



hbosc

HEALTH BEHAVIOUR IN
SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN

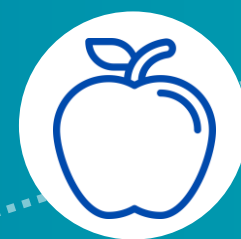
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION
COLLABORATIVE CROSS-NATIONAL STUDY

Trends in Health Behaviours, Outcomes and Contexts: 1998-2022

The Irish Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Study



1998



2002



2006



2010



2014



2018



2022



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An Roinn Sláinte
Department of Health



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Trends in Health Behaviours, Outcomes and Contexts: 1998-2022

The Irish Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Study

Louise Lunney, Aoife Gavin, András Költő, Larri Walker, Saoirse Nic Gabhainn and Colette Kelly

Presentation of Key Findings

Louise Lunney

June 3rd 2025

University
ofGalway.ie

Overview

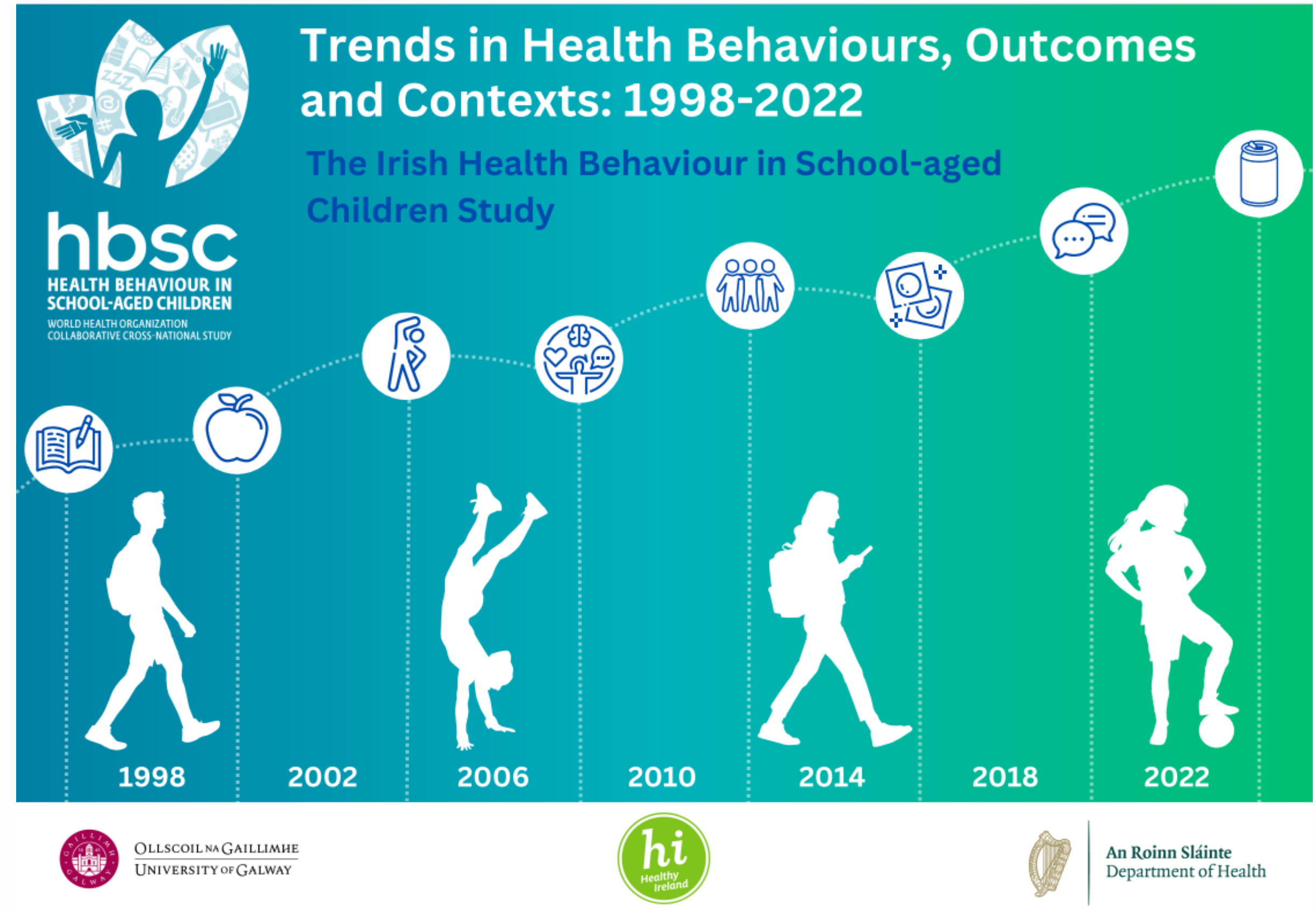
HBSC Study

Methods

Reading the Report

Key Findings

Summary



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#HBSC Trends
#adolescenthealth

#HBSC Ireland
#HealthyIreland



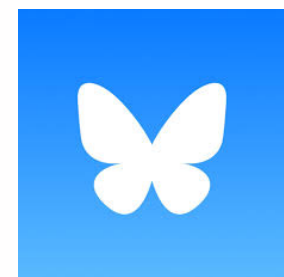
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www.universityofgalway.ie/hbsc/

Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Study

- Collaborative study with the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe
- Survey carried out every four years
- Ireland has collected data since 1998 (2022 - 7th survey cycle)
- 45 countries and regions in 2022



HBSC Study Approach

Gain insight into and increase our understanding of young people's:



**Health
Behaviours**

**Health
Outcomes**

**Social
Contexts**



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Methods

Methods



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School-based survey: self-completion questionnaires administered by teachers

International HBSC survey protocol

Paper questionnaires, online version introduced for 2022



Trends 1998-2022



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Cross-sectional design

Main Study: 5th Class to 5th Year; 10-17 year olds

n = 70,533

1998

n = 8,497

2002

n = 8,424

2006

n = 10,333

2010

n = 12,661

2014

n = 10,555

2018

n = 12,002

2022

n = 8,061

Analysis



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Items included in at least 3 survey cycles

Weighted to account for gender and regional imbalances

Statistically significant differences over time

Statistically Significant Trends			
↑	Small increase <25%	↓	Small decrease <25%
↑ ↑	Moderate increase 25-49.9%	↓ ↓	Moderate decrease 25-49.9%
↑ ↑ ↑	Large increase 50-74.9%	↓ ↓ ↓	Large decrease 50-74.9%
↑ ↑ ↑ ↑	Very large increase ≥75%	↓ ↓ ↓ ↓	Very large decrease ≥75%

International comparisons included where available

Report Content



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The Trends Report includes 38 indicators

New indicators

Health Behaviours

- Going to school or bed hungry
- Soft drink consumption

Health Outcomes

- Sleep difficulties

Social Contexts

- Family Support
- Teacher Support
- Peer Support
- Been Bullied



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Reading the Report

SOFT DRINK CONSUMPTION

Children were asked how often they drink coke or other soft drinks that contain sugar. The response options ranged from 'never' to 'every day, more than once'. The findings here present the percentage of children who reported drinking soft drinks daily or more.

Findings

Between 2002 and 2022, there was a very large decrease in the percentage of boys and girls who reported drinking soft drinks daily or more. The decrease was evident across all age and social class groups.

Figure 8: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who reported drinking soft drinks daily or more, overall and by gender from 2002-2022

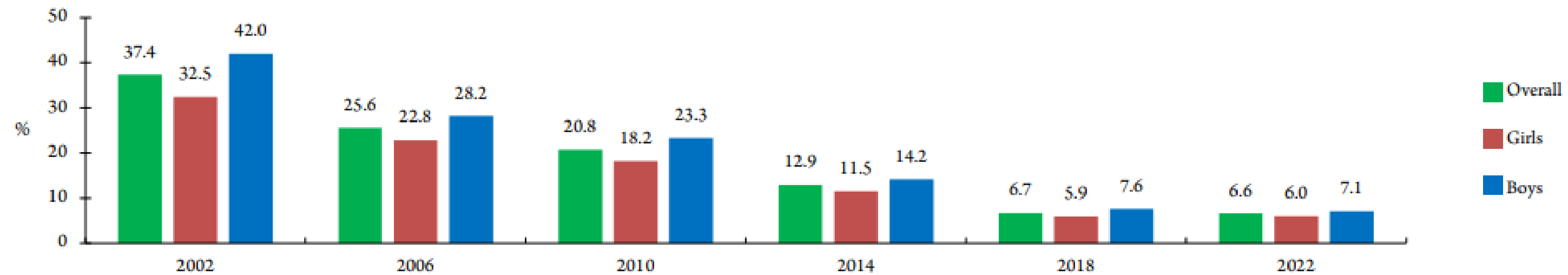


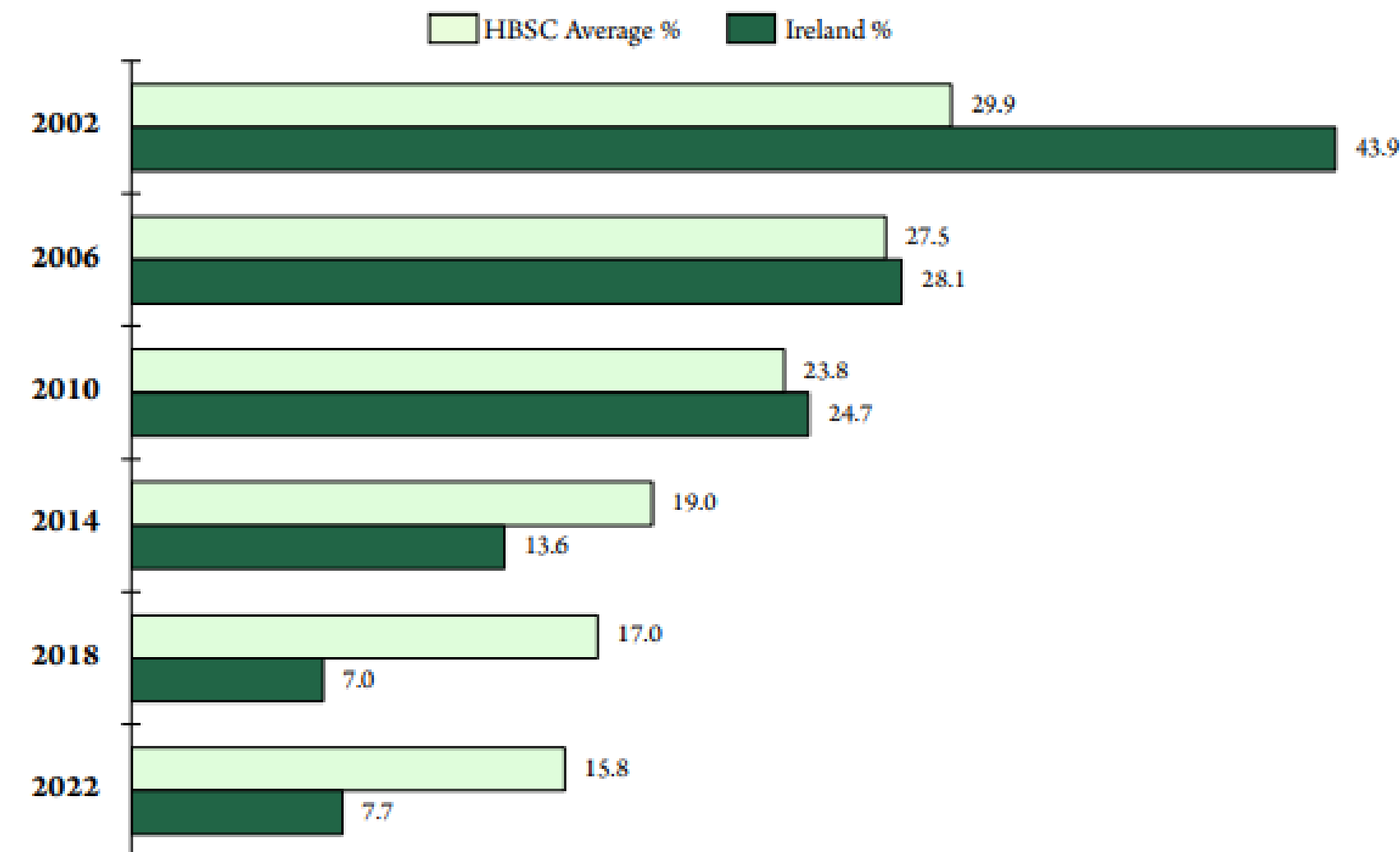
Table 8: Percentage of 10-17 year olds who reported drinking soft drinks daily or more, by age group and social class from 2002-2022								
		2002	2006	2010	2014	2018	2022	Trend
Age group	10 to 11 years	28.3	18.6	14.5	7.8	4.1	4.3	↓↓↓↓
	12 to 14 years	38.4	25.7	20.5	13.1	7.1	6.0	↓↓↓↓
	15 to 17 years	41.9	29.7	23.3	14.5	7.4	7.9	↓↓↓↓
Social class group	High	31.7	19.2	15.7	7.4	3.9	3.5	↓↓↓↓
	Middle	41.9	28.3	22.0	13.6	7.3	7.1	↓↓↓↓
	Low	44.2	29.3	29.6	17.7	10.8	9.1	↓↓↓↓

For a full breakdown by gender, age group and social class see appendix [Table A8](#)

SOFT DRINK CONSUMPTION - INTERNATIONAL

27

Figure 8.1: Percentage of 15-year-olds who reported drinking soft drinks daily or more from 2002-2022



International comparisons

In 2022, 15-year-olds in Ireland were below the international HBSC average for reporting drinking soft drinks daily or more. Ireland ranked 37th out of 44 countries, with 36 countries reporting a higher percentage of soft drink consumption.

The international report *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*, includes further HBSC data on food and dietary behaviours.

<https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/376772>.

Table 8.1: Summary of international data - 15-year-olds who reported drinking soft drinks daily or more from 2002-2022

	HBSC Min %	HBSC Max %	HBSC Average %	Ireland %	No. of countries	Ireland Rank
2002	8.0	56.3	29.9	43.9	35	6
2006	6.0	49.7	27.5	28.1	41	23
2010	4.7	44.0	23.8	24.7	40	23
2014	3.2	38.2	19.0	13.6	42	29
2018	4.4	33.3	17.0	7.0	47	40
2022	5.2	41.7	15.8	7.7	44	37



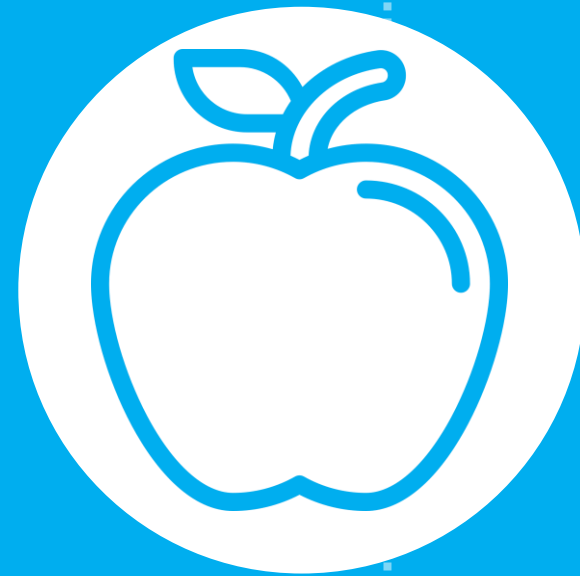
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Key Findings



Health Behaviours

Key Findings



1998

2002

2006

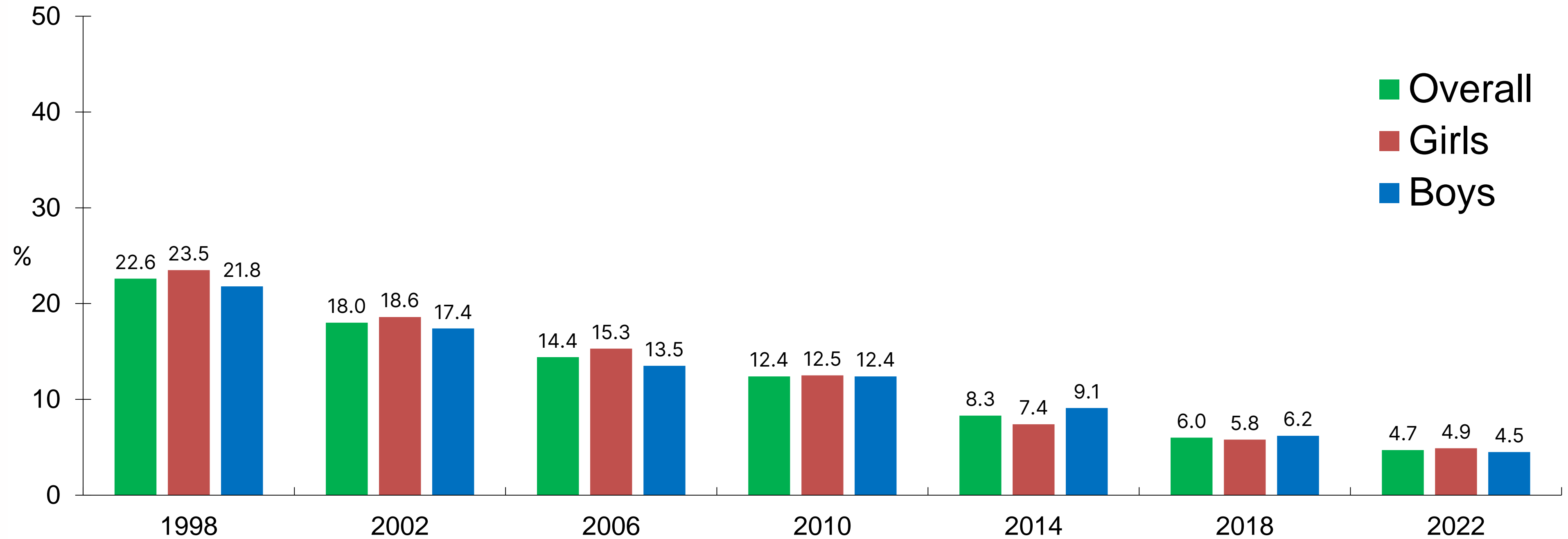
2010

2014

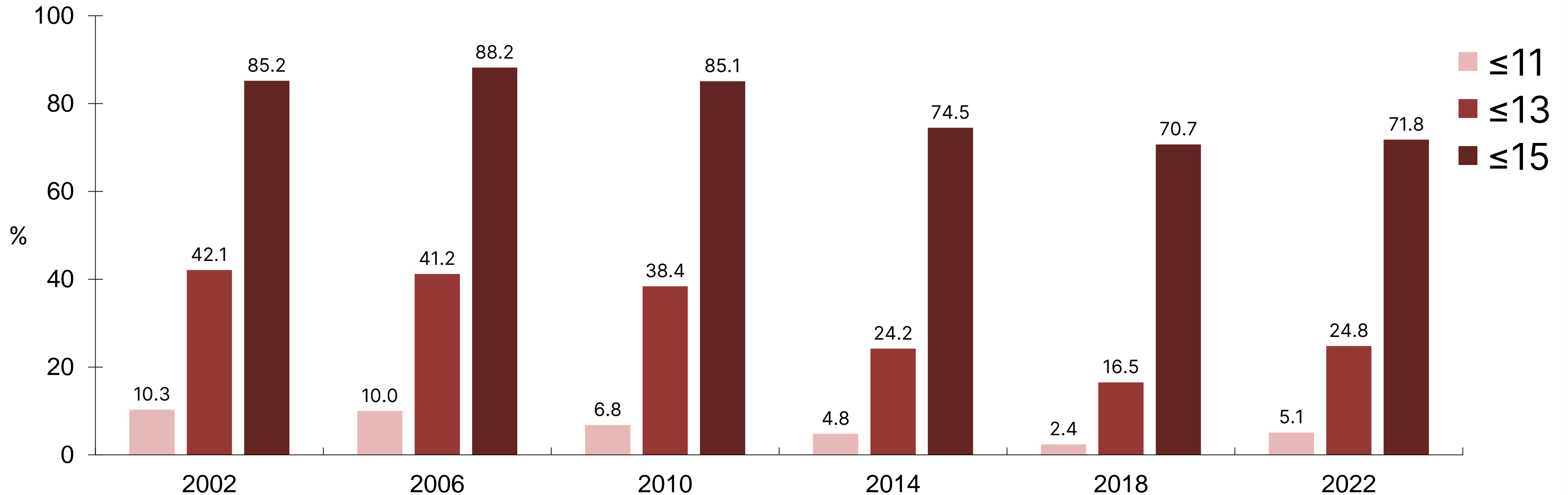
2018

2022

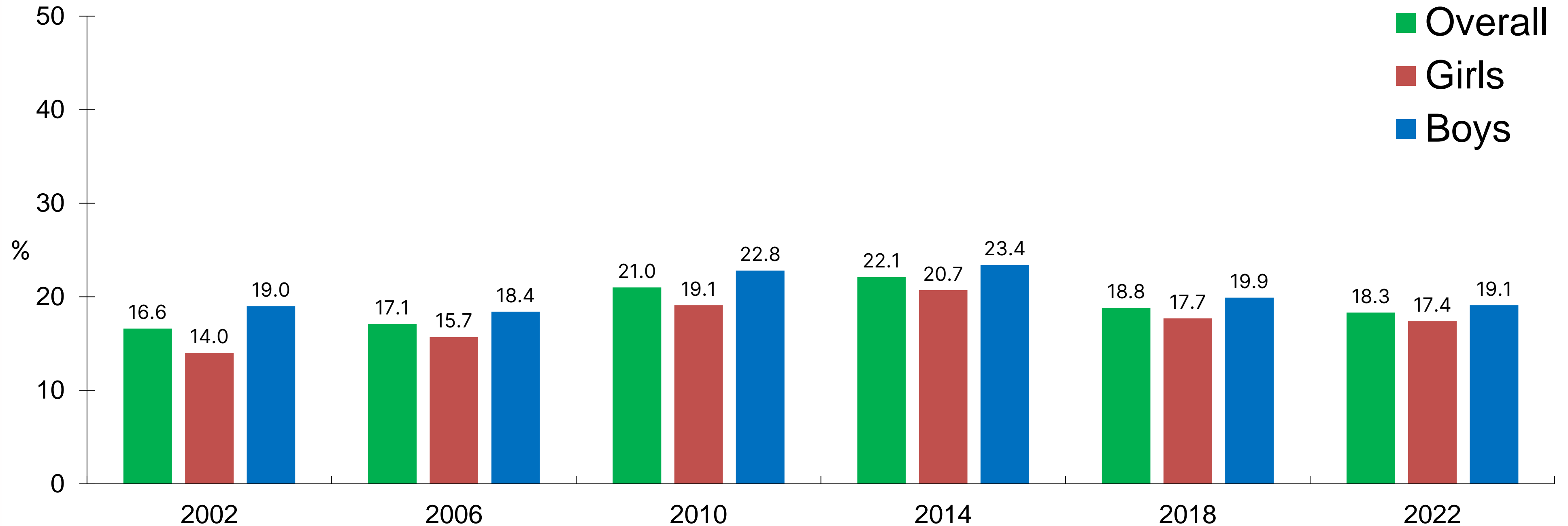
Current tobacco smoker



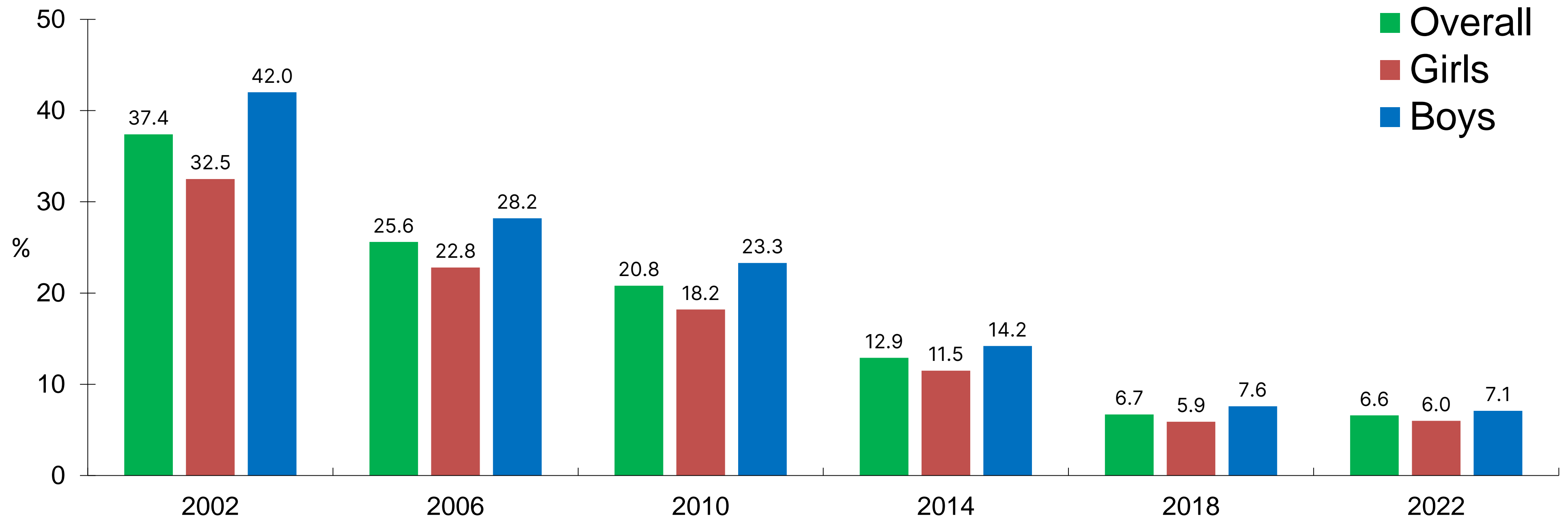
Age of first alcoholic drink



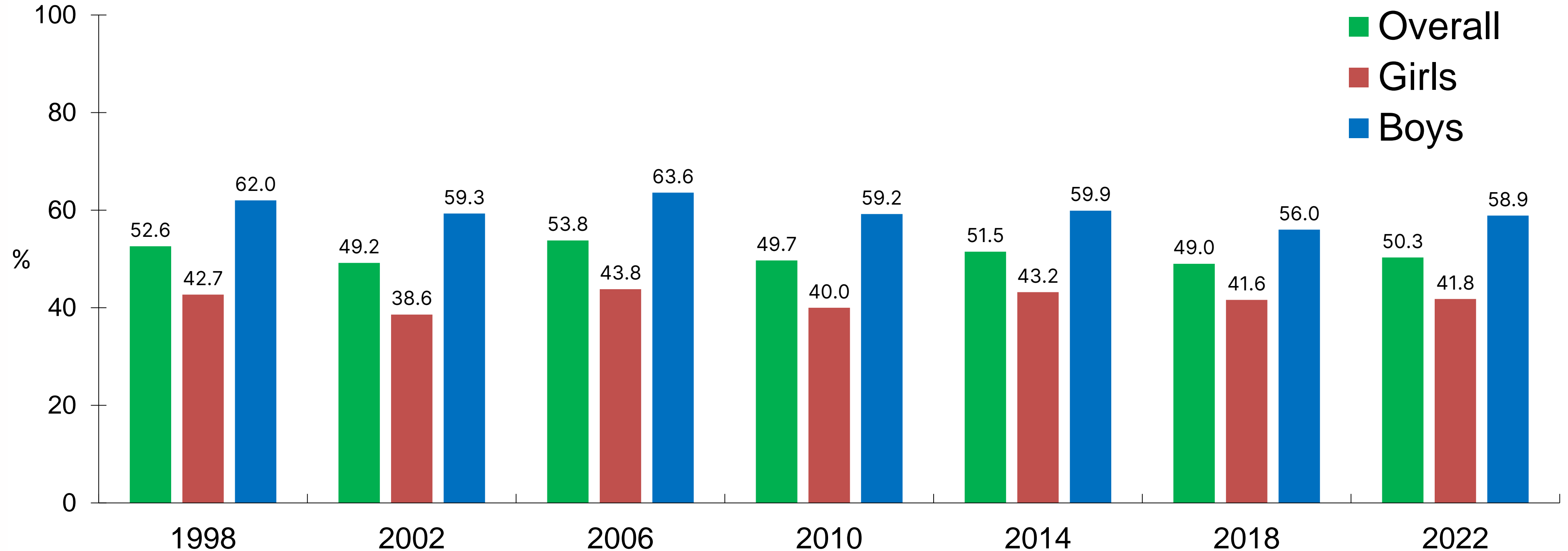
Going to school or bed hungry



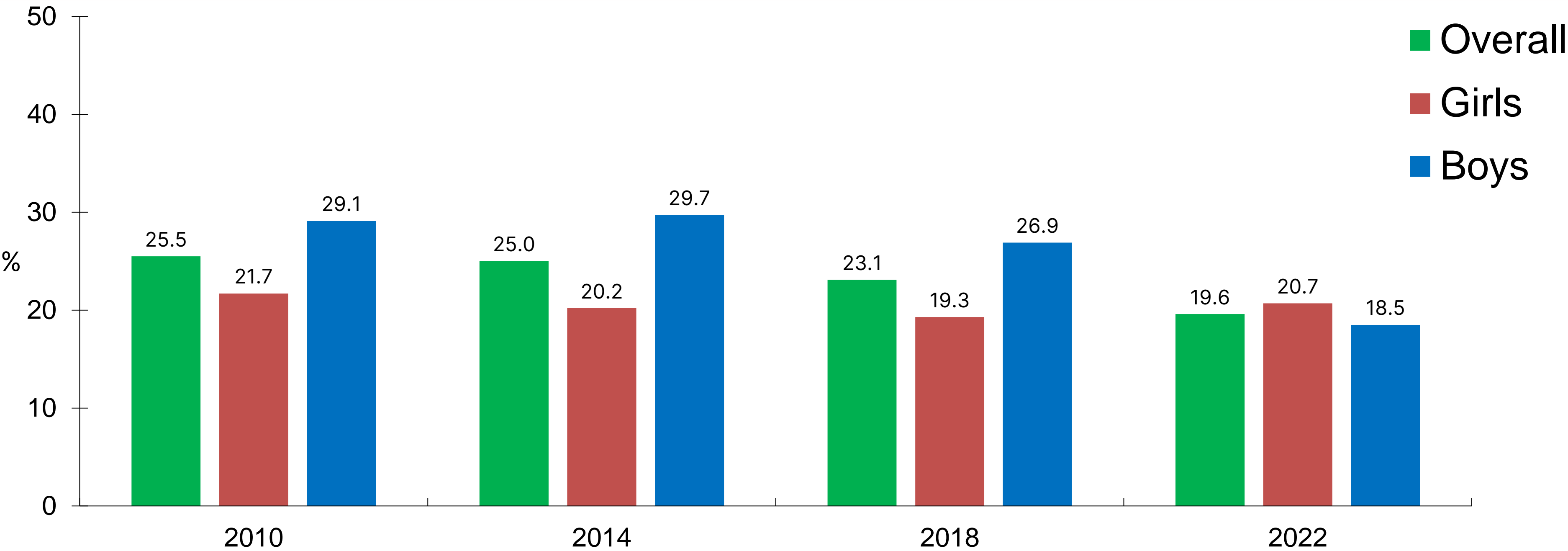
Soft drink consumption



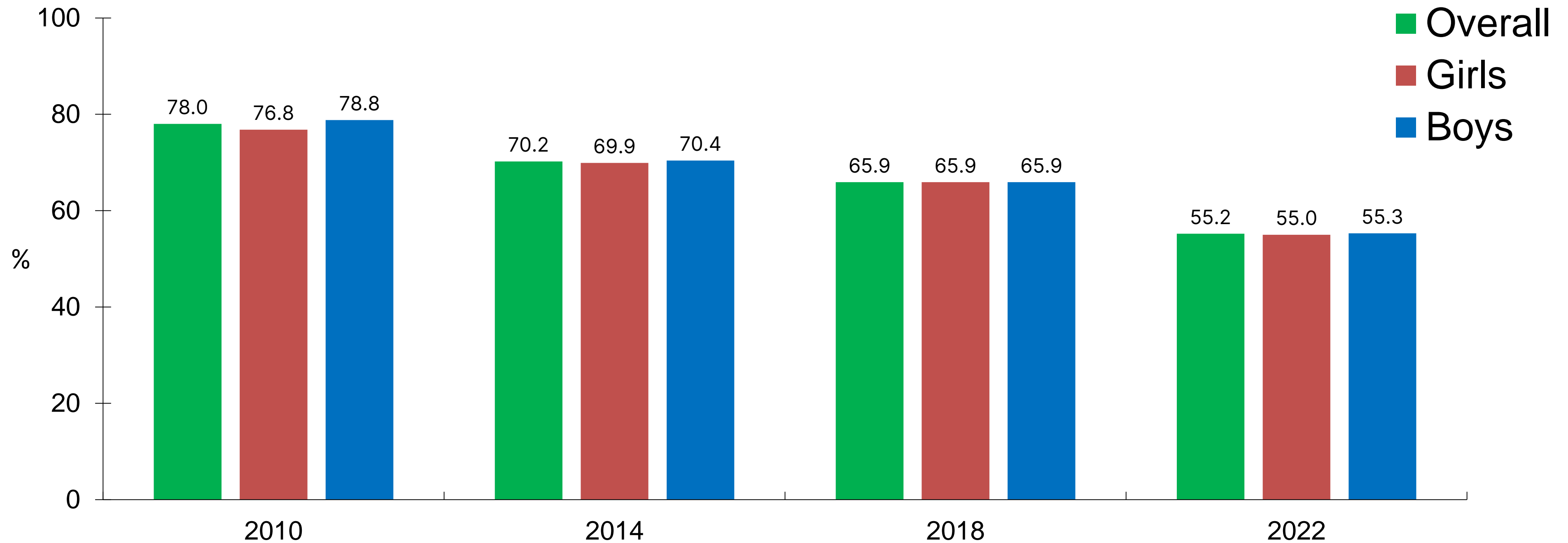
Vigorous exercise



Ever had sexual intercourse



Condom use at last sexual intercourse





Health Outcomes

Key Findings



1998

2002

2006

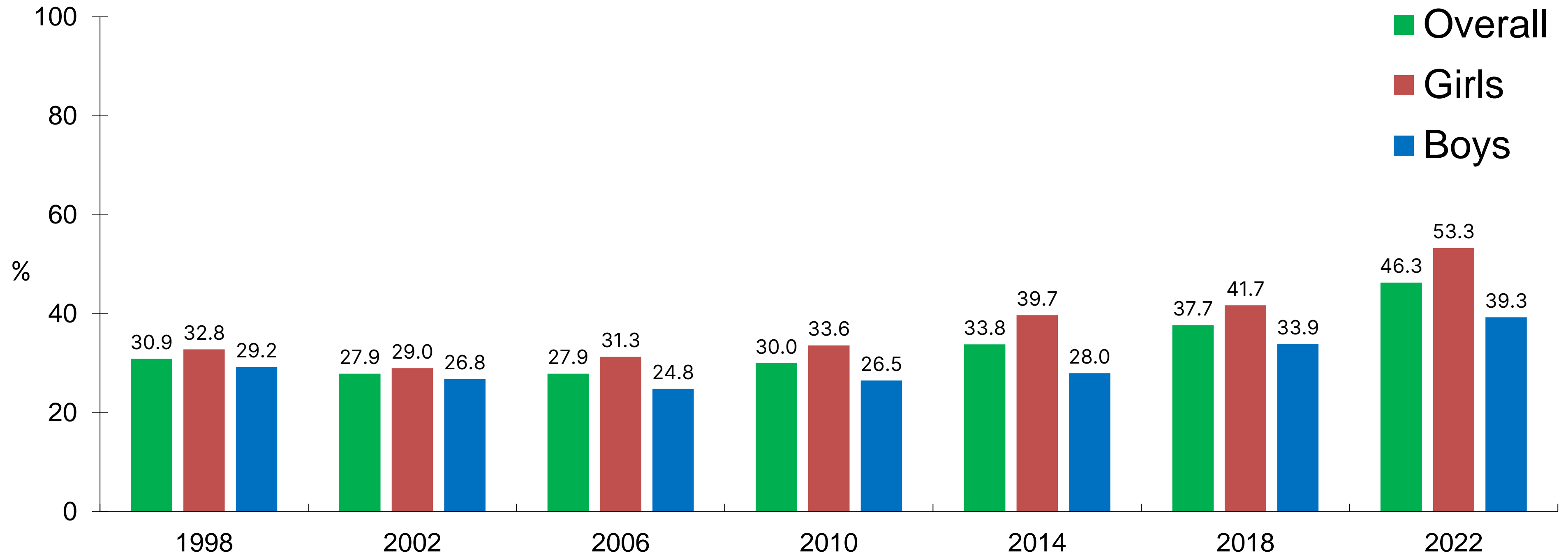
2010

2014

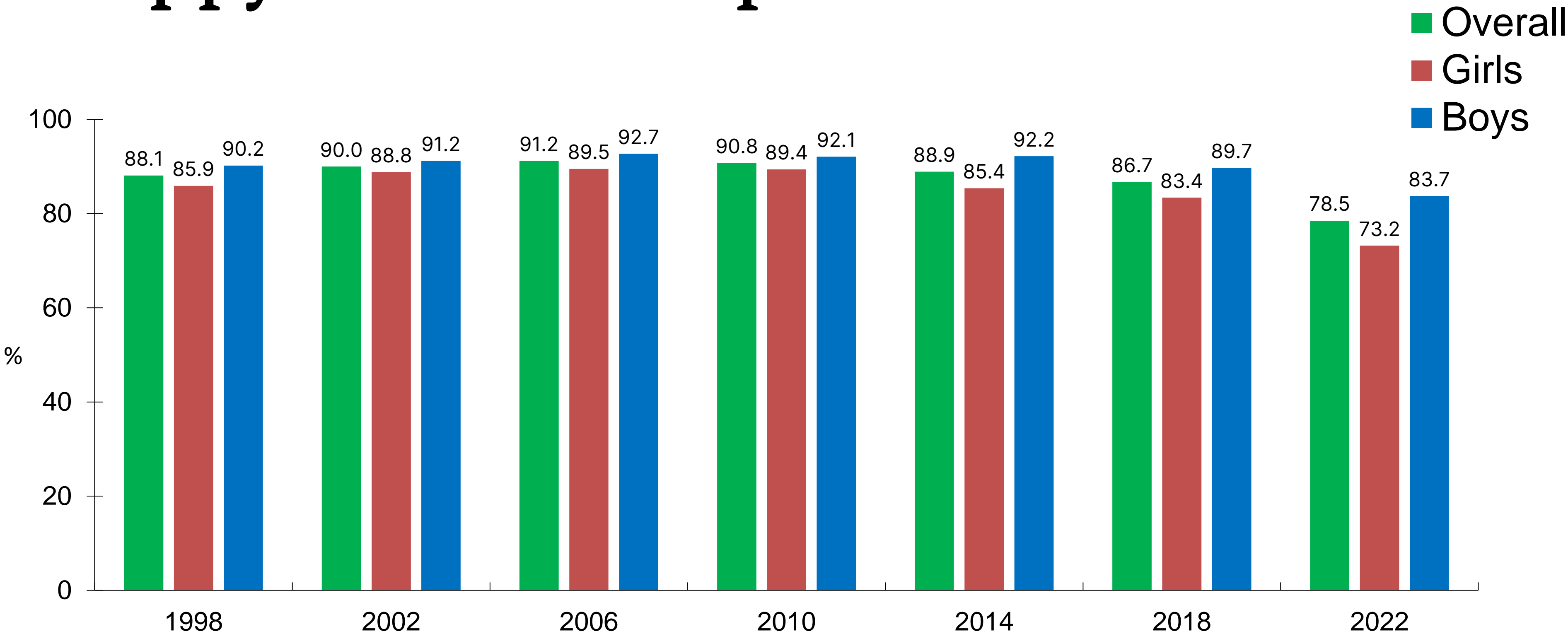
2018

2022

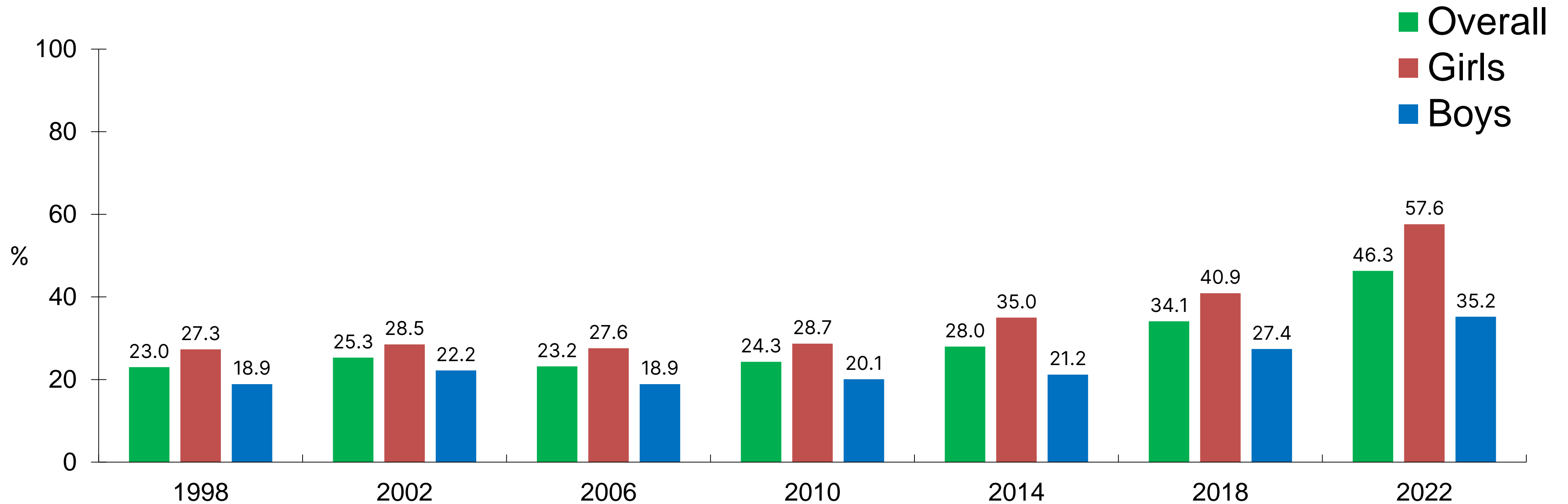
Sleep difficulties



Happy with life at present



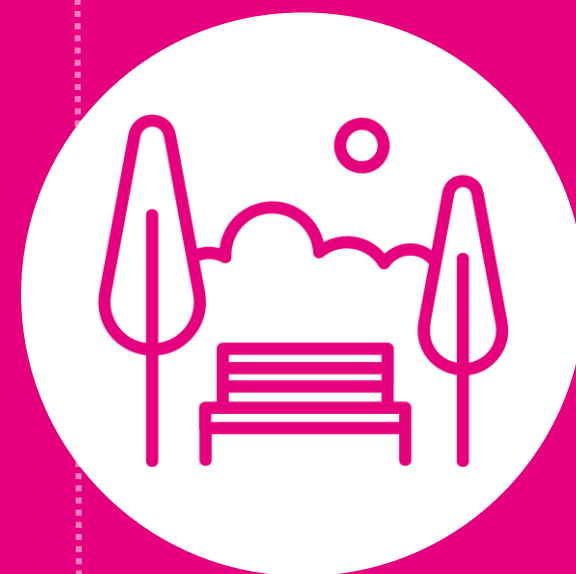
Feeling low





Social Contexts

Key Findings



1998

2002

2006

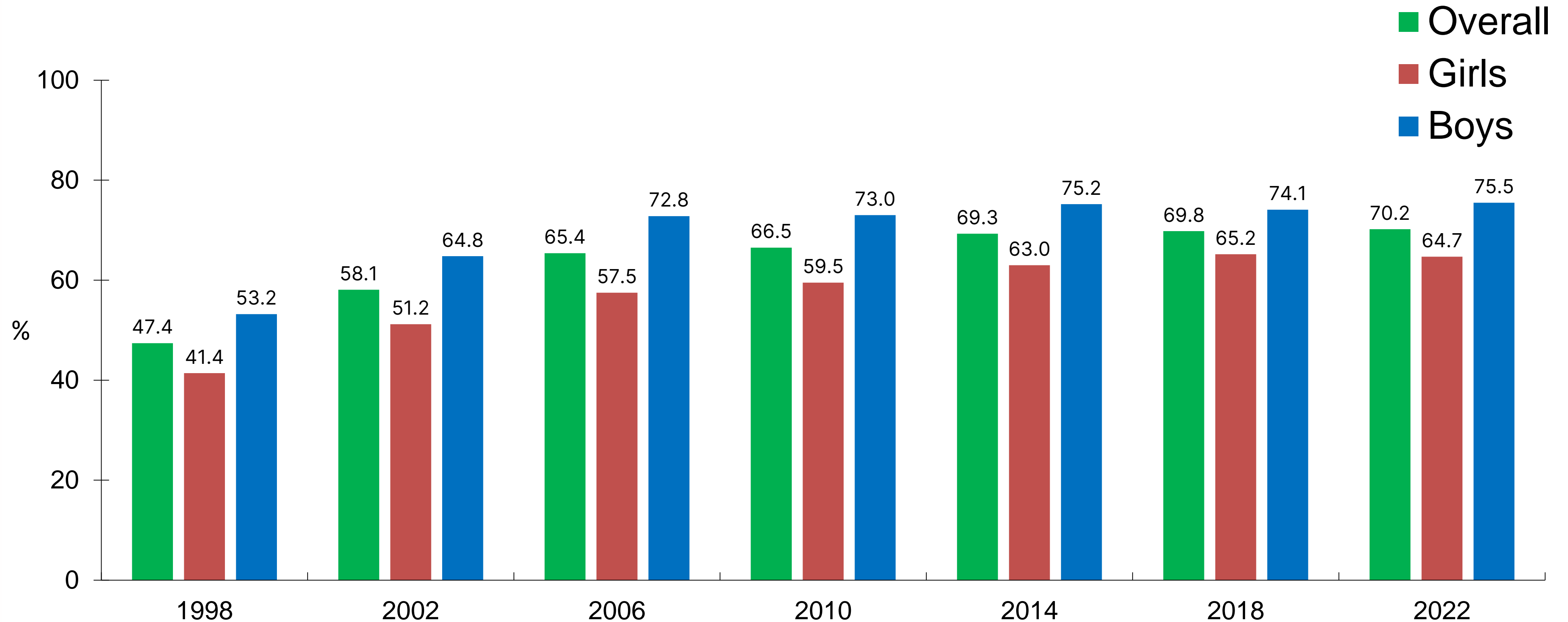
2010

2014

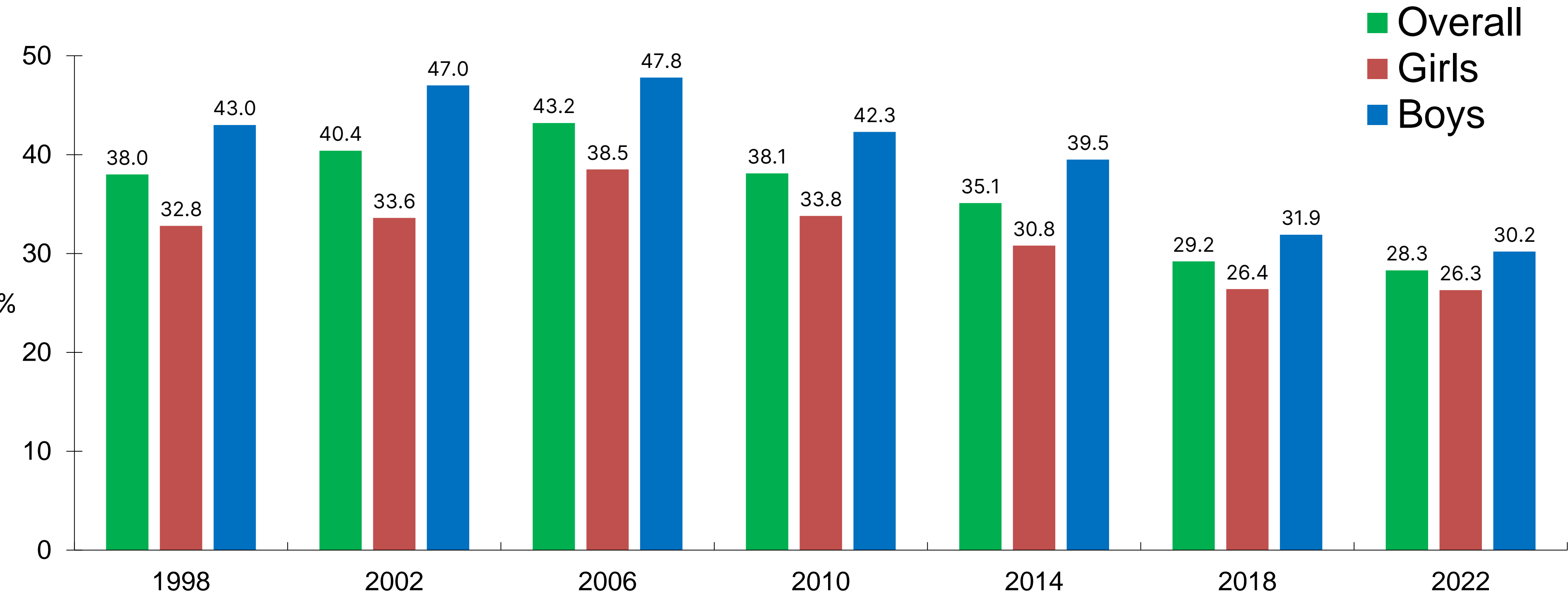
2018

2022

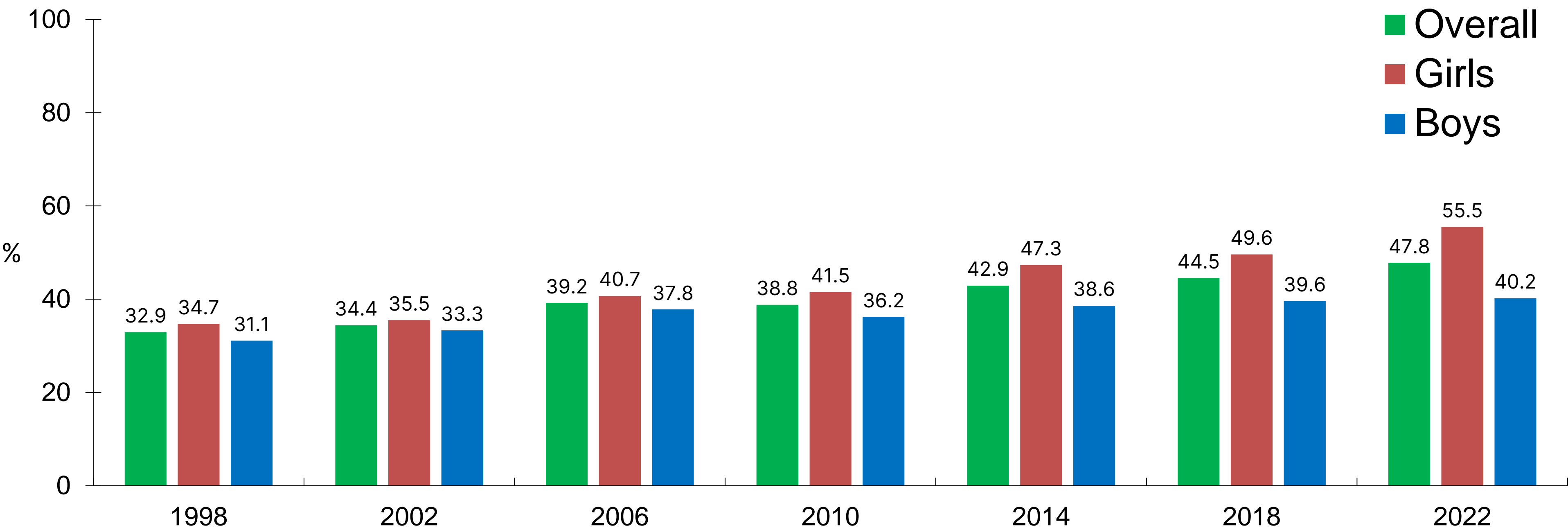
Communication with father



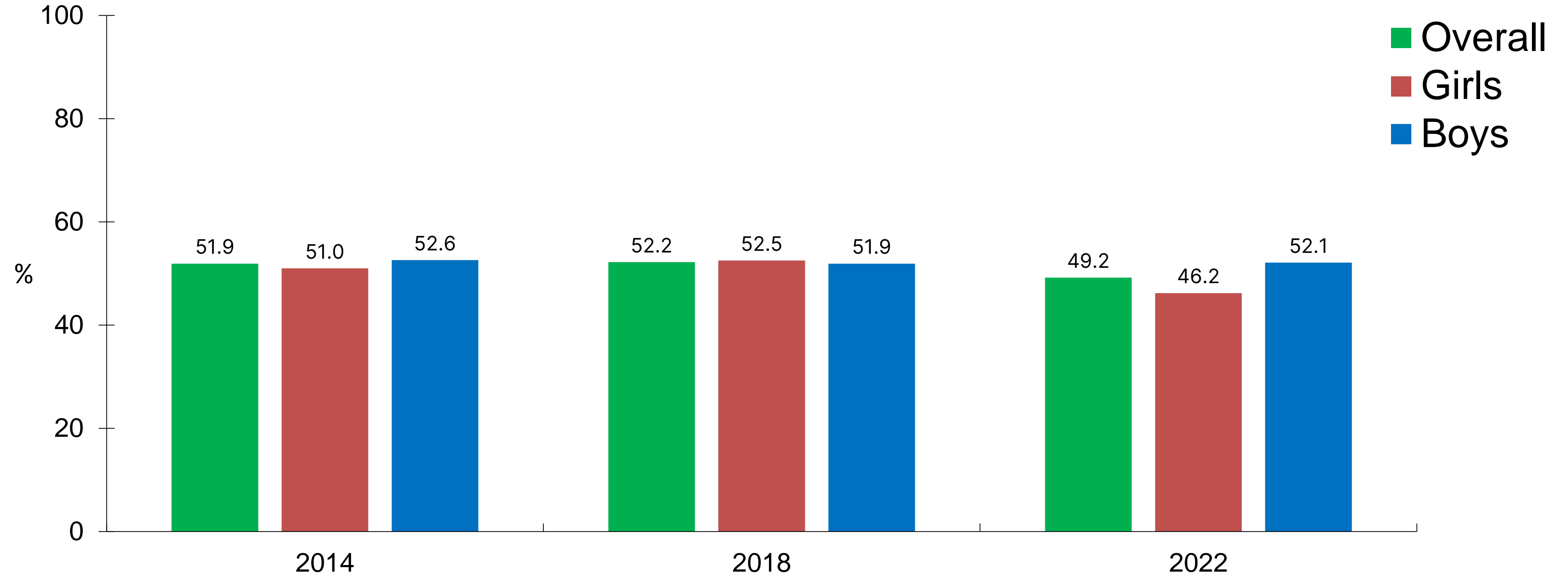
Evenings out with friends



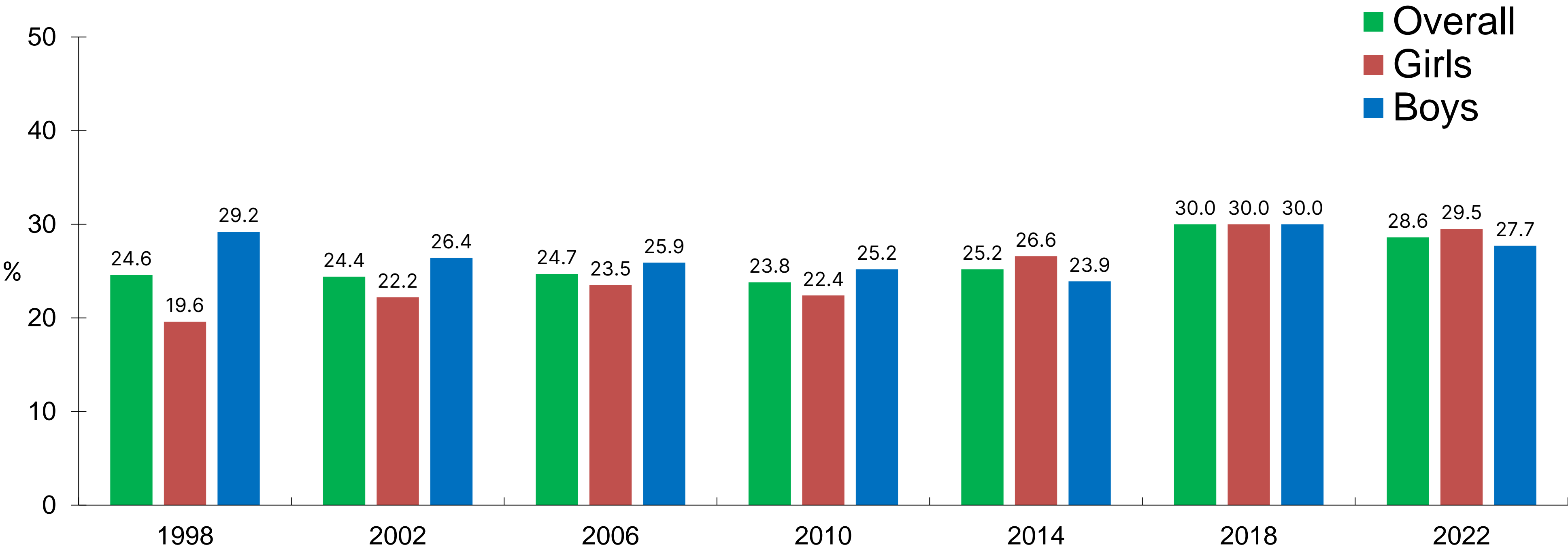
Pressured by schoolwork



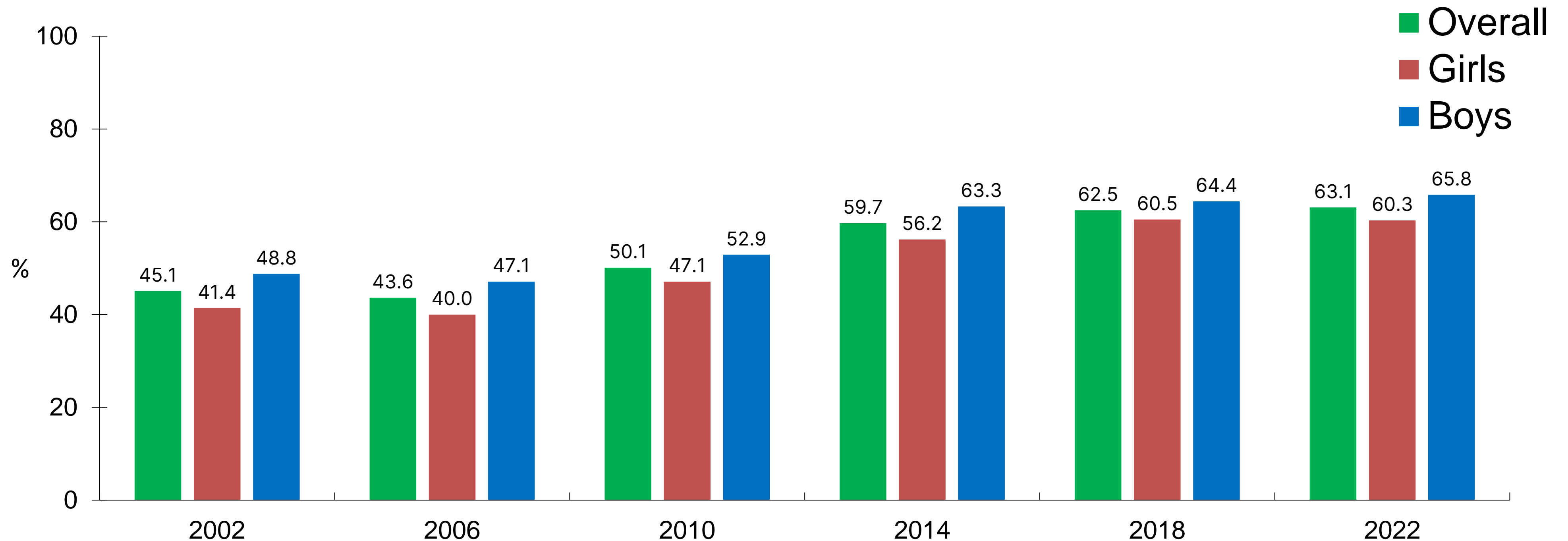
Teacher support



Been bullied



Good places to spend free time





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Summary of Findings

Summary of Findings



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Good News

Decreases across substance use indicators

Decrease in soft drink consumption

Increase in communication with parents

Not so good news

Decrease in condom use

Decreases across physical health and wellbeing outcomes

Increase in school pressure

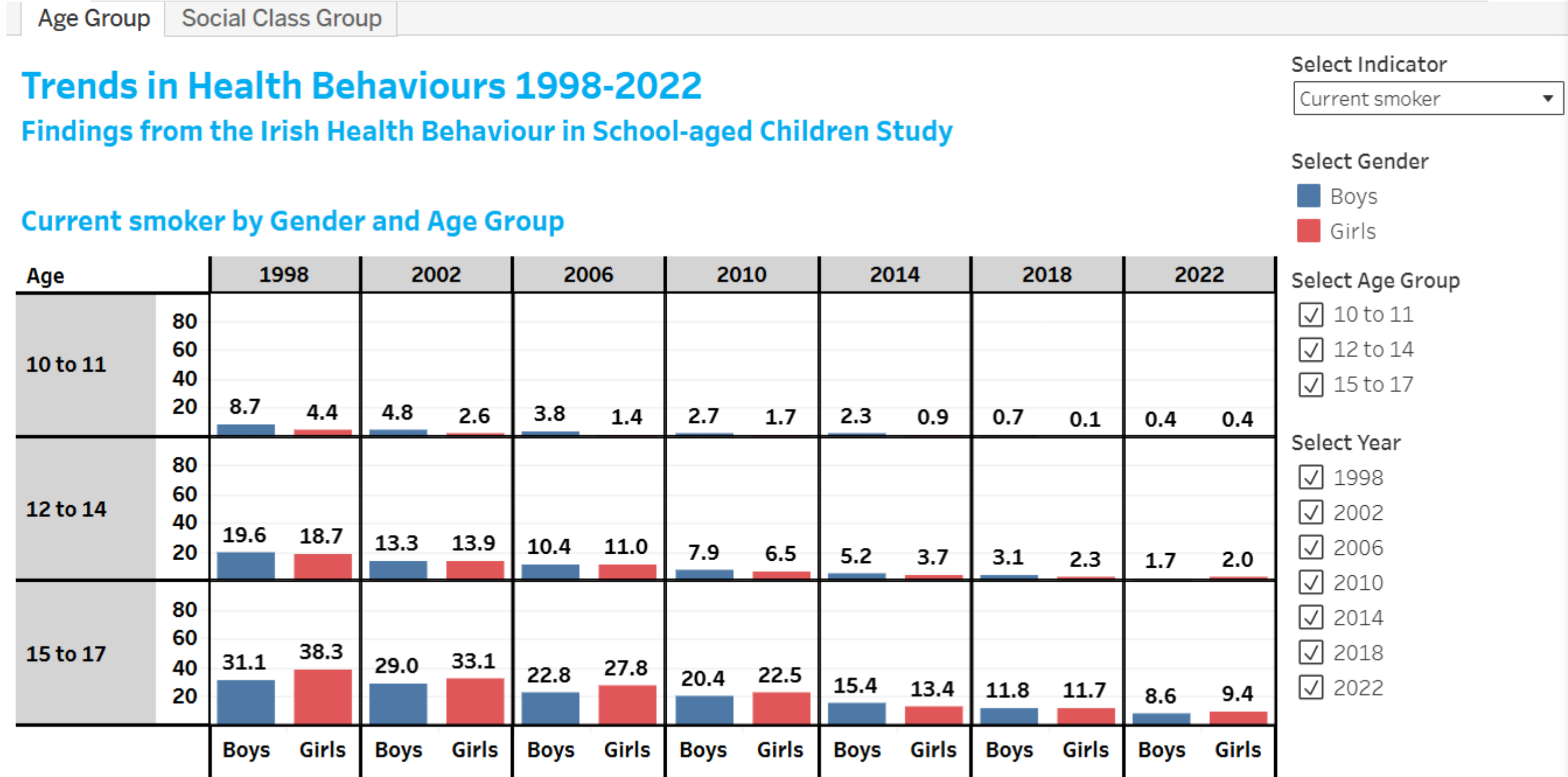


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Finding Out More

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ofGalway.ie

HBSC Data Visuals



<https://tinyurl.com/hbscdatavis>

HBSC Ireland Dissemination



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Publication Type	Total
National reports	303
International reports	215
Peer reviewed journal articles	316
Short reports	63
Research factsheets (Ireland)	121
Data visuals	35
Other reports and papers	129
Book chapters	12
Theses	31
Presentations (Abstracts)	266
All publications	1,491

Acknowledgements

Department of Health

HBSC Ireland Advisory Committee

HBSC International Research Network

World Health Organization (Regional Office for Europe)

Health Promotion Research Centre



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Thank you

To everyone who contributed
to HBSC Ireland 1998-2022

In particular, thanks to the
children, parents, schools,
principals and teachers



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SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN
ÉIREANN / IRELAND



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#HealthyIreland



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