



Who speaks ICF?

Implementation of ICF in early childhood intervention centers in Germany

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Abstract Within the last year, the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) has become well-known in early childhood intervention centers (EICs) in Germany. Started in 2016, the "ICF Mapping Project" is a project that aims to systematically review ICF usage in the EICs. We conducted a survey in 2017 and again in July 2018. In this poster, we present the results of the follow-up survey sent to all EICs in Germany (N=1000).

Introduction

Germany passed a new participation law (*Bundesteilhabegesetz*) that declares the use of the ICF as mandatory for rehabilitation and social institutions in Germany starting in 2018. Consequently, there is a push to develop ICF-oriented tools and instruments, and the number of instruments for different purposes is increasing. In 2016 the ICF Research Institute (IRIs) at MSH Medical School Hamburg started a project "ICF Mapping" with the primary objective of exploring the status of ICF use in all EICs in Germany as well as the learning/training needs of the EIC professionals.

Methods & Materials

The results of a first survey (in 2017) was presented at the 2017 WHO-FIC Annual Meeting. A follow-up survey took place online in July 2018 using the same questionnaire as in 2017 with only one additional question addressing the use of newly developed needs assessments. We sent the link to the online survey to the heads of all EICs in Germany (n=1000).

Recap 2017 Results

The EICs across Germany's 16 Federal states are in various stages of ICF implementation. Figure 1 shows the allocation of the 329 returned responses to the 2017 survey (n₂₀₁₇) to federal states, showing regional differences in usage.

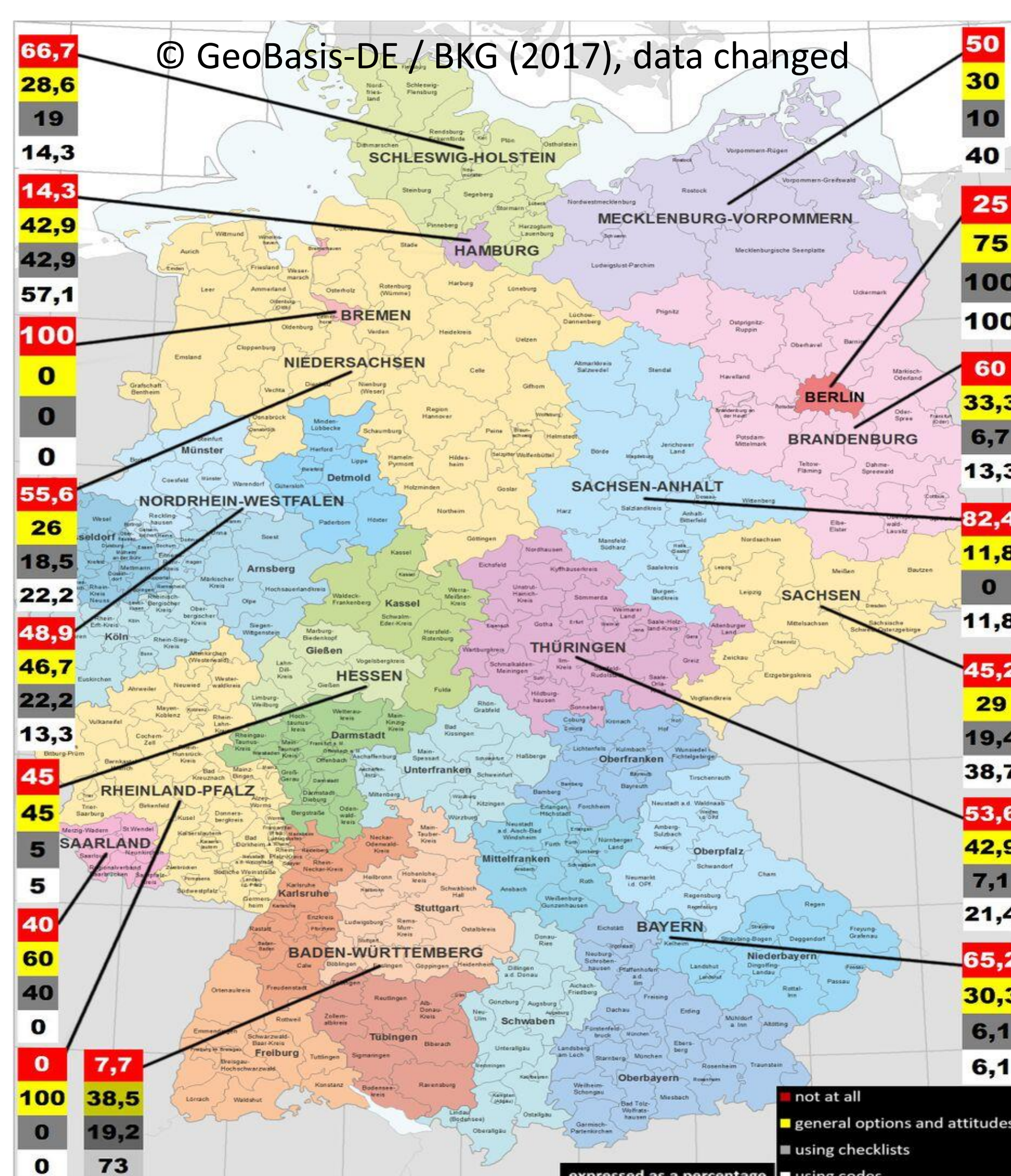


Figure 1: use of ICF in the 16 provinces of Germany in 2017 (multiple answers possible)

Results of the 2018 Survey

Of the 1000 questionnaires sent out to the EICs in 2018 164 were returned (n₂₀₁₈), rendering a $\%$ of 16,4% (-16.5 percentage points compared to 2017).

In our sample (n₂₀₁₈=164), 118 EICs indicated that they are using the ICF in different ways (+25.5 percentage points compared to 2017):

- 93 EICs use ICF as a framework/ attitude (+6.7 percentage points)
- 49 EICs use the ICF-checklists (+12.9 percentage points)
- 50 EICs use codes or ICF items for intervention plans (-2.4 percentage points)

How do you use the ICF ?

- Framework/attitude
- Checklists
- Intervention plans
- not at all

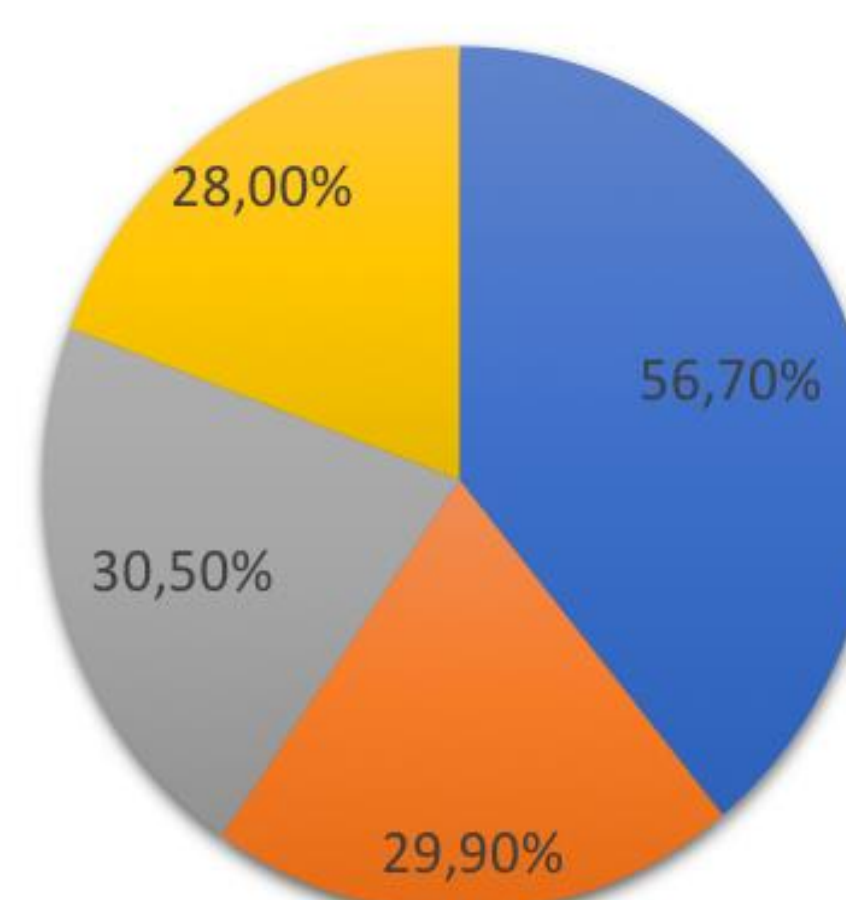


Figure 2: How do you use ICF? Answers of 164 EICs in Germany (multiple answers possible)

In the 2018 sample, 46 EICs indicated that they do not use the ICF in any way (-25.2 percentage points). The majority has not participated in an ICF training nor introduction class (-1.9 percentage points).

attended training classes /year - EIC's that do not use the ICF

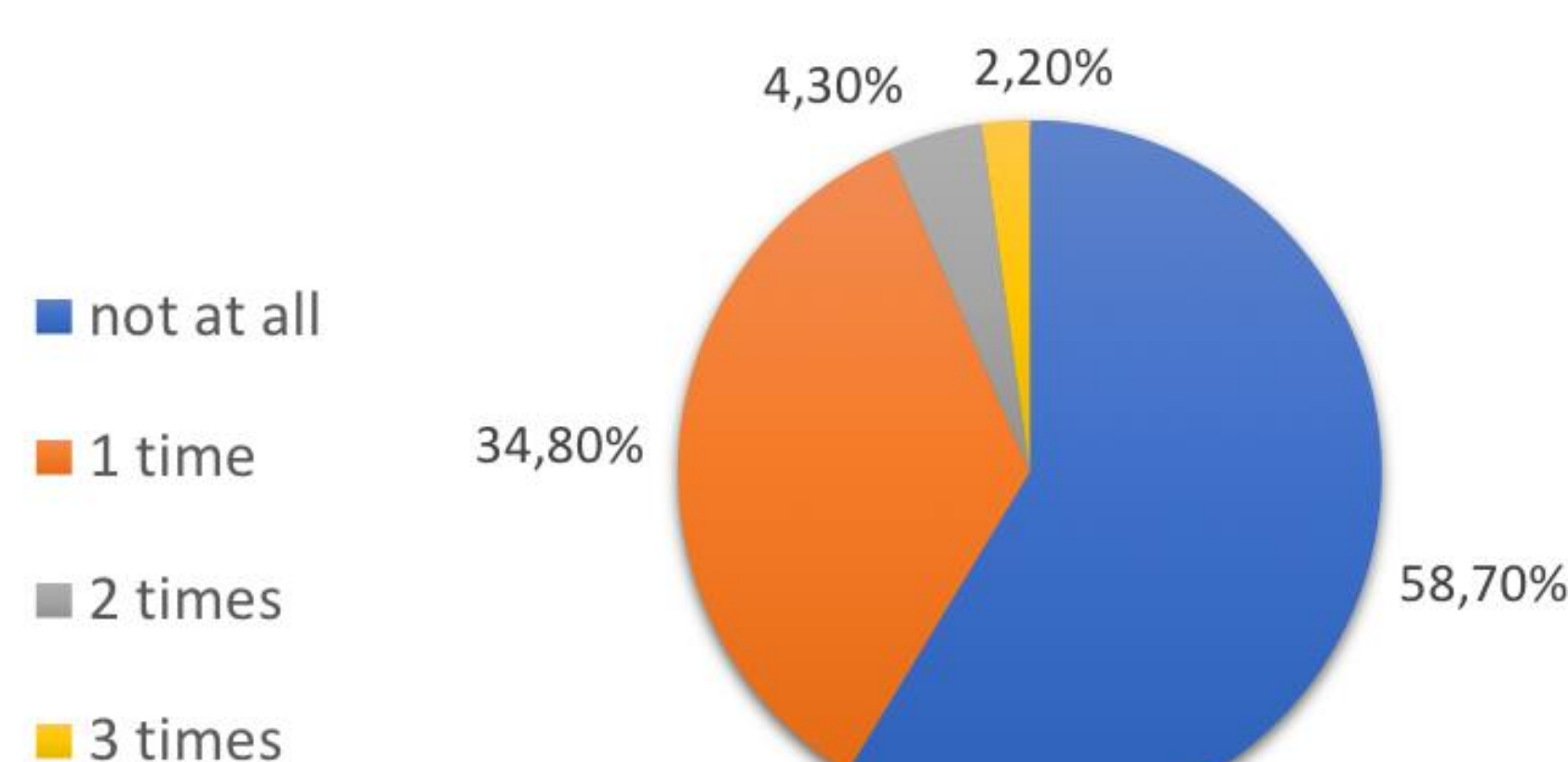


Figure 3: 27 of 46 EICs not using the ICF have indicated that they have not participated in an ICF training nor introduction class.

Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales (2017) Bundesteilhabegesetz. [Internet]. Available at: www.bmas.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/PDF/Meldungen/2016/bundesteilhabegesetz.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=7. Accessed 7 August 2018.

Simon, L., Kottysch, S., Irmeler, M., Kindervater, A. (2017): Do you speak ICF? Poster 2nd international symposium on ICF education, Cape Town, South Africa.

Kottysch, S., Simon, L., Mevs, A., Paulsen, J. (2018): Implementation of the ICF in early childhood intervention centres in Germany, Poster 3rd International Symposium in ICF Education, Hamburg, Germany

Acknowledgements

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The 164 survey responses in 2018 can be allocated to 14 federal states. We did not receive answers from 2 states (see figure 4).

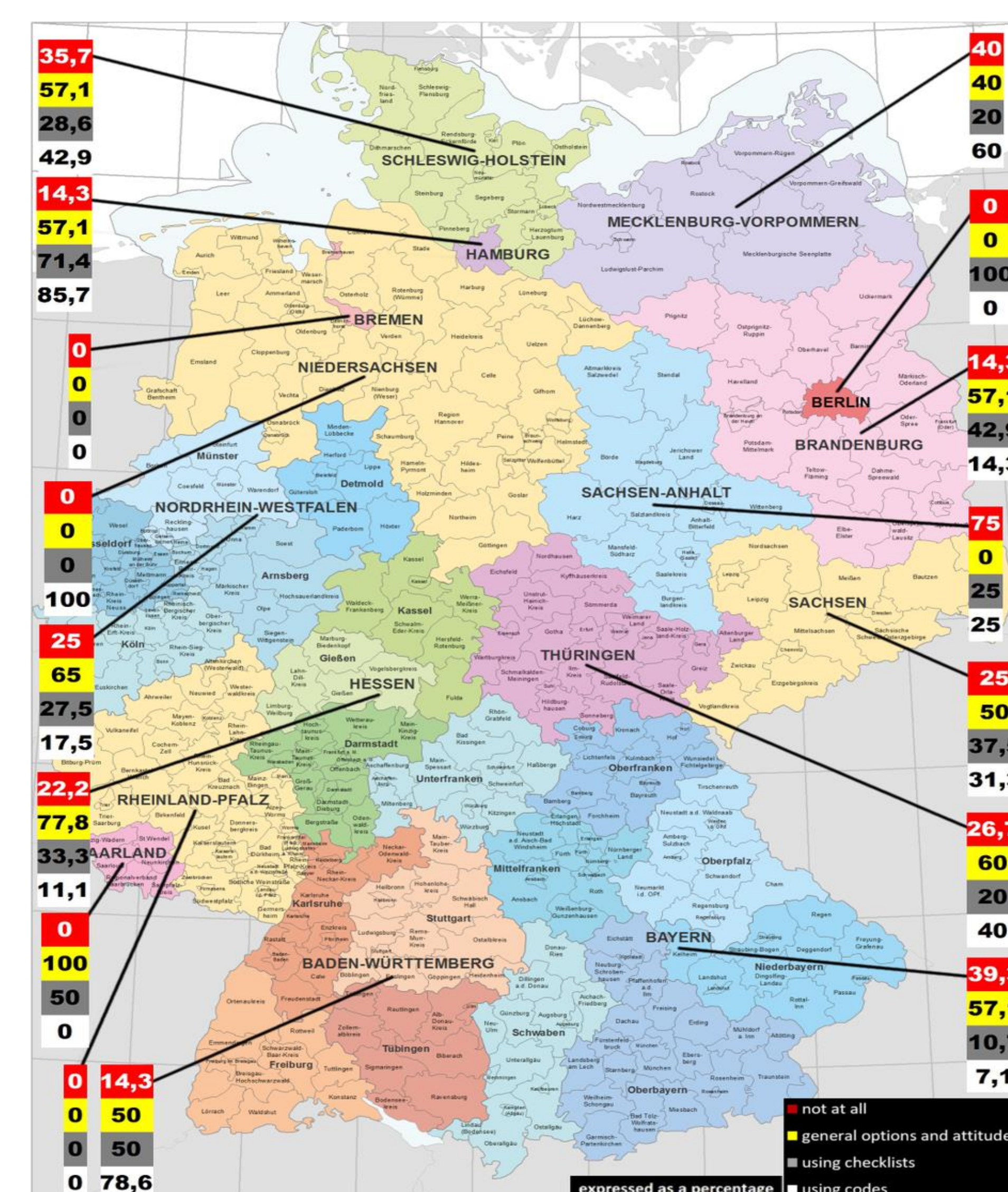


Figure 4: Use of ICF in the 16 German states in 2018 (multiple answers possible)

Discussion /Conclusions

The new German participation law explicitly requires the use of the ICF. A complete reform of the social system over the next few years is planned. Accordingly the use of the ICF in EICs is also increasing.

The results of the 2017 and 2018 surveys show that in 2018 the use of ICF checklists (29.9%) and of ICF codes in intervention plans (30.5%) have increased compared to the 2017 (13.4% and 21% respectively). For the first time, ICF-based needs assessment procedures developed by the responsible authorities were also used by 23 EICs (14%).

The survey results also show that:

- There is a strong need for training classes.
- Also needed are ICF -based instruments that are especially suitable for daily routine practice in EICs and for assessing needs in early childhood in general.
- The increasing variety of ICF-based assessments and instruments requires a more detailed analysis.