

Children's Worlds National Report

# GERMANY



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## 1. Introduction

The Federal Republic of Germany is about 360,000 km<sup>2</sup> and divided into 16 federal states. The national survey of 2011 reports that Germany currently has a population of 83.1 million and is therefore the most densely inhabited country of the European Union with 232 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>.

Germany is one of the founding members of the European Union and is an influential state in the European as well as global context. It is also Europe's biggest and the world's fourth largest economy. Currently, in 2018, the GDP of the country is at 3.344,37 billion Euros. According to the Human Development Index, Germany holds the fifth rank with an index of .936 and therefore belongs to the countries with "very high human development".

The unemployment rate per the data from 09/2019 is at 5%. Though Germany is one of the richest countries, in 2017, 16.1% of the inhabitants were in risk of poverty. Within this population, unemployed people and single-parent-households are at greatest risk.

The survey was held in the new as well as in old federal states of Germany because these two regions differ demographically from each other in population and living standards. 19.8% of the total population lives in the new federal states, which lie in the Eastern part of Germany (including Berlin), meaning that 80.2% live in the old federal states.

Germany's population is of relatively old age, as only 16.4% are younger than 18 years old, while 7.7% are between 18 and 25, and 19% are between 25 and 40 years old. 29.4% of Germany's population is between 40 and 60 years old and 21.2% are senior citizens above 64 years. On average, the population is 44.4 years old. In context of the survey, 4% of the overall population are children aged 8-12.

When comparing the federal states, it stands out that the average age in the new federal states is considerably older (46.7 years) than in the old states as well as in the whole of Germany. There are more senior citizens living in all federal states than children.

There is also a big difference between the new and old federal states when it comes to inhabitants without a German passport. In Germany as a whole, 7.7% of the inhabitants are foreigners without German passport. 4% of these foreigners live in the Eastern states, whereas 90% live in the Western states and 6% in Berlin. However, it that these numbers only include those inhabitants who do not hold German citizenship. Inhabitants with two citizenships, including German, are enlisted as Germans, as are children of foreign parents who are born in Germany and therefore have German citizenship as well as the citizenship of their parents. As a result, there are an additional of 4.3 million inhabitants with two citizenships. Including them, the total number of foreigners account for 13% of Germany's overall population. Internationally, Germany has the third highest number of immigrants.

Germany is a multicultural society with a migration history that had its peak particularly in the 1960s with migrant workers from southern European countries. 32% of German children have a migration background, which means that either the children themselves or at least one of their parents were born abroad. However, there are immense differences to this

regard between the federal states of Germany. There are states with 7% of children with a migration background while in other states 59% of the children migrated by themselves or are counted as second generation immigrants (Müthing et al. 2018: 37f). About one third of these immigrant children mostly speak their parents' mother tongue at home (World Vision 2018: 64), they grow up bilingually. Beside this, religious influence is stronger among migrant children. 45% of them pray at home, whereas this is true for only about 34% of children with a German background (ibid: 62). This underlines that migrant children's childhood is as diverse as other children's (World Vision 2013, BAMF 2015).

As many other countries, Germany is dealing with a growing number of refugees in recent years. In 2018, 306,095 people have been living in Germany with an uncertain residence status (Statistisches Bundesamt 2018: 28). About one third of them are children, mainly living with their families but also unaccompanied. Despite their difficult living situation and trauma, they are suffering. According to German institutions and children's rights, these children and youths do not get sufficient support and help they need (UNICEF 2014, Berthold 2014).

Since education is compulsory for all German children as well as to migrant and refugee children at the age of six, school is a time-consuming and important part of every child's life.

These days, childhood and the best type of up-bringing is a big issue in the public media and among parents. There is a huge market of parenting guides in form of books, magazines and TV shows from experts of different fields, pedagogues, psychologists, teachers, pediatricians or priests. This leads to increasing insecurity among parents. They are under big pressure to raise their children to persist and to be successful in this performance-oriented society. Authors who coined the term "helicopter parents" in the German discourse described especially today's upper-and middle-class parenting style as a mixture of cramped early education and compliant spoiling, which leads to overstrained and busy scheduled children. Opposing opinions attribute this behavior to the insecurity of parents, the fear of failure and not being able to offer the best education to their child. Reacting to this parenting development, there are different activities for children of all ages like language courses, sports, art or music classes. This puts lower class families under an even bigger pressure, because those kind of activities always cost membership fees, which they may not be able to afford. Although, it is frequently assumed that children spend most of their free time watching TV or playing computers, and spending their days in different institutions, current studies reconsider the theories that childhood takes place only at home, is institutionalized and socially impoverished. However, it is not only parents who are influenced by the media in their parenting style. Likewise, children are targeted by all kinds of media.

Internet access has an increasing influence on today's children's and youth's lives. The latest KIM-Survey 2018 showed that 65% of children between 6 to 13-years-old have access to the Internet at home (ibid: 28). 70% of these children connect with friends and family via WhatsApp and the remaining third uses social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. (ibid: 38). Despite all the advantages, there are also concerns about negative

influences like cyber-bullying or inappropriate content like violence, porn and extremism that 10% of children have experienced due to internet access.

### **Family and Child Policies**

Germany has a Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth that is (among others) responsible for family support and the supervision of the Child and Youth Service Act, and Youth Protection Legislation. Improvements of family services, childcare and youth protection are always a matter of governmental debates and discussions.

The government supports families through different kinds of service. Hence, young mothers get maternity benefits and a paid leave from their job six weeks before and eight weeks after childbirth. Parents, who want to stay at home after childbirth can get parental benefits for up to 14 months. For up to three years, parents are eligible for a parental leave. During this time, their employment has to remain unchanged. There is a legal entitlement to a nursery school place for every child but the government is still working on the extension of places.

Child benefits are paid for every child below the age of 18 or, if still studying, until the age of 25. Families in poverty can claim a grant for their children besides welfare and child benefits. Since welfare benefit-levels are very low, it is also possible to claim housing benefit.

A statutory health insurance is obligatory for every citizen, which guarantees free health care and social services of high quality.

Though this may give the impression of an easy life for families, an increasing number of families experience high levels of poverty. The latest studies show that around 16,8% of German citizens live in poverty, whereas as many as 21% of children and youth under 18 years grow up in poverty (Deutscher Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband 2018: 36). The current unemployment rate of 5% is one of the lowest in the European Union but shows that many families face poverty despite having a paid job.

### **Education system**

Schooling is compulsory in Germany. Generally, children will go to school at the age of 6 or 7. After attending primary school for four years, they have to choose between three different types of school mostly depending on their previous school performance and recommendations of teachers. These types of schools are found either in separate schools (Hauptschule, Realschule, Gymnasium) or in types of schools that combine two or three types. These combined schools have different names in different federal states. The only common label is the Gymnasium, which is the highest type of school. Depending on the federal state's regulations, it is mandatory to attend school for 9 to 10 years. The type of graduation depends on the completed grades. It is possible to change school types after primary school at any time.

Compared to other OECD countries, classes in Germany are larger at secondary level. The average class size in the OECD is 23 students in secondary schools, whereas in Germany, there are 24 students per class in secondary schools, and in primary level, as in the OECD average, there are 21 students per class. Within recent years, big efforts have been made to

establish inclusive schools. Diversity is perceived as an enrichment that enables the inclusion of all children irrespective of impairments or disabilities and provides them the individual support they need. In our survey, we did not label or differentiate between inclusive or non-inclusive schools where only students without physical or mental impairments are taught.

### **Family environment**

From a normative point of view, family provides the best environment for children and adults to create strong emotional bonds with each other. Even though the concept of family may vary in who is included, a family may typically consist of parents with one or more children. Parents may be married or living together unmarried. They may live separated and bring up their children together or may be a lone parent. It can be the child's own parents or stepparents. Many forms of family structures are possible and found among German families. However, studies found that a two-child-nuclear family is still the most common form and three-generation-families most seldom (World Vision 2018: 55). Though about one quarter of children's parents are separated or divorced, which is a most common scene in urban environments (Müthing et al. 2014). 70% of children in Germany still grow up in a family with their biological and married parents (World Vision 2018: 55). 43% of children have one sibling, whereas one fifth has two or more.

Besides changing family structure, the conventional distribution of roles within the family is changing. Employment and therefore the insurance of subsistence is no longer men's concern only. 28% of children grow up in a nuclear family with only one employed parent and this is usually the father. In 35% of cases both parents are employed, whereas mostly the fathers are employed full-time, with mothers being employed marginally or part-time. In 14% of cases both parents are both employed full-time, while 13% of children grow up with a lone parent who is employed full-time (World Vision 2018: 67).

Despite financial problems, living arrangements play an important role in German families' households, and families invest a great deal in housing. On average, families spend about 30% of their household income on accommodation, which varies greatly between different cities and districts. Poor families in the city of Frankfurt am Main, for example, spend up to 52% of their income for cheap housing.

In total, only 27% of urban housing is suitable for families, whereas poor families can afford only about 12% of the available housing (Bertelsmann 2013).

Although many families aim to live in private property, particularly in urban areas most of them live in rental accommodation. In rural areas, property is more affordable, hence, many families live in private residential houses.

### **Everyday life**

German children spend much of their day at school. Usually it starts at 8 o'clock in the morning and goes on for five days a week. On these days, schools make substantial efforts to provide full-day care for all students. About 28% of them already benefit from this and this

number is rising, however, it is more common in urban than in rural areas and many children in all-day care are from lower class families (World Vision 2018: 88).

Unlike assumptions that children's lives become more and more institutionalized, studies show that they still spend most of their time at home or with friends. Most commonly, as reported in the World Vision Study 2013, children spend their time after school or on the weekends and on holidays playing with toys at home, doing sports, listening to music, watching TV or being with friends. Other activities include riding bicycles or skateboards, reading books, drawing or being creative, spending time with pets and playing outside on the streets. Activities like playing an instrument, videogames, Lego bricks or Playmobil, activities with the family, listening to audio dramas or stories are less popular. Theatre and dancing are very gender specific, which is mostly done by girls, and doing handicrafts with tools, which is a typical leisure activity for boys.

### **Unequal childhoods**

Not all children in Germany have the same chances and opportunities in life. Children who grow up in poverty, children with immigration backgrounds or foreigners, and children from lower class families are examples of those who are often stigmatized in German society. These children have less chance of getting a higher school qualification and going to universities. They are marginalized because of their background and do not have equal opportunities to live their life in a way they wish to live. Particularly, poor children have low chances of breaking the cycle of poverty because they cannot participate in activities like other children do. This inequality is shown in numerous surveys that reveal the prevalence of children living in precarious or/and unequal conditions. About 21% of German children currently grow up in poverty. Although one quarter of children in Germany have an immigration-background, 84% of them are born in Germany and therefore are second generation immigrants.

### **1.2 Sampling: Strategy and outcome**

First of all, the survey was endorsed by the Ethics Commission of the Faculty of Education at Goethe University Frankfurt according to the Scientific Ethical Code of Practical Research.

The German sample was designed to achieve a nationally representative sample according to types of school and geographical distribution. The target was 1000 students per each age group. The sampling strategy is based on experiences of former and other school-based surveys, which showed the difficulty to reach schools to participate in the survey and parents giving their active consent for their children.

The first sampling stratum was the type of school. Due to many different school types which are only found in certain states, the sampling decided in the first stage between "Gymnasium" [equivalent of Grammar school] and three other forms of secondary school types (Realschule, Hauptschule, Gesamtschule). The second criterion was the geographical distribution.

The quantitative survey took place in schools in the academic year of 2017/18 in seven Federal states of Germany. Northern, Eastern, Southern and Western states were included. The states were selected randomly. All regular type of schools - elementary and secondary schools - were considered. Of around 2,200 schools randomly contacted by post, in person, by telephone or by e-mail, a total of 30 elementary and 28 secondary schools took part, including private-funded schools. This corresponds to a response rate of about three percent. On basis of official statistics, a weighting framework was drawn up to correspond to the distribution of students in different school types in academic year of 2017/18.

The survey was conducted in class groups from third to ninth grades. In Germany, classes do not represent age-homogeneous groups. For this purpose, tablet computers were used, which guaranteed anonymity on a high level. The participating children or adolescents were present as well as one to two trained interviewers. Only those students who gave their own consent and additionally the active consent of parents or guardians were allowed to answer the questionnaire. In order to reach the population of around 3,500 students, around 6,000 parents were asked for their consent. Only in a few rare cases children and adolescents themselves showed no interest in participating in the survey.

Non-participating students were supervised by a teacher. Participants could decide at any time not to answer any questions, cancel the questionnaire or not answer single questions. The interviewers decided, depending on the desire of the class, whether all the questions were read out and explained collectively, or whether the pupils worked themselves through the questionnaire and received help in the sense of further explanations. This was the overwhelming majority, except in elementary schools.

**Achieved sample (un-weighted)** - Total number after data cleaning for the international data base: 3,293

Table 1a. Achieved sample by age (%)

Age	%
8	7,4
9	14,5
10	14,8
11	17,0
12	18,6
13	18,1
14	9,6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100,0</b>

Missing data 10 (0,3)

Table 1.b.1. School Types (%)

Primary School	28,8
Secondary School Types	71,2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Missing data	5 (0,2)

Table 1.b.2. Secondary Schools from 5th grade (%)

	Composition of children in the Sample	Composition of children in the population
<b>Secondary School (Hauptschule)</b>	13,4	9,8
<b>Secondary School (Realschule)</b>	12,6	20,5
<b>Gymnasium</b>	50,4	36,3
<b>Comprehensive School</b>	23,6	33,4

Table 1.c. Federal State

<b>Federal States (North)</b>	<b>2,4</b>
<b>Federal States (West)</b>	36,7
<b>Federal States (Southwest)r</b>	33,4
<b>Federal States (South)</b>	16,9
<b>Federal States (East)</b>	10,5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100,0</b>
Missing Data	1 (0,03)

## 2. Results

### 2.1 The participants

The contribution of girls and boys is estimated as almost equal (48% boys, 51% girls). From the age of 12, children were able to address themselves non-binary. It can be assumed that the number of non-male or female students (in this binary table counted as "missing data") is too high to be counted as non-binary individuals. Further considerations and deliberations need to be made, how to include a question which can reflect on all genders.



Table 2. Age by gender (Numbers (%))

	8-year-olds	10-year-olds	12-year-olds	Total
<b>Boy</b>	435 (46.5)	352 (47.5)	570 (50.7)	1357 (48.4)
<b>Girl</b>	501 (53.5)	389 (52.5)	555 (49.3)	1445 (51.6)
<b>Total</b>	936	741	1125	2802
<b>Missing data</b>	9 (1.0)	82 (10.0)	399 (26.2)	490 (14.9)

## 2.2 The home and the people children live with

Almost all children in Germany live in a family environment (97.9%<sup>1</sup>), though it is unclear how family is constructed.

Table 3. Home type (12 year old) (%)

First home %	
<b>I live with my family</b>	97.9
<b>I live in a foster home</b>	0.6
<b>I live in a children's home</b>	0.6
<b>I live in another type of home</b>	0.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Missing data 66 (4.3)

Tables 4 and 5 shows different scales of how satisfied children are with the people they live with. The data of 8-year-olds is presented in a 5-point-scale with emoticons, the data of 10- and 12-year-olds are presented in an 11-point-scale. Most of the younger children are (very) happy with the people they live with (sum total is at 94.5). The scale of older children is distributed more differentially. 72% of 10- and 12-year-olds rated their satisfaction as nine or ten on the scale, 8.1% rated 5 or below.

<sup>1</sup> The four items were used in the 12-year olds questionnaire only. But we know from official statistics, that the numbers represent other age groups.

Table 4. Satisfaction with the people you live with (8-year-olds) (%)






Satisfaction with ...					
<b>The people you live with</b>	0.2	1.1	4.2	26.6	67.9
Missing data	21 (2.2)				

Table 5. Satisfaction with the people you live with (10- &amp; 12-year-olds) (%)

Satisfaction with ...	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>The people you live with</b>	2.2	1.1	0.4	0.7	1.3	2.4	2.6	6.3	10.9	21.5	50.5
Missing data	42 (1.8)										

When it comes to questions about family life, it shows a similar picture that older children are less positive than the younger ones. In total, children make relatively positive experiences about how safe they feel at home (mean of 3.6), in contrast to their experience of being included in decision making processes at home (mean of 2.7). Interesting in this case is the fact that this does not vary significantly among age groups. The biggest variations are found in having someone in the family, who helps with any arising problem and having a good time together (means of 3.5 in age group 8; 3.2 in age group 12)

Table 6. Variations in questions about home and family (All age groups; means)

	Family care	Family help problem	Good time together	Feel safe	Parents listen	Make joint decision
<b>8-year-olds</b>	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.7	3.2	2.7
<b>10-year-olds</b>	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.6	3.2	2.6
<b>12-year-olds</b>	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.5	3.1	2.7
<b>Total</b>	3.5	3.3	3.3	3.6	3.2	2.7
<b>Missing data</b>	150 (4.6)	108 (3.3)	80 (2.4)	76 (2.3)	118 (3.6)	161 (4.9)

### 2.3 The home where children live

We were not only interested in the family life of the children, but also in their satisfaction with the house or flat they live in. The data showed that children are relatively satisfied with their housing. Only 0.4% of the 8-year-old children are very unhappy with it. In contrast to this, almost 75% are absolutely happy with the condition of their house or flat. The 10- and 12-year-old children are less satisfied. 1.7% rated the lowest number of the scale, 57% the highest number.

Table 7. Satisfaction with the house or flat where you live (8-year-olds) (%)






Satisfaction with ...					
<b>the house or flat where you live</b>	0.4	0.4	2.8	21.5	74.8
Missing data	24 (2.5)				

Table 8. Satisfaction with the house or flat where you live (10- &amp; 12-year-olds) (%)

Satisfaction with ...	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>the house or flat where you live</b>	1.7	1.0	0.4	0.6	1.2	2.0	2.4	5.4	9.0	19.2	57.1
Missing data	34 (1.4)										

We have also asked the children about things they own. As we expect all children in Germany to have an own bed, we did not include this question. Interestingly, the data shows that more children have a quiet place to study (92.3%) than an own room (82.1%). This gives a hint that parents try to fulfill their children's need for a quiet place despite having space offering them a room by their own. It would be interesting to take a look at relations with the financial situation of the families or number of siblings.

Table 9. Things you have (%)

Whether you have ...	10- & 12-year-olds	Missing data
<b>Own room</b>	82.1	71 (3.0)
<b>Place to study</b>	92.3	195 (8.3)

## 2.4 Friends

Friends play an important role in children's lives. The data shows that the majority of children is satisfied with their friends, nobody of 8-year old children selected the crying emoticon. 66.3% selected the happiest face to describe their satisfaction with friends. The older children are also satisfied with their friends in general. 93.7% ticked higher than 5 on a 0 to 10 scale, 2.2% selected the middle and 4.1% are less satisfied with their friends and ticked between zero and four.

Table 10. Satisfaction with your friends (8-year-olds) (%)






Satisfaction with ...					
<b>Your friends</b>	0.0	1.1	5.6	27.0	66.3
Missing data	46 (4.9)				

Table 11. Satisfaction with your friends (10- &amp; 12-year-olds) (%)

Satisfaction with ...	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Your friends</b>	1.2	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	2.2	2.8	7.3	12.8	25.6	45.2

Missing data 31 (1.3)

It is worth is to take a closer look at children's relationship with their peers. In the survey we included some items about how they feel with their friends, which is described in Table 12 below. 60.5% of children totally agree with the statement of having enough friends. In further research, it would be interesting to focus on the children with no friends or those, who say they do not have enough friends to find out the reason behind and possible effects of having less friends (and not being happy about it). In this context, the item "If I have a problem, I have a friend who will support me" strikes out, too. More than every fifth child (21.2%) does not agree with it. Knowing from research how important friends are for support, disclosure and trust, it is thought-provoking that lots of children do not have friends who fully support them.

Table 12. Friends (All age groups) (%)






	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Totally agree
<b>I have enough friends</b>	3.7	2.9	7.9	24.9	60.5
<b>My friends are usually nice to me</b>	2.9	2.4	8.9	33.7	52.1
<b>If I have a problem, I have a friend who will support me</b>	3.7	5.1	12.4	32.4	46.4

Missing data enough friends: 133 (4.0), friends nice: 97 (2.9), get along well: not asked, support me: 120 (3.6)

## 2.5 School

Children spend lots of time in school. We did not only ask about their school performance and their role as a student, but also about other children in class and their school experiences (Tables 13 and 14). As seen in Table 13, younger students seem to be more satisfied with their life as a student, the things they learned about as well as other children in class. Out of these three items, the 8-year-olds are most unsatisfied with their peers in class and most satisfied with the things they have learned. Interestingly, older children are most unsatisfied with the things they have learned and most satisfied with their life as a student (Table 14).

Table 13. Satisfaction with school life (8-year-olds) (%)

Satisfaction with ...					
<b>Life as a student</b>	1.1	1.1	12.6	38.9	46.3
<b>Things you have learned</b>	0.6	1.4	8.8	39.5	49.7
<b>Other children in your class</b>	0.0	2.4	15.7	40.6	40.6

Missing data life as student: 10 (1.1), things learned: 15 (1.6), children in class: 13 (1.4)

Table 14. Satisfaction with school life (10-year-olds) (%)

Satisfaction with ...	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Life as a student</b>	1.7	1.0	1.5	1.5	3.4	5.8	8.8	13.1	20.0	21.2	21.8
<b>Things you have learned</b>	1.7	0.7	1.7	2.2	3.5	7.5	8.3	13.5	19.9	20.9	20.2
<b>Other children in your class</b>	1.8	0.9	1.7	2.5	3.4	6.5	7.9	13.1	15.6	24.1	22.6

Missing data life as student: 22 (0.9), things learned: 30 (1.3), children in class: 25 (1.1)

If children spend so much time at school, what other experiences do they make there, besides learning? How do they experience their teachers, what kind of relationship do they have with them and how is the atmosphere with their classmates? We have asked the children all of these questions and got some deep insights and outstanding data. Looking at the student-teacher relationship, 64% of students feel that their teachers care and help them with occurring problems. 69.3% feel listened to by teachers. The question clearly asks –what are the reasons and why so many children (36% and 31,7%) do not have a very trustful relationship to their teachers. Also, there are more children who count on other children (66.7%) more than on teachers. Very outstanding is the relatively little number of students with opportunities of decision-making at school in the sense of participation. Only 18.5% totally agree with this item. 4.6% of children do not feel safe at all at school, 4.8% only agree a little bit and 13.4% agree somewhat, which are outstanding numbers as well. This picture becomes clearer when taking a look at Table 16 above about bullying.

Table 15. Views about school (All age groups) (%)

	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Totally agree
<b>My teachers care about me and help me if I have a problem.<sup>2</sup></b>	5.2	9.1	21.7	33.5	30.5
<b>If I have a problem at school, other children will help me</b>	4.3	8.3	20.7	34.9	31.8
<b>There are a lot of arguments between children in my class</b>	20.8	33.6	22.2	13.0	10.4
<b>My teachers listen to me and take what I say into account</b>	4.5	7.7	18.5	34.4	34.9
<b>At school I have opportunities to make decisions about things that are important to me</b>	10.8	17.2	26.8	26.7	18.5
<b>I feel safe at school</b>	4.6	4.8	13.4	34.0	43.2

Missing data teachers care: 162 (4.9), other children help: 123 (3.7), arguments between children 208 (6.3), Decisions: 290 (8.8), feel safe: 113 (3.4)

Bullying has many faces and is without any doubt harmful. For affected children and youths these experiences are decisive. In the survey, we asked children if they are affected of

<sup>2</sup>One item

bullying in a sense if they have made experiences of being hit by other children at school, called unkind names or left out (Table 16). Only 60.8% of children between 8 and 12 years have not been hit by other children in school, and only 58.3% have not made the experience of being left out. 66.1% of children have not been called unkind names. Andresen and Möller (2019) have written further elaborations about this in a German publication.

Table 16. Bullying (All age groups) (%)






How often:	Never	Once	Two or 3 times	More than three times
Hit by other children in your school	60.8	14.2	12.5	12.4
Called unkind names by other children in your school	66.1	16.5	8.5	8.9
Left out by other children in your class	58.3	22.4	9.4	9.9

Missing data hit by other children 278 (8.4), called unkind names 283 (8.6), left out 282 (8.6)

## 2.6 The area where children live

Less than half (49.8%) of the younger 8-year-old children are fully happy with the area they live in. Children of age 10 to 12 are even less satisfied with their living environment. There are 29.2% who are fully satisfied, 14.1% are not satisfied and rated below 5. Table 17 gives more information about this topic and elaborates on the views of children about their local area.

Table 17. Satisfaction with local area (8-year-olds) (%)

Satisfaction with ...					
The area where you live	1.9	3.2	12.3	32.9	49.8

Missing data 27 (2.9)

Table 18. Satisfaction with local area (10- &amp; 12-year-olds) (%)

Satisfaction with ...	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
The area where you live	4.3	1.5	2.0	3.1	3.2	7.7	6.2	11.2	14.1	17.5	29.2

Missing data 197 (8.4)

Almost one fourth of children (24.7%) do not agree a lot or completely with the sentence "I feel safe when I walk in my area". Even more children of age 10 to 12 (31.3%) criticize that there are not enough places to play or to have a good time. These two findings give hints about the child- and youth-friendliness of cities and towns in Germany. About local people, there are 46.9% of 10- and 12-year-olds who do not agree a lot or totally agree that there are people who will help them, if they have a problem. 70.7% agree that there are adults who are kind to children.

Table 19. Views about local area (All age groups) (%)






In my area, I live in...	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Totally agree
I feel safe when I walk	5.0	6.6	13.1	31.2	44.2
There are enough places to play or to have a good time (only 10 and 12-year-olds)	8.7	7.5	15.1	24.1	44.6
If I have a problem there are people who will help me (only 10 and 12-year-olds)	13.7	13.5	19.7	23.9	29.2
Adults are kind to children (only 10 and 12-year-olds)	4.6	8.0	16.8	31.	39.7

Missing data feel safe 168 (5.1), places to play (only 10 and 12-year-olds) 95 (4.1), people help (only 10 and 12-year olds) 93 (4.1), adults kind (only 10 and 12-year olds) 84 (3.4)

## 2.7 Money and the things children have

Money and material possessions are important topics. Children were asked to rate the level of satisfaction with things they have. Table 20 and table 21 show that a high percentage of children in Germany are satisfied. 75,3% of 8-year-olds were very satisfied and 55,6% of 10- and 12-year-olds felt the most satisfaction.

Table 20. Satisfaction with all the things you have (8-year-olds) (%)

Satisfaction with ...					
all the things you have	0.5	0.4	3.4	20.3	75.3

Missing data 21 (2.2)

Table 21. Satisfaction with all the things you have (10&amp;12-year-olds) (%)

Satisfaction with ...	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
all the things you have	0.6	0.8	0.3	0.5	0.5	1.9	1.9	5.7	10.1	22.1	55.6

Missing data 30 (1.3)

The hedging of financial needs is operationalized on three levels based on a question of availability of goods and facilities. On an existential level the question is about having enough to eat and not suffering from hunger. The second level is about elementary needs like sanitary facilities and secure places to sleep, play, and work. Goods which have a high significance in society, and which are rather facilities for the family than just for the children, characterize the third level. It includes being facilitated with a car or going on a vacation once a year with the entire family.

High proportions of children in Germany were found to have sufficient amount of material possessions. Table 22 shows that the majority of children have enough to eat each day.

Table 22. Do you have enough food to eat each day? (%)

	8-year-olds	10-year-olds	12-year-olds	Total
<b>No</b>	1.3	0.9	0.1	0.7
<b>Yes</b>	98.7	99.1	99.9	99.3
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Missing data</b>	33 (3.5)	81 (9.8)	125 (8.2)	239 (7.3)

Table 23 shows possessions, which are important for the family like a bathroom or a car. All families have their own bathroom and 6,6% have no car. 10,5% of the children did not agree that they had a holiday with their family. Table 22 shows whether children have privacy. 14,9% share a room to sleep.

Table 23. Descriptive statistics on material possessions (10- &amp; 12 years-old) (%)

<b>How many bathrooms are in your home?</b>	
None	0.0
One	36.4
Two	43.4
More than two	19.9
<b>Do you sleep in your own room or do you share a room?</b>	
I sleep in a room on my own	85.1
I sleep in a room that I share with other people	14.9
<b>Does your family own a car, van or truck?</b>	
No	6.6
One	32.5
Two or more	60.7
<b>In the last 12 months, how many times did you travel away on holiday with your family?</b>	
No	10.5
Yes	89.5
<b>How many computers do your family own?</b>	
None	0.8
One	7.0
Two	15.6
More than two	76.6
<b>Does your home have a washing machine?</b>	
No	0.4
Yes	99.6
Missing data	bathroom 41 (1.7), own room 71 (3.0), cars 24 (1.0), holiday 83 (3.5), computer 60 (2.6), washing machine 60 (2.6)



Table 24 shows that pocket money or money to spend independently from adults, equipment for sports and hobbies, and access to internet are lacking items for some children.

Table 24. The things children have (%)

Which of the following do you have	8-year-olds		10-year-olds		12-year-olds		Total	
	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Clothes in good condition	3.9	96.1	1.7	98.3	3.5	96.5	3.1	96.8
Enough money for school trips and activities	4.4	95.7	2.5	97.5	2.4	97.6	3.0	97.0
Access to the Internet at home	5.1	94.9	2.1	97.9	1.6	98.4	2.7	97.3
The equipment/things you need for sports and hobbies	6.8	93.2	6.9	93.1	7.4	92.6	7.1	92.9
Pocket money/ money to spend on yourself	8.2	91.8	10.6	89.4	9.2	90.8	9.3	90.7
Two pairs of shoes	3.6	96.4	3.1	96.9	3.8	96.2	3.6	96.4
A mobile phone	43.7	56.3	11.3	88.7	3.7	96.3	16.6	83.4
The equipment/things you need for school	2.5	97.5	1.6	98.4	1.3	98.7	1.7	98.3

Missing data (8-year-olds) clothes 26 (2.8), school trips 46 (4.9), internet 39 (4.1), sports and hobbies 50 (5.3), pocket money 47 (5.0), shoes 27 (2.1), mobile phone 74 (7.8), things for school 27 (2.9)  
 Missing data (10-year-olds) clothes 14 (1.7), school trips 17 (4.9), internet 9 (1.1), sports and hobbies 28 (3.4), pocket money 22 (2.7), shoes 13 (1.6), mobile phone 9 (1.1), things for school 27 (2.9)  
 Missing data (12-year-olds) clothes 28 (1.8), school trips 36 (2.4), internet 15 (1.0), sports and hobbies 34 (2.2), pocket money 36 (2.4), shoes 20 (1.3), mobile phone 20 (1.3), things for school 22 (1.4)  
 Missing data (total) clothes 68 (2.1), school trips 99 (3.0), internet 63 (1.9), sports and hobbies 112 (3.4), pocket money 105 (3.2), shoes 60 (1.8), mobile phone 103 (3.1), things for school 60 (1.8)

When children were asked, “How often do you worry about how much money your family has” 48,1% of all children (all ages) responded “never”, 35,5% responded “sometimes”, 10,7% responded “often” and 5,6% “always”. Overall, 16,3% have concerns about their financial situation. Keeping in mind that about 21% of children grow up in poverty, this number supports the assumption that parents suffering from poverty try their best not to let their children feel their precarious situation.






Table 24. How often do you worry about how much money your family has? (%)

	8-year-olds	10-year-olds	12-year-olds	Total
<b>Never</b>	49.5	48.4	47.7	48.4
<b>Sometimes</b>	35.0	33.6	37.5	35.8
<b>Often</b>	10.3	9.6	10.8	10.4
<b>Always</b>	5.2	8.5	4.0	5.5
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Missing data</b>	113 (12.0)	54 (6.6)	103 (6,8)	270 (8.2)

## 2.8 Time use

Table 25 and 26 show the level of satisfaction with time use of all children. 68,3% of 8-year-olds reported the highest level of satisfaction. 28,7% of the 10- and 12-year-olds were completely satisfied with the way how they use their time.

Table 25. Satisfaction with time use (8-year-olds) (%)

Satisfaction with ...					
<b>How you use your time</b>	0.4	0.8	4.2	26.3	68.3

Missing data time 32 (3.4), free time: not asked

Table 26. Satisfaction with time use (10-year-olds) (%)

Satisfaction with ...	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>How you use your time</b>	1.0	0.8	0.9	1.1	1.7	4.3	6.2	9.4	17.2	24.0	33.3






Missing data time 86 (3.7), free time not asked

## Subjective well-being: how children feel about their lives

### OLS (Overall Subjective Well-Being)

Children who are 8 years old were asked to use a 5-point-scale and the older children were asked to use an 11-point scale to answer the OLS scale. On life scale as a whole, 72,6% of 8-year-olds responded with a maximum score and 1,2% with a minimum score. 53% of the 10- and 12-year-olds were completely satisfied.

Table 27. Satisfaction with life as a whole (8-year-olds) (%)

Satisfaction with ...					
<b>Your life as a whole</b>	0.4	1.0	5.0	21.0	72.6

Missing data 34 (3.6)

Table 28. Satisfaction with life as a whole (10- & 12-year-olds) (%)

Satisfaction with ...	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Your life as a whole</b>	0.7	0.5	0.8	0.9	0.5	2.7	3.2	6.3	10.3	21.0	53.0

Missing data 10-year old 32 (3.9)  
12-year old 703 (44.0%)

### CW-SWBS (Children's Worlds Subjective Well-Being Scale)

This scale is a reduced version of Student's Life Satisfaction Scale (Huebner 1991). Only the 10 and 12-year-olds were interviewed. Within the scale differences are interesting: 55,3% reported the maximum of having a good life and 31,9% rated the maximum of the item "The things that happen in my life are excellent".

Table 29. CW-SWBS items (10- & 12-year-olds) (%)






	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I enjoy my life	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1	1.9	4.3	4.3	8.5	11.6	17.2	49.1
My life is going well	0.9	0.8	1.0	1.3	2.4	4.8	5.6	9.0	13.6	20.2	40.5
I have a good life	0.8	0.6	0.7	1.1	1.4	4.2	3.4	6.1	8.9	17.5	55.3
The things that happen in my life are excellent	1.2	0.9	0.8	2.0	2.8	5.5	6.5	9.9	14.8	23.7	31.9
I like my life	1.1	0.8	1.0	1.2	1.7	3.4	4.1	5.5	8.8	17.7	54.7
I am happy with my life	1.1	1.0	0.9	1.6	1.5	3.5	3.9	5.5	10.2	18.1	52.6

Missing data enjoy life 64 (1.9), life going well 46 (1.4), good life 46 (1.4), things are excellent 84 (2.6), like life 58 (1.8), happy with life 48 (1.5)

### CW-DBSWBS (Children's Worlds Domain Based Subjective Well-Being Scale (2003))

The CW-DBSWBS is again an adapted version. It focuses on personal aspects (friends), contexts (area) and self-images such as the "way you look". Table 30 shows the descriptive data of the eight-year-olds and table 31 the data of the 10-12-year-olds.

Table 30. CW- DBSWBS items (8-year-olds) (%)

Satisfaction with ...					
The people you live with	0.2	1.1	4.2	26.2	67.9
Your friends	0.0	1.1	5.6	27.0	66.3
Your life as a student	1.1	1.1	12.6	28.9	46.3
The area where you live	1.9	3.2	12.3	32.9	49.8
The way that you look	1.1	1.4	6.5	29.6	61.3

Missing data people 21 (2.2), friends 46 (4.9), life as student 10 (1.1), area 27 (2.9), look 41 (4.3)

Table 31. CW- DBSWBS items (10- &amp; 12-year-olds) (%)

Satisfaction with	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>The people you live with</b>	2.2	1.1	0.4	0.7	1.3	2.4	2.6	6.3	10.9	21.5	50.5
<b>Your friends</b>	1.2	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	2.2	2.8	7.3	12.8	25.6	45.2
<b>Your life as a student</b>	1.7	1.0	1.5	1.5	3.4	5.8	8.8	13.1	20.0	21.2	21.8
<b>The area where you live</b>	4.3	1.5	2.0	3.1	3.2	7.7	6.2	11.2	14.1	17.5	29.2
<b>The way that you look</b>	1.8	0.6	1.5	2.3	3.0	5.5	6.5	11.8	14.5	21.1	31.3

Missing data      people 42 (1.8), friends 31 (1.3), life as student 22 (0.9), area 197 (8.4), look 101 (4.3)

Tables 32 and 33 offer a descriptive overview about the psychological subjective well-being of children in Germany.

### CW-PNAS (Children's Worlds Positive and Negative Affects Scale)

Table 32. CW-PNAS items (10- &amp; 12-year-olds) (%)

Last two weeks: How often feeling	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Happy</b>	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.7	2.3	4.6	5.2	10.3	19.2	24.1	29.5
<b>Calm</b>	3.7	1.8	3.1	4.2	4.4	9.6	9.3	13.3	15.4	15.2	20.0
<b>Full of energy *</b>	40.3	10.8	7.9	6.5	5.3	8.3	5.1	5.2	3.4	2.4	4.9
<b>Sad</b>	18.0	18.3	16.5	11.9	7.5	7.3	4.5	4.9	4.2	3.3	3.5
<b>Stressed</b>	14.4	10.5	10.0	10.8	9.4	9.9	8.3	8.9	7.7	5.6	4.5
<b>Bored</b>	19.0	12.8	11.7	10.7	10.0	11.1	7.3	5.5	4.8	3.7	3.4

Missing data      happy 57 (2.4), calm 77 (3.3), full of energy 292 (12.4), sad 87 (3.7), stressed 82 (3.5), bored 88 (3.7)

\* Translation of the items in German has a negative meaning.

**CW-PSWBS (Children's Worlds Psychological Subjective Well-Being Scale)**

Table 33. CW-PSWBS items (12 year olds) (%)

How much you agree with	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I like being the way I am	2.0	0.7	1.4	2.6	2.6	5.7	6.7	9.1	14.3	18.7	36.0
I am good at managing my daily responsibilities	1.5	0.9	1.5	3.1	3.2	8.7	9.2	11.6	16.9	18.0	25.5
People are generally pretty friendly towards me	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.8	1.8	4.0	5.5	10.4	13.9	25.5	36.9
I have enough choice about how I spend my time	1.0	0.6	1.3	1.4	2.2	5.5	6.1	10.0	14.2	23.4	34.4
I feel that I am learning a lot at the moment	2.2	1.3	1.0	1.6	2.9	6.7	8.3	13.6	15.8	17.2	29.4
I feel positive about my future	2.1	0.9	0.8	1.7	2.4	4.8	5.5	9.3	12.8	18.4	41.3

Missing data: way I am 52 (3.4), daily responsibilities 71 (4.7), people friendly 56 (3.7), time 60 (3.9), learning 84 (5.5), future 75 (4.9)

**2.10 Children perceptions about their country**

We measure children's perception about their country on the basis of children's rights. Do they know about their rights, do they have the impression that adults respect children's rights? In general, the data shows that children in Germany have a lack of knowledge about the Convention and their rights. It depends on school types whether they know about rights or not (Andresen/Möller 2019).

Table 34. Children's rights (%)

		8-year-olds	10-year-olds	12-year-olds	Total
I know what rights children have	No	21.7	12.1	7.2	12.5
	Not sure	42.3	44.8	40.3	42.0
	Yes	36.0	43.1	52.4	45.5
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Missing	60 (6.3)	37 (4.5)	59 (3.9)	156 (4.7)
I know about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child	No	60.6	58.2	50.1	55.2
	Not sure	19.4	22.4	24.7	22.6
	Yes	20.0	19.4	25.2	22.2
	Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Missing	43 (4.6)	39 (4.7)	74 (4.9)	156 (4.7)

### 3. Conclusions

The report presents initial descriptive analyses of the Children's Worlds dataset in Germany. We published two reports about Child Well-Being and children's needs in Germany this year (Andresen/Wilmes/Möller 2019 and Andresen/Möller 2019). We sent a short report with key findings in a child friendly format to the participating schools.

We found that most German children live with both parents at their home. One can see that the majority is satisfied with the situation and the people at home.

Personal relations in general are important. This is also the case when we asked children about their friends at school and beside the school. The majority is satisfied with friends they have. 46% in all age groups completely agreed that friends help them with problems. This seems to be an important resource.

When it comes to satisfaction with school as a whole, the data shows a typical pattern. Older children are less satisfied. School is an important place for experiences with children's rights, participation and acknowledgement by teachers as well as negative experiences with bullying. A relatively high percentage experienced all three forms of bullying more than three times. This is a crucial finding when it comes to subjective well-being.

At a glance, children in Germany seem to have a high subjective well-being when considering the psychometric scales. However, school is a dimension, which influences the overall subjective well-being negatively. In general, those scales are most interesting and meaningful in international comparison, which will be done in the international report of the Children's Worlds Project.

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