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**Committee:** UNICEF (Junior)

**Country:** Federal Republic of Germany

**Agenda Item(s):** Fighting against social exclusion and child poverty, providing education during emergencies

Germany is located in Central Europe having borders with the countries such as Austria, Belgium, Czechia, Denmark, France, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland and Switzerland. The country is ruled by federal parliamentary republic and 14.8 % of the population lives under the poverty line which means it is an economically strong country.

In the first half of 2020, over 90% of school children worldwide (1.5 billion) were hit by fully or partially closed schools. Nearly two years into the pandemic, school closures still affect almost 50% of the world’s students according to UNESCO. This is also true for Germany. In April 2021, schools of an estimated 10 million children had to be (partially) closed because of the pandemic. Germany has announced €16 Million for the Education Cannot Wait fund (ECW), becoming one of the largest donors to the world’s first dedicated fund for education in emergencies. Expanding on Germany’s commitment to education in crisis and conflict situations, German Development Minister Gerd Müller said, “Education is the key to the development of each person. We must prevent a situation in which generations of children in crisis countries grow up without education, traumatized by violence and without opportunities for a better future. Education creates opportunities and gives people hope – and every child has a right to education. Thus for example, since June 2020, [Germany has been offering financial aid to students](https://www.studying-in-germany.org/germany-provides-interim-financial-aid-for-students-affected-by-pandemic/), including international students who demonstrated that they are experiencing financial distress due to the pandemic. Since then, many students have received €500 grants per month as part of the ministry’s assistance.

Since the unification in 1991 the situation regarding child poverty in both East and West Germany has become serious. Children whose parents are unemployed, children of parents who are paid badly, mainly children of ethnic minorities and children of one parent or divorced families and families with two or more children are affected most by economic and societal change and therefore by child poverty. In Germany, the processes of social exclusion firstly depend on the general economic situation, and secondly on the situation and background of the individual families. The economic troubles of one parent families results from the incompatibility of childcare and work, especially in rural regions where it is problematic to find adequate day care facilities. Therefore, women cannot work full time. Another problem is the number of fathers who do not pay alimony is growing. Thus, the poverty rate of children under 16 years in East Germany, rose from 4,9 per cent in 1990 to 9,3 per cent in 1992 and in West Germany they climbed up to 11,8 per cent. This phenomenon can have serious effects on the situation of children, for example their education and their future chances on labour market. Especially the educational opportunities for children of ethnic minorities, which have always been poor, become even worse. Studies have shown that the health of children in families with low incomes is bad being affected by poor diet, bad day to day habits or psychological stress. In spite of the indifference towards children in political life and the social cuts in child welfare, social work for children has recognised processes of social exclusion for years. Charities, churches and youth organisations call attention to the consequences of social change and welfare cuts for the work with children and the individual development of children at risk. Furthermore, youth organisations especially in areas of social deprivation have developed programs of support for children in families at risk.

We firmly believe that to prevent the social exclusion and educational disadvantage of children with handicaps, behavioural disorders, with problematic learning abilities and with family problems in a region with great economic problems, each and every Member State should be a part of the development plans for those children for the reintegration of them into normal schools and day care centres. They are our future and we should keep in mind that they deserve to have a happy life.