

Foundation



Remembrance
Responsibility
Future

MEMO

Multidimensional
Remembrance
Monitor

2023

YOUTH
STUDY

Are there certain past events or time periods that you consider particularly important?¹



Comments. The reported percentages are based on the systematic analysis and categorization of 500 randomly selected cases from the overall sample. Some responses classified for multiple categories, for which reason they should not be regarded as exclusive. Events beginning with the French Revolution have been listed in the illustration. Events and periods going back historically further are not shown in the graphic.

¹ The first survey wave took place in September and October 2021, i.e. before the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine; consequently, this war was not mentioned by the participants here.

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1 The Foundation's prologue



During this period, a huge majority of Germans followed a racist, murderous, and Social Darwinist ideology, thereby forming a national community. People who didn't belong to this national community, i.e. Jews, Sinti and Roma, homosexuals, people deemed to be "antisocial", people with illnesses as well as political opponents, were persecuted and murdered to an unimaginable extent.

Female, 18 years old

After World War I, Adolf Hitler became Chancellor and a dictator and came to rule Germany and Europe.

Divers, 16 Jahre

Right-wingers took advantage of Germany's unstable situation in order to seize power; they plunged Germany into a hopeless war with millions of victims as well as war crimes.

Male, 18 years old



Dear readers,

These statements came from MEMO Youth Study participants to explain what National Socialism means in particular to them in their own words. These are responses to one of the open questions about National Socialism put to young people between the ages of 16 and 25 in the representative survey. In total, the participants answered more than 100 questions, most of which were standardized. In this way, the MEMO Youth Study complements the previous five MEMO surveys (2018 to 2022) by the group of adolescents and young adults.

The Study highlights which issues are of historic significance for this age group and what importance the memory of National Socialism has for them.

The answers are as varied as the 3,485 respondents themselves. The good news: Even if there are substantial gaps in their knowledge – young people take an interest in the time of National Socialism; they want to engage in a critical examination of it and see many points of reference in the present. It is clear that respondents want to “talk about it” and that they consider treatment of the topic in school and the media as well as visits to museums and memorial sites as important and actually demand it.

The time of National Socialism is regarded as a significant era in German history. Data shows that there is a great deal of interest in National Socialist history – greater than has often been assumed before – and that many people have already engaged in a critical examination of National Socialism frequently. Respondents want fact-based learning at historical places and to fill existing gaps in their knowledge. They want to understand how such a thing could have happened.

The 16 to 25-year-olds also look for points of connection between the critical view of the past and their own experience of the present. Being more sensitive to issues of discrimination than the general population, they are concerned about the extent of degradation and exclusion of people in German society today. One in five report being actively involved themselves.

The need for fact-based learning at historical places and for participation in important social negotiation processes is taken up by the EVZ Foundation in its funding programs:

- The federal program *YOUNG PEOPLE* remember supports international youth encounters at hitherto little-known memorial sites of National Socialist persecution and extermination.
- The *MEET UP! Youth for Partnership* funding program strengthens youth exchange between Germany and the countries of the Eastern Partnership. The focus here is on young people's critical examination of the culture of remembrance, climate protection or human rights.
- The *Education Agenda NS-Injustice* is aimed at current social and political challenges in historical-political education about National Socialist injustice in Germany and Europe and makes a pioneering contribution to learning and understanding. The Agenda addresses and activates young people's life-worlds with creative and digital formats.

The findings relating to the culture of remembrance and the attitudes of 16 to 25-year-olds also provide numerous starting points for the conception of historical-political educational work. The EVZ Foundation is already implementing many of these, for example by actively involving young people in projects, and it will continue to develop these approaches together with its partners.

As teachers, historical-political educators, journalists or funding institutions – let us take these adolescents and young adults at their word! Let's give them a space to learn and listen to them more. They are less discriminatory in terms of group-focused enmity if they have addressed National Socialist history; they are committed to their future, specifically on issues of climate change and anti-discrimination. This facilitates a better social coexistence.

Andrea Despot, Chief Executive Officer of the EVZ Foundation and Merle Schmidt, Specialist Advisor for youth educational work

2 Die MEMO-Jugendstudie

This study was carried out and published as part of the “MEMO” project of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Conflict and Violence (IKG) at Bielefeld University. MEMO, the Multidimensional Remembrance Monitor, has been coordinated by the IKG since 2018 and is funded by the Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and Future (EVZ). The results of five representative telephone surveys have been published as part of the project so far. The study reports are fully accessible free of charge on the homepage www.stiftung-evz.de/memo. In terms of content, the MEMO studies address various aspects of the societal remembrance of the National Socialist era in Germany and the critical examination of this period. A full overview of the topics covered is available in the report of the fifth study, “MEMO V/2022,” published in July 2022.

This study is an additional, in-depth survey which was conducted as part of the project beginning in late summer 2021. It differs from the preceding surveys in particular in three points: In the MEMO Youth Study adolescents and young adults between the ages of 16 and 25 were specifically questioned as an important target group for historical-political educational work. The survey was not held by telephone, but online, so that participants could answer a larger number of questions, some of which were open-ended, in their own words with full anonymity. Participants were not questioned just once; they were questioned a second time with an interval of twelve months to facilitate analyses of changes in behavior and attitude.

The MEMO Youth Study is intended to provide information about the concerns and needs of the surveyed age group and to serve as an orientation for the design of current and future historical-political educational work in Germany. This document presents key findings from the online surveys. 3,485 representatively selected young people were interviewed for the study in an initial survey in September and October 2021. Participants were then invited to take another survey in September 2022. 838 participants took part in this second survey. Unless otherwise stated, the reported results are based on data from the first representative survey in 2021.

In terms of content, the MEMO Youth Study is based on the previous telephone surveys, although it goes beyond them thematically and also explores topics in greater depth by means of open-ended questions. Some questions were taken verbatim from the telephone surveys to facilitate comparisons between responses from the general population and responses from 16 to 25-year-olds in the MEMO Youth Study. All comparisons in this report are based on responses from participants over the age of 25 from the MEMO Studies I to V. In addition to questions about the German culture of remembrance in relation to the National Socialist era, the MEMO Youth Study also includes questions on interests and concerns relating to the culture of remembrance in general as well as other sociopolitical topics – including an excursus on the perception and assessment of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. In order to draw a more comprehensive picture of the group of 16 to 25-year-olds, the study intentionally includes not just history-related questions but also topic areas such as participants’ own experiences of discrimination and the question of which sociopolitical issues young people in Germany are committed to in their everyday lives.

A methodological strength of the MEMO Youth Study lies in its mixed-methods approach, i. e. the combination of quantitative and qualitative survey methods which represent the object of study as comprehensively as possible. Participants' responses to open questions were categorized systematically and quantified according to content criteria so that the statements on these questions are not based on analyses of randomly selected individual cases: they present the data material as in the broadest possible way. This report presents selected results of the surveys.

3 Methodology

In the two standardized online surveys, participants answered both open questions without specifying response options (e. g. "Which way of dealing critically with the time of National Socialism has been the most useful to you personally so far?") and closed-format questions where statements were given and respondents could indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on a rating scale (e. g. "I don't understand why, today, I am still supposed to deal with Germany's history in the time of National Socialism." – "Strongly disagree, disagree, neither/nor, agree, strongly agree"). To avoid forcing specific answers, participants could reply to these questions on a five-point Likert scale, whereby they were given a neutral middle answer category. Participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous. There was always the option not to answer a question ("I don't know" or "prefer not to answer") or to stop participating in the survey.

The presentation of the data includes calculations of percentages and mean values (M). Mean values describe the calculated arithmetic mean, i. e. the average of the answers from all respondents. In some cases, results are reported for a selected share of respondents, e. g. those who answered a previous question in the same way. The fact that within a question the response values do not always add up to 100 % is due to some respondents' "I don't know" answers or missing answers. However, due to the possibility of multiple responses, some response values may as well add up to more than 100 %. The report also includes information on systematic correlations and differences. They were examined using corresponding statistical methods (correlation, distribution, and variance analyses). Systematic results are those for which a statistically significant correlation or difference can be demonstrated based on the data, i. e. which are highly unlikely to be random (with a maximum error probability of $p = 5\%$). The analysis of correlations (r) does not allow any conclusions to be drawn about the causal direction of these correlations. For the sake of readability, the current report does not present any further statistical data.

4 Description of the survey samples

The samples on which the report is based are presented below. The presentation includes first the description of the 3,485 adolescents and young adults who were questioned in September and October 2021, followed by the description of the 838 people who also participated in the second survey in September 2022.

First survey wave

The adolescents and young adults surveyed in September and October 2021 were between the ages of 16 and 25, with an average age of 20.8 years. Just over half of them (51.8 %) report a male gender identity, 47.6 % identify as female, and 0.6 % as diverse. More than half of the respondents (56.9 %) state that their highest educational qualification is a higher education entrance qualification (Hochschulreife), whilst approximately one in four (24.1%) say that their highest qualification is a high school diploma (Realschulabschluss). Just over one in ten respondents (11.4 %) has already completed a degree at a university or technical college. A comparison with data from the Federal Statistical Office shows that the participants in our sample have an above-average level of education. The following tables summarize key demographic characteristics of the sample.

Gender distribution

female	47.6 %
male	51.8 %
diverse	0.6 %

Occupation

employed	28.0 %
in apprenticeship or school	29.0 %
at university	35.6 %
Other	6.4 %

Highest own educational degree

No school-leaving qualification	2.2 %
High school diploma (Hauptschulabschluss)	3.8 %
High school diploma (Realschulabschluss)	24.1 %
Secondary school (Hochschulreife)	56.9 %
Completed degree at a university or technical college	11.4 %

Highest educational degree of parents

No school-leaving qualification	2.0 %
High school diploma (Hauptschulabschluss)/ polytechnical secondary school (polytechnische Oberschule)	11.8 %
High school diploma (Realschulabschluss)	27.7 %
Secondary school (Hochschulreife)	24.1 %
Completed degree at a university or technical college	26.6 %

Financial situation/net household income

<EUR 1,000	12.5 %
EUR 1,000 to EUR 2,000	16.4 %
EUR 2,000 to EUR 3,000	18.8 %
EUR 3,000 to EUR 4,000	12.2 %
>EUR 4,000	20.7 %
"I don't know"	19.3 %

Migration biographies (data provided by respondents)

Respondent was not born in Germany	5.4 %
One parent was not born in Germany	10.7 %
Both parents were not born in Germany	18.1 %

Second survey wave

The second survey took place in September 2022. Those of the 3,485 participants from the first survey wave who had granted consent were contacted during this period and invited to participate again. On account of the self-selection, the respondents of the second survey wave are not a representative sample. By the repeated survey, the MEMO Youth Study provides a data basis for a series of further analyses that go beyond this results report.

Participants in the second survey wave were 21.9 years old on average; consequently, as expected, they were on average approximately one year older than at the time of the first survey. The gender distribution was stable in the second survey wave: 48.0 % of the participants reported a female gender identity, 51.3 % reported a male gender identity, and 0.7 % reported diverse gender identity.

Gender distribution in the second survey wave

female	48.0 %
male	51.3 %
diverse	0.7 %

5 key findings

5.1 Interest in history and important historical events and periods

The greater proportion of 16 to 25-year-olds (47.1 %) say they are generally interested in history – just 17.5 % of the participants report having little or no interest in history. Similar proportions are found with regard to history lessons: Just over half of the respondents (53.6 %) like or have liked history lessons at school – approximately one in four (24.4 %) dislike or have disliked the lessons. Additionally, the greater part of the respondents (42.7 %) say they occasionally deal with historical topics in their leisure time, whilst 30.5 % often and 26.5 % rarely or never deal with the topic of history on their own initiative.

How interested are you in history in general?

Not at all	Rather not	Neither/nor	Rather a lot	A lot
3.2 %	14.3 %	35.0 %	32.3 %	14.8 %

And how much do you like or have liked the subject of history in school lessons?

Not at all	Rather not	Neither/nor	Rather a lot	A lot
7.3 %	17.1 %	21.6 %	29.0 %	24.6 %

How often do you deal with the topic of history, for example with certain historical events, in your leisure time?

Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Very often
5.3 %	21.2 %	42.7 %	23.8 %	6.7 %

In the further analyses, it became clear that the respondents' interest in history had no systematic relation to factors such as their age, their educational background or their parents' educational background.

In order to map respondents' interest in a differentiated way, participants in the MEMO Youth Study were asked which past events and periods they personally found especially important. No specific historical context had been named up to this point in the survey to ensure the most unbiased responses possible. Respondents could openly name up to three events or periods which they personally considered important. The answers were then systematized in accordance with content criteria. To allow for a wide range of answers, "past events and periods" were defined as "all events and periods in the past that are or could be important to us as a society to this day." By definition, it did not matter "whether the events occurred a long time ago or only in recent years or decades, or whether they were one-off events, specific days or periods lasting months, years, or decades."

Are there certain past events or time periods that you consider particularly important?¹

Answers	Percentage
Context of National Socialism	82.6 %
Explicit reference to World War II ²	58.0 %
Explicit reference to National Socialism	24.6 %
Context of World War I ²	35.6 %
Context of the German division and reunification	31.0 %
Specific historical eras (e. g. Antiquity, Roman Empire, Medieval Period)	16.8 %
Concrete revolutions (e. g. French Revolution, Islamic Revolution)	7.6 %
Industrial age	6.6 %
9/11	6.4 %
Specific individuals (e. g. Napoleon, Martin Luther)	5.8 %
Context of the coronavirus pandemic	5.4 %
Cold War	5.2 %
Other wars (e. g. Vietnam, Afghanistan)	5.2 %
November 9 (non-specific answers)	4.8 %
Weimar Republic	4.6 %
Colonialism	3.4 %
Civil rights movements after 1949 (e. g., Black Lives Matter)	2.2 %
Foundation of the German Empire	2.0 %
Economic, financial and banking crises	1.4 %
Arab-Israeli Conflict	1.4 %

Comments. The reported percentages are based on the systematic analysis and categorization of 500 randomly selected cases from the overall sample. Some responses classified for multiple categories, for which reason they should not be regarded as exclusive.

The vast majority of participants in the MEMO Youth Study (82.6 %) responds to the question about subjectively important historical events with those from the context of the National Socialist era. Most respondents explicitly refer to World War II (58.0 %), whilst approximately a quarter (24.6 %) explicitly mentions

¹ A reminder: The first survey wave took place in September and October 2021, i.e. before the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine; consequently, this war was not mentioned by the participants here.

² Responses in which respondents named “the World Wars” or “both World Wars” were categorized as referring to both World War I and World War II.

National Socialism. Less than one third (31.0 %) consider historical events and periods from the context of German division and reunification to be particularly important.

5.2 Cultures of remembrance and social practices of dealing critically with history

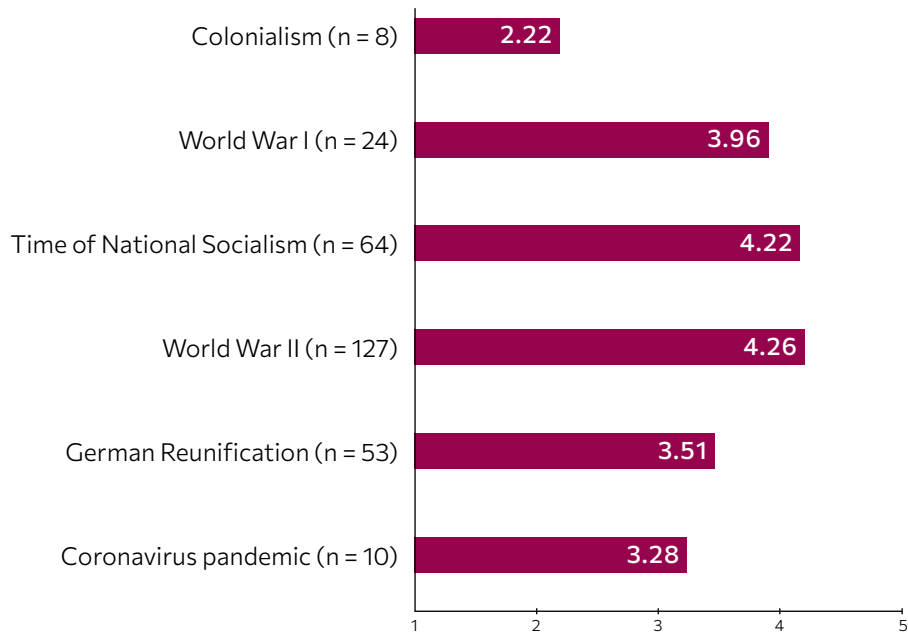
The content of the following section follows on from the questions on interest in history – but the focus is now on the specific question concerning which of the named historical events the 16 to 25-year-olds consider to be especially relevant for today’s social debates and which culture of remembrance practices they themselves recommend for a critical examination. Generally, the majority of participants in the MEMO Youth Study (84.8 %) think that it is “rather important” or “very important” that “we as a society engage in a critical examination of our own past”. Only 3.4 % of the respondents disagree with this statement.

How important do you think it is generally that we as a society engage in a critical examination of ‘our own past’?				
Not important at all	Rather not important	Neither/nor	Rather important	Very important
0.6 %	2.8 %	11.2 %	33.3 %	51.5 %

Afterwards, all the participants who had indicated more than one historical event or period in the previous questions were asked to choose the event or period that they felt we as a society need address more intensively. They were then questioned in more detail about the context they selected. Consequently, the results given below refer only to those respondents from the overall sample who selected the particular event (for example, colonialism). The number of respondents (*n*) varies accordingly in the analyses.

Of the selected historical contexts, the respondents perceive World War II ($M = 4.26$) and the time of National Socialism ($M = 4.22$) most clearly as “part of the German culture of remembrance” – i. e. as content of, for example, commemorative events, memorial sites, or school lessons. They perceive the history of colonialism as poorly represented both in society and institutionally ($M = 2.22$).

To what extent is this event/period part of the culture of remembrance in Germany, i. e. for example, the content of commemorative events, of memorial sites, or a topic in schools?



Comments. The average responses (mean values) of the respondents are reported here, differentiated by the historical event or period they indicated. Participants answered the question on a scale from 1 = “not at all” to 5 = “very strongly.”

The further analyses showed that the participants subjectively dealt least intensively with the history of reunification ($M = 3.37$). On the other hand, the time of National Socialism ($M = 4.20$) and the Coronavirus pandemic ($M = 4.05$) are reported as events that participants have dealt with intensively.

The respondents rate the history of colonialism ($M = 4.50$) as the most interesting historical context in terms of content, alongside the time of National Socialism ($M = 4.51$). The base values are high for all contexts. Participants naturally report their strongest personal connection to the Coronavirus pandemic ($M = 4.42$), and the least to the history of colonialism ($M = 1.92$). They further report having learned the least about colonialism at school ($M = 2.72$) – but the most about the time of National Socialism ($M = 4.14$) and World War II ($M = 4.14$). Finally, the participants judge that, from their point of view, the Coronavirus pandemic ($M = 4.81$) and history of colonialism ($M = 4.72$) have the greatest influence on the present.

In relation to the event/period, how much do you agree with the following statements?

	Colonialism	World War I	Time of National Socialism	World War II	German reunification	Coronavirus pandemic
I have intensively examined the event/period.	3.80	3.96	4.20	3.86	3.37	4.05
In terms of content, I find the event/period interesting.	4.50	4.33	4.51	4.31	4.30	4.14
The event/period matters a lot to my family.	1.82	2.59	2.43	2.37	2.73	3.28
I have a strong personal connection to this event/period.	1.92	2.66	2.11	2.33	2.28	4.42
The event/period has a great impact on the present.	4.72	3.95	4.44	4.20	4.19	4.81
I learned a lot about this event/period in school.	2.72	3.56	4.14	4.14	3.46	3.10
The event/period is important to people among my friends.	2.60	3.13	2.85	2.86	2.66	3.72

Comments. The respondents' average responses (mean values), differentiated by the socially relevant historical events or periods they selected, are reported here. The two highest mean values per question are highlighted.

Asked explicitly about this, approximately half of all participants (49.3 %) believe that too little is talked in society about "other periods of German history," such as the history of colonialism.

We talk too little in our society about other periods of German history, e.g. the history and consequences of German colonialism.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
4.2 %	9.6 %	27.1 %	33.1 %	16.2 %

Comments. This question was asked in the context of the second survey wave. The percentages presented are therefore based on the responses from the 838 participants who took part in it.

Finally, in this part of the study, participants were asked about their suggestions for addressing the historical context they themselves named. In this open question, the adolescents and young adults were free to name educational approaches and could refer to established methods or suggest new approaches. The open answers were then systematized according to content criteria.

What should people in Germany do to remember or critically deal with this event/period?	
Answer	Percentage
Dealing with it in history lessons/school	34.8 %
Visiting memorial sites and commemorative events	22.2 %
Discuss it	7.2 %
Watch films and documentaries	7.0 %
Meet contemporary witnesses	4.0 %
No more work/education is needed	3.0 %
Use social media	1.0 %

In terms of forms of social debate, most respondents would like to see classical formats such as a critical examination in school lessons (34.8 %) and visits to memorial sites and commemorative events (22.2 %). Culture of remembrance work is therefore primarily located and desired in established educational institutions. Formats in new or social media are only proposed sporadically. New approaches in terms of possibilities for a critical examination that do not yet exist are not mentioned. A supplementary systematization of the answers demonstrates that respondents feel that the responsibility for social reappraisal and a critical examination of historical events lies first and foremost with the state and with institutions (47.8 %) and only secondarily with the individual (28.8 %).

5.3

Interest in and ways of critical examination of the time of National Socialism

In terms of content, the following parts of the survey refer specifically to the history of National Socialism. The primary questions to be addressed are how intensively and in what ways young people in Germany have dealt with the history of the time of National Socialism in the past, which opportunities and offers they have found especially worthwhile and how they think educational offers on the topic should be designed.

Most participants (62.8 %) say they have “rather intensively” or “very intensively” dealt with the topic of National Socialism so far. Only slightly more than one in ten (10.7 %) report not having dealt intensively with the time of National Socialism. This means the intensity of engagement with National Socialism is higher among 16 to 25-year-olds than in the general population (see MEMO IV/2021): Here, 52.8 % of the respondents stated that they had dealt with National Socialism “rather intensively” or “very intensively”.

How intensively have you dealt with the time of National Socialism so far?						
	Not intensively at all	Rather not intensively	Neither/nor	Rather intensively	Very intensively	
	2.8 %	7.9 %	23.9 %	41.5 %	21.3 %	
	6.8 %	15.2 %	25.1 %	29.5 %	23.3 % ³	MEMO IV

A similar pattern is seen with regard to school-based critical examination: Participants in the MEMO Youth Study more frequently report having learned “rather a lot” or “a lot” about the time of National Socialism in school (67.7 %) than respondents in the general population (45.8 %, see MEMO IV/2021). Analyses show that young people with higher educational qualifications report more frequently that they learned a lot at school than respondents with lower educational qualifications.

What would you say: how much did you learn about the time of National Socialism in school?						
	Nothing at all	Not very much	Neither/nor	Rather a lot	A lot	
	1.5 %	9.2 %	20.8 %	38.3 %	29.4 %	
	9.7 %	23.7 %	20.7 %	24.7 %	21.1 %	MEMO IV

Overall, the results do not indicate a decrease in interest among young people in the history of National Socialism. On the contrary, less than one-tenth (8.7 %) express a lack of understanding concerning why they should still be concerned with the topic today. About three quarters of the participants (76.5 %) do not question the point of the critical examination. As compared to the general population, the answers in the MEMO Youth Study are also clearer here:

³ At some points in this report, comparative values from the MEMO I/2018 to MEMO V/2022 representative telephone surveys are stated. The comparative values are highlighted in color in the tables. For the comparisons, the respective response frequencies of respondents over the age of 25 from the previous MEMO studies were used.

In MEMO Study III/2020, more than a quarter of the respondents from the general population (26.0 %) said they did not understand why people should still deal with National Socialist history today.

I don't understand why, today, I am still supposed to deal with Germany's history in the time of National Socialism.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
	56.7 %	19.8 %	11.0 %	5.4 %	3.3 %
MEMO III	33.2 %	23.7 %	17.1 %	17.6 %	8.4 %

With regard to approaches to the topic of National Socialism, the importance of the internet as a source of information for adolescents and young adults is initially confirmed. In terms of existing ways of dealing critically with the National Socialist era, participants in the study gave answers as to how often they had made use of different accesses in the past. Ways such as reading non-fiction books and novels or meeting contemporary witnesses are mentioned rather rarely, whilst feature films and documentaries, in addition to the internet, are important sources for young people in Germany to learn more about the National Socialist era. Only 4.5 % of all the respondents say that they have “never” seen a feature film or documentary on the topic. At the same time, the results make it clear that young adults also make use of other approaches in addition to digital and media services. Talking with friends or within the family, for example, are also important – approximately half of the respondents report that they have talked about the National Socialist era with friends or within the family “four times or more often”. Opportunities such as visits to exhibitions and lectures, as well as to concentration camp memorial sites, are also reported relatively frequently – almost three quarters report having visited such an event or a memorial site at least “once.” At the same time, at least a quarter of all respondents have “never” visited an exhibition, a lecture or a concentration camp memorial site.

How often have you done the following things to deal critically with the subject of National Socialism?

	Never	Once	Twice	Three times	Four times or more often
Read texts or watched videos on the internet (<i>M</i> = 4.10)	7.0 %	8.5 %	11.4 %	10.6 %	58.8 %
Watched a documentary or feature film (<i>M</i> = 3.97)	4.5 %	11.3 %	17.8 %	13.5 %	50.9 %
Talked to friends (<i>M</i> = 3.88)	9.7 %	10.1 %	13.7 %	8.9 %	51.9 %
Talked to family members (<i>M</i> = 3.63)	14.2 %	11.9 %	14.0 %	8.5 %	45.8 %
Visited an exhibition or attended a lecture (<i>M</i> = 2.58)	27.1 %	24.8 %	20.4 %	10.1 %	14.0 %
Read a non-fiction book or novel (<i>M</i> = 2.49)	30.6 %	25.7 %	16.5 %	8.7 %	14.4 %

Visited a concentration camp memorial site ($M = 2.15$)	27.8 %	42.8 %	17.6 %	6.2 %	4.2 %
Visited a commemorative event ($M = 1.80$)	54.9 %	19.7 %	11.5 %	4.8 %	4.8 %
Met a contemporary witness ($M = 1.70$)	56.7 %	23.4 %	10.5 %	3.7 %	3.1 %
Played a mobile phone or computer game set in the time of National Socialism ($M = 1.59$)	73.8 %	7.3 %	5.1 %	3.4 %	7.4 %

If we evaluate the mentioned ways as a measure of the intensity of the critical examination of National Socialism, systematic correlations emerge, especially with regard to respondents' educational backgrounds: The higher their own and their parents' educational qualification, the more intensively 16 to 25-year-olds have dealt with the National Socialist era. Other factors such as age, gender or migration biographies only have minor effects on the question of how intensively participants have dealt with National Socialist history so far.

Further analyses show that respondents who have adopted one specific way of engaging in a critical examination are more likely to take up certain other ways of critical examination more frequently. Overall, two types of critical examination among young adults can be distinguished based on the data:

Group 1 (“own-initiative and private approaches”): Respondents who have engaged in a critical examination of the topic of National Socialism on the internet were also more likely to have watched films about National Socialism or to have talked about the National Socialist era with family or friends.

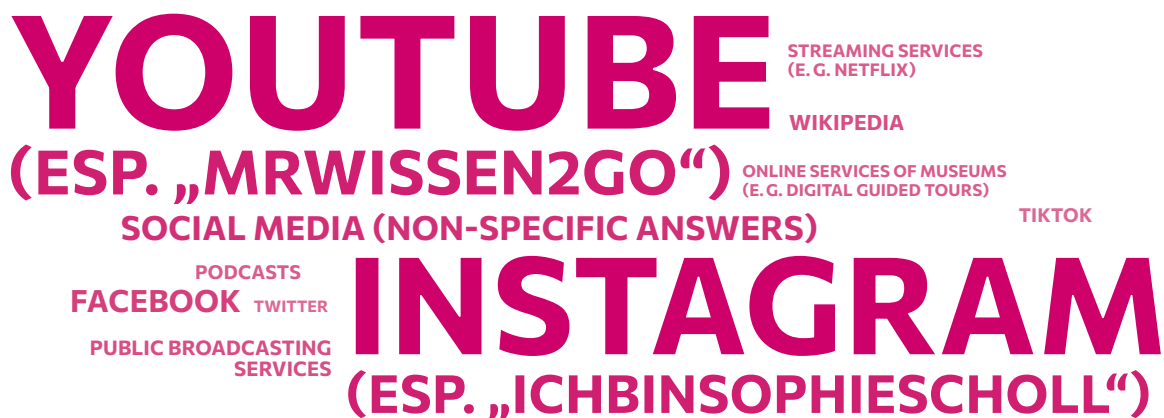
Group 2 (“institutionalized approaches”): Respondents who have visited a concentration camp memorial site are more likely to also have attended a commemorative event, a meeting with contemporary witnesses, an exhibition or a lecture on the subject of National Socialism.

To obtain a more nuanced picture of the participants' use of media, they were asked to name other digital services they have used or continue to use. 629 of the respondents (18.0 %) report at least one other digital access point here; most of them (36.2 %) report watching videos on YouTube. In specific terms, the majority of respondents refer to the YouTube channel “MrWissen2go”. Likewise, many participants (30.8 %) say they have used Instagram. The most frequent specific answer was the Instagram account “ichbinsophiescholl”. In contrast, other digital access points such as Wikipedia articles (4.8 %), Tiktok (3.3 %), or podcasts (1.7 %) are rarely mentioned.

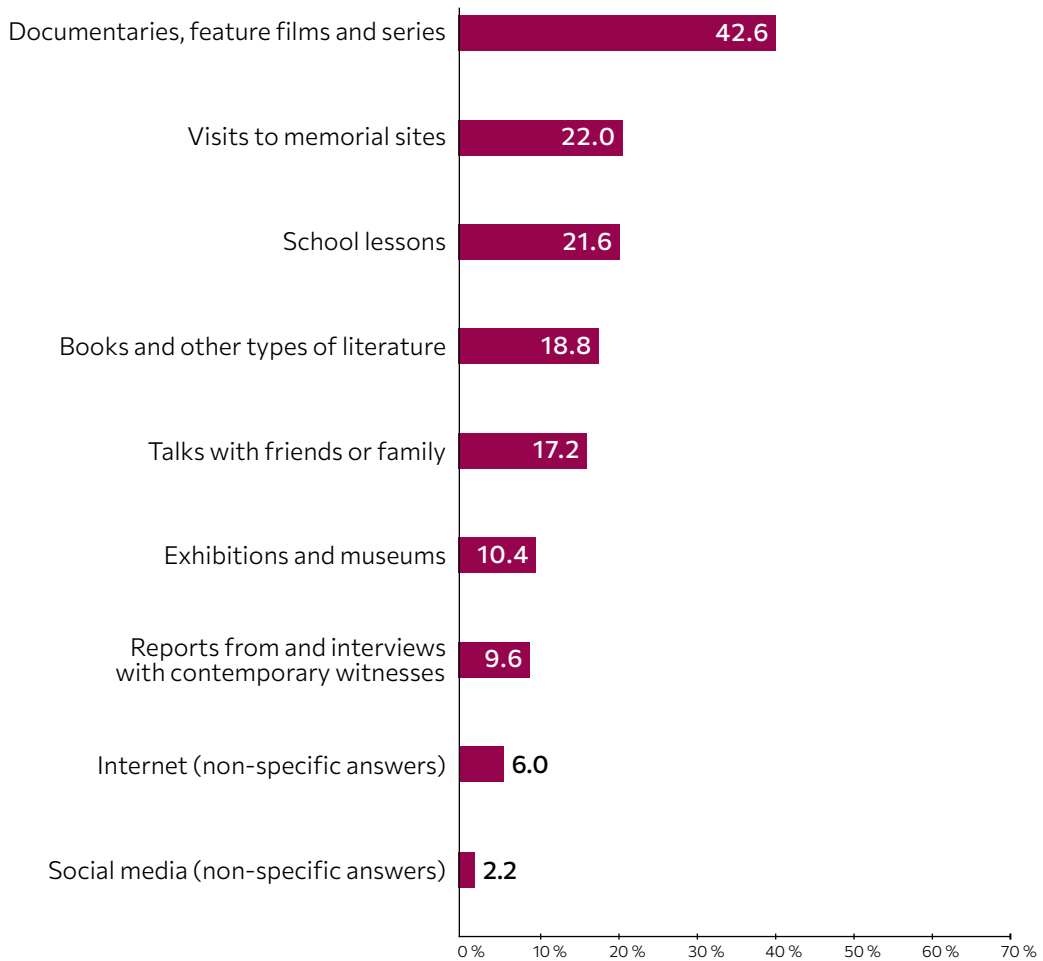
**If you used another digital service (e. g. social media):
Which offer or services did you use?**

Answer	Percentage
YouTube (especially "MrWissen2go")	36.2 %
Instagram (especially "ichbinsophiescholl")	30.8 %
Social media (non-specific answers)	7.6 %
Facebook	7.0 %
Wikipedia	4.8 %
Public broadcasting services	4.6 %
Streaming services (e. g. Netflix)	4.1 %
Tiktok	3.3 %
Online services of museums (e. g. digital guided tours)	2.9 %
Twitter	2.7 %
Podcasts	1.7 %

In addition to the frequency with which specific access points are used, the study was also interested in which offers are subjectively perceived as being especially worthwhile. For this purpose, the participants were openly asked which critical examination of National Socialism has been most useful to them personally. The answers to this question were then systematized according to content criteria.



Which way of dealing critically with the time of National Socialism has been the most useful to you personally so far?



Comments. The reported percentages are based on the systematic analysis and categorization of 500 randomly selected cases from the overall sample. Multiple responses were coded for which reason percentages add up to over 100 %.

Brief summary

The MEMO Youth Study participants most frequently cite cinematic representations as their most useful critical examination of the subject of National Socialism so far, especially documentaries, and in some cases feature films or series. Visits to memorial sites and school lessons were also rated as types of critical examination that have most use for them so far by a significant proportion of the respondents. Only a small proportion of the participants refers to social media in response to this question.

A total of 42.6 % of the evaluated open answers to the question concerning the most useful way of engaging in a critical examination of National Socialism refer to cinematic representations, with the vast majority of respondents mentioning documentaries here; feature films and series are mentioned less frequently. Just over one in five respondents cites visits to memorial sites (22.0 %) and school lessons (21.6 %) as the most useful ways of engaging in a critical examination of National Socialism. Books and other forms of literature (18.8 %), as well as talks with friends or family (17.2 %) are also referred to as especially worthwhile by a proportion of the respondents. When asked about the most useful approaches to the subject of National Socialism, adolescents and young adults only rarely refer to other forms of critical examination, such as visits to exhibitions and museums or the use of social media.

Critical examination of National Socialism in the course of the year

In order to look at which approaches are presently significant in a more nuanced way, participants in the second survey wave were asked again in September 2022 about their critical examination of National Socialist history; the questions here referred to the past twelve months. All results below are based on this second survey wave. A large proportion of the 838 participants (45.8 %) report having dealt “rather intensively” or “very intensively” with National Socialist history in relation to this period.

And how intensively have you dealt with the time of National Socialism in the past twelve months?

Not intensively at all	Rather not intensively	Neither/nor	Rather intensively	Very intensively
4.2 %	15.6 %	33.5 %	32.2 %	13.6 %

Moreover, participants stated that, in addition to the internet, talks with friends and family as well as feature films and documentaries played a central role in their critical examination of National Socialism. In each case, more than two thirds of the respondents have adopted these approaches to the subject at least once during the twelve months. More than one in four (29.9 %) have visited a concentration camp memorial site in the past twelve months.

How often have you done the following things to deal critically with the subject of National Socialism in the past twelve months?

	Never	Once	Twice	Three times	Four times or more often
Read texts or watched videos on the internet (<i>M</i> = 2.85)	27.2 %	19.7 %	13.2 %	11.9 %	24.1 %
Talked to friends (<i>M</i> = 2.65)	29.0 %	21.7 %	17.4 %	10.0 %	18.0 %
Talked to family members (<i>M</i> = 2.46)	34.6 %	17.9 %	20.5 %	9.2 %	13.1 %
Watched a documentary or feature film (<i>M</i> = 2.44)	32.3 %	27.3 %	18.0 %	9.5 %	13.0 %

Read a non-fiction book or novel (M = 1.69)	59.8 %	21.1 %	8.3 %	4.2 %	4.2 %
Visited an exhibition or attended a lecture (M = 1.62)	65.1 %	15.7 %	9.5 %	3.7 %	3.7 %
Visited a concentration camp memorial site (M = 1.44)	67.9 %	20.9 %	5.8 %	2.0 %	1.2 %
Played a mobile phone or computer game set in the time of National Socialism (M = 1.43)	78.5 %	6.3 %	6.4 %	2.5 %	3.9 %
Visited a commemorative event (M = 1.35)	77.7 %	10.4 %	5.6 %	1.9 %	1.7 %
Met a contemporary witness (M = 1.32)	80.4 %	8.8 %	4.1 %	3.3 %	1.2 %

In terms of the content, respondents have most frequently dealt with specific groups of victims of National Socialism (18.9 %) and the mechanisms of persecution, exclusion and murder (17.2 %) in the past twelve months. Some young people also mentioned war events (12.4 %) as well as what happened in the concentration camps (12.4 %).

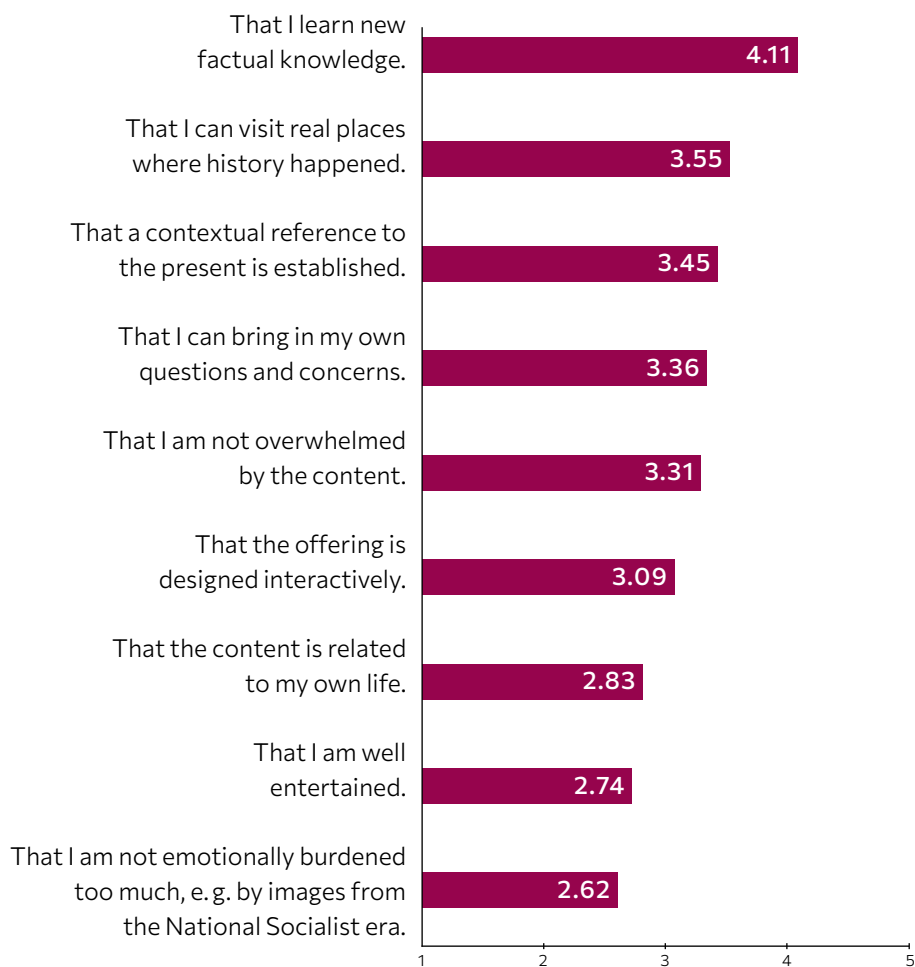
Have you dealt more intensively [in the past twelve months] with a particular aspect or aspects of National Socialist history? If so, with which one or ones?

Answer	Percentage
Groups of victims	18.9 %
Persecution, exclusion and murder	17.2 %
War events	12.4 %
Concentration camps	12.4 %
National Socialist ideology	7.7 %
Adolf Hitler	7.3 %
Seizure of power by the NSDAP	6.4 %
Role of the "uninvolved" or non-persecuted German population	6.4 %
National Socialism after 1945	4.3 %
References to the present	3.4 %
The political system of National Socialism	3.0 %
Perpetrators	2.6 %
Resistance fighters	2.1 %

Comments. The percentages are based on a systematic analysis and categorization of responses from the 233 participants in the second survey wave who responded to this question. Multiple responses were coded for which reason percentages add up to over 100 %.

In order to better understand which aspects of educational offerings are especially relevant for young adults when engaging in a critical examination of National Socialism, they assessed how important a number of criteria are when they choose an educational offering in their leisure time. The respondents' most important concern is clearly the desire to learn new factual knowledge about the National Socialist era (74.8 % "rather important" or "very important"). Only a small proportion of the participants (7.3 %) indicate that the desire for new factual knowledge is unimportant. The second most important reason for selection is the opportunity to visit locations where the history of National Socialism happened (50.7 % "rather important" or "very important"). The majority of the respondents also consider it important that the educational offerings should establish a contextual reference between the history of National Socialism and the present, and that they are able to actively contribute their own questions and concerns. Being "well entertained" by the educational offerings and the concern about being too emotionally burdened is found to be relatively less relevant for adolescents and young adults.

**If you decide to deal with the topic of National Socialism in your leisure time:
How important are the following aspects for your decision?**



Comments. Participants answered the question on a scale from 1 = "not important at all" to 5 = "very important".

To give the respondents the opportunity to name other aspects that are relevant to them concerning educational offerings about National Socialism, they were then asked the open question about how formal educational offerings on the subject should be designed in order for them to be experienced as useful. The responses were then systematized as far as possible, with a wide range of content and quality of responses to this question.

What would you say: How should formal educational offerings on the subject of the National Socialist era, e. g. school lessons, be designed so that you yourself find them as useful as possible?

Answer	Percentage
Visiting historical places	22.6 %
Mainly visual/with visuals	17.1 %
Predominantly interactive	15.3 %
With reference to the present	15.3 %
Easily accessible	14.2 %
Via contact with contemporary witnesses	12.1 %
Fact-based, rational, objective	11.6 %
Based on emotions	3.4 %
Through presentation of individual fates	3.0 %
Coherent, comprehensive	2.7 %
Desire for specific content topics	2.7 %
Multimedia and digital	2.5 %
Not overly factual	2.3 %
Via texts	2.2 %

Comments. The reported percentages are based on a systematic analysis and categorization of responses from the 438 participants in the second survey wave who responded to this question. Multiple responses were coded for which reason percentages add up to over 100 %.

5.4

The characterizing images of the National Socialist era

A key interest of the MEMO Youth Study was to achieve a better understanding of how previously experienced educational offerings have been reflected in knowledge and perceptions of 16 to 25-year-olds. The central questions were which “images” of National Socialist history have become established in the previous critical examination, which explanations the respondents themselves give for the crimes of National Socialism and which interests and unresolved questions about the subject they are concerned with.

For an open entry, the participants were first asked for their first pictorial association when they think about “the time of National Socialism.” The open answers were then systematized.

If you think of “the time of National Socialism”: What is the first image that spontaneously comes to your mind? Describe the image briefly in your own words.

Answer	Percentage
Adolf Hitler	35.2 %
The crimes of the National Socialists	27.4 %
The extermination of people in concentration camps	20.0 %
The victims of National Socialism	19.0 %
The war and its consequences	16.8 %
National Socialist ideology and its dissemination	11.8 %
Emotions and moods	11.2 %
National Socialist symbolism	11.0 %
Perpetrators	9.8 %
The role of the “uninvolved” or non-persecuted German population	8.6 %
The political system	4.2 %
Relativizations	1.4 %

Comments. The reported percentages are based on the systematic analysis and categorization of 500 randomly selected cases from the overall sample. Some responses met the criteria of multiple categories, for which reason they are not exclusive.

ADOLF HITLER

NATIONAL SOCIALIST SYMBOLISM

THE CRIMES OF THE NATIONAL SOCIALISTS

THE WAR AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

RELATIVIZATIONS

THE EXTERMINATION OF PEOPLE IN CONCENTRATION CAMPS

PERPETRATORS

EMOTIONS AND MOODS

NATIONAL SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY AND ITS DISSEMINATION

THE ROLE OF THE "UNINVOLVED" OR NON-PERSECUTED GERMAN POPULATION

THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

THE VICTIMS OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM

Brief summary

The image that the 16 to 25-year-olds respondents most frequently associate with the National Socialist era is Adolf Hitler himself. The second most frequently mentioned are images and ideas of the acts and crimes of National Socialists, i. e. ideas of oppression, persecution and murder of people as well as groups of people. Images of the crimes and extermination of people in concentration camps are also strongly associated with National Socialism.

The answers to the question of which "image" they personally have in mind when they think about the time of National Socialism vary from the description of very concrete images and imaginations to abstract concepts. Over a third of the respondents (35.2 %) first think of Adolf Hitler when they think about National Socialism. While many refer to "Hitler" in a non-specific way, others refer to more concrete situations and contexts, especially iconographic scenes of Hitler interacting with crowds, e. g. "A picture of Hitler driving through all the cities, especially Munich, with crowds cheering him and flags hoisted", "Hitler at a podium in front of a large audience in a hall," or "Hitler standing before a huge crowd."⁴

More than a quarter of respondents (27.4 %) have images in mind that are related to the acts and crimes of the National Socialists. When writing about this, they often mention rather unspecific terms such as "persecution", "oppression", "murder," or "Holocaust"; but they also describe specific scenes they have in mind, e. g. "Jews who died in miserable conditions in gas chambers and were burned in heaps in crematoria", "How Jews were chased out of their own homes" or "People treated and killed like slaves and animals". Approximately one in five respondents (20.0 %) refer to the specific context of the extermination of people in the concentration camps. Examples of these answers include "Jews being gassed in concentration camps", "People enslaved and killed in concentration camps," or "Trains full of Jews being taken to a concentration camp overwhelmed with grief and fear."

4 All quotations contained in this report were adopted from the original data material; they were translated by a professional translator.

Other images relate to the events of the war and its consequences (16.8 %, e.g. *“Destruction, pure violence, image: a bombed city”, “I see lots of children who were already trained as soldiers at a very young age”*), to moods or emotions (11.2 %, e.g. *“disgust”, “hate” or “everything is dark and degrading”*) or to the National Socialist symbolism (11.0 %, e.g. *“swastikas”, “flags,” or “SS uniforms”*). Only a relatively small number of respondents (8.6 %) describe images that involve the supposedly uninvolved general German population, and these are mostly in a passive interaction with Adolf Hitler, e.g. *“Hitler as he stands before a cheering crowd and smiles proudly”*.

5.5 Subjective explanations for National Socialism

The following open question dealt more deeply with how respondents themselves explain the National Socialist era, and which aspects of National Socialist history are central for them in terms of understanding the time and the crimes of National Socialism. To capture these aspects, participants were asked to describe in their own words how they would explain to a person with no prior knowledge what happened in Germany during the National Socialist era. The open and sometimes very detailed answers were then systematized as far as possible to work out which aspects of National Socialist history shape the understanding of adolescents and young adults in a particular way.

How would you describe in a few sentences what happened in Germany at that time to a person who has never heard of the time of National Socialism?

Answer	Percentage
General persecution, exclusion and murder of groups of victims	60.2 %
Persecution, exclusion and murder of Jewish people	32.6 %
Hitler or “a dictator”	37.6 %
War and imperial claim to power	28.6 %
Ideology and ideological aspects of National Socialism	24.2 %
Perpetrators and responsible persons (e.g. Nazis, NSDAP)	19.8 %
Political system or regime	19.2 %
Seizure of power and its circumstances	12.0 %
Relation to the role of the “uninvolved” or non-persecuted German population	11.8 %
Concentration camps	9.8 %
General statements	2.2 %

Reference to the present	2.0 %
Transfiguration, relativization and glorification	0.8 %

Comments. The reported percentages are based on the systematic analysis and categorization of 500 randomly selected cases from the overall sample. Some responses met the criteria of multiple categories, for which reason they are not exclusive.



Brief summary

When adolescents and young adults are asked how they would explain the National Socialist era to someone and which aspects of National Socialist history they think are worth mentioning, they refer most frequently to the persecution, exclusion and murder of groups of victims. More than a third refer explicitly to Adolf Hitler himself. Other aspects mentioned frequently include, for example, the war and the National Socialists' imperial claims to power, National Socialist ideology or aspects of the ideology, and the naming and description of the perpetrators and persons responsible for the crimes.

The responses reflect a variety of aspects that are perceived as relevant and worth mentioning. Most frequently, respondents refer to the aspect of persecution, exclusion and murder of people and groups of people in their explanation of National Socialism (60.2 %). In terms of content, answers vary a great deal from naming specific groups of victims or characteristics on the basis of which people were persecuted and murdered, to more general descriptions of the fact that people were put to death by a regime (e.g. *"People would be put to death in an agonizing way due to their origin or religion"*, *"Hitler only wanted "Germans" and had Jews or foreigners killed"*, *"A dictator came to power in Germany about a century ago."*, *"The government caused World War II and the killing of many innocent people"*, *"A man from Austria decided who is deemed worthy to live in Germany. Besides genocide, he overran other countries. National Socialism is murder, war, just everything bad."*). Approximately half of these respondents (32.6 %) explicitly refer to the persecution and murder of Jewish people.

More than a third of participants (37.6 %) describe the person or role of Adolf Hitler as central to the explanation of National Socialism; he is also referred to as “a dictator” or “a Führer” in this context. Hitler is often described as the key individual, and in some cases as the only active player, and the crimes of National Socialism are reported as the consequences of his actions (e.g. *“A dictator manipulated people, especially those of pure German descent and waged a worldwide war in which he spread hatred of Jews.”*, *“The country was going through a difficult time and there was desperation; then someone came along with a lot of persuasive power as well as bad intentions. Hitler took advantage of all this and came to power by force. Once in power, he secured his position and then showed his true face. He tried to impose his ideology, in which there was only the Aryan race. Nothing stopped his path to his goal until the Allies defeated Germany by means of their combined efforts.”*, *“A racist man gained power through manipulation and oppression and terrorized people; he had a cleanout based on his ideas.”*, *“There was a man who wasn’t even really German himself whose intention was to preserve the German race (blond and blue eyes). All other people and especially foreigners and Jews had no right to live and were put into concentration camps or gassed.”*).

Over a quarter of respondents (28.6 %) mention World War II and Germany’s imperial claim to power when explaining National Socialism (e.g. *“The NSDAP came to power, making Germany a dictatorship under Hitler. Among other things it led to the Holocaust and World War II.”*, *“The transition from a democracy to a brutal dictatorship that intentionally killed and exterminated millions of people and engulfed Europe and ultimately the world in the war.”*, *“Hitler and his party, the NSDAP, used the weaknesses of the Weimar constitution to transform Germany into a dictatorship which was entirely centered on the Führer (Hitler). As soon as they got into power, they systematically persecuted and exterminated in concentration camps groups that were of lesser value according to them. At the same time, they wanted to establish the Deutsche Reich as the sole world power, and to that end they waged a war against all of its European neighbors, Russia, England, and the USA.”*).

Just under a quarter of the participants (24.2 %) refer to National Socialist ideology or mention specific aspects of that ideology in their answers, e.g. antisemitism, racism, xenophobia or the notion of an ‘Aryan race’ (e.g. *“Minorities were systematically oppressed and killed in Germany whilst Germans saw themselves as the superior master race.”*, *“A genocide driven by antisemitism.”*, *“The belief was evident that Germany was the superior, rightful state and that only the German (blond, blue-eyed) was pure and righteous. Other countries and other cultures were seen as inferior. Minorities in Germany were oppressed, the Jewish people were persecuted.”*).

About one in five refer to relevant perpetrators and actors apart from Hitler, for example “the Nazis” or “the NSDAP” (19.8 %) or to the political system (19.2 %) when explaining the National Socialist era. Other aspects of National Socialism and National Socialist crimes are mentioned by relatively few respondents. These include, for example, the seizure of power and the circumstances of it (12.0 %) or the role of the “uninvolved” German population (11.8 %). Only 2.2 % of the respondents refer to the present era in their answers or explicitly address the consequences or historical continuities of National Socialism (0.8 %).

5.6

Interests and open questions in the context of the history of National Socialism

The final open question in this part of the study referred to the aspects of National Socialist history in which 16 to 25-year-olds feel a particular personal interest and which questions on the range of topics relating to the National Socialist era they would like to have an answer to but did not find in previous educational offerings. The responses were then summarized and systematized according to content criteria.

Is there a particular aspect of the National Socialist era that interests you the most? What question about the National Socialist era would you like to have an answer to?

Answer	Percentage
The role of the “uninvolved” or non-persecuted German population	35.4 %
The role of Adolf Hitler	21.2 %
Groups of victims and their persecution	14.4 %
General questions about “why?”	13.4 %
References to the present and the continuities of National Socialism	11.6 %
Motives and behavior of the perpetrators	9.4 %
The origin of National Socialism and the NSDAP's seizure of power	6.2 %
The war and the role of other nations	5.6 %
Concentration camps and their backgrounds	3.6 %
Resistance movements during National Socialism	2.2 %
Self-reflection and the role of one's own ancestors	1.6 %

Comments. The reported percentages are based on the systematic analysis and categorization of 500 randomly selected cases from the overall sample. Some responses met the criteria of multiple categories, for which reason they are not exclusive.

Brief summary

With regard to the key interests and open questions relating to the National Socialist era, young adults and adolescents mention in particular the role and responsibility of the supposedly uninvolved general German population and ask how a society can facilitate and permit developments and crimes like those of the National Socialist era. Many respondents are also interested in the role and person of Adolf Hitler and ask questions about his motivations, biography and psyche. They also ask about the victim groups of National Socialism and the reasons why they, of all people, were persecuted and declared to be inferior.

Asked openly whether there is a particular aspect of National Socialist history that interests them most or whether they would like an answer to a particular question, most participants (35.4 %) mention the role and responsibility of the supposedly uninvolved German population during the period of National Socialism. In this context they refer to the people who were not among the victims of the National Socialist regime and not explicitly among the perpetrators. Most participants in the study are interested in how a society can permit *“something like National Socialism,”* why people did not actively intervene, or why they allowed themselves to be *“manipulated”* (e.g. *“Why people went along with all this and very few questioned anything.”*, *“How a whole country justified or tolerated such crimes without resistance.”*, *“How could people overlook what was happening so easily?”*, *“Simply WHY so many people had to die and no one stopped this man?”*, *“How so many people could be manipulated and how it could happen at all.”*, *“How many citizens secretly disagreed with National Socialist actions at the time but didn’t resist out of fear of them?”*).

More than one in five participants (21.2 %) are especially interested in the person and role of Adolf Hitler, often in his motivations and in how a person was able to exert such a great influence on German society (e.g. *why Hitler of all people, who was not a real German anyway, managed to do what he did without a large part of society questioning it morally?*), *“How can something like that happen, that one man can gain so much power without anyone resisting or even being able to resist?”*, *“What made Hitler so special that he went down so well with people?”*, *“Where did Hitler’s hatred of the Jews come from?”*, *“What was Hitler like in private/as a friend?”* Did Josef Mengele and Himmler ever have compassion for the victims, and were they aware of the suffering they brought upon people with illnesses? What mental illnesses would Hitler be diagnosed with today?).

Some of the respondents (14.4 %) ask themselves questions about the victim groups of National Socialism, mostly related to the victim group of Jewish people. Among other things, the young people are interested in why these groups, of all groups, were persecuted and murdered by the National Socialist regime but also in how those affected experienced the situation during the National Socialist era (e.g. *“Why such a big difference was made between people of different religions”*, *“I am very interested in how people (both victims and those who benefited from National Socialism) experienced the National Socialist era and what their experiences were”*, *“Why Jews in particular were the National Socialists’ enemy image”*, *“The ghettos and living conditions of Jews before deportation to concentration camps and how the German population lived with Jews and how much they really knew.”*, *“Stories of those affected. They deserve/deserved more attention and a bigger voice”*, *“Why Jews? Why so many deaths? Why children?”*).

A smaller number of participants are interested in a whole range of other topics, such as references to the present and today’s society (11.6 %, e.g. *“Has society learned from its mistakes or could something like this happen again in a similar form?”*, *“Why does such an ideology remain in people’s minds even today?”*, *“Why people don’t learn from violence and still even practice it.”*) and in the motives and psyche of the perpetrators (9.4 %, e.g. *“Why did people do such terrible things?”*, *“How can people be/become so cold?”*, *“Did the murderers have a conscience?”*).

5.7

The critical examination of family histories

The greater part of the participants (48.5 %) have so far engaged in little or no critical examination of the history of their own family in the context of National Socialism. Approximately a quarter of all respondents (24.8 %) say they have dealt “rather a lot” or “a lot” with their own family history. Whether adolescents and young adults have engaged in a critical examination of the role and involvement of their ancestors depends in particular on how intensively they have dealt with the history of National Socialism in general. The educational background of parents is also relevant here – young people from families with higher educational qualifications are more likely to have engaged in a critical examination of their own family history than respondents from educationally disadvantaged families.

Have you dealt with your family’s history as part of your previous critical examination of the time of National Socialism?

Not at all	Rather little	Neither/nor	Rather a lot	A lot
21.4 %	27.1 %	24.6 %	17.2 %	7.6 %

When asked about concrete knowledge about the involvement of their ancestors, approximately one in ten respondents in the MEMO Youth Study (9.4 %) state that their own family members had been among the perpetrators. Almost two-thirds answered this question in the negative (62.4 %) whilst approximately a quarter (26.7 %) say they know nothing about it. Compared to the general population (MEMO III/2020) it appears, as expected, that young people have less clear knowledge. Among respondents from the general population, only around one in ten say they know nothing about perpetrators among their own ancestors (10.1%), whilst just under a quarter (24.5 %) report perpetrators in their family.

Were any of your ancestors among the perpetrators during the time of National Socialism?

Yes	No	I don't know	
9.4 %	62.4 %	26.7 %	
24.5 %	65.4 %	10.1 %	MEMO III

The respondents who answered in the affirmative to the question concerning knowledge of perpetration were asked which acts led them to describe their ancestors as perpetrators. The open answers to these questions were then systematized as far as possible. Most frequently, 16 to 25-year-olds report that their ancestors were soldiers or members of the Wehrmacht (50.3 %) or members of the SS or the SA (22.1 %). A small number of respondents (9.5 %) believe that their ancestors adhered to the ideology of National Socialism. The same number states that they had ancestors who enabled the acts through passivity or tolerance; they also see this as a form of perpetration.

What did your ancestors do that you would call them perpetrators?

Answer	Percentage
Membership in the Wehrmacht, military, "soldier"	50.3 %
Membership in the SS or SA	22.1 %
Supporter of National Socialism, the National Socialist ideology, Nazis	9.5 %
Passivity, tolerance, collaboration	9.5 %
Involved in extermination camps	9.0 %
Member of the NSDAP	8.0 %
Not specified	7.5 %
Beneficiaries	1.0 %

Comments. The reported percentages are based on a systematic analysis and categorization of responses from the 199 participants in the first survey wave who responded to this question in terms of content. Multiple responses were coded for which reason percentages add up to over 100 %.

Knowledge about whether their ancestors were among the victims of National Socialism is also lower among adolescents and young adults as compared to the general population. Again, more than a quarter of the respondents (26.9 %) say they know nothing about it. About one in five (20.3 %), i.e. proportionately fewer than in the general population (36.5 %, see MEMO III/2020), believe that their own ancestors were victims of National Socialist crimes. More than half of 16 to 25-year-olds (55.6 %) report not knowing whether people in their own family helped potential victims during the National Socialist era – again, as expected, the portion who do not know is greater than in the general population (25.6 %, see MEMO III/2020). 15.6 % of the participants in the present study know about helpers among their ancestors – compared to around one third (32.1 %) of respondents from the general population.

Were any of your ancestors among the victims during the time of National Socialism?

	Yes	No	I don't know
	20.3 %	51.3 %	26.9 %
MEMO III	36.5 %	58.3 %	5.2 %

Did any of your ancestors help potential victims during the time of National Socialism?

	Yes	No	I don't know
	15.6 %	27.4 %	55.6 %
MEMO III	32.1 %	42.3 %	25.6 %

Less than half the participants (46.9 %) assume that their own ancestors knew about the systematic persecution and murder of people during the time of National Socialism. The assumption that their own family members had benefited from developments during the National Socialist era is shared by 7.7 % of the respondents, whilst more than half of them (55.7 %) explicitly denies this. Those who report profiteering by their own ancestors were asked to explain how their ancestors had benefited from developments during the time of National Socialism. The few answers to this question vary from specific cases such as additional commercial orders for a family business in the context of mass extermination, individual careers in the military, profit from the exploitation of forced laborers or from a takeover of companies, housing spaces or other property of expropriated Jewish people, to more general statements for example an increase in social status due to the devaluation of other population groups.

Would you say that during the time of National Socialism, ancestors of yours knew that other people were systematically persecuted and murdered during that time?

Yes	No	I don't know
46.9 %	15.8 %	35.7 %

Would you say that ancestors of yours benefited from the developments during the time of National Socialism?

Yes	No	I don't know
7.7 %	55.7 %	34.7 %

Less than one in five of the adolescents and young adults surveyed assume that today's family and societal prosperity in Germany is also a result of the crimes of National Socialism.

To this day, the prosperity of many families in Germany is based on the crimes committed by their ancestors during the time of National Socialism.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
17.2 %	21.8 %	22.9 %	12.7 %	5.5 %

Comments. This question was asked in the context of the second survey wave. The percentages presented are therefore based on the responses from the 838 people who took part in the second survey.

The material prosperity in our society is also a result of the crimes committed during the time of National Socialism, e. g. the expropriation of Jewish people.

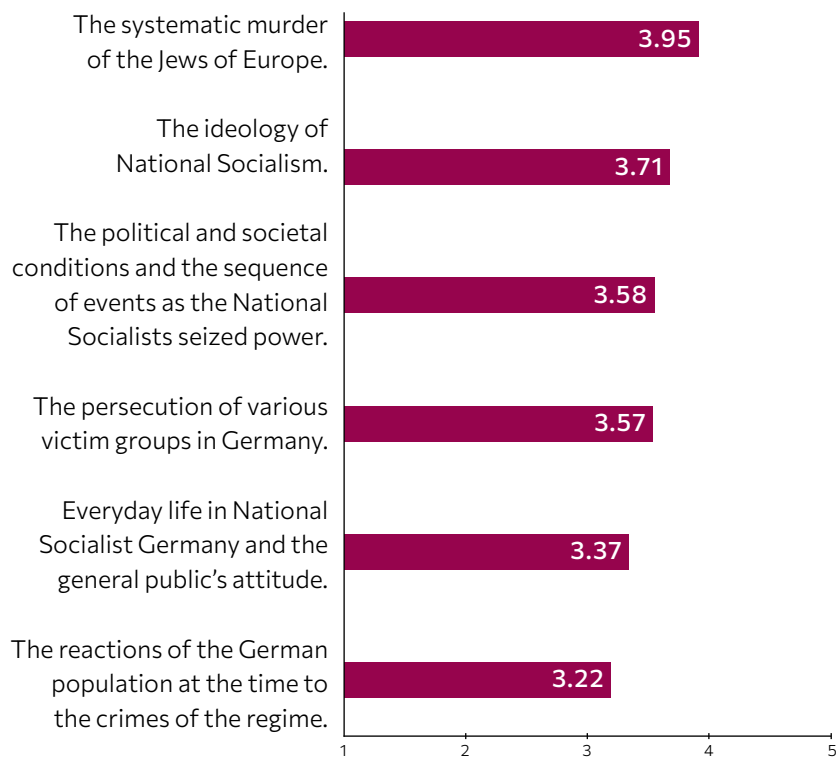
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
16.9 %	22.2 %	23.6 %	14.4 %	4.6 %

Comments. This question was asked in the context of the second survey wave. The percentages presented are therefore based on the responses from the 838 people who took part in the second survey.

5.8

Knowledge about specific aspects of National Socialist history

With regard to concrete knowledge about the history of National Socialism, the MEMO Youth Study initially confirms the findings of the surveys of the general population. Whilst young respondents feel relatively well-informed about the systematic murder of Jews in Europe (70.4 % “rather intensively” or “very intensively”) and about the ideology of National Socialism (61.4 % “rather intensively” or “very intensively”), they have dealt less intensively with aspects such as attitudes of the German population, their reactions to the crimes of the regime and the process of coming to terms with National Socialist crimes after the end of World War II.

How intensively have you dealt with the following aspects of National Socialist history so far? (mean values)

Participants answered the question on a scale from 1 = “Not intensively at all” to 5 = “very intensively”.

How intensively have you dealt with the following aspects of National Socialist history so far?

	Not intensively at all	Rather not intensively	Neither/nor	Rather intensively	Very intensively
The systematic murder of the Jews of Europe. (M = 3.95)	3.3 %	5.8 %	18.7 %	35.5 %	34.9 %
The ideology of National Socialism. (M = 3.71)	4.6 %	9.3 %	22.4 %	35.0 %	26.4 %
The political and social conditions and the sequence of events as the National Socialists seized power. (M = 3.58)	4.3 %	11.4 %	26,1 %	34.8 %	21.0 %
The persecution of the various victim groups in Germany. (M = 3.57)	4.8 %	11.3 %	25.5 %	36.0 %	20.3 %
Everyday life in National Socialist Germany and the general public's attitude towards National Socialism. (M = 3.37)	4.8 %	14.5 %	32.4 %	32.1 %	14.1 %
The reactions of the German population at the time to the crimes of the regime. (M = 3.22)	6.0 %	18.4 %	32.6 %	29.2 %	11.6 %
With the reappraisal of National Socialist crimes after the end of World War II. (M = 3.22)	6.2 %	18.8 %	32.6 %	27.7 %	12.5 %

Comments. The respondents' average responses (mean values) are shown here, differentiated according to the historical aspects of National Socialist history to which the questions related. The participants answered the questions on a scale from 1 = "not intensively at all" to 5 = "very intensively."

To further investigate the participants' objective knowledge, they were then asked to answer three specific knowledge-related questions about the National Socialist era. These open questions related to the historical period generally referred to as the "time of National Socialism", to knowledge about the victims of National Socialism and to concentration camps where people were systematically murdered during the National Socialist era.

In response to the first question, i.e. which period in Germany is referred to as the “time of National Socialism” approximately half of the respondents (48.8 %) state the correct period “1933 to 1945.” Just under a third of all participants (31.5 %) answered this question incorrectly or incompletely, whilst the remaining respondents made no statement or answered the question with “I don’t know”.

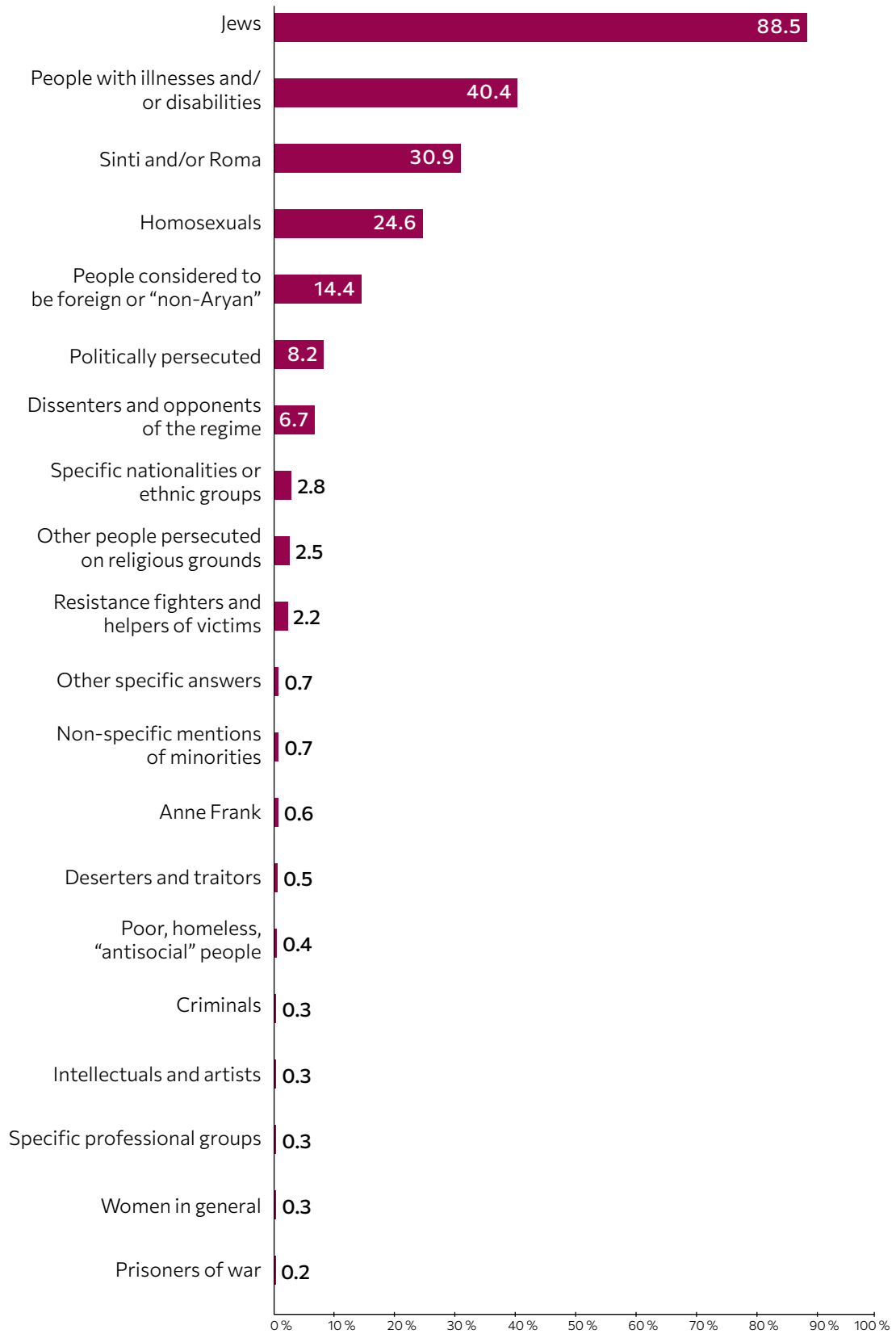
Which period in Germany is referred to as the “time of National Socialism”?

Answer	Percentage
answered correctly and completely	48.8 %
answered incorrectly or incompletely	31.5 %
“I don’t know”	12.5 %

When asked about their knowledge about the victim groups of National Socialism, 10.0 % of respondents gave no answer. 12.5 % name one victim group, 16.4 % name two, and more than half of adolescents and young adults (61.1 %) name three victim groups. The open information given by the participants was systematized. As expected, the majority of respondents (88.5 %) name Jews as a victim group. 40.4 % name people with illnesses and/or disabilities; less than one in three (30.9 %) mention Sinti and/or Roma as a victim group, and less than a quarter (24.6 %) mention homosexuals. Knowledge about the victim groups of National Socialism is systematically related to the respondents’ educational background as well as their previous engagement in a critical examination of the subject of National Socialism. The lower the educational level of adolescents and young adults and the less intensively they have dealt with National Socialist history so far, the fewer victim groups of National Socialism they can openly name.

When asked about their knowledge of concentration camps, 16.6 % of the respondents gave no answer, 21.8 % of the participants name one location, 24.0 % name two locations and almost two thirds of the respondents (62.4 %) are able to name at least three locations. The open answers were then systematized. Not all of the answers refer to actual former concentration camps. The concentration camp most frequently known to 16 to 25 year-olds is Auschwitz-Birkenau (74.8 %), followed by the concentration camps Dachau (34.3 %), Buchenwald (27.0 %), Bergen-Belsen (11.5 %) and Sachsenhausen (6.1 %). The other locations mentioned were named by 2.5 % or a smaller percentage of the respondents. A map showing the most frequent mentions can be found on the last page of the report.

Can you name groups of people who were systematically persecuted and murdered during the time of National Socialism?



Comments. For the sake of clarity, victim groups named by less than 0.2 % of respondents are not presented in the table.

5.9

German population at the time of National Socialism

As with previous MEMO studies, the MEMO Youth Study asked how participants perceive the role of the German population at the time of National Socialism, as well as the extent of their involvement in National Socialist crimes. They were also asked to what extent they attribute a share of responsibility for the crimes of National Socialism to the supposedly uninvolved German population.

With regard to involvement in National Socialism young people estimate the proportion of perpetrators in the German population to be significantly higher than respondents from the general population, i. e. 60.0 %: On average, MEMO III/2020 participants assumed that only one third of Germans (33.6 %) were among the perpetrators. As compared with the general population, 16 to 25-year-olds estimate the proportion of victims in the German population during the National Socialist era as lower (14.1 %), but the proportion of helpers as higher (40.0 %). In addition, adolescents and young adults on average assume that approximately one third of Germans (31.6 %) knew that people and groups of people were systematically persecuted and murdered during the time of National Socialism. This estimate is higher in the general population, i. e. 40.1% (see MEMO III/2020).

During the time of National Socialism, what percentage of the German population do you think...

		MEMO III
...were among the perpetrators?	60.0 %	33.6 %
...were among the victims?	14.1 %	33.8 %
... helped potential victims?	40.0 %	15.4 %
...knew that people and groups of people were being systematically murdered at the time?	31.6 %	40.1 %

Around half of 16 to 25-year-olds (51.9 %) attribute “rather a lot” or “a lot” of the responsibility for National Socialist crimes to the supposedly uninvolved German population. Just over a third (36.9 %) think the population has a shared responsibility (“neither/nor”). Just over one in ten (11.1%) believes that the German population had little or no complicity in National Socialist crimes.

Would you say that the German population at that time shared responsibility for the crimes of National Socialism?

Not at all	Rather not	Neither/nor	Rather a lot	A lot
2.0 %	9.1 %	36.9 %	31.5 %	16.4 %

Those participants in the youth study who attributed at least a proportionate degree of responsibility to the population were then openly asked what they thought this responsibility consisted of. Two thirds (66.2 %) of respondents refer to the “passivity” of Germans and the fact that they “looked the other way” or let the crimes happen without actively intervening (e. g. “They didn’t raise their voices and just accepted and tolerated it.”, “The population fell for an idiotic ideology, apparently without thinking very much about it

themselves. Many people must definitely have been very well aware of what was happening in concentration camps and the like, and yet they did nothing.”, “They intervened too late or not at all. If they had opposed it earlier, these things might not have happened.”). One third of the respondents (33.6 %) see the German population’s shared responsibility in actively supporting the National Socialist regime and its crimes. This includes both endorsement of National Socialist ideology and voting for the NSDAP (for example, “Some people voted for these inhuman policies or for the NSDAP or for parties that tolerated it.”. “They voted for the NSDAP and some supported the system.”, “They brought the National Socialists to their position of power by democratic means.”).

In what way would you say the German population shared responsibility for the crimes of National Socialism?	
Answer	Percentage
Passivity, allowing it to happen	66.2 %
Active support of National Socialism	33.6 %
Fear of repression	12.0 %
Ignorance and/or manipulation by the regime	8.8 %
Knowledge of the crimes	3.6 %
Complicity	2.6 %
Benefiting from the crimes	2.0 %
Obedied orders	1.4 %

Comment. Some responses met the criteria of multiple categories, for which reason they are not exclusive.

5.10 "Lessons from the past"

After the questions that were primarily content-based MEMO Youth Study participants were asked about possible “lessons” from history and about their own prejudices, their personal social commitment as well as other sociopolitical issues.

When asked directly, the majority (61.4 %) of adolescents and young adults say that their own critical examination of the National Socialist era has made them more sensitive to discrimination and exclusion of people in the present. Only around one in ten respondents (10.6 %) believe that they have not been made more sensitive by dealing with the past. Those who rate themselves as sensitive also report lower levels of group-focused enmity attitudes, as well as higher levels of sensitivity to prejudice (see 5.16).

To what extent have your personal dealings with the National Socialist era raised your awareness of the discrimination and exclusion of people or groups of people in the present day?				
Not at all	Rather little	Neither/nor	Rather much	Very much
3.9 %	6.7 %	22.2 %	38.9 %	22.5 %

When specifically asked whether they themselves have prejudices against groups of people who were persecuted and murdered during the National Socialist era, 5.0 % of the respondents report “rather strong” or “very strong” prejudices of their own. Three quarters (75.7 %) said that they had “no prejudice at all” or “rather no prejudice” against groups of people who were persecuted during the time of National Socialism.

When you think about the people who were systematically persecuted and murdered during the National Socialist era: Would you say that you yourself have prejudices against some of these groups?

No prejudices at all	Rather no prejudices	Somewhat	Rather strong prejudices	Very strong prejudices
43.7 %	32.0 %	13.7 %	3.7 %	1.3 %

Respondents who reported prejudices were then openly asked which group or groups they are prejudiced against. Most of them (62.8 %) mention prejudices against Jews. About one third (35.5 %) are prejudiced against Sinti and/or Roma, and approximately one in five (20.3 %) against “foreigners” or “strangers” in general.

What group or groups are you thinking of?

Answer	Percentage
Jews	62.8 %
Sinti and/or Roma	35.5 %
People considered to be foreign or "strangers"	20.3 %
Homosexuals and other LGBTQIA people	5.7 %
People with disabilities	4.9 %
Nazis, right-wing extremists	4.0 %
Muslims	2.9 %
Black people	2.6 %
Beneficiaries of the social system	1.7 %

With regard to possible “lessons” from history, the participants were also asked to imagine that they themselves had lived in Germany at the time of National Socialism. Based on this consideration, they estimated the probability that they themselves would have become a perpetrator or a victim of National Socialism, as well as the probability that they themselves would have helped potential victims during the National Socialist era.

11.1 % of respondents consider it likely that they themselves would have been among the perpetrators. More than two thirds (69.6 %) explicitly deny that they would have become perpetrators. One third of respondents (33.5 %) consider it likely that they themselves would have been victims of National Socialism. Nearly half the participants (49.2 %) believe that they would have helped people who were persecuted and murdered by the National Socialists.

How likely do you think it is that you yourself would have...					
	Very unlikely	Rather unlikely	Neither/nor	Rather likely	Very likely
...become a perpetrator?	42.5 %	27.1 %	16.2 %	8.7 %	2.4 %
...become a victim?	17.9 %	24.6 %	18.0 %	18.5 %	15.0 %
...helped people who were persecuted and murdered by the National Socialists?	3.9 %	13.0 %	26.2 %	30.8 %	18.4 %

5.11 Social challenges and commitment in the present

With regard to the respondents’ own actual commitment in the present the picture in the study is mixed: Whilst a large proportion of 16 to 25-year-olds (39.5 %) say they are “rather little” or “not at all” involved in societal or global problems and challenges, more than one in five (21.5 %) report being “rather strongly” or “very strongly” involved. Those who report higher levels of involvement are also systematically more likely to report having intensively dealt with the history of National Socialism.

How much are you yourself actively involved in solving social or global problems or challenges in the present?				
Not at all	Rather little	Neither/nor	Rather strongly	Very strongly
8.6 %	30.9 %	34.3 %	17.3 %	4.2 %

Respondents who said they are actively involved were then asked what problems or challenges they are working to resolve. The open answers were systematized based on content criteria as far as possible. The largest proportion of committed young adults and adolescents declare that they are active in climate and environmental protection (42.8 %). Many of them refer specifically to the Fridays For Future movement. Just over one in five (21.6 %) report being active against racism or the exclusion and discrimination against minorities in society. Just under one in ten (9.2 %) are involved in feminist contexts for women’s rights and equality and against sexism. The overall range of reported commitment is broad, and many other contexts are named, with only a small proportion of respondents actively committed in each of these areas.

What problems or challenges are you actively working to solve?

Answer	Percentage
For climate and environmental protection; in the context of Fridays for Future	42.8 %
Against discrimination, exclusion, racism; for minorities	21.6 %
For feminism, women's rights, equality; against sexism and sexual violence	9.2 %
Against homophobia; for gay and other LGBTQIA rights	7.4 %
Against poverty; for social justice	7.1 %
For sustainability, the energy transition, sustainable consumption	6.5 %
Unspecific answers	6.0 %
For species and animal protection	3.9 %
For refugees and improved asylum law	3.0 %
For the rights and opportunities of children and young people	2.6 %
For inclusion and the rights of people with disabilities	2.5 %
Against bullying and exclusion	2.1 %
Political commitment	1.9 %
Against right-wing extremism	1.6 %
For educational justice and equal opportunities	1.3 %
For social cohesion	1.3 %
For religious freedom; against religious discrimination	1.1 %
Against antisemitism	1.1 %
In the context of the Coronavirus pandemic; against "lateral thinking"	1.1 %
In the context of mental illness and health	1.0 %
In the context of culture of remembrance and historical awareness	1.0 %
For the elderly	1.0 %
For facts, science and enlightenment	1.0 %

Participants were also asked about the extent to which they experience the exclusion and discrimination of people in today's society as problematic and to what extent they themselves are affected by discrimination in everyday life. The extent of discrimination and exclusion of people is perceived as "alarming" by the largest proportion of young people questioned (59.6 %). The approval ratings among 16 to 25-year-olds are higher than among the general German population (52.1 %, see MEMO IV/2021). However, Youth Study respondents assess their own responsibility to do something against discrimination and exclusion in society as lower (50.7 %) than respondents from the general population (58.0 %, *ibid.*). The same applies to their own active commitment, which young people report less often overall (26.0 %) than respondents in the general population (38.4 %, *ibid.*).

I think the level of discrimination against and exclusion of people or groups of people in Germany is alarming.						
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree	
	3.7 %	9.2 %	23.0 %	35.4 %	24.2 %	
	8.0 %	9.5 %	29.7 %	28.5 %	24.2 %	MEMO IV

I feel it is also my responsibility to prevent discrimination and the exclusion of people or groups of people in Germany.						
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree	
	9.6 %	13.3 %	21.2 %	31.6 %	19.1 %	
	13.7 %	10.6 %	18.3 %	22.7 %	34.7 %	MEMO IV

I am actively involved in fighting discrimination and the exclusion of people or groups of people in Germany.						
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree	
	16.3 %	27.1 %	25.4 %	17.3 %	8.7 %	
	12.7 %	17.8 %	31.1 %	20.0 %	18.4 %	MEMO IV

5.12 Experiences of discrimination

More than a third of the respondents (37.8 %) report having at least a significant degree of concern about being discriminated against and excluded themselves in Germany. The extent of this concern is systematically related to a number of factors. Relatively bigger fears are expressed by respondents with migration biographies, respondents from educationally disadvantaged families and respondents from families with lower net household income. There is a weakly significant correlation ($r = .05$) between respondents' own experience with discrimination and the intensity of engagement in a critical examination of National Socialist history.⁵ The more discriminated 16 to 25-year-olds feel in their everyday lives, the more intensively they have tendentially looked at National Socialist history.

Just under a third of adolescents and young adults (32.4 %) actually feel discriminated against, at least to some degree, in everyday life. As expected, systematic correlations with other factors are evident with regard to the actual experience of discrimination: Respondents with migration biographies report being discriminated against significantly more frequently than respondents without migration histories. Adolescents and young adults from educationally disadvantaged families and from families with lower income are also more likely to feel devalued. Both the concern about and the actual experience of discrimination are systematically related to the assessment of social cohesion (cf. 5.17): The more respondents worry about discrimination or feel discriminated against, the lower they rate social cohesion in Germany as a whole.

Are you worried that you yourself might be discriminated against or excluded by people in Germany?

Not at all	Rather little	Neither/nor	Rather strongly	Very strongly
27.1 %	32.2 %	19.8 %	11.8 %	6.2 %

How much do you yourself feel discriminated against in your everyday life because of characteristics such as your gender, your skin color, your religion or because of other characteristics?

Not at all	Rather little	Neither/nor	Rather strongly	Very strongly
37.5 %	27.6 %	18.8 %	9.1 %	4.5 %

Participants with experiences of discrimination were openly asked about the characteristics on account of which they feel most discriminated against and excluded in everyday life. Here again, respondents' open answers were then systematized as far as possible based on content-related criteria.

⁵ Systematic results are those for which a statistically significant correlation can be demonstrated based on the data, i.e. which are highly unlikely to be random (with a maximum probability of error of $p = 5\%$). The analysis of correlations (r) does not allow any conclusions to be drawn about the causal direction of these correlations.

Adolescents and young adults most frequently report feeling discriminated against in everyday life because of their female gender (25.7%). Just under a quarter of respondents (25.3%) mention experiencing discrimination on the basis of their origin or nationality and on the basis of society's perception of them as "foreigners". Another 15.9% report discrimination due to their appearance or skin color, without defining these characteristics specifically. Approximately one in ten (10.2%) feel discriminated against in everyday life because of their own body or stature – for example, because of their body weight or height. Multiple discrimination is reported by a large number of participants. In particular, respondents who relate as "foreign" and "female" report feeling discriminated against and excluded in everyday life due to both characteristics.

Because of which characteristic or characteristics do you feel most discriminated against in your everyday life?	
Answer	Percentage
Female gender	25.7 %
Origin, nationality, being perceived as "foreign".	23.5 %
Appearance, skin color (non-specific)	15.9 %
Body and body measurements	10.2 %
Religion and belief	7.6 %
Sexual orientation (non-specific)	4.8 %
Homo- or bisexuality	4.3 %
Language	2.1 %
Attitudes, opinions, political views	1.8 %
Disabilities	1.7 %
Cis male	1.5 %
Unvaccinated status	1.4 %
Class, financial status, educational background	1.4 %
Transsexuality	1.4 %
German nationality	1.3 %
Character traits (e. g. being introverted or sensitive)	1.2 %
Age	1.1 %
Mental illness	1.1 %
Queerness	0.7 %
Physical illnesses	0.4 %

5.13

National identity

Less than half of 16 to 25-year-olds (41.8 %) agree or strongly agree that being German is an important part of their identity. Just under a third of all respondents (31.7 %) deny that being German is an important part of their identity. Compared with the general population (53.2 %, see MEMO IV/2021), national identity is of less importance to adolescents and young adults. Nearly three quarters of the respondents (71.9 %) consider themselves to be part of German society; this is lower than in the comparative sample from the general adult population (74.3 %, see MEMO IV/2021). The extent to which young citizens consider themselves part of German society is systematically related to a number of other factors:

To a lesser extent, respondents from lower-income households or those with migration biographies as well as young people who have had their own experiences of exclusion and discrimination in German society consider themselves to be part of society.

Being German is an important part of my identity.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
	14.7 %	17.0 %	21.7 %	25.1 %	16.7 %
MEMO IV	12.4 %	15.0 %	19.4 %	20.2 %	33.0 %

Ich betrachte mich selbst als einen Teil der deutschen Gesellschaft.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
	2.9 %	5.2 %	16.7 %	35.6 %	36.3 %
MEMO IV	2.7 %	2.9 %	10.2 %	26.2 %	58.1 %

When asked whether the history of their own family was part of the German culture of remembrance, a relatively large proportion of respondents (15.6 %) has no answer. Approximately one in four (26.5 %) agree or strongly agree that their own family history is part of the German culture of remembrance. More than one third of respondents (35.0 %) do not feel that their own family’s history is part of the German cultural remembrance. This means that agreement with this question among 16 to 25-year-olds is substantially lower than in the general German population: In MEMO III/2020 more than half the respondents (61.0 %) regarded their own family as being part of the culture of remembrance.

My own family's history is a part of the German culture of remembrance.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
	16.2 %	18.8 %	22.9 %	18.3 %	8.2 %
MEMO III	8.1 %	12.5 %	18.4 %	35.5 %	25.5 %

Participants with migration biographies systematically see their own family history less strongly reflected in the German culture of remembrance. There is also a systematic association between the cultural representation of the culture of remembrance and issues of social cohesion: Respondents who see their family's history represented in the German culture of remembrance regard themselves more strongly as part of German society. They also rate social cohesion in Germany higher than respondents who do not see themselves or their family as being part of the culture of remembrance.

5.14 Attitudes towards culture of remembrance

In terms of responses to specific questions about the culture of remembrance and society's process of coming to terms with Germany's National Socialist history, 16 to 25-year-olds tend to exhibit more critical attitudes than respondents from the general population. Consequently, on average, they are less convinced that German historical reappraisal can be considered "exemplary" relative to other countries. Whilst 50.2 % of adult respondents participating in the MEMO Study IV/2021 agreed that Germany could serve as a model for other countries in successfully coming to terms with the past, only a little over one third of adolescents and young adults (38.6 %) agree with this statement. Respondents to the Youth Study also express more critical views on the question of how receptive German society still is to right-wing ideologies today.

Germany can serve as an example to other countries because of how well it has come to terms with its past.						
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree	
	7.0 %	13.4 %	31.4 %	26.0 %	12.6 %	
	6.7 %	7.1 %	35.9 %	28.6 %	21.6 %	MEMO IV

Today, Germans are less receptive to right-wing ideologies than Germans during the period of National Socialism.						
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree	
	9.8 %	21.1 %	28.2 %	23.3 %	6.9 %	
	10.7 %	24.5 %	27.6 %	25.1 %	12.1 %	MEMO IV

Differences between participants in the MEMO Youth Study and the general population are also evident concerning the question of how meaningful it seems to continue to engage in a critical examination of National Socialist history at the present time. Whereas in MEMO III/2020 a quarter of respondents (26.0 %) had no understanding of the reasons for dealing with National Socialist history today, in the Youth Study the figure is less than a tenth (8.7 %). Three quarters of 16 to 25-year-olds (76.5 %) do understand why they should still engage in a critical examination of the history of National Socialism today.

I don't understand why, today, I am still supposed to deal with Germany's history in the time of National Socialism.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
	56.7 %	19.8 %	11.0 %	5.4 %	3.3 %
MEMO III	33.2 %	23.7 %	17.1 %	17.6 %	8.4 %

5.15 Facets of group-focused enmity and motivation to behave without prejudice

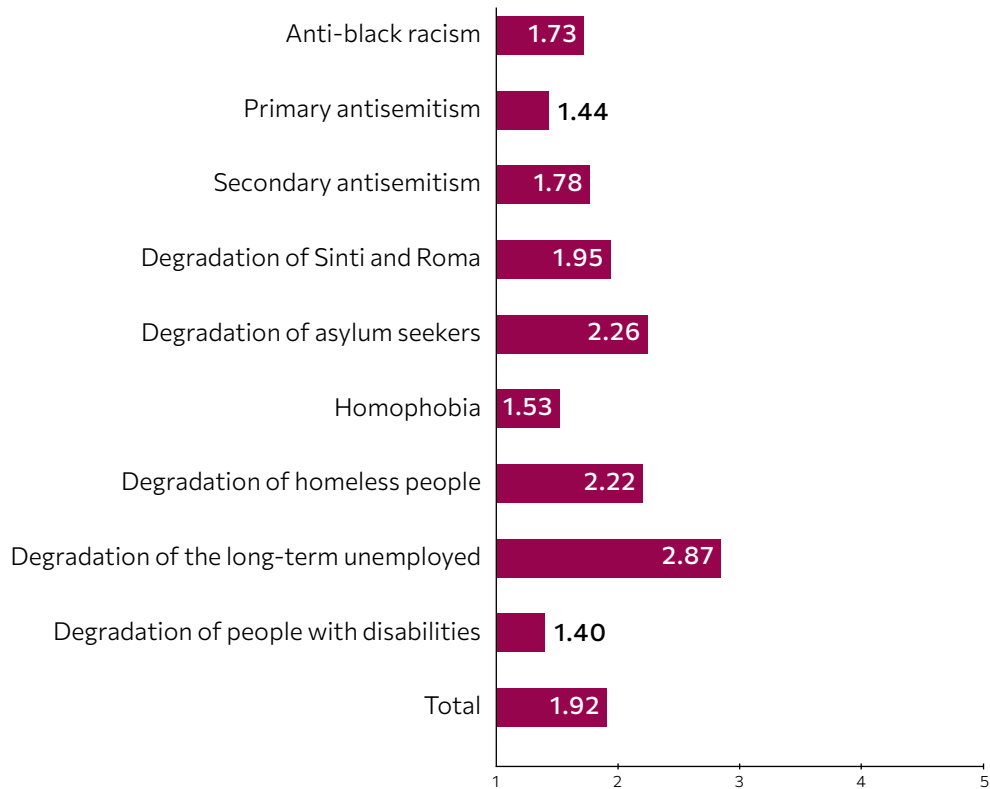
In order to investigate group-focused enmity (GFE) or equivalent attitudes among adolescents and young adults, facets of the sociological GFE concept [in German: GMF-Konzept] (Heitmeyer, 2005; Zick & Küpper, 2021)⁶ were also looked at in the context of the MEMO Youth Study.

The clearest prejudice is found among 16 to 25-year-olds in relation to the long-term unemployed ($M = 2.87$), asylum seekers ($M = 2.26$), and homeless people ($M = 2.22$). Adolescents and young adults report the lowest levels of prejudice with regard to the facets of homophobia ($M = 1.53$), primary antisemitism ($M = 1.44$) and discrimination against people with disabilities ($M = 1.40$). If individual facets recorded are combined to form a measure of group-focused enmity, correlative relationships with other constructs recorded in the study become apparent: A lower degree of prejudice is reported by young people who rate themselves as sensitive to prejudice ($r = -.40$) and who report a greater level of civil courage and responsibility with regard to current exclusion and discrimination of people in society ($r = -.19$). Prejudices are systematically more pronounced among 16 to 25-year-olds who agree with conspiracy narratives⁷ to a greater extent ($r = .46$); this correlation applies to all facets of recorded group-focused enmity. There is a weak correlation between the extent to which respondents have studied the history of National Socialism and the expression of attitudes of group-focused enmity: Young people who have dealt more intensively with National Socialist history tend to exhibit a less pronounced degree of group-focused enmity ($r = -.07$).

6 In order to facilitate comparability, the facets of group-focused enmity were recorded based on the methodology of the "Center Studies" [Mitte-Studien] of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Conflict and Violence. In explicit quantitative measurement, stereotypes and prejudices are inevitably reproduced in the statements that are made.

7 In the context of the MEMO Youth Study, participants also answered questions about conspiracy theories (e.g. "There are secret organizations that exercise a great deal of influence on political decision-making," "Politicians and other people in positions of leadership are only puppets for the real agents of power behind them."). These items are occasionally included in analyses but are not addressed in a separate section.

Agreement with the facets of group-focused enmity (mean values)



The following table shows the response frequencies in relation to the individual questions about the facets of group-focused enmity.

Sub-facets and individual items for the recording of group-focused enmity

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
Anti-black racism					
Black people are too sensitive about racism in Germany.	49.4 %	21.6 %	12.7 %	6.7 %	3.7 %
If black people tried harder, they would be successful.	63.8 %	11.7 %	7.7 %	3.8 %	2.6 %
Primary antisemitism					
Jews have too much influence in Germany.	64.6 %	15.7 %	5.8 %	3.3 %	2.2 %
By their behavior, Jews are complicit in their persecutions.	74.2 %	11.1 %	4.6 %	2.5 %	1.6 %

Secondary antisemitism					
Many Jews try to take advantage of the past of the Third Reich today.	48.1 %	19.7 %	10.2 %	7.0 %	3.4 %
With the policy that Israel makes, I can well understand that people are against Jews.	54.1 %	15.0 %	8.7 %	4.6 %	2.9 %
Degradation of Sinti and Roma					
I would have problems with Sinti and Roma being in my neighborhood.	47.7 %	19.8 %	11.2 %	5.9 %	2.5 %
Sinti and Roma are prone to criminality.	33.4 %	21.7 %	15.9 %	7.9 %	3.3 %
Degradation of asylum seekers					
Most asylum seekers are not persecuted in their home country at all.	29.1 %	27.5 %	21.5 %	7.0 %	4.3 %
Most asylum seekers only come here to take advantage of the welfare system.	31.2 %	25.1 %	23.5 %	8.8 %	5.8 %
Homophobia					
It is disgusting when homosexuals kiss in public.	69.3 %	10.9 %	7.5 %	4.5 %	4.1 %
Homosexuality is immoral.	75.1 %	8.9 %	4.5 %	3.4 %	3.5 %
Degradation of homeless people					
Most homeless people are work-shy.	29.4 %	32.5 %	22.4 %	6.8 %	2.9 %
Begging homeless people should be removed from pedestrian areas.	31.5 %	26.8 %	21.5 %	9.3 %	5.5 %
Degradation of the long-term unemployed					
Long-term unemployed are not really interested in finding a job.	12.8 %	20.7 %	37.1 %	17.0 %	8.3 %
The long-term unemployed make a comfortable life for themselves at the expense of society.	15.7 %	19.0 %	33.7 %	18.2 %	9.7 %
Degradation of people with disabilities					
Disabled people receive too many benefits.	69.6 %	17.8 %	5.4 %	2.3 %	1.3 %
It is better for everyone if disabled people remain among themselves.	75.4 %	13.1 %	4.8 %	2.7 %	1.1 %

When asked explicitly about their attitudes towards prejudice and stereotypes, the majority of adolescents and young adults report a high sensitivity and motivation to behave without prejudice. At least half, and in some cases more than three quarters, of respondents feel annoyed when prejudices are thought or expressed and feel that it is important to avoid degradation and prejudice in everyday life.

I get annoyed with myself when I think or feel something that could be considered prejudicial.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
5.7 %	8.5 %	18.7 %	33.6 %	27.8 %

It makes me angry when someone expresses prejudice about minorities.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
2.7 %	5.3 %	14.5 %	32.2 %	41.8 %

You should be especially fair when dealing with someone who is likely to suffer prejudice on a more frequent basis.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
3.3 %	5.4 %	19.7 %	34.1 %	32.2 %

When talking about minorities, one should avoid degrading terms.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
2.8 %	3.0 %	11.0 %	26.5 %	52.5 %

5.16 Social cohesion and political participation

At the time of the survey in late summer 2021, the majority of 16 to 25-year-olds (62.2 %) said they “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with the statement that “I am worried about social cohesion in Germany”. They are ambivalent about the cohesion they actually experience, about trust in other people and their support.

More than one in five respondents (22.8 %) believe that people in Germany “generally” stick together well – approximately one third (34.2 %) perceive no cohesion in German society. Whilst 28.7% say they trust other people in our society, approximately one in four (25.2 %) report having little or no trust in other people. Comparable figures are seen for the question of whether one can rely on the support of other people in society: More than one in four (27.7 %) have no confidence in being supported by other people in a doubtful case. Perceived cohesion and the individual’s trust in society are linked to a number of other factors: For example, respondents with migration biographies, respondents from educationally disadvantaged families as well as respondents who do not themselves have a higher education qualification report less perceived cohesion and less trust.

I am worried about social cohesion in Germany.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
2.3 %	7.8 %	23.6 %	38.5 %	23.7 %

People in our society generally stick together well.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
7.4 %	26.8 %	40.0 %	19.3 %	3.5 %

You can trust other people in our society.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
6.5 %	18.7 %	42.7 %	23.8 %	4.9 %

I can rely on the support of people in our society.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
7.3 %	20.4 %	38.2 %	25,1 %	5.4 %

Young people also tend to be pessimistic about their own political representation and opportunities for participation: While 16.0 % of respondents have the impression that politicians are interested in and committed to their concerns, this is not the case for 44.3 % of adolescents and young adults. Just under half (48.6 %) do not have the impression that they can actively influence what happens socially and politically in Germany – just under one in five (19.6 %) believe they are able to play an active role.

Politicians in Germany actively campaign for the issues that affect or burden me personally.				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
14.1 %	30.2 %	35.1 %	13.3 %	2.7 %

I have the feeling that I can actively influence what happens in Germany socially and politically.				
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
17.5 %	31.1 %	27.9 %	15.2 %	4.4 %

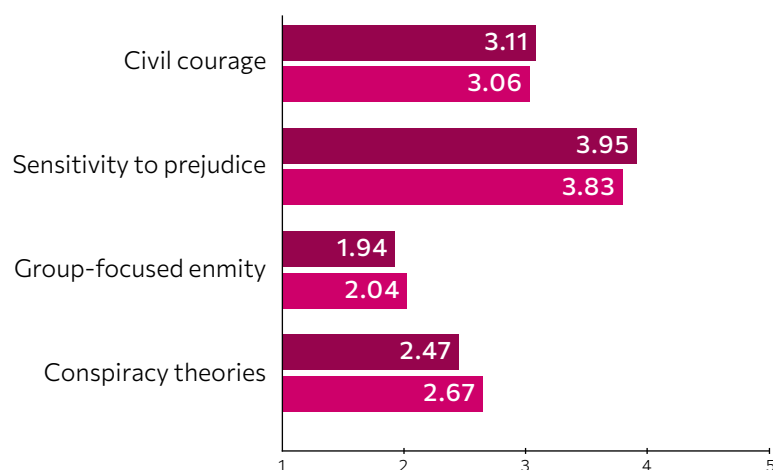
6 Changes in attitudes over the course of time

Some of the questions in the MEMO Youth Study were gathered in two survey periods, i. e. participants who also took part in the second survey answered certain questions both in late summer 2021 and, with a twelve-month interval, in late summer 2022. In this way, possible developmental trajectories in relevant attitudinal measures could also be examined. Questions were asked repeatedly about civil-minded attitudes (e. g. “I feel it is also my responsibility to prevent discrimination and the exclusion of people or groups of people in Germany.”), about sensitivity to prejudice (e. g. “It makes me angry when someone expresses prejudice about minorities.”), about various facets of group-focused enmity (e. g. antisemitism, homophobia, prejudice against people with disabilities), and about beliefs in conspiracy narratives (e. g. “Politicians and other people in positions of leadership are only puppets for the real agents of power behind them.”).

A comparison of the responses of the 838 respondents who participated in both surveys initially showed a high level of stability of the constructs covered, with slight descriptive differences between the measurement time points. From September 2021 to September 2022, civil-minded attitudes and sensitivity to prejudice decreased slightly among respondents. However, with regard to attitudes of group-focused enmity and beliefs in conspiracy narratives there was an increase over the course of time.

Mean value comparisons between measurement time point 1 and measurement time point 2

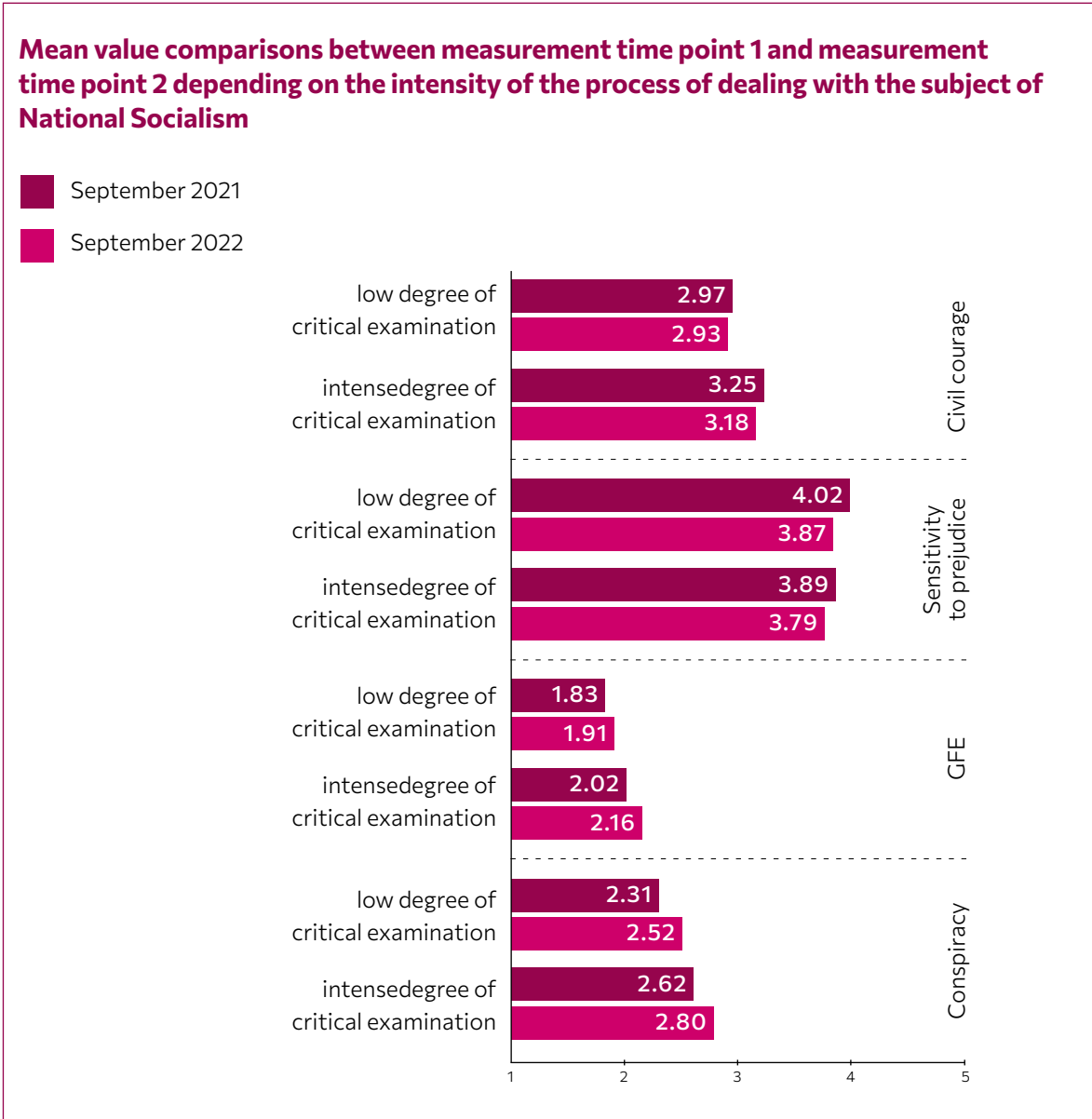
- September 2021
- September 2022



The measurement repetition data facilitates a number of further analyses to examine the extent to which changes in the recorded attitudinal measures are related to other factors. Only some of the possible analyses

are given in this report. There was initially an examination of the extent to which changes in attitudes are related to the intensity with which the respondents have engaged in a critical examination of the subject of National Socialism in various ways during the past twelve months (see Section 5.3). For this comparison, the 838 respondents who were again interviewed were divided in half into two groups: First, into participants who have engaged less intensively with the issue of National Socialism over the past twelve months (“low intensity”), and respondents who report more intensive engagement in the past twelve months (“high intensity”).

Descriptively, there is no evidence of selective effects for respondents who have dealt more intensively with National Socialist history. They report fundamentally higher levels of civic courage, while they also agree more with attitudes of group-focused enmity and conspiracy narratives. There are no selective differences in the development trajectories between the two groups; consequently, it cannot be concluded on the basis of the current analyses that dealing with National Socialism during the course of the year has an effect on current sociopolitical attitudes.



7 Excursus: Attitudes to the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine

The start of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine on February 24, 2022, was within the survey period of the MEMO Youth Study. In view of these and subsequent events and potential points of reference to German and European culture of remembrance, questions about Ukraine and the Russian war of aggression were included in the second survey wave. Because of the timing of the survey, the following questions were thus only asked the 838 people who also participated in the second survey in September 2022.

Most of the 16 to 25-year-olds respondents (42.3 %) report that they have “rather intensively” or “very intensively” dealt with the war in Ukraine, whilst more than one in five (20.5 %) say they have hardly dealt with the issue or not dealt with it at all.

How intensively have you dealt with the war in Ukraine so far?

Not intensively at all	Rather not intensively	Neither/ nor	Rather intensively	Very intensively
4.9 %	15.6 %	34.6 %	28.2 %	14.1 %

For adolescents and young adults, the most important explanation for Russia attacking Ukraine was Russia’s current (geo)political interest, while historical interests were given less weight. The least relevant reason rated by respondents was the threat to Russia’s security posed by NATO. Overall, they regard all the stated reasons at least partially relevant for Russia to have attacked Ukraine.

In your opinion, how important are the following reasons to explain the current war against Ukraine? (mean values)



Comments. The respondents' average agreement ratings (mean values) are shown here.

Participants marked their level of disagreement or agreement on a scale from 1 = "not at all important" to 5 = "very important."

A concrete link between the war in Ukraine and the importance of dealing with history is evident for a larger part of the respondents (40.0 %). These participants agree with the statement that the war in Ukraine has made them aware of how important it is to deal with history. However, more than one in four (28.2 %) see no connection between the war and the significance of history. A concrete more intensive examination of the role of Ukraine during World War II is only reported by a small number of respondents (14.9 %) whilst the largest part (59.3 %) say that they have not dealt with it more intensively.

The war in Ukraine made me aware of how important it is to deal with the subject of history.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
11.2 %	17.0 %	25.1 %	26.6 %	13.4 %

In den letzten Monaten habe ich mich intensiver mit der Rolle der Ukraine während des Zweiten Weltkriegs beschäftigt.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
35.8 %	23.5 %	17.3 %	9.2 %	5.7 %

Respondents also tend not to see a “special moral responsibility” of Germany towards Ukraine due to the crimes committed during World War II. Less than one in five (19.1 %) agree with this statement – more than twice as many respondents disagree (40.7 %). At the same time, a relatively large proportion of adolescents and young adults (39.0 %) say they were prepared to accept personal cutbacks in their everyday lives out of solidarity with Ukraine.

Because of the crimes committed during World War II, Germany has a special moral responsibility towards Ukraine.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
18.9 %	21.8 %	21.8 %	12.6 %	6.5 %

Out of solidarity with the people in Ukraine, I am prepared to accept personal cutbacks in everyday life.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Strongly agree
11.3 %	13.7 %	28.7 %	28.2 %	10.8 %

8 Authors' summary

This study is an in-depth survey carried out as part of the “MEMO” project of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Conflict and Violence (IKG) at Bielefeld University, funded by the Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and Future (EVZ). The MEMO Youth Study is intended to provide information about the concerns and needs of 16 to 25-year-olds in the context of society's process of dealing with the history of National Socialism, and to provide a guide for the design of current and future historical-political educational offerings. For the study, 3,485 representatively selected young citizens were interviewed in an initial survey carried out in September and October 2021. In September 2022, participants were invited to take another survey; 838 people took part in this second survey. In addition to numerous questions on the National Socialist era in Germany, the study also includes questions relating to other sociopolitical topics in order to provide a more differentiated impression of the target group. Key findings of the study are summarized below, arranged according to the subject.

1. In general, the 16 to 25-year-olds respondents in the MEMO Youth Study **tend to be interested in history**, although dealing with historical topics outside the school context does not play a particular role for many of them. When asked openly about historical events and periods in which they are especially interested, the majority of respondents answer with the ‘major historical contexts’ such as the **National Socialist era, the two World Wars as well as German division and reunification**. There are no signs of disinterest or content saturation here. At the same time, the open answers show clearly that **young people's interest in and awareness of history in Germany is much broader**, including more distant historical periods (e.g. specific historical eras) as well as more current social and political events (e.g. 9/11 and the Coronavirus pandemic).

2. Generally, 16 to 25-year-olds consider it **important that we as a society deal with our own past**. The respondents see **different historical events** and periods as being differentially well represented in the German culture of remembrance. From their point of view, this culture of remembrance is shaped in particular **by the contexts of the National Socialist era and World War II. The respondents do not express any disinterest or doubts about the importance of dealing with the National Socialist era** – on the contrary, they show more interest in National Socialist history than participants in a comparative sample from the general German population. MEMO Youth Study participants would especially like to see **traditional educational formats and points of contact such as school lessons, as well as memorial sites and locations as access routes** for dealing with the past.

3. The 16 to 25-year-olds rate their personal involvement with the history of National Socialism as more intensive than respondents from the general population. Besides the **internet, documentaries and feature films are the most important access to National Socialist history** for adolescents and young adults. However, many also discuss the topic in their private setting. **More than a quarter of 16 to 25-year-olds have never visited a concentration camp memorial site**. In terms of digital engagement, they report using **YouTube and Instagram** in particular – with many citing well-known channels such as “MrWissen2go” and “ichbinsophiescholl.” The intensity with which they deal with the topic is related to their own educational background as well as that of their parents.

4. When asked about their **most meaningful engagement with** National Socialism to date, most of them mention **documentaries in which they learned a very great deal about the National Socialist era, followed by visits to memorial sites as well as school lessons**. The most important criteria for adolescents and young adults when deciding on educational offerings in the context of National Socialism are that they **can acquire new factual knowledge, visit historical places** and that **references between the past and present** are made in the educational offerings. Other factors, such as being well entertained, play a less important role.

5. For most respondents, the **first and strongest content-related association with the National Socialist era** is **Adolf Hitler** himself, who has a special influence on the societal remembrance of National Socialism. For young people, National Socialist history is also closely linked to **images and perceptions of the crimes committed by the National Socialists**, especially the **extermination of people in concentration camps and extermination camps**. Images of other social and political developments and events play a less important role by comparison and appear to have less of an impact on collective memory.

6. In the context of the MEMO Youth Study, respondents were asked to describe in their own words what happened in Germany during the National Socialist era. The purpose of this question was to examine what **subjective explanations** 16 to 25-year-olds have for **National Socialism** and its crimes, and **what aspects of National Socialist history** they consider to be **especially noteworthy**. The quality and differentiation of the answers varies greatly. The most frequently **mentioned is the persecution, exclusion and/or murder of people by the National Socialists**. Only some of the answers show an awareness of the systematic nature and ideological motivation behind the persecution. There is also frequent mention of **Adolf Hitler** – who is often paraphrased as a central and supposedly single individual – as well as **World War II**. A large proportion of the accounts are brief and relatively undifferentiated; consequently, it is **not possible to conclude** from this that there is **a fundamental understanding of National Socialism** among a large proportion of the respondents. Some sub-aspects of National Socialist history appear to be underrepresented in the responses overall, such as the circumstances of the National Socialists' seizure of power, the manifold social and economic entanglements and the role of the supposedly uninvolved population.

7. With regard to **specific interests and open questions** in the context of National Socialist history, it is apparent that the majority of respondents are especially interested in the **role and responsibility of the supposedly uninvolved and non-persecuted German population** and in the question of **how a society can permit and tolerate crimes such as those committed during the National Socialist era**. Adolescents and young adults are also frequently interested in Hitler himself as well as his motives and the reasons and explanations for the persecution of the **specific groups of victims**.

8. With regard to **awareness of their own family history**, it is confirmed that **knowledge of the role and involvement of their own ancestors is increasingly dwindling among adolescents and young adults**. Many cannot give any information about whether and to what extent their own ancestors were involved in National Socialism and its crimes. Young people from educationally disadvantaged families in particular have little knowledge about their own family history. Approximately one in **ten respondents report perpetrators** among their ancestors; one in **five reports knowledge of victims**, and around **15 % assume that their own ancestors helped potential victims**. Less than half the young people assume that their ancestors were aware of the crimes of National Socialism during this period. Approximately half of the respondents attribute a **share of responsibility for the crimes of National Socialism** to the non-persecuted German population. From the point of view of 16 to 25 year-olds, this co-responsibility consists primarily in the passivity of the population and the fact that it did not prevent the crimes of the National Socialists.

9. With regard to their level of knowledge about various aspects of National Socialist history, respondents show themselves to be the **least well-informed** about **everyday life in National Socialist Germany and about attitudes and reactions of the German population to the crimes of the regime. Just under half were able to name the period of National Socialist rule fully and correctly.** Whilst more than half of the 16 to 25-year-olds know **at least three victim groups of National Socialism, one in five respondents** names **only one or no victim group at all.** The content evaluation shows that many victim groups are less well known. For example, less than half of the respondents name people with illnesses and people with disabilities as groups persecuted and murdered during the National Socialist era, and less than a third name the victim group of Sinti and/or Roma. More than half of the participants in the Youth Study can **name at least three places where people were systematically murdered during the National Socialist era,** whilst over 40 % know only one or no such places. The most famous **places of extermination during the time of National Socialism** are the concentration camps **Auschwitz-Birkenau, Dachau, Buchenwald and Bergen-Belsen.**

10. When asked explicitly about this, the majority of respondents say they have been **sensitized to issues such as exclusion and discrimination** by **dealing with the history of National Socialism.** More than three quarters report that they **themselves have no prejudices against groups of people who were persecuted during the National Socialist era.** Only 5 % openly report their own prejudices against these people.

11. Participants in the MEMO Youth Study have a **more critical attitude** toward the German culture of remembrance and society's process of dealing with the National Socialist era than those in a comparative sample from the German general population. Young adults and adolescents rate **German engagement with its own history as "less exemplary" and German society as still being receptive to right-wing and extreme right-wing ideas.** The majority of them believe that a further individual and societal confrontation with Germany's National Socialist past is worthwhile, and do **not question why they should still deal with this past today.**

12. Beyond Germany's National Socialist past, participants in the MEMO Youth Study were also asked about a **range of other sociopolitical issues** in order to provide an inclusive representation of the interests, attitudes and concerns of the age group. Consequently, they were asked to what extent they are involved in **social issues and problems in the present.** The larger proportion of respondents say they are rather little involved or not involved at all in solving current social and global problems or challenges. Approximately **one in five, on the other hand, report being actively involved.** When asked openly about this, most reported involvement **in the area of environmental and climate protection,** for example in the context of Fridays for Future, and **countering discrimination, exclusion and racism.** The majority of 16 to 25-year-olds are worried about the extent of discrimination and exclusion of people in German society.

13. **Just under one third of** respondents report feeling **at least partially discriminated against** in their daily lives. Adolescents and young adults with a migration history are very frequently affected by this. In response to the open question about their own experiences of discrimination, most participants report being **discriminated against in everyday life because of their female gender or because they are considered to be foreign by other people in society.** Many report feeling discriminated against due to both characteristics.

14. **German nationality** plays a **lesser role** for 16 to 25-year-olds as compared to the general adult population. Approximately one third of respondents say that being German is not important for them. **Nevertheless, the majority of them feel part of German society.** Young people in Germany **often** feel that their **own family history is not represented in the German culture of remembrance.** This perception is related to

subjects such as the assessment of social cohesion in Germany: Those who do not see their family history represented in the culture of remembrance rate social cohesion as poorer and they feel less strongly about themselves as being part of German society.

15. **Attitudes of group-focused enmity** are **less pronounced overall** among adolescents and young adults than in the general German population. There are relatively low levels of antisemitism and homophobic attitudes, as well as the discrimination against people with disabilities. **Relatively strong prejudices** are reported **against the long-term unemployed, homeless people and asylum seekers**. The relationship between having dealt with Germany's National Socialist past and the extent of reported prejudice is weak and, according to analyses so far, the repeat survey does not demonstrate any selective effects of having dealt with the National Socialist era on reported prejudice.

16. The **majority** of 16 to 25-year-olds are **worried about social cohesion** in Germany. **Approximately a third of them do not perceive any cohesion in German society**, and around a quarter report having little or no confidence in the support provided by other people in society. **Less than one in five respondents** say they felt **represented by politicians in Germany** or had the impression that they could actively influence what happens socially and politically in Germany.

17. In view of the **start of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine** on February 24, 2022, participants in the second wave of the MEMO Youth Study (838 respondents interviewed in September 2022) were asked about their attitudes toward this war in a digression from the main content. The responses show that the majority of 16 to 25-year-olds have dealt with it – **although more than one in five say they have hardly dealt with the war or not at all**. Current events have not tended to lead to a more intensive examination of Ukraine's history during World War II. Furthermore, only around one in five respondents believes that Germany has a special moral responsibility toward Ukraine due to the crimes committed during World War II.

Imprint

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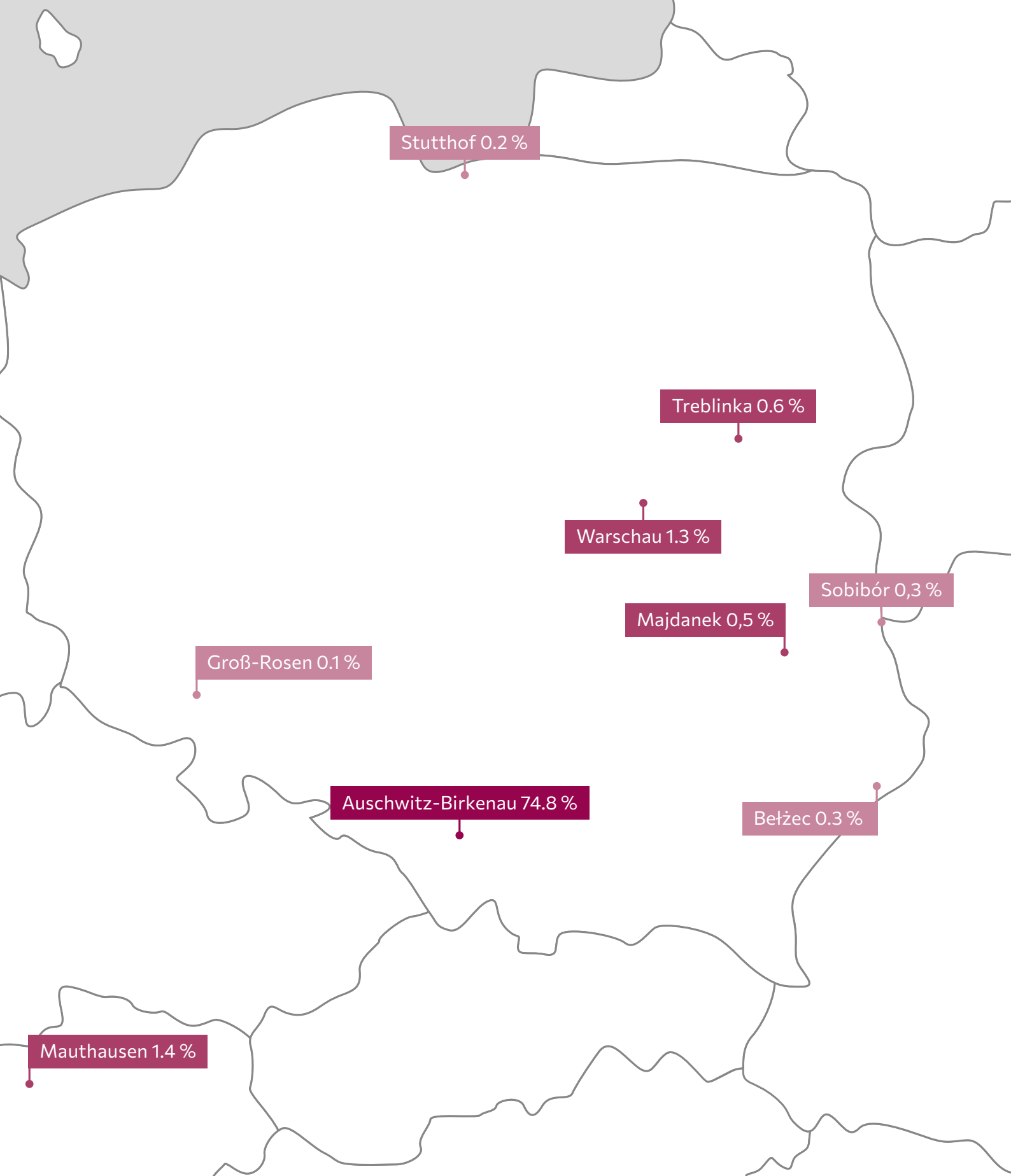
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Can you name concentration camps of the National Socialists? Please name up to three concentration camps where people were systematically murdered during the National Socialist era.





Note. For the sake of clarity, locations named by less than 0.1 % of respondents are not presented in the graphic. Not all of the places mentioned by the participants were actually concentration camps in the strict sense.



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