

→ Concurrent use of tobacco, alcohol and cannabis among Serbian students ←



Background

The most popular psychoactive substance (excluding medicines without doctor's prescription) in Serbia is alcohol, followed by tobacco and cannabis. Less is known about the concurrent use of these substances, especially among minors.

Pilot survey Health Behavior in School-aged Children (HBSC) was conducted in Serbia in 2017, according to HBSC 2013/14 international study protocol.

The survey was conducted on a nationally representative survey of 3267 pupils 10-17 years old from V, VII grade of primary school and I grade of secondary school.

The aim of this analysis is to explore past month use of alcohol, tobacco and cannabis use as well as dual and poly-use of these substances.



Method

Secondary analysis of data obtained from the Serbian 2017 pilot HBSC survey.

Data obtained from students in the first grade of secondary school was extracted (N = 1408) for this analysis as only those children were asked about cannabis use.



Results

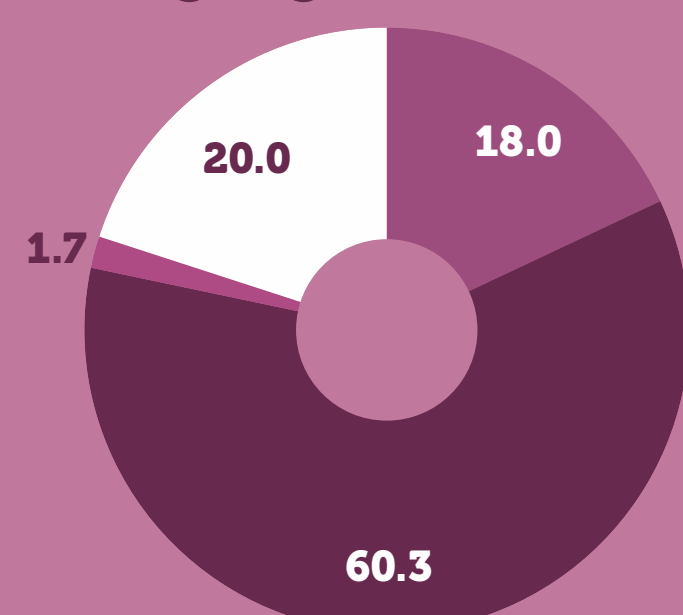
Current use (at least once in the last 30 days) of substances among students of the first grade of primary school (15-16 years old):



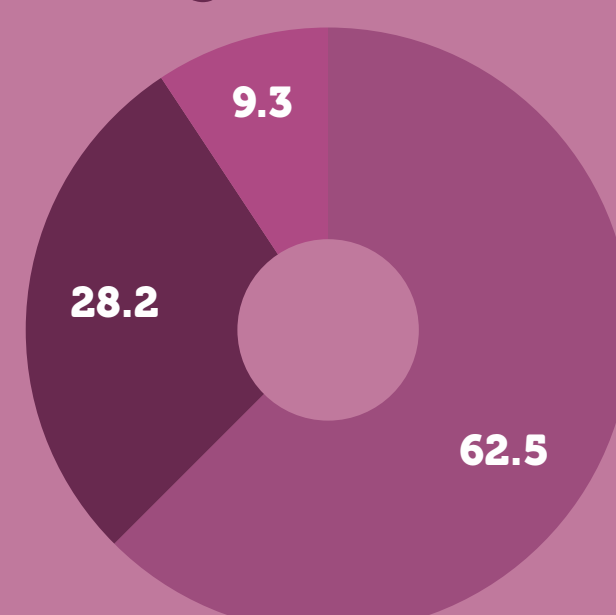
Almost half (44%) of the first-grade students didn't use any of these substances.

Among students that reported current use of either cigarette, alcohol or cannabis use, one quarter (26.9%) reported use of two substances.

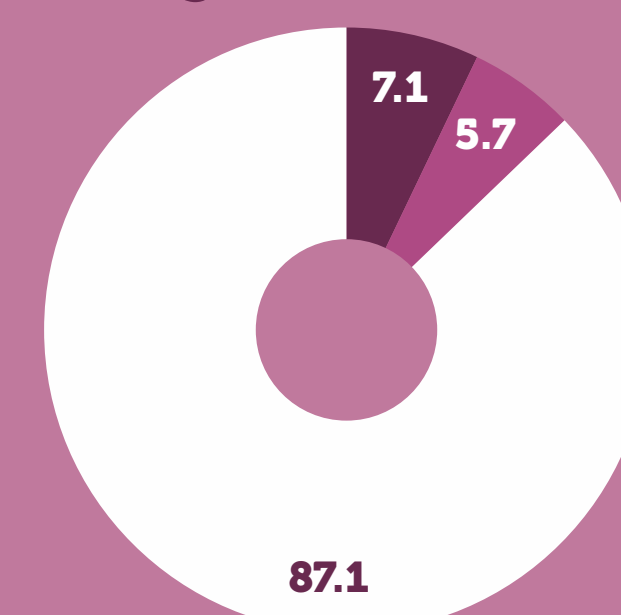
Single, dual and poly substance use among cigarette smokers (%)



Single, dual and poly substance use among alcohol users (%)



Single, dual and poly substance use among cannabis users (%)



■ Exclusive cigarette smoking ■ Dual cigarette and alcohol ■ Exclusive alcohol use ■ Dual cigarette and alcohol ■ Exclusive cannabis use ■ Dual cigarette and cannabis
■ Dual cigarette and cannabis ■ Poly use (alcohol, smoking and cannabis) ■ Poly use (alcohol, smoking and cannabis) ■ Poly use (alcohol, smoking and cannabis)

Conclusion

A high percentage of tobacco, alcohol, and cannabis users are dual and poly substance users.

Results call for action due to exposure of children to more than one risk factor and stress the importance of integrated view on substance use.

Characteristics of poly-substance users should be further explored.

Results should be taken into account for planning evidence-based interventions in Serbia.

Conflict of interest statement: The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.