

HBSC IRELAND

The Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) is a research study conducted by an international network of research teams¹ in collaboration with the World Health Organisation (Europe) and co-ordinated by Dr Joanna Inchley of the University of Glasgow. This factsheet is based on data collected in 2018 from 12,002 10-17 year olds in Ireland from randomly selected schools throughout the country².

Further information is available at:
<http://www.hbsc.org>
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hbsc
HEALTH BEHAVIOUR IN
SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN
ÉIREANN/IRELAND



Summary

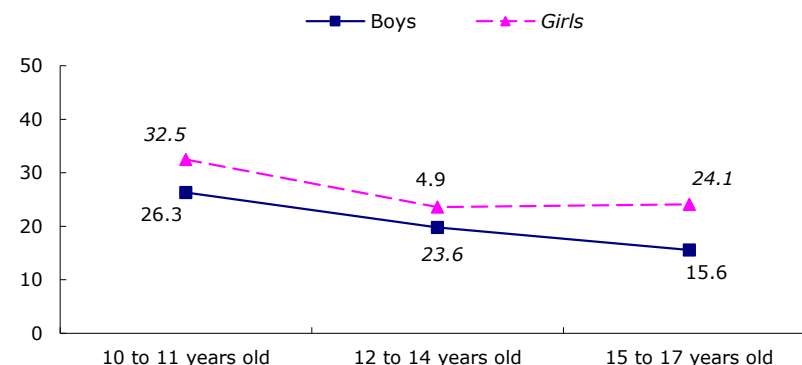
Fruit consumption in this factsheet refers to children who report eating fruit more than once a day. Overall, 22.5% of children report that they eat fruit more than once a day. More girls (25.2%) than boys (19.7%) report fruit consumption more than once a day. The proportion of children eating fruit more than once a day is higher among younger than older children (29.3% of 10 to 11 years; 20.2% of 15 to 17 years). Those who live with both parents and those who find it easy to talk to their mother and father about things that really bother them are more likely to report eating fruit more than once a day. Those who report feeling pressured by schoolwork are less likely to eat fruit more than once a day, as are those from lower social class groups.

Why this topic?

Fruit is an essential part of a healthy diet³. A diet rich in fruits and vegetables promotes good health and supports growth and development⁴. Eating behaviour and dietary habits are established at a young age⁵ and can be sustained into adulthood, reducing the risk of chronic diseases. Increasing the availability and accessibility of fruit, at home and at school, can promote consumption.

Change 2014-2018

The overall proportion of children who report eating fruit more than once a day has stayed the same between 2014 and 2018 (25.9%). There is a slight increase in the proportion of younger girls aged 10 to 11 (31.4% in 2014, 33.6% in 2018) and boys of the same age (27.2% in 2014, 29.0% in 2018) who report eating fruit more than once a day. There is a slight decrease in the proportion of older girls aged 15 to 17 (26.1% in 2014, 23.3% in 2018) and boys of the same age (17.9% in 2014, 15.6% in 2018) who report eating fruit twice daily or more. Boys from lower social class groups are the least likely to report consuming fruit more than once a day (14.3%).



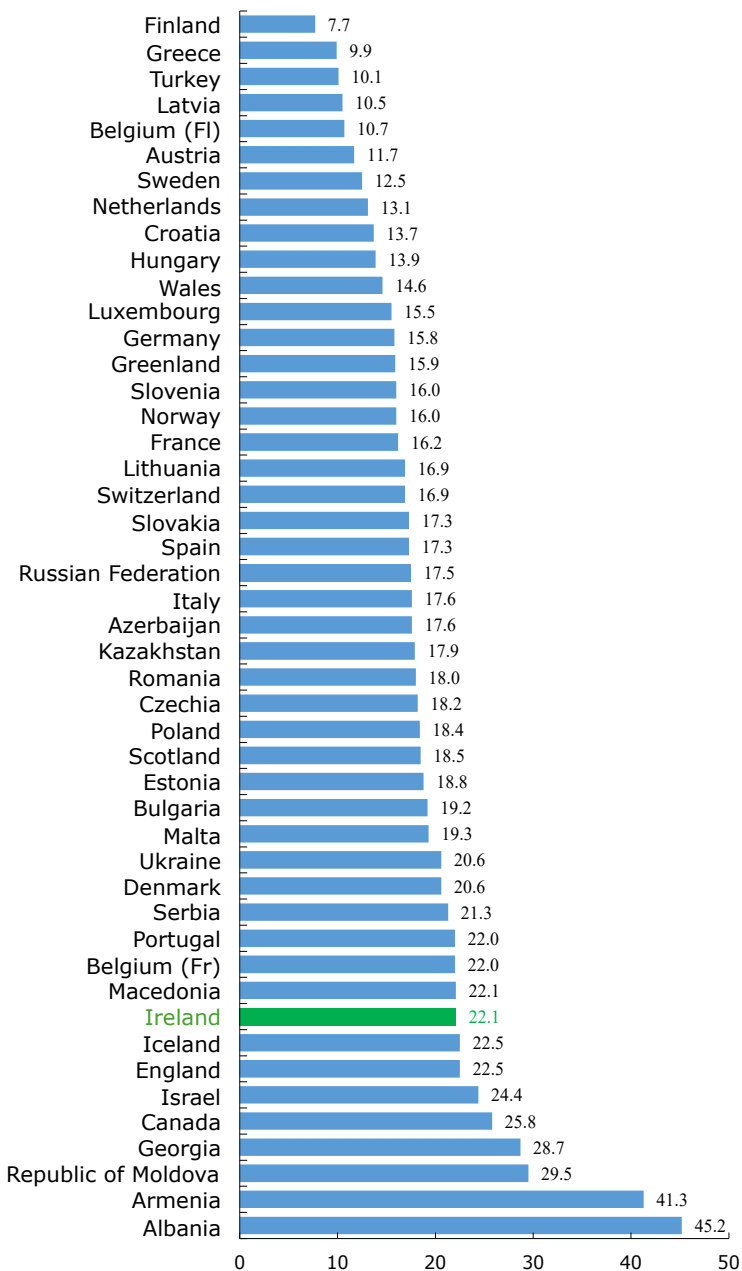
Percentage of children who report consuming fruit everyday, more than once, by age and gender

Fruit consumption in context

- Children from higher social class groups are more likely to report that they eat fruit more than once a day compared to those in middle and lower social class groups (17.5% of social class 5-6; 19.8% of social class 3-4; 26.9% of social class 1-2)
- Children who live with both parents are more likely to report that they eat fruit more than once a day compared to children living in other households (24.3% vs. 17.7%)
- Children who report that they find it easy to talk to their mother are more likely to report that they eat fruit more than once a day compared to those who do not find it easy (23.5% vs. 18.0%). The same pattern holds for ease of talking to their father (24.8% vs. 18.8%)
- Children who report liking school are more likely to report that they eat fruit more than once a day compared to those who do not (25.0% vs. 16.7%), while those who report feeling pressured by their schoolwork are less likely to report that they eat fruit more than once a day compared to those who do not (21.5% vs. 23.5%).

...Fruit consumption among schoolchildren in Ireland

Percentage of 15 year children reporting consuming fruit everyday, more than once, by country



International

Fifteen year old schoolchildren in Ireland (boys and girls together) are ranked 9th of 47 countries in Europe with 22.1% reporting that they eat fruit more than once a day¹.

Implications

Fruit consumption remains unchanged since 2014. The majority of children in Ireland are not meeting recommendations for daily fruit intake. Increasing the availability and accessibility of fruit can increase consumption among children. Interventions to food environments in schools, families and communities are needed, coupled with policy and political support to fund these initiatives⁶.

References

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All factsheets and other HBSC publications and reports can be downloaded from our website: <http://www.nuigalway.ie/hbcs>

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