

STATE OF
THE NATION'S
CHILDREN



CHILDREN'S OUTCOMES

3



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ANALYTICS



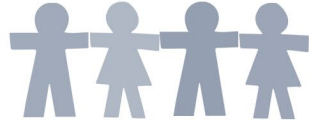
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THE NATION'S
CHILDREN**





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Education Outcomes



Quality of Early Childhood Care and Education

Measure: The percentage of pre-school services contracted to deliver the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme under Core funding

Note: Due to changes in Core Funding, 2022/2023 data is only presented below. See Appendix 1 for more details.

- For the 2022/23 pre-school year there were 108,616 children registered for the latest finalised ECCE programme call under Core Funding. There were 3,970 services contracted to offer ECCE in 2022/23 (see *Table 45*).
- For the 2022/23 pre-school year 2,946 (78%) of pre-school services under contract to deliver the ECCE Programme under Core Funding had a least one staff member with Quality and Qualifications Ireland level 7 (QQI L7) or above. The percentage ranged from 68% in Longford to 95% in Meath (see *Table 46*).

Table 45. Number of unique children registered for the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE) and the unique number of services contracted to offer ECCE (2022/2023)

	No. of Children	No. of Services
2022/23	108,616	3,970

Source: Pobal



Table 46. Number and percentage of pre-school services under contract to deliver the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme under Core Funding, by administrative county (2022)

	Services	Services	With at least one staff member QQI L7 or above		With no staff member QQI L7 or above	
	No.	% of all ECCE 2022 services	No.	%	No.	%
Total	3,790	95	2,946	78	844	22
Administrative county						
Carlow	44	96	40	91	<5	N/A
Cavan	65	98	51	78	14	22
Clare	123	98	91	74	32	26
Cork City	125	97	109	87	16	13
Cork County	284	96	225	79	59	21
Donegal	133	96	98	74	35	26
Dublin City	337	93	253	75	84	25
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown	148	90	128	86	20	14
Fingal	244	91	196	80	48	20
South Dublin	243	96	176	72	67	28
Galway County	123	99	98	80	25	20
Kerry	165	96	134	81	31	19
Kildare	87	100	66	76	21	24
Kilkenny	73	95	56	77	17	23
Laois	30	100	21	70	9	30
Leitrim	156	96	121	78	35	22
Limerick	29	91	23	79	6	21
Longford	102	98	69	68	33	32
Louth	118	98	81	69	37	31
Mayo	173	98	127	73	46	27
Meath	59	98	56	95	<5	N/A
Monaghan	60	98	45	75	15	25
Offaly	54	96	43	80	11	20
Roscommon	64	97	51	80	13	20
Sligo	184	91	133	72	51	28
Tipperary	152	97	112	74	40	26
Waterford	88	93	66	75	22	25
Westmeath	70	99	49	70	21	30
Wexford	121	95	111	92	10	8
Wicklow	136	94	117	86	19	14

Source: Pobal

Note: See further information on this table in the appendix.



Primary school attendance

Measure: The percentage of primary school children who are absent from school for 20 days or more in the school year

Note: School attendance from 2019/20 to 2021/22 was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

- Over the period 2017 to 2021, the percentage of primary school children who were absent from school for 20 days or more increased from 12.1% to 40.3% (see *Table 47*).

Table 47. Percentage of primary school children who were absent from school for 20 days or more in the school year (2017–2021)

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Primary school children	12.1	10.7	5.0	11.1	40.3

Source: Tusla, the Child and Family Agency

- The average percentage of primary school children who were absent from school for 20 days or more in the 2021/22 school year was higher in rural schools (45.5%) compared to urban schools (35.1%)
- The average percentage of school children who were absent from school for 20 days or more in the 2021/22 school year was highest in schools characterised as urban, in School Support Programme Band 1¹ (57.6%).

Table 48. Average percentage of primary school children per school* who were absent from school for 20 days or more in the school year, by selected school characteristics (2017–2021)

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Type of school					
Rural	7.9	7.5	7.4	15.9	45.5
Urban	15.0	13.2	3.4	7.0	35.1
DEIS status					
Rural, not in School Support Programme	7.4	7.1	3.2	6.9	34.7
Rural, in School Support Programme	9.9	9.7	4.6	7.9	37.4
Urban, not in School Support Programme	12.2	10.3	6.2	13.0	42.0
Urban, in School Support Programme Band 2	18.6	16.7	8.2	18.9	50.7
Urban, in School Support Programme Band 1	23.1	21.8	12.1	27.2	57.6

* This table uses schools-level data

Source: Tusla, the Child and Family Agency

¹ See here for details of the DEIS programme



- In the 2021/22 school year, the average percentage of primary school children per school who were absent for 20 days or more ranged from 28.5% in Monaghan to 46.1% in Offaly.

Table 49. Average percentage of primary school children per school* who were absent from school for 20 days or more in the school year, by county (2017–2021)

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
All counties	11.3	10.5	5.0	10.4	39.0
County					
Carlow	13.8	11.7	6.3	11.2	42.3
Cavan	9.8	8.7	4.2	8.3	33.1
Clare	10.4	10.2	5.0	8.4	32.8
Cork	10.8	10.1	4.4	8.3	36.7
Donegal	8.0	7.9	3.2	10.4	36.1
Dublin	15.6	14.5	7.7	16.5	45.5
Galway	10.0	10.6	4.4	7.5	34.6
Kerry	11.3	12.0	4.9	9.0	37.0
Kildare	12.1	10.4	5.3	10.5	43.5
Kilkenny	9.6	7.6	3.8	8.1	36.8
Laois	13.0	10.9	3.8	12.3	45.2
Leitrim	8.1	7.0	5.5	8.0	36.2
Limerick	11.6	11.6	4.8	13.6	40.1
Longford	13.7	12.8	6.3	14.9	43.6
Louth	12.7	12.0	5.2	11.8	44.3
Mayo	10.2	9.0	4.4	6.3	39.7
Meath	9.5	8.5	3.8	8.9	37.4
Monaghan	6.8	5.4	2.4	6.3	28.5
Offaly	12.2	11.4	5.4	11.1	46.1
Roscommon	9.3	9.7	5.5	10.0	36.6
Sligo	10.0	9.3	4.8	8.3	34.2
Tipperary	9.3	8.5	4.2	7.8	36.0
Waterford	10.4	9.4	4.6	9.3	37.0
Westmeath	12.2	9.4	6.0	11.9	41.1
Wexford	12.0	11.2	5.5	10.8	41.5
Wicklow	10.7	10.1	3.6	8.4	42.2

* This table uses schools-level data

Source: Tusla, the Child and Family Agency



Post-primary school attendance

Measure: The percentage of post-primary school children who are absent from school for 20 days or more in the school year

Note: School attendance from 2019/20 to 2021/22 was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

- Over the period 2017 to 2021, the percentage of post-primary school children who were absent from school for 20 days or more increased from 14.6% to 26.8% (see Table 50).

Table 50. Percentage of post-primary school children who were absent from school for 20 days or more in the school year (2017–2021)

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Post-primary school children	14.6	14.5	9.5	12.0	26.8

Source: Tusla, the Child and Family Agency

- In the 2021/22 year, the average percentage of post-primary school children who were missing for 20 days or more was lowest in secondary schools (24%). This average percentage was 24.5% in non-DEIS schools and 36.8% in DEIS schools.

Table 51. Average percentage of post-primary school children per school* who were absent from school for 20 days or more in the school year, by selected school characteristics (2017–2021)

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Type of school					
Secondary schools	12.7	12.3	8.3	10.0	24.0
Community and comprehensive schools	18.7	17.5	12.0	15.8	31.1
Vocational schools	19.7	19.8	13.3	17.0	33.2
DEIS status					
DEIS schools	23.6	22.9	17.1	23.1	36.8
Non-DEIS schools	12.9	12.7	7.7	9.7	24.5

* This table uses schools-level data

Source: Tusla, the Child and Family Agency

- In the 2021/22 school year, the average percentage of post-primary school children per school who were absent for 20 days or more ranged from 18.9% in Leitrim to 44.6% in Laois.



Table 52. Average percentage of post-primary school children per school* who were absent from school for 20 days or more in the school year, by county (2017–2021)

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
All counties	15.8	15.5	10.4	13.3	28.0
County					
Carlow	15.6	17.6	13.1	15.9	24.0
Cavan	12.4	13.2	14.4	11.0	24.6
Clare	12.5	15.4	6.4	11.2	24.0
Cork	13.9	12.3	8.3	10.8	21.4
Donegal	18.2	18.7	11.0	17.7	33.6
Dublin	15.4	15.4	11.4	14.6	28.1
Galway	18.1	19.5	11.1	14.2	30.2
Kerry	16.2	13.7	10.9	14.6	28.6
Kildare	15.4	16.2	9.4	9.0	28.5
Kilkenny	14.4	18.6	10.3	12.8	26.1
Laois	17.7	19.0	11.0	23.7	44.6
Leitrim	17.5	12.6	8.5	15.8	18.9
Limerick	14.3	13.5	9.7	9.4	33.5
Longford	21.2	25.0	10.3	26.3	32.9
Louth	12.1	12.9	5.0	10.6	24.1
Mayo	19.8	17.1	10.9	12.2	31.0
Meath	13.8	16.4	6.6	7.9	29.0
Monaghan	18.0	17.9	9.8	13.4	30.8
Offaly	17.7	15.4	11.9	4.4	22.9
Roscommon	17.6	10.0	9.4	15.0	25.8
Sligo	19.1	18.3	9.9	18.0	30.9
Tipperary	27.1	13.4	8.1	7.4	24.2
Waterford	14.9	11.8	12.2	12.0	23.9
Westmeath	17.2	15.8	10.0	17.6	35.2
Wexford	20.6	18.7	16.5	14.5	34.5
Wicklow	17.3	17.5	12.1	14.2	31.5

* This table uses schools-level data

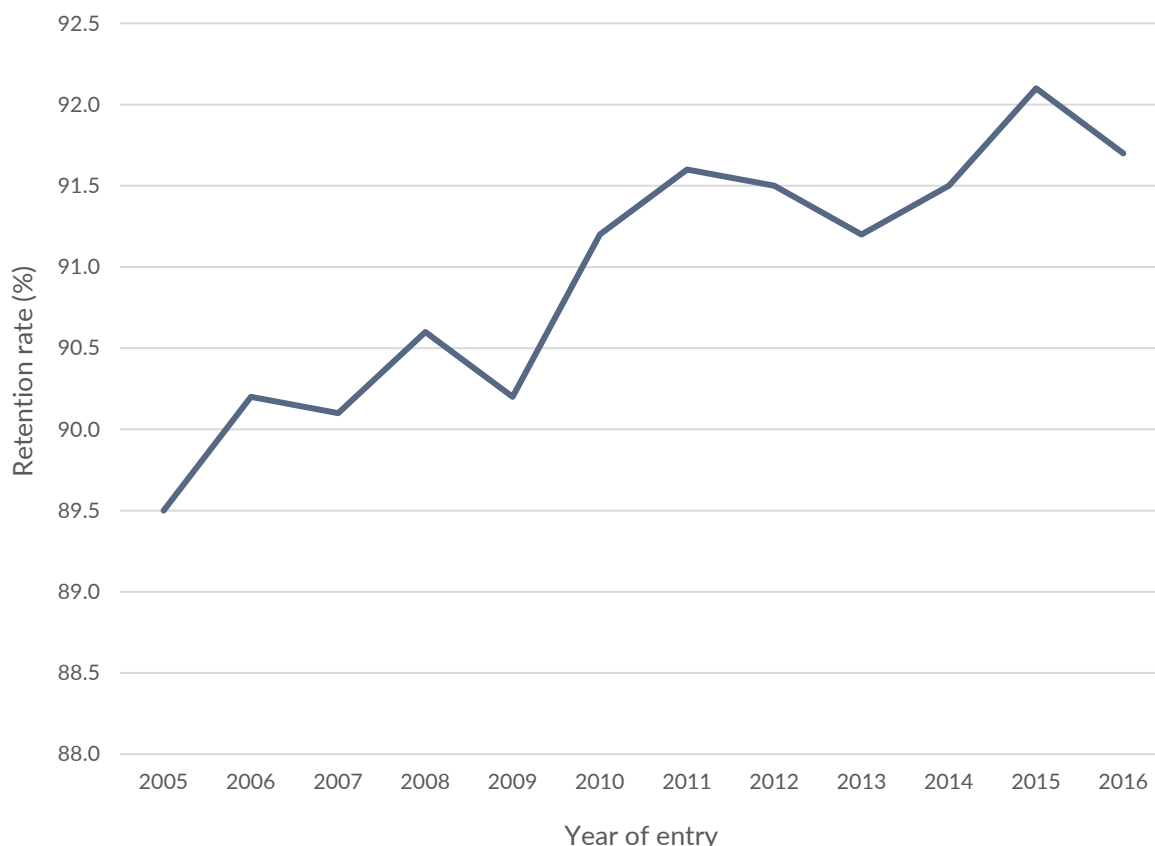
Source: Tusla, the Child and Family Agency



Leaving Certificate retention rates

Measure: The Leaving Certificate retention rate

Figure 9. Leaving Certificate retention rate (2005–2016 school entry cohorts)



Source: Department of Education

- The Leaving Certificate retention rate for children entering secondary school in 2016 was 91.7%, i.e. out of the 63,910 enrolled on 30 September 2016 in year one of the Junior Cycle, 58,605 either sat the Leaving Certificate or received a calculated grade by 2021 or 2022 (see *Table 53*).
- Leaving Certificate retention rates increased from 89.5% in 2005 to 91.7% in 2016 (see *Figure 9*).
- The retention rate for boys in the 2016 school entry cohort was 90.1%, compared to 93.3% for girls (see *Table 53*).
- On average, secondary schools had the highest retention rates (at 93.2%) when compared with community and comprehensive schools (90.4%) and vocational schools (89.5%) (see *Table 53*).
- For the 2016 school entry cohort, the retention rate was 85% in DEIS schools, compared to 93.4% for children in non-DEIS schools.
- Overall, the Leaving Cert retention rate for children in the 2016 entry cohort ranged from 94.2% in Sligo to 89.5% in Carlow (see *Table 54*).


Table 53. Leaving Certificate retention rate, by gender, school type, and DEIS status (2016 school entry cohort)

	No. in cohort	Retention rate (%)
Total	63,910	91.7
Sex		
Male	32,545	90.1
Female	31,365	93.3
School type		
Secondary schools	34,812	93.2
Vocational schools	18,296	89.5
Community and comprehensive schools	10,802	90.4
DEIS status		
DEIS schools	12,973	85
Non-DEIS schools	50,937	93.4

Source: Department of Education

Table 54. Leaving Certificate retention rate, by county (2016 school entry cohort)

	No. in cohort	Retention rate (%)
Total	63,910	91.7
County		
Carlow	993	89.5
Cavan	999	91
Clare	1,486	91.6
Cork	7,081	92
Donegal	2,384	90.5
Dublin	15,869	91.2
Galway	3,508	92.2
Kerry	1,966	92.7
Kildare	3,487	92.6
Kilkenny	1,317	91.8
Laois	1,127	89.7
Leitrim	496	91.5
Limerick	2,721	92.6
Longford	675	89.8
Louth	2,199	93
Mayo	1,720	93.7
Meath	2,759	93.4
Monaghan	866	90.6
Offaly	1,171	90.5
Roscommon	602	92.2
Sligo	825	94.2
Tipperary	2,254	91.8
Waterford	1,582	92.9
Westmeath	1,493	89.7
Wexford	2,326	90.1
Wicklow	2,004	90.6

Source: Department of Education



Achievement in reading: OECD-PISA Reading Literacy Scale

Measure: The Mean scores of children based on the OECD-PISA reading Literacy Scale

- In 2022, 15 year-old children in Ireland achieved a mean score of 516.0 on the reading literacy scale (see *Table 55*).
- Immigrant children scored 507.4 on the reading literacy scale, compared to a score of 520.4 for non-immigrant students.
- Girls scored 525.4 on the reading literacy scale, compared with 507.1 for boys.
- In 2022, Irish students are the best performing in reading literacy among the 37 countries in the OECD and the 26 EU countries. In reading literacy, Ireland has moved from eighth place to second place among the 81 countries taking part in the PISA project.

Table 55. Mean score of children aged 15 based on the OECD-PISA Reading Literacy Scale, by population group (2022)

	Mean score
All children	516.0
Immigrant status	
Immigrant children	507.4
All children except immigrant children	520.4

Source: OECD-Pisa survey

Table 56. Mean score of children aged 15 based on the OECD-PISA Reading Literacy Scale, by gender and socio-economic status (2012–2022)

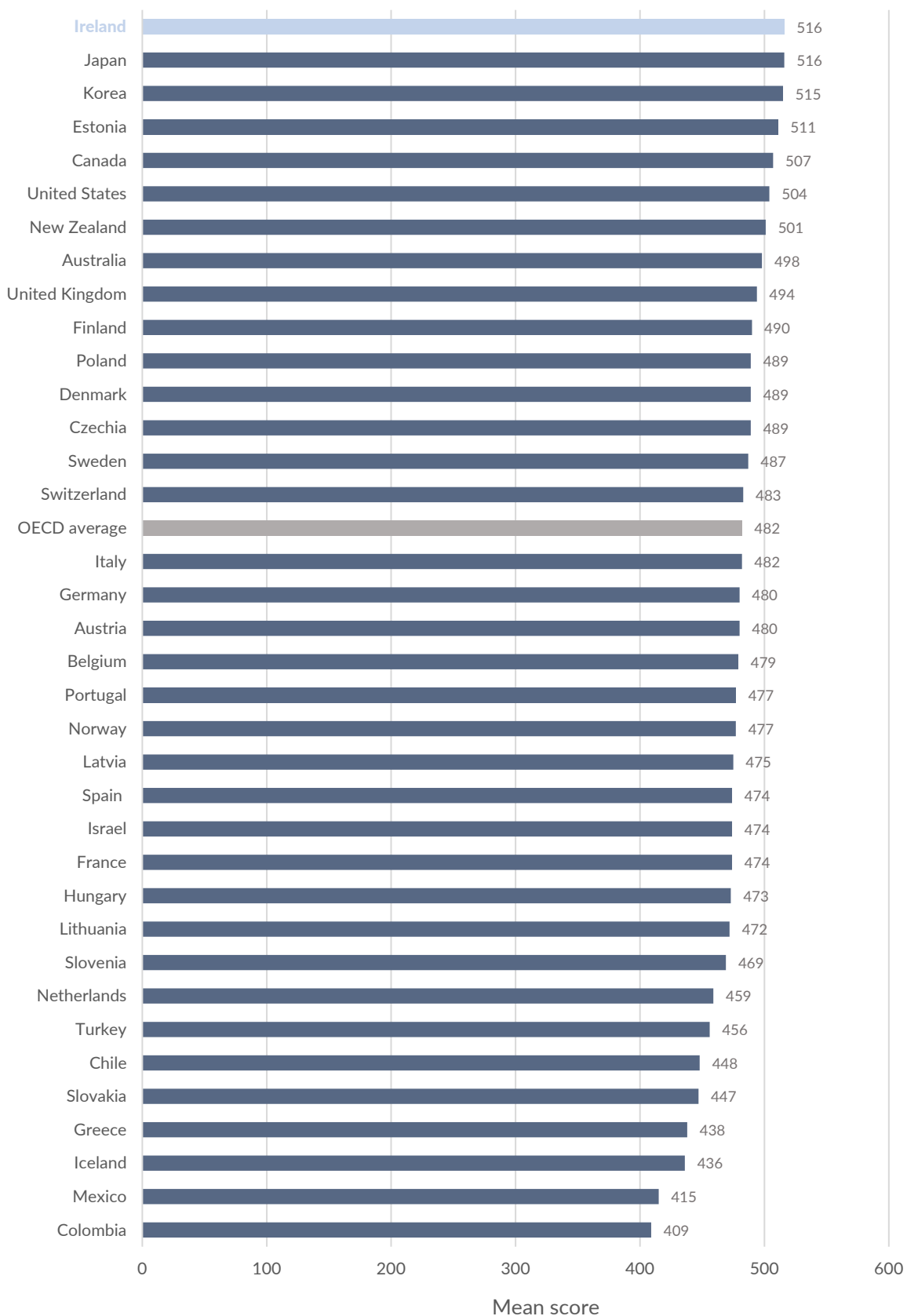
	2012	2015	2018	2022
All children	523.2	520.8	518.1	516
Gender				
Male	509.2	515	506.4	507.1
Female	537.7	526.9	529.6	525.4
Social class				
High	562.3	555.6	551.8	Pending*
Medium	523.3	520.5	517.5	Pending*
Low	485.9	488	487.9	Pending*

Source: OECD-Pisa survey

*Update not available at time of publication



Figure 10. Mean score of children aged 15 based on the OECD-PISA Reading Literacy Scale, by OECD country (2022)



Source: OECD-Pisa survey



Achievement in mathematics: OECD-PISA Mathematics Literacy Scale

Measure: The Mean scores of children based on the OECD-PISA mathematics Literacy Scale

- In 2022, 15 year-old children in Ireland achieved a mean score of 491.6 on the mathematics literacy scale (see *Table 57*).
- Immigrant children scored 486.6 on the mathematics literacy scale, compared to a score of 494.8 for non-immigrant students.
- Girls scored 485.1 on the mathematics literacy scale, compared with 497.8 for boys.
- In 2022, Ireland moved from twenty-first place to eleventh place in mathematical literacy among the 81 countries taking part in the PISA project.

Table 57. Mean score of children aged 15 based on the OECD-PISA Mathematics Literacy Scale, by population group (2022)

	Mean score
All children	491.6
Immigrant status	
Immigrant children	486.6
All children except immigrant children	494.8

Source: OECD-Pisa survey

Table 58. Mean score of children aged 15 based on the OECD-PISA Mathematics Literacy Scale, by gender and socio-economic status (2012–2022)

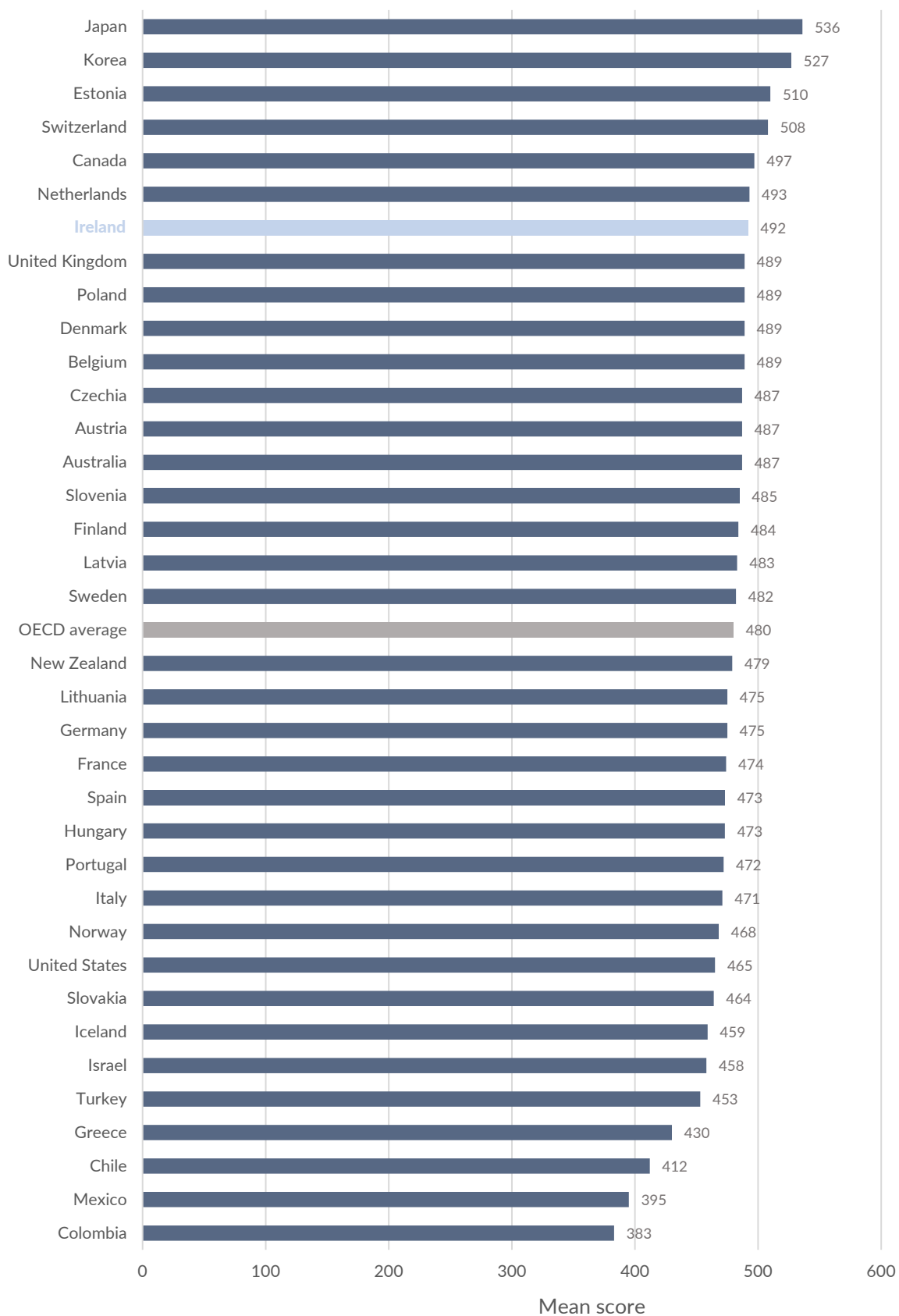
	2012	2015	2018	2022
All children	501.5	503.7	499.6	491.6
Gender				
Male	509	511.6	502.6	497.8
Female	493.7	495.4	496.7	485.1
Social class				
High	538.9	537.7	530	Pending*
Medium	501.3	502.4	498.5	Pending*
Low	465.5	471.5	472.3	Pending*

Source: OECD-Pisa survey

*Update not available at time of publication



Figure 11. Mean score of children aged 15 based on the OECD-PISA Mathematics Literacy Scale, by OECD country (2022)



Source: OECD-Pisa survey



Achievement in science: OECD-PISA Science Literacy Scale

Measure: The Mean scores of children based on the OECD-PISA science Literacy Scale

- In 2022, 15 year-old children in Ireland achieved a mean score of 503.8 on the science literacy scale (see *Table 59*).
- Immigrant children scored 502.6 on the science literacy scale, compared to a score of 506.4 for non-immigrant students.
- Girls scored 501.0 on the science literacy scale, compared with 506.6 for boys.
- In 2022, Ireland moved from twenty-second place to twelfth place in science literacy among the 81 countries taking part in the PISA project.

Table 59. Mean score of children aged 15 based on the OECD-PISA Science Literacy Scale, by population group (2022)

	Mean score
All children	503.8
Immigrant status	
Immigrant children	502.6
All children except immigrant children	506.4

Source: OECD-Pisa survey

Table 60. Mean score of children aged 15 based on the OECD-PISA Science Literacy Scale, by gender and socio-economic status (2012–2022)

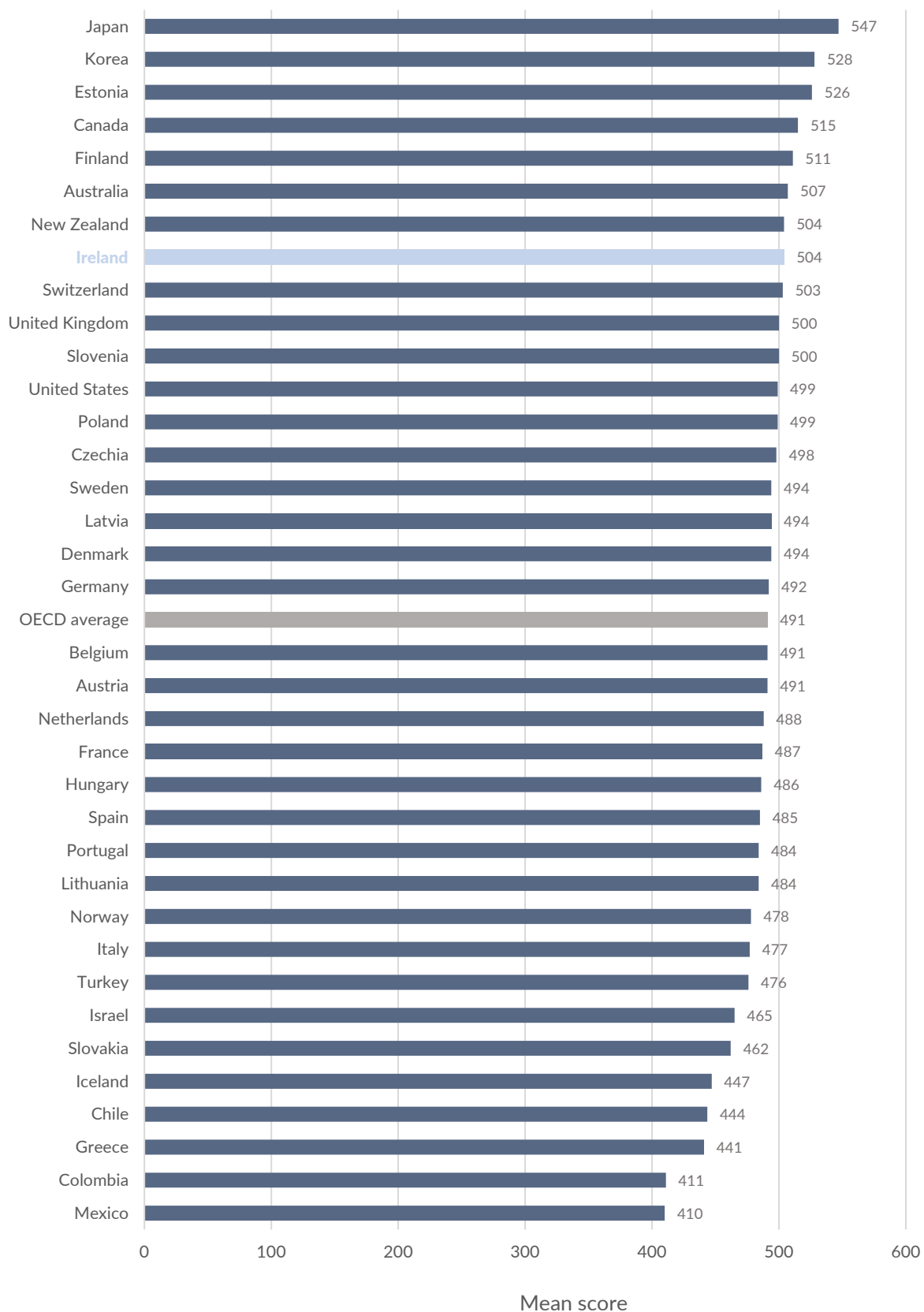
	2012	2015	2018	2022
All children	522	502.6	496.1	503.8
Gender				
Male	523.9	507.7	495.4	506.6
Female	520	497.2	496.9	501.0
Social class				
High	562.4	538.5	529.3	Pending*
Medium	522.3	501.8	495.7	Pending*
Low	483	468.3	465.9	Pending*

Source: OECD-Pisa survey

*Update not available at time of publication



Figure 12. Mean score of children aged 15 based on the OECD-PISA Scientific Literacy Scale, by OECD country (2022)



Source: OECD-Pisa survey



Health Outcomes



Birth weight

Measure: The percentage of babies born weighing less than 2,500 grams (live and still births)

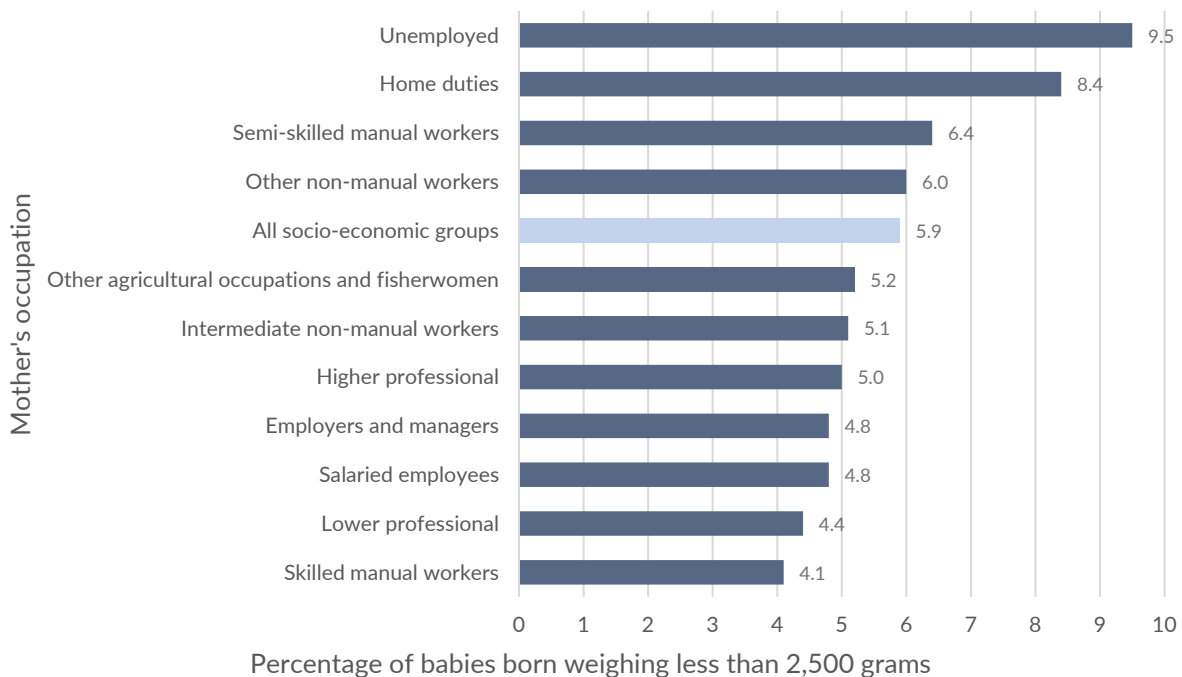
Table 61. Percentage of babies born in birth weight categories (live and still births), by gender (2019–2021)

	2019			2020			2021		
	Low weight	Healthy weight	High weight	Low weight	Healthy weight	High weight	Low weight	Healthy weight	High weight
Total	5.8	79.6	14.6	5.8	79.7	14.6	5.9	79.4	14.7
Gender									
Male	5.5	76.8	17.7	5.1	77.1	17.8	5.3	76.6	18
Female	6.1	82.5	11.3	6.5	82.4	11.1	6.5	82.2	11.3

Source: National Perinatal Reporting System (NPRS), Healthcare Pricing Office

- In 2021, 5.9% of all babies born were in the low birth weight category (weighing less than 2,500 grams) (see *Table 61*).
- Girls were more likely than boys to be born in the low birth weight category (6.5% and 5.3% respectively) (see *Table 61*).
- The percentage of babies born in the low birth weight category was highest among mothers who reported being unemployed (9.5%) (see *Figure 13*).

Figure 13. Percentage of babies born weighing less than 2,500 grams (live and still births), by occupation of mother (2021)



Source: National Perinatal Reporting System (NPRS), Healthcare Pricing Office



- Overall, 5.9% of babies born in 2021 were in the low birth weight category. This percentage ranged from 3.5% of all births in Roscommon to 7.2% of all births in Longford (see *Table 62*).

Table 62. Percentage of babies born weighing less than 2,500 grams (live and still births), by mother's county of residence (2019–2021)

	2019	2020	2021
Total	5.8	5.8	5.9
Mother's county of residence			
Carlow	6.2	5.2	5.3
Cavan	7.2	5.2	5.9
Clare	6.6	6.4	6.7
Cork	6	5.7	6.0
Donegal	6.2	5.9	6.2
Dublin City	5.9	6	6.1
Dublin County	5.2	5.3	5.2
Galway	4.9	4.6	5.8
Kerry	4.9	5.8	5.1
Kildare	5.7	5.3	5.5
Kilkenny	4.5	4.9	5.8
Laois	6.8	6.9	5.7
Leitrim	6	4.5	6.5
Limerick	6.9	7	7.0
Longford	6.7	8.2	7.2
Louth	6.1	7.1	6.8
Mayo	5.5	5	4.4
Meath	6	4.9	5.0
Monaghan	4.4	5.4	5.6
Offaly	6.6	5.7	6.0
Roscommon	5.2	5.6	3.5
Sligo	4.6	6.7	5.6
Tipperary	5.8	6	6.8
Waterford	7.3	6.3	5.6
Westmeath	6	5.6	6.8
Wexford	4.8	5.7	6.5
Wicklow	5.4	5.5	4.5

Source: National Perinatal Reporting System (NPRS), Healthcare Pricing Office



Breastfeeding

Measure: The percentage of infants who are (a) exclusively breastfed and (b) partially breastfed on being discharged from hospital

- In 2021, 61.7% of infants were breastfed on being discharged from hospital. This includes 46% who were breastfed exclusively and a further 15.7% who were fed using a combination of bottle and breastfeeding (see *Table 63*).
- The percentage of infants who were breastfed (either exclusive or combined) was higher among mothers aged 40-44 years of age (see *Table 63*).
- The percentage of infants who were breastfed (either exclusive or combined) was highest among mothers in “higher professional” and “skilled manual workers” groups (80.4% and 75% respectively), when compared with mothers in the “unemployed” group, among whom it was lowest (39.6%) (see *Figure 14*).

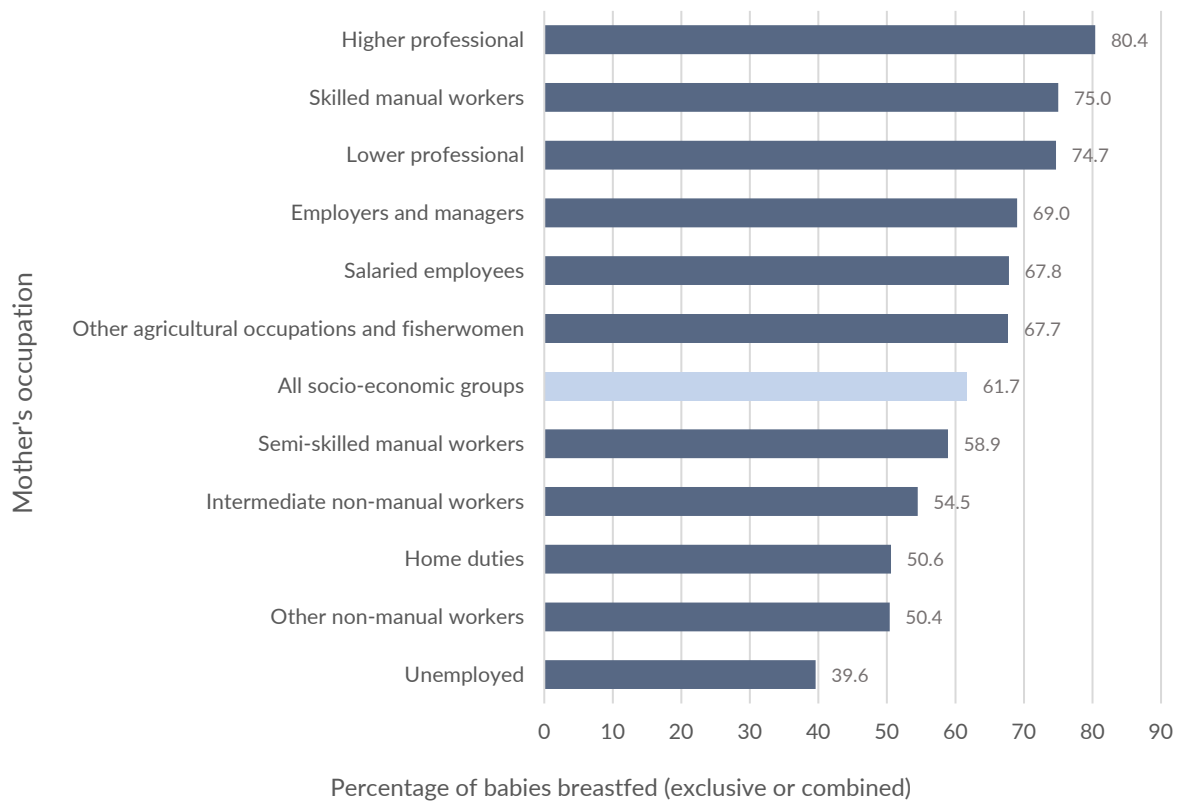
Table 63. Percentage of infants who are breastfed (exclusive and combined) on being discharged from hospital, by mother's age (2019–2021)

	2019			2020			2021		
	Excl.	Comb.	Total	Excl.	Comb.	Total	Excl.	Comb.	Total
Total	45.5	15.2	60.7	44.2	17.1	61.3	46.0	15.7	61.7
Mother's age									
15–19 years	19.3	8.1	27.4	18.9	8	26.9	16.5	8.5	25.0
20–24 years	28.4	10.6	39	25.7	11.5	37.2	25.8	10.7	36.5
25–29 years	37.8	13.9	51.7	36	15.5	51.5	36.8	14.7	51.5
30–34 years	48.3	15.4	63.7	47	17.7	64.7	48.0	16.7	64.7
35–39 years	51.5	16.2	67.7	50.4	17.8	68.2	52.7	16.0	68.7
40–44 years	48.2	18.6	66.8	48.1	21.3	69.5	51.1	17.8	68.9
45 years and over	35.7	25.8	61.5	35.1	29.8	64.9	45.2	22.4	67.7

Source: National Perinatal Reporting System (NPRS), Healthcare Pricing Office



Figure 14. Percentage of infants who are breastfed (either exclusive or combined) on being discharged from hospital, by occupation of mother (2021)



Source: National Perinatal Reporting System (NPRS), Healthcare Pricing Office



- Geographically, breastfeeding on being discharged from hospital ranged from 47.8% in Donegal to 72.6% in Dublin County (see Table 64).

Table 64. Percentage of infants who are breastfed (exclusive and combined) on being discharged from hospital, by mother's county of residence (2021)

	Exclusive	Combined	Total
Total	46.1	15.8	61.9
Mother's county of residence			
Carlow	47.8	8.5	56.2
Cavan	38.5	14.0	52.5
Clare	49.3	7.8	57.1
Cork	63.0	3.5	66.6
Donegal	35.8	12.0	47.8
Dublin City	42.1	23.8	65.8
Dublin County	48.3	24.2	72.6
Galway	43.3	20.6	63.9
Kerry	58.6	6.0	64.7
Kildare	41.4	23.7	65.2
Kilkenny	57.8	3.3	61.1
Laois	51.9	6.7	58.5
Leitrim	41.3	18.9	60.2
Limerick	43.8	7.6	51.4
Longford	42.5	10.0	52.6
Louth	32.6	20.2	52.8
Mayo	43.2	16.1	59.3
Meath	43.5	20.2	63.6
Monaghan	37.0	13.9	50.9
Offaly	42.5	9.7	52.1
Roscommon	42.1	16.9	59.1
Sligo	39.2	19.1	58.3
Tipperary	38.3	12.9	51.2
Waterford	57.5	3.0	60.5
Westmeath	47.6	11.2	58.9
Wexford	42.6	12.6	55.2
Wicklow	46.5	17.5	63.9

Source: National Perinatal Reporting System (NPRS), Healthcare Pricing Office



Health conditions and hospitalisation

Measure: The number of hospital discharges of children

- In 2022, there were 135,033 hospital discharges of children (see *Table 65*).
- Children aged under 1 year and 1–4 years together accounted for 44.2% of total hospital discharges of children (20.9% and 23.4% respectively) (see *Table 65*).
- Boys accounted for more than half of total hospital discharges of children (54.9%) (see *Table 65*).
- The most commonly reported principal diagnosis recorded was “diseases of the respiratory system” (13.2%) followed by “diseases of the digestive system” (9.3%) (see *Table 65*).

Table 65. Number, percentage and rate (per 1,000) of hospital discharges of children, by age, gender, and principal diagnosis (2021–2022)

	2021			2022		
	No.	%	Rate	No.	%	Rate
Total	119,642	100	99.1	135,033	100	110.8
Age						
Under 1 year	25,356	21.2	453.9	28,160	20.9	487.2
1–4 years	26,333	22	107.5	31,571	23.4	132.9
5–9 years	22,390	18.7	65.3	26,791	19.8	78.2
10–14 years	26,833	22.4	73.7	28,215	20.9	75.3
15–17 years	18,730	15.7	93.9	20,296	15.0	98.4
Gender						
Male	64,422	53.8	104.3	74,126	54.9	118.9
Female	55,220	46.2	93.7	60,907	45.1	102.4
Principal diagnosis						
Diseases of the respiratory system	11,338	9.5	9.4	17,827	13.2	14.6
Injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes	12,241	10.2	10.1	11,758	8.7	9.6
Diseases of the digestive system	11,755	9.8	9.7	12,607	9.3	10.3
Certain infectious and parasitic diseases	5,077	4.2	4.2	8,463	6.3	6.9
Certain conditions originating in the perinatal period	9,790	8.2	8.1	9,773	7.2	8.0
Congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities	6,448	5.4	5.3	6,760	5.0	5.5
Diseases of the genitourinary system	5,428	4.5	4.5	5,450	4.0	4.5
Neoplasms	5,983	5	5.0	6,924	5.1	5.7
Diseases of the skin and subcutaneous tissue	3,605	3	3.0	3,986	3.0	3.3
Diseases of the ear and mastoid process	1,991	1.7	1.6	2,537	1.9	2.1
All other conditions and reasons for admission	45,986	38.4	38.1	48,948	36.2	40.2

Rates calculated using population estimates for the relevant years and Census 2022.

Source: Hospital In-patient Enquiry, Healthcare Pricing Office



- Overall, there were 110.3 hospital discharges of children residing in Ireland per 1,000 total children in 2022. Rates ranged from 78.5. per 1,000 in Monaghan to 253.0 per 1,000 in Mayo (see *Table 66*).

Table 66. Number and rate (per 1,000) of hospital discharges of children, by county of residence (2022)

	No.	Rate
State	134,412	110.3
County of residence		
Carlow	1,741	116.8
Cavan	2,168	101.5
Clare	2,974	97.3
Cork	12,712	92.9
Donegal	8,518	205.9
Dublin	32,024	100.0
Galway	7,501	115.9
Kerry	3,967	113.4
Kildare	6,429	100.0
Kilkenny	2,457	96.0
Laois	2,771	112.6
Leitrim	769	88.6
Limerick	5,819	122.4
Longford	1,271	107.9
Louth	3,565	100.9
Mayo	8,073	253.0
Meath	5,355	89.0
Monaghan	1,349	78.5
Offaly	2,173	104.7
Roscommon	2,303	134.8
Sligo	2,310	142.8
Tipperary	4,476	110.6
Waterford	3,128	104.9
Westmeath	2,728	114.5
Wexford	4,489	113.9
Wicklow	3,342	85.8

Rates calculated using county population at Census 2022

Source: Hospital In-patient Enquiry, Healthcare Pricing Office



Accidents, injuries, and hospitalisation

Measure: The number of hospital discharges of children with a principal diagnosis of “injury, poisoning, and certain other consequences of external causes”

- In 2022, there were 11,758 hospital discharges of children with a principal diagnosis of “injury, poisoning, and certain other consequences of external causes” (see *Table 67*).
- Children aged under 1 year and 1–4 years together accounted for 26.8% of total hospital discharges of children with a principal diagnosis of “injury, poisoning, and certain other consequences of external causes” (5.6% and 21.2% respectively) (see *Table 67*).
- Boys accounted for more than half of total hospital discharges of children with this diagnosis (57.1%) (see *Table 67*).
- The most commonly reported cause recorded was “accidental falls” (39.6%) followed by “other external causes of injury” (16.3%) and “accidents caused by objects” (15%) (see *Table 67*).

Table 67. Number, percentage, and rate (per 1000) of hospital discharges of children with a principal diagnosis of “injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes”, by age, gender, and cause (2021–2022)

	2021			2022		
	No.	%	Rate	No.	%	Rate
Total	12,241	100	10.1	11,758	100	9.6
Age						
Under 1 year	695	5.7	12.4	655	5.6	11.3
1–4 years	2,782	22.7	11.4	2,497	21.2	10.5
5–9 years	2,946	24.1	8.6	2,815	23.9	8.2
10–14 years	3,464	28.3	9.5	3,504	29.8	9.4
15–17 years	2,354	19.2	11.8	2,287	19.5	110.9
Gender						
Male	6,956	56.8	11.3	6,708	57.1	10.8
Female	5,285	43.2	9.0	5,050	42.9	8.5
Cause						
Accidental falls	4,717	38.5	3.9	4,651	39.6	3.8
Accidents caused by objects	1,776	14.5	1.5	1,762	15.0	1.4
Transport accidents	1,031	8.4	0.9	866	7.4	0.7
Drowning, submersion, other accidental threats to breathing and foreign bodies	601	4.9	0.5	548	4.7	0.4
Intentional self-harm	975	8	0.8	870	7.4	0.7
Accident, not otherwise specified	479	3.9	0.4	555	4.7	0.5
Accidental poisoning	329	2.7	0.3	236	2.0	0.2
Assault	133	1.1	0.1	124	1.1	0.1
Contact with heat or hot substances	135	1.1	0.1	144	1.2	0.1
Event of undetermined intent	63	0.5	0.1	53	0.5	0.0
Exposure to smoke, fire and flames	14	0.1	0.0	26	0.2	0.0
Other external causes of injury	1,985	16.2	1.6	1,915	16.3	1.6
External cause not reported	< 5	NA	NA	< 5	NA	NA

Rates calculated using population estimates for the relevant years and Census 2022.

Source: Hospital In-patient Enquiry, Healthcare Pricing Office



- Overall, there were 9.6 hospital discharges of children residing in Ireland with a principal diagnosis of “injury, poisoning, and certain other consequences of external causes” per 1,000 total children in 2022. Rates ranged from 7.2 per 1,000 in Cork to 13.5 per 1,000 in Donegal (see *Table 68*).

Table 68. Number and rate (per 1,000) of hospital discharges of children with a principal diagnosis of “injury, poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes”, by county of residence (2022)

	No.	Rate
State	11,669	9.6
County of residence		
Carlow	193	12.9
Cavan	228	10.7
Clare	340	11.1
Cork	981	7.2
Donegal	560	13.5
Dublin	2,693	8.4
Galway	594	9.2
Kerry	321	9.2
Kildare	557	8.7
Kilkenny	251	9.8
Laois	309	12.6
Leitrim	69	8.0
Limerick	570	12.0
Longford	110	9.3
Louth	366	10.4
Mayo	401	12.6
Meath	500	8.3
Monaghan	131	7.6
Offaly	221	10.7
Roscommon	165	9.7
Sligo	210	13.0
Tipperary	482	11.9
Waterford	298	10.0
Westmeath	298	12.5
Wexford	459	11.6
Wicklow	362	9.3

Rates calculated using county population at Census 2022

Source: Hospital In-patient Enquiry, Healthcare Pricing Office



Nutritional outcomes

Measure: The percentage of first class children in Body Mass Index (BMI) categories “normal”, “overweight”, and “obese”

- In 2018, 76.9% of first class children were classified as being in the “normal” weight category according to the International Obesity Taskforce Standards. 15.5% were classified as either “overweight” or “obese” (see *Table 69*).
- 79.3% of boys were classified as being in the “normal” weight category, compared to 74.3% of girls. 13.5% of boys and 17.7% of girls were classified as being either “overweight” or “obese” (see *Table 69*).

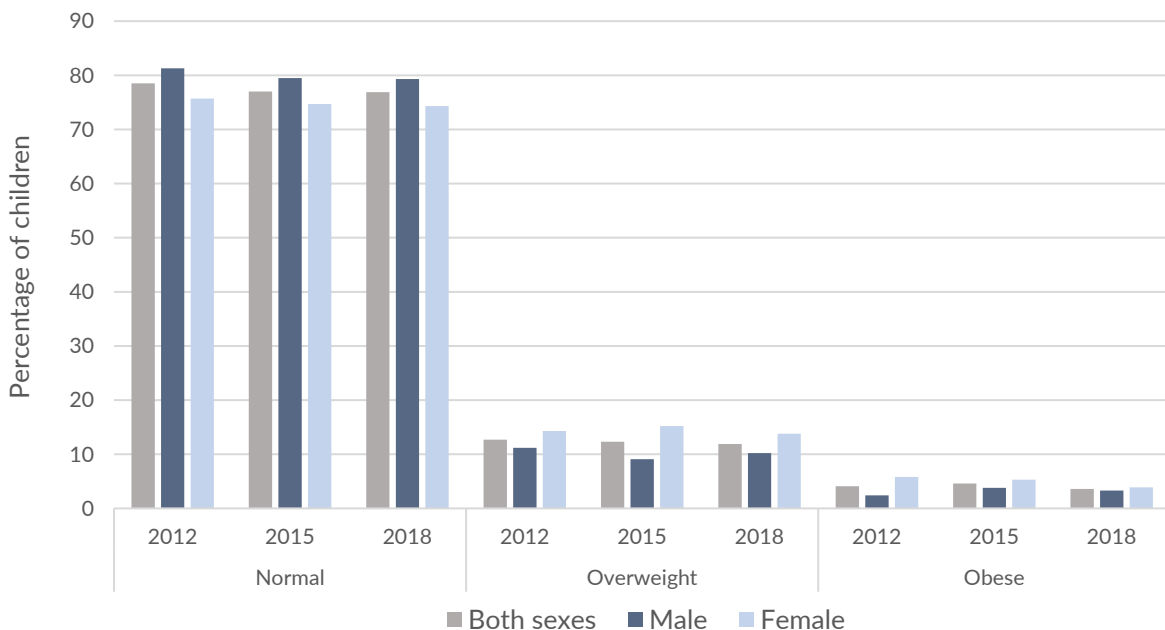
Table 69. Percentage of first class children in BMI categories “normal”, “overweight”, and “obese”, by gender (2012–2018)

	2012			2015			2018		
	Normal	Overweight	Obese	Normal	Overweight	Obese	Normal	Overweight	Obese
Total	78.5	12.7	4.1	77.0	12.3	4.6	76.9	11.9	3.6
Gender									
Male	81.3	11.2	2.4	79.5	9.1	3.8	79.3	10.2	3.3
Female	75.7	14.3	5.8	74.7	15.2	5.3	74.3	13.8	3.9

Source: Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative

- The percentage of first class children classified in the “normal” weight category decreased, from 78.5% in 2012 to 76.9% in 2018.

Figure 15. Percentage of first class children in BMI categories “normal”, “overweight”, and “obese”, by gender (2012–2018)



Source: Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative



Intellectual disability

Measure: The number of children with an intellectual disability registered for HSE funded disability services

Note: there was a change to data collection in 2022 resulting in an increase of registrations, see the appendix for more details.

- In 2022, there were 8,826 children with an intellectual disability registered for HSE disability services (see *Table 70*). This equates to 7.2 children per 1,000, registered as having an intellectual disability in 2022 (see *Table 70*).
- 5% of children registered as having an intellectual disability were aged 4 years and under, while 43.8% were aged 10–14 years (see *Table 70*).
- 67% of children registered as having an intellectual disability were boys and 32.7% were girls. This equates to a rate of 9.5 per 1,000 for boys and 4.9 per 1,000 for girls (see *Table 70*).
- 29.5% of children who were registered as having an intellectual disability were registered as having a moderate disability. (see *Table 70*).

Table 70. Number, percentage, and rate (per 1,000) of children registered as having an intellectual disability, by age, gender, and severity of disability (2020–2022)

	2020			2021			2022		
	No.	%	Rate	No.	%	Rate	No.	%	Rate
Total	9,592	100	7.9	8,969	100	7.4	8,826	100	7.2
Age									
Under 5 years	654	6.8	2.1	495	5.5	1.6	440	5	1.5
5–9 years	2,558	26.7	7.3	2,235	24.9	6.5	2,145	24.3	6.3
10–14 years	4,017	41.9	11.3	3,932	43.8	10.8	3,864	43.8	10.3
15–17 years	2,363	24.6	11.9	2,307	25.7	11.6	2,377	26.9	11.5
Gender									
Male	6,451	67.3	10.4	6,012	67	9.7	5,914	67	9.5
Female	3,137	32.7	5.3	2,954	32.9	5.0	2,888	32.7	4.9
Not known	NA			NA			24	0.3	
Severity									
Borderline	315	3.3	0.3	267	3	0.2	253	2.9	0.2
Mild	2,439	25.4	2.0	2,231	24.9	1.8	2,140	24.2	1.8
Moderate	2,626	27.4	2.2	2,446	27.3	2.0	2,603	29.5	2.1
Severe	683	7.1	0.6	645	7.2	0.5	641	7.3	0.5
Profound	133	1.4	0.1	115	1.3	0.1	113	1.3	0.1
Not verified	3,396	35.4	2.8	3,265	36.4	2.7	3,076	34.9	2.5

Rates calculated using population estimates for the relevant years

Notes: Changes to reporting in 2022 (see technical notes in Appendix 1).

Source: National Ability Support System



- In 2022, rates of those registered with an intellectual disability ranged from 1.7 per 1,000 in Laois to 15.2 per 1,000 in Kerry (see *Table 71*).

Table 71. Number and rate (per 1,000) of children registered as having an intellectual disability, by administrative county (2022)

	No. of children	Rate
Total	8,826	7.2
County		
Carlow	138	9.3
Cavan	167	7.8
Clare	54	1.8
Cork	1439	10.5
Donegal	296	7.2
Dublin	2,051	6.4
Galway	540	8.3
Kerry	531	15.2
Kildare	414	6.4
Kilkenny	79	3.1
Laois	43	1.7
Leitrim	61	7.0
Limerick	190	4.0
Longford	31	2.6
Louth	313	8.9
Mayo	308	9.7
Meath	462	7.7
Monaghan	119	6.9
Offaly	51	2.5
Roscommon	247	14.5
Sligo	204	12.6
Tipperary	250	6.2
Waterford	271	9.1
Westmeath	68	2.9
Wexford	230	5.8
Wicklow	254	6.5

Rates calculated using administrative county population at Census 2022

Source: National Ability Support System



Physical and sensory disability

Measure: The number of children with a physical and/or sensory disability registered for HSE funded disability services

Note: there was a change to data collection in 2022 resulting in an increase of registrations, see the appendix for more details.

- In 2022, there were 6,340 children with a physical and/or sensory disability registered for HSE disability services (see *Table 72*). This equates to a rate of 5.2 per 1,000 children.
- 9.6% of children registered as having a physical and/or sensory disability were aged 4 years and under, 24.2% were aged 5–9 years, 42.9% were aged 10–14 years, and the remaining 23.3% were aged 15–17 years (see *Table 72*).
- 65.1% of children registered as having a physical and/or sensory disability were boys and 34.8% were girls. This equates to a rate of 6.6 per 1,000 for boys and 3.7 per 1,000 for girls (see *Table 72*).
- In 2022, 78.4% of children who were registered as having a physical and/or sensory disability were registered as having either a physical disability or a neurological disability (59.1% and 19.3% respectively) (see *Table 72*).

Table 72. Number, percentage, and rate (per 1,000) of children registered as having a physical and/or sensory disability, by age, gender, and type of disability (2020–2022)

	2020			2021			2022		
	No.	%	Rate	No.	%	Rate	No.	%	Rate
Total	7,252	100	6.0	5,873	100	4.9	6,340	100	5.2
Age									
Under 5 years	634	8.7	2.1	475	8.1	1.6	609	9.6	2.1
5–9 years	1,916	26.4	5.5	1,395	23.8	4.1	1,534	24.2	4.5
10–14 years	3,229	44.5	9.1	2,709	46.1	7.4	2,719	42.9	7.3
15–17 years	1,473	20.3	7.4	1,294	22	6.5	1,478	23.3	7.2
Gender									
Male	4,686	64.6	7.5	3,801	64.7	6.2	4,125	65.1	6.6
Female	2,566	35.4	4.3	2,072	35.3	3.5	2,204	34.8	3.7
Not known	NA			NA			11	0.2	
Type of disability									
Physical	4082	56.3	3.4	3,322	56.6	2.8	3,744	59.1	3.1
Neurological	1,339	18.5	1.1	1,184	20.2	1.0	1,222	19.3	1.0
Hearing loss/deafness	450	6.2	0.4	321	5.5	0.3	379	6	0.3
Visual	669	9.2	0.6	453	7.7	0.4	494	7.8	0.4
Speech/language	3,506	48.3	2.9	2,443	41.6	2.0	2,688	42.4	2.2
Deaf Blind-dual sensory	12	0.2	0.0	15	0.3	0.0	61	1	0.1

Rates calculated using population estimates for 2020 and 2021 and Census for 2022

Source: National Ability Support System



- In 2022 rates of those registered as having a physical and/or sensory disability ranged from 1.0 per 1,000 in Clare, to 19.1 per 1,000 in Roscommon (see *Table 73*).

Table 73. Number and rate (per 1,000) of children registered as having a physical and/or sensory disability, by administrative county (2022)

	No. of children	Rate
Total	6,340	5.2
County		
Carlow	98	6.6
Cavan	199	9.3
Clare	32	1.0
Cork	376	2.7
Donegal	213	5.1
Dublin	1294	4.0
Galway	532	8.2
Kerry	75	2.1
Kildare	370	5.8
Kilkenny	98	3.8
Laois	33	1.3
Leitrim	38	4.4
Limerick	137	2.9
Longford	21	1.8
Louth	304	8.6
Mayo	409	12.8
Meath	815	13.5
Monaghan	143	8.3
Offaly	34	1.6
Roscommon	326	19.1
Sligo	126	7.8
Tipperary	98	2.4
Waterford	280	9.4
Westmeath	45	1.9
Wexford	152	3.9
Wicklow	92	2.4

Rates calculated using administrative county population at Census 2022

Source: National Ability Support System



Child welfare and protection

Measure: The number of child welfare and protection referrals to Tusla, the Child and Family Agency

- In 2022 Q4, there were 21,473 child welfare and protection referrals to Tusla, the Child and Family Agency (see *Table 74*).
- 55.8% of these referrals related to welfare concerns (see *Table 74*).
- Overall, there was a 22.8% increase across the period between 2020 Q4 and 2022 Q4 (see *Table 74*).

Table 74. Number, percentage and rate (per 1,000) of child welfare and protection referrals to Tusla, by type of referral (2017 Q4 – 2022 Q4)

	2017 Q4	2018 Q4	2019 Q4	2020 Q4	2021 Q4	2022 Q4		
	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	%	Rate
Total	13,365	13,823	12,623	17,485	19,580	21,473	100.0	18.0
Type of referral								
Welfare issues	8,051	7,109	7,148	8,529	10,483	11,975	55.8	10.1
Physical abuse	1,336	1,630	1,609	1,808	1,878	2,026	9.4	1.7
Emotional abuse	2,051	2,996	2,080	2,525	2,959	3,243	15.1	2.7
Sexual abuse	708	929	861	1,072	1,159	1,314	6.1	1.1
Neglect	1,219	1,159	925	720	1,006	1,039	4.8	0.9
Not recorded	NA	NA	NA	2,831	2,095	1,876	8.7	1.6

Rates calculated using population at Census 2016

Note: Starting in 2020, the number of referrals also includes cases not requiring a social work response (type "Not recorded")

Source: Tusla, the Child and Family Agency



Table 75. Number and rate (per 1,000) of child welfare and protection referrals to Tusla, by administrative area (2020 Q4–2022 Q4)

	2020 Q4		2021 Q4		2022 Q4	
	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate
All Tusla regions	17,485	14.7	19,580	16.4	21,437	18.0
Tusla Dublin North East	4,541	16.5	5,009	18.2	5,656	20.6
Cavan/Monaghan	521	14.3	619	17	595	16.3
Dublin North	1,720	17.1	1,845	18.3	2,097	20.8
Dublin North City	1,036	23.1	1,244	27.7	1,325	29.5
Louth/Meath	1,264	13.6	1,301	14	1,639	17.6
Tusla Dublin Mid Leinster	5,323	15.6	5,961	17.5	6,607	19.4
Dublin South Central	1,363	20.8	1,259	19.2	1,654	25.2
Dublin South East/ Wicklow	686	7.9	842	9.7	819	9.4
Dublin South West/Kildare/West Wicklow	1,668	15.4	1,944	18	2,095	19.4
Midlands	1,606	20	1,916	23.9	2,039	25.4
Tusla South	4,432	14.8	4,698	15.7	5,180	17.3
Carlow/Kilkenny/South Tipperary	1,009	16	1,036	16.4	952	15.1
Cork	1,670	12.5	1,725	12.9	1,992	14.9
Kerry	488	14.1	505	14.6	619	17.9
Waterford/Wexford	1,265	18.5	1,432	20.9	1,617	23.6
Tusla West	3,189	11.6	3,912	14.2	3,994	14.5
Donegal	436	10.2	463	10.8	574	13.4
Galway/Roscommon	889	11.1	1,039	13	1,009	12.6
Mayo	399	12.5	429	13.4	424	13.3
Mid West	1,152	12	1,570	16.3	1,651	17.2
Sligo/Leitrim/West Cavan	313	13.3	411	17.4	336	14.3

Rates calculated using regional populations at Census of Population 2016

Note: Starting in 2020, the number of referrals also includes cases not requiring a social work response (type "Not recorded")

Source: Tusla, the Child and Family Agency

- There were 18 referrals per 1,000 children in 2022 Q4. Rates ranged from 9.4 per 1,000 in Dublin South East/Wicklow to 29.5 per 1,000 in Dublin North City (see *Table 75*).



Social, Emotional, and Behavioural Outcomes



Participation in decision-making

Measure: The percentage of children aged 10–17 who report students at their school participate in making the school rules

- In 2018, 32.6% of children aged 10–17 reported that students at their school participate in making the school rules. This decreased between 2014 and 2018 (see *Table 76*).
- Among individual population groups, when compared to all other children, children with a disability and/or chronic illness were less likely to report students at their school participate in making the school rules (see *Table 76*).

Table 76. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported that students at their school participate in making the school rules, by population group (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
All children	35.5	32.6
Traveller status		
Traveller children	47.7	40.0
All children except Traveller children	35.2	32.4
Immigrant status		
Immigrant children	31.2	33.2
All children except immigrant children	36.2	28.3
Disability and/or chronic illness status		
Children with a disability and/or chronic illness	35.3	31.1
All children except those with a disability and/or chronic illness	35.5	33.1

Source: HBSC Survey

- A lower percentage of males than females reported that students at their school participate in making the school rules (see *Table 77*).
- On average, the percentage of children who reported that students at their school participate in making the school rules decreased with age (see *Table 77*).
- The percentage of children who reported that students at their school participate in making the school rules was lowest among the high social class group (see *Table 77*).



Table 77. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported that students at their school participate in making the school rules, by age, gender, and social class (2014–2018)

	2014			2018		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
All children	36.0	34.9	35.5	31.9	33.4	32.6
Age						
10 years	49.6	53.3	51.4	45.6	48.7	47.1
11 years	55.3	55.4	55.3	39.9	46.5	43.0
12 years	46.2	49.9	47.9	35.2	43.2	39.2
13 years	39.2	37.5	38.3	30.0	33.4	31.8
14 years	28.5	29.3	28.9	23.8	23.1	23.4
15 years	24.6	17.3	20.9	18.9	16.2	17.4
16 years	20.3	19.3	19.8	15.2	14.8	15.0
17 years	21.0	15.3	18.5	12.5	14.4	13.5
Social class						
High	34.9	32.9	33.9	30.5	32.1	31.4
Middle	36.3	35.3	35.8	32.7	32.6	32.6
Low	35.6	41.3	38.4	33.6	35.3	34.5

Source: HBSC Survey

- The percentage of children who reported that students at their school participate in making the school rules ranged from 28.1% in the Border region to 37% in the South-West (see *Table 78*).

Table 78. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported that students at their school participate in making the school rules, by NUTS region (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
State	35.5	32.6
NUTS region		
Border	33.4	28.1
Midland	33.0	30.9
West	32.9	31.0
Dublin	36.7	32.6
Mid-East	37.6	31.6
Mid-West	33.2	31.3
South-East	37.3	33.5
South-West	36.2	37.0

Source: HBSC Survey



Reading as a leisure activity

Measure: The percentage of children aged 15 who report that reading is one of their favourite hobbies

- In 2018, 30.8% of children aged 15 reported that reading is one of their favourite hobbies (see *Table 79*).
- 40.2% of immigrant children aged 15 reported that reading is one of their favourite hobbies, compared to 28.8% for non-immigrant students.

Table 79. Percentage of children aged 15 who reported that reading is one of their favourite hobbies, by population group (2018)

	%
All children	30.8
Immigrant status	
Immigrant children	40.2
All children except immigrant children	28.8

Source: OECD-Pisa Survey

*2022 update not available at time of publication

- 39.3% of girls aged 15 reported that reading is one of their favourite hobbies, compared with 22.1% of boys.
- 38.5% of children in the high socio-economic status category reported that reading is one of their favourite hobbies. The corresponding figure for those in the medium socio-economic status category was 28.6%, and for those in the low socio-economic class category, it was 25.2% (see *Table 80*).

Table 80. Percentage of children aged 15 who reported that reading is one of their favourite hobbies, by gender and social class (2018)

	2006	2009	2012	2018
All children	42.6	31.7	38.6	30.8
Gender				
Male	32.7	23.4	30.0	22.1
Female	52.0	40.2	47.3	39.3
Social class				
High	50.0	39.2	46.3	38.5
Medium	41.8	31.7	37.6	28.6
Low	36.5	25.3	31.6	25.2

Source: OECD-Pisa Survey

*2022 update not available at time of publication



Smoking cigarettes: Weekly smoking

Measure: The percentage of children aged 10–17 who report smoking cigarettes every week

- In 2018, 2.4% of children aged 10–17 reported smoking cigarettes every week. This decreased between 2014 and 2018 (see *Table 81*).
- Among individual population groups, when compared to all other children, Traveller children and immigrant children were more likely to report smoking cigarettes every week (see *Table 81*).
- Traveller children were the population group with the highest percentage who reported smoking cigarettes every week (see *Table 81*).

Table 81. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported smoking cigarettes every week, by population group (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
All children	5.3	2.4
Traveller status		
Traveller children	11.4	9.1
All children except Traveller children	5.2	2.2
Immigrant status		
Immigrant children	5.2	4.2
All children except immigrant children	5.3	2.2
Disability and/or chronic illness status		
Children with a disability and/or chronic illness	6.9	3.1
All children except those with a disability and/or chronic illness	4.9	2.2

Source: HBSC Survey

- A lower percentage of females than males reported smoking cigarettes every week (see *Table 82*).
- On average, the percentage of children who reported smoking cigarettes every week increased with age (see *Table 82*).
- The percentage of children who reported smoking cigarettes every week was highest among the low social class group (see *Table 82*).



Table 82. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported smoking cigarettes every week, by age, gender, and social class (2014–2018)

	2014			2018		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
All children	6.0	4.5	5.3	2.6	2.3	2.4
Age						
10 years	0.5	0.4	0.4	2.8	2.3	0.3
11 years	1.8	0.9	1.3	3.6	2.3	0.4
12 years	2.6	1.8	2.3	3.1	3.0	0.5
13 years	4.3	2.0	3.1	3.0	2.1	1.1
14 years	4.5	4.0	4.3	2.7	2.5	2.9
15 years	8.4	7.5	7.9	3.2	3.0	5.5
16 years	13.7	10.0	11.9	1.9	2.0	8.2
17 years	14.3	11.7	13.2	2.2	2.2	7.7
Social class						
High	4.8	3.1	4.0	1.9	1.4	1.6
Middle	5.2	4.2	4.7	2.4	2.3	2.3
Low	6.1	6.2	6.1	3.8	3.0	3.4

Source: HBSC Survey

- The percentage of children who reported smoking cigarettes every week ranged from 2.0% in the South-East to 3.1% in the Mid-West (see *Table 83*).

Table 83. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported smoking cigarettes every week, by NUTS region (2014–2018)

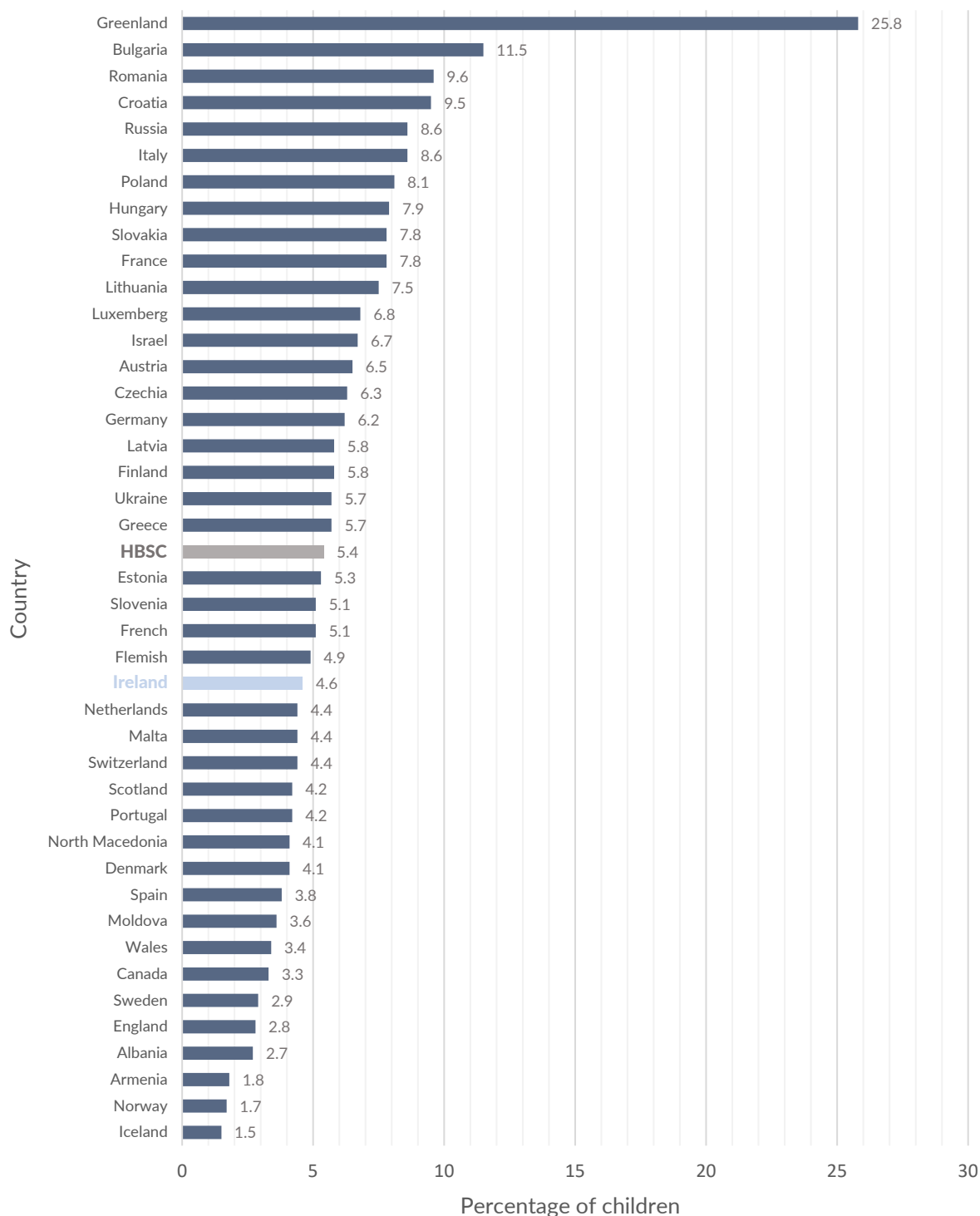
	2014	2018
State	5.3	2.4
NUTS region		
Border	6.5	2.6
Midland	5.7	2.9
West	4.5	3.0
Dublin	5.6	2.5
Mid-East	5.2	2.6
Mid-West	3.7	3.1
South-East	5.1	2.0
South-West	5.2	2.2

Source: HBSC Survey



- Across 45 countries/regions, the average percentage of children who reported smoking cigarettes every week was 5.4% (see *Figure 16*). This ranged from 1.5% in Iceland to 25.8% in Greenland. The corresponding percentage in Ireland was 4.6%. This was below the international HBSC average.

Figure 16. Percentage of children aged 11, 13, and 15 who reported smoking cigarettes every week, by country (2014)



Note: This indicator was last collected internationally in 2014.

Source: HBSC Survey



Smoking cigarettes: Never smoking

Measure: The percentage of children aged 10–17 who report never having smoked cigarettes

- In 2018, 89.4% of children aged 10–17 reported never having smoked cigarettes. This increased between 2014 and 2018 (see *Table 84*).
- Among individual population groups, when compared to all other children, Traveller children, immigrant children, and children with a disability and/or chronic illness were less likely to report never having smoked cigarettes (see *Table 84*).
- Immigrant children were the population group with the lowest percentage who reported never having smoked cigarettes (see *Table 84*).

Table 84. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported never having smoked cigarettes, by population group (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
All children	84.2	89.4
Traveller status		
Traveller children	75.1	84.5
All children except Traveller children	84.4	89.5
Immigrant status		
Immigrant children	83.0	84.2
All children except immigrant children	84.5	90.1
Disability and/or chronic illness status		
Children with a disability and/or chronic illness	82.1	86.1
All children except those with a disability and/or chronic illness	84.8	90.2

Source: HBSC Survey

- A lower percentage of females than males reported never having smoked cigarettes (see *Table 85*).
- On average, the percentage of children who reported never having smoked cigarettes decreased with age (see *Table 85*).
- The percentage of children who reported never having smoked cigarettes was lowest among the low social class group (see *Table 85*).



Table 85. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported never having smoked cigarettes, by age, gender, and social class (2014–2018)

	2014			2018		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
All children	83.7	84.8	84.2	89.5	89.3	89.4
Age						
10 years	94.7	96.2	95.5	100.0	100.0	100.0
11 years	95.8	98.5	97.1	98.4	99.7	99.0
12 years	95.2	96.6	95.8	98.0	98.9	98.4
13 years	90.8	93.7	92.3	94.4	96.0	95.3
14 years	85.5	86.5	86.0	91.0	89.6	90.3
15 years	77.6	81.0	79.3	83.0	81.8	82.3
16 years	70.7	66.8	68.8	74.2	73.6	73.8
17 years	67.4	63.9	65.8	66.1	68.2	67.2
Social class						
High	83.3	86.8	85.1	89.7	89.5	89.6
Middle	86.2	85.1	85.7	90.0	89.8	89.9
Low	84.4	81.1	82.8	87.7	88.4	88.0

Source: HBSC Survey

- The percentage of children who reported never having smoked cigarettes ranged from 85.0% in the South-East to 91.4% in the Mid-East (see *Table 86*).

Table 86. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported never having smoked cigarettes, by NUTS region (2014–2018)

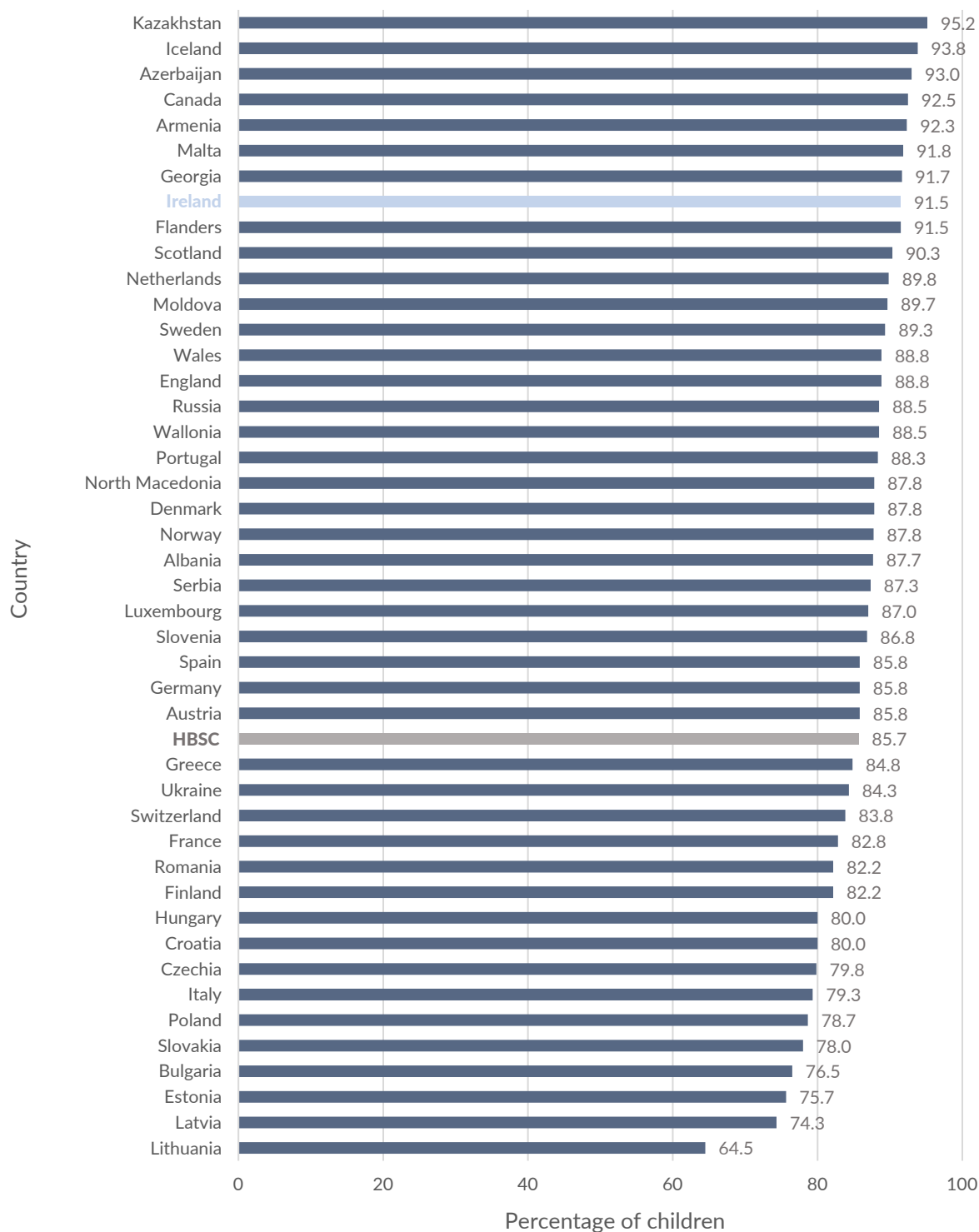
	2014	2018
State	84.2	89.4
NUTS region		
Border	83.0	89.8
Midland	83.1	88.4
West	84.6	89.3
Dublin	83.7	90.5
Mid-East	84.4	91.4
Mid-West	88.5	88.4
South-East	83.1	85.0
South-West	84.8	87.0

Source: HBSC Survey



- Across 45 countries/regions, the average percentage of children who reported never having smoked cigarettes was 85.6% (see Figure 17). This ranged from 64.5% in Lithuania to 95.2% in Kazakhstan. The corresponding percentage in Ireland was 91.5%. This was above the international HBSC average.

Figure 17. Percentage of children aged 11, 13, and 15 who reported never having smoked cigarettes, by country (2018)



Source: HBSC Survey



Alcohol use: Drunkenness

Measure: The percentage of children aged 10–17 who report having been drunk at least once in the past 30 days

- In 2018, 6.9% of children aged 10–17 reported having been drunk at least once in the past 30 days. This decreased between 2014 and 2018 (see *Table 87*).
- Among individual population groups, when compared to all other children, Traveller children and children with a disability and/or chronic illness were more likely to report having been drunk at least once in the past 30 days (see *Table 87*).
- Traveller children were the population group with the highest percentage who reported having been drunk at least once in the past 30 days (see *Table 87*).

Table 87. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported having been drunk at least once in the past 30 days, by population group (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
All children	10.0	6.9
Traveller status		
Traveller children	16.8	12.9
All children except Traveller children	9.9	6.8
Immigrant status		
Immigrant children	8.9	7.2
All children except immigrant children	10.2	6.8
Disability and/or chronic illness status		
Children with a disability and/or chronic illness	11.6	8.4
All children except those with a disability and/or chronic illness	9.6	6.5

Source: HBSC Survey

- The same percentage of females and males reported having been drunk at least once in the past 30 days (see *Table 88*).
- On average, the percentage of children who reported having been drunk at least once in the past 30 days increased with age (see *Table 88*).
- The percentage of children who reported having been drunk at least once in the past 30 days was highest among the low social class group (see *Table 88*).



Table 88. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported having been drunk at least once in the past 30 days, by age, gender, and social class (2014–2018)

	2014			2018		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
All children	10.5	9.6	10.0	6.9	6.9	6.9
Age						
10 years	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
11 years	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.0
12 years	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.0
13 years	1.7	1.4	1.5	1.9	1.4	1.7
14 years	5.7	6.0	5.8	4.2	4.3	4.2
15 years	11.6	10.4	11.0	10.1	10.4	10.3
16 years	25.9	22.2	24.1	19.4	19.0	19.2
17 years	32.2	36.3	34.0	32.3	29.0	30.6
Social class						
High	10.7	9.0	9.8	7.2	6.6	6.8
Middle	9.3	9.4	9.3	5.7	7.3	6.6
Low	7.8	10.0	8.9	7.7	7.2	7.4

Source: HBSC Survey

- The percentage of children who reported having been drunk at least once in the past 30 days ranged from 5.1% in the Mid-East to 9.3% in the South-West (see *Table 89*).

Table 89. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported having been drunk at least once in the past 30 days, by NUTS region (2014–2018)

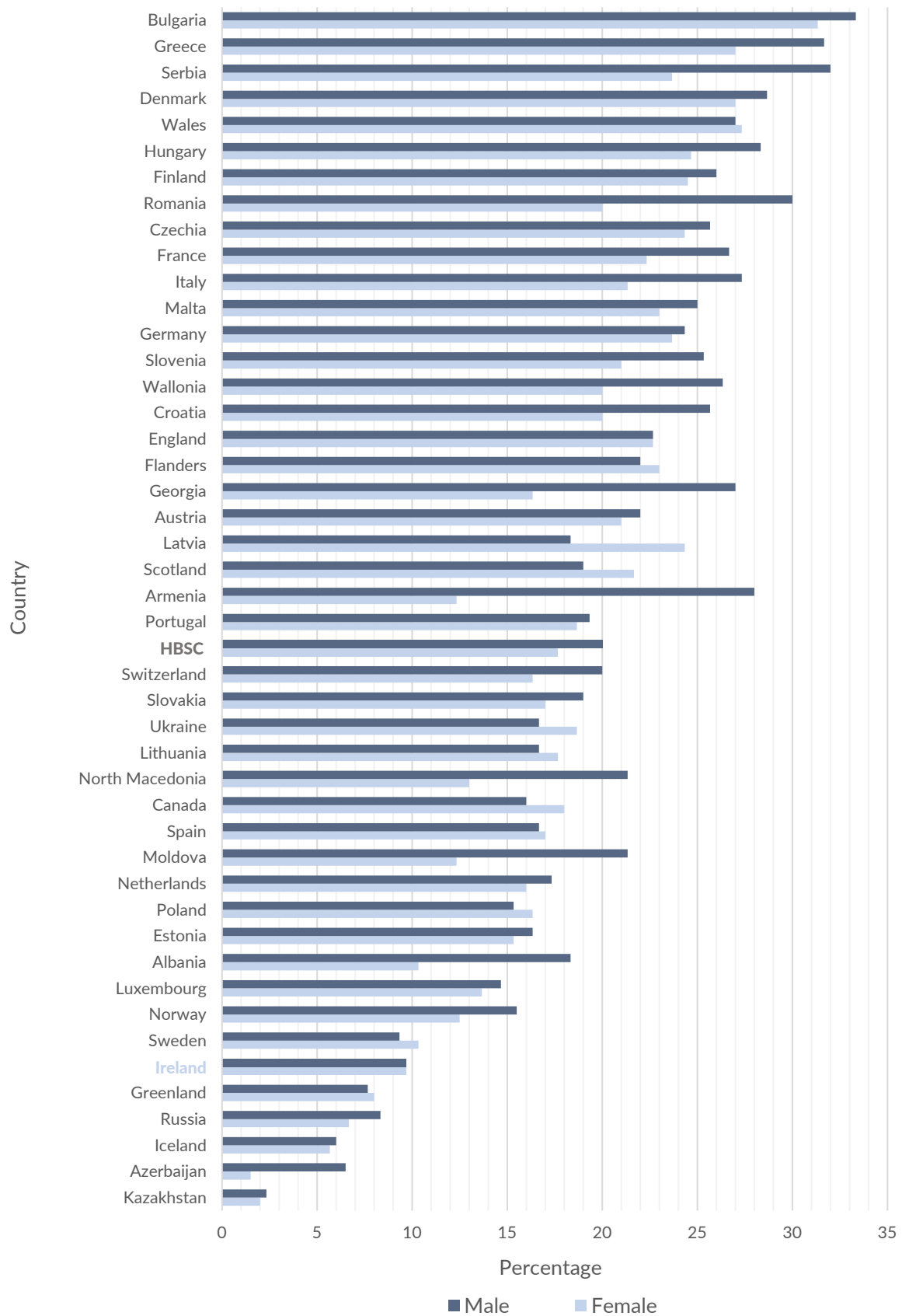
	2014	2018
State	10.0	6.9
NUTS region		
Border	12.1	8.5
Midland	7.2	5.9
West	9.5	5.7
Dublin	11.4	7.1
Mid-East	8.9	5.1
Mid-West	11.3	6.3
South-East	10.5	9.0
South-West	7.3	9.3

Source: HBSC Survey

- Across 45 countries/regions, the average percentage of children who reported having drunk alcohol at least once in the past 30 days was 20.0% for boys and 17.7% for girls (see *Figure 18*). This ranged from 2.3% and 2.0%, respectively, in Kazakhstan, to 33.3% and 31.3%, respectively, in Bulgaria. The corresponding percentage in Ireland was 9.7% for both boys and girls. This was below the international HBSC average.



Figure 18. Percentage of children aged 11, 13, and 15 who reported having drunk alcohol in the last 30 days, by country (2018)



Source: HBSC Survey



Alcohol use: Never drinking

Measure: The percentage of children aged 10–17 who report never having had an alcoholic drink

- In 2018, 69.4% of children aged 10–17 reported never having had an alcoholic drink. This increased between 2014 and 2018 (see *Table 90*).
- Among individual population groups, when compared to all other children, immigrant children and children with a disability and/or chronic illness were less likely to report never having had an alcoholic drink (see *Table 90*).
- Immigrant children were the population group with the lowest percentage who reported never having had an alcoholic drink (see *Table 90*).

Table 90. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported never having had an alcoholic drink, by population group (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
All children	58.4	69.4
Traveller status		
Traveller children	60.4	74.7
All children except Traveller children	58.4	69.3
Immigrant status		
Immigrant children	56.6	63.9
All children except immigrant children	58.7	70.3
Disability and/or chronic illness status		
Children with a disability and/or chronic illness	54.6	64.1
All children except those with a disability and/or chronic illness	59.3	70.8

Source: HBSC Survey

- A lower percentage of males than females reported never having had an alcoholic drink (see *Table 91*).
- On average, the percentage of children who reported never having had an alcoholic drink decreased with age (see *Table 91*).
- The percentage of children who reported never having had an alcoholic drink was lowest among the high social class group (see *Table 91*).



Table 91. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported never having had an alcoholic drink, by age, gender, and social class (2014–2018)

	2014			2018		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
All children	55.8	61.0	58.4	69.1	69.8	69.4
Age						
10 years	88.0	93.4	90.8	92.8	98.9	95.8
11 years	80.4	90.2	85.4	90.4	96.9	93.5
12 years	82.2	87.9	84.8	88.9	93.9	91.4
13 years	72.4	79.6	76.1	83.0	85.9	84.6
14 years	58.5	64.8	61.7	69.3	69.6	69.5
15 years	42.9	46.1	44.5	50.3	51.2	50.8
16 years	27.9	29.9	28.9	31.7	30.9	31.3
17 years	17.7	14.9	16.5	22.9	16.4	19.5
Social class						
High	53.6	61.7	57.8	68.0	69.1	68.6
Middle	58.2	61.8	59.9	69.3	69.9	69.6
Low	56.2	59.5	57.8	68.8	70.5	69.7

Source: HBSC Survey

- The percentage of children who reported never having had an alcoholic drink ranged from 61.2% in the Mid-West to 75.1% in the South-West (see *Table 92*).

Table 92. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported never having had an alcoholic drink, by NUTS region (2014–2018)

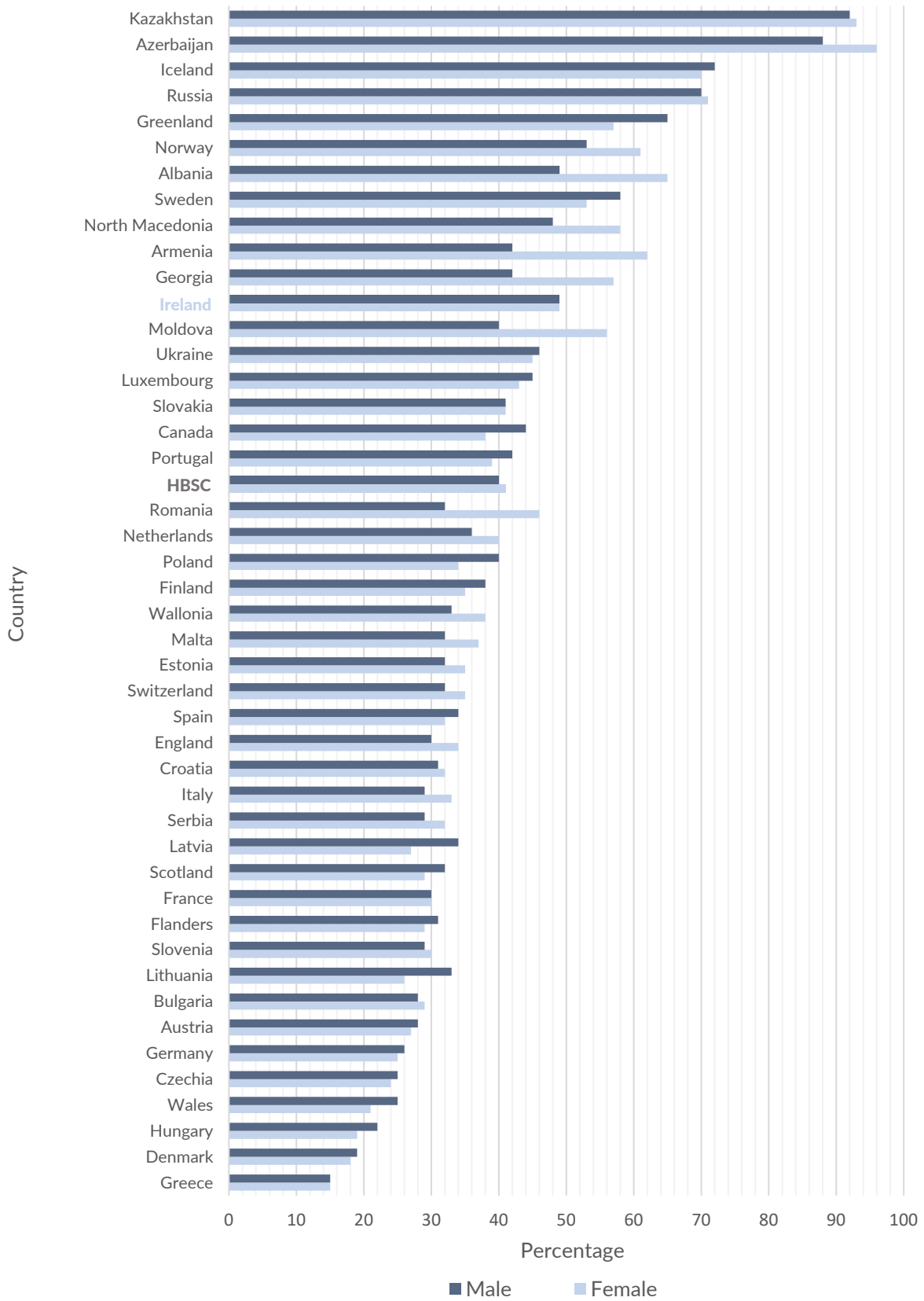
	2014	2018
State	58.4	69.4
NUTS region		
Border	59.3	67.6
Midland	54.9	67.0
West	58.4	66.9
Dublin	57.8	70.4
Mid-East	57.9	66.8
Mid-West	59.5	61.2
South-East	54.0	70.9
South-West	63.5	75.1

Source: HBSC Survey

- Across 45 countries/regions, the average percentage of children who reported never having had an alcoholic drink was 41.0% for girls and 40.0% for boys (see *Figure 19*). This ranged from 15% for both girls and boys in Greece, to 93.0% and 92.0% for girls and boys, respectively, in Kazakhstan. The corresponding percentage in Ireland was 49% for both boys and girls. This was above the international HBSC average.



Figure 19. Percentage of children aged 15 who reported never having had an alcoholic drink, by country (2018)



Source: HBSC Survey



Cannabis use

Measure: The percentage of children aged 10–17 who report having taken cannabis at least once in their lifetime

- In 2018, 7.8% of children aged 10–17 reported having taken cannabis at least once in their lifetime. This decreased between 2014 and 2018 (see *Table 93*).
- Among individual population groups, when compared to all other children, Traveller children, immigrant children, and children with a disability and/or chronic illness were more likely to report having taken cannabis at least once in their lifetime (see *Table 93*).
- Traveller children were the population group with the highest percentage who reported having taken cannabis at least once in their lifetime (see *Table 93*).

Table 93. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported having taken cannabis at least once in their lifetime by population group (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
All children	8.8	7.8
Traveller status		
Traveller children	18.2	12.0
All children except Traveller children	8.6	7.7
Immigrant status		
Immigrant children	10.9	12.0
All children except immigrant children	8.4	7.1
Disability and/or chronic illness status		
Children with a disability and/or chronic illness	10.1	10.0
All children except those with a disability and/or chronic illness	8.5	7.2

Source: HBSC Survey

- A lower percentage of females than males reported having taken cannabis at least once in their lifetime (see *Table 94*).
- On average, the percentage of children who reported having taken cannabis at least once in their lifetime increased with age (see *Table 94*).
- The percentage of children who reported having taken cannabis at least once in their lifetime was highest among the high social class group (see *Table 94*).



Table 94. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported having taken cannabis at least once in their lifetime, by age, gender, and social class (2014–2018)

	2014			2018		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
All children	10.7	6.9	8.8	8.9	6.7	7.8
Age						
10 years	0.7	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
11 years	0.8	0.5	0.7	0.3	0.0	0.2
12 years	1.8	0.3	1.1	0.5	0.6	0.6
13 years	3.6	2.5	3.0	2.8	1.2	1.9
14 years	5.9	4.5	5.2	7.0	5.2	6.0
15 years	14.1	8.2	11.1	15.7	11.2	13.2
16 years	23.4	15.5	19.6	25.0	18.5	21.5
17 years	28.5	21.9	25.5	32.6	23.4	27.9
Social class						
High	10.1	5.7	7.8	9.1	6.8	7.8
Middle	10.3	6.4	8.4	7.5	6.0	6.7
Low	7.7	7.7	7.7	9.4	6.0	7.5

Source: HBSC Survey

- The percentage of children who reported having taken cannabis at least once in their lifetime ranged from 6.1% in the West and Mid-West to 11.3% in the South-East (see *Table 95*).

Table 95. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported having taken cannabis at least once in their lifetime, by NUTS region (2014–2018)

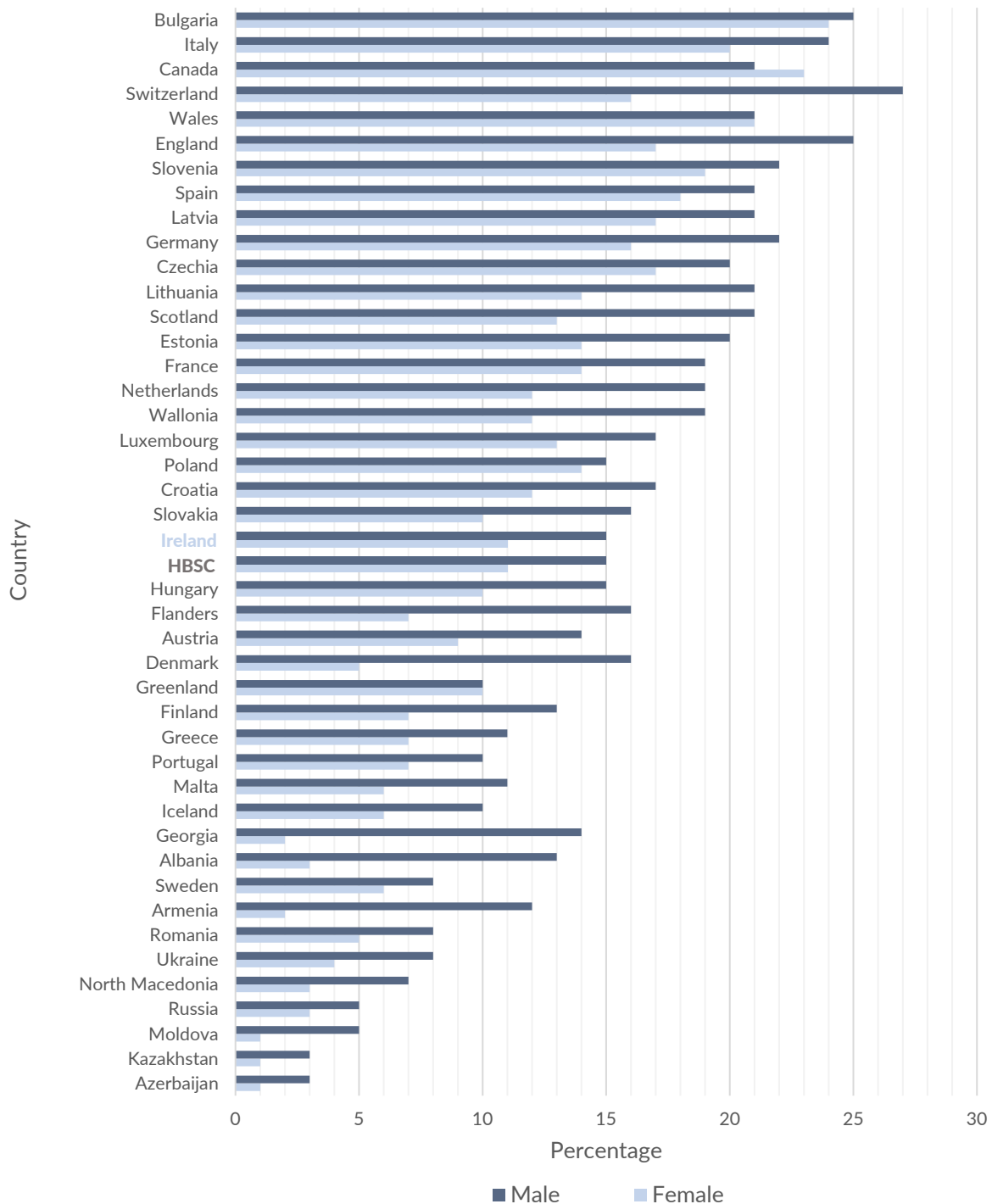
	2014	2018
State	8.8	7.8
NUTS region		
Border	8.9	7.2
Midland	8.8	7.3
West	5.9	6.1
Dublin	11.2	8.8
Mid-East	10.5	7.2
Mid-West	6.7	6.1
South-East	8.8	11.3
South-West	6.5	8.4

Source: HBSC Survey



- Across 45 countries/regions, the average percentage of children who reported having taken cannabis at least once in their lifetime was 15.0% for boys and 11.0% for girls (see Figure 20). This ranged from 3% and 1%, respectively, in Azerbaijan, to 25% and 24%, respectively, in Bulgaria. The corresponding percentage in Ireland was 15% for boys and 11% for girls. This was above the international HBSC average.

Figure 20. Percentage of children aged 15 who reported having ever used cannabis, by country (2018)



Source: HBSC Survey



Sexual health and behaviour: Teen births

Measure: The number of births to mothers aged 15–17

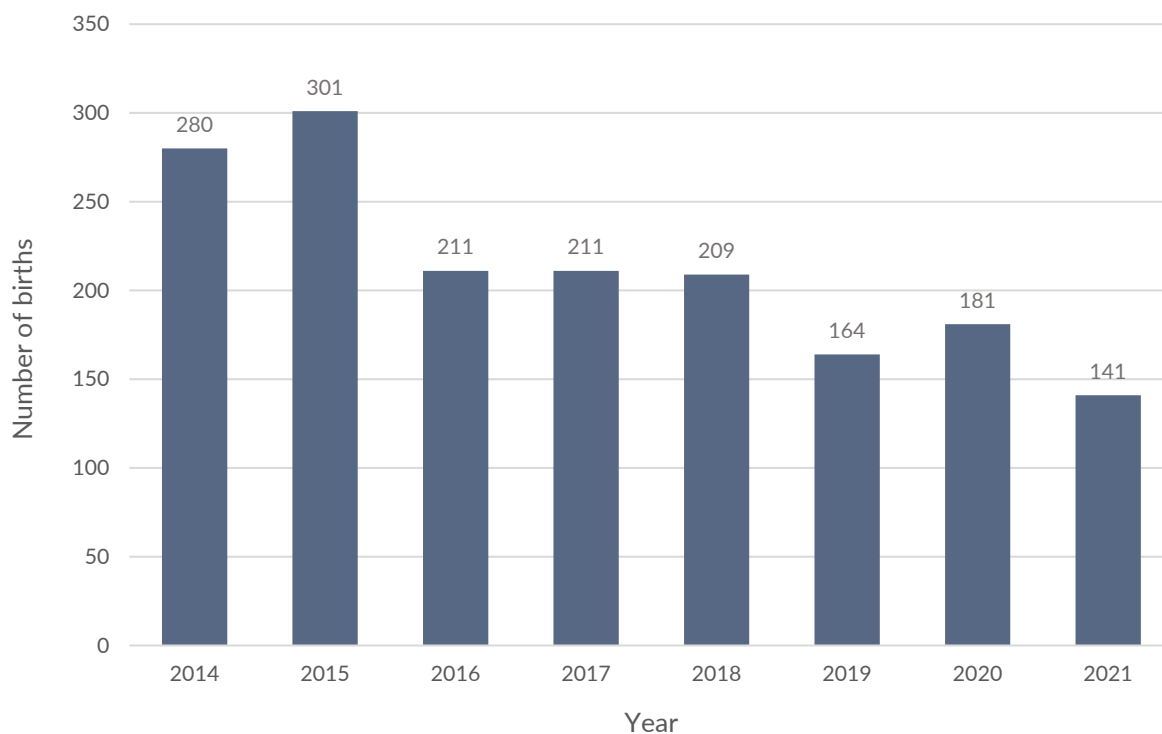
- In 2021, there were 141 births to mothers aged 15–17 (see *Table 96*).
- Over the four-year period 2018 to 2021 the number of births to mothers aged 15–17 decreased by 32.5% (see *Table 96*).

Table 96. Number and rate of births (per 1,000 of female population), by mother's age (2018–2021)

	2018		2019		2020		2021	
	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate
All ages 15+	61,022	31.0	59,294	29.5	56,812	27.8	60,573	29.6
Mother's age								
15–17 years	209	2.2	164	1.7	181	1.9	141	1.5
18–24 years	5,817	28.5	5,378	25.5	4,989	23.1	4,847	22.4
25 years and over	54,996	32.9	53,752	31.6	51,642	29.8	55,585	32.1

Source: Vital Statistics (CSO)

Figure 21. Number of births to mothers aged 15–17 (2014–2021)



Source: Vital Statistics (CSO)



- Overall 2.3 births per 1,000 were to mothers aged 15–17 in 2021 (see Table 97). This rate was highest in Westmeath, at 4.1, and lowest in Leitrim, which had no births to 15–17 year olds in 2021.

Table 97. Number and rate (per 1,000) of births to mothers aged 15–17, by county (2021)

	No. of births to 15–17 year olds	No. of births to all ages 15+	Rate of births to 15–17 year olds*
Total	141	60,573	2.3
County			
Carlow	3	768	3.9
Cavan/Monaghan	2	1,829	1.1
Clare	2	1,375	1.5
Cork	6	6,763	0.9
Donegal	3	1,755	1.7
Dublin	60	17,538	3.4
Galway	2	3,231	0.6
Kerry	3	1,703	1.8
Kildare	7	3,100	2.3
Kilkenny	4	1,121	3.6
Laois/Offaly	6	2,052	2.9
Leitrim	0	412	0.0
Limerick	4	2,395	1.7
Longford	1	549	1.8
Louth	6	1,677	3.6
Mayo	3	1,515	2.0
Meath	8	2,847	2.8
Roscommon/Sligo	1	1,561	0.6
Tipperary	4	2,045	2.0
Waterford	1	1,398	0.7
Westmeath	5	1,231	4.1
Wexford	6	1,830	3.3
Wicklow	4	1,841	2.2

Source: Vital Statistics (CSO) *Rate calculated per 1,000 births



Sexual health and behaviour: Sexual activity

Measure: The percentage of children aged 15–17 who report having ever had sex

- In 2018, 24.8% of children aged 15–17 reported having ever had sex. This decreased between 2014 and 2018 (see *Table 98*).
- Among individual population groups, when compared to all other children, Traveller children, immigrant children, and children with a disability and/or chronic illness were more likely to report having ever had sex (see *Table 98*).
- Traveller children were the population group with the highest percentage who reported having ever had sex (see *Table 98*).

Table 98. Percentage of children aged 15–17 who reported having ever had sex, by population group (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
All children	26.8	24.8
Traveller status		
Traveller children	54.7	57.1
All children except Traveller children	26.4	24.5
Immigrant status		
Immigrant children	29.1	26.2
All children except immigrant children	26.4	24.2
Disability and/or chronic illness status		
Children with a disability and/or chronic illness	30.3	28.8
All children except those with a disability and/or chronic illness	25.9	24.0

Source: HBSC Survey

- A lower percentage of females than males reported having ever had sex (see *Table 99*).
- Children aged 17 years were most likely to report having ever had sex and children aged 15 years were least likely (see *Table 99*).
- The percentage of children who reported having ever had sex was highest among the low social class group (see *Table 99*).



Table 99. Percentage of children aged 15–17 who reported having ever had sex, by age, gender, and social class (2014–2018)

	2014			2018		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
All children	32.2	21.3	26.8	29.3	21.0	24.8
Age						
15 years	25.9	13.6	19.6	23.1	12.3	16.9
16 years	34.9	21.6	28.3	30.7	26.1	28.2
17 years	37.9	36.1	37.1	38.6	33.0	35.7
Social class						
High	26.4	18.4	22.3	26.7	17.9	21.8
Middle	31.1	20.9	26.0	30.3	22.9	26.3
Low	34.3	27.0	30.9	31.6	26.3	28.6

Source: HBSC Survey

- The percentage of children who reported having ever had sex ranged from 19.6% in the Mid-West to 32.8% in the South-West (see *Table 100*).

Table 100. Percentage of children aged 15–17 who reported having ever had sex, by NUTS region (2014–2018)

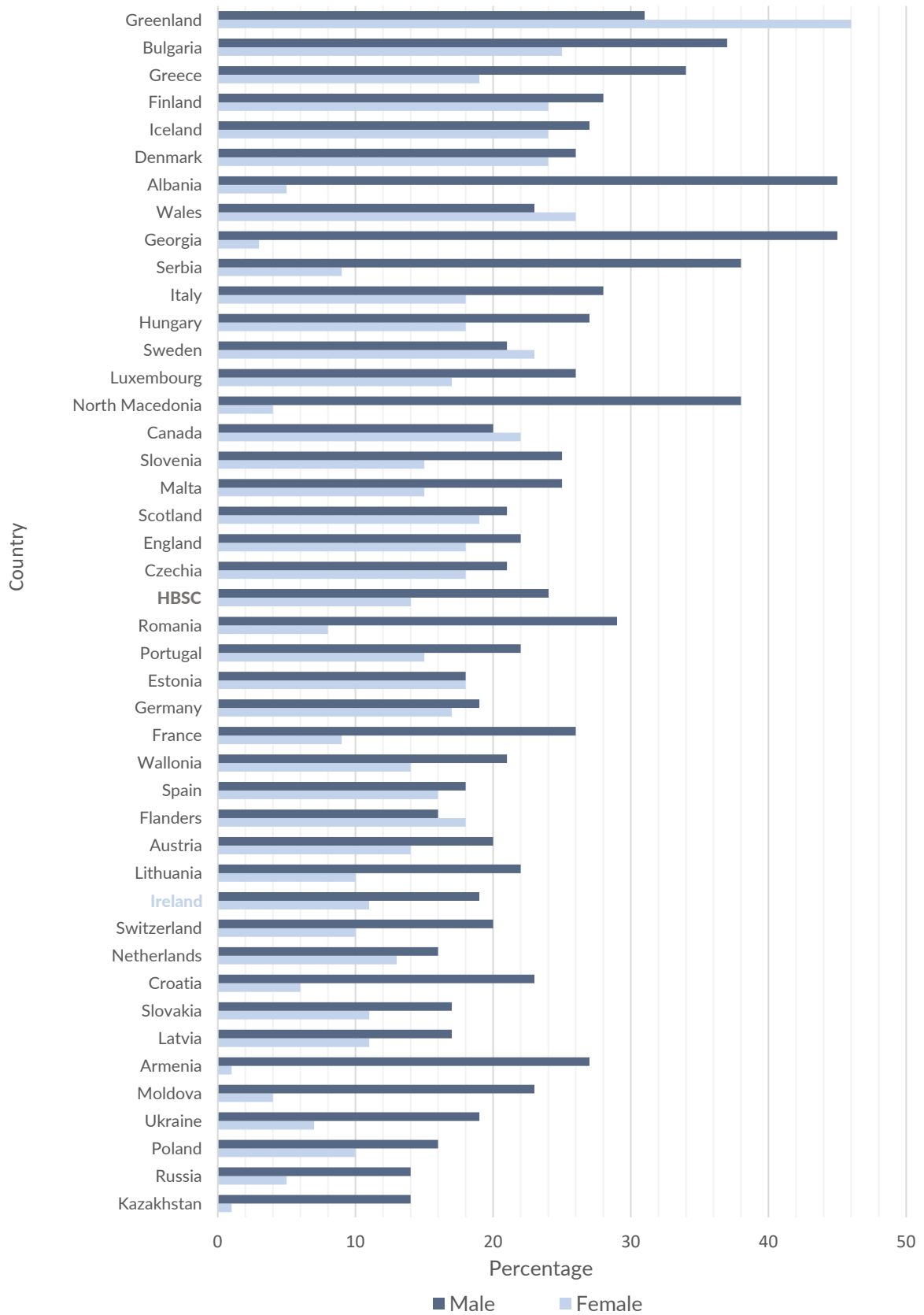
	2014	2018
State	26.8	24.8
NUTS region		
Border	26.9	26.4
Midland	23.9	27.8
West	24.1	25.9
Dublin	33.1	21.7
Mid-East	25.0	24.9
Mid-West	24.5	19.6
South-East	31.8	30.0
South-West	18.4	32.8

Source: HBSC Survey

- Across 45 countries/regions, the average percentage of children who reported having ever had sex was 24% for boys and 14% for girls (see *Figure 22*). This ranged from 14% and 1%, respectively, in Kazakhstan, to 31% and 46% respectively, in Greenland. The corresponding percentage in Ireland was 19% for boys and 11% for girls. This was below the international HBSC average.



Figure 22. Percentage of children aged 15 who reported having had sexual intercourse, by country (2018)



Source: HBSC Survey



Self-esteem

Measure: The percentage of children aged 10–17 who report feeling happy with the way they are

- In 2018, 57.6% of children aged 10–17 reported feeling happy with the way they are. This changed only marginally between 2014 and 2018 (see *Table 101*).
- Among individual population groups, when compared to all other children, immigrant children and children with a disability and/or chronic illness were less likely to report feeling happy with the way they are (see *Table 101*).
- Children with a disability and/or chronic illness were the population group with the lowest percentage who reported feeling happy with the way they are (see *Table 101*).

Table 101. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported feeling happy with the way they are, by population group (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
All children	57.5	57.6
Traveller status		
Traveller children	62.4	63.0
All children except Traveller children	57.4	57.5
Immigrant status		
Immigrant children	56.1	52.2
All children except immigrant children	57.7	58.3
Disability and/or chronic illness status		
Children with a disability and/or chronic illness	53.6	51.1
All children except those with a disability and/or chronic illness	58.5	59.4

Source: HBSC Survey

- A lower percentage of females than males reported feeling happy with the way they are (see *Table 102*).
- On average, the percentage of children who reported feeling happy with the way they are decreased with age (see *Table 102*).
- The percentage of children who reported feeling happy with the way they are was lowest among the middle social class group (see *Table 102*).



Table 102. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported feeling happy with the way they are, by age, gender, and social class (2014–2018)

	2014			2018		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
All children	64.2	50.5	57.5	62.9	52.7	57.6
Age						
10 years	77.6	76.7	77.2	71.2	75.8	73.5
11 years	75.0	74.4	74.7	72.8	69.7	71.4
12 years	71.3	66.8	69.3	68.8	60.8	64.7
13 years	63.4	48.9	55.9	60.2	47.5	53.4
14 years	64.3	41.2	52.6	56.5	38.2	46.7
15 years	54.8	30.2	42.1	51.5	32.5	40.9
16 years	52.8	32.2	42.8	49.7	32.7	40.5
17 years	51.5	32.7	43.2	47.6	28.7	37.9
Social class						
High	65.1	51.4	58.1	63.6	54.5	58.7
Middle	66.5	50.6	58.6	62.4	51.0	56.6
Low	64.1	47.6	55.9	63.3	51.1	56.9

Source: HBSC Survey

- The percentage of children who reported feeling happy with the way they are ranged from 52.8% in the West to 61.9% in Dublin (see *Table 103*).

Table 103. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported feeling happy with the way they are, by NUTS region (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
State	57.5	57.6
NUTS region		
Border	57.2	57.4
Midland	56.0	59.6
West	57.6	52.8
Dublin	55.5	61.9
Mid-East	59.5	61.6
Mid-West	59.4	55.2
South-East	56.4	55.0
South-West	59.6	58.0

Source: HBSC Survey



Self-reported happiness

Measure: The percentage of children aged 10–17 who report being happy with their lives at present

- In 2018, 88.2% of children aged 10–17 reported being happy with their lives at present. This decreased slightly between 2014 and 2018 (see *Table 104*).
- Among individual population groups, when compared to all other children, immigrant children and children with a disability and/or chronic illness were less likely to report being happy with their lives at present (see *Table 104*).
- Children with a disability and/or chronic illness were the population group with the lowest percentage who reported being happy with their lives at present (see *Table 104*).

Table 104. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported being happy with their lives at present, by population group (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
All children	89.7	88.2
Traveller status		
Traveller children	89.2	88.6
All children except Traveller children	89.7	88.2
Immigrant status		
Immigrant children	88.1	84.8
All children except immigrant children	90.0	88.6
Disability and/or chronic illness status		
Children with a disability and/or chronic illness	87.1	83.5
All children except those with a disability and/or chronic illness	90.4	89.4

Source: HBSC Survey

- A lower percentage of females than males reported being happy with their lives at present (see *Table 105*).
- On average, the percentage of children who reported being happy with their lives at present decreased with age (see *Table 105*).
- The percentage of children who reported being happy with their lives at present was lowest among the low social class group (see *Table 105*).



Table 105. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported being happy with their lives at present, by age, gender, and social class (2014–2018)

	2014			2018		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
All children	92.6	86.8	89.7	91.1	85.6	88.2
Age						
10 years	94.8	95.2	95.0	95.6	95.9	95.8
11 years	95.0	95.2	95.1	94.3	93.7	94.0
12 years	96.0	92.5	94.4	93.1	91.9	92.5
13 years	92.2	86.4	89.2	91.9	85.7	88.6
14 years	91.9	82.2	87.0	88.3	78.3	82.8
15 years	90.1	79.6	84.7	86.1	77.8	81.3
16 years	89.4	81.7	85.7	86.5	77.6	81.6
17 years	91.0	81.8	86.9	89.4	80.9	85.0
Social class						
High	94.0	87.5	90.7	91.2	86.3	88.5
Middle	93.0	88.2	90.7	91.5	85.0	88.2
Low	90.2	84.3	87.3	89.6	83.9	86.5

Source: HBSC Survey

- The percentage of children who reported being happy with their lives at present ranged from 85.2% in Dublin to 90.5% in the Mid-East (see *Table 106*).

Table 106. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported being happy with their lives at present, by NUTS region (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
State	89.7	88.2
NUTS region		
Border	90.4	89.0
Midland	89.7	87.9
West	90.5	88.6
Dublin	88.7	85.2
Mid-East	90.0	90.5
Mid-West	89.5	89.4
South-East	88.7	89.3
South-West	91.1	89.3

Source: HBSC Survey



Child and youth suicide

Measure: The number of suicides by children aged 10–17

- In 2021, there were 9 suicides by children aged 10–17 (see *Table 107*).
- Over the eight year period from 2014 to 2021, the number and rate (per 100,000) of suicides by children aged 10–17 was typically higher among boys (see *Table 107*).

Table 107. Number and rate (per 100,000) of suicides, by age and gender (2014–2021)

	10–17 years				18–24 years				10–24 years	
	Male		Female		Male		Female			
	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate
2014	12	4.8	4	1.7	66	33.5	10	5.2	92	10.5
2015	14	5.5	1	0.4	33	16.6	10	5.2	58	6.5
2016	9	3.5	12	4.9	54	27.1	9	4.7	84	9.4
2017	12	4.6	7	2.8	39	19.2	14	7.2	72	7.9
2018	3	1.1	3	1.2	44	20.8	22	10.8	72	7.7
2019	13	4.8	7	2.7	43	20	14	6.7	77	8
2020	5	1.8	8	3	42	19	10	4.7	65	6.6
2021	7	2.4	2	0.7	43	19.2	11	5.1	63	6.3

Source: Vital Statistics (CSO)

- Overall, suicide accounted for 14.5% of deaths of children aged 10–17 in 2021.

Table 108. Suicides as a percentage of total deaths of children aged 10–17, by gender (2014–2021)

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total	27.6	30.6	29.2	38	8.8	33.9	24.5	14.5
Sex								
Male	28.6	35	21.4	37.5	7.3	31	15.2	17.1
Female	25	11.1	40	38.9	11.1	41.2	40	9.5

Source: Vital Statistics (CSO)



Self harm

Measure: The number of children aged 10–24 who presented at a hospital emergency department

- In 2020, the rate of children and young people aged 10–24 presenting at a hospital emergency department following self-harm was 375 per 100,000 (see *Table 109*).
- The rate for girls was 493 per 100,000 and the rate for boys was 261 per 100,000.
- In 2020 the highest rate of presentation to an emergency department following self-harm was among girls aged 15–19 years.

Table 109. Rate (per 100,000) of children aged 10–24 who presented at a hospital emergency department following self-harm, by gender and age (2011–2020)

	Male				Female				Total			
	10–14	15–19	20–24	10–24	10–14	15–19	20–24	10–24	10–14	15–19	20–24	10–24
2011	35	430	568	338	98	586	534	406	65	507	551	371
2012	40	368	533	303	119	617	520	409	79	490	527	356
2013	34	345	510	282	144	619	529	416	88	478	519	347
2014	49	381	544	305	160	678	534	442	104	524	538	372
2015	45	364	553	297	178	718	570	470	110	535	561	381
2016	53	377	516	294	160	760	583	483	106	563	549	386
2017	60	357	505	292	174	758	496	481	115	553	500	384
2018	73	377	543	320	196	766	544	496	133	568	543	406
2019	71	386	485	304	210	726	536	484	139	554	510	392
2020	71	316	422	261	234	779	485	493	151	544	453	375

Note: 2020 rates have been estimated due to missing data from one hospital

Source: National Suicide Research Foundation

Table 110. Rate (per 100,000) of children aged 10–24 who presented at a hospital emergency department following self-harm, by HSE region (2019)

	10–14	15–19	20–24	10–24
HSE region				
Dublin Mid-Leinster	123	575	463	389
Dublin North East	204	580	493	419
South	147	563	622	429
West	113	552	560	394

Source: National Suicide Research Foundation

- In 2019, Dublin North East had the highest rate (per 100,000) of children and young people aged 10–14 (204) and 15–19 (580) presenting at a hospital emergency department following self-harm.
- The South region had the highest rate of young people aged 20–24 (622) presenting at a hospital emergency department following self-harm and had the highest rates overall in the 10–24 age group (429).



Physical activity

Measure: The percentage of children aged 10–17 who report being physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on more than four days per week

- In 2018, 51.1% of children aged 10–17 reported being physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on more than four days per week. This changed only marginally between 2014 and 2018 (see *Table 111*).
- Among individual population groups, when compared to all other children, immigrant children and children with a disability and/or chronic illness were less likely to report being physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on more than four days per week (see *Table 111*).
- Immigrant children were the population group with the lowest percentage who reported being physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on more than four days per week (see *Table 111*).

Table 111. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported being physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on more than four days per week, by population group (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
All children	52.0	51.1
Traveller status		
Traveller children	60.1	53.9
All children except Traveller children	51.9	51.0
Immigrant status		
Immigrant children	47.9	43.4
All children except immigrant children	52.8	52.2
Disability and/or chronic illness status		
Children with a disability and/or chronic illness	51.2	47.8
All children except those with a disability and/or chronic illness	52.3	52.0

Source: HBSC Survey

- A lower percentage of females than males reported being physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on more than four days per week (see *Table 112*).
- On average, the percentage of children who reported being physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on more than four days per week decreased with age (see *Table 112*).
- The percentage of children who reported being physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on more than four days per week was lowest among the low social class group (see *Table 112*).



Table 112. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported being physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on more than four days per week, by age, gender, and social class (2014–2018)

	2014			2018		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
All children	60.2	43.5	52.0	58.1	44.8	51.1
Age						
10 years	63.4	56.7	59.9	72.7	61.5	67.1
11 years	73.1	65.4	69.2	75.4	67.9	71.9
12 years	75.2	60.9	68.8	67.5	60.9	64.1
13 years	64.3	47.8	55.9	58.9	49.0	53.6
14 years	58.3	39.7	48.9	51.0	36.4	43.2
15 years	54.8	31.8	43.1	46.7	30.4	37.6
16 years	49.3	30.6	40.2	48.3	29.3	38.1
17 years	46.0	29.1	38.5	42.2	25.6	33.8
Social class						
High	61.3	43.9	52.3	60.1	46.9	53.0
Middle	60.3	44.3	52.4	57.7	42.6	50.0
Low	57.9	43.1	50.5	53.6	41.4	47.0

Source: HBSC Survey

- The percentage of children who reported being physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on more than four days per week ranged from 46.5% in the Border region to 57.2% in the West (see *Table 113*).

Table 113. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported being physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on more than four days per week, by NUTS region (2014–2018)

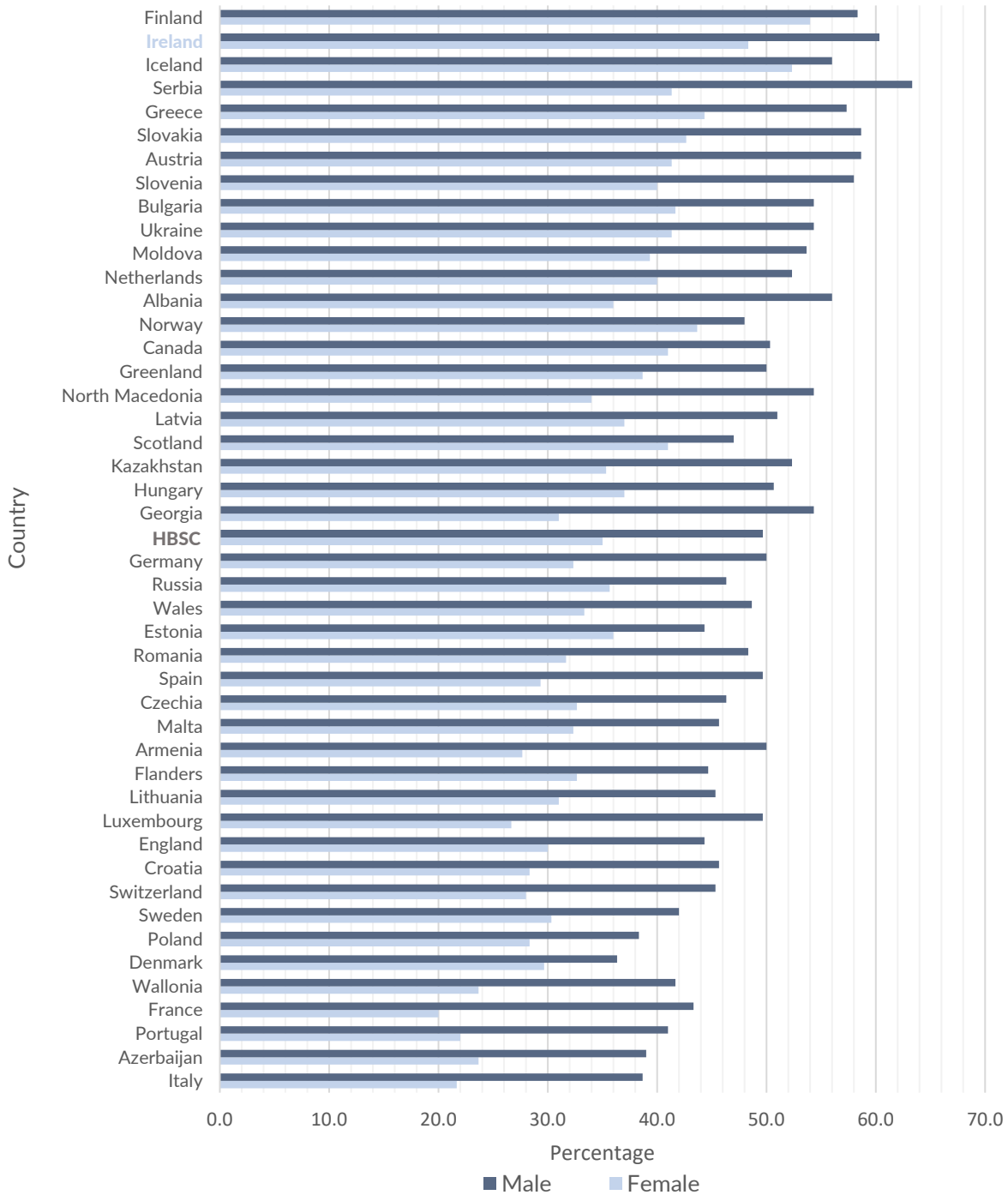
	2014	2018
State	52.0	51.1
NUTS region		
Border	48.6	46.5
Midland	47.7	48.0
West	53.3	57.2
Dublin	53.2	51.0
Mid-East	52.5	50.5
Mid-West	52.8	53.7
South-East	52.1	50.6
South-West	53.5	50.1

Source: HBSC Survey



- Across 45 countries/regions, the average percentage of children who reported exercising four times or more per week outside of school hours was 49.7% for boys and 35.0% for girls (see Figure 23). This ranged from 38.7% and 21.7%, respectively, in Italy, to 58.3% and 54.0%, respectively, in Finland. The corresponding percentage in Ireland was 60.3% for boys and 48.3% for girls. This was above the international HBSC average.

Figure 23. Percentage of children aged 11, 13, and 15 who reported exercising four times or more a week (outside school hours), by country (2018)



Source: HBSC Survey



Nutrition: Breakfast consumption

Measure: The percentage of children aged 10–17 who report eating breakfast on five or more days per week

- In 2018, 78.2% of children aged 10–17 reported eating breakfast on five or more days per week. This increased between 2014 and 2018 (see *Table 114*).
- Among individual population groups, when compared to all other children, Traveller children, immigrant children, and children with a disability and/or chronic illness were less likely to report eating breakfast on five or more days per week (see *Table 114*).
- Traveller children were the population group with the lowest percentage who reported eating breakfast on five or more days per week (see *Table 114*).

Table 114. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported eating breakfast on five or more days per week, by population group (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
All children	76.7	78.2
Traveller status		
Traveller children	65.3	72.5
All children except Traveller children	76.9	78.3
Immigrant status		
Immigrant children	74.4	74.7
All children except immigrant children	77.2	78.7
Disability and/or chronic illness status		
Children with a disability and/or chronic illness	75.0	76.4
All children except those with a disability and/or chronic illness	77.2	78.6

Source: HBSC Survey

- A lower percentage of females than males reported eating breakfast on five or more days per week (see *Table 115*).
- On average, the percentage of children who reported eating breakfast on five or more days per week decreased with age (see *Table 115*).
- The percentage of children who reported eating breakfast on five or more days per week was lowest among the low social class group (see *Table 115*).



Table 115. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported eating breakfast on five or more days per week, by age, gender, and social class (2014–2018)

	2014			2018		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
All children	79.6	73.7	76.7	81.8	74.8	78.2
Age						
10 years	92.1	84.9	88.3	86.6	88.4	87.5
11 years	85.2	86.0	85.6	90.1	88.9	89.6
12 years	84.1	77.5	81.1	86.1	83.0	84.5
13 years	77.6	73.1	75.3	81.9	74.9	78.2
14 years	78.9	70.6	74.7	79.1	70.2	74.4
15 years	79.5	68.0	73.6	77.1	66.5	71.2
16 years	74.7	71.3	73.0	74.2	66.4	70.0
17 years	75.2	69.9	72.8	77.3	68.2	72.7
Social class						
High	83.6	79.1	81.3	86.4	79.1	82.5
Middle	81.8	72.8	77.3	81.0	74.7	77.7
Low	75.9	68.6	72.3	72.1	68.2	70.0

Source: HBSC Survey

- The percentage of children who reported eating breakfast on five or more days per week ranged from 75.6% in the South-East to 82.0% in Dublin (see *Table 116*).

Table 116. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported eating breakfast on five or more days per week, by NUTS region (2014–2018)

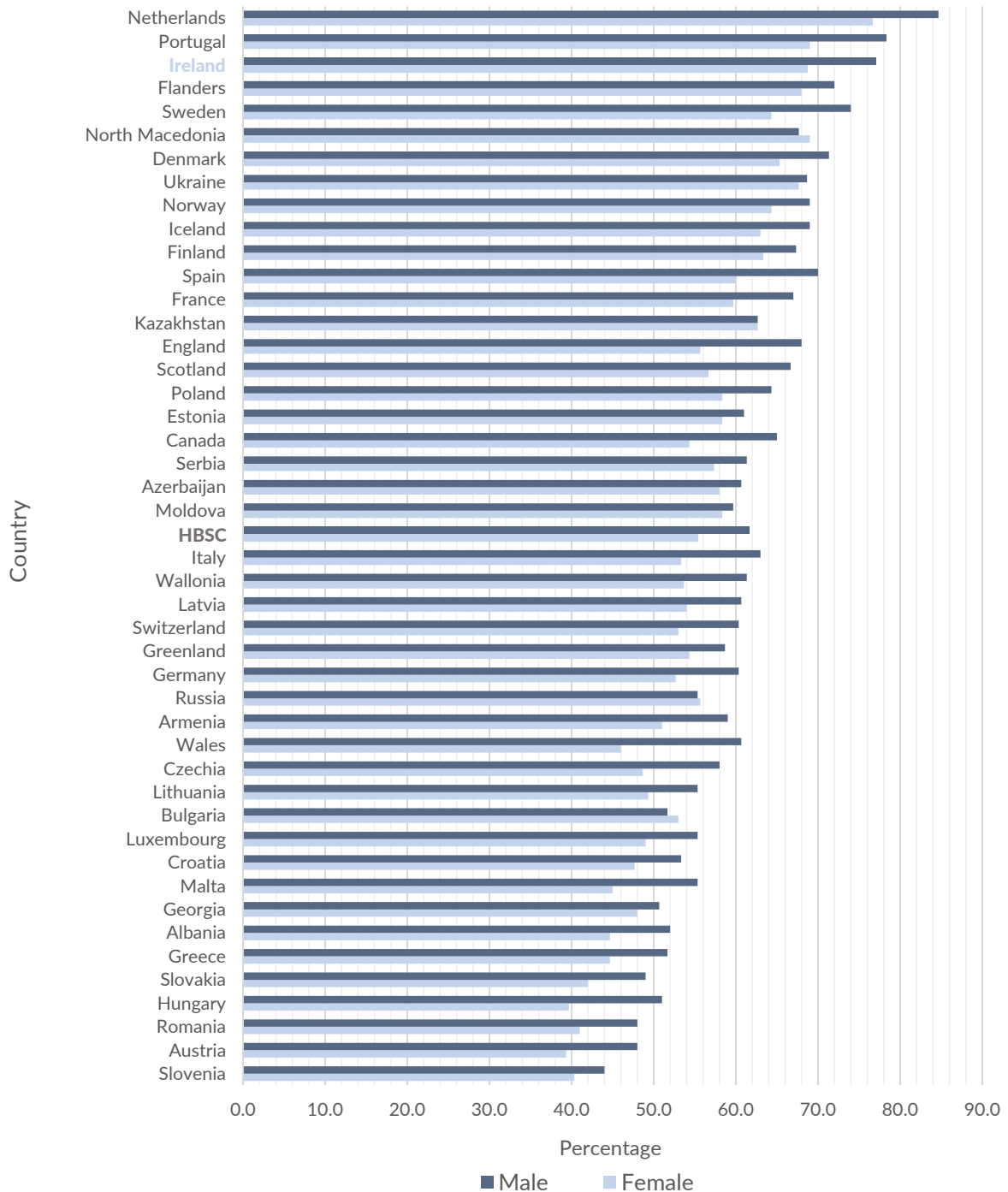
	2014	2018
State	76.7	78.2
NUTS region		
Border	76.9	77.5
Midland	76.8	76.5
West	81.1	79.0
Dublin	73.5	82.0
Mid-East	77.9	81.3
Mid-West	76.8	76.9
South-East	74.8	75.6
South-West	79.7	79.2

Source: HBSC Survey



- Across 45 countries/regions, the average percentage of children who reported eating breakfast on five or more days per week was 61.7% for boys and 55.3% for girls (see Figure 24). This ranged from 44.0% and 40.3%, respectively, in Slovenia, to 84.7% and 76.7%, respectively, in the Netherlands. The corresponding percentage in Ireland was 77.0% for boys and 68.7% for girls. This was above the international HBS average.

Figure 24. Percentage of children aged 11, 13, and 15 who reported eating breakfast every weekday, by country (2018)



Source: HBS Survey



Nutrition: Soft drinks

Measure: The percentage of children aged 10–17 who report drinking soft drinks that contain sugar at least once a day

- In 2018, 6.5% of children aged 10–17 reported drinking soft drinks that contain sugar at least once a day. This decreased between 2014 and 2018 (see *Table 117*).
- Among individual population groups, when compared to all other children, Traveller children, immigrant children, and children with a disability and/or chronic illness were more likely to report drinking soft drinks that contain sugar at least once a day (see *Table 117*).
- Traveller children were the population group with the highest percentage who reported drinking soft drinks that contain sugar at least once a day (see *Table 117*).

Table 117. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported drinking soft drinks that contain sugar at least once a day, by population group (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
All children	12.6	6.5
Traveller status		
Traveller children	23.5	16.5
All children except Traveller children	12.4	6.2
Immigrant status		
Immigrant children	10.6	7.0
All children except immigrant children	12.9	6.4
Disability and/or chronic illness status		
Children with a disability and/or chronic illness	12.9	7.2
All children except those with a disability and/or chronic illness	12.5	6.2

Source: HBSC Survey

- A lower percentage of females than males reported drinking soft drinks that contain sugar at least once a day (see *Table 118*).
- Children aged 14 years were most likely to report drinking soft drinks that contain sugar at least once a day and children aged 11 years were least likely (see *Table 118*).
- The percentage of children who reported drinking soft drinks that contain sugar at least once a day was highest among the low social class group (see *Table 118*).



Table 118. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported drinking soft drinks that contain sugar at least once a day, by age, gender, and social class (2014–2018)

	2014			2018		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
All children	13.8	11.3	12.6	7.1	5.9	6.5
Age						
10 years	11.6	9.4	10.5	5.9	4.3	5.1
11 years	6.1	9.2	7.6	4.8	4.0	4.4
12 years	8.7	12.7	10.5	5.2	6.2	5.7
13 years	16.0	10.4	13.1	6.9	6.5	6.7
14 years	18.3	12.5	15.4	10.9	7.4	9.0
15 years	18.1	13.3	15.7	8.3	6.0	7.0
16 years	16.3	12.0	14.2	9.1	7.6	8.3
17 years	14.2	10.6	12.6	6.3	3.9	5.1
Social class						
High	8.5	6.4	7.4	4.3	3.1	3.7
Middle	14.1	12.0	13.1	7.1	6.5	6.8
Low	16.2	17.9	17.0	10.2	9.9	10.0

Source: HBSC Survey

- The percentage of children who reported drinking soft drinks that contain sugar at least once a day ranged from 4.4% in the Midland region to 9% in the Mid-East (see *Table 119*).

Table 119. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported drinking soft drinks that contain sugar at least once a day, by NUTS region (2014–2018)

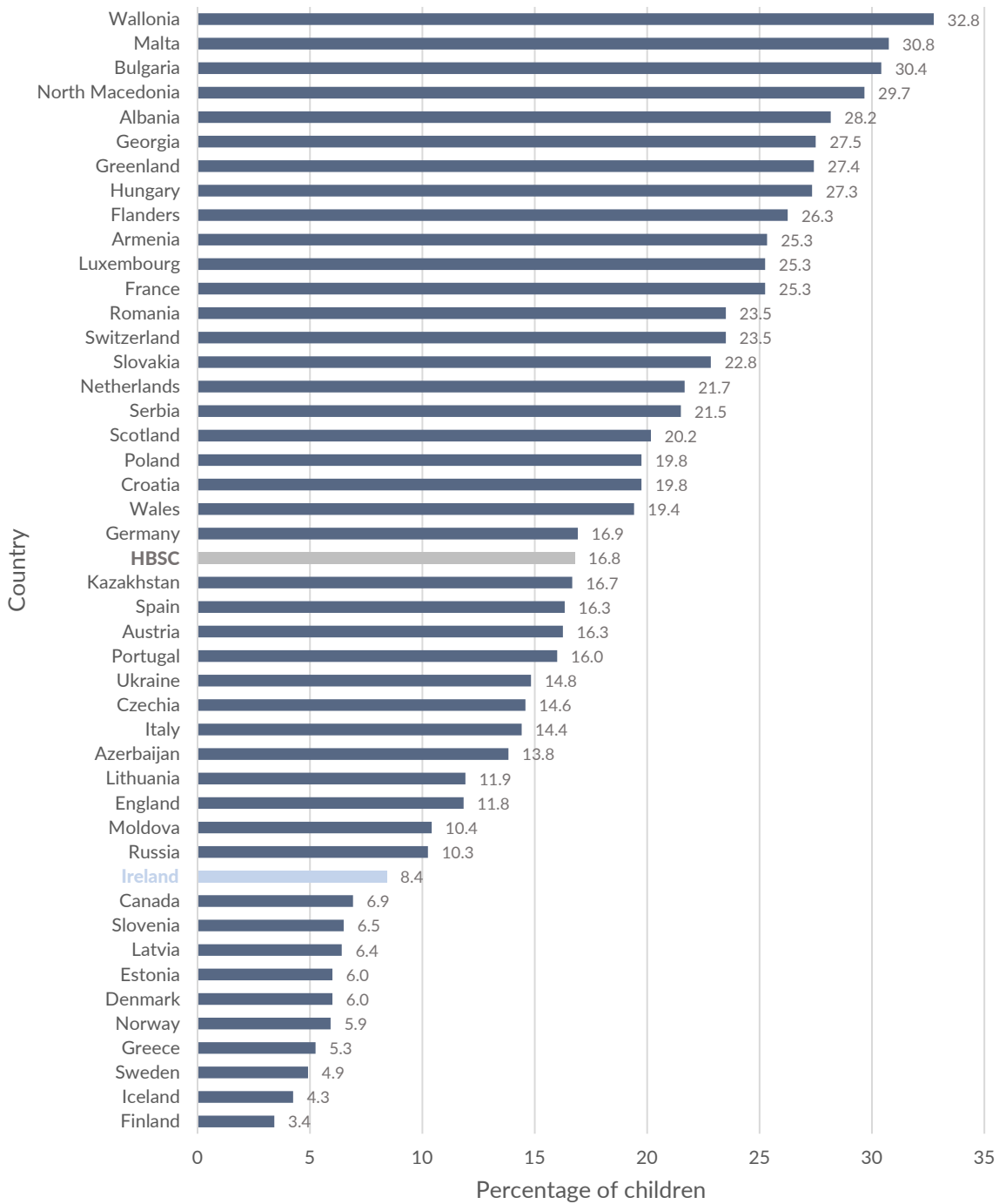
	2014	2018
State	12.6	6.5
NUTS region		
Border	11.4	5.1
Midland	9.0	4.4
West	8.4	5.7
Dublin	16.8	6.7
Mid-East	11.8	9.0
Mid-West	11.2	7.0
South-East	14.6	8.3
South-West	10.6	5.1

Source: HBSC Survey



- Across 45 countries/regions, the average percentage of children who reported drinking soft drinks that contain sugar at least once a day was 16.7% (see Figure 25). This ranged from 3.4% in Finland to 32.7% in Wallonia. The corresponding percentage in Ireland was 8.4%. This was below the international HBS average.

Figure 25. Percentage of children aged 11, 13, and 15 who reported drinking soft drinks at least once a day, by country (2018)



Source: HBS Survey

STATE OF THE NATION'S CHILDREN



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
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