



WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO US?

**CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN AUSTRIA
FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS**

„Everyone must work together for children’s rights.“

(Lea, 8)

„Not all rights are well implemented!

There’s still room for improvement, as my math teacher says.“

(Florian, 12)

„I find all rights equally important - how am I supposed to decide?“

(Elia, 6)

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Examination of children's rights in Austria 2019/2020

Children and young people up to the age of 18 have special human rights, the children's rights of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Austria, like the other countries of the world, must do everything it can, to ensure that children's rights are respected. Approximately every five years, the United Nations then reviews everything that may not work optimally for children and young people in Austria and should be improved. During this examination of children's rights, the experts of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child get an idea of the situation in Austria.

Now 2019/2020 this is done again. Various reports are important for the examination of children's rights: the State Report, the Supplementary Report of the Network on the Rights of the Child (non-governmental organisations) and the Report of Children and Adolescents, i.e. what children and young people themselves say about children's rights in Austria: to be read in this brochure. In addition, a special short film was shot by young people on the subject of education.

The brochure „What is important to us?“ and the short film were produced on behalf of the Austrian National Coalition for the Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child with the financial support of the Austrian Federal Chancellery, Federal Minister for Women, Families and Youth. The coordination and collection of the results was done by

beteiligung.st, the specialist contact partner for the involvement and participation of children, young people and adult citizens in socio-political life.

Workshops with over 500 children

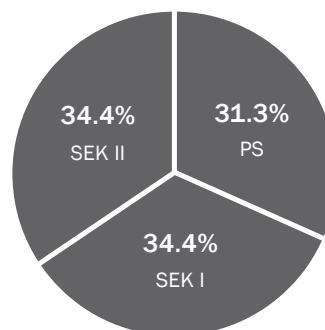
32 schools, institutions and organisations from eight federal states held workshops with a total of **536 children and young people** at the beginning of 2019. The representation by age group was very balanced (see Figure 1). The participating institutions were classified as follows:

Primary level (PS): 6 - 11 years

Secondary level 1 (SEK I): 10 - 16 years

Secondary level 2 (SEK II): 15 - 20 years

Figure 1: Participating institutions by age group (n=32)
(In-house processing)



Children's rights with the greatest need for action in Austria

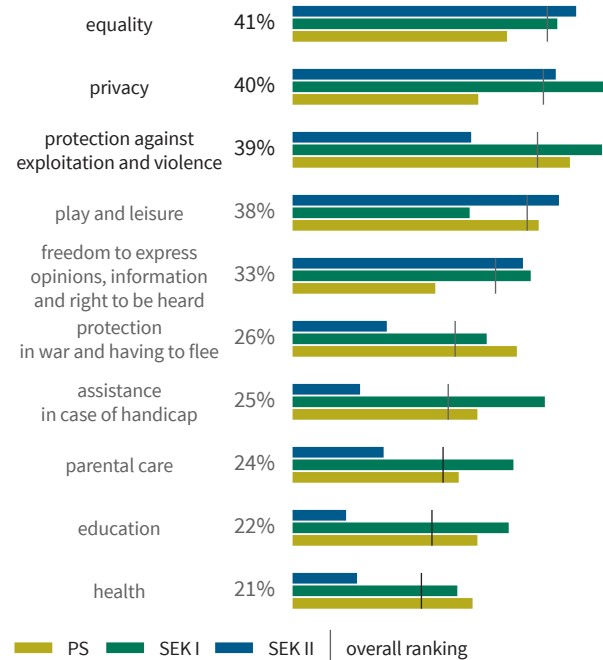
The children and adolescents were asked which children's rights, in their opinion, still require action. For this purpose, they could award each child's right up to three points in order to make visible where improvements are needed. The following table (Table 1) shows a list (ranking) of children's rights with the greatest need for action from the point of view of the participating children and young people.

As can be seen in Table 1, in the opinion of the children and young people, there is still a need for action with regard to children's rights „right to equality“, „right to privacy“, „right to protection from exploitation and violence“ and „right to play and leisure“.

Table 1: List of children's rights with the greatest need for action (In-house processing)

1. equality	41%
2. privacy	40%
3. protection against exploitation and violence	39%
4. play and leisure	38%
5. freedom to express opinions, information and right to be heard	33%
6. protection in war and having to flee	26%
7. assistance in case of handicap	25%
8. parental care	24%
9. education	22%
10. health	21%

Figure 2: List of children's rights with the greatest need for action by age group (In-house processing)



The results in detail

In the following - starting with children's rights, which in the eyes of children and adolescents, require the most action - you can find quotes from children and adolescents on the respective children's rights. There are also photos, statements such as in social media and drawings by children and young people from the debate on children's rights in the participation institutions.



RIGHT TO EQUALITY.

„That everyone is worth the same, whether they have money or not.“ (Luca, 14)

„Even today, in Austria, unfair treatment can be found with regard to individual differences between people.“
(Nina, Verena and Martina, 17)

„Stop „putting people in a box“!“ (SEK II)

„The equality of children with disabilities is written down on paper, but very often it is not lived in everyday life.“
(Laura, 17)

„I am a Christian and would like to be perceived as such. I constantly hear that I am a Muslim with a weapon.“
(Samuil, 13)

„We girls are always discriminated, be it in the fire department or in football.“ (Lena, 13)

„How’s a kid in a wheelchair gonna get into our classroom?“ (David, 10)

„Younger siblings are favoured and have it easier.“ (SEK II)



Picture: BAfEB Kärnten 3b

RIGHT TO PRIVACY.

„My mother searches my room when I'm not home.“
(Female, 16)

„Parents don't have to know everything about their child.
The child may have certain secrets in his life and lead a free
life.“ (Severin, 13)

„Get out of my browser!“ (Miriam, 16)

„I have no privacy. My parents are constantly searching my
history on my phone.“ (Kevin, 14)

„So my mom always wants to know what I write with my
girlfriends.“ (Theresa, 11)

„My mama can't read my cell phone if I don't want her to!“
(Livia, 10)

„It's important that I can talk things over with my girlfriends
without my mom listening.“ (Female, 9)

„Because I don't want anyone watching me. That is
unpleasant for me.“ (Female, 10)

„For me the most important child's right is to have a right
to privacy, because every person and every child has their
secrets and should keep them!“ (Female, 10)

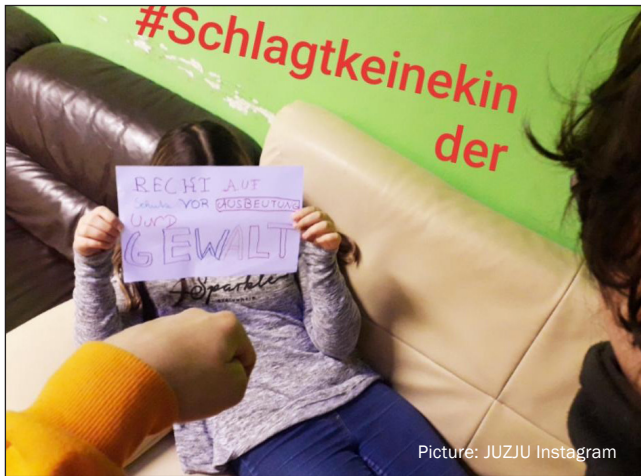
„Privacy is important because my things belong to me.“
(Female, 10)

„I don't want my parents looking at my contacts. I don't
want my parents to know my code.“ (Female, 10)

„The privacy of children and young people is often
unknowingly violated by adults.“ (Miriam, 17)

„Many parents take the cell phones off their children as a
punishment. This is often an excuse to check the messages.“
(Selina, 16)

„The right to privacy is important because not everyone
needs to know everything about me.“ (Kevin, 14)



RIGHT TO PROTECTION FROM EXPLOITATION AND VIOLENCE.

„Children who are exposed to violence are discouraged from defending themselves.“ (Julia, 17)

„Verbal violence at school is increasing and sometimes scares me. I also use aggressive words far too often.“ (17)

„Kids should not be beaten because it hurts and you have the right to say stop.“ (Luke, 6)

„Where I babysit the parents often get rough, they don't want to hit the child, but they want the child not to do something, for example, take the cell phone and then they just hit the forearm like that, or push the child away.“ (Female)

„Disabled is not a swearword, but it is often made into one by people“ (Laura, 17, wheelchair user)

„In kindergarten, even if a child is upset and it's lying on the floor, the kindergarten teacher goes and pulls it up by the arm, that's violence, isn't it?“ (Female)

„Yes, or when I have to help out at the inn, for example.“ (Male)

„Some people get into trouble over grades, even though they do their best. They get yelled at and beaten. You can get depressions from that.“ (Sebastian, 14)

„Children hurt other children from other countries.“ (David, 10)

„I once got beaten with a wooden spoon on my bottom! But then Daddy cried more to my Mum than me.“ (Hannes, 11)

„The right to protection from exploitation and violence should be a shield everywhere in the world, because there are many countries where children are abducted and killed.“ (Lea, 11)

„Most of us were beaten at home, that's why we're in the Children's Village.“ (without specification)

„My mother was just watching.“ (without specification)

„My mother called the police.“ (without specification)

„Violence was inflicted on my siblings and myself at home. But I don't want to talk about it.“ (without specification)

„Children in other countries have to work hard on plantations and are often afraid of being attacked on the street.“ (Emely, 10)



RIGHT TO PLAY AND LEISURE.

„Children often have far too little time to play because they have to do so much. But playing is so important for the development!“ (Michaela, 14)

„When you don't have leisure time, you get stressed and sad.“ (Female)

„School just goes too long, then you have to do homework and then you have to study. There is hardly any free time left. Even on weekends and holidays the free time is getting less and less!“ (Marissa, 15)

„For example the school - we have no free time, we have to study and do homework, we have no time.“ (Female)

„In the after-school care, you notice that especially - the children play chess or grass hockey after the after-school care, and others visit the gymnastics club - they have so many hobbies.“ (Female)

„Yeah, but if you like doing it.“ (Female)

„Yes, but if it comes from the parents, it's not okay. It depends on whether parents put the children under leisure stress because of their own needs.“ (Female)

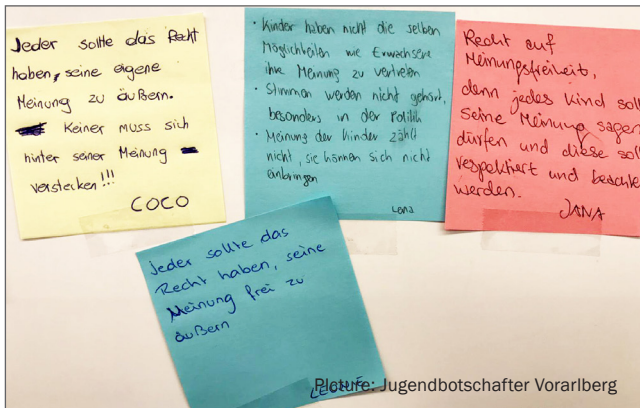
„Children with disabilities experience exclusion through various barriers again and again.“
(Laura, 17, wheelchair user)

„The right to play and leisure time is the most important thing because I like to play with my mom and dad, also with my brother.“ (Julia, 7)

„Playing and leisure time is important so that I can concentrate on my homework afterwards and recover from stress.“ (Male, 9)

„Children in poorer countries are exploited by having to work and they have no time to play.“ (Lena, 10)

„Children have a right to play and leisure time, because children like to play or do sports. Work is for adults.“
(Elias, 16)



RIGHT TO FREEDOM TO EXPRESS OPINIONS, INFORMATION AND RIGHT TO BE HEARD.

„Adults have the feeling that they are superior to children, that the child knows nothing anyway, that they believe children can only learn something from adults. Adults don't want to hear the truth.“ (Female)

„The law can be violated very easily, for example, when buying shoes. The adults ask the child what shoes it wants, but in the end the shoes that the mother wants are bought.“ (Female)

„One is not taken seriously, for example regarding climate change, I engaged in it and I can say something about it, but the adults do not take me seriously, I am not recognized as „mature“ because I do not yet have the age.“ (Female)

„Are teenagers who smoke allowed to go smoking during class when they have withdrawal symptoms?“ (Male, 18)

„I think it's important that everyone has their own opinion, that you can say it, and that you're taken seriously as a teenager.“ (Nicole, 15)

„The right to freedom of expression, information and to be heard is particularly important! People who are not informed cannot make a difference in the world because their voices are lost!“ (Darius, 15)

„You are allowed to say what you think.“ (Connor, 5)

„Children should have more say, especially in things that affect us children. Only the adults decide what is good for us.“ (Class unanimously, PS)

„Freedom of expression is important! I would like to have a say much more often.“ (Sebastian, 7)



RIGHT TO PROTECTION FROM WAR AND HAVING TO FLEE.

„There was war in Austria, USA and 2, 3 other countries. Then it was decided that there was peace and that’s good.“ (Luca, 9)

„Actually, we have it good. I can go to school and other children play with bombs and guns!“ (Leonie, 11)

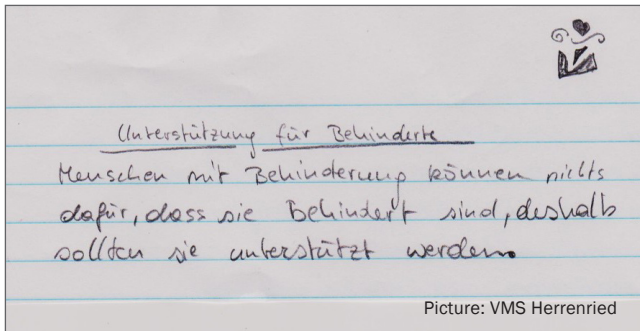
„I find the right to protection from war and from having to flee particularly important because everyone needs a home. All refugees should be allowed into a safe country.“ (Paul, 10)

„Children who have to leave their home because of war need more help!“ (Jana, 10)

„In poor countries, children have to work.“ (Luca, 9)

„Many children who have fled are not received at all friendly. And even while fleeing, they have no protection.“ (Hannah, 10)

„My girlfriend had to go back home even though a bomb fell right in front of her. I don’t understand why she couldn’t stay here.“ (Tina, 12)



RIGHT TO CARE IN CASE OF DISABILITY.

„Many of the buildings here are not at all accessible for handicapped people. Many of the costs have to be paid for by the disabled themselves, which is not fair. I also don't like the fact that people keep staring at those who are different.“ (15)

„I believe that the right to support in the case of disability is very important. Handicapped children should not be disadvantaged, and yet there are still so many barriers in Styria and Austria.“ (Michelle, 16)

„The right to special support in the case of disability is important because not everyone can do everything equally well. Each of us sometimes needs a little more support.“ (Marie, 9)



RIGHT TO PARENTAL CARE.

„I'm very happy to see Mom and Dad, even though they're separated.“ (Juna, 7)

„I miss the contact with my father, but my mother and he couldn't agree.“ (Male, 17)

„Children are so long in after-school care or kindergarten, really a long time and they have no time with their parents.“ (Female)

„There is violence in our family.“ (Female, 15)

„What's the difference between custody and contact rights?“ (Male, 17)

„The right to parental care is most important because it has an effect from an early age on, because if you are left alone by your parents as a baby, society becomes even rougher. Empathy is lost! (Lisa, 15)

„I only see my dad once a month for eight hours, that's way too little.“ (Sascha, 13)

„My foster family said this will be a vacation and then I was in a home for two years.“ (Lisa, 12)

„I think the right to parental care is important because children can't keep their parents from arguing. They are very sad because of the quarrel, especially when they can't see a parent anymore.“ (Anna, 10)

„It's especially important to me to spend a lot of time with my family.“ (Lena, 9)

„Our neighbour has to work so much in unskilled jobs in order to be able to feed her children, there's no time for the children.“ (Female, 18)

„I have a right to a good home and that my parents take care of me because a kid can't do it alone.“ (Nora, 11)



Picture: ASO Oberpullendorf

RIGHT TO EDUCATION.

„The allocation of tasks in school projects is not fair!“

„Financial difficulties at home make it impossible to continue school. That should not be like that!“ (15)

„Pupils are insufficiently challenged, could do more, but are not specifically fostered.“ (16)

„I think that education should not be taken for granted, but as a privilege. Considering that millions of children and young people do not have the opportunity to go to school, we can be glad to be so well educated.“ (Manfred, 16)

„Without education, you can live your life, but not a beautiful life. Everyone should experience education!“ (Andreas, 15)

„Education is important so you can have more and better opportunities later in life.“ (Female, 8)

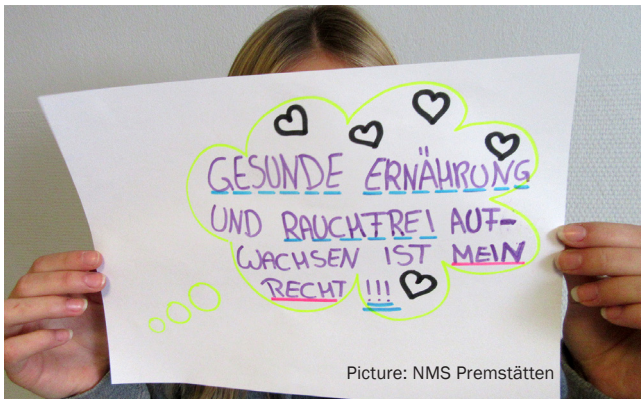
„...but in the world this is the right that is most violated. The right to health is also neglected in the world, but when you see that girls are not allowed to go to school, it's bad.“ (Catherine, 16)

„Not all kids can afford everything at school.“ (Luke, 6)

„The right to education is a privilege that should be accessible to everyone. There should be no entrance tests in order to study at the university.“ (16)

„We're fine, we can learn and train in a good profession, unfortunately other children aren't so well off and they can't go to school at all.“ (Matthias, 10)

„The right to go to school is important because knowledge is power. As an adult you get a better job and more money if you have a good education.“ (Pascal, 16)



RIGHT TO HEALTH.

„Health is especially important, because if you are ill, you can't live well!“ (Julia, 16)

„It's important that everyone has enough to eat.“ (Lea, 8)

„It's important for everyone that there is a hospital.“ (Naomi, 8)

„It is important that parents look after our health, because if you are ill, you can't go to school and learn, and that has to do with the right to education!“ (Livia, 9)

What other children's rights can children think of? (Group SEK I)

More freedom! | No violence! | Deal with mistakes! | A right to love! | A right to more educational books! | Right to MC/Right to Burger King! | A right to a beautiful environment! | A right to no homework! | A right to stay out longer! | A right to energy! | A right to more pocket money! | More right to privacy! | Right to more horses! | Right to vacation! | Right to equal rights! | Right to clothing! | Right to a bed! | Right to school! | Right to life! | Right to help! | Right to money! | Right to pets! | Right to reading time! | Right to time! | Right to sport! | Right to cinema! | Right to parents!



The Crew after finishing the film.
Watch the **short-film** on YouTube: [beteiligungST](#)



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