

PRESS RELEASE, Heidelberg / Berlin, 19.03.2024

The majority of Germans are happy - despite crises and conflicts

SINUS study on International Day of Happiness on March 20th in cooperation with YouGov

"Crisis mode" was chosen as the word of the year in 2023. The jury wanted to point out that the state of emergency has become a permanent state. One could therefore assume that the state of mind of people in the country has also deteriorated in times of multiple crises. But is this really the case? SINUS-Institut, together with the international Data & Analytics Group YouGov, took International Day of Happiness on March 20th as an opportunity to ask the population how happy they were, what their personal happiness depends on and how happy they see themselves in the future. The results show that Germans are currently happier than one might have expected.

Currently, six out of ten respondents (60%) describe themselves as very or somewhat happy. It was found that the higher the level of education or household income, the happier were those surveyed. The young generation (18 to 24 years) and singles were the most reserved in their responses to this question.

People in Germany are slightly unhappier in 2024 than they were in 2019

The question arises as to whether people were happier before the crises of recent years. The answer is yes, somewhat. After all, two thirds of all respondents (66%) described themselves as happy in 2019, 6 percentage points more than in 2024. In view of far-reaching geopolitical and other events, one might expect that the feeling of happiness would have decreased more significantly. This may indicate the resilience of the population.

And if you ask people in the country today how happy they remember themselves feeling five years ago, it turns out that just under two in five respondents (39%) say they were just as happy or unhappy as they are today. In contrast, 30% say they were happier back then and 23% were unhappier than today.

Looking into the future, the majority (43%) expect to be just as happy in five years' time as they are today. 10% expect to be unhappier. As many as 26% are confident that they will be happier. In 2019, the level of optimism about the future was comparable (28%).

Happiness determinants: health, a good partnership and an intact family

The most frequently cited key to happiness is health (50%). A good partnership (30%), an intact family (27%), sufficient money (26%) and a nice home (23%) follow at a clear distance. These top five happiness factors have practically not changed in the past five years. Of the 19 factors surveyed, happiness is least dependent on beauty (2%), success and education (3% each).

When asked about *the* happiest experience so far, the birth of one's own children (24%) leads the way, followed by getting to know one's partner (11%). Experiences with family or friends and getting married were mentioned less frequently (5% each).

The lifeworld also determines the sense of happiness

However, the basic orientation influences the degree of happiness and the things that make you happy even more than socio-demographics. This is shown by an analysis based on the Sinus-Milieus social model, which divides the population into ten "groups of like-minded people" based on their values and lifestyle.

"Each milieu sets different priorities in terms of the goods that bring them happiness. For the Nostalgic Middle Class Milieu, i.e. the nostalgic part of the social center with a longing for the 'good old days', for example, family and a harmonious social environment are the key to happiness. For the urban progressive Cosmopolitan Avantgarde milieu, on the other hand, happiness means being able to lead an unconventional and varied life," comments Manfred Tautscher, Managing Director of SINUS-Institut.

Fewer and fewer people think that the population is happy

While 60% of people in Germany describe themselves as happy, their fellow human beings are perceived as significantly less happy: only 25% believe that people in Germany are happy. This figure has fallen significantly since 2019: five years ago, 46% of respondents thought that Germans were happy.

"The results of the survey show a discrepancy between the self-reported feeling of happiness and the attribution of happiness to others. It is interesting that those who describe themselves as happy do not transfer their own satisfaction with life to others," says Philipp Schneider, Head of Marketing DACH at YouGov. "This probably shows the effects of the perception of the global crises and the strikes and demonstrations of recent weeks and months."

Tu felix Austria: Austrians are happier than Germans

This proverb attributes people in our neighboring country Austria with being particularly happy. This is also confirmed by the latest data collected by the SINUS sister institute INTEGRAL: In Austria, 73% say they are happy (vs. 60% in Germany). A larger proportion than in Germany also rate their own countrymen as happy (35% vs. 25%).

Methodological information

The results are based on an online survey conducted by YouGov Deutschland GmbH, in which 2,010 people took part between January 30 and February 8, 2024. The weighted results are representative of the German population aged 18 to 75.

About SINUS-Institut

SINUS Markt- und Sozialforschung GmbH, with offices in Heidelberg and Berlin, has specialised in psychological and social science research and consulting for over 40 years. SINUS develops strategies for companies and institutions that use socio-cultural change as a success factor.

A key tool is the [Sinus-Milieus model](#) - a model of society and target groups that summarises people according to their lifestyles in "groups of like-minded people". For decades, the Sinus-Milieus have been one of the best-known and most influential segmentation approaches in the German-speaking market and are available for over 50 countries.

SINUS cooperates closely with its sister companies INTEGRAL Markt- und Meinungsforschung in Vienna, Austria, and OPINION Market Research & Consulting, Nuremberg, Germany (INTEGRAL-SINUS-OPINION Group).

More Information on SINUS-Institut at www.sinus-institut.de.

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About YouGov

YouGov is an international online market research and analytics technology company. As innovators and pioneers of online market research, we have spent the last twenty years building an ever-growing source of consumer data that enables us to understand the complex lives of consumers. Our treasure trove of data is not static, but is continuously updated and expanded. We call this: Living Data.

Our innovative solutions help the world's best-known brands, media owners and agencies to better plan, activate and measure their marketing activities.

With operations in the UK, the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, India and Asia Pacific, we have one of the world's largest research networks.

YouGov data is regularly quoted by the international press - we are the most quoted market research institute in the world.

YouGov. Living Consumer Intelligence.

More information on YouGov at [yougov.de](https://www.yougov.de)

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