



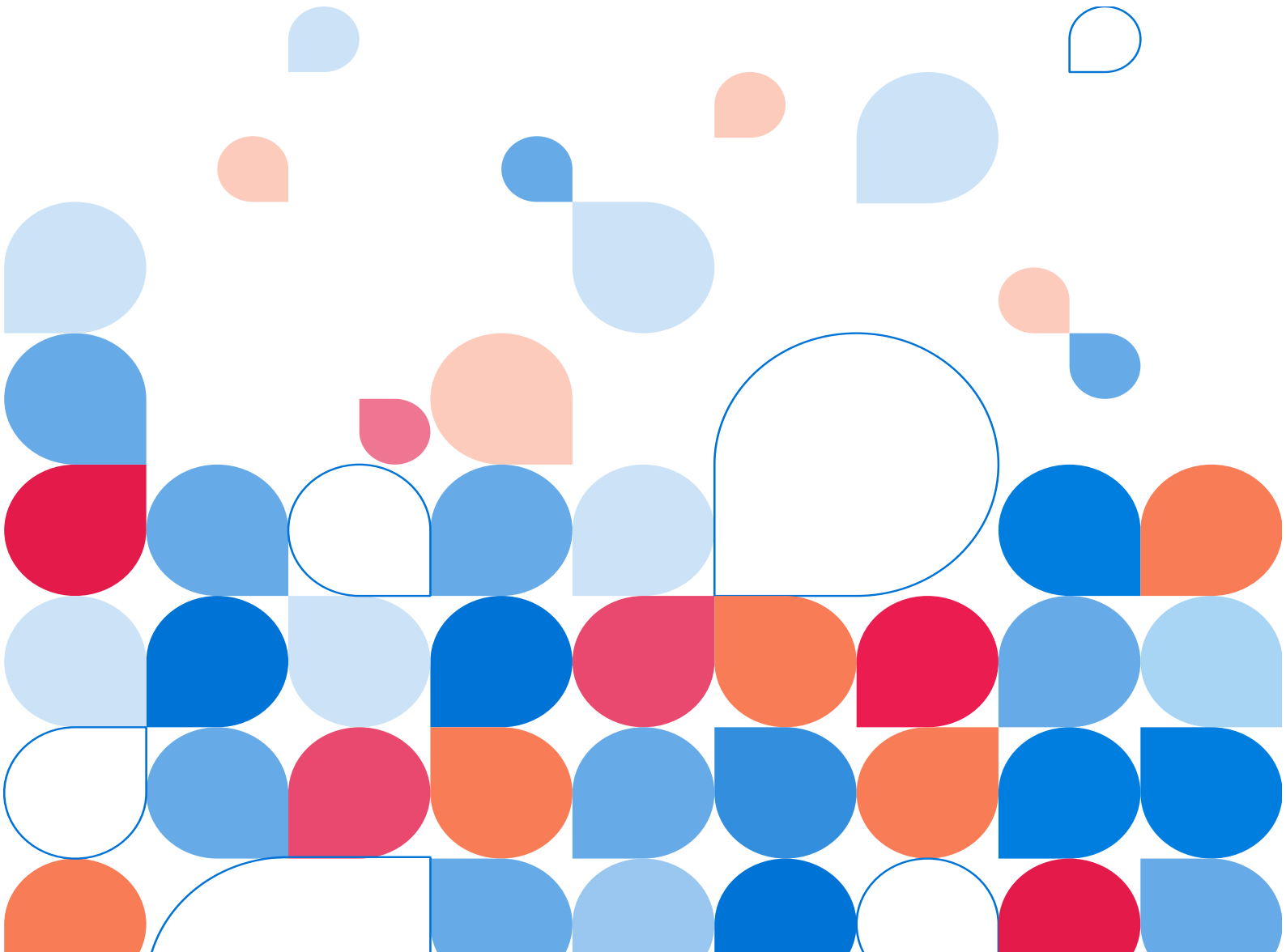
Child Abuse in Sport European Statistics

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CASES: General Report

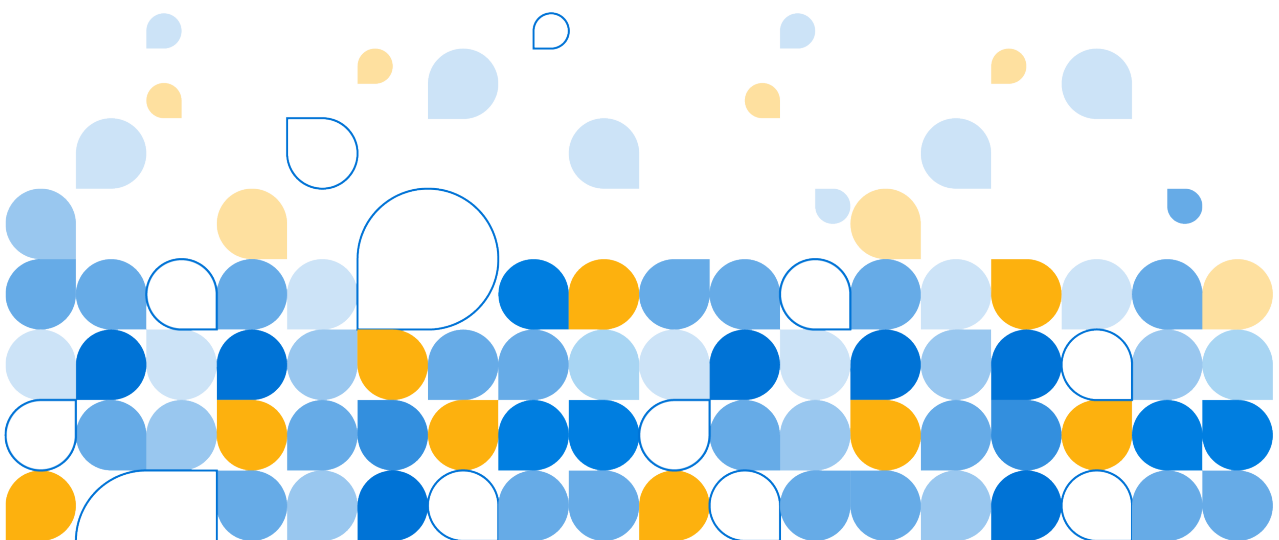
The prevalence and characteristics of interpersonal violence
against children (IVAC) inside and outside sport in six
European countries





Citation:

Hartill, M., Rulofs, B., Lang, M., Vertommen, T., Allroggen, M., Cirera, E., Diketmueller, R., Kampen, J., Kohl, A., Martin, M., Nanu, I., Neeten, M., Sage, D., Stativa, E. (2021). *CASES: Child abuse in sport: European Statistics – Project Report*. Ormskirk, UK: Edge Hill University.



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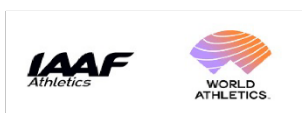
The project was led by Edge Hill University in partnership with the University of Wuppertal (Germany, co-lead), the University of Ulm (Germany), the University of Antwerp (Belgium), the University of Vic (Catalonia, Spain), the University of Vienna (Austria), the National Institute for Mother and Child Health "Alessandrescu-Rusescu" (Romania), the German Sport Youth Federation (Germany), World Athletics (Monaco), and Sport England (UK).

The authors would especially like to thank all those individuals who responded to the survey. Your participation has made a significant contribution to knowledge in this area and towards the design of safe environments for children in sport.



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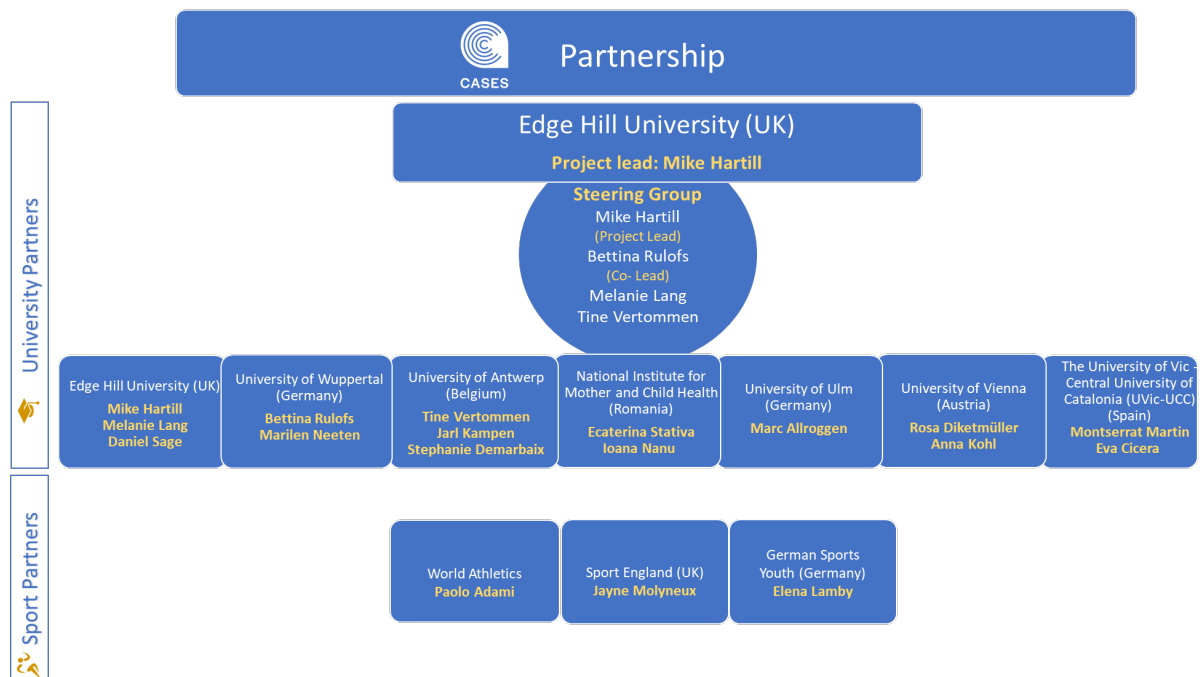
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The CASES Partnership

The CASES-Project is built on a collaborative partnership of universities, research institutes and sport organisations. The project was led by Mike Hartill at Edge Hill University in UK, who was supported by a steering group of Bettina Rulofs (co-lead, University of Wuppertal in Germany), Melanie Lang (Edge Hill University, UK) and Tine Vertommen (University of Antwerp, Belgium).

The survey on interpersonal violence in sport was applied in six European countries. Academics from seven universities and research institutes in those countries supported the project in each phase. Partners from three sport organisations – one international (World Athletics) and two national (Sport England and German Sports Youth) – consulted the project in order to increase transfer into the field of practical sport.

FIGURE 1. THE CASES PARTNERSHIP



List of Abbreviations

ASKÖ	Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Sport und Körperkultur in Österreich
CASES	Child Abuse in Sport: European Statistics
CPSU	Child Protection in Sport Unit
CSA	El Casejo Superior de Deportes (High Sport Council)
CSV	Contact sexual violence
DOSB	Deutscher Olympischer Sportbund (German Olympic Sports Confederation)
DSJ	Deutsche Sportjugend (German Sports Youth)
EACEA	Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
EU	European Union
EHU	Edge Hill University
EPAS	Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport
IAAF	International Association of Athletics Federations (World Athletics)
IM	Ipsos MORI
IV	Interpersonal Violence
IVAC	Interpersonal Violence Against Children
NCSV	Non-Contact Sexual Violence
NGB	National Governing Body
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UK	United Kingdom
WHO	World Health Organization

1. Executive Summary

Introduction

The project Child Abuse in Sport: European Statistics (CASES) aimed to provide evidence on the prevalence of interpersonal violence experienced by children (people under the age of 18) who participate in sport, across different national contexts. A partnership of seven research organisations in six European countries and three sport organisations was established to deliver the project, led by Edge Hill University in the United Kingdom (UK).

The investigation of prevalence of abuse in sport is a relatively new area of research born out of work over the past thirty years that has tried to highlight and expose child abuse in sport. Pioneers in the field, such as Celia Brackenridge, Peter Donnelly, Kari Fasting, Sandra Kirby, and Trish Leahy, have all contributed to the attempt to quantify the scale of the problem. Such efforts support the endeavours of victims and survivors who have challenged the abuse they were subjected to, through the courts, through the media, through advocacy and campaigning, and through their contributions to research.

In a similar vein, then, this study sought to build on previous quantitative research whilst offering some contribution to the ongoing and sustained efforts of those with lived experience of abuse and violence in sport to bring about change in their respective national and local contexts. Increasingly, whilst still rare, meaningful partnership between research and the sport sector seem possible in this field, illustrated here through the participation of Sport England, the German Sport Youth, and World Athletics.

Concept and Scope

Given the international dimension of the study, CASES drew on the concept of 'interpersonal violence' as adopted by the *World Health Organisation* (Krug et al., 2002) and the *UN Committee on the Rights of the Child* (2011). This concept was considered appropriate to ensure a broad and inclusive approach to harm experienced by children that could be applied in all partner countries. For many, the term 'violence' may have strong connotations to physical aggression and physical injury, however, in recent years it has become far more common to find it applied to other categories of harm and this is the approach taken here.

It is important, then, to understand that the data generated by this study is not confined to what are often considered the 'most serious' experiences of child abuse and neglect. This approach is justified in at least two ways. First, as noted, national and international definitions are far broader than conceptualisations of child abuse within popular discourse (especially the media) and it is important that research captures the full breadth of potentially harmful experiences by providing, as far as possible, the opportunity for respondents to define and report their own experiences. Second, sport (as with other child-friendly spaces) should not just be free from the so-called 'serious' forms of abuse and neglect, it should be free from any harm, harassment, violence and abuse, serving as a positive, safe and healthy force within the lives of all children.

The Study

The research was guided by the following overarching question:

What is the prevalence of interpersonal violence against children active in organised sport, inside and outside sport?

Therefore, our focus is on participants of sport and the interpersonal violence they experience, whether inside sport or beyond.

Subsidiary questions were also investigated:

- What are the characteristics of ‘victims’?
- What are the characteristics of ‘perpetrators’?
- What are the further characteristics of the experience, in relation to:
 - Frequency
 - Duration
 - Location
 - Organisational setting
 - Disclosure

Investigating the prevalence of any experience or behaviour, across different countries, is complex. Child abuse and neglect is clearly an emotive and sensitive issue and a challenging area of research. Therefore, establishing prevalence of experiences of child abuse, or interpersonal violence in childhood, is far from straightforward. The conceptualisation and definition of the problem, as well as the approach to collecting data, are critical factors. These are explained more fully in the report.

Definitions

Our conceptualisation of interpersonal violence against children is based on four categories of violence that typically underpin international and national definitions. Therefore, to answer the research questions, the project team constructed a questionnaire based on the following categories of interpersonal violence:

- **Physical violence:** acts that result in actual or potential physical harm to a child
- **Psychological violence:** non-physical acts that cause, or potentially cause, harm to the psychological health or development of a child
- **Sexual violence:** the inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful or psychologically harmful sexual activity
- **Neglect:** failures to meet a child’s basic physical or psychological needs

Questionnaire and Sample

Approval for the research protocol was provided by University partners’ research ethics committees.

The project recruited Ipsos MORI (IM) – an international market research company with expertise in online-polls on social issues – to design and programme the questionnaire in a suitable, accessible online format.

Following a pilot study with 300 UK respondents, the questionnaire was administered by IM in the six participating countries (two surveys were administered in Belgium,

differentiated into Dutch-speaking Flanders and French-speaking Brussels-Wallonia) using samples of individuals (n=1,472) aged 18-30 years who had participated in sport during childhood.

Samples were comparable by gender (male/female) and age group (18-24/25-30). The final sample consisted of 10,302 individuals. This is one of the largest samples, if not the largest, ever studied internationally on child abuse and neglect in sport.

Fieldwork took place between 22 October and 14 December 2020. IM collated the data and supplied this to the project team. Statistical analyses were then applied to calculate prevalence rates.

The main part of the questionnaire consists of 35 items grouped into five categories of interpersonal violence (psychological, physical, neglect, sexual (non-contact), sexual (contact)). Each category included a number of items (presented as descriptions of behaviour or experiences) for respondents to consider. The survey focused particularly on the sport context, but also asked respondents to state whether the experience was *inside* sport or *outside* sport.

For respondents who indicated one or more experiences of interpersonal violence as a child, additional questions were presented in order to address the subsidiary research questions.

This first publication reports prevalence at the broadest level of analysis focusing on: type of interpersonal violence, the national context, gender, and performance level. The report also provides additional detail regarding victim age (at onset/cessation); frequency, duration, and location; number, gender and role of perpetrators; disclosure; and support. Future publications will provide further analysis.

1.1 Key Findings

1. The experience of interpersonal violence in children's and youth sport is a widespread problem.

In all countries surveyed, around three quarters of respondents reported having had at least one experience of interpersonal violence inside sport before the age of 18.

2. Adults who played sport in their youth are overwhelmingly positive about their overall experience of sport.

Despite the rates of interpersonal violence against children inside sport, 85% of respondents rated their *overall experience of sport* as either 'good (42%) or 'very good' (43%). Less than 5% stated their overall of sport was either 'poor' (3%) or 'very poor' (1%). This is a very positive outcome for the sport sector, but it may also suggest that interpersonal violence is, to some degree, normalized within sport.

3. The prevalence of interpersonal violence against children who participate in sport is marginally lower inside sport than outside sport.

82% of respondents reported at least one experience of interpersonal violence against children outside sport, compared to 75% of respondents who reported at least one experience inside sport. This demonstrates that interpersonal violence against children and young people is a widespread problem in European societies that affects sport as much as other societal areas.

4. The prevalence of specific categories of interpersonal violence against children inside sport varies.

The most common experience of interpersonal violence against children inside sport was *psychological violence* (65%); followed by *physical violence* (44%); *neglect* (37%); and *non-contact sexual violence* (35%); the least common experience inside sport was *contact sexual violence* (20%).

5. The prevalence of interpersonal violence against children inside sport is broadly similar across national contexts.

Inside sport, interpersonal violence against children (across all categories) varies from 70% in Austria (lowest) to 80% in Belgium Brussels-Wallonia (highest).

6. The prevalence of interpersonal violence against children *inside sport* is higher for boys than girls in all countries.

Outside sport, experiences of interpersonal violence against children were reported significantly more often by women. However, *inside sport*, experiences of interpersonal violence against children were reported significantly more often by men. *Inside sport*, 79% of male respondents and 71% of female respondents reported at least one experience of any type of interpersonal violence against children. The range for girls varied from 65% in Belgium Flanders (lowest) to 75% in Brussels-Wallonia, Germany and Spain (highest). The range for boys varied from 72% in Austria (lowest) to 84% in Brussels-Wallonia (highest). The gender-differences per category (inside sport) are:

a. *psychological violence*

68% of men and 61% of women reported at least one experience of psychological violence inside sport before age 18. With the exception of Austria, men were significantly more likely to experience psychological violence inside sport.

b. *physical violence*

52% of men and 36% of women reported at least one experience of physical violence inside sport before age 18. Across all countries, men were significantly more likely to experience physical violence inside sport.

c. *neglect*

44% of men and 30% of women reported at least one experience of neglect inside sport before age 18. Across all countries, men were significantly more likely to experience neglect inside sport.

d. *non-contact sexual violence (NCSV)*

38% of men and 32% of women reported at least one experience of NCSV inside sport before age 18, however, the difference is significant in the UK and Belgium only.

e. *contact sexual violence (CSV)*

26% of men and 14% of women reported at least one experience of CSV inside sport before age 18. With the exception of Austria, men were significantly more likely to have experienced CSV inside sport.

7. The prevalence of interpersonal violence against children is lowest for respondents in recreational sport and highest for those who competed in international sport.

Overall, the prevalence for any form of interpersonal violence against children is 68% at the recreational level and 84% at the international level. The jump from recreational sport to local competitive sport, in particular, seems to increase the risk of experiencing violence.

Further findings:

The following findings relate only to respondents' 'most serious' experience for each category of interpersonal violence against children inside sport:

8. Interpersonal violence against children occurs across the full range of organisational settings in which sport is provided for children, but most often in the sport club.

Interpersonal violence against children was indicated across a range of organisational contexts, including within elite sport settings and within private settings. However, across all categories, the sport club is by far the most frequent location for interpersonal violence against children.

9. Perpetrators of interpersonal violence against children inside sport were predominantly identified as male, but not exclusively.

Across all categories of interpersonal violence against children, *males* were most often identified as the perpetrator(s). *Females* were indicated less often as perpetrators, yet – against common expectations – were responsible for a substantial proportion of the experiences reported by respondents.

10. Interpersonal violence against children is perpetrated by both adults and peers.

Interpersonal violence in sport is perpetrated by peers (e.g. team members) as well as adults. Overall, peers are more often the 'perpetrator'. Among adults, the coach or instructor is most often the perpetrator.

11. Perpetrators of interpersonal violence against children are usually known to the child.

On average, the experience involved an *unknown* adult in only 6% of cases, whereas *coaches*, *other sports personnel*, and other *known adults* were involved in 50% of cases on average. Unknown peers were involved in 21% of cases compared to 37% of *known* peers.

12. The risk of experiencing longer durations of interpersonal violence increases with the level of performance.

Respondents who performed their sport at the national and international competitive level before the age of 18 indicated longer durations of psychological, physical, and non-contact sexual violence than those at lower competitive levels or in recreational sport.

13. The majority of respondents experiencing interpersonal violence against children inside sport did not disclose their most serious experience and a disclosure to someone inside sport was rare.

The majority of respondents experiencing interpersonal violence against children did not disclose the (most serious) experience. Only a very small proportion of participants (4% – 6%) asked for support within the sport context. Disclosures were far more likely to be made to a *family member* or *friend*. Beyond friends and family, the sectors most likely to receive a disclosure were *education* and *health*.

1.2 Conclusion

The aim of the CASES project was to provide robust data on the prevalence of child abuse and neglect inside (and outside) sport across different national contexts.

A key strength of the study is that the same questionnaire was administered in the same way, at the same time, in seven separate national contexts, with young adult respondents (age 18-30) who stated they had participated in sport before age 18 and with samples equally weighted for gender (male/female) and age (18-24/25-30). The CASES study is unique in this regard. In particular, it draws on a sample of young respondents, therefore, the experiences reported refer to recent experiences rather than so-called 'historical cases'.

The CASES study has identified prevalence rates for five categories of interpersonal violence against children in sport, based on respondents (aged 18-30) indicating one or more relevant experience, at least once, before age 18. These rates range from 65% for psychological violence to 20% for contact sexual violence. Whilst some national differences were evident, rates of IVAC were similar across all countries, inside and outside sport.

Therefore, our general conclusion is that (potentially) harmful behaviour is a frequent and widespread experience for children within sport (in Europe). This leads us to suggest that sport may not provide the protective, positive and healthy environment for children that is sometimes assumed and claimed.

The survey also found a significant difference in prevalence of interpersonal violence, *inside* sport, between boys and girls. Perhaps surprisingly, the rates for boys were higher than for girls for all categories, inside sport. We offer some observations on this in the report (see section 6.5). However, the rates for females, whilst generally lower, is nevertheless also high. This factor is far more important than any numerical differences within the sample. CASES has demonstrated that interpersonal violence against children in sport is a serious and widespread problem. Certainly, on the basis of our analysis, interpersonal violence against children in sport evidently persists in all countries involved in the study and there is no reason to believe that this is confined to these countries alone.

For some countries (inside and outside this project), prevention responses from the sport sector have, to varying degrees, been slow, narrowly focused, poorly resourced, and with little or no independent oversight or evaluation. In some countries, despite over 30 years of international research and advocacy in this field, alongside the testimony of many abused athletes, policy implementation has barely begun.

A key feature of addressing interpersonal violence against children and young people in sport (and all athletes) is to ensure that strategy is informed, not just by what leaders and their organisations see, but also by independent and robust scientific evidence. The CASES project provides an important part of the evidential picture that sport leaders, legislators and policymakers require in their efforts to improve the experience of sport for all children and to improve the lives of children, families and communities, through sport. Ultimately, this is the key performance indicator or measure of the sport sector.

Addressing interpersonal violence against children in sport requires cultural change. Therefore, in order to meaningfully address the problem, we conclude that proactive leadership is required within all national contexts and across the whole sport sector (public, private, and voluntary). We leave it to those with the authority to make such decisions in relation to sport to determine the extent and timing of such change and the resources required.

We draw this conclusion on the basis of our findings, however, we would also want to recognise that some countries have already undertaken substantial and significant action in this regard. We very much welcome such action. We also want to recognise the persistent endeavours of individuals within the sport sector who work tirelessly and selflessly to provide meaningful and safe opportunities for children and for the improvement of children's lives. We very much hope that you will see this study as a contribution to your work – perhaps more vital now than ever – rather than a negation of it.

The CASES findings can now be used by sports organisations to further substantiate and develop their measures to protect children from harm in sport. We offer some recommendations based on these findings, again recognising that the distance some countries and organisations have travelled in the protection and safeguarding of children in sport may make these recommendations more or less relevant.

1.3 Recommendations

A. Government departments or ministries responsible for sport should:

1. Ensure general policies and strategies on child protection and 'safeguarding' include and apply to sport.
2. Incorporate systematic, longitudinal research on prevalence of interpersonal violence against children in sport into national strategies and action plans for sport.
3. Provide an independent body or agency where those affected by interpersonal violence in sport can report their experiences and receive help and support.
4. Ensure national agencies or federations are supported and appropriately resourced to introduce and/or increase efforts to raise awareness of and prevent interpersonal violence in sport.
5. Ensure prevention efforts extend to the local level (e.g. voluntary sports clubs) and are not limited to 'umbrella' sports federations.

B. International, national and federal bodies should:

6. Acknowledge all forms of interpersonal violence against children inside sport.
7. Introduce measures to prevent interpersonal violence in sport and ensure children's rights are incorporated into all levels of organisational structures in sport.
8. Ensure strategic policy is informed by evidence on prevalence rates of interpersonal violence against children.
9. Evaluate and improve the efficacy of prevention measures through longitudinal assessment of interpersonal violence against children in sport.

C. Prevention strategies should:

10. Include compulsory training across all categories of interpersonal violence against children, including peer violence, for those with responsibility for children in sport.
11. Establish sport-specific and independent contact points for support, advice, complaints and reports (e.g. a helpline).
12. Acknowledge the important role that sports personnel have in recognising interpersonal violence, receiving and handling disclosures, and the support they need to carry out these roles safely and effectively.
13. Address interpersonal violence against children at all levels of sport (from recreational grassroot to competitive and elite sport) and be sensitive to the potential for heightened risk in competitive sport.

D. Training and education should:

14. Convey that interpersonal violence against children can occur in different forms and that some forms (e.g. peer violence, psychological violence) are more prevalent than others.
15. Convey that the risk for interpersonal violence against children might increase as the child moves beyond recreational sport.
16. Recognize that interpersonal violence against children is a significant problem for both males and females and that boys and men may be particularly underrepresented in official reports.
17. Recognise that children participating in sport may have experienced interpersonal violence in other contexts and that adults in sport may be important contact points to support children.
18. Recognise that interpersonal violence in sport does not stop at age 18.

2. Introduction

Recent years have seen unprecedented attention on the abuse of children and athletes in sport. Strategic responses are critical and must be informed by robust evidence on the scale and nature of these abuses. The project “Child Abuse in Sport – European Statistics” (CASES) is designed to support this endeavour.

This report presents first key findings of the CASES study into the prevalence of child abuse – or interpersonal violence against children – within six European countries. It is designed to inform those working in the field of organised sport, sport management, sport politics and child protection. Further and more detailed publications will follow in academic publication formats. For more details on the results in the participating countries, respective country reports are published.

2.1 European Context

The European Parliament, the Council of the European Union, and the Council of Europe have all acknowledged that sport is a setting where children are at risk of violence and notes that progress in preventing such violence has been hampered by, among other things, a lack of robust data and research, including empirical work on the prevalence of violence against children (e.g. World Health Organisation, 2015).

Consequently, it is recommended that EU Member States conduct regular, robust studies into the prevalence of child maltreatment, including all forms of violence against children, and to ensure such studies focus not only on the various types or categories of maltreatment but also on risk factors, age, gender and socio-economic determinants to better understand the scale and backgrounds of the problem and to inform future preventive programmes.

2.2 European Sport Context

Reference to sport as a setting where violence occurs and as an institution with responsibility for protecting those involved was first made in 1975 in the *European Sport for All Charter* (Council of Europe, 1975), which called for the introduction of methods ‘...to safeguard sport and sportsmen [sic] from exploitation for political, commercial or financial gain, and from practices that are abusive and debasing’ (Council of Europe, 1975, Article 5). An updated version of the Charter later referred specifically to implementing steps in sport to prevent ‘sexual harassment and abuse, particularly of children, young people and women’ (Council of Europe, 1992a, Article 1).

Since then, various European-level actors have established policies calling for action to prevent and manage violence and exploitation in sport. In its 2007 *White Paper on Sport*, the European Commission Member States and sports organisations cooperated on building a robust evidence base on the magnitude of the problem and on disseminating information on, among others, best practice for preventing and managing such exploitation.

The prevention and management of sexual violence against adult and child athletes also features prominently in European-level policy. For example, the *Resolution on the Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Women, Young People and*

Children in Sport (Council of Europe, 2000) and the *Resolution on Women and Sport* (European Parliament, 2002) urge European member states to develop national policies that define harassment and abuse in sport and raise awareness of these behaviours. Meanwhile, the *Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse* (Council of Europe, 2007) called for better understanding of the extent of violence against children in and beyond sport and the introduction of measures to prevent and manage this. According to the Council of Europe (2010) sport and sport-related organisations are responsible for ensuring that:

... safeguards are in place within the context of an overall framework of support and protection for children, young people and women, both to protect them from sexual harassment and abuse and to prevent the exploitation of children, particularly those who demonstrate precocious ability. (Council of Europe, 2010: 10.10)

The protection of minors from abuse is specifically highlighted in the EU Work Plan for Sport 2014-17 and the EU Work Plan for Sport 2017-2020 identifies the objective of strengthening the evidence base for sport, identifying the integrity of sport, in particular promoting good governance, including the safeguarding of minors, as a key topic; Annex I of the Plan refers specifically to a study on the prevalence of child abuse in sport. The outputs of this project make a clear and significant contribution to the delivery of the Plan.

2.3 The CASES Project and Partnership

The project aimed to develop insights pertinent to strategic efforts to prevent child abuse, exploitation and violence in sport and to develop resources for the sport sector that will support sport organisations to safeguard children's welfare.

To this end, the principal objective of the project was to collect scientifically robust evidence on the scale, dynamics and constellations of *interpersonal violence against children in sport* (IVACS). In undertaking this task, the CASES partnership fully acknowledges that abuse and violence does not only affect those under the age of 18 and that studies of adult experiences of violence in sport are also required.

CASES is a collaborative partnership between seven European universities, two national sport council's and one international sport federation (see Figure 1).

3. National Contexts of Partners

3.1 Austria

Austria has a population of approximately 8.0 million people. Sport in Austria is organised in a governmental and a non-governmental sector. The latter includes the Austrian Olympic Committee, the Austrian Sports Association for the Disabled as well as three umbrella organisations who record 2.7 members in over 14,000 sport clubs.

Research on the prevalence of interpersonal violence against children in Austrian sport has not yet been conducted. However, Austrian sport introduced prevention measures in 2006 when ASKÖ, one of the three national umbrella sport organisations, initiated the national 'Call4Girls/Call4Boys' project. This established a telephone helpline for any child or adult who has experienced sexual violence in sport – one of the few such initiatives of its kind in EU sport at that time.

As a result of this project, some governing bodies introduced designated individuals with responsibility for disseminating information and advice on violence in sport within their organisation (known as 'Trust Persons'). These roles are now established in each national sport federation and in all national governing bodies of sport in Austria. In 2015 a 'Code of Ethics' was first implemented to develop a more democratic and gender-sensitive culture within clubs as a way of preventing gender-based violence in sport. Moreover, an established working group aiming at preventing sexualized violence in sport – in collaboration with the organisation *100% Sport* – offer advanced education and training for coaches and others working in sport organisations to help implement prevention measures.

Currently, Austrian policy makers are planning to establish a central clearing agency to provide support for individuals affected by abuse in sport.

3.2 Belgium

Belgium is a federal state with a population of approximately 11.5 million people and comprising Dutch, French and German speaking communities.

Violence and abuse in sport is a rather new topic in sport policy in Belgium. However, the topic of sexual violence in general is not. In 1996, the case of Belgian serial killer and child abuser Marc Dutroux drew public and political attention worldwide and was a catalyst for major changes in police investigation and legislation on child abuse. However, it was not until after the public disclosures of child sexual abuse in the Catholic Church, in 2010, that the context of sport was investigated in Belgium. The Flemish Minister of Sport announced the development and installation of a prevention policy, however, there were no official or public disclosures of sexual violence in sport from athletes or any data on prevalence.

Belgian sports federations are commonly split into Flemish and French-speaking sections. As sport is organised separately within each language community, policies differ across communities. This study is the first attempt to estimate the prevalence of the problem in the Brussels-Wallonia region.

In Flanders, the first prevalence study into interpersonal violence against children in sport was published in 2016 and found that 38% of adults had experienced psychological violence, 14% sexual violence and 11% physical violence, in sport, before the age of 18 (Vertommen et al., 2016). The findings also showed that physical violence was experienced more by boys, compared to girls. Psychological violence, including bullying, was reported equally by boys and girls. Sexual violence was reported more by girls, but with regard to the most severe types of contact sexual violence, there were no gender differences. In Wallonia-Brussels, currently, no evidence on the magnitude of interpersonal violence in sport is available. The current study will be the first to report on this.

3.3 Germany

Germany has a population of approximately 83 million people. The German Olympic Sport Federation (Deutscher Olympischer Sportbund [DOSB]) is the umbrella agency for German sport. The DOSB records 27.6 million memberships in over 88,000 sports clubs. The German Sport Youth (Deutsche Sportjugend [DSJ]) is the youth organisation of the DOSB and represents the interests of 9.6 million young people under the age of 26.

Despite an early study (Klein & Palzkill, 1998) revealing sexual harassment and abuse of women and girls in German sport, the general sport sector with a few exceptions ignored the problem of violence in children's sport for a long period. However, a Commissioner for Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) was established at the level of the German government in 2010 following media coverage of CSA in schools, churches and sport. At this point the national sport agencies (DOSB and DSJ) began to develop policies to prevent sexual violence in sport. This included the introduction of a designated individual responsible for prevention in each member organisation.

From 2019, German sport organisations are required to complete 15 separate actions for the prevention of *sexual* violence. These actions include a risk analysis and an intervention plan and are a condition of central funding to be received from the DOSB and DSJ.

Significant research has been undertaken to measure the magnitude of interpersonal violence in sport in Germany. The research project »Safe Sport«, based on a sample of 1799 elite athletes (over the age of 16), found that more than every third elite athlete (37.6%) has experienced sexual violence inside sport, 11% experiencing a 'severe' form of sexual violence. Female athletes were affected significantly more often than male athletes (Ohlert et al., 2018).

The study also revealed a prevalence rate of 30% overall for physical violence and 86% of respondents reported at least one situation of psychological violence. If these experiences are categorised according to severity, it emerges that 21% of the athletes stated that they had experienced severe psychological violence in the context of sport (mainly relating to permanent or recurring experiences of violence) (Ohlert et al., in press).

Compared to the Netherlands and Belgium (Flanders), where an identical questionnaire was used in the survey by Vertommen et al. (2016), the prevalence in Germany for all three forms of violence (psychological, physical and sexualised

violence) is significantly higher than in these two countries (Ohlert et al., 2020). This study is restricted to the field of elite sport, data on interpersonal violence in leisure and recreational sport settings is missing up to date.

3.4 Romania

Romania has a population of approximately 19.5 million people. Violence against children in sports has received very little attention in Romania. Policies targeting child abuse do not reference abuse in sport. Documents to raise awareness and combat forms of child abuse, developed by UNICEF and NGOs in Romania, refer to the places where forms of violence can occur, such as the home, family, school, child care institutions, etc., however sport is not mentioned (Marin & Zaharia, 2016).

Research on abuse has mainly focused on the institutionalized child (Stativa et al., 2002), the child in families (Anghelescu et al., 2006), and bullying in schools (Gradinaru et al., 2016).

Abuses against children in sports have sporadically been brought to public attention through press investigations following reports from parents. Former athletes, especially female gymnasts, have also made public statements denouncing the cruelty with which they were treated by coaches in childhood, referring to physical, verbal and emotional abuse, including starvation.

References to sexual abuse rarely appear in these press inquiries and are limited to reference of inappropriate touches from (male) coaches on girls during training. The abuse of boys (any form) has not been raised or disclosed.

At the time of preparing this project (2018), in Romania there were no ongoing programs to raise awareness of abuse in sport. Only in October 2019, Terre des hommes Romania launched the project, 'Keeping children safe in sports' (funded by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Program of the European Union). But it also avoids the subject of sexual abuse, focusing on other forms of abuse.

In these conditions, the development of control and prevention policies must be based on scientific data on the prevalence of abuse in sports, in all its forms of manifestation and in all categories of athletes, which the present study proposes to do.

3.5 Spain

Spain has a population of approximately 47 million people. The Spanish High Sport Council (El Consejo Superior de Deportes [CSD]) is the umbrella agency for Spanish Sport. In the last report (2020) the CSD accounted 3.8 million memberships to federations in over 74,459 sport clubs. Moreover, the last survey (2020) on sport habits found that 60% of the Spanish population aged 15 years and older had played sport in the last year, either regularly or occasionally.

Attention to interpersonal violence against children in sport is growing but still remains a marginal topic in the sport world. In 2013, a case of sexual violence against a female child gymnast in the national team at the Moscow 1980 Olympic Games hit the national news. The head gymnastics coach and alleged perpetrator had been a member of the CSD for more than 20 years and the gymnastics programme depended on him. Due to the statute of limitations, the case was never

taken to court. However, the police investigation stated that there were strong indications that sexual abuse against child gymnasts had been happening for some years. After this case, other Olympic and international athletes came forward and reported sexual abuse. For example, international coaches Torres Baena (Karate) and Miguel Millán (athletics) are currently serving prison sentences for sexually abusing child athletes.

Following the media coverage of these cases, a few clubs and sport entities within the various Autonomous Communities (Catalonia, Madrid, Basque country, etc.) took the initiative to raise awareness and provide training on prevention and detection of sexual violence, providing workshops, talks and webinars on the topic for their coaches and members. However, this is not a unified or systematic approach and official training resources and ‘safeguarding’ structures are required at both national and Autonomous Communities level.

In June 2021, after years of pressure from Spanish and international NGOs, a law related to the comprehensive protection of children and adolescents from violence was approved (*Organic Law 8/2021, of 4 June*). This law represents a crucial turning point in Spain; for the first time sport is explicitly referenced as one of the areas in which violence can occur.

The law imposes three specific obligations with reference to child protection in sport: (i) requisite training of professionals working in sport with children; (ii) obliging the clubs and sport entities to appoint a child protection delegate; and (iii) implementing protocols with an emphasis on addressing discrimination, insults, and humiliation in sport contexts. Therefore, the new law goes beyond sexual violence and establishes new norms for the sport sector and professionals working with children. It includes all coaches and adults who work with children in sport contexts. The law also requires each area, including sport and leisure, to draw up national prevention strategies.

3.6 UK

The United Kingdom, comprising England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, has a population of approximately 67 million people. Each country has its own umbrella agency for sport, primarily responsible for promoting sports participation and distributing central funding, but sport governing bodies are independent and autonomous organisations.

Following the research and advocacy of Celia Brackenridge from the late 1990s, the UK was one of the first countries to establish measures to protect children from IV in sport. In 2001, Sport England and a children’s charity¹ established the *Child Protection in Sport Unit* (CPSU). The CPSU helps sports organisations build capacity for safeguarding children in sport and now operates in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. An equivalent organisation runs in Scotland².

In 2003, the CPSU established professional standards for sports organisations (CPSU, 2018, 2019). These include measures to protect children from IV in sport. Funding for national governing bodies of sport (NGBs) is tied to implementation of

¹ The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC).

² This is called Children 1st.

these standards. NGBs also have designated national safeguarding leads with links to statutory agencies, safeguarding training is required for sports staff, and criminal history checks are mandatory for staff with regular contact with children in sport (Lang & Papaefstathiou, 2021).

Despite these developments, little is known about the prevalence of IV against children in sport in the UK. One study explored self-reported harms experienced by a non-representative sample of university students when they were children in organised sport (Alexander et al., 2011). Of the valid 6,124 responses that relate to forms of IV, 75% reported experiencing emotional harm, 29% sexual harassment, 24% physical harm, and 3% sexual harm. Males reported experiencing more emotional, physical, and sexual harm than females, and females more sexual harassment.

The study did not gather data on neglect in sport. The focus on subjective 'harm', the definitions used and the lack of representative sample means the study does not constitute a prevalence study. As such, there is a significant gap in our knowledge about the prevalence of IV against children in sport. This was highlighted in an independent report to government that recommended 'government to ensure that a prevalence study, looking at the rates of abuse of children and adults in sport, is conducted to gather up to date information' (Grey-Thompson, 2017: 18).

4. Methodology

CASES surveyed six European countries using samples of individuals (n=1472) aged 18-30 years who had participated in sport during childhood. Samples were comparable by gender and age group (18-24, 25-30) of respondents. The survey focused particularly on the sport context but also collected comparative data for interpersonal violence and abuse outside of sport.

The necessary sample size is based on a power calculation to allow comparison between the respective genders and age groups (n=368) with an expected lowest prevalence of interpersonal violence in sport (contact sexual violence) of 4% (Confidence Interval 95%, alpha= .05: Z= 1.96, d= .02).

4.1 Research Questions

The study was guided by the central research question:

What is the prevalence of interpersonal violence against children active in organised sport, inside and outside sport?

Subsidiary questions were:

- What are the characteristics of 'victims'?
- What are the characteristics of 'perpetrators'?
- What are the further characteristics of the experience in relation to:
 - Frequency
 - Duration
 - Location
 - Organisational setting
 - Disclosure

4.2 Definitions

4.2.1 Interpersonal violence

Violence is a complex and contested concept. Traditional or minimalist conceptions focus on physical force, but are criticized for failing to take 'account of the wider contexts of social relationships in which violence occurs, non-physical harms (especially psychological), and the possibility of violent outcomes that were not consciously intended' (Ray, 2011: 24).

The forms in which violence manifests itself can be visible or insidious, sometimes difficult to perceive or recognise as such, both by the individual who manifests the behaviour and by the one who is subjected to it. The impact of violent behaviours on children, in particular, does not only depend on the form that behaviour takes, but on a series of contextual and personal factors that can aggravate the consequences.

As there are many behaviours with severe consequences, which are 'non-violent', even 'affectionate' (e.g. caressing, kissing, hugging), yet represent an abuse of trust rather than actions normally construed as violent, the terms *abuse*, *exploitation*, and/or *maltreatment* are widely used to refer to harm to children. Thus, Article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1989) states that the child should be protected from:

[..] all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) describes the nature of violent acts as: 1) *physical*; 2) *sexual*; 3) *psychological*; and 4) *deprivation* or *neglect*³ (Krug et al., 2002: 6). Sethi et al. (2018: 106) provide definitions for each type or category of violence. The WHO also separate violence into three distinct categories: *self-directed*, *interpersonal*, and *collective* violence. For the purposes of this study, *self-directed* and *collective* violence were excluded.

Interpersonal violence (IV) refers to: a) *family and intimate partner violence* and b) *community violence*. *Family and intimate partner violence* refers to violence 'usually, though not exclusively, taking place in the home'. *Community violence* refers to 'violence between individuals who are unrelated, and who may or may not know each other, generally taking place outside the home' (Krug et al., 2002: 6). Furthermore, 'children can experience violence at the hands of adults, and violence may also occur among children' (UN, 2011). This is a significant area of global health policy. Thus, the WHO published a 'global plan of action' in 2016 'to strengthen the role of the health system within a national multisectoral response to address interpersonal violence, in particular against women and girls, and against children' (WHO, 2016). The CASES team chose to use this concept of *interpersonal violence against children* (IVAC) and to include all four types or categories of violence (physical, sexual, psychological, neglect).

4.2.2 Categories of interpersonal violence

Based on the framework of the WHO and incorporating views from research and other appropriate organisations, the four types or categories of interpersonal violence were defined as follows:

Physical violence results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction or lack of an interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust, e.g. a coach or physiotherapist in the field of sport (WHO, 1999: 16). Yet, physical violence may also occur in peer-to-peer interaction, e.g. between peer athletes in a sport-setting. Physical violence may involve hitting, kicking, shaking, pushing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, drowning or any other method of causing physical harm (CPSU, 2021). In the field of sport, it is important to be sensitive to those physical behaviours that would be

³ Conceptualisations of child abuse make the same distinctions (e.g. the British governments statutory guidance in 'safeguarding' includes four main categories of abuse: physical, sexual, emotional abuse, and neglect, as well as exploitation and extremism (HM Government, 2018, p.106)).

considered violent or abusive in other contexts, but are a normal ‘part of the game’ in sport, such as hitting in combat sport or collisions in many team/ball games. Thus, forms of physical harm that belong to the usual execution of a sport are not included in this study. However, physical violence does include situations where coaches or the entourage of an athlete encourage the use of drugs or harmful substances (e.g. to enhance performance, delay puberty, etc.) or instances where athletes are required to participate when injured or where sanctions used by coaches involve inflicting pain (CPSU, 2021).

Psychological violence (sometimes also called ‘emotional violence’) includes acts towards a child that cause, or have a high probability of causing, harm to the child’s psychological health or mental, spiritual or social development (WHO, 1999). Those acts include belittling, humiliating, shouting, scapegoating, rejecting, isolating and threatening behaviours, as well as being ignored, or denied attention and support (Mountjoy et al., 2016). Furthermore, in the field of sport the pressure to perform to unrealistically high expectations falls within the scope of psychological violence (CPSU, 2021).

Sexual violence or abuse – according to the WHO (1999) is the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or that violate the laws or social taboos of society. Sexual violence encompasses situations where a child is forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities where consent is not or cannot be given. This may or may not involve physical contact, and it can also occur ‘online’. In sport, it often involves manipulation and entrapment of the athlete (CPSU, 2021; IOC, 2007).

The term ‘sexual violence’ is usually used as an umbrella term that includes a continuum of different behaviours, ranging from sexual harassment without body contact, to transgressive behaviours, to sexual violence with body contact. The common characteristics of these different forms are that the behaviours are based on sexuality and the abuse of power and have intimidating or even traumatising effects on victims (Brackenridge, 2001; Ohlert et al, 2018, Rulofs et al., 2019). In this study sexual violence is differentiated into *contact-sexual violence*, including sexual behaviours with body-contact, and *non-contact sexual violence*, including verbal, visual or digital/online forms of sexual harassment.

Neglect is the failure to meet a child’s basic physical or psychological needs. Since a child has unique demands to sustain growth and development, behaviours that neglect these demands can have a long-lasting impact on a child's health or development. In sport, examples of neglect could include a coach or supervisor failing to ensure children are safe while participating in their sport, e.g. exposing children to unsafe conditions or extreme weather without ensuring adequate equipment, clothing or hydration, exposing children to unnecessary risk of injury by ignoring safe practice guidelines or failing to ensure the use of safety equipment. (CPSU, 2021; Mountjoy et al., 2016).

4.2.3 Inclusive Approach

Based on these definitions, our conceptualisation of IVAC was, therefore, broad and deliberately intended to include supposedly milder forms of violence, or acts that may not be considered as violent, such as inappropriate staring or leering, being

made to feel inferior, or not providing positive feedback ('praise'). This decision may be criticised, however, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child states:

All forms of violence against children, however light, are unacceptable. [...] Frequency, severity of harm and intent to harm are not prerequisites for the definitions of violence. State parties may refer to such factors in intervention strategies in order to allow proportional responses in the best interests of the child, but definitions must in no way erode the child's absolute right to human dignity and physical and psychological integrity by describing some forms of violence as legally and/or socially acceptable. (UNCRC, 2011: 8)

Similarly, the UK government's statutory guidance for 'safeguarding' children provides the following definition of 'child abuse':

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. (HM Government, 2018: 106)

Therefore, the CASES questionnaire purposely aimed to be as inclusive as possible. We would add that *all* items in the questionnaire represent experiences and/or behaviours that can have a deleterious and long-term impact on those who are subjected to them.

When studying interpersonal violence (IV) *in sport*, it is also necessary to distinguish behaviours or actions that are a normal and legitimate part of the game or activity, even though they may normally be described as 'violent', from that which oversteps the ethical mark (Brackenridge, 2010); in other words, deliberate or non-accidental IV. Accordingly, 'violence' occurring within the bounds of prescribed constitutive rules (for example, punching in boxing and collisions in sports such as rugby or football) is not considered in this study.

4.2.4 Defining 'Sport'

CASES focused on *organised sport* which we define as every recreational or competitive sporting activity that is: voluntary, takes place within the context of a club or organisation outside the school curriculum, and involves an element of training or instruction by an adult, including sport camps and organised extracurricular sporting activities at school.

We exclude physical education (PE), as governance for PE lessons falls within the education sector rather than the sport sector. We also exclude informal or casual sport activities (e.g. self-organised running and swimming) and other informal physical activities (e.g. dog-walking, gardening).

Whilst the focus of the study is the sport context, the underpinning principle is the prevention of child abuse (interpersonal violence against children) in all its forms and contexts. Therefore, to establish a meaningful picture of the interpersonal violence experienced by those who participate in sport (before age 18), it was important to survey respondents' experiences both inside *and* outside sport.

4.3 Respondents

This study consists of a convenience sample, provided by the international research agency Ipsos MORI. An online questionnaire (described below) was completed by 1,472 adults (aged 18-30) in each partner country (Austria, Belgium, Germany, Romania, Spain, United Kingdom). Only respondents that took part in organised sport before the age of 18 were included in the survey. Interlocking quotas were set on *age* (18-24 years old and 25-30 years old) and *gender* to reach an equal split across the four categories.

Following a specific request from the Walloon government, two samples were taken in Belgium: one with Dutch-speaking citizens living in Flanders, and one with French speaking citizens living in Brussels or Wallonia.

Two responses (one from a participant in the UK and one from Romania) had to be deleted (see 3.5.6 for further information). A final sample of 10,302 individuals was achieved.

4.4 The Instrument

The research instrument was an online questionnaire structured around the four main categories of abuse or interpersonal violence: *physical*, *psychological* (or emotional), *sexual*, and *neglect*. Sexual violence was further divided into two categories: *contact sexual violence* (CSV) and *non-contact sexual violence* (NCSV).

4.4.1 Development of the questionnaire

The CASES study is based on an online questionnaire for adults (aged 18 to 30) that enquires about their experiences in sport prior to age 18. The questionnaire was specifically developed by the CASES-consortium to address the research question (above). It is informed by previous research that has documented and described abuse and interpersonal violence in sport since the 1990s. Previous similar research, such as Alexander et al. (2011), Vertommen et al. (2017; 2020) and Ohlert et al. (2018) were particularly influential in the questionnaire design.

4.4.2 Operationalising criteria for 'violent' experiences

A significant challenge in the development of the questionnaire was to operationalise the broad definition of *interpersonal violence* into concrete items exploring the respondents' experiences inside and outside sport. The instrument had to capture the range of experiences indicated by the *United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC) within a concise survey. Therefore, the impulse to gather all the data considered important, valuable and meaningful had to be tempered against the need to produce a questionnaire that respondents would be able and willing to complete in a reasonable timeframe. In this regard, the design had to take particular account of individuals who may have many experiences to report and ensure that the questionnaire was not overly onerous for such respondents.

It was also crucial that the questionnaire was suitably contextualised to the sport sector so that respondents were sensitised to IVAC *inside sport*. At the same time – since a comparison to experiences *outside sport* was also part of the study design –

the questionnaire items also had to be compatible with general, non-sport-specific fields.

Guided by the principles of the UNCRC and aligned with international standards on child welfare and children's rights, the survey items do not necessitate a 'perpetrator' who *intentionally* harms another individual. Rather the questionnaire is designed to capture not only overtly violent or abusive acts against children, but also behaviour and experiences that may be normalised or tolerated, inside sport (and other) contexts, and which, as a consequence, may well not be considered as violent or harmful by the individual or 'victim' at the time of experience.

Therefore, the concept of (self-perceived) *violence* was not the primary criteria for respondents to consider. Instead, the survey sensitised respondents to include experiences they felt to be negative, hurtful, or harmful. Therefore, the introduction to the main items in the questionnaire stated:

The next questions ask about your childhood and experiences that are generally considered to be negative or harmful for young people.

The preamble to each battery of questions then sensitized the respondent to the particular area of IVAC using the following statements:

Physical:

Sometimes people can do things that hurt us physically when we are children.

Psychological:

Sometimes, people can do or say things which hurt our feelings or have a negative or harmful emotional impact when we are children.

Neglect:

Sometimes the people that are responsible for caring for us when we are children do not do look after us in the way that they should.

Sexual:

Sometimes people can do or say negative or harmful things of a sexual nature when we are children. These may have been unwanted at the time, or you may now feel that they were inappropriate.

4.4.3 Central items/questions

35 items were developed in order to gather data on four types of IV or 'abuse'. These were grouped into five categories and each category included a number of behaviours or experiences for respondents to consider: *neglect* (6 items), *psychological violence* (9 items), *physical violence* (5 items), *non-contact sexual violence (NCSV)* (9 items), and *contact sexual violence (CSV)* (6 items).

Table 1 provides an abridged version of the 35 items. Future publications will include the full questionnaire.

TABLE 1: OVERVIEW OF ITEMS DESCRIBING EXPERIENCES OF INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

Category of interpersonal violence	Core content of item
Neglect	1. Inadequate support
	2. Inadequate medical care
	3. Inadequate supervision
	4. Inappropriate equipment
	5. Absence from school
	6. Unsafe conditions
Psychological violence	7. Humiliations
	8. Criticism about appearance
	9. Ignored or excluded
	10. Not praised for efforts (praise withheld)
	11. Verbal aggression/abuse
	12. Unrealistic expectations
	13. Initiation games/rites (non-physical)
	14. Verbal threats about performance
	15. Expulsion from team/club/group
Physical violence	16. Exercise as a punishment
	17. Initiation games/rites
	18. Taking supplements
	19. Playing while injured or at harmful intensity
	20. Physical assault
Non-contact sexual violence (NCSV)	21. Obscene or sexual comments
	22. Inappropriate staring or leering
	23. Asked/forced to view sexual images/messages
	24. Asked/forced to produce or share sexual images or messages
	25. Sexual images of respondent produced and/or shared
	26. Undressing for others
	27. 'Flashed' at (in person)
	28. 'Flashed' at (online)
	29. Sexual games/initiation rites (non-contact)
Contact sexual violence (CSV)	30. Kissing
	31. Sexual touching
	32. Genital contact
	33. Oral sex
	34. Sexual penetration
	35. Sexual games/initiation rites (contact)

4.4.4 Dynamics and constellations of IVACS

For respondents who indicated one or more experiences of interpersonal violence in sport before age 18, additional questions were presented. Where a respondent indicated more than one item within a category of IVAC, they were asked to provide details for the 'most serious experience'. To operationalise this, respondents were asked to select 'the one experience that had the most impact on you, either physically or psychologically' (see Table 2).

TABLE 2: OVERVIEW OF ITEMS RELATING TO MOST SERIOUS EXPERIENCE OF IVAC

Respondent ('victim')	1. Age experience began (onset)
	2. Age experience stopped (cessation)
Experience (or incident)	3. Number of incidents (frequency)
	4. Total period of experience/victimisation (duration)
	5. Organisational type of sport setting (context)
	6. Specific sport location
Perpetrator(s)	7. Number of individuals involved
	8. Gender of individuals involved
	9. Role/Position of individuals involved
Reporting & Support	10. Disclosure and support sought by respondent

4.5 Procedure

4.5.1 Testing

The questionnaire was first developed in English and pre-tested by members of the UK research team with 30 male and female adult (over 18) native English speakers in the target age range and from a range of socio-economic backgrounds. This took the form of a 'say what you think' type trial, to allow the research team to check respondents' understandings of the questions. This prompted some amendments to improve clarity, mainly adjusting to lay language.

Following pre-testing, EHU published a tender for the online implementation of the questionnaire across the partner countries. Ipsos MORI (IM), a global leader in market research, were subsequently recruited to implement the questionnaire.

The move to an online format required further development of the questionnaire. In particular, IM advised and assisted in adapting the survey to be 'device agnostic'; given the age of target audience (18-30 years), it was important that the survey was compatible with completion on a mobile phone. Therefore, some adjustments to question length and format were made.

The online version of the questionnaire was built by IM and hosted on their platform. A pilot of the UK survey was then completed with 300 respondents from Ipsos' IIS panel⁴. The aim of the pilot was to test questionnaire routing, survey length, to check for any questions with a high number of abandoned interviews or non-substantive answers ('don't know' or 'prefer not to say'), and to review use of the open text response item.

Pilot fieldwork took place between 28 August – 1 September 2020. The pilot-testing revealed some inconsistencies in routing and phrasing of questions, leading to further refinements.

⁴ Ipsos Interactive Services Limited, or IIS, is a company with its registered address in the England at 3 Thomas More Square, London, E1W 1YW. IIS is part of the Ipsos worldwide group of companies.

4.5.2 Translation

The survey questionnaire, survey invitation, and privacy notice were translated by the respective national consortium partners of the project into German (Austria and Germany), Dutch (Belgium), Romanian and Spanish. The translation into French (Belgium) was provided by an external agency. A separate list of sports was provided for all countries in the relevant language by the consortium partners and proofread by the IM Translation Team. Once translated, these were checked by the partners across the survey countries and a small number of changes were suggested and incorporated before the translations were finalised.

In order to ensure a translation that was as close as possible to the English original, the principle of back-translation was undertaken, i.e. the questionnaire was back-translated into English by an independent third person who was a native speaker of English and also knew the local language of the respective country. Any deviations were discussed and adjusted by the whole team.

4.5.3 Sampling

Sampling and data collection were performed by IM. Members of the IM Panel are regularly invited to participate in various online surveys and receive small incentives (e.g., coupons for online shopping) in return for their participation. IM was responsible for compiling a well-balanced composition of the sample, so that it is as representative of the populations as well as possible.

IM contacted panel members aged 18-30, who were screened on the basis of whether they had participated in organised sport when under 18. During the fieldwork, interlocking quotas were set by gender and age-group (18-24 and 25-30 years-old), with the aim of reaching an equal distribution across the four categories. Although this form of quota sampling facilitated a sample as representative as possible in terms of age and gender, there are also disadvantages of such a sampling. Online panels, by definition, only reach those who have internet access, whilst recruitment into a panel in the first place is self-selective and likely to be biased towards particular demographic groups. Nevertheless, the sample is one of the largest – if not the largest – ever studied internationally on interpersonal violence in sport.

Panel members were invited to participate in the study by means of a briefing letter which contained information on the content of the questionnaire, a link to a webpage with further information on the methodology of the study, a directory of counselling services, and a hyperlink to the CASES questionnaire.

4.5.4 Ethical considerations

Approval for the research protocol was obtained from all University partners' ethics committees in all participating countries.

Given the sensitive nature of the survey, considerable thought was given to the ordering of the questions while also ensuring respondents were clear on the different categories of experience. The final questionnaire asked first about physical violence, followed by psychological violence, neglect, and finally sexual violence.

Respondents could only proceed after completing a consent page. This made it clear that the questionnaire covered 'sensitive matters such as abuse', that participation

was voluntary, responses were confidential, and that the survey could be paused or terminated at any point. Respondents were reminded of this throughout the questionnaire. For those questions considered to be of a particularly sensitive nature, an answer option 'prefer not to say' was offered.

A list of support services, bespoke for each partner country, was provided through a link on every screen and at the end of the survey.

Initially, a series of follow-up questions (relating to: frequency, duration, perpetrator details, location) were designed for each specific item of violence experienced. However, after review of the scripted questionnaire, it became clear that this would result in a very long interview for those who had experienced multiple forms of violence. This increased the potential risk of harm to respondents, therefore, in the final version, follow-up questions were only asked about the *most serious* experience, for each category of IVAC. This modification reduced the potential time burden significantly.

4.5.5 Fieldwork

The mainstage fieldwork involved a staggered approach to launching the survey in each country, as shown in Table 3. Fieldwork took place between 22 October and 14 December 2020, until the net response of 1472 was achieved in all countries.

TABLE 3: FIELDWORK DATES BY COUNTRY

Country	Fieldwork start date	Fieldwork end date	Duration (days)
Austria	11/11/2020	17/11/2020	7
Belgium (Flanders)	03/11/2020	14/12/2020	41
Belgium (Brussels-Wallonia)	03/11/2020	22/11/2020	20
Germany	10/11/2020	14/11/2020	5
Romania	29/10/2020	4/11/2020	7
Spain	30/10/2020	2/11/2020	4
UK	22/10/2020	31/10/2020	10

4.5.5.1 ACHIEVED QUOTAS

Interlocking quotas were set on *age* and *gender* to reach an equal split across the four categories (18-24 years/25-30 years and male/female), as shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4: ACHIEVED QUOTAS FOR MALES AND FEMALES IN BOTH AGE GROUPS

Country	Male			Female			In another way / Prefer not to say			Total
	18-24	25-30	Total	18-24	25-30	Total	18-24	25-30	Total	
Austria	368	357	725	368	368	736	7	4	11	1,472
Brussels-Wallonia	368	352	720	368	368	736	9	7	16	1,472
Flanders	368	356	724	368	368	736	6	4	10	1,472
Germany	368	354	722	368	368	736	11	3	14	1,472
Romania	365	366	731	368	368	736	2	3	5	1,472
Spain	361	366	727	368	368	736	6	3	9	1,472
UK	363	367	730	368	368	736	4	2	6	1,472

3.5.5.2 AVERAGE COMPLETION TIME

The survey allowed respondents to come back to the survey after leaving it open in their browser or exiting the website. Therefore, the overall mean length of interview is skewed by those who left the survey open for a long period of time before finishing the questions. Excluding those who took more than 45 minutes to complete the survey⁵, the average length of interview was 13.2 minutes across all countries. Table 5 shows the average length of interview for each country.

TABLE 5: QUESTIONNAIRE COMPLETION TIME

Country	Mean length of interview (minutes)
Austria	13.6
Belgium (Brussels-Wallonia)	12.6
Belgium (Flanders)	12.3
Germany	15.0
Romania	14.5
Spain	13.3
UK	12.7

Regarding the device used to access the survey, 35% of participants used a *laptop* or PC, 63% a *smartphone*, and 2% *tablet*.

⁵ 95 per cent of interviews took less than 45 minutes.

4.5.6 Data processing and quality control

The production of survey data is an automated process based on the online survey script, which was designed, constructed and tested in advance of fieldwork. The final data files for each country were checked by IM and the research team to ensure routing for each question had worked correctly and that respondents answered all relevant questions as intended. The data files were also 'cleaned' so that all datafiles were fully labelled, structured logically and included all relevant sample variables.

The final item in the questionnaire stated:

If there is anything else you would like to say about this topic or if you'd like to provide any feedback on this questionnaire, please add your thoughts on the next screen.

All responses were reviewed by the team. Two respondents (one from UK and one from Romania) stated their responses were incorrect and were subsequently deleted from the sample.

4.5.7 Statistical procedure

The primary aim of this study was to estimate the prevalence of interpersonal violence experienced by children who participate in sport. For the purpose of this first report descriptive statistics and chi-square tests are used to describe and detect possible differences in prevalence between countries, male and female respondents, or between different levels of sport participation in the study population. Further possible differentiations, e.g. by age group, sexual orientation, ethnic background or (dis)ability of respondents are not explored in the scope of this first report. More detailed publications on these subgroups of the sample will follow.

In the statistical procedures, precision is defined here as the width of the 95% confidence interval (CI). In order to make the report readable for a general audience, detailed statistical parameters (e.g. chi square-results or p-values) are not reported. Whenever we use the term 'significant' in the report, this means that the difference described, e.g. between countries, genders, or the level of sport participation, is also a significant finding on the basis of *statistical* calculation procedures.

Due to the sample size, statistical procedures reveal many differences between sub samples, which appear to be significant in a statistical sense, however, we focus on the differences that we consider relevant based on the statistics *and* the content and aim of our project. The statistical software package SPSS version 27 was used to analyse the data.

5. Results

5.1 Introduction and Sample

This chapter presents the main findings of our survey of 10,302 respondents in six European countries: Austria, Belgium, Germany, Romania, Spain and the UK. Seven questionnaires were distributed, including two in Belgium: one in Belgium Flanders and one in Belgium Brussels-Wallonia.

The main demographic profile of the sample was as follows:

- **Age:** Respondents were aged 18-30, with an average age of 24.4 years.
- **Sex:** 49.3% (5,077) of respondents were male and 50% (5,125) were female. 0.3% stated they identified themselves 'in another way' and 0.4% stated they would 'prefer not to say'.
- **Sexual orientation:** 82.3% (8,477) identified as heterosexual, 7% (721) as bisexual, 2.5% (254) as gay, 1.7% (172) as lesbian, 1.7% as other (176), and 4.9% (502) preferred not to say.
- **Disability:** 6% (615) of respondents stated they had a disability. Furthermore, 6.7% of respondents stated they had participated *only* in sports for people with disabilities, 14% had participated in both non-disabled and disabled sports, and just under 80% had not participated in any sports for disabled people.
- **Ethnicity:** 11.3% of respondents belonged to a minority ethnic group.

5.2 Characteristics of Sport Participation

Respondents were asked to indicate up to five sports they had participated in before the age of 18. Those who had not participated in any sport were thanked and exited from the questionnaire.

Only 3% of respondents declined to name the sport they had participated in. Nearly two-thirds (61%) identified a second sport, 37% identified a third sport, 19% a fourth, and 11% a fifth.

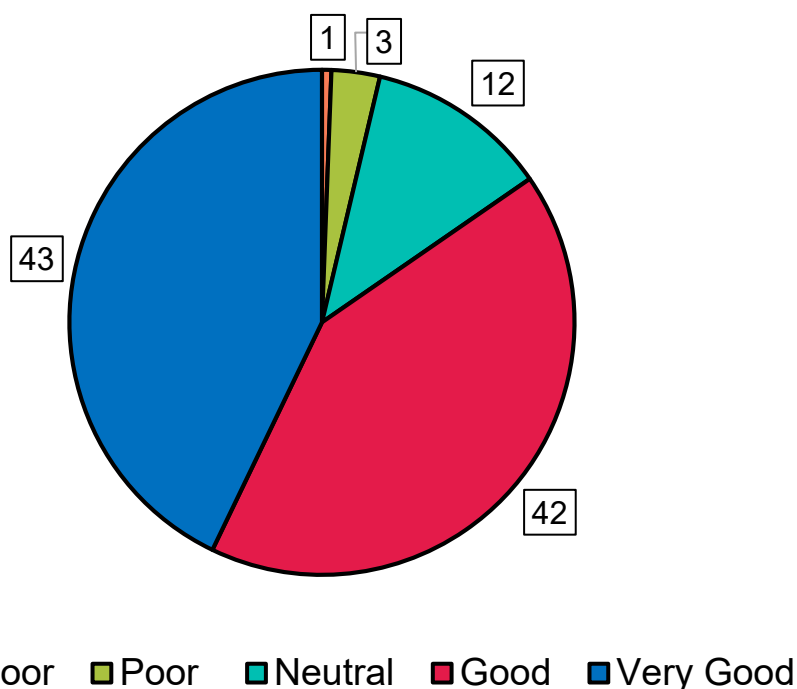
Dance was the most popular sport for women (13%), followed by: swimming (10%), football (8%) and volleyball (7%). For men, football was the most common sport (28%), followed by basketball (10%), tennis (8%) and swimming (6%) (see Table 6).

TABLE 6: MOST POPULAR SPORTS BY GENDER

Male			Female		
	%	<i>n</i>		%	<i>n</i>
Football	27.5	3,209	Dance	12.8	1,453
Basketball	9.7	1,130	Swimming	9.9	1,130
Tennis	7.5	870	Football	7.9	901
Swimming	6	702	Volleyball	7.1	810
Table Tennis	3.6	415	Tennis	6.7	762
Athletics	3.3	385	Basketball	6.3	722
Volleyball	3.2	370	Gymnastics	5.4	611
Exercise & Fitness	3.2	368	Handball	4.3	487
Handball	3	356	Athletics	3.9	443
Cycling	2.6	299	Badminton	3.7	426

When asked to rate their overall experience in youth sports, the majority (85%) stated it had been either ‘very good’ (43%) or ‘good’ (42%), with less than 5% stating either ‘poor’ (3%) or ‘very poor’ (0.6%) (see Figure 2). Around one-in-ten respondents (12%) stated their experience had been ‘neutral’.

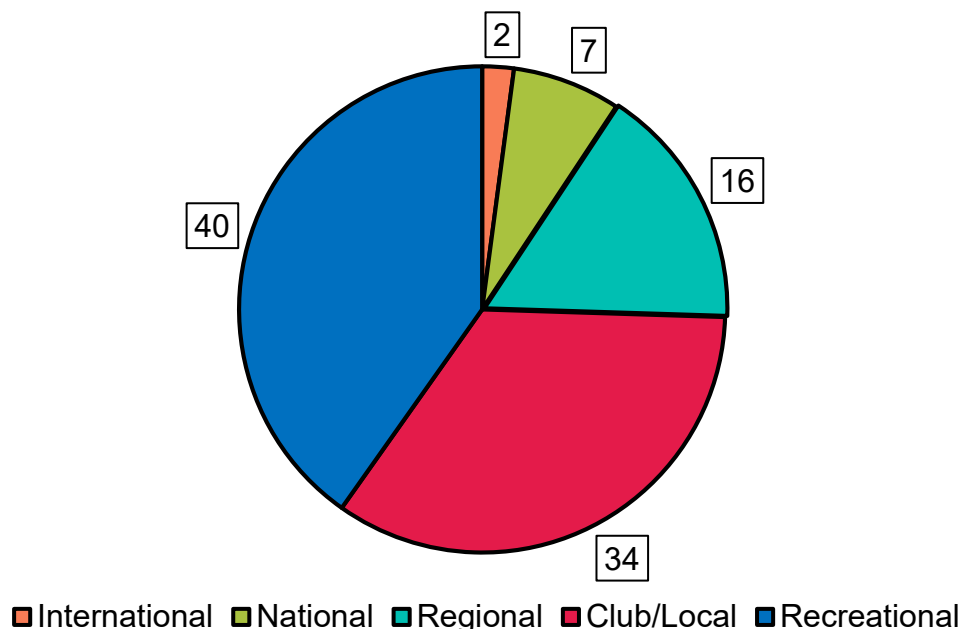
FIGURE 2: OVERALL EXPERIENCE IN SPORT (%)



Respondents reported a range of organisations for their participation in sport. Most had played in a sports club (70%), with 30% playing in extra-curricular school sports, 18% at a fitness centre, 20% in a private setting, 16% in a sports camp, 9% in a non-sports club and 6% in a training centre for elite athletes.

Respondents were also asked for their highest level of participation in youth sports. As shown in Figure 3, nearly three-quarters participated either at the recreational (40%) or local club level (34%). A quarter had participated at higher competitive levels, including regional (16%), national (7%) and international (2%).

FIGURE 3: HIGHEST LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION (%)



There were, however, large differences by gender in terms of the highest level of participation in youth sports, with men being more likely to have participated at a higher level. For example, 19% of men had participated at a regional level compared to 13% of women. Similarly, 9% of men had participated at a national level compared to 7% of women. Exactly half of all female respondents' highest level of participation was recreational, compared to just 30% of men.

5.3 Prevalence of Interpersonal Violence Against Children

This section presents the findings on the prevalence of interpersonal violence against children (IVAC), both *inside* and *outside* sport. To reiterate, all participants were aged 18-30 and had participated in organised sport before the age of 18. An experience of IVAC *always* indicates an experience that happened before the age of 18.

The category 'inside sport' assesses any experience of IVAC that happened in the context of sport, independent of possible additional experiences *outside* the sport context. The category 'outside sport' assesses any experience of IVAC that happened outside sport, in a non-sport context, even if a respondent also experienced IVAC within the sport context. As a consequence, it is important to keep in mind that these categories overlap, thus respondents may appear in both categories if they experienced IVAC in both contexts.

5.3.1 Overall Interpersonal Violence Against Children (IVAC)

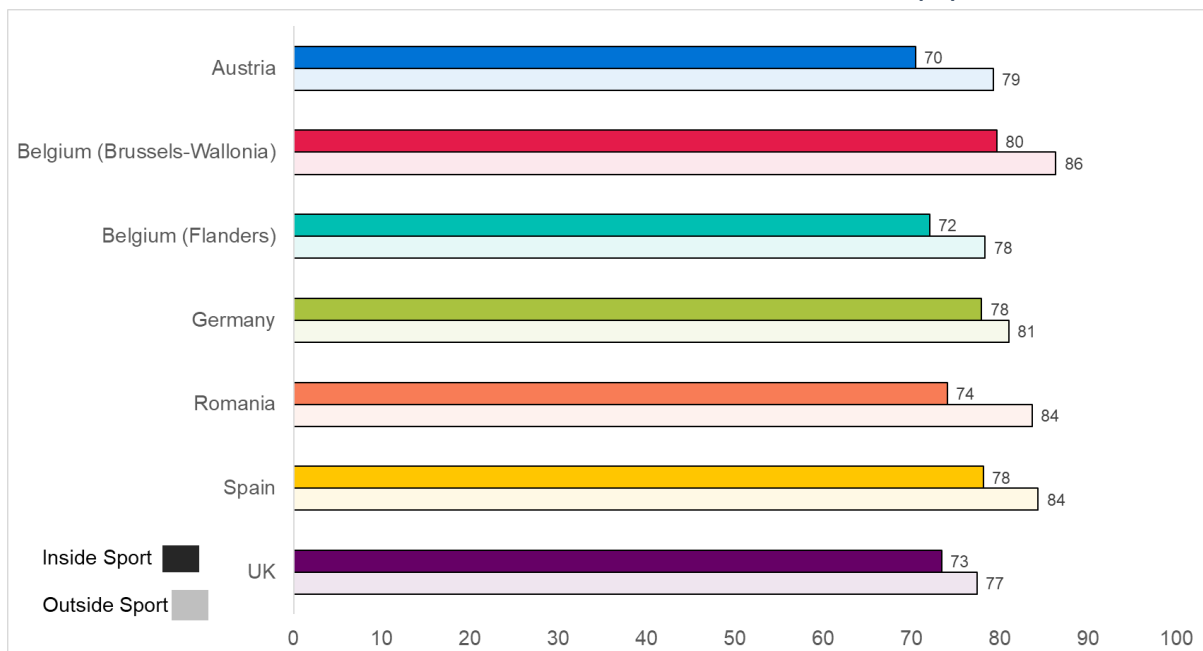
Overall (average across all categories and countries) the CASES survey found:

75% of respondents reported at least one experience of IVAC *inside* sport
82% of respondents reported at least one experience of IVAC *outside* sport

Inside sport, cross-national comparisons show that, overall, IVAC prevalence varies from 70% in Austria to 80% in Belgium Brussels-Wallonia.

Outside sport, the prevalence of IVAC varies from 77% in the UK to 86% in Belgium Brussels-Wallonia (see Figure 4).

FIGURE 4: PREVALENCE OF IVAC INSIDE & OUTSIDE SPORT BY COUNTRY (%)

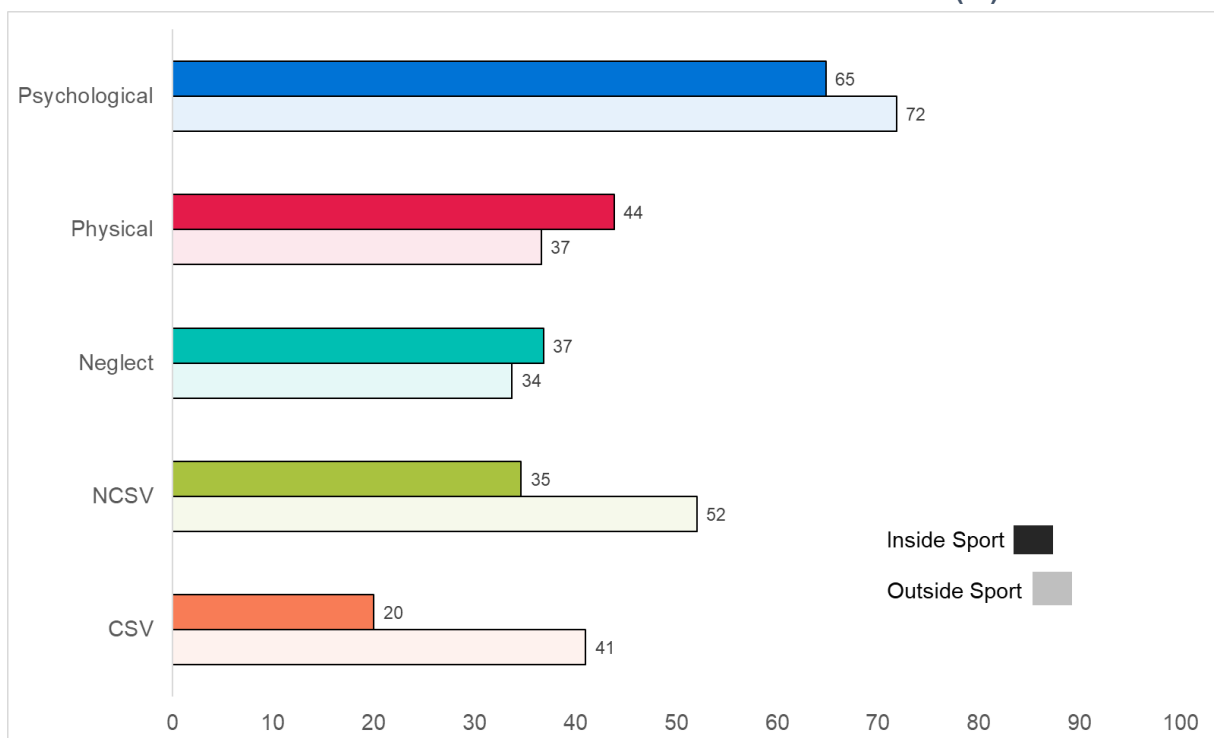


The most common experience of IVAC *inside sport* was *psychological violence* (65%), followed by *physical violence* (44%), *neglect* (37%), *non-contact sexual violence* (35%), and *contact sexual violence* (20%)

Psychological violence, non-contact sexual violence (NCSV), and contact sexual violence (CSV) were all experienced at a higher frequency **outside sport**.

Inside sport, neglect was marginally more common and physical violence was significantly⁶ more common.

FIGURE 5: PREVALENCE OF CATEGORIES OF IVAC INSIDE & OUTSIDE SPORT (%)



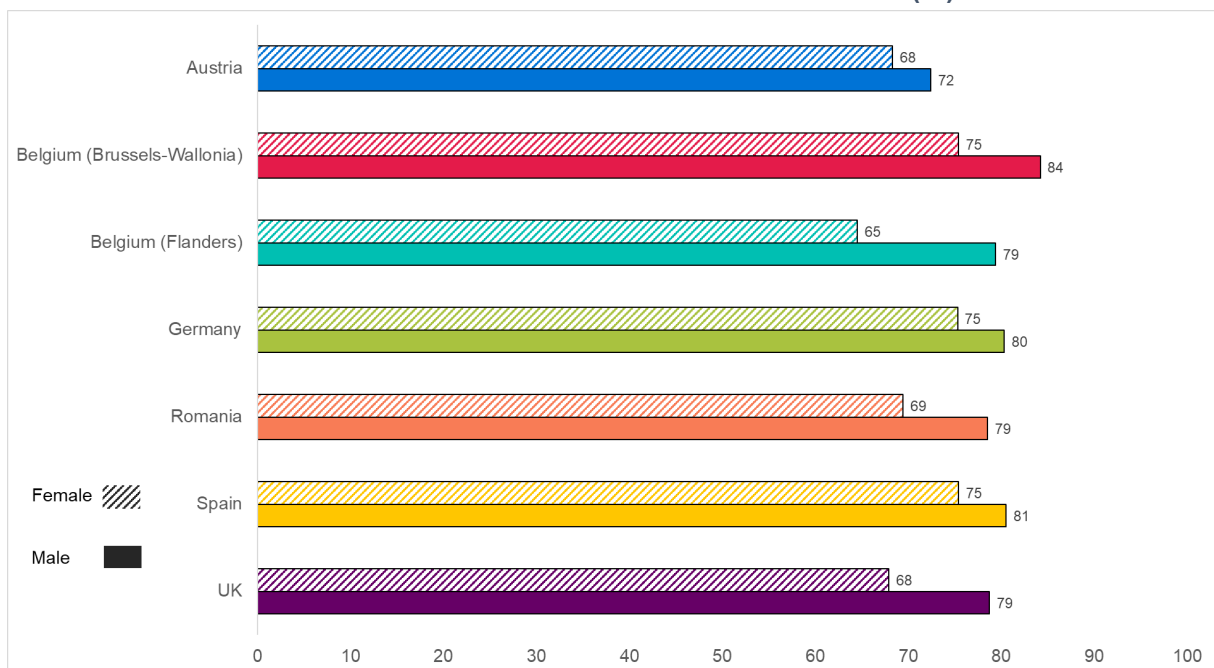
⁶ Reminder: use of the term 'significant' is based on statistical significance tests.

Inside sport, 79% of men and 71% of women reported at least one experience of any type of IVAC.

Across all countries, with the exception of Austria, men were significantly more likely to experience IVAC than women.

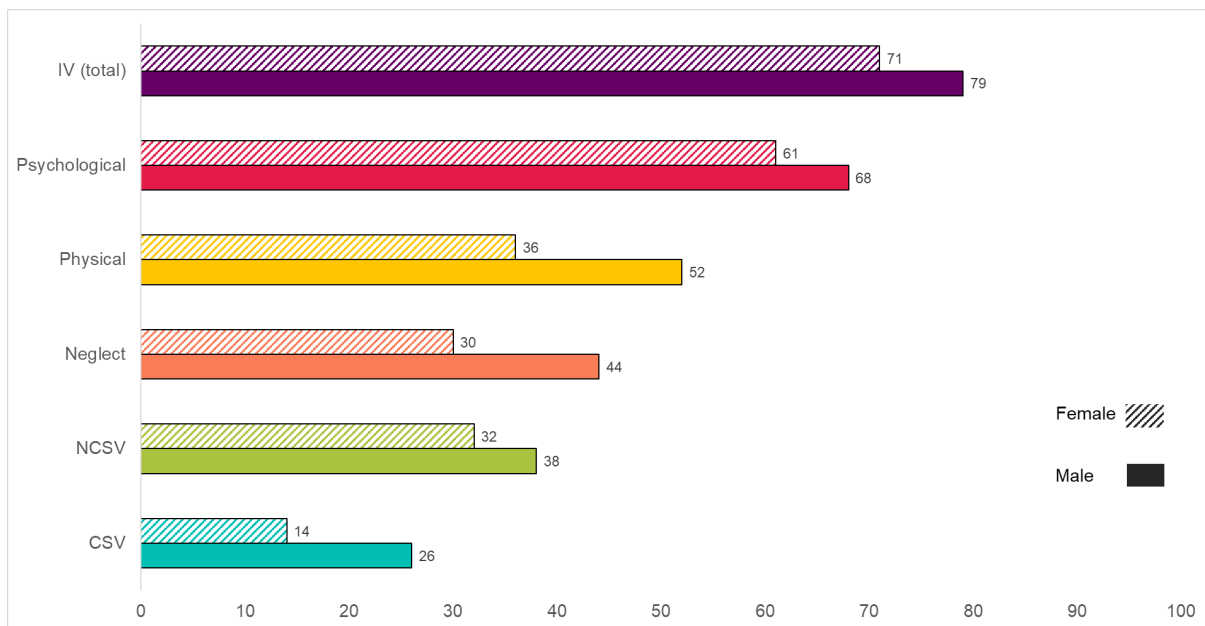
The range for women varied from 65% in Belgium Flanders to 75% in Brussels-Wallonia and Germany. For men, experience of IVAC varied from 72% in Austria to 84% in Brussels-Wallonia (see Figure 6).

FIGURE 6: PREVALENCE OF IVAC INSIDE SPORT BY GENDER & COUNTRY (%)



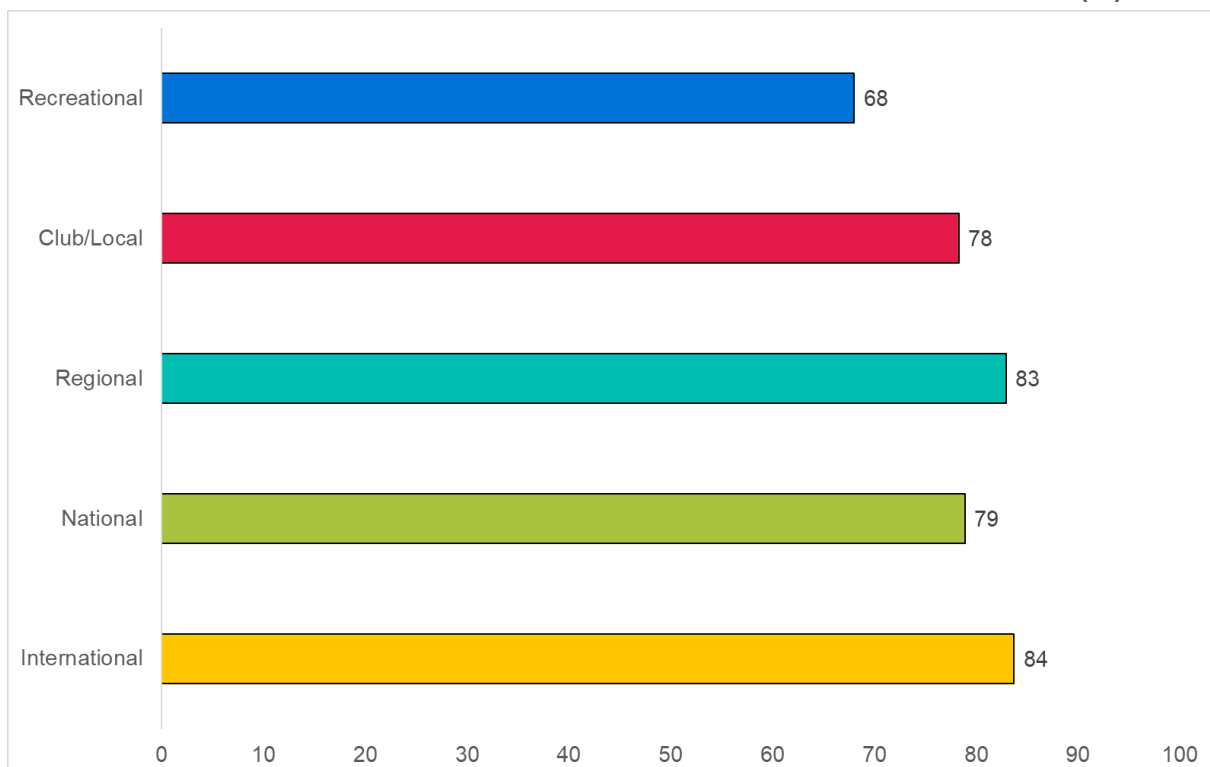
Furthermore, across the whole sample, males were significantly more likely to have experienced each type of IVAC inside sport (see Figure 6a).

FIGURE 6A: PREVALENCE OF IVAC INSIDE SPORT BY GENDER AND CATEGORY (%)



Those competing at higher levels of sport were more likely to have an experience of IVAC *inside sport*. For example, 84% of those who had competed internationally had experienced IVAC, compared to 68% who had competed only at a recreational level (see Figure 7).

FIGURE 7: PREVALENCE OF IVAC INSIDE SPORT BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION (%)



SUMMARY

- The prevalence of IVAC **inside sport** is between 70% to 80% depending on the country.
- The prevalence of IVAC **outside sport** is between 77% to 84% depending on the country.
- The differences between the countries are statistically significant but not particularly high.
- The proportion of respondents who had experienced IVAC **outside sport** is higher in all countries (by 3% to 9%) than the proportion of those who experienced IVAC **inside sport**.
- Psychological violence is the most common form of IVAC, both within and outside sport.
- CSV is the least common form of IVAC **inside sport**; neglect is the least common **outside sport**.
- The prevalence of IVAC **inside sport** is significantly higher for males than females.
- The prevalence of IVAC **inside sport** is lowest at the recreational level and highest at the international level.

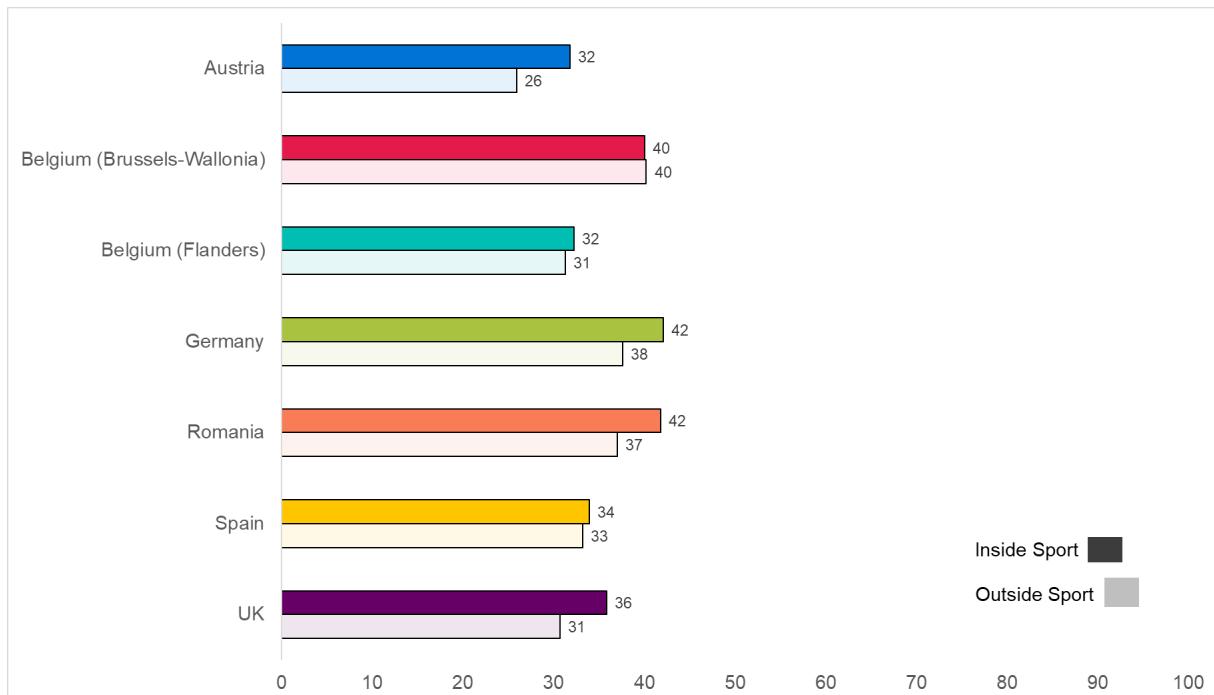
5.3.2 Neglect

Inside sport, 37% of respondents had experienced at least one form of neglect before age 18, compared to 34% **outside sport** (see Figure 5).

Cross-national comparisons show the prevalence of neglect **inside sport** varies from 32% in Austria and Belgium (Flanders) to 42% in Germany and Romania. **Outside sport**, the experience of neglect ranges from 26% in Austria to 40% in Belgium Brussels Wallonia (see Figure 8).

The most common experience of neglect inside sport was a *lack of appropriate equipment/kit to safely perform* (16%) followed by *forced to participate in unsafe conditions* (16%) and *lack of adequate support for well-being* (15%) (see Table 7).

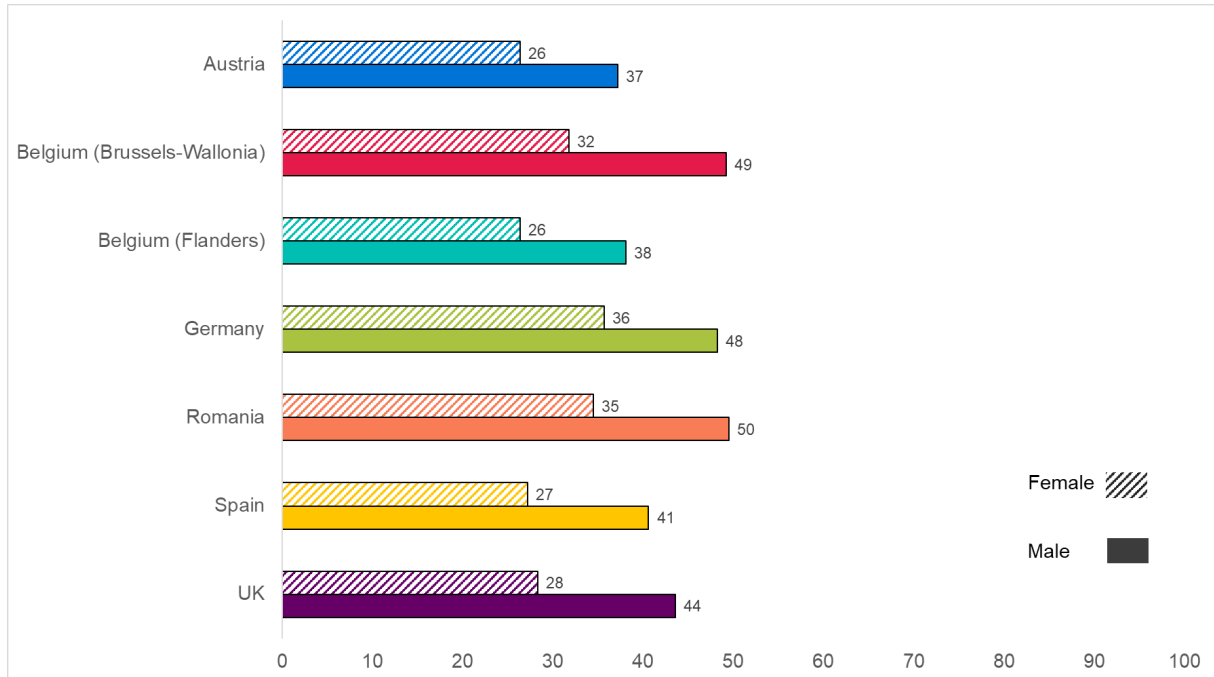
FIGURE 8: PREVALENCE OF NEGLECT BY COUNTRY (%)



Inside sport, 44% of men and 30% of women reported at least one experience of neglect before age 18. Overall, and for each country, men were significantly more likely to experience neglect inside sport than women.

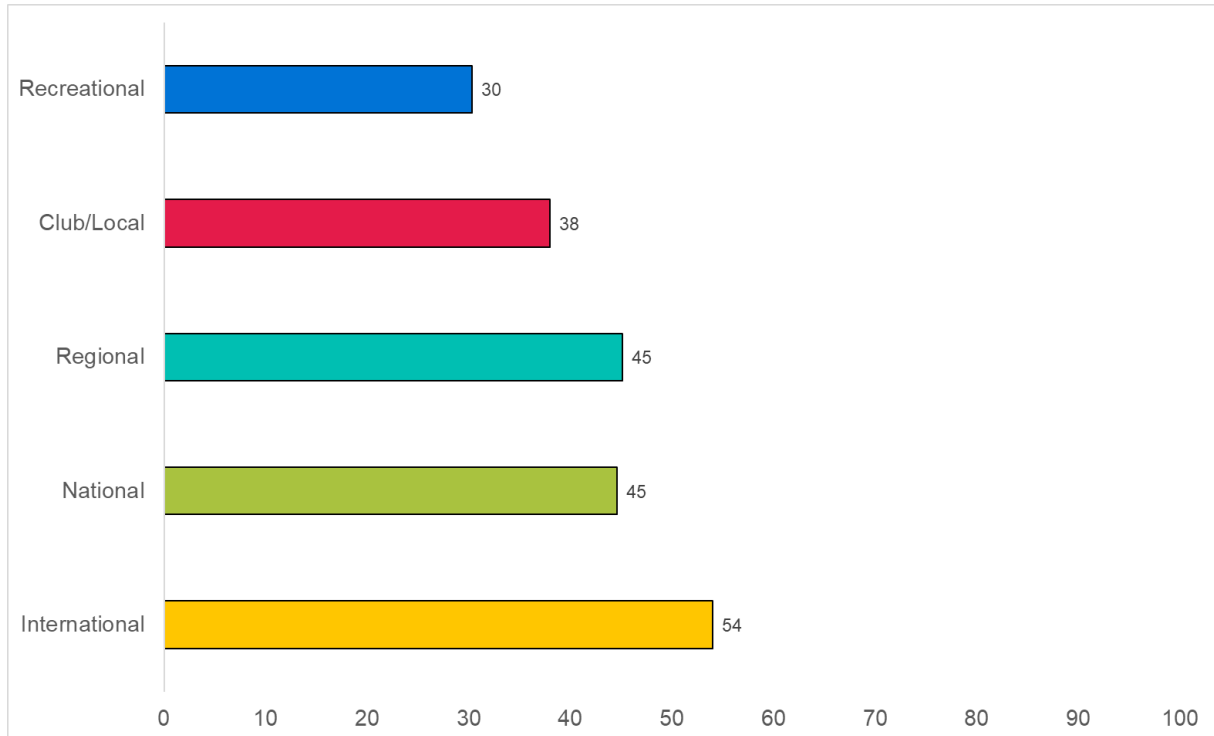
The prevalence of neglect for women ranged from 26% in Austria and Belgium Flanders to 36% in Germany. For men, the prevalence varied from 37% in Austria to 50% in Romania (see Figure 9).

FIGURE 9: PREVALENCE OF NEGLECT INSIDE SPORT BY GENDER & COUNTRY (%)



As with the overall prevalence of IVAC, the prevalence of neglect increased amongst those who competed at higher levels of youth sport. For example, 30% of those who competed recreationally had experienced neglect, compared to 54% of those competing internationally (see Figure 10).

FIGURE 10: PREVALENCE OF NEGLECT INSIDE SPORT BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION (%)



5.3.3.1 SUMMARY

- Across the total sample, approximately one-third of respondents had experienced neglect inside sport before age 18.
- The prevalence rate for neglect *inside sport* is between 32% to 42% depending on the country.
- The difference between the countries is statistically significant but not particularly high.
- Neglect is experienced *inside sport* more frequently than *outside sport*.
- The prevalence of neglect *inside sport* is significantly higher for males than females.
- The prevalence of neglect *inside sport* is highest at the international level and lowest at the recreational level.

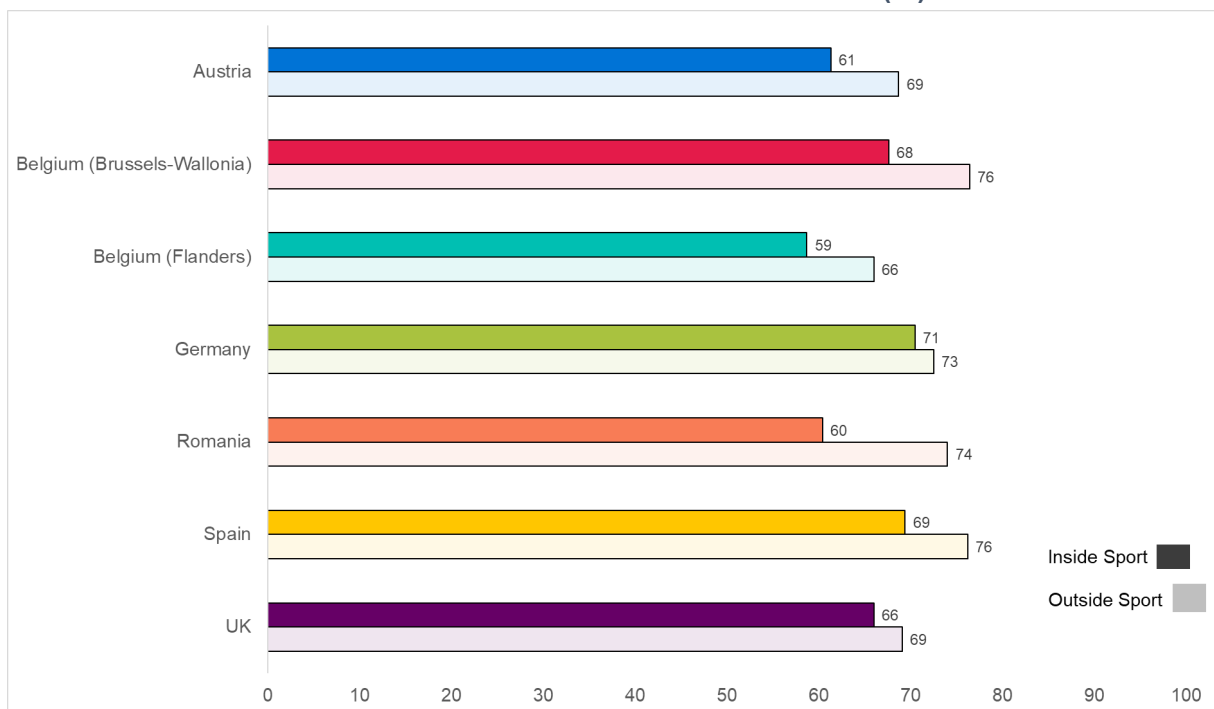
5.3.4 Psychological Violence

Inside sport, 65% of respondents reported at least one experience of psychological violence before age 18. This compared to 72% who experienced psychological violence **outside sport** (see Figure 5).

Cross-national comparisons showed that the prevalence of psychological violence **inside sport** ranged from 59% in Belgium-Flanders to 71% in Germany. **Outside sport**, the rate of psychological violence varied from 66% in Belgium Flanders to 76% in Belgium Brussels Wallonia (see Figure 11).

The most common experience of psychological violence **inside sport** was *not being praised for efforts or achievements* (35%) followed by *humiliations* (34%) (see Table 7).

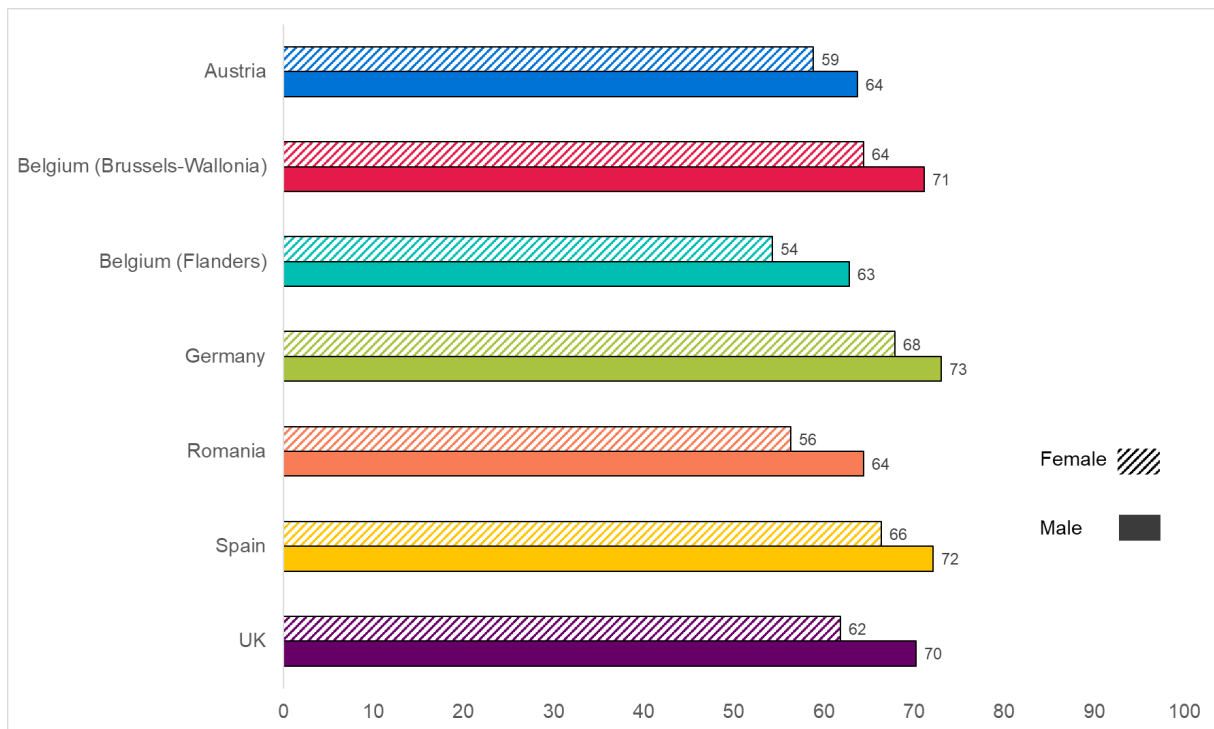
FIGURE 11: PREVALENCE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE BY COUNTRY (%)



Inside sport, 68% of men and 61% of women reported at least one experience of psychological violence before age 18. With the exception of Austria, men were significantly more likely to experience psychological violence compared to women.

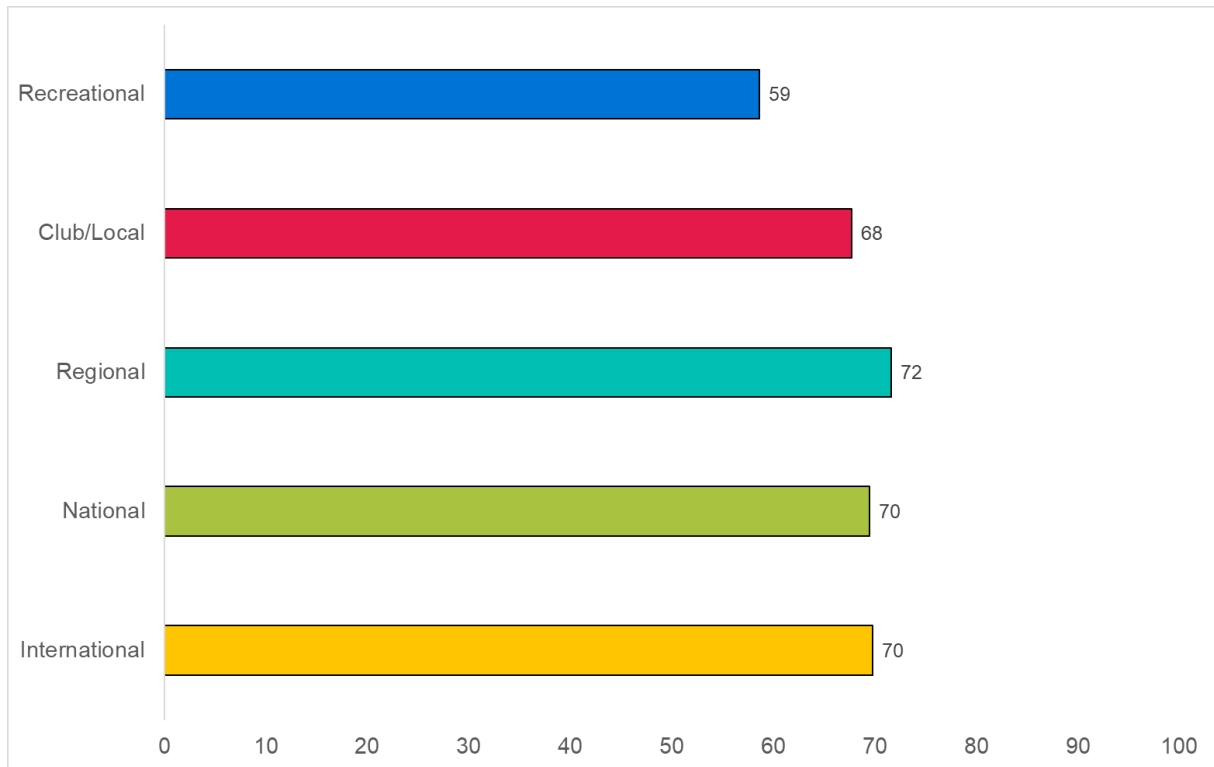
Across the countries, the rate of psychological violence for women varied from 54% in Flanders (Belgium) to 68% in Germany. For men, the range was from 63% in Belgium Flanders to 73% in Germany (see Figure 12).

FIGURE 12: PREVALENCE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE INSIDE SPORT BY GENDER & COUNTRY (%)



In relation to participation level, there is a difference between recreational level and other levels, but no difference between the four levels of competitive sport. As shown in Figure 13, those who competed recreationally were the least likely to have experienced psychological violence (59%), whilst regional competitors were the most likely (72%).

FIGURE 13: EXPERIENCE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE INSIDE SPORT BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION (%)



SUMMARY

- Across the total sample, approximately two-thirds of respondents had experienced psychological violence *inside sport* before age 18.
- The prevalence rate for psychological violence *inside sport* is between 59% to 71%, depending on the country.
- The difference between the individual countries is statistically significant but not particularly high.
- Psychological violence is experienced by children more frequently *outside sport* than *inside sport*.
- With the exception of Austria, the prevalence of psychological violence *inside sport* is significantly higher for males than females.
- The prevalence of psychological violence inside sport is lowest at the recreational level compared to the other competitive levels.

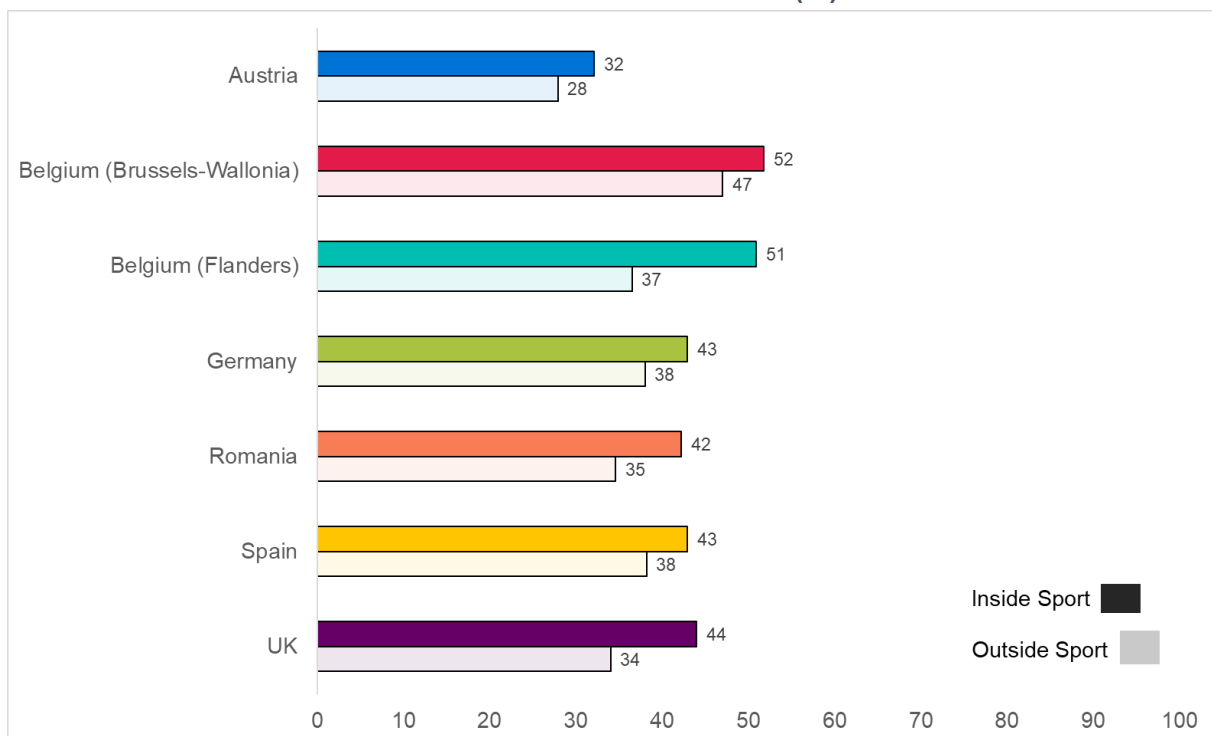
5.3.5 Physical Violence

Inside sport, 44% of respondents reported at least one experience of physical violence before age 18. This compared to 37% of respondents **outside sport** (see Figure 5).

Cross-national comparisons showed the prevalence of physical violence **inside sport** varies from 32% in Austria to 52% in Belgium Brussels-Wallonia. **Outside sport**, the prevalence range was between 28% in Austria to 47% in Belgium Brussels-Wallonia (see Figure 14).

The most common experience of physical violence **inside sport** was *Instructed or forced to play while injured or at a harmful intensity* (18%) followed by *physical assaults (punched, slapped, grabbed/pushed, or otherwise)* (15%) (see Table 7).

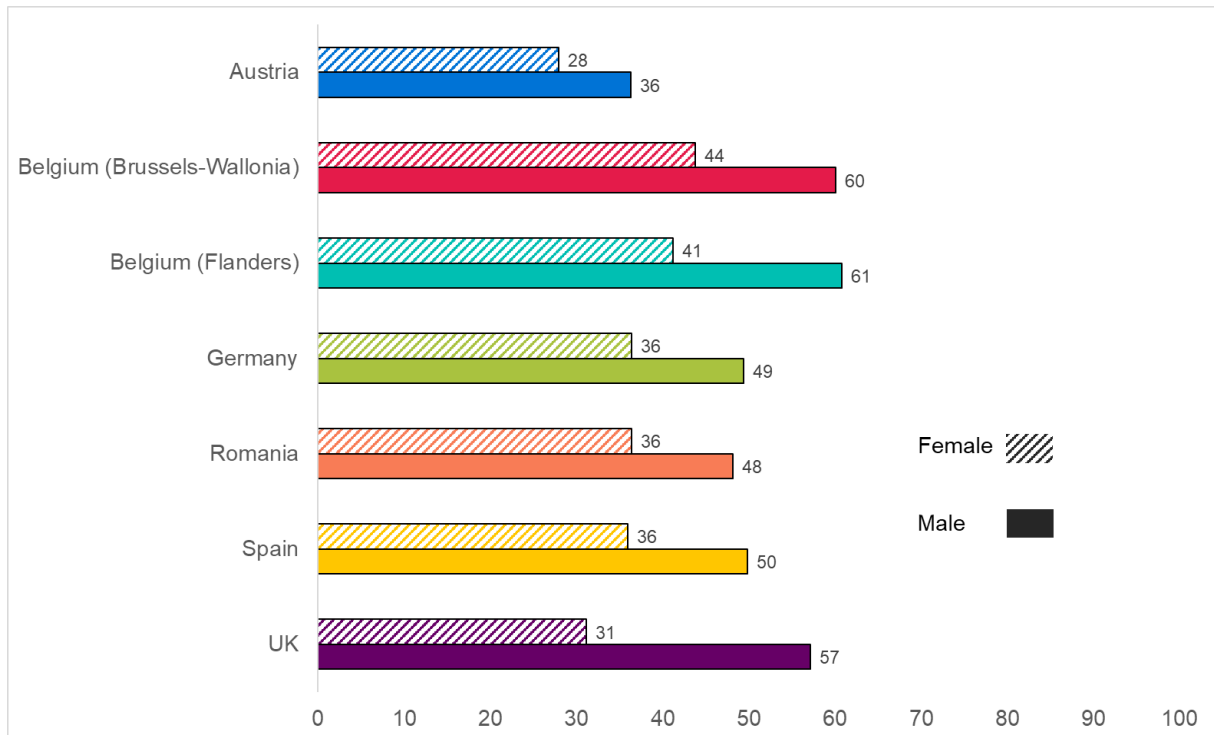
FIGURE 14: PREVALENCE OF PHYSICAL VIOLENCE BY COUNTRY (%)



Inside sport, 52% of men and 36% of women reported at least one experience of physical violence before age 18. Men were significantly more likely to experience physical violence inside sport than women in each country.

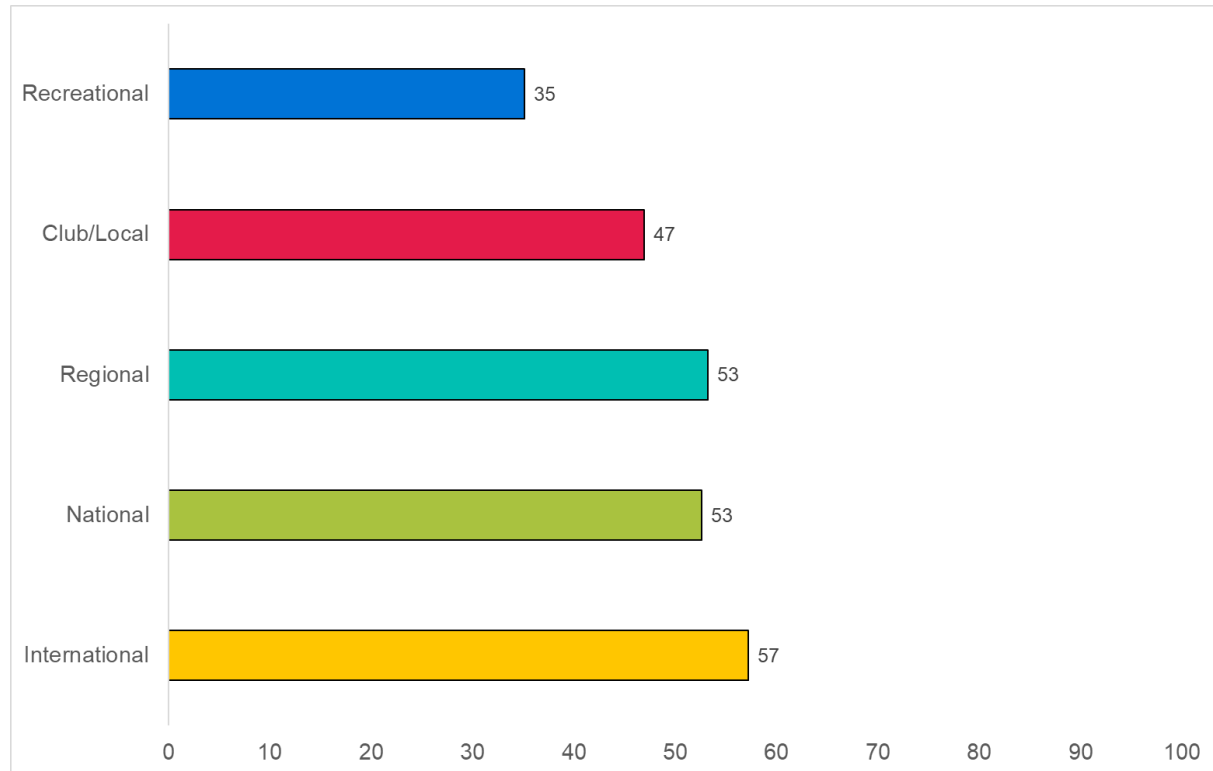
Cross-national comparisons show that the prevalence of physical violence against women ranged from 28% in Austria to 44% in Belgium Brussels-Wallonia. For men, the physical violence rate varied from 36% in Austria to 61% in Belgium Flanders (see Figure 15).

FIGURE 15: PREVALENCE OF PHYSICAL VIOLENCE INSIDE SPORT BY GENDER & COUNTRY (%)



The prevalence of physical violence at the recreational level of sport is lower than within competitive sport. Thus, 35% of respondents participating at a recreational level had experienced physical violence compared to 57% of those who had competed at an international level (see Figure 16).

FIGURE 16: PREVALENCE OF PHYSICAL VIOLENCE INSIDE SPORT BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION (%)



SUMMARY

- Across the total sample, 44% of respondents had experienced physical violence *inside sport* before age 18.
- The prevalence rate for physical violence *inside sport* is between 32% to 52% depending on the country.
- The prevalence of physical violence *inside sport* varied significantly between countries; the prevalence in Austria was 20% lower than in Belgium Brussels-Wallonia.
- Physical violence is experienced more frequently by children *inside sport* than *outside sport*.
- The prevalence of physical violence *inside sport* is significantly higher for males than females.
- The prevalence of physical violence as a child *inside sport* is lowest at the recreational level and highest at the international level.

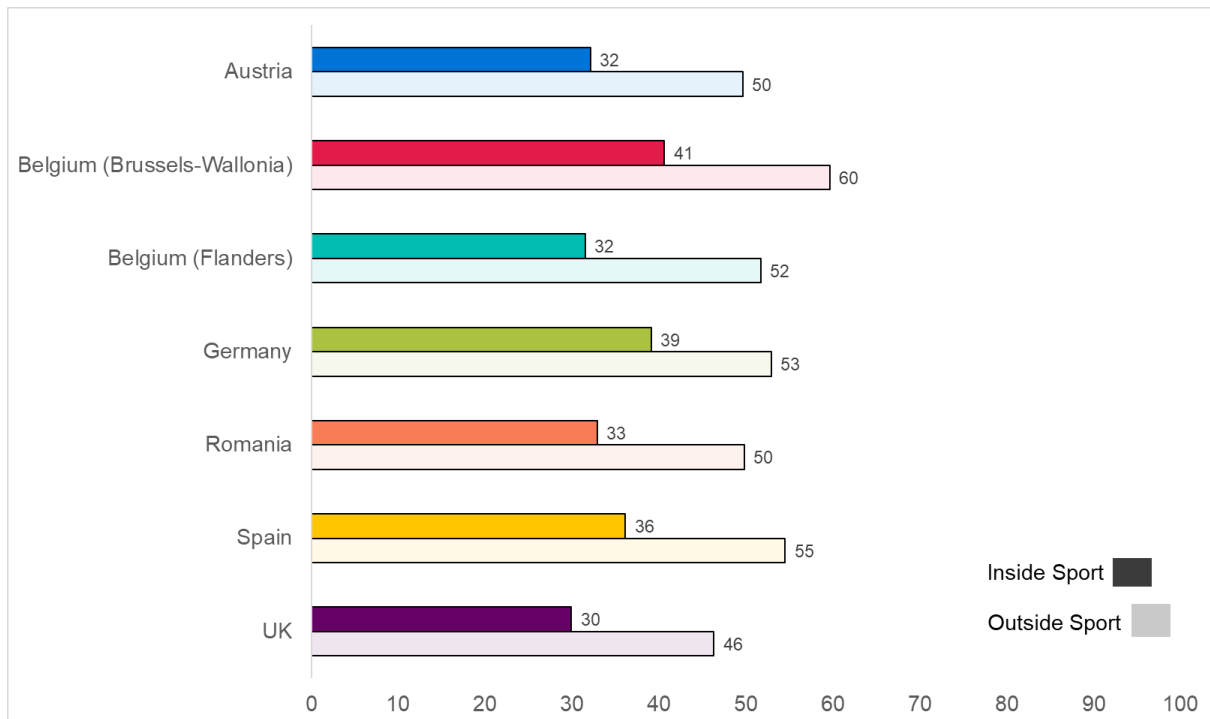
5.3.6 Non-Contact Sexual Violence (NCSV)

Inside sport, 35% of respondents reported at least one experience of NCSV before age 18. This compared to 52% **outside sport** (see Figure 5).

As shown in Figure 17, across the countries, the prevalence of NCSV **inside sport** was between 30% in the UK and 41% in Belgium Brussels-Wallonia. **Outside sport**, the range was from 46% in the UK to 60% in Belgium Brussels-Wallonia.

The most common experience of NCSV **inside sport** was *obscene or sexual comments* (19%) followed by *inappropriate staring or leering* (18%) (see Table 7).

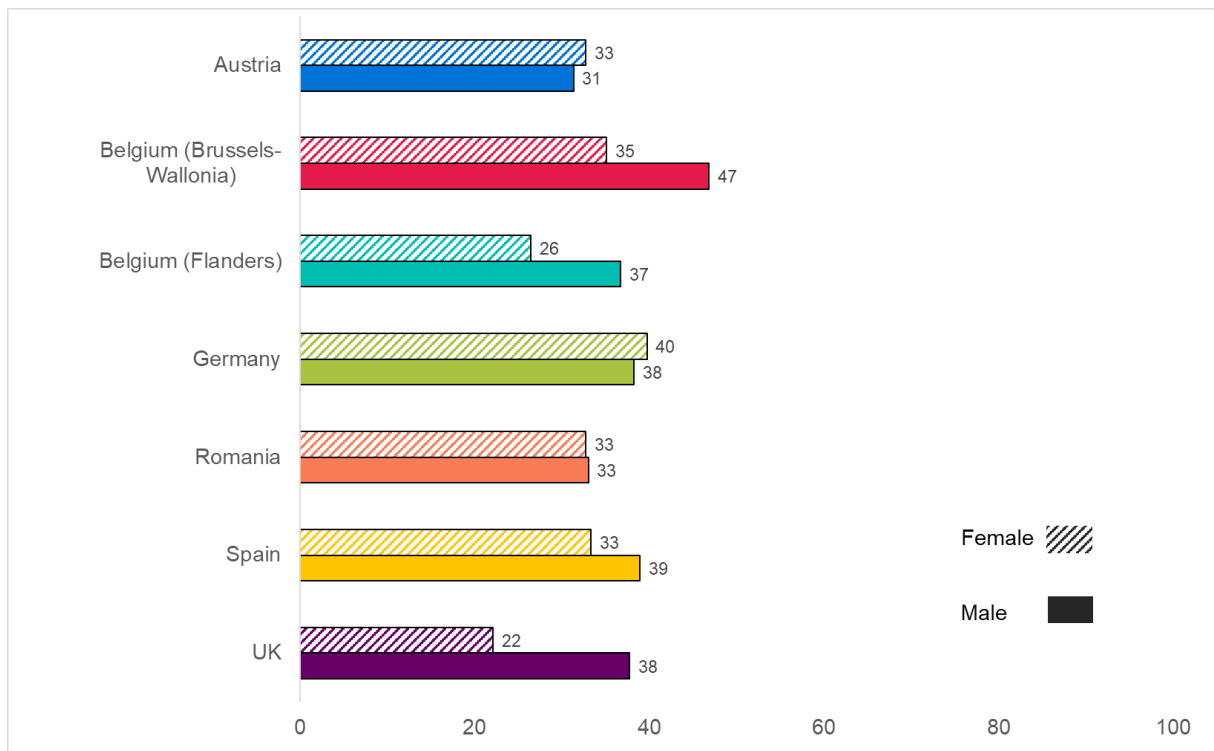
FIGURE 17: PREVALENCE OF NON-CONTACT SEXUAL VIOLENCE (NCSV) BY COUNTRY (%)



Inside sport, 38% of men and 32% of women reported at least one experience of NCSV before age 18. This difference was statistically significant in Belgium, Spain and the UK.

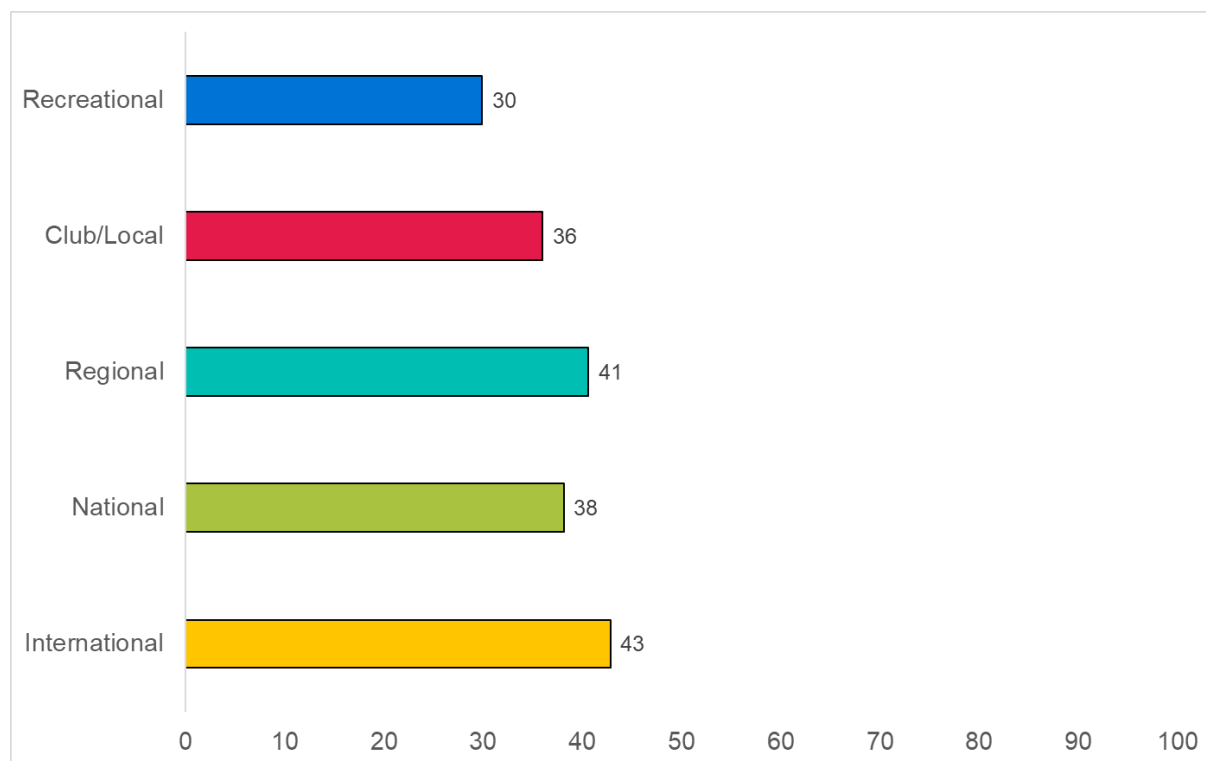
Across the countries, the rate of NCSV inside sport for females ranged from 22% in the UK to 40% in Germany. For males, the prevalence rate varied from 31% in Austria to 47% in Belgium Brussels-Wallonia. (see Figure 18).

FIGURE 18: PREVALENCE OF NON-CONTACT SEXUAL VIOLENCE (NCSV) INSIDE SPORT BY GENDER & COUNTRY (%)



Higher prevalence rates of NCSV were associated with higher levels of sports participation, although as Figure 19 shows this is not a uniform increase.

FIGURE 19: PREVALENCE OF NON-CONTACT SEXUAL VIOLENCE (NCSV) INSIDE SPORT BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION (%)



SUMMARY

- Across the total sample, one-third of respondents' report experiencing NCSV *inside sport* before age 18.
- The prevalence rate for NCSV violence *inside sport* is between 30% to 41% depending on the country.
- The differences between countries are statistically significant, but not particularly high.
- In all countries, NCSV is experienced more frequently *outside sport* than *inside sport*.
- The prevalence of NCSV *inside sport* is significantly higher for males than females in the UK and Belgium, with a smaller difference in Spain and no difference in Romania. In Austria and Germany, the experience of NCSV *inside sport* is marginally more frequent for females than males.
- The prevalence of NCSV as a child *inside sport* is lowest at the recreational level and highest at the international level.

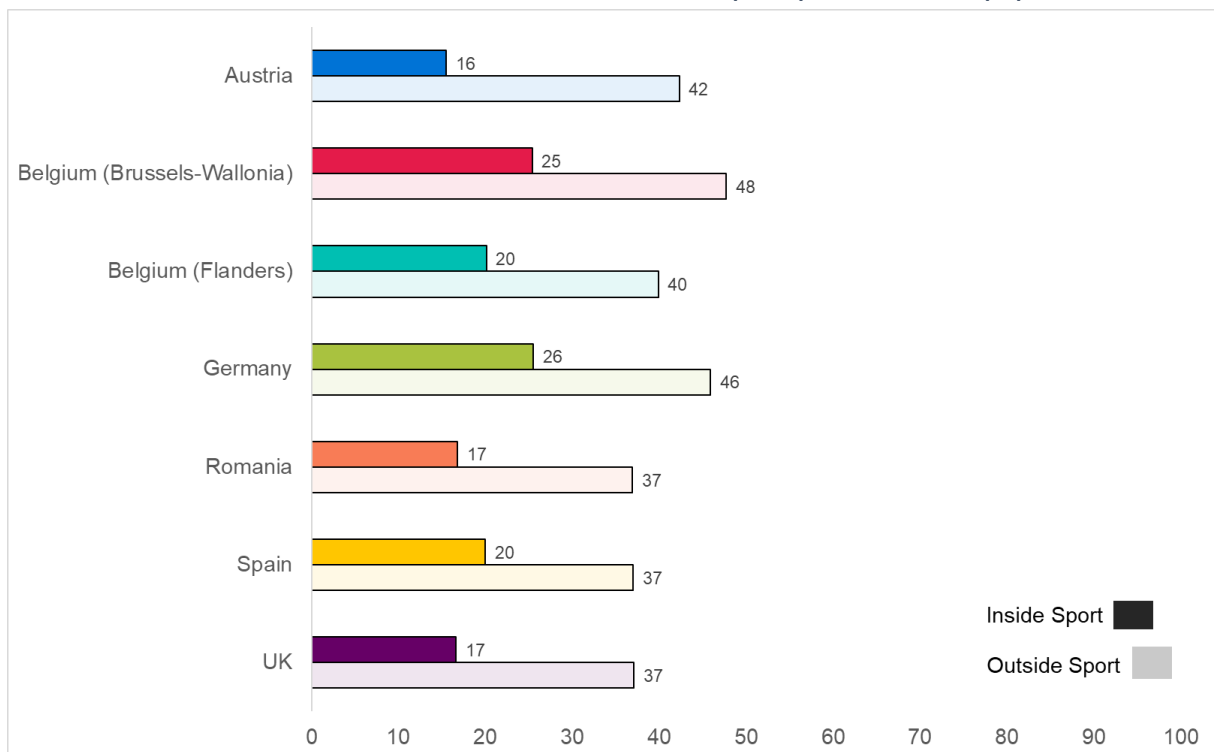
5.3.7 Contact Sexual Violence (CSV)

Inside sport, 20% of respondents reported at least one experience of contact sexual violence (CSV) before age 18. This compared to 41% **outside sport** (see Figure 5).

Cross-national comparisons show that the prevalence of CSV **inside sport** ranged from 16% in Austria to 26% in Germany. **Outside sport**, experience of CSV varied from 37% in Romania, Spain and the UK to 48% in Belgium Brussels-Wallonia (see Figure 20).

The most common experience of CSV **inside sport** was *kissing* (11%) followed by *sexual touching* (8%) and *genital contact* (8%) (see Table 7).

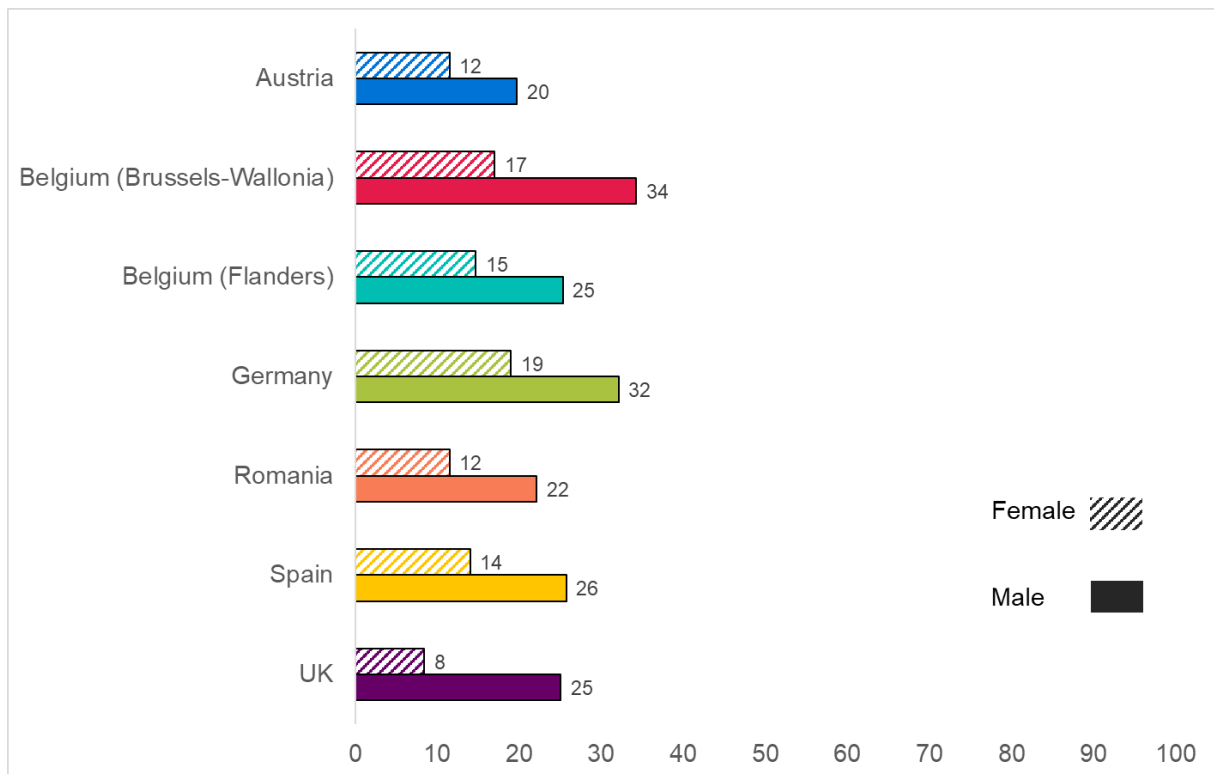
FIGURE 20: PREVALENCE OF CONTACT SEXUAL VIOLENCE (CSV) BY COUNTRY (%)



Inside sport, 26% of men and 14% of women reported at least one experience of CSV before age 18. Men were significantly more likely to have experienced CSV in youth sports in each country.

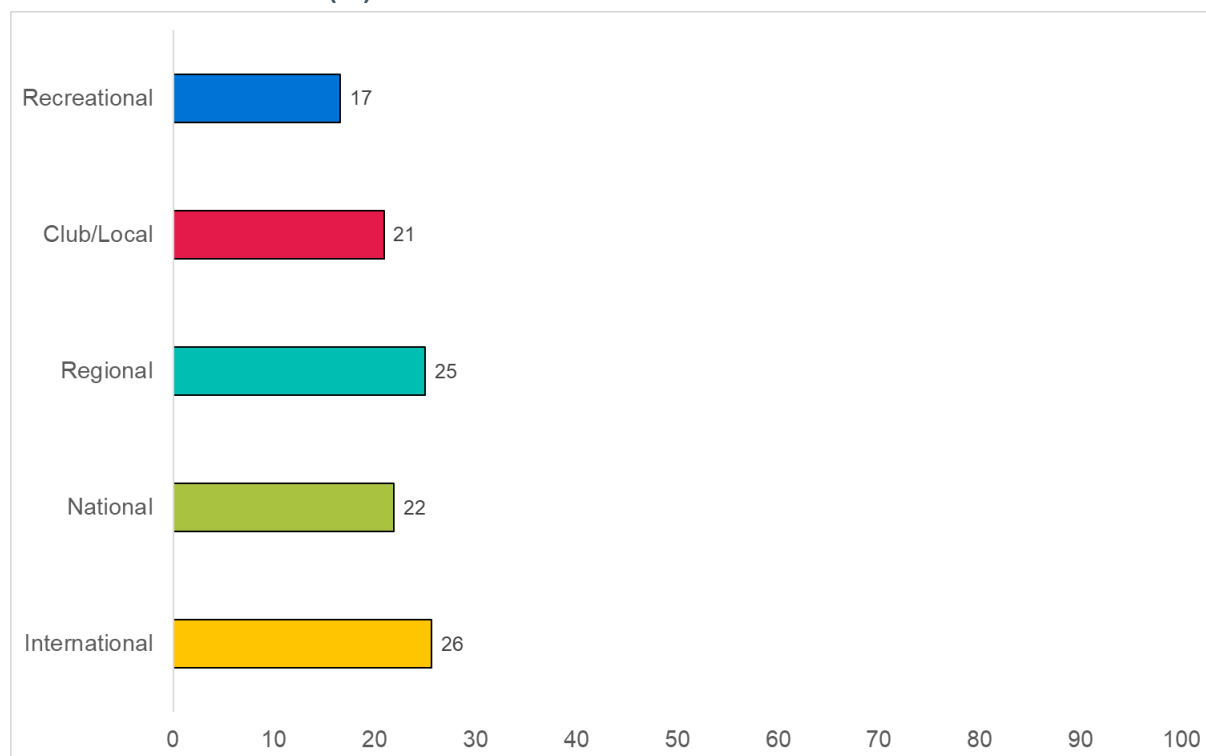
Across the countries, the prevalence of CSV for females ranged from 8% in the UK to 19% in Germany. For males, CSV varied from 20% in Austria to 34% in Belgium Brussels-Wallonia (see Figure 21).

FIGURE 21: PREVALENCE OF CONTACT SEXUAL VIOLENCE (CSV) INSIDE SPORT BY GENDER & COUNTRY (%)



Similar to NCSV, the prevalence of CSV *inside sport* was lowest in recreational sport, with some increase at the more competitive levels. Again, differences were marginal and not uniform. As shown in Figure 22, for those competing *recreationally*, 17% had experienced CSV inside sport; compared to 26% amongst those competing *internationally*.

FIGURE 22: PREVALENCE OF CONTACT SEXUAL VIOLENCE (CSV) INSIDE SPORT BY HIGHEST LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION (%)



5.3.7.1 SUMMARY

- Across the total sample, one-fifth of respondent's reported at least one experience of CSV *inside sport* before age 18.
- The prevalence rate for CSV violence *inside sport* is between 16% to 26% depending on the country.
- The differences between countries are statistically significant, but not particularly high.
- In all countries, the experience of CSV before age 18 is significantly more frequent *outside sport* than *inside sport*.
- The prevalence of CSV *inside sport* is significantly higher for males than females.
- The prevalence of CSV as a child *inside sport* is lowest at the recreational level and highest at the international level.

5.3.8 Prevalence of all CASES items

Table 7 presents the total responses to each main item of the CASES questionnaire. The five categories of IVAC are shaded and ranked according to their prevalence *inside sport*. For comparison, the ranking of each item *outside sport* is also shown in the final column.

TABLE 7: ITEMS BY CATEGORY, RANKED BY PREVALENCE INSIDE & OUTSIDE SPORT

IVAC	Experience/Behaviour (abridged)	Rank N (%)	
		inside sport	outside sport
Psy	not praised for my efforts or achievements	1. 3576 (35%)*	4. 3790 (37%)
Psy	humiliated or made to feel inferior or small	2. 3490 (34%)	2. 4310 (42%)
Psy	ignored or excluded	3. 3058 (30%)	3. 4156 (40%)
Psy	criticised about appearance, including weight, body shape	4. 3041 (30%)	1. 4618 (45%)
Psy	asked/forced to do exercise as a form of punishment	5. 2916 (28%)	19. 1594 (16%)
Psy	screamed at, threatened, or otherwise verbally abused	6. 2150 (21%)	5. 3229 (31%)
NCSV	subjected to obscene or sexual comments	7. 1958 (19%)	6. 3165 (31%)
Psy	asked/forced to perform at unrealistically high standards	8. 1946 (19%)	14. 1959 (19%)
Psy	shouted at or threatened because of performance	9. 1924 (19%)	18. 1645 (16%)
Phys	asked/forced to participate while injured or sick or at an intensity or frequency that was potentially harmful	10. 1875 (18%)	22. 1459 (14%)
NCSV	subjected to inappropriate staring or leering	11. 1836 (18%)	7. 3098 (30%)
Neg	not provided with the appropriate equipment/kit	12. 1657 (16%)	21. 1465 (14%)
Neg	forced to participate in unsafe conditions	13. 1629 (16%)	23. 1347 (13%)
Phys	punched, slapped or otherwise physically assaulted	14. 1560 (15%)	12. 1971 (19%)
Neg	not provided with adequate support for my basic well-being	15. 1550 (15%)	17. 1684 (16%)
Neg	placed at risk of harm due to poor supervision	16. 1431 (14%)	20. 1548 (15%)
Psy	expelled from my team/club/group, or threatened with this	17. 1365 (13%)	24. 1319 (13%)
Neg	absent from school to participate in other activities	18. 1245 (12%)	29. 1217 (12%)
Neg	did not receive appropriate medical care when needed	19. 1160 (11%)	25. 1314 (13%)
CSV	asked/forced to kiss someone	20. 1091 (11%)	8. 2385 (23%)
Phys	substances to manage body weight, enhance performance	21. 1045 (10%)	32. 1071 (10%)
Psy	asked/forced to participate in initiation ceremonies or other rituals intended to humiliate, degrade or belittle	22. 1043 (10%)	28. 1264 (12%)
NCSV	'flashed' at / someone 'exposed' themselves <i>in person</i>	23. 1037 (10%)	15. 1951 (19%)
Phys	participated in ceremonies/rituals involving physical harm	24. 923 (9%)	30. 1131 (11%)
NCSV	'flashed' at / someone 'exposed' themselves <i>online</i>	25. 883 (9%)	10. 2220 (22%)
NCSV	participated in initiations or rituals including degrading or harmful activities of a sexual nature, without physical contact	26. 825 (8%)	33. 995 (10%)
NCSV	produce/share sexual images, videos or text messages	27. 794 (8%)	27. 1286 (13%)
CSV	caressed or otherwise touched sexually	28. 792 (8%)	13. 1963 (19%)
CSV	genital contact with someone (including masturbation)	29. 792 (8%)	9. 2225 (22%)
CSV	actual or attempted vaginal/anal sex (object or person)	30. 788 (8%)	11. 2034 (20%)
NCSV	asked/forced to view sexual images, videos or messages	31. 766 (7%)	26. 1318 (13%)
CSV	asked/forced to participate in initiation ceremonies or other rituals of a sexual nature that involved physical contact	32. 744 (7%)	35. 744 (7%)
CSV	engaged in (gave or received) oral sex	33. 721 (7%)	16. 1921 (19%)
NCSV	asked/forced to undress or perform sexual acts on myself for the pleasure of someone else	34. 675 (7%)	31. 1111 (11%)
NCSV	sexual images of me were produced/shared by someone else	35. 654 (6%)	34. 985 (10%)

*bold denotes highest/most prevalent in category

Table 7 illustrates the finding that the most common form of IVAC experienced inside sport is psychological violence and the least common is sexual violence.

The comparison between 'inside sport' and 'outside sport' warrants further analysis and this will be the subject of future publications. There are some apparent similarities, for example, the first four most prevalent items *inside* sport are the same (but in different order) as those *outside* sport.

There are also some clear differences. For example, a number of sexual violence items differ substantively depending on whether they were experienced inside or outside sport, generally indicating the higher rate of prevalence for sexual violence *outside* sport. For example, actual or attempted sexual intercourse (vaginal or anal) was reported by 8% of respondents in relation to a sports setting compared to 20% of respondents in relation to a non-sport setting.

5.4 Characteristics of interpersonal violence against children: ‘most serious experience’

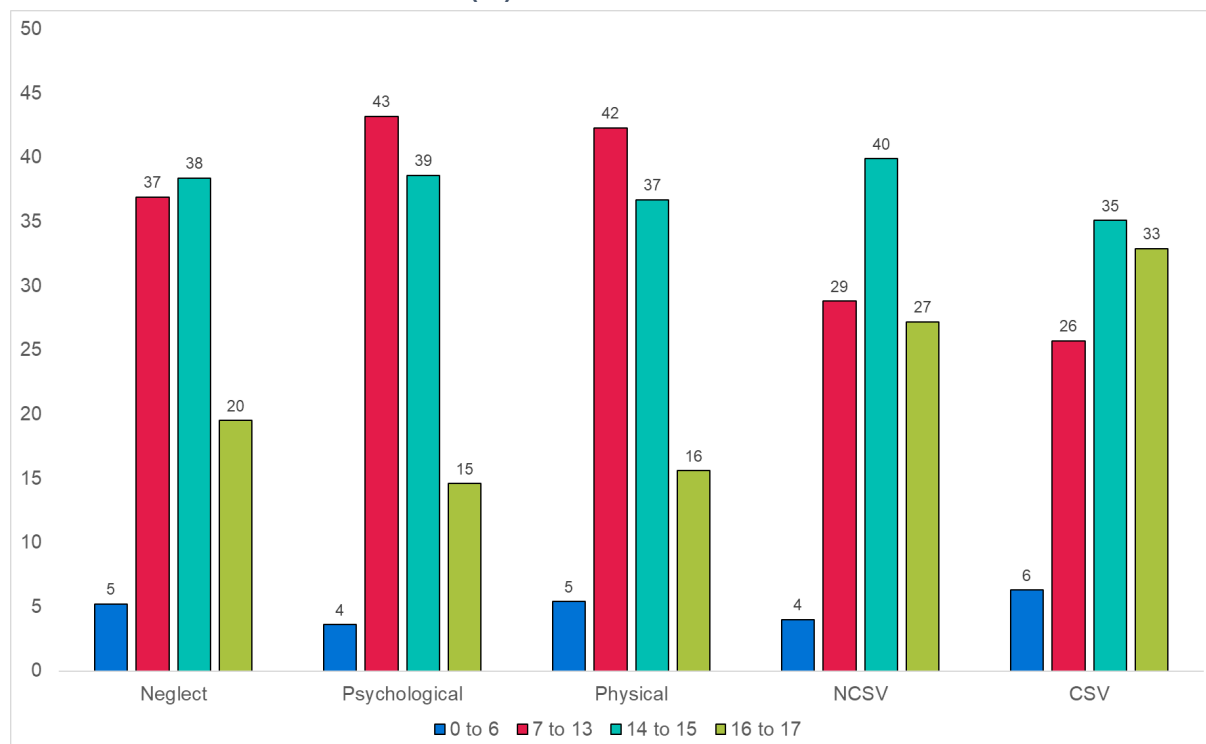
The study also gathered additional data on the characteristics of IVAC in sport by asking further, follow-up questions when a respondent reported an experience of IVAC. Many respondents identified more than one IVAC experience, therefore, rather than asking follow-up questions for *each* experience or item – which could be onerous for those who report multiple experiences – respondents were asked to identify (‘think of’) the experience they rated as the ‘most serious’, in the sense of having the most impact on them. Thus, the data below are based on responses to questions regarding the most serious experience across the ten areas presented above in Table 2.

5.4.1 Age, frequency and duration of experience

In relation to the age of respondents when this (most serious) experience or incident (inside sport) began and ended, the questionnaire offered four age categories: 0-6, 7-13, 14-15, and 16-17.

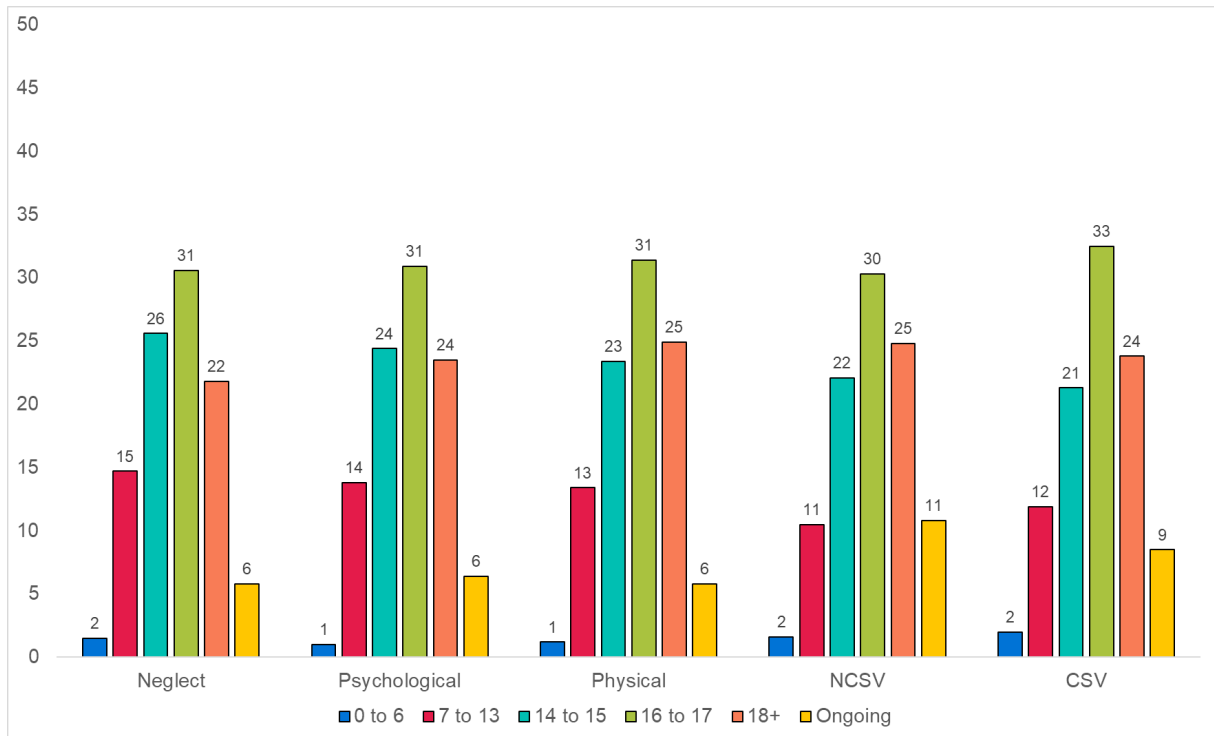
For *psychological* violence (43%) and *physical* violence (42%), the experience most commonly began between 7-13 years of age. However, for *neglect* (38%), *NCSV* (40%), and *CSV* (35%) the experience most frequently began between 14-15 years old (see Figure 23).

FIGURE 23: AGE OF ONSET OF IVAC (%)



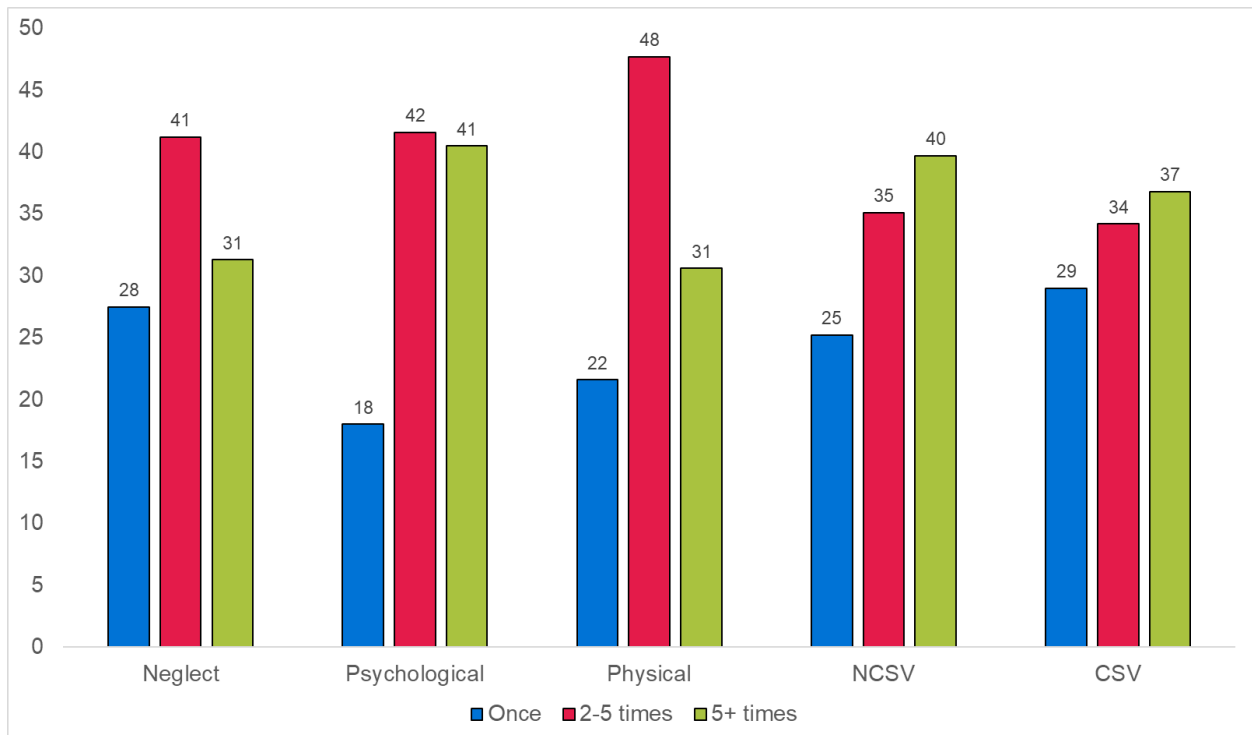
Across all categories, the majority were 16-17 years old when the experience stopped (30-33%). However, 7% of respondents reported the experience was still occurring at the time of survey (see Figure 24).

FIGURE 24: AGE OF CESSATION OF IVAC (%)



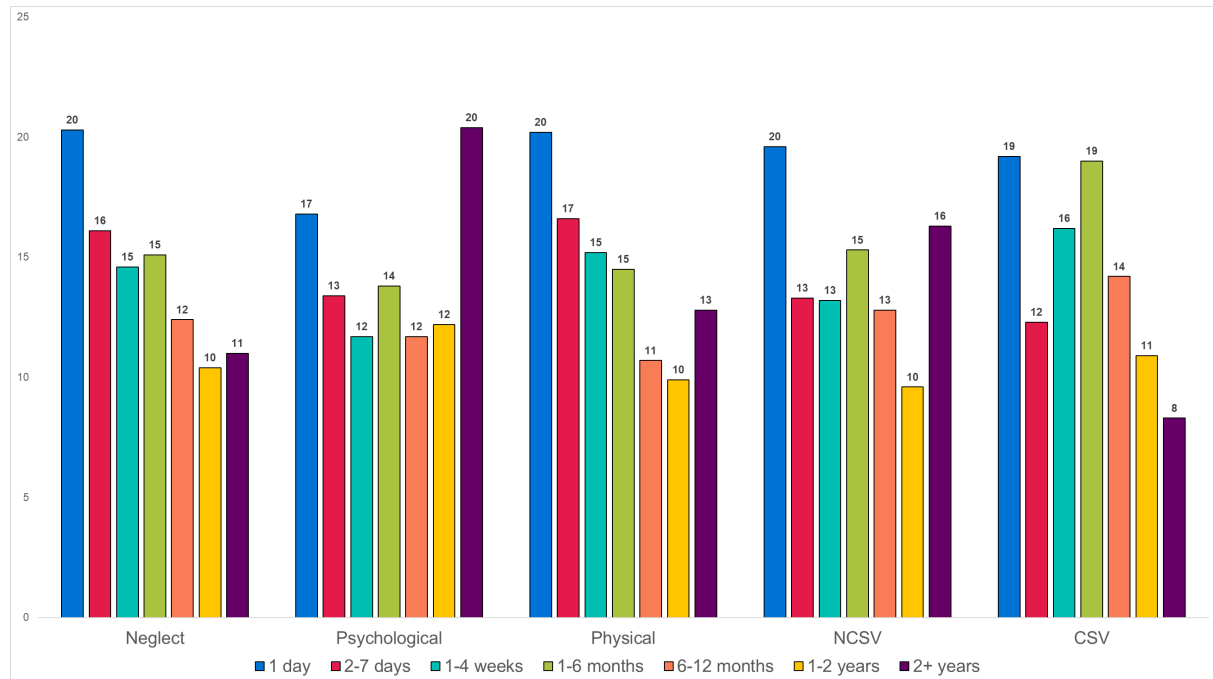
In relation to *frequency* of experience, most respondents indicated *2-5 times* for neglect (41%), psychological violence (42%) and physical violence (48%). Frequency was higher for sexual violence: the most common response was *more than five times* (40% for NCSV; 37% for CSV). 41% of those experiencing psychological violence also reported a frequency of *more than five times* (see Fig. 25).

FIGURE 25: FREQUENCY OF IVAC EXPERIENCE (%)



In relation to *duration* of experience (see Figure 26), across all categories, except psychological violence, the most common response was 1 day (19% to 20%). However, for psychological violence, 20% of respondents indicated a period of over 2 years. In all categories, between 49% and 58% of respondents indicated the experience had lasted at least one month. In all categories, more than 30% of respondents reported the experience lasted at least 6 months (more than 40% for psychological violence).

FIGURE 26: DURATION OF IVAC EXPERIENCE (%)



Significant sub-group differences concerning the duration of IVAC were found indicating that female athletes tend to experience IVAC in all five categories over a longer period of time compared to male athletes (see Table 3.1 in Appendix 3).

Further, for psychological violence, physical, violence, and NCSV, a higher level of performance (national and international) was related to longer durations of IV experience. This was especially the case at the international level for psychological violence and NCSV (see Table 3.2 in Appendix 3).

5.4.2 Characteristics of ‘perpetrators’

5.4.2.1 TERMINOLOGY

In relation to their most serious experience, respondents were asked to state how many people were responsible, their gender(s), and the role/position they held. These findings are presented in Figures 27-29.

Before presenting the data on the perpetration of abuse, it is important to qualify our use of the term ‘perpetrator’. Respondents were asked several questions about the person or people responsible for the experience they considered to be most severe. The terms ‘perpetrator’ or ‘offender’ were deliberately avoided as they are often associated with deliberately harmful and/or criminal acts. However, as noted above, ‘intent to harm [is] not [a] prerequisite for the definition of violence’ (UNCRC, 2011: 8) and it was important to avoid giving any impression that the survey was limited to criminality as defined in law. Therefore, the initial invitation stated:

The survey collects information about negative, potentially harmful, actions or behaviours that you may have experienced within an organised sports setting

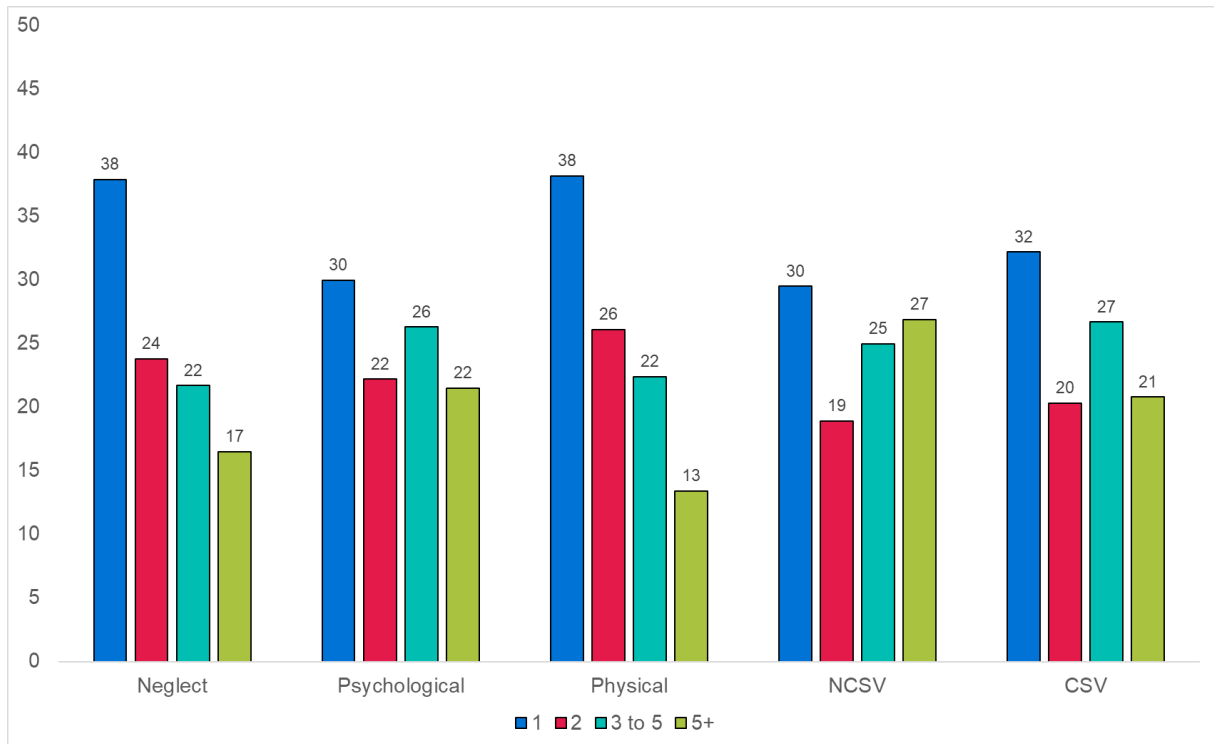
Furthermore, children also experience harm by or from other children. This may include deliberate acts, but it may also be normalised behaviour that is encouraged or tacitly endorsed by adults (e.g. an adult ignoring children using sexist, racist or homophobic language). The survey also cannot capture causes or motives for IVAC and it would be erroneous to make assumptions in this regard. In these circumstances, labelling children as *perpetrators* of interpersonal violence may be technically correct, but conceptually limited.

Therefore, in describing our data, whilst we adopt the term ‘perpetrator’ in reference to those persons identified by our respondents as being responsible for the negative experiences they had, we do so in a qualified fashion to acknowledge its limited and problematic application.

5.4.2.2 NUMBER OF PERPETRATOR(S)

The majority of respondents (30% to 38%) indicated a single perpetrator in all five categories, followed by *two people* or *three to five people* for all categories, except NCSV, for which *more than five people* was the second most frequent response at 27% (see Figure 27).

FIGURE 27: NUMBER OF PERPETRATOR(S) (%)

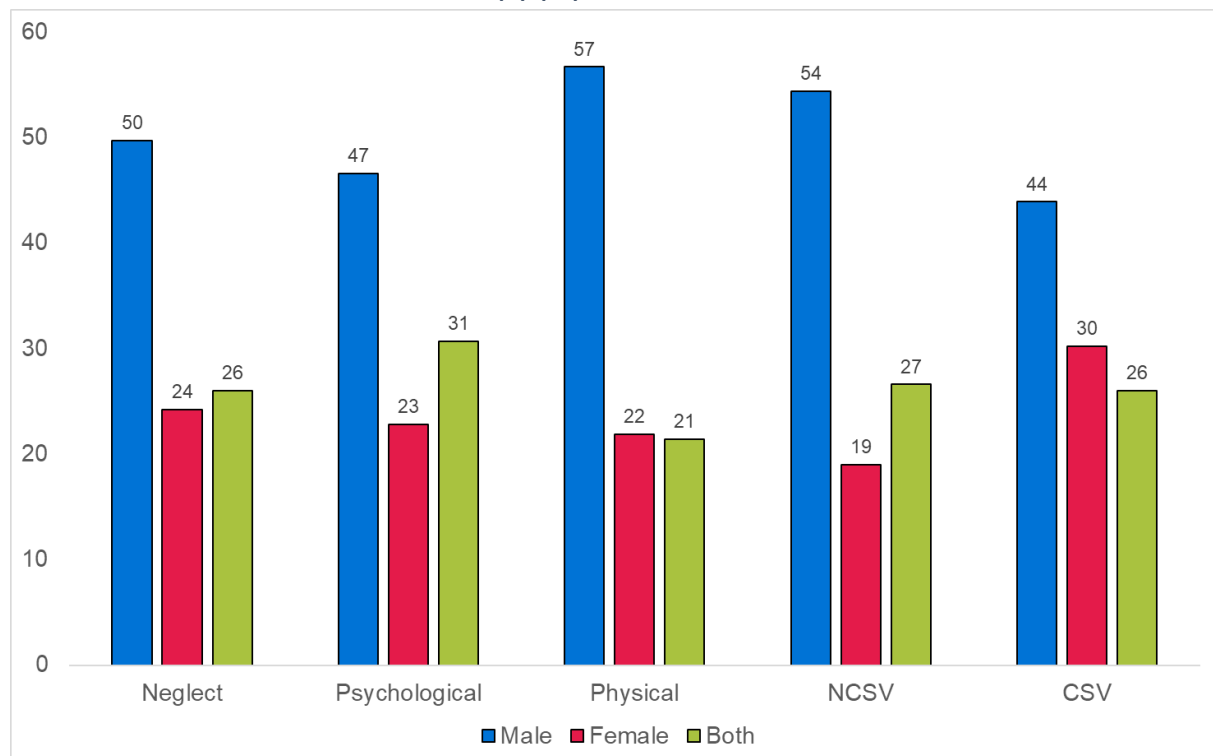


5.4.2.3 GENDER OF PERPETRATOR(S)

Across all categories, *males* were most often identified as the perpetrator(s) (44% to 57%) (see Figure 28). *Females* were indicated less often (19% to 30%).

The highest volume of female perpetrators was in CSV (30%). The largest difference, per type, in the gender of perpetrators was found in NCSV (54% male, 19% female). A substantial proportion of respondents (21% to 31% depending on the type) stated the perpetrators were both male *and* female.

FIGURE 28: GENDER OF PERPETRATOR(S) (%)



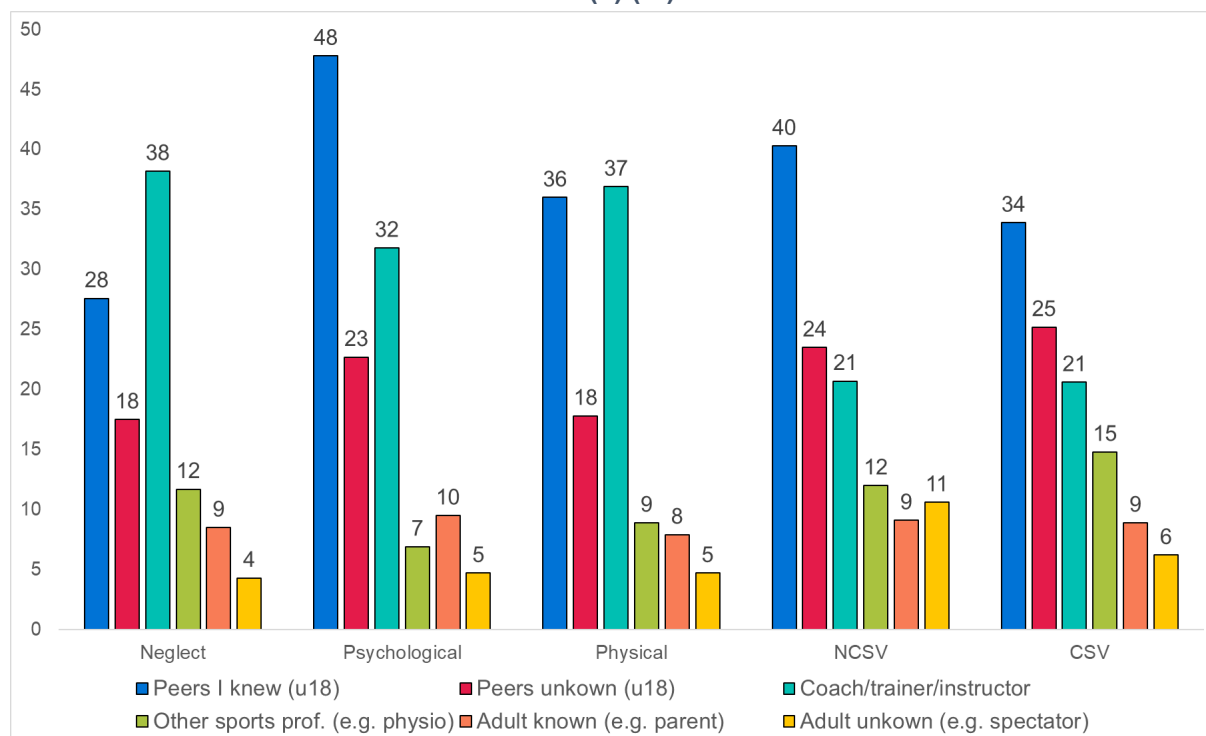
When looking at gender of respondents *and* gender of perpetrators, significant subgroup differences can be seen (see Table 3.3. in Appendix 3). For neglect (60%), psychological (66%), and physical violence (67%), most male respondents reported a male perpetrator, while female respondents were relatively evenly distributed among the three options concerning the gender of the perpetrators.

Perpetrators of sexual violence (NCSV and CSV), are most often male, regardless of the victim's gender. However, just over one-fifth (22%) of male respondents reported NCSV by a *female* perpetrator, increasing to over one-third (34%) for CSV. Just over one-fifth (23%) of female respondents indicated CSV by another female.

5.4.2.4 ROLE AND POSITION OF PERPETRATOR(S)

For psychological violence (48%), NCSV (40%) and CSV (34%), most respondents indicated *teammates or peers (under 18 years)* as perpetrators (see Figure 29). Neglect (38%) and physical violence (37%) was most often perpetrated by *coaches, trainers or instructors (18+)*.

FIGURE 29: ROLE/POSITION OF PERPETRATOR(S) (%)



Despite the differences across the categories, *teammates and peers* as well as *coaches, trainers and instructors* were the two most common perpetrator groups for neglect, psychological and physical violence.

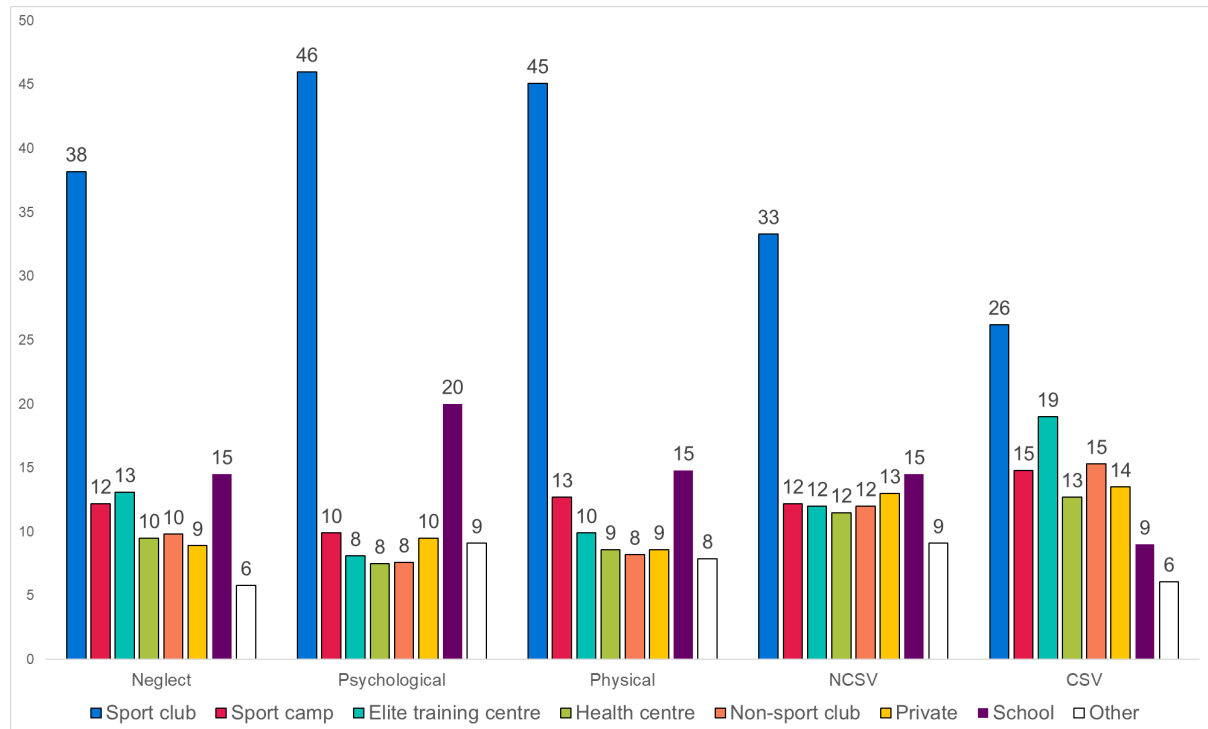
For NCSV and CSV, besides peers that were known, the second most mentioned perpetrator group are *peers (under 18 years) that were not known* by the athletes. One-fifth of the respondents indicated coaches as perpetrators of NCSV and CSV.

5.4.3 Context and location of violence experience

5.4.3.1 ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

Respondents were asked to identify, from multiple options, the sports context in which this most severe experience happened (see Figure 30). In all five violence categories, the *sport club* (26% to 46%) is the most often indicated context. Other contexts frequently referred to are *special training centres for elite athletes* (31% for neglect, 19% for CSV) and *organised extra-curricular school sport* (20% for neglect, 15% for physical violence, 15% for NCSV).

FIGURE 30: SPORTS CONTEXT OF EXPERIENCE (%)

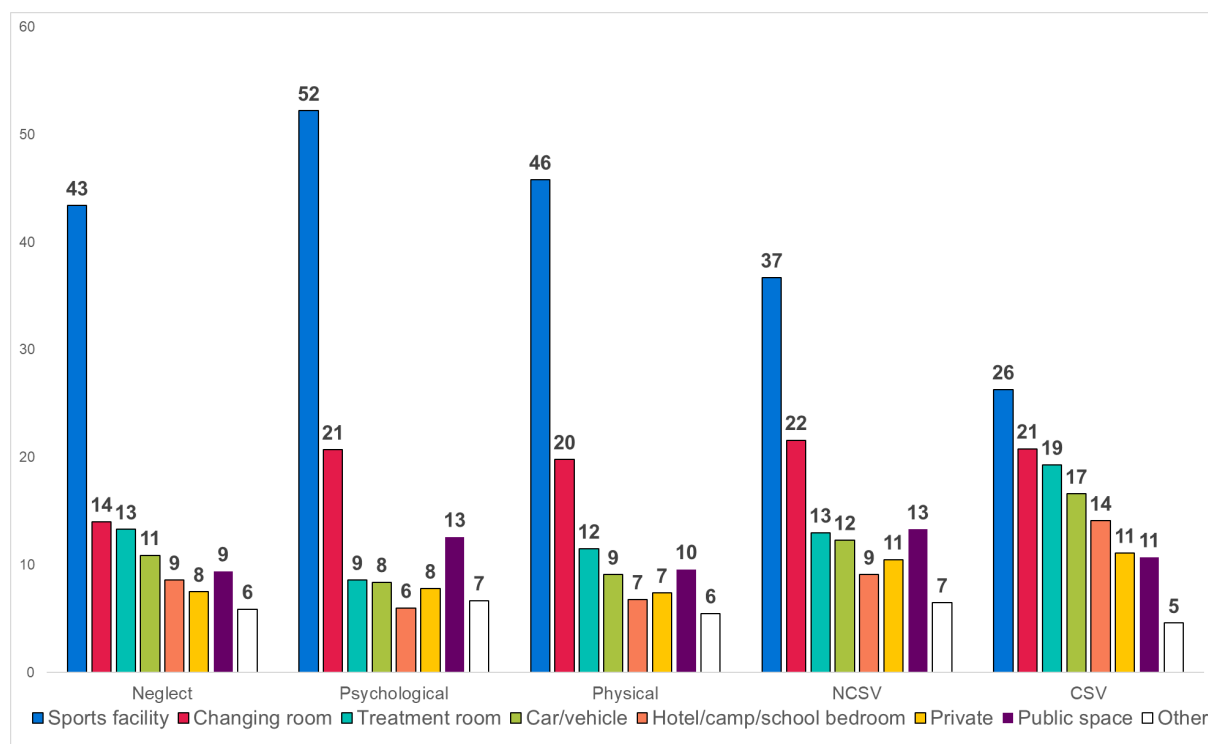


5.4.3.2 LOCATION

Respondents were also asked to indicate the type of **specific location** where they experienced IVAC (see Figure 31). The majority identified *In or around the sports facility* for each of the five violence categories (26% to 52%), followed by a *changing/locker room* (14% to 22%) and a *treatment room* (9% to 19%).

Furthermore, the results indicate that there is greater variation in the location of *sexual* violence experiences compared to the other forms of violence. *Private houses, cars and rooms in hotels, camps or boarding schools* are mentioned more often as places of sexual violence than for the other forms of violence.

FIGURE 31: LOCATION OF EXPERIENCE (%)



5.4.4 Support/Disclosure

Respondents were also asked whether they had told (disclosed) anyone about their experience of violence (see Figures 32 and 33). The majority of respondents, across all five categories, reported that they had *not* disclosed or sought support.

FIGURE 32: DISCLOSURE & SUPPORT – NON-SEXUAL VIOLENCE (%)

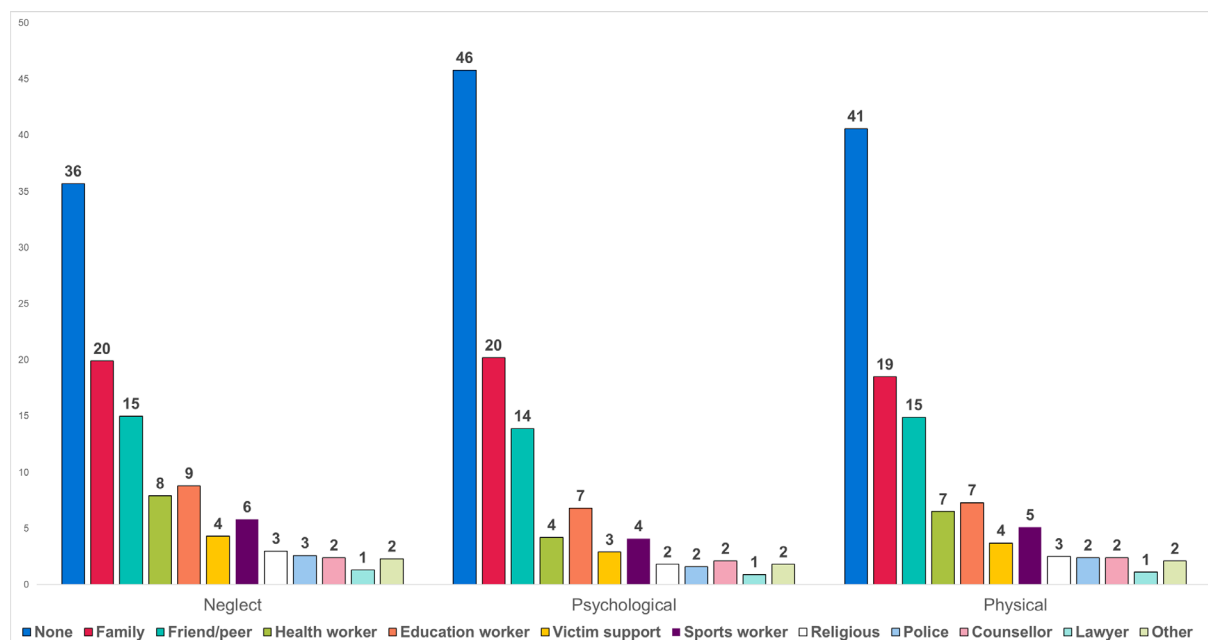
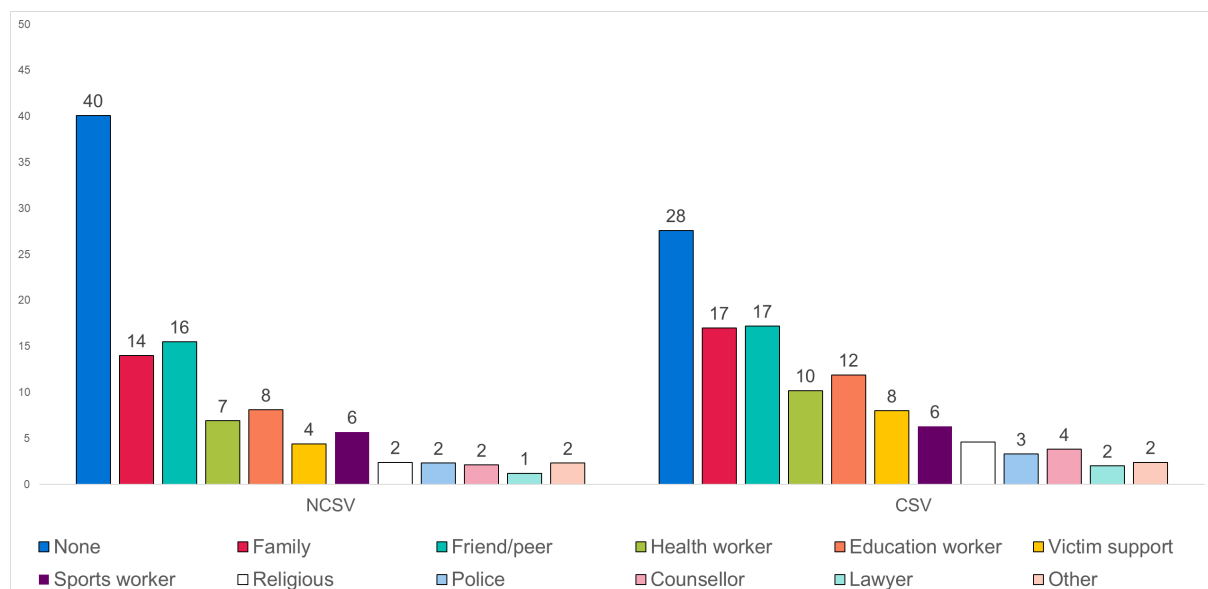


FIGURE 33: DISCLOSURE & SUPPORT – SEXUAL VIOLENCE (%)



Experiences of psychological violence were the least disclosed and CSV was the most often disclosed. If support was sought, *family members or relatives* were the first point of contact for experiences of neglect (20%), psychological violence (20%), and physical violence (19%). For experiences related to NCSV (16%) and CSV (17%), most respondents who did tell somebody, disclosed to *friends or peers*. Thus, families, friends and the individual's close social environment were the most frequently chosen points of disclosure and support.

Official institutions, such as *health services* (4% to 10%) or *victim-support organisations* (3%-8%) as well as *school/education settings* (7% to 12%), were indicated by some participants in all categories, but were, in comparison to the close social entourage, contacted less. The least contacted institutions or professions were the *police, therapists and lawyers*.

Furthermore, experiencing IVAC inside sport rarely leads to a report to *someone in sport* (e.g. a coach). Only a small proportion of participants (4% to 6%) asked for support within the sport context. This may indicate that respondents either did not know where to report in the context of sport or did not feel encouraged to seek support in the organisations of sport.

6. Summary and Discussion of Key Findings

In the following sections we summarise and discuss some of the key findings from the CASES study. In this preliminary report it is not possible to explore all the data generated by this project; further publications will follow, allowing for more differentiated and detailed observations of the findings.

6.1 Prevalence of interpersonal violence against children (IVAC) inside sport and outside sport

The most striking finding from this study is the extent to which those who participate in sport as children experience violations and abuses, either whilst participating in sport, or otherwise. 75% of respondents in this survey experienced some form of interpersonal violence *inside sport*, at least once, before the age of 18. Outside sport, the figure rises to 82%.

The consistency of these findings across national contexts also demonstrates the widespread nature of IVAC across sporting contexts in various European countries.

Overall, the proportion of respondents who had experienced IVAC *outside sport* is marginally higher in all countries (by 3% to 9%) than the proportion of those who experienced IVAC *inside sport* (see Figure 4).

6.2 Scope of CASES survey

It is important to contextualise these high prevalence rates. Importantly, our survey was deliberately inclusive, in line with international definitions of violence and abuse against children. That is, respondents were asked about various forms of violations and harassments, including those that are often considered ‘inconsequential’, ‘normal’, ‘tolerable’, ‘mild’, ‘low-level’, etc. Thus, the most common IVAC experiences reported, regardless of context, relate to psychological violence (see Table 7): withholding praise, ignoring, humiliating, shouting at, or excluding children.

The impact of such experiences cannot be determined by this study and probably many would not call these experiences ‘violence’ in the narrow sense of the word. It is only clear from these data that a considerable proportion of respondents had been affected by such forms of psychological violation, both outside and inside sport.

It should also be understood that the overall prevalence rates include respondents who reported experiencing such actions/behaviour just *once*. However, when asked about their most serious experience inside sport, approximately 40% of respondents reporting IVAC reported a frequency of 2-5 times and 36% reported a frequency of more than five times (see Figure 25). Similarly, more than 80% of respondents said their most serious experience lasted for more than 1 day (see Figure 26). Therefore, in most instances the data refer to individuals who have been subjected to repeated experiences, by one or more persons, over a period of days, weeks, months or years.

6.3 Categories of IVAC inside sport and outside sport

Separating violence (or abuse) into specific forms allows more detailed insight into IVAC. However, it is important to note that one individual can experience multiple forms of violence (for example, see Euser et al., 2010). Therefore, whilst it is analytically useful, this separation can also be artificial. The issue of ‘overlap’ will be explored in future publications. Below we briefly consider the overall findings for each type of IVAC and offer some contextual discussion.

6.3.1 Psychological violence

More than 6 out of 10 respondents (65%) reported an experience of psychological violence inside sport. This is lower than the findings of Alexander et al. (2011) and higher than Vertommen et al. (2016). However, different sampling and other methodological differences between studies make comparison very difficult.

It is important to note that these experiences or behaviours, which may cause significant, long-term harm, also fall within the realm of widely accepted disciplinary practices. Often, they are accepted as part of *normal* ‘child-rearing’ or child socialization practices and it is evident that these were commonly experienced outside of sport also.

There has been comparatively little attention to psychological violence within the sport sector (Krahn, 2021; Stirling & Kerr, 2013). Yet it represents a key challenge for child welfare in sport and athlete welfare more broadly. Within performance-oriented sport cultures, withholding praise, ignoring, humiliating, shouting at, or excluding children, are frequently seen as ‘character-building’ and necessary elements of preparing children to succeed, as well as the means for identifying and separating out those who have the (apparent) requisite volume of ‘mental toughness’ and ‘resilience’. It is little surprise, then, that high numbers of respondents stated they had experienced such things at least once.

In a similar vein, using exercise to discipline children is a commonly used and widely accepted coaching practice or has been in the very recent past. These abuses then, often form the accepted and inherited cultural fabric of sport – practices that require no comment because they are ‘part of the game’. In such circumstances, raising objections to such practices can risk ostracization and vilification, as illustrated in the previous VOICE Project in relation to sexual violence in sport (Rulofs et al., 2020). Therefore, psychological violence towards children in sport often ‘hides within plain sight’ and the challenge of addressing it cannot be underestimated.

6.3.2 Physical violence

We found that more than 4 out of 10 children (44%) participating in organised sport experience some form of physical violence beyond the usual or accidental physical contact or harm/injury that occurs as a normal feature of playing sports. It is important to point out that this category includes experiences beyond direct physical assault, such as being forced to train when injured, being instructed to take performance enhancing substances, and being forced to participate in ritualized games and ceremonies that involved harmful physical activities.

A high tolerance for physical pain applies to many sports and some sports are violent or aggressive in nature, such as combat-sports and team-sports such as rugby.

Again, the emphasis on ‘winning’ (games, leagues, trophies, etc.) in sport and the exclusionary practices of ‘selection’ inherent to a performance culture, is accompanied by the overt rewarding and celebrating of children who most rapidly improve their performance in comparison to other children. In such a culture, a willingness to overload one’s body, to ‘play through’ injury, ignore pain, practice to excess, and to perform and achieve beyond age-related standards is highly valued by adults, and seen as displaying ‘the right spirit’ and ‘the will to win’ (Mayer, Kühnle & Thiel, 2021). Thus, rather than being viewed as problematic or damaging, such behaviours, or qualities, are more often seen as key indicators of ‘potential’. Therefore, it is not especially surprising to find that nearly 1-in-5 respondents (18%) had been ‘instructed or forced to perform while injured or sick or at an intensity or frequency that was potentially harmful’.

Thus, sport environments seem to provide a context where physical violence (including physical assault, unhealthy body-management practices, and rituals involving physical harm) occurs more often inside sport than outside sport (see Figure 5). If sport is to deliver on its claims to contribute to safe and healthy childhoods, the challenge to be both a physically demanding or challenging space for children, whilst also being a physically safe and positive space requires significant attention.

6.3.3 Neglect

As Gilbert et al. (2009: 68) found ‘neglect is at least as damaging as physical or sexual abuse in the long-term, but has received the least scientific and public attention’. Thus, there has been very little attention to child neglect inside sport. Undoubtedly, sport constitutes a realm within which children’s safety is entrusted to organisations that rely heavily on volunteers who may have experience in playing sport, but often little or no experience of managing children’s safety effectively, for example, through robust risk assessment procedures. Yet sport is often a physically ‘risky’ endeavour, indeed, that is part of its distinct appeal for so many, including children. However, resources are frequently scarce, thus the equipment, facilities and expertise necessary for the safe provision of children’s sport, as well as ensuring children are properly looked after whilst *in loco parentis* (acting in place of a parent), is often limited or absent.

In the CASES-study, approximately one third of respondents indicated experiences of neglect inside sport and outside sport (37% and 34% respectively). This finding presents a substantive challenge for sport where local provision is often stretched but where children’s rights are no less important or applicable. Ultimately, the volume of experiences in this category can be cautiously interpreted to mean that the prevention of neglect in sport should be carefully considered and given more importance than has been the case so far.

6.3.4 Sexual violence

The least frequent experiences reported by respondents in this study are those of sexual violence (both *contact* and *non-contact* forms). This result may seem to be in contrast to the attention given to sexual violence against children in recent years. However, the results clearly show that one-in-five (20%) children who participate in organised sport experience some form of *contact* sexual violence *inside sport* and over a third (35%) experience some form of *non-contact* sexual violence *inside sport*.

The most common experiences were being the subject of ‘obscene or sexual comments’ (19%), ‘inappropriate staring or leering’ (18%), inappropriate, unwanted or forced kissing (11%), and being ‘flashed’, both in-person (10%) and online (9%). Acts commensurate with sexual assault and rape inside sport had a prevalence rate of 7% to 8%.

Qualitative research with former athletes has previously illustrated the life-long personal impact of sexual violence in sport (e.g. Hartill, 2016; Rulofs et al., 2019). Sexual violence and child sexual abuse remains a taboo subject in many cultures and as such remains a form of violence around which there is a ‘dome of silence’ (Kirby et al., 1999) and a topic that many are reluctant to discuss. Unsurprisingly, many victims and survivors feel their experience is an isolated one and find disclosure – privately or through official channels – very difficult. The findings presented here demonstrate that sexual violence in sport is far from uncommon.

Whilst the call to prevent sex offenders and paedophiles from entering youth sport is widely supported, sexual violence is often defined in very narrow terms. Certainly, the focus of media attention is almost entirely confined to rape and severe sexual assault. Significantly, then, the CASES data illustrate clearly the large volume of sexual activity within children’s sport that is either *forced*, *unwanted* or *inappropriate*. These data illustrate the need for the sports community to understand ‘sexual violence’, ‘sexual abuse’, ‘sexual exploitation’, and ‘sexual harassment’ in their widest sense, rather than confine their understanding and prevention of sexual harm to the most violent forms.

Therefore, these data confirm the need for efforts to prevent the sexual abuse of children, inside and outside sport, to remain of utmost importance. Thus, the protection of children from sexual violence must remain a high priority in sport as well as in other areas of child and youth work.

6.4 Cross-national comparisons

A key finding is the similarity between national prevalence rates. Examining the rates across national contexts through the individual categories of IVAC reveals a few differences (see Table 8). These show a range of approximately 10 percentage points for each category of IVAC, with the exception of physical violence, which has a range of 20 percentage points.

TABLE 8: CROSS-NATIONAL COMPARISONS: PREVALENCE RANGE OF IVAC INSIDE SPORT

Category	Range and country
Psychological	59% in Belgium-Flanders to 71% in Germany
Neglect	32% in Austria to 42% in Germany
Physical	32% in Austria to 52% in Belgium Brussels-Wallonia
Non-contact sexual violence	30% in the UK and 41% in Belgium Brussels-Wallonia
Contact sexual violence	16% in Austria to 26% in Germany

The survey found the highest rates inside sport for psychological violence, neglect, and contact sexual violence in Germany; the highest rates for both physical violence and non-contact sexual violence were in Wallonia-Brussels. The lowest prevalence

rates for neglect, physical violence, and contact sexual violence were found in Austria; UK had the lowest rate for non-contact sexual violence; and Belgium-Flanders the lowest rate for psychological violence.

Whilst noting these differences, it is difficult to draw direct conclusions from this. The CASES-consortium will explore this in further statistical procedures and future publications. At this stage, it can be concluded that for almost all categories (except physical violence) the range of difference between countries is small and thus the differences in prevalence rates of violence in sport between countries are minor, if not negligible.

Without gathering data over longer periods of time, it is not possible to know if these differences are reflective of long-standing, durable patterns. This illustrates the need for longitudinal studies that can generate international trend analyses to map change over time. The CASES questionnaire offers an instrument that would enable such longitudinal analyses in future.

6.5 Gender

6.5.1 Rates of victimization for boys and girls

The data shows that males report higher rates of IVAC inside sport than females, across all five categories. This somewhat goes against prevailing thought where public debate and discussions within the sport sector often focus (sometimes implicitly) on the victimisation of female athletes to the exclusion of males. In keeping with general studies of child abuse and child sexual abuse (e.g. Gilbert et al., 2009; Pereda et al., 2009; Stoltenborgh et al., 2011), rates for females were found to be higher than males outside sport. However, a study of maltreatment in the UK also found higher rates of victimization of boys (under 18) by 'non-resident' adults (Radford et al., 2011: 69-70).

The CASES findings contrast with a recent study of current and retired Canadian athletes (Kerr et al., 2019) that found a higher number of 'harmful behaviours' against females in psychological, physical, and sexual harm, and neglect. However, other research findings indicate that our result is not entirely unexpected.

Vertommen et al. (2016) found that boys experience more *physical* violence than girls while playing sports and no gender differences in relation to psychological violence and the most severe types of sexual violence. Bermon et al. (2021) found 'no difference between genders for verbal, physical, and sexual abuses' within the *elite* athletics setting, but that 'touching sexual abuses' 'represented 35% of all sexual abuses in women and 57% in men.' Similarly, Fasting et al. (2016: 24) measured neglect, verbal harassment, bribery, physical abuse, gender harassment, sexual harassment and sexual abuse in Zambian sport in a sample of 410 athletes. They found 'no statistically significant differences between female and male athletes with respect to experiences of the different types of harassment and abuse.'

Therefore, the statistically significant difference found here, between male and female prevalence rates across all forms of IVAC inside sport, and across seven national contexts, is a unique finding, but one that resonates with evidence from other recent studies.

It is important to keep in mind that this survey is a cross-sectional study that collected experiences of violence retrospectively at a specific point in time in a specific sample. Further detailed analysis and discussion will follow in future publications, however, we offer some initial thoughts for consideration with respect to the gender-differences in violence experiences in our sample.

6.5.2 Boys and Male-Sport

First, it may be that the higher rates of victimization for boys are explained by the higher volume of ‘perpetrators’ within the male population generally (established across many studies of child abuse) and the fact that sport remains a firmly sex-segregated (and male-dominated) field. Thus, males in sport, including those who perpetrate violence, are far more likely to participate with other males than with females. Therefore, it may be that the high proportion of sex-segregation within sport increases the risk to boys whilst decreasing the risk to girls.

The higher overall rates of male victimization may also be related to dominant forms of gender socialization as well as gender-based myths around violence and abuse. That is, erroneous narratives about boys can operate against adults ‘seeing’ (and acting on) violence towards and between boys and/or being especially sensitized to the vulnerability of girls. This may lead to lower thresholds of protection as well as lower reporting and disclosure.

For example, physical violence clearly has a different relationship to masculinity and femininity. Fighting amongst boys has generally been considered a rite of passage, if not an essential element of masculinity, yet widely discouraged amongst girls. In other words, physical violence is a highly valued element of (dominant versions of) masculinity, but anathema to successful or dominant femininity within hetero-patriarchal cultures. Certainly, there is a great deal of research literature that has detailed the hyper-masculinist culture that prevails within (male) sport (e.g. Messner & Sabo, 1990; Meuser, 2007; Hartill, 2014). Within these cultures, hierarchies are encouraged and violence between males (both on and off ‘the field’) is normalized and valorised (as is ‘rape culture’ and sexual violence against women and girls; e.g. Curry, 1991).

Therefore, despite formal codes and rules to the contrary, dominant forms of sport (often referred to as *national* sports) have produced clear expectations that boys should both perpetrate violence, and accept it without complaint; their capacity for both carries significant meaning for their social status and male identity. Such spaces are breeding grounds for sexist and homophobic masculinity, but they are also spaces in which boys are extremely vulnerable to interpersonal violence, including sexual violence (Hartill, 2005).

Therefore, generally speaking, expectations about what is acceptable behaviour between boys, and towards boys, differs markedly from that of girls and all-female (sport) spaces. If the capacity to accept physical pain is a key indicator that marks out ‘a (real) man’, then non-physical (or psychological) *violence* is an oxymoron within male-sport. Thus, many forms of interpersonal violence within male-dominated or all-male spaces, such as male-sport, are dismissed as harmless – ‘boys being boys’, ‘just banter’; or considered positive – ‘character building’, ‘rites of passage’ – or simply as unavoidable, natural by-products of being male (‘testosterone-fuelled’).

Similarly, in relation to sexual abuse, the ‘male perpetrator-female victim paradigm’ has been influential in shaping discourses around risk and victimization. Likewise, male perpetrators are referred to as ‘paedophiles’, ‘deviants’, and ‘sex beasts’, far removed from normal (heterosexual) men. Therefore, masculinist, heteronormative spaces such as sport – persistently characterised as moral training grounds for the young, policed by strong heterosexual men – are thought to pose little or no risk for boys. Yet as feminists have long pointed out, even sexual violence is about power rather than sex. In such conditions, the preponderance of male ‘victims’ (and male ‘perpetrators’) is not especially surprising.

It should also be taken into account that, unlike other studies that survey athletes (see Kerr et al., 2019), the sample used here consists of people who participated in organised sport in their childhood and adolescence, but who are not necessarily still currently members of a sports club. It is also possible that our sample includes a number of men who are now more critical of their experiences of violence in sport and less likely to accept it as a normal part of sport socialisation than in studies using samples of athletes.

The survey found a significant difference between male and female respondents and we have offered some observations on this above. However, the rates of IVAC for females, whilst generally lower, is nevertheless also high. This factor is far more important than any numerical differences within the sample. Whilst it seems reasonable to highlight differences between male- and female-sport, there are also many similarities. Thus, the fundamental ‘nature’ of competitive sport as a ‘zero-sum game’ (Brackenridge, 2001) frequently organises children (regardless of gender) into hierarchical units and designates their value according to their ability to deliver performance-driven goals – above all according to their win-loss ratio. Such environments are evident in abundance within national and international media reports on ‘child abuse in sport’ scandals. Therefore, whilst acknowledging this important finding on gender, our focus is on *children* and the nature of the spaces provided for them.

6.5.2.1. DURATION

Finally, the data also indicates that females experience all categories of IVAC over longer time periods (see Table 3.1 in Appendix 3). In the *duration* options ‘1-2 years’ and ‘more than 2 years’, female rates were higher than males across all five IVAC categories. The difference was especially pronounced for *more than 2 years* for NCSV (12% difference) and psychological violence (10% difference).

6.5.3 ‘Perpetrators’

6.5.3.1 GENDER

Most reports (relating to respondents’ *most serious experience inside sport*) refer to *male* ‘perpetrators’. However, on average across all categories, the perpetrator was identified as *exclusively* male in half of all IVAC reports and *exclusively* female in just under a quarter of reports (see Figure 28). This finding reinforces the generally accepted view that ‘perpetrators’ of child abuse and neglect are most often male.

However, the substantial minority of female perpetration of IVAC inside sport should serve as a warning against the general tendency to overly-masculinise violence

against children – in other words, to assume it is only males who are responsible for such behaviour.

This is particularly the case for sexual violence where previous studies have identified males as perpetrators in the overwhelming majority of cases. Therefore, it is noteworthy that in these data, the gender difference for perpetrators is closest in contact sexual violence where 30% of all reports identified a female ‘perpetrator(s)’ *exclusively*, compared to 44% of reports identifying a male ‘perpetrator(s)’ exclusively.

6.5.3.2 ROLE AND STATUS

In relation to the role (or relationship) of the perpetrators, our survey design allows us to disaggregate role by category of IVAC (using the ‘most serious experience’ only). Figure 29 shows that neglect is most often perpetrated by adult coaches, whereas psychological violence, non-contact sexual violence, and contact sexual violence is most often perpetrated by known peer athletes. Physical violence is most often perpetrated by coaches / instructors as well as known peer athletes.

Focusing on whether the perpetrator was known to the victim, it is clear that perpetrators of all forms of IVAC inside sport were known to the respondent in the overwhelming majority of cases, even though the incident may also have involved individuals who were not known to the victim (yet were still part of the sport environment).

6.6 Prevalence of IVAC and level of sport participation

A significant finding of the CASES-study is the correlation between the level of sport participation and the experience of IVAC in sport. Interpersonal violence happens at all levels of sport, from recreational sport, through club sport to regional, national and international level. However, the results suggest that the likelihood of experiencing IVAC inside sport increases as the level of performance moves beyond the recreational level to more competitive sport.

Across all forms of violence, prevalence is lowest for those respondents indicating participation in recreational sport and highest for those indicating international level performance (e.g. representing their country at international events in official competitions). Overall, the prevalence for any form of IVAC is 68% at the recreational level and 84% at the international level.

Furthermore, for psychological violence, physical violence, and NCSV, a higher level of performance (national and international) was also related to longer durations of IVAC.

The data also reveals that the prevalence of experiencing IVAC inside sport does not increase continuously with the level of sport participation. Instead there is a sharp increase from the recreational level over the club level to already relatively high prevalence rates at the regional level, while the further increase from the regional level to national and international level is minor (e.g. for physical violence), marginal (e.g. for NCSV) or absent (e.g. for psychological violence). This implies that the difference between recreational sport and competitive sport in general (starting at regional level) might be relevant to the experience of IVAC inside sport.

Competitive sport with its specific social structures, for example the close relationships of dependency between athlete and coach, the pressure to produce success and 'win', and the disciplining body-related regimes, might foster conditions for the execution of violence against children in sport. Yet participating in sport at a competitive level goes hand-in-hand with spending much more time in sport, often within a single sport, in contrast to recreational sport. Thus, the higher prevalence rates in competitive sport may also be an effect of a longer exposure time in sports and/or specialisation within one sport.

6.7 Organisational context of IVAC in sport

In order to prevent interpersonal violence in sport effectively, it is important to know in which organisations of sport it takes place. All in all, the CASES-results show that violence was experienced by respondents in diverse organisational contexts of sport, e.g. in clubs, camps, elite training centres, health centres, extra-curricular school sport, etc. It can also occur in private settings, when athletes visit each other in private homes or coaches invite athletes to their private houses.

Overall in all five categories of IVAC, the sport club is by far the most often indicated context of violence experience in sport (see Figure 30). For example: of all respondents who indicated the experience of psychological violence, 46% identified the sport club, 20% extra-curricular school sport, 10% a sport camp and 10% a private setting as the organisational context where the experience took place.

Against the background of the great relevance of sports clubs for the system of organised sport in many European countries, this finding is not surprising. However, it also points to the need for further efforts to prevent violence, especially within the structural base of organised sport – in the clubs. If organised sport for children and youth is to become a safer space in future, there is a strong need to support sport clubs in installing prevention measures. As sports clubs are mainly based on voluntary work, sports and youth politics are challenged to find ways and means for sports clubs to be better positioned for the prevention of violence against children.

However, it goes without saying that the other organisational contexts are also called upon to further expand their efforts to prevent violence. With regard to contact sexual violence, for example, the CASES study shows that as many as 19% of respondents with experiences of contact sexual violence in sport stated they had experienced it in the context of elite training centres. This finding points to the need to also increase safeguarding measures in the field of competitive sport for children and in those specific institutions of competitive sport, e.g. centres of excellence and Olympic training centres.

6.8 Disclosure

The majority of respondents experiencing IVAC did not disclose the experience. This is a consistent finding across all categories of IVAC (see Figure 32 & 33). Similarly, for all categories, if a disclosure was made it was highly likely that this would be to a *family member* or *friend*, outside of the sport context. Overall, disclosures towards an official or professional position were rare (mostly below 10%) and from these professional positions those working in *education* or *health* were the most likely to receive a disclosure. Following these professions, those working in *sport* were the

next most likely to receive a disclosure (with the exception of CSV where *victim-support* workers were marginally more likely to receive a disclosure).

Across all categories of IVAC, the respondents in this study were more likely to disclose to a sport worker than to someone in a religious organisation, the police, a counsellor, or a lawyer. With the exception of contact sexual violence, sport workers were also more likely to receive a disclosure than a victim-support worker. This emphasizes the importance of ensuring the sports workforce, and the organisations within which they are situated, is appropriately equipped to handle such disclosures.

6.9 Overall experience of sport

It is important to highlight that despite the high prevalence rates inside sport, nearly 85% of respondents rated their general experience of sport as 'good' (43%) or 'very good' (42%). This is a rather counter-intuitive finding to which we make a number of preliminary observations.

First, it is likely that for at least some respondents, their broader experience of sport was not significantly impacted by experiences of interpersonal violence. This should not obscure the fact that experiences of interpersonal violence (even supposedly 'mild' forms) can lead to 'drop-out', loss of enjoyment, and have serious psychological or health consequences. However, such experiences would not necessarily detract from respondents' general positive feelings about sport that are often established early in childhood.

Furthermore, even extreme experiences of interpersonal violence within childhood sport often do not equate to the totality of an individual's experience of sport. Sport may be the site of interpersonal violence, exploitation and abuse *and* a source of personal achievement, self-efficacy, and empowerment. Therefore, reducing such positive, even self-defining, experiences to the experience of victimisation may well be deeply unpalatable for the individual.

This complexity is impossible to resolve in a survey of this type, but it does not seem illogical to expect that even those experiencing significant harm within sport may want to recognise and focus on the positive aspects of their participation.

Finally, this level of approval no doubt illustrates the strong contribution that the sport sector makes to individual lives and the extent to which sport participation is valued within our societies. However, it may also indicate both the widespread normalization of violent and harassing behaviours (towards children) and the weak recognition and implementation of children's rights in many cultures and institutional settings of sport.

7. Limitations

7.1 Temporal and cultural context of the survey sample

It is important to recognize that the survey data relates to a specific timeframe. Respondents had to be between 18 and 30 years old during the fieldwork dates. The survey opened on 22/10/2020 (UK) and closed 14/12/2020 (Belgium: Flanders) (see Table 3). All respondents were born between October 1989 and December 2002 and the experiences recorded by the survey all occurred when respondents were under 18 years of age – a 30-year period between 1990-2020.

This timeframe represents a significant period inside sport in relation to child abuse in sport, or as we define it here, interpersonal violence against children (IVAC) in sport. The earliest media coverage of sexual abuse in sport can be traced to the mid-1990s in several countries, however, organised strategic efforts to prevent abuse in sport were only appearing at the turn of the millennium at the earliest (e.g. UK and the Netherlands). For most countries (including most countries in this study), such efforts did not occur until much later and for most countries in the CASES study, these efforts are either in the early stages of implementation (Austria, Belgium, Germany,) or only very recently initiated (Romania, Spain). Therefore, the timeframe of the study has been a period of substantial change inside sport. This emphasizes the need for longitudinal studies that can map trends over time.

7.2 Methodology and sample

The task of establishing prevalence of child abuse and neglect is a significant challenge in its own right. This task is complicated further by the specific contextual focus on sport, and complicated again by the comparative, multi-national approach taken. A key challenge was to incorporate the vast array of behaviours and experiences that fall within the frame of harm against children, and to do so with appropriate clarity and specificity so that the survey was accessible and user-friendly. Thus, the team were required to draw up clear and concise questions, first in English, in a way that translated and transferred well across other national contexts.

Thus, in constructing a questionnaire that would provide sufficient granularity, whilst not being overly onerous on respondents, especially those who had experienced multiple forms of harm, it was not possible to specifically refer to all harmful behaviours or experiences that fall within the scope of interpersonal violence against children. For example, self-harm, financial exploitation, and trafficking of children were not specifically referred to.

In order to ensure that the questionnaire was ‘device agnostic’ – in other words, it could be completed on an array of internet-connected devices including mobile phones – questions had to be pared down to the minimum number of characters prior to the final programming. Therefore, several compromises had to be made by the research team to produce both a comprehensive *and* viable instrument.

Surveying a sensitive issue like violence against children requires a thoughtful and carefully justified approach. Findings from the literature generally suggest that estimates of prevalence rates for difficult topics are best based on self-administered interviews (Aquilino, 1994; Catania, Dermott, & Pollack, 1986). Nonetheless, instead of interviewing children, we chose to use a faster retrospective design. This approach, which is less invasive and precludes the need for parental consent, was also adopted in the national prevalence studies in the United Kingdom (Cawson, 2000; Radford et al., 2011).

Using an online panel for scientific purposes can be methodologically problematic. First, using the internet leads to an underrepresentation of those groups that have no, or limited, access to it. Also, the researcher cannot check whether the person to whom it was sent in fact completed the questionnaire. Another constraint of this format was that the fieldwork was terminated as soon as the target number of participants was reached, preventing the exact response rate from being determined.

Our sample can hence be best described as a *convenience sample* of respondents who have chosen to be panel members and are thus willing and able to fill out a questionnaire relatively rapidly. Therefore, the sample may not be representative for the total population. Taking these restrictions into account, however, we found no evidence that falsifies the claim that our samples are representative of the respective target populations.

In the sampling process, quotas for gender and age group were considered in order to achieve comparability by gender and age group (18-24, 25-30) of respondents. Proportions by sport *discipline* and sport *level* were not considered, so it is not known if the sample is representative for the whole population. It is notable that the number of female respondents who competed at the *recreational* level (50%) is higher than the number of male respondents (30%). In other words, male respondents had participated at higher levels of competition in sport than female respondents. This is a situation comparable to the general population. Since the overall results of the CASES-study show higher prevalence-rates for males than for females in sport, it has to be reflected that this finding might be based on interrelated effects of gender relations and hegemonic cultures in sport as well as the specific structures of competitive sport.

The questionnaire was a *retrospective self-report*, which tend to have false positives and negatives. The validity of retrospective reports of adverse childhood experiences is frequently debated in the literature (e.g., Hardt & Rutter, 2004) as such reports tend to involve a substantial number of false negatives and measurement errors, whereas false positive reports are thought to be less probable. Given the latter assumption, we feel that our prevalence estimates are likely to underestimate the prevalence of IV in sport.

Therefore, whilst this study uses the most recent, advanced and comprehensive research instrument available to measure the prevalence of interpersonal violence, it is possible that some who experienced IVAC do not consider themselves to be a 'victim' of interpersonal violence. While we operationalised the definition of violence as defined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, we acknowledge certain normalization processes in sport may lead people to not acknowledging their experiences as unwanted or unacceptable.

8. Conclusion

The aim of the CASES project was to provide robust data on the prevalence of child abuse and neglect experienced by children who participate in sport.

A key strength of the study is that the same questionnaire was administered in the same way, at the same time, in seven separate national contexts, with young adult respondents (age 18-30) who stated they had participated in sport before age 18 and with samples equally weighted for gender (male/female) and age (18-24/25-30). The CASES study is unique in this regard. In particular, it draws on a sample of young respondents, therefore, the experiences reported refer to relatively recent experiences rather than so-called 'historical cases'.

The CASES study has identified prevalence rates for five categories of interpersonal violence against children (IVAC) in sport, based on respondents (aged 18-30) indicating one or more relevant experiences, before age 18. These rates range from 65% for psychological violence to 20% for contact sexual violence. Whilst some national differences were evident, rates of IVAC were relatively similar across all countries, inside and outside sport.

These behaviors have long been part of the organisational culture of sports and, as we have seen, are universal (the same happens in all countries) and 'normal' (by frequency, in space and time) for both children and adults. For this reason some of these behaviours are difficult to identify as unacceptable, especially as they belong to adults or happen under the eyes of adults who are directly responsible for children.

Therefore, our general conclusion is that (potentially) harmful behaviour is a frequent and widespread experience for children within sport (in Europe). This leads us to suggest that sport may not provide the protective, positive and healthy environment for children that is sometimes assumed and claimed.

CASES has demonstrated that IVAC in sport is a serious and widespread problem. Certainly, on the basis of our analysis, IVAC in sport evidently persists in all countries involved in the study and there is no reason to believe that this is specific to these countries alone.

For some countries (inside and outside this project), prevention responses from the sport sector have, to varying degrees, been slow, narrowly focused, poorly resourced, and with little or no independent oversight or evaluation. In some countries, despite over 30 years of international research and advocacy in this field, alongside the testimony of many abused athletes, policy implementation has barely begun.

A key feature of addressing interpersonal violence against children and young people in sport (and all athletes) is to ensure that strategy is informed, not just by what leaders and their organisations see or believe, but also by independent and robust scientific evidence. The CASES project provides an important part of the evidential picture that sport leaders, legislators and policymakers require in their efforts to improve the experience of sport for all children and to improve the lives of children, families and communities, through sport. Ultimately, this is the key performance indicator, or measure, of the sport sector.

Addressing interpersonal violence against children in sport requires cultural change. Policy intervention is an important part of this process, but it is only one part. Therefore, in order to meaningfully address this problem, we conclude that strong, proactive leadership is required within all national contexts and across the whole sport sector (public, private, and voluntary). We leave it to those with the authority to make such decisions in relation to sport to determine the extent and timing of such change and the resources required.

We draw this conclusion on the basis of our findings. However, we also want to recognise that some countries and organisations have already undertaken substantial and significant action in this regard. We very much welcome such action. We also want to recognise the persistent endeavours of individuals within the sport sector who work tirelessly and selflessly to provide meaningful and safe opportunities for children and for the improvement of children's lives. We very much hope that you will see this study as a contribution to your work – perhaps more vital now than ever – rather than a negation of it.

The CASES findings can now be used by sports organisations to further substantiate and develop their measures to protect children from harm in sport. We offer some recommendations based on these findings, again recognising that the distance some countries and organisations have travelled in the protection and safeguarding of children in sport may make these recommendations more or less relevant.

9. Recommendations

A. Government departments or ministries responsible for sport should:

1. Ensure general policies and strategies on child protection and 'safeguarding' include and apply to sport.
2. Incorporate systematic, longitudinal research on prevalence of interpersonal violence against children in sport into national strategies and action plans for sport.
3. Provide an independent body or agency where those affected by interpersonal violence in sport can report their experiences and receive help and support.
4. Ensure national agencies or federations are supported and appropriately resourced to introduce and/or increase efforts to raise awareness of and prevent interpersonal violence in sport.
5. Ensure prevention efforts extend to the local level (e.g. voluntary sports clubs) and are not limited to 'umbrella' sports federations.

B. International, national and federal bodies should:

6. Acknowledge all forms of interpersonal violence against children inside sport.
7. Introduce measures to prevent interpersonal violence in sport and ensure children's rights are incorporated into all levels of organisational structures in sport.
8. Ensure strategic policy is informed by evidence on prevalence rates of interpersonal violence against children.
9. Evaluate and improve the efficacy of prevention measures through longitudinal assessment of interpersonal violence against children in sport.

C. Prevention strategies should:

10. Include compulsory training across all categories of interpersonal violence against children, including peer violence, for those with responsibility for children in sport.
11. Establish sport-specific and independent contact points for support, advice, complaints and reports (e.g. a helpline).
12. Acknowledge the important role that sports personnel have in recognising interpersonal violence, receiving and handling disclosures, and the support they need to carry out these roles safely and effectively.

13. Address interpersonal violence against children at all levels of sport (from recreational grassroot to competitive and elite sport) and be sensitive to the potential for heightened risk in competitive sport.

D. Training and education should:

14. Convey that interpersonal violence against children can occur in different forms and that some forms (e.g. peer violence, psychological violence) are more prevalent than others.

15. Convey that the risk for interpersonal violence against children might increase as the child moves beyond recreational sport.

16. Recognize that interpersonal violence against children is a significant problem for both males and females and that boys and men may be particularly underrepresented in official reports.

17. Recognise that children participating in sport may have experienced interpersonal violence in other contexts and that adults in sport may be important contact points to support children.

18. Recognise that interpersonal violence in sport does not stop at age 18.

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Appendices

1. Basic information for the total sample

TOTAL SAMPLE (cross-national; N = 10,302)		
Age	24.37 years; SD=3.7	Min: 18; Max: 30
Sex		
Male	5077 (49.3%)	
Female	5152 (50.0%)	
Other	35 (0.3%)	
Overall Experience Sport (1= very good; 5= very poor)	1.8; SD = 0.815	Min:1; Max: 5.
Minority	1163 (11.3%)	
Disability	615 (6 %)	
Where did you practice your sport?		
sport club	7278 (70.6%)	
sport camp	1636 (15.9%)	
special training centre for elite athletes	658 (6.4%)	
fitness centre	1871 (18.2)	
non-sport club, but provided sporting activities	924 (9.0%)	
private or self-organised setting	2058 (20.0%)	
organised, extra-curricular school sport	3133 (30.4%)	
other	320 (3.1%)	
Participation in organised sports for those with a disability		
	only: 686 (6.7%); both: 1410 (13.7%)	
sports level		
recreational level	4141 (40.2%)	
club/local level	3536 (34.3%)	
regional level	1670 (16.2%)	
national level	740 (7.2%)	
international level	215 (2.1%)	
sexual orientation	male	female
heterosexual	4221 (83.1%)	4224 (82.0%)
lesbian	37 (0.7%)	132 (2.6%)
gay	235 (4.6%)	16 (0.3%)
bisexual	230 (4.5%)	479 (9.3%)
other	77 (1.5%)	91 (1.8%)
missing	277 (5.5%)	210 (4.1%)
sport participated in	male	female
Football	3209 (27.5%)	901 (7.9%)
Basketball	1130 (9.7%)	722 (6.3%)
Tennis	870 (7.5%)	762 (6.7%)
Swimming	702 (6.0%)	1130 (9.9%)
Table Tennis	415 (3.6%)	181 (1.6%)
Athletics	385 (3.3%)	443 (3.9%)
Volleyball	370 (3.2%)	810 (7.1%)
Exercise & Fitness	368 (3.2%)	400 (3.5%)
Handball	356 (3.0%)	487 (4.3%)
Cycling	299 (2.6%)	164 (1.4%)
Dance	102 (0.9%)	1453 (12.8%)
Gymnastics	107 (0.9%)	611 (5.4%)
Badminton	197 (2.5%)	426 (3.7%)

2. Prevalence Data: Item level

2.1 Inside sport

	Yes, inside sport Frequency (%)
Neglect	
1. I was not provided with adequate support for my basic well-being	1550 (15.0%)
2. I did not receive appropriate medical care when needed	1160 (11.3%)
3. I was placed at risk of harm due to not being properly supervised	1431 (13.7%)
4. I was not provided with the appropriate equipment/kit to safely perform my activity	1657 (16.1%)
5. I was instructed or forced to be absent from school so I could participate in other activities	1245 (12.1%)
6. I was forced to participate in unsafe conditions, extreme weather, where facilities or equipment were unsafe, or safety rules ignored	1629 (15.8%)
Psychological Violence	
7. I was humiliated or made to feel inferior or small	3490 (33.9%)
8. I was criticised about my physical appearance, including my weight, 'look', clothes or body shape	3041 (29.5%)
9. I was ignored or excluded	3058 (29.7%)
10. I was not praised for my efforts or achievements	3576 (34.7%)
11. I was screamed at, sworn at, threatened, or otherwise verbally abused	2150 (20.9%)
12. I was asked, instructed or forced to perform at unrealistically high standards	1946 (18.9%)
13. I was, instructed or forced to participate in initiation ceremonies or other rituals intended to humiliate, degrade or belittle myself or others	1043 (10.1%)
14. I was shouted at or threatened because of my performance or because I did not want to train/compete/practice	1924 (18.7%)
15. I was expelled from my team/club/group, or threatened with this, for reasons unrelated to my performance or behaviour, or for reasons not explained	1365 (13.2%)
Physical Violence	
16. I was instructed or forced to do exercise as a form of punishment	2916 (28.3%)
17. I was instructed or forced to participate in ceremonies or other rituals involving harmful physical activities	923 (9.0%)
18. I was instructed or forced to take substances to manage my body weight/size, enhance my performance, delay puberty or stop or delay my period	1045 (10.1%)
19. I was instructed or forced to play, participate or perform while injured or sick or at an intensity or frequency that was potentially harmful	1875 (18.2%)
20. I was punched, slapped, grabbed / pushed, or otherwise physically assaulted	1560 (15.1%)
Non-contact sexual violence (NCSV)	
21. I was subjected to obscene or sexual comments	1958 (19.0%)
22. I was subjected to inappropriate staring or leering	1836 (17.8%)
23. I was asked, instructed or forced to view sexual images, videos or messages	766 (7.4%)
24. I was asked, instructed or forced to produce or share sexual images, videos or text messages featuring me or others	794 (7.7%)
25. Sexual images or videos of me were produced or shared by someone else	654(6.3%)
26. I was asked, instructed or forced to undress or perform sexual acts on myself for the pleasure of someone else	675 (6.6%)
27. I was 'flashed' at / someone 'exposed' themselves to me in person	1037 (10.1%)
28. I was 'flashed' at / someone 'exposed' themselves to me online	883 (8.6%)
29. I was instructed or forced to participate in initiations or rituals including degrading or harmful activities of a sexual nature, without physical contact	825 (8.0%)
Contact Sexual Violence (CSV)	
30. I was kissed by someone / I was asked, instructed or forced to kiss someone	1091 (10.6%)

31. I was caressed or otherwise touched sexually / I was asked, instructed or forced to touch someone sexually	792 (7.7%)
32. I had genital contact with someone (including masturbation)	792 (7.7%)
33. I engaged in (gave or received) oral sex	721 (7.0%)
34. I engaged in actual or attempted vaginal or anal sex (with an object or person)	788 (7.6%)
35. I was, instructed or forced to participate in initiation ceremonies or other rituals of a sexual nature that involved physical contact	744 (7.2%)

2.2 Outside sport

	Yes, outside sport Frequency (%)
Neglect	
1. I was not provided with adequate support for my basic well-being	1684 (16.3%)
2. I did not receive appropriate medical care when needed	1314 (12.8%)
3. I was placed at risk of harm due to not being properly supervised	1548 (15.0%)
4. I was not provided with the appropriate equipment/kit to safely perform my activity	1465 (14.2%)
5. I was instructed or forced to be absent from school so I could participate in other activities	1217 (11.8%)
6. I was forced to participate in unsafe conditions, extreme weather, where facilities or equipment were unsafe, or safety rules ignored	1347 (13.1%)
Psychological Violence	
7. I was humiliated or made to feel inferior or small	4310 (41.8%)
8. I was criticised about my physical appearance, including my weight, 'look', clothes or body shape	4618 (44.8%)
9. I was ignored or excluded	4156 (40.3%)
10. I was not praised for my efforts or achievements	3790 (36.8%)
11. I was screamed at, sworn at, threatened, or otherwise verbally abused	3229 (31.3%)
12. I was asked, instructed or forced to perform at unrealistically high standards	1959 (19.0%)
13. I was, instructed or forced to participate in initiation ceremonies or other rituals intended to humiliate, degrade or belittle myself or others	1264 (12.3%)
14. I was shouted at or threatened because of my performance or because I did not want to train/compete/practice	1645 (16.0%)
15. I was expelled from my team/club/group, or threatened with this, for reasons unrelated to my performance or behaviour, or for reasons not explained	1319 (12.8%)
Physical Violence	
16. I was instructed or forced to do exercise as a form of punishment	1594 (15.5%)
17. I was instructed or forced to participate in ceremonies or other rituals involving harmful physical activities	1131 (11.0%)
18. I was instructed or forced to take substances to manage my body weight/size, enhance my performance, delay puberty or stop or delay my period	1071 (10.4%)
19. I was instructed or forced to play, participate or perform while injured or sick or at an intensity or frequency that was potentially harmful	1459 (14.2%)
20. I was punched, slapped, grabbed / pushed, or otherwise physically assaulted	1971 (19.1%)
Non-contact sexual violence (NCSV)	
21. I was subjected to obscene or sexual comments	3165 (30.7%)
22. I was subjected to inappropriate staring or leering	3098 (30.1%)
23. I was asked, instructed or forced to view sexual images, videos or messages	1318 (12.8%)
24. I was asked, instructed or forced to produce or share sexual images, videos or text messages featuring me or others	1286 (12.5%)
25. Sexual images or videos of me were produced or shared by someone else	985 (9.6%)

26. I was asked, instructed or forced to undress or perform sexual acts on myself for the pleasure of someone else	1111 (10.8%)
27. I was 'flashed' at / someone 'exposed' themselves to me in person	1951 (18.9%)
28. I was 'flashed' at / someone 'exposed' themselves to me online	2220 (21.5%)
29. I was instructed or forced to participate in initiations or rituals including degrading or harmful activities of a sexual nature, without physical contact	995 (9.7%)

Contact Sexual Violence (CSV)

30. I was kissed by someone / I was asked, instructed or forced to kiss someone	2385 (23.2%)
31. I was caressed or otherwise touched sexually / I was asked, instructed or forced to touch someone sexually	1963 (19.1%)
32. I had genital contact with someone (including masturbation)	2225 (21.6%)
33. I engaged in (gave or received) oral sex	1921 (18.6%)
34. I engaged in actual or attempted vaginal or anal sex (with an object or person)	2034 (19.7%)
35. I was, instructed or forced to participate in initiation ceremonies or other rituals of a sexual nature that involved physical contact	744 (7.2%)

3. Sub-group differences: Characteristics of interpersonal violence against children: 'most serious experience'

3.1 Duration of experience per gender

Type of violence	Gender of respondents	Duration of experience(s)							$\chi^2 (6) / p$
		1 day	2 days – a week	> 1 week-1 month	> 1 month – 6 months	> 6 months - 1 year	> 1 year - 2 years	>2 years	
Neglect	male	18.7%	16.1%	16.4%	17.7%	13.0%	8.8%	9.3%	49.19/<.001***
	female	22.5%	16.3%	12.1%	11.5%	11.6%	12.7%	13.3%	
Psychological	male	17.9%	15.0%	13.1%	15.2%	12.7%	10.4%	15.7%	110.68/<.001***
	female	15.5%	11.5%	10.1%	12.0%	10.6%	14.4%	25.9%	
Physical	male	21.7%	16.3%	16.5%	15.3%	10.4%	8.8%	11.1%	28.06/ <.001***
	female	18.2%	17.1%	13.3%	13.4%	11.2%	11.5%	15.4%	
NCSV	male	18.6%	15.2%	16.8%	17.4%	13.4%	7.9%	10.7%	101.74/ <.001***
	female	20.7%	11.1%	8.9%	12.8%	12.1%	11.4%	23.0%	
CSV	male	18.7%	12.6%	19.1%	18.3%	13.4%	10.1%	7.7%	17.66//. 01**
	female	20.0%	12.0%	10.4%	20.9%	15.6%	11.8%	9.3%	

3.2 Duration of experience(s) per participation level

Type of violence	Level of sport participation	Duration of experience(s)							χ^2 (24) / p
		1 day	2 days - a week	> 1 week- 1 month	> 1 month – 6 months	> 6 months to 1 year	> 1 year to 2 years	>2 years	
Neglect	Recreational	19.8%	17.3%	15.1%	13.5%	10.7%	12.4%	11.2%	41.0/.02*
	Club/Local	21.9%	16.6%	15.7%	15.2%	12.3%	9.0%	9.3%	
	Regional	18.5%	14.4%	13.9%	17.5%	15.7%	9.6%	10.3%	
	National	21.5%	15.2%	10.5%	15.2%	11.0%	11.0%	15.6%	
	International	14.3%	11.4%	12.9%	14.3%	11.4%	15.7%	20.0%	
Psychological	Recreational	16.9%	14.7%	12.1%	12.9%	10.4%	11.6%	21.4%	54.10/ <.001***
	Club/Local	16.8%	13.1%	12.2%	15.0%	11.3%	12.3%	19.2%	
	Regional	16.6%	12.8%	10.5%	15.7%	14.3%	11.9%	18.1%	
	National	18.6%	12.8%	10.7%	9.7%	12.2%	13.8%	22.2%	
	International	10.1%	6.4%	11.0%	6.4%	13.8%	17.4%	34.9%	
Physical	Recreational	23.0%	17.1%	14.5%	14.4%	10.7%	8.9%	11.4%	40.66/ .018*
	Club/Local	18.7%	18.1%	16.7%	13.5%	10.6%	10.3%	12.2%	
	Regional	19.7%	15.3%	14.8%	14.8%	11.5%	10.3%	13.5%	
	National	19.9%	12.7%	13.4%	19.6%	7.2%	10.1%	17.0%	
	International	15.2%	11.4%	11.4%	11.4%	19.0%	12.7%	19.0%	

NCSV	Recreational	21.1%	15.0%	12.4%	14.2%	11.3%	9.5%	16.6%	44.34/ .01**
	Club/Local	19.0%	12.9%	15.8%	16.2%	11.4%	10.2%	14.7%	
	Regional	19.7%	12.2%	11.5%	15.2%	16.4%	9.8%	15.2%	
	National	19.7%	10.4%	10.9%	14.5%	17.1%	8.8%	18.7%	
	International	10.0%	15.0%	8.3%	18.3%	10.0%	3.3%	35.0%	
CSV	Recreational	22.7%	13.3%	14.4%	20.2%	11.0%	11.0%	7.4%	24.28/ .45
	Club/Local	17.9%	11.9%	17.3%	20.2%	15.0%	10.6%	7.3%	
	Regional	15.4%	11.2%	18.8%	17.7%	17.3%	10.4%	9.2%	
	National	18.2%	13.1%	13.1%	12.1%	17.2%	14.1%	12.1%	
	International	22.2%	11.1%	13.9%	16.7%	13.9%	8.3%	13.9%	

3.3. Gender of perpetrators(s) and gender of respondent(s)

Type of violence	Gender of respondents	Gender of perpetrator(s)			χ^2 (2) / p
		male	female	both (miff)	
Neglect	male	60.1%	17.3%	22.6%	169.23/ <.001***
	female	35.3%	33.8%	30.8%	
Psychological	male	65.5%	11.4%	23.2%	854.59/ <.001***
	female	26.3%	35.1%	38.6%	
Physical	male	67.2%	13.9%	18.9%	241.00/ <.001***
	female	42.4%	33.1%	24.5%	
NCSV	male	51.6%	22.2%	26.2%	16.80/ <.001***
	female	57.4%	15.8%	26.9%	
CSV	male	41.3%	34.0%	24.8%	17.234/ <.001***
	female	49.3%	22.6%	28.1%	

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