

*Research Study: "European Training Strategy and the Trainer Competence Model: The political dimension of the work of youth trainers in Germany, Greece, Cyprus, and Romania".*

*Summary Research Report*



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# Introduction

## The Project

This Project aims to the promotion of active youth participation through youth work. This is because one of the major issues contemporary democracies face in in Europe is the political disengagement of the young people when it comes to traditional politics or organizational membership.

To achieve this goal, the partners will first work on the competence development of youth professionals such as youth workers, youth trainers, mentors of ESC volunteers. The project will address issues such as the issues of EU Citizenship, EU awareness, democracy, youth participation, youth work, youth policy and access for the disadvantaged.

To better understand the concept, the project partners determine political participation among young people as:

- Any lawful activities undertaken by citizens that will or aim to influence, change or affect the government, public policies, or how institutions are run;
- A diverse range of activities such as people being members of different organisations, participating in cultural organisations, or activities, signing petitions, protesting, contacting politicians, social media campaigning, engaging online, etc.

As such the specific objectives (SO) of the project involve:

- SO1: To understand the level, depth and dimensions of integration of the political dimension into the trainers' work in the partner countries (with the implementation of research).
- SO2: To build on the capacity of youth organisations in managing active citizenship initiatives by developing the competences of young voluntary coordinators and young volunteers.
- SO3: To learn how to use innovative methods which are attractive to young people with fewer opportunities in order to stimulate youth participation in general but also with a focus on contemporary issues which affect Human Rights such as democracy & Human Rights, fighting Antisemitism & anti-Islamism, gender equality & rights to sexuality as well as climate change.
- SO4: To enable youth workers to understand social media and to provide them with tools and procedures to run successful online campaigns together with the youth on issues that affect the youth and the societies they live in.

## Context

In the context of the European Training Strategy (ETS) the SALTO Training & Cooperation Resource Centre (SALTO T&C RC) developed the Competence Model for Trainers Working at International Level [www.salto-youth.net/trainercompetences](http://www.salto-youth.net/trainercompetences).

One of the competences of the above model is the political dimension meaning the integration of political dimension into the trainers' work based on the **European Training Strategy (ETS)** competence model for trainers. This particular competence from the model encompasses the following competences:

1. Linking (youth) policies and educational programmes,
2. Integrating political values and beliefs in the context of the trainer's work,
3. Supporting learners in developing political thinking,
4. Applying democracy and human rights principles.

Up to today, there has been no research on how and in which extend the political dimension is incorporated into the trainers' practice. We need to explore this dimension in the partner countries in order to create a researched baseline for the partner countries. This baseline will help us build better educational material for competence development of youth trainers.

The partners need to conduct this research with the aims:

- To contribute to quality development of youth work and of training practice in the field;
- To put the European Training Strategy Competence Model into practice;
- To support our organizations and organization in our networks in working with trainers on competence development;
- To contribute to the professional development of trainers.

Enabling youth trainers to take further steps in their professional practice when it comes to the incorporation of the political dimension in their work will result in providing better training to the young people.

With the Intellectual Output "European Training Strategy and the Trainer Competence Model: The political dimension of the work of youth trainers in Germany, Greece, Cyprus, and Romania" we are going to gather insights that will help us understand in more depth factors such as:

- What are the personal, internal and external influences on the role of trainers (politics, policies, environment, social and economic contexts, etc.)? ;
- Which are the notions of ethics and ethos of trainers? ;
- How can we work on the attitudes of trainers with regards to authenticity, openness, curiosity and dealing with personally challenging values and beliefs? ;

We wish to understand better the knowledge, skills and attitudes of youth trainers. Some the aspects we are going to investigate are (indicatory):

- Knowledge of the socio-political contexts of learners;
- Skill to deal with the socio-political contexts of learners;
- Readiness to challenge one's views on the educational approach with regard to the socio-political context of the learners;
- Openness and sensitivity to socio-political contexts of learners;
- Knowledge of the contextual and political dimensions;
- Skill to reflect on their personal civic engagement, values and beliefs in the course and to act in a responsible and constructive manner.

## Executive Summary of Findings

The project produced some very encouraging results from a diverse wealth of responses.

In total 111 youth workers from four countries were interviewed. Out of these, the majority (65%) were women. The overall education level was high, with most (86%) being university graduates holding at least a bachelor or equivalent degree or even a Masters. This high ratio also held true with respect to their experience in the field as 75% have stated to be involved in youth training for 4 years or more.

The same however could not be said as to their time- involvement with youth training. Here we have located our first concern as 59% stated that they are a part-time youth trainer while working in another occupation. However, encouragingly, the youth trainers of our sample do not confine themselves domestically and take an international dimension to their work with most (61%) stating that they work as a youth trainer on the international level.

How our youth trainers got to be youth trainers, is also interesting. Here there is not one answer we can give as the combinations vary, but still, we can indicate that the biggest group, around one third, acquired the relevant knowhow from direct experience, or a mixture of training (train-the-trainer courses) and experience. The rest followed a mixture of different combinations.

As to political activity, a key element to our research, our youth trainers were as a group moderately active. This is so as one in four belonged to a political organization but mostly as a member, without actively engaging that is with the organization's activities or holding a position there.

As to our other key elements of our research, our findings are rather encouraging. With respect to connecting youth training with youth policies and programmes most (around eight in ten) of our youth trainers confirmed they generally do so, at least to a medium extent. The same was largely true with respect to our other 3 areas, that of:

- Integration of personal values and beliefs in youth training;
- Connecting youth training with critical thinking skills; and
- Connecting youth training with principles of democracy and Human Rights.

The message is clear: partners need to work on three levels.

First, they must encourage those that do connect these absolutely to continue doing so. Then they must begin advising those that do not of the benefits and necessity in doing so. Perhaps a pairing of the two

could work here. Finally, they must look at the reasons why those at the middle, meaning those that connect the topics to a moderate degree do not advance further in their negative attitudes and address these for the consortium by looking at the examples of each partner.

However, one thing is for certain: Most of the youth trainers that took part in our research do consider the overall project effort as important and would like to further engage in it. This is true as most (six in ten) participants, have confirmed their willingness to either participate in a relevant one-day dissemination workshop or even a three-day train-the-trainer workshop. As such the overall project is on sound footing and is encouraged to proceed as designed.



## Methodology

### General

We choose to perform a field-based **survey research** for the collection of the relevant information. This was addressed to youth trainers. Beyond collecting more relevant data this type of research further allows the project partners to recruit participants. A **questionnaire** was distributed on hard copy in face-to-face meetings with the youth trainers but also online through **Survey Monkey** in order to collect the insights of the youth trainers in the four countries. Each country then produced an individual report.

From there on, the findings from each country were collated to produce this summary research report. This allowed the viewing of project themes and challenges not only in the specific light of each partner but also in the general light of the consortium. In turn this enabled the consortium to better observe and account for strengths and weaknesses. With this in mind partners can thus focus their efforts on those areas most problematic while seek each other's help in exchanging innovative solutions and approaches from each other on each partner's specific challenges. It also allows for a parallel general approach to be adopted wherein the partners could also focus on the areas that were most problematic as a whole.

With the survey we have asked the trainers:

- To reflect on and explore the limits of the 'political role of trainers' in their practice;
- To reflect on human rights principles and human rights education in their work.

The questionnaire included closed-end questions to collect quantitative data but also open-end ones to collect qualitative data. Dropdown questions, single-answer multiple choice questions and matrix questions were used.

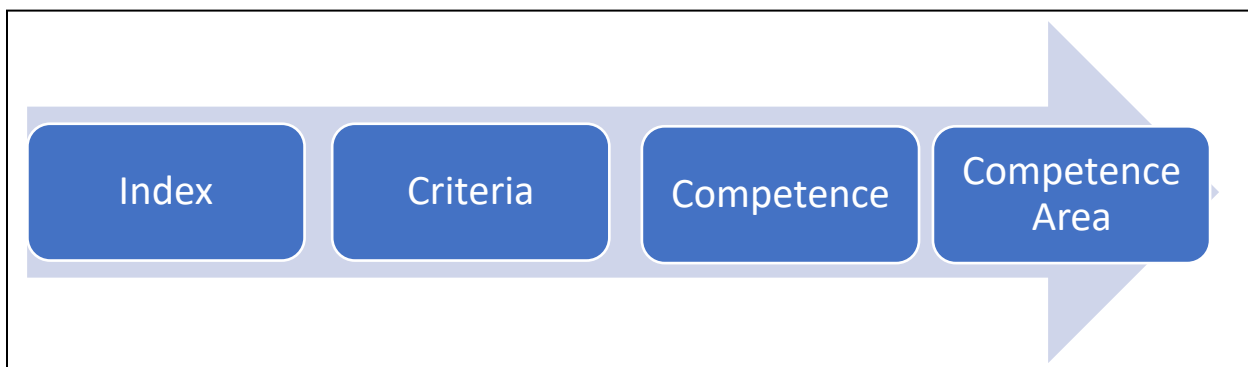
The methodology applied was of an academic level and thus it is feasible to be applied again. The results of the research will thus be possible to be generalized to a certain degree. The report will be available online but it will also be distributed within the partners' networks. This way, other youth professionals will be able to use it as the base of new initiatives in the field of competence development of youth trainers.

## Competences Accounted for in the Research

The questionnaire tested for specific competence relevant to the project itself. It was built to test the civic engagement of participants as well as their abilities to pass on these skills to their trainees. Examining the demographics and background of the trainers, in terms of education, gender, relevant training, experience in political participation and so on, It took into account four major competences within this area as it relates to youth-training, namely that of

- (1) Connecting youth policies and educational programmes;
- (2) Integrating values and beliefs;
- (3) Supporting learners into developing critical thinking; and
- (4) Applying democracy and Human Rights principles.

These 4 competences where broken down into their constituent criteria and assigned relevant indicators to test their applicability with participants and thus gain valuable insights into the state of art, in terms of applicability and areas of focus within the partners. These were then assigned their corresponding indicators. To clarify, these indicators or indexes where explanatory of the relevant criterion that itself was explanatory of the competence that form part of the major competence area which in this case was that of being civically engaged. This process was repeated with respect to all the competences that make the competence area.



The original Salto competences and indicators were advised and these were refined into the final competence matrix that can be seen in the questionnaires. These can be made available via request. Once this refinement was done, the consortium would know on which areas to test so that it may better concentrate its efforts to effect the biggest change in terms of such things as perception and skills acquirement among its ranks having first of course completed the survey.

# Part 1: Demographics and Related Profile Information

## Gender

The total number of participants that took the survey was 111 for the consortium as a whole. The gender (Figure 1) was mostly women, specifically, 65% as opposed to 35% Men. This same 6 to 4 ratio was also largely seen among the partners with the exception of Cyprus, where a more equal gender distribution was observed, with 54% women and 46% men. The highest difference in gender was in Romania where 71% of the participants were women as opposed to 29% that were men.

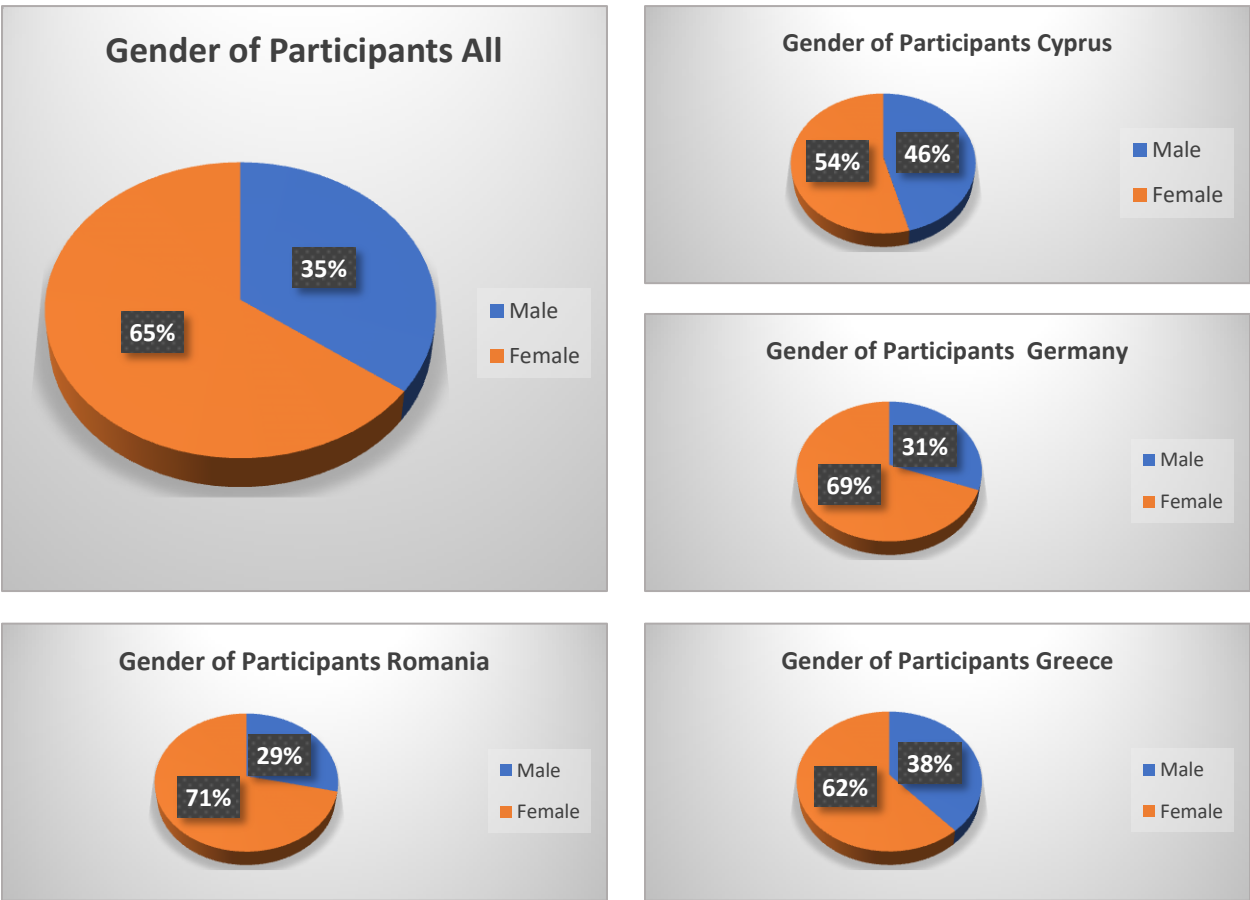


Figure 1: Gender

## Educational Attainment

The overall educational background of our youth trainers was high. Most participants held at least a bachelor or equivalent degree. This was to be expected as this is most often the case for those that work in the general field of education and training. Beyond the 64% of participants that held a bachelor degree, an impressive further 22% also held a master's degree, while an even further 4% held a PhD without this PhD necessarily being related to their profession.

As to the partners themselves, Romania had the most participants (80%) with master's degrees. The lowest was Germany with 50%, though it did have however a high ratio of Bachelor holders (23%), resulting in a combined 73% of its participants having a higher form of diploma. Cyprus, on the other hand, had the most PhDs (8%) holders and Germany once more had the least with none. Greece resembled the average for the consortium with 34% and 52% participants having a bachelor or a master's degree respectively.

As to those with no University education, the percentage was generally low. For the consortium as a whole, this accounted for just 8% of our youth trainers with the highest percentage being that of Germany (27%) and the lowest in Cyprus that had none. Romania and Greece scored also low with 3% and 7% of participants falling in this category respectively.

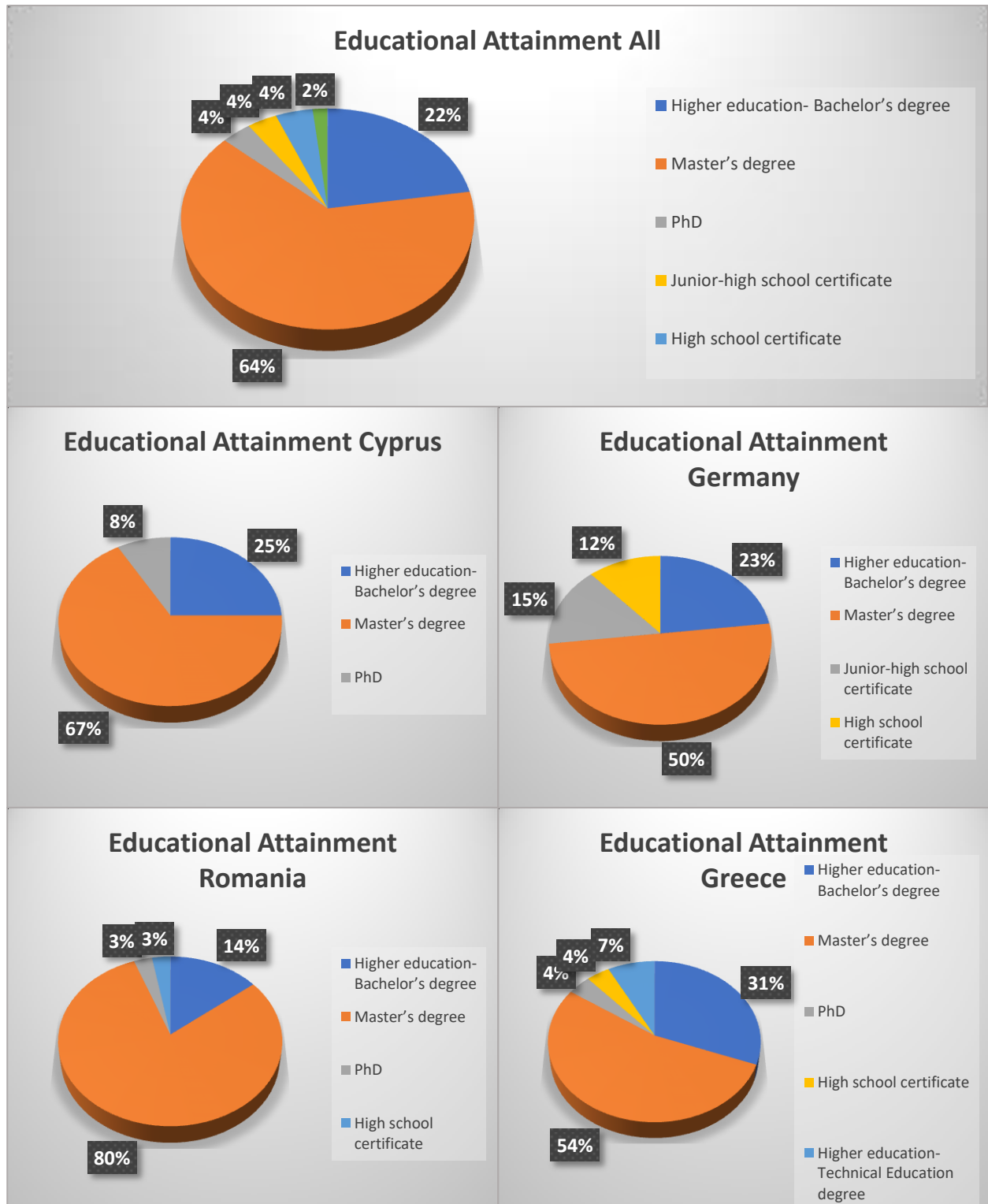


Figure 2: Educational Attainment

## Involvement with Youth Training

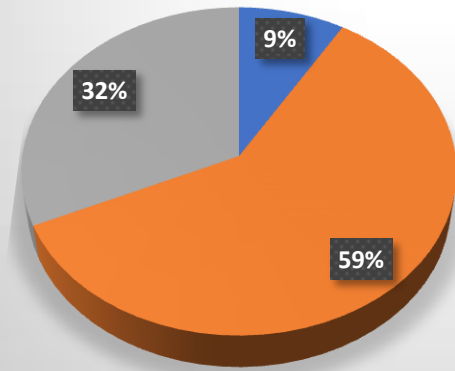
As to involvement with youth training, most of our youth trainers work on the field part-time. In fact, 59% stated that they are a part-time youth trainer while working in another occupation.

This did not come as too big of a surprise given that in most countries youth training has not been centralized in one competent body and remains both legally and institutionally fragmented. As a result, perhaps of this phenomenon, only 9% of participants claimed to be full-time youth trainers. Another 32% stated to be closer to full-time youth training in the sense of being youth workers involved in youth training as part of their work. The time invested in this activity however, for those who engage in youth training as part of their work, understandably varies based on the demands of their youth work.

As to the partners themselves, with respect to part-time youth work most follow the norm. The only significant exception is that of Romania where the percentage of those involved in youth training part-time rose to 72% in total. Other than that, and with the exception of Greece where none of the respondents were full-time youth trainers, the rest of the partners are close to the average rates.

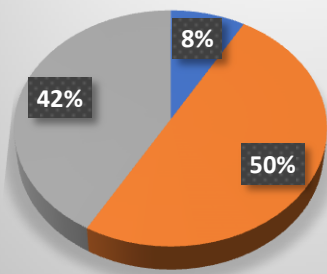
In specific, Cyprus featured 50% part-time trainers, 42% youth workers as youth trainers and 8% full-time trainers. Greece had 50% part-timer workers and 50% youth workers as youth trainers, Romania 72% part-time trainers, 17% youth workers as youth trainers and 11% full-time trainers, while Germany 46% part-time trainers, 42% youth workers as youth trainers and 12% full-time trainers.

### Involvement with Youth Training All



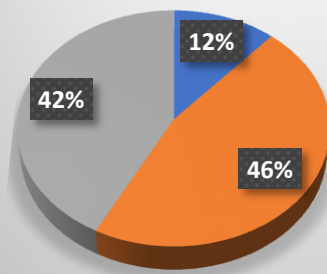
- Full-time Youth Trainer
- Part-time Youth Trainer
- Youth Worker and Youth Training is part of my job

### Involvement with Youth Training Cyprus



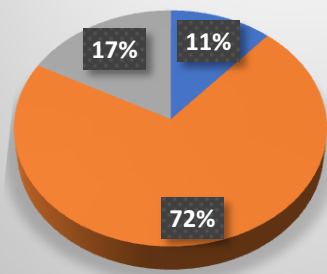
- I am a full-time Youth Trainer
- I am a part-time Youth Trainer while I am working in another occupation.
- I am a Youth Worker and Youth Training is part of my job

### Involvement with Youth Training Germany



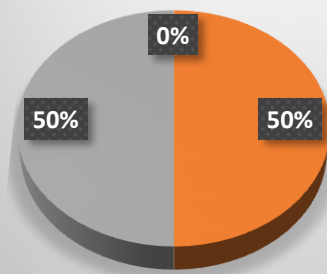
- I am a full-time Youth Trainer
- I am a part-time Youth Trainer while I am working in another occupation.
- I am a Youth Worker and Youth Training is part of my job

### Involvement with Youth Training Romania



- I am a full-time Youth Trainer
- I am a part-time Youth Trainer while I am working in another occupation.
- I am a Youth Worker and Youth Training is part of my job

### Involvement with Youth Training Greece



- I am a full-time Youth Trainer
- I am a part-time Youth Trainer while I am working in another occupation.
- I am a Youth Worker and Youth Training is part of my job

Figure 3: Involvement with Youth Training

## Experience

Experience is important, especially in youth-training. Thankfully, the partners seem to be well-off in this regard as around 75% of youth trainers have stated to be involved in youth training for at least 4 years. Among these, veterans (more than 10 years of experience in the field) accounted for 31% of the sample, while those seasoned (7-9 years of experience) and in the middle (4-6 years of experience) accounted for 13% and 24% respectively.

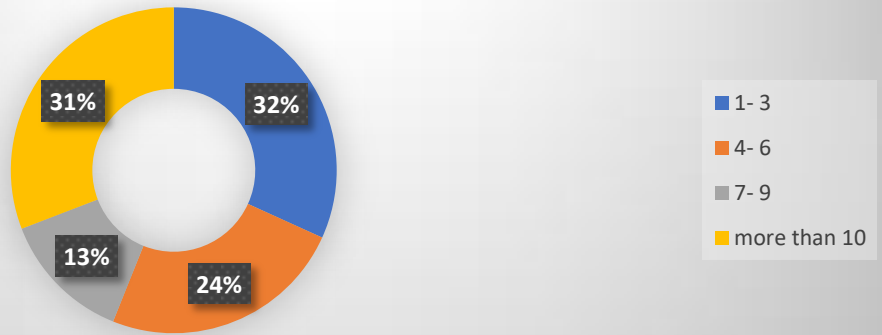
Relatively novice professionals (1-3 years of experience) are a somewhat sizeable and healthy portion representing 32% of the sample. Of course, different professionals at different stages of their career will require analogous support and given that most are engaged in youth training through a part-time capacity, the shift to full-time seasoned or veterans as professionals in the field becomes ever more challenging.

As to the partners themselves, with the exemption of Greece, the results are more or less similar. In Greece, the majority of participants were relatively new to youth training, with 58% claiming to have less than 3 years of experience. To a lesser extent, this holds also true for Germany where 42% stated the same.

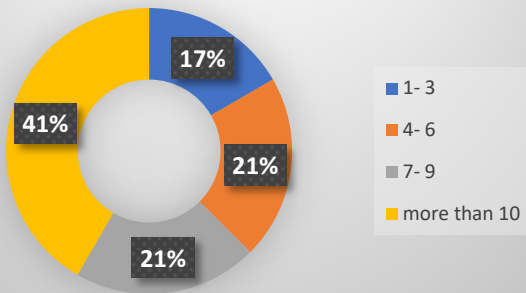
On the other hand, the country with the most seasoned youth trainers, part time and full time included, was Cyprus with a total of 72% stating that they had more than 7 years of experience. Second is Romania with 65% of participants stating the same. This is interesting as Romania was also the country where the most participants (72%) stated to be part-time youth trainers which perhaps reveals a long, timewise, specific model applicable to Romania. On the other hand, a great deal of participants (42%) in Cyprus was associated with youth training through their profession as a youth worker. This could be taken to mean that Cyprus follows a more blended model. Germany was closest to the norm with the ratios being similar to the average, the highest (42%) being those with less than 3 years of experience followed closely by seasoned or veteran youth trainers.



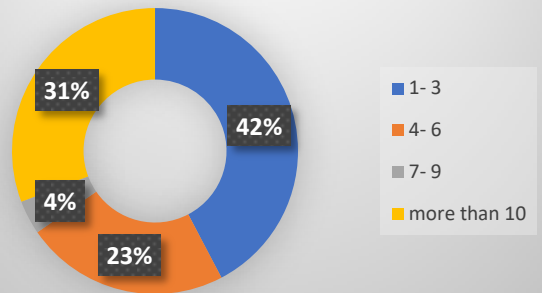
### Experience in Youth Training All



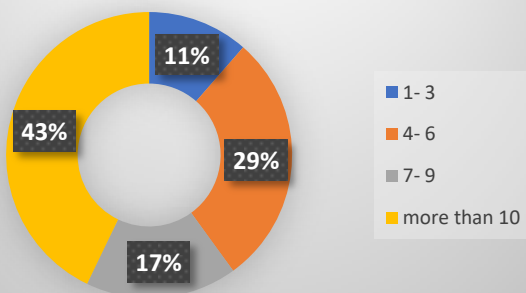
### Experience in Youth Training Cyprus



### Experience in Youth Training Germany



### Experience in Youth Training Romania



### Experience in Youth Training Greece

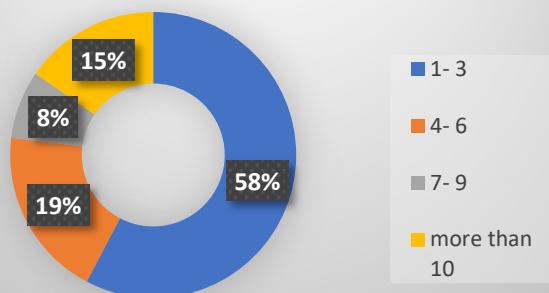


Figure 4: Experience in Youth Training

## International Exposure

With respect to the international dimension of youth training participants' responses differed. As an aggregated sum, most of the participants (61%) have attached an international affiliation to the provision of their youth training by stating that they work as a youth trainer on the international level. This ratio was the highest in Romania where almost all of the participants (89%) claimed this to be so, followed by Cyprus with 59% answering in the affirmative. The lowest reported ratio of youth trainers being active on an international level was Germany (42%) followed by Greece (46%).

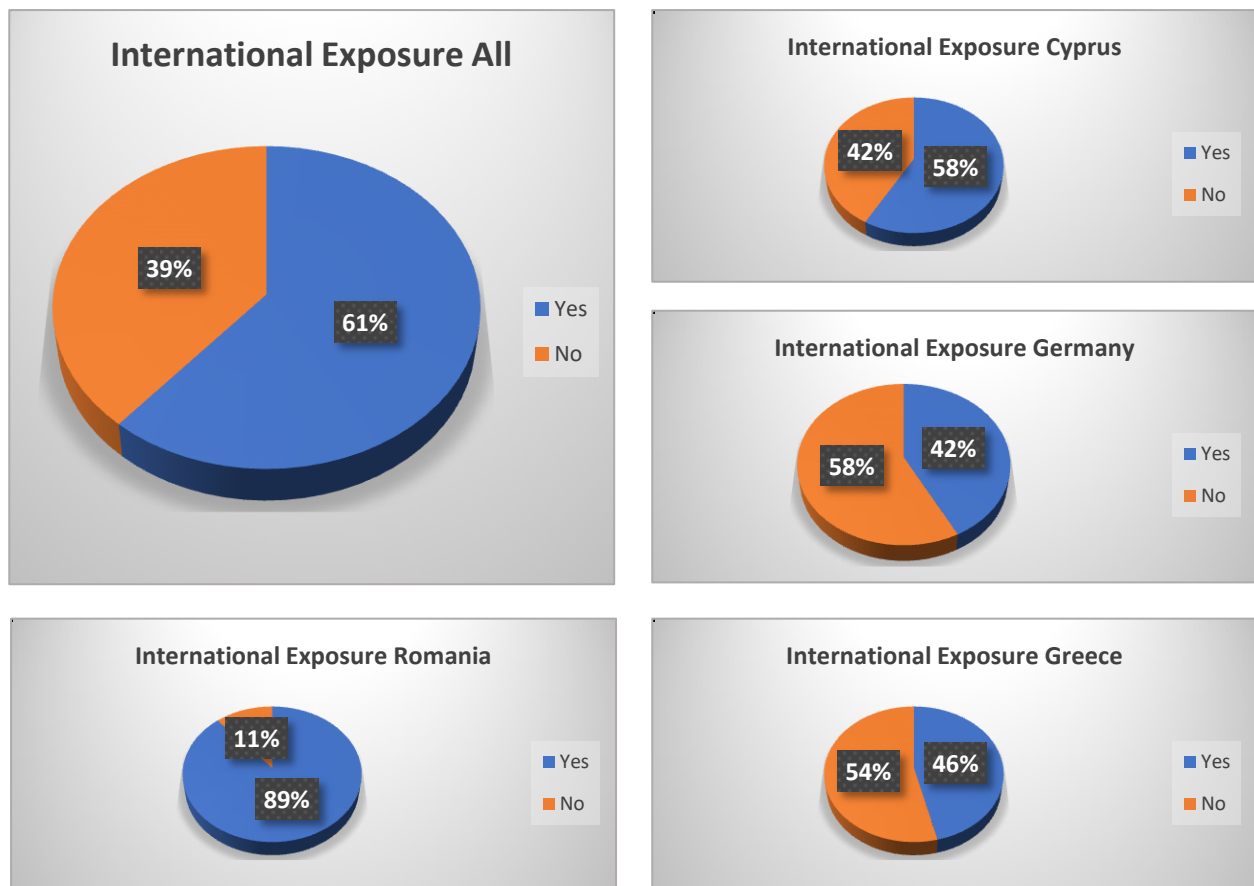


Figure 5: International Exposure

## Training as a Youth Trainer

Not all youth trainers become one in the same way. This is especially so since, as already mentioned, the profession is largely unregulated and relatively new to the member states. Combined with the time commitment mentioned above, the results of this section become thus more understandable.

This is so if we consider that the majority of participants (33.33%) acquired the relevant knowhow from direct experience, or a mixture (32.43%) of training (train the trainer courses) and experience. Just 8.11% stated to have acquired the necessary background through their studies, while an impressive 9.91% claimed to have done so through a combination of all, studies, trainings and experience while a small number (4.50%) followed a different combination of the three or utilized another method for doing so.

In each country the combination is different but some commonalities can be observed. For Germany Cyprus and Greece, the highest percentage with respect to how participants acquired the necessary background to become a youth trainer was through experience with 46.15%, 41.67% and 50% respectively. In Romania, the highest percentage (62.86%) opted for a mixture of training and experience. Only in Germany was the necessary background acquired as part of the participants' education to a relatively high (38.46%) degree.

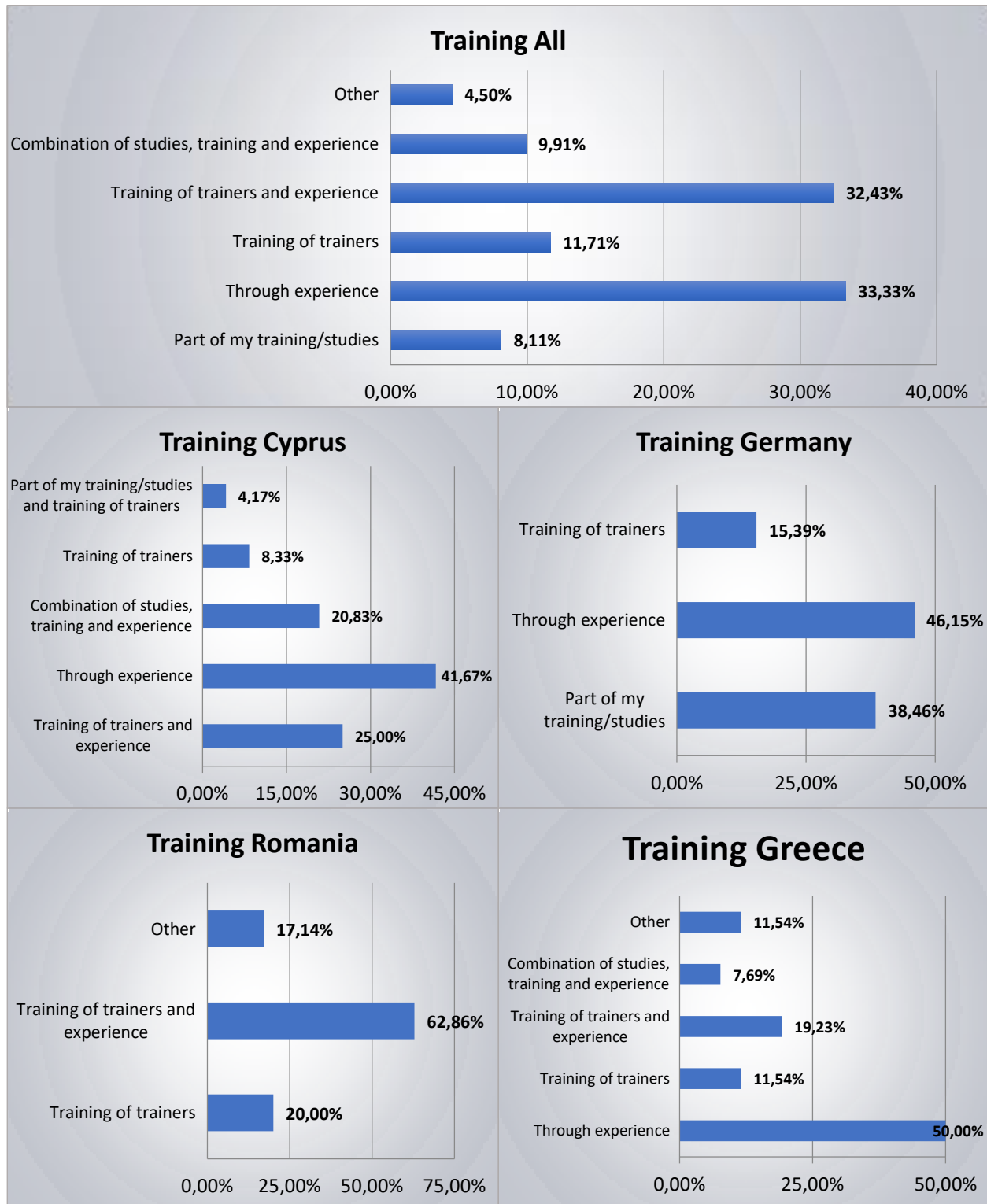


Figure 6: Training and Educational Background in Youth Training

## Part 2: Political Affiliation

### Membership to a Political Organization

Most (75%) participants stated to not be a member of a political organization. It should be noted that this does not mean that participants are not politically active or that they do not share any ideology. Instead, what was measured here is the general commitment to a particular party.

With respect to this, both Cyprus and Greece seemed to follow the general average of not being registered in any political organization with 71% and 76% respectively. Germany trailed close behind with 58% answering this in the negative. The big exception is Romania where this negative ratio rose to 88% of our youth trainers.

Once more though, this isn't a necessary indication of one's political life, it does only set a rough boundary. We mean this in the sense of a minimum engagement level upon which to better estimate participants' political activity and its potential spill-over into youth training without signalling this as either negative or positive.

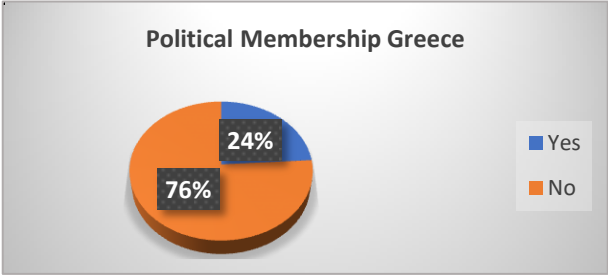
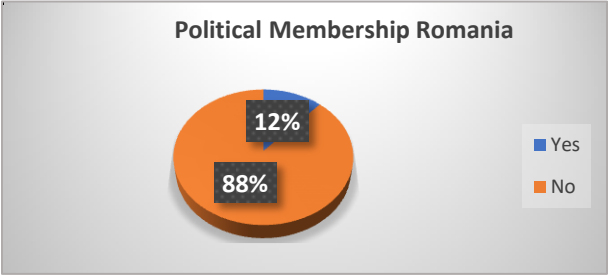
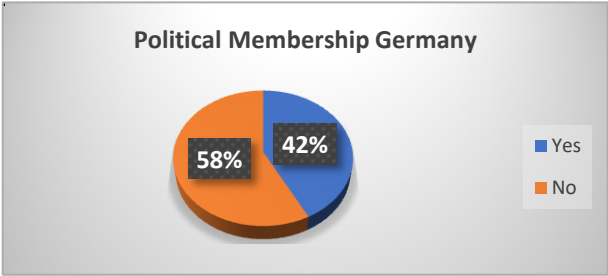
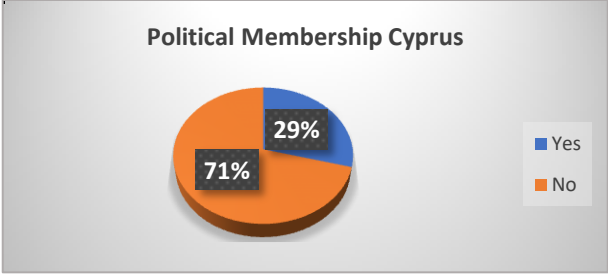
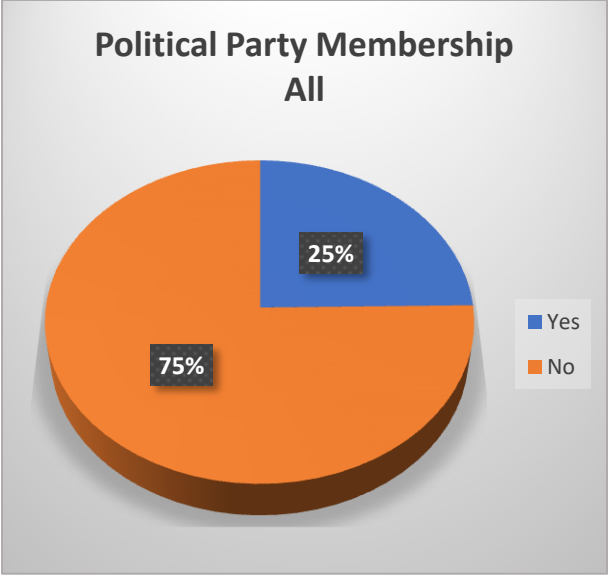


Figure 7: Political Organization Membership

## Activity within the Political Organization

The next figure provides better insight into this. Out of the 25% of participants that are members of a political organization, more than half (57%) are simply members without any other activity relating to that organization.

Just 18% of these participants have an official role and 25% participate in the organization's activities. These findings differ significantly among partners. However, we should note that the sample is too small to draw any safe conclusions, given that originally only 25% of the participants were registered members of a political organization.

Despite this, it is interesting to note the vast antithesis between Germany and the rest of the partners. Here, the ratio of those who were actively engaged in the political organization's activities or those who held an official position, this can be considered as a sign of increased political activity, is 70% and the highest among the partners. By contrast, in Romania 100% of the participants stated to only be members.

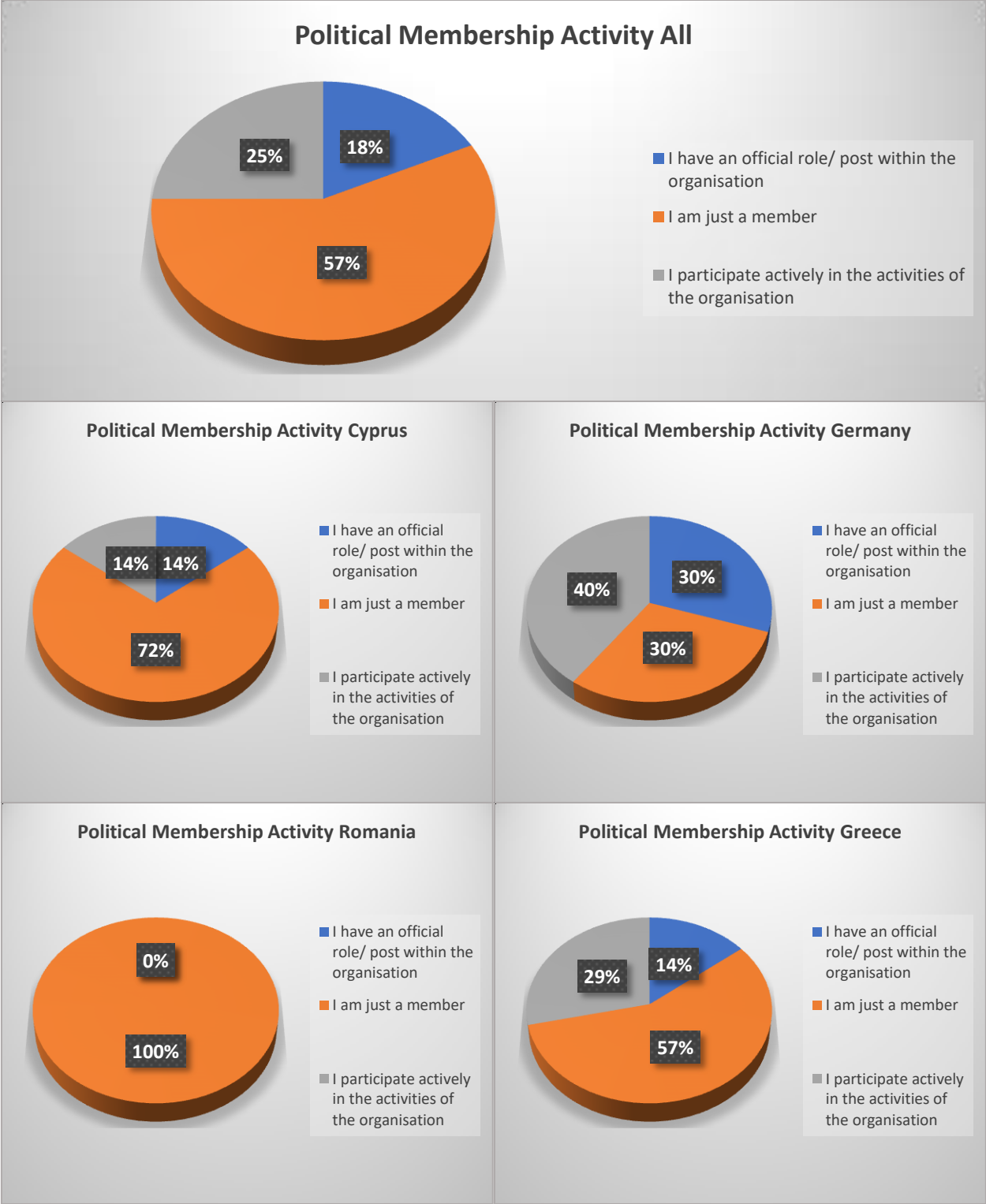


Figure 8: Political Membership Activity



## Part 3: Connecting Youth Training with Youth Policies and Programmes

### General Evaluation

Connecting youth training with youth policies and programmes is very important, as it allows for current theories and trends related to the field to be embedded into the workings of the youth trainer. It also allows maintaining the methodology of the trainer current and up-to-date with the EU state of the art as well as the priorities of the countries and the union. Yet, and importantly so, just 37% of participants stated to absolutely connected their youth training to relevant youth policies and programmes. However, another 48% does link it to a moderate degree while a worrisome 15% does not link it at all.

The problem is most severe in Germany where the greatest antithesis was observed. Here, 27% of participants confirmed that they do not connect youth policies and programmes to their youth work while at the same time 62% connect it to a very high degree. These are the highest ratios among the partners in both categories.

On the other side, Romania and Greece stay close to the average for the consortium. For Romania, 23% considered this statement as totally relevant, 63% considered relevant to a moderate degree and 14% considered it not relevant at. The same is true for Greece with 31%, 58% and 11% of the sample respectively. As to Cyprus, this pattern is not repeated and features the lowest ratio (8%) of trainers not connecting youth training with relevant policies and programmes. Here another 38% and 54% connect it to a high or medium degree respectively.

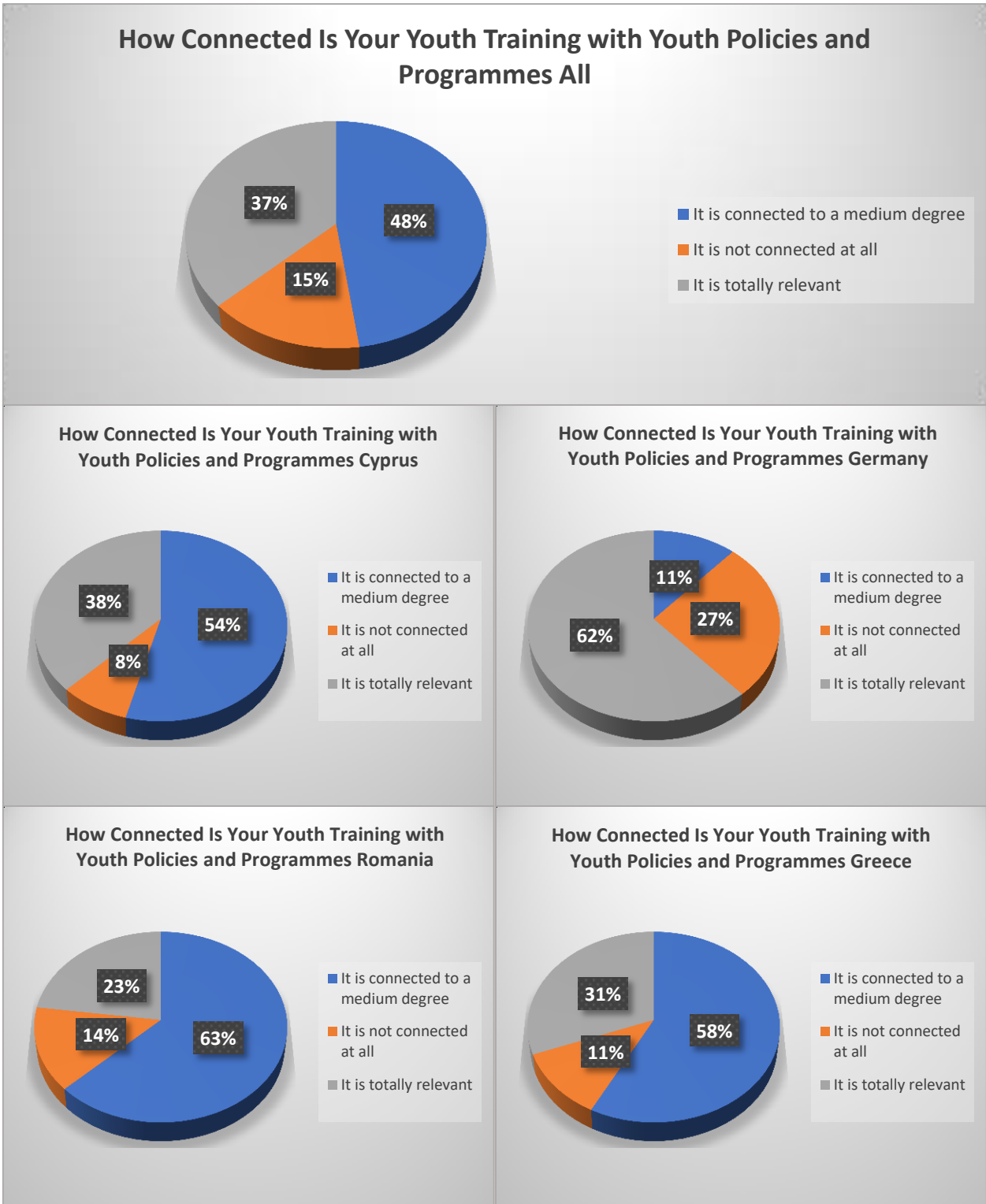


Figure 9: Connecting Youth Training with Youth Policies and Relevant Programmes

## Specific Evaluation of Competences

Beyond the general image provided, a specific understanding of competences must also be sought. This is true if one wants to understand the reasons for the general answers of connecting or not connecting the applicable Youth- Training with its relevant policies and programmes, not only at national but also at the European level.

As to this, the highest level of confidence was recorded with respect to distancing one's beliefs from and when delivering their relevant youth training. In total 80% of participants stated to be able to do so to a moderate or satisfactory degree.

This ability is especially crucial and becomes even more so when combined with the next most popular categories in terms of confidence, those of being able to understand the ramifications of different policies and reflect from European to local level or vice versa. Both feature similar high confidence levels as the one in discussion. To a large degree, these findings help explain the earlier relevantly high ration of connecting policies and programmes to youth training as remaining apolitical in the classroom while promoting a healthy degree of civic engagement in an unbiased manner can come from these external sources.

However, this is greatly challenged by the 30% of the participants who went on to state they either need to work on their ability or have no real ability to demonstrate the civic and political dimensions of youth training. It is nonetheless supported by the remaining 70% who feel comfortable in doing so. This somewhat large and rather confusing divide is indeed very much expected. The changing landscape of youth training and the greater effort put forth at the EU level to normalize and guide the profession can account and help this.

However, despite this generic picture the results among the partners contain some differences. In general, Cyprus and Germany exhibit the highest overall confidence levels while Romania and Greece show the lowest.

For Cyprus, the category where participants felt most confident was with respect to the three categories of identifying sources of information and critically evaluating them, critically assessing sources of information as well as distancing one's own beliefs from the material they are delivering. Here, over 90%

of participants in all aspects that were mentioned above felt comfortable or extremely comfortable in doing so.

The lowest scoring categories were with respect to both gathering relevant information on programmes and policies relating to youth training as well as displaying the civic and political dimensions of youth training. Here, 28% and 21% of Cypriot participants respectively felt they either had to improve or completely lacked in this area.

For Germany, the highest scoring confidence level was observed with respect to being able to critically assess sources (92%) and showcasing the youth trainer as an engaged civil act, with 88% of participants feeling comfortable in doing so.

However, distancing one's own beliefs from the material they are delivering seemed to be the lowest confidence scoring category for Germany, though not to an alarming extent. Just 32% of participants felt they either needed to work on it more or were completely lacking in it.

In Romania, as in Cyprus, although to a lesser extent, the highest scores were achieved in two categories. These were those of identifying and evaluating sources of information and critically assessing sources and information where 83% and 89% of participants respectively felt at least some confidence in their abilities. The lowest scoring categories were those of gathering relevant information on programmes and policies associated with youth training and demonstrating the political and civic dimension of the work. Here 44% and 34% respectively felt either unconfident or completely lacking in their skills. This can be contrasted with Cyprus in first case and Germany in the second who exhibited the highest level of confidence in these categories respectively.

For Greece, as in the case of Romania, overall confidence levels were lower than in Cyprus and Germany. Here, understanding the differences in policies and distancing one's own beliefs from the material delivered were the highest confidence scoring categories. For these, around 80% of participants felt comfortable or extremely comfortable in doing so.

The lowest observed confidence level was the same for Greece as in Romania. It involved the two categories of gathering relevant information on associated to youth training programmes and policies as well as demonstrating the political and civic dimension of the work. Here, 39% and 50% of participants respectively stated to feel uncomfortable with their ability or reported a complete lack of it. The case of reflecting from the European to the local level also scored low with 39%, with this being rather unique for Greece.

## Connecting Youth Policies and Educational Programmes All

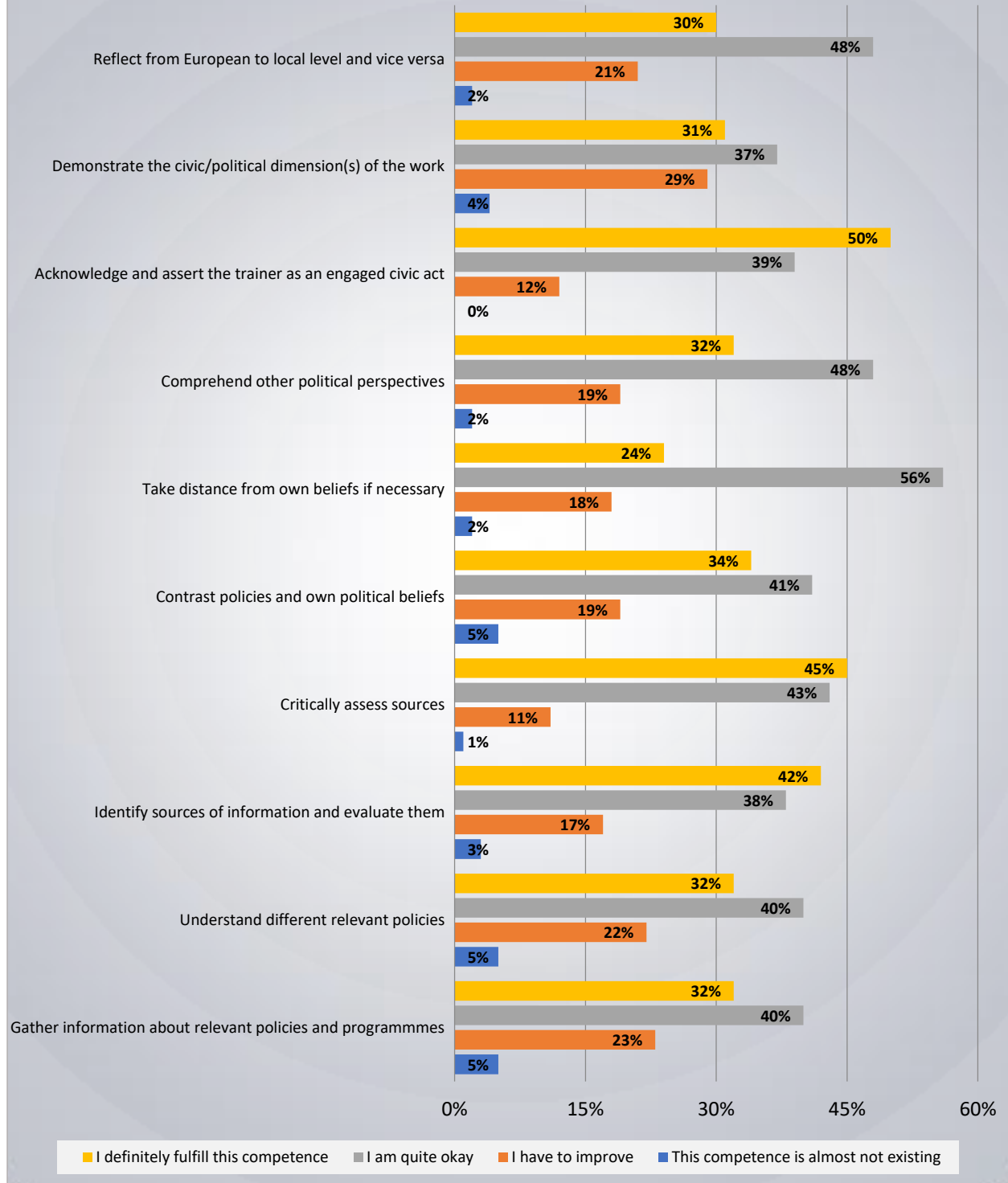


Figure 10: Connecting Youth Policies and Education Programmes All

## Connecting Youth Policies and Educational Programmes Cyprus

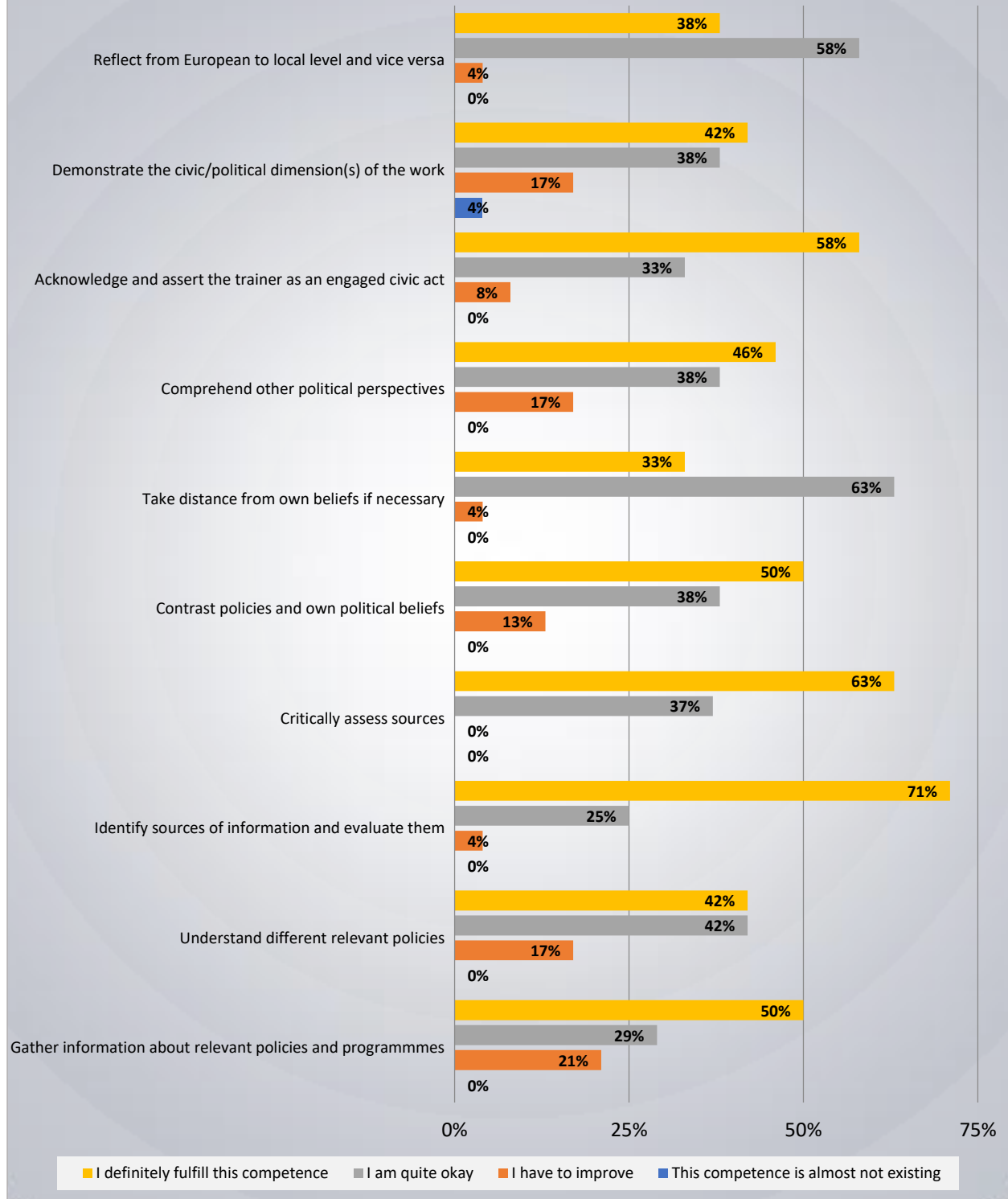


Figure 11: Connecting Youth Policies and Education Programmes Cyprus

## Connecting Youth Policies and Educational Programmes Germany

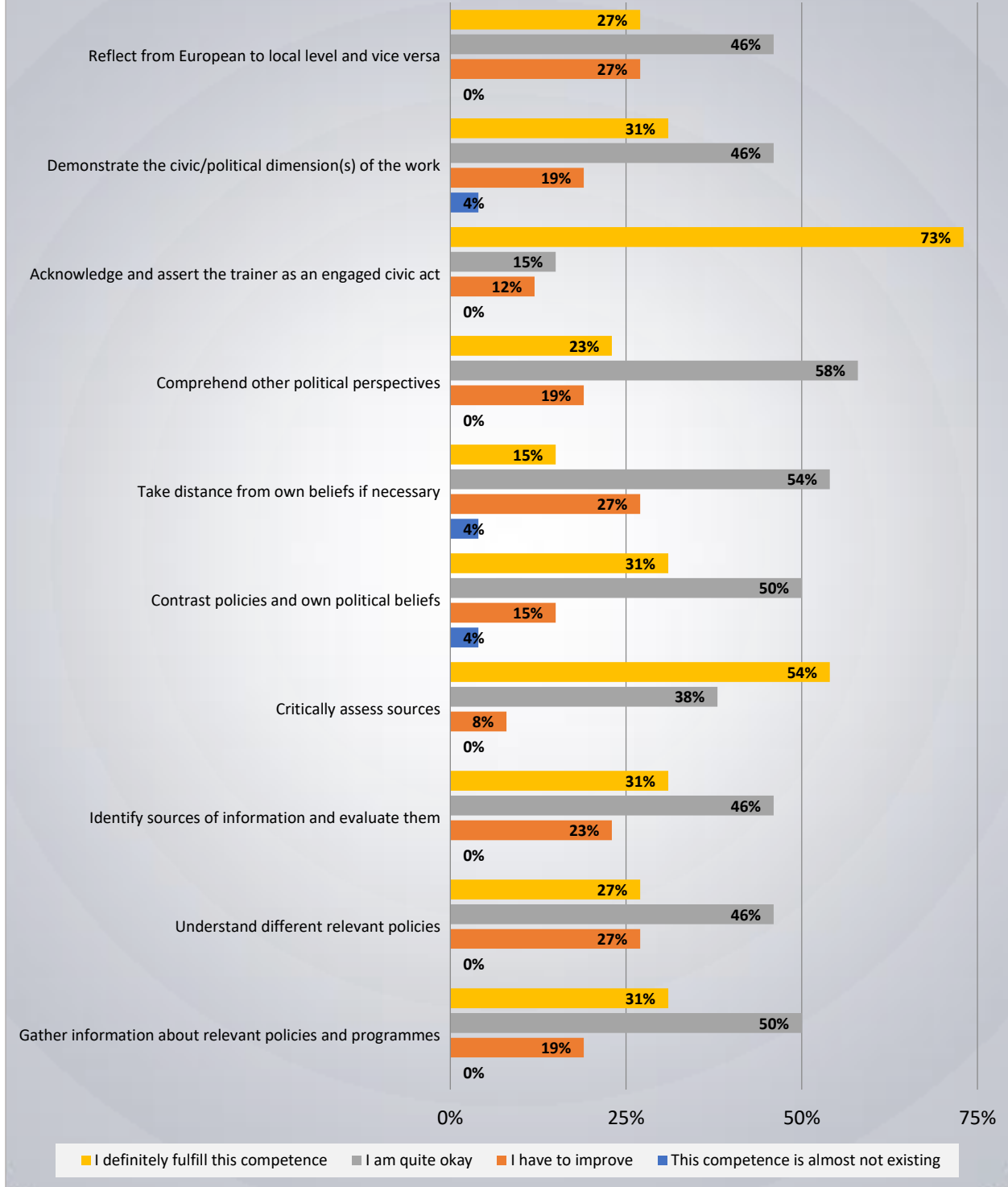


Figure 12: Connecting Youth Policies and Education Programmes Germany

## Connecting Youth Policies and Educational Programmes Romania

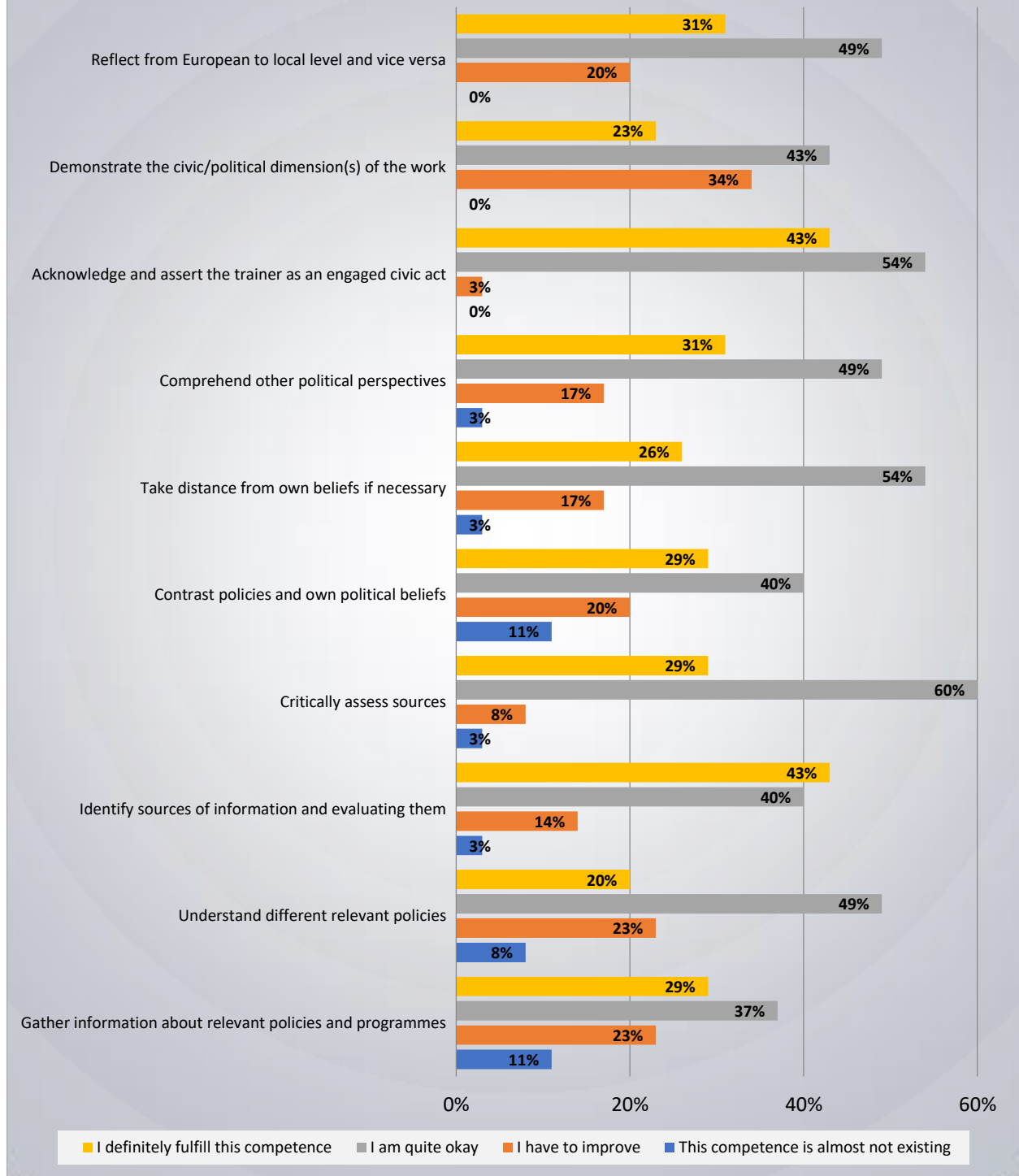


Figure 13: Connecting Youth Policies and Education Programmes Romania



## Connecting Youth Policies and Educational Programmes Greece

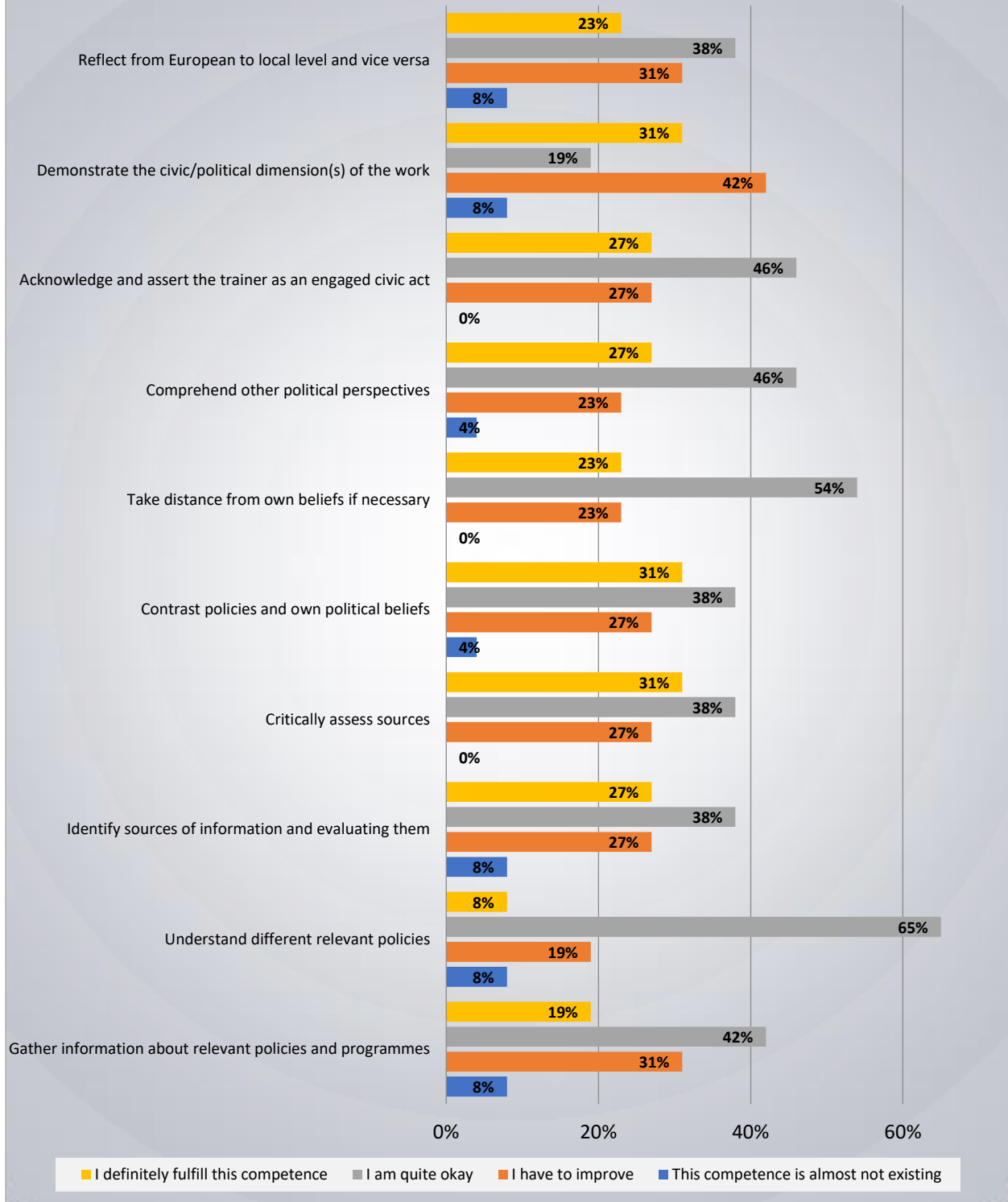


Figure 14: Connecting Youth Policies and Education Programmes Greece

## Part 4: Integrating Values and Beliefs

### General Evaluation

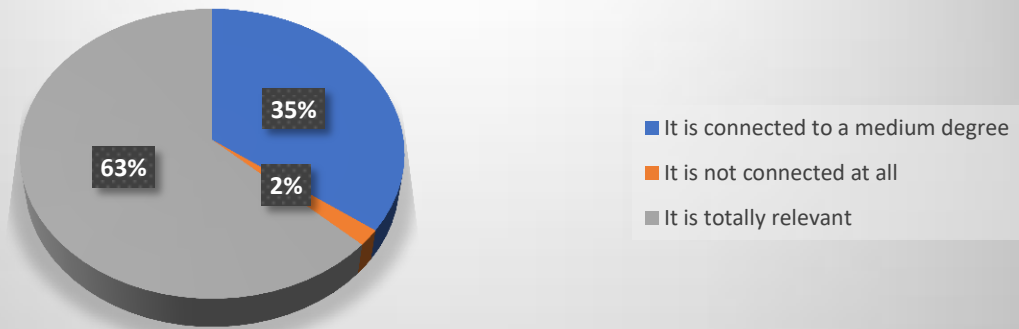
As to the integration of personal values and beliefs in youth training, responders are adamant. The vast majority (63%) admitted that this inevitably influences and is a part of their delivered training.

Whether that is desirable or not would depend on just what these values are. However, if we consider the high connection rate of youth policies and programmes to youth training as examined before, we can conclude that these programmes form a large part of the trainers' values and beliefs. These are in turn expected to be passed along to trainees through the delivered courses.

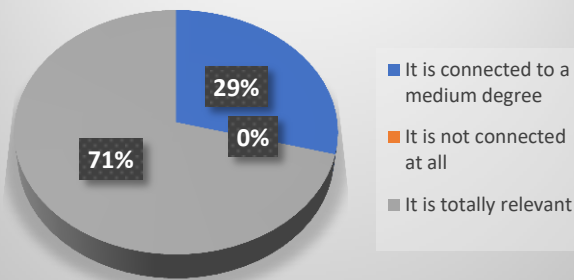
It is important to note that only 2% stated this as not connected at all to their youth training. It has to be noted that this is a stark contrast to the approximately 80% who stated they are able to distance themselves from their own views while delivering the training. The part here confirms what was said earlier that responders do view youth related policies and programmes as part of their values and beliefs. Alternatively, it could mean that they take these policies and programmes as the ones they should advance onto learners, infusing these into their teaching and keeping their personal opinion largely to themselves, in the sense of not allowing a negative effect on their teaching.

With the exception of Greece all the partners report similar results as the aggregated sum. For Greece the exception is with the 8% of participants that stated this as not connected at all.

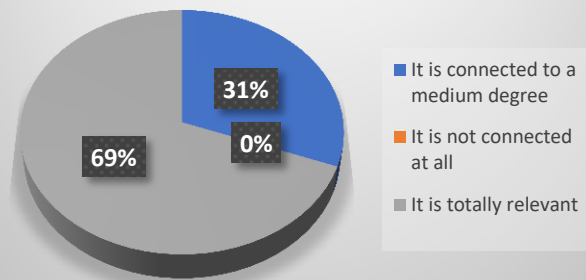
## How Connected Is Your Youth Training With the Integration of Values and Beliefs All



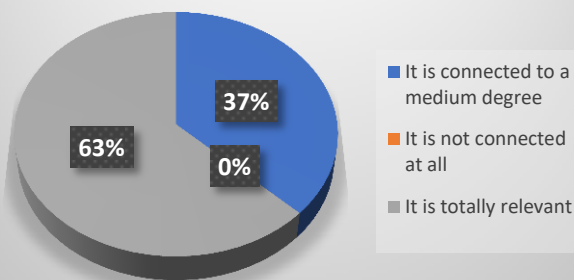
### How Connected Is Your Youth Training With the Integration of Values and Beliefs Cyprus



### How Connected Is Your Youth Training With the Integration of Values and Beliefs Germany



### How Connected Is Your Youth Training With the Integration of Values and Beliefs Romania



### How Connected Is Your Youth Training With the Integration of Values and Beliefs Greece

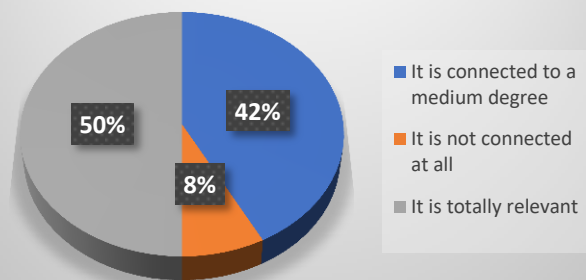


Figure 15: How Connected Is Your Youth Training With the Integration of Values and Beliefs

## Specific Evaluation of Competence

As to specifics of integrating values and beliefs, the overall confidence level rises. On average, more than 80% of participants feel comfortable in all the described competences. This is so to a medium or high degree. The lowest scoring category, though by no means low, is that of gathering training relevant sufficient political context information. Here, just 66% of participants stated to be ok with it or to definitely fulfil this competence as opposed to the earlier mentioned more than 80% who claimed likewise on the rest of the statements.

Based on this result and at the very least, participants seem to understand the importance of responsibly integrating values and beliefs into the training. By responsibly we mean that they do so in an open and democratic manner. This comprises such example as including their trainees into a fact-based discussion, comparing views and arguing for or against in a non-antagonistic manner that encourages them to further share their values and belief system.

For the countries themselves the results are about the same. For Cyprus, the average high 80% consensus is reached for all categories and even surpasses it to a total 90% competence level. The notable general exception of gathering training relevant sufficient political context information holds also true here with 70% of participants feeling at least a moderate level of confidence with it. The same image is repeated with respect to Romania with the same category gathering an average of 60% confidence.

Greece and Germany however differ from the high confidence levels of Cyprus and Romania. Though the general high levels of confidence are repeated here too, they are so repeated by a relatively lower confidence level. This is accompanied by a rather high stated inability to meet the said competences.

In specific for Germany between 15%-30% of the participants feel they have to improve on the categories of gathering training relevant sufficient political context information, interpreting own values and beliefs in the context for the training, reflecting on own values and beliefs without endangering the training, explaining values and beliefs without overtaking the group and showing interest and sensitivity to other's values and beliefs.

Greece, too, shared the same perspective as Germany but the ratio is higher here. It accounts for anywhere from 26% to 46% in the comparable categories. The competences with which participants in

Greece seem to struggle the most are those of explaining their position on a matter without overtaking the group, contrasting/questioning all opinions and interpreting own values and beliefs within the context of the training course. Here, 46%, 46% and 42% of participants respectively feel they need to work more on those competences to improve or develop these competences. These results are not alarming per se but do show that these countries need to invest a bit more on these skills.

## Integrating Values and Beliefs All

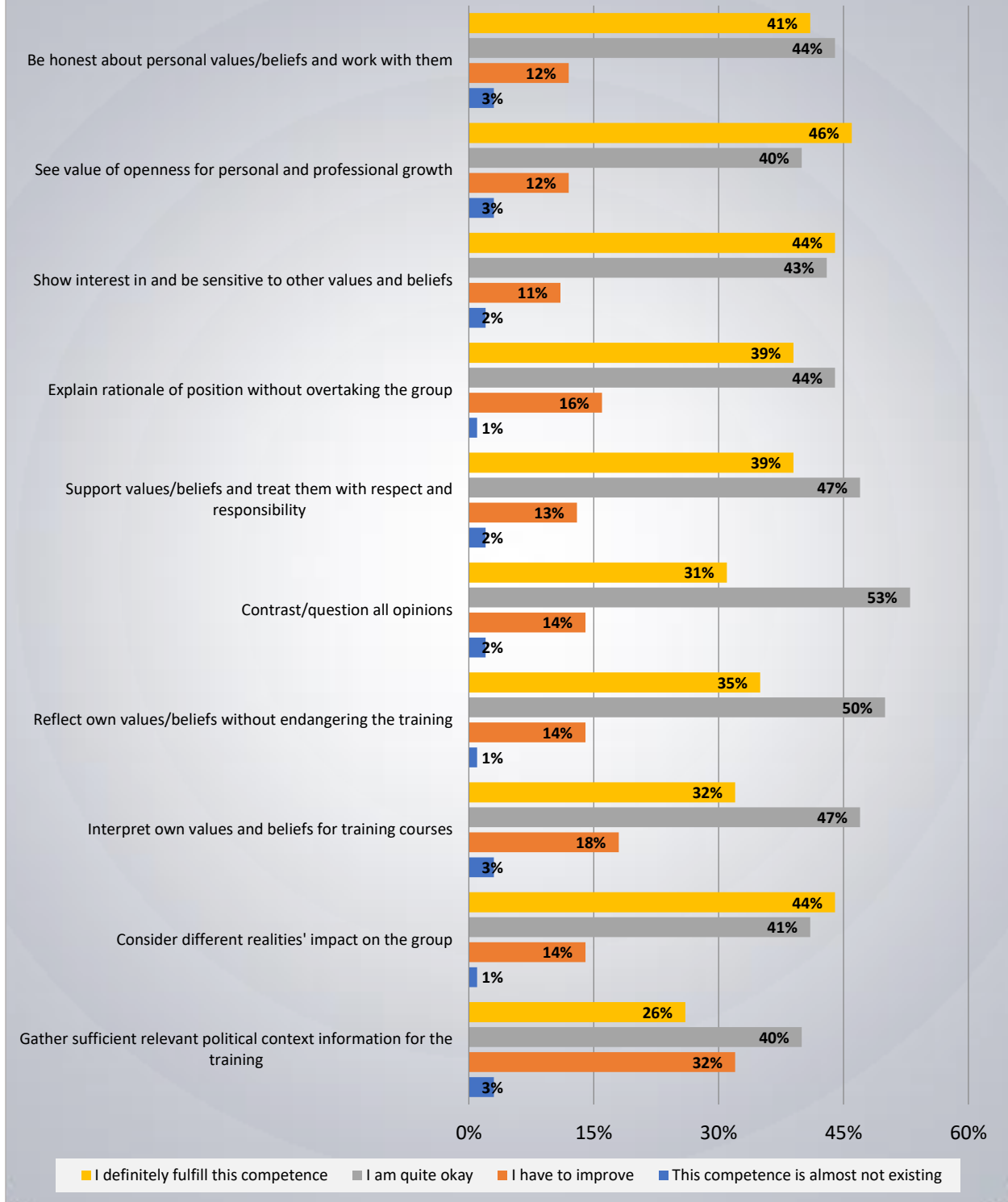


Figure 16: Integrating Values and Beliefs All

## Integrating Values and Beliefs Cyprus

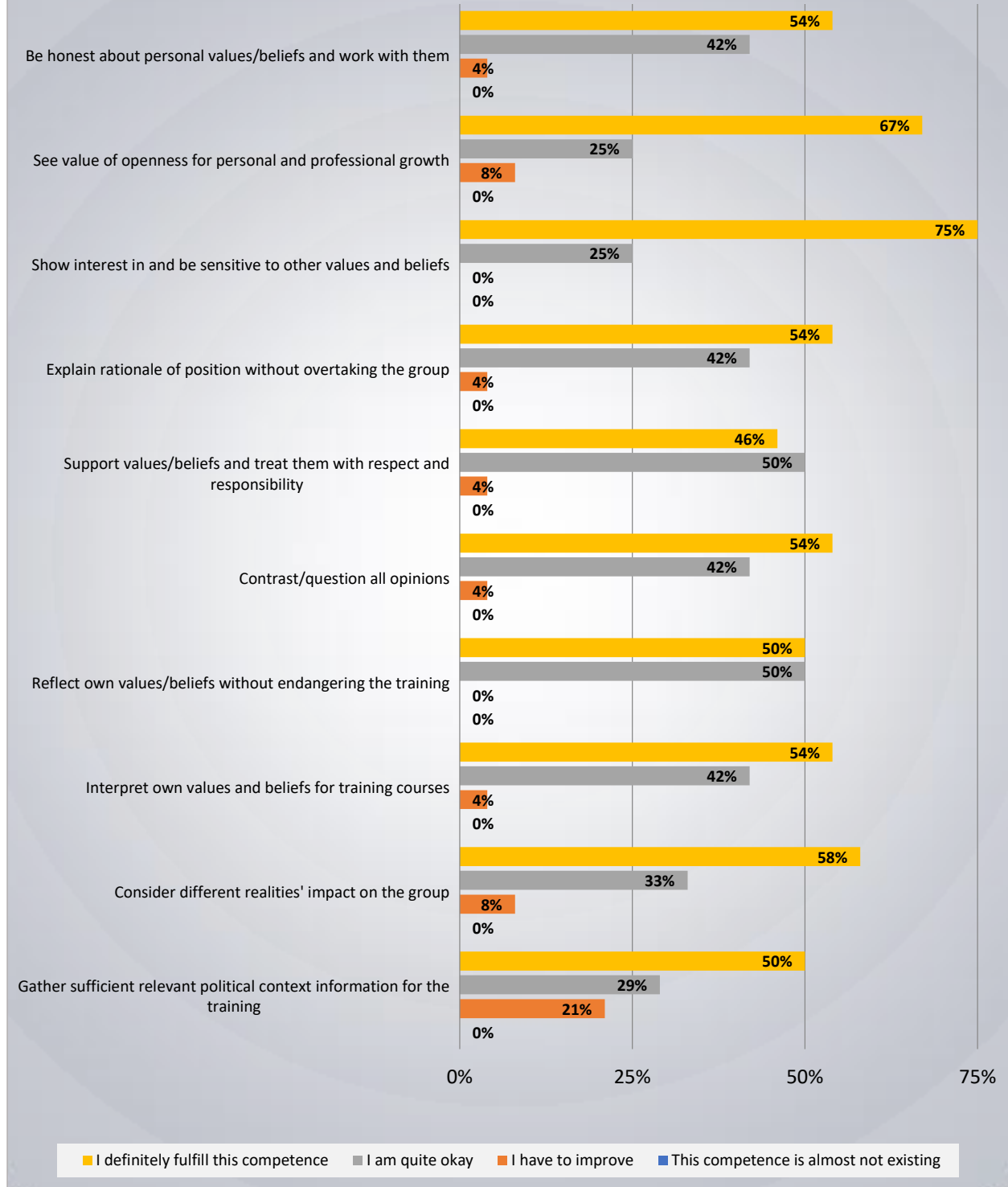


Figure 17: Integrating Values and Beliefs Cyprus

## Integrating Values and Beliefs Germany

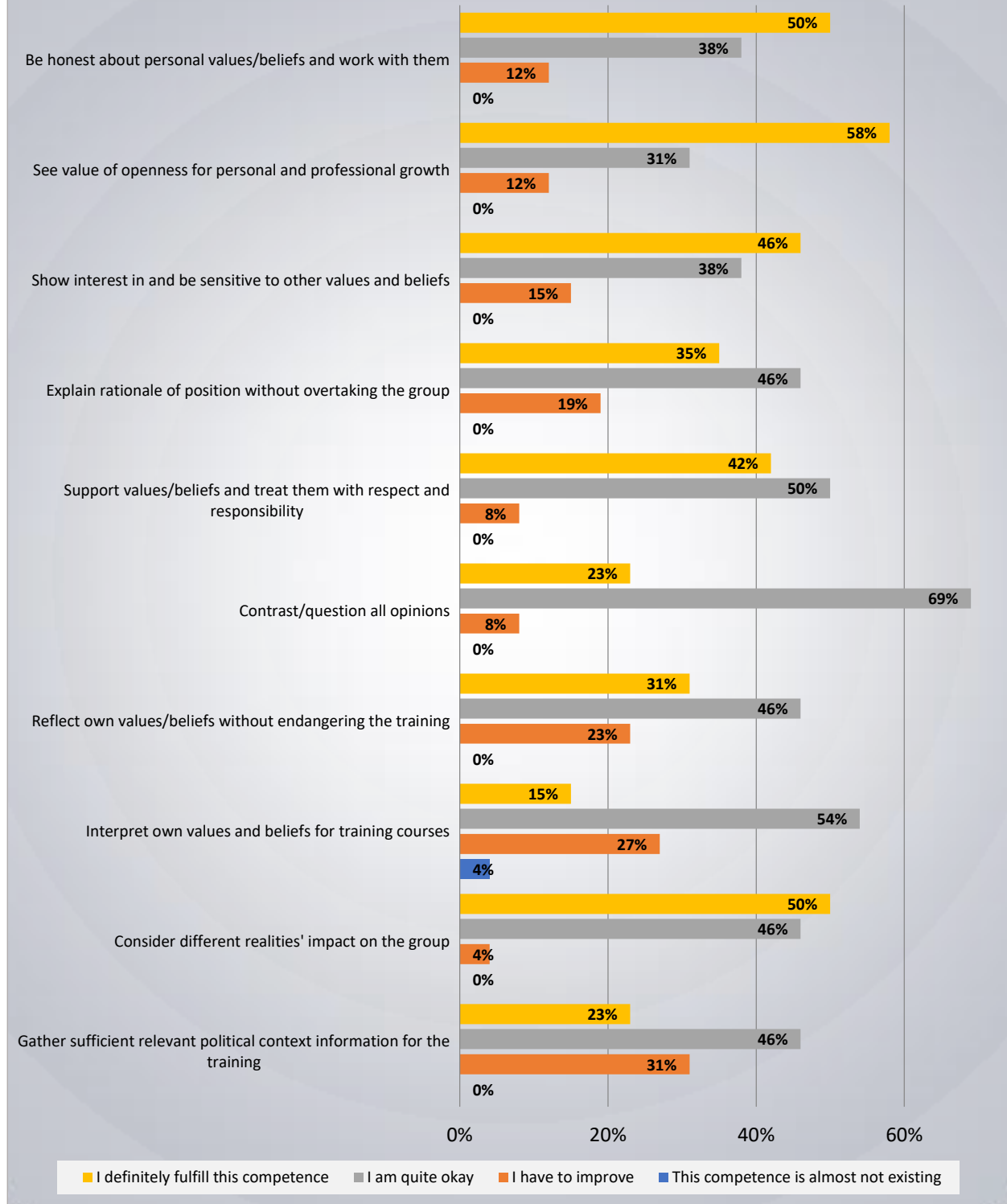


Figure 18: Integrating Values and Beliefs Germany



## Integrating Values and Beliefs Romania

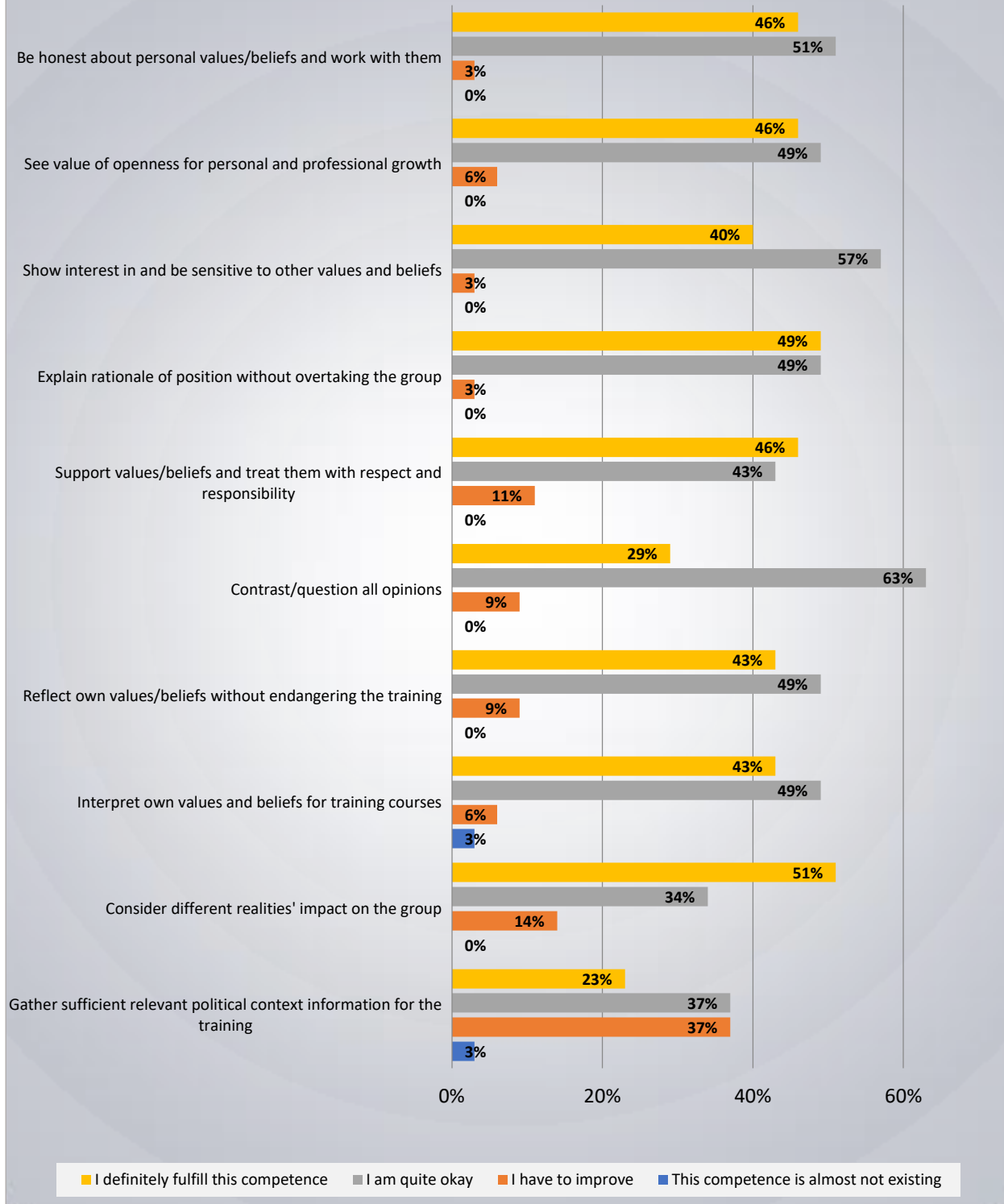


Figure 19: Integrating Values and Beliefs Romania

## Integrating Values and Beliefs Greece

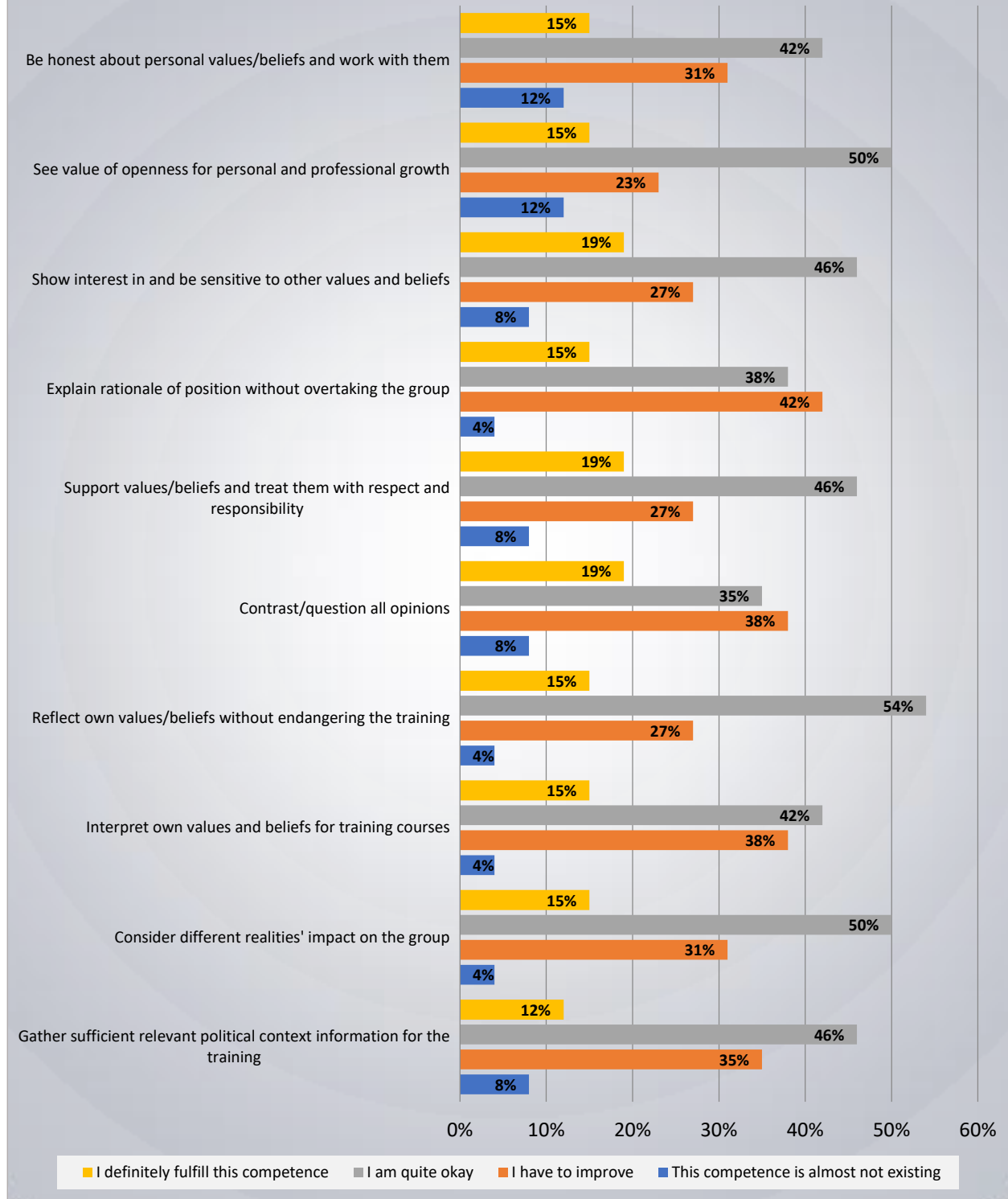


Figure 20: Integrating Values and Beliefs Greece

## Part 5: Supporting Learners in Developing Critical Thinking

### General Evaluation

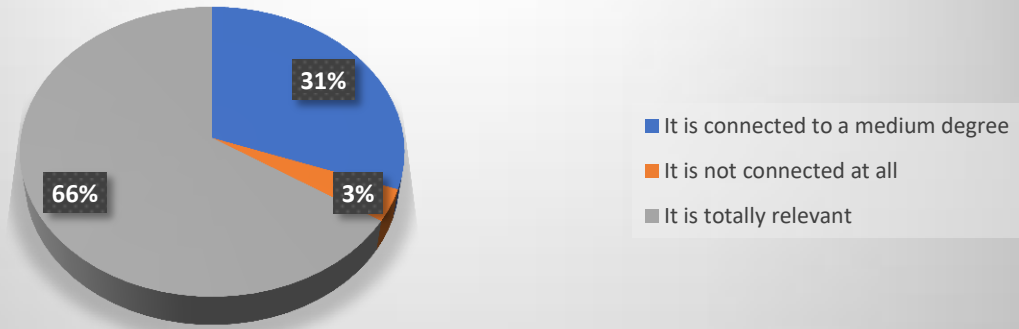
As to connecting youth training with critical thinking skills, the results are positive. Far more than half of the participants (66%) stated this to be totally relevant to their delivered form of training. Comparatively, 31% of our youth trainers consider this to be somewhat or to a medium degree relevant and just 3% as totally unconnected.

This is exceptional as critical thinking is one of the fundamental skills, if not the most fundamental skill that learners should receive and trainers impart upon. It is especially crucial with regards to civic engagement and participation. This is so as it allows learners to better evaluate information while engaging in healthier discussions with others, all the while maintaining a more objective mind set and a general openness to opinions.

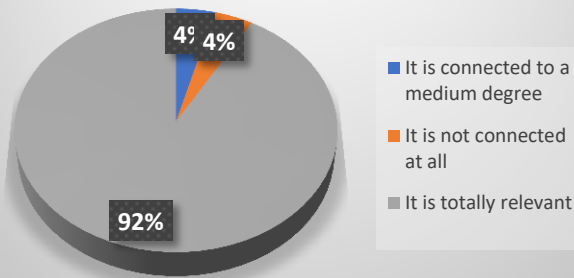
As to the specific partners themselves, the results follow this aggregate average with the exception of Cyprus. Here, almost all participants (92%) considered critical thinking skills and youth training to be totally connected. The highest percentage of youth trainers who also thought of this to be totally connected, after Cyprus, was observed in Germany with 65%, followed by Romania and Greece with 57% and 54% respectively.

The ones on the other end who found this to be totally unconnected represented only a small minority. They account for just 3% of the total sample, with 4% for all partners except Romania which reported a slightly smaller ratio (3%). However, none of these percentages should raise any alarm.

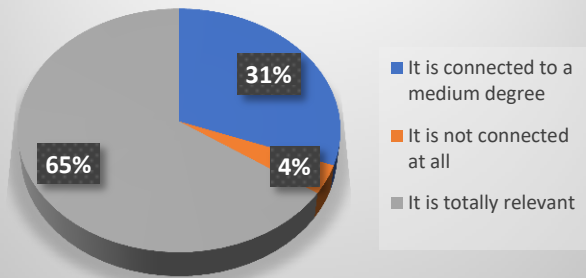
### How Connected Is Your Youth Training in Supporting Critical Thinking All



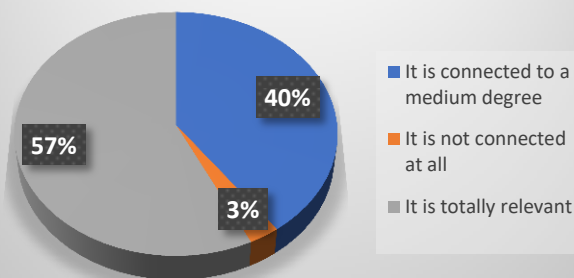
### How Connected Is Your Youth Training in Supporting Critical Thinking Cyprus



### How Connected Is Your Youth Training in Supporting Critical Thinking Germany



### How Connected Is Your Youth Training in Supporting Critical Thinking Romania



### How Connected Is Your Youth Training in Supporting Critical Thinking Greece

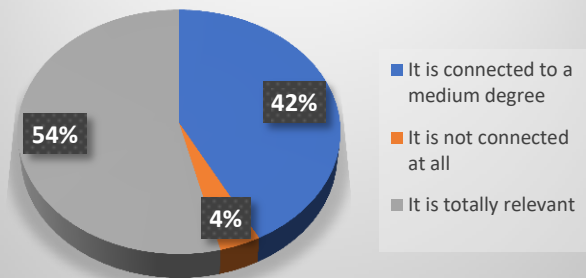


Figure 21: Supporting Critical Thinking General Evaluation

## Specific Evaluation of Competences

As to the specific competences related to critical thinking the results are rather mixed. In most cases participants by about or close to 50% feel they absolutely meet these competences. However, this is offset by an average rate of 25% who feel they need to improve or don't meet it at all. Still another 25% feel they meet these skills, which are related to the development of critical thinking by learners, to a medium degree.

This can be contrasted with the earlier 65% of participants who feel the development of critical thinking skills by learners to be totally relevant to their delivered Youth Training. As such the message is clear. Though most feel that the two are and should be related not all possess the necessary skills to do so or they don't feel comfortable in exercising them. As such the partners need to pay specific attention to this category as it appears to be among the most challenging.

Beyond this, the sub category where participants felt the most comfortable with, was with respect to listening wholeheartedly to learner's expression of values and beliefs. Here a combined total of 88% of participants felt they absolutely (49%) met or meet this to a medium degree (39%). Combined with the next most popular category, that of empathy/truthfulness in providing learners space to explore values/beliefs/thoughts, which scored slightly lower than the previous one (combined 86%), these results are at least somewhat encouraging. This is so as the development of critical thinking skills must first begin by showcasing on the part of the trainer this active listening skill.

By comparison, the category where participants exhibited the least confidence was with respect to critically examining policies in the context/objectives of the training. This is understandable given the low relevant confidence level exhibited with respect to this category in Part 2 above. To remind you, just 37% of participants stated that this is totally relevant to their delivered training. Beyond this, the rest of the categories follow the general norm described above.

As to the partners themselves results are also greatly mixed. The highest overall level of confidence was exhibited in Cyprus where the vast majority (65% and more) felt they met all these competences. The highest consensus in Cyprus was reached with respect to the categories of empathy/truthfulness in providing learners space to explore values/beliefs/thoughts and providing space for dialogue/interaction considering learners' values/beliefs. These achieved an unparalleled 96% of participants feeling they meet the skills absolutely (67%) or at least to a medium degree (29%) with respect to both. The lowest,

though by no means low, category for Cyprus, using different elements to addresses learners' civic engagement in work/life, the same consensus reached 87% as opposed to 13% which stated they felt like the needed to work more on this skill.

Greece is the most controversial of the partners with the overall confidence level being rather low. Just 50% of participants feel the meet this competence with the results varying among categories. The highest confidence level was exhibited with respect to the category of using different elements to addresses learners' civic engagement in work/life where 84% of participants felt they met this skill absolutely or to a medium degree. The lowest scoring category among the many low scoring categories was with respect to using group, training environment/process for learners to develop civic engagement. Here, 54% of participants felt they either needed to work on it more or were completely lacking the skill.

Germany and Romania find themselves somewhat in the middle of the extremes. For Romania, the average confidence level fell just below the aggregated average of the whole sample to around 60% with the exception of few categories. In these two instances, the highest scoring category was generating reflection/self-exploration space connected to learners' work/life with 89% of participants feeling they met this competence.

Germany was somewhere between Romania and Cyprus. The average confidence level was close to 75% but did also exhibit a large level of variation among participants. This variation for some categories reached as high as 38% feeling they needed to work more on the skill. The Highest scoring category was with respect to Listens wholeheartedly to learners' expressions of their values and beliefs where 92% of participants felt they either met this criterion absolutely or to a medium degree. The Categories with the most problem in the sense of exhibiting the least confidence were those of Uses different elements to addresses learners' civic engagement in work/life. Here and similar to Greece 38% felt they needed to work more on the skill. Another 38% felt the same with respect to both Uses group, training environment/process for learners to develop civic engagement and Critically Examines policies in the context/ objectives of the training. This second sub-category has been often found to be challenging for the partners in general.

## Supporting Learners' Critical Thinking Specific Competences All

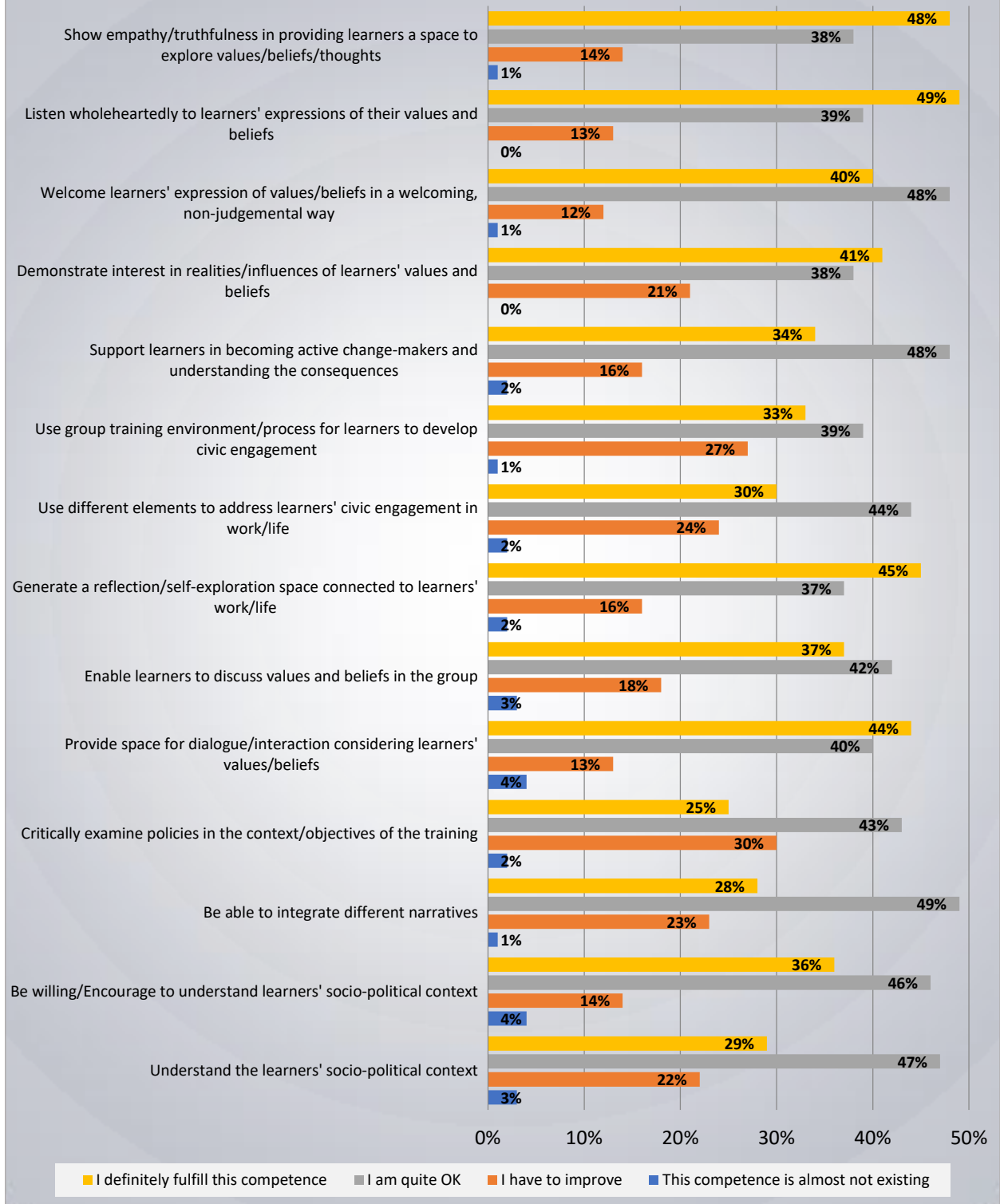


Figure 22: Supporting Learners' Critical Thinking Specific Competences All

## Supporting Learners' Critical Thinking Specific Competences Cyprus

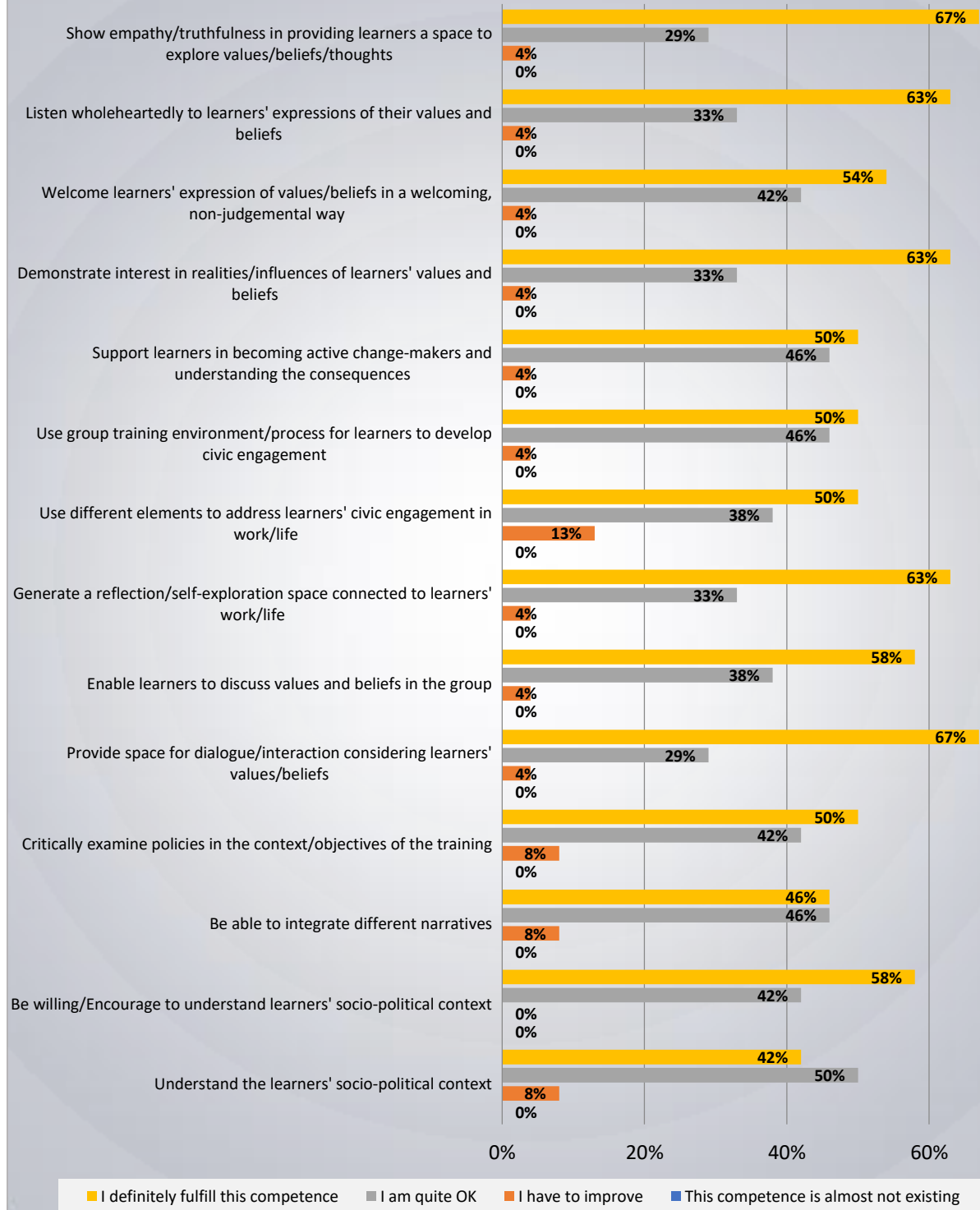


Figure 23: Supporting Learners' Critical Thinking Specific Competences Cyprus



## Supporting Learners' Critical Thinking Specific Competences Germany

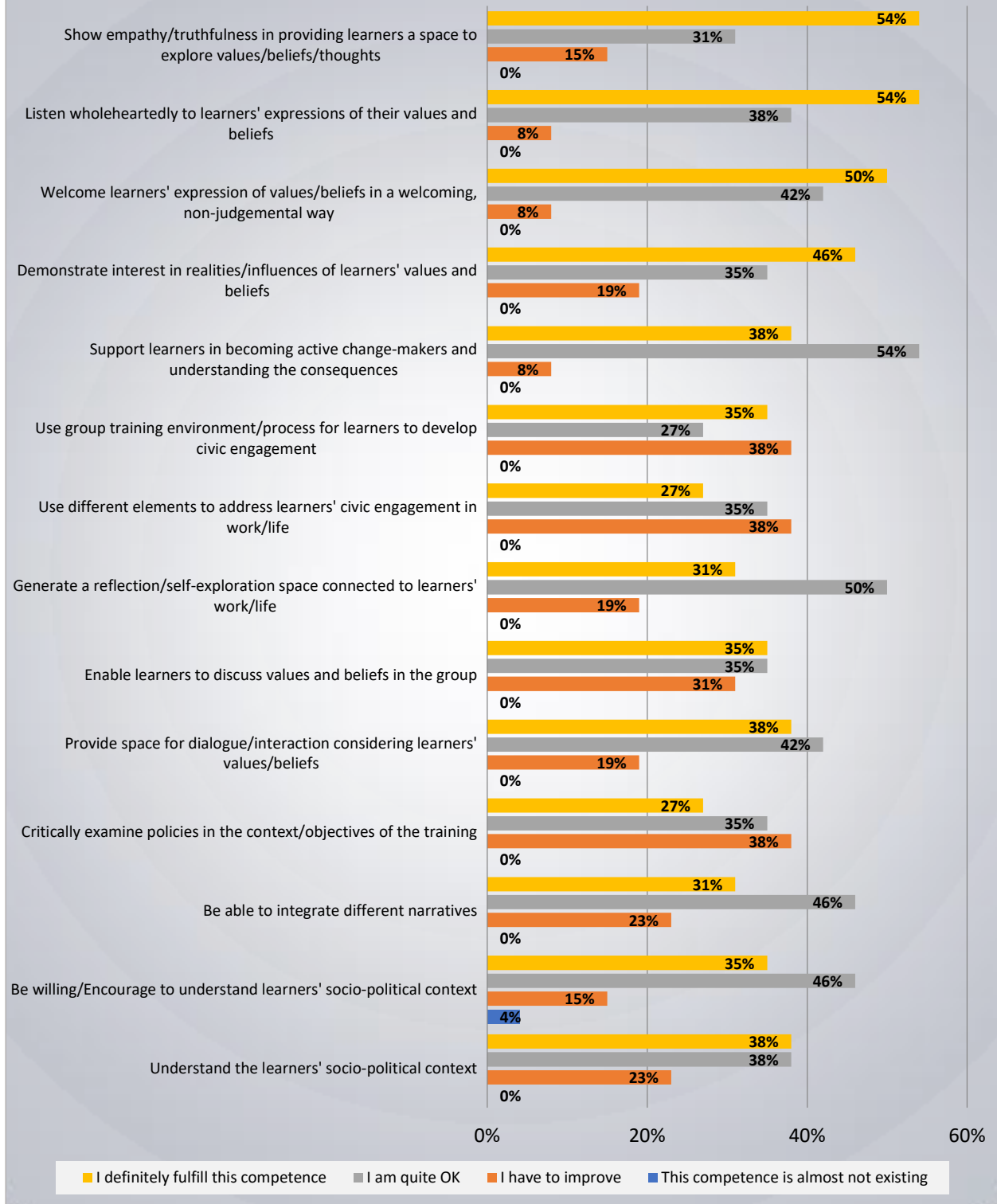


Figure 24: Supporting Learners' Critical Thinking Specific Competences Germany

## Supporting Learners' Critical Thinking Specific Competences Romania

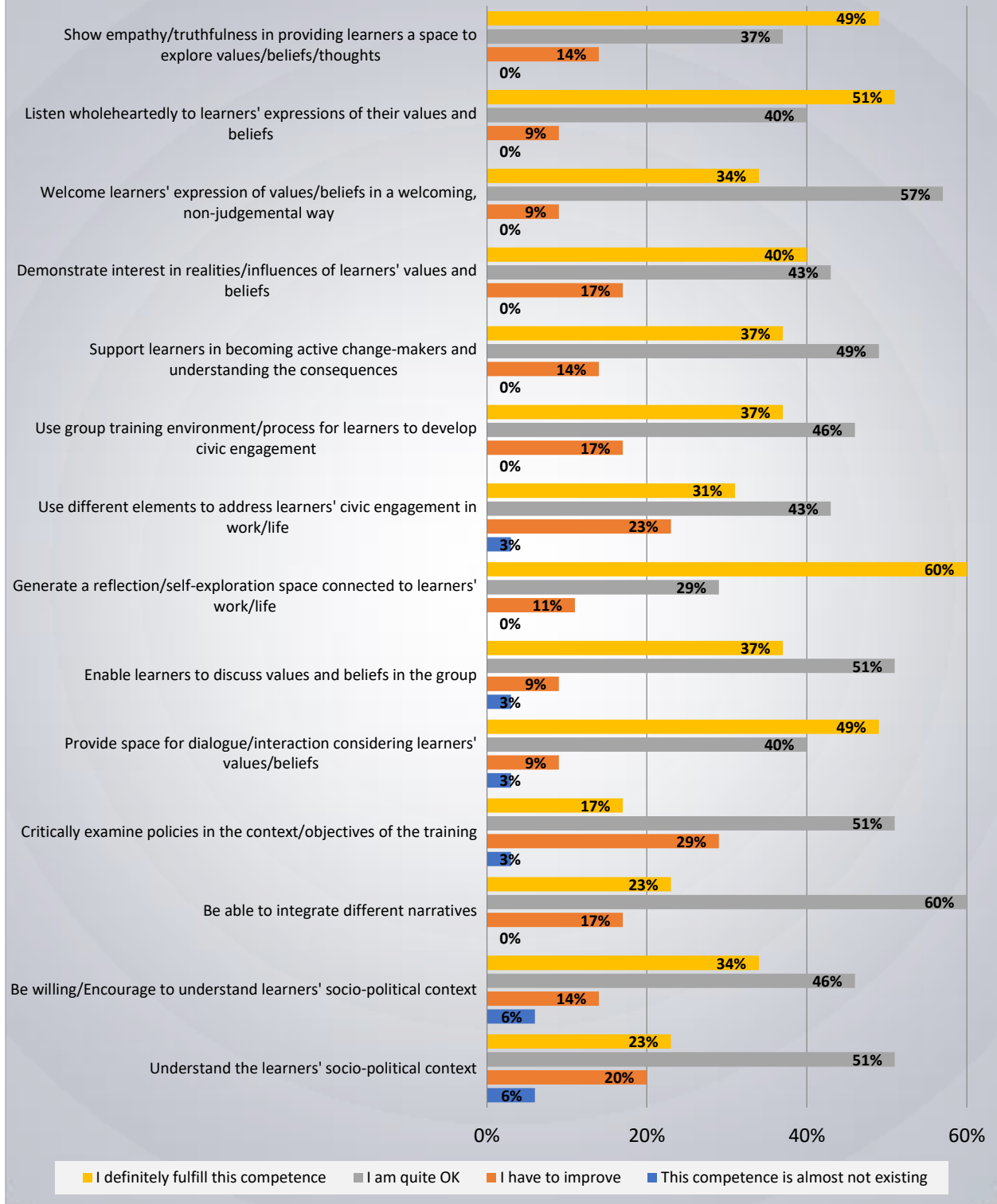


Figure 25: Supporting Learners' Critical Thinking Specific Competences Romania

## Supporting Learners' Critical Thinking Specific Competences Greece

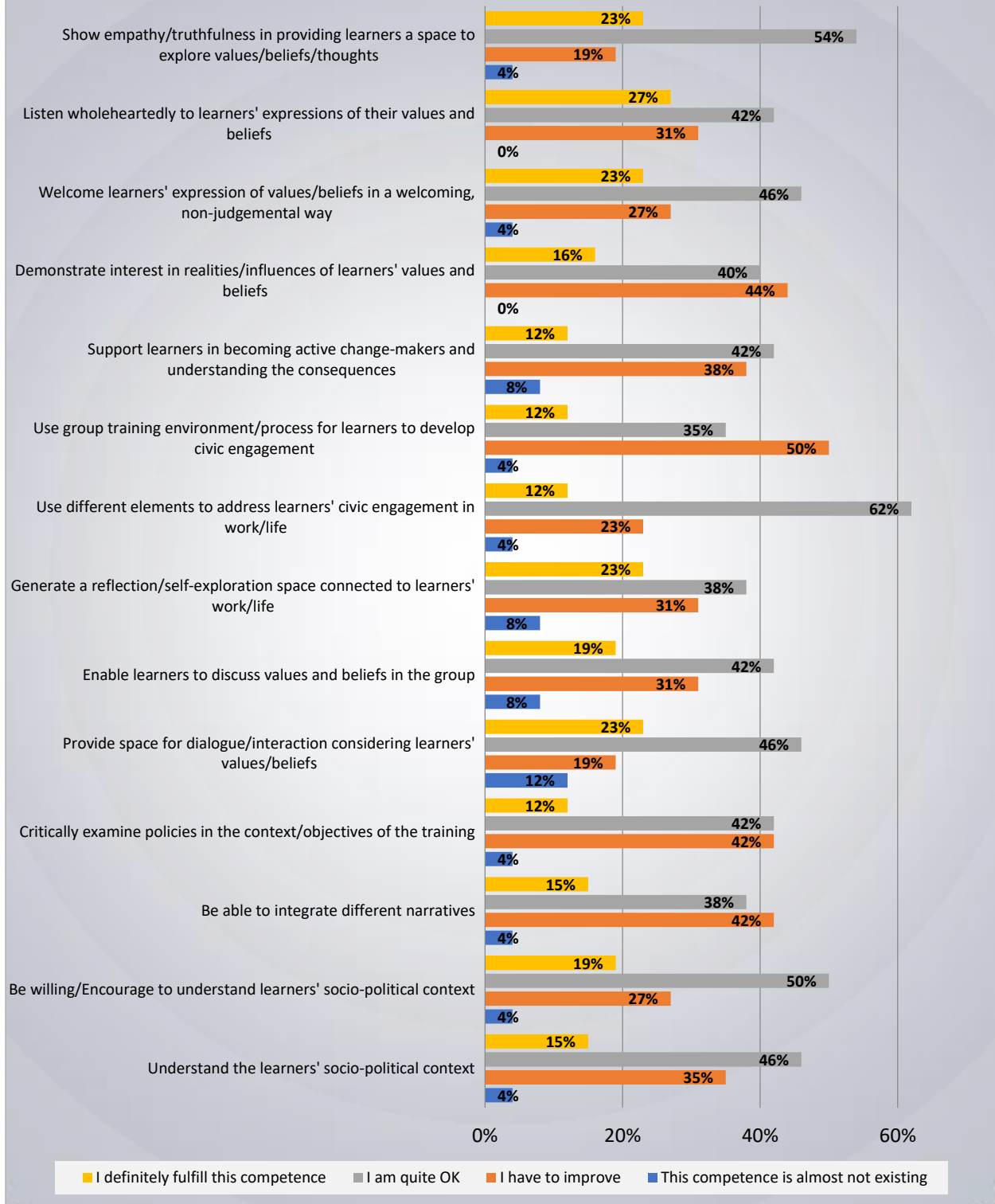


Figure 26: Supporting Learners' Critical Thinking Specific Competences Greece

## Part 6: Applying Democracy and Human Rights Principles

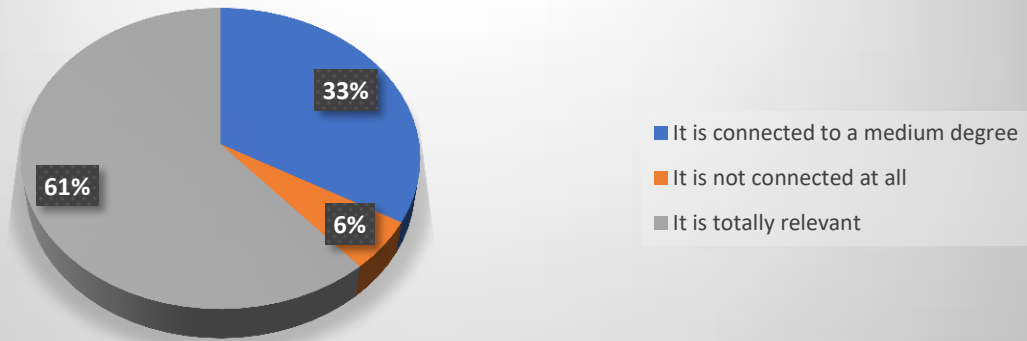
### General Evaluation

As to the final element of the issue, most participants agree. Connecting youth training with principles of democracy and Human Rights is something that is totally relevant to their provision of youth training.

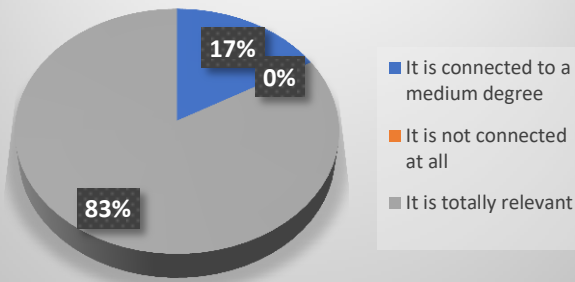
Beyond the 61% that agree that it is totally relevant, another 33% agree to a medium degree. Just 6% of participants stated they consider it not connected at all. This is very important as civic participation and the political aspect of training can be guided to its full potential when based upon mutual respect for democratic principles and Human Rights. The overwhelming majority of participants seem to understand this fully and to a large extent implement it.

As to the participating countries themselves, the results are similar. Cyprus is at the top with 83% of participants stating that including democratic principles and Human Rights aspects in their delivered training was totally relevant. Cyprus is followed by Germany (65%), Romania (54%) and Greece (46%) with the number of those stating this to be unconnected being kept exceptionally low at 3% or lower for all except Greece. Here, those who felt this to be unconnected rose to 19% of the sample. Perhaps Greece can have a closer look into this area calling upon the partnership to help develop a more targeted educational solution on this.

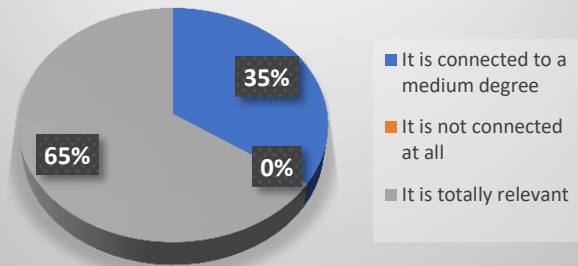
**How Connected Is Your Youth Training with Applying Democracy and Human Rights Principles All**



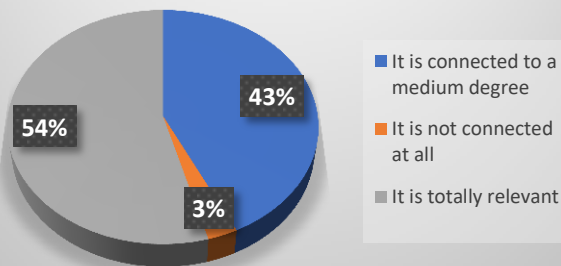
**How Connected Is Your Youth Training with Applying Democracy and Human Rights Principles Cyprus**



**How Connected Is Your Youth Training with Applying Democracy and Human Rights Principles Germany**



**How Connected Is Your Youth Training with Applying Democracy and Human Rights Principles Romania**



**How Connected Is Your Youth Training with Applying Democracy and Human Rights Principles Greece**

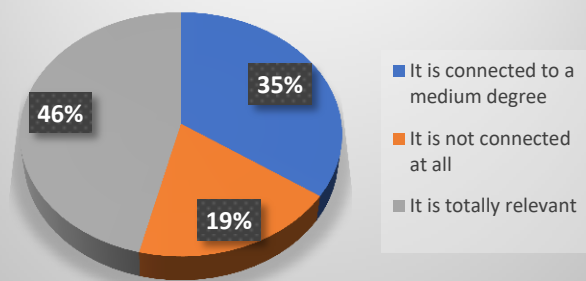


Figure 27: Connecting Youth Training with Democracy and Human Rights

## Specific Evaluation

As to the specific competences most on average feel they meet these to a medium degree. Combined as such, at least 72% of participants feel quite confident they do possess the skill required to connect youth training with fundamental democratic processes and principles of Human Rights as opposed to around 25% who feel they need to work further on the skillset. An unalarming 3% considered themselves as completely lacking in this area.

With respect to the countries themselves, the same patterns as before are observed. Cyprus is once more at the top of the confidence level, averaging about 57% of participant claiming to absolutely possess these competences. Another 36% feel they do so on a moderate degree as oppose to about 8% who feel they either need to improve or are completely lacking in the area. The same positive feeling is true for Romania although to a lower degree where the same ratios stood at 35%, 45% and 20% respectively.

The highest scoring category for Cyprus was proactively looking for spaces to explicitly or implicitly tackle democracy and human rights principles. Here 96% stated to be able to do so. The lowest category concerned paying attention that the overall process within the training course is consistent with Human Rights and democracy principles with 92% of the sample feeling likewise. For Romania the highest scoring category was also the same with 89% and the lowest, allowing participants to experience a democratic learning community in the context of the course, had 69% of the participants stating they have this competence to at least a moderate degree.

Germany and Greece stand yet again at the other extreme. Here, for both the average confidence level was around 65% with a significant number of participants feeling the need to either improve this competence or found themselves completely unsuited to it. The highest scoring category for Greece was the same as with Cyprus and Romania with 77% of their participants. For Germany the highest was highlighting moments and situations to explicitly illustrate those principles and their importance with 80% of youth trainers stating confident in doing so. For Greece on the other hand the lowest was allowing participants to experience a democratic learning community in the context of the course with 58% and for Germany paying attention that the overall process within the training course is consistent with human rights and democracy principles which gather close to 40% of the sample claiming they felt they needed more work on this skill.

## Applying Democracy and Human Rights Principles All

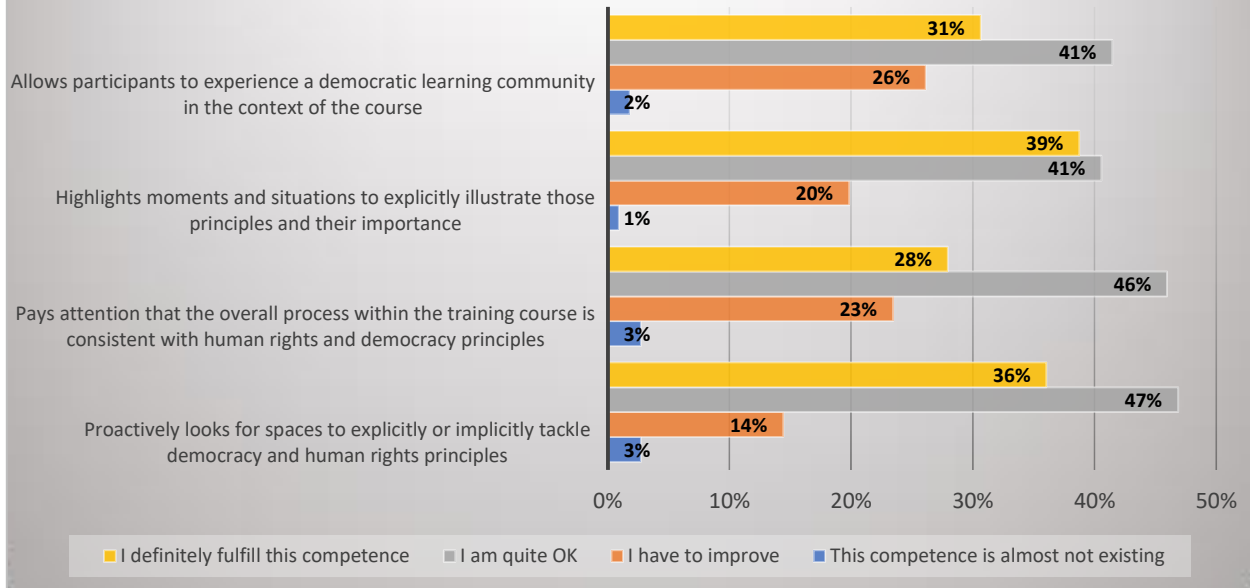


Figure 29: Democracy and Human Rights All

## Applying Democracy and Human Rights Principles Cyprus

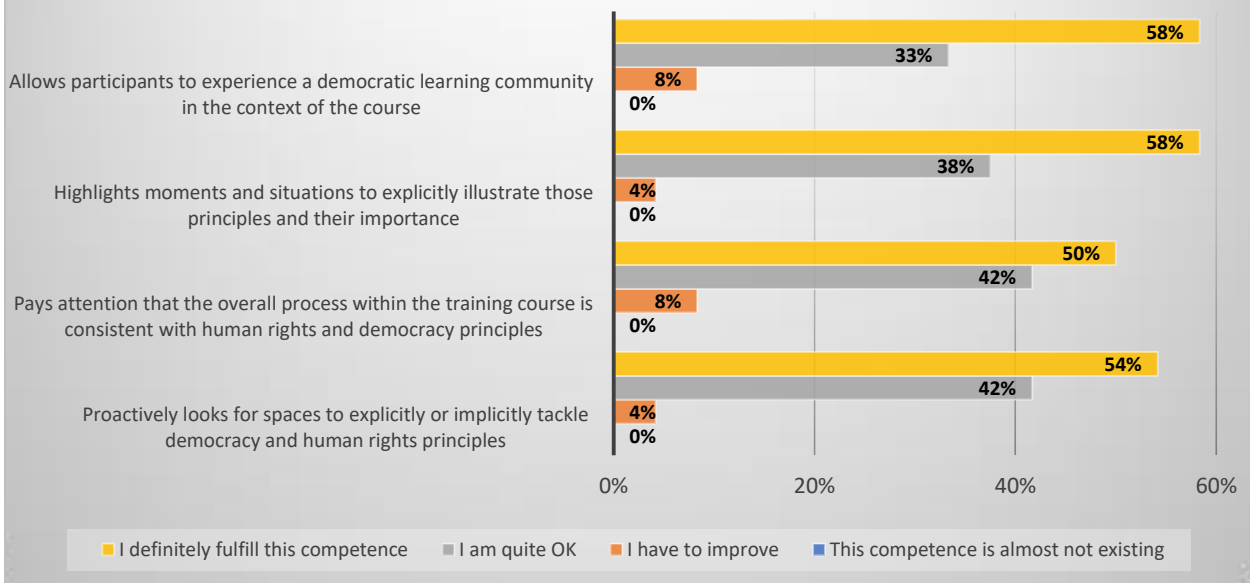


Figure 29: Democracy and Human Rights Cyprus

## Applying Democracy and Human Rights Principles Germany

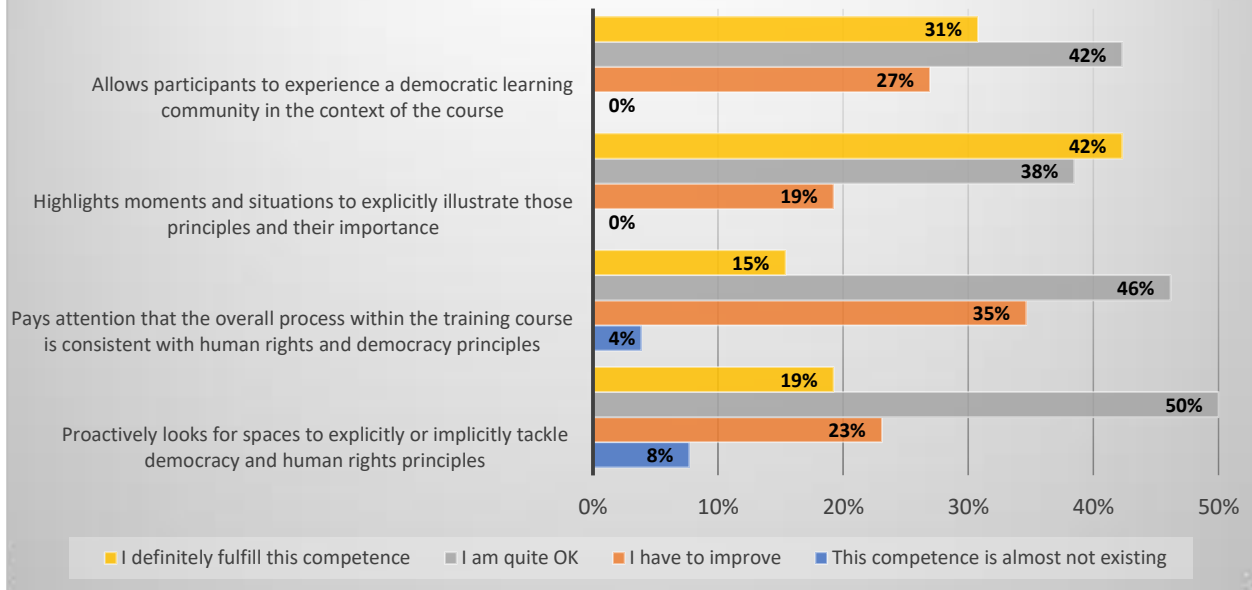


Figure 31: Democracy and Human Rights Germany

## Applying Democracy and Human Rights Principles Romania

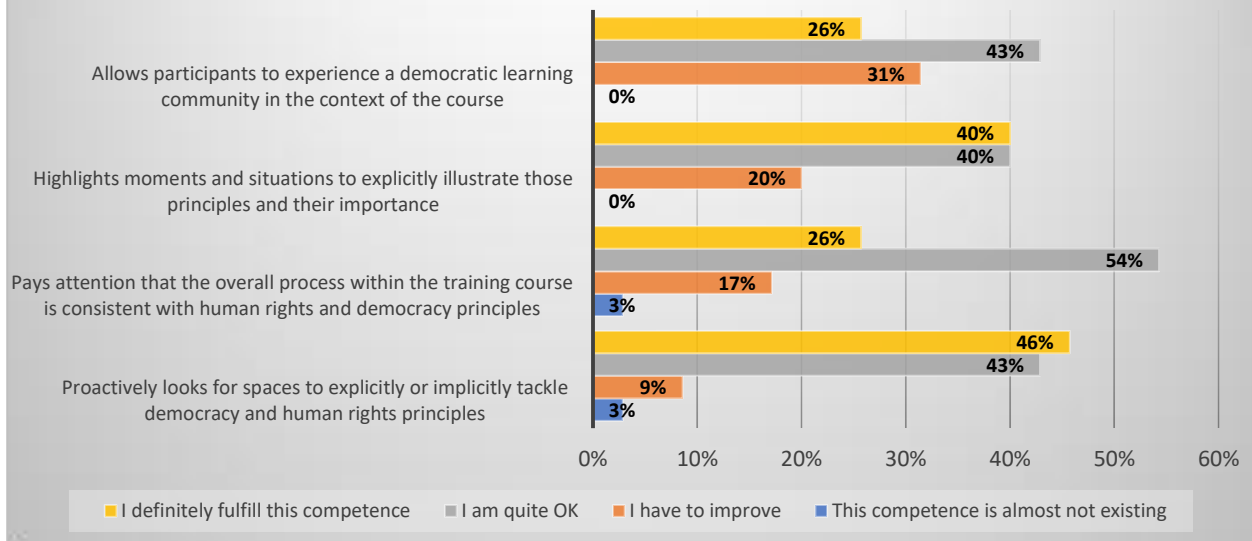


Figure 31: Democracy and Human Rights Romania



## Applying Democracy and Human Rights Principles Greece

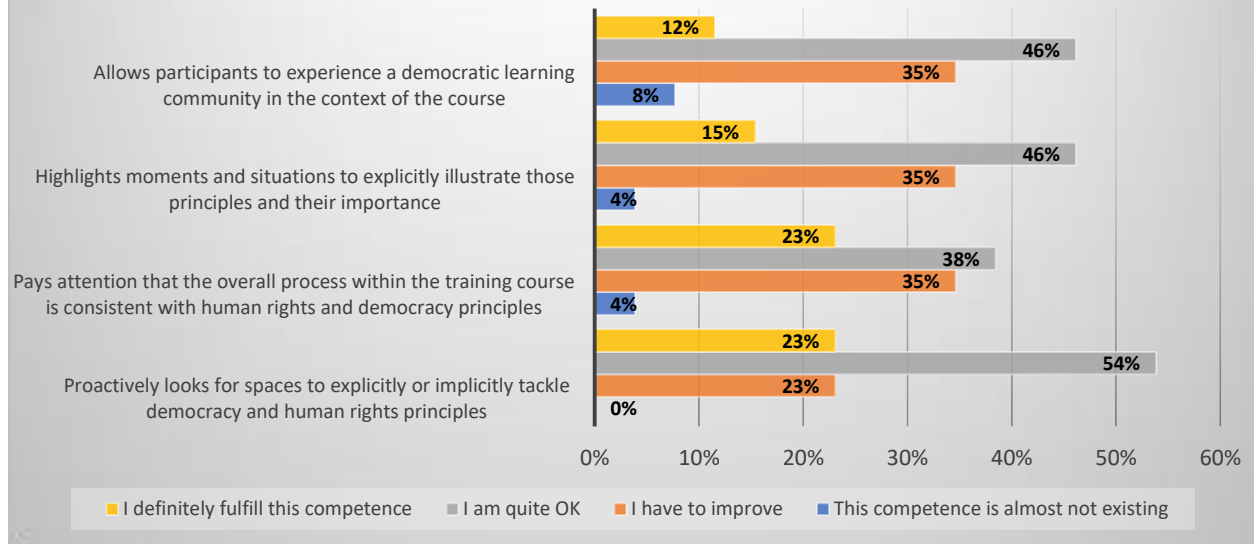


Figure 32: Democracy and Human Rights Greece

## Conclusion and Future Commitment

The overall image portrayed is a rather positive one. Participants seem to at the very least understand the importance of including a political and civic dimension in their training. They also seem to be rather familiar or at least to a large extent understanding of the importance of connecting youth train with such things as youth policies, programmes, values, beliefs, critical thinking and so on.

On average over the total competences tested, around 50% considered these to be absolutely relevant to the delivery of youth training. The most problematic category seems to be that of connecting youth training with relevant policies and programmes. Here, just 37% of participants stated it as totally relevant. Comparatively the most confidence exhibiting one is with respect to connecting youth training with developing critical thinking where 66% of participants stated this as totally relevant.

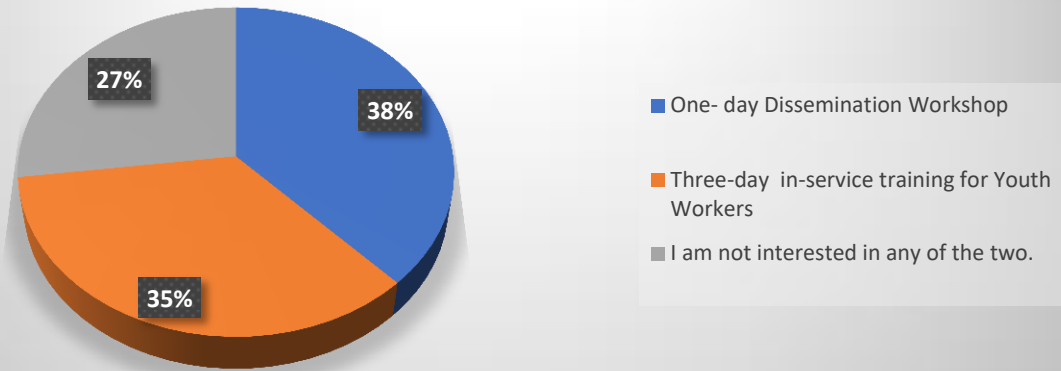
The willingness of participants to develop or further develop these skills has been made obvious. This is so as in total 63% of participants have confirmed their willingness to either participate in a relevant one-day dissemination workshop or even a three-day train the trainer workshop. Just 27% of participant stated to not be interested in neither. Of course, this should not be taken to mean that they are not interested in the topic nor that they do not wish to develop or further develop their skills. It just expressed that they may prefer a different tool or setting to advance. Of the rest, 38% opted for the one-day workshop and 35% for the three-day train the trainer workshop.

As to the countries themselves results vary. Cyprus and Greece are close to the norm with just 25% and 31% of participants respectively showing no interest in either the one-day dissemination workshop or the three-day training. Of the rest, 54% for Cyprus and 38% for Greece stated they preferred the dissemination workshop while 21% and 31% opted for the train the trainer workshop.

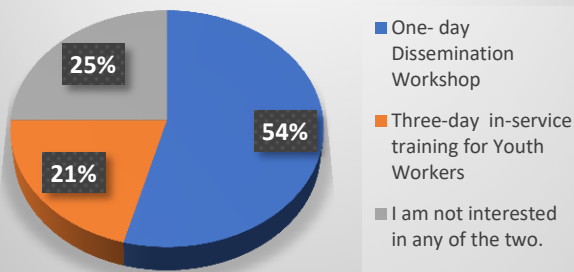
The two outliers are Germany and Romania. For Germany a 46% ratio stated they would not be interested in participating while just 11% stated so for Romania. Out of those who suggested they wish to participate, 52% for Romania and 31% for Germany desired to attend the one-day dissemination workshop while another 37% and 23% the three-day training.

As such, these numbers showcase both the desire and the necessity to further the relevant training. This is understandable given the importance of the topic and the weight it carries for both trainers and learners in further developing their competences and learning to learn competences.

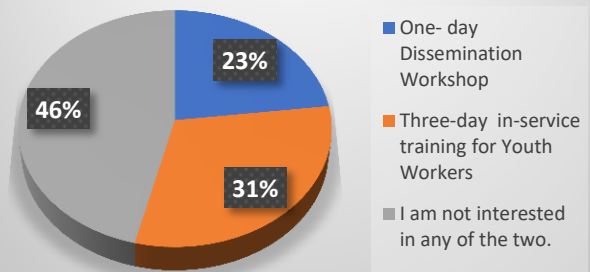
### Future Participant Commitment to the Project All



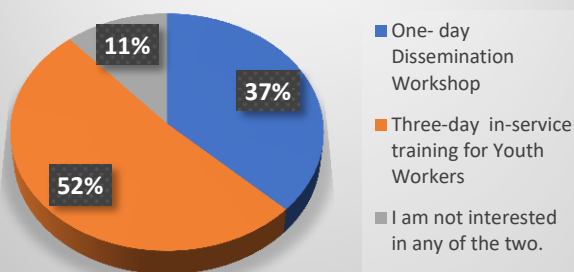
### Future Participant Commitment to the Project Cyprus



### Future Participant Commitment to the Project Germany



### Future Participant Commitment to the Project Romania



### Future Participant Commitment to the Project Greece

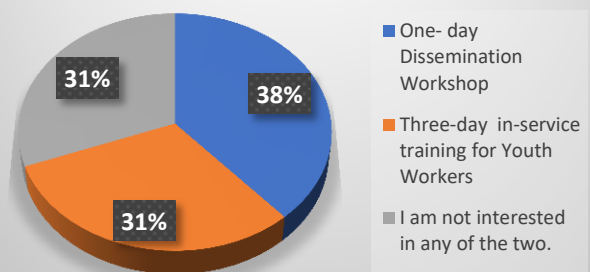


Figure 33: Future Participant Commitment to the Project

Beyond this, the survey revealed some interesting features. Most participants do not belong in a political party and even those that do, only keep an inactive membership to it. As such, party politics cannot really be said to significantly influence the method and context of the provided training. Instead, personal views and beliefs seem to play the predominant role in influencing the trainers. However, as it has been already stipulated in the relevant Part 4 (Integrating Values and Beliefs) and throughout this document, this is done in an as far as possible unbiased and open manner.

Despite this, it is problematic that among the lowest scoring categories was that of integrating policies and programmes relevant to youth training. This is so as, if improved, it can in turn affect the training of participants and the role of the trainers in a positive way. Partners should make an effort to correct this aspect, perhaps by providing trainers with more accessible data into these relevant youth training resources. Despite this, the category in question in general was not so problematic in its specifics, meaning the indexes assigned to this. As such perhaps it is only a matter of encouragement and lack of clarity.

On the other side the highest scoring category in terms of indexes was integrating values and beliefs. Here, 83% of participants stated to fulfil the 10 different indexes assigned to this category to a medium or high degree as opposed to 17% that claimed not to do so at all or only to a basic degree. The next most well received category, always in terms of indexes, was supporting learners in developing critical thinking with 80% and 20%, followed by connecting youth policies and educational programmes with 78% and 12% and applying democracy and Human Rights with 76% and 24% respectively. The results clearly confirm the participants' general image of themselves and their competences while refining this further into more manageable categories that can thus be better addressed with the participants and between the partner countries themselves. This being said, the overall research and the combination of the findings help to better understand the next steps of the project and the trainings that are to follow.

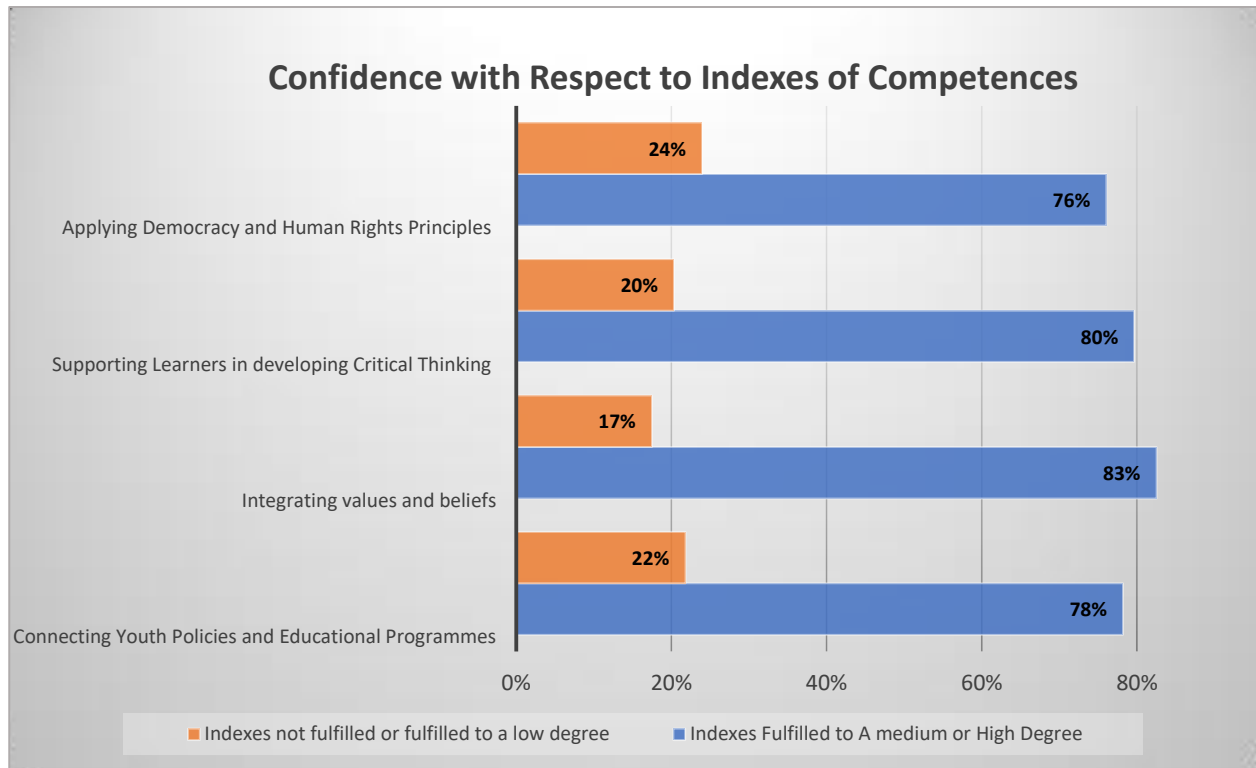


Figure 34: Performance on All Competences