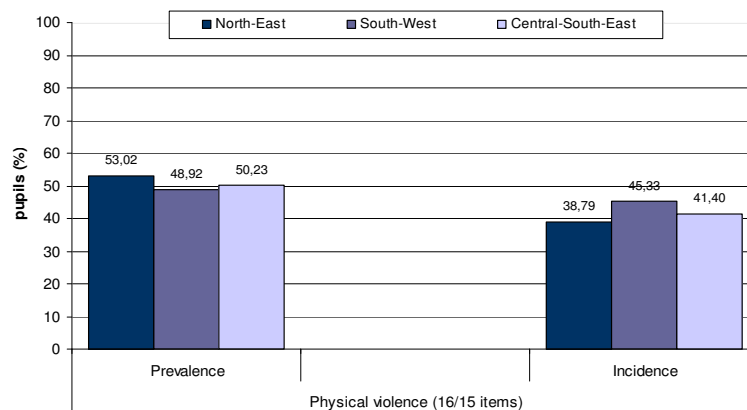
**Figure D.8.** Prevalence and incidence rates of pupils' exposure to violent behaviors by grade group. (Only the scales for which the analyses revealed a significant main effect of grade group and no significant interactions with grade group are presented here).

Prevalence & incidence of contact sexual violence show that 16 years old boys coming from general school (Pr. 9,72% and In. 7,99%) are significantly more exposed to contact sexual violence than other grade groups of children (Figure D.9.).



**Figure D.9.** Prevalence and incidence rates of pupils' exposure to violent behaviors by child's gender and grade group. (Only the scales for which the analyses revealed a significant interaction of gender x grade group are presented here).

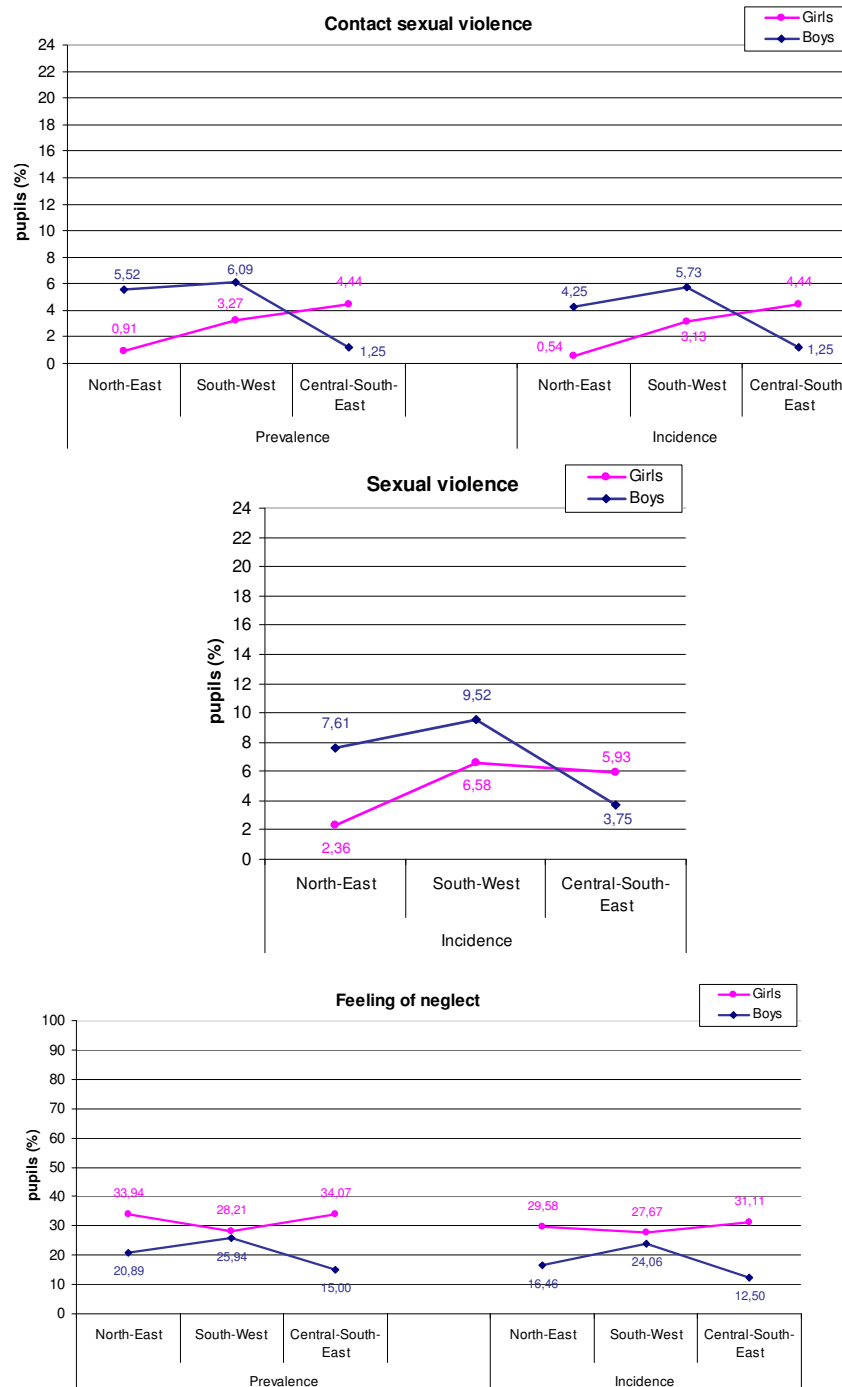
Significant main effects of **geographical area** have been found in prevalence rates of physical violence of children showing significantly highest rates in North-East region (53,02%) comparing to other two regions, and in incidence rates of physical violence in South-West region (45,33%) in comparison to other two regions (Figure D.10.).



**Figure D.10.** Prevalence and incidence rates of pupils' exposure to violent behaviors by geographical area. (Only the scales for which the analyses revealed a significant main effect of geographical area and no significant interactions with geographical area are presented here).

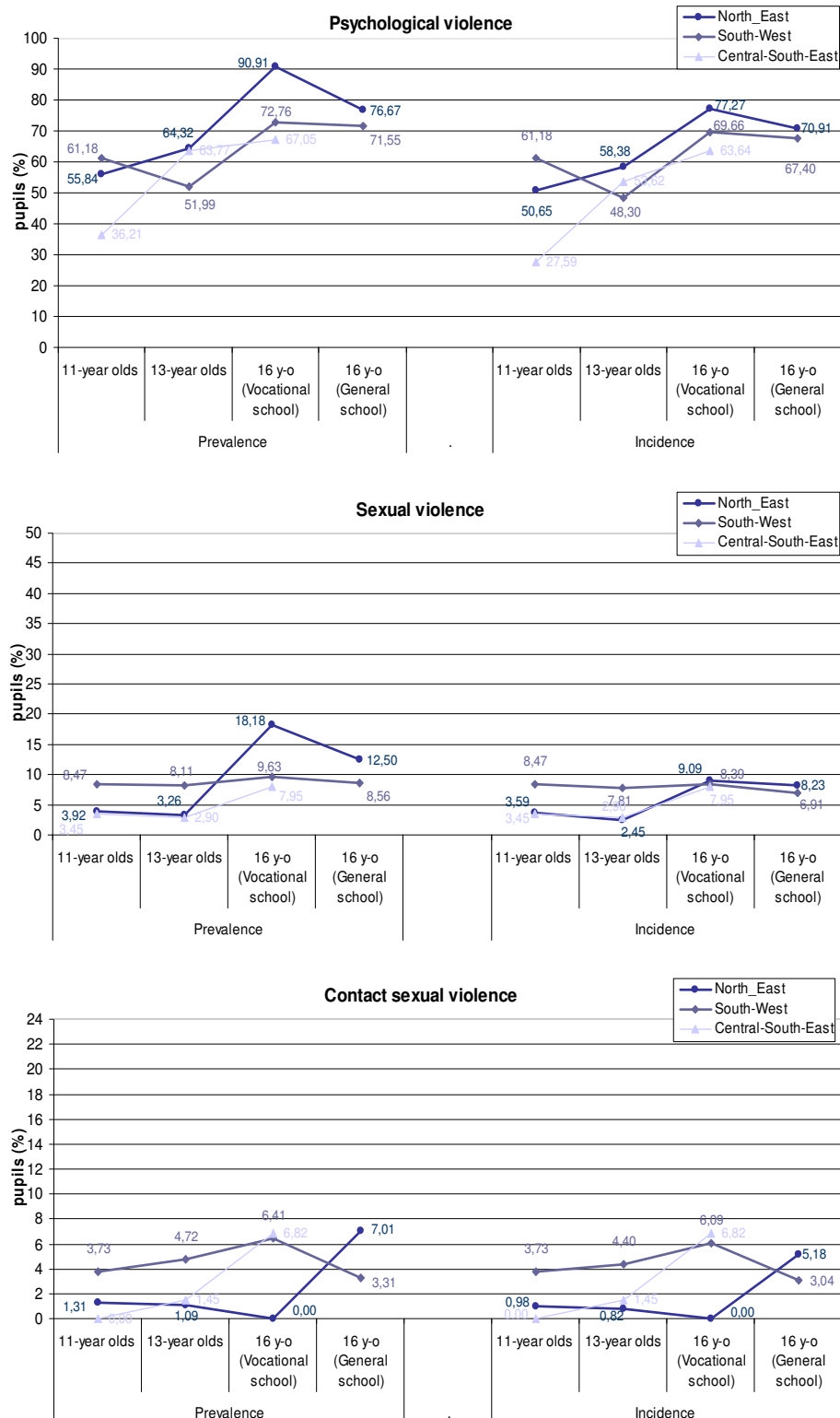
Boys in North-East and South-West region compared to the South-East region, were significantly more exposed to contact sexual violence (Pr. 6.09% and In. 5.73%) while girls (Pr. 4.44%, In. 4.44%) were more exposed to contact sexual violence in Central-South-

East then boys (Pr.1.25% In.4.44%) from the same region. When the results of contact sexual violence in Central-South-East region are considered it is evident that all abused subjects experienced contact sexual abuse during last year. Incidence of sexual violence which again shows that boys in the South-West region (9,52%) were significantly more exposed to sexual violence compared to other regions and prevalence and incidence rates of feelings of neglect showing that girls were significantly more exposed to neglect in South-East region (Pr. 34,07% and In. 31,11%). Only in Central-South-East region girls were more exposed to sexual violence compared to boys (Figure D.11.)

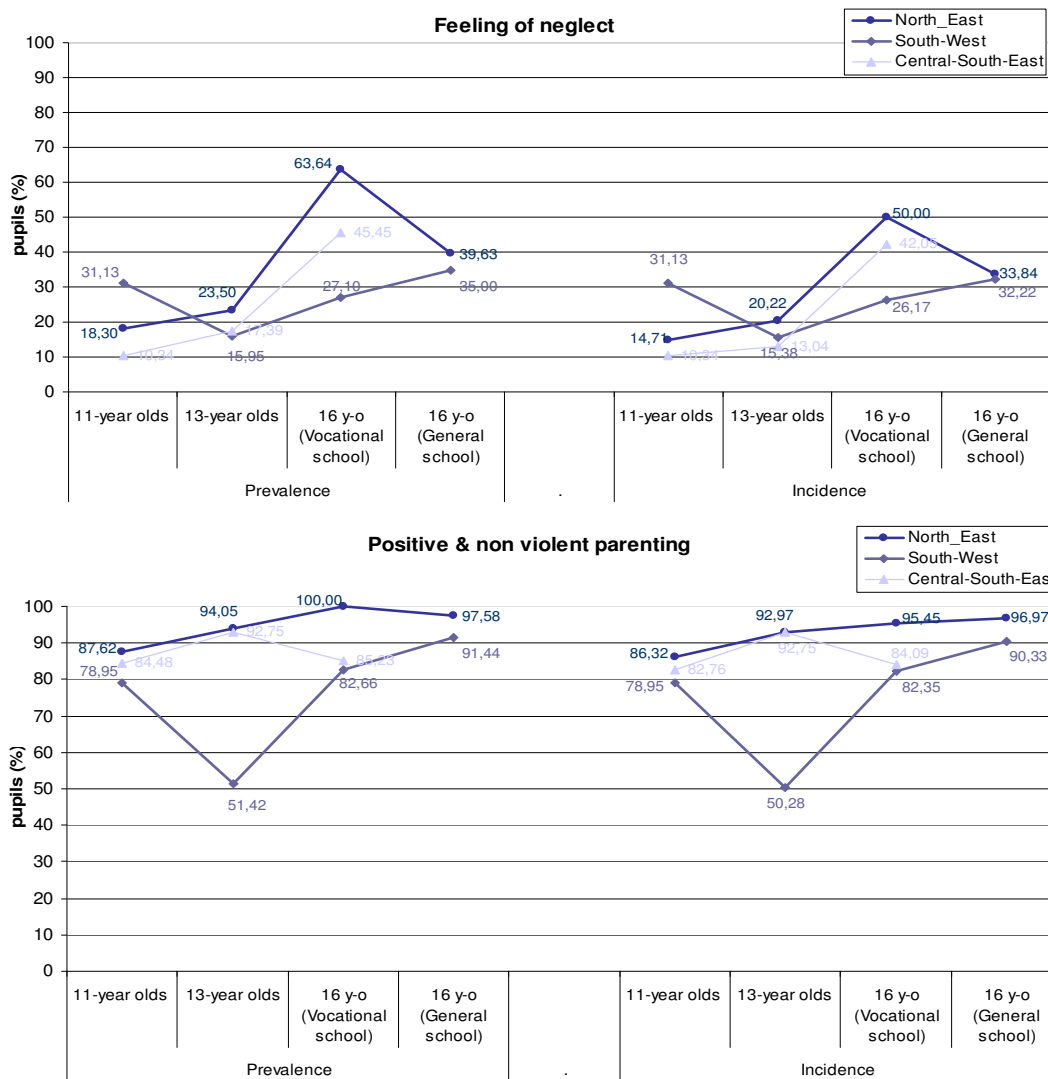


**Figure D.11.** Prevalence and incidence rates of pupils' exposure to violent behaviors by child's gender and geographical area. (Only the scales for which the analyses revealed a significant interaction of gender x geographical area are presented here).

Significant interaction of **grade group x geographical area** have been observed in prevalence and incidence rates of psychological violence showing that 16 years old children in vocational schools in North-East region were significantly more exposed to psychological violence compared to other two regions (Pr. 90,91% and In. 77,27%) (Figure D.12.).



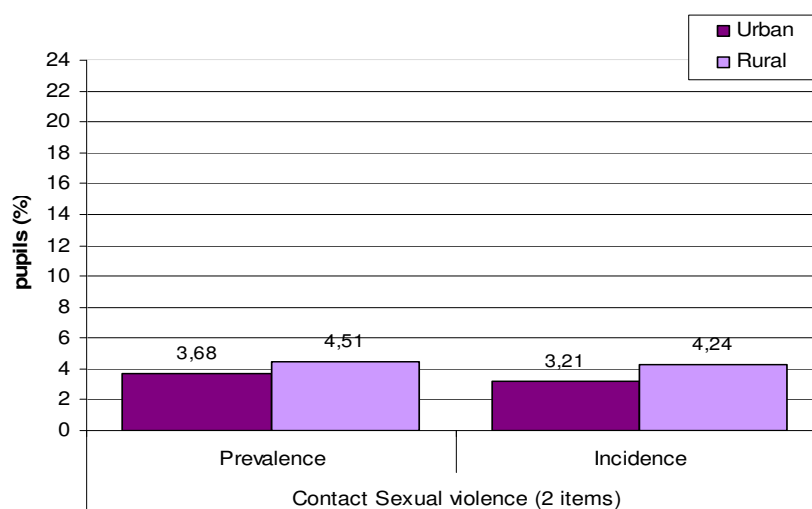
**Figure D.12.** Prevalence and incidence rates of pupils' exposure to violent behaviors by grade group and geographical area. (Only the scales for which the analyses revealed a significant interaction of grade group x geographical area are presented here).



**Figure D.12.** Prevalence and incidence rates of pupils' exposure to violent behaviors by grade group and geographical area. (Only the scales for which the analyses revealed a significant interaction of grade group x geographical area are presented here).

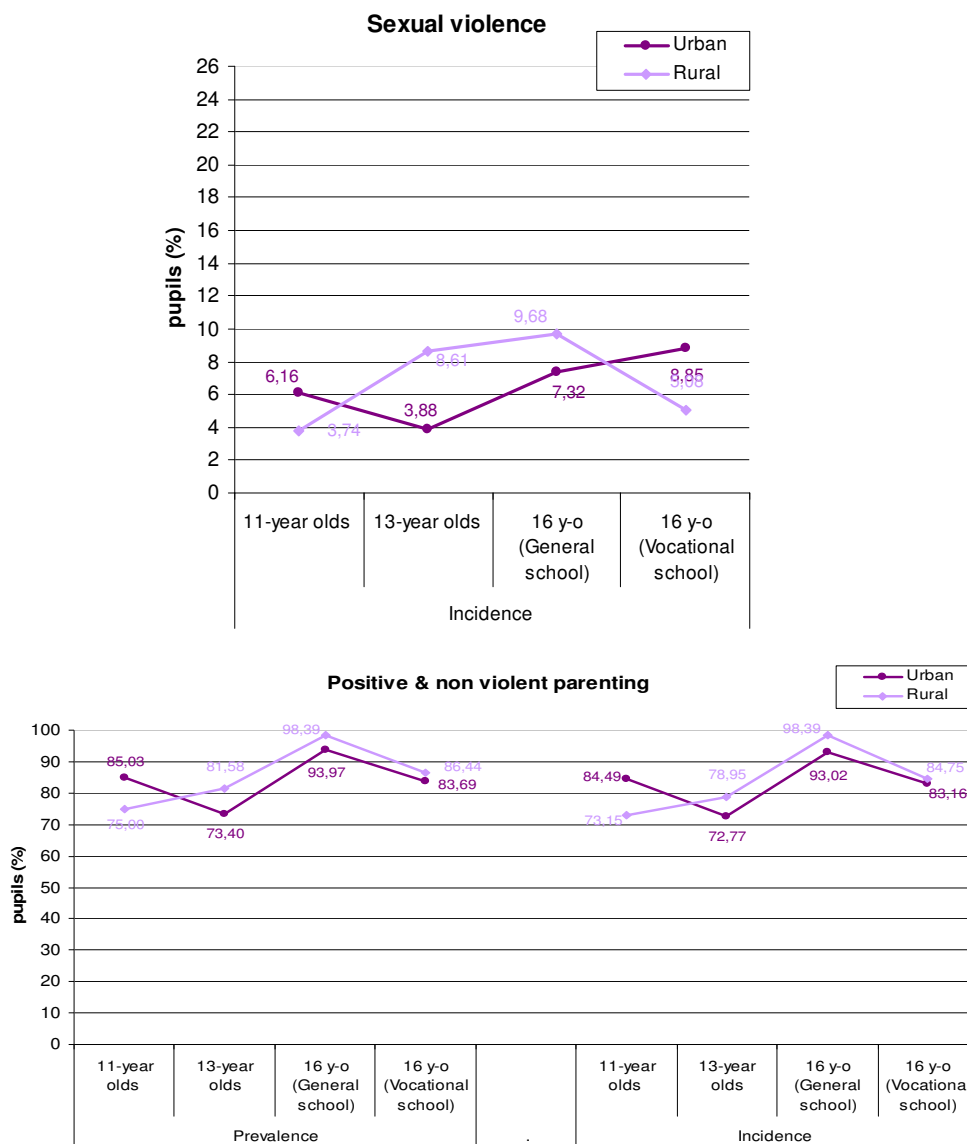
Significant interaction of **grade group x geographical area** has been observed also in prevalence and incidence rates of sexual violence showing that 16 years old children in vocational schools in North-East region were significantly more exposed to it and in prevalence rate of contact sexual violence, showing that 16 years old children in general schools in North-East region were significantly more exposed to sexual violence compared to other two regions. Findings suggest that in all regions 16 years old showed significantly higher rates of feelings of neglect. Regarding the prevalence and incidence rates of feelings of neglect, 16 years old from vocational schools in North-East region were significantly more exposed to it (Pr. 63,64 and In. 50%), and positive and non-violent parenting being significantly less experienced by 13 years old in South-West region (Pr. 51,42% and In. 50,28%) (See Figure D.12.).

Significant main effects of **urbanicity** has been observed in prevalence and incidence rates of contact sexual violence showing that children in rural areas were significantly more exposed to this type of violent behavior (Pr. 4,54% and In. 4,24%) (See Figure D.13.).



**Figure D.13.** Prevalence and incidence rates of pupils' exposure to violent behaviors by urbanicity. (Only the scales for which the analyses revealed a significant main effect of urbanicity and no significant interactions with urbanicity are presented here).

Significant interaction of **grade group x urbanicity** has been observed in prevalence and incidence rates of psychological violence showing that in rural areas children were exposed to higher rates of psychological abuse in earlier period of their life (13 years old). But, 16 years old children from general (75,24%) and vocational schools (70,32%) in urban areas were much more exposed to this kind of violent behavior. The incidence of sexual violence is significantly more experienced by 16 years old children (9,68%) in general schools in rural areas compared to other regions. In urban areas there is a significantly higher incidence rate of sexual abuse of younger children (11 years old). We have found than 6.16% were sexually abused during the last 12 months in urban areas versus 3.74% in rural areas, and finally prevalence and incidence rates of positive and non-violent parenting has been significantly more experienced by 16 years old (Pr. 98,39% and In. 98,39%) from general schools in rural areas (Figure D.14.).



**Figure D.14.** Prevalence and incidence rates of pupils' exposure to violent behaviors by grade group and urbanicity. (Only the scales for which the analyses revealed a significant interaction of grade group x urbanicity are presented here).

**Table D.5.** Results of 12 Univariate GLM regression analyses conducted on the prevalence and the incidence of the 3 scales of violent behaviour, of the feeling of neglect scale and of the positive parenting scale; the results of the analyses on the subscale of contact sexual violence are also illustrated

		Psychological violence	Physical violence	Sexual violence	Contact Sexual violence	Feeling of Neglect	Positive & non violent parenting
gender	PR.			14.739****	5.605*	19.641****	
	IN.		6.781**	12.578****	14.392****	21.628****	4.555*
grade group	PR.	36.008****	7.804****	5.537****	9.046****	32.990****	48.694****
	IN.	8.210****		3.250*	6.991****	23.021****	40.264****
geographical area	PR.	12.319****	13.804****			8.271****	65.973****
	IN.	4.994**					48.942****
urbanicity	PR.						8.643***
	IN.		5.517*				8.478***



gender x grade group	PR.		3.291*	4.345***	10.371****	4.157**	4.739***
	IN.			4.426***	9.321****	4.558***	5.812****
gender x geographical area	PR.				3.650*	4.895**	
	IN.					4.650**	
gender x urbanicity	PR.						
	IN.						
grade group x geographical area	PR.	6.368****		3.849***	3.565***	8.370****	10.117****
	IN.	5.615****		3.260**	2.860*	6.826****	9.878****
grade group x urbanicity	PR.						3.342*
	IN.		4.111**				3.818**

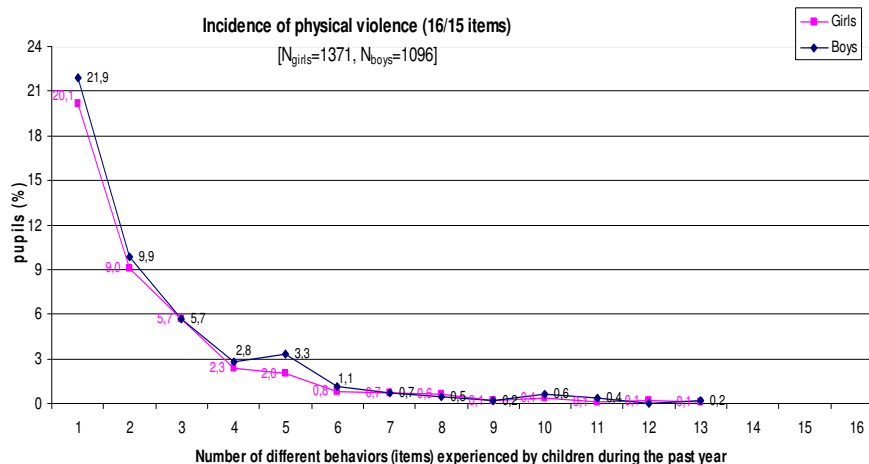
\* p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.005, \*\*\*\*p<.001

PR: Prevalence, IN: Incidence

**Note:** In the cells of the table are depicted the F-values only for the main effects and the 2-way interactions that reached significance.

Significant main effects of **Gender** have been observed on incidence of physical violence (for p<.01) and positive non-violent behavior (for p<.05), on prevalence and incidence of sexual and contact sexual violence and feelings of neglect ( for p<.001) (See Table D.5.).

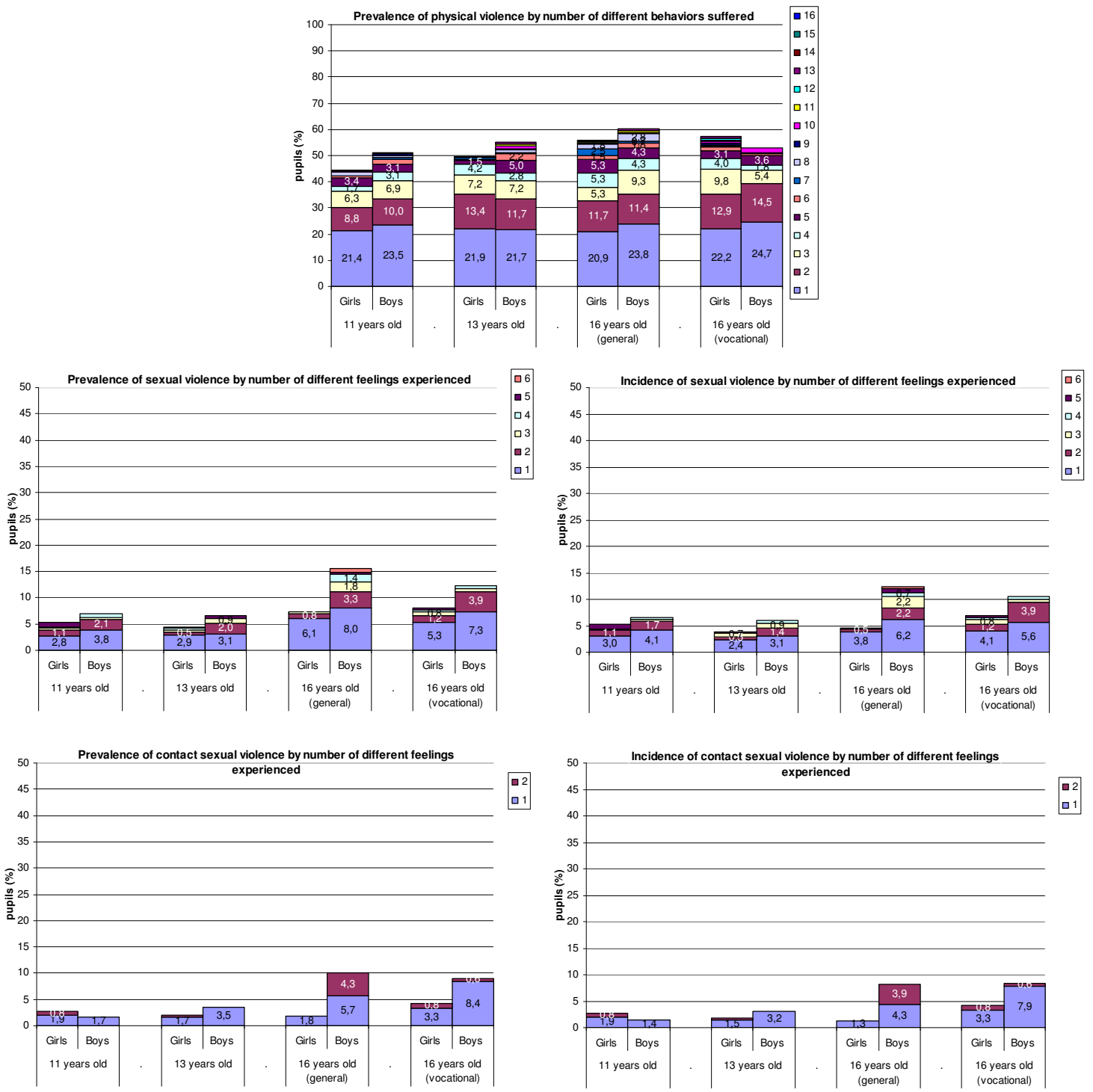
Exposure of children to multiple forms of violence and neglect during the last 12 months shows that the boys were slightly more exposed to multiple forms of physical abuse than girls – one type of physical violence was experienced by 21,9% of boys and by 20,1% of girls, two types by 9,9% of boys and 9% of girls, three types of violence by equal percentage of boys and girls 5,7%, and 4 and more types of physical violence was experienced by 7% of boys and 6,5% of girls (See Figure D.15.).



**Figure D.15.** Prevalence and incidence rates of pupils' exposure to violent behaviors by number of different behaviors (items) they have been exposed to and by child's gender. (Only the scales for which the analyses revealed a significant main effect of gender and no significant interactions with gender are presented here).

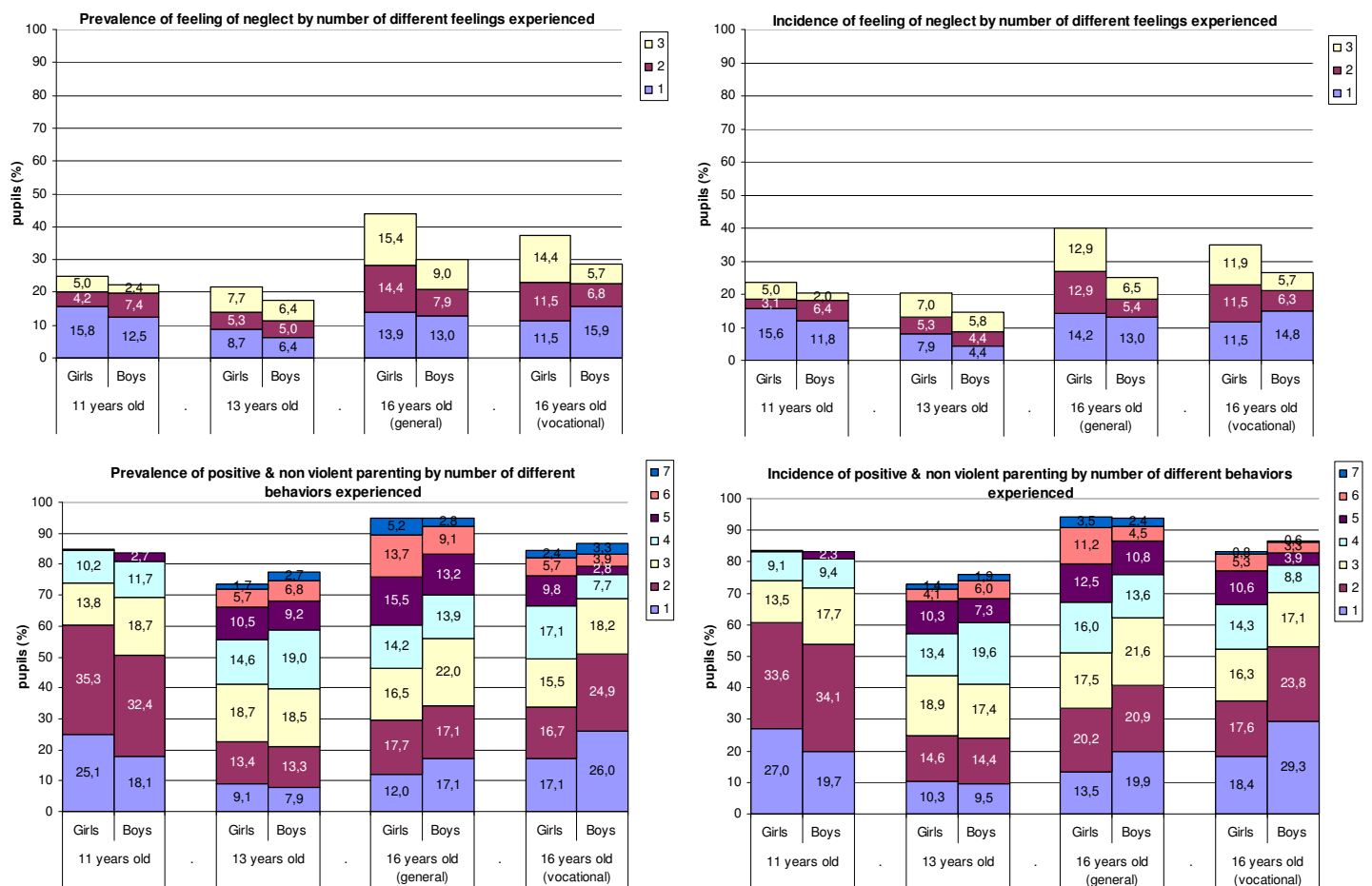
Significant Interactions of **Gender x grade group** on prevalence of physical violence by number of different behaviors suffered by children has shown significantly greater exposure of boys to different violent behaviors in all grade groups (11, 13 and 16 general) except for 16 years old boys in vocational schools. But also significant Interactions of **gender x grade**

**group** on prevalence and incidence of sexual and contact violence by number of different feelings experienced has shown that boys were significantly more exposed to such experiences across all grade groups (See Figure D.16.).



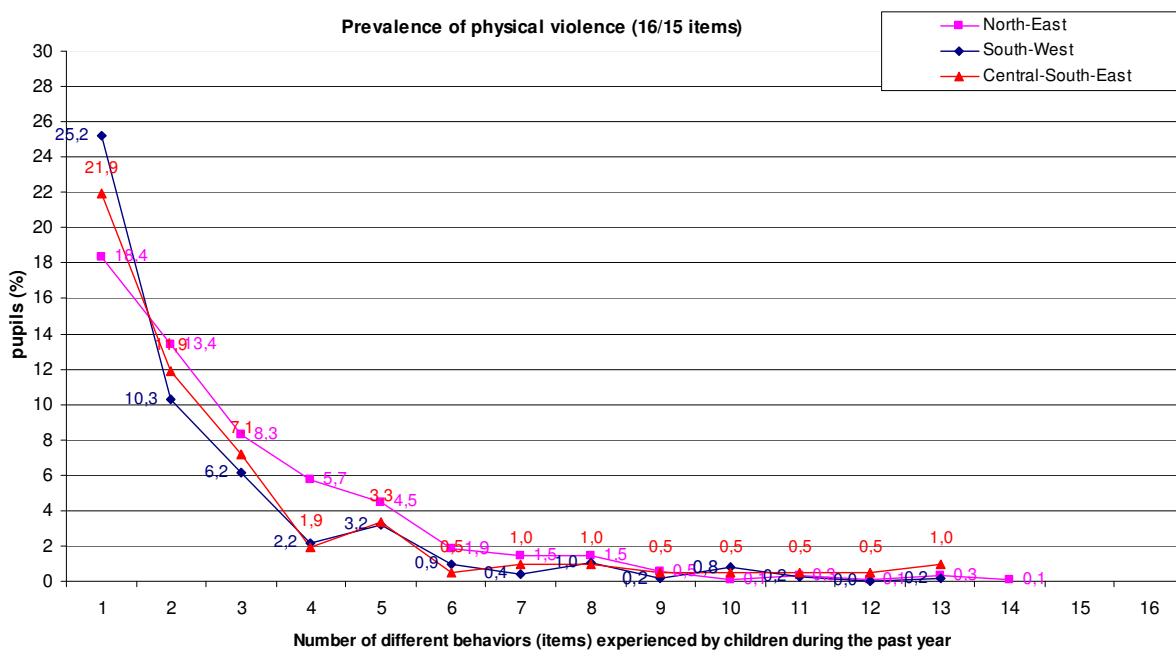
**Figure D.16.** Prevalence and incidence rates of pupils' exposure to violent behaviors by number of different behaviors (items) they have been exposed to and by gender and grade group. (Only the scales for which the analyses revealed a significant interaction of gender x grade group are presented here).  
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On the other hand, significant Interactions of **gender x grade group** on prevalence and incidence of feelings of neglect by number of different feelings experienced have shown significantly greater exposure of girls to different feelings of neglect experienced across all grade groups. Also prevalence and incidence of positive non-violent parenting by number of different behaviors experienced, reflects this interaction showing that 13 years old and 16 years old in vocational schools have significantly more experiences of positive parenting than their peers from other age groups (Figure D.17.). When expanded by gender, girls in grade group of 16 years old (both general and vocational) have experienced more positive parenting than boys from the same grade group. The previous conclusion refers to prevalence and incidence of positive parenting.



**Figure D.17.** Prevalence and incidence rates of pupils' exposure to violent behaviors by number of different behaviors (items) they have been exposed to and by gender and grade group. (Only the scales for which the analyses revealed a significant interaction of gender x grade group are presented here).  
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Significant main effects of **Geographical area** to prevalence of physical violence has been observed in pupils' exposure to violent behaviors by number of different behaviors (items) they have been exposed to. Although the highest rate of exposure to one violent physical behavior has been observed in children in the South-West region (25,2%), and the lowest in North-East region (18,4%), when it comes to multiple forms of exposure to physical violence (2, 3, 4, 5, and more violent behaviors), children from North-East region are significantly more exposed to a number of such behaviors (Figure D.18.).



**Figure D.18.** Prevalence and incidence rates of pupils' exposure to violent behaviors by number of different behaviors (items) they have been exposed to and by geographical area. (Only the scales for which the analyses revealed a significant main effect of geographical area and no significant interactions with geographical area are presented here).

Significant Interactions of **grade group x geographical area** on prevalence & incidence of pupils' exposure to psychological violence by number of different behaviors experienced have shown that 16 years old children from vocational schools in North-East region have been significantly more exposed to such behaviors than others. Moreover, 13 and 16 years old from general schools, also in the North-East region, have more such experiences than their peers in other geographical regions. Prevalence and incidence of pupils' exposure to sexual violence by number of different behaviors experienced have shown that 16 years old children from vocational schools in North-East region have been significantly more exposed to such behaviors than others. Children from South-West region belonging to the 11 year old grade group had more experiences of sexual violence than their peers from North-East region who belong to same age group, both for prevalence and incidence of sexual violence. 13 years old who live in South-West region have been significantly more exposed to sexual violence (prevalence and incidence), then those from North-East and Central-South-East region. When it comes to pupils' exposure to feelings of neglect by number of different

behaviors experienced also 16 years old from vocational schools in the North-East region have been significantly more exposed to feelings of neglect.

But the exposure of pupils to positive non-violent parenting during lifetime or during the last 12 months surprisingly is significantly more experienced also by 16 years old pupils from vocational schools and their peers from general schools in the same, North-East region (See Figure D.19).

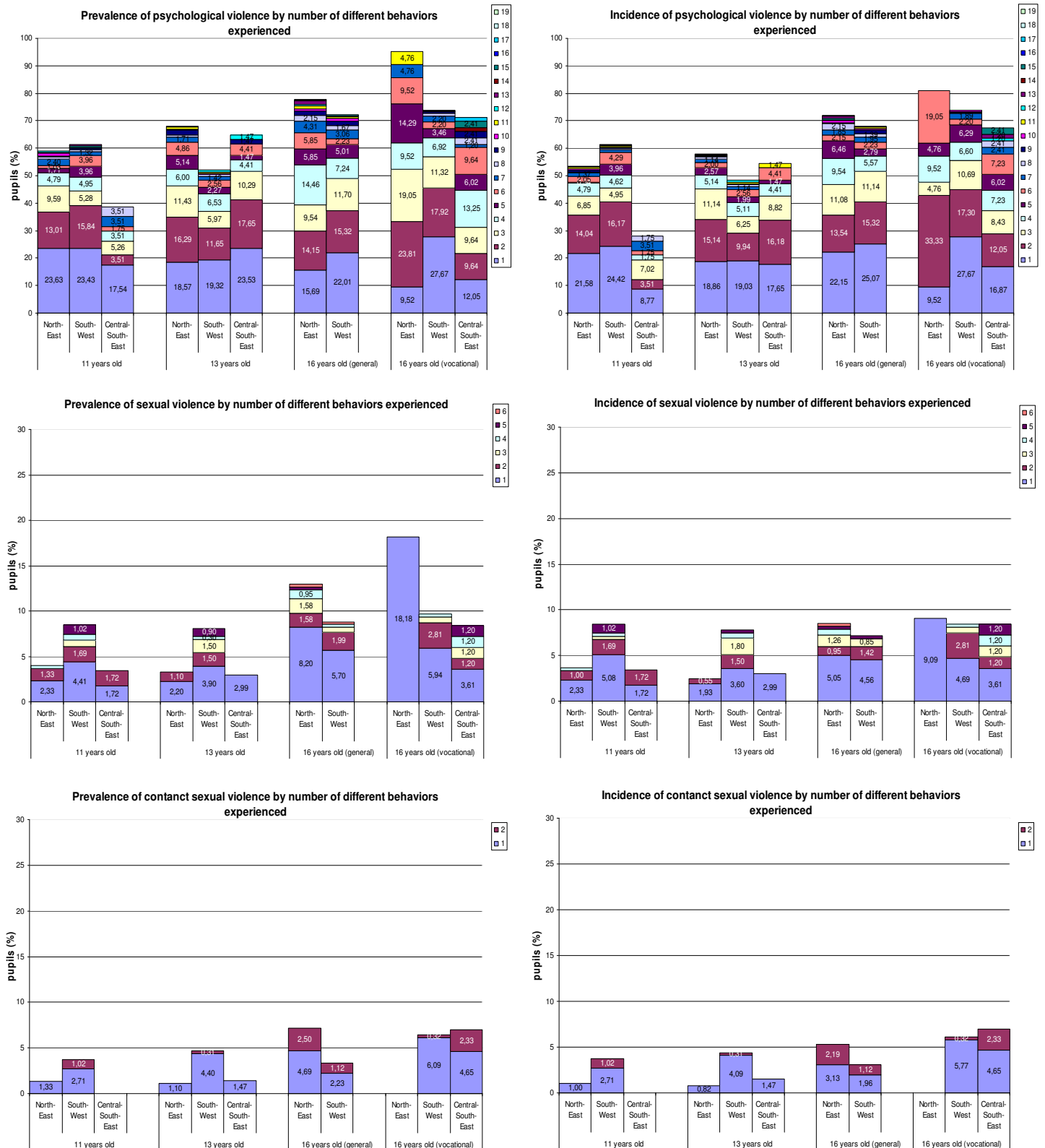
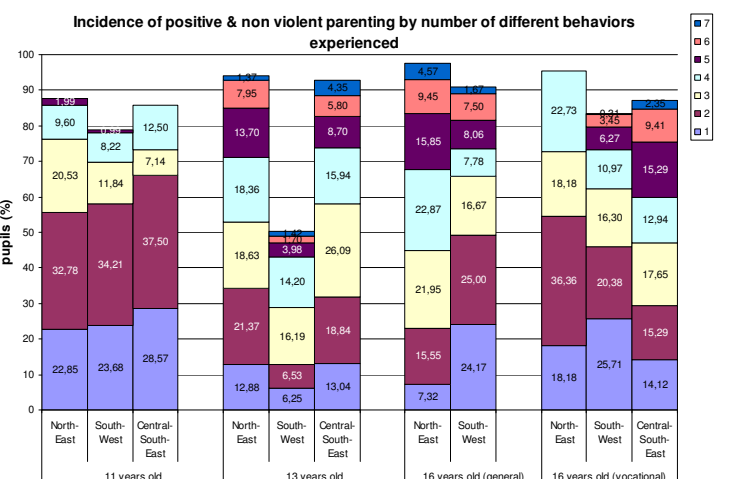
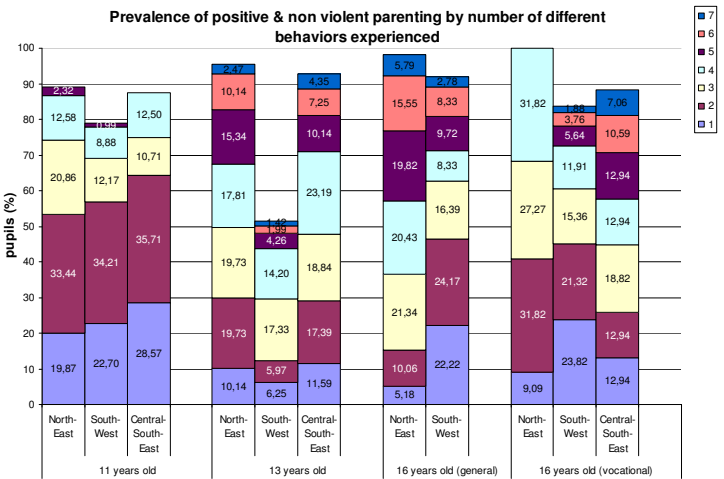
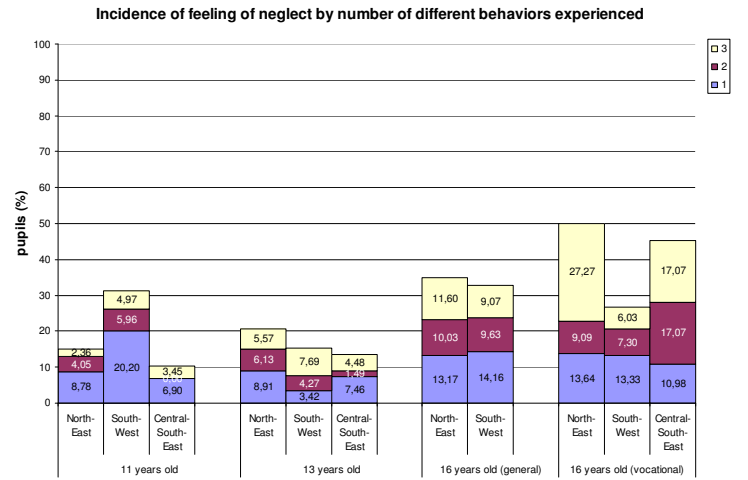
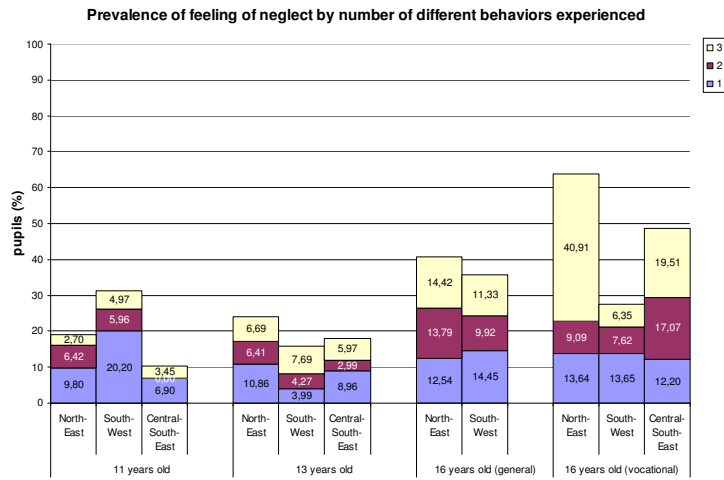


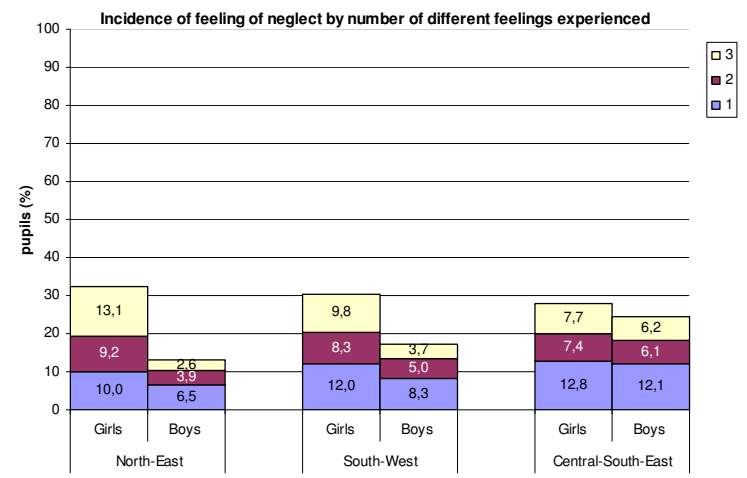
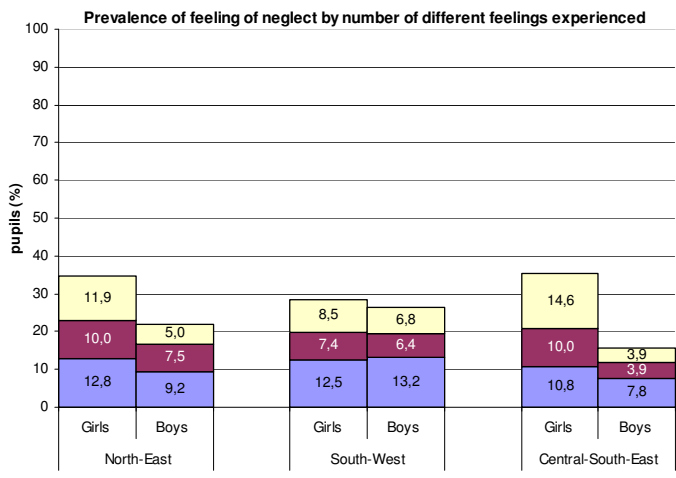
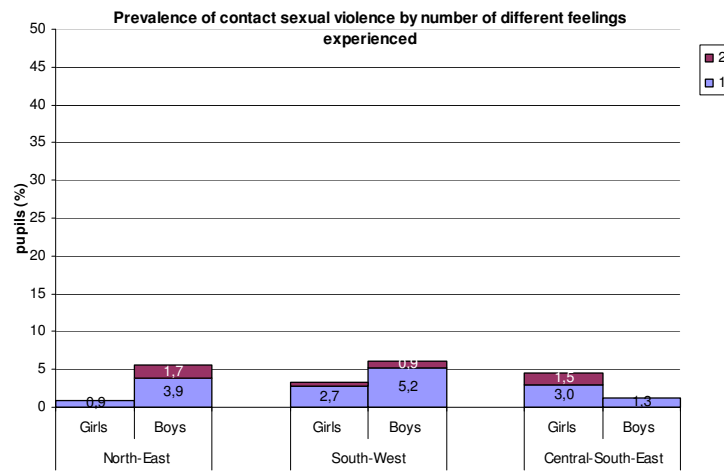
Figure D.19.



**Figure D.19.** Prevalence and incidence rates of pupils' exposure to violent behaviors by number of different behaviors (items) they have been exposed to and by grade group and geographical area. (Only the scales for which the analyses revealed a significant interaction of grade group x geographical area are presented here).

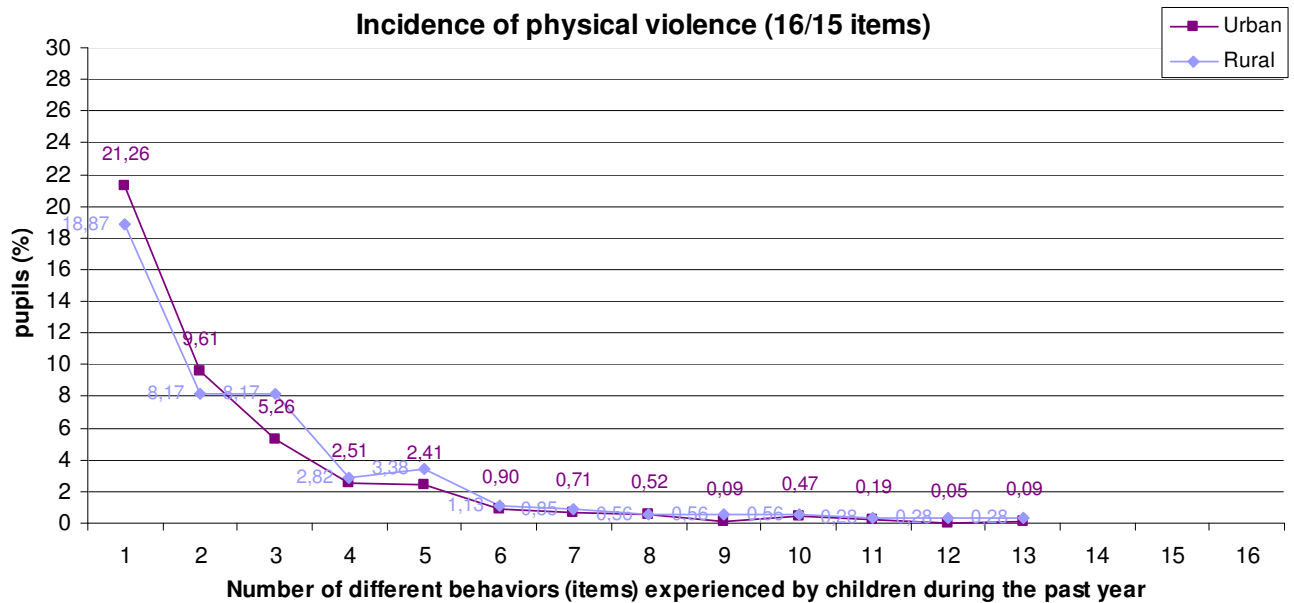
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Significant Interactions of **Gender x geographical area** on prevalence & incidence of feelings of neglect by number of different feelings experienced by pupils have shown that girls from South-East region have been significantly more exposed to feelings of neglect during lifetime than their peers, but girls from North-East region have been significantly more exposed to feelings of neglect during last 12 months. Also, the interaction of gender and geographical region is significant for prevalence of contact sexual violence by number of different feelings significantly more experienced by boys in South-West region than their peers (Figure D.20).



**Figure D.20.** Prevalence and incidence rates of pupils' exposure to violent behaviors by number of different behaviors (items) they have been exposed to and by gender and geographical area. (Only the scales for which the analyses revealed a significant interaction of grade group x geographical area are presented here).

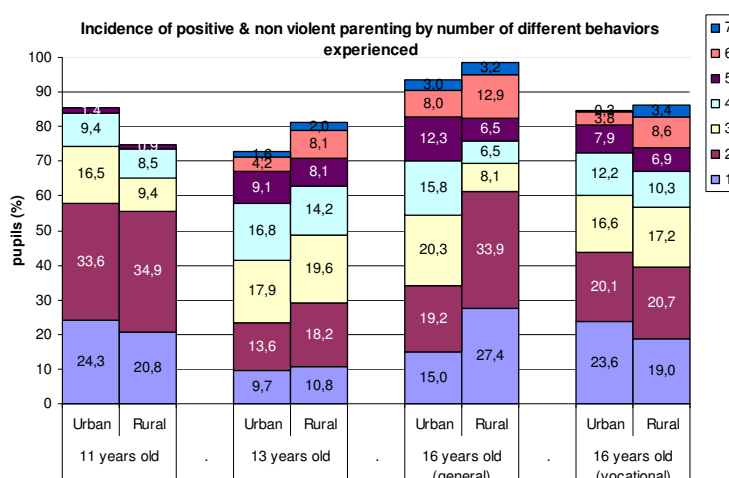
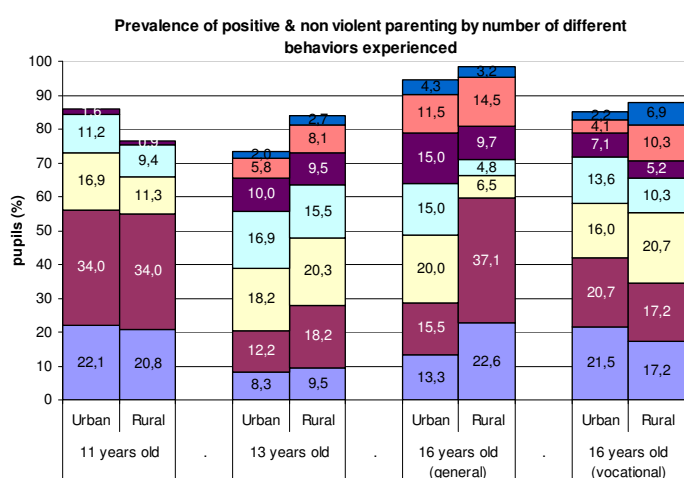
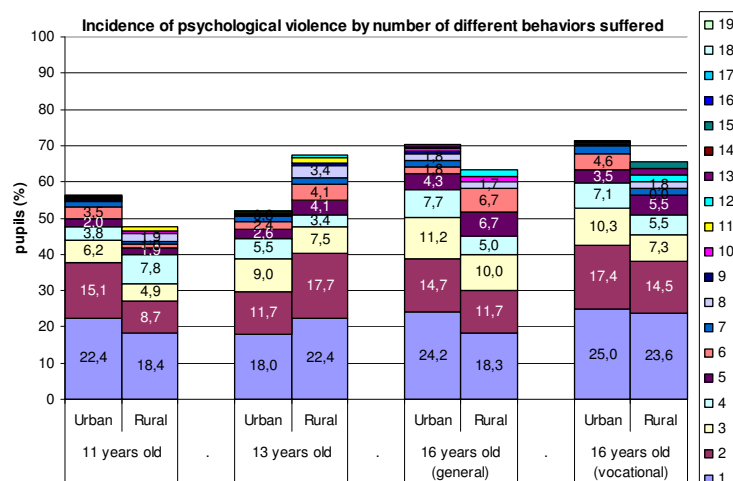
Significant main effects of **Urbanicity** (without any significant interaction) on incidence of physical violence has been observed in pupils' exposure to violent behaviors by number of different behaviors (items) they have been exposed to. Although the higher rate of exposure to one violent physical behavior has been observed in children in the urban areas (21,26%) versus rural (18,87%), when it comes to multiple forms of exposure to physical violence (3, 4, 5, and more such behaviors), children from rural areas are significantly more exposed to a number of such behaviors (Figure D.21. ).



**Figure D.21.** Prevalence and incidence rates of pupils' exposure to violent behaviors by number of different behaviors (items) they have been exposed to and by urbanicity. (Only the scales for which the analyses revealed a significant main effect of urbanicity and no significant interactions with urbanicity are presented here).



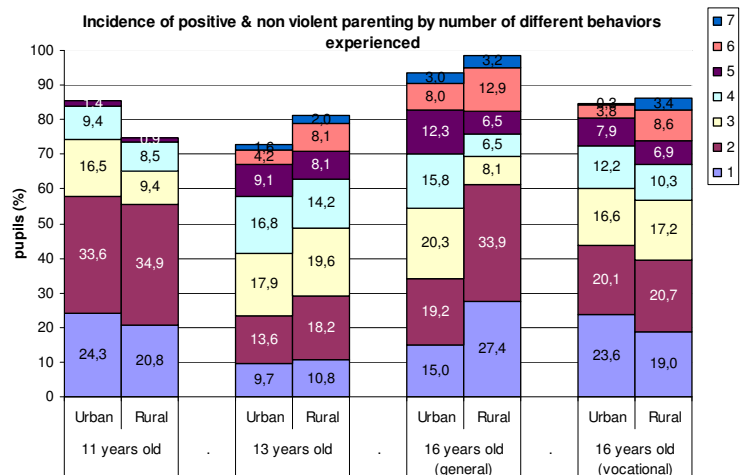
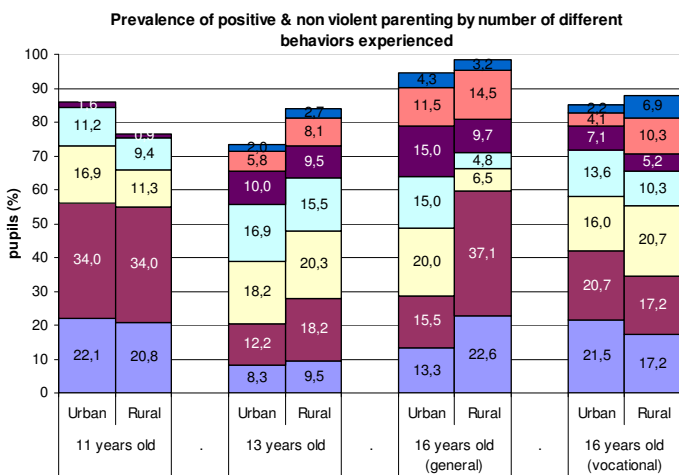
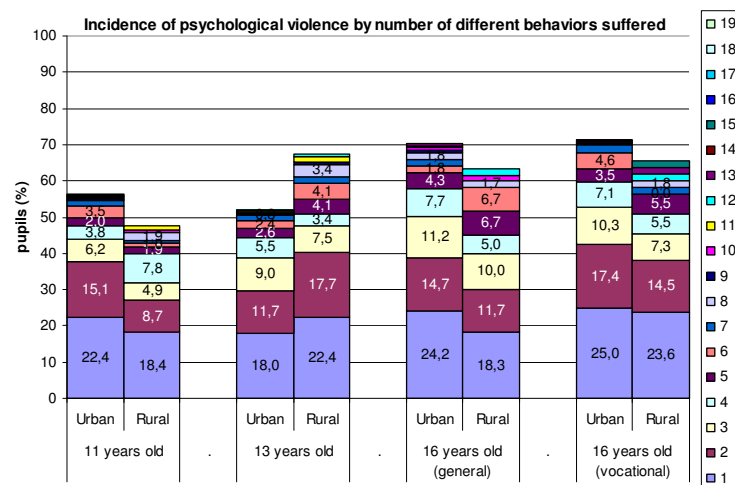
Significant Interactions of **grade group x urbanicity** on incidence of psychological violence by number of violent behaviors pupils have been exposed to, has shown that 16 years old in vocational schools in urban areas. 13 years old children from rural areas, have been more exposed to psychological violence (prevalence and incidence) then their peers from urban areas in the same age group. But when it comes to positive non-violent parenting practices 16 years old from general schools from rural areas have had significantly more experiences of positive parental practices, which is consistent with previous findings (Figure D.22.).



**Figure D.22.** Prevalence and incidence rates of pupils' exposure to violent behaviors by number of different behaviors (items) they have been exposed to and by grade group and urbanicity. (Only the scales for which the analyses revealed a significant interaction of grade group x urbanicity are presented here).

Significant Interactions of **grade group x urbanicity** on incidence rates of pupils' exposure to psychological violence by number of different behaviors have demonstrated that 16 years old from general and vocational schools in the urban areas have been exposed at a significantly higher rate to different psychologically violent behaviors than other pupils, as presented in the Figure D.23 . But, on the other hand these interactions on prevalence and incidence rates of

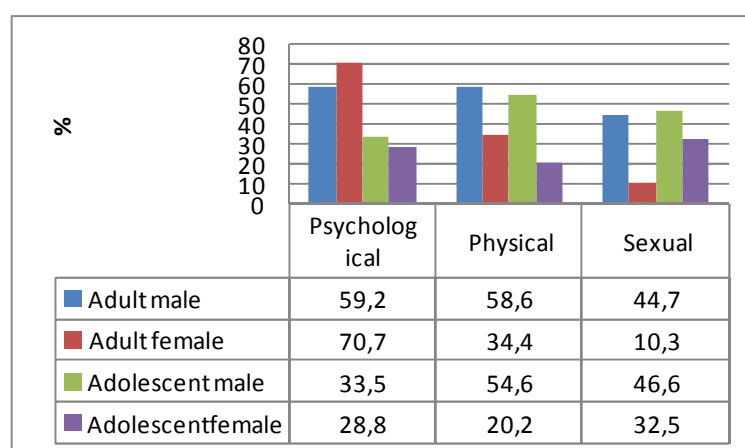
positive parental practices experienced by pupils have shown that 16 years old in general schools from rural origin have been brought up with significantly more positive behaviors than their peers. Within other grade groups this same pattern is observed, demonstrating that the same grade group children coming from rural areas have more such experiences, except for 11 years old where the pattern is reversed, both for prevalence and incidence (Figure D.23.). Children, age 11 years from urban areas have experienced more positive parenting than those in grade group of 13 years, but less than those from grade group 16 years vocational schools. In rural areas adolescents (16 years old) reported more positive parenting than younger children (11 years and 13 years).



**Figure D.23.** Prevalence and incidence rates of pupils' exposure to violent behaviors by number of different behaviors (items) they have been exposed to and by grade group and urbanicity. (Only the scales for which the analyses revealed a significant interaction of grade group x urbanicity are presented here).

## Perpetrators

In this chapter we have focused on perpetrators of violent behavior that have caused children's suffering across lifetime or during the last 12 months, who might be adults (parents/caregivers) or peers/siblings. The perpetrators have been assessed for each type of violence separately, by percentage of pupils who have experienced different violent behaviors by number of different behaviors they have been exposed to, and by type of perpetrator.



**Figure D.24. Percentage of pupils who have experienced different violent behaviors by type of perpetrator**

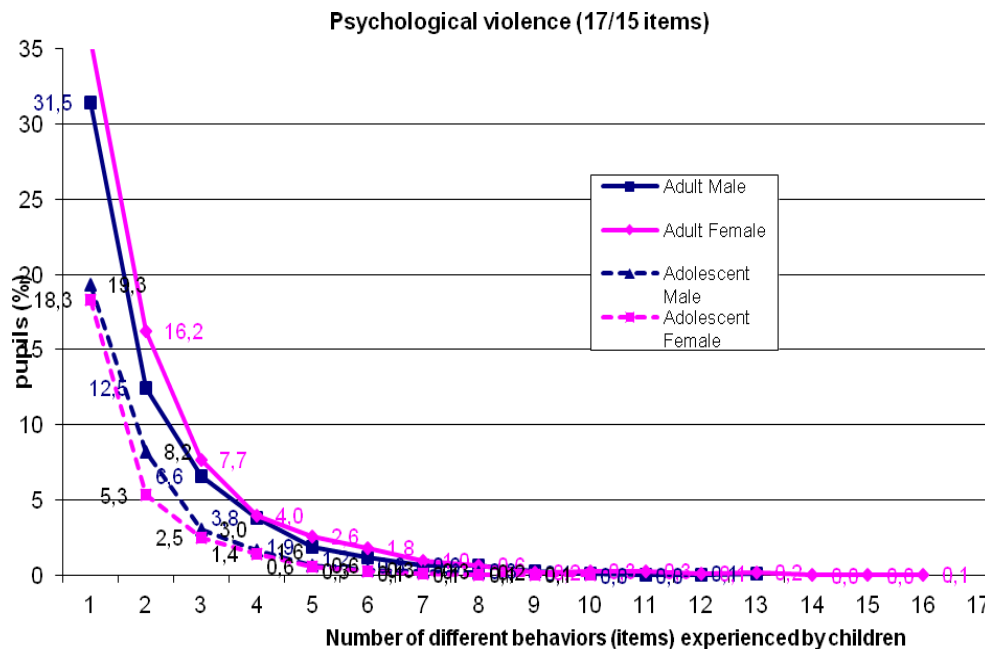
In regard to psychological violence, adult female perpetrators were mostly reported by more than 70% of children that have experienced such violent behaviors. Adult male perpetrators have been reported by 59,2% of children experiencing these behaviors. Adolescent male perpetrators have been reported by 33,5% of children reporting psychological violence and adolescent female perpetrator by 28,8% (Figure D.24.)

In cases of physical violence adult male perpetrator has been mostly reported by 58,6% of children being exposed to different forms of physically violent behaviors, adolescent male by 54,6% of children, adult female by 34,4% of children being exposed to such behaviors and adolescent female perpetrator was reported by 20,2% (Figure D.24.)

In cases of sexual violence adolescent male perpetrators were reported by 46,6% of children exposed to sexual violent behaviors, adult male perpetrators were reported by 44,7%, adolescent female by 32,5% and adult female by 10,3%. In sum, majority of pupils who have experienced psychologically violent behaviors reported adult female as a perpetrator. In most of the cases of exposure to physical violence adult male was reported as a perpetrator, and in most of the cases of sexual violence adolescent male was reported as a perpetrator.

In regard to psychological violence, adult female perpetrator was reported by more than 35% of children that have experienced one such violent behavior, by 16,2% of children that have experienced two violent behaviors, 7,7% experiencing three such behaviors, 4% experiencing four violent behaviors etc. Adult male perpetrator has been reported by 31,5% of children experiencing one violent behavior, by 12,5% of children experiencing two violent behaviors

and by 6,6% experiencing three violent behaviors, 3,8% experiencing four such behaviors etc. (Figure D.25.). Majority of pupils who have experienced different violent behaviors, by number of different behaviors they have been exposed to, (1-16), reported adult female as a perpetrator.



**Figure D.25. Percentage of pupils who have experienced different violent behaviors by number of different behaviors (items) they have been exposed to and by type of perpetrator**

In cases of physical violence adult male perpetrator and adolescent male perpetrator have been reported by almost the same percentage of children (34% of children being exposed to one physically violent behavior, 11,4% being exposed to two such behaviors, 5,5% exposed to three physically violent behaviors versus adolescent male perpetrator who has been reported by slightly smaller percentage of children in each range of violent experiences). Physical violence perpetrated by adult female or adolescent female significantly differs from previously described constellation (20,7% of children being exposed to one violent behavior, 6,5% to two violent behaviors and 4,7% exposed to three violent behaviors) (see Figure D. 26).

Considering sexual violence adolescent male perpetrator and adult male perpetrator have been reported by majority of the children. More than 29% of all children being exposed to one sexually violent behavior, 9,2% being exposed to two such behaviors, almost 5% exposed to three sexually violent behaviors were reported being perpetrated by adolescent male perpetrator. Adult male perpetrator has been reported by 26,4% of children who have experienced one sexually violent behavior, 10,4% who have experienced two such behaviors and 6,1% three such behaviors. Adolescent female perpetrator was also reported by 23,8% of children who have experienced one violent sexual behavior and by 3,1% who have experienced two such behaviors (See Figure D.27).

Physical violence (16/15 items)

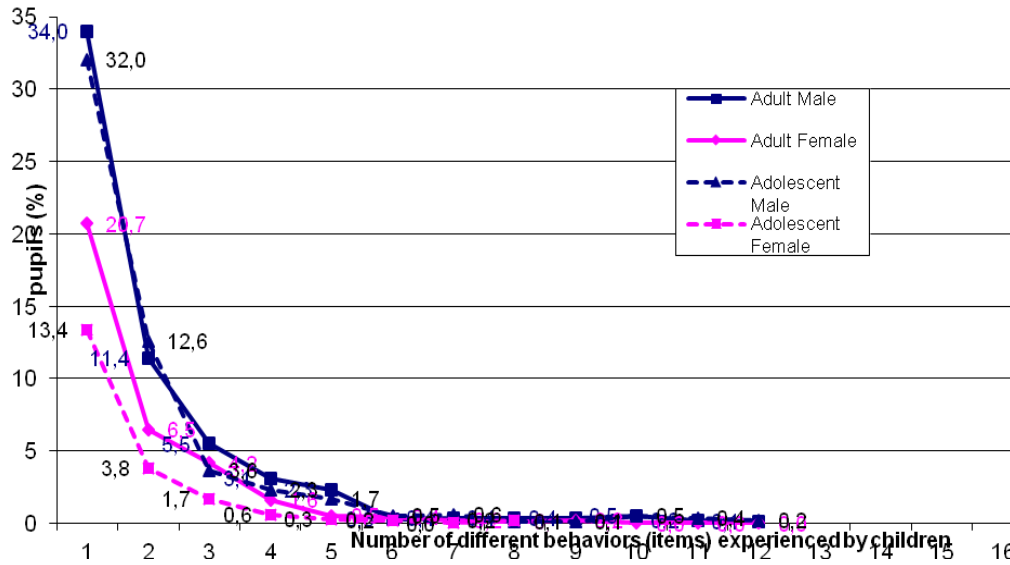


Figure D.26. Percentage of pupils who have experienced different violent behaviors by number of different behaviors (items) they have been exposed to and by type of perpetrator

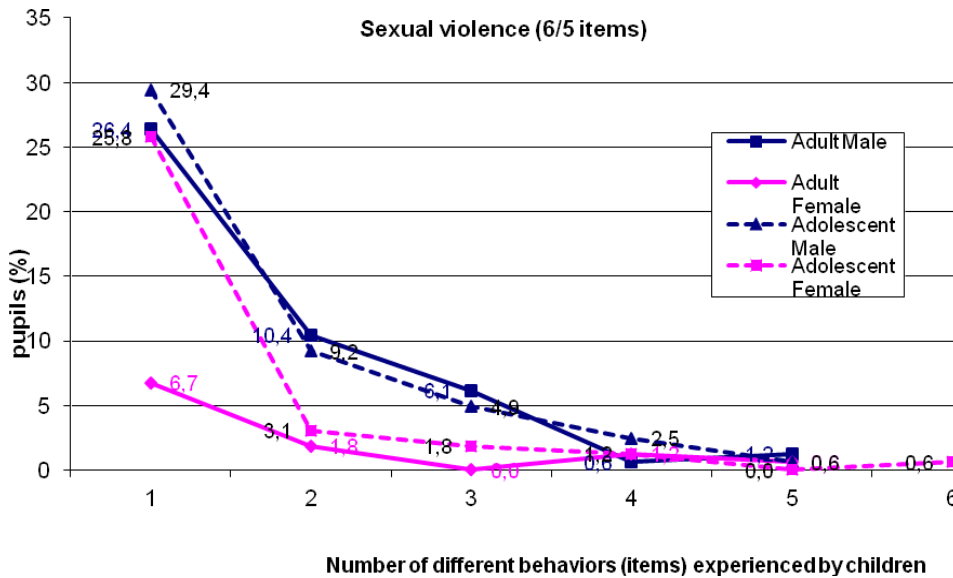
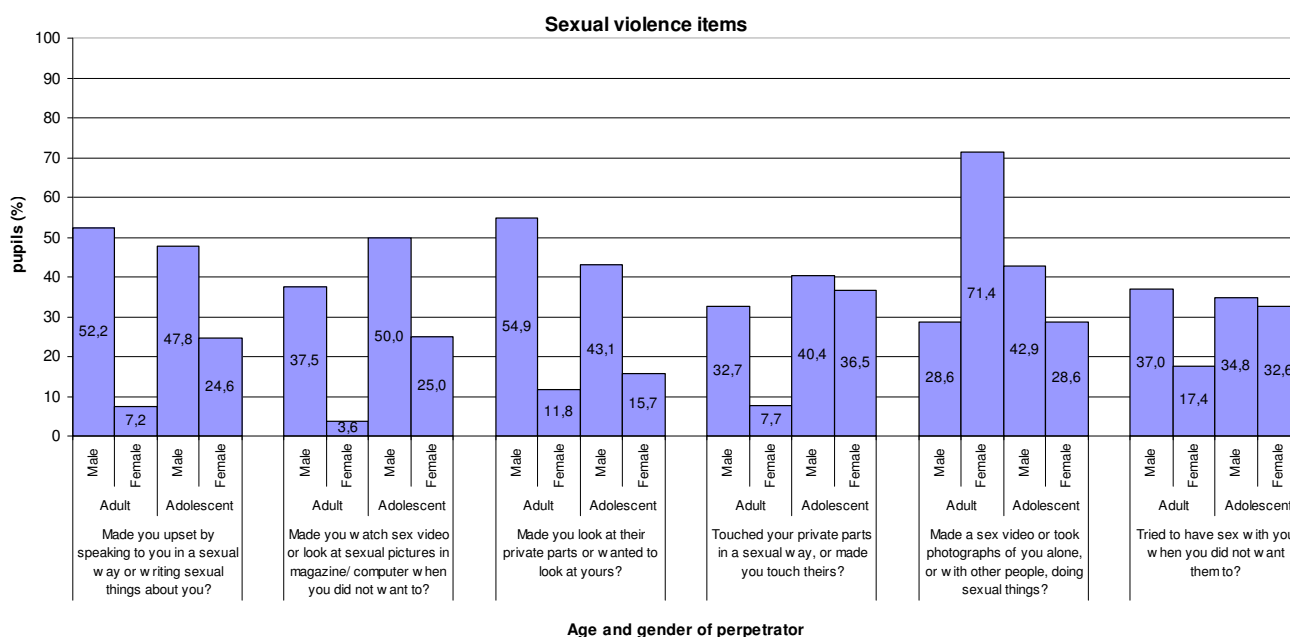


Figure D.27. Percentage of pupils who have experienced different violent behaviors by number of different behaviors (items) they have been exposed to and by type of perpetrator (adult male or female and adolescent male or female)

Adult male perpetrators of sexual violence were more prone to speaking in a sexual way or writing sexual things (52,2%), in exposing their private parts to children's gaze (54,9%), in trying to make sexual contact (34%). Adolescent male perpetrators were mostly engaged in making someone watch sex video or sexual pictures (50%), in touching private parts in a sexual way or make someone touch them (40,4%). Surprisingly, adult female perpetrators

were mostly engaged in making a sex video or in taking photographs of the child (Figure D 28.).

Adult male perpetrators and adolescent male perpetrators are mostly involved in perpetrating contact sexual violence (touching private parts – 40,4% adolescent male perpetrators and 32,7% male perpetrators and in trying to have sex with a child – 37% adult male perpetrators and 34,8% adolescent male perpetrators). But nevertheless adolescent female perpetrators are also pointed of perpetrating sexual violence considering contact sexual violence (Figure D 28).

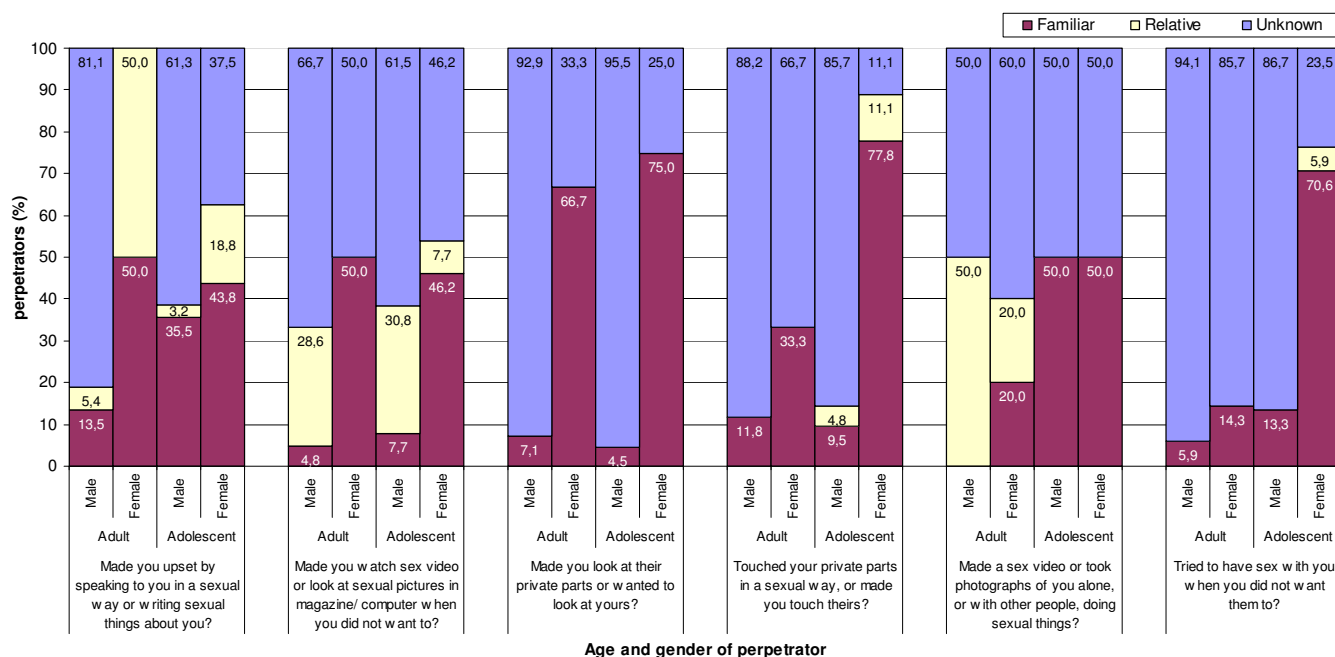


**Figure D.28.** Percentage of pupils who have experienced 6 different behaviors of sexual violence by type of perpetrator (adult male or female and adolescent male or female).

### Note

The percentages are calculated on the total number of children who had each experience; their sum exceeds 100%, in case some children have experienced the same behavior from different types of perpetrators.

Most of the reported perpetrators of sexual violence are unknown to children, than come familiar people and relatives. Distribution of perpetrators as reported by children who have experienced each of 6 different behaviors of sexual violence, by type of perpetrator (adult male or female and adolescent male or female) and his/her relationship to the child are shown in the Figure D.29.). Female perpetrators of sexual violence in majority of cases are familiar to the child-victim, which refers mostly to adolescent female, but also to some extent to adult female perpetrators, who are familiar with the child in more than 50%, except for contact sexual violence, in the case of which they were unknown to the child. Male perpetrators in majority of cases are unknown to the child victim, especially for contact sexual abuse.



**Figure D.29.** Distribution of perpetrators as reported by children experienced each of 6 different behaviors of sexual violence, by type of perpetrator (adult male or female and adolescent male or female) and his/her relationship to the child (unknown person, familiar person, a relative).

**Note**

The percentages are calculated on the total number of perpetrators that had been reported by children who had each experience.

**Paired analysis**

The aim of this study was also to analyze the data from pairs of parents and children who gave consent to participate in the study.

There were 1662 pairs of parent and children in the paired sample, and the distribution of children by gender was that 58% were girls and 42% boys. The distribution by grade group was like this: 25,63% were 11 years old, 28,82% belong to the 13 years old group, 24,91, were 16 years old coming from general schools and 20,64% were 16 years old, coming from vocational school. Most of the children were the first and oldest children to their parents (37,41%), the youngest child (25,74%) and the only child (23,92%). Only 9,73% were the middle child. In majority of cases children lived with their parents (97% with mother, and 92% with father. 39% of children lived with their male siblings, 37% with their female siblings, 29% with grandmother and 21% with grand father. In 85% of pairs child's mother responded to the questionnaire and only in 14,1% it was the father who responded. In 74,5% of cases respondents also answered for their partner and in 16,5% they answered for themselves only. According to nationality majority of respondents were Macedonians (78%), Albanian (15,2%), Roma almost 2%, Turks (1,25%), Serbians (1,18%), Vlachs (0,93%). Most of the parents live in marriage (92,57%) 5,17% of parents are either divorced or separated, and remarried (0,90%). Two thirds are coming from urban environments and 23,19 from rural. 83% of parents/caregivers are working, almost 17% were either unemployed or not working.

Parent's educational level shows that the majority of them have secondary education (52,62% of fathers and 44,87% of mothers) university (23,37% of mothers and 21,30% of fathers), primary education (15,24% of mothers and 8,29% of fathers) and higher school (15,20% of fathers and 11,36% of mothers).

The economic situation estimated by the parents is moderate by 45,36%, good by 26,41%, bad by 12,61%, very bad by 11,29%, very good by 4,33% (Table D.6).

**Table D.6.** Demographics for matched pairs of children and their parent/caregiver participated in the ICAST-CH and ICAST-P survey in F.Y.R. of Macedonia, and information about their living conditions (**Sample's size = 1.662 pairs of child – respondent parent/caregiver**)

				Mother		Father	
				N	%	N	%
<b>child's gender</b>							
	Girls	967	58,18				
	Boys	695	41,82				
<b>child's age</b>							
	10	21	1,26				
	11	405	24,37				
	12	27	1,62				
	13	420	25,27				
	14	32	1,93				
	15	5	0,30				
	16	695	41,82				
	17	53	3,19				
	18	4	0,24				
<b>grade group (typical age of attending pupils)</b>							
	11 y-o	426	25,63				
	13 y-o	479	28,82				
	16 y-o, General school	414	24,91				
	16 y-o, Vocational school	343	20,64				
<b>child's birth position in the family</b>							
	unspecified	69	4,15				
	only child	381	23,92				
	first child (oldest)	596	37,41				
	middle child	155	9,73				
	last child (youngest)	410	25,74				
	twins	49	3,08				
	not biological child	2	0,13				
<b>persons cohabitating with the child</b>							
	mother	1614	97,11				
	father	1530	92,06				
	stepmother (father's spouse)	7	0,42				
	stepfather (mother's spouse)	14	0,84				
	mother's partner	4	0,24				
	father's partner	37	2,23				
	grandmother	484	29,12				
	grandfather	358	21,54				
	female siblings(s)	622	37,42				
	male siblings(s)	654	39,35				
	other relatives	104	6,26				
	other non relatives	8	0,48				
<b>respondent's relationship with the child</b>							
	unspecified	12	0,72				
	mother	1404	85,09				
	father	234	14,18				
	foster mother	1	0,06				
	sister	3	0,18				
	brother	6	0,36				
	grandmother	2	0,12				
<b>respondent also replied for:</b>							
	unspecified	15	0,93				
<b>Respondent's subjective</b>							
	the other parent	1122	74,50				
	her/his spouse/partner	30	1,99				
	other person, who looks after the child	95	6,31				
	other person	11	0,73				
<b>Parents' Nationality</b>							
	Unspecified	36	2,17	30	1,81		
	N/A (parent not alive)	14	0,84	26	1,56		
	Macedonian	1262	78,29	1261	78,52		
	Albanian	247	15,32	244	15,19		
	Roma	32	1,99	32	1,99		
	Turkish	20	1,24	20	1,25		
	Serbian	20	1,24	19	1,18		
	Vlach	15	0,93	15	0,93		
	Other	13	0,81	12	0,75		
	I don't want to answer	3	0,19	3	0,19		
<b>Parents' marital situation</b>							
	Unspecified	55	3,31	88	5,29		
	N/A (parent not alive)	14	0,84	26	1,56		
	married	1438	90,27	1433	92,57		
	separated	54	3,39	59	3,81		
	divorced	27	1,69	21	1,36		
	remarried	-	-	14	0,90		
	cohabitating	2	0,13	3	0,19		
	single	58	3,64	11	0,71		
	widow	14	0,88	5	0,32		
	other	-	-	2	0,13		
<b>Urbanicity of the place of residence</b>							
	Unspecified	64	3,86	98	5,91		
	N/A (parent not alive)	14	0,84	26	1,57		
	Urban	1256	79,44	1179	76,81		
	Rural	325	20,56	356	23,19		
<b>Parents' employment condition</b>							
	Unspecified	83	4,99	79	4,75		
	N/A (parent not alive)	14	0,84	26	1,56		
	not working	320	20,45	112	7,19		
	working	992	63,39	1293	83,04		
	unemployed	250	15,97	146	9,38		
	retired	3	0,19	6	0,39		
<b>Parents' educational level</b>							
	Unspecified	99	5,96	129	7,76		
	N/A (parent not alive)	14	0,84	26	1,56		
	Has not attended school	12	0,77	2	0,13		
	Some grades of Primary school	36	2,32	9	0,60		
	Primary school	236	15,24	125	8,29		
	Secondary school	695	44,87	793	52,62		
	Higher school	176	11,36	229	15,20		
	University	362	23,37	321	21,30		
	Postgraduate studies (masters, doctorate)	32	2,07	28	1,86		



estimation of economic situation			
Unspecified	68	4,09	
very bad	180	11,29	
bad	201	12,61	
moderate	723	45,36	
good	421	26,41	
very good	69	4,33	

### Cronbach's alphas

Again, considering the paired sample, we wanted to check the internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) of the three scales of maltreatment (psychological, physical and sexual violence), feelings of neglect and of the positive and nonviolent parenting scales, and to see the level of reliability of our questionnaire for the sample we had. Cronbach's alpha for different scales both for prevalence and incidence is from 0,664 for contact sexual violence on prevalence for children, which is the lowest and questionable to 0,891 which is good, and for prevalence for parents from 0,777, which is acceptable to 0,872 which is good.

For incidence again the contact sexual violence scale for children is 0,518 – unacceptable for contact sexual violence, for children's sexual violence scale 0,681 – questionable to 0,891 for psychological violence scale (children) and 0,872 for the same scale for parents.

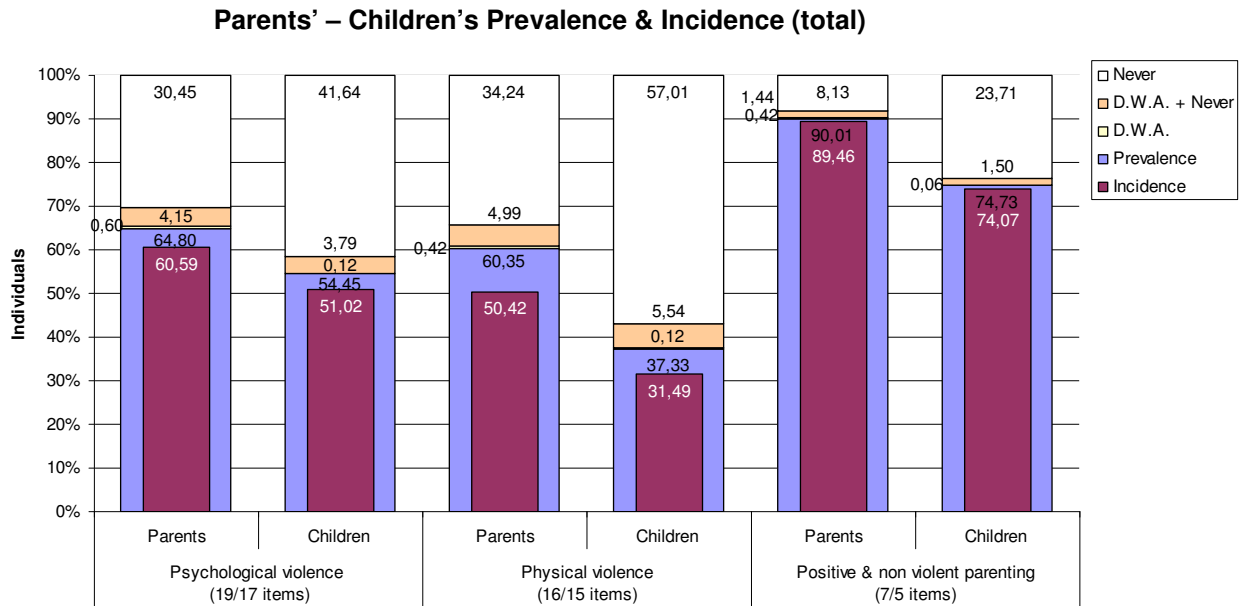
**Table D.7.** Internal consistencies (Cronbach's alpha) of 3 scales of maltreatment (psychological, physical and sexual violence) and of the positive & non violent parenting scales

	Prevalence		Incidence	
	Children	Parents	Children	Parents
<b>Psychological violence (19/17 items)</b>	0,891	0,872	0,891	0,872
<b>Physical violence (16/15 items)</b>	0,859	0,869	0,859	0,869
<b>Sexual violence (6/5 items)</b>	0,848	N/A	0,681	N/A
Contact sexual violence (2 items)	0,664	N/A	0,518	N/A
<b>Positive &amp; non violent parenting (7/5 items)</b>	0,748	0,777	0,748	0,777

### Parents' – Children's Prevalence & Incidence

The prevalence and incidence rate in regards to children's exposure to psychological and physical violence and to positive parental behaviors point out to some differences among them in the perception of violent exposure of children. Each form of violence and positive non-violent parenting is perceived at a significantly higher rate by parents than by children. Psychological violence, which has the highest prevalence and incidence rate has been estimated to used in 60,59% in the past year, and in 64,80 during lifetime by parents compared to the children's perception which is 51% during past year and 54% during lifetime. Even significantly bigger difference among children and parents is in regard to physical

violence. Parents estimate that have used this type of violence in 50,42% during the last year, and in 60,35% during lifetime, but children report that they had such experiences in 31,49% during the last year and 37,33% during lifetime.



**Figure D.30.** Distribution of parents' and pupils' answers in regards to children's exposure to psychological and physical violence and to positive parental behaviors during their life time (prevalence) and/or during past year (incidence), by scale.

**Note**

- Incidence:** percentage of parents/children reporting any frequency score under "During the past year (previous 12 months)" in at least 1 item of the scale
- Prevalence:** percentage of parents/children reporting doing/having experienced at least 1 behavior of the scale during their entire life time (either in the past year or before)
- D.W.A.:** percentage of parents/children answering "Don't want to answer" in all items of the scale
- D.W.A.+Never:** percentage of parents/children answering "Don't want to answer" in 1 or more items of the scale and "Never" to all other items of this scale
- Never:** percentage of parents/children reporting that they have "Never" in their lives do/experience none of the scale's behaviors.

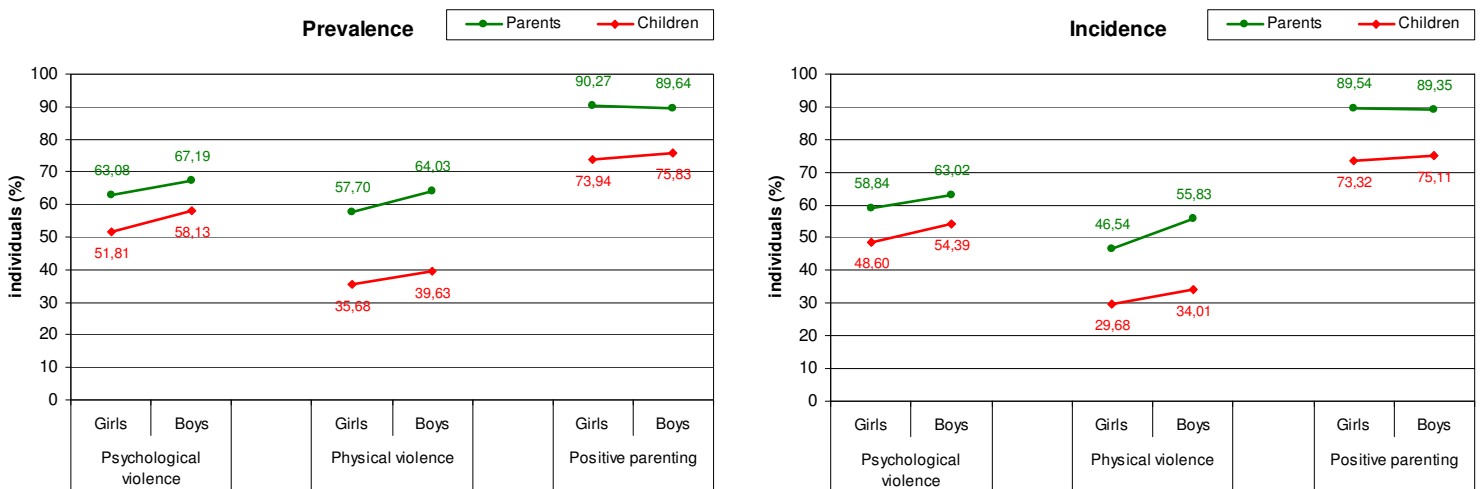
This pattern is also recognizable in positive non-violent parental practices. Parents estimate that children have experienced positive, non-violent parenting in 89,5% during the last 12 months, and 90% during lifetime, but children report on such parental behavior in 74,1% for the same time period and 75% during lifetime.

**Parents' – Children's Prevalence & Incidence (by children's gender)**

When it comes to gender perspective on experienced types of violence the difference between children and parents still exist, both parents and children report on some gender differences in exposure to / use of different violent behaviors, for which the both groups agree that girls were less exposed to violent behaviors than boys (psychological and physical violence). Girls reported being exposed to psychological violence in 51,81% and their

respective parents reported on using it in 63%, and boys report exposure to such experiences in 58,13% and their parents using it in 67,19% during lifetime. There is a significant difference between parents and children in reporting on physical violence. Girls reported having such experiences in 35,68% and their respective parents using this behavioral practices in 57,7%, boys reported on the same experiences in 39,63% and their respective parents in 64%. Positive non-violent parenting is also perceived as significantly different between parents and children, in that way that parents report on using almost equal level of positive parental practices to both girls and boys at a significantly higher level than children report.

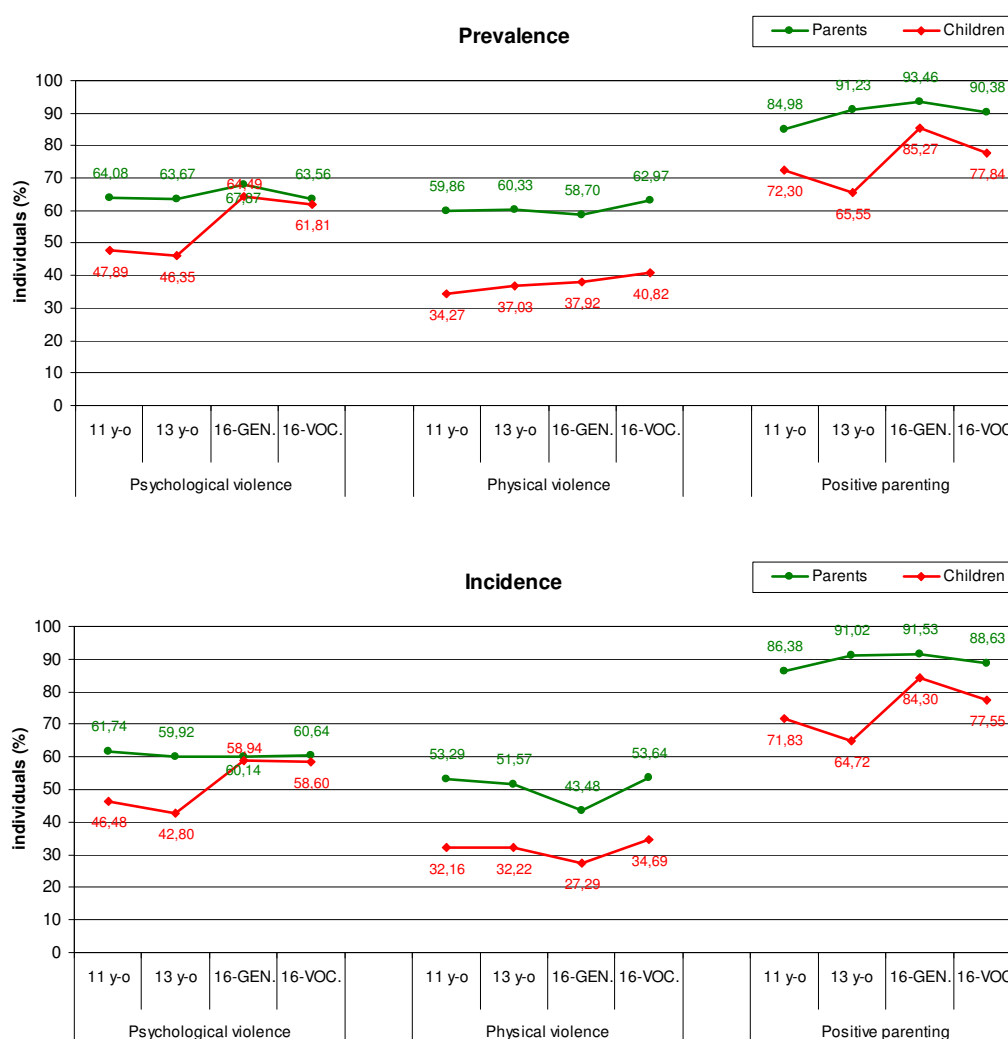
The incidence of these experiences is perceived almost the same as prevalence, especially in regard to psychological violence and positive non-violent parental practices. Physical violence is somewhat lower perceived by both groups of respondents but with significantly high difference (Figure D.31.).



**Figure D.31.** Prevalence and incidence rates of parents' use and children's exposure to behaviors of psychological and physical violence and of positive parenting, by child's gender.

## Parents' – Children's Prevalence & Incidence (by children's grade group)

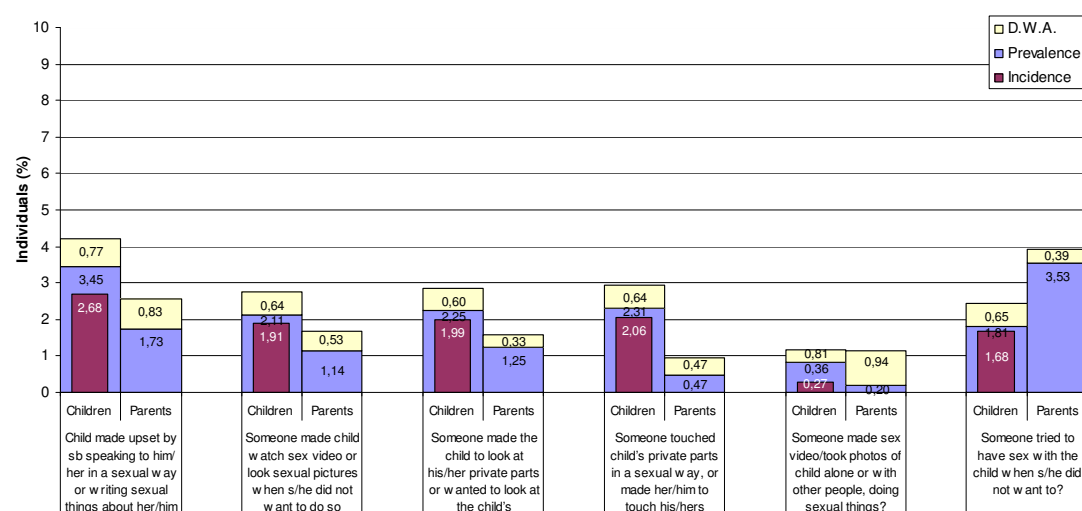
From grade-group perspective, the prevalence of psychological violence according to parents was significantly higher in regard to younger children (11 and 13 years old being 64%), but according to children themselves it was 48% for 11 years old and 46% for 13 years old. The perspectives of children (64%) and parents (67%) got closer for the age of 16, both for those coming from general or vocational school. For physical violence there is a significant difference between the perspectives of parents and children for all ages of children. 11 years old report on 34,27% of children being exposed to physical violence (parents report on using it in 59,89%), 13 years old report on 37% being exposed to physical violence (parents report on using it in 60,33%), 16 years old from general schools reported on 37,9% (parents 58,7%) and 16 years old from vocational schools reported on 40,82 (parents 62,97%). Positive non-violent parenting significantly differs mostly for 13 years old (children report on 65,55% versus parents who use it in 91,23, but for 11 years old the difference is slightly smaller (children 72,3% versus parents 84,98%) and for 16 years old from vocational schools (children 77,84% versus 90,38%) (see Figure D.32.).



**Figure D.32.** Prevalence and incidence rates of parents' use and children's exposure to behaviors of psychological and physical violence and of positive parenting, by child's grade group.

**Items of Sexual abuse:** children (prevalence & incidence) – parents (prevalence)

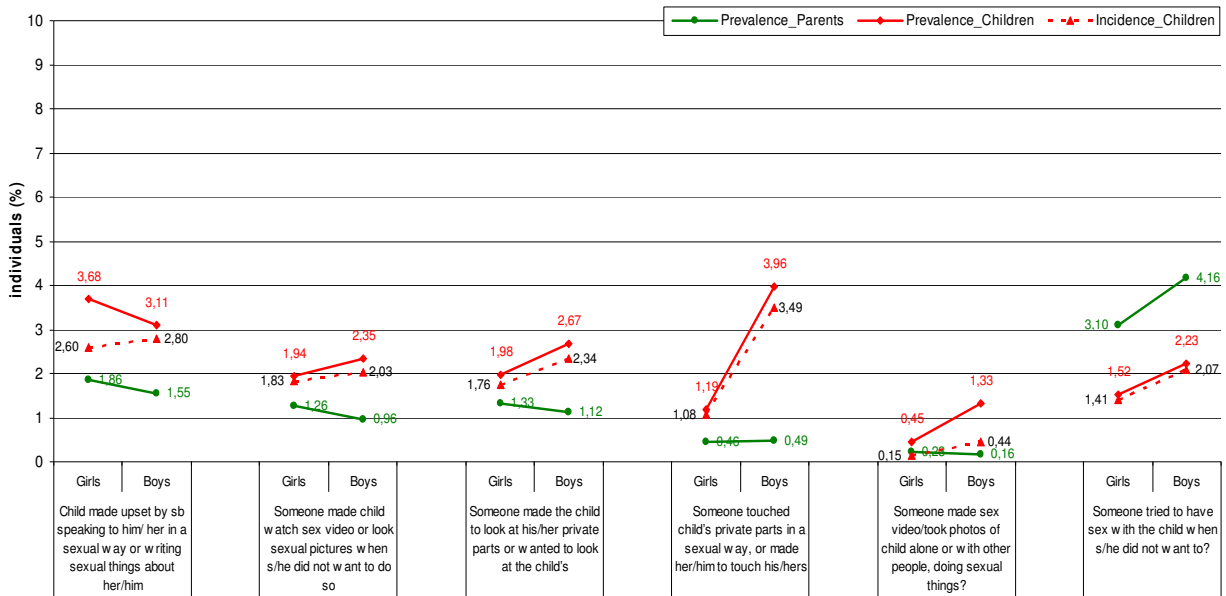
Prevalence and incidence rates of children’s exposure to 6 different sexually violent behaviors and rates of parental awareness for their children’s exposure show that there is a reversed pattern of different perspectives between children and parents from the previously presented one, referring to the other types of violence children have suffered. In almost all forms of exposure to sexually violent behaviors the awareness of the parents is significantly lower than children’s report on their actual experience. Only in the case of attempted sexual intercourse the parents were aware and reported it at a higher rate than their children did (Figure D.33).



**Figure D.33.** Prevalence and incidence rates of children’s exposure to 6 different sexually violent behaviors and rates of parental awareness for their children’s exposure.

**Items of Sexual abuse, by gender:** children (prevalence & incidence) – parents (prevalence)

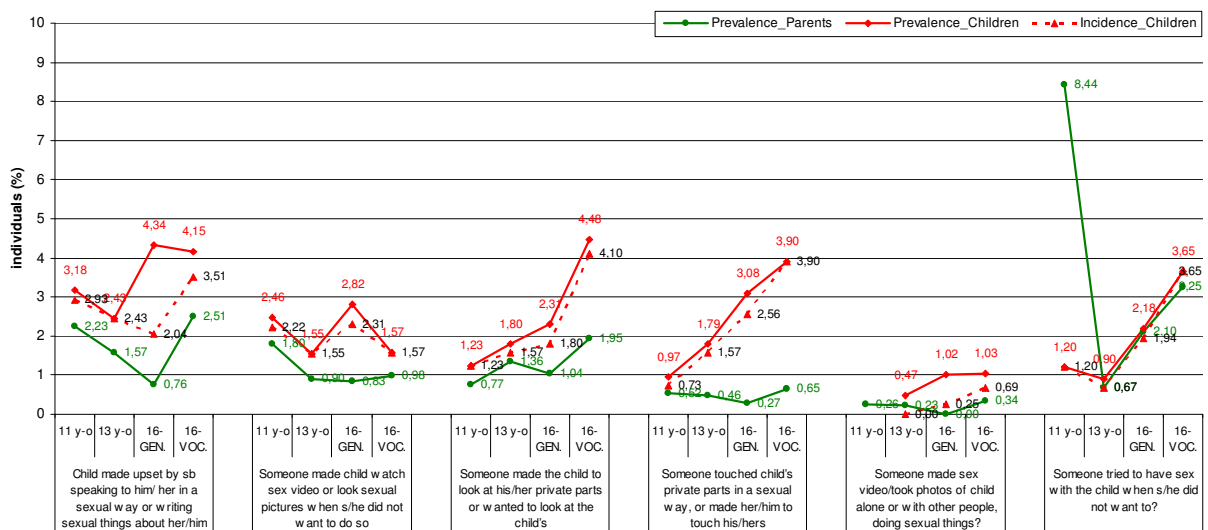
In general, parents are less aware of sexual violence their children have suffered for both girls and boys. Prevalence and incidence rates of children’s exposure to 6 different sexually violent behaviors and rates of parental awareness for their children’s exposure, by child’s gender significantly differ. The parental estimation of any form of sexual violence against their children is higher for girls across all scale of different sexually violent behaviors except for attempting sexual intercourse. In the later case the parental report for exposure of girls to sexual violence 3,10% versus girls’ report for themselves which is 1,52%, and parents’ report for boys is 4,16% versus boys’ report for themselves which is 2,23%. The biggest discrepancy between parental and children’s report is on the items of touching children’s private parts and on attempting sexual intercourse. The former is 0,46% for girls and 0,49% for boys estimated by parents, but reports from boys and girls themselves are significantly different: 1,08% reported by girls, and 3,96% reported by boys (Figure D.34).



**Figure D.34.** Prevalence and incidence rates of children's exposure to 6 different sexually violent behaviors and rates of parental awareness for their children's exposure, by child's gender.

**Items of Sexual abuse, by grade group: children (preval. & incid.) – parents (prevalence)**

The same pattern in terms of parental perception of sexual violence of their children is obvious when it comes to paired analysis by grade group. In general parents are less aware of sexual violence their children have suffered as they grow older. The biggest discrepancy between parents and children is for 16 years old in general and in vocational schools. All the items on the sexual violence scale reflect this situation: for children as young as 11 the reports from parents and children are close enough and do not differ significantly, but as the age is higher the differences are bigger and for 16 years old they reach the level of significance. The only item that brought the both perspectives closer is on attempting to have sexual intercourse, in which reports from children and parents are almost identical (D.35.)



**Figure D.35.** Prevalence and incidence rates of children's exposure to 6 different sexually violent behaviors and rates of parental awareness for their children's exposure, by child's grade group. (The item "has anyone ever... made a sex video or took photographs of you alone, or with other people, doing sexual things?" was not included in the short ICAST-CH version, completed by the 11 y-o grade's pupils, but it was included in the ICAST-P, their parents completed.)

(In)consistency of parents' – children's replies on individual items – Kappa

**Table D.7.** (In)consistency in children's - parents' reporting in regards to the parents' use and children's exposure to the different behaviors of the psychological and physical violence as well as of the positive parenting scales

Scale	Items <sup>1</sup>	N	Kappa coefficient <sup>2</sup>	
			PR	IN.
Psychological violence (19/17 items)	Shouted, yelled, or screamed at her/him very loud and aggressively?	1662	0.104	0.107
	Insulted him/her by calling him/her dumb, lazy or other names like that?	1662	0.106	0.142
	Cursed him/her?	1662	0.100	0.100
	Refused to speak to him/her (ignore him/her)?	1662	-0.007	0.001
	<b>Blamed him/her for your bad mood?</b>	1236	0.055	0.074
	Read his/her diary or his/her SMS or e-mail messages without his/her permission?	1662	0.047	0.030
	Went through his/her bag, drawers, pockets etc. without his/her permission?	1662	0.031	0.028
	Compared him/her to other children in a way that s/he felt humiliated?	1662	0.129	0.154
	Ashamed or embarrassed her/him intentionally in front of other people in order to make him/her feel very bad or humiliated?	1662	0.108	0.124
	Told her/him that you wished s/he was dead or had never been born?	1662	0.077	0.114
	Threatened to leave or abandon him/her?	1662	0.054	0.100
	Threatened to kick out of house or send away?	1662	0.051	0.063
	Locked out of home?	1662	0.049	0.080
	<b>Threatened to invoke ghosts or evil spirits or harmful people against him/her?</b>	1236	0.068	0.158
	Threatened to hurt or kill her/him?	1662	0.042	0.038
	Locked her or him up in a small place or in a dark room?	1662	0.062	0.094
Threatened him/her with a knife or gun?	1662	0.017	-0.004	
Physical violence (16/15 items)	Pushed or kicked her/him?	1662	0.067	0.097
	Grabbed him/her by clothes or some part of his/her body and shook him/her?	1662	0.046	0.066
	Slapped him/her?	1662	0.096	0.082
	Hit him/her on head with knuckle or back of the hand?	1662	0.071	0.051
	Spanked her/him on the bottom with bare hand?	1662	0.117	0.083
	Hit her or him on the buttocks with an object such as a stick, broom, cane, or belt?	1662	0.096	0.071
	Hit elsewhere (not buttocks) with an object such as a stick, broom, cane, or belt?	1662	0.030	0.078
	Hit her or him over and over again with object or fist ("beat-up")	1662	0.060	-0.005
	Choked or smothered him/her (prevent breathing by use of a hand or pillow) or squeezed his/her neck with hands (or something else)?	1662	0.033	-0.005
	Intentionally burned or scalded him/her?	1662	0.022	-0.004
	<b>Put chili pepper, hot pepper, or spicy food in his/her mouth (to cause pain)?</b>	1236	0.123	0.230
	Tied him/her up or tied him/her to something using a rope or a chain?	1662	-0.005	-0.003
	Roughly twisted her/his ear?	1662	0.104	0.098
	Pulled her/his hair?	1662	0.089	0.089
	Pinched her/him roughly?	1662	0.104	0.095
Forced him or her to hold a position that caused pain or humiliated him/her as a means of punishment?	1662	0.085	0.094	
Positive and non-violent parenting (7/5 items)	<b>Told her/him to start or stop doing something (e.g. start doing your homework or stop watching TV)?</b>	1236	0.244	0.296
	Explained him/her why something s/he did was wrong?	1662	0.224	0.228
	Gave him/her an award for behaving well?	1662	0.247	0.241
	<b>Gave him/her something else to do in order to distract his/her attention (e.g. to tell him/her to do something else in order to stop watching TV)?</b>	1236	0.119	0.121
	Took away pocket money or other privileges?	1662	0.126	0.135
	Forbade something that s/he liked?	1662	0.093	0.091
	Forbade him or her from going out?	1662	0.189	0.194

<sup>1</sup> Items in bold had been excluded from the short-version of the ICAST-CH completed by the 11 y-o grade's pupils

<sup>2</sup> The lower the kappa coefficient, the higher the disagreement between children's - parents' reports; Kappas lower than ,40 considered to be poor, ,41-,75 fair to good and larger than ,75 excellent agreement

Kappa coefficient shows the consistency in children's - parents' reporting, more precisely the inconsistencies in our sample in regards to the parents' use and children's exposure to the different behaviors of the psychological and physical violence as well as of the positive parenting scales. In general the consistency is between poor and fair, but in certain cases it is

negative showing that there is inconsistency between children's and parents responses. The psychological violence scale shows poor to fair consistency, but items which are considered as very violent behaviours showed negative consistency for the incidence (Threatened with a knife or a gun). The physical violence scale shows also poor to fair consistency, but with more negative coefficients on items that are considered as very violent/abusive such as: Hit her or him over and over again with object or fist ("beat-up"), Choked or smothered him/her (prevent breathing by use of a hand or pillow) or squeezed his/her neck with hands (or something else), Intentionally burned or scalded him/her, Tied him/her up or tied him/her to something using a rope or a chain.

Even the positive non violent parenting scale shows also poor to fair consistency between parents' and children's responses.

In general, the more violent a certain behaviour is the more higher the inconsistencies between parents and children's responses are.



## E. DISCUSSION (OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS)

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The results of this study are subjected to certain limitations. Responses were based on self-reports. A potential weakness of studies with retrospective reporting of childhood experiences is the possibility of recall bias, such as the likelihood that more recent and severe experiences are being reported. It may also be possible that there was differential recall, depending upon the nature and significance of the events (e.g., being a victim of sexual violence compared to neglect).

Another potential weakness is the likelihood of respondents giving socially desirable answers, and also with automatic answers, such as “no” or “never”. The percentage of incorrect questionnaires was higher by younger participants in the study (11years old), mainly due to the length of the questionnaire and lack of skills and insight into their own experiences, as observed by the researchers, and 16 years old from vocational schools who were not focused enough on their task.

Also long questionnaires might discourage children to carefully read all the items and fill them automatically with “never” or miss answers. Questioning parents on their part and on behalf of their spouse also put some problems in answering the questions.

The demographic characteristics of children participating in the study show that 55,61% are girls and 44,39% are boys. The discrepancy in gender representation is due to the fact that more male children were either not given active consent to participate in the study (due to forgetfulness of children or parents, or to active refusal to participate), or the questionnaire was not valid to be included in further analysis. According to age/grade group the most represented grade group was 13 years old (30,59%) and 16 years old coming from general secondary schools (26,76%), because they could completely understand the task they were given and because the invalid questionnaires in these grade groups were at minimum. Majority of the participants (85,27%) live in urban environments and 14,73% in rural environments. Urban/rural stratification was not entirely possible because secondary schools, being located in the towns and cities, could not be stratified neither as urban nor as rural. On the other hand trying to make the sample as representative as possible we included the stratification on the basis of type of school for secondary schools for several reasons. Rural population tend to gravitate towards vocational schools, including children with lower level of academic achievement, as well as children from families with lower level of education.

According to nationality 82% are Macedonians, 7,98% are Albanians, 2,34 Roma population, 1, 54% Serbians, 1,19% Turks and 0,88 Vlachs and according to religion 72,93% are Orthodox, and 20,92 are Muslim. This could be considered as a nationally representative sample in terms of nationalities and religions represented in the FYR of Macedonia.

In regard to experiences of all kinds of violence, lifetime prevalence and incidence of psychological violence has the highest rate among all forms of violent experiences, with almost 65% of children have at least once in their lifetime experienced some kind of psychological violence, more than half of the children (50,7%) have experienced physical

violence, 27,5% have experienced feelings of neglect and 7,6% have experienced some form of sexual violence. The incidence rate of same experiences is somewhat lower, but doesn't differ significantly. Positive parental practices have been experienced by children in 83% during the last 12 months and almost equally during lifetime.

Exposure of children to psychological violence during the last 12 months (incidence), has been found as the most frequent experiences of all violent behaviors that children have suffered. The most common experience of psychological violence was being called lazy or dumb, and being shouted, yelled, or screamed at. But more than 15% were threatened with abandonment and leaving the house, and almost 7% had experienced that they were better dead or never been born. Almost 6% threatened to be hurt or killed, and almost 2% have been threatened with a knife or a gun during the last 12 months. More than one fourth of children (25,65%) have been exposed to these behaviors ranging from several times a month to several times a week. The results from ACE study in our country with 18-21 years old students, in which more than 30% of them experienced forms of more severe psychological violence during lifetime are similar to BECAN findings. Little is known about the global extent of this form of violence against children except that it frequently accompanies other forms: a strong coexistence between psychological and physical violence of children in violent households has been established (Dube et al, 2002). A study across five countries conducted by the World Studies of Abuse in the Family Environment (World SAFE) project indicated that insulting, threatening children with abandonment, cursing children varied across countries according to the cultural practices: in Philippines 48% of mothers threaten to abandon the child, in Egypt 51% cursed the child, but only 10% threatened abandonment (Runyan D. et al., 2002). Significant interaction of **grade group x urbanicity** has been observed in prevalence and incidence rates of psychological violence showing that in rural areas children were exposed to higher rates of psychological abuse in earlier period of their life (11 and 13 years old), but 16 years old children from general and vocational schools in urban areas were much more exposed to this kind of violent behavior. This is also confirmed with the significant interaction of **grade group x geographical area**, being observed in prevalence and incidence rates of psychological violence showing that 13 and 16 years old children mainly, in general and vocational schools in North-East region were significantly more exposed to psychological violence compared to other two regions, which represents the most urban area in the country, thus confirming the previous finding

Physical violence is widespread experience among children around the world experiencing wide range of practices by their parents with different intensity of hitting, kicking, shaking, beating, deliberate burning, strangulation, poisoning or suffocation.

In our study experiences of physical violence are the second most prevalent type of maltreatment of children with an incidence rate of 42,40% and prevalence rate of 50,66%. The most frequent experiences of physical violence among children are those in relation to corporal punishment: being slapped (45%) or spanked (32%), being pushed or kicked (31%).

Almost 23% of children have experienced more severe forms of physically violent behaviors, but in general 10,19% have been almost continuously exposed to these behaviors ranging from several times a month to several times a week compared to 13% of students that reported being severely physically abused, according to the results from ACE study (Raleva et al, 2012). Surveys from around the world also suggest that physical abuse of children in the home is widespread in all regions. In a survey of students aged 11 to 18 in Iran, 38.5% reported experiences of physical violence at home that had caused physical injury ranging from mild to severe (Stephenson et al., 2006).

Our study showed significantly greater exposure of boys to different physically violent behaviors in all grade groups (11, 13 and 16 general) than girls. Older children as old as 16 years, coming from general schools have been significantly more exposed to physical violence during lifetime, than children from the other grade groups, and there is an increasing trend of physical violence with age/grade group. Geographical area has a significant effect on rates of physical violence showing the highest prevalence rates in North-East region (53,02%), and in incidence rates in South-West region (45,33%). Significant main effects of urbanicity on incidence of physical violence when it comes to multiple forms of exposure to physical violence (3, 4, 5, and more such behaviors), children from rural areas are significantly more exposed to a number of such behaviors.

Overall 7,60% of children experienced some kind of sexual violence across lifetime, and 6,39% during the last 12 months. Out of all sexually abused children 43% were exposed to sexual way of speaking, 33% exposed to touching, and 30% experienced sexual intercourse or attempted sexual intercourse. Almost two thirds all sexually abused children have been abused by contact sexual experiences. The frequency of these experiences in majority of cases was once or twice, but in 41% it has happened 3-5 times, and in almost 29% of all sexually abused children it has happened once a month to few times a week. According to the ACE study almost 13% of students experienced some kind of sexual abuse during lifetime, which might be higher because of the higher age of the respondents. Although in majority of studies females are more prone to sexual abuse than males, our study has shown different pattern. From a gender perspective, our study showed that boys were significantly more exposed to sexual abuse than girls (9,64% versus 6,01%). This finding was also confirmed in the ACE study – 20% of male students versus 7,3% of female students (Raleva, Jordanova-Peshevska, Sethi, 2013), who were sexually abused during their childhood. On the other hand a review of epidemiological surveys from 21 countries, mainly high and middle –income countries, found that at least 7% of females (ranging up to 36%) and 3% of males (ranging up to 29%) reported sexual abuse during their childhood (Finkelhor, 1994).

Interactions of **Gender x grade group** on prevalence and incidence of sexual and contact violence by number of different feelings experienced has shown that boys were significantly more exposed to such experiences across all grade groups and especially 16 years old boys coming from general school are significantly more exposed to contact sexual violence than other grade groups of children. Significant interaction of **grade group x geographical area**

has been observed also in prevalence and incidence rates of sexual and contact sexual violence showing that 16 years old children in vocational and general schools in North-East region, especially boys in North-East region were significantly more exposed to this type of violence compared to other two regions, while girls were more exposed to sexual violence and contact sexual violence in South-East region. When the results on contact sexual violence in South-East region are considered it is evident that all abused subjects experienced contact sexual abuse during last year. Taking into consideration **urbanicity** children in rural areas were significantly more exposed to this type of violent behavior, especially 16 years old children (9,68%) in general schools in rural areas. In urban areas there is a significantly higher incidence rate of sexual abuse of younger children (11 years old). The sexual abuse has happened during the last 12 month in 6.16% of children in urban areas versus 3.74% in rural areas.

Feelings of neglect reflect the failure of a parent/caregiver to meet the needs of a dependent child, satisfying his/her developmentally specific needs. In general, 27,47% of children were exposed to different feelings of neglect across lifetime and 24,90% during the last 12 years compared to 31% of respondents who felt neglected during lifetime in the ACE study (Raleva, Jordanova-Peshevska, Sethi, 2013). The most common experience of feelings of neglect was the feeling of not being important, reported by 70% of all neglected children. Feelings of neglect have been experienced by 51,5% of all neglected children, ranging from 6 times to more than 50 times during the last 12 months. Significant Interactions of **gender x grade group** on prevalence and incidence of feelings of neglect have shown significantly greater exposure of girls to this type of violence across all grade groups. But also findings suggest that in all regions 16 years old showed significantly higher rates of feelings of neglect. When it comes to interactions of **Gender x geographical area** on prevalence & incidence on this type of violent behaviour findings have shown that girls from South-East region have been significantly more exposed to it during lifetime, than their peers, as well as girls from North-East region who have also been significantly more exposed to it during last 12 months. Regarding the prevalence and incidence rates of feelings of neglect, 16 years old from vocational schools in North-East region were significantly more exposed to it.

Positive parenting have been experienced by 83,87% of all children during lifetime, and by 83,02% in the last 12 months. The most common experiences of this type referred to parents, awarding the child for behaving well (78,3%), explaining the child why something was wrong (68,7%). However, the fact that almost 17% of children neither had such experiences (15,24%) nor wanted to answer, is highly concerning. This finding has to be taken in consideration in regard to development of preventive CAN programmes in first place parenting programmes. But when it comes to positive non-violent parenting practices 16 years old from general schools from rural areas have had significantly more experiences of positive parental practices, which is consistent with previous findings. 13 years old and 16 years old from vocational and general schools have significantly more experiences of positive

parenting than their peers from other age groups. When expanded by gender, girls in grade group of 16 years old (both general and vocational) have experienced more positive parenting than boys from the same grade group. These interactions also showed significantly higher rate of positive experiences in older children (13 and 16 years old) coming from rural areas, except for 11 years old where the pattern is reversed, both for prevalence and incidence.

Majority of children have experienced multiple forms of different violent behaviours. One type of violence has been experienced by 27,53% of children, two types of violence by 28,58%, 3 types of violence by 18,25 and of four types of violence by 2,4%. The Incidence rate of experiencing one type of violence by children is somewhat higher. According to the ACE study one type of violence was experienced by 29% of students, two types of violence were experienced by 15% of students, 3 types were experienced by almost 10% of students, four or more types of ACEs are experienced by 9.5% of student (Raleva, Jordanova-Peshevska, Sethi, 2013).

The perpetrators of psychological violence were mainly adult female perpetrators (mothers), adult male perpetrators in the second place, adolescent male perpetrators in the third place and adolescent female perpetrator are at least responsible for psychological violence. In cases of physical violence adult male perpetrator has been mostly reported, than comes adolescent male, and at last adult female. This finding is according to the cultural practices, which show that male use more physical power and female more verbal. Perpetrators of sexual violence are mainly adolescent male perpetrators, adult male in the second place, adolescent female, and at last adult female perpetrators.

Most of the reported perpetrators of sexual violence are unknown to children, than come familiar people and at last relatives. Female perpetrators of sexual violence in majority of cases are familiar to the child-victim, which refers mostly to adolescent female, Male perpetrators in majority of cases are unknown to the child victim, especially for contact sexual abuse.

In Finkelhor's review of epidemiological surveys, between 14% and 56% of sexual abuse of girls, and up to 25% of the sexual abuse of boys, was perpetrated by relatives and step parents. Most children do not report the sexual abuse they experience at home because they are afraid of what will happen to them and their families, that their families will be ashamed of or reject them, or that they will not be trusted (Finkelhor, 1994).

#### Paired analysis

There were 1662 pairs of parent and children and according to gender distribution of children 58% were girls and 42% boys. 25,6% were 11 years old, 28,8% belong to the 13 years old group, 24,9%, were 16 years old coming from general schools and 20,64% were 16 years old, coming from vocational school. In 85% child's mother responded to the questionnaire and only in 14,1% it was the father who responded. In 74,5% of cases respondents also answered for their partner and in 16,5% they answered for themselves only. According to nationality

majority of respondents were Macedonians (78%), Albanian (15,2%), Roma almost 2%, Turks (1,25%), Serbians (1,18%), Vlachs (0,93%) which means that it is a representative sample in terms of national structure. Majority of fathers and mothers have finished secondary school, in the second place university, third is primary education (15,24% of mothers and 8,29% of fathers) and higher school (15,20% of fathers and 11,36% of mothers). The economic situation estimated by the parents is moderate by 45,36%, good by 26,41%, bad by 12,61%, very bad by 11,29%, very good by 4,33%.

The prevalence and incidence rate in regard to children's exposure to psychological and physical violence and to positive parental behaviors point out to evident differences among them in the perception of violent exposure of children. Each form of violence and positive non-violent parenting is perceived at a significantly higher rate by parents than by children.

From grade-group perspective, the prevalence of psychological violence according to parents was significantly higher in regard to younger children, but the perspectives of children and parents got closer for the age of 16, both for those coming from general or vocational school. For physical violence there is a significant difference between them for all ages of children. Positive non-violent parenting significantly differs mostly for younger children. From gender perspective on experienced types of violence the difference between children and parents still exist, both parents and children report on some gender differences in exposure to / use of different violent behaviors, for which the both groups agree that girls were less exposed to violent behaviors than boys (psychological and physical violence). There is a reversed pattern of different perspectives from the previously presented one, between children and parents, referring to sexual violence. In almost all forms of exposure to sexually violent behaviors the awareness of the parents is significantly lower than children's report on their actual experience. In general, parents are less aware of sexual violence their children have suffered for both girls and boys. Parents estimation is that all forms of sexual violence against their children are higher for girls across all scale of different sexually violent behaviors except for attempting sexual intercourse. In general parents were not aware of children's susceptibility to different forms of sexually violent behaviors except for sexual intercourse.

In general, the more violent a certain behaviour is the more higher the inconsistencies between parents and children's responses are according to the Kappa coefficient analysis.

The same pattern in terms of parental perception of sexual violence of their children is obvious when it comes to paired analysis by grade group. In general parents are less aware of sexual violence their children have suffered as they grow older. The biggest discrepancy between parents and children is for 16 years old in general and in vocational schools. All the items on the sexual violence scale reflect this situation: for children as young as 11 the reports from parents and children are close enough and do not differ significantly, but as the age is higher the differences are bigger and for 16 years old they reach the level of significance. The only item that brought the both perspectives closer is on attempting to have sexual intercourse, in which reports from children and parents are almost identical. This might be due to the fact that they became aware of sexual abuse of their children only when more severe forms of violence are in question.

In general parents are not familiar with the sexually violent experiences of their children, or in the cases parents know they do not want to disclose it even anonymously. Being still a taboo sexual violence against children should be considered as one of the most important issues in developing and implementing primary preventive programmes for child sexual abuse in primary schools with specific approaches for girls and boys.

## **F. FACILITATORS AND BARRIERS**

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Main facilitating factors in this study were the schools, i.e. the school staff in particular. Those schools which were more organized, prepared and motivated to collaborate on such a research and had better relationship with children and parents were real facilitators to the implementation of the research.

Also well prepared and experienced research team is a very important facilitating factor. For this purpose there should be possibility for ongoing training and support for researchers, developing their sensitivity to children's reactions to the experiences of CAN.

It is of crucial importance to use the method of passive consent where it is possible in order to avoid the extension of the time needed to answer to the request, the low response rate of parental consent. Use of clear and simple messages to the parents and children as well, explaining the procedure very clearly are useful and facilitating details for such a research.

As motivated and well organized schools were facilitators, the opposite such as unmotivated, unprepared schools and school staff were problems encountered during the implementation of the research. In order to improve the readiness of the school to collaborate researchers should work with schools as partners and motivate the involvement of teachers, school psychologist and pedagogue. This was solved mainly by visiting schools more often, paying more attention to the support and motivation of the staff, offering them training on the issue of CAN and sometimes supporting them with the materials they needed (leaflets, brochures, information on CAN, posters etc.)

## G. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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The main conclusions from this study are:

- Almost 65% of children participating in this study experienced at least one case of psychological violence during their life. More than 50% experienced at least one case of physical violence, whereas 27,5% of children felt neglected at least once in their lifetime. More than 7% of children experienced at least one case of sexual violence.
- Prevalence of positive non-violent parental practices is more than 83%.
- Incidence for all categories of experience is somewhat lower than the prevalence, except for the positive parental practices, which is almost the same across lifetime or during the last 12 months.
- Prevalence and incidence of experienced all forms of violence are higher with age, in children of both sexes.
- Prevalence of all forms of violence (psychological, physical, sexual violence and feelings of neglect) is higher in South-West region than in North-East and South-East region.
- Girls more frequently than boys report on experiences of feelings of neglect. Boys are in a larger extent exposed to the experience of sexual violence, physical violence and psychological violence.
- Boys in general are more exposed to sexual and contact sexual violence across all grade groups. Incidence and prevalence rates of contact sexual violence showed that boys in South-West region were significantly more exposed to contact sexual violence compare to other two regions and; incidence of sexual violence also shows that boys in the South-West region were significantly more exposed to sexual violence compared to other regions; and prevalence and incidence rates of feelings of neglect showing that girls were significantly more exposed to neglect in South-East region.
- Children in urban areas reported on significantly more psychological and physical violence and feelings of neglect, but they have reported on more positive and non-violent parental behavior too, comparing to the children from rural areas.
- Most frequently, perpetrators of psychological violence are adult female persons (mothers), then adult male persons (fathers). Perpetrators of sexual violence are usually male peers, then adult male perpetrators.
- The prevalence and incidence rate in regard to children's exposure to psychological and physical violence and to positive parental behaviors point out to evident differences among parents and children in their perception of violent exposure of children. Each form of violence and positive non-violent parenting is perceived at a significantly higher rate by parents than by children.
- Parents perceive younger children being exposed significantly more to psychologically violent behaviors, than older children. For physical violence there is a



significant difference between them for all ages of children. Positive non-violent parenting significantly differs mostly for younger children.

- From gender perspective on experienced types of violence the difference between children and parents still exist, both parents and children report on some gender differences in exposure to / use of different violent behaviors, for which the both groups agree that girls were less exposed to violent behaviors than boys (psychological and physical violence).
- There is a reversed pattern of different perspectives from the previously presented one, between children and parents, referring to all forms of exposure to sexually violent behaviors. In general, parents are less aware of sexual violence their children have suffered for both girls and boys, and for all age/grade groups .
- Parents are only aware of the sexual abuse of their children in cases of contact sexual abuse (attempting sexual intercourse), for which reports from children and parents are almost identical.

The most important contribution of BECAN survey is to provide evidence that child maltreatment is a public health problem in the country which is in contrast to the common notion in our society (and many other societies) that child abuse and neglect is simply a social and juridical problem.

- At national level, direct benefit that was derived due to the implementation of the BECAN survey is the development and implementation of a multisectoral National Action Plan on Child Abuse and Neglect, with full implementation of the international and national legislation for prevention of CAN and enforcement of legislation with preventive measures, treatment, social care and support for victims of violence were. At present the national system has only addressed the problem of child sexual abuse, reflected in the interministerial National Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Sexual Abuse against Children and Pedophilia. Current findings indicate that psychological and physical abuse, are the most frequently reported forms of violence against children, which might lead to health consequences regardless of type of abuse. In order to fine-tune these findings, several meetings with the main stakeholders in the country have been organized to present the findings and facilitate a national response and holistic approach to prevent and combat child abuse and neglect. As a result of these efforts, the formation of a National Commission on Child Abuse and Neglect was approved by the Minister of Labor and Social Policy to prepare a National Action Plan (NAP) for Prevention and Dealing with Child Abuse and Neglect. The draft of the NAP for Prevention and Dealing with Child Abuse and Neglect 2013-2015 has already been prepared and is now in a procedure of official launching. The survey will also serve to further improvement of the Child Protection System especially strengthening of capacities for data collection and needs assessment through development of an integrated system for monitoring of child abuse and neglect.

- At the Balkan area's level the benefit that was derived from the BECAN survey is the use of the data that all countries have collected for further analysis and for the development and improvement of the research tools and tools for monitoring CAN in Balkan countries, also from educational point of view exchange of expertise between countries, and also for further improvement of the Child Protection System.
- Last but not least, we also would like to point out that on national level such surveys on CAN should be conducted every five years in order to be able to follow the trends and to evaluate any preventive efforts implemented.

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