AI4YouthWork

Co-funded by the European Union

AI Competence Framework for Youth Workers

VALIDATION REPORT

AI FOR YOUTH WORK

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Document Control

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Document History

Version	Date	Author(s)	Description
V0.1	19/10/2024	ACOMI Ovidiu	First internal draft
V1.0	21/10/2024	ACOMI Ovidiu	Final version integrating partners' feedback

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Executive Summary

This report presents the findings from the validation process of the **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Competence Framework for Youth Workers**, developed as part of the AI4YouthWork project, a Cooperation Partnership co-funded by the European Union's Erasmus+ Programme. The framework is designed to equip youth workers with the necessary competencies to integrate AI into their work, offering the first definition of the knowledge, attitudes, and skills required in this context. As part of the project, the framework was validated by youth workers from across the European Union.

- **Chapter 1** introduces the *AI4YouthWork* project, outlining its objectives, the composition of the consortium, and the key deliverables. It also describes the framework's scope, which comprises six competence areas, 17 competencies, and corresponding proficiency levels aimed at enhancing the capacity of youth workers to incorporate AI into their professional practice.
- **Chapter 2** outlines the methodology employed to validate the AI Competence Framework. It details the design of the online survey used to collect feedback, including demographic questions and both quantitative and qualitative measures. The chapter explains the participant selection process, the data collection timeline, and the ethical considerations taken to ensure voluntary and confidential participation. The survey was designed to gather comprehensive feedback to inform potential refinements to the framework.
- **Chapter 3** summarises the survey results, providing an overview of respondents' profiles, geographical distribution, gender, and levels of AI knowledge. The chapter highlights key findings, including broad agreement on the relevance and quality of the framework, alongside constructive feedback and suggestions for improvement.
- **Chapter 4** provides a detailed discussion of the survey results, focusing on the relevance and quality of the framework, its practical application, and its alignment with ethical standards. It also examines the impact of focus group participation on respondents' views and explores regional and role-based differences in perceptions of the framework.
- **Chapter 5** offers recommendations for improving the AI Competence Framework. These suggestions include simplifying the framework to enhance accessibility, incorporating practical examples and tools, and developing localised adaptations to

ensure it effectively meets the needs of youth workers in various countries.

- **Chapter 6** concludes the report by reiterating the importance and value of the framework for the youth work sector. It emphasises the significance of the feedback received during the validation process and highlights areas for refinement to enhance the practical application of the framework.

1. Project and Framework Overview

1.1 The Project

Artificial Intelligence for Youth Work (*AI4YouthWork*) is a Cooperation Partnership in the Youth field co-funded by **Erasmus+**, the European Union's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe.

CONSORTIUM

The project brings together organisations from four European countries:

Lascò (Coordinator)
Digital innovation company
lasco.io

TEAM4Excellence
Non-profit organisation
trainingclub.eu

Kyttaro Enallaktikon Anazitiseon Neon
Non-governmental organisation
kean.gr

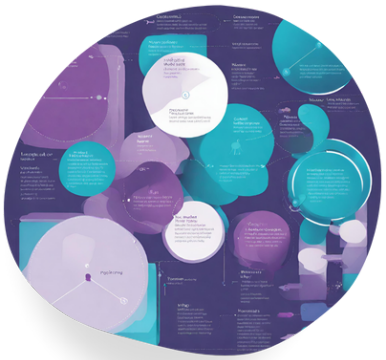
Contextos
Social cooperative
contextos.org.pt

OBJECTIVES

Contribute to increasing youth professionals' capacity to harness the potential of AI for enhancing the quality, attractiveness, and effectiveness of their work.

1. Identify the **competences** needed by youth work professionals to integrate AI into their work.
2. Equip youth work professionals with **training and learning resources** to adopt trustworthy AI solutions and foster young people's AI literacy
3. Increase the **awareness** of youth work professionals and young people on the benefits and limitations of adopting artificial intelligence.

KEY RESULTS



AI Competence Framework for Youth Workers

Identifying the competencies needed by youth work professionals to integrate AI into their work and guide youth in navigating an AI-powered future.

Digital Catalogue

A catalogue of 48 open educational resources on artificial intelligence for youth workers in English, Italian, Greek, Portuguese and Romanian.

AI Training Toolkit

A toolkit with a map of relevant, trustworthy AI-powered solutions for youth work and 15 multi-language workshop plans on AI that youth workers can implement with youth

Learn more at

www.ai4youthwork.eu

1.2 The Framework

AI Competence Framework for Youth Workers comprises four dimensions:

DIMENSION 1: COMPETENCE AREA - Areas identified to be part of the AI competence for youth workers. In this Framework, 6 competence areas outline what AI Competence for Youth Workers entails, such as *Professional Engagement*, *AI-Powered Resources*, *AI for Training and Learning*, *Assessment and Evaluation*, *Empowering Young People*, and *Facilitating Young People's AI Competences*.

DIMENSION 2: COMPETENCE - The title and descriptor of each competence included in the competence areas. The framework includes 17 competences:

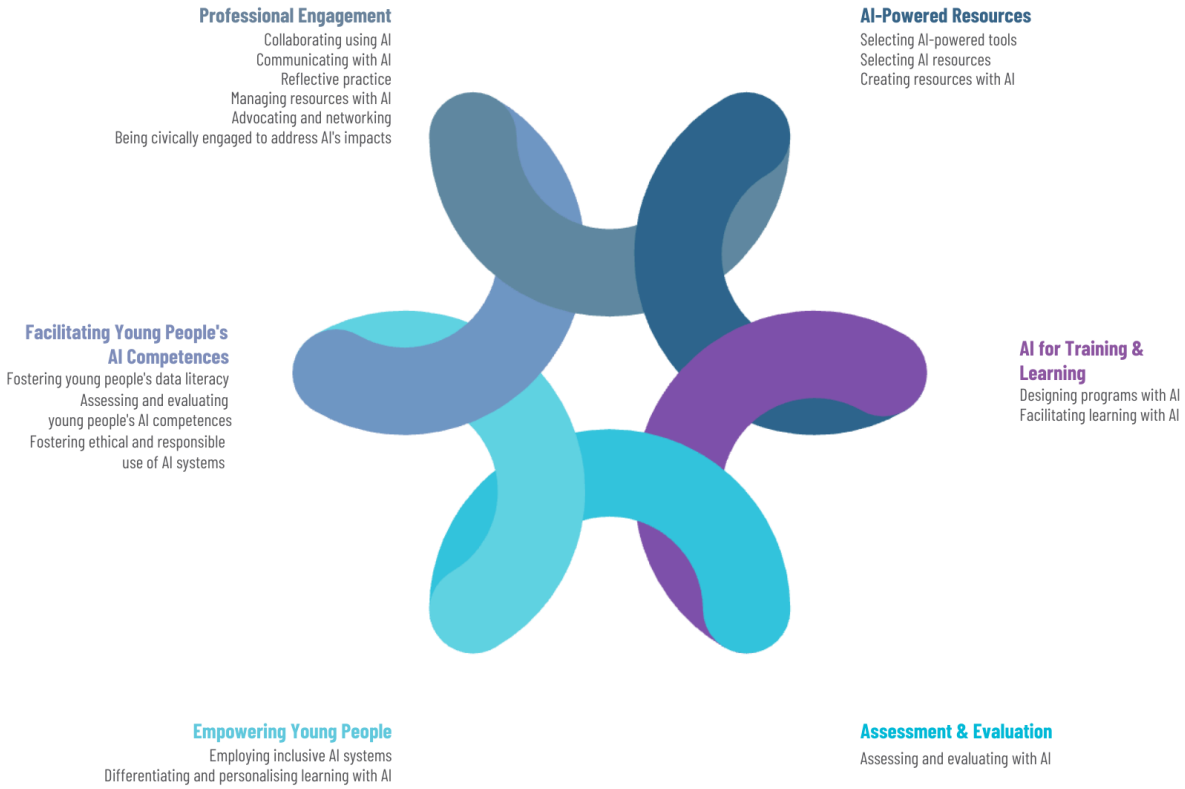
1. Collaborating using AI
2. Communicating with AI
3. Reflective practice
4. Managing resources with AI
5. Advocating and networking
6. Being civically engaged to address AI's impacts
7. Selecting AI-powered tools
8. Selecting AI resources
9. Creating resources with AI
10. Designing programs with AI
11. Facilitating learning with AI
12. Assessing and evaluating with AI
13. Employing inclusive AI systems
14. Differentiating and personalising learning with AI
15. Fostering young people's data literacy
16. Assessing and evaluating young people's AI competences
17. Fostering ethical and responsible use of AI systems

DIMENSION 3: PROFICIENCY LEVELS - The levels of proficiency for each competence, divided into six levels:

Foundation	Level 1 Level 2
Intermediate	Level 3 Level 4
Advanced	Level 5 Level 6

DIMENSION 4: BODY OF KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ATTITUDES - Examples of the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are relevant to each competence.

Figure 1 Competence Framework for Youth Workers



2. Validation Methodology

2.1 Survey Design

The validation of the AI Competence Framework for Youth Workers was conducted through an online survey. The primary objective of the survey was to gather feedback on the framework's clarity, relevance, quality, and alignment with the needs of youth workers. The survey was designed to capture quantitative and qualitative insights from a diverse group of participants involved in youth work.

The survey was structured with multiple sections, including:

- Demographics: Participants were asked to provide their profile, gender, and country of residence to understand the background and geographical diversity.
- AI Competence Framework Feedback: Respondents were asked to evaluate various aspects of the framework, such as its relevance, clarity, and its ability to meet the competence needs of youth workers. Responses were captured using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).
- Open-ended Question: A final question provided space for participants to elaborate on their responses, offering qualitative feedback that could help refine the framework.

2.2 Participant Profile

The target participants for the validation survey were professionals involved in youth work, including:

- Youth workers
- Representatives of youth organisations
- Providers of continuous professional development opportunities for youth workers
- Policy/decision-makers in the field of youth

The consortium aimed to collect feedback from at least 100 participants, with an indicative number of 25 respondents from each partner country (Greece, Italy, Portugal, Romania). In total, responses were gathered from a variety of profiles to ensure a broad representation of the youth work sector.

2.3 Data Collection Process

The data collection took place through an online survey platform (Google Forms) between 31 July 2024 and 15 October 2024. Each partner country was responsible for promoting the survey to relevant stakeholders in their respective areas. Participants were invited to complete the survey in English or in their national language through translated versions of the survey.

Survey invitations were sent via email and other communication platforms (e.g. WhatsApp), following a standardised message (provided in Annex 1). The email introduced the AI Competence Framework and directed participants to download the framework from Zenodo before completing the survey. As an incentive, participants were offered an acknowledgment of their contribution, which they could share on social media upon completion of the survey.

2.4 Validation and Refinement Process

The validation process was designed not only to assess the framework but also to identify areas for refinement. The survey results, combined with qualitative feedback from open-ended responses, were analysed to highlight potential improvements. If significant improvements were recommended, the framework would undergo refinement before publishing Version 2.0 of the AI Competence Framework on Zenodo. The consortium ensured that any refinements were thoroughly documented and incorporated into the final validation report.

2.5 Ethical Considerations

Participation in the survey was entirely voluntary, and respondents were informed that their feedback would remain anonymous. They were given the option to provide additional comments and suggestions without any identifying information being collected. All data was handled with confidentiality, and participants were able to opt out of the survey at any time.

3. Survey Results

3.1 Simple Counts Analyses of Responses

For each question in the survey, the research team counted the frequency of each possible response (simple counts methodology), allowing to highlight dominant views, evaluate the distribution of responses, and assess overall sentiment. The single counts methodology involves tallying the number of times each response option was selected for each survey question. This approach provides a clear and simple way to quantify how frequently certain opinions or responses occur within the data. By aggregating responses in this manner, the project research team could easily identify the most common answers, patterns, or trends in the feedback provided by participants.

The results presented below were displayed graphs, providing a visual representation of how respondents engaged with the questions. This method was particularly useful for analysing the relatively large datasets in a straightforward and efficient manner, offering insights into common perceptions and potential areas for improvement. The visual representation was supplemented by descriptive statistics.

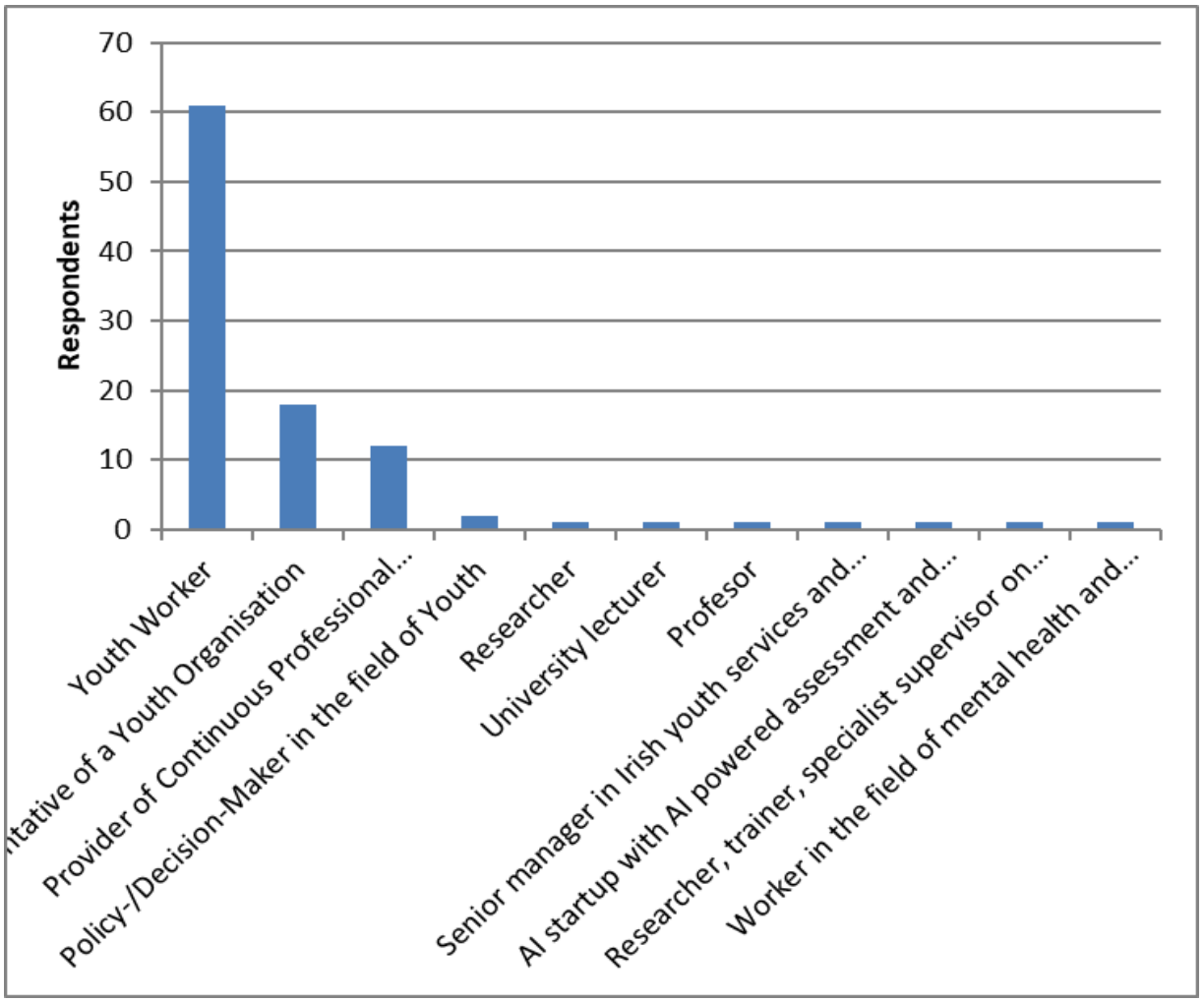
3.1.1 Question 1. Profile Distribution

Q1. Please select the options that better describe your profile.

- Youth Worker
- Representative of a Youth Organisation
- Provider of Continuous Professional Development for youth workers
- Policy-/Decision-Maker in the field of Youth
- Other…

The majority of respondents are Youth Workers (61), followed by Representatives of Youth Organizations (18). Other notable groups include Providers of Continuous Professional Development for youth workers (12), with smaller representation from Researchers, Policy-/Decision-Makers, and others.

Figure 2 Profile Distribution



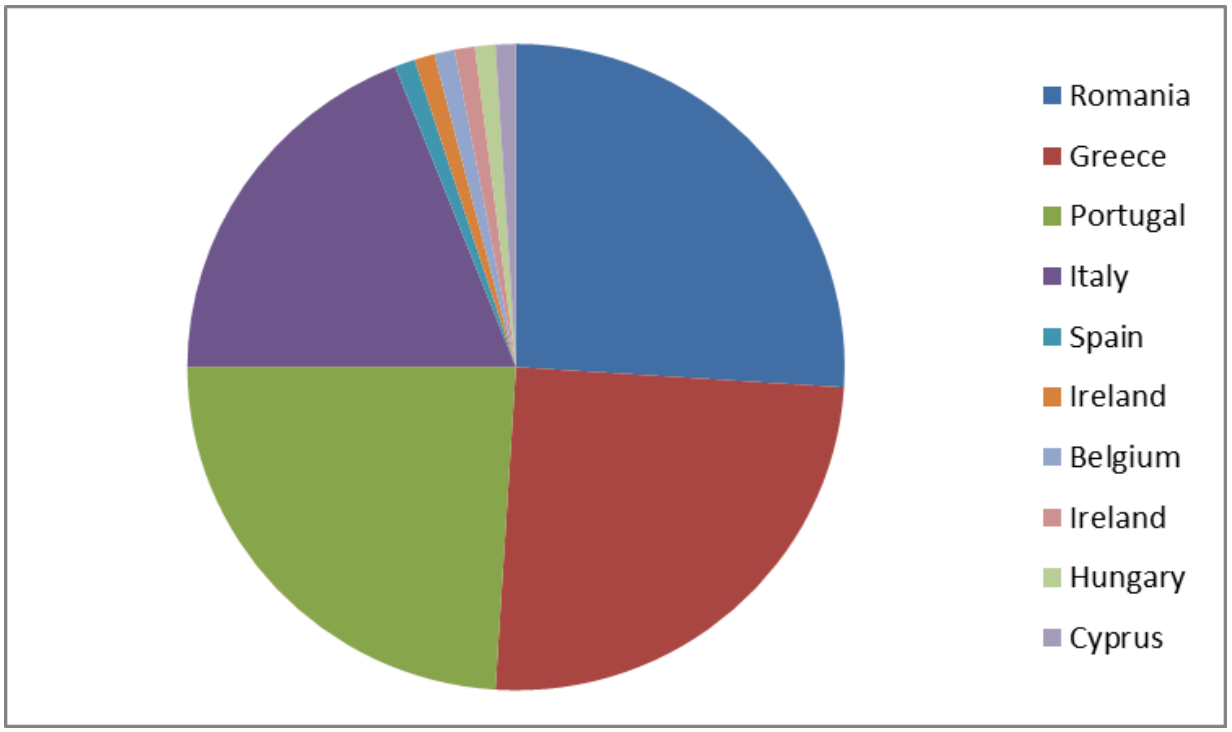
3.1.2 Question 2. Country Distribution

Q2. Where are you based?

- Greece
- Italy
- Portugal
- Romania
- Other…

Most respondents are based in Romania (26), followed closely by Greece (25), Portugal (24), and Italy (19). There are smaller numbers from countries like Spain, Ireland, and Belgium.

Figure 3 Country Distribution



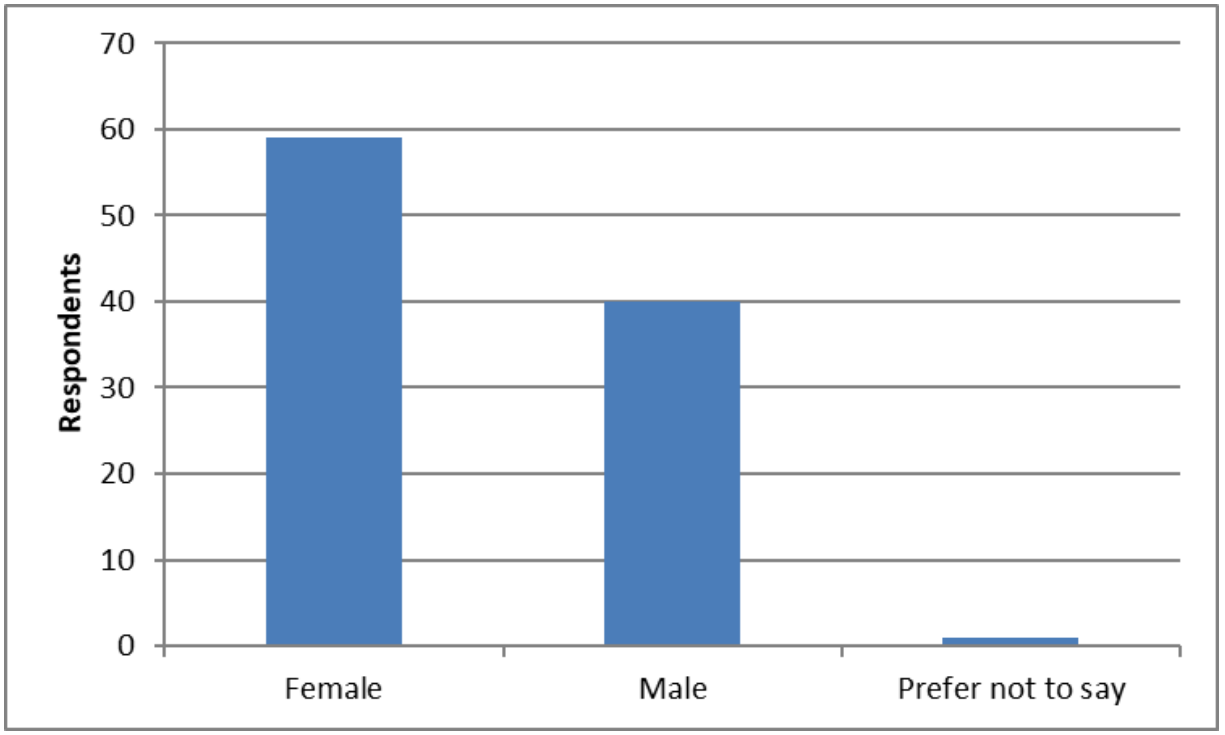
3.1.3 Question 3. Gender Distribution

Q3. What best describes your gender?
Multiple research studies have highlighted gender differences in AI usage and perceptions. For instance, according to research by the Oliver Wyman Forum of 25,000 working adults surveyed in 16 geographies, 59% of male workers aged 18-65 around the world say they use generative AI tools at least once a week, while only 51% of women say the same. Most distressing, the gap is widest among the youngest of workers: 71% of men aged 18-24 say they use generative AI weekly, compared with 59% of women. (Source) We're asking this question to ensure we gather a balanced representation of multiple gender identities. If you don't feel comfortable answering it, you can select the "Prefer not to say" option.

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say
- Other…

More respondents identified as Female (59) compared to Male (40). One person preferred not to specify their gender.

Figure 4 Gender Distribution



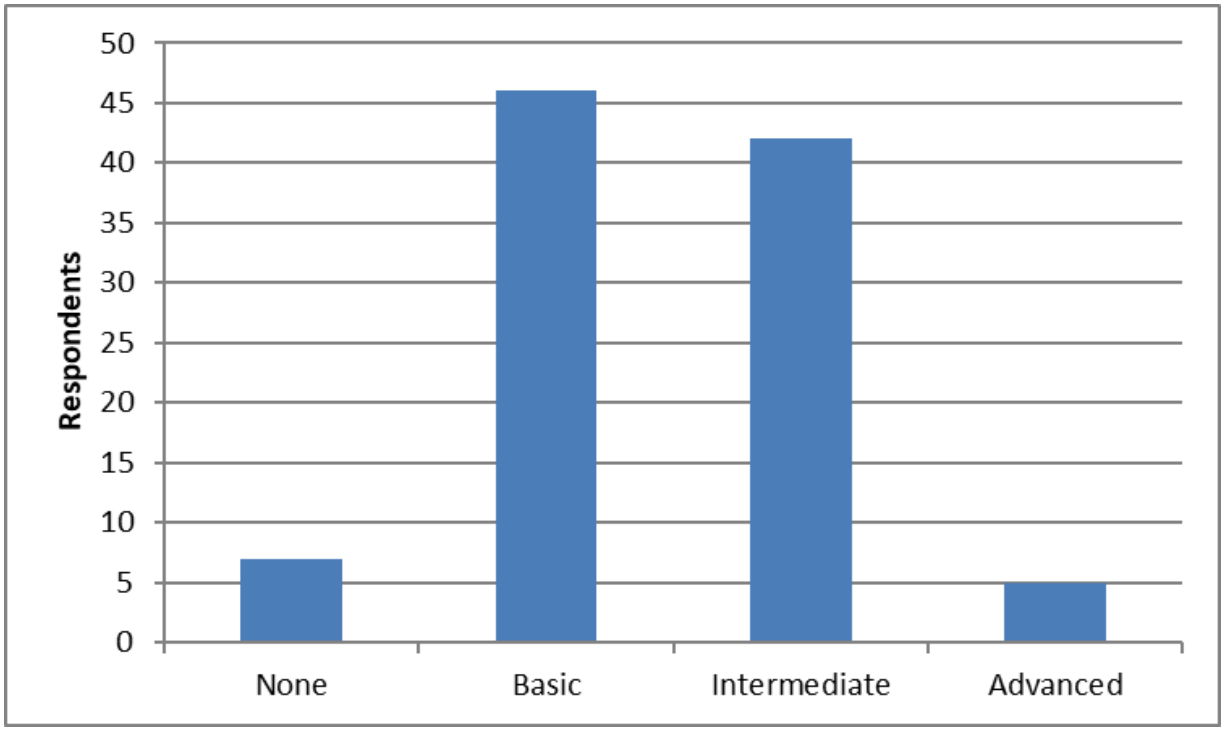
3.1.4 Question 4. AI Knowledge Level

Q4. How would you evaluate your knowledge of AI?
Our Framework should be accessible to everyone, regardless of the level of knowledge of the topic.

- None
- Basic
- Intermediate
- Advanced

The majority of participants reported having Basic knowledge of AI (46), followed by Intermediate knowledge (42). A smaller group has Advanced knowledge (5), while a few have No knowledge (7).

Figure 5 AI Knowledge Level



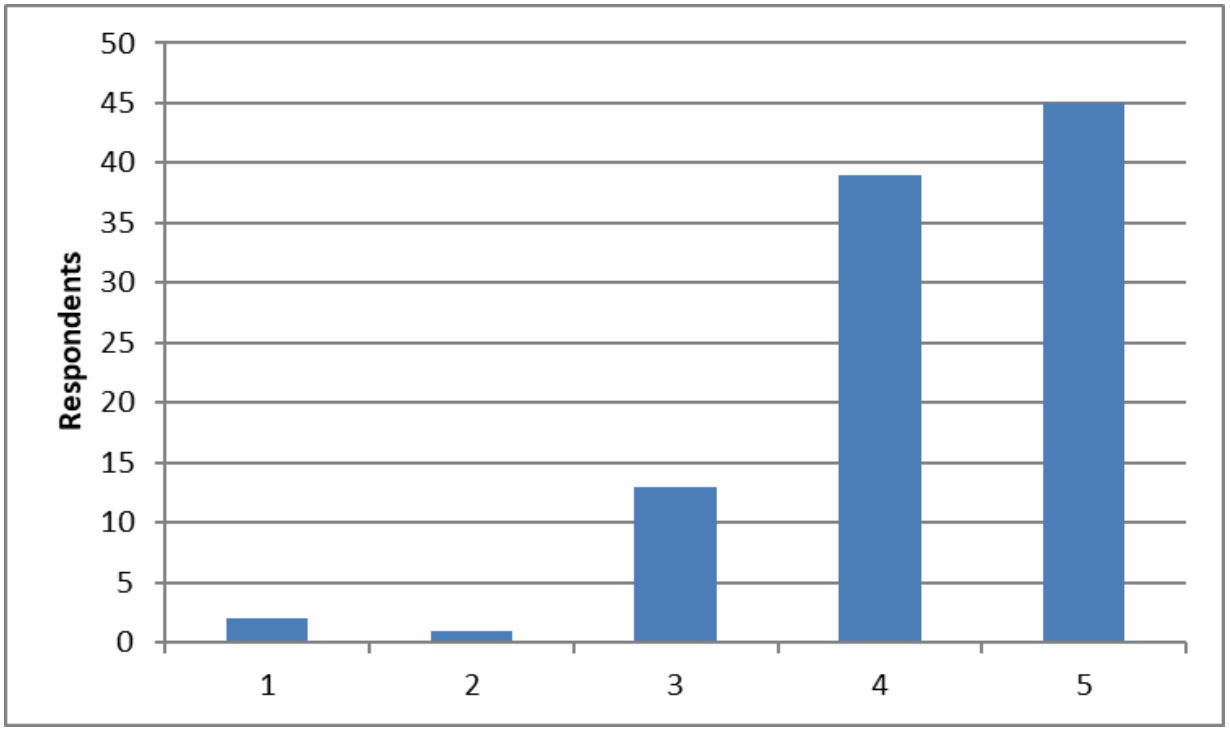
3.1.5 Question 5. Relevance of AI Competence Framework

Q5. How relevant do you find the AI Competence Framework for youth workers?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very Irrelevant	○	○	○	○	○	Very Relevant

Most respondents rated the AI Competence Framework as highly relevant, with 45 people giving it the highest relevance rating of 5. A further 39 rated it 4, while fewer participants gave lower ratings.

Figure 6 Relevance of AI Competence Framework



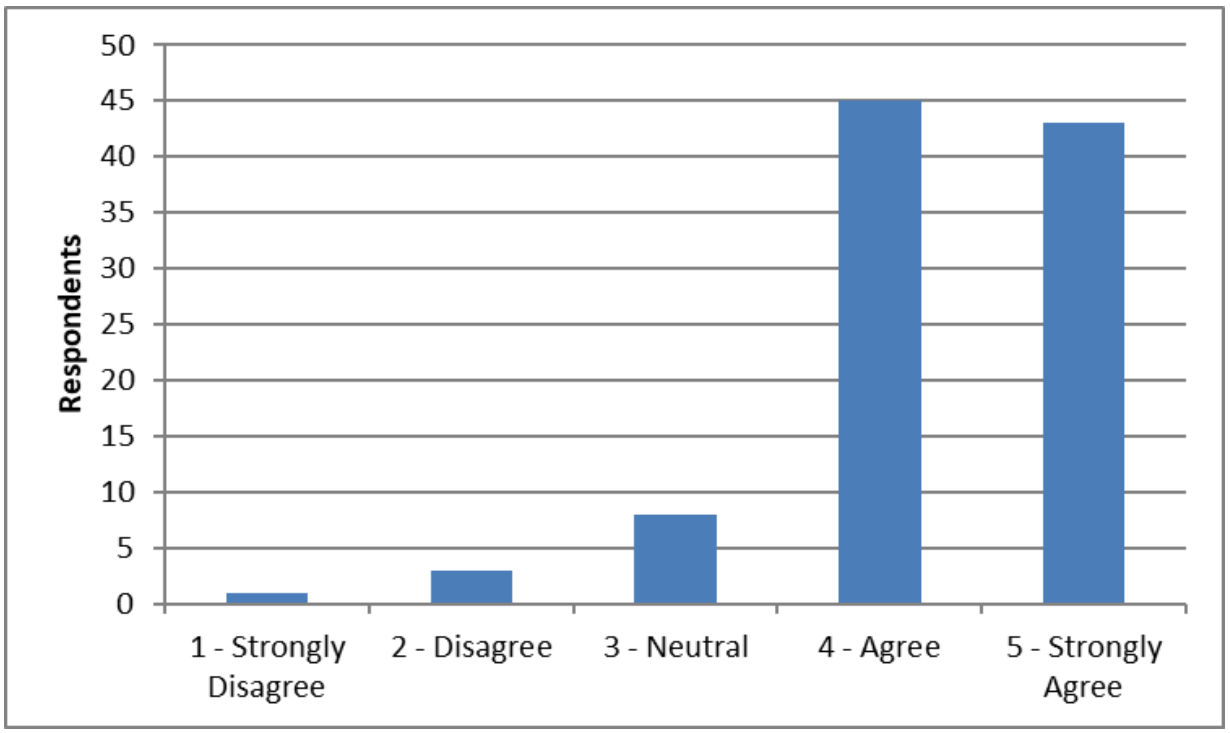
3.1.6 Question 6. AI Framework Capacity to Improve Youth Workers' Skills

Q6. Please, indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements, using a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).
The framework can improve youth workers' capacity to integrate AI into their work.

- 1 - Strongly Disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Agree
- 5 - Strongly Agree

Many respondents agreed that the framework can improve youth workers' ability to integrate AI into their work. 45 respondents rated it 4 - Agree, with another 43 rating it 5 - Strongly Agree.

Figure 7 AI Framework Capacity to Improve Youth Workers' Skills



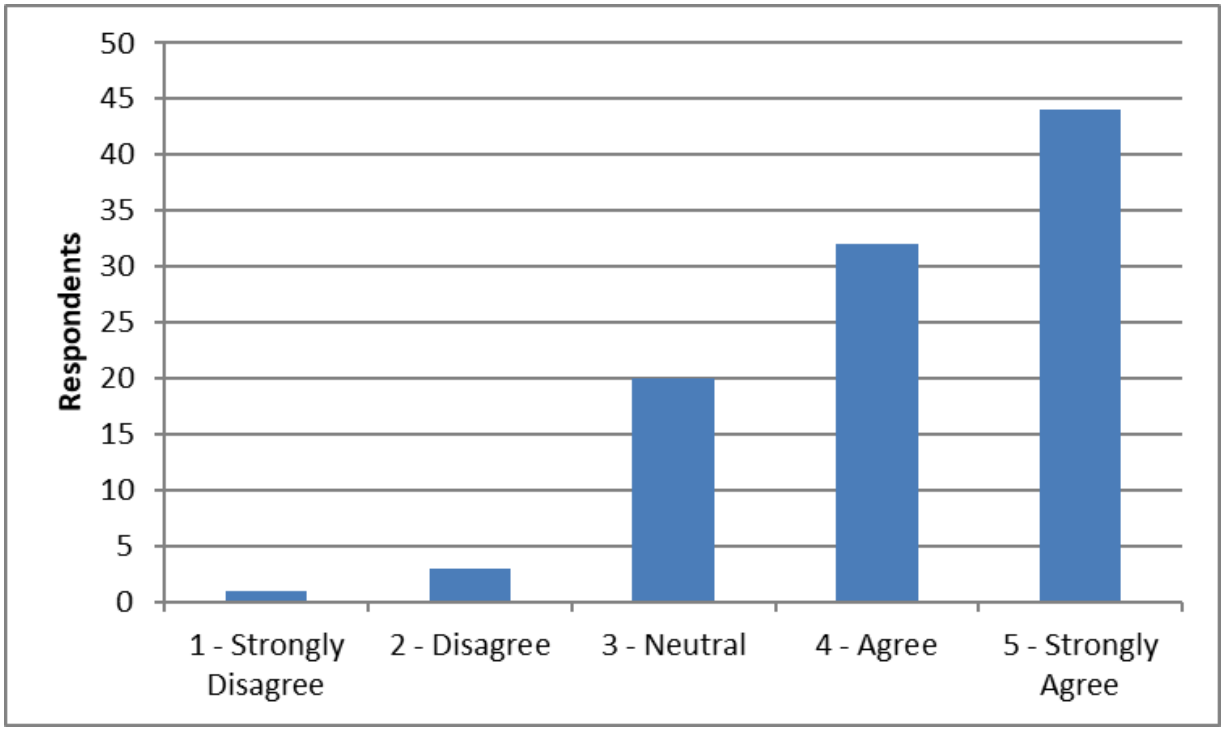
3.1.7 Question 7. Framework Addressing AI-Related Needs and Challenges

Q7. Please, indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements, using a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).
The framework effectively addresses the needs and challenges faced by youth workers in the context of AI.

- 1 - Strongly Disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Agree
- 5 - Strongly Agree

44 respondents gave the highest rating of 5 - Strongly Agree, suggesting that the framework effectively addresses youth workers' AI-related needs and challenges. Another 32 respondents rated it 4.

Figure 8 Framework Addressing AI-Related Needs and Challenges



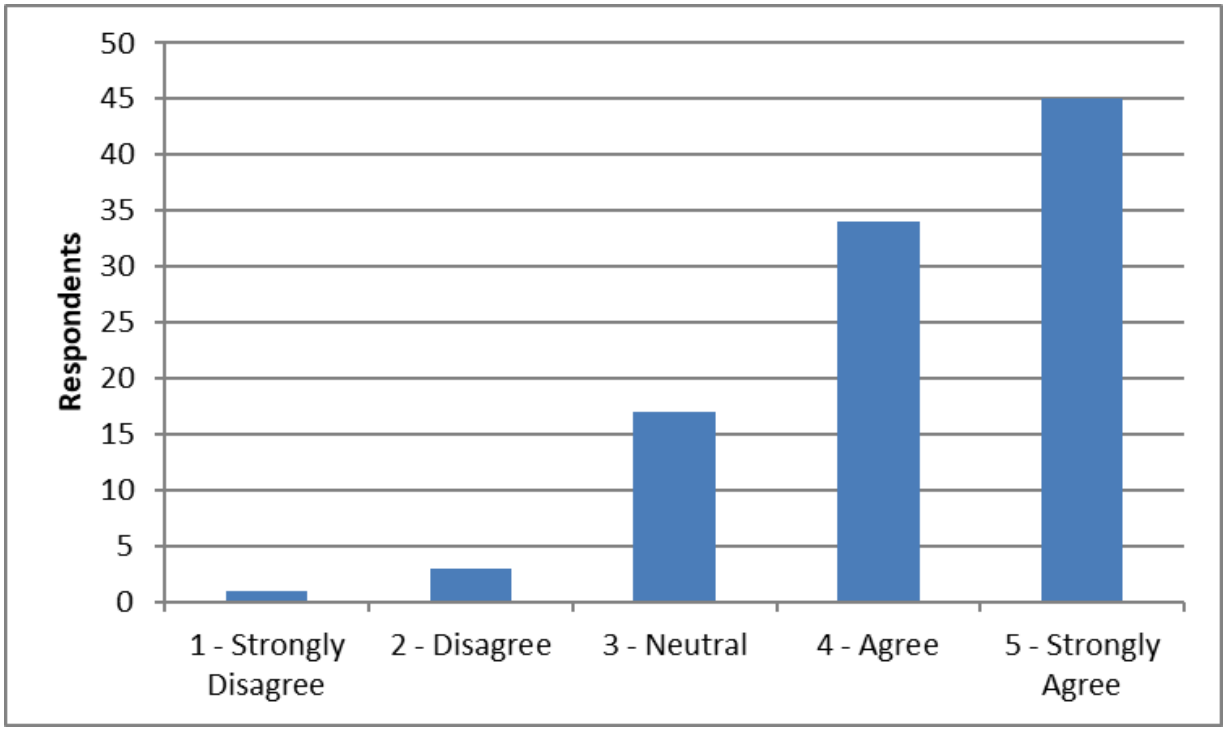
3.1.8 Question 8. Framework Reflecting Competence Needs and Gaps

Q8. Please, indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements, using a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).
The framework effectively addresses the specific competence needs and gaps youth workers face in their work.

- 1 - Strongly Disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Agree
- 5 - Strongly Agree

45 respondents rated 5 - Strongly Agree, indicating a strong belief that the framework reflects the competence needs and gaps faced by youth workers. Another 34 respondents rated it 4 - Agree.

Figure 9 Framework Reflecting Competence Needs and Gaps



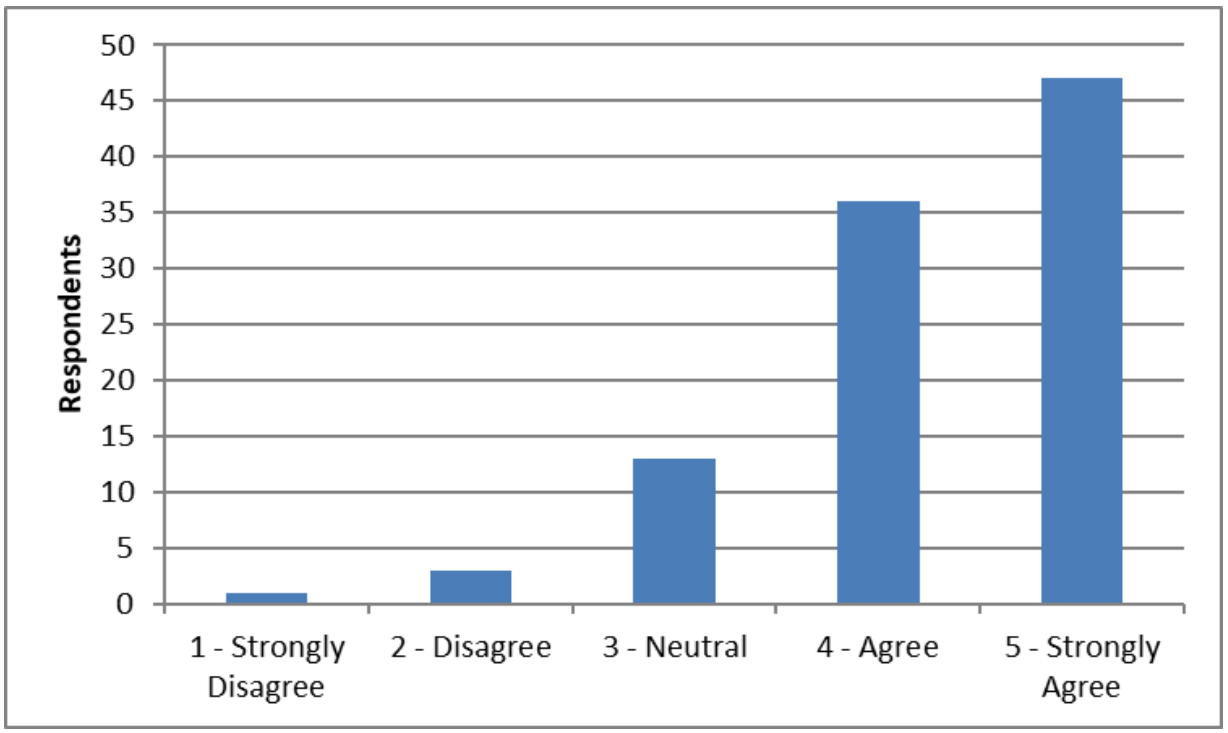
3.1.9 Question 9. Overall Quality of the Framework

Q9. Please, indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements, using a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).
The overall quality of the framework is high.

- 1 - Strongly Disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Agree
- 5 - Strongly Agree

47 respondents rated the quality of the framework as 5 - Strongly Agree, indicating high satisfaction. Another 36 respondents rated it 4 - Agree, showing positive feedback on its quality.

Figure 10 Overall Quality of the Framework



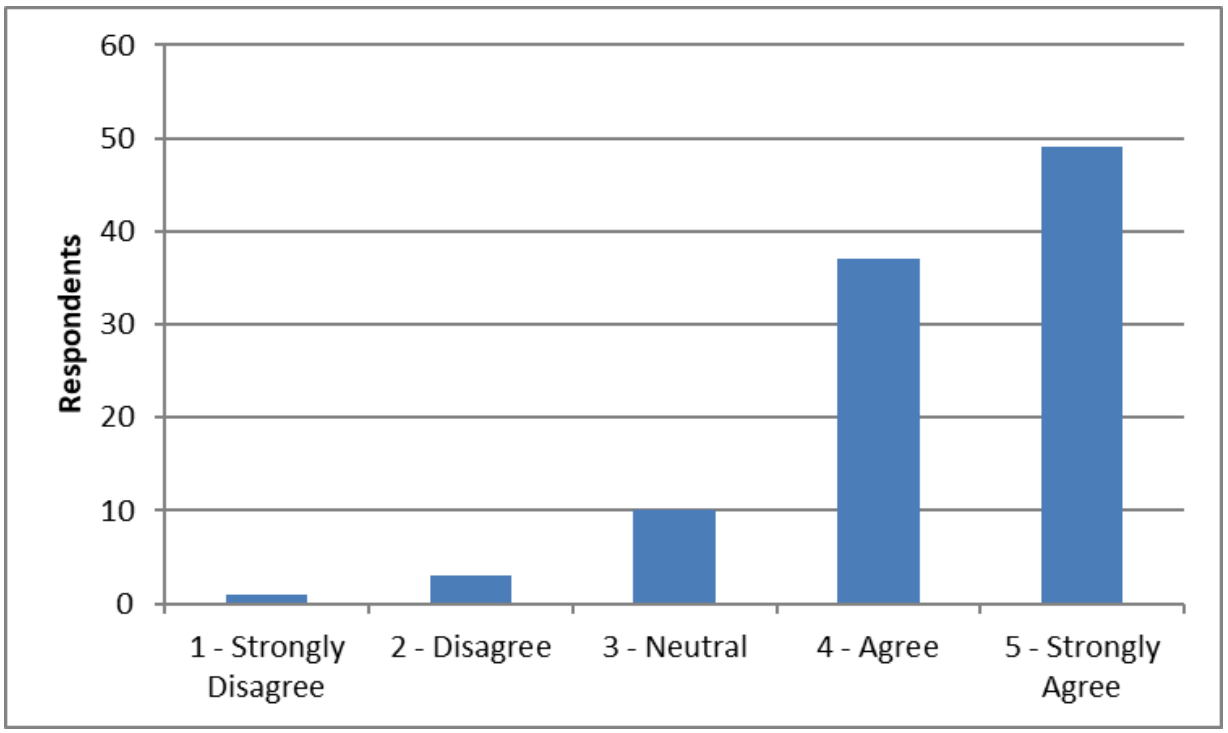
3.1.10 Question 10. Comprehensiveness of the Framework

Q10. Please, indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements, using a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).
The framework is comprehensive.

- 1 - Strongly Disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Agree
- 5 - Strongly Agree

A high number of respondents (49) strongly agreed that the framework is comprehensive, with another 37 rating it 4 - Agree.

Figure 11 Comprehensiveness of the Framework



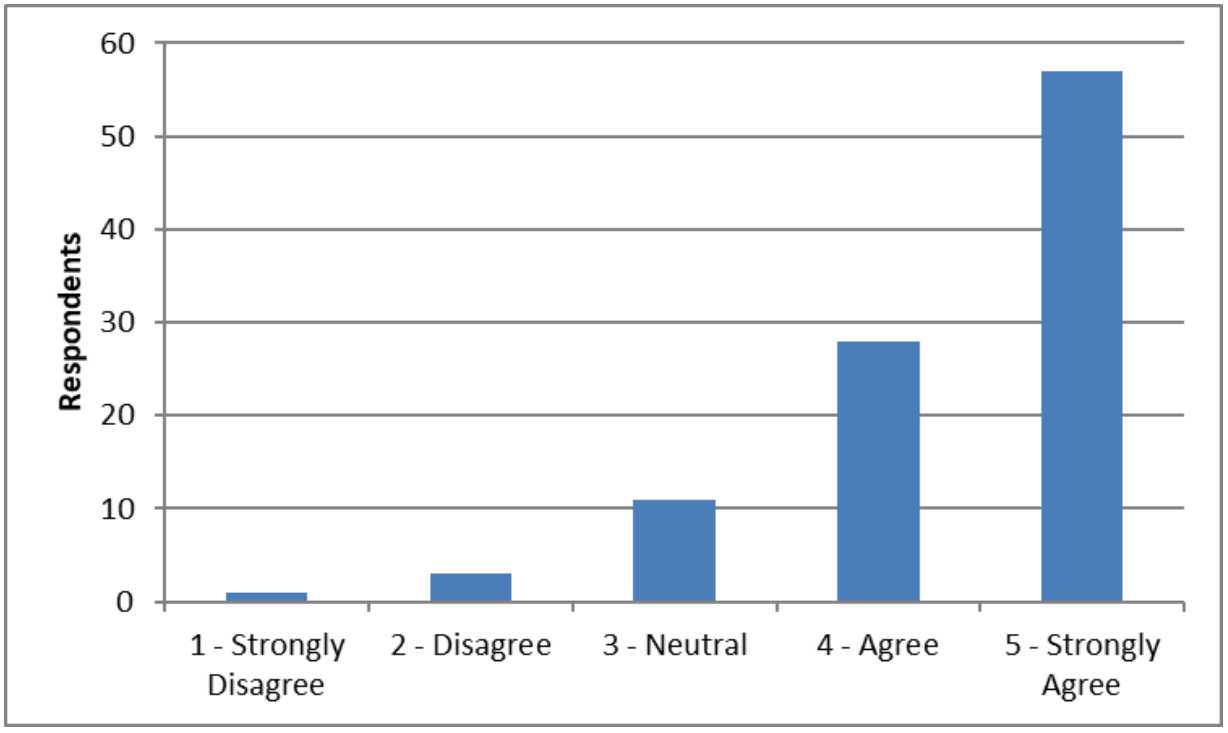
3.1.11 Question 11. Framework as a Foundational Tool for Youth Workers

Q11. Please, indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements, using a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).
The framework is likely to serve as a foundational tool for youth workers aiming to employ AI effectively and ethically in their training practices.

- 1 - Strongly Disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Agree
- 5 - Strongly Agree

57 respondents rated the framework as 5 - Strongly Agree, showing strong agreement that it will serve as a foundational tool for youth workers aiming to employ AI effectively. Another 28 rated it 4.

Figure 12 Framework as a Foundational Tool for Youth Workers



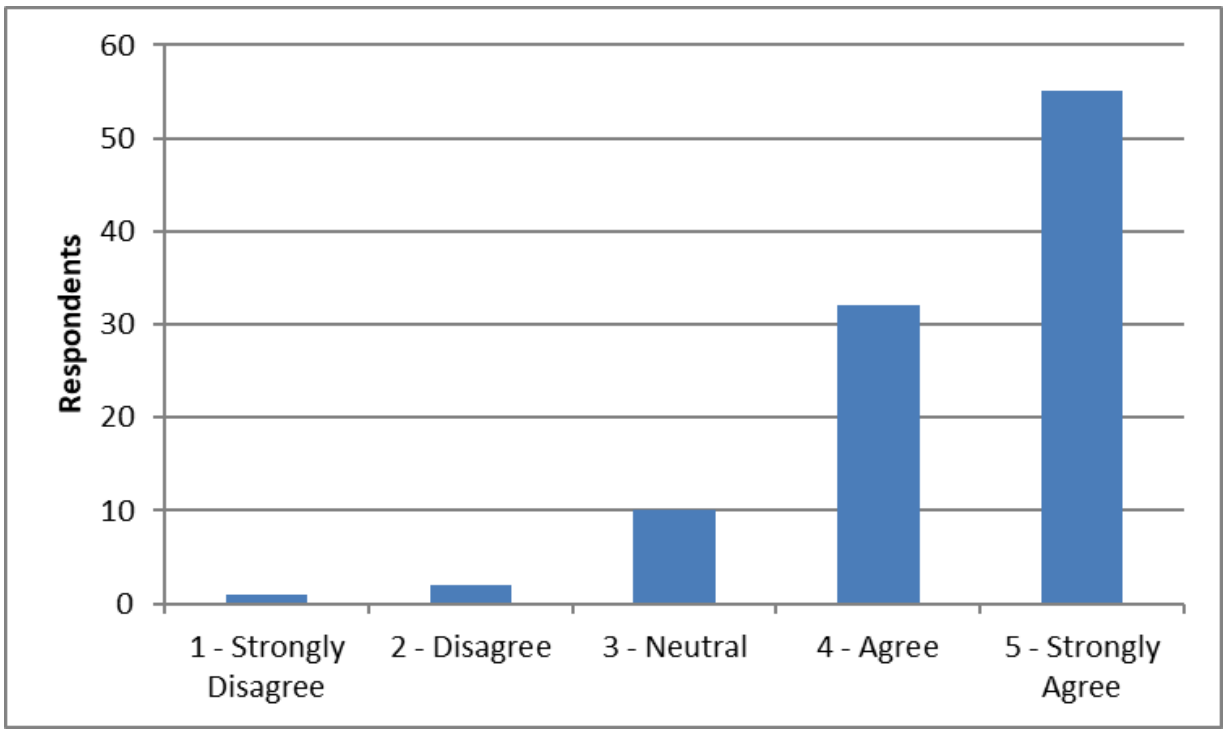
3.1.12 Question 12. Alignment with European Frameworks

Q12. Please, indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements, using a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).
The framework aligns well with complementary European frameworks (e.g., DigComp, DigCompEdu)

- 1 - Strongly Disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Agree
- 5 - Strongly Agree

55 respondents strongly agreed that the framework aligns well with complementary European frameworks like DigComp and DigCompEdu. Another 32 rated it 4.

Figure 13 Alignment with European Frameworks



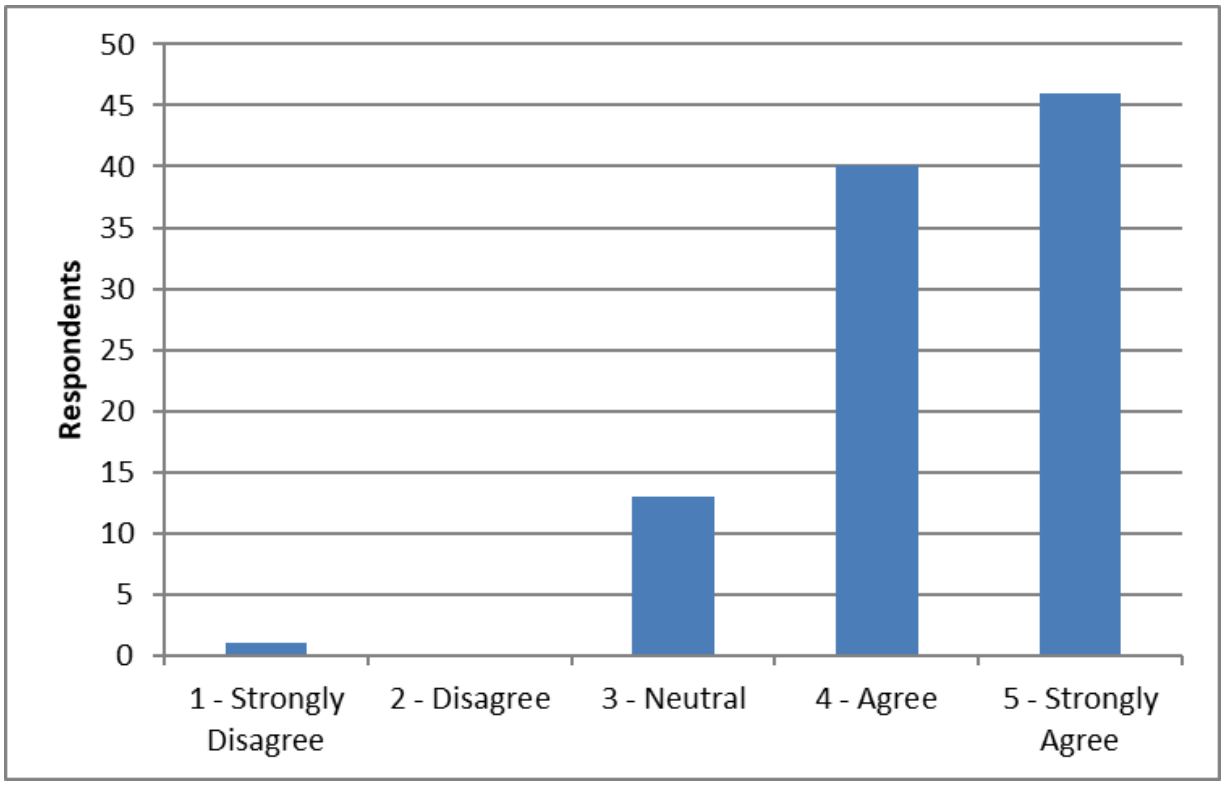
3.1.13 Question 13. Clarity of Competency Guidelines

Q13. Please, indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements, using a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).
The guidelines and recommendations provided in the framework to develop the competencies (Chapter 4) are clear.

- 1 - Strongly Disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Agree
- 5 - Strongly Agree

46 respondents strongly agreed that the guidelines for developing competencies in Chapter 4 are clear, with 40 agreeing at a rating of 4.

Figure 14 Clarity of Competency Guidelines



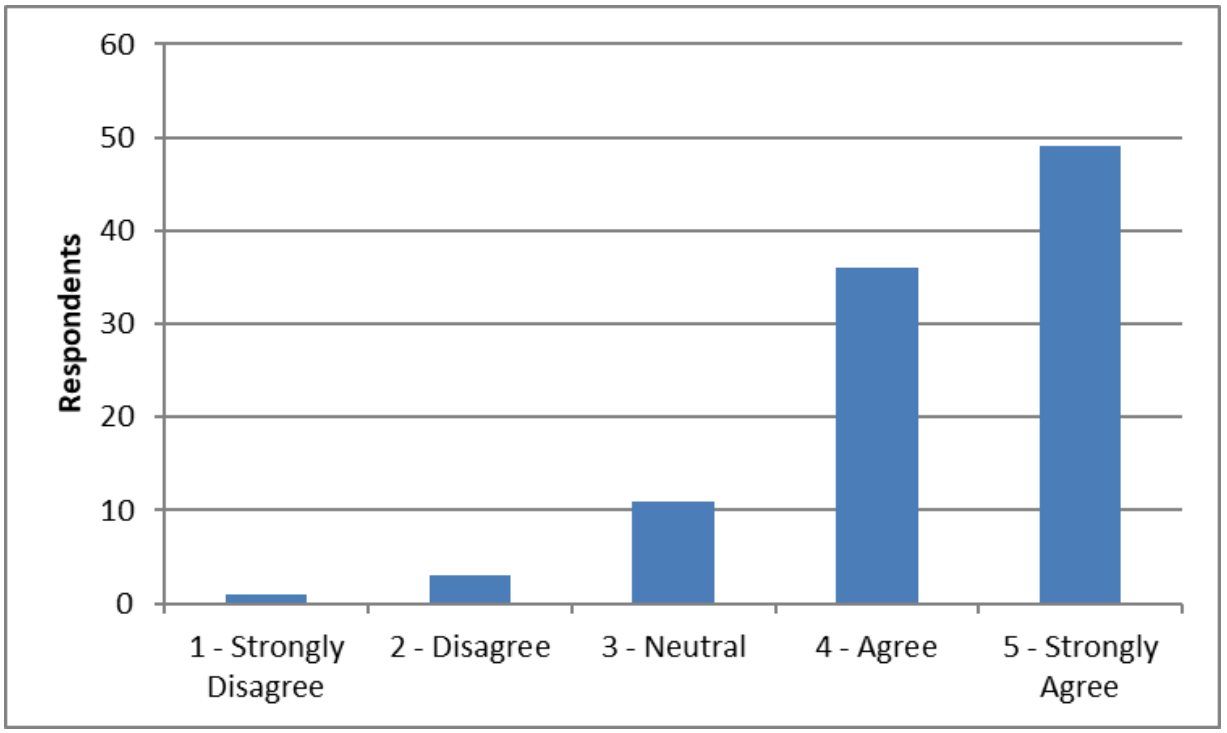
3.1.14 Question 14. Usefulness of Recommendations

Q14. Please, indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements, using a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).
The recommendations in the framework are useful to understand and apply AI competences in youth work.

- 1 - Strongly Disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Agree
- 5 - Strongly Agree

The recommendations in the framework were rated 5 - Strongly Agree by 49 respondents, with 36 rating them 4 - Agree.

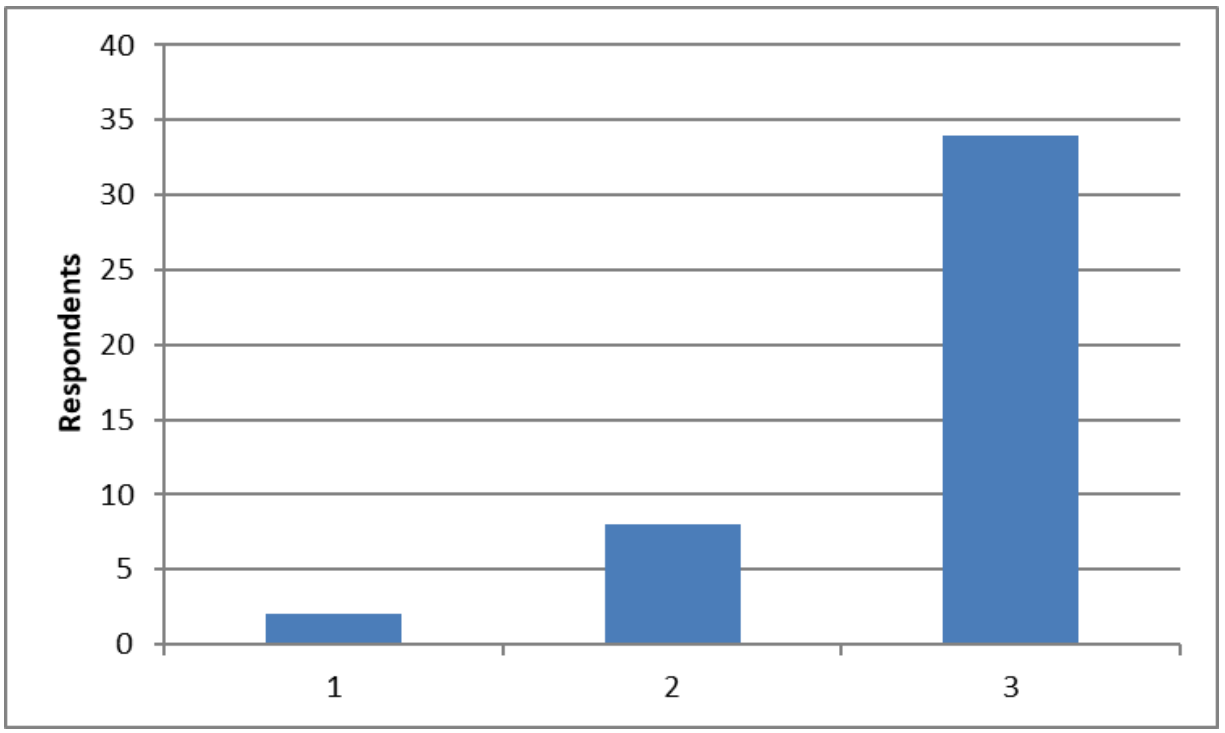
Figure 16 Usefulness of Recommendations



3.1.15 Question 15. Feedback from Former Focus Group Participants

Of the 44 participants who previously attended the project focus groups, 34 respondents rated the framework's incorporation of their perspective as 3 (maximum), suggesting that the framework incorporates input from the initial research focus groups.

Figure 17 Feedback from Former Focus Group Participants



3.1.16 Question 16. Additional Comments and Suggestions

The last survey question was an open question. Below follows an analysis of the qualitative feedback provided in the final survey question, which invited respondents to share additional comments or suggestions regarding the AI Competence Framework for Youth Workers. The feedback reflects diverse perspectives on the framework's strengths, areas for improvement, and overall utility.

Key themes

1. General Praise and Enthusiasm. Many respondents expressed strong positive feedback, praising the framework's usefulness and its potential to shape the future of youth work. Examples include:
    - "It is a cornerstone framework for the future of youth work."
    - "Congratulations! Outstanding work!"
    - "This framework is going to be really useful for me and my team."
    - "Nice work! Can't wait to see what else comes from this project."
2. Usefulness for Practical Application. Several respondents highlighted the practical value of the framework, particularly in its ability to guide youth workers in integrating AI into their work.
    - "This framework is a valuable resource. The examples of knowledge, attitudes, and skills are very useful to understand some AI concepts and how they can be applied practically."
    - "The framework provides clear guidance on essential skills and competencies that youth workers require to navigate and leverage AI tools effectively."
3. Suggestions for Improvements. Many respondents offered constructive feedback aimed at improving the framework. A common suggestion was to create a shorter or simpler version of the framework to make it more accessible and easier to apply in everyday work.
    - "To evaluate and perhaps improve the application of the AI Framework, a simple version that focuses just on the competencies and descriptions would be useful."
    - "The framework is thorough, but I would prefer a more light version. It was challenging to read and provide feedback due to the workload."
    - "The Framework looks pretty comprehensive. A shorter version could be a useful addition to simplify the reading."

4. Desire for More Examples and Practical Tools. Several respondents requested more real-world case studies, examples, or interactive tools that could help youth workers apply the framework's competencies in practical scenarios.
    - "Possibly some examples would have made it easier for youth workers to actively use and integrate the framework."
    - "One suggestion could be to include more real-world case studies or examples to help users contextualise the competencies in everyday youth work scenarios."
    - "The framework could benefit from more interactive, practical tools, such as case studies, exercises, or simulations."
5. Language and Translation Requests. There was a request for translated versions of the framework to better serve non-English-speaking youth workers.
    - "It would be good to have the document in Portuguese."
6. Framework's Structure and Comprehensiveness. While some respondents praised the structure and comprehensiveness of the framework, there were also suggestions to balance this thoroughness with simplicity.
    - "The Framework is well-structured. It provides clear guidance on essential skills and competencies."
    - "The framework is theoretical in nature and not dynamic."
    - "More examples would add more precision to the contents of Chapter 3."
7. Acknowledgment of Specific Chapters. Some respondents praised specific sections, such as Chapter 6, which focuses on facilitating young people's AI competences.
    - "I find highly relevant the content in Chapter 6... how to assess and evaluate young people's AI competences, as well as how to foster ethical and responsible use of AI."
8. Concerns about Practical Application. A few respondents expressed concerns about how widely youth workers would engage with or apply the framework in their day-to-day work.
    - "It's quite extensive... I wonder how much youth workers will actively use and read the document."
    - "Nice work, I don't know if it can be applied in Greece."

To conclude, the additional comments provide valuable insight into how the AI Competence Framework is perceived by youth workers and youth organisation representatives. While the

framework is generally viewed as a high-quality and useful tool, there are several key suggestions for improving its accessibility and practical application:

- Creating a simpler version to cater to youth workers with limited time or those seeking a quick reference.
- Incorporating more practical examples, case studies, or interactive tools to help bridge the gap between theory and practice.
- Considering translations to support non-English-speaking youth workers in effectively using the framework.

These insights are critical in refining the framework and ensuring it better serves the needs of youth workers across different regions and contexts.

3.2 Data Analyses with Comparing Variables

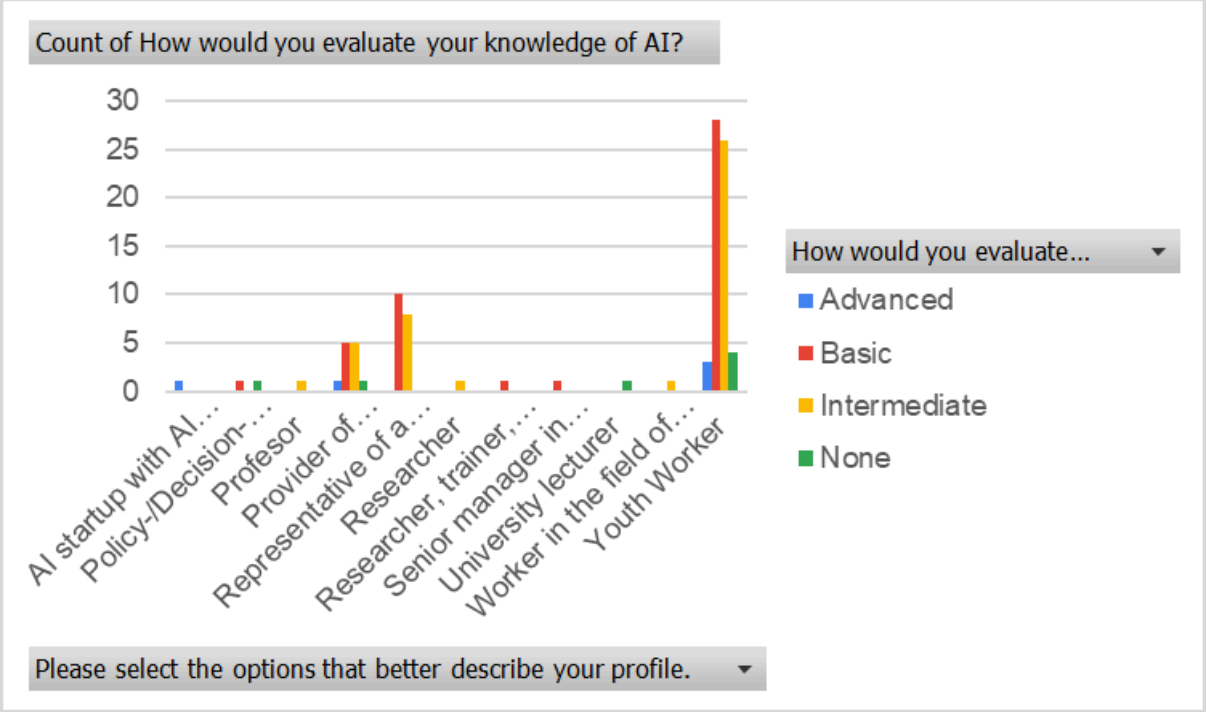
On completion of the analysis of individual questions, a more in-depth analysis was carried out, in order to examine interdependencies and to provide an interpretation of the results. Since the results data did not carry high levels of statistical significance, it follows that the comparing variables analyses did not, either. However, these analyses could provide deeper insights into the relationships between different aspects of the AI Competence Framework for Youth Workers.

3.2.1 Comparison of AI Knowledge Levels Across Participant Profiles

Variables: "How would you evaluate your knowledge of AI?" vs. "Please select the options that better describe your profile."

Objective: Determine if certain participant profiles (e.g., youth workers vs. policy-makers) have differing levels of AI knowledge, which could highlight gaps in AI competence across roles in the youth work sector.

Figure 18 Comparison of AI Knowledge Levels Across Participant Profiles



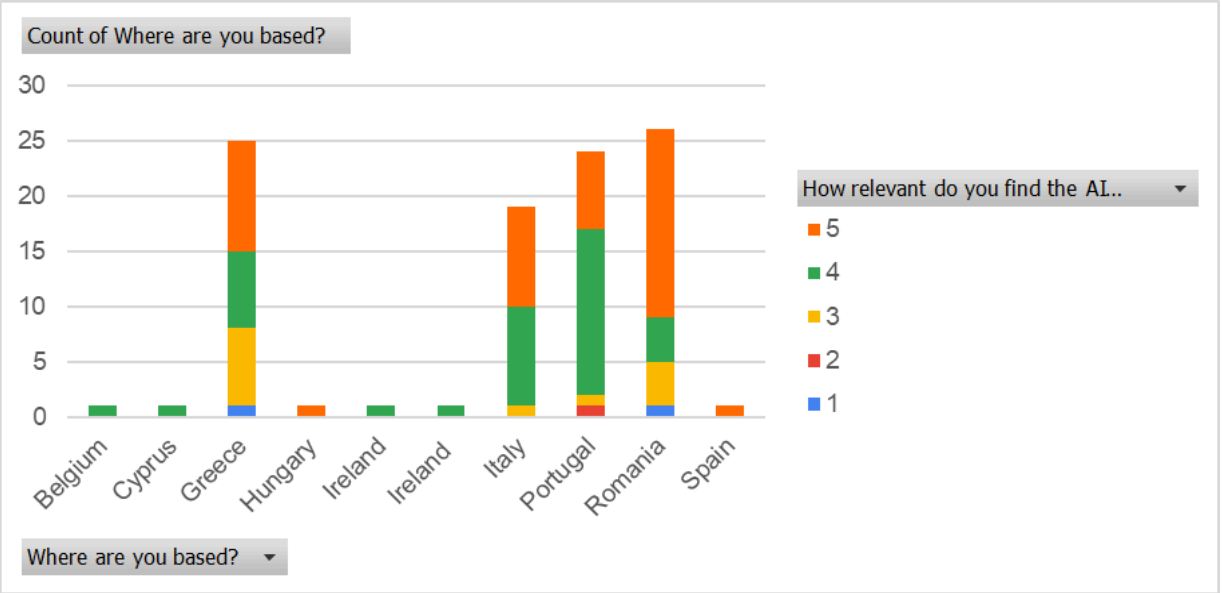
The analysis reveals that youth workers predominantly reported having basic to intermediate levels of AI knowledge. Representatives of youth organisations generally reported similar knowledge levels, while more specialised roles such as policy-/decision-makers had a broader distribution of knowledge levels.

3.2.2 Country-Based Comparison of Framework Relevance

Variables: "How relevant do you find the AI Competence Framework for youth workers?" vs. "Where are you based?"

Objective: Analyse whether respondents from different countries view the relevance of the AI Competence Framework differently, which could reveal regional differences in how AI is perceived in youth work.

Figure 19 Country-Based Comparison of Framework Relevance



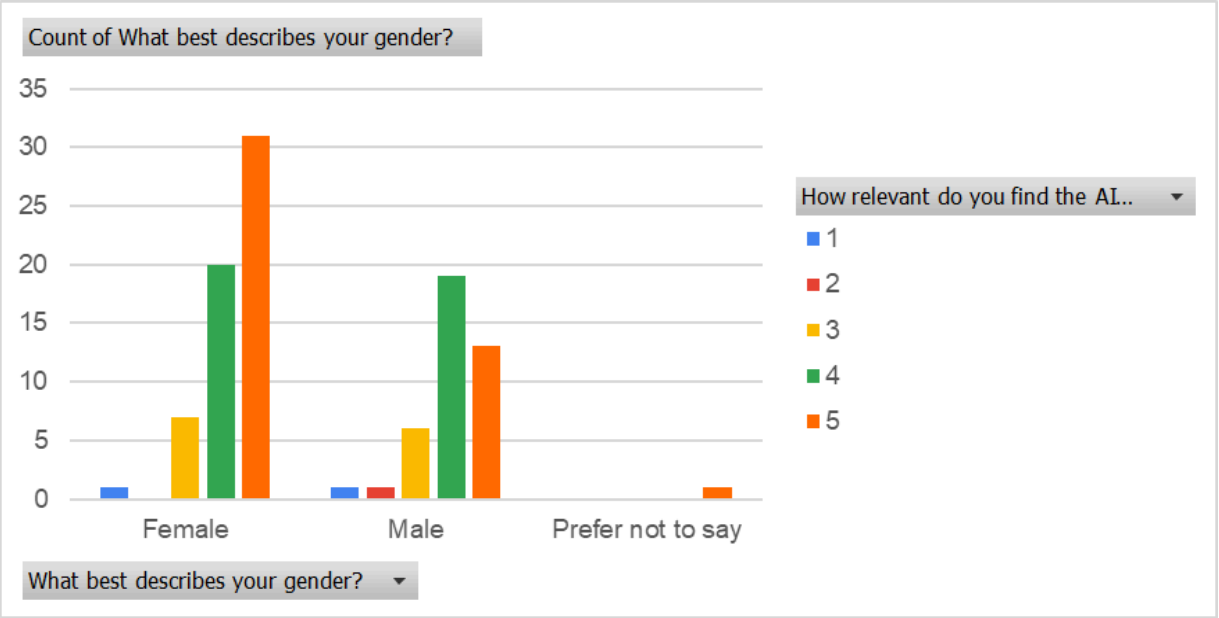
Respondents from all countries (Romania, Greece, Portugal, and Italy) found the AI Competence Framework highly relevant, with the majority rating it as a 4 or 5. However, slight variations emerged, with some countries showing a higher concentration of 5 ratings, indicating stronger perceived relevance in certain regions.

3.2.3 Gender Differences in Perceptions of AI Competence Framework

Variables: "What best describes your gender?" vs. "How relevant do you find the AI Competence Framework for youth workers?"

Objective: Examine whether there are significant gender-based differences in how participants perceive the relevance of the AI Competence Framework, which could help identify any gender-related trends or biases.

Figure 20 Gender Differences in Perceptions of AI Competence Framework



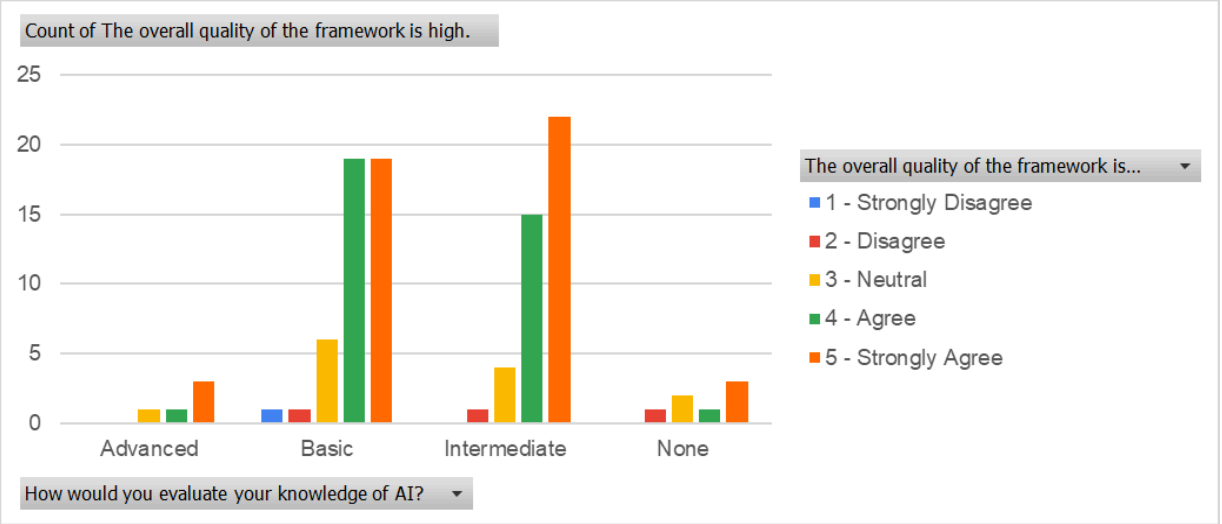
Both male and female respondents largely rated the framework as highly relevant, with little difference between gender groups. The majority of respondents in both groups provided ratings of 4 or 5, indicating broad satisfaction across genders.

3.2.4 Perception of Framework Quality by AI Knowledge Level

Variables: "How would you evaluate your knowledge of AI?" vs. "The overall quality of the framework is high."

Objective: Investigate whether respondents with higher AI knowledge levels rate the quality of the framework differently from those with basic or no knowledge of AI.

Figure 21 Perception of Framework Quality by AI Knowledge Level



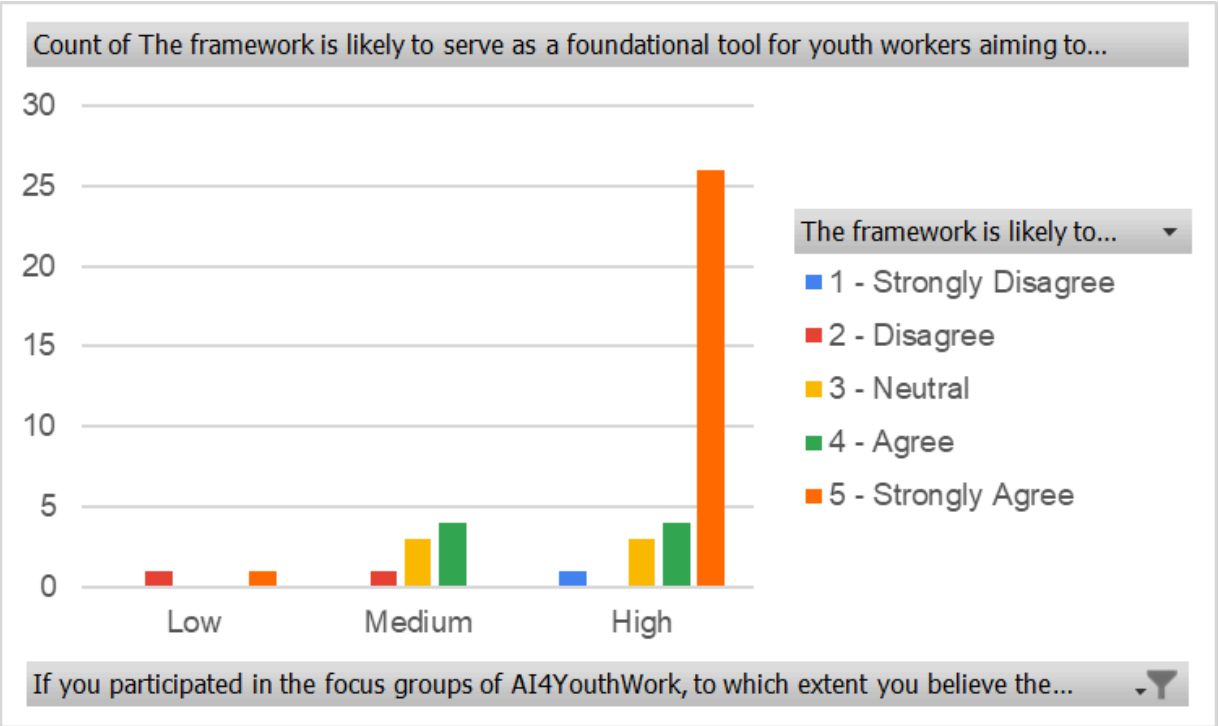
Respondents with more advanced AI knowledge tended to rate the quality of the framework higher than those with basic or no knowledge. This suggests that the more familiar participants are with AI concepts, the more they appreciate the framework's quality.

3.2.5 Impact of Focus Group Participation on Framework Perception

Variables: "If you participated in the focus groups of AI4YouthWork, to which extent do you believe the Framework incorporates your perspective and voice?" vs. "The framework reflects the ethical considerations related to AI in youth work."

Objective: Assess whether focus group participants feel more strongly that their perspectives were incorporated and if they have different views on the ethical considerations in the framework compared to non-participants.

Figure 22 Impact of Focus Group Participation on Framework Perception



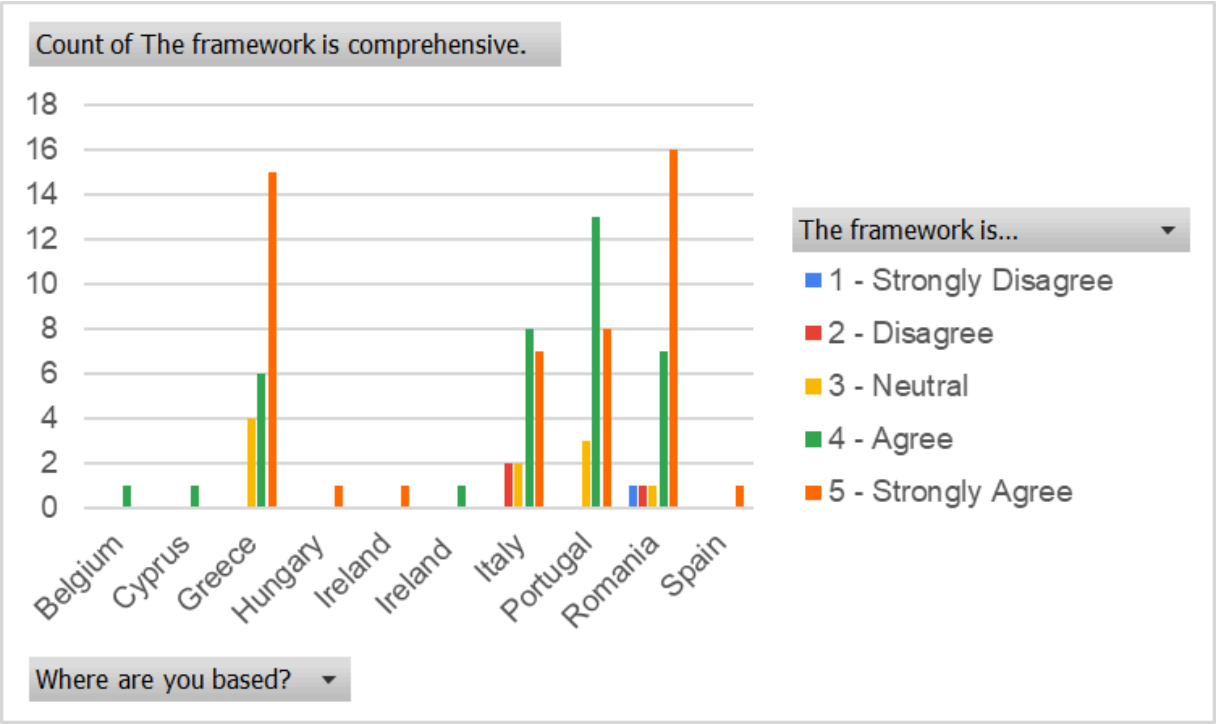
Those who participated in the focus groups were more likely to rate the framework as reflecting ethical considerations well. This indicates that participants felt their perspectives were effectively incorporated into the framework.

3.2.6 Framework Comprehensiveness Perception Across Countries

Variables: "Where are you based?" vs. "The framework is comprehensive."

Objective: Determine whether the perception of the framework's comprehensiveness varies by country, providing insights into regional differences in expectations or needs for AI-related competence frameworks.

Figure 23 Framework Comprehensiveness Perception Across Countries



Across all countries, respondents agreed that the framework is comprehensive, with the majority giving it high ratings. However, certain countries rated it slightly higher, indicating regional differences in how well the framework meets local needs.

This analysis highlights general satisfaction with the AI Competence Framework while pointing to opportunities for improving its practical application and ensuring it meets diverse regional and role-based needs.

4. Discussion

The validation process for the AI Competence Framework for Youth Workers has provided valuable insights into how the framework is perceived by youth workers, youth organisation representatives, policy-makers, and other stakeholders across various countries. The feedback gathered through the survey has revealed several key themes regarding the relevance, quality, and usability of the framework. This chapter will discuss these findings in detail, focusing on the framework's strengths, potential areas for improvement, and the implications for its future application.

4.1 Relevance of the AI Competence Framework

Overall, the framework was widely regarded as highly relevant to the needs of youth workers, with the majority of respondents from all participant groups and countries rating its relevance positively. The highest ratings were observed among respondents from countries like Romania, Greece, and Portugal, indicating that the framework resonates well across diverse geographical contexts. This suggests that the framework successfully addresses common AI competence gaps faced by youth workers across Europe.

However, the slight variation in ratings across countries suggests that certain regional adaptations or support materials could further enhance its applicability in different national contexts. This finding underscores the importance of considering localised needs when developing tools and frameworks that are intended for use across multiple countries.

4.2 Perceptions of the Framework's Quality

The overall quality of the framework was rated positively by respondents, particularly those with advanced knowledge of AI. This suggests that the framework is robust and well-regarded by individuals who have a deeper understanding of AI concepts. However, respondents with less AI knowledge were slightly more reserved in their evaluations, indicating that the framework may benefit from additional simplifications or explanatory content to make it more accessible to those with lower AI literacy.

Moreover, feedback from focus group participants indicated that the framework effectively reflects ethical considerations related to AI, which is a crucial aspect given the increasing importance of responsible AI usage in youth work. This suggests that the framework has

successfully integrated key ethical dimensions, making it a valuable resource for fostering responsible AI adoption.

4.3 Practicality vs. Theoretical Nature

One of the recurring themes in the feedback was the balance between the framework's theoretical aspects and its practical applicability. While many respondents appreciated the framework's thoroughness and structure, several highlighted the need for more practical tools, case studies, and examples to help youth workers apply the competencies in real-world settings. This feedback suggests that while the framework is comprehensive, there is room to improve its usability by incorporating more dynamic and interactive resources that facilitate practical application.

Respondents who found the framework to be too theoretical were also less likely to rate it as providing sufficient practical guidance. This highlights a potential gap in the framework's current form: it may need to provide more concrete, hands-on tools to help youth workers translate theoretical AI competencies into their daily work practices. Practical tools such as exercises, simulations, or real-life case studies could bridge this gap and make the framework more user-friendly.

4.4 Impact of Focus Group Participation

The focus group participants generally rated the framework more positively, particularly in terms of its ethical considerations and its alignment with their needs and perspectives. This suggests that the iterative validation process, which incorporated feedback from these participants, was effective in refining the framework to reflect the voices of its intended users. This collaborative approach has strengthened the framework's relevance and alignment with the real-world challenges faced by youth workers.

4.5 Regional and Role-Based Differences

Although there was broad agreement on the framework's relevance and quality, some differences emerged based on the country of origin and the professional roles of the respondents. Youth workers, who were the largest respondent group, generally rated the framework positively, but some expressed a desire for a more streamlined or simplified version. Similarly, respondents from certain countries expressed stronger support for the framework, while others indicated that additional adaptation might be necessary for it to be fully effective in their national contexts.

These findings highlight the need for flexibility in the framework's application. While the core competencies and principles are widely applicable, additional support materials, such as translated versions or region-specific case studies, could enhance the framework's utility across different contexts.

4.6 Limitations of the Validation Process

While the validation process for the AI Competence Framework for Youth Workers yielded valuable insights, several limitations should be acknowledged, given below.

Sample Size and Representation: Although the survey aimed to collect responses from at least 100 participants across multiple countries, the sample size may still be limited in representing the broader population of youth workers. Additionally, while efforts were made to include diverse profiles, the representation of certain groups (e.g., policy-makers, decision-makers) was relatively smaller compared to youth workers, which may have skewed the feedback towards operational concerns rather than strategic or policy-level issues.

Geographical and Cultural Scope: The validation process was conducted across four partner countries (Romania, Greece, Portugal, and Italy). While these countries provide a diverse range of perspectives, the findings may not fully reflect the needs and challenges faced by youth workers in other European or global regions. Cultural and regional differences may affect how the framework is perceived and applied.

Limited Time for Engagement: Given the timeline for the survey responses, some participants may not have had enough time to engage deeply with the AI Competence Framework before providing feedback. As a result, some responses may reflect initial impressions rather than a thorough evaluation of the framework's long-term usability.

Focus on Quantitative Feedback: While the survey collected both quantitative and qualitative feedback, the analysis relied heavily on quantitative data to assess the overall perceptions of the framework. This may have limited the depth of understanding regarding specific challenges or opportunities for improvement that could have emerged from more extensive qualitative feedback.

Variation in AI Knowledge Levels: Participants reported varying levels of AI knowledge, from none to advanced. This variation may have influenced how they evaluated the framework, with some participants potentially finding it too complex or too basic based on their level of familiarity with AI. This disparity could impact the generalizability of the findings, as certain

aspects of the framework may resonate differently with users depending on their existing AI competencies.

Focus Group Participation: Only a subset of respondents participated in the focus groups, which may have limited the validation of certain aspects of the framework that would benefit from more in-depth discussions. Additionally, those who participated in the focus groups may have had a more positive bias toward the framework, as they were directly involved in its development and refinement.

By recognizing these limitations, the project team aims to ensure that future iterations of the AI Competence Framework validation process consider a broader range of perspectives, allow for deeper engagement, and address the diverse needs of youth workers in various contexts.

5. Recommendations for Improvement

Several areas for improvement were identified through the survey feedback.

Simplification and accessibility: A more concise, simplified version of the framework could benefit users with lower AI literacy or those who are looking for quick, actionable insights. This could be presented as a companion guide or a summary document focusing on key competencies.

Increased practical guidance: The addition of more practical examples, real-life case studies, and interactive tools would enhance the framework's usability and help youth workers apply AI competencies in their everyday work. Practical resources could also address the concerns of respondents who found the framework too theoretical.

Localised adaptations: To address regional variations in relevance, localised case studies or examples could be developed to help users better contextualise the competencies within their own cultural and professional environments.

Ongoing Revisions to Reflect AI and Youth Work Developments: The framework should be revisited periodically, not only after users have had sufficient time to implement it but also to keep pace with the evolving nature of AI technologies and the youth worker profession. As AI continues to develop and new competencies emerge, it is crucial to ensure that the framework remains relevant and up-to-date in addressing the latest challenges and opportunities in youth work.

6. Conclusion

The feedback gathered during the validation process demonstrates that the AI Competence Framework for Youth Workers is a valuable and relevant tool for the youth work sector. However, there are clear opportunities for refinement, particularly in enhancing the framework's practical usability and ensuring it meets the diverse needs of youth workers across different countries and roles. In addition, the framework should be revisited over time to ensure it remains aligned with ongoing developments in AI and the evolving nature of youth work.

By addressing these areas for improvement, the consortium can ensure that the framework not only equips youth workers with essential AI competencies but also provides them with the practical tools they need to apply these skills effectively and keep pace with future advancements.

7. Annexes

7.1 Annex 1. Email Invitation

Dear [Name],

On behalf of [Partner Organisation], representative in [your Country] of the European initiative "Artificial Intelligence for Youth Work", I am writing to invite you to participate in the validation of our "AI Competence Framework for Youth Workers".

The Framework resulted from in-depth international research on AI Competence Needs for Youth Workers conducted by the consortium together with 70+ youth workers from Greece, Italy, Portugal and Romania, and builds on recognised European competence frameworks and models. For the first time, it provides a definition of the competences youth workers need to support young people in AI-driven environments, as well as to leverage AI technologies to optimise their work.

We would be very grateful if you would like to help us shape these results. Here is how you can contribute:

Download the Framework at https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.12790943.

Share your feedback anonymously via our survey, available at [link to the survey in ENG or your language].

As a token of our appreciation for your time, at the end of the survey, you will be able to download an acknowledgment of your valuable contribution to advancing knowledge on AI in youth work.

If you have any questions or need further information, I'll be here and glad to help.

Hoping you'll be able to join us on this journey, I thank you very much for your time.

Best regards,