

Navigating uncharted territory: school closures and adolescent experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic in the WHO European Region

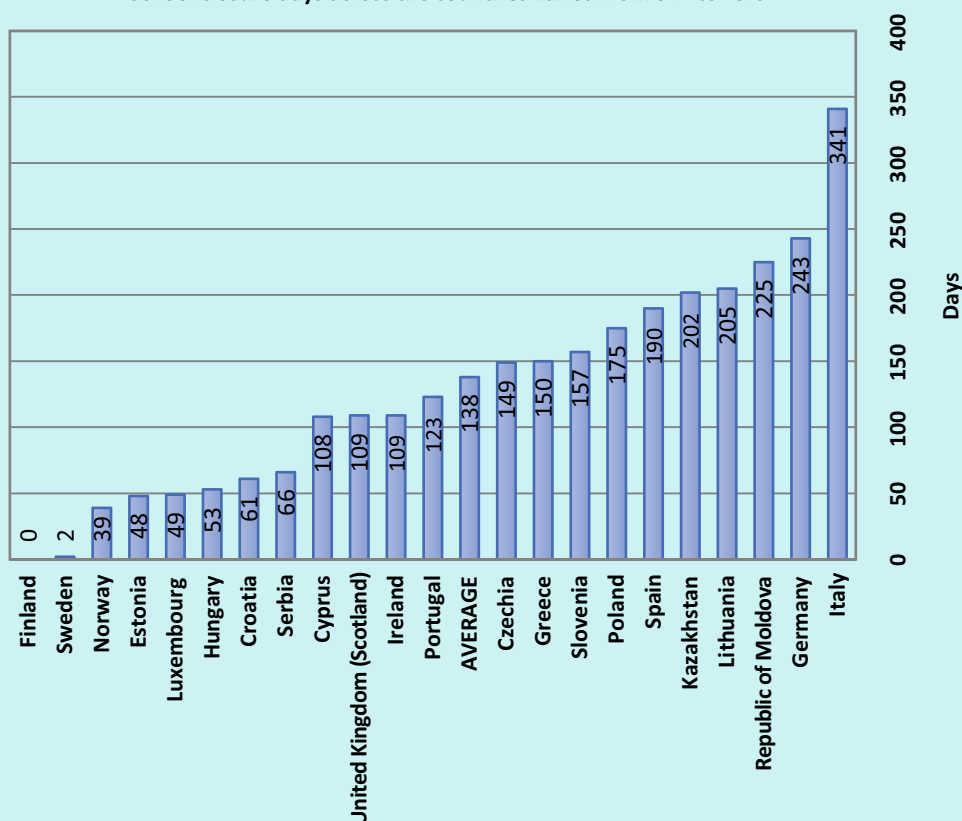
Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people's health and well-being from the findings of the HBSC survey round 2021/2022

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Key findings

- On average, 138 school closure days occurred between January 2020 and December 2022 in the 22 countries and regions of the WHO European Region that were studied.
- The range of number of days of school closures across the countries and regions was from 341 to zero.
- Almost half of the adolescents reported experiencing some or a lot of school pressure, with those having more school closure days being more likely to report this.
- Girls and older adolescents were more likely to report feelings of pressure from their schoolwork.
- Adolescents who experienced more social support from classmates and teachers felt less school pressure and reported fewer negative impacts on school performance.
- More than a quarter (especially older adolescents and girls) reported that the COVID-19 pandemic had had a negative or very negative impact on their school performance.
- The number of school closure days was not linked to the pandemic's impact on school performance.
- Only around 20% reported liking school a lot during the pandemic. Adolescents experiencing higher social support from their classmates and teachers reported liking school more.
- Boys were less prone to liking school than girls. The number of school closure days was not linked to liking school during the pandemic.
- Adolescents from better-off families reported more negative school experiences (more school pressure and less liking of school) but also less pandemic impact on school performance.
- Targeted efforts are needed to address the avoidable differences between the groups of adolescents affected by the pandemic.
- Adolescent experiences should be heard and taken into consideration in the post-pandemic recovery.

School closure days across the countries varied from 341 to zero



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