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MYWEB (Measuring Youth Well-Being)

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WP4: Direct engagement with children and young people (CYP)

Deliverable 4.1: Country-level reports on interviews and focus groups from delivery partners (Latvia)

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1. Introduction

Results from the field work undertaken with the goal of finding out the meaning and significance that children and young people allocate to well-being, as well as to identify differences in their understanding of it, have been provided in this report. Individual and focus group interviews provided an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the method for obtaining the data and to find out potential difficulties in undertaking longitudinal research. To develop the instruments to measure children's and young people's well-being, their own views and opinions about what they'd like the researchers to ask them had to be taken into account, as well as the way in which the survey should be conducted.

2. Fieldwork characteristics

2.1. Fieldwork

The fieldwork in Latvia was undertaken with four different groups of children and young people. There were 20 individual and 4 focus group interviews completed in three months (October – December 2014). One part of the fieldwork involved conducting 10 semi-structured individual interviews and 2 focus group interviews, with children and teenagers who were identified from 2 contrasting schools: in one school with children (10-12 years old) in the last year of compulsory primary education and, in the other school with teenagers (15-16 years old) in the last year of compulsory education.

Daugavpils Secondary School No. 12 (10-12 year old children) and Rīga's Waldorf School (15-16 year old teenagers) were selected as the contrasting schools for the fieldwork. The economic development of the places where the schools are located in Latvia, their ethnic composition and social situation, as well as the type of teaching, were used as the contrasting criteria. Riga and Daugavpils are locations in Latvia that contrast for several reasons: firstly, because of their different geopolitical situation (Riga is the capital city, situated in the centre of the country, while Daugavpils is a border city); secondly, due to their very different economic situations (Riga is the flourishing centre of the Latvian economy, while Daugavpils is an economically stagnating eastern city); thirdly, because of the different ethnic composition (only 18% of the population of Daugavpils is Latvian); and fourthly because of the different information spaces (the inhabitants of Daugavpils prefer the Russian media). Finally, the schools selected for the fieldwork represent different types of teaching: at Daugavpils Secondary School No. 12, the educational programme is implemented using standard methodology, whereas at Rīga's Waldorf School, the teaching takes place with an anthroposophic methodology according to which the general basic

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education programme should be taught through the use of art (visual art, theatre, singing, the playing of musical instruments and craft).

The other part of the fieldwork was undertaken among young people (16-18 years old) representative of a variety of social groups and levels. During the work, 10 individual interviews and 2 focus group (5 people) interviews were obtained. One of the focus groups was with organised and active young people and the other with non-organised active young people.

2.1.1. Children (10-12 years old) in the last year of compulsory primary education

The fieldwork with 10-12 year old children was undertaken at the state funded general education school, Daugavpils Secondary School No. 12. Early primary school education is the first segment in the education structure at Latvian schools. After completing their early primary education, the school children continue their education in years 5-9 at primary school. At the school chosen for the fieldwork, the transition to the next educational segment not only meant changes in the content of education and in the way it was taught (for example, the children receive their lessons in a different room especially set up for the particular subject), but also a change in the customary environment, meaning a move to the so-called big school, which is located nearby. This is a new environment, with new buildings and teachers, which can potentially strongly influence a child's comfort level, and requires some adaptation. Attention was focussed on this in the fieldwork interviews, as a change in the children's usual school environment is a significant element for them in the development of the instruments measure well-being.

In accordance with the guidelines for the project, the fieldwork took place among children in the final year of early primary school. Five individual and one focus group interview took place, consistent with the tasks and goal of the project. Ten 10-year-old children (five girls and five boys) participated in the interviews. Their teacher was actively involved in the conduct of the fieldwork. The students and their parents were introduced to the goal and tasks of the project, using the materials prepared by the Daugavpils University's MYWEB project team. The teacher came to an agreement with the children and their parents about the timing of the interviews. The interviews took place immediately after their lessons at school in the children's usual classroom. During the interviews, the teacher was also in the classroom, except in the focus group interview, as the children felt better doing it in this way. In the first two individual interviews, the children were particularly nervous, but in the rest of the interviews they were no longer as worried, and obviously, they'd discussed the process of the interviews and the questions among themselves and no longer considered the interviewer to be a threat. Starting from the third interview, the discussions took place in a relaxed and responsive atmosphere, sometimes with a few jokes, thereby securing greater openness from the children and higher quality interviews. Other significant indicators were also taken into consideration in selecting

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the respondents: their place of abode (distance from the school, the city suburb, an apartment house with an open courtyard and similar), the language used within the family and the nationality and family status (only child in the family, some/many siblings, having both parents or a single parent and others). Written permission to conduct the survey was gained from the school's leadership and parents before the fieldwork commenced. After the conclusion of the interview process, the respondents and the teacher received incentives and a certificate of recognition for their participation in the MYWEB project.

2.1.2. Teenagers (15-16 years old) in the final year of compulsory education

The research with teenagers (15-16 years old) in the final year of compulsory education took place at Rīga's Waldorf School. The school's leadership was told about the goal and tasks of the project prior to the commencement of the survey. After reaching agreement, information leaflets and consent forms were distributed to the parents of the 17 selected teenagers. The main problems faced were the difficulty in getting the signed consent forms back from the parents. The reasons for this included the parents' or children's own decision not to take part in the research and the fact that some children forgot to inform their parents about the project. To solve this problem, all necessary materials were distributed a second time. Organization of the focus groups was particularly difficult due to the same reasons, but also because some children did not turn up for school due to illness, as the fieldwork took place in late autumn, when a high level of children's illness can be observed in Latvia.

2.1.3. Young people (16-18 years old) from different social groups

The other part of the fieldwork consisted of 10 interviews with 16-18 year old teenagers, representative of different social groups and spaces of civic engagement and 2 focus groups (each consisting of 5 people) with young people in the same age range. Five interviews and an interview with the focus group were recorded with organized and active young people selected because of their involvement in different spaces of civic engagement (leisure clubs, minority groups, NGOs, school representatives and religious groups). The other 5 interviews and an interview with a focus group were recorded with non-organized young people. In general, the respondents were young people with different activity situations: working, studying (secondary education, university, vocational training) and with some of them coming from different vulnerable situations.

The main problem encountered in this part of the fieldwork was the recruitment of the young people required. During the recruiting process, different organizations (several youth groups and umbrella organizations, youth workers and youth information points, social organisations and services, etc.) were contacted directly. However, neither the organizations nor the young people showed great interest in

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the research. As a consequence, snowball sampling was useful for recruiting participants, especially when forming the two focus groups. Problems were caused by the fact that a number of young people stopped participating in the research because they did not wish to take part in a discussion group. There were problems encountered in organizing the interviews at a time and place suitable to the respondents (in the case of one focus group, two young people who had been organized did not turn up for the interview and in one case a respondent was not previously notified). The greatest problem was complying with the request for respondents of both sexes, as girls were more responsive than boys

Table 1. Main socio-demographic characteristics of the participants in the fieldwork

	Interviews	Focus groups
Pupils from primary school	5 10-year-olds 3 boys, 2 girls 5 born in Daugavpils 5 Latvian-speaking 3 live with parents 2 live with mother	5 10-year-olds 2 boys, 3 girls 5 born in Daugavpils 5 Latvian-speaking 5 live with parents
Pupils from secondary school	5 15-year-olds 3 boys, 2 girls 5 born in Riga 1 two-parent family 3 single-parent families 1 lives with mother and stepfather	5 15-year-olds 3 boys, 2 girls 5 born in Riga 2 two-parent families 3 live with mother/father and stepfather/stepmother
Non-organised young people	1 16-year-old 2 17-year-olds 2 18-year-olds 3 girls 2 boys 5 born in Riga 1 vocational training 4 secondary school 4 two-parent families 4 live with parents 1 lives in a social care centre 4 unemployed 1 in part-time employment	1 16-year-old 1 17-year-old 3 18-year-olds 3 girls 2 boys 2 born in Riga 3 born in other Latvian cities 4 vocational training 1 secondary school 3 two-parent families 2 single-parent families 2 live independently with friends 3 live with parents 3 unemployed

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		1 looking for a job 2 in part-time employment
Involved people	young	1 17-year-old 3 18-year-olds 1 19-year-old 3 born in Riga 2 born in other Latvian cities 1 in vocational training 1 at university 3 in secondary school 4 two-parent families 1 lives independently with friends 1 lives with mother and stepfather 1 with learning difficulties 3 unemployed 2 in part-time employment

2.2. Methodological differences among interviews and focus groups

From comparing the processes in the individual and focus group interviews, as well as the data obtained, it can be concluded that there were a number of important methodological differences. Young people (16-18 years old) tried to provide genuine information, yet they felt more comfortable and were more open during the individual interviews, and this applied in particular to questions of a personal nature (the family, future plans and others). Moreover, the respondents attempted to avoid more detailed statements and provided superficial responses during focus group interviews. During the interviews with the young people, 2-3 of the 5 respondents were more active, marking the development of leaders within the groups of adolescents. As opposed to the focus group interviews, during led to lively discussions among the young people without extended pauses , supplementary questions had to be actively posed during the individual interviews. The discussions in the young people’s focus groups were also more productive in the sense that during the course of one interview, one could immediately identify the degree to which the opinions of the young people agreed or differed on a specific question.

There were also methodological differences in the children’s (10-12 years old) individual and focus group interviews. Compared with the individual interviews, the

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children's focus group interviews were characterized by the following features:

- the respondents felt safer and freer, joked and laughed if someone expressed a witty and interesting response;
- they tried to involve the others in the interview (especially at the start), inviting them to be more active and to express their opinion;
- they reacted to each other's answers, sometimes trying to fill them out if someone was talking about events at which the other respondents had been present, to give the others interested and clarifying questions or objecting to an opinion that had been expressed. If they objected to responses made by others, they tried to explain their view;
- some tried to particularly stand out and be different from the others in their responses or with their opposing assertions;
- it was also observed that now and then, focus groups respondents were influenced by responses from others or responded to a clarifying question that the interviewer had given to another respondent;
- compared to individual interviews, an easier spontaneous diversion away from the question could be observed in the focus group. The interviewer allowed such a diversion, as it could potentially provide a broader and more open view;
- some focus group participants tended to exchange glances with each other while others talked and sort of pointed out other things about which only they, but not the interviewer, knew. They tried to point to some aspects which only they knew about in their communication, which weren't revealed during their interview. However, there is a basis for the view that this did not influence the pace of the interview, its atmosphere or its results;
- it was a characteristic of the focus group that after a question was posed, a number of respondents began to express their view at the same time. This required a swift and accurate psychological evaluation of the respondent by the interviewer, who had to immediately try to understand who should be given the floor first, and who could wait while others responded;
- focus groups participants were careful in expressing their views, as others could call them out if they exaggerated or were not precise.

These differences, although methodologically important and worthy of note, both in undertaking the fieldwork as well as in predicting the results, did not significantly affect the undertaking of the survey or its results.

3. Main empirical findings

3.1. Understanding and measuring well-being among children

Global understanding/definition of well-being

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The respondents' general understanding of well-being was to a large degree very specific. For children, these were connected with certain elements of their lives and the degree to which their parents, other family members and their teachers felt good. Namely, these were the main people that could significantly affect a child's well-being and the degree to which they were happy and feeling good (or the exact opposite), significantly influencing the child's psychological comfort, feeling of happiness and their satisfaction with life. The most important specific things that children understood by well-being were connected with:

- general family well-being: the family had enough money for food, clothing and to attend entertainment, cultural and sporting events together and travel. The family could also support and donate to those who were in need or seriously ill;
- achievements at school: good grades, a loving and pleasant class teacher, a friendly class, where nobody gets shunned or ignored and each person has a secure and stable place in the class;
- the opportunity to learn, acquire knowledge and attend school is considered to be a significant criterion of well-being. Those who lack such an opportunity or attend school irregularly are considered to have unfavourable living conditions;
- friends, friendship, a happy family many good people around who help others, who do not laugh at others, who think positively and do good deeds. The child and all the family are happy and nobody argues: *Well-being is when everyone helps each other, nobody argues. When you have what you need* (interview, Lauma, female, 10 years old).

The general definitions of well-being expressed in the interviews were fine-tuned and summarized in the focus group, when all the participants in the focus group briefly defined well-being as assisting others: *It seems that if a person is doing well, he/she makes others happy and helps them. There aren't any problems within the family. There is enough [money] to buy food. When you can go out somewhere with your family, go for a walk... go on a trip. When nobody within the family argues. If there's enough [money] to buy the everyday things. And they are always happy* (Focus Group, primary school).

The children always pointed out precisely that they saw differences in the well-being of the people around them. They usually mentioned that their standard of living was average, there were some who lived better and some who lived worse. In such cases, they measured well-being using the specific aforementioned criteria: whether a child had a good, friendly family, if they had both parents, if the child could attend school, acquire knowledge and find out a lot of new and interesting things. Material items were important: whether the parents were able to provide the family with everything they needed and whether the family had enough financial resources.

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Major domains

The major domains which were important to a child's well-being were identified in individual and focus group interviews: the family, school/class, environment (courtyard, city) and material well-being. Other domains (for example, health) were not examined, as they were not important at the time to the respondents. Good health was only mentioned as a criterion to describe another level of well-being, as a negative aspect was given to health problems: *Well, yes. If everybody was sick, then you couldn't do anything. You couldn't play, well nothing* (interview, Guna, female, 10 years old).

Many children discussed their relationships with their younger or older siblings very often. In analyzing the interview data, it was concluded that relationships between brothers and sisters were complex and diverse, and that this was one of the most important indicators of children's daily well-being. Even though the respondents also frequently mentioned that they tended to argue regularly, these arguments did not last and were always resolved positively. The respondents admitted that during the arguments and shortly afterwards they felt sad and sometimes angry. However, they analyzed the reasons for the argument and were capable of renewing harmony, making good and admitting their rashness. Arguments and disagreements between close family members were not protracted and nasty and could be identified as everyday petty quarrels. Harmony, joint walks, games, watching television and the fact that older brothers/sisters cared for younger ones and protected them were also often mentioned: *It's because my brother and I, I'm getting into trouble all the time and my brother, at those times, well, when I'm being beaten, he takes all the blows. That's why I'm thankful for my brother!* (interview, Kārlis, male, 10 years old).

Relationships with their parents were always described as good. The respondents expressed happiness for the fact that their parents focussed attention specifically on them, that their parents were interested in the children's everyday activities, about school, their grades, that they checked their homework, even though the majority of the children studied unassisted. The children positively evaluated the fact that their parents supported their children's interests in education (most of the respondents attended art or music classes, sporting activities and other interest groups). The children valued their parents' investment highly considered that they worked a lot and, obviously, wished that they would work less and would be together with them more. The children also spent a lot of time with their grandparents, visiting them during longer vacations, in summer, as well as every day, immediately after classes or on weekends if they did not live far away. The time spent with their grandparents was described as interesting and full of love, from which the children gain important life experience.

Relationships with their classmates was an important criterion for well-being. In a

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similar way to their relationships with their siblings, the mutual relationships with their classmates were diverse and disagreements caused sadness and anger. However, long-lasting conflicts in class were not observed. All the respondents pointed out that they really liked their school, class, teacher and the overall atmosphere. The only negative aspect of school was bad grades, but the respondents' views were that it was their own fault for not studying enough.

Happiness

The respondents gained a feeling of happiness and pleasure from good, friendly relationships with family members, classmates and teachers, from spending time together, from getting good grades and from good living conditions when nothing worried them or made them sad: *Well, perhaps, when everything is good. When, well, everything is fine with me, I talk with everybody, well, on a day when I don't have any worries. That's it* (interview, Guna, female, 10 years old). Discomfort is caused by their own ill-considered statements, actions, an argument or a bad grade. It was difficult for the respondents to remember good or bad days that they had experienced recently. Some maintained that there was something good and bad every day. Usually good days were associated with time spent together with their parents or grandparents, when all the family was together (for example, a trip, zoo visits, trips to Rīga, the sea, or summer holidays with their grandparents out in the countryside). Time spent together with their parents created a feeling of happiness and pleasure: *Well, the fact that I was together with my parents and we... we all watched television together and talked, I liked that, when we all sit down, with our parents and brothers and talk and eat something... sweet* (interview, Guna, female, 10 years old).

Bad things were also usually associated with everyday events, such as tests, something that was forgetfully left behind at home (for example, a sporting uniform), an arrangement with a friend to meet in the courtyard to play or to ride bikes but he could not come, or when it was not possible to meet with girlfriends, to go for a walk after lessons and have a chat because of being too busy: *Well, for example, when I ask my mother whether I can go somewhere with my girlfriends and she says I can't, well I feel like that sometimes* (interview, Lauma, female, 10 years old). Traumatic events were mentioned only on rare occasions. One respondent recalled that his friend had recently drowned, and this had affected him very much: *I went to his funeral. I wanted to cry, but I didn't* (interview, Kārlis, male, 10 years old). Sometimes worrying about their parents or siblings if they were late getting home was emphasized: *When my brother isn't home for a long time, sometimes my mother won't respond. I think that something bad has happened to him already, see. Nothing. Mum has... the telephone... there was something wrong with the sound, she didn't hear it. My brother was delayed at the technical school* (interview, Kārlis, male, 10 years old). Overall, it can be concluded that a feeling of happiness is associated with

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the relationship the child has with those around him/her. Money, toys and material things are not as important in providing a lasting feeling of happiness, security and well-being.

Life satisfaction

In describing their satisfaction with life, all the respondents emphasized that they were satisfied with it, that they do not lack anything and that they have a family, parents, grandparents, or pets that they care for and can play with. The parents are satisfied with their lives as well. In the focus group interview, someone mentioned that “my father says what else is there to live for but your children” (Focus Group, primary school). Only one respondent mentioned that his mother does not like living in Latvia because she receives a low income (interview, Pēteris, male, 10 years old).

In describing their own and the life satisfaction of their parents, the respondents expressed themselves in a laconic way, acknowledging the fact, but without going into any details. The same applied to their reflections about what they do not have and what they would like to have. Their responses were brief and specific: those who do not have pets want them; those who do not have a brother or sister want a brother or sister; those who have a brother want a sister and vice-versa. These questions do not seem to be important in measuring well-being, as the conclusion was made that the respondents were not used to thinking or worrying about life in this way.

Psychological well-being

A significant measurement of psychological well-being is satisfaction with what a person is doing. The respondents considered the fact that they were studying, attending school and discovering a lot of new and interesting things is important and crucial, as this is a guarantee for a successful future career, for well-being and for a good and well-paid job as well as personal development: *If you're not in school, you won't know anything!* (interview, Kārlis, male, 10 years old). The school children emphasized that they were learning for themselves: *It's like this, what your education is like, where you'll work, it depends on this. On the kind of achievements you'll have* (interview, Lauma, female, 10 years old). Obviously, parents and teachers are happy when children do well and achieve in your studies. However, the school children admitted that it is possible to study and develop your personality and that it is an important measurement of well-being. School is rated highly in the interviews – you gain a lot which is of use in your future adult life there.

The question about life three years previously and in three years' time was difficult to understand for the respondents. This question was problematic for this age group. Firstly, children do not remember events three years back. They can only recall feelings, for example, like how they felt when they started school. Then some

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recalled insecurity and curiosity, but overall this did not provide insight about well-being at the time and did not provide an opportunity to measure the dynamics of well-being. In the same way, thoughts about the future in three years was abstract, even though some respondents were worried about the future: *Oh, don't know! If I studied very well in the first year, not so well now, what will happen in the seventh year? I just don't know!* (interview, Pēteris, male, 10 years old). Others are optimistic and think that they will study at university and pursue an important career. These questions were not fully understood in this age group and useful data was not obtained.

3.2. Understanding and measuring well-being among young people

Global understanding/definition of well-being

Most of the young people associated the term *well-being* with external and internal conditions. In their opinions, the main elements that create external well-being are connected with good living conditions, evidence of which is clothing, one's appearance and behaviour: *If you go to school, if you have a stable family, then you are a happy person. When everything in your life is in order, when there are no problems within the family, problems at school or something similar, that's well-being.* (interview, Sandra, female, 15 years old, secondary school).

When people are living well, you can tell immediately from their clothing, from their appearance and how they walk. You can see their lifestyle immediately. Those who are not doing as well, immediately [one can understand] also from their clothing, from their style and also from their face, you can tell (interview, Kristaps, male, 16 years old, non-organized).

Based on the conclusions of the respondents, internal conditions made up of a number of elements can also be identified: the emotional condition, psychological stability and good relationships with the people around them.

1. Emotional condition. According to how young people think, emotional well-being includes such emotions or internal conditions with which they feel happy, confident in themselves and satisfied with the surrounding situation, instead of the opposite, finding themselves under the influence of depressive emotions:

When he is sort of joyful, happy, when he has some position and he is satisfied with it, well so that he's happy, he is happy, he smiles, he is positively inclined, he has good energy, he can do all sorts of good things. I don't know, his mind is in a happy state about something, like that (interview, Anna, female, 15 years old, secondary school).

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He [emotions], obviously has to be favourably inclined. You have to feel some sort of emotional uplift, with no sadness, no bad experiences, but you are just happy and you understand that it is your real place and you are exactly where you want to be (interview, Anna, female, 15 years old, secondary school).

2. The second component of well-being that emerges from the young people's responses is psychological stability. This is the feeling when everything in life is going well for a person; he/she is not dependent on anyone financially or morally; he/she is capable of solving his/her own problems and of controlling what is happening; he/she has security about the present and the future:

Living conditions when you don't really have to worry about food, prices, the level of rent. How can I say it, when more money comes in than goes out. Then you can afford things for yourself. I think that is well-being (interview, Antons, male, 18 years old, involved).

For me, as a clever young person, the first association is that well-being is when you're doing well. When your life and your future is more or less guaranteed. Maybe it's that I feel free and safe and don't worry about... even what's going on in the country... (interview, Karīna, 17 years old, non-organized)

3. Thirdly, for a person to feel happy and satisfied, it is important to be with other people and to get along with them. As a consequence, young people need to develop congenial, strong and high-quality relationships with the people around them, from whom one expects support and trust, not violence: *[Well-being is] some sort of feeling you have, how you are valued, your place in society, how you feel within society, how you get along with others, how the connection develops, well, the kind of contact with other people (interview, Madara, female, 17 years old, involved).*

Probably a loving family. A lot hinges on the fact that those who are close and good friends are with you all the time, and probably those material values too (interview, Liene, 18 years old, non-organized).

Major domains

Young people from three different groups expressed surprisingly similar views about the major domains important to their well-being. Family was recognized as the most important domain, followed by friends and school. The state as an institution played an important role in their lives, as did the opportunity to express themselves and enjoy their time off, taking part in various interest groups and activities.

Family

Most of the respondents placed their family in first place, including people within it who are more involved in their upbringing, satisfy their needs and with whom they

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spend most of their time at home. In most cases these are their mother/father and brothers/sisters. In other cases, the concept of the family also included the stepmother/stepfather and grandparents with whom contact usually takes place on weekends or more rarely on holidays. *So my family is made up of my mother, my father and my brother, who is younger than me* (interview, Madara, female, 17 years old, involved).

I live with my mother. I have a brother and sister, and another sister was recently born. I live with my mother and stepfather (interview, Sandra, female, 15 years old, secondary school).

I live with my mother and my brother. Mother and father got divorced not long ago. Yes, for instance I have the choice on weekends of whether I want to live with my mother or my father (interview, Valdis, male, 15 years old, secondary school).

The family, specifically, is the first socialization space that a child enters in the first years of life. Primary development takes place here as they become full-fledged members of society. Being aware of this, most of the respondents tried to maintain good and friendly relationships with their parents. If they had to choose between family and friends to spend their time, in most cases they would choose in favour of the family:

INT: If you had to choose between friends and family?

RESP: I'd prefer family.

INT: Why family?

RESP: Well they are the closest. They will always be with you (interview, Vineta, female, 18 years old, involved).

INT: What if you had to make the choice with whom you'd spend your time? With family or with friends?

RESP: With family. Obviously with family, as they are closer to me than my friends, especially granny. She raised me, and I will spend more time with her, of course (interview, Kristaps, male, 16 years old, non-organized).

The time spent together is devoted to relaxation, reading books, watching television or going shopping and to cultural/recreational places, eating together (mainly dinner and weekend/holiday meals) and discussions about school, relationships with friends and other people of the same age, other spare time opportunities available, everyday worries etc. *We are a good family, because we feel good together, just as comfortable lying on the sofa together and watching television and everything is really great, or going on a trip somewhere, visiting and trying out some new foods, see, those sorts of things* (interview, Madara, female, 17 years old, involved).

INT: For example, what do you talk about in the evenings or on holidays and

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weekends?

RESP: I don't know. How I was doing at school, what I was doing, the usual sorts of things (interview, Antons, male, 18 years old, involved).

The interviews provide evidence of the fact that young people are satisfied with the amount of time that their parents devote to them to a large degree. Even in cases when the young people were aware that the time devoted to them in their family when they were young was not enough, they were convinced that more attention from their parents was not really necessary. Firstly, they are used to this sort of situation, and secondly, they were old enough now and more attention had to be focussed on their younger siblings: *I get enough attention and at times it really gets on my nerves, as they want me to come visit all the time, for me to ring, all the time they ask me how I'm going, how I'm getting along. I couldn't say that I don't get sufficient attention or something similar, like it is with some other people (Focus Group, Madara, 15 years old, secondary school).*

INT: Do you want them [parents] to give you more attention?

RESP: I don't think so. Well in the respect that I'd probably answer yes, if I'd experienced this at some time, it's not like I'm yearning for something now, because you can't yearn for something that you've never had. I think it has been like that all of my life and why should I change it now? (interview, Uģis, male, 18 years old, involved).

Despite the fact that arguments take place in families and there are disagreements between young people and their parents, this is also considered to be a normal phenomenon. Usually, conflicts occur because the young people do not want to listen to their parents and want to solve problems and do things their own way, as well due to them needlessly wasting time or not doing their chores, which consist mainly of washing dishes, taking out the rubbish, cleaning their room, walking the dog, etc. Coming out of the interviews is the fact that in such situations, either a compromise is attempted or the young people have to accept their parents' conditions even if they think they are unfair. Conflicts take place frequently between siblings. In some cases, arguments are sorted out by the parents who decide who was right or by defending the weaker/smaller family member, and sometimes conflicts are regulated by the children themselves, without involving their parents: *Well, my parents usually get the upper hand. Still, I'm still living in their house and I have to step back on occasions (interview, Liene, 18 years old, non-organized). Usually we try, in my family, to find a compromise (Focus Group, Madara, 15 years old, secondary school).*

INT: What do you argue about?

RESP: About why I didn't do the dishes and when will I clean my room (interview, Antons, male, 18 years old, involved).

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When describing a good family, strong relationships, love, understanding, security, care and absence of any abuse are listed as the most important values. The ability to provide for the children's and the family's material stability and a regular income are mentioned as guarantors of well-being and essential for a young person to feel good and not be subjected to stress. In contrast, a lack of attention within the family, unloving parents, especially parents suffering from various addictions, for example, alcoholism, narcotics users and others and violence within the family are all reasons why young people do not feel secure and happy in Latvian families and are not satisfied with their lives. According to the observations of these young people, it is the children from these families in particular who are badly behaved. For example, they are aggressive, have a poor level of hygiene, get involved with bad company, smoke from an early age and suffer from alcoholism.

Friends

To feel good, young people need friendly relationships with their peers. To a large degree, friendships are formed at school, in the neighbourhood and in interest groups, although friendly relationships with adults are also included. In some cases, friends are considered 'second family', and in a few rare instances were placed above it:

INT: If you had to choose between family or friends, with whom would you spend time?

RESP: Probably with friends, as they have the same interests as me. I could chat with my parents for about, let's say two days, good, but I could talk with my friends for a few months (interview, Antons, male, 18 years old, involved).

INT: If you had to choose between family and friends?

N: Friends are almost the same as family, good friends (Focus Group, Madara, 15 years old, secondary school).

T: If they are real friends (Focus Group, Sanita, 15 years old, secondary school).

M: But what would you do without a family? What can you do without a family? Without a family, nothing, then you're in trouble (Focus Group, Roberts, 15 years old, secondary school).

T: Both of them, family and friends (Focus Group, Sanita, 15 years old, secondary school).

Relationships with peers are not always easy. Some respondents make friends quite quickly, whereas others have their own criteria by which they select their friends:

INT: What do people have to be like for them to become your friend?

RESP: I don't really have standards, as, if I had [them], then I wouldn't have any friends at all. You can't judge a person before you've spoken to them more than 5

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times. I don't know, for example, you don't talk at all to a friend, he moves away and then yes, contact ends. You sort of stop being friends, but with other people with whom you talk every day in school, they automatically become your friends. We simply spend a lot of time together (interview, Antons, male, 18 years old, involved).

Even though most of the respondents admit that other young people's living conditions, parents and surroundings are not that important to them, to a large degree they still have a tendency to develop closer relationships only with those who are externally pleasant and who are similar to them, both in thinking and in terms of lifestyle:

INT: Is the material well-being of a person with whom you are friends, important to you? Is what this person thinks, important to you?

RESP1: What they think, yes, but their material well-being, no (Focus Group, Veronika, female, 16 years old, involved).

RESP2: I don't think that it [material well-being] should be a factor that influences the relationships between people (Focus Group, Kārlis, male, 17 years old, involved).

RESP3: If a person is interesting, you are also interested in having contact with them and you make contact with them (Focus Group, Zane, female, 17 years old, involved).

RESP2: If you like being in contact with them, what does it matter what their parents earn? (Focus Group, Kārlis, male, 17 years old, involved)

RESP4: But only if they don't stink. I don't make contact with circles of people where a smell emanates from some of the children (Focus Group, Imants, male, 17 years old, involved).

The majority of respondents classify their peers around them in three categories: 'real friends', 'friends' and 'acquaintances'. 'Real friends' are usually a small group of people (2-4 people) who not only have common interests and have fun spending time together, but from whom they also expect trust, more familiarity, respect, responsiveness and other forms of support:

INT: How many friends do you have?

RESP: Many friends. No, I don't know, if I sort of look, what you could count as a real friend? So you could count acquaintances that way as well. If [they] count as friends, then it's very many, but if you count only real friends, then I only have three friends (interview, Anna, female, 15 years old, secondary school).

'Friends' are people of the same age with whom it is fun to spend time, doing both useful as well as silly things, to whom they can turn in various situations and talk about various topics. 'Acquaintances' are people they would usually greet on the street, where sometimes a discussion ensues: *There is a very large difference between people who are very good friends and who know you as a personality. Those people who know you, they only see your external image* (interview, Uģis, male, 18

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years old, involved).

School

This is one of the main domains on which young people have divided feelings. Young people attend school mainly to gain knowledge, developing themselves in this way and laying the foundations for a successful future (studies at university and a good career), and to have a good time forming friendly relationships and socializing with their peers. In less common situations, going to school is considered unnecessary and is done for the sake of the parents:

INT: Would you be happy if you were told that you don't have to go to school?

RESP: At all? No, as I'd lose contact with my friends and that's it. School, no. I don't think so. Again, if I was told I didn't have to go to school for a week or a month, then I would be happy indeed. Then, often in summer it's like I want to go to school again. When you are at school, you want the summer.

INT: Are there only friends at school, and do you have to go to school only because of your friends?

RESP: No, probably not. You have to study because when we are in high school, then we'll already be independent. Yes (interview, Jānis, male, 15 years old, secondary school).

INT: What do you think, is school useful?

RESP: School isn't useful. It's education, and you can gain an education at work, but well... The only reason why I try to do well is simply so that my parents would be proud of me. That's the only reason (interview, Valdis, male, 15 years old, secondary school).

Divided feelings develop among young people for the following reasons. Firstly, it is a question about the need for high school, the need for which was usually commented on by students at trade school. In their view, it is much more important to get some trade in addition to primary education, and not focus their attention on learning high school subjects. In this way they aim to have a better chance of entering the labour market when they reach adulthood. Besides this, these young people also include the chance to continue their studies, go to university or improve their professional education by attending courses:

INT: Why trade school rather than high school?

RESP1: What's the point of going to high school? (Focus Group, Gunita, female, 18 years old, non-organized).

RESP2: Because you get high school, plus a diploma as well as one for some trade, which means that you have not only a high school certificate, but also a trade diploma (Focus Group, Ilze, female, 18 years old, non-organized).

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RESP3: Two hares with one shot (Focus Group, Kristaps, 18 years old, non-organized).
RESP1 and RESP2: Exactly (Focus Group, Ilze, female, 18 years old, non-organized; and Focus Group, Gandita, female, 18 years old, non-organized).
RESP2: You get experience and that additional year is spent gaining experience, which means that you gain experience, and you gain two diplomas, plus you also have a stipend (Focus Group, Ilze, female, 18 years old, non-organized).
RESP1: You gain experience and can look for work (Focus Group, Gunita, female, 18 years old, non-organized).

Secondly, not all young people are satisfied with the study process. In this respect, some indicate a rather large workload, while others point to stress due to studies, which is particularly characteristic of those completing their final years (9th and 12th years). One of the most widespread complaints is about the large volume of unnecessary information, though in some cases this was also valued positively, explaining that in choosing what to study, you learn to select priorities: *I like coming to school, I like learning. Sometimes I don't like the senselessness, as I intensely feel that some things are completely useless for my future, that it's terrible how very unnecessary this is, and how aware I am of it. The system of evaluation too, for example, in subjects like sports and in visual art also seem quite pointless to me (interview, Liene, 18 years old, non-organized).*

Relationships with their classmates and teachers are of importance to young people for feeling good and safe at school. All the respondents would like to see a friendly and united class where it is cheerful, with no conflict or teasing among classmates. It transpires from the interviews that teasing and conflicts are more typical in younger classes due to children's behaviour and mental capacity (they are better or worse in their studies), their family situation or the way in which the youngest children try to prove themselves. Among the children in the older classes (starting with the 7th-8th year) this is a rarer phenomenon, and it should be emphasized that they do not tend to tease each other based on their living situation:

INT: In class, do children also focus attention on the fact that some live better and some worse?

RESP: It was made fun of by some in the younger classes. Now nobody focuses on it. Nobody cares now (interview, Valdis, male, 15 years old, secondary school).

Well, in primary school, you were made fun of for having bad grades. No, wait, quite the opposite, you were made fun of for having good grades. If you were clever, then you were a nerd. This I remember (interview, Uģis, male, 18 years old, involved).

INT: Is calling each other names widespread among the children?

RESP: Not anymore at my age. In year 6 perhaps, when we were 13 years old, we weren't at all [interested] in their material circumstances. It was simply the case that

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you tease and shun some child for some unknown reason, but not anymore at my age. At least I haven't seen it in my class anymore, nor with my friends outside of school. It hasn't happened, not anymore, as at this age you do mature. It's no longer the case that you argue or... (interview, Sandra, female, 15 years old, secondary school).

A similar positive and fair attitude is expected from the teacher. It is important for the young people that the teacher listens to them and accepts their viewpoint, devoting sufficient time to explaining the subject, helping them become competent in their subject and treating all the students equally, especially when giving grades:

INT: Do teachers give grades fairly?

RESP1: I don't think that they always do. Sometimes they move them up (Focus Group, Madara, 15 years old, secondary school).

RESP2: I got a 5, and it was entered as not counting. I don't like that (Focus Group, Guntis, male, 15 years old, secondary school).

INT: Why do teachers behave like that, giving unfair grades?

RESP1: Because in this situation they are angry at you or... they don't like the person... (Focus Group, Madara, 15 years old, secondary school).

INT: Is that fair?

RESP1: In this case it shouldn't be evaluated based on the person, but on how well they have done their work (Focus Group, Madara, 15 years old, secondary school).

Country's well-being

Some of the young people feel patriotic, as if they belong to their country, confirming this not just through their participation in a variety of significant national events, but also by praising their native language, beautiful natural environment and unique culture, which must be preserved. They are not indifferent to what is happening in the nation, as state institutions do affect the level of well-being of the residents of Latvia in a direct way:

INT: Do you feel like a Latvian patriot?

RESP: I think so. I, yes, I feel this way because yesterday [11th November], well my family and I, we talked about it all. My brother and sister as well, we talked about what it was all like then, why we... drove down there to lay the candles.

INT: Do you also attend the other November events?

RESP: Yes, definitely. I guess that's patriotism, but not just. It's all sort of mixed together like that. I don't know.

INT: Are you proud of being a Latvian?

RESP: Yes, we even have our own language. We have our own country, we achieved something. We are making it even more abundant, broader and full of more opportunities (interview, Anna, female, 15 years old, secondary school).

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The state as an institution has to provide many important things in the lives of young people: education (secondary, vocational training, higher education, etc.), employment opportunities, good living conditions, opportunities for self-expression and how to spend free time, as well as peace and security in the country. The respondents mentioned that there was a lower standard of living in Latvia (unemployment, low wages, poor people etc.) in comparison to other countries around the world, such as the USA, England, Germany, the Scandinavian countries, Belgium and Switzerland, for example. However, most of the young people considered that living and building a future in Latvia was not that bad. Mainly, compared to the situation in other countries, like in Ukraine, Syria, India, China or in many African countries, where democracy is operating poorly and military conflicts are taking place, or there is overpopulation, there is an even lower standard of living than in Latvia. Despite the observed desire of a large number of respondents to leave Latvia, in most cases, leaving is planned in connection with education and gaining experience in other countries. Only a minority have considered the idea of remaining elsewhere, while the majority of the respondents wish to return to their native land, to form their family and career here:

INT: How well do people in Latvia live?

RESP: Not everything is ideal, but there are [countries] where they live worse, and in comparison to other countries, even right here in the European Union, we are living quite well (Focus Group, Kārlis, male, 17 years old, involved).

INT: You can build your future here?

RESP: Well, you can, sort of. I think you could. For example, I am going to build my future in Latvia. I don't want to [go] other countries, outside of Latvia, as this is my native land. Maybe just to go and study, finish some good university and return, yes. I wouldn't like to live anywhere else. Only in Latvia. Not me, I wouldn't like that (interview, Kristaps, male, 16 years old, non-organized).

Self-expression

Respondents in all three groups feel the need to express themselves by getting involved in a variety of activities, including in organizations. The main difference between the respondents is the better the material and family circumstances, the more the young person is involved in a variety of developmental activities. The respondents are active in music, dancing, drawing, sports and reading and are involved in interest groups. This is done not just to make use of their free time, but is a way of developing new skills and abilities, to feel better physically and mentally and to become more mature. Through these activities, some respondents saw an opportunity to support themselves later. The young people noted that by involving them in various activities, their parents wanted them to communicate with other

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children and socialize, to develop from being quiet and shy to gaining confidence in themselves:

I am interested in volunteer work and then I do it a lot and it takes up a lot of my free time. I am also getting involved in the 'StaroRīga 2014' Festival which will be on soon. I will be working right on the 17th [November]. I read books as well, and I am learning German in parallel (interview, Karīna, 17 years old, non-organized).

My mother, I remember, dragged me to all sorts of groups – to choir, basketball and aikido, one after another, she also achieved my [becoming] fairly open (interview, Liene, 18 years old, non-organized). I think that it's great that you can sort of loosen up [get involved in something], well I loosened up, for example, when I played the piano. I play for about two hours and that pacifies me, relaxes me. The same with drawing (interview, Anna, female, 15 years old, secondary school).

While it is more typical for primary school respondents to get involved in various groups where children's talents and abilities are developed for young people (17-18) there is a tendency to join some organization. Among organized young people, there are persons who have become involved in informal educational organizations, in their school's or university's self-government, in volunteer organizations and others. By getting involved in work with organizations, they get the opportunity to develop their leadership skills (for example, by being a board member in their organization), to do good for people around them or their town (volunteer work) or the opportunity to travel (for example, by undertaking projects in their organization), with a line on their CV being no less important.

Money

Even though money was given a smaller role than family, friends and school, there is no doubt that material circumstances are also significant for young people's well-being. The significance of money is emphasized when speaking mainly about satisfying basic needs, like clothing, food and housing. Most of the respondents wish to earn a good living in the future. Some would like to become famous or even to simply become millionaires. However, even in such situations, the respondents think not about the opportunity to gain power or valuable material things with the assistance of money, but about a feeling of security in the present and future, as well as the opportunity to provide for their family:

INT: Which are things can be related more to well-being than others?

RESP: Probably the fulfilment of some dream. I think that dreams stand above everything, even when you are chasing after money. You don't chase after money, you chase after what you want to do with the money. If your dream is a husband and three children, you will put effort into that job, not because you have a need for that money, but to feed those children. (...). Money is only some sort of means and only a

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small factor in it all (interview, Uģis, male, 18 years old, involved).

INT: How important is the material side, earning a lot of money, to you in life?

RESP: The only thing perhaps, for others. For me, to be able to earn a lot, but I don't need a lot for myself (interview, Kārlis, male, 15 years old, secondary school).

Happiness

In analysing the young people's responses, it can be concluded that for them to feel happy, young people do not need many things or even need to possess material things. Young people are made happy on an everyday basis firstly, by the people around them. This includes mainly a loving family, trustworthy friends, spending time with others close to them, good relationships at school and others. In the main, loyalty, respect, understanding and the ability to listen, to accept young people's opinions, is expected from these people:

I like the fact that I have great parents who look after themselves, care for us and can provide us with nice things, and that together we can... We are a good family. We can feel good together, just as easily lie together on the sofa and watch television and everything is really great, or even travel somewhere, go visiting and try out various new foods, see, those sorts of things (interview, Madara, female, 17 years old, involved).

The respondents felt happy if their basic needs could be met: if they are fed and clothed, if there is a roof over their heads, a warm bed and health, then there is no basis for being unsatisfied:

INT: What does well-being mean to you?

RESP: Well-being means that ... I can return, come home and a warm bed awaits me, and Mum makes me something to eat (interview, Liene, 18 years old, non-organized).

INT: What's important for you to feel well?

RESP1: A safe local environment, a feeling of home in a sense, when you are not afraid of going out on the street, support from those around you. (Focus Group, Ilze, female, 18 years old, non-organized)

RESP2: Definitely friends (Focus Group, Sandis, 17 years old, non-organized).

RESP1: Food (Focus Group, Ilze, female, 18 years old, non-organized).

RESP2: Food is more to survive (Focus Group, Sandis, 17 years old, non-organized).

RESP3: A day without food and your mood is at zero (Focus Group, Kristaps, 18 years old, non-organized).

Useful and interesting ways to pass the time guarantee a feeling of happiness in young people: attending various interest groups, hobbies (sports, music, theatre or drawing), playing on the computer, travelling, doing silly things etc., all promote a

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good frame of mind, a feeling of satisfaction and satisfaction in oneself in what has been achieved. It also promotes stability and security by to think about the future and do good deeds for others, like charity, helping others, volunteer work etc. *I like it if I do something and make others happy. I like making others happy. I like the fact that it makes me happy as well, that I have the so-called energy for doing some sorts of things* (interview, Anna, female, 15 years old, secondary school).

The main things mentioned that make children feel unhappy, worried and even angry were mainly various failures, disappointments, a bad attitude, injustice towards them, stress, problems at school, losing someone close, violence, situations when they could not get what they wanted, relationships with others and their studies:

INT: How did you feel over the last week?

RESP: I was very angry and sad as I had tests at school all week. I had two tests on the same day in chemistry and in another [subject], then a mathematics test as well and a biology test on the same day. You go home, you feel tired and you still have to study. All that homework, and tests on the following day as well. Only then can you think about doing something for yourself. I probably get angry at my parents if they make me do something (interview, Antons, male, 18 years old, involved).

Life satisfaction

All of the participants in the survey were more or less satisfied with their lives. Their responses to the question: “Are you satisfied with your life?” included general evaluations: “my life is very good”, “I am satisfied”, “there’s no problem”, etc. This can also be applied to respondents whose external appearance and life circumstances provide evidence of a less favourable or even unfavourable environment within the family, about which none of the respondents would talk openly. An exceptional case is the respondent who at the time of the survey was living in a children’s crisis centre. However, even he admitted that if he had not ended up at the crisis centre, he would feel 100% satisfied with his life:

INT: To what degree are you currently satisfied with life?

RESP: From 100% to 20%.

INT: You are only 20% satisfied?

RESP: Less, about 10%. If I was home, then I’d be 100% satisfied. Now I am 10% satisfied.

INT: Generally, do you like your life?

RESP: Overall, yes.

INT: What do you like about your life?

RESP: I like everything. I like my friends, my grandmother. Well like that. (interview, Kristaps, male, 16 years old, non-organized)

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INT: To what degree are you presently satisfied with your life?

RESP: Well, I wouldn't want to live like this until the end of my life, but I consider that in principle, up until now, everything is OK for me.

INT: So you like your life?

RESP: Yes (interview, Kārlis, male, 15 years old, secondary school).

Despite the fact that the respondents are, in the main, satisfied with their lives, young people admit that “there’s always the desire to achieve more”, “it can always be better” or “there could be more of something” as well. By this, they mean mainly more friends, love, a better external appearance, more interests, as well as much more free time: *It can always be better. Your health could be better or you could have better grades, or more time to do things, less laziness, a greater will to do something* (interview, Antons, male, 18 years old, involved).

For young people, greater difficulties were provided in determining their parents’ level of satisfaction, as this issue was not discussed on an everyday basis. The young people’s responses varied from ‘partly satisfied’ (an unsuccessful personal life, a boring job or a low wage etc.), to ‘is satisfied’ (a good job, ‘as they’ve got us’, personal home, etc.).

Psychological well-being

The survey reveals that it is important for young people to be aware of their desires, interests and life goals. The respondents said that they deprecate and criticize themselves about inexpediently used time or even extended searching for themselves, which causes them a feeling of stress. Selecting and realizing one’s life goals in the future is considered to be a successful guarantee of the future. The respondents were aware that incorrectly selected goals and the overrating of their abilities can lead to difficulties and failure in the future. The support of family and friends, a good education, financial means, a broad range of acquaintances and the development of one’s abilities and talent are mentioned as factors that influence the fulfilment of future plans. It is significant that these factors were also mentioned as hurdles to the achievement of goals. For example, a current shortage of funds stops one from gaining a good education or gaining a good profession, spending time too actively with friends diverts concentration from studies and disagreements within the family undermine the young people's hopes of realizing their dreams:

INT: What makes it easier to achieve goals?

RESP: Obviously, the support of friends. Support makes it easier and it's the same with family support. There has to be that spark that possibly makes everything easier (interview, Toms, male, 17 years old, non-organized).

The fact that it's not your real goal may interfere. You haven't understood your

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subconscious well enough, you didn't understand what you really wanted, for example if you are only guided by money. People who are motivated only by money usually don't get very far. ...they are unhappy (interview, Santa, female, 19 years old, involved).

The data gained provided evidence that young people that firstly, study hard; secondly, come from stable families and are aware that they will always have family support; thirdly, are active in interest groups or active members of an organization, have firmer conviction about their future and the achievement of the goals they have set.

In discussing the future, most of the respondents expressed a hope for stability in their lives, which they thought could be reached with a good education, employment, a family, a house, and good and trusted friends. A few of the respondents added pets to this list (female respondents) and a car (male respondents). The most active discussions were raised by the issue of employment. All the respondents wish to work in a well-paid job in the future and also in an interesting job. The question about a possible choice between a well-paid but uninteresting job and an interesting, but lower paid job made them think. In the discussions, the respondents maintained that they were ready to forego a higher wage in favour of an interesting job only where the discussion is about themselves, and not about providing for the family. The respondents confirmed their readiness to sacrifice themselves for the good of their family, choosing a better paid, rather than an interesting job:

INT: What are the goals that you wish to achieve in life?

RESP: To live life normally.

INT: What is normally?

RESP: Well, getting work and living normally, so that the work is not too bad and so that there's money, and so on all your life (interview, Vineta, 18 years old, non-organized).

INT: Would you be ready to work for a lower wage, but with a more interesting job?

RESP: Yes, as if you do that, you will always have the opportunity to grow in some way so that you will get just as much or... if you like something, you will always find a way of earning good money through it. For example, I know a man who really likes being a waiter. He earns good money, more than my mother sitting at her computer and continually printing out numbers. Why be a little sulky and sad Latvian, if you can do something mighty doing what you like? (interview, Santa, female, 19 years old, involved).

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3.3. Remarks on the definition and operationalization of 'well-being' in the fieldwork

The questions did not create difficulty and the question strategy was successfully worked out during the fieldwork, allowing the level of the children's well-being to be established fairly accurately. The interview questions allowed for accurate research on pre-school children's ideas of well-being and to also describe their own level of well-being. Even though the questions did not provide difficulties, perhaps individually those associated with the understanding of abstract concepts like *well-being* and *inequality* did, for example. In these cases, it could be seen that the respondents thought for a longer time, initially responding inaccurately until they found the right words and could formulate their views precisely. Primary school children's interview questions had to be different from the questions for the respondents in the older groups. The idiosyncrasies of their age cohort, for example, must be taken into account, as it is not typical for primary school-aged children to rise up "against the authority of adults".

One of the problems with talking to the primary school respondents is the way in which it should be done. During this fieldwork, the teacher was in the room where the interview took place. On one hand, it was a place that the respondent was used to and the presence of the teacher was a guarantee of a feeling of security. However, at times it could be observed that the respondent knew that the teacher could hear his/her replies. It can be assumed that the responses were adapted to the teacher's wishes to hear the "right" answers. This created a hurdle for open discussion about the school, the class, and their classmates, as it was important to the children how what they were saying would be understood by the teacher.

There was also the problem that the primary school-age respondents were nervous and worried about the interview, and the interviewer had to be able to ask the questions such in a way that the respondent could regain composure and provide candid responses.

The respondents were better able to understand the specific questions associated with what they had experienced, observed and felt themselves.

4. Differences in the understanding of well-being depending on certain factors

The demographics (age, gender, nationality etc.) in the primary school group of

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students were not determinative in the differences in the development of the data established and described. A consistent similarity in responses can be established in the respondents' understanding of well-being and diametrically opposite or radical views do not appear in them. This is determined by the fact that the views of the primary school-aged group of respondents have been formed in families with a similar social situation, level of education, living conditions and mutual relationships. To gain more varying data, it would be necessary to conduct interviews outside of school and in different social environments.

Meanwhile, during the discussions, the respondents (16-18 years old) who were in a vulnerable situation emphasized the satisfaction of their basic needs more. They accented the need for a home, employment, family and health, as well as stability and equality. Even though young people from stable families also discussed similar needs, among them there was still more discussion about opportunities for spending their free time outside the home (the cinema, theatre or cafe), participation in interest groups and other activities, travel, self-expression and the possibility of speaking up.

During fieldwork, it was observed that children who achieve more at school than others are more confident about their ability to get a good education and to achieve what they want in the future, such as a good family, a good job, a house, travel, etc. A similar situation could also be observed among young people active outside of school. They were confident that the skills they were learning would also be useful in the future and could help in making contacts and in seeking work, for example.

In the data gained in interviews, it can be established that there are differences in young people's views about the importance of family and friends. Even though the majority of respondents value the family higher than friends, young people with a lower level of education and who are not involved in activities outside of school are more attached to family. On the contrary, young people with a better education and who are more active outside of school value family and friends fairly equally.

5. Having their voices heard and survey engagement

Children (10-12 years old)

The respondents considered that their viewpoint was sometimes heard, but this did not occur often. It should be noted that primary school-aged children do not particularly try to force their point of view in a discussion with adults. It is different amongst their peers when they state their opinion and their friends listen to it, for example, in class or in the yard. The parents and grandparents of a number of

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children listened to their opinion, but the children were merely notified about important issues and did not get involved in solving them. At school, children also stated their opinions, but the final word belonged to adults on important things. On the street and on public transport, children did not get involved in discussions with adults, and if there was a threat of conflict arising with their peers or children a little bit older, the respondents left the situation, ignoring any teasing of them or interference.

None of the respondents in the primary school-aged group had any specific suggestions on how to make the interview more interesting. They were entirely satisfied with the interview time and conditions. Even though the interview took place immediately after their lessons, the respondents said that they were not tired (however, individual signs of tiredness could be observed as the responses were shorter, they became distracted and could not sit still).

All the respondents expressed a desire to willingly participate in interviews again and admitted that it had been an interesting experience. Even though at the beginning of the interviews they were told about the goals of the project and its process in other countries, the overall measurement of well-being remained incomprehensible and abstract to the primary school children. The motivation was individual. For example, they like being active or would respond to interesting offers. Special motivation was not required. However, after the fieldwork, the respondents were proud when they met with the interviewer and received incentives for their participation.

There was agreement on the issue of the interview venue. The school and their own class was unanimously considered to be the best venue – an environment in which they were used to spending time, responding to questions and relying on their teacher. Home and the presence of their parents was not considered to be a better environment for the interviews.

Young people (16-18 years old)

The interview data showed that the young people's level of education, upbringing within the family and their involvement in activities outside of school determined the level to which they wanted to express their opinion. Young people who did better at school, who were taught to argue their point of view within the family or who were involved in an NGO got more actively involved in discussions and in expressing their viewpoint in class, within the family or within society. The young person's psycho-emotional type was an equally important factor: young people, who, by their nature, are quieter or less confident in themselves get involved in discussions to a lesser degree, whereas young people who could be identified as leaders had no difficulty in expressing their point of view: *I am more the type who listens and hears other people. I can't say that I don't like being asked for my opinion. I can express my point of view,*

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but if I have to more or less fight for it, so that my opinion is heard, for example, so that the teacher hears what I want to say and so that she gives me a grade for it, then that's really not for me (interview, Liene, 18 years old, non-organized).

INT: Do you like expressing your opinion?

RESP: Yes, a lot. It's like my mother has taught me from early childhood: if we want something, we have to state why. Your opinion has to be argued. As a consequence, she has already been listening to our arguments from early childhood, what we want and what we think about various things (interview, Karīna, 17 years old, non-organized).

From the interviews, it transpires that young people express their viewpoint mainly within the family, among friends, at school and sometimes also on social networks (Twitter, Facebook etc.). The environment in which the young person's opinion is more or less taken into account is dependent on the profile of the person involved. For example, the young people mentioned that despite the fact that they were asked to express their opinions during lessons at school or to reveal their position on some issue, these opinions were not always respected, and this was influenced not only by the theme being discussed but also the teacher's attitude:

It depends a lot on the teacher, but in reality, we only have one teacher who is against any of our opinions. She considers that only her point of view is correct. That's our biology teacher, but the other teachers are responsive (interview, Karīna, 17 years old, non-organized). It's the case that sometimes I am afraid [to express my opinion], as I understand that I, for example, will express some thoughts and that the teacher will specially mark me down. I'd rather be silent as I want to finish the 12th year well (interview, Vineta, female, 18 years old, involved).

In discussing the acceptance of young people's opinions in society as a whole, the respondents were unanimous that their voices were not adequately taken into account, even though various students'/young people's local and national-level boards operate in Latvia. In their opinion, it happens because adults don't think that young people are capable of thinking independently, of taking on responsibility and they still lack experience. This sort of attitude from adults contrasts with the fact that adult conduct and behaviour is expected from young people who are 15-18 years old. In admitting that the views of young people are taken into account very little, a few of the respondents, however, agreed with the adult position on this issue, considering that adults are right in most cases, as they better understand what their children need: *Unfortunately, in reality nobody listens. That's what I said, that adult behaviour is expected from us, but we are treated like children. Often it all ends up, perhaps, not as one would have liked...* (interview, Toms, male, 17 years old, non-organized).

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6. Other recommendations informing the MYWEB project

Education and employment opportunities for young people who have not reached adulthood, young people's addictions, early sexual relations and a low level of well-being are problems mentioned by young people, indicating that more attention should be focussed on them. Research on young people's well-being was recognized as one of the most effective methods to help young people to express their opinion and to be heard in society. According to the thinking of the respondents, such research should include in-depth interviews and questionnaires and observation of what should happen, not only at school, but also on the streets, in interest groups and NGOs. The views of the respondents were divided about whether special motivation was needed. Some pointed out that participation in the research has to be completely voluntary and that the child/young person has to want to talk about their problems. Other respondents said that young people could be motivated by payments, incentives to encourage them and, if the interview was to take place at school, that they should be freed from lessons.

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