



Children's Worlds: The International Survey of Children's Well-Being

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The story of the International Survey of Children's Well-Being

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Background



- **Children's Worlds** is a world-wide research survey on children's subjective well-being.
- The purpose is to **improve children's well-being** by creating awareness among children, their parents and their communities, but also among opinion leaders, decision makers, professionals and the general public.
- The study aims to collect solid and representative data on **children's lives and daily activities**, their time use, and in particular on their own perception of their well-being.
- By determining the degree of **children's well-being in as many countries as possible**, we hope to raise awareness to children's well-being and their life situations and to influence government policies and services.

Why?



- Because the field has rapidly developed
- Because the field has changed
- Because we do not know enough
- Because we better understand what we do not know
- Because we believe children's voices must have a place in big international studies

The history



- Phase I – planning:
 - In 2009, a group of researchers collaborated under the auspice of **UNICEF-Geneva** to propose a questionnaire that could be used in a variety of countries, be they industrialized or developing.
- Phase II – First pilot:
 - These proposals resulted in a preliminary questionnaire that was put to the test in the summer and fall of 2010, in Brazil, England, Germany, Honduras, Israel and the UK.
 - In December 2010, the findings of these pilot surveys were presented and discussed, under the auspice of **World Vision - Germany** and the questionnaire was subsequently revised and developed according to lessons learnt.
- It was also decided **to make the questionnaire available freely to competent researchers anywhere in the world.**

The history – extended pilot 2011-2012



- ~ 35,000 children
- Ages 8, 10 & 12
- 14 countries.
- Goal was 1,000 kids per age group per country
- Convenience sample
- Included countries with less children
- Not all countries had the 3 age groups

Full Survey 2013-2104



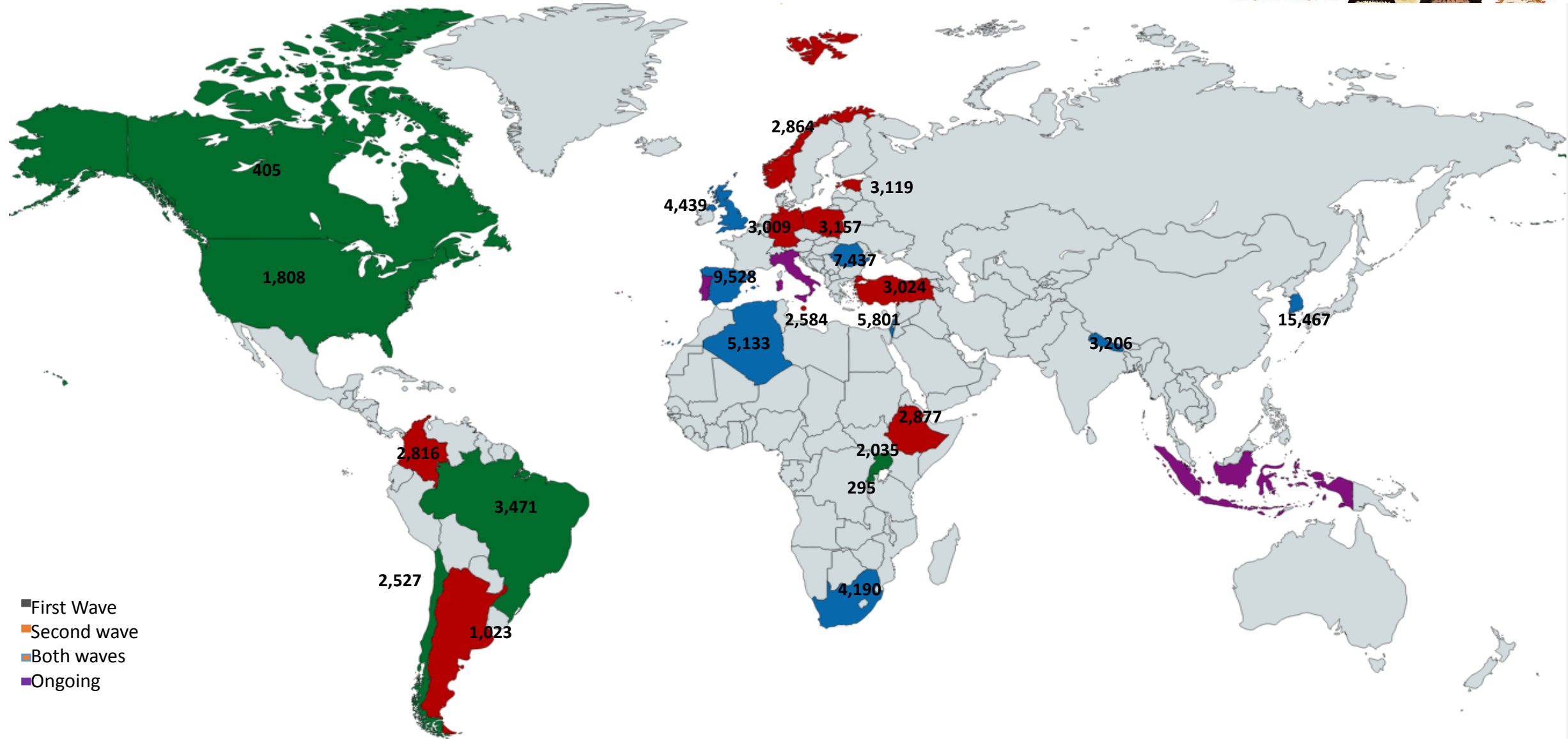
- 54,000 children. ~ 18,000 per age group
- 15 countries from different continents, varied cultures, diverse religions, distinct development and different types of welfare states.
- A representative sample of the entire country or federal region.
 - The entire country: England, Estonia, Ethiopia, Israel, Nepal, Norway, Romania, South Korea.
 - Federal region: Algeria (El Bayedh , Tlemcen and Oran), Colombia (Antioquia), Germany (Thuringia, Hesse, Baden-Wurttemberg and North Rhine-Westphalia) Poland (Wielkopolska), South Africa (Western Cape), Spain (Catalonia), Turkey (Istanbul).

Full Survey 2013-2104



- Sample was based on mainstream schools, and therefore did not include special education schools and etc.
- Sampling strategy varied from country to country, subject to the characteristics of each.
- To ensure the quality of the sample each sample plan, prepared by the local teams, was reviewed and approved in advance by a 'sample committee' comprised of four experts.

Children's Worlds participants per country



- First Wave
- Second wave
- Both waves
- Ongoing

Children's Worlds participants per country



Wave	Country	Participants
First Wave	Brazil (Rio Grande do sul)	3,471
	Canada (Manitoba)	405
	Chile	2,527
	Rwanda (Capital)	295
	Uganda (Eastern)	2,035
	US (South Dakota)	1,808
Second Wave	Argentina	1,023
	Colombia (Antioquia)	2,816
	Estonia	3,119
	Ethiopia	2,877
	Germany	3,009
	Malta	2,584
	Norway	2,864
	Poland (Wielkopolska)	3,157
	Turkey (Istanbul)	3,024

Wave	Country	Participants
Both Waves	Algeria (Western)	5,133
	Israel	5,801
	Nepal	3,206
	Romania	7,437
	South Africa (W Cape)	4,190
	South Korea	15,467
	Spain	9,528
	UK (England)	4,459

Total 90,235

Data collection in Ethiopia



Some initial thoughts



- Almost 90,000 kids ages 8, 10 & 12 from 21 countries, various religions, cultures and languages were comfortable with 95% of the questions we asked.
- The only problematic domain was family formation. For example you can not ask an Arab child if his mother lives with a boy friend...

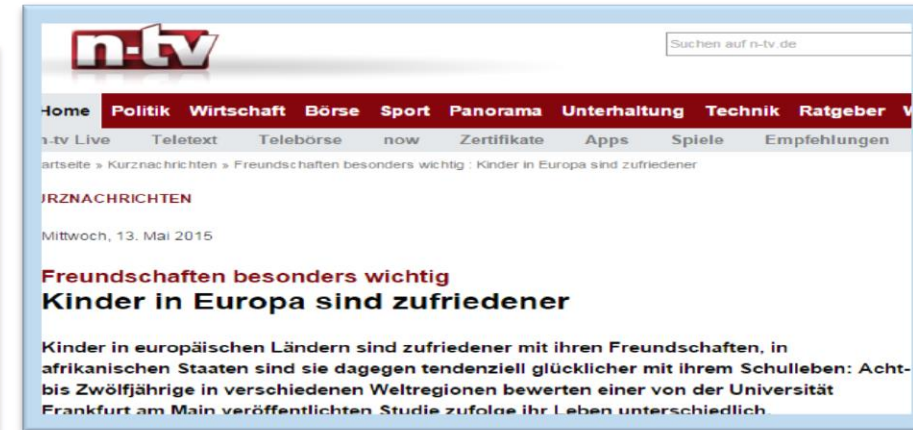
From the press

The launch of the comparative report



From the press

The launch of the comparative report



Thank you very much!



Asher Ben-Arieh

The Haruv Institute, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

www.isciweb.org



Objectives and methods of the Children's Worlds project

Emeritus Professor Ferran Casas

Co-ordinator, ERIDIQV, Research Institute on Quality of Life, University of Girona

What did we ask?



- Questions about frequency of activities
- Satisfaction scales of life in large and specific domains or factors
- Agreement scales with status and events.
- Socio-demographic characteristics

➤ **On the following topics:**

You

- age
- gender
- place of living

Your home and the people you live with

- sleeping place
- the home you live
- people you live with

Money and things you have

- 4 pocket money
- 9 things you have
- 1 satisfaction with things you have

Your friends and other people

- 2 agreement
- 3 satisfaction
- 3 activities

The area where you live

- 3 agreement
- 4 satisfaction

School

- 4 agreements
- 2 bullying
- 6 satisfaction

How you use your time

- list of 10 activities

More about you

- 10 satisfaction
- 5 changes

How you feel about yourself

- 4 satisfaction
- 1 happiness

Your life and your future

- 5 items of the SLSS
- 3 children's rights; 8 values aspired; 6 positive affects
- 2 evaluation items on the questionnaire

Overall subjective well-being



- The survey included 28 questions about children's **satisfaction** with different aspects of their life
 - A question about satisfaction with life as a whole (**OLS**) (0-10)
 - Cummins and Lau's Personal Well-Being Index-School Children (**PWBI-SC**) (7 items, 0-10)
 - Seligson & Huebner's Brief Multidimensional Student Life Satisfaction Scale (**BMSLSS**) (5 items, 0-10)
 - 15 items on satisfaction with other aspects or domains of their lives (0-10)
- Six questions about positive affects in the last two weeks (0-10)
- Short version of Huebner's Student Life Satisfaction Scale (SLSS) (5 items, 0-10)
- All multi-item scales have been converted to 0 to 100 for comparison purposes

How did we ask it? (I)

- Three versions of the questionnaire were created, one for each age group.
- The format of the questionnaires was advised by children from some of the participant countries by means of focus groups.
- Questionnaires differ in length; the questionnaire for age 12 is the longest while the questionnaire for age 8 is the shortest.
- In the 8-years-old version, a scale of emoticons was used for the satisfaction items and these items were phrased in terms of happiness ('How happy you feel with...').



How did we ask it? (II)



- Frequency: of activities in last week, month and year
- Agreement scales: five-point unipolar agreement scale was used. Children could also choose to answer 'Don't know'.
- Satisfaction scales: 11-point scale, with 0 denoting 'not at all satisfied' and 10 'totally satisfied'.
- Response scale for the satisfaction items in the 8 year-olds questionnaire consisting of five emoticons (from a sad face to a happy face), was converted to a 0-4 scale.
- For the analysis the data for each country has been weighted equally by gender

Challenges



- Different languages
 - Need to translate to different languages and to adapt to each linguistic context.
 - Unipolar scales better than bipolar.
- Diverse cultures
 - Appropriate for a wide range of cultures (developed-developing; different continents; various living situations; different answering styles; ...)
 - Comparability of the psychometric scales?
 - Which belongings are good socio-economic indicators?
- Various ages
 - Suitable for the developmental and cognitive level of children aged 8-12
 - Few previous experiences with big samples of 10 or 8 year-olds
 - The first questionnaire ever seen by some children

Full survey 2013-2014: representative samples



Country	8 y.o.	10 y.o.	12 y.o.	Total
Algeria	1385	1216	1359	3960
Colombia	1003	1071	1007	3081
England	990	989	1319	3298
Estonia	1131	1034	1033	3198
Ethiopia	1000	1000	1000	3000
Germany	1069	1143	851	3063
Israel	1004	1030	954	2988
Nepal	1073	1073	1073	3219
Norway	977	1033	1000	3010
Poland	1078	1156	1038	3272
Romania	1422	1424	1561	4407
South Africa	1032	1109	1143	3283
South Korea	2323	2323	2607	7253
Spain	1066	1082	1717	3865
Turkey	1045	1079	1029	3153
Total	17598	17762	18691	54051

Data collection in Nepal



More countries involved



- Data collection process has recently been completed in Argentina and Malta.
- Data collection is going on in Brazil, Italy, Portugal, and Wales.
- Data collection during the next scholar course is announced in Indonesia.

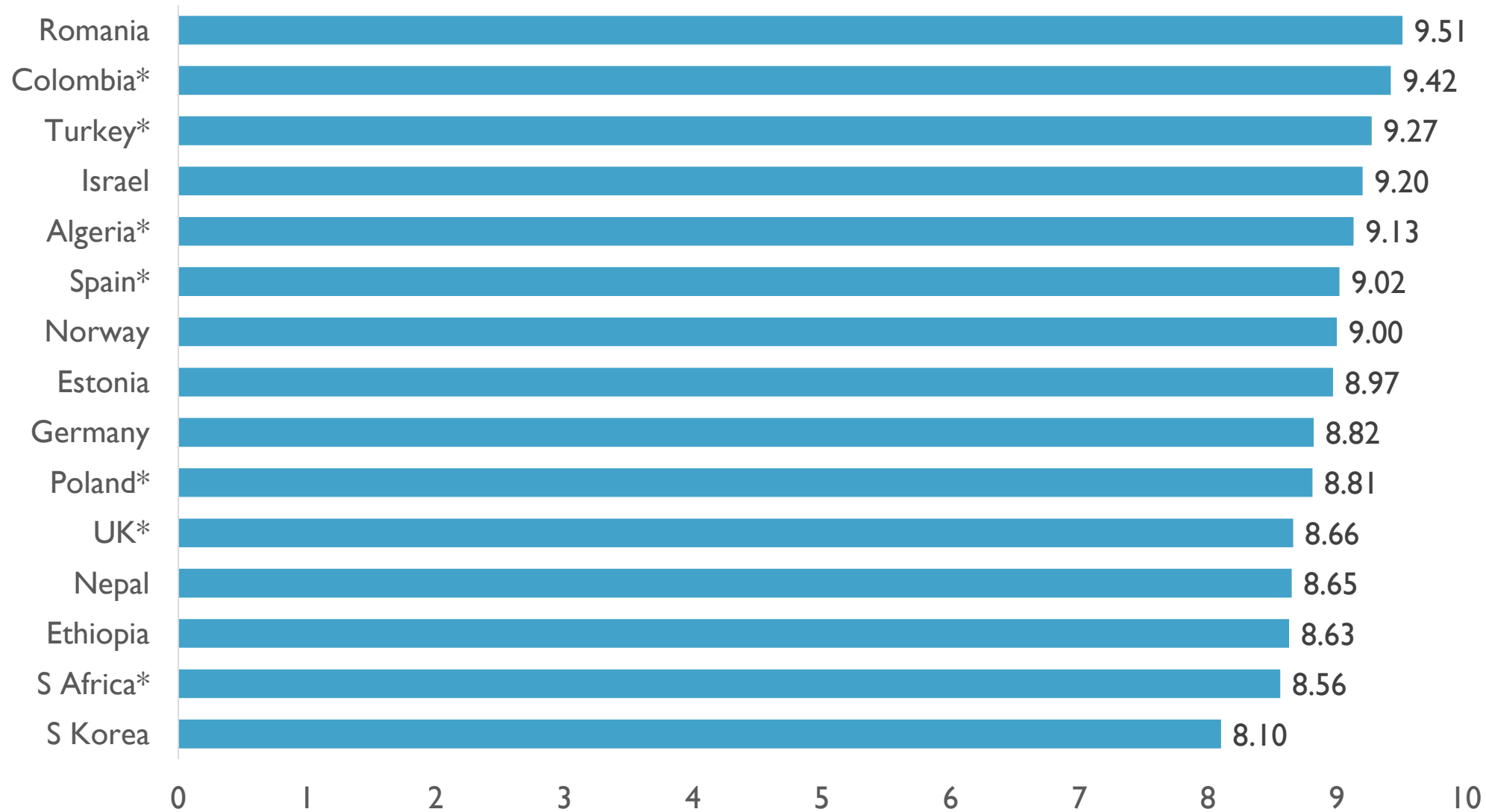


Key findings from the Children's Worlds project so far

Gwyther Rees

Honorary Research Fellow, Social Policy Research Unit, University of York

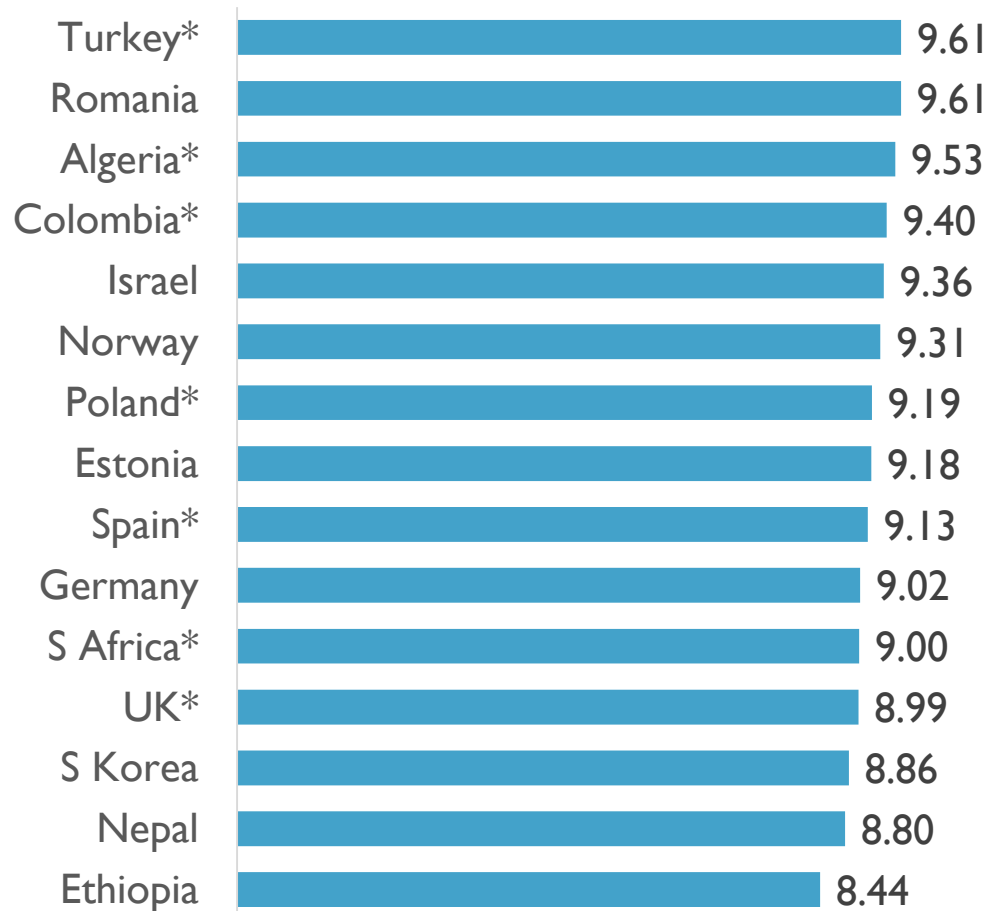
Satisfaction with life as a whole



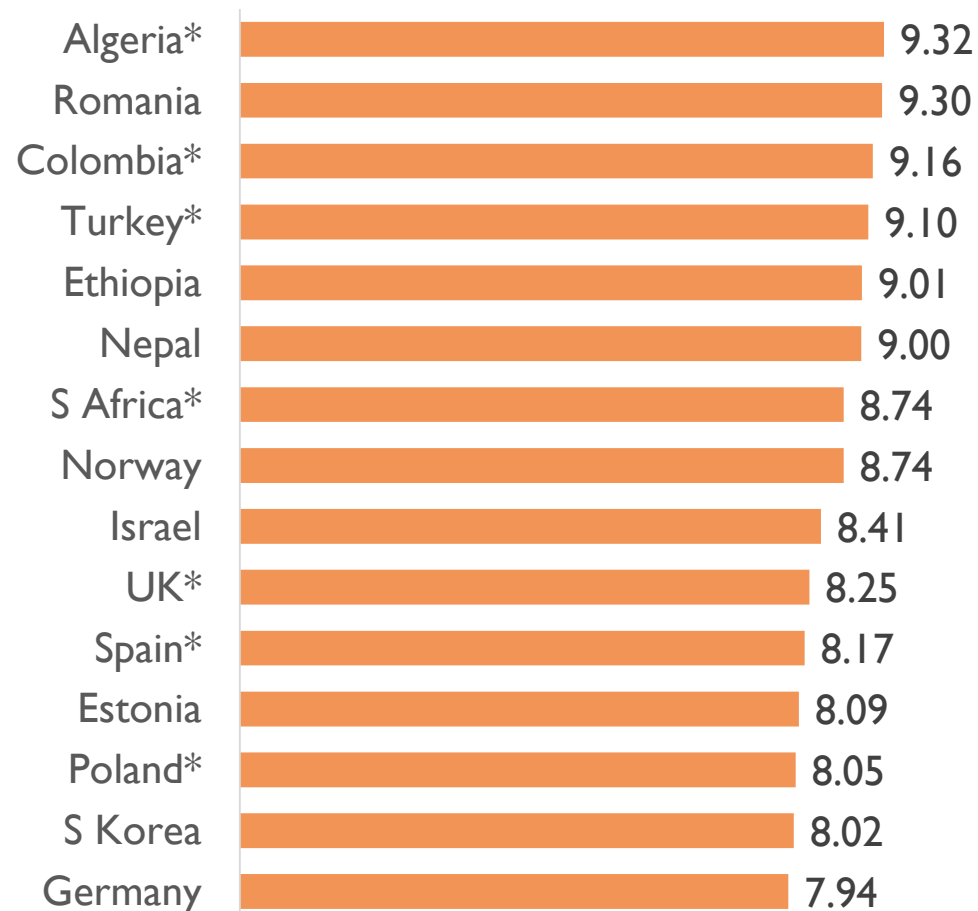
Satisfaction with different aspects of life



Family life



Life as a student



What should we compare?



Various options

- Means or mean ranks
- % with low well-being
- Inequalities of well-being

Linked to three different potential goals

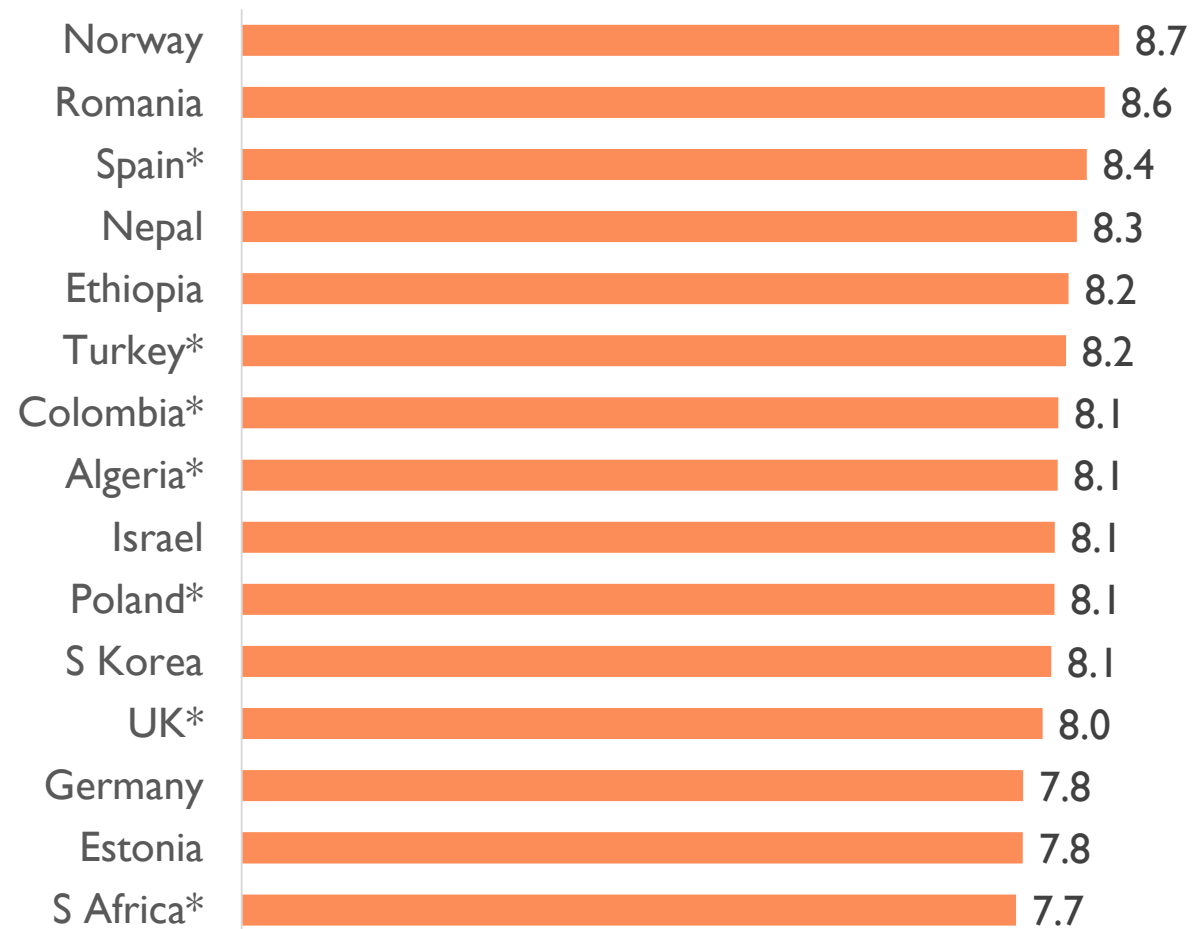
- Increase average happiness or satisfaction
- Reduce misery
- Reduce inequality

Rankings of satisfaction with life as a whole



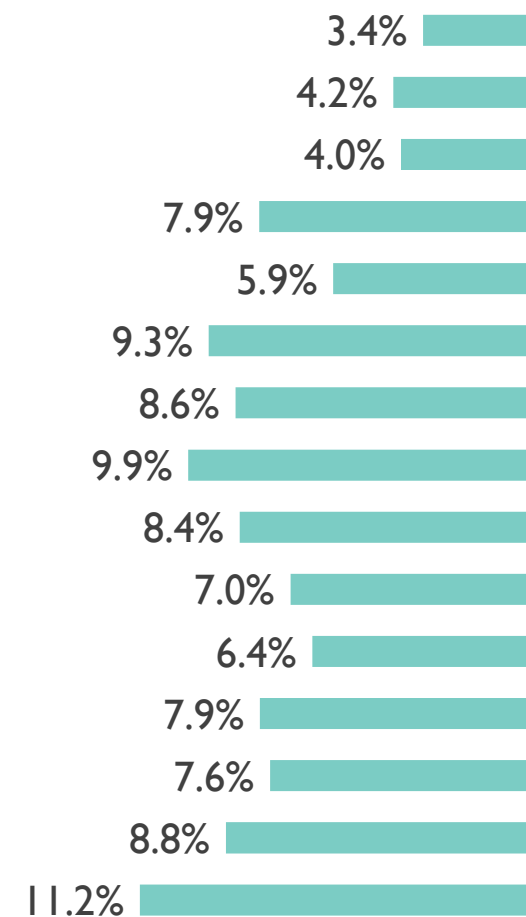
	Mean	Mean rank	% with low well-being (<5 out of 10)	% with very high well-being (10 out of 10)	Inequality (standard deviation)
Algeria*	5	5	5	5	7
Colombia*	2	3	2	3	2
Estonia	8	8	7	8	6
Ethiopia	13	14	10	14	11
Germany	9	12	9	13	8
Israel	4	4	6	4	5
Nepal	12	11	13	9	13
Norway	7	6	4	7	4
Poland*	10	10	11	11	10
Romania	1	1	1	2	1
S Africa*	14	9	15	6	15
S Korea	15	15	14	15	14
Spain*	6	7	3	10	3
Turkey*	3	2	8	1	9
UK*	11	13	12	12	12

Satisfaction with classmates

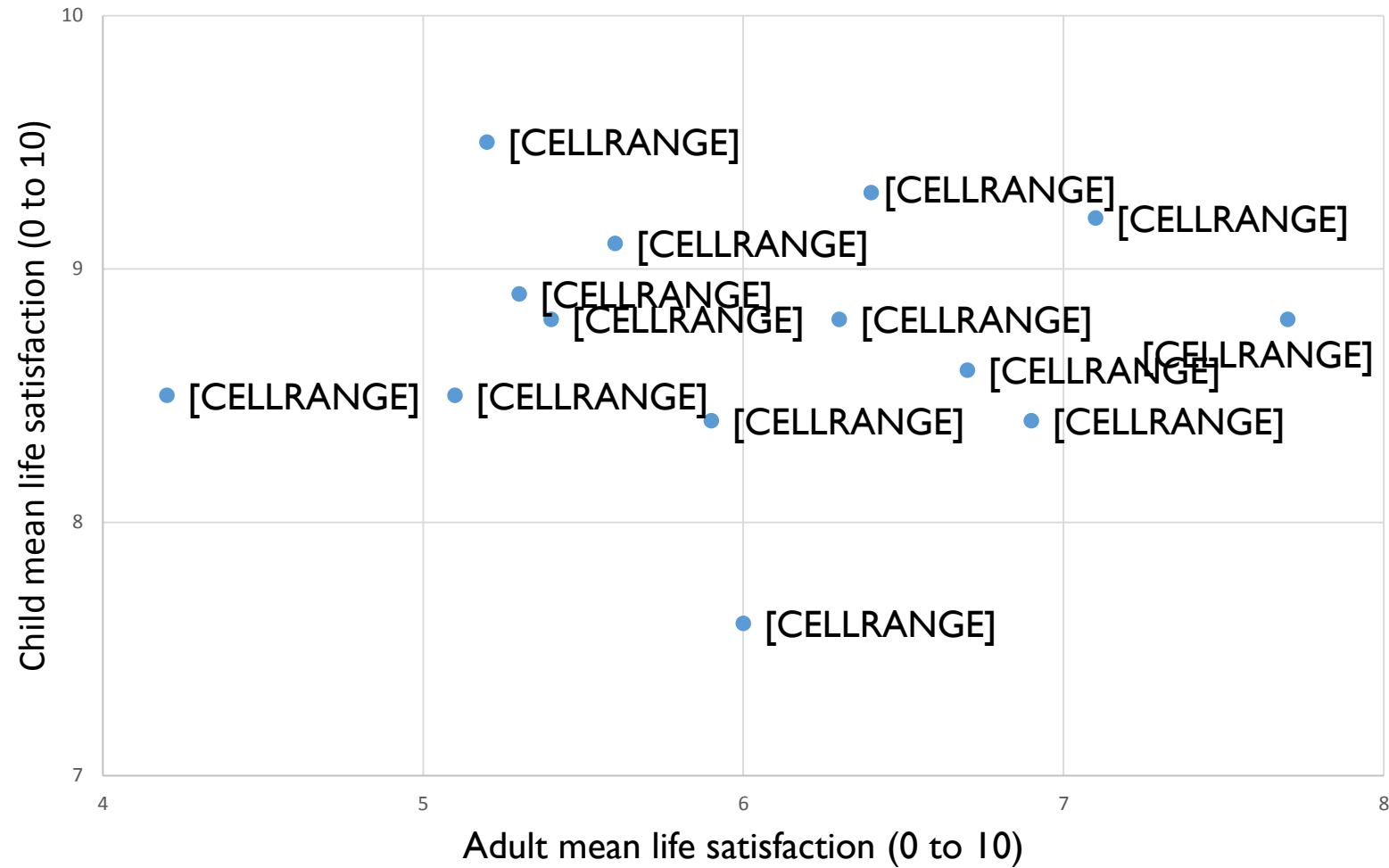


Mean satisfaction (out of 10)

% with low satisfaction



Child and adult life satisfaction



Making use of the Children's Worlds data



- Comparing means (or % with low well-being or inequalities) between countries is potentially useful, if we can explain the reasons for variation through:
 - Macro analysis
 - Contextualisation (example)
 - Theoretical approaches
- We can use satisfaction scores in other useful comparative ways
 - Comparing factors explaining within-country variation.
 - Looking at relative positive and negative aspects of life
 - Looking at sub-group differences
- There are other important topics covered in the survey – bullying, time use, children's rights

Absolute and relative scores

Mean scores for selected satisfaction questions



	Family life	Things	Friends	Life as student	Local area	Time use	Body	The future	Life as a whole
Algeria*	9.53	8.10	8.51	9.32	8.23	8.34	8.76	8.93	9.13
Colombia*	9.40	9.45	8.72	9.16	8.95	9.02	9.47	9.24	9.42
Estonia	9.18	8.96	8.71	8.09	8.53	8.50	8.15	8.40	8.97
Ethiopia	8.44	7.20	8.23	9.01	8.02	8.31	8.69	7.71	8.63
Germany	9.02	9.19	9.07	7.94	7.82	8.53	8.05	8.95	8.82
Israel	9.36	9.40	8.83	8.41	8.82	8.72	9.15	8.72	9.20
Nepal	8.80	8.77	8.56	9.00	8.44	8.34	8.57	5.78	8.65
Norway	9.31	9.46	9.22	8.74	9.36	8.62	8.26	8.86	9.00
Poland*	9.19	9.27	8.52	8.05	8.70	8.71	8.39	8.96	8.81
Romania	9.61	9.57	8.96	9.30	9.27	9.18	9.35	8.97	9.51
S Africa*	9.00	8.74	8.36	8.74	7.78	8.35	8.87	7.87	8.56
S Korea	8.86	8.54	8.55	8.02	8.00	7.91	7.41	8.02	8.10
Spain*	9.13	9.28	8.99	8.17	8.69	8.56	8.63	8.66	9.02
Turkey*	9.61	9.19	8.96	9.10	8.88	8.95	9.07	9.34	9.27
UK*	8.99	9.17	8.84	8.25	8.43	8.42	7.86	8.23	8.66

Calculating relative scores

							Your own body								Mean within country
Algeria*															
Colombia*															
Estonia															
Ethiopia															
Germany															
Israel															
Nepal															
Norway															
Poland*															
Romania															
S Africa*															
S Korea															
Spain*															
Turkey*															
UK*															
Mean within domain							8.58								8.58

8.69

Relative score
 $= 8.69 / 8.22$
 $= 1.06$

Predicted score
 $= (8.58 / 8.58) * 8.22 = 8.22$

Relative scores for selected aspects of life, 10- and 12-years-old surveys



	Family life	Things	Friends	Local area	Life as student	Time use	Body	The future
Algeria*	1.03	0.90	0.97	0.96	1.08	0.97	1.01	1.05
Colombia*	0.99	1.01	0.96	1.01	1.02	1.01	1.06	1.05
Estonia	1.02	1.02	1.01	1.02	0.95	1.01	0.97	1.01
Ethiopia	0.96	0.84	0.98	0.98	1.09	1.01	1.06	0.95
Germany	1.00	1.04	1.05	0.93	0.94	1.01	0.95	1.08
Israel	1.00	1.03	0.99	1.01	0.95	1.00	1.04	1.01
Nepal	1.00	1.02	1.02	1.03	1.08	1.01	1.04	0.71
Norway	0.97	1.01	1.01	1.05	0.97	0.96	0.92	1.01
Poland*	1.00	1.03	0.97	1.02	0.93	1.01	0.97	1.06
Romania	0.98	1.00	0.96	1.02	1.01	1.00	1.02	0.99
S Africa*	1.02	1.01	0.99	0.94	1.05	1.01	1.07	0.97
S Korea	1.03	1.02	1.04	1.00	0.99	0.98	0.92	1.01
Spain*	0.99	1.03	1.02	1.01	0.94	0.99	1.00	1.02
Turkey*	1.00	0.98	0.98	1.00	1.01	1.00	1.01	1.06
UK*	1.00	1.05	1.03	1.01	0.98	1.00	0.94	0.99

High and low relative scores, 8 years old survey

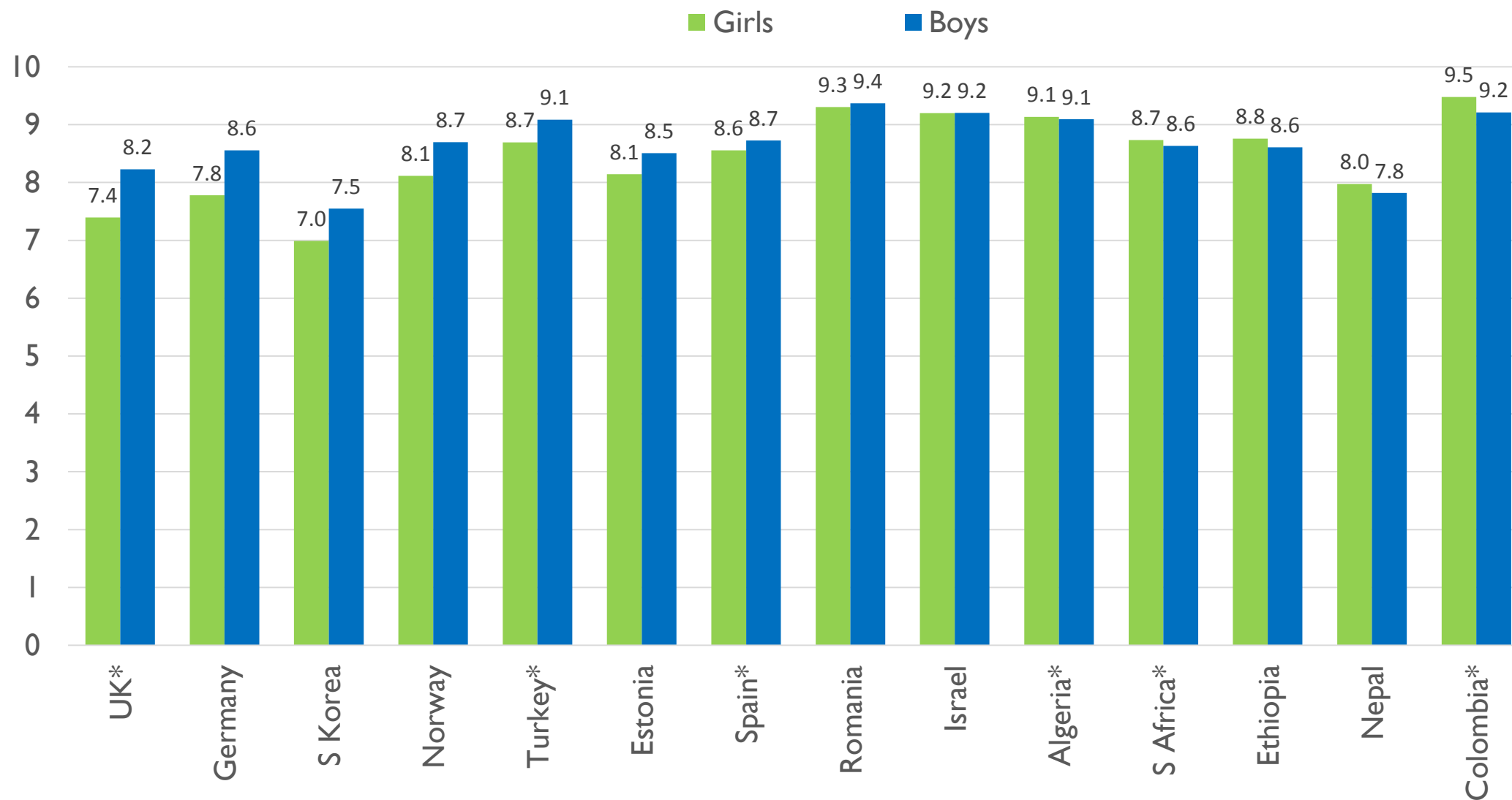


Country	Highest	Lowest
Algeria*	Relationships in general Relationships with teachers People in area	Health Activities in free time
Colombia*	Treatment at doctors Listened to by adults	Friends Classmates
Estonia	Local area in general Activities in free time Family life	Other people in family Classmates Treatment at doctors
Ethiopia	Classmates Health Appearance	Money and possessions Safety Freedom
Germany	Activities in free time Treatment at doctors Other people in family	Local area in general Classmates School experience
Israel	Freedom Own body Appearance	Relationships in general Treatment at doctors School experience
Malta	Money and possessions Friends Relationships with teachers	Treatment at doctors Family life People in local area
Nepal	People in local area Classmates School experience	Treatment at doctors Activities in free time People live with

Country	Highest	Lowest
Norway	Outdoor areas Other people in family Relationship with teachers	Health
Poland*	Outdoor areas	School experience Relationship with teachers
Romania	Treatment at doctors	Outdoor areas Friends
S Africa*	Own body Freedom	Outdoor areas Safety
S Korea	Other people in family Treatment at doctors People live with	Appearance School marks Relationships in general
Spain*	Outdoor areas Other people in family	Relationships with teachers Listened to be adults
Turkey*	Freedom	Other people in family Activities in free time
UK*	People live with	Appearance Other people in family Outdoor areas

Sub-group differences

Gender and appearance



Age variations in school satisfaction



	8 years old		10 years old		12 years old
My teachers listen to me and take what I say into account	3.30	>	3.21	>	2.94
My teachers treat me fairly	3.34	≈	3.30	>	3.00
I feel safe at school	3.40	>	3.34	>	3.14
I like going to school	3.23	>	3.06	>	2.80
Sum of agreement scores for above four items (0 to 16)	13.35	>	13.01	>	11.89

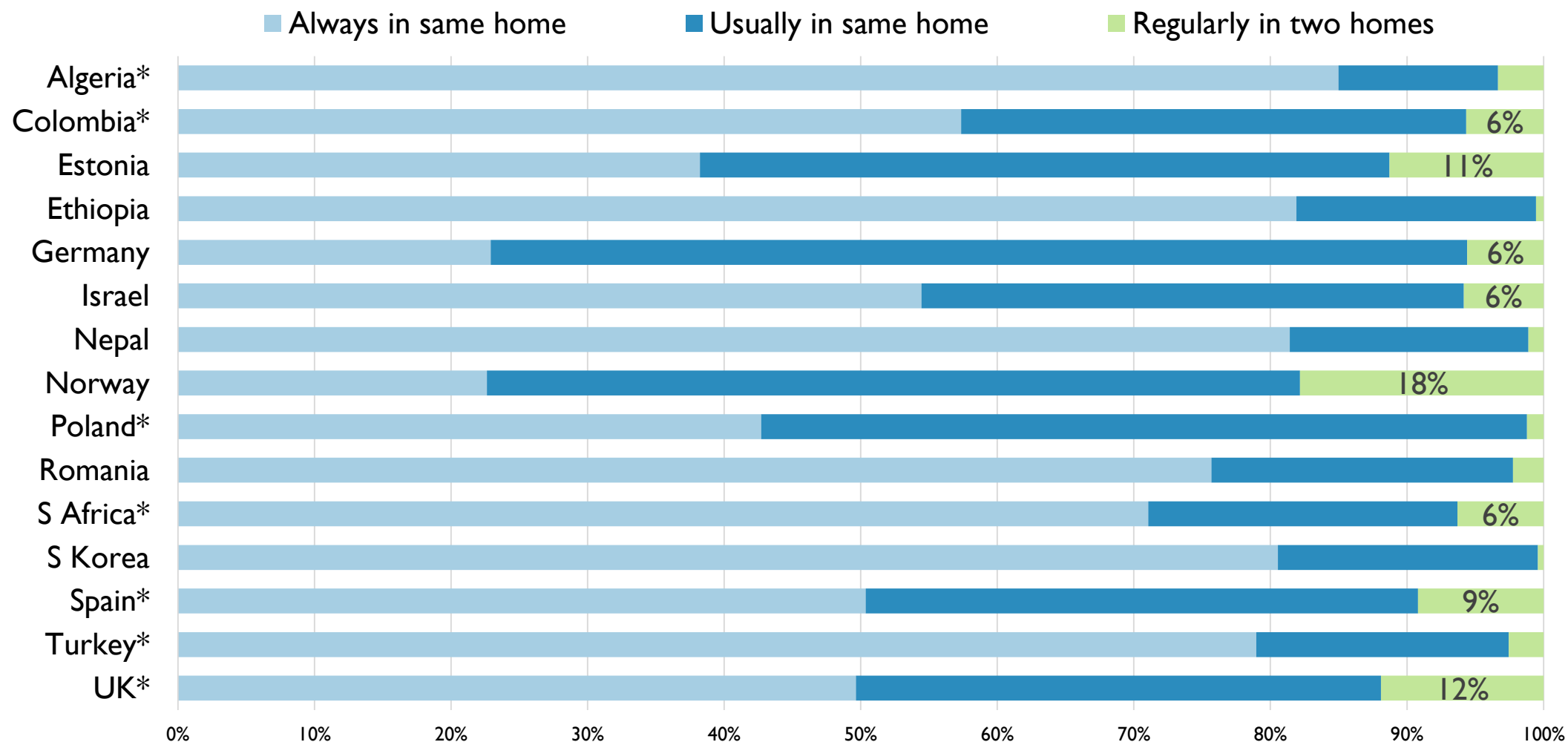
Age variations in school satisfaction by country



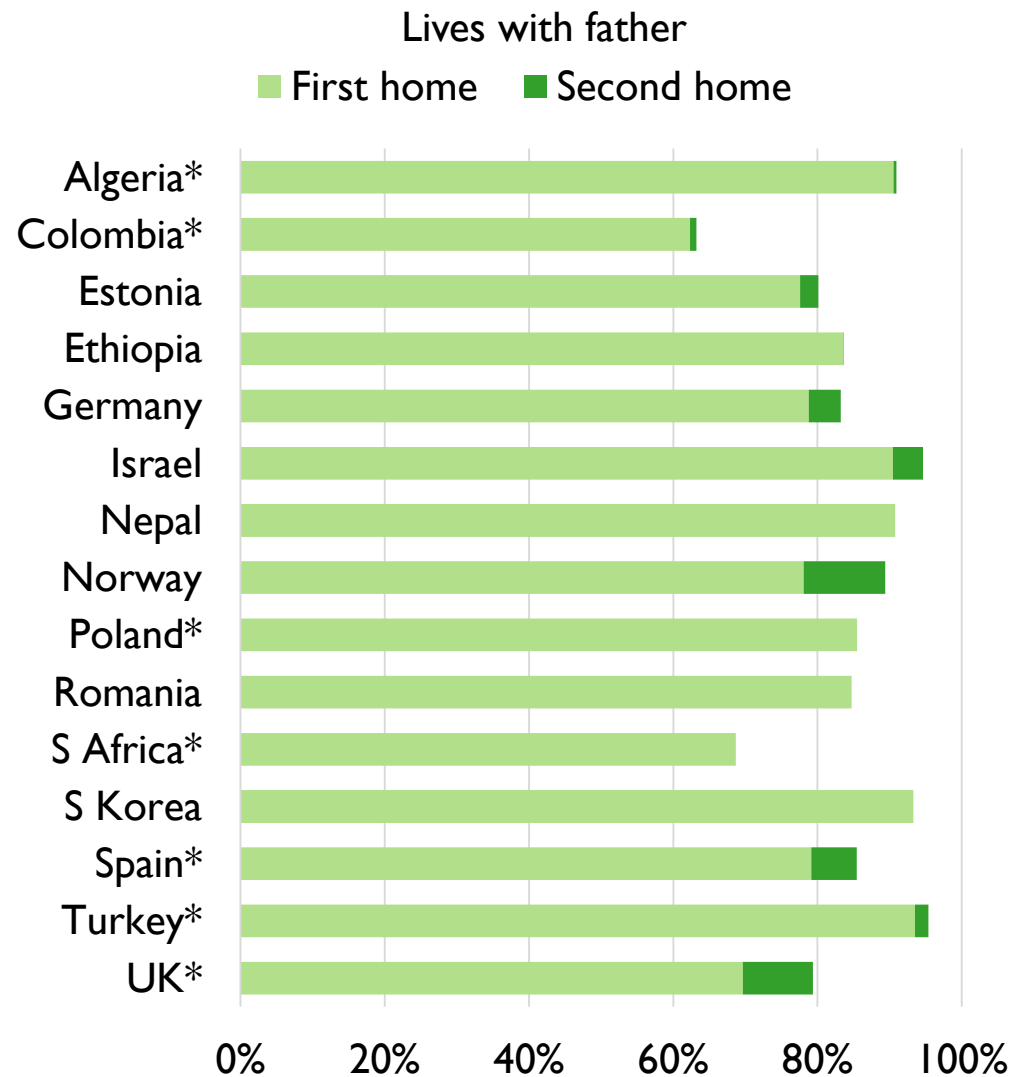
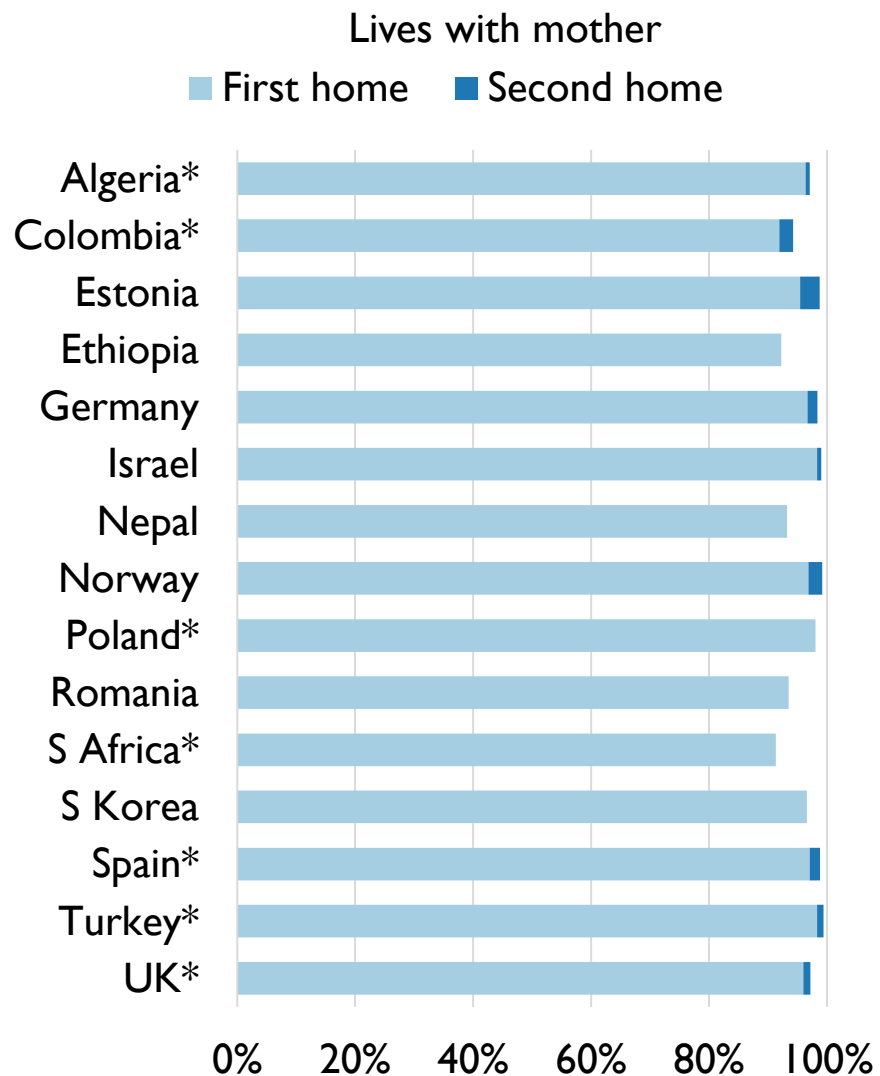
	Total	8 years old		10 years old		12 years old	eta ²
Germany	11.62	12.25	≈	12.24	>	10.13	.067
Algeria*	14.07	14.59	≈	14.51	>	13.21	.053
S Korea	12.42	12.87	≈	12.99	>	11.48	.040
Spain*	12.64	13.59	>	13.06	>	11.81	.043
Turkey*	13.18	13.29	≈	13.68	>	12.57	.020
UK*	11.87	12.94	>	12.61	>	10.56	.079
Colombia*	13.35	14.21	>	13.43	>	12.48	.060
Estonia	11.99	13.09	>	12.31	>	10.66	.061
Romania	13.19	14.17	>	13.65	>	11.96	.071
Poland*	12.34	13.62	>	12.60	>	10.93	.090
Norway	13.22	13.84	>	13.36	>	12.56	.038
S Africa*	12.56	13.13	>	12.45	≈	12.17	.018
Israel	12.09	12.54	>	11.72	≈	11.68	.010
Ethiopia	13.20	13.28	≈	13.25	≈	13.08	ns
Nepal	13.38	13.06	<	13.29	<	13.77	.020

The context of children's lives

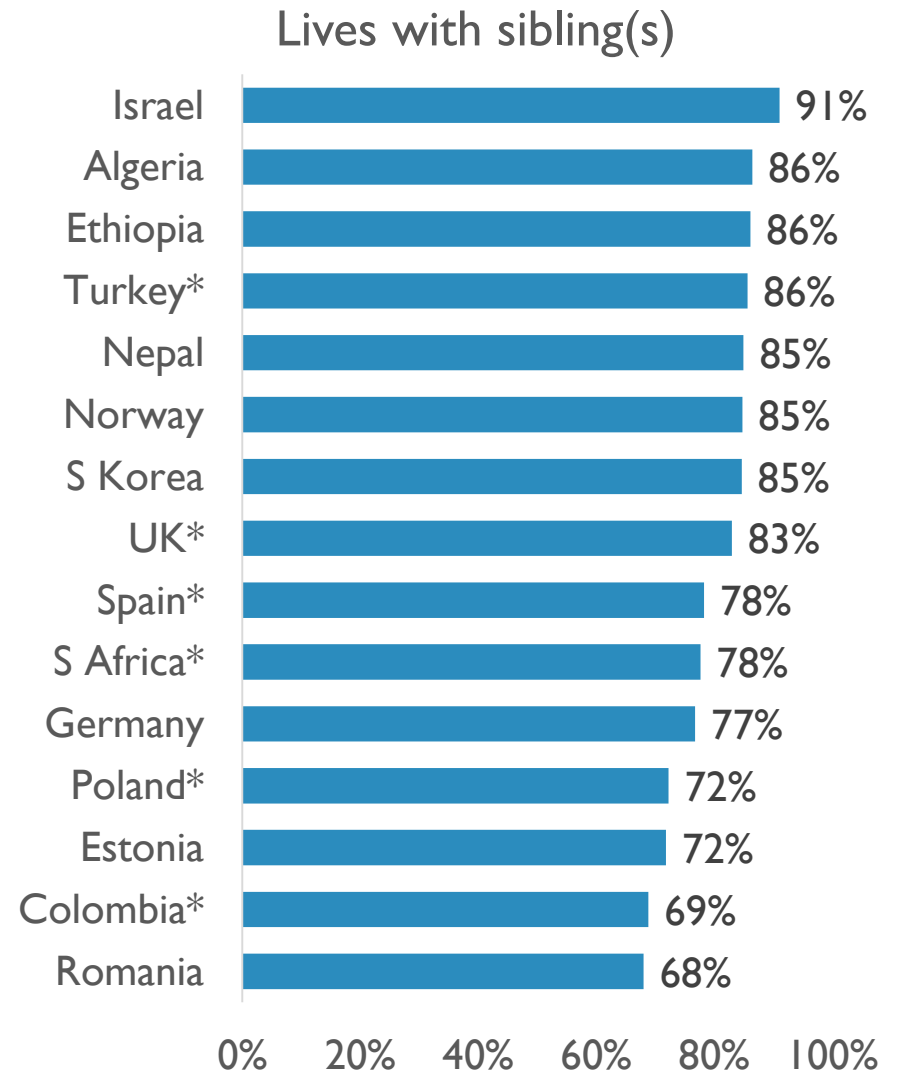
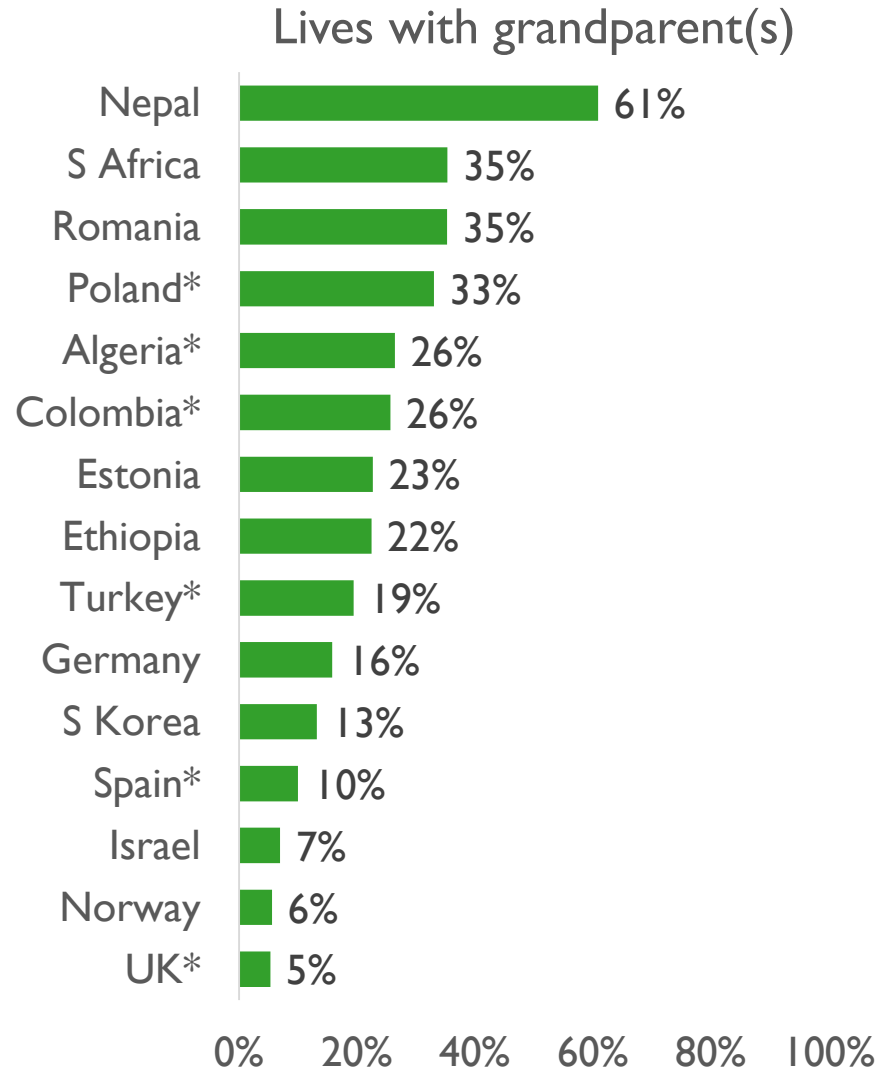
Children living in two homes



Living with mothers and fathers

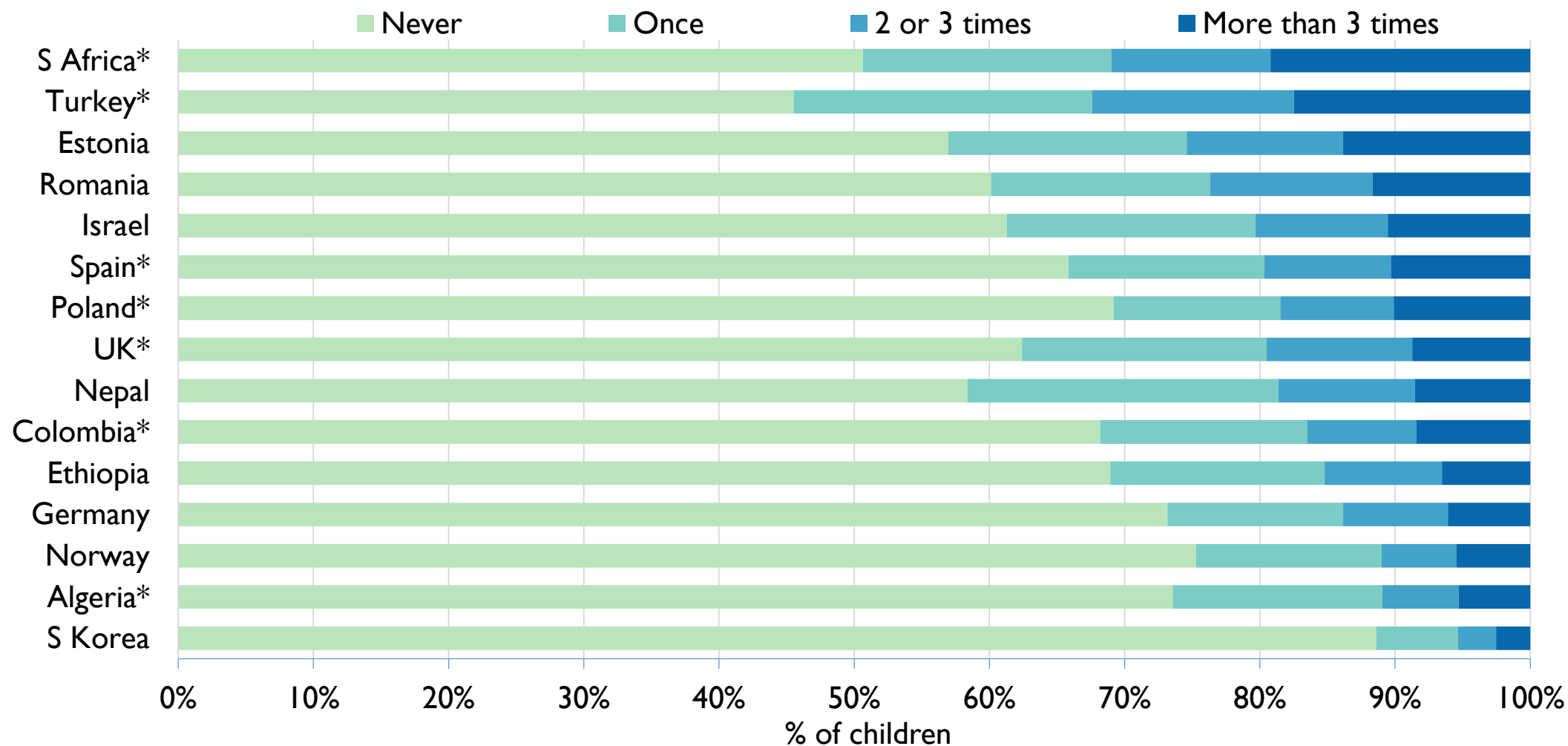


Living with grandparent and siblings

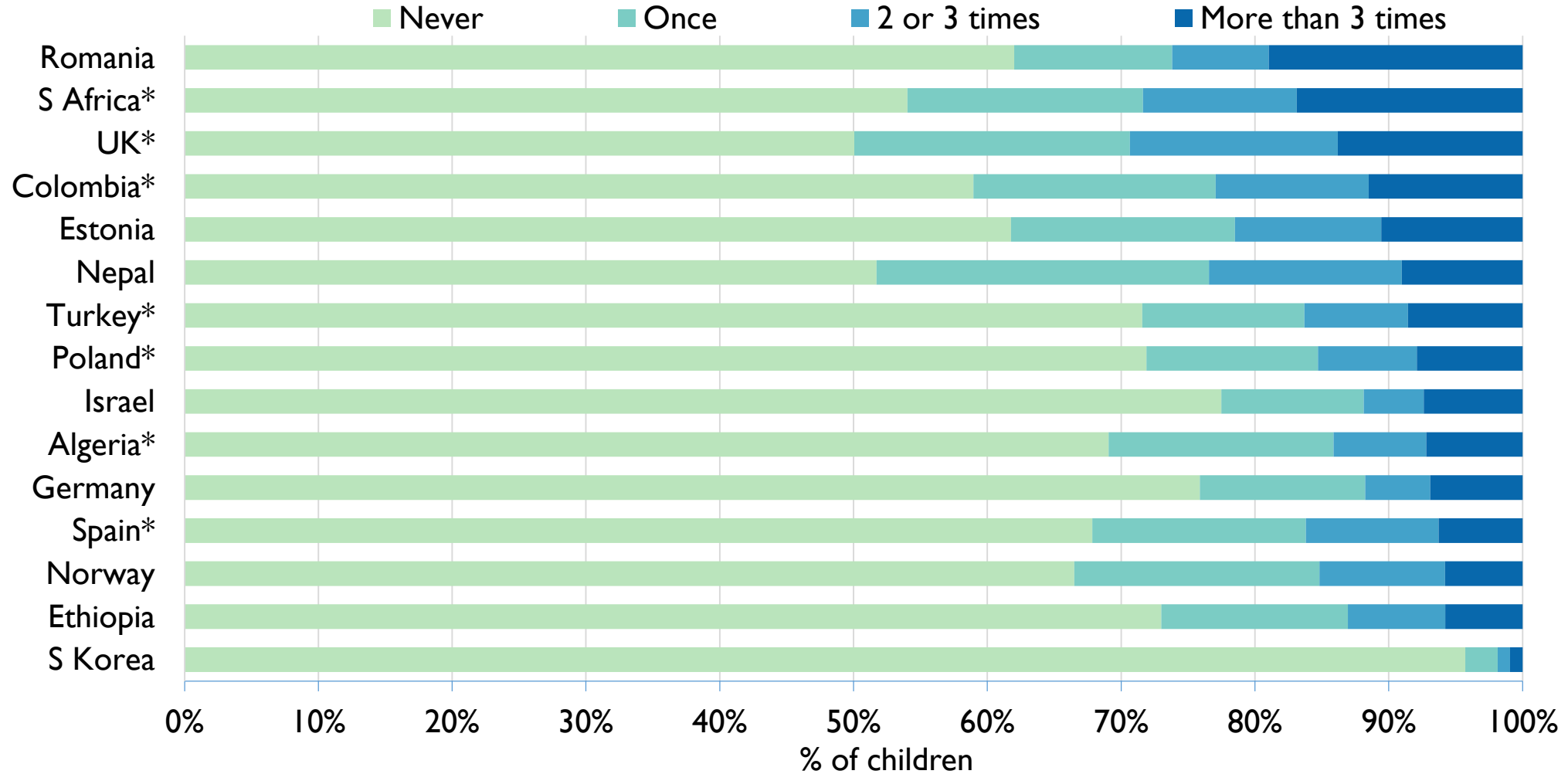


Bullying

Bullying: Being hit by other children



Bullying: Being left out by classmates



Time use

Time use: Response differences

Country	Mean response (0 to 3)
Spain*	2.14
S Africa*	2.13
Estonia	2.11
Israel	2.08
UK*	2.04
Colombia*	2.02
Norway	1.98
Poland*	1.98
Romania	1.86
Turkey*	1.83
Algeria*	1.82
Germany	1.82
Nepal	1.67
S Korea	1.60
Ethiopia	1.44

Is this variation:

a) Due to cultural response differences?

b) Due to us missing key activities?

Countries doing each activity most and least



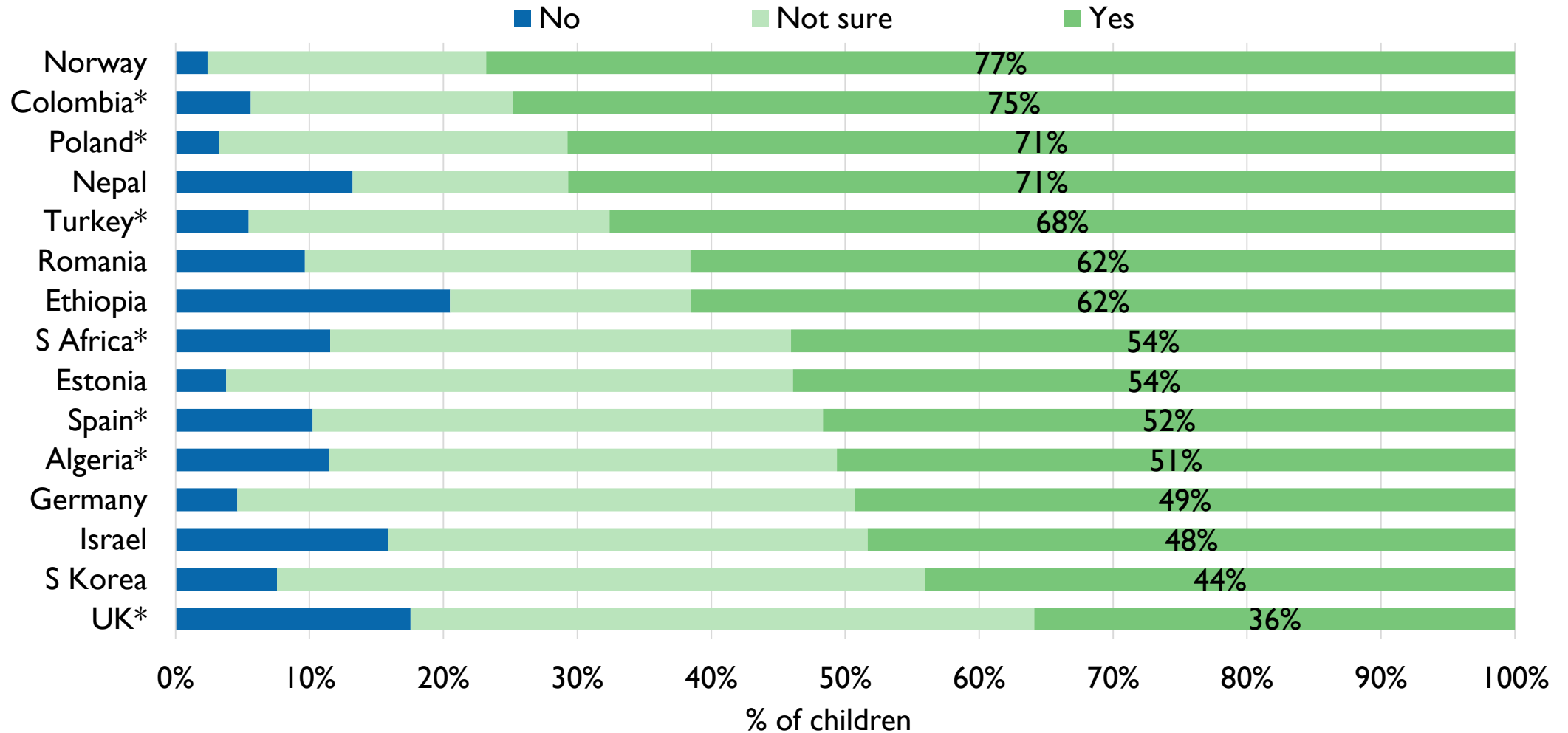
	Absolute means		Relative scores	
	Most	Least	Most	Least
Watch TV	Estonia	Ethiopia	S Korea	Ethiopia
Use computer	Estonia	Ethiopia	Estonia	Ethiopia
By self	UK	Ethiopia	UK	Romania
Classes	Estonia	UK	Germany	UK
Org. leisure	S Africa	S Korea	S Africa	S Korea
Sports/Exercise	Poland	Ethiopia	Germany	Algeria
Help house	Nepal	Turkey	Ethiopia	Turkey
Care family	Algeria	Germany	Ethiopia	Germany
Homework	Estonia	UK	Ethiopia	UK
Read for fun	Turkey	Ethiopia	Turkey/Nepal	Ethiopia

Time use: Gender differences

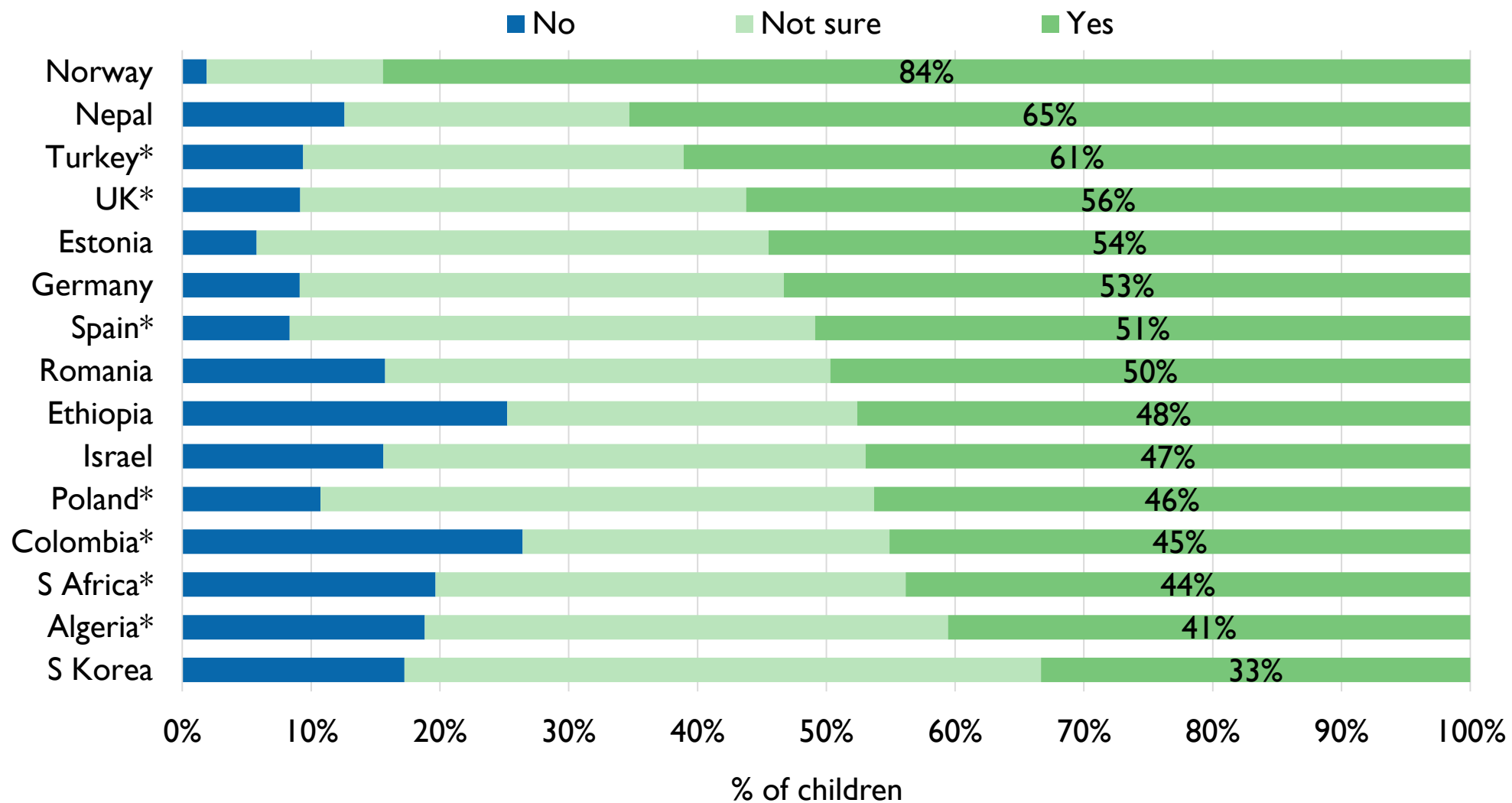
	TV	Comp- uter	By self	Classes	Org. leisure	Sports/ Exercise	Help house	Care family	Home work	Reading for fun
Algeria*		B		B		B	G			
Colombia*						B	G		G	
Estonia		B					G			G
Ethiopia						B				
Germany		B				B				
Israel						B				G
Nepal										
Norway		B				B		B		G
Poland*		B					G			G
Romania		B				B	G			G
S Africa*						B				
S Korea	G	B			B	B				
Spain*			G	B		B				G
Turkey*		B				B	G		G	
UK*						B				G

Children's rights

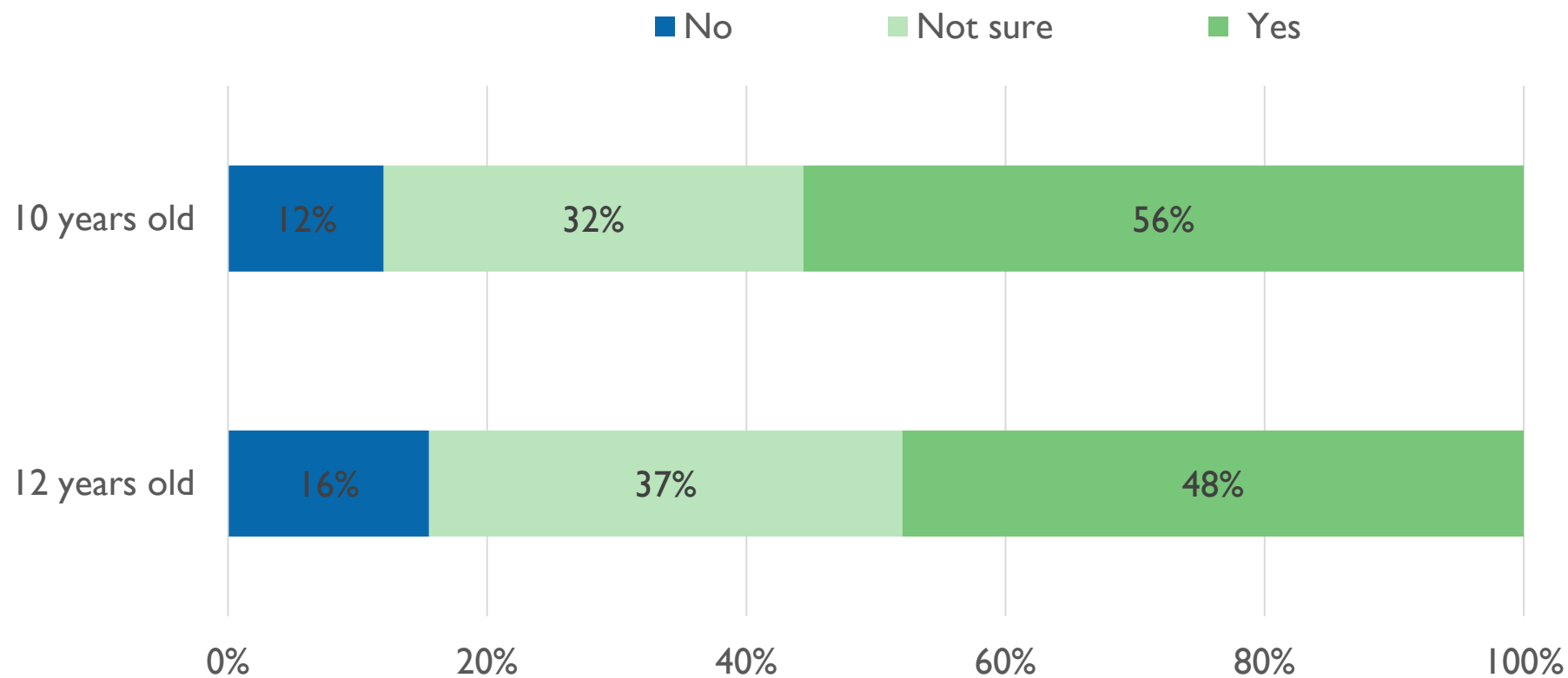
Knowledge of children's rights



Do adults respect children's rights?



Do adults respect children's rights?





The future of the project

Emeritus Professor Jonathan Bradshaw
Department of Social Policy & Social Work, University of York

Children's Worlds



- Publishing 2014 sweep – conferences, special issues, website, [here](#).
- Data available for public use July 2016
- More countries coming – Malta, Portugal, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Argentina, Brazil, Italy and Wales
- Planning new sweep 2017 – all existing partners have signed up. New ones welcomed
- Revising Q – suggestions welcomed

Questionnaire



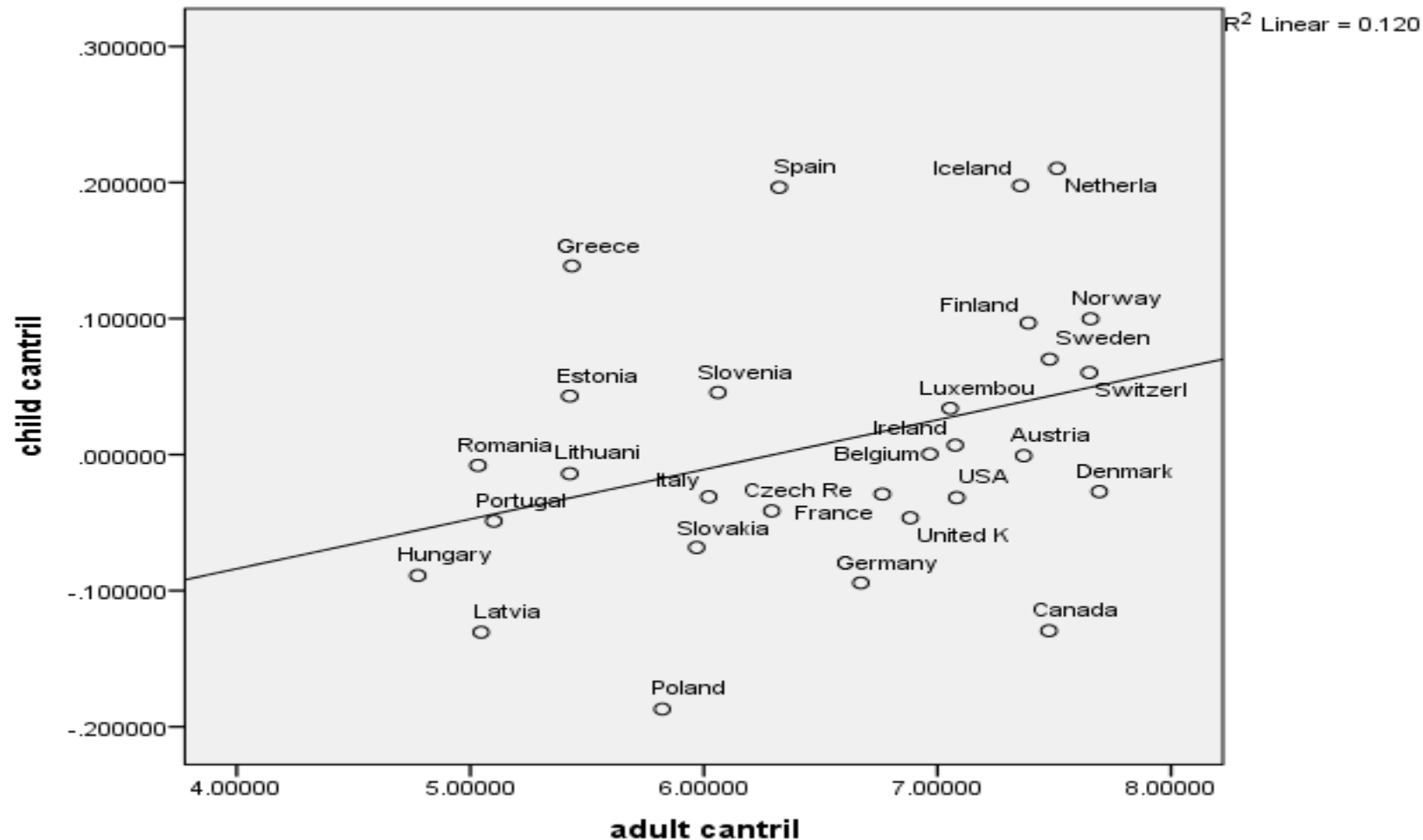
- Too much on.
 - Many measures of SWB - need to be reduced
 - Duplication of satisfaction and frequency
 - Lots of learning ie “somewhat”
- Not enough on
 - Family
 - Friends
 - Bullying
 - Material

Science of happiness

- Most work done on adults
- Adults different from children



Children's lives different from adults' lives

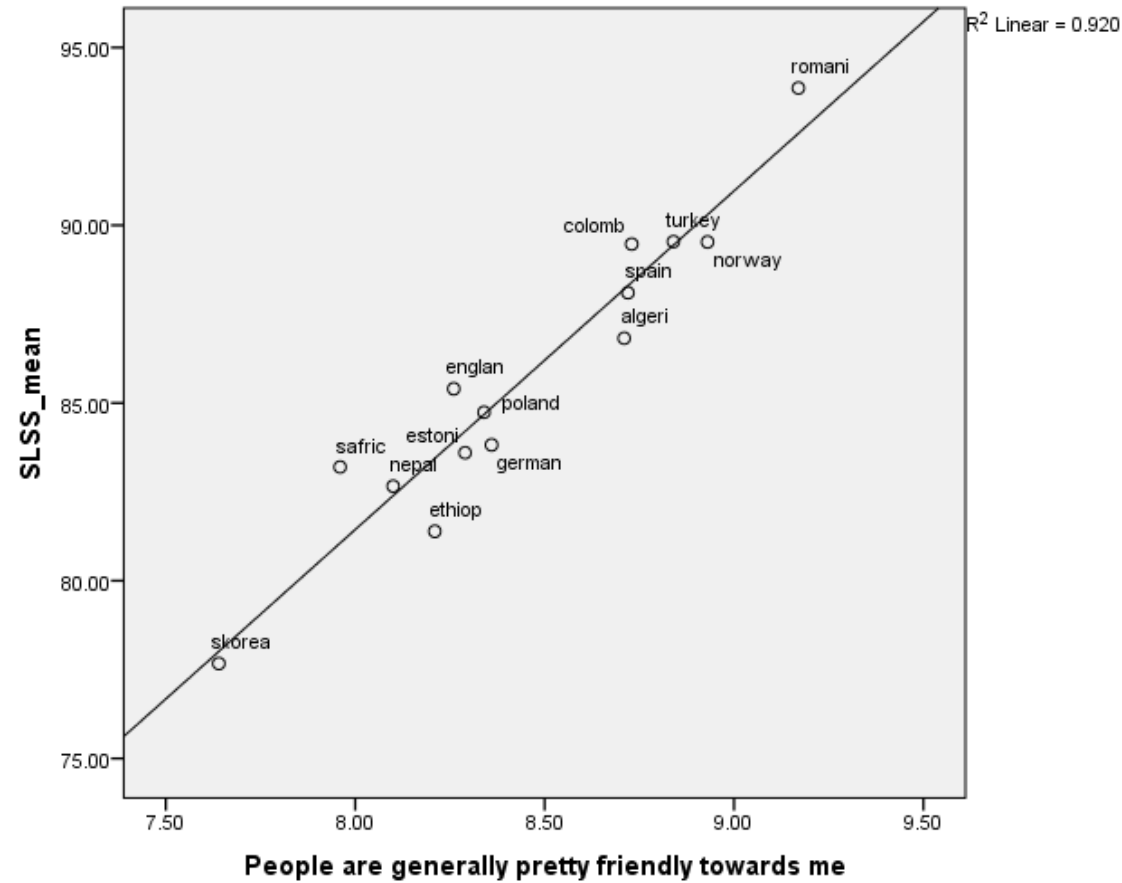


Science of happiness

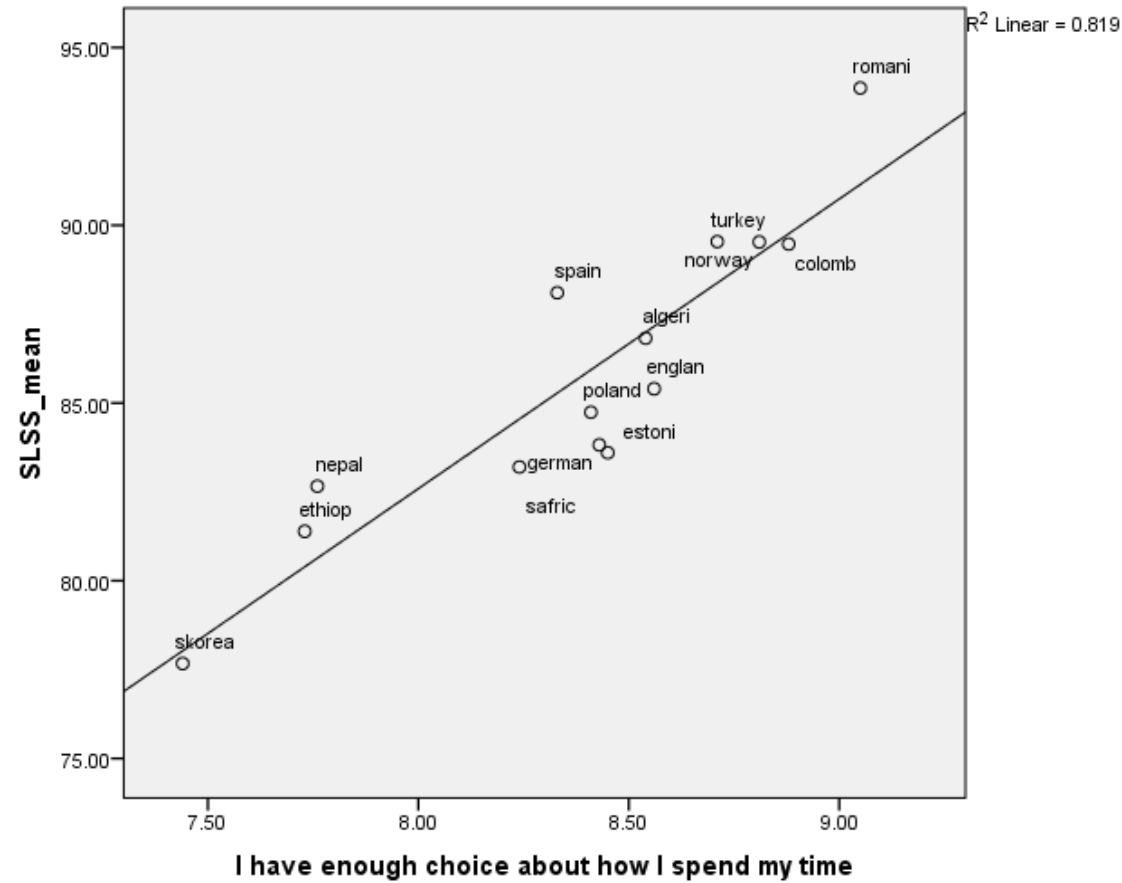


- Most work done on adults
- Adults different from children slide
- Helliwell World Happiness Report - GDP fairly important for adults not children.
- Most adult life satisfaction and most child happiness influenced by friendship and freedom
- And really not much else
- Much more work needed on this

Child SLSS by people are generally pretty friendly towards me 10 and 12 year olds



Child SLSS by satisfaction with whether you have enough choice about how you use your time. 10 and 12 year olds



Coalition needed



- HBSC, OECD, UNICEF, Children's Worlds already players
- EU not yet - advocates? UNDP, UN.....
- Fantastic progress in ten years.
- Thanks to all players but especially ISCI.
- Good collaboration but needs a designated coordinator – harmonisation and timing of childhood surveys
- But underpowered.
 - In terms of resources. We cannot afford to use World Gallup like World Happiness Report
 - Intellectually - absence of serious economic interest - where are Stiglitz et al.
- Do children matter as much?
- We need to be less bizarre, more technically good and engage with adult happiness discourse.



Further information about Children's Worlds

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