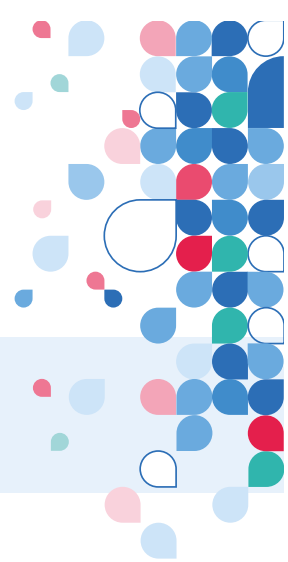




Child Abuse in Sport European Statistics



Factsheet 1

Prevalence of Interpersonal Violence against Children

Participants, Goals, Development...

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.

In the project a study was carried out within six European countries (Austria, Belgium – Brussels - Wallonia, Belgium - Flanders, Germany, Romania, Spain and the UK). The aim was: (1) to develop insights to support strategic efforts to prevent child abuse, exploitation and violence in sport; and (2) to develop resources for the sport sector that will support sport organisations to safeguard children’s welfare. This was done through collecting scientifically robust evidence on the scale, dynamics and constellations of *interpersonal violence against children in sport* (IVACS).

The constructed online survey, was based on the following categories of IVACS:

- **Psychological violence:** non-physical acts that

may cause harm to the psychological health or the mental or social development of a young person, e.g. humiliating, threatening, or isolating behaviours.

- **Physical violence:** physical acts that may result in harm, e.g. hitting, kicking, shaking or forcing athletes to use drugs or play when injured.
- **Sexual violence:** a continuum of unwanted or coerced sexual behaviours with or without body-contact (e.g. verbal, visual or digital/online sexual harassment to violent sexual contact (e.g. rape)).
- **Neglect:** including failures to meet a child’s basic physical or psychological needs, e.g. failing to ensure that children perform their sport in safe conditions, risking their health by not providing the necessary supervision or medical treatment.

The survey was directed at adults and enquired about their experiences in organised sport, as children and teenagers (before age 18).

A total sample of 10302 individuals (age 18-39 years), took part in the study.

[find all factsheets here](#)

factsheet 1 - Prevalence of IVAC
factsheet 2 - Prevalence of IVAC: Gender and Sport Level
factsheet 3 - Prevalence of IVAC: Perpetrators and Location
factsheet 4 - Prevalence of Psychological Violence
factsheet 5 - Main Recommendations



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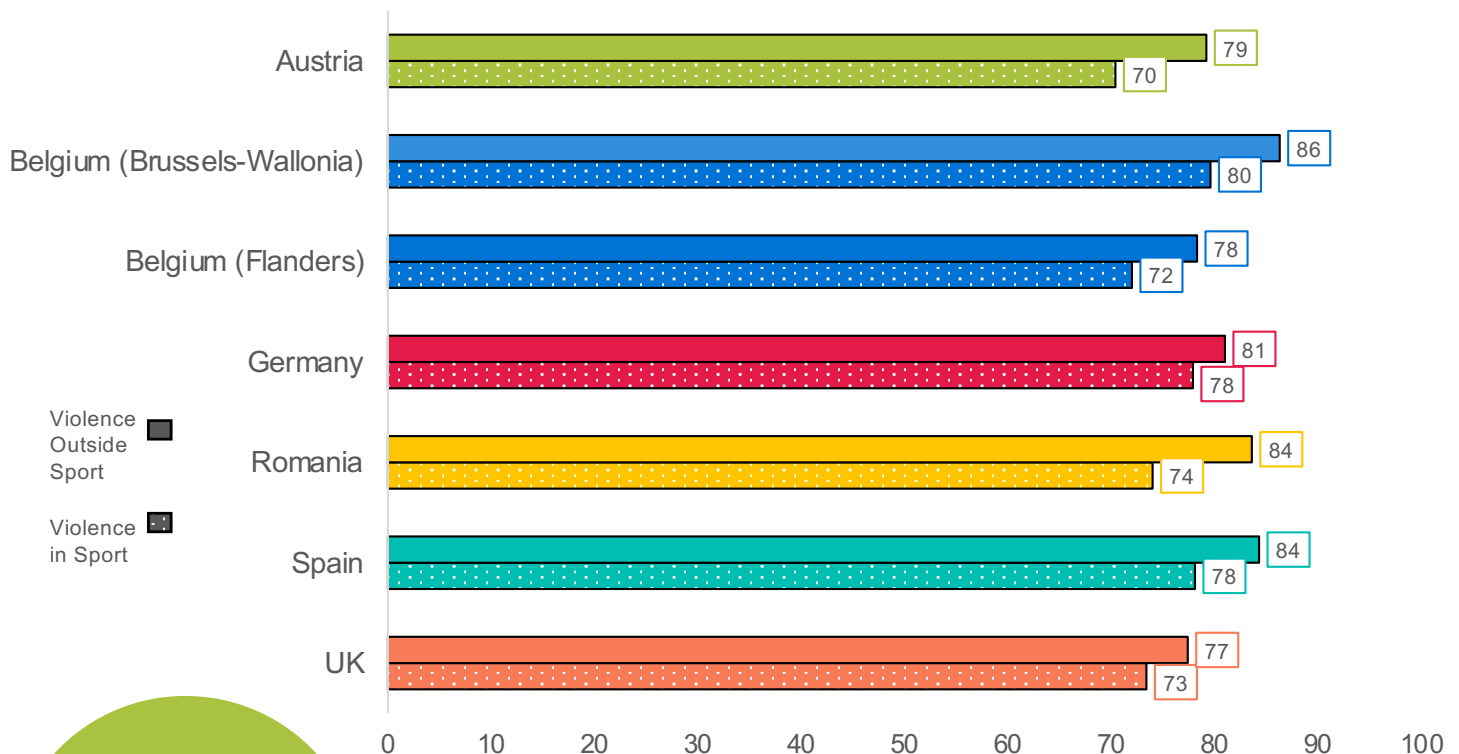
The data shows 3 out of 4 respondents reported at least one experience of IVAC within sport before the age of 18.

The difference in the prevalence of IVAC within the countries referenced was no bigger than 10 points percentage.

The highest percentage prevalence can be seen in Belgium (Brussels-Wallonia) with 80% followed by Germany and Spain (78%) while the lowest is Belgium (Flanders) 72% and Austria 70%.

Overall
Prevalence
of IVAC
by Country

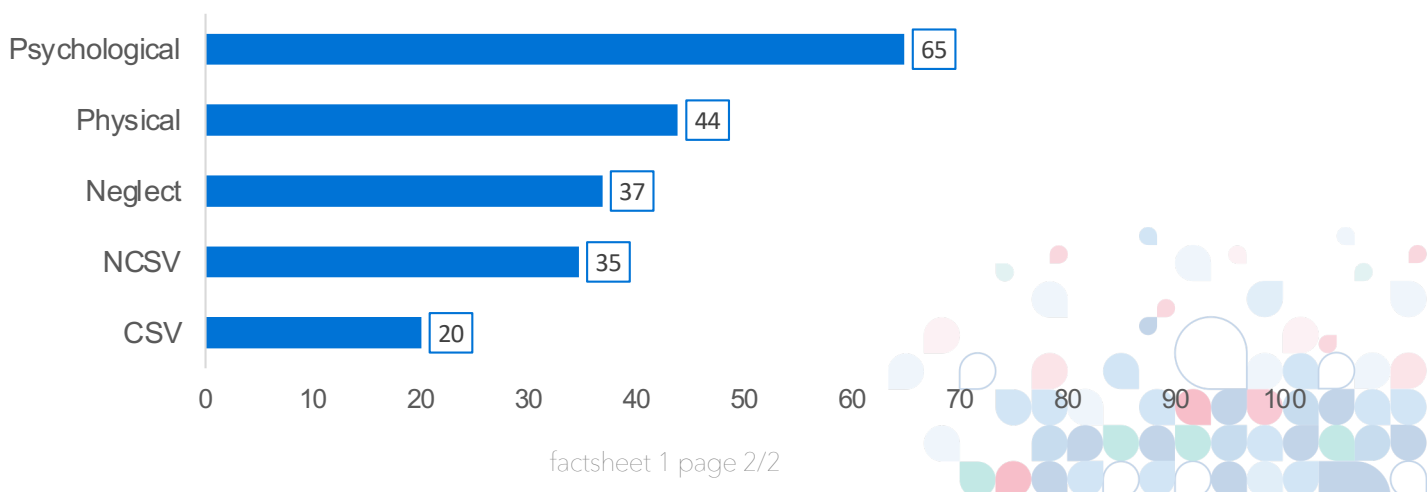
Figure 1: Overall Prevalence of IVAC by Country (%)



Prevalence
of Type of
IVAC within
Sport

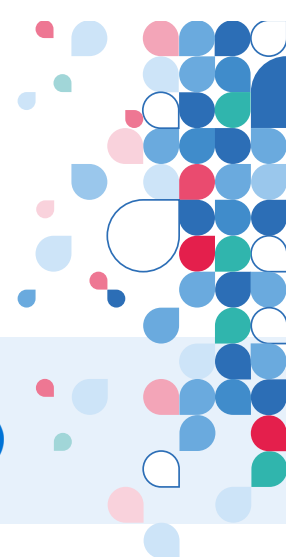
Looking at the differences regarding type of IVAC within sport, psychological violence (65%) was by far the most common, followed by physical violence (44%), neglect (37%) and non – contact sexual violence (NCSV) with 35%. The least common type of IVAC with 20% was contact sexual violence (CSV).

Figure 2: Prevalence of Type of IVAC in Sport (%)





Child Abuse in Sport European Statistics



Factsheet 2

Prevalence of Interpersonal Violence against Children (IVAC) according to Gender and Sport Level

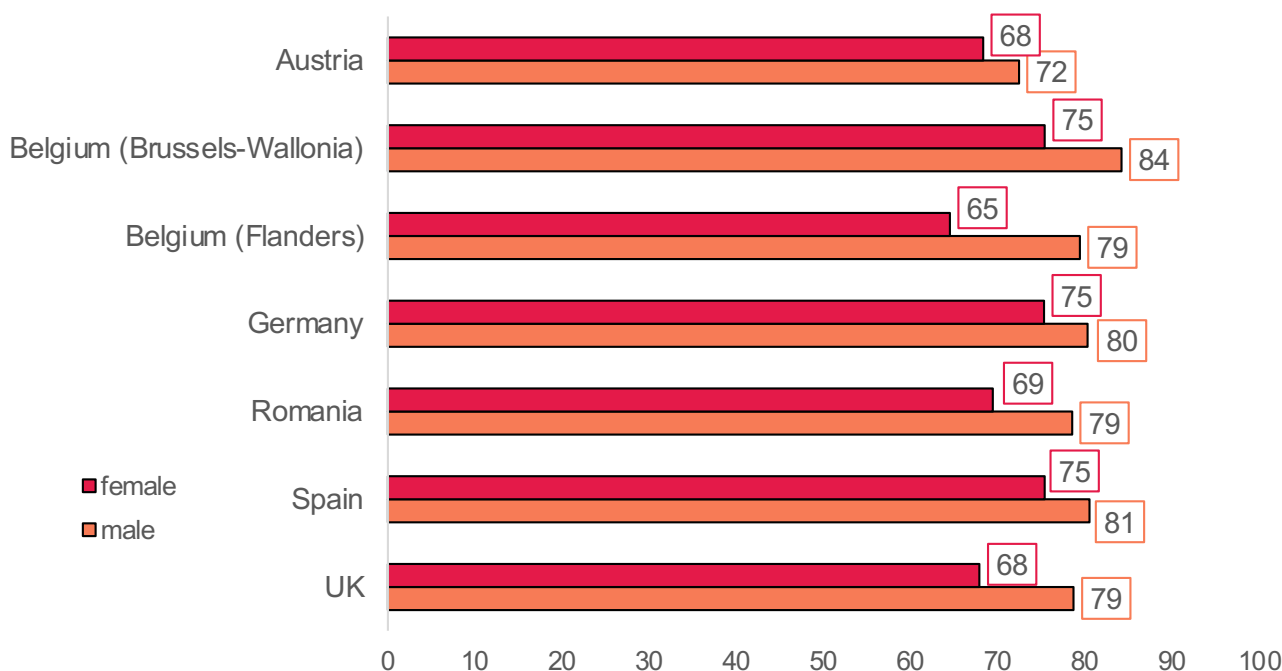
Gender Comparison...

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, Germany and Spain. For men, experience of IVAC varied from 72% in Austria to 84% in Brussels-Wallonia.

Overall, irrespective of gender, 75% of all respondents experienced some type of IVAC.

Figure 1: Overall prevalence of IVAC by gender (%)



[find all factsheets here](#)

- factsheet 1 - Prevalence of IVAC
- factsheet 2 - Prevalence of IVAC: Gender and Sport Level
- factsheet 3 - Prevalence of IVAC: Perpetrators and Location
- factsheet 4 - Prevalence of Psychological Violence
- factsheet 5 - Main Recommendations



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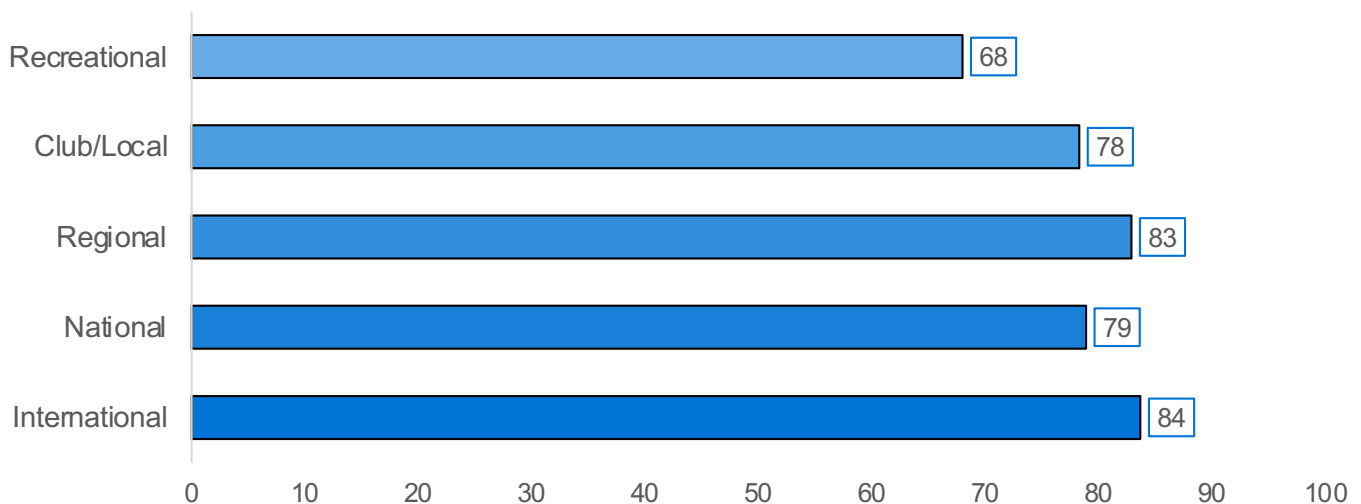


Those competing at higher levels of sport were more likely to have an experience of IVAC inside sport. For example, 84% of those who had competed internationally had experienced IVAC, compared to 68% who had competed at a recreational level only.

The likelihood of experiencing IVAC inside sport increases as the level of performance increases.

Overall
Prevalence
of IVAC
by Sport
Level

Figure 2: Overall Prevalence of IVAC by Sport Level (%)

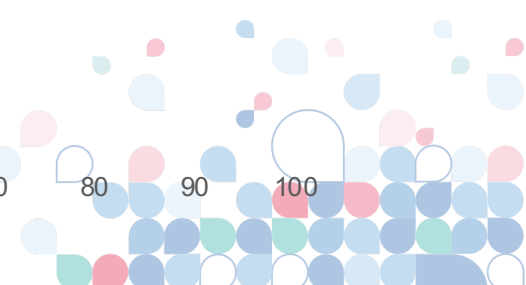
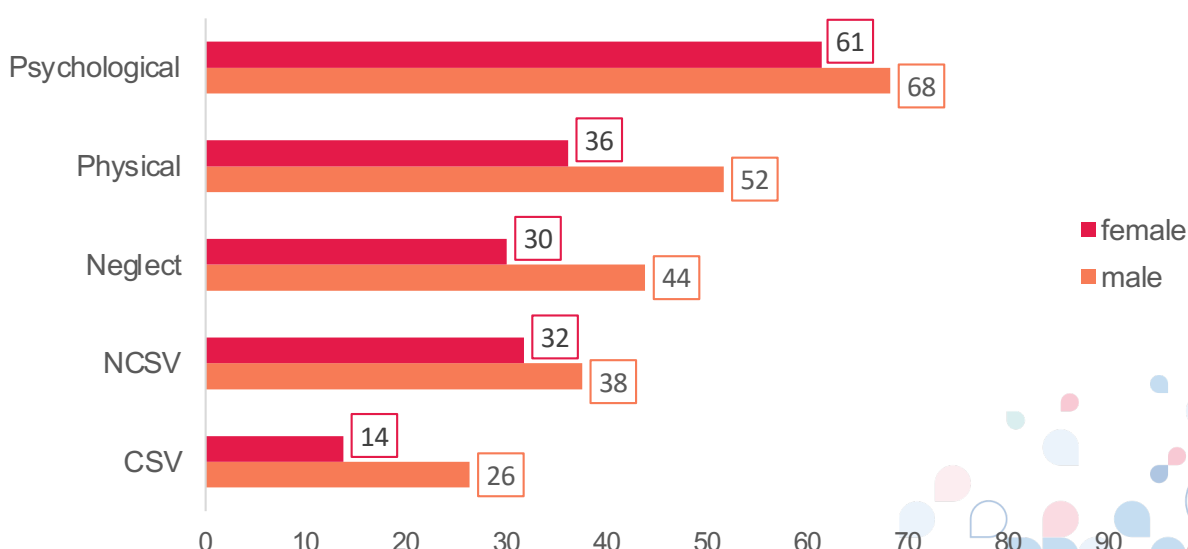


Psychological violence is the most common type of IVAC inside sport, for both males and females. Whereas, contact sexual violence is the least common type for both genders.

Overall the prevalence of each type of IVAC inside sport is significantly higher for males than females.

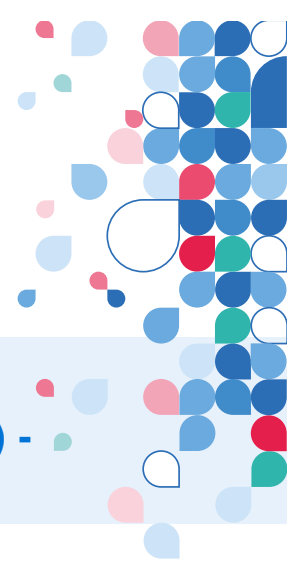
Prevalence
of Type of
IVAC by
Gender

Figure 3: Prevalence of Type of IVAC by Gender (%)





Child Abuse in Sport European Statistics



Factsheet 3

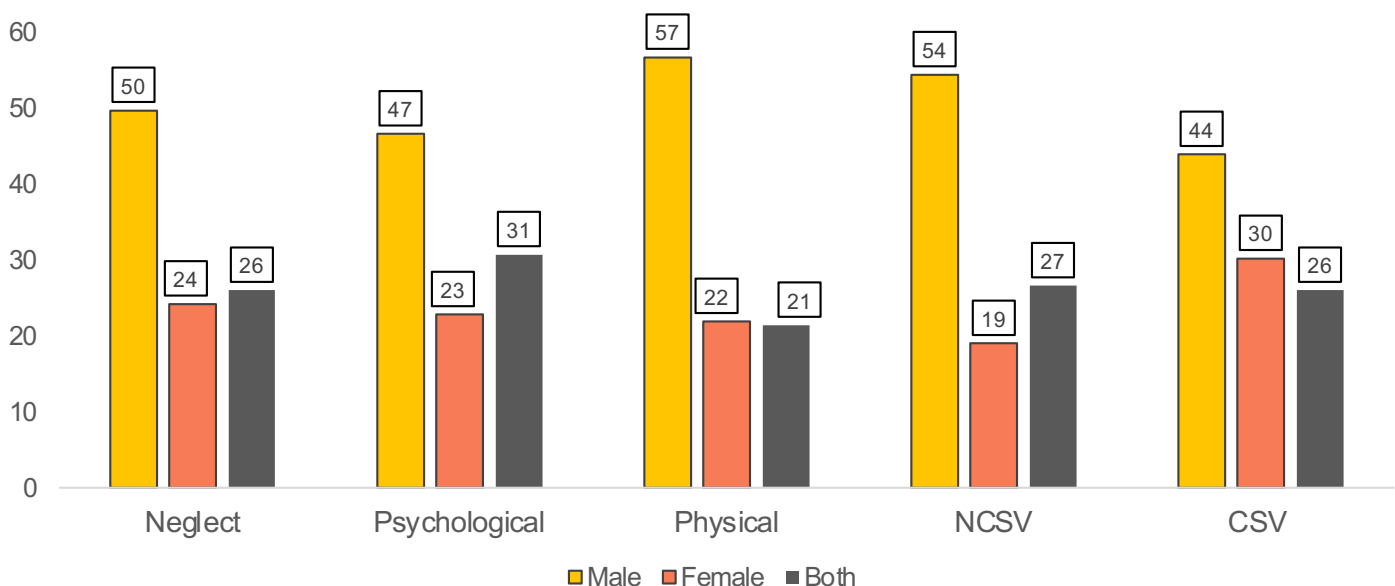
Prevalence of Interpersonal Violence against Children (IVAC) - Severe Cases, Perpetrators & Location

Perpetrators by Gender...

In general, the majority of perpetrators were identified as male (44% to 57%). Females were stated as perpetrator(s) less frequently (19% to 30%). The largest group of female perpetrators was found in CSV (30%), whereas males had the highest number in physical violence (57%). A substantial proportion of respondents (21% to 31% depending on the type) stated the perpetrators were both male and female.

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.

Figure 1: Perpetrators by Gender (%)



find all factsheets here

- factsheet 1 - Prevalence of IVAC
- factsheet 2 - Prevalence of IVAC: Gender and Sport Level
- factsheet 3 - Prevalence of IVAC: Perpetrators and Location
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Teammates or peers (under 18) that were known by the respondent, were the most indicated perpetrators for psychological violence (48%), NCSV (40%) and CSV (34%). While coaches are the most common perpetrators in neglect (38%) and physical violence (37%).

Peers (under 18) that were not known by the athletes were the second most mentioned perpetrators for NCSV and CSV. In the categories of sexual violence (NCSV & CSV), 21% of respondents indicated coaches as perpetrators.

Role and
Position of
Perpetrator(s)

Figure 2: Role of Perpetrator per IVAC (%)

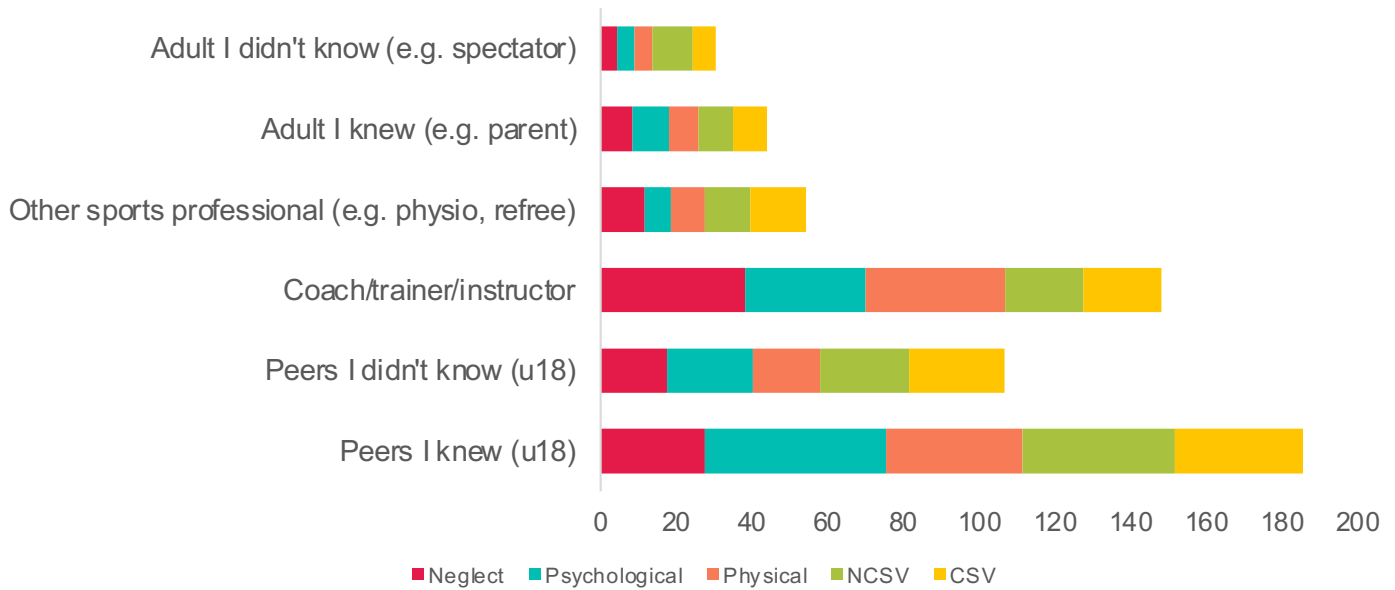
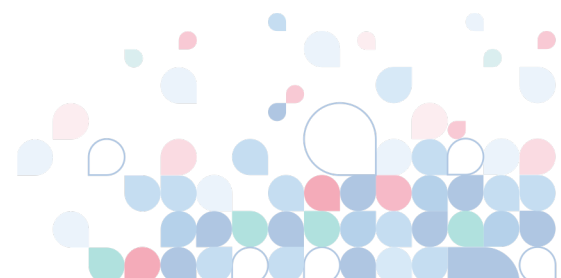


Table 1: Role of Perpetrator per IVAC (%)

	Peers I knew (u18)	Peers I didn't know (u18)	Coach/trainer/instructor	Other sports professional (e.g. physio, referee)	Adult I knew (e.g. parent)	Adult I didn't know (e.g. spectator)
Neglect	28	18	38	12	9	4
Psychological	48	23	32	7	10	5
Physical	36	18	37	9	8	5
NCSV	40	24	21	12	9	11
CSV	34	25	21	15	9	6



Sport clubs (26% to 46%) were most often indicated as context of IVAC across all five categories. Special training centres for elite athletes (31% for neglect, 19% for CSV) and organised extra-curricular school sport (20% for psychological violence, 15% for physical violence and NCSV) were also frequently referred to.

In or around the sports facility, changing/locker room and treatment room are the most indicated specific locations where IVAC was experienced.

Furthermore, there is a greater variation in location in sexual violence experiences than in the other forms of violence.

Context and Location of IVAC Experience

Figure 3: Context of IVAC experience (%)

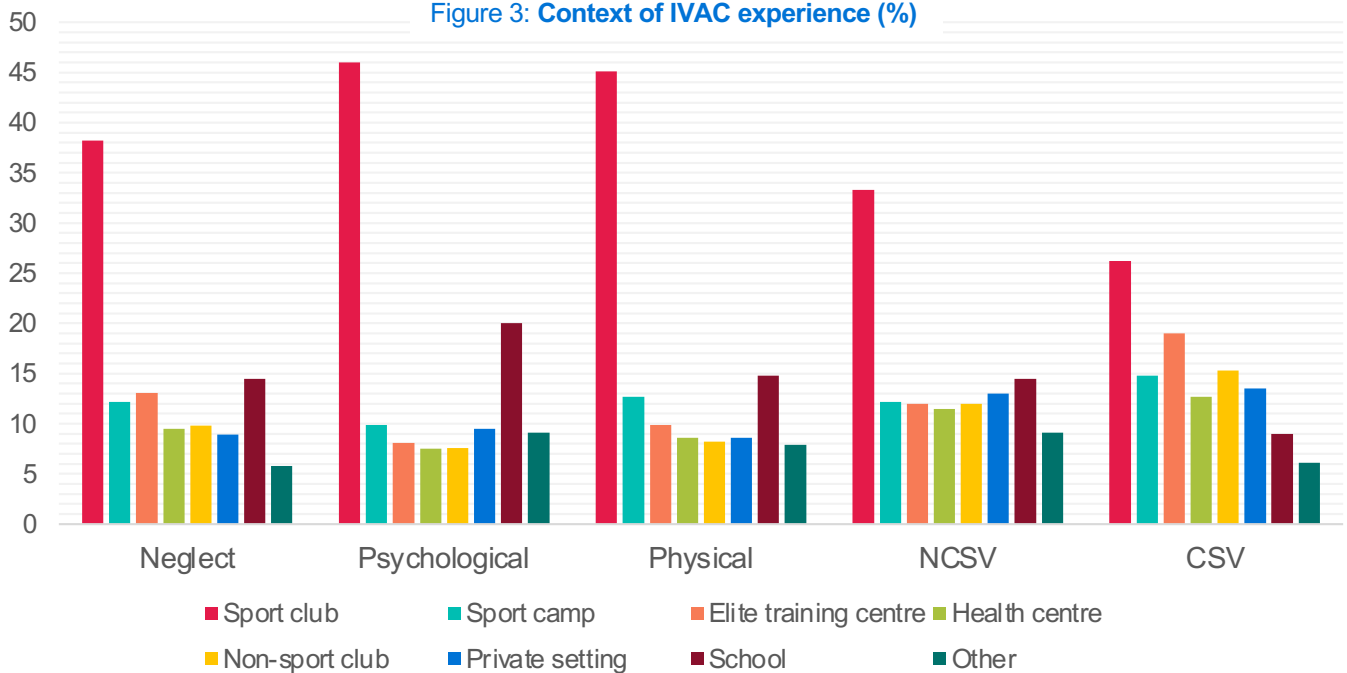
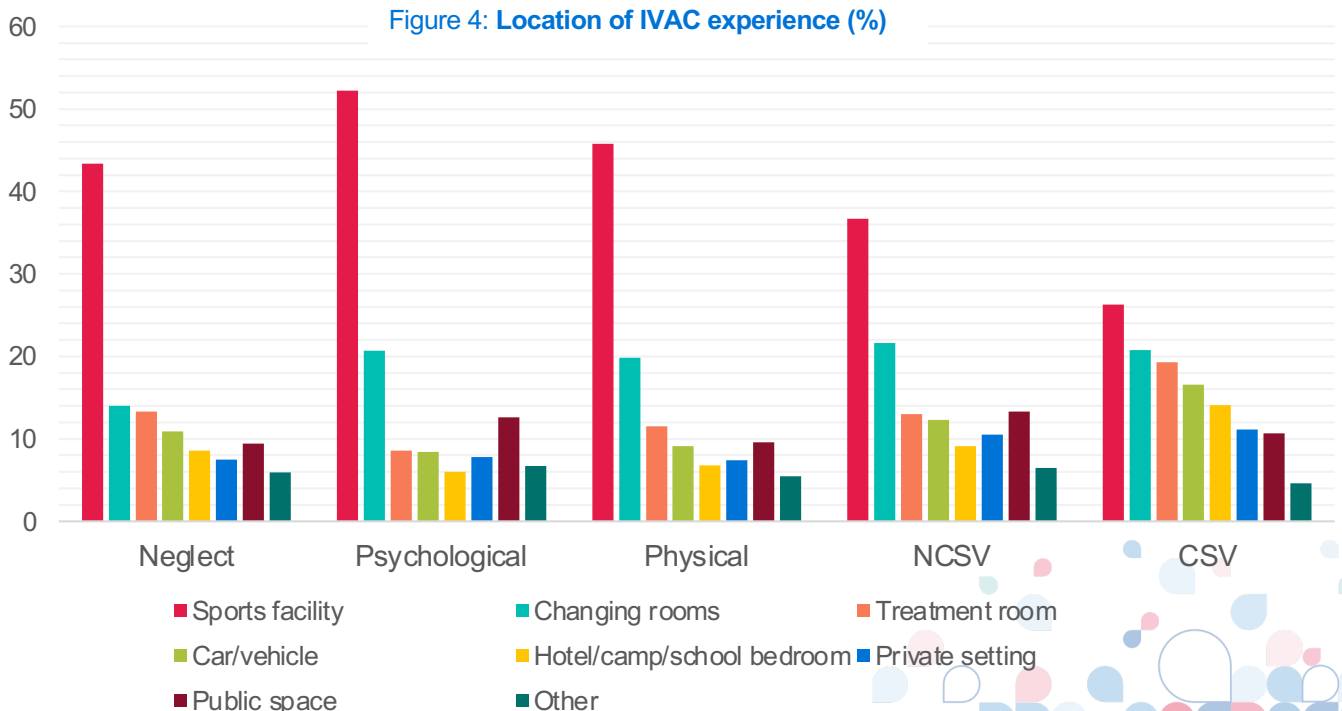
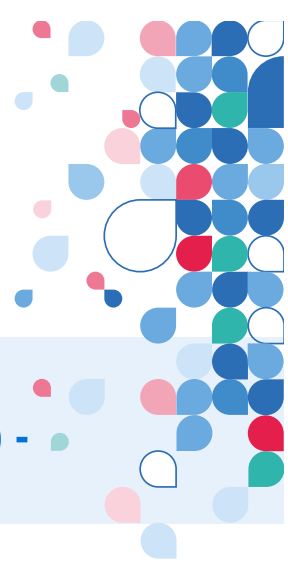


Figure 4: Location of IVAC experience (%)





Child Abuse in Sport European Statistics



Factsheet 4

Prevalence of Interpersonal Violence against Children (IVAC) - Psychological Violence

Experiences of Psychological Violence...

Considerably more than 1-in-2 respondents (65%) reported an experience of psychological violence inside sport. However, 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 for children. 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.

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 items or scenarios 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). The table below shows the 9 items of psychological violence.

Table 1: Items of Psychological Violence by Frequency (darkest = most frequent)

I was not praised for my efforts or achievements.
I was humiliated or made to feel inferior or small.
I was ignored or excluded.
I was criticised about my physical appearance, including my weight, 'look', clothes or body shape.
I was screamed at, sworn at, threatened, or otherwise verbally abused.
I was asked, instructed or forced to perform at unrealistically high standards.
I was shouted at or threatened because of my performance or because I did not want to train/compete/practice.
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.
I was instructed or forced to participate in initiation ceremonies or other rituals intended to humiliate, degrade or belittle myself or others.

[find all factsheets here](#)

factsheet 1 - Prevalence of IVAC
factsheet 2 - Prevalence of IVAC: Gender and Sport Level
factsheet 3 - Prevalence of IVAC: Perpetrators and Location
factsheet 4 - Prevalence of Psychological Violence
factsheet 5 - Main Recommendations



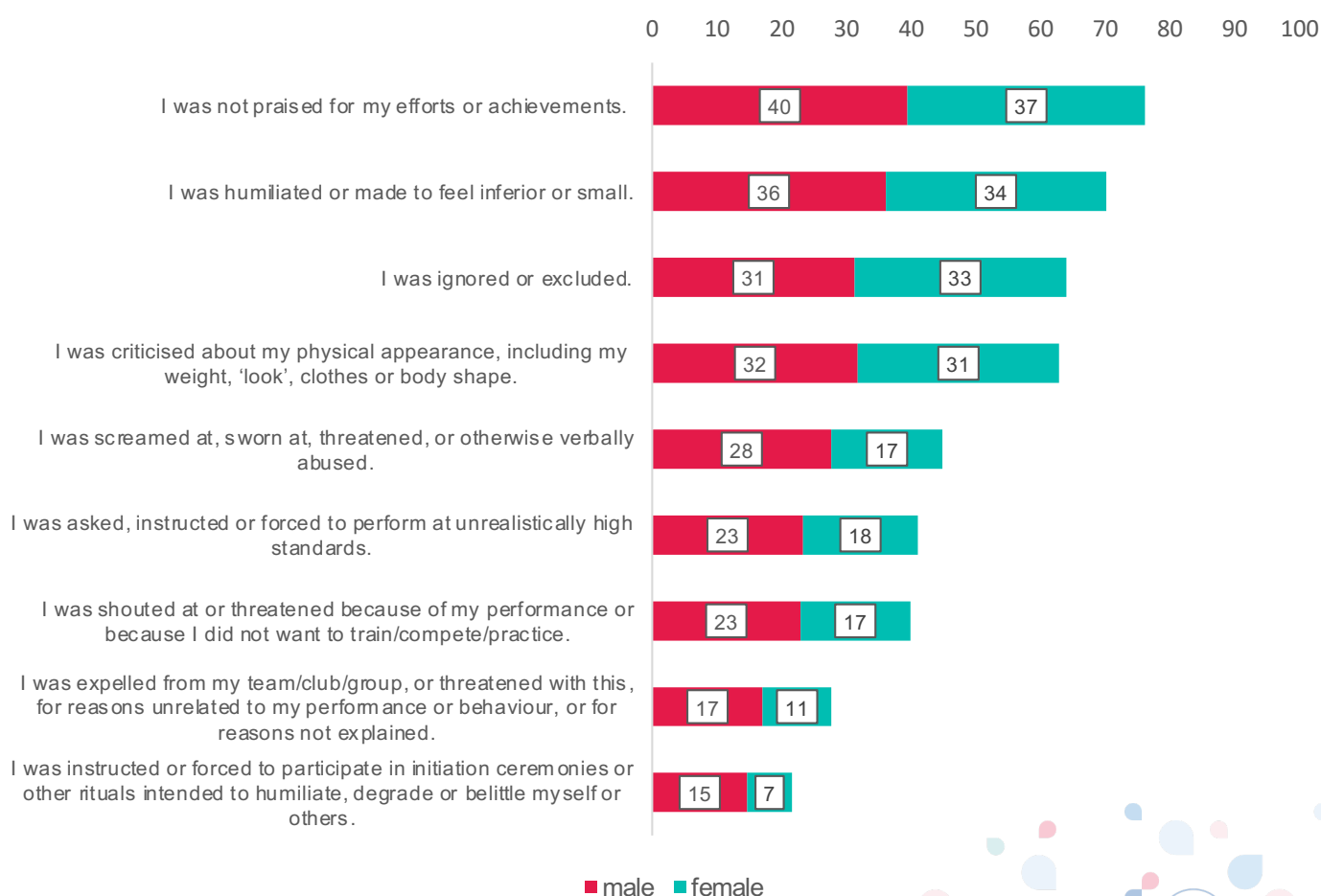
Within sport, 65% of respondents reported at least one experience of psychological violence before age 18. This compared to 72% who experienced psychological violence outside sport.

The most common experience of psychological violence within sport was not being praised for efforts or achievements, followed by humiliations and being ignored or excluded.

The prevalence rate for psychological violence within sport increased with higher levels of sports participation. Those who competed recreationally were the least likely to have experienced psychological violence (59%), whilst regional competitors were the most likely (72%).

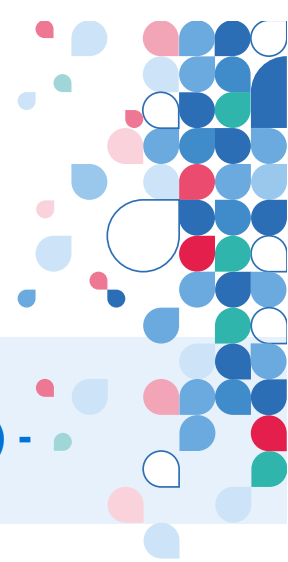
Within sport, 68% of men and 61% of women reported at least one experience of psychological violence before age 18. With the exception of Austria, men were significantly more likely to experience psychological violence compared to women.

Figure 1: Prevalence of Psychological Violence by Gender (%)





Child Abuse in Sport European Statistics



Factsheet 5

Prevalence of Interpersonal Violence against Children (IVAC) - Recommendations

Recommendations...

The findings of the CASES project 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, recognising that the distance some countries have travelled in the protection and

safeguarding of children in sport may make these recommendations more or less relevant.

Below, 18 recommendations in four categories are presented to guide child protection in sport.

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.

[find all factsheets here](#)

factsheet 1 - Prevalence of IVAC

factsheet 2 - Prevalence of IVAC: Gender and Sport Level

factsheet 3 - Prevalence of IVAC: Perpetrators and Location

factsheet 4 - Prevalence of Psychological Violence

factsheet 5 - Main Recommendations



B

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.