

# STADA Health Report

# 2016

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**Health consultation hour:**  
What body and mind have to tell each other

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## 1. Editorial



Healthy body, healthy mind, says a Latin proverb. The interaction between the physical and the psychological is undisputed. The extent to which this interaction affects our daily lives is dependent on the

individual living conditions. Do socio-demographic characteristics such as age, origin or gender influence these effects? How do certain attitudes affect our behavior? Why, for example, are some people reluctant to see the doctor despite being unwell? Which factors lead to physical inactivity, why do some people eat better than others? How do low self-esteem and the feeling of unattractiveness affect happiness? And what are the main causes of sleep problems and stress? The STADA Health Report 2016 looks at such questions.

The STADA Health Report has been produced for the third year in a row. We are proud of this, particularly when we note that the results of the studies are discussed in the media and by the public. In 2014 we looked at Germans' attitudes, wishes and behavior in terms of their health, while in 2015 the focus was on Germans' health knowledge. This year, we are going one step further and combining the two topics: What determines our behavior towards our health, why don't we pay enough attention to our body and mind? In addition, with the STADA Wellbeing Index we have shown what has changed since 2014 in terms of Germans' subjective wellbeing. Once again, we have renowned physician Dr. Johannes Wimmer on board for support. We were also able to secure psychologist Dr. Eva Wlodarek as an expert. The two of them represent the focus of our study: Dr. Wimmer as a specialist in health and physical wellbeing, Dr. Wlodarek through years of experience with human psychology and behavior patterns.

As in previous years, market research institute Kantar Health supported us in the population-representative survey of 2,000 people aged between 18 and 70. The study aimed to identify daily habits, attitudes and behavior as well as mental and physical impairments. We have linked the two in a more detailed analysis. Without giving too much away: There are still big differences between the genders in terms of self-perception. Women continue to feel obligated to meet with an ideal external image, as influenced by society. Furthermore, social differences also directly influence health: The fear of unemployment and a decline in living standards are associated with psychological strain and stress. And long-term stress is one of the risk factors for numerous complaints, including cardiovascular disease. Stress at work and stress during leisure time are also responsible for sleep problems, as corroborated by the STADA Health Report 2016. Alarmingly, the under 30-years-olds are increasingly affected, as many are also living on the edge in their spare time.

The STADA Health Report 2016 is part of our »All the Best« initiative, which we successfully launched in 2014. We want people to take responsibility for their health. We want to raise awareness of how valuable health is for our lives and how carefully we must take care of it in order to cope with daily tasks. In addition, our report will also show the problems with the health care system, where all of those involved must do more in explaining, preventing and treating.

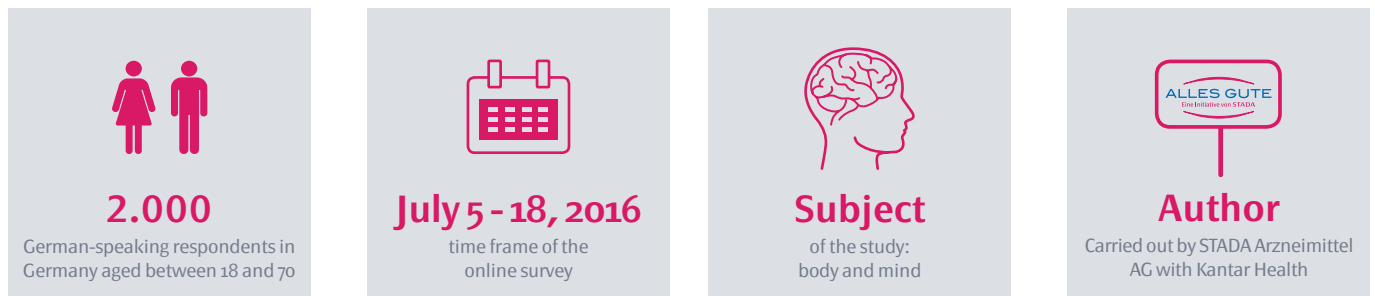
I hope you enjoy reading the third edition of the STADA Health Report.

Sincerely,



Dr. Matthias Wiedenfels,  
CEO of STADA Arzneimittel AG

## 2. A look back at 2015, starting position, objectives and methodology



Health education is urgently required. This was a key finding of the STADA Health Report 2015. In the second edition of our empirical study, we uncovered frightening gaps in medical knowledge in society. In a nutshell: The STADA Health Report 2015 even revealed dangerous superficial knowledge and an all too careless approach towards the risks of sometimes life-threatening conditions, such as heart attacks or skin cancer. Even chronically ill patients in Germany often do not know enough about their own condition. A further finding: education and gender, and in some cases age, influence health literacy. The first edition of the STADA Health Report 2014 revealed education as a criterion for susceptibility to stress and physical activities.

According to the report, people with a higher level of education suffered more from professional stress and from a lack of exercise than those with a lower level of education. The DKV Report 2015 presented similar results. Here 47 percent of people with basic school level education (up to age 15) admitted not being physically active at all in their free time.<sup>1</sup> The results of all of these studies offer a good approach to targeted education and effective health care, particularly in certain population

groups and educational institutions. This is not only urgently required for economic reasons. Employee absence increased by 0.63 days between 2014 and 2015, adjusted for age. This was published by the Techniker Krankenkasse in its current »Health Report 2016—Health between Work and Family«.<sup>2</sup>

After the STADA Health Report 2014 examined Germans' attitudes, wishes and behavior in terms of their health in the first year of the »All the Best« initiative, last year the report looked at Germans' health knowledge. And this year the study has gone one step further and combined the two aspects: But it is not just about finding the status quo in terms of happiness and health competence, so-called health literacy. It is also about the link between physical health with attitudes, outward appearance and behavior in everyday life—the interaction of body and mind. Furthermore, the STADA Health Report 2016 will examine the motivation or obstacles for certain behavior on this basis. This will allow both targeted interaction between physical and psychological aspects to be uncovered as well as backgrounds and reasons for different behavior, for example at the doctor's or when taking medication, to be identified.

The reasons for this can also be found in the health care system itself. According to the »PWC Healthcare Barometer 2016«, almost half of publicly insured patients complained that the doctor did not spend enough time with them.<sup>3</sup> The importance of the Internet for gathering information is also increasing according to the Barometer, in contrast with the importance of personal contact with a family doctor or friends—even though the family doctor remains the most important source of information according to the PWC Healthcare Barometer. But don't personal aspects such as motivation for prevention and happiness with ourselves play a much more important role in maintaining our health? The STADA Health Report 2016 answers these and other questions.

The external framework conditions for health care are principally good, although there is room for improvement in some areas. According to an assessment by the Robert Koch Institute, spending on prevention and health protection increased continuously between 2008 and 2013.<sup>4</sup> If additional measures from companies, nurseries or schools were added, health care could be further optimized. Because for people who do not take part in sport because they do not have time or are simply lethargic, for example, an exercise offer from their employer after work or at lunchtime could be appealing. In the STADA Health Report 2016 we ask just how high this potential is among non-athletic people, how many people use a lack of time and motivation as justification, and thereby indicate targeted approaches for improvement.

For the Health Report 2016, STADA has been supported once again by Kantar Health, a subsidiary of the TNS Infratest Group in Germany. Market researchers surveyed the German-speaking population in Germany as part of an online study between July 5 and 18, 2016. The sample consisted of 2,000 respondents aged between 18 and 70, representative of gender, region, age and education.

**The general topic »body and mind« was divided into six sections on the questionnaire:**



**»Back pain and treatment«:**  
Frequency, causes, impairments, prevention



**»Attractiveness and self-confidence«:**  
Self-evaluation of own appearance and psychological strain



**»Nutrition and exercise«:**  
Health competence in type 2 diabetes, self-perception, nutritional situation, physical activity



**»Colds and work«:**  
Frequency and self-perception, psychological strain, being ill at work



**»Doctor-patient relationship«:**  
Preferred information sources, trust in doctors



**»Happiness and stress«:**  
Sleep behavior, wishes in terms of increasing happiness, resistance to stress

There is also a further category, which provides interesting figures for comparison with the STADA Health Report 2014:



**»STADA Wellbeing Index«:**  
Happiness and the feeling of overstrain in everyday life

The interaction between body and mind, i.e. between attitudes and motivation and behavior as well as physical impacts, is the overriding focus. Example: How many people very frequently experience back pain? The evaluation then goes into detail and investigates whether these people know the cause of their pain and if they actively try to tackle this pain. At the same time, it could be of interest to find out whether people with long-term back complaints actually do less sport on average than the majority of the population.

1 Zentrum für Gesundheit durch Sport und Bewegung der Deutschen Sporthochschule Köln, Der DKV-Report »Wie gesund lebt Deutschland?« 2015. Köln 2015.  
2 Techniker Krankenkasse (Hrsg.), Gesundheitsreport 2016 – Veröffentlichungen zum Betrieblichen Gesundheitsmanagement der TK, Hamburg 2016.  
3 PricewaterhouseCoopers Aktiengesellschaft Wirtschaftsprüfungsgesellschaft, Healthcare-Barometer April 2016. Frankfurt 2016.  
4 Robert Koch-Institut (Hrsg.), Gesundheit in Deutschland: Gesundheitsberichterstattung des Bundes. Gemeinsam getragen von RKI und Destatis. Berlin 2015.

# Health consu

What body and mind



## Happiness and stress

**26 percent** even feel stressed during leisure time or can only relax on vacation. This is particularly common among 18 to 29-year-olds.

**32 percent** of them find it difficult to say »no«, and the same number set very high standards for themselves.



## Doctor-patient relationship

**51 percent** of Germans do not speak to a doctor first about acute medical symptoms. This is often due to a lack of trust: **63 percent** of Germans get a second opinion following a diagnosis—just **37 percent** say about every diagnosis: »I trust my doctor.«



## Back pain and treatment

**62 percent** of Germans are restricted in their everyday lives by back pain—but the physical strain is often not enough for treatment or prevention.

**One in three** of those affected do not do anything about the pain. The main reasons: No time and no desire to do sport and back exercises.

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## STADA Wellbeing Index

In comparison with 2014, the satisfaction of the population with daily life has decreased by **12 percent**. However, this is not a result of increasing demands: The number of people who feel overstrained by daily life has fallen by **5 percent** in the last two years.



## Colds and work

**68 percent** of Germans suffer from a cold twice a year or more. **65 percent** feel awful as a result or say they must recover at home. And yet: **82 percent** of employees go to work despite having a cold—they have too much to do or do not want to let their colleagues down.



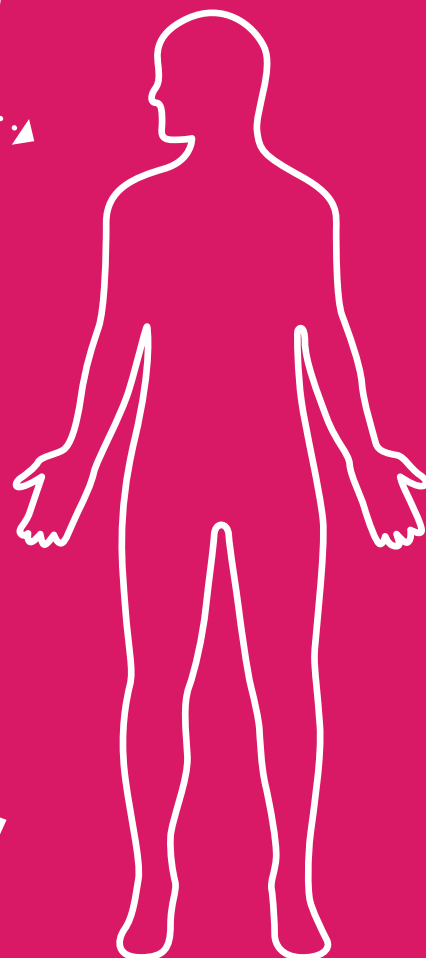
## Nutrition and exercise

**88 percent** believe that a healthy lifestyle is important, but this is not reflected in their behavior: Just **56 percent** make sure they have a healthy diet, even fewer, **42 percent**, do sport every week. They cannot motivate themselves or do not have time.



## Attractiveness and self-confidence

**83 percent** of Germans believe that others find them attractive. However, just **half** are happy with their own appearance. Inner psychological strain means that **45 percent** would take advantage of free cosmetic surgery.



## 3. Summary



### Back pain and treatment

- Back pain has developed into a widespread condition, which causes a high level of psychological strain. **One in three Germans suffer several times a month**, almost half suffer several times a year.
- **A third of people do not do anything** about back pain and do not seek professional support from a doctor.
- The reason for back pain is often a lack of exercise. This cause affects one in three back pain patients. Despite this, **listlessness and lethargy** stop Germans from doing sport or preventing the pain. 28 percent cannot bring themselves to do sport and 30 percent do not want to spend their time in waiting rooms.



### Attractiveness and self-confidence

- **Just 47 percent of women, but 60 percent of men** are happy with their appearance. 63 percent of women, but just 41 percent of men, directly associate their self-satisfaction with their appearance.
- **Half of women would even undergo cosmetic surgery** to change their appearance, or have already undergone surgery.
- Men more strongly associate external attractiveness with **the desire to be well perceived by others**—particularly by the opposite sex. This applies to one in four men.



### Nutrition and exercise

- Overall, more Germans pay attention to healthy nutrition than we might think. **56 percent eat healthily**, women more than men. The main reasons for a healthy lifestyle are: greater balance, the desire to live longer and more attractiveness.
- On the other hand, there is a group of non-athletic people, for whom exercise is out of the question. **Three in ten Germans do not do any sport at all**. Particularly affected: people with a lower level of education and lower income. In addition, people with a high BMI above 30 were on average more likely not to consider sport important. This applies to two thirds of this group. This is true for just half of those of a »normal weight«.
- Over half of Germans, who do sport a maximum of once per week, say that **lethargy and not enough time** are the main reasons for their lack of exercise.



### Colds and work

- **Young people have colds more often than older people**. 84 percent of them suffer once or twice a year or more often, compared with just 53 percent of 60 to 70-year-olds.
- **82 percent of employees go to work despite having a cold**, the main reason for this is a sense of duty. This applies more often for people with a higher income than those who earn less. At less than EUR 1,000 per month, four in ten go to work despite a cold, while this figure is at three in four with income of at least EUR 4,000.
- Further reasons for going to work despite a cold are **fear of the boss** (for one in five Germans) and the feeling of being »indispensable« (for one in eight).





## Doctor-patient relationship

- **Just 49 percent of Germans** usually see their doctor first with acute medical symptoms.
- Following a diagnosis from the doctor, **two in three Germans seek a second opinion**, primarily online.
- **Young people in particular do not trust** physicians. They are more likely than average not to visit the doctor with acute medical symptoms because they believe the doctor will not be able to help them.



## Happiness and stress

- **Over 60 percent of Germans have problems with their sleep;** this particularly applies to those aged 18 to 29.
- Those with a higher income are more likely to be happy with their life than those who earn less. Just nine percent of people with an income of up to EUR 1,000 a month describe themselves as very happy, with at least EUR 3,500 this figure stands at 17 percent, and above EUR 4,000 at 21 percent. **Germans, who consider themselves »very attractive« are the happiest with their own lives:** Almost half (42 percent) of those who find themselves »very attractive« say that they are generally very happy with their lives. There is therefore a clear connection between satisfaction and subjective attractiveness.
- **Leisure stress is increasingly coming into focus.** The phenomenon, currently particularly widespread among the under 30-years-olds, results, among other things, in the feeling of being overstrained in everyday life. This applies to 95 percent of those who feel stressed in their leisure time.



## STADA Wellbeing Index

- Subjective wellbeing in the population has **declined by twelve percent in the last two years.**
- **Young people under 30**, women, single people and people in socially weak regions in particular are **generally less happy with their lives** than they were two years ago.
- In contrast, **older people over the age of 40 feel less overstrained** in their everyday lives than two years ago.

## 4. Double interview: »The link between body and mind is a key topic«



*Dr. Johannes Wimmer works as a doctor at the University Hospital Hamburg-Eppendorf. It was quickly clear to him that he wanted to go public, primarily to achieve one thing: an improvement in doctor-patient communication. In*

*November 2015 he published his first book, »Fragen Sie Dr. Johannes« [Ask Dr. Johannes], the second book »Alles über die Haut« [All about skin], was released in April 2016 and reached the SPIEGEL bestseller list. Dr. Wimmer has his own television show on the NDR channel in Germany (»Wissen ist die beste Medizin« [Knowledge is the best medicine]) and gives presentations at health policy congresses and conferences.*



*Dr. Eva Wlodarek is a psychologist, coach and bestselling author. She wrote her thesis on the subject of »happiness«. In addition to many years of work as a psychotherapist, for over 20 years she was the consultant psychologist for the magazine »Brigitte«.*

*Her focus as a coach, author and consultant is on the »development of personal potential«. She published numerous guidebooks on self-confidence and positive aura, most recently »Jeder Mensch hat Charisma. Lassen Sie Ihre Persönlichkeit leuchten« [Everyone has charisma. Let your personality shine through]. She is in demand in the media as an expert and has worked in diverse TV formats.*

### What do body and mind have to tell each other?

*Dr. Wimmer:* The link between body and mind is a key topic. In the emergency room I have seen that ever more acute physical symptoms are caused or worsened by the mind—for example in the form of anxiety. There are also many chronic illnesses, which have been proven to be strongly linked with the mind. For example psoriasis, which is often caused by increased stress.

*Dr. Wlodarek:* Fortunately medicine and psychology now know about these interactions. For many centuries the body and the soul, or mind, were seen as separate. However, the two belong together and influence each other. Sometimes one speaks, sometimes the other. Attitudes and feelings have an effect on the body. The placebo effect is a clear example of this. But physical processes can also influence the mind and soul, for example by causing depression.

### Which results of the STADA Health Report 2016 did you find most surprising?

*Dr. Wimmer:* I had not expected many of the results to be so high. The frequency of back pain is huge, just as the fact that so many people do not do anything about it. That 61 percent believe they are too fat or that 82 percent go to work despite having a cold are also shocking insights into the health, or rather illness, of Germans.

*Dr. Wlodarek:* I agree. I was surprised that one in three Germans regularly suffer from back pain. I am also alarmed by the fact that 50 percent of women would go under the knife for cosmetic surgery.

**From surprises to expectations:  
Which results did you see coming?**

*Dr. Wlodarek:* The results related to differences between the sexes. Women bow down to social pressure more than men and are more focused on outer appearances. The traditional belief that »a woman must be beautiful« continues to apply. This can be explained and was also expected, but is still disappointing. We live in times, in which appearance plays a big role.

*Dr. Wimmer:* I am not surprised that so many people seek a second opinion after visiting the doctor. At a time, when it is so easy to access a wealth of information with just a few clicks, this is the logical consequence. I had therefore also expected significantly more people to consult the Internet before their doctor.

**Young people avoid seeing the doctor far more often than older people. How would you explain that?**

*Dr. Wlodarek:* Young people are used to looking for information online. In addition, there they find other people who are also affected and who can answer their questions, and feel they are understood. The exchange generates a sense of community, which we don't get if we as individuals go to the doctor. Furthermore, on the Internet we can also find doctors, who explain even complicated issues in a simple way, like Dr. Wimmer. Unfortunately, many doctors are not successful in this. There is a need to catch up.

*Dr. Wimmer:* The young generation has greater trust in the body's »self-healing powers«. But generally they simply do not have time to go to the doctor. This is also shown by figures for »leisure stress«. In fact, doctors must adapt to social change, but this is not happening. A practice has fixed opening hours. If the practice is closed, then it is closed. But the Internet is always open. Dr. Wlodarek is right: There are some reputable medical information platforms online—but on the whole there are still far too few.

**The STADA Health Report 2016 also showed that some Germans value their financial situation more than their health. What does this mean?**

*Dr. Wimmer:* I think that is relatively normal. Money simply suggests more security for the future than health, because

money is a calculable amount. In contrast, health is not easily quantifiable and the value of health cannot be measured – particularly not for someone who is healthy.

*Dr. Wlodarek:* That is true. We value our health most when we no longer have it. For healthy people, money is a symbol of health, a zest for life and freedom: We have no financial concerns, can go on vacation and do not have to take on work we do not enjoy.

**What about physical activity? Some people know that they are overweight, but do not take enough exercise. People with back pain also struggle with sport, although it would do them good.**

*Dr. Wlodarek:* That has less to do with laziness or lethargy than we might think. It is down to the powerful force of habit. Our brains are programmed to keep everything as simple as possible and to reward low effort with the release of happy hormones. A new habit must therefore first be painstakingly trained. However, the transition period is limited. If you can keep up your sports program every day for three weeks, your body and mind adapt. Then it will be easy for you and you will not want to go without it.

*Dr. Wimmer:* Alongside the discussed habits, time also has a role to play: There are many things that people find more important than exercise. Back pain or being overweight are tolerated until they are no longer bearable. Before then friends, private appointments and work have priority. In addition, many people have still not grasped how important exercise is for physical and mental health. In order to cement this understanding, we need a cultural change, supported by schools, employers and doctors.

## 5. Analyses and results



### 5.1 Back pain and treatment

#### Too few people prevent back pain

Back pain is quite rightly regarded as a widespread condition. According to the »Health Report 2016—Health between Work and Family« of the Techniker Krankenkasse, muscle-skeletal disorders and connective tissue diseases are the second most common diagnosis in sick notes for employees. For the »Health in Germany 2015« assessment, the Robert Koch Institute analyzed figures from the AOK health insurance company from 2013, which should however still be largely up to date. This showed that muscle-skeletal disorders and connective tissue diseases were responsible for the most absence at work.

According to the STADA Health Report 2016, one in three Germans suffer from back pain several times a month, almost half suffer several times a year. Just seven percent of the population never have such problems. Those aged 50 to 59 and people with a low to medium income were most likely to suffer from back pain. Noteworthy: Women suffer with back pain more often than men.

But what are the causes of back pain? Respondents of the STADA Health Report 2016 stated tense muscles as the most common cause. One in three also complained about a lack of exercise, for example as a result of sitting down at work. This actually represents a larger problem than greater physical strain, for example in a job in the construction industry. Physical overstrain was indicated by five percent fewer people as the cause of their pain than sitting for too long at work.

Frequent back pain increases psychological strain: 30 percent sleep badly as a result, one in five avoid certain leisure activities. And yet: One third of Germans do not do anything about back pain. Simple exercises could be carried out in

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Three in ten people do not treat or prevent back pain.



the workplace. It was also indicated that less sport results in more back pain. Young people aged between 18 and 29 in particular play with their health—in the hope the pain will go away by itself. Those affected say their main reason for not seeking treatment and prevention is listlessness and a lack of trust in forms of treatment.

In figures: 28 percent cannot bring themselves to do sport, 30 percent do not want to spend their valuable time in waiting rooms and 24 percent do not believe that a certain form of treatment will have a long-term effect.

One in twelve Germans do not know the causes of their back pain and do not do anything about it. Most of those affected, 35 percent, rely on old household remedies such as heat rubs and hot water bottles as well as on over the counter medication such as ibuprofen and paracetamol (24 percent).

»Many types of back pain could be prevented. That so many people cannot bring themselves to take exercise or do sport is understandable, but still frightening. As long as they are healthy, they likely underestimate the consequences that back pain can have on the body and mind in the long-term.«

Dr. med. Johannes Wimmer



## 5.2 Attractiveness and self-confidence

### Women: Self-confidence through attractiveness

83 percent of Germans think that people they know consider them »quite attractive«, »attractive« or even »very attractive«. Self-confidence is very different: Just 53 percent of Germans are »happy« or »very happy« with their own appearance. This extreme self-criticism is particularly common among women. Just 47 percent of them are happy with their own appearance, although 84 percent believe they are positively perceived by people they know.

This differs for men: 82 percent of men believe that people they know would put them on a scale between »quite attractive« and »very attractive«—slightly lower than for women. On the other hand, 60 percent of men are happy with their appearance—significantly more than their female counterparts. Women continue to put themselves under pressure to meet with the ideal appear-

## How attractive do Germans find themselves? Big discrepancy between self-perception and how we think others perceive us.



**84%** of women believe that other people find them attractive.

**82%** of men believe that other people find them attractive.

ance expected by society. Meanwhile, just 13 percent say: »I do not find myself particularly attractive, but I am happy.«

People who consider themselves »far too fat« also put themselves under pressure. This applies to 62 percent of those affected. However, the STADA Health Report 2016 provides little indication that body image has an impact on a healthier lifestyle. People who think they are too fat pay less attention to healthy nutrition or regular sport than those who think they are »just right«. A lack of self-confidence clearly also causes lethargy, which tends to increase psychological strain—a vicious circle.

### One in two women would go under the knife

Unhappiness with our appearance often results in wanting to change the reflection in the mirror by any means necessary. The

53%

of Germans are happy with their  
own appearance.

51%

of women are prepared to undergo  
cosmetic surgery.

13%

do not find themselves  
attractive, but are happy.

question of whether they would go to a renowned cosmetic surgeon, without having to pay a penny, or had already had cosmetic surgery, was answered positively by 45 percent. Willingness to go under the knife decreases with age. But it is still significantly higher among women at 51 percent than men (38 percent).

Why is this? Many people base their self-confidence directly on their outer appearance—this applies to women in particular. In figures, 63 percent of women and 41 percent of men admitted this. For men, the desire to be attractive is often because they want to please others: This »flirt effect« applies to 25 percent of men but just 17 percent of women.

»The big discrepancy between happiness with appearance and how attractive we feel can be explained psychologically. We might think that positive feedback in terms of attractiveness would have a positive impact on self-perception, but this is not necessarily the case. We develop our self-image early and it can be persistent. People who are particularly self-critical tend to interpret compliments as deception and think: »They are only saying that because they like me.« Instead, we orient ourselves towards unachievable ideals from the media, although many do not know or forget that this is often retouched beauty. Because outer appearance is so important to women, unhappiness is preprogrammed.«

Dr. Eva Wlodarek



### 5.3 Nutrition and exercise

#### Non-athletic people versus nutrition experts

Too fat or too thin? Are we obsessed with being thin? Just one in three Germans believe they are »just right«, 61 percent think they are »much too fat« or »slightly too fat«.

#### Many Germans think they are too fat—but do not do anything about it.



Surprisingly, there are few significant differences between men and women. Overall, Germans are more health-conscious than we often assume. The majority, a total of 56 percent, »generally« or »always« pay attention to healthy nutrition: Women more than men, however employed people more than the unemployed. If we describe the typical representative of healthy nutrition, they would be female, aged 60 to 70, retired and educated. They shop at markets and the booming organic supermarkets and pay attention to a healthy lifestyle.

Overall, one in two women generally pay attention to healthy nutrition, compared with just 40 percent of men. The subjects of being overweight and ideal weight are important for Germans: At the same time, just nine percent of Germans answered »I have never been on a diet«. Conversely, this means that 91 percent of those surveyed have already completed at least one diet; projected across the entire population of the approximately 57 million people aged between 18 and 70, this amounts to 51.9 million Germans. Women go on diets more often than men.

### No fear of diabetes despite being overweight

Many Germans actively concern themselves with their nutrition, partially for health reasons, however the already discussed desire to be attractive also has a part to play. The fear of the consequences of an unhealthy diet is also an important aspect.

The STADA Health Report 2015 on Germans' health knowledge brought to light a huge lack of knowledge of the dangers of diabetes. At that time, 84 percent did not know about the consequences of type 2 diabetes mellitus. However, the same study showed that one in three were scared of developing diabetes, while one in twelve already have the condition.

87 percent of all people with a BMI over 30 know that being overweight can cause diabetes. At this level, doctors generally diagnose obesity. In spite of this, 30 percent of this group have no concerns about developing diabetes—a value that is still much too high. The majority of Germans now know the risk factors for developing type 2 diabetes: 74 percent know about being overweight, 65 percent about nutrition, 53 percent about a lack of exercise. And one in three know that predisposition also plays a role. All of these values are encouraging, however there is room for further education.

A balanced diet is undoubtedly part of an overall healthy lifestyle. But what else contributes towards health? Why do Germans want to live a healthy life? The most common answers are: »Because then I will feel better in general, for example more balanced and less stressed« and »because I want to be fit«. For 32 percent, a further reason is an increased feeling of attractiveness. People with a higher income tend to live healthily more often in order to simply live longer. 42 percent of people with a net monthly income of over EUR 4,000 said that this was the case. Among the low-wage earners, with an income of less than EUR 1,000, this figure is just 28 percent.

Exercise and sport undoubtedly contribute towards this. However, three in ten Germans are non-athletic and do not do any sport at all. This particularly includes people with a lower level of education, lower income and extremely high BMI as well as people aged between 50 and 59. The main reasons for the lack of sport were classic lethargy

(»I cannot motivate myself« / »It is too much effort«) and a lack of time. Over half of people, who do sport a maximum of once per

week, say that these two aspects are hindrances. 29 percent »do not have time« for more sport. For many of them, this reason also applies if they have to see the doctor as a result of acute symptoms. A lack of time can therefore become an everyday concern, which threatens health.

Overall, a lack of exercise appears to be the cause of being overweight more often than unhealthy nutrition. People with a high BMI between 30 and 34.9 pay more attention to healthy nutrition (48 percent) than regular sport (35 percent). In comparison: Among those of a »normal weight« with a BMI between 18.5 and 25, one in two (50 percent) do sport regularly and 62 percent pay attention to healthy nutrition.

»It is strange: People know that being overweight is a risk factor for diabetes. In spite of this, a third of Germans, who are classified as obese according to their BMI, are not worried about getting diabetes. These people therefore do not pay more attention to healthy nutrition and exercise than the rest of the population. Education must thus clearly be increased here, in order to make people aware of the dangers of diabetes. There is a good reason that diabetes has now become a widespread condition.«

Dr. med. Johannes Wimmer



### 5.4 Colds and work

#### Have a cold? Off to work.

Two in three Germans suffer from a cold at least once or twice a year, 15 percent suffer at least once every quarter. Young people aged between 18 and 29 are particularly susceptible to colds. 84 percent of them suffer once or twice a year or more often, compared with just 53 percent of 60 to 70-year-olds. The older people are, the less likely they are to suffer with a cold. The subjective feeling of suffering from colds more often than other people is generally higher among those with private insurance than those



with statutory health insurance. The belief as to whether a cold is serious or not so serious, also varies. A third of people, including primarily those with a very high income, say »it could be worse«. In contrast, 29 percent require complete rest with a serious cold.

Illnesses of the respiratory system, which includes colds, are traditionally by far the largest cause of sick notes and resulting absence of employees, according to the TK Health Report 2016.

However, as shown by the STADA Health Report 2016: For the majority of Germans (57 percent), a cold is not a reason not to go to work, with this figure at 83 percent among employed people. The higher the income, the higher this statistic. At less than EUR 1,000 a month, this statistic stands at 40 percent, and at over EUR 4,000 at 75 percent. Those surveyed said that the main reasons were a high feeling of responsibility and sense of duty. They do not want to let their colleagues down. Furthermore, 13 percent believe they are »indispensable« in their job.

One in five fear consequences from their employer. This fear decreases with increasing income. However, those who earn more do not necessarily worry less. Although they make time for breaks during the week, they complain more often than average, for example, that they can only truly relax at the weekend and

on vacation. 16 percent of people with a monthly net income of at least EUR 4,000 can only truly relax on vacation. This was only the case for eight percent of those earning less than EUR 1,000.

The STADA Health Report 2016 confirmed that healthy nutrition had a positive impact on physical wellbeing:

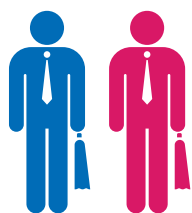
Those who almost never suffer from colds are more likely than average to pay close attention to healthy nutrition compared with the entire population.

»A feeling of responsibility is a great quality. But we should initially apply it to ourselves in terms of health. The attitude »I am irreplaceable« is self-deception, which results in overstrain. The worry of letting down colleagues or the boss is also critical. A different way of thinking is required here: Deciding to step back and relax with a cold does not only speed up recovery, it also shows responsibility towards others. The danger of infection is ultimately a risk for them.«

Dr. Eva Wlodarek

## 82 percent of employees go to work despite having a cold. But why?

(Multiple responses possible)



**47%**

do not want to let their colleagues down.



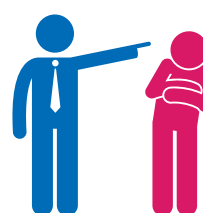
**39%**

simply have too much to do.



**31%**

do not take colds seriously.



**20%**

are scared of their boss.



**13%**

believe they are indispensable.

# 63%

seek a second opinion following  
a diagnosis from their doctor.

# 36%

of 18 to 29-year-olds do not take medication  
as recommended by the doctor.

# 24%

do not go to the doctor with acute symptoms,  
because they do not time or have to  
wait too long for an appointment.

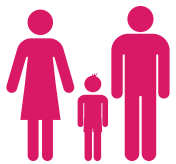


## 5.5 Doctor-patient relationship

### Young Germans are losing trust in doctors

For 49 percent of those surveyed, the doctor is the first point of contact for health problems. The remaining half of Germans seek health information from a different source. 17 percent of those questioned aged between 18 and 70 initially look for advice in

### Where do Germans first seek information about medical symptoms?



11%

family/partner/  
friends



16%

trust  
themselves



1%

Magazines/  
books



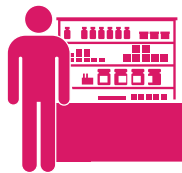
17%

Internet



49%

doctor



6%

pharmacists

Just half of Germans go to the doctor first.  
Young people in particular avoid  
visiting the doctor.



36%

of 18-29-  
year-olds go  
to the doctor.



49%

of 30-39-  
year-olds go  
to the doctor.



50%

of 40-49-  
year-olds go  
to the doctor.



58%

of 50-59-  
year-olds go  
to the doctor.



53%

of 60-70-  
year-olds go  
to the doctor.

online portals. Just six percent first ask pharmacists for an initial assessment. The decreasing trust in doctors can also be observed in another area: Following a diagnosis from their doctor, two in three Germans seek a second opinion. The main source for further information after the visit to the doctor is the Internet, followed by other people, pharmacists and a second doctor. Among the 37 percent, who have complete trust in their doctor, are significantly more men than women. Trust in doctors also increases with age. We could also say: Young people are generally more skeptical towards doctors than older people or simply ask more questions. This is also shown in the »prescription discipline«: 87 percent of 60 to 70-year-olds take medication for acute illnesses exactly as recommended by the doctor. Among 18 to 29-year-olds, this is just 64 percent. Respect for doctors is clearly much greater in older generations. And we can also see here that the general consensus »doctor before the Internet« will change dramatically in the coming years. Because in the generation of »digital natives«, people who have grown up with digital media and are confident in using them, willingness to see the doctor with symptoms is already the lowest: just 36 percent of 18 to 29-year-olds, 53 percent of 60 to 70-year-olds. The »digital natives« generally go to the pharmacy first more often.

What are the reasons for not going to the doctor with acute symptoms? They are very individual. On the one hand, the combination of a long waiting time (13 percent) and lack of time (eleven percent) should be noted. On the other hand, there is also a lack of trust: Eleven percent of Germans believe that the doctor would not be able to help them in most cases. This applies—unsurprisingly—more often to younger people than to the older generation.

»Doctors must adapt. In the age of the Internet society is used to things being simple, fast and comfortable. Hour-long waiting times to see the doctor do not fit with this change. This also applies to practice opening times, which are generally during working hours. Doctors must become more flexible and orient themselves more towards the Internet as an information platform, in order to regain trust and appreciation.«

Dr. med. Johannes Wimmer



## 5.6 Happiness and stress

Social anxieties and illness cause sleepless nights 35 percent of Germans sleep six to seven hours a night. Those who belong to the 37 percent of Germans, who have no problems with sleep, should consider themselves lucky: They fall asleep with no problem and sleep through the night (18 percent), generally do not feel tired during the day (eleven percent) or are immediately awake when the alarm rings (eight percent). Noteworthy: For people aged between 60 and 70 years, as many as 50 percent do not have any problems with sleep. However, one in five feel tired during the day, with more women affected than men. People with a low monthly income below EUR 1,500 generally suffer more from sleep problems than those who earn at least EUR 3,500. Existential worries are therefore a clear cause of sleep problems. Illness is a further cause, as people with chronic symptoms also suffer from sleep problems significantly more often.

### Most Germans would like to have more money

Social difficulties also reflect the need for change. In response to the question »What would you most like to change in your life, if you could?«, one in five wished for more money, particularly people with a low to middle net household income of up to EUR 2,500 per month and particularly men. In these groups, one in four would like to have more money. The wish »to be healthier« was only important for around 20 percent of the population and was therefore almost equal with the need for more money. Finances are therefore just as important as health. 13 percent want more self-confidence. This applies to more women (16 percent) than men (eleven percent). The desire for attractiveness (seven percent), more freedom and more education (six percent each) are equal between the sexes. Twelve percent of people want to be more relaxed.

And did anyone say that they would not change anything because they are already happy? Around one in eight Germans, and more men than women. Furthermore, people with a net household income of over EUR 4,000 are more often »happy« than at any other income level, in 15 percent of cases. So does money make us happy? To a certain extent, yes, as shown by the STADA Health Report 2016. Just nine percent of people with an income of up to EUR 1,000 a month described themselves as happy, at a minimum of EUR 3,500 this figure is 17 percent and above EUR 4,000 as high as 21 percent. The place of residence also plays a key role: People in Berlin are most likely to wish for more money. According to the »Bericht

## If Germans had one wish for their lives, they would choose ...



22 %  
money



21 %  
health



13 %  
self-confidence



12 %  
relaxation



7 %  
attractiveness



6 %  
education



6 %  
leisure time



1 %  
recognition



12 %  
nothing. They are happy.

zur Armutsentwicklung in Deutschland 2016« [Report on poverty development in Germany 2016], published by the Paritätischen Gesamtverband, a group of charities, at 20 percent the poverty rate here was significantly above the national average of 15.4 percent.

People with social difficulties therefore do not sleep as well and are often generally unhappy with their lives. In contrast, money, professional success and social security are the best sleep aids, as trivial as it might seem. Illness is also among the risk factors for insomnia. People suffering from a chronic illness sleep poorly and generally feel more weak and tired on average during the day. This naturally results in the desire to be

healthier, although sport only has a small part to play here. 35 percent of people with chronic conditions do not do any sport, this figure stands at just 30 percent for the rest of the population. Of course: People who are often ill and struggle to move must avoid sport, even if they are highly motivated.

### Being attractive makes us happy

Alongside money, there is one other main factor for a high level of happiness in everyday life: subjective attractiveness. Almost one in two (42 percent) who find themselves »very attractive« said that they were generally very happy with their lives—the top figure in this category. There is therefore a clear connection between happiness and subjective attractiveness. The interpretation of this: Beauty seems to make us happy. Furthermore, it is also interesting to see which groups most often seek social recognition and want to be more confident and more attractive.

This always applies more to women than men, and to people under 40 years of age more than for older people. Alongside an increase in free time, for retired people in particular, age appears to bring a sense of calm. This can also be seen in stress-resistance: While almost half of Germans above the age of 60 only feel stressed rarely, only seven percent of 18 to

29-year-olds gave the same answer. Extremely worrying: One in five in this age group in the professional orientation stage even feel stressed in their leisure time. In contrast, the younger generation are more likely than average to take breaks during the week and to use the weekend to relax (or to want to use the weekend to relax). Stress-perception has clearly changed here: While stress was once primarily associated with professional, outside overstrain, the phenomenon has now reached leisure time.

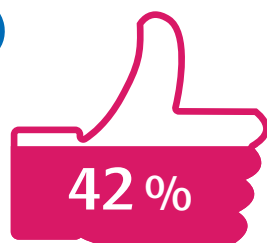
People who have private appointments several times a week after eight hours a day at work might see this as stress, even if they are responsible for their timetable. The term »leisure stress« was first coined in the 1980s. One in five people aged under 40 feel stressed in their leisure time. But just 14 percent of the population, approximately one in seven, say that a too high workload is one of the main reasons. Long-term leisure stress is also a sign of an unhealthy lifestyle: People who are even stressed in their leisure time complain more often than average of being overstrained in day-to-day life. This applies to 95 percent of those who feel stressed in their leisure time.

What are the other reasons for finding too little time for ourselves? 29 percent admit that they prefer to do things themselves, rather than delegate, 28 percent find it difficult to say »no«. In both questions, women, who take their appearance very seriously, were seven and four percent above men. Furthermore, only 28 percent of those surveyed said that they had enough time for themselves. Among those aged between 60 and 70, including a high proportion of retired people, this figure was at 56 percent.

## Beauty makes us happy.



An average of twelve percent of Germans say: »I am very happy with my life.«



Among those people, who find themselves »very attractive«, 42 percent say: »I am very happy with my life.«

»While stress at work cannot always be avoided, we create this stress ourselves during our leisure time. It is no wonder that this particularly applies to young people: They often overestimate themselves, are scared of missing out on something or are under pressure to appear dynamic. In general, too much activity can result in sleep problems, nervousness and ultimately even burnout. One countermeasure is to deliberately allow ourselves time where nothing is planned, and to let ourselves be lazy.«

Dr. Eva Wlodarek



## 5.7 STADA Wellbeing Index

### Subjective wellbeing in Germany has decreased compared with 2014

A look back: In 2014, 85 percent of Germans were happy or very happy with their daily lives. This however does not mean that nothing negative was mentioned. Negatives for German citizens in 2014 particularly included stress at work as the number one health risk, a lack of light and exercise as well as sensitivity to weather and other factors.

How do things look today, two years later? The STADA Wellbeing Index shows that now just 73 percent of Germans are happy to very happy. The (subjective) wellbeing has particularly decreased in the three largest, very different groups: 18 to 29-year-olds (from 86 to 65 percent), women (85 to 71 percent) and single people (78 to 67 percent). 18 to 29-year-olds, the »digital natives«, also identified themselves as very susceptible to colds in the STADA Health Report 2016, said that they had little trust in doctors, are often stressed—including in their leisure time—and are more likely to suffer from sleep problems. Increased stress could also be the main cause of the decreased (subjective) wellbeing. Among women, who according to the STADA Health Report 2016 base a significant portion of their self-confidence on their own attractiveness, the pressure to have the ideal appearance influenced by society appears to have increased. This could explain their decreased (subjective) wellbeing. The value fell particularly

### The STADA Wellbeing Index shows: Germans are increasingly less happy with their own lives.

(In percent)



In 2014, 85% are generally happy.



In 2016, just 73% are generally happy.

dramatically in Berlin (from 84 to 76 percent) and Brandenburg/Mecklenburg-Vorpommern/Saxony Anhalt (89 to 74 percent)—regions with high unemployment and a high risk of poverty.

However, five percent less people feel overstrained by daily life than two years ago (currently 74 percent, compared with 79 percent in 2014). There were greater changes among those aged over 40. They feel significantly less overstrained than two years ago: Just 68 felt overstrained, compared with 75 percent in 2014. There was no change with younger people under the age of 40.

»It is shocking that happiness has fallen by twelve percent within two years. We can only speculate about the reasons for this. It is likely to be linked with political and social circumstances, but this is a highly complex area. Of course, the media have a negative impact on mood with frequent reports of catastrophes.«

Dr. Eva Wlodarek

»Although we cannot definitively explain the fall in the wellbeing index, the report uncovered many other discrepancies between attitudes and motivations, and behavior and physical effects. Some of the well-known common conditions or symptoms such as back pain, stress or diabetes could be better tackled if body and mind were more often in agreement.«

Dr. med. Johannes Wimmer

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