# Short Report

# HBSC Ireland: age related patterns in alcohol consumption and cannabis use among Irish children between 1998-2006

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# Introduction:

Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) is a cross-national research study conducted in collaboration with the World Health Organisation (European Office). The study runs on a four-year cycle and in 2006 there were 41 participating countries across Europe and North America. HBSC collects data on key indicators of health, health attitudes and health behaviours, as well as the contexts of health for young people. The study is a school-based survey with information collected from students through self-completion questionnaires in classrooms. Further information on the International HBSC study can be found at <u>www.hbsc.org</u>.

The most recent HBSC Ireland dataset comprises 10,344 children from 5th class in primary school to 5th year in post-primary schools. The methods employed comply with the International HBSC protocol and are detailed in the first national report from the 2006 survey, which can be found at <u>www.nuigalway.ie/hbsc</u>.

## Focus:

This short report presents a brief analysis of alcohol consumption and cannabis use among Irish schoolchildren aged 13-17 years, for the HBSC Ireland surveys undertaken in 1998, 2002 and 2006. From the three surveys the following questions were used:

- 'At present how often do you drink anything alcoholic, such as beer, wine or spirits?' with response options for each everyday; every week; every month; rarely; never.
- 'Have you ever had so much alcohol that you were really drunk?' with response options no, never; yes, once; yes, 2-3 times; yes, 4-10 times; yes, more than 10 times.

- 'At what age did you first drink alcohol (more than a small amount) by age?' with response options never; 11 years old or less; 12 years old; 13 years old; 14 years old; 15 years old; 16 years or older.<sup>1</sup>
- How many days a week do you usually drink any alcoholic drink?' with response options never; less than once a week; once a week; 2-4 days; 5-6 days; once a day; everyday more than once.<sup>2</sup>
- 'At what age did you first get drunk?' with response options never; 11 years old or less; 12 years old; 13 years old; 14 years old; 15 years old; 16 years or older.<sup>i</sup>
- 'Have you ever taken cannabis (hashish, grass, pot) in your life?' with response options never; once or twice; 3-5 times; 6-9 times; 10-19 times; 20-39 times; 40 times or more.<sup>3</sup>
- 'Have you ever taken cannabis (hashish, grass, pot) in the last 12 months?' with response options never; once or twice; 3-5 times; 6-9 times; 10-19 times; 20-39 times; 40 times or more.<sup>3</sup>
- 'Have you ever taken cannabis (hashish, grass, pot) in the past 30days?' with response options never; once or twice; 3-5 times; 6-9 times; 10-19 times; 20-39 times; 40 times or more.<sup>3</sup>
- 'At what age did you first take cannabis?' with response options never; 11 years old or less;
  12 years old; 13 years old; 14 years old; 15 years old; 16 years or older.<sup>1</sup>

Data are presented below by survey year, age-group and gender.

# Findings:

Table 1 contains the percentages that reported they ever had an alcoholic drink by gender, age and study year. Table 2 contains the percentages that reported having an alcoholic drink in the past month by gender, age and study year. Tables 3-5 contain the percentages that reported frequencies for consuming alcoholic drinks by gender age and study year; Tables 6-8 contain the percentages that reported ever being really drunk by gender, age and study year. Tables 9-10 contain the percentages that reported age of alcohol initiation by gender, age and study year. Tables 11-12 contain the percentages that reported age of drunkenness initiation by gender, age and study year.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This question was not asked in the 1998 survey and in 2002 the response options were never; and participants inserted their age of initiation.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> This question was only asked in the 2002 survey.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The response options to this question in the 1998 survey differed slightly and included never; once or twice; 3-5 times; 6-9 times; 10+.

## Table 1: Percentages reporting they have ever had an alcoholic drink

	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All	
		2006			2002			199	8	
Age										
13 years	48.1	37.1	43.1	61.9	44.2	52.1	70.8	60.3	65.6	
14 years	59.2	54.3	57.0	69.1	58.6	63.0	75.6	68.1	72.0	
15 years	69.5	69.9	69.9	81.0	76.8	78.5	85.6	80.5	83.0	
16 years	77.8	78.0	78.0	84.7	86.2	85.6	88.5	85.5	87.0	
17 years	85.1	85.6	85.6	89.5	89.5	89.5	82.4	87.3	85.1	

### Table 2: Percentages reporting that they have had an alcoholic drink in the past month

	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All	
		2006			2002			199	8	
Age										
13 years	15.4	10.5	13.2	25.6	16.7	20.7	26.6	19.2	22.9	
14 years	26.5	23.8	25.3	35.7	28.1	31.3	38.7	29.3	34.2	
15 years	40.3	39.8	40.0	51.7	43.7	47.0	55.5	44.1	49.8	
16 years	54.5	50.1	52.4	61.9	62.2	62.1	67.7	60.9	64.3	
17 years	65.6	70.9	68.0	74.2	74.6	74.6	60.0	69.4	65.4	

## Table 3: How many days per week do you usually drink any alcoholic drinks

2006 Not Asked	Boys	Girls	All												
Age		13			14			15			16			1	7
Never															
Less than once a week															
Once a week															
2-4 days a week															
5-6 days a week															
Once a day, every day															
Every day, more than once															

2002	Boys	Girls	All												
Age		13			14			15			16			17	
Never	72.6	77.7	75.4	58.3	67.9	64.0	40.2	50.4	46.3	32.3	28.8	30.2	19.7	22.0	20.9
Less than once a week	18.8	16.5	17.5	26.8	22.7	24.4	37.1	33.9	35.2	35.4	48.1	43.1	39.9	40.2	40.1
Once a week	4.5	2.9	3.6	9.2	6.0	7.3	16.1	11.6	13.4	22.6	18.6	20.1	25.0	29.1	27.5
2-4 days a week	1.0	0.7	0.8	2.3	1.1	1.5	3.7	2.1	2.8	4.2	3.0	3.5	10.6	6.7	8.3
5-6 days a week	0.9	0.7	0.8	1.3	0.4	0.8	1.4	0.9	1.1	2.1	0.7	1.2	1.6	0.4	0.9
Once a day, every day	1.0	0.3	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.6	1.3	0.3	0.7	1.1	0.0	0.5
Every day, more than once	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.7	1.3	1.5	1.0	0.5	0.7	2.1	0.5	1.2	2.1	1.6	1.8

Table 4: How many days per week do you usually drink any alcoholic drinks

# Table 5: How many days per week do you usually drink any alcoholic drinks

1998 Not Asked	Boys	Girls	All												
Age		13			14			15			16				17
Never															
Less than once a week															
Once a week															
2-4 days a week															
5-6 days a week															
Once a day, every day															
Every day, more than															
once															

# Table 6: Have you ever had so much alcohol that you were really drunk?

2006	Boys	Girls	All												
Age		13			14			15			16			17	
No, never	80.3	86.8	83.3	66.8	70.7	68.5	52.7	53.1	52.9	38.9	43.4	41.1	27.0	25.2	26.2
Yes, once	9.9	6.7	8.5	10.9	10.4	10.7	12.6	14.6	13.5	13.4	12.1	12.8	12.9	13.8	13.4
Yes, 2-3 times	5.8	3.1	4.6	12.3	8.2	10.5	13.1	14.2	13.6	16.9	18.7	17.8	22.6	24.0	23.2
Yes, 4-10 times	2.3	1.9	2.2	4.5	5.6	5.0	9.2	9.1	9.1	12.7	14.5	13.6	15.2	21.0	17.9
Yes, more than 10	1.7	1.4	1.6	5.5	5.0	5.3	12.4	9.0	10.9	18.1	11.3	14.7	22.3	15.9	19.3
times															

Table 7: Have y	you ever had so much alcohol that	you were really drunk?

2002	Boys	Girls	All												
Age		13			14			15			16			17	
No, never	78.1	85.4	82.1	66.2	72.4	69.8	48.7	52.4	50.9	36.5	38.6	37.8	26.3	31.5	29.2
Yes, once	10.9	8.1	9.3	13.8	11.4	12.3	16.2	14.3	15.1	11.9	15.3	14.0	10.0	14.8	12.7
Yes, 2-3 times	6.1	4.4	5.2	7.7	9.0	8.5	11.0	17.0	14.6	16.9	22.2	20.1	18.4	19.1	19.2
Yes, 4-10 times	2.2	1.5	1.8	6.4	4.1	5.1	10.6	9.0	9.7	14.0	11.4	12.4	18.4	20.2	19.4
Yes, more than 10	2.7	0.7	1.6	5.9	3.1	4.3	13.5	7.2	9.8	20.7	12.5	15.7	26.8	14.4	19.6
times															

# Table 8: Have you ever had so much alcohol that you were really drunk?

1998	Boys	Girls	All												
Ago		12			14			16			14			17	
Age		13			14	-		15			16			17	
No, never	72.1	83.5	77.8	61.6	70.5	65.9	47.0	58.2	52.6	38.4	44.2	41.3	35.3	35.9	35.4
Yes, once	13.6	9.6	11.6	14.6	13.1	13.9	12.4	14.0	13.2	12.6	15.3	13.9	14.1	18.4	16.4
Yes, 2-3 times	8.5	3.4	6.0	9.1	9.2	9.1	13.3	14.4	13.9	17.2	19.4	18.3	12.9	19.4	16.4
Yes, 4-10 times	3.0	2.2	2.6	7.2	4.1	5.7	11.8	8.0	9.9	10.5	10.3	10.4	11.8	11.7	11.6
Yes, more than 10	2.7	1.4	2.1	7.4	3.2	5.4	15.5	5.4	10.5	21.2	10.8	16.1	25.9	14.6	20.1
times															

Table 9: At what age did	you first drink alcohol (more than a small amount) by a	<u>le</u>

			Boys					Girls					All		
2006	13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17
Never	53.4	39.9	27.3	19.9	13.6	65.6	45.5	27.9	21.2	13.6	59.0	42.4	27.5	20.6	13.6
11 or less	17.8	17.0	11.5	9.8	7.3	10.2	9.1	6.6	6.4	6.6	14.4	13.4	9.3	8.1	7.0
12	17.0	13.4	11.9	12.2	7.9	13.5	13.5	11.5	8.3	6.3	15.4	13.4	11.7	10.3	7.1
13	10.5	18.1	14.1	13.6	15.7	9.8	19.8	18.4	15.6	13.6	10.2	18.9	16.0	14.6	14.7
14		11.1	21.6	15.9	16.0		11.6	22.6	19.7	21.4		11.4	22.1	17.7	18.6
15			13.2	21.2	18.4			13.1	20.5	21.4			13.2	20.8	19.7
16 or more				7.4	21.0				8.4	17.2				7.9	19.2

			Boys					Girls					All		
2002	13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17
Never	50.5	39.5	26.8	18.0	13.2	68.0	49.9	30.9	19.1	13.1	60.2	45.5	29.2	18.7	13.1
11 or less	22.0	18.2	15.5	11.9	11.6	9.8	7.4	6.3	3.9	2.3	15.3	12.0	10.0	7.1	6.2
12	16.9	13.2	13.8	9.6	11.6	14.3	13.0	12.4	6.9	7.7	15.5	13.1	13.0	8.0	9.3
13	10.3	20.4	17.8	18.2	12.1	7.9	20.4	17.2	13.3	11.2	9.0	20.4	17.5	15.2	11.5
14		8.5	18.6	17.8	13.7		8.9	23.3	23.0	19.3		8.7	21.4	21.0	16.9
15			7.5	18.7	23.7			9.6	25.5	23.2			8.7	22.8	23.3
16 or more				5.7	14.2				8.3	23.2				7.2	19.7

Table 10: At what age did you first drink alcohol (more than a small amount) by age

### Table 11: At what age did you first get drunk?

			Boys					Girls					All		
2006	13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17
Never	82.4	67.3	50.5	35.3	24.0	86.8	69.1	50.5	40.5	23.9	84.4	68.1	50.4	37.8	23.9
11 or less	3.2	2.4	4.6	3.0	1.8	1.2	1.6	1.7	1.1	1.5	2.3	2.0	3.3	2.1	1.7
12	6.8	5.1	5.9	4.6	3.4	3.5	5.2	3.9	2.9	2.4	5.3	5.1	4.9	3.8	3.0
13	6.6	13.0	8.3	8.5	7.9	8.0	12.8	9.9	8.8	9.1	7.2	12.9	9.0	8.6	8.5
14		11.6	16.2	15.5	14.5		10.7	18.6	13.6	12.1		11.2	17.3	14.5	13.5
15			14.0	22.5	16.1			15.3	20.8	18.5			14.6	21.7	17.2
16 or more				10.6	32.2				12.3	32.4				11.5	32.3

# Table 12: At what age did you first get drunk?

			Boys					Girls					All		
2002	13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17
Never	80.8	67.7	48.6	34.8	23.8	87.3	72.8	51.1	37.8	28.3	84.4	70.6	50.1	36.6	26.3
11 or less	5.1	4.8	3.9	5.2	5.8	1.8	0.7	1.3	1.5	0.4	3.3	2.4	2.3	3.0	2.7
12	5.5	4.5	4.6	5.0	4.2	4.0	3.0	3.1	1.9	3.1	4.6	3.7	3.7	3.1	3.6
13	8.4	12.1	12.1	10.3	7.4	7.0	11.9	11.2	6.4	5.4	7.6	11.9	11.5	7.9	6.2
14		10.9	18.7	14.9	9.5		11.7	18.8	14.2	10.5		11.4	18.7	14.5	10.0
15			11.9	20.5	21.2			14.3	22.8	21.3			13.3	21.9	21.2
16 or more				9.2	28.0				15.4	31.0				13.0	30.1

#### **CANNABIS** Data

## Findings

Tables 13-15 contain the percentages that reported they ever used cannabis by gender, age and study year. Tables 16-18 contain the percentages that reported that they used cannabis in the past 12 months by gender, age and study year. Table 19 contains the percentages that reported they used cannabis in the past 30 days by gender and age in 2006. Tables 20-22 contain the percentages that reported age of cannabis initiation by gender, age and study year.

2006	Boys	Girls	All												
Age		13			14			15			16			17	
Never	92.1	95.7	93.7	83.7	87.0	85.2	74.0	78.4	76.0	66.5	72.9	69.7	60.4	64.4	62.3
Once or twice	4.9	2.7	3.9	8.0	5.6	6.9	9.1	11.2	10.0	14.9	12.2	13.6	19.9	18.6	19.3
3-5 times	1.4	0.3	0.9	1.9	2.2	2.0	3.9	3.0	3.5	3.9	3.1	3.5	4.2	4.5	4.3
6-9 times	0.4	0.8	0.6	1.2	1.3	1.2	3.3	1.9	2.6	3.5	2.9	3.2	4.5	5.1	4.7
10-19 times	0.3	0.0	0.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	2.4	1.5	2.0	3.5	4.6	4.0	2.9	2.4	2.7
20-39 times	0.4	0.0	0.2	1.4	1.3	1.3	2.2	2.0	2.1	2.1	1.8	1.9	1.6	1.5	1.5
40 times or more	0.5	0.5	0.5	2.7	1.4	2.1	5.1	2.0	3.7	5.6	2.4	4.0	6.6	3.6	5.2

#### Table 13: Percentages reporting they have ever used cannabis

### Table 14: Percentages reporting they have ever used cannabis

2002	Boys	Girls	All												
Age		13			14			15			16			1	7
Never	93.5	97.1	95.5	88.1	92.4	90.6	72.5	83.0	78.8	64.4	76.1	71.5	62.7	70.8	67.6
Once or twice	3.7	1.1	2.3	4.8	3.6	4.1	9.6	7.5	8.4	11.4	12.2	11.9	10.3	10.5	10.4
3-5 times	0.7	0.6	0.6	1.2	1.1	1.1	3.1	1.8	2.4	4.1	2.3	3.0	4.9	2.3	3.4
6-9 times	0.4	0.6	0.5	1.2	0.8	0.9	2.5	2.0	2.2	2.2	1.9	2.0	3.8	2.7	3.2
10-19 times	0.5	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.7	0.5	1.2	1.1	1.1	2.6	1.5	1.9	3.8	5.1	4.5
20-39 times	0.5	0.1	0.3	1.0	0.5	0.7	1.8	0.4	0.9	3.4	1.9	2.5	2.2	3.5	2.9
40 times or	0.7	0.4	0.5	3.5	0.9	2.0	9.2	4.2	6.2	11.9	4.1	7.1	12.4	5.1	8.1
more															

1998	Boys	Girls	All												
Age		13			14			15			16			17	
Never	88.3	96.4	92.3	82.0	90.7	86.3	70.0	84.1	77.1	69.5	74.9	72.2	72.9	72.0	72.6
Once or twice	6.7	2.2	4.4	7.5	6.5	7.0	10.6	10.0	10.3	11.1	10.4	10.7	8.2	15.0	11.8
3-5 times	1.7	0.8	1.2	3.3	0.6	2.0	4.6	2.6	3.6	6.8	4.3	5.6	5.9	5.0	5.4
6-9 times	1.2	0.2	0.7	1.2	1.2	1.2	2.4	0.8	1.6	1.7	3.7	2.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
10-19 times no (10+ - only option)	2.0	0.5	1.2	5.9	1.0	3.6	12.4	2.6	7.5	10.9	6.7	8.8	12.9	8.0	10.2
20-39 times no															
40 times or more no															

# Table 16: Percentages that have used cannabis in the past 12 months

2006	Boys	Girls	All												
Age		13			14			15			16			1	7
Never	92.9	96.8	94.6	87.6	88.5	88.0	78.8	84.0	81.2	73.5	78.2	75.8	71.3	72.4	71.8
Once or twice	4.2	2.4	3.4	5.6	5.9	5.8	8.2	8.7	8.4	12.8	11.0	12.0	14.5	15.8	15.1
3-5 times	1.1	0.0	0.6	2.0	2.1	2.0	4.3	2.3	3.4	4.3	2.9	3.7	3.7	4.4	4.0
6-9 times	0.5	0.3	0.4	1.3	1.5	1.4	2.4	2.0	2.2	2.5	3.2	2.9	2.8	3.0	2.9
10-19 times	0.5	0.0	0.2	1.6	0.7	1.2	2.4	1.6	2.0	2.2	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.0	2.2
20-39 times	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.6	0.8	0.7	1.3	0.7	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.4	1.0	1.2
40 times or	0.7	0.6	0.6	1.4	0.4	0.9	2.6	0.7	1.8	3.6	1.2	2.4	4.0	1.3	2.8
more															

2002	Boys	Girls	All												
Age		13			14			15			16				17
Never	94.2	97.3	95.9	88.9	93.3	91.5	74.5	84.4	80.4	66.2	78.7	73.8	64.1	75.3	70.7
Once or twice	3.5	1.0	2.1	4.6	2.9	3.6	10.4	7.2	8.4	12.3	11.3	11.7	11.4	7.8	9.3
3-5 times	0.5	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.8	0.9	2.6	2.0	2.2	2.8	2.5	2.6	4.9	3.1	3.9
6-9 times	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.8	1.1	0.9	2.8	1.9	2.2	3.0	1.2	1.9	3.8	2.4	2.9
10-19 times	0.7	0.1	0.4	0.8	0.5	0.6	1.2	1.1	1.1	4.5	2.1	3.0	2.7	6.7	5.0
20-39 times	0.2	0.0	0.1	1.0	0.9	0.9	1.6	0.8	1.1	3.4	1.2	2.1	2.2	1.2	1.6
40 times or more	0.7	0.6	0.6	2.9	0.4	1.5	7.0	2.8	4.5	7.7	3.0	4.9	10.9	3.5	6.6

Table 17: Percentages that have used cannabis in the past 12 months

# Table 18: Percentages that have used cannabis in the past 12 months

1998	Boys	Girls	All												
Age		13			14			15			16			17	
Never	90.9	97.0	94.0	83.6	93.3	88.3	73.4	87.7	80.7	73.3	79.2	76.2	75.3	80.4	78.2
Once or twice	5.1	2.2	3.7	7.3	4.6	6.0	10.1	8.1	9.1	11.0	9.3	10.1	9.9	10.3	10.1
3-5 times	1.6	0.5	1.0	3.4	0.7	2.1	4.3	1.7	3.0	5.6	5.7	5.7	3.7	2.1	2.8
6-9 times	0.8	0.2	0.5	1.7	0.9	1.3	3.6	0.8	2.2	1.9	1.5	1.7	3.7	1.0	2.2
10-19 times no (10+-only option)	1.6	0.2	0.9	4.0	0.4	2.2	8.5	1.7	5.1	8.2	4.2	6.2	7.4	6.2	6.7
20-39 times no															
40 times or more no															

### Table 19: Percentages that have used cannabis in the past 30 days

	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls	All
		2006		2002					1998
Age									
13 years	4.0	1.7	2.9	Not asked in 2002			6.4	1.9	4.1
14 years	7.5	6.8	7.2				10.5	3.0	6.8
15 years	12.8	8.1	10.7				17.7	5.2	11.4
16 years	15.0	11.8	13.4				15.1	9.8	12.5
17 years	13.7	12.1	12.9				12.3	9.3	10.6

# Table 20: At what age did you first use cannabis, by age

		Boys	5					Girls					All		
2006	13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17
Never	94.2	86.9	76.5	67.6	63.4	96.2	89.2	82.2	76.0	65.6	95.1	87.9	79.1	71.7	64.5
11 or less	1.0	1.1	1.5	1.7	1.6	0.3	0.9	0.0	0.0	1.5	0.7	1.0	0.8	0.9	1.6
12	2.0	2.3	1.9	1.8	1.3	0.9	1.3	1.6	1.9	0.9	1.5	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.1
13	2.3	5.5	5.5	4.6	3.4	2.4	4.2	3.9	3.0	1.8	2.3	4.9	4.7	3.8	2.7
14		3.9	8.4	8.5	8.8		4.2	7.7	6.3	5.2		4.0	8.1	7.4	7.1
15			6.2	11.3	9.0			4.7	8.9	10.7			5.5	10.1	9.8
16 or more				4.5	12.5				3.8	14.1				4.2	13.2

# Table 21: At what age did you first use cannabis, by age

			Boys					Girls					All		
2002	13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17
Never	93.8	88.6	73.6	63.8	61.4	97.3	92.8	83.2	76.3	71.4	95.7	91.0	79.4	71.4	67.4
11 or less	1.2	1.1	0.8	1.5	1.6	0.5	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.8	0.6	0.3	0.7	0.7
12	1.7	1.5	2.3	1.5	3.8	0.5	0.1	1.0	0.3	0.4	1.1	0.7	1.6	0.7	1.8
13	3.1	4.9	4.2	4.0	3.3	1.6	3.3	2.5	2.0	1.5	2.3	4.0	3.2	2.8	2.2
14		3.9	10.6	8.2	6.0		3.5	6.5	4.2	3.1		3.7	8.2	5.8	4.3
15			8.1	12.4	9.2			6.5	11.4	7.3			7.2	11.8	8.1
16 or more				8.6	14.7				5.4	16.2				6.7	15.5

#### Table 22: At what age did you first use cannabis, by age

	Boys						Girls					All				
1998	13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17	
Never	Not asked in 1998															
11																
12																
13																
14																
15																
16																
17																

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