

## **Section 2: On the body concepts of young people in six European countries: Self-perception – perceptions of others – ideals of beauty**

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### **1. Background and aims of the empirical study – Developmental-psychological aspects**

*The concept of developmental tasks.* In 1941, HAVIGHURST (1901-1991) formulated so-called 'developmental tasks' for six stages in life (early, mid-childhood, adolescence, early, mid-, late adulthood) and allocated to every stage specific developmental tasks. According to HAVIGHURST (1972) these developmental tasks derive from three sources: from biological changes to the organism, from expectations and requirements of the surrounding society and culture as well as from the values and goals of the involved individual.

Central themes of developmental tasks in adolescence and early adulthood are focused on the involvement with oneself (body concept, identity ...), on the forming of relationships (binding and loosening in the context of family and peer group, friendship and partnership) as well as the defining of life plans (social and vocational competences, values, acceptance of roles, future plans, life-style ...).

*The concept of transitions.* According to KIMMEL & WEINER (1995) "transitions" are periods of intensive change – followed by instability and vulnerability (susceptibility). Such transitions are centred in the bio-physical domain, in the area of cognitive functions as well in social development.

The following study is predominantly interested in bio-physical transitions, which can be characterised as follows:

- They are completely different to 'growing' during childhood;
- The body scheme that has been established loses its validity in the course of sexual maturity;
- Based on the changes to bodily proportions new gender-specific notions have to be integrated in a new perception of self.

This type of involvement is dependent on the norms and ideals that determine the perception of an adult female respectively an adult male.

These physical changes are not only perceived by the individual but are also discernible for others; they take place within the societal parameters and contexts, in which the young people are growing up. Current phenomena ('internet identity', 'body presentation', 'assimilation to consumption habits') are more related to societal parameters than bio-physical development. In this overall systemic perspective, the ecological development model of Urie BRONFENBRENNER (1917-2005) plays an important role with its concept of the interaction of developmental contexts (e.g. family, habitat, school, working place, cultural norms and values) with the interconnectedness to other increasingly complicated systems. The transition to a higher education school or the start of an apprenticeship (at the age of 14 or 15), and in general any transition to a new area

of life requires a special act of adaptation as personal experience.

Youth-culture communities (cf. the hip-hop scene, the boarder scene, the hooligan scene ...) invest much time and energy in the realisation of an exact pre-defined, based often on complex rules of physical and fashion-bound appearance. According to HEINZLMAIER (2011) this type of aesthetic self-configuration "also depends on the fact that the post-modern youth cultures are emotion- and perception-oriented cultures. Individuals attempt to get nearer to each other through strategies of mutual empathy and understanding. Through bodily appearance and the fashion-bound presentation of oneself, values, worldviews, and philosophies of life are ex-pressed. It is all about communicating not only to the youth cultures but to the public in general through these pictures, which are meant to be invitations to understand the personal identities behind them" (Heinzlmaier 2011, p. 236).

It is worth mentioning that in Austria and Germany more than three-quarters of the 11- to 29 year-olds see themselves as part of an informal community or scene (Heinzlmaier 2011, p. 238, referring to: tfactory Osterreich 2008, tfactory Deutschland 2008, Institut für Jugendkulturforschung 2007, Grossegger/Heinzlmaier 2007, Grossegger/Heinzlmaier 2002, Silbereisen u. a. 1996). In this context, the fitness scene is considered the most important. In this way, the forming of physical appearance and the care of one's body becomes a theme that forges community identity (compare Heinzlmaier 2011, Pp. 238). HEINZLMAIER (2011) also describes the targeted influencing and forming of aesthetic configuration as stronger among young females than among young males.

Our society is significantly influenced by the media: they influence not only the way we communicate but also how we present ourselves to our societal surroundings. Visual media above all encompass us with suggestions and instructions how we should shape our outward appearance in order to be successful.

"Whoever wants to succeed in the visual media must look good, must send out strong physical signals that communicate that one's own body is important ... In this way, care for one's body and personal physical appearance as communicated by the visual media becomes a central concern for young people (Heinzlmaier 2011, P. 252, based on "Deutsche Shell" 2006).

Results of the WHO-HBSC-Survey 2010 show that in Austria: "only 48.6% of children and young people said that they 'roughly had the right weight'; round 37% said that they felt too fat. However, the body heights and body weights that were reported show that in fact, only 12.3% are overweight and 2.8% are adipose [...] Based on personal reporting; since 2002 the proportion of overweight and adipose individuals is continually slightly increasing. As far as young females is concerned, the first increase was reported between the survey of 2006 and 2010" (WHO-HBSC-Survey 2010, link: <http://www.bmg.gv.at> [02/07/2012]).

In 1990, in a longitudinal analysis of 12- to 16 year-olds, FEND already identified significant gender-specific differences, which seem to show

- girls seem to be less stable than boys;
- they had lower self-esteem, an adverse self-perception of their bodies, limited personal control, and a higher level of anxiety regarding their performance (Fend 1990, p. 86f.).

TERPELUK (1992) confirmed these results: young females were more dissatisfied with themselves and felt that they could not assert themselves. They are more fearful, more susceptible, felt more alienated and think about themselves more than young males. According to FEND (1990), young females dealt with developmental problems somatically directing them inwards at their own self-esteem. In contrast, young males direct similar challenges outwardly, which are sometimes expressed in aggressive and destructive behavioural patterns (compare Zartler 1997, p. 13).

## **2. Description of the research material**

The complete research material was developed by the author in German and English. The first part of the research material (items 1-18) originated using the following scales:

- BAT – *Body Attitude Test* (questionnaire about own body attitude);
- EDI-2D – *Eating Disorder Inventory 2* (German language versions).

The items 1-4 cover own body attitude, item 5: because of a mistake in translation was not taken into consideration, the values for the fear of transition to adulthood are covered in the items 6-9. Items 10-13 ask about attitudes to current beauty ideals – items 14-18 look at the importance of outward appearance.

The young people (average age 13,9) were asked to answer the statements in a way that was personally appropriate.

Items 1-18 had to be answered in a four-stage scale, i.e.:

1: Is completely true; 2: Is partly true; 3: Is not really true; 4: Is not true at all.

## **3. The concrete form of the questions**

The following concrete questions formed the basis for the research:

1. Is there an overall difference between the test persons (young males and young females) in the selected European countries

- according to their attitude to their own bodies (qualitative, quantitative),
- according to their statements about transition to adulthood (qualitative) and according to the gathered information on the levels of fear regarding the transition to adulthood (quantitative),
- according to their orientation to current beauty ideals (qualitative, quantitative),
- according to their estimation of the importance of outward appearance for personal success (qualitative, quantitative)?

2. Is there a difference between boys and girls in Austria, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Poland, and Turkey

- according to their attitude to their own bodies (qualitative, quantitative),
- according to their statements about transition to adulthood (qualitative) and according to the gathered information on the levels of fear regarding the transition to adulthood (quantitative),
- according to their orientation to current beauty ideals (qualitative, quantitative),
- according to their estimation of the importance of outward appearance for personal success (qualitative, quantitative)?

#### 4. Description of the samples

The Austrian sample (AT) originated from a Viennese secondary modern school (8th grade). The German sample (DE) came from a 7<sup>th</sup> grade gymnasium (grammar school) and a 7th grade secondary modern school in Rotenburg/Wümme (30 km east of Bremen)<sup>1</sup>. The Hungarian sample (HU) was carried out in a primary school in Szeged<sup>2</sup>. The Norwegian data (NO) was gathered in 10 primary school classes ("Jugendschule") – approx. half from Alta and half from Kristiansand, in the south of Norway<sup>3</sup>. The Polish sample (PL) comes from a gymnasium (grammar school – compulsory school for 13-16 year-old pupils) in Słupsk<sup>4</sup>. The Turkish sample (TR) comes from Izmir<sup>5</sup>. The test persons are attending a "Dershane" (a private preparation class preparing pupils for various exams that they need to move from compulsory schooling to further education). The project partners of the involved countries translated the questionnaires into the national languages (footnotes 2-6).

The following table 1 shows the origin of the data according to country and gender:

Country	AT	DE	HU	NO	PL	TR	Total
Boys	28	66	28	29	28	30	207
Girls	24	84	26	41	30	30	237
Total	52	150	54	70	58	60	<b>444</b>

Table 1: Origin of the data according to country and gender

The data was gathered from secondary schools groups aged between 11 and 17, concentrating on the age group 13 to 15 – in general who were attending their last year of compulsory education (compare the following table):

Age / Country	AT	DE	HU	NO	PL	TR
11	-	0,7 (1)	-	-	-	-
12	-	10,7 (16)	-	-	-	-
13	5,8 (3)	76,7 (115)	42,6 (23)	32,9 (23)	5,3 (3)	3,3 (2)
14	61,5 (32)	12,0 (18)	46,3 (25)	7,1 (5)	29,3 (17)	95 (57)
15	23,1 (12)	-	11,1 (6)	47,1 (33)	37,9 (22)	1,7 (1)
16	9,6 (5)	-	-	12,9 (9)	25,9 (15)	-
17	-	-	-	-	1,7 (1)	-

Table 2: Presentation of the sample according to the age of the test persons

<sup>1</sup> Information from Dr. Bernd Drägestein (Munich, Germany)

<sup>2</sup> Information from Prof. Mag. Erika Grossmann (Szeged, Hungary)

<sup>3</sup> Information from Prof. Dr. Herbert Zoglowek (Alta, Norway)

<sup>4</sup> Information from Dr. Małgozata Żyluk (Słupsk, Poland)

<sup>5</sup> Information from Ass. Prof. Nesrin Oruc (Izmir, Turkey)

## 5. Quality of the data and its encoding

The research data was gathered and analysed by the authors of the study using SPSS. In general, the first part of the questionnaire was filled in carefully by the test persons. The items 1-18 (qualitative results) were encoded according to a four-stage scale: "1: Is completely true; 2: Is partly true; 3: Is not really true; 4: Is not true at all" as well as regarding

- a "positive attitude to one's body",
  - the "fear of the transition to adulthood",
  - the "orientation to current beauty ideals (advertisements, media)",
  - the "estimation of the importance of outward appearance for personal success"
- re-encoded in order to provide quantitative values for further analysis.

## 6. Depiction and description of the results of the questions 1 und 2

### 6.1 Sub-test 1: Statements about the attitude to own body

The following table presents the results of "Sub-test 1: Statement to attitudes to own body" according to countries (results in percentages<sup>6</sup>; absolute numbers in brackets).

<b>Sub-test 1: Statements to attitudes to own body</b>				
	Is completely true	Is partly true	Is not really true	Is not true at all
<b>1 I am satisfied with my appearance.</b>				
AT	40,4 (21)	<b>46,2 (24)</b>	9,6 (5)	3,8 (2)
DE	26,0 (39)	<b>59,3 (89)</b>	13,3 (20)	-
HU	33,3 (18)	<b>50,0 (27)</b>	14,8 (8)	1,9 (1)
NO	15,7 (11)	<b>61, (43)</b>	12,9 (9)	5,7 (4)
PL	34,5 (20)	<b>51,7 (30)</b>	12,1 (7)	1,7 (1)
TR	<b>45 (27)</b>	41,7 (25)	6,7 (4)	5 (3)
<b>2 When I compare myself with my peers I am not satisfied with my body.</b>				
AT	17,3 (9)	28,8 (15)	13,5 (7)	<b>40,4 (21)</b>
DE	7,3 (11)	25,3 (38)	<b>38,0 (57)</b>	29,3 (44)
HU	27,8 (15)	<b>31,5 (17)</b>	20,4 (11)	20,4 (11)
NO	22,9 (16)	<b>42,9 (30)</b>	27,1 (19)	5,7 (4)
PL	10,3 (6)	22,4 (13)	19,0 (11)	<b>48,3 (28)</b>
TR	11,7 (7)	18,3 (11)	26,7 (16)	<b>41,7 (25)</b>
<b>3 I tend to hide my body (e.g. through loose clothing).</b>				
AT	7,7 (4)	3,8 (2)	17,3 (9)	<b>71,2 (37)</b>
DE	3,3 (5)	11,3 (17)	40,0 (60)	<b>45,3 (68)</b>
HU	3,7 (2)	22,2 (12)	16,7 (9)	<b>55,6 (30)</b>
NO	--	<b>34,3 (24)</b>	<b>34,3 (24)</b>	1,4 (1)
PL	10,3 (6)	15,5 (9)	13,8 (8)	<b>58,6 (34)</b>
TR	6,7 (4)	15 (9)	15 (9)	<b>61,7 (37)</b>
<b>4 My appearance is very important for me.</b>				
AT	<b>59,6 (31)</b>	34,6 (18)	5,8 (3)	0 (0)

<sup>6</sup> The author is aware of the problematic nature of presenting percentages by n<100. They are used here to give a better comparison of the results from differing sizes of samples.

DE	<b>44,7 (67)</b>	<b>44,7 (67)</b>	7,3 (11)	2,7 (4)
HU	<b>48,1 (26)</b>	46,3 (25)	5,6 (3)	0 (0)
NO	21,4 (15)	<b>55,7 (39)</b>	18,6 (13)	2,9 (2)
PL	37,9 (22)	<b>44,8 (26)</b>	13,8 (8)	3,4 (2)
TR	<b>73,3 (44)</b>	15,0 (9)	1,7 (1)	5,0 (3)

Table 3: Data from Sub-test 1

- The test persons from the European sample are generally satisfied with their appearance (item 1). This is most apparent in the statements from the Polish, Austrian, and Turkish young people. The least satisfied are Norwegian young people: 18,6 % said that they were not / absolutely not satisfied with their appearance.
- In comparison with their peers, 40 % of the Polish, Austrian, and Turkish young people are rather satisfied with their body (item 2). Norwegian young people are least satisfied – followed by Hungarian young people.
- Norwegian young people tend more, compared to other young people in other countries, to hide their bodies through loose clothing (compare item 3).
- Young people in Europe think that their outward appearance is generally very important (item 4). This opinion is particularly predominant in the Hungarian, Austrian, and Turkish sample. It is least prominent in the Norwegian sample.

#### Question 1:

*Do the test persons (boys and girls together) in selected European countries differ in the attitude to their own bodies (qualitative, quantitative)?*

As expected – compare Table: “Statements to attitudes to own body” – the test persons differ in items 1-4 in  $X^2$ -Test significantly to very significantly in their statements ( $p < 0,05$ ).

The quantitative analysis offers a more nuanced picture. In item 2 and item 4 in the Sub-test 1: “Statements to attitudes to own body”, the Scheffé Test<sup>7</sup> shows significant differences ( $p < 0,05$ ) between the statements of the test persons from the selected countries.

Item 2 between

- Norway and Germany, Norway and Turkey, and Norway and Poland as well as between
- Hungary and Germany, Hungary and Turkey, and Hungary and Poland.

Item 4 between

- Norway and Germany, Norway and Hungary, Norway and Austria, and Norway and Turkey as well as between
- Poland and Turkey.

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<sup>7</sup> The Scheffé Test (*post hoc*) is a mean score test, which robustly deals with any challenges to its presuppositions. Data gathered regarding the F-value have not been considered here in order not to overload the reader with further statistical data).

This box plot<sup>8</sup> (Stem-and-Leaf Display) visualises the differences pro country and illustrates the in total unfavourable attitude to own body of the Norwegian sample. According to Kruskal-Wallis the countries differ very significantly ( $X^2 = 44,9070$ ;  $p < 0,0000$ ).

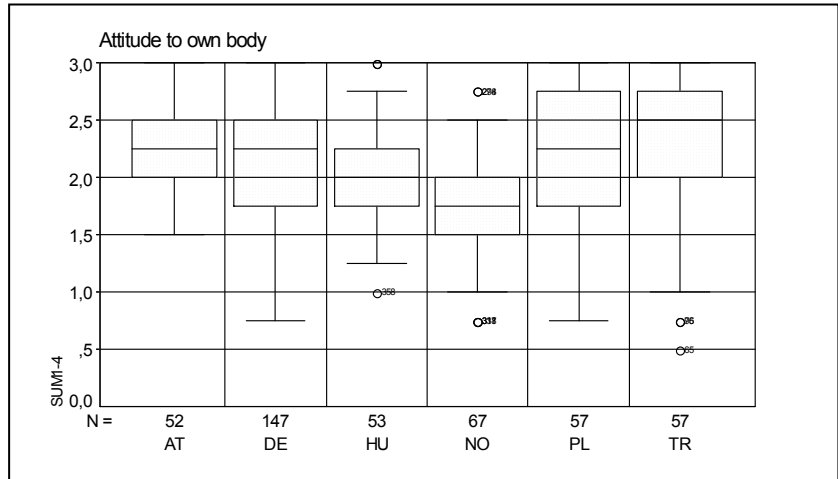


Chart 1: Attitude to own body according to selected countries

**Question 2:**

*Do boys in Austria, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Poland, and Turkey differ from girls in the same countries regarding their attitude to their own bodies?*

The following table gives an overview of the significant differences in the data gathered in the  $X^2$ -Test between boys and girls in the selected countries. The asterisk (\*) indicates significant differences between boys and girls in the following items:

<b>Attitude to own body (Differences between boys and girls; qualitative Analysis)</b>	<b>AT</b>	<b>DE</b>	<b>HU</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>PL</b>	<b>TR</b>
1 I am satisfied with my appearance.		*		*		
2 When I compare myself with my peers I am not satisfied with my body.	*	*		*		
3 I tend to hide my body (e.g. through loose clothing).	*					
4 My appearance is very important for me.			*	*		

Table 4: Sub-test 1 – Differences between boys and girls

According to the  $X^2$ -Test, in items 1-4 (compare table above), there are no significant difference between boys and girls with regards to their own-body attitude in Poland and Turkey.

*Item 1:* Boys from the evaluated sample in Germany are highly significantly satisfied with their appearance compared to girls from the same cohort ( $p < 0,00005$ ). 44,6 % of the boys are satisfied with their outward appearance compared to 12,0 % of the girls. This is even more evident in the Norwegian sample: Boys from the evaluated sample in Norway are highly significantly satisfied with their appearance compared with girls from

<sup>8</sup> The box in the diagram is limited by the first and third quartile (25 respectively 75 percentile). The inner (stronger) lines represent the medians. Furthermore, the lowest and greatest value are marked as long as they do not represent aberrations.

the same cohort ( $p < 0,005$ ): 37,0 % of the boys are satisfied with their outward appearance compared to 2,5 % of the girls.

*Item 2:* Girls from the Austrian sample are highly significantly dissatisfied with their outward appearance compared with the boys from the same cohort – the same situation holds true for girls and boys from the German sample.

For 34,1 % of the girls from the Norwegian sample, dissatisfaction with their own bodies “is completely true” compared to 7,1 % of the boys ( $p < 0,0005$ ).

*Item 3:* Girls from the Austrian sample tend to hide their bodies through loose clothing ( $p < 0,05$ ).

*Item 4:* For the girls from the Hungarian sample their outward appearance is very important. This “is completely true” for 64,3 % of the girls but only for 30,8 % of the boys. The difference in  $\chi^2$ -Test between boys and girls is significant ( $p < 0,05$ ).

In the Norwegian sample, the statement is completely true for 34,1% of the girls and for only 3,6 % of the boys ( $p < 0,0005$ ).

It becomes overall evident that girls in the selected countries have a less favourable “Attitude to own body” compared to boys. They are less satisfied with their appearance compared to boys and in comparison with their peers less satisfied than boys.

Norwegian young people show the least favourable attitude to their own bodies, in particular the girls.

## 6.2 Sub-test 2: Fear of transition to adulthood

The following table depicts the results of Sub-test 2: “Fear of transition to adulthood” according to countries (results in percentages; absolute numbers in brackets).

<b>Sub-test 2: Fear of transition to adulthood</b>				
	Is completely true	Is partly true	Is not really true	Is not true at all
<b>6 I check my appearance in front of the mirror.</b>				
AT	<b>63,5 (33)</b>	17,3 (9)	13,5 (7)	5,8 (3)
DE	<b>46,7 (70)</b>	34,0 (51)	16,7 (25)	2,7 (4)
HU	<b>64,8 (35)</b>	24,1 (13)	7,4 (4)	3,7 (2)
NO	<b>58,6 (41)</b>	27,1 (19)	8,6 (6)	4,3 (3)
PL	35,1 (20)	<b>36,2 (21)</b>	19,0 (11)	8,6 (5)
TR	<b>80,0 (48)</b>	11,7 (7)	5,0 (3)	1,7 (1)
<b>7 I would like to be younger.</b>				
AT	13,5 (7)	9,6 (5)	19,2 (10)	<b>55,8 (29)</b>
DE	2,7 (4)	12,0 (18)	19,3 (29)	<b>66,0 (99)</b>
HU	5,6 (3)	14,8 (8)	18,5 (10)	<b>59,3 (32)</b>
NO	-	4,3 (3)	21,4 (15)	<b>72,9 (51)</b>
PL	10,3 (6)	10,3 (6)	8,6 (5)	<b>69,0 (40)</b>
TR	20,0 (12)	21,7 (13)	21,7 (13)	<b>35,0 (21)</b>
<b>8 I am glad that I am no longer a child.</b>				
AT	<b>42,3 (22)</b>	30,8 (16)	17,3 (9)	9,6 (5)
DE	34,0 (51)	<b>38,7 (58)</b>	18,7 (28)	8,0 (12)
HU	29,6 (16)	<b>42,6 (23)</b>	7,4 (4)	13,0 (7)
NO	24,3 (17)	<b>48,6 (34)</b>	18,6 (13)	7,1 (5)



PL	<b>39,7 (23)</b>	29,3 (17)	15,5 (9)	12,1 (7)
TR	<b>41,7 (25)</b>	35,0 (21)	11,7 (7)	10,0 (6)
<b>9 I think that people are happiest when they are children.</b>				
AT	<b>40,4 (21)</b>	28,8 (15)	23,1 (12)	7,7 (4)
DE	26,7 (40)	<b>47,3 (71)</b>	20,0 (30)	6,0 (9)
HU	24,1 (13)	<b>48,1 (26)</b>	16,7 (9)	7,4 (4)
NO	21,4 (15)	<b>45,7 (32)</b>	22,9 (16)	8,6 (6)
PL	<b>44,8 (26)</b>	39,7 (23)	8,6 (5)	5,2 (3)
TR	<b>58,3 (35)</b>	23,3 (14)	8,3 (5)	6,7 (4)

Table 5: Data from Sub-test 2

- The highest percentage of test persons, with exception of the Polish sample, says that it is "completely true" that they check their appearance in front of the mirror (item 6). This is particularly true for Turkish, Hungarian, and Austrian young people. It is least true for the young people of the German sample. Polish young people do not "stand" so often "in front of the mirror".
- The notion that the young people would rather be younger (item 7) is overall not true. The desire to become an adult is most clearly articulated by Norwegian young people, followed by the Polish and German test persons; it is least clearly articulated by Turkish and Austrian young people.
- Almost three-quarters of the young people who were evaluated say that it is completely/ partly true that they are happy that they are no longer children (item 8).
- Ca. 70-85 % of the young people who were evaluated are completely/partly of the opinion that people are happiest, when they are children (item 9). This opinion is most clearly articulated by the young people of the Turkish sample (84,5 %); and least clearly articulated by the young people of the Norwegian sample (67,1 %).

#### Question 1:

*Do the test persons (boys and girls together) in selected European countries differ in their statements about the transition to adulthood (qualitative) and their fear of the transition to adulthood (quantitative)?*

In "Sub-test 2: Fear of transition to adulthood" the differences between countries is highly significant in the  $X^2$ -Test in the items 6, 7, and 9 ( $p < 0,0005$ ).

The quantitative analysis offers a more nuanced picture. In "Sub-test 2: Fear of transition to adulthood", the Scheffé Test shows in item 6 – "I check my appearance in front of the mirror" – significant differences between

- Turkey and Poland as well as between Turkey and Germany.
- Item 7 – "I would like to be younger" – significant differences are evident between
- Turkey and Norway, Turkey and Germany, Turkey and Poland, and Turkey and Hungary.

The Scheffé Test, regarding item 9 – "I think that people are happiest when they are children" – shows significant differences between Turkey and Norway.

The following boxplot visualises the differences in the whole of the Sub-test "Fear of transition to adulthood" in the selected countries.

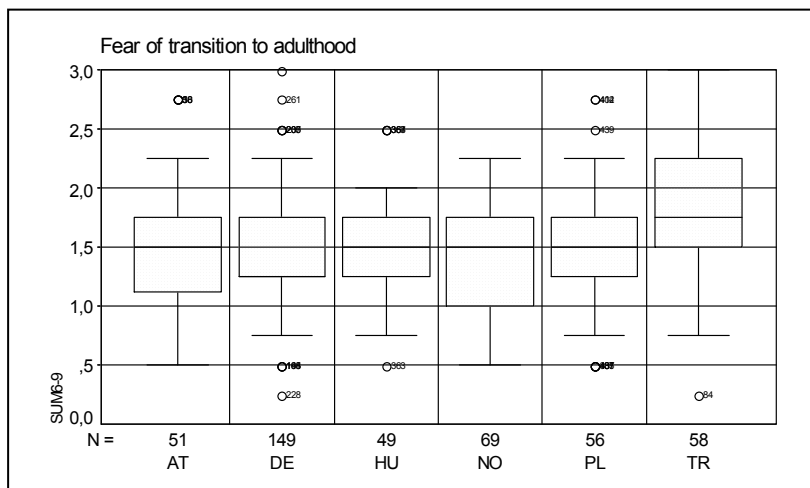


Chart 2: Fear of transition to adulthood according to countries

The highest fear-values (the higher the value on the y-axis, the higher the fear-value) regarding "adulthood" are shown by the young people of the Turkish sample, the lowest values in the Norwegian and Hungarian samples.

According to Kruskal-Wallis the countries differ very significantly ( $X^2= 27,5904$ ;  $p<0,0000$ ).

**Question 2:**

*Do boys in Austria, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Poland, and Turkey differ from girls in the same countries regarding their statements to adulthood (qualitative) and regarding the gathered data about fear-values concerning adulthood (quantitative)?*

The asterisk (\*) in the following table denotes significant differences between boys and girls regarding their statements about the fear of transition to adulthood in the following items:

<b>Statements about the fear of the transition to adulthood (differences between boys and girls; qualitative analysis)</b>	<b>AT</b>	<b>DE</b>	<b>HU</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>PL</b>	<b>TR</b>
6 I check my appearance in front of the mirror.	*	*		*		
7 I would like to be younger.						
8 I am glad that I am no longer a child.						
9 I think that people are happiest when they are children.		*				

Table 6: Sub-test 2 – Differences between boys and girls

The Hungarian, Polish, and Turkish samples reveal no fail-safe statistical differences between boys and girls regarding their statements in items 6 to 9.

**Item 6:** Girls in the Austrian sample significantly "check their appearance in front of the mirror" compared to boys in the same sample ( $p<0,05$ ).

There are fail-safe statistical differences between girls and boys in the German sample ( $p<0,05$ ). 57,1 % of girls but only 33,35 % of boys say that this is "completely true".

73,2 % of girls in the Norwegian sample compared to 39,3 % of the boys say that they check their appearance in front of the mirror. The difference is statistically fail-safe ( $p < 0,05$ ).

*Items 7 and 8:* No statistical difference in any of the selected countries is evident between boys and girls regarding their statements about the transition to adulthood.

Item 9: For 47 % of the boys of the German sample it is completely true that they are glad that they are no longer children; compared to the girls where the value is only 24,1 %. The difference is statistically fail-safe ( $p < 0,05$ ).

Girls particularly from the Turkish sample show high fear values regarding the transition to adulthood.

In addition, girls in Austria and Hungary show higher fear levels regarding the transition to adulthood compared to the other selected countries.

### 6.3 Sub-test 3: Orientation according to current beauty trends

The following table shows the results of the "Sub-test 3: Orientation according to current beauty trends" according to countries (results in percentages for better comparison; absolute numbers in brackets).

<b>Sub-test 3: Orientation according to current beauty trends</b>				
	Is completely true	Is partly true	Is not really true	Is not true at all
<b>10 The super slender females and males in fashion and advertising are not my role models.</b>				
AT	<b>46,2 (24)</b>	30,8 (16)	13,5 (7)	9,6 (5)
DE	34,7 (52)	<b>36,7 (55)</b>	24,7 (37)	3,3 (5)
HU	<b>59,3 (32)</b>	11,1 (6)	22,2 (12)	7,4 (4)
NO	<b>47,1 (33)</b>	2,3 (17)	20,0 (14)	5,7 (4)
PL	<b>69,0 (40)</b>	17,2 (10)	3,4 (2)	8,6 (5)
TR	<b>40,0 (24)</b>	30,0 (18)	20,0 (12)	8,3 (5)
<b>11 I would like to be as slender as the fashion and advertising models.</b>				
AT	3,8 (2)	13,5 (7)	34,6 (18)	<b>48,1 (25)</b>
DE	7,3 (11)	24,7 (37)	<b>37,3 (56)</b>	30,0 (45)
HU	14,8 (8)	18,5 (10)	20,4 (11)	<b>46,3 (25)</b>
NO	7,1 (5)	22,9 (16)	24,3 (17)	<b>44,3 (31)</b>
PL	10,3 (6)	19,0 (1)	22,4 (13)	<b>46,6 (27)</b>
TR	23,3 (14)	23,3 (14)	<b>31,7 (19)</b>	20,0 (12)
<b>12 I do not care about being slender even if it is "in".</b>				
AT	<b>36,5 (19)</b>	<b>36,5 (19)</b>	17,3 (9)	9,6 (5)
DE	12,0 (18)	33,3 (59)	<b>39,3 (59)</b>	15,3 (23)
HU	20,4 (11)	18,5 (10)	<b>35,2 (19)</b>	24,1 (13)
NO	<b>37,1 (26)</b>	27,1 (19)	28,6 (20)	5,7 (4)
PL	31,0 (18)	<b>34,5 (20)</b>	19,0 (11)	13,8 (8)
TR	<b>36,7 (22)</b>	35,0 (21)	18,3 (11)	8,3 (5)
<b>13 I think current slenderness ideals are over exaggerated even if so many people orientate themselves accordingly.</b>				
AT	34,6 (18)	<b>36,5 (19)</b>	17,3 (9)	11,5 (6)

DE	28,0 (42)	<b>39,3 (59)</b>	30,0 (45)	2,7 (4)
HU	<b>42,6 (23)</b>	37,0 (20)	16,7 (9)	3,7 (2)
NO	<b>38,6 (27)</b>	<b>38,6 (27)</b>	14,3 (10)	5,7 (4)
PL	<b>67,2 (39)</b>	15,5 (9)	13,8 (8)	1,7 (1)
TR	<b>58,3 (35)</b>	20,0 (12)	10,0 (6)	10,0 (6)

Table 7: Data from Sub-test 3

- For ca. 70 % of the evaluated young people of the Austrian, German, Hungarian, and Turkish samples, the "super slender females and males in fashion and advertising" are definitely/ partly not role models. For Polish young people the value is 86 %. The group of young people that orientate themselves according to these super slender (anorectic) models is between 3 % and 10 % – mostly in Austria, in Poland, and in Turkey.
- Almost one quarter of the young people of the Turkish sample would like to be as "slender as the fashion and advertising models". This is "not true at all" for more than 45 % of the Austrian, Hungarian, Norwegian, and Polish young people.
- Young people of the Austrian and Turkish sample (AT: 73%, TR: 71,7%) do not care about being "slender"; young people of the Hungarian sample care the most.
- Polish and Hungarian young people think that current slenderness ideals, according to which many people orientate themselves, are often over exaggerated (82,7% respectively 79,6 %), young people of the German sample said that they are not over exaggerated (67,3 %).

*Question 1:*

*Do the test persons (boys and girls together) in selected European countries differ in their statements about their orientation according to current beauty trends (qualitative, quantitative)?*

The  $\chi^2$ -Test in Sub-test 3: "Orientation according to current beauty trends" shows significant differences in items 10-13 regarding statements to orientation according to current beauty ideals.

The quantitative analysis offers a more nuanced picture.

Regarding item 10 – The super slender females and males in fashion and advertising are not my role models – the Polish differ significantly from the German test persons ( $p < 0,05$ ).

Item 11 – I would like to be as slender as the fashion and advertising models – the Scheffé-Test reveals significant differences between the statements of Turkish and Austrian samples ( $p < 0,05$ ).

In the evaluation of the statement "I do not care about being slender even if it is 'in'" significant differences become evident between Germany and Norway, Germany and Turkey, and Germany and Austria ( $p < 0,05$ ).

Item 13 – "I think current slenderness ideals are over exaggerated even if so many people orientate themselves accordingly" also shows significant differences between

Poland and Norway, between Poland and Austria, between Poland and Germany as well as between Turkey and Germany.

The Stem-and-Leaf Display illustrates the differences and shows that the young people from the Polish sample hardly orientate themselves according to current beauty trends; in the total score, they differ significantly from the German test persons (Kruskal-Wallis:  $\chi^2=26,0072$ ;  $p<0,0001$ ).

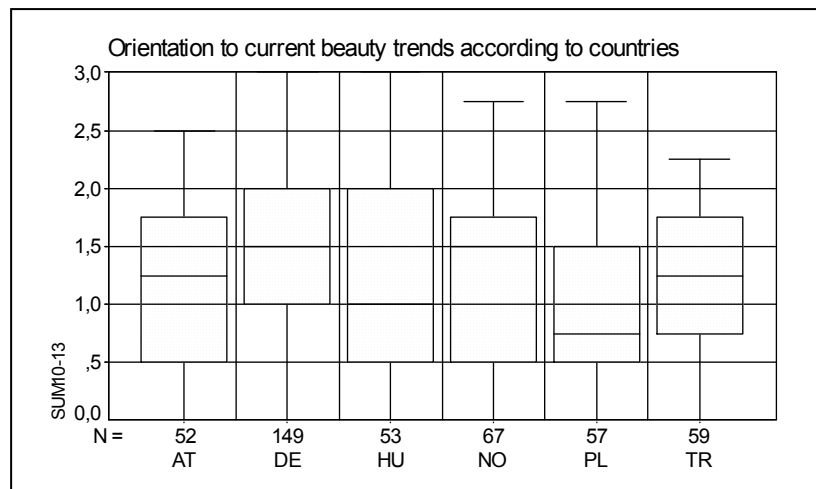


Chart 3: Orientation to current beauty trends according to countries

**Question 2:**

Do boys and girls in Austria, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Poland, and Turkey differ in their orientation according to current beauty trends (qualitative, quantitative)?

The asterisk (\*) in the following table denotes significant differences between boys and girls regarding their statements about their orientation to current beauty trends in the following items:

Orientation according to current beauty trends (Differences between boys and girls; qualitative Analysis)	AT	DE	HU	NO	PL	TR
10 The super slender females and males in fashion and advertising are not my role models.	*			*		
11 I would like to be as slender as the fashion and advertising models.		*		*	*	
12 I do not care about being slender even if it is "in".			*	*		*
13 I think current slenderness ideals are over exaggerated even if so many people orientate themselves accordingly.	*			*		

Table 8: Sub-test 3 – Differences between boys and girls

**Item 10:** According to the  $\chi^2$ -Test, the statement: "The super slender females and males in fashion and advertising are not my role models" is often more relevant for Austrian boys than for Austrian girls ( $p<0,05$ ). Also the Norwegian boys and girls differ in a similar way; "is completely true" is more frequent by boys than by girls (boys: 64,3 %, girls 37,5 %) ( $p<0,05$ ).

**Item 11:** The girls and boys from the German sample differ significantly ( $p<0,05$ ) to the effect that categories 1 and 2 are more frequently relevant to the girls. There is a similar situation with the Norwegian sample; not one of the boys said that "it is completely true" that "I would like to be as slender as the fashion and advertising models" (0 %); in

contrast, 12,2 % of the girls would like to be so slender. In addition, the Polish sample shows significant differences between boys and girls that point in the same direction.

*Item 12:* According to the X<sup>2</sup>-Test, Hungarian boys differ from girls in that for 38,5 % of the boys the statement "I do not care about being slender even if it is "in" is "completely true"; in contrast only 3,7 % for the girls. An even greater distancing from the statement is evident by Norwegian boys 67,9 % compared to 17,1 % of the girls (p<0,05).

"Not caring about being slender" is also more evident by the boys of the Turkish sample compared to the girls (p<0,05).

*Item 13:* Boys from the Austrian sample more frequently think it is "completely true" that "current slenderness ideals are over exaggerated even if so many people orientate themselves accordingly" compared to the girls (p<0,05). The same results are evident in the Norwegian sample.

It becomes clear that the test persons from the Polish sample, but above all Norwegian boys do orientate themselves according to current beauty trends.

In all the selected countries, girls show a strong orientation according to current beauty trends than boys.

#### 6.4 Sub-test 4: The importance of appearance for personal success

The following table presents the results of the qualitative analysis for the Sub-test "The importance of appearance for personal success" according to country (results in percentages for comparison; absolute numbers in brackets):

<b>Sub-test 4: The importance of appearance for personal success</b>				
	Is completely true	Is partly true	Is not really true	Is not true at all
<b>14 A good outward appearance results in better opportunities in professional life.</b>				
AT	28,8 (15)	<b>38,5 (20)</b>	30,8 (16)	0 (0)
DE	22,7 (34)	<b>46,0 (69)</b>	27,3 (41)	3,3 (5)
HU	14,8 (8)	<b>51,9 (28)</b>	24,1 (13)	7,4 (4)
NO	8,6 (6)	31,4 (22)	<b>42,9 (30)</b>	15,7 (11)
PL	<b>44,8 (26)</b>	34,5 (20)	15,5 (9)	3,4 (2)
TR	<b>43,3 (26)</b>	20,0 (12)	23,3 (14)	11,7 (7)
<b>15 Whoever wants to be successful in our society has to look good.</b>				
AT	19,2 (10)	<b>40,4 (21)</b>	21,2 (11)	19,2 (10)
DE	9,3 (14)	<b>45,3 (68)</b>	37,3 (56)	7,3 (11)
HU	16,7 (9)	<b>48,1 (26)</b>	29,6 (16)	3,7 (2)
NO	7,1 (5)	14,3 (10)	31,4 (22)	<b>45,7 (32)</b>
PL	27,6 (16)	25,9 (15)	<b>31,0 (18)</b>	13,8 (8)
TR	<b>36,7 (22)</b>	23,3 (14)	21,7 (13)	16,7 (10)
<b>16 People who look good have an easier life.</b>				
AT	25,0 (13)	<b>30,8 (16)</b>	28,8 (15)	15,4 (8)
DE	22,7 (34)	<b>52,0 (78)</b>	21,3 (32)	2,7 (4)
HU	25,9 (14)	<b>55,6 (30)</b>	16,7 (9)	1,9 (1)
NO	8,6 (6)	<b>38,6 (27)</b>	30,0 (21)	21,4 (15)
PL	<b>36,2 (21)</b>	34,5 (20)	22,4 (13)	5,2 (3)

TR	<b>31,7 (19)</b>	15,0 (9)	26,7 (16)	25,0 (15)
<b>17 It is important that men have a smart outward appearance.</b>				
AT	<b>71,2 (37)</b>	23,1 (12)	1,9 (1)	3,8 (2)
DE	<b>52,0 (78)</b>	42,0 (63)	6,0 (9)	--
HU	<b>66,7 (36)</b>	29,6 (16)	1,9 (19)	1,9 (1)
NO	7,1 (5)	<b>42,9 (30)</b>	31,4 (22)	17,1 (12)
PL	<b>69,0 (40)</b>	22,4 (13)	1,7 (1)	5,2 (3)
TR	<b>80,0 (48)</b>	11,7 (7)	5,0 (3)	1,7 (1)
<b>18 It is important that women have a smart outward appearance.</b>				
AT	<b>80,8 (42)</b>	19,2 (10)	--	--
DE	<b>59,3 (89)</b>	39,3 (59)	1,3 (2)	--
HU	<b>85,2 (46)</b>	11,1 (6)	3,7 (2)	--
NO	14,3 (10)	<b>42,9 (30)</b>	30,0 (21)	11,4 (8))
PL	<b>84,5 (49)</b>	10,3 (6)	1,7 (1)	1,7 (1)
TR	<b>81,7 (49)</b>	8,3 (5)	5,0 (3)	3,3 (2)

Table 9: The data from Sub-test 4

- The statement: "A good outward appearance results in better opportunities in professional life" (item 14) received the most affirmation from the young people of the Polish sample (79,3 %) followed by the German and Austrian samples (68,7 % respectively 67,3 %). The young people from the Norwegian sample offer the least affirmation (is completely true / is partly true) with only 40%.
- The statement – "Whoever wants to be successful in our society has to look good" – was confirmed by the young people in all the selected countries (more than 50 % "is completely true" / "is partly true") with the exception of the Norwegian sample. The strongest affirmation comes from the Hungarian and Turkish test persons (64,8 % respectively 60 %). In contrast, the 77,1 % of the Norwegian test persons say that the statement "is not really true" / "is not true at all".
- The young people from the Hungarian, German, and Polish samples confirm to a large extent (81,5 %, 74,7 % respectively 70,7 %) that "People who look good have an easier life" (item 16). The young people from the Turkish, Norwegian, and Austrian samples are less convinced (46,7 %, 47,2 % respectively 55,8 %).
- With the exception of the Norwegian sample, the young people from the selected countries agree largely that it is important that men have a smart appearance (item 17). The percentage is even higher regarding the statement that it is important that women have a smart appearance (item 18).

The Scheffé-Test was implemented to give a more differentiated result of the differences between the selected countries regarding Sub-test 4: The importance of appearance for personal success.

Regarding the statement: "A good outward appearance results in better opportunities in professional life", the test persons from the Norwegian sample differ significantly ( $p < 0,05$ ) from the young people from the German, Turkish, and Austrian samples.

The statement: "Whoever wants to be successful in our society has to look good" is largely negated by the Norwegian young people; this is a significant difference to the other selected countries ( $p < 0,05$ ).

Item 16 presents a similar result: again, the Norwegian young people differ to their German, Polish, and Hungarian cohorts ( $p < 0,05$ ). Also regarding the statement about the smart appearance of men and women, the Norwegian young people differ from the young people from all the other selected countries who think that this is important.

The stem-and-leaf display shows the total scores from Sub-test 4 according to countries (the lower the values on the y-axis, the lower the perception that outward appearance is important for personal success):

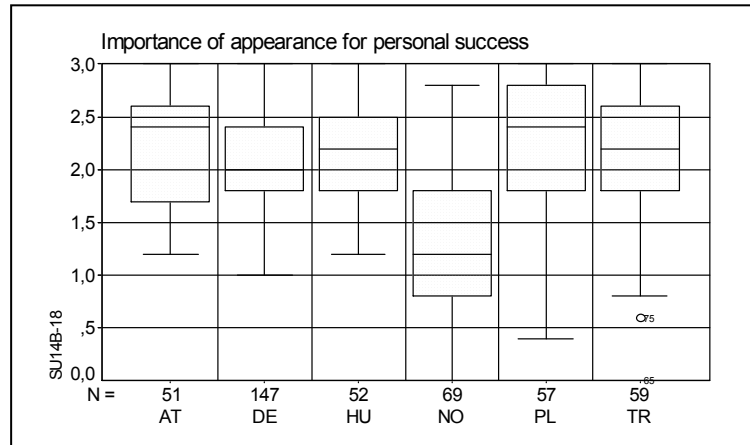


Chart 4: The importance of appearance for personal success

The Polish and Austrian young people think that outward appearance is of great importance for personal success. In contrast, outward appearance is not very important for Norwegian young people (Kruskal-Wallis:  $X^2 = 89,9395$ ,  $p < 0,0000$ ).

**Question 2:**

*Do boys and girls in Austria, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Poland, and Turkey differ in their evaluation of the importance of appearance for personal success (qualitative, quantitative)?*

The asterisk (\*) in the following table denotes significant differences between boys and girls regarding their statements about the importance of appearance for personal success in the following items:

<b>The importance of appearance for personal success (differences between boys and girls; qualitative analysis)</b>	<b>AT</b>	<b>DE</b>	<b>HU</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>PL</b>	<b>TR</b>
14 A good outward appearance results in better opportunities in professional life.	*	*				*
15 Whoever wants to be successful in our society has to look good.						
16 People who look good have an easier life.	*					*
17 It is important that men have a smart outward appearance.						
18 It is important that women have a smart outward appearance.						

Table 10: Sub-test 4 – differences between boys and girls



*Item 14:* Austrian boys differ significantly ( $p < 0,05$ ) from Austrian girls regarding the statement: "A good outward appearance results in better opportunities in professional life". The boys confirm this statement more than the girls.

A similar picture evolves in Germany: boys – strong affirmation 33,8 %; girls 14,3 %. The  $\chi^2$ -Test shows significant gender differences in the Turkish sample. For the boys, a good appearance is very important regarding personal success.

*Item 15, 17 and 18:* no relevant statistical differences between boys and girls in the whole sample.

*Item 16:* The boys from the Austrian sample agree more than the girls regarding the statement: "People who look good have an easier life" ( $p < 0,05$ ). The same is true for the Turkish sample.

The importance of appearance for personal success" according to gender and country" (the lower the values on the y-axis, the lower the perception that outward appearance is important for personal success):

Boys from the Norwegian sample are the least convinced that personal appearance is important for personal success. Girls from the Hungarian and Polish samples are the most convinced.

## **7. Summary and discussion**

*Questions 1 und 2:*

- The young people involved in the research study (444 test persons from Austria, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Poland, and Turkey) differ significantly in their "Attitudes to own body". Based on a three-step scale, the young people from the Norwegian sample have a mean of  $M=1,7985$ , whereas the young people from the Turkish sample have a mean of  $M=2,333$ . This means that the Turkish young people have a more positive attitude to their own bodies. In the whole sample, the girls, and also in comparison with their peers, have a significantly lower opinion of and satisfaction with their own bodies than the boys. This is most clearly shown by the girls from the Norwegian sample with a mean of  $M=1,6875$ . In comparison, the Turkish boys have a mean of  $M=2,3839$ .

The gender-specific satisfaction with own body has been verified in numerous studies (amongst others Buddenberg-Fischer 2000, Schmidt 2003 ...). According to a study from KIEFER, LEITNER, BAUER und RIEDER (2000), 1 % of men but 73,7 % of women were dissatisfied their weight (according to Bauer 2007, page 16).

In contrast to BUDDENBERG-FISCHER (2000), the theory that dissatisfaction with the own body increases with age could not be verified in this present study.

- The young people involved in the research study (444 test persons from Austria, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Poland, and Turkey) differ significantly in their "Fear of transition to adulthood". Turkish young people have the greatest fear ( $M=1,8190$ ) whereas the young people from the Norwegian sample have the least fear ( $M=1,2768$ ).

- The young people involved in the research study (n=444 test persons) differ significantly in their "Orientation according to current beauty trends". The Polish young people orientate themselves according to current beauty trends least of all with a mean of M= 0,9430. The young people from the German (M=1,4513) respectively the Turkish sample (M= 1,2585) are most affected by current trends. In all the selected countries, girls orientate them-selves much strongly than boys.

This general result correlates with statements from SETZWEIN (2004), who points out that current societal dictates expect both men and women to have an attractive body "however the social acceptance for male body figures is clearly broader than for women" (Setzwein 2004, S. 246).

- Boys more than girls (with the exception of the Norwegian sample: M=1,3043) from the Austrian, German, Polish and Turkish samples think that *the outward appearance is very important for personal success* i.e. Polish boys M= 2,3185; in Hungary and Norway it was the opposite.

Altogether, the young people are very conscious that attractive people are not only more successful in finding a partner but that they have better job and career advancement opportunities (compare Koppetsch 2000, P. 99).

LATNER & STUNKARD (2003) stated that it was much more difficult for obese people, despite equal qualifications, to be accepted at high-ranking colleges "...*stigma against obesity, the tendency for obese adolescents to be less often accepted into high-ranking colleges than their non-obese peers, despite equal qualifications*" P. 455).

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Note: During the study, two additional questions were raised. Due to lack of space the results could not be published at this point.