How to support adolescents in their journey into adult life?

Positive potential and risk behaviours of adolescents in Malta

Discussion of survey results with recommendations

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The time you devoted to organizing and conducting the research contributed to enriching general knowledge about the positive potential and problems of Maltese teenagers.

We hope that the results of the survey will be useful for you both in everyday relations with young people and in educational and prevention work.

Research team of the European Institute for Integrated Prevention Foundation (Warsaw, Poland)

I. Introduction

This report presents the results of research on teenage youth, which was part of a broader project entitled Youth Positive Potential (YPP), under the Erasmus+ programme. The research was conducted in the period 2021-2022, in Lithuania, Malta and Poland, the three countries that participated in the project. In addition to youth surveys, the YPP project included the adaptation of the Polish Archipelago of Treasures prevention programme to the conditions of the partner countries in the project. The assumptions of the youth survey closely corresponded to the goals and content of the AoT programme. Research results were to provide not only a diagnosis of the psychosocial condition of young people, but also teaching material for the implementation of the AoT programme with young people.

The studies were carried out in all the partner countries in the period 2021-2022. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, surveys in schools were carried out much longer, and this report is the first full presentation of their results.

1. Assumptions of the Integrated Prevention Model

The YPP project uses the Polish Integrated Prevention Model as the basis for an effective method of comprehensive support for youth development and the prevention of problems and risk behaviours of youth.

The Integrated Prevention Model, including its components: diagnostic activities (surveys in schools), practical preventive activities (the Archipelago of Treasures programme) and

recommendations (the Seven Levers Strategy), takes into account a wide spectrum of developmental needs of youth and the causes of such risk behaviours as: psychoactive substance use, gambling, suicide and depression, violence, cyberbullying, and early sexual contact.

In the Integrated Prevention Model, the above-mentioned risk behaviours of youth are not treated as isolated phenomena, but as elements of a syndrome of interrelated behaviours and risk factors. The basis for this assumption is the empirical correlations between the various risk behaviours of adolescents detected in the long-term research of the Polish Institute for Integrated Prevention. The results of the research show, in addition, that many of the risk behaviours of adolescents have common environmental and individual causes, which means that there are common risk factors for them.

2. How to support youth in preparing for the journey of life? The strategy of the Seven Levers of Effective Prevention

In 2015, as a result of many months of Szymon Grzelak team's work (Institute for Integrated Prevention, IPZIN), including analysing study results and numerous discussions and consultations with experts, a set of seven important recommendations was created. They were called the Levers of Effective Prevention.

The Law of the Lever says that if an appropriate fulcrum is found, then a small force is sufficient to lift a very heavy object – so heavy that it would be impossible to lift without the lever.

The strategy of the Seven Levers of Effective Prevention is a set of strategic recommendations providing a coherent whole that can help professionals (psychologists, teachers, prevention specialists) in their work and provide a cooperation platform for local and nationwide educational and health authorities.

The illustration below presents seven strategic recommendations, referred to as the Seven Levers, which were developed using knowledge from developmental psychology and data from studies of youth.

In this report, not all recommendations referred to as the Levers of Effective Prevention of youth problems will be illustrated with research results. The studies conducted provided important results related to recommendations described as Levers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7. These recommendations are especially relevant to those who have daily direct contact with youth.

Lever 1: Focus on what is good (then you will find better solutions to the problems). Positive information about youth, as information potentially supporting youth development, is the best starting point for finding creative solutions to youth problems.

Focusing attention on such facts triggers a train of thoughts: 'What can I do so that even more young people develop their potential, live a healthy life, and have others follow them?'. It is important to notice what has been successful, and learn from this.

Lever 2: Think in an integrated way about problem behaviours and prevention (then solutions will be holistic and efforts economical). Many of the risk behaviours of young people are interrelated, occurring simultaneously. For example, using one psychoactive substance greatly increases the risk that a young person will use others.

Strengthening the protective factors and weakening the risk factors of one problem should be considered in the context of the impact of that factor on other problems as well. A holistic and integrated approach can be a source of significant efficiency gains in public spending on prevention. The inclusion in a local or state youth policy of such measures that strengthen the protective factors and weaken the risk factors associated not with one, but with multiple risks, results in expenditures on a given measure having a multiplied effect.

Lever 3: Rely on resources of local communities (by respecting them you gain powerful allies). Building on the resources existing in the local community is the most rational and effective approach in integrated prevention. Good relationships with parents, the religious faith of young people and a good school and classroom climate are proven protective factors that prevent many risks and risk behaviours at the same time. Family, church and parish, and also school are therefore important resources for any local community.

An approach based on respect for natural community resources fosters the development of social capital, prevents conflicts and builds a broad positive front around preventive and youth development support activities. It can also become the basis for the formation of local teams working together to support youth development.

Lever 4: Build on youth's dreams and values. Understanding the importance of young people's life aspirations, values and spirituality makes it possible to use the very strong and deep motivations associated with them in prevention.

Numerous studies show that young people's aspirations are directed to the greatest extent towards issues and goals that are related to the most important interpersonal bonds, and at the same time involve issues that can give adult life purpose and meaning. Polish experience has shown for years that prevention programmes referring to such motivations are well received by youth, and this is true even when the message of these programmes poses very difficult challenges to adolescents related to a healthy lifestyle. Supporting the realization of young people's dreams of creating a happy family in the future, and the development of interests and passions that will prepare them for professional life, is an important level that can be used to unite the efforts of different entities in the local community.

Recommendations from Lever 5 – struggle for youth development support and problem prevention to be a development priority, and Lever 6 – creating a strategy, search for maximum effect at optimal cost, are aimed especially at those who are involved in education but do not have direct daily contact with students. Such people have a very important social role in education management and youth-oriented policies. Therefore, they should be aware of the importance of prevention and the social and financial costs of youth risk behaviours. When creating youth strategies and policies, they should seek maximum effects at optimal costs. Optimal costs are not the lowest costs, but the cheapest way to achieve maximum effects. In the field of prevention, the effect we want to achieve is a significant reduction in the scale of many different youth risk behaviours and problems in the entire local community. We can

achieve the maximum effect at optimal cost by combining two factors: comprehensive effectiveness of activities and their wide implementation. The issue of youth policies and prevention policies on a local and national scale, and their effectiveness, is a separate subject and the purpose of the next research.

3. Usefulness of research results in prevention work with young people

The results of the Youth Positive Potential project's survey of 14 to 15-year-old youth in Malta may have practical applications in supporting youth's development for several reasons.

- First, the results show some more general and widespread trends in youth's attitudes and behaviours. They can therefore provide a reference point for teachers', parents' and school counsellors' own observations. They can also provide a point for assessing the influence of a peer environment broader than the school, and the influence of the dominant youth culture.
- Second, the results are helpful in showing young people themselves a picture of the values, attitudes and behaviours of their environment on a broader scale. Practice shows that the preventive effect is achieved by showing youth that their positive potential is high and dominates risk behaviours in their environment. The preventive effect of presenting the results of the research also involves denying the negative stereotype, especially present in the media, of youth as a hotbed of problems: 'they drink, fight and take drugs'.
- Third, the collected data make it possible to show the multiple interrelationships between various environmental and individual factors and youth risk behaviours.
- Fourth, data analyses also show what multiple individual and environmental factors of young people protect them from risk behaviours.

II. Research methodology

The study used the integrated prevention research methodology (over 20 years of experience in Poland).

A new Pro-Inte 10 questionnaire was constructed for the study (based on the Polish ProZint-9 questionnaire). In this new version of the questionnaire, the vast majority of questions were common to Lithuania, Malta and Poland, but the questionnaires also contained sets of questions directed only at students of a specific country, due to the specificity of national social contexts.

For Malta, the specific questions concerned:

- Early school leaving
- Immigrant roots of students
- The type of school attended by students

Maltese and Lithuanian partners' teams were trained by the researches of EIIP on how to use the research method – conducting surveys in schools and coding data.

The survey was carried out in classrooms and was anonymous and in compliance with personal data protection regulations.

1. The purpose of the studies

The main purposes of the studies conducted as part of the YPP project were:

1. to identify the positive potential and problems of youth in Malta, Poland and Lithuania,
2. to adapt the Archipelago of Treasures programme to the national contexts in the partner countries, on the basis of study results,
3. to share the results of the studies with school counsellors, teachers and other school staff in the partner countries so that they can use the knowledge in their work with students and parents.

2. The subject of research

The survey included students aged 14 to 15, attending schools. The main research questions formulated for this group of young people were:

- what is their positive development potential,
- what are their values and life attitudes,
- what risk behaviours do they exhibit,
- what risk factors are they exposed to,
- what are the protective factors for their positive potential?

The above questions were operationalized by means of over 80 questions in the Pro-Inte 10 questionnaire. The responses to these questions became important material developed and used in the adaptation of the Polish Archipelago of Treasures prevention programme to the needs of young people in Malta and Lithuania.

3. Research sample and response set

The school surveys were conducted under difficult conditions, as the Covid-19 pandemic was underway (2021-2022). For this reason, data collection in schools took much longer than originally planned, as the national survey teams tried to achieve the maximum of the assumed survey sample sizes.

Detailed information on the surveys carried out in Malta, Lithuania and Poland is provided in Table 1.

Table 1 Characteristics of surveys conducted in Malta, Lithuania and Poland under the YPP project

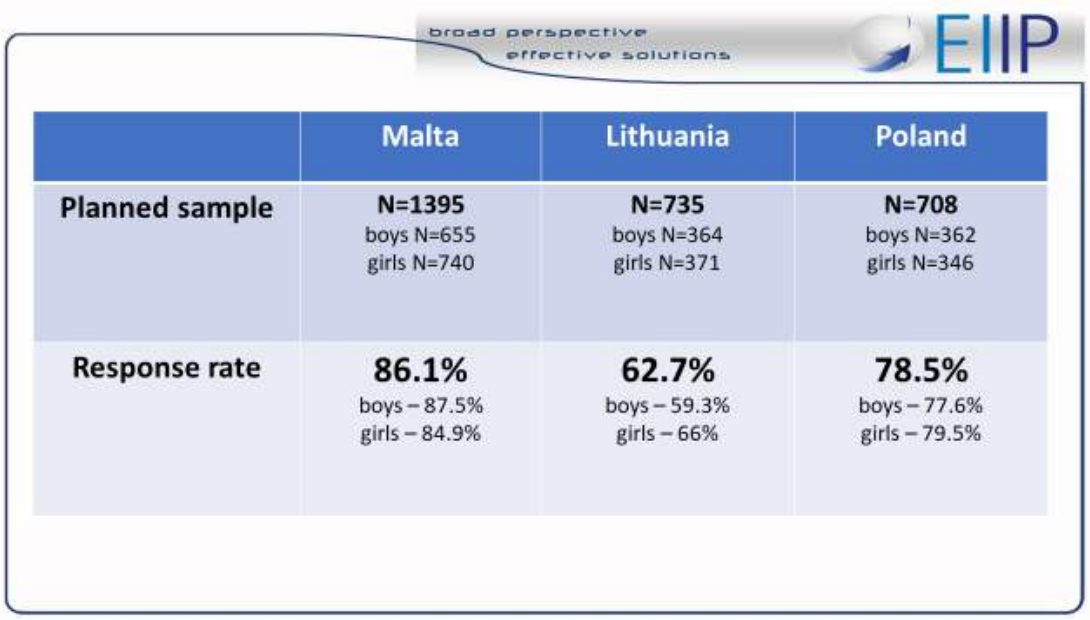
	Malta	Lithuania	Poland
Time of research	05.2021-02.2022	09.2021-11.2021	09.2021-04.2022
Sample size	N=1222	N=469	N=558
Age of students	**14 years – 72%** 15 years – 26% other – 2%	14 years – 29% **15 years – 66%** other – 6%	13 years – 19% **14 years – 54%** 15 years – 24% other – 3%
Types of schools	• Government • Church • Independent	Schools with • Polish language • Lithuanian language	Primary schools, Year/form 8
Geographical structure	Southern, Central & Northern Malta & Gozo	Vilnius	Small towns from the following provinces: Lubelskie, Podlaskie, Małopol., Mazowieckie and Wielkopolskie
Representative survey	**Yes** (quota sample - region, type of school, sex)	No	No

Due to the unrepresentative nature of the study samples in Poland and Lithuania, conclusions from analyses of data from these countries should be formulated with caution, so as not to generalize them to the entire population of young people in these countries. Due to the different nature of the study samples in Malta and the other two partner countries, strict comparisons cannot be made between the countries. Inter-country compilations of data, especially of frequency distributions, should be treated as an illustration of different or similar phenomena in the countries studied.

At the same time, it should be noted that correlation analyses conducted on both Maltese and Polish and Lithuanian data make it possible to show significant relationships between problem behaviours and protective and risk factors in the studied groups of young people in each country.

As shown in Table 2, despite the difficult implementation conditions, Malta managed to collect 86.1% of the planned student questionnaires. This is the highest percentage of data collected among the countries participating in the project.

Table 2 Malta, Lithuania, Poland – planned samples and response rate (numbers)



	Malta	Lithuania	Poland
Planned sample	**N=1395** boys N=655 girls N=740	**N=735** boys N=364 girls N=371	**N=708** boys N=362 girls N=346
Response rate	**86.1%** boys – 87.5% girls – 84.9%	**62.7%** boys – 59.3% girls – 66%	**78.5%** boys – 77.6% girls – 79.5%

The survey sample in Malta was a quota sample, representative by three criteria: region of the country (Southern, Central & Northern Malta & Gozo), type of school (Government, Church, Independent) and sex (boys, girls).

Tables 3 and 4 show detailed data concerning the sample structure of the students surveyed in each country.

Table 3 Percentages of surveyed students by sex (in Malta, Lithuania and Poland)

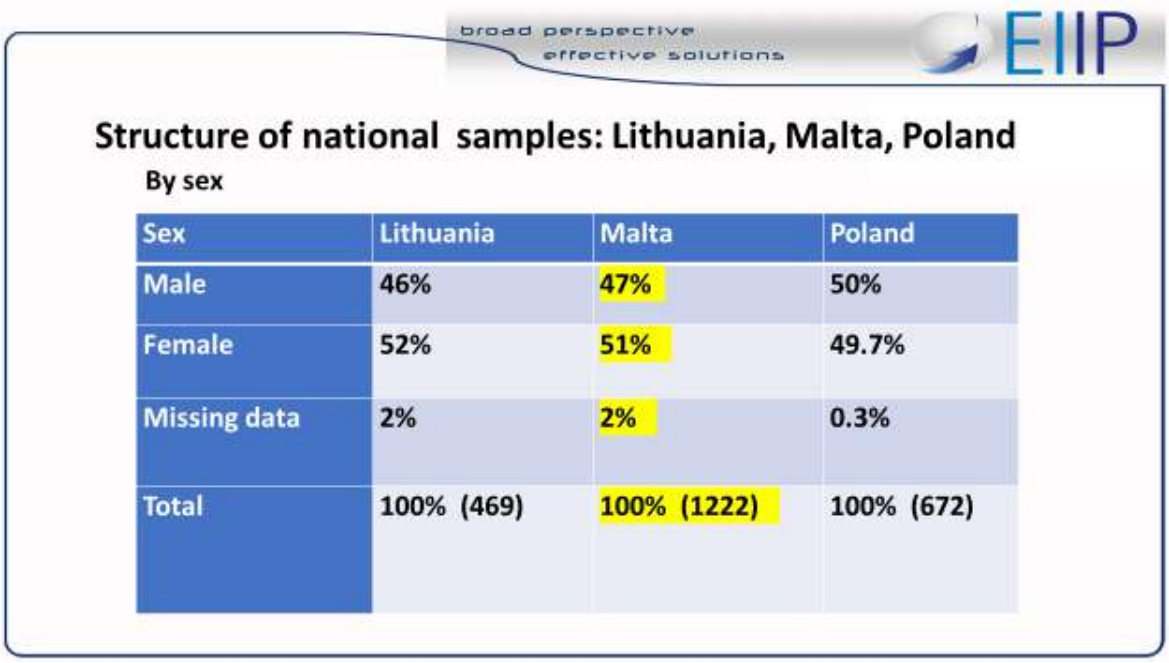
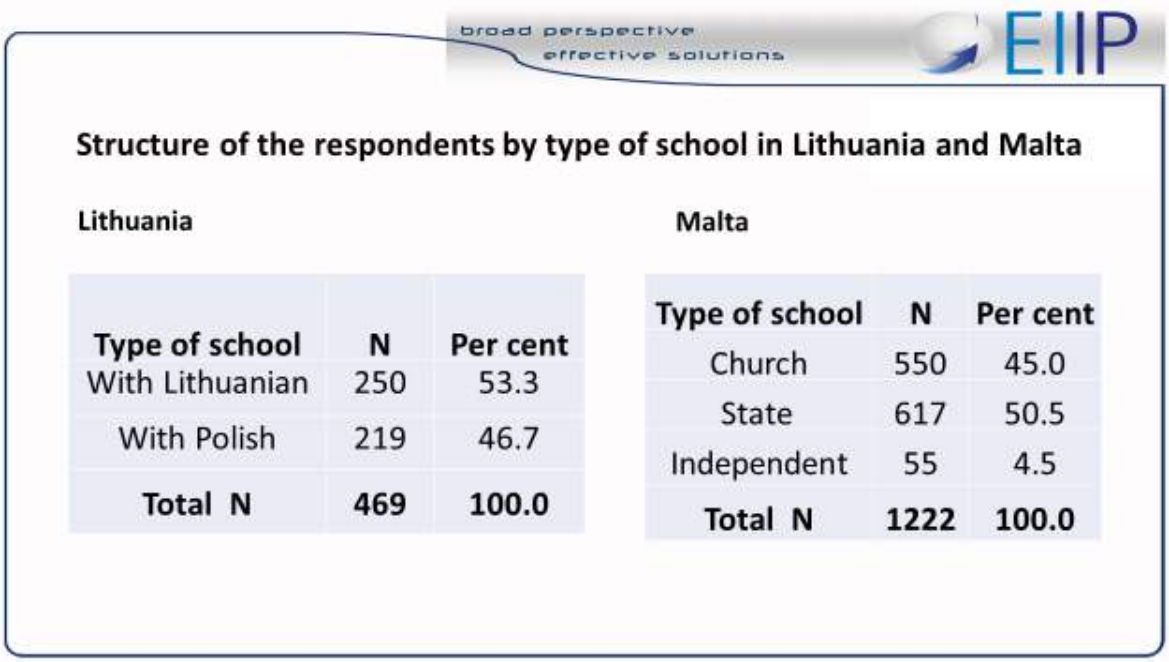


Table 4 shows the structure of the Maltese and Lithuanian samples by the types of schools the surveyed students attended. In Poland, only state schools, which make up the vast majority of primary schools (89.3% of primary schools for children and adolescents), were included in the survey. In Malta, differentiation of schools by the schools' governing body was included, and in Lithuania, differentiation by the languages of instruction available in the school.

Table 4 Percentages of surveyed students by type of school (in Malta and Lithuania)



4. Analysis methods

A single cumulative statistical set was created on the basis of the data collected in the surveys in Lithuania, Malta and Poland. Data analysis methods varied from simple frequency analysis through correlation analyses to principal component analysis.

Data analysis was conducted at two levels: the general, nationwide level and the level of data obtained at specific schools. In the general diagnosis for a country/region/city, we need to add up the results from many schools, but country averages hide what is most important for a given school. Diagnoses prepared for individual schools gave the school staff a picture of the positive potential and problems of their students. Lithuanian schools participating in the project received reports with the results in their schools.

The results of the data analyses showed the extent of prevalence and the interrelationships between many variables describing youth's behaviours and attitudes. Through the analyses, links were found between: drinking alcohol, smoking cigarettes, drug use, viewing pornography, early sexual contact, suicidal thoughts, and depression.

The analyses included a rich set of co-occurring and explanatory factors. Their results describe the role of such protective factors (i.e. factors that decrease the likelihood of problem behaviours) as: mother and/or father as a life guide, being heard in family conversation, religious practices, thoughts turned to God, good climate in class, acceptance in class, school average grade, belief that true love grows over time, belief in true love nowadays, and contact with model marriages. Risk factors (i.e. factors that increase the likelihood of problem behaviours) were found to be: parental divorce, school truancy, fear of violence in school, company of alcohol drinkers, company of drug users, and sexualization.

III. Research results in the perspective of the Seven Levers of Effective Prevention strategy

The results of the research conducted in Malta as part of the Youth Positive Potential project will be presented in a way that shows their usefulness in the broader perspective of the practice of prevention work with youth defined as the Seven Levers strategy, and developed by Dr Szymon Grzelak and his team.

1. Positive development potential of Maltese teenagers

Lever 1: Focus on what is good (then you will find better solutions to the problems)

The data collected confirm the fact that the vast majority of Maltese adolescents aged 14 to 15 do not engage in risk behaviours and do not yield to risks such as using various psychoactive substances, committing violence and cyberbullying, viewing pornography, or early sexual initiation.

This is positive information indicating the high developmental potential of Maltese teenagers. Widely presenting and discussing results illustrating the positive potential of adolescents is the best starting point for finding creative solutions to the problems of this minority of adolescents who do exhibit risk behaviours.

Figure 1 below presents data that show that the vast majority of Maltese youth have not used such psychoactive substances as cigarettes (94.5% ever in their lives) or e-cigarettes (93% ever in their lives), alcohol (72% in the 30 days before the survey), drugs (98% in the 30 days before the survey) and designer drugs (98.5% in the 12 months before the survey). Of concern is the relatively lower level of students' declarations (72%) about not using alcohol in the 30 days before the survey compared to the level of declarations about other psychoactive substances. The results presented in Figure 1 also show that Maltese girls are slightly more likely than boys to drink alcohol, be drunk and use e-cigarettes.

Figure 1 Malta – percentage of youth not using listed psychoactive substances, by sex

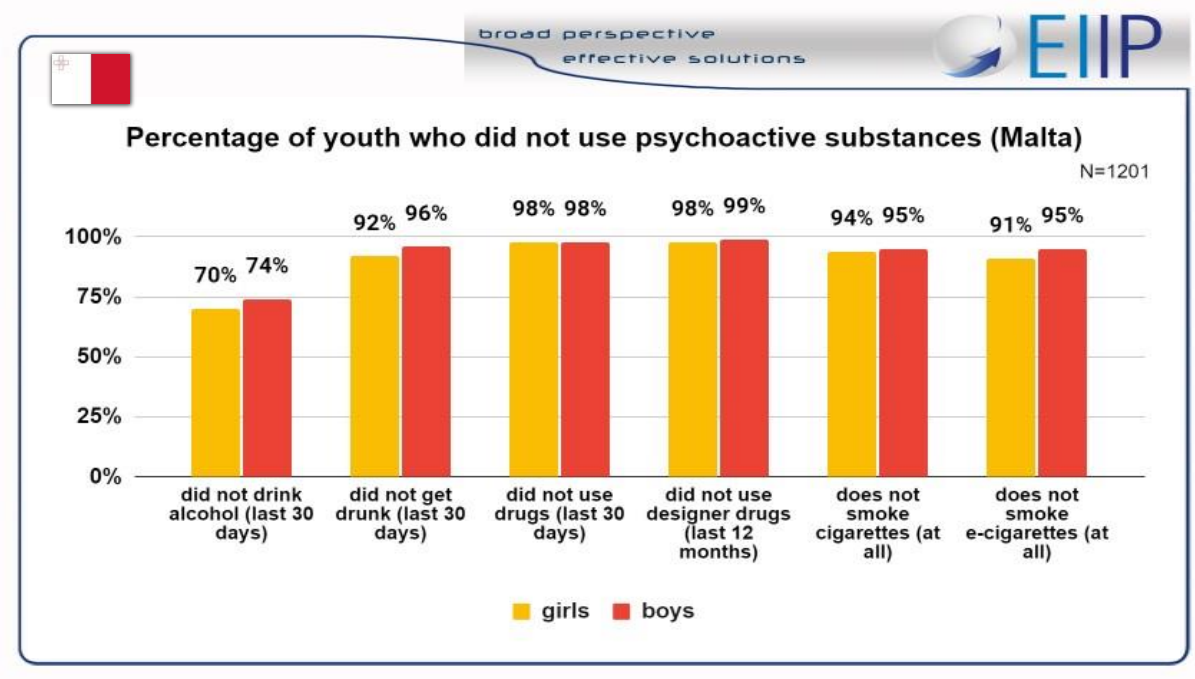
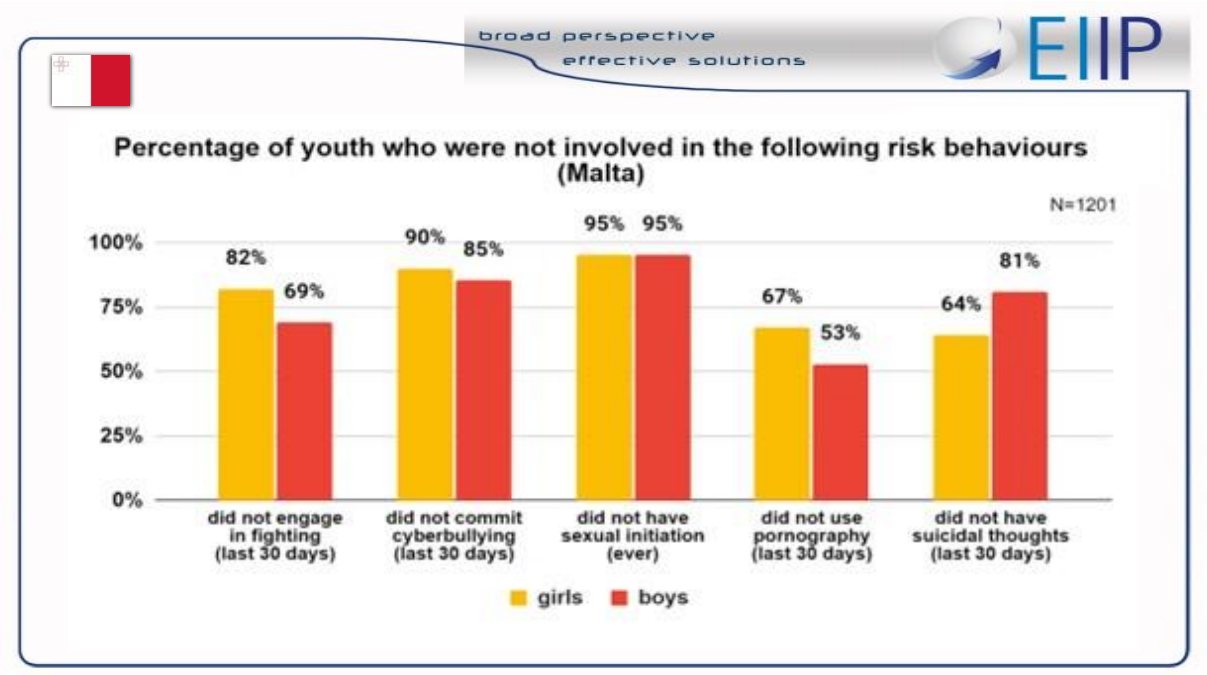


Figure 2 presents results relating to such risk behaviours as fighting, cyberbullying, sexual initiation, viewing pornography and suicidal thoughts. And also in this case, the majority of Maltese teenagers do not declare these behaviours. However, the data on pornography viewing are disturbing. Although the majority of girls and boys do not view it (60%), a significant group of the surveyed students declare viewing it (40%; the question concerned the period of 30 days before the survey). There are significantly fewer such declarations among girls (33%), but almost half of the boys gave such declarations (47%).

Figure 2 Percentage of youth not declaring the following risk behaviours, by sex



Considerable differences, statistically significant, between boys and girls also occur with respect to involvement in fights (girls are much less likely to take part in them) and suicidal thoughts (boys have such thoughts much less often). No difference between behaviours declared by boys and girls is observed for sexual initiation, and a slight difference is seen for committing cyberbullying (girls commit it less often than boys) .

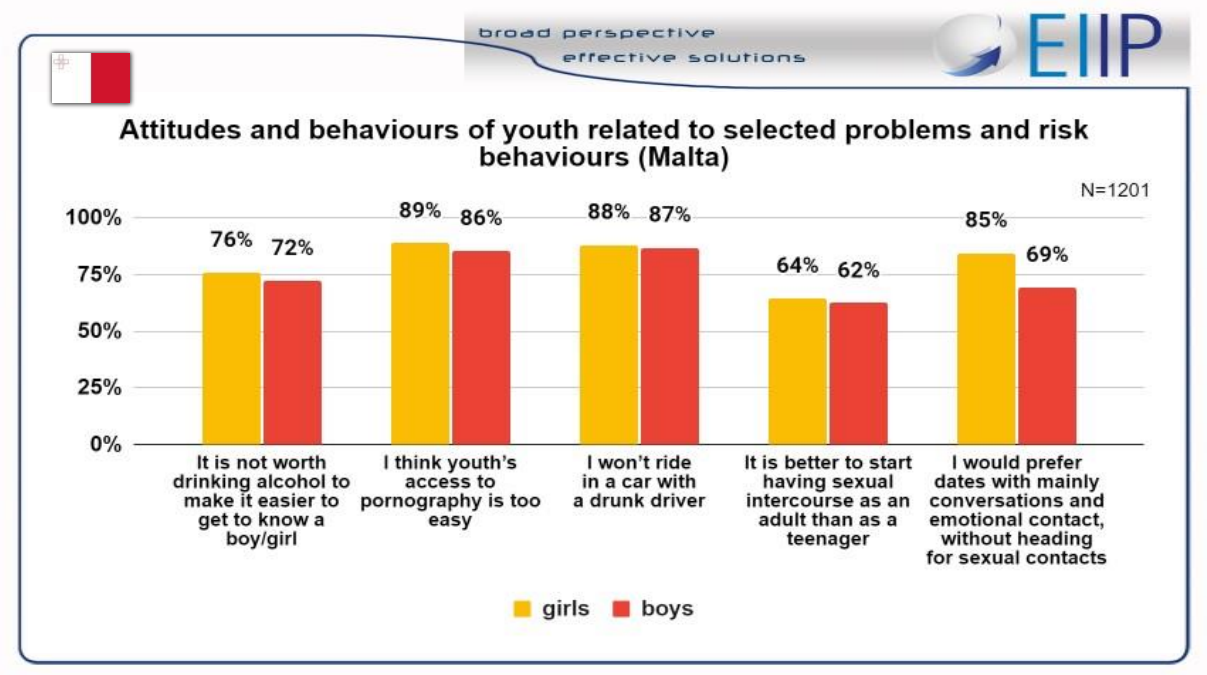
Among the resources for the positive potential of Maltese youth are the opinions and attitudes declared by the majority of them towards specific risks and risk behaviours. These attitudes and opinions include:

- non-acceptance of alcohol as facilitating getting to know another person (boy/girl)
- opinion that youth and children's access to pornography is too easy
- non-acceptance of driving under the influence of alcohol

- belief that it is better to wait until adulthood before starting sex life
- preference for dates oriented towards conversation and emotions rather than heading for sexual contact.

Detailed data on this subject are presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3 Percentage of declarations of selected attitudes and opinions of youth, by sex



It is worth noting, comparing the data in Figures 1 and 3, that although declarations of not drinking alcohol are expressed by 72% of the respondents, attitudes such as non-acceptance of drivers under the influence of alcohol are significantly more numerous (such an opinion is expressed by 87.5% of teenagers). The same is true of disapproval of the opinion that alcohol makes it easier to get to know a person (the disapproval is expressed by slightly more students: 74%). Showing the prevalence of such attitudes can lead to their reinforcement and the expansion of the group of teenagers who do not drink alcohol.

In conclusion, the research results presented above in synthetic form provide good, factual material for use in prevention work with young people.

Sharing with adolescents this kind of knowledge about themselves has a positive effect on the self-image of the young person and on the image of a wider group of youth in their eyes. For the majority, it is a confirmation of their choices and attitudes through a sense of being in a broad group of people who think and act alike. For a minority of youth, those with problems, sharing this knowledge helps them to see a broader, positive reference group.

For anyone involved in youth prevention, focusing attention on such positive facts triggers a train of thoughts: 'What can I do so that even more young people develop their potential, live a healthy life, and have others follow them?'.

In both cases, both in young people and those who support their development and education, there is a positive mobilization for supporting, rebuilding and expanding the positive potential of behaviours and attitudes. And in addition, there is mutual satisfaction that such positive potential exists and is large, as the survey results show.

2. The analysis of risk behaviours and youth problems in an integrated perspective

Lever 2: Think in an integrated way about problem behaviours and prevention (then solutions will be holistic and efforts economical)

Although the majority of Maltese teenagers do not exhibit risk behaviours, and their healthy development does not appear to be at risk, it is worth looking at the problems that occur among a minority of adolescents. The scale of these problems requires the attention of prevention specialists, teachers and parents. Care should be taken to keep their scale as small as possible. The real risks include:

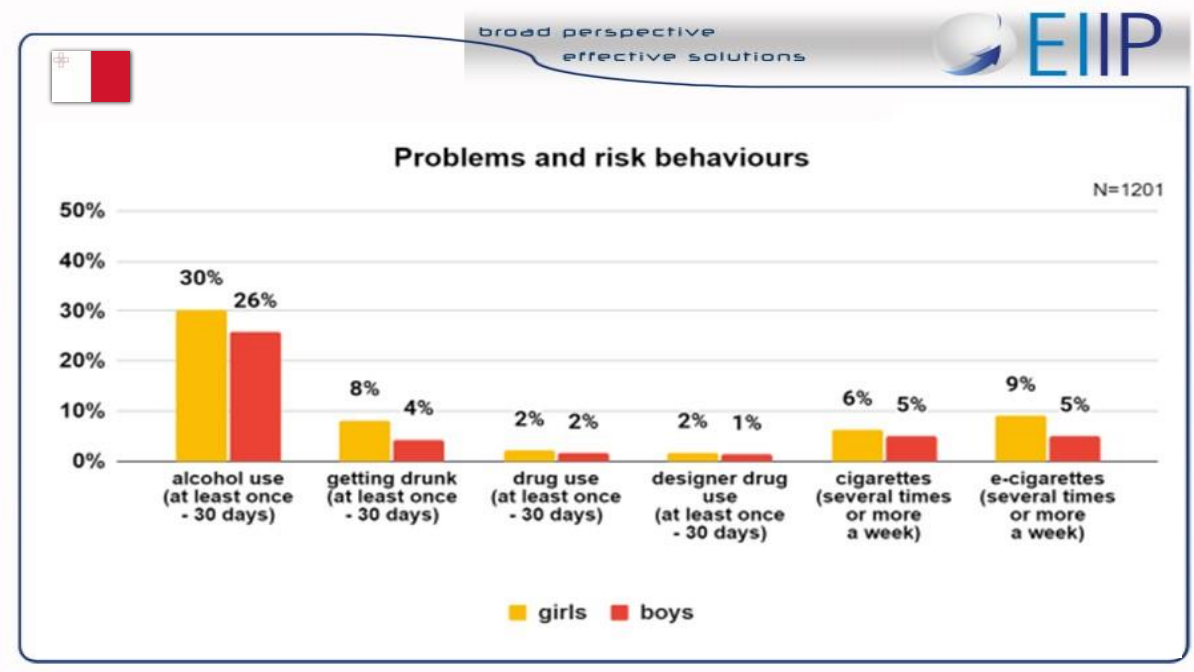
- Psychoactive substance use: alcohol, drugs, tobacco, designer drugs, medicines
- Behavioural problems: addiction to pornography, violence, early sexual contact, addiction to social media, gambling, cyberbullying
- Mental and physical health problems: depression, suicide, self-harm, anorexia and bulimia, social withdrawal, early school leaving, gender identity disorders.

a. Scale of risk behaviours among adolescents

We will present data showing the magnitude of the above-mentioned risk behaviours by sex, for boys and girls. In addition to the nationwide data, we will include selected examples of inter-school variation in these behaviours in the Maltese schools surveyed. The results of the analyses from these two levels, nationwide and school level, are intended to sensitize prevention specialists, teachers and parents not only to the magnitude of the problems, but also to their variation between specific schools.

In Figure 4, we see a summary of data showing the scale of risk behaviours related to psychoactive substances in the national perspective, broken down by sex.

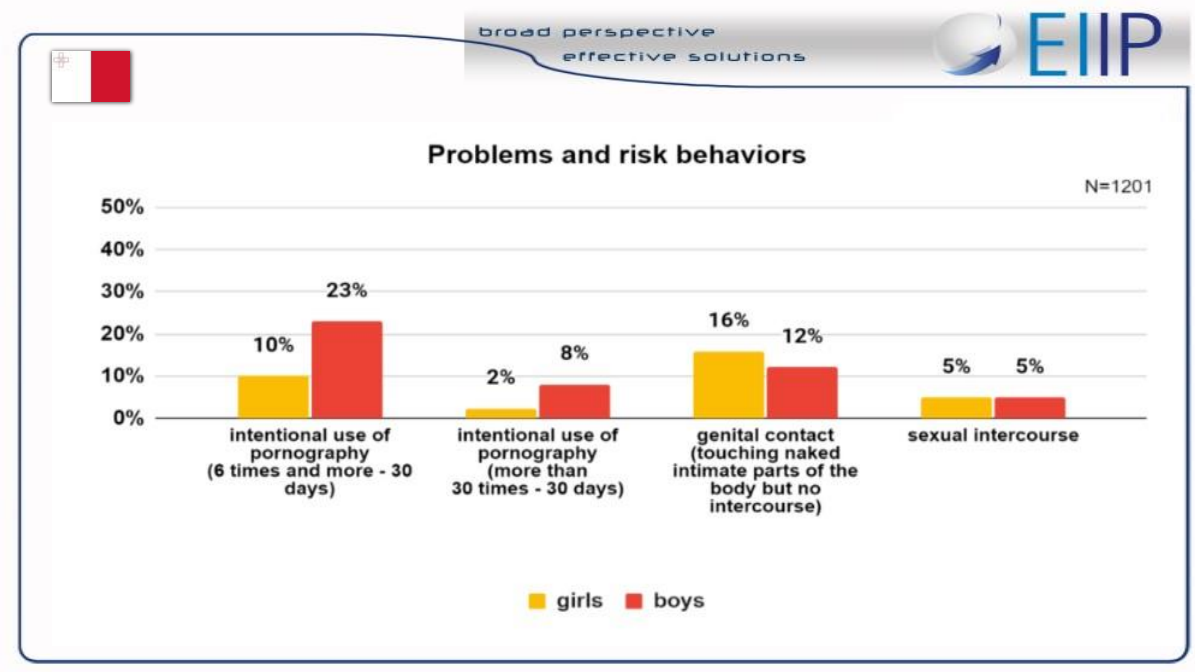
Figure 4 Scale of risk behaviours related to psychoactive substances, by sex (%)



As the data show, as far as psychoactive substances are concerned, it remains a challenge for teachers and other people supporting youth development to reduce the extent of alcohol drinking and e-cigarette smoking.

The frequency of risk behaviours related to sexuality, such as intentional pornography viewing and genital contact without and with full sexual intercourse, is presented in the data in Figure 5.

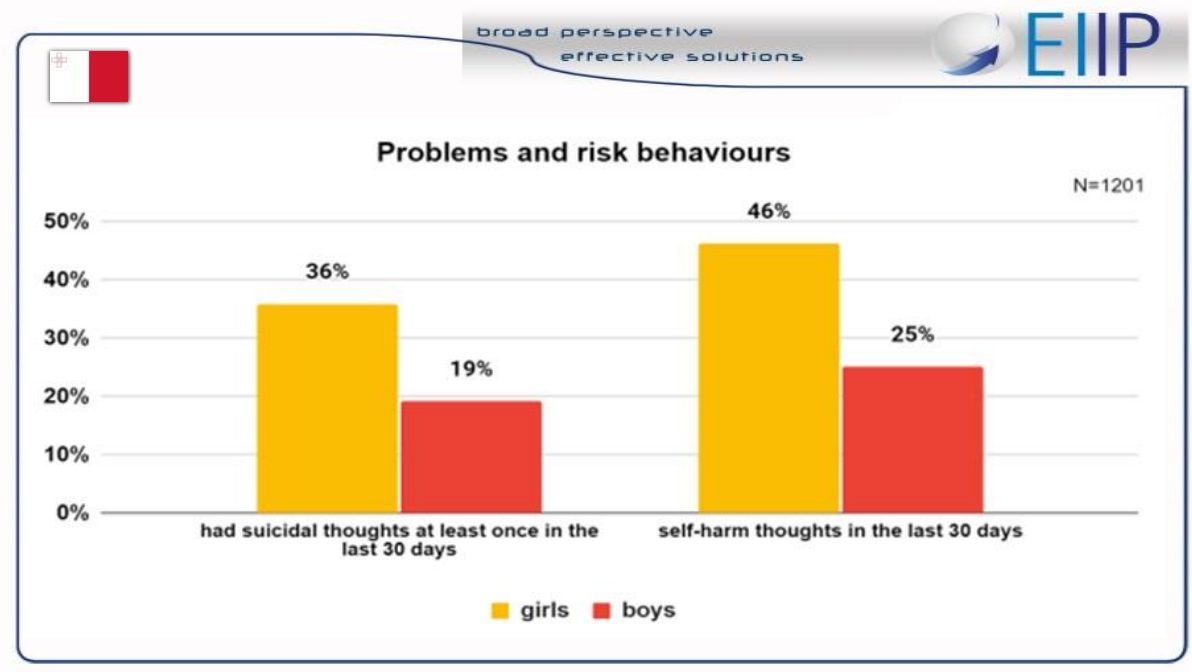
Figure 5 Frequency of risk behaviours related to sexuality, by sex (%)



Of note and concern is the relatively high percentage of boys (23%) who intentionally view pornography at least 6 times a month, as well as the existence of an 8% group of boys who view pornography more than once a day.

Figure 6, in turn, presents data on such behaviours dangerous for teenagers as suicidal thoughts and self-harm, declared in the surveys by boys and girls.

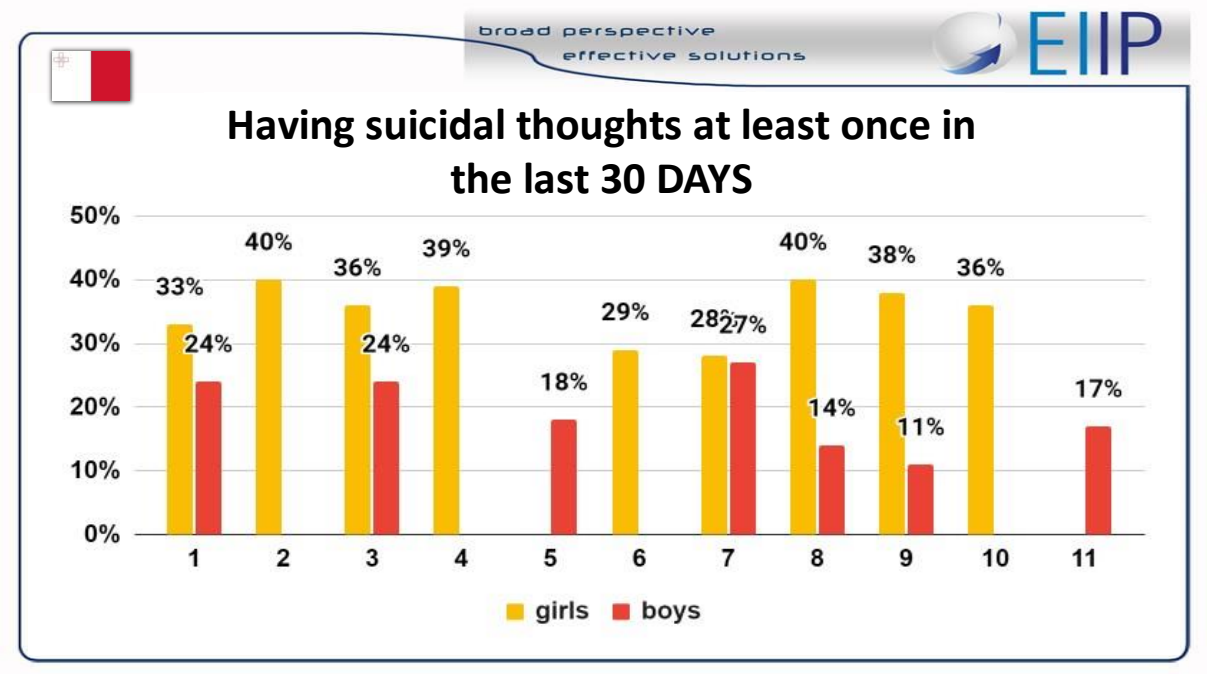
Figure 6 Frequency of declarations of suicidal and self-harm thoughts, by sex (%)



The data show that this type of behaviours is much more frequently reported among girls than among boys. For the 30-day period before the survey, self-harm was signalled by almost half of Maltese girls (46%), and suicidal thoughts by 36%.

In Figure 7, we can look at data on the inter-school variation in the frequency of declarations of suicidal thoughts. We can see that depending on the specific school, there are different rates of their occurrence.

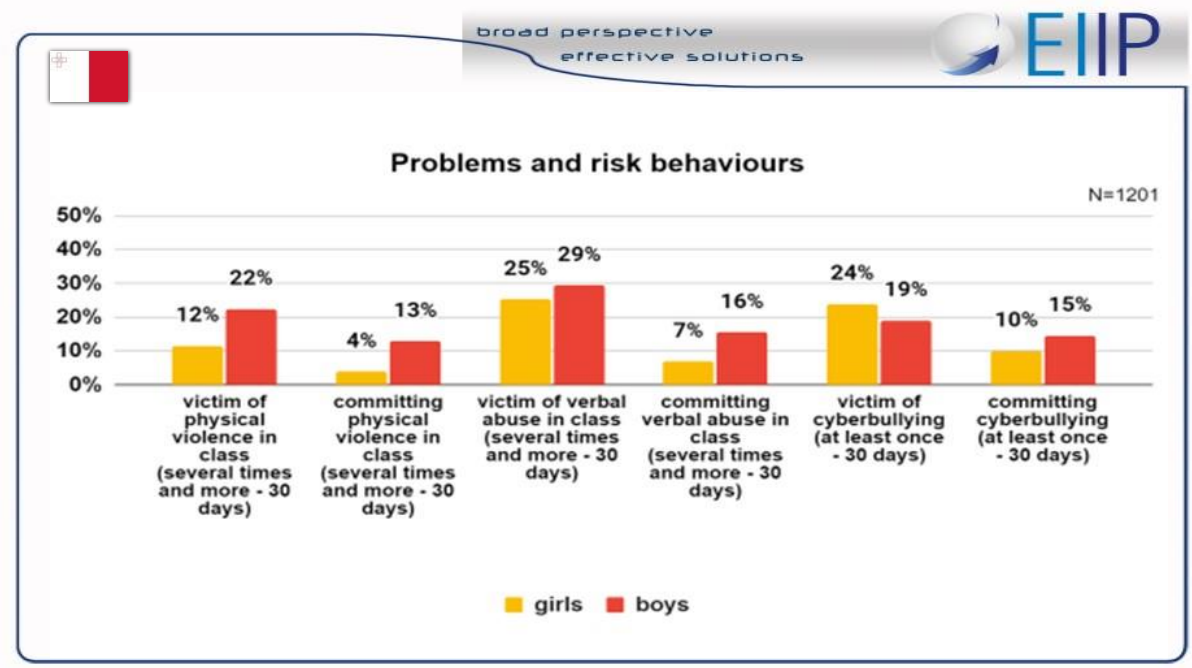
Figure 7 Inter-school variation in the frequency of declarations of suicidal thoughts, by sex (%)



The data come from 11 schools participating in the study, and the data in the single bars next to the school code numbers are from single-sex schools. Such a feature of the school environment differentiates the frequency of declarations of suicidal thoughts differently and more strongly among girls (in coeducational schools – 33.4%, in single-sex schools – 38%) than among boys (in coeducational schools – 20%, in single-sex schools – 17.5%).

It is worthwhile at this point to present data relating to violent behaviour at school and cyberbullying, as reported by teenagers. Such data are presented in Figure 8.

Figure 8 Frequency of declarations of violent behaviour, by sex (%)

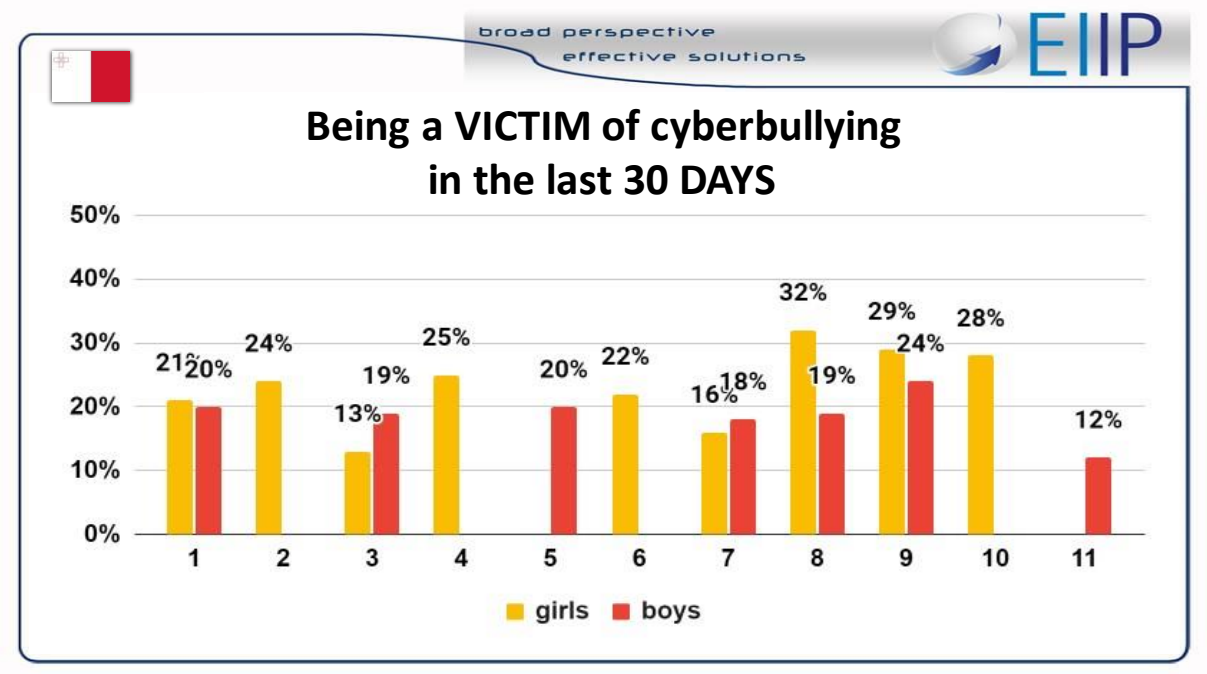


The data show that physical and verbal violence in class is more common among boys; only for declarations of being a victim of cyberbullying do we see higher percentages of girls than boys.

Figures 9 and 10 show sample data on the inter-school variation in the frequency of such an experience as being a victim of cyberbullying and such a behaviour as taking part in cyberbullying. And in these kinds of cases, we can say that schools are 'unequal', as we observe visible inter-school variation.

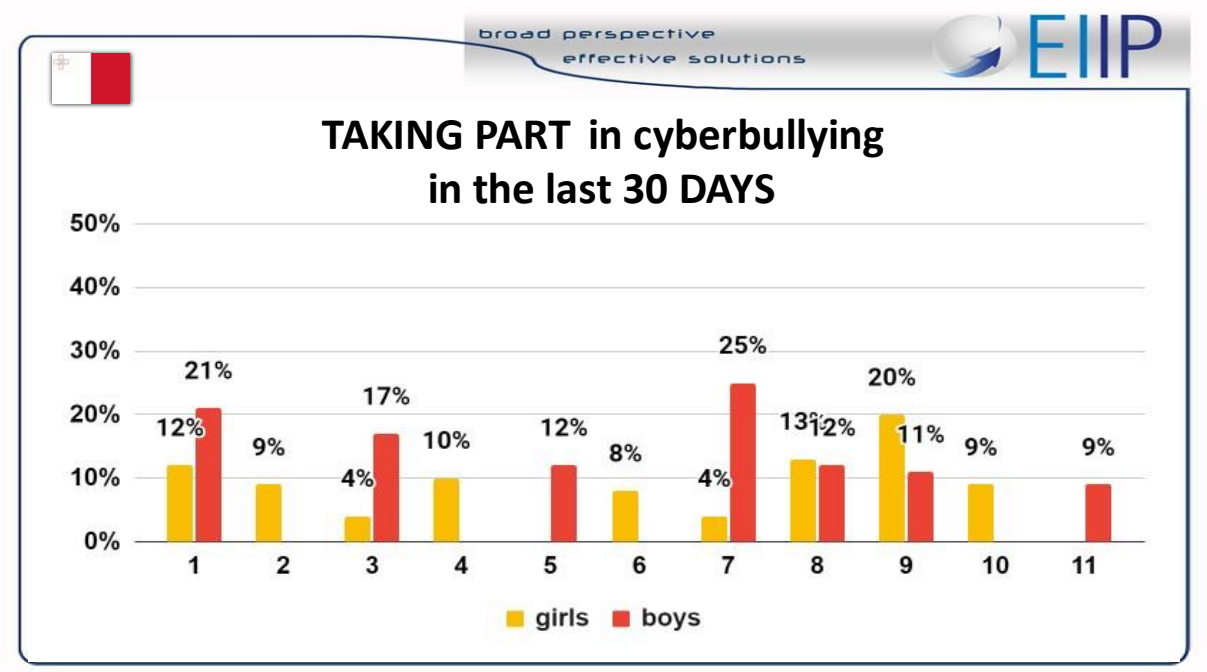
In coeducational schools, the experience of being e.g. a victim of cyberbullying ranges from 16% to 26.5% of students, depending on the school. In single-sex schools, such experience is reported by 22% to 28% of girls and 12% to 20% of boys (Figure 9). In addition, among coeducational schools there are both those where more girls than boys declare themselves victims of cyberbullying and schools where boys are more likely than girls to make such declarations (Figure 9).

Figure 9 Inter-school variation in the frequency of being a victim of cyberbullying, by sex (%)



The frequency of declarations of committing cyberviolence at school is presented in Figure 10. The data show that students from coeducational schools are more likely to admit committing this type of violence than those from single-sex schools, and boys are more likely to admit this than girls. Of the five coeducational schools surveyed, in three of them, boys were significantly more likely than girls to report involvement in cyberbullying; in one of them, girls were more likely than boys to admit committing violence, and in one of them, there was no significant difference between boys and girls.

Figure 10 Inter-school variation in the frequency of taking part in cyberbullying, by sex (%)



The data shown in Figures 9 and 10 are evidence of how averaged results for the whole country can distort the picture of youth problems at the level of a particular school. These results should not be taken as an assessment of schools' efforts for youth development support, but as a diagnosis of their specific characteristics defined by a much broader environmental or subcultural context.

b. Are the different problems of young people correlated with each other, and how strongly?

Here we begin to present data showing that many of the risk behaviours discussed earlier are interrelated, meaning that they occur simultaneously. For example, the use of one psychoactive substance greatly increases the risk that a young person will use others. What is more, the results of the analyses show that he or she is more likely to commit violence or engage in early sexual contact. The results of the correlation analysis showed significant correlations between the above-mentioned risk behaviours of young people.

The advantage of our study is that it includes indicators of youth risk behaviours and problems from very many areas. This is because the study concept was based on the integrated prevention model, which required a multidimensional and contextual diagnosis of youth risk behaviours and problems.

This broad approach makes the survey data a good source for analysing the relationships between variables describing risk behaviours, with the exception of behaviours that are very rare in the study population. Below, Table 5 presents the results of analyses conducted on data from the Maltese survey of youth aged 14 to 15. The analyses presented for 19 variables relate to behaviours, problems and attitudes in various problem areas. The goal of the correlation analysis was to check whether links exist between various risk behaviours and problems, and if so, what their direction and strength is. The results definitively confirm the hypothesis of the coexistence of various problems and risk behaviours.

The analysis used the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (in short, rS). The conventional interpretation of the strength of relationship applies as well when correlations are negative (i.e. when an increase in one variable is accompanied by a decrease in the other). All correlations presented in the tables are statistically significant; that is why we omit significance criteria. The values of the coefficient of <0.2 indicate a weak relationship, 0.2 to 0.3 indicate moderate relationship, and >0.4 is a strong relationship, but interpretation of values is always disputable.

The results in Table 5 confirm many popular observations and those made by specialists dealing with adolescent problems. Thus, no one will be surprised by the strong relationship between drinking alcohol and being drunk, between drug use and using designer drugs, or the relationship between depression and self-harm or suicidal thoughts.

However, the results of the analysis showed us many connections between adolescents' risk behaviours that are strong but less obvious. These include the connection between committing violence and being a victim of violence, or between sexual initiation and smoking cigarettes. Simple, non-obvious correlations demand explanation. In the first case, further analyses showed that the experience of violence is the experience of both committing violence and being a victim, and is probably part of the school subculture, the unwritten norm of responding to violence with violence. The second example becomes understandable when we see the strong links, visible in Table 5, between sexual behaviours and the use of various psychoactive substances, including cigarette smoking. Again, a more in-depth analysis showed a more general pattern related to psychoactive substance use: that reaching for one increases the likelihood of reaching for others.

Table 5 Correlation matrix between risk behaviours and problems – Malta

N = 1201 Youth problems and risk behaviours		Alcohol use (last 30 days)	Getting drunk (last 30 days)	Cigarettes (several a week)	Drug use (last 30 days)	Designer drug use (last 30 days)	Gambling (last 30 days)	Pornography (last 30 days)	Genital contact	Sexual intercourse	Fighting (last 30 days)	Victim of physical violence	Committing physical violence	Cyberbullying victim (last 30 days)	Cyberbully (last 30 days)	Depression scale	Self-harm (last 30 days)	Suicidal thoughts (last 30 days)	Drop out of school	No children in the future
Psychoactive substances	Alcohol use	1.00	0.46	0.36	0.24	0.16	0.13	0.31	0.38	0.27	0.18	0.06	0.15	0.11	0.11	0.12	0.18	0.14	0.22	-0.05
	Getting drunk	0.46	1.00	0.40	0.39	0.23	0.11	0.19	0.31	0.28	0.12	0.05	0.11	0.06	0.11	0.07	0.14	0.10	0.20	-0.03
	Cigarettes	0.36	0.40	1.00	0.41	0.19	0.10	0.18	0.37	0.33	0.17	0.05	0.14	0.08	0.16	0.11	0.16	0.13	0.17	0.02
	Drug use	0.24	0.39	0.41	1.00	0.48	0.12	0.15	0.24	0.37	0.21	0.06	0.11	0.06	0.15	0.08	0.14	0.10	0.11	0.02
	Designer drug use	0.16	0.23	0.19	0.48	1.00	0.11	0.07	0.16	0.26	0.15	0.02	0.08	0.03	0.07	0.02	0.06	0.04	0.03	-0.01
Gambling	Gambling	0.13	0,11	0.10	0.12	0.11	1.00	0.16	0.07	0.13	0.20	0.11	0.22	0.12	0.15	-0.06	0.07	0.00	0.04	0.00
Sexual behaviours	Pornography	0.31	0.19	0.18	0.15	0.07	0.16	1.00	0.26	0.13	0.18	0.12	0.22	0.09	0.15	0.07	0.17	0.15	0.19	-0.07
	Genital contact	0.38	0.31	0.37	0.24	0.16	0.07	0.26	1.00	0.49	0.18	0.08	0.14	0.18	0.15	0.15	0.18	0.18	0.21	-0.07
	Sexual intercourse	0.27	0.28	0.33	0.37	0.26	0.13	0.13	0.49	1.00	0.22	0.09	0.10	0.09	0.12	0.06	0.11	0.11	0.12	-0.05
Violence and fighting	Fighting	0.18	0.12	0.17	0.21	0.15	0.20	0.18	0.18	0.22	1.00	0.22	0.35	0.15	0.17	0.02	0.10	0.08	0.09	-0.09
	Victim of physical violence in class	0.06	0.05	0.05	0.06	0.02	0.11	0.12	0.08	0.09	0.22	1.00	0.44	0.19	0.12	0.10	0.14	0.14	0.06	0.00
	Committing physical violence in class	0.15	0.11	0.14	0.11	0.08	0.22	0.22	0.14	0.10	0.35	0.44	1.00	0.08	0.20	-0.07	0.04	0.04	0.05	-0.02
	Cyberbullying victim	0.11	0.06	0.08	0.06	0.03	0.12	0.09	0.18	0.09	0.15	0.19	0.08	1.00	0.30	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.16	-0.01
	Cyberbully	0.11	0.11	0.16	0.15	0.07	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.12	0.17	0.12	0.20	0.30	1.00	0.04	0.10	0.10	0.13	0.04
Depression and self-harm	Depression scale	0.12	0.07	0.11	0.08	0.02	-0.06	0.07	0.15	0.06	0.02	0.10	-0.07	0.26	0.04	1.00	0.63	0.58	0.37	0.14
	Self-harm	0.18	0.14	0.16	0.14	0.06	0.07	0.17	0.18	0.11	0.10	0.14	0.04	0.26	0.10	0.63	1.00	0.71	0.35	0.17
	Suicidal thoughts	0.14	0.10	0.13	0.10	0.04	0.00	0.15	0.18	0.11	0.08	0.14	0.04	0.25	0.10	0.58	0.71	1.00	0.34	0.16
Plans for the future	Drop out of school	0.22	0.20	0.17	0.11	0.03	0.04	0.19	0.21	0.12	0.09	0.06	0.05	0.16	0.13	0.37	0.35	0.34	1.00	0.08
	No children in the future	-0.05	-0.03	0.02	0.02	-0.01	0.00	-0.07	-0.07	-0.05	-0.09	0.00	-0.02	-0.01	0.04	0.14	0.17	0.16	0.08	1.00

Even the colouring of the strength of the interrelationships between the variables in Table 5 makes it possible to see and identify more general groups of youth problems.

c. Four groups of youth problems, their structure and interrelationships

The results of subsequent analyses led to the adoption of a more general categorization of youth risk behaviours, while showing that the components of the groups of problems are different for girls and boys. The principal component analysis (PCA) conducted determined four principal components – the main problems for both boys and girls. Careful analysis of the components of the principal components makes it possible to identify those risk behaviours that have the greatest impact on the picture of the individual principal components, i.e. those that form a homogeneous and distinct group.

Table 6 presents data showing a picture of the identified four principal components, i.e. groups of problems experienced by boys (places marked with dark pink colour).

The four principal components are separate, more general groups of problems, consisting of the following components (risk behaviours):

1. A group of problems related to such behaviours as drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes, viewing pornography, sexual behaviours (genital contact, sexual intercourse) and beliefs described by a high score on the sexualization scale, i.e. approval of the

objectification of sex and heading for engaging in sex. The determinant for this group (i.e. the variable with the greatest impact on the other variables in this group) is activity associated with genital contact.

2. A group of problems related to poor mental health (depression, having self-harm thoughts and suicidal thoughts). The determinant for this group is suicidal thoughts.
3. A group of problems related to the use of drugs and designer drugs, and with getting drunk. The determinant for this group is the use of designer drugs.
4. A group of problems related to violence, both committing violence and being a victim. The determinant for this group is the declared being a victim of cyberbullying.

The data included in Table 6 show the identified four groups of problems of Maltese boys and their components.

Table 6 Risk behaviours included in four principal components. Analysis for boys, Malta

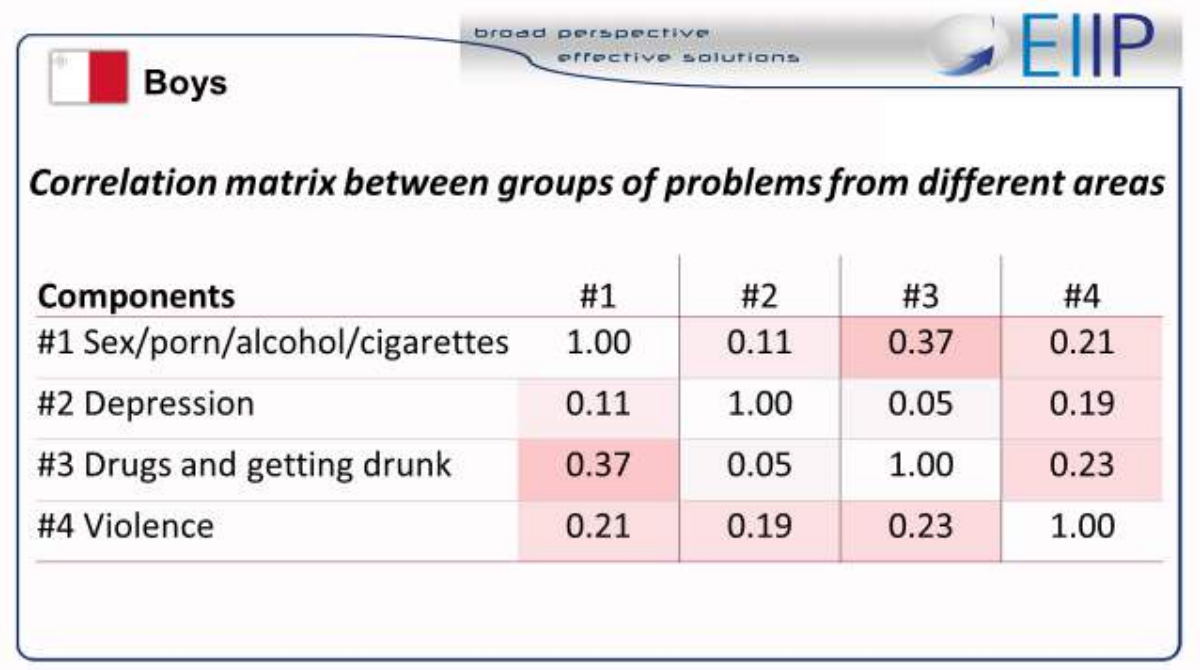
The problems included in the components (Boys)	Components 1	2	3	4
Genital contact	0.75	0.00	-0.10	0.03
Alcohol use (30 days)	0.70	-0.06	0.00	-0.04
Scale of sexualization	0.68	-0.02	-0.13	0.10
Pornography (last 30 days)	0.64	0.07	-0.07	-0.06
Cigarettes	0.61	0.06	0.29	-0.07
Sexual intercourse	0.60	-0.01	-0.01	0.03
Suicidal thoughts (30 days)	0.00	0.91	0.01	0.01
Scale of depression	0.03	0.89	-0.05	-0.03
Self-harm thoughts	-0.02	0.87	0.04	0.05
Designer drug use (last 30 days)	-0.29	-0.01	0.92	0.05
Drug use (last 30 days)	0.04	0.03	0.86	-0.09
Getting drunk (30 days)	0.26	-0.05	0.60	-0.04
Cyberbullying victim (last 30 days)	-0.03	-0.02	-0.17	0.75
Physical violence victim (last 30 days)	-0.16	0.08	-0.05	0.65
Fighting	0.10	0.01	0.21	0.62
Committing physical violence in class	0.01	-0.05	0.24	0.61
Cyberbully (last 30 days)	0.20	-0.01	-0.14	0.57

The groups of problems extracted in this empirical way were subjected to further analysis, the results of which showed significant interrelationships between them.

In Table 7, which contains a matrix of interrelationships between the four above-mentioned groups of problems experienced by boys, a strong correlation draws attention between the problem related to sexuality, alcohol and cigarettes, and the problem related to drugs and getting

drunk. This may indicate susceptibility to and/or entanglement in a dangerous subculture of risk behaviours.

Table 7 Correlation matrix between groups of problems. Analysis for boys, Malta



Components	#1	#2	#3	#4
#1 Sex/porn/alcohol/cigarettes	1.00	0.11	0.37	0.21
#2 Depression	0.11	1.00	0.05	0.19
#3 Drugs and getting drunk	0.37	0.05	1.00	0.23
#4 Violence	0.21	0.19	0.23	1.00

The data in Table 7 show that the depression problem in boys (problem 2) is weakly correlated with the other separate groups of problems (problems 1, 3, 4). This may indicate that there are other, separate determinants of problems related to poor mental health in boys.

The next Table, Table 8, presents analogous data for girls, showing a picture of the identified four main categories of problems and the risk behaviours included in them (places marked in dark pink). Although, as for boys, four main groups of experienced problems were distinguished in girls as well, both their scope and components turned out to be different.

Table 8 Risk behaviours included in four principal components. Analysis for girls, Malta

The problems included in the components	Girls	Components 1	2	3	4
Self-harm thoughts		**0.86**	0.05	0.06	-0.09
Suicidal thoughts (30 days)		**0.84**	-0.02	0.04	-0.06
Scale of depression		**0.83**	-0.02	0.01	-0.08
Cyberbullying victim (last 30 days)		**0.52**	-0.08	0.05	0.17
Physical violence victim (last 30 days)		**0.47**	0.11	-0.20	0.29
Designer drug use (last 30 days)		-0.06	**0.90**	-0.17	-0.11
Drug use (last 30 days)		0.01	**0.90**	-0.08	0.02
Cigarettes		0.06	**0.70**	-0.02	0.16
Sexual intercourse		0.04	**0.50**	**0.30**	-0.07
Scale of sexualization		-0.09	-0.24	**0.86**	0.09
Pornography (last 30 days)		0.20	-0.24	**0.67**	-0.02
Genital contact		0.09	0.11	**0.66**	-0.09
Alcohol use (30 days)		-0.03	0.23	**0.60**	0.10
Getting drunk (30 days)		-0.11	0.31	**0.57**	-0.01
Committing physical violence in class		-0.12	-0.09	0.10	**0.83**
Fighting		0.01	0.02	0.04	**0.76**
Cyberbully (last 30 days)		0.11	0.05	-0.06	**0.74**

For girls, these four groups of problems are:

1. A group of problems that includes risk behaviours related to poor mental health (depression, having thoughts of self-harm and suicidal thoughts). The determinant for this group is experiencing thoughts of self-harm.
2. A group of problems including risk behaviours related to the use of psychoactive substances (drugs, designer drugs, cigarettes) and sexual intercourse. The determinant for this group is the use of designer drugs and drugs.
3. A group of problems including risk behaviours such as intentional viewing of pornography, genital contact, drinking alcohol and getting drunk, as well as beliefs described by a high score on the sexualization scale, i.e. approval of the objectification of sex and heading for engaging in sex. The determinant for this group is the declared strongly sexualized beliefs.
4. A group of problems including aggressive behaviour, related to committing violence (participation in physical violence in class, in fights and in cyberbullying). The determinant for this group of problems is participation in physical violence in class.

The four groups of problems of girls, extracted in the same empirical way as for boys, were subjected to further analysis, the results of which showed significant interrelationships between them. This supports the thesis that in addition to the significant correlations between individual

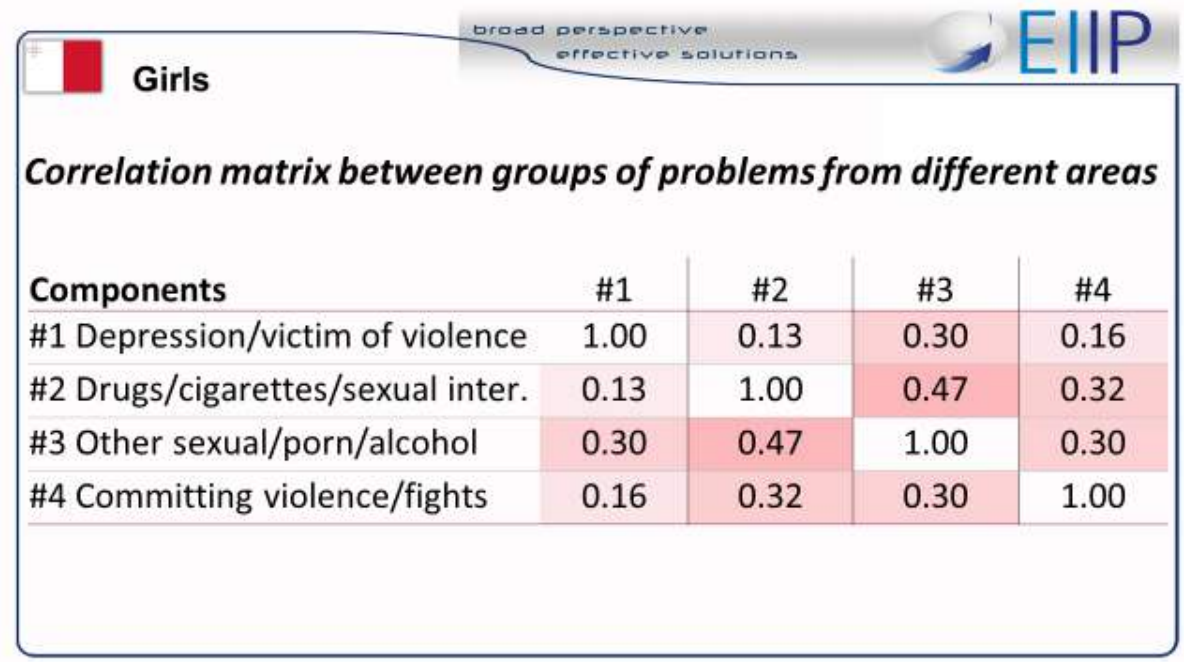
adolescent risk behaviours, there are significant interrelationships between broader categories of adolescent problems, both in girls and boys.

Compared to boys, among girls we see homogeneity in violence-related behaviours. In girls, it is only committing violence, and not being a victim at the same time. On the other hand, the problem of poor mental health in girls includes also the experience of being a victim of violence and cyberbullying.

As for the other two groups of problems (problems 2 and 3), for girls there is a slightly different configuration, as compared to boys, of risk behaviours related to sexuality, viewing pornography and using psychoactive substances.

On the other hand, the results presented in Table 9 confirm, as for boys, significant relationships between groups of problems experienced by girls.

Table 9 Correlation matrix between groups of problems. Analysis for girls, Malta



Components	#1	#2	#3	#4
#1 Depression/victim of violence	1.00	0.13	0.30	0.16
#2 Drugs/cigarettes/sexual inter.	0.13	1.00	0.47	0.32
#3 Other sexual/porn/alcohol	0.30	0.47	1.00	0.30
#4 Committing violence/fights	0.16	0.32	0.30	1.00

Unlike in boys, for girls we see the strongest relationship between the problem whose determinant is the use of designer drugs and drugs (problem 2) and the problem whose determinant is the strong sexualization of beliefs about human sexuality (problem 3). For girls, unlike boys, a relatively strong relationship also links depressions with sexualization. It is noteworthy that in girls it is problem 3, with a complex structure of components (intentional

viewing of pornography, genital contact, drinking alcohol and getting drunk, as well as approval of the objectification of sex and heading for engaging in sex) that is significantly associated with the other three groups of problems. In boys, such a full pattern of significant associations (but weaker) is observed for their group of problems related to violence.

The data showing the differentiation and components of more general patterns of risk behaviours among girls and boys are an important guideline for prevention specialists, teachers and parents in carrying out work with young people. This is because we gain awareness that in prevention work we will encounter different patterns, constellations of problems and risk behaviours among both boys and girls.

For both boys and girls, the thesis was supported that in addition to the correlations between individual adolescent risk behaviours, there are significant interrelationships between broader categories of adolescent problems. The results of the analyses presented above make a strong case for integrated prevention, oriented not to one specific problem (such as drugs), but addressing the issues of multiple adolescent risks.

d. Problems and risk behaviours vs protective factors and risk factors

The results described earlier show that many adolescent problems, as well as specific risk behaviours, are interrelated.

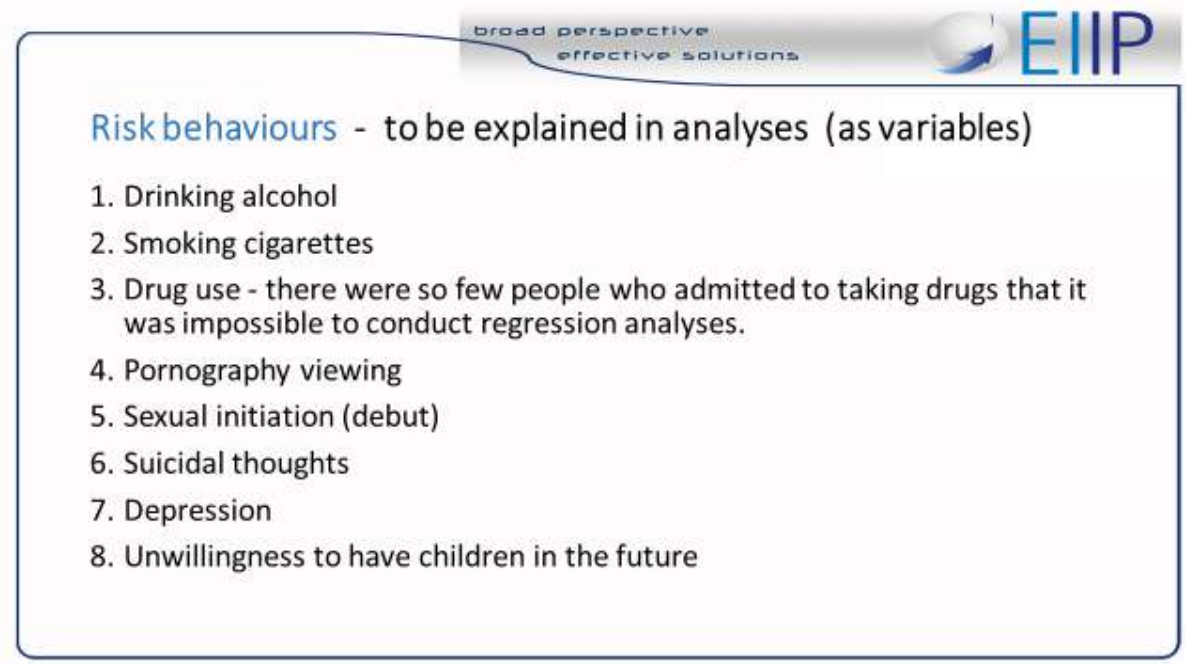
Here we will present study results that show how strongly specific risk factors and protective factors are associated with specific adolescent risk behaviours.

Risk factors are those individual characteristics and/or features of the social environment (as well as the effects of their interaction) that create and/or increase the risk of adolescent behavioural disorders (e.g. being in the company of alcohol and/or drug users is a risk factor).

Protective factors, on the other hand, are individual characteristics of a person and features of their environment that compensate for or reduce the impact of risk factors, thus helping to lower the likelihood of risk behaviours or minimize the degree of their intensity (e.g. analysis results show the protective effect of a supportive family, having a life guide, and religious practices).

The analyses presented here include correlations between the set of risk behaviours found in Table 10, and the risk and protective factors listed in Table 11.

Table 10 List of risk behaviours included in the correlation analysis



As can be seen in Table 10, the analysis included 8 important risk behaviours whose occurrence among adolescents can seriously threaten their development. These are:

1. Drinking alcohol
2. Smoking
3. Drug use – there were so few people who admitted to taking drugs that it was impossible to conduct regression analyses
4. Pornography viewing
5. Sexual initiation (debut)
6. Suicidal thoughts
7. Depression
8. Unwillingness to have children in the future

Table 11, on the other hand, shows the sets of protective factors and risk factors whose associations with risk behaviours were analysed. Among the protective factors are:

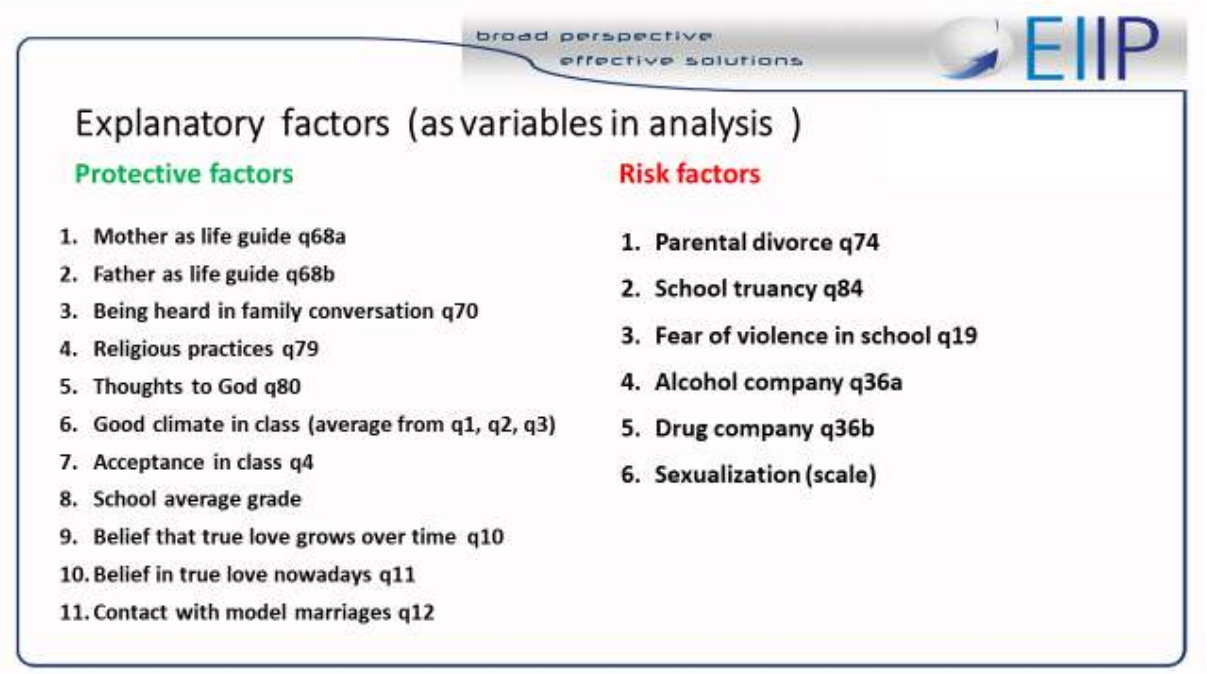
1. Mother as life guide
2. Father as life guide
3. Being heard in family conversation
4. Religious practices
5. Thoughts turned to God
6. Good climate in class

7. Acceptance in class
8. School average grade
9. Belief that true love grows over time
10. Belief in true love nowadays
11. Contact with model marriages

Among the risk factors are:

1. Parental divorce
2. School truancy
3. Fear of violence in school
4. Alcohol company (company of alcohol drinkers)
5. Drug company (company of drug users)
6. Sexualization

Table 11 List of protective factors and risk factors included in the correlation analysis



Before proceeding to the presentation of the results of correlation analyses, it is worth explaining the general principles of their interpretation. The values seen in the tables are the values of Spearman's Rho rank coefficient, that is, the coefficient that determines the strength of the relationship between two variables (e.g. drinking alcohol by a teenager and his or her staying in the company of alcohol drinkers). These values indicate the strength of the

relationship. The closer they are to '0,' the weaker the relationship. The closer they are to '1' (or '-1'), the stronger the relationship.

To interpret the result, it is also important to consider the sign next to the coefficient value, which determines the direction of the relationship and signifies how the values of one variable affect the values of the other variable.

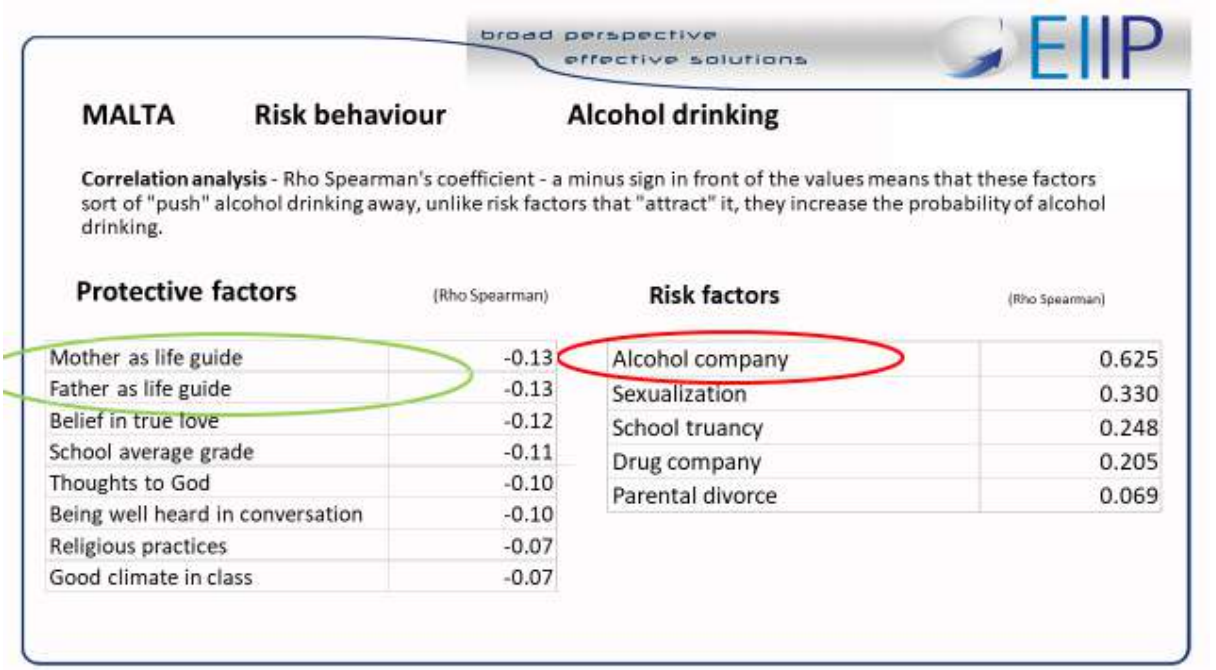
A minus sign in front of the coefficient values means that the protective factors being analysed sort of 'push away' the Maltese teenager – for example, from the temptation to drink alcohol. On the other hand, a plus sign appearing next to risk factors shows that they 'attract,' i.e. increase the likelihood – in the example given above – of a young person drinking alcohol.

- Drinking alcohol – risk factors and protective factors

For alcohol drinking by Maltese youth, parents are protective factors, if they are regarded by the young people as their life guides. On the other hand, the most significant risk factor is the company of alcohol drinkers they meet or stay with (see below, Table 12).

In Malta, as well as in the other countries in the study, i.e. Poland and Lithuania, alcohol consumption is part of their traditional cultures. It should be remembered that Europe is the region with the highest level of alcohol consumption in the world. According to 2018 data, people over the age of 15 consume 9.24 litres of pure alcohol per person. This is almost twice the world average (National Alcohol Policy, 2018). Alcohol is therefore a stimulant commonly encountered by young people in each of the three countries participating in the project. As described above, 28% of adolescents in Malta reported drinking alcohol in the 30 days before the survey.

Table 12 Alcohol drinking – risk factors and protective factor (correlation analysis)



It is worth noting that the association between being in the company of alcohol drinkers (alcohol company) and statements of drinking alcohol is very strong (0.625). As regards drinking alcohol, 4 of the 5 risk factors analysed (i.e. alcohol company, attitude towards sex, truancy and drug company) show stronger associations with drinking alcohol than all the protective factors included in the analyses in this case. On the other hand, we can see how many factors act as protective factors for teenagers against drinking alcohol. The authority of parents and their listening to the child's problems, good climate in the class, good school grades, religious faith and belief that true love exists, all act in this way. Protective factors against drinking alcohol are found in various spheres of teenagers' lives, while drinking alcohol is related to the subculture of psychoactive substances present in part of the adolescent environment. The results of the study show that persuading teenagers to abstain from alcohol is a serious and ongoing challenge for parents, teachers and prevention specialists.

- Cigarette smoking and drug use – risk factors and protective factors

Tables 13 and 14 confirm the hypothesis and show the strength of the influence of the youth subculture of psychoactive substances. The analyses showed strong associations of drug use and cigarette smoking with being in the company of alcohol and drug users.

The results of the analyses also show the multidimensionality of the subculture of psychoactive substances. Psychoactive substances co-occur in this subculture with intentional viewing of pornography, sexualization (objectification of sex) and neglecting student duties (truancy).

Table 13 Cigarette smoking – risk factors and protective factors (correlation analysis)

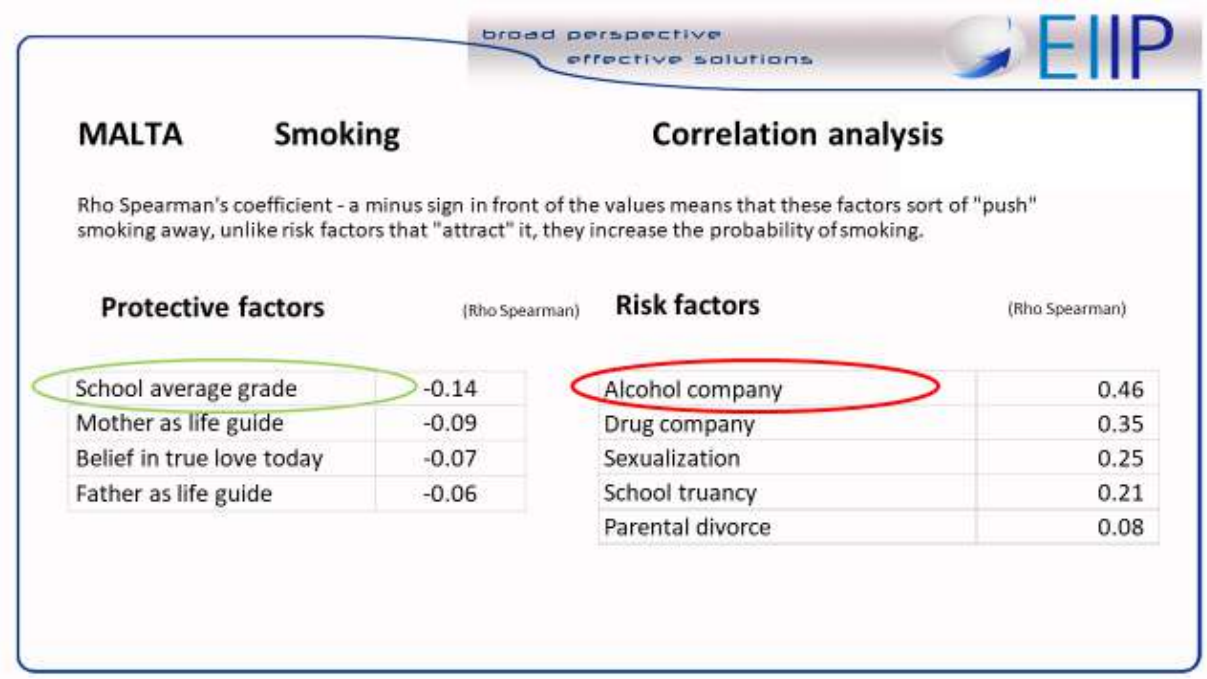
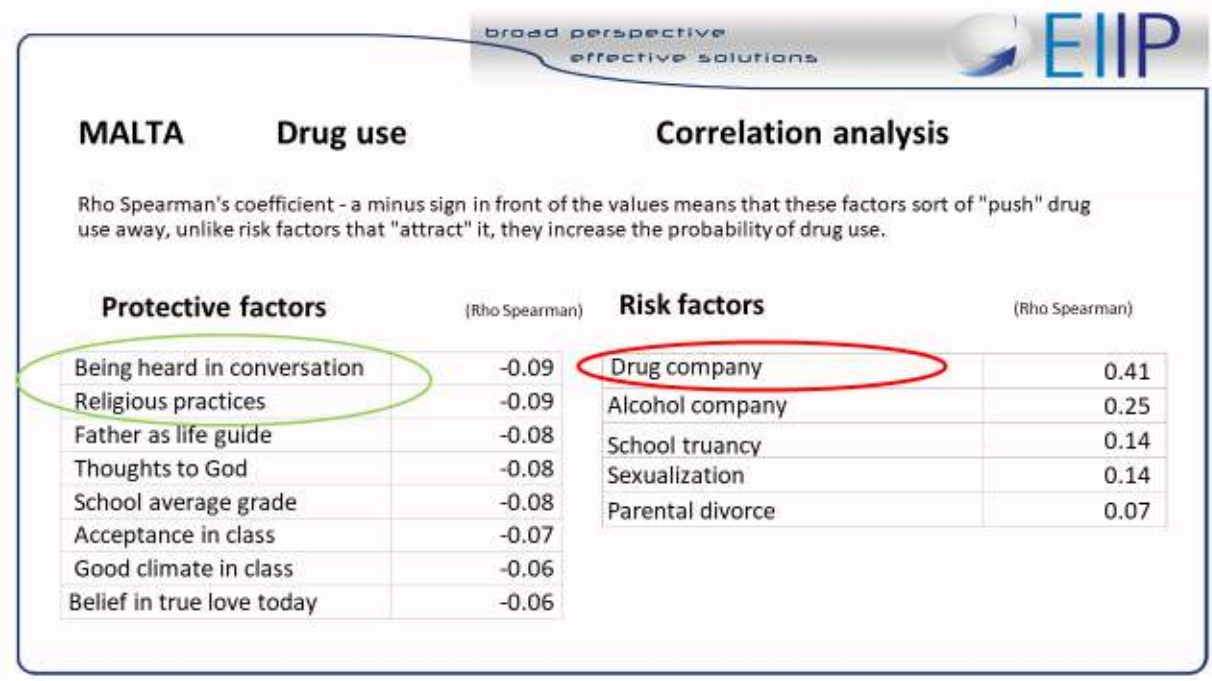


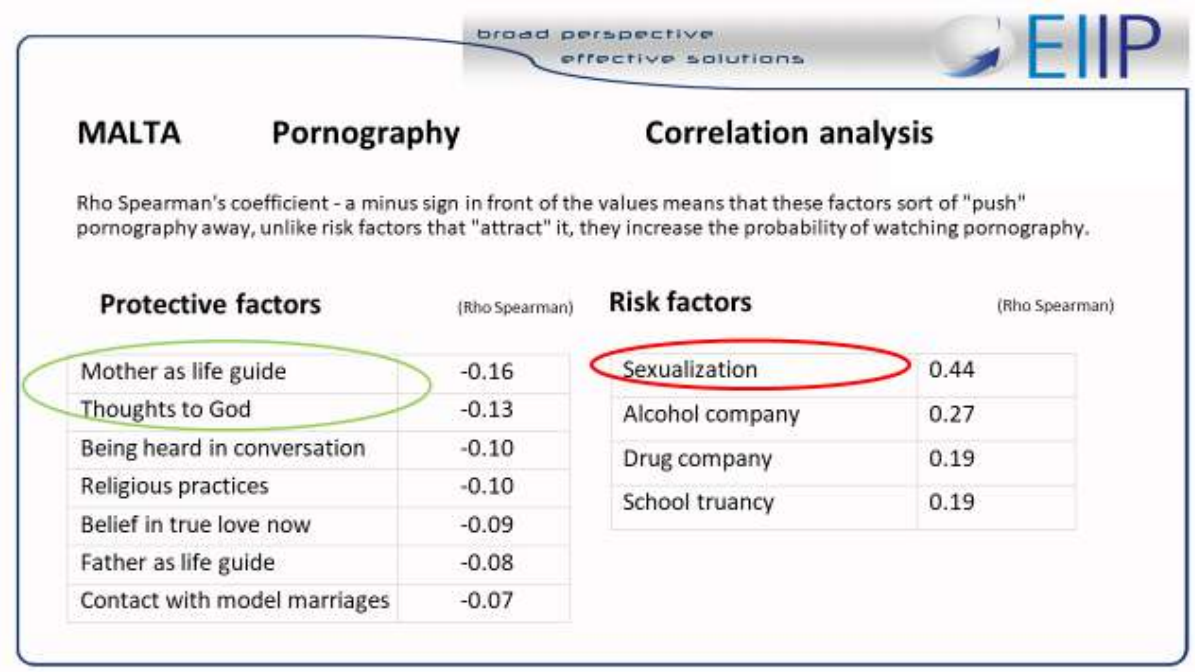
Table 14 Drug use – risk factors and protective factors (correlation analysis)



- Viewing pornography – risk factors and protective factors

As for intentional viewing of pornography by 15-year-olds, it is most strongly associated with sexualization (Table 15). Sexualization is a feature (phenomenon) of modern culture, especially mass culture, involving the objectification of human sexuality as an object of sexual use for others. This may lead to distorted attitudes towards sexuality (e.g. reducing a person's value to sexy appearance or behaviour, frequent feeling of strong sexual tension). Adolescents' declared beliefs about, among other things, being susceptible to sexual propositions, treating sex as fun and exciting, and heading for it made up the high score on the sexualization scale used in the study.

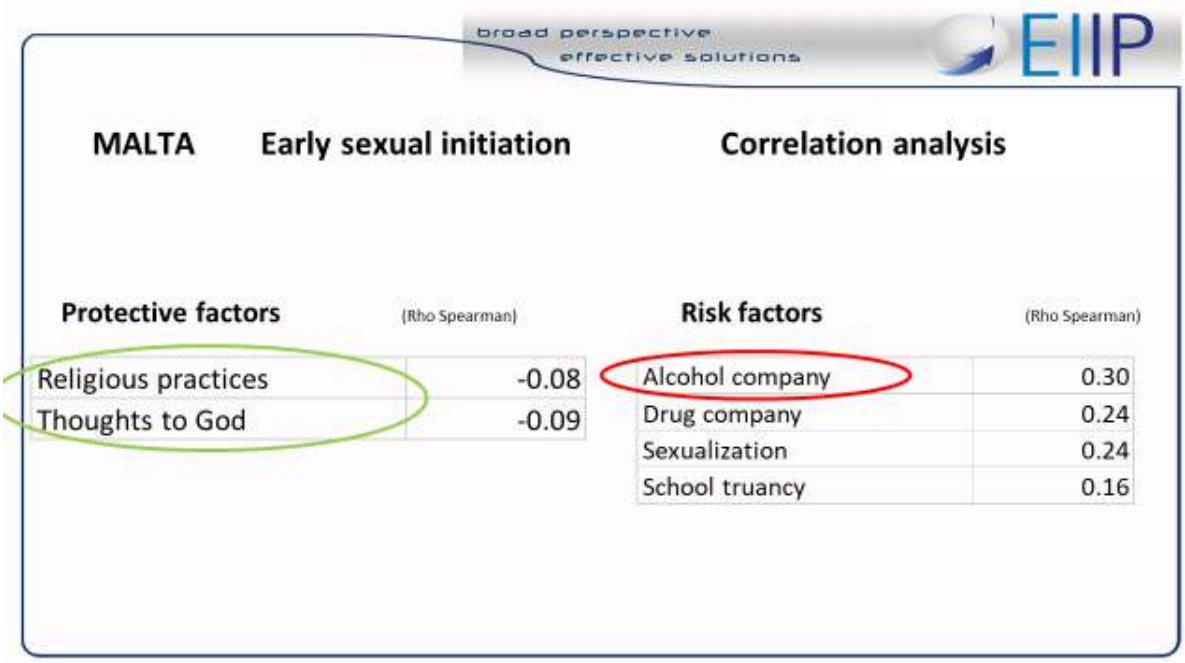
Table 15 Viewing pornography – risk factors and protective factors (correlation analysis)



- Sexual initiation – risk factors and protective factors

Table 16 presents analysis results showing clear links between early sexual initiation (debut) and being in the company of alcohol drinkers and drug users and sexualization, indicating the important role of such reference groups in the youth environment.

Table 16 Sexual initiation – risk factors and protective factors (correlation analysis)

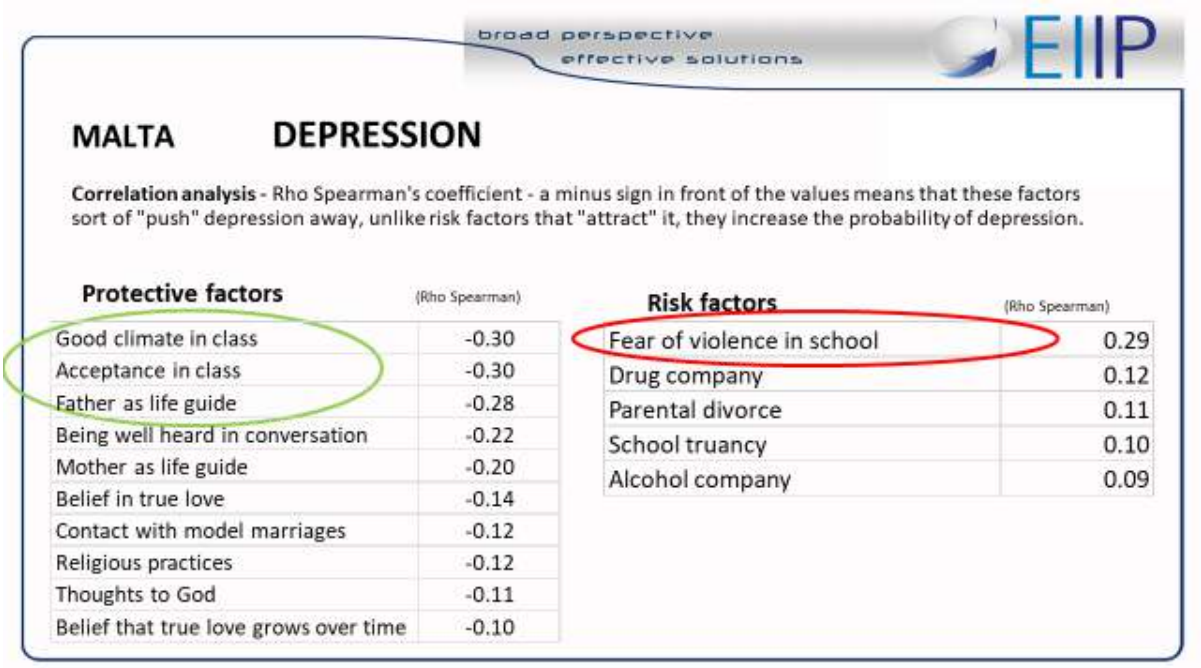


In conclusion, strengthening family, school and non-school protective factors and weakening the influence of risk peer groups remains an important challenge for integrated youth prevention concerning the problems of psychoactive substances and broadly understood sexualization.

- Mental health – risk factors and protective factors

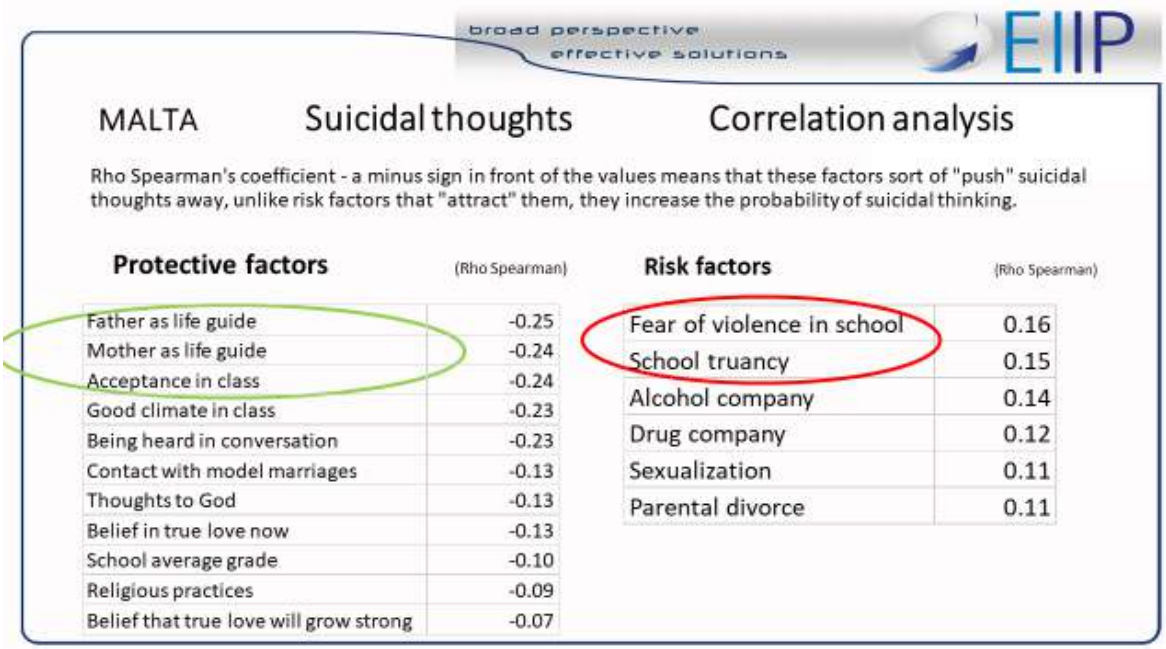
Another serious developmental risk is disorders of the mental health of youth. Maltese 15-year-olds were asked in the survey how often they feel depressed, lonely, want to cry, and have suicidal thoughts. This enabled a non-clinical measurement of young people's depressiveness. The results of correlation analyses show a clear influence of such factors protecting teenagers against being depressive as: good climate in class, being accepted in class, parents as life guides, and being heard in conversation by parents. As regards depressiveness, there are several strong protective factors, while among the risk factors that threaten the well-being of 15-year-olds only one factor stands out – fear of violence in school.

Table 17 Depression – risk factors and protective factors (correlation analysis)



The results of correlational analyses between suicidal thoughts in adolescents show similar protective factors and risk factors as for depression. Also similar is the greater strength of associations with major protective factors, as compared to the strength of associations with risk factors.

Table 18 Suicidal thoughts – risk factors and protective factors (correlation analysis)



The significant role of parents, good communication of the adolescent with them, and a good climate and acceptance in class most strongly reduce the likelihood of suicidal thoughts in young people. This is shown by the data in Table 18.

- Unwillingness to have children in the future – risk factors and protective factors

It is worth showing one more result of the analyses in the perspective of protective factors and risk factors. It concerns teenagers' attitudes towards having children in the future. The strongest protective factor, i.e. one blocking the unwillingness to have children in the future, turned out to be personal contact with a married couple whom teenagers consider a successful and model marriage. Next in terms of the strength of the relationship were: the belief that love grows with time, and religious practices and turning thoughts to God. We can see that among the risk factors, i.e. those reinforcing unwillingness to have children in the future, the most significant, although weak in terms of relationship value, is parental divorce.

Table 19 Unwillingness to have children in the future – risk factors and protective factors (correlation analysis)

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MALTA Unwillingness to have children in the future Correlation analysis

Rho Spearman's coefficient - a minus sign in front of the values means that these factors sort of "push" this unwillingness away, unlike risk factors that "attract" it, they increase its probability.

Protective factors	(Rho Spearman)
Contact with model marriages	-0.24
Belief that true love grows over time	-0.20
Thoughts to God	-0.20
Religious practices	-0.19
Being heard in family coversation	-0.18
Belief in true love nowadays	-0.16
Father as life guide	-0.13
Mother as life guide	-0.12
Good climate in class	-0.12
Acceptance in class	-0.10

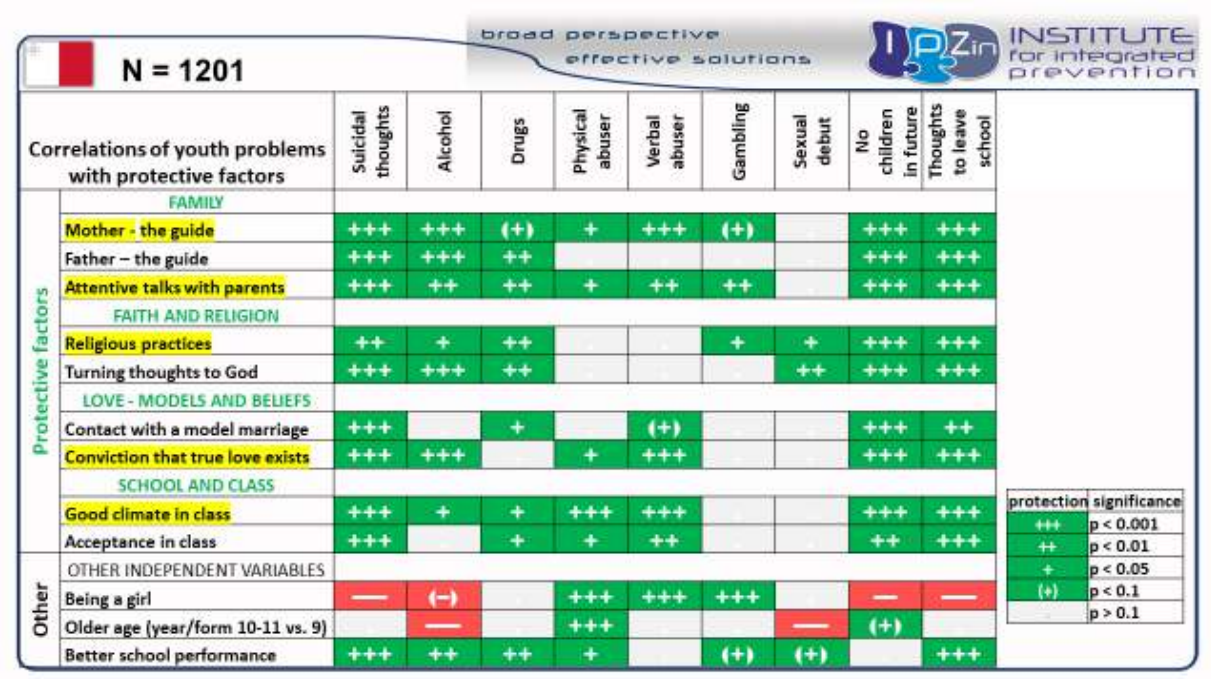
Risk factors	(Rho Spearman)
Parental divorce	0.11
Fear of violence in school	0.10
Drug company	0.06

Obviously, teenagers' procreation attitudes may change, as they refer to a relatively distant future, but it is nevertheless good to be aware of what experiences of young people shape these attitudes during their adolescence.

- The picture of relationships between youth risk behaviours and categories of protective factors and risk factors

Table 20 presents the results showing a complex picture of the interrelationships between adolescents' risk behaviours and the categories of protective factors against them by their level of significance of the observed relationships. Thus, we have such categories of protective factors as family, religion, school and love models. Green is the colour of protective factors, and the more pluses, the more statistically significant the relationship is. Red is the colour of risk factors, and the longer the minus, the more statistically significant the relationship. In addition, at the bottom of the table are the results of the significance analysis for the relationship between risk behaviours and such characteristics of the surveyed adolescents as being a girl, being a 10th or 11th year (form) student, and having good school grades.

Table 20 Matrix of statistically significant correlations between protective factors and youth risk behaviours



	Correlations of youth problems with protective factors	Suicidal thoughts	Alcohol	Drugs	Physical abuser	Verbal abuser	Gambling	Sexual debut	No children in future	Thoughts to leave school
Protective factors	FAMILY									
	Mother - the guide	+++	+++	(+)	+	+++	(+)		+++	+++
	Father – the guide	+++	+++	++					+++	+++
	Attentive talks with parents	+++	++	++	+	++	++		+++	+++
	FAITH AND RELIGION									
	Religious practices	++	+	++			+	+	+++	+++
	Turning thoughts to God	+++	+++	++				++	+++	+++
	LOVE - MODELS AND BELIEFS									
	Contact with a model marriage	+++		+		(+)			+++	++
	Conviction that true love exists	+++	+++		+	+++			+++	+++
	SCHOOL AND CLASS									
	Good climate in class	+++	+	+	+++	+++			+++	+++
	Acceptance in class	+++		+	+	++			++	+++
Other	OTHER INDEPENDENT VARIABLES									
	Being a girl	—	(–)		+++	+++	+++		—	—
	Older age (year/form 10-11 vs. 9)		—		+++			—	(+)	
	Better school performance	+++	++	++	+		(+)	(+)		+++

protection	significance
+++	p < 0.001
++	p < 0.01
+	p < 0.05
(+)	p < 0.1
	p > 0.1

The green boxes confirm the previously presented correlational relationships (this time confirmed in terms of their statistical significance) between risk behaviours and protective factors.

What is important is the results that draw attention to the special mental situation of girls. Being a girl turns out to be a significant predictor, that is, it raises the likelihood of suicidal thoughts and thoughts of dropping out of school, as well as unwillingness to have children. For older of

the teenagers surveyed, as compared to those a year younger (year/form 10 and 11 vs 9), differences in drinking alcohol and sexual initiation become significant. Being a year older is conducive to engaging in these risk behaviours, and significantly increases their occurrence.

In conclusion, the results presented in this section of the report confirm the adequacy of the integrated prevention model for strategies used to prevent youth problems.

Not only were many correlations between specific risk behaviours confirmed, but also the fact that these behaviours have many risk factors in common. The analyses also showed a number of protective factors, with the dominant role of the family and the school (class) environment. At the same time, the results of the Malta study showed a surprisingly large scale of positive behaviours and attitudes of the majority of adolescents aged 14 to 15.

This picture of the situation of the young generation leads to the question: how to use the existing protective factors to secure the positive potential of young people for the future, and to effectively support youth in the difficult period of growing up and preparing for adulthood. How can protective factors be strengthened and risk factors weakened?

The results of the analysis make it easier to answer the question: should we respond to so many coexisting youth problems with many selective types of prevention, or should we develop integrated prevention?

Szymon Grzelak, the author of the Polish Archipelago of Treasures prevention programme, is of the opinion that integrated prevention is the right approach, as it protects and effectively strengthens the positive developmental potential of the majority of young people, and is able to encourage youth with risk behaviours to a healthy lifestyle. Such effects were shown by experimental evaluation studies of the effects of the Archipelago of Treasures programme, conducted in Poland in 2019/20.

A strong argument in favour of an integrated approach in youth prevention is the fact, shown in the data, that many risk behaviours are correlated. As the results of the analyses have shown, by strengthening the protective factors and weakening the risk factors, we have a chance to increase preventive effectiveness not only against one problem, but many others as well.

A holistic and integrated approach can save money and significantly increase the efficiency of public spending on prevention. Including in a local or national strategy such activities that strengthen the protective factors and weaken the risk factors associated not with one, but with many risks, causes the resources spent on an activity to bring a multiplied effect.

3. Family and school as natural resources for integrated prevention

Lever 3: Rely on resources of local communities (by respecting them you gain powerful allies)

Relying on existing resources in the local community is the most rational and effective approach in integrated prevention. Good relationships with parents, the religious faith of young people and a good school and class climate are proven protective factors that prevent many risks and risk behaviours at the same time. Family groups, religious institutions and schools are important resources for any local community. An approach based on respect for these natural social resources fosters the development of social capital, prevents conflict and builds a broad positive front around preventive and youth development support activity. It can also become the basis for the formation of local teams working together for youth development support.

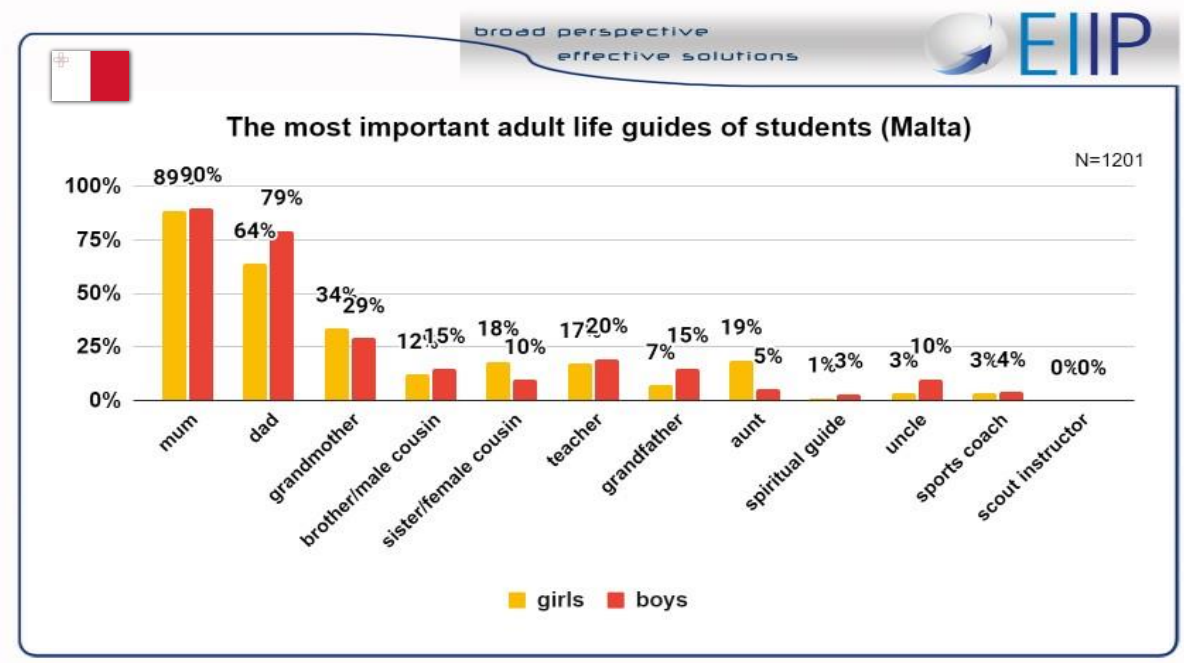
The following will present results showing the positive potential of local resources that can be used in joint activities and programmes to support youth in their development and problems.

a. Authority figures and trust in adults among adolescents

The questionnaire included a question about who the young respondent considers to be a life guide. The question read: 'Some adults are an example of a good way of life, conduct, character, knowledge and skills. Who of the adults around you are presently the most important guides in your life?' Respondents could choose no more than three people from the fourteen listed.

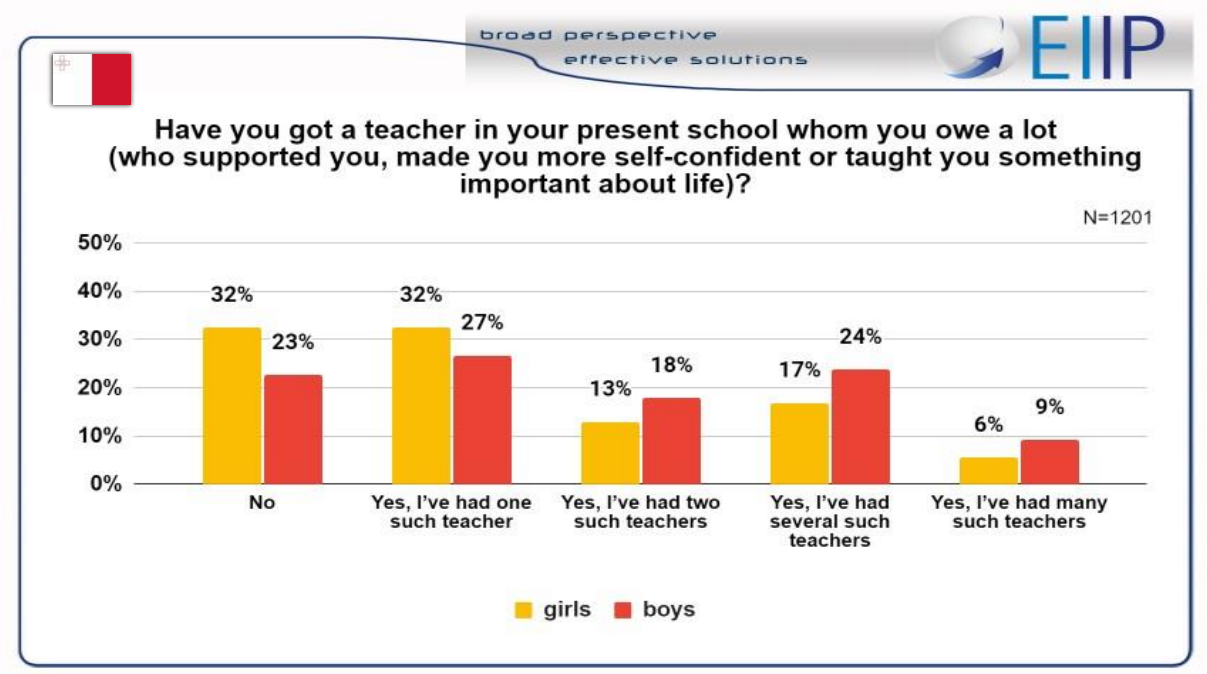
Figure 11 shows the full distribution of Maltese teenagers' responses. In terms of frequency of indications, parents, close relatives and teachers stand out. Almost all adolescents point to their mother as their life guide (girls 89%, boys 90%). For the vast majority of teenagers, the life guide is the father, significantly more often for boys (79%) than for girls (64%). Every third 15-year-old mentions his or her grandmother as a life guide. She is the third person, and the first after the parents, most often indicated by adolescents. The results of correlational analyses indicate the 'Granny effect' – the grandmother is an equally protective factor against many risk behaviours, especially when the teenager does not name either parent as a life guide.

Figure 11 The most important life guides as declared by youth, by sex (%)



Nearly one in five young people indicates their teacher as one of the three most important life guides. This is not insignificant, if we consider the data presented in Figure 12. The majority of teenagers have met a teacher/ teachers in their lives who have been helpful to them and/or taught them something important about life.

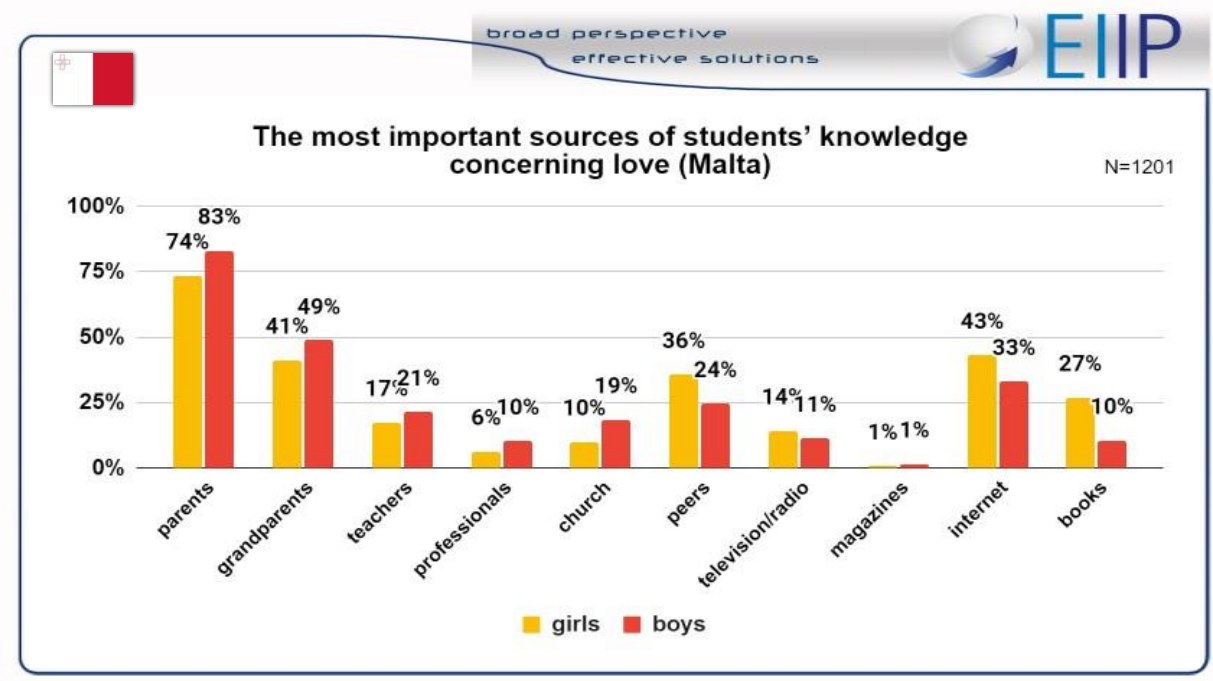
Figure 12 Students who have been helped and/or taught something important in life by a teacher, by sex (%)



The survey results presented above show that two environments, family and teachers, have the greatest potential for authority among adolescents. Thus, it is family members and teachers who represent important preventive capital to be used in joint activities for adolescents.

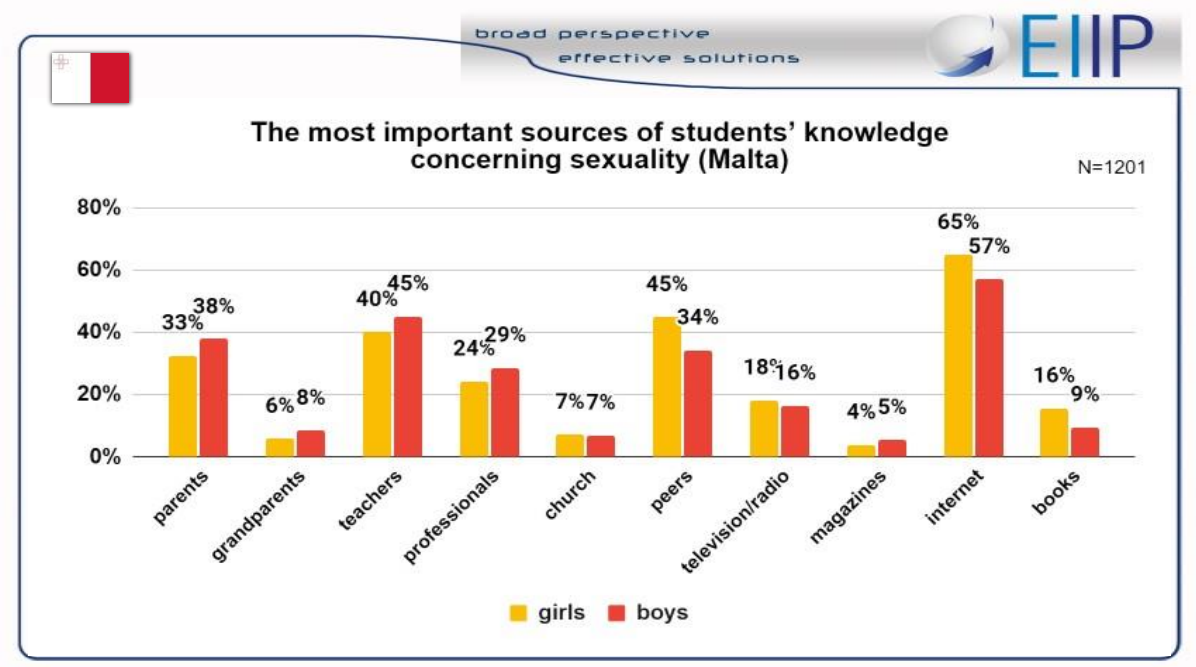
Responses of similar significance were given by teenagers to questions about sources of their knowledge concerning topics as personal as love and sexuality, which are sometimes related to youth risk behaviours. In this case, the results show a significant role of both parents and teachers (Figures 13 and 14). The data in Figure 13 show that regarding love, the message of parents and grandparents 'wins' even against Internet content and peers' opinions. This confirms the position and role of immediate family members as life guides.

Figure 13 Sources of youth's knowledge concerning love, by sex (%)



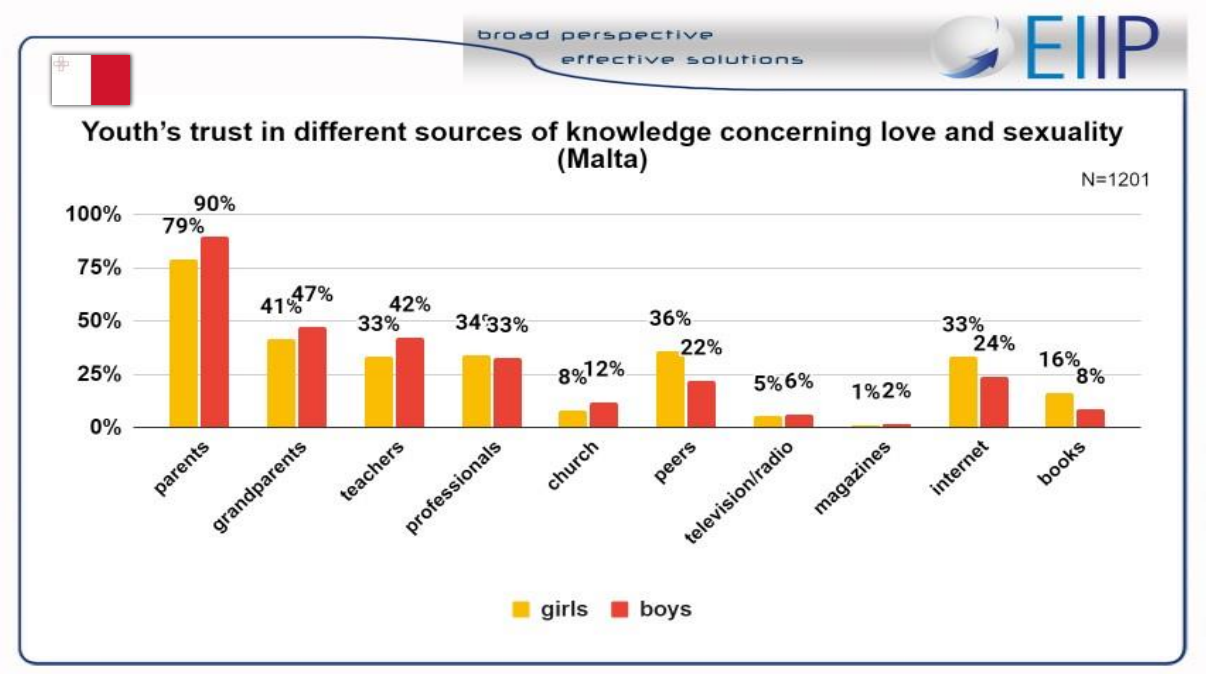
The situation is different for sources of knowledge about sexuality indicated by young people (Figure 14). In this case, among the majority of respondents (65% of girls, 57% of boys) the message from the Internet dominates. However, it is worth noting that for a large group, teachers are the source of such knowledge (40% of girls, 45% of boys). Thus, a large group of adolescents benefit from professional messages about sexuality. The relatively low percentage of indications of specialists in this field (24% of girls, 29% of boys) may indicate a deficit of this kind of educational offer for schools. It may also indicate the difficulty for extracurricular, external specialists offering sex education programmes to enter schools.

Figure 14 Sources of youth's knowledge concerning sexuality, by sex (%)



Searching for and using various sources of knowledge about love and sexuality does not automatically mean that teenagers consider these sources trustworthy. In another question, students indicated the sources they trust from a list of different sources. The distribution of responses on this topic is shown in Figure 15.

Figure 15 Trust in sources of knowledge concerning love and sexuality, by sex (%)

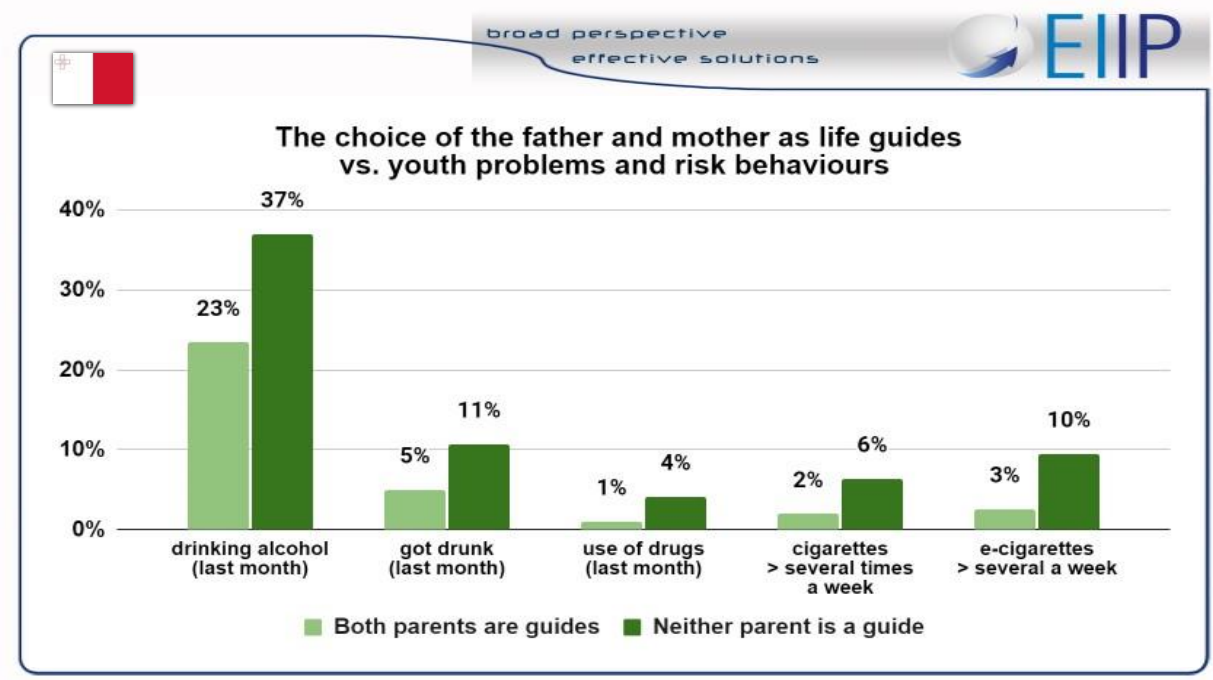


The data show that parents, grandparents, teachers and professionals remain students' most trusted sources of knowledge concerning love and sexuality. Both peers and the Internet 'lose' to them. This would indicate that direct and professional education in this area would be effective, as it would be credible. The results presented also indicate the need for close cooperation between parents, teachers and specialists.

b. Parents and their importance in protecting and developing the positive potential of adolescents

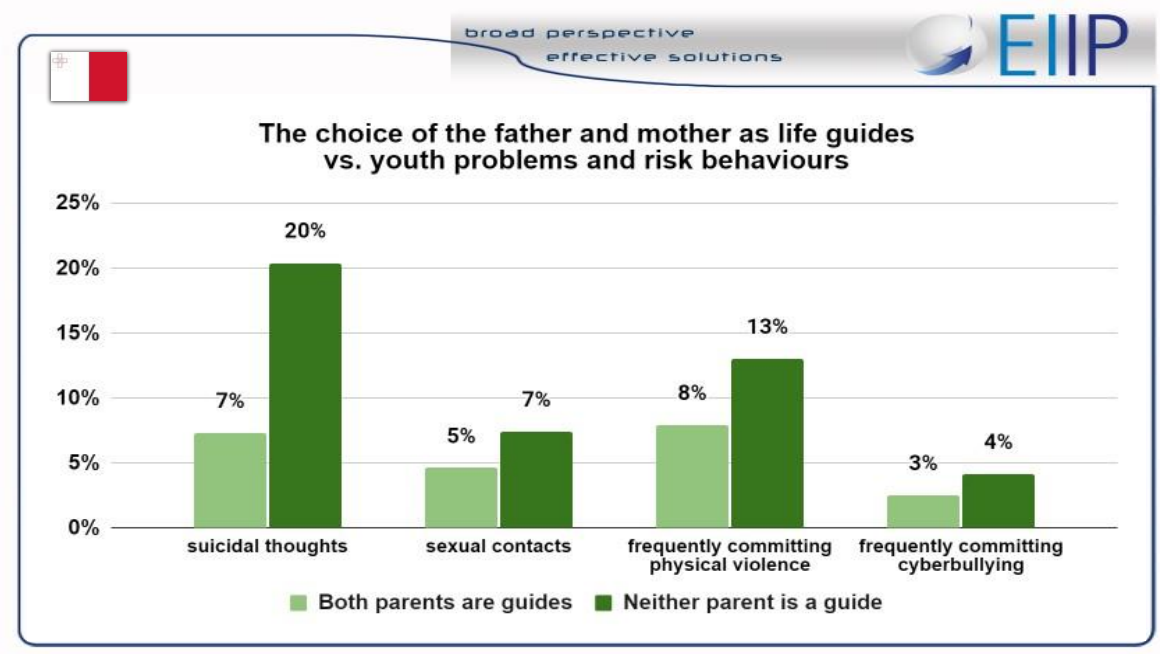
The results of the survey clearly show the protective influence of parents as life guides for young people in reducing a number of risk behaviours. Those students who identified both parents as life guides were significantly more likely not to use such psychoactive substances as alcohol, drugs, cigarettes and e-cigarettes than students who did not identify either parent as a life guide. Students with both parental life guides were less likely to get drunk. Data on this subject are presented in Figure 16.

Figure 16 Parents as life guides vs psychoactive substance use (%)



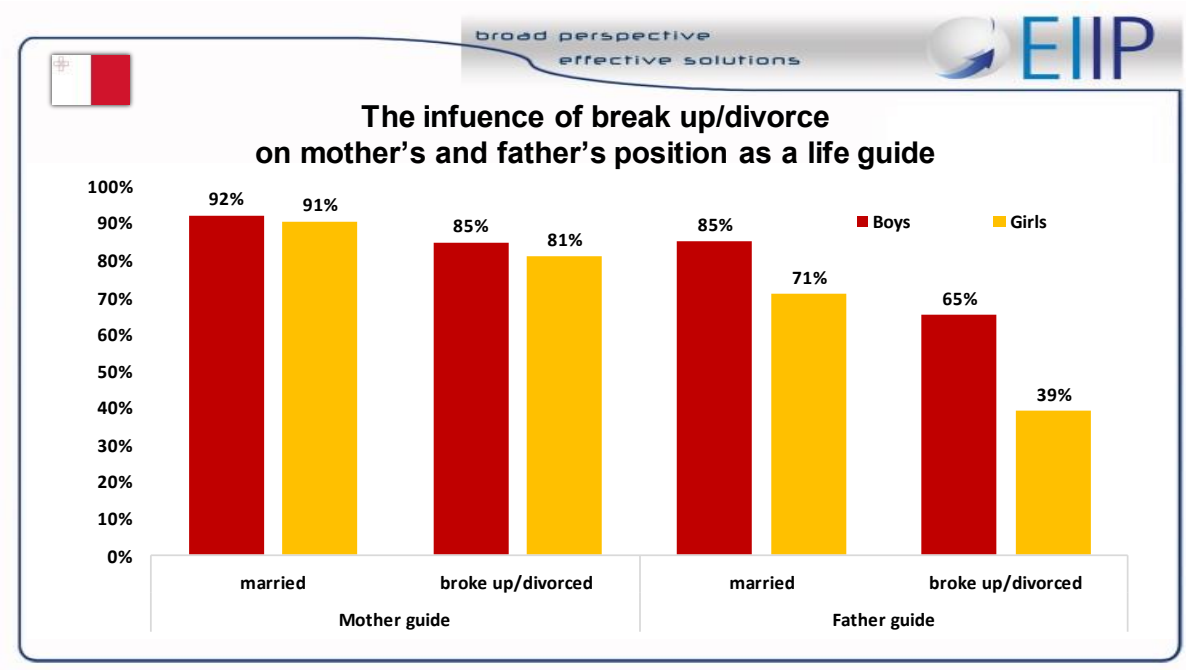
In Figure 17, we can see a similar relationship also with regard to such behaviours as involvement in physical violence and cyberbullying, and sexual contact. It also relates to the occurrence of suicidal thoughts.

Figure 17 Parents as life guides vs selected risk behaviours (%)



It is worth knowing that parents' divorce has a significant negative impact on their position in the eyes of the child as life guides. This is shown by the data in Figure 18.

Figure 18 Parents' divorce vs their position as life guides, by sex (%)



Parental divorce especially threatens the father's position as a life guide in both girls and boys. The lowest percentage of indicating fathers as life guides is observed in girls with divorced

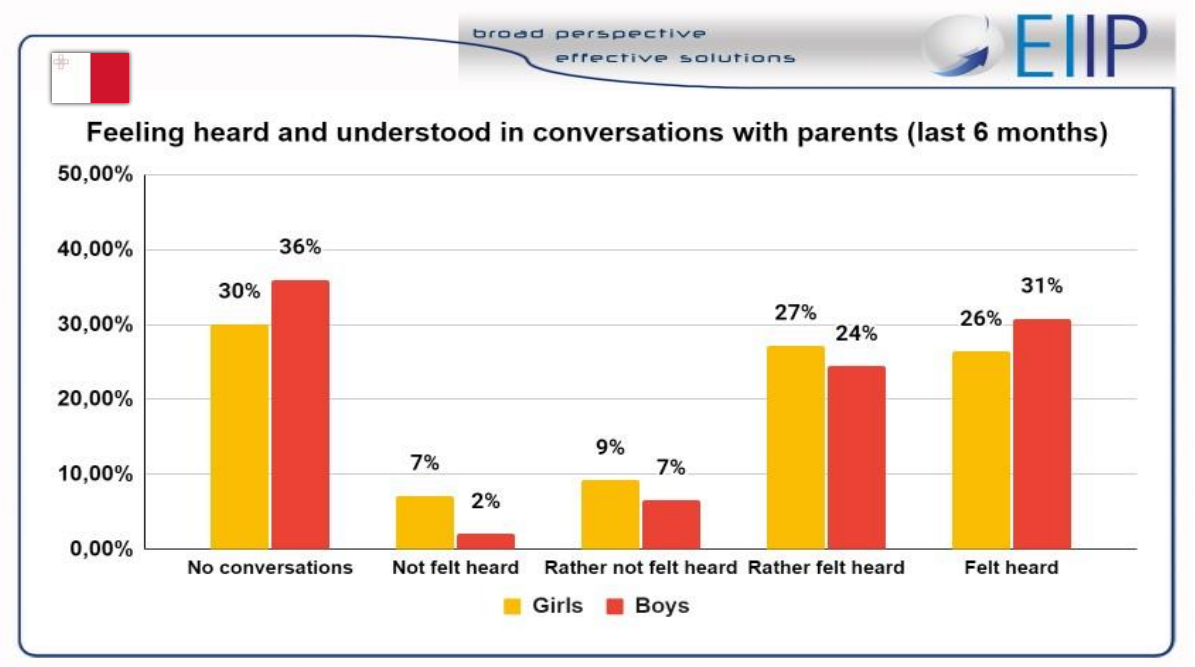
parents. We see that in complete families, 71% of girls indicated their father as a life guide, while after the divorce of their parents such indications among girls are 39%.

For those teenagers who point to neither parent as their life guide but they point to grandmother, we observe fewer of the following problems: taking drugs, getting drunk, suicidal thoughts, violence, and sexual contacts. The 'Granny effect' is very clear and by far stronger than the impact of other guides (grandfather, aunt, uncle, teacher, sports trainer, clergyman).

Undoubtedly, the family conditions of teenagers after the divorce of their parents become more difficult and relationships more complicated.

The data collected show that most teenagers talk to their parents about their problems, and of those who do, most feel heard and understood by their parents. Data on this subject are presented in Figure 19.

Figure 19 Youth's declared feeling of being heard by their parents (conversations in the last 6 months before the survey), by sex (%)



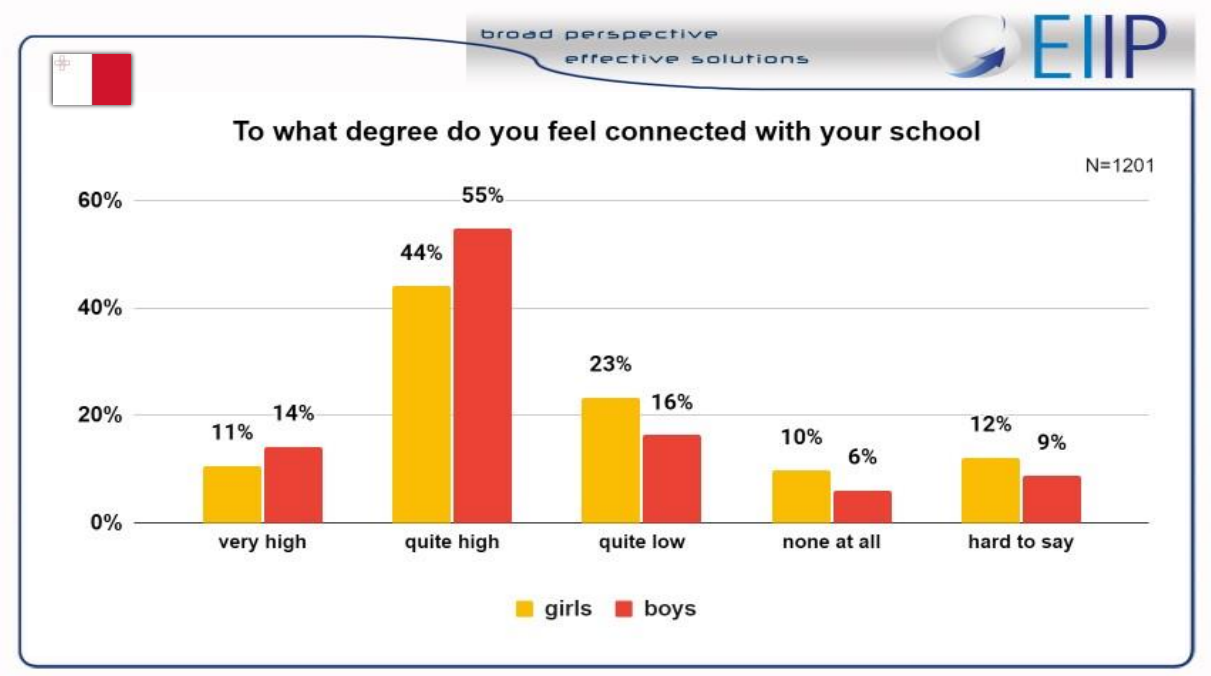
Being heard and understood by parents is confirmed by the majority of both girls (53%) and boys (55%).

c. School as an environment supporting youth development

The positive potential of teachers for supporting youth development has already been shown; they were indicated by the majority of students as those who had helped them and/or taught them something important in life. However, a school is more than teachers, it is an institution that organizes the activities of the entire school community. Within its walls, a complex process takes place, aimed at both education and youth development support. The way this process goes builds students' connection with their school.

Figure 20 shows adolescents' declarations about their connection with school.

Figure 20 Sense of connection with school, by sex (%)

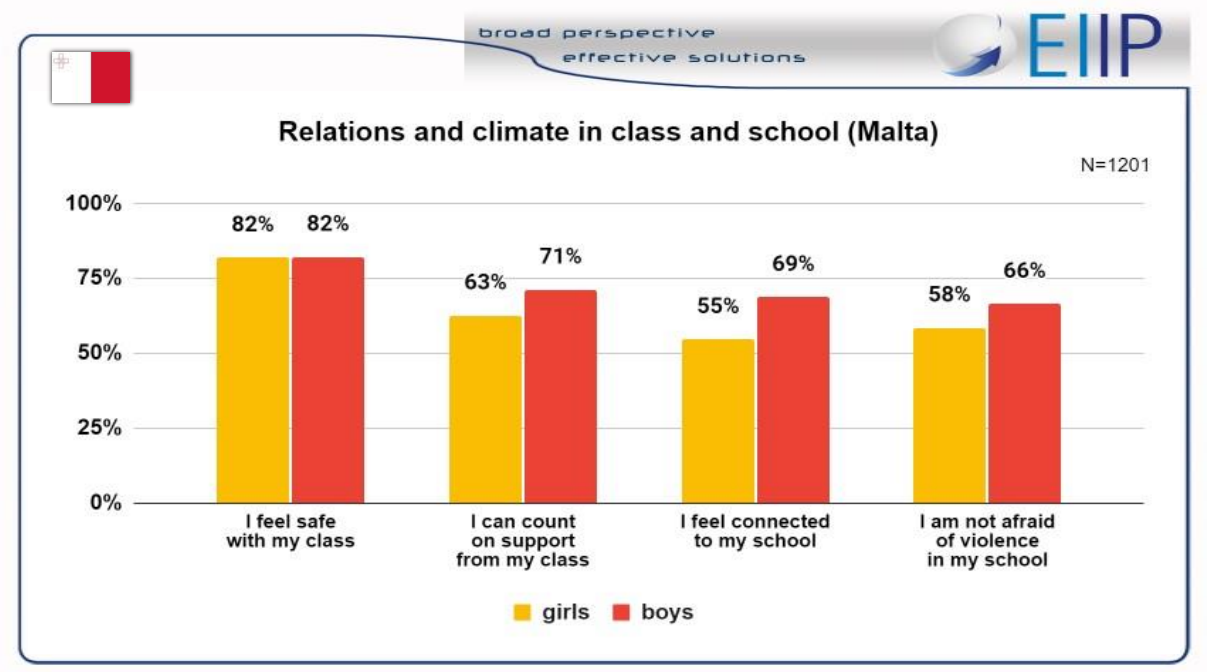


If we add up the percentages of those declaring a very strong and quite strong connection with their school, we see that they make up the majority of students, both among girls (55%) and boys (69%). A strong connection with school as an institution grows out of certain experiences of teenagers – positive experiences. Data on such experiences are shown in Figure 21, with the majority of those asked responding:

- I can count on support from my class (girls 63%, boys 71%)
- I feel safe with my class (girls 82%, boys 82%)

We also know that 67% of girls and 62% of boys think that there is a climate of kindness in their classes.

Figure 21 Relations and climate in class and school, by sex (%)



The data show that fewer girls than boys can count on support from their class. Fewer girls than boys feel a strong connection with their school. Boys are more likely than girls not to be afraid of violence at school.

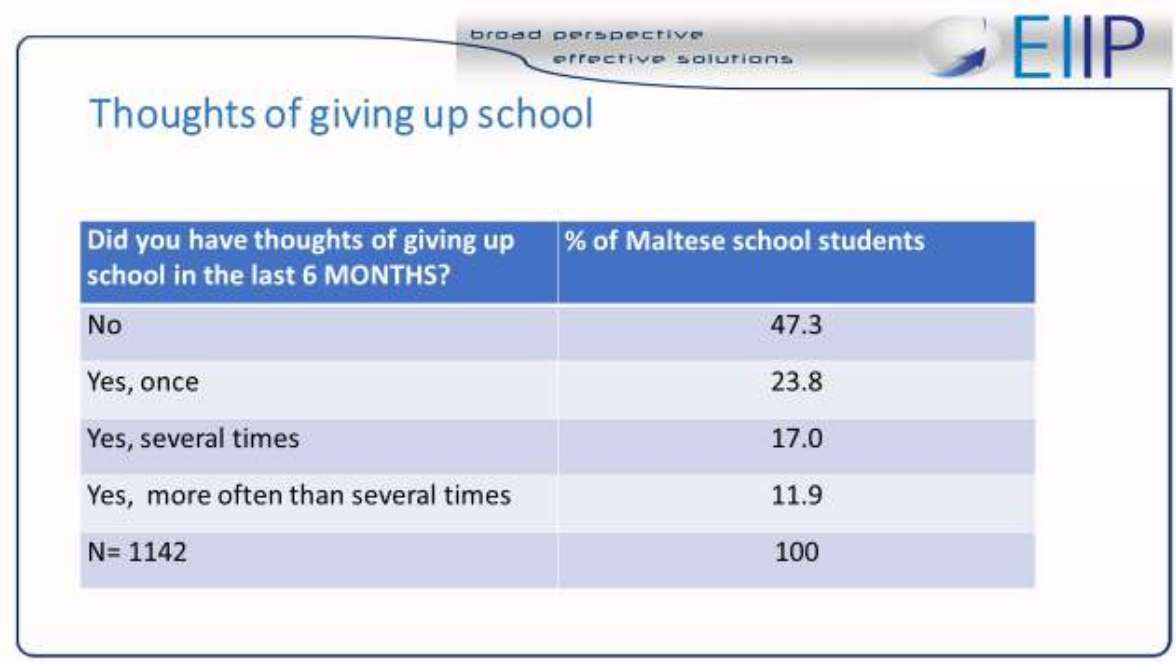
The problem of safety at school is a more complex problem. A very high percentage of students feel safe in their class environment, while a significantly lower percentage feel safe in the environment of the whole school (this especially concerns girls). This indicates the importance of, and need for, developing broader positive student relationships between classes, throughout the school community.

There remains another problem of institutional schooling, namely dropping out of school before the end of compulsory education and not continuing later. In European Union countries, this problem is taken seriously, and reducing the dropout rate has become a goal of educational policies.

The European Commission has created the concept of Early School Leaving (ESL). Early school leaving refers to people aged 18 to 24 who leave education and training without attaining upper secondary qualifications or their equivalent. In spite of this 'official' definition, Early School Leaving is an ambiguous concept, depending on the educational realities in different countries.

The survey presented here wanted to know the percentage of students who think of dropping out of school before the end of compulsory education, i.e. before the age of 16. Table 21 presents data on this subject.

Table 21 Thoughts of giving up school (%)



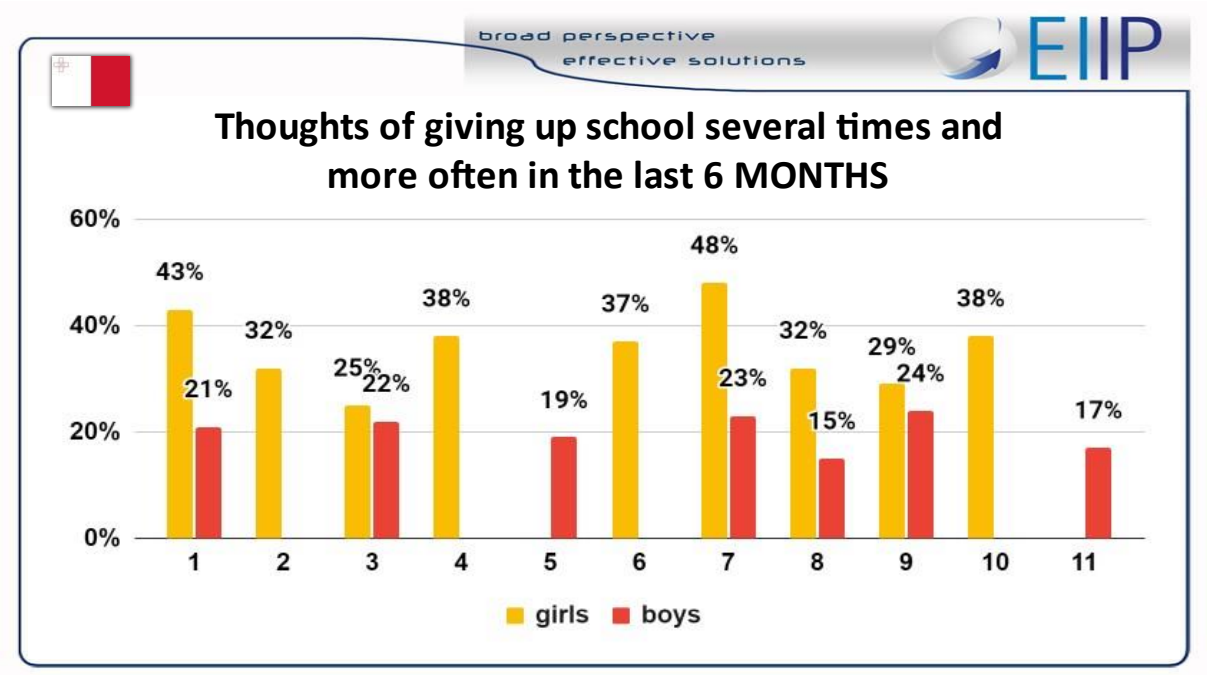
Did you have thoughts of giving up school in the last 6 MONTHS?	% of Maltese school students
No	47.3
Yes, once	23.8
Yes, several times	17.0
Yes, more often than several times	11.9
N= 1142	100

The data show that more than half (52.7%) of the students have thoughts of giving up school, with varying frequency. The results of the analyses further showed that such thoughts are more frequent in:

- girls than boys
- students declaring a weaker connection to their school, place of residence and the country of Malta
- students with lower grades, and more prone to truancy
- students in a worse financial situation

One should also be aware of the existing inter-school variation in this problem, and the fact that significantly more girls than boys think of dropping out of school. Data on this subject are presented in Figure 23.

Figure 22 Inter-school variation with respect to students' thoughts of dropping out of school, by sex (%)



As for girls, there are schools where the percentage of those wanting to drop out of school reaches nearly half (schools 1 and 7). The lowest recorded percentage of girls with such thoughts is 25% (school 3). In both cases, the highest and the lowest percentages, the girls attend coeducational schools. In single-sex schools, such percentages are also relatively high and significantly higher than for boys, regardless of the type of school the boys attend.

4. Values, dreams and life plans of adolescents

Lever 4: Build on youth's dreams and values (then young people will accept a healthy lifestyle as a means to achieving their own goals)

Knowing the goals and dreams of young people is very important in supporting their development and in prevention work, because they signal the directions in which young people want to develop. Knowing these directions makes it easier to motivate young people to make the efforts necessary to achieve them. General knowledge of the dreams and life goals of young people can also contribute to the setting of goals by adults responsible not only for themselves, but also for the future of their children and next generations.

Referring in school practice and elsewhere to the life goals, values and dreams declared by young people is conducive to promoting healthy lifestyles as a means of achieving goals that are important to them. Lack of support from the environment or bitter experiences of

disappointments in life can cover these dreams with a layer of fears and anxieties. Numerous studies show that young people's aspirations are most often directed towards important matters and goals – those that are related to deep interpersonal bonds such as love, for example, and at the same time involve matters that are meant to give adult life purpose and meaning, such as family and professional work.

Supporting the realization of young people's dreams of creating a happy family in the future, as well as the development of youth's passions and interests that will prepare them for professional life, is an important level of prevention activities that can be used to unite the efforts of both school and family to support youth development. Prevention programmes that refer to such motivations are well received by their addressees, and this is true even when the messages of these programmes pose very difficult challenges to young people concerning healthy lifestyles.

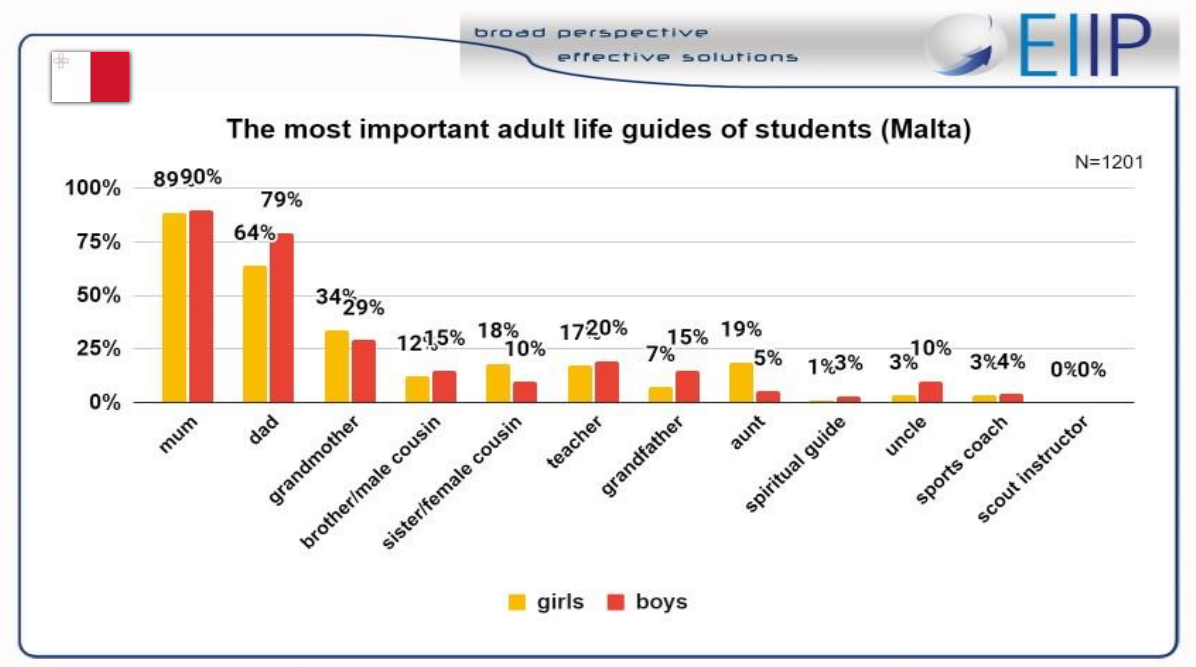
a. Aspirations and dreams and life plans of youth

Understanding the importance of adolescents' life aspirations, values and related attitudes makes it possible to use their very strong and deep motivations in prevention. Supporting the realization of adolescents' dreams regarding, in particular, the creation of a happy family in the future and the development of passions and interests that will prepare young people for professional life is an important goal that should be used to unite the efforts of different entities in the local community.

One of the questions asked in the youth survey was: People have different dreams and goals in life. Which of the following are most important to you? The selection from an extensive list was limited to indicating the three most important dreams and life plans for a teenager.

Table 22 presents the distributions of responses to this question, not only of Maltese teenagers, but also of their Lithuanian and Polish peers.

Table 22 Youth aspirations, dreams and life plans in Malta (by sex), Poland and Lithuania (total) (%)



We see that in Malta, the most popular life goal and plan, for both girls and boys, is a successful career (64% of indications). The next two most frequently indicated life goals are a happy family life (girls 53% and boys 60%) and lasting love and friendship (girls 57% and boys 39%). The least frequently indicated life goals for both girls and boys turned out to be helping others (9%) and gaining power (3%).

Maltese girls who dream of a happy family life and children are less likely than those who do not indicate such a life goal to:

- have suicidal thoughts,
- commit verbal abuse towards other people
- think of leaving school.

Boys who choose a happy family life and children among their life goals, less often than those who do not indicate such a life goal:

- use drugs
- engage in gambling.

The results of correlation analyses show that the small group of adolescents (9%) who dream of helping others, less often than those who do not choose this life goal:

- have suicidal thoughts,

- drink alcohol,
- want to drop out of school.

In contrast, Maltese teenagers who dream of a life full of entertainment are more likely than those who do not indicate such a life goal to:

- drink alcohol, think of dropping out of school
- use drugs
- engage in gambling.

Maltese girls who dream of acquiring a large fortune are more likely than those who do not choose such a life goal to:

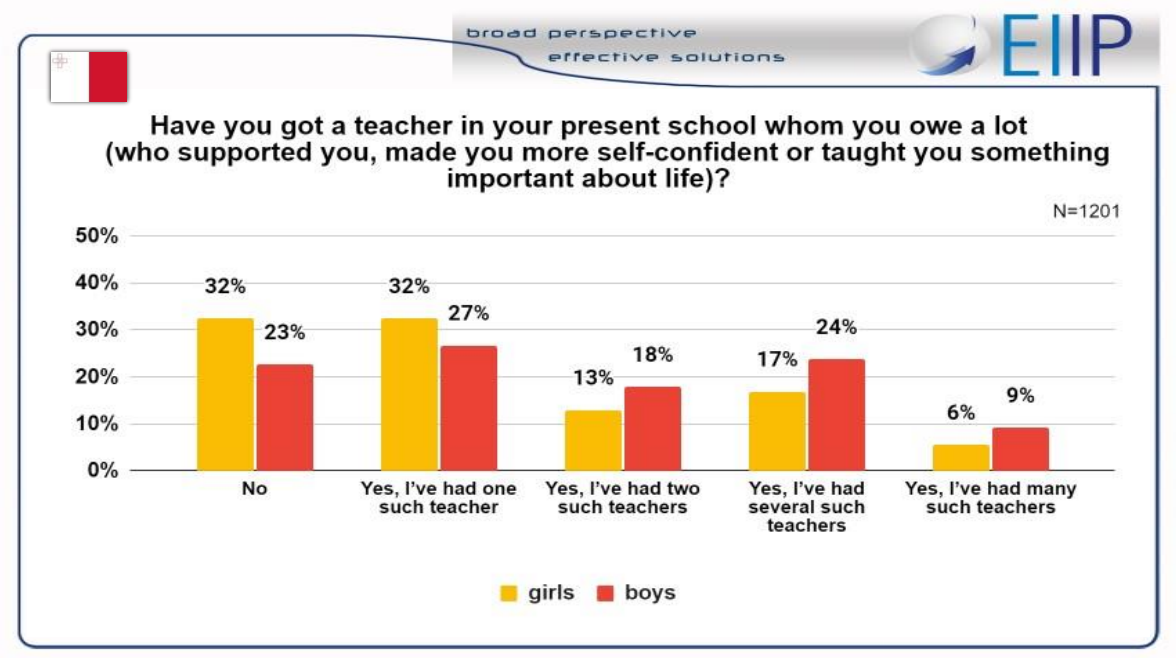
- drink alcohol
- commit physical violence
- think of dropping out of school.

Correlational analyses do not resolve whether it is specific risk behaviours that influence the choice of specific life goals, or whether it is the other way around, that specific life goals shape specific risk behaviours. The results only draw attention to their co-occurrence, which may be the result of subcultural influences of family and peer environments.

b. Aspirations of Maltese youth and the challenges of demography

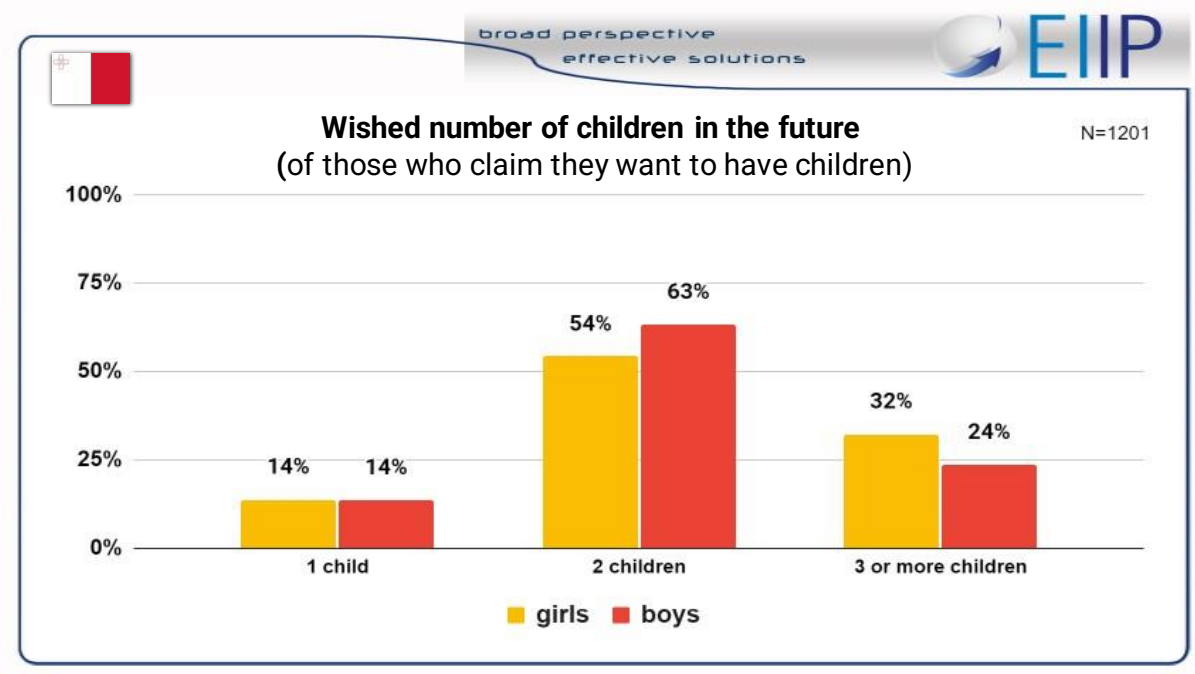
It is worthwhile to look at the dreams and life aspirations of Maltese youth from the perspective of not only individual preferences, but also in terms of broader, society-wide consequences. Not only in Malta, but in most European countries, we are seeing a demographic crisis. In many of them, forecasting and promoting having children has become a goal of national social policies. The survey, the results of which we present, asked young people if they would like to have children in the future. Figure 23 shows the distribution of responses confirming such willingness.

Figure 23 Percentages of youth willing to have children in the future, by sex (%)



Most teenagers plan to have children, with slightly more boys than girls having such plans. Among this group of Maltese teenagers, most plan to have two children.

Figure 24 Number of children planned in the future, by sex (%)



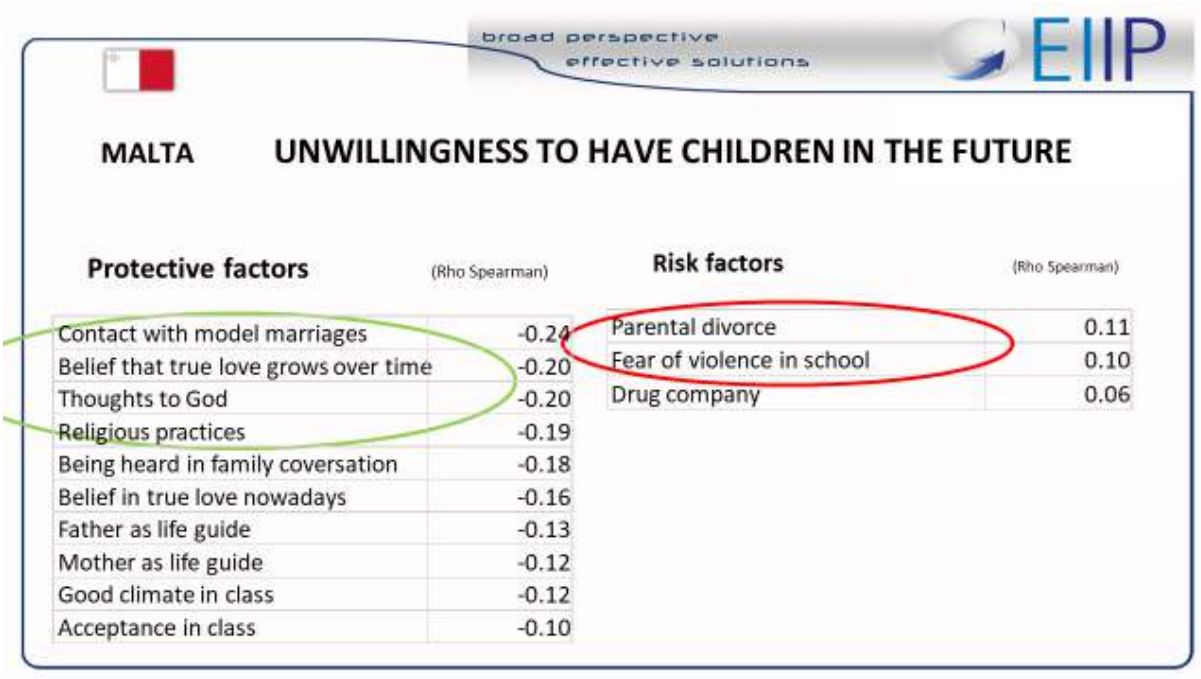
There are slightly more girls (32%) than boys (24%) who want to have three or more children in the future.

Correlational analyses showed the following protective factors, i.e. factors that significantly minimize teenagers' unwillingness to have children in the future:

- contact with a successful married couple, whose love is a model for young people
- belief that the love of two people will grow over time
- turning thoughts to God
- participation in religious practices.

Data on the strength and direction of the correlation relationship, as measured by Spearmann's Rho coefficient, are presented in Table 23. The closer the value approaches 1 or -1, the stronger the relationship. A minus sign in front of the coefficient values means that the analysed protective factors, so to speak, 'minimize' Maltese teenagers' unwillingness to have children in the future. In contrast, the plus sign appearing next to the risk factors shows that they 'maximize' such unwillingness.

Table 23 Unwillingness to have children in the future – protective factors and risk factors (%)



Protective factors against unwillingness to have children, or fear of having children, in the future, such as family factors, religious factors, and positive beliefs about love, dominate both in number and in the strength of association values over risk factors. Thus, there is a good chance for positive effects of preventive measures in this regard.

The results of the analyses also show that unwillingness to have children in the future co-occurs with such life goals as interesting job, in accordance with interests (chosen as a life goal by

24% of teenagers), peaceful life with no troubles (chosen as a life goal by 24% of teenagers) and a life full of entertainment (chosen as a life goal by 19% of teenagers). This creates room for prevention specialists to form a rational, responsible vs. panic attitude towards the 'costs' of choosing such a life goal as starting a family and planning children.

c. Preferred place of residence in adult life

The generation of teenagers surveyed was born not only in Malta, but also in the European Union. Freedom to move within its territory, to change one's place of residence, including a change of country, is an obvious, lifelong experience of this generation. However, the mobility of citizens, guaranteed by law, raises questions about the extent of their permanent migration out of the country. The problem of migration today is becoming another important subject of social policies.

The numerous and permanent migration of young people from a country gives rise to concerns about its cohesion and social and national solidarity. In the survey described in the report, Maltese teenagers were asked where they would like to live in adulthood. Figure 25 shows the distribution of responses to this question. We can see that it was still difficult for a relatively large group of students to indicate their preferred place of residence in adulthood (17%).

Figure 25 Preferred place of residence in adulthood (%)

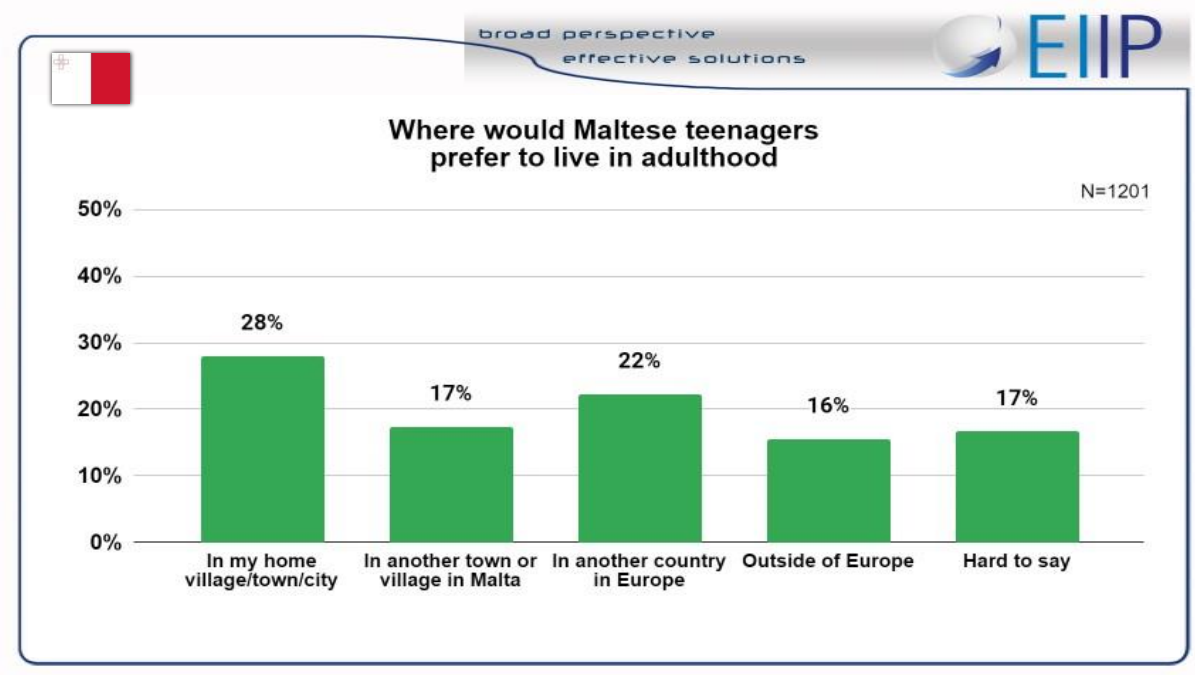


Table 24 shows the profiles of adolescents who prefer to leave Malta in adulthood (the 'future emigrants') and adolescents who prefer to stay in Malta (the 'patriots'), as developed through correlation analysis.

The profile of a 'future emigrant' brings together many different characteristics of a young person. An important role in it is played by life plans not related to family life or having children. Religious attitudes of such a person are weaker, and so is their mental health (suicidal and self-harm thoughts are more frequent, as well as fear of school violence), and their parents have weaker authority. Their preferred move abroad in adulthood seems to be a utopian escape from the above-mentioned problems that they experience 'here and now.'

The profile of the 'patriot' is the reverse of the profile of the 'future emigrant.' The 'patriot' is a teenager whose family, school and mental problems do not 'push' him or her out of the country. They are comfortable 'here and now,' so they plan to pursue their life plans such as happy family life and having children here, while feeling the support of their parents (as life guides) and religion (religious practices, thoughts to God).

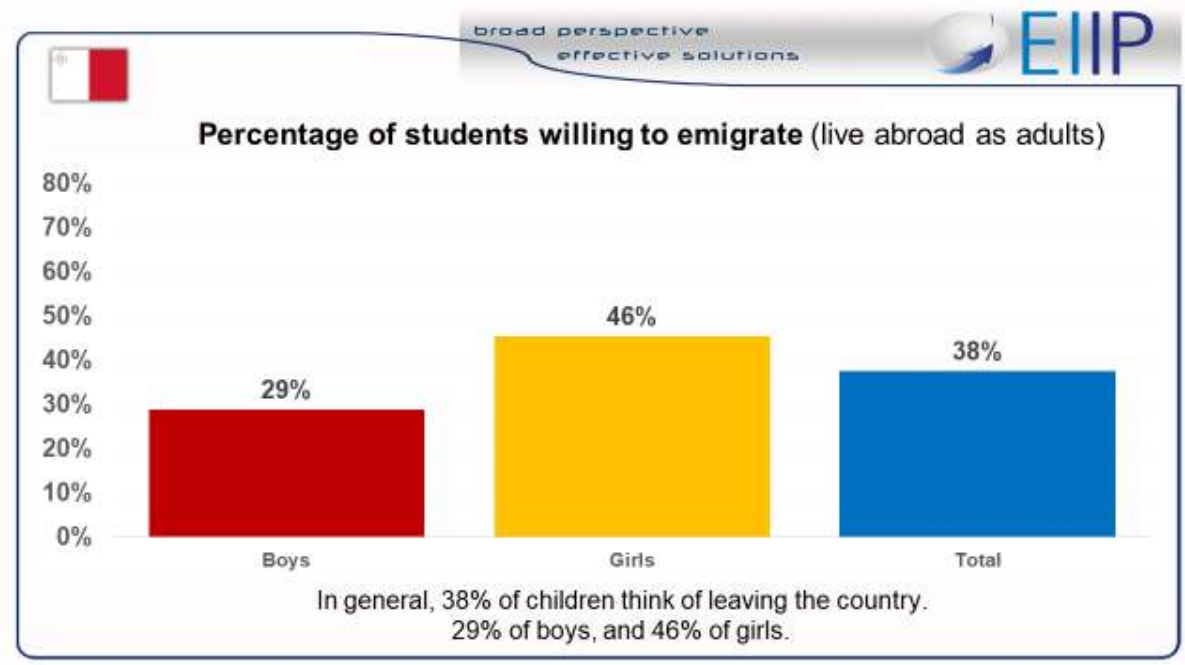
Table 24 Psycho-social traits profile regarding plans to leave Malta in the future

Profiles of the "future emigrant" and the "patriot"
(where would teenagers prefer to live in adulthood)

The future emigrant The teenager who:	Rho Spearman values (p<0.05)	The patriot The teenager who:
more often is a girl	.169	more often is a boy
less often dreams of a happy family life, children	-.244	more often dreams of a happy family life, children
less often wants to have children in the future	.212	more often wants to have children in the future
often feels stress at school	-.210	never or rarely feels stress at school
is afraid of violence at school	.166	is not afraid of violence at school
is more likely to have suicidal thoughts	.183	is less likely to have suicidal thoughts
is more likely to have self-harm thoughts	.217	is less likely to have self-harm thoughts
never/rarely turns thoughts to God	-.219	often turns thoughts to God
never/rarely takes part in religious practices	-.216	often takes part in religious practices
rarely chooses Father as a life guide	-.126	often chooses Father as a life guide
rarely chooses Mother as a life guide	-.091	often chooses Mother as a life guide

The data presented in Figure 26 show that among those willing to live abroad in adulthood, there are significantly more girls (46%) than boys (29%). This is explained in part by the fact that the 'future emigrant' is more likely to be a girl, and the 'patriot' is more likely to be a boy.

Figure 26 Youth willing to live abroad in the future, by sex (%)



The analysis results presented below show the significant differences that exist between girls and boys with regard to the co-occurrence of migration plans with the various problems currently experienced.

The data in Figures 27 and 28 show the school situation of those boys and girls who plan to migrate as adults. For girls in particular, school stress is the catalyst for such plans. Among girls experiencing school stress on a daily basis, the majority are 'migrant girls' (60%), while among those who experience stress rarely or never, they are significantly less numerous (42%). Another catalyst for migration plans, affecting girls more strongly than boys, is fear of violence at school.

Figure 27 Migration plans in adulthood and school stress, by sex (%)

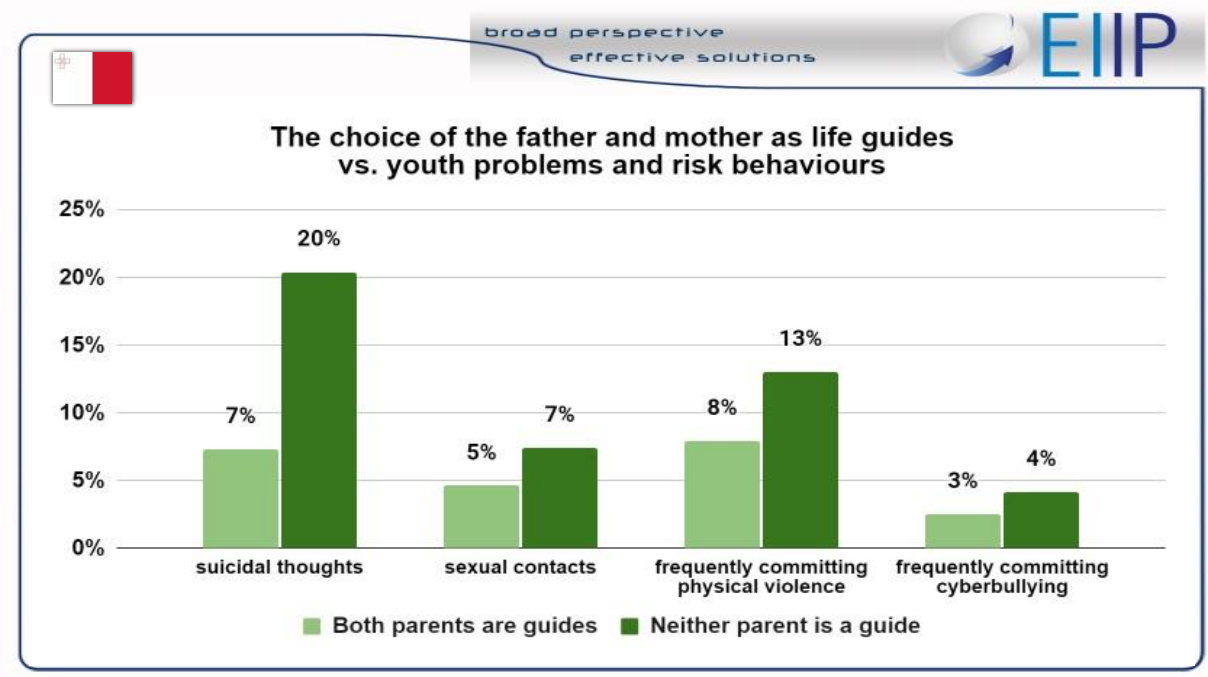
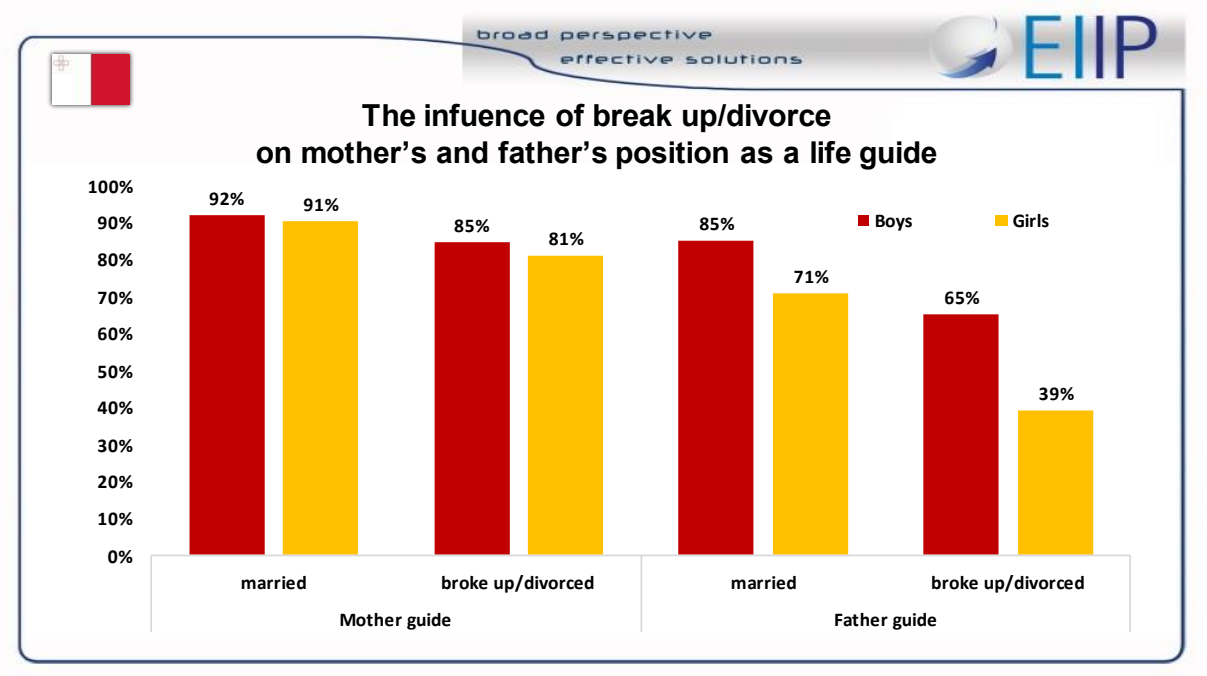


Figure 28 Migration plans and fear of violence at school, by sex (%)



The data in Figures 29 and 30 show the variation in the mental situation faced by boys and girls planning to migrate as adults. In Figure 29 we see that in the group declaring migration plans, girls experiencing suicidal thoughts are significantly more numerous than boys. A similar result can observed for self-harm (Figure 30).

Figure 29 Migration plans in the future and suicidal thoughts, by sex (%)

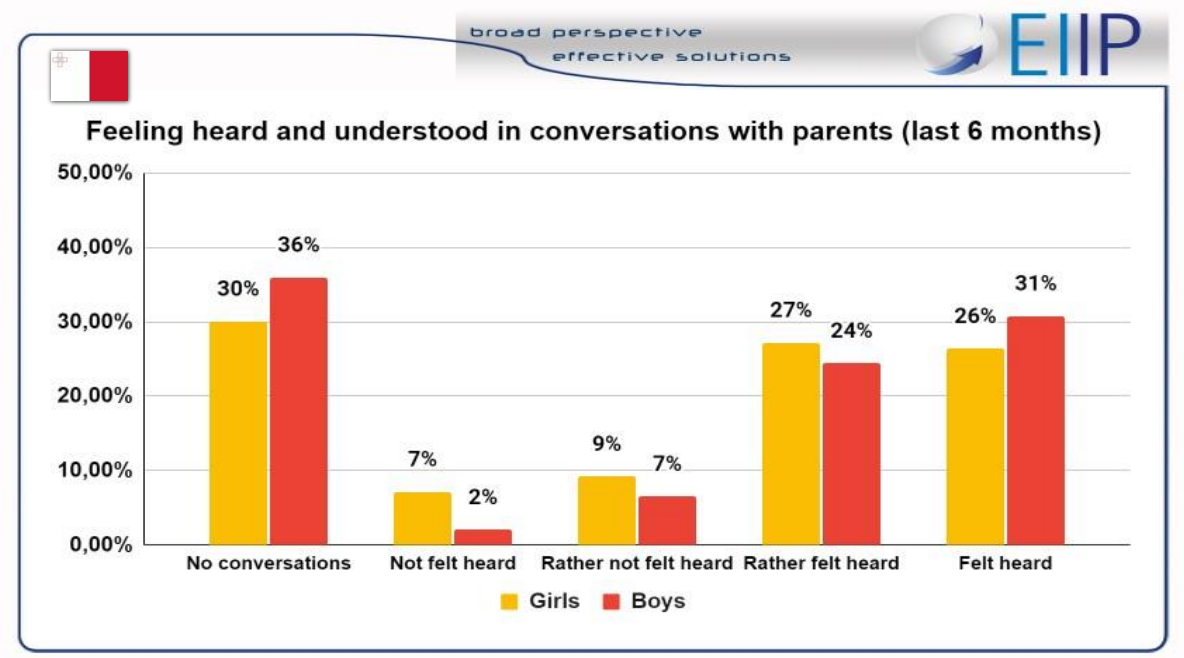
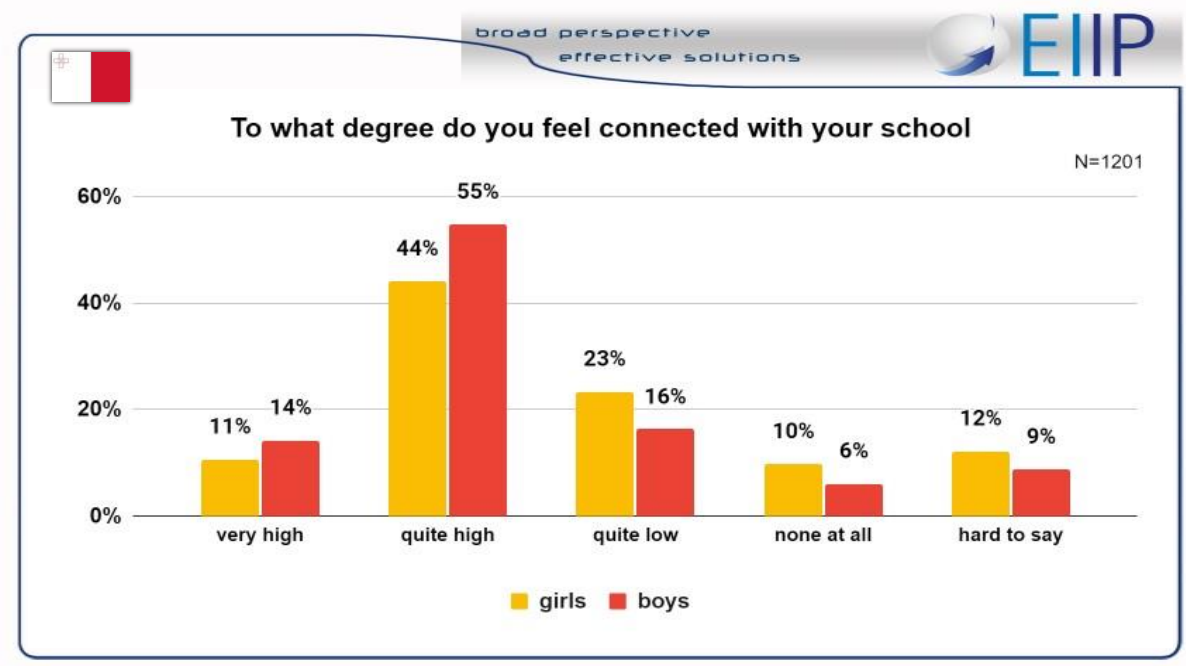


Figure 30 Migration plans and self-harm thoughts, by sex (%)



Among those planning to go abroad to live there as adults, more girls than boys indicate that they have no support from either their parents (they are not their life guides) or religious faith. Data in Figures 31, 32 and 33 show that among future emigrants:

- 51% of girls (38% of boys) did not identify both or one of their parents as a life guide
- 70% of girls (38% of boys) do not turn to God, however understood, in their thoughts
- 70% of girls (50% of boys) do not participate in religious practices.

Figure 31 Migration plans in the future and indication of parents as life guides, by sex (%)

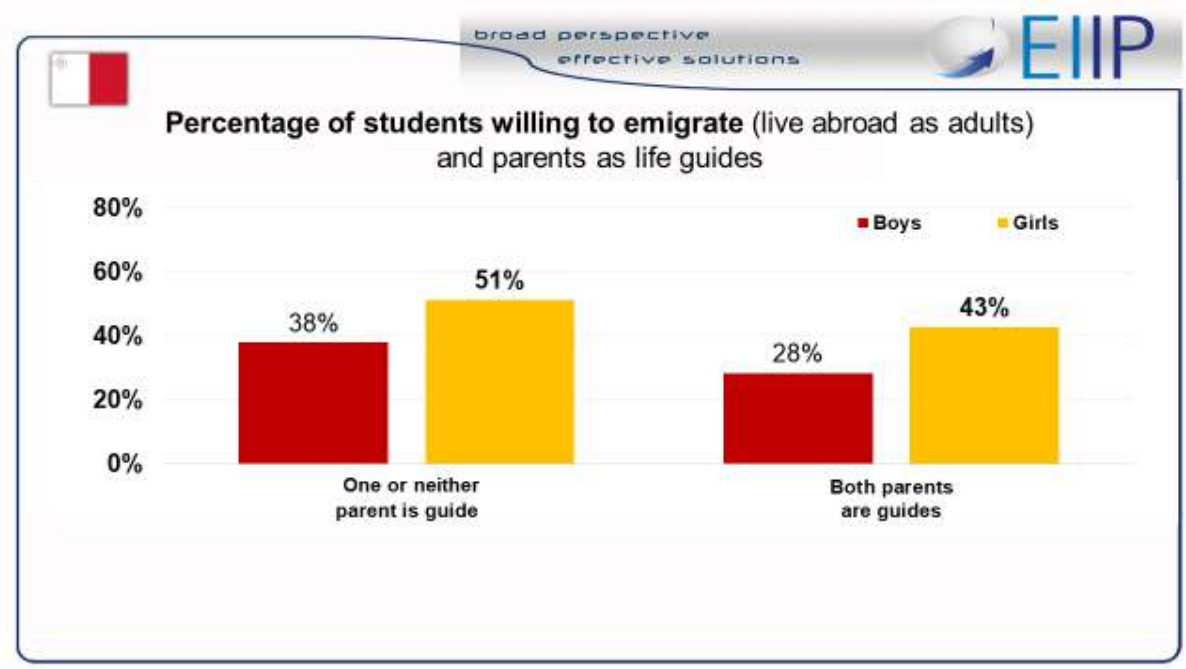


Figure 32 Migration plans in the future and thoughts to God, by sex (%)

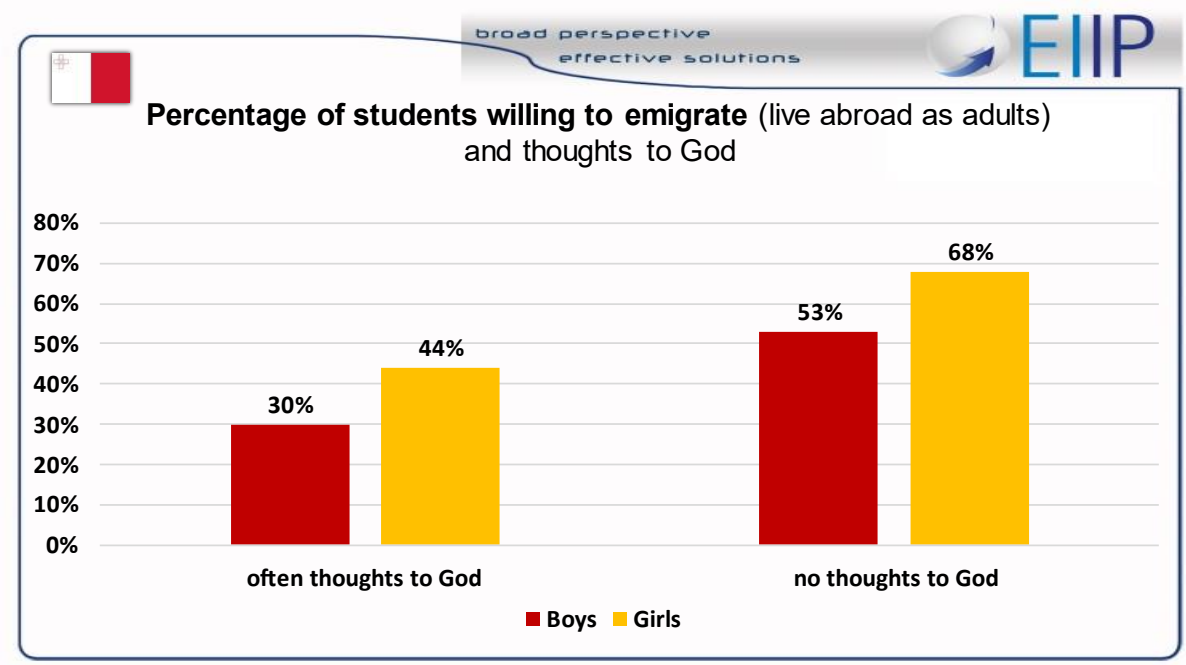
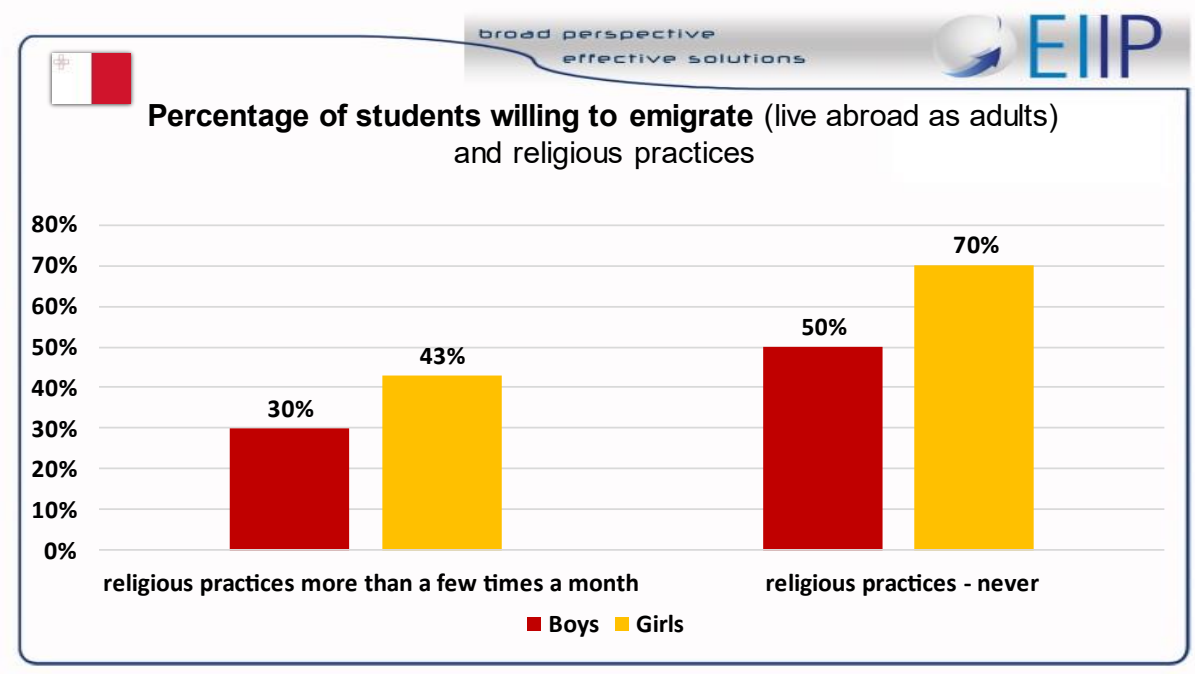
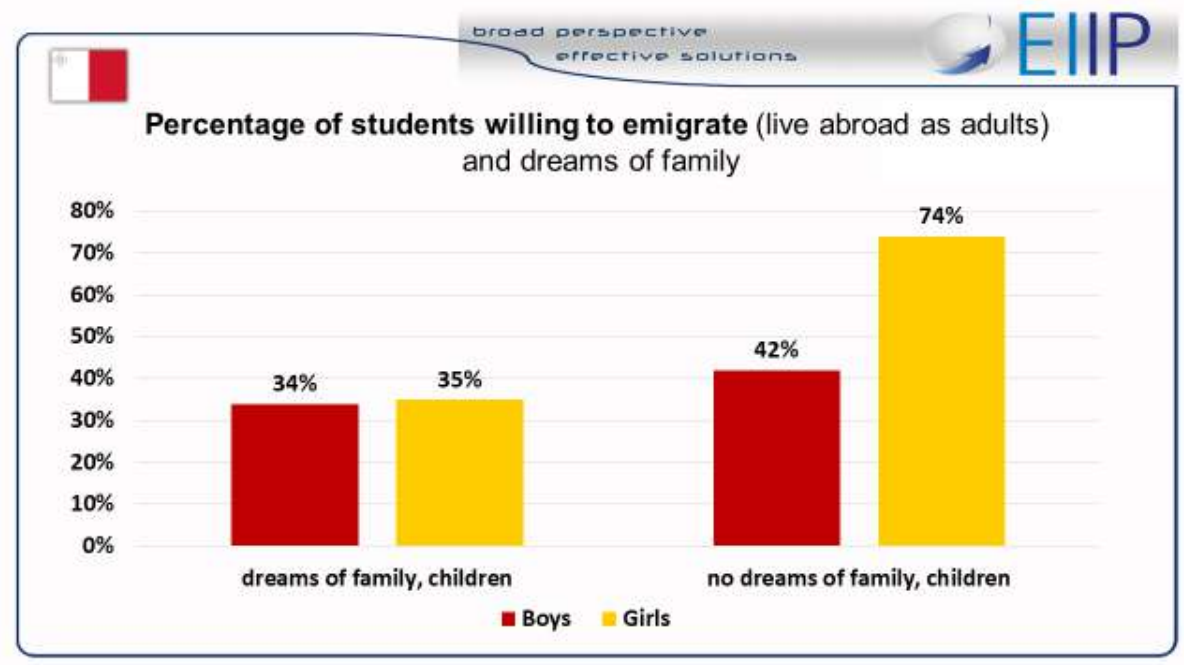


Figure 33 Migration plans in the future and religious practices, by sex (%)



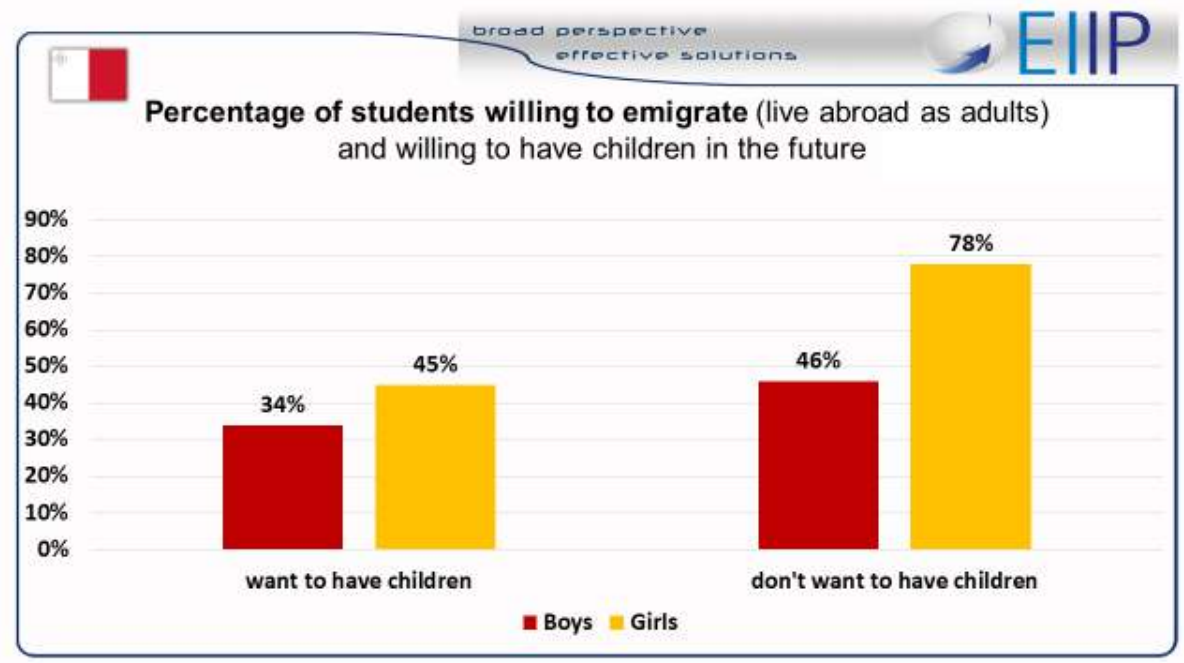
The data in Figure 34 show that among those not planning a family life there are 74% of girls and 42% of boys who intend to live abroad in the future.

Figure 34 Migration plans in the future and family dreams and goals, by sex (%)



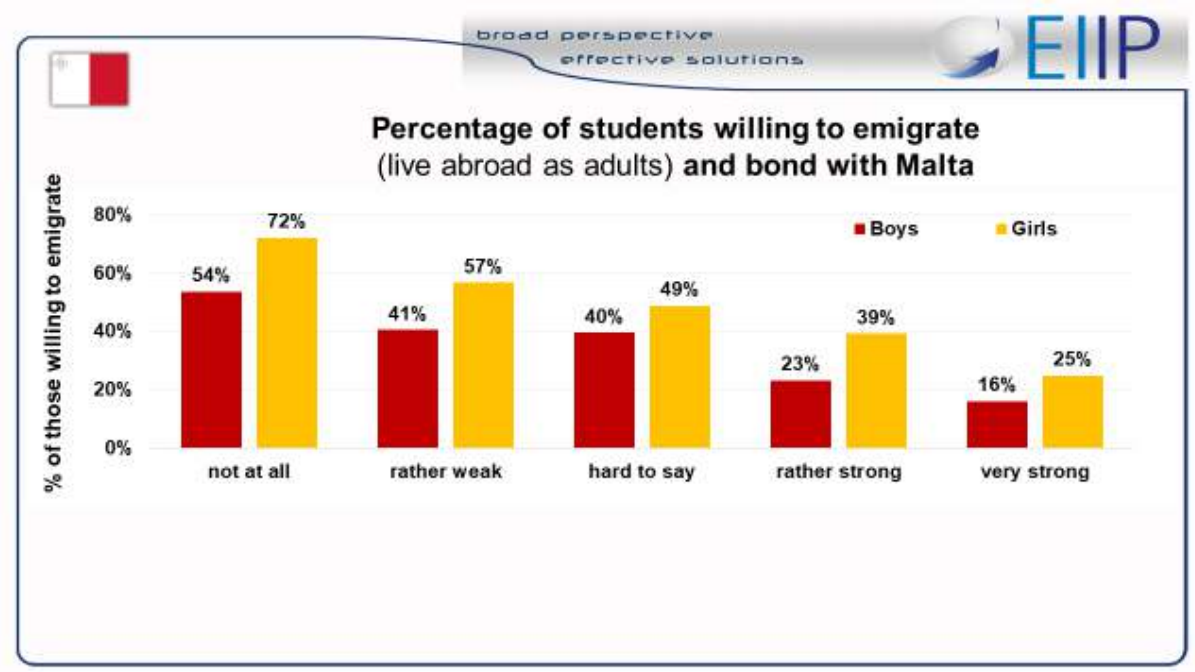
As shown in the data in Figure 35, among those not willing to have children in the future, 78% of girls and 46% of boys plan to live abroad in the future.

Figure 35 Migration plans in the future and willingness to have children, by sex (%)



The detailed review of the results of the analyses showing the variation in the determinants of future migration plans declared by teenagers should be concluded with data in Figure 36. The data show the relationship between a sense of bond with Malta and future migration plans. The data support the intuition that migration plans co-occur with a weak bond, or lack of bond, with the homeland.

Figure 36 Sense of bond with Malta and future migration plans, by sex (%)



In light of the previously presented data, it is not surprising that among those who do not have a sense of bond with Malta, the majority are teenagers planning to leave Malta in the future (girls 72%, boys 54%). What draws attention, however, is that even among those declaring a very strong bond with their homeland there is a not so small group of young people with migration plans (girls 25%, boys 16%). It should be noted that in addition to the characteristics and situations related to the personal experience of adolescents, as indicated in the results of the analyses, more general social and cultural factors may be the catalysts of adolescents' migration plans. These can include both the lack of good (interesting and/or well-paid) jobs at home and the fact that we live in a Europe without borders (EU), encouraging mobility.

d. Religious faith as a youth experience and as a protective factor

The study results show that a prominent role in shaping young people's attitudes is played by their attitude to religion. Religion is part of the broader social and cultural environment in which young people live. It is present in the experiences of some adolescents, as evidenced, for example, by self-declarations as to religion, and admissions that they direct their thoughts to God with varying intensity, and that they participate in religious practices.

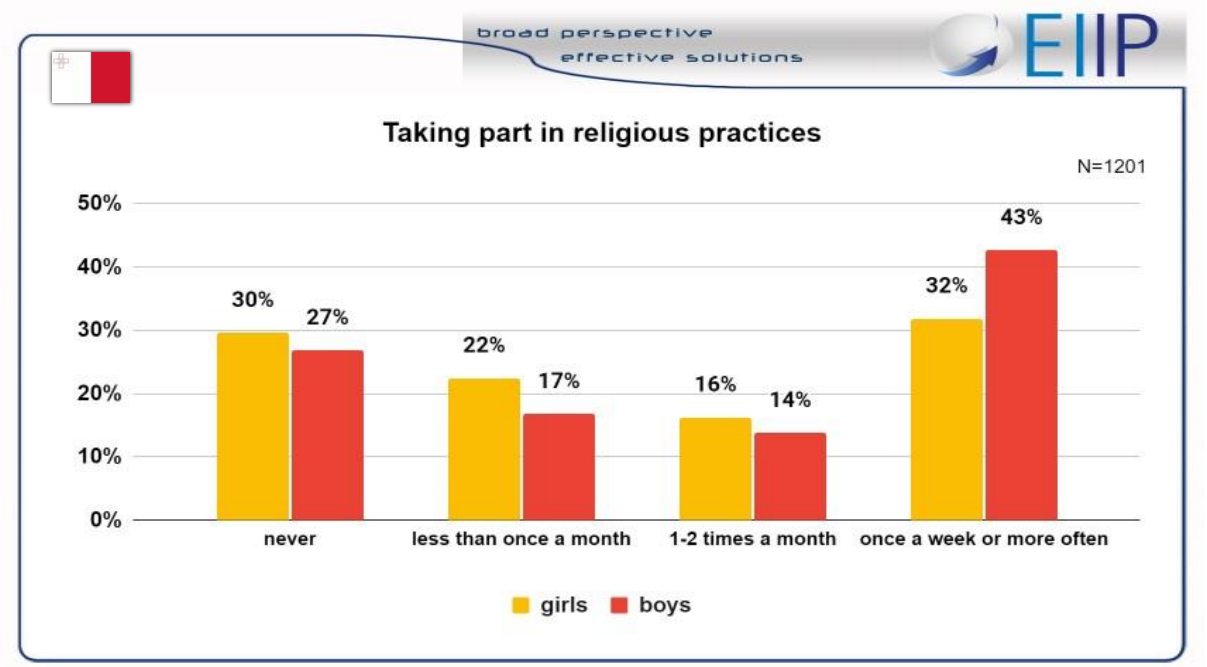
The vast majority of Maltese teenagers declare themselves Catholics (74%). Among other faiths (12%), followers of Islam account for 4%, while 14% described themselves as non-believers.

The data show that 36% of teenagers participate in religious practices regularly, i.e. at least once a week. Some of the participating adolescents declared that they participate at least occasionally (35%), and the remaining group (29%) does not participate in religious practices.

The vast majority of teenagers declared that they turn to God in their thoughts. The intensity of such personal religious contact varies. 25% of youth said that they have such thoughts at least several times a week, while 17% turn to God several times a day, and 22% of respondents declare no such thoughts.

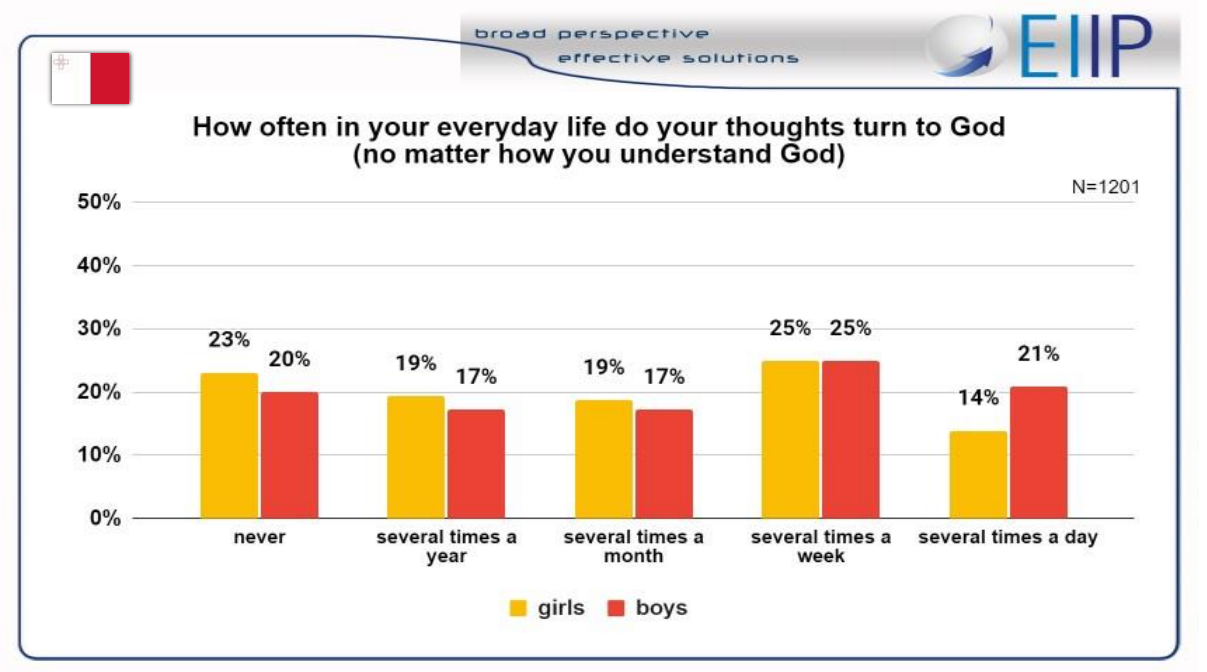
In light of the data presented above, we can conclude that a sizable group of Maltese 15-year-olds are religiously active and engaged. And in this case, the data show significant differences between girls and boys in the intensity of religious attitudes (Figures 37 and 38). We can see that there are more (43%) boys who practice regularly than girls (32%), and fewer boys (27%) than girls (30%) who do not participate in religious practices at all (Figure 37).

Figure 37 Participation in religious practices, by sex (%)



A similar trend can be seen in Figure 38; more boys (21%) than girls (14%) turn their thoughts to God every day, and fewer boys (20)%) than girls (23%) never turn their thoughts to God.

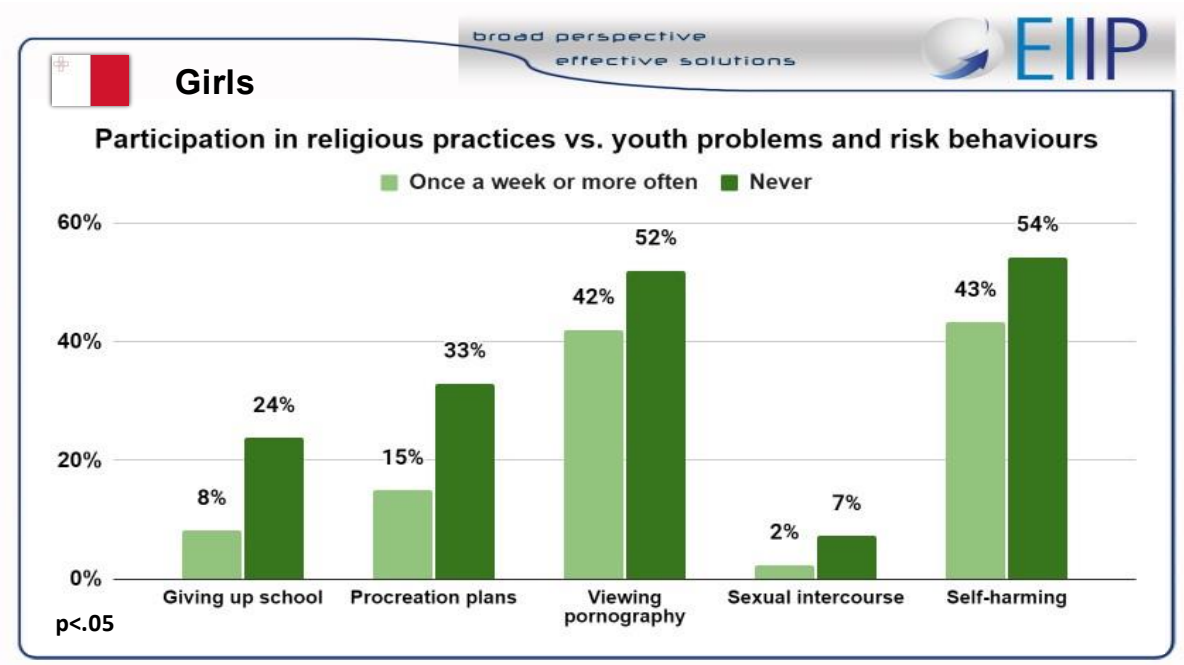
Figure 38 Frequency of turning thoughts to God, by sex (%)



We will now try to answer the question whether and how religious faith or the lack of it affects the attitudes of Maltese girls and boys. The results of the analyses show that weaker involvement with religion, especially for girls, raises the likelihood of a great many risk behaviours.

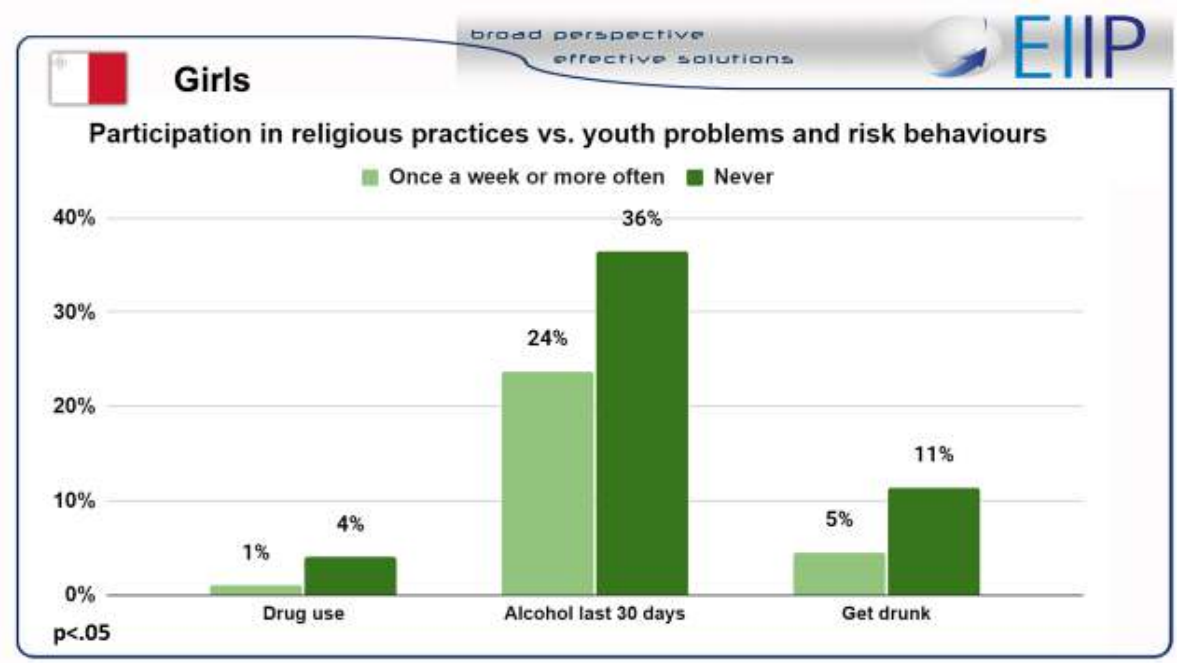
Figures 39 and 40 below show the intensity of selected problems and risk behaviours of Maltese girls depending on their involvement in religious practices and in personal contact with God (however understood). The analyses show that girls who reported frequent (i.e. at least once a week) participation in religious practices were significantly less likely to experience suicidal thoughts, initiation of sexual intercourse and viewing pornography than girls who did not practice at all.

Figure 39 Girls – participation in religious practices vs selected risk behaviours (%)



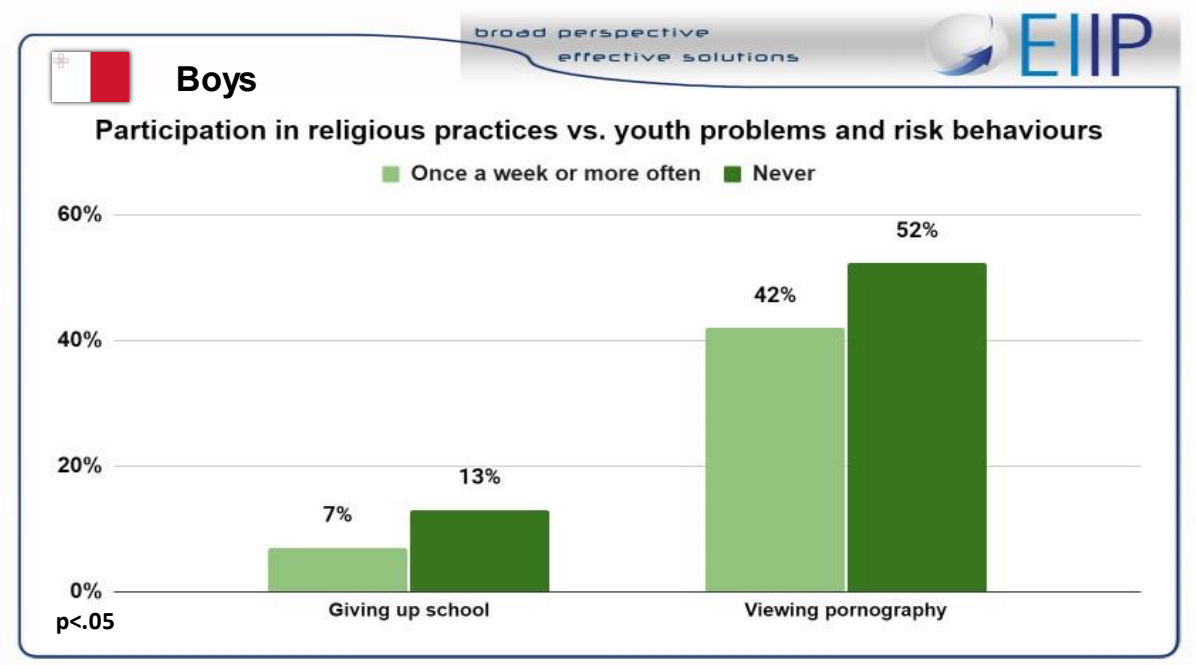
A similar trend is observed for the use of psychoactive substances. Girls who declared frequent (i.e. at least once a week) participation in religious practices were significantly less likely to report using drugs, drinking alcohol and getting drunk. The differences between them and non-practising girls are statistically significant, and presented in Figure 40.

Figure 40 Girls – participation in religious practices vs psychoactive substance use (%)



As for Maltese boys, significant differences between regular practitioners and non-practitioners are noted only for pornography viewing and thoughts of dropping out of school. Data on this subject are presented in Figure 41.

Figure 41 Boys – participation in religious practices vs selected risk behaviours (%)



There are more young people turning to God in their thoughts more or less intensely (79%) than those practising (72%). This may indicate the openness of young people to religious faith,

especially in a non-institutionalized form, but in the form of personal contact with the Sacred. The results of the analyses show similar effects of this personal contact with God on young people's attitudes and behaviour to the effects of religious practices. This type of religious attitude, like religious practices, shapes risk behaviours of girls and boys to varying degrees.

Figure 42 Girls – thoughts to God vs selected risk behaviours (%)

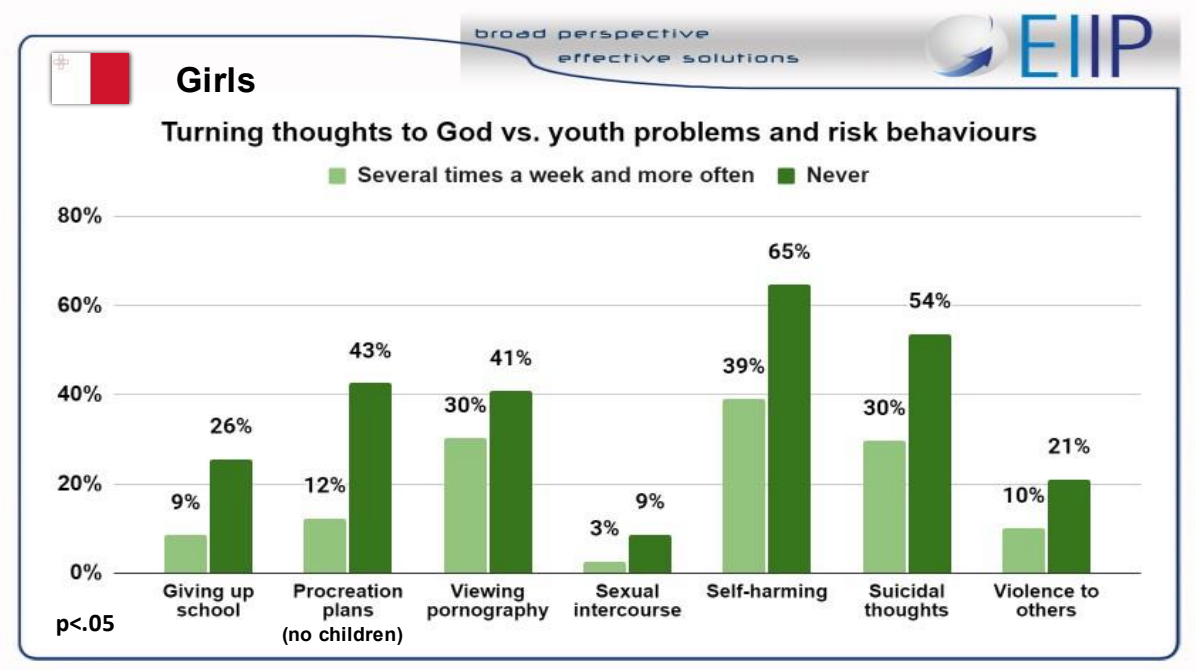
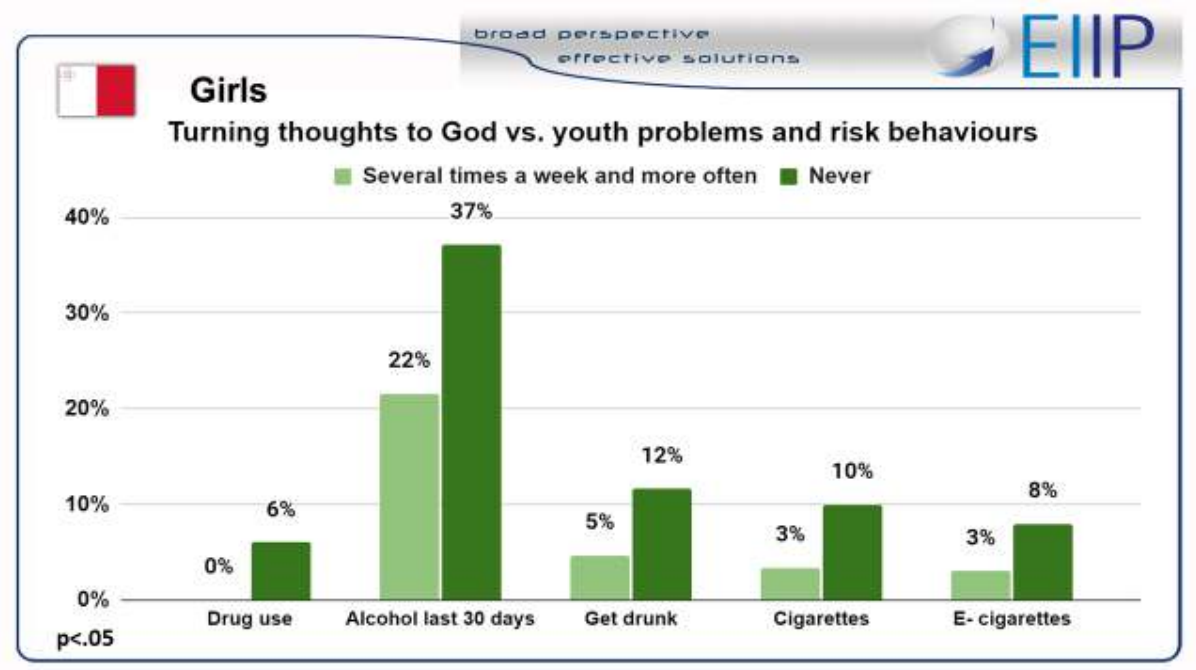
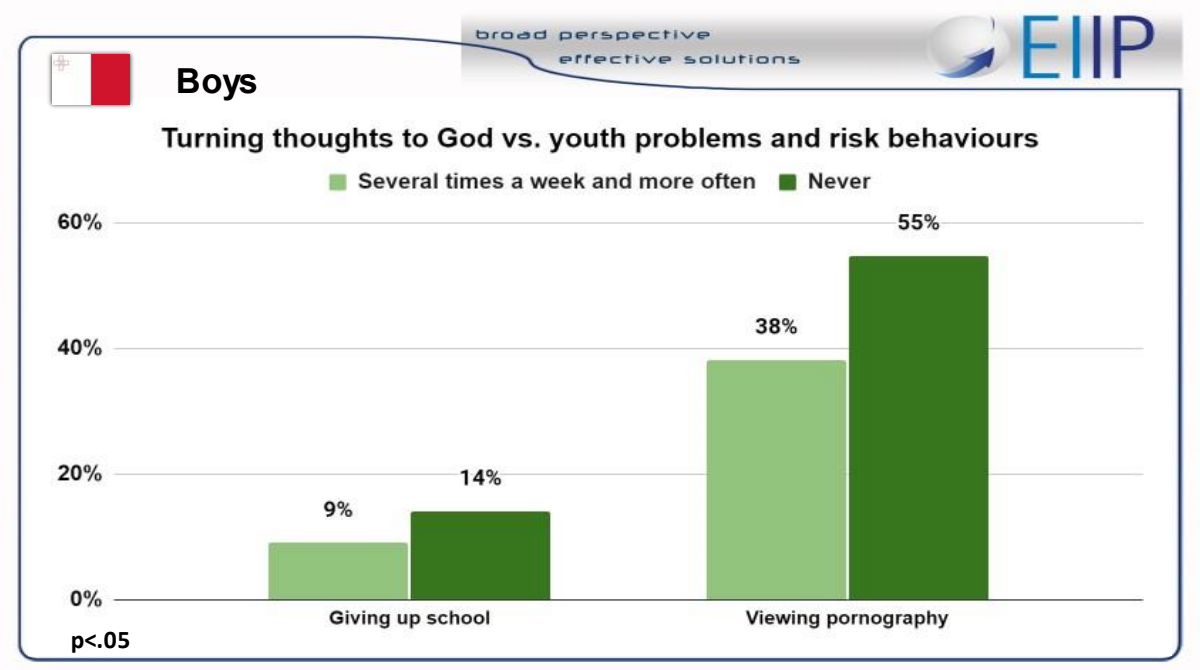


Figure 43 Girls – thoughts to God vs psychoactive substance use



As the data in Figures 42 and 43 show, girls' frequent turning to God in their thoughts results in less frequent risk behaviours compared to girls who do not admit to such thoughts. Figure 44 shows this kind of statistically significant relationships for boys.

Figure 44 Boys – thoughts to God vs selected risk behaviours (%)



Summarizing the data on the relationship between religious involvement and risk behaviours, we can make the following conclusion. Although religious commitment (regular practices, frequent thoughts to God) is more frequent in boys than in girls, in boys it does not translate so clearly into their attitudes and risk behaviours as is evident for girls.

It is worthwhile to note at this point the possibility of parents and teachers cooperating with religious organizations of various faiths in exerting preventive influence on young people. Research shows that the prevention message is all the more effective, the more people who are significant for the young person are involved in it, i.e. the more people speak with one voice and point youth in a specific direction (Grzelak, 2009)[1].

[1] Grzelak, Sz. (2009). *Profilaktyka ryzykownych zachowań seksualnych młodzieży. Aktualny stan badań na świecie i w Polsce* (*Prevention of Youth Sexual Risk Behaviours: Current State of Research in the World and in Poland*). Kraków: Wydawnictwo Rubikon.

IV. Strategic recommendations for long-term solutions and actions

The study results obtained in the YPP project enabled a broad diagnosis of the positive potential and problems of Maltese youth. The study conducted in Malta confirmed the relationships between many risk behaviours, and further confirmed the fact that these behaviours have many risk factors in common. The data also showed the operation of a number of protective factors, with the dominant role of family and school and the supportive role of religion.

The results of the study confirmed the usefulness of the Polish integrated prevention model in the Maltese national context, and helped to adapt the Polish Archipelago of Treasures programme to Maltese socio-cultural conditions. They provided a number of arguments in favour of the Polish strategy of the Seven Levers of Effective Prevention. This report refers to it directly, showing how reliable and up-to-date knowledge of the extent and diversity of risk behaviours, mental health and social experiences of 15-year-olds can be useful in the work of prevention specialists.

The effectiveness of efforts directed at youth and aimed at supporting their development and preventing problems and risk behaviours is largely derived from:

a. good recognition of both the problems and the positive potential of youth,
b. the quality of the measures taken (effective prevention programmes and projects),
c. the time perspective in which they are planned (it should be a long-term perspective),
d. their attractiveness to young people (attractive forms of communication, interactivity)
e. cooperation with natural allies: parents, teachers, youth specialists.

With this report, we want to convince its readers that the prevention of youth risk behaviours will be most effective if the measures taken are based on a reliable diagnosis of the problem behaviours and positive potential of youth. On the basis of such a diagnosis, it is possible to build a sequence of many activities arranged in a whole in the long term. It is also necessary to relate the planned activities to the diagnosed developmental needs that students have, not only in particular age groups (older and younger), but also with respect to the separate developmental needs of girls and boys. In addition, attention should be paid to ensure that the activities being implemented are legitimized by their effectiveness proven by scientific research, and at the same time are attractive to students regarding the content and the way it is conveyed.

An important recommendation for a long-term strategy for the prevention of youth problems is the recommendation to continue diagnostic research at the national level and in individual

schools in order to monitor both the positive potential of youth and their risk behaviours. Conducting research in successive years of youth provides an opportunity to use the results to modify development support and prevention programmes (school, local, and national ones) and to respond quickly to youth problems (including emerging new problems and threatening phenomena, such as epidemics, war, natural disasters).

Another recommendation is to involve parents more broadly in building and implementing a common line of influence directed at young people. As the data show, in Malta, parents remain the most important life guides for the vast majority of students.

It is very important to develop new effective tools for communicating with and training parents on current and specific youth issues. As the research conducted shows, in the opinion of the young people surveyed, parents are a very reliable source of knowledge about love and sexuality, while this potential is not used because young people do not sufficiently draw knowledge from parents in these areas, and especially in the area of sexuality. There is a need for effective support for parents from both school specialists – counsellors and psychologists – and external specialists.

Experience also shows that parents (for various reasons) attend meetings at school in small numbers. It becomes a challenge to develop new solutions for interactive contact with parents in important problems related to youth development support, faced by the school and experienced by their children.

The organization of activities to support parents in building positive relationships with their growing children cannot be overestimated, either.

It is also important to organize as much support as possible from form teachers, school specialists, counsellors and psychologists for the youth themselves who are at a difficult stage of their psychosexual development, if only by:

- undertaking and continuing prevention work by form teachers of classes participating in the Archipelago of Treasures® programme,
- encouraging students to participate in prevention activities at school,
- encouraging students to report their problems related to this area.

It is worth noting, in conclusion, that the scale of problem behaviours in adolescents depends not only on simple socio-demographic indicators of their situation, but also on the social culture

of the country, its norms and laws. The effectiveness of pro-health indications, medical as well as related to youth development support, can be limited by both country-specific traditions and laws. This can be seen in relation to alcohol drinking and cigarette smoking. Even pro-health changes in social policies and laws do not change social habits in the short term. Even more so, prevention must be seen as an impact over the long term, towards changing the attitudes and habits of the younger generation.

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Annex 1 - Glossary of terms

Risk behaviours – in our research, we regard risk behaviours as those behaviours that threaten the broadly understood health of a person engaging in them (legal and illegal psychoactive substance use, gambling, addiction to computer games and the Internet, pornography use, early sexual activity, aggressive behaviours – physical and verbal violence).

Pro-development behaviours and attitudes (positive potential) promote the health of a young person, and health – according to the definition of the World Health Organization – is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being of a person.

Risk factors are individual characteristics, features of the social environment and the effects of their interaction that are associated with an increased risk of abnormalities, disorders, diseases or premature death (Ostaszewski, Rustecka-Krawczyk, Wójcik, 2009, p. 13)[2].

Protective factors are individual characteristics of a person and features of their environment that compensate for or reduce the impact of risk factors, thus helping to lower the likelihood of risk behaviours or minimize the degree of their intensity (having a life guide, religious practices).

Integrated prevention is one that aims to effectively prevent the broadest possible spectrum of youth risk behaviours and problems (e.g. tobacco, alcohol, drugs, violence, depression, teenage pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases) simultaneously.

Sexuality is a natural aspect of the human nature, subject to natural developmental processes over the course of an individual's life.

Sexualization is a feature (phenomenon) of modern culture, especially mass culture, involving the objectification of human sexuality and making it public (including by reducing a person's value to sexy appearance or behaviour, presenting people as objects of sexual use for others, and displaying sex-related content or images in public space).

[2] Ostaszewski, K., Rustecka-Krawczyk, A. and Wójcik, M. (2011). *Czynniki chroniące i czynniki ryzyka związane z zachowaniami problemowymi warszawskich gimnazjalistów: Klasy I–II (Protective factors and risk factors associated with problem behaviours of Warsaw intermediate school students: classes 1 to 2).* Warszawa: Instytut Psychiatrii i Neurologii

Annex 2 - Malta - Distribution of responses - Pro Inte 10M Questionnaire

This Annex contains the full distributions of youth responses to all questions of the Pro-Inte 10 M questionnaire used in the study in Malta conducted as part of the Erasmus +-funded Youth Positive Potential project.

Tables A1 through A5 present the characteristics of the sample of youth participating in the study. Tables 1 through 86 present the percentages of those who chose particular answers to subsequent questions of the questionnaire. The tables include information on the level of missing data for each question.

The results of the youth are broken by sex. A small percentage of respondents (1.7% of the total sample) did not mark their sex in the questionnaire. However, their results were included in the 'Total' column.

As part of the project, surveys were conducted in three countries: Malta, Lithuania and Poland. The questionnaire for each country contained specific questions adapted to its cultural context. Questionnaire questions asked only of Maltese youth were marked with an 'M' next to the question number.

Some questions were designed so that the answer to them depended on the answer chosen in the preceding question. All such questions were marked with footnotes containing relevant explanations.

A1. I am:

1. Male	46.9%
2. Female	51.4%
Lack of data	1.7%

A2. I was born:

	Boys	Girls	Total
2005	0.3%	0.5%	0.4%
2006	14.7%	15%	14.7%
2007	61.1%	63.1%	61.4%
2008	23.6%	21.2%	22.3%
2009	0.2%	0%	0.2%
Lack of data	0.2%	0.3%	1.1%

A3. I live in:

	Boys	Girls	Total
The south of Malta	16.2%	26.3%	21.4%
The centre of Malta	30%	37.3%	33.9%
The north of Malta	14.5%	14.5%	14.8%
Gozo	39.3%	22%	30%

A4. I am studying in:

	Boys	Girls	Total
Church school	39.8%	50.3%	45%
State school	55.3%	45.7%	50.5%
Independent school	4.9%	4%	4.5%

A5. I attended for the last year of primary education:

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. State school	57.4%	47.1%	51.5%
2. Church school	30.7%	42.7%	36.7%
3. Independent school	5.1%	5.1%	5.2%
4. Abroad, not in Malta	2.3%	2.1%	2.2%
Lack of data	4.5%	3%	4.5%

1) I feel safe with my class.

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Definitely no	1.6%	1.8%	1.7%
2. Mostly no	5.2%	3.8%	4.7%
3. Hard to say	11%	12.4%	11.7%
4. Mostly yes	46.9%	47.8%	47.1%
5. Definitely yes	34.6%	34.2%	34.2%
Lack of data	0.7%	0%	0.7%

2) I can count on support from my class.

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Definitely no	2.8%	4.3%	3.8%
2. Mostly no	5.9%	7.8%	7%
3. Hard to say	19.9%	25.2%	22.6%
4. Mostly yes	46.8%	44.7%	45.2%
5. Definitely yes	24.1%	17.7%	20.7%
Lack of data	0.5%	0.3%	0.7%

3) There is a climate of kindness in my class.

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Definitely no	4.7%	2.1%	3.4%
2. Mostly no	7.2%	6.5%	6.9%
3. Hard to say	24.8%	23.1%	24.1%
4. Mostly yes	46.4%	49%	47.3%
5. Definitely yes	15.5%	18%	16.6%
Lack of data	1.4%	1.3%	1.7%

4) Other students accept me as I am.

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Definitely no	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%
2. Mostly no	6.3%	5.7%	6.1%
3. Hard to say	11.5%	15.9%	13.9%
4. Mostly yes	36.8%	39.6%	38.2%
5. Definitely yes	41.2%	34.4%	37.3%
Lack of data	0.9%	1%	1.2%

5) Have you got a teacher in your present school whom you owe a lot [who supported you, made you more self-confident or taught you something important about life]?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. No	22.3%	32%	27.3%
2. Yes, I've had one such teacher	26.4%	32%	29.1%
3. Yes, I've had two such teachers	17.6%	12.7%	15.5%
4. Yes, I've had several such teachers	23.4%	16.7%	19.6%
5. Yes, I've had many such teachers	9.1%	5.4%	7.1%
Lack of data	1.2%	1.1%	1.5%

6) In the last 30 days, did you keep company with peers with whom:
a. You went riding a bike, rollerblading or playing any other sport together?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. No	31.4%	55.3%	43.7%
2. Yes,1-2 times	15.2%	20.1%	17.7%
3. Yes,3-10 times	23.6%	13.9%	18.6%
4. Yes,11-19 times	11.3%	4.3%	7.5%
5. Yes, 20 times or more	16.6%	5.7%	10.9%
Lack of data	1.9%	0.8%	1.6%

b. You did something useful for others?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. No	12.6%	13.4%	12.9%
2. Yes, 1-2 times	18.5%	25.3%	21.9%
3. Yes, 3-10 times	35.3%	36.3%	35.8%
4. Yes, 11-19 times	20.2%	13.5%	16.6%
5. Yes, 20 times or more	12%	11%	11.5%
Lack of data	1.4%	0.5%	1.3%

c. You prepared something for school together?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. No	44.3%	38.9%	41.3%
2. Yes, 1-2 times	27.6%	33.9%	31.1%
3. Yes, 3-10 times	18.5%	16.6%	17.2%
4. Yes, 11-19 times	5.1%	5.7%	5.3%
5. Yes, 20 times or more	2.8%	4.8%	3.8%
Lack of data	1.7%	0.2%	1.2%

7) To what degree do you feel connected with:
a. your school

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Very high	13.8%	10.5%	11.9%
2. Quite high	53.2%	43.6%	47.7%
3.Quite low	15.9%	23.1%	19.7%
4. None at all	5.9%	9.7%	8%
5. Hard to say	8.6%	12.1%	10.6%
Lack of data	2.6%	1%	2%

b. Your neighbourhood/ village/town/city

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Very high	26.7%	16.2%	20.9%
2. Quite high	34.9%	28%	30.9%
3.Quite low	22%	30.9%	26.8%
4. None at all	8.4%	13.9%	11.3%
5. Hard to say	5.1%	9.9%	7.6%
Lack of data	3%	1.1%	2.4%

c. Malta

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Very high	28.1%	16.2%	21.8%
2. Quite high	32.1%	32.2%	32.1%
3.Quite low	19.7%	24.2%	22.2%
4. None at all	7.7%	9.2%	8.4%
5. Hard to say	8.2%	15.3%	11.7%
Lack of data	4.2%	2.9%	3.8%

d. Your country of origin if it is not Malta

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Very high	11.3%	10.2%	10.6%
2. Quite high	12.7%	9.9%	11.3%
3.Quite low	9.4%	9.2%	9.2%
4. None at all	13.3%	15.6%	14.5%
5. Hard to say	8.6%	9.7%	9.2%
Lack of data or not applicable	44.7%	45.4%	45.2%

e. Europe

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Very high	17.8%	11.3%	14.4%
2. Quite high	30.7%	32.8%	31.8%
3.Quite low	25.5%	30.3%	27.7%
4. None at all	8.4%	9.1%	8.8%
5. Hard to say	12.4%	15.3%	13.7%
Lack of data	5.2%	1.3%	3.5%

f. The whole world

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Very high	14%	10.4%	12%
2. Quite high	24.3%	22%	23%
3.Quite low	22.2%	27.5%	24.9%
4. None at all	13.3%	14.8%	14%
5. Hard to say	21.6%	24.4%	23.1%
Lack of data	4.7%	1%	3%

8) Where would you most prefer to live as an adult?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. In my home village/town/city	33.3%	21%	26.6%
2. In another town or village in Malta/ Gozo	15.9%	17.2%	16.5%
3. In another country in Europe	17.6%	23.7%	21.1%
4. Outside of Europe	10.1%	19.3%	14.8%
5. Hard to say	18.8%	13.2%	15.8%
Lack of data	4.2%	5.6%	5.2%

9) People have various dreams and goals in life. Which of the goals listed below are the most important for you? (Choose up to 3 most important goals)

	Boys	Girls	Total
a. Successful carrier	57.4%	57.5%	57.1%
b. Helping others	17.8%	15.3%	16.4%
c. Making a big fortune	13.4%	11.5%	12.4%
d. Achieving success in art, science or sport	15.2%	14%	14.5%
e. Life full of entertainment	10.6%	14.5%	12.5%
f. Rich social life	8.6%	8.1%	8.2%
g. Lasting love, friendship	34.9%	49.7%	42.4%
h. Happy family life, children	54.6%	46.5%	50.2%
i. Gaining power	3.3%	2.2%	2.8%
j. Interesting job, in accordance with your interests	22.3%	20.5%	21.2%
k. Peaceful life with no troubles	23.4%	19.15	21.4%
l. Other	3.1%	2.7%	2.9%
Lack of data	9.8%	12.1%	11.3%

10) If true love appears between two people

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. It will end quite soon, but not as soon as untrue love.	6.8%	7.2%	7%
2. It will end, but only after many years.	9.4%	8.9%	9.2%
3. It will never end, but will become weaker over the years.	19.9%	19.6%	19.8%
4. It will never end, and will be equally strong after years.	29.5%	29.6%	29.5%
5. It will never end, and will be fuller after years than it was at the beginning.	30.4%	33.3%	31.7%
Lack of data	4%	1.4%	2.9%

11) These days, true and lasting love between two people:

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Definitely cannot happen	1.6%	0.5%	1%
2. Is unlikely to happen	24.1%	25.6%	24.8%
3. Hard to say	32.6%	31.2%	31.7%
4. Is likely to happen	23.7%	24%	23.8%
5. Definitely can happen	16.2%	18.3%	17.4%
Lack of data	1.7%	0.3%	1.3%

12) Have you ever had close contact with a married couple whose love can be a model for you?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Yes. with many such couples	16.8%	19.1%	17.9%
2. Yes. with very few such couples	31.6%	40.9%	36.2%
3. Hard to say	22.9%	16.6%	19.5%
4. I can't remember such a couple	20.8%	18.2%	19.6%
5. Such couples don't exist	4.8%	4.8%	4.8%
Lack of data	3.1%	0.5%	2%

13) What family situation would you like to have at the age of 30?

	Boys	Girls	Total
0. I'm not planning to start a family at all	9.8%	13.2%	11.6%
1. I'll start a family later	8.7%	7.3%	8%
2. I will be married but will have no children	15.2%	18.6%	17.2%
3. I will be married and will have children	62.8%	58.9%	60.2%
Lack of data	3.5%	1.9%	2.9%

14) Would you like to have children in the future?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Yes, definitely	36%	34.7%	35%
2. Yes, I think so	29.5%	30.6%	29.9%
3. I don't know	10.3%	11%	10.8%
4. No, I don't think so	5.6%	8.4%	7.2%
5. No, definitely not	3.8%	9.2%	6.5%
Lack of data	14.8%	6.1%	10.6%

15) If so, how many?[3]

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. One	10.1%	9.4%	9.6%
2. Two	47.5%	37.3%	41.8%
3. Three	13.4%	17.8%	15.7%
4. Four	2.1%	2.4%	2.2%
5. Five or more	2.1%	1.9%	2.1%
Not applicable	16.8%	27.2%	22.3%
Lack of data	8%	4%	6.2%

[3] Question answered by those who chose answer 1 or 2 in question no 14.

16) I learn the most important things about love mainly from:
(Mark your 3 most important sources)

	Boys	Girls	Total
a. Parents	71%	66.6%	68.2%
b. Grandparents	41.7%	37.3%	38.8%
c. Teachers	18.2%	15.8%	16.8%
d. Professionals invited by the school	8.7%	5.7%	7.1%
e. Religious leaders (church/mosque/etc.)	15.9%	9.1%	12.1%
f. Peers	20.9%	32.2%	26.8%
g. Television/radio	9.6%	12.9%	11.7%
h. Magazines	1.2%	0.6%	0.9%
i. Internet	28.3%	38.9%	33.9%
j. Books	8.9%	24.4%	17%
Lack of data	14.3%	9.4%	12.1%

17) I learn the most important things about sexuality mainly from:
(Mark your 3 most important sources)

	Boys	Girls	Total
a. Parents	32.1%	28.7%	30.1%
b. Grandparents	7.2%	5.1%	6.1%
c. Teachers	38.2%	35.4%	36.7%
d. Professionals invited by the school	24.3%	21.3%	22.7%
e. Religious leaders	5.8%	6.2%	6.1%
f. Peers	29.1%	39.5%	34.5%
g. Television/radio	14%	15.9%	15%
h. Magazines	4.5%	3.3%	3.9%
i. Internet	48.5%	57.2%	53.1%
j. Books	8%	13.7%	11%
Lack of data	15%	11.8%	13.5%

18) In your opinion. which sources of knowledge about love and sexuality can be trusted most? (Choose exactly 3 answers)

	Boys	Girls	Total
a. Parents	85%	77.4%	80.5%
b. Grandparents	44.9%	40.3%	42.1%
c. Teachers	40.1%	32.3%	35.8%
d. Professionals invited by the school	30.9%	33%	31.8%
e. Religious leaders	11.2%	8%	9.3%
f. Peers	20.9%	34.7%	28.3%
g. Television/radio	5.8%	4.9%	5.4%
h. Magazines	1.6%	1.1%	1.4%
i. Internet	22.9%	32.2%	28%
j. Books	7.9%	15.9%	12.4%
Lack of data	5.2%	2.4%	4%

19) How much are you afraid that someone in your school may harm or scare you, or take something from you?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Very much afraid	4.9%	7%	6.1%
2. Somewhat afraid	14.3%	20.2%	17.7%
3. Hard to say	13.8%	14.2%	13.8%
4. Not really afraid	33.5%	35.2%	34%
5. Not afraid at all	31.8%	22.9%	26.9%
Lack of data	1.7%	0.5%	1.4%

20) How often did someone from your class hit or push you, or damage or destroy something that was yours in the last 30 DAYS, when you were at school?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. It did not happen	55.3%	77.1%	66%
2. Once during that period	21.5%	11%	16.3%
3. A few times over that period	11.2%	7.8%	9.3%
4. Once or twice a week	5.4%	2.2%	3.8%
5. Daily or every other day	5.6%	1.4%	3.4%
Lack of data	1%	0.5%	1.1%

21) How often did someone from your class ridicule, or humiliate or tease you in the last 30 DAYS?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. It did not happen	51%	55.6%	52.9%
2. Once during that period	18.5%	18.8%	18.7%
3. A few times over that period	14.8%	15.6%	15.1%
4. Once or twice a week	7.3%	4.5%	5.9%
5. Daily or every other day	6.6%	4.9%	6%
Lack of data	1.7%	0.6%	1.5%

22) During the last 30 DAYS. when you were at school, how often were you in one of the following situations: you hit or pushed someone from your class, or damaged or destroyed their things?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. It did not happen	62.8%	86.1%	74.5%
2. Once during that period	22.9%	9.7%	16%
3. A few times over that period	6.1%	1.8%	3.8%
4. Once or twice a week	4.4%	1.1%	2.7%
5. Daily or every other day	2.3%	1%	1.7%
Lack of data	1.6%	0.3%	1.2%

23) During the last 30 DAYS, how often were you in one of the following situations: you ridiculed or humiliated someone from your class, or talked to them in a teasing way?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. It did not happen	62%	74.5%	67.8%
2. Once during that period	21.1%	17.5%	19.3%
3. A few times over that period	8.4%	3.8%	6.1%
4. Once or twice a week	4.7%	1.4%	2.9%
5. Daily or every other day	2.1%	1.4%	2%
Lack of data	1.7%	1.3%	1.9%

24) How many times did you take part in fighting at school or near school in the last 30 DAYS?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Not once	67.5%	81.8%	74.7%
2. 1–2 times	23.7%	15.3%	19.1%
3. 3–5 times	4.4%	1.4%	2.8%
4. 6–9 times	1.4%	0.5%	0.9%
5. 10–19 times	0.3%	0%	0.2%
6. More than 20 times	0.9%	0.6%	1%
Lack of data	1.7%	0.3%	1.3%

25) How often (if ever) did you take part in cyberbullying in the last 30 DAYS, e.g. by ridiculing. smearing or otherwise bullying someone on the internet or by mobile phone?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Never	83.8%	89.5%	86.3%
2. 1–2 times	11%	8.1%	9.7%
3. 3–5 times	2.1%	1%	1.5%
4. 6–10 times	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
5. More than 10 times	1%	0.8%	1%
Lack of data	1.9%	0.5%	1.5%

26) How often (if ever) did you fall victim to cyberbullying in the last 30 DAYS, e.g. you were ridiculed, smeared or otherwise bullied by someone on the internet or by mobile phone?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Never	79.8%	75.6%	77.1%
2. 1–2 times	15%	17.5%	16.4%
3. 3–5 times	2.8%	3.5%	3.2%
4. 6–10 times	0.3%	1.1%	0.9%
5. More than 10 times	0.5%	1.8%	1.1%
Lack of data	1.6%	0.5%	1.3%

27) How often did you feel stressed because of school duties in the last 30 DAYS?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Every day	29.7%	61.6%	46.6%
2. Once or twice a week	24.4%	13.9%	18.7%
3. Several times a month	18.5%	10.5%	14.2%
4. Several times over that period	13.8%	9.1%	11.1%
5. Not once	11.3%	4.1%	7.6%
Lack of data	2.3%	0.8%	1.9%

28) How often did you feel lonely in the last 7 DAYS?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Never or rarely	50.8%	28.7%	38.9%
2. Sometimes	33.3%	36.5%	34.6%
3. Often	10.6%	23.6%	17.6%
4. All the time	3.5%	10.4%	7.3%
Lack of data	1.7%	1%	1.6%

29) How often did you feel depressed in the last 7 DAYS?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Never or rarely	59.2%	34.4%	45.7%
2. Sometimes	23.9%	29.5%	26.6%
3. Often	10.6%	24.7%	18%
4. All the time	4.4%	10.7%	7.9%
Lack of data	1.9%	0.8%	1.8%

30) How often did you feel like crying in the last 7 DAYS?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Never or rarely	63%	15.1%	37.6%
2. Sometimes	25.5%	33%	29.1%
3. Often	6.5%	30.1%	18.8%
4. All the time	3.1%	20.7%	12.7%
Lack of data	1.9%	1.1%	1.8%

31) How often did you think of self-harm in the last 30 DAYS?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Never	71.7%	52.2%	61%
2. Rarely	14.1%	17.8%	16%
3. Sometimes	6.5%	17%	11.9%
4. Often	3.5%	10.2%	7.3%
Lack of data	4.2%	2.7%	3.8%

32) Did you have any serious trouble/problem in the last 30 DAYS (e.g. connected with your school, your life, relationships with peers, parents, siblings etc.)?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. No	66.1%	50%	57.2%
2. Yes	23.4%	41.9%	33.3%
Lack of data	10.5%	8.1%	9.5%

33) If so, did you tell anyone about that difficulty/problem? (Circle all the answers that concern you)[4]

	Boys	Girls	Total
a. I didn't tell anyone about that	13.1%	16.7%	15.1%
b. I talked about that with a friend (a boy/a girl)	9.1%	23.2%	16.5%
c. I talked about that with my mum or dad	8.9%	13.9%	11.4%
d. I talked about that with another person from my family (specify……)	4%	5.7%	4.8%
e. I talked about that with a teacher/ form teacher/ counsellor at school	2.8%	6.8%	4.8%
f. I talked about that with another adult (who?.....)	1.7%	3.2%	2.5%
g. I used a helpline or some other form of anonymous counselling, e.g. by mail	1%	1%	1%
Not applicable	64.6%	47.6%	55.2%
Lack of data	4.7%	2.2%	3.8%

34) Did that conversation help you to deal with your difficulty/problem?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Definitely yes	7.3%	10.7%	8.9%
2. Mostly yes	12.4%	18.5%	15.6%
3. Mostly no	6.8%	10.5%	8.8%
4. Definitely no	7.9%	7%	7.7%
Not applicable	58.6%	45.9%	51.5%
Lack of data	7%	7.5%	7.5%

35) Did you have any suicidal thoughts in the last 30 DAYS?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. No	77.3%	62.1%	68.8%
2. Yes, once	12.6%	18.8%	15.8%
3. Yes, twice or more frequently	5.8%	15.9%	11.3%
Lack of data	4.4%	3.2%	4.1%

36) Did you keep company with young people in the last 30 DAYS where:
a. Beer, wine or vodka and other spirits was drunk?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. No	79.8%	76.6%	77.7%
2. Yes, 1-2 times	8.4%	13.7%	11.2%
3. Yes, 3-10 times	6.1%	5.7%	5.9%
4. Yes, 11-19 times	2.3%	1.6%	1.9%
5. Yes, 20 times or more	1.6%	1.4%	1.6%
Lack of data	1.9%	1%	1.7%

b. Drugs were used?

[4] Questions 33 and 34 answered by those who chose answer 2 in question no 32.

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. No	96%	95.4%	95.3%
2. Yes, 1-2 times	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%
3. Yes, 3-10 times	0.5%	0.8%	0.7%
4. Yes, 11-19 times	0.2%	0.5%	0.3%
5. Yes, 20 times or more	0.2%	0.5%	0.4%
Lack of data	1.6%	1.3%	1.7%

c. Cigarettes were smoked?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. No	86.7%	85.5%	85.8%
2. Yes, 1-2 times	5.1%	6.5%	5.7%
3. Yes, 3-10 times	3.1%	2.5%	2.8%
4. Yes, 11-19 times	1%	2.2%	1.6%
5. Yes, 20 times or more	1.7%	1.9%	2%
Lack of data	2.3%	1.3%	2%

37) Do you currently smoke:

a. Cigarettes or other tobacco products

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. No	93.2%	92.2%	92.2%
2. Yes, several times a year	2.8%	2.5%	2.7%
3. Yes, several times a month	1.2%	2.1%	1.6%
4. Yes, several times a week	0.2%	0.8%	0.5%
5. Yes, daily	0.7%	0.6%	0.7%
Lack of data	1.9%	1.8%	2.2%

b. Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes)

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. No	93.5%	89.3%	90.8%
2. Yes, several times a year	1.9%	3.7%	2.9%
3. Yes, several times a month	1.6%	2.5%	2%
4. Yes, several times a week	0.5%	2.1%	1.4%
5. Yes, daily	0.9%	0.6%	0.8%
Lack of data	1.6%	1.8%	2%

38) On how many occasions (if any) did you use a drug (marijuana, hashish, amphetamines, ecstasy and other):

a. In the last 30 days

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Not once	95.1%	95.7%	95.2%
2. 1-2 times	1.4%	1%	1.1%
3. 3-5 times	0%	0.8%	0.4%
4. 6-9 times	0.2%	0%	0.1%
5. 10 times or more	0%	0.3%	0.2%
Lack of data	3.3%	2.2%	3%

b. In the last 6 months

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Not once	94.1%	94.3%	93.9%
2. 1-2 times	1.4%	1.1%	1.2%
3. 3-5 times	0.3%	0.5%	0.4%
4. 6-9 times	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
5. 10 times or more	0.3%	0.8%	0.7%
Lack of data	3.3%	2.9%	3.4%

39) On how many occasions did you use designer drugs or so-called smart drugs, legal highs [designer drugs are substances with effects similar to those of drugs]?

a. In the last 30 days

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Not once	95.5%	95.7%	95.2%
2. 1-2 times	1.4%	0.8%	1.1%
3. 3-5 times	0%	0.5%	0.2%
4. 6-9 times	0%	0.2%	0.1%
5. 10 times or more	0%	0.3%	0.2%
Lack of data	3.1%	2.5%	3.2%

b. In the last 6 months

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Not once	95.3%	94.3%	94.4%
2. 1-2 times	0.5%	1.8%	1.2%
3. 3-5 times	0.2%	0.5%	0.3%
4. 6-9 times	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%
5. 10 times or more	0.3%	0.5%	0.4%
Lack of data	3.5%	2.7%	3.4%

40) In the last 30 DAYS, did you ever participate in any form of gambling [Internet gambling, sports betting, lottery tickets, gambling machines, etc.]

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Never	83.6%	92.4%	87.8%
2. Rarely	12%	5.9%	8.8%
3. Often	1.9%	1%	1.5%
Lack of data	2.4%	0.8%	1.9%

41) On how many occasions (if any) did you drink anything alcoholic (beer, wine, vodka and other spirits)?

a. In the last 7 days

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Not once	81.5%	78.8%	79.8%
2. 1-2 times	11.2%	13.4%	12.4%
3. 3-5 times	2.6%	2.5%	2.5%
4. 6-9 times	0.7%	1.6%	1.1%
Lack of data	4%	3.7%	4.1%

b. In the last 30 days

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Not once	70.2%	68%	68.7%
2. 1-2 times	12.7%	15.1%	13.9%
3. 3-5 times	6.6%	8.4%	7.6%
4. 6-9 times	3%	2.7%	2.9%
5. 10 -19 times	1.6%	1.8%	1.6%
6. 20 times or more	0.5%	1.6%	1.1%
Lack of data	5.4%	2.4%	4.2%

c. In the last 6 months

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Not once	57.6%	51.8%	54.3%
2. 1-2 times	17.3%	19.9%	18.7%
3. 3-5 times	8.4%	9.1%	8.7%
4. 6-9 times	4.4%	5.7%	5.1%
5. 10 -19 times	3.5%	4.9%	4.3%
6. 20 times or more	4.5%	5.3%	5%
Lack of data	4.4%	3.3%	4.1%

42) On how many occasions (if any) did you get really drunk with alcoholic beverages (beer, wine, vodka and other spirits) in the last 30 DAYS? [Really drunk means that you had at least one of these symptoms: you could not walk straight; you could not speak properly; you threw up (vomited); you did not remember what had happened]

a. In the last 7 days

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Not once	94.1%	93.5%	93.5%
2. 1-2 times	2.1%	4.3%	3.2%
3. 3-5 times	0.2%	0.5%	0.3%
4. 6-9 times	0.3%	0%	0.2%
Lack of data	3.3%	1.8%	2.8%

b. In the last 30 days

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Not once	92.1%	89.5%	90.3%
2. 1-2 times	2.6%	5.7%	4.4%
3. 3-5 times	0.7%	1.9%	1.3%
4. 6-9 times	0.5%	0.3%	0.4%
5. 10 -19 times	0%	0%	0%
6. 20 times or more	0.3%	0%	0.2%
Lack of data	3.7%	2.5%	3.4%

c. In the last 6 months

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Not once	89.2%	83.8%	85.9%
2. 1-2 times	5.4%	8%	6.7%
3. 3-5 times	1.4%	3.3%	2.6%
4. 6-9 times	0.5%	1.6%	1.1%
5. 10 -19 times	0.5%	1.1%	0.8%
6. 20 times or more	0.3%	0.5%	0.4%
Lack of data	2.6%	1.8%	2.5%

43) How difficult do you think it would be for you to get access to the following substances, if you wanted to?

a. Alcohol

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Impossible	20.8%	14.5%	17.3%
2. Very difficult	8.2%	7.8%	7.9%
3. Quite difficult	9.2%	11.8%	10.5%
4. Quite easy	25.7%	25.3%	25.3%
5. Very easy	26%	30.9%	29%
6. I don’t know	7%	8.6%	7.7%
Lack of data	3.1%	1.1%	2.4%

b. Drugs

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Impossible	51%	47.1%	48.6%
2. Very difficult	13.1%	13.1%	13%
3. Quite difficult	9.6%	11.1%	10.3%
4. Quite easy	6.6%	9.6%	8.3%
5. Very easy	2.8%	4.1%	3.6%
6. I don’t know	13.4%	13.7%	13.5%
Lack of data	3.5%	1.3%	2.6%

c. Designer drugs

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Impossible	52.7%	50%	50.9%
2. Very difficult	10.8%	12.9%	11.9%
3. Quite difficult	7.9%	9.4%	8.8%
4. Quite easy	5.2%	5.9%	5.6%
5. Very easy	3%	3.5%	3.2%
6. I don’t know	17.1%	16.4%	16.7%
Lack of data	3.3%	1.9%	2.9%

d. Cigarettes

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Impossible	32.5%	27.7%	29.8%
2. Very difficult	9.8%	10%	9.7%
3. Quite difficult	6.3%	9.6%	7.9%
4. Quite easy	17.6%	18%	18.1%
5. Very easy	23%	22.6%	22.8%
6. I don't know	7.9%	10.2%	9%
Lack of data	3%	1.9%	2.7%

44) Imagine that a group of friends you care about offers you a car ride. You can see that the driver is under the influence of alcohol. What would you do?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. I would definitely go	2.6%	1.8%	2.2%
2. I would probably go	3%	3.2%	3.1%
3. Hard to say	7.3%	6.8%	7%
4. I probably wouldn't go	28.3%	26.1%	27%
5. I definitely wouldn't go	56.7%	61.3%	58.8%
Lack of data	2.1%	0.8%	1.8%

45) Do you think drinking alcohol helps to feel at ease on a date?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Definitely yes	2.6%	4.1%	3.4%
2. Mostly yes	10.5%	14.8%	12.8%
3. Hard to say	26.2%	29%	27.9%
4. Mostly no	18.3%	18.6%	18.2%
5. Definitely no	40%	32.8%	35.9%
Lack of data	2.4%	0.6%	1.8%

46) Do you think drinking alcohol helps to get to know a girl/a boy?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Definitely yes	3.3%	2.7%	3.1%
2. Mostly yes	6.6%	8.3%	7.5%
3. Hard to say	16.8%	13.1%	14.9%
4. Mostly no	17.5%	19.4%	18.7%
5. Definitely no	51.8%	55.6%	52.9%
Lack of data	4%	1%	2.8%

47) Which sentence from each pair do you agree with? A or B? Circle appropriate numbers.

If you agree with sentence A. circle 'A' or 'Mostly A'. and if you agree with sentence B. circle 'B' or 'Mostly B'

a) A. I think I would be very prone to sexual proposals when dating with someone.
B. I am sure that I would set boundaries at a date so as not to engage in sexual activity.

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. A	9.1%	6.1%	7.4%
2. Mostly A	13.6%	12.6%	13.1%
3. Hard to say	23%	15.6%	19%
4. Mostly B	19.9%	24.7%	22.5%
5. B	27.1%	37.3%	32.2%
Lack of data	7.3%	3.8%	5.8%

b) A. It is better to start having sexual intercourse as a teenager.
B. It is better to start having sexual intercourse as an adult.

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. A	7.2%	5.4%	6.3%
2. Mostly A	11%	11%	10.9%
3. Hard to say	16.6%	18.2%	17.7%
4. Mostly B	20.9%	22.5%	21.7%
5. B	36.6%	40%	38%
Lack of data	7.7%	3%	5.5%

c) A. It is better to wait with starting sexual intercourse until getting married.
B. It is better to start having sexual intercourse before getting married.

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. A	21.8%	18.6%	19.9%
2. Mostly A	13.8%	13.5%	13.6%
3. Hard to say	20.6%	21.2%	20.8%
4. Mostly B	18.2%	23.2%	20.8%
5. B	16.9%	20.4%	19%
Lack of data	8.7%	3%	6%

d) A. I think about sexual intercourse as fun and exciting.
B. I think about sexual intercourse as something important and wonderful.

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. A	11.2%	11.9%	11.8%
2. Mostly A	13.8%	15.3%	14.6%
3. Hard to say	31.1%	33.8%	32.2%
4. Mostly B	16.1%	19.1%	17.6%
5. B	19.2%	15%	16.9%
Lack of data	8.7%	4.9%	7%

e) A. I would prefer dates with mainly conversations and spending time together, without heading for sexual contacts.

B. I would prefer dates with mainly sexual arousal, heading towards sexual contact.

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. A	38.7%	53.3%	46.2%
2. Mostly A	24.8%	28.3%	26.5%
3. Hard to say	18.2%	10.4%	13.9%
4. Mostly B	6.5%	3.2%	4.7%
5. B	3.5%	1.4%	2.5%
Lack of data	8.4%	3.3%	6.1%

f) A. I prefer films that show how sexual contacts between a man and a woman develop.

B. I prefer films that show how emotional relationship between a man and a woman develops.

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. A	7.7%	6.5%	7.3%
2. Mostly A	6.8%	9.6%	8.2%
3. Hard to say	27.4%	19.6%	23%
4. Mostly B	20.1%	24.4%	22.3%
5. B	28.8%	36.8%	32.9%
Lack of data	9.2%	3.2%	6.4%

g) A. If erotic scenes are presented on TV, it is better when sexual intercourse is not shown.

B. If erotic scenes are presented on TV, it is better when sexual intercourse is clearly shown.

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. A	27.2%	27.1%	26.9%
2. Mostly A	14.5%	19.7%	17.2%
3. Hard to say	28.3%	28%	27.9%
4. Mostly B	11.5%	12.1%	11.9%
5. B	9.4%	9.6%	9.7%
Lack of data	9.1%	3.5%	6.5%

48) How many times in the last 30 DAYS did you find yourself in the following situations?

a. You had a fleeting (non-intentional) contact with erotic or pornographic images or texts

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Not once	51%	62.3%	56.2%
2. 1-2 times	20.4%	22%	21.2%
3. 3-5 times	9.2%	7.6%	8.6%
4. 6-10 times	6.3%	2.5%	4.3%
5. 11-30 times	3.1%	1.9%	2.6%
6. More than 30 times	3.8%	1.1%	2.4%
Lack of data	6.1%	2.5%	4.7%

b. You intentionally watched (on television, internet, in the cinema or in magazines) erotic or pornographic images or read erotic or pornographic texts

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Not once	49.2%	65.4%	57.2%
2. 1-2 times	12.7%	16.7%	14.6%
3. 3-5 times	9.6%	5.7%	7.5%
4. 6-10 times	7%	4.9%	5.9%
5. 11-30 times	6.8%	2.5%	5%
6. More than 30 times	7.5%	2.4%	4.8%
Lack of data	7.2%	2.2%	4.9%

49) If you intentionally watched pornography in the last 30 DAYS, circle the 2 most frequent sources[5]

	Boys	Girls	Total
a. Internet on a mobile device (smartphone/ tablet)	40.8%	29.3%	34.9%
b. Internet on a computer	19.7%	14.5%	17%
c. Phone call/ SMS	1.2%	1.9%	1.6%
d. Television	3.7%	4.9%	4.3%
e. Magazines	0.5%	1%	0.7%
Not applicable	43.5%	61.3%	52.4%
Lack of data	10.6%	3.7%	7.4%

50) If you intentionally watched pornography on the internet in the last 30 DAYS, circle all the sources you used for such content:[6]

	Boys	Girls	Total
a. Pornographic websites marked 18+	21.1%	11.3%	16.3%
b. Pornographic websites not marked like that	11.2%	8%	9.5%
c. Ordinary websites (information, sports, music, etc.) with pornographic elements	2.3%	3%	2.7%
d. Social networking websites (Facebook, Instagram, etc.)	4.9%	6.4%	5.9%
e. Chats, forums, etc.	1.9%	1.6%	1.8%
f. Mobile applications	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%
g. Games	1.7%	1.1%	1.5%
h. Other	2.4%	2.7%	2.5%
Not applicable	54.5%	69.6%	61.7%
Lack of data	12.3%	4.5%	7.8%

[5]Question answered by those who chose answer 2 to 6 in question no 48.

[6] Question answered by those who chose answer a or b in question no 49.

51) At what age did you first have contact with pornography?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Before I turned 7	1.9%	2.9%	2.6%
2. Before I turned 10	12.4%	11%	11.9%
3. Before I turned 12	26.5%	19.9%	22.7%
4. Before I turned 14	25%	23.7%	24.3%
0. I have not had contact with pornography yet	26.7%	38.9%	32.6%
Lack of data	7.5%	3.7%	5.8%

52) What do you think about young children's (under 12 years old) access to pornography on the internet and in the media? It is:

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Definitely too easy	46.2%	43.8%	44.9%
2. Rather too easy	28.6%	37.4%	33.1%
3. Not too easy	11.2%	9.9%	10.4%
4. Not too easy at all	5.2%	5.6%	5.4%
Lack of data	8.7%	3.3%	6.1%

53) What do you think about youth's (in your age) access to pornography on the internet and in the media? It is:

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Definitely too easy	53.2%	64%	58.8%
2. Rather too easy	25.8%	21.8%	23.6%
3. Not too easy	8.6%	7.6%	8.%
4. Not too easy at all	4.9%	3.2%	3.9%
Lack of data	7.5%	3.3%	5.6%

54) Have you ever had a contact with another person which involved touching naked intimate parts of the body (but without full sexual intercourse)?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. No	82.7%	83.3%	82.6%
2. Yes	11.3%	15.8%	13.7%
Lack of data	5.9%	1%	3.7%

55) Have you ever had sexual intercourse?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. No	89%	93.6%	90.9%
2. Yes	4.5%	4.8%	4.7%
Lack of data	6.5%	1.6%	4.3%

56) How much time has passed since your latest sexual intercourse?[7]

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Less than one month	3.3%	2.5%	2.9%
2. 1–3 months	1%	1.6%	1.3%
3. 4–6 months	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
4. 7–12 months	0.2%	0.5%	0.3%
5. More than one year	1.9%	0.6%	1.3%
Not applicable	85.7%	92.7%	88.9%
Lack of data	7.5%	1.8%	4.9%

57) The last time you had sexual intercourse, had you or the other person taken a small or bigger dose of alcohol or drugs before?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Neither of us	4.7%	4.3%	4.7%
2. Only me	0.7%	0.3%	0.5%
3. Only the other person	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
4. Both of us	0.9%	0.8%	0.8%
Not applicable	86%	92.7%	89%
Lack of data	7.5%	1.8%	4.8%

58) The last time you had sexual intercourse, did you use any method to avoid getting pregnant or becoming infected with sexually transmitted disease?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Yes (name the method _____	3.1%	2.5%	2.8%
2. No	2.8%	2.4%	2.7%
Not applicable	85.9%	93%	89.1%
Lack of data	8.2%	2.1%	5.6%

59) Did you use the morning after pill? Note: This Question is answered by girls only
a. In the last 7 days

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Not once	X	10.8%	X
2. 1-2 times	X	0.2%	X
3. 3-5 times	X	0.2%	X
Not applicable	x	86.3%	X
Lack of data	X	2.6%	X

b. In the last 30 days

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Not once	X	10.7%	X
2. 1-2 times	X	0.3%	X
3. 3-5 times	X	0.2%	X
4. 6-9 times	X	0.2%	X
5. more than 10 times	X	0%	X
Not applicable	X	86.3%	X
Lack of data	X	2.4%	X

[7] Questions 56. 57. 58. 59 answered by those who chose answer 2 in question no 55.

c. In the last 6 months

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Not once	X	10.8%	X
2. 1-2 times	X	0.6%	X
3. 3-5 times	X	0.2%	X
4. 6-9 times	X	0.3%	X
5. more than 10 times	X	0%	X
Not applicable	X	86.1%	X
Lack of data	x	1.9%	X

60) Regardless of your earlier experience, is it important for you to wait with having sexual intercourse from now until you are fully grown-up? [fully grown-up = mature, independent, able to take responsibility for your own family]

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Very important	37.9%	39.5%	38.1%
2. Rather important	25.7%	29.1%	27.7%
3. Hard to say	15.7%	17%	16.2%
4. Not really important	8.4%	9.7%	9.1%
5. Not important at all	3.7%	2.9%	3.4%
Lack of data	8.7%	1.8%	5.4%

61) Regardless of your earlier experience, is it important for you to wait with having sexual intercourse from now until getting married?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Very important	19.9%	14.5%	16.9%
2. Rather important	18.8%	15.6%	17%
3. Hard to say	20.2%	24.4%	22%
4. Not really important	17.3%	25.2%	21.5%
5. Not important at all	14.8%	18.5%	17%
Lack of data	8.9%	1.9%	5.6%

62) In your opinion, for how many peers from your school think it is important to wait with having sexual intercourse until they are fully grown-up? [fully grown-up = mature, independent, able to take responsibility for their own family]

	Boys	Girls	Total
0	4%	2.9%	3.5%
5	4.2%	6.5%	5.3%
10	2.3%	5.3%	3.8%
15	3.8%	5.6%	4.7%
20	3.7%	5.4%	4.7%
25	3.8%	3.8%	3.8%
30	4.2%	4.8%	4.5%
35	3.3%	5.3%	4.3%
40	3.7%	6.7%	5.2%
45	4%	5.3%	4.6%
50	12%	15.3%	13.7%
55	1.2%	2.5%	2%
60	5.1%	2.9%	3.9%
65	3.5%	1.9%	2.6%
70	5.4%	4.5%	4.9%
75	4.9%	4.3%	4.5%
80	4.7%	3.2%	3.8%
85	3.1%	2.2%	2.7%
90	2.6%	2.4%	2.5%
95	2.3%	1.4%	1.8%
100	4.2%	1.9%	2.9%
Lack of data	14%	6.1%	10.1%

63) In your opinion, are there any methods that give 100% certainty one will not get pregnant as a result of having sex?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Yes, there are such methods	35.1%	31.8%	33.1%
2. No, there are no such methods	25.7%	33.6%	30%
3. I don't know	25.5%	30.3%	27.8%
Lack of data	13.7%	4.2%	9%

64) If you answered yes, circle all the methods that give 100% certainty one will not get pregnant as a result of having sex:[8]

	Boys	Girls	Total
a . Contraceptive pill	16.2%	16.2%	16.4%
b. Intrauterine device, IUD (the coil)	4.9%	9.4%	7.2%
c. Condom	28.4%	20.4%	24%
d. Morning after pill	11.7%	18.9%	15.3%
e. Fertility awareness methods	7.3%	6.7%	7%
Not applicable	50.1%	63.5%	57.2%
Lack of data	10.2%	3.4%	6.8%

[8] Question answered by those who chose answer 1 in question no 63.

65) In your opinion, are there any methods that give 100% certainty one will not get infected with the HIV virus as a result of having sex?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Yes, there are such methods	22.7%	20.7%	21.4%
2. No, there are no such methods	27.6%	32.3%	30.3%
3. I don't know	31.6%	39.6%	35.7%
Lack of data	18.1%	7.3%	12.6%

66) If you answered yes, circle all the methods that give 100% certainty one will not get infected with the HIV virus as a result of having sex:[9]

	Boys	Girls	Total
a . Contraceptive pill	3.3%	2.9%	3.1%
b. Intrauterine device, IUD (the coil)	2.8%	1.9%	2.3%
c. Condom	22.3%	20.7%	21.3%
d. Morning after pill	2.8%	2.1%	2.4%
e. Fertility awareness methods	3%	3%	3%
Not applicable	57.8%	71.8%	65.1%
Lack of data	15.7%	5.9%	10.7%

67) What do you think about abortion?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. It is definitely something bad	51.5%	30.1%	40%
2. It is mostly something bad	18.7%	18.2%	18.3%
3. It is mostly nothing bad	6.3%	13.2%	10%
4. Definitely it is not something bad	5.8%	18.6%	12.7%
5. Hard to say	10.6%	18.3%	14.5%
Lack of data	7.2%	1.6%	4.5%

[9] Question answered by those who chose answer 1 in question no 65.

68) Some adults are an example of a good way of life, conduct, character, knowledge and skills. Who of the adults around you are presently the most important guides in your life? Mark no more than 3 most important persons.

	Boys	Girls	Total
a. Mum	74.2%	82.8%	78.5%
b. Dad	65.4%	59.6%	61.9%
c. Grandmother	23.9%	31.7%	27.9%
d. Grandfather	12.4%	6.5%	9.2%
e. Aunt	4.2%	17.5%	11.2%
f. Uncle	8.2%	3.2%	5.5%
g. Adult brother/male cousin	12.2%	11.5%	11.9%
h. Adult sister/female cousin	7.9%	17%	12.8%
i. Teacher, form teacher, counsellor from your school	13.3%	11%	12.2%
j. Psychologist, counsellor from outside your school	2.8%	5.1%	4.1%
k. Sports coach	3.1%	3.2%	3.1%
l. Scout instructor	0.5%	0.2%	0.3%
m. Cleric, priest or nun	1.4%	0.5%	0.9%
n. Layperson from a religious group or community	1%	0.5%	0.7%
o. Other	3.8%	9.6%	6.7%
Lack of data	17.6%	6.5%	11.9%

69) Did you talk frankly to your parents (or other adults who take care of you), about matters that are important to you, in the last 6 MONTHS?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. No	34.6%	28.2%	31%
2. Yes, about single matters from among those important to me	14.7%	21.2%	18.1%
3. Yes, about some of the matters that are important to me	16.2%	19.3%	18%
4. Yes, about most matters that are important to me	11.2%	11.9%	11.5%
5. Yes, about anything that bothered me	13.1%	17.5%	15.3%
Lack of data	10.3%	1.9%	6.1%

70) Did you feel really heard and understood the last time you talked about matters that are important to you?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Definitely no	3%	6.4%	4.8%
2. Mostly no	9.8%	16.2%	13.2%
3. Mostly yes	24.8%	30.7%	28%
4. Definitely yes	16.9%	16.7%	16.6%
0. I have not talked about such matters	34.6%	27.4%	30.6%
Lack of data	11%	2.5%	6.8%

71) Did you talk to your parents (or other adults who take care of you) about matters concerning sexuality that was interesting to you in the last 6 months?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. No	67.9%	67.2%	67.1%
2. Yes, about single matters from among those important to me	7.5%	12.6%	10.4%
3. Yes, about some of the matters that are important to me	2.8%	5.6%	4.2%
4. Yes, about most matters that are important to me	4.9%	5.1%	5.0%
5. Yes, about anything that bothered me	4.7%	6.5%	5.7%
Lack of data	12.2%	3%	7.6%

72) Did you feel really heard and understood the last time you talked about sexuality?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Definitely no	3.5%	4.8%	4.2%
2. Mostly no	4.2%	6.8%	5.6%
3. Mostly yes	12.6%	14.8%	13.7%
4. Definitely yes	7.5%	8.4%	8.1%
0. I have not talked about such matters	61.3%	63.4%	62%
Lack of data	11%	1.8%	6.4%

73) I live permanently with the following adults:[10]

	Boys	Girls	Total
a. Biological parents (mother and father)	67.9%	73.1%	70.1%
b. Adoptive parents (mother and father)	1.2%	2.4%	1.8%
c. Mother only	7%	8.3%	7.8%
d. Father only	1.7%	1.3%	1.5%
e. Mother and stepfather	4.2%	4.5%	4.4%
f. Father and stepmother	1.2%	1%	1.1%
g. Some days with mother, some days with father in separate home	5.2%	5.9%	5.6%
h. Other_____	1.9%	3%	2.5%
Lack of data	11.3%	1.8%	6.6%

[10] The multiple choice question

74) Have your parents split up or got divorced? (if you have lived in an adoptive or foster family for years, this question refers to your adoptive or foster parents):

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. No	68.4%	74.8%	71.4%
2. They are now in the process of splitting up/ getting divorced	0.7%	2.7%	1.8%
3. Yes, they have split up/ got divorced but currently they are together again	2.3%	1.6%	1.9%
4. Yes, they have split up/ got divorced and they are not together now	16.9%	17.5%	17.3%
Lack of data	11.7%	3.3%	7.6%

75) What do you think about your family's present material situation?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. We don't have enough money even for our basic needs	1%	1.8%	1.5%
2. We have to be very economical on a daily basis	2.8%	4.9%	3.9%
3. We have enough money for our daily life, but have to save for more serious purchases	38.2%	38.7%	38.2%
4. We can afford to buy things without saving much	29.7%	32.2%	30.6%
5. We can afford some luxury	15.2%	18.6%	17.1%
Lack of data	13.1%	3.8%	8.7%

76M) What is your nationality?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Maltese	68.8%	79%	73.8%
2. Other	8.4%	8.9%	8.8%
Lack of data	22.9%	12.1%	17.4%

77M). If you are a foreigner for how long have you lived in Malta/ Gozo? [11]

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Less than two years	2.6%	1.1%	1.9%
2. Three to five years	5.2%	4.5%	4.8%
3. Six to ten years	3.5%	4.1%	3.8%
4. More than ten years	5.2%	5.6%	5.4%
Not applicable	67.2%	78%	72.6%
Lack of data	16.2%	6.7%	11.5%

[11] Question answered by those who chose answer 2 in question no 76M.

78) What is your religion (if any)?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Non-believer	11.3%	13.7%	12.8%
2. Catholic	67.4%	68.6%	67.3%
3. Orthodox	1.6%	2.7%	2.1%
4. Protestant	0.3%	0.8%	0.6%
5. Jewish	0.2%	0%	0.1%
6. Muslim	2.6%	4.3%	3.5%
7. Other	3.5%	4.6%	4.1%
Lack of data	13.1%	5.3%	9.5%

79) How often do you take part in religious practices (services, masses or other religious gatherings)?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Never	23.7%	28.8%	26.8%
2. Less than once a month	14.8%	21.8%	18.3%
3. 1–2 times a month	12.2%	15.8%	13.9%
4. Once a week or more often	37.7%	30.9%	33.7%
Lack of data	11.5%	2.7%	7.2%

80) How often in your everyday life do your thoughts turn to God, no matter how you understand Him?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Never	17.6%	22.5%	20.3%
2. Several times a year	15.2%	18.8%	17.2%
3. Several times a month	15.2%	18.2%	16.5%
4. Several times a week	22%	24.2%	22.9%
5. Several times a day	18.3%	13.5%	15.7%
Lack of data	11.7%	2.9%	7.4%

81M) What was your average grade at the end of the last school year?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. 0-20%	1.2%	0.8%	1.1%
2. 21-40%	3%	4.3%	3.7%
3. 41-61%	12.9%	15.4%	14.2%
4. 62-80%	44.2%	45.5%	44.7%
5. 81-100%	23.7%	27.4%	25.5%
Lack of data	15%	6.5%	10.9%

82M) How fluently do you speak the following languages?

a. English

	Boys	Girls	Total
0. Not fluently at all	0.2%	0.5%	0.5%
1. Poorly	1%	1.3%	1.1%
2. Not badly	8.6%	6.5%	7.5%
3. Well	37.5%	32%	34.2%
4. Excellently	41.2%	58%	49.9%
Lack of data	11.5%	1.8%	6.7%

b. Maltese

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Not fluently at all	4.4%	4.3%	4.4%
2. Poorly	4.7%	6.4%	5.6%
3. Not badly	15.7%	11.9%	13.9%
4. Well	22.9%	27.4%	25.1%
5. Excellently	40.8%	48.4%	44.4%
Lack of data	11.5%	1.6%	6.6%

83) Are your parents, (or any other member of your family) helpful with your schoolwork and school projects?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Never	8%	10.7%	9.6%
2. Rarely	14.5%	17.4%	15.9%
3. Sometimes	31.8%	32.5%	31.9%
4. Often	33.5%	36.8%	35%
Lack of data	12.2%	2.7%	7.6%

84) How many classes did you decide to miss in the LAST FOUR SCHOOL WEEKS (not counting holidays)?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. None	67.4%	72.6%	69.6%
2. 1–2 classes	11.9%	13.1%	12.5%
3. 3–5 classes	5.1%	6.5%	5.9%
4. 5–10 classes	2.3%	3.3%	2.9%
5. 10–20 classes	0.9%	1.3%	1.1%
6. More than 20 classes	1.2%	1%	1.1%
Lack of data	11.3%	2.2%	6.9%

85M) Did you have thoughts of giving up school in the last 6 MONTHS?

	Boys	Girls	Total
1. No	49.6%	40.1%	44.2%
2. Yes. once	21.1%	23.4%	22.3%
3. Yes. several times	10.3%	20.7%	15.9%
4. Yes. more often than several times	7.7%	14.2%	11.1%
Lack of data	11.3%	1.6%	6.5%

86) The Covid-19 epidemic continues. What it is now the most troublesome issue for you? (Please select no more than 3 answers)

	Boys	Girls	Total
a. School sanitary rules	28.3%	15.6%	21.6%
b. Overload with school material	30.9%	47.3%	39.4%
c. The need to wear masks in public spaces (outside the school)	33.7%	28.8%	31%
d. The need for frequent hand disinfection (outside the school)	7.2%	3.2%	5%
e. Nervous atmosphere at home	5.2%	8%	6.8%
f. Fear for your own health	17.6%	18.3%	17.9%
g. Fear for the health of family and relatives	29.1%	39.6%	34.5%
h. Boredom	26.2%	23.4%	24.5%
i. Restrictions on meetings peers	17.5%	31.5%	24.7%
j. Restrictions on spending free time (no big concerts. restrictions in cinemas ...)	18%	36.1%	27.3%
k. Other	7.2%	9.4%	8.3%
Lack of data	15.7%	7.2%	11.6%