

Wellbeing of adolescents (10-14 years old) living in the Cluj Metropolitan Area

A better world for adolescents

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*„A child needs many things but he needs parental love the most.
Childhood is very important during one's life and everyone
should have a perfect childhood”*

13 years old Romanian girl living in Gilău, a commune from the Cluj Metropolitan Area

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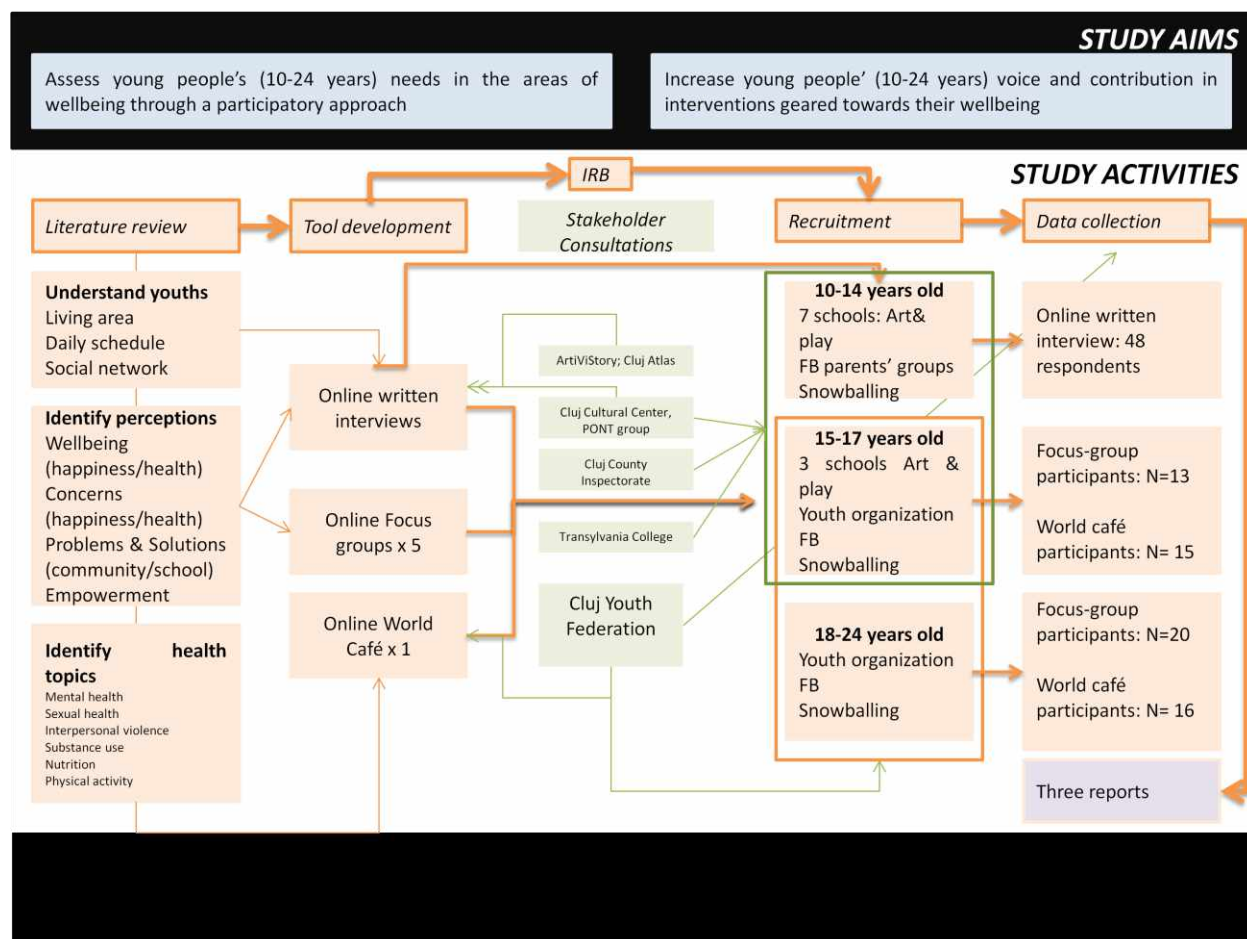
I. STUDY DESCRIPTION

Summary

The current report is a deliverable of the project „*Interdisciplinary study on young people’s needs and opportunities assessment in Cluj-Napoca, Romania (LEAP)*” implemented during January - September, 2020 with the support of the Department of Public Health and Political Science Department-FSPAC-Babes-Bolyai University, PONT Group and Cluj Cultural Center.

The LEAP uses a rapid participatory assessment to identify needs, gaps and opportunities of the young population (10-24 years old) living in the Cluj Metropolitan area and comprised the following components: 1. stakeholder analysis; 2. quantitative study; 3. qualitative study; 4. stakeholder consultations; 5. systemic gap identification; 6. policy analysis and 7. a priority setting exercise.

The Qualitative Study of the LEAP project was employed during January – May 2020 and aimed to engage youths in identifying their needs and opportunities by using three methodologies: I. An online written interview addressing wellbeing with adolescents aged 10-14, II. Online focus-groups addressing wellbeing with youths aged 15 to 24 and III. An online World Cafe session addressing six health related topics with youths aged 15 to 24 years old.



The results presented in this report emerged from the 1st component of the Qualitative Study – the online written interview addressing wellbeing in adolescents age 10-14.

ONLINE WRITTEN INTERVIEW: brief study description

Targeted population: adolescents aged 10-14 living in the Cluj Metropolitan Area

Objectives:

1. Understand adolescents
2. Identify adolescents' perspectives with regards to their needs and solutions in addressing them
3. Empower adolescents in identifying and solving the problems they confront with

Topics assessed: The following topics were addressed with the online interview.

1. Understanding adolescents. This topic is promoted in the WHO AA-HA guidance and in the Growing up in cities Project. To understand adolescents, these two scientific sources propose a focus on three components: 1.1. understand the area where adolescents live; 1.2. understand adolescents' daily schedule and 1.3. understand adolescents' social network.
2. Identify how adolescents perceive wellbeing and the factors influencing wellbeing. This topic is promoted in the WHO AA-HA guidance. To identify adolescents' perception on wellbeing, this guidance suggests asking adolescents their perception of health and happiness (e.g., "What is healthy and unhealthy")
3. Identify adolescents' needs and problems. To identify adolescents', the AA-HA guidance suggest to explore with adolescents their main concerns about health and about happiness (e.g., „What influences health and ill-health, risk and protective factors, including safety and security”).
4. Identify solutions envisioned by adolescents. To identify adolescents', the AA-HA guidance suggest to explore with adolescents the types of actions they believe can be implemented in the schools and communities to improve their wellbeing
5. Empowerment. To empower adolescents in identifying and addressing their problems, A(e.g., actions they can take to stay healthy)

Tool: A structured interview guide was developed following the above 5 topics. The interview guide comprised 6 sections:

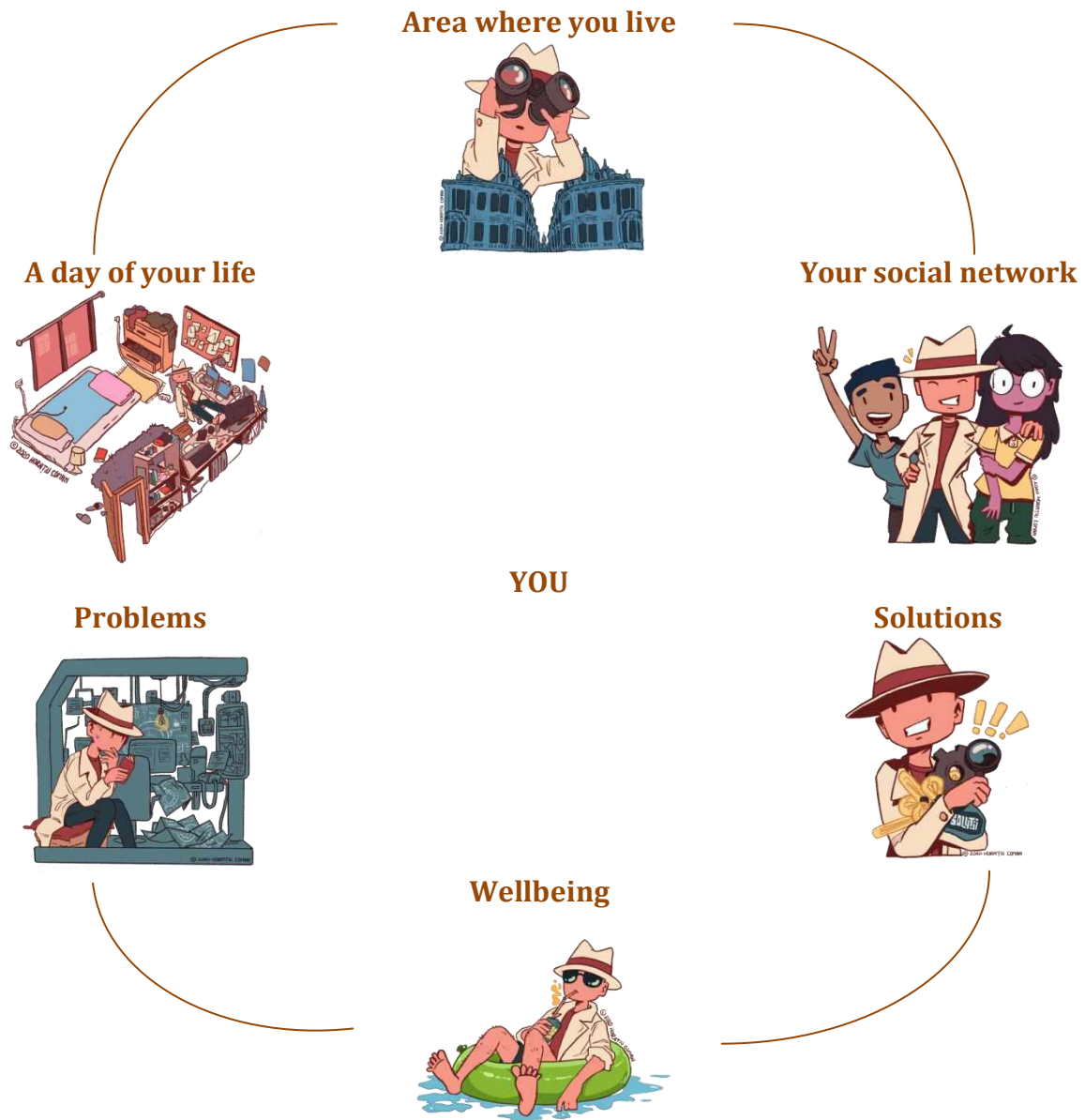
1. The area where you live
2. Your daily schedule
3. Your social network
4. Wellbeing
5. Problems
6. Solutions

To ensure that the tool is age adapted, a story of the LEAP detective was developed and the adolescents agreeing to participate were assigned the role of co-investigators in identifying adolescents' needs. A collaboration with the ArtiViStory team was established, the LEAP detective was designed and represented and each of the 6 assessed topics were visually represented. An example can be viewed below.

The LEAP detective:



The visual representations for the 6 topics addressed



The tool was uploaded via Qualtrics and it allowed adolescents to upload video/audio materials and pictures and to write answers.

Data collection: Data was collected online via Qualtrics between April 30 – May 28, 2020. After obtaining the ethics committee approval, the structured interview guide was developed in an online version and a link + a text was disseminated using three methods:

1. The snowballing technique. A member of the Cluj Cultural Center disseminated the link via Email and WhatsApp to professors, artists and parents from 10 schools. CCC has been having a collaboration with these schools through the Art and Wellbeing project.
2. The LEAP Advisory Board members were contacted via phone/Zoom/WhatsApp and asked to disseminate the recruitment text and the link for the online in their own network
3. The online form was promoted one a week for three weeks on the SPH Facebook page and shared on the Cluj Youth Federation Facebook page
4. A text and the online form were disseminated on Facebook groups for parents by a 24 years old member of the SPH team
5. Ten master students identified either one professors willing to disseminate the online form or 5 parents willing to allow their children to fill in the form
6. Various associations for vulnerable groups (e.g., FRCCF) were identified and emailed an invitation to disseminate the online form

The link was first viewed by parents who gave their parental consent and received a link to be forwarded to their child/children. Children gave their written, 2020 assent before answering the online written interview and selected either to fill the form online during one week or to download the form and sending it via email.

Data analysis: The data set was monitored during one month, problematic cases (e.g., where child assent or parental consent were missing) were approached and solved individually and the data set was cleaned two times a week for four weeks. Parents send 2 reminders via phone to ask their children to fill in the form. Data was exported from Qualtrics in an Excel format and analyzed manually. Thematic analysis was employed and both deductive and inductive coding was used.

II. RESULTS

1. Socio-demographics

Although 129 parents consented for their children to participate in the study and although 204 adolescents assented to participate, only 62 actually started answering the online interview.

Table 1. Information on the parents of children aged 10-14

		N	%
Obtaining parents' informed consent	Number of parents who signed the informed consent document	129	NA
	Number of children consented (<i>some parents offered their consent for multiple children to participate in the project</i>)	204	NA
Parents' preferences for how their children will fill out the project's form	Online, using the available link	82	63.57
	Offline and sent by email	40	36.43

Table 2. Socio-demographics of children aged 10-14 (N=62)

		N	%
Gender	Female	33	53.23
	Male	29	46.77
Age	10	23	37.10
	11	13	20.97
	12	16	25.81
	13	8	12.90
	14	2	3.23
Ethnicity	Romanian	58	93.55
	Hungarian	3	4.84
	Rroma	1	1.61
Residency	City of Cluj-Napoca	43	69.35
	Commune near Cluj-Napoca	19	30.65
Communes	Gilau	8	12.90
	Aiton	1	1.61
	Floresti	8	12.90
	Baciu	2	3.23
Cluj-Napoca neighborhood	Borhanci	1	1.61
	Buna Ziua	2	3.23
	Centru	1	1.61
	Dambu Rotund	2	3.23

	Faget	2	3.23
	Gheorgheni	2	3.23
	Grigorescu	2	3.23
	Gruia	1	1.61
	Manastur	20	32.26
	Marasti	1	1.61
	Plopilor	1	1.61
	Primaveri	1	1.61
	Someseni	2	3.23
	Zorilor	5	8.06
School	Colegiul de Muzica "Sigismund Toduta"	2	3.23
	Colegiul National "Avram Iancu"	8	12.90
	Colegiul National "Gheorghe Sincai"	3	4.84
	Liceul de Informatică "Tiberiu Popoviciu"	15	24.19
	Liceul Teoretic "Eugen Pora"	22	35.48
	Liceul teoretic "Gelu Voievod"	7	11.29
	Liceul Teoretic "Nicolae Bălcescu"	1	1.61
	Liceul Teoretic Bathory Istvan	1	1.61
	Seminarul Teologic Ortodox	2	3.23

2. Understanding adolescents

To better understand the adolescents enrolled in this study we asked them to describe the area where they live, their daily schedule and their social network.

2.1. Area where adolescents' live

49 participants answered this section

2.1.1. Describe the area where you live. Send me a picture representing the area where you live and describe the picture. What does the picture say about the area where you live?

By describing the area where they live, adolescents expressed their preferred spaces, characteristics of the area and the activities they engage in. At the same time, in the descriptions they offered, their attitudes towards the area where they live was present. Most of them (n=31) expressed positive feelings, by using words such as “beautiful”, “amazing”, “wonderful”, when referring to where they live or by specifying the characteristics of the area that they appreciate such as the quietness, availability of green spaces, opportunity of social interaction and availability of facilities. Nine participants were neutral in describing the area, presenting it briefly such as “my backyard”, “my house”, “my neighborhood” while four participants expressed negative attitude by referring to “absence of a playground” or presence of “intense traffic”. For examples, please read the eight quotes presented below.

Participants characteristics are expressed throughout the document as follows: Gender;Age;Ethnicity; Cluj-Napoca versus Cluj; Neighborhood Name vs Commune Name

Attitude	Quotes	Participants' characteristics
Positive	<i>The picture represents the courtyard of the block where I live. It's a clean space, surrounded by greenery. The picture represents all the beautiful moments I had here.</i>	F;13;Ro;Cluj;Gilau
	<i>Baciu is a village near Cluj-Napoca. The picture shows that I have a lot of greenery here...that's why I love to live here, especially during summer time. Even the forest is close to us and I can have walks in the forest.</i>	F;13;Hu;Cluj;Baciu
	<i>This is the most beautiful house in the village and I have been living here since I was 4 years old. I love this house.</i>	B;12;Ro;Cluj;Aiton
	<i>I took the picture this spring. You can see the tulips, the orthodox church ...the picture shows that this area is very beautiful.</i>	B;10;Other;Cluj-Napoca;Manastur
	<i>The picture represents my neighborhood.</i>	F;10;Cluj;Foresti

Negative	<i>The courtyard of the building block where I live ... it missing a playground</i>	B;11; Ro; Cluj-Napoca; Manastur
	<i>This is Observatorului street that crosses the Zorilor neighborhood....the traffic is intense.</i>	B;12;Ro;Cluj-Napoca; Zorilor

2.1.2. What can be found in the area where you live?

The environmental items mentioned as available in the area where adolescent participants live shows the not only the diversity of the sample enrolled in this study but also the diversity of the environment where participants. Moreover, it also shows what participants notice in their surrounding and what is important for them.

Nature was the most frequent element mentioned by 28 of the participants as present in their area. The *nature elements* that adolescents focused on were parks (n=3), water (n=5), forest (n=12), trees, (n=3) and animals (n=2). Stores were the second most mentioned environmental item, after nature, 27 participants mentioning the presence of a store in the area where they live. With regards to the type of store 3 participants noticed food stores, 5 participants mentioning a food market, 3 participants mentioned restaurants, 1 participant mentioned the pharmacy and 18 participants mentioning other types of stores (e.g., mall). Participants also mentioned *leisure and play infrastructure* such as spaces available for sports (n=4) and playgrounds (n=7). *Public institutions* were also present in the area of some participants. The school was most present (n=8), followed by the church (n=5), the hospital (n=3) and the municipality (n=2). Building blocks were mentioned by 18 participants. Only 4 participants mentioned transport related items, 3 mentioning being close to a bus station and one participant mentioning the highway nearby. Only one participant expressed being close to a service (e.g., beauty center). Cultural items were mentioned by five participants who expressed living near an old castle or tourism facilities. The table below presents the number of participants per expressed environmental items.

Environmental items		No of participants mentioning this item
Nature elements	Parks	13
	Water	5
	Forest	12
	Trees	3
	Animals	2
Play and leisure	Sports' facilities	4
	Playgrounds	7
Public institutions	Schools	8
	Hospitals	3
	Police department	1
	Church	5

	Municipality	2
Stores	Food store	3
	Food market	5
	Retailers	18
	Pharmacy	1
	Restaurant	3
	Beauty saloon	1
Buildings	Building blocks/houses	17
	Student dorm	1
Cultural aspects	Castles	5
	Library	1
Transport facilities	Bus station	3
	Airport	1
People		4

The number of environmental items varied between participants, ranging from only 1 item mentioned to 9 items mentioned by some participants. Of the 17 participants mentioning only one item present in their environment, 5 referred to other people (e.g., family, friends, neighbors), 5 referred to either a forest or a park, 6 mentioned building blocks and 1 mentioned the airport. For the other 32 participants the length of the description varied, from brief to complex description, including specific labels of diverse institutions (e.g., Transylvania Medical Center), sports' facilities (e.g., Sport's Hall Horia Demian), cultural facilities (e.g., BT Arena) or retailers (e.g., Lidl; Profi; Sigma Center). For examples, please read the nine quotes presented below.

Quotes	Participants' characteristics
<i>My family and my heart</i>	B; 13; Ro; Cluj-Napoca; Zorilor
<i>Building blocks and food stores</i>	B;11; Ro; Cluj-Napoca; Manastur
<i>Near my building block there are two parks, the school I attend, beauty salons, stores, the police section and behind the building block is the Gilau castle</i>	F; 13; Ro; Cluj; Gilau
<i>BT Arena, Horia Demian Sports building, Babeş-Bolyai park, Rozelor park, the Olympic swimming pool, restaurantul Motor Rock.</i>	F;12;Ro;Cluj-Napoca; Plopilor
<i>In the area where I live I have: supermarket, a playground, houses and building blocks, a bus station, hospitals, churches, school, a library, gas stations, the mall and a climbing room.</i>	B; 13; Hu; Cluj-Napoca; Zorilor

2.1.3. What do you like the most where you live?

Participants' answers to what they appreciate most where they live clustered in 10 topics. The aspect valued by the majority of participants (n=17) was the *availability of green spaces*. Participants valued being close to nature and having in the area nature elements. The second most valued characteristic was the *quietness* of the area, seldom referred to „I like that it's a quiet area". Being close to family, friends and colleagues was the third characteristic that made the area likeable for these participants. At the same time, participants appreciated being close to playgrounds or spaces where they can spend time with other youths. If we sum the number of participants that value in the area the possibility of being close to people with those that value having spaces where they can spend time with others, we can conclude that actually the characteristic valued by the majority of participants (n=20) is *the availability of spaces for social interaction*. Closeness to sports' facilities, to transport facilities, to the city center and aspects related to cleanliness and clean air were other characteristics appreciated by adolescents.

What participants like with regards to the area where they live	No.	Quotes	Participant characteristics
Presence of nature/being close to nature	19	<i>I like big parks and the forest that is near. This spring I loved most the tulips.</i>	B;10; Other ethnicity; Cluj-Napoca; Manastur
Quietness	17	<i>I like the most that is a quiet are and that it has a lot of green spots</i>	B;12;Ro;Cluj-Napoca; Zorilor
Being close to people	12	<i>I like the fact that my colleagues live nearby</i>	B;11;Rroma;Cluj-Napoca; Manastur
Availability of playgrounds/spaces for spending time with others	8	<i>I like two things, first that I have a green space in the backyard of the block and second that I have children that I can play with.</i>	F;10;Ro;Cluj-Napoca;Gruia
Absence of cars/traffic	5	<i>I like that it's quiet and there are only a few cars crossing by</i>	B;12;Ro;Cluj; Dambul Rotund
Closeness to sports' facilities	4	<i>I like the fact that when I get out from the house I have access to a green space where I can do sports. I also like the fact that I am near the bus stations.</i>	F;11;Ro;Cluj-Napoca; Manastur
Closeness to transport facilities	3	<i>I like the most that I have the buss station close and that is quiet.</i>	B; 13; Hu; Cluj-Napoca; Zorilor
Clean air	2	<i>Fresh mountain air, beautiful landscape, nice people</i>	B;13;Ro;Cluj;Gilau

With regards to what adolescents appreciate in the area where they live, we asked participants to consult online with their friends that live in the same area and to identify what their friends like at the area where they live. Seven aspects were appreciated by the friends of these study participants: the availability of green spaces (n=14), the availability of sports facilities (n=5), the availability of stores, restaurants and coffee shops (n=4), the people living nearby (n=2) and the fact that it is a quiet (n=2) and clean area (n=2).

2.2. Adolescents' daily schedule

39 participants completed this section

To better understand the characteristics of this participant sample, we asked adolescents to describe their daily schedule, to specify what activities they engage in during a day and to present what they like to most during a day's time. The activities these adolescent participants engage in during a day grouped in 6 domains: school related activities, leisure and play activities, physical activities, cultural activities, social interactions, hygiene and nutrition related activities. *School related activities* were most present in the daily schedule of adolescents with 38 participants referring to school in their daily schedule description. The school based activities referred to school attendance (n=33), homework (n=29) and after school schedule (n=4). The second category of activities present in participants' daily schedule were *cultural activities* (n=34). The cultural activities participants engaged were watching movies/TV (n=29), reading (n=19), art related activities such as drawing, painting, playing the guitar (n=9) and listening to music (n=2). *Leisure and play activities* were the third most present type of activity in the daily schedule of 32 participants. This category included play (n=24) in the form of simple play but also chess play, rummy, lego, relaxation activities (n=8) and gadget related activities (n=17). Physical activity was also present during a day for most participants (n=28), in the form of sport activities (n=20) but also in the form of nature walks and spending time outside (n=14). *Social interaction* was also present during participants' daily schedule (n=18), involving activities with family members (n=13), activities with friends (n=9) but also with animals (n=2). Hygiene related activities were mentioned by 12 participants, who referred mainly to oral hygiene. Nutrition related activities were present in the daily life of 22 participants, 18 participants referring to engage in serving the main meals, mainly breakfast, and 4 referring to engage in cooking together with their mom. One participant mentioned watering flowers daily and another participant mentioned praying.

Topics	No of participants	Quotes	Participants characteristics
School related activities	38		
Attending online classes	23	<i>Now I stay in the house, take online classes, read and do sports.</i>	B; 13; Ro; Cluj-Napoca; Zorilor
Attending onsite classes	10	<i>In the picture that I sent you can see my room...where a lot of my activities' results are present. A day of my life before the pandemics starts at 7, when I wake up. First thing I do is go to the bathroom where I do my morning routing. Then I dress up and go to school where I learn new things each day. I the school brake I take my breakfast. Normally, I stay 6 to 7 hours to school. After school I go home and take the lunch. Each day, after I arrive home, and relax for one hour and then I do the homework. When I'm ready with homework I play, read or help my mother. During evening I take the dinner with my family and that we watch together a movie. Before</i>	F; 13; Ro; Cluj; Gilau;
Homework	29		
Additional school activities	4		

		<i>going to bed, I pray. Next day I start everything all over...until the weekend comes...when I relax.</i>	
Physical activity	28		
Sports	20	<i>I do sports each day...because I love sport. I also spend time with my family in the forest near my building block and we do physical activity outside</i>	F;11;Ro;Cluj-Napoca; Manastur
Walks	14		
Cultural activities	34		
Reading	19	<i>The picture I sent represents a desk because I spend a lot of time learning and drawing at that desk. Each day I have online classes and afterwards I like to spend a lot of time drawing fantastic heroes. Afterwards, I go outside with my friend who stays near me and whom I meet often. She has a dog and we take the dog for walks.</i>	F; 13; Hu; Cluj; Baci
Watching movies/TV time	29		
Listening to music	2		
Art based activities	9		
Leisure and play	32		
Relaxing	8	<i>I play, I learn, I play, I read, I eat, I play, I go to school, I play, I sleep</i>	F;10;Ro;Cluj-Napoca;Gheorgheni
Playing	24		
Gadget time	17		
Social interaction	18		
Family time	13	<i>The picture I sent represents my step-by-step classroom. This is where I spend most of my time, together with my colleagues and my teachers. Before the pandemics, a day of my life started at7, when I usually wake up, then I do my hygiene, than eat, go to school until 4 p.m., back home, read, play on the gadgets, spend time with my sister and my parents and also with my friends. If the weather is nice I go outside and play with my neighbors. On Wednesday I take an arts class with my sister and on Friday I take a dance class.</i>	F;11;Ro;Cluj-Napoca; Centru
Time with friends	9		
Time with pets	2		
Hygiene	12		
Nutrition	22		
Eating	18	<i>During one day I cook with my mom, I work with plasticine, I water the plants, play chess, do online school, spend time on gadgets, read, do homework, take walks</i>	F;12;Ro;Cluj-Napoca; Grigorescu
Cooking	4		

We asked them to specify what they like most during a day and what they would change in their daily schedule. Their favorite activities clustered in 8 topics, social interaction with friends being the number one preferred activity by most participants (n=30), followed by sports (n=15), spending time on gadgets (n=12), playing (n=11), studying (n=9), reading (n=6), spending time outside (n=6), spending time with the family (n=3).

2.3. Adolescents' social network

To better understand participants we asked them several questions related to whom they interact daily and how, what they like at their social network and what they would change.

Interaction with family, with friends and with colleagues gained the same importance, as 23 participants stated interaction with each of these three categories to be most frequent. Interaction with professors was expressed as frequent by 6 participants. For most participants (n=23) the most common type of communication was face to face, followed by WhatsApp (n=14), phone conversations (n=11), online tools such as Discord, Microsoft, Google Classroom, Zoom, Roblox (n=9) and social networks such as Instagram and Facebook (n=2).

Playing was the most frequent type of social interaction (n=22), followed by talking/discussing (n=10), doing sports (n=7), walking (n=5) and reading (n=2).

The characteristics that study participants valued at their social network were the presence of a good communication and the absence of conflicts (n=14), the trust that they can have in their family and friends (n=10), a kindness, care and supportive attitude that exists in their social network (n=9), and the fact that their family members and friends are funny (n=10) and playful (n=3).

Quotes	Participant characteristics
<i>My mom supports me with everything that I do and my friends are also by my side</i>	F;10;Cluj;Floresti
<i>I can't put into words the love I carry for my family...we argue from time to time but we get along quickly and I can trust them a lot</i>	F;13;Ro;Cluj;Gilau
<i>I like the fact that I am spending a lot of time together with my family and that they trust me.</i>	F;11;Ro;Cluj-Napoca; Centru
<i>I like the fact that I can speak everything with my parents and my friends and that they are very funny</i>	B;12;Ro;Cluj-Napoca; Zorilor

3. Adolescents' perception on wellbeing

34 participants completed this section

To understand how adolescents perceive wellbeing, we asked them what happiness and health represents for them and what makes them happy and healthy.

3.1. Perception of happiness

Adolescents' answers to what is happiness and what makes them happy clustered in four topics: social interaction, interaction with nature, activities and internal states. *Time spend with family and friends* was the main factor related to participants' happiness (n=21). *Time spent in nature* through walks, nature trips, climbing trees, breathing fresh air, watching the sea, were expressed as determinants of happiness by 10 of the participants. Activities such as *playing* (n=9), engaging in *cultural activities* (n=5) such as drawing, dancing, singing, reading, playing instruments or creating any kind of art and engagement in *religious activities* (n=1) such as going to church, were mentioned as relevant to happiness. *Internal states* such as feeling joy, feeling relaxed, smiling, laughing, feeling good, feeling safe, inner peace, inner harmony but also relational harmony were related to happiness by 9 of the participants. Having freedom (n=2), being healthy (n=2), being successful (n=1) and receiving gifts (n=3) were also related to happiness.

Quotes	Participants' characteristics
<i>I am happy when I spend time with my family and friends and when everyone is healthy...a lot of things offer me feelings of happiness.</i>	F;13;Ro;Cluj;Gilau
<i>This is my first guitar ...each time I play remember my first guitar lesson 4 years ago..this was my mom's guitar. I am happy when I play the guitar</i>	B;12;Ro;Cluj-Napoca; Zorilor
<i>Happiness means spending time with friends, nice moments that I live, having a pleasurable feeling such as when I eat ice cream. I am happy when I get what I want, when I receive gifts, when I create, play with my friends, hug someone, singing, dancing, reading, playing with toys and when I am the best at something</i>	F;10;Ro;Cluj-Napoca;Gruia

Participants were also asked to call their friends and investigate what makes their friends happy. Being healthy, spending time with friends and family, playing, being in good relations with others, doing sports, relaxing, participating in cultural events, having money, having free time, receiving gifts, spending time with pets, playing instruments, traveling, feeling good, being successful in something that they like - were the replies that they got back from their close friends.

Quotes	Participants' characteristics
<i>My friends are happy when they are healthy and when their family is peaceful</i>	B;12;Ro;Cluj-Napoca; Zorilor
<i>My friends are happy when they play or when they travel abroad for visiting</i>	B;11;Ro;Cluj-Napoca;Manastur
<i>Playing makes them happy, receiving new toys, reading books and playing with pets</i>	B;10; Other ethnicity; Cluj-Napoca; Manastur

3.2. Perception of health

Participants were also asked what health represents for them and what determines their health. Participants described health in terms of absence of disease but also in terms of peacefulness, internal and mental balance. Participants related health mainly to nutrition (n=22), speaking about the importance of fruits and vegetable in their daily diet but also the importance of healthy food. Physical activity was also highly related to health for 21 participants. The third most important determinant of health was nature (n=11). Contact with nature and spending time in nature was perceived as influencing health. Happiness was perceived as influencing health by 6 participants. Being mentally balanced (n=2), having a good communication with others (n=3), play (n=1) and hygiene (n=2) were also considered important for health.

Quotes	Participants' characteristics
<i>Nature means health, freedom, fresh and unpolluted air where fruits and vegetables grow and these in turn also play an important role in staying healthy</i>	F;13;Ro;Cluj;Gilau
<i>Health is the most important thing in life. Without health we can't do anything. I eat healthy, I am happy, I play, I listen to music...all these make me happy</i>	F;10;Ro;Cluj-Napoca; Manastur
<i>Health means not getting upset, eating healthy, doing sports, having a peaceful mind</i>	F;10;Ro;Cluj-Napoca;Gruia
<i>Healthy means being in a perfect balance with yourself and with nature...it also means taking care of what you eat and taking care of yourself...also time to relax and physical activity outside in the nature</i>	F;14;Ro;Cluj;Faget

We asked participants to interview their close friends to find out what makes their friends healthy. Having a healthy lifestyle, doing sports, eating healthy food, eating fruits and vegetables, spending time in nature, hygiene, being happy, and having good family relations were what their friends replied.

4. Problems

34 participants answered this section

To better understand adolescents' needs we asked participants to share with us the problems that they are facing and also to focus on the problems they face at school, in the city or area where they live and at home.

For the *school environment*, two topics emerged namely being exposed to bullying (n=11) and also high level of stress (n=10). Stress at school was caused by either a high amount of homework, a high amount of information and too little time to study, low academic achievement and unfair punish due to some of the students that misbehave during classes. Also absence of appropriate school infrastructure for sport activities but also for studying was mentioned by 2 students.

With regards to *problems they face in the city*, crowdedness and intense car traffic was reported by 11 participants, followed by feelings of unsafe (n=6) due to bad people, dogs on the street or the possibility to get lost. Cleanliness (n=3) and difficulty of transportation (n=4) were also reported as problems faced in the city and so was the absence of playgrounds.

With regards to *problems faced at home*, the main topic that emerged referred to the presence of conflicts or arguments (n=6) with the family members, either with parents or with close relatives.

Quotes	Participant characteristics
School related problems	
<i>My problem is that in the classroom we are all unfairly punished because of how one of our colleague behaves. We also have a lot of homework to do. At school we don't have a sports' gym we don't have a conference room...</i>	B;10; Other ethnicity; Cluj-Napoca; Manastur
<i>To many class hours each day 6 to 7 hours – it's exhausting....and after school I have homework</i>	F; 13; Hu; Cluj; Baci
<i>My colleagues bully me and the problem is that many children go through this but don't know how to express it. Also evaluation and grades are my problem...because I can't concentrate when I am evaluated</i>	F;10;Ro;Cluj-Napoca;Gruia
City related problems	
<i>Not enough parks – a lot of time spend using public transportation because the city is crowded and also cleanliness is missing in the ciy.</i>	B;10; Other ethnicity; Cluj-Napoca; Manastur
<i>I live far from the city center. There is a bus that I can access but it's scheduled once per hour....and my parents can't take me in the city when I feel the need to go out</i>	F;14;Ro;Cluj;Faget
Home related problems	

<i>I get upset when I fight with my brother and he does not respect what I say and no one listen to me</i>	F;10;Ro;Cluj-Napoca;Gruia
When I have fights with my parents	B;12;Ro;Cluj-Napoca; Zorilor

Participants also asked they close friends to share their problems. Bullying, too many homework, stress were the school related problems that their friends reported. Crowdedness, feeling unsafe to travel alone in the city, garbage, noise, absence of adolescent friendly spaces were the problems that their friends relate to the city and family conflicts and parents' health problems were reported as family related problems. Being vulnerable as an adolescent, being emotionally unstable were also present in their discourse.

5. Solutions

31 participants answered this section

To understand what solutions adolescent see important to implement we asked them what things should change for them to be happier and healthier. Most participants (n=8) focused on behavioral changes in adults and adolescents. With regards to the behavioral change, participants focused on an increase in collaboration and cooperation between people, cultivating kindness and acceptance, lower self-centered attitudes.

Quotes	Participant characteristics
<i>Some people are mean and selfish and this creates problems in the world. We could have a better world if children are raised in a more appropriate manner and are taught to be kind with others. In this way they would grow up to be nice adults. Usually, the problems that adults face have the roots in their childhood...Also, the world would be better if we would not have nightclubs and bars</i>	F; 13; Ro; Cluj; Gilau;
<i>First, people should be kind to each other</i>	B;13;Ro;Cluj;Gilau

At the same time, adolescents asked for an increase in addressing their problems

Quotes	Participant characteristics
<i>To be asked what our problems are and our problems should be considered and solved</i>	F;14;Ro;Cluj;Faget
<i>Children should be listen to and their problems should be taken seriously</i>	B;12;Ro;Cluj; Aiton

Less homework (n=5), increase of exposure to extra-curricular activities (n=3) were also present. Other topics approached were reduction of pollution, increase in hygiene, increasing safety, closing drinking bars, supporting healthy food restaurants, having a cleaner city, addressing poverty, increasing the number of playgrounds and time spent doing sports..

We asked participants what they can change in order to improve their and others' wellbeing. Their answers mainly focused on personal change (n=10), with two outputs. These participants considered that changing themselves towards accepting others, helping others and learning how to communicate and collaborate with others can make a difference. Lifestyle changes were mentioned by 5 participants in terms of sports, healthy eating and adequate hygiene included in their daily activities. Caring for nature (n=7) was also considered as a self-empowering action through behaviors such as lowering polluting behaviors, caring for the surroundings and planting trees.

Quotes	Participant characteristics
<p>.</p> <p><i>I could start changing the way I behave. What matters most is how I behave.</i></p>	<p>F; 13; Ro; Cluj; Gilau;</p>
<p><i>I could help my close ones and I could take care of nature</i></p>	<p>F;10;Cluj;Floresti</p>
<p><i>As putea sa ajut la plantat copaci, flori sa avem un oras mai frumos si sanatos.</i></p>	<p>B;10; Other ethnicity; Cluj-Napoca; Manastur</p>
<p><i>Sa fac curatenie pe strada voluntar</i></p>	<p>B;12;Ro;Cluj; Aiton</p>
<p><i>As putea sa strang gunoaiele</i></p>	<p>F;10;Ro;Cluj- Napoca;Gruia</p>
<p><i>Sa am mai multa grija de locurile de langa casa, sa fie curat</i></p>	<p>F;10;Ro;Cluj- Napoca;Gheorgheni</p>

6. Changes

49 participants answered this section

6.1. In the area where they live

To identify more precisely adolescents' needs with regards to the area where they live, we asked four questions. The first two questions addressed what they would change and what they would add in the area where they live. Four areas of needs emerged from participants' answers: (1) availability of infrastructure for play and leisure; (2) availability of infrastructure for culture; (3) renovation and (4) increase social interaction.

Increasing the *availability of play and leisure infrastructure* was mentioned by 26 participants. Seven types of play and leisure infrastructures were present in participants' answers. The highest need was expressed regarding sports facilities, 16 adolescents asking for sports facilities such as a football and basketball playgrounds, bicycle trail, gymnastic hall, box hall, ping-pong table. Building play areas age adapted was the second need, expressed by 13 adolescents, followed by building green parks (n=9), building aqua parks or swimming pools (n=8) and building parks for animals (n=3). Two adolescents mentioned the importance of having drinkable water in the play area and places where they can live their bicycles and bags.

Investment in *renovating and caring for the area* where adolescents' live was the second important topic present in the answer of 23 participants. Adolescents referred to three aspects that need to be improved through renovations: 4 referred to buildings (e.g., renovating the exterior of houses and of building blocks, renovating the school and renovating the entire neighborhood), 8 referred to roads (e.g., asphaltting and illuminating the streets) and 7 referred to green spaces (e.g., plant trees, build green spaces). Making the area more clean was another topic expressed by 7 participants in relation to improvements in the area.

Cultural availability was another area of improvement presents for 10 adolescents. Participants expressed the need for cultural infrastructure in terms of bookstores (n=5), cultural center for youths (n=2), cinema (n=1). Three adolescents mentioned the need for cultural activities that they can engage in.

The need for improvements in social interaction was expressed by 5 participants, these participants focusing on managing social conflicts, increase happiness in people and increase the number of children they can play with.

Topic	Quotes	Participants' characteristics
Play and leisure (n=26)		
Play areas age adapted	<i>I would prefer to have a playground that has facilities for my age...not only for small children</i>	F;10;Ro;Cluj;Floresti
Parks	<i>More parks and leisure spaces</i>	B;13;Ro;Cluj;Gilau

Animals	<i>If I could change something that would be to asphalt the street from my building block, to build a park and a playground and a space for pets</i>	B;11;Ro;Cluj-Napoca;Manastur
Sport facilities	<i>I would like to have more basket playgrounds where you can park your bike, and more bike trails</i>	B;12;Ro;Cluj-Napoca;Zorilor
Swimming pool	<i>I would like a swimming pool</i>	B;12;Ro;Cluj; Dambul Rotund
Culture (n=10)		
Bookstore	<i>I would like to have clothes store, shoes stores, bookstores as the ones from Cluj-Napoca</i>	F; 13; Ro; Cluj; Gilau;
	<i>I would like to have more stores such as IPB or Diverta</i>	F; 13; Hu; Cluj; Baci
Cinema	<i>A cinema...I found out that something like that previously existed here</i>	B;13;Ro;Cluj;Gilau
Cultural center	<i>I would like to have a bookstore and a space for activities because we don't have such a space and we don't have where to bike</i>	F;11;Ro;Cluj-Napoca;Manastur
Cultural activities	<i>I would like to have more activities like dance or sports</i>	F;13;Ro;Cluj;Gilau
Renovation (n=23)		
Roads	<i>I prefer the street to be asphalted</i>	B; 13; Hu; Cluj-Napoca; Zorilor
Buildings	<i>I would renovate the building blocks because they are very gloomy</i>	F;12;Ro;Cluj-Napoca;Zorilor
Green spaces	<i>Less garbage, more green spaces, more parks</i>	B;10; Other ethnicity; Cluj-Napoca; Manastur
Cleanliness	<i>I would not need anything else besides the cleanliness</i>	F;12;Ro;Cluj-Napoca; Plopilor
Social interaction (n=5)		
Happiness	<i>I would like every person to be happy</i>	B;11;Ro;Cluj-Napoca; Manastur
Conflict management	<i>I would like the street to be asphalted and lighted. Also, although I don't think it's possible, I would like people to talk nice to each other</i>	F;11;Ro;Cluj-Napoca; Manastur
Number of kids	<i>To have more kids to play with</i>	B;12;Ro;Cluj; Floresti

We asked participants to consult online with their friends that live in the same area with regards to changes that adolescents perceive as necessary. Eight aspects emerged from participants' answers: build spaces for social interaction in the forms of parks or green spaces (n=9), build sports facilities (n=3), renovate schools and asphaltting the roads (n=3), increase cleanliness of the area (n=2), increase availability of cultural activities (n=2), increase availability of transport facilities (n=1) and lower the car traffic (n=1).

6.2. In their daily schedule

The changes that participants would bring in their daily schedule clustered in 5 domains. The domain that outnumbered the rest of the domains was related to *education*. Twenty three participants referred to changes in their daily schedule related to school. A reduction in the amount of homework was requested by 14 participants, the rest of participants referring to the following changes that should be brought in the school schedule: being exposed to more quality education, school bag is too heavy, have longer school breaks, have shorted school program, starting school at 9 instead of 8, moving from class to class during one day, changing students' behavior. The second aspect that participants would change was related to spending time outside (n=11), this need being a consequence of the pandemic period. The third aspect needing change was related to time, 9 participants stating the need to have more free time. Increase social interaction was present in 3 participants and a need to increase play time was present in 3 participants.

6.3. In their social network

39 participants completed this section

When asked what they would change in their social network, 31 participants answered "I wouldn't change a thing", "I love them as they are", "nothing", "I like the way they are", 3 participants expressed spending more time together with family and friends, 2 participants expressed improvements in their friends' behaviors in terms of self-respect, one participant referred to reducing family conflicts and family time spent on gadgets and one participants referred to changing the father's drinking behavior.

7. A perfect world for adolescents

36 adolescents answered this section

7.1. The perfect city

To further explore adolescents' needs in terms of the urban environment we asked participants to envision and describe the perfect/ideal city. Three topics emerged from the description: characteristics of the city, characteristics of the people living in the city and facilities the city should have. In the perception of 11 adolescents, the city should have the following *characteristics*: should be clean (n=9) in terms of unpolluted and without garbage but also with clean and renovated buildings, without crowdedness/traffic (n=4), technologically evolved (n=3), full of color and light (n=2), safe (n=1), beautiful (n=1) and small (n=1). Six youths express that *people* living in the ideal city should be happy (n=4), intelligent (n=2), sociable (n=2), civilized (n=1), healthy (n=1) and wealthy (n=1). In the perception of 20 participants, the ideal city should have the following *facilities*: green spaces (n=12), age adapted playgrounds (n=11), with a lot of sports facilities, including a pool (n=3), relaxation areas/parks (n=3), freely available toys and books (n=2), available arts' classes (n=3) such as dancing, painting, singing, sports classes, free museums (n=1), high quality shopping area (n=5) that includes child adapted restaurants, shops and should include animal interaction (n=2). Several participants envisioned a center for adolescents comprising the above mentioned facilities.

Quotes	Participant characteristics
<i>The perfect city is full of color and all the people are happy...would have high quality stores and people living in it don't have any problem. Each person has everything needed and happiness floats in the city. Probably this city would be the number 1 city in the world for its beauty and creativity and also for having the smartest people in the world.</i>	F; 13; Ro; Cluj; Gilau;
<i>The perfect city is a safe city, a clean and tidy city, a city without traffic, a city having many leisure and play areas, restaurants, pizza places and a lot of spaces where you can have activities such as dance, sports, painting, music</i>	F;13;Ro;Cluj;Gilau
<i>A perfect city is an unpolluted city where people behave nicely, speak nicely and respect each other and the city leaders care for their people....this would be the perfect city for me</i>	F;12;Ro;Cluj-Napoca; Plopilor
<i>The perfect city for me would be a technologically evolved city and a clean and unpolluted city with many trees</i>	B;11;Ro;Cluj-Napoca;Manastur
<i>A city with many playgrounds, swimming pools, trees and beautiful buildings...and also with spaces where children can spend all the day together playing and being able to have free toys and books ...also, in this city instead of cars we are using huge slides</i>	F;10;Ro;Cluj-Napoca;Gruia

7.2. The perfect school for adolescents

When describing the ideal school, adolescent participants focused on the school schedule and school curricula (n=12), school facilities (n=15) and the characteristics of students and professors (n=9).

With regards to the *school curricula*, 10 participants mentioned that the in the ideal school classes are highly interactive, focus on life skills that youths need, address the educational needs of students, engage students in school and class related decision and involve having classes in various environments such as a plant garden, a zoo etc. Besides a school curricula with interactive and student centered classes, the *class schedule* in an ideal school would involve less time for studying in class and for homework (n=5) and would have larger time for spontaneous activities and for social interaction (n=3). *Students* enrolled in the ideal school are happy (n=4), manifest a civilized behavior (n=3), have good academic achievements (n=2) and *professors* are friendly, funny, less restrictive, student centered and qualified in teaching (n=4).

The ideal school has large green and open spaces (n=9), but also spaces allowing for cultural activities (n=2). It also has a lunch area with good and free food (n=5), sport facilities (n=4), closets for school bags (n=1), shops for students (n=1). The school is clean (n=1) but also modern and with high technology infrastructure (n=4).

Quotes	Participant characteristics
<i>The ideal school is one having a child as a school principle. Only a child that learns in that school would know what's best for a school and for its students. Of course, only the child can decide on important matters. The school should be painted in nice colors such as pink and should be large. At the last floor a swimming pool exists. The school has 10 floor but only the first 5 are allocated for study and the other 5 should include a cafeteria, stores for children and things that an adolescent needs. Classes are for 60 minutes but are fewer than we currently have...and the break lasts 1 hour, an hour that children can spend as they like.</i>	F; 13; Ro; Cluj; Gilau;
<i>The perfect school should be a modern one where laptops are used instead of books</i>	B;11;Ro;Cluj-Napoca;Manastur
<i>If I would be the school principle I would make the school classes more interactive to make sure that students understand what is being taught ...for children from poor families I would offer free meals and on Fridays I would replace the croissant ant the milk with a salad or a pizza. For the primary school classes I would not use grades for evaluation...instead I would focus on teaching so every child gets it. All this would reduce school dropouts because children would love to come to school ... and let's not forget about proper hygiene. I my school we have only one person cleaning the 4 floors of the school ...the bathroom is problematic</i>	B;12;Ro;Cluj-Napoca; Zorilor
<i>...a school similar with what you see in American movies....every child has a personal wardrobe, the school has a nice gym a large back yard and playgrounds...also cleanliness is present, children behave nice and professors are friendly</i>	F;13;Ro;Cluj;Gilau

7.3. The perfect house

Participants preferred the ideal house to be large (n=12), include large yards and green spaces (n=12), have a swimming pool (n=10) and sports facilities (n=4), have a modern design (n=4) and be placed in a quiet area (n=2).

Quotes	Participant characteristics
<i>The perfect house is large because it has a swimming pool, basket ball and tennis playgrounds, a gym and a chef cooking the best food</i>	F; 13; Ro; Cluj; Gilau;
<i>The perfect house would not be a luxurious one but a normal house designed after my needs and preferences...but I would like to have a large backyard with trees and flowers, a gym, and a swimming pool (who does not want a swimming pool)</i>	F;13;Ro;Cluj;Gilau
<i>I would like to have a large backyard with a climbing wall, a swing, grass, trees, full of flowers, each child has its own room and a lot of space for play</i>	F;10;Ro;Cluj-Napoca;Gheorgheni

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