

Empirical Approaches to the Effects of Child Protection Measures

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Ulm, September 2017

Using service-as-usual data to improve child protection

- **3 possible strategies (each with problems):**
- **Follow-up and outcome data**
- **(international) comparisons**
- **Procedural quality**

3 follow-up studies

- **Sample 1 (Bae & Kindler): 356 child protection (CP) cases from 2 child and youth welfare offices, follow-up period: 10-22 months**
- **Sample 2 (Jagusch & Kindler): 150 CP cases from 1 child and youth welfare office, follow-up period 36 months**
- **Sample 3 (Witte, Miehlbradt, Santen & Kindler): 400 CP cases from 4 child and youth welfare offices, follow-up period 6 months**

Re-referral Rates

	Time period	Re-referral Rate
Sample 1	10-22 Months	10,3 %
Sample 2	36 Months	33 %
Sample 3	6 Months	
Physical Abuse		25%
Emotional Maltreatment		21%
Sexual Abuse		4%
Neglect		48%

Migration and Case Trajectory

(Sample 2)

- **Re-Substantiation during follow-up:**
36 (Mig) vs 28% (ns)
- **Out-of-home placement during follow-up**
21 (Mig) vs. 32% (*)
- **Positive case-worker rating of school adaptation**
84 (Mig) vs. 84% (ns)
- **Pos. case-worker rating overall behavioral adaptation**
58 (Mig) vs. 58% (ns)

Risk and Case Trajectory

(Sample 2)

- Standardized set of 12 risk factors coded by case workers at baseline

- Risk and

- Re-Substantiations .33 **
- Out-of-Home Placement .38 **
- Negative adaptation child (current CW) .47 **



Services not sufficient to offset effects of accumulated risk

Decision at the end of child protection investigations (sample 3)

	the Netherlands %	England %	Germany %
no risk of future harm	19.5	26.3	36.7
child in need, but no endangerment	9.3	27.5	38.6
risk of significant harm	42.3	46.3	15.9
not documented	29.0	0.0	8.8
no support needed	15.8	18.3	25.9
support needed	78.5	81.8	67.0
not documented	5.8	0.0	7.1

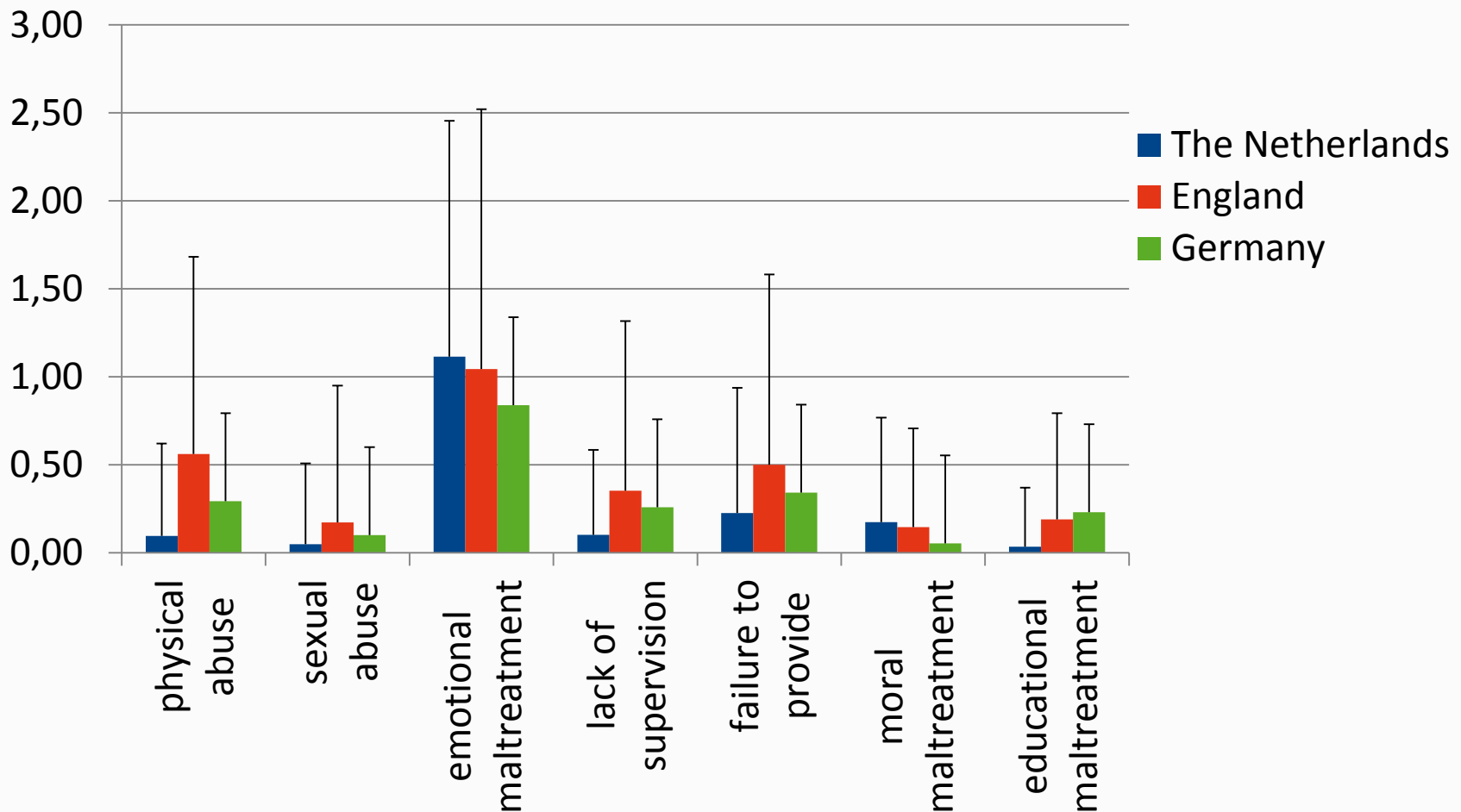


In Germany girls slightly more likely to be considered at risk of significant harm



Inverse tendencies regarding risk of harm and age of the index child (in the Netherlands and England decrease, in Germany increase with age)

Comparing German CP cases using the severity scale of the MMCS (Sample 3)



Decision – Voluntary support measures (sample 3)

	the Netherlands %	England %	Germany %
voluntary	64.4	43.4	72.3
involuntary	24.3	47.4	6.5
both	2.5	7.7	9.0
unclear	2.5	1.5	4.0
not documented	6.3	0.0	8.3



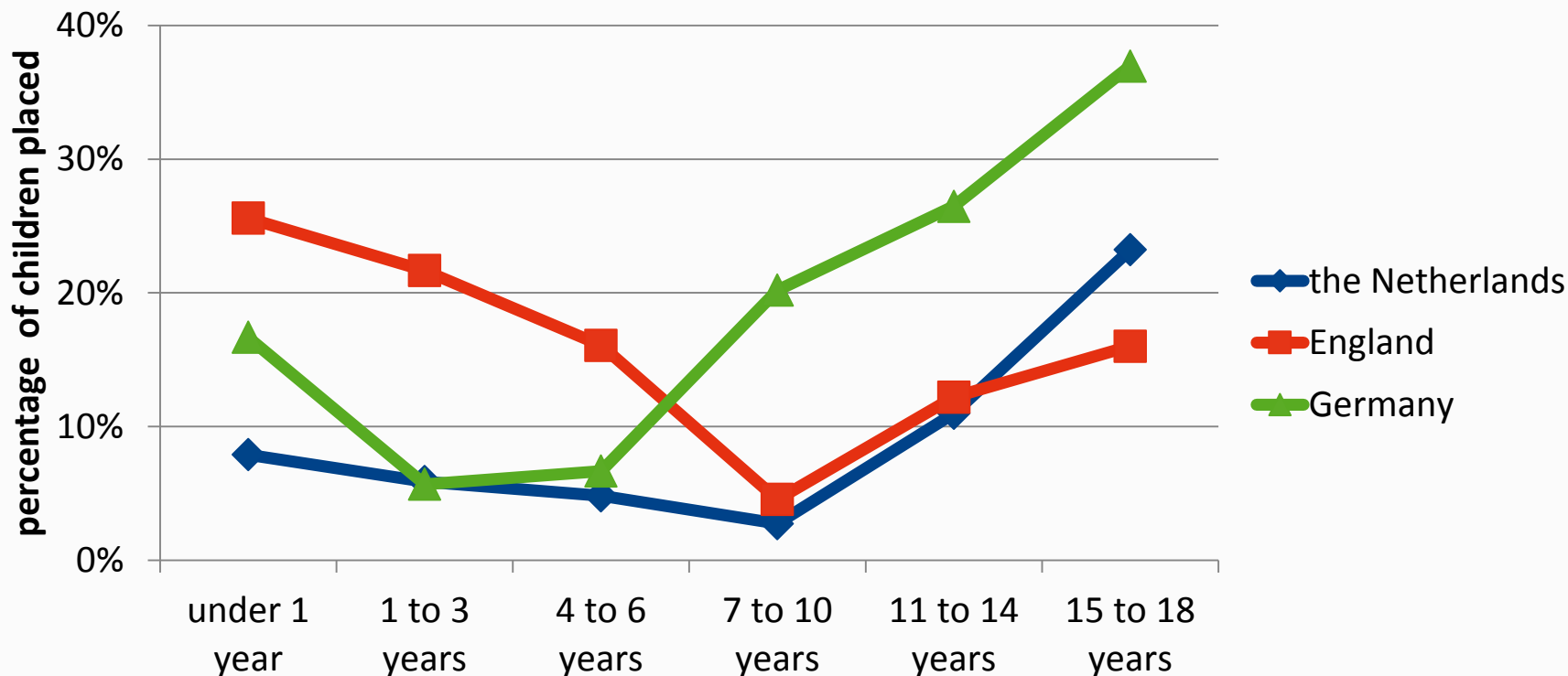
No differences based on the gender of the index child



Increase in likelihood of involuntary support measure with age of the index child in England

Decision – Placement of index child

- Higher numbers of placement in Germany (17.6%) and England (16.3%) than in the Netherlands (8.8%)
- No differences in the number of female and male index children in placement
- Significant differences between countries in the age of the children placed



Decision – Predictors of placement

	the Netherlands OR	England OR	Germany OR
Age index child	1.14**	0.92**	1.11***
Gender index child: female	1.44	1.30	1.03
Physical abuse	1.50	1.85	1.25
Sexual abuse	1.09	2.96*	0.71
Emotional maltreatment	1.61	1.04	2.19**
Lack of supervision	1.40	1.46	1.09
Failure to provide	2.00	2.93**	1.78
Moral maltreatment	1.44	0.42	0.91
Educational maltreatment	0.42	1.06	1.03
Willingness to accept help	0.76	0.20**	0.49
R ² Nagelkerke	.12	.19	.16

Predicting decision: involuntary measures

	the Netherlands OR	England OR	Germany OR
Age index child	1,06*	0,87***	0,97
Gender index child: female	0,75	1,10	0,62
Physical abuse	0,92	1,13	2,46*
Sexual abuse	3,73	1,39	1,00
Emotional maltreatment	2,40**	2,35**	0,96
Lack of supervision	1,14	1,19	0,60
Failure to provide	3,52***	1,34	1,00
Moral maltreatment	1,38	7,21**	0,98
Educational maltreatment	1,02	1,20	1,28
Willingness to accept help	0,06***	0,18**	0,46*
R ² Nagelkerke	.30	.36	.09

Referral and investigation phase – Contacts to family members

- **Index child:**
 - No documented contact to child at all in 63.0% of the cases in the Netherlands, in 34.0% of the cases in Germany and in 15.1% of the cases in England
- **Caretaker:**
 - Highest number of contacts in England, then Germany
- **Family:**
 - No documented contact to any family member in 22.8% of the cases in the Netherlands, in 3.5% of the cases in England and 7.1% of the cases in Germany



A longer duration is associated with more contacts with the index child in England but not in the Netherlands and Germany



Significant effect of gender of the index child on the number of contacts in all countries

Referral and investigation phase – Contacts to professionals

	the Netherlands (n = 400)		England (n = 400)		Germany (n = 409)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
	police	164	41,0	318	79,5	63
other social worker at Jugendamt, Children’s services, AMHK, CPB	109	27,3	118	29,5	52	12,7
health system	233	58,3	307	76,8	79	19,3
educational system	160	40,0	276	69,0	126	30,8
other child and youth welfare institution	262	65,5	41	10,3	99	24,2
other Jugendamt, Children’s services, AMHK, CPB	33	8,3	79	19,8	14	3,4
other	97	24,3	55	13,8	33	8,1



More contact with health system and police in the Netherlands and England than in Germany

Conclusions

- **Follow-up data show no discrimination against children with migrant background (1 city)**
- **But the protection of neglected children and children from high risk families may be insufficient**
- **MMCS severity data do not explain reluctant use of „child endangerment“ category in Germany**
- **MMCS and parental cooperation do not explain use of involuntary measures. But what else?**
- **Still many children are not included and there are few contacts to other professionals**

Thank you for your attention