

# Confirmation Work in Germany



# Evangelical Church in Germany

(Evangelische Kirche in  
Deutschland; EKD)

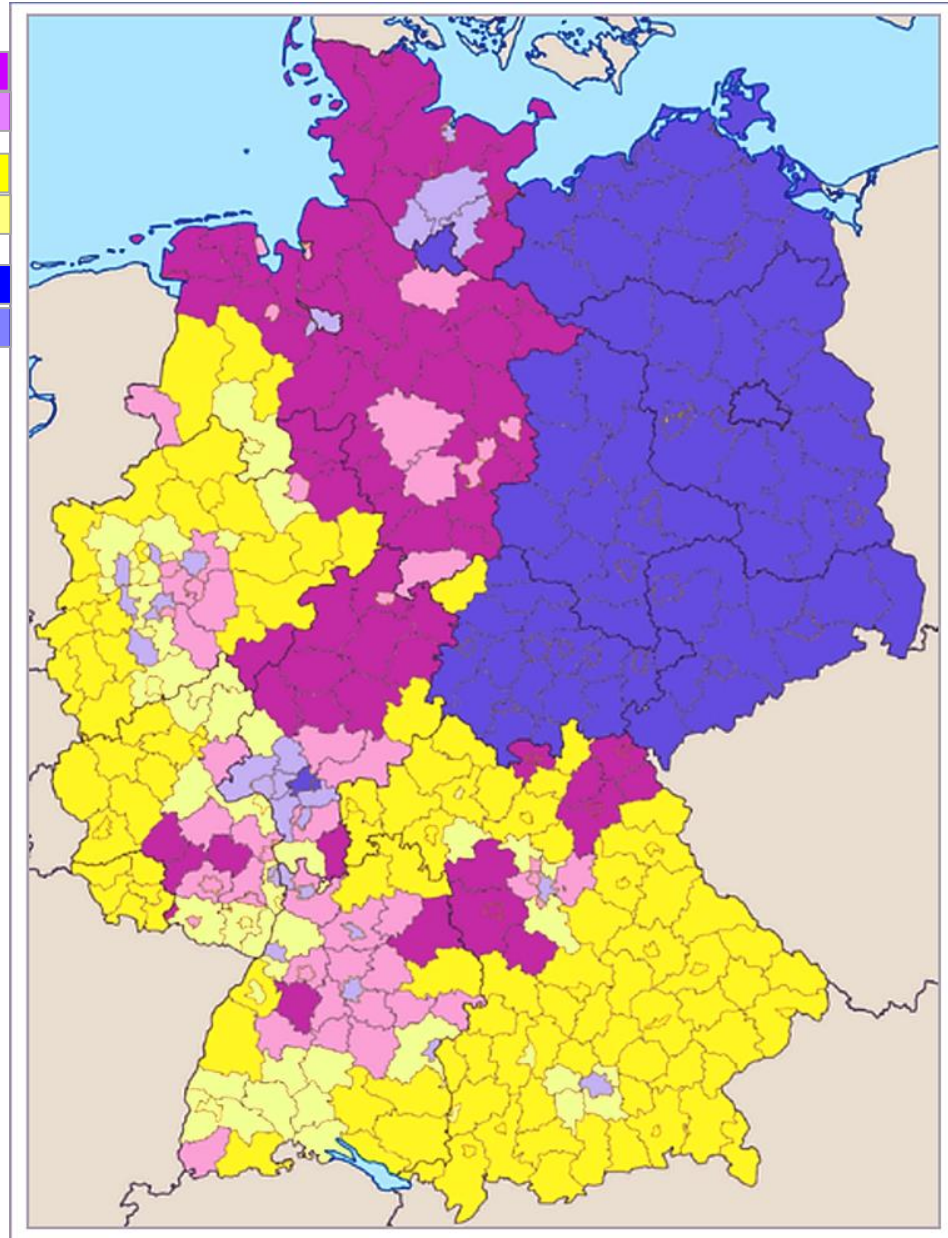
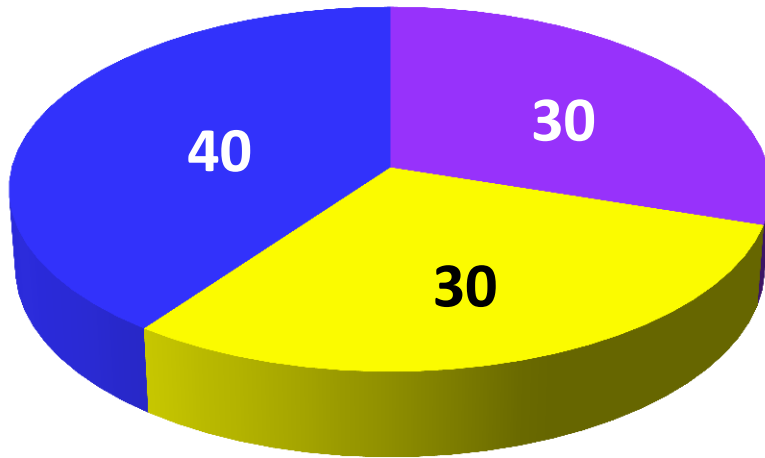
20 Lutheran, Reformed or  
United regional Churches

15.000 parishes

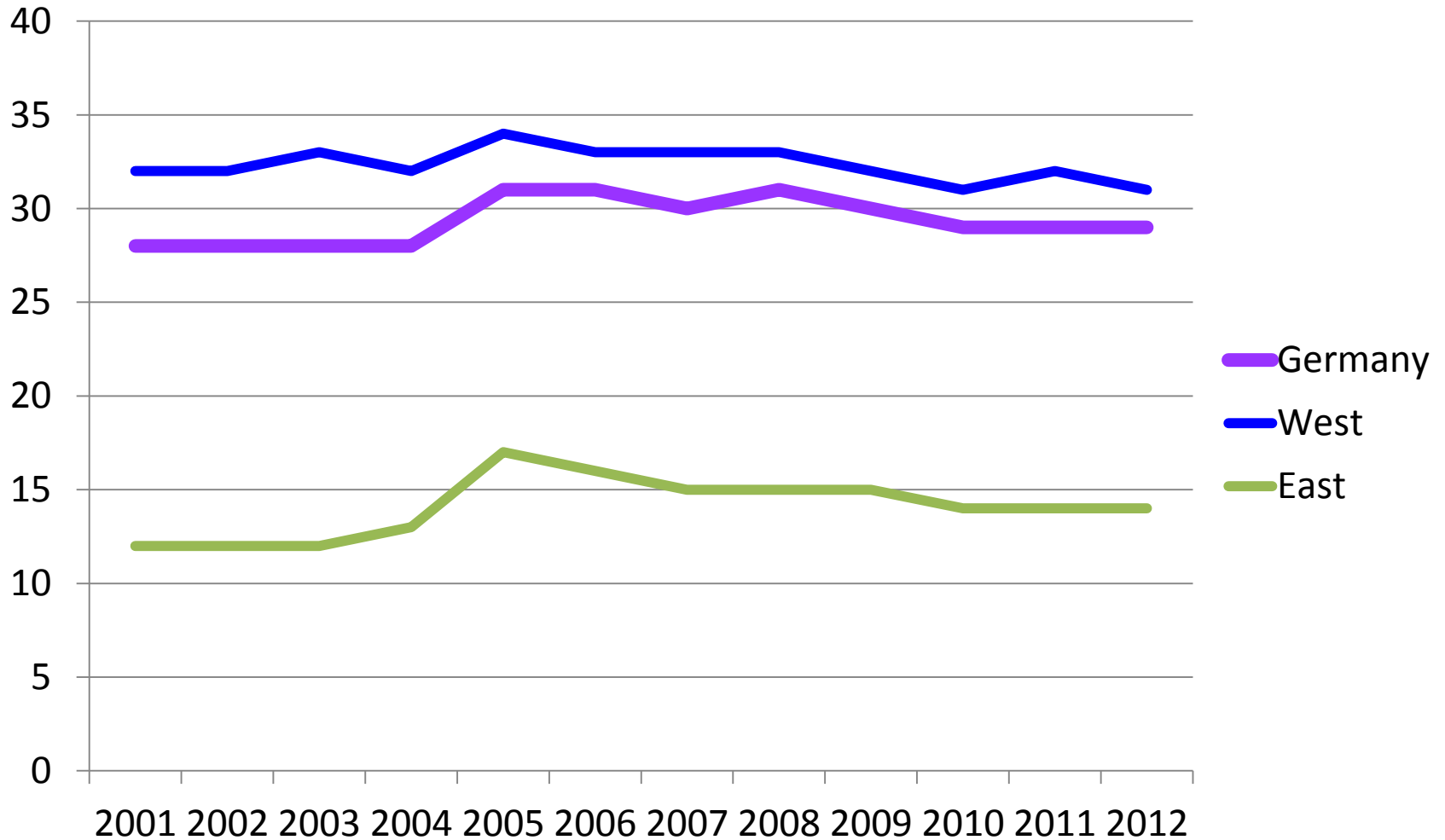
great autonomy



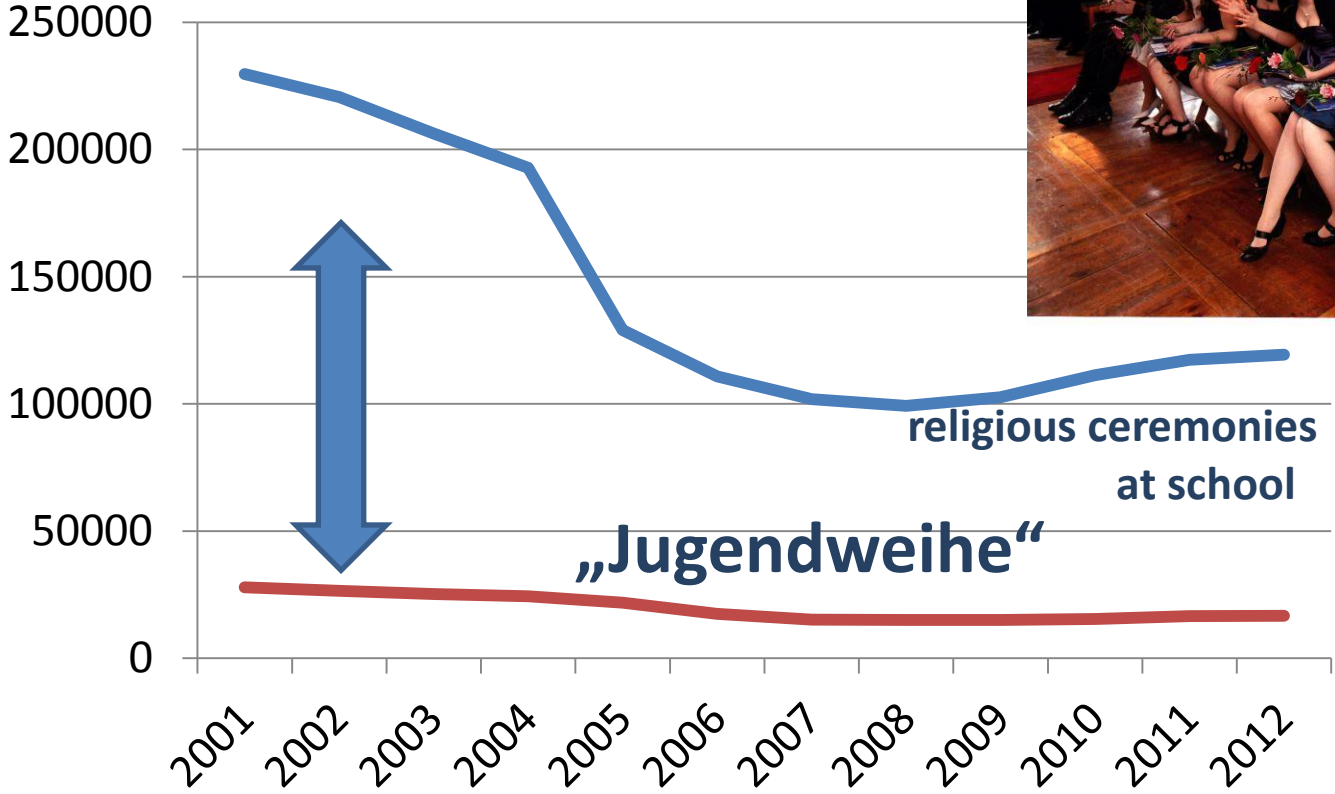
**Protestant**  
**Roman-catholic**  
**Undenominational/  
Non-christian**



# Percentage of confirmands among all 14-year-old germans



# Confirmation work in eastern Germany



# Roman-Catholic equivalents



First Communion (age of 9)  
~ 100% of all baptised



Confirmation (*Firmung*) (age of 15 or 16)  
~ 70% of all baptised



# In some regional Churches: Two stages of confirmation work



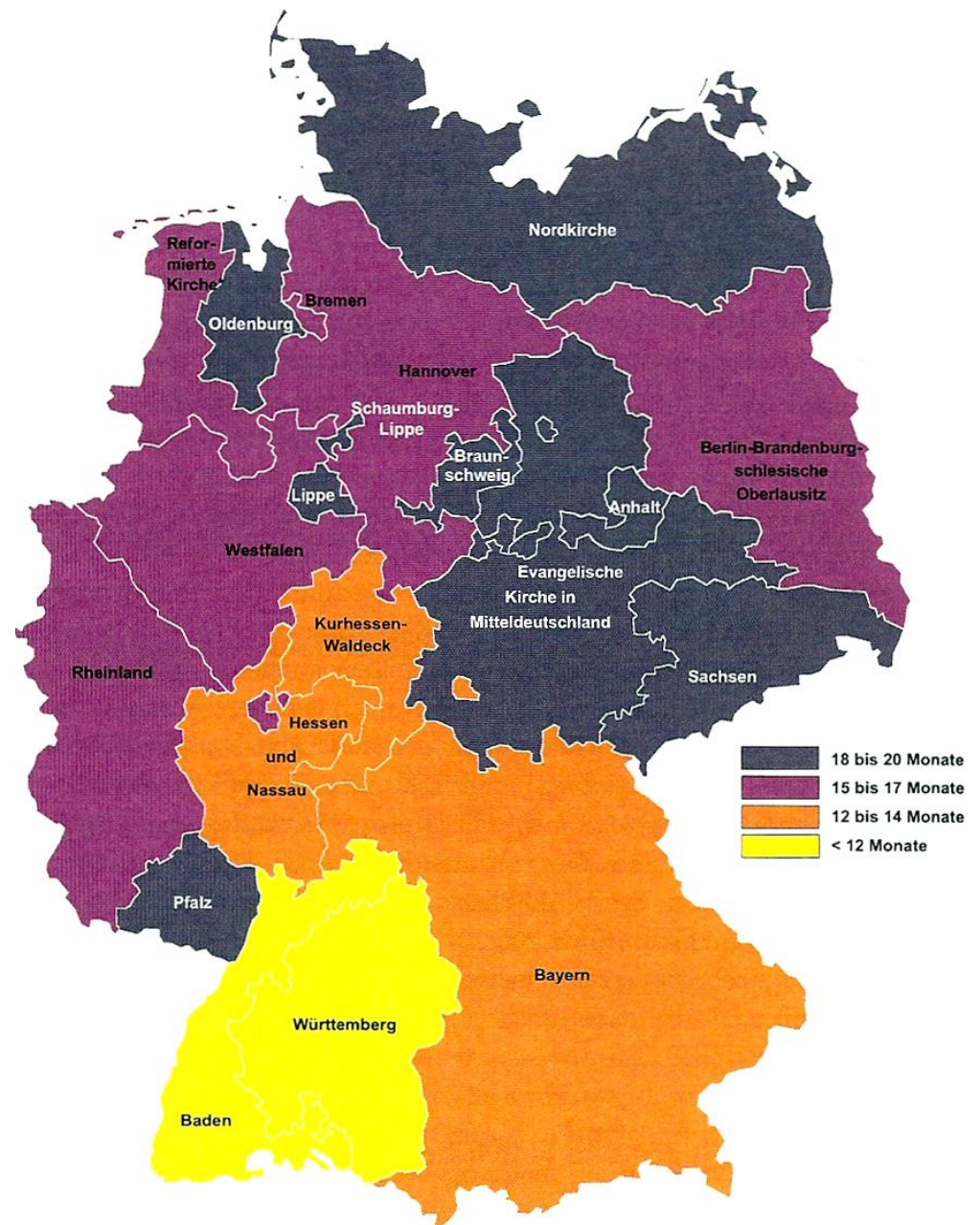
Age of 9 or 10:  
„Konfi-Kids“  
„Konfi 3“



Age of 12 or 13:  
confirmands



Average duration of confirmation classes in Germany:  
15 month





# Organisation

Confirmation classes usually meet	2012/2013	2007/2008
Once a week	59%	70%
Every second week	18%	13%
Once a month	15%	11%

	Average	Range (Local Churches)
Meetings of the whole class	37	23 – 49
Hours of „normal“ training	39	24 – 49
Hours of placement	3	1 – 6
Youth work activities	3	0 – 14
Camps (duration)	2.9 days	2 - 6



# Confirmation Work between Tradition and Everyday life (Lebenswelt) OR From instruction to Confirmation Ministry

Dr. Thomas Ebinger, ptz Stuttgart



**tradition**

**everyday life**

**1998 EKD-  
Reformtext**

**Glauben  
entdecken**

Konfirmandenarbeit  
und Konfirmation  
im Wandel

Eine Orientierungshilfe

EKD

**Switch of focus/  
What do teenagers  
need?**

**Focus on church  
and the social context**

**Orientation on  
experience and relevance**



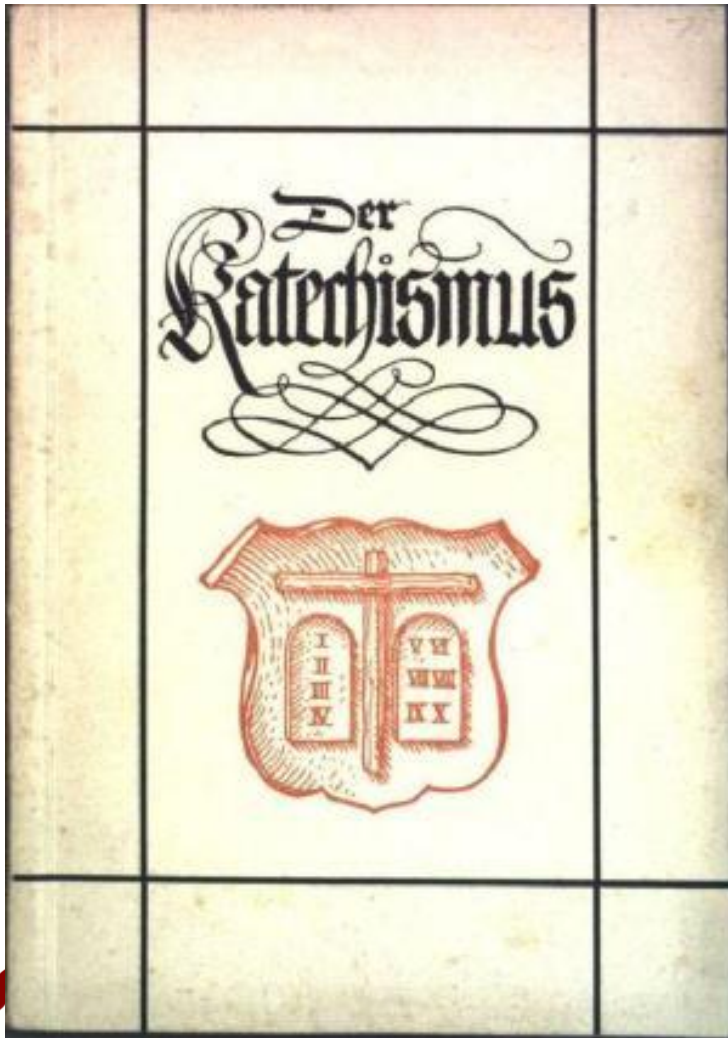
# Main theses of „Glauben entdecken“ (discover belief)

4. The young people do not have much prior knowledge, but elementary religious ideas and experiences are quite present. Religious educational investigations show that religious beliefs or convictions, including a private religious practice, exist in adolescents, **despite the diminishing knowledge about religion**. They ask for meaning and faith. However, these "**elementary experiences and approaches**" (see 3.6) are less likely to be made in an ecclesiastical context with a language shaped by Christian tradition, or even in familiar forms of theology, but rather "**encoded**" in **individual experiences of everyday life**, connected with biographical experiences. This requires the teachers to be curious about what the young people can yield, to listen carefully and to perceive their needs. They have to find out whether and where religion and faith still have a **meaning for the young people's life** and then **tie more to that (dt. "anknüpfen")** . (*Summary theses p. 51ff, emphasis T. E.*)

=> **“Switch of focus/Change of perspective”**



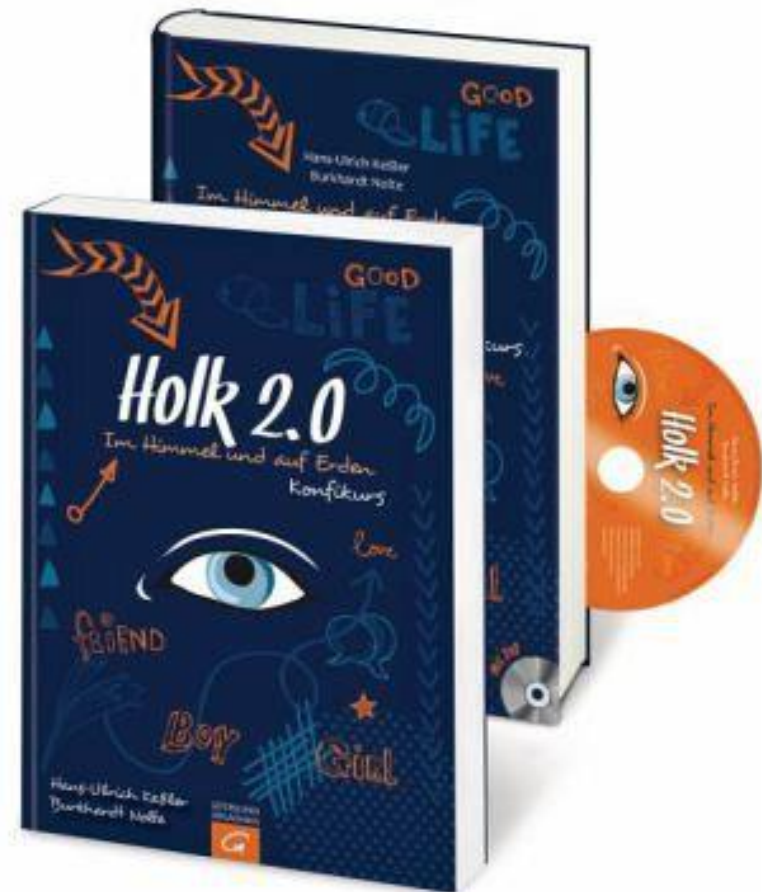
# Farewell to catechism



**Der Katechismus der evangelischen  
Kirche in Württemberg 1937**

# Model of a non-negative (dt. nichtdefizitär) confirmation work

Hans-Ulrich Kessler/Burkhardt Nolte



# Inspiration by and cooperation with Youth Ministry

**Siehe Video Konficamp Bezirk  
Bernhausen 2016**

**<https://youtu.be/WCCZrKOvB7w>**



# Main theses of „Glauben entdecken“ (discover belief)

7. The Confirmands should get to know the church community's life and meet people who live their faith and make an account of it.

(= Church community as a field of learning)

Today, an internship / placement phase is common in many congregations.





# Main theses of „Glauben entdecken“ (discover belief)

- 9. The confirmands are congregation for themselves.
- 10. Confirmation work must be linked to youth work.

Working with young volunteers, Konfi-camps



# New orders for Confirmation Work in the member churches of EKD Here: Rahmenordnung Württemberg 2000

## **APPROPRIATION**

**Children and young people learn to understand the essential content of the biblical message and to relate them to their own life.**

## **OWN POSITION**

**Children and young people find their own point of view and learn to take responsibility in their every day life.**

## **GET HOMELIKE („Beheimatung“)**

**Children and young people experience that they are welcome and acknowledged as church community members.**

## **COMPANY**

**Children and young people are accompanied on their way of Christian faith and encouraged to express their own forms of faith.**



# Changes in comprehension of confirmation



# Confession



# blessing



# community





blessing



community

confession

