

School bullying-victimization and subjective health among students with disability or chronic condition in western countries



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Introduction

- Three characteristics of bullying: repetition, intended harm, and unequal power;
- Less powerful children may find themselves easy victims of bullying, making children with disability or chronic illness at increased risk for victimization compared to their peers;
- Consequences of victimization on children's health and well-being have been explored: anxiety, poor self-esteem, depression...

Objectives

- To compare the prevalence of school bullying-victimization among students with a disability or chronic illness (D/CI) and among a general sample of students across countries;
- To explore the association between bullying-victimization and subjective health among students reporting D/CI, and to compare the strength of this association according to the D/CI status.

Health Behaviour in School-aged Children survey (HBSC)

- ✓ Based on the 2006 HBSC/WHO cross-national survey
- ✓ Nationally representative sample of adolescents aged 11, 13 and 15 years from 11 western countries (n=55,030)
- ✓ Self-completion questionnaire, anonymous and voluntary
- ✓ Multilevel logistic regressions (country / school / student)

Bullying victimization at school

- A standardised definition of bullying was provided to allow confidence in cross-national comparisons, focusing on the three elements that define bullying (Olweus 1993): repetition, harm and unequal power
- Measure: being bullied at least 2 or 3 times a month

Subjective health

- 3 complementary outcomes exploring different aspects of subjective health :
- Self-related health* → assessment of global health perception
 - Life satisfaction* → cognitive evaluation of ones life
 - Health complaints* → response to stressful situations.

Disability and chronic illness (D/CI)

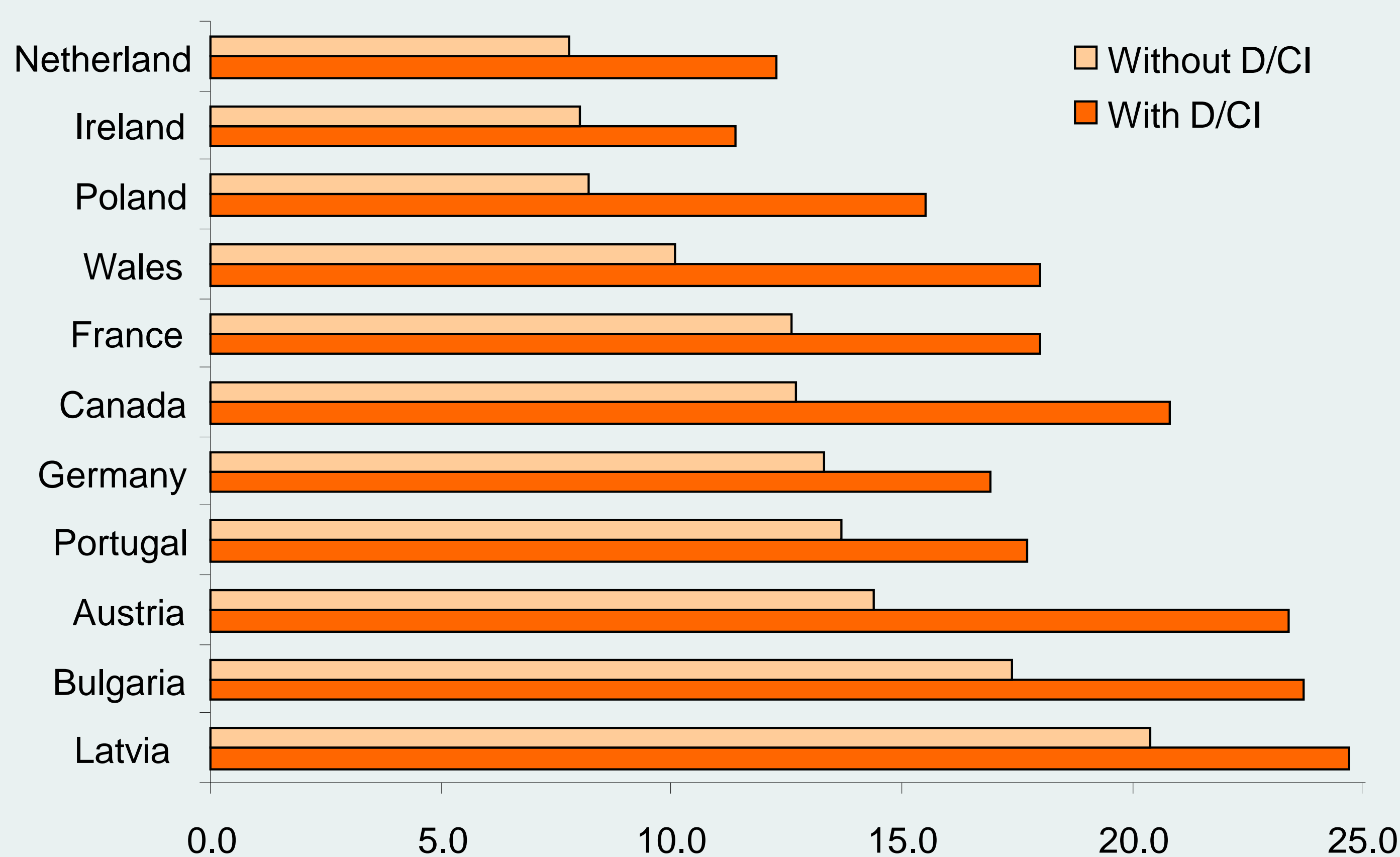
Disabled students were identified by the following question: "Do you have a long-term illness, disability, or medical condition (like diabetes, arthritis, allergy or cerebral palsy) that has been diagnosed by a doctor?"

Olweus D. *Bullying at School: What We Know and What We Can Do*. Blackwell Publishers; 1993.

Results

- Overall, **13.5%** of students reported having been bullied at least 2/3 times a month, with large variations across countries (from **8.5% in Netherland** to **21.3% in Latvia**).
- The prevalence of students reporting being bullied was **consistently higher among students reporting a D/CI** compared to others, in all countries.

- 58,0%** of the victims of bullying reported at least one of the health concerns (poor self-related health, low life satisfaction and multiple health complaints) compared to **33.6%** among others.
- Victims of bullying were more likely to report poor self-related health, low life-satisfaction and multiple health complaints; and a similar risk was found according to the D/CI status of students.



	Poor self-related health	Low life satisfaction	Multiple health complaints
	Adjusted OR* (95% CI)	Adjusted OR* (95% CI)	Adjusted OR* (95% CI)
Among without D/CI	1.8 (1.3-2.4)	2.3 (2.1-2.5)	2.3 (2.1-2.5)
Among D/CI without restriction	1.3 (0.7-2.4)	2.0 (1.6-2.5)	2.1 (1.7-2.6)
Among D/CI with restriction	1.4 (0.8-2.3)	2.2 (1.7-3.0)	1.8 (1.3-2.4)

* adjusted on : age, gender, family affluence, talking to mother, talking to father, family structure, peer support, talking to same sex friends, BMI, pressured by schoolwork
Note: ORs significant at 5% level are in bold; results for bully-victims are not reported.

Risk for reporting a poor subjective health outcomes associated with bullying victimisation according to the D/CI status

Conclusion

- Adolescents reporting a D/CI are more vulnerable to bullying at school; this holds irrespective of the country context.
- The negative impacts of being bullied on subjective health and well-being is similar for students with and without D/CI.
- The higher level of inclusion of children with chronic conditions in mainstream education make it important to pay attention to the quality of this inclusion.

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Financial support : ULYSSES exchange program (project n° 18934VJ)