

Characteristics of body height and weight among European children

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Growth is a multifaceted process, where development in body size leads to morphological and functional changes. This process is determined by biological factors that indicate a high degree of sensitivity to environmental stimuli, which shake the expression of genetic potential (Ulijaszek, 2006; Thomis & Towne, 2006). As a result, there is a significant difference between populations in growth patterns (Eveleth & Tanner, 1990). In Albania, the need to develop appropriate updated child and adolescent growth references is motivated by: public health concerns about the growing incidence of overweight/ obesity in children, the lack of new national epidemiological norms, and related data with pediatric anthropometric measurements. Data results from this study showed children in Albania have an average body height increase of 6.1 cm for boys and 4.0 cm for girls aged 12-15. Turkish, Croatian (6.6 cm) boys and Ukrainian girls (5.0 cm) have the highest increase in body height average during the 12-15 age group. Greek boys (5.4 cm) and Cypriot girls (2.7 cm) have the lowest increase in body height average during the 12-15 age group. Boys in Albania (6.0 kg), Italy (5.5 kg) and Greece (5.4 kg) have the highest annual average body weight gain at the age of 12-13 years, while boys in Turkey have the highest increase at the age of 11-12. aged 6.5 kg. Also girls in Albania (6.6 kg), Italy (4.6 kg), Croatia (4.9 kg), Norway (5.1 kg) and Ukraine (4.8 kg) have the highest annual average body weight gain at the age of 12-13 years. while girls in Turkey (6.9 kg) have the highest annual average body weight gain at the age of 11-12 years.