



Insta Undisguised – perfect and invulnerable

Frankfurt am Main, 3 April 2019. The German Cosmetic, Toiletry, Perfumery and Detergent Association (IKW) publishes the results of the new youth study “Insta Undisguised – The dream of invulnerability”, conducted by Lönneker & Imdahl rheingold salon.

A life without mobile phone or Instagram? For many young people the mere thought of it is frightening. For some, the idea is even similarly bad as death penalty. 74% of the young people go up to 20 times a day on Instagram. More than one-third spends more than four hours per day on this platform – some even much longer. And 35% of the pupils are online even during school time. Time limits – set by the users or the parents? No chance in most cases. The in-depth psychological-representative study “Insta Undisguised” explains what fascinates young people about Instagram in such a way that they are downright addicted and the influence this has on their development. The result: on Instagram many young people try to install a perfectly controllable dreamworld in which everything is perfect and they are invulnerable.

Many young people have today in many areas of their life a feeling of uncertainty – either caused by separations within the family, radical social changes like the refugee crisis or their own physical change during puberty. The young people have, therefore, developed strategies which counter the perceived loss of control. Ines Imdahl, Director of Studies and Managing Director of Lönneker & Imdahl rheingold salon: “The intense use of Instagram helps young people to regain control in their life. Here they stage an ideal world. It is an escape from the negative and the evil of reality. On Instagram, by contrast, everything is very nice and harmonious.” The boys and girls create a parallel world for themselves, in which they seclude themselves increasingly often. Two-thirds of them like to be on Instagram because it distracts them from everyday life. More than 50% state that they can plunge into a beautiful and ideal world on Instagram.

Favourite topics with which young people deal on Instagram include fashion, sports or lifestyle. This inspires them. In-depth information from society, politics or the business community, about which they would have to think, plays, however, hardly a role. Although the young people are aware that the pictures shown are constructed and staged, they accept them as they are. Only 14% experience photos as artificial. Almost 30% rather perceive them as “well improved”. Only 12% admit that Instagram also

makes them unhappy, since the platform supports a permanent comparison with others.

A topic which the young people like to talk about is, however, the number of their followers. Even if they first pretend not to know the exact number of followers, it turns out rather quickly that in particular the reach of their own account has a high relevance for them. Because the number of followers shows how special one is. And this is decisive for the own self-esteem. Positive comments, hearts and comments in the form of superlatives are not only desired but are absolutely expected in a high number. They make an essential contribution to one's own self discovery which is directly related to the perfection of the posts and the number of followers. 67% of the respondents state that they have more than 100 followers, 36% have even more than 200. These numbers must be constantly increased. "See and be seen" is the motto and the young people feature themselves on Instagram as a matter of course.

For photos to fit into the beautiful world of Instagram, they are optimised before they are posted. People show themselves only from their most attractive side; allegedly ugly pictures are erased. Young people do not want others to see that they might have been fat or differently styled in the past. Emotions and personal stories are avoided in the same way as the entire confrontation with oneself. However, the boys and girls like to show themselves to their followers with mostly standardised poses, which are generally accepted and a perfect makeup or hair styling. In this way they do not run any risk and make themselves invulnerable. More than 60% of the girls state that they are interested in makeup, hair styling or eye makeup on Instagram. For 40% of the boys, hair styling is particularly important.

However, this has hardly to do with superficiality of the youth. For the young people it is rather important to keep the way they are perceived by others under control. Birgit Huber, Head of the Beauty Care Department at IKW: "With this new study we have dealt for the third time with young people and their concerns, desires and dreams. The feeling of uncertainty is growing and young people have their own ways and means to deal with them in our digital world. The control of their appearance by means of cosmetic products is a decisive factor which provides them with self-assurance."

Within the framework of the qualitative polling, group interviews were conducted with altogether 24 young women and men aged between 16 and 22 years. For the representative quantitative survey 1,000 young women and men aged between 14 and 21 years were interviewed.

Note to editors:

Interesting facts are available on the site www.ikw-youthstudy.org.

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About IKW

The German Cosmetic, Toiletry, Perfumery and Detergent Association, with headquarters in Frankfurt am Main, was founded in 1968. It represents the interests of more than 420 companies from the fields of beauty and home care on a national and European level. With sales revenues of more than EUR 18 billion, the member companies cover approximately 95% of the market and employ a workforce of approximately 500,000 people in the value chain.

IKW is the contact partner for its member companies, ministries, public authorities, consumers, institutions and associations as well as for the media as far as scientific, regulatory or business topics are concerned. Experts of the competence partners Beauty Care and Home Care within IKW provide competent answers on questions concerning skin and hair care, beauty and self-esteem as well as hygiene and cleaning. More information on www.ikw.org

About Lönneker & Imdahl rheingold salon

Lönneker & Imdahl rheingold salon combines long-standing depth psychological expert knowledge from moderation, project and process support, research and marketing in an own offering on the market. rheingold salon positions itself "between" the classical offerings of management consulting and market research. Apart from classical, depth psychological and morphological market research, strategies and strategic consulting are offered in the fields of marketing, brand management and development, public relations, business alignment and internal corporate processes, communication and concept development, innovation processes as well as team building.

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