



Scotland



Country report card - children

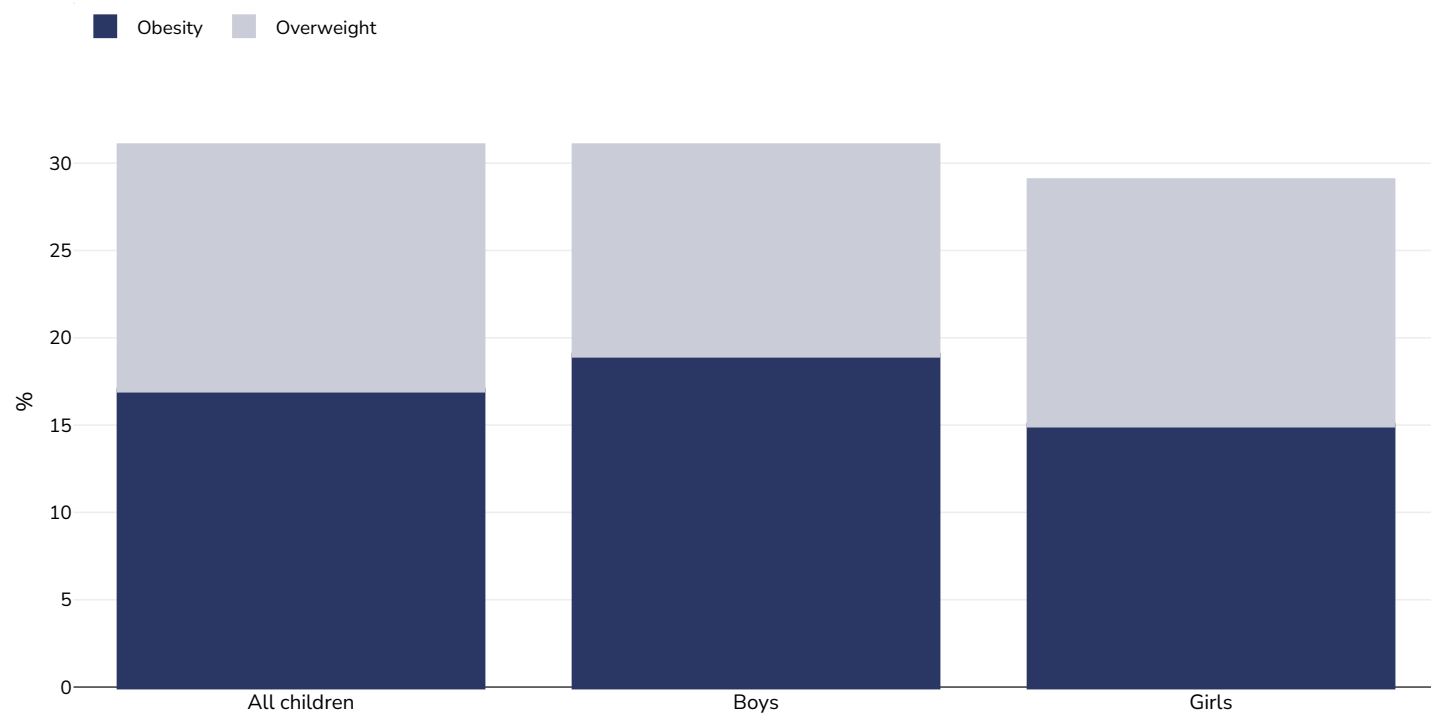
This report card contains the latest data available on the Global Obesity Observatory on overweight and obesity for children, including adolescents (aged 5 to 18 years). Where available, data on common and relevant obesity drivers and comorbidities are also presented.

View the latest version of this report on the Global Obesity Observatory at <https://data.worldobesity.org/country/scotland-239/>.

Contents	Page
Obesity prevalence	3
Trend: % children living with overweight or obesity by age in Scotland 2013 - 2019	4
Trend: % Children living with overweight or obesity in Scotland 1974-1994	6
Trend: % Children living with overweight or obesity in Scotland 2012-2022	7
Overweight/obesity by education	9
Overweight/obesity by age	10
Overweight/obesity by region	11
Overweight/obesity by socio-economic group	13
Overweight/obesity by ethnicity	15
Insufficient physical activity	16
Prevalence of at least daily carbonated soft drink consumption	18

Obesity prevalence

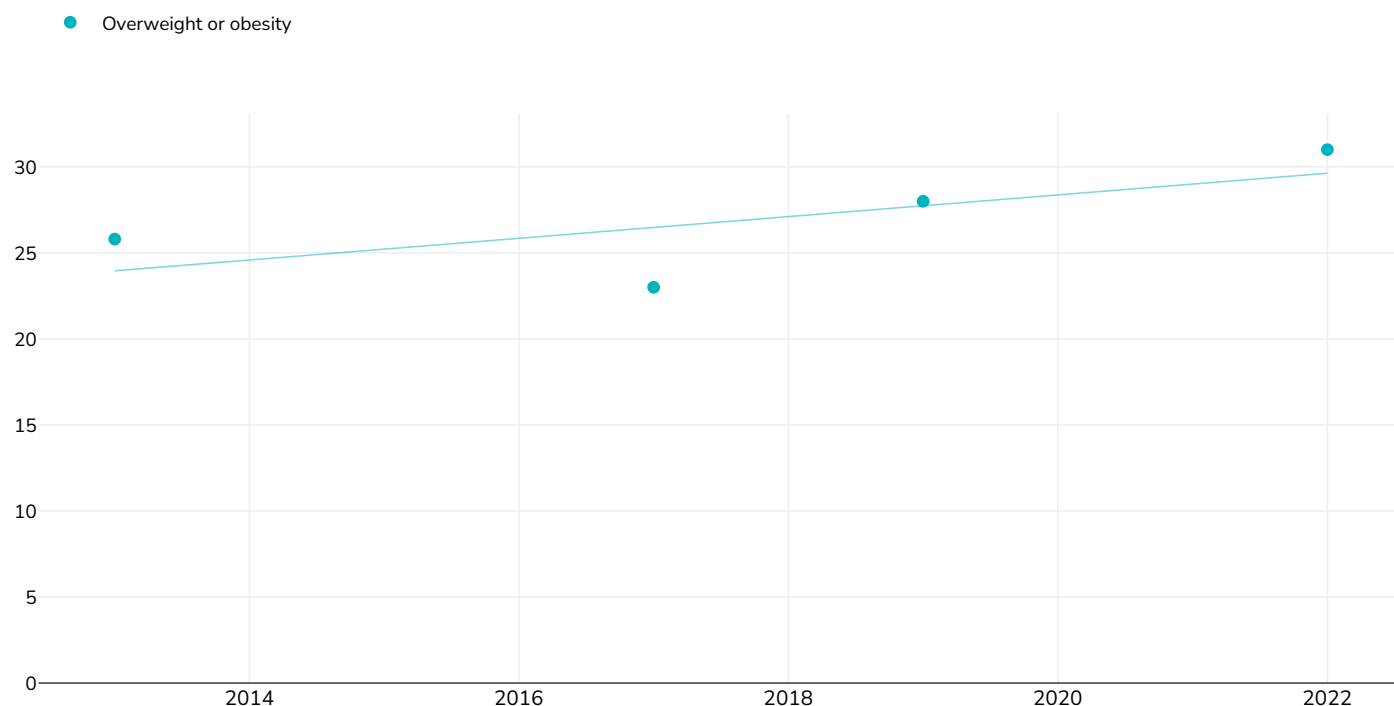
Children, 2023



Survey type:	Measured
Age:	2-15
Sample size:	1365
Area covered:	National
References:	Scottish Health Survey 2023. Available at https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-health-survey-2023-volume-1-main-report/documents/ (last accessed 18.11.24)
Cutoffs:	85th/95th Centile

% children living with overweight or obesity by age in Scotland 2013 - 2019

Girls

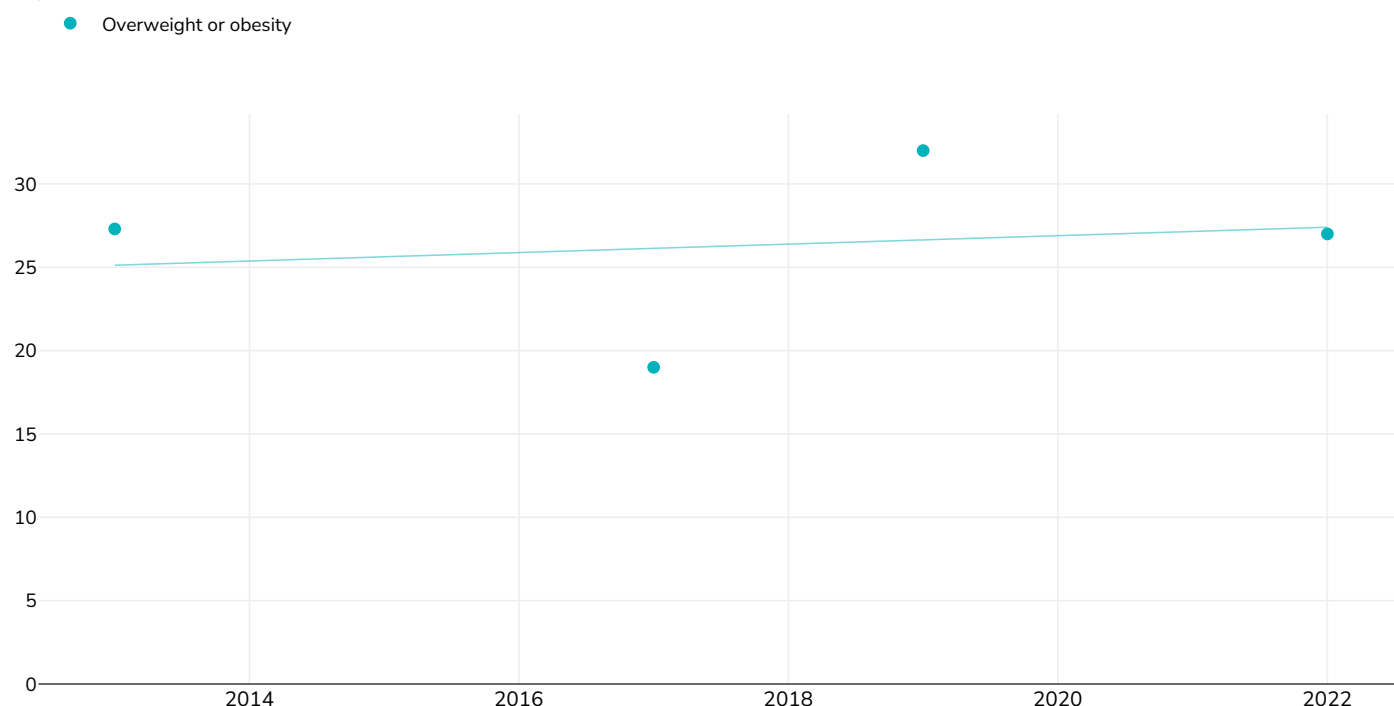


References:

- 2013: Scottish Health Survey 2013
- 2017: Scottish Government. (2017). Scottish Health Survey 2017. Available: <https://www.gov.scot/Resource/0054/00540654.pdf>. Last accessed 3rd Oct 2018.
- 2019: Scottish Health Survey 2019. Scottish Health Survey 2019. <https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-health-survey/>. Last accessed: 13.05.21.
- 2022: Scottish Health Survey 2022. Available at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-health-survey-2022-volume-1-main-report/pages/12/> (last accessed 05.12.23)

Different methodologies may have been used to collect this data and so data from different surveys may not be strictly comparable. Please check with original data sources for methodologies used.

Boys

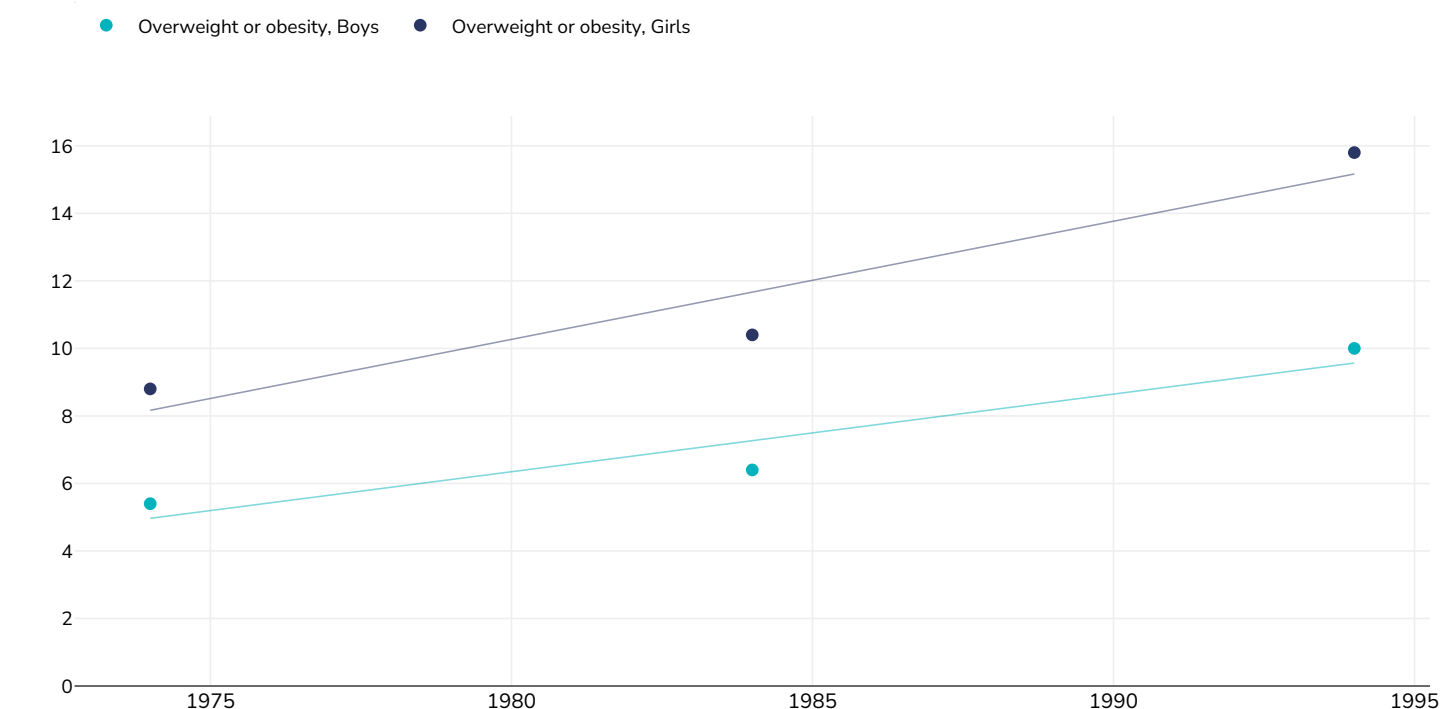


References:

- 2013: Scottish Health Survey 2013
- 2017: Scottish Government. (2017). Scottish Health Survey 2017. Available: <https://www.gov.scot/Resource/0054/00540654.pdf>. Last accessed 3rd Oct 2018.
- 2019: Scottish Health Survey 2019. Scottish Health Survey 2019. <https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-health-survey/>. Last accessed: 13.05.21.
- 2022: Scottish Health Survey 2022. Available at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-health-survey-2022-volume-1-main-report/pages/12/> (last accessed 05.12.23)

Different methodologies may have been used to collect this data and so data from different surveys may not be strictly comparable. Please check with original data sources for methodologies used.

% Children living with overweight or obesity in Scotland 1974-1994



Survey type:

Measured

References:

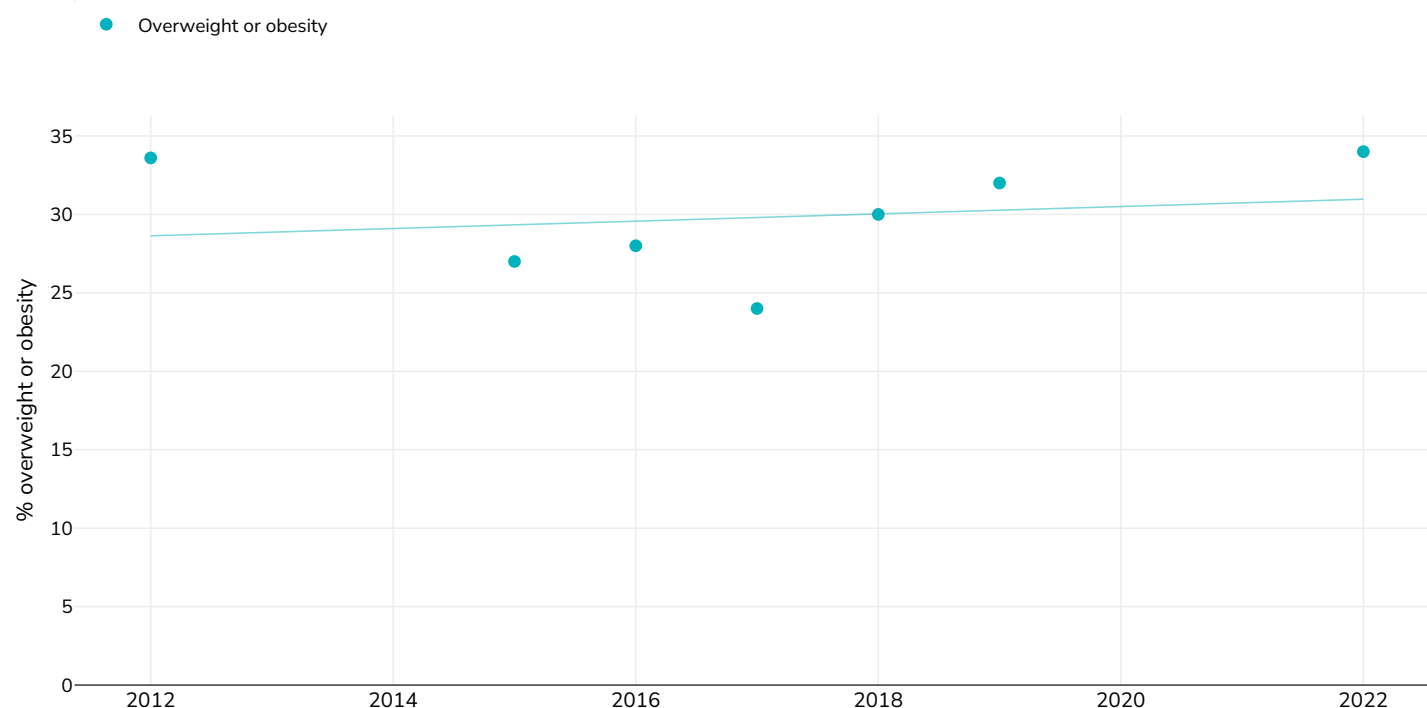
Chinn S, Rona RJ. Prevalence and trends in overweight and obesity in three cross sectional studies of British children, 1974-94. *BMJ* (2001);322:24-26
 Chinn S, Rona RJ. Prevalence and trends in overweight and obesity in three cross sectional studies of British children, 1974-94. *BMJ* (2001);322:24-26
 Chinn S, Rona RJ. Prevalence and trends in overweight and obesity in three cross sectional studies of British children, 1974-94. *BMJ* (2001);322:24-26

Unless otherwise noted, overweight refers to a BMI between 25kg and 29.9kg/m², obesity refers to a BMI greater than 30kg/m².

Different methodologies may have been used to collect this data and so data from different surveys may not be strictly comparable. Please check with original data sources for methodologies used.

% Children living with overweight or obesity in Scotland 2012-2022

Boys



Survey type: Measured

References:

2012: Scottish Health Survey 2012 <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0043/00434590.pdf>

2015: Scottish Health Survey 2015. (<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Health/scottish-health-survey/Publications/Supplementary2015>)

2016: Scottish Health Survey 2016, Statistics available online at <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Health/scottish-health-survey/Publications/Supplementary2015/Supplementary2016> (last accessed 2nd November 2017)

2017: Scottish Government. (2017). Scottish Health Survey 2017. Available: <https://www.gov.scot/Resource/0054/00540654.pdf>. Last accessed 3rd Oct 2018.

2018: Scottish Government. (2018). Scottish Health Survey 2018. Available: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-health-survey-2018-volume-1-main-report/> (Last accessed 24.09.19)

2019: Scottish Health Survey 2019. <https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-health-survey/>. Last accessed: 13.05.21.

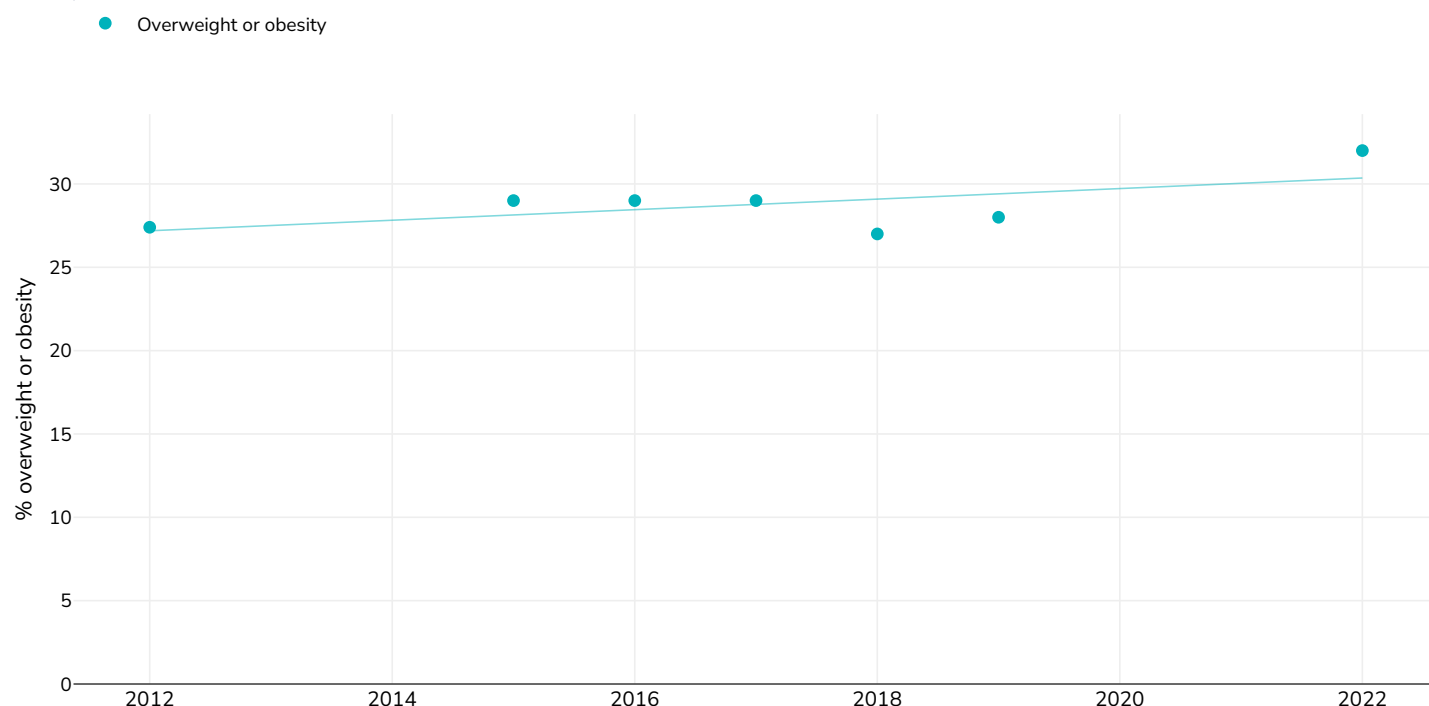
2022: Scottish Health Survey 2022. Available at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-health-survey-2022-volume-1-main-report/pages/12/> (last accessed 05.12.23)

Notes: Aged 2-15.

Definitions: 85th & 95th Percentiles

Different methodologies may have been used to collect this data and so data from different surveys may not be strictly comparable. Please check with original data sources for methodologies used.

Girls



Survey type: Measured

References:

2012: Scottish Health Survey 2012 <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0043/00434590.pdf>

2015: Scottish Health Survey 2015. (<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Health/scottish-health-survey/Publications/Supplementary2015>)

2016: Scottish Health Survey 2016, Statistics available online at <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Health/scottish-health-survey/Publications/Supplementary2015/Supplementary2016> (last accessed 2nd November 2017)

2017: Scottish Government. (2017). Scottish Health Survey 2017. Available: <https://www.gov.scot/Resource/0054/00540654.pdf>. Last accessed 3rd Oct 2018.

2018: Scottish Government. (2018). Scottish Health Survey 2018. Available: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-health-survey-2018-volume-1-main-report/> (Last accessed 24.09.19)

2019: Scottish Health Survey 2019. <https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-health-survey/>. Last accessed: 13.05.21.

2022: Scottish Health Survey 2022. Available at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-health-survey-2022-volume-1-main-report/pages/12/> (last accessed 05.12.23)

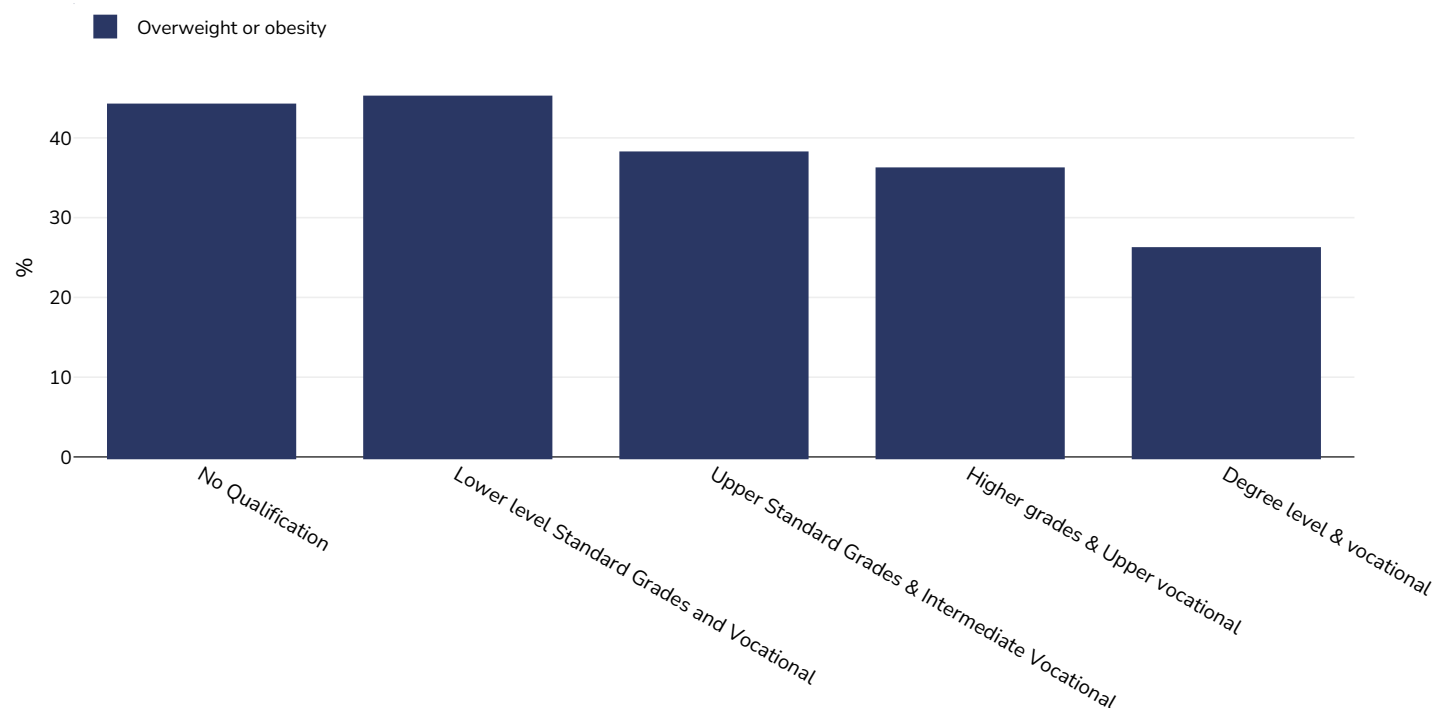
Notes: Aged 2-15.

Definitions: 85th & 95th Percentiles

Different methodologies may have been used to collect this data and so data from different surveys may not be strictly comparable. Please check with original data sources for methodologies used.

Overweight/obesity by education

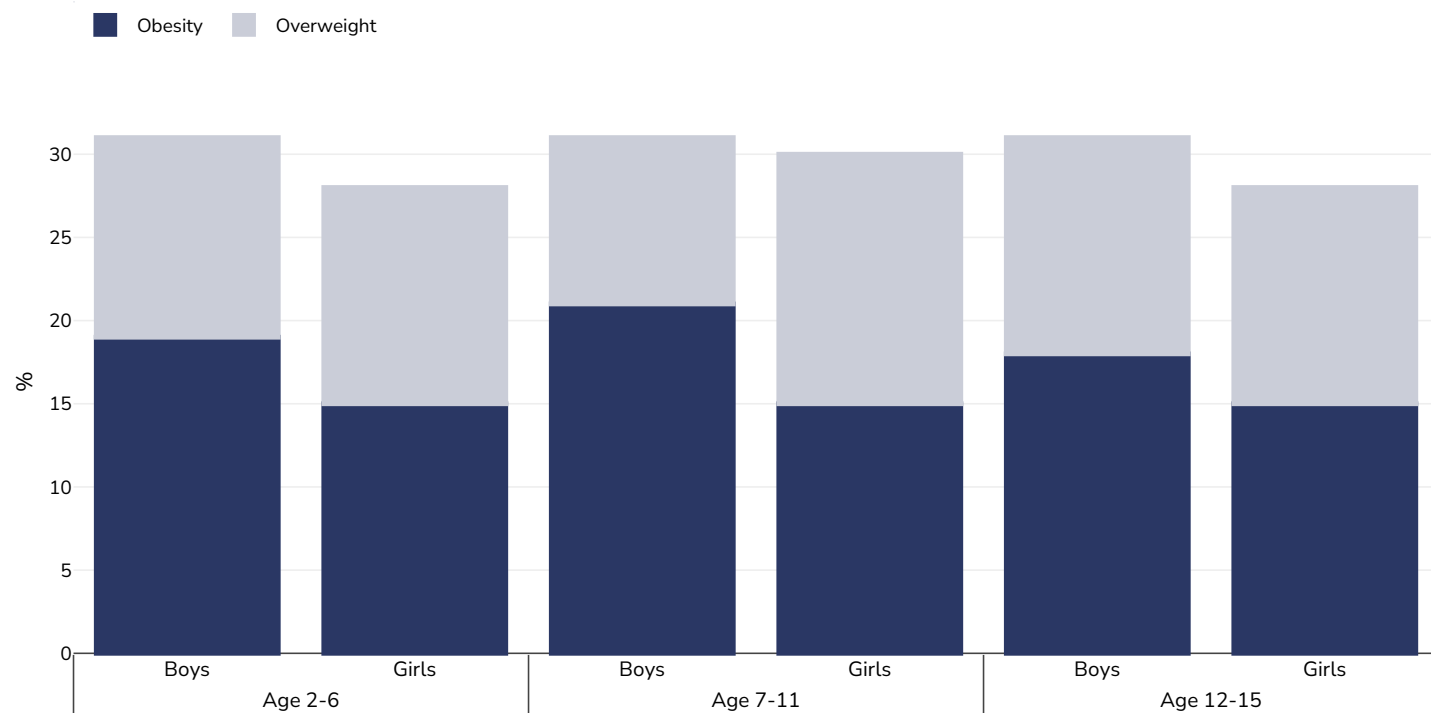
Children, 2014-2015



Survey type:	Measured
Age:	10
Sample size:	2750
Area covered:	National
References:	Growing up in Scotland: overweight and obesity at age 10 (2018). Available at: https://www.gov.scot/publications/growing-up-scotland-overweight-obesity-age-10/ . Last accessed: 14.04.21.
Notes:	At or above 85th percentile and below 95th percentile: overweight At or above 95th percentile: obesity

Overweight/obesity by age

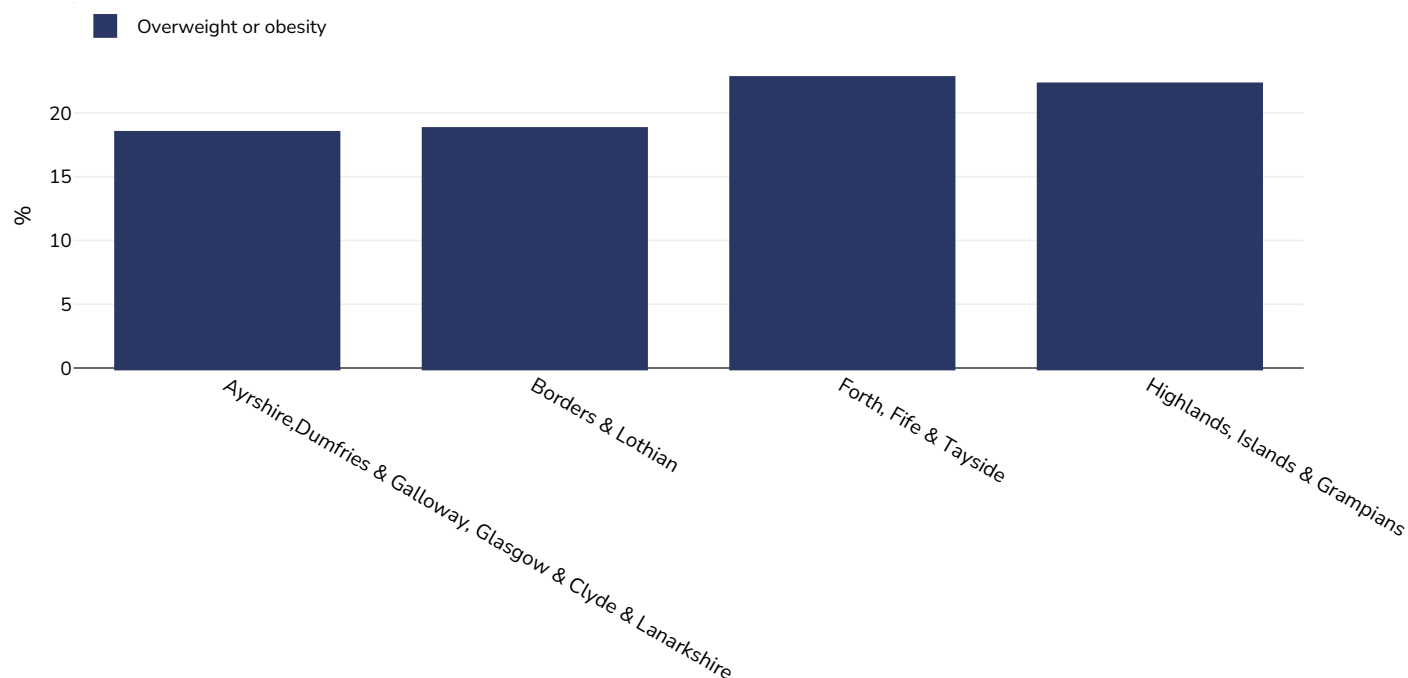
Children, 2023



Survey type:	Measured
Sample size:	1365
Area covered:	National
References:	Scottish Health Survey 2023. Available at https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-health-survey-2023-volume-1-main-report/documents/ (last accessed 18.11.24)
Cutoffs:	85th/95th Centile

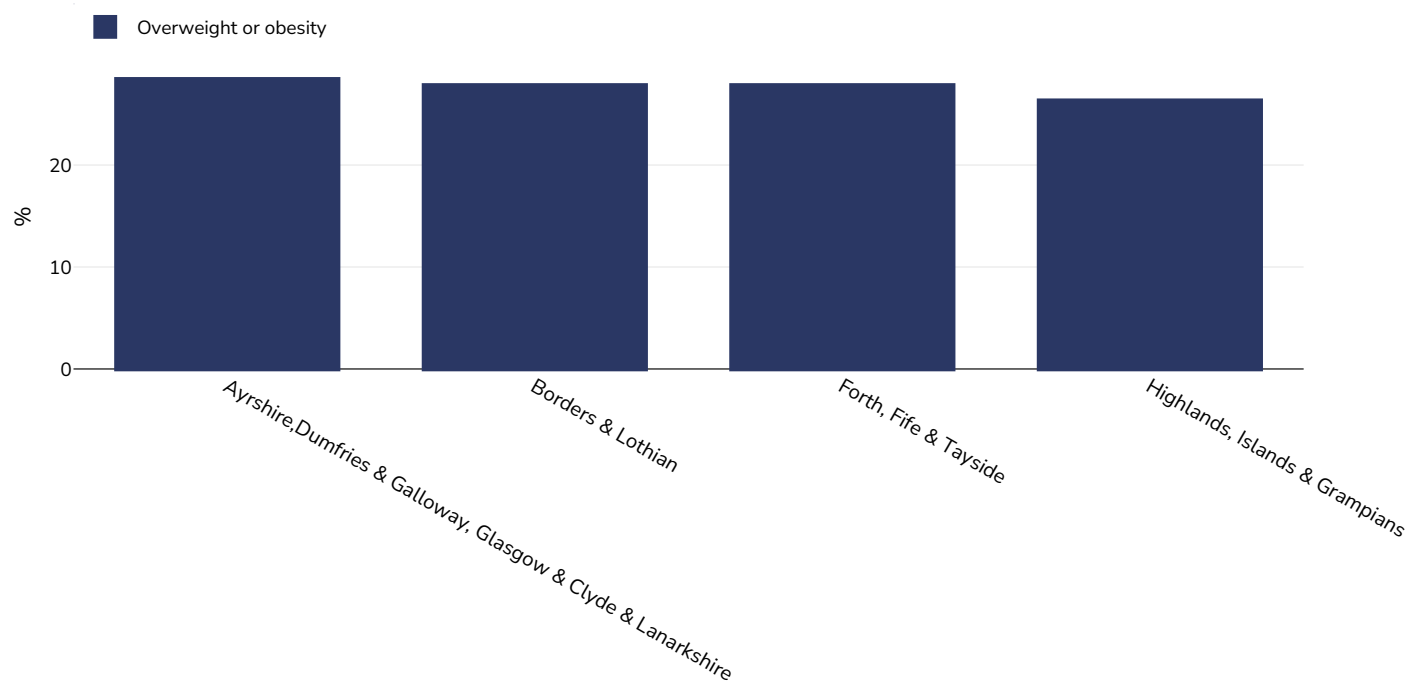
Overweight/obesity by region

Boys, 2015



Survey type:	Measured
Age:	2-17
Sample size:	1018
Area covered:	National (but small sample)
References:	Scottish Health Survey 2015, Renanalysis by R Jackson Leach of the World Obesity Federation
Notes:	IOTF International cut off NB SMALL SAMPLE SIZES & COMBINED REGIONS
Cutoffs:	IOTF

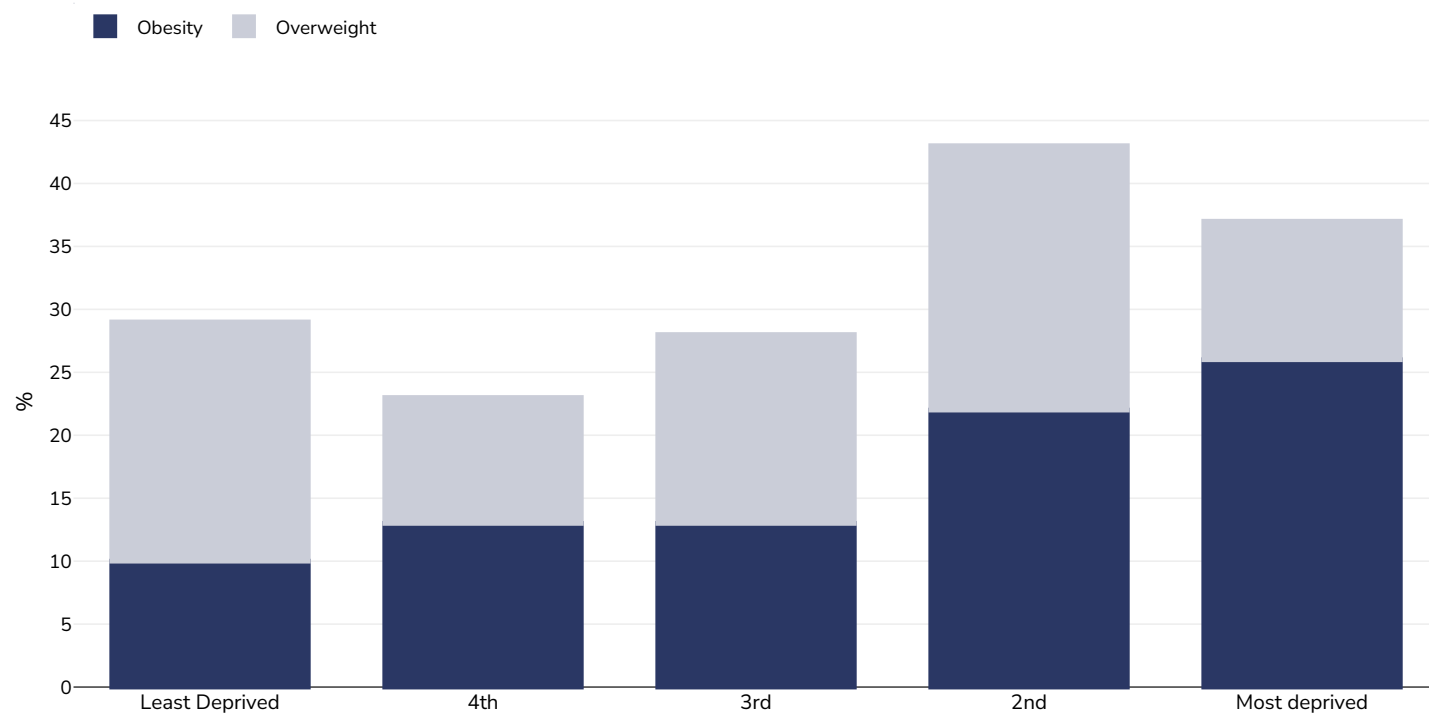
Girls, 2015



Survey type:	Measured
Age:	2-17
Sample size:	1018
Area covered:	National (but small sample)
References:	Scottish Health Survey 2015, Renanalysis by R Jackson Leach of the World Obesity Federation
Notes:	IOTF International cut off NB SMALL SAMPLE SIZES & COMBINED REGIONS
Cutoffs:	IOTF

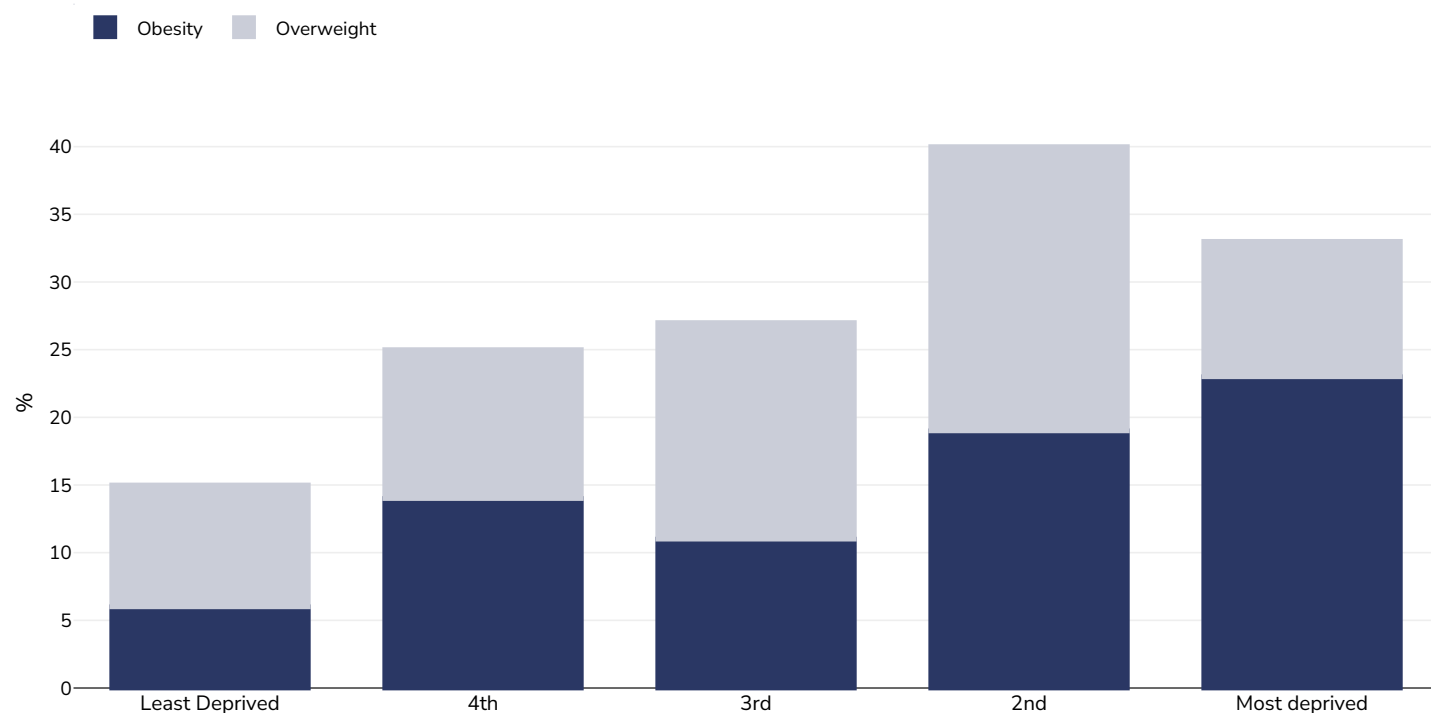
Overweight/obesity by socio-economic group

Boys, 2019



Survey type:	Measured
Age:	2-15
Sample size:	1345
Area covered:	National
References:	Scottish Health Survey 2019. Available at: https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-health-survey-2019-volume-1-main-report/ . Data from Scottish Health Survey 2019 supplementary tables. Available at: https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-health-survey-2019-supplementary-tables/ . Last accessed 14.04.21.
Notes:	SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) Quintiles 5 Least Deprived - 1 Most Deprived
Cutoffs:	UK90

Girls, 2019

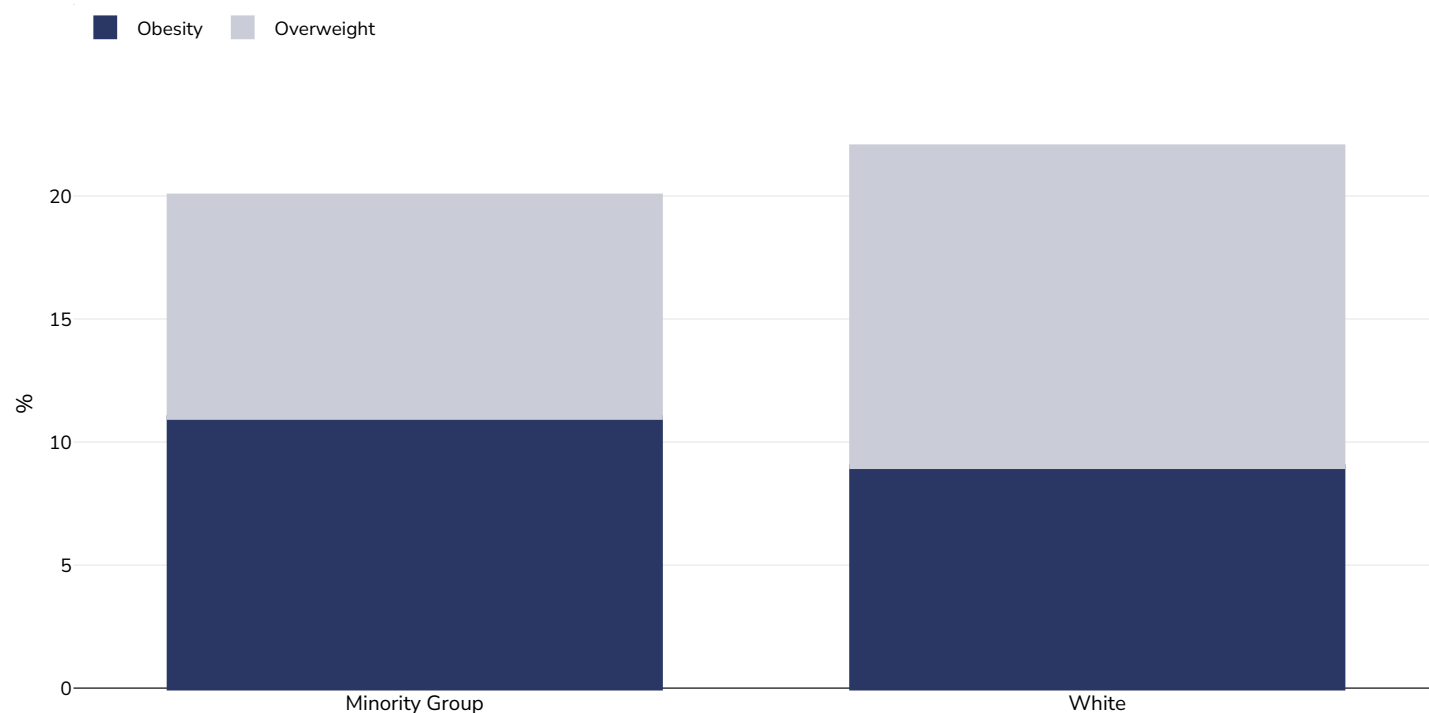


Survey type:	Measured
Age:	2-15
Sample size:	1345
Area covered:	National
References:	Scottish Health Survey 2019. Available at: https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-health-survey-2019-volume-1-main-report/ . Data from Scottish Health Survey 2019 supplementary tables. Available at: https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-health-survey-2019-supplementary-tables/ . Last accessed 14.04.21.
Notes:	SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) Quintiles 5 Least Deprived - 1 Most Deprived
Cutoffs:	UK90

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.

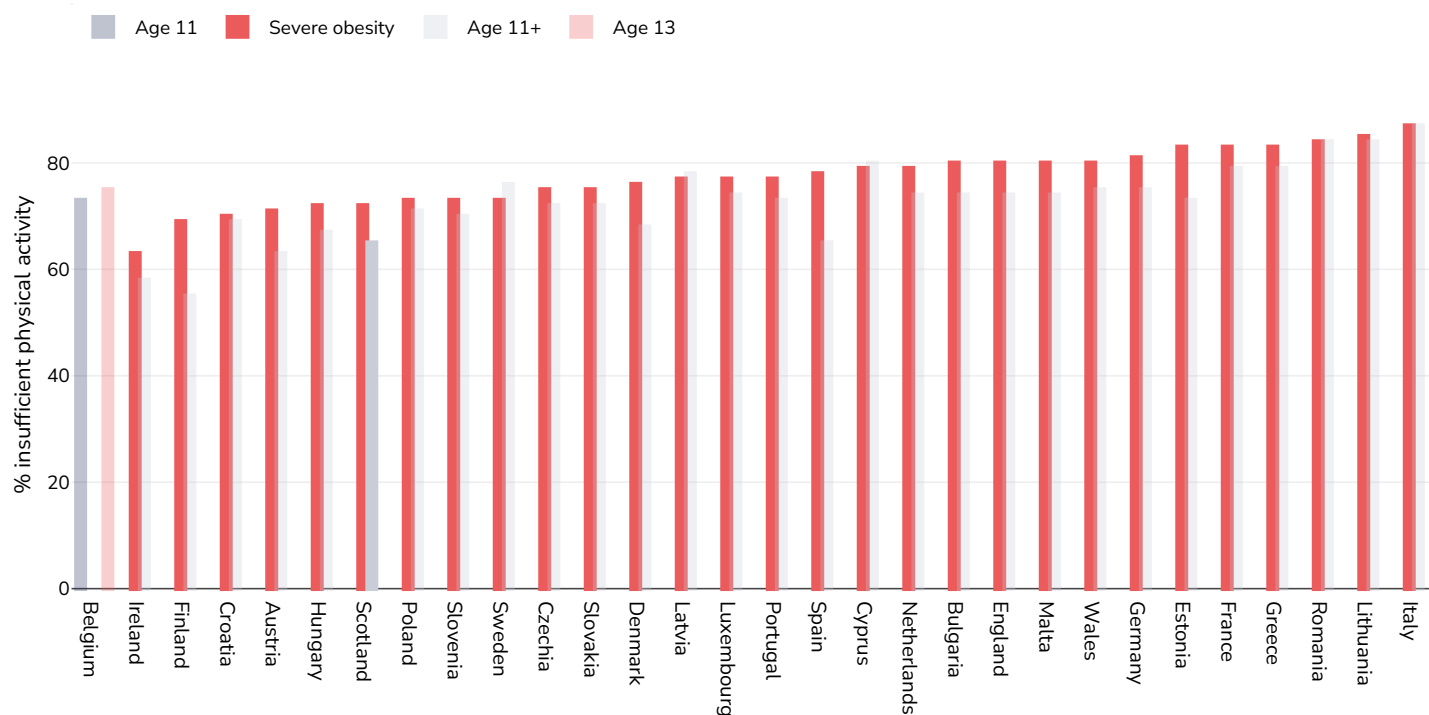
Children, 2010-2011



Survey type:	Measured
Age:	5-6
Sample size:	2931
Area covered:	National
References:	Growing up in Scotland: overweight obesity and activity (2012). Available at: https://www.gov.scot/publications/growing-up-scotland-report-overweight-obesity-activity/pages/8/ . Last accessed: 26.04.21.
Notes:	Ethnic groups as defined by survey of origin.
Cutoffs:	UK90

Insufficient physical activity

Boys, 2022



Area covered:

National

References:

Rakić JG, Hamrik Z, Dzielska A, Felder-Puig R, Oja L, Bakalár P et al. A focus on adolescent physical activity, eating behaviours, weight status and body image in Europe, central Asia and Canada. Health Behaviour in School-aged Children international report from the 2021/2022 survey. Volume 4. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2024. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO. Health Behaviour in School-aged Children study (2023), Data browser (findings from the 2021/22 international HBSC survey): <https://data-browser.hbsc.org>.

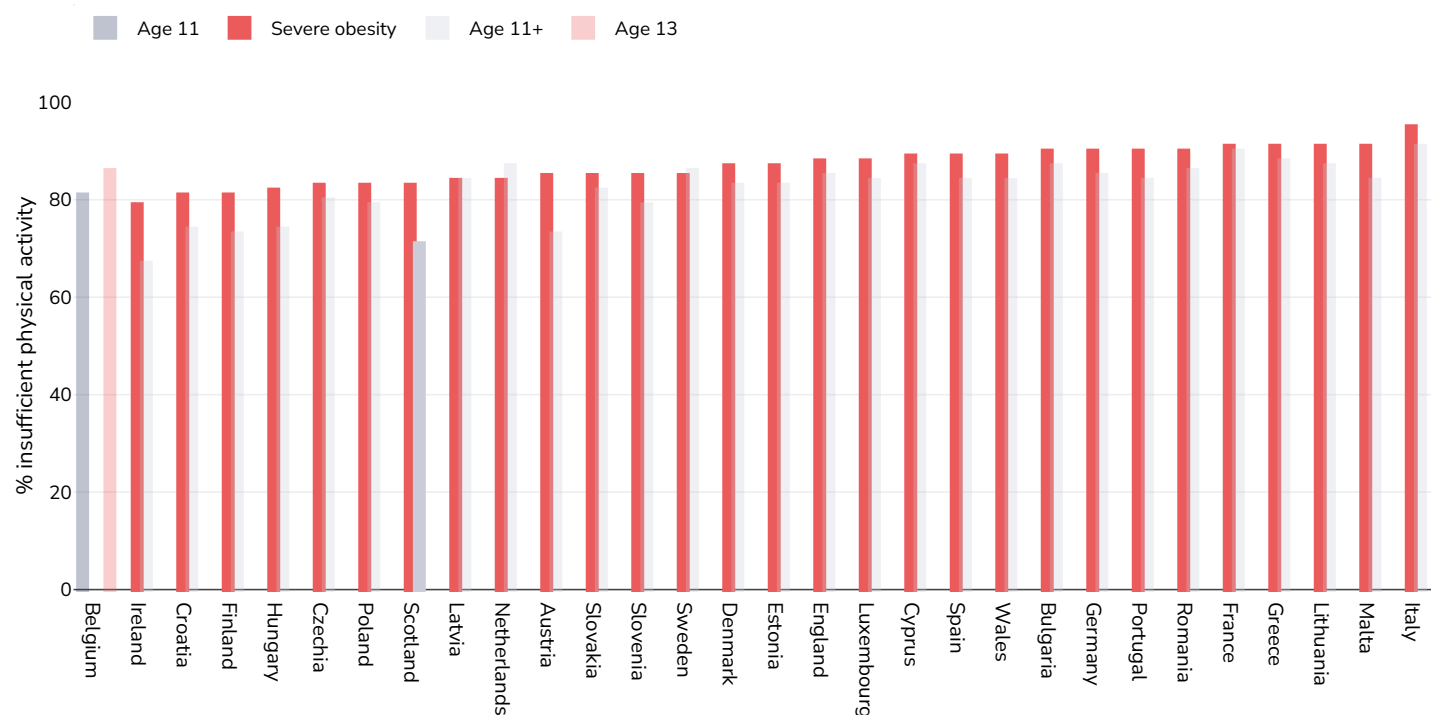
Notes:

Young people were asked to report the number of days over the past week during which they were physically active for a total of at least 60 minutes. The question was introduced by text defining moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA) as any activity that increases the heart rate and makes the person get out of breath some of the time, with examples provided. Findings presented on the Observatory show the proportions who report less than 60 minutes of MVPA daily.

Definitions:

% reporting less than 60 minutes of MVPA daily

Girls, 2022



Area covered:

National

References:

Rakić JG, Hamrik Z, Dzielska A, Felder-Puig R, Oja L, Bakalár P et al. A focus on adolescent physical activity, eating behaviours, weight status and body image in Europe, central Asia and Canada. Health Behaviour in School-aged Children international report from the 2021/2022 survey. Volume 4. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2024. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO. Health Behaviour in School-aged Children study (2023), Data browser (findings from the 2021/22 international HBSC survey): <https://data-browser.hbsc.org>.

Notes:

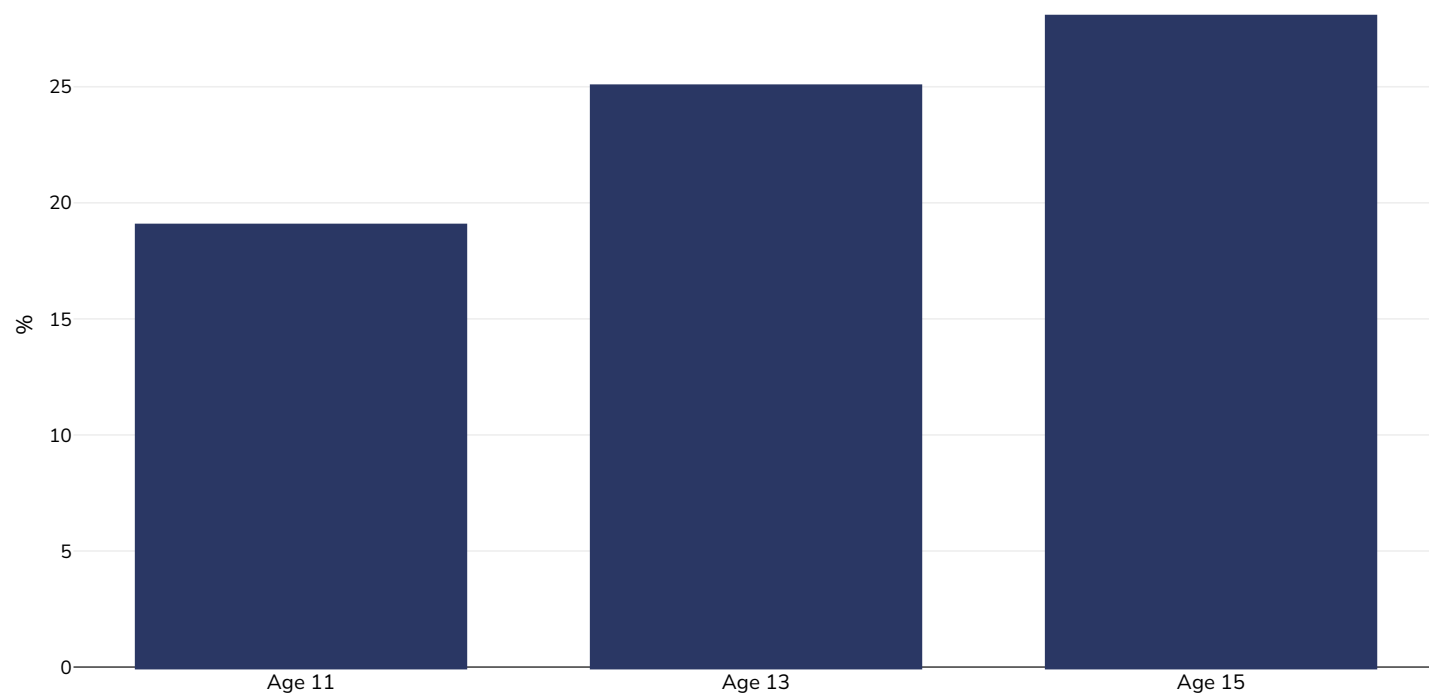
Young people were asked to report the number of days over the past week during which they were physically active for a total of at least 60 minutes. The question was introduced by text defining moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA) as any activity that increases the heart rate and makes the person get out of breath some of the time, with examples provided. Findings presented on the Observatory show the proportions who report less than 60 minutes of MVPA daily.

Definitions:

% reporting less than 60 minutes of MVPA daily

Prevalence of at least daily carbonated soft drink consumption

Boys, 2021-2022

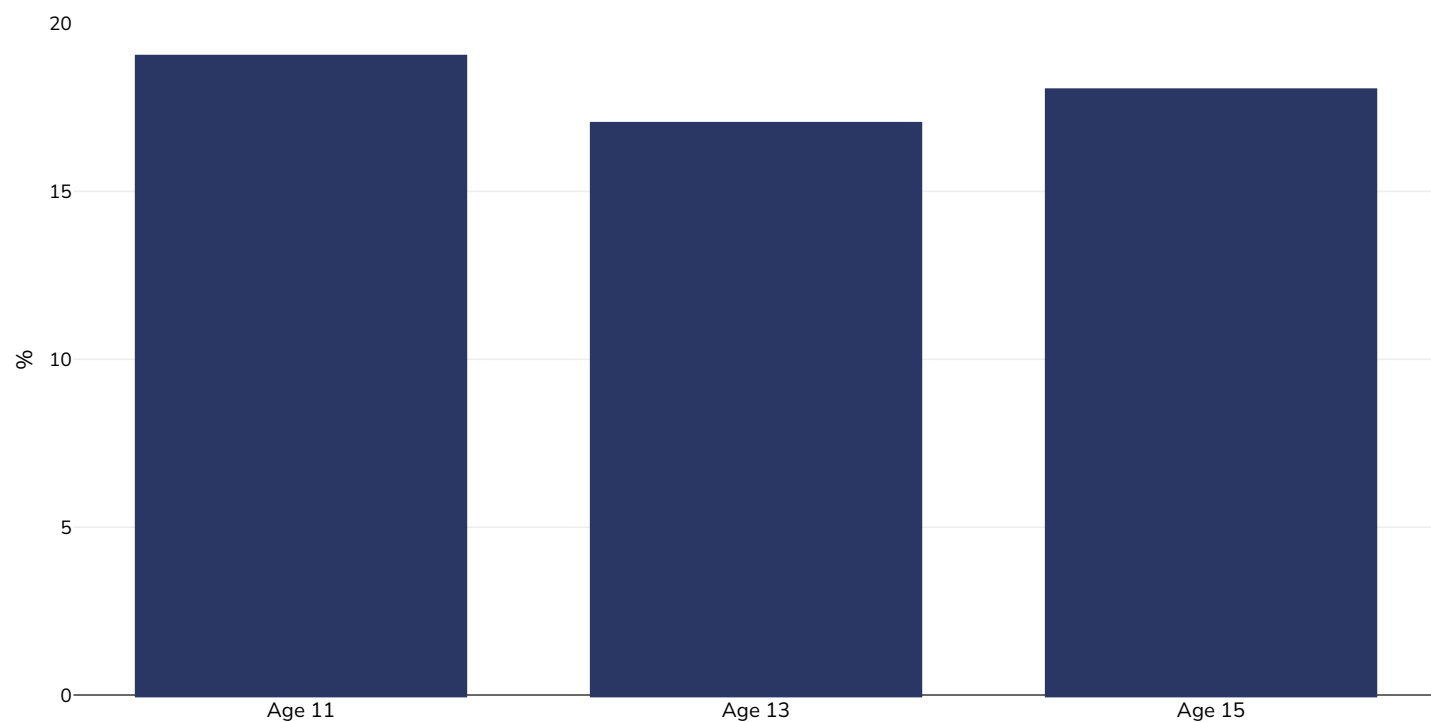


Area covered: National

References: Health Behaviour in School-aged Children study (2023), Data browser (findings from the 2021/22 international HBSC survey): <https://data-browser.hbsc.org>

Definitions: Proportion who reported drinking sugary soft drinks daily (at least once)

Girls, 2021-2022



Area covered: National

References: Health Behaviour in School-aged Children study (2023), Data browser (findings from the 2021/22 international HBSC survey): <https://data-browser.hbsc.org>

Definitions: Proportion who reported drinking sugary soft drinks daily (at least once)

PDF created on July 7, 2025