



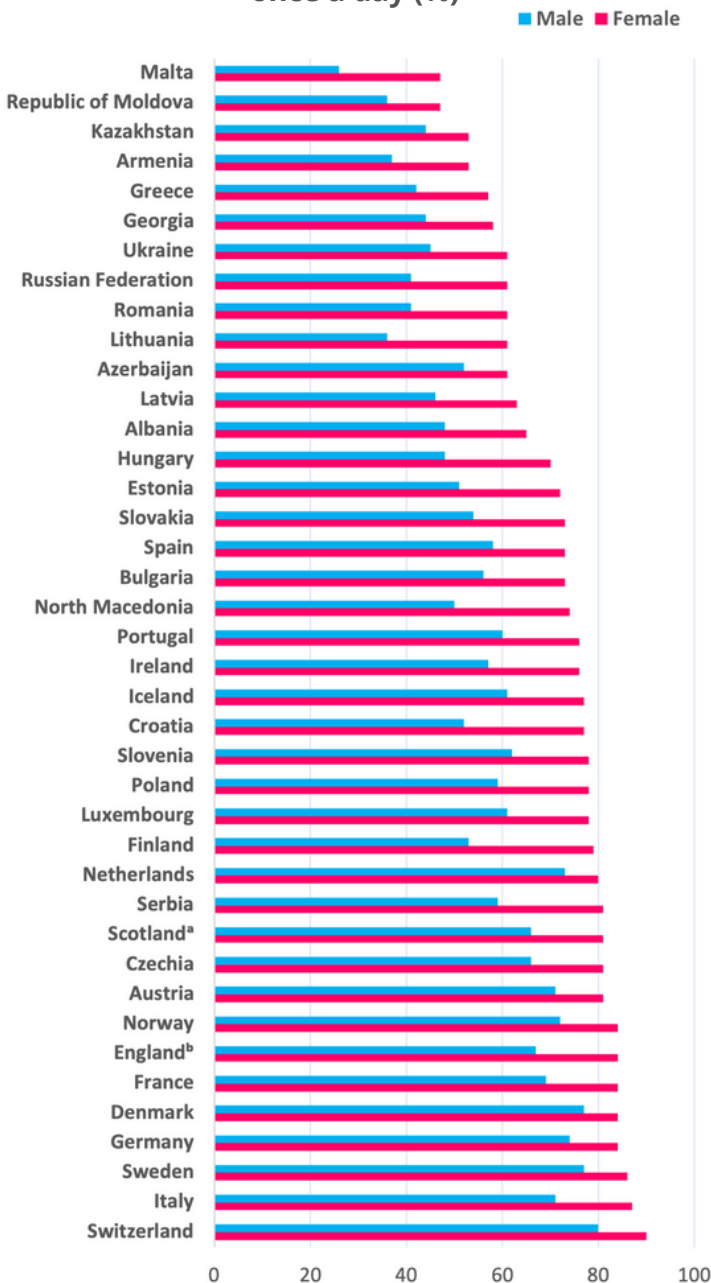
Tooth decay is the most common noncommunicable disease



18–98% of 6-year-olds have dental caries in their primary teeth



13-year-olds who brush their teeth more than once a day (%)



Note: countries with no data: Andorra, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Monaco, Montenegro, San Marino, Serbia, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan. Belgium (Flanders), Belgium (Wallonia), United Kingdom (Wales) not included.

^a United Kingdom (Scotland).

^b United Kingdom (England).

Source: Oral health. Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) survey, 2017/2018.

<https://gateway.euro.who.int/en/datasets/hbsc/>

Oral diseases are highly prevalent

- Oral disease patterns vary from country to country depending on population exposure to fluoride
- Oral disease can result from poor oral health care, diets high in sugar, and being underserved by dental-care services
- It is more frequent and severe in underprivileged populations

Consequences of tooth decay in children

- Oral diseases can cause pain and discomfort, infections, or even sepsis
- In some countries, it is the **number one** reason for child hospital admissions
- Dental care is a **leading cause** of out-of-pocket payments incurred by households with catastrophic health spending

What needs to be done?

- Governments should implement systematic public health approaches for administering fluoride:
 - water fluoridation, or alternatives such as salt or milk fluoridation
 - affordable toothpaste containing fluoride
- Governments should control marketing of food and drink with high sugar content to promote healthy diets
- PHC providers should perform regular physical dental examinations at all well-child visits
- Check counselling box 8 for dental caries prevention in the Pocket Book

Scan the QR code for more information on what PHC providers can do!

