



Erasmus+ KA2 2021 project - Cooperation Partnerships in School Education 2021-1-IT02-KA220-SCH-000029847

REPORT

Data Processing Report

Litigare a scuola Project

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Centar za mir, nenasilje i ljudska prava - Osijek
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1. INTRODUCTION

Research conducted in 2018 shows that introducing non-violent communication and peaceful conflict resolution improves the students' way of communicating and dealing with peer disputes. Workshops that included activities such as role play have shown students how to act if encountering violent communication and improve their relationships with not only their peers, but their teachers as well. Furthermore, engaging students in these types of programs has been proven more than effective and research shows that their motivation in classrooms is driven by exactly that.¹ This is just one of many conducted research in school which has been proven successful in introducing students with peaceful conflict resolution. Accordingly, *Arguing at school – Psychopedagogical methods to help children learn from arguing* is KA2 Erasmus+ project focuses on the topic of quarrels and conflicts among peers, ages 2-18, in the context of their life experiences at school. It is led by CPP and it concerns methods well known in consortium experience: Litigare Bene by Daniele Novara (for 2-10 year old children), Friendship Cards by Relationships Are Forever Foundation (6-18 years old) and Peer mediation (11-18), that includes nonviolent communication and peaceful conflict resolution.

The partners in the project are as follows:

- CPP – Centro Psicopedagogico per la pace e la gestione dei conflitti (Italy);
- FREREF – Fondation des Régions Européennes pour la Recherche l'Education et la Formation (Belgium and France);
- IIHL International Institute of Humanitarian Law (Italy);
- Fondazione Intro (Italy);
- Osnovna škola Ivana Gorana Kovačića Vrbovsko (Croatia);
- The Center for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights – Osijek (Croatia);
- Innovate4Future- Centrul pentru Solutii Educationale Avansate (Romania);
- Colegiul National Sfantul Sava (Romania);
- RAFF Relationships are Forever Foundation (Malta);
- Maria Regina College Naxxar Induction Hub (Malta).

¹ Suzić, N., Luka, B., Marić, T., & Malešević, D. (2018). Effects of nonviolent communication training program on elementary school children. *Arctic*, 71(8), 35-62.

As part of Project Result 2 – Toolkit for teachers training, the Center for Peace was tasked with identifying what courses teachers needed to transfer the methods to their school/class by identifying common and differentiating elements, which are also useful to work on raising awareness of the characteristics of the school situation without methods of argument. The method of collecting listed information was through questionnaires filled out by teachers from all partner countries, which partners disseminated to teachers and schools through e-mail, social media and other appropriate networks. The collected inputs from teachers provide us with a base for creating a toolkit as a result type in this work package.

2. DATA COLLECTION

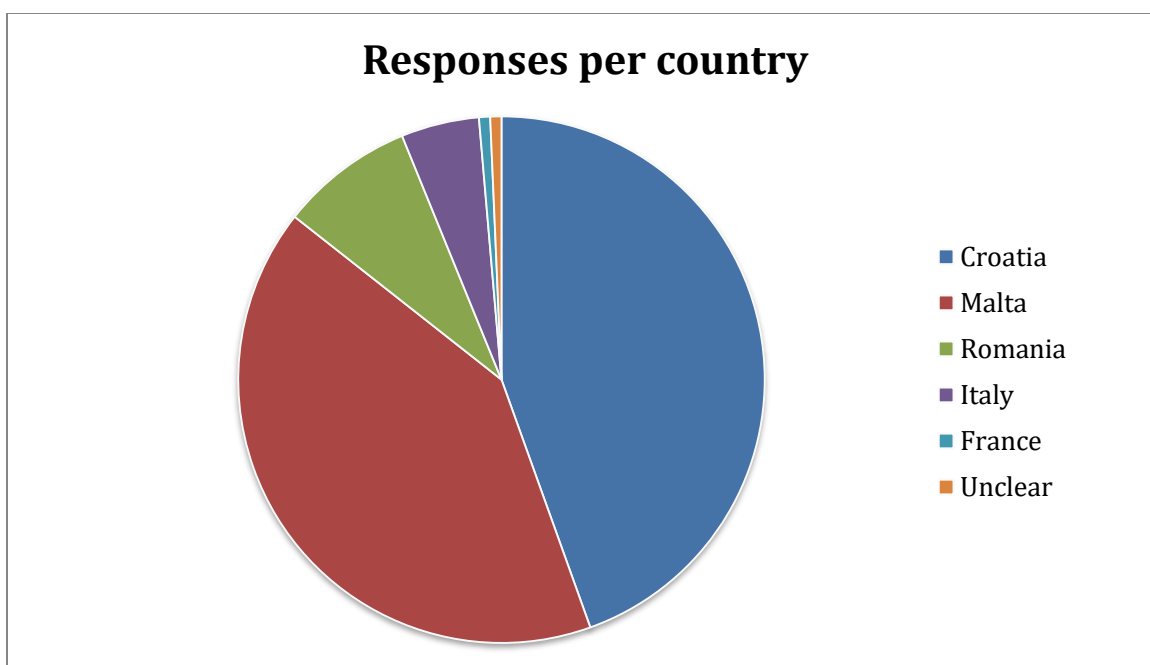
As aforementioned, in order to collect information on the importance of non-violent conflict resolution and communication from the perspectives of teachers and other educators, 146 participants from 5 partner countries filled out questionnaires in Google forms which were later statistically processed. The questionnaires were composed of 21 questions in which some of them provided the participants with examples of possible answers. The collected data will be presented through graphs and the interpretation of answers given by participants.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Countries from which the data was collected

As it was mentioned, five countries participated in the project. As it's shown in graph 1, most participants are from Croatia (44,54%) with 65 participants, then Malta with 60 participants (41,09%), Romania with 12 participants (8,22%), then Italy with 7 (4,79%) and lastly, France with 1 participant (0,68%). One participant did not specify from which country they are, therefore in the graph it is stated as "Unclear".

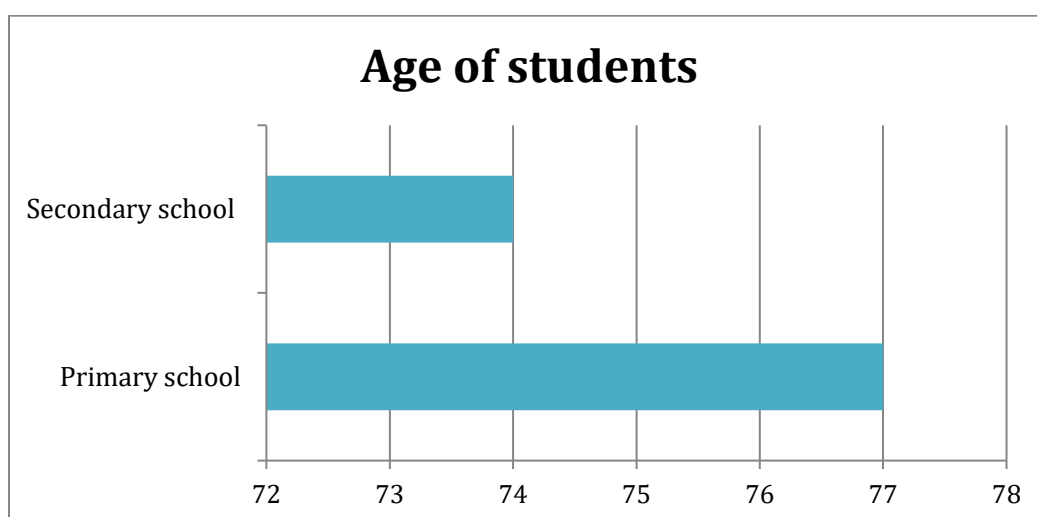
Graph 1 Responses per country



3.2. *The age of the students that the teachers work with*

The answers of the participants show that out of 146 questionnaires, 50,68% stated that they work with students from secondary schools, while 52,74% said that they work with primary school students. It is important to note that some of the participant stated that they work with both primary and secondary school students so there is an overlap present.

Graph 2 The age of the students that the teachers work with



3.3. *The meaning of the word conflict*

Regarding the question of what the word conflict represents for each participant (as a part of the question they were given examples of answers: violence, disagreement, possibility, argument, problem solving, contradiction, opportunity for growth and development), the participants clearly stated that they view conflict as a disagreement with 48 answers (32,88%). Next, with a steep fall in answers, was an argument with 17 answers (11,64%). With these particular answers, it is important to distinguish the difference between the words “disagreement” and “argument”. In the context of this research, disagreement stands for a lack of consensus, while an argument implies a more aggressive exchange of diverging views. The following most common answer was that conflict represents an “opportunity for growth and development” with 12 answers (8,22%). Then, 10 participants (6,85%) stated that conflict represents a “disagreement, but it’s an opportunity to grow”, meaning that although conflict may represent an unpleasant situation, it also provides the parties in the conflict with a distinct opportunity to work on their relationship, as well as improve their communication skills. With a similar idea, 8 participants (5,48%) stated that for them, conflict is an “argument, but an opportunity to grow”. Other participants took on a different perspective, 7 of them (4,79%) answered that the word conflict represents some type of violence. Then, 5 people (3,42%) said that the issue is a lack of understanding between the parties that partake in a conflict. Next, 5 participants (3,42%) equated the word conflict with “problem solving”, removing the word itself from the narrative of violence and opposing sides, and rather perceiving it as a process of resolving whichever problem is present. Next, an equal number of 4 participants (2,74%) stated 4 different answers, which are as follows: Disagreement ranging from small arguments to violence; Contradiction; Arguing and problem solving; Problem solving with an opportunity to grow. While the first two answers focus on the disagreeing part of conflicts, the second two answers acknowledge it, but focus on the part of the problem solving process. Only 2 participants (1,37%) stated that they see conflict as a situation of “tension”, while other 2 participants said how conflict represents contradicting values with an opportunity to grow, pointing out how while the situation implies two or more sides with different value systems and perspectives on the conflict, they are also provided with an opportunity to listen to the feeling and ideas of the other persons in order to resolve the conflict. It is important to note that some participants answered with their own ideas of conflict, in which 1 person (0,68%) stated that conflict means that the people involved are not willing to dialogue (or they don’t have the skills to rather), which especially refers to students. Then while 1 participant stated that conflict means violence, another person said it implies bullying. Interestingly, while 1 person stated that conflict represents setting boundaries

and respecting opinions, another participant said how it actually represents non-acceptance of other people's opinions. Other answers which were provided by 1 participant each are: misunderstanding; one-off violence; inappropriate behavior; failure to find a solution in favor of both parties; fighting, clash between individuals and antagonism; conflict resolution, an opportunity either to grow or as a consequence the relationship will suffer; problem situation and varying opinions/ideas about it; as well as differences, misunderstandings, personal interest. Also, 1 participant only stated that conflict implies all of the above (from the provided examples in the question), while 1 person stated that it's an opportunity. The results of this question show how most participants have a pretty similar idea of what conflict means for them, while a lesser number of them see it either from a perspective of violent actions and communication or from a perspective of a conversation in which people can express their opinions in order to come to a solution together.

3.4. Meaning of non-violent conflict resolution

When asked about how non-violent conflict resolution looks like for each participant (while given examples of answers in the question as it follows: constructive space for reaching an agreement; reasoned discussion; conversation that presents points of view for the benefit of both/multiple parties; arguing and shouting; ignoring the problem), participants provided a variety of answers. The most stated answer was that the word conflict represents a conversation that presents points of view for the benefit of both/multiple parties with 28 answers (19,18%). This answer was followed closely by "a discussion where all parties can share their thoughts and feelings" with 27 answers (18,49%). The third most common answer was "reasoned discussion" with 22 answers (15,07%). Then, 19 participants (13,01%) stated that non-violent conflict resolution requires a constructive space for reaching an agreement. Other answers indicate that non-violent conflict resolution is a peaceful conflict resolution which was stated by 7 participants (4,79%), next that it's a constructive discussion that was said by 6 people (4,11%). Then, 5 participants (3,42%) suggested that the core of non-violent conflict resolution requires compromising and reaching common ground, while other 5 said that it comes down to active listening and dialogue and 5 others who just simply stated that it's a conversation. Some answers focused on specific methods, such as mediation which was stated by 3 people (2,05%), then 1 person (0,68%) who said the Peace corner, while 1 participant mentioned the Thomas and Kilmann styles of conflict resolution. For clarification, the so-called "Peace corner" or "Peace box" depending on the translation is adapted into some Croatian schools based on the Litigare bene method which has been developed by Daniele

Novara and validated in a research in 2011. It aims to prevent teachers to look for the culprit and impose their solution when children quarrel. The method entails a space in the classroom or the school designated for the conflicting partners, or students rather, to discuss what the conflict is about and work towards a solution, peacefully.² Furthermore, 2,05% of the participants combined the provided examples and answered that non-violent conflict resolution implies a constructive space for reaching an agreement, reasoned discussion, conversation that presents points of view for the benefit of both/multiple parties. Other participants (2,05%) pointed out the importance of tolerance and being respectful of other people's opinions in the process. Moreover, some participants answered with their own ideas on non-violent conflict resolution, where 1 of them (0,68%) said that it's an analysis of the situation and acceptance of responsibility, while another person said that it's more about recognizing one's own and other people's emotions and apologizing. Two of the participants had a similar idea of their answer in which one of them said that the process implies a constructive resolution, while another person said that it's about constructive dialogue. Also, 2 participants stated how for them, the resolution implies a reasoned discussion and finding a solution together. Interestingly, one participant stated how it implies: "a communication which leads to shouting, back stabbing, hurting others emotionally". It is unclear whether they actually perceive non-violent conflict resolution in this way or they haven't managed to express themselves in a way they wanted to because of the language barrier. Lastly, 1 participant simply stated "all of the above" meaning the provided examples in the question. It's apparent that most participants perceive non-violent conflict resolution as a certain type of discussion that requires a safe space for expressing one's thoughts and emotions, as well as working together towards a solution that is a win-win situation.

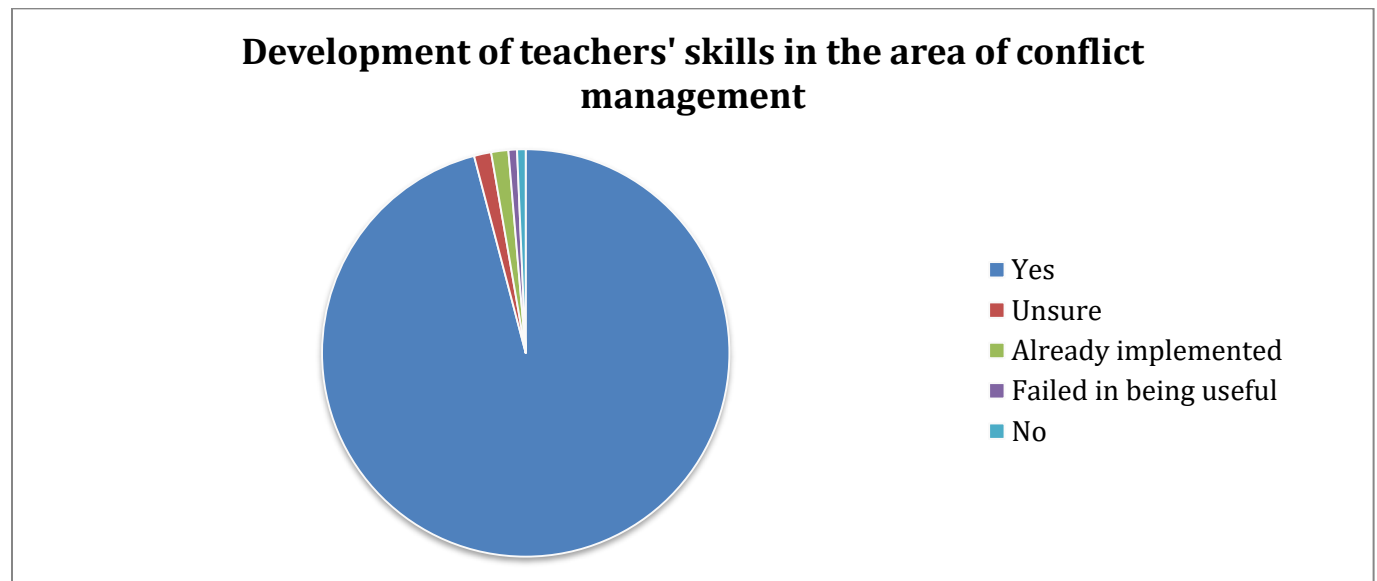
3.5. *Usefulness of the program*

When asked about how beneficial it would be to develop teachers' skills in the area of conflict management from an educational perspective, 95,89% of participants agree that it would be useful, while only one person (0,68%) disagrees, one participant also states that the attempt to implement this failed, two participants (1,37%) state that development of such skills in an educational environment was already implemented, while 1,37% of participants are unsure whether such development is necessary and if it would be beneficial enough to even discuss

²Krmpotić, M. (July, 2022). Kako se svađati na dobar način? Škola u Vrbovskom provodi fora projekt, imaju čak i – kutiće za sukobe. https://www.novilist.hr/rijeka-regija/gorski-kotar/kako-se-svadati-na-dobar-nacin-skola-u-vrbovskom-provodi-fora-projekt-imaju-cak-i-kutice-za-sukobe/?meta_refresh=true

implementing it. As shown by the graph, it's evident how implementing such programs in the education process is more than necessary and would be greatly appreciated by teachers and other educators in improving their communication skills as well as conflict resolution skills.

Graph 3 Usefulness to develop teachers' skills in the area of conflict management from an educational perspective



3.6. *Methods for managing peer disputes at school*

Out of 146 participants, 12 of them (8,22%) stated that they in fact don't use or don't know rather about any methods for managing peer disputes in school. Most participants (12,33%) simply stated that they use conversation as a method, while the second most common answer with 14 answers (9,59%) was some type of (class)discussion which is used to search for a solution together. Next, 8,90% of participants stated that they use mediation as a method in conflict resolution. Other answers consisted of compromising (4,79%), the Peace Corner (4,11%), Friendship Cards (2,74%), and group work (2,74%). One of the participants pointed out some methods which include De Bono's thinking skills, role reversal, and the Lazarus effect, while another one mentioned the phenomenological method. Regardless of the previous methods, 2,05% of participants noted that the method used depends solely on the gravity of the situation, or the peer dispute rather and whether the situation is a simple disagreement or a case of bullying and or violence.

Additional specified methods that participants pointed out for using in a classroom/ when working with students include (each bullet represents 1 participant):

- Awareness of emotions and dealing with the source of the problem;
- Life skills training;
- Argumentative discussion with the expert team;
- Alternative methods include strengthening the victim, paraphrasing, negotiation, 5 levels of water-lowering, and transformative communication;
- Defining needs;
- Method of mutual understanding and respect for diversity;
- Measuring instruments (sociometry, assessment scale etc.);
- Coaching;
- Diplomacy;
- Circle time;
- Guidance sessions and Friendship Cards;
- Communication, reflection sessions, sharing evidence;
- Communication and role play;
- Empathy lessons and stress management;
- Self-control;
- Litigare bene method;
- Conducting workshops;
- Me messages;
- Clear messages;
- De-escalation technique;
- Guidance Counselling;
- PSCD (Personal development);
- Providing examples for students;
- Creating a space for discussion and using empathy scenarios;
- Involving SMT and the discipline board in cases of physical aggression and referring students to the guidance team;
- Class discussion and encouraging students to come up with solutions themselves;
- Conflict resolution skills;
- Notifying parents if necessary and class discussion;
- Decision making technique;

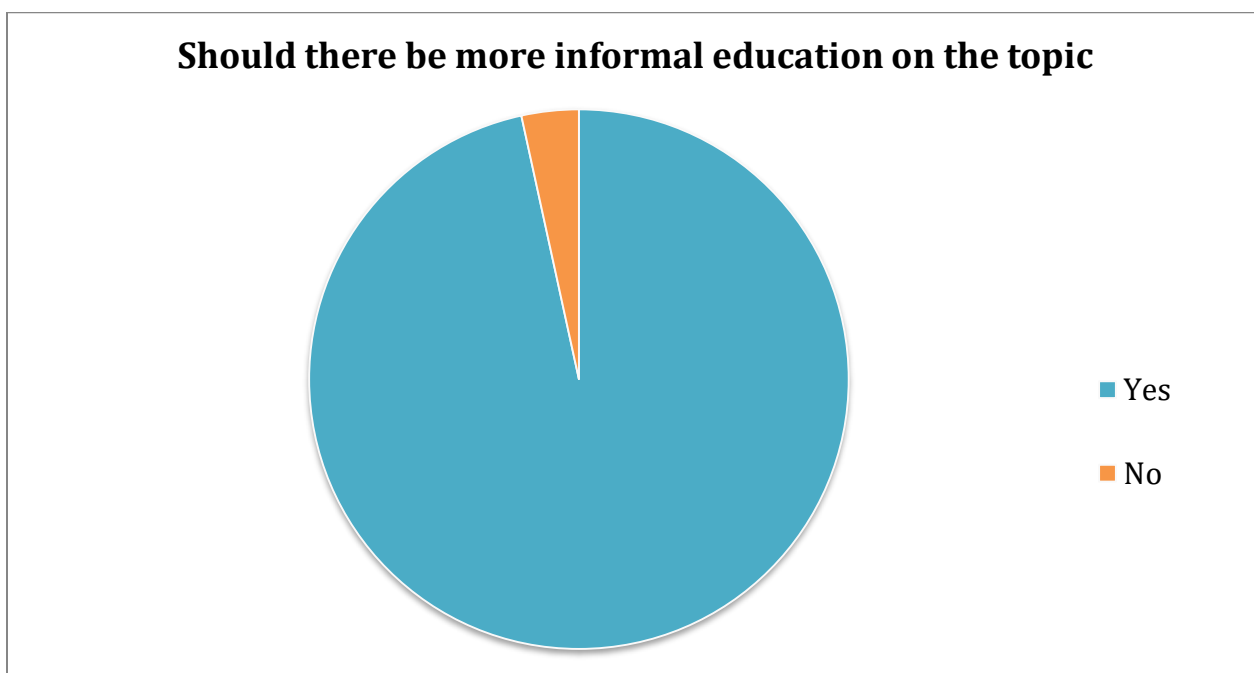
- Listening to students separately then asking them to swap roles to try to understand each other's point of view.

It's clear that participants display a variety of methods which are almost all rooted in empathy and understanding of other people's emotions and reasoning, and most importantly the students' own understanding of their emotions and reasoning.

3.7. Question of implementing more informal education on the topic

In regard to implementing more informal education on non-violent communication and conflict resolution, graph 4 shows that out of 146 participants, 96,58% agree that there definitely should be more informal education on this topic, while only 3,42% of participants disagree with this idea. This shows that there is space for implementation and general improvement in learning about non-violent conflict resolution and communication.

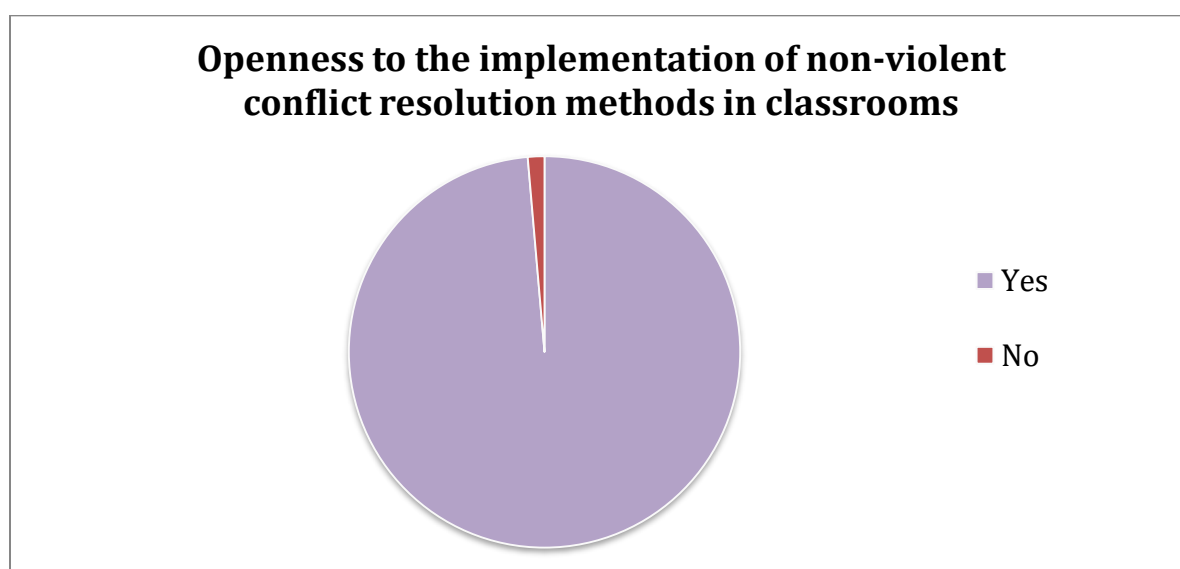
Graph 4 Implementing more of informal education on non-violent conflict resolution



3.8. *Openness to implementing or introducing non-violent conflict resolution methods in classes*

When asked about their interest in implementing or rather, introducing non-violent conflict resolution methods in their classrooms, a whopping 144 out of 146 participants (98,63%) stated that they were willing to do so, while only 2 participants (1,37%) are opposed to the idea as shown in graph 5. It is evident that essentially all teachers and educators are open to the idea of introducing such topics in their classes.

Graph 5 Openness to implementing or introducing non-violent conflict resolution methods in classrooms

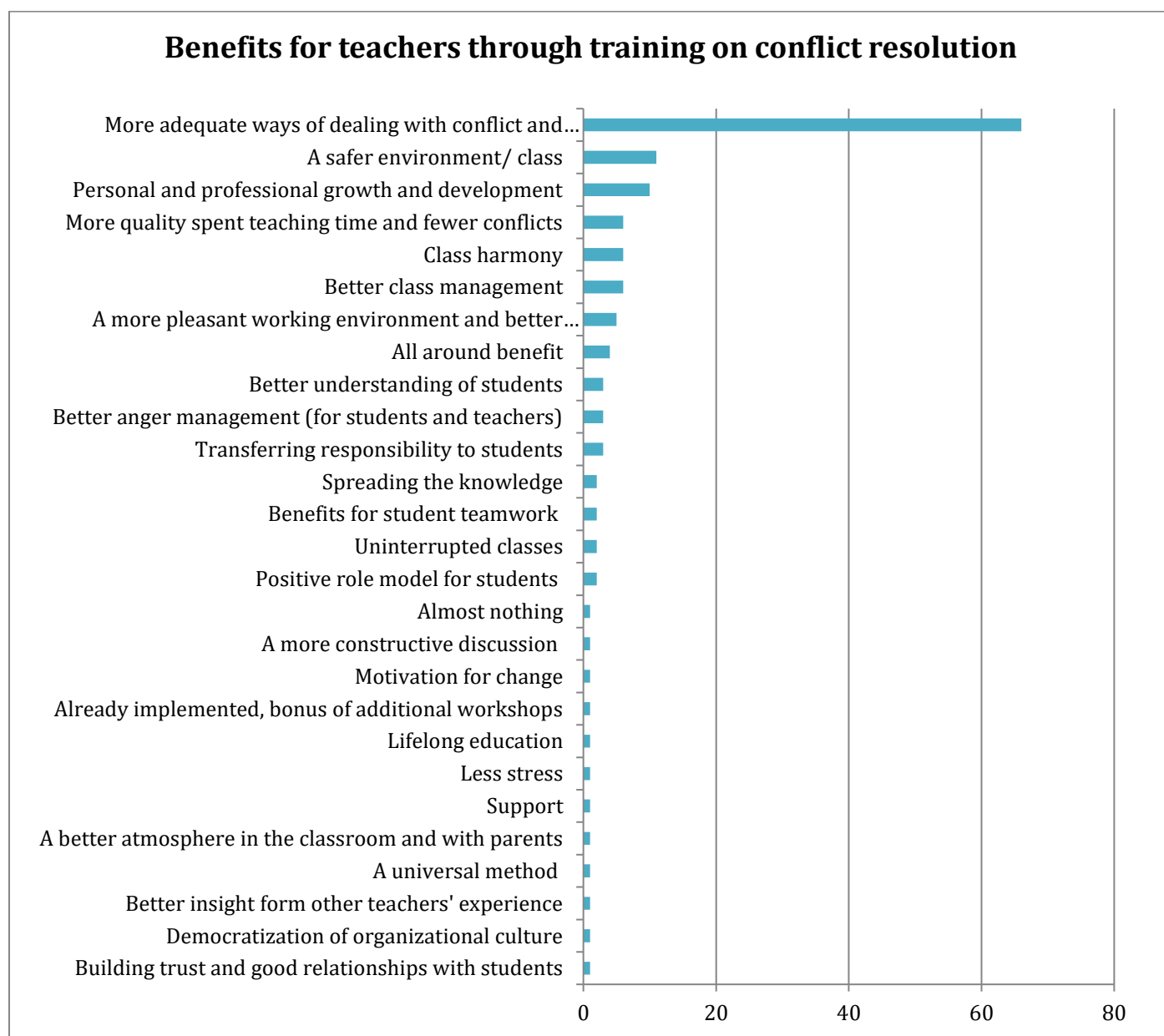


3.9. *Benefits for teachers through training on conflict resolution methods*

Almost half of all participants (45,21%) pointed out that the main benefits that teachers would gain through conflict resolution methods training are, of course, more adequate ways of dealing with conflict and acquiring skills to do so. Participants emphasized that this entails overall a more efficient and proper way of dealing with peer disputes before they escalate or even begin. They also pointed out the opportunity to apply the training in their everyday life and relationships with other people even outside the classroom. Furthermore, participants point out that the students would learn to be more assertive and therefore less aggressive, and teachers on the other hand would improve their immediacy skills while also giving them practical methods and alternative measures to guide students in these situations. One participant even emphasized their

experience with teachers whose mutual communication is “inadequate, immature, and non-argumentative”, and therefore could use the acquirement of such skills. Accordingly, some participants (6,85%) therefore focused on the aspect of their personal and professional growth and development that would result from the training. They point out how acquiring more adequate skills in such topics would not only allow them to be better educators and transfer their knowledge onto students to help them resolve conflicts peacefully, but also allow for them to improve them as people in general. In regard to better class management, participants (4,11%) point out that they would feel more confident and more competent about their decision making in class and therefore not feel as helpless as of right now, as well as be more productive when conducting classes. Some participants (7,53%) also pointed out the importance of a safer environment and generally a lot calmer and more relaxed classrooms that would be beneficial for both teachers and students if they were thought how to communicate better and resolve conflicts, which would also lead to a more creative learning environment. This would also affect the teacher and educator collective and 3,42% of participants stated that better class harmony would contribute to an overall more pleasant working environment, as well as better relationships between teachers and their colleagues. It's important to point out that 2,05% of participants note how these trainings would result in better anger management for both students and themselves, which is especially important considering the fact that some of participants mentioned cases of them or their colleagues yelling at students as a way of stopping peer disputes. Graph 6 shows other mentioned benefits for teachers and it's clear that all participants can point out some of the benefits that would result if trainings on non-violent communication were conducted, while only 1 participant believes how almost no benefits would come from these trainings. The categories were constructed based on the similarity and compatibility of answers given by participants who, in many cases, answered with a few words.

Graph 6 Benefits for teachers through training on conflict resolution methods

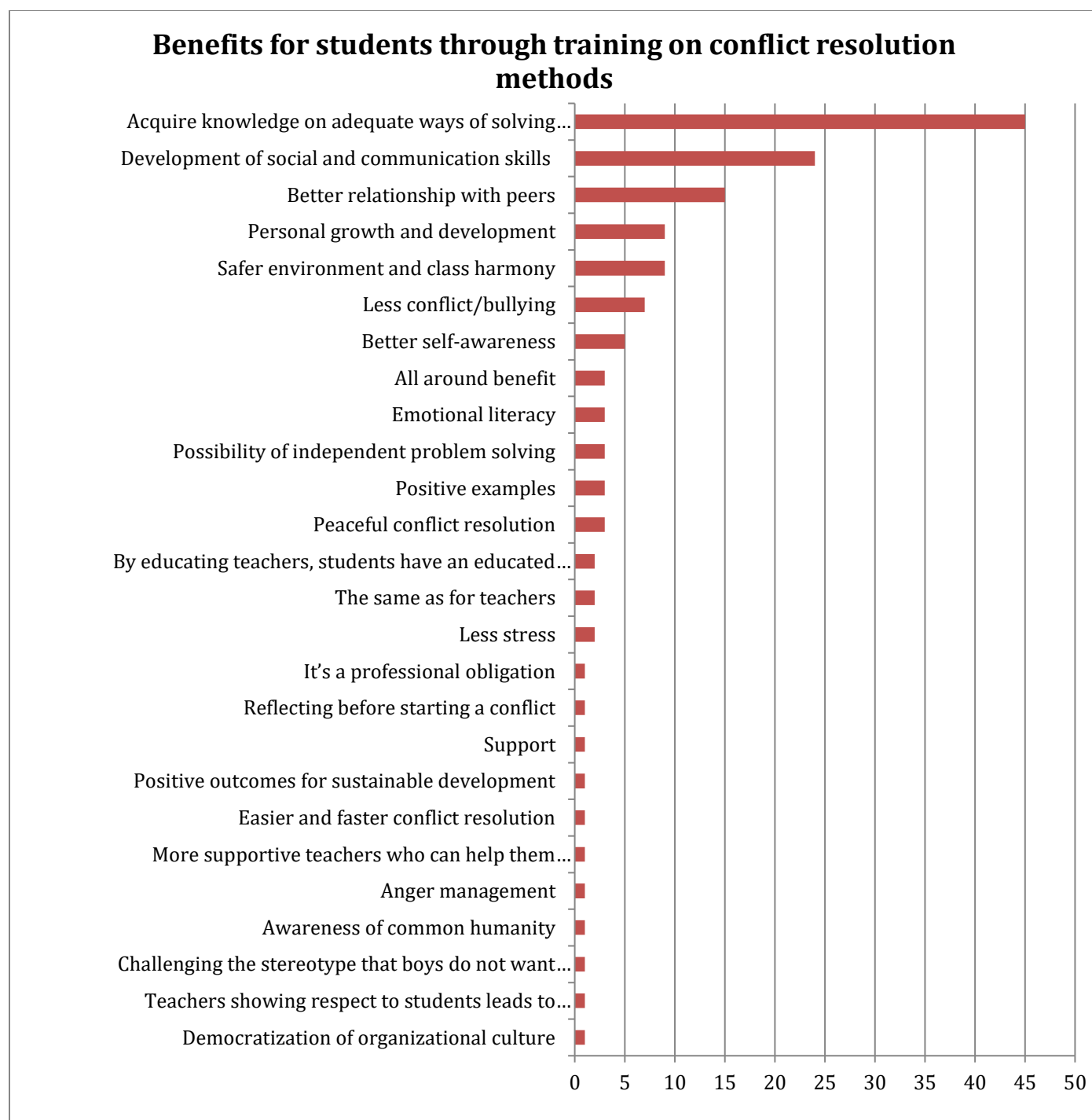


3.10. *Benefits for students through training on conflict resolution methods*

As participants stated in the previous question, they recognize the benefits students would enjoy if trainings on conflict resolution methods were implemented. Hence, most participants (30,82%) recognized that if students were more educated on conflict resolution methods, which is undoubtedly acquiring knowledge that is needed for peacefully resolving a conflict. This category

that is shown in graph 7 includes answers such as how perfecting social skills is a method of an extraordinary preventive program and how their role in conflict resolution would go from a more passive one where the teachers are “judges” to a more active role in the context of active participation in making decisions and solutions. Participants also stated that this would result in students even being able to foresee potential conflicts or quarrels and therefore avoid them or successfully resolve them early on. Participants then recognized that considering that conflicts are inevitable and pivotal parts of every single person’s life, acquiring these skills would provide them with a lifelong tool for their private and future professional relationships. Secondly, other participants (16,44%) also pointed out on students’ benefit for their development of social and communication skills that include skills such as: acceptance of responsibility; empathy; respect for other people’s opinions etc. Third most common answer (10,27%) was that education on said topic would surely result in an overall better relationship with their peers, meaning that they would be more tolerant and accepting of each other. Participants (6,16%) also pointed out an important possible outcome which is personal growth and development that includes aspects such as: setting and breaking boundaries; self-regulation; transformation of relationships; long-term democratization etc. Participants believe that educating students on this topic would improve their emotional literacy since they would be confronted with violent communication through workshops and would have a direct confrontation with their peers and therefore could gain a better understanding of themselves through working on self-awareness, as well as putting themselves in the shoes of their peers which would ultimately have an all-around benefit for both teachers and students. Once again, it is important to note that participants have given either nearly identical answers as for the previous question, as well as given short answers even though the question was clearly an open type.

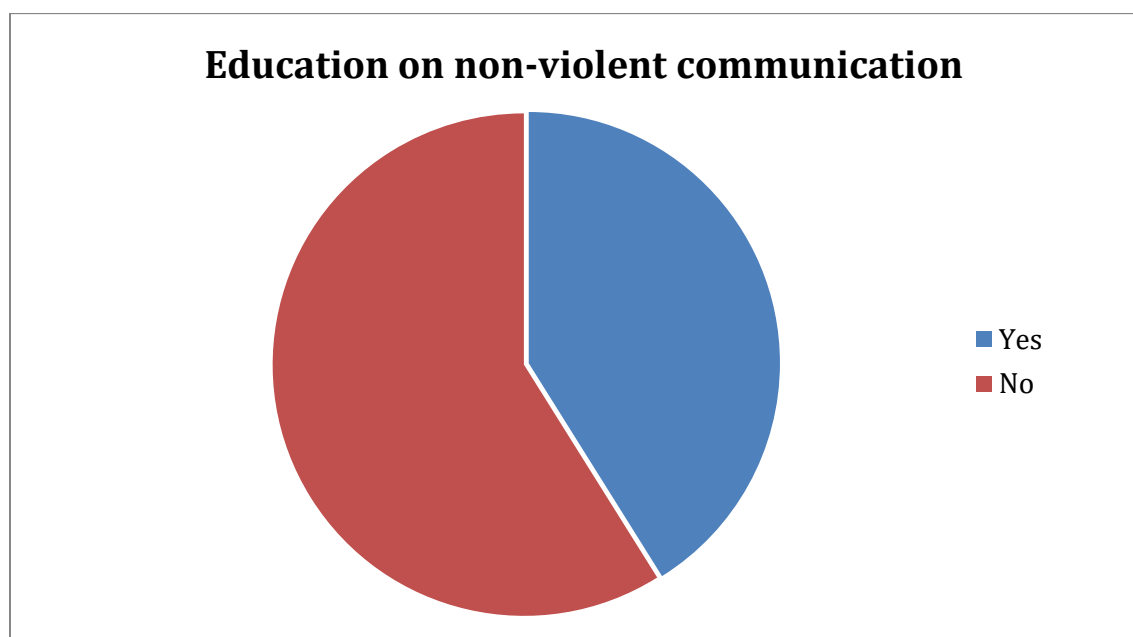
Graph 7 Benefits for students through training on conflict resolution methods



3.11. The opportunity of education in the field of nonviolent communication

When asked about having the opportunity to educate themselves in the field of nonviolent communication so far, as shown in graph 8, more than half of participants (58,90%) stated that they have not had that opportunity, while 40,41% of them said that they indeed had such an opportunity. Such results clearly show the need to implement further education on non-violent communication in the educational system, as well as encourage teachers and experts who work with children and young people to seek further training in the area of non-violent communication.

Graph 8 The opportunity to educate themselves in the field of nonviolent communication



Accordingly, the participants were then asked to state which topics of non-violent communication they've covered in regards to educating themselves on the mentioned topic. While out of 59 participants 3,34% of them didn't answer, 10,53% of them mentioned mediation, 7,02% answered conflict resolution, 5,26% mentioned the Peace corner, 3,51% said non-violent communication, another 3,51% stated they covered conflict resolution with Friendship Cards, then 3,51% who said life skills training and 3,51% who said Litigare bene training sessions. Furthermore, the other participants stated the following (each bullet represents one participant):

- Anger management skills;
- Compromising;
- Conflict;

- Emotional awareness;
- De-escalation techniques/ healthy ways of dealing with conflict;
- Practicing me messages;
- Conflict management styles and problem solving;
- Mindfulness;
- Peer relationships;
- By agreement to the goal;
- Conflict as an opportunity, not a violent transformation of conflict;
- Achieving a win-win situation, mediation, methods of opposing power structures and changing the social climate;
- Active listening, negotiation, confidence, empathy, communication;
- Ways of resolving conflicts, "I" messages;
- Peer violence in school and on the street – education;
- Conflict as an opportunity;
- Mediation, Litigare bene, Friendship Cards;
- Peacemaking corner, mediation, life skills training;
- Assertiveness, types of communication, self-control, empathy;
- Reconciliation, non-violent communication, I messages;
- Education of all types of violence for teachers is regularly conducted through the Ministry of Science and Education and Agency for Upbringing and Education in cooperation with associations and organizations;
- Conflict resolution, negotiating the goal, Assertiveness, Dealing with anger, Social skills;
- Peer violence, violence by a known person and by an unknown person;
- How to stand up for yourself without endangering the other side;
- Tolerance, assertiveness, non-violent conflict resolution;
- Conflict and the consequences of violence, identity, stereotypes and prejudices, communication skills, through different forms of conflict resolution (peer mediation, family mediation, partner therapy etc.);
- Mediation, CAP program;
- Listening, empathy, communication skills, leverage;
- Observation, feelings, needs and requests;
- Listening skills, respect, non-verbal communication;
- Developing a positive culture and respectful;
- Reason, religion, loving kindness, empathy, psychotherapy;

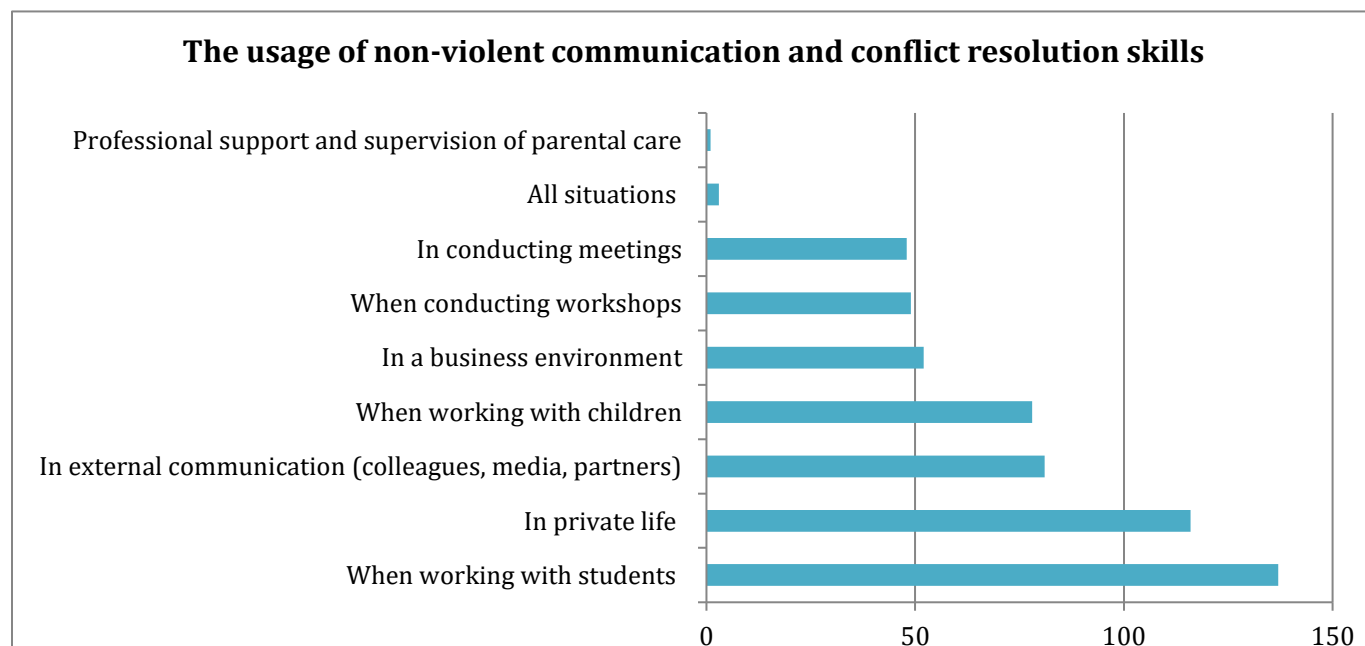
- Being assertive; using the broken record method; developing active listening skills, defusing the situation by using humor;
- Empathy, self-compassion, anger issues.

When talking about the communication skills, participants mentioned the skills on how to listen, obstacles to communication, and incentives for communication, assertive communication, conflicts, techniques and procedures for resolving conflicts. It's clear that many of them have at least heard of, or even applied the presented methods, which means that it's not a foreign concept to educators and some of these methods could and should therefore be integrated into the education perspective.

3.12. *The usage of non-violent communication and conflict resolution skills*

When asked about the situations in which the participants could apply their newfound skills in non-violent communication, 93,83% of them, among other offered answers, stated that they could apply them when working with students. The next most common answer was that they could use those skills in their private lives (79,45%). Other offered answers in the question, and which provided similar results were: when conducting workshops (33,56%); in conducting meetings (32,88%); and in a business environment (35,62%). One of participants even specified that they use non-violent communication professional support and supervision of parental care, in situations in which the parents are in conflict, and generally when working with families with children.

Graph 9 The usage of non-violent communication and conflict resolution skills

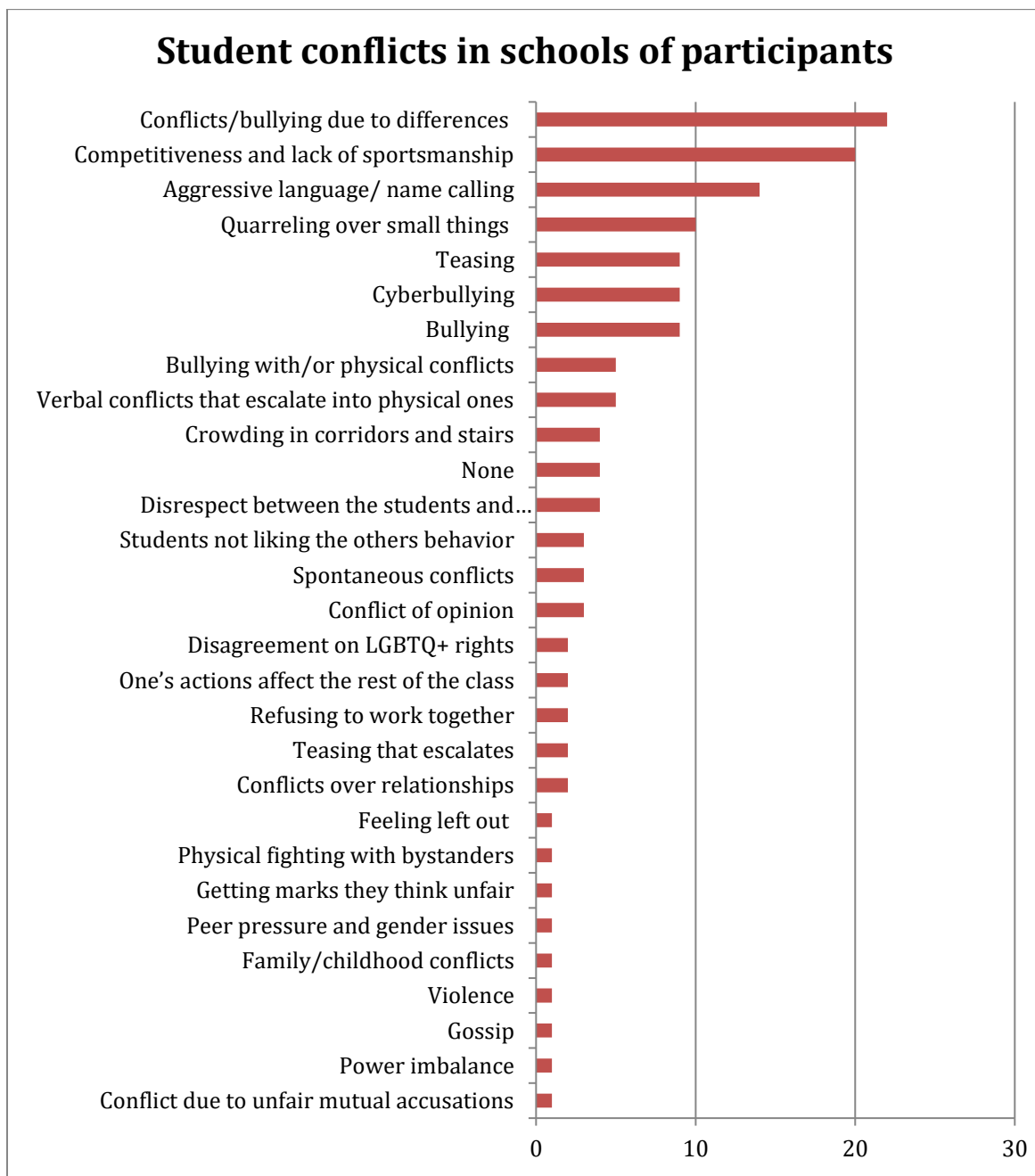


3.13. *Conflicts between students in the school environment*

Next, the participants were asked to specify the conflict(s) present in the school environment where they work. The most common type of conflicts according to our participants, are the cases of violence that concern behaviors such as bullying, in regard to various types of differences among students. Therefore, 15,01% of participants pointed out the conflicts which are rooted in gender issues, nationality, children with developmental disabilities and cultural differences in general. This is not surprising and is still one of the most common occurrences in the educational perspective. One of the participants described a situation in which a student with ADHD who tends to be impulsive and at times plays rough with his classmates, which is interpreted as bullying the other students, so they “gang up” on him and accuse him of hurting others, leaving him isolated to a certain extent. Another example was described by a participant in which a student with special needs was openly attacked by a classmate for having a different written test (the participant emphasized that the test was graphically different, not easier in its contents). A very similar example was provided by a Croatian participant who said how some children dislike when the teachers give some concessions to children from Ukraine, that they resent it and demand the same treatment as other children. Furthermore, there was another case of a student with special needs who does not have developed social skills is challenged or mocked by other students in various ways. Through the methods of non-violent communication it is crucial to work on raising awareness on the impact of stereotypes and prejudice present in society while promoting skills such as empathy, tolerance and acceptance. Conflicts regarding basic human rights should be dealt with accordingly, while informing students of the importance of equality. As expected with younger students in primary schools, the second most commonly mentioned conflicts are the result of competitiveness and lack of sportsmanship with 13,70% of participants talking about the situation where students fight over which game to play, who can be in which team, who gets the point in the game etc. This includes cases which a participant describes as the most common one, when a child steals other children's toys at recess, or a child says something offensive to a peer. Next, 9,59% of them mentioned name calling and the use of some type of aggressive verbal communications including curse words, threats etc. Unsurprisingly, 6,85% of participants state that the students quarrel over small things such as who gets to be the first in line, who can be a member of which friend group and similar disputes. What may come as a bit of a surprise is that 6,16% of participants describe cases of cyberbullying which include bullying in Viber groups, posting something, mainly pictures, online without the consent of the person and other situation where bullying between students takes place online. Some participants (2,74%) even point out

the cases of students not only being disrespectful amongst themselves, put showing blatant disrespect towards the teacher in question. As shown in Graph 10, other participants pointed out conflicts like gossiping, violence, feeling left out, peer pressure and so on. The ever-presence of cyberbullying may call for introduction of methods that would teach educators how to deal with these types of conflicts specifically and what the process of resolving it would include. Other examples of conflicts present in classrooms of participants are shown in Graph 10 which were categorized based on the compatibility of participants' answers.

Graph 10 Student conflicts in the schools where the participants work



3.14. Perception of conflicts between students and emotional involvement

While many participants mentioned that that they consider conflicts to be an inevitable and necessary part of growing up and life, and that the students' mutual conflicts provide them with an opportunity to learn non-violent communication and peaceful conflict resolution, 11 of them (7,53%) stated exactly that. Furthermore, while some of the participants stated how they shy away from conflict and would like to be able to avoid them completely because they feel responsible for their resolution. Most answers, 17 of them (11,64%) are about how, obviously, witnessing to student conflict arouses unpleasant emotions for teachers and the general upset. Next, 7,53% of participants stated that they feel frustrated with student conflict because it's either disruptive to their class, or that it's a waste of time, or that they simply don't know what to do. Feelings of sadness and anger are mentioned by 6,85% of participants respectively. It's important to point out how 7 participants (4,79%) answered that they feel, or rather try to feel, neutral when conflict occur, simply because they want to be objective when resolving the issue, and are aiming towards equal opportunities for students in question to discuss their thoughts and feelings. The same amount of participants see student conflicts as a teaching opportunity in which they can work on personal growth and also teach students the healthy ways of dealing with peer disputes. Some participants (3,42%) stated that they feel helpless in these situation for a lack of conflict resolution skills and the appropriate response. Other answers that participants point out are: fear; compassion; tiredness; uncertainty; disruption to work; betrayal; envy (this answer remains without context since the participants only wrote the word envy as an answer). One participant even stated that conflicts are a reflection of family situations and insufficient education on the rights to diversity. Some participants (7,53%) described that their first and secondary reactions include unpleasant emotions such as anger, panic, fear, frustration, sadness and so on. Moreover, 2,05% of participant said that after feeling angry at first, then they work on conflict resolution, while 1,37% said that after listening to the students about what happened, that they refer them to the Peace corner.

3.15. First and secondary reactions to student conflicts

Participants were then ask to describe what are their first and what their secondary reactions to student conflict, to which 34 participants (23,29%) stated that they first work on calming down the students and the situation from escalating, then they have a conversation or a discussion rather about what happened and what cause the conflict. Next, 18 participants (12,33%) state how their

first reaction is to stop, and in some cases even physically separate the students if there is a physical altercation and then to work on peacefully resolving the conflict. Other answers on primary and secondary reactions of teachers on peer disputes include as follows (each bullet represents one participant):

- Uncertainty about one's own decisions;
- Observing the conflict if it is not physical, if it escalates, calming the situation and finding a solution;
- Giving advice for conflict resolution;
- Finding the reason why the student did not act as he "should";
- Discomfort, then looking for a solution;
- Asking students to reconcile and apologize to each other;
- Depending on the situation (there are many children with disabilities at school);
- Raising the tone, then solving the situation;
- Reassure and engage a person who can help;
- Optimism about finding a solution;
- Active listening and finding a peaceful solution (role playing);
- Surprise and concern;
- Discomfort and optimism;
- Placing responsibility on students;
- An issue of cultures and home environments (normalized);
- Explain to the students that there is no reason to argue;
- Preventing a physical fight and working on anger management strategies;
- Stopping them and pointing out what they did wrong;
- Trying to compromise, then threatening with a report;
- Curiosity, then compassion;
- Thinking of a resolution after understanding the situation.

From the answers of the participants it's clear that there should be improvement regarding the educators' primary reaction to student conflicts, as to avoid yelling on the students as an attempt to settle them down or not approaching the conflict in an adequate way.

3.16. *Intervention in student conflicts*

When participants were asked whether or not they, or their colleagues intervene when a student conflict occurs and how, 7 of them (4,79%) of them state that they in fact, do not intervene, while 14 (9,59%) of them simply stated that they do intervene. Notably, 32 of participants (21,92%) stated that their intervention consists of a discussion with the students about what happened and supporting them during the resolution so that it can be done efficiently and without escalation. Next, 14 of them (9,59%) said that they simply talk with them and try to calm the situation down, but the participants didn't specify if they help in the conflict resolution process, just that they focus on calming things down. Some participants (5,48%) simply stated that they intervene by talking with the students, while another 8 participants stated that they physically separate the students and try to calm them down. Alarming, 3,42% of educators stated that they also physically separate the students as to eliminate injuries, which were not a rare occurrence in these cases and one participant even stated that they intervene by taking the students' weapons away, as if it a common circumstance. When it comes to violent incidents in schools, one participant even said how sometimes teachers get hurt when separating the students. Some answers (4,11%) regarded involving the SMT (School Management Team) to help in these situation and calm the situation down themselves, while 3,42% of participants said that they use mediation as a method, while another 5 said that they intervene by including the pedagogue and parents. Only one participant said that there was no need for an intervention, while two of them said that the intervention truly depends on the intensity of the situation. Furthermore, 1,37% of participants mentioned using consultation, another 2 who said they refer students to the Peace corner, while on another note, 2 participants said that they work as a team. Next, 2 of them said that they use non-violent communication, and two others similarly stated that they firstly establish the causes of why the conflict even happened and then encourage communication through conversation. Other answers given by participants in regards to their and their colleagues' method of intervention included the following (each participant represents one participant):

- Trying to reason with them, if it fails, giving in;
- Explaining to them that there is no reason to argue;
- Observing the conflict if it is not physical, if it escalates, calming the situation and finding a solution;
- Finding the reason why the student did not act as he "should";
- Stopping the conflict from reoccurring;

- By stopping aggression;
- By reminding them of being respectful when settling disagreements;
- By discussing and if it's serious, reporting to SLT (school leadership);
- Depends on the situation, some colleagues force a resolution by screaming;
- Trying to understand the students' reasoning, other colleagues force a resolution by yelling;
- With the adoption of conflict resolution rules (listening to interlocutors, showing respect, proposing compromises);
- Students talk about conflict during the PSCD lesson;
- Separation of students, inclusion of class teachers, mediation;
- Conversation, mediation, conversation with parents;
- By restitution;
- Through conversation and workshops;
- Handing over to the class teacher;
- Letting the students try to solve it themselves, if not, leading a conversation to understand each other's point of view;
- By class intervention and empathizing;
- Male colleagues intervene in physical fights;
- A case of physical violence;
- Serious arguments finishing as a physical fight.

It's should be noted that a few participants did not answer this question, while some of them apparently confused this question with previous ones, as can be seen by the last couple of given answers.

3.17. *Existence of rules regarding intervening in peer disputes*

Later, participants were asked whether they have a rule in their classrooms/schools regarding intervening in school conflicts and which methods they use, if any. A majority of answers, 23 of them rather (15,75%), simply stated "No" in regard to this question, while 10 of them (10,27%) were answered with a short "Yes" without elaborating on which rule is integrated in their classrooms and another 6 (4,11%) of educators suggested that teachers should intervene. Five participants (3,42%) talked about how intervening in student conflicts should be and is a matter

of teacher assessment and that in most cases teachers don't have to intervene if it is a case of an argument, and that there definitely needs to be an intervention if it's a case of violence. Next, 4 participants (2,74%) said that it entirely depends on the situation and 3 of them (2,05%) who specified that they act in accordance with the Protocol on handling, while on the other hand, two participants said that they intervene only in cases of physical violence. Another 5 of them emphasized the importance of allowing the students to try to solve the issue independently while observing them of course, and intervene only if they can't or the conflict escalates and then include a third person if needed. Moreover, two answers were about referral to the pedagogue and professional team. It should be noted that 9 participants (6,16%) did not answer this question. More answers that were given by participants include the following (each bullet represents one participant):

- Majeutics method;
- It is necessary to channel the argument in a positive direction;
- Intervention is not needed if the children are educated for non-violent conflict resolution;
- Intervening at the beginning of the conflict while the students are not educated for non-violent conflict resolution;
- Point out the importance of conflict resolution so that violence does not occur;
- Should, with the threat of punishment or embarrassment from the leadership of the school, the media, the ministry;
- Individual approach;
- Mediation and the Peace corner;
- Self-initiated access to the Peace corner;
- If they ask for help.

The given answers imply that rules about intervening in student conflicts are not an entirely transparent to teachers and educators. Since not only many participants said that they don't have such implemented rules, other said that their intervention is conversation, which should be conducted regardless. Others seemed to have not even understood the question in itself. This shows that specified and integrated rules of dealing with student conflict not only need to be more introduced in the education perspective, but they have to be closely explained and taught to teachers and educators as well.

3.18. Indicators of whether a conflict is a case of violence or bullying

In the next question, the participants were asked to consider their example of student conflict again and try to categorize it depending on if it's a case of an argument, violence or rather bullying. While almost all participants mentioned similar indicators to determine in which category the conflict belongs, 12 (8,22%) of participants specifically stated that indicators that distinguish quarrels from bullying and violence are intensity, duration, power imbalance, whereby violence implies more intense conflicts that are often physical, while bullying lasts a longer period and quarrels that are isolated one-time verbal conflicts in which both/ all parties participate. Argument was the most common answer with 33 participants (22,60%) stating that, while 8,22% said that it was a case of (continuous) bullying with purposeful malintent and 11 (7,53%) of participants report on violent incidents and or cases of physical violence. Furthermore, 7 participants (4,79%) stated that the indicators for cases of bullying and/ or violence are repetitive behavior and purposeful intent to harm and recognize it as such. Some participants (3,42%) said that it was difficult for them to categorize and say what of the mentioned categories represents their examples. Next, 2,05% of participants stated that in their opinion, bullying is a continuous and purposeful behavior, while an argument is a disagreement and a one-time thing, and another 3 participants reported that in cases of bullying there is a power misbalance present and malintent involved, while in an argument both parties can express their opinion. Other answer were similar regarding indicators in which repetitiveness of behavior, continuation and intent to harm represent bullying, while a certain equality when expressing one's opinion is present in arguments.

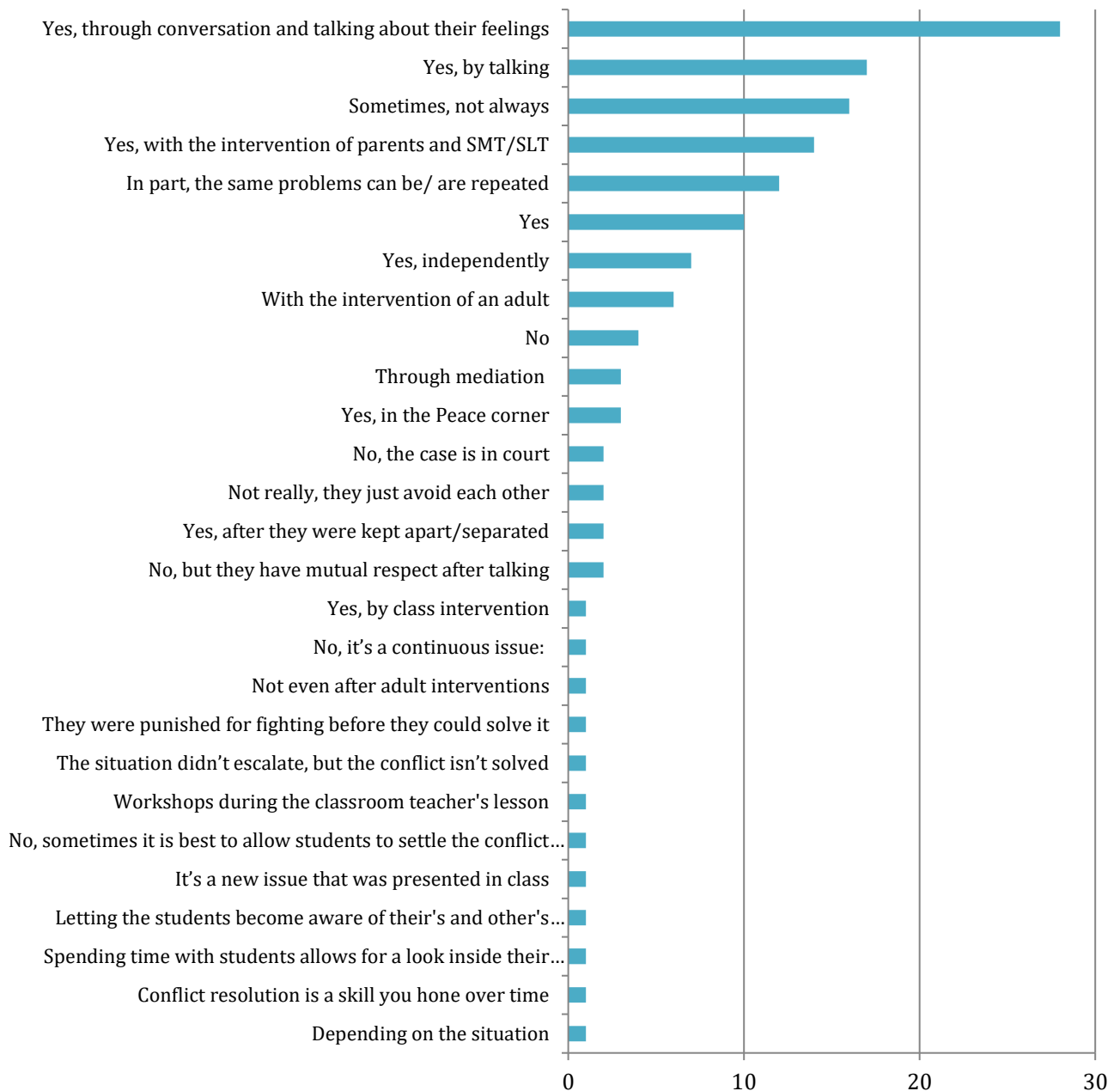
3.19. Students' ability to successfully and independently resolve the conflict

Participants were also asked if, in the examples that happened in their schools, the students resolved the conflict and how it happened. Having said that, 19,18% of participants said that the students in fact resolved the conflict through conversation about their emotions and thought process as to understand both/all parties involved. Then, 11,64% of them simply stated that the issues were solved by talking about it, while 10,96% of them said that the conflicts sometimes, or usually get resolved, but that is not always the case, similarly with 8,22% of participants who said that the conflicts are usually partially resolved, but they either resurface and the same problems are repeated. In 4,79% of cases the students succeeded in resolving the conflict independently, while 6,85% of participants simply answered that the issue was in fact resolved. Graph 11 also shows that 9,59% of participants involve the SMT or SLT and/ or parents as soon as conflicts

occur, as this is their common practice with peer disputes in most countries. Participants therefore point out that students are in fact able to resolve conflict with the help of guidance teachers, parents, and they were, in the mentioned case, able to sit down and communicate, but they emphasize how it did not happen overnight and that some students agree to disagree and go their separate ways. On the other hand, one participant states how most often, students do not know how to resolve conflicts on their own, and the intervention and guidance of an adult is needed until they acquire the habit of communicating and objectively looking at themselves and the situation. One participant went as far as saying how conflict resolution is a short-term solution and how today's peer conflicts are an everyday occurrence that, unfortunately, are often "amenable" by parents as well and how society accepts and even glorifies violence, whether verbal, mental or physical. It's important to point out that 2 participants state that not only are the conflicts in question not resolved, but they ended up in court and are currently ongoing. The thing that one participant talked about is truly an interesting take on conflict resolution, in that that they pointed out how spending time with students allows for a look inside their thought process which in the long run, helps in prevention. As shown in Graph 11 the answers vary from situations in which educators take on an empathetic approach with active listening, to giving the students the opportunity to resolve the issue amongst themselves, and to those who immediately inform the school management team as well as parents. The limitation of this question and most questions really, is that the participants don't go into great detail when asked to elaborate or point out how the process of resolving conflicts looks like in their educational perspectives. Therefore, categories were named based on the compatibility of the participants' answers, which were in many cases almost identical, especially in the case of the second most stated answered showed in graph 11. They also have not elaborated on the situations in which the students tried to resolve the conflict, notably in the first category of students resolving their conflict through conversation.

Graph 11 Students' ability to successfully resolve the conflict

Students' ability to successfully resolve the conflict

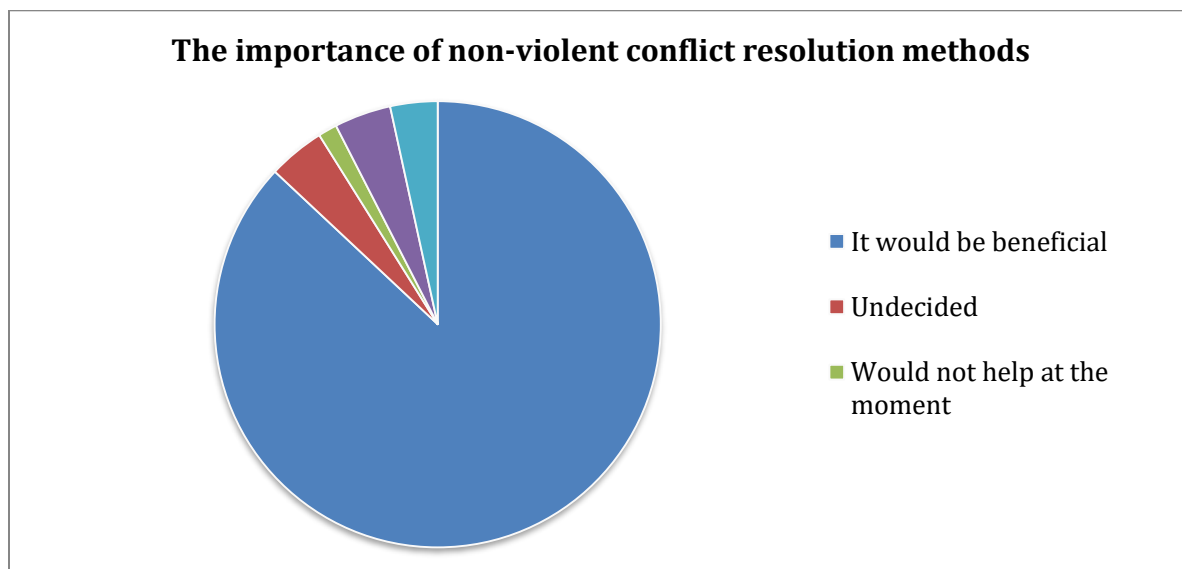


3.20. *The importance of introducing a program with non-violent conflict resolution methods into the education process*

As shown in Graph 12, regarding the importance of non-violent conflict resolution methods, 86,98% of participants state that introducing a program with non-violent conflict resolution

methods into the education process would be entirely beneficial and an asset for students, teachers and society in general while raising a much more tolerant generation. Moreover, they state that this would be a way of empowering students. One of the participants who wrote that this was already implemented in their schools, point out that in one part, this exists through civic education/ interdisciplinary topics of civic education and personal and social development, but it is not mandatory, yet if it were integrated into the education system, both students and teachers would be mentally healthier knowing what triggers some people may have and how to deal with them. The ones who answered that it would not be of help at the moment is because, in their opinion, since they teach lower classes of primary schools, they deem these topics too complicated for them. Participants also point out that if such a program is to be introduced, it should be comprehensively implemented in schools, and all teachers should participate in conducting the program, it would be good for students and teachers in better conflict resolution, an employee in schools who would only deal with this topic in the education perspective. Out of 146 participants only 6 of them stated that there is some type of non-violent conflict resolution method implemented in their classroom/ school, while another 6 are not convinced that this topic is a crucial and urgent aspect of teaching. Considering that the majority of participants agree that implementation of such methods are essential and achievable, it's not unreasonable to conclude that there is a likelihood of integrating peaceful conflict resolution in the education system.

Graph 12 The importance of introducing a program with non-violent conflict resolution methods into the education process



4. IMPLICATIONS

The language barriers represented a partial difficulty for some teachers while filling out the questionnaire, as well as brief and simple answers to said questions. Nevertheless, the given answers present a space for improvement and implementation of non-violent communication in schools. As a part of this project, a mapping of activities of non-violent communication and peaceful conflict resolution that are conducted in the partner countries within NGOs, the education system, different organizations etc. was conducted by the partner countries. A total of 61 activities were mapped. The main themes of these activities are mediation; art therapy; self-awareness; emotional literacy; sensibilization, social responsibility, and of course peaceful conflict resolution through activities that include: role plays, workshops, theatre, film making, direct confrontation of peers in conflict etc. Furthermore, introducing non-violent communication in schools can assist teachers in relating to their students and help them understand their students better and therefore aid students in resolving conflicts more adequately. It's important to emphasize that implementing this topic in schools can also benefit parents and allow for a better communication between them and teachers and the school management team, as well as their children.³ Rosenberg, who in the 1960s developed the concept of non-violent communication, calls it the "language of compassion". He divided the concept into four components: observations; feeling; needs; requests.⁴ These components allow us to stay focused in the interaction and get a clearer idea of what the interaction is actually about. When teaching students about peaceful conflict resolution, it is very important to know what the process should even look like and what it entails. Based on the answers of the participants, there is still a long way to go in regards to adequate ways for dealing with conflict from both teachers and the students themselves. Especially because they report on violent incidents, cases of cyberbullying and common occurrences of aggressive language usage, as well as some teachers relying on shouting at students as a way of dealing with their conflicts. Considering almost all of them are open to the idea of introducing these methods in their classrooms if it was properly implemented and was comprehensive, the idea of conducting this is entirely possible.

³ Koegel, R. (2002). Partnership education and nonviolent communication. *Encounter: Education for meaning and social justice*, 15(3), 2-4.

⁴ Rosenberg, M. B., & Chopra, D. (2015). *Nonviolent communication: A language of life: Life-changing tools for healthy relationships*. PuddleDancer Press.

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