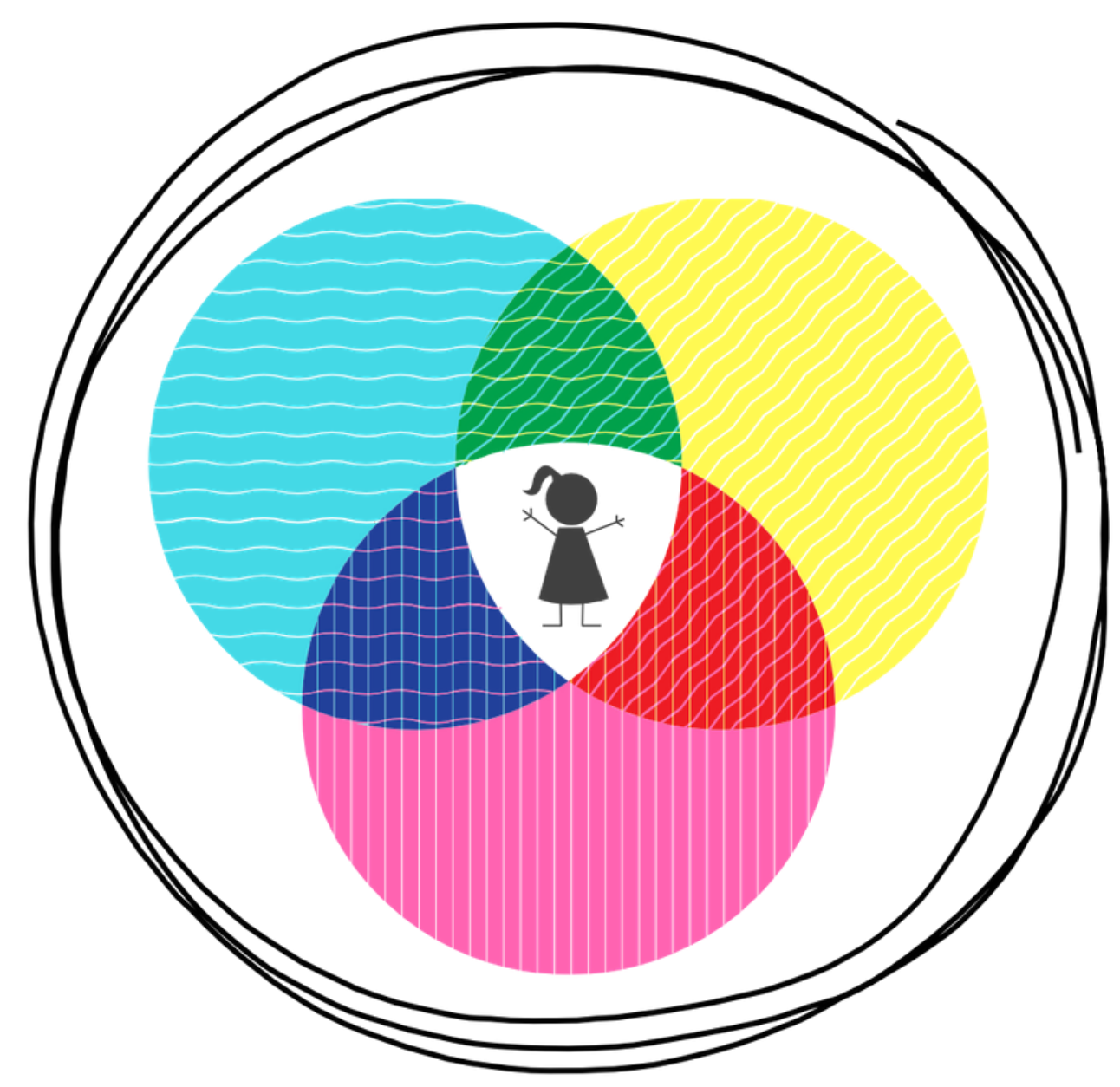




The impact of violence on Polish adolescents - results from POLKA18 study.

Joanna Barwińska¹, Michalina Drejza², Grzegorz Łopiński³, Katarzyna Rylewicz³, Ewa Majcherek⁴, Klaudia Szymuś⁵, Patrycja Klein⁶, Grażyna Jarząbek-Bielecka⁷

1 Medical Student, Medical University of Silesia, Katowice, Poland, 2 PhD Candidate, Centre of Adolescent Gynecology and Sexology, Department of Perinatology and Gynecology, Poznan University of Medical Sciences, Poznań, Poland, 3 Medical Student, Medical University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland, 4 Medical Student, Poznan University of Medical Sciences, Poznań, Poland, 5 Medical Student, Medical University of Gdańsk, Gdańsk, Poland, 6 Medical University of Lublin, Lublin, Poland 7 Head, Centre of Adolescent Gynecology and Sexology, Department of Perinatology and Gynecology, Department of Perinatology and Gynecology, Poznan University of Medical Sciences, Poznań, Poland

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Background

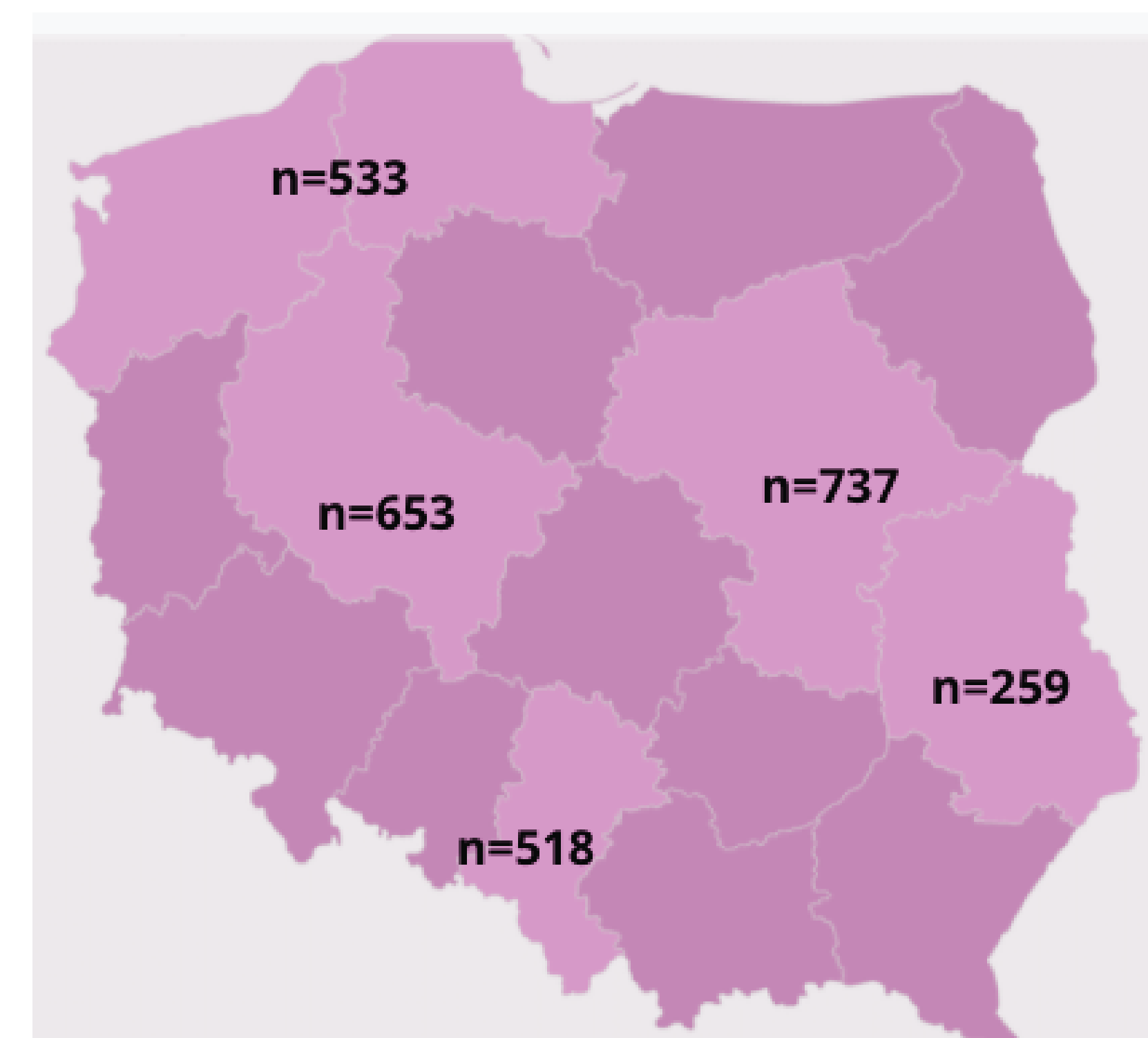
POLKA 18 study aims to assess the knowledge, attitude and practices of Polish adolescents about their health and healthcare with a special focus on sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Given that many schools would not allow research directed solely on sexual and reproductive health in Poland, in December 2018 we conducted local consultations with high school students, experts and academics to create a **holistic model** of health priorities for Polish adolescents including freedom of violence.

We decided to evaluate **experience of intimate partner violence** (IPV) and/or sexual violence among Polish adolescents and its potential influence on negative reproductive health outcomes and level of gynecological care.

Methods

We surveyed **2700 Polish adolescents** via **cross-sectional observational study** which used original paper-based questionnaires distributed in schools in **six Polish voivodeships**. The questionnaires were distributed in two phases: April-June 2019 and October-December 2019 by local research associates, who were medical students.



Sample of the study

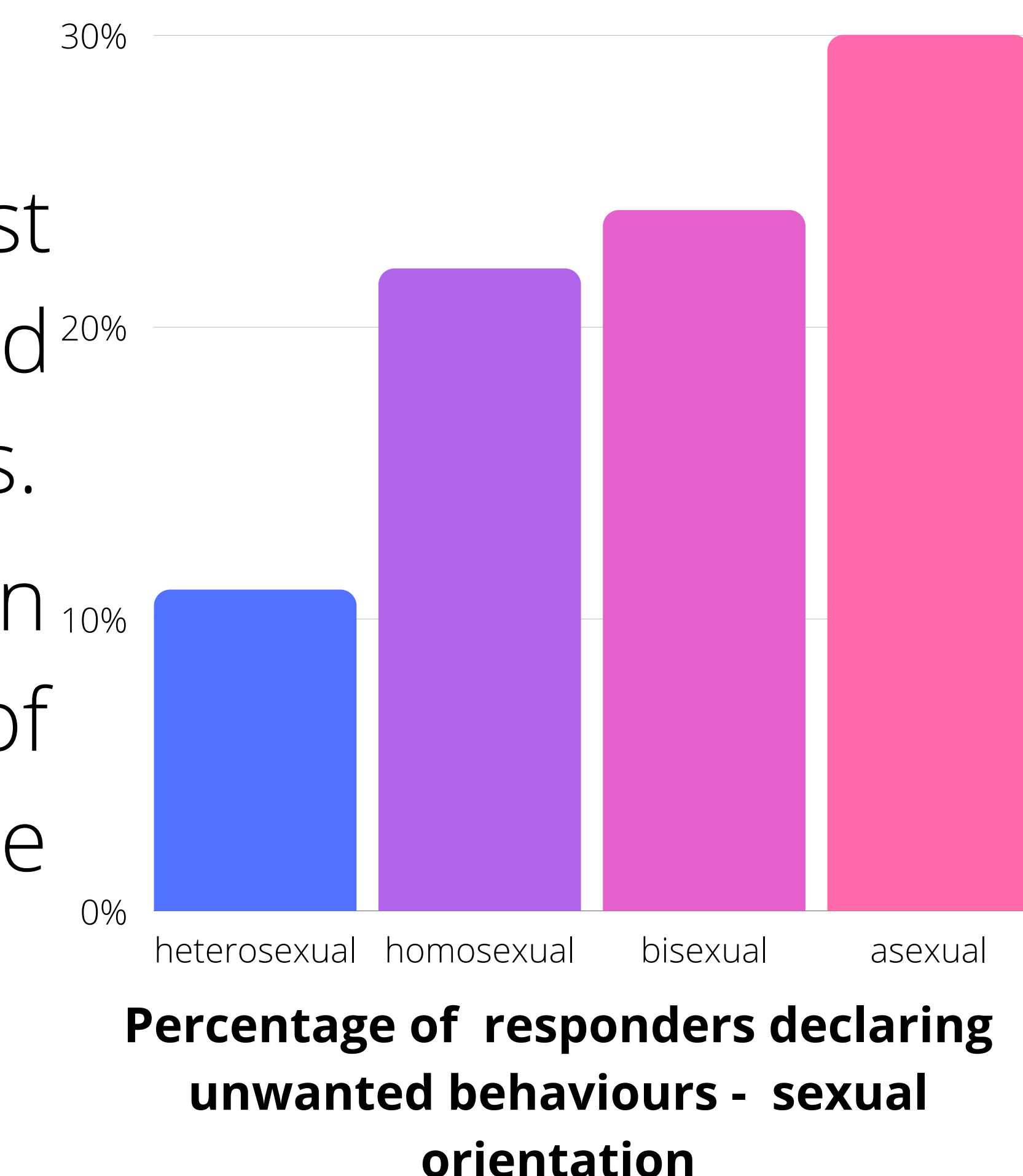
Main results

→ **6.6%** of all the respondents reported **intimate partner violence**.

→ **12%** declared being forced to **unwanted behaviour** such as kissing, petting and/or sexual intercourse.

→ **Non-heterosexual responders** declared at least **twicely** higher frequency of reporting unwanted behaviours in comparison to the **heterosexual** peers.

→ The percentage of **non-heterosexual** individuals in the study who claimed experience of any type of violence has been **significantly higher** than in the **heterosexual population**.



Conclusions

→ Nationwide data on the level of IPV are **incomplete** and the limited data might underestimate the **negative impact** on health and well-being, especially among **adolescents**.

→ A **non-heterosexual population** is more likely to be exposed on experience of **violence** including IPV, domestic violence, school bullying and cyberbullying.

→ It is advisable to continue **further research** to search for reasons for this state.