

## Images of childhood and future: cross-cultural perspectives



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[Translate to 2-English:] *"Speculating about the future can be a useful way of assessing the present."* (Arnett 2000)

Two main goals of research on childhood and youth are: to reveal those social structures that affect the quality of children's and young people's lives, and to develop approaches that help to improve their living conditions and future prospects.

In this respect, childhood and adolescence are closely tied to the question of the future, on both an individual and a social level. But how do children and young people look into their future themselves? Which points of reference are important for such a look-out? How do they differ between societies and cultures, and how can they be revealed? Seeking for ways to approach children's and young people's own perspectives, visual data, especially drawings and photographs, have proved particularly useful – in childhood and cross-cultural studies alike.

At the same time, the majority of the world's children in the "Global South" is excluded from most of the research and discourse on children and youth:

*"Most of what is currently known about child development comes from studies of children in the minority developed world"* (Bornstein et al. 2012)

These issues shall be addressed at the conference which serves as a forum for promoting cross-cultural research in childhood and youth, particularly focusing on Europe and Africa. It started in 2016 at the first conference in Winneba (Ghana), bringing together researchers from different European and African countries.

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