STATE OF THE NATION'S CHILDREN

CHILDREN'S RELATIONSHIPS

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DATA + ANALYTICS

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STATE OF
THE NATION'S
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Relationship with mothers

Measure: The percentage of children aged 10–17 who report finding it easy to talk to their mother when something is really bothering them

- In 2018, 83.3% of children aged 10–17 reported finding it easy to talk to their mother when something is really bothering them. This changed only marginally between 2014 and 2018.
- 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 finding it easy to talk to their mother when something is really bothering them (see *Table 24*).
- Immigrant children were the population group with the lowest percentage who reported finding it easy to talk to their mother when something is really bothering them (see *Table 24*).

Table 24. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported finding it easy to talk to their mother when something is really bothering them, by population group (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
All children	82.7	83.3
Traveller status		
Traveller children	78.8	84.6
All children except Traveller children	82.7	86.3
Immigrant status		
Immigrant children	80.3	78.3
All children except immigrant children	83.1	84.0
Disability and/or chronic illness status		
Children with a disability and/or chronic illness	81.4	80.6
All children except those with a disability and/or chronic illness	83.0	84.1

Source: HBSC Survey

- A lower percentage of females than males reported finding it easy to talk to their mother when something is really bothering them (see *Table 25*).
- On average, the percentage of children who reported finding it easy to talk to their mother when something is really bothering them decreased with age (see *Table 25*).
- The percentage of children who reported finding it easy to talk to their mother when something is really bothering them was lowest among the low social class group (see *Table 25*).

Table 25. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported finding it easy to talk to their mother when something is really bothering them, by age, gender, and social class (2014–2018)

	2014			2018		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
All children	83.6	81.8	82.7	84.3	82.4	83.3
Age						
10 years	86.9	85.7	86.3	86.4	85.9	86.1
11 years	88.4	89.8	89.1	88.3	88.8	88.5
12 years	87.8	87.5	87.7	86.9	87.9	87.4
13 years	86.0	83.4	84.7	86.9	81.2	83.8
14 years	83.1	77.8	80.4	80.5	78.9	79.7
15 years	82.3	77.2	79.7	80.6	76.1	78.1
16 years	76.2	75.8	76.0	76.3	75.9	76.1
17 years	75.7	77.6	76.6	79.7	79.5	79.6
Social class						
High	85.1	82.7	83.9	85.1	84.1	84.5
Middle	83.6	81.5	82.5	84.4	81.8	83.1
Low	77.7	82.3	80.0	84.1	80.9	82.4

Source: HBSC Survey

- The percentage of children who reported finding it easy to talk to their mother when something is really bothering them ranged from 82.1% in Mid-West to 84.5% in Mid-East (see *Table 26*).

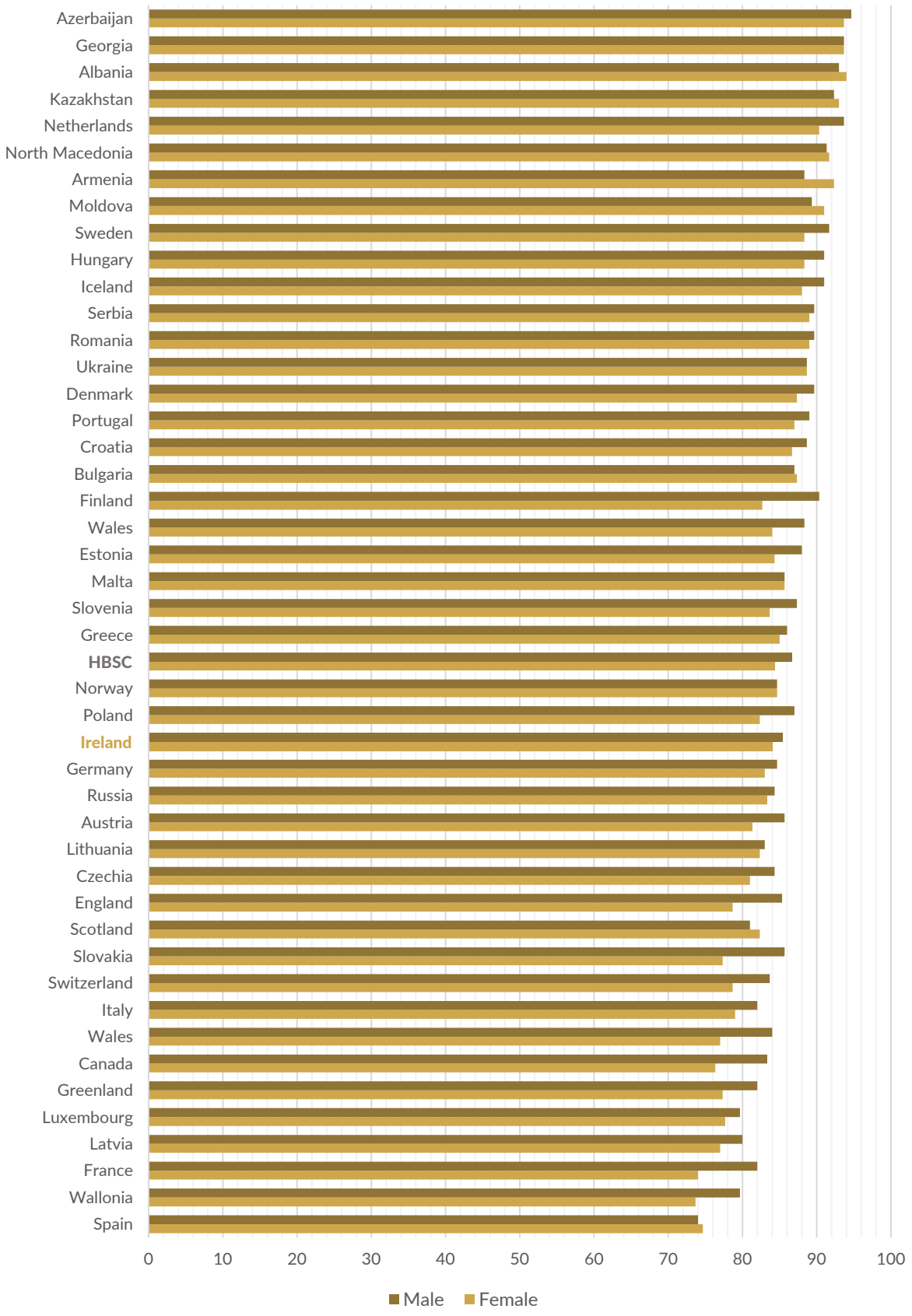
Table 26. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported finding it easy to talk to their mother when something is really bothering them, by NUTS region (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
State	82.7	83.3
NUTS region		
Border	83.0	84.3
Midland	82.5	82.9
West	83.3	82.2
Dublin	80.7	83.5
Mid-East	83.0	84.5
Mid-West	83.8	82.1
South-East	82.3	82.4
South-West	84.8	84.4

Source: HBSC Survey

- Across 45 countries/regions, the average percentage of children who reported finding it easy to talk to their mother when something is really bothering them was 83.9% (see *Figure 6*). This ranged from 72% in France to 91.8% in Albania. The corresponding percentage in Ireland was 83.5%. This was below the international HBSC average.

Figure 6. Percentage of children aged 11, 13, and 15 who reported finding it easy to talk to their mother, by country (2018)



Source: HBSC Survey

Relationship with fathers

Measure: The percentage of children aged 10–17 who report finding it easy to talk to their father when something is really bothering them

- In 2018, 67.9% of children aged 10–17 reported finding it easy to talk to their father when something is really bothering them. This decreased between 2014 and 2018.
- 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 finding it easy to talk to their father when something is really bothering them (see *Table 27*).
- Immigrant children were the population group with the lowest percentage who reported finding it easy to talk to their father when something is really bothering them (see *Table 27*).

Table 27. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported finding it easy to talk to their father when something is really bothering them, by population group (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
All children	70.2	67.9
Traveller status		
Traveller children	70.4	68.9
All children except Traveller children	70.2	67.8
Immigrant status		
Immigrant children	67.5	60.8
All children except immigrant children	70.7	68.7
Disability and/or chronic illness status		
Children with a disability and/or chronic illness	68.7	64.1
All children except those with a disability and/or chronic illness	70.6	68.9

Source: HBSC Survey

- A lower percentage of females than males reported finding it easy to talk to their father when something is really bothering them (see *Table 28*).
- On average, the percentage of children who reported finding it easy to talk to their father when something is really bothering them decreased with age (see *Table 28*).
- The percentage of children who reported finding it easy to talk to their father when something is really bothering them was lowest among the low social class group (see *Table 28*).

Table 28. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported finding it easy to talk to their father when something is really bothering them, by age, gender, and social class (2014–2018)

	2014			2018		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
All children	75.7	64.4	70.2	72.5	63.5	67.9
Age						
10 years	80.2	72.8	76.6	78.7	76.5	77.6
11 years	82.7	74.8	78.9	79.7	72.3	76.3
12 years	83.6	69.5	77.4	75.4	68.0	71.7
13 years	78.2	66.0	72.0	74.2	61.0	67.1
14 years	73.5	59.3	66.3	67.8	54.4	60.5
15 years	71.5	57.3	64.3	64.7	52.0	57.6
16 years	66.1	56.8	61.6	60.9	52.2	56.2
17 years	67.8	58.2	63.6	58.6	52.9	55.7
Social class						
High	76.8	65.6	71.1	75.1	66.9	70.7
Middle	76.6	63.6	70.3	73.2	62.9	67.9
Low	72.4	62.0	67.2	66.2	59.0	62.4

Source: HBSC Survey

- The percentage of children who reported finding it easy to talk to their father when something is really bothering them ranged from 63.9% in the West to 71% in the South-West (see *Table 29*).

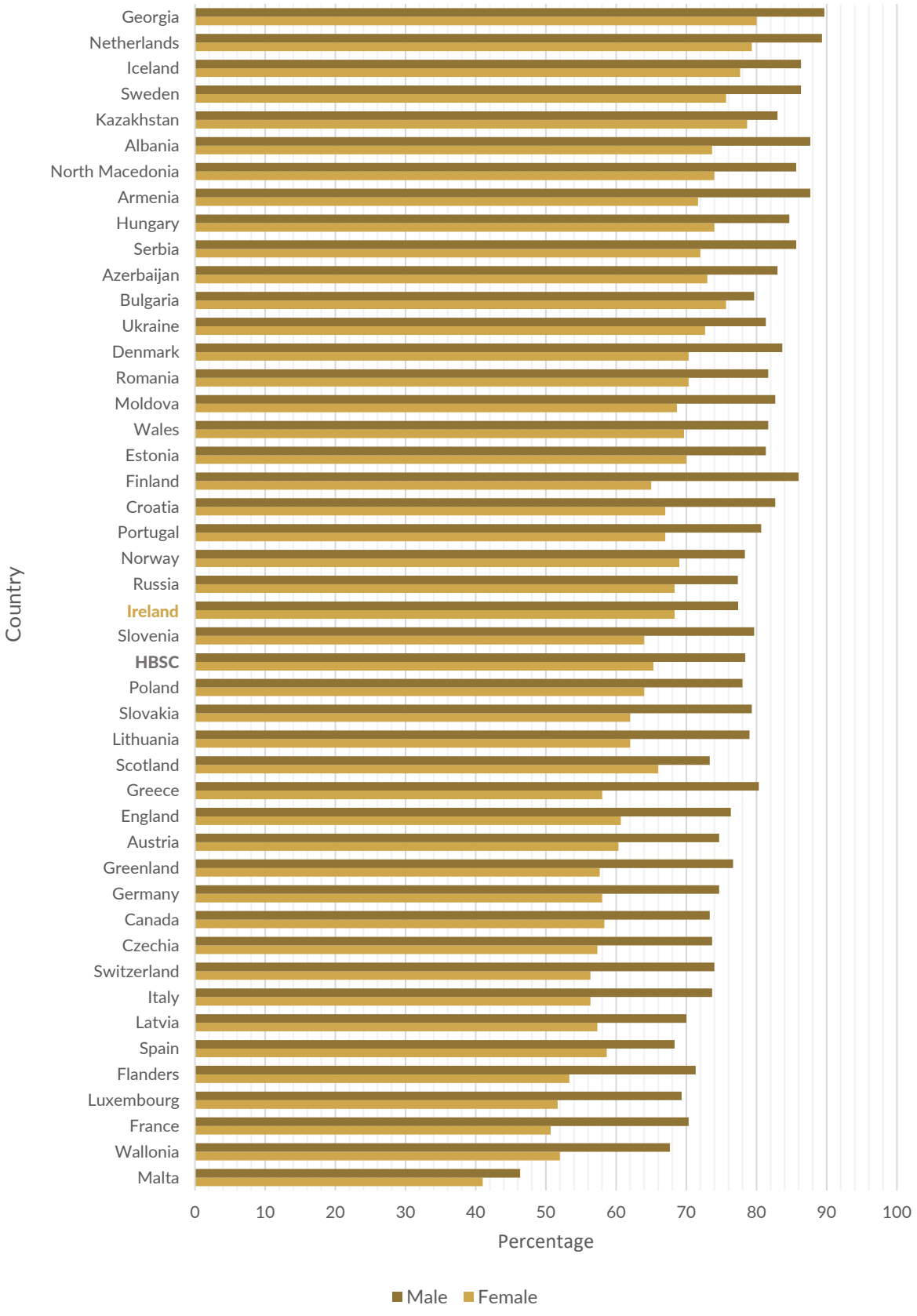
Table 29. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported finding it easy to talk to their father when something is really bothering them, by NUTS region (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
State	70.2	67.9
NUTS region		
Border	70.5	68.5
Midland	69.0	67.5
West	70.5	63.9
Dublin	67.9	70.7
Mid-East	71.4	70.3
Mid-West	73.7	64.0
South-East	70.1	65.3
South-West	71.0	71.0

Source: HBSC Survey

- Across 45 countries/regions, the average percentage of children who reported finding it easy to talk to their father when something is really bothering them was 78.3% for boys and 65.3% for girls (see *Figure 7*). This ranged from 46.3% and 41.0%, respectively, in Malta to 89.7% and 80.0%, respectively, in Georgia. The corresponding percentage in Ireland was 77.3% for boys and 68.3% for girls. This was above the international HBSC average.

Figure 7. Percentage of children aged 11, 13, and 15 who reported finding it easy to talk to their father, by country (2018)



Source: HBSC Survey

Talking to parents

Measure: The percentage of children aged 15 who report their parents spend time just talking with them several times a week

- In 2018, 69.9% of children aged 15 reported that their parents spend time just talking with them several times a week.
- 65.9% of immigrant children aged 15 reported that their parents spend time just talking with them several times a week, compared to 70.9% for non-immigrant children.

Table 30. Percentage of children aged 15 who reported that their parents spend time just talking with them several times a week, by population group (2018)

	Mean score
All children	69.9
Immigrant status	
Immigrant children	65.9
Non-immigrant children	70.9

Source: OECD-Pisa Survey

*2022 update not available at time of publication

- 78.5% of girls aged 15 reported that their parents spend time just talking with them several times a week, compared with 61% of boys.
- 73.7% of children in the high socio-economic status category reported that their parents spend time just talking with them several times a week. The corresponding figure for those belonging to the medium socio-economic status category was 70.2%, and for those in the low socio-economic status category, it was 65.7%.

Table 31. Percentage of children aged 15 who reported that their parents spend time just talking with them several times a week, by gender and social class (2018)

	2009	2012	2015	2018
All children	59.8	67.9	73.4	69.9
Gender				
Male	48.9	58.5	65.5	61.0
Female	70.8	77.4	81.6	78.5
Social class				
High	63.0	71.3	75.2	73.7
Medium	60.2	66.9	72.1	70.2
Low	57.1	65.4	72.9	65.7

Source: OECD-Pisa Survey

*2022 update not available at time of publication

Parental involvement in schooling

Measure: The percentage of children aged 15 who report their parents discuss with them how well they are doing at school several times a week

- In 2018, 51.9% of children aged 15 reported that their parents discuss with them how well they are doing at school several times a week.
- 57.4% of immigrant children aged 15 reported that their parents discuss with them how well they are doing at school several times a week, compared to 51.1% for non-immigrant children.

Table 32. Percentage of children aged 15 who reported that their parents discuss with them how well they are doing at school several times a week, by population group (2018)

	Mean score
All children	51.9
Immigrant status	
Immigrant children	57.4
Non-immigrant children	51.1

Source: OECD-Pisa Survey

*2022 update not available at time of publication

- 58.9% of girls aged 15 reported that their parents discuss with them how well they are doing at school several times a week, compared with 44.7% of boys.
- 55.1% of children in the high socio-economic status category reported that their parents discuss with them how well they are doing at school several times a week. The corresponding figure for those belonging to the medium socio-economic status category was 52.5%, and for those in the low socio-economic status category, it was 47.8%.

Table 33. Percentage of children aged 15 who reported that their parents discuss with them how well they are doing at school several times a week, by gender and social class (2018)

	2009	2012	2015	2018
All children	42.8	49.4	56.1	51.9
Gender				
Male	39.4	45.2	51.3	44.7
Female	46.3	53.6	61.1	58.9
Social class				
High	46.6	55.2	58.7	55.1
Medium	43.6	48.3	57.2	52.5
Low	37.9	44.6	52.6	47.8

Source: OECD-Pisa Survey

*2022 update not available at time of publication

Eating a main meal together

Measure: The percentage of children aged 15 who report their parents eat a main meal with them several times a week

- In 2018, 69.1% of children aged 15 reported that their parents eat a main meal with them several times a week.
- 62.3% of immigrant children aged 15 reported that their parents eat a main meal with them several times a week, compared to 70.9% for non-immigrant students.

Table 34. Percentage of children aged 15 who reported that their parents eat a main meal with them several times a week, by population group (2018)

	Mean score
All children	69.1
Immigrant status	
Immigrant children	62.3
Non-immigrant children	70.9

Source: OECD-Pisa Survey

*2022 update not available at time of publication

- 72.7% of girls aged 15 reported that their parents eat a main meal with them several times a week, compared with 65.4% of boys.
- 76.6% of children in the high socio-economic status category reported that their parents eat a main meal with them several times a week. The corresponding figure for those belonging to the medium socio-economic status category was 68.9%, and for those in the low socio-economic status category, it was 61.4%.

Table 35. Percentage of children aged 15 who reported that their parents eat a main meal with them several times a week, by gender and social class (2018)

	2009	2012	2015	2018
All children	72.4	73.2	76.0	69.1
Gender				
Male	70.1	71.8	74.8	65.4
Female	74.6	74.6	77.2	72.7
Social class				
High	77.1	79.2	81.0	76.6
Medium	73.6	72.9	75.9	68.9
Low	66.9	67.5	71.3	61.4

Source: OECD-Pisa Survey

*2022 update not available at time of publication

Friendships

Measure: The percentage of children aged 10–17 who report having three or more friends of the same gender

- In 2018, 89.3% of children aged 10–17 reported having three or more friends of the same gender. This increased between 2014 and 2018.
- 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 having three or more friends of the same gender (see *Table 36*).
- Immigrant children were the population group with the lowest percentage who reported having three or more friends of the same gender (see *Table 36*).

Table 36. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported having three or more friends of the same gender, by population group (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
All children	88.0	89.3
Traveller status		
Traveller children	87.7	86.1
All children except Traveller children	88.0	89.4
Immigrant status		
Immigrant children	85.0	84.5
All children except immigrant children	88.5	90.0
Disability and/or chronic illness status		
Children with a disability and/or chronic illness	86.4	87.8
All children except those with a disability and/or chronic illness	88.4	89.8

Source: HBSC Survey

- A lower percentage of females than males reported having three or more friends of the same gender (see *Table 37*).
- On average, the percentage of children who reported having three or more friends of the same gender decreased with age (see *Table 37*).
- The percentage of children who reported having three or more friends of the same gender was lowest among the low social class group (see *Table 37*).

Table 37. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported having three or more friends of the same gender, by age, gender, and social class (2014–2018)

	2014			2018		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
All children	88.0	87.9	88.0	89.4	89.3	89.3
Age						
10 years	88.5	89.4	88.9	90.8	88.4	89.6
11 years	91.1	90.9	91.0	93.0	91.8	92.4
12 years	90.8	90.3	90.6	93.5	93.1	93.3
13 years	91.2	88.5	89.8	91.4	91.3	91.4
14 years	87.5	88.9	88.2	85.4	90.4	88.1
15 years	85.9	85.2	85.6	86.9	87.3	87.2
16 years	86.5	85.3	85.9	80.0	83.4	81.8
17 years	80.5	83.7	81.9	86.2	86.5	86.3
Social class						
High	88.7	88.7	88.7	90.8	90.6	90.7
Middle	89.2	88.5	88.9	89.8	89.1	89.5
Low	86.9	87.2	87.0	86.7	88.1	87.5

Source: HBSC Survey

- The percentage of children who reported having three or more friends of the same gender ranged from 87.9% in the Border region to 90.7% in the West (see *Table 38*).

Table 38. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported having three or more friends of the same gender, by NUTS region (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
State	88.0	89.3
NUTS region		
Border	87.2	87.9
Midland	87.7	88.2
West	88.0	90.7
Dublin	87.7	89.7
Mid-East	87.4	89.3
Mid-West	90.0	89.3
South-East	86.9	89.6
South-West	89.5	89.7

Source: HBSC Survey

Pets and animals

Measure: The percentage of children aged 10–17 who report having a pet of their own or a pet in the family

- In 2018, 71.7% of children aged 10–17 reported having a pet of their own or a pet in the family. This decreased between 2014 and 2018.
- Among individual population groups, when compared to all other children, Traveller children were less likely to report having a pet of their own or a pet in the family (see *Table 39*).

Table 39. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported having a pet of their own or a pet in the family, by population group (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
All children	74.6	71.7
Traveller status		
Traveller children	77.2	66.6
All children except Traveller children	74.5	71.9
Immigrant status		
Immigrant children	59.5	73.2
All children except immigrant children	77.3	59.7
Disability and/or chronic illness status		
Children with a disability and/or chronic illness	77.4	73.4
All children except those with a disability and/or chronic illness	73.8	71.3

Source: HBSC Survey

- A lower percentage of males than females reported having a pet of their own or a pet in the family (see *Table 40*).
- On average, the percentage of children who reported having a pet of their own or a pet in the family increased with age (see *Table 40*).
- The percentage of children who reported having a pet of their own or a pet in the family was lowest among the high social class group (see *Table 40*).

Table 40. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported having a pet of their own or a pet in the family, by age, gender, and social class (2014–2018)

	2014			2018		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
All children	73.5	75.6	74.6	70.5	72.9	71.7
Age						
10 years	75.0	75.1	75.1	68.8	74.2	71.4
11 years	75.4	71.9	73.7	70.8	74.6	72.5
12 years	76.2	76.4	76.3	69.4	72.8	71.1
13 years	71.4	74.1	72.8	71.4	70.8	71.1
14 years	71.6	76.6	74.1	70.6	71.8	71.2
15 years	76.4	77.3	76.9	71.8	69.7	70.6
16 years	70.7	77.2	74.0	70.9	73.5	72.3
17 years	69.3	76.0	72.4	75.1	77.7	76.4
Social class						
High	75.2	77.3	76.3	69.2	73.5	71.5
Middle	75.2	75.0	75.1	71.6	74.1	72.8
Low	71.7	76.9	74.3	73.5	74.3	73.9

Source: HBSC Survey

- The percentage of children who reported having a pet of their own or a pet in the family ranged from 61.4% in the South-East to 80.7% in the Mid-West (see *Table 41*).

Table 41. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported having a pet of their own or a pet in the family, by NUTS region (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
State	74.6	71.7
NUTS region		
Border	75.5	76.5
Midland	78.6	74.3
West	78.5	78.7
Dublin	62.2	73.4
Mid-East	74.0	78.2
Mid-West	82.2	80.7
South-East	84.6	61.4
South-West	78.4	72.3

Source: HBSC Survey

Bullying

Measure: The percentage of children aged 10–17 who report having been bullied at school in the past couple of months

- In 2018, 31.1% of children aged 10–17 reported having been bullied at school in the past couple of months. This increased between 2014 and 2018.
- Among individual population groups, when compared to all other children, Traveller children and immigrant children and children with a disability and/or chronic illness were more likely to report having been bullied at school in the past couple of months (see *Table 42*).
- Traveller children were the population group with the highest percentage who reported having been bullied at school in the past couple of months (see *Table 42*).

Table 42. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported having been bullied at school in the past couple of months, by population group (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
All children	26.5	31.1
Traveller status		
Traveller children	32.8	42.0
All children except Traveller children	26.3	30.8
Immigrant status		
Immigrant children	31.1	36.4
All children except immigrant children	25.6	30.4
Disability and/or chronic illness status		
Children with a disability and/or chronic illness	31.9	38.9
All children except those with a disability and/or chronic illness	25.0	29.0

Source: HBSC Survey

- A lower percentage of males than females reported having been bullied at school in the past couple of months (see *Table 43*).
- On average, the percentage of children who reported having been bullied at school in the past couple of months decreased with age (see *Table 43*).
- The percentage of children who reported having been bullied at school in the past couple of months was highest among the low social class group (see *Table 43*).

Table 43. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported having been bullied at school in the past couple of months, by age, gender, and social class (2014–2018)

	2014			2018		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
All children	25.2	27.7	26.5	30.8	31.3	31.1
Age						
10 years	34.1	36.0	35.0	33.7	35.9	34.8
11 years	22.6	28.1	25.3	30.6	29.7	30.2
12 years	21.4	28.1	24.5	27.1	28.4	27.7
13 years	26.2	30.1	28.2	31.2	33.0	32.1
14 years	26.7	26.1	26.4	29.9	34.1	32.2
15 years	24.5	27.2	25.9	31.0	28.1	29.3
16 years	24.6	24.2	24.4	30.4	30.3	30.4
17 years	19.9	17.3	18.8	27.9	20.4	24.0
Social class						
High	23.3	25.1	24.2	29.6	28.4	28.9
Middle	26.2	28.2	27.2	30.5	34.1	32.3
Low	27.9	31.9	29.9	33.7	34.9	34.3

Source: HBSC Survey

- The percentage of children who reported having been bullied at school in the past couple of months ranged from 29% in the Border region to 34.4% in the Mid-West (see *Table 44*).

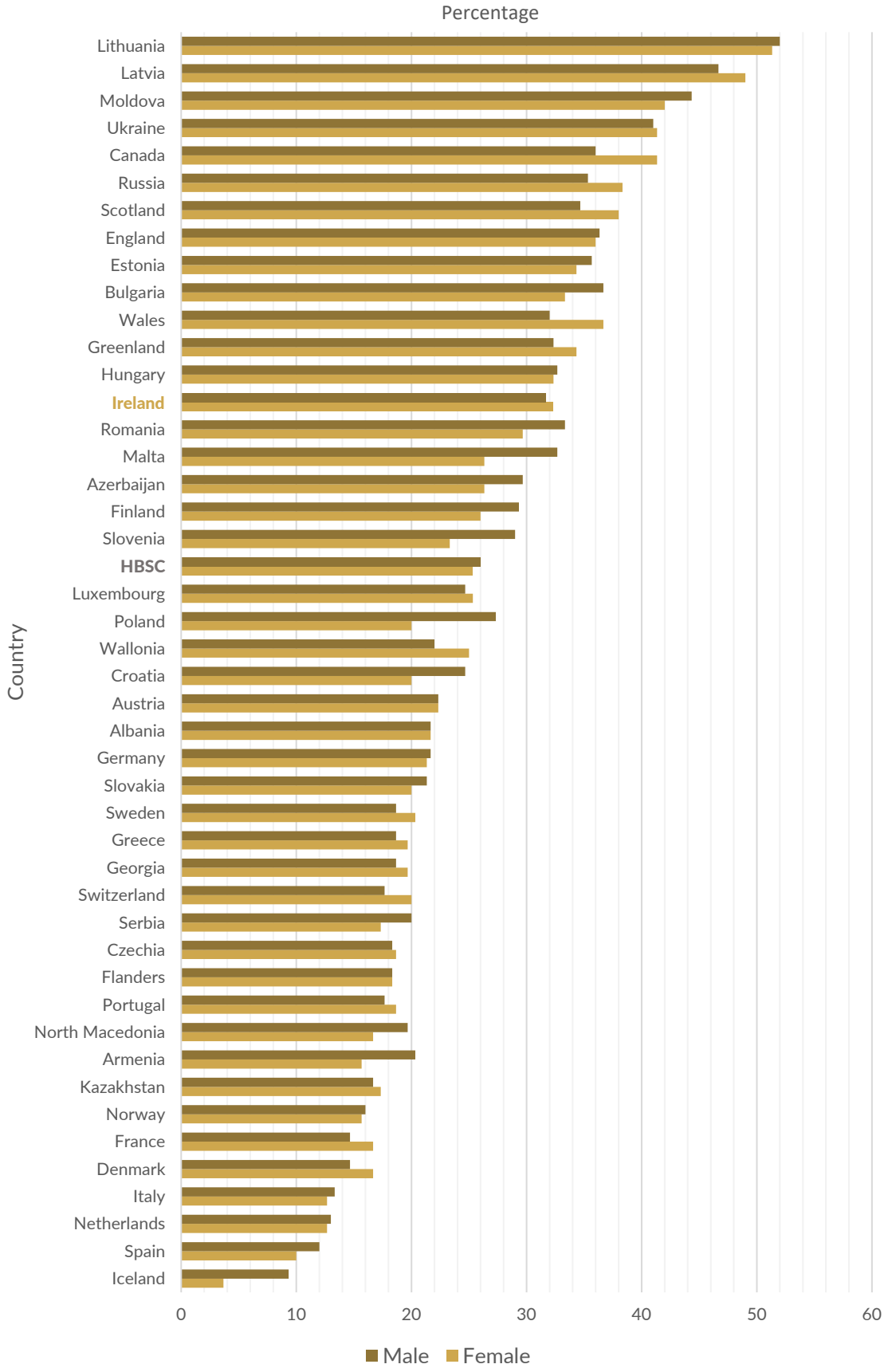
Table 44. Percentage of children aged 10–17 who reported having been bullied at school in the past couple of months, by NUTS region (2014–2018)

	2014	2018
State	26.5	31.1
NUTS region		
Border	28.1	29.0
Midland	29.2	30.2
West	25.2	31.9
Dublin	27.5	32.3
Mid-East	23.7	30.6
Mid-West	24.5	34.4
South-East	27.5	30.5
South-West	25.4	31.7

Source: HBSC Survey

- Across 45 countries/regions, the average percentage of children who reported having been bullied at school in the past couple of months was 26.0% for boys and 25.3% for girls (see *Figure 8*). This ranged from 9.3% and 3.7%, respectively, in Iceland, to 52.0% and 51.3%, respectively, in Lithuania. The corresponding percentage in Ireland was 31.7% for boys and 32.3% for girls. This was above the international HBSC average.

Figure 8. Percentage of children aged 11, 13, and 15 who reported having been bullied at least once or twice at school in the previous couple of months, by country (2018)



Source: HBSC Survey

STATE OF THE NATION'S CHILDREN

An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais, Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth