



# INSIGHTS FROM THE YOUTH LEADERS ON THEIR NEEDS, PREFERENCES, AND CHALLENGES ON WHAT MOTIVATES AND TRAINS THEM TO GET ENGAGED IN DEMOCRATIC LIFE

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**Authors:**

Bianca Balea, PhD., Fundatia Noi Orizonturi Lupeni, Romania – [www.noiorizonturi.ro](http://www.noiorizonturi.ro)

**Contributors**

Fundatia EuroEd, Romania – [www.euroed.ro](http://www.euroed.ro)

AWO International e.V., Germany – [www.awointernational.de](http://www.awointernational.de)

INEX- Sdruzeni Dobrovolnych Aktivit Z S, Czechia – [www.inexsda.cz](http://www.inexsda.cz)

Relais Ouverture Echanges Linguistiques, France - [www.roudel.org](http://www.roudel.org)

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# I. INTRODUCTION

**The present report** is developed in the framework of the project ENGAGE - Empowering Next Generation Advocates for Global Education, co-funded by the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Programme, KA220-YOU - Cooperation partnerships in youth, Ref. no.: 2024-1-RO01-KA220-YOU-000250540.

**The ENGAGE project addressing youth leaders (YL)** fills an existing gap by providing them with an online course and training internationally and nationally on EU values, cultural diversity, inclusion, social justice, and civic engagement; it equips them with the necessary knowledge and skills that empower them to effectively guide and mentor young people in various aspects of personal development and active citizenship. The project is driven by a desire to educate knowledgeable, skilled, and socially responsible citizens through a holistic youth development approach.

**The main aim of ENGAGE project is to develop resources and actions, providing youth leaders (YL) with the necessary knowledge, skills, methodologies, and tools to educate youth on democratic processes and European values**, raise awareness of the diversity and role of inclusion in Europe, and ensure that all young people, including those with disabilities and those who are at risk, have equal access to opportunities.

**The National Report is based on the findings of the research developed by the project consortium** to define the base ground of the project. Even though the project application started with a solid motivation and needs identification, for the development of the project results, especially the involvement strategy, online course and direct actions with the target group, the partnership considered essential the need to implement in the beginning of the project research activities to involve the direct target group to identify Youth Leaders' needs, preferences and challenges related the topic.

Getting information about **their experience, knowledge, skills, training, the strategies they use to motivate young people, raise their awareness of inclusion and diversity or what topics they would like to do in the training course** suggested by the project **will help project partners to effectively design the training course to customize Youth leaders' needs**. This will also ensure that the topic, content, methodologies and inclusive strategies of the training course will be relevant, impactful and useful to youth leaders.



## II. RESEARCH DESIGN

### 2.1 Objectives and research questions

The present research within the ENGAGE project aims to provide data and insights that support the project's main objective: to empower Youth Leaders (YLS) to become effective educators and facilitators of civic participation, social inclusion, and European values. Based on the research findings, the project will develop tools and methods that are relevant, impactful, and practical for youth work across Europe.

To ensure the quality and usefulness of project outcomes, **the key objectives of this research are to:**

- 1) Understand Youth Leaders' needs, preferences, and challenges in engaging young people in inclusive and democratic activities. These insights are essential for shaping training content and resources that respond to real-world contexts.
- 2) Explore young people's attitudes, motivations, and perceived barriers in getting involved in civic life, with a particular focus on youth programs and initiatives. Understanding youth perspectives is key to designing inclusive, participatory approaches.
- 3) Support the co-creation of a training course by integrating Youth Leaders' direct input. Their feedback ensures the course will reflect current challenges and interests in the field.
- 4) Inform the development of a strategic framework and practical tools for working with young people who face exclusion risks, helping to ensure that inclusive youth work becomes more widespread, intentional, and effective.

#### Key Research Questions

To respond to the first two objectives, the study explored the following overarching questions:

Q1. How can we better understand the current practices, challenges, and support needs of Youth Leaders in promoting civic participation, inclusion, and European values, in order to design training and tools that are relevant, impactful, and grounded in their realities?

Q2. What motivates and hinders young people's participation in civic life, and how do they perceive inclusion, representation, and support within their communities and youth programs?

These research questions were designed to capture a multi-perspective understanding of youth participation and engagement, in order to inform both the design of the ENGAGE training and the broader strategy for inclusive youth work.

In this way, the research contributes directly to the ENGAGE mission by identifying key areas of support and enabling youth leaders to make a lasting impact. Ultimately, the findings will guide not only the training program, but also the creation of advocacy resources, ethical communication codes, and inclusive engagement strategies at both national and European levels.

### 2.2 Methodology overview

This research followed a multiphase quantitative design, conducted through two online surveys: one targeting Youth Leaders (YLS) and another targeting young people (ages 13–30). The study aimed to generate comparative and actionable insights that would inform the ENGAGE project's training curriculum, communication strategies, and inclusive youth engagement practices.

The design of both questionnaires was a co-creation process within the ENGAGE consortium, grounded in the project's objectives and aligned with key European frameworks on youth participation, civic engagement, and inclusion. The tools were designed to be both evidence-generating and practical, ensuring their relevance across four diverse national contexts.

## 2.3 Sampling

The sampling was non-probabilistic, based on convenience and snowball sampling, and was tailored by each country partner to best reach Youth Leaders and youth locally. Neither of the samples is not representative at the national or European level, but includes a diverse range of respondents in terms of age, gender, location, and background.

Recruitment was done using multiple outreach channels, including internal databases, social media campaigns, collaboration with local organizations, direct engagement with youth workers and educators, and peer-to-peer sharing (especially to reach youth respondents via Youth Leaders). While the youth sample showed slightly higher rates of non-response, especially in open-ended questions, the overall completion rate and data quality are considered robust for the project's goals.

A total of 477 Youth Leader and 415 Youth completed questionnaires were collected across Romania, France, Czech Republic, and Germany, resulting in a total of 892 questionnaires accross all countries.

The present study reports on the 112 Youth Leaders questionnaire collected in the Czech Republic.

Table 1. SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION BY COUNTRY

| YOUTH LEADERS SAMPLE |     | YOUTH SAMPLE |  | TOTAL SAMPLE |  |
|----------------------|-----|--------------|--|--------------|--|
| CZ                   | 112 | 30           |  | 142          |  |
| DE                   | 102 | 79           |  | 181          |  |
| FR                   | 109 | 22           |  | 131          |  |
| RO                   | 154 | 284          |  | 438          |  |
| TOTAL Sample         | 477 | 415          |  | 892          |  |

## 2.4 Data collection

Two distinct but complementary questionnaires were used:

*Youth Leader questionnaire:* Final version included 31 questions, of which 6 were open-ended, allowing for deeper qualitative insights.

*Youth questionnaire:* A shorter instrument with 23 questions, including 1 open-ended question, designed to reduce dropout and missing responses.

To ensure inclusivity and capture a broader range of experiences, most multiple-choice questions included an “Other” option, enabling respondents to reflect contexts not foreseen by the research team.

After validation in English, each partner translated and adapted the questionnaires into their national language to ensure cultural and linguistic relevance. Online distribution was facilitated using SurveyMonkey in all four countries, and the data collection took place over a 3–4-month period, starting in March 2025 and concluding by mid-August 2025.

## 2.5 Data Analysis

The analysis was primarily descriptive, focusing on trends, distributions, and cross-country comparisons. Quantitative data was processed using SPSS, and data visualizations were produced with Tableau to facilitate interpretation and reporting.

In addition to the quantitative analysis, open-ended responses were examined thematically, particularly for Youth Leaders, to extract insights about challenges, needs, and preferred approaches.

For each partner was produced a country-level report, and a comparative report summarizing and analysing cross-country findings will be developed as a final output.

## 2.6. Ethical Considerations and Limitations

Participation in the study was voluntary, anonymous, and confidential. No personal identifiers were collected, and respondents could withdraw at any time. Ethical principles of informed consent, data protection, and respect for participants were upheld across all stages.

Limitations of the research include:

- 1) The non-representative nature of the sample, limiting generalizability;
- 2) Self-selection bias, particularly among more engaged or motivated respondents;
- 3) Online distribution constraints, potentially excluding youth and youth leaders without digital access;
- 4) A relatively high non-response rate for the youth survey, possibly due to perceived complexity or survey length;
- 5) Use of some terminology from EU frameworks (e.g., “inclusion,” “civic engagement”) that may not be equally familiar across all respondent groups.

Despite these limitations, the research provides rich, context-sensitive insights that support the co-design of relevant and impactful tools for youth leaders across Europe.

## III. YOUTH LEADERS- FINDINGS AND INSIGHTS

### 3.1 RESPONDENT PROFILE

#### 3.1.1 Demographic overview

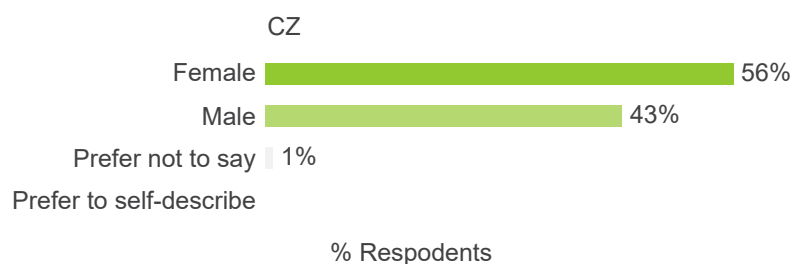
Most of the 112 youth leaders who responded to the survey in Czech Republic come from large cities, with 63% living in urban centres of over 250,000 residents and 21% in medium sized cities. Smaller towns and rural areas are significantly less represented, findings that could suggest that most of the youth-related initiatives and networks may remain concentrated in urban environments.

Based on the age profile, nearly 8 in 10 respondents are between 26 and 40 years old, and only 14% are under 25. This points to a strong presence of educators or professionals with experience in the field of working with youth.

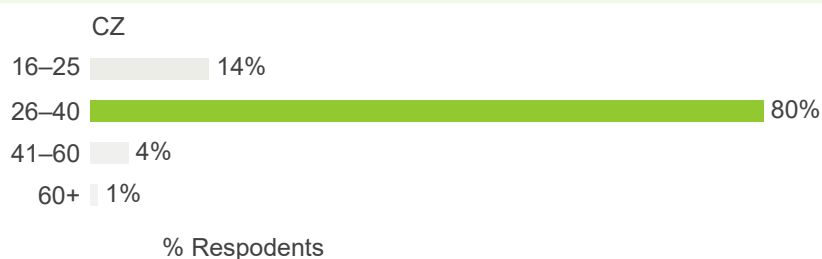
In terms of gender, the majority of respondents identify as female (56%), while 43% identify as male, and 1% preferred not to say.

These patterns should be considered when designing future training, especially the need to tailor content for both experienced facilitators and emerging peer leaders, and to expand outreach beyond dominant urban profiles.

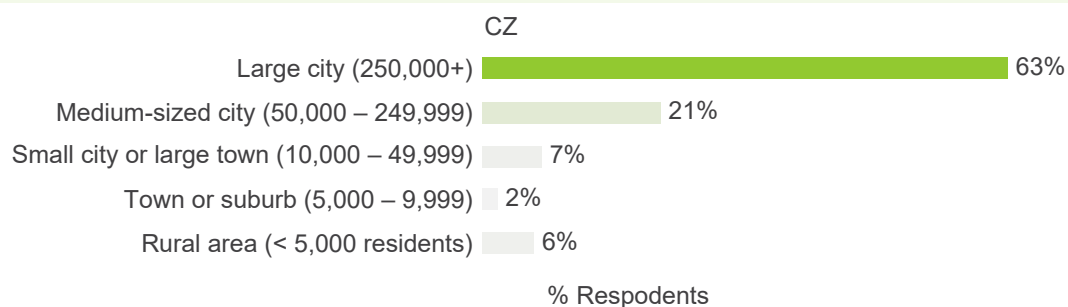
#### GENDER



#### AGE



#### TYPE OF RESIDENCE



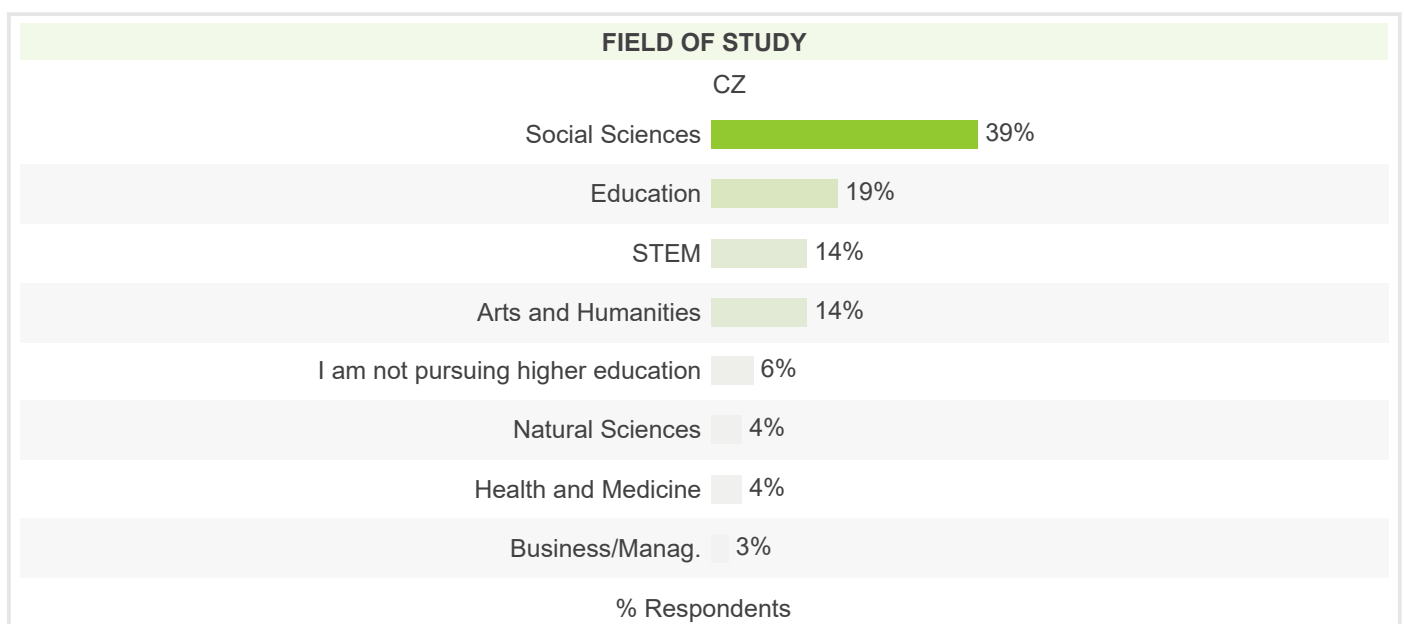
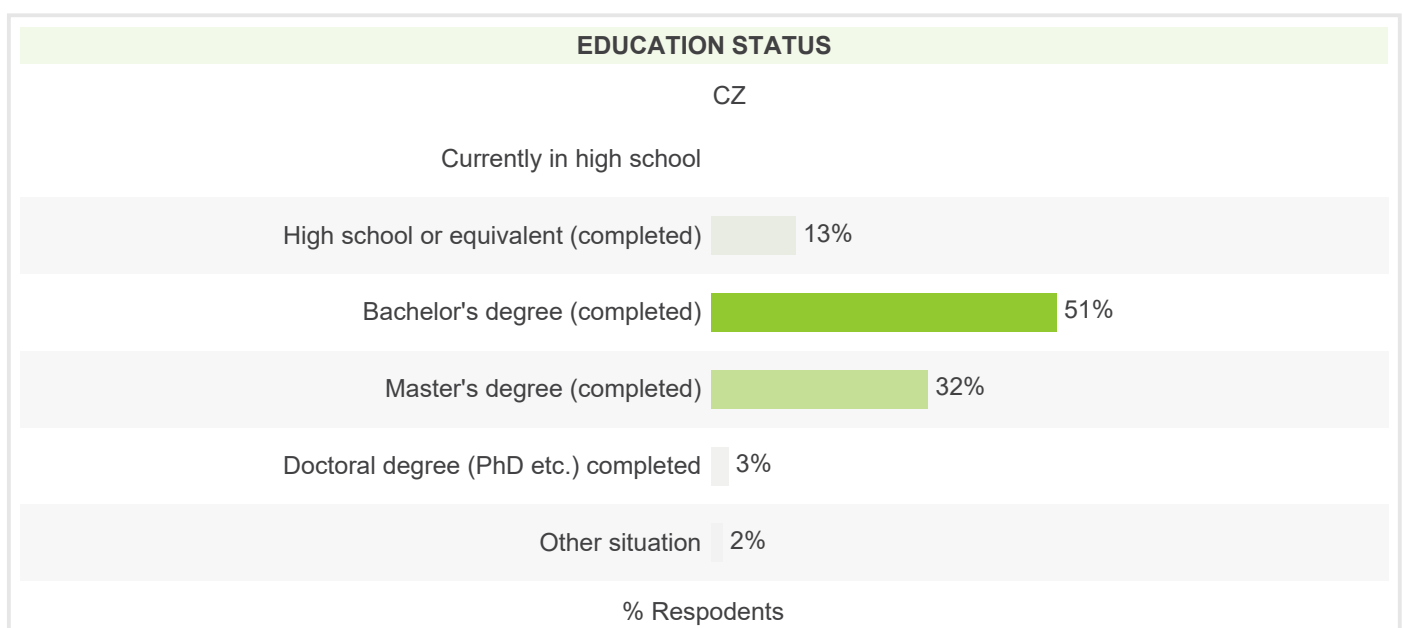


### 3.1.2 Education and field of study

The educational profile of the youth leaders participating in this study is balanced across different levels. A majority of respondents (51%) have completed a bachelor's degree, followed by 32% with a master's degree. A small percentage completed high school (13%) or hold a doctoral degree (3%).

In terms of field of study, social sciences are most common (39%), followed by education (19%) and arts and humanities (14%). Fewer respondents come from other fields like medicine or natural science (4%) or report not pursuing higher education (6%).

The data suggest that YL come from diverse social and educational backgrounds and, most probably, and their needs likely differ accordingly.



### 3.1.3 Work experience and context of working with youth

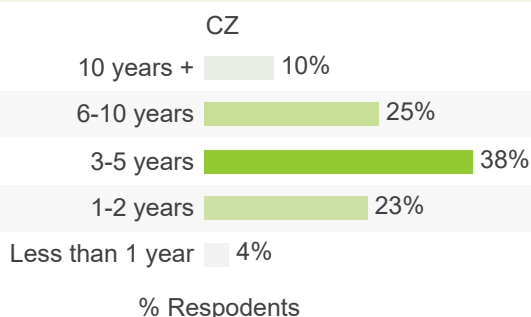
Although there is a core group of experienced professionals, with 10% active for 10+ years, it's worth noting that more than half (66%) of youth leaders have less than five years of experience in youth leadership. This includes 4% with less than one year, 23% with 1–2 years, and 34% with 3–5 years.

Most youth leaders in the Czech Republic report working with adolescents and young adults, particularly those aged 15–17 (49%) and 13–14 (45%). A smaller proportion, 37%, work with children under 13, and 30% with those aged 18–24. Engagement with the 25–30 age group is least frequent, at 17%.

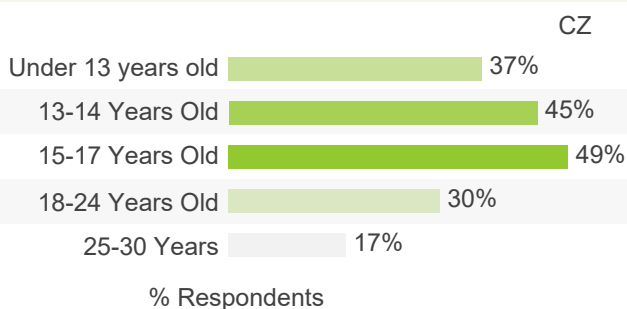
When it comes to the institutional picture, the range of institutions in which youth leaders work is wide, with most respondents affiliated with NGOs (43%) or schools (27%), while youth centres (16%), public institutions (10%), and universities (3%) are less common.

Overall, data suggest that there are many youth leaders that are building their practice. Trainings should provide not only advanced tools for professionals but also strong foundational elements and practical resources for those newer to the field.

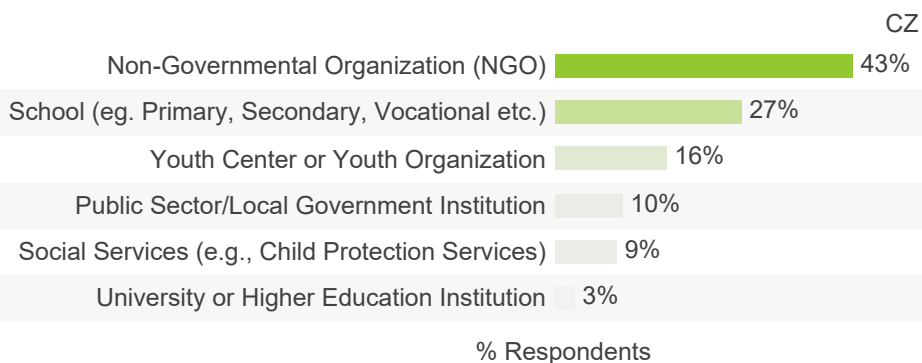
#### WORK EXPERIENCE WITH YOUTH



#### AGE GROUPS WORK WITH



#### TYPE OF INSTITUTION YOUTH LEADERS WORK



### 3.1.4 Working with specific youth groups

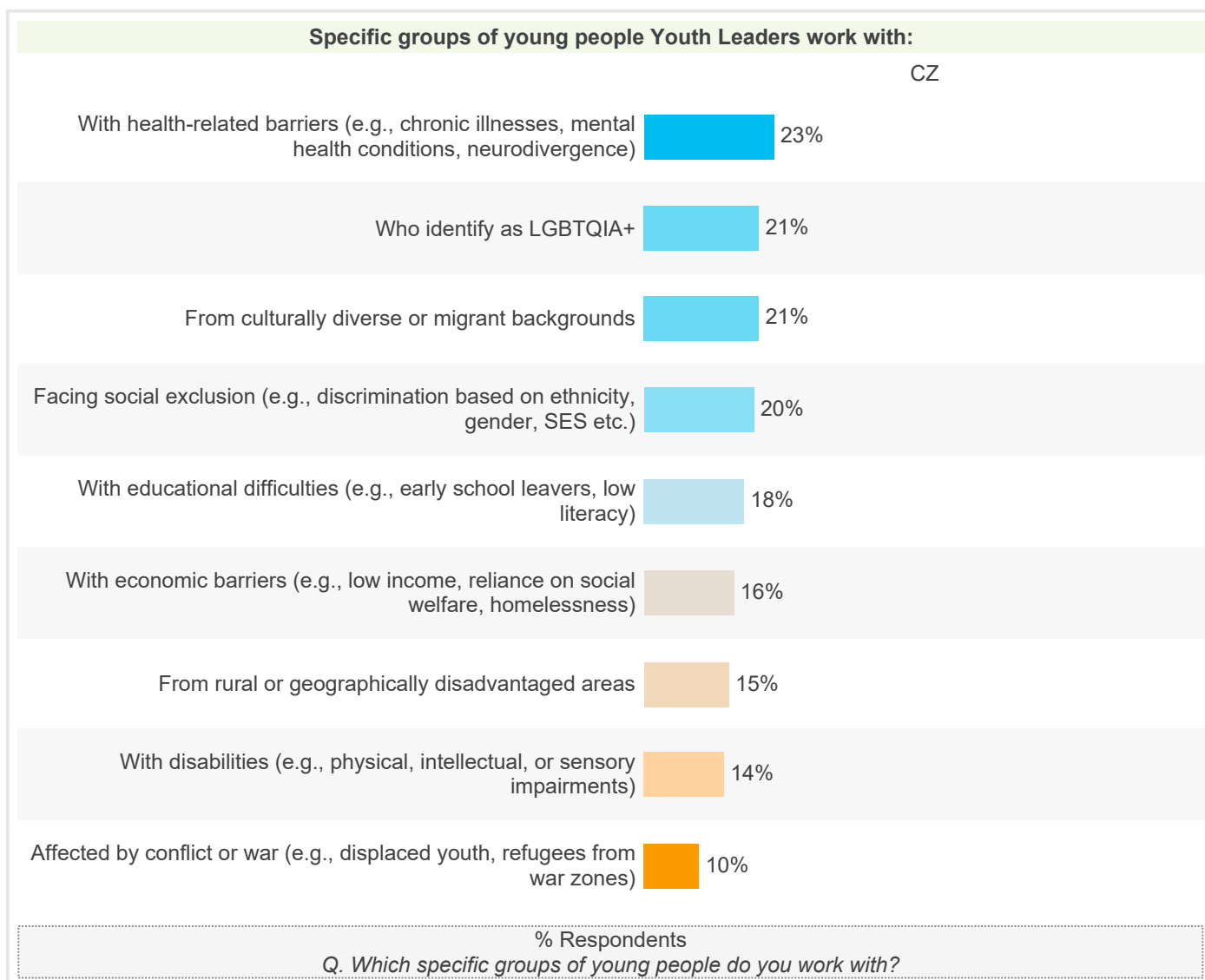
Youth leaders that responded to the questionnaire report highest engagement with disadvantaged groups at generally lower levels compared to the other countries that participated in this research (Romania, Germany or France).

The most common groups mentioned are youth with health-related barriers (23%), those from culturally diverse or migrant backgrounds (21%), and young people identifying as LGBTQIA+ (21%).

Working with youth facing social exclusion was cited by 20% of respondents, while 18% mentioned youth with educational difficulties. Groups facing economic barriers (16%) and rural or geographically disadvantaged areas (15%) are reported at lower levels.

Youth with disabilities (14%) and those affected by conflict or war (10%) are the least represented in current practice.

These findings highlight that, while Czech youth leaders do engage with a variety of groups, overall percentages are lower across categories. This highlights a potential gap in outreach, especially toward economically disadvantaged youth, rural youth, and those facing exclusions.



## 3.2 KNOWLEDGE AND TRAINING

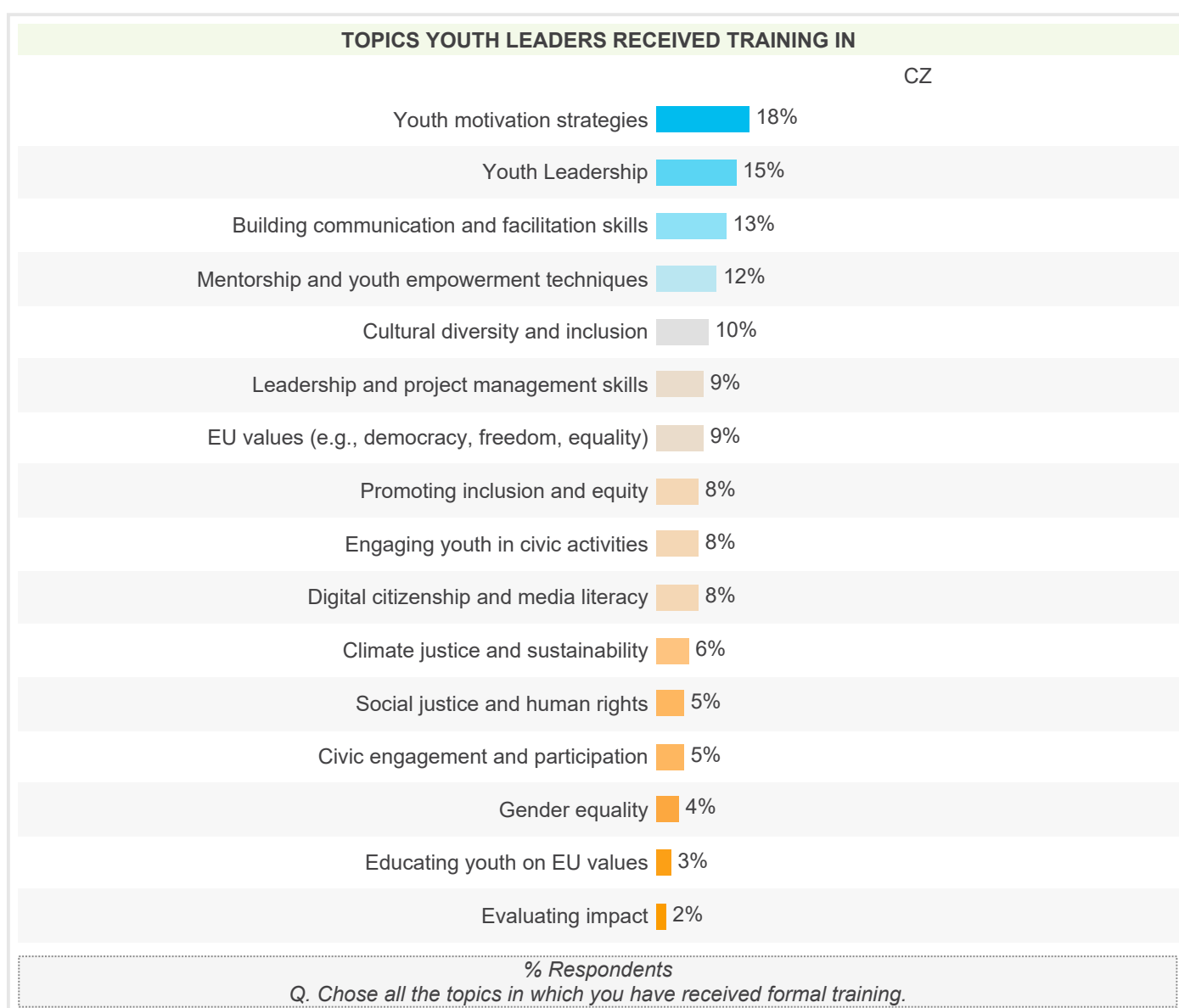
### 3.2.1 Link between training, practice and priorities in Youth Leadership

#### Formal training

When we look at formal training, the gap is evident. Only a small share of youth leaders in the Czech Republic report having received training in youth leadership (15%), communication and facilitation (13%), or leadership and project management (9%).

Training in engaging youth in civic activities is also limited (8%), as is civic engagement and participation (5%). Areas such as social justice and human rights (5%), gender equality (4%), and climate justice (6%) remain among the least covered. Some slightly higher levels are observed for youth motivation strategies (18%) and mentorship and youth empowerment techniques (12%), but overall percentages remain low across most categories.

Data highlights that youth leaders show low training levels across most areas, which points to an opportunity to expand capacity-building and strengthen youth leaders' skills in topics they value most (see Figure *TOPICS CONSIDERED MOST IMPORTANT BY YOUTH LEADERS*).



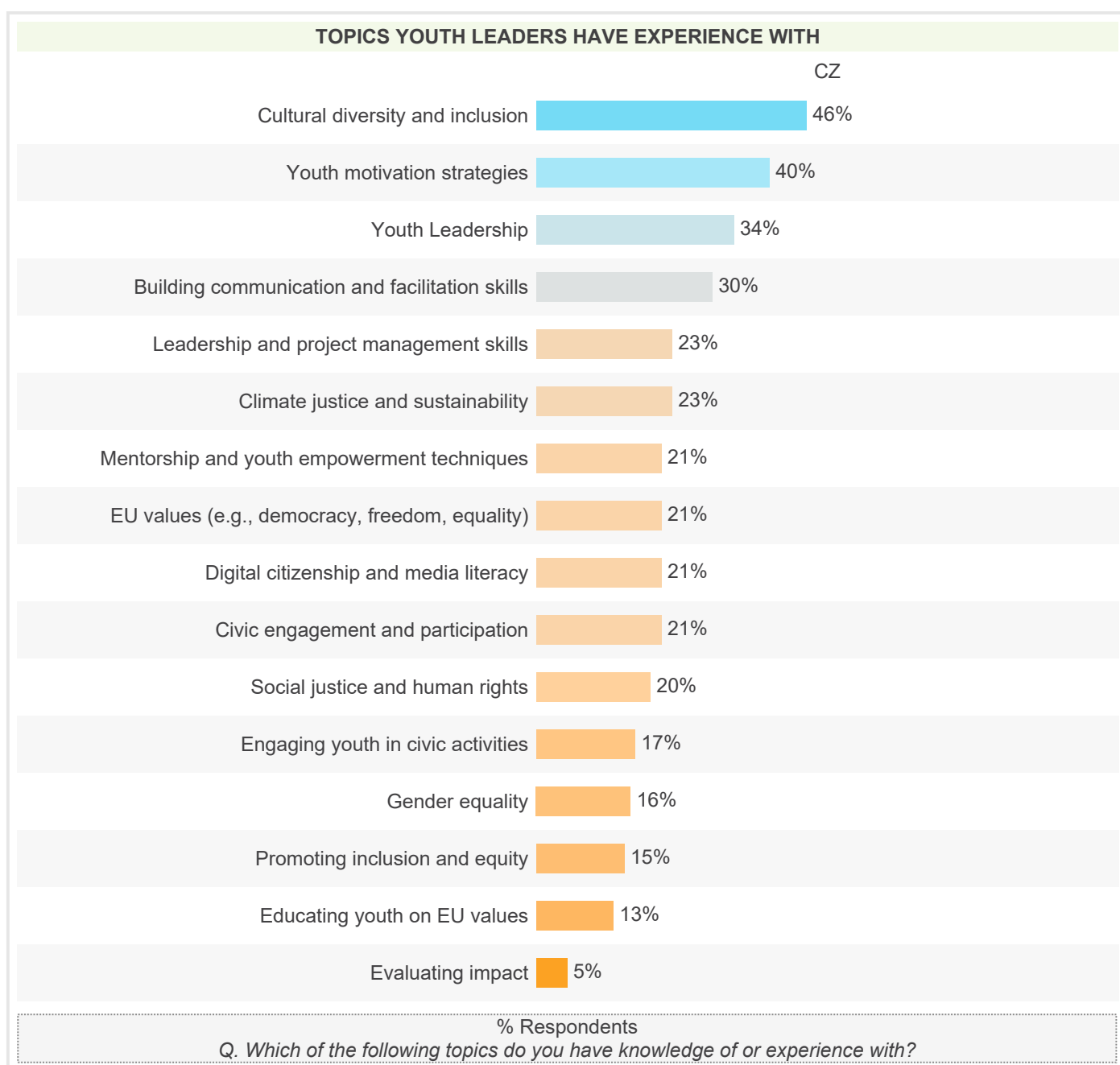
## Experience with different topics

When it comes about their practical experience with several topics, youth leaders report some experience in youth motivation strategies (40%) and cultural diversity and inclusion (46%), while most other areas remain underdeveloped. Core civic themes such as engaging youth in civic activities (17%), civic engagement and participation (21%), and leadership and project management (23%) are reported at very low levels.

Notably, youth leadership (34%), mentorship (21%), and communication and facilitation (30%) remain modest. Even more limited are experiences with EU values (21%), educating youth on EU values (13%), and promoting inclusion and equity (15%).

Rights-based themes such as gender equality (16%), climate justice (23%), and social justice (20%) also register very low experience levels. Evaluating impact (5%) is rarely reported at all.

These results highlight a clear need to strengthen both civic competencies and rights-based knowledge for Czech youth leaders, especially when consider the data related with the data above.



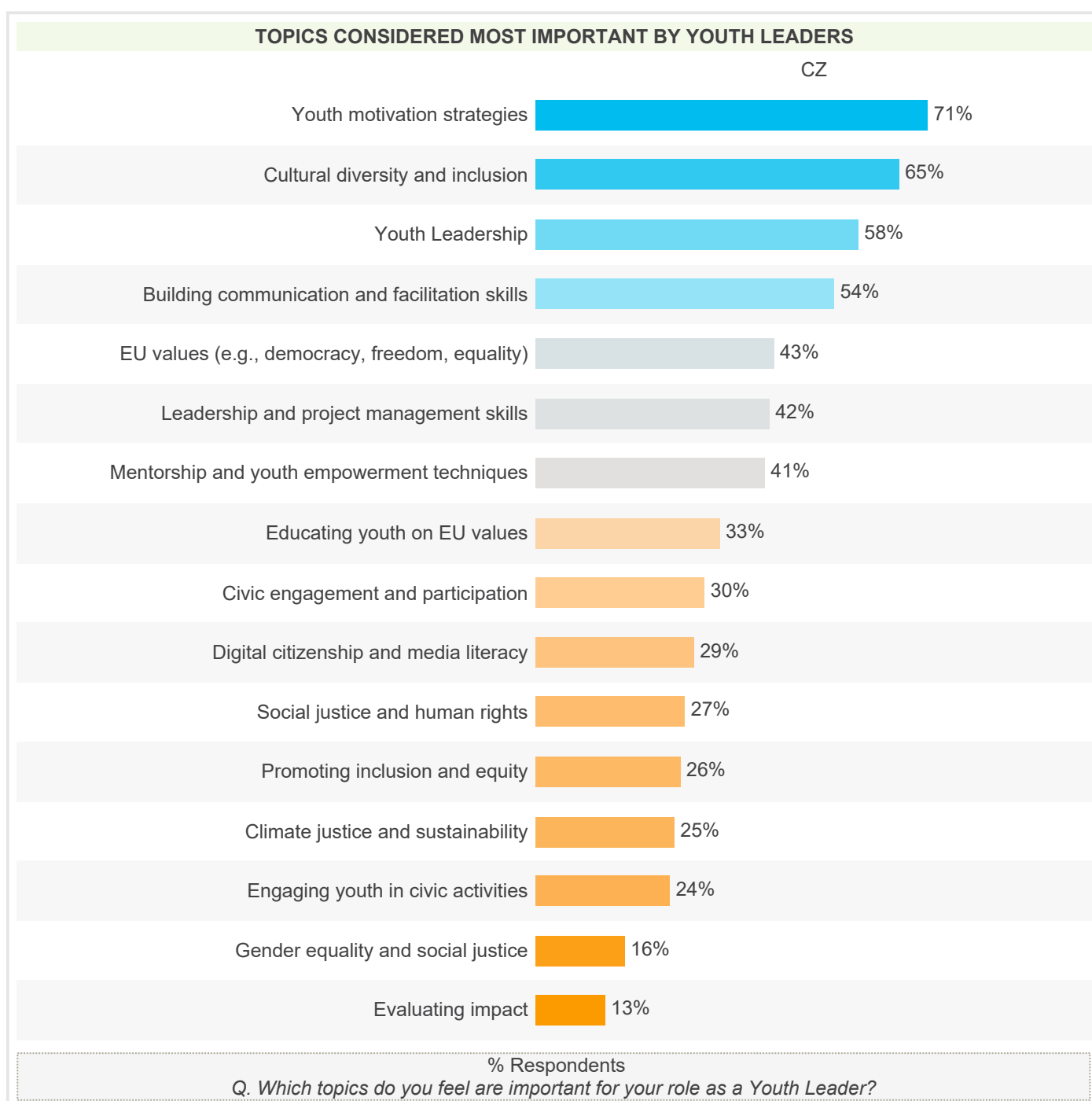


### Importance of the topics for their role

Asked about what topics are important for their role, youth leaders give the greatest importance to youth motivation strategies (71%) and cultural diversity and inclusion (65%). These are followed by communication and facilitation skills (54%) and youth leadership (58%), suggesting that leaders prioritize building motivation and inclusion alongside fostering leadership potential.

Civic engagement and participation (30%) and engaging youth in civic activities (24%) are less frequently marked as highly important. Rights-based areas such as EU values (43%), social justice (27%), and climate justice (25%) also remain comparatively low. Evaluating impact (13%) is rarely selected, highlighting it as a clear gap.

The results show that Czech youth leaders value motivation, leadership, and diversity, but place less emphasis on civic participation and rights-based themes. Training should therefore focus on consolidating these core strengths while introducing more systematic work on civic engagement, rights, and evaluation.



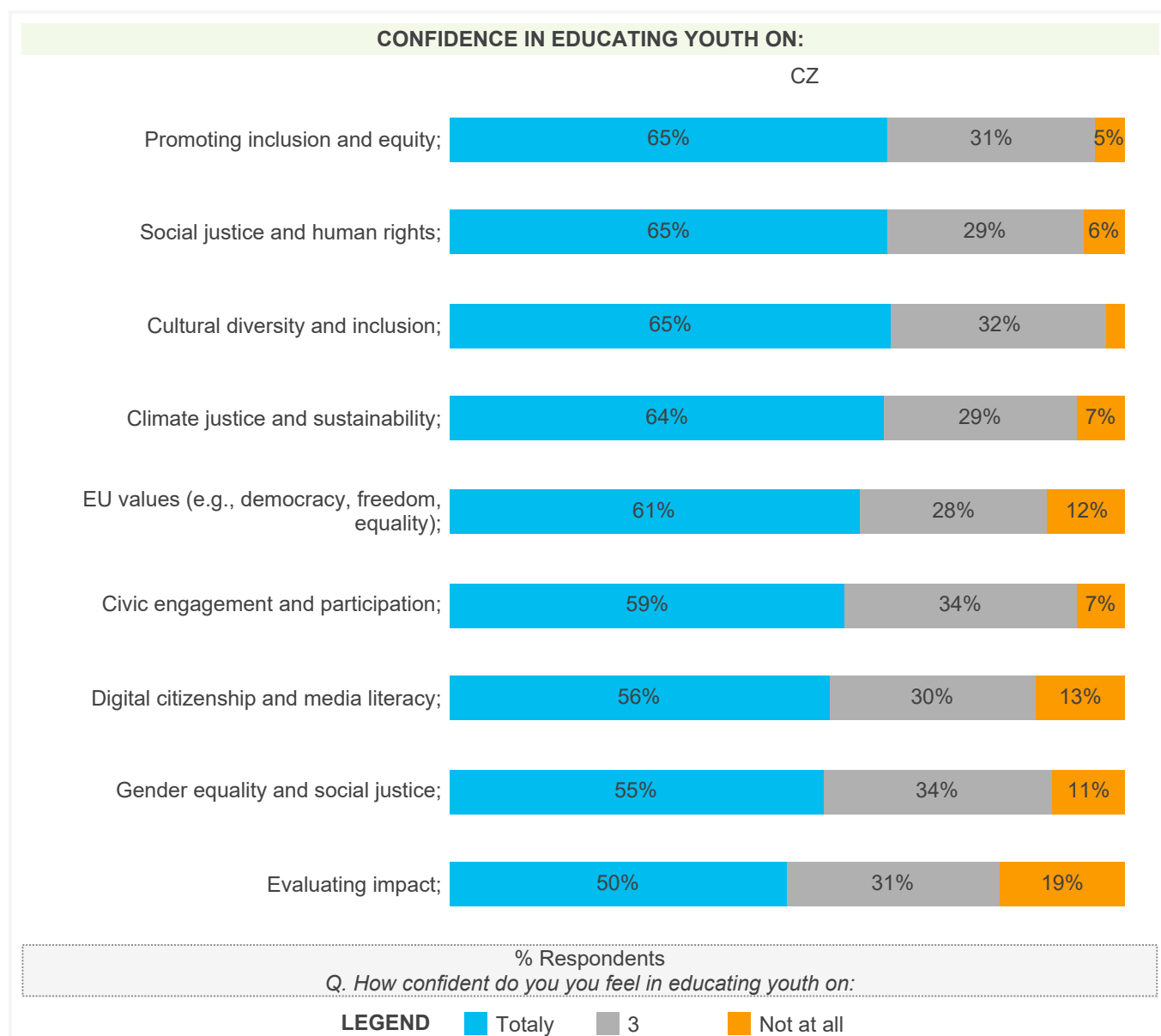
### 3.2.2 Confidence in educating youth on different thematics

When questioned about confidence in educating youth on different topics, youth leaders reported their strongest confidence in promoting inclusion and equity (65%) among youth, social justice and human rights (65%), and cultural diversity and inclusion (65%). Civic participation (59%) also stands out as a priority, indicating that leaders see engagement and inclusion as key topics to their work.

Confidence is lower in other domains. EU values (61%) and climate justice (64%) are moderately represented, while gender equality (55%) and digital citizenship (56%) show less consistent results.

Half of youth leaders feel confident in evaluating impact (50%) pointing to an area that is less firmly established in practice.

Taken together, the results show that Czech youth leaders emphasize civic and inclusion-related themes, while data suggest weaker confidence in gender equality, digital citizenship, and evaluation. These are areas where additional training could strengthen existing practice.



## 3.3 CHALLENGES IN WORKING WITH YOUTH

### 3.3.1 Challenges youth face in Youth Leaders opinion

Asked about what challenges youth generation in their country, youth leaders identify a series of challenges.

However, they point first and foremost to mental health as a growing crisis. Stress, anxiety, and depression are frequently linked to the pressures of school, the rapid pace of societal change, and the long shadow of the pandemic. Social isolation, a lack of resilience, and limited access to psychological support compound these struggles, in young leaders understanding.

Another major theme, in their perspective, is the impact of the digital environment. Social media, information overload, and exposure to disinformation are seen as overwhelming for many young people, leaving them struggling to distinguish truth from fake content and often leading to low self-confidence. At the same time, structural issues such as unequal access to education, unemployment, and economic hardship reinforce feelings of insecurity and low motivation.

*"Poor mental health is becoming one of the biggest challenges. The post-COVID period, the influence of social media, and even the war in Ukraine have left many young people anxious, isolated, and without sufficient support. They often lack resilience and struggle to cope with the constant flow of information and crises around them. Instead of being able to build their own stability, they are left exhausted, with little time outdoors, little movement, and few opportunities to regain balance." (YL, Czech Republic, 2025)*

#### CHALLENGES YOUTH FACE

CZ

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Civic Disengagement and Disinterest</b><br>"low civic engagement", "low volunteering", "lack of knowledge of EU values", "low democratic participation"     | <b>Educational and Employment Barriers</b><br>"lack of opportunities", "unemployment of graduates", "unequal access to education", "financial literacy gaps", "mismatch between schools and practice" | <b>Social Inequalities and Exclusion</b><br>"economic crisis", "social inequalities among youth", "discrimination of minorities", "lack of inclusion", "rural disadvantage" |
| <b>Digital Overload and Disinformation</b><br>"social media addiction", "digital threats", "information overload", "lack of media literacy", "AI", "fake news" | <b>Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing</b><br>"mental health issues", "lack of psychological support", "low resilience", "post-COVID effects", "anxiety", "isolation", "obesity", "stress"          | <b>Uncertainty and Anxiety</b><br>"uncertain future", "lack of motivation", "low self-confidence", "lack of responsibility", "insecurity about choices"                     |

Q. Thinking about the youth generation in your country, what is the biggest challenge they are currently facing?

### 3.3.2 Barriers in working with youth

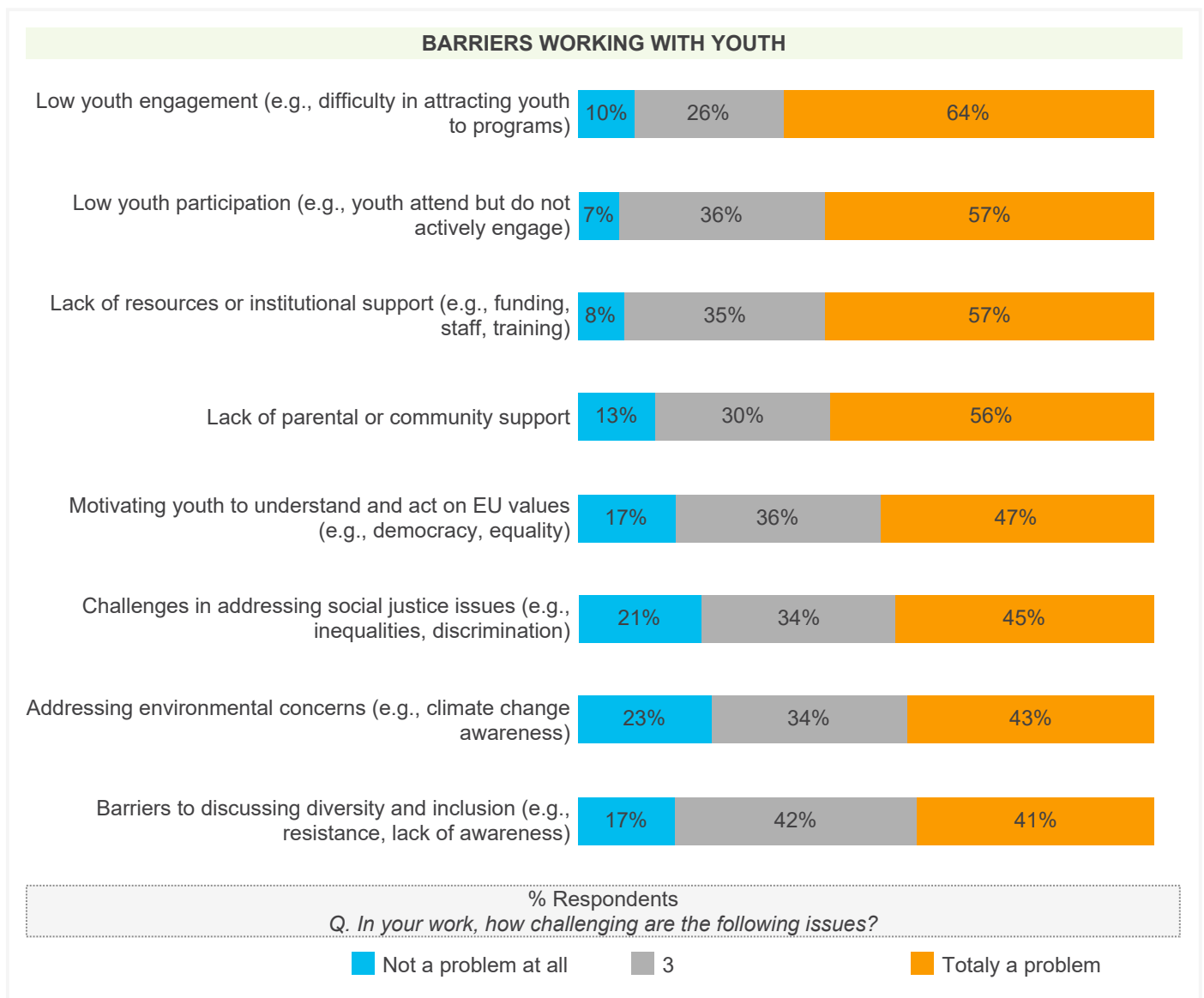
When working with youths, in the Czech Republic, the most frequently reported barrier by respondents is low youth engagement, with 64% identifying it as a major problem and 26% as moderate. Lack of institutional resources follows closely, marked as a major issue by 57% of respondents and moderate by 35%.

Parental and community support is also perceived as limited, with 56% seeing it as a major problem and 30% as moderate. Similarly, 57% say youth attend activities but do not actively participate.

Other concerns when working with youths include social justice (45% major), diversity and inclusion (41% major), and motivating youth on EU values (47% major).

Environmental issues are reported less often, with 43% marking them as a major problem.

Overall, the data suggest that participation, engagement, and resource limitations are the most consistent barriers for youth leaders in their work with youth.



### 3.3.3 Methods in motivating youth

When asked how they engage and motivate youth, Romanian youth leaders pointed to several tools and approaches. Some leaders pointed to interactive, real-life experiences that go beyond traditional education.

A significant number rely on non-formal methods such as role-playing, storytelling, outdoor learning, and team-based projects to create meaningful, hands-on learning environments. One of the most impactful tools mentioned was service-learning.

In addition, digital tools, from social media platforms to gamified learning and digital storytelling, are widely used to meet youth where they are and keep them engaged. Mentorship also emerged as a key strategy, along with personalized support, recognition of effort, and the creation of safe, inclusive spaces. These methods suggest that when youth feel seen, valued, and empowered, their motivation increases.

▣ Service-learning frameworks and experiential education strategies into training curricula could help youth leaders build participatory programs that foster motivation through personal growth and civic responsibility.

| METHODS AND TOOLS USED TO MOTIVATE YOUTH   |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| CZ   |  |   |
| <b>Community and Social Activities</b><br>Leisure activities; cultural events; sports tournaments; community engagement projects | <b>No Methods / I Don't Know</b><br>“I don't know”; “I don't use any”  | <b>Non-formal and Experiential Education</b><br>Experiential pedagogy; reflection and feedback; service learning; interactive games; school workshops |
| <b>Mentoring and Coaching</b><br>Mentoring and coaching approach; co-responsibility for activities; role models                  |  |   |
| <b>Motivation through Recognition</b><br>Competitions and challenges; recognition of skills; peer-to-peer campaigns              |  |   |
|  | <b>Use of Digital Tools and Media</b><br>Social media; WhatsApp chat; podcasts; YouTube videos; online courses |   |

Q. What tools or methods do you use to engage and motivate youths?

Q. What tools or methods do you use to engage and motivate youths?



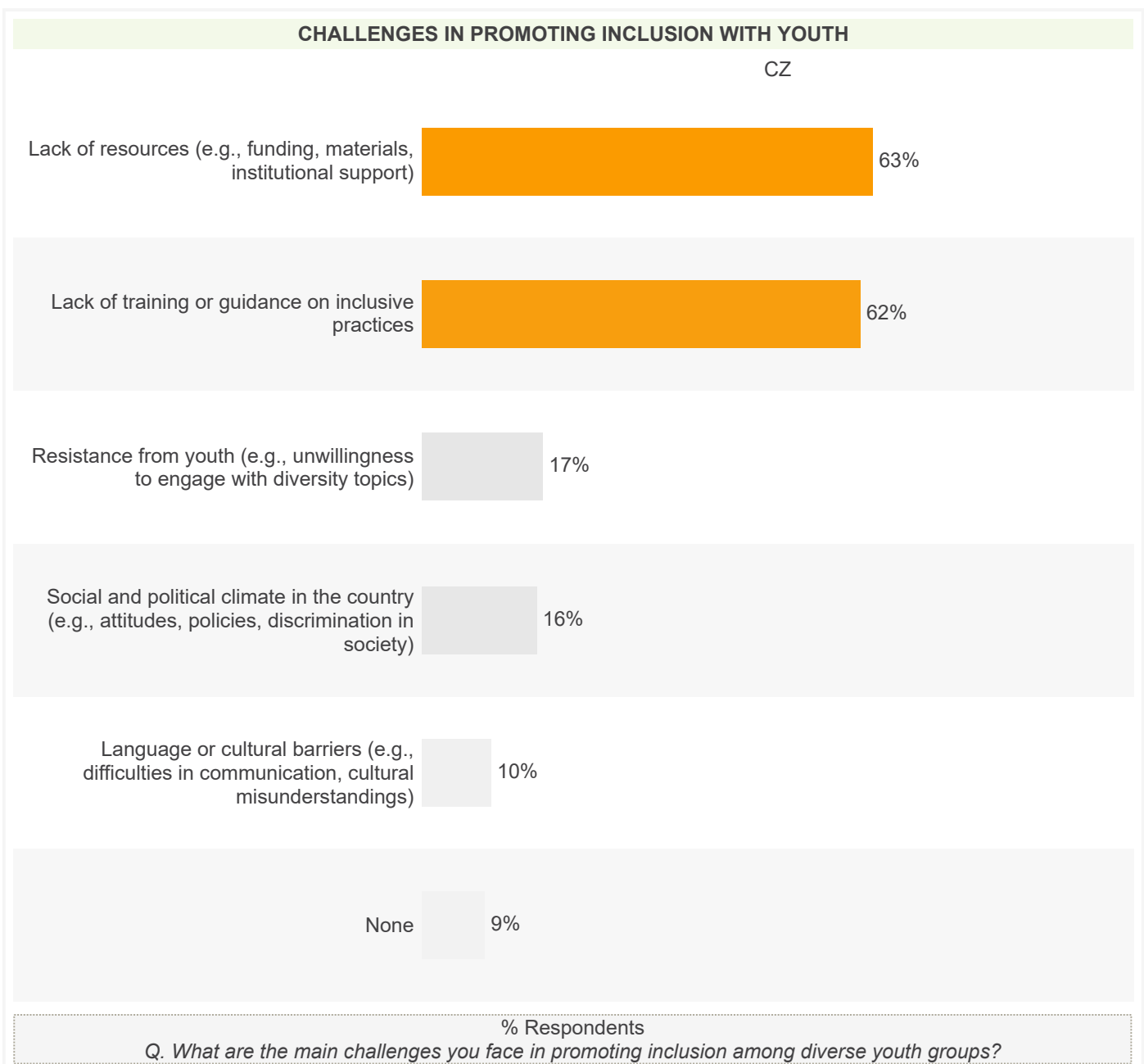
### 3.3.4 Challenges in promoting inclusion among youth

The most frequently cited obstacles by the respondents in promoting inclusion among youth are lack of resources (63%) and lack of training or guidance on inclusive practices (62%). These figures together with the previous ones might suggest that youth leaders often feel under-prepared and under-supported when working on diversity-related issues.

Resistance from youth themselves is mentioned far less often, with 17% identifying it as a barrier. Similarly, the social and political climate is reported by 16%, and language or cultural barriers by 10%.

Notably, 9% of youth leaders in the Czech Republic report no challenges at all, the highest proportion across the four countries.

Overall, the data indicate that barriers among youth leaders are primarily structural and capacity-related, while direct resistance from youth or wider social conditions are less frequently perceived as obstacles by the youth leaders.



### 3.3.5 Methods in promoting inclusion among youth

When asked how they support the inclusion of youth with fewer opportunities, Czech youth leaders highlighted mentoring and individualized support as their most common tools for inclusion. Many responses referred to a coaching approach, personal guidance, or simply “being there” for young people, showing the importance of relational and trust-based support.

Non-formal education was also central in the tools and approaches youth leaders admit using. They described experiential pedagogy, workshops, and community-based projects as ways to help young people feel empowered and part of a group. Activities were often designed to be interactive and practical, offering reflection and feedback to build confidence.

Providing free access and minimizing financial barriers were also frequently approaches cited. Some respondents emphasized making activities cost-free or low-cost, offering scholarships, or ensuring that programs remained accessible to youth regardless of background. Creating safe, low-threshold environments was also mentioned as an inclusion strategy.

Digital tools and communication methods such as social media, WhatsApp, and online resources play a supporting role, in youth leaders perspective. These are used to reach youth directly and to adapt activities to their needs.

A significant number of leaders, however, responded “I don’t know” or “I don’t use any methods,” which highlights an uneven level of preparedness. This suggests that further training and exchange of practices would be beneficial to strengthen inclusive capacity among all youth leaders.

*“I try to be close to them, personally available, and to show them that there is a community they can be part of if they engage. Often, the sense of belonging is the strongest motivation for them to continue, more than any single activity we organize.”*  
YL, Czech Republic, 2025

#### INCLUSION SUPPORT METHODS AND TOOLS

CZ

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Financial and Logistical Support</b><br>Scholarships; stipends; covering costs of participation; accessible facilities | <b>Individualized Support and Accessibility</b><br>Personal support for participation; free or low-cost access; low-threshold approaches | <b>Counseling and Personal Support</b><br>Individual counseling; social assistants; family support groups |
|   |  |   |
| <b>No Methods / I Don't Know</b><br>“I don’t know”; “I don’t use any”   | <b>Integration in Community Life</b><br>Participation in community projects; involvement in family and community networks                |   |
|   |  |   |

Q. What tools or methods do you currently use to support the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities (e.g., youth facing economic, social, educational, or health-related barriers)?

### 3.3.6 Challenging youth groups to include in activities in Youth Leaders perception

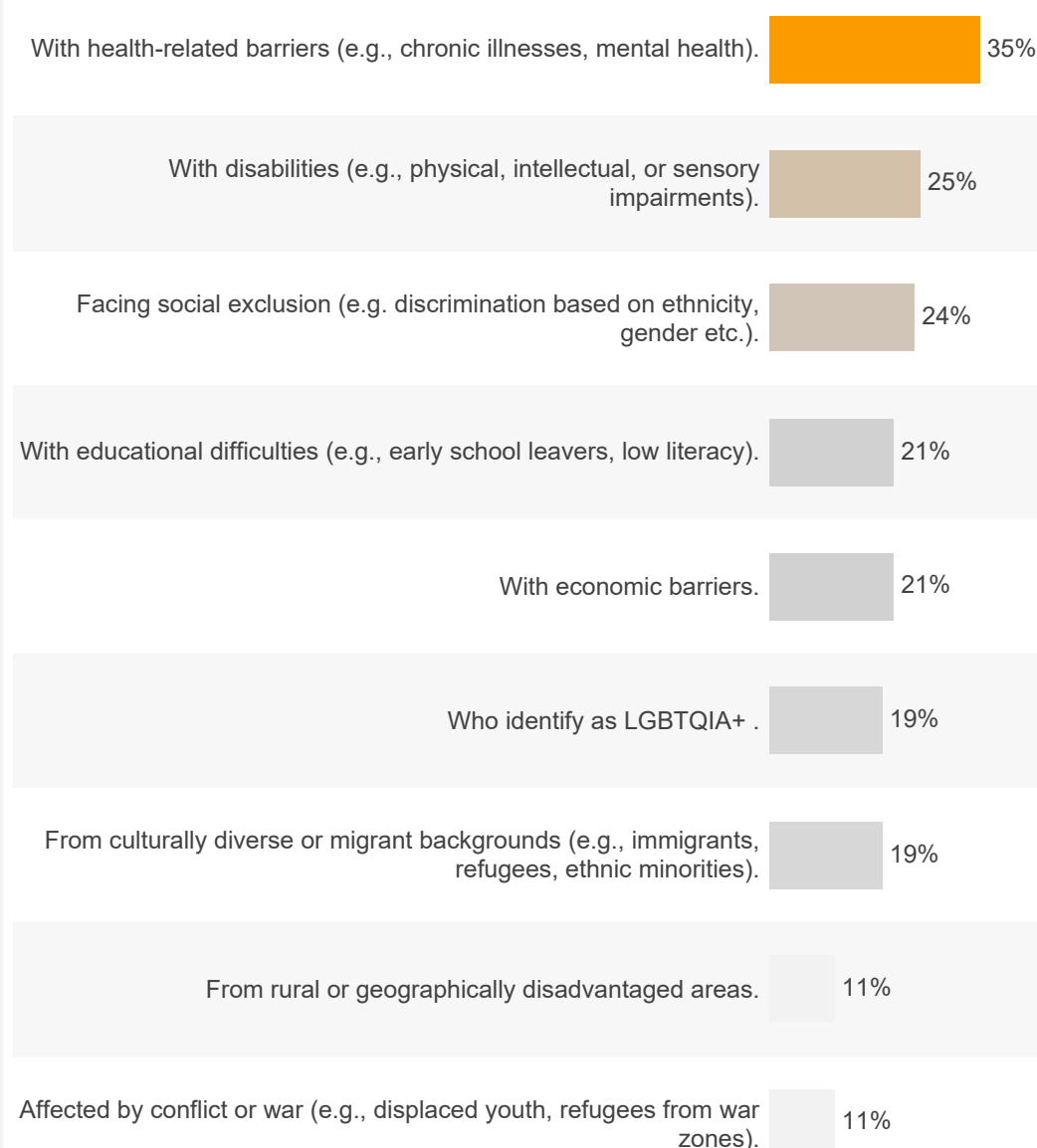
When asked which groups of young people are most challenging to include in activities, youth leaders in this study most often pointed to young people with health-related barriers (35%) and young people with disabilities (25%). Young people who face educational difficulties are cited by 21%, a lower share than other contexts.

Other groups are mentioned less frequently: young people who experience social exclusion (24%), who face economic barriers (21%), or who come from culturally diverse or migrant backgrounds (19%). Smaller shares refer to young people from rural or geographically disadvantaged areas (11%), affected by conflict or displacement (11%), or who identify as LGBTQIA+ (19%).

Overall, the results show that challenges are most often reported around health-related needs and disability, while other structural or identity-related circumstances are cited less often.

#### MOST CHALLENGING GROUPS TO INCLUDE IN ACTIVITIES

CZ



% Respondents

Q. Which youth groups do you find most challenging to include in your activities?

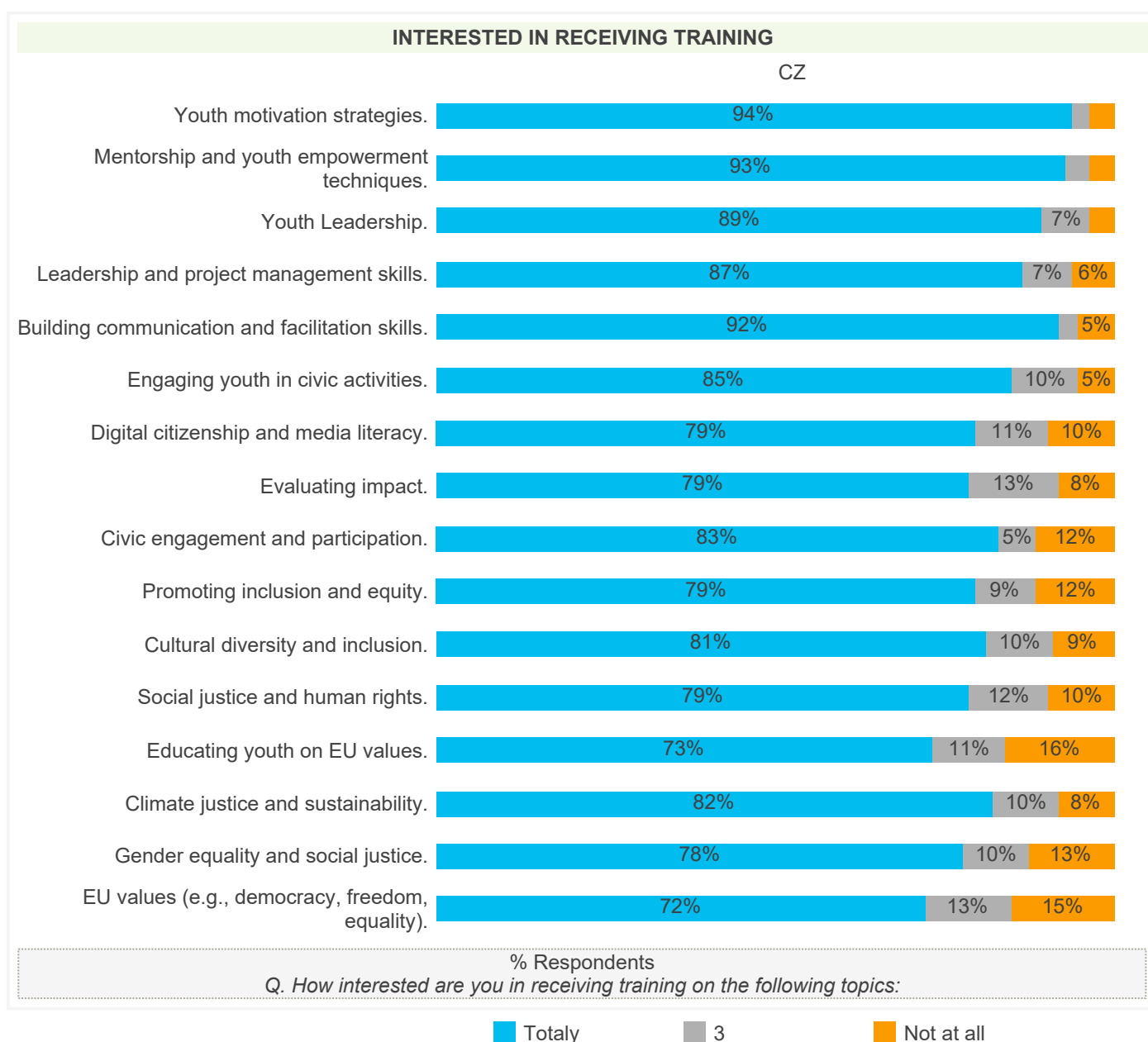
## 3.4 TRAINING NEEDS AND PREFERENCES

### 3.4.1 Topics of interest

Youth leaders in the Czech Republic express the highest interest in training on youth motivation (94%), mentorship (93%), and communication skills (92%), confirming their strong focus on interpersonal connection and engagement. Interest is also very high for civic-related areas such as youth leadership (89%) and civic engagement (83%).

Project management (87%) and inclusion (79%) also rank high, reflecting a readiness to develop more strategic and inclusive approaches to youth work. Less interest is shown in training on climate justice (82%) and EU-related themes, though rates still exceed 70% for most topics.

Youth leaders are eager to build on existing practices in motivation, facilitation, and leadership, but also show openness to further training in inclusion, participation, and sustainability.



### 3.4.2 Preferred training formats and learning approaches

When it comes to training preferences, youth leaders in the Czech Republic show a strong interest in practical and applied learning.

The preferred methods are theoretical input followed by working with case studies and practical examples, chosen by 43% of respondents. Peer discussions and group work are also valued (43%), pointing to a balanced mix of styles, without an outlined preference.

Hybrid formats that combine online and face-to-face learning are the most preferred (56%), followed by interactive online training (47%). Face-to-face training is less popular (26%), with even fewer respondents favoring self-paced courses (32%) or volunteering experiences (15%). Preferences show a leaning toward flexible, digitally-supported options.

Weekends are the most preferred time for training (84%), followed by weekdays (26%) and Fridays (23%). Few respondents choose school breaks (4%) or public holidays (6%).

These results suggest that trainings should prioritize weekend hybrid formats, with a blend of practical examples and group work to keep engagement high.

#### LEARNING APPROACHES

CZ

Mostly theoretical input (presentations, lectures) 44%

Peer discussions & practical group work 43%

Case studies & practical examples followed by theoretical input 43%

Personalized mentoring sessions 27%

% Respondents

Q. What Learning Approaches do you prefer?

#### TRAINING FORMAT

CZ

Hybrid course (combining face-to-face and online learning) 56%

Online training (interactive, including discussions) 47%

Online course (content-based, self-paced) 32%

Face-to-face training 26%

Volunteering or internship experience 15%

% Respondents

Q. What training formats do you prefer?

#### PREFERED TIME

CZ

Week-ends 84%

Week-day 26%

End of the week (Friday) 23%

Public holidays 6%

School breaks 4%

% Respondents

Q. When do you prefer to participate in training?



### 3.4.3 Preferred training content or activities

Asked about what content or activities should be included in a training course, youth leaders consistently emphasized the need for training that combines structured input with hands-on experience. Many emphasized the value of theoretical frameworks paired with practical applications, with requests for “real examples,” “materials to take away,” and “practice with feedback.”

Interactive and experiential methods are strongly preferred and mentioned, including role plays, simulations, workshops, and group discussions. Among the responsesn, leaders stressed that courses should not be overly long or abstract, but concrete, engaging, and directly relevant to their practice. Networking and informal exchanges with peers were also highlighted as essential elements.

Some responses mentioned specific themes including youth motivation and inclusion, mental health, communication and facilitation skills, conflict resolution, digital and media literacy, intercultural competence, and EU values. Project management, fundraising, and evaluation also surfaced, pointing to the need for both soft and organizational skills.

The overall message is straight forward, youth leaders want training that is diverse, interactive, and firmly connected to their professional reality, offering both inspiration and directly usable tools.

*“What matters most is that the training is practical, interactive, and supported by real examples. It should give us space to exchange experiences, to practice methods, and to leave with concrete tools we can apply in our own youth work.”*  
YL, Czech Republic, 2025

#### PREFERRED CONTENT AND ACTIVITIES

CZ

|  |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Balance of Theory and Practice</b><br>“theoretical part + practice with feedback”, “examples from practice”, “hybrid courses”               | <b>Emotional Support and Wellbeing</b><br>“mental health of youth”, “working with emotions”, “peer support groups”                            | <b>Experiential and Interactive Methods</b><br>“experiential pedagogy”, “interactive workshops”, “role plays”, “simulations of elections or democratic processes” | <b>Flexibility and Accessibility</b><br>“short and effective modules”, “hybrid/online + offline options”, “time efficiency” | <b>Inclusion and Diversity</b><br>“inclusive education”, “working with marginalized youth”, “intercultural communication”, “LGBTQ+ inclusion” |
| <b>Civic and Critical Thinking Skills</b><br>“critical thinking”, “global connections”, “citizenship participation”, “EU values and democracy” |   |   |   |   |
| <b>Communication and Conflict Resolution</b><br>“communication skills”, “facilitation”, “conflict resolution”                                  | <b>Mentoring and Leadership</b><br>“mentorship”, “leadership”, “coaching approaches”, “facilitation”  | <b>No Specific Preference</b><br>“I don’t know”, “no preference”, “not sure”  |   | <b>Volunteering and Civic Action</b><br>“volunteer motivation”, “community projects”, “youth engagement”                                      |
| <b>Digital and Media Literacy</b><br>“digital tools”, “media literacy”, “use of social media in youth work”                                    | <b>Motivation and Engagement of Youth</b><br>“how to motivate youth”, “techniques for inclusion of disadvantaged groups”, “keeping attention” | <b>Project Design and Management</b><br>“project management”, “fundraising”, “evaluation of projects”, “templates for exercises”                                  |   |   |

Q. What content or activities should be included in the training course for you to participate?

Open Q

### 3.4.3 Barriers and incentives to accessing professional development

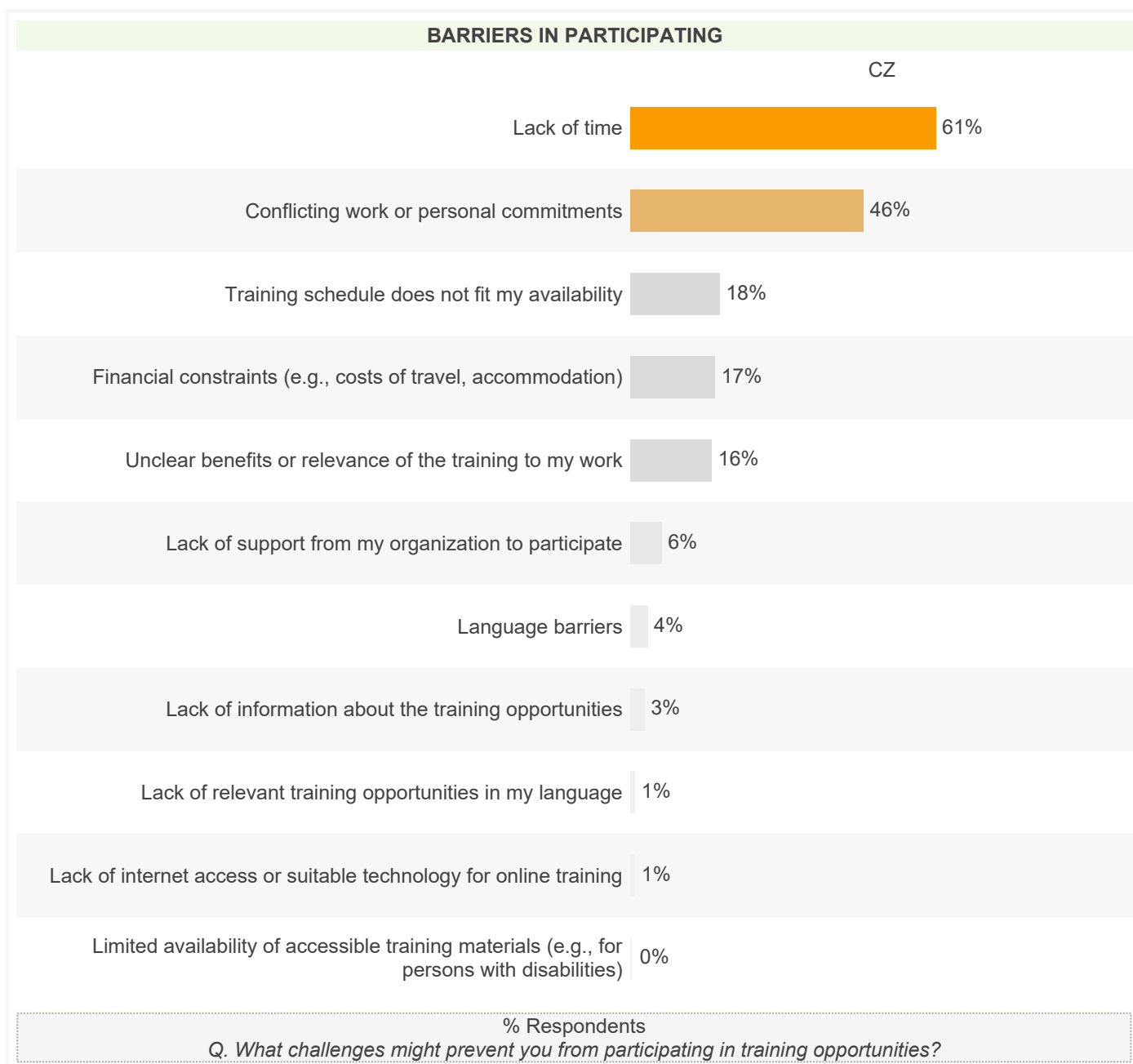
Youth leaders in the Czech Republic reported a mix of logistical and institutional barriers that limit their ability to participate in training.

The most commonly cited issue is the lack of time (61%), followed closely by conflicting work or personal commitments (46%).

Furthermore, fewer respondents point to the training schedule itself (18%) or financial constraints (17%) as barriers, suggesting that availability and affordability are less critical than time management and workload balance.

Other reasons include a lack of clarity about the benefits of training (16%) and limited information about opportunities (3%). A small number also report lacking support from their organization (6%).

Overall, making training more visible and reducing time-related pressures could help increase participation.



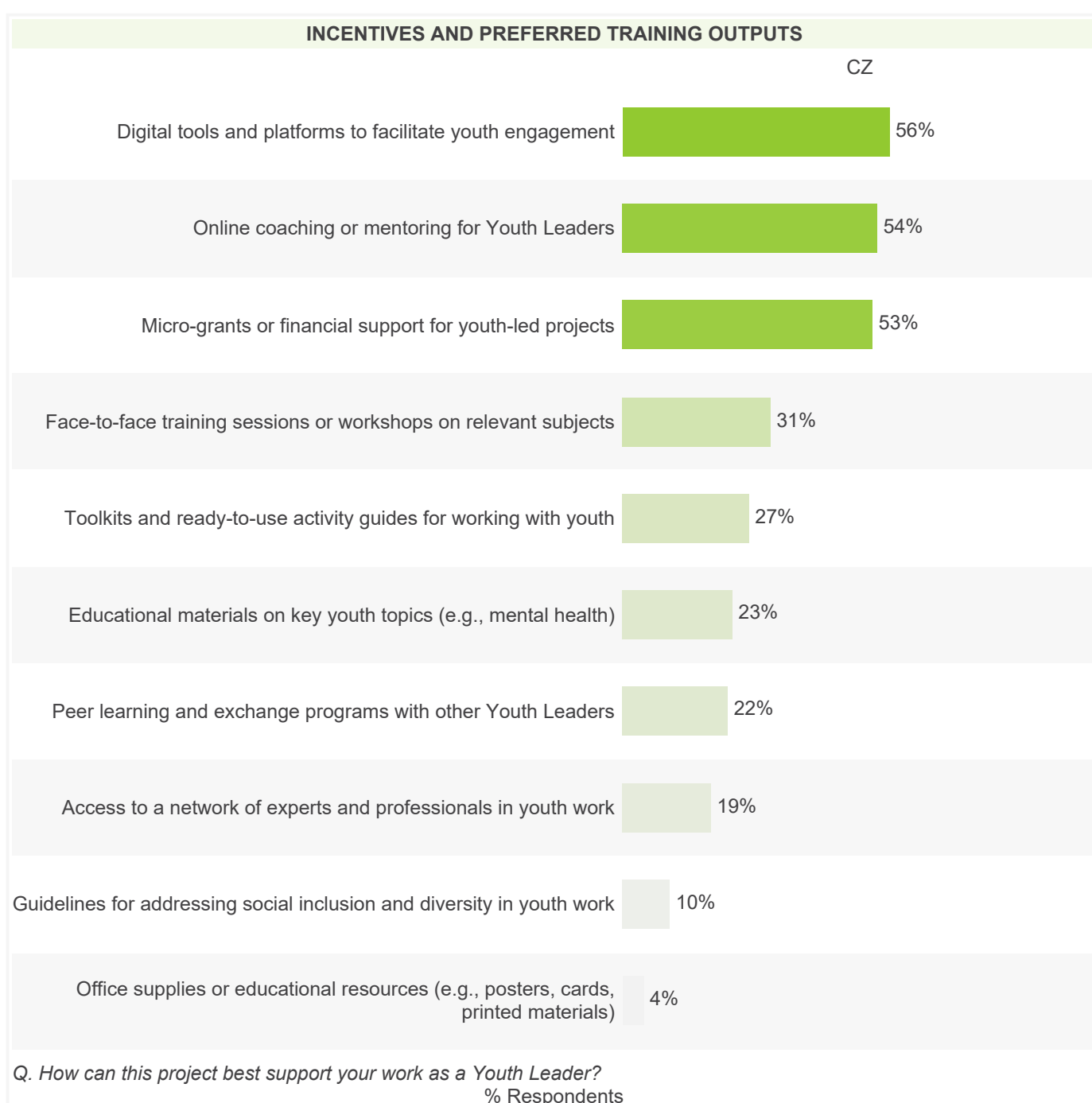
When asked what types of outputs or incentives would be most valuable, the respondents expressed a clear preference for digital facilitation tools and financial support mechanisms.

The most frequently selected incentive was access to digital platforms for youth engagement (56%), followed closely by online coaching or mentoring (54%), reflecting a strong interest in ongoing, individualized support.

Toolkits and ready-to-use activity guides ranked lower (27%), possibly indicating a greater focus on funding and infrastructure over content provision.

Educational materials (23%) and peer learning (22%) were also considered helpful, though not top priorities. Meanwhile, more traditional forms of support such as printed resources (4%) and guidelines on inclusion (10%) received limited interest.

Overall, the responses highlight a strong need for flexible tools, digital solutions, and funding opportunities that empower youth leaders to experiment, adapt, and implement in their work.



### 3.4.4 Interest in participating in international experiences and needs

Youth leaders questioned in this research show a very high enthusiasm for cross-border engagement, with 71% reporting a high probability of participating in international training or networking, and 71% also expressing strong interest in future ENGAGE activities.

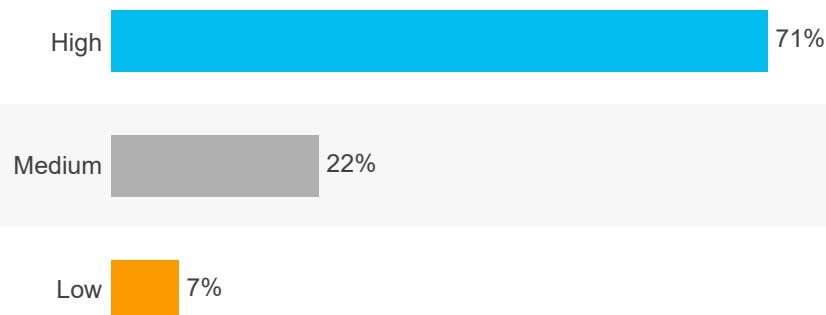
This strong interest could reflect a broader desire for professional development through European collaboration. Many participants see international exposure as essential for accessing new tools, building relationships with peers across countries, and adapting innovative approaches to the local context.

Several youth leaders note that international projects help them feel part of a larger community and validate their efforts in the field.

The findings suggest a strong appetite and a great opportunity for international exchange as a pathway to learning, recognition, and community building, reinforcing the value of offering such opportunities to support motivation and professional identity.

#### INTEREST IN PARTICIPATING IN NEXT ENGAGE ACTIVITIES

CZ

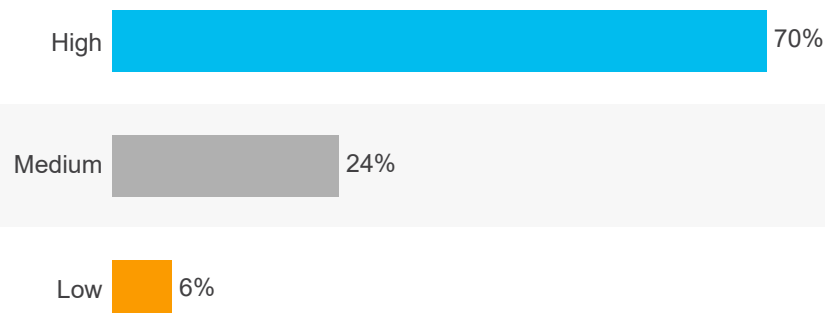


% Respondents

Q. How can this project best support your work as a Youth Leader?

#### PROBABILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERNATIONAL TRAINING OR NETWORKING PROGRAMS

CZ



% Respondents

Q. Would you participate in international training or networking opportunities with Youth Leaders from other countries, if expenses covered?

### 3.5 KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

The profile of youth leaders respondent in the Czech Republic, as reflected in survey data, shows a group of practitioners who are mainly young or middle aged, educated, and based in urban areas, with women forming the majority of respondents.

Many work in NGOs, schools, or youth centers, often with adolescents and young adults. A large proportion report fewer than five years of experience, showing an emerging cohort of leaders entering the field.

The link between training, practice, and priorities is uneven. Czech youth leaders prioritize civic engagement, leadership, and inclusion, but the majority of them lack of training in these areas. Confidence often exceeds formal preparation, especially in topics like civic education and human rights, while new and emerging areas—climate justice, intersectionality, and gender equality—remain underdeveloped.

Youth leaders identify challenges in working with youth that reflect both global and local concerns. They note that young people face growing mental health issues, social isolation, and uncertainty about the future, compounded by digital overload and disinformation. Structural barriers, including unequal access to education, lack of opportunities in rural areas, and weak institutional support, are also highlighted.

In youth leaders perception, barriers in youth work include low participation, limited resources, and insufficient community or parental support. Inclusion is reported as challenging particularly for young people with health-related barriers, disabilities, and those at risk of social exclusion.

To motivate and include youth in their activities, Czech leaders rely on experiential and non-formal methods such as role play, mentoring, and reflective exercises. Competitions, cultural events, and service-learning projects are also used to engage youth. Mentoring and individualized support are central to inclusion strategies, along with offering cost-free or low-cost participation and safe, low-threshold environments. Digital tools and social media are used, but as complements rather than core methods.

Training preferences show strong demand for interactive and flexible learning. Leaders prefer hybrid or shorter formats, with an emphasis on experiential learning, mentoring, and peer exchange. Content priorities include motivation strategies, inclusion practices, mental health, communication, critical thinking, and project management. The need for ready-to-use materials and concrete tools was emphasized.

Czech youth leaders also express openness to international experiences, which are perceived as opportunities to gain inspiration, develop new methods, and strengthen collaboration.