

Generation Unity

**Opinions and Attitudes of
those born in
1989 and 1990**

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Preliminary remark

On behalf of the Deutsche Welle, forsa Politik- und Sozialforschung GmbH has conducted a representative survey among those born at the start of reunification (“Wende-Geborene”) on the subject of „Generation Unity“.

In the course of the survey, a total of 751 people, who were born in the years 1989 and 1990, were selected according to a systematic random procedure and interviewed in the Federal Republic of Germany.

The survey was conducted between the 15th and 28th of July 2015 by means of computer aided telephone interviews. The results are presented in the following report.

The results can only be extended to the total population of those born in 1989 and 1990 along with the error tolerances possible in all sample surveys (in this case +/- 4 percentage points).

1. The biggest problems in Germany

The respondents were asked openly and unaided, what they think the three biggest problems in Germany are at the moment.

The immigration policy or the high number of asylum seekers respectively foreigners in Germany was most frequently mentioned: Almost half (46%) mentioned things related to immigration issues as a major problem.

24 percent of the respondents see social disparity or social inequality as one of the biggest problems in Germany. 17 percent mention the problems with Greece or rather the situation in Greece.

For 12 percent of those born around the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the education policy or education in schools and universities constitutes a major problem. 9 percent of the respondents mention financial affairs (financial difficulties or fiscal policy). That unemployment currently poses one of the biggest problems in Germany is the opinion of another 9 percent.

7 percent cite xenophobia/hostility to foreigners in Germany as a major problem. Politics in general, as well as the European policy or the European Union are each named by 6 percent of those born at the time of reunification. 5 percent in each case think that immigration or rather the Immigration Act, foreigners or the policy on foreigners and integration, the aging society, the Euro as well as the economy or economic policy belong to the biggest problems in the country at present.

8 percent of those surveyed do not see any problems in Germany.

The views of those born at the start of reunification do not differ significantly from those of the German citizens as a whole in their assessment of the problems in Germany. Social inequality and poverty is the only thing that those born in the years 1989 and 1990 mention considerably more often, as one of the biggest problems in Germany, compared to the average of all German citizens. In contrast, the subject of Greece as a major problem is mentioned less often by those born at the start of reunification than by German citizens as a whole.

▪ **Biggest Problems in Germany**

	German citizens *)	Wende-Geborene **)
	in total %	in total %
- Immigration policy, asylum seekers, foreigners	47	46
- Xenophobia/ hostility to foreigners	5	7
- Right-wing extremism, right extremist violence	4	3
- Social inequality, poverty	9	24
- Population pyramid, ageing population	2	5
- Pension	4	4
- Situation in Greece	33	17
- Finances, fiscal policy, national debt	7	9
- Euro	4	5
- Unemployment, youth unemployment	11	9
- Economy, economic situation	2	5
- Low wages	2	2
- Education policy, education, schools, Unis	8	12
- European unity	4	6
- Health care provision, health system	1	4
- Traffic problems	5	3
- Environmental problems	3	3
- Family policy, nursery school places	4	4
- People's behaviour to one another	1	3
- State of society in general	2	3
- General dissatisfaction	1	2
- Displeasure with politicians, parties	8	11
- None	12	8

*) Results of a nationwide survey from week of 13th July to end of week 27th July 2015

**) open-ended questions, mentions over 2 percent are shown (Wende-Geborene)

2. Personal priorities

In answer to the question, what is important in life, those born at the start of reunification above all mention personal relationships e.g. to family and friends as well as health, which are each very important to 75 percent of those born around the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall.

A high priority in the life of those born around the time of reunification is having fun or enjoying life as well as social equality, which are each very important to 43 percent of the “Wende-Geborenen”.

The Reunification-babies less often mention self-fulfilment (29%), professional success and career (18%) or money (9%) as being very important.

▪ Personal priorities I

	It is personally		
	very important %	important %	less respectively not at all important %
- Personal relationships, e.g. to family and friends	75	24	1
- Health	75	24	1
- Having fun, enjoying life	43	53	4
- Social equality	43	52	5
- To find self-fulfilment	29	60	11
- Professional success and career	18	61	21
- Money	9	60	31

Respondents who spent most of their life in West Germany claim more often than respondents who spent most of their life in East Germany that self-fulfilment is very important to them. Health and social equality are slightly more often very important to them as well.

▪ Personal priorities II

It is personally <u>very</u> important:	In	Majority of life spent in:	
	total	East Germany	West Germany
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
- Personal relationships, e.g. to family and friends	75	74	75
- Health	75	71	76
- Having fun, enjoying life	43	45	43
- Social equality	43	40	45
- To find self-fulfilment	29	24	31
- Professional success and career	18	18	18
- Money	9	8	9

Women state more often than men, that personal relationships and health are very important to them. Having fun and enjoying life is more frequently very important to men than women, as is having professional success and getting ahead.

Pupils and students claim more often than working people that it is very important for them to find self-fulfilment/ do their own thing. It is also slightly more often very important to them to have fun and enjoy life.

Professional success and career is somewhat more frequently very important to working people than pupils and students.

▪ Personal priorities III

It is personally <u>very</u> important:	In total	Men	Women	Pupils/ students	Working people
	%	%	%	%	%
- Personal relationships, e.g. to family and friends	75	67	83	75	76
- Health	75	68	81	75	77
- Having fun, enjoying life	43	47	39	47	42
- Social equality	43	42	44	45	42
- To find self-fulfilment	29	30	28	34	26
- Professional success and career	18	21	15	15	20
- Money	9	11	7	6	10

3. Involvement in political or social causes

About one third (35 %) of those born around the time of reunification, claim that they are involved in political or social causes, through voluntary work for example.

Pupils and students are more often active than working people.

- Involvement in political or social causes

	Are personally involved in social or political causes %
In total	35
Majority of life spent in:	
- East Germany	34
- West Germany	36
Men	35
Women	36
Pupils/ students	41
Working people	34

Of the respondents who are personally involved in social or political causes, 22 percent work with children or young people. 21 percent are active in the field of sport.

16 percent of the respondents are politically active or active in local politics, 14 percent are involved in the church or the community and 10 percent are with the fire brigade or emergency services.

9 percent of the people involved in social causes are either active in working with socially disadvantaged groups such as the homeless, refugees or people with disabilities and in the field of culture and music. 7 percent are committed to animal welfare, and 5 percent to conservation/environment protection. 3 percent each claim that they are involved in relief projects in poorer regions of the world or in the field of education. 2 percent of those who are socially engaged work with senior citizens.

Men claim much more often than women that they are involved in the field of sports, politics as well as fire brigade and the emergency services. Women, on the other hand, more often dedicate themselves to children and young people, the church and community, socially disadvantaged groups as well as animal welfare.

▪ Areas of personal involvement I *)

Are active in the field of:	In total **)	Men	Women
	%	%	%
- working with children or young people	22	15	29
- sport	21	27	14
- politics resp. local politics	16	25	6
- the church and the community	14	10	19
- fire brigade, emergency services	10	17	3
- working with socially disadvantaged groups	9	4	15
- culture and music	9	7	11
- animal welfare	7	3	10
- conservation/environment protection	5	5	4
- relief projects in poorer regions of the world	3	3	3
- education, school, university	3	1	6
- working with senior citizens	2	2	2

*) Base: respondents who are involved with something

**) open-ended question; mentions over 2 percent are shown

If we look at all of those born at the start of reunification, 8 percent of them work with children and young adults, 7 percent are active in the field of sports.

6 percent of those born in the years 1989 and 1990 are politically active or active in local politics, 5 percent are involved in the church or community and 4 percent are active in the fire brigade or emergency services.

3 percent of respondents either work with socially disadvantaged groups or are involved in culture and music. 2 percent each are dedicated to animal welfare and the conservation of the environment. 1 percent each of those born at the time of the “Wende” claim that they support relief projects in poorer regions of the world, are engaged with issues of education, or work with the elderly.

65 percent of those who were born around the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall, state that they are currently not personally involved in anything.

▪ Areas of personal involvement II

Are active in the field of:	In total *) %	Men %	Women %
- working with children or young people	8	5	10
- sport	7	10	5
- politics resp. local politics	6	9	2
- the church and the community	5	3	7
- fire brigade, emergency services	4	6	1
- working with socially disadvantaged groups	3	1	5
- culture and music	3	3	4
- animal welfare	2	1	4
- conservation/environment protection	2	2	1
- relief projects in poorer regions of the world	1	1	1
- education, school, university	1	0	2
- working with senior citizens	1	1	1
No involvement	65	65	64

*) Open-ended question; mentions over 1 percent are shown

4. Personal prospects for the future

The vast majority (82 %) of those born around the start of reunification have a optimistic view of the future.

Only a minority are more pessimistic (12 %), or are both optimistic as well as pessimistic (6%) about the future.

Respondents who have spent most of their life in West Germany, more often view the future more optimistically than respondents who have spent most of their life in East Germany.

In addition, women more frequently claim to be optimistic about the future than men.

- Looking toward the future

	The view to the future is		
	more optimistic %	more pessimistic %	both *) %
In total	82	12	6
Majority of life spent in:			
- East Germany	75	19	6
- West Germany	84	10	6
Men	75	16	9
Women	90	7	3
Pupils/ students	83	11	6
Working people	82	11	6

*) difference to 100 percent = „don't know“

5. The most important event for Germany in the past 30 years

The respondents were asked openly and unprompted, what was, in their opinion, the most important event for Germany in the last 30 years.

The vast majority (77 %) mentioned the fall of the Wall or the reunification of Germany.

A few respondents mentioned the introduction of the Euro (4 %), the football World Cup (3 %), the establishment of the European Union (2 %), and the election/ voting out of individual chancellors (1 %) as being the most important events for Germany in the past 30 years.

▪ The most important event for Germany in the past 30 years

	In *) total %	Majority of life spent in:	
		East Germany %	West Germany %
- Fall of the Wall, reunification	77	85	75
- Introduction of the Euro	4	2	4
- Football World Cup	3	5	3
- Establishment of the EU	2	1	3
- Election/ voting out of a chancellor	1	0	1

*) Open-ended question; mentions over 1 percent are shown

6. Opinions about the reunification and the GDR

The vast majority (93 %) of those born in the years 1989 and 1990 think that it is good that German unity was implemented 25 years ago.

Only a very few respondents (3 %) are of the opinion that it would be better if the wall between East and West was still standing.

▪ Opinions about the reunification

	Think it is good that German unity was implemented	
	yes %	no, it would be better if the wall was still standing % ^{*)}
In total	93	3
Majority of life spent in:		
- East Germany	87	3
- West Germany	95	3
Men	92	2
Women	93	4
Pupils/students	95	2
Working people	94	2

*) difference to 100 percent = „don't know“

50 percent of those born around the time of the start of German Reunification are of the opinion that the GDR was an unconstitutional state.

37 percent think that it cannot be called unconstitutional.

Those born around the time of reunification therefore think that the GDR was a criminal state, slightly less often than the average of all German citizens.

Respondents who spent most of their life in West Germany, and pupils and students, are more often of the opinion that the GDR was an unconstitutional state than the average of all the respondents.

In contrast, people who have spent most of their life in East Germany and working people, more often than average think that it cannot be called unconstitutional.

- GDR as unconstitutional state?

	The GDR was an unconstitutional state	
	yes %	no, can't really say that *) %
German citizens in total **)	58	34
Wende-Geborene in total	50	37
Majority of life spent in:		
- East Germany	36	49
- West Germany	55	33
Men	52	36
Women	48	38
Pupils/ students	62	26
Working people	45	43

*) difference to 100 percent = „don't know“

**) Results of a survey commissioned by RTL in September 2014

7. Opinions about East and West Germans

46 percent of those born around the start of the German Reunification are of the opinion that the mentality of East and West Germans differs more than it is usually the case when people come from different regions.

51 percent think you can't really put it like that.

This opinion does not differ much from that of German citizens as a whole.

Respondents who have spent most of their life in East Germany, more often think that the mentality of East and West Germans differs more than it is usually the case when people come from different regions than respondents who have lived most of their life in West Germany.

Working people are also slightly more often of this opinion than pupils and students.

- Differences in mentality in East and West

	The mentality of East and West Germans differs more than is usually the case when people come from different regions	
	yes %	no, can't really say that % ^{*)}
German citizens in total ^{**)}	47	49
Wende-Geborene in total	46	51
Majority of life spent in:		
- East Germany	60	39
- West Germany	42	55
Men	45	53
Women	48	49
Pupils/ students	41	55
Working people	49	49

*) difference to 100 percent = „don't know“

**) Results of a survey commissioned by RTL in September 2014

The respondents were read several statements about East and West Germans and asked whether they agree with these statements or not.

Just under half (47 %) of those born in 1989 and 1990 think that money and status symbols tend to be more important to West Germans than East Germans.

Approximately one third of respondents in each case, are of the opinion that West Germans tend to attach more importance to their careers than East Germans (38 %), that East Germans tend to be more xenophobic than West Germans (35 %) and that West Germans tend to be more arrogant than East Germans (32 %).

More than a quarter of respondents (28 %) also think East German women tend to be more emancipated than West German women.

Comparatively few respondents are of the opinion that East Germans tend to moan and complain more than West Germans (22 %) and that East Germans tend to be more socially involved than West Germans (17 %).

▪ Differences between East and West Germans I

	Agree with the respective statement	
	yes %	no *) %
- Money and status symbols tend to be more important to West Germans than to East Germans	47	50
- West Germans tend to attach more importance to their careers than East Germans	38	58
- East Germans tend to be more xenophobic than West Germans	35	60
- West Germans tend to be more arrogant than East Germans	32	65
- East German women tend to be more emancipated than West German women	28	64
- East Germans tend to moan and complain more than West Germans	22	74
- East Germans tend to be more socially involved than West Germans	17	72

*) difference to 100 percent = „don't know“

Respondents who have spent most of their life in East Germany, more often agree with the majority of the statements than the respondents who have spent most of their life in West Germany: they are more often of the opinion that money and status symbols tend to be more important to West Germans than to East Germans, that West Germans tend to attach more importance to their careers than East Germans, that West Germans tend to be more arrogant than East Germans, that East German women tend to be more emancipated than West German women and that East Germans tend to be more socially involved than West Germans.

In contrast, respondents who have spent most of their life in West Germany more often think that East Germans tend to be more xenophobic than West Germans.

▪ Differences between East and West Germans II

Agree with the statement:	In	Majority of life spent in:	
	total	East Germany	West Germany
	%	%	%
- Money and status symbols tend to be more important to West Germans than to East Germans	47	54	44
- West Germans tend to attach more importance to their careers than East Germans	38	45	36
- East Germans tend to be more xenophobic than West Germans	35	28	37
- West Germans tend to be more arrogant than East Germans	32	37	30
- East German women tend to be more emancipated than West German women	28	46	23
- East Germans tend to moan and complain more than West Germans	22	20	22
- East Germans tend to be more socially involved than West Germans	17	26	14

8. Visit to the other part of the country

Nearly all respondents who have spent most of their life in East Germany (98 %), have already been to West Germany. Only very few respondents (2 %) have never been to West Germany, apart from West Berlin.

Of the respondents who have spent most of their life in West Germany, three quarters (73 %) have already been to East Germany. One quarter (27 %) have never been to East Germany, aside from Berlin.

▪ **Visit to the other part of the country**

	Already visited the other part of the country	
	yes	no
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Majority of life spent in:		
- East Germany	98	2
- West Germany	73	27