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This is the second part of our IKEA Life at Home Report series, where we explore the life at home of people all over the globe. This time, we have taken a closer look at how people meet and eat in and around the kitchen. The report is based on existing IKEA research, other published studies and a new survey where we have explored the food routines, habits and wishes of people in eight cities - from what we grow to how we store, cook, eat, socialise around food.

At IKEA we have lots of experience, knowledge and insights about people's lives at home from listening to the needs and dreams of our customers. With the Life at Home Report we want to share our insights, raise awareness and interest, spark debate and contribute towards creating a better everyday life.

The data that forms the foundation for this report is a combination of existing IKEA research and a new survey conducted in eight cities in eight different countries. The survey was conducted in cooperation with Swedish business intelligence agency United Minds using online panels in Berlin, London, Moscow, Mumbai, New York, Paris, Shanghai and Stockholm. More than 1,000 respondents in each city adds up to a total of 8,527 respondents among people from 18 to 60 years of age.

The IKEA Life at Home Report is divided into two parts. In the first part we share insights based on our new survey and existing IKEA research, augmented with other reputable and published study findings from experts and opinion leaders from a variety of backgrounds. We've also visited and photographed eight different households in the eight cities

to give a better understanding of what everyday life at home around food can look like. In the second part we encourage you to try our digital tool - the Data Mixing Board - where you can discover interesting connections by mixing the survey's raw data on the life around food.


## Having an organised kitchen isn't all about looks. It's actually the key to eating well. Making simple changes in our kitchens can help us see and eat more of the food inside our cupboards.


the most relaxed about how their kitchens appear to others, whereas Parisians are more concerned about theirs, with one in five feeling uncomfortable or even ashamed of having friends in their kitchen. Basically, we tend to feel most at ease with others in our kitchen when it's tidy and clean.

The good news is that getting them in order has other benefits too. How we organise our kitchens can in fact affect our eating behaviour. According to Brian Wansink, Professor of Behaviour Change and author of "Mindless Eating: Why We Eat More Than We Think", the principle of convenience tells us that, what we eat and how much we eat depends on how convenient it is for us to get to it. In other words, the more we see it, the more likely we'll eat it.

How we organise our kitchens can affect what we eat

Our study reveals that people around the world are more concerned about how their kitchen looks than about the contents of their cupboards and fridges. This may come as no surprise, given the kitchen's central and increasingly open location in our homes. Mumbaikars and Shanghaians are

KITCHEN APPEARANCE MOST IMPORTANT


Question: How would you feel if a friend looked in your kitchen?


food and drink items on a regular basis. These twin products often get pushed to the back of the cupboard and risk being thrown away when they go out of date. The results of our study show that a quarter of urbanites feel bad about the amount of food they throw away. In some cities this feeling is more widespread, like in Shanghai where 4 in 10 feel bad. But in other cities like Paris and Berlin less than 2 in 10 feel bad about the amount of food they throw away each week.


Question: How would you feel if a friend looked in your kitchen?


## Cupboard castaways

Being more mindful of how we organise our food at home doesn't just affect what we put into our bodies, but also what we empty into our bins.
We can all relate to the experience of returning home from the grocery store only to discover that some of the items you bought were already in your cupboard. In fact, one in five households in our study accidentally double up on
1 in 5

Often buy products only to find they already had them at home


## Tidying up our food habits

According to Professor Wansink's research, people make over 200 food-related decisions every day, most of which they can't explain. However, we can have influence over our everyday food choices by making healthy food and drinks easy to see and the not-so-healthy stuff more invisible. Could reorganising our kitchens help us consume more of what we should, rather than what is easiest? Not to mention avoiding buying more than we need or unnecessarily wasting what we buy. Wansink calls this the "see-food" diet - healthy foods up front at eyelevel in the fridge and healthy snacks instead of candy in a clear kitchen counter jar. Or as Japanese tidiness expert Marie Kondo puts it, the key to tidiness is to know where your things are so you use them as much (or as little) as you intended. So, perhaps a little tidying up in our kitchens can help us tidy up our food habits too.

FOOD WASTE ANXIETY


Statement: I feel bad about the amount of food I throw away each week


## Cooking is about more than taste and nutrition. Could it also play a small part in making our everyday lives a little better?



## The eternal quest for more time

There are a multitude of reasons why everyday cooking is a challenge. But what it mostly boils down to for the people in the cities we've studied, is the lack of time. According to our study, Muscovites struggle the most with half of them not finding enough time to cook on weekdays. A lack of everyday inspiration is the second most common challenge. More so in Stockholm and Paris than anywhere else. For Stockholmers, it's almost as big of an issue as time.

HOW OFTEN DO WE COOK AT HOME


## Food for thought

Even though six in ten people in the surveyed cities enjoy cooking a lot, making everyday meals isn't fun for everyone. To those who feel the least confident in the kitchen, cooking on weekdays carries with it feelings of reluctance, boredom and a lack of inspiration. To those with the most kitchen confidence, everyday cooking is a source of fun, inspiration and relaxation. But the really good news is this: our research shows that even when making a meal feels like a chore, everyday cooking can still be positive for your wellbeing.


Question: What feelings best describe how you usually feel when cooking on weekdays?



The kitchen has become an important place for selfexpression. And while that sounds like serious stuff, maybe we should try to embrace a playful attitude towards cooking? Finished meals aren't just a means to an end - it seems like it's also the journey that matters with all the mishaps and small personal victories made along the way. There really seems to be a case for getting around to more of those little kitchen moments as they may well lead to less stress and increased mindfulness.

## "Enjoy cooking a lot"

Scale 0-10, 10: Enjoy very much, 0: Don't enjoy at all. Showing share of answers 7-10


Question: How much would you say you enjoy cooking?


## Bite-sized cooking for the better

People who cook more often on weekdays find their days just as stressful as those who cook less. But there is an upside: those who cook more also enjoy their everyday life a little more.

According to a recent article in the Wall Street Journal, therapists have even started using cooking as a therapy tool since it eases stress, builds self-esteem and curbs negative thinking by focusing the mind on following a recipe.
(LIME IS THE BIGGEST HURDLE
TO EVERYDAY COOKING


Question: What would you say are the biggest barriers for you to cook at home on weekdays?


Scale 0-10, 10: Very confident, 0 : Not confident at all. Showing share of answers 7-10.


Question: How confident do you feel cooking at home?


Inviting kids into the kitchen is a great way for them to learn about food and cooking. But could these culinary lessons also improve teamwork, creativity and build confidence?


Concern for our little ones
Having kids help out in the kitchen can bring up other aspects of parenting, such as being concerned about the best way to do things. And with advice from everyone from nutritionists to celebrity chefs, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. Our study reveals that for parents, keeping kids out of the kitchen has to do with their concern for their kids' needs. "Will they hurt themselves?". "Are they too busy?".


OF PARENTS THINK IT'S IMPORTANT THAT THEIR CHILDREN ARE INVOLVED IN ACTIVITIES AROUND FOOD


[^0] activities? Showing share of answers "Very important" or "Important"

## We want more kids in our kitchens

We've heard it before - involving kids in the kitchen is one of the best ways of building healthy food and eating habits. Provided the food we cook is healthy, of course. As Dr Maya Adam, professor of child health and nutrition at Stanford University puts it: 'by involving kids in the cooking process, they learn to love the foods that will support good health and enjoyment throughout their lifetimes'. This notion is clearly echoed in the results of our eight cities study, which show that 9 in 10 parents involve their children in the activities around food and that a majority think it's an important thing to do. In Berlin and Shanghai, this sentiment is shared by as many as eight in ten parents.

parents involve their children in some way around food



## Participation is everything

The good news is that kids learn and understand a great deal from just doing the little things. And this goes beyond the cooking process; counting by measuring flour but also planning when grocery shopping, getting creative choosing napkin colours or just practicing the teamwork involved in making an everday dinner great.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES AROUND FOOD ON WEEKDAYS plan | Shop | Prepare meals | Clean up



Parents are also worried that it may create too much mess. Mumbaikar and Shanghainese parents are amongst those who feel it's most important that their kids help out with the food, but are also the most anxious about their little ones hurting themselves or simply being too young to start.

CHILDREN'S NEEDS THE MAIN CONCERN FOR PARENTS


Question: What are the main barriers preventing you from involving your child(ren) the activities around food during weekdays? Showing answers for top concerns


As author and family therapist Jesper Juul points out, by taking on real-life responsibilities at home and seeing us being adults, children are essentially practicing being adults. It might actually surprise us what tasks they actually enjoy, like picking their favourite vegetables at the store or scrubbing a greasy stove shiny again.

Berlin parents involve their children in more activities around food than in any other city in our study*; from meal planning and grocery shopping to setting and clearing the table as well as helping out in the kitchen during cooking. The study also shows that they worry less than parents in other cities about the whats and hows of letting their children participate.

Perhaps Berlin can serve as an inspiration? Maybe instead of letting our concerns become an obstacle, we could let curious kids in on the fun around food.


## An important ingredient in any good meal is togetherness. So how do we get the experience of intimacy when gathering around an actual dinner table isn't always possible?



Households today, from Shanghai and Moscow to Stockholm and New York, are finding it difficult to get together over a meal. Our study shows that as many as one in three people living alone wish they could eat together with others more often during weekdays. This sentiment is most common in Berlin where more than 4 in 10 single households long for more together time at home around food.


THE NEW NORMAL?

$36 \%$ never eat in kitchen or dining room during weekdays

## Longing for more together time

Food and drink are central to our traditions. In our previous Life at Home Report we found that for all the focus on the tradition of dinner, breakfast is often overlooked as an opportunity to spend time together. This year we've had a look at how togetherness is created beyond the dinner table. After all, research by Cornell University has proven that it's the bonding time with friends and family that's important - not where and how we choose to share a meal.

LONGING FOR MORE TOGETHER TIME Want to eat together with others more often


Question: If you think about how often you eat together at home with the people you live with on weekdays: Which of the following statements best describe how you feel about it?



## Modern traditions

Our study shows that the kitchen has become a place for any and every home activity, and meals have broken free from their traditional domain and migrated to other places - the sofa, bed, floor or desk. Although this behaviour is more common for younger folks, it's clearly a global trend. A majority of people today have their meals outside the kitchen or dining room once or several times every week. In some cities these new traditions are especially evident - 54\% of all Berliners don't eat in their kitchens at all on weekdays. In other parts of the world however, the dinner table is still the undisputed social epicenter - 6 of 10 Moscovites always eat here during weekdays.

[^1]

Never eat in kitchen or dining room during weekdays



Families face the same challenges. Nearly a quarter of couples with children feel they aren't eating together as often as they would like, and for one out of ten parents that brings a feeling of guilt. Trying to stick to traditions of the past can add extra pressure. This is particularly true for single parents who are most likely to feel guilty over the fact that they're not eating together with their family often enough.

However, it's not only time and distance that stand in the way of us getting together. Our expectations on what eating at home should be like is another obstacle. A quarter of people living alone in Paris feel that the size of their home is a major barrier to having people over.


Our new traditions are changing where, how and when we eat. The good news is that the benefits we get from eating together can be had anywhere, whether it be a sofa dinner, a window sill date or even sharing that dish you made in solitude with your friends via social media. BBC chef Andy Bates urges us to build our own traditions around family and food: "And I mean family in the broadest sense - housemates, couples, friends, whatever your group is." The recipe for togetherness might not be so complicated after all.


[^2]

## Making a meal with others is an excellent opportunity to bond and practice good teamwork.

 What can we learn about ourselves from cooking with others?

## Gender equality in the kitchen

In Stockholm, Shanghai and New York men and women feel equally confident around the stove. And among young adults under 30 years old in New York, men have more kitchen confidence than women on average. This may be an encouraging sign of growing equality and shared responsibilities at home.

MALE AND FEMALE CONFIDENCE IN THE KITCHEN


Question: How confident do you feel cooking at home?

## Personalities in the mix

Like any other group activity, cooking with others is an excellent opportunity for us to hone our social skills. Not to mention learn new things about ourselves. A majority of metropolitans in our study cherish spending time in the kitchen with friends, partners or children. As many as one in five say it's a favourite thing to do. Mumbaikars value togetherness around the stove most highly, where one in three say it's one of their favourite ways of spending time with other people. The French mindset, however, is a bit different from that of other urbanites. Parisians are more focused on cooking time as me-time, as almost a third of them prefer to cook by themselves.
52\%

ENJOY COOKING WITH OTHERS A LOT Scale $0-10,10$, Enjoy very much, $0:$ Don't thjoy at all.


Question: How much would you say you enjoy cooking together with others?

they have learnt things about themselves through cooking with others. This experience is shared by as many as a third of all Mumbaikars. Learning to work together in the kitchen can be a great way to get to know ourselves and others better, through things like problem solving. Margaret Paul,


Question: Think about cooking together with others. Which of the following statements describe what that's like for you? Kitchen confidence, Scale 0-10. 10: Very confident, 0 : Not confident at all. Most confident: 7-10, Least confident: 0-3


## Learning by doing

When cooking together we get to see other people's points of view and feel the joy of reaching a goal together, which boosts our confidence. And according to research from UCLA, we're not only creating a happy experience out of what could be a chore, we're also setting the stage for more productive conversations with each other in the future. However, our study tells us that the most confident cooks, are actually more likely to feel a little stressed when letting other people join in. On the other hand, some recognise that

## 16\%

I have learnt things about myself that became more evident while cooking with others


Question: Think about cooking together with others. Which of the following statements describe what it's like for you?


Ph.D. and bestselling author and relationship expert thinks so, and claims that cooking together 'tests your communication, as well as your ability to collaborate and compromise.' In the end, even if the food doesn't turn out exactly as planned (does it ever?), maybe there's something we can all gain from the time spent together and learn about ourselves and others by cooking togehter.


As it turns out, you should thank your parents for insisting that you try and taste everything on your plate. Let's find out how our childhood food memories influence the way we eat as grown-ups.

be more influenced by our past food habits and experiences than we realise. For example, those who remember themselves as being picky with food as a child turn out to be more bored with their weekday meals than others. A third of them even admit to dismissing foods they never actually tried. And yet as many as 6 in 10 of these very same people wished they would try more new types of foods.

"I ENJOY TRYING NEW TYPES OF FOODS A LOT"


Question: How much would you say you enjoy trying new types of food?

## What do you want to eat when you grow up?

Hopefully, most of us have fond childhood memories of our family meals. Do these moments influence us as we grow up and leave our parents' kitchens? According to Professor Tim Jacob, from Cardiff University's School of Biosciences, our preferences for food do indeed seem to stay with us. Our own study supports this and points to the fact that we may actually

"I'M BORED WITH THE FOOD I EAT AT HOME ON WEEKDAYS"


Question: Which of the following statements do you agree with?


a default morning meal. Even dinners across the globe seem to leave plenty of room for more variation, seeing that four in ten of urban dwellers eat the same dish several nights a week. In Moscow and Mumbai, more than fifty percent eat the same meals more than once a week. And one in five in Stockholm, New York and Moscow admit that they are bored with what they eat on weekdays.


Question: Please think about the meals you typically eat Monday to Friday - which of the following statements best describes your breakfast/dinner.


## It's good for you

They say variety is the spice of life. It can also be the key to a healthy diet. At least according to the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, which urges us to 'try new recipes' and to 'explore the produce aisle and choose something new'. And as many as 7 in 10 in our study enjoy trying new types of food a lot. But the weekday grind often means that our menus remain mostly the same. This is especially true for breakfasts, as more than half of our metropolitans start their days with

## " I WANT TO TRY NEW FOODS MORE OFTEN"



22\%
"There are foods I say I don't like even though I have never tried them..."
Question: Which of the following statements do you agree with?


## Go ahead, try something new

Are we turning down new food and experiences out of habit rather than choice? It turns out that metropolitans who manage to vary what they put on their plate from day to day do enjoy their weekdays a little more. Maybe if we realised that our childhood food memories might be getting in the way of us trying new foods, we could get out of our comfort zone, be more curious and put a little more excitement into our week.


## 1 in 4

say they were picky with food as a child


Growing our own food is about much more than saving money. But could it actually make life at home happier?


## The puzzle of growing green

It is said that nature always finds a way. But our study shows that the barriers for growing in cities are many. Even among those who don't grow plants at home, almost half say it's something they would like to do. Although time pressure is a constant in urban life and some undoubtedly lack green


## Inviting nature in

To some, growing is a hobby or a pastime. And according to our study, metropolitans have many reasons for growing: for fun, to decorate their homes and to have fresh produce available when they cook are some of the most stated ones. Others see growing as a way of inviting living things into their homes. In fact, six in ten of all people acrosss the cities in our study are bringing nature into their urban homes and neighbourhoods. Gardening in this general sense is most widely rooted in Shanghai where three quarters grow something at home. Decorative plants and flowers are the norm in Shanghai and Mumbai. New Yorkers are just as likely to grow vegetables as flowers.

## 6 in 10 <br> GROW SOMETHING



Question: Do you grow any of the following?



## Benefits of growing

Even if there are challenges to growing greenery at home, we can all benefit from many different aspects of growing - from simply caring for something to eating what we've grown. Whether it's the satisfaction of eating something home grown or just the sheer fun of seeing something you've planted thrive, city growers actually claim that they enjoy their weekdays more than others. And they say this even as our study* shows us that their days are just as stressful as those of the people that don't grow something at home.

thumbs, the main challenge to urban growing is finding the right space. Not everyone has a balcony, which is where most home gardening takes place. Nor does everyone live in a climate that allows them to grow outside their window. But it turns out that growing even the most simple of herbs at home could be almost as satisfying as having your own garden.

MAIN BARRIERS TO GROWING AT HOME


Question: Why don't you grow plants, vegetables, fruits or herbs at home?


PLACES WE GROW IN THE CITY


Question: Where do you grow?


## Eating together is arguably one of the best ways to bond with others. How is social media creating new ways for us to connect through food?


whether it's pictures of someone's "ordinary" breakfast, new exotic recipes or celebrity chefs on YouTube, more than six in ten have looked for food inspiration online. In other words, the breakfast picture you tweeted this morning, might well be someone elses inspiration for their breakfast tomorrow.

For some, however, it can feel like these devices are getting in the way of connecting with others when eating together, rather than a way of inviting more people to the table. Our study* shows that as many as three in four Berliners find it annoying when people use social media whilst eating together and one in ten even say they don't allow them at all during mealtimes. All in all, one third of people across the cities in our study would actually prefer it if no-one was allowed to use social media when eating together.

## Digital food: distracting or delightful?

For many of us, smartphones and social media have become an integral part of our weekday, not least around food and eating. We love to share our recipes and our accomplishments in the kitchen via our social networks. And whilst not everyone has embraced sharing their own experiences online, research from the Hartman Group shows that people are exploring what others are creating in social media, far more than they are creating content themselves. According to our own study,

## 6 in 10

EXPLORE
social media about food


Question: What of the following have you done? Explore: search for recipes, look at food pictures for inspiration, watch cooking videos etc. Create: post recipes or pictures of food, blog about food etc.


social media in all cities is actually interacting with friends or family when eating alone by chatting, texting or sending a picture of whatever is on the plate. And for the many people in urban areas living alone, that can mean eating by themselves becomes a little less lonely. So perhaps we should think less of social media as something that gets in the way and see it for what it is: another way for us to connect through food.


## Together alone

Food communicates across continents, cultures and generations. But food in social media doesn't just connect us to people in far away lands. More than anything it allows us to share moments around food with those closest to us The most common use of

## 52\%



Think it's annoying when people use their mobile devices when
eating together


## 1 in 4


young (18-29) people living alone, think social media makes it less lonely to eat alone

Question: Think about how you feel about smartphones and other mobile devices during mealtimes at home Which of the following statements are true for you?

## About the survey

The Data Mixing Board is making the data gathered in the new survey accessible for everyone to create awareness and interest in how people meet and eat in and around the kitchen. It is an interactive tool where users can test their own hypotheses about life at home.

## Scope, method and data collection period

The Data Mixing Board is based on a survey in eight cities around the world; Berlin, London, Moscow, Mumbai, New York, Paris, Shanghai and Stockholm. The survey was conducted between the 5th and 17nd of March 2015 through online panels. The median time to answer the survey was 13 minutes and 53 seconds.

All in all, 8,527 answers were collected, with respondents evenly distributed between cities as described in the table below.

Answers were collected among people living in cities with access to computer, in ages 18-60 years. The results from the survey are valid for this group; they are not to be generalized for the whole population of each city.

From the survey, key questions have been selected to be used as variables in the Data Mixing Board. There are topics described in the Life At Home Report that are not present in the Data Mixing Board. This is due to the necessity of creating a tool which allows the user to do many things while at the same time not being confused by complexity.

## Income variables in the Data Mixing Board

In the Data Mixing Board, it is possible to compare results between different income groups. To make this function meaningful, it is necessary to create spans that are somewhat comparable. This is challenging due to differences in currency, general income levels et cetera.

To make comparisons possible between cities, we have used the Big Mac Index as a benchmark. It is a reliable method since it mirrors the market conditions and the general purchasing power among the general public.

To produce the income span variable, we translated all currencies to USD and defined a general variable. This variable was then divided by the cost of a Big Mac in every country. The upper 25 percent and the lower 25 percent were defined as high and low income, respectively.

## On general differences and similarities between cities

The survey focuses on different aspects of how people meet and eat in and around the kitchen, and shows both interesting differences and similarities between cities. One challenge when assessing differences between countries or demographic groups (e.g. men and women, age groups) is that different groups tend to answer questions slightly different.

If we want to give a picture of all answers together, to find an "average" (in our case meaning the eight cities combined), we need to take precautions against differences between groups. If one group is overrepresented in one city, biases could follow if that group also tends to answer questions in a deviant way.

To assess such group differences, we have analyzed the material using a random forest technique, creating decision trees to find the groups or combination of groups that create the most significant differences for the scale questions assessing "Life happiness". We conclude that differences appear primarily between people with different occupations and living statuses.

When we control for these two demographic factors, we can look at the remaining differences between cities. Clustering the cities in two dimensions, based on how respondents answer the questions about happiness, we can produce a cluster map, showing which cities are more closely related to each other in this sense, and which ones are further apart.

In the Data Mixing Board, it is possible to produce graphs illustrating all cities collapsed into one population. In this view, answers are weighted on occupation and living status to increase comparability.

## On statistical significances

The Data Mixing Board is an exploratory tool, meant to be used for testing hypotheses, while still being interesting and easy to use. It is not possible through the Data Mixing Board to validate statistically significant differences between groups or behaviors. The ultimate reason for this is that the data collection method has been online panels, which do not produce a random sample of responses (meaning that every person in a city would have the same possibility of participating). A random sample is a necessary criterion for drawing conclusions about statistical significance between groups.

IKEA does not take responsibility for any conclusions drawn through the use of the Data Mixing Board.

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[^0]:    Question:How important is it that your children help out in some way with food-related

[^1]:    Only eat in kitchen or dining room during weekdays

[^2]:    Question: What are the main barriers that stop you from eating together
    at home (with the people you live with) on weekdays?

