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## Survey 2021 results – Schools Bulgaria

Galia Puhaleva, Maya Karamarinoва and Vasiliana Puhaleva



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## 1. Data collection

An online questionnaire was sent out to schools in Bulgaria in September 2021. The schools could participate in the survey and answer its questions from September till December 2021. Some schools were reached by the federation and reminders were sent out. In the given time period 57 schools participated in the survey. In this report, their answers are summarised and analysed.

## 2. Sample

As can be seen in the charts below, the majority of the schools, participating in the survey, are public and located in cities rather than the countryside (figure 1).

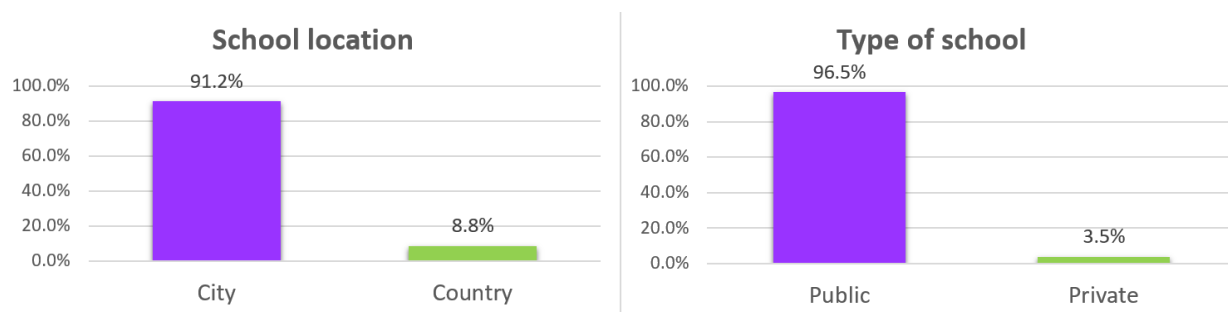


Figure 1: School location and type (n=57 schools)

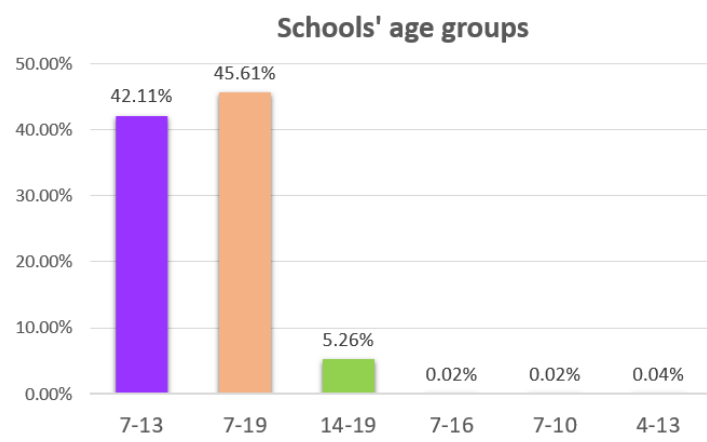


Figure 2: School's age groups (n=57 schools)

Looking at the age groups of the schools, most of the survey's respondents (45,61%) have students aged 7 through 19, which includes primary, middle and high school. The close second is the group 7-13, which includes primary and middle school. Three of the schools (or 5,26%) have classes only for high school students, and those are the sport schools which have answered the survey (see figures 2 and 3).

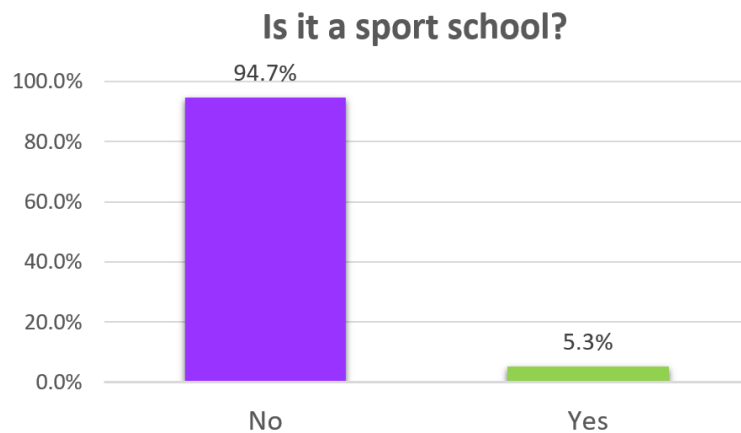


Figure 3: Is it a sport school? (n=57 schools)

In the table below the population of the regions the schools are located in can be seen. The majority (28,1%) of them have between 10,000 and 50,000 inhabitants, followed by cities with less than 10,000 (19,3%). The category with the least respondents is regarding regions of 200,000 to 1,000,000 inhabitants, with only 2 answers (3,5%).

Population of the region	
Less than 10,000	11 (19,3%)
Between 10,000 and 50,000	16 (28,1%)
Between 50,000 and 100,000	8 (14%)
Between 100,000 and 200,000	6 (10,5%)
Between 200,000 and 1,000,000	2 (3,5%)
Between 1,000,000 and 2,000,000	8 (14%)
Missing	6 (10,5%)

Table 1: Population of the region



Last but not least, the number of students in the schools has been indicated. The majority of the schools (28,1%) have between 500 and 800 students, followed by the 24,6% of the group between 200 and 500. Next in line are the schools with less than 200 students and the ones between 800 and 1200 (both at 19,3%). As can be seen below, less than 10% of the schools participating in the survey have more than 1200 students, which can be connected to the previous table with the sizes of the region they are located in.

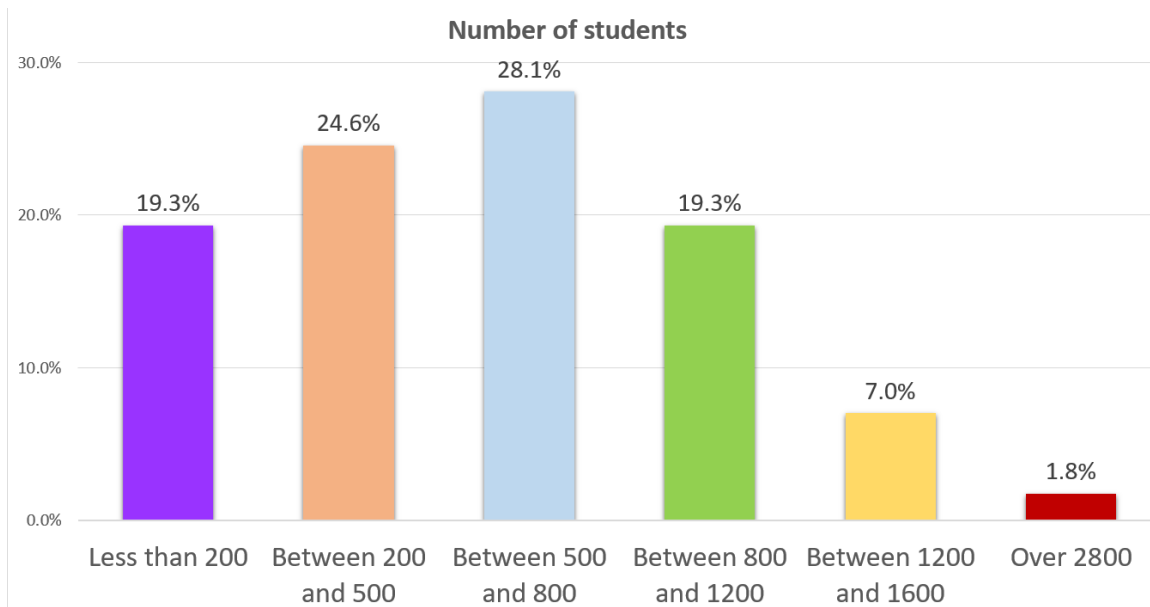


Figure 4: Number of students (n=57 schools)

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Sport specific education level of the schools' staff

Out of the respondents, the majority of the teachers leading the sport classes have some sort of sport education. However, when it comes to the younger audience (7-10 years), some schools use one teacher for all subjects, meaning they aren't required to have a sport education.

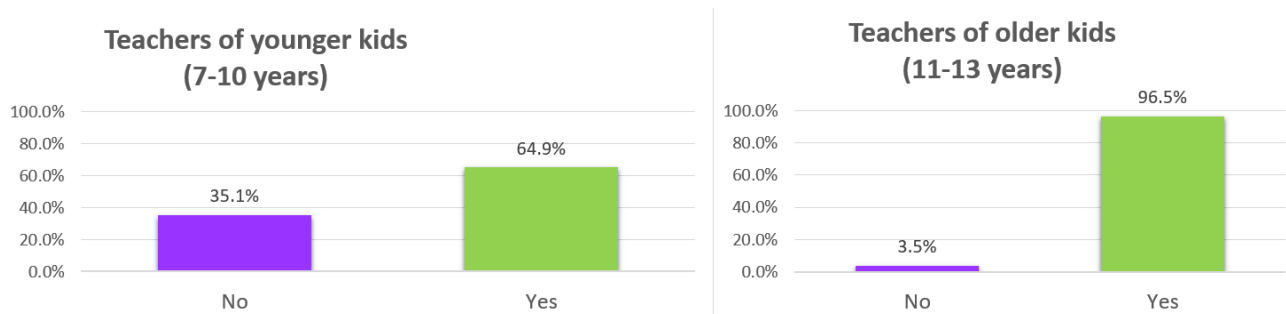


Figure 5: Sport specific education level of the schools' staff (n=57 schools)



### 3.1. Sport demographics

#### 3.1.1. Popularity of different sports

What was interesting to see in this survey, was the distribution of the different sports around the schools in the country. When asking about the popularity of the sports, football took the first place, with volleyball as a close second. Athletics and basketball followed, whereas the rest of the sports had lower results. An overview of the given points can be seen in the table below, and the chart shows the final percentages, calculated with the results from the mean.

Popularity of the sport	-	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Football	9	4	5	5	9	25	3.96
Athletics	11	5	12	5	16	8	3.22
Handball	35	7	6	8	1	0	2.14
Gymnastics	32	7	8	7	2	1	2.28
Swimming	47	5	4	1	0	0	1.60
Volleyball	17	1	5	13	11	10	3.60
Basketball	17	5	6	13	10	6	3.15
Rugby	57	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Netball	55	2	0	0	0	0	1.00
Others	44	8	2	0	1	2	2.00

Table 2: Popularity of the different sports (n=57 schools)

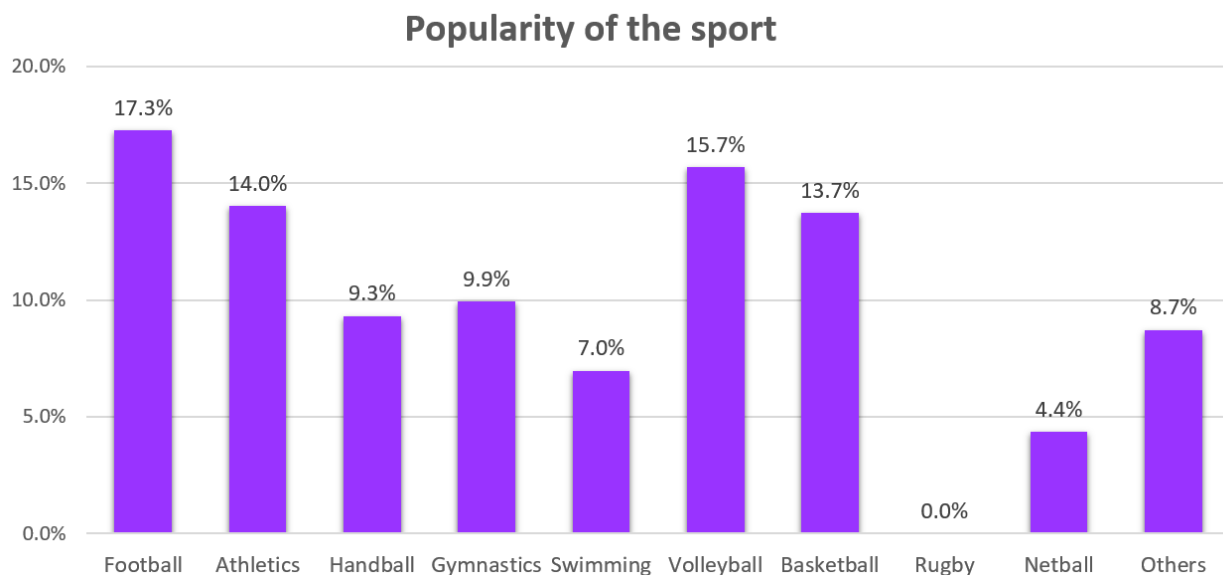


Figure 6: Popularity of the different sports – final results (n=57 schools)



### 3.1.2. Focus of the sport curriculum

Looking at the sports curriculum, the focus is pretty equally distributed between most of the different sports, besides rugby and handball. This can be explained by the fact that these are not commonly practiced sports in Bulgaria. Other than the already mentioned ones, a common sport practiced in Bulgaria is traditional folk dancing, which many of the schools have mentioned to be part of their curriculum, as well as to be popular amongst the students. The overview of the points and final results can be seen below.

Focus of the curriculum	-	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Football	12	5	2	6	12	20	3.89
Athletics	9	1	9	12	11	15	3.63
Handball	19	10	8	13	6	1	2.47
Volleyball	9	1	5	7	10	25	4.10
Basketball	7	1	4	13	16	16	3.84
Rugby	32	25	0	0	0	0	1.00
Other team sports	17	3	8	7	9	13	3.53
Others	37	10	2	3	3	2	2.25

Table 3: Focus of the sports curriculum (n=57 schools)

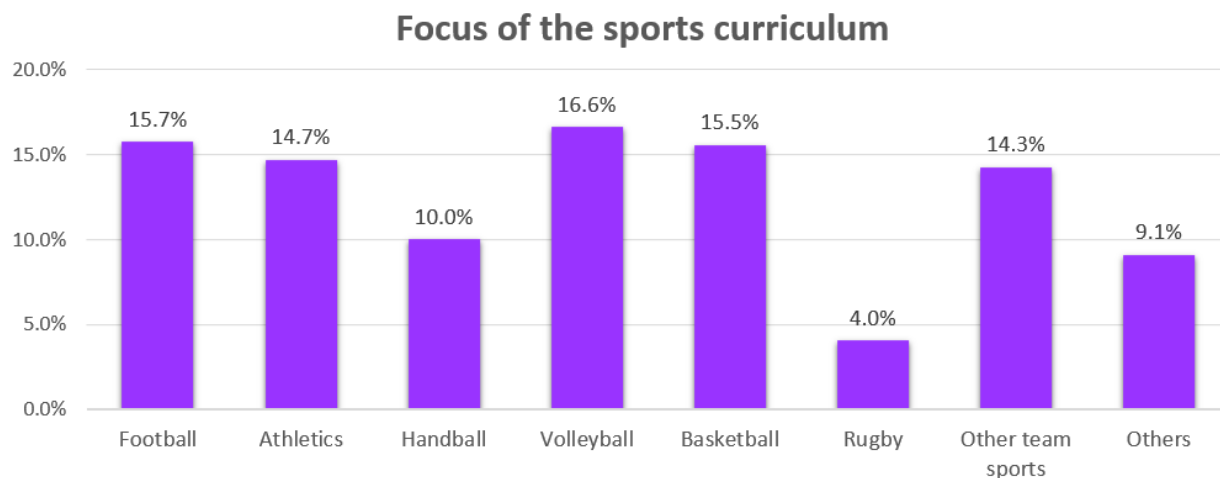


Figure 7: Focus of the sports curriculum - final results (n=57 schools)

### 3.1.3. Focus of the athletic curriculum

The focus of the athletics sports curriculum is what we'll be looking at next. Sprints take the lead here, and again a pretty equal distribution between most other categories can be seen. However, hurdles, walking and combined events are not as popular. This can be due to limited resources for proper equipment, such as hurdles.

Focus of the athletics curriculum	-	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Sprints	6	0	1	6	11	33	4.49
Hurdles	27	15	5	4	3	3	2.13
Middle and long distance runs	9	4	10	8	18	8	3.33
Relays	10	6	3	14	7	17	3.55
Jumping	6	2	10	21	10	8	3.24
Throwing	8	7	11	13	9	9	3.04
Walking	21	19	3	5	7	2	2.17
Combined events	27	25	3	2	0	0	1.23

Table 4: Focus of the athletics curriculum (n=57 schools)

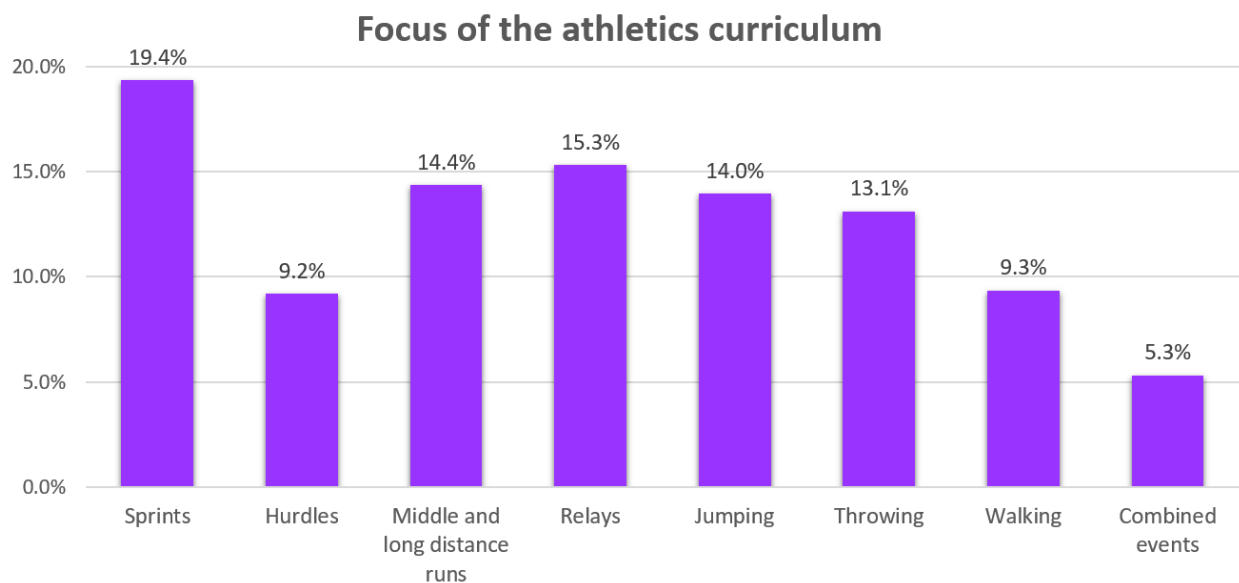


Figure 8: Focus of the athletics curriculum - final results (n=57 schools)





### 3.1.4. Purpose of athletic activity

Next, the purpose of the athletic activity according to the respondents is summarised. Not surprisingly, health promotion and improvement of the general motor skills are the most important ones for the participants of the survey. All other categories have similar answers, which shows that the athletic activity is important for various reasons.

Purpose of athletic activity	-	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Improvement of general motor skills	2	2	2	3	13	35	4.40
Physical activity and health promotion	3	1	3	4	6	40	4.50
Children having fun	7	5	4	14	8	19	3.64
Promoting social development	9	1	10	11	8	18	3.67
Improvement of specific athletic movements	10	5	6	12	8	16	3.51
Preparation for competitions	16	8	6	13	4	10	3.05
Preparation for physical education tests	11	4	3	13	6	20	3.76

Table 5: Purpose of athletic activity (n=57 schools)

### Purpose of athletic activity

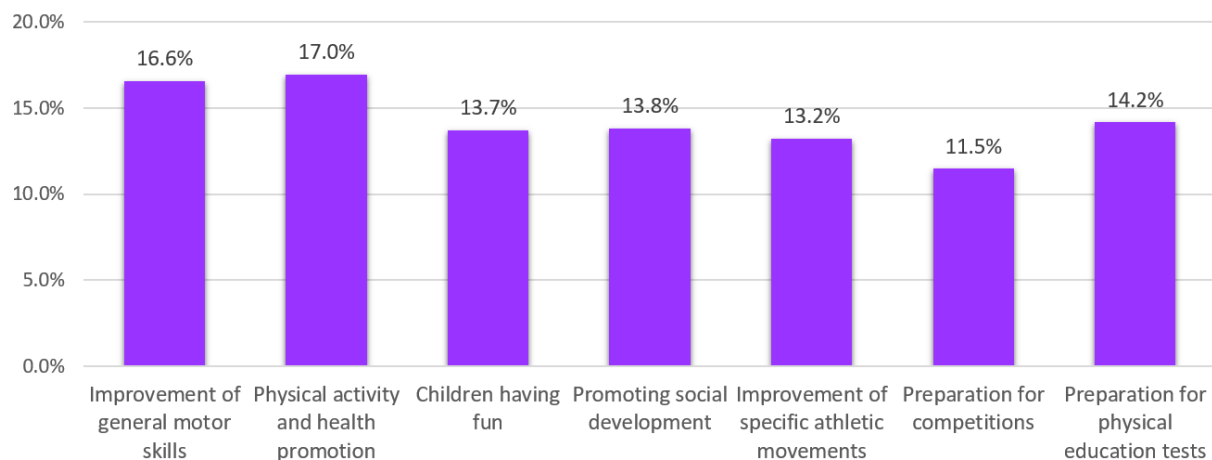


Figure 9: Purpose of athletic activity - final results (n=57 schools)

### 3.2. Kids' participation

The charts below show if the participation of the kids is necessary in the sport classes. Over 80% for both younger and older kids need to participate in the physical activity, with a little surplus in the older classes.

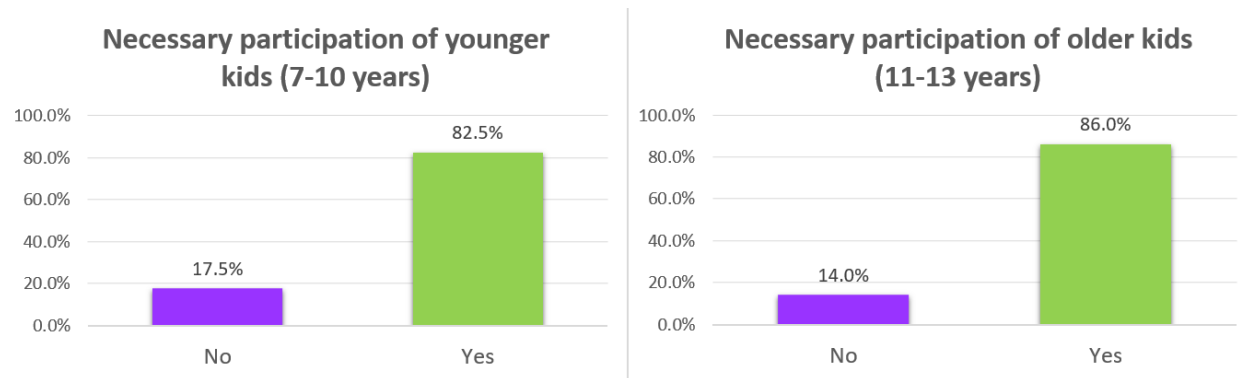


Figure 10: Necessary participation in sport class for younger and older kids (n=57 schools)

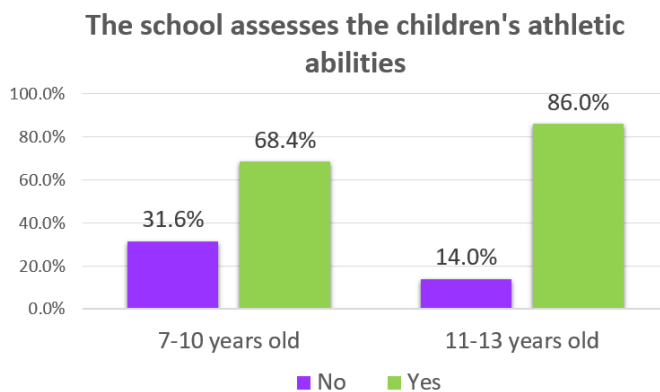


Figure 11: Assessing of children's athletic abilities (n=57 schools)

Most schools have reported that they do assess the children's athletic abilities. They do that by standardised tests and minima they have to cover twice a year, as are the country's regulations. These usually include long jump, sprint, middle distance run and throwing of medicine ball. According to the age and gender of the kids, they have different standards.

When it comes to the integration of special needs kids, it can be seen that most of the schools (77,2%) count on the creativity of their teachers and don't have a special programme that needs to be followed. Over half the students (57,9%) with special needs can be excused from the sport class and are rarely encouraged to follow special programmes outside of school. This integration of the students is something the schools should look into.

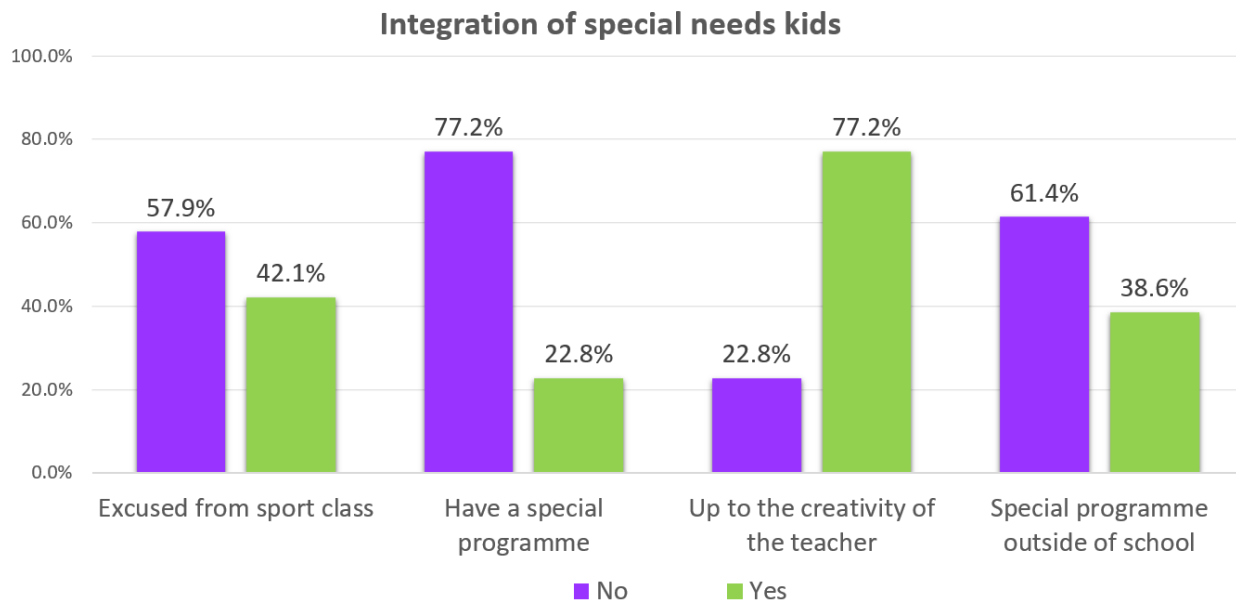


Figure 12: Integration of special needs kids (n=57 schools)

### 3.3. Teachers' motivation

The two charts below (figure 13) show the motivation of the teachers for self-development in the sport area as a whole, and specifically in the athletics area. 68,4% of the respondents have indicated that the teachers of their school are motivated to develop their sport skills, however, when it comes to the athletics area, there is a decrease of 12,3%. The teacher's individual growth, except for the categories shown on figure 14, is often supported by attending seminars, and knowledge exchange with fellow teachers. When it comes specifically to the athletics area, a few of the participants have described their self-development with the help of the Bulgarian athletic federation and the seminars they present, such as Kids athletics.

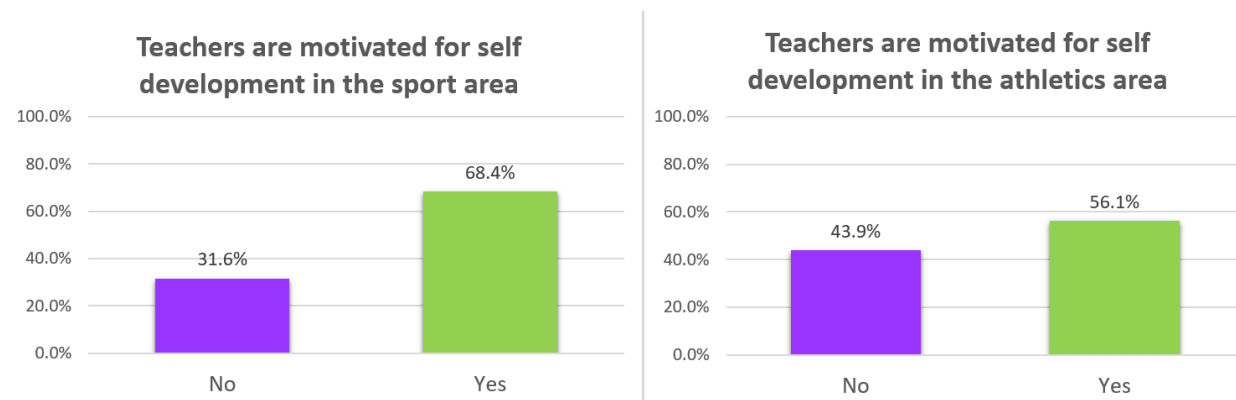


Figure 13: Teachers' motivation for self-development (n=57 schools)

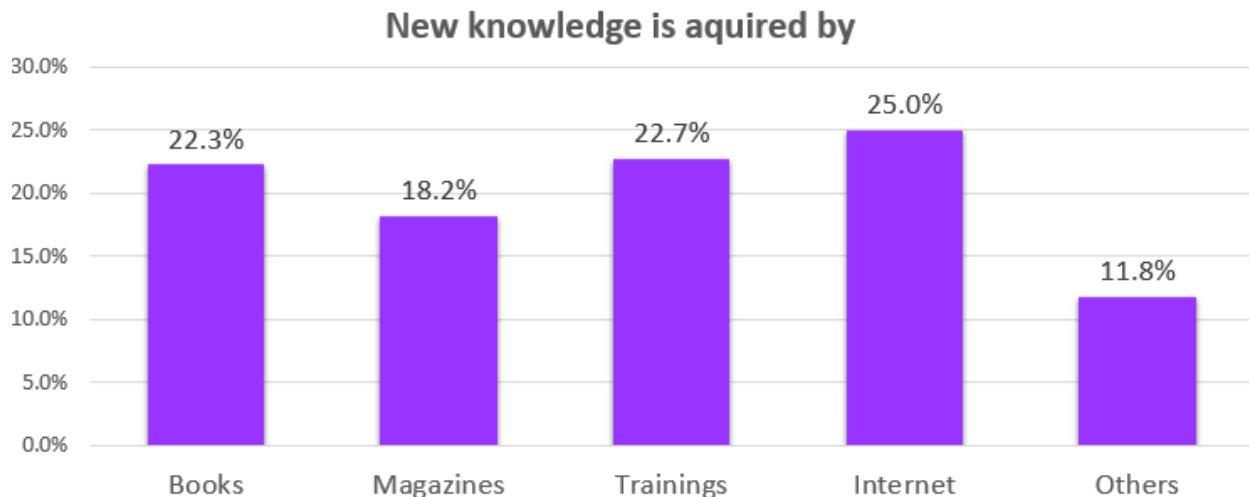


Figure 14: New knowledge acquirement (n=57 schools)

Another question that relates to the teachers' motivation is whether or not the sport lessons can be combined with other classes. For 38,6% of the 7-10 year olds and 28,1% of the 11-13 year olds this is possible. However, when asked to describe what that looks like, some of the respondents have replied that it depends on the motivation, creativity and collaboration of the teachers. Most common they have used relays in combination with maths or other competitions where they have to give the right answer to questions as well. The majority of the schools that lead this type of lessons, do that once or twice per semester (2-4 per year).

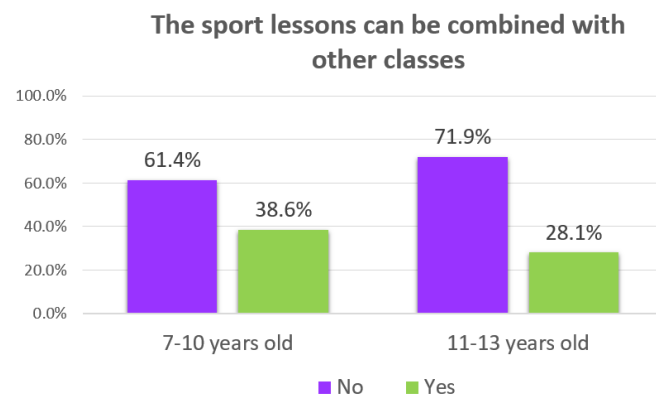


Figure 15: Combination of sport lessons with other classes

### 3.4. Schools' sport involvement

In this section of the report, the overview of the schools' involvement can be seen. Around 65% of the schools organise competitions or other athletic events for both younger and older kids (figure 16). However, when looking at sport clubs the schools have, most (96,5%) have reported that they don't have an athletics one, and 61,4% don't have any. The ones that have, are most commonly football, basketball and volleyball. Clubs that have been mentioned only once include chess, tourism, dodgeball, folk dancing, swimming, baseball, handball, softball and taekwondo.

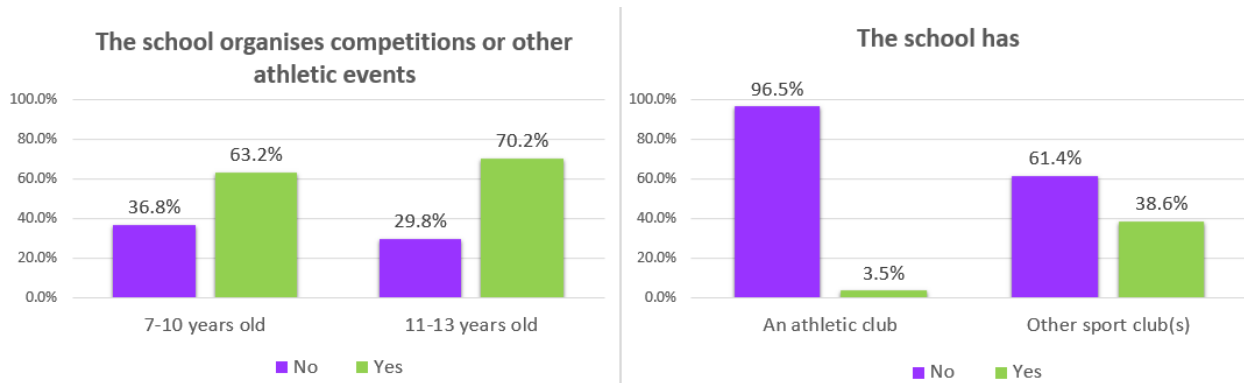


Figure 16: Sport clubs and athletic events (n=57 schools)

The next chart shows if the schools participate in different types of sport competitions. Nearly 90% of the respondents are active on a local level, 63,2% participate in regional, and just over 35% partake in national competitions. This could be due to the infrastructure of the respective sports in the country, to the motivation of the teachers, and not least the limited resources.

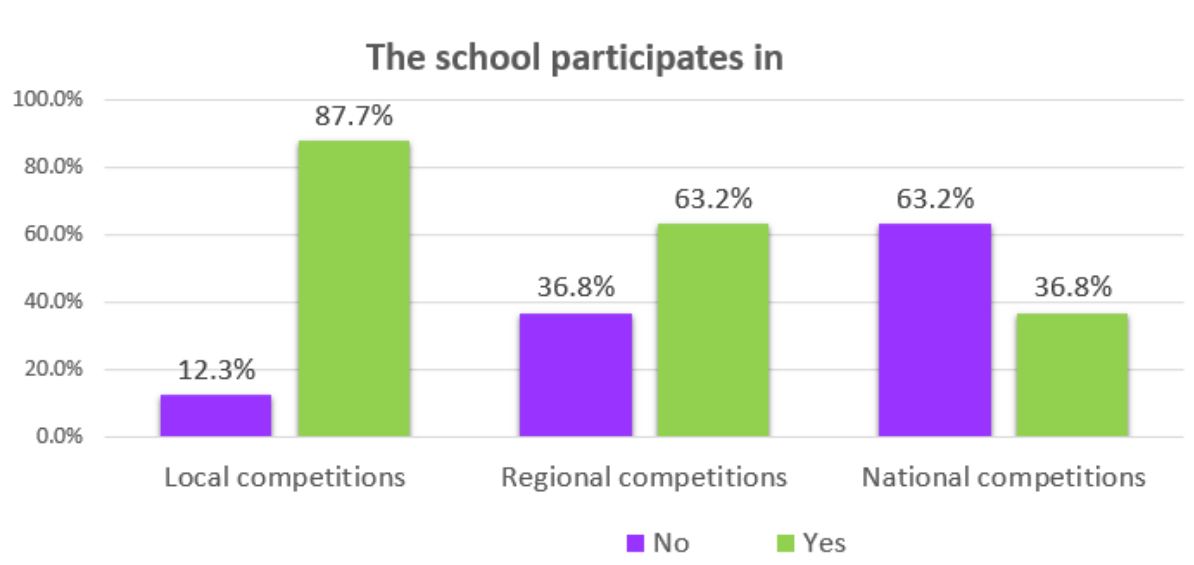


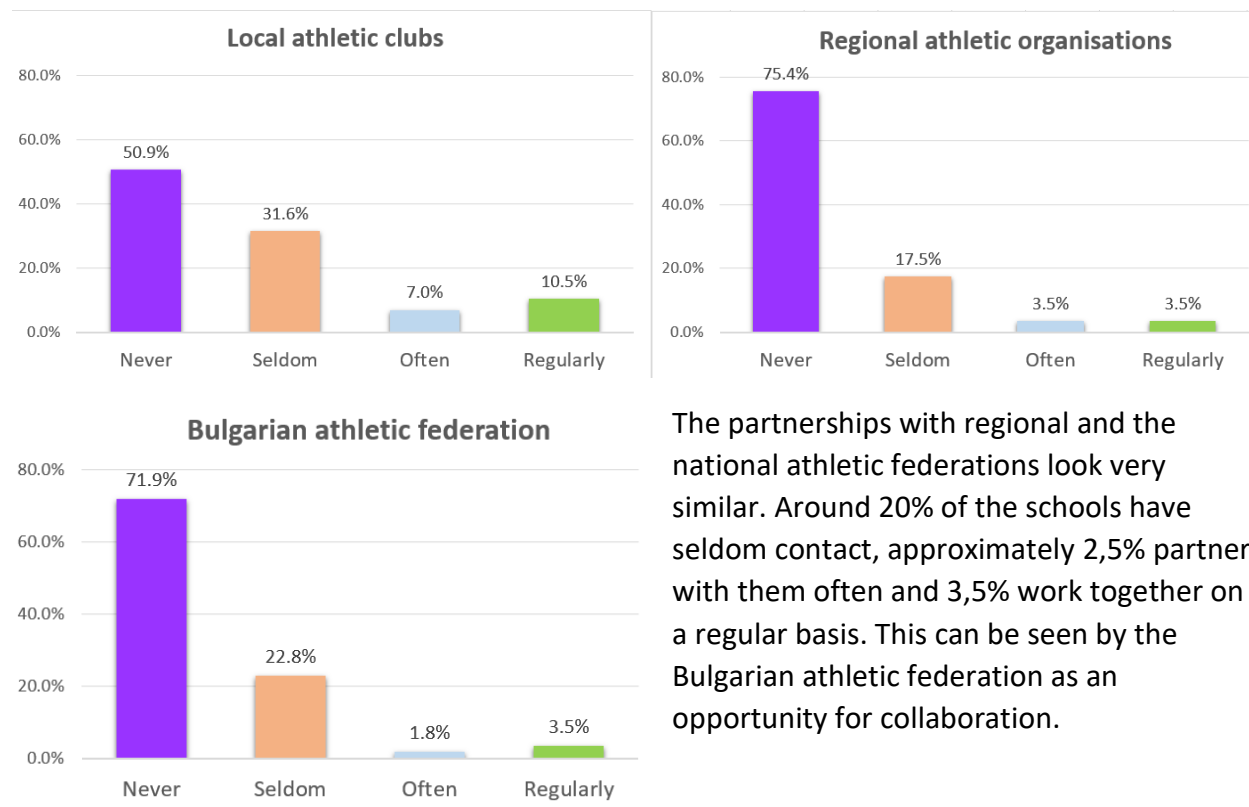
Figure 17: Participation of schools in different sport competitions



### 3.5. School partners

#### 3.5.1. Athletic partners

Here some of the schools' partners and their involvement are explored. The figure below shows the three main categories – local athletic clubs, regional athletic clubs and the Bulgarian athletic federation. What can be easily seen is that most schools have no partnership with all three categories. Looking at the local athletic clubs, they have the most contact with the schools, with 31,6% seldom contact (once per year), 7% often (1-2 times per month) and 10,5% regular partnership (1-2 times per week). The schools with regular contact describe it with trainings of the local clubs on school grounds, as well as leading of seminars. Students from the schools also take part in trainings of the clubs.



The partnerships with regional and the national athletic federations look very similar. Around 20% of the schools have seldom contact, approximately 2,5% partner with them often and 3,5% work together on a regular basis. This can be seen by the Bulgarian athletic federation as an opportunity for collaboration.

Figure 18: School partners (n=57 schools)



### 3.5.2. Help from parents

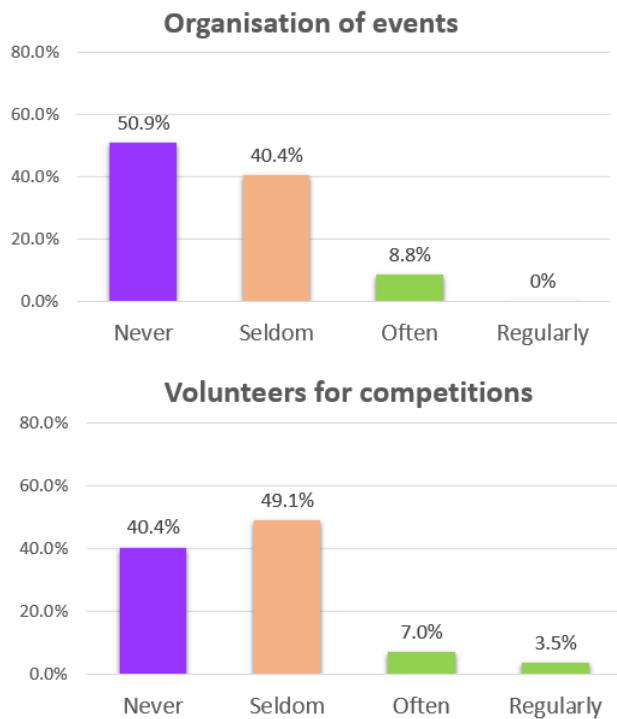
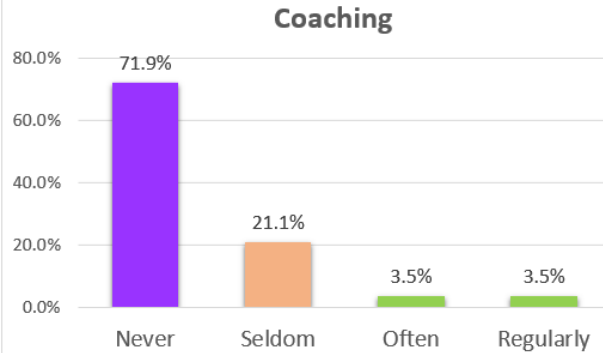


Figure 19: Help from parents (n=57 schools)



Here the involvement of parents in school events can be seen. The highest involvement of parents is with organisation of sport events and volunteering during them, with an average of 45% who seldom take part and 7,9% often. 21,1% of schools have seldom help from parents with coaching and almost no help on a regular basis.

### 3.5.3. Star athletes

Only one quarter (14) of the schools have invited famous athletes or local stars as inspiration for their students, and mostly it was a single occasion. 5 of the respondents have indicated they do it once or twice a year, and many of the others have indicated they would like to do it one day. When reaching out to potential guests, they rarely use partners (only one school has mentioned the Bulgarian athletic federation), but count more on social media and personal connections.

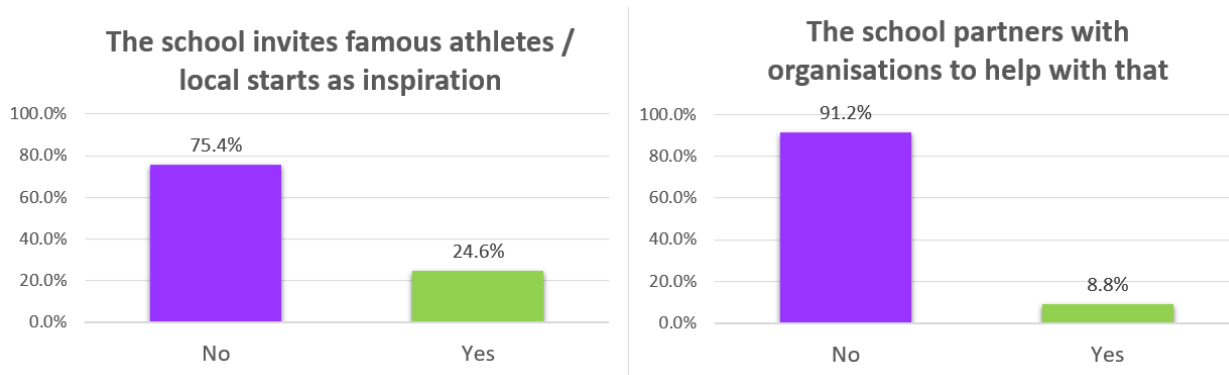


Figure 20: Star athletes partners (n=57 schools)

### 3.6. Sport facilities

The charts below show the facilities the schools can use, and how far away from the school territory they are located. Most of the schools have a school sport field and an indoor multifunctional hall on school territory, whereas their access to an athletic stadium is non-existent. Only one quarter of the schools have access to a stadium, some on school territory and others within 10 kilometres. Looking at the gyms, a bit over a third of the respondents have access to one. The schools that have other sport facilities, have mentioned swimming pools, baseball field and dancing hall. Another interesting result is that 82,5 % of the schools have access to changing rooms for their students, however only 17,5% of them have showers as well.

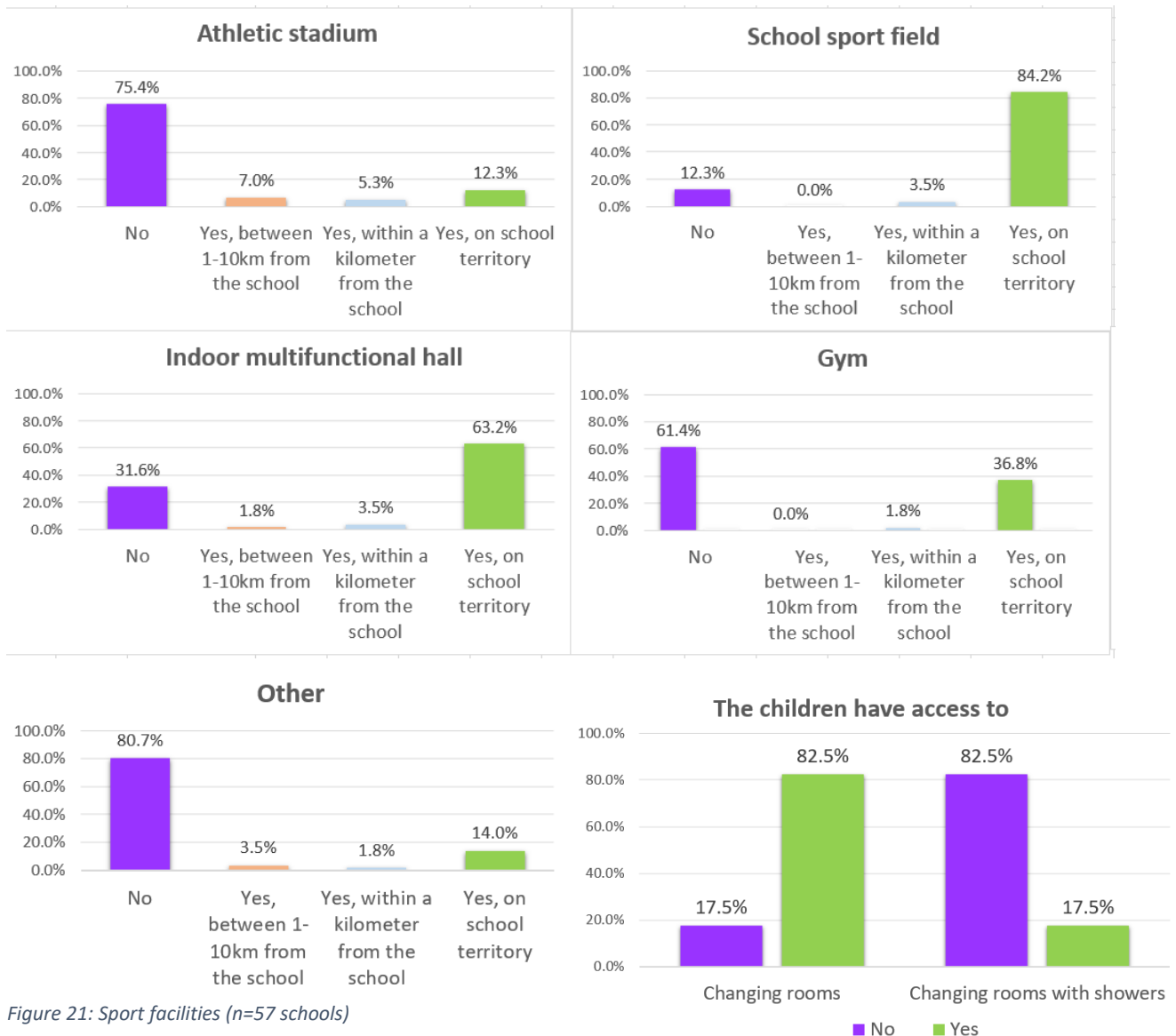


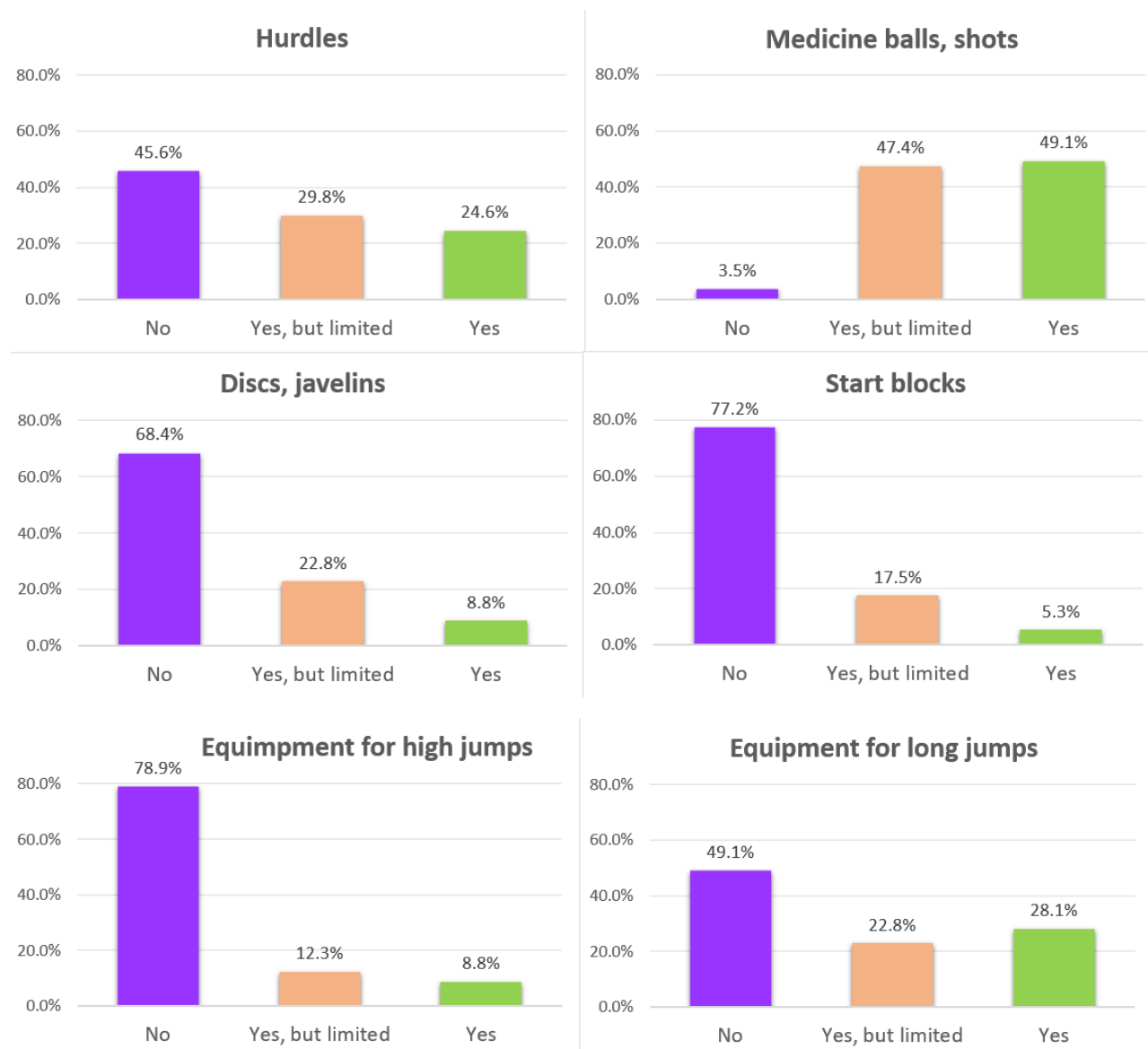
Figure 21: Sport facilities (n=57 schools)

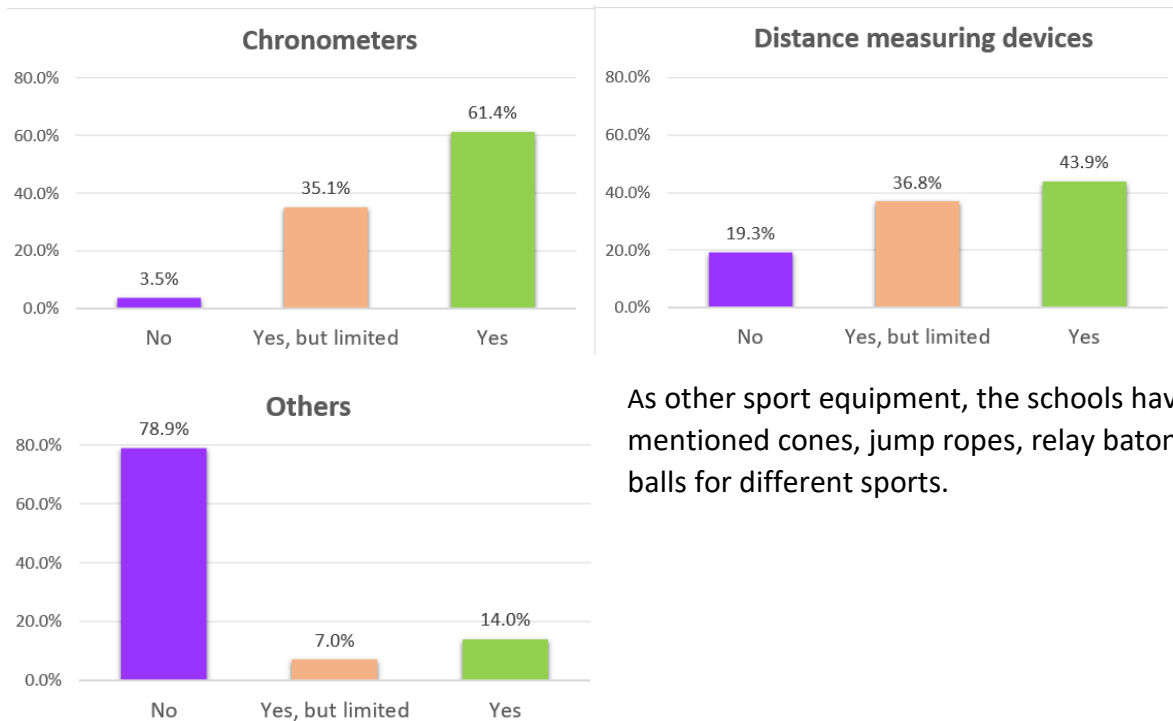




### 3.7. Sport equipment

After we've looked at the sport facilities, it's time to see the equipment. What is sad to see is that the chronometers are the only equipment, which more than half of the respondents have a sufficient amount of. Medicine balls and distance measuring devices follow with an average of 46%. Hurdles and equipment for long jumps are enough for roughly one quarter of the respondents. All other results indicate a lack of the needed equipment, since most schools have limited or no units.



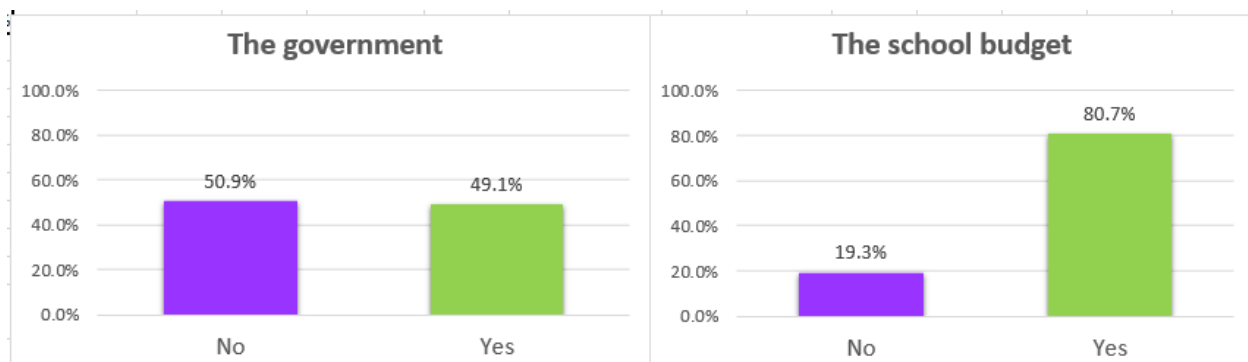


As other sport equipment, the schools have mentioned cones, jump ropes, relay batons and balls for different sports.

Figure 22: Sport equipment (n=57 schools)

### 3.7.2. Finance of sport equipment

What can be seen here, is that the majority (80,7%) of the respondents have financed the sport equipment from their school's budget and almost half have received them as subsidy from the government. Few of the schools depend on sponsors, and most of those are private.



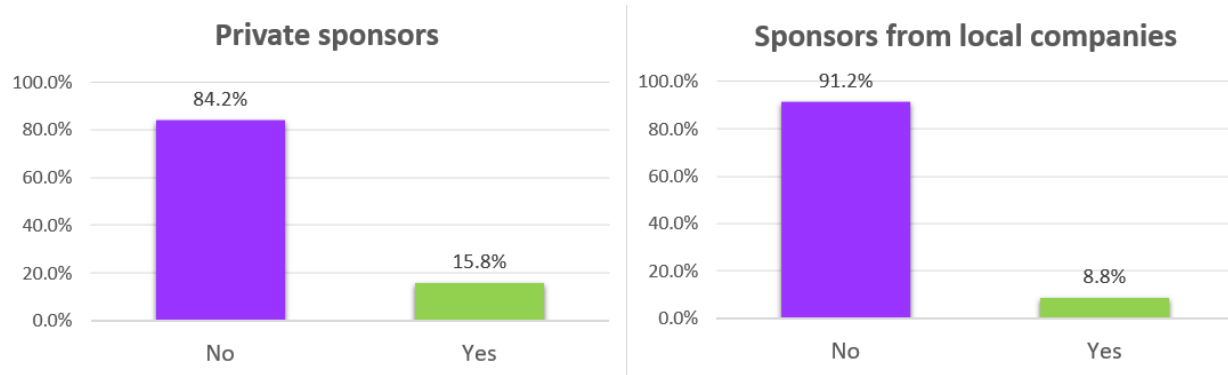
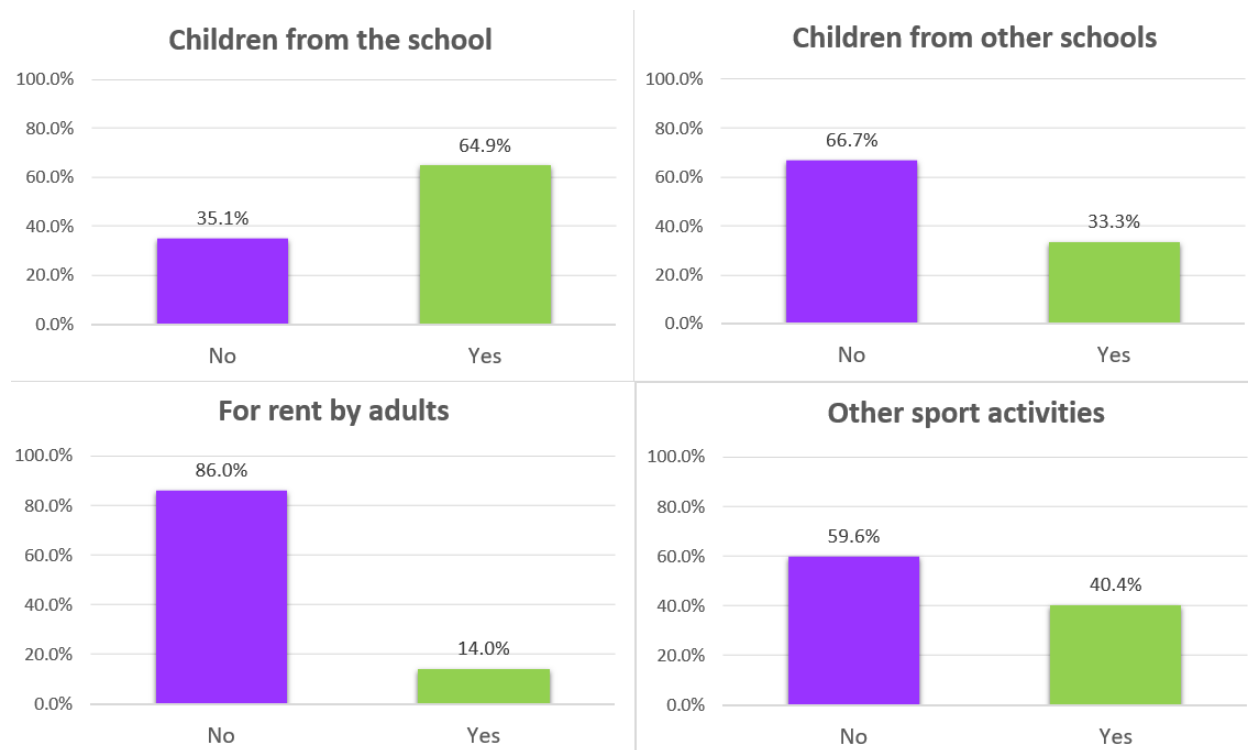


Figure 23: Finance of sport equipment (n=57 schools)

### 3.8. Availability of sport facilities and equipment out of school hours

64,9% of the respondents indicate their sport facilities and equipment as available for the children from their school even out of the school hours. This is not the same for children from other schools, however, where only one third allows it. 8 of the participants in the survey (or 14%) rent out their property to adults and 23 of them (or 40,4%) allow other sport activities out of school hours.





## 4. Conclusion

The schools who took part in this survey are mostly public schools located in cities up to 100'000 inhabitants, which corresponds to the general distribution of schools in the country. There's not much responses from sport schools as they are not within the target age group: sport schools in Bulgaria are for students aged 14 to 19, while the research was intended to gather information on younger students. Physical education is taught by the general teachers to younger children (7-10), but for the older students there are special PE teachers with appropriate sport education.

The most popular sport in the country is not surprisingly football. Athletics comes on the third place however, after volleyball. The focus of the sport curriculum is on the team sports like volleyball, basketball and football, however athletics is also among the top 4 sports in terms of hours dedicated to it in school. The events that are mostly practiced are those which don't require special equipment or complicated technical skills – sprints, middle distance runs, relays, horizontal jumps (on the asphalt). Athletics is regarded as beneficial to all important areas of the development of a child – from improving of motor skills, promotion of health, to social inclusion and having fun, which makes it a very likeable sport by all.

Attendance to PE classes is obligatory to all students. Exception is made for specific medical reasons that have to be proven by a document from a doctor. There are very few specific programmes for children with special needs or disabilities – it is the teacher's job to decide how to include them. There are not many programmes for the professional development of the teachers either; they are encouraged to be proactive in acquiring knowledge, mostly via internet, interaction with colleagues, reading books and magazines. Sport lessons are rarely combined with other classes.

The majority of the schools organise competitions or other athletics events at least once a year, however there very few of them have their own sport clubs. A very small part of them are organising joined activities together with athletic clubs or other entities. Parents are rarely involved, mainly as volunteers at competitions or other organisational tasks. Very few schools have reported inviting star athletes as role models for the children.

There is limited athletics equipment in the schools, mostly chronometers, tape lines, medicine balls, but almost no starting blocks, hurdles or event specific implements. This is probably due to the fact that most schools rely on their own budget to acquire equipment and have small support in this area from other sources. The schools do have a standard indoor gym and outdoor playfields where PE classes are practiced, which are generally available for practicing sports after school hours and in some occasions are rented to adults.



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