

# Girls fare worse than boys, says WHO Report on Adolescents' mental health in Europe

Specific data on Luxembourg paints a picture of our adolescents' mental health and how it matches up against the larger Europe and Central Asia trend.

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Today, as the globe marks World Mental Health Day, the WHO Regional Office for Europe published the latest mental health data from the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) study, revealing a widespread and troubling trend across Europe and Central Asia: a pervasive downturn in the mental well-being of adolescent girls.

Dr. Carolina Catunda, co-author of the report, part of the Center for Childhood and Youth Research at the University of Luxembourg and Co-Principal Investigator of the HBSC project in Luxembourg, commented: *"These figures aren't just numbers. They are a reflection of our society, our schools, our homes. The situation is worrying. This is a call to action — to understand deeper, act swifter, and support better."*

Analysing data from the 2021/22 HBSC study, including insights from 280,000 young people across 44 countries, adolescent girls have worse mental health and well-being compared to boys. In Luxembourg, a similar picture is observed. For instance, at age 11, 8% of boys and 14% of girls report feelings of loneliness. Those prevalences double at age 15: 14% of boys and 28% of girls report those feelings.

In addition, adolescents in Luxembourg are among the 15 countries with the highest prevalences of excellent health in all age groups. At age 11, 43% of girls and 47% of boys report an excellent health, compared to 39% of girls and 44% of boys mean of the overall countries.

Furthermore, this report highlights the decline of mental health and well-being from 2018 to 2022. In almost all countries, adolescents, and more particularly girls, report more often multiple health complaints. In Luxembourg, 13 and 15 years old girls are the ones presenting the steeper increase of multiple health complaints from 2018 to 2022.

Building on the broader European findings, the emphasis in Luxembourg is also on early interventions, especially within school settings. Schools aren't just educational hubs, they are central to our adolescents' well-being. Collaborations between educational institutions, community health centres, and national mental health initiatives are paramount for tangible change.

*"The findings offer us a chance to not only compare but also to craft more tailored interventions for our young people, right here in Luxembourg. With the data we now have, it's clear. Our approach must be multi-faceted, bridging schools, homes, communities, and policy. We have the insights; it's time for impactful action,"* continues Dr. Catunda.

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## Links

**Report:** [A focus on adolescent mental health and wellbeing in Europe, central Asia and Canada. Health Behaviour in School-aged Children international report from the 2021/2022 survey. Volume 1](#)

[International data browser](#)

## Participating countries and regions:

Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Greenland, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Republic of Moldova, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, England, Scotland, and Wales (UK)