

BALKAN EPIDEMIOLOGICAL STUDY ON CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT (BECAN)

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



BECAN SURVEY ON CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT (CAN) IN SAMPLES OF CHILDREN WHO HAVE DROPPED-OUT OF SCHOOL

Institute of Child Health
Department of Mental Health and Social Welfare
Centre for the Study and Prevention
of Child Abuse and Neglect



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INTRODUCTION

The Project “Balkan Epidemiological Study on Child Abuse and Neglect” (B.E.C.A.N.) run from September 2009 until January 2013 in 9 Balkan countries and was co-funded by the EU’s 7th Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (FP7/2007-2013)¹ and the participating partner organizations. The project’s coordinator was the Institute of Child Health, Department of Mental Health and Social Welfare, Centre for the Study and Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ICH-MHSW), in Athens (Greece), while the national coordinators for each of the participating countries were the following Organizations:

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

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

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

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

¹ Grant Agreement No: HEALTH-F2-2009-223478.

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

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

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

The current report aims to provide a picture of the supplementary surveys that were conducted with convenience samples of children that have dropped-out from school in countries where the drop-out rates are high as well as to provide a justification for the reasons why in some countries such surveys were not necessary or feasible to be conducted.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Surveys with children that have dropped-out of school were not conducted in Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece and Serbia. The reasons why such a survey was not conducted is described below, per country.

Supplementary surveys were conducted to convenience samples of children (and their parents) that have dropped-out of school in countries where the drop-out rates are high for producing estimates of respectful CAN indicators at national level. More specifically, such surveys were conducted in Bulgaria, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Romania, and Turkey.

Data collection was conducted via the two of the ISPCAN Child Abuse Screening Tools (ICAST) and more specifically the ICAST-CH and ICAST-P questionnaires, modified, translated and culturally adapted for use in the respective Balkan countries. The provisioned method of data collection was structured interviews.

In an effort to identify the children that have dropped out of school, in each school that was included in the main epidemiological study, the national teams tried to gather contact details on the targeted children that used to attend school the year before (or earlier in the same year), but they did not continue attending school this year. Subsequently, it was provided that families of those children to be contacted and visited by the research teams in order for the data to be collected. The interviews were provisioned to take place either at participants' home or in another safe place, according to family's preference. Communication with organizations offering services to children that have dropped out of school was another method of identification of targeted children and their parents.

Instructions and guidelines for the implementation of the surveys were included in the "Training Manual and Guidelines for Researchers for the modified ICAST-CH and ICAST-P Questionnaires". In addition, after the realization of the Train-the-Trainers Workshop national teams conducted Field Researchers' Training Workshops.

More information about the organization, implementation and results of the surveys with convenience samples of children (and their parents) that have dropped-out of school can be found in the respective national reports of countries that conducted such supplementary surveys. Table 1 summarizes each country's children and parents' samples.

Table 1. Description of drop-out children's and parents' sample by age group and country

Country	Completed ICAST-CH			Completed ICAST-P		
	11 year olds	13 year olds	16 year olds	11 year olds	13 year olds	16 year olds
Bulgaria	3	17*	1**	1	4	-
FYROM	6	11	6	-	-	1
Romania	14	12	27	44		
Turkey	10	20	241	1	4	42

* 14 children were 13 year olds, and 3 children 14 year olds

**15 year old

Albania

After a careful review and considerations between NAB in Albania and the research team it was decided not to include any data from the drop out study in the final research. The reasons behind this decision are as following:

1. Albania has a low official dropout rate compared to the overall number of children attending the education system.
2. The team responsible for the study, planned to use 100 questionnaires, 50 to be implemented by directly interviewing children who had dropped out of school and 50 parents. The method of passive consent was used. The Research Team it did not receive back any parental consent for ages 11 and 13 despite laborious efforts to visit the entire social centres where children who had dropout of school would attend or visit. Several centres serving to street children, abandoned or at risk children were visited by the Research Team. Information letters or parents to participate in the study together with Consent Forms were distributed to 50 parents at 4 centres.
3. The Research Team found that in practice it was impossible to interview children 16 years of age, as most of them, although may have dropped out of school, have found some form of manual labour. The starting age of formal employment in Albania is 14.
4. The team tried also to reach out to parents, but was clear from beginning that the majority of parents of children that represented an interest for the study did not know to read and write and getting their permission for interviewing was not possible.

Because of all these major challenges it was impossible to implement the research under such circumstances despite the fact that efforts were actually dedicated to bring about this part of the project's initial design as its particular implementation was found not feasible. Nevertheless, as a result of all the feasibility studying efforts of the national Research Team an outcome was eventually recording perplexities posed by this particular objective; and in turn, if in the foreseeable future some additional resources could be secured, some such attempt could be substantially facilitated by the preliminary work carried out by the BECAN project since by pointing out specificities of the problem at stake it also indicated the inevitably differentiated methodology of approach that should be employed and the special planning required which was assessed going far beyond the scope and provisos of the BECAN project (i.e. using different instruments for conducting research, involving other type of resources than schools to get access and motivate children that drop out etc).

Bosnia & Herzegovina

Due to the complex administrative structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)², the educational system is highly complex and decentralized facing the lack of coordination among all institution in charged. The overall number of 13 ministries in BiH is in charged for educational system at some instance. There are two ministries which have mostly coordination function: Ministry of Civil Affairs, the institution which is in charged for coordination of educational system at state level and Federal Ministry of Education and Science which coordinates operation of 10 cantonal ministries in relation to Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Srpska (RS) and services in charge for education in Brčko District. Monitoring, planning, and implementation of education policies are responsibilities of each of cantonal ministries in Federation of BiH (with a support of the Federal Ministry) and Ministry of Education and Culture in RS. More than 30 different laws at different state levels regulate the education system in BiH.

The overview above was needed to offer a wider insight in the administrative structure which provides basis for the system of any data collection relating to education in BiH. Any of the institutions above does not offer comprehensive database relating statistics on drop-outs rate in the country on the annual basis. As the results of MDGIF study (2011)³ demonstrate, the data collected on by centres for social work, pedagogical institutes, municipality bureaus, and schools are scarce as well. According to this study 94% of children in BiH attend primary school. Furthermore, 99% of all children enrolled in first grade, continue their education to fifth grade (p.15). According to Outline Law on Primary and Secondary Education⁴, applicable in all administrative units, regular attendance of primary school is obligatory for all children who turn six years of life to 1st of April in current calendar year and continues for at least 8 years without cessation. The law also guarantees free primary education for all children. The low drop-out rates in primary school can be explained due to these regulations. The Special Report of Ombudsman for Human Rights of Republic of Srpska (2011)⁵ on dropping out from primary and secondary schools in this entity has encompassed data on drop-outs from: (I) 120 primary schools which represent data from 62.82% of all primary schools in this entity (p.14), and (II) 67 secondary schools which represent data from 67.8% of all secondary schools in this entity (p.21). Based on data offered in the report, during the two schools years,⁶ it can be estimated that the drop-out rate for both primary and elementary schools is lower than 1% in respect to total number of

² According to Dayton Peace Agreement, Bosnia and Herzegovina is structured in 3 administrative areas: Federation of BiH which is structured in 10 cantons, Republic of Srpska and District Brčko.

³ The study was focused on non-attendance and cessation of education in primary and secondary school. MDGIF (2011): „Napuštanje i nepohađanje obrazovanja: studija formirana na istraživanju djece i mladih koji ne upisuju i koji napuštaju osnovnu i srednju školu“, available at: http://www.undp.ba/upload/publications/Dropout_BHS-1.pdf (2/5/2013)

⁴ The content of the Law is available at: http://www.mcp.gov.ba/org_jedinice/sektor_obrazovanje/dokumenti/zakoni/?id=676 (2/5/2013)

⁵ The report is available at: <http://www.djeca.rs.ba/uploaded/nijedno%20dijete%20izvan%20obrazovnog%20sistema.pdf> (2/5/2013)

⁶ 2009/2010 and 2010/2011

enrolled pupils in this entity. The results also demonstrate that fewer children drop out from primary schools compared to secondary schools.

As to the official agencies for statistics, there are three institutes in charged: on the state level *Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina* and two agencies on entity level *Institute for Statistics of Republic of Srpska* and *Federal Office of Statistics*. As many other, the data on school attendance and drop-outs is not collected on state level; however there are some data available on annual basis referring to all three administrative units. The available data demonstrate low drop-outs rates and are visible in the Table 1*.

*The data in the table are compiled from several statistical yearbooks:

- Republički zavod za statistiku, Republika Srpska (2010): *Srednje obrazovanje: kraj 2008/2009. i početak 2009/2010.*, (Statistički bilten, no. 9), Banja Luka
- Republički zavod za statistiku, Republika Srpska (2011): *Srednje obrazovanje: kraj 2009/2010. i početak 2010/2011.*, (Statistički bilten, no. 10), Banja Luka
- Republički zavod za statistiku, Republika Srpska (2012): *Srednje obrazovanje: kraj 2010/2011. i početak 2011/2012.*, (Statistički bilten, no. 11), Banja Luka
- Republički zavod za statistiku, Republika Srpska (2010): *Osnovno obrazovanje: kraj 2008/2009. i početak 2009/2010.*, (Statistički bilten, no. 10), Banja Luka
- Republički zavod za statistiku, Republika Srpska (2011): *Osnovno obrazovanje: kraj 2009/2010. i početak 2010/2011.*, (Statistički bilten, no. 11), Banja Luka
- Republički zavod za statistiku, Republika Srpska (2012): *Osnovno obrazovanje: kraj 2010/2011. i početak 2011/2012.*, (Statistički bilten, no. 12), Banja Luka
- Federalni zavod za statistiku, Federacija Bosne i Hercegovine (2010): *Srednje obrazovanje u Federaciji Bosne i Hercegovine: kraj 2008/2009. i početak 2009/2010.*, (Statistički bilten, no. 142), Sarajevo
- Federalni zavod za statistiku, Federacija Bosne i Hercegovine (2011): *Srednje obrazovanje u Federaciji Bosne i Hercegovine: kraj 2009/2010. i početak 2010/2011.*, (Statistički bilten, no. 157), Sarajevo
- Federalni zavod za statistiku, Federacija Bosne i Hercegovine (2012): *Srednje obrazovanje u Federaciji Bosne i Hercegovine: kraj 2010/2011. i početak 2011/2012.*, (Statistički bilten, no. 174), Sarajevo
- Federalni zavod za statistiku, Federacija Bosne i Hercegovine (2010): *Predškolsko obrazovanje 2009. godini, Osnovno obrazovanje: kraj 2008/2009.godine i početak 2009/2010.godine* (Statistički bilten, no. 141), Sarajevo
- Federalni zavod za statistiku, Federacija Bosne i Hercegovine (2011): *Predškolsko obrazovanje 2010. godini, Osnovno obrazovanje: kraj 2009/2010.godine i početak 2010/2011.godine* (Statistički bilten, no. 156), Sarajevo
- Federalni zavod za statistiku, Federacija Bosne i Hercegovine (2012): *Predškolsko obrazovanje 2011. godini, Osnovno obrazovanje: kraj 2010/2011.godine i početak 2011/2012.godine* (Statistički bilten, no. 171), Sarajevo
- Agencija za statistiku Bosne i Hercegovine (2011): *Statistika obrazovanja od kraja 2007/2008 do početka 2011/2012 školske godine*, Year 10, No. 14, Brčko
- Agencija za statistiku Bosne i Hercegovine (2012): *Statistika obrazovanja od kraja 2008/2009 do početka 2012/2013 školske godine*, Year 11, No. 14, Brčko

Table 1

Secondary schools	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012
FBIH				
Drop outs	985	764	840	No data
Enrolled	96.011	93.592	97.758	No data
% <i>dropped out</i>	1,03%	0,82%	0,86%	No data
RS				
Drop outs	371	276	402	No data
Enrolled	46.307	49.928	50.046	No data
% <i>dropped out</i>	0,80%	0,55%	0,80%	No data
BD				
Drop outs	No data	No data	88	92
Enrolled	3.434	3.560	3.664	3.875
% <i>dropped out</i>	No data	No data	2,40%	2,37%
% <i>dropped out in BiH</i>	No data	No data	0,88%	

Primary schools	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012
FBIH				
Drop outs	No data	156	95	No data
Enrolled	238.345	234.337	222.677	No data
% <i>dropped out</i>	No data	0,07%	0,04%	No data
RS				
Drop outs	45	26	23	No data
Enrolled	112.440	107.986	104.424	No data
% <i>dropped out</i>	0,04%	0,02%	0,02%	No data
BD				
Drop outs	No data	No data	2	2
Enrolled	7.604	7.409	7.071	6.790
% <i>dropped out</i>			0,03%	0,03%
% <i>dropped out in BiH</i>	No data	No data	0,04%	No data

Legend:	
FBIH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
RS	Republic of Srpska
BD	Brčko district

The data in the table indicate lower drop-out rates in primary schools compared to secondary schools, which correspond with the information obtained from principals of the secondary schools during the data collection in epidemiological survey in BiH. Only 2-8 children cease education per school year in secondary schools. According to school principals, drop-outs are mostly girls who get married or pregnant and multiple grade repeaters.

Considering aforementioned, the epidemiological survey on child abuse and neglect with school drop-outs in BiH was not conducted although as it is self-evident by data illustrated above, one hand sufficient efforts were dedicated to bring about this particular project's objective (gathering relevant information, conducting authoritative agencies in all different levels of BiH's administrative division etc), while on the other by the partial school drop out rates it is apparent that no substantial differentiation should be anticipated in national CAN rates if this particular category of children was eventually included. The reason for this assumption is that in virtue of the relatively low school drop out rates, ranging from 0,03% to 2,4% in different administrative regions of the country, even in the less plausible case of the

drop out sub-sample having an extremely different image from school attending children's sample, it practically could not affect consolidated national CAN rates (and not in any case away from confidence intervals of prevalence and incidence rates found in main epidemiological survey). Thus, the non feasibility of conducting the school drop out supplementary survey is considered as not having any substantial impact on the validity of results in this country.

Bulgaria

See National Report.

Croatia

The demographic information for Croatia based on census shows very low prevalence of school drop-outs. The criteria for dropouts is not finishing elementary school (8 years) and the 2001 census data for contingent 20-24 years old population (total 294 497), which is the youngest contingent with complete data for education (in younger contingents some people still go to elementary school), shows that there are 5041 people, or 1.71%, who can be considered as drop-outs. Based on 2001 census data 16-years old contingent has approximately 49 706 people (interpolated from 5-9 years old contingent in 2001). Based on this data we can estimate that there are approximately 850 children who have dropped out school at the age of 16-years old in Croatia. There are no available and reliable data on number of school drop-outs at this level of education. As well the schools are not allowed to give information about children that have left primary education since this is classified as private data covered by the respectful legal provisos of the Act for the protection of sensitive personal data. Therefore as a result of the aforementioned feasibility study conducted by the Croatian Research Team and despite efforts dedicated to bring about this particular project's objective along with its initial planning, it was eventually concluded that it would not be possible to find proper sample for school drop-out study for 11 and 13 years old children since they are almost all attending school, and it would be very difficult to have a proper sample of school drop-outs that are 16 years old. Accordingly, the Research Team had to modify respectfully the research's plan given also the fact that with such relatively small school drop out rates one shouldn't anticipate any substantial differentiation of results at national level.

Greece

In Greece, pupils 6-12 years old are attending Primary school which is compulsory by law. Pupils 13-15 years old are attending Junior High School which is also compulsory by law. Pupils 16-18 years old attend Senior High School, but its attendance is not compulsory.

One of the sources of information available about drop-out rates in secondary education is the Transition Observatory, Institute of Pedagogy, Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs. According to the research of Rousseas & Vretakou (2008), during the school year 2003-2004⁷ 100.271 pupils were registered at the grade of 13 year olds in a sample comprising by the 94.72% of the junior high-schools of the country that participated in the research; a total of 5.264 pupils (5.25%) either did not attend at all the grade of 13 year olds [3.312 pupils (3.30%)] or dropped-out [1.952 pupils (1.95%)]. Regarding children that dropped-out from the grade of 13 year olds in the schools of all Prefectures in the three Peripheries where the WP3 main epidemiological survey was planned to be conducted (namely, Attica, Crete and Central Macedonia) the respective percentage was 2.22%. According to data concerning the school year 2009-10 that were obtained from the Ministry of Education, Religion and Lifelong Learning, Directorate of Operational Infrastructure, Informatics and New Technologies upon request, the drop-out rate at the grade of 13 year olds (difference between registered and active pupils), in all Prefectures of the Peripheries of Attica, Crete and Central Macedonia, was 3.08%.

Senior High School in Greece consists of General and Vocational High Schools. According to Rousseas & Vretakou (2008), the drop-out rate in the grade of 16 year olds at a sample comprising by the 92% of General High Schools of the country that participated in the research was 1.26%. Regarding children that dropped-out from the grade of 16 year olds in the general high schools of all Prefectures in the Peripheries of Attica, Crete and C. Macedonia the respective percentage was 1.32%. The respective data of the Ministry of Education (school year 2009-2010) showed that the drop-out rate at the grade of 16 year olds (difference between registered and active pupils) in Attica, Crete and Central Macedonia was 0.68%. Regarding Vocational Schools the research of Rousseas & Vretakou (2008) on the one hand, showed (in the 93.6% of vocational schools of the country that participated in the research) at the grade of 16 year olds a drop-out rate of 16,57% (16.73% in Attika, Crete and C. Macedonia). On the other hand, the Ministry of Education provided data for Vocational schools in the three aforementioned peripheries showing a very low drop-out rate (0.47%) at the grade of 16 year olds; it should be noted though that the Ministry's of Education data refer to the difference between registered and active pupils and not to the number of students who after a school-year did not register to the next grade; in addition, the data was provided on December, and it could be safely assumed that the drop-out rates would have been better if the data were provided at the end of the school year. The even more baffling thing at this particular instance is that a good portion of Vocational Schools' students are in

⁷ Unfortunately, there is not available a more updated research for the next years of 2003-2004.

fact children of higher age than the one regularly anticipated in their grade, some of which as a matter of fact are already adults. And insofar there is little or no evidence at all in regards to the proportion of school dropping out rate that is attributable to children at the age of 16 and the one corresponding to children of higher age or adults that make attempts to attend and finish formal education via Vocational Schools but eventually do not make it to complete it. It should be noted that during the main body of the epidemiological study there were indeed a lot of adults found in Vocational Schools at this particular grade, whose replies were excluded from the final data set.

In Greece it was initially planned to conduct a survey to children that have dropped-out of school by reaching about 50 children (of all grade groups) as well as their parents. This survey was decided not to be conducted due to two main reasons:

a) It was not feasible to obtain personal data about children that have dropped-out of school by the schools that participated in the main WP3 epidemiological survey in order to invite them to participate in the survey with their parents. This was so, because despite initial efforts dedicated to that by the Greek national Research Team, schools excluded any possibility of making available relevant information (and so did in preliminary conducts officials of the Hellenic Ministry of Education) in virtue of the existing legislation protecting personal sensitive data. Thus, in any case, accessing required information was not feasible.

b) The aforementioned drop-out rates were not expected to change considerably the estimation of child abuse and neglect rates that were found in the main WP3 epidemiological survey. This is quite evident by the results of the prior study illustrated in brief above in regards to most of children's grade groups with one potential exception, namely the first grade of Vocational Schools; but even in this case, the actual magnitude of school dropping out that refers to children of age of 16 year old should be considered as less than the overall size of the phenomenon. Moreover, given the figures found regarding incidence and prevalence rates of major CAN types in Greece and if the rates of school dropping out mentioned above are taken for granted, the anticipated influence of any kind of differentiation of this particular sub-population of children in contrast to the trends recorded in the respectful school attending children is calculated to range within the confidence intervals of the rates found in the main epidemiological study, thus, not substantially affecting the national incidence and prevalence rates.

To sum up, although efforts were systematically dedicated to bring about this particular objective of the project, that part of it had to be reconsidered under the light of the non feasibility of it in virtue of the constant refusal of the educational system's agencies to share information about children who drop out schools but also its anticipated rather limited impact in the final research results in terms of small potential differentiation of national CAN incidence and prevalence rates in virtue of the relatively small school drop out rates in Greece at the particular peripheries in which epidemiological survey was conducted.

Rousseas, P., & Vretakou, V. (2008). *Study on drop-out rate in secondary education through internet*. Athens: Transition Observatory, Institute of Pedagogy, Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs.

FYROM

See National Report.

Romania

See National Report.

Serbia

The drop out survey did not take place in Serbia as it was planned. In the beginning it was considered that such a research would be both feasible and informative; but the later inquiry in terms of preliminary feasibility and utility study revealed that the drop out rate in Serbia is very low.

According to the official statistics the drop-out rate is 0.5 for the elementary education which is obligatory for children aged 7-14 years. For secondary education, which is not obligatory and concerns children from 15 to 18 years, the drop out rate is 1.86% (Source: Statistical Yearbook of Serbia 2009. Belgrade. Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia). The Statistical office does not have disaggregated data by grades or age of children but only summary data for elementary and secondary education.

An additional field inquiry was made in several schools in different regions of Serbia (Belgrade, West-South, West, East-South and East Serbia) and it confirmed that the drop out rate is really low, less than 1.00%. Therefore it was decided not to conduct the drop-out survey. The rationale for that was that for such low school drop out rates whatever the differentiation might be in the reported CAN rates to be found at this particular children's sub-population, it anyway wouldn't substantially alter the overall national country's CAN rates found in the main epidemiological survey.

On the other hand, there are children in Serbia who are out of schools but most of those children are Roma children living in Roma settlements who were never enrolled to school and thus they do not fit to the definition of drop out children in BECAN research and can not be reached by the sampling designed for the BECAN study. Many of those children were not even registered at births and do not have identity papers. This phenomenon, sometimes referred to in the international literature as "the invisible children", is suspected to occur also in Serbia. And it also relates to substantial differentiation of CAN rates to be found in that population in contrast to the general children's population. The Multiple Indicators Clusters Survey (MICS 3, Serbia, UNICEF; 2005) found that the rate of severe physical abuse is 3 times higher in this than in general population. Although, it would be of great importance to do a survey of these children, it also necessarily would require a methodology different from the one in the actual BECAN research as well as it would certainly require separate planning and resources for those purposes. The rationale for this is that for many of these "invisible children" instruments to be used, methodology to be approached, importance and focus on the linkage with children's parental practices and perceptions should be inevitably redeployed especially for such children reaching a certain age after which their vulnerability is often liable to other factors than domestic or peer violence.

Accordingly, in virtue of both the relatively small anticipated significance for the national CAN rates in virtue of the small school drop out rates and the inapplicability of the current design and focus of the project for the small portion of invisible children and despite the efforts dedicated to bring about this particular project's objective, the implementation of

that particular design part of it was found to be potentially both not feasible and not informative and thus was not eventually conducted as such.

Turkey

See National Report.