



# Children's Worlds National Report

## Norway

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## 1. Introduction

This is an initial report of the results from the Children's Worlds Survey conducted in Norway during the spring of 2014. The aim of the report is to give a brief descriptive overview of the conduct and the content of the survey and of key findings. Later, more detailed analyses will be presented of particular aspects of the survey in Norway, as well as analyses comparing results in Norway with those from other countries participating in the international project.

### 1.1 Context and population

#### *External influences*

By the end of 2013, Norway's population was 5.1 million. Different regions are more or less densely populated. The capital Oslo had just below 635 000 inhabitants, ie around 12,5 per cent of the total population. Oslo and the county surrounding (Akershus) it had 1.2 million inhabitants or close to one fifth of the total population, while the three Northern counties (Nordland, Troms and Finnmark) had less than half a million altogether.

At the beginning of this year children and young people aged 0 to 19 years numbered 1.26 million or 24,6 per cent of the population. Children aged 6 to 12 numbered 8,4 per cent.

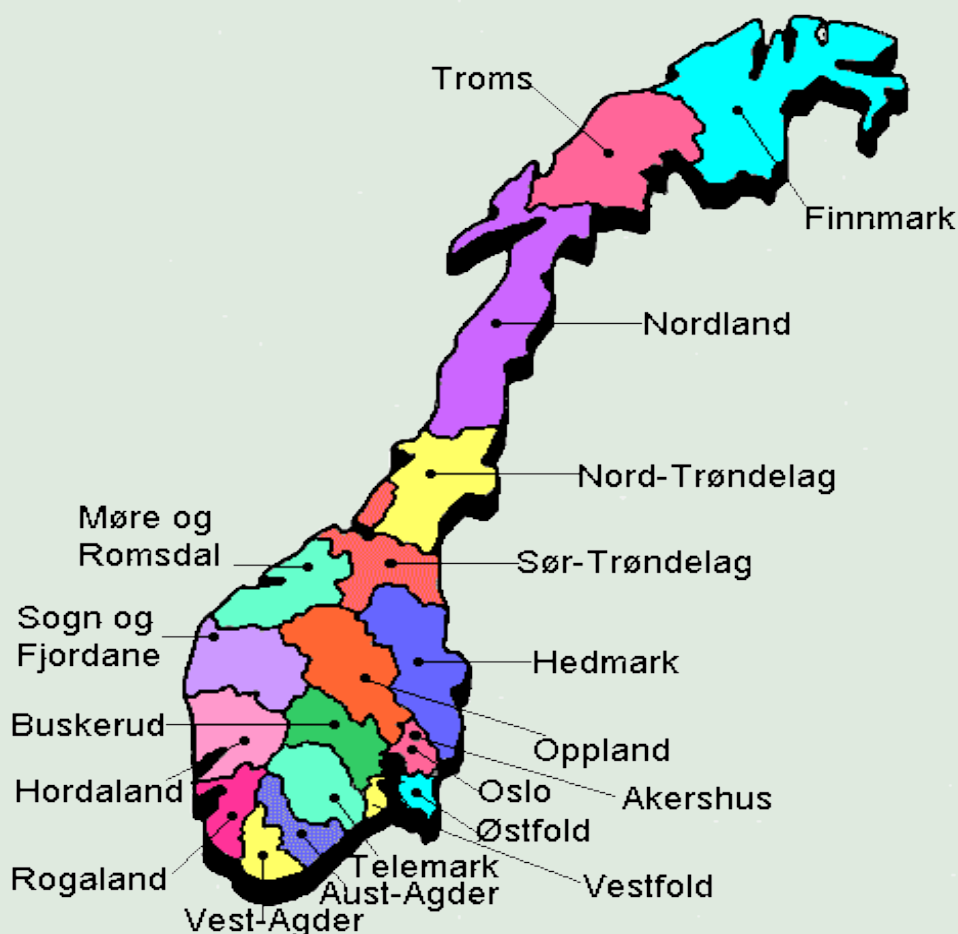


Figure 1: Norway's counties

At the end of 2013 a total of 760 000 persons or 14,9 per cent of the population were immigrants themselves or Norwegian-born with immigrant parents, primarily the former. They can be divided into two groups; those coming from EU/EEA, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand (6,5 %) and those coming from Asia, Africa, Latin-America and Europe (8,4 %). Broken further down, we see that the largest group consists of 242 000 persons from Asia and Turkey, while the second largest group consists of 171 406 persons from EU-countries in former Eastern Europe.

Around 55 % of those over 16 report that they belong to some religious denomination, of whom 17 per cent attend a religious ceremony or meeting monthly, according to the latest level of living panel study<sup>1</sup>. The Church of Norway is Lutheran. At the end of 2013 around to thirds of the population were members of the Church of Norway. Of the 550.000 or 10,7 per cent who belonged to other religious denominations<sup>2</sup> 22 percent were Moslem, 57 per cent belonged to Christian denominations other than the Church of Norway (amongst others the Catholic Church), 2,9 per cent were Buddhist and 1,2 per cent Hindu.

Norwegian is the main language, with lots of more or less similar dialects. Everyone understands each other across dialects. In addition national minorities like the Sami have their own language which is used in specific TV-programs, for instance. Travellers and Roma people have their language as well, but this is not used on public arenas. Finally we do, of course, have people from all over the world in Norway, with their diverse languages. In the Eastern parts of Oslo is it not uncommon to have pupils with 40-50 different mother tongues for instance ranging from Swedish (very similar to Norwegian) or English (which the children learn from grade 1) to Serbian, Albanian, Arabic, Somali, Urdu, Vietnamese or Chinese.

Norway's GDP per capita was NOK 592 778 in 2013, or USD 87 342 at the rate at the time of writing. As in the other Nordic welfare states the general unemployment rate is low, 2,9 per cent in all and 2,2 per cent if immigrants are excluded. However, these numbers reflect rates for persons totally outside of the labour market, and do not include those receiving various kinds of public measures as preparation for work (like training, short-term employment paid by the State, etc.). However, 36,5 per cent of those totally outside of the labour market are immigrants. As in other countries, youth unemployment is higher than the general unemployment rate. Amongst those between 15 and 24 years of age, the unemployment rate was 8.2 per cent in 2013.

As a rule, children do not contribute to the family income, although it is quite common for young people to work beside school and during summer holidays to save up for extras and get working experience to put on their CVs. The lower limit for employing someone is age 13. Below the age of 15 young people may be asked to do light work. On the other hand, many types of work are unavailable for those under 18 because of safety regulations. Nor can young people below the age of 18 be cashiers in shops selling alcohol or work in cafes or restaurants selling alcohol because 18 is the lower limit for buying beer and wine. The objective of the regulation is to protect minors against economic exploitation, as well as work which may damage their health and security, or physical, mental, moral, or social development. In addition, they are to be protected against work that will impede their educational achievement.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Statistics Norway

<sup>2</sup> Measured by the number of persons submitted to the State to gain economic support

Norwegian children are, to a large extent, expected to participate in organized leisure time activities, with sports at an all-time high. Boys do football (and other sports), girls do handball or swimming, for instance, both do skiing during winter, besides which we have choirs, school orchestras, scouts, religious activities, or more games-oriented activities like chess, or diverse collections. Children from Muslim families often attend Koran schools. What will vary is how many days a week such activities are attended, with white middle-class families participating the most. Typically, the amount of organized activities will become less when the children enter secondary school – some choose one activity which they keep up, others start going to fitness centers, and others again just do less.

Norway is known for being very child-friendly, with a major focus on child-related policies (cfr. Esping-Andersen's later works as well). This includes access to kindergarten between ages 1 and 5, free schooling, free health and dental services, vaccination programs, generous parental leave, paid leave for a number of days per year when children are ill, 1-3 days' paid leave to help children adapt to kindergarten and when they start school, and paid leave an hour a day for mothers who breast-feed after they have returned to work.

### *Family and child policies*

Child and family issues are important in Norway, both politically and ideologically (see above). Unemployment levels are still low, and child poverty levels are low as well not in the least because of our social security net. However, child poverty is increasingly becoming an issue for immigrant families to a much larger degree than for ethnic Norwegian families, particularly those from some Asian and African countries and those with many children. Even families with income below the poverty level of 60 % of the median (EU's threshold) have lots of consumer goods, and a majority own their home. In 2013, 84 300 children (8,6 %) had been living in low-income families, ie families with less than 60 per cent of the median income, for two of the last three years. However, half of these were immigrant children. Children from Somalia, Iraq and Afghanistan are particularly at risk for living in families with low income over time<sup>3</sup>. As well, Oslo has significantly more children living in households with low income than the rest of the country, since significantly more families from other countries live in the capital.

However, we must remember that when we use a relative measure like the EU definition, 60 per cent of the median will be quite a lot of money in a high-income country like Norway. This is why we usually find that even families with low income over time may own their house or flat, and the children may not lack much. Other ways of defining child poverty actually give other and lower rates. However, the issue remains that child poverty is increasingly becoming associated with ethnic minorities.

### *Education system*

In Norway, day care is available after the first year, and on average 90 percent of the 1-5 year olds attend kindergarten part-time or all day. Attendance increases with age, as 80 per cent of the 1-2 year olds attend, while the corresponding rate for 3-5 year olds was 96,5 in 2013<sup>3</sup>. Day care is seen as a resource for all children, but particularly important for ethnic minority children, to help them master Norwegian as well as possible before they start school.

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<sup>3</sup> Source: Statistics Norway

Children start school the calendar year they become six years old. Education is compulsory for ten years, seven years in primary school and three years in junior high (secondary) school. Then everyone has the right to three years' education in senior high school, academic or vocational. Almost all start this three-year period, but many drop out. The dropout rate from these last three years is around 30 per cent, but by age 24 80 per cent will have finished this part of their education. Ethnic minority boys are most at risk for dropout. What we call post-gymnasial education can then be vocational or academic, the latter with a structure of bachelors' and masters' exams. As in other OECD countries, girls are now outnumbering boys in a series of higher education areas like medicine, nursing, teaching, social work, law, psychology, etc. By age 24, 80 per cent will have completed senior high school, which is among the lowest rates in the Nordic countries<sup>4</sup>.

Norway has an extremely inclusive school system, and 98-99 per cent attend mainstream primary schools at the municipal level. This includes special needs children and children with developmental issues, although some smaller units still exist. Amongst other things, this high degree of inclusion is the result of a political decision made 25-30 years ago to reduce social exclusion among special needs children. Consequently, most special schools were shut down. Instead, regional competence centers were established to aid the ordinary schools.

Access to education is good, as schooling is free. If parents want to send their children to one of the relatively few private schools, they have to pay, but the State will subsidize these schools as well, reducing the size of the fees. A fee is paid per semester in higher education, but not at all comparable to other countries. The students get loans and grants, and if they follow the mandated progression, a part of the loan will be converted to a grant. Some higher education options are more private as well, and cost much more money.

Children with special needs are entitled to easy access education, although not universally. In addition, there are grants for children from economically disadvantaged families, available on application. However, we have the same class differences as other countries with regard to who enters further education.

### *Family environment*

The main family composition still is the nuclear family, ie mother, father and children. Just below 70 per cent of all 16-year olds live with both parents. The second most common constellation is with mother alone or mother with new partner. Much fewer live with father alone or father with new partner. During recent years, it has become more common for lesbian or gay couples to have children, through semen donation, through step parent adoption, because they have children from a former, heterosexual relationship, or in some instances through fostering children. These family constellations do not constitute a large number, however.

The divorce and separation rates seem slightly reduced during the last couple of years. However, estimates are that after 10 years of marriage, 19 per cent will have been dissolved. The corresponding rate after 20 years is 31 percent, and after 30 years, 37 per cent<sup>5</sup>. This underlines the fact that couples divorce after their children have moved away from home as well as before they have children at all. During the last couple of decades it has become more common for parents to

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<sup>4</sup> Halvorsen et al., 2012

<sup>5</sup> Source: Statistics Norway

share custody for their children after separation, which is reflected in the responses to the Children's Worlds survey where 18 per cent of the 10 and 12 year olds answered that they divide their time between two homes. It is not very common for three generations to live together.

Norwegians like to own their homes, which 83 per cent of those over 16 do. A separate unit is the preferred option whenever possible. Just above 70 per cent of Norwegian domiciles are houses, mostly one-family units<sup>6</sup>. However, more people live in flats in the cities, as might be expected.

### *Everyday life*

A typical day in an urban or semi-urban middle-class primary school child's life will center around school and organized leisure time activities. As both parents will usually be working, children in year 1-4 often go to after-school activities at school, ranging from help with home-work to chess, theatre groups, to unorganized playing. The after-school activities cost a fixed sum per month and the content is the responsibility of the municipality – thus dependent on local economies. Extras cost extra money as well, for instance ski courses.

Ethnic Norwegian children will participate in organized leisure activities, to a large degree centered on sports like football (an all-time high for the boys!), handball, gymnastics, ballet, etc. Parents vary when it comes to how many of these activities they want their children to participate in. Many parents invest hours of unpaid, voluntary work to function as coaches, organizers, chauffeurs, etc. Ethnic minority boys participate in football along with ethnic Norwegian peers, but at least Muslim girls will be less active. On the other hand, religious instruction is more common among Muslim children, who often participate in Koran schools after their ordinary school under the auspices of the local Mosques. Children with other religious denominations may or may not attend religious ceremonies with their parents on Sundays or other days.

Thus, middle-class parents, particularly ethnic Norwegian ones (or from other parts of particularly Northern Europe), will have to organize their time in a very structured way during the week to manage all the activities on top of monitoring the children's homework etc. This may often become a source of stress for the parents, particularly if one parent feels that she or he bears a disproportionate part of the burden over time. There is some concern as well, that some or many of these children will have too little time for unsupervised play.

Weekends will be when families meet up, and when older children visit friends and have their own activities – more so the older they get. During the longer holidays, families will be together. Many have their own cottages either in the mountains or by the seaside (or both...), or they go abroad.

Children from less advantaged families will participate less in leisure time activities that cost money, or that presuppose large investments from the parents in terms of time, driving, voluntary work etc. The same pertains to some, but not all immigrant parents. Among some Muslim parents there is a gender issue as well, as girls may be withdrawn from a great deal of activities outside of their home when they enter puberty.

### *Unequal Childhoods*

As shown above, inequality in terms of child poverty is to an increasing degree connected with ethnic minorities, and particularly families from Somalia, Iraq or Afghanistan.

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<sup>6</sup> Source: Statistics Norway

With regard to education, parents' educational level influences the children's educational achievements in Norway as in other European welfare states. Compensating for the effects of class measured as educational level has proved very difficult as well despite many efforts within the school system. In addition, we have the same gender differences as other OECD countries, with girls as a group doing better than boys. The only exception is math, but even here, the girls seem to be catching up. So far, this has not led to women in general earning more than men, however. Thus, lack of equity with regard to wages and leading positions in society will, to a certain extent, be related to factors other than educational achievement.

Being a child welfare client is associated with a risk of future marginalization, as is having severe mental health problems, substance abuse, or disabilities. Here Norway is not very different from other Nordic countries.

### *Children's rights*

Norway became a signatory of the UN Charter of the Rights of the Child in 1991, and the Charter became part of the Norwegian Human Rights' legislation in 2003. A Children's Ombudsman has existed since 1981.

## **1.2 Sampling strategies and outcomes**

The Norwegian sample aimed at achieving a nationally representative sample in years 3 (8-year olds), 5 (10-year olds) and 7 (12-year olds), based on school size, with at least 1,000 participants in each age group. The sampling unit was primary schools. The methodology for the sampling was as follows: First, we looked at a list of all primary schools (years 1-7) and how large they were. To balance between the need to achieve a nationally representative sample and the need to have a manageable amount of schools we decided on inviting schools with more than 40-50 pupils at each age level. In addition schools with 10-25 pupils in each age group were added. This resulted in two strata (table 1.1), which were changed to three when the data were weighted (table 1.2), in order to separate out data from the largest cities. All the schools in the two original strata were invited, with one exception: Oslo, the capital, was not invited for administrative reasons. Among the schools who agreed to participate all the pupils in the three age groups were invited in order to achieve a sufficiently large sample. In Norway almost all primary school pupils attend municipal schools as close as possible to where they live. Thus, the composition of pupils within schools varies, and may well be larger than variation between schools. It is very difficult to find indicators which may be used to stratify samples within schools like for instance free school meals.

The resulting sample consisted of 39 municipal schools. The survey began in December 2013 and was completed in June 2014. As the study is anonymous with no sensitive information collected, it was not necessary to ask for a recommendation from the Privacy Ombudsman of Research. The parents had to give their written consent to their children's participation.

Table 1.1 summarizes the resulting sample. After data cleaning, the survey data set contained questionnaires from a sample of 3 010 children.



Table 1.1: Achieved sample (Numbers)

	All	1	2
		Large schools	Smaller schools
Year 3	977	915	62
Year 5	1033	956	77
Year 7	1000	936	64
Total	3010	2807	203

Weights have been applied to the sample used in the analysis so that the proportion of children in the data set in each stratum is equivalent to the proportion of children in that stratum in the population. In addition, a new stratum was created consisting of children from the large cities.

Table 1.2: Weighted sample (Numbers)

	Stratum			
	All	Large cities	Large schools	Smaller schools
Year 3	930	109	758	63
Year 5	970	106	788	76
Year 7	988	136	788	64
Total	2888	351	2334	203

### 1.3 Note on statistical analyses

All differences referred to in the document have been subject to statistical testing. Where differences are noted as significant they relate to a p-value below 0.01. Differences referred to as marginally significant to p-values between 0.01 and 0.49. It must be noted that we have not presented non-significant results throughout the report to any large degree, but concentrated on the significant differences.

However, at this stage, although data have been weighted, the analysis does not take into account the design effect of clustering in the sample due to children being surveyed in class groups in schools. Taking this factor into account will not affect the descriptive statistics but is likely to affect the significance levels for statistical tests.



## 2. Results

### 2.1 The participants

#### *Age and gender*

The children's ages ranged from seven to fifteen years, but the vast majority were the appropriate age for their schools year: 8 or 9 in year 3, 10 or 11 in year 5 and 12 or 13 in year 7. Less than ten children were younger or older than appropriate (table 2.1). The sample is not representative by age group and will be analysed by year group from here on. To maintain consistency across the countries reports we will name '8-year-olds' group the Year 3, '10-year-olds' group the Year 5, and '12-year-olds' group the Year 7.

46.6 per cent of the sample were boys, and 53.4 per cent were girls.

Table 2.1: Age by gender (Numbers)

	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Total
<b>Boy</b>	3	321	121	331	146	278	141	1	1	1343
<b>Girl</b>	0	342	146	313	179	400	159			1539
<b>Total</b>	3	663	267	644	325	678	300	1	1	2882

#### *Country of birth*

7.3 per cent of the children (211 altogether) were *not* born in Norway. As expected, more parents were born in other countries: 15 per cent of the mothers (436 altogether) and 14.4 per cent of the fathers (417 altogether). The proportion of parents not born in Norway thus corresponds to the national proportion of just above 14 per cent at the time we did the study. However, the composition of ethnic or national minorities varies substantially between local areas in Norway. We intentionally tried to include municipalities with high rates of ethnic minorities, but did not succeed as well as we desired.

### 2.2 Your home and the people you live with

Questions about which people children live with were only asked of children in the 10 and 12 age-groups. All but 18.9 per cent of the 12 year olds and 15.8 per cent of the 10 year olds responded that they always (24.5/17.1 %) or usually (56.6/53.1 %) sleep in the same home. These results must be seen in relation to children with divorced parents – when asked explicitly whether they lived in two families, 19.8 per cent of the 10-year olds and 14.6 per cent of the 12-year olds responded that they did this.

Almost all responded that they lived with their families, whether this meant having one or two homes. Hardly any responded that they lived in a foster home, in residential care, or in another kind of home.

We asked the participants to describe whom they lived with in a further detail. A large majority of the children, more than 95 per cent, lived with their mother if they lived in only one home, while the

same was only the case with around three fourths of the fathers. More than 80 per cent lived with siblings, while very few lived with grandparents or other children or adults.

As expected, most of the children also lived with both parents (table 2.2). Living with both parents is still the most common family type for Norwegian children by the age of 16, while the second most common family type is mother with new partner with lone mother in third place.

Table 2.2: Family type in first (or only) home. (10 and 12 year-olds, n=1948/58). Per cent

First home	%
Mother and father	74.6
Mother and partner	10.2
Father and partner	1.5
Lone mother	12.9
Lone father	0.1
Other	0.7
Total	100

There were five questions about children’s views of their home and the people they live with. The results are summarized in table 2.3. Children were most in agreement with the statement “We have a good time together in my family”, and least in agreement with “I have a quiet place to study at home”.

Table 2.3: Home and family (all Age groups, n=2902). Per cent

	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Totally agree
I feel safe at home	1.0	2.4	6.9	14.5	71.8
I have a quiet place to study at home	3.2	6.6	11.6	19.0	57.2
My parents/carers listen to me and take what I say into account	1.7	4.5	7.7	16.3	68.1
My parents/carers treat me fairly	1.8	3.4	5.8	16.4	70.1
We have a good time together in my family	1.0	2.5	4.5	11.1	79.3

In general the table shows that the majority of the children responded positively to all five statements, agreeing totally with them, and with between 76.2 and 90.4 per cent agreeing a lot or totally. Table 2.4 summarizes variations in responses to these five questions.

Table 2.4: Variations in questions about home and the people you live with (all age groups). Means

	Feel safe	Place to study	Parents listen	Parents fair	Good time together
<b>Gender</b>					
Boy	3.69	3.17	3.39	3.50	3.68
Girl	3.69	3.28	3.47	3.57	3.68
<b>Age group</b>					
8 year-olds	3.62	3.03	3.34	3.45	3.66
10 year-olds	3.67	3.26	3.51	3.57	3.70
12 year-olds	3.78	3.39	3.45	3.58	3.67

There were no significant gender differences in the responses to these questions.

Table 2.5 summarizes the results of three questions about time spent with family.

Table 2.5 Time spent with family in the past week. All age groups. Per cent

	Not at all	Once or twice	Most days	Every day
How often do family members talk together (n=2781)?	1,2	6,0	13,8	78,9
How often do family members have fun together (n=2741)?	2,8	14,6	41,3	41,3
How often do family learn together (n=2640)?	6,5	23,2	41,6	28,7

First, it is obvious that talking together is the most frequent activity of the three, with more than 90 per cent report doing this most days or every day, primarily every day. We cannot know, however, to what extent some children will characterize daily communications about breakfast, school things, bedtime etc. as something other than talking together. In general, we cannot know the content of the communication in the family. Second, more than 80 per cent of the children reported having fun together most days or every day, while not more than 70 per cent of the children reported learning together most days or every day. Here, we cannot know whether the distribution had been different if we had asked about doing homework together rather than learning together. Finally, the number of valid answers was reduced from the first to the third questions, primarily because an increasing number of children answered that they did not know.

Table 2.6 compares the mean scores of the same questions according to gender, age, and family type (one or two families). Scores range from 0 (not at all) to 3 (every day).

Table 2.6. Variations in time spent with family. Gender, age groups and family type. Mean scores

	Talk together	Have fun together	Learn together
<b>Gender</b>			
Boy	2,65	2,20	1,89
Girl	2,70	2,22	1,95
<b>Age group</b>			
8 year-olds	2,62	2,31	2,04
10 year-olds	2,67	2,20	1,96
12 year-olds	2,81	2,12	1,79
<b>Family type (10 and 12 year-olds)</b>			
Mother and father	2,76	2,18	1,90
Lone mother	2,72	1,90	1,60
In two families	2,62	2,16	1,81
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,70</b>	<b>2,21</b>	<b>1,93</b>

As table 2.6 indicates, there are few differences between the mean scores whether they are analyzed by gender, age, or family type. There is a slight tendency for children who live in two families to talk less often with their families during the week ( $p=.05$ ).

Altogether, the children participating in the Norwegian part of the Children's Worlds study seem to do important things with their families during the week. Particularly the oldest children reported talking together very frequently. Having fun and learning together were more similar in frequency and did not take place quite as often.

The next set of questions covered satisfaction with family life. Children were asked the same questions in all three age groups, but the 8 year-olds were presented with a 5-point scale of emoticons while the two oldest age groups filled in a 10-point scale. Table 2.7 shows the results for the 8 year-olds, while Table 2.8 shows the results for the two oldest age groups.

Table 2.7 Satisfaction with home and the people you live with. 8 year-olds (n=926). Per cent

	0	1	2	3	4
The house or flat where you live	3	1,4	4,1	14,6	79,6
The people you live with	0,5	0,3	4,4	13,9	80,8
All the other people in your family	0,1	0,7	3,2	13,8	82,3
Your family life	1,3	1,5	5,4	16,5	75,4

Overall the 8 year-olds were very satisfied with their family life as this was measured here, with more than 90 per cent selecting one of the two most positive response alternatives. The girls were slightly

more happy with the house or flat where they lived than the boys ( $p=.05$ ), otherwise there were no significant gender differences.

Table 2.8 Satisfaction with home and the people you live with. 10 (n=960) and 12 (n=969) year-olds. Per cent

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
The house or flat where you live	0,2	0,2	0,3	0,6	1,3	1,9	2,3	5,4	9,2	13,0	65,0
The people you live with	0,1	0,3	0,2	0,3	0,5	1,8	1,4	2,9	6,0	11,5	74,8
All the other people in your family	0,2	0,1	0,2	0,2	0,4	1,2	2,1	1,9	5,3	13,4	74,0
Your family life	0,1	0,2	0,3	0,3	0,6	1,3	2,3	3,0	7,7	17,1	66,5

The large majority of the children in the older two age groups also selected one of the two most positive response options, to all four questions. As the children used very few of the other response alternatives, one might discuss whether the scale can preferably be shortened.

The girls gave slightly more positive answers to the question about the people they lived with ( $p=.05$ ), but otherwise there were no significant gender differences in the answers. The 10-year olds tended to use the most positive response alternative (10) slightly more than the 12-year olds, but otherwise there were no notable age differences. Nor were there any significant differences according to whether the children lived with both parents, with lone mothers or in two families.

### 2.3 Money and the things you have

We asked the children a set of nine questions about things they have or have access to, like a mobile phone, their own room, access to a computer at home, a car, or a television. The 8-year olds had five such questions, the two oldest age groups nine. Table 2.9 shows the percentage of the children who answered “yes” to these questions.

Table 2.9. Things you have (all age groups). Per cent

	8-year olds (n=930)	10- and 12-year olds (n=1929)
Mobile phone	-	96,8
Own room	-	91,8
Books to read for fun	-	94,2
Own stuff to listen to music	-	98,3
Clothes in good condition to go to school in	99,7	98,5
Access to a computer at home	91,5	96,7
Access to the Internet	93,7	98,5
Family car for transportation	96,3	95,8
Television that can use	99,1	99,3

The children’s answers reflect the fact that Norway is a rich country, where a significant majority have access to a series of consumer goods. Of course, this may lead to an increased feeling of social exclusion among the very few who without this access. On the other hand, not having a mobile phone, for instance, may be due to a conscious prioritization on the part of the parents, as may sharing a room with siblings or not having access to a computer at home or to the Internet. Parents will vary with regard to when they want their children to start using social media.

In Norway, having fewer economic resources or child poverty is frequently associated with having immigrated to Norway, particularly from Asian and African countries. Thus, we analyzed whether there was a correlation between being born in Norway and whether the parents were born in Norway, and having access to the items. The 8-year olds were slightly more likely to have access to a TV if they or their mother had been born in Norway ( $p=.05$ ), while the likelihood was higher of having a family car if the father had been born in Norway ( $p=.01$ ).

The 10-year olds were more likely to have access to a computer, have their own room and have their own stuff to listen to music (all  $p=.01$ ) if they were born in Norway, as well as being more likely to have books to read for fun and having a family car for transportation (all  $p=.05$ ). If the mother or father was born in Norway they were more likely to have books to read for fun, have their own room, and access to a computer (all  $p=.01$ ).

On their part the 12-year olds who were born in Norway were more likely to have a mobile phone, their own room, and access to a family car for transportation (all  $p=.01$ ). The only item associated with having a mother or a father born in Norway was access to a family car for transportation ( $p=.05$ ). Thus, the most systematic difference seemed to be access to a family car.

As well, we asked the children about how happy they feel with the things they have, with the same response alternatives as in table 2.9. This is a more general question, but we cannot know to what extent the children referred to the items specifically mentioned just before in their responses. The results are presented in tables 2.10 and 2.11.

Table 2.10. How happy do you feel with the things you have? 8-year olds (n=918). Per cent.

	0	1	2	3	4
How happy do you feel with the things you have?	0,2	1,4	3,1	18,7	75,3

As the table shows most of the 8-year olds were pleased with the things they have, with three fourths scoring the maximum and a further almost 20 per cent scoring the second best. There was a significant gender difference ( $p=.01$ ) with more girls than boys ticking the most happy face. Their mean scores differed with accordingly (see table 2.12 below). In addition, those not born in Norway were slightly more likely to feel happy about the things they have.

Table 2.11. How happy do you feel with the things you have? 10-year olds (n=941) and 12-year olds (n=955). Per cent.

	0*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
How happy do you feel with the things you have?	0	0	0	0,2	0,3	0,7	1,3	2,3	4,3	18,7	70,0

\*One child ticked this response alternative

The same general tendency was evident amongst the two oldest age groups. There was a tendency for more of the 12-year old girls to use the most positive response alternative, but no significant gender differences otherwise. Nor were there significant differences related to country of birth. Table 2.12 shows the variation in means after gender, age and family type.

Table 2.12. Variation in satisfaction with the things you have (Means)

	8-year olds	10- and 12-year olds
<i>Gender</i>		
Boy	3,63	9,44
Girl	3,76	9,49
<i>Age Group</i>		
10-year olds	-	9,53
12-year olds	-	9,41
<i>Family type</i>		
Both parents	-	9,49
Two families	-	9,38
Lone mother	-	9,23
All	-	9,47

Both 10- and 12-year olds were slightly less satisfied with the things they had if they lived with a lone mother, although they still had a mean score well above nine. Among the 12-year olds, those living in two families had exactly the same mean score as those living with a lone mother. Among the 10-year olds, the mean score of those living in two families was closer to that of those living with both parents. However, the variation in mean scores was generally quite small.

We asked the oldest children about pocket money and their household's current economic status as well. With regard to pocket money, we were interested in whether they had pocket money, and how regularly (table 2.13).



Table 2.13. Pocket money, 12-year olds (n=969)

	Per cent
I don't get pocket money	16,5
I get pocket money, but not regularly	39,0
I get pocket money every week	24,4
I get pocket money every month	12,8
Missing or don't know	7,3
Total	100

Most of the children received pocket money, and it was most common not to receive pocket money regularly. If they received pocket money regularly, it was most likely that they did so every week<sup>7</sup>. There were no significant gender differences, nor any significant differences if the children or their parents were born outside of Norway. The sums reported by the children varied greatly. However, it is difficult to judge the significance of these differences since we did not ask the children about what the money was supposed to cover.

We asked two questions about household economic issues. The first was whether the children worry<sup>8</sup> about the family having sufficient money (table 2.14).

Table 2.14. Worry about family money. 12-year olds (n=969). Per cent

	Per cent
Never	46,0
Sometimes	37,3
Often	9,7
Always	2,0
Missing or don't know	5,0
Total	100

Almost half never worried if their family had enough money, while just above one third worried sometimes. Most interesting here are those who worried often or always, and whether this was related to the number of employed grown-ups in the household (table 2.15).

<sup>7</sup> In Norwegian the two most frequently used terms are the equivalent of 'pocket money' and 'weekly money'

<sup>8</sup> The word 'worry' was translated into 'lurer på om'

Table 2.15. Number of employed grown-ups in the household. 12-year olds (n=969). Per cent

	Per cent
None	0,9
One	13,8
Two	71,9
More than two	11,7
Missing or don't know	1,7
Total	100

Very few children answered that none of the adults in their household had paid work. Half of those who indicated that more than two grown-ups have a paid job, as well answered that they lived in two families. There were no significant associations between worrying about money, and paid work on the part of the grown-ups. Again, it is difficult to interpret these results, as we did not ask the children what worrying about money meant to them.

## 2.4 Your friends and other people

We asked the children several questions about their friends – their relationship with their friends, how satisfied they were with this, if they had enough friends, and how often they talk to them outside school. Table 2.16 shows the extent to which the children thought they had enough friends, and whether their friends were usually nice to them.

Table 2.16. Friends (all age groups). Per cent

	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Totally agree
My friends are usually nice to me (n=2790)	0,1	5,1	10,0	22,1	62,0
I have enough friends (n=2732)	2,1	3,5	5,8	12,7	76,1

The children indicated positive views about their friends. Almost 85 per cent agreed totally or a lot that their friends are usually nice to them, and even more agreed that they have enough friends. There were no significant differences by age or gender.

However, 10-15 per cent of the children did not agree as much. We did not ask the 8-year olds about their family situation, but this did not influence the older children's answers significantly. What did influence the answers, however, was whether country of birth was Norway. In all three age groups there was a significant correlation ( $p=.01$ ) between being born in Norway and positive responses to the two questions (table 2.17). This means that being born in Norway of one or two foreign-born parents was more similar to being born in Norway of Norwegian-born parents, while the children coming from another country might be worse off here.

Table 2.17. Friends after country of birth. All age groups. Means

	8-year olds		10-year olds		12-year olds	
	Born in Norway	Not born in Norway	Born in Norway	Not born in Norway	Born in Norway	Not born in Norway
<b>My friends are usually nice to me</b>	3,31	3,24	3,40	2,95	3,52	3,24
<b>I have enough friends</b>	3,59	3,07	3,62	3,40	3,58	3,28

The next set of questions concerned the children’s satisfaction with their friends and other people in their area, as well as their satisfaction with their relationships with people in general. Table 2.18 show the results for the 8-year olds, Table 2.19 for the two oldest age groups.

Table 2.18. Satisfaction with friendships and other relationships. 8-year olds (n=933-928). Per cent

	0	1	2	3	4
<b>Your friends</b>	0,3	1,4	5,3	21,3	71,7
<b>The people in your area</b>	1,2	1,8	7,1	25,6	64,3
<b>Your relationships with people in general</b>	0,2	0,5	6,1	26,5	66,6

The children were mainly satisfied with their friends, but gave slightly less positive responses to the more general questions. We do not know to what extent they found the two last questions too general or not very relevant to their daily well-being; friends, class-mates or those children they meet at leisure-time activities are directly related to them along with family and network. The people in their area will be less directly related unless they have reason to be in contact with them because they are parents or siblings to friends, minders, or ,on the other hand, are bothersome in some way. There were no significant gender differences. However, there was a certain likelihood (p=.05) that children who had been born in Norway gave more positive answers, but their parents’ country of birth did not matter.

Table 2.19. Satisfaction with friendships and other relationships. 10- (n=951-953) and 12-year olds (n=957-976). Per cent.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Your friends</b>	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,6	1,0	2,3	1,7	4,3	9,0	18,1	62,5
<b>The people in your area</b>	1,6	0,1	1,2	1,6	1,6	4,2	2,9	6,4	11,0	19,6	49,2
<b>Your relationships with people in general</b>	0*	0,2	0,3	0,7	0,6	1,6	2,0	3,1	8,6	21,9	60,8

\*Just one child ticked this alternative

There was a certain likelihood that being born in Norway increased the likelihood of positive responses (p=.05 for the 10-year olds and p=.01 for the 12-year olds). Whether the mother was born

in Norway increased the likelihood for positive answers from the 10-year olds ( $p=.05$ ) but not the 12-year olds.

Spending time with friends is important to children, and we asked them how often they talked to their friends, had fun together or met to study together. Table 2.20 shows the results for all age groups together.

Table 2.20. How often do you spend time with friends outside of school (all age groups,  $n=2802$ ). Per cent

	Not at all	Once or twice	Most days	Every day
Talk together	2,4	12,5	32,4	52,7
Have fun together	2,9	13,9	36,4	46,4
Meet to study together	40,5	33,5	14,4	7,1

The table shows that all age groups spent much time with their friends talking and having fun together, but that meeting to study together was not common. These were children in primary school, and it might be that it is more relevant to study together for older children. There were no gender differences among the 8- and 10-year olds. Among the 12-year olds, however, boys were more likely to have fun together ( $p=.01$ ), while girls were more likely to meet to study together ( $p=.01$ ).

The older the children, the more frequently they talked to their friends outside of school (figure 2.1).

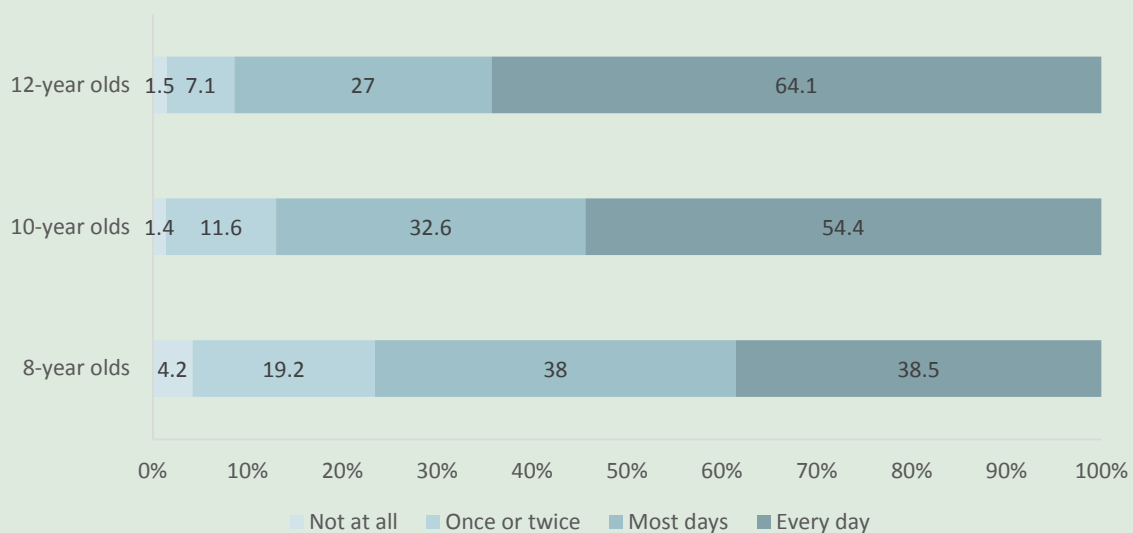


Figure 2.1. Frequency of talking together outside of school by age. Per cent

The figure shows that talking to friends every day outside of school increased sharply with age. One likely reason for this is that the older the children, the more of them will have access to a mobile phone or even other social media. As well, children's radius increases with age in Norway, and it is easier to meet with friends without needing transport or help from the parents.

## 2.5 The area where you live

The place where children live is essential to their feeling of well-being; whether there are places to play outside of home and whether it is safe to play outside, and to move between locations like home, school, friends' houses, activities or local shops. We asked the children two questions to capture this dimension; whether there are enough places to play or to have a good time in their area, and whether they feel safe when they walk in the area they live in (table 2.21).

Table 2.21. Views about the local area (all age groups, n=). Per cent

	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Totally agree
In our area there are enough places to play and to have a good time	2,0	6,9	8,2	16,8	66,4
I feel safe when I walk in the area I live in	1,3	3,9	7,6	16,6	71,0

Around two thirds of the participants totally agreed that they have sufficient places to play and have a good time where they lived, and seven out of ten agreed totally that they felt safe when they were out walking.

Among the 8-year olds it was slightly more likely that boys than girls totally agreed that they felt safe ( $p=0.05$ ), and this likelihood was even greater among the 12-year olds ( $p=.01$ ). There were no gender differences among the 10-year olds at this point. Nor were there significant differences according to whether the children were born in Norway or not, except that there was some likelihood that 12-year olds gave more positive answers if they were born in Norway ( $p=.05$ ).

The children mainly felt safe walking in the area they live in irrespective of age, with mean scores varying from 3,49 to 3,52. The 12-year olds were slightly less positive to the availability of places to play and have a good time, with a mean score of 3,25 as opposed to 3,40-3,48.

Another way of addressing questions about the same topic is to ask the children about their satisfaction with various aspects of the area they live in. We asked the children about their satisfaction about how they are dealt with at the doctor's, with outdoor areas where they live, and with the area they live in general (table 2.22 and 2.23).

Table 2.22. Satisfaction with the local area (8 year-olds). Percent

	0	1	2	3	4
How you are dealt with at the doctor's (n=906)	1,0	1,8	7,8	24,9	64,4
The outdoor areas children can use in your area (n=923)	1,2	2,4	6,3	23,3	66,8
The area you live in general (n=912)	,5	1,5	3,6	14,3	80,1

The 8-year old boys seemed slightly more satisfied with both the outdoor areas and the area in general than the girls did ( $p=.01$ ). There were no gender differences with regard to the question about the doctor's. In addition there were significant differences between those born and those not born in Norway with regard to satisfaction with outdoor areas ( $p=.01$ ).

Table 2.23. Satisfaction with the local area (10- and 12-year olds). Percent.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
How you are dealt with at the doctor's (n=1869)	0,8	0,2	0*	0,6	0,7	2,7	1,7	2,6	6,7	15,9	68,0
The outdoor areas children can use in your area (n=2007)	1,1	0,9	0,9	0,9	1,3	4,1	3,7	5,2	9,6	13,2	53,5
The area you live in general (n=1898)	0,3	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,8	2,3	1,7	3,1	5,3	13,2	72,6

\*Just one child ticked this alternative

The 10-year olds boys were slightly more likely to be satisfied with the outdoor area and the area in general ( $p=.05$ ). There were no gender differences in the answers from the 12-year olds, and no significant differences according to country of birth. In addition, the tables show that the youngest children were more positive to their outdoor areas and the area in general. The mean values of the answers from the 10-year olds were slightly higher than those the 12-year olds gave as well.

## 2.6 School

We asked all age groups four questions about their views about school, concerning how they like going to school, their relationship with their teacher, and whether they feel safe at school (table 2.24).

Table 2.24. Views about school. All age groups. Per cent

	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Agree totally
My teachers listen to me and take what I say into account (n=2785)	1,6	5,7	11,5	26,2	55,0
I like going to school (n=2812)	5,2	10,4	14,2	25,9	44,3
My teachers treat me fairly (n=2776)	2,6	5,4	9,5	21,9	60,4
I feel safe at school (n=2797)	2,0	4,7	7,2	16,8	69,3

The majority of the children were positive about their teachers and their school. The least positive response was to the statement 'I like going to school', but still seven out of ten agreed a lot or totally. Still, the difference is marked compared to responses to the other three statements.

There were several significant gender differences, all of them in favour of the girls. Among the 8-year olds this pertained to being listened to by the teachers and liking to go to school ( $p=.01$ ). Among the

10-year olds this pertained to being listened to ( $p=.05$ ), liking school and being treated fairly (both  $p=.01$ ), and among the 12-year olds to liking school ( $p=.01$ ).

The only significant difference according to country of birth was among the 10-year olds, where those born in Norway were more likely to give a very positive answer to the question of being listened to by the teachers ( $p=.01$ ).

Table 2.25. Variations in views about school by gender and age group (all age groups). Means

	My teachers listen to me and take what I say into account	I like going to school	My teachers treat me fairly	I feel safe at school
<i>Gender</i>				
Boy	3,25	2,83	3,29	3,53
Girl	3,36	3,11	3,39	3,45
<i>Age group</i>				
8-year olds	3,50	3,21	3,50	3,52
10-year olds	3,32	2,92	3,39	3,40
12-year olds	3,02	2,69	3,09	3,47
Total	3,31	2,96	3,34	3,49

When we divide the mean scores by gender, the differences in favour of the girls are underlined. What becomes evident when we divide the mean scores by age is how the responses become less positive over time, by around a mean of 0.50 points. The only exception is feeling safe at school, where the mean score remained high and quite stable for all three age groups. As we will show later, the results were less positive when we looked at the correlation between responses to the items discussed here and whether the children reported that they had been bullied at school.

In addition, we asked the two oldest age groups six questions about their satisfaction with various aspects of their school situation, like their relationship with other children and teachers and their learning experiences (table 2.26). They used a set of eleven point scales. The youngest age group got four of the same questions, but on a five-point emoticons scale (table 2.27).

The table shows quite large variation among the six items, with most positive answers to the one about the children's relationship with their teachers. The children expressed least satisfaction with their school written evaluations (see Footnote 9 in the previous page).



Table 2.26. Satisfaction with school (10- and 12-year olds). Per cent

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Other children in your class (n=1933)	0,2	0,4	0,6	0,8	1,4	3,6	5,3	7,9	12,4	15,9	49,5
Your school written evaluations <sup>9</sup> (n=1877)	0,6	0,4	0,6	0,6	1,6	4,0	3,5	7,6	12,9	20,7	45,3
Your school experience (n=1905)	0,3	0,7	0,8	0,6	0,1	2,7	2,5	6,4	13,0	22,0	52,1
Things you have learnt (n=1900)	0,6	0,6	0,4	0,5	0,7	2,7	2,7	5,8	12,1	20,2	53,6
Your life as a student (n=1919)	1,0	0,6	0,4	1,1	1,6	3,0	3,5	5,9	10,2	18,4	54,3
Your relationship with teachers (n=1929)	0,8	0,6	0,3	0,8	1,0	2,7	3,3	5,6	9,0	17,3	58,9

Table 2.27. Satisfaction with school (8-year olds). Per cent

	0	1	2	3	4
Other children in your class (n=923)	0,7	1,5	6,2	22,9	68,8
Your school written evaluations (n=915)	0,5	1,5	6,3	29,0	62,5
Your school experience (n=913)	1,8	2,7	5,9	22,2	67,4
Your relationship with teachers (n=908)	0,1	0,9	3,9	13,6	81,5

As well, the 8-year reported high degrees of satisfaction with the aspects of their school life we asked them about. The pattern in the replies was similar to that of the older age groups, but the levels of satisfaction were markedly higher. There were significant gender differences in the responses to all but the first item, in that the girls were more likely to record a higher degree of satisfaction ( $p=.05$ ,  $.01$  and  $.01$  respectively).

Table 2.28. Variations in satisfaction with school and gender (8 year-olds). Mean values

	Other children in your class	Your school written evaluations	Your school experience	Your relationship with teachers
Boy	3,60	3,46	3,39	3,71
Girl	3,56	3,56	3,62	3,81

<sup>9</sup> 'School marks' was translated to 'written evaluations'. In the Norwegian educational system children receive several pages where their achievements in the different subjects are listed according to the objectives set by the school authorities for that year.

Among the 10-year olds, there were significant gender differences in the responses to five of the six items they answered. The exception was satisfaction with their life as a student or pupil. The boys were more likely to record a higher degree of satisfaction to the first item ( $p=.05$ ), while the girls were consistently more likely to record a higher degree of satisfaction to the remaining four items ( $p=.01$  for all). There were no significant differences according to country of birth, except that those born in Norway were slightly more likely to record a higher degree of satisfaction with their school experience.

There were markedly fewer gender differences among the replies from the 12-year olds. Like the 10-year olds, the 12-year old boys were slightly more likely to be satisfied with the other children in their class ( $p=.05$ ), while the girls were slightly more likely to be satisfied with the things they had learnt ( $p=.05$ ). Neither did we find significant differences according to country of birth for this age group, except that those born in Norway were more likely to record a higher degree of satisfaction with the other children in their class ( $p=.01$ ).

Table 2.29. Variation in satisfaction with school (10 and 12 year-olds). Percent

	Other children in your class	Your school written evaluations	Your school experience	Your life as a student	Things you have learnt	Your relationship with teachers
<b>Gender</b>						
Boy	8,89	8,56	8,91	8,63	8,82	8,86
Girl	8,62	8,76	8,98	9,02	9,03	9,08
<b>Age group</b>						
10 year-olds	8,86	8,79	9,01	8,89	9,14	9,22
12 year-olds	8,63	8,53	8,86	8,76	8,72	8,73
<b>Total</b>	8,76	8,66	8,95	8,83	8,93	8,97

The mean scores were generally high among the children. Still, in addition to the gender differences we have already mentioned, there are age differences as well. The table shows a general tendency for the 10-year olds to be more satisfied than the 12-year olds.

Being bullied or excluded is part of school life for a number of children as well. The children were asked whether this had happened to them, and how often.

Table 2.30. Bullying and exclusion during the last month (all age groups). Percent

	Never	Once	Two or three times	More than three times
Hit by other children in your school (n=2713)	69,3	15,5	7,8	7,3
Left out by other children in your class (n=2702)	64,1	18,0	10,0	7,8

Around two thirds of the children answered that they had not been hit or excluded during the last month. We did not define the terms for the children, thus we cannot know how serious an incident had been before the children included them, or whether the children defined being hit or excluded in the same way.

There were similar and significant gender differences in all three age groups. Boys were more likely to have been hit ( $p=.01$  in all three age groups), while girls were more likely to have been excluded ( $p=.05$  among the 8-year olds, and  $.01$  among the older children). With one exception, it did not seem to matter whether the children had been born in Norway. Ten-year olds who were not born in Norway were slightly more likely to have been excluded ( $p=.05$ ).

Table 2.31. Variations in bullying and exclusion (all age groups). Means

	Hit by other children in your school during the last month	Left out by other children in your class during the last month
<i>Gender</i>		
Boy	0,67	0,50
Girl	0,43	0,72
<i>Age group</i>		
8-year olds	0,85	0,79
10 year-olds	0,57	0,61
12 year-olds	0,28	0,46
Total	0,55	0,61

The table shows reduced prevalence of being hit or exclusion with age among the children participating in Children's Worlds, particularly where being hit by other children was concerned. Here the mean score was one third among the 12-year olds compared to the 8-year olds.

We supposed that being hit or excluded influences children's well-being at school, and found significant correlations between them in the expected direction. If the children reported that they had been hit by other children in their school during the last month, there was a systematic association with reduced school well-being as we measured this above ( $p=.01$  all age groups and all items). The same pertained to the children who reported that they had been left out by children in their class during the last month ( $p=.01$  all age groups and all items). In addition there was a slight likelihood that 10-year olds who lived in two families would report being hit ( $p=.05$ ), but otherwise no significant correlations with family type.

## 2.7 Time use

We asked the children a series of questions about what they did outside of school, ranging from participation in more organized activities to helping at home and doing things for fun or as leisure time activities, besides doing homework.

Table 2.32. Time use (all age groups except items marked with \* 12 year-olds only). Per cent

	Rarely or never	Less than once a week	Once or twice a week	Every day or almost every day
Reading for fun (n=2703)	22,0	14,5	27,3	36,1
Helping with housework (n=2739)	3,0	6,5	37,3	53,2
Doing homework (n=2781)	1,3	1,1	10,7	86,9
Watching TV (n=2745)	1,7	2,3	17,1	78,6
Playing sports or doing exercise (n=2747)	6,3	6,3	28,5	58,9
Using a computer (n=2766)	10,8	15,8	31,9	40,5
Just being by myself* (n=934)	9,7	22,3	36,1	31,9
Taking care of brothers, sisters, other family members you live with* (n=928)	36,2	19,3	20,9	23,6

The most frequently reported activities were doing homework and watching TV. In general, the children reported high levels of activity with regard to various kinds of activities, helping with housework included. We cannot know what the content of these activities was, but the children obviously managed to fill their weeks quite well.

As with many of the other aspects of the children's daily lives, we found some marked gender differences here as well, although not equally distributed across the age groups. Among the 8-year olds boys were more likely to play ( $p=.01$ ). The same pertained to the 10-year olds, but here boys were more likely to watch TV as well ( $p=.01$  on both counts). These differences disappeared among the 12-year olds, where girls were more likely to read for fun and to help with housework ( $p=.01$  on both counts). Boys were slightly more likely to participate in sports and to do homework ( $p=.05$  on both counts).

There were some significant differences associated with country of birth as well. 8-year olds born in Norway were more likely to play more ( $p=.01$  on both). Ten-year olds born in Norway reported more time used to play as well ( $p=.01$ ). Among the 12-year olds not born in Norway were more likely to be by themselves and taking care of people they lived with ( $p=.01$  on all counts).

Table 2.33. Variation in time use (all age groups). Means

	Reading for fun	Helping with housework	Doing homework	Watching TV	Sports or exercise	Using a computer
8 year olds	1,99	2,28	2,83	2,57	2,33	1,82
10 year olds	1,93	2,44	2,87	2,74	2,46	2,09
12 year olds	1.42	2.49	2,80	2,85	2,41	2,20

As this table shows that the mean scores of doing homework, and doing sports or exercising were quite similar across ages. Time used to help with housework increased with age, as did watching TV and using a computer. Reading for fun declined, however.

## 2.8 Your life and your future

Children in the two oldest age groups were asked eleven questions about their life and future (table 2.34).

Table 2.34. Satisfaction with life and future (10 and 12 year-olds). Per cent

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
How you use your time (n=1906)	0,3	0,2	0,2	0,7	1,0	3,0	5,4	10,0	15,5	23,3	40,4
The freedom you have (n=1897)	0,4	0,3	0,6	0,7	1,3	2,7	3,5	4,4	9,1	17,1	59,8
Your health (n=1884)	0,5	0,2	0,1	0,5	0,8	2,7	2,9	5,4	10,2	20,1	55,8
The way you look (n=1880)	2,0	0,6	1,2	1,4	2,0	4,5	4,6	8,5	11,3	16,9	47,0
Your own body (n=1855)	2,3	1,3	1,1	0,9	3,1	4,7	4,5	7,0	10,7	18,2	45,7
What you do in your free time (n=1894)	0,4	0,4	0,3	-	1,3	2,7	2,3	4,0	7,8	15,3	66,1
How you are listened to by adults in general (n=1897)	0,4	0,2	0,4	0,8	1,5	2,8	3,7	5,0	11,3	22,8	55,1
Your self-confidence (n=1882)	1,4	0,5	1,7	1,2	2,3	4,2	3,6	6,3	11,0	21,1	47,0
Your life as a whole (n=1916)	0,5	0,4	0,7	0,7	1,0	2,8	2,6	4,9	9,2	16,7	60,0
The amount of opportunities you have (12-year olds only) (n=945)	-	0,3	0,2	0,4	0,8	1,5	3,5	6,2	11,1	17,2	58,2

The children in the two oldest age groups were mostly satisfied with the aspects of their lives they were asked about here, but with some interesting variations which become more evident if we add together the two most favorable responses (9 and 10 above).

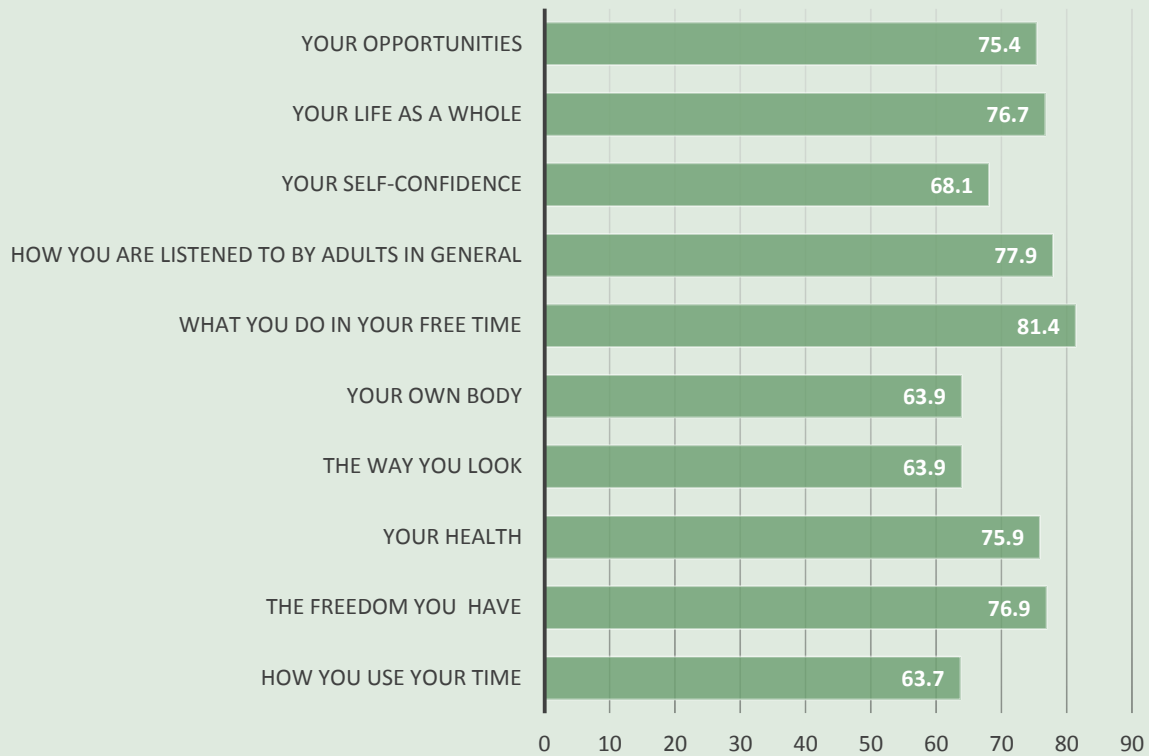


Figure 2.2 Proportion with the two most favorable responses (per cent)

With one exception, the lowest scores concern the children’s views of characteristics of themselves. The exception was time use. On the other hand, the children gave all over very positive evaluations of their life as a whole and, in addition, of their health. It is interesting that they rate their life as a whole as highly while at the same time rating their self-confidence, the way they looked and their body less well.

Among the 10-year olds, there was some likelihood ( $p=.05$ ) for girls to give more positive responses than boys on two items: satisfaction with the amount of freedom they have, and how they are listened to by adults in general. Those not born in Norway were significantly less satisfied with the way they used their time in general ( $p=.01$ ).

Among the 12-year olds on the other hand, there were significant gender differences in the responses to four of the items: satisfaction with the way the look, their body, their self-confidence, and their life as a whole. As might be expected, boys gave more positive answers ( $p=.01$  for all four).

Below (table 2.35) we will show mean gender and age differences in the children’s responses. The table shows some interesting mean age differences. The 10-year olds’ mean responses were systematically more positive, but the difference in mean scores varied as shown in figure 2.3.

Table 2.35. Variation in satisfaction with life and future (10 and 12 year-olds). Mean values.

	Time use	Freedom	Health	The way you look	Body	Free time	Listened to	Self-confidence	Life as a whole	Opportunities*
<b>Gender</b>										
Boy	8,64	8,88	9,06	8,62	8,61	9,26	8,81	8,75	9,12	9,13
Girls	8,62	9,09	8,95	8,18	8,02	9,15	8,95	8,39	8,93	9,04
<b>Age group</b>										
10 year olds	8,97	9,19	9,08	9,17	8,88	8,81	8,99	8,92	9,17	
12 year olds	8,28	8,80	8,81	7,87	7,72	8,95	8,77	8,15	8,84	9,08
<b>Total</b>	8,63	9,00	8,95	8,52	8,30	8,88	8,88	8,54	9,01	9,08

\*12 year-olds only

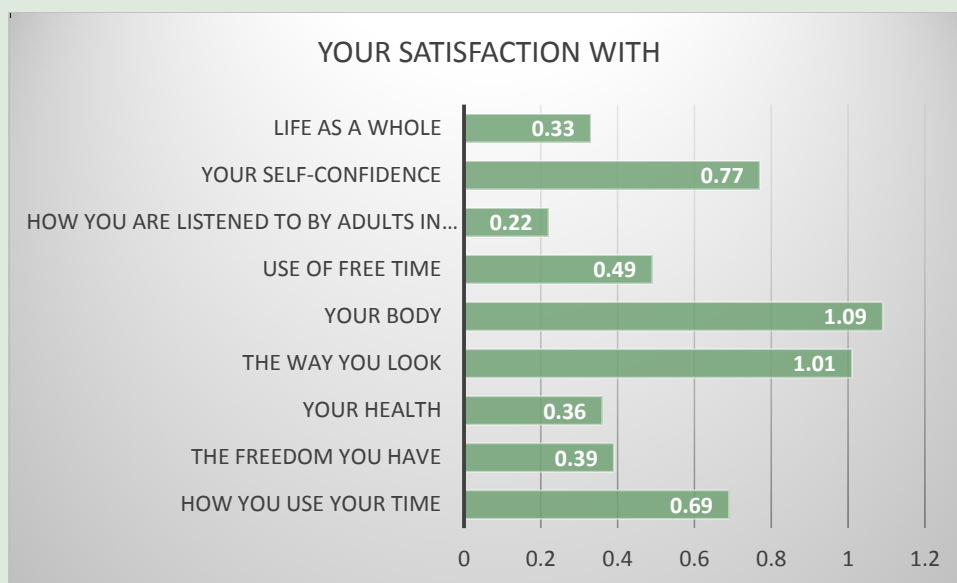


Figure 2.3. Variation in mean age differences in satisfaction with life and future for 10 and 12 year-olds

The figure shows that the greatest differences appeared in the items about how satisfied they were with their body and how they look, with self-confidence as number three. As we saw gender differences among the 12-year olds here as well, there is probably an interaction effect between age and gender at some points, along with a cohort effect in other areas.

With two exceptions, the youngest age group answered the same questions (table 2.36). They used the same five-point scale with emoticons as earlier, and in general gave even more positive answers than the older children did.



Table 2.36. Satisfaction with life and future. 8 year-olds. Per cent

	Mean	0	1	2	3	4
The freedom you have (n=924)	3,61	0,4	1,0	5,8	22,0	70,7
Your health (n=915)	3,52	1,1	1,7	6,9	24,0	64,8
The way you look (n=908)	3,54	1,5	1,9	6,1	21,0	67,3
Your body (n=919)	3,60	1,8	1,3	5,0	18,4	72,4
What you do in your free time (n=916)	3,73	0,3	1,0	3,1	15,4	78,6
How you are listened to by adults in general (n=909)	3,41	1,2	1,7	7,5	34,4	55,2
Your self-confidence (n=922)	3,65	0,5	2,1	5,2	15,8	75,8
Your life as a whole (n=919)	3,59	1,9	1,6	6,1	16,4	73,9

Between 88 and 94 per cent of the 8-year olds chose the two most positive response alternatives, with the majority choosing the most positive one. The only variation was the item “How you are listened to by adults in general”, where relatively fewer children chose the most positive response alternative. This is more similar to the responses from the two older age groups, while the rest of the answers were skewed more positively among the youngest.

Among the youngest participants there were some significant gender differences, all in favor of the girls who were more likely to feel satisfied with the freedom they have, the way they look, and how they are listened to by adults in general (all  $p=.01$ ). Those born in Norway were more likely to feel satisfied with the way they look as well ( $p=.01$ ).

### Children's rights

In Norway, children's rights are supposed to play an integral part in the way society and parents organize the daily life of children. Thus, it was interesting to ask the participants about what they know about this (table 2.37).

Table 2.37. Knowledge about children's rights (all age groups). Per cent

	No	Not sure	Yes
I know what rights children have (n=2771)	2,7	28,0	69,4
I know about the Children's Rights Convention (n=2815)	11,4	18,2	69,7
I think in my country adults in general respect children's rights (n=2802)	1,7	15,2	83,0

This table shows that a large majority of the participants think that adults generally respect children's rights, irrespective of age. This is the case even though fewer know about the CRC, or about what rights children have. As might be expected, the degree of knowledge increases with age, although the largest age difference was between the 8- and the 10-year olds.

There were no significant gender differences in the responses, at any age level. However, there were significant differences according to whether the children had been born in Norway. The 8-year olds born in Norway were more likely to answer that they know what rights children have ( $p=.05$ ). On their part, the 10-year olds born in Norway were more likely to respond that adults in general respect children’s rights ( $p=.01$ ), while the 12-year olds born in Norway were more likely to respond that they know about the CRC ( $p=.01$ ).

### *Changes in children's lives*

The two oldest age groups were asked questions about changes that may have happened to them during the last year. The changes concerned moving house, moving out of the local area, changing schools, staying in another country for longer than a month or changing carers (table 2.38).

Table 2.38. Changes in children’s lives (10- and 12-year olds). Per cent

	No	Yes
Have you moved house? (n=1865)	83,5	16,5
Have you changed local area? (n=1860)	90,2	9,8
Have you changed schools? (n=1867)	91,7	8,3
Have you lived in another country for more than one month (not on a holiday)? (n=1865).	93,5	6,5
Are you living with the same parents or carers as you used to live with one year ago? (n=1894)	5,0	95,0

The children obviously led fairly stable lives with few changes. For many, moving house meant moving within the same local area.

With regard to living in another country for more than a month not on a holiday, this was much more common for those not born in Norway. Among the 10-year olds, this pertained to 68 children. 38 of them were not born in Norway, and comprised 59,3 per cent of this subgroup. 30 were born in Norway, and did not comprise more than 3,5 per cent of them. Among the 12-year olds, 29 of the children were not born in Norway, and comprised 38,2 per cent of this subgroup. 23 were born in Norway and comprised 2,7 per cent of them.

## **2.9 Subjective well-being**

The Children’s Worlds survey included a variety of different measures asking about overall subjective well-being. For more detailed information about these scales see the Methods section in the General Introduction on page 2.

### *Overall life satisfaction (OLS)*

The first measure was a single-item measure where the children rank how satisfied they are with their life as a whole<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> See tables 2.35 and 2.36 for mean scores and differences between mean scores for 10- and 12-year olds

Table 2.39. Your life as a whole 10 and 12 year-olds

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Your life as a whole (n=1916)</b>	0,5	0,4	0,7	0,7	1,0	2,8	2,6	4,9	9,2	16,7	60,0

In these two age groups 60 per cent were totally satisfied with their life as a whole, while another 16,7 per cent were almost as satisfied.

Table 2.40. Your life as a whole 8-year olds

	Mean	0	1	2	3	4
<b>Your life as a whole (n=919)</b>	3,59	1,9	1,6	6,1	16,4	73,9

In this age group 73,9 per cent gave the maximum score, while another 26.4 per cent were quite satisfied.

**The Student's Life Satisfaction Scale (SLSS)**

In addition, we asked several questions about different domains of life satisfaction, including general questions from slightly different angles. The Student's Life Satisfaction Scale (SLSS) consists of five items, again with a scale from 0-10 for the two oldest age groups and from 0-4 for the 8-year olds.

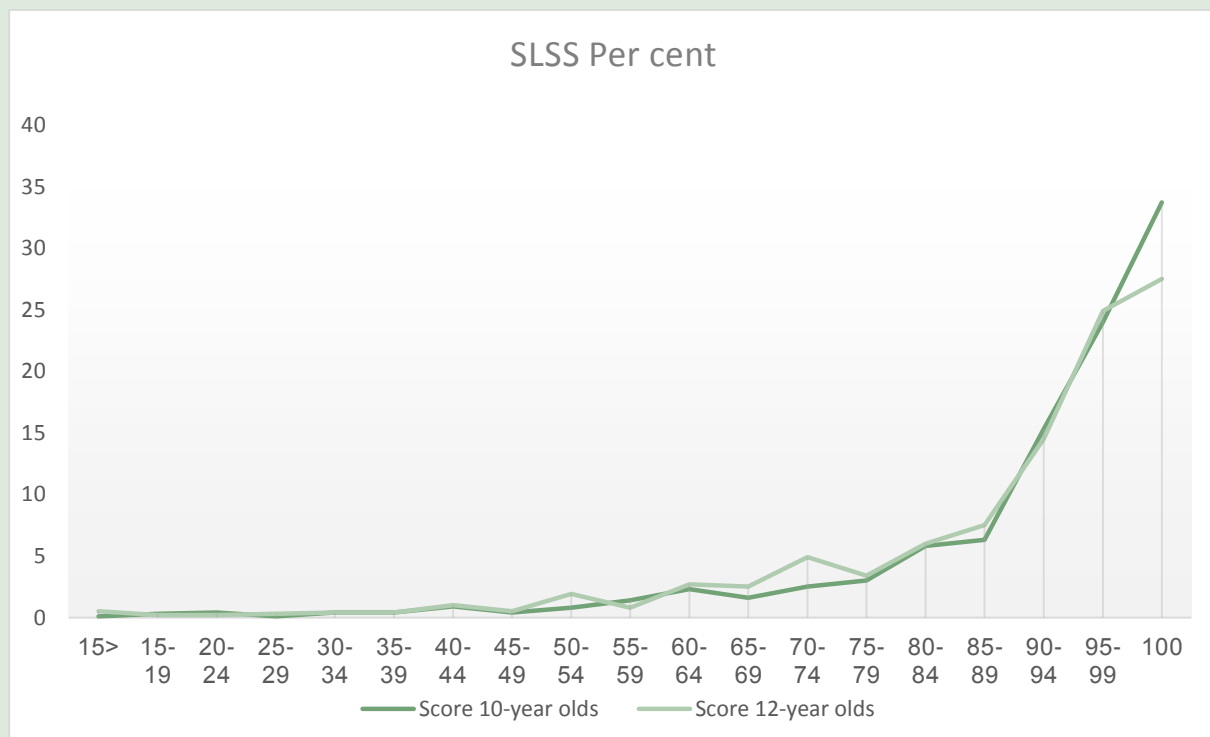


Figure 2.4. Student's Life Satisfaction Scale. 10 and 12 year-olds. Per cent

We presupposed a single factor solution for this scale, made a sum score of the five items and transformed it into a scale from 0 to 100. On average 59,6 per cent, or six out of ten of the 10- and 12-year olds, indicated that they had the highest possible levels of satisfaction with all the indicators used. In general, few children reported low levels of satisfaction, and as many as 85,5 per cent reported levels of satisfaction at the three highest levels of the scale. One third of the 10-year olds and 27,5 per cent of the 12-year olds chose the highest possible response alternative. Not more than 6,9 per cent used scores of five or below.

The most notable contrast was between the item “I have a good life” where more than seven out of ten used the highest score possible, and the item “I have what I want in life”, where four out of ten did so. More children chose the lower end of the scale here, but mostly they spread their scores more at the upper end of the scale.

We asked the 8-year olds the same questions, but using a five point scale. Again the responses were very positively distributed.

Table 2.41. SLSS items (8-year olds). Per cent.

	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Totally agree
My life is going well (n=902)	1,7	3,0	5,8	15,5	74,0
My life is just right (n=895)	1,2	4,1	7,3	16,2	71,2
I have a good life (n=889)	1,6	3,3	4,5	12,2	78,4
I have what I want in life (n=857)	5,9	6,5	11,8	29,1	46,6
The things in my life are excellent (n=886)	1,6	5,4	6,5	18,9	67,5

The responses from the 8-year olds showed the same pattern. On average two thirds, or 67,9 per cent, totally agreed with all the items, while 86,2 per cent chose the two most positive response alternatives. Again, the item about what they want in life received the lowest share of very positive responses.

### *Brief Multidimensional Student Life Satisfaction Scale (BMSLSS)*

The third scale we computed was a modified version of the Brief Multidimensional Student Life Satisfaction Scale (BMSLSS), originally proposed by Huebner. This scale consists of five domains – family, friends, school, living arrangements, and self. We calculated an adapted version of this scale using items about satisfaction with family life, friends, school experience, local area and body (figure 2.5). The scale is a sum of these five scores transformed so that it is from zero to 100.

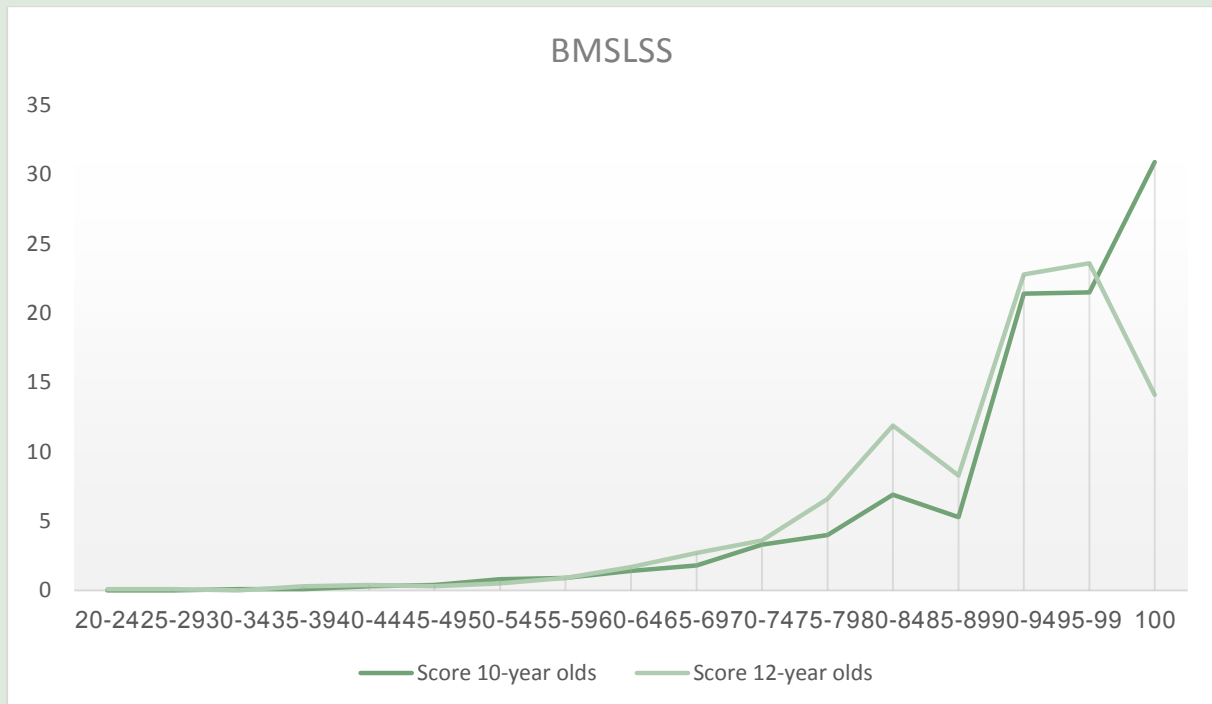


Figure 2.5. BMSLSS scores (10 and 12 year-olds). Per cent

Six out of ten (60,2 %) chose the most positive response alternative to all five of these items. However, the number of children choosing this alternative varied from 45,7 (satisfaction with your own body) to 72,6 per cent (satisfaction with the area you live in general) between the items. The most obvious difference between the two age groups is the rate choosing the most positive response alternative, which amounted to 30,9 per cent of the 10-year olds, but only half as many (14,1 per cent) of the 12-year olds.

### Positive Affect

Finally the questionnaire to the 10- and 12-year olds included six items on positive affect derived from Russell’s measure of core affect. The children were asked how often they had felt satisfied, happy, relaxed, active, calm, and full of energy during the last two weeks. The response alternatives ranged from not at all (0) to very much (10), and the combined score was transformed into a 0-100 scale (table 2.40).

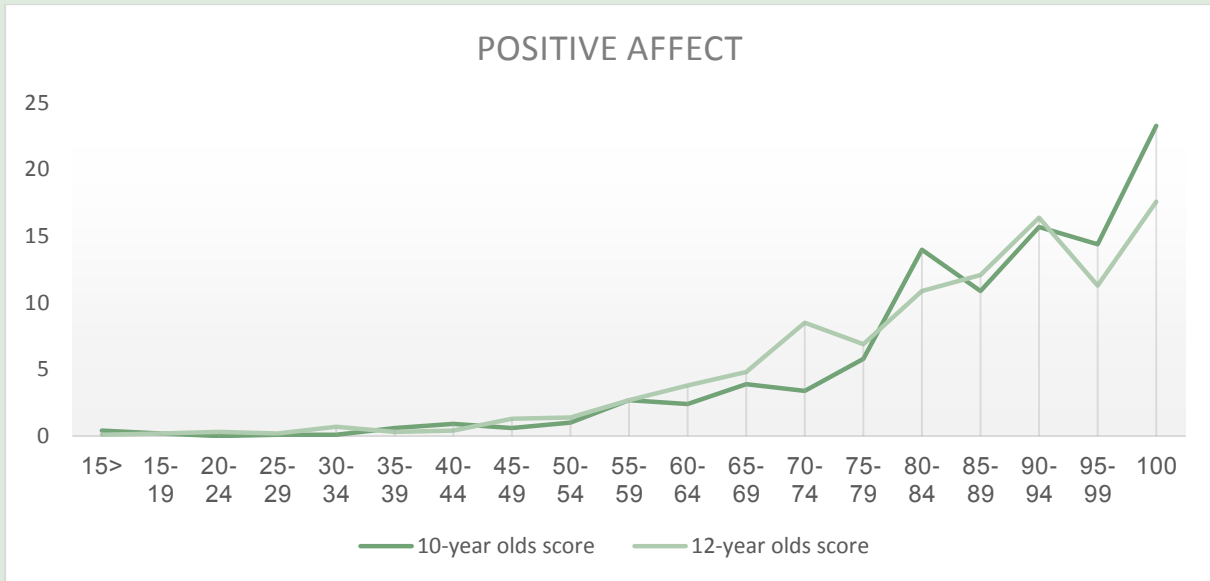


Figure 2.6. Distribution of scores on the Positive Affect Scale (10 and 12 year-olds). Per cent

A sum score of these six items shows that half of the children (51,5 %) chose the most positive response alternative to all six items. However, again the variation was large, from 35,5 to 60,2 per cent. Just above three fourths (77,2 %) chose the values 8, 9 or 10. Thus, we may conclude that all over, the children showed positive affect as measured here, but again with a tendency for the 12-year olds to choose the highest values less often than the 10-year olds. On the other hand, there were no significant age differences in the choice of more negative response alternatives.

Among the 10-year olds, there were no significant gender differences. Those born in Norway were slightly more likely to report that they had felt happy ( $p=.05$ ), while those living in two families were less likely to report that they had felt happy ( $p=.01$ ), satisfied ( $p=.05$ ) or calm ( $p=.05$ ).

Among the 12-year olds, the girls were more likely to have been satisfied ( $p=.01$ ) and slightly more likely to have been happy ( $p=.05$ ). Those born in Norway were slightly more likely to have felt active ( $p=.05$ ). On the other hand, those living in two families did not give significantly different answers.

### 3. Conclusions

#### 3.1 Key points

We have primarily done the analyses in this country report in order to elicit variations in the responses according to age, gender, and country of birth.

The large majority of the 8-12 year olds who participated in the Norwegian study seemed very satisfied and happy with their lives. However, a small minority are less happy, and further analyses are necessary to find out what characterizes them in our study.

#### *Gender differences*

The analyses show gender differences in several areas of the Norwegian study, mostly but not totally in favor of the girls. These differences seem quite similar to what other Norwegian studies of gender differences among children show. Below, we sum up the differences by age. The gender differences were largest among the 10-year olds. As well, they seemed larger in areas outside of home, particularly related to school. However, it is worth noting that boys at all age levels were more likely to feel safe where they lived – although the mean score of both genders was high. As expected, boys were more likely to have been hit by other children at school while girls were more likely to have been excluded by other children in their class.

The *8-year old girls* were more satisfied with the house of flat they lived in, and more likely to be happy with the things they had. At school, they were more likely to feel listened to by teachers, like going to school, and be satisfied with school written evaluations, school experience, and their relationship with teachers. On the other hand, girls were more likely to have been excluded by other children in their class. On their part, *8-year old boys* were more likely to use time playing. As well, they were more likely to agree totally that they feel safe where they live, and with the outdoor areas and with the area they live in general. As opposed to the girls, they were more likely to have been hit by other children at school.

The *10-year old girls* were more likely to be satisfied with the people they live with. At school, they were more likely to feel listened to by teachers, to like school, and feel that they are treated fairly. As well, they are more likely to be satisfied with their school written evaluations, their school experience, the things they have learnt, their life as a student and their relationship with teachers. Like the 8-year old girls, they were more likely to have been excluded. At home, the *10-year old boys* were more likely to plan and to watch TV. At school, the boys were slightly more likely to be satisfied with the other children in their class and to have been hit by other children at their school.

At home, the *12-year old girls* were more likely to meet to study together, to read for fun and to help with housework. At school, they are more likely to like school, to be satisfied with the things they had learnt, and to have been excluded. The *12-year old boys* were more likely to have fun together, feel safe where they lived, participate in sports, or do homework. At school, the boys were more likely to be satisfied with the other children in their class, and to have been hit by other children in their school.

### *Differences according to country of birth*

We found a larger number of significant differences according to whether or not the children had been born in Norway. Those born in Norway might have parents who were born in other countries, and be second-generation immigrants, but their responses were more similar to those of children who were not immigrants. These differences may mirror more comprehensive integration and adaptation over time, and foreseeable challenges for children who are new to Norway. On the other hand, the results point to a need to look specifically at these groups of children and make extra efforts to help them. However, we do not know how long these children had been in Norway, and how much time they and their families had had to establish themselves.

As described earlier, the children not born in Norway amounted to between seven and eight per cent of the total sample. To a certain extent, the differences between these children and partly their parents if they were not born in Norway followed other dimensions than the gender differences presented above. One is the things they possessed, where children born in Norway were more likely to have access to several of the items included in the question about this. A second dimension was more general satisfaction with various aspects of their lives, where the Norwegian-born children with foreign-born parents scored higher than those not born in Norway. Below we go through the results by age again. It must be noted that there were no significant differences between those born and not born in Norway on many of the questions, here we have chosen to focus on the differences.

The *8-year olds* were more likely to have access to a TV if their mother had been born in Norway, and more likely to have a family car if their father had been born in Norway. In general, they were more likely to feel happy with their home situation if they were born in Norway. It was more likely that they would give positive answers to the questions about their friends being nice and having enough friends, to be satisfied with their friends and other relationships, and with their outdoor areas. As well, they were more likely to play sports if they were born in Norway. On the other hand, they were more likely to feel happy with the things they have if they were *not* born in Norway. In addition, it seems as if the differences were larger among the older children.

The *10-year olds* were more likely to have access to a computer, have their own room and have their own stuff to listen to music if they were born in Norway, as well as more likely to have books to read for fun and a family car for transportation. As well, they were more likely to give positive answers to the questions about friends being nice to them and having enough friends if they were born in Norway, and more likely that they would be satisfied with their friends and other relationships. At home, they were more likely to play. At school, they were more likely to feel listened to by teachers, but more likely to have been excluded if they were *not* born in Norway.

The *12-year olds* were more likely to have a mobile phone, their own room and access to a family car if they were born in Norway, and more likely to be totally happy with the things they have if this was the case. As well, they were more likely to be satisfied with their friends and other relationships, and their local area. They were more likely to participate in extra activities outside school time if born in Norway. At school, they were more likely to participate in extra activities outside school time. On the other hand, they were more likely to use time just being by themselves, or caring for other people they lived with if *not* born in Norway.



### *More about age differences*

The 12-year olds are in their final year before entering secondary school, and many of them, and particularly the girls, will have started their pubescence, or at least started identifying themselves as youths-to-be rather than children. This may be one explanation why they used the very high scores less than the 10-year olds, which we saw on the scales presented in part 2.9, as well as the responses to the questions about their lives which were presented in table 2.35 and figure 2.3. Girls usually reach puberty earlier than boys as well, which may partly explain the gender differences we found.

The gender differences were very marked in the mean responses to two questions: how satisfied the children were with their body and the way they looked (table 2.35), with the boys being more positive than the girls. As well, the mean values of the responses were markedly lower to these items than to the other items included in the same question. We know that in particular young girls in our Western, industrialized countries are highly exposed to pressure from many sources with regard to how they should look and dress, and many youth studies point out that this may be stressful. It is a pity if 12-year olds are starting to feel the same pressure. The differences between the responses of the 10-year olds and the 12-year olds to the questions about the body may point in this direction. It would be interesting to research this theme among the higher classes in primary school in a more comprehensive manner.

### **3.2 Possible limitations**

We have mainly analyzed the weighted data in order to make the results as representative as possible according to stratum, which was again based on a combination of school size and living in Norway's largest cities. This should function as a fairly representative distribution of large and small local areas. However, the number of participating schools was small, not more than 39, was not situated in all counties, and just in a few of Norway's more than 400 municipalities. Thus, in further national reporting from the study, we will use other studies of children's well-being in Norway for comparison.

A second issue is the children's use of the scales. For most of the questions, the children gave very positive answers, with most choosing either the most or the second most positive response alternative. In particular, this made the 11-point scale used with the 10- and 12-year olds very skewed, with most of the children choosing values 8, 9, or 10. One child commented negatively on this scale. He or she would have preferred one with five response alternatives. Norwegian children do not get grades until year 8, when the scale ranges from 1 to 6. During year 1 to 7, the teacher gives them written comments on their achievements twice a year, discussed in a meeting attended by the child, the parents and the teacher.

When grown-ups participate in questionnaire studies using scales with too many response alternatives, they often cluster their responses around the end and middle points. In the Norwegian version of Children's Worlds, the responses were markedly skewed towards the positive end of the scale. Since we used the English national report as a basis for the Norwegian report, we could compare the results from these two countries while writing our report. It seems as if the Norwegian participants consistently gave significantly more positive answers than the English ones, and we need to discuss the possibility of response sets on the part of the Norwegian children.

A final issue concerns a possible effect of asking the children questions they did not understand or did not like. When we looked at the proportion of participants who were missing or who did not understand various items, we could see that this proportion varied quite a lot. There has not been time to analyze these variations in detail. At the same time, this is worth mentioning as several of the children commented that they did not like the items about how they feel about their bodies or the way they look. They may have chosen to skip these or other problematic items, or to respond less truthfully. This we cannot know.