

IMPELEMENTING THE NATIONAL STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN ON VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN IN SERBIA

Prof. Veronika Ispanovic-Radojkovic

Council of Child Rights of the Government of Serbia

***Combating Violence against Children:
From Violence to Integrated Strategies***

**Kyiv, the Ukrainian House,
24-25 May 2011**



Република Србија
Министарство рада
и социјалне политике



Савет за права детета
Владе Републике Србије



Outline of presentation

- **Child protection in Serbia in the past**
- **New child rights policies**
- **National Strategy on violence against children**
 - **Vision and goals**
 - **Implementation**
 - **Responsibilities**
 - **Lessons learnt**



Child Protection in Serbia before 90'

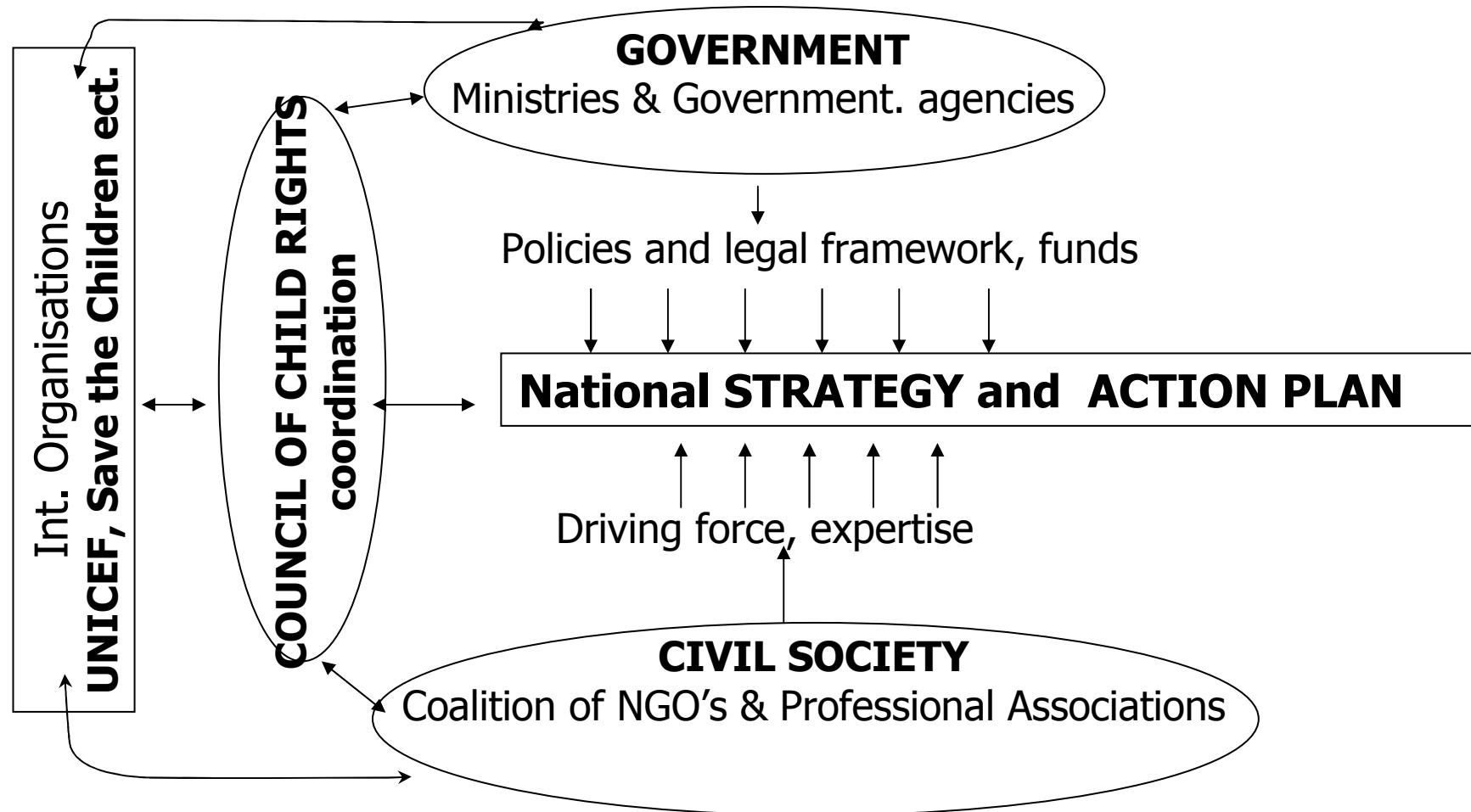
- **Low awareness on child rights**
- **Denial of child abuse, esp. sexual abuse**
- **“Sectorized” approach to service provision**
- **Lack of sound procedures, protocols in child protection**
- **Reactive measures dominant – lack of prevention**
- **Role of civil society, NGOs, unrecognized**



New policies on child rights in Serbia since 2000

- **Establishment of the **Council of Child Rights of the Government** (2002)**
- **Poverty Reduction Strategy (2003)**
- **National Action Plan for Children 2004-2015 (2004)**
- **Social Welfare Development Strategy (2005)**
- **Initial Framework for National Strategy Against Violence (2005)**
- **Strategy for Youth Development and Health (2006)**
- **National Strategy for Prevention and Protection of Children from Violence (dec. 2008) and Action Plan (2009-2015)**

Process of creating National Strategy and Action Plan





Overall goals of the National Strategy

Development of safe environment in which the right of each child to protection from all forms of violence will be ensured.

Establishment of national system for prevention of violence and protection of children from all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation.



Main strategic goals of the National Strategy and Action plan

- 1. Legal framework for preventing and protecting children from all forms of violence**
- 2. Awareness raising on child rights and child protection issues**
- 3. Establishment of effective community based child protection networks**
- 4. Strengthening the competence of professionals working with and for children**
- 5. Establishment of system of child abuse and neglect registration on national and local level**
- 6. Fostering child participation**
- 7. Support to research on violence against children**
- 8. International cooperation**
- 9. Developing a sustainable mechanism of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the National Strategy**



Responsibilities for implementation of National Strategy and Action plan

- **Government and relevant ministries**
- **Public institutions (health, education, social services, police, judiciary)**
- **Local authorities**
- **Academic institutions**
- **International organizations (UNICEF, Save the Children...)**
- **Local NGOs**
- **Media**
- **Ombudsman responsible for child rights - monitoring**

Council for Child Rights – Task force for coordination, monitoring and reporting to Government



Legal framework for preventing and protecting children from violence

- **Ratification and signature of UN and CE treaties, recommendation**
- **Amendment of Criminal Code (2002)**
- **Law on Education (2003, 2009)**
- **Family Law (2005)**
- **Law on Juvenile Justice (2005)**
- **Law on Police (2005)**
- **Law on Preventing the Discrimination of Persons with Disabilities (2006)**
- **Law on Social Protection (2011)**
- **Law on Child Rights– draft**



Education and awareness raising

- ***Non violent communication*** – 8.000 school children
- ***School without violence*** (UNICEF) - 205 schools, 52.000 children, 13.200 teachers, 17.500 parents, Manuals
- ***School of parenting*** – in 27 health centers, Manual
- ***Reproductive health of young*** – 100 pediatricians, Manual
- ***Stop to alcohol and drugs*** -4.950 school children and teachers, 350 parents, Manual
- ***Safe community*** – 449 policemen
- ***Media campaigns*** – against corporal punishment, “Stop the Violence Together”, on safety on internet “ Click safely”, etc.



Capacity building of professionals working with and for children

Training in accredited programs on prevention and protection of children from violence:

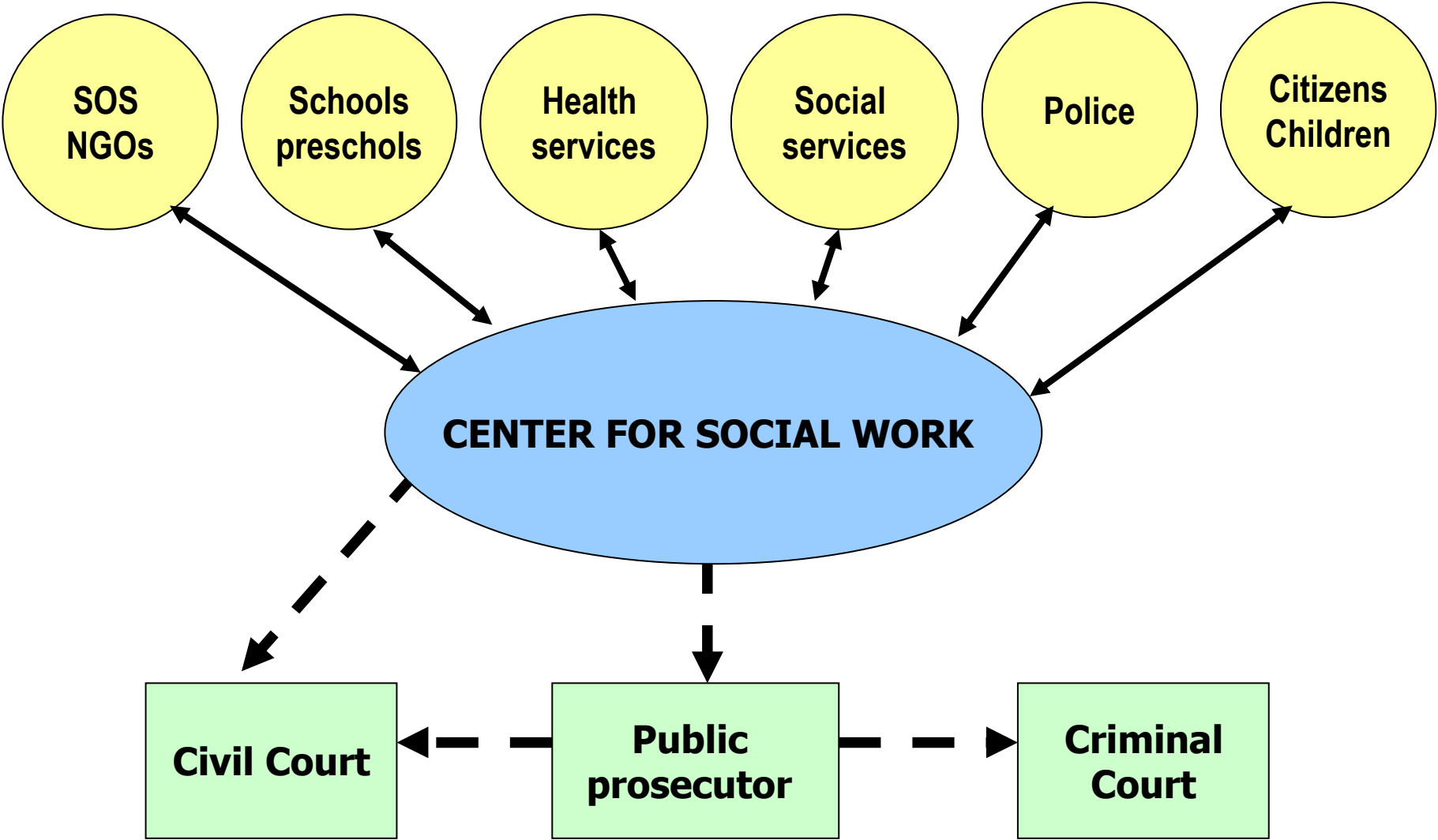
- ***Multidisciplinary Child protection teams*** in 32 out of 126 municipalities
- ***Staff of institutions for children***
- ***Law enforcement staff***
- ***Child protection teams*** in health services (Health centers and Child hospitals)
- **Child protection teams in schools/preschools**
- **Staff of judiciary system** (judges, prosecutors)



Community based child protection network

- **Community multidisciplinary CP teams in 32 municipalities**
- **Urgent 24 hours intervention (CSW, Health Centers, Police)**
-
- **Specialized CP teams in regional hospitals**
- **Shelters for women and children victims of violence**
- **School Policeman – 342 policemen in 620 schools**
- **National SOS Child line**

Child Protection Network





Protocols on intersectoral collaboration in preventing and protecting children from violence

- **General Protocol (2005, Government)**
- **Special Protocols (relevant Ministries):**
 - **Social services (2006)**
 - **NGOs (2007)**
 - **Police (2007)**
 - **Education (2007)**
 - **Health services (2009)**
 - **Judiciary (2010)**



Registration of child abuse and neglect

- **Registration on local level**
- **Reporting to relevant Ministries**
- **Still no mechanism of central gathering and processing the data (challenge!)**



Child participation

- ***Peer counselling and mediation*** – 570 students in 73 schools
- ***Students Parliaments*** – 152 students in 25 schools
- ***Child Coalition*** – children and young at DX Club, Center for Child Rights, Center for Integration of Young:
 - Organized focus groups with children and young on child rights
 - Created proposals on prevention and protection of children from violence, child prostitutions and child pornography
 - Participated in reporting on Optional Protocols to the CRC to the UN Committe on CR in Geneva, 2010



Research on child abuse and neglect

- **Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey in Serbia- MICS 2005**

http://www.childinfo.org/files/MICS3_Serbia_FinalReport_2005-06_Eng.pdf

- **School without Violence**

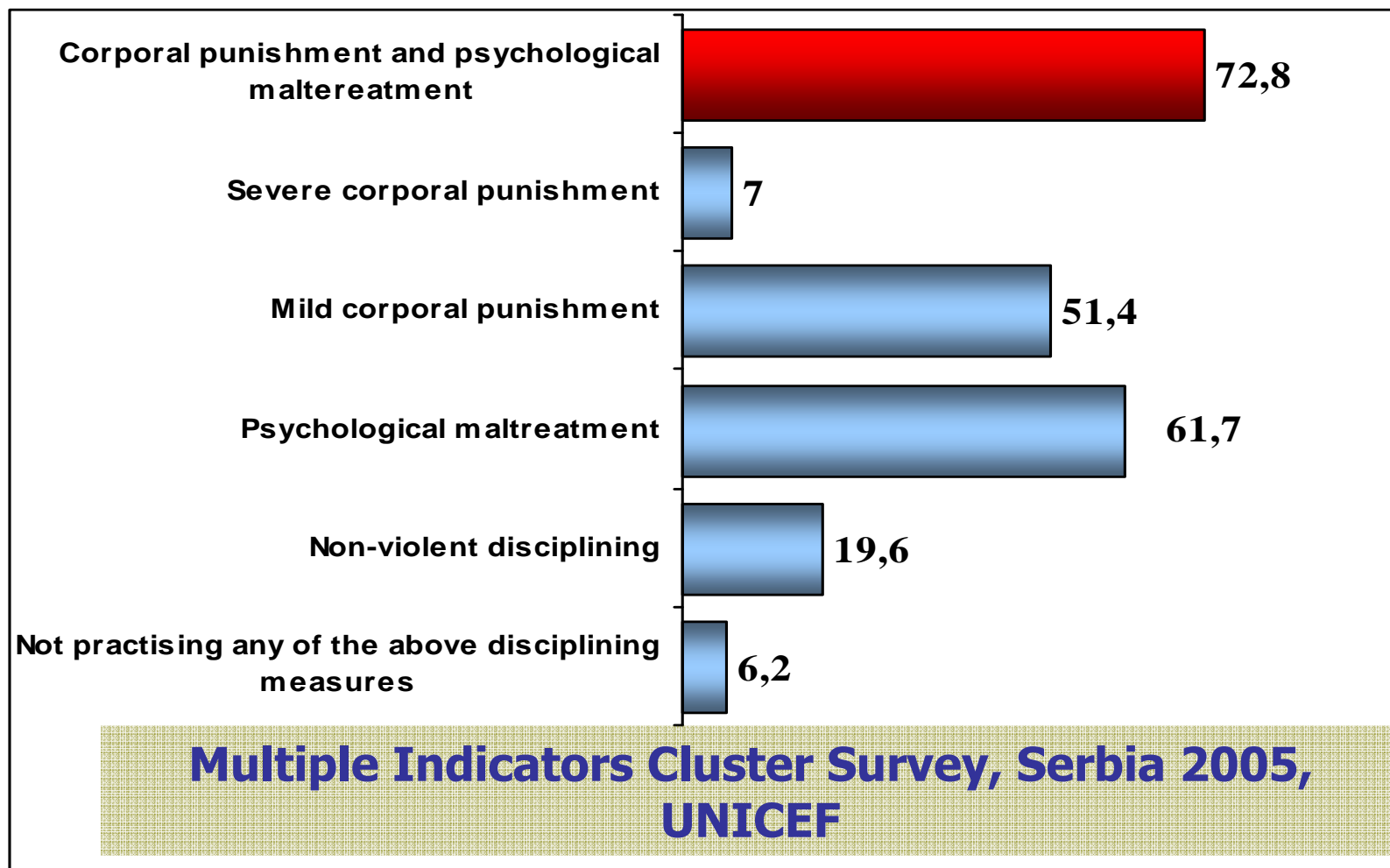
http://www.unicef.org/serbia/research_in_50_schools.doc

- **Balkan Epidemiological Study on CAN**

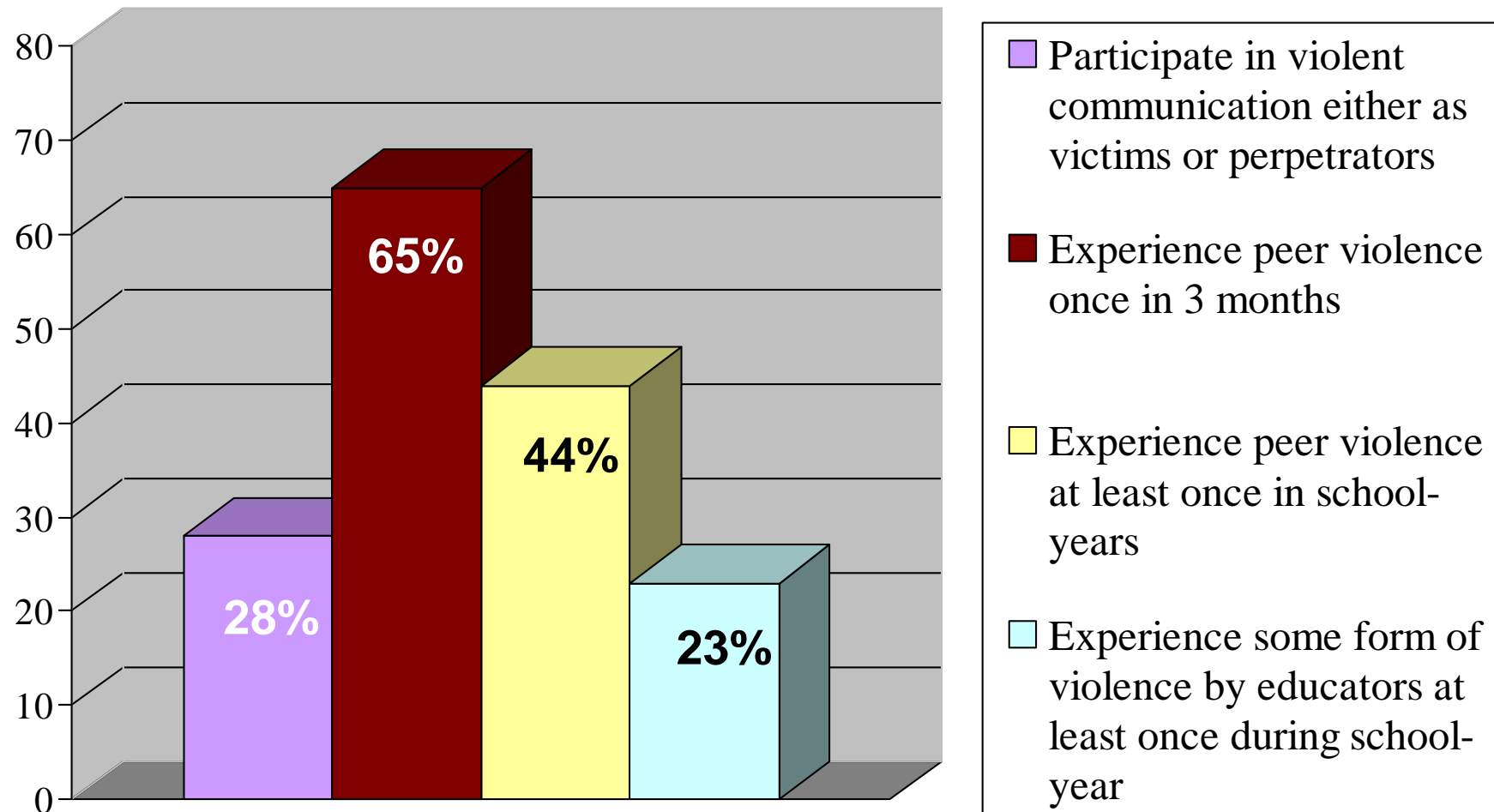
<http://www.becan.eu>

Indicator 74. – Child discipline

(% of Children aged 2-14 - applied measures of discipline and punishment by parents in 9.953 sampled households)



School without violence project in Serbia, UNICEF;
N= 29.040 school children aged 9-13yrs.



Balkan Epidemiological Study on Child Abuse and Neglect

2009-2013, www.becan.eu

Dept. of Social Work, Faculty of Law, Univ. of Zagreb

Faculty of Political Sciences, Sarajevo

Children's Rights Center, Tirana

Istituti degli Innocenti, Firenze (Evaluator)

Univ. Clinic of Psychiatry, Skopje



Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation, University of Belgrade

Social Work Dept., Babes-Bolyai Univ., Cluj

S W University Blagoevgrad

Institute of Child Health, Athens (Coordinator)

Association of Emergency Ambulance Physicians, Izmir





International cooperation

Consultancy, training, monitoring:

- **ISPCAN**
- **BASPCAN**
- **UNICEF**
- **Save the Children UK, Sweden, Norway**
- **Regional *Conference Childhood without Violence in SEE*, Belgrade, 18-19 October 2007, within the presiding of Serbia to Committee of Ministers of CE**



Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of National Strategy and Action Plan

- **Ombudsman** responsible for child rights monitoring
- **Council of Child Rights** – Task force for coordination, monitoring and reporting to Government
- **Special Committee on the Rights of Child at the Parliament** (establ. 2010)



Lessons learnt

Efficient prevention and child protection:

- **Child rights-based policies and legislation**
- **Community based sustainable network**
 - **Training and support to multidisciplinary CP teams**
 - **Wide range of services for children and families**
 - **Protocols on intersectoral collaboration**
 - **Partnership with all stakeholders**
 - **Balance between preventive and reactive strategies**
- **Informed and committed professional**
- **Awareness of general public (children! media!)**



Lessons learnt

Creation and implementation of National strategy and Action Plan:

- **Partnership of all stakeholders**
- **Participation of children and young**
- **Funds**
- **Coordination**
- **Independent monitoring**
- **International cooperation**