
REPORT

YOUTH SAFETY FEELING

IN THE

BALTIC SEA REGION

2020

Project “Youth for safer youth” was supported by
Council of the Baltic Sea States
Project Support Facility
Project number 2019/04



**PROJECT
SUPPORT
FACILITY**

Project “Youth for safer youth” began in September 2019 and run through November 2020. In this Council of the Baltic Sea States Project Support Facility supported project safety experts (from Union of the Baltic Cities Safe Cities Commission) together with youth representatives from Latvia, Finland and Lithuania developed a questionnaire to research youth safety in the Baltic Sea region. The questionnaire run during late summer of 2020.

Project partners:

- Liepaja Municipal Police (Liepājas pilsētas Pašvaldības policija – Latvia);
- Liepaja Children and Youth Centre “Youth house” (Liepājas Bērnu un jaunatnes centra “Jauniešu māja” – Latvia);
- Southwest Finland Emergency Services (Varsinais-Suomen pelastuslaitos – Finland);
- Espoo Youth Services (Espoon nuorisopalvelut – Finland);
- Kaunas City Municipality (Kauno Miesto Savivaldybė – Lithuania).

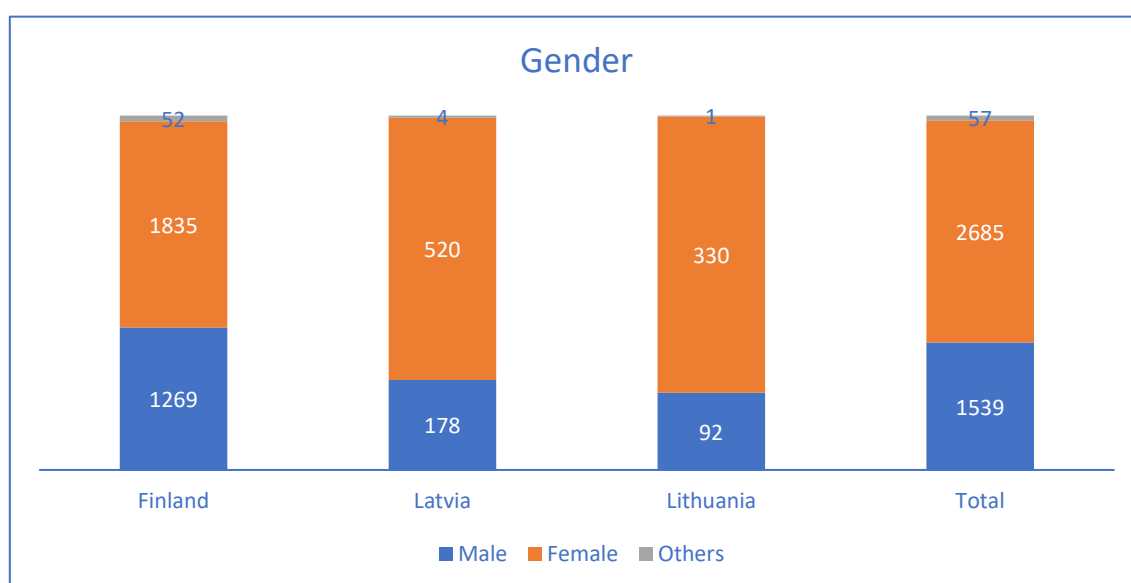
The questionnaire was developed to make the day-to-day life for youth safer. The goal of the questionnaire was to help understand when and why youth feels unsafe and what kind of help is needed for them to be safer. These responses will help to develop better safety education for youth in the Baltic Sea Region.

In total to the questionnaire were received 4281 responses. In Finland 3156 responses were received, in Latvia – 702 responses and in Lithuania – 423 responses.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT RESPONDENTS

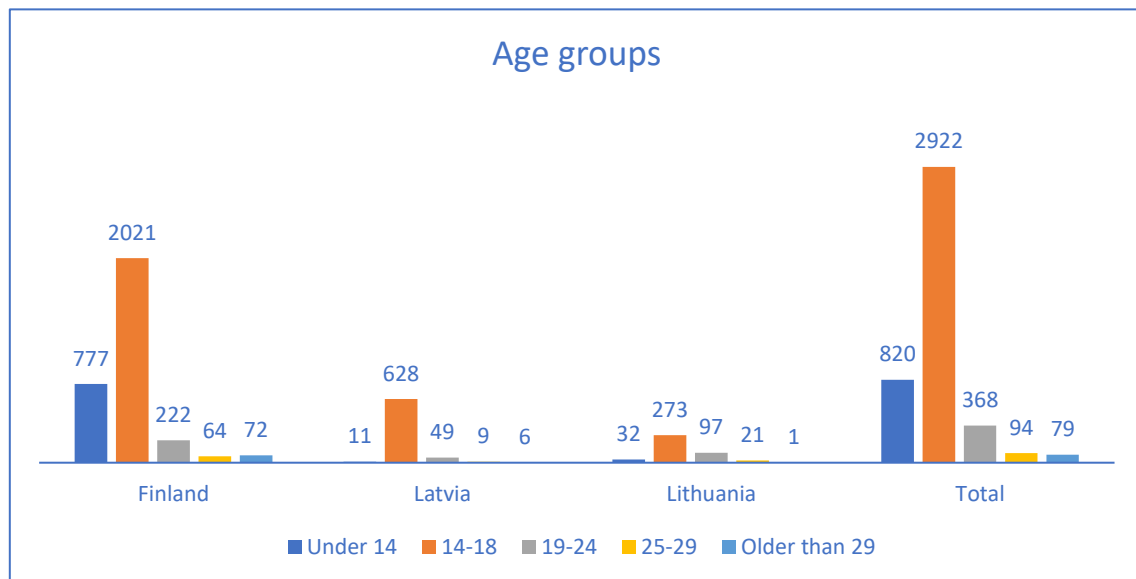
Respondents by gender: In total responded 36% males, 62,7% females and 1,3% of respondents identified themselves as other.

| | Finland | Latvia | Lithuania | Total |
|--------|---------|--------|-----------|-------|
| Male | 40,2 | 25,4 | 21,8 | 36 |
| Female | 58,1 | 74 | 78 | 62,7 |
| Other | 1,7 | 0,6 | 0,2 | 1,3 |

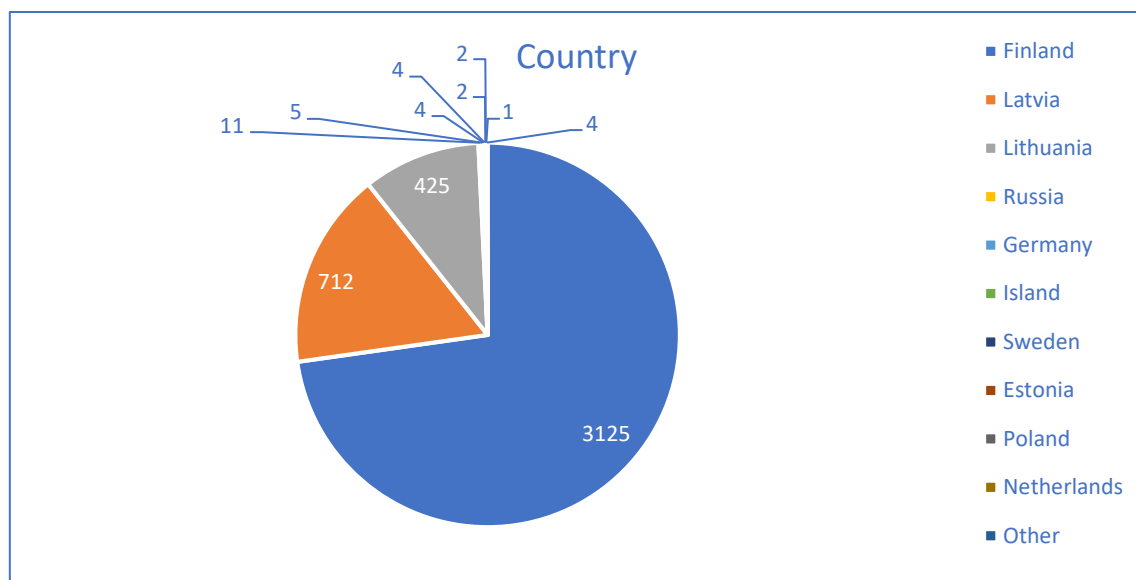


As it is possible to see in the diagram, in Latvia and Lithuania the respondents majority were girls, while in Finland it was almost half-and-half.

Age: 19% of respondents were under 14 years of age; meanwhile the majority of respondents were in the age group between 14 and 18 – 68%. Next age group were 19-24 years old (9%), followed by 25-29 (2%). Older than 29 years of age were only 2% of respondents.

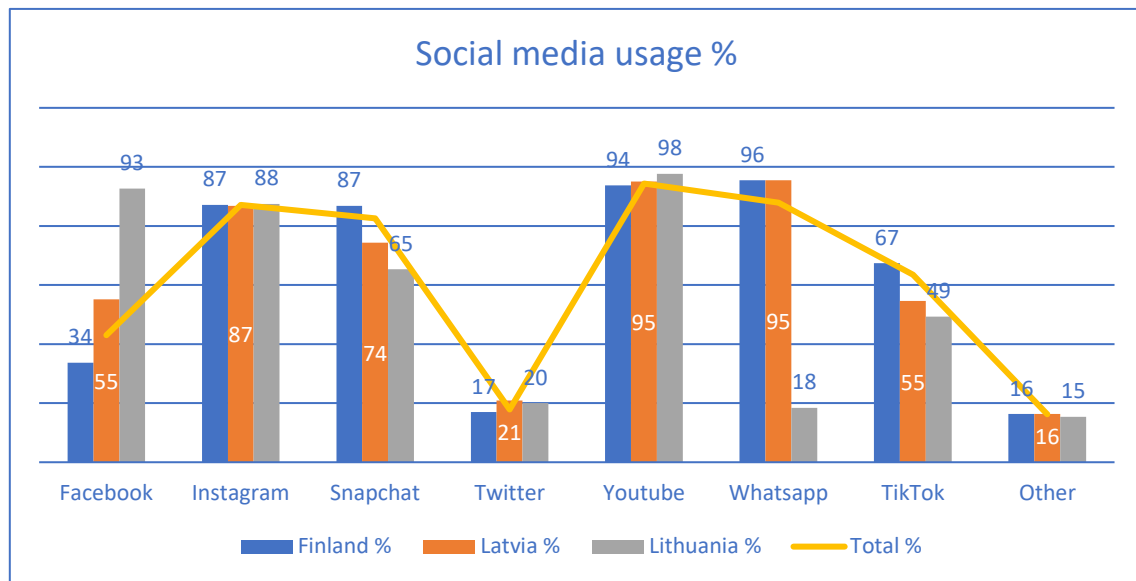


Country: Majority of the respondents were from Finland (3125 respondents), second highest respondents number was from Latvia (712 respondents), but third largest number was from Lithuania (425 respondents). Respondents from other countries were less than 1%.



Towns: In Finland majority of responses were from Helsinki, Haapavesi and Turku. In Latvia, main responses came from Riga, Liepaja and Dagda, while in Lithuania most active youth in responding were from Kaunas, Kedainiai and Jonava.

Social networks and sites: In total youth mainly uses Youtube (94%), followed by Whatsapp and Instagram (both 87%), close follower is Snapchat (82%).



Looking into other social networks and sites which were not specified in the questionnaire, respondents in Finland replied, that most popular from other social networks are Reddit, followed by Discord and Pinterest. Meanwhile in Latvia the top 3 is vKontakte, Reddit and Discord. In Lithuania – Reddit, Viber and Facebook Messenger.

Reddit – Reddit is an American social news aggregation, web content rating, and discussion website. Registered members submit content to the site such as links, text posts, and images, which are then voted up or down by other members (*source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reddit>*).

Discord – Discord is an American proprietary freeware instant messaging and VoIP application and digital distribution platform designed for creating communities ranging from gamers to education and businesses. Discord specializes in text, image, video and audio communication between users in a chat channel (*source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discord_\(software\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discord_(software))*).

Pinterest – Pinterest is an American image sharing and social media service designed to enable saving and discovery of information on the World Wide Web using images and, on a smaller scale, animated GIFs and videos, in the form of pinboards (*source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pinterest>*).

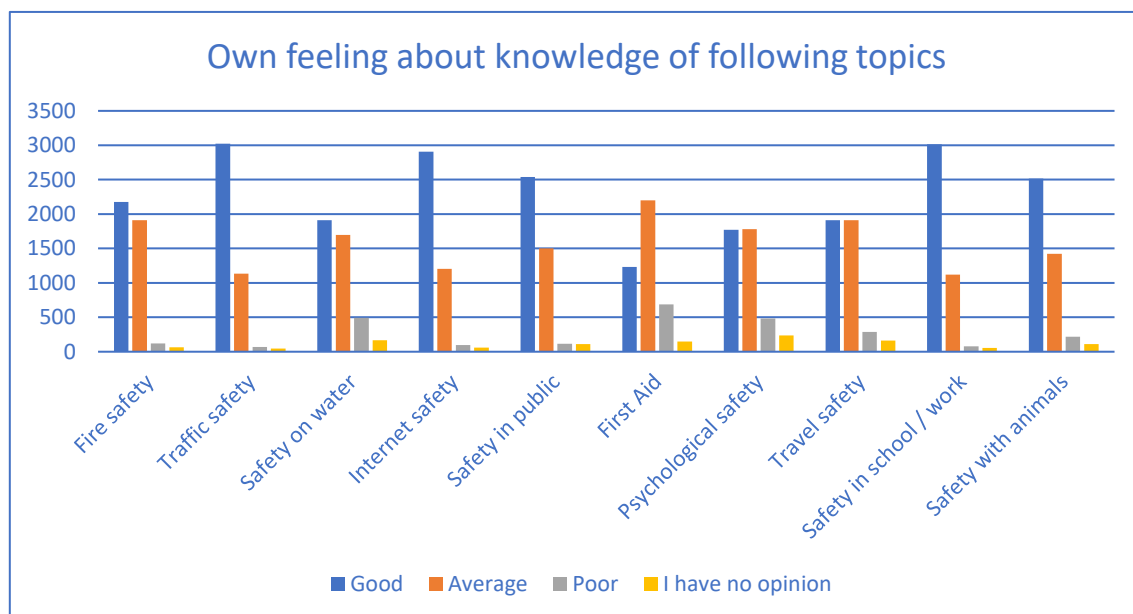
vKontakte – VK is a Russian online social media and social networking service based in Saint Petersburg. VK is available in multiple languages but it is predominantly used by Russian-speakers (*source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/VK_\(service\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/VK_(service))*).

Viber – Rakuten Viber, or simply Viber, is a cross-platform voice over IP and instant messaging software application operated by Japanese multinational company Rakuten, provided as freeware for the Android, iOS, Microsoft Windows, macOS and Linux platforms (*source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viber>*).

Facebook Messenger – Messenger (commonly known as Facebook Messenger) is an American messaging app and platform developed by Facebook, Inc. Originally developed as Facebook Chat in 2008, the company revamped its messaging service in 2010, and subsequently released standalone iOS and Android apps in August 2011 and standalone Facebook Portal hardware for Messenger-based calling in Q4 2018 (*source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facebook_Messenger*).

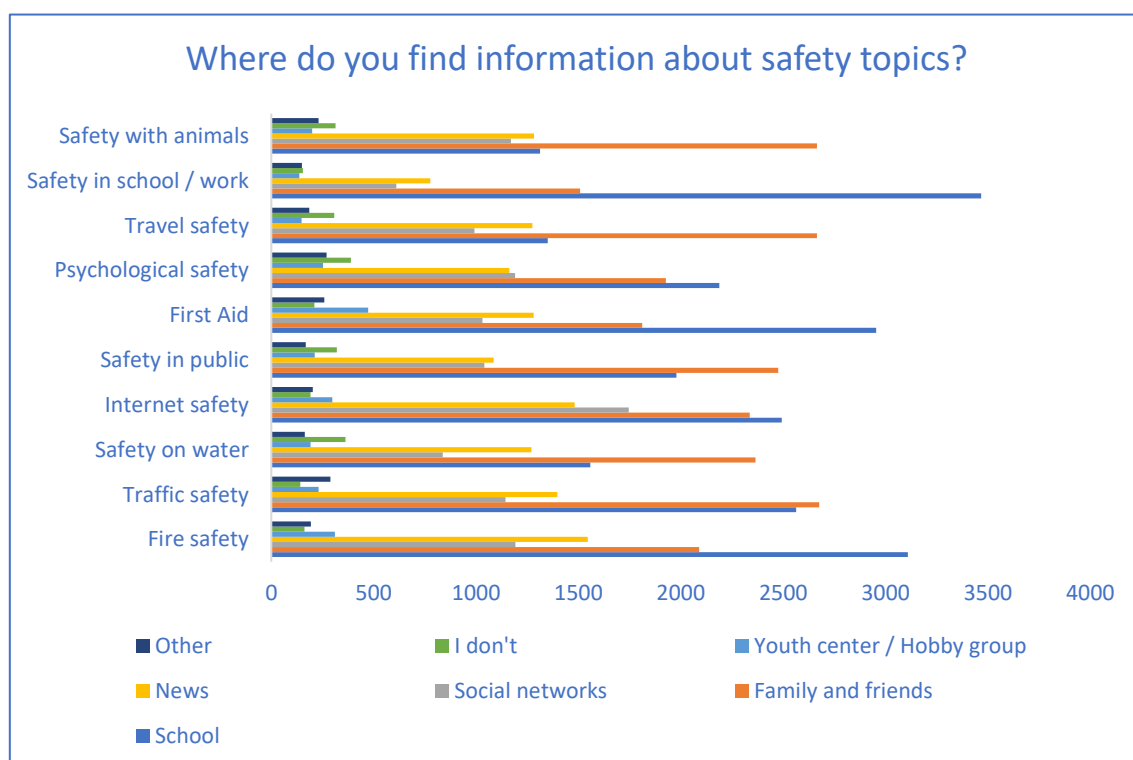
GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUTH SAFETY

The main question was formulated to rate their own knowledge on these safety topics.



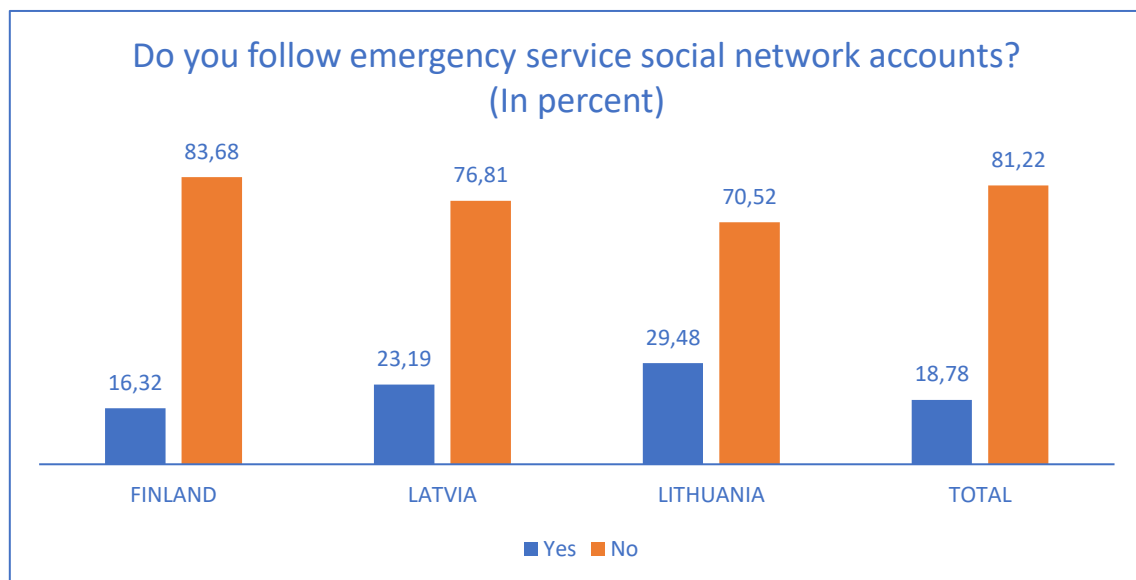
Analyzing answers from all respondents, it shows, that in general youth feels, that they have good or average knowledge of all topics, except First Aid, Psychological safety, Travel safety and Safety on water. Looking more detailed on responses by countries, it shows, that in Finland they feel, that they have poor knowledge about safety on water (13,8%), First Aid (11,5%) and psychological safety (7,9%). Meanwhile in Latvia there is poor knowledge on First Aid (34,7%), psychological safety (20%) and travel safety (11,2%). In Lithuania youth responded, that they have poor knowledge about Psychological safety (21,9%), First Aid (20%) and fire safety (10,8%).

In the question “Where do you find information of these topics?”, total responses were as follows:



Replying to question, about the ways of safety information is most attractive and memorable to the youth, in Finland 50,7% replied, that they prefer practical trainings by professionals, 48,4% replied, that they prefer presentations by specialists. Followed by 34,9% which stated that they prefer video lessons, in close following by 34,8% who said, that they like to learn from social media content. 32,9% said, that they prefer games as attractive and memorable ways to learn about safety. In Latvia 73% replied, that they most attractive and memorable information prefer from social networks and internet. 53,8% prefer practical trainings by professionals, 50,9% likes presentations by specialists. 41,4% better remembers at public events on safety issues and 23,3% remembers safety information from information articles. While in Lithuania 72,9% prefers practical trainings by professionals and 56,4% - presentation by specialists. 3rd and 4th memorable way in Lithuania with 48,6% is public events on safety issues and social networks and internet. 34% likes video lessons.

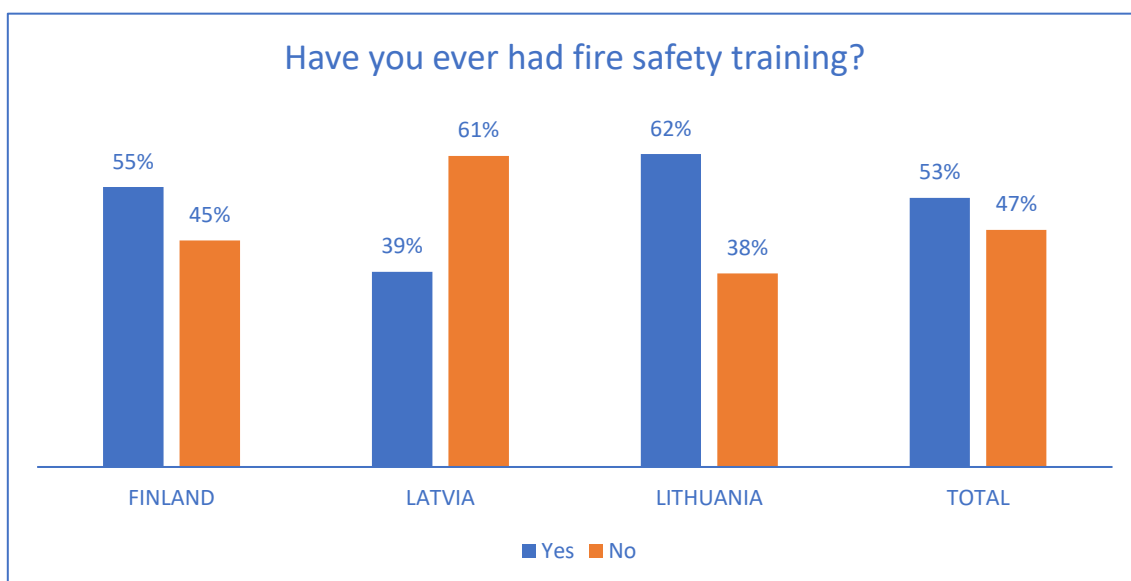
When asking if the respondents follow any emergency service social network accounts (i.e. Police, Fire fighters, Ambulance, etc.) the majority of respondents replied, that only 19 % follows any emergency service social network accounts.



But when asked if they know where to call in case of emergency, only 1% didn't know where to call, but the rest of the respondents replied, that they know where to call.

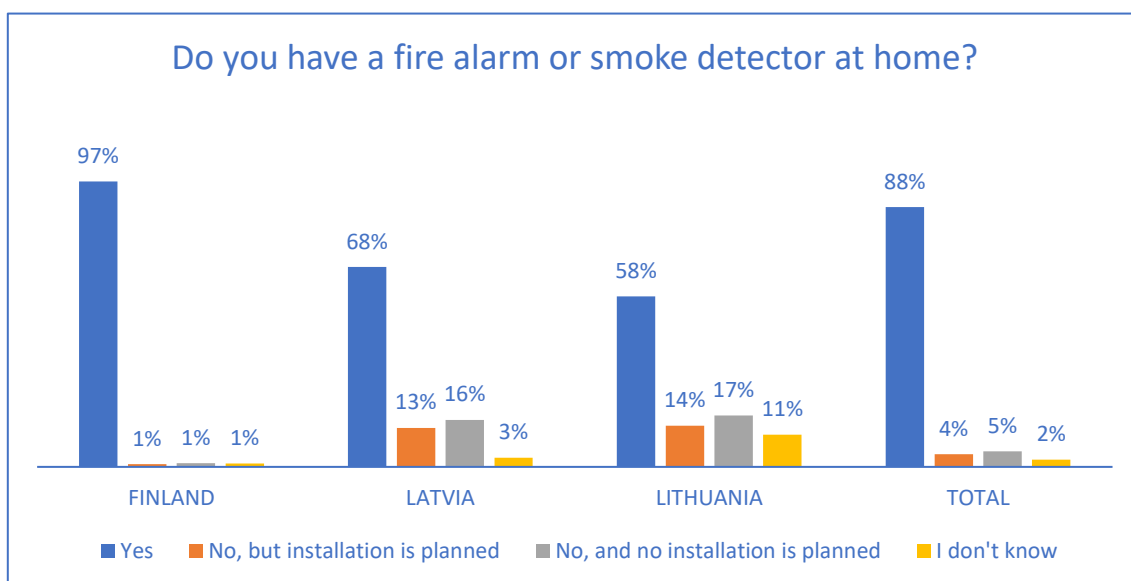
QUESTIONS ABOUT FIRE SAFETY

When asked about fire safety questions, the first question asked was to find out, if the respondents have ever had fire safety training.



As shown in diagram, the worst situation is in Latvia, where less than half have received fire safety training; in Finland and Lithuania more than half have had fire safety training. However, the percentage is still quite small. So it is necessary to think about fire safety trainings for youth in larger scale.

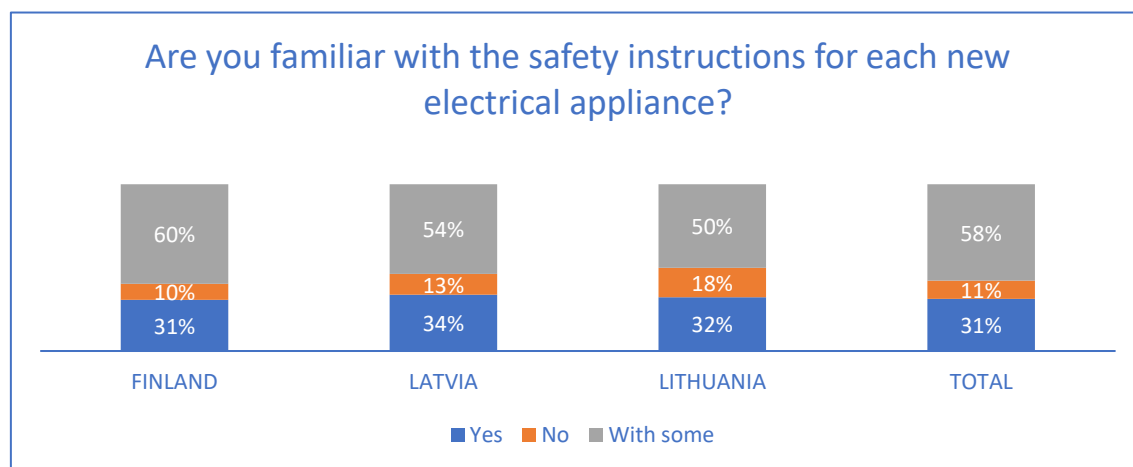
When asked about fire alarm or smoke detector at home, the best situation is in Finland, where 97% of youth replied, that they have fire alarm or smoke detector at home. In Latvia only 68% respondents have it, meanwhile in Lithuania only 58% have the smoke detectors. 16% in Latvia and 17% in Lithuania replied, that there is no plans to install fire alarm or smoke detector at their home.



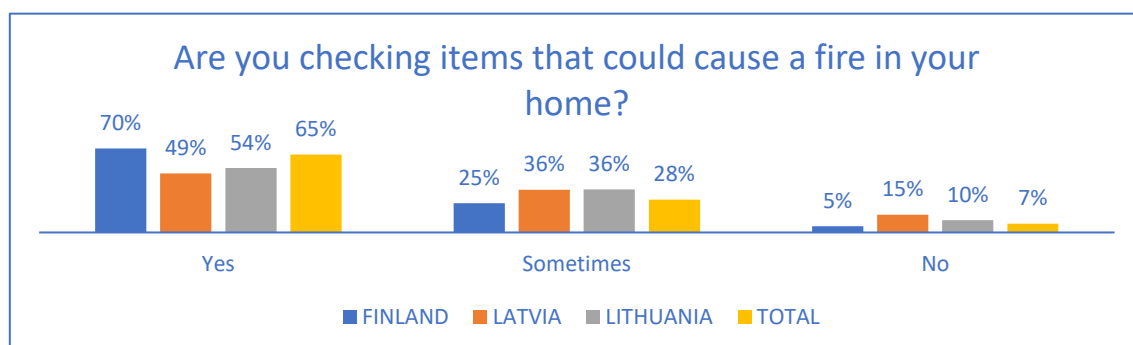
However, when they had to reply to question, if they know what to do in the event of a fire at home, the overwhelming majority responded, that they know what to do.



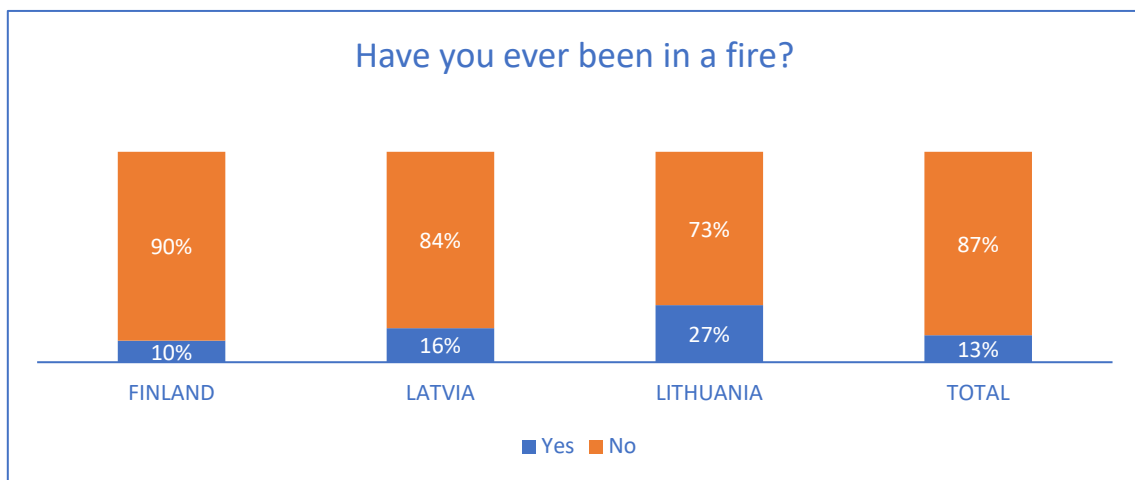
Asked if they are familiar with the safety instructions for each new electrical appliance, mainly in all three countries more than 50% of youth is familiar at least with some of the instructions for new electrical appliances. In Finland 10% is not familiar with any of instructions, in Latvia it's 13%, but in Lithuania it is 18% who is not familiar with any of instructions for the new electrical appliances.



Majority of youth are checking items that could cause a fire in their homes. In Finland only 5% of youth doesn't check the items, which could cause a fire, while in Latvia it's 15%, but in Lithuania – 10%. It is important for youth to know, that they have to check for appliances and items, which could cause a fire.

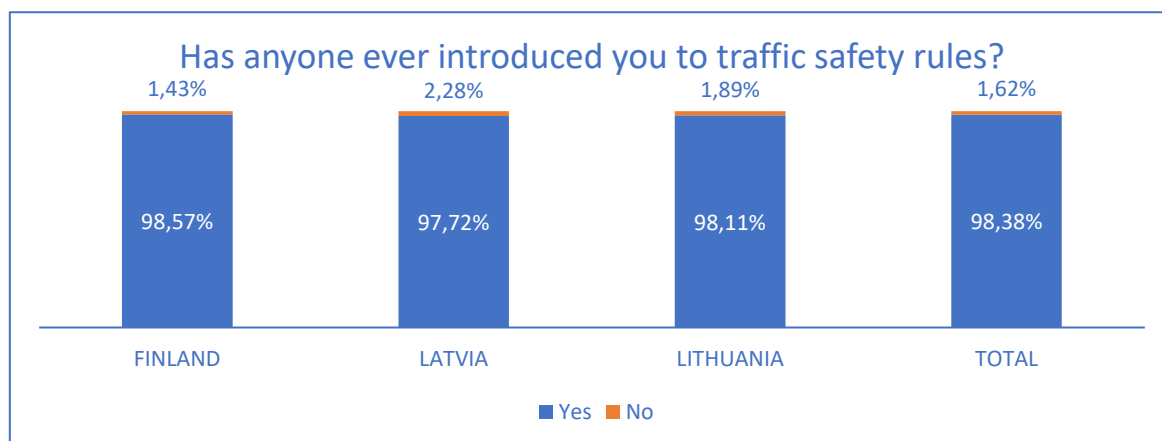


27% of Lithuanian, 16% of Latvian and 10% of Finnish youth have said that they have been in fire.

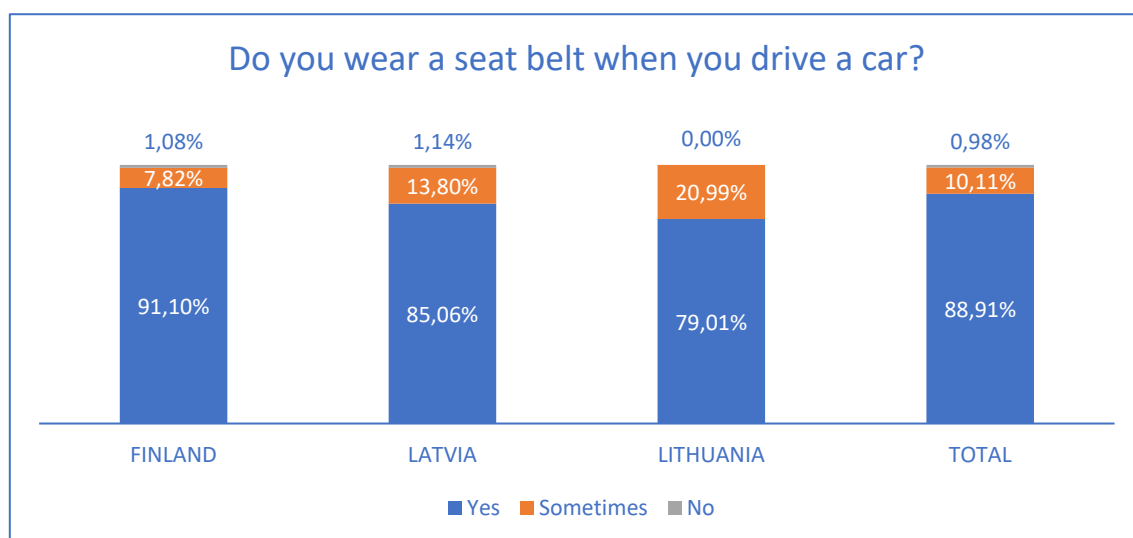


QUESTIONS ABOUT TRAFFIC SAFETY

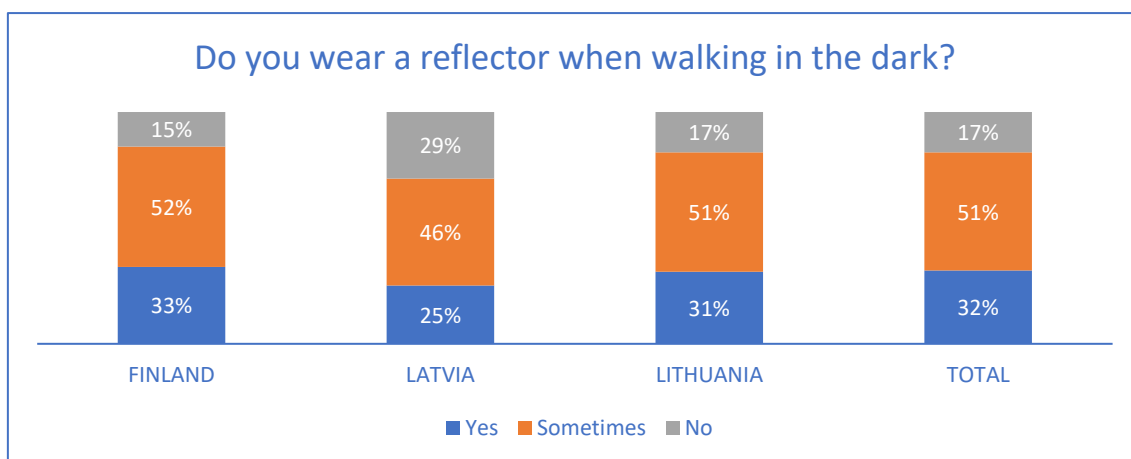
Answering to the question if anyone has ever introduced youth to traffic safety rules, almost everyone replied, that they have been informed about traffic safety. In total only 69 from 4267 respondents replied, that they have not been introduced into traffic safety rules.



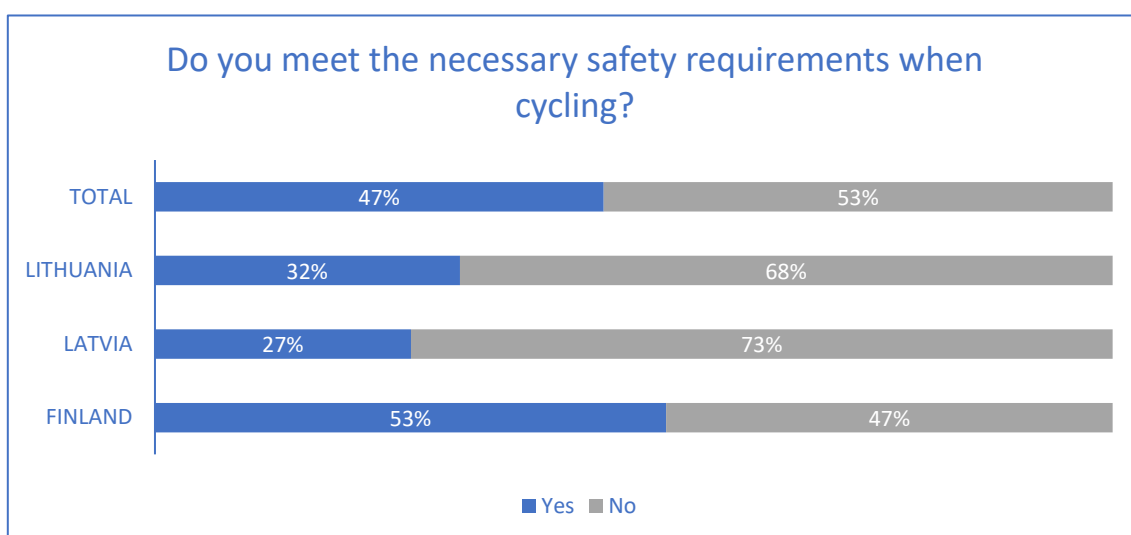
Asked, if youth wears a seat belt when driving in a car, there is a problem, because in total more than 10% wears seatbelt only sometimes. The worst situation is in Lithuania, where about 20% wears seatbelt only sometimes. It is necessary to educate the youth and their parents about the need to use a seatbelt while driving in a car.



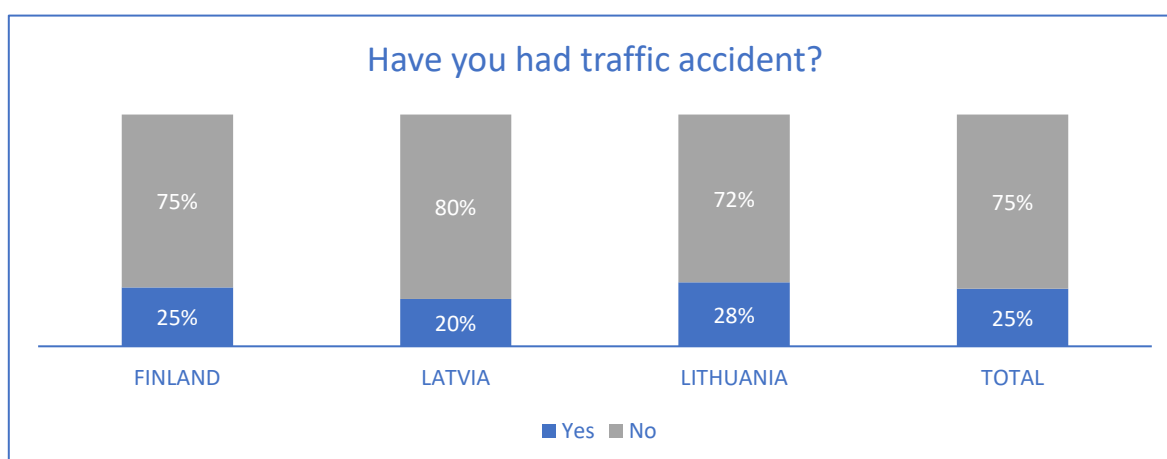
In all three countries where the youth were questioned, during autumn and winter there are long periods, when outside is dark. Therefore, the need for reflectors is crucial. When asked, if they wear a reflector when walking in the dark, the replies indicated an unpleasant situation, because only one third of respondents said, that they use reflectors when walking in the dark. Half of the respondents said, that they use reflectors sometimes, but around 17% said that they do not wear reflectors. The most unsatisfactory situation is in Latvia, where only 25% wear reflectors, while 29% does not wear them at all.



When asked about the usage of cycling safety equipment, the majority of the respondents replied, that they does not meet them. In Finland the situation is a little bit better (53% meets safety requirements), while in Latvia (27% meets safety requirements) and Lithuania (32% meets safety requirements) the situation is worse. The important part of the cycling culture is education about safety while cycling, and it is necessary to provide the youth with information, what happens, when they does not meet the necessary safety requirements when cycling.

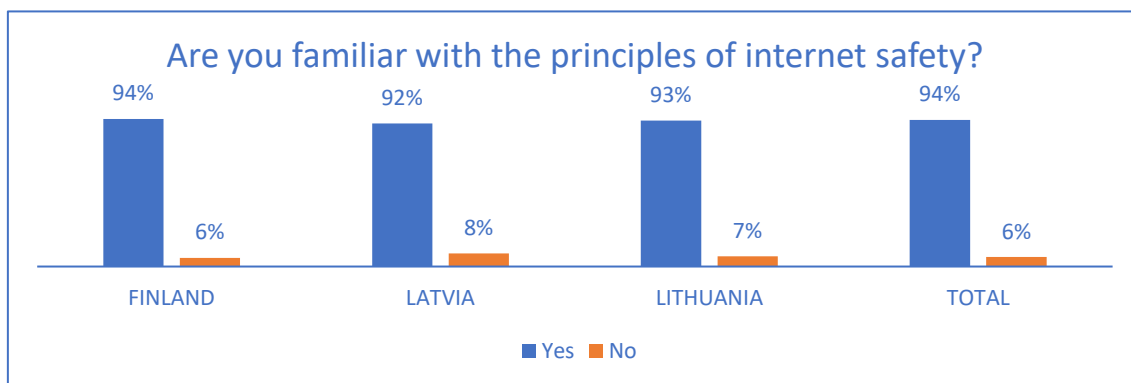


Almost one fourth of respondents have been involved in traffic accident. In Lithuania there is 28% who have been in traffic accident, in Finland it us 25%, but in Latvia – 20%.

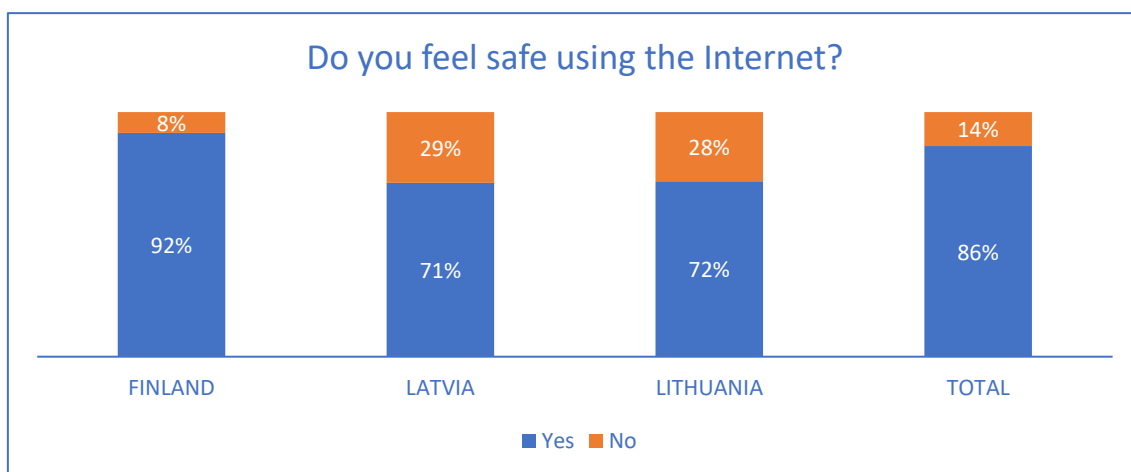


QUESTIONS ABOUT INTERNET SAFETY

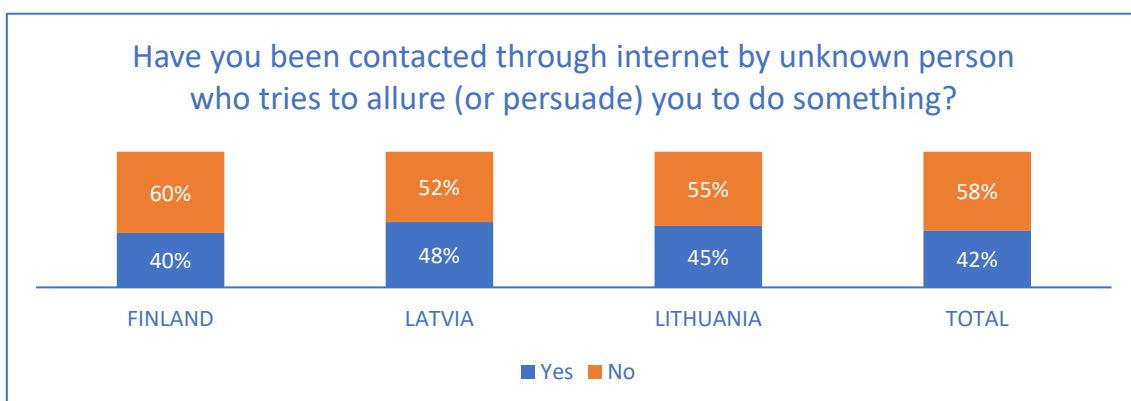
The first question regarding internet safety was, if they are familiar with the principles of internet safety (i.e. - keeping your personal information limited, being careful what to download, choosing strong passwords, making purchases in secure and trusted sites, being careful who to meet online, using antivirus and firewall, etc.). The majority (94%) replied that they are familiar with the principles of internet safety. The answers between each country were quite similar.



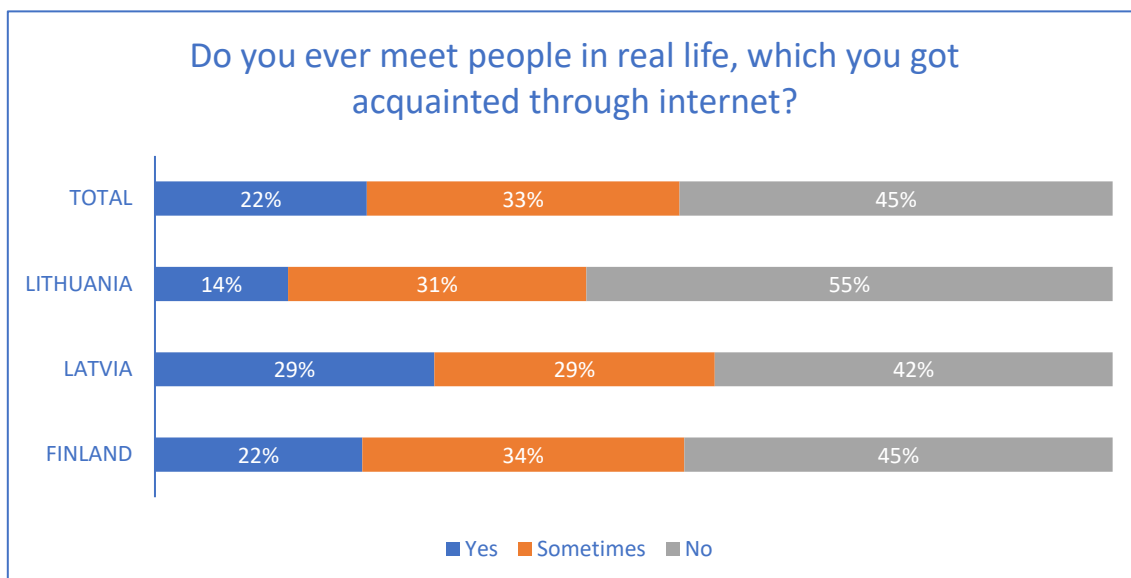
But when asked, if they feel safe using the Internet, in Finland (92%) feels safe, but in Latvia (71%) and Lithuania (72%) youth doesn't feel so safe as in Finland.



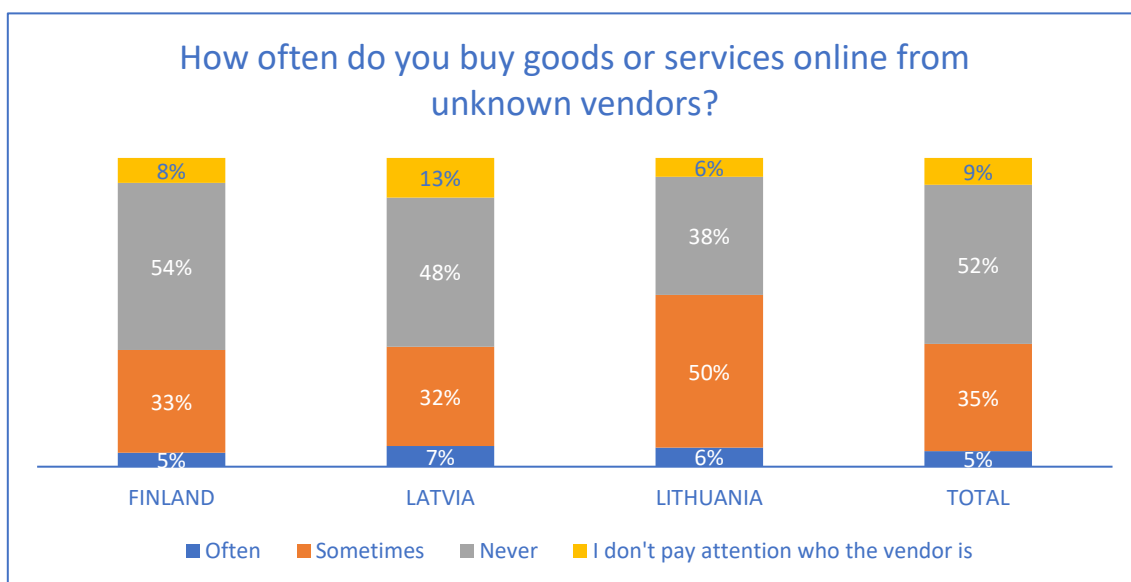
In replying, to question if unknown person who tries to allure (or persuade) has contacted them through internet to do something, the answers were alarming. In all three countries, unknown persons have persuaded almost half of the responded youth in internet. This is the case, where parents need to know by whom their children are contacted in internet.



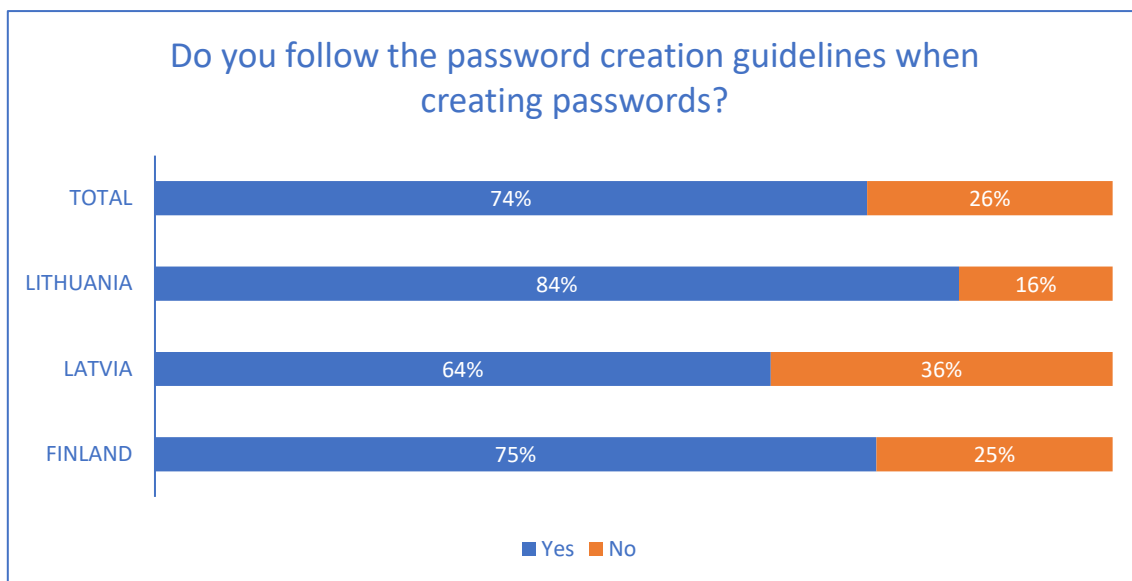
Even more alarming was the responses to question if they ever meet people in real life, which they have acquainted through internet. About half of all respondents have met people in real life, which they have acquainted through the internet.



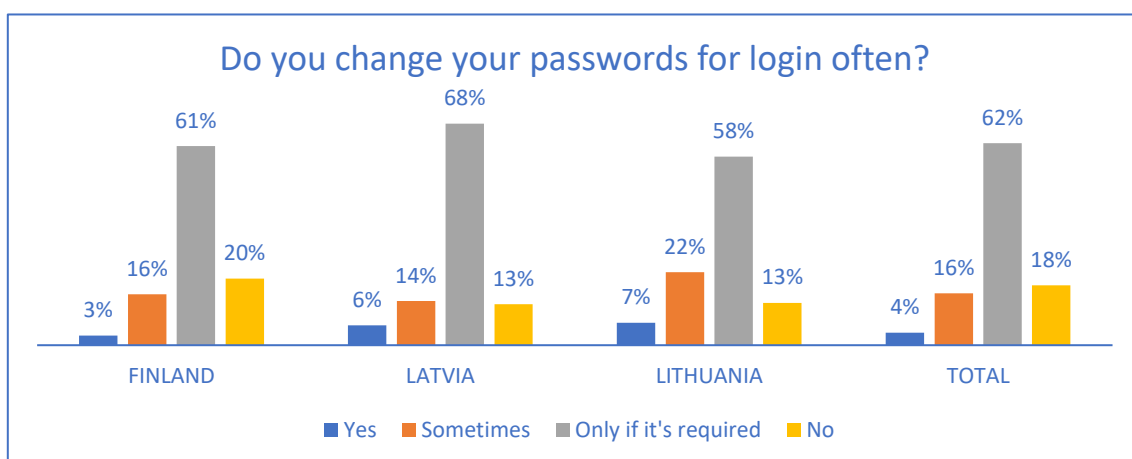
Overall picture about internet safety is not so wonderful as well when asked about how often they buy goods or services online from unknown vendors. In Finland only 54% don't buy anything from unknown vendors, while in Latvia its 48%, but in Lithuania only 38% cares about not buying from unknown vendors.



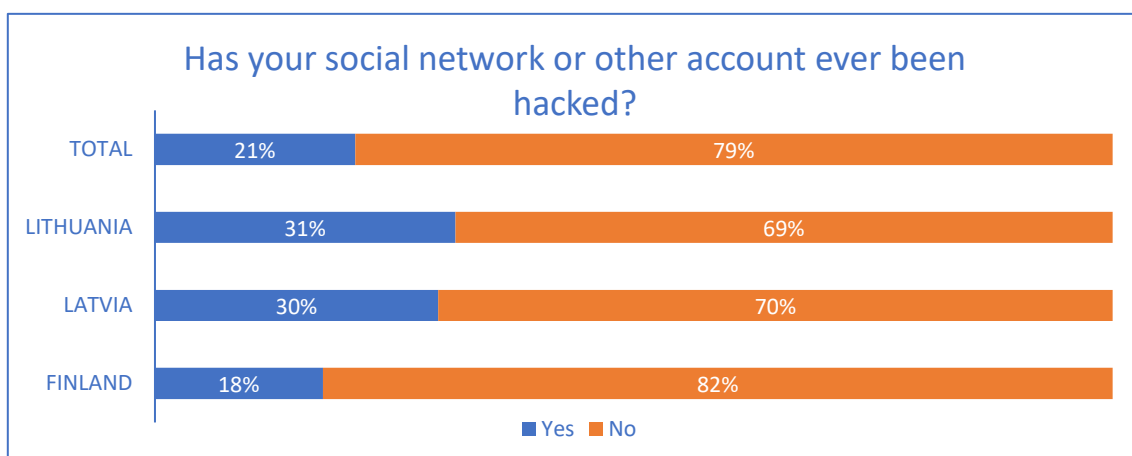
Providing answers about the following of password creation guidelines when creating passwords (i.e. using at least 8 characters, including uppercase and lowercase letters, mixing letters and numbers, including at least one special characters (i.e. ! @ # ?), changing the passwords often (every three months), etc.), the youngsters replied, that the majority follows the guidelines. The good solution is that in many websites, where you have to create passwords, it is harder to create unsafe password.



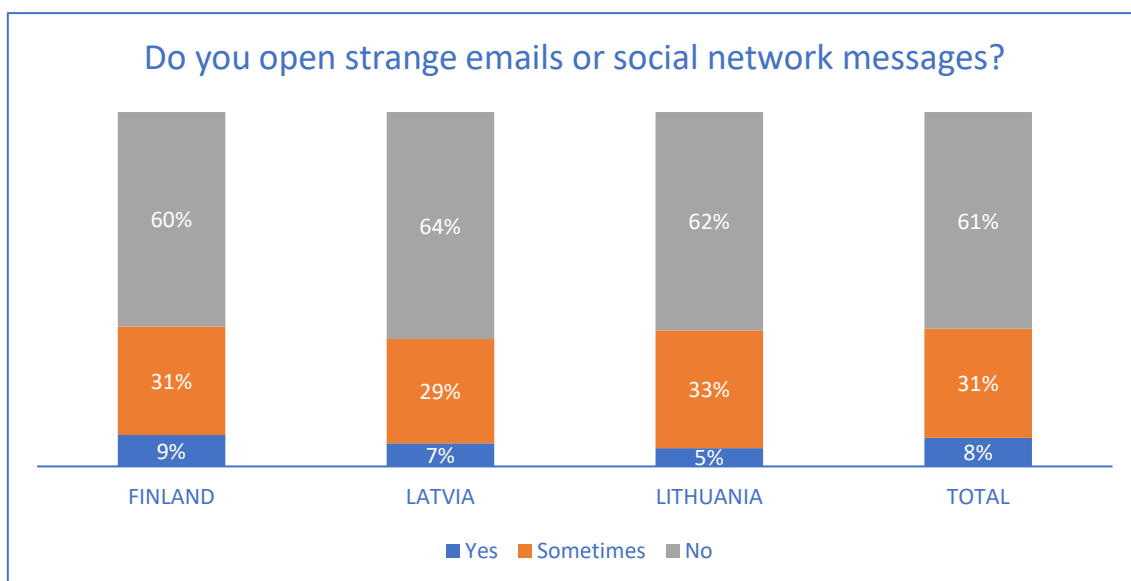
When asked if they change your passwords for login often, majority of respondents (62%) replied, that they do that only if it is required by the website. Based on that, it would be required for homepages to request automatically the password change at least every three months.



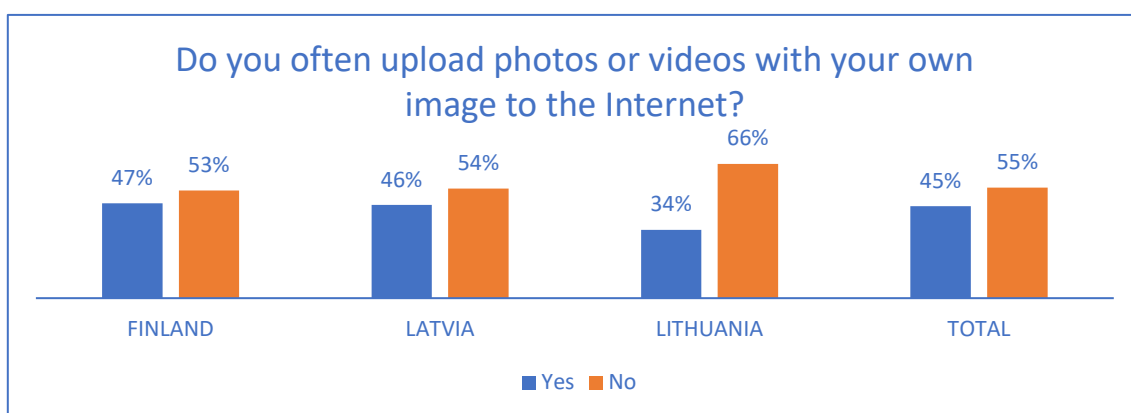
However, at the same time, when answering to question, if their social network or other account has ever been hacked, quite big part (total 21%) of the respondents said that their accounts have been hacked.



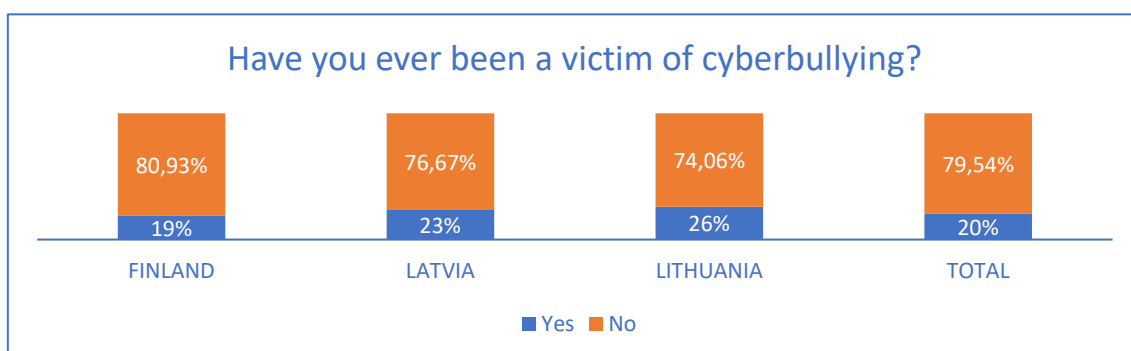
Based on the possibility to hack the email, social network or other website accounts, question if they open strange emails or social network messages (i.e. Do you open emails from people you don't know or the topic is not relevant to you? Do you click unknown links in social networks?) was asked. Around 40% would open strange emails or social network messages, thereby risking with their personal data.



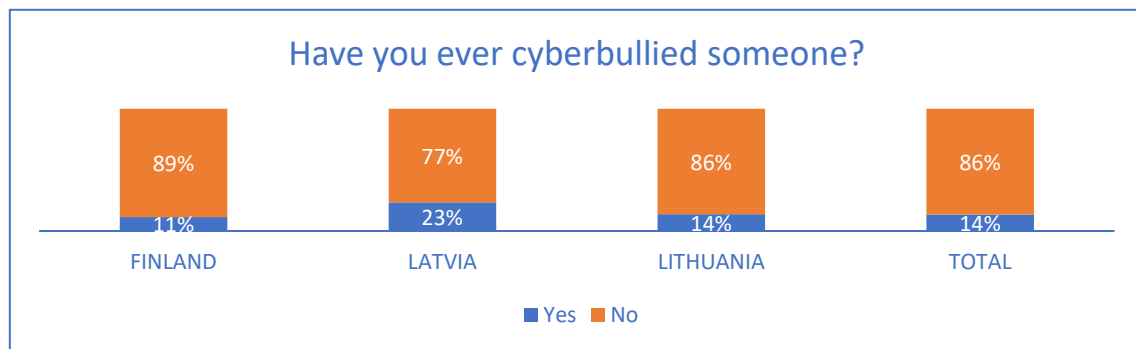
Almost half of the respondents often upload photos or videos with their own image to the Internet. In Lithuania (34%), it is less than in Finland (47%) and in Latvia (46%).



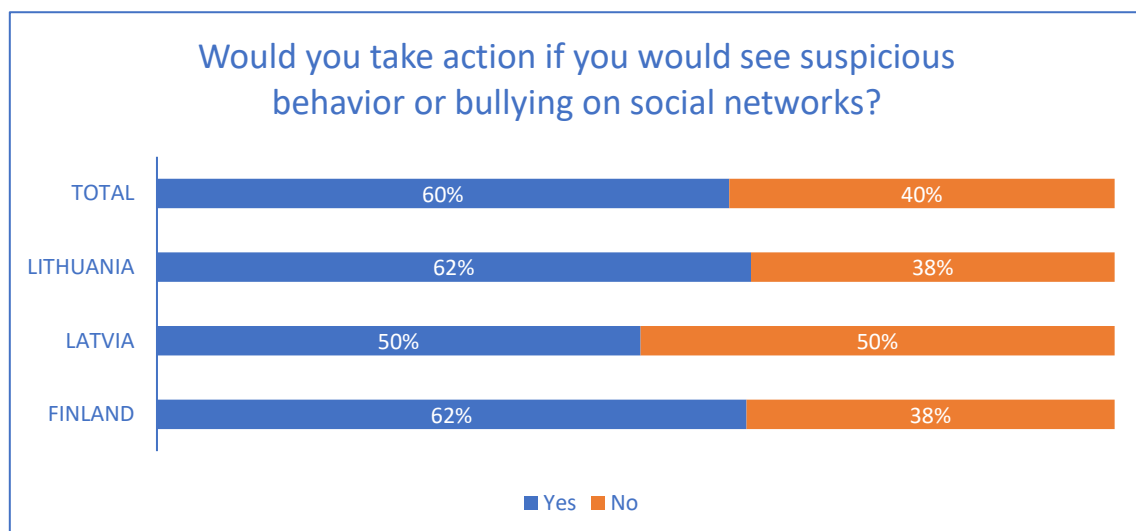
Quite big number of respondents have been a victim of cyberbullying. In Finland 19% have been victims, while in Latvia it is 23%, but in Lithuania – 26%.



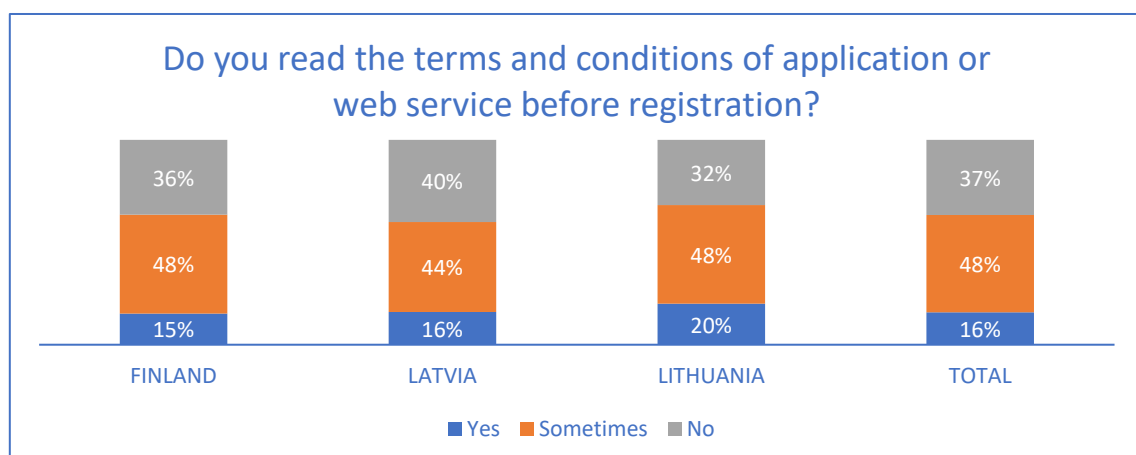
In Finland 11%, in Latvia 23%, but in Lithuania 14% respondents have cyberbullied someone. Therefore, in general it is possible to say, that one cyberbully does bully more than one person.



When ask if they would take action seeing suspicious behavior or bullying on social networks, only around 60% would do something. The percentage should be larger, so there is need to educate the youth, that they have to act if they see bullying, and on how to act, not to be later part of the bullied.

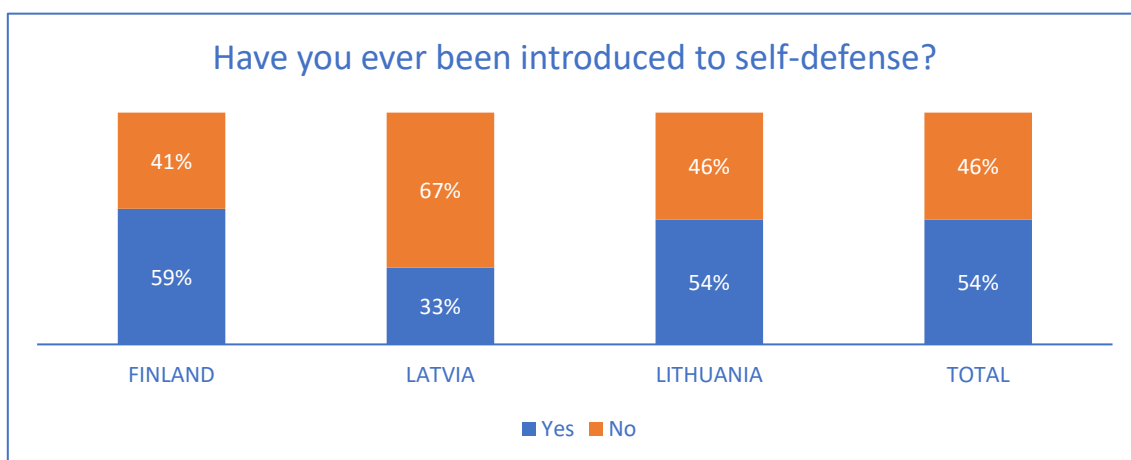


Only 16% does read the terms and conditions of application or web service before registration, while 48% does that sometimes, but 37% does not read them at all. So big majority does not know to what they agree, as well, here is the question if they are legal to submit to these terms and conditions, because of the legal age and liability.

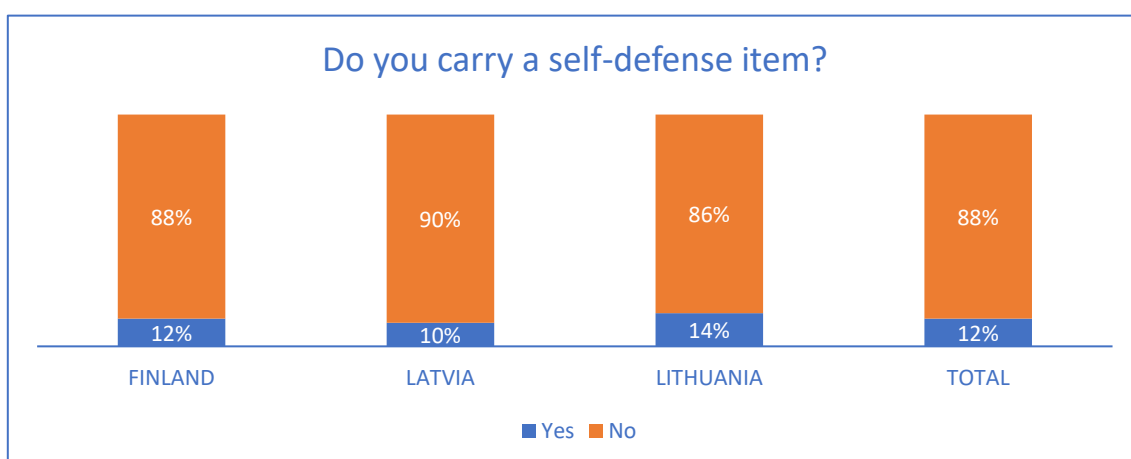


QUESTIONS ABOUT SAFETY IN PUBLIC

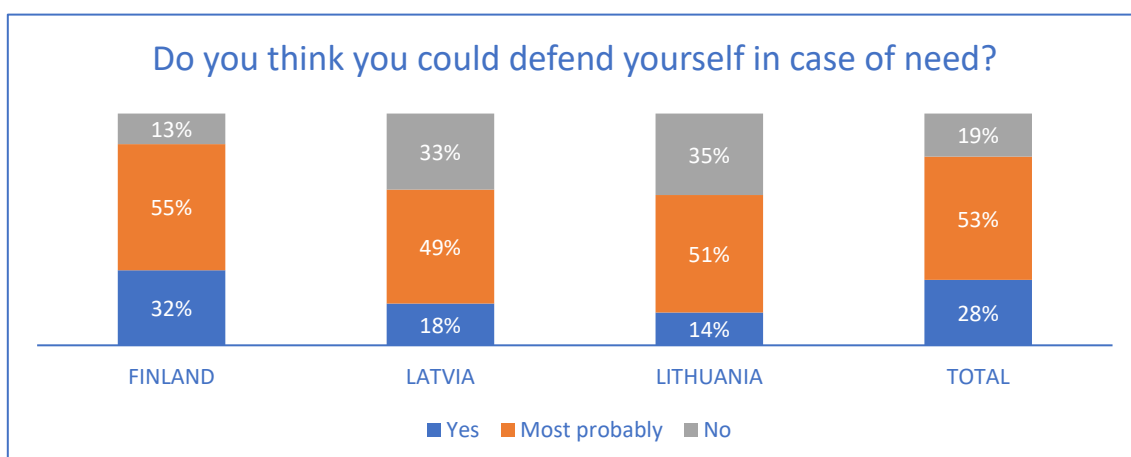
In Finland (59%) and in Lithuania (54%) majority of youth respondents have been introduced to self-defense, while in Latvia only 33% have been introduced.



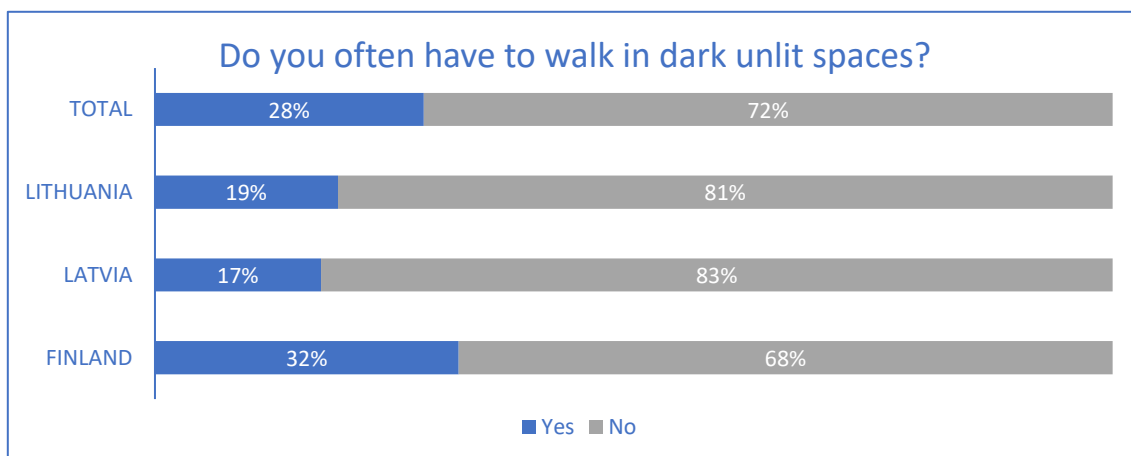
While only small part of youth respondents carry self-defense items – in Finland 12%, in Latvia 10%, but in Lithuania 14%.



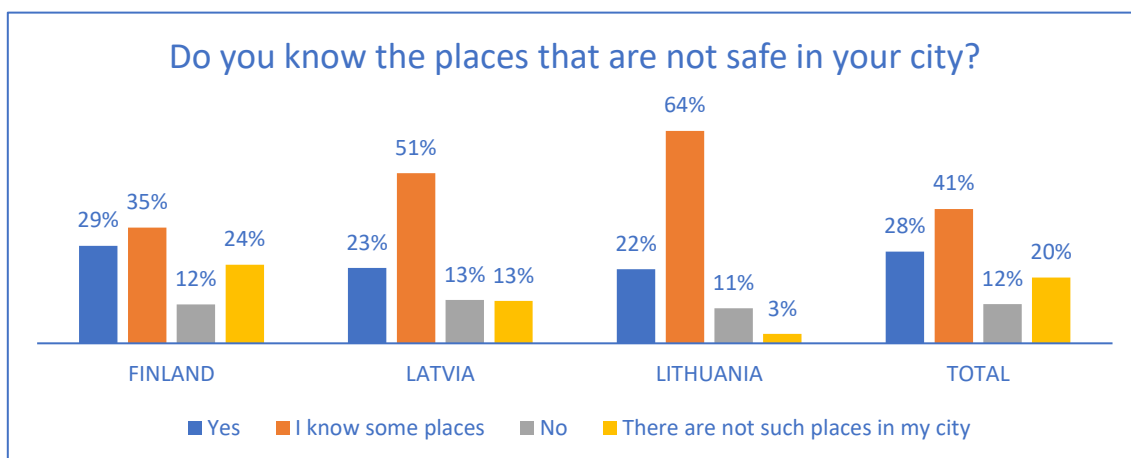
Majority of the respondents think that they could defend themselves in case of need. The most confident youth is in Finland, because only 13% don't think, that they could defend themselves, while in Latvia 33% and in Lithuania 35% are not sure about themselves defending.



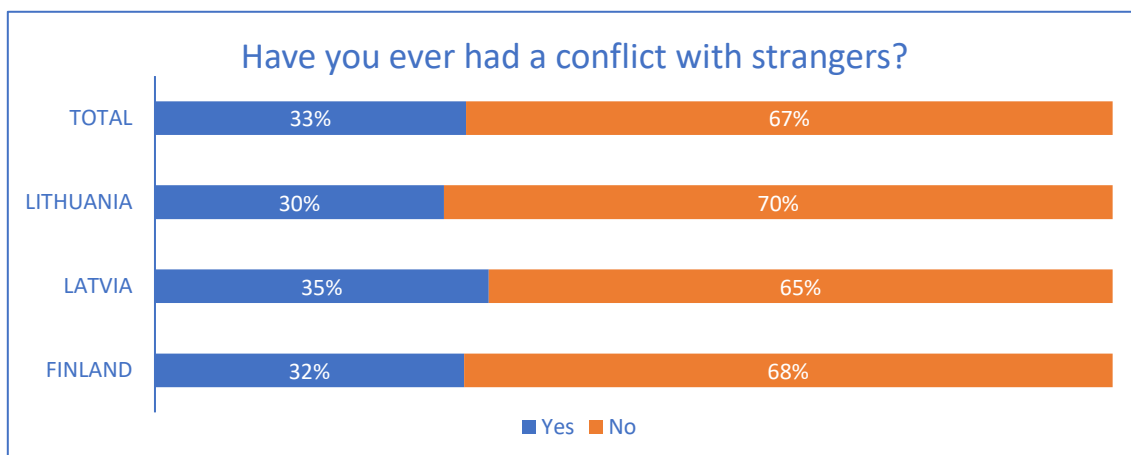
In total 28% respondents have to walk in dark unlit spaces often. In Finland it is more often (32%) than in Latvia (17%) and Lithuania (19%).



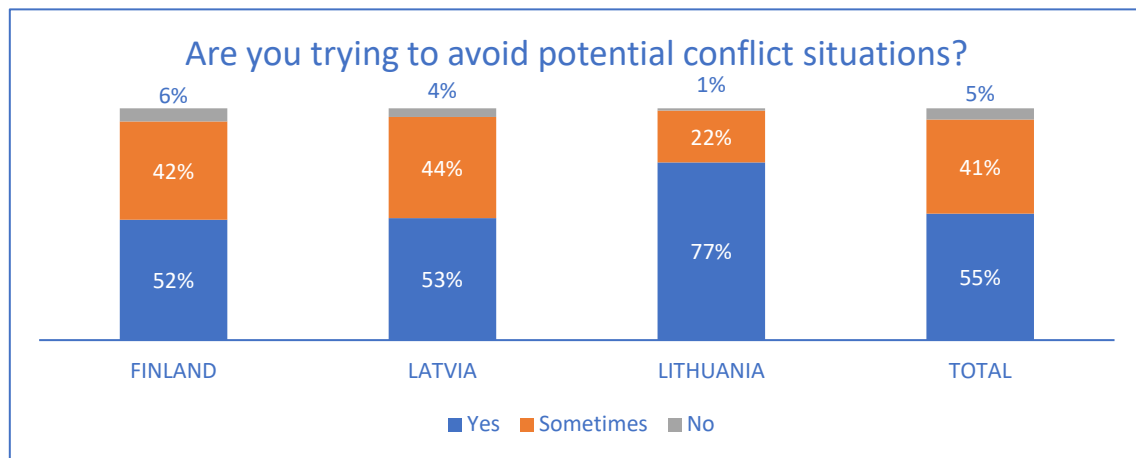
Asked if they know the places that are not safe in their city, in total 28% replied, that they know all the places, but 41% only some of the places. In Lithuania 64% know some unsafe places, while in Latvia 51%, but in Finland 35%. From all respondents 12% does not know unsafe places. 24% of Finnish youth replied, that in their city are not such places, while in Latvia 13% stated that, but in Lithuania only 3% thinks that there are no unsafe places in their cities.



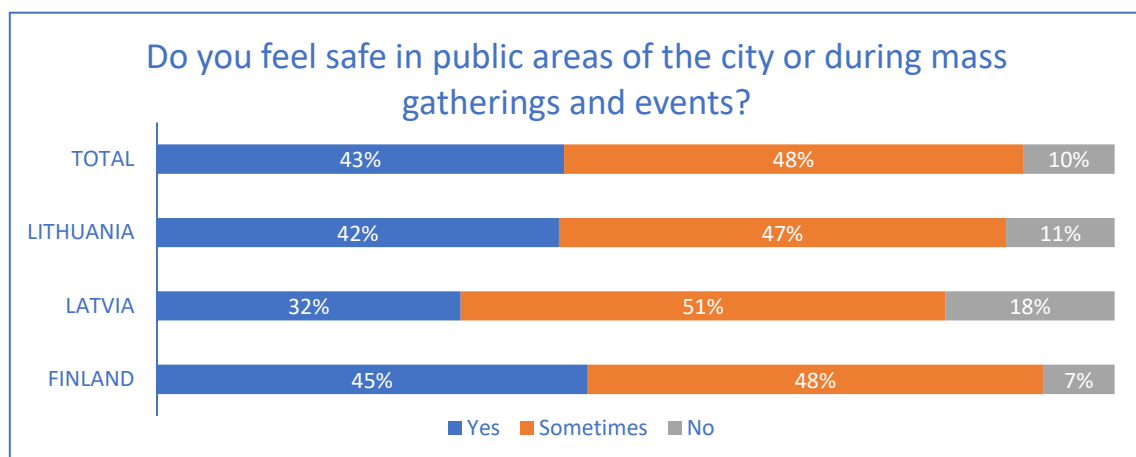
Almost one third of all respondents have had a conflict with strangers.



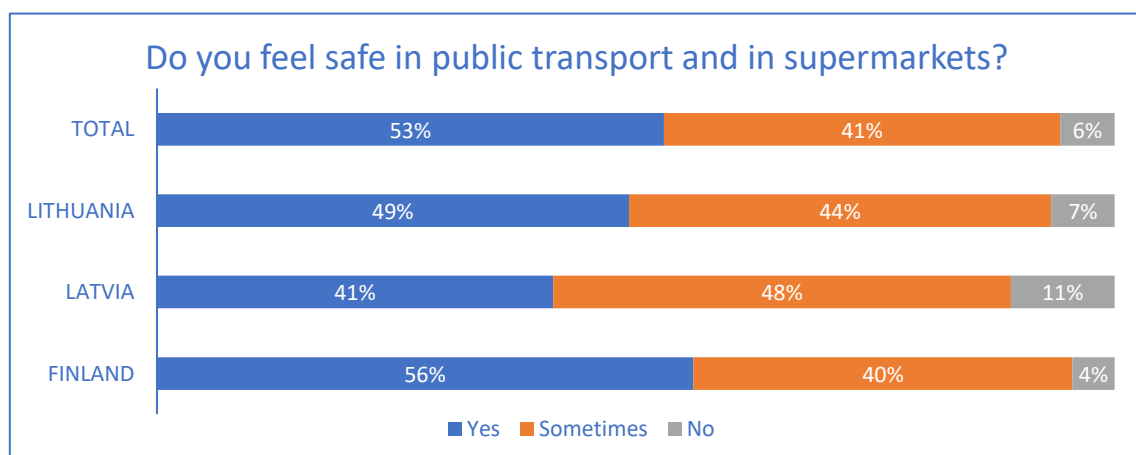
When asked if they are trying to avoid potential conflict situations, majority responded, that mainly yes or sometimes. Only in total 5% replied, that they are not trying to avoid potential conflict situation, but that does not mean that they are trying to look for conflicts.



In total 43% respondents feel safe in public areas of the city or during mass gatherings and events. Looking at youth who are feeling unsafe in Finland 7% of them feels unsafe, meanwhile in Lithuania 11%, but in Latvia 18% feels unsafe in public areas or during mass events.

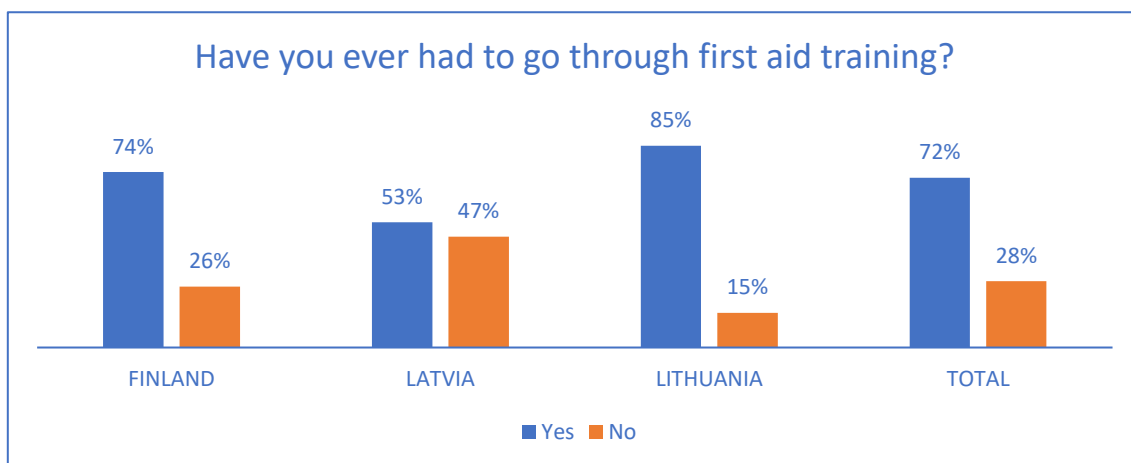


Meanwhile in public transport and in supermarkets the safety feeling for youth is much better.

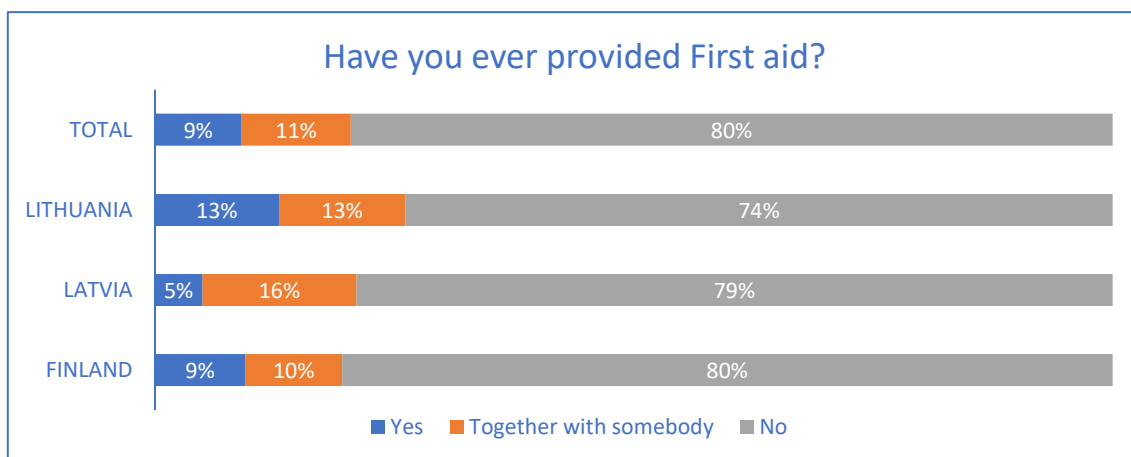


QUESTIONS ABOUT HEALTH SAFETY

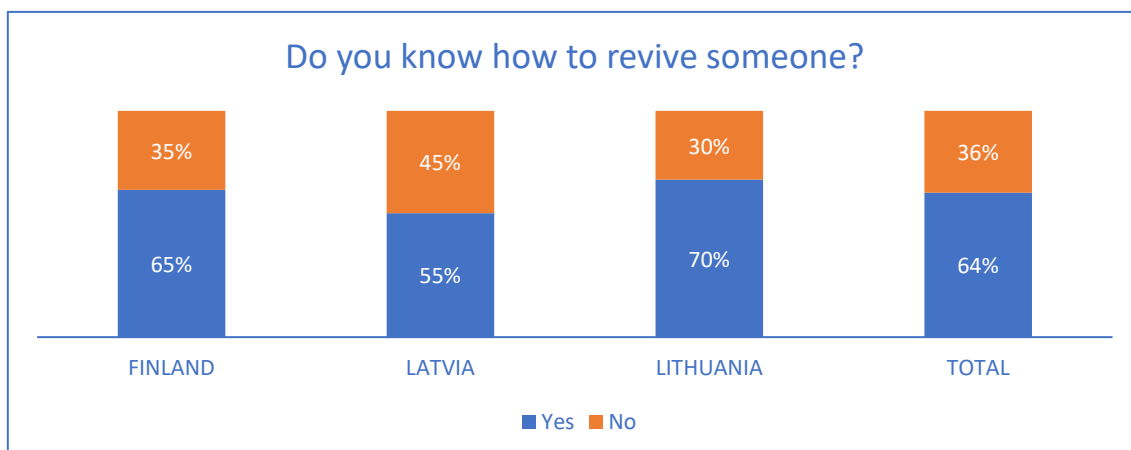
First aid training (About how to help people who got some injuries, cuts, fainted, etc.) have received 85% of respondents in Lithuania, in Finland 74%, but in Latvia the situation is less better, because only 53% of respondents have received First aid training.



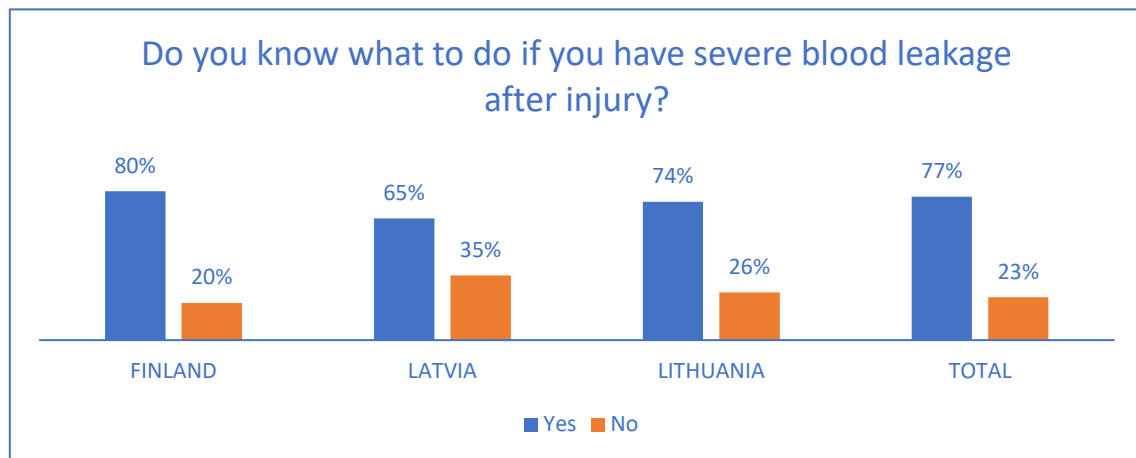
20% of respondents have provided First aid (alone or together with somebody).



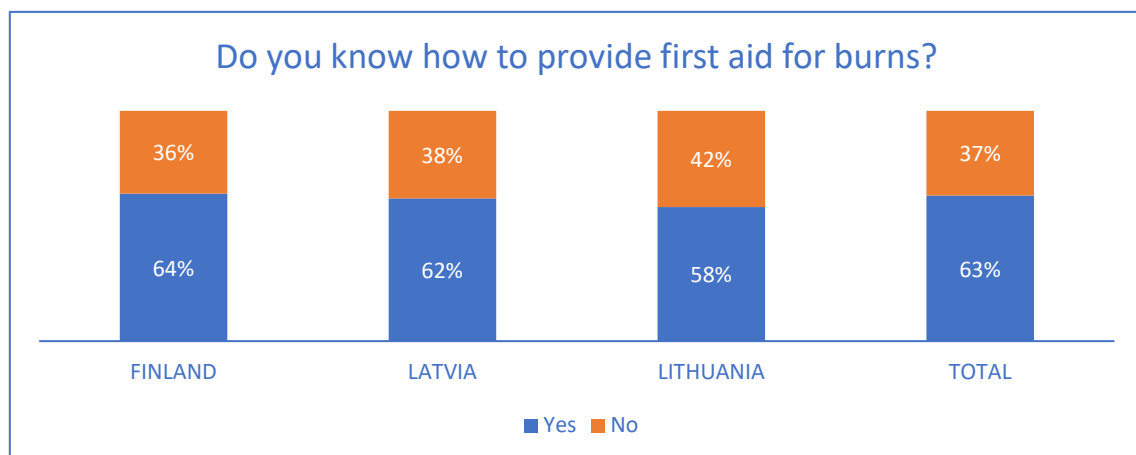
When asked, if they know how to revive someone, in total 64% of respondents know, how to revive. In Lithuania 70% know that, while in Finland 65%, but in Latvia – 55%.



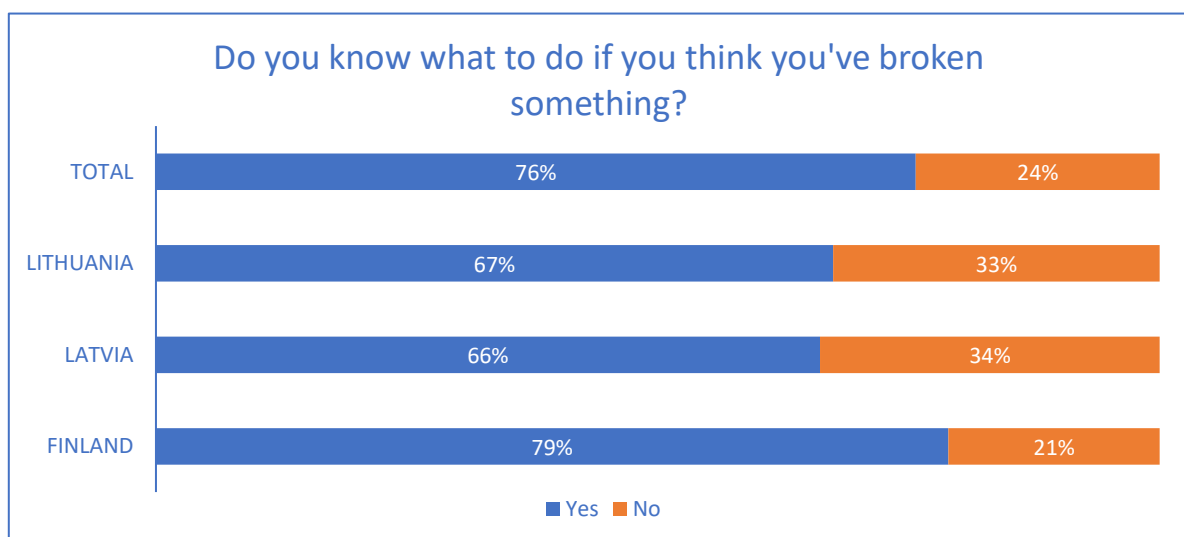
In total 77% of respondents know what to do if someone have severe blood leakage after injury. In Latvia the percentage is lower than in other countries (Latvia – 65%, Lithuania – 74%, Finland – 80%). That can be explained with the smaller amount of First aid training in Latvia.



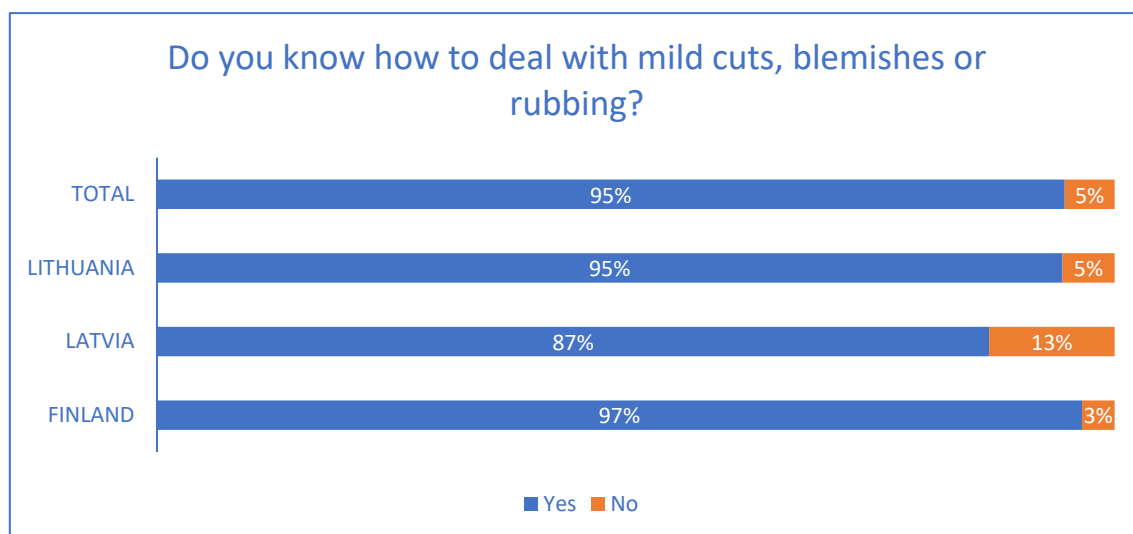
But when asked if they know how to provide first aid for burns, replies indicated, that there is less knowledge about that, because in total only 63% knew how provide first aid for burns, compared to dealing with sever blood leakage.



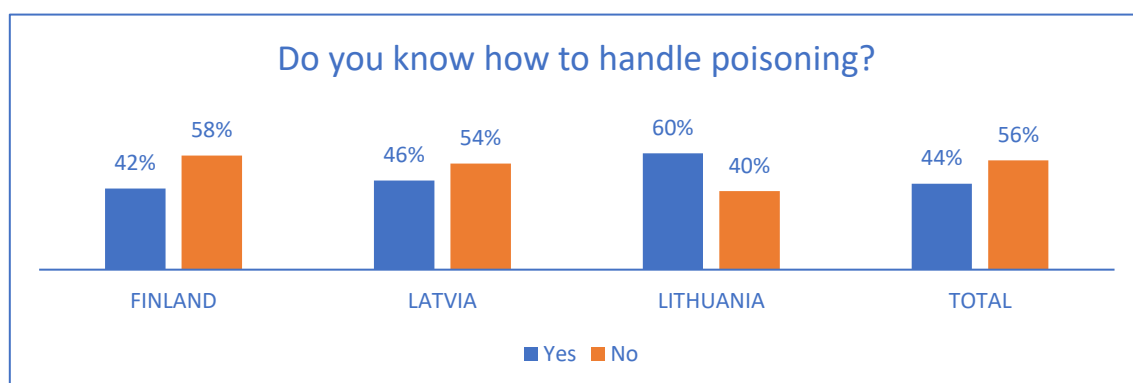
In total 76% of respondents know what to do if they think they've broken something.



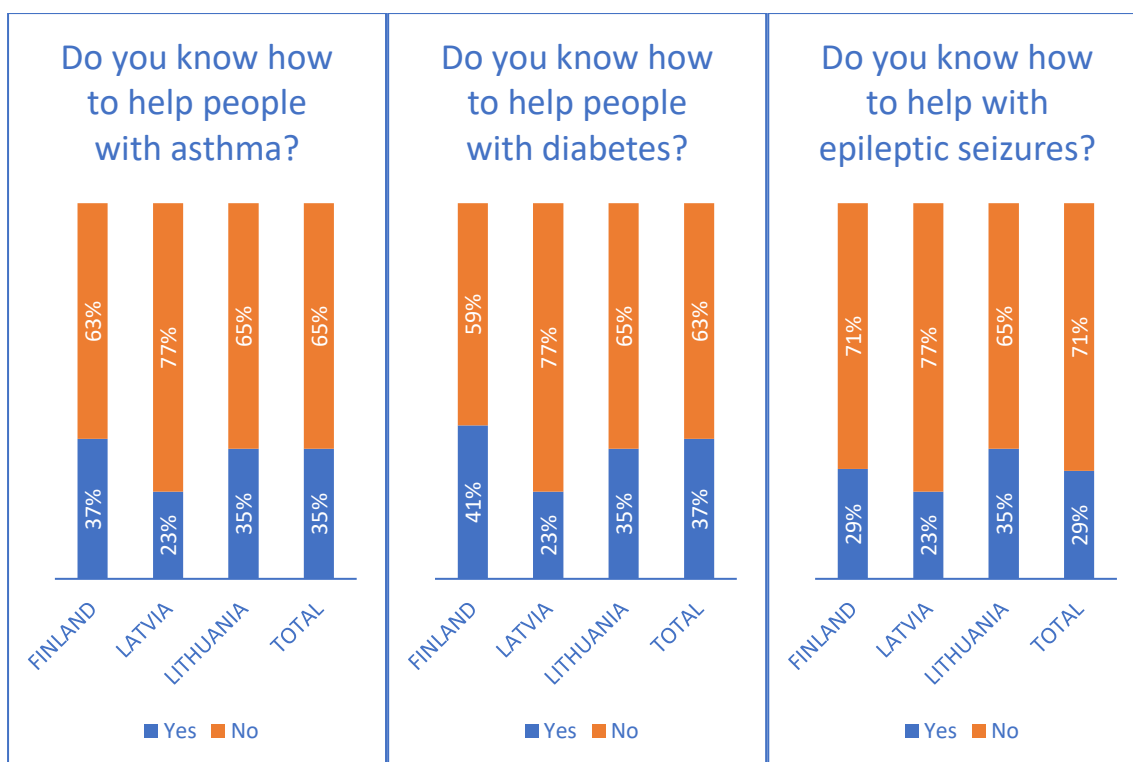
Overwhelming majority of the respondents knows how to deal with mild cuts, blemishes or rubbing. In total 97% of respondents said that they know what to do. Only in Latvian responses the percentage went in double digits (13%) who replied, that they don't know what to do with this kind of injuries. And again that can be explained with the smaller amount of First aid training in Latvia.



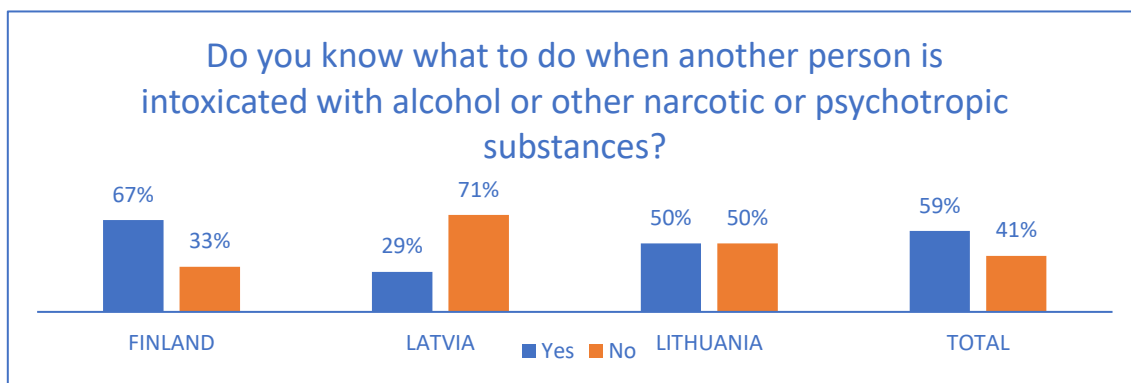
Less than a half (44%) of respondents know how to handle poisoning. The situation is better in Lithuania, when compared to Latvia and Finland, where less than a half of youth respondents know how to deal with poisoning, in Lithuania 60% of the youth respondents know how to handle poisoning.



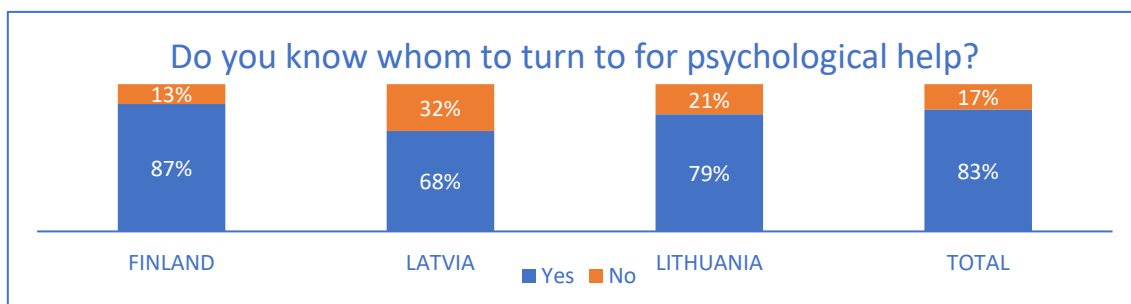
When asked if the respondents know how to help people with asthma, diabetes or epileptic seizures, from all these three issues, better readiness is for help with diabetes (37% total), followed by asthma (35% total) and epileptic seizures (29%). In Finland 41% of youngsters know how to help people with diabetes, while knowledge on how to help with epileptic seizures have 29% of Finnish youth. In Lithuania 35% of respondents know how to help with all these three issues, while in Latvia only 23% knows how to help.



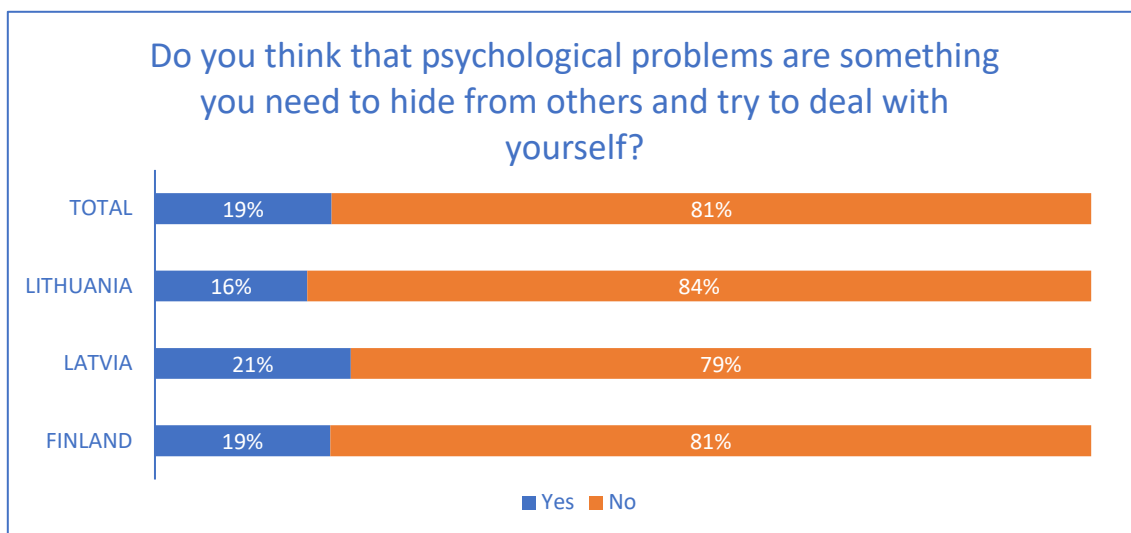
When asked if the respondents know what to do when another person is intoxicated with alcohol or other narcotic or psychotropic substances, the replies were very different based on country. In Finland 67% of respondents know what they would have to do, meanwhile in Lithuania 50% of respondents would know, but in Latvia only 29% of respondents know what to do if someone is intoxicated.



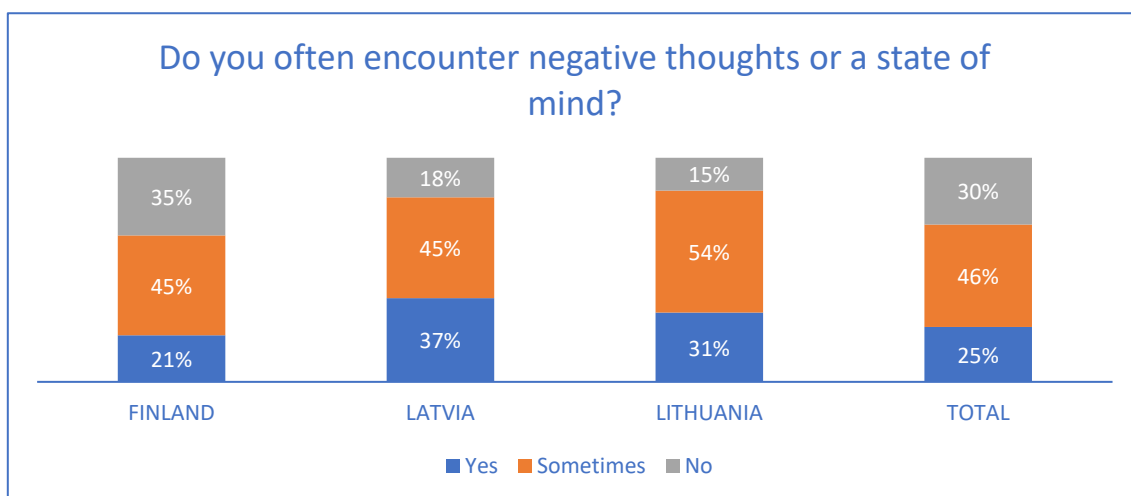
Majority of respondents know to whom to turn to for psychological help. If in Finland only 13% does not know, then in Lithuania they are 21% of respondents, but in Latvia 32%. So the situation is not so good in Latvia and Lithuania about knowledge were to get psychological help.



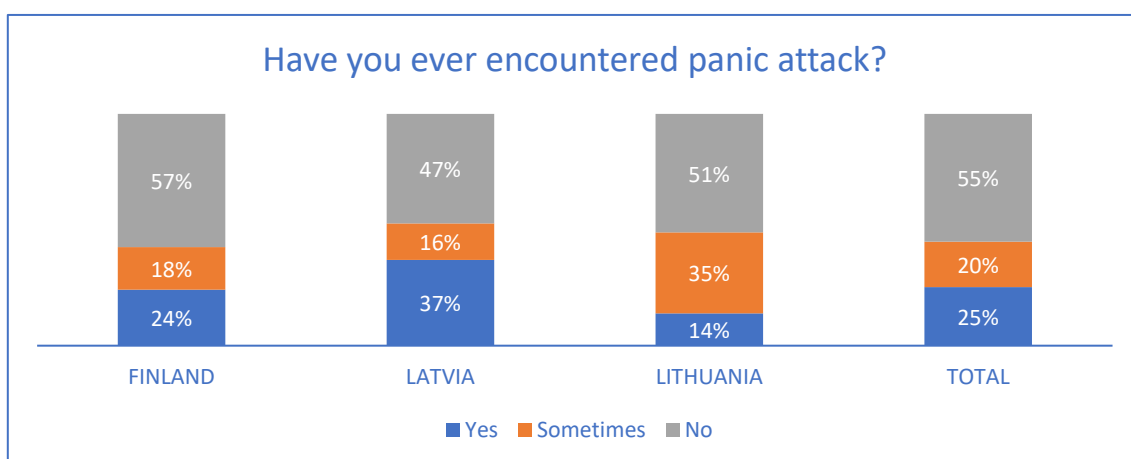
Unfortunately, 19% of all respondents think that psychological problems are something they need to hide from others and try to deal with themselves.



Especially when two thirds of respondents does encounter often or sometimes negative thoughts or a state of mind. In Finland 35% doesn't have these kind of thoughts, while in Latvia (18%) and Lithuania (15%) there are less youngsters who don't have negative thoughts or state of mind.

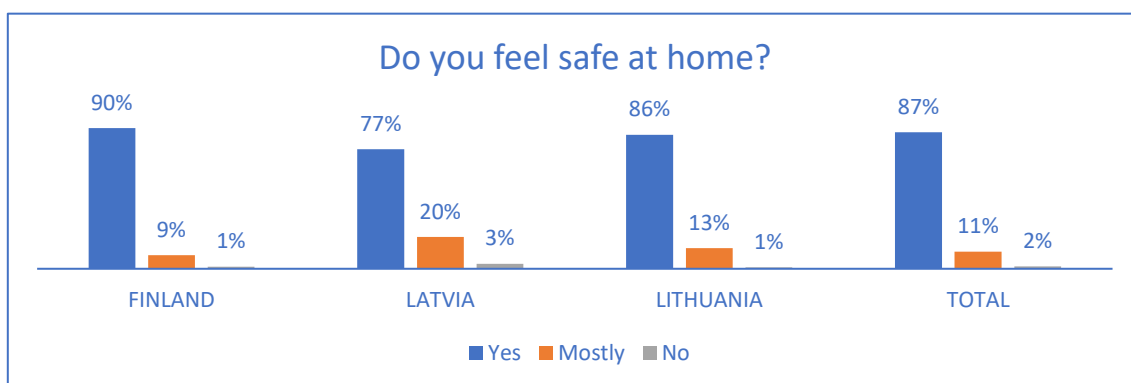


As well almost half of all respondents at some point have encountered a panic attack.

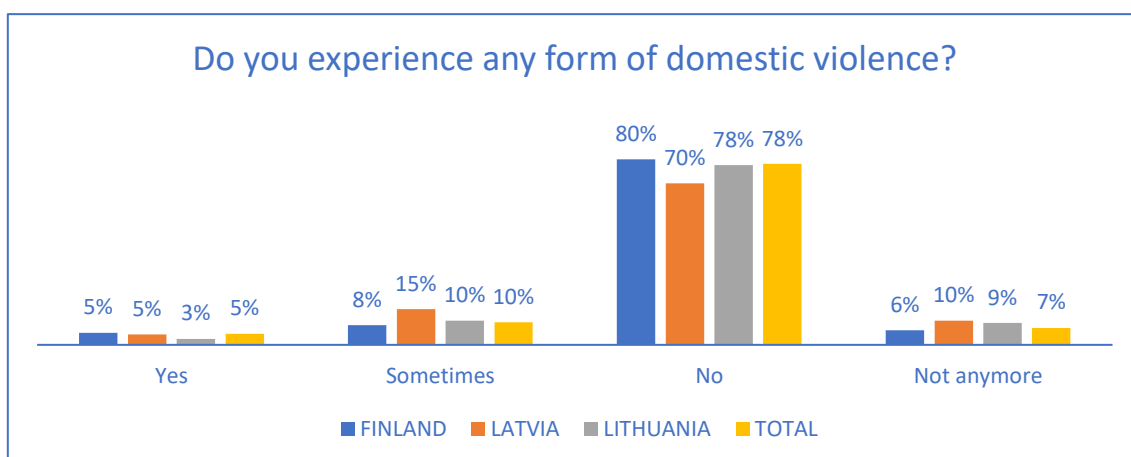


QUESTIONS ABOUT FAMILY SAFETY

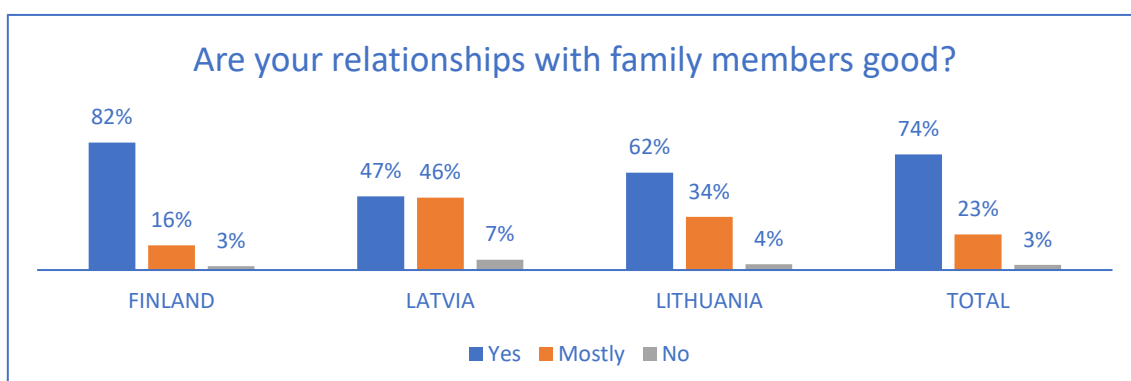
Mainly all of youth respondents does feel safe at home. Only 2% of total respondents does not feel safe at home.



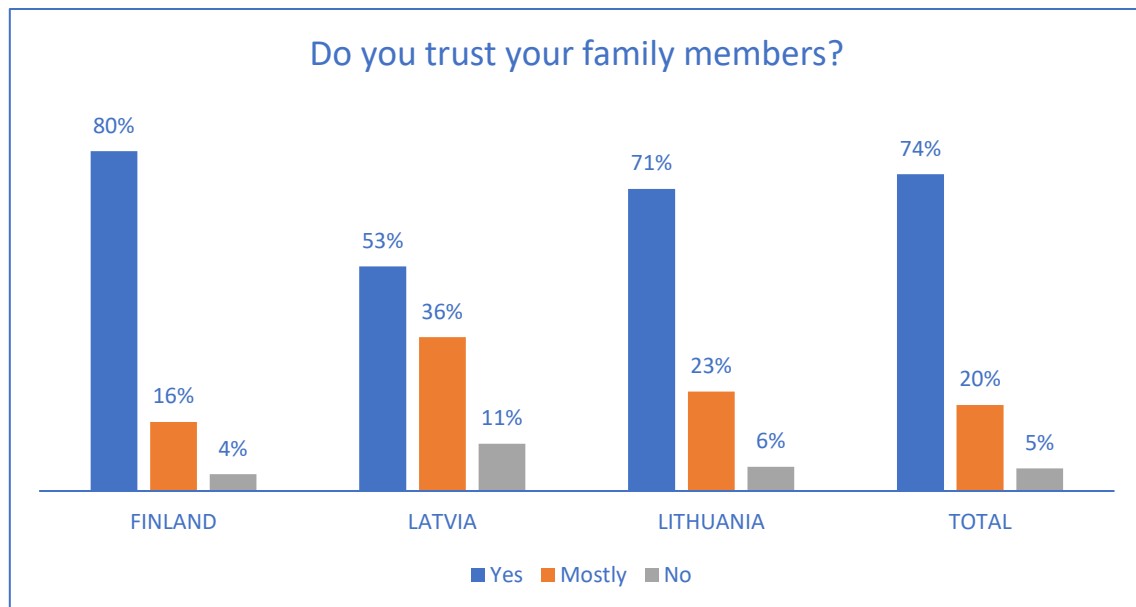
When asked if the youth respondents does experience any form of domestic violence, responses indicated, that in total 78% does not, but 7% not anymore. Unfortunately 5% of the respondents does experience any form of domestic violence, while 10% does experience it sometimes.



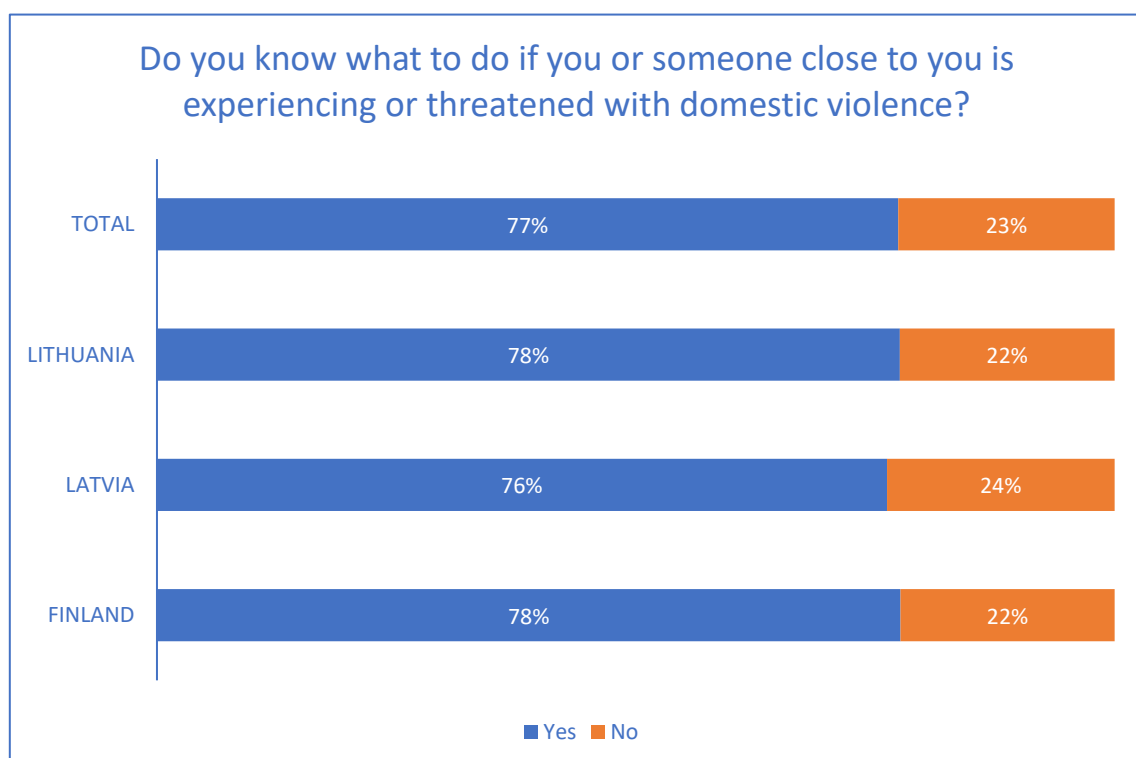
Nevertheless, when asked, if they having good relationships with family members, the respondents replied, that only 3% in total does not have good relationships with family members. Contrast between countries can be found, when looking at differences between good relationships all the time and mostly. In Finland 82% of respondents have good relationships with family members, while in Lithuania it's 62%, but in Latvia only 47%.



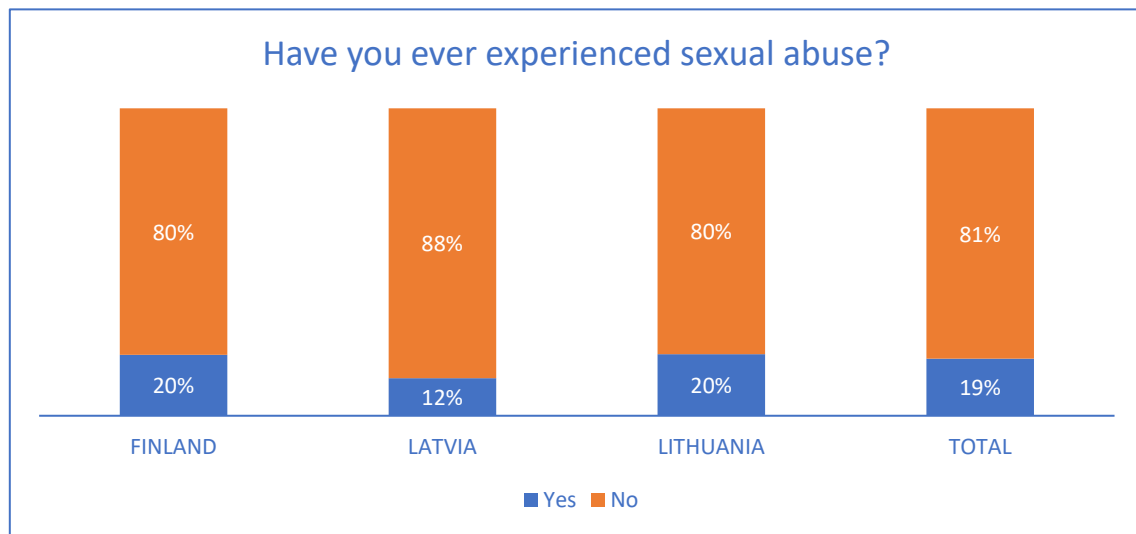
Meanwhile when asked, if the respondents trust their family members, the responses showed slight changes. Even if they have good relationships with their family members, when it comes to trust, then in Finland they trust less compared to good relationships (82% to 80%), but it is different in Latvia (47% to 53%) and in Lithuania (62% to 71%). So even if they don't have good relationships, they do trust their family members. However, compared to bad relationships, the disbelief in their family members are higher Finland (3% bad relationships to 4% mistrust), Latvia (7% to 11%), Lithuania (4% to 6%).



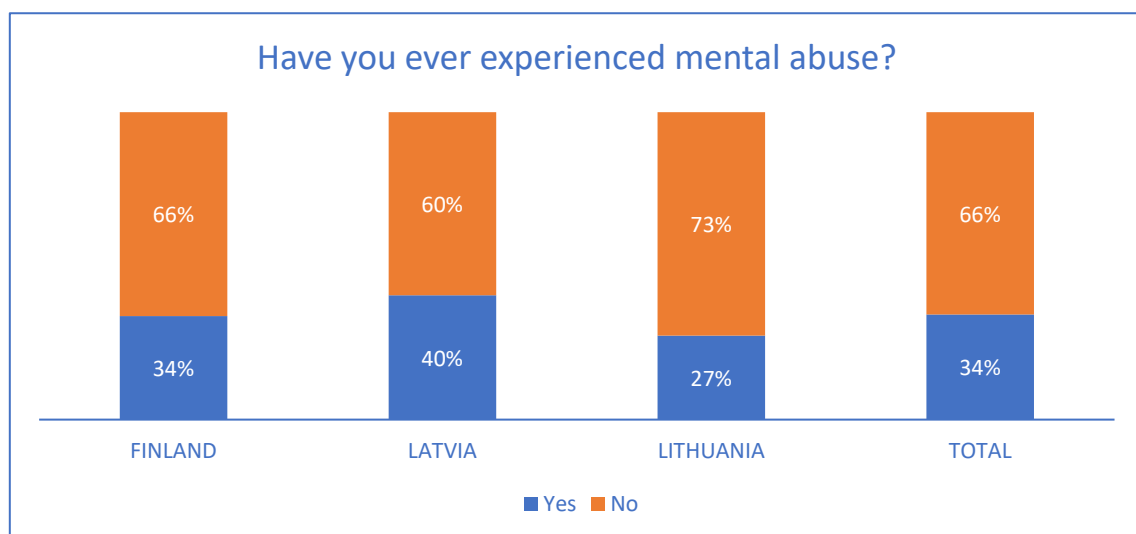
In total around 77% of respondents said that they know what to do if they or someone close to them is experiencing or threatened with domestic violence. Unfortunately, 23% is quite high number who does not know what to do.



When asked if the youth respondents have ever experienced sexual abuse (i.e. sexual comments, inappropriate touching, etc.), in total worrying 19% (Finland 20%, Lithuania 20%, Latvia 12%) of the respondents said, that they have experienced sexual abuse.

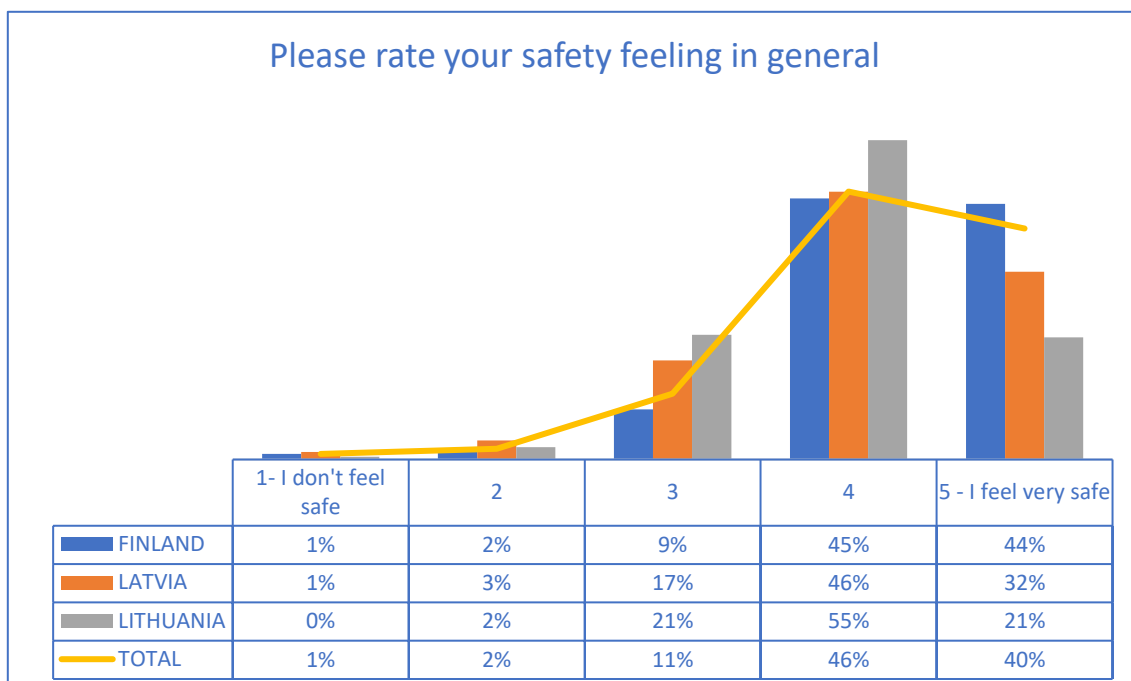


But when asked if they have ever experienced mental abuse, in total 34% respondents replied, that they have experienced mental abuse.



FINAL QUESTION

Please rate your safety feeling in general



As it is possible, to see. In general, our youth does feel safe. However, it is necessary to pay attention to all of our youth and to educate them in safety issues! Knowledge can't be too much.

Let's have our youth safe!

For additional information regarding the project and the questionnaire results, please contact

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