

# Children's Worlds National Report

## Catalonia (Spain)



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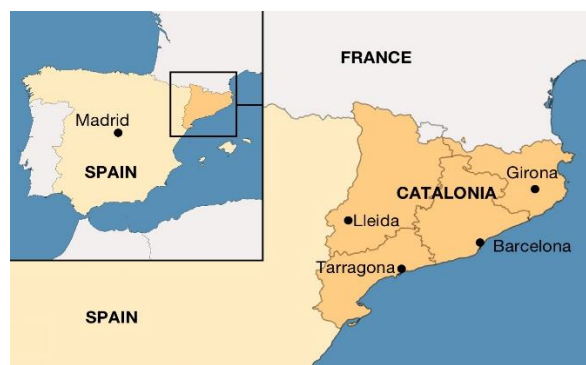
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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Context and population

Catalonia is an autonomous community of Spain. As Figure 1 shows, it lies in the north-east and borders with France and Andorra in the north, with other two Spanish autonomous communities (Aragon to the west and Valencian Community to the south) and it is surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea in the eastern coast. Catalonia consists of four provinces: Barcelona (that has the capital and the largest city), Tarragona, Lleida and Girona. The official languages are Catalan, Spanish and the Aranese dialect of Occitan, in the Val d'Aran comarca, in the Pyrenees. The Spanish type of government is a constitutional monarchy, and its own Parliament is the unicameral legislature of Catalonia. The region has a surface of 32,108 km<sup>2</sup> and a censused population of 7,739,758 inhabitants by 2021 (Statistical Institute of Catalonia [Idescat], n.d. a), wherein the group of 10-14 represents the 5.6% of the population and the group 15-19 the 5.3%, within the 20.3% of children comprising 0-19 years old (Idescat, n.d. b). Catalonia is one of the most economically dynamic communities in Spain, with a GDP of 244,172 million € in 2021 (provisional data) (Idescat, n.d. c) and the rate of unemployment in 2021 was 10.2% (Expansión, n.d.).

Figure 1. Location of Catalonia within Spain



Source: Google Images (Catalonia)

### 1.1.1. Context of COVID-19 in Catalonia

The Department of Health of the Generalitat de Catalunya confirmed 54,664 cases in Catalonia by the end of May 2020 (Idescat, n.d. d). Because COVID-19 has rapidly spread worldwide through human-to-human transmission (Huang *et al.*, 2020), situations involving social interactions can be seen as a threat, and individuals might try to avoid them. The rapid increase of cases in a short-period time drove the Spanish government to take restrictive measures to prevent the transmission of the virus, including public measures to detect and control COVID-19 cases and to help citizens maintain physical distance from each other (e.g., closing of schools and universities, wearing masks, and keeping a minimum of one-meter distance between individuals when outside the home) (Health System Response Monitor, 2020). However, the official measures taken by governmental institutions to face the pandemics have been constantly changing. School closure has significant direct and indirect consequences on the well-being of children and may enhance social inequities (Buonsenso, 2021; Viner *et al.*, 2021). The majority of COVID-19 cases in children have been reported to be weak or asymptomatic (Viner *et al.*, 2020).

Up to May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022, 6,502,431 residents were given the first dose of the vaccine, 84.2% of the total population. Out of those, 6,416,278 also got a second dose administered (83.09% of the total population). And up to 3,379,990 people got the third dose (43.77% of the total population). 6,275,983 residents are considered to be fully immunized (78.6%). Anyone who is registered in a municipal census in Catalonia is entitled to at least basic Catalan Health Service public health coverage, which includes Covid care and vaccinations (Catalan News, 2022). By February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022, the accumulated incidence rate in people between 10-19 years old was 579 (Salut, n.d. a), and the rate of positivity diagnosed through PCR was 24% (Salut, n.d. b).

Beyond the epidemiological data, the National Council for Childhood and Adolescence of Catalonia (2020) has written a manifesto in which representatives of children and

adolescents explicitly complain about being left aside in decisions affecting them during the Covid-19 pandemic, and the negative impact of the strict confinement that took place at its beginning. Accordingly, they claim that adults should consider what they need, and that the media should use a language that children and adolescents can understand. This opinion is also shared by the Catalan ombudsman who has declared that “children and adolescents have been made invisible as subjects of rights” (2020, p.28) to the extent that, in general, their needs and rights have not been clearly specified in the normative texts that have been adopted to contain the pandemic.

### **1.1.2. School activity during the lockdown**

During the lockdown, schools and other educational institutions had to face several challenges to respond to the educational demands during the pandemic. In order to respond to the educational demands, school adopted new teaching approaches to respond to contextual and social demands during the initial phases of the pandemic. As a result of these changes, the digital gap has become even deeper. Public administrations have invested in electronic devices in order to solve part of the digital gap. Despite all the efforts done, it was difficult to compensate the gap easily, especially in “high complexity schools” where children were not prepared to use digital devices for the different school subjects.

Another important aspect involving schools during the lockdown, is that communication between the social agents experienced some difficulties. For example, the scarce communication between teachers and professionals of the informal education such as social educators, made sometimes difficult to appropriately support children at risk. The communication with the family had an important role. It is evident that the lockdown has increased awareness and involved a lot of families in the education of their children. Despite this, the communication between teachers and each student’s family during the lockdown was not always successful. According to the Fundació Jaume Bofill (2020) it is estimated that during the lockdown teachers lost contact with approximately 15% of its students in Catalan schools partly due to the digital gap. Due to this loss of

communication with families and students and the digital gap, children with specific needs have been utterly affected and thus the educational inequalities have increased.

The pedagogical model has experienced some changes during the lockdown specially to transfer the school learning to children's homes. In this case, we can mention three different procedures according to the Fundació Jaume Bofill (2020):

- Schools that have tried to replicate by telematic means the development of an "ordinary" class within a traditional methodology and a curriculum organized by different disciplines. The success of this model relied on the support and familiar means that each child had at home to reproduce a traditional class.
- Schools that during the lockdown have promoted curricular competencies through active methodologies (cooperative activities, globalized projects, gamification activities etc). This model has succeeded in some specific cases when students had already achieved the mastery of virtual environments even before the lockdown.
- Educational institutions that have departed from children's interest to know about the situation and the barriers and opportunities that facilitates their familiar context. In this case, they have established a personal learning itinerary, tutors collaborating with families and other educators.

This report departs from the fact that it is becoming increasingly clear that not enough attention has been paid in Catalonia to the psychosocial effects of the pandemic on children and the subsequently urgent concern to have available data to know what are their needs and what are the answers that should be given as a society as a whole and, in particular, by those responsible for decision-making on children issues.

## 1.2. Sampling: Strategy and outcome

Different primary and secondary schools in the province of Girona were contacted and all the centres that accepted to participate in the study were included. The population

of this province is 781,788 inhabitants. It has different municipalities and in our case the questionnaire was administrated in schools located in the municipalities of Girona (101,932 inhabitants), Salt (32,230 inhabitants), Calonge (11,484 inhabitants), Llançà (4,868 inhabitants), Vilablareix (3,225 inhabitants) Quart (3,856 inhabitants) and Vilajüiga (1,124 inhabitants).

The sampling procedure was a convenience one (*ad hoc*). After a pilot study with some students in order to test the comprehension and suitability of the new items introduced in the Covid-19 data collection, we administered the questionnaire in 7 schools, 2 high schools and 1 educational centre that includes students from both primary and secondary education. In addition, we also administered the questionnaire in 4 summer camps in the city of Girona to increase the final sample. We administered the questionnaire in the school setting mostly (excepting the 38 cases recruited in summer camps), by accessing classrooms having the majority of children from the ages 10 to 12. However, because all students in each classroom were surveyed, the age interval ranges from 9 to 14 years old.

Even though some schools allowed us to access to the classrooms, we administrated the questionnaires in online format. A research assistant was always in the classroom to help in the administration of the questionnaires and solve any questions or technical/logistic issues. In the summer camps, questionnaires were administered in paper format as children didn't have access to computers. Some other schools did not allow us to enter into the class due to Covid-19 restrictions. We used Google Meet to introduce the project to the students. Students responded the questionnaire online and could raise any question or doubt during the administration. Most schools didn't ask for parental consent because the questionnaire is anonymous and was considered not to be necessary.

It is important to highlight the difficulty to obtain schools' consent to participate in the data collection because it was almost the end of the academic year, and many schools were not interested in supporting the project. Another big issue was to access to the schools due to the Covid-19 restrictions. Schools were instructed by the Department of

Education to operate in bubble-groups as much as possible and some of them did not allow outsiders to enter the classroom. Despite the efforts on behalf the researchers these difficulties may have well affected the quality of the sample and of the data finally obtained.

Apparently, children asked fewer questions and interacted less with researchers when they were connected online, in comparison to the face-to-face data collection. This is related to a bigger proportion of missing values observed and to fewer children fully completing the questionnaire, probably due to the fact that researchers were not in the classroom in all cases to supervise children's progress with the questionnaire.

In general terms, students reported the questions were quite easy for them to understand. They also reported them to be very interesting and entertaining. Most of them said that the questions were very reflexive and considered that they helped them to think on issues important for them.

## 2. Results

### 2.1. About you: Q1-2, Q5-10

#### 2.1.1. Gender and age distribution

The children's age ranged from 9 to 15-years-old. In 5<sup>th</sup> grade primary school children were 10 and 11 years old, although a few children were aged 9. In 6<sup>th</sup> grade they were 11 and 12-years-old. And in 1<sup>st</sup> grade of secondary school children were mainly 12 and 13-years-old although some children were aged 14 and 15 years old. The age range between 10 and 12-year-old comprises 85.5% of the 702 cases considered as valid after data cleansing. Overall, 48.3% were boys, 49.3% girls and 2.3% did not consider themselves as a boy or a girl.

#### 2.1.2. About the people you live with



Some questions referred to people children lived with: 77.2% of children stated they live with their family in their home; 18.1% live with their family in more than one home, because their parents lived in different homes; 3.3% live with their family in more than one home because their family had more than one home; 1% live with their family but at a different place (not at their regular home); 0.3% live in a family different from their own; and 0.1% live in residential care.

### 2.1.3. Children's situation during the Covid-19 pandemic

The following questions about the situation during the COVID pandemic were raised to the children in the survey (Table 1). As a general trend, the most endorsed descriptors of their life during the Coronavirus were “My school was closed during lockdown” (91.8%), “I could not attend school for many days” (86.2%), “I had to stay at home for many days” (86%), “Somebody I know got infected with Coronavirus (e.g.: from my neighbourhood or in a friend's family)” (79.6%), “There were times where I had to be in my home all day (including the garden, yard or balcony,) because of the Coronavirus” (76.9%), and “Everybody in my city/town/village was in lockdown for many days” (74.4%).

The percentage of children “not sure” of the answer to some of our questions oscillates from 1.7 to 18.5%, suggesting some children got an ambiguous information about the situation – for example, 12.5% were not sure whether somebody in his or her family got infected with Coronavirus, 9.7% were not sure whether somebody at home was at high risk in front of the virus, and 8.6% was not sure whether there were times when they were only allowed to leave home for a few hours during the day because of the Coronavirus.

On the other hand, the percentage of children reporting somebody in their family was infected or they had somebody at high risk in front of Coronavirus living at home are rather impressive (46.2% and 47.1% respectively) suggesting that the issue was very

vivid in many households, despite in 71.6% of the families, children said nobody was infected.

While all the country was in lockdown for many days, some children (7.2%) reported they were not, 11% reported they did not have to stay at home for many days, and 11.2% denied they could not attend school for many days. An issue that raises from these answers is whether the concept of “many days” may be different for some children; alternatively, for the two first items perhaps they were children living in remote rural areas, but it is unclear, because that could not be the case for the third item. Most impressive is that 19.2% of children deny that there were times where they had to be at home all day (including the garden, yard or balcony, if you have) because of the Coronavirus, suggesting in some areas the lockdown was not strictly respected by some children.

Table 1. Q6-7 - Do the following statements describe your situation during the Coronavirus? (%)

Item	Yes	No	Not Sure
Everybody in my city/town/village was in lockdown for many days	74.4	7.2	18.5
Me or somebody in my home got infected with Coronavirus	23.5	71.6	5
Somebody in my family (not living with me) got infected with Coronavirus	46.2	41.3	12.4
Somebody I know got infected with Coronavirus (e.g.: from my neighbourhood or in a friend’s family)	79.6	10.8	9.6
At home we had to be very careful because somebody was considered at high risk of getting very ill if got infected with the Coronavirus	47.1	43.2	9.7
I had to stay at home for many days	86	11	3
I could not attend school for many days	86.2	11.2	2.6
My family had to move to another home	4.3	93.9	1.7
I had to be in quarantine once	54.6	43.3	2

I had to be in quarantine more than once	37.5	58.7	3.8
My school was closed during lockdown	91.8	4.9	3.3
There were times where I had to be in my home all day (including the garden, yard or balcony, if you have) because of the Coronavirus	76.9	19.2	3.9
There were times where I was only allowed to leave my home for a few hours during the day because of the Coronavirus	58.2	33.2	8.6

#### 2.1.4. Money and the things you have

Children were asked about the things they have (Table 2). All the items had a higher percentage of “Have” than “Don’t have”. The oldest participants displayed the highest percentage for all items in comparison with the youngest ones. Regarding children lacking some things, 21% reported they do not have their own room, 46.6% do not to get pocket money and 26.1% don’t have a mobile phone.

Table 2. Q9 - Which of the following do you have at home? (%)

Item	Have	Don't have
Own room	79	21
Clothes in good condition	98.3	1.7
Enough money for school trips and activities	96	4
Access to the internet at home	98.7	1.3
The equipment/things you need for sports and hobbies	94.4	5.6
Pocket money / money to spend on yourself	53.4	46.6
Two pairs of shoes in good condition	96.4	3.6
A mobile phone	73.9	26.1
The equipment/things you need for school	98.3	1.7

Access to computer or a tablet when needed	95.7	4.3
Devices (e.g.: microphone and camera) for video-classes	92.3	7.7
A place in your home where you can study	95.3	4.7

### 2.1.5. Food during the lockdown

Children were asked if they had enough food during the lockdown: 92.4% said that they always had enough food, 5.6% of them said that they often had enough food, 0.9% reported they only had enough food sometimes and 1.1% never had enough food.

### 2.1.6. Safety perceptions

Among the questions related to safety, children indicated that feeling safe at home was the most endorsed item (55.1% totally agreed and 29.5% agreed a lot), followed by feeling safe with their friends (47.1% totally agreed and 30.8% agreed a lot). In contrast, the item “I feel alone” reported the lowest percentage of agreement response (52% did not agree and 22.7% agreed a little bit), suggesting solitude during the lockdown was a serious problem for a sub-cluster of children in our country, but not for the majority. However, the percentages of children only agreeing “a little bit” about different aspects of their safety are not that low (excepting at home and with friends) – 17.2% of children reported not to agree they felt safe at school, or only a little bit (Table 3).

Table 3. Q8 - How much do you agree with each of the following sentences (%)

Item	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Totally agree
I feel safe at home	1	2.8	11.6	29.5	55.1
I feel safe at school	5.7	11.5	29.4	32.7	20.6
I feel safe when I walk around in the area I live in	4.2	14.8	26.9	30.2	23.9
I feel safe with my friends	0.9	5.3	16	30.8	47.1
I feel alone	52	22.7	10.4	8.1	6.8
I feel protected from the Coronavirus	8.2	13.8	28.7	27.5	21.8

## 2.2. Your life during the Coronavirus: Q11-14

In relation to the questions about their life during the Coronavirus, children felt generally informed about the Coronavirus, although it was not very common to speak about the pandemic at home (52.6% were just little or somewhat in agreement with this statement and 9.4% did not agree at all) (Table 4). The main source of information about the Coronavirus came from the news (76.6% summing up the “agree a lot” and “totally agree” answers), followed by their caregivers (58.4%), their teachers (47.4%), social media (35.1%) and other children (34.6%). 41.5% of children believed that a lot of the news about the Coronavirus were unreliable.

While 44.1% of the children agree a lot or totally that their opinions about the Coronavirus were taken seriously at home, 26.3% do not agree or only agree a little bit on that. This percentage probably reflects the fact that many children do not feel they have a say or are taken seriously at home.

39.2% of the children disagree or only agree a little bit that they received a lot of information about the Coronavirus from other children, suggesting Coronavirus was not a topic of conversation among many children.

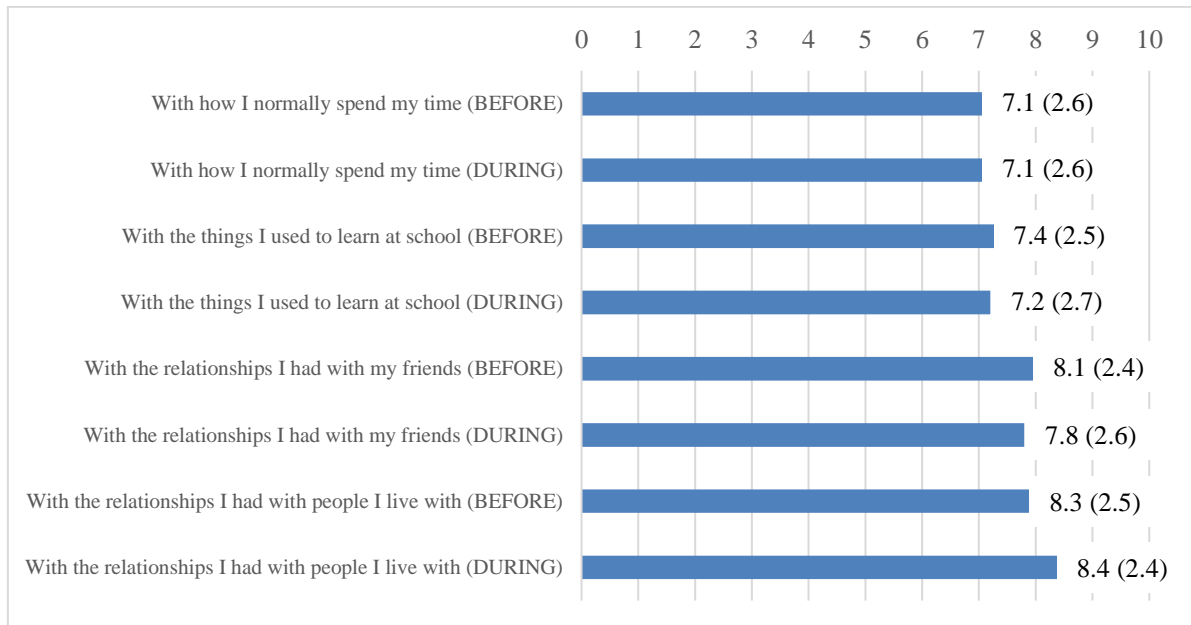
Table 4. Q11 - How much do you agree with each of the following sentences? (%)

Item	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Totally agree
I have enough information about the Coronavirus	2.8	10.4	26.4	40.3	20.2
We speak together about the Coronavirus in my home	9.4	23.4	29.2	23.5	14.4
My opinions about the Coronavirus are taken seriously in my home	10.3	16	29.6	22.9	21.2
I received a lot of information about the Coronavirus from my family members or caregivers	6.3	12.8	22.4	22.4	36
I received a lot of information about the Coronavirus from other children	11.4	27.8	26.2	18.7	15.9
I received a lot of information about Coronavirus from teachers	4.7	19.9	28	20.5	26.9
I received a lot of information about Coronavirus through social media (Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook, etc.)	19.6	19.6	25.6	13.3	21.8
I received a lot of information about the Coronavirus through the news	3.8	8.5	11.1	24.5	52.1
I think that a lot of the news about the Coronavirus are unreliable	9.3	25.5	23.7	26.5	15

Children informed that their level of satisfaction with the things they learnt at school, the relationships with their friends, and the relationships with the people they lived with was lower **during** than **before** the Coronavirus. With the exception of satisfaction with

how they spend their time, in which no variation in the mean is observed. In general, they were most satisfied with the relationships they had with their friends and the people they lived with (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Q12-Q13 - How satisfied are you with each of the following things in your life BEFORE and DURING the Coronavirus? M (SD)



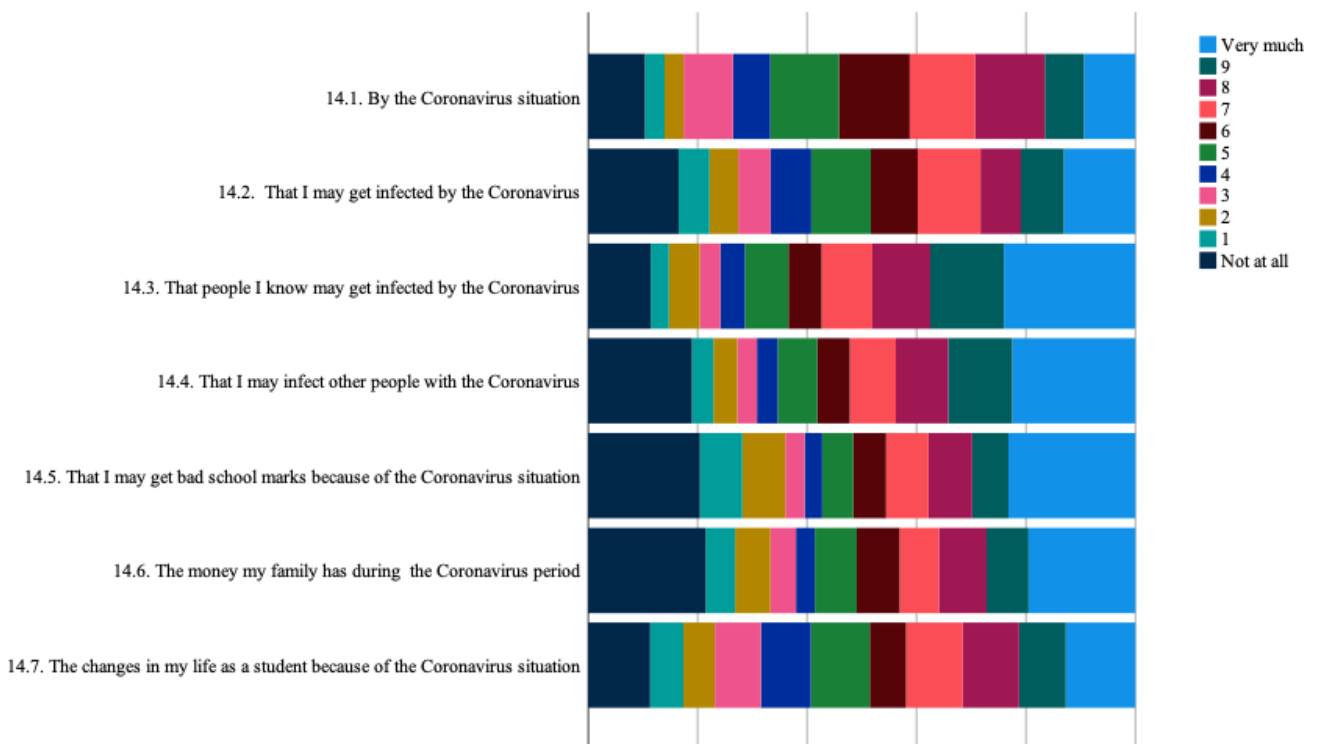
In general terms, in a scale ranging between 1 “Not all” and 10 “Very much”, children seemed not to be very much worried about the coronavirus situation, about being infected or infecting other people or the consequences that the Covid-19 may have on their school life, school marks and their family’s money, since means are not high. However, they seemed to be more concerned about people they know getting infected (Table 5 and Figure 2).

Table 5. Q14 - During the last month, how worried have you been about the following things in your life? M (SD)

Item	Total
By the Coronavirus situation	5.5 (3)
That I may get infected by the Coronavirus	5.1 (3.4)

That people I know may get infected by the Coronavirus	6.3 (3.4)
That I may infect other people with the Coronavirus	5.8 (3.8)
That I may get bad school marks because of the Coronavirus situation	5.2 (3.9)
The money my family has during the Coronavirus period	5.1 (3.8)
The changes in my life as a student because of the Coronavirus situation	5.3 (3.2)

Figure 2. Q14 - During the last month, how worried have you been about the following things in your life? (% of responses of each category)



### 2.3. School and relationships: Q16-19, Q22-23



Children were asked about the way they learnt at home, their access to and use of the Internet to learn and keep in contact with their friends. Their responses revealed that during the Coronavirus they mainly learnt by online classes with their teachers (79.5%) and with the people who looked after them (47.4%), although 12.2% reported that no member of their family helped them with schoolwork (Table 6 and 8). Learning by searching through the Internet was more than twice as prevalent as learning with friends (42.3% versus 20.1%), while not studying at home was rare (2.1%).

As a general opinion, children agreed they managed to continue with their learning from home (67.9%) and only 2.8% disagreed (Table 7). Access to the Internet was a common practice during the Coronavirus pandemic (87.5% summing up “often” and “always” responses). Children manifested that they sometimes experienced some problems when they used the Internet for an entire day (37.6%) and when they had classes online (43.3%) (table 8). However, 2.0% of children in Catalonia reported they never had access to the Internet during the pandemic, and a 4.8% could never access for an entire day, which presumably had a negative impact to complete school assignments.

Table 6. Q16 - During the Coronavirus, when schools were closed, how did you learn at home? (%)

Item	Yes
Online classes with teachers	79.5
Learning by searching the Internet	42.3
Learning with parents or people that are looking after you	47.4
Learning with my friends	20.1
Other ways	6.8
I did not study at home	2.1

Table 7. Q17 - How much do you agree with the following sentence (%)

Item	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Totally agree

During the Coronavirus, when schools were closed, I managed to continue with my learning from home	2.8	11.2	18.2	29.2	38.7
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Table 8. Q18 - Please, answer the following questions. During Coronavirus... (%)

Item	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
How often did you have access to the Internet?	2	10.4	34.4	53.1
How often did it happen that you could not access the Internet for an entire day?	47.1	37.6	10.5	4.8
How often did you have problems with the Internet connection while having a class over web	34.3	43.3	16.8	5.7
How often did you miss your classmates?	9	17.6	37.8	35.6
How often did you wish that you could go back to school?	15.9	25.3	30.5	28.3
How often did your parent or a sister/brother help you with schoolwork?	12.2	35.6	32.5	19.7

Children commonly made use of video calls, calls and WhatsApp to keep in contact with their friends (Table 9).

Still, a general believe of missing their classmates (73.4%) and wishing to go back to school (58.8%) was shared among many children (“often” and “always” responses in table 8). Many of them reported a feeling of support by some of their teachers (43.5%) and friends (62.2%), but specially by the people they lived with (85.8%) (summing up “agree a lot” and “totally agree” responses in the three cases in table 10).

On the other hand, 9% of children reported they never missed their classmates (Table 8), suggesting these children do not have supportive social networks with peers. In fact, 3.4% of children stated they did not feel well-supported by some of their friends, and 11.7% only agreed a little bit on that statement (Table 10).

28.3% of children reported not to agree they were well-supported by their teachers, or only agreed a little bit, while that was the feeling of 5.9% of children about people they lived with (responses not agreeing and just agreeing a little bit in Table 10).

During the Coronavirus, 75.7% of children reported to agree a lot or totally agree with having become closer to their families but 5.9% did not agree or only a little bit, while the 42.9% believed their relationships with friends were affected during the pandemic (agreeing a lot and totally agreeing responses), with an important percentage (47.4%) indicating that they did not make new friends online (Table 11).

Table 9. Q19 - How do you keep in touch with your friends during the Coronavirus lockdown? (%)

Item	Yes
Video calls (Hangout, Skype...)	77.5
Calls	57.7
WhatsApp messages	51.6
Social media (Instagram, Facebook, TikTok or any other)	47.7
WhatsApp audios	27.4
Meeting each other in person	21.4
Not at all	3.4
Other ways	0.3

Table 10. Q22 - How much do you agree with the following sentences? During the Coronavirus, I felt well-supported by... (%)

Item	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Totally agree
some of my friends	3.4	11.7	22.8	37.5	24.7

some of my teachers	10	18.3	28.3	27	16.5
some people I live with	2.4	3.5	8.3	18.3	67.5

Table 11. Q23 - How much do you agree with each of the following sentences? (%)

Item	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Totally agree
During the Coronavirus, I became closer to some members of my family	4.2	8.2	11.9	26.5	49.2
My relationships with my friends were affected during the Coronavirus	14.9	24.6	17.6	24.8	18.1
I made new friends with other children online during the Coronavirus	47.4	15	10.4	12	15.2

#### 2.4. How do you feel about life: Q24-28

The questions related to **subjective well-being**, as measured by the CW-SWBS5 (Table 12), show that the mean levels are moderate-high among children, with the questions “I have a good life” (M = 8.6, SD = 1.9), “I enjoy my life” (M = 8.4, SD = 2.1) “I am happy with my life” (M = 8.3, SD = 2.3) and “My life is going well” (M = 8.3, SD = 2.1) reporting the highest mean scores.

Table 12. Q24 - How much do you agree with each of the following sentences about your life as a whole? M (SD)

Item	Total
I enjoy my life	8.4 (2.1)
My life is going well	8.3 (2.1)
I have a good life	8.6 (1.9)
The things that happen in my life are excellent	7.1 (2.4)

Scores for the items on **positive and negative affect** are shown in table 13. The items “Happy” and “Full of energy” showed the highest endorsement among children. “Stressed” is the negative affect showing the highest scores during the pandemic.

Table 13. Q25 - Below is a list of words that describe different feelings. Please read each word and then tick a box to say how much you have felt this way during the last two weeks. M (SD)

Item	Total
Happy	7.9 (2.2)
Sad	3.8 (3)
Calm	6.2 (2.9)
Stressed	5.2 (3.4)
Full of energy	7.7 (2.6)
Bored	4.8 (3.2)

The questions regarding the extent to which **children were afraid of Covid-19** revealed that many agreed with the statements on the negative personal consequences of the Coronavirus, while many disagreed (Table 14). The question “I am afraid of losing my life because of the Coronavirus” showed the highest frequency for the “totally agree” answer (18.7%).

The questions dealing with somatic activation were the ones with the highest percentages of not agreement, but a non-negligible percentage totally agreed with “It makes me uncomfortable to think about the Coronavirus” (5.6%), and even higher with “When I watch news and stories about the Coronavirus on the TV and social media, I become nervous or anxious” (6.5%). However, a majority of children disagreed with the statements “I cannot sleep because I’m worrying about getting the Coronavirus” (61.5%), “My hands become sweaty when I think about the Coronavirus” (59.4%), and “My heart races (beats very fast) when I think about getting the Coronavirus” (51%).

Table 14. Q26 - How much do you agree with the following sentence? (%)

Item	I do not agree	Agree a little bit	Agree somewhat	Agree a lot	Totally agree
I am very afraid of the Coronavirus	21.5	43.7	19	10.3	5.6
It makes me uncomfortable to think about the Coronavirus	32.9	36.5	15.1	9.9	5.6
My hands become sweaty when I think about the Coronavirus	59.4	28.3	7.8	2.3	2.2
I am afraid of losing my life because of the Coronavirus	23.1	28.1	16.2	13.9	18.7
When I watch news and stories about the Coronavirus on the TV and social media, I become nervous or anxious	34.5	35.9	12.9	10.2	6.5
I cannot sleep because I'm worrying about getting the Coronavirus	61.5	25.7	6.1	4.6	2
My heart races (beats very fast) when I think about getting the Coronavirus	51	29.6	11.1	5	3.3

The questions involving **children's cognitive evaluations about different aspects of their life** show a general tendency of high scores on satisfaction (Table 15). More specifically, the domains children indicated to be most satisfied with were: the people they live with (M = 8.9, SD = 2.0), the things they have (M = 8.9, SD = 1.9), the house they live in (M = 8.8, SD = 2.0) and their health (M = 8.8, SD = 2.0), being satisfaction with the way they look (M = 7.5, SD = 2.8) and how are they listened to by adults (M = 7.8, SD = 2.4), among the least valued life domains. In general terms, the results show that children reported moderate to high levels of satisfaction with the different aspects in their life they were asked about.

Table 15. Q27 - How satisfied are you with each of the following things in your life? M (SD)

Item	Total
The people you live with	8.9 (2)
The house you live in	8.8 (2)
The area where you live	8.4 (2.2)
About how safe you feel	8.4 (2.2)
Your friends	8.7 (2)
How you use your time	7.9 (2.3)
The way you look	7.5 (2.8)
The things you have	8.9 (1.9)
The freedom you have	8.5 (2.2)
What may happen later in your life	7.9 (2.2)
How you are listened to by adults in general	7.8 (2.4)
Your health	8.8 (2)
Your life as a whole	8.5 (2.2)

When asked about **the happiness with their life** before and during the pandemic, children indicate that they were generally happier before ( $M = 8.3$ ,  $SD = 2.1$ ) than during the pandemic ( $M = 7.5$ ,  $SD = 2.5$ ) (Table 16).

Table 16. Q28 - Please, answer the following questions. M (SD)

Item	Total
Thinking about how your life was BEFORE the Coronavirus, how happy were you with your life as whole?	8.3 (2.1)
Thinking about how your life now DURING the Coronavirus, how happy are you with your life as whole?	7.5 (2.5)

### 3. Conclusions

The current report presents the findings of an initial descriptive analysis of Catalonia Children's Worlds dataset. Most surveyed Catalan children (with highly equal gender distribution) live with their family in their home and did not report relevant material or food needs during the lockdown. However, there are exceptions, and these low percentages of children living in different family circumstances and in more deprived situations are the ones that had more difficult times during the pandemics.

Many children reported to have a lot of information about the Coronavirus, despite that often was not a common topic to be discussed at home. They mainly got the information from the news and their family/caregivers, suggesting that official channels and the adults in more proximity were their main sources of information. However, some children reported not to have enough information.

Fear in front of the Coronavirus was very diverse, oscillating between children who reported that never were afraid and children who reported that they were very afraid during the lockdown. However, in general terms they did not seem to be specially worried about getting infected and the Covid-19 affecting the school domain or their family's money, fear of people they know getting infected obtaining a higher mean.

Most children reported to feel safe, particularly at home and with friends, but some other children did not. However, the percentages of children feeling protected from Coronavirus were much lower than these of children feeling safe (except for feeling safe at school), suggesting for many children the pandemic was perceived as a realistic threat. In fact, outstanding clusters of children reported somebody they knew got infected with Coronavirus, and that at home they had to be very careful because somebody was considered at high risk of getting very ill if got infected with the Coronavirus – that suggesting Coronavirus menace was very present at children's every day's life during the pandemics. On the other hand, not negligible percentages of children reported they thought a lot of the news about the Coronavirus are unreliable, this fact also contributing to insecurity.



During the Coronavirus, when schools were closed, children managed to continue with their learning from home with different intensity. Getting social support was crucial. Many children reported not to have enough support from people living with them or from friends. Although a majority of children reported their opinions about the Coronavirus were taken seriously at home, noticeable percentages reported they did not.

Children felt happier with their lives, and more satisfied with how they spent their time and with the things they used to learn at school before than during the Coronavirus, which can be taken as a general indicator of the negative impact that the Coronavirus has had on children's quality of life. Noteworthy, children's recall on their life situation before the pandemic is even more negative compared to what they actually expressed in a pre-pandemic data collection also within the Children's Worlds Project (see Casas & González-Carrasco, 2021).

As it could be expected, online classes with teachers were the most endorsed option to learn from home, which is related to the high use of the Internet reported by children. Children not having easy access to the Internet, or not having access at all, were the ones having the worse experience during the lockdown. A not negligible percentage of all the children in the sample reported to agree somewhat, a lot or totally that they felt alone. Even though children used frequently video calls and calls to be in touch with their friends, they generally reported to miss their peers and their previous school situation. In light of children's responses, it seems that technology and social media has helped them to cope with the lockdown isolation, but not in all cases. Although they managed to maintain their relationships, they usually reported they did not make new friends during that time.

Most of Catalan children surveyed during the Coronavirus reported to be satisfied with their life, and they were especially happy with their life and with the way they are. More than three quarters of respondents were satisfied with the things they have, and more than half of them were satisfied with their house. Unfortunately, these results are not

strictly comparable with the data collected in Catalonia for Children's Worlds 3<sup>rd</sup> wave using a representative sample, because the present sample is of a convenience one. However, everything suggests that there was an important decrease of most children's satisfaction with overall life and with many life domains. Positive Affect has apparently decreased and Negative Affect increased since the third wave until the present data collection, and particularly the increase of reported stress is outstanding.

The pandemic had therefore impacted on children's subjective well-being, this impact expected to extend far beyond its epidemiological control. This "silent" pandemic has broad consequences as it affects those who have suffered from the disease and those who have not. Energies have been dedicated to count infections and deaths and measures are being used to have information on the evolution of the pandemic, enabling policy-makers to monitor the progress of the disease and define public health measures. In contrast, there is a lack of information about the subjective well-being of the child population as a scarce number of studies have been conducted.

Besides, the data here collected in the context of an international project punts into evidence how important is not only to focus on the difficulties that children and adolescents may be experiencing -although identifying them is very important for designing public health measures accordingly- but also on those factors that have helped them to cope with the health crisis.

This approach is in line with that proposed by Dvorsky et al. (2020), who advocate for identifying both risk and resilience factors and with that of Branquinho et al. (2020), who through a qualitative study with Portuguese adolescents, observed the importance of facing the pandemic with a positive perspective, carrying out pleasure activities, keeping in touch with family and friends, and establishing routines. Other authors have also found hope, meaning in life and satisfaction with life to be positive indicators of adaptive coping styles during the current health crisis (Nearchou et al., 2020).

It is in this context that reports such as the one presented here take on a special significance. Despite the fact this is not a study carried out with a representative sample,

due to the urgency of collecting data and insufficient material resources to recruit a larger number of participants, the available data provide valuable information from children's perspective, this way giving them a role as main actors on the impact of the pandemic in their own lives.

Next steps would require a commitment from the administration to systematically and periodically collect data on children in Catalonia, covering the whole territory and a wide age range in order to monitor the impact of the pandemic and identify which sub-clusters of children are having the greatest difficulties so that actions that can help them are implemented.

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