

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>
<http://www.nuigalway.ie/hbsc/>



hbsc
HEALTH BEHAVIOUR IN
SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN
IRELAND/IRELAND



NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

The HBSC Ireland Team, Health Promotion Research Centre, NUI Galway

Summary

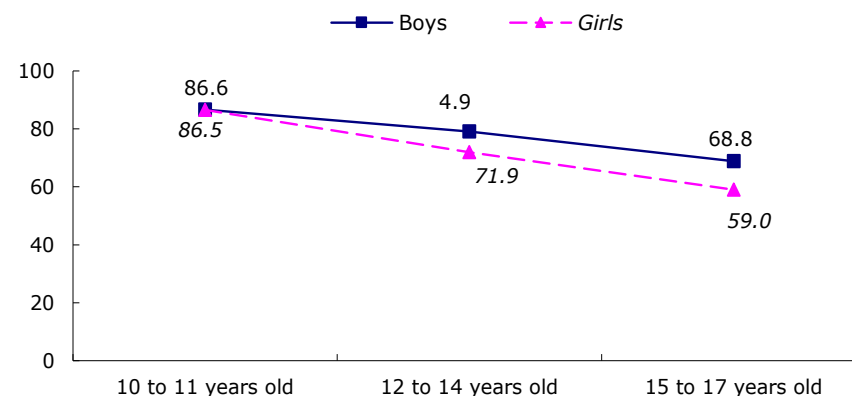
Life satisfaction in this factsheet refers to the percentage of children who rated their satisfaction with their lives as 7 or more on a scale of '0' (the worst possible life) to '10' (the best possible life). Overall, 73.3% of children report high life satisfaction. This has decreased slightly since 2014 (75.5%). More boys (77.2%) than girls (69.8%) report high life satisfaction. The proportion of children who report high life satisfaction is higher among younger children (86.6% of boys and 86.5% of girls aged 10-11 years; 79.1% of boys and 71.9% of girls aged 12-14 years; 68.8% of boys and 59% of girls aged 15-17 years). Children in higher social class groups are more likely to report higher life satisfaction than those in lower social class groups. Children who live with both parents, and those who find it easy to talk to their mother and father are more likely to report high life satisfaction. Children who spend four or more evenings per week with friends are more likely to report high life satisfaction. Children who like school and do not feel pressured by schoolwork also report higher life satisfaction.

Why this topic?

Life satisfaction is an important predictor of happiness and is directly associated with physical and psychological health. A high level of reported life satisfaction is associated with better mental health and consequently higher academic achievement³. It is also positively associated with health promoting behaviours such as physical activity⁴ and lower levels of substance use⁵.

Change 2014-2018

Overall, the proportion of children who report high life satisfaction has decreased slightly from 75.5% in 2014 to 73.3% in 2018. The proportion of children who report high life satisfaction has decreased slightly for boys (80.3% in 2014, 77.2% in 2018) and girls (72.2% in 2014, 69.8% in 2018).



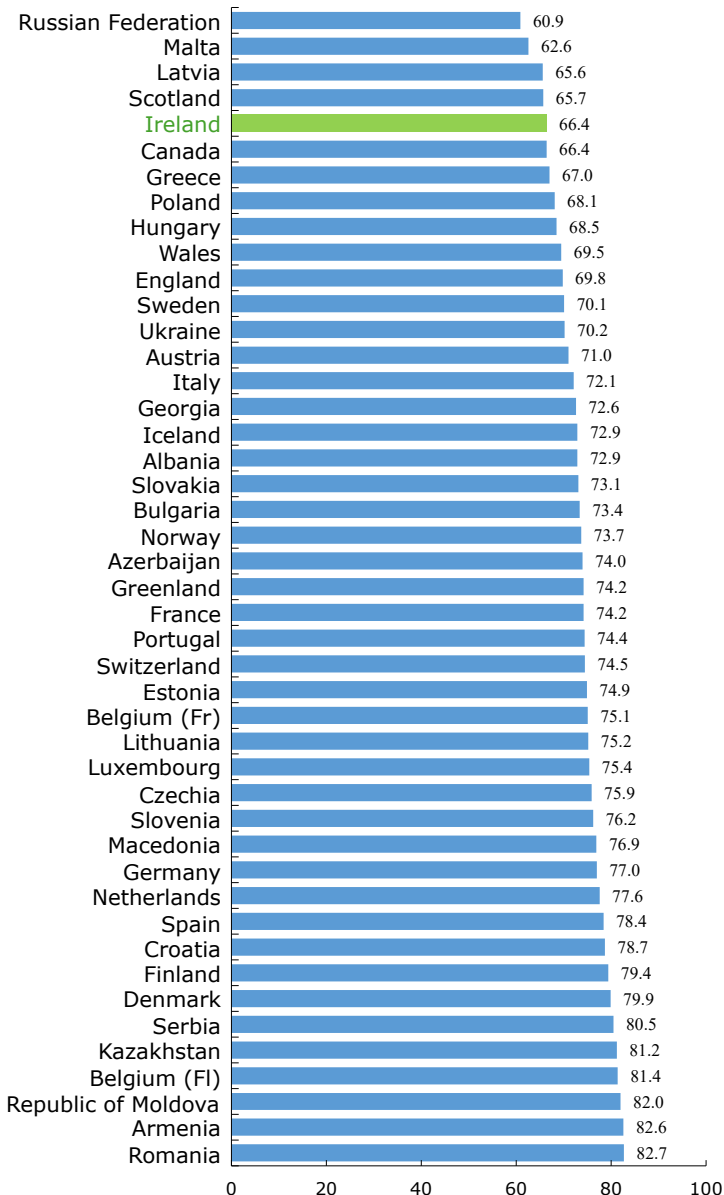
Percentage of children who report high life satisfaction, by age and gender

Life satisfaction in context

- Children from higher social class groups are more likely to report high life satisfaction compared to other social class groups (75.8% in social classes 1-2; 73.2% in social classes 3-4; 68.6% in social classes 5-6)
- Children who live with both parents are more likely to report high life satisfaction than those living with one parent (76.9% vs 63.3%)
- Children who report finding it easy to talk to their mother are more likely to report high life satisfaction compared to those who do not find it easy (79.3% vs 43.8%). The same pattern holds for ease of talking to fathers (82.8% vs 55.9%)
- Children who report liking school are more likely to report high life satisfaction compared to those who do not (80.6% vs 55.7%), while those who report not feeling pressured by school are more likely to report high life satisfaction than those who feel pressured (81.9% vs 62.1%)
- Children who spend 4 or more evenings a week with friends are more likely to report high life satisfaction than those who do not (76.8% vs 72%).

...Life satisfaction among schoolchildren in Ireland

Percentage of 15 year olds who report high life satisfaction, by country



International

Fifteen-year-old schoolchildren in Ireland (boys and girls together) are ranked 41st among 45 countries in Europe with 66.4% reporting high life satisfaction (HBSC average; 71.4%)

Implications

The percentage of children in Ireland reporting high life satisfaction has decreased slightly between 2014-2018 across all age groups, for both girls and boys. The findings presented indicate that children who report high life satisfaction like school and do not feel pressured by schoolwork. Good communication with parents and positive experiences at school are associated with higher life satisfaction and may have a positive effect on mental health and academic achievement.

References

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This factsheet was prepared by: Patricia Harte, Aoife Gavin and Saoirse Nic Gabhainn of the HBSC Ireland research team, NUI Galway. HBSC Ireland is funded by the Department of Health.

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Contact us at: hbhc@nuigalway.ie
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