



Profile

# HBSC – Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Switzerland

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## Description

The international WHO Europe study "**Health Behaviour in School-aged Children**" (**HBSC**) is conducted every four years. Switzerland has participated in the study since 1986. HBSC provides information on the health status and behavior of 11- to 15-year-old students in public schools in Switzerland.

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## Published results

**Health:** general health status, illnesses, physical complaints, mental health, stress, emotions, body image, weight status.

**Health behaviors and determinants:** Physical activity, nutrition, alcohol, tobacco/nicotine, medication, and drug use, sexuality and contraception, online behavior, violence and bullying, sleep, dental care.

**Social contexts:** Family, friends, school.

Complete list of publications: [Publications - hbcs.ch](https://publications-hbcs.ch)

Standard tables: [Standard tables - hbcs.ch](https://standard-tables-hbcs.ch)

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## Method

Target group: Public school students aged 11 to 15 (5th to 9th grade or 7th to 11th HarmoS year).

National, representative sample: Randomized cluster sample of classes, stratified by canton and grade level.

Data collection: PAPI in class, during a school lesson (max. 45 min.).

Trend data every four years since 2002 (or since 1986, where applicable).

Two questionnaire versions: short (grades 5 to 7 or HarmoS years 7 to 9), long (grades 8 and 9 or HarmoS years 10 and 11)

Response rate ≈ 74% (2022) to 89% (2018) of selected classes.

N ≈ 10,000 students aged 11 to 15

Variables used:

- Health status (illnesses, physical complaints, limitations, mental health, body mass index, etc.)
- Health behavior (eating habits (frequency of food consumption, frequency of breakfast, fruit and vegetable portions), physical activity (in general and sports), tobacco/nicotine, alcohol, and cannabis\* consumption, consumption of other illegal drugs\*, online behavior (e.g., problematic gaming\*, problematic use of social networks), violence (e.g., bullying and cyberbullying), sexuality\* and contraception\*, sleep\*, dental care)
- Social contexts (relationships with family, relationships with friends, life at school)
- Degree of regionalization: Switzerland, language regions, and cantons that have increased their cantonal sample size

\*only in the long version of the questionnaire

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### Revision policy

Routine revisions: Adjustment of the questionnaire before each survey, taking into account the international study protocol.

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### Legal basis

- Federal Statistics Ordinance of April 30, 2025, on the conduct of federal statistical surveys (SR 431.011)
  - Article 29c of the Narcotics Act of October 3, 1951
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### Organization

**Addiction Switzerland** (since 1986)  
on behalf of the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH),  
with additional funding from most cantons

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