



Health at a Glance: EUROPE 2014

How does Germany compare?

KEY FINDINGS

- Progress has been made to reduce smoking rates and alcohol consumption in Germany, but obesity is on the rise as in most other EU countries.
 - As in other EU countries, spending for prevention in Germany accounts only for around 3% of current health spending.
-

Preventing health problems

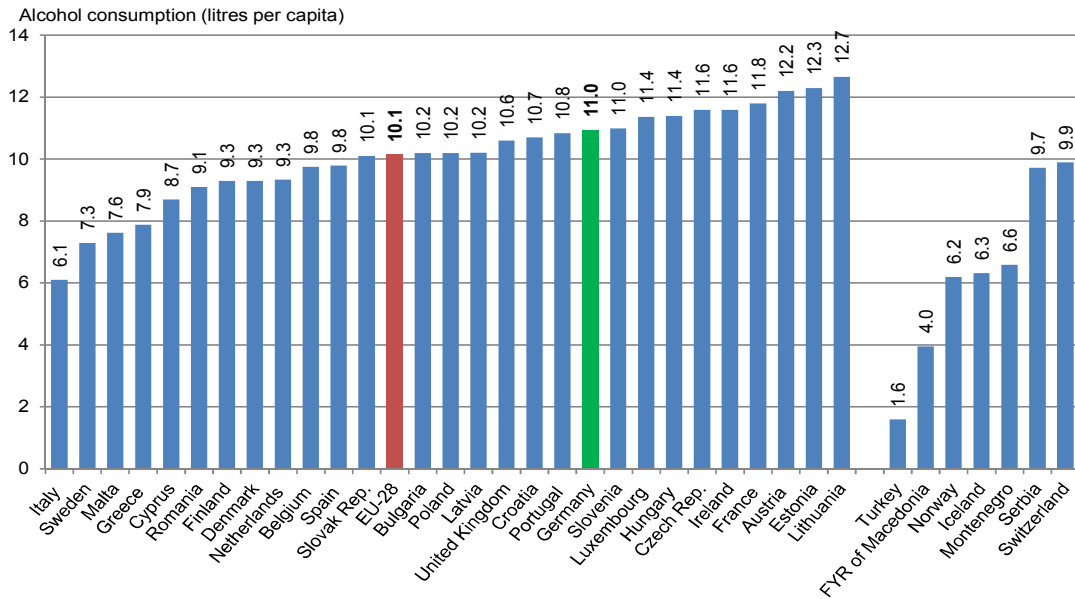
Germany has made some progress in reducing the number of people engaging in unhealthy behaviours. The share of daily smokers and the aggregate levels of alcohol consumption have gone down over the last years, but the gap with the best performing countries remain large. The percentage of adults who smoke daily has been reduced from 24% in 2003 to 22% in 2009, and the most recent data from the Federal Statistical Office indicates that this share has continued to decline to reach 21% in 2013. This remains, however, much higher than in Nordic countries such as Sweden and Iceland where only 13-14% of adults smoke daily.

As in nearly all other EU countries, there is a higher smoking prevalence among men than women in Germany, with a difference of about 9 percentage points. Further efforts are therefore needed to reduce smoking rates among men in particular and to prevent young people from beginning to smoke in the first place.

With 11 litres of pure alcohol consumption per capita in 2012, Germans drink more than the average European (10 litres), and the consumption per capita is more than 50% higher than in Italy or Sweden. As in many other European countries, the aggregate consumption of alcohol in Germany has been reduced over the last 30 years, but at the same time there has been an increase in hazardous alcohol drinking behaviours among certain population groups.

As in most other EU countries, the share of obese people has increased in Germany, going up from 13% in 2003 to 15% in 2009, with the most recent data indicating that it has increased further to 16% in 2013. On average across EU countries, one in six adults were obese around the year 2012 (16.7%), up from one in eight a decade ago. Obesity is a known risk factor for numerous health problems, including hypertension, high cholesterol, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and some forms of cancer.

Alcohol consumption among population aged 15 years and over, 2012 (or nearest year)



Spending for prevention

Increasing spending on preventive activities in a variety of different settings, as a result of the currently planned Prevention Act by the German Federal Government, is a step in the right direction to promote healthier lifestyles and reduce the prevalence of chronic and costly diseases.

In 2012, Germany allocated 3.3% of its current health spending on prevention which is slightly more than the EU average of 2.7%, but this share has decreased slightly since 2008. However, preliminary data for 2014 suggest that spending on prevention is picking up again.

More information on **Health at a Glance: EUROPE 2014** is available at <http://www.oecd.org/els/health-at-a-glance-europe-23056088.htm>.

For more information on OECD's work on **Germany**, please visit <http://www.oecd.org/germany>.
