

# ANALYTICAL REPORT

based on the results of surveys of Ukrainian adolescents in 2022/2023 “Health Behaviour in School-aged Children” within the framework of WHO international project “Health Behaviour in School-aged Children” (HBSC)

Kyiv 2024



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>HBSC</b>	Health Behaviour in School-aged Children
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>IDP</b>	Internally displaced person
<b>BMI</b>	Body mass index
<b>MoH</b>	Ministry of Health of Ukraine
<b>AIDS</b>	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

## INTRODUCTION

Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children (HBSC) project has been an innovative international study for over 41 years and provides a deep understanding of youth well-being, health behaviours, and social context. In collaboration with the WHO Regional Office for Europe, the survey is conducted every four years in 51 countries in Europe and North America among adolescents aged 11-15. For Ukraine, the age group of adolescents covers 11-17-year-olds.

The results of the HBSC study are used to inform policy makers and practitioners to improve the lives of millions of young people. Ukraine has been a participant in the international research project «Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children(HBSC) since 2001, when the first pilot survey was conducted, which allowed Ukraine to become a full member of the project. In Ukraine, the study is conducted by the NGO «Ukrainian Institute for Social Research after Olexander Yaremenko» (principal researcher of the project is Tetyana Bondar. Until 2022, the project was headed by Olga Balakireva).

To date, six waves of the survey have been conducted in Ukraine (5,267 persons were interviewed in 2002; 6,535 persons - in 2006; 10,343 persons - in 2010; 11,390 persons - in 2014; 13,337 persons - in 2018; and 23,612 persons - in 2022/2023), which was made possible with the support of the main partner, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) in Ukraine.

We express our gratitude to all ministries, agencies and organizations that actively contributed to the implementation of the project in Ukraine, in particular: The Ministry of Health of Ukraine, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, the State Scientific Institution «Institute of Educational Analytics», the NGO «Ukrainian Institute for Social Research after Olexander Yaremenko», the UNICEF Country Office in Ukraine, and the WHO Office in Ukraine.

The HBSC study provides an opportunity to examine current trends in adolescent health behaviour and the impact of the social environment on the health status of students. Since February 24, 2022, Ukraine has been facing security issues and the impact of russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The analysis of the data allows us to determine the priorities for the formation of healthy lifestyle skills, taking into account the characteristics of different gender and age groups.

The materials presented are addressed to teachers and educators, social workers, parents, healthcare workers, representatives of youth NGOs and the media, as well as other professionals directly involved in the development of healthy lifestyle skills among children and youth. In addition, the proposed results will be useful for those who prepare and make decisions on health issues, healthy lifestyles and healthy behaviour of Ukrainian youth: heads of state authorities and administration, educational institutions, health care facilities, influential politicians and public figures, etc. The results of the latest wave of the survey made it possible to prepare a thorough analysis of key health indicators and adolescents’ attitudes toward their health, social well-being, and existing behavioural patterns. The report also presents the dynamics of certain indicators. The authors note that the implementation of this study in Ukraine was made possible only through the cooperation of a wide range of people.

First of all, these are employees of the NGO «Ukrainian Institute for Social Research after Olexander Yaremenko», heads of interviewer teams and interviewers of the Institute’s permanent network in the regions, heads of educational institutions and employees of departments of education and science who facilitated and assisted in organizing and conducting the survey.

Special thanks to Jo Inchley, the HBSC International Coordinator, Head of the HBSC Research Team at the University of Edinburgh’s, Child and Adolescent Health Research Unit; and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) in Ukraine, which supported the preparation of this report and its publication.

### **Sincere words of gratitude are personally extended to:**

- Anton Tovchenko, head of the Planning, Monitoring and Reporting Department of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) in Ukraine;
- Svitlana Fitsaylo, Head of the Department of Education Content, Extracurricular and Educational Work at the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine;
- Andriy Lytvynchuk, acting director of the SSI ‘Institute of Educational Analytics’.

The analytical report was prepared by a team of authors: T. Bondar, PhD in Sociology (scientific supervision and editing, introduction, research methodology, general conclusions); O. Haniukov, PhD in Philosophy (socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and socio-economic well-being of the family, subsections 4.8, 4.9, 4.10, 5.1, 5.2); A. Zinchenko, PhD in History (socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and socio-economic well-being of the family, subsections 5.1, 5.2, 5.4), O. Yevtovych (socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and socio-economic well-being of the family, subsections 2.2, 2.3); O. Levtsun, PhD in Sociology (subsection 1. 1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1,

3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4); D. Pavlova, PhD in Sociology, Associate Professor (subsections 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 6.1); S. Shevchenko (subsections 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 3.1).

The results of the monitoring study «Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children», which was conducted in 2002-2023 as part of the WHO international project «Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children» (HBSC), allow us to analyze the impact of the social environment on the health of school youth aged 11-17 in the dynamics.

The results of the study include data on the health assessment and lifestyle of Ukrainian youth: diet, body image, physical activity, psychological climate and comfort, insults and violence, bad habits, sexual culture and HIV/AIDS awareness, security issues and the impact of russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022. In order to better understand all the determinants of health, the surrounding socio-economic environment of young people is studied, as well as their living conditions at home, in educational institutions, and with friends.

Considering the results of the study in the dynamics allows us to better understand the factors and trends that influence adolescents' behaviour and shape their perceptions of various aspects of life, and provide relevant information for adjusting policies and practices to improve the lives of adolescents.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology is based on the protocol of the international research study «Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children» (HBSC), which provides a conceptual framework and has an agreed set of indicators of social and individual determinants of health, as well as medical and behavioural indicators.<sup>1</sup>

The tools used in the study are based on the questions proposed by the international research protocol, which includes both mandatory thematic blocks with questions for all participating countries and optional (additional) blocks with separate specific thematic questions; as well as national questions, which allows to analyze national factors that affect the behaviour of adolescents.

### **This report uses data from previous waves of the survey:**

- 2006 - The survey was conducted from April 1 to May 30, 2006 in all regions of Ukraine, the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Kyiv. A total of 6,535 respondents from 6th, 8th, and 10th grades and first-year students of vocational schools and universities were interviewed. Standard deviations at the significant 95 percent and variables ratio from 0.1 : 0.9 to 0.5 : 0.5 are 1.10 to 1.83 percent. The survey was conducted in 337 educational institutions located in 227 settlements of Ukraine (124 cities and 103 villages). Method of obtaining information: group questionnaire survey in classrooms.
- 2010 - The survey was conducted from April 23 to May 30, 2010 in all regions of Ukraine, the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Kyiv. A total of 10,343 respondents from 6th, 8th, 10th, 11th grades and 1st, 2nd, 3rd year students of vocational schools and universities of I-II accreditation levels (based on 9-year education), 1st, 2nd year students of universities of I-II accreditation levels (based on 11-year education) and 1st year students of universities of III-IV accreditation levels were interviewed. Standard deviations at the significant 95 percent and variables ratio from 0.1 : 0.9 to 0.5 : 0.5 are 0.59 to 0.98 percent. The survey was conducted in 616 educational institutions located in 374 cities and 239 villages of Ukraine. Method of obtaining information: self-completion of a formalized questionnaire using the group survey method in classrooms.
- 2014 - The survey was conducted from April 4 to May 28, 2014 in all regions of Ukraine, the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Kyiv. A total of 11,390 respondents from 6th-11th grades and 1st and 2nd year students of vocational schools and universities of I-II accreditation levels based on 9-year education, aged 10-17 years, were interviewed. Standard deviations at the significant 95 percent and variables ratio from 0.1 : 0.9 to 0.5 : 0.5 are 0.56 to 0.94 percent. The survey was conducted in 738 classrooms located in 458 educational institutions. Method of obtaining information: self-completion of a formalized questionnaire in classrooms, using an individual envelope for each respondent.
- 2018 - The survey was conducted from April 9 to May 29, 2018 in all regions of Ukraine (in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, the survey was conducted in the territories controlled by Ukrainian government) and the city of Kyiv. A total of 13,337 respondents (6,570 boys, 6,767 girls, and 1 transgender person whose answers are neither boys nor girls, and whose answers are not presented separately due to non-representativeness) from 5th-11th grades and 1st and 2nd year students of vocational schools and universities of I-II accreditation levels based on 9-year education, aged 10-17 were interviewed. Standard deviations at the significant 95 percent and variables ratio from 0.1 : 0.9 to 0.5 : 0.5 are 0.51 to 0.86 percent. The survey was conducted in 817 classes/groups located in 287 educational institutions. The method of obtaining information: self-completion of a formalized questionnaire in classrooms, using an individual envelope for each respondent.

<sup>1</sup> Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children: a World Health Organization cross-national study (HBSC). Research Protocol for the 2021/2022 survey. Edinburgh, Child and Adolescent Health Research Unit, University of Edinburgh. URL: <http://www.hbsc.org>

- 2023 - The survey was conducted from November 1 to December 25, 2023 in all regions of Ukraine in the territories controlled by Ukrainian government. A total of 23,613 respondents from grades 5-11 and 1st and 2nd year students of vocational schools and universities of I-II accreditation levels based on 9-year education, aged 11-17, were interviewed. Standard deviations at the significant 95 percent and variables ratio from 0.1 : 0.9 to 0.5 : 0.5 are 0.56 to 0.94 percent. The survey was conducted in 700 educational institutions. The method of obtaining information was implemented through an anonymous online survey using the SurveyMonkey platform. The survey tools involved the use of a standardized form, which ensured the consistency and reliability of the information received. The survey was conducted at the respondent's place of residence, ensuring complete anonymity and confidentiality of the information provided.

The method of obtaining information in the last wave differs from the previous waves due to the fact that after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, Ukraine faced the destruction of infrastructure facilities, which caused problems with power outages and the transition of educational institutions to distance learning.

*The implemented sample population of the sixth wave.* The total number of participants in this study is 32,465 respondents. However, incomplete questionnaires that lasted up to 15 minutes, i.e., were not filled out completely, led to the removal of such information from the general database. Thus, the total data set for analysis consists of responses from 23,612 persons.

*The purpose of the study* is to obtain reliable and valid information on the characteristics of health and lifestyle of adolescents aged 11-17, which will allow to strengthen measures to preserve and promote health, to determine the priorities for the formation of healthy lifestyle skills, taking into account the characteristics of different gender and age groups; to study the impact of the social environment on the health of students; to strengthen information support for the formation of a healthy lifestyle in educational institutions; to launch the implementation of a system of indicators for healthy lifestyles among adolescents, based on sociological survey data and complementing departmental statistics on diseases.

*The sample population* was calculated by the specialists of the SSI 'Institute of Educational Analytics'.

The survey covered 25 territorial-administrative units of Ukraine, 24 oblasts (Vinnytsia, Volyn, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Zhytomyr, Zakarpattia, Zaporizhzhia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kyiv, Kirovohrad, Luhansk, Lviv, Mykolaiv, Odesa, Poltava, Rivne, Sumy, Ternopil, Kharkiv, Kherson, Khmelnytsky, Cherkasy, Chernivtsi, Chernihiv) and the city of Kyiv. Since the 2022/2023 survey was conducted online, all regions were covered.

All educational institutions are divided into three types: 1) general secondary education institutions (GSEIs); 2) vocational education institutions (VEIs) based on incomplete secondary education; 3) professional pre-higher education institutions (technical schools, colleges, etc.) (PPEIs). The general list from which the observation units were selected did not include certain categories of educational institutions, namely: educational institutions for children with physical and mental disabilities; sanatorium educational institutions; educational institutions for children deprived of their liberty by a court decision and in correctional facilities; boarding schools for orphans and children deprived of parental care. The proportion of students of these educational institutions among the total population of students of secondary education institutions does not exceed 1.5%.

### **The selection of sample units (class/group) was determined in two steps:**

- The first step is to select the required number of institutions among each type of educational institution. The method of systematic sampling by calculated intervals was used to generate lists of schools and to select VEIs and PPEIs.
- The second step is the selection of classes/groups in each of the educational institutions using special tables that ensured proportional representation of classes/groups of the target population and equal probability for each class/group to be included in the sample (only one class per parallel was selected in each educational institution).

The unit of observation is all pupils/students in the selected classes/groups.

*The survey instrument* was based on the instruments of the international HBSC project; to adapt it to the conditions of Ukraine, a special methodological study was conducted, which resulted in the necessary adjustments.

*Ethical issues.* In order to organize the survey, a letter of support was prepared and received on behalf of the Deputy Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine to the heads of departments (offices) of education and science of oblast and Kyiv city military administrations. A positive opinion was received from the Commission on Professional Ethics of the Sociological Association of Ukraine that the research technology ensures the necessary level of anonymity and confidentiality of the information received; the text of the questionnaires (in terms of content and style of wording) is correct, ensures respect for rights, human dignity and moral and ethical standards in accordance with the ethical principles of research among children and adolescents approved by the Sociological Association of Ukraine, the principles of the Helsinki Declaration of Human Rights, the Council of Europe Convention on Human Rights and the principles of the

European Convention on Human Rights.

*Data collection procedure.* The field stage of the study was carried out by the staff of the NGO «Ukrainian Institute for Social Research after Olexander Yaremenko» using the online data collection platform SurveyMonkey.

*Confidentiality and anonymity.* An essential component of compliance with the requirements of the survey technology was to maintain the anonymity and confidentiality of student responses. Heads of educational institutions were warned that confidentiality would be maintained for each educational institution.

To organize the survey before 2018 (inclusive), interviewers had a preliminary meeting (or phone conversation) with the administration of the educational institution in order to:

- inform about the main purpose of the study, emphasizing the ethical principles of conducting sociological research among children and adolescents, confidentiality and anonymity of the data to be obtained;
- explain why and how this particular educational institution was selected for the study (computer-generated random number method);
- describe the survey procedure;
- inform the class teacher/group supervisor that if there are students in the class/group who, due to religious or ideological beliefs, cannot participate in the survey, such students may refuse to participate in the survey if they wish;
- obtain consent from the head of the educational institution to conduct an interview with him/her or his/her deputy, i.e. a person from the administration of the educational institution;
- obtain the consent of the head of the educational institution that the survey will be conducted in a particular class/group (this was emphasized in the letter to the head of the educational institution); agreement that the teacher will only introduce the interviewer and then leave the class and return after the survey is completed;
- come to agreements on a specific classroom/audience, date and time of the survey. Interviewer-assisted surveys were conducted to avoid the presence of teachers or anyone from the school administration in the classroom during the survey. The interviewer came to the school on the day and time agreed upon in advance, instructed students, distributed questionnaires and individual envelopes, into which students personally put the questionnaires after the survey. The student handed the sealed envelope with the questionnaire to the interviewer or put it in an envelope common to the entire class/group. Students filled out the questionnaires in the classroom in the presence of the interviewer, who, if necessary, could provide advice and necessary explanations if students did not understand certain questions, words, names, etc. The interviewers' responsibilities and necessary comments to the questionnaire were specified in the instructions for interviewers. All individual envelopes with completed questionnaires were packed in a common class envelope. The interviewer filled out a report form for the classroom/group survey (on a separate form), which was placed in the common classroom/group envelope. All common class/group envelopes were handed over to the survey organizer in oblast, who sent them to the NGO "Ukrainian Institute for Social Research after Olexander Yaremenko" (Kyiv), where the questionnaires were further processed: coding, transferring information into electronic format, statistical and mathematical processing.

**To organize the 2022/2023 survey, the administration of the educational institution was notified by a letter from the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine in order to:**

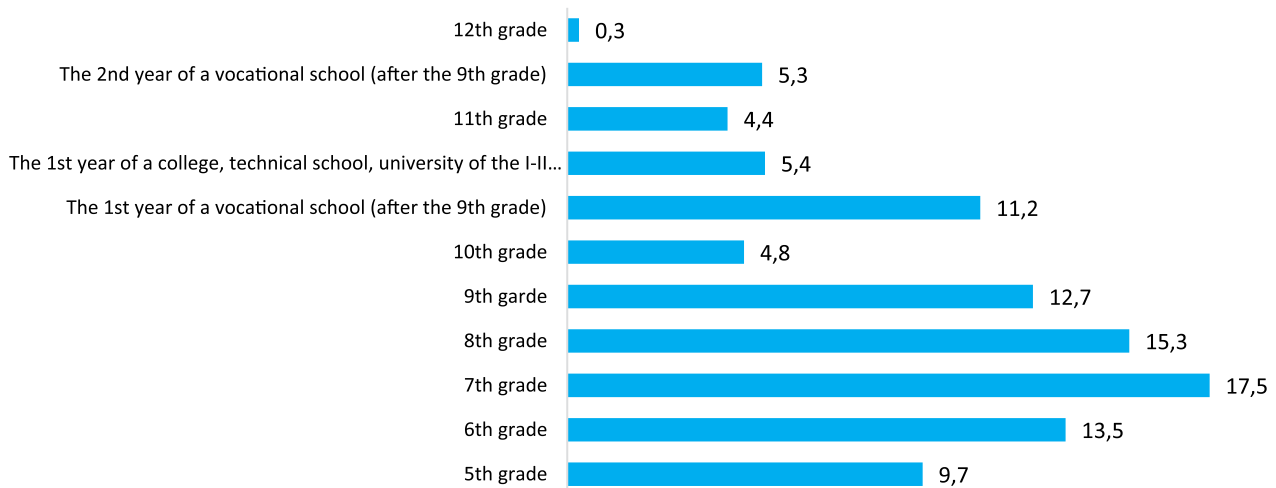
- inform about the main purpose of the study, emphasizing compliance with the ethical principles of conducting sociological research among children and adolescents, confidentiality and anonymity of the data to be obtained;
- explain why and how this educational institution was chosen for the study;
- describe the survey procedure;
- inform classroom teachers/group supervisors that if there are pupils/students in the class/group who, due to religious or ideological beliefs, cannot participate in the survey, such pupils/students may refuse to participate in the survey if they wish;
- distribute a link or QR code to the SurveyMonkey platform in selected educational institutions. This link or QR code was distributed by the class teacher/group supervisor among the pupils/students of the classes/groups they supervise.

The «Ukrainian Institute for Social Research after Olexander Yaremenko» (Kyiv) carried out further processing of the questionnaires: coding, preparation of the data set, statistical and mathematical processing.

## SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF THE FAMILY

The survey involved 23,612 respondents studying in general secondary education institutions from grades 5 to 12, in the 1st and 2nd year of vocational school (after grade 9), and in the 1st year of college, technical school, and higher education institution of I-II accreditation levels (after grade 9). 98.4% of respondents study in the region of their residence. A detailed distribution of respondents by grade or year of study is shown in Figure 1.

**Fig. 1. Distribution of respondents by grade, %, N = 23612**



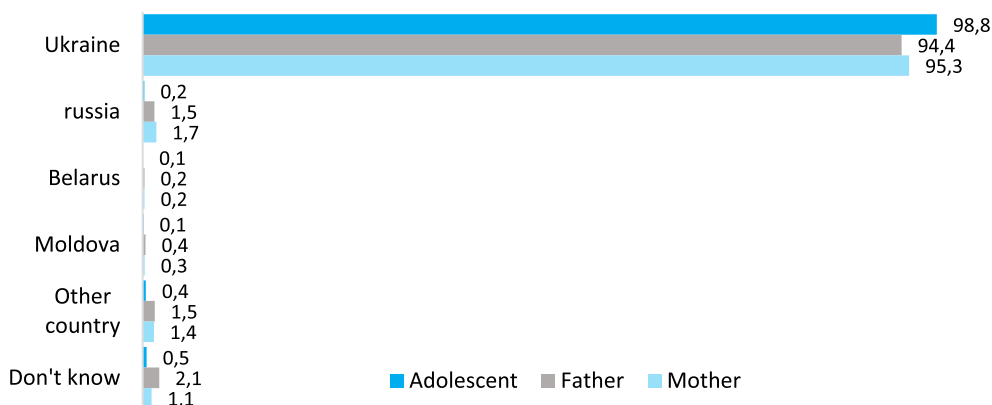
50.7% of male and 49.3% of female respondents were interviewed. The majority of respondents live in cities/towns - 72.6%. The proportion of rural residents is 27.4%. The respondents' age is 11-17 years old. A detailed distribution of respondents by age is shown in Figure 2.

**Fig. 2. Distribution of respondents by age, %, N = 23612**



The vast majority (98.8%) of adolescents surveyed, like their parents, were born in Ukraine. According to the survey, there is a small proportion of adolescents who do not know where their father and mother were born (2.1% and 1.1%, respectively), and 0.5% do not know where they were born. The distribution of respondents by their place of birth and place of birth of their parents is shown in Figure 3.

**Fig. 3. Distribution of respondents and their parents by country of birth, %, N = 23612**





## Parental employment

More than three quarters of parents of the surveyed adolescents are employed. Fathers' employment was reported by 76.6% of respondents, mothers' employment by 73.2%.

The proportion of employed parents of adolescents aged 11-12 is higher than in the sample as a whole. In families raising 11-year-olds, 82.9% of fathers and 74.2% of mothers work. For 12-year-old respondents, 80.6% of fathers and 74.5% of mothers are employed.

Among the older respondents (16-17-year-olds), the proportion of working parents is lower than in the overall sample. For example, 16-year-old adolescents reported that their fathers were employed in 69.5% of cases; their mothers – in 70.7%. In the families of 17-year-old adolescents, 66.3% of fathers and 67.8% of mothers work.

By family place of residence, the number of employed fathers and mothers (77.5% and 75.5%, respectively) is higher in families living in urban areas. The number of employed fathers and mothers living in rural areas is 74.3% and 67.7%, respectively. Mostly employed are parents of adolescents who moved with their families outside their oblast (78.3%) and country (78.2%) after February 24, 2022.

The proportion of unemployed mothers is higher (23.1%) than that of unemployed fathers (6.7%). Parents who are unemployed mostly live in rural areas (the proportion of unemployed mothers in rural areas is 28.8%; unemployed fathers - 9.0%, respectively).

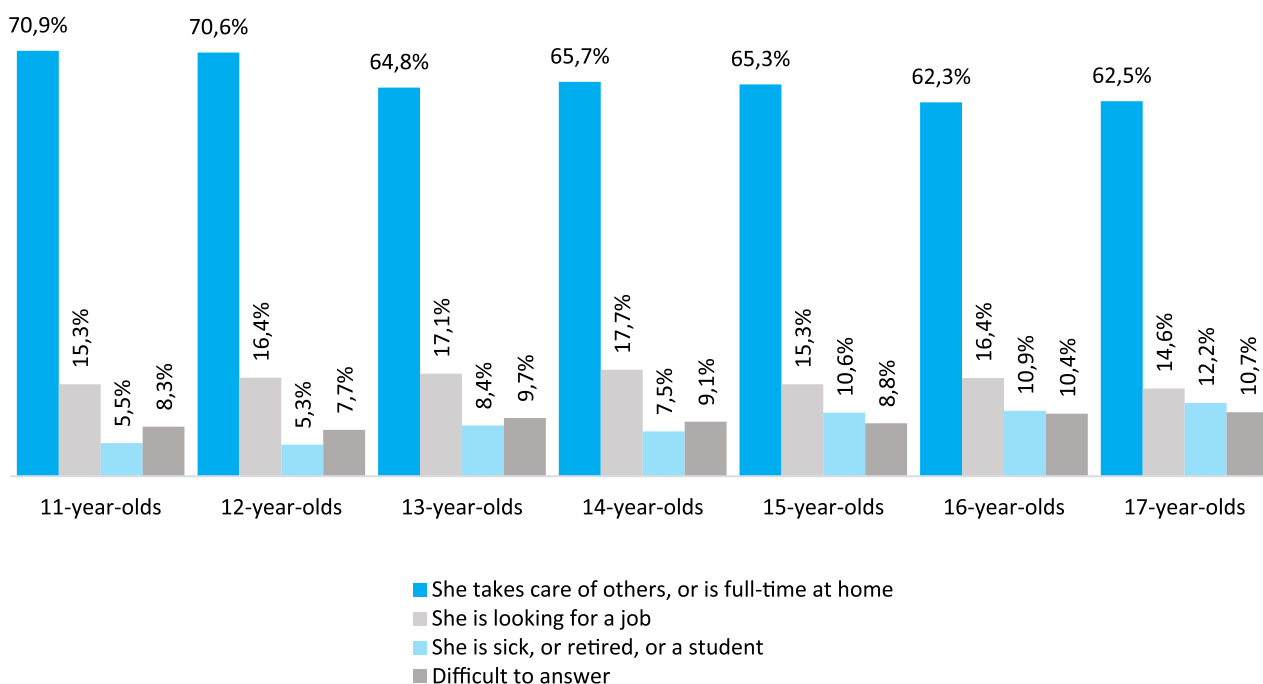
In families living abroad and planning to return, 26.5% of mothers are unemployed, and among those who do not plan to return, 26.1% of mothers are unemployed.

Almost every seventh respondent does not see one of their parents or said that they do not have one (12.8% do not see or have a father; 2.2% do not see or have a mother). Mostly adolescents over the age of 16 report such a family situation. Among 16-year-old respondents, 17.7% and 3.7%, respectively, do not see their father or mother; among 17-year-olds, 18.7% and 4.0%, respectively.

The majority of respondents who do not see their father or do not have a father live in another oblast (15.6%) and abroad (15.5% of those who plan to return and 14.3% of those who do not).

The main reason for mothers' unemployment is that 66.6% of respondents (among those whose mothers are unemployed) said that they take care of family members and/or run a household. This reason was mostly mentioned by 11-12-year-olds (70.9% and 70.6% respectively). The distribution of respondents' answers about the reasons for mothers' unemployment by age is shown in Figure 4.

**Fig. 4. Distribution of respondents' answers about the reasons for mother's unemployment by age of respondents, among those whose mothers are unemployed, N = 2752**



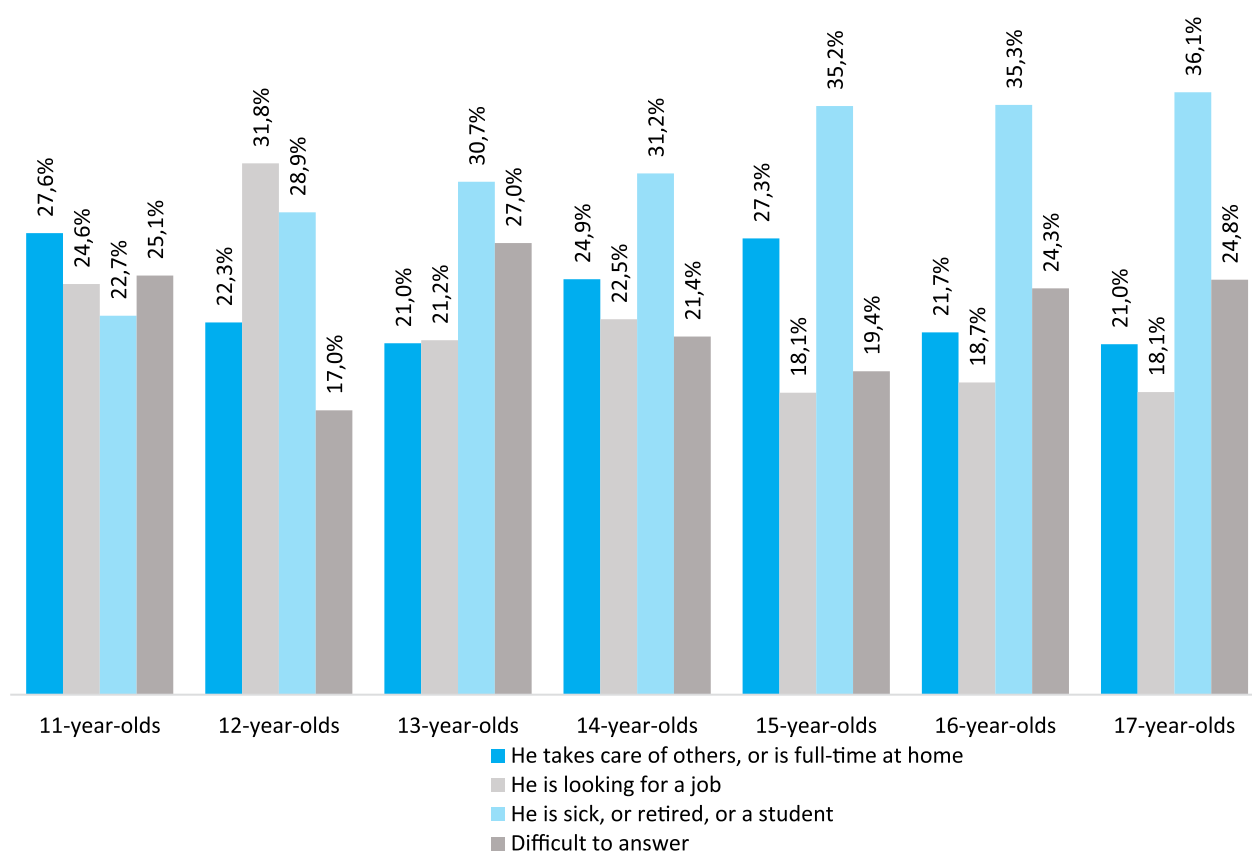
Caring for family members or running a household is the main reason for the unemployment of women in the families of respondents who left the region after February 24, 2022 (71.2%).

21.8% of women from families who left after 02/24/2022 are looking for a job and therefore temporarily unemployed. This reason is mentioned by adolescents living abroad (36.0% of respondents who do not plan to return and 20.8% of those who do).

Due to studying, illness or retirement, 14.5% of women among those living abroad who do not plan to return, and 12.1% of those who plan to return to Ukraine are unemployed.

The main reason for their father’s unemployment is sickness, retirement or study (31.2%), followed by caring for family members or running a household (23.9%), and looking for a job (23.4%). The distribution of respondents’ answers about the reasons for father’s unemployment by age is shown in Figure 5.

**Fig. 5. Distribution of respondents’ answers about the reasons for father’s unemployment by age of respondents, among those whose fathers are unemployed, N = 797**



Fathers of adolescents living in the city/town are more likely to be looking for a job (23.5%), as well as those who left Ukraine after February 24, 2022 (34.2%), those living in another oblast (25.5%), or abroad (28.5% of those who do not plan to return and 41.3% of those who do).

Studying, illness, or retirement as a reason for a father’s unemployment is more often mentioned by adolescents living in the city/town (34.3%) and by respondents whose families left the oblast (37.4%) and the country (33.9%) after the start of the full-scale invasion.

Those who are engaged in caring for family members or housekeeping and do not work as a result are mainly men living in rural areas (31.2%) and parents of families who moved outside their settlement (32.5%) after the start of the full-scale invasion.

Almost a quarter of adolescents (22.6%) whose father is unemployed do not know why their father is unemployed, and almost one in ten (9.0%) do not know the reason for their mother’s unemployment. Most often, these are adolescents aged 16 (24.3% and 10.4%, respectively) and 17 (24.8% and 11.1%). Respondents from families living in rural areas (11.1%) and adolescents living abroad and planning to return (11.6%) mostly do not know the reasons for their mother’s unemployment. The majority of girls (24.3%) and respondents who live in another oblast (24.6%) and abroad and do not plan to return (25.8%) do not know the reasons for their father’s unemployment.

## Family affluence

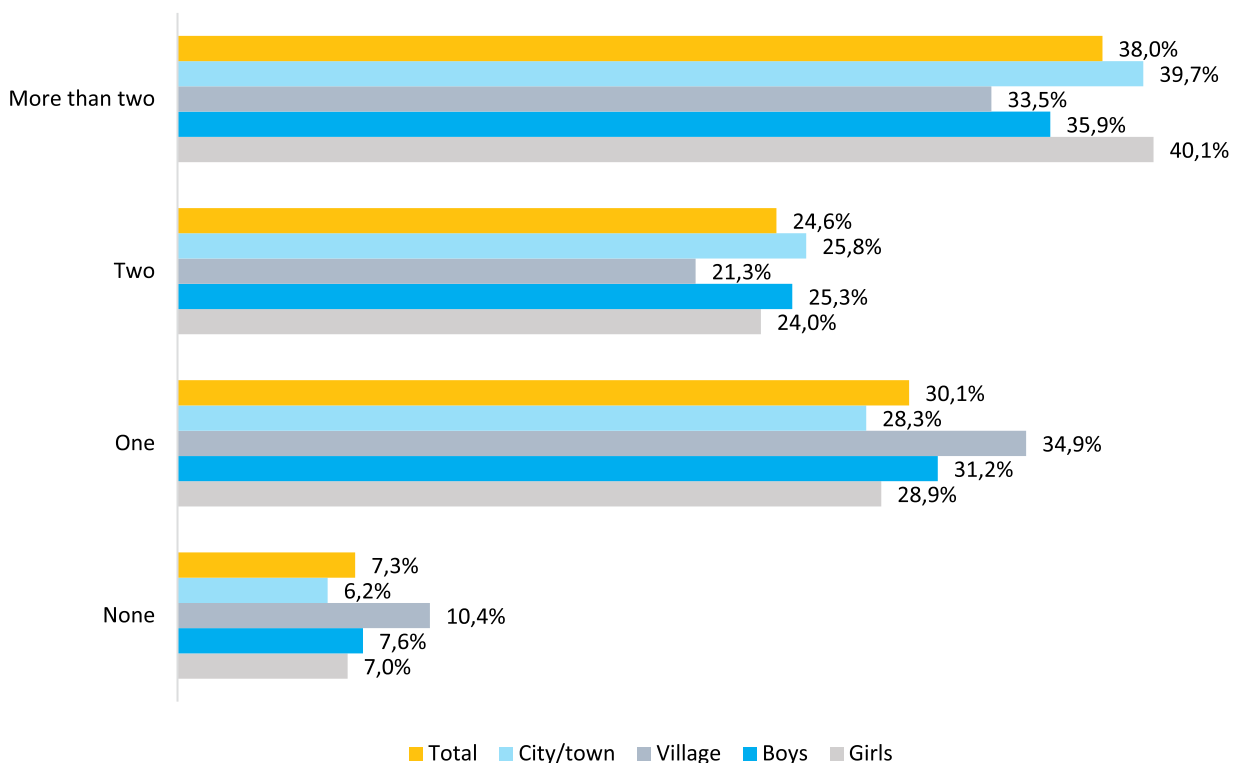
According to the survey, almost half of the respondents' families (48.3%) own a car (car, minibus or truck). Two or more cars are owned by 16.2% of families. More than a third of families (35.5%) do not have a car. The absence of a car in the family was more often reported by adolescents whose families did not leave their place of residence (38.9%).

Three quarters of adolescents (74.0%) have their own room. The lack of a room is more often reported by respondents aged 11 and 13 (28.6% and 29.8% respectively) than by the sample as a whole (26%), as well as by adolescents who have moved out of their settlement (28.2%) and who, together with their families, now live in another oblast (31.0%) or abroad (32% of those who do not plan to return and 31% of those who plan to return).

More than two computers are owned by 38% of respondents (in particular, laptops, netbooks, tablets, except for game consoles and smartphones). This was reported mainly by respondents aged 12 and 13 (41.6% and 39.7%, respectively), as well as those who moved out of the oblast (43.1%) or outside Ukraine (46.8%).

Families of 24.6% of respondents have two personal computers. One computer is available in the families of 30.1% of respondents. Families living in rural areas have one computer more often. Families of 7.3% of respondents do not have any computers, mostly they live in rural areas (10.3%). A detailed distribution of respondents' answers about the number of personal computers in their families by gender and type of settlement in which they live is shown in Figure 6.

**Fig. 6. Availability of computers in respondents' families, by gender and type of settlement, %, N = 23612**



The availability of computers in 89.8% of respondents' families leads to a high level of adolescents' use of their own gadgets during distance learning. The vast majority of respondents (77.6%) had a separate gadget (computer, laptop, tablet) for distance learning, and 12.2% of adolescents had a gadget that they shared with other family members.

Adolescents aged 16 and older (79.5%) and adolescents from families living in urban areas (78.5%) use their own gadgets more often. One in ten respondents (10.2%) does not have a separate gadget that they could use for distance learning. The proportion of such respondents is slightly higher than the average among 13-year-olds (11.3%) and respondents from rural areas (11.3%).

In their homes/apartments, 74.6% of respondents have one bathroom and/or shower, 9.1% have two, and 10.7% have more than two. A small number (5.6%) of respondents do not have a bathroom and/or shower at their place of residence. Mostly, there are no toilets in houses/apartments located in rural areas (9.5%) and abroad (7.9%). More than two bathrooms are available in the apartments/houses of 19.5% of adolescents who do not plan to return to Ukraine.

Almost a fifth (17.9%) of respondents have dishwashers, 82.1% do not.

Three quarters of respondents (74.7%) have not traveled outside Ukraine for vacation or holidays in the last 12 months (Fig. 7). Most of them (83.6%) are adolescents who have not left their hometown or village since February 24, 2022 and now live in the place where they were born (83.6%). The proportion of respondents who live in another oblast after 02/24/2022 and have traveled outside of Ukraine during the holidays once is 17.7%, and 13.6% have traveled twice or more.

**Fig. 7. Distribution of respondents' answers about the number of trips outside of Ukraine in the last 12 months, %, N = 23 612**



More than a half (54.8%) of respondents have traveled outside the oblast with their families for holidays (vacations), including: 22.1% have traveled once, 12.4% - twice, 20.3% - more than twice. Adolescents aged 12 (24.1% - once, 13.9% - twice) and 14 (22% more than twice) have such experience more often. Adolescents, who left after February 24, 2022, have traveled outside their city/town (16.4% - twice), oblast (25.8% - once, 15.5% - twice, 29.6% - more than twice), and country (26.2% - once, 27.1% - more than twice).

### Self-assessment of family affluence

According to almost half of the respondents (45.3%), their families have an average level of well-being. Almost a third (29.8%) consider their family's affluence to be above average, and another 17.0% consider it to be high. A small proportion of adolescents (6.3%) consider their level of well-being to be below average, and 1.7% consider it low.

Respondents aged 11-12 are more likely than others to assess the level of family affluence as high and above average (11-year-olds - 23.4% and 27.5%; 12-year-olds - 21.5% and 32.8%, respectively). Mostly 16- and 17-year-olds consider the level of well-being of their families to be average (50.7% and 50.3%, respectively).

Adolescents from families living in rural areas are more likely to assess the level of their family affluence as high (19.2% vs. 17% in the sample as a whole).

The majority of respondents who assessed their family affluence as 'below average' and 'low' at the time of the survey lived in another oblast (10.1%).

In general, we can say that the financial situation of the respondents' families, according to their self-assessment, is quite high. The vast majority of adolescents have separate rooms (74%) and gadgets for distance learning (89.8%). Respondents' families often have a car (64.6%) and computers (92.7%). Most families have a bathroom/shower in their homes/apartments (94.4%). At the same time, the financial situation of families living in urban and rural areas does not differ significantly. However, every tenth family living in rural areas does not have a computer or gadgets for distance learning, or a bathroom/shower in their house/apartment. Almost half of the respondents living in rural areas have never traveled outside the oblast for vacations or holidays. On the other hand, adolescents from families living in rural areas assess the level of their family affluence higher than the overall sample.

The level of well-being of families who have moved outside the oblast or country after 02/24/2022 and those who are currently staying abroad is somewhat higher - they travel more often, their families are more likely to have one car or more, and more than two computers. However, the majority of adolescents from these families assess their family's level of well-being as 'average' or 'below average', obviously comparing it to the standard of living of local residents.

## SECTION 1. COMPONENTS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH OF UKRAINIAN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

### 1.1. Health and mood.

Among the important indicators of adolescents' well-being and mood, the HBSC results allow us to assess mood over the past month, two weeks, and a week and to consider feelings of loneliness, despondency, and a subjective assessment of respondents' ability to solve problems.

#### Mood over the past two weeks

Less than a half of adolescents surveyed felt positive emotions, calmness, cheerfulness, activity, and fullness of their lives 'most of the time' or 'all the time' during the last two weeks (Table 1.1.1). Over the last two weeks, girls have experienced positive emotions much less often than boys.

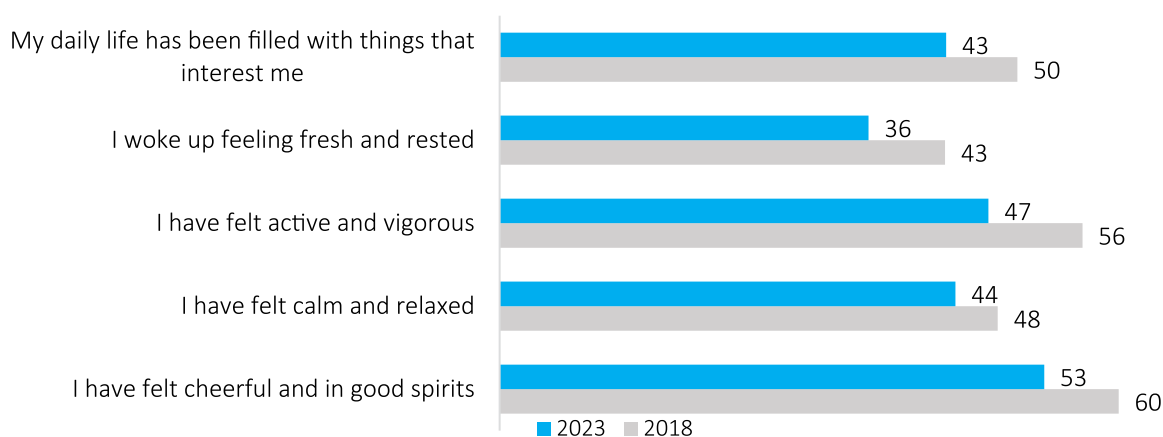
As in previous waves, the proportion of respondents experiencing positive emotions steadily decreases with age for all five indicators - among 11-year-olds, the proportion of respondents who feel good at least most of the time is one and a half times higher than among 17-year-olds.

**Table 1.1.1. Distribution of answers to the question about self-assessment of health and mood: "Please indicate for each of the five statements which is closest to how you have been feeling over the last two weeks.", % (sum of answers 'most of the time' and 'all the time')**

	Total	Boys	Girls
I have felt cheerful and in good spirits	53	59	46
I have felt calm and relaxed	44	51	38
I have felt active and vigorous	47	54	40
I woke up feeling fresh and rested	36	43	29
My daily life has been filled with things that interest me	43	47	39

Looking at the dynamics, the proportion of respondents experiencing positive emotions has significantly decreased compared to the time before the full-scale invasion (2018) (Fig. 1.1.1).

**Fig. 1.1.1. Distribution of answers to the question: "Please indicate for each of the five statements which is closest to how you have been feeling over the last two weeks", % of affirmative answers**



## Loneliness

Almost three quarters of adolescents feel lonely. Twenty-six percent of respondents said they never feel lonely, while one-fifth (21%) felt lonely most of the time or all the time over the past year.

Girls are more likely than boys to feel lonely - every fourth girl (25%) feels lonely most of the time or always, while among boys it is every sixth (17%). In contrast, one third of boys (33%) never feel lonely, compared to 20% of girls.

Age differences are similar to the results for good mood and positive emotions - with age, the proportion of respondents who do not feel lonely decreases, and the proportion of those who do feel lonely increases (Table 1.1.2).

**Table 1.1.2. Distribution of answers to the question: “During the past 12 months, how often have you felt lonely?”, %**

	Total	Boys	Girls	11-year-olds	12-year-olds	13-year-olds	14-year-olds	15-year-olds	16-year-olds	17-year-olds
<b>Never</b>	26	33	20	34	30	27	26	21	20	21
<b>Rarely</b>	27	28	27	29	30	30	27	27	26	25
<b>Sometimes</b>	26	22	29	22	24	25	24	27	30	29
<b>Most of the time</b>	16	13	19	12	12	14	18	19	18	18
<b>Always</b>	5	4	5	3	4	4	5	6	6	7

## Self-efficacy

As for the subjective assessment of the ability to solve problems, there is virtually no difference between different age groups, as was observed in the answers about the feeling of loneliness or positive emotions. 61% of respondents say that they often or very often find a solution to a problem if they make enough effort. The same number (60%) of respondents believe that they often or very often manage to do what they decided to do. 14% of respondents demonstrate uncertainty in their ability to solve problems (the sum of answers ‘never’ and ‘rarely’) and 13% - in their ability to do what they planned (Table 1.1.3). The difference between boys and girls in these indicators is minimal.

**Table 1.1.3. Distribution of answers to the question: “The following questions are about the way you deal with things”, %**

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Most of the time	Always
<b>How often do you find a solution to a problem if you try hard enough?</b>	4	10	24	45	17
<b>How often do you manage to do the things that you decide to do?</b>	3	10	27	48	12

## Feeling of sadness and hopeless in the last 12 months

Almost a third of respondents (31%) have felt so sad or hopeless on a daily basis for two weeks or more that they stopped doing their usual activities.

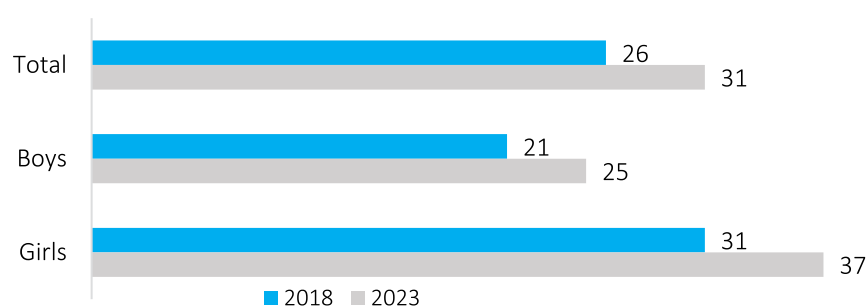
This feeling is much more common among girls (37%) than among boys (25%). Similar to the results of previous waves of the survey, the proportion of young people who have experienced such feelings of sadness in the past 12 months increases with age - from 22% among 11-year-olds to 40% among 17-year-olds (Table 1.1.4).

**Table 1.1.4. Distribution of answers to the question: “During the past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities?”, by gender and age, %**

	Total	Boys	Girls	11-year-olds	12-year-olds	13-year-olds	14-year-olds	15-year-olds	16-year-olds	17-year-olds
<b>Yes</b>	31	25	37	22	27	29	31	36	38	40
<b>No</b>	69	75	63	78	73	71	69	64	62	60

The prevalence of feelings of sadness and hopelessness has always had gender and age specifics (increasing with age, prevalence among girls), and in the current wave these features are also present, but now we are talking about a general increase in the prevalence of emotions such as sadness and hopelessness among all respondents compared to the period before the full-scale invasion. In the previous ‘pre-war’ wave (2018), this figure was 26%, including 31% for girls and 21% for boys (Fig. 1.1.2).

**Fig. 1.1.2. Distribution of affirmative answers to the question: “During the past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities?”, by gender, 2018–2023, %**



The rates of sadness and hopelessness differ significantly between students who are in Ukraine and those who are abroad due to the war. Unusual, unfamiliar environment and separation from close people contribute to the spread of such feelings. For example, while 29% of students who currently live in their home towns feel sad and hopeless, 37% (among those who are abroad and plan to return) and 46% (among those who are abroad and do not plan to return) feel this way.

We should also pay attention to the prevalence of this indicator among adolescents who were forced to live in another locality in Ukraine. Among them, this figure is 38%, which is significantly higher than among those who continue to live in their settlement (Table 1.1.5).

**Table 1.1.5. Distribution of answers to the question: “During the past 12 months, did you ever feel so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that you stopped doing some usual activities?”, by place of current residence, %**

	Total	In the city/town or village where you were born	In another oblast of Ukraine	Abroad, but we plan to return	Abroad and we do not plan to return
<b>Yes</b>	31	29	38	37	46
<b>No</b>	69	71	62	63	54

## Resilience

In recent years the problem of resilience of young Ukrainians, their ability to withstand various challenges related to the war, to withstand stressful situations without reducing their usual activity, has become more relevant. Under stress, anxiety, self-doubt, and disbelief in a better future increase. It is important for adolescents to be able to adapt to disruptive changes and uncertainty, unfavorable news, to be resilient and productive, and to learn to maintain optimism and faith despite adversity. Thus, resilience becomes a necessary competence for every young person.

The study showed that Ukrainian adolescents demonstrate a fairly high level of resilience and are able to successfully withstand the challenges of wartime. On the one hand, compared to the pre-war period, the proportion of respondents who felt that they were unable to control important things in their lives over the past month has slightly increased. In 2018 the corresponding figure was 38% (the sum of the answers 'sometimes', 'quite often' and 'very often') and became 43% in 2023. This can be qualified as a recognition by respondents that the number of difficulties in their lives has objectively increased (Table 1.1.6).

**Table 1.1.6. Distribution of answers to the question: 'How often have you experienced ... in the last month?', %**

Year of survey	Never	Almost never	Sometimes	Quite often	Very often
<b>... that you were not able to control the important things in your life</b>					
<b>2018</b>	39	23	28	7	3
<b>2023</b>	30	27	31	9	3
<b>... that you felt confident in your ability to cope with personal problems</b>					
<b>2018</b>	14	11	25	35	15
<b>2023</b>	6	10	27	42	15
<b>... that everything happens your way</b>					
<b>2018</b>	15	14	37	26	8
<b>2023</b>	7	13	42	31	7
<b>... that there are so many difficulties that you are unable to overcome them</b>					
<b>2018</b>	27	24	32	11	6
<b>2023</b>	19	28	33	14	6

On the other hand, compared to the pre-war period, there has increased the proportion of respondents who 'often' (the sum of the answers 'quite often' and 'very often') felt...

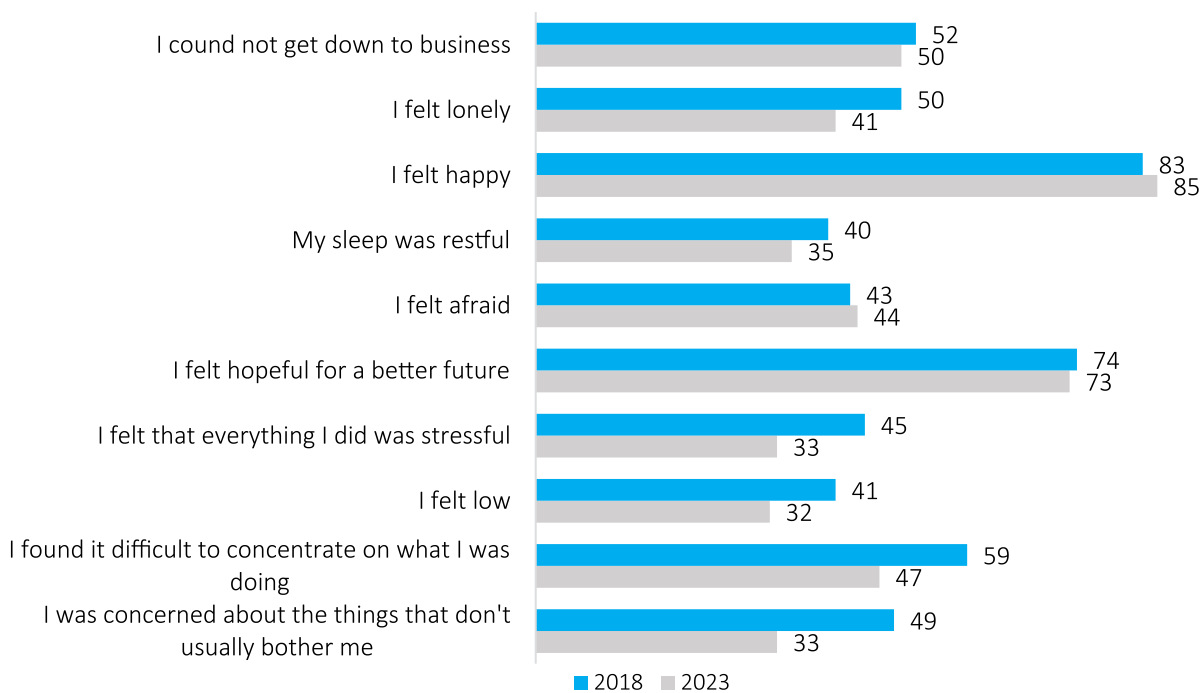
- confident in their ability to cope with personal problems (2018 – 50%, 2023 – 57%);
- that everything happened their way (2018 – 34%, 2023 – 38%).

The results of the study demonstrate a positive trend in the indicators characterizing anxiety (Fig. 1.1.3). In particular, the number of respondents who have 'sometimes' or 'often' ... in the past 12 months has significantly decreased:

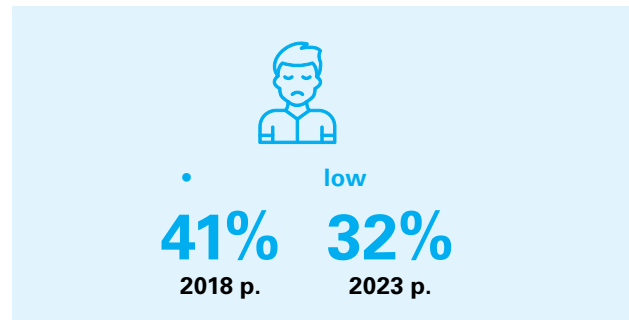
- were concerned about things that usually do not bother them (2018 – 49%, 2023 – 33%),
- felt that everything they did causes tension (2018 – 45%, 2023 – 33%),
- found it difficult to focus on what they were doing (2018 – 59%, 2023 – 47%).



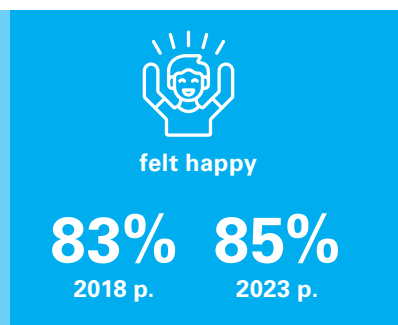
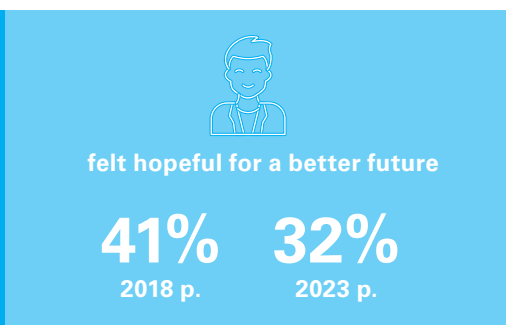
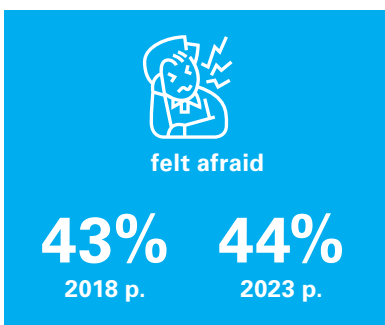
**Fig. 1.1.3. Кількість респондентів, які протягом останніх 12 місяців «іноді», «часто» або «завжди» відчували себе таким чином<sup>2</sup>, %**



**In addition, the proportion of respondents who felt... decreased:**



**The proportion of adolescents who «sometimes» or «often» felt lonely over the past 12 months has decreased significantly (2018 - 50%, 2023 - 41%). Despite the unfavorable living conditions and the impact of stressors (consequences of the war), the number of respondents who... remained stable**



<sup>2</sup> In the 2018 survey, the answer options were 'sometimes', 'often or a moderate amount of time', and 'all the time'.

## 1.2. Life satisfaction and happiness

### Life satisfaction

Life satisfaction is an extremely subjective indicator, and therefore a scale in the form of an imaginary ladder is used to assess it, where the highest step ('10') means the best possible life, and the lowest step ('0') means the worst possible life. Respondents were asked to assess what step they are currently on.

Overall, two-thirds (65%) of students rated their lives as 'the best possible' (7 to 10 steps), 30% placed themselves in the middle (4 to 6 steps), and 5% rated their lives as 'the worst possible' (0 to 3 steps).

Gender and age characteristics are the same as for the above indicators of positive emotions and feelings of sadness, i.e. life satisfaction is higher among boys than girls, and with increasing age, the satisfaction rate decreases (Table 1.2.1).

**Table 1.2.1. Distribution of answers to the question about how they assess their quality of life\*, by gender and age, %**

	Total	Boys	Girls	11-year-olds	12-year-olds	13-year-olds	14-year-olds	15-year-olds	16-year-olds	17-year-olds
<b>Best possible life**</b>	65	70	59	81	72	67	58	58	54	54
<b>Neither of these***</b>	30	26	35	17	25	29	36	36	38	38
<b>Worst possible life****</b>	5	4	6	2	3	4	6	6	8	8
<b>Mean value, step</b>	7,10	7,34	6,86	7,93	7,43	7,19	6,83	6,73	6,58	6,59

\* On a 10-point scale, where '0' is the worst possible life and '10' is the best possible life.

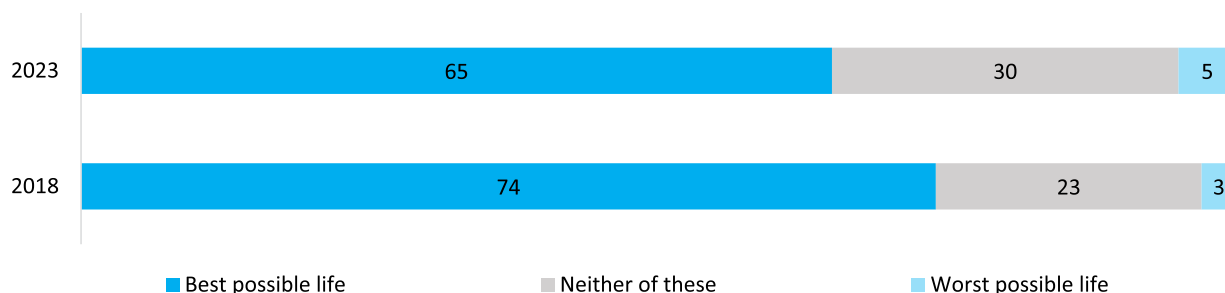
\*\* Sum of answers from 7 to 10 points.

\*\*\* Sum of answers from 4 to 6 points.

\*\*\*\* Sum of answers from 0 to 3 points.

The overall figures for the country have also decreased compared to the 2018 wave, when three quarters (74%) of respondents reported themselves at the top of the steps (Fig. 1.2.1).

**Fig. 1.2.1. Distribution of answers to the question about how they assess their quality of life, 2018–2023, %**



Assessment of quality of life is largely related to whether students live in their home settlement. For those respondents who were internally displaced or moved abroad, the conditional step (the average value of answers to the question about how they assess their quality of life) is lower than for those who remain in their town/village despite the war (Fig. 1.2.2).

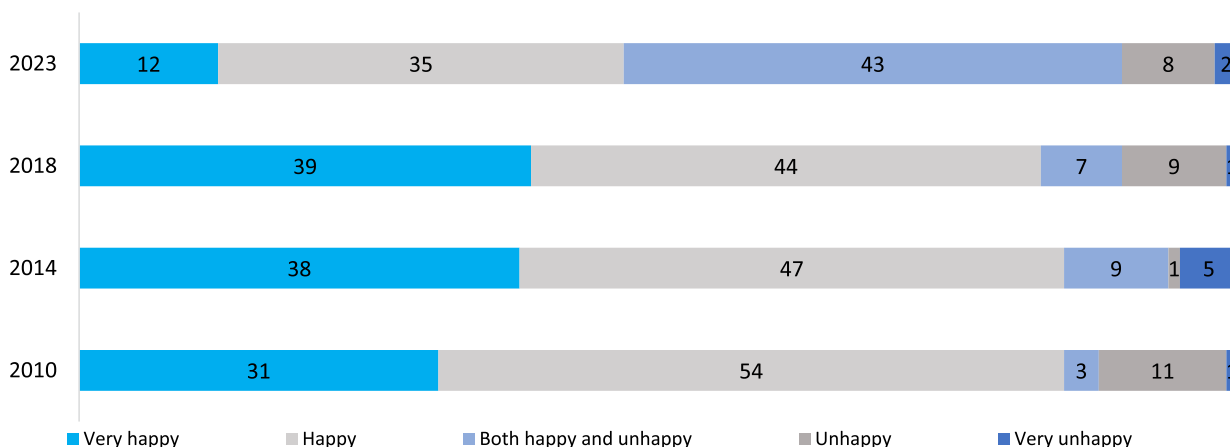
**Fig. 1.2.2. Distribution of answers to the question how they assess their quality of life, by place of current residence, mean value**



### Happiness

Up to 2022 the vast majority of adolescents felt happy ('very happy' or 'happy'). russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine has become a challenge for millions of Ukrainians, including children and adolescents, and a source of stress and suffering. Among other things the war has caused a deterioration in the psychological health of Ukrainian population. The proportion of young people who feel somewhat happy has significantly decreased: from 83% (2018) to 47% (2023). At the same time, the proportion of respondents who feel both happy and unhappy has increased significantly (fig. 1.2.3).

**Fig. 1.2.3. Distribution of answers to the question: "In general, would you say that you feel very happy, happy, both happy and unhappy, unhappy, very unhappy?", %**



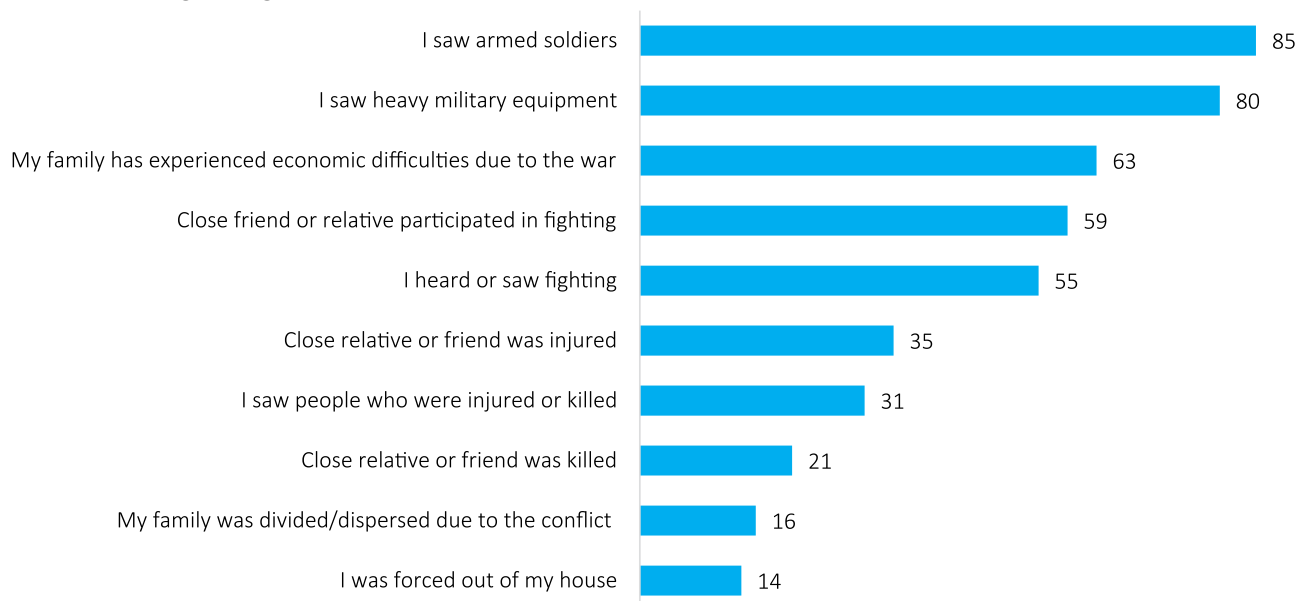
A survey conducted in 2023 helped to identify what circumstances related to the war and hostilities could be a source of stress and anxiety for adolescents (Fig. 1.2.4). It turned out that many respondents had to go through events that had a definite negative impact on the psycho-emotional state of a young person. A significant proportion of respondents indicated that:

- their family experienced economic difficulties (63%);
- their close relative or friend participated in hostilities (59%);
- they personally heard or saw the fighting (55%);
- their close relative or friend was injured (35%);
- they personally saw people who were injured or killed (31%);
- their close relative or friend was killed (21%).



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**Fig. 1.2.4. Number of respondents who have personally experienced the following circumstances since the beginning of war in Ukraine, %**



The number of respondents who ‘sometimes’ or ‘often’ felt happy over the past 12 months was almost identical in 2023 and 2018. At the same time, compared to 2018, in 2023, there were half as many respondents who felt happy ‘in general’. The respondents’ ability to recognize themselves as a happy person is hampered, firstly, by stress and their own experiences related to the war, and secondly, by the unfavorable social atmosphere and the experiences of others. Among young people, the number of respondents who feel happy in general has decreased, but the number of unhappy people has remained the same until 2022. The number of respondents who called themselves unhappy in 2023 and 2018 is the same (10%).

The results of the study give grounds to make a reasonable assumption that the vast majority of adolescents have successfully adapted to the negative changes in the social environment that have occurred in the country as a result of the war. Young people demonstrate high resilience and successfully withstand stressors. The phenomenon of adolescent resilience in war, its connection with value aspects, and the peculiarities of transforming life events into new opportunities despite external adversity deserve a separate study.

### 1.3. Family support

Family support in this study was studied through such indicators as ease of discussing important problems, family support, and spending time with family members.

#### Discussing important issues

The ease of discussing important issues was measured by answering the following question: “How easy is it for you to talk to the following people about things that really bother you?”

According to Table 1.3.1, the easiest interlocutor is the mother, both for boys and girls: 85% say that it is ‘easy’ or ‘very easy’ to talk to their mother about topics that really concern them. The father is still a preferred interlocutor to a greater extent for boys (82%) than for girls (69%). The ease of discussing important issues decreases for stepparents - about two-thirds of respondents who have a stepfather or stepmother reported that it is ‘easy’ or ‘very easy’ to talk to them about important topics. In 2023, the indicator was also measured for grandparents: 77% of respondents found it ‘easy’ or ‘very easy’ to talk to their grandfather about topics of real concern, and 80% of respondents said it was ‘easy’ or ‘very easy’ to talk to their grandmother.

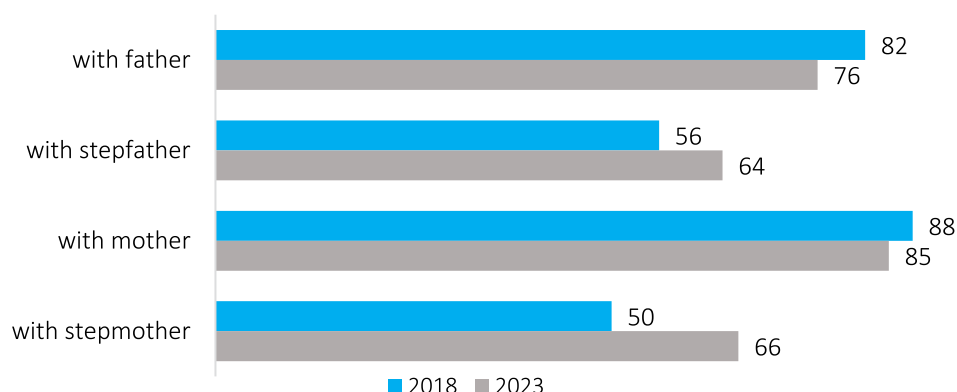
For all of these alternatives (except for a stepmother), we can observe a steady trend toward a decrease in the proportion of those who find it easy to talk about important topics with increasing age: for 11-year-old participants, this figure is the highest, for 17-year-olds, it is the lowest (a clear linear relationship with age is not observed only in the case of a stepmother). In addition, for absolutely all items, there are more respondents among boys who indicate the alternative ‘easy’ or ‘very easy’ than among girls. It can be assumed that in the context of constant stress and emotional tension in the context of a full-scale invasion, it is more difficult for girls to discuss important topics with adult family members. Such a difference between girls and boys is also observed in relation to the issues of loneliness, sadness, etc. described in the previous subsections. Obviously, a greater sense of loneliness is to some extent related to the difficulty of discussing important issues with adults.

**Table 1.3.1. Distribution of answers to the question: “How easy is it for you to talk to the following people about things that really bother you?”, by gender and age, % (sum of answers ‘very easy’ and ‘easy’ among respondents who answered the question, excluding those who do not have relevant persons)**

	Total	Boys	Girls	11-year-olds	12-year-olds	13-year-olds	14-year-olds	15-year-olds	16-year-olds	17-year-olds
<b>Father</b>	76	82	69	84	79	76	76	72	68	69
<b>Stepfather (or mother’s boyfriend/partner)</b>	64	69	58	69	68	61	62	62	62	62
<b>Mother</b>	85	88	82	93	88	85	83	80	81	79
<b>Stepmother (or father’s girlfriend/partner)</b>	66	71	59	65	68	59	72	67	65	66
<b>Grandfather</b>	77	84	68	82	80	77	76	73	72	72
<b>Grandmother</b>	80	85	75	88	84	81	79	75	74	75

If we analyze the dynamics of this indicator, we see a decrease for biological parents, and vice versa for stepparents. Thus, in 2018, 82% of respondents found it ‘easy’ or ‘very easy’ to discuss important issues with their father, and 88% with their mother. In the previous wave of the survey, the figures for stepparents were 56% for stepfathers and 50% for stepmothers, meaning that in extreme wartime conditions, the presence of even stepparent is extremely important for children and adolescents. At the same time, the situation with biological parents has deteriorated somewhat (Fig. 1.3.1)

**Fig. 1.3.1. Proportion of respondents who find it ‘very easy’ and ‘easy’ to talk about important topics with adults, %** (among those who answered, excluding those who do not have relevant persons)



### Psychological support

Psychological support from family members, the opportunity to be heard and receive advice in a difficult life situation is an important prerequisite for a child’s well-being. HBSC monitoring surveys allow us to analyze the dynamics of indicators characterizing family support for adolescents (Table 1.3.2).

**Table 1.3.2. Distribution of answers to the question: “To what extent do you agree with the following statement?”, %.**

Year of survey	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree
<b>My family really tries to help me</b>			
<b>2014</b>	6	6	88
<b>2018</b>	4	5	91
<b>2023</b>	7	6	87
<b>I get the necessary moral (emotional) help and support from my family</b>			
<b>2014</b>	7	7	86
<b>2018</b>	6	8	86
<b>2023</b>	13	7	80
<b>I can discuss my problems with my family</b>			
<b>2014</b>	11	15	74
<b>2018</b>	10	15	75
<b>2023</b>	19	9	72
<b>My family is ready to help me make decisions</b>			
<b>2014</b>	9	14	77
<b>2018</b>	5	9	85
<b>2023</b>	10	7	83

In all years when monitoring surveys were conducted, similar features were recorded. In each case, the overwhelming majority of adolescents surveyed (over 70%) agree with the thesis that in the family...

- they are tried to be helped;
- they are being ready to be helped in decision-making;
- they receive necessary moral (emotional) help and support;
- they can discuss their problems.

If we compare the indicators of agreement with certain evaluative characteristics of pre-war 2018 and 2023, we can observe a slight decrease in the value of the indicators (in all cases). For example, in 2018, 87% of adolescents agreed with the statement «I receive the necessary moral (emotional) help and support from my family,» while in 2023, the same figure was 80%. This decrease is significant, but not critical.

It can be assumed that this negative trend is partly due to emotional burnout after two years of war. Due to constant stress and tension, people feel physically and emotionally exhausted. Emotional burnout can negatively affect many areas of life, including family relationships. Parents begin to pay less attention to their children and respond to their requests with more restraint. And children notice this.

### Spending time with family, joint family activities

We studied the frequency of spending time together in the family in relation to various activities (watching TV, playing games, eating, walking, entertainment, visiting friends or relatives, sports, talking). A total of nine indicators were used (Table 1.3.3).

The distribution of responses shows that, as before, the most common family activities are eating, talking, and watching TV or video - the vast majority of respondents say that this happens once a week or more. Two-thirds of respondents said they go for a family walk once a week or more often. As before, the frequency of joint family activities decreases with the age of the respondents.

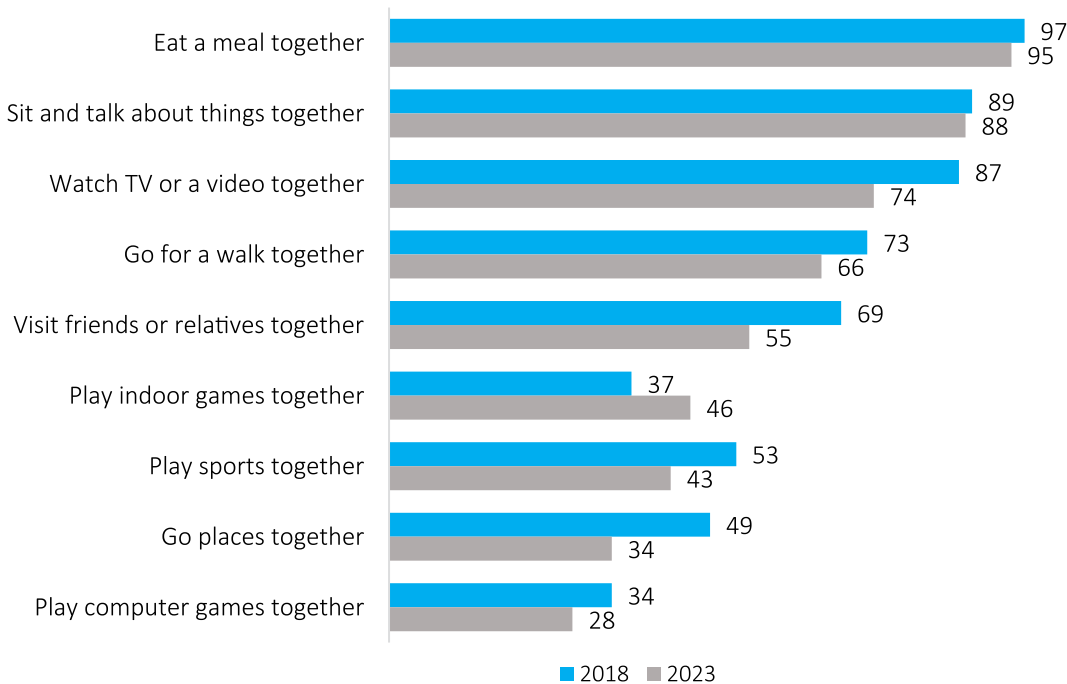
The difference in joint family activities between boys and girls has not only not decreased, but has even deepened. While in the previous wave there was a significant difference in such activities as computer games, going to entertainment venues, and playing sports (which are much more common among boys), now, in all activities (except for joint meals), girls spend much less time together than boys. As before, there is no activity that is more often done together with girls than with boys.

**Table 1.3.3. Distribution of answers to the question: “How often do you and your family usually do each of these things all together?”, by gender, % (sum of answers ‘every day’, ‘most days’ and ‘about once a week’)**

	Total	Boys	Girls
<b>Eat a meal together</b>	95	96	94
<b>Sit and talk about things together</b>	88	91	85
<b>Watch TV or a video together</b>	74	76	72
<b>Go for a walk together</b>	66	71	62
<b>Visit friends or relatives together</b>	55	59	50
<b>Play indoor games together</b>	46	53	39
<b>Play sports together</b>	43	52	34
<b>Go places together</b>	34	38	30
<b>Play computer games together</b>	28	34	21

In general, almost all types of joint activities (except for eating and talking, which have not changed much) have decreased significantly in the context of full-scale invasion. This is especially true for going to places of entertainment (decrease for 15%) and visiting friends (decrease for 14%). Instead, playing games at home has become a more common type of joint activity - an increase from 37% to 46%, and this is the only example of joint leisure that has become more common (Figure 1.3.2).

**Fig. 1.3.2. Proportion of respondents who do certain activities TOGETHER with the family members every day, most days or about once a week, %**



To a separate question: “How often do you eat together as a family?” 90% of respondents answered that they do it every day, or most days, or at least once a week, while 54% do it every day, 3% never eat together as a family, and 7% do it less than once a week. As with other joint family practices, the frequency of joint meals decreases with age.



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## 1.4. Parental monitoring

In a Ukrainian family, the mother has an absolute priority in raising children and controlling this process. She fulfills the traditional role of a guardian in Ukrainian culture. Negligence or lack of control on her part in relation to children is extremely rare and unusual.

A certain proportion of adolescents (13%) say that they do not see their fathers for some reason. In this case, they rely entirely on their mother or other close people to raise them. 2% of respondents said they did not have a mother or did not see her for some reason.

In this study, the level of parental monitoring was analyzed by assessing parents' knowledge of their child's friends, their spending, where they go after school and in the evening, their leisure activities, and their Internet activity. A total of six indicators were used.

The analysis of the answers shows that the Internet is traditionally the least controlled space, both by mothers and fathers. New technologies make parental control more difficult, but parents, especially mothers, retain some influence over traditional activities (Table 1.4.1).

**Table 1.4.1. Distribution of answers to the question about parental control: "How much does your mother really know about?" and "How much does your father really know about?", %**

Statement	Mother		Father	
	Knows a lot	Does not know*	Knows a lot	Does not know*
Who your friends are	71	27	41	45
How do you spend your money	62	36	41	46
Where you are after school	80	18	50	37
Where you go at night	82	17	56	31
What you do with your free time	64	34	44	42
What you do on the Internet	42	56	30	57

\*Sum of answers 'knows a little' and 'does not know anything'.

Mothers are almost twice as likely to know about their children's friends as fathers (71% and 41%, respectively), and they know a little more about their daughters' friends than about their sons' friends, as girls are more open about this issue. Fathers, on the other hand, while not really asking who their children communicate with and make friends with, know a little more about their sons' friends than about their daughters' friends.

The way children spend their pocket money remains less controlled by parents. According to the survey, more than a third of mothers (36%) and almost half of fathers (46%) have no idea how their children spend their money.

Mothers are much better informed about how their children spend their time after school than fathers. For example, 80% of adolescents surveyed said that mothers know a lot about their children's activities after school, while 50% of respondents said the same about their fathers. At the same time, mothers know a little more about their daughters' leisure activities than about their sons' leisure activities. This may be due to the fact that mothers are not always able to control boys, as they are more independent and self-reliant than girls. In view of this, mothers occasionally try to delegate educational and controlling functions in relation to their sons to their fathers. Fathers take on these responsibilities to a limited extent, but they show a somewhat greater interest and attention to their sons than to their daughters. Fathers know better than mothers who their sons communicate with and make friends with, where and how they spend their time after school, how they spend their money, etc. (Table 1.4.2).

**Table 1.4.2. Distribution of answers to the question about parental control: “How much does your mother really know about?” and “How much does your father really know about?”, % (only a share of answers ‘knows a lot’ is given)**

Statement	Mother		Father	
	boys	girls	boys	girls
Who your friends are	68	74	44	38
How do you spend your money	59	65	43	39
Where you are after school	77	83	52	48
Where you go at night	77	85	58	54
What you do with your free time	65	63	49	39
What you do on the Internet	41	43	33	28

As children grow older, parental control tends to weaken, but it remains quite high. When a child is 11 years old, 90% of mothers and 69% of fathers are well aware of where their child goes in the evenings. At the age of 13, the number of well-informed mothers drops to 75% and fathers to 58%. When an adolescent is 17 years old, the number of well-informed parents decreases even further, and the number of mothers and fathers who know nothing about their children’s evening activities increases (Tables 1.4.3 and 1.4.4).

**Table 1.4.3. Distribution of answers to the question about parental control: “How much does your mother really know about?”, % (only the sum of answers ‘knows a little’ and ‘does not know anything’ is given)**

Statement	Mother			
	11-year-olds	13-year-olds	15-year-olds	17-year-olds
Who your friends are	19	27	32	33
How do you spend your money	25	33	44	48
Where you are after school	11	16	24	28
Where you go at night	9	14	22	27
What you do with your free time	24	35	39	39
What you do on the Internet	39	56	65	65

**Table 1.4.4. Distribution of answers to the question about parental control: “How much does your father really know about?”, %**

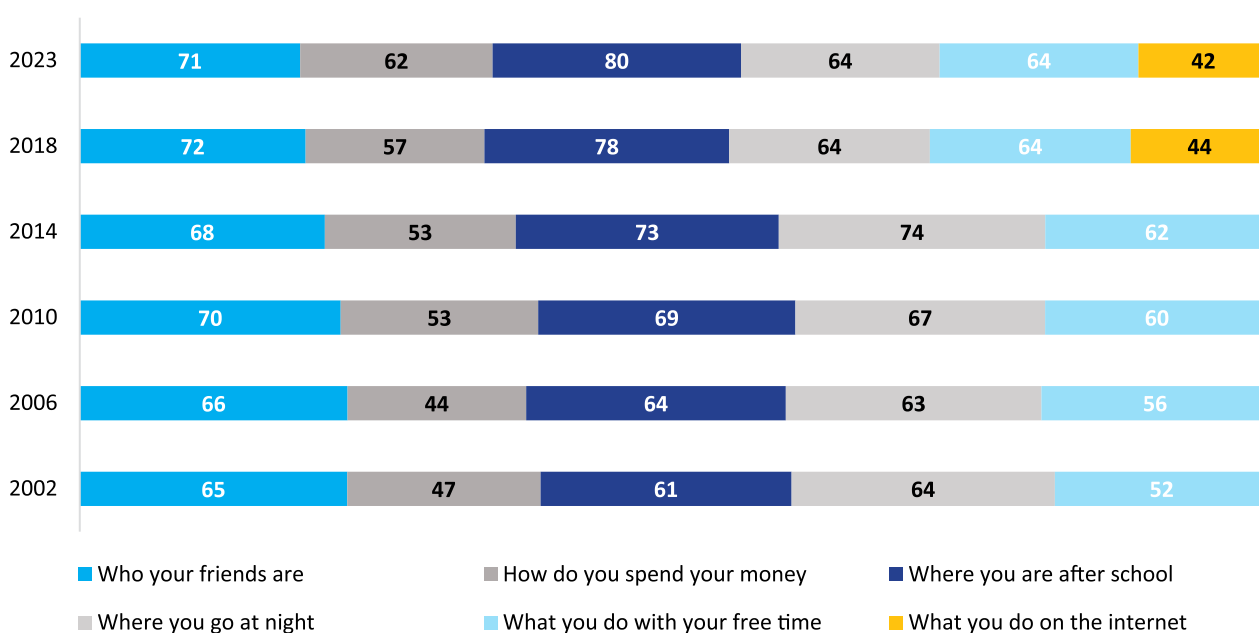
(only the sum of answers ‘knows a little’ and ‘does not know anything’ is given)

Statement	Father			
	11-year-olds	13-year-olds	15-year-olds	17-year-olds
Who your friends are	44	46	47	45
How do you spend your money	39	45	50	49
Where you are after school	31	37	40	42
Where you go at night	22	30	36	39
What you do with your free time	35	44	46	46
What you do on the Internet	47	58	62	59

With age, the level of parental awareness decreases in all gender and age groups, both on the mother’s and father’s side. The most pronounced decline in parental awareness of Internet activities is observed at the age of 13. Between the ages of 11 and 17, the number of parents who are well aware of what their children are doing on the Internet decreases significantly: from 58% to 31% for mothers and from 44% to 22% for fathers.

Awareness of both mothers and fathers has increased since 2002. The greatest increase can be observed in knowledge about spending their own money and staying after school (Figures 1.4.1 and 1.4.2).

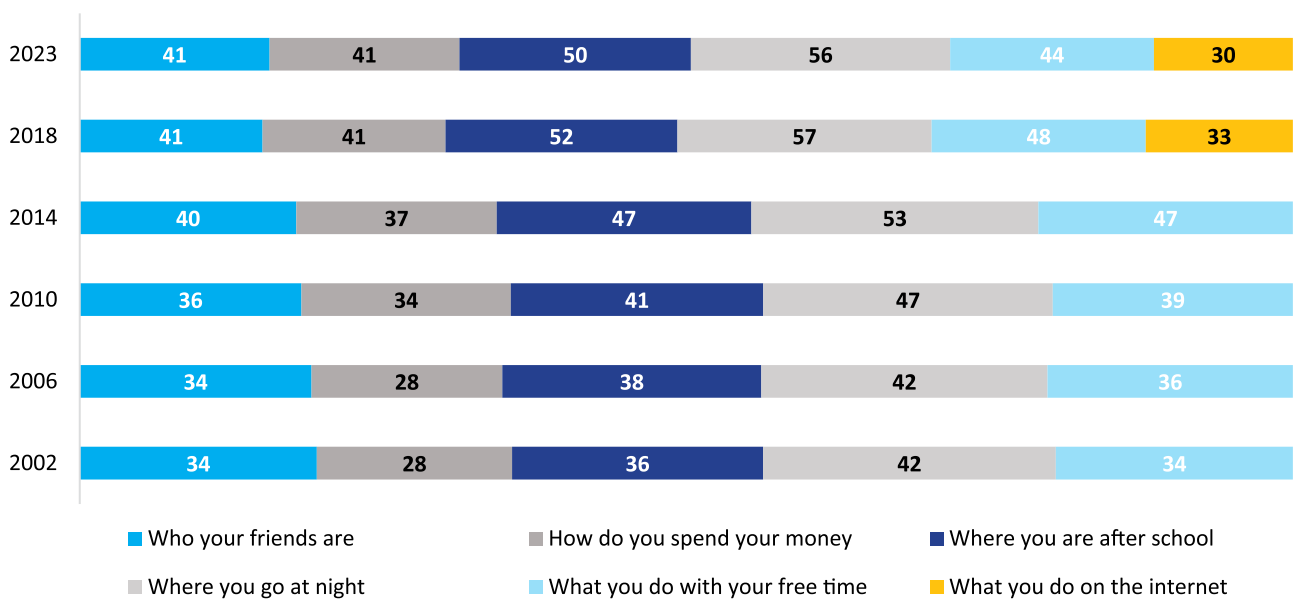
**Fig. 1.4.1. Distribution of answers to the question about parental control: “How much does your mother really know about?”, % among all respondents in dynamics (only the share of answers ‘knows a lot’ is given)**





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**Fig. 1.4.2. Distribution of answers to the question about parental control: “How much does your father really know about?”, % among all respondents in dynamics (only the share of answers ‘knows a lot’ is given)**



## 1.5. Peer support

Adolescence is characterized by a shift in focus from the family to the environment, including peers, and spending free time away from home and school. Communication with friends takes more time and has a significant impact on the lives of young people. However, it is important to understand that peer relationships can have both positive and negative effects on health, as many psychological and behavioural aspects of health are related to peer relationships. Particular attention should be paid to the formation of friendships. Maintaining a positive and supportive environment in peer relationships is key to adolescents' health and well-being.

Overall, Ukrainian adolescents demonstrate positive attitudes: 64% believe that their friends try to help them, 63% believe that they can count on their friends when things go wrong, 74% are ready to share their joys and sorrows, and 65% discuss their problems with friends. There were no significant differences by type of settlement, but it can be seen that the level of trust in friends decreases with the age of the respondents (Table 1.5.1).

**Table 1.5.1. Atmosphere in the company of friends, by gender and age, %**

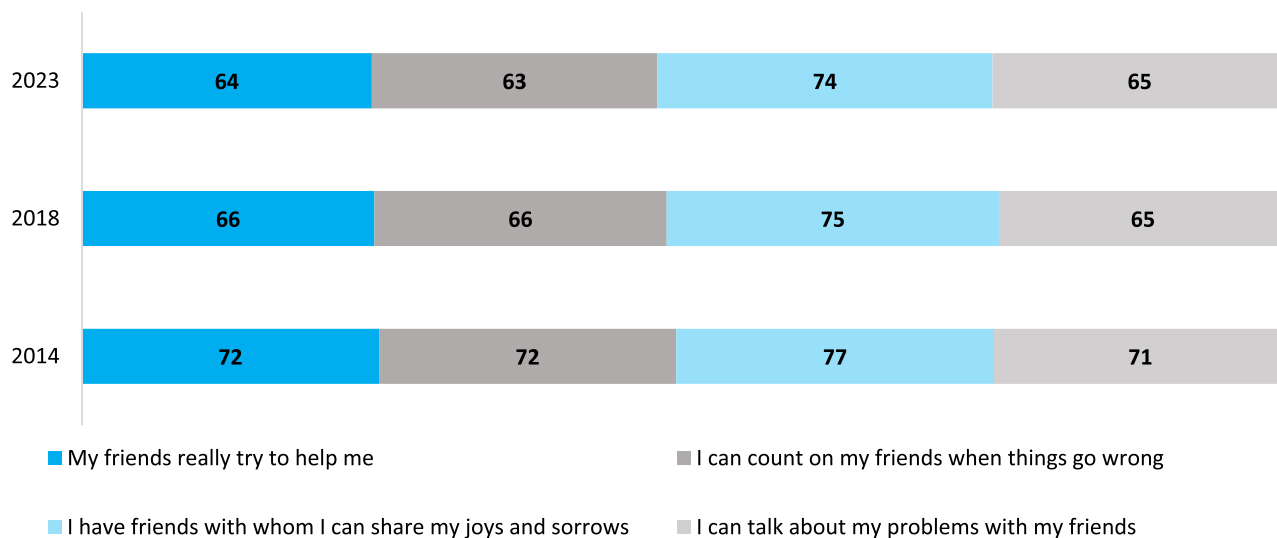
	11-year-olds	13-year-olds	15-year-olds	17-year-olds	Among all
<b>My friends really try to help me</b>					
<b>Disagree*</b>	17	21	24	26	22
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	13	14	15	15	14
<b>Agree**</b>	70	65	61	59	64
<b>I can count on my friends when things go wrong</b>					
<b>Disagree*</b>	21	23	25	28	24
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	13	13	13	13	13
<b>Agree**</b>	66	64	62	59	63
<b>I have friends with whom I can share my joys and sorrows</b>					
<b>Disagree*</b>	16	16	18	22	18
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	8	9	10	10	9
<b>Agree**</b>	76	75	72	68	73
<b>I can talk about my problems with my friends</b>					
<b>Disagree*</b>	25	23	24	27	24
<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	11	10	11	10	11
<b>Agree**</b>	64	67	65	63	65

\* Sum of answers 'very strongly disagree', 'strongly disagree', 'disagree'.

\*\* Sum of answers 'very strongly agree', 'strongly agree', 'agree'.

According to the analysis of data from previous waves of the survey, it can be argued that differences in answers about relationships with friends have not undergone statistically significant changes (Fig. 1.5.1).

**Fig. 1.5.1. Atmosphere in the company of friends, among all respondents in dynamics (the sum of answers 'very strongly agree', 'strongly agree', 'agree'.)**



## 1.6. Body image

In adolescence, the body undergoes changes, and it is at this time that appearance becomes very important for a young person. During puberty, adolescents (both boys and girls) become more attentive to their own bodies and compare themselves to their peers. With age, young people become more critical of their own appearance.

According to the Public Health Center of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, 18-20 thousand new cases of obesity among children and adolescents are recorded annually in Ukraine. Childhood obesity is closely linked to risk factors for non-communicable diseases, particularly at an older age: cardiovascular disease (the leading cause of death among Ukrainians), diabetes, musculoskeletal problems and mental disorders.<sup>3</sup>

According to the survey, the majority of adolescents surveyed (60%) consider their bodies to be normal, but 14% consider themselves thin, and one in four (26%) are overweight. Girls are more likely to consider themselves overweight (31%) than boys (22%), and such critical attitude towards their own bodies is typical for girls aged 13 and older (Table 1.6.1).

**Table 1.6.1. Self-assessment of own body, by age and gender, %**

	11-year-olds			13-year-olds			15-year-olds			17-year-olds		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
<b>Thin*</b>	12	11	11	17	9	13	21	10	16	21	12	14
<b>About the right size</b>	64	63	64	60	56	59	59	57	58	62	56	60
<b>Fat**</b>	24	26	25	23	33	28	20	33	26	18	32	26

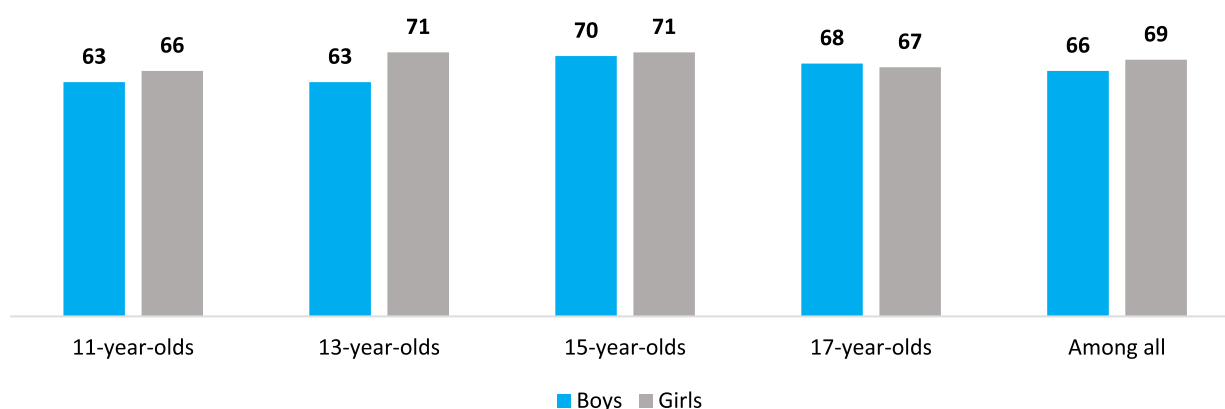
\* Sum of answers 'much too thin', 'a bit too thin'.

\*\* Sum of answers 'a bit too fat', 'much too fat'.

According to the data on the ratio of height to body weight - body mass index (BMI\*) in all age and gender groups - deviations from the norm were found in a significant proportion of adolescents. The data analysis used the definition of the WHO International Obesity Task Force (four IOTF WHO classifications - underweight, normal weight, overweight, obesity).<sup>4</sup>

Normal BMI is observed in 67% of surveyed young people aged 11-17 years (Fig. 1.6.1).

**Fig. 1.6.1. Proportion of adolescents with normal BMI, by age and gender, %**



<sup>3</sup> Childhood obesity survey conducted in Ukraine for the first time: why it is important.

<https://phc.org.ua/news/v-ukraini-vpershe-provodyat-doslidzhennya-schodo-dityachogo-ozhirinnya-chomu-ce-vazhlivo>

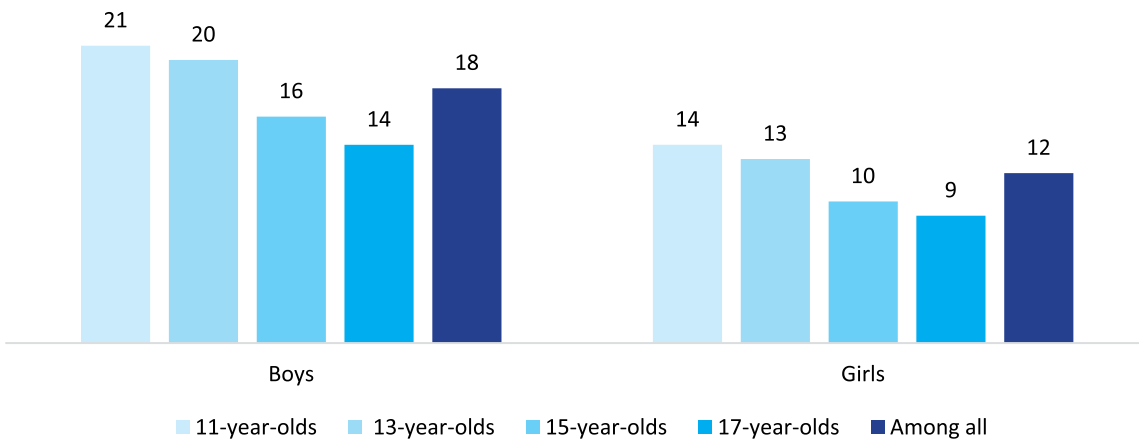
<sup>4</sup> Cole T. J., Lobstein T. Extended international (IOTF) body mass index cut-offs for thinness, overweight and obesity. *Pediatric Obesity*. 2012. Vol. 7 (4). P. 284–294.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2047-6310.2012.000064.x>

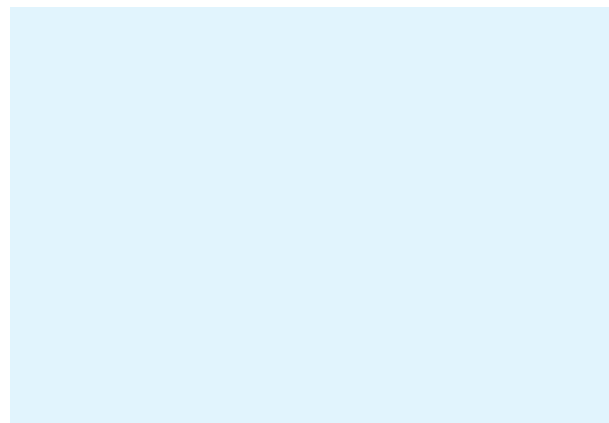
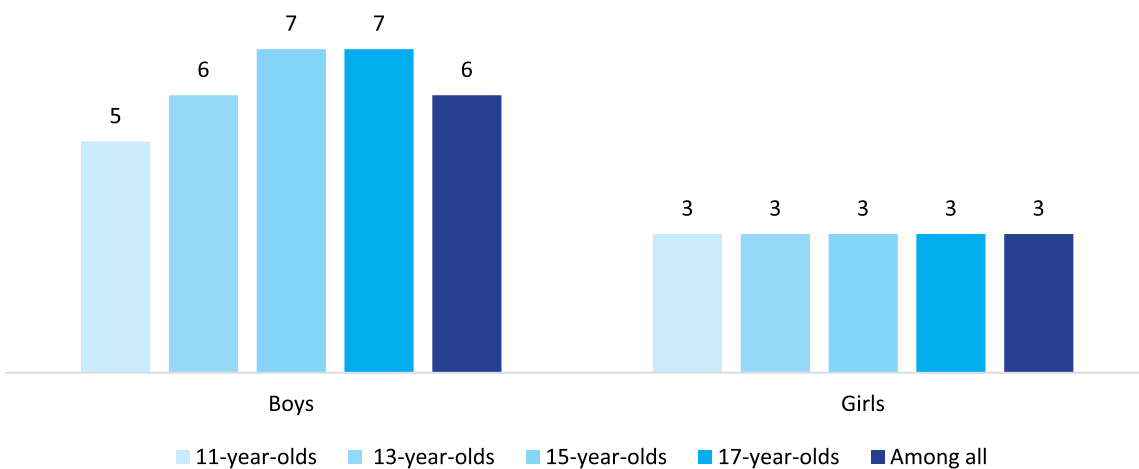
Every sixth girl and every tenth boy is underweight. Girls were more likely to report being underweight - almost one in five (21%) girls aged 17 and one in six girls aged 11, 13, and 15. Among boys, the proportion of those who were underweight ranged from 7% among 15-year-olds to 11% among 11-year-olds.

Overweight was most common among 11- and 13-year-old respondents, while the proportion of overweight was higher among boys of all age groups. The same situation was with the proportion of those who were diagnosed with obesity (Fig. 1.6.2 and Fig. 1.6.3).

**Fig. 1.6.2. Proportion of adolescents with overweight, by age and gender, %**



**Fig. 1.6.3. Proportion of adolescents with obesity, by age and gender, %**





## CONCLUSIONS to Section 1

### Health and mood

- Less than half of adolescents have experienced positive emotions 'most of the time' or 'all of the time' in the last two weeks, such as: calm and relaxed (44%), cheerfulness and in good spirits (53%), activity and energy (47%), filling their lives with interesting things to do (43%), feeling fresh and rested after waking up (36%).
- Girls experience positive emotions much less often than boys, and the proportion of those who experience positive emotions steadily decreases with age. These gender and age peculiarities are preserved for all waves of the survey.
- Compared to the last pre-war wave (2018), the proportion of those experiencing positive emotions has decreased.
- Feeling of loneliness have been experienced by 74% of adolescents during the year. 26% never feel lonely, while 21% have felt lonely most of the time or all of the time over the past year.
- Girls are more likely to feel lonely than boys - 25% of girls feel lonely most of the time or always, while among boys - 17%. With age, the proportion of those who do not feel lonely decreases, and the proportion of those who do feel lonely increases.
- The subjective assessment of the ability to solve problems does not differ among different age groups, and the difference between boys and girls is also minimal. Overall, 61% of respondents say that they often or fairly often find a solution to a problem if they make enough effort, and 60% believe that they often or fairly often manage to do what they decided to do.
- Almost a third of respondents (31%) have experienced such daily sadness or hopelessness, which made them stop doing their usual activities, for two weeks in a row or more. As before, this feeling is more common among girls (37%) than among boys (25%). The proportion of adolescents who have experienced such feelings of sadness increases with age (from 22% among 11-year-olds to 40% among 17-year-olds).
- In the current wave, there is an increase in the prevalence of emotions such as sadness and hopelessness among all respondents compared to the period until 2022. In 2018, this figure was 26%, including 31% for girls and 21% for boys.
- Among students who have been forced to move to another locality in Ukraine (IDPs), this figure is 38%, which is significantly higher than among those who continue to live in their town/village (29%).
- The study showed that Ukrainian adolescents demonstrate a fairly high level of resilience and are able to successfully withstand the challenges of wartime. On the one hand, compared to the pre-war period, the proportion of respondents who felt that they could not control something important in their lives over the past month has slightly increased. In 2018, this figure was 38% (the sum of the answers 'sometimes', 'quite often', and 'very often'), and in 2023 it was 43%. This can be seen as a recognition by respondents that the number of difficulties in their lives has objectively increased.

### Life satisfaction and happiness

- Two-thirds (65%) of students rated their life as 'the best possible' (7 to 10 steps), 30% rated it in the middle (4 to 6), and 5% rated their life as 'the worst possible' (0 to 3 steps).
- The gender and age characteristics are the same as for indicators of positive emotions and feelings of sadness, i.e., life satisfaction is higher among boys than girls, and the satisfaction rate decreases with increasing age.
- The overall figures for the country have decreased compared to the 2018 wave, when three-quarters (74%) of respondents reported themselves at the highest levels.
- Assessment of quality of life is related to whether students live in their home settlement. For IDPs and those who are abroad, the quality of life is lower than for those who remain in their town or village despite the war.
- By 2022, the vast majority of adolescents felt happy ('very happy' or 'happy'). russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine has become a challenge for millions of Ukrainians, including children and adolescents, as well as a source of stress and suffering. Among other things, the war has caused a deterioration in the mental health of the Ukrainian population. The proportion of young people who feel somewhat happy has significantly decreased: from 83% (in 2018) to 47% (in 2023).

### Family support

- 85% of respondents say that it is 'easy' or 'very easy' to talk to their mother about topics that really concern them. Fathers are still the preferred interlocutor for boys (82%) more than for girls (69%). The indicator of ease of discussing important issues decreases for stepparents (to about two-thirds). With grandfather it is 'easy' or 'very easy' to talk about topics that really concern 77% of respondents, with grandmother - 80%.
- For all the alternatives (except for a stepmother), we can observe a tendency of a decrease in the proportion of those who find it easy to talk about important topics with increasing age. In addition, for all items, there are more boys who indicate the alternative 'easy' or 'very easy' than girls. In the context of constant stress and emotional tension in war, it is more difficult for girls to discuss important topics with adult family members. Such a difference between girls and boys is also observed in terms of loneliness, sadness, etc. Obviously, a greater sense of loneliness is also associated with the difficulty of discussing important issues with adults.

- In terms of the dynamics of the indicator, a decrease is observed for biological parents, and vice versa for stepparents. In the extreme conditions of wartime, the presence of even stepparents is extremely important for children and adolescents, while the situation with biological parents has worsened somewhat.
- In all the years when monitoring surveys were conducted, similar features were recorded. In each case, the overwhelming majority of adolescents surveyed (over 70%) agree with the thesis that in the family:
  - they are tried to be helped;
  - they are being ready to be helped in decision-making;
  - they receive necessary moral (emotional) help and support;
  - they can discuss their problems.

If we compare the indicators of agreement with certain estimated characteristics in 2018 and 2023, we can observe a certain decrease in the value of the indicators (in all cases). For example, in 2018, 87% of adolescents agreed with the statement "I receive the necessary moral (emotional) help and support from my family", while in 2023, the same figure was 80%. This decrease is significant, but not critical.

- The most common family activities are eating, talking, and watching TV or video - the majority of respondents say this happens once a week or more. Two-thirds said they go for a family walk once a week or more often. As in previous waves, the frequency of joint family activities decreases with the age of the respondents.
- The difference in joint family activities between boys and girls has deepened. While in 2018 there was a significant difference in such activities as computer games, going to entertainment venues, and playing sports (much more common among boys), now, for all activities (except for joint meals), girls spend much less time together with the family than boys. As before, there is not a single activity that is more often done together with girls than with boys.
- During the war, almost all types of joint activities (except for eating and talking, which have not changed much) have significantly decreased. This is especially true for going to places of entertainment (decrease for 15%) and visiting friends (decrease for 14%). The only example of an increase in the prevalence of joint leisure activities is playing games at home (from 37% to 46%).

## Parental monitoring

- The analysis of the answers demonstrates that the least controlled space, in the opinion of both mothers and fathers, is the Internet.
- Mothers know almost twice as much about their children's friends as fathers (71% and 41% respectively), and they know a little more about their daughters' friends than about their sons' friends. Fathers, on the contrary, know a little more about their sons' friends than about their daughters' friends.
- Spending of pocket money remains less controlled by parents. According to the survey, more than a third of mothers (36%) and almost half of fathers (46%) have no idea how their children spend their money.
- Mothers are much better informed than fathers about how their children spend their time after school. For example, 80% of adolescents surveyed said that mothers know a lot about their children's activities after school, while 50% of respondents said the same about their fathers.
- Mothers know a bit more about their daughters' leisure activities than about their sons' leisure activities. Fathers know better than mothers who their sons communicate with and make friends with, where and how they spend their time after school, how they spend their money, etc.
- As a child grows up, parental control tends to weaken, but remains quite high. When a child is 11 years old, 90% of mothers and 69% of fathers are well aware of where they go in the evenings. At the age of 13, the number of well-informed mothers drops to 75% and fathers to 58%. When the adolescent is 17 years old, the number of well-informed parents decreases even further, and the number of mothers and fathers who know nothing about their children's evening time increases.
- With age, parental control decreases in all gender and age groups, both on the part of the mother and the father. The most pronounced decline in parental awareness of Internet activity is observed at the age of 13. Between the ages of 11 and 17, the number of parents who are well aware of what their children are doing on the Internet decreases significantly: from 58% to 31% for mothers and from 44% to 22% for fathers.
- It is important to note that awareness of both mothers and fathers has increased since 2002. The biggest increases can be seen in knowledge about spending their own money and where to go after school.

## Peers support

- Overall, Ukrainian adolescents demonstrate positive attitudes: 64% believe that their friends try to help them, 63% believe that they can count on their friends when something goes wrong, 74% are ready to share their joys and sorrows, and 65% discuss their problems with their friends. There were no significant differences by type of settlement, but it can be seen that the level of trust in friends decreases with the age of the respondents.
- According to the analysis of data from previous waves of the survey, it can be argued that differences in answers about relationships with friends are not statistically significant.

## **Body image**

- According to the survey, the majority of adolescents (60%) consider their body to be normal, but 14% consider themselves thin, and one in four (26%) consider themselves overweight. Girls are more likely to consider themselves overweight (31%) than boys (22%), and such critical attitude to their own bodies is typical for girls aged 13 and older.
- According to the data on the ratio of height to body weight - body mass index (BMI\*) in all age and gender groups - deviations from the norm were found in a significant proportion of adolescents. The data analysis used the definitions of the WHO International Obesity Task Force (four WHO IOTF classifications - underweight, normal weight, overweight, and obesity)
- Normal BMI is observed in 67% of surveyed young people aged 11-17.
- One in six girls and one in ten boys is underweight.
- Girls were more likely to report being underweight - almost one in five (21%) girls aged 17 and one in six girls aged 11, 13, and 15. Among boys, the proportion of those who were underweight ranged from 7% among 15-year-olds to 11% among 11-year-olds.
- The highest prevalence of overweight was found among 11- and 13-year-old respondents; the proportion of overweight was higher among boys of all age groups. The same situation was observed with the proportion of those who were diagnosed with obesity.

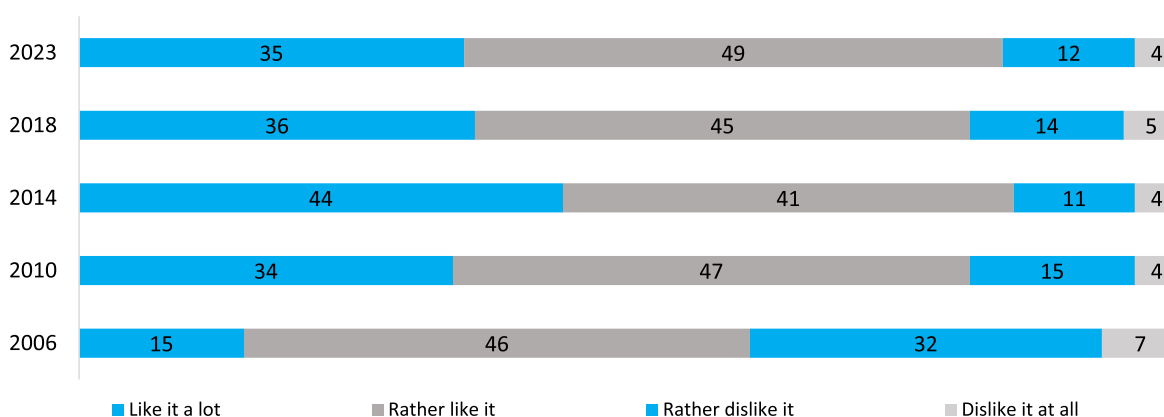
## SECTION 2. SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

### 2.1. Atmosphere at the educational institution

#### School satisfaction (liking school)

According to the results of previous waves of survey, since 2010, the vast majority of adolescents surveyed (over 80%) have been satisfied with their educational institution - respondents like it to some extent (Fig. 2.1.1). This level of satisfaction can be qualified as 'high'. Satisfaction with their educational institution varies somewhat over the years but remains stable overall. In 2023, the share of respondents who 'liked it a lot' or 'rather liked' their educational institution was 84%, and in pre-war 2018 it was 81%. At the same time, in 2014, this figure was slightly higher and equaled 86%.

**Fig. 2.1.1. Distribution of answers to the question: "How do you currently feel about your educational institution?", %**



#### Schoolwork pressure

Students were asked the following question: "How pressured do you feel by the schoolwork you have to do (both in class/group and at home)?" At the time of the study, the feeling of academic workload was characterized by the fact that more than a quarter of respondents (26%) felt 'some' and 'a lot' pressure while doing schoolwork both in the classroom/group and at home. The feeling of pressure is more pronounced among girls (28%) than among boys (24%). The least pressure is felt by younger pupils - 11 and 12-year-olds, and the most - by 14-year-olds (31%). After the age of 14, the feeling of pressure becomes less common (Table 2.1.1).

**Table 2.1.1. Distribution of answers to the question: "How pressured do you feel by the schoolwork you have to do (both in class/group and at home)?", by gender and age, %**

	Total	Boys	Girls	11-year-olds	12-year-olds	13-year-olds	14-year-olds	15-year-olds	16-year-olds	17-year-olds
<b>Not at all</b>	34	35	33	39	33	33	31	33	34	35
<b>A little</b>	40	40	39	42	43	39	38	40	39	36
<b>Some</b>	20	19	21	16	18	22	23	20	20	21
<b>A lot</b>	6	6	7	3	6	6	8	7	7	8
<b>Feel the pressure (some or a lot)</b>	26	24	28	20	24	27	31	27	28	29

The indicators of pressure differ significantly between students who are in Ukraine and those who are abroad because of the war. It is clear that studying in a foreign language environment is itself a source of additional stress. Thus, while 25% of students who currently live in their home town feel pressure, and 29% of those who live elsewhere in Ukraine feel pressure, the feeling of tension is more widespread among students abroad. It is felt by 32% of those who plan to return and 35% of those who do not.

The level of school pressure has remained almost at the pre-war level (it has increased slightly compared to 2018, when it reached 24%). Thus, the school environment is to some extent a center of psychological stability for Ukrainian students during the war.

### Peer support in learning

At the time of the survey, 49% of pupils ‘strongly agreed’ and ‘agreed’ with the statement “The students in my class(es) enjoy being together”; 52% - with the statement “Most of the students in my class/es are kind and helpful”; and 62% with the statement “Other students accept me as I am”.

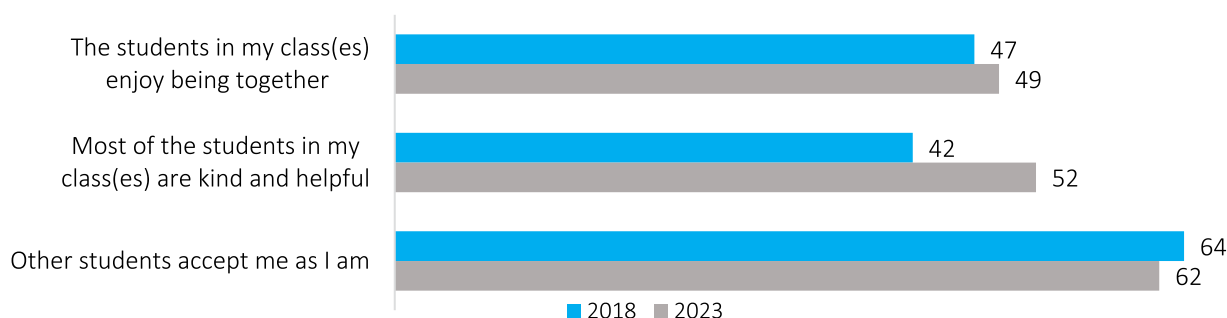
Although girls are less likely than boys to agree with these statements, these differences are smaller than age differences. According to the respondents, the highest level of support from classmates is among younger students (11-12-year-olds) and older students (15-year-olds and older), while 13-14-year-olds show the highest level of disappointment with classmates (Table 2.1.2).

**Table 2.1.2. Distribution of answers to the question: “Please show how much you agree or disagree with each statement”, by gender and age, % (sum of answers ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’)**

	Total	Boys	Girls	11-year-olds	12-year-olds	13-year-olds	14-year-olds	15-year-olds	16-year-olds	17-year-olds
<b>The students in my class(es) enjoy being together</b>	49	52	46	56	47	43	44	54	50	48
<b>Most of the students in my class(es) are kind and helpful</b>	52	53	51	56	48	46	48	58	55	54
<b>Other students accept me as I am</b>	62	64	61	69	62	59	58	64	63	62

Comparison with the 2018 survey shows that peer support remained at about the same level, and even increased from 42% to 52% regarding the presence of kind and helpful classmates - Fig. 2.1.2.

**Fig. 2.1.2. Proportion of respondents who ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’ with the statements concerning the peer support, %**



Similarly to school pressure, peer support scores differ significantly between students who are in Ukraine and those who are abroad. For the latter, support scores are lower than for those in Ukraine (Table 2.1.3). At the same time, support indicators for those who plan to return are higher than for those who intend to stay abroad. It is likely that the distribution by return plans cannot be very precise, given the overall uncertainty of the situation and the complexity of planning.

It is also worth noting the somewhat lower rates of peer support among IDP students who are now studying in places other than where they lived before Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine than among those who are studying in their home town/village.

**Table 2.1.3. Distribution of answers to the question: "Please show how much you agree or disagree with each statement", by current place of residence, % (sum of answers 'strongly agree' and 'agree')**

	Total	In the city/ village where I was born	In other oblast of Ukraine	Abroad, but we plan to return	Abroad and we do not plan to return
<b>The students in my class(es) enjoy being together</b>	49	49	47	51	39
<b>Most of the students in my class(es) are kind and helpful</b>	52	53	48	49	44
<b>Other students accept me as I am</b>	62	64	59	54	49



## 2.2. Teacher/educator support

The monitoring shows that adolescents mostly positively characterize the attitude of their teachers and educators towards themselves (Table 2.2.1). In all years of the survey, two-thirds of respondents agreed with the statement «I feel that teachers accept me as I am.» In 2023, 66% of respondents agreed to some extent with this characterization of teachers and educators, and in 2018 - 67%. That is, there is stability in the indicators, despite the dramatic change in social conditions.

The indicators characterizing the process of personality education are also stable. Approximately half of the respondents agreed with the statement «I feel that my teachers care about me as a person.» In 2023, this figure was 47%, in 2018 - 49%. The figure for 2014 was significantly higher - 55%, but the peculiarity of the historical moment should be taken into account. It was the year of the Revolution of Dignity, which significantly influenced public sentiment (including the civic position of teachers and educators).

**Table 2.2.1. Distribution of answers to the question: “Below are some statements about your teachers/educators. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of them?”, %**

Year of survey	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<b>I feel that teachers accept me as I am <sup>5</sup></b>					
<b>2014</b>	31	40	24	4	1
<b>2018</b>	29	37	25	6	3
<b>2023</b>	28	38	26	6	2
<b>I feel that my teachers care about me as a person <sup>6</sup></b>					
<b>2014</b>	18	37	30	12	3
<b>2018</b>	15	34	36	11	4
<b>2023</b>	16	31	36	13	4
<b>I feel a lot of trust in my teachers <sup>7</sup></b>					
<b>2014</b>	17	33	36	10	4
<b>2018</b>	16	28	34	15	7
<b>2023</b>	17	28	35	13	7

Respect for the pupil/student as an individual on the part of teachers/educators creates the basis for trusting relationships. About half of the surveyed adolescents feel trust in their teachers and educators, while the share of those who do not trust teachers in all years of the surveys does not exceed 22% (half as much). The trusting attitude is almost the same in 2018 and 2023 (44% and 45%, respectively), and slightly higher in 2014 (50%).

<sup>5</sup> In 2014, “I feel that my teachers/educators treat me as an individual”.

<sup>6</sup> In 2014 “I feel that my teachers/educators accept me for who I am”.

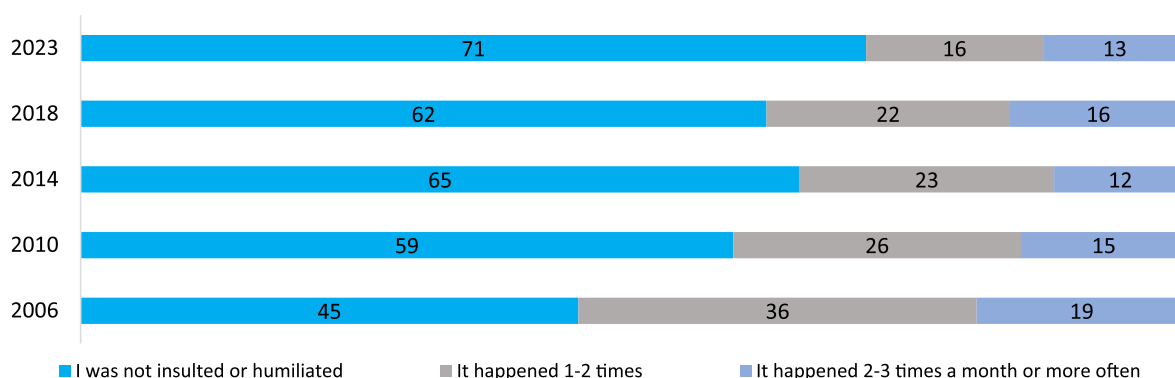
<sup>7</sup> In 2014 “I trust my teachers/educators a lot”.

## 2.3. Bullying in educational institutions

Bullying in its various manifestations is a rather persistent phenomenon in the adolescent environment that is difficult to counteract. Monitoring surveys have revealed a positive trend - a decrease in the number of children surveyed who were victims of bullying (insults, mockery, humiliation) while at educational institution (Fig. 2.3.1). While in 2006, more than half of the respondents (55%) reported that they had been victims of psychological violence at least once in the past few months; in 2023, the number was half as high (29%). The significant decrease in the number of victims of bullying in 2023 compared to 2018 (from 38% to 29%) can be partly explained by the change in social conditions, when violence against one’s friends became especially unacceptable against the backdrop of russian aggression. The war has helped to consolidate Ukrainian society and have awakened a desire to help others in many people.

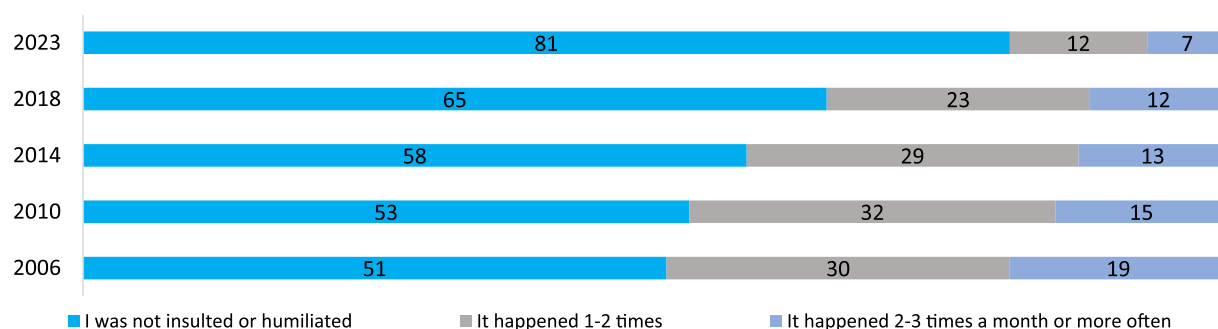
Nevertheless, bullying in educational institutions remains quite common. In 2023, 13% of respondents admitted that they were regularly (2-3 times a month or more) bullied by others (Fig. 2.3.1). This figure should be qualified as ‘significant’. In addition, 25% of the surveyed adolescents reported that they regularly (once a month or more) witnessed humiliation, insults, and bullying of other people. In this case, we are talking about cases of bullying in the social environment of young people in general (not only in educational institutions).

**Fig. 2.3.1. Distribution of answers to the question: “How often have you been insulted/humiliated/bullied in your educational institution over the past few months?”, %.**



The monitoring also revealed another trend - a decrease in the number of adolescents who themselves participated in insulting or humiliating their peers (Fig. 2.3.2). While in 2006, almost half of the respondents (49%) reported that they had bullied their fellow students in the past few months (at least once); in 2023, the number was two and a half times lower (19%). The growing decrease in the number of participants in bullying is a clear trend that can be traced back to each subsequent year of the survey. The sharp decline in the number of bullying participants in 2023 compared to 2018 (from 35% to 19%) can also be explained by the changing atmosphere in society - increased rejection of violence against others.

**Fig. 2.3.2. Distribution of answers to the question: “How often have you participated in insulting/humiliating others or bullying them at school over the past few months?”, %.**





## CONCLUSIONS to Section 2

### Atmosphere at the educational institution

- Since 2010, the vast majority of adolescents surveyed (over 80%) have been somewhat satisfied with their educational institution. This level of satisfaction can be qualified as 'high'. Satisfaction with their educational institution varies from year to year, but remains generally stable. In 2023, the proportion of respondents who liked their educational institution 'a bit' or 'a lot' was 84%, and in 2018 it was 81%. At the same time, in 2014, this figure was 86%.
- When doing schoolwork, both in the classroom/group and at home, 26% of respondents felt 'some' and 'a lot' pressure. The least pressure is felt by younger students - 11 and 12-year-olds, and the most - by 14-year-olds (31%). After the age of 14, the feeling of pressure becomes less common.
- The level of school pressure has remained almost at the pre-war level (24% in 2018), meaning that the school environment is a certain center of psychological stability for Ukrainian students in times of war.
- At the time of the survey, 49% of students agreed with the statement "The students in my class(es) enjoy being together"; 52% agreed with the statement " Most of the students in my class(es) are kind and helpful"; 62% agreed with the statement " Other students accept me as I am".
- Comparison with the 2018 survey shows that peer support has remained at about the same level, and even increased from 42% to 52% in terms of having kind and helpful classmates.
- Among IDP students, peer support is somewhat lower than among those who study in their home town/village.

### Teacher/educator support

- 66% of respondents agree with the statement: "I feel that teachers accept me as I am", and in 2018 - 67%. That is, there is a stability of indicators, despite the dramatic change in social conditions.
- About half of the respondents in different years agreed with the thesis: "I feel that my teachers care about me as a person." In 2023, this figure was 47%, in 2018 - 49%. Respect for the pupil/student as an individual by teachers creates the basis for trusting relationships. About half of the surveyed adolescents feel trust in their teachers and educators, while the proportion of those who do not trust teachers in all years of the surveys does not exceed 22% (half as much).
- The rate of trust is almost the same in 2018 and 2023 (44% and 45%, respectively), and slightly higher in 2014 (50%).

### Bullying in educational institutions

- Bullying in its various manifestations is quite common among adolescents. Monitoring surveys have revealed a positive trend - a decrease in the number of children surveyed who have been victims of bullying (insult, mockery, humiliation) while in an educational institution.
- While in 2006, more than half of the respondents (55%) reported that they had been victims of psychological violence at least once in the past few months, in 2023, the number was half as high (29%). The significant decrease in the number of victims of bullying in 2023 compared to 2018 (from 38% to 29%) can be explained, in particular, by the change in social conditions, when violence against one's friends became particularly unacceptable against the backdrop of russian aggression. The war has helped consolidate Ukrainian society, and many people have a desire to help others.

## SECTION 3. BULLYING, CYBERBULLYING AND PHYSICAL FIGHTING IN YOUTH ENVIRONMENT

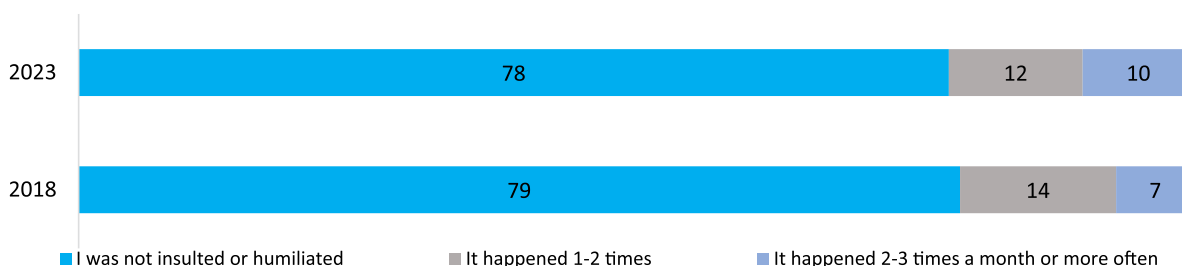
### 3.1. Experience of bullying and cyberbullying.

#### Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying - online insults, humiliation, and mockery - is a relatively recent phenomenon, but it has quickly become a mass phenomenon. Monitoring of this phenomenon among adolescents started in 2018. The surveys recorded a stable number of respondents who reported that they had been a victim of online bullying (at least once) in the past few months. While in 2018, the number of such respondents was 21%, in 2023 it was 22% (Fig. 3.1.1).

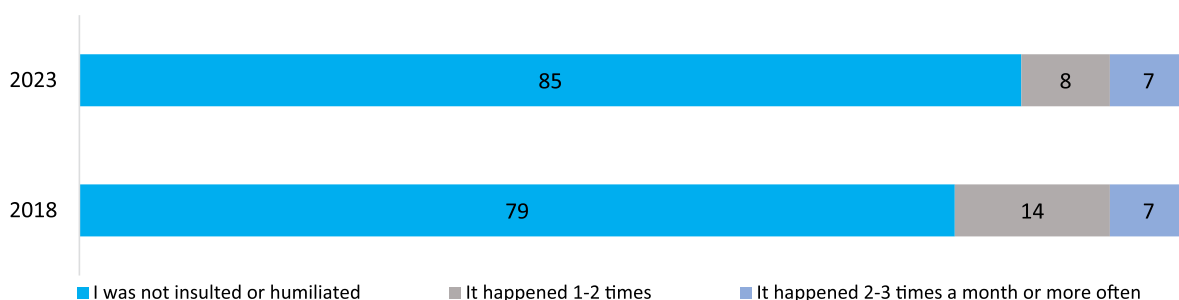
At the same time, it is somewhat alarming that the number of victims of cyberbullying was not affected by the change in the moral atmosphere during the war - the consolidation of Ukrainian society, the desire of many citizens to help others, and the rejection of violence against fellow citizens against the backdrop of Russian aggression. It is also noteworthy that the number of respondents who have become victims of cyberbullying on a regular basis (2-3 times a month or more) has increased to some extent (although not significantly). While in 2018, 7% of respondents were victims of cyberbullying, in 2023, the figure was 10%. The anonymity of the cyberstalker makes him or her immune to public opinion; it is more difficult to identify and punish the offender and stop the bullying online than in the school community.

**Fig. 3.1.1. Distribution of answers to the question: “Over the past few months, how often have you been insulted/humiliated/bullied online?”, %.**



As a sign of a positive trend, we should note a decrease in the number of adolescents who have personally participated in online insults, humiliation, and bullying over the past few months. In 2018, there were 21% of such respondents, and in 2023 - 15% (Fig. 3.1.2). This decrease was due to a decrease in the number of those who participated in cyberbullying rather accidentally (once or twice): from 14% in 2018 to 8% in 2023. The next monitoring surveys will show whether this positive trend will be sustainable and long-lasting.

**Fig. 3.1.2. Distribution of answers to the question: “Over the past few months, how often have you participated in online insults/humiliation/bullying, such as cyberbullying?”, %.**



## Witnesses of bullying

Bullying as a phenomenon consists not only of victims and perpetrators, but also of witnesses, so it was important to find out how often students witness bullying in person and online. In the 2023 study (these questions were not asked in the previous wave), respondents were asked how often they witnessed events such as bullying and cyberbullying.

In general, almost half of the respondents (49%) witnessed bullying to some extent at least once in the last six months, and a quarter (25%) witnessed such events regularly - once a month or more.

As for cyberbullying, the proportion of witnesses is lower - 38% have seen it at least once, including 22% once a month or more. The decrease in the proportion of witnesses to cyberbullying is related to the peculiarities of this type of bullying, where the victim may receive offensive messages or experience other online troubles on their gadget or computer after school hours, alone, without witnesses.

While boys are more likely to be offended, there is no difference in terms of witnesses - both boys and girls are equally likely to witness bullying and cyberbullying. Instead, this proportion increases with age: from the age of 12, the number of witnesses of bullying, both in person and online, increases rapidly, reaching a peak in 15-year-old students (Table 3.1.1).

Якщо серед хлопців частіше зустрічаються ті, які ображають, то щодо свідків різниці немає – і хлопці, і дівчата з однаковою частотою стають свідками булінгу та кібербулінгу. Натомість ця частка збільшується з віком: вже з 12 років стрімко зростає кількість свідків знущань як очних, так і онлайн, і досягає піку у 15-річних учнів (табл.3.1.1).

**Table 3.1.1. Distribution of answers to the question: “How often have you witnessed such events?”, by gender and age, %**

	Total	Boys	Girls	11-year-olds	12-year-olds	13-year-olds	14-year-olds	15-year-olds	16-year-olds	17-year-olds
<b>Cases of BULLYING (humiliation, insult, mockery)</b>										
<b>Never</b>	51	51	51	59	51	52	50	48	47	48
<b>Witnessed</b>	49	49	49	41	49	48	50	52	53	52
<b>Once in the last 6 months</b>	24	24	25	22	24	25	24	25	26	27
<b>One time a month</b>	10	11	10	9	10	10	12	11	10	10
<b>Several times a month</b>	9	8	9	6	9	8	9	10	10	9
<b>Several times a week</b>	6	6	5	4	6	6	5	6	6	6
<b>Cases of CYBERBULLYING (humiliation, insult, mockery online)</b>										
<b>Never</b>	62	62	62	75	66	62	59	54	56	55
<b>Witnessed</b>	38	38	38	25	34	38	41	46	44	45
<b>Once in the last 6 months</b>	16	15	17	13	15	16	17	19	17	17
<b>One time a month</b>	9	9	9	6	7	8	11	11	10	11
<b>Several times a month</b>	7	7	8	4	7	8	7	9	9	10
<b>Several times a week</b>	6	7	4	2	5	6	6	7	8	7

The proportion of witnesses to bullying differs between students who are in Ukraine and those who are abroad. Thus, while 25% of respondents in general witnessed bullying regularly (once a month or more), more than a third of those studying abroad did so (33% of those who plan to return and 35% of those who do not plan to return). As for cyberbullying, the gap is even wider - while on average 22% witness regular cyberbullying, the numbers are 34% and 27% among students abroad, respectively.

Within the country, there is also a difference by place of residence - while 24% of students studying in their home settlement regularly witness bullying and 21% witness cyberbullying, for IDP students who are now studying in places other than where they lived before Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, these proportions are 27% and 28%, respectively.

### Action of witnesses of bullying

Students were asked what actions they took when they witnessed bullying (in person and online) in the last two months. The answer was open-ended, allowing students to select all options that applied. A third of witnesses (33%) reported helping the victim in the case of face-to-face bullying and more than a quarter (27%) in the case of cyberbullying.

Only 25% of witnesses said they had told an adult about the bullying situation, and 19% in the case of cyberbullying. In the case of cyberbullying, almost all possible actions were reported with less frequency.

About a third of witnesses admitted that they did nothing at all (31% for bullying and 36% for cyberbullying). More details are provided in Table 3.1.2.

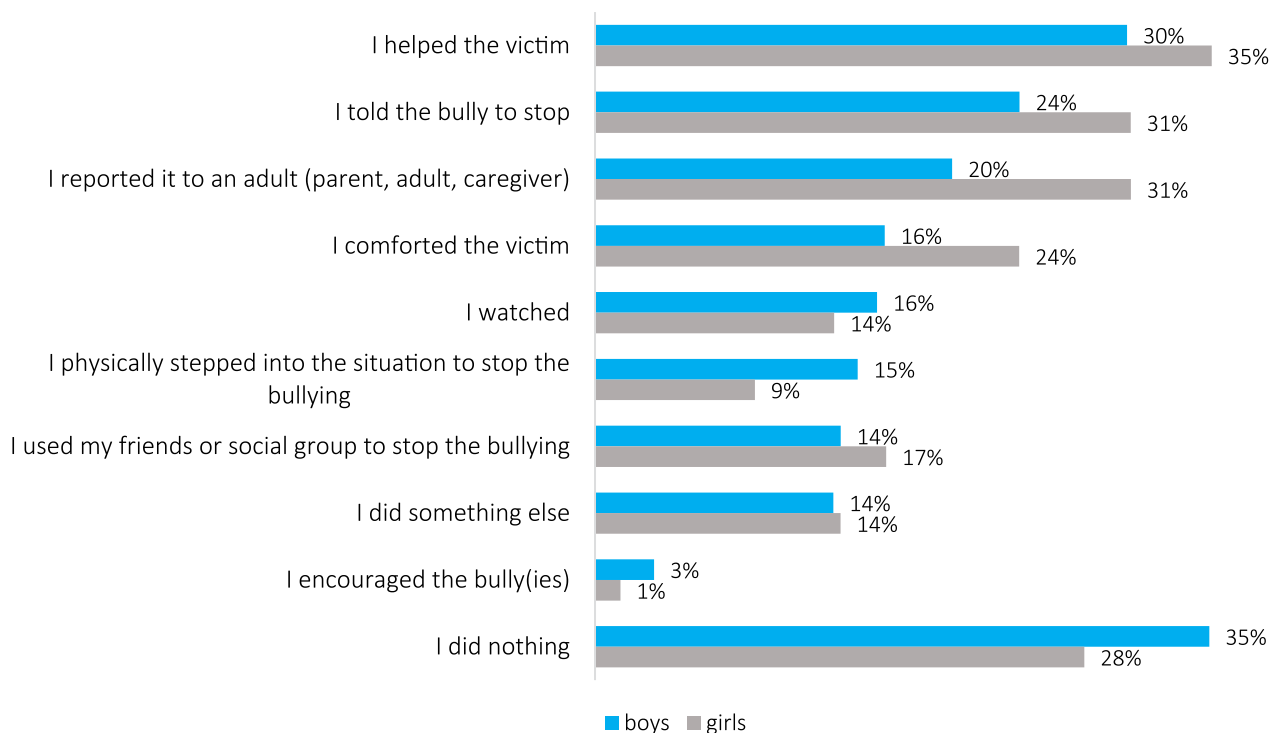
**Table 3.1.2. Distribution of answers to the question: "What did you do when you witnessed bullying and cyberbullying (online abuse) during the last two months?", % of affirmative answers**

	Witness bullying	Witness cyberbullying
<b>I helped the victim</b>	33	27
<b>I told the bully to stop</b>	27	22
<b>I reported it to an adult (parent, adult, caregiver)</b>	25	19
<b>I comforted the victim</b>	20	17
<b>I used my friends or social group to stop the bullying</b>	15	12
<b>I watched</b>	15	14
<b>I did something else</b>	14	15
<b>I physically stepped into the situation to stop the bullying</b>	12	7
<b>I encouraged the bully(ies)</b>	2	3
<b>I DID NOTHING</b>	31	36

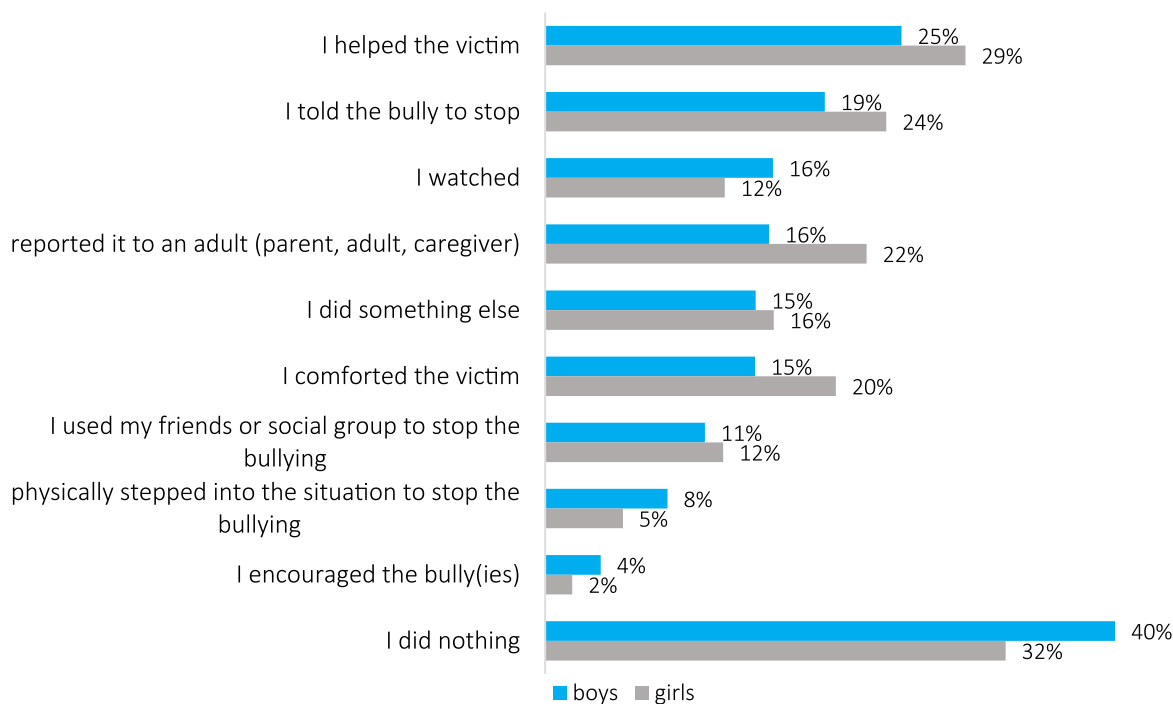
When analyzing the behavioural practices of students who witnessed bullying and cyberbullying, the difference in how boys and girls acted is striking (Figures 3.1.3 and 3.1.4).

Both during bullying and cyberbullying, boys were more likely to be passive (do nothing) than girls, while girls were more likely to help the "victim", try to verbally stop the aggressor, comfort the victim, and tell adults (parents, teachers, etc.) about the incident.

**Fig. 3.1.3. Distribution of answers to the question: “What did you do when you witnessed bullying during the last two months?”, % of affirmative answers**



**Fig. 3.1.4. Distribution of answers to the question: “What did you do when you witnessed cyberbullying (online abuse) during the last two months?”, % of affirmative answers**





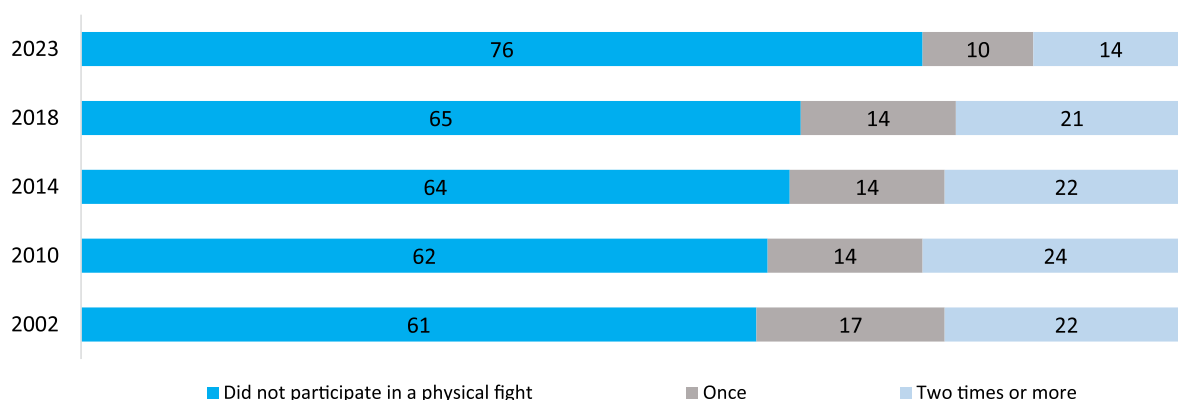
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### 3.2. Physical violence: participation in physical fights

Psychologists and educators, characterizing the specific behaviour of adolescents, note, in particular, their high conflictness and aggressiveness. One form of aggressive reaction is the use of physical force against another person. In all years of the survey, the majority of respondents indicated that they had never been involved in a physical fight during the year (Fig. 3.2.1). Moreover, while in the pre-war years this figure was fairly stable and ranged from 61-65%, in 2023 it increased sharply to 76%. Accordingly, the rate of participation in fights has decreased: while in 2018 the number of those who participated in fights twice or more during the year was 21%, in 2023 it was one and a half times less (14%).

This phenomenon can be partly explained by a decrease in the intensity of interpersonal interaction among young people offline. During the war, many educational institutions provided online education; adolescents spent less time away from home and less time with their peers.

**Fig. 3.2.1. Distribution of answers to the question: “How many times in the last 12 months have you participated in a physical fight”<sup>8</sup>, %**



<sup>8</sup> In 2010, the question was worded as follows: “How many times in the last 12 months have you been in a physical fight?”

## CONCLUSIONS to Section 3

### Experience of bullying and cyberbullying

- Cyberbullying - insulting, humiliating, mocking online - is a recent phenomenon, but it has quickly become a mass phenomenon. Monitoring of this phenomenon among adolescents was launched in 2018. According to the surveys, the number of respondents who reported that they had been bullied online (at least once) in the past few months has remained stable. While in 2018, the number of such respondents was 21%, in 2023 it was 22%.
- 49% witnessed bullying at least once in the last six months, including 25% who witnessed such events regularly - once a month or more. As for cyberbullying, the proportion of witnesses is lower - 38% have seen it at least once, including 22% - once a month or more.
- Both boys and girls witness bullying and cyberbullying with equal frequency. Starting from the age of 12, the number of witnesses to bullying, both in person and online, increases rapidly, reaching a peak among 15-year-old students.
- 33% of witnesses reported helping the victim in the case of bullying, 27% - in the case of cyberbullying.
- Only 25% of witnesses said they had told an adult about the bullying situation, and only 19% in the case of cyberbullying. In the case of cyberbullying, almost all possible actions of witnesses were reported with a lower frequency.
- About a third of witnesses admitted that they did nothing at all (31% for bullying and 36% for cyberbullying).
- During both bullying and cyberbullying, boys were more likely than girls to be passive (do nothing), while girls were more likely to help the 'victim', try to verbally stop the aggressor, comfort the victim, and tell adults (parents, teachers, etc.) about the incident.

### Physical violence: participation in physical fights

- In all years of the survey, the majority of respondents indicated that they had never been involved in a fight during the year. While this figure was fairly stable until 2022, ranging from 61-65%, in 2023 it increased sharply to 76%.
- The rate of participation in fights has decreased: while in 2018 the number of respondents who participated in fights twice or more during the year was 21%, in 2023 it was one and a half times less (14%).

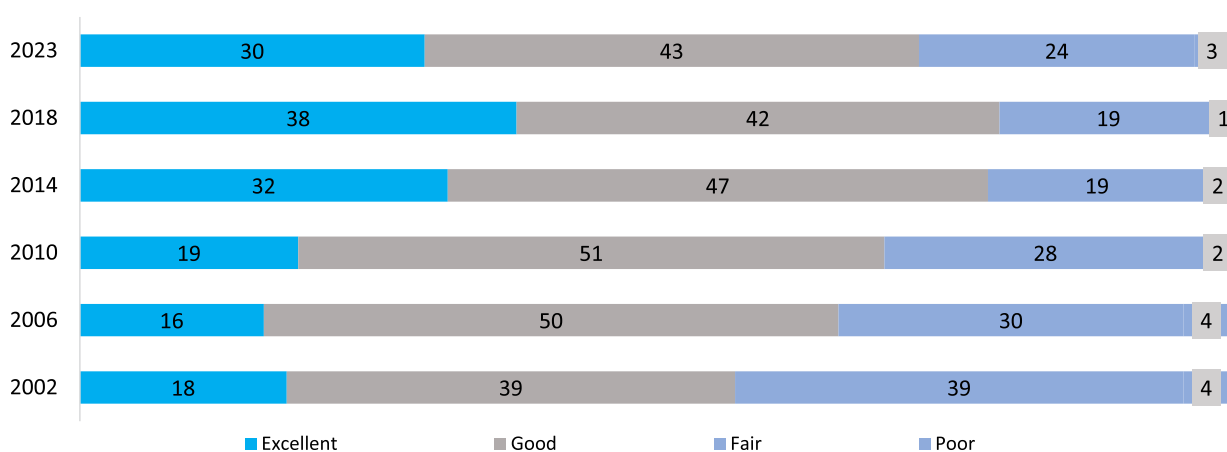
## SECTION 4. HEALTH IN INDIVIDUAL PRACTICES AND LIFE STRATEGIES OF ADOLESCENTS

### 4.1. Self-assessment of health and manifestations of illnesses

The overwhelming majority of adolescents surveyed in 2023 (73%) assess their health as 'excellent' or 'good', about a quarter of respondents (27%) characterize it as 'fair' or 'poor'. Since we are talking about young people, these indicators are rather unfavorable.

Monitoring surveys have recorded an undulating trajectory of adolescents' assessment of their own health. At first, the total rate of 'excellent' and 'good' characteristics gradually increased: in 2002, this figure was 57%, in 2006 - 66%, in 2010 - 70%, in 2014 - 79%, and in 2018 it reached its maximum value - 80%. In 2023, there was a sharp decline to 73%, almost to the level of 2010 (Fig. 4.1.1). At the same time, there was a sharp increase in the number of respondents who characterized their own health as 'fair' or 'poor': from 20% in 2018 to 27% in 2023. There is reason to believe that the main factor that negatively affected adolescents' self-assessment of their health was the war and its consequences. In other words, stress and deterioration of socio-economic living conditions have led to a deterioration in the health of young people.

**Fig. 4.1.1. Distribution of answers to the question: "How would you assess your health?", %.**



As noted above, adolescents' self-assessment of their health is rather poor and indicates the prevalence of health problems. This assumption is supported by data on respondents' experience of unwellness and psychological discomfort over the past six months (Fig. 4.1.2). Psychological problems are the most common. In 2023, once a week or more often many respondents complained that they ...

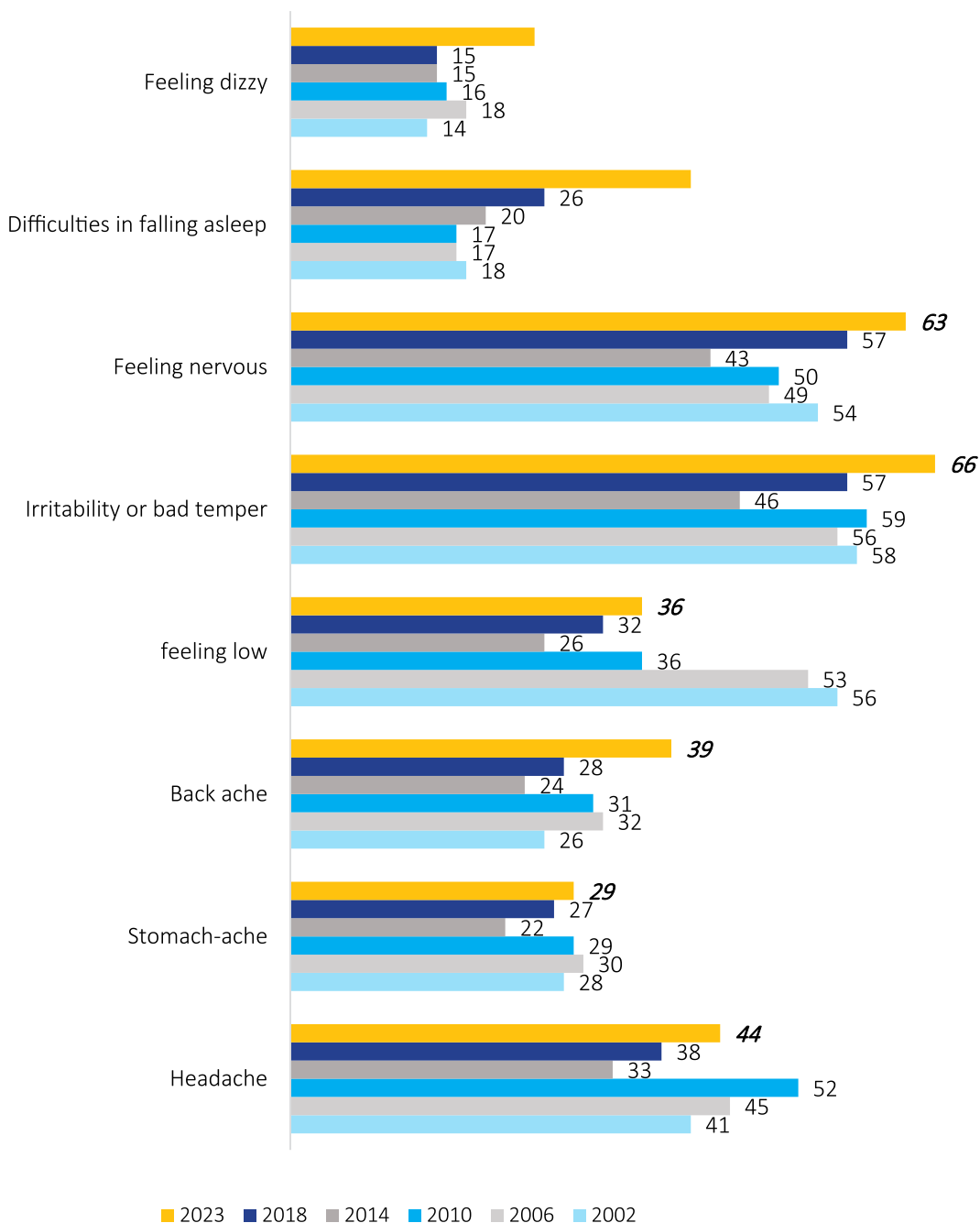
- felt irritated or bad temper (66% of respondents),
- felt nervous (63%),
- had difficulties in falling asleep (41%),
- felt low (36%).

Data from the 2023 survey shows the prevalence of symptoms that can be characterized as symptoms of certain diseases. Many adolescents reported that once a week or more they had...

- headache (44% of respondents),
- back ache (39%)
- stomach-ache (29%).



**Fig. 4.1.2. Number of respondents who have experienced the following symptoms of illness and psychological discomfort “almost every day”, “more than once a week” or “once a week” in the last 6 months<sup>9</sup>, %**



Compared to the pre-war year of 2018, in 2023, the indicators characterizing the manifestations of such ailments increased especially:<sup>10</sup>

- Felt dizzy (1.7 times increase);
- Had difficulties in falling asleep (1.6 times increase);
- Back ache (1.4 times increase).

As for the increase in the rate of such manifestations as “back ache”, it can be assumed that this is due to a decrease in the mobility of adolescents and an increase in the time they spend with gadgets (sitting). During the war, many young people study remotely and limit their time away from home.

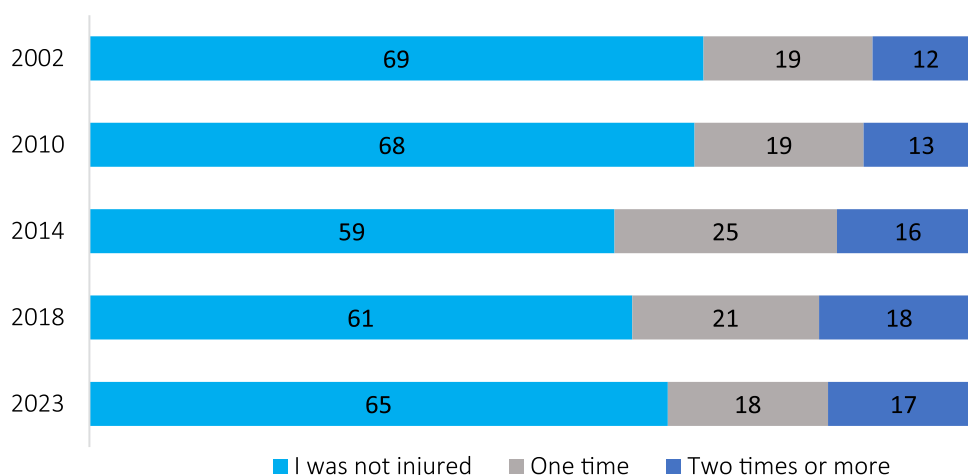
<sup>9</sup> In the 2010 survey, the indicator (manifestation) of illness “Difficulties in falling asleep” was worded differently: “I had insomnia.”

<sup>10</sup> This refers to the number of respondents who felt this way once a week or more often.

## 4.2. Adolescent traumatism

The indicators characterizing injuries among adolescents are quite stable. In 2023, the number of respondents who had been injured during the last 12 months and had to see a doctor or nurse was 35%. This is slightly less than in 2018 (39%) or 2014 (41%). At the same time, the injury rate in 2023 is slightly higher than the same indicator in 2010 (32%) or 2002 (31%). Thus, the injury rate varies noticeably from year to year, but not significantly (Fig. 4.2.1).

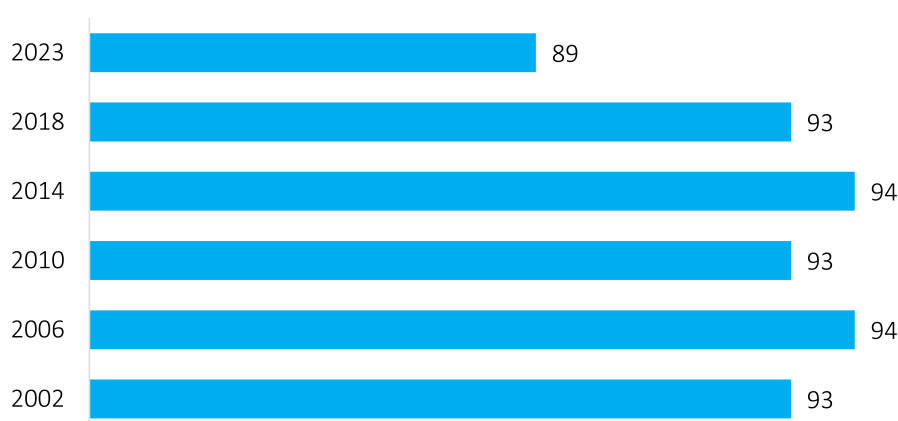
**Fig. 4.2.1. Distribution of answers to the question: “In the last 12 months, how often have you been injured and so you had to visit a doctor or nurse?”,<sup>11</sup> %**



## 4.3. Hygiene practices

A healthy lifestyle involves practical actions aimed at preventing diseases, strengthening the body, and improving well-being. Hygiene procedures, including brushing teeth, play an important role among healthy habits. The vast majority of adolescents surveyed brush their teeth daily (Fig. 4.3.1).

**Fig. 4.3.1. Number of respondents who brush their teeth every day (once or more often), %.**



In 2023 there was a slight (insignificant) decrease in the number of young people who brush their teeth daily. This could be due to the deterioration of the respondents’ social and living conditions, in particular, due to forced displacement. At the same time, the influence of stressors cannot be ruled out.

<sup>11</sup> In 2010, the question was worded as follows: “In the last 12 months, how often have you been injured and so you had to seek medical care?”

#### 4.4. Features of nutrition of children and adolescents

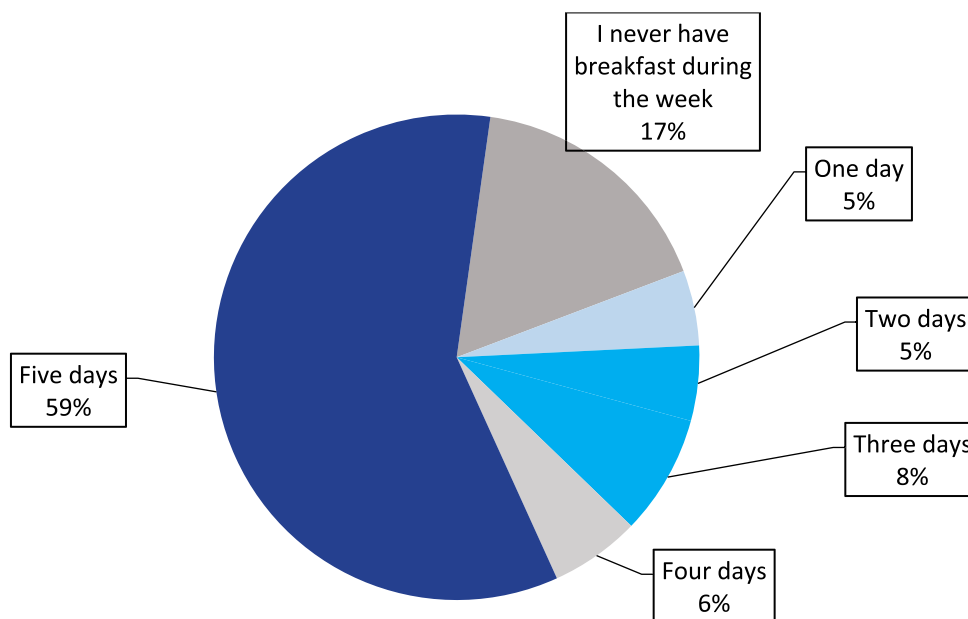
Rational nutrition is the timely provision of the body with food containing nutrients in optimal amounts, taking into account the nature of human activity and individual characteristics: age, gender, height, weight, etc. A healthy diet is the key to health, strength, endurance and longevity. However, many adolescents are frivolous about their nutrition, not understanding the importance of this health factor.

A healthy diet involves an optimal eating regimen, i.e., observing certain intervals between individual meals and dividing the daily ration into separate meals. Nutritionists

- Refusal to eat breakfast or meals for a long time can increase overeating at other times of the day.<sup>12</sup>
- Skipping breakfast is correlated with an increased risk of type 2 diabetes.<sup>13</sup>
- People who don't eat breakfast consume fewer nutrients, such as calcium, vitamin D, folic acid, and iron.<sup>14</sup>
- Ignoring breakfast significantly increases the likelihood of psychological stress.<sup>15</sup>

So, there is every reason to believe that breakfast is very important, especially for children. According to the survey of Ukrainian children and adolescents, quite a few (17%) respondents never eat breakfast on weekdays (Fig. 4.4.1). In addition, another 10% of respondents eat breakfast on weekdays only once or twice a week. Constantly (daily) eat breakfast 59% of adolescents surveyed. This is a rather high rate of morning meals, but it cannot be considered quite satisfactory.

**Fig. 4.4.1. Distribution of answers to the question: "How often do you usually have breakfast (more than a glass of milk or fruit juice) on weekdays?", %**



As for breakfast on weekends, the rate of morning meals is higher than on weekdays: 71% of respondents reported having breakfast on both Saturday and Sunday (Figure 4.4.2). At the same time, the proportion of respondents who do not eat breakfast on weekends (13%) is significant and almost equal to the number of those who refuse to eat breakfast on weekdays.

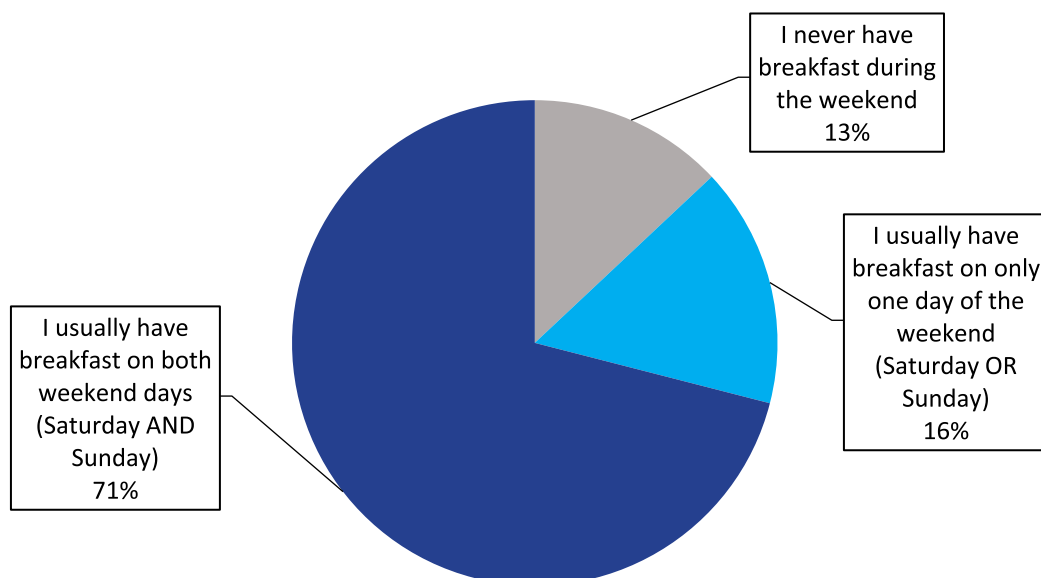
<sup>12</sup> Xiumei Ma, Qing Chen, Yueli Pu, Man Guo, Zongzhe Jiang, Wei Huang, Yang Long, Yong Xu. Skipping breakfast is associated with overweight and obesity: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Obesity Research & Clinical Practice*. 2020 Jan-Feb. Vol. 14 (1). P:1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orcp.2019.12.002>

<sup>13</sup> Huashan Bi 1, Yong Gan 1, Chen Yang 1, Yawen Chen 1, Xinyue Tong 1, Zuxun Lu. Breakfast skipping and the risk of type 2 diabetes: a meta-analysis of observational studies. *Public Health Nutrition*. 2015. Vol. 18. Issue 16. P. 3013–3019. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S13688980015000257>

<sup>14</sup> Fanelli S., Walls C., Taylor C. Skipping breakfast is associated with nutrient gaps and poorer diet quality among adults in the United States. *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society*. 2020. Vol. 80. Issue OCE1: Winter Conference Live 2020, 8–9 December 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0029665121000495>

<sup>15</sup> Hoda Zahedi, Shirin Djalalinia, Omid Sadeghi, Fateme Zare Garizi, Hamid Asayesh, Moloud Payab. Breakfast consumption and mental health: a systematic review and meta-analysis of observational studies. 2020. P. 1250-1264. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1028415X.2020.1853411>

**Fig. 4.4.2. Distribution of answers to the question: “How often do you usually have breakfast (more than a glass of milk or fruit juice) on weekend?”, %**



**Table 4.4.1. Distribution of answers to the question: “How often do you usually have breakfast (more than a glass of milk or fruit juice) on weekdays/ weekend?”, %**

	Age							Gender		Type of settlement		All respondents
	11-year-olds	12-year-olds	13-year-olds	14-year-olds	15-year-olds	16-year-olds	17-year-olds	Girls	Boys	City/town	Village	
<b>Weekdays</b>												
<b>I never have breakfast during the week</b>	10	12	15	18	22	23	25	20	13	16	18	17
<b>One day</b>	4	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
<b>Two days</b>	4	6	6	5	6	6	7	6	5	5	6	5
<b>Three days</b>	7	7	8	8	9	8	9	9	8	8	8	8
<b>Four days</b>	6	6	5	6	5	5	4	7	4	6	5	6
<b>Five days</b>	69	63	61	58	53	53	50	53	65	60	58	59
<b>Weekend</b>												
<b>I never have breakfast during the weekend</b>	6	9	12	13	17	19	20	15	11	13	14	13
<b>I usually have breakfast on only one day of the weekend (Saturday OR Sunday)</b>	13	14	16	16	18	16	16	16	15	15	18	16
<b>I usually have breakfast on both weekend days (Saturday AND Sunday)</b>	81	77	72	71	65	65	64	69	74	72	68	71

The analysis of the survey results revealed the following features of having breakfast (Table 4.4.1):

- With age, the proportion of adolescents who always eat breakfast on weekdays (eating breakfast five days a week on weekdays) gradually decreases. Among 11-year-olds, this figure is 69%, and among 17-year-olds - 50%. At the same time, the proportion of respondents who do not eat breakfast on weekdays is increasing: among 11-year-olds, 10%, and among 17-year-olds, 25%.
- The older the respondents are, the fewer of them necessarily eat breakfast on weekends (both on Saturday and Sunday). Among 11-year-olds, this figure is 81%, and among 17-year-olds - 64%. Along with age, the share of respondents who do not eat breakfast on weekends increases: among 11-year-olds, 6%, and among 17-year-olds, 20%.
- Girls are less likely than boys to have breakfast every day on weekdays (53% and 65% respectively) and on weekends (69% and 74%). At the same time, there are relatively more girls who do not eat breakfast at all, both on weekdays and weekends.
- There are no significant differences in the practice of morning meals among urban and rural adolescents. However, there are some minor (symptomatic) differences: urban children eat breakfast on weekdays and weekends somewhat more often than rural children. These differences are minor, but statistically significant.

The diet should be balanced, providing an optimal ratio of proteins, fats, carbohydrates, minerals and vitamins. An example of a rational approach to dietary planning is the “healthy eating plate” - a modern model of healthy eating that reflects a balanced daily menu. This model was developed and recommended for the population of Ukraine by experts of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine.<sup>16</sup> Adherence to the healthy eating model allows you to have high physical and mental performance and a low risk of dangerous diseases. It is in light of the recommendations of the MoH that the survey results characterizing adolescents’ consumption of certain foods were analyzed.

- The majority of adolescents surveyed (66%) eat bread every day - once or several times a day (Fig. 4.4.3). Daily bread consumption is quite acceptable in itself, provided that the amount and nutritional value of the product consumed is optimal. (In particular, whole grain bread contains more fiber and minerals than sifted flour bread.)
- Half of the respondents consume fruits and vegetables on a daily basis (51% and 48% of respondents, respectively). At the same time, according to the recommendations of the MoH, both vegetables (excluding potatoes) and fruits (in each case) are mandatory components of the daily diet. It is recommended to eat at least 300 gr of vegetables and 200 gr of fruits and berries per day.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, the indicators of fruit and vegetable consumption by respondents cannot be considered satisfactory.
- A healthy diet involves moderate consumption of lean meat (poultry, veal, etc.). Every day, 41% of adolescents eat meat and meat dishes. Given this figure, there is an excessive consumption of meat. It is advisable to study the structure and volume of consumption of this product in a more differentiated way.
- Recommendations of MoH on healthy eating include advice to avoid consuming deeply processed meat products: sausages, ham, frankfurters, pates, etc.<sup>18</sup> At the same time, a quarter of respondents (25%) eat these products every day. This is an unfavorable indicator.
- It is recommended to eat fish dishes two or three times a week.<sup>19</sup> Only 6% of surveyed adolescents eat fish every day, and 34% eat it more than once a week.
- It is considered advisable (healthy) to eat one or two eggs per day, in particular as an alternative to meat dishes.<sup>20</sup> At the same time, only 18% of adolescents said they eat eggs every day.
- According to healthy eating guidelines, you should consume 2-3 servings of dairy products daily: milk, yogurt, cheese (cottage cheese), preferably with moderate fat or low fat content.<sup>21</sup> Given these recommendations, the actual consumption of dairy products by adolescents is rather insufficient. Only 13% of respondents consume whole milk, and 4% consume skim milk. There are few respondents (8%) who consume fermented milk products such as kefir, ryazhenka, and yogurt (without sugar) on a daily basis. Only 7% of respondents eat cottage cheese, which is a source of calcium necessary for a growing body, on a daily basis. Of the dairy products, the majority of respondents (17%) eat hard cheese on a daily basis, but this high-fat product is the one that should be avoided (eaten infrequently).
- Nutritionists recommend consuming two tablespoons of various unsalted and unsweetened nuts and seeds <sup>22</sup> daily. But only 12% of the surveyed adolescents eat them daily.

<sup>16</sup> The Ministry of Health of Ukraine presented recommendations on healthy eating. Ministry of Health of Ukraine. 13.12.2017. URL: <https://moz.gov.ua/article/news/moz-ukraini-predstavilo-rekomendacii-zi-zdorovogo-harchuvannia>

<sup>17</sup> Healthy eating plate. Ministry of Health of Ukraine. 4.11.2021. URL: <https://moz.gov.ua/article/health/tarilka-zdorovogo-harchuvannia>

<sup>18</sup> Recommendations for healthy eating for adults. 8.12.2017.

URL: [https://moz.gov.ua/uploads/ckeditor/%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%BA%D1%83%D0%BC%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%82%D0%B8/01122017\\_Basic\\_Recommendations-1.pdf](https://moz.gov.ua/uploads/ckeditor/%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%BA%D1%83%D0%BC%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%82%D0%B8/01122017_Basic_Recommendations-1.pdf)

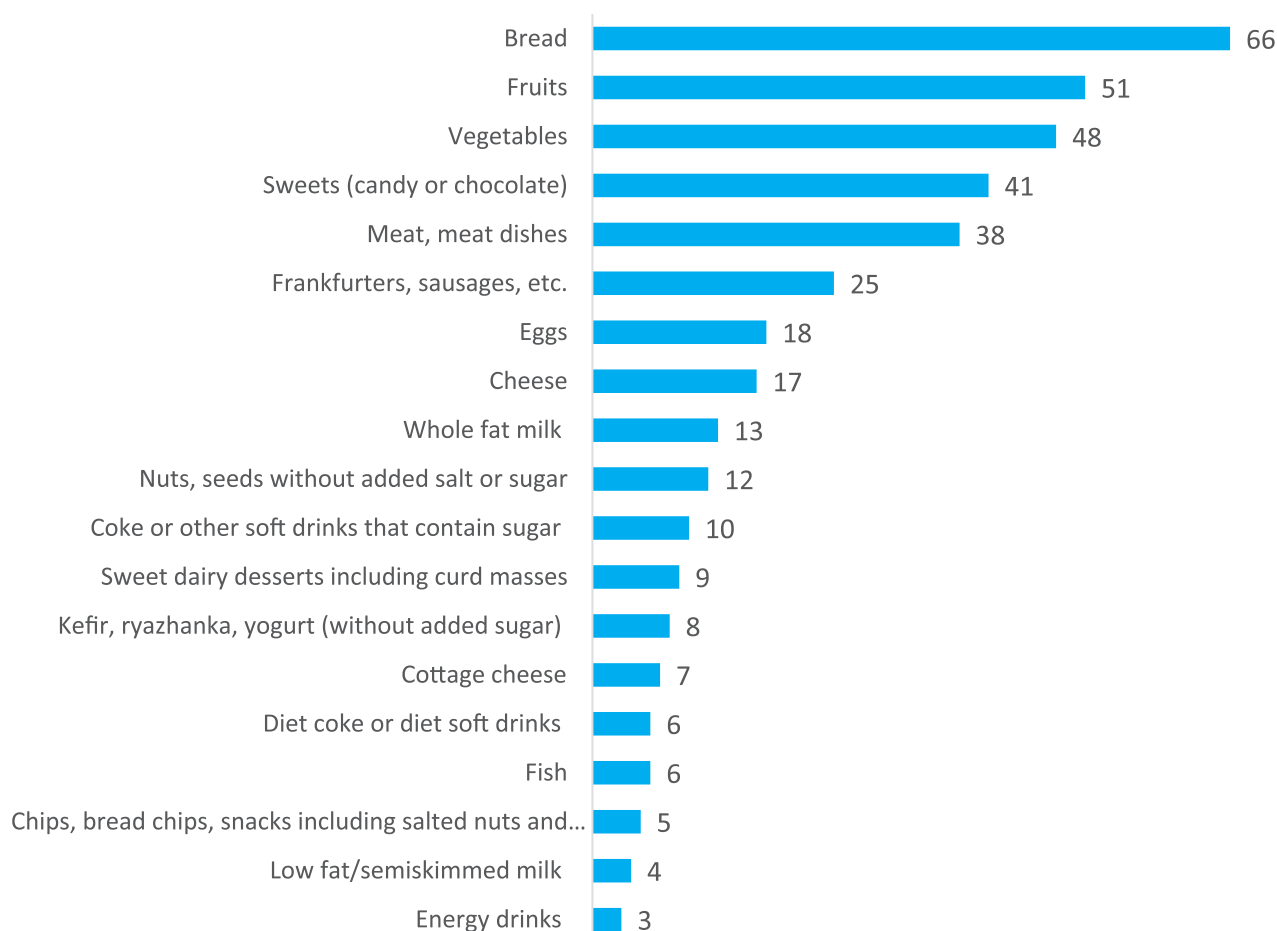
<sup>19</sup> Healthy eating plate. Ministry of Health of Ukraine. 04.11.2021. URL: <https://moz.gov.ua/article/health/tarilka-zdorovogo-harchuvannia>

<sup>20</sup> What and how to eat to live long: recommendations of MoH. 20.12.2017. URL: <https://moz.gov.ua/article/health/scho-i-jak-isti-schob-zhiti-dovgo-rekomendacii-moz>

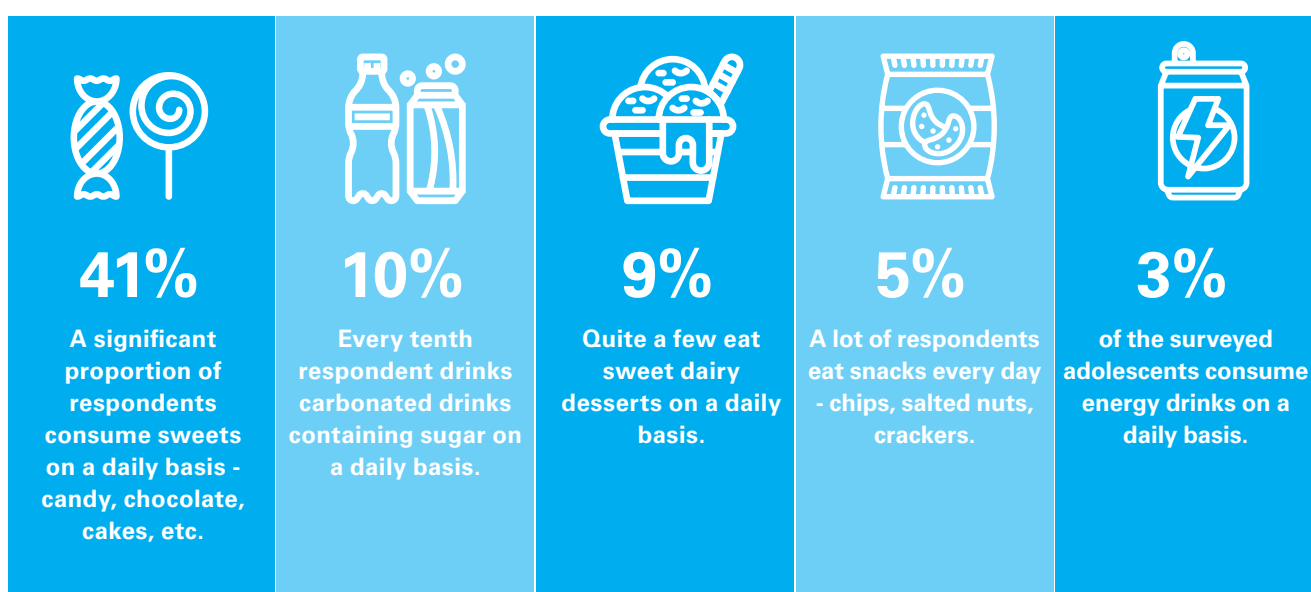
<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Healthy eating plate.

**Fig. 4.4.3. Share of respondents who consume this food product daily, %**



**When it comes to foods that should be severely limited or completely excluded for adolescents, the following figures are of serious concern:**



The survey results indicate that adolescents consume excessive amounts of sugar. The recommended daily allowance of free sugar (both sucrose and fructose) should be less than 50 g; it is considered desirable to limit the allowance to 25 g (5 teaspoons or a glass of fruit juice). The results of the survey suggest that a significant proportion of adolescents exceed both sugar consumption limits.

The study revealed the specifics of adolescents' consumption of certain foods depending on their age, gender, and place of residence (Table 4.4.2).

**Table 4.4.2. Proportion of respondents who consume this food product daily, %**

	Age							Gender		Type of settlement		All respondents
	11 років	12 років	13 років	14 років	15 років	16 років	17 років	Дівчата	Хлопці	Місто	Село	
<b>Fruits</b>	60	57	52	51	46	43	42	51	52	51	51	51
<b>Vegetables</b>	53	52	49	49	44	44	41	49	48	48	49	48
<b>Sweets (candy or chocolate)</b>	50	44	42	40	36	36	33	43	39	42	39	41
<b>Coke or other soft drinks that contain sugar</b>	7	8	10	11	12	13	13	9	11	10	11	10
<b>Diet coke or diet soft drinks</b>	4	5	5	6	7	7	8	5	6	5	7	6
<b>Energy drinks</b>	1	1	2	3	4	5	6	2	4	3	3	3
<b>Low fat/semi skimmed milk</b>	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	5	4
<b>Whole fat milk</b>	16	13	12	12	10	10	9	10	15	12	14	13
<b>Cheese</b>	22	19	18	18	16	14	13	17	18	19	15	17
<b>Cottage cheese</b>	8	6	7	7	7	7	6	6	8	7	8	7
<b>Kefir, ryazhanka, yogurt (without added sugar)</b>	11	9	8	8	7	7	6	7	9	8	8	8
<b>Eggs</b>	21	20	20	17	17	16	17	16	21	18	18	18
<b>Sweet dairy desserts including curd masses</b>	10	8	9	9	9	8	9	8	9	9	9	9
<b>Meat, meat dishes</b>	44	39	39	37	34	35	35	34	42	39	34	38
<b>Frankfurters, sausages, etc.</b>	28	25	23	24	24	23	23	22	27	25	24	25
<b>Fish</b>	6	6	6	7	6	6	7	5	7	6	7	6
<b>Bread</b>	74	69	67	63	61	61	58	59	72	63	71	66
<b>Nuts, seeds without added salt or sugar</b>	13	12	12	12	10	10	10	11	13	11	13	12
<b>Chips, bread chips, snacks including salted nuts and seeds</b>	4	5	4	5	6	5	6	4	6	4	6	5

The analysis revealed that with age:

- the frequency of consumption of fruits, vegetables, sweets, whole milk, hard cheese, fermented milk products (kefir, etc.), eggs, meat, and bread decreases;
- the frequency of consumption of carbonated beverages (both sugar and sugar-free) and energy drinks increases.

The older the respondents are, the worse their diet is, given the decrease in the frequency of consumption of healthy foods and the increase in consumption of unhealthy foods. The only exception is a decrease in the consumption of bread and sweets (sweets, chocolate, cakes).

Regarding gender differences in eating practices, the following should be noted:

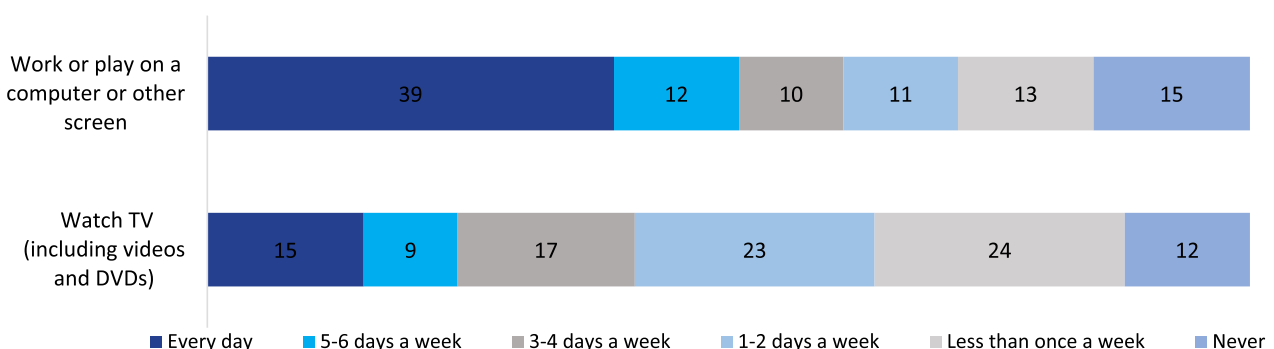
- Boys are somewhat more likely than girls to consume meat, eggs, fish, nuts and seeds without added salt or sugar, as well as dairy products - whole milk, cottage cheese (curd), fermented milk products (kefir, etc.). Thus, their diet is closer to a rational, balanced diet. At the same time, boys are more likely to consume bread, sausages, snacks, carbonated and energy drinks, which can potentially cause weight gain and provoke metabolic disorders.
- Girls are more likely than boys to eat sweets (candy, chocolate, cakes), which can lead to weight gain.

The diets of urban and rural adolescents differ little. The seasonality factor played a significant role (the survey was conducted in winter). If the survey had been conducted in summer, rural respondents might have shown higher rates of fruit and vegetable consumption. Significant differences were found elsewhere:

- Urban adolescents are relatively more likely to consume hard cheese, meat, and sweets. These are rather expensive foods (compared to vegetables, cereals, dairy products, etc.). This is a manifestation of the factor of high incomes of urban residents, who are generally wealthier than rural residents.
- Rural adolescents are significantly more likely to consume bread, whole milk, nuts, and sugar-free seeds, which are relatively cheap products available in rural areas due to household gardens.

It is a very common habit among adolescents to eat something while watching TV or spending time with a gadget. A large number of respondents (39%) combine eating with computer work or entertainment on a tablet or phone every day (Fig. 4.4.4). There are also many (15%) who eat daily while watching TV programs and videos. When a child is completely focused on the screen, they have no control over their food intake, and emotional experiences can lead them to 'binge' on new portions of high-calorie or unhealthy foods (sweets, salty snacks, etc.). This results in chronic overeating, overweight, and a predisposition to certain diseases.

**Fig. 4.4.4. Distribution of answers to the question: “How often do you eat a snack while you.....? ”, %**



The study showed that boys are especially likely to eat something when they work or play on a computer, tablet, or phone (Table 4.4.3). While 44% of boys surveyed eat something every day while using a computer or device, the number of girls is 34% (significantly less). Among girls, the number of those who eat while watching TV programs and videos is slightly higher, but this number is only slightly higher than the corresponding figure for boys (16% and 14%, respectively).



**Table 4.4.3. Proportion of respondents who eat a snack daily during a certain type of activity, %**

	Age							Gender		Type of settlement		All respondents
	11-year-olds	12-year-olds	13-year-olds	14-year-olds	15-year-olds	16-year-olds	17-year-olds	Girls	Boys	City/town	Village	
<b>Work or play on a computer or other screen</b>	41	41	42	39	37	36	36	34	44	39	40	39
<b>Watch TV (including videos and DVDs)</b>	15	15	15	16	15	13	16	16	14	14	16	15

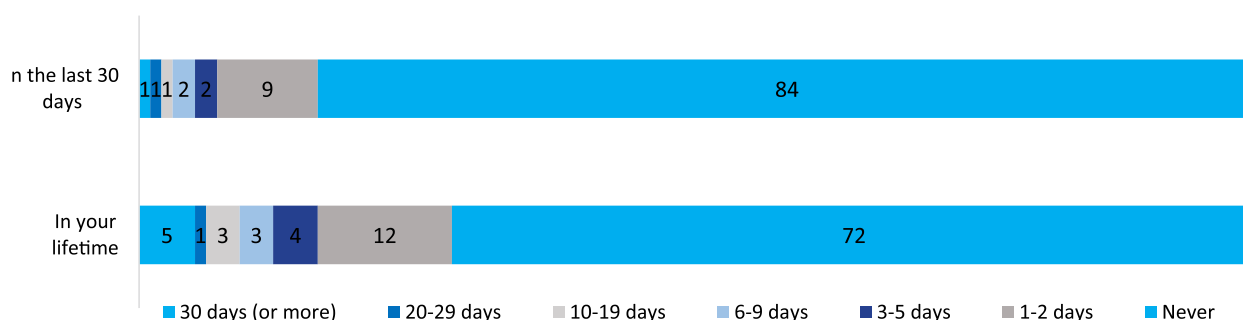
The proportion of adolescents who eat a snack while working or playing on a computer, tablet, or phone decreases slightly with age. While 41% of 11-year-olds do so, 36% of 17-year-olds do so. The number of people who want to eat while watching TV shows and videos remains fairly stable. As for urban and rural residents, their habits are practically the same.

### 4.5. Experience of alcohol consumption

Drinking alcohol in adolescence is associated with a number of risks for mental development, physical and moral health, and the life prospects of a young person in general. The growing body gets used to alcohol much faster; often children who started drinking alcohol at school are already suffering from alcoholism at the age of 20-25.

The study showed that many adolescents have experience of drinking alcohol. More than a quarter of respondents (28%) have tried alcohol at least once in their lives (Fig. 4.5.1). A significant number of respondents (16%) indicated that they had consumed alcoholic beverages in the past 30 days. At the same time, 7% of respondents drank alcohol for more than two days in the last month (more than two separate occasions), which is a very high rate.

**Fig. 4.5.1. Distribution of answers to the question: “On how many days (if any) have you drunk alcohol?”, %**



The analysis revealed the following features of adolescents’ involvement in alcohol consumption:

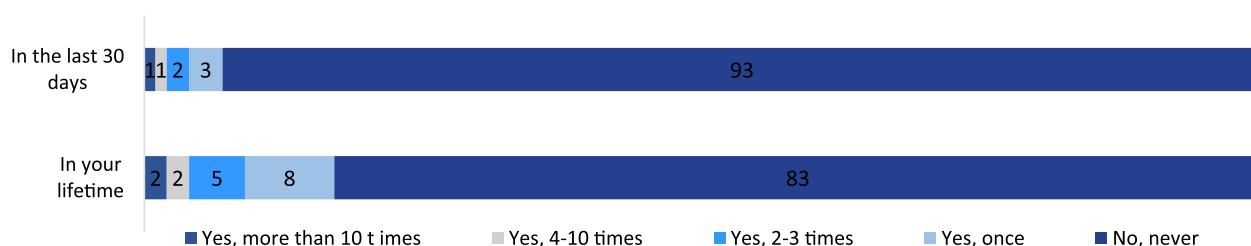
- With age, the proportion of respondents who have experience of drinking alcohol increases dramatically. Among 11-year-olds, 7% of respondents have consumed alcohol at least once in their lives, among 14-year-olds - one third, and among 17-year-olds - more than half (Table 4.5.1).
- The rate of current alcohol use increases sharply with age. Among 11-year-olds, 4% have consumed alcohol at least once in the past 30 days, among 14-year-olds - 15% (four times more), and among 17-year-olds - 38% (ten times more).
- Girls have a much higher proportion of alcohol drinkers than boys. This applies both to the indicator of precedent of alcohol consumption in their lives and current consumption (indicator of alcohol consumption in the last 30 days).
- Rural adolescents were somewhat more likely than urban adolescents to report drinking alcohol in the past 30 days. However, the differences are not significant.

**Table 4.5.1. Proportion of respondents who have consumed alcoholic beverages at least once during the specified period, %.**

	Age							Gender		Type of settlement		All respondents
	11-year-olds	12-year-olds	13-year-olds	14-year-olds	15-year-olds	16-year-olds	17-year-olds	Girls	Boys	City/town	Village	
<b>In the last 30 days</b>	4	5	9	15	27	32	38	18	14	15	18	16
<b>In your lifetime</b>	7	10	18	29	47	53	58	32	25	28	29	28

The precedents of severe intoxication of adolescents are particularly alarming. It is no exaggeration to say that these are the first signals of future disfunction. It is known that even a single and small dose of alcohol can negatively affect a child’s cognitive abilities. Among the respondents, 17% reported that they had drunk so much alcohol at least once in their lives that they felt very intoxicated (Fig. 4.5.2). Many respondents (7%) indicated that in the past 30 days they had drunk to the point of intoxication at least once.

**Fig. 4.5.2. Distribution of answers to the question: “Have you ever had so much alcohol that you were really drunk?”, %**



The older adolescents are, the more of them have experience of heavy drinking (Table 4.5.2). A quarter of 15-year-old respondents (27%) and almost half of 17-year-olds (42%) have been very intoxicated at least once in their lives. Among adolescents aged 15 and older, more than 10% indicated that they had been drunk at least once in the past 30 days.

**Table 4.5.2. Proportion of respondents who drank alcohol and felt very intoxicated at least once during the specified period, %**

	Age							Gender		Type of settlement		All respondents
	11-year-olds	12-year-olds	13-year-olds	14-year-olds	15-year-olds	16-year-olds	17-year-olds	Girls	Boys	City/town	Village	
<b>In the last 30 days</b>	2	3	4	7	11	13	16	6	8	6	8	7
<b>In your lifetime</b>	4	6	8	16	27	34	42	17	16	16	18	17

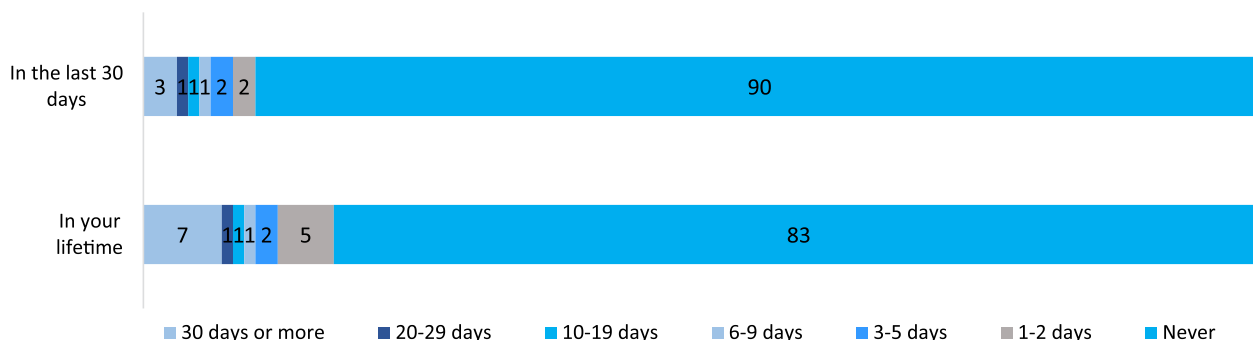
Indicators characterizing the experience of being intoxicated by rural and urban adolescents do not differ significantly, although there are more respondents with such experience among rural residents. (This applies to both lifetime precedent of intoxication and cases of intoxication in the last 30 days). However, it is disturbing that the rural family and rural community, which used to be the centers of child upbringing based on traditional values, no longer perform this function. The practice of alcohol consumption by rural children partially confirms this conclusion.

## 4.6. Experience of cigarette smoking (tobacco smoking)

Smoking is harmful to people at any age, but it has a particularly negative impact on the developing body of adolescents. Smoking is dangerous for the brain, provokes cardiovascular diseases, and significantly increases the risk of neoplasms. If a person starts smoking at the age of 15, his or her life expectancy is reduced by more than 8 years on average.<sup>23</sup>

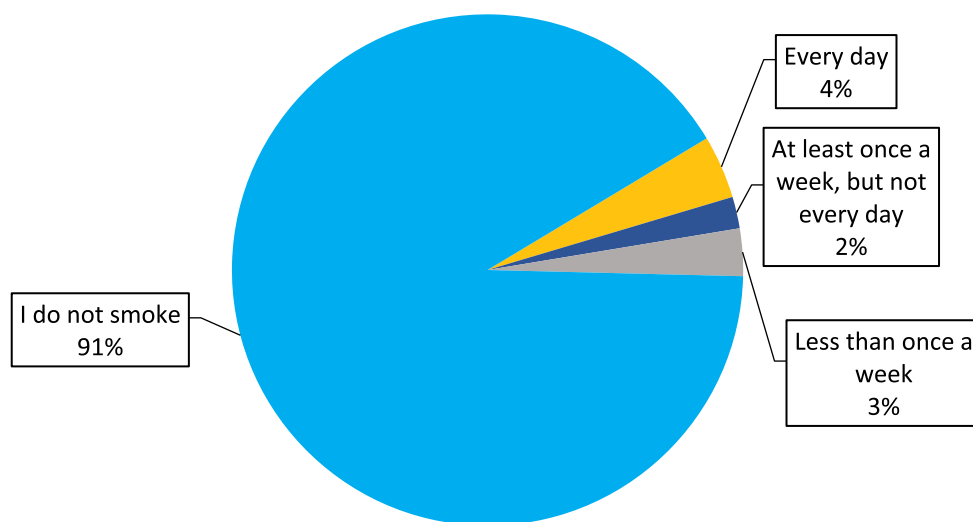
The survey showed that 17% of adolescents have smoking experience - they have smoked cigarettes at least once in their lives. Every tenth respondent (10%) smoked at least once in the last 30 days (Fig. 4.6.1).

**Fig. 4.6.1. Distribution of answers to the question: "On how many days (if any) have you smoked cigarettes?", %**



At the time of the survey, 9% of respondents indicated that they smoked cigarettes with some regularity, while 4% of respondents smoked cigarettes daily (Fig. 4.6.2).

**Fig. 4.6.2. Розподіл відповідей респондентів на запитання: «Як часто ти куриш сигарети нині?», %**



Peculiarities of smoking among adolescents (Table 4.6.1):

- The proportion of smokers increases rapidly with age. Currently, 3% of 11-year-olds smoke cigarettes with some regularity, while among 15-year-olds this number is five times higher (15%), and among 17-year-olds it is seven times higher (22%). Thus, one in five 17-year-olds is a smoker.
- The number of smokers among boys is significantly higher than among girls (11% and 7%, respectively).
- Rural adolescents smoke as often as their urban peers.

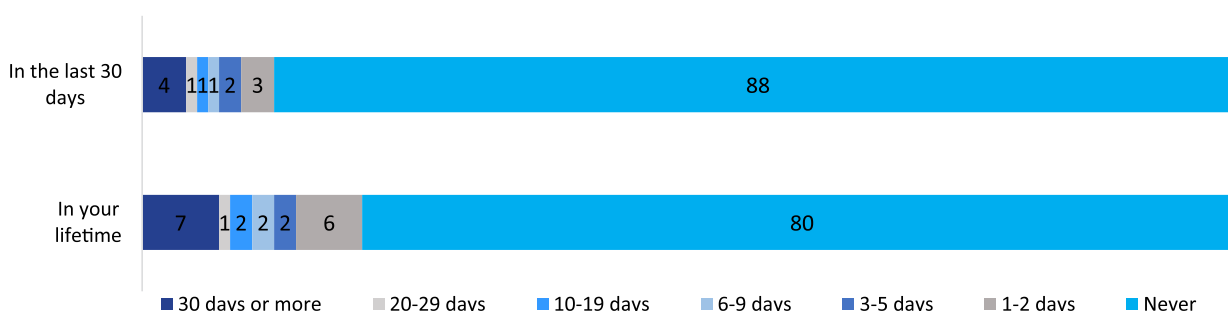
<sup>23</sup> Myths and reality about smoking. Bukovian State Medical University. URL: <https://www.bsmu.edu.ua/blog/5294-mifi-i-realnist-pro-kurinnya/>

**Table 4.6.1.** Частка респондентів, які курили сигарети принаймні один раз упродовж вказаного періоду, %

	Age							Gender		Type of settlement		All respondents
	11-year-olds	12-year-olds	13-year-olds	14-year-olds	15-year-olds	16-year-olds	17-year-olds	Girls	Boys	City/town	Village	
In the last 30 days	3	4	7	9	16	19	23	9	11	10	11	10
In your lifetime	5	8	12	16	26	30	36	16	18	16	19	17
Current smokers with some regularity	3	3	6	8	15	19	22	7	11	9	10	9

Among adolescents, smoking electronic cigarettes (vapes) is somewhat more common than smoking traditional cigarettes (Fig. 4.6.3). Every fifth respondent (20%) reported having smoked/vaped a vape at least once in their life (the same figure for traditional cigarette smoking is 17%). A significant proportion of respondents (12%) have smoked e-cigarettes in the last thirty days (compared to 10% of traditional cigarette smokers).

**Fig. 4.6.3.** Distribution of answers to the question: “On how many days (if any) have you used electronic cigarettes/vape?”, %



Демографічні особливості паління електронних сигарет серед підлітків (табл. 4.6.2):

- The older the age group of respondents, the higher is the proportion of those with smoking experience. Among 11-year-olds, 5% have smoked vapes at least once in their lives, among 13-year-olds this number is three times higher (15%), among 15-year-olds it is six times higher (30%), and among 17-year-olds it is eight times higher (40%). The indicators characterizing current smoking practice (within the last 30 days) increase just as rapidly with age.
- While boys smoke traditional cigarettes more often than girls, the proportion of girls and boys who smoke vapes is the same.
- Rural adolescents smoke e-cigarettes as often as their urban peers.

**Table 4.6.2.** Proportion of respondents who smoked/vaped e-cigarettes (vapes) at least once during the specified period, %.

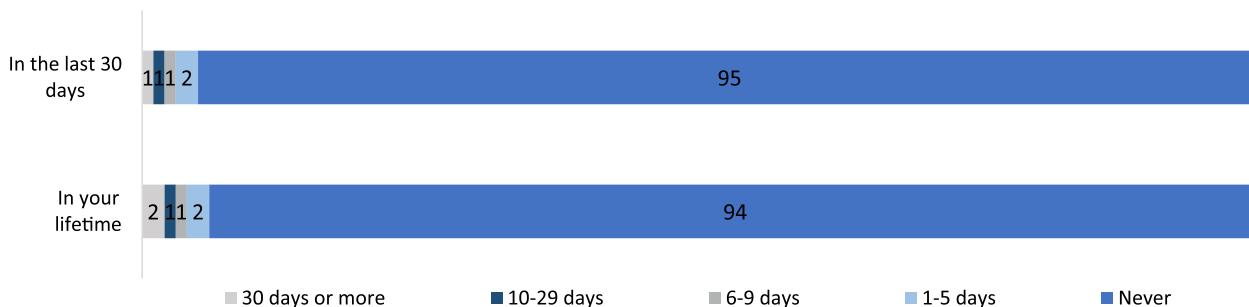
	Age							Gender		Type of settlement		All respondents
	11-year-olds	12-year-olds	13-year-olds	14-year-olds	15-year-olds	16-year-olds	17-year-olds	Girls	Boys	City/town	Village	
In the last 30 days	2	4	7	11	21	26	30	12	13	12	13	12
In your lifetime	5	9	15	22	30	36	40	20	20	20	20	20

## 4.7. Experience of cannabis or hashish use

Until the end of adolescence, the brain continues to grow and form, and therefore is particularly sensitive to cannabis use. Negative effects can occur even if teenagers smoke marijuana very rarely. Modern research shows that the use of even very small amounts of cannabis by children causes changes in the brain.<sup>24</sup>

According to the survey results, 6% of respondents have experience with marijuana use - they have used it at least once in their lives (Fig. 4.7.1). Many of the adolescents surveyed (5%) have smoked 'weed' in the past 30 days.

**Fig. 4.7.1.** Distribution of answers to the question: "Have you ever taken cannabis marijuana ("weed", "plan", "hemp") or hashish?", %



The analysis revealed the following features of marijuana use by adolescents (Table 4.7.1):

- As a rule, children start trying marijuana at the age of 13. With age, the proportion of adolescents with experience of using the drug increases rapidly. While among 13-year-olds the proportion of such respondents is 3%, among 16-year-olds it is three times higher (9%). Among adolescents aged 16 and 17, 6% have used marijuana in the past 30 days, and 4% have used it for more than five days (more than five separate occasions), i.e. regularly. This is a fairly high rate.
- Boys are twice as likely as girls to use marijuana.
- There are slightly more cannabis users among rural adolescents than among urban residents. It can be assumed that this is due to the greater availability of marijuana in rural areas, due to the availability of opportunities for growing cannabis.

**Table 4.7.1.** Proportion of respondents who used marijuana at least once during the specified period, %

	Age						Gender		Type of settlement		All respondents	
	11-year-olds	12-year-olds	13-year-olds	14-year-olds	15-year-olds	16-year-olds	Girls	Boys	City/town	Village		Ceno
<b>In the last 30 days</b>	0	2	4	5	6	6	3	7	4	6	5	12
<b>In your lifetime</b>	0	3	5	7	9	9	4	7	5	8	6	20

<sup>24</sup> How marijuana affects the brain of a teenager. Deutsche Welle. URL: <https://www.dw.com/ru/kak-marihuana-vliaet-na-mozg-podrostka/a-47118011>

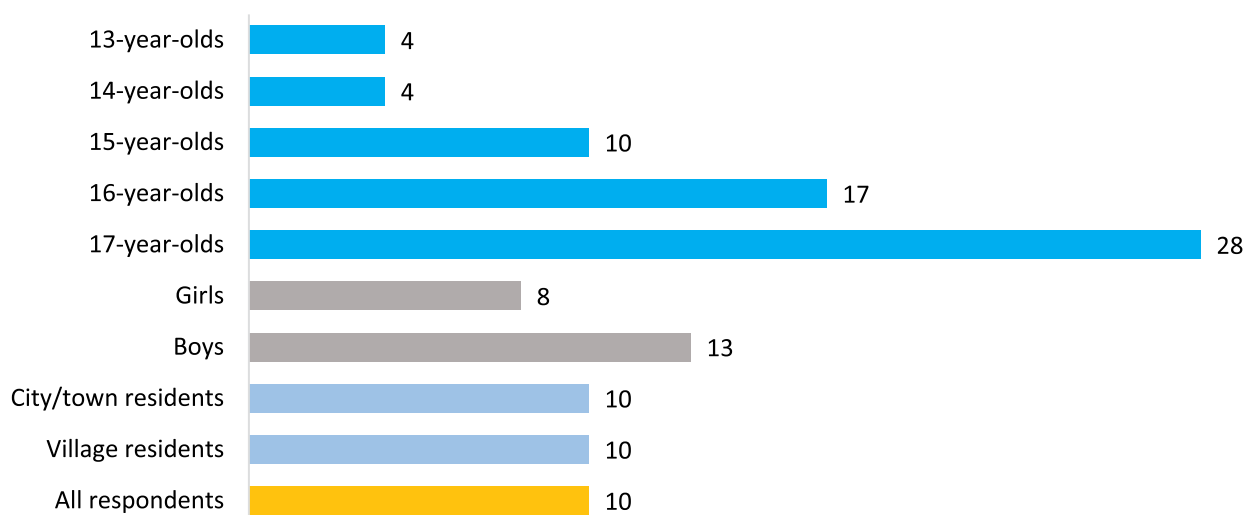
## 4.8. Sexual experience

Sociological research shows that most people have their first sexual experience in adolescence. For many adolescents, sexual debut (initiation) is a way of achieving the status of an ‘adult’. After all, in today’s society there is nothing that corresponds to the rite of passage for girls and boys. Modern secular culture focuses on other aspects of growing up: graduating from school, entering a higher education institution, or starting a career. As a result, young people face the sphere of intimate and sexual relations unprepared. In particular, they often lack the necessary knowledge to ensure their safety and avoid unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. Parents, teachers, and the media should help adolescents acquire the skills and awareness necessary for rational (safe) behaviour in this area.

The survey results show that every tenth adolescent has already had sexual relations (Fig. 4.8.1). Among 12-year-old respondents, none of them reported having sexual experience, but among 13-year-olds, this number was already 4%. With age, this figure increases rapidly, and among 17-year-old adolescents, the proportion of those who have undergone sexual initiation reaches 28% (more than a quarter).

Boys report having had sexual experience much more often than girls (13% and 8%, respectively). At the same time, it would be worthwhile to further study the nature of this experience, as girls and boys may have significantly different understandings of sexual initiation.

**Fig. 4.8.1. Proportion of respondents who have had sexual experience, among certain demographic groups, %**



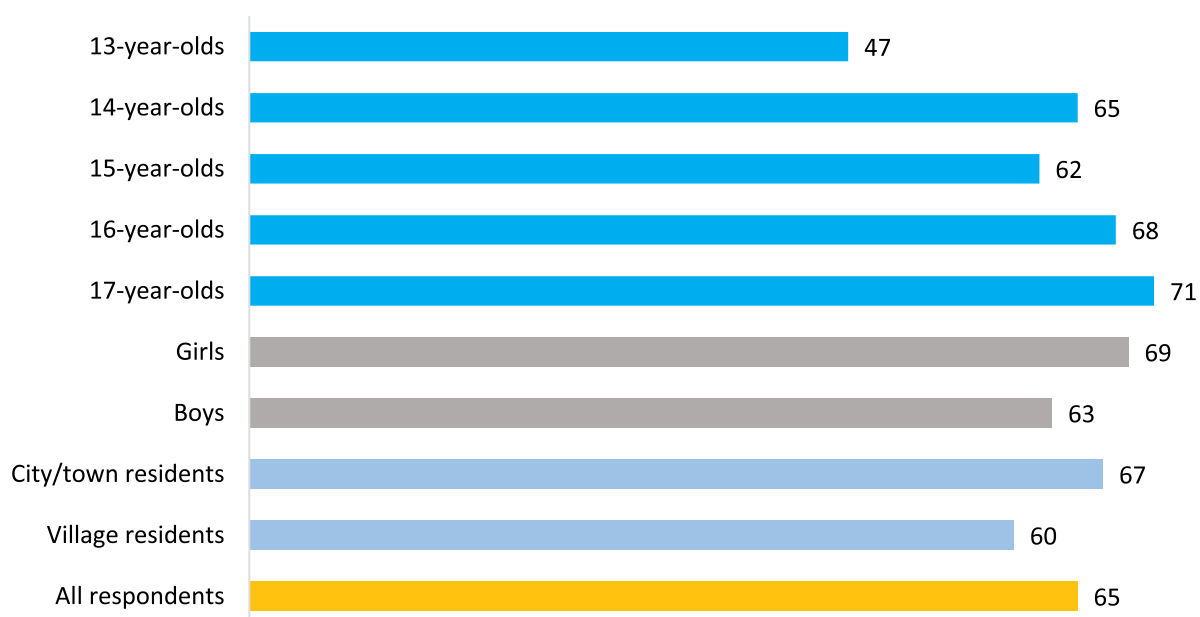
The majority of adolescents who have had their first sexual experience after the age of 13 have repeated sexual intercourse. Their sexual life becomes regular. The number of respondents who have repeated sexual relations gradually increases with age (Fig. 4.8.2).

The overwhelming majority (70%) of adolescents who have had sexual experience gained it when they were 15 years old or younger, i.e. before the age of consent <sup>25</sup> (Table 4.8.1). The fact that a significant proportion of respondents (11.6%) had their sexual debut when they were 11 years old or younger is alarming. At this age, few people are ready for prudent, rational (safe) sexual behaviour.

Compared to girls, there are twice as many boys whose sexual initiation occurred at the age of 11 or earlier (7% and 15%, respectively). Rural adolescents report early sexual debut more often than their urban counterparts (16% and 10%, respectively).

<sup>25</sup> The age of sexual consent is the age defined in criminal law at which a person is considered to be able to give informed consent to sexual activity with another adult. The age of sexual consent in Ukraine is 16 years, and this norm is regulated by Article 155 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine.

**Fig. 4.8.2. Proportion of respondents who have had sexual intercourse twice or more often, % (percentage of respondents with sexual experience)**

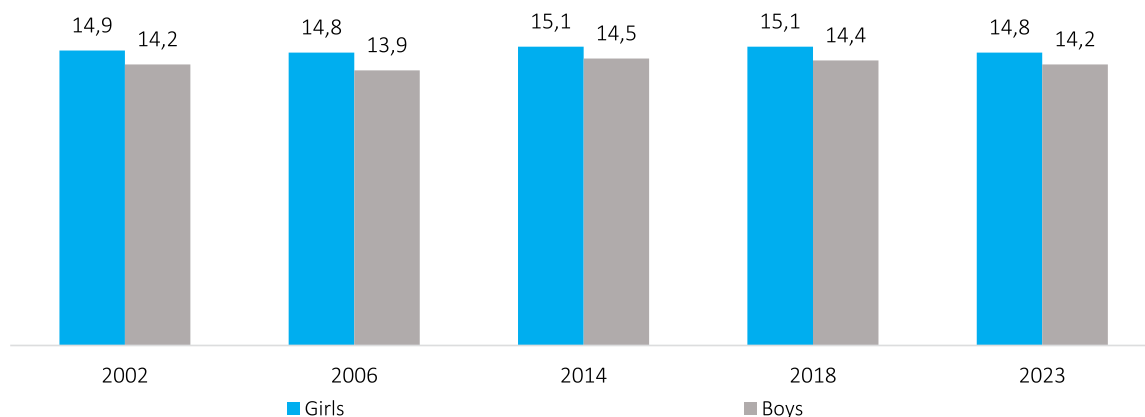


**Table Table 4.8.1. Distribution of answers to the question: “How old were you when you had sexual intercourse for the first time?”, % (percentage of respondents with sexual experience)**

Age of sexual experience	Age of respondent					Gender		Type of settlement		All respondents
	13-year-olds	14-year-olds	15-year-olds	16-year-olds	17-year-olds	Girls	Boys	City/ town	Village	
<b>11 years old or less</b>	29	27	13	8	4	7	15	10	16	12
<b>12 years old</b>	4	5	3	2	2	2	3	2	4	2
<b>13 years old</b>	67	15	7	5	2	6	12	9	9	9
<b>14 years old</b>	0	53	24	13	10	18	19	18	21	19
<b>15 years old</b>	0	0	53	27	18	30	26	29	23	28
<b>16 years old</b>	0	0	0	45	34	28	21	25	21	24
<b>17 years old</b>	0	0	0	0	30	9	4	6	6	6

HBSC monitoring demonstrates that the average age of sexual initiation among Ukrainian adolescents remains fairly stable. For girls it is about 15 years old, and for boys - 14 years old (Fig. 4.8.3).

**Fig. 4.8.3. Average age of respondents when they first had sexual intercourse, years old**



In Ukraine, as in most countries, an adult is criminally liable if he or she engages in sexual activity with a person under the age of consent. Among 13-year-old adolescents with sexual experience, more than a quarter (27%) reported that their first partner was an adult, i.e., 18 years of age or older (Table 4.8.2). Among 14-year-olds, this number is 25%, and among 15-year-olds - 20%.

**Table 4.8.2. Distribution of answers to the question: “How old was your partner when you had sexual intercourse for the first time?”, % (percentage of respondents with sexual experience)**

Вік першого сексуального партнера	Age of respondent					Gender		Type of settlement		All respondents
	13-year-olds	14-year-olds	15-year-olds	16-year-olds	17-year-olds	Girls	Boys	City/ town	Village	
<b>11 years old or less</b>	10	8	6	3	3	3	6	4	6	5
<b>12 years old</b>	8	4	2	1	1	1	3	1	3	2
<b>13 years old</b>	24	14	3	2	1	1	7	5	5	5
<b>14 years old</b>	3	15	12	8	4	4	11	8	9	8
<b>15 years old</b>	11	15	20	12	8	10	16	14	13	13
<b>16 years old</b>	3	9	19	24	20	18	20	20	17	19
<b>17 years old</b>	5	1	12	18	21	19	12	15	14	15
<b>18 years old</b>	11	5	4	11	12	12	7	9	8	9
<b>19 years old</b>	3	1	3	5	8	8	2	5	5	5
<b>20 years old and more</b>	13	19	13	12	17	20	10	14	14	14
<b>I don't know</b>	9	9	6	4	5	4	6	5	6	5

Girls are more likely to have sexual relations with a partner older than themselves. Among female respondents with sexual experience, 40% reported that their first partner was an adult (aged 18 and older). Among the boys surveyed, the same figure is 19% (half as much).



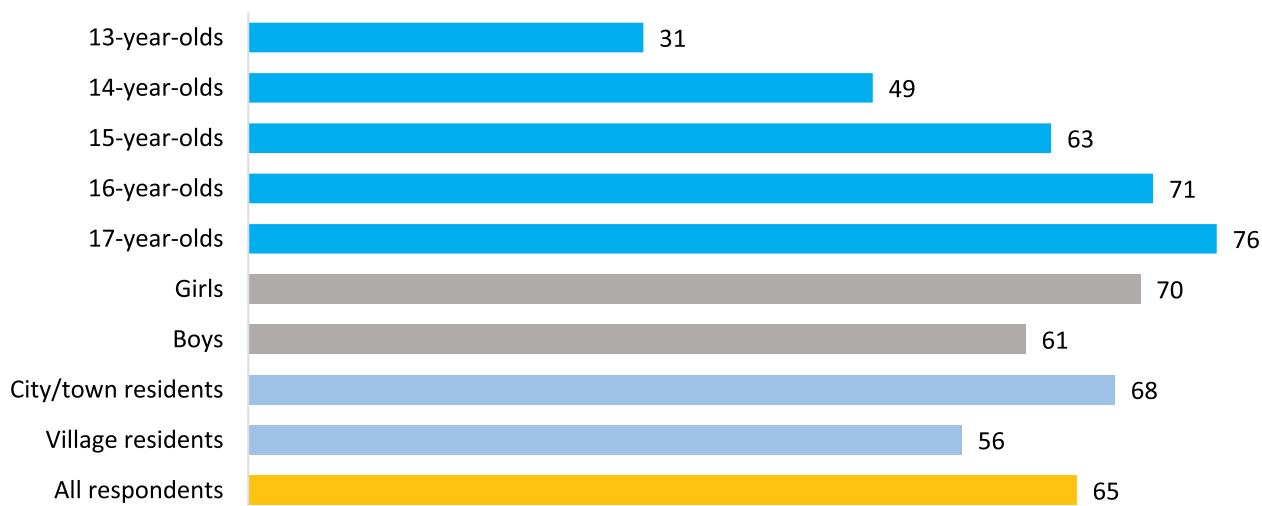
## 4.9. Risky sexual behaviour. Use of condoms and contraceptive pills

Romantic relationships and sexual behaviour, on the one hand, are an important stage in a young person’s development, contributing to positive psychosocial adaptation. At the same time, some types of sexual behaviour can be a manifestation of social and psychological maladjustment and are associated with the risk of negative consequences. These include sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies (most of which are usually artificially terminated), and psychological trauma. The prevalence of risky sexual behaviour is caused by a decrease in the age of sexual initiation (debut), insufficient sexual culture and health literacy.

The survey showed that two-thirds of respondents (65%) used a condom during their first sexual intercourse (Fig. 4.9.1). This is quite a lot, but nevertheless, for one third of adolescents, the first sexual experience was associated with the risk of negative consequences. Sexual initiation was especially risky for 13-year-old respondents: only 31% of them used a condom, and only half of 14-year-olds did.

The later the sexual debut occurs, the more balanced and responsible adolescents are about safe sex. Among 17-year-old respondents, three quarters used condoms during their first sexual intercourse. (Most 17-year-old respondents had their first sexual experience at the age of 16 or 17).

**Fig. 4.9.1. Proportion of respondents who used a condom during their first sexual intercourse , %**  
(percentage of respondents with sexual experience)

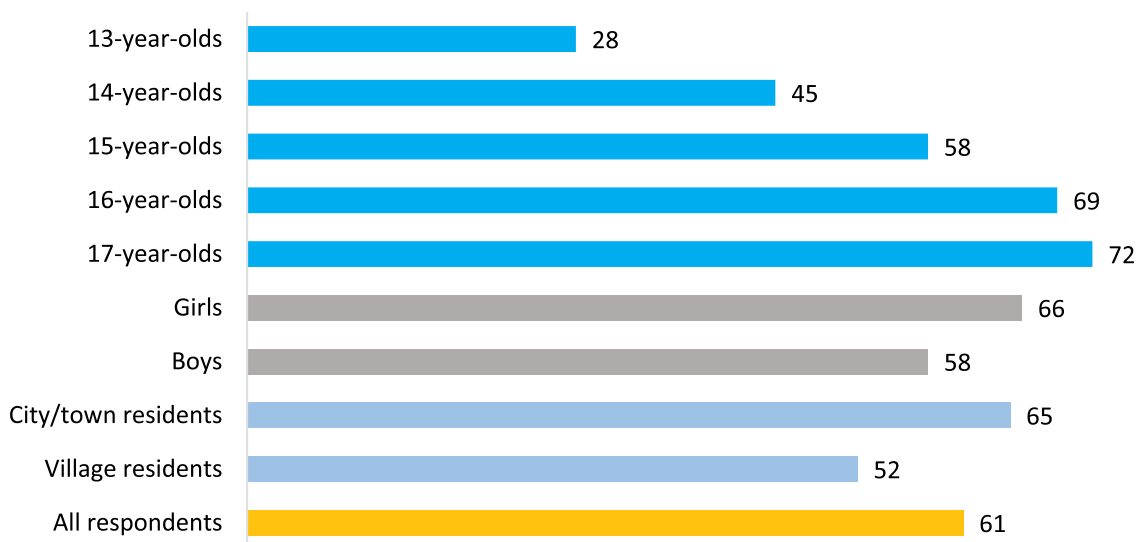


Girls pay more attention to the safety of the first sexual contact than boys. While 70% of girls reported that their partner used a condom, 61% of boys said the same. Urban adolescents are more likely to use a condom during sexual debut than their rural peers. This can be explained by a higher level of sexual culture and the fact that rural adolescents usually have their first sexual experience somewhat earlier (these circumstances are interrelated).

As noted, two-thirds of respondents (65%) have had sexual intercourse twice or more often. However, the indicators characterizing condom use during the last sexual intercourse are close to those characterizing sexual debut. In particular, 61% of surveyed adolescents used a condom during their last sexual intercourse (Fig. 4.9.2). This is even less than during initiation.

<sup>26</sup> The survey of girls asked about condom use by their partner.

**Fig. 4.9.2. Proportion of respondents who used a condom during their last sexual intercourse,<sup>27</sup> %**  
(percentage of respondents with sexual experience)



The most risky sexual behaviour is demonstrated by 13- and 14-year-old respondents: less than half of them used a condom during their last sexual intercourse. Thus, the frequency of sexual intercourse is not related to condom use. Awareness of the need to avoid risk and protect sexual life comes only with age - with the acquisition of a certain culture, a better understanding of one's own needs.

Boys are more likely to engage in risky sexual behaviour: 58% of them used condoms during their last encounter with a partner, while among girls - 66%. It seems that girls are more eager to protect themselves from possible negative consequences, as it is not only about the risk of contracting a sexually transmitted infection, but also about the possibility of getting pregnant.

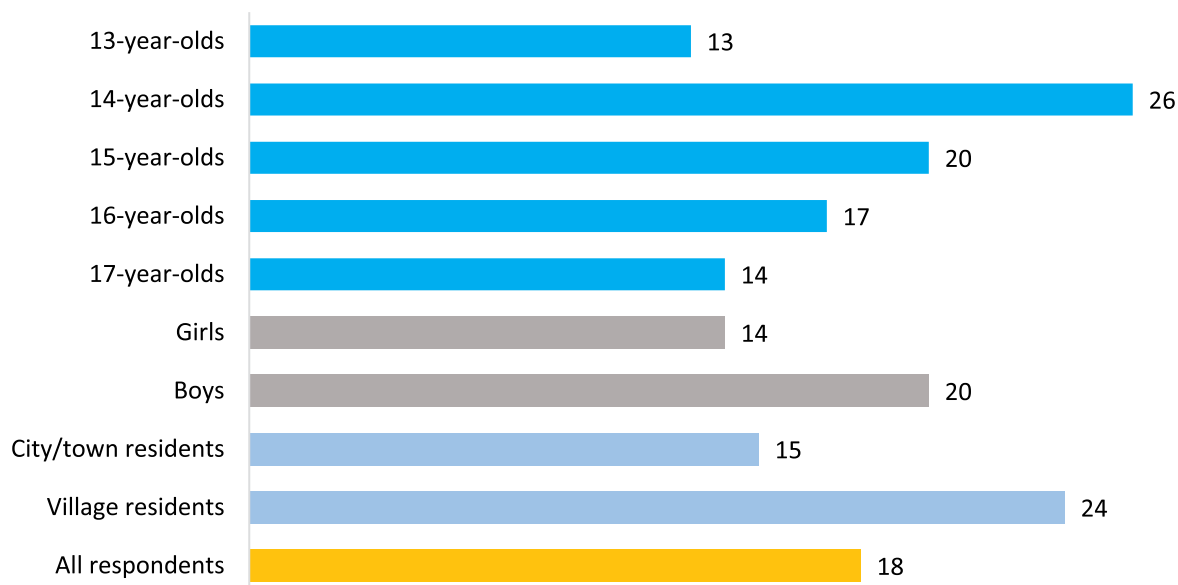
Urban adolescents are much more likely to use condoms during sex than their peers living in rural areas. This can be explained primarily by differences in sexual culture, greater emancipation and sexual literacy among urban residents. In addition, urban adolescents are more likely to have pocket money; condoms are more affordable and easier to buy in the city (the trade infrastructure is better developed here than in the countryside). In the city, it is easier to make an anonymous purchase; rural residents and, in particular, store/pharmacy staff usually know each other personally. This circumstance may deter adolescents from making 'compromising' contraceptive purchases in front of people they know. Girls will find it particularly difficult ('uncomfortable') to do so.

Among adolescents who have already had sexual intercourse, the use of medical contraception is very limited. During their last sexual intercourse, only 18% of respondents used contraceptive pills (Fig. 4.9.3).

The rate of use of medical contraception (as well as condom use) is critically low among 13-year-old respondents who have had sexual experience. The survey results revealed the following trend: from the age of 14, respondents use contraceptive pills less. While 26% of 14-year-old respondents reported that they had used medical contraception during their last sexual intercourse, the number of 17-year-olds was twice as low (14%). It should be borne in mind that this trend occurs against the background of more active condom use: the older the respondents, the more often they use condoms (see above). It can be assumed that as adolescents gain experience of sexual relations, they begin to rely more on condoms, believe that they are quite sufficient to protect sexual intercourse, and see no need to use contraceptive pills.

<sup>27</sup> The survey of girls asked about condom use by their partner.

**Fig. 4.9.3. Proportion of respondents who used contraceptive pills during their last sexual intercourse,<sup>28</sup> % (percentage of respondents with sexual experience)**



Boys were more likely to report using medical contraception during their last sexual intercourse than girls. It should be taken into account that girls’ partners are mostly older boys. In particular, one in five respondents had their first sexual intercourse with a partner who was twenty years old or older. Girls’ partners are usually more experienced than their male peers, in particular in using condoms. For girls, the risk of pregnancy is partially reduced, and there is no need to use medical contraception.

As for rural adolescents, who report using contraceptive pills during sex more often than their urban peers, it should also be noted that rural residents (i.e., rural boys) use condoms less often than urban residents. The partners of rural boys have to use medical contraception more often to protect themselves at least from unplanned pregnancy.

The above considerations regarding the peculiarities of adolescents’ use of contraceptive medications are based on a reasonable assumption (hypothesis). This issue requires further study.

<sup>28</sup> The survey of boys asked about the contraceptive pills use by their partner.



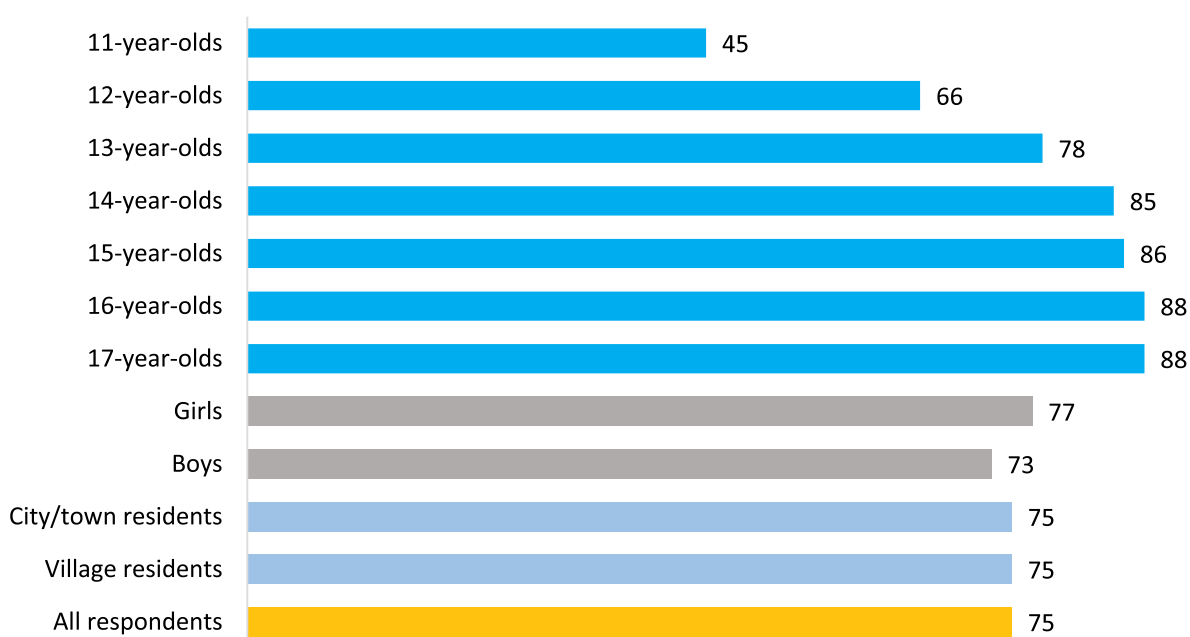
## 4.10. Awareness of HIV and AIDS

Sexual human rights include, in particular, access to information and education necessary to ensure safe sexual life, sexual and general health. Adolescents will be able to take better care of their health and safer sex if they are aware of how HIV is transmitted and how it can be prevented.

Three quarters of the surveyed adolescents (75%) reported that they had heard something about HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) or AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome). The older the respondent, the higher is the level of awareness. Among 11-year-olds, less than half (45%) have heard of HIV and AIDS, among 12-year-olds - two-thirds (66%), and among 14-year-olds - 85%. After the age of 14, the rate of awareness almost does not increase: among 17-year-old respondents it is 88%, which is slightly higher than among 14-year-olds (Fig. 4.10.1).

Girls are somewhat better informed about HIV and AIDS than boys (awareness rates are 77% and 73%, respectively). And this is despite the fact that boys are more likely than girls to engage in risky sexual behaviour - unprotected sex (see above).

**Fig. 4.10.1. Proportion of respondents who have heard about HIV and AIDS, %**

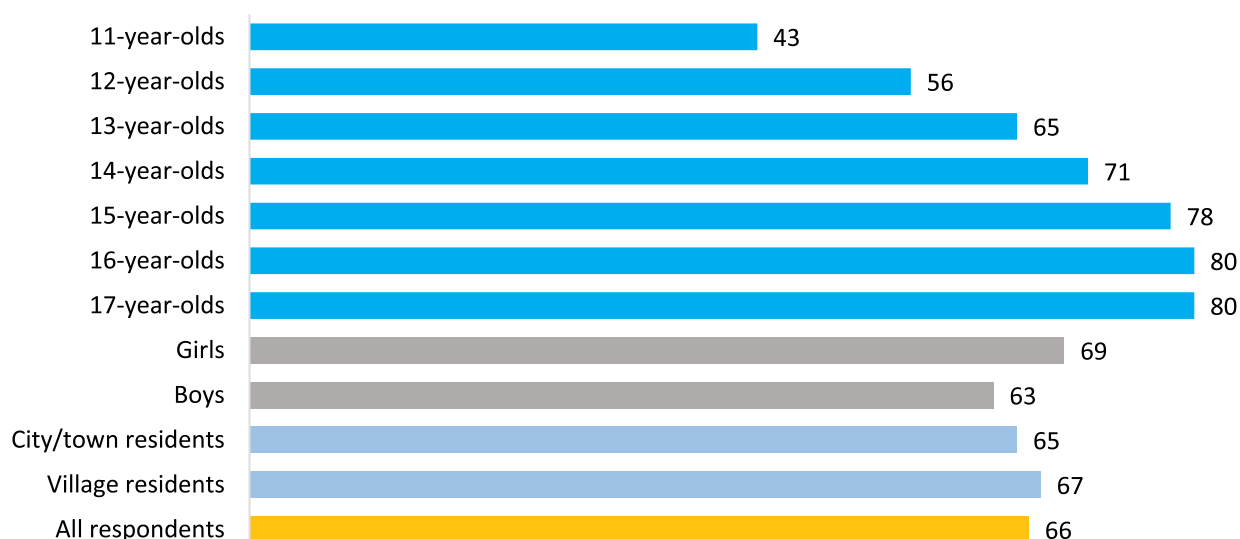


At first glance, the indicators of adolescents' awareness of HIV/AIDS are quite high. However, can they be considered satisfactory? The answer to this question depends on the depth of awareness, the extent to which adolescents have meaningful knowledge of the risks and ways of contracting HIV, and the extent to which they are aware of the means of preventing infection. The extremely early age of sexual debut of modern adolescents should be taken into account. There are grounds to qualify the indicator of HIV/AIDS awareness among 11-year-old respondents (45%) as unsatisfactory. The fact that among 17-year-old respondents 12% have not heard about the risk of HIV infection at all should also be a cause for concern.

As for the awareness of the algorithms of actions in case of finding out the fact of infection, the awareness indicators are much lower. Only 66% of respondents know where to go to get tested for HIV (Fig. 4.10.2). Among 11-year-olds, this number is less than half. With age, the rate of awareness of where to go for testing gradually increases and reaches 80% among 17-year-olds. Accordingly, every fifth person does not know what to do when there is a risk of infection.

Girls are somewhat better informed than boys on this issue (awareness rates are 69% and 63%, respectively). Awareness rates among urban and rural residents do not differ significantly.

Дівчата дещо краще, ніж хлопці, обізнані в цьому питанні (показники інформованості складають відповідно 69% та 63%). Показники обізнаності городян та жителів села істотно не відрізняються.

**Fig. 4.10.2. Proportion of respondents who know where to go to get tested for HIV, %**

## CONCLUSIONS to Section 4

### Самооцінка здоров'я та прояви нездужання

- The overwhelming majority of adolescents (73%) surveyed in 2023 assess their health as 'excellent' or 'good', while about a quarter of respondents (27%) characterize it as 'fair' or 'poor'. Since we are talking about young people, these indicators are rather unfavorable.
- There is an undulating trajectory of adolescents' assessment of their own health. At first, the total indicator of 'excellent' and 'good' characteristics gradually increases: in 2002, this indicator was 57%, in 2006 - 66%, in 2010 - 70%, in 2014 - 79%, and in 2018 it reaches its maximum value - 80%. In 2023, there was a sharp decline to 73%, almost to the level of 2010. At the same time, there was a sharp increase in the number of respondents who characterized their own health as 'fair' or 'poor': from 20% in 2018 to 27% in 2023. There is reason to believe that the main factor that negatively affected adolescents' self-assessment of their health was the war and its consequences. Thus, stress and deteriorating socioeconomic conditions have led to a deterioration in the health of young people.
- The indicators of adolescents' self-assessment of their health are rather unfavorable and indicate the prevalence of health problems. This assumption is confirmed by the data on respondents' feelings of unwellness and psychological discomfort over the past six months.
- Psychological problems are the most common. In 2023, many respondents complained that once a week or more they: felt irritated or had a bad temper (66%); were nervous (63%); had trouble falling asleep (41%); felt low (36%).
- Many adolescents reported having aches once a week or more often: head (44%); back (39%); stomach (29%).
- Compared to 2018, in 2023, the indicators characterizing the manifestations of such ailments increased especially: 'felt dizzy' (1.7 times increase); 'difficulties in getting to sleep' (1.6 times increase); 'backache' (1.4 times increase). As for the increase in 'backache', we can assume that this is due to a decrease in adolescents' mobility and an increase in the time they spend with gadgets (sitting) during distance learning.

### Adolescent traumatism

- The indicators characterizing injuries among adolescents are quite stable.
- In 2023, the number of respondents who had been injured in the past 12 months and had to see a doctor or nurse was 35%. This is slightly less than in 2018 (39%) or 2014 (41%).
- At the same time, the injury rate in 2023 is slightly higher than in 2010 (32%) or 2002 (31%). Thus, the injury rate varies noticeably from year to year, but not significantly.

### Hygiene practices

- The vast majority of adolescents surveyed brush their teeth daily.
- In 2023, there was a slight decrease in the number of young people who brush their teeth daily. This could be due to the deterioration in the social and living conditions of the respondents, in particular due to forced displacement. At the same time, the influence of stressors cannot be ruled out.

## Features of nutrition of children and adolescents

- The study revealed a number of problems related to adolescents' nutrition: the distribution of their daily diet and the balance of its composition.
- Many adolescents surveyed do not eat breakfast on weekdays and weekends, which may have negative health consequences in the future. The survey showed that quite a few (17%) respondents never eat breakfast on weekdays. In addition, another 10% of respondents eat breakfast on weekdays only once or twice a week. Constantly (every day on weekdays) 59% of adolescents eat breakfast.
- With age, the proportion of adolescents who always eat breakfast on weekdays gradually decreases. Among 11-year-olds, this figure is 69%, and among 17-year-olds - 50%. At the same time, the proportion of respondents who do not eat breakfast on weekdays is increasing: among 11-year-olds, it is 10%, and among 17-year-olds, 25%.
- Children whose bodies are still forming do not eat enough fruits and vegetables, fish, eggs, dairy products, unsalted nuts and seeds. At the same time, they overconsume meat and sausage products, sweets, carbonated (including energy) drinks, and snacks (chips, salted nuts, crackers, etc.).
- The survey results show that adolescents consume excessive amounts of sugar.
- It is a very common habit among adolescents to eat something while watching TV or spending time with a gadget (device). A large number of respondents (39%) combine eating with computer work or entertainment on a tablet or phone every day.
- The older the respondent, the worse his or her diet is, given the reduced frequency of consumption of healthy foods and increased consumption of unhealthy foods. It seems advisable to improve the methodology (tools) of the survey of adolescents in order to be able to compare the indicators characterizing the practice of eating with the model (diet) of healthy eating recommended by the Ministry of Health of Ukraine.

## Experience of alcohol consumption

- More than a quarter of the surveyed adolescents have experience of drinking alcohol; a significant number of respondents admitted that they had consumed alcoholic beverages in the past 30 days. Among 11-year-olds, 7% of respondents have drunk alcohol at least once, among 14-year-olds, a third of them have, and among 17-year-olds, more than half have.
- With age, the proportion of respondents who have experience of drinking alcohol increases dramatically.
- The older adolescents are, the more of them have experience of heavy drinking. At least once in their lives, a quarter of 15-year-old respondents (27%) and almost half of 17-year-olds (42%) have been very intoxicated. Among adolescents aged 15 and older, more than 10% indicated that they had been drunk at least once in the past 30 days.
- Among girls, the number of those who have already had experience with alcohol consumption is significantly higher than among boys. One third of the respondents reported that they had been drunk to the point of intoxication at least once.

## Experience of cigarette smoking (tobacco smoking)

- 17% of the surveyed adolescents have experience of smoking, and every tenth respondent has smoked at least once in the last 30 days.
- At the time of the survey, 9% of respondents indicated that they smoked cigarettes with some regularity, with 4% of respondents smoking daily.
- Smoking electronic cigarettes (vapes) among adolescents is somewhat more common than smoking traditional cigarettes.
- While traditional cigarettes are smoked more often by boys than girls, the number of vape users among girls and boys is equal.
- The proportion of smokers increases rapidly with age. While among 11-year-olds, 3% smoke cigarettes with some regularity, among 15-year-olds it is five times higher (15%), and among 17-year-olds it is seven times higher (22%). Thus, one in five 17-year-olds is a smoker.
- Among boys, there are significantly more smokers than among girls (11% and 7%, respectively).

## Experience of cannabis or hashish use

- Many of the surveyed adolescents have experience of marijuana consumption; every twentieth respondent has consumed marijuana in the past 30 days.
- Some children start trying marijuana as early as 13 years old. With age, the proportion of adolescents with experience of using the drug is growing rapidly. While the number of such respondents among 13-year-olds is 3%, among 16-year-olds it is three times higher (9%).

- According to the survey, 6% of respondents have experience with marijuana use - they have used it at least once in their lives. Many of the surveyed adolescents (5%) have smoked 'weed' in the past 30 days.
- Children start trying marijuana at the age of 13. With age, the proportion of adolescents with experience of using the drug increases rapidly.

## **Sexual experience**

- Adolescents are sexually initiated quite early: among 13-year-old respondents, there are already those who have had their sexual debut. The survey results show that one in ten adolescents has already had sexual experience.
- With age, the share of adolescents with sexual experience is growing rapidly: among 17-year-olds, more than a quarter of them have already had sexual experience.
- The majority of adolescents (70%) had their first sexual experience when they were 15 years old or younger, i.e. before the age of consent.
- Compared to girls, there are twice as many boys whose sexual initiation occurred at the age of 11 or earlier (7% and 15%, respectively).
- Rural adolescents report early sexual debut more often than their urban peers (16% and 10%, respectively).
- Among 13-year-old adolescents with sexual experience, more than a quarter (27%) reported that their first partner was an adult, i.e. 18 years of age or older (Table 4.8.2). Among 14-year-olds, this number is 25%, and among 15-year-olds - 20%.
- For some respondents, sexual debut occurred when they were only 11 years old or younger.
- The average age of sexual initiation for Ukrainian adolescents remains fairly stable. For girls it is about 15 years old, and for boys it is 14 years old.

## **Risky sexual behaviour. Use of condoms and contraceptive pills**

- For many adolescents, the first sexual intercourse was unprotected and could have negative consequences. Sexual initiation was especially risky for 13-year-old respondents: only one third of them used condoms, and half of 14-year-olds did. The realization of the need to avoid risk by using condoms comes only with age.
- Among 17-year-old respondents, three quarters used condoms during their first sexual intercourse.
- Girls pay more attention to the safety of first sexual intercourse than boys. While 70% of girls reported that their partner used a condom, 61% of boys used condoms.
- The most risky behaviour is demonstrated by 13- and 14-year-old respondents: less than half of them used condoms during their last sexual intercourse.
- Boys are more likely to engage in risky sexual behaviour: 58% of them used condoms during their last encounter with a partner, while among girls - 66%.
- Among adolescents who are already sexually active, the use of medical contraception is very limited. During the last sexual intercourse, only 18% of respondents used contraceptive pills.

## **Awareness of HIV and AIDS**

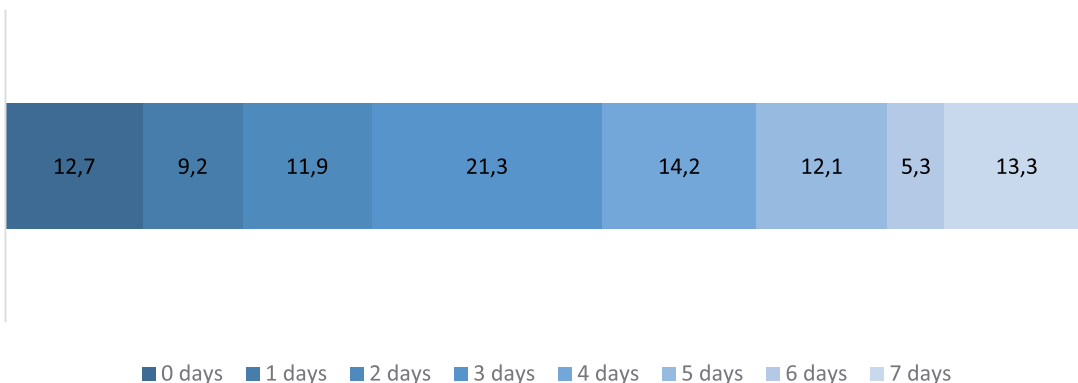
- Three quarters of surveyed adolescents reported that they had heard something about HIV or AIDS. As for the awareness of the algorithms of actions in case of finding out the fact of infection, the awareness indicators are much lower. The older the respondent, the higher is the awareness rate. Among 11-year-olds, less than half (45%) have heard about HIV and AIDS, among 12-year-olds - two-thirds (66%), and among 14-year-olds - 85%.
- Girls are somewhat better informed than boys about issues related to HIV infection. And this is despite the fact that boys are more likely than girls to engage in risky sexual behaviour, i.e. unprotected sex. It seems advisable to study in more detail the depth of adolescents' awareness: how meaningful is their knowledge of the risks and ways of contracting the HIV virus, how aware they are of the means of preventing infection, etc. This is relevant given the extremely early age of sexual debut of modern adolescents.

## SECTION 5. FORMS OF ACTIVITIES OF MODERN ADOLESCENTS

### 5.1. Physical activity

Physical activity is a component of children’s lifestyles. According to the study, more than a third of the surveyed adolescents (35.5%) were physically active for at least 60 minutes a day 3-4 days a week, and almost a third (30.7%) were physically active 5-7 days a week. However, one in eight adolescents (12.7%) did not spend at least 60 minutes a day being physically active, and one in five (21.1%) spent 1-2 days a week doing so (Fig. 5.1.1).

**Fig. 5.1.1. Number of days during the week when respondents reported at least 60 minutes of physical activity**



Boys spent more time (16.4%) per week than girls (13.3%) being physically active, with an average of 13.3% across the sample. In contrast, 15.0% of girls (with an average of 12.7% in the sample) were not physically active for more than 60 minutes per day on any day during the week). There is no significant difference in the intensity of physical activity between adolescents living in rural and urban areas.

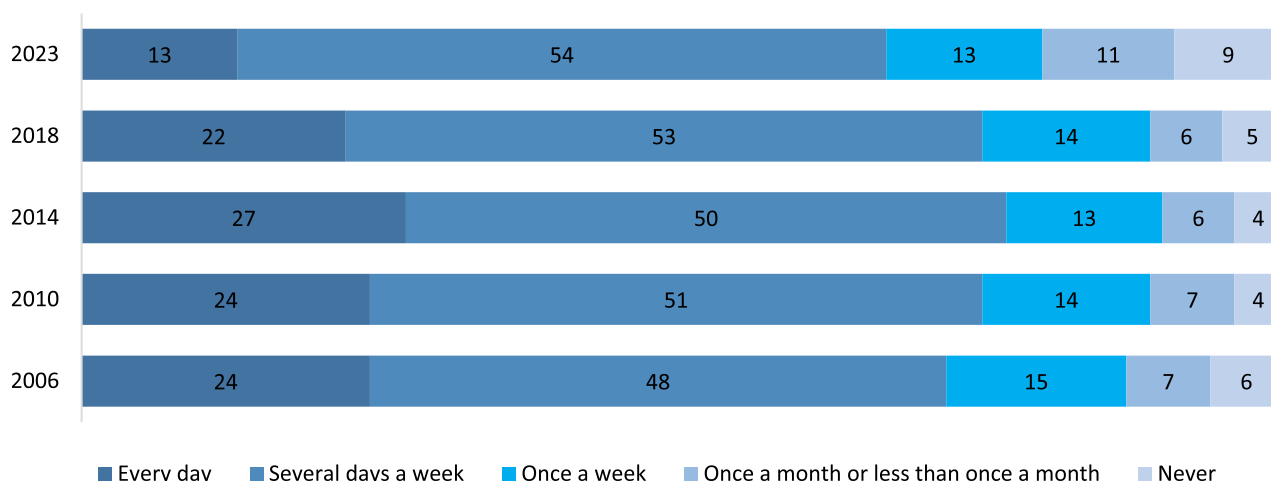
However, the older children get, the less time they are physically active. Thus, 15.2% of 11-year-olds, 13.0% of 12-year-olds, and 14.5% of 13-year-olds are physically active 7 days a week. Instead, only 11.1% of 16-year-olds and 11.3% of 17-year-olds are physically active every day.

Not a single day a week 15.9% of 15-year-olds, 19.3% of 16-year-olds, and 22.7% of 17-year-olds did not engage in physical activity. There is also a difference in physical activity among those who have moved outside their locality or Ukraine for their own safety. The proportion of those who are physically inactive during the whole week is higher among those who live in another oblast of the country and abroad and do not plan to return to the country (14.9% and 17.3% respectively). However, the proportion of adolescents who are physically active for at least 60 minutes per day on 1 and 7 days per week among those who currently live abroad and do not plan to return is also higher than in the whole sample (11.2% and 17.6%, respectively), and among those who currently live abroad and plan to return, the rates of physical activity for 2-3 days are higher (13.5% and 23.9%). For other indicators of physical activity intensity during the week, adolescents currently living abroad have lower rates than adolescents living in Ukraine.

In the pre-war years, the indicators characterizing adolescents’ physical activity were quite stable: about a quarter of respondents were engaged in various physical activities in their free time every day, and about half - several times a week (Fig. 5.1.2). In 2023, there was a significant decrease in the number of respondents who exercise daily. While in pre-war 2018 there were 22% of them, in 2023 there were almost half as many (13%). At the same time, the proportion of respondents who do not exercise at all has increased (from 5% to 9%, respectively), as well as those who exercise only once a month or less (from 6% to 11%). This negative trend may be related to the deterioration of socioeconomic living conditions of respondents’ families, in particular, due to forced displacement. Loss of motivation to train due to stressors cannot be ruled out either.

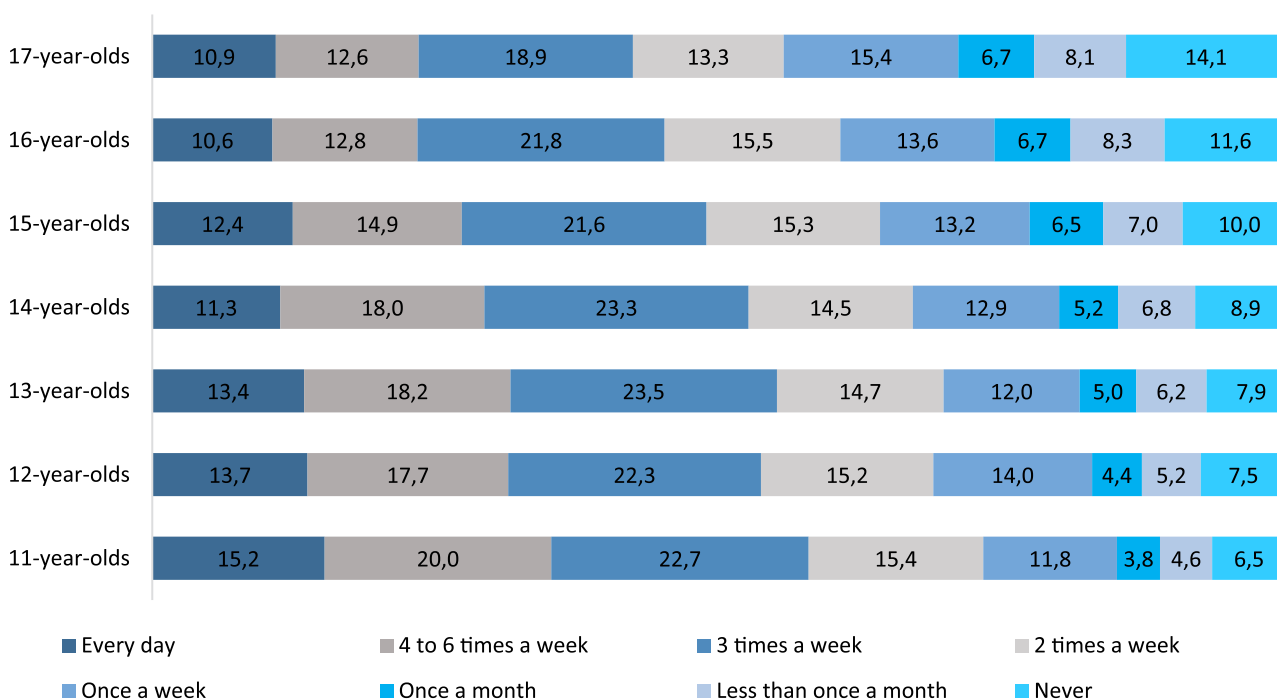


**Fig. 5.1.2. Distribution of answers to the question: “How often do you do various physical exercises (training) in your free time so much that you sweat or get out of breath or sweat?”<sup>29</sup>, %**



Boys (35.1%) choose physically active leisure to a greater extent than girls (24.1%) (sum of answers ‘every day’ and ‘4 to 6 times a week’). At the same time, the choice of physical exercises as an extracurricular activity decreases with the age of respondents. Distribution of respondents’ answers by age regarding frequency of physical activity in their free time is shown in Figure 5.1.3. When considering survey results by type of settlement where respondents live, no significant difference was found between rural and urban residents.

**Fig. 5.1.3. Distribution of answers to the question: “How often do you usually exercise in your free time so much that you get out of breath or sweat?”, by gender, %**



<sup>29</sup> In 2014, the question was formulated as follows: “How many hours a week do you do various physical activities (e.g., exercise or workout) in your free time that you get out of breath or sweat?”

## 5.2. Route to and from educational institution

The level of physical activity of adolescents can be increased if they walk to educational institutions on a daily basis. For half of the surveyed children (51.3%), the route to and from school takes up to 15 minutes. Only almost a fifth of the surveyed children (19.7%) walk from home to an educational institution for more than 30 minutes (Table 5.2.1).

**Table 5.2.1. Distribution of answers to the question: “How long does it usually take you to travel to school from your home?”, %**

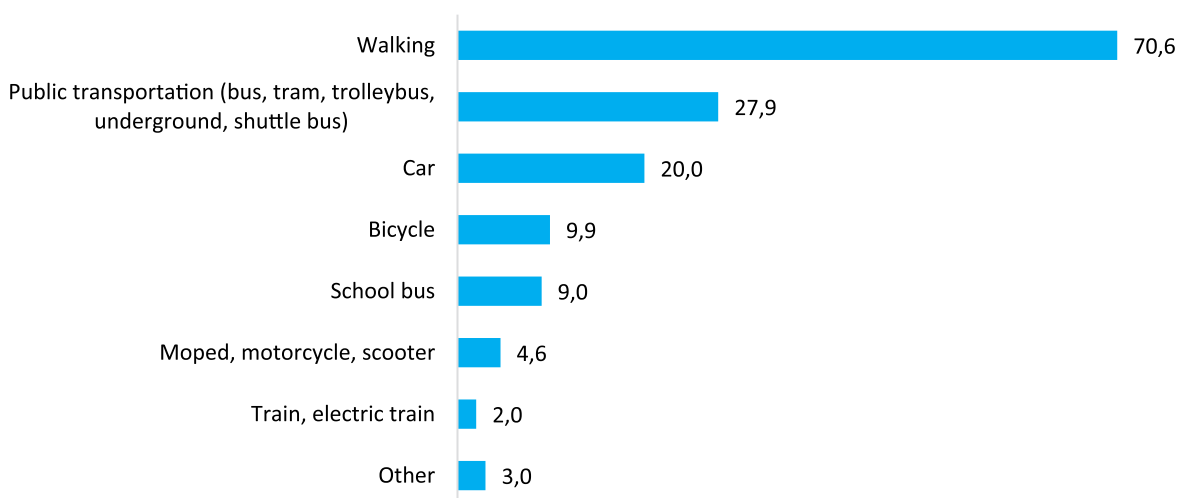
Up to 15 minutes		15-30 minutes	30 minutes to an hour	More than 1 hour
Less than 5 minutes	5-15 minutes			
15,8	35,5			
51,3		29,0	13,4	6,3

Most of the time to get to an educational institution is spent by 15-17-year-old adolescents, which may be due to the fact that they mostly study at I-II accreditation level higher education institutions and/or vocational education institutions. For example, it takes more than 1 hour to get to an educational institution for 12.1% of 15-year-olds, 13.7% of 16-year-olds, and 16.0% of 17-year-olds. 11-13-year-olds mostly spend up to 15 minutes on the road. 17.7% of 11-year-olds and 18.1% of 12-year-olds spend less than 5 minutes on the road, and 43.1% of 11-year-olds, 43.5% of 12-year-olds, and 42.3% of 13-year-olds spend 5 to 15 minutes on the road.

The majority of adolescents who spend 5 to 15 minutes going to an educational institution live in rural areas (38.2%). There is no other significant difference in terms of the type of settlement and the amount of time respondents spend traveling to educational institutions. However, the proportion of those who spend more than 1 hour traveling to an educational institution is twice as high among those who have now gone abroad and do not intend to return, and amounts to 13.0%.

Walking distance to educational institutions means that the vast majority of adolescents (70.6%) walk the main way from home to educational institutions (Fig. 5.2.1). These are mostly adolescents living in urban areas (72.0%) and adolescents of younger age groups (73.8% of 11-year-olds, 76.1% of 12-year-olds, 76.2% of 13-year-olds, and 76.8% of 14-year-olds). And the proportion of adolescents who do not walk to educational institutions is significantly lower among adolescents who currently live abroad (65.9% of those who intend to return, and 58.8% of those who do not intend to return).

**Fig. 5.2.1. Distribution of answers to the question: “On a typical day is the main part of your journey to school made by...?”, %** (The respondent could choose all options that apply)



More than a quarter (27.9%) of adolescents surveyed use public transportation to get to their educational institution. These are mostly adolescents aged 15-17 and those who live in cities/towns. Thus, 20.3% of respondents living in cities/towns use buses (compared to 19.2% overall) and those aged 15 (29.7%), 16 (30.7%), and 17 (29.5%). Buses are also mostly used by respondents who live in cities/towns (11.1%, compared to 9.4% overall) and by older adolescents aged 15 (17.1%), 16 (18.5%), and 17 (19.5%). The proportion of adolescents using public transport is also higher among those who currently live abroad. Thus, 23.3% of respondents who live abroad and plan to return, 37.1% of those who live abroad and do not plan to return, 5.8% and 8.8% of those who live abroad use buses, and 3.8% and 4.6% of those who live abroad use trams, respectively.

Almost one in ten (9%) adolescents surveyed use a school bus to get to their educational institution. This type of transportation is mostly used by adolescents living in rural areas (18.0%) and adolescents of younger age group (11-14-year-olds): 10.4% of 11-year-olds, 10.3% of 13-year-olds, and 11.2% of 14-year-olds. Almost twice as few adolescents who have left the country use school buses to get to educational institutions - 5.4%.

20% of surveyed adolescents get to educational institutions by car. These are mostly girls (21.4%) and adolescents of the younger age group (21.9% of 11-year-olds, 23.3% of 12-year-olds, and 21.6% of 13-year-olds). Adolescents who currently live abroad are less likely to use a car to get to educational institutions: only 15.4% of those who live abroad and plan to return, 11.9% of those who do not plan to return.

Almost one in ten adolescents (9.9%) go from home to an educational institution by bicycle. These are more often boys (13.9%), adolescents living in rural areas (16.3%), and adolescents of the younger age group: 11.1% of 11-year-olds, 11.8% of 12-year-olds, 11.9% of 13-year-olds, and 11.3% of 14-year-olds. The proportion of those who use a bicycle to get to school is also higher among those who currently live abroad - 11.9% among those who plan to return and 13.3% among those who do not plan to return. Instead, it is mostly boys (mopeds - 2.0%, motorcycles - 2.9%) and older adolescents who use individual vehicles (mopeds or motorcycles) to get to educational institutions: 1.7% and 2.6% of 15-year-olds (using a moped and a motorcycle, respectively), 1.7% and 3.3% of 16-year-olds. Those who live abroad are more likely to use mopeds and motorcycles: 2.4% and 3.3% among those who plan to return, 4.8% and 6.4% among those who do not plan to return.

Thus, one third (35.5%) of adolescents surveyed are physically active (at least 60 minutes per day) 3-4 days a week, and 30.7% are physically active 5-7 days a week, which is a fairly high level of physical activity. However, for a third of adolescents surveyed, the level of physical activity was insufficient (12.7% of respondents were not physically active on any day, and 21.1% spent 1-2 days a week). In addition, boys and adolescents of the younger age group (11-13-year-olds) are physically active more often. For half of adolescents surveyed (51.3%), the route to an educational institution takes up to 15 minutes and cannot be perceived as a means of significantly increasing adolescents' physical activity; only one in ten adolescents use a bicycle to get to an educational institution (which can also be considered physical activity).



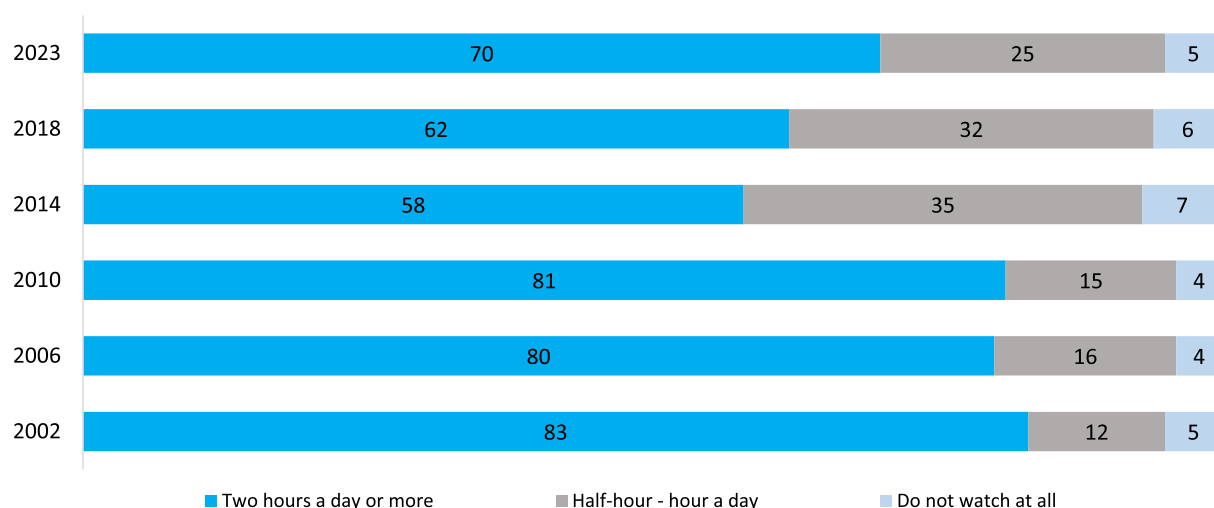
### 5.3. Watching TV programs and videos

Monitoring surveys have helped to identify the peculiarities of adolescents' watching TV programs and videos. In 2002-2010, the number of young people who watched TV and video for two hours or more on a weekday remained stable at around 80% (Fig. 5.3.1). In 2014, there was a sharp decline in this figure to 58% and a simultaneous increase in those who watched TV and video for only half an hour or an hour (from 15% in 2010 to 35% in 2014). Since 2018, there has been a gradual increase in the number of people who watch TV and video for two or more hours: in 2018, this figure was 62%, and in 2023 it was 70%. At the same time, the share of those who watch videos for half an hour or an hour is decreasing.

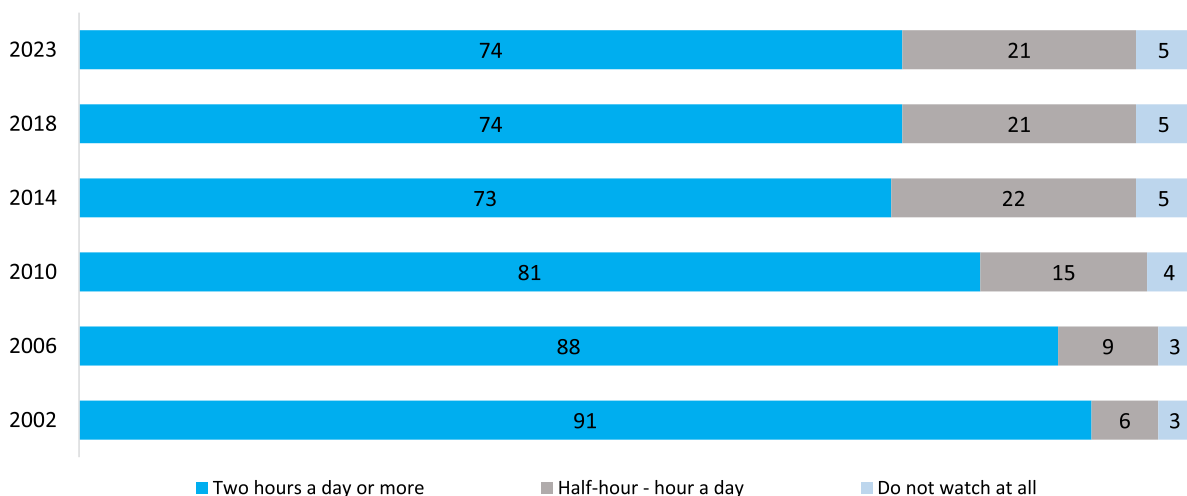
If we analyze the peculiarities of adolescents' TV and video watching on weekends, we also see a downward trend, but more pronounced: starting in 2006, the share of respondents who watched TV and video for two hours or more per day steadily decreased until 2014, and then stabilized at 73-74% (Fig. 5.3.2).

This downward trend reflects the crisis of traditional television and such technical devices as TV receivers and video players (VCRs and DVD players). They have been replaced by social networks, laptops, smartphones, and smart TVs, i.e. devices that allow watching videos on social networks. Young people have stopped watching TV and broadcasts, preferring to watch videos on social networks. And for this purpose, they primarily use smartphones and laptops.

**Fig. 5.3.1. Distribution of answers to the question: "How many hours a day do you usually watch TV, videos (including YouTube and similar services) on weekdays in your free time?"<sup>30</sup>, %**



**Fig. 5.3.2. Distribution of answers to the question: "How many hours a day do you usually watch TV, video (including YouTube and similar services) on weekends in your free time?"<sup>30</sup>, %**



<sup>30</sup> In 2014 and 2018, the question was formulated differently: "How many hours a day do you usually watch TV, videos (including YouTube and similar services), DVDs, or other screen-based entertainment in your free time?"

## 5.4. Consumption of content in social networks and virtual communication

The decrease in physical activity is associated with an increase in the time adolescents spend on social media and communicating online. A quarter of surveyed adolescents communicate online daily or almost daily with close friends and relatives (parents, sisters) (Table 5.4.1). Online communication is defined as sending and receiving text messages, emoticons, emojis, as well as photo, video, or audio messages in real time using messengers (e.g., Viber, WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook messenger, Signal, Snapchat), social networks (e.g., Instagram, TikTok, Facebook), and video calls (e.g., Zoom, Teams, Skype). Most often, adolescents communicate online with a close friend (24.5% - every day or almost every day; and 41% - several times a day or constantly throughout the day) or friends (25.3% - weekly, 16.8% - daily, and 19.3% - several times a day or constantly).

Girls are more likely to communicate with close friends (24% communicate almost constantly all day and 21.7% - several times a day), older adolescents (22.8% of 14-year-olds, 23.5% of 15-year-olds, and 25.3% of 16-year-olds communicate all day), and adolescents who have moved outside the oblast (18.4% communicate weekly and 22.5% - several times a day), abroad (22.7% - weekly among those who plan to return, 22.9% - constantly among all those who have moved abroad). Younger adolescents communicate with their friends weekly (19.8% of 11-year-olds, 18.1% of 12-year-olds), daily (26.8% of 11-year-olds and 26.8% of 12-year-olds), or several times a day (21.9% of 12-year-olds and 22.2% of 14-year-olds). Online communication with close friends is not used mostly by adolescents living in rural areas (10%).

Girls (19.2%), younger adolescents (19.8% of 12-year-olds, 19.4% of 13-year-olds, and 19.7% of 14-year-olds), and those who have gone abroad and do not plan to return (22.8%) are the ones who never or almost never communicate with friends online. Older adolescents communicate with their friends mostly weekly (26.5% of 15-year-olds and 28.3% of 17-year-olds) or all day (9.0% of 15-year-olds, 9.8% of 16-year-olds). The intensity of communication with friends is also high among adolescents who have moved abroad (27.8% communicate weekly). Among those who currently live abroad and plan to return, a higher proportion than in the whole sample communicate weekly and daily (27.8% and 18.1%), and among those who do not plan to return - those who communicate all day (12.7%)

**Table 5.4.1. Distribution of answers to the question: “How often do you have ONLINE contact with the following people?”, %**

	Don't know/ doesn't apply	Never or almost never	At least every week	Daily or almost daily	Several times each day	Almost all the time through out the day
<b>Close friend(s)</b>	8,5	8,7	17,2	25,5	20,2	20,8
<b>Friends from a larger friend group</b>	20,0	18,6	25,3	16,8	11,3	8,0
<b>Friends that you got to know through the internet but didn't know before</b>	36,7	23,4	15,1	9,9	7,3	7,6
<b>Teacher(s)/Educator(s)</b>	18,1	30,1	25,3	15,6	6,2	4,7
<b>People other than friends (e.g. parents, brothers/sisters, classmates, teachers)</b>	9,6	12,0	24,9	25,8	14,8	12,9

Adolescents spend a significant amount of time communicating with friends they met on the Internet (they did not know them before): 15.1% - weekly, 9.9% - daily, and 14.9% - several times a day or constantly. Most of them are boys (16.4% - weekly, 11.4% - daily) and older adolescents (17.8% of 15-year-olds, 17.6% of 16-year-olds, 17.5% of 17-year-olds communicate weekly; 10.9% of 15-year-olds and 11.4% of 16-year-olds communicate daily; 8.6% of 14-year-olds communicate several times a day; 8.9% of 14-year-olds, 9.5% of 15-year-olds, and 9.2% of 16-year-olds communicate almost constantly all day). The proportion of such adolescents is also high among those who live in another oblast (12.8% communicate daily and 8.5% several times a day) and among those who currently live abroad (20.8% and 13.5% of those who plan to return communicate - weekly and daily; several times a day and constantly, 8.1% and 8.3% of those who plan to return, and 8.6% and 13.6% of those who do not plan to return).

Almost half of the surveyed adolescents (48.2%) do not communicate online with teachers/educators, a quarter (25.3%) communicate at least weekly, 1.6% almost daily, and every tenth (10.9%) communicates several times a day or constantly. Online communication

with teachers may be due to the introduction of distance learning in many regions of the country. Younger adolescents communicate with teachers more often (22.5% of 11-year-olds and 17.8% of 12-year-olds communicate daily; 8.9% of 11-year-olds and 7.6% of 12-year-olds communicate several times a day; 6.8% of 11-year-olds and 5.3% of 12-year-olds communicate constantly all day). Instead, older adolescents often do not communicate with teachers/educators at all. For example, 20.1% of 15-year-olds, 20% of 16-year-olds, and 19.2% of 17-year-olds do not use online communication with teachers/educators. Weekly communication with teachers is used by 27.3% of 15-year-olds, 26.5% of 16-year-olds, and 28.6% of 17-year-olds. Adolescents who have moved outside their settlement, oblast, or country for their own safety are more likely to communicate with teachers online. Thus, more than a quarter of adolescents (27.5%) who currently live abroad and plan to return communicate with teachers/educators on a weekly basis, 17.5% of them - on a daily basis. Adolescents who have moved outside their settlement and oblast also communicate with teachers on a daily basis (19.3% and 19.1%). A higher proportion of adolescents who currently live abroad and do not plan to return communicate with teachers on a regular basis, more than the total sample (8.2%).

One fifth (21.6%) of adolescents surveyed practically do not communicate online with their relatives (parents, brothers and sisters) and classmates (mostly 16-year-olds (23.2%) and 17-year-olds (23.8%)), a quarter of respondents (24.9%) communicate weekly and another quarter (25.8%) communicate daily or almost daily. Most of the weekly communication is among older adolescents (27% of 14-year-olds, 26.8% of 15-year-olds, 27.9% of 16-year-olds, and 26.4% of 17-year-olds). And 11- and 12-year-olds mostly communicate daily, several times a day, and constantly (26.8%, 18.1%, and 17.0% of 11-year-olds, and 28% of 12-year-olds communicate daily and 17.5% several times a day). A higher proportion of girls (26.7%) than boys (24.9%) also communicate daily. Adolescents living in rural areas (14.6%) and adolescents who have moved outside their settlement, oblast, or abroad communicate more intensively (all day long). Thus, a quarter of adolescents (26.3%) who went abroad communicate with their relatives every week, 17.5% of those who currently live abroad and do not plan to return communicate several times a day, 15.9% of those who plan to return communicate constantly. More than a quarter of adolescents (27.5%) who have moved out of the oblast communicate with their families every day, and 15.9% of those who have moved out of their settlement communicate several times a day.

In addition to the high intensity of online communication, especially with friends, it was found that a significant proportion of Ukrainian adolescents replace sports and favorite activities with social networks,<sup>31</sup> using them as a means of getting rid of negative feelings. A significant proportion of the surveyed adolescents feel dissatisfied and feel bad when they cannot use social media as much as they would like, and cannot think about anything else but using social media. Some adolescents have conflicts, quarrels, and lie to their parents, relatives, and friends because of social media use (Table 5.4.2).

More than a quarter of the adolescents surveyed (27.9%) said that they could not think of anything else but the moment when they would be able to use social media again. These were mostly older adolescents (29.8% of 15-year-olds, 29.0% of 16-year-olds, 30.4% of 17-year-olds), adolescents living in rural areas (30.8%), and adolescents who had left their town or village for their own safety but remained within the oblast (30.4%) and outside the oblast (28.2%). A significant percentage of them were also found among adolescents who lived in another oblast at the time of the survey (32.3%) and abroad (among those who plan to return to Ukraine and those who do not plan to return, more than a third (34.9% and 35.4%, respectively)).

22.3% of respondents said they regularly felt dissatisfied because they wanted to spend more time on social media. The number of such respondents is higher among girls (23.2%), among 12-year-olds (23.9%), and among adolescents from families living in rural areas (24.3%). Those who have left their town or village for their own safety but stayed within the oblast (24.5%) and those who live in another oblast (26.1%) or abroad (27.4% of those who plan to return, and 28.8% of those who do not plan to return) would also like to spend more time on social media.

**Table 5.4.2. Distribution of answers to the question: “During the past year, have you...”, %**

	Yes	No
... regularly found that you can't think of anything else but the moment that you will be able to use social media again?	<b>27,9</b>	72,1
... regularly felt dissatisfied because you wanted to spend more time on social media?	<b>22,3</b>	77,7
... often felt bad when you could not use social media?	<b>20,1</b>	79,9
... tried to spend less time on social media, but failed?	<b>36,3</b>	63,7
... regularly neglected other activities (e.g. hobbies, sport) because you wanted to use social media?	<b>21,3</b>	78,7
... regularly had arguments with others because of your social media use?	18,3	81,7
... regularly lied to your parents or friends about the amount of time you spend on social media?	13,2	86,8
... often used social media to escape from negative feelings?	<b>40,4</b>	59,6
... had serious conflict with your parents, brother(s) or sister(s) because of your social media use?	15,7	84,3

<sup>31</sup> Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, means of instant messaging (Viber, WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook messenger, Signal, Snapchat) and videocalls (ZOOM, Teams, Skype, etc.).

Every fifth (20.1%) respondent felt bad when they could not use social media. Most of these feelings were experienced by adolescents aged 15 and 16 (21.7% and 21.4%, respectively), girls (22.9%), and adolescents from families living in rural areas (21.6%). The highest proportion of those who felt bad when they could not use social media live with their families in another oblast (24.4%) and abroad (among those who plan to return - 27.5%, among those who do not plan to return - 27.6%) and among those who moved to another city/town or village for their own safety (22.6%).

Social networks are increasingly replacing sports and favorite activities for adolescents (21.3%), and serve as a method of protection from negative feelings (40.4%). Thus, sports and favorite activities were neglected mostly by 15-year-olds (23.0%), 16-year-olds (25.5%), and 17-year-olds (23.5%), as well as adolescents living with their families in rural areas (24.5%), and those who live in another oblast (25.0%) and abroad (among those who plan to return - 30.0%, among those who do not plan to return - 31.6%) and among those who moved to another city/town or village for their own safety (24.5%). Mostly girls (47.1%), 15-year-olds (43.7%), 16-year-olds (43.8%) and 17-year-olds (43.9%), those who moved with their families outside their city/town or village (42, 6%) and outside of Ukraine (43.4%), lived in another region (42.9%) and abroad at the time of the survey (among those who plan to return, 42.6%, and among those who do not plan to return, 42.9%).

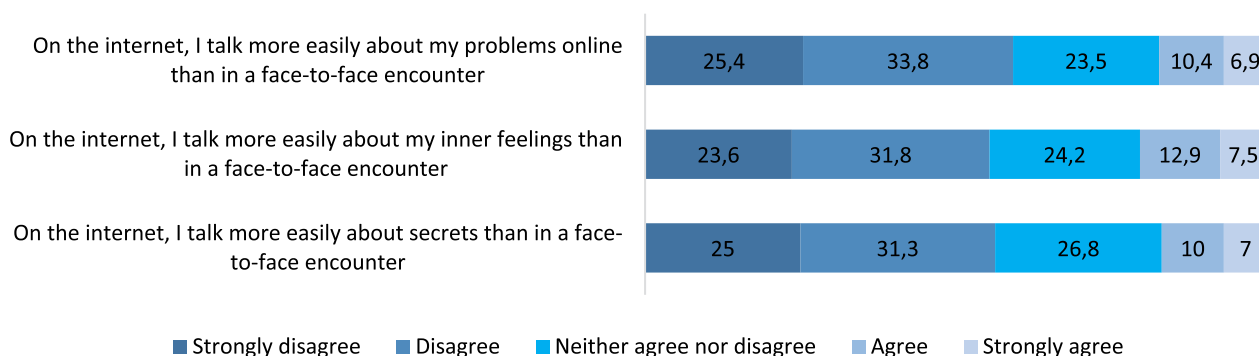
More than a third of adolescents surveyed (36.3%) tried to spend less time on social media, but failed. Attempts to reduce time were mostly made by girls (40.3%), younger adolescents (37.4% of 11-year-olds and 38.1% of 12-year-olds), and adolescents whose families lived in rural areas (39.4%). Such attempts were also made by those adolescents who left the city/town or village after the start of the full-scale invasion (37.9%) and those who were living abroad at the time of the survey and planned to return home (40.2%).

Conflicts, quarrels, and lies due to the use of social media occur in every 6-8 adolescents surveyed (15.7%, 18.3%, and 13.2%, respectively). The proportion of such cases is higher among 11-14-year-olds. Thus, a higher proportion of 12-13-year-olds (19.1% and 19.2%, respectively) quarreled with their parents than the total sample; 14-year-olds (14.4%) lied; 12-year-olds (16.6%), 13-year-olds (17.0%), and 14-year-olds (16.7%) had conflicts.

A higher proportion of adolescents whose families lived in rural areas had conflicts with their parents, siblings, or friends because of social media use (17.3%). A higher proportion of such adolescents than in the sample as a whole was also found among those who had moved outside their city/town or village (21.4% quarreled, 17.3% lied, 19.2% had conflicts), lived in another oblast at the time of the survey (22, 4% quarreled, 17.4% lied, 21.0% had conflicts) or abroad (both among those who plan to return and those who do not - 25.6% and 25.1% quarreled, 21.7% and 18.2% lied, 24.5% and 25.1% had conflicts, respectively).

In our opinion, the popularity of social networks as a form of leisure time and a channel of communication with friends and family is due to the fact that every fifth adolescent (20.4%, the sum of answers 'strongly agree' and 'agree) believes that it is easier to talk about their personal feelings on the Internet than face-to-face (Fig. 5.4.1). This opinion is shared mainly by girls (23.0%), 13-14-year-olds (22.7% and 23.2% respectively), and adolescents who at the time of the survey lived in another oblast (21.7%) and abroad (among those who plan to return - 22.7%, among those who do not plan to return - 26.6%). Almost a quarter of adolescents (24.2%) do not have a clear position on this issue, which may also indicate that they are inclined to believe that it is easier to talk about feelings in online communication. Mostly older adolescents (15-year-olds - 27.8%, 16-year-olds - 27.7%, and 17-year-olds - 27.6%) and adolescents who lived abroad at the time of the survey and do not plan to return (25.4%) do not have a clear answer.

**Fig. 5.4.1. Distribution of answers to the question: "Below are some statements about the Internet. Please choose whether you agree or disagree with the given statements", %**

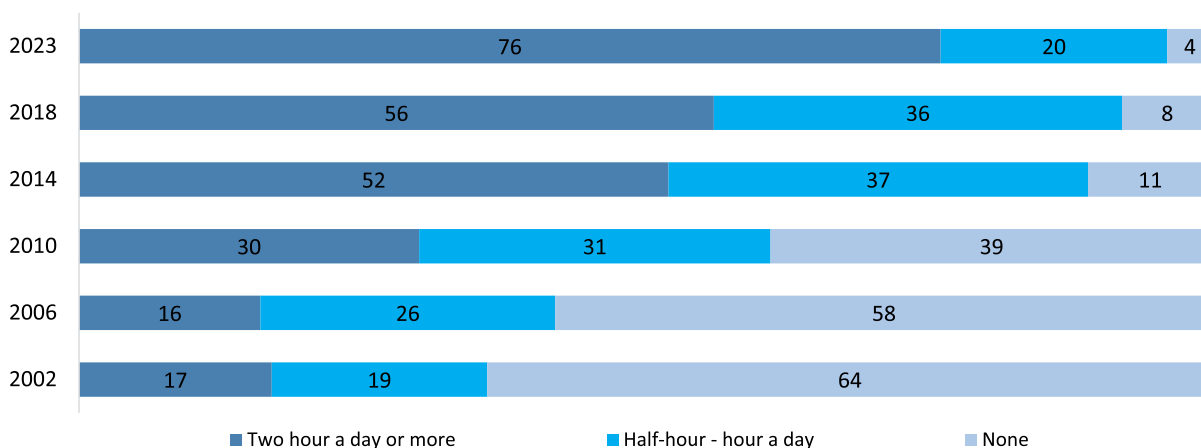


Almost the same proportion of adolescents believe that it is easier for them to talk about secrets (17% 'agree' and 26.8% 'neither agree nor disagree') and problems (17% 'agree' and 23.5% 'neither agree nor disagree') during online communication. It is also easier to talk about secrets and problems in online communication for girls (18.2% and 19.5% respectively), 13-15-year-olds (about secrets - 18.3% of 13-year-olds, 20.3% of 14-year-olds, and 18.5% of 15-year-olds; about problems - 19.8% of 14-year-olds and 18.4% of 15-year-olds) and those who currently live in another oblast (18.8% and 19.2%) and abroad (among those who plan to return and agree with the statement that it is easier to share secrets on the Internet - 19.8%; among those who do not plan to return (24.5% and 24.0% respectively). Mostly older adolescents express more doubt (agree/disagree) about these statements (30.3% of 15-year-olds, 29.8% of 16-year-olds, and 29.1% of 17-year-olds say it is easier to share secrets; 26.9% of 15-year-olds, 26.5% of 16-year-olds, and 26.2% of 17-year-olds reported ease of talking about personal problems), those who left the oblast for their own safety (28.8% and 24.9%, respectively), and 25.8% of those who were living abroad at the time of the survey and do not plan to return, agree with the statement that it is easier to talk about their problems on the Internet.

In general, it should be emphasized that the surveyed adolescents actively use social media to communicate online with friends and family. The intensity of online communication is higher among adolescents who left their cities/towns and villages after February 24, 2022 for their own safety and lived in another oblast or abroad at the time of the survey. For a significant proportion of the surveyed adolescents (40.3%), the use of social media has also become a means of releasing negative feelings, and for one in five, it is a way of spending leisure time (instead of sports and hobbies). More than a third of the surveyed adolescents tried to reduce the amount of time they spent on social media, but failed. A significant proportion of surveyed adolescents cannot think of anything else but the moment when they will be able to use social media again (27.9%), feel dissatisfied because they wanted to spend more time on social media, and feel bad when they cannot use social media (22.3% and 20.1%). The use of social media also leads to conflicts, quarrels and lies to parents, family and friends.

Social networks have, without exaggeration, revolutionized leisure, and communication practices. While in 2002, about a third of adolescents surveyed sent emails, chatted, surfed the Internet, etc., today more than 90% of respondents use social networks. According to the results of the 2023 survey, 96% spent some time on the computer on weekdays, and the same number spent time on weekends (Fig. 5.4.2 and Fig. 5.4.3).

**Fig. 5.4.2. Distribution of answers to the question: “How many hours a day do you usually spend on a computer or other electronic devices to use social networks, for example: Instagram, TikTok, Viber, Telegram, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and others in your free time on weekdays?”<sup>32</sup>, %**



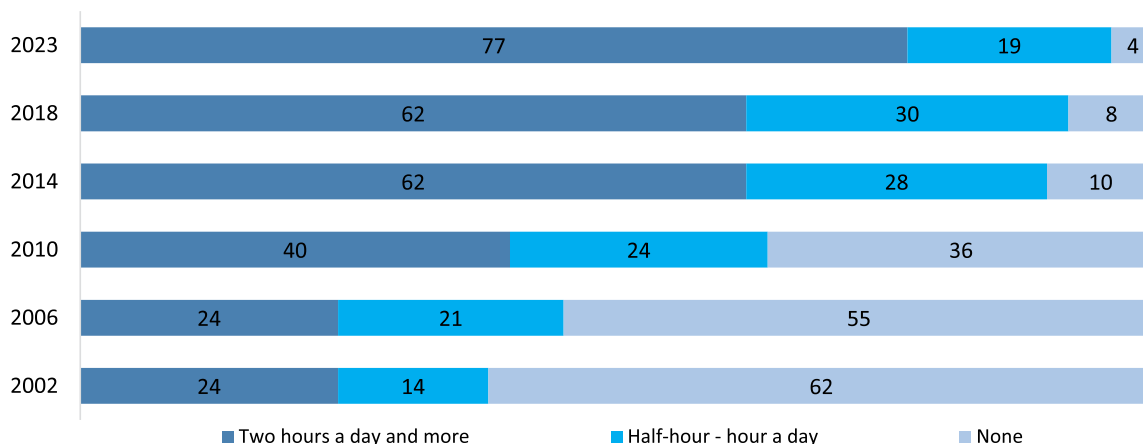
<sup>32</sup> In 2002-2010, the question was formulated as follows: “How many hours a day do you usually use a computer (sending emails, chatting, surfing the net, etc.), not including the time you spend playing computer games?”

In 2014, the question was formulated as follows: “How many hours a day do you usually spend using electronic devices such as a computer, tablet (e.g., iPad), smartphone for other purposes: doing homework, sending emails, on Twitter, Facebook, Vkontakte, Sprayshivay.ru, Google+, Odnoklassniki, Mail.ruAgent, chatting, using Internet resources in your free time?”

In 2018, the question was formulated as follows: “How many hours a day do you usually spend using electronic devices such as a computer, tablet, smartphone for the following purposes: doing homework, sending emails, on Twitter, Facebook, chatting, and using the Internet in your free time?”



**Fig. 5.4.3. Distribution of answers to the question: “How many hours a day do you usually spend on a computer or other electronic devices to use social networks, e.g.: Instagram, TikTok, Viber, Telegram, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and others in your free time on weekends?”<sup>32</sup>, %**



The intensity of social networks use has increased dramatically: in 2002, only 17% of respondents spent two hours or more on the computer on weekdays and 22% on weekends. In 2023, the same figures were 76% and 77%. While at the beginning of the ‘global web era’ people spent slightly more time surfing the Internet on weekends than on weekdays, now the time spent on social networks is the same on weekdays and weekends. The intensity of social media use increases with the age of the child. 62.9% of 11-year-olds, 71.9% of 12-year-olds, 77.6% of 13-year-olds, 80.4% of 14-year-olds, 81.9% of 15-year-olds, and 81.3% of 15- and 16-year-olds use social media from 2 to 7 hours or more per day.

## CONCLUSIONS to Section 5

### Physical activity

- A third (35.5%) of adolescents surveyed are physically active (at least 60 minutes per day) 3-4 days a week, and almost a third (30.7%) are physically active 5-7 days a week. However, for another third of adolescents surveyed, the level of physical activity was insufficient (12.7% of respondents were not physically active on any day, and 21.1% spent 1-2 days a week).
- Boys spend more time (16.4%) per week physically active than girls (13.3%), with an average of 13.3% in the sample.
- There is no significant difference in the intensity of physical activity between adolescents living in rural and urban areas.
- The older children get, the less time they are physically active. Thus, 15.2% of 11-year-olds, 13.0% of 12-year-olds, and 14.5% of 13-year-olds are physically active 7 days a week. Instead, only 11.1% of 16-year-olds and 11.3% of 17-year-olds are physically active every day.
- In 2023, there was a significant decrease in the number of respondents who exercise daily. While in pre-war 2018 there were 22% of them, in 2023 there were almost half as many (13%). At the same time, the proportion of respondents who do not exercise at all has increased (from 5% to 9%, respectively), as well as the proportion of respondents who exercise only once a month or less (from 6% to 11%).
- Boys are more likely to choose physically active leisure time (35.1%) than girls (24.1%). At the same time, the choice of physical exercises as an extracurricular activity decreases with the age of the respondents.

### Route to and from educational institution

- Most of the time spent on the way to an educational institution is spent by 15-17-year-old adolescents, which is obviously due to the fact that they mostly study in I-II accreditation level higher education institutions and/or vocational education institutions. Thus, it takes more than 1 hour to get to an educational institution for 12.1% of 15-year-olds, 13.7% of 16-year-olds, and 16.0% of 17-year-olds.
- The overwhelming majority of respondents (70.6%) walk to educational institutions.
- More than a quarter (27.9%) of adolescents surveyed use public transportation to get to an educational institution. These are mostly adolescents aged 15-17 and those living in urban areas.
- Almost every tenth (9%) respondent uses a school bus.
- School bus is mostly used by students living in rural areas (18.0%) and adolescents of younger age group (11-14 years): 10.4% of 11-year-olds, 10.3% of 13-year-olds, and 11.2% of 14-year-olds.

- Almost every tenth respondent (9.9%) cycles from home to school. Most of them are boys (13.9%), adolescents living in rural areas (16.3%), and younger adolescents.
- Although the overwhelming majority of respondents (70.6%) walk to educational institutions, and every tenth (9.9%) goes by bicycle, the route to an educational institution cannot be considered a means to significantly increase adolescents' physical activity, as half of the surveyed adolescents (51.3%) cover the main route from home to an educational institution in 15 minutes.

### **Watching TV programs and videos**

- In 2002-2010, the number of young people who watched TV and video on weekdays for two hours or more remained stable at around 80%. In 2014, there was a sharp decline in this figure to 58%. Since 2018, there has been a gradual increase in the number of respondents who watched TV and video for two hours or more: in 2018, this figure was 62%, and in 2023, it was 70%.
- Young people have stopped watching TV and broadcasts, preferring videos on social media. And for this purpose, they primarily use smartphones and laptops.

### **Consumption of content in social networks and virtual communication**

- The study recorded a high intensity of online communication among adolescents. One of the reasons for the intensity of online communication is the displacement of families with children, limited opportunities during the war to communicate with peers during walks, sports and hobbies, etc. A quarter of respondents communicate online daily or almost daily with close friends (24.5%) and relatives (parents, sisters) (25.8%). Another 41% of respondents communicate several times a day and almost constantly all day long with close friends, and 27.7% - with relatives. High intensity of communication with close friends is characteristic of girls, 14-16-year-olds, and those who left the oblast or moved abroad after February 24, 2022. And intensive online communication with relatives is more typical for 11-12-year-olds and those who have moved outside their settlement, oblast, or abroad.
- The war has prompted a greater use of social media not only as a channel of communication with friends and family, but also as a method of releasing negative feelings (for 40.3%) and a way to spend free time (instead of doing sports and/or favorite activities) (for 21.3%). This behaviour is typical for 15-17-year-old adolescents and those who have moved outside their settlement, outside Ukraine. In addition, a larger proportion of adolescents than the sample as a whole, who live with their families in rural areas, replaced sports or favorite activities with social media use, and mostly girls immersed themselves in social media to avoid negative feelings.
- A significant proportion of respondents cannot think of anything else but the moment when they will be able to use social media again (27.9%), feel dissatisfied because they wanted to spend more time on social media, and feel bad when they cannot use social media (22.3% and 20.1%). It is mainly 11-12-year-olds who feel dissatisfied when they cannot use social media, and a larger proportion of 15-17-year-olds than the sample as a whole feel bad about not being able to think about anything else but social media.
- More than a third of respondents (36.3%) tried to spend less time on social media, but failed. Attempts to spend less time were made mostly by girls, 11-12-year-olds whose families lived in rural areas, those who had moved out of the city/town or village after the start of russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and those who were living abroad at the time of the survey.
- Conflicts (15.7%), arguments (18.3%), and lies (13.2%) to family and friends because of social media were mostly reported by 11-14-year-olds, those who left their city/town or village, or those who lived abroad after russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.
- Every fifth respondent (20.4%) believes that it is easier to talk about their personal feelings online than face-to-face. A slightly smaller proportion of adolescents find it easier to talk about secrets (17%) and problems (17%) during online communication.

## SECTION 6. IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC AND WAR ON THE LIVES OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

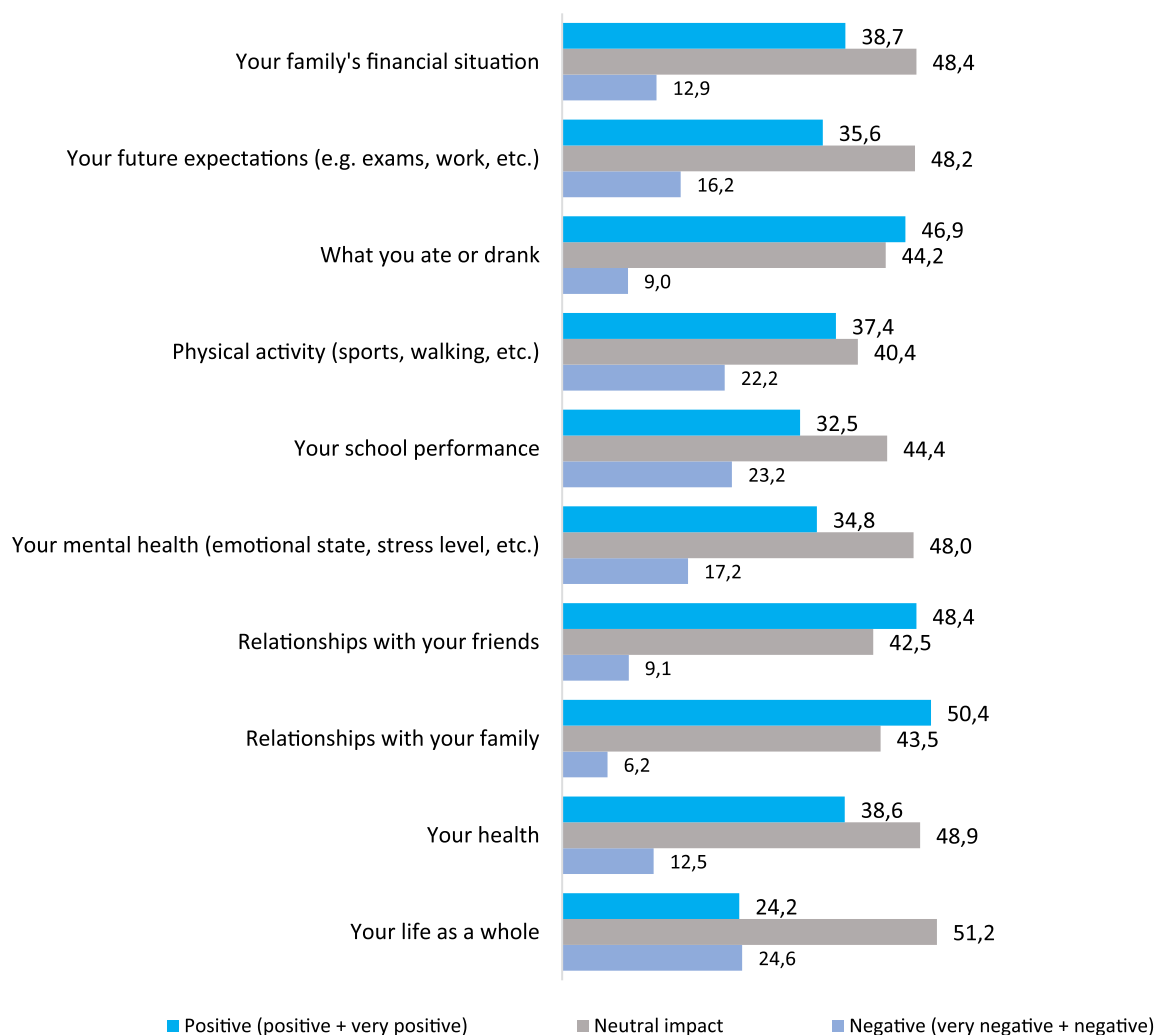
### 6.1. Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the quality of life

The second decade of the twenty-first century began in a very stressful way for the whole world, and although the war of the last two years has pushed COVID-19 off the agenda, the effects of the pandemic are still being felt in Ukrainian society.

In the survey, 21.3% of respondents indicated that they had tested positive for COVID-19, and another 49.1% indicated that their family members had tested positive. Adolescents and their family members (51.5%) living in urban areas were somewhat more likely to have tested positive for COVID-19 (21.7%) than respondents (20.4%) and their family members (42.7%) from rural areas.

Adolescents were asked to individually assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on various aspects of their lives. According to the survey, the most positive impact of the pandemic was on relationships with family (50.4%), friends (48.4%), and nutrition (46.9%). It can be assumed that during the quarantine, family members locked in the same room had more time to communicate and establish a daily routine (including meals), and remote communication with friends helped avoid conflicts. The distribution of respondents' answers about the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on their lives is shown in Figure 6.1.1.

**Fig. 6.1.1. Distribution of answers to the question: "Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic [March 2020], the lives of many people have been affected (i.e., lockdowns, school closures, distance learning, and social distancing). What impact did these measures have on the following aspects of your life?", %**



## 6.2. Impact of war as a stressor

The war forced almost half of the respondents and their families to leave their hometown or village for their own safety after February 24, 2022. Almost half (44.4%) of the respondents said that they had left their place of residence (Fig. 6.2.1). Every eighth respondent (12.2%) moved outside of Ukraine, and almost every third (32.2%) moved within Ukraine. 14.1% of respondents have moved outside the oblast, and 18.1% have moved outside their city or village but remained within the oblast.

Among those respondents who lived in cities/towns, 18.7% moved outside their locality, 15.9% moved outside the oblast, and 13.6% moved outside Ukraine. 16.5% of rural residents left their place of residence, another 9.4% left the region of residence, and 8.4% went abroad for their own safety. A significant share of 16- and 17-year-old adolescents left Ukraine (13.3% and 14.6%, respectively).

More than half of the surveyed adolescents (55.6%) have not changed their place of residence. Most of them are adolescents living in rural areas (65.7%).

**Fig. 6.2.1. Distribution of answers to the question: “Have you left your place of residence for your own safety?”, %**



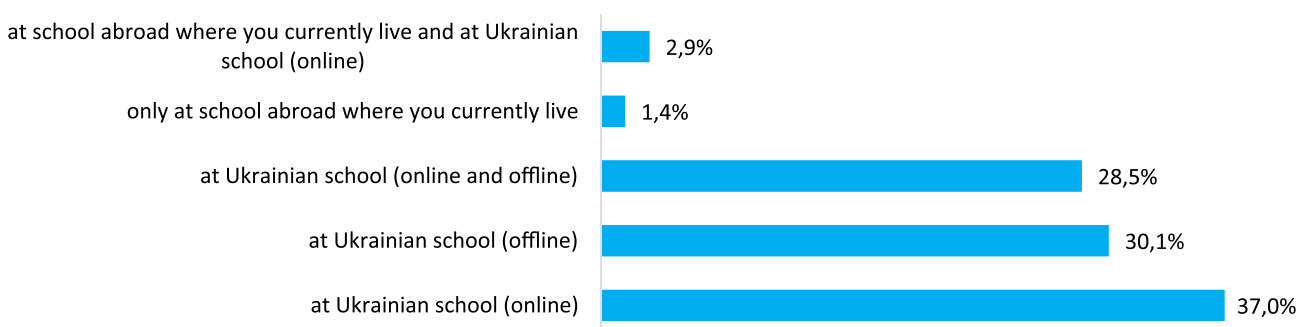
The overwhelming majority of respondents (83.2%) live in the city or village where they lived before Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine (which indicates that the share of adolescents who left the oblast and Ukraine with the start of the full-scale invasion has already returned). Every tenth (10.3%) lives in another oblast, another 6.5% live abroad, of whom 1.7% do not plan to return to Ukraine.

The vast majority of respondents study in Ukrainian educational institutions. Thus, more than a third of respondents (37.0%) were studying online at the time of the survey, 30.1% were studying offline, and 28.5% were combining online and offline learning (Fig. 6.2.2).

A higher proportion of urban residents (39.6%), 17-year-olds (43.9%), adolescents who have moved outside their locality (42.2%) and outside the oblast (49.7%) since the beginning of the war, and almost half of those who now live in another oblast (48.4%) study online than in the sample as a whole.

Offline - residents of rural areas (39.1%), 15-16-year-olds (36.5% each), those who have not left since the beginning of the war (35.4%), and those who currently live in the town or village where they were born (32.4%). Combining online and offline learning is mostly done by 11-13 year olds (30.7% of 11-year-olds, 32.9% of 12-year-olds, and 34.6% of 13-year-olds), those who have not left their place of residence since 24.02.2022 (31.3%), and those who currently live in the town or village where they were born (30.3%).

**Fig. 6.2.2. Distribution of answers to the question: “Currently you are studying...?”,%**



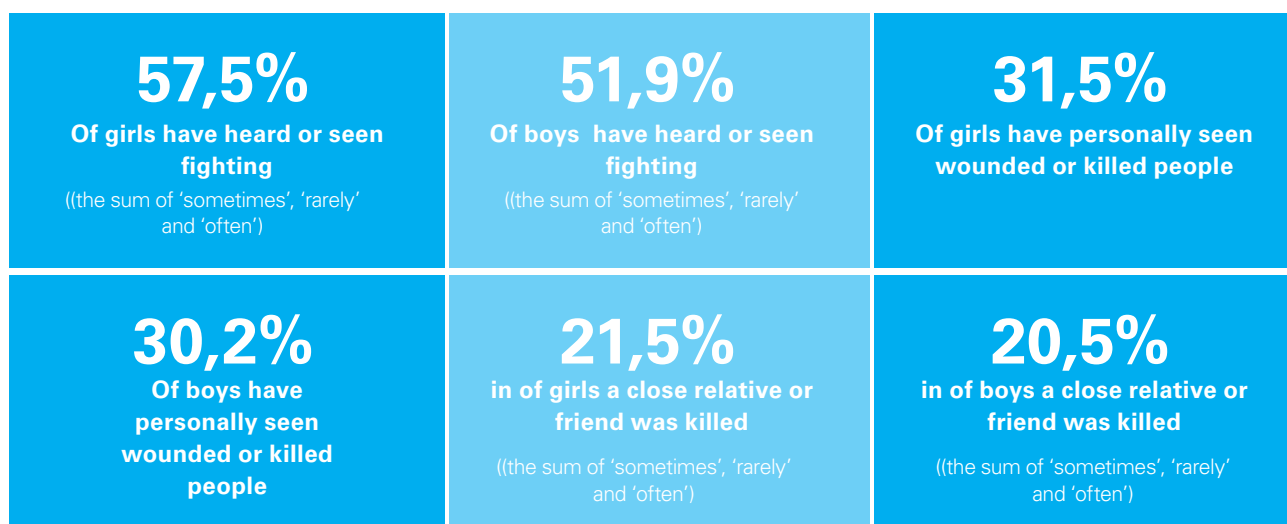
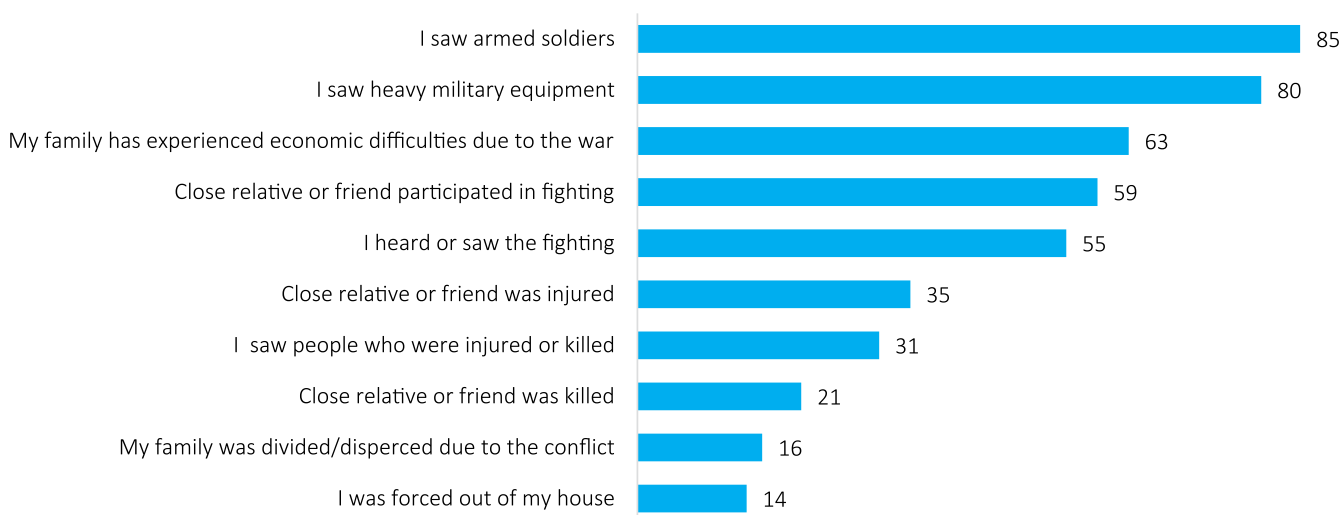
Only 4.3% of respondents study at schools abroad, of whom 2.9% study both at the school abroad where they currently live and at a Ukrainian school (online). Mostly 12-year-olds (3.2%) and 14-year-olds (3.5%) combine studying at a school abroad and at a Ukrainian school, almost half (45.1%) of those who live abroad and do not plan to return, and more than a third (36.2%) of those who live abroad and plan to return.

Thus, the war has caused mass temporary displacement of almost half of the respondents to other cities, oblasts, and abroad. At the time of the survey, 16.8% of adolescents lived in other oblasts of the country and abroad. The hostilities and forced displacement have led to a change in the forms of education. More than a third (37%) of respondents study online (mostly adolescents living in other oblasts of the country), 30.1% study offline, and 28.5% combine online and offline learning. More than a third of respondents living abroad study at an educational institution abroad and at the same time at a Ukrainian school.

The survey conducted in 2023 made it possible to find out what circumstances related to the war and hostilities could be a source of stress and anxiety for adolescents (Fig. 6.2.3). It turned out that many respondents had to go through events that had a definite negative impact on the psycho-emotional state of a young person. A significant proportion of respondents indicated that...

- their family experienced economic difficulties (63% of respondents),
- their close relative or friend participated in hostilities (59%),
- they personally heard or saw the fighting (55%),
- their close relative or friend was injured (35%),
- they personally saw people who were injured or killed (31%),
- their close relative or friend was killed (21%).

**Fig. 6.2.3. Number of respondents who have personally experienced the following circumstances since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, %**



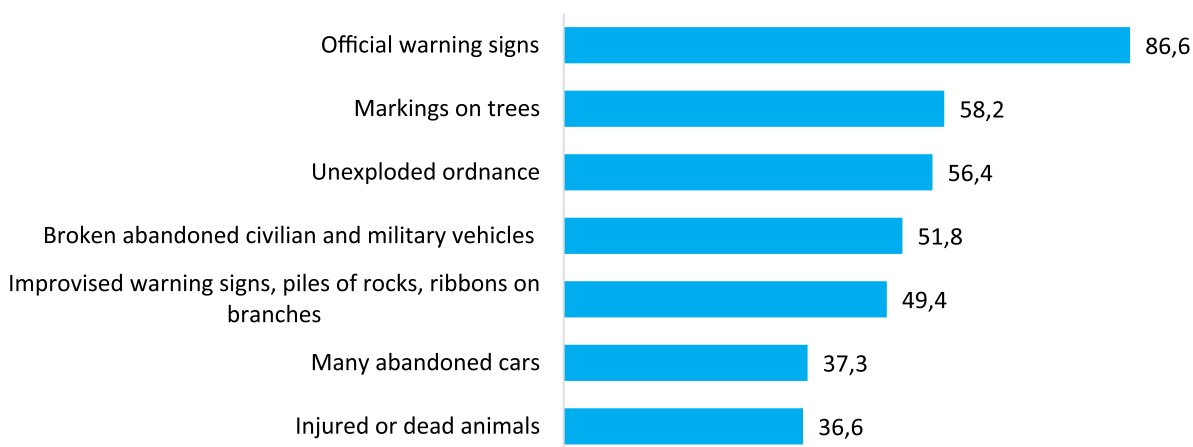
### 6.3. Life safety: awareness of young people on mine safety

The majority of respondents are still not sufficiently aware of how to identify dangerous areas (Fig. 6.3.1). The overwhelming majority of respondents stated that they can identify the danger of an area by looking at official warning signs (86.6%). More than half of the respondents identified the presence of markings on trees (58.2%), unexploded ordnance (56.4%), broken and abandoned civilian and military equipment (51.8%), and improvised warning signs (stones, ribbons on branches) (49.4%) as signs of the danger of the territory. More than a third of adolescents believe that abandoned cars (37.3%) and injured or dead animals (36.6%) are signs that can be used to identify a dangerous area.

A lower level of awareness is demonstrated by adolescents living in rural areas. For example, only 82.8% of respondents living in rural areas believe that official warning signs can help determine whether an area is dangerous, 52.7% believe that markings on trees, 47.5% - unexploded ordnance, 45% - abandoned military and civilian vehicles, 43.4% - improvised warning signs, 31.5% - abandoned cars, and 31.0% - wounded or dead animals can help determine whether an area is dangerous.

Adolescents aged 15-17 also have a lower level of awareness of the danger of the territory. Thus, 84.0% of 15-year-olds and 83.8% of 17-year-olds considered official warning signs to be signs of territory danger, 56.7% of 17-year-olds considered tree markings to be signs of danger, and 48.5% of 17-year-olds considered abandoned and broken civilian and military vehicles to be signs of danger.

**Fig. 6.3.1. Distribution of answers to the question: "How can you identify if an area is dangerous?", %**  
(The respondent could choose several options)



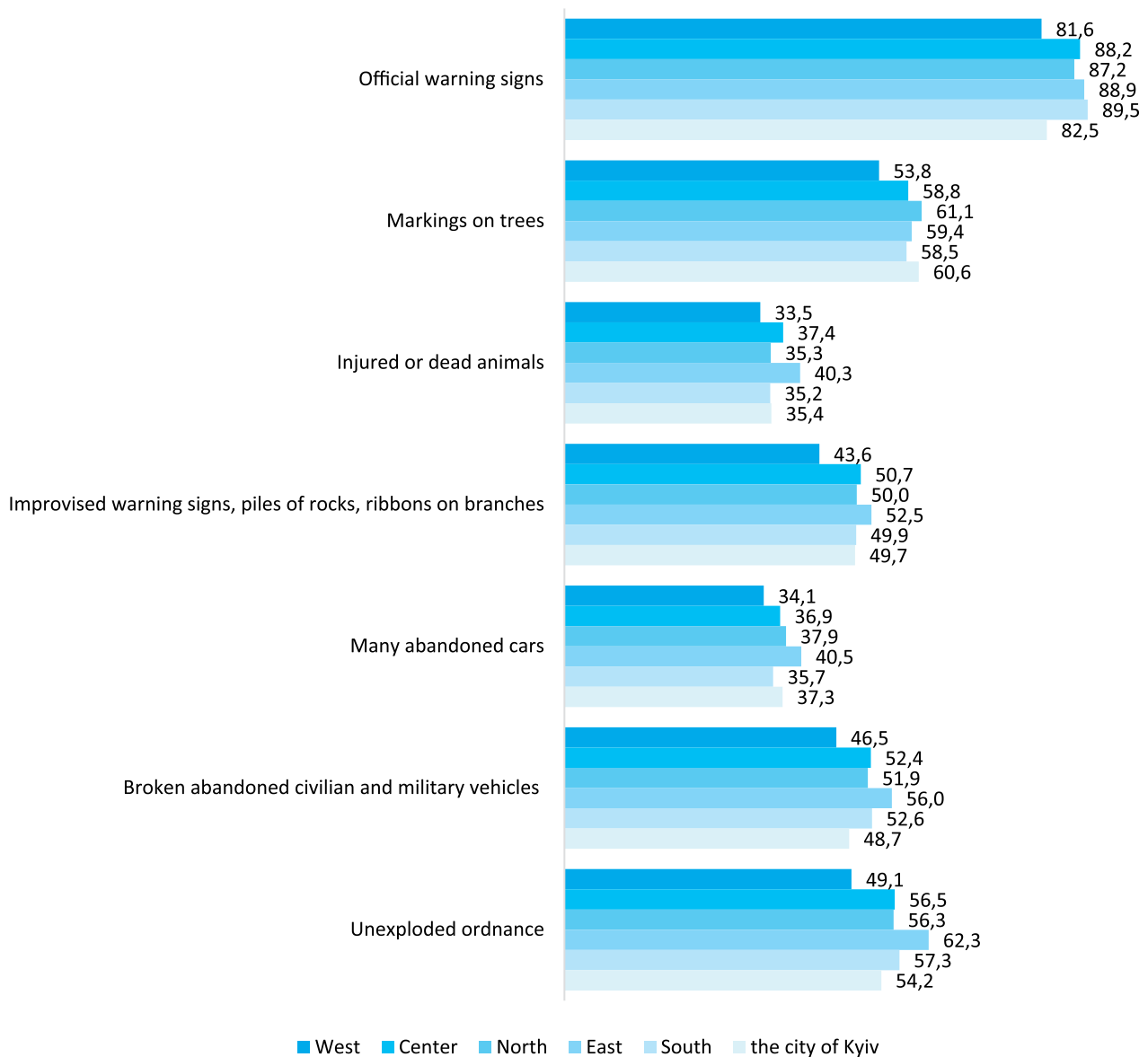
Adolescents who were living abroad at the time of the survey also demonstrate a lower level of awareness of the signs that can help determine whether a territory is dangerous. A smaller number of respondents than in the sample as a whole, who live abroad, consider certain proposed signs to be those that would allow determining the danger of the territory. For example, among respondents who live abroad and plan to return to Ukraine, 65.8% believe that official warning signs can help determine whether a territory is dangerous, while 45.9% think that this can be done by markings on trees. Among those who do not plan to return, 65.2% answered about official warning signs, and 42.9% about tree markings.

If we consider the results of respondents' answers in terms of macro-regions (West - Volyn, Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Rivne, Ternopil, Chernivtsi oblasts; Center - Vinnytsia, Kirovohrad, Poltava, Khmelnytskyi, Cherkasy oblasts; North - Zhytomyr, Kyiv, Sumy, Chernihiv oblasts; East - Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Luhansk, Kharkiv oblasts; South - Mykolaiv, Odesa, Kherson oblasts and the city of Kyiv), adolescents living in the west of the country are the least aware of ways to determine the danger of the territory.

Thus, only 81.6% of respondents living in the west believe that official warning signs can help determine the danger of a territory, while in the south and east of the country 89.5% and 88.9% agree with this, respectively. Only 53.8% of respondents from the western regions of Ukraine consider tree markings to be a sign of a dangerous area, while in the north (61.1%) and Kyiv (60.6%) a higher proportion of respondents think so than in the sample as a whole.

Only 33.5% of respondents in the west and 40.3% of respondents in the east of Ukraine correlate injured or dead animals with the danger of the territory. Improvised warning signs are considered to be actually warning signs by 43.6% of respondents in the west and 52.5% in the east of the country. The proportion of those who consider abandoned cars to be a warning marker is only in eastern Ukraine at a maximum of 40.5%, and in other regions it is much lower. Broken abandoned military and civilian vehicles are a warning sign for 56% of residents of the east and only 46.5% of respondents from the west. Unexploded ordnance is also considered a warning by the majority of those living in the east (62.3%). A detailed distribution of responses to the ways of determining the danger of the territory is shown in Figure 6.3.2.

**Fig. 6.3.2. Distribution of answers to the question: “How can you identify if an area is dangerous?”, by micro-regions of residence, %** (The respondent could choose several options)



In the context of war, the issue of life safety has become more relevant, and compliance with mine safety has become an important component of a healthy lifestyle. As part of the 2023 study, the questionnaire included questions aimed at finding out how well adolescents were informed about mine safety.

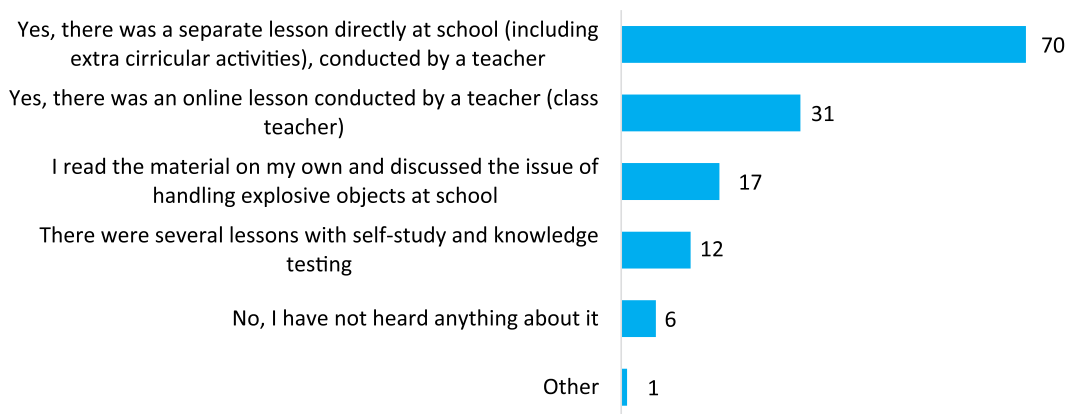
The majority of adolescents surveyed (70%) reported that a teacher/educator at their educational institution had conducted a separate lesson/class on mine safety education. The majority of respondents who had such a lesson live in the northern regions (77.7%), with the smallest share (62.3%) in eastern Ukraine.

In addition, a large number of respondents (31%) indicated that their teacher (class teacher) / educator conducted an online lesson on this topic. More of those who had such an online lesson live in the east (42.8%) and South (34.7%) of the country. The lowest number (22.2%) of online lessons were held in the west.

A significant number of young people (17%) studied materials on handling explosive objects on their own and then discussed the issue in their educational institution. Among those who have studied such material on their own, a significant share (17.9%) of respondents live in the eastern regions of the country, while in Kyiv the number of such respondents is the lowest - 13.7%.

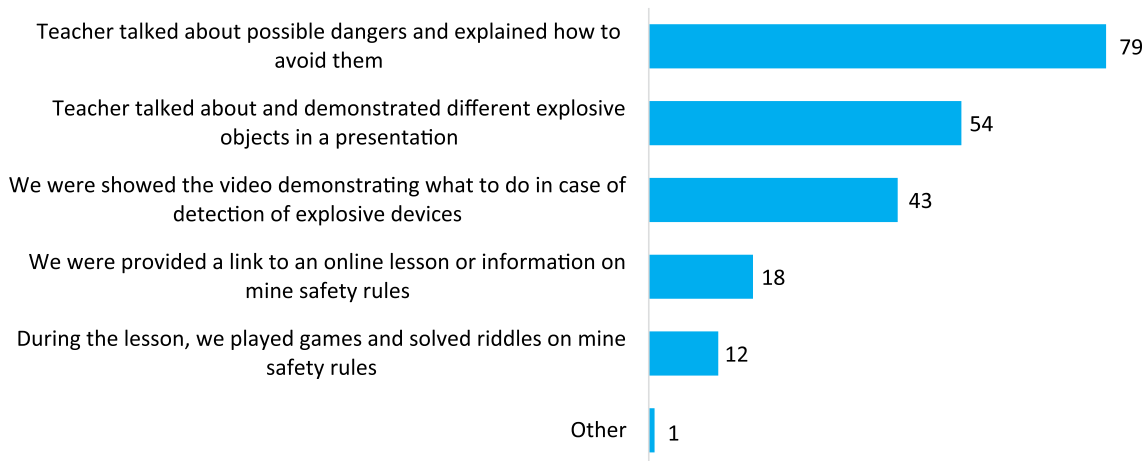
Only 6% of respondents said they had not heard anything about it (Fig. 6.3.3). The largest number (10.9%) of such respondents live in the western oblasts. Thus, the level of awareness of adolescents about mine safety can be considered quite high.

**Fig. 6.3.3. Distribution of answers to the question: “Have you ever heard about mine safety?”, % (The respondent could choose several options)**



It is worth mentioning the format in which information on mine safety is usually presented to pupils and students in educational institutions. Most often, information is provided in the form of a story by a teacher/educator without the use of visual materials. This format was reported by 79% of respondents (Fig. 6.3.4) including those living in southern oblasts (81.6%) and the city of Kyiv (80%). A smaller share of such responses (77.1%) was obtained when surveying respondents in the west of the country. At the same time, about half of the respondents attended a thematic lesson/lecture where explosive devices (54% of respondents) or an animated video showing how to behave and what to do in case of detection of explosive devices (43%) were demonstrated. The most frequent participants (57.8%) in the lessons were residents of the south, and the least frequent (46%) were adolescents from the western regions of Ukraine. The animated video with the rules of handling explosive devices was more often shown to adolescents living in the south and east of Ukraine (46.4% and 46%, respectively), and less often in western Ukraine (36.9%). Therefore, it can be said that mine safety education for pupils and students is often carried out using visual materials.

**Fig. 6.3.4. Distribution of answers to the question: “Please indicate in what form the information was provided?”, % (The respondent could choose several options)**





## 6.4. Awareness of young people about explosive devices

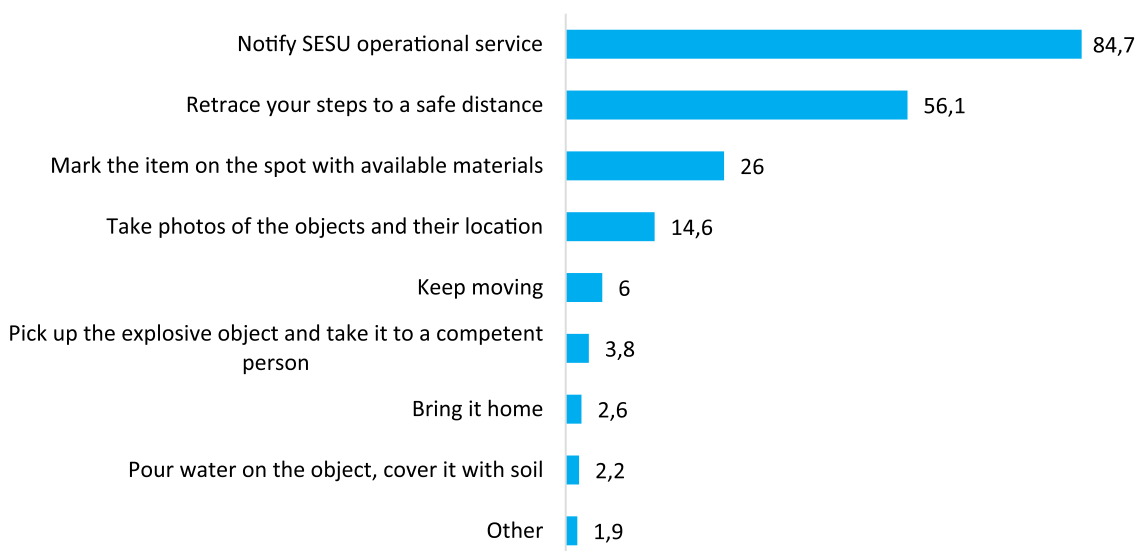
The study found that a quarter of respondents are potentially ready to take dangerous actions, such as touching, lifting, photographing, etc. if they find explosive items (Fig. 6.4.1).

Only 84.7% of respondents are ready to notify the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SESU) operational service and more than half (56.1%) are ready to retrace their steps and move to a safe distance.

The lowest awareness of the proper handling of explosive devices was demonstrated by adolescents living in rural areas, students aged 15-17, and those living in another oblast or abroad.

The lowest level of awareness about handling explosive devices was found among respondents living in the west of the country and in the city of Kyiv. Thus, more respondents from the western regions (7.1%) and the city of Kyiv (6.9%) would continue their movement if they found a dangerous object than the total sample. 5.5% of adolescents from the western regions and 4.8% of Kyiv residents would pick up such an object and take it to a competent person; 3.8% of adolescents from the Western region and 3.4% of Kyiv residents would pick it up and take it home. A higher proportion than in the overall sample of residents of the central regions and Kyiv (28.2% and 27.6%, respectively) would mark the location of a dangerous object on their own. Also, adolescents living in the capital and in the west of the country are more likely than the overall sample to pour water or cover a potentially explosive object with soil (3.7% and 3%, respectively). 15% of residents of the east of the country and Kyiv residents (14.8%) would take pictures of a dangerous object, which is a higher proportion than in the sample as a whole.

**Fig. 6.4.1. Distribution of answers to the question: «What will you do if you find explosive objects?», %**  
(The respondent could choose several options)

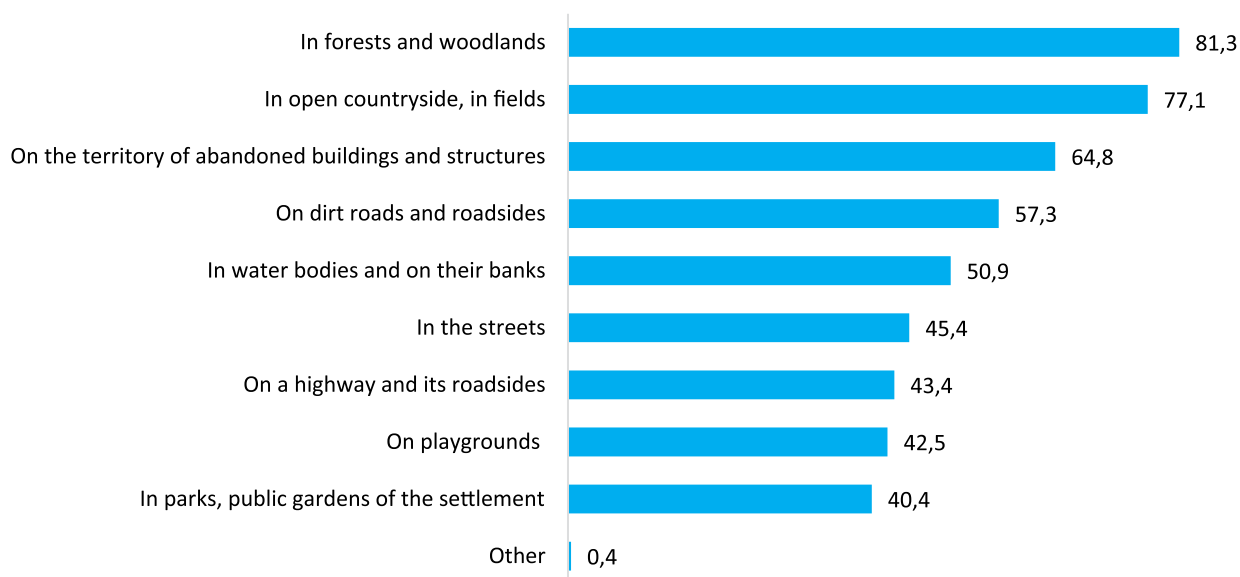


The most knowledgeable about handling explosive devices were 11-12-year-old adolescents. Thus, a larger proportion of 11-12-year-olds are ready to notify the SESU operational service if they find such an object (88.6% of 12-year-olds) and retrace in their steps and move to a safe distance (59.6% of 12-year-olds), while a smaller proportion of them will pick it up and take it to a competent person (2.1% of 11-year-olds, 3% of 12-year-olds), bring it home (1.1% of 11-year-olds, 1.6% of 12-year-olds), etc.

When considering the results of the survey by macro-region of residence, residents of the central and southern regions of Ukraine were the most knowledgeable about the proper handling of explosive devices - 86.7% and 86% respectively would report a dangerous find to the SESU. Only 80.8% of respondents in the west of the country will do so. 59.2% of residents of the center of Ukraine and 59% of adolescents from the east will follow their tracks to a safe distance, while only 47.9% of respondents from the western regions will do so.

The vast majority of adolescents believe that explosive devices can be located outside or on the outskirts of a settlement, in places where they are difficult to see and find: in forests or woodlands (81.3%), in fields (77.1%), on the territory of abandoned buildings and structures (64.8%), on roadsides or dirt roads (57.3%), in water bodies and their banks (50.9%) (Fig. 6.4.2). Less than half of the respondents believe that explosive devices can be found within settlements, in places where there are many people: on the streets (45.4%), on the highway and its side (43.4%), on playgrounds (42.5%) and in parks or squares (40.4%).

**Fig. 6.4.2. Distribution of answers to the question: “Where do you think explosive objects might be located?, % (The respondent could choose several options)**



A lower level of awareness of the possible location of explosive devices is also demonstrated by adolescents who lived abroad or in another oblast at the time of the survey. For example, a smaller proportion of respondents than in the sample as a whole said that these items could be located in forests (59.1% of those who live abroad and do not plan to return, 64.8% of those who live abroad and plan to return, 74.6% of those who live in another oblast), on the territory of abandoned buildings and structures (50.3% of those who live abroad and do not plan to return, 55.5% among those who live abroad and plan to return, 62.8% among those who live in another oblast), in the field (62.0% among those who live abroad and do not plan to return, 62.2% among those who live abroad and plan to return, 71.3% among those who live in another oblast), etc.

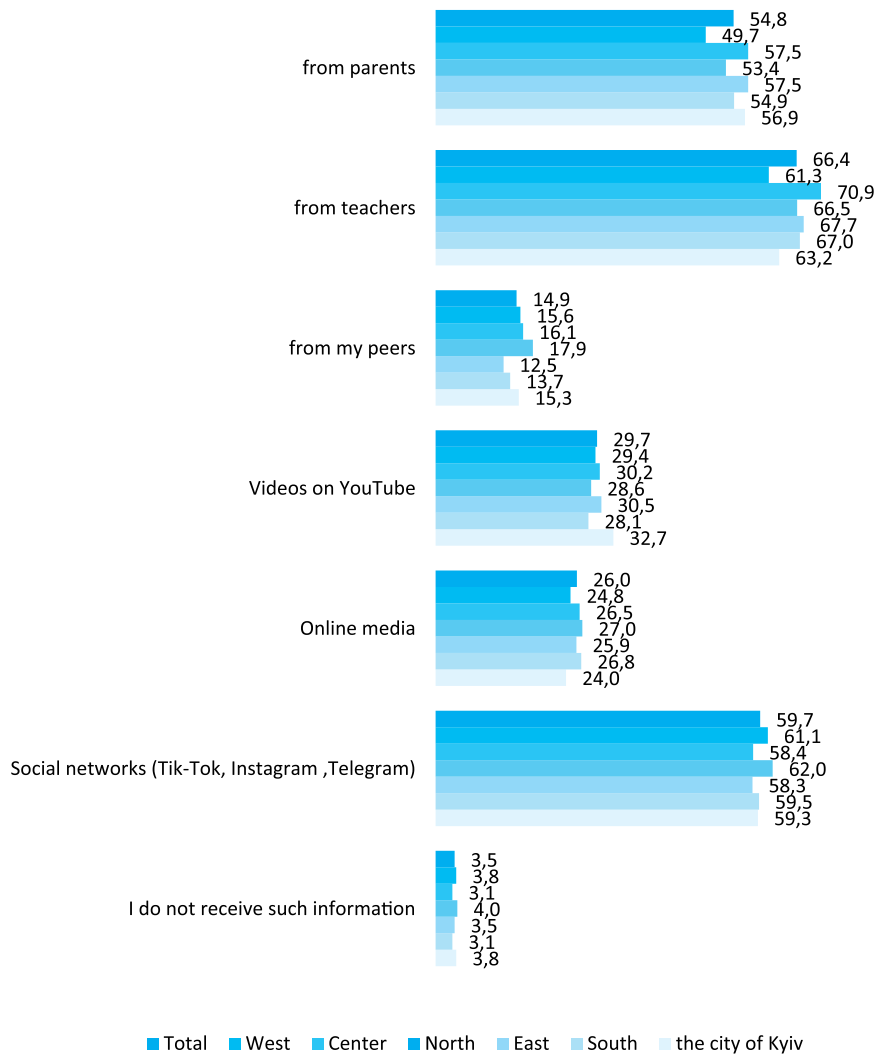
For all options regarding the possible location of dangerous items, the lowest percentage of correct answers than in the sample as a whole was given by adolescents living in the western oblasts of Ukraine and mostly those living in the capital. For example, 71% of respondents from the western oblasts of Ukraine and 74% of Kyiv residents believe that explosive devices can be found in countryside open spaces and fields. Forests and forest park areas as possible places to find dangerous objects are also mentioned to a lesser extent than in the sample as a whole by adolescents from the west of the country (73.2%) and the city of Kyiv (80.4%). Only 37.8% and 50.9% of respondents from the western oblasts of Ukraine identified the highway and dirt roads as places where they could come across an explosive object, respectively. In addition, adolescents from the western regions named the territory of abandoned buildings and structures (57.9%), water bodies and their banks (41.7%), parks and public gardens of the settlement (37.3%), streets (41.7%) and playgrounds (38.3%). The proportion of their responses is lower than in the whole sample.

On the contrary, the proportion of respondents who moved to another oblast after February 24, 2022 demonstrated a higher level of awareness of the possible location of explosive devices on the highway and its sides (47.6%), dirt roads and roadsides (61.4%), abandoned buildings and structures (69.3%), in water bodies and on their banks (56.9%). The higher level of awareness is probably related to their own experience of forced displacement.

In addition to teachers and staff of the educational institution where the respondents study, social media and parents are important sources of information about explosive devices for adolescents (Fig. 6.4.3). Social networks were mentioned more often than parents (59.7% and 54.8%, respectively). Videos on this topic on YouTube are quite popular (29.7% of respondents). Thus, due to its popularity among adolescents, social media is a promising channel for informing young people about mine safety.

Teachers are the main source of information about explosive devices for adolescents in all regions. This was noted by 61.3% of respondents from western, 70.9% from central, 66.5% from northern, 67.7% from eastern, 67% from southern oblasts of Ukraine and 63.2% of Kyiv residents. Social networks are in second place for all regions, and parents are in third place. Detailed distribution of answers is shown in Figure 6.4.3.

**Fig. 6.4.3. Distribution of answers to the question: “Where do you get information on handling explosive devices?”, by micro-regions of residence, % (The respondent could choose several options)**



## ВИСНОВКИ до Розділу 6

### Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on quality of life

- 21.3% of respondents said they had tested positive for COVID-19, and another 49.1% said their family members had tested positive.
- According to the survey, the most positive impact of the pandemic was on relationships with family (50.4%), friends (48.4%), and nutrition (46.9%). It can be assumed that during the quarantine, family members locked in the same room had more time to communicate and establish daily routines (including meals), and remote communication with friends helped avoid conflicts.

### Вплив війни як стресогенного чинника

- Almost half (44.4%) of respondents said that they had left their place of residence.
- Every eighth respondent (12.2%) moved outside Ukraine, and almost every third (32.2%) moved within Ukraine. 14.1% of respondents moved outside the oblast, 14.1% moved outside their town or village, but remained within the oblast (18.1%).
- The overwhelming majority of respondents (83.2%) live in the city/town or village where they lived before the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine (the proportion of adolescents who left the oblast and Ukraine with the start of the full-scale invasion and have already returned). Every tenth (10.3%) lives in another oblast, another 6.5% live abroad, of whom 1.7% do not plan to return to Ukraine.
- The vast majority of respondents study in Ukrainian educational institutions. Thus, more than a third of respondents (37.0%) were studying online at the time of the survey, 30.1% were studying offline, and 28.5% were combining online and offline studies.
- Only 4.3% of respondents are studying abroad, of whom 2.9% are studying both at a school abroad where they currently reside and at a Ukrainian school (online).
- The survey conducted in 2023 revealed that many respondents had experienced events that had a definite negative impact on the psycho-emotional state of a young person. A significant proportion of respondents indicated that: their family experienced economic difficulties (63%); their close relative or friend participated in hostilities (59%); they personally heard or saw fighting (55%); their close relative or friend was injured (35%); they personally saw people who were injured or killed (31%); their close relative or friend was killed (21%).

### Life safety: awareness of young people on mine safety

- The majority of respondents are still not sufficiently aware of how to identify dangerous areas.
- The overwhelming majority of respondents stated that they can identify the danger of an area by looking at official warning signs (86.6%).
- Adolescents living in the west of the country are the least aware of ways to determine the danger of the territory.
- Adolescents living in rural areas demonstrate a lower level of awareness.
- The majority of adolescents surveyed (70%) reported that a teacher or educator at their educational institution had conducted a separate lesson or activity dedicated to mine safety.
- Most often, the information is delivered in the form of a teacher's story without the use of visual materials. This format was reported by 79% of respondents.
- The majority of those who have had an online lesson live in the east (42.8%) and south (34.7%) of the country. The least number of online lessons (22.2%) were held in the west of the country.

### Awareness of young people about explosive devices

- Only 84.7% of respondents are ready to notify the SESU operational service and a little more than half (56.1%) are ready to retrace their steps and move to a safe distance.
- Residents of the central and southern oblasts of Ukraine were the most aware about the proper handling of explosive devices - 86.7% and 86% respectively would report a dangerous find to the SESU. Only 80.8% of respondents in the west of the country will do so. 59.2% of residents of the center of Ukraine and 59% of adolescents from the east will retrace their steps to a safe distance, while only 47.9% of respondents from the western oblasts will do so.
- The most knowledgeable about handling explosive devices were 11-12-year-olds.
- The lowest level of awareness of handling explosive devices was found among respondents living in the west of the country and in the city of Kyiv.
- The proportion of respondents who moved to another region after February 24, 2022 demonstrated a higher level of awareness of the possible location of explosive devices on the highway and its sides (47.6%), dirt roads and roadsides (61.4%), abandoned buildings and structures (69.3%), in water bodies and on their banks (56.9%).

- The main source of information about explosive devices for adolescents in all regions is teachers. The second place is also taken by social media in all regions, and only the third place is taken by parents.
- In addition to teachers and educators of the educational institution where the respondents study, social media and parents are important sources of information about explosive devices for adolescents. Social networks were mentioned more often than parents (60% and 55%, respectively). Videos on this topic on YouTube are quite popular (30% of respondents).

## GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

- Before 2022, the vast majority of adolescents felt happy. The war caused a deterioration in the psychological well-being of Ukrainians, including children. Among the young people surveyed, the proportion of those who feel happy in general has significantly decreased. Recognizing oneself as a happy person is hindered, firstly, by stress and personal experiences related to the war, and secondly, by the unfavorable social atmosphere and the emotions of others.
- Many adolescents had to face circumstances that negatively affected their psycho-emotional state. The majority of respondents reported that their family had experienced economic difficulties, that a close relative or friend had participated in hostilities, or that they had personally heard or seen hostilities, and wounded or killed people.
- The study has shown that Ukrainian adolescents demonstrate a fairly high level of resilience and the ability to successfully withstand wartime adversity. The vast majority of respondents feel confident in their ability to cope with personal problems. Indicators characterizing anxiety and loneliness in 2023 did not exceed similar indicators of the pre-war survey of 2018. The phenomenon of adolescent resilience in wartime deserves a separate study.
- In all the years when monitoring surveys were conducted, the vast majority of adolescents surveyed reported that their families try to help them, they receive the necessary moral (emotional) support, and they can discuss their problems. However, due to economic hardships and emotional burnout caused by the war, some parents are paying less attention to their children and responding to their requests with more restraint.
- Since 2010, the vast majority of adolescents surveyed have consistently reported their satisfaction with their educational institution. The monitoring shows that adolescents mostly positively characterize the attitude of their teachers and educators towards them personally.
- The monitoring surveys revealed a positive trend - a decrease in the number of adolescents who were victims of bullying (insults, mockery, humiliation) while in an educational institution, as well as personally involved in psychological violence. Nevertheless, bullying in educational institutions remains quite widespread.
- In all years of the survey, the majority of respondents indicated that they had never participated in a physical fight during the year. In 2023, the rate of participation in physical fights dropped sharply. This phenomenon can be partly explained by a decrease in the intensity of interpersonal interaction among young people offline.
- In 2023, there was a sharp decline in adolescents' self-assessment of their health compared to 2018. The survey data show the prevalence of illness symptoms and psychological discomfort. There is reason to believe that the main factor that negatively affected self-assessment of health was the war and its consequences. Stress and unfavorable socio-economic living conditions have led to a deterioration in the health of young people.
- The 2023 study shows that adolescents are quite aware of the issue of mine safety. Educational institutions actively inform pupils and students on mine safety issues, and visual materials and multimedia presentations are often used in this process. Social networks are an important source of mine safety information for adolescents.
- Up to 2022, the indicators characterizing adolescent physical activity were quite stable. In 2023, there was a significant decrease in the number of adolescents surveyed who exercise daily. This negative trend may be related to the deterioration of socioeconomic living conditions of respondents' families, in particular due to forced displacement.
- Compared to 2002-2010, there was a decrease in the number of adolescents watching television (TV programs). Young people prefer to watch videos on social networks, primarily using smartphones and laptops. The tools for monitoring youth preferences related to passive leisure, including video watching, need to be modernized and supplemented, taking into account existing practices.
- Social networks have undoubtedly revolutionized leisure and communication practices. While in 2002 about one third of adolescents surveyed sent e-mails, communicated in chats, surfed on Internet, etc., now more than 90% of respondents use social networks. The intensity of social networks use has increased dramatically: in 2023, three-quarters of young people spent two hours or more daily consuming content in social media and communicating virtually.
- The indicators of adolescents' self-assessment of their health are rather unfavorable and indicate the prevalence of health problems. This assumption is supported by the data on respondents' feelings of unwellness and psychological discomfort over the past six months. Compared to 2018, in 2023, the indicators characterizing the manifestations of such ailments increased especially:
  - o "Felt dizzy" (1.7 times increase);
  - o "Had trouble falling asleep" (1.6 times increase);
  - o "I had back pain" (1.4 times increase).

- One in five respondents said they had tested positive for COVID-19, and half said their family members had tested positive.
- The study revealed a number of problems related to adolescents' nutrition: the distribution of their daily diet and the balance of its composition. Many of the surveyed adolescents do not eat breakfast on weekdays and weekends, which may have negative health consequences in the future. Children whose bodies are still forming do not eat enough fruits and vegetables, fish, eggs, dairy products, unsalted nuts and seeds. At the same time, they overconsume meat and sausage products, sweets, carbonated (including energy) drinks, and snacks (chips, salted nuts, crackers, etc.).
- The survey results show that adolescents consume excessive amounts of sugar.
- The older the respondent, the worse his or her diet is, given the reduced frequency of consumption of healthy foods and the increased consumption of unhealthy foods.
- More than a quarter of adolescents surveyed have experience of drinking alcoholic beverages; a significant number of respondents admitted that they had consumed alcoholic beverages in the past 30 days.
- Tobacco smoking is reported by 17% of adolescents, and every tenth respondent has smoked at least once in the past 30 days.
- At the time of the survey, 9% of respondents indicated that they smoked cigarettes with some regularity, with 4% of respondents smoking daily.
- Smoking electronic cigarettes (vapes) is somewhat more common among adolescents than smoking traditional cigarettes.
- Every tenth adolescent surveyed has had sexual relations. With age, the proportion of adolescents with sexual experience is growing rapidly: among 17-year-olds, more than a quarter of them have had sex. The average age of sexual initiation among Ukrainian adolescents remains fairly stable. For girls it is about 15 years old, and for boys it is 14 years old.
- For many adolescents, the first sexual intercourse was unprotected and could have negative consequences. Sexual initiation was particularly risky for 13-year-old respondents: only one third of them used a condom, and half of 14-year-olds did.
- Three quarters of adolescents surveyed reported that they had heard something about HIV or AIDS. As for awareness of the algorithms of actions in case of infection, the indicators of awareness are much lower.
- One third of surveyed adolescents are physically active (at least 60 minutes a day) 3-4 days a week.