Tobacco consumption statistics

Statistics Explained

Data extracted May 2022. The data presented in this article refer to 2019.

Planned article update: July 2027.

Highlights

In 2019, men in the EU were more likely than women to be daily smokers.

Among people aged 15 years and over, the share of daily smokers in the EU in 2019 ranged from 6.4 % in Sweden to 28.7 % in Bulgaria.

In 2019, 5.9 % of the EU population aged 15 years and over consumed at least 20 cigarettes per day, and 12.6 % consumed less than 20.

This article starts with a presentation of statistics on the share of persons aged 15 years and over in the EU who are daily smokers of cigarettes. It continues with a section on the use of electronic smoking devices and concludes by looking at exposure to tobacco smoke. In many EU Member States, the prevalence of smoking has stabilised or declined in recent decades. Nevertheless, smoking remains the largest avoidable health risk in the EU and its consequences are a major burden on health care systems.

The data in this article are from the European health interview survey (EHIS) which was conducted in 2019 and which covered persons aged 15 years and over. These data indicate that substantial inequalities exist in terms of sex, age and education level concerning the share of adults who are daily smokers of cigarettes, while there are also considerable differences between the EU Member States with respect to smoking habits.

This article is one of a set of statistical articles concerning health determinants in the EU which forms part of an online publication on health statistics .

Daily smokers of cigarettes

Men were more likely than women to be daily smokers

In 2019, 18.4 % of people aged 15 years and over in the EU were daily smokers. Among the EU Member States, the share of daily

smokers ranged from 6.4 % in Sweden and 9.9 % in Finland to 23.6 % in Greece and 28.7 % in Bulgaria (see Table 1).

Daily smokers of cigarettes among persons aged 15 and over, 2019

	Total	Men	Women	Gender difference
		(%)		(percentage points)
EU	18.4	22.3	14.8	7.5
Belgium	14.6	17.6	11.8	5.8
Bulgaria	28.7	37.6	20.7	16.9
Czechia	19.3	23.2	15.7	7.5
Denmark	11.7	11.7	11.8	-0.1
Germany	21.9	25.4	18.6	6.8
stonia	18.9	25.2	13.5	11.7
reland	13.8	15.0	12.7	2.3
Greece	23.6	29.9	17.9	12.0
Spain	19.7	23.2	16.4	6.8
rance	17.8	20.5	15.4	5.1
Croatia	21.8	25.1	19.2	5.9
taly	16.5	20.5	12.7	7.8
Cyprus	21.2	30.1	12.8	17.3
_atvia	22.1	34.4	12.1	22.3
Lithuania	18.4	29.1	9.5	19.6
_uxembourg	10.5	11.7	9.2	2.5
Hungary	19.3	21.5	17.3	4.2
Valta	19.4	21.9	16.8	5.1
Netherlands	14.6	16.4	12.8	3.6
Austria	20.2	23.1	17.5	5.6
Poland	18.4	23.0	14.2	8.8
Portugal	11.5	16.4	7.2	9.2
Romania	18.7	30.6	7.5	23.1
Slovenia	16.6	18.4	14.8	3.6
Slovakia	20.4	26.1	15.1	11.0
inland	9.9	12.1	7.8	4.3
Sweden	6.4	5.9	6.8	-0.9
celand	7.5	8.7	6.5	2.2
Norway	10.2	11.0	9.4	1.6
Serbia	26.2	28.3	24.4	3.9
Turkey	27.3	40.6	14.4	26.2

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hlth_ehis_sk3e)

eurostat

Table 1: Daily smokers of cigarettes among persons aged 15 and over, 2019 Source: Eurostat (hlth_ehis_sk3e)

Among men, the share of daily smokers ranged from 5.9 % in Sweden, 11.7 % in Denmark and Luxembourg and 12.1 % in Finland to 37.6 % in Bulgaria, while among women, the share ranged from 6.8 % in Sweden (and also less than 10.0 % in Portugal, Romania, Finland, Luxembourg and Lithuania) to 20.7 % in Bulgaria. Denmark and Sweden were the only Member States where the share of daily smokers was higher among women than among men, although the differences in the shares were quite small, particularly in Denmark.

The largest gender differences, in percentage point terms, were in Romania and Latvia, where the shares of daily smokers among men were 23.1 and 22.3 percentage points respectively above the shares recorded among women – see Figure 1.

Share of daily smokers of cigarettes among persons aged 15 and over, by sex, 2019

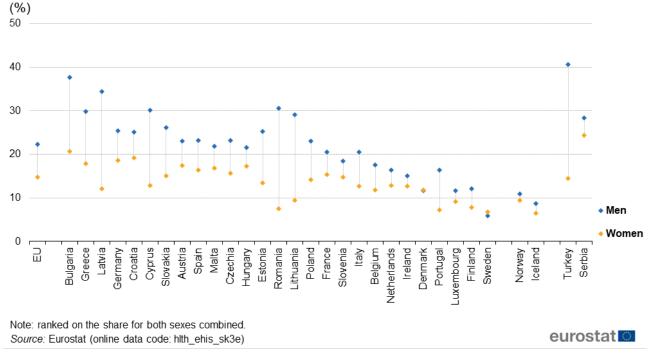


Figure 1: Share of daily smokers of cigarettes among persons aged 15 and over, by sex, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (hlth_ehis_sk3e)

The share of daily smokers was notably lower among age groups beyond 55-64 years

For the EU as a whole, the age profile of daily smokers was similar for men and for women:

- the share increased between the age groups 15-24 and 25-34;
- for the age groups from 25–34 to 55–64 the share of daily smokers remained generally high;
- thereafter the shares fell, with by far the lowest share of daily smokers among the oldest age group.

Most of the EU Member States followed this broad pattern, with the highest shares reported between the ages of 25 and 54 years and the lowest in the age groups from 65 years (see Table 2). In fact, in all EU Member States, as well as in Serbia and Turkey, for men and for women the lowest rates were always among people aged 75 years and over; this was not the case in Iceland or Norway, where the share of daily smokers among people aged 75 years and over was greater than in some of the younger age groups, particularly those aged 15–24 and 25–34 years. Turning to the highest shares, among men aged 35–54 years in Bulgaria and aged 45–54 years in Latvia, more than 45 % were daily smokers. Among women, shares

above 30 % were recorded in Bulgaria for the age range 35-54 years and in Croatia among those aged 55-64 years.

Share of daily smokers of cigarettes, by sex and age group, 2019

		Men, age groups in years					Women, age groups in years									
	≥ 15	15-24	25-34	35–44	45-54	55-64	65-74	≥75	≥ 15	15-24	25-34	35–44	45-54	55-64	65-74	≥75
EU	22.3	16.7	28.6	29.0	26.8	24.8	14.6	5.4	14.8	11.2	18.1	18.1	19.7	19.0	10.4	3.4
Belgium	17.6	13.3	24.6	25.4	20.0	18.7	7.3	3.2	11.8	7.7	11.3	12.5	16.8	16.6	8.9	3.0
Bulgaria	37.6	20.2	41.9	47.6	48.3	44.7	28.4	8.2	20.7	11.6	24.3	33.7	35.8	23.0	10.1	1.5
Czechia	23.2	19.1	27.5	27.6	25.4	26.3	17.6	5.7	15.7	9.8	19.4	19.8	17.6	19.5	14.5	3.5
Denmark	11.7	6.4	12.8	11.8	15.4	15.8	10.5	5.8	11.8	12.5	11.5	12.4	12.8	15.8	8.6	7.6
Germany	25.4	19.3	33.2	35.4	31.1	28.2	16.4	3.8	18.6	16.5	22.4	22.1	24.3	24.1	13.9	5.2
Estonia	25.2	14.8	25.1	27.0	28.3	35.6	24.1	10.0	13.5	11.6	15.6	16.2	22.3	17.6	7.3	2.3
Ireland	15.0	14.8	21.1	15.2	15.5	16.5	8.4	5.5	12.7	8.2	16.1	13.9	17.9	12.1	10.3	4.8
Greece	29.9	19.4	34.8	40.7	35.3	35.3	23.8	10.6	17.9	7.9	18.8	24.5	28.0	23.0	13.4	4.1
Spain	23.2	17.9	30.6	27.9	26.2	27.3	14.1	7.4	16.4	12.0	21.7	20.0	23.7	20.1	8.6	2.0
France	20.5	18.7	30.5	30.0	24.9	18.4	8.7	2.8	15.4	12.7	23.8	20.9	19.2	17.8	7.4	2.6
Croatia	25.1	21.3	30.5	31.5	33.3	31.1	21.5	7.8	19.2	12.3	26.7	21.8	27.5	30.7	13.3	3.9
Italy	20.5	16.8	26.9	26.8	23.6	22.0	14.8	6.8	12.7	9.1	15.5	15.8	16.5	16.0	11.1	3.3
Cyprus	30.1	22.3	41.2	34.5	33.3	31.2	21.4	9.3	12.8	7.8	18.7	19.5	11.1	13.4	7.8	2.6
Latvia	34.4	19.9	39.5	38.8	45.3	38.6	27.5	10.0	12.1	12.0	16.0	18.2	17.7	14.3	5.6	1.1
Lithuania	29.1	17.7	27.7	33.7	40.3	40.1	17.9	6.8	9.5	5.8	11.3	18.5	14.1	10.6	5.2	0.4
Luxembourg	11.7	11.5	10.8	17.6	14.0	9.7	6.2	3.4	9.2	8.2	9.2	9.8	10.2	11.4	7.8	4.2
Hungary	21.5	22.2	24.8	24.4	23.7	25.5	13.4	4.9	17.3	20.6	22.3	17.3	21.2	20.7	13.1	4.0
Malta	21.9	14.6	24.8	28.8	23.4	26.6	14.4	6.2	16.8	11.0	20.9	21.1	23.6	17.9	11.4	3.7
Netherlands	16.4	12.5	21.8	21.9	19.5	17.8	10.2	4.4	12.8	8.0	14.7	15.1	16.0	14.8	11.9	6.5
Austria	23.1	23.2	30.4	31.9	26.7	21.3	11.8	3.4	17.5	13.9	22.2	21.7	23.5	21.0	11.8	2.5
Poland	23.0	12.6	24.0	24.6	26.5	30.1	23.0	9.2	14.2	7.6	11.5	14.8	19.3	23.6	13.7	3.2
Portugal	16.4	13.7	21.4	23.5	23.5	16.4	5.7	2.9	7.2	5.3	8.6	12.6	11.1	7.6	3.2	0.6
Romania	30.6	14.3	39.9	40.1	40.1	31.3	19.6	6.8	7.5	5.7	12.1	10.0	10.4	8.0	3.1	1.1
Slovenia	18.4	13.9	23.6	22.0	22.6	20.8	10.4	4.0	14.8	11.7	18.1	17.4	18.4	21.0	11.8	1.7
Slovakia	26.1	17.9	29.9	31.1	32.0	25.9	19.9	9.0	15.1	13.3	18.8	18.4	19.9	16.1	10.1	2.2
Finland	12.1	6.3	12.2	16.2	19.1	15.4	9.2	2.9	7.8	5.1	8.1	9.2	11.2	12.9	5.6	1.2
Sweden	5.9	3.5	5.6	5.7	6.9	8.5	7.6	3.0	6.8	4.1	6.3	6.3	7.3	11.5	7.8	3.8
Iceland	8.7	4.1	11.1	9.0	10.8	9.5	9.0	6.0	6.5	2.2	4.5	8.8	6.0	10.4	6.1	6.4
Norway	11.0	3.5	7.3	15.1	10.9	17.2	14.8	7.6	9.4	2.2	4.4	9.1	13.3	16.8	14.6	4.7
Serbia	28.3	16.2	29.5	33.8	38.3	35.2	20.7	8.1	24.4	13.4	24.4	30.5	33.9	32.6	18.9	4.7
Turkey	40.6	30.7	50.4	51.5	43.9	37.7	19.5	12.8	14.4	7.6	16.4	23.6	17.8	12.6	5.7	2.7

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hlth_ehis_sk3e)

eurostat

Table 2: Share of daily smokers of cigarettes, by sex and age group, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (hlth_ehis_sk3e)

In the EU, the gender difference in daily smoking in 2019 was greatest in percentage point terms in the age groups with the highest prevalence of smokers, while in relative terms it was quite even across all age groups. There were some more notable gender differences among the EU Member States. For example, in Lithuania and Latvia, men aged 75 years and over were 17 and 9 times as likely to be daily smokers as women in the same age group. There were also a few Member States where the likelihood of smoking was higher for women than for men in particular age groups. This was the case in all age groups in Sweden, and in one or more age groups in Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands and Slovenia.

The share of daily smokers of cigarettes was generally lowest among people with a tertiary level of education, although there were quite different patterns for men and women

Figure 2 shows that the prevalence of daily smoking in 2019 was generally lowest among people having completed tertiary education and highest among those having completed upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education. In Greece, Croatia, Cyprus, Romania and Slovenia, the lowest prevalence was reported for persons having completed, at most, lower secondary education; this was also the case in Turkey.

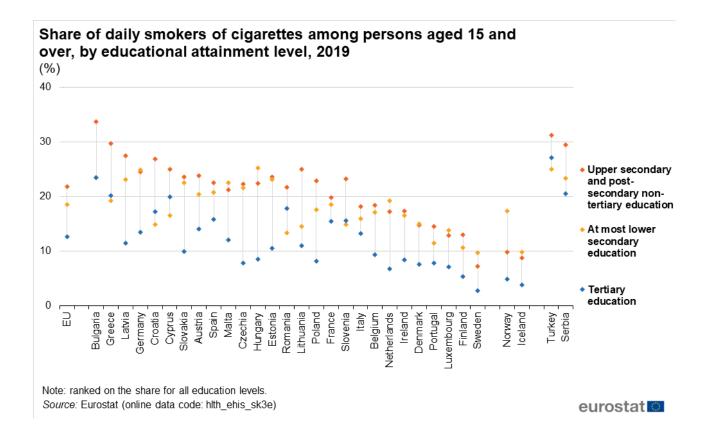


Figure 2: Share of daily smokers of cigarettes among persons aged 15 and over, by educational attainment level, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (hlth_ehis_sk3e)

A similar analysis is presented in Table 3, but with separate data for men and women. In 2019, the lowest shares of daily smokers among men were generally recorded for those with a tertiary level of education, the only exception among the EU Member States being recorded in Romania.

For women, the pattern was somewhat different, as relatively low shares of daily smokers were reported not only for women with a tertiary level of education, but also for women having completed, at most, lower secondary education. As such, in 18 EU Member States the highest share of daily smokers among women was recorded among those having completed upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education. Looking in more detail, relatively low shares of women having completed at most lower secondary education were daily smokers in Cyprus, Bulgaria, Greece and Croatia for women, at least 5.0 percentage points lower than for women in either of the other education categories shown in Table 3. Equally, a relatively low share of women having completed tertiary education were daily smokers in Hungary and Czechia, at least 10.0 percentage points lower than the share for women in either of the other two education categories.

Share of daily smokers of cigarettes among persons aged 15 and over, by sex and educational attainment level, 2019

		Men		Women				
	At most lower secondary education	Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education	Tertiary education	At most lower secondary education	Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education	Tertiary education		
EU	24.0	26.0	14.2	13.9	17.8	11.3		
Belgium	22.7	20.3	11.0	12.6	16.2	7.9		
Bulgaria	37.4	41.0	28.3	12.4	25.6	20.2		
Czechia	28.0	26.3	8.6	17.3	18.1	7.3		
Denmark	15.5	14.1	7.5	14.4	15.6	7.7		
Germany	31.1	29.2	14.9	20.6	20.3	11.4		
Estonia	29.6	29.7	14.7	17.8	16.9	8.0		
reland	17.8	19.2	8.8	15.1	15.9	8.2		
Greece	27.9	36.8	21.2	13.0	21.9	19.3		
Spain	26.6	24.4	16.2	15.1	20.6	15.4		
France	22.8	20.2	16.6	14.4	19.5	14.5		
Croatia	23.0	27.9	18.4	11.5	26.0	16.6		
taly	21.6	21.1	14.9	11.0	15.3	11.9		
Cyprus	29.7	34.4	24.8	5.8	14.9	15.7		
_atvia	33.6	40.7	19.5	13.1	15.2	6.9		
Lithuania	24.4	38.2	16.2	6.6	12.3	7.4		
uxembourg	16.6	14.5	7.4	11.3	11.3	7.0		
Hungary	30.1	24.6	8.5	22.2	20.0	8.7		
Malta	25.6	24.6	13.0	19.3	17.6	11.1		
Netherlands	21.8	19.1	8.0	17.0	15.3	5.7		
Austria	26.4	26.8	15.5	16.8	20.6	12.6		
Poland	24.1	27.4	9.2	12.7	18.1	7.6		
Portugal	18.2	16.0	10.8	5.5	13.1	5.9		
Romania	24.2	33.9	27.5	6.1	8.2	8.7		
Slovenia	18.6	24.2	16.5	12.8	21.5	14.6		
Slovakia	28.0	30.3	12.5	19.3	16.7	7.7		
inland	12.9	15.3	6.2	8.4	10.4	4.8		
Sweden	10.0	6.0	2.4	9.5	8.8	3.2		
celand	10.5	10.0	5.1	9.4	7.4	3.2		
Norway	18.8	9.7	4.8	16.0	10.0	5.0		
Serbia	27.4	31.2	20.4	20.9	27.7	20.6		
Turkey	43.0	40.9	34.6	11.8	18.0	17.8		

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hlth_ehis_sk3e)

eurostat

Table 3: Share of daily smokers of cigarettes among persons aged 15 and over, by sex and educational attainment level, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (hlth ehis sk3e)

Most daily smokers had been smoking for at least 10 years

Figure 3 confirms that the vast majority (76.2 %) of daily smokers in 2019 across the EU had been smoking for at least 10 years; note that these data cover persons aged 15 years and over, so some of the younger people in this reference population are likely to have been smoking for only a few years. Some 78.1 % of men who were daily smokers had smoked for at least 10 years, compared with 73.5 % for women. When analysed by level of educational attainment, daily smokers having completed, at most, a lower secondary level of education were most likely to have smoked for at least 10 years, this share reaching 80.5 %. For daily smokers with a tertiary level of education the share was 71.2 %.

Distribution of the duration of daily smokers of cigarettes among persons aged 15 and over, EU, 2019 (%)

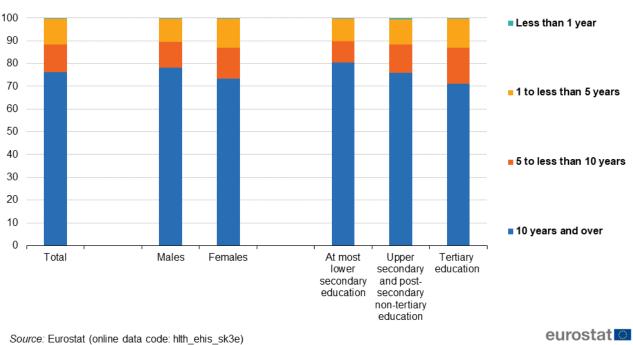


Figure 3: Distribution of the duration of daily smokers of cigarettes among persons aged 15 and over, EU, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (hlth ehis sk5e)

Level of cigarette consumption

The next section of analysis in this article focuses on the level of consumption, distinguishing between smokers consuming on average 20 cigarettes or more per day (hereafter referred to as heavy smokers) and daily smokers with a lower level of consumption (hereafter referred to as light smokers).

Share of daily smokers of cigarettes among persons aged 15 and over, by level of consumption, 2019

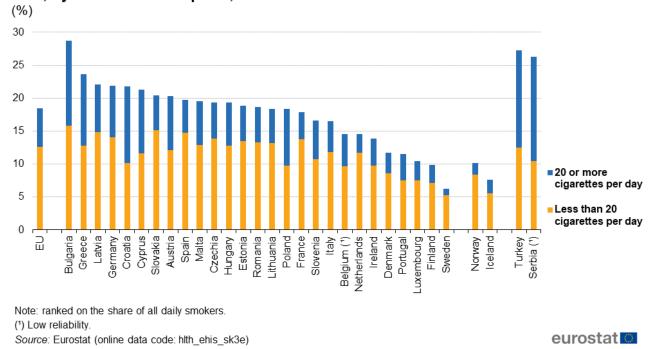


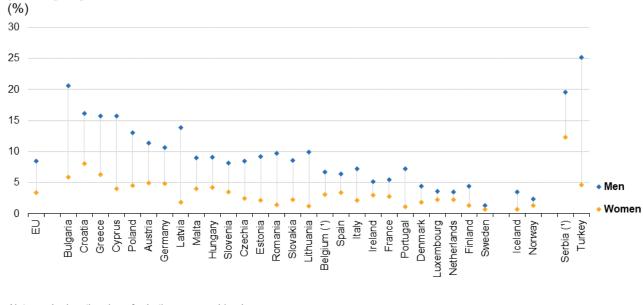
Figure 4: Share of daily smokers of cigarettes among persons aged 15 and over, by level of consumption, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (hlth_ehis_sk3e)

In 2019, 5.9 % of the EU population aged 15 years and over consumed at least 20 cigarettes per day and 12.6 % consumed less than 20 per day. Among the EU Member States, only in Croatia did heavy smokers make up the majority of daily smokers; heavy smokers were also in a majority in Turkey and Serbia. By contrast, in the Netherlands and Sweden, less than one in five daily smokers were heavy smokers – see Figure 4.

In 2019, around one in eight persons aged 15 years and over in Bulgaria were heavy smokers

The share of heavy smokers among those aged 15 years and over varied somewhat in 2019, from 1.0 % in Sweden and close to 3 % in Finland, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Denmark, to 9.7 % in Cyprus, 10.8 % in Greece, 11.6 % in Croatia and 12.9 % in Bulgaria. In line with the general pattern for all daily smokers, men were more likely than women to be heavy smokers, as can be seen in Figure 5.

Share of persons aged 15 and over consuming 20 or more cigarettes per day, by sex, 2019



Note: ranked on the share for both sexes combined. (1) Low reliability.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hlth_ehis_sk3e)

eurostat

Figure 5: Share of persons aged 15 and over consuming 20 or more cigarettes per day, by sex, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (hlth_ehis_sk3e)

For men, the share of heavy smokers among those aged 15 years and over was 8.5 % in the EU in 2019. This share was above 10.0 % in eight EU Member States, peaking at 20.6% in Bulgaria. The share was below 5.0 % in five Member States, with the lowest share in Sweden (1.3 %). Among women, this share was 5.0 % or higher in just four of the Member States; the 8.1 % share in Croatia was the highest. Less than 2.0 % of women aged 15 years and over were heavy smokers in seven Member States, with Sweden again recording the lowest share (0.7 %).

Share of daily smokers of cigarettes among persons aged 15 and over, by sex and level of consumption, 2019

	Me	en	Wor	Women			
	Less than 20 cigarettes per day	20 or more cigarettes per day	Less than 20 cigarettes per day	20 or more cigarettes per day			
EU	13.8	8.5	11.4	3.4			
Belgium (1)	10.9	6.7	8.7	3.1			
Bulgaria	17.0	20.6	14.8	5.9			
Czechia	14.7	8.5	13.2	2.5			
)enmark	7.3	4.4	9.9	1.9			
Germany	14.6	10.7	13.7	4.9			
Estonia	16.0	9.2	11.3	2.2			
reland	9.9	5.2	9.7	3.0			
Greece	14.1	15.7	11.6	6.3			
Spain	16.8	6.4	13.0	3.4			
France	15.0	5.5	12.6	2.8			
Croatia	8.9	16.2	11.1	8.1			
taly	13.2	7.3	10.5	2.2			
Cyprus	14.4	15.7	8.8	4.0			
_atvia	20.6	13.9	10.2	1.9			
Lithuania	19.2	9.9	8.3	1.2			
uxembourg	8.0	3.6	6.9	2.3			
Hungary	12.5	9.1	13.1	4.2			
Malta	12.9	9.0	12.8	4.0			
Vetherlands	12.9	3.5	10.6	2.3			
Austria	11.6	11.4	12.5	5.0			
Poland	10.1	13.0	9.6	4.6			
Portugal	9.1	7.3	6.2	1.1			
Romania	20.9	9.7	6.2	1.4			
Slovenia	10.2	8.2	11.2	3.5			
Slovakia	17.5	8.6	12.8	2.3			
inland	7.7	4.4	6.5	1.3			
Sweden	4.6	1.3	6.1	0.7			
celand	5.2	3.5	5.8	0.7			
Norway	8.6	2.4	8.2	1.3			
Serbia (²)	8.7	19.6	12.1	12.3			
Turkey	15.4	25.2	9.7	4.7			

⁽¹⁾ Men: low reliability

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Table 4: Share of daily smokers of cigarettes among persons aged 15 and over, by sex and level of consumption, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (hlth_ehis_sk3e)

Use of electronic smoking devices

The third wave of the European health interview survey included questions on the use of electronic cigarettes or similar electronic devices; the latter include e-shisha, e-pipe or e-hookah. For such cigarettes or devices, the activity may be referred to as vaping rather than smoking. The survey asked respondents whether they currently vaped – distinguishing between daily and occasional vapers – and whether current non-vapers had formerly vaped. In the EU as a whole, 3.6 % of people aged 15 years and over vaped in 2019, among which slightly more did so occasionally rather than daily. A larger share, 4.8 % had formerly vaped. In other words, there were more ex-vapers than current vapers, and among the current vapers there were more who did so occasionally than daily.

Among the EU Member States, the highest shares of current vapers in 2019 were observed in France (6.6 %), Poland (6.0 %) and the Netherlands (5.9 %); Iceland reported a higher share of current vapers (7.7 %). The lowest share among the Member States was 1.0 % in Spain; Turkey reported a slightly smaller share (0.9 %). Among current vapers, daily vapers outnumbered occasional vapers in Poland, Ireland, Greece, France and Portugal; this was also the case in Iceland. In 20 Member States, former vapers outnumbered current vapers (occasional and daily combined). The seven where there were

more current vapers than former ones were Latvia, Croatia, Lithuania, Greece, the Netherlands, Czechia and Ireland.

⁽²⁾ Low reliability

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hlth ehis sk3e)

Distribution of the frequency of use of electronic cigarettes or similar electronic devices among persons aged 15 and over, 2019

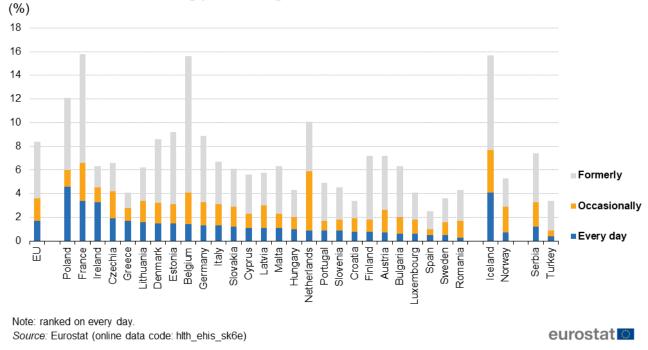


Figure 6: Distribution of the frequency of use of electronic cigarettes or similar electronic devices among persons aged 15 and over, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (hlth_ehis_sk6e)

In the EU, daily vaping was more common among men than women for persons aged 15 years and over. In 2019, this pattern was observed in all of the EU Member States, as well as in Iceland, Norway and Turkey; the reverse was true in Serbia. The difference between the shares for men and women vaping daily was particularly wide in percentage point terms in Poland, France and Lithuania (at least 1.7 percentage points), as was also the case in Iceland. The narrowest gender difference was 0.1 percentage points, recorded in Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

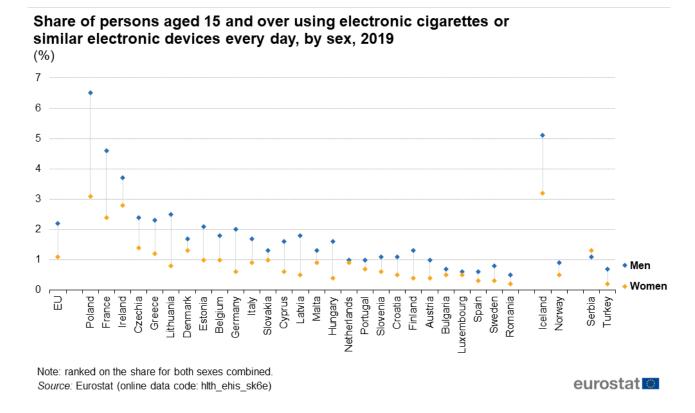


Figure 7: Share of persons aged 15 and over using electronic cigarettes or similar electronic devices every day, by sex, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (hlth_ehis_sk6e)

Exposure to tobacco smoke

The final part of this article looks at the issue of exposure to tobacco smoke indoors, for example being in a room where other people are smoking or have smoked. This exposure to smoke may take place in a variety of different enclosed spaces, such as at home or work, in public places, or in bars and restaurants.

In 2019, 69.1 % of people aged 15 years and over in the EU reported that they were exposed to smoke indoors either rarely or never. Among the 30.9 % who were exposed to smoke, around half (15.4 % of the reference population) were exposed on a daily basis and the remainder less often. Among people exposed on a daily basis, around two thirds were exposed to smoke for one or more hours daily.

Among the EU Member States, the highest shares of people exposed to smoke on a daily basis in 2019 were observed in Croatia (34.7 %), Bulgaria (29.3 %) and Greece (28.0 %); a high share (49.0 %) was also reported for Serbia. In 17 Member States, the share of people exposed to smoke on a daily basis was less than 14.0 %, with this share below 5.0 % in Finland; it was also below 5.0 % in Iceland.

In nearly all EU Member States, the proportion of people exposed to smoke on a daily basis for one or more hours was greater than the share exposed daily for less than one hour: in Finland, these shares were the same (as was also the case in Iceland), while in Estonia, Portugal and Sweden the share was slightly higher for persons exposed daily to smoke for less than one hour; in Norway the share was notably larger for persons exposed to smoke on a daily basis for less than one hour. At the other end of the ranking, in Ireland, Germany and Croatia about three quarters of people exposed daily to smoke were exposed for one hour or more.

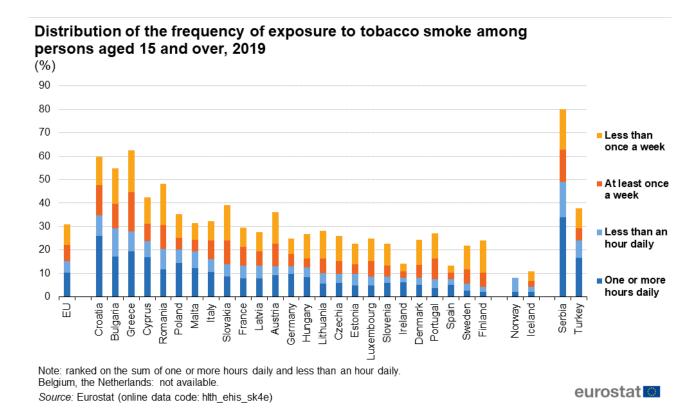


Figure 8: Distribution of the frequency of exposure to tobacco smoke among persons aged 15 and over, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (hlth_ehis_sk4e)

In the EU, daily exposure to smoke was more common among men than women. In 2019, this pattern was observed among those aged 15 years and over for all of the EU Member States, as well as all of the non-member countries shown in Figure 9. The difference between the shares of men and women exposed daily to smoke was particularly wide in percentage point terms in Romania, Bulgaria, Latvia, Greece, Cyprus and Lithuania (at least 10.0 percentage points). The narrowest gender difference was in Spain (0.6 percentage points).

Share of persons aged 15 and over exposed to tobacco smoke on a daily basis, by sex, 2019

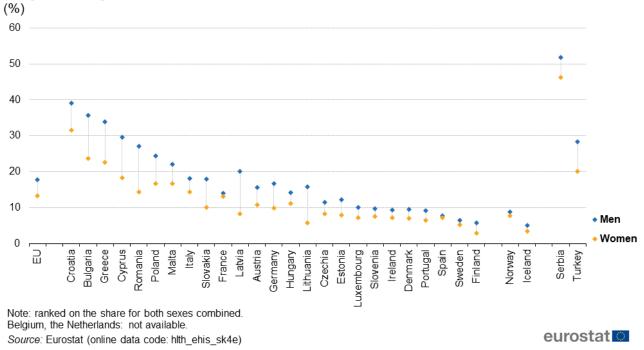


Figure 9: Share of persons aged 15 and over exposed to tobacco smoke on a daily basis, by sex, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (hlth_ehis_sk4e)

Source data for tables, figures and maps (MS Excel)

· Tobacco consumption statistics: tables and figures

Data sources

The third wave of the European health interview survey (EHIS) is the source of information for the data presented in this article. The general coverage of the EHIS is the population aged 15 years and over living in private households residing in the national territory. This source is documented in more detail in this background article which provides information on the scope of the data, its legal basis, the methodology employed, as well as related concepts and definitions.

The third wave of the EHIS was conducted in all 27 EU Member States, as well as in Iceland, Norway, Serbia and Turkey. The data collection period was generally 2019. However, it was 2018 for Belgium, 2018–2019 for Austria, and 2019–2020 for Germany and Malta.

Limitations of the data

The indicators presented in this article are derived from self-reported data. Therefore, they are to a certain extent affected by respondents' subjective perception as well as by their social and cultural background.

Context

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), tobacco is one of the biggest public health threats in the world, killing more than eight million people a year. The European Commission's Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety describes tobacco consumption as the 'single largest avoidable health risk, and the most significant cause of premature death in the EU'. Many forms of cancer, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases are linked to tobacco

use. Smoking may increase the burden on health care services, while around half of smokers die prematurely.

The EU's main policy measures related to tobacco and tobacco consumption aim to protect people from the hazardous effects of smoking and other forms of tobacco consumption, including against second-hand smoke. These include:

- the regulation of tobacco products, for example in terms of packaging, labelling, and ingredients, through the 2014 tobacco products Directive (2014/40);
- tobacco advertising restrictions, for example through the 2003 tobacco advertising Directive (2003/33);
- limitations where people may smoke, as supported by the 2009 Council Recommendation on smoke-free environments;
- tax measures and activities against illicit trade, for example the 2010 Directive on excise duty on tobacco which amended the structure and rates of duty with public health goals in mind;
- anti-smoking campaigns, such as the 2011–2013 and 2014–2016 'ex-smokers are unstoppable' campaigns.

The EU Member States and the European Commission are active partners in the WHO's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, a legally binding international treaty that aims to reduce the damaging health and economic impacts of tobacco consumption.

An indicator on 'Regular smokers' is included in the health determinants chapter of the European core health indicators (ECHI) .

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Database

• Health (hlth), see:

Health determinants (health_det)

Tobacco consumption (hlth_smok)

Thematic section

Health

Methodology

- European health interview survey (EHIS) (ESMS metadata file hlth det esms)
- European Health Interview Survey (EHIS wave 3) Methodological manual 2020 edition

External links

- European Commission Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety European core health indicators (ECHI)
- European Commission Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety, see:
 - Tobacco overview
- European Commission Eurobarometers , see:
 - Attitudes of Europeans towards tobacco and electronic cigarettes, Special Eurobarometer 506, February 2021
- WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control
- WHO Tobacco
 - WHO global report on trends in tobacco smoking 2000–2025