

## Tobacco consumption

### Introduction

Smoking increases the risk of many serious diseases, including cardiovascular diseases, respiratory diseases and cancer (IARC 2004; USDHHS 2014). In Germany alone, more than 100,000 people per year die from the health effects of smoking (Mons 2011). The sustainable reduction of tobacco consumption is a fixed component of the national health target process and is thus a main area of activity in health and prevention policy (Kröger et al. 2010). Preventing children and adolescents from taking up smoking plays a key role here. This is all the more important because the course of tobacco consumption in adult years is set during youth. The earlier a person starts smoking, the higher the probability of this person developing a nicotine addiction (Kendler et al. 2013). In addition to this, many adolescents underestimate the health-related consequences of smoking (Lampert 2008; Lampert et al. 2014).

### Indicator

In KiGGS Wave 1, information on smoking behaviour was gathered by means of several questions relating, for example, to current tobacco consumption and the intensity of smoking (Lampert et al. 2014). In order to determine the lifetime prevalence of tobacco consumption, all adolescents aged between 11 and 17 were first asked: “Have you ever smoked?” (Answer categories: “Yes”, “No”). Respondents who answered “Yes” to this question were also asked how often they currently smoke (Answer categories: “Every day”, “Several times a week”, “Once a week”, “Less than once a week”, “Never”). Below, current smoking refers to all types of smoking habits, including occasional tobacco consumption.

The figure shows the proportion of girls and boys who currently smoke according to age. In addition to data on current smoking, the tables also provide information on daily smoking and on the lifetime prevalence, differentiated according to sex, age and social status.

### Key results

- ▶ Currently, 12.0% of adolescents smoke, almost half of them (5.4%) every day. 27.0% of young people aged from 11 to 17 have smoked at least once.
- ▶ The prevalence of smoking rises sharply with increasing age.
- ▶ There are no significant differences between girls and boys in terms of smoking habits.
- ▶ Adolescents with low social status are more likely to smoke than those of the same age with high social status. This is most evident with regard to daily tobacco consumption.

### Conclusion

The comparison with the data from the KiGGS baseline study shows that the proportion of adolescents who smoke has decreased considerably in the last number of years. While the data collected from 2003 to 2006 showed that 20.4% of 11-17 year olds smoked, the figure today is only 12.0% according to the current data (Lampert et al. 2014). In this respect, the findings from KiGGS correspond to the results of other studies that regularly investigate the tobacco consumption of adolescents in Germany, such as the representative surveys of the Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA), the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children study (HBSC) and the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD) (Kraus et al. 2011; Richter et al. 2012; BZgA 2013). The measures that may have contributed to the reduction in smoking include the gradual increase in tobacco tax, the raising of the age limit for purchasing and consuming tobacco products, and the anti-smoking laws of the federal government and the federal states introduced since 2007, which relate to public buildings and transport, schools and hospitals, bars and restaurants (Kröger et al. 2010; DKFZ 2014). However, the KiGGS data also shows that pronounced social differences continue to exist in terms of smoking habits. These are evident with respect to the social status of adolescents. In addition, significant differences according to the type of school attended by

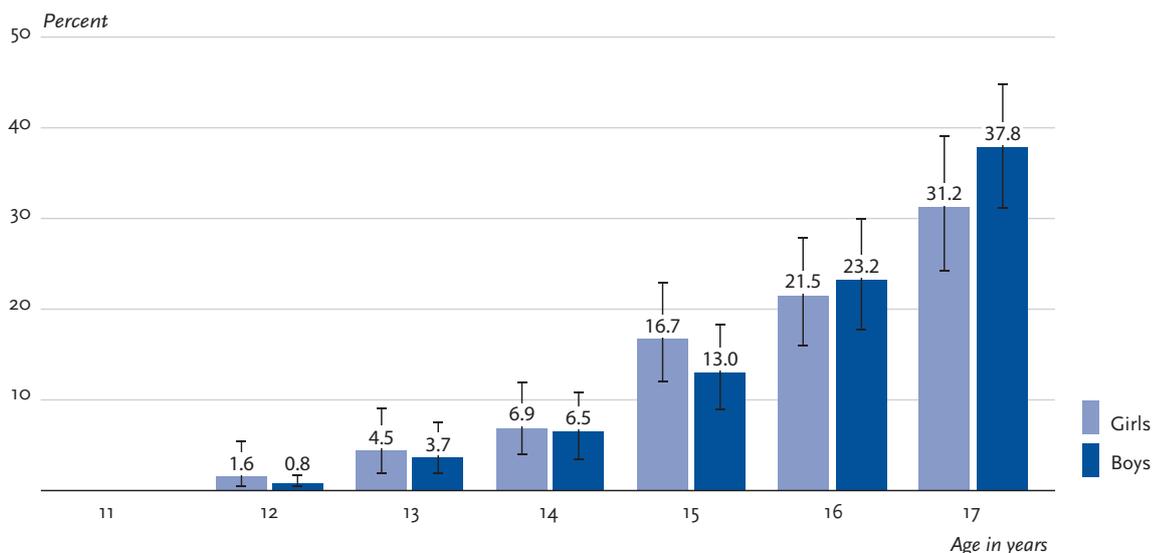
adolescents were found in the KiGGS baseline study and in the scope of other studies. According to these results, students attending upper secondary school (Gymnasium) are less likely to smoke than students in comprehensive schools (Gesamtschule), lower secondary schools (Hauptschule) and intermediate secondary schools (Realschule) (Lampert, Thamm 2007; Lampert 2008; Kraus et al. 2011; BZgA 2013). The results underline the importance of tobacco prevention measures aimed at specific target groups.

Note: A detailed description of the study as well as explanations on the method are available on the KiGGS study website, [www.kiggs-studie.de](http://www.kiggs-studie.de), and in Lange et al. (2014). Further results regarding tobacco consumption can be found in Lampert et al. (2014).

## Literature

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**Figure 1**  
Proportion of girls and boys who currently smoke according to age



**Table 1**  
Prevalence of tobacco consumption in 11 to 17-year-old girls according to age and social status

	Current Smokers		Daily Smokers		Ever Smokers	
	%	(95% CI)	%	(95% CI)	%	(95% CI)
<b>Girls</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>(10.2–13.8)</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>(4.2–6.8)</b>	<b>26.9</b>	<b>(24.5–29.4)</b>
<b>Age</b>						
11 to 13 years	2.1	(1.1–4.0)	0.5	(0.1–2.7)	4.9	(3.4–7.1)
14 to 17 years	19.1	(16.4–22.2)	8.9	(7.0–11.3)	43.2	(39.3–47.2)
<b>Social status</b>						
low	13.9	(9.2–20.5)	7.7	(4.7–12.3)	31.1	(24.2–39.0)
medium	12.3	(10.1–15.0)	5.6	(4.0–7.7)	27.1	(24.1–30.3)
high	7.5	(5.2–10.5)	1.0	(0.3–3.4)	21.4	(17.5–25.9)
<b>Total (girls and boys)</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>(10.8–13.3)</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>(4.7–6.3)</b>	<b>27.0</b>	<b>(25.3–28.8)</b>

**Table 2**  
Prevalence of tobacco consumption in 11 to 17-year-old boys according to age and social status

	Current Smokers		Daily Smokers		Ever Smokers	
	%	(95% CI)	%	(95% CI)	%	(95% CI)
<b>Boys</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>(10.5–14.0)</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>(4.4–6.9)</b>	<b>27.2</b>	<b>(24.8–29.7)</b>
<b>Age</b>						
11–13 Jahre	1.5	(0.8–2.9)	0.8	(0.3–2.1)	9.2	(6.9–12.2)
14–17 Jahre	20.2	(17.5–23.3)	9.2	(7.3–11.5)	41.0	(37.4–44.6)
<b>Social status</b>						
low	14.8	(10.2–20.9)	8.5	(5.3–13.4)	32.6	(25.2–40.9)
medium	11.3	(9.6–13.3)	5.1	(3.9–6.6)	25.8	(23.1–28.6)
high	10.3	(7.9–13.2)	3.1	(2.0–4.7)	23.5	(19.9–27.6)
<b>Total (girls and boys)</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>(10.8–13.3)</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>(4.7–6.3)</b>	<b>27.0</b>	<b>(25.3–28.8)</b>

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