

# WELLBEING & HEALTH

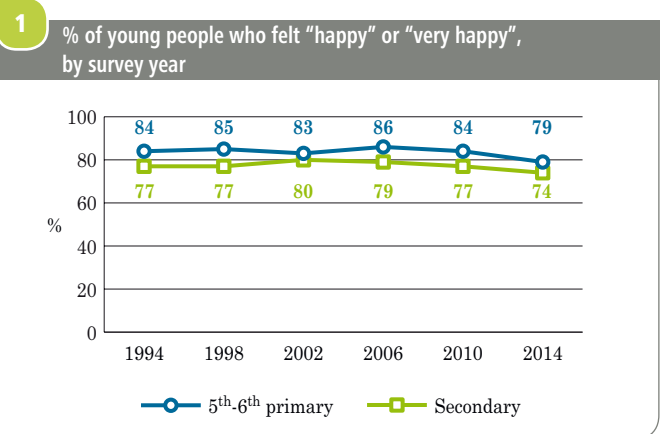
Eight in ten young people reported that they felt «happy» or «very happy» but four in ten young people reported frequent multiple health complaints. The results highlighted gender inequalities, with girls falling behind, and social inequalities, at the expense of socio-economically less advantaged young people.

## THE FEELING OF HAPPINESS\*

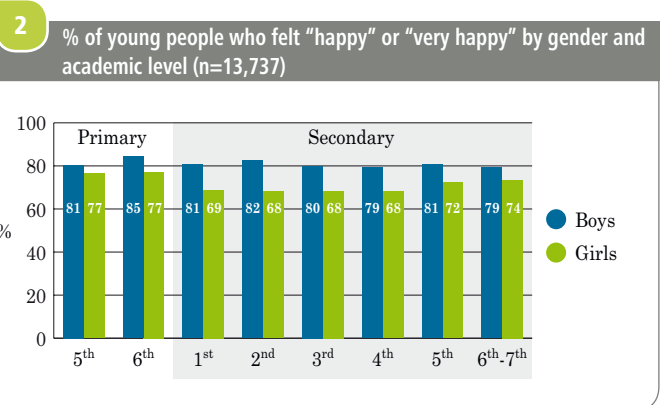
The feeling of happiness is an important part of wellbeing. During childhood, it contributes to the development of social and coping skills.

In 2014, 1 young person in 5 (21%) reported that they felt “very happy”, 1 young person in 2 felt “happy” (55%), 1 young person in 5 (20%) felt “not very happy” and a small minority (4%) felt “not at all happy”. The proportion of young people who reported to be “very happy” was twice as high among pupils in 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> years of primary school compared with the students in secondary school (34% vs 17%).

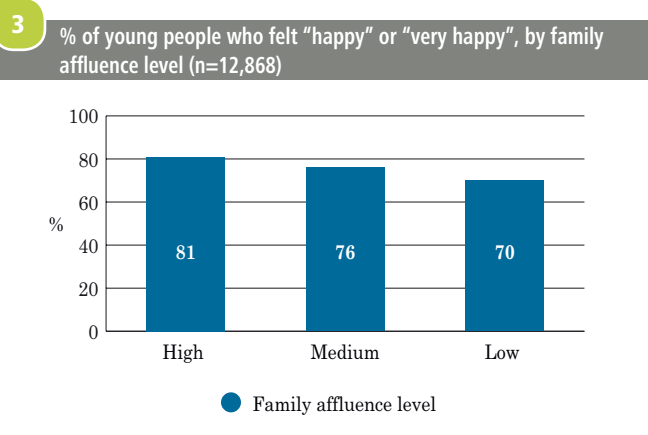
The proportions of young people who felt “happy” or “very happy” at the end of primary and in secondary school remained stable until 2010 but fell in 2014. **1**



Boys reported more frequently that they were “happy” or “very happy”. The proportion of “happy” or “very happy” boys remained stable throughout their schooling while the proportion of girls decreased during secondary school. **2**

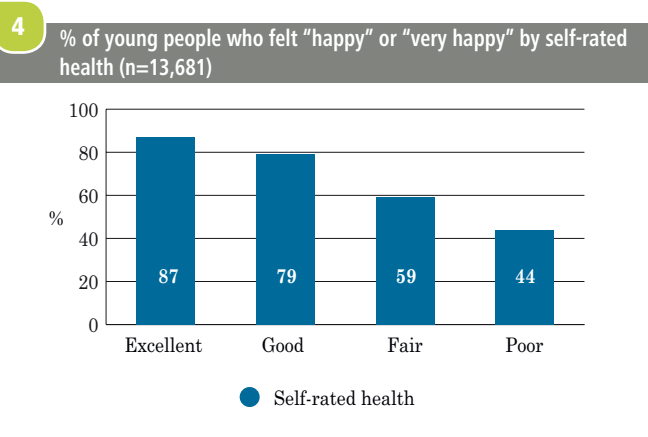


A social gradient was observed for the feeling of happiness. The proportion of young people who reported that they were “happy” or “very happy” decreased with family affluence level. **3**



## HAPPINESS AND SELF-RATED HEALTH

The feeling of happiness was also associated with young people self-rated health. The proportion of young people who felt “happy” or “very happy” decreased when their self-rated health became poor. **4**



The proportions of young people in Federation Wallonia-Brussels (FWB) who perceived their health as “fair” or “poor” were higher than the global proportions of the study across all countries taking part in the 2014 HBSC survey, regardless of gender and age. The FWB was among countries with the highest proportions of young people who perceived their health as “fair” or “poor”, particularly among adolescent girls. **5**

**5** % of young people who perceived their health as “fair” or “poor” internationally and in FWB

	HBSC International			FWB	
	% min	% global	% max	%	Rank
Boys (11 years)	2	9	16	15	2/42
Boys (13 years)	3	11	18	15	6/42
Boys (15 years)	4	13	21	16	11/42
Girls (11 years)	2	10	22	18	3/42
Girls (13 years)	4	16	29	23	4/42
Girls (15 years)	7	21	38	31	4/42

\* This question was not part of the study’s standard protocol, only young people in FWB were asked it.

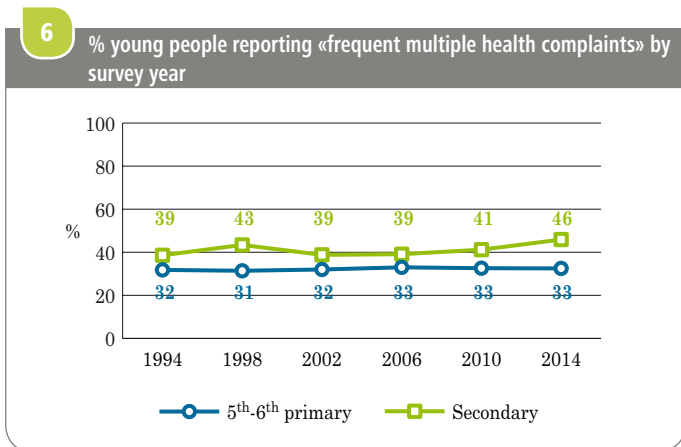
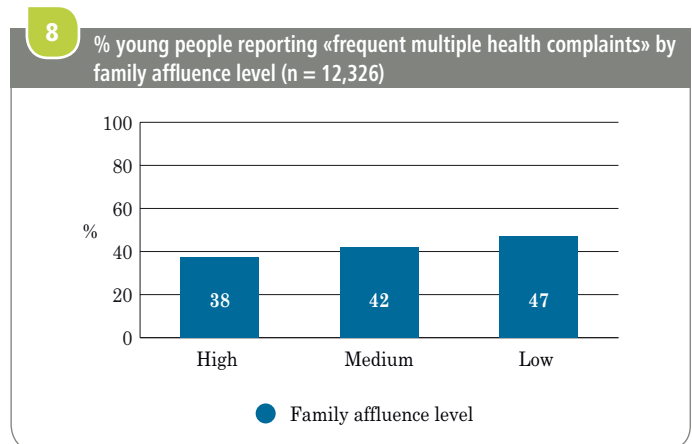
## REPORTED HEALTH COMPLAINTS

Reported health complaints, whether somatic (headache, backache) or psychological (nervousness, irritability) rarely occur in isolation and are important indicators of wellbeing.

Four young people in ten (42%) reported “frequent multiple health complaints”\*. This proportion was higher among young people in secondary school (44%) than those in the 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> years of primary school (31%).

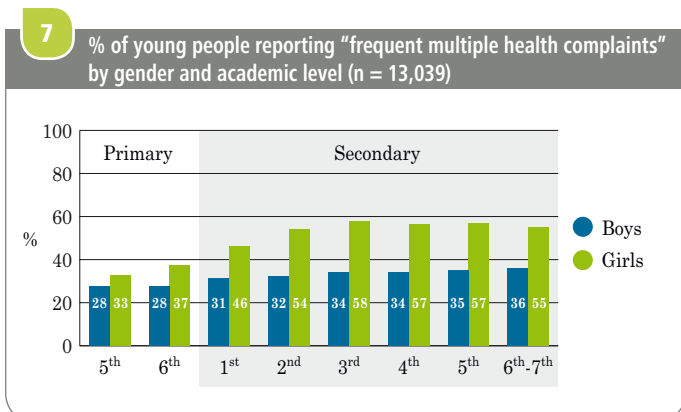
Since 1994, the proportion of young people frequently reporting multiple health complaints remained stable in the 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> years of primary school while in secondary school, this proportion was higher in 2014 compared to previous surveys. **6**

“Frequent multiple health complaints” were also associated with the family affluence level. The proportion of young people reporting “frequent multiple health complaints” increased as family affluence level decreased. **8**



The proportion of young people reporting multiple health complaints several times a week was higher among girls. The gap between boys and girls widened until 3<sup>rd</sup> year of secondary school and continued in subsequent years. **7**

Internationally, the proportions of young people reporting “frequent multiple health complaints” were higher in FWB than the global proportions across all countries taking part in the 2014 HBSC survey. FWB was among the 10 countries with the highest proportions of young people reporting “frequent multiple health complaints” regardless of gender and age. **9**



**9** % of young people reporting “frequent multiple symptoms”, internationally and in FWB

	HBSC International			FWB	
	% min	% global	% max	%	Rank
Boys (11 years)	12	24	40	30	7/42
Boys (13 years)	15	25	40	30	6/42
Boys (15 years)	16	27	44	35	6/42
Girls (11 years)	19	31	48	36	9/42
Girls (13 years)	30	41	61	48	6/42
Girls (15 years)	36	50	68	54	10/42

\* Frequent multiple health complaints referred to young people who reported at least 2 symptoms several times a week among the 8 following symptoms: headache, stomach ache, backache, feeling low, irritable or bad tempered, feeling nervous, difficulties in getting to sleep or feeling dizzy in the last 6 months.