



Saudi Arabia



Country report card - children

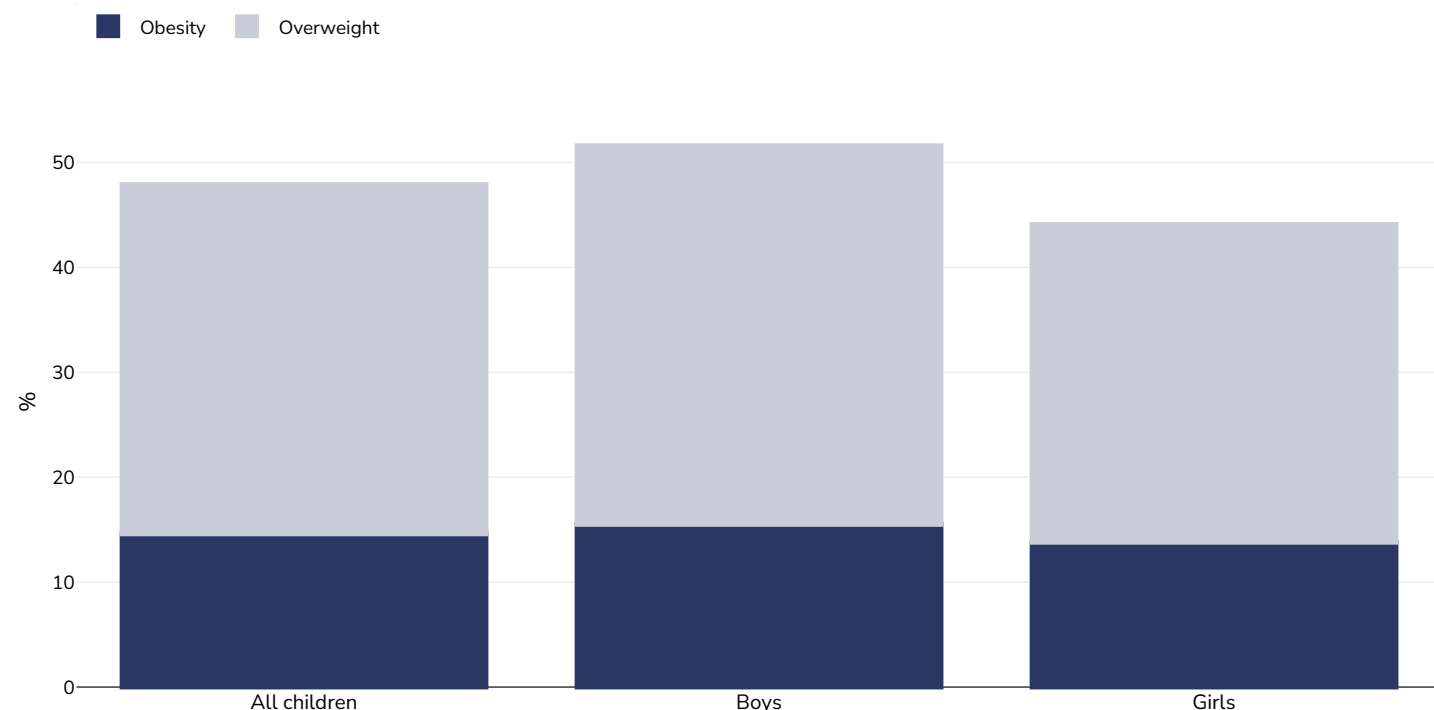
This report card contains the latest data available on the Global Obesity Observatory on overweight and obesity for children, including adolescents (aged 5 to 18 years). Where available, data on common and relevant obesity drivers and comorbidities are also presented.

View the latest version of this report on the Global Obesity Observatory at <https://data.worldobesity.org/country/saudi-arabia-186/>.

Contents	Page
Obesity prevalence	3
Overweight/obesity by education	4
Overweight/obesity by age	5
Overweight/obesity by region	6
Overweight/obesity by socio-economic group	7
Overweight/obesity by ethnicity	8
Double burden of underweight & overweight	11
Mental health - depression disorders	12
Mental health - anxiety disorders	15

Obesity prevalence

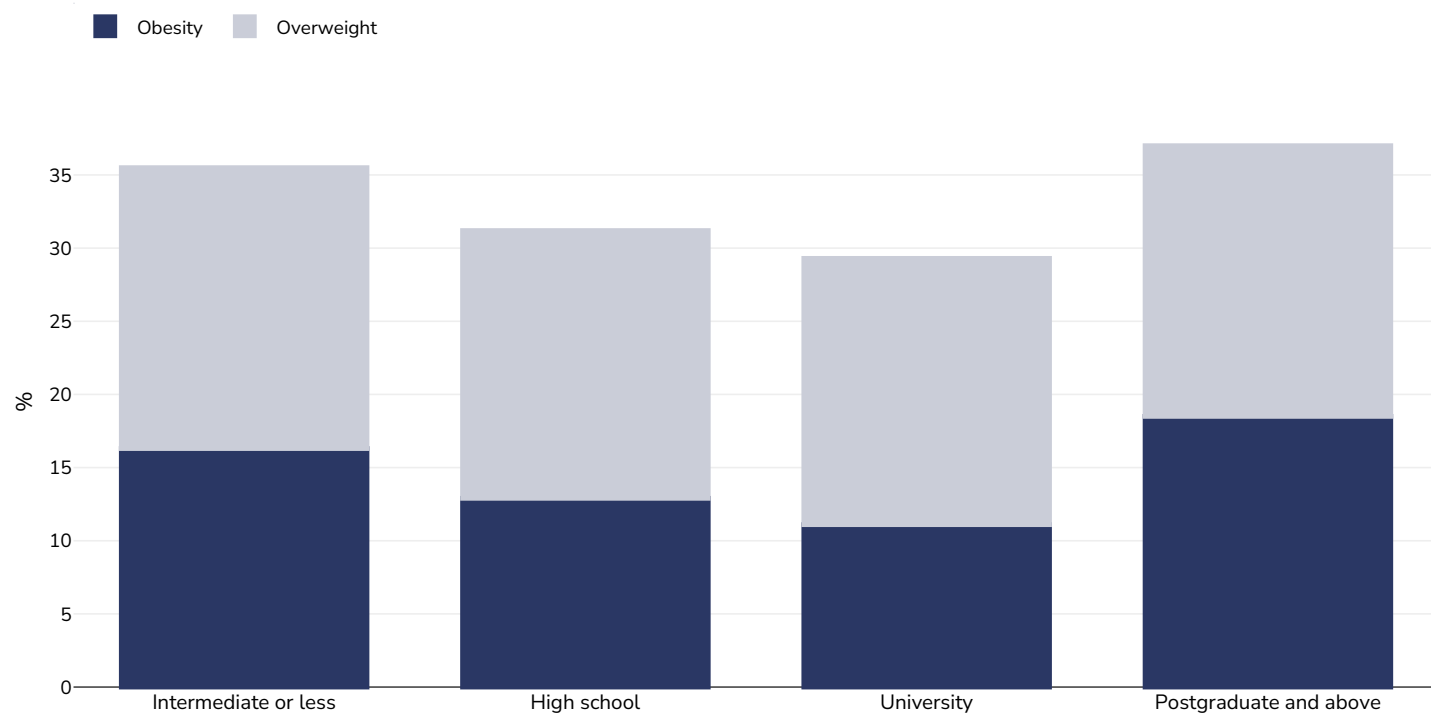
Children, 2024



Survey type:	Self-reported
Age:	2-14
Sample size:	79723
Area covered:	National
References:	General Authority for Statistics. Health Determinants Statistics Publication 2024. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; Riyadh. Available at: https://www.stats.gov.sa/documents/20117/2435259/Health+Determinants+Statistics+Publication+2024+EN.pdf [Accessed 19.06.25]
Notes:	Data from the Woman and Child Health Survey 2024, collected through computer-assisted personal interviews (CAPI). Sample size includes adult women not shown in this data.
Cutoffs:	WHO

Overweight/obesity by education

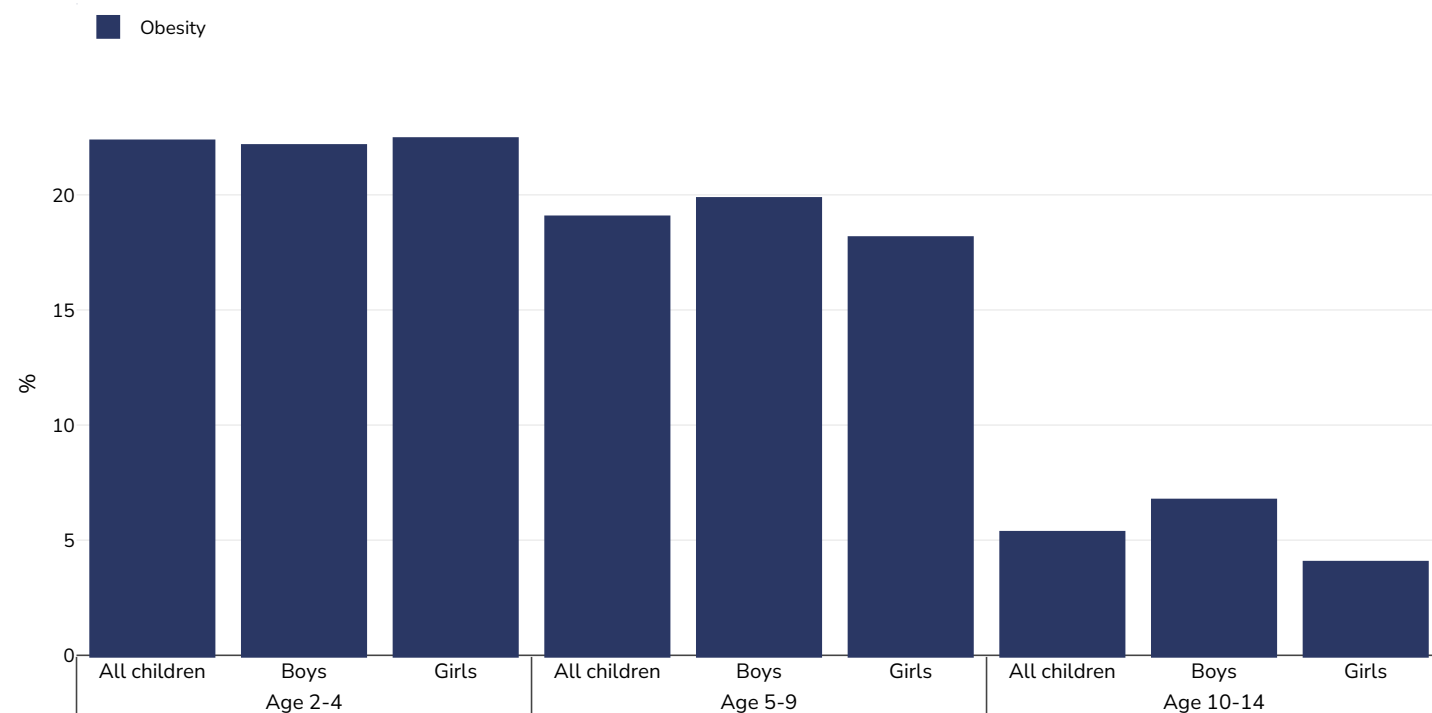
Children, 2017-2019



Survey type:	Measured
Age:	6-13
Sample size:	2169
Area covered:	Riyadh and Jeddah
References:	Al-Hazzaa, H.M. et al. (2022). Prevalence of overweight and obesity among saudi children: A comparison of two widely used international standards and the national growth references. <i>Frontiers in Endocrinology</i> , [online] 13. doi: https://doi.org/10.3389/fendo.2022.954755
Notes:	WHO and KSA cut-offs also available in article
Definitions:	Highest level of maternal education
Cutoffs:	IOTF

Overweight/obesity by age

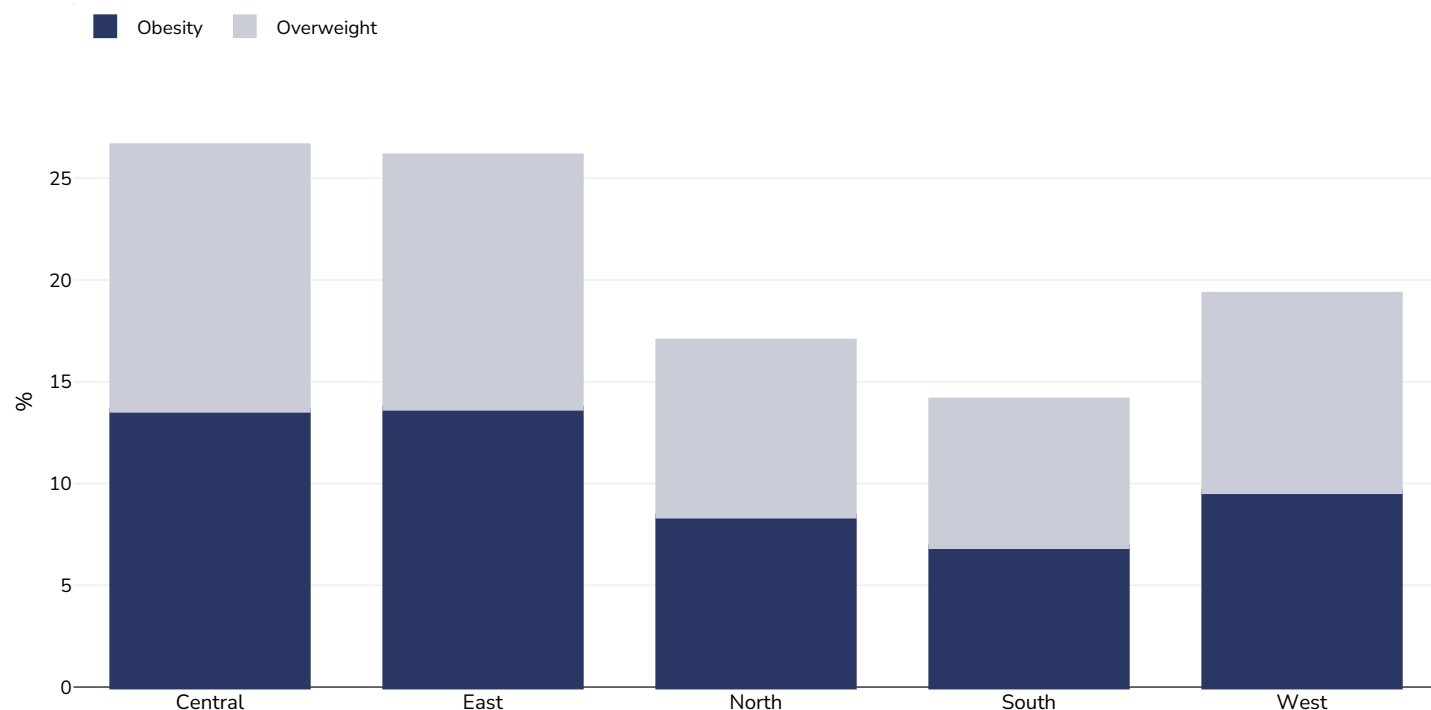
Children, 2024



Survey type:	Self-reported
Sample size:	79723
Area covered:	National
References:	General Authority for Statistics. Health Determinants Statistics 2024. Available at: https://www.stats.gov.sa/en/statistics-tabs/-/categories/123842?tab=436312&category=123842 [Accessed 19.06.25]
Notes:	Data from the Woman and Child Health Survey 2024. Sample size includes adult women not shown in this data.
Cutoffs:	WHO

Overweight/obesity by region

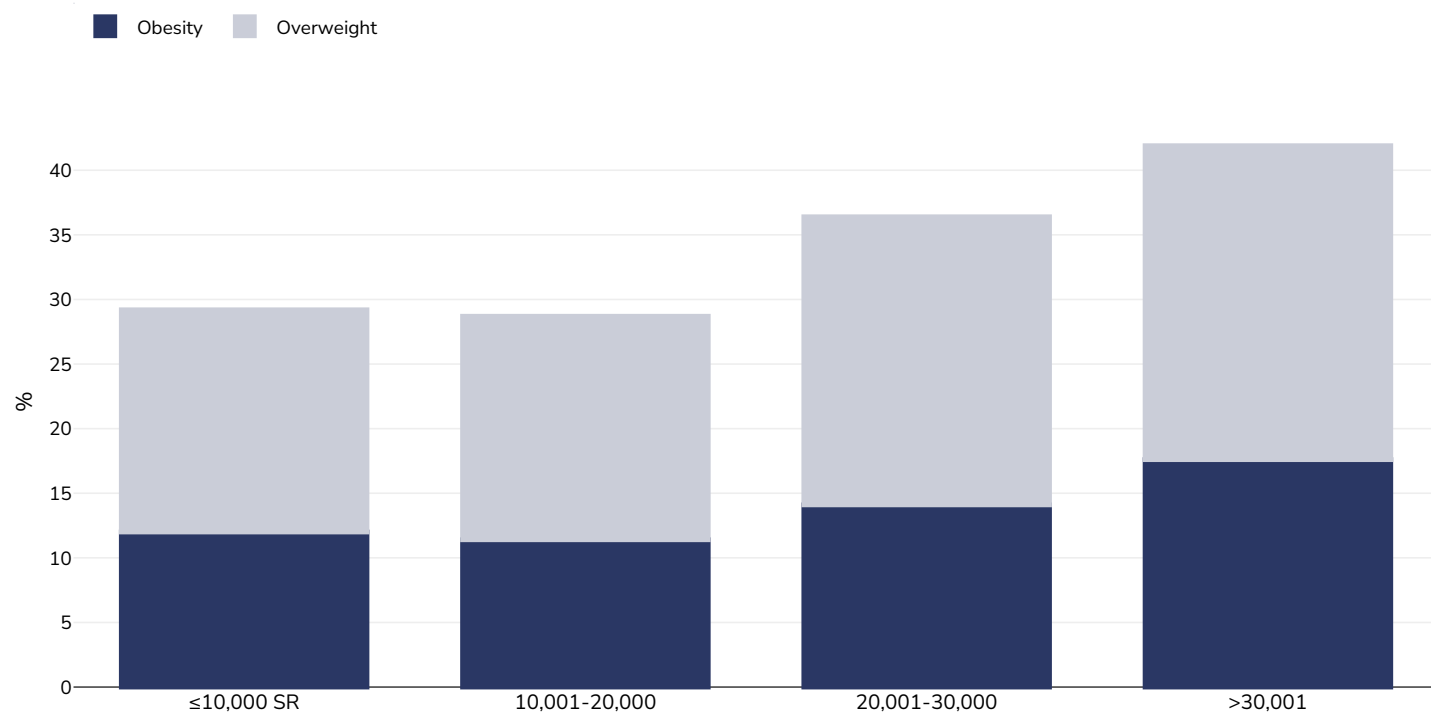
Children, 2020-2022



Survey type:	Measured
Age:	6-19
Sample size:	1134317
Area covered:	National
References:	Alhamed, A., Al-Zeer, A., Alsaawi, F., Alshaikh, A., Alzaher, A., Alkattan, A., Alrasheed, N., Sagor, K., Alsalem, E., Ibrahim, M. and Alfaleh, A., 2023. The shifting patterns of childhood obesity: Insights from national school screening data. Saudi Pharmaceutical Journal, p.101862.
Definitions:	Growth Charts for Saudi Children and Adolescents. BMI data were plotted on Saudi's sex-specific percentile charts and categorized into four groups: underweight (less than the 5th percentile), normal weight (5th percentile to less than 85th percentile), overweight (85th to less than 95th percentile), obese (95th percentile or greater), and severe obesity (120% of the 95th percentile or greater)
Cutoffs:	Other

Overweight/obesity by socio-economic group

Children, 2017-2019

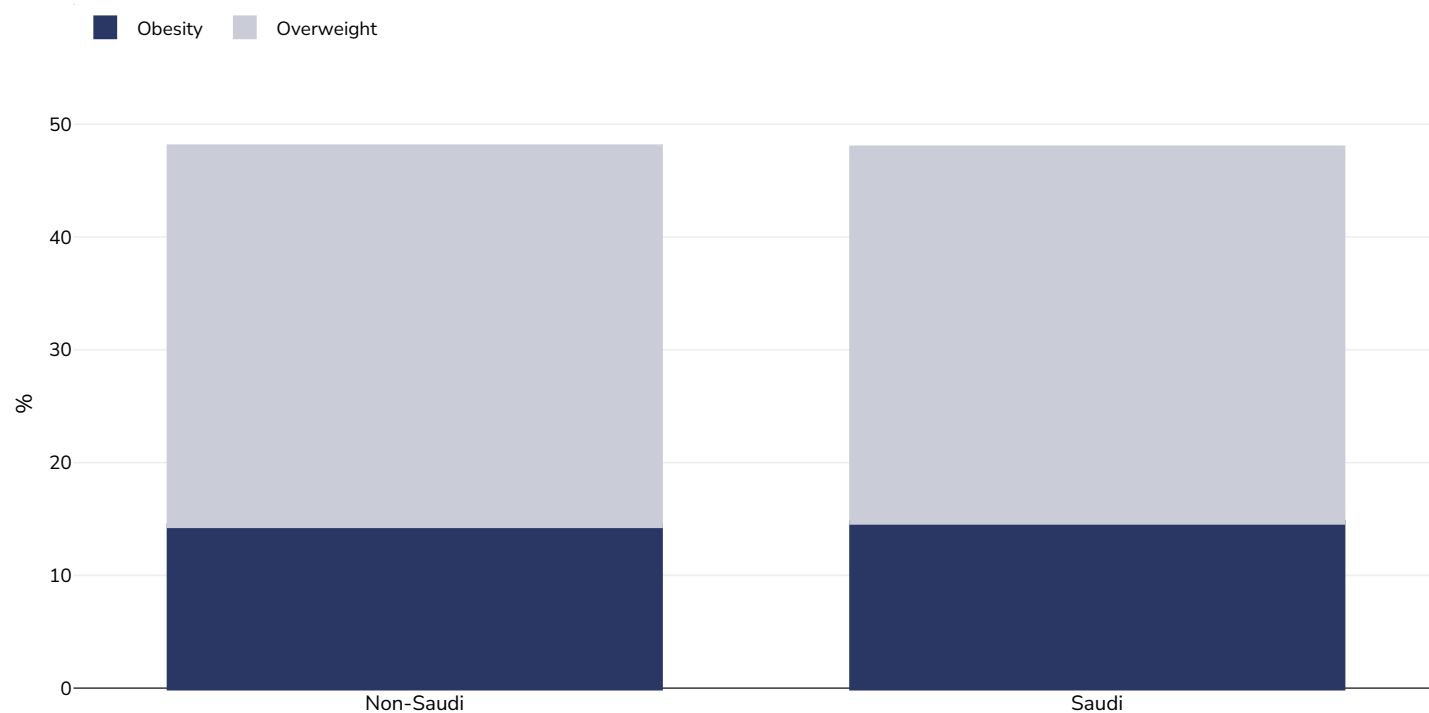


Survey type:	Measured
Age:	6-13
Sample size:	2169
Area covered:	Riyadh and Jeddah
References:	Al-Hazzaa, H.M. et al. (2022). Prevalence of overweight and obesity among saudi children: A comparison of two widely used international standards and the national growth references. <i>Frontiers in Endocrinology</i> , [online] 13. doi: https://doi.org/10.3389/fendo.2022.954755
Notes:	WHO and KSA cut-off data also available in article
Definitions:	Annual family income in Saudi Riyal (SR)
Cutoffs:	IOTF

Overweight/obesity by ethnicity

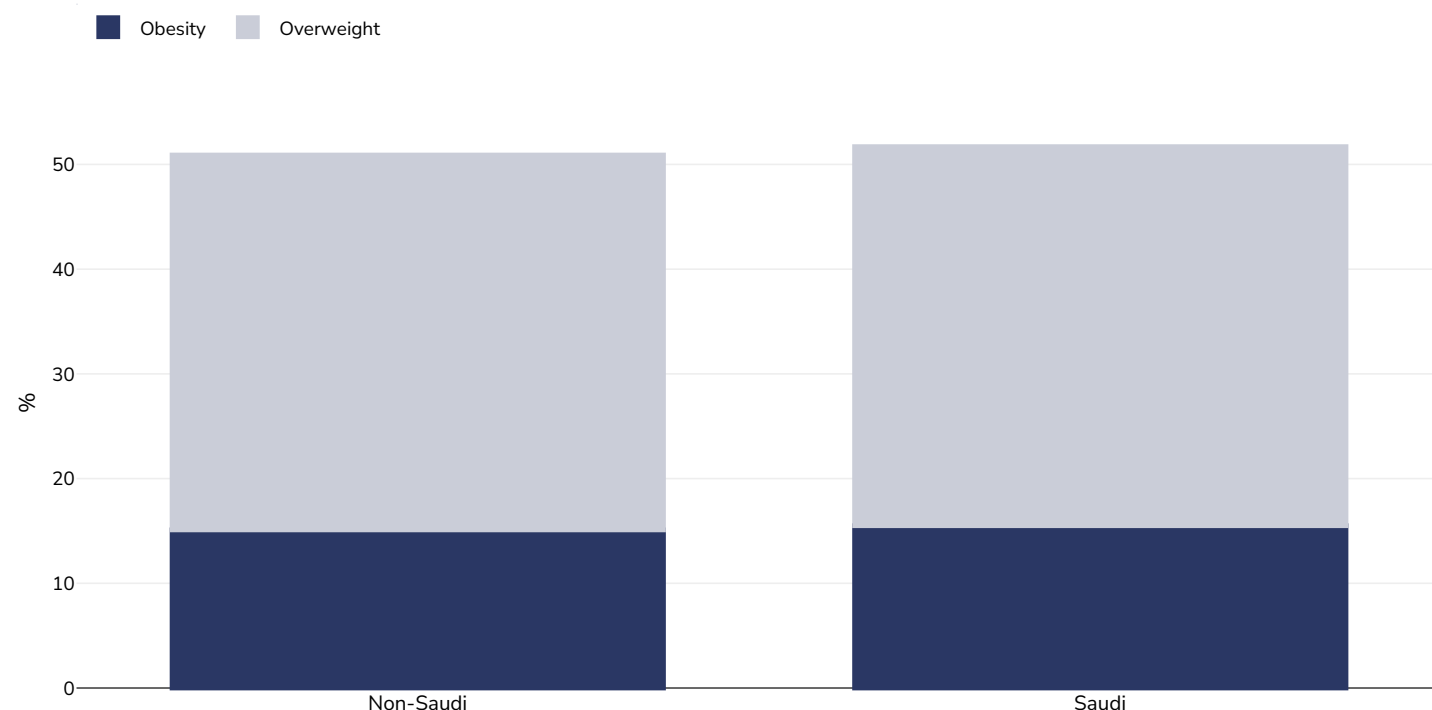
Ethnic groups are as defined by publication of origin and are not as defined by WOF. In some instances ethnicity is conflated with nationality and/or race.

Children, 2024



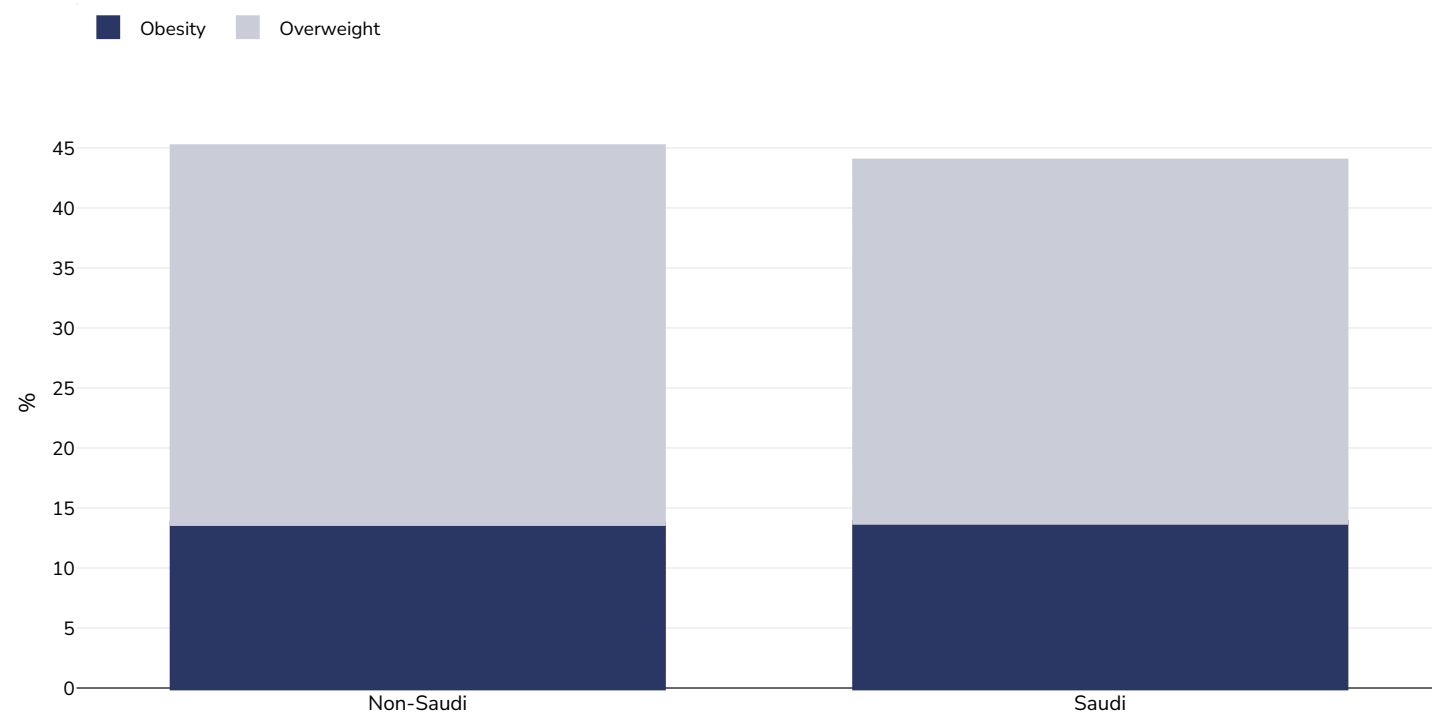
Survey type:	Self-reported
Age:	2-14
Sample size:	79723
Area covered:	National
References:	'Body Mass Index (BMI) among children (2 - 14 years) by sex and nationality ' in General Authority for Statistics, Health Determinants Statistics 2024. Available at: https://www.stats.gov.sa/en/statistics-tabs/-/categories/123842?tab=436312&category=123842 [Accessed 19.06.25]
Notes:	Data from the Woman and Child Health Survey 2024. Sample size includes adult women not shown in this data.
Definitions:	Nationality: Saudi or Non-Saudi
Cutoffs:	WHO

Boys, 2024



Survey type:	Self-reported
Age:	2-14
Sample size:	79723
Area covered:	National
References:	'Body Mass Index (BMI) among children (2 - 14 years) by sex and nationality ' in General Authority for Statistics, Health Determinants Statistics 2024. Available at: https://www.stats.gov.sa/en/statistics-tabs/-/categories/123842?tab=436312&category=123842 [Accessed 19.06.25]
Notes:	Data from the Woman and Child Health Survey 2024. Sample size includes adult women not shown in this data.
Definitions:	Nationality: Saudi or Non-Saudi
Cutoffs:	WHO

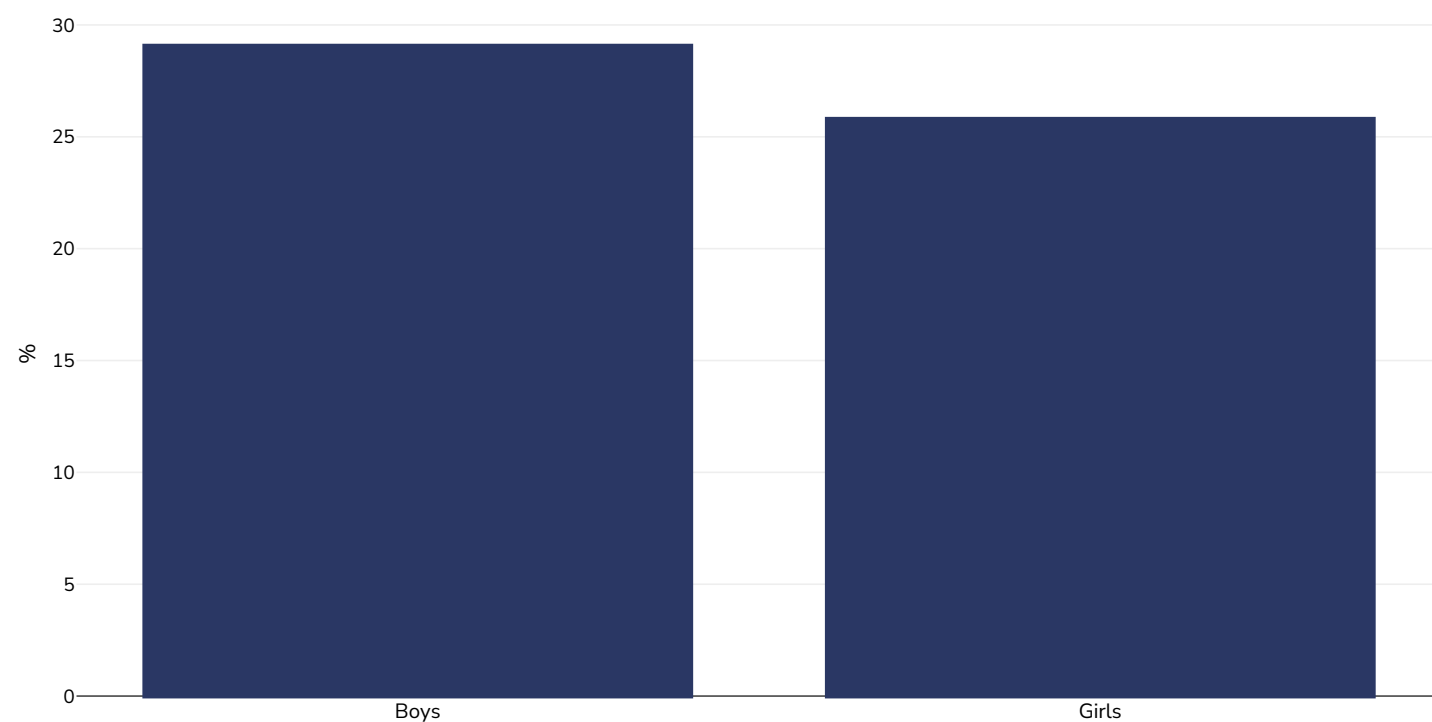
Girls, 2024



Survey type:	Self-reported
Age:	2-14
Sample size:	79723
Area covered:	National
References:	'Body Mass Index (BMI) among children (2 - 14 years) by sex and nationality ' in General Authority for Statistics, Health Determinants Statistics 2024. Available at: https://www.stats.gov.sa/en/statistics-tabs/-/categories/123842?tab=436312&category=123842 [Accessed 19.06.25]
Notes:	Data from the Woman and Child Health Survey 2024. Sample size includes adult women not shown in this data.
Definitions:	Nationality: Saudi or Non-Saudi
Cutoffs:	WHO

Double burden of underweight & overweight

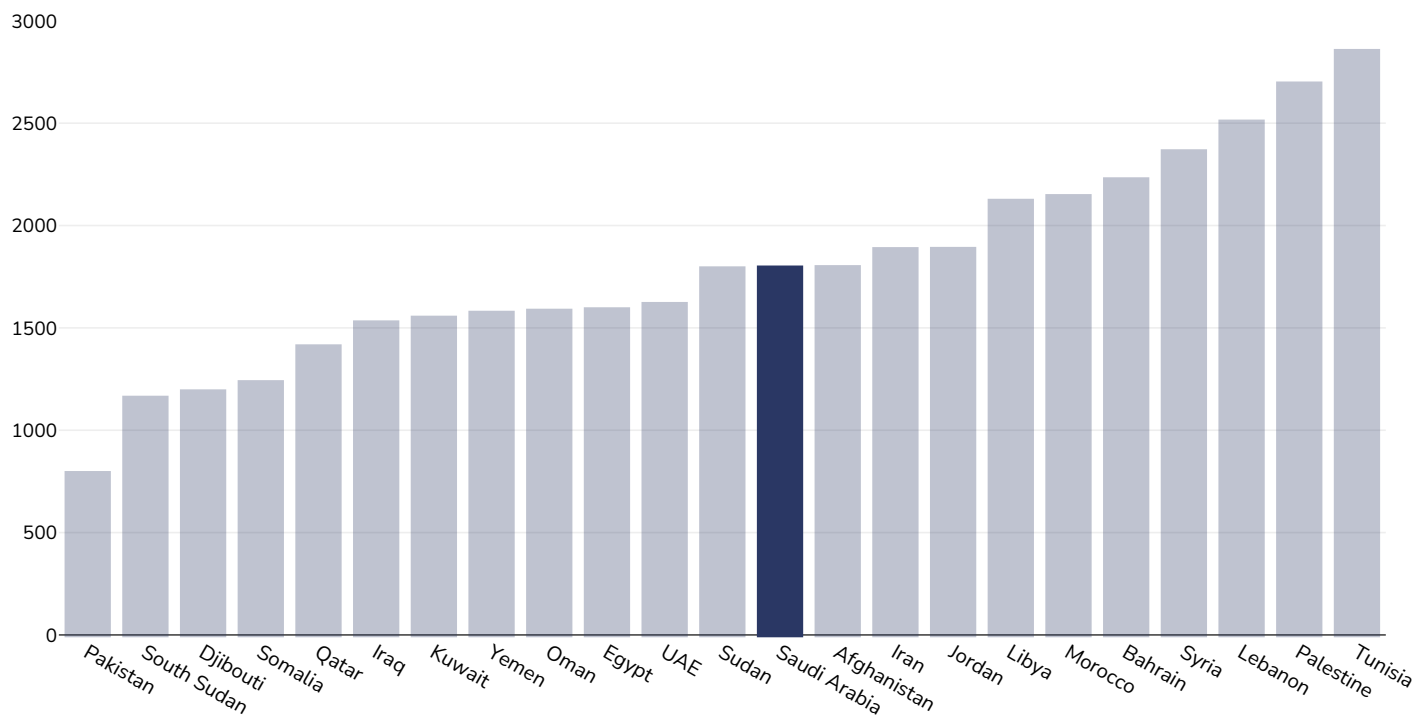
Children, 2022



Survey type:	Measured
Age:	5-19
References:	NCD Risk Factor Collaboration (NCD-RisC). Worldwide trends in underweight and obesity from 1990 to 2022: a pooled analysis of 3663 population representative studies with 222 million children, adolescents, and adults. Lancet 2024; published online Feb 29. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(23)02750-2 .
Notes:	Age standardised estimates
Definitions:	Combined prevalence of BMI < -2SD and BMI > 2SD (double burden of thinness and obesity)
Cutoffs:	BMI < -2SD and BMI > 2SD

Mental health - depression disorders

Children, 2021

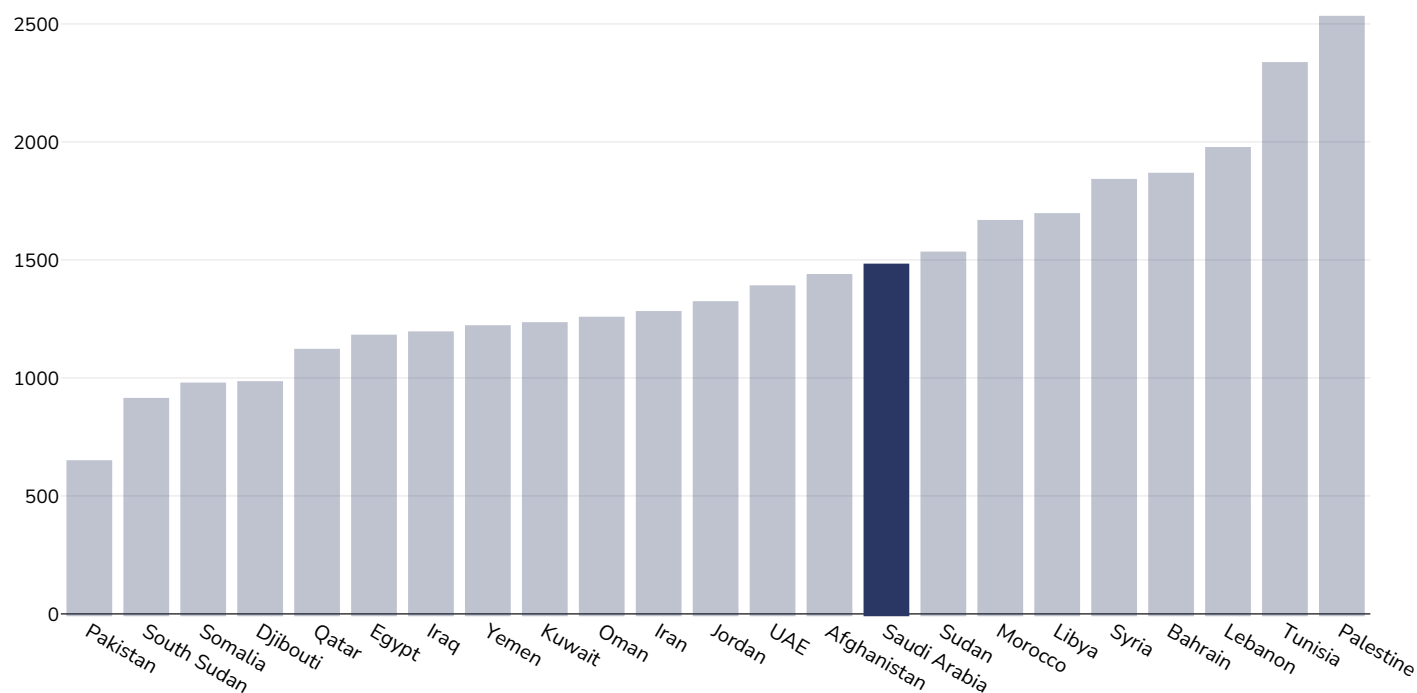


Area covered: National

References: Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). GBD Compare Data Visualization. Global Burden of Disease (GBD) Study 2021. Seattle, WA: IHME, University of Washington, 2023. Available from <http://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-compare>. (Last accessed 23.04.25)

Definitions: Number living with depressive disorder per 100,000 population (Under 20 years of age)

Boys, 2021



Area covered:

National

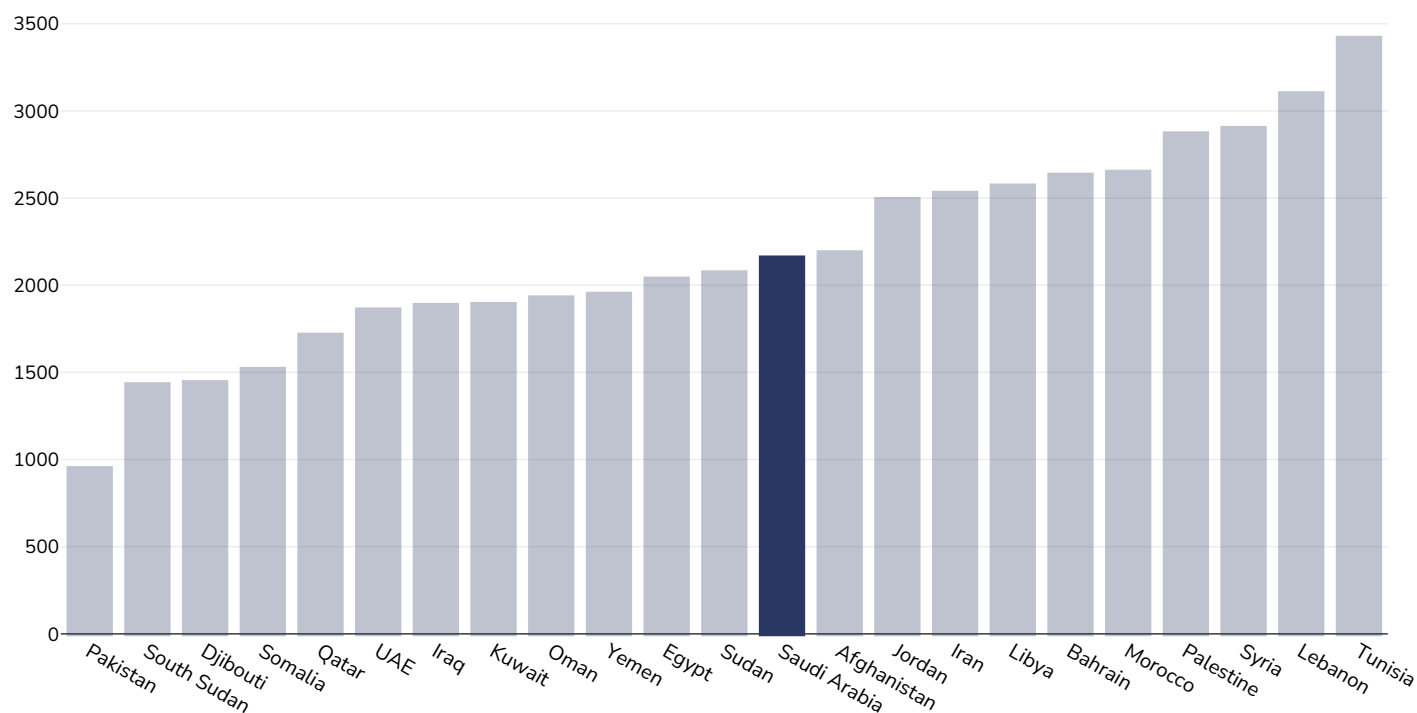
References:

Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). GBD Compare Data Visualization. Global Burden of Disease (GBD) Study 2021. Seattle, WA: IHME, University of Washington, 2023. Available from <http://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-compare>. (Last accessed 23.04.25)

Definitions:

Number living with depressive disorder per 100,000 population (Under 20 years of age)

Girls, 2021



Area covered:

National

References:

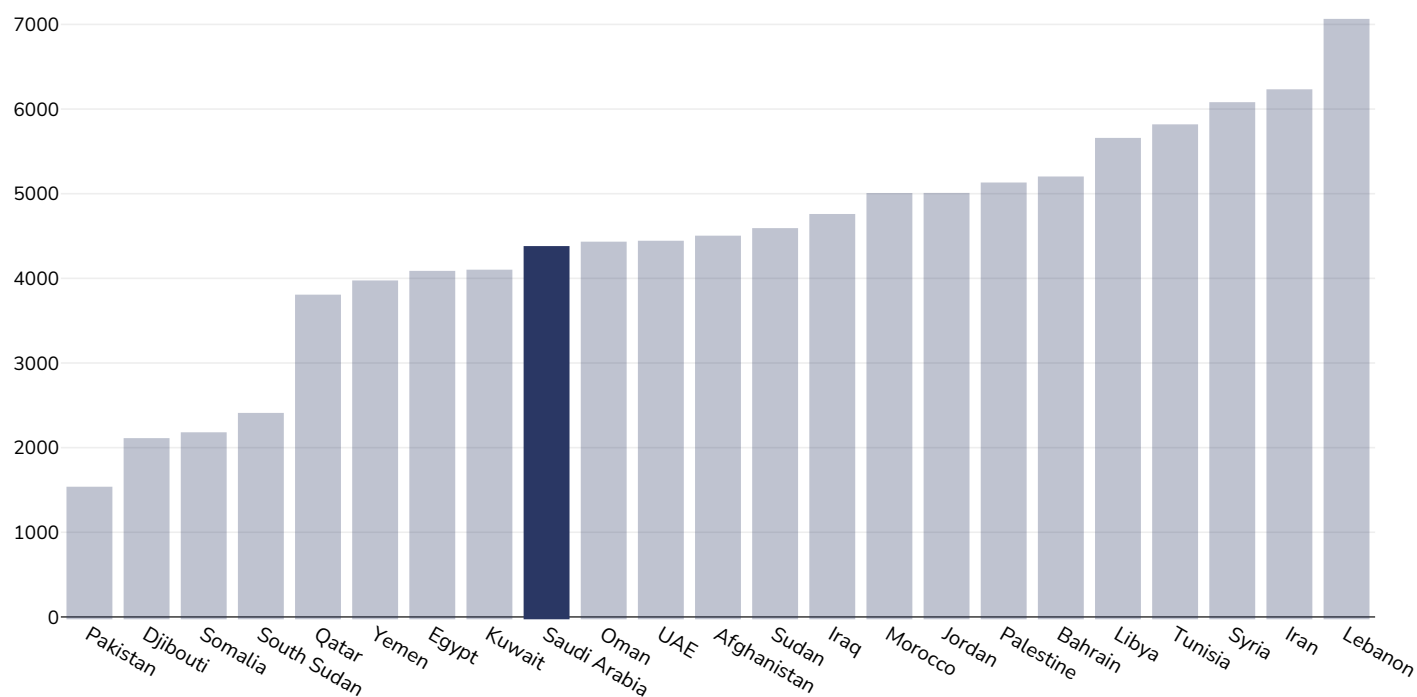
Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). GBD Compare Data Visualization. Global Burden of Disease (GBD) Study 2021. Seattle, WA: IHME, University of Washington, 2023. Available from <http://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-compare>. (Last accessed 23.04.25)

Definitions:

Number living with depressive disorder per 100,000 population (Under 20 years of age)

Mental health - anxiety disorders

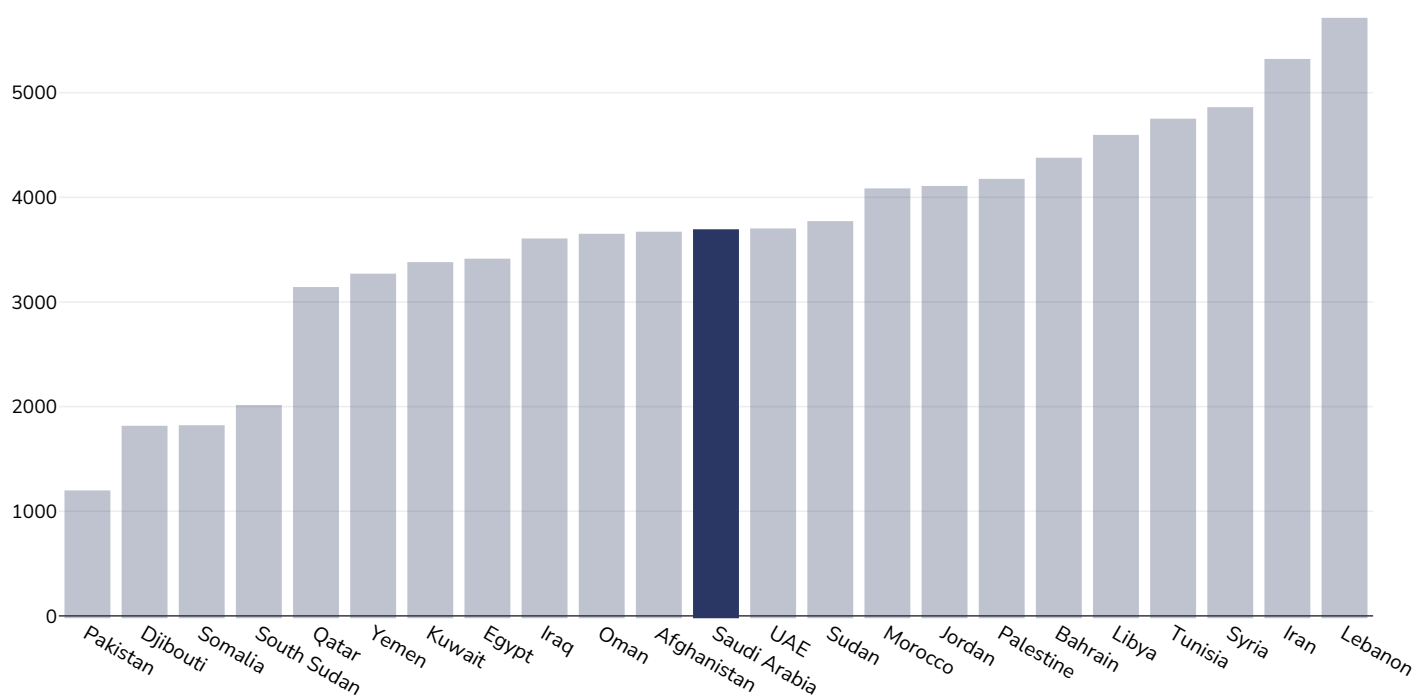
Children, 2021



References:

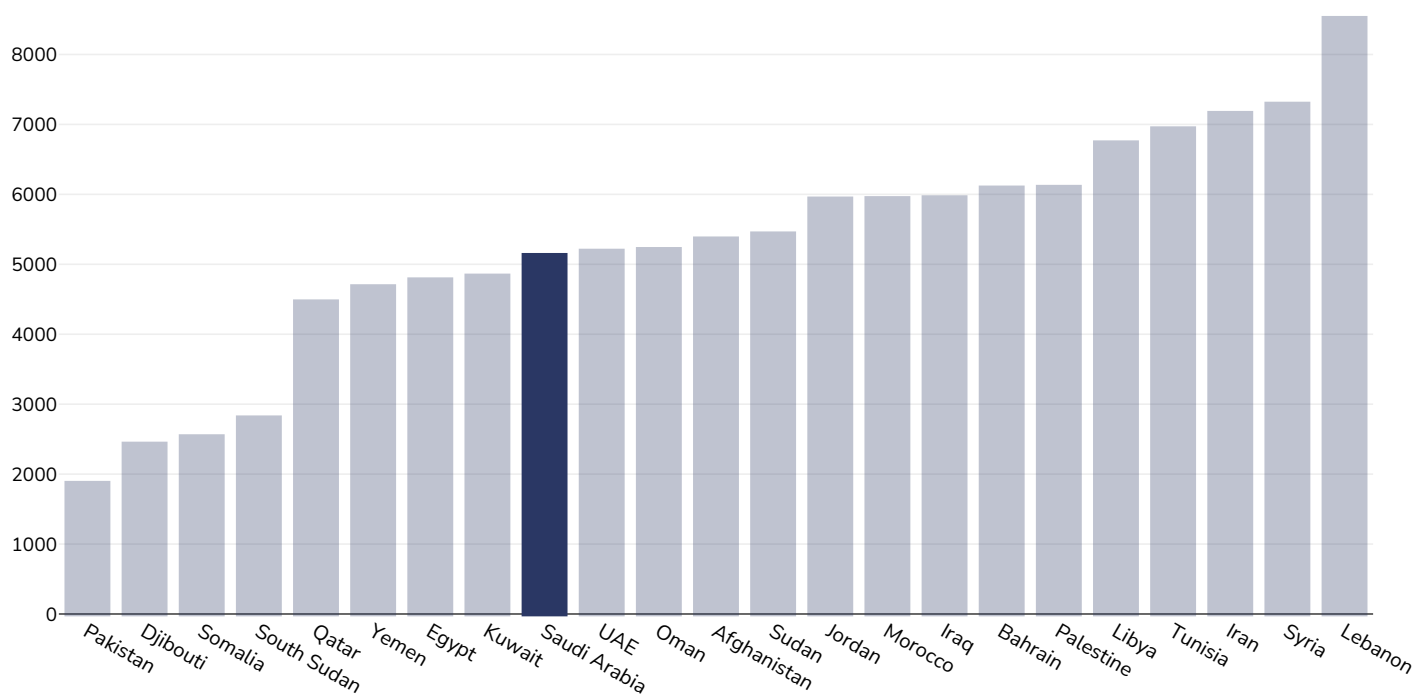
Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). GBD Compare Data Visualization. Global Burden of Disease (GBD) Study 2021. Seattle, WA: IHME, University of Washington, 2023. Available from <http://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-compare>. (Last accessed 23.04.25)

Boys, 2021



References: Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). GBD Compare Data Visualization. Global Burden of Disease (GBD) Study 2021. Seattle, WA: IHME, University of Washington, 2023. Available from <http://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-compare>. (Last accessed 23.04.25)

Girls, 2021



References: Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). GBD Compare Data Visualization. Global Burden of Disease (GBD) Study 2021. Seattle, WA: IHME, University of Washington, 2023. Available from <http://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-compare>. (Last accessed 23.04.25)

PDF created on August 19, 2025