Structured Dialogue VI Cycle Consultations: Quantitative Data Analyses

1. Introduction to the Analytical Sample

After data cleaning procedures and weighting the sample, 25,734 responses were further analysed from 18 European countries[1]; all respondents were aged 11-34. 36.3% of our respondents were male and 63.3% female, with 0.4% using the option "Other gender" (see Graph 1 below).

Graph 1: Gender distribution of the analytical sample; percentages.
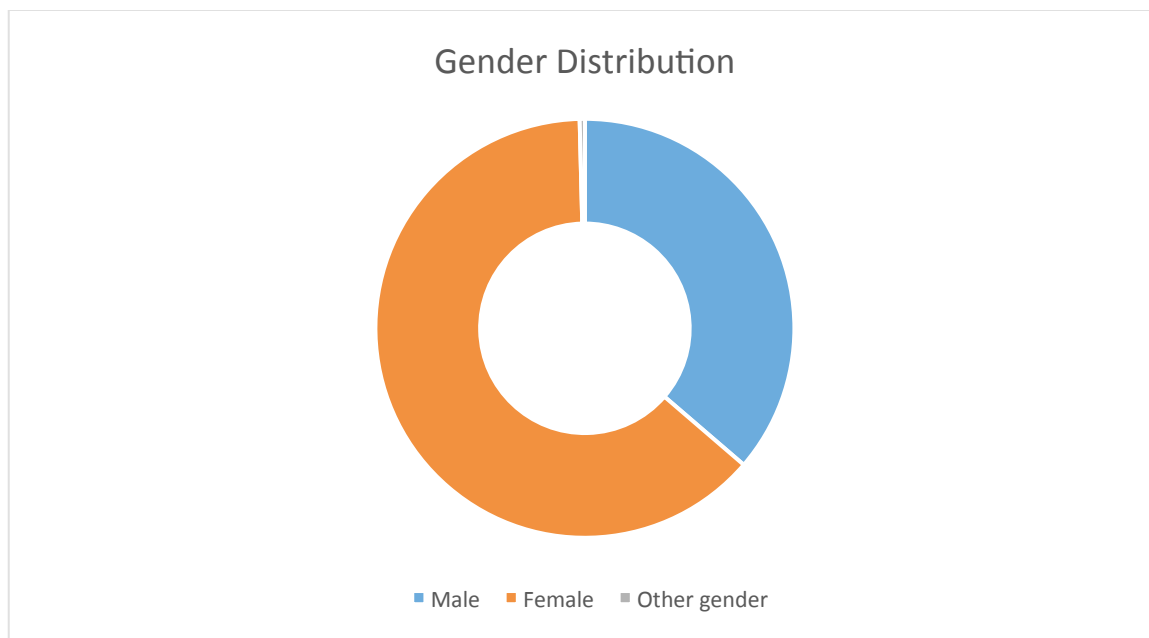
14% of our respondents indicated that they come from an ethnic minority background, about the same percentage indicated religious minority background, more than 19% represented LGBT+ community, more than 5% of the respondents were disabled young people, and almost 22% of them indicated having

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[1] Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden, United Kingdom,

financial difficulties. These data suggest, that the NWGs were rather successful in reaching out not only to the majority, but also to the young people with minority backgrounds.

This is confirmed also in case of educational attainment, which is mostly represented by lower and higher secondary school graduates, with only about 10% of respondents holding MA or higher university degrees, as shown in Graph 2 below.

Graph 2: Highest educational attainment of the respondents in the analytical sample; percentages.

Highest Educational Attainment

■ No formal education ■ Basic school ■ High school ■ BA degree ■ MA degree ■ PhD degree

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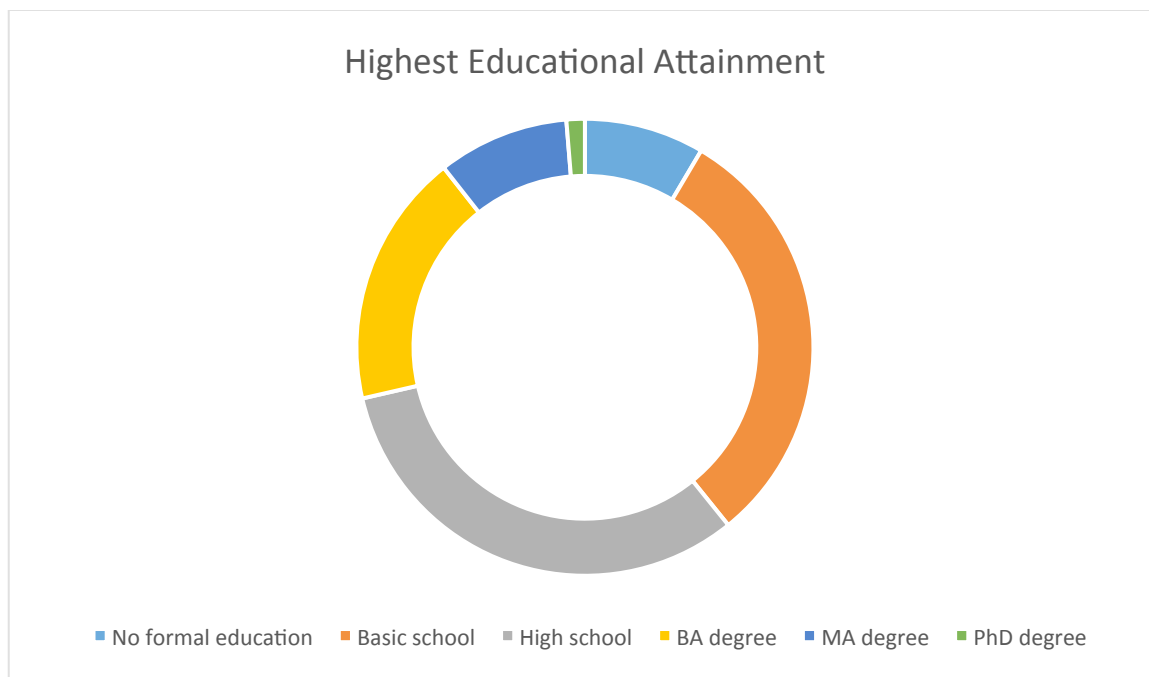
Analyses show that educational attainment is relatively similar in both males and females[2], with statistically more high-school-graduates among males than in females (34% in comparison to 31,2%), and statistically more BA and MA graduates in females than in males (19% females and 16,6% males in case of BA degree; 10% females and 8,5% males in case of MA degree). While these differences are statistically significant and can be therefore expected to occur also in general youth populations, it is obvious that the differences are rather minor (as well illustrated by graph below), and it seems that genders are rather balanced in terms of educational attainment.

Graph 3: Highest educational attainment of the respondents in the analytical sample by gender; percentages.

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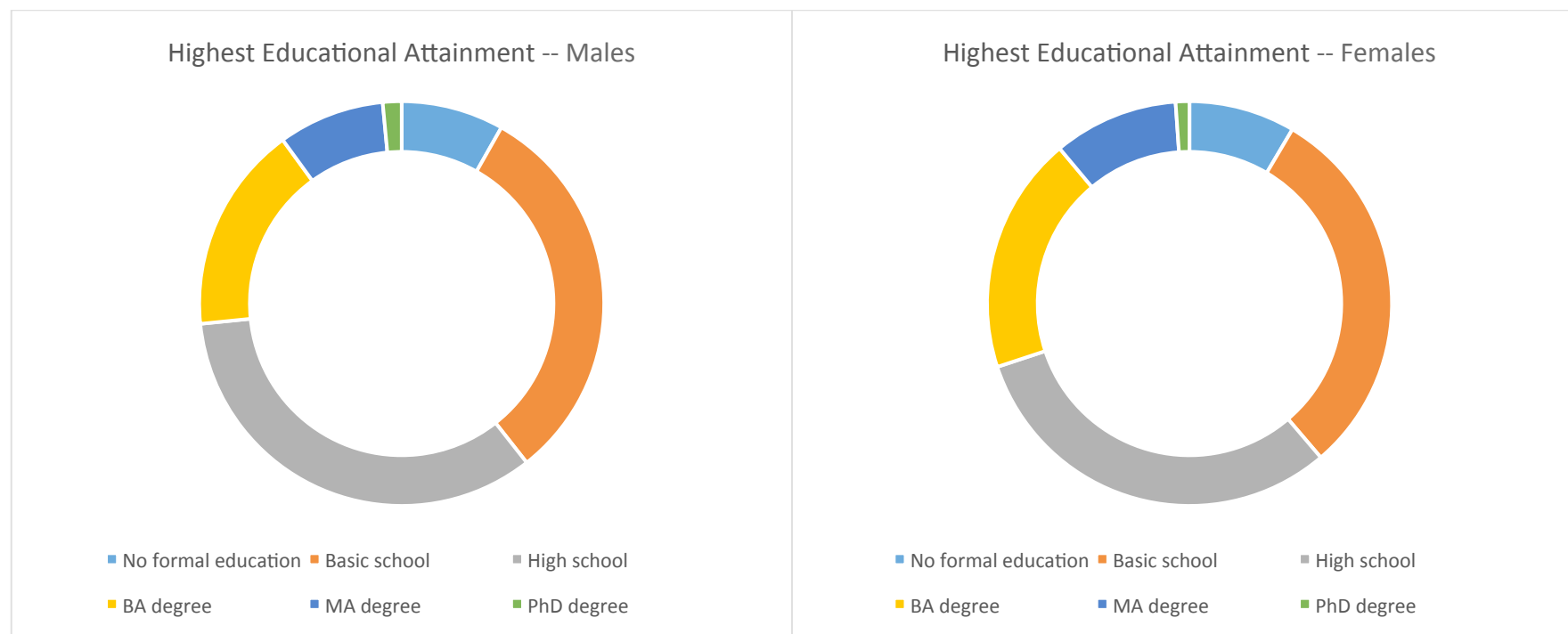
[2] Gender „Other" has been dropped from the analysis, due to lack of cases for a meaningful statistical operation.

Age structure of the sample also suggests quality national consultancy processes, with almost 47% of respondents 18-year-old or younger, and 80% of the sample being 24 years of age or younger, as indicated in graph below.

Graph 4: Age distribution of the analytical sample; percentages.
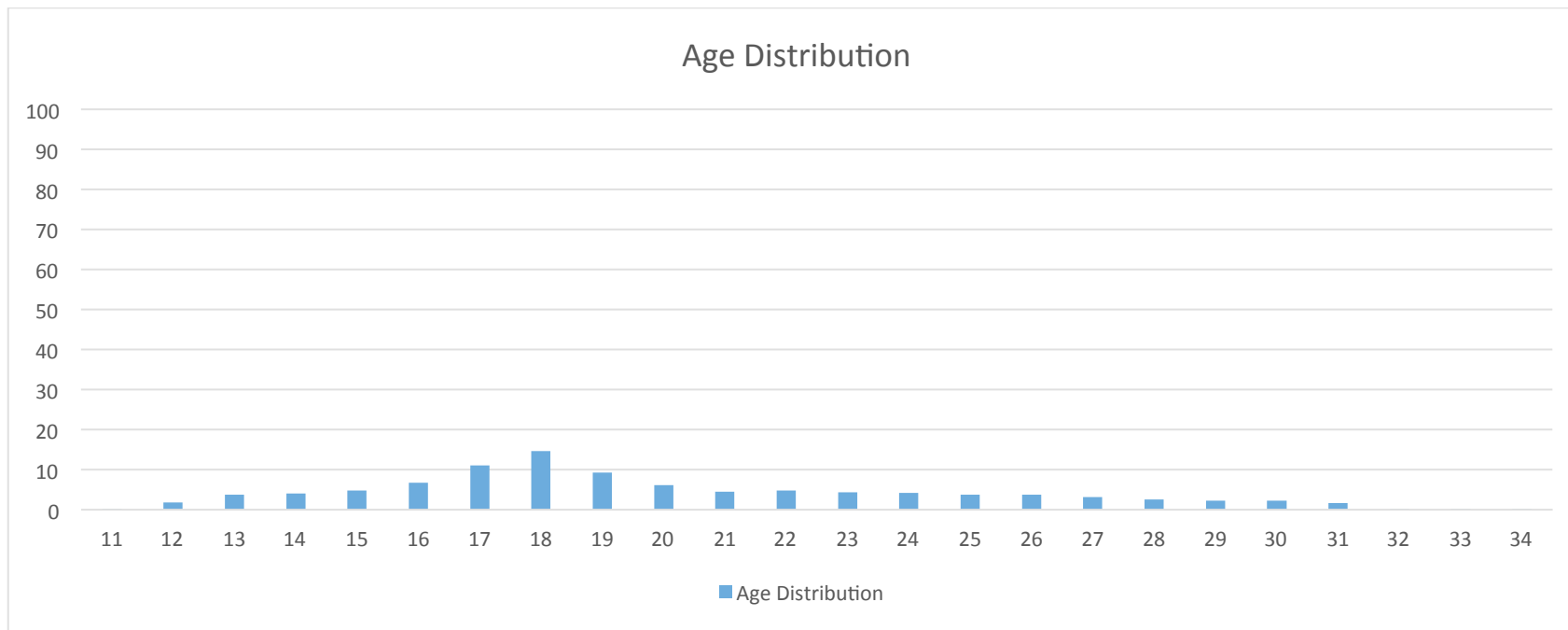
The sample has been also structured into age groups, which are in accordance with the Eurostat age grouping system and is summarized in the graph below. Notably, the strong group of 15-19 year olds dominates the sample.

Graph 5: Age distribution of the analytical sample; percentages.
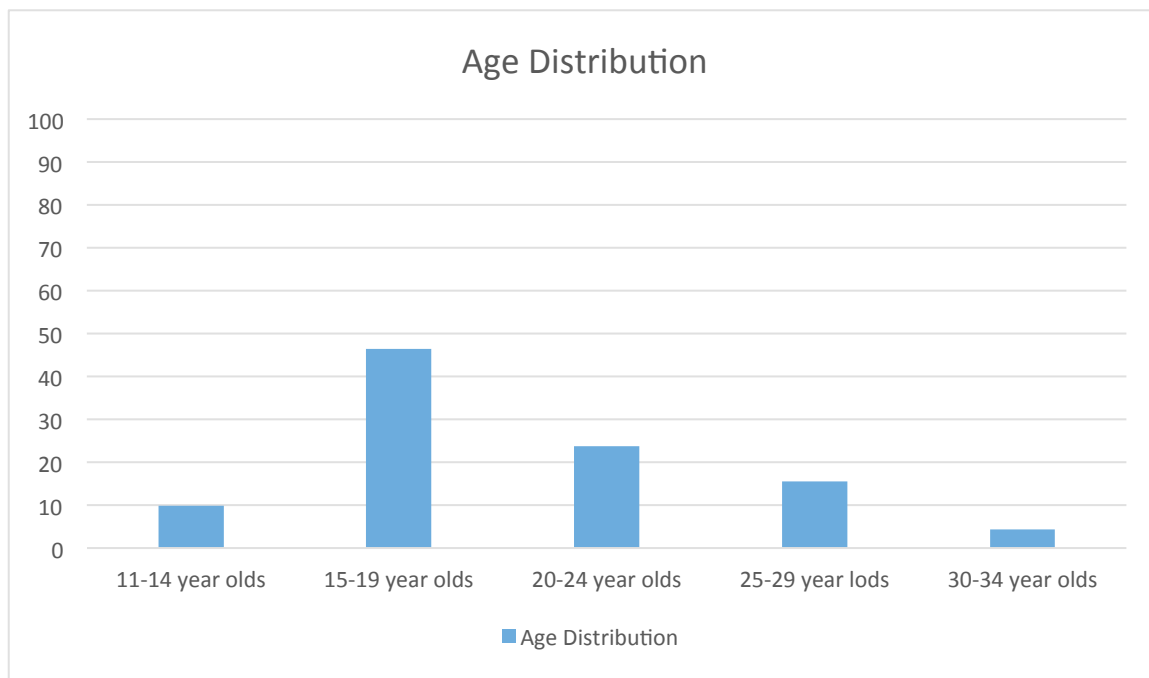
As can be seen from the graph below, even the distribution of the age groups in genders can be considered rather balanced, with differences in the magnitude of single percentages.

Graph 6: Age distribution of the analytical sample by gender; percentages.
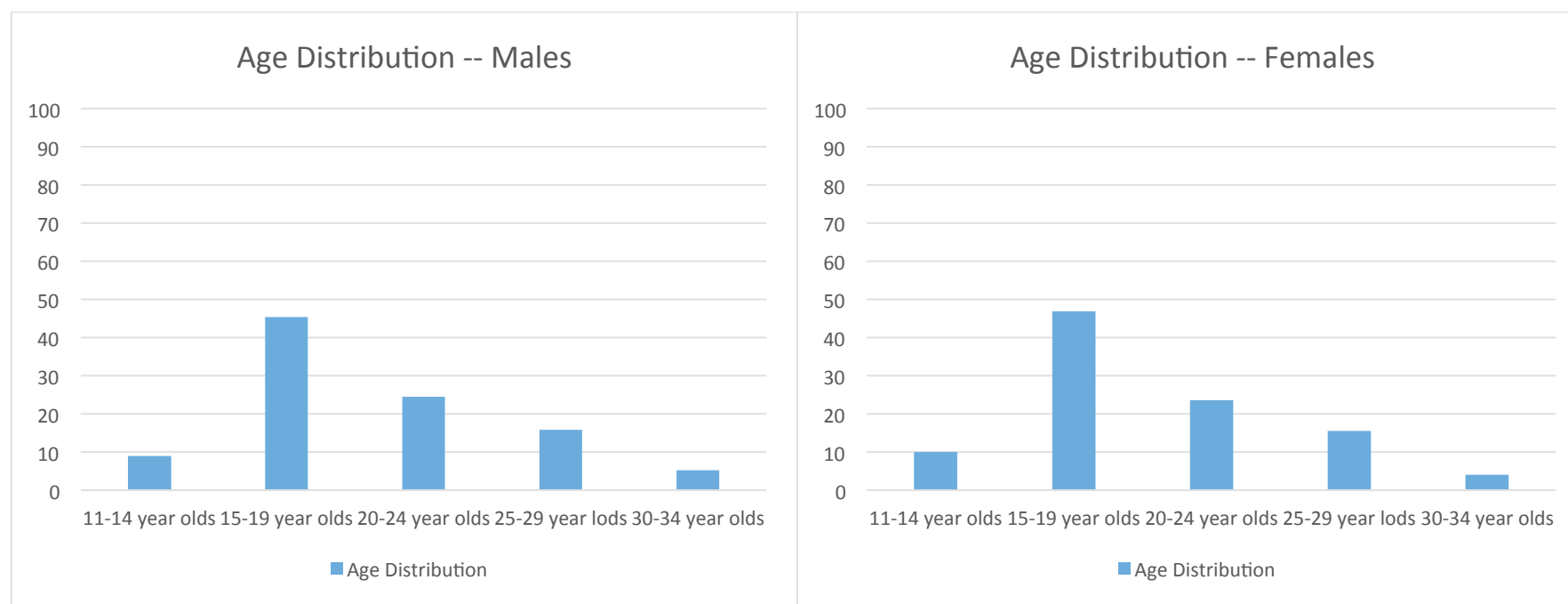
All of the aforementioned attributes of the analytical sample suggest that the following analyses are rather reliable and not affected by any fundamental sample bias.

1.1 Young People with Minority Backgrounds

In the survey, items focusing on ethnic, religious, sexuality, health, and financial backgrounds were asked. Respondents were instructed to indicate, whether they belong to any of the aforementioned groups[3]. Based on these self-reported data of the respondents, it has been calculated, that every second young people in our sample considers themselves to be in some way part of the group which could be described as "Young People with Minority Backgrounds" (50.5% of the respondents). Given the large proportion of the respondents who answered positively to the item on financial difficulties, a second variable has been calculated, leaving the financial difficulties out of question, and creating "Young People with Minority Backgrounds (financial aspects excluded)" variable which shows (see graph below) that 38,8% of the respondents have indicated some form of minority background even when financial aspects are not taken into account. This is a rather high percentage, which has to be treated with caution, since this is based on self-perceptions of the respondents, with no clear indication on what borderlines the respondents themselves used to include oneself into or exclude oneself from the given group.

All following analyses will be using both the variable of "Young People with Minority Backgrounds" and of "Young People with Minority Backgrounds (financial aspects excluded)" due to the fact that the financial aspect is the only one where respondents were given a rather wide space to decide whether they belong to this group or not, while in other aspects (sexuality, religion…), the respondents might be clearer on the borderlines of the groups in question[4].

In both cases, the percentage of young people who have attributed themselves to one or more of the minority backgrounds, is rather high, and this rather widely understood concept of minority background may lead to a lowering of differentiation in respondents´ opinions; in other words, the fact that large numbers of respondents identified themselves as representatives of various minorities may lead to the statistical analyses producing similar outcomes for majority and minority respondents.

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[3] Following items were asked: Do you consider yourself to be …
- … part of an ethnic minority.
- … part of a religious minority.
- … lesbian, gay bisexual or any sexuality other than heterosexual.
- … disabled.
- … having financial difficulties.

[4] "Young People with Minority Backgrounds" will be abbreviated as YPMB, and "Young People with Minority Backgrounds (financial aspects excluded)" will be abbreviated as YPMB_nonfin.

The graph below summarizes, that systematically, there are less males who consider themselves coming from any minority background at all; while females, and most notably people who designated themselves as "Other" in gender-related question, tend to be overrepresented in the minority background categories.

Graph 7: Minority background distribution of the analytical sample; percentages.

Minority Background Distribution

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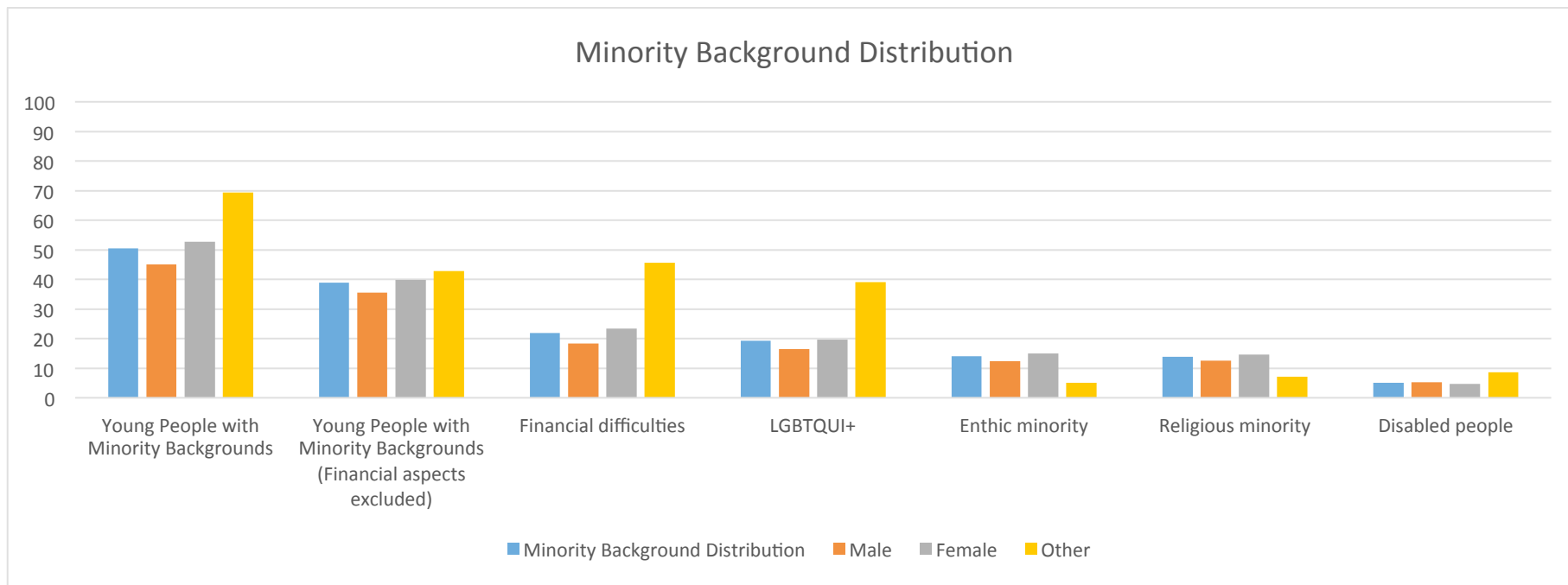
It is obvious from the graph below, that the young people under 15 years of age are either not familiar with the concepts they are being asked about (minority backgrounds) or are on purpose exaggerating their answers. This needs to be taken into account both when interpreting the current data, and in the future, as these items need to be better tailored to the younger respondents, in order to avoid responses which are potentially unreliable.

Graph 8: Minority background distribution of the analytical sample; percentages.
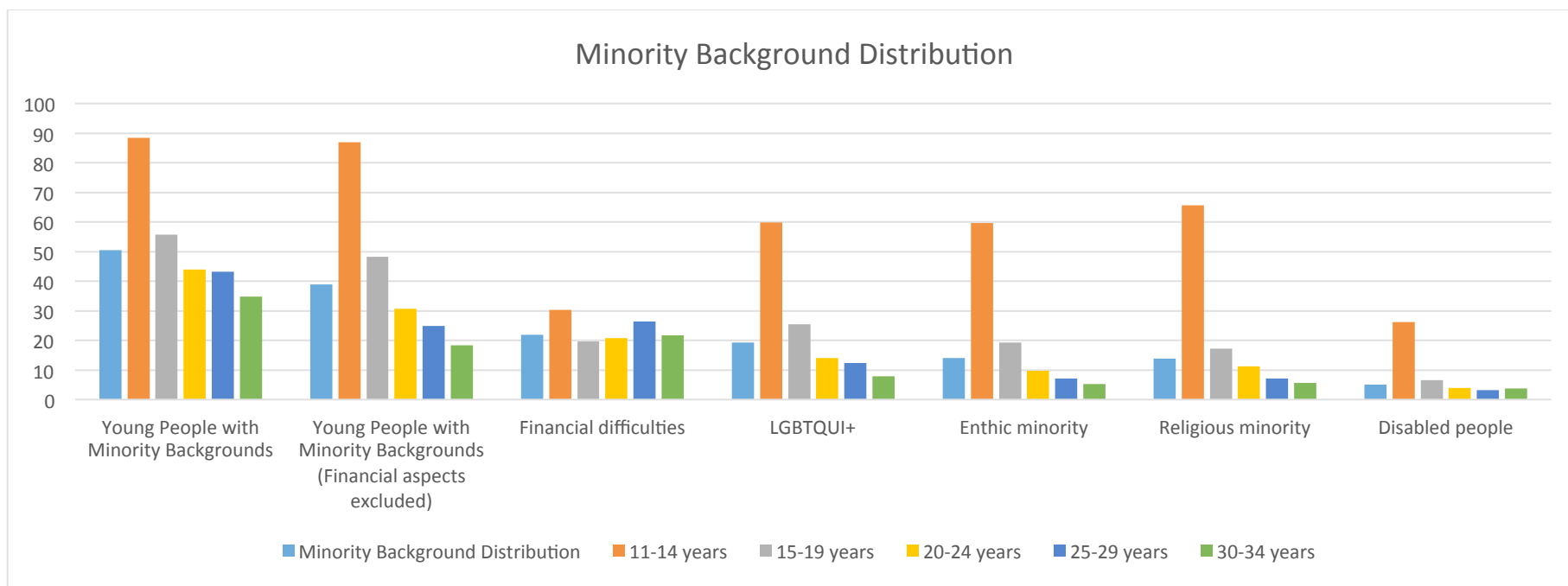
2. Priorities for Young People

The survey included two batteries of questions aimed at prioritizing the thematic areas which were identified at the European Youth Conference in Tallinn 2017. First battery asked the respondent to indicate, how important it is to them to be able to do certain tasks. The second battery prompted the respondents to state their visions of the future, as described by series of statements.

The graph below shows the summary of both batteries, with discrimination topping the chart, followed by the issues of education and mental health. The least important topics are the universal support for the EU among all young people, followed by young migrants, and environmental issues.

Detailed analyses of the two batteries can be found below, and detailed analyses of the topics themselves can be found in chapter 3.

Graph 9: Overall priorities for young people; average scores.

Overall Priorities for Young People

Category	All
…young women and girls do not face discrimination anymore.	4.66
Getting the skills I need for the future from my education.	4.57
Being able to cope with stressful situations.	4.55
Getting the knowledge I need for the future from my education.	4.54
…young people from marginalized communities are able to fully participate in society.	4.53
Being able to communicate respectfully with people who have different views than me.	4.49
Being able to set realistic goals for my future.	4.47
Being able to find realiable sources of information.	4.47
Being ready for the new types of work that might exist in the future.	4.36
…EU youth programmes are accessed by more young people.	4.29
…rural areas provide access to more opportunities for young people.	4.27
Having access to spaces in which you can relax, learn and connect with young people.	4.25
…EU youth programmes are accessed by a more diverse range of young people.	4.25
…all young people in Europe understand how the EU works.	4.2
…rural areas become more attractive to young people.	4.1
Being able to influence decisions made about your community on a daily basis.	4.07
Being able to take part in activities that improve the environment.	4.06
…young migrants are properly supported throughout the EU.	4.05
…all young people in Europe support the EU.	3.69

2.1 First battery of priority-related questions

Average scores in the first battery[5] show that the young people consider all of the proposed areas to be of great importance to them – all average scores are above 4 on a scale from "Very unimportant" (coded as 1) to "Very important" (coded as 5). Small differences show that the most important priorities in this battery of questions has been connected to education, mental health of young people, and non-violent communication.

Gender analysis shows (see the same graph below), that there are no large gender differences in this battery, apart from the respondents who categorized themselves as "Other" in the gender-focused question, who scored generally lower in all analysed items, and substantially lower in case of non-violent communication, setting realistic goals for the future, and getting ready for the new types of work in the future. There is no clear indication as to why this is the case, since there are not enough cases for a meaningful analysis and description of this specific gender group[6]; it would be helpful to hold specific qualitative interviews, focus groups, or similar activities with the representatives of this gender group.

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[5] The item read: "How important are the following things to you?"
[6] The only findings at hand point that this gender group is mostly located on the high-school-graduate educational level and is mostly represented by young people 25 years of age and older.

Graph 10: Priorities of the young people, including gender differences, part 1; average scores.

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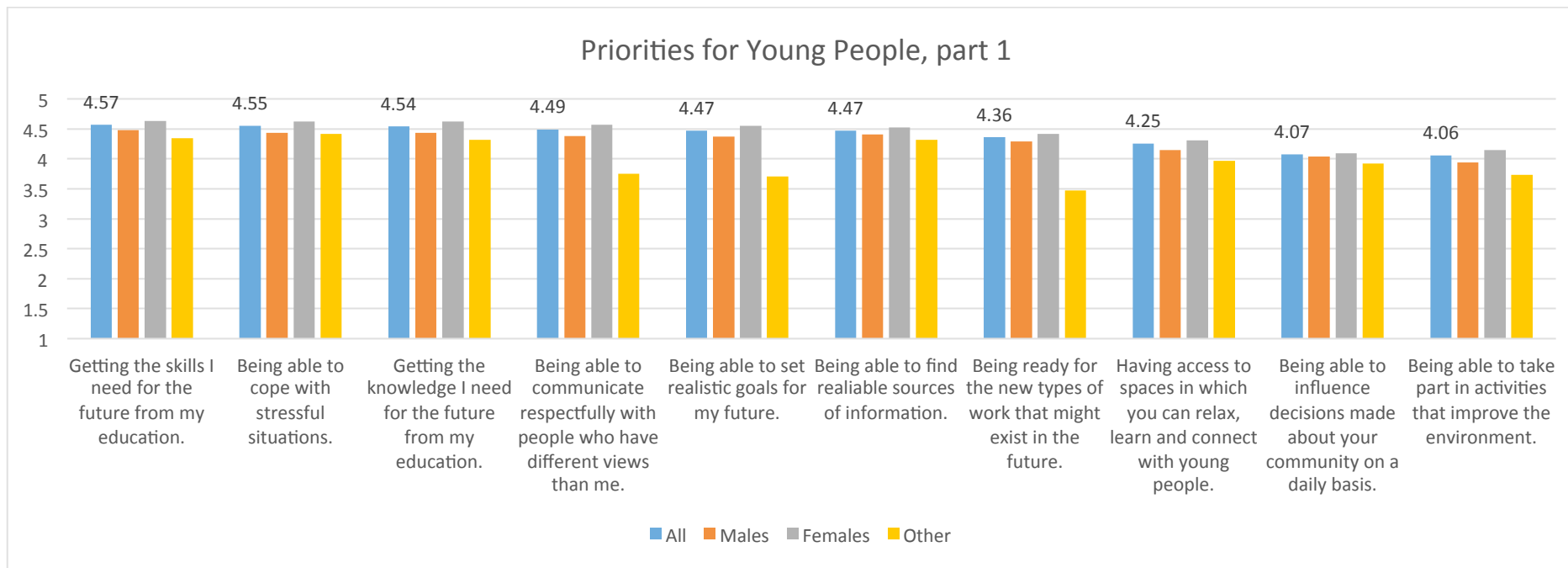
The graph below shows that differences in opinions on these issues when it comes to minority backgrounds of the respondents, are negligible. This can be caused by the young participants who largely also fall under the minority background group, and who systematically underscore in these items, as shown in the following paragraph.

Graph 11: Priorities of the young people, including Young People with Minority Backgrounds, part 1; average scores.
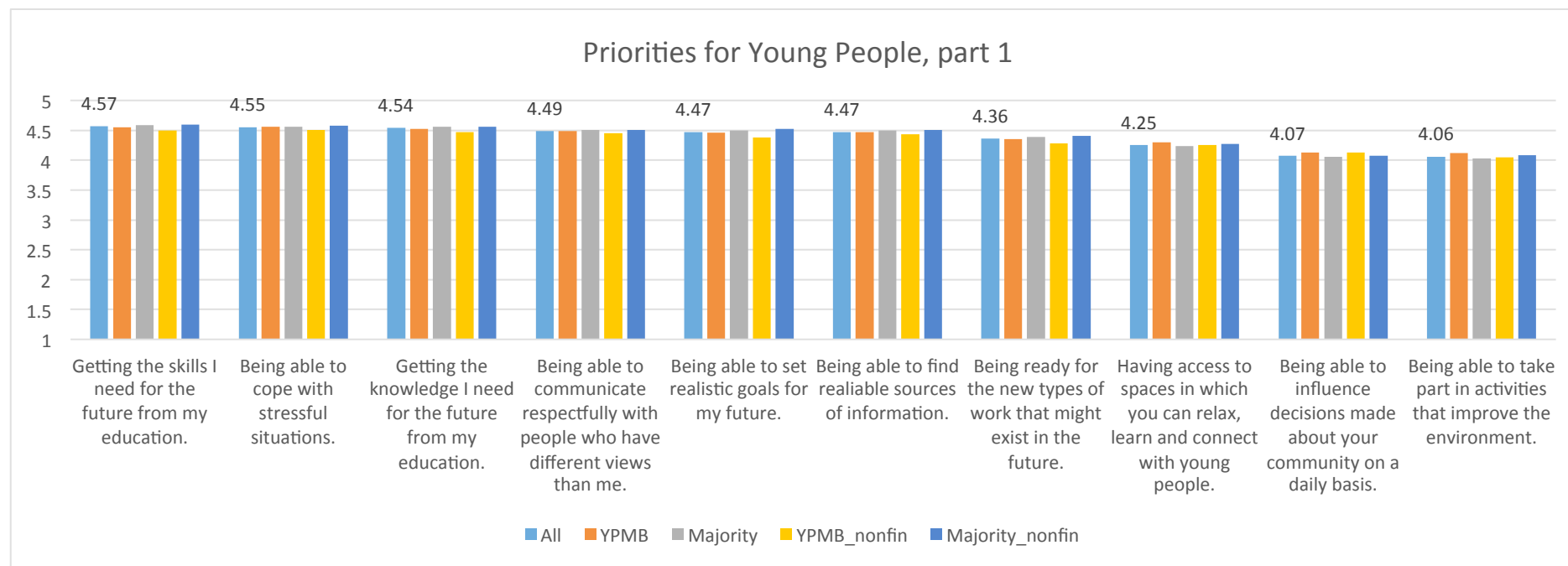
Age group analysis shows (see graph below), that younger respondents (most prominently 11-14-year olds) are scoring systematically lower than the older ones, with lower than average scores in all analysed items. This seems to indicate that the younger respondents under 15 years of age do not feel their priorities as strong as their older counterparts. This being said, it is also worth noticing, that even those younger respondents under 15 years of age have scored on average above 4 on a five-point scale in most cases (apart from the last two analysed items), and this clearly shows that even they have strong opinions on their priorities; only in comparison to their older counterparts, their scores may seem more conservative. Areas in which, on the other hand, the older respondents (25 years of age and older) seem to be systematically more interested than their younger counterparts are active participation, and environmental issues.

Graph 12: Priorities of the young people, including age differences, first question battery; average scores.

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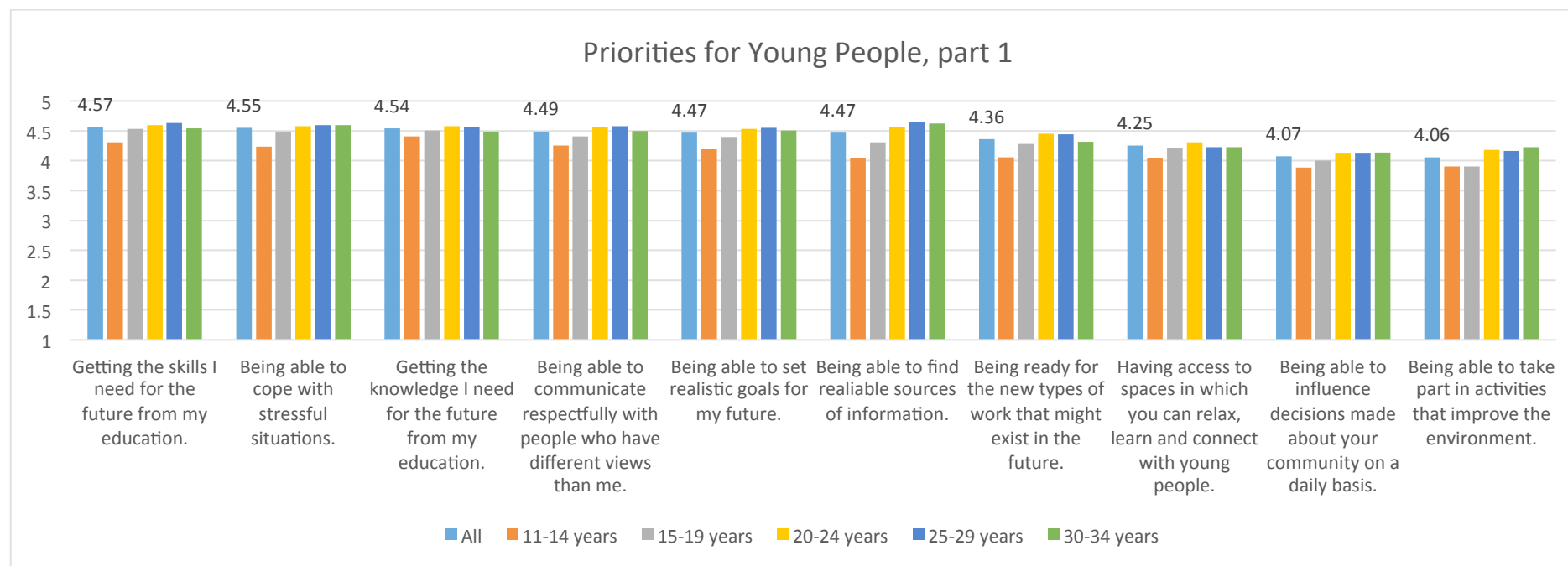
Rather surprisingly, the least appreciated were the topics of active participation and environmental issues, as shown in the graph below; as already mentioned above, these are more important to older than to younger participants.

Graph 13: Priorities of young people, first question battery; percentages.

Priorities of Young People, part 1
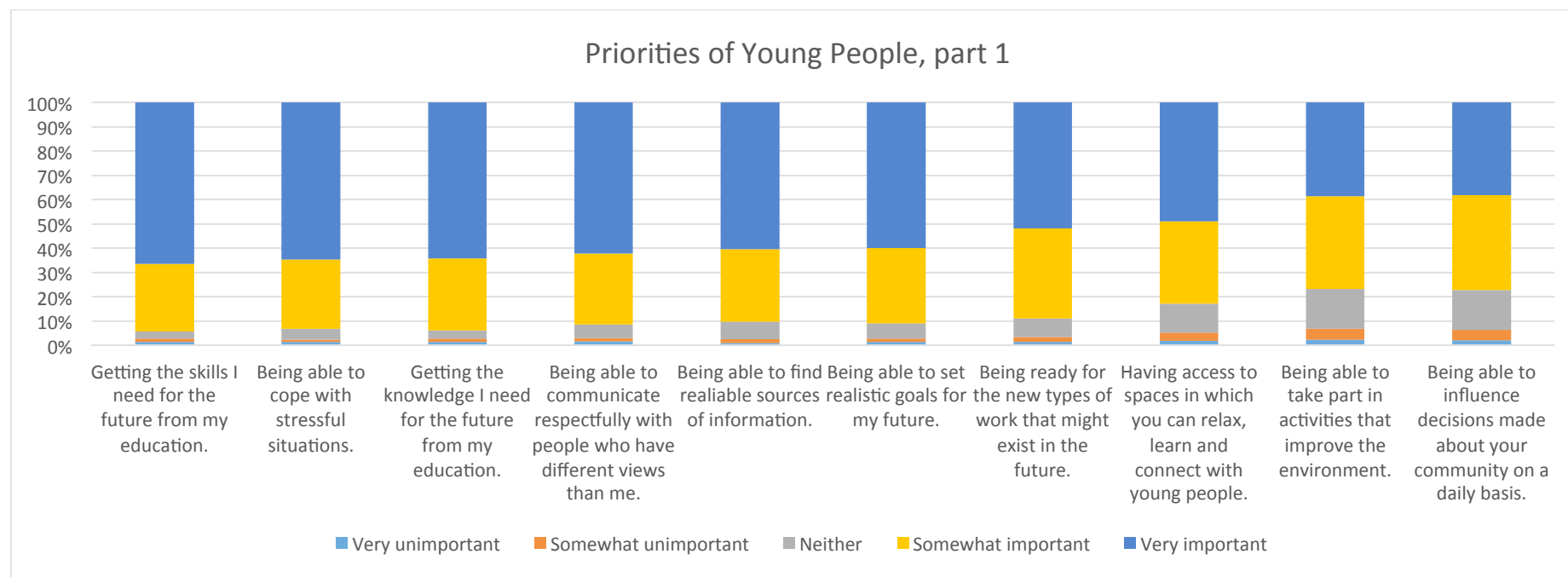
2.2 Second batter of priority-related questions

The second battery of questions[7] aiming at exploring young people´s preferences in various areas has, again, brought rather high results in terms of appreciation of the outlined topic, with only "support for the EU" dropping under the score levels of 4 (the battery using the same 5-point scale described in the previous section, with 5 standing for "Very important"[8]), as shown in the graph below.

The graph also highlights gender differences, with the most visible trend being higher average scores, and therefore a systematically stronger support of all presented items, by female respondents in comparison to other genders in almost all cases. Another noteworthy finding is the strong support of respondents who marked themselves as "Other" in gender-related question, of the inclusion issue (support of marginalized communities).

Graph 14: Priorities of young people, including gender differences, second question battery; average scores.

Priorities for Young People, part 2

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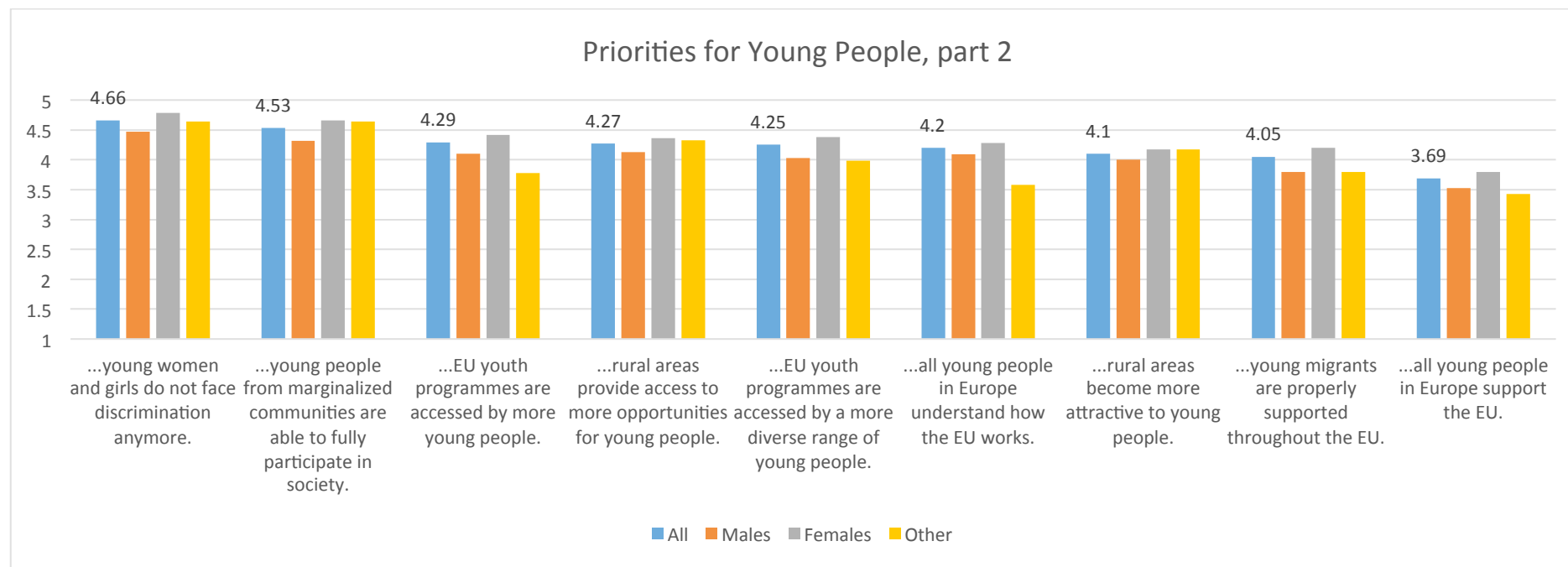
[7] The item read: "Over the next 10 years, how important is it to make sure…"
[8] The survey question reads as follows: "Over the next 10 years, how important is it to make sure…"

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Graph below shows that with regard to minority backgrounds of the respondents, there are no fundamental differences in their preferences in this priority battery; as mentioned above, this might be caused due to the rather large group of respondents who have marked themselves as having a minority background. Such diverse group of "minority background respondents" simply does not differ from the rest of the sample.

Graph 15: Priorities of young people, including Young People with Minority Backgrounds, second question battery; average scores.

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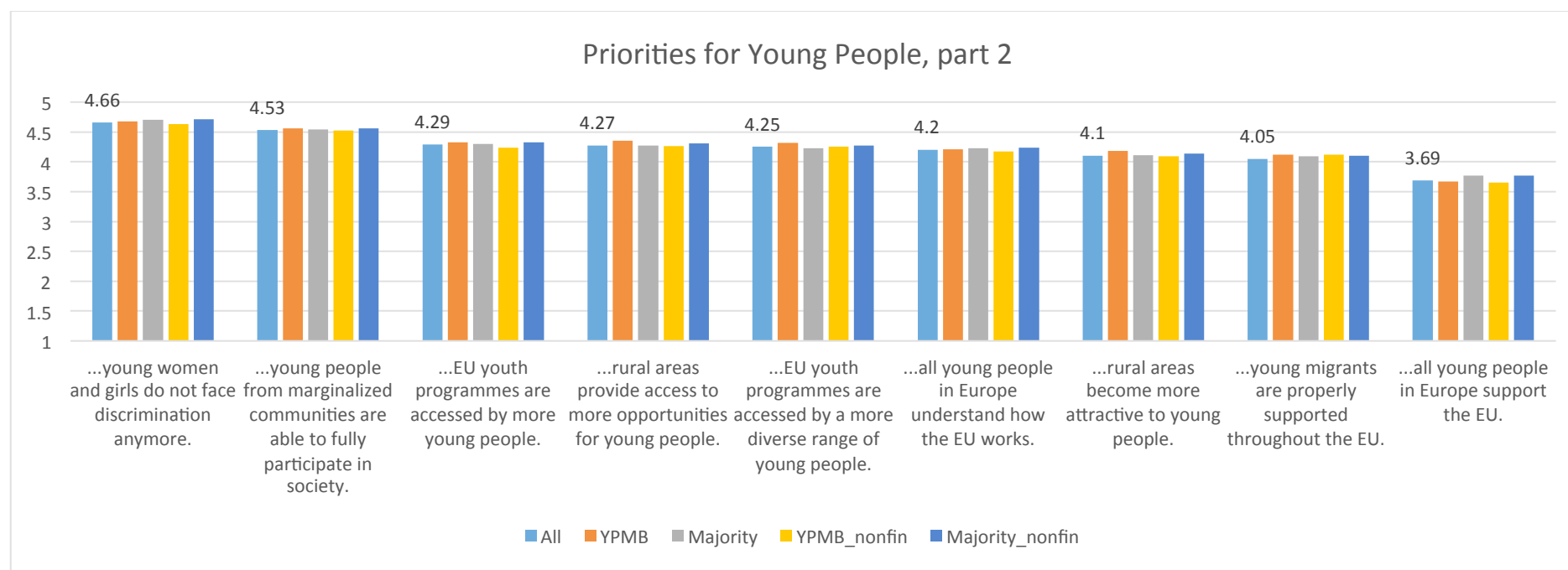
When it comes to age differences, it is obvious, that the older respondents (again) voice their preferences in a more profound way, than the youngest group of respondents under 15. Again, the responses of the younger respondents are widely in line with the direction in which their older counterparts were answering, only their rating of the answers has been more lenient than in their older counterparts.

Graph 16: Priorities of young people, including age differences, second question battery; average scores.

Priorities for Young People, part 2

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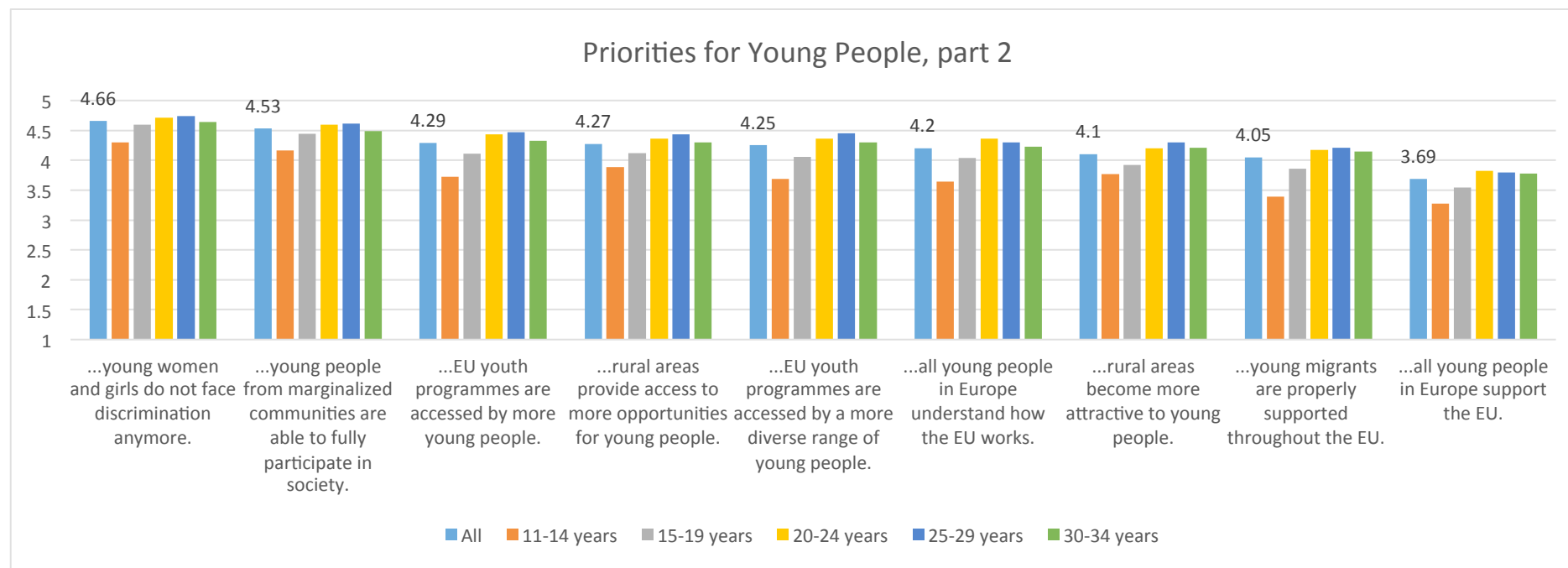
Both the analysis of the averages, and of the percentage distribution, show that there is a strong support for anti-discrimination topics (concerning both women and marginalized communities), and for EU youth programmes; whereas universal support of the EU in young people seems to be the most divisive issue, with a rather large percentage stating either negative answers or a neutral one. In relation to the EU, it is more important for the young people to understand the way the EU functions, than to aim at universal support of the EU in general.

Graph 17: Priorities of young people, second question battery; percentages.
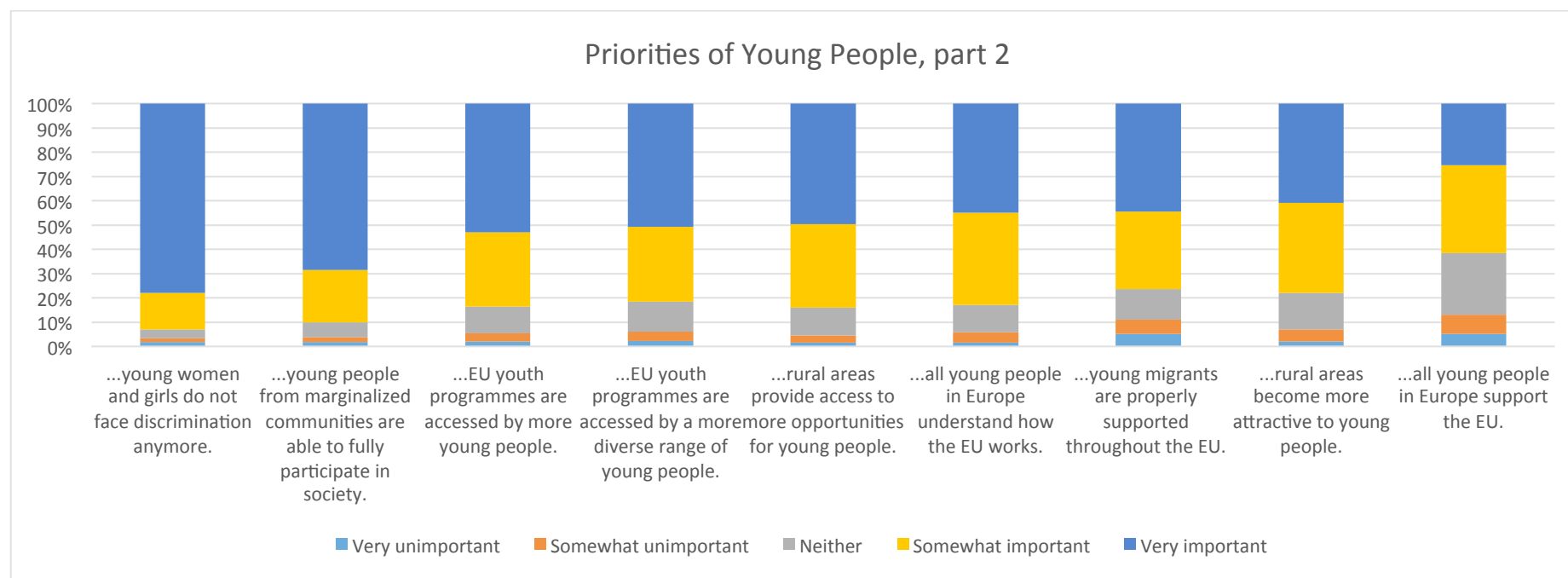
All in all, there are clear priorities for young people: anti-discrimination, education, mental health, and EU youth programmes. It also became rather clear, that the EU should aim more at being more transparent, which is more important to the young people than the universal support.

3. Consultation Questions

This section provides a detailed account of analyses of batteries linked directly to the consultancy questions outlined for the VI Cycle of national consultations within the Structured Dialogue process.

3.1 What are the most important competencies that young people require from education, for their lives in a future Europe?

A battery of questions focusing on competencies[9] young people perceive as important has been distributed within the survey. Results show that young people believe they should receive a very wide variety of competences, since all of the listed competence options received high average scores of more than 4 on a 5-point scale.

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[9] The item read: "How important is it to you to have the following skills?"

Graph 18: The most important competencies in education for young people; average scores.

Priorities for Young People in the Area of Education

Competency	Score
Communication in mother tongue	4.59
Learning to learn	4.53
Using ICT in everyday life	4.49
Non-violent communication in everyday life	4.45
Active participation in everyday life	4.41
Intercultural competence	4.36
Communication in foreign language	4.3
Using science and technology in everyday life	4.19
Entrepreneurial skills	4.19
Using mathematics in everyday life	4.18

■ Importance of Competencies

Graph below shows that there is a wide support for competencies related to communication (mother tongue and non-violent), as well as for competence learning to learn, and ICT competence related to everyday tasks. Rather surprisingly, active participation is also rather high on young people´s agenda when in comes to schooling: an area which, at least traditionally, is not very strongly linked to formal education. Among the less rated competencies is also the entrepreneurial competence; a competence, which is repeatedly quoted as vital for the modern economy and labour market. In this case, it would be interesting to explore more on the meanings and perceptions the young people have when asked about the entrepreneurial skills.

Graph 19: The most important competencies in education for young people; percentages.
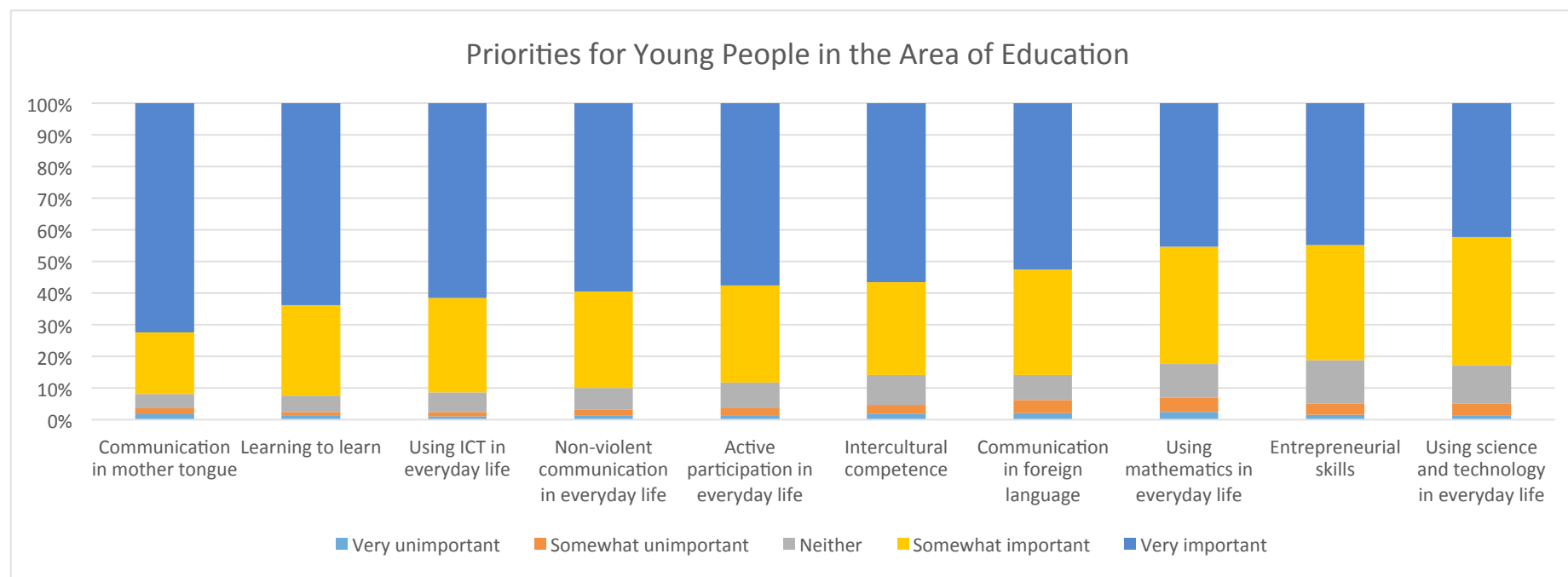
Interesting Fact

An interesting fact in this section is that, rather surprisingly and against the general stereotypes of today, it is females who see mathematics in everyday life as a more important priority, than males (see graph below).

Graph 20: Using mathematics in everyday life by gender; percentages.
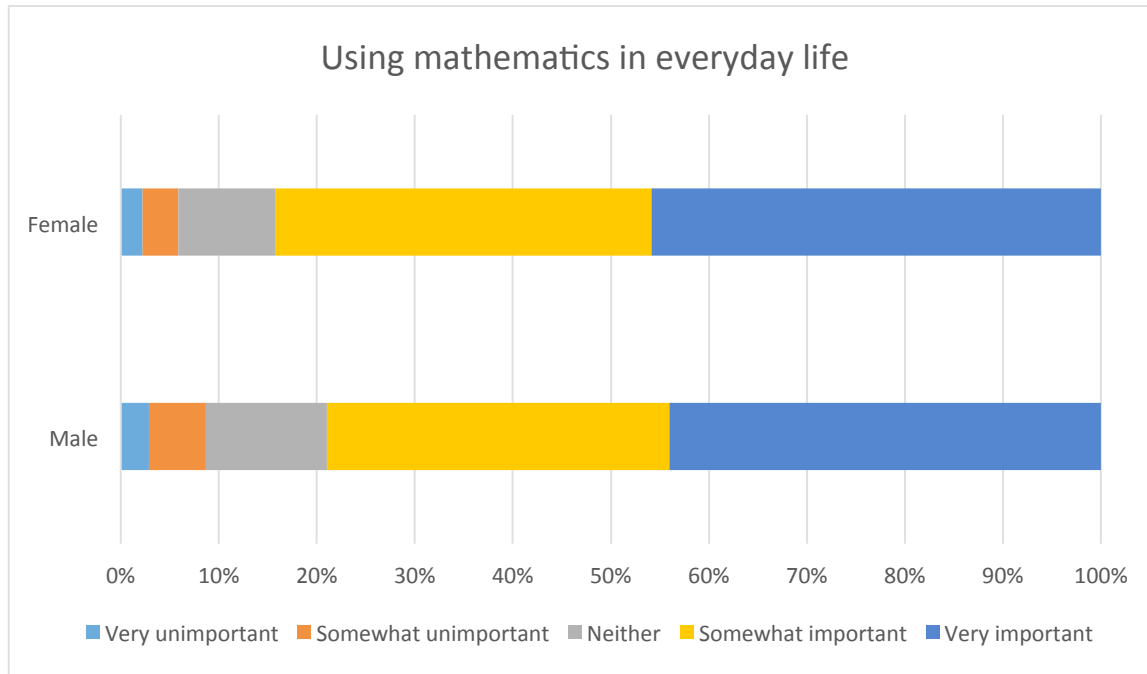
3.2 What can prepare young people for the forms of work that are likely to exist in the future?

As was the case in the previous consultation question, the answers shown in the graph below indicate, that the young people expect a wide variety of support mechanisms[10] in order to get ready for future working environment and labour market needs. What young people seem to stress are practical opportunities to get hands-on experience, such as training on the job, working while studying, internships, or support in employment-related matters at schools.

Graph 21: The most important support mechanisms in the area of work preparation for young people; average scores.

Priorities for Young People in the Area of Work Preparation

Support Mechanism	Score
Training and education on the job	4.47
Access to part-time jobs during studies	4.42
Access to internships	4.4
Employment and career support at school	4.39
Web-based information for youth	4.33
Access to non-formal education courses	4.28
Career guidance on the job	4.2
Access to information centers for youth	4.15
Access to volunteering opportunities	4.1
Access to independent career guidance	4.07

Importance of Support Mechanisms

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[10] The item read: "How important is it to you, to have the following things when trying to prepare for work and develop your career?"

Graph below shows that most of the young people consider all of these support mechanisms either somewhat important, or very important.

Graph 22: The most important support mechanisms in the area of work preparation for young people; percentages.

Priorities for Young People in the Area of Work Preparation

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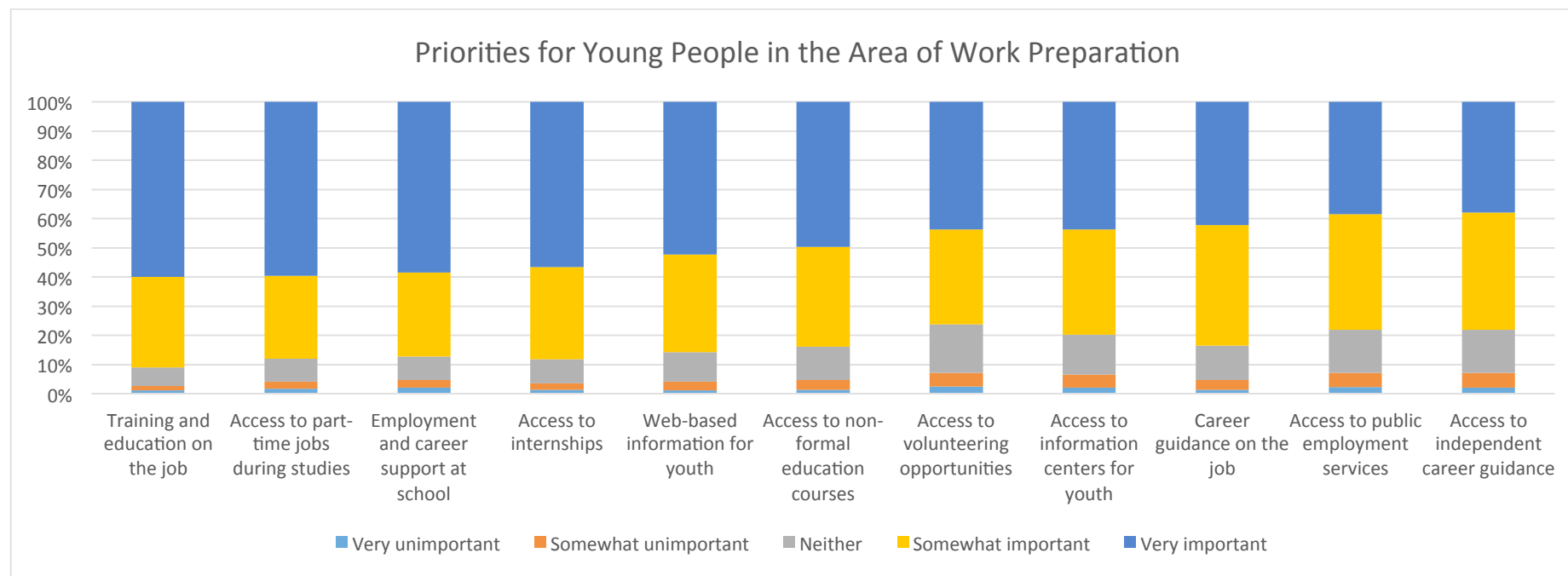
Interesting Fact

Interestingly, it is more important to females than to males to have an opportunity to get hands-on working experience while studying, as shown in the graph below.

Graph 23: Working part-time while studying by gender; percentages.
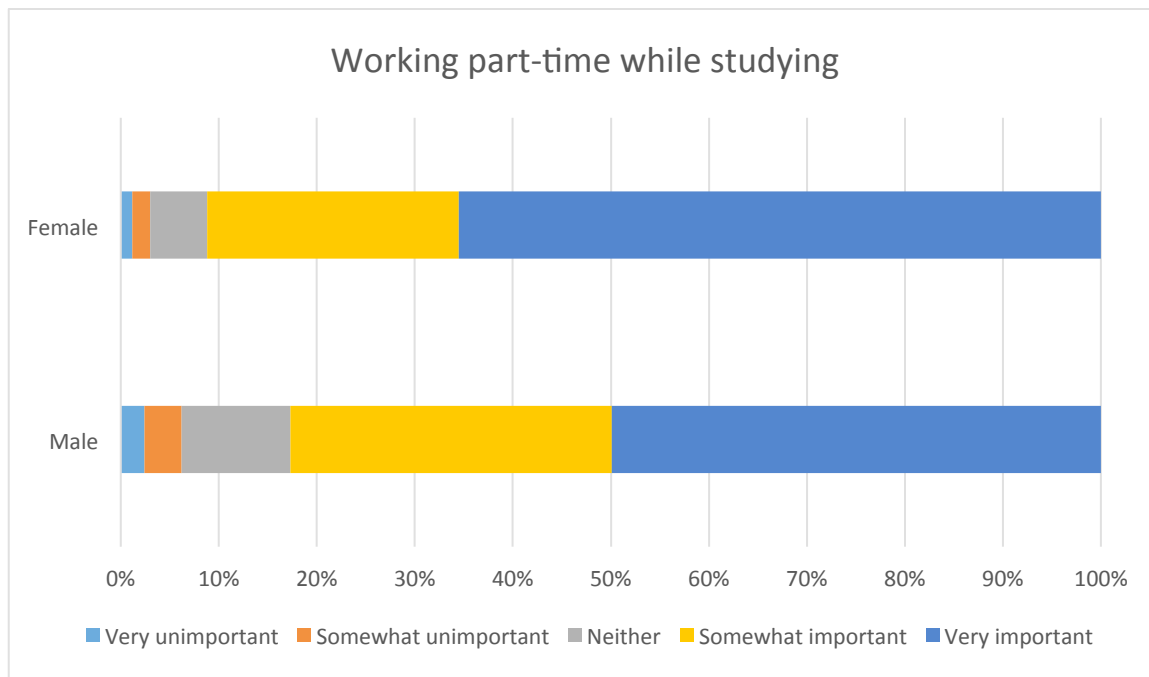
3.3 What would enable young people to form realistic life goals and expectations?

Young people would, again, appreciate a wide variety of supporting mechanisms[11] in this area, but it seems that the most valuable to them are the ones which are helping them to come in touch with the everyday reality of the working life they are about to enter in later stages of their lives, such as internships, or part time jobs. Among other important supporting mechanisms, there are generally accessible information, and support from the systems the young people get in touch with the most, such as schools.

Graph 24: The most important support mechanisms for creating realistic life goals in young people; average scores.

Priorities for Young People in the Area of Expectations

Internships	Part time jobs during studies	Web-based information	Receiving information and guidance at school	Non-formal learning courses	Volunteering	Access to career guidance in general	Information centers for youth
4.47	4.37	4.27	4.24	4.14	4.12	4.07	4.06

■ Importance of Support Mechanisms

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[11] The item read: "How important are the following options to you when you are trying to set your life goals (e.g. in planning family, career, traveling, housing, etc.)?"

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The graph below shows, that the young people demonstrate a rather wide support for the whole variety of mechanisms listed in the survey.

Graph 25: The most important support mechanisms for creating realistic life goals in young people; percentages.
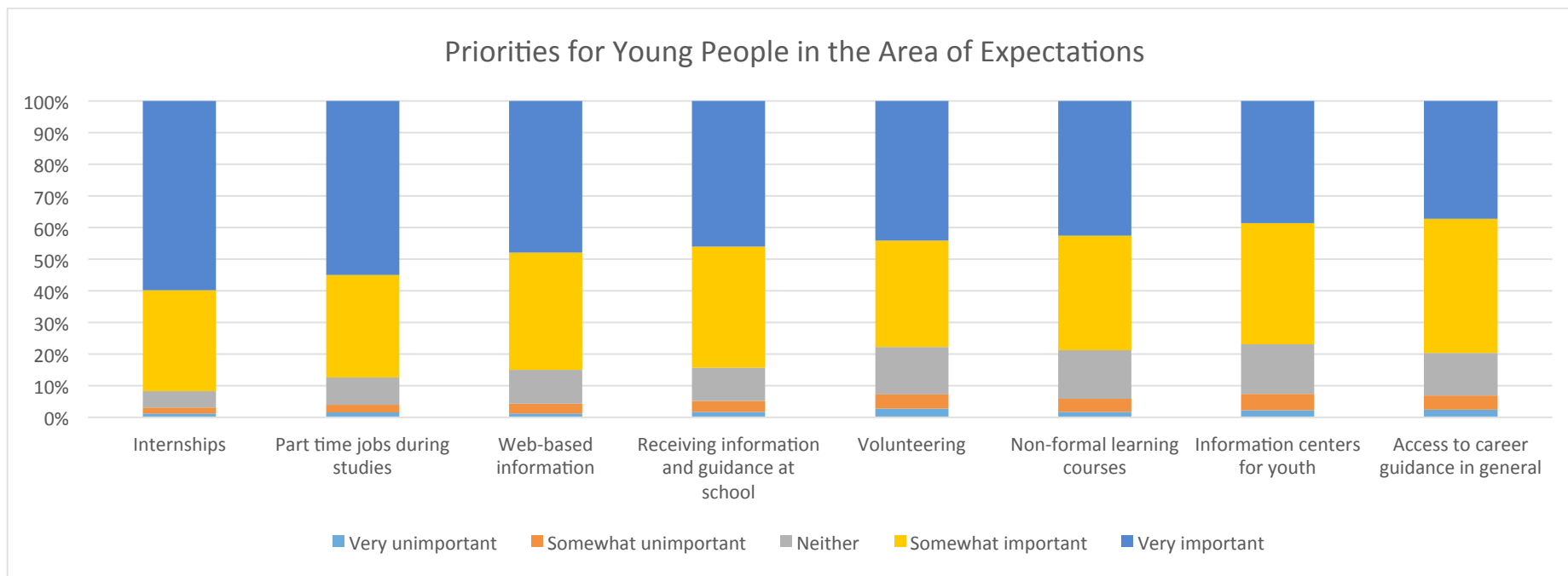
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Interesting Fact

Interestingly, it is more important to females than to males to have an opportunity to get hands-on working experience in internships, as shown in the graph below.
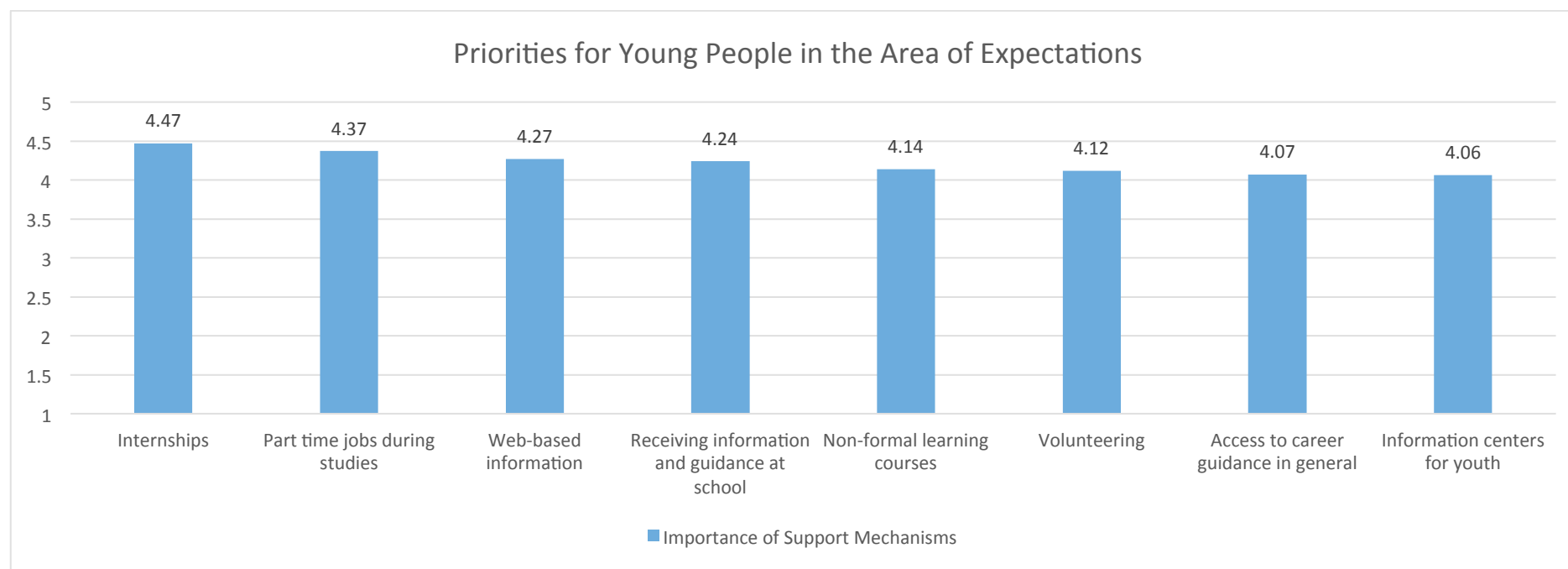
Graph 26: Getting hands-on experience via internships by gender; percentages.
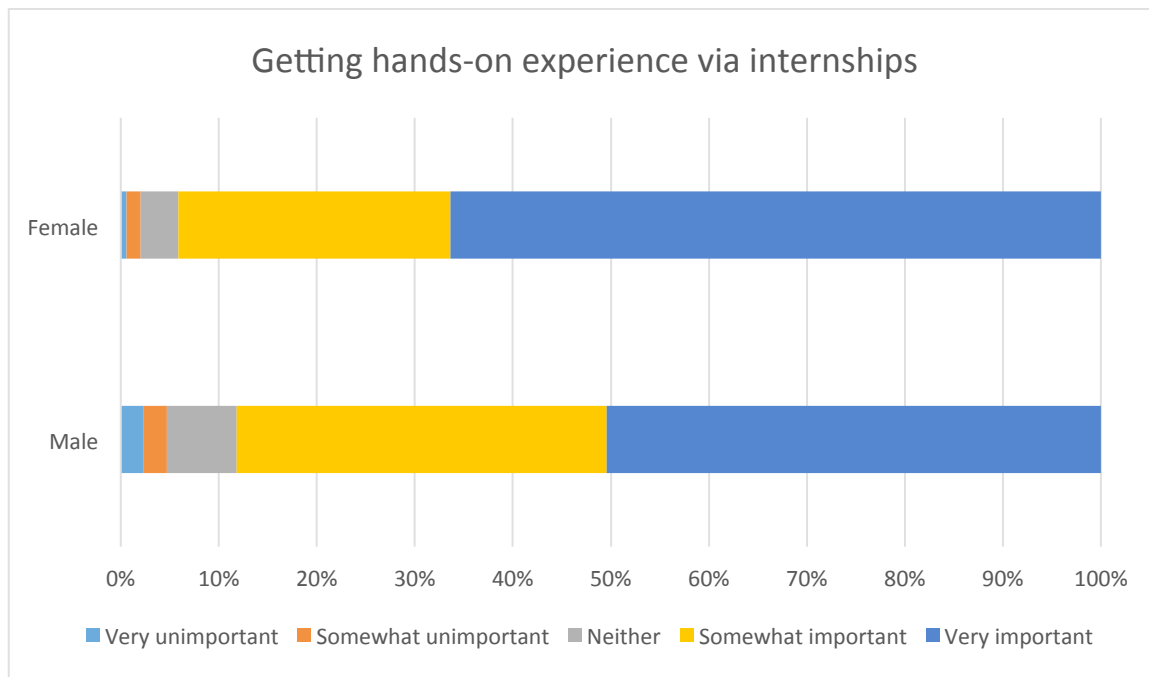
3.4 What can enable young people to cope with stressful situations and times of crisis?

In this case, it seems that the whole area of sports, leisure, youth work, and schooling is not on young people´s minds when they face difficulties in their lives[12]. On the contrary, their peers and families are by far the most important anchors in such situations. Future initiatives in this area should take this into account, focusing more on providing the young people themselves with mental hygiene routines, creating courses and learning opportunities for young parents, in order to help them create a supportive environment for their children, etc.

Graph 27: The most important support mechanisms for supporting mental health in young people; average scores.

Priorities for Young People in the Area of Mental Health

Support Mechanism	Score
Friends	4.55
Family	4.53
Psychologists and mental health professionals	3.98
Web-based information	3.73
Guidance and counselling in general	3.63
Teachers	3.59
Youth workers	3.59
Information centers for youth	3.57
Sports coaches	3.32

■ Importance of Support Mechanisms

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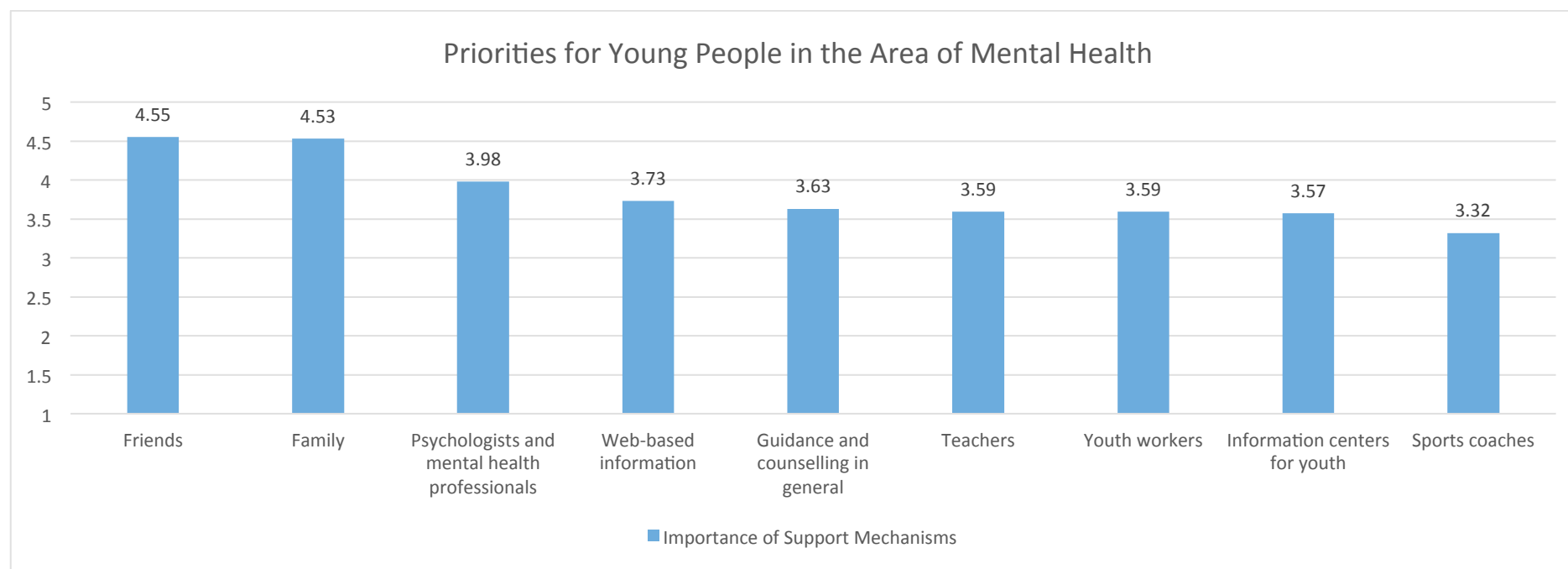
[12] The item read: "How important are the following sources of support to you when you are trying to overcome stressful situations (e.g. having relationship trouble, feeling stressed or depressed)?"

The graph below well illustrates the aforementioned fact that there is a large difference for young people in talking to a friend or a family member about their trouble, and in talking to people outside of this inner circle.

Graph 28: The most important support mechanisms for supporting mental health in young people; percentages.

Priorities for Young People in the Area of Mental Health
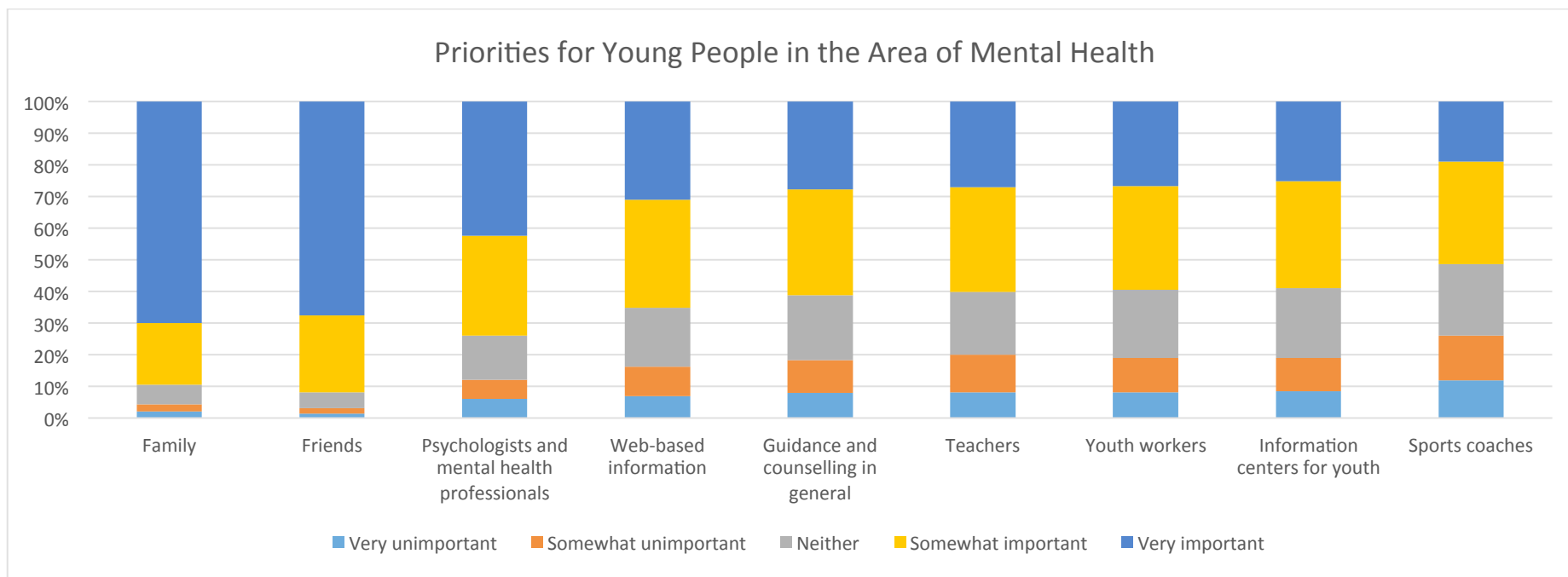
Interesting Fact

Further analyses show, that in line with general gender perceptions, the females are more likely to consider important even the mechanisms which are outside of the inner circle of family and friends; however, this does not apply to sports coaches, in which case the males are more likely to consider them important, than the females.

3.5 What would enable young people to navigate their way through today's information overload?

We see an interesting trend of considering the internet sources as important as family by the young people.[13] At the same time, certain reflectivity of this view can be seen in putting the social networks on the last place in importance of the mechanisms they consider when battling with information overload. It is also important, that today´s youth considers the internet sources more important than the traditional mass media, such as the newspapers, TV, or radio. All of this points to the direction of highly necessary information and ICT literacy to get high on youth policy agenda.

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[13] The item read: „ Could you tell us how important are the following sources to you when you are trying to find truthful information (e.g. on everyday events, on upcoming elections, on EU affairs, etc.)?"

Graph 29: The most important support mechanisms for supporting information management in young people; average scores.
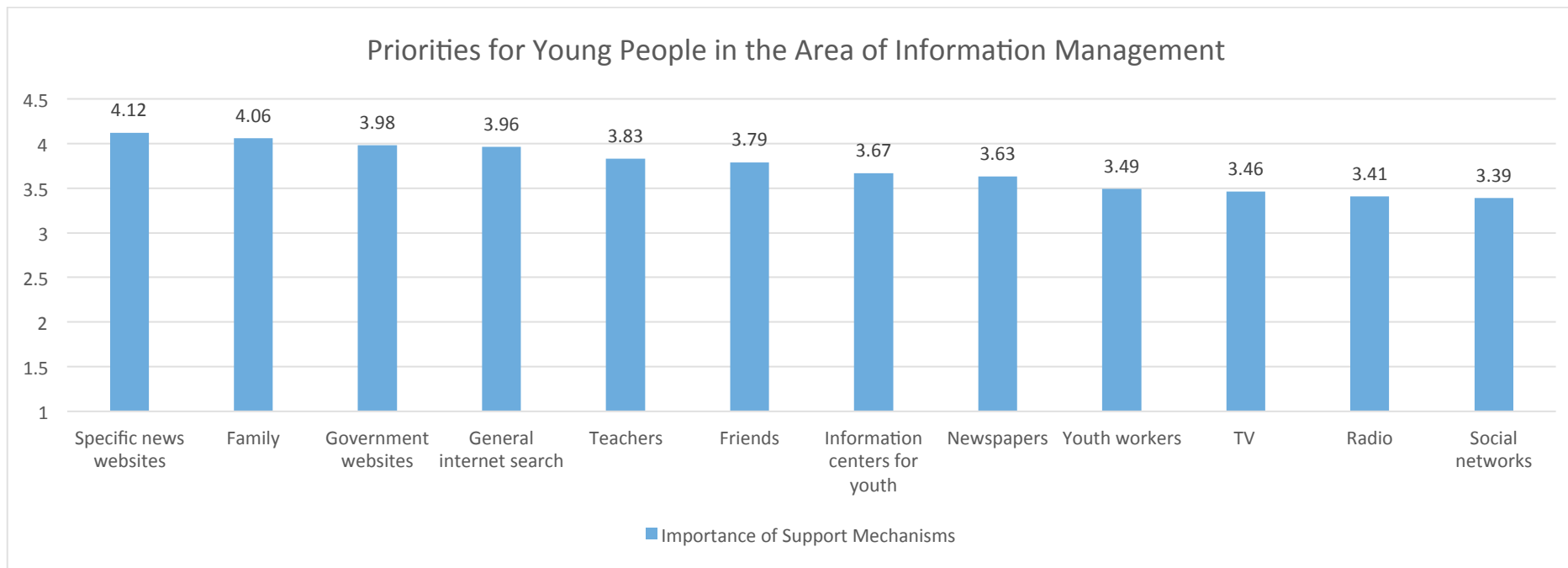
The graph below shows more in detail, that the traditional mass media are considered rather unimportant by the young people today, in comparison to the internet sources. Notably, even teachers are in this respect very much behind the internet-based sources of information.

Graph 30: The most important support mechanisms for supporting information management in young people; percentages.

Priorities for Young People in the Area of Information Management
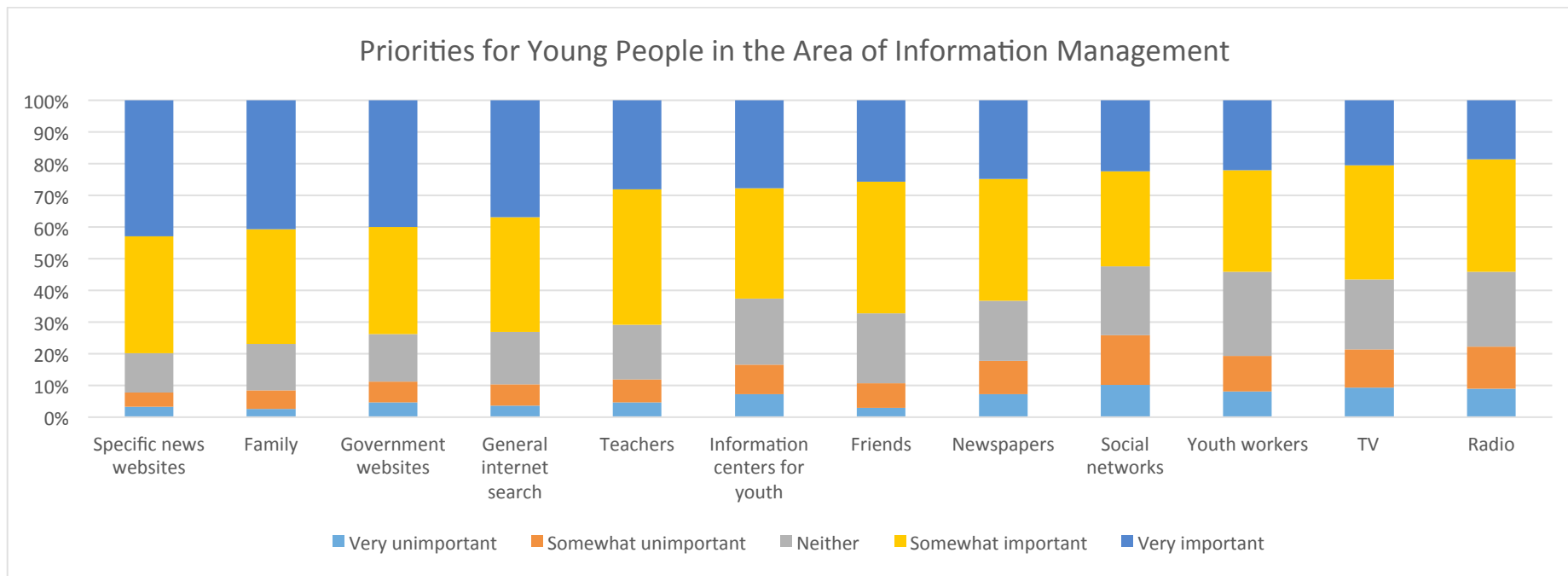
Interesting Fact

As is visible from the graph below, females tend to be more trusting in the social networks as a source of information. This would suggest that either females are using social networks more in terms of following various news sources, or they are more in danger of manipulation, especially in light of the recent public-opinion-influencing actions of some private companies in case of public elections in various countries.

Graph 31: Social networks by gender; percentages.
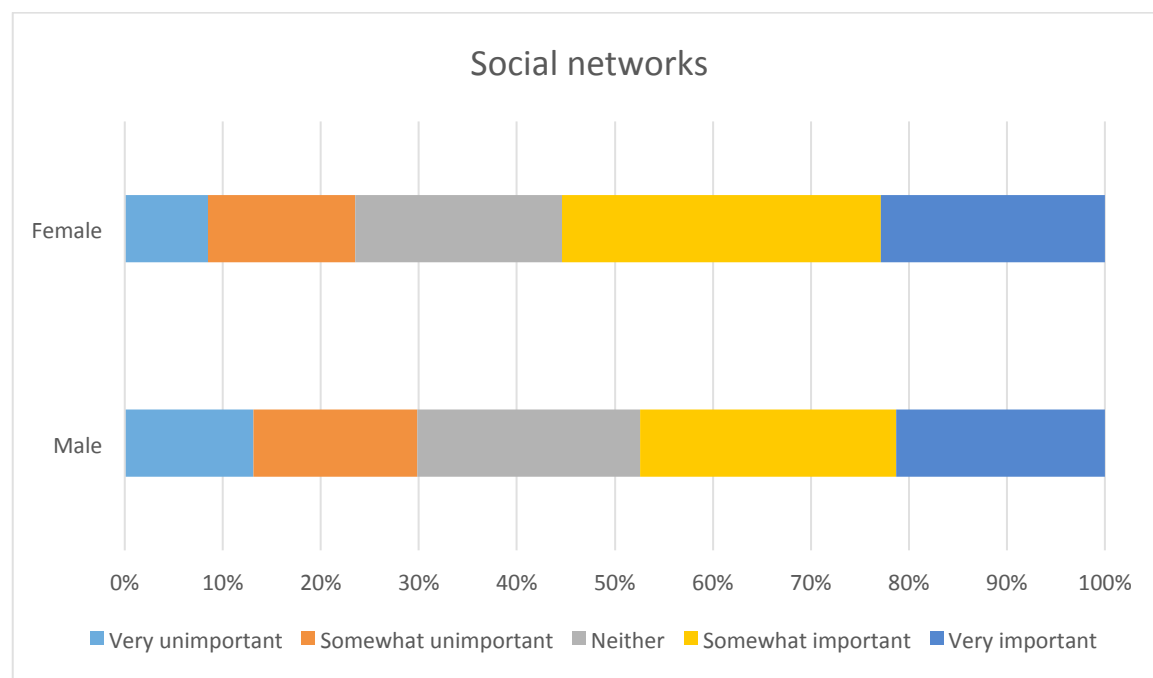
3.6 What would enable young people to have a respectful and non-violent dialogue with those who hold very different opinions from them?

The inner circle of friends and family is, once again, seen as prominent, when talking of learning specific soft skills, such as communicating respectfully and in a non-violent way. Interestingly and importantly, non-formal learning opportunities are even by the young people themselves considered to be a good source of such competences; and it should be further enhanced as such.[14]

Graph 32: The most important support mechanisms for supporting non-violent communication in young people; average scores.

Priorities for Young People in the Area of Non-Violent Communication

Family	Friends	Non-formal learning	Formal education	Online websites	Sports
4.31	4.28	3.99	3.86	3.7	3.55

■ Importance of Support Mechanisms

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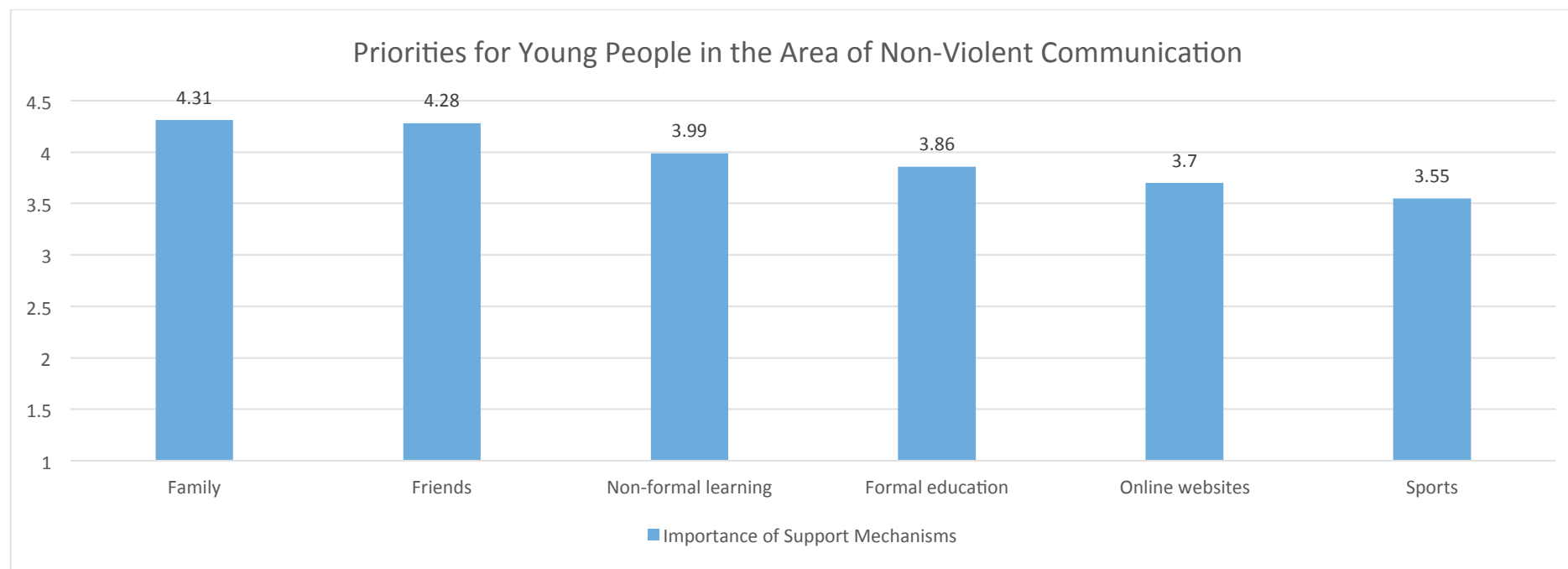
[14] The item read: "How important are the following options when learning how to discuss things peacefully with people who hold very different opinions (e.g. on upcoming elections, on EU affairs, etc.)?"

Again, the detailed graph below provides deeper insight into the profound difference between the inner circle of the young person (family and friends), and the outside world supporting mechanisms.

Graph 33: The most important support mechanisms for supporting non-violent communication in young people; percentages.

Priorities for Young People in the Area of Non-Violent Communication

Structured Dialogue Cycle VI Quantitative Data Analyses
Authors: Dan Moxon and Ondrej Barta from The Pool of European Youth Researchers
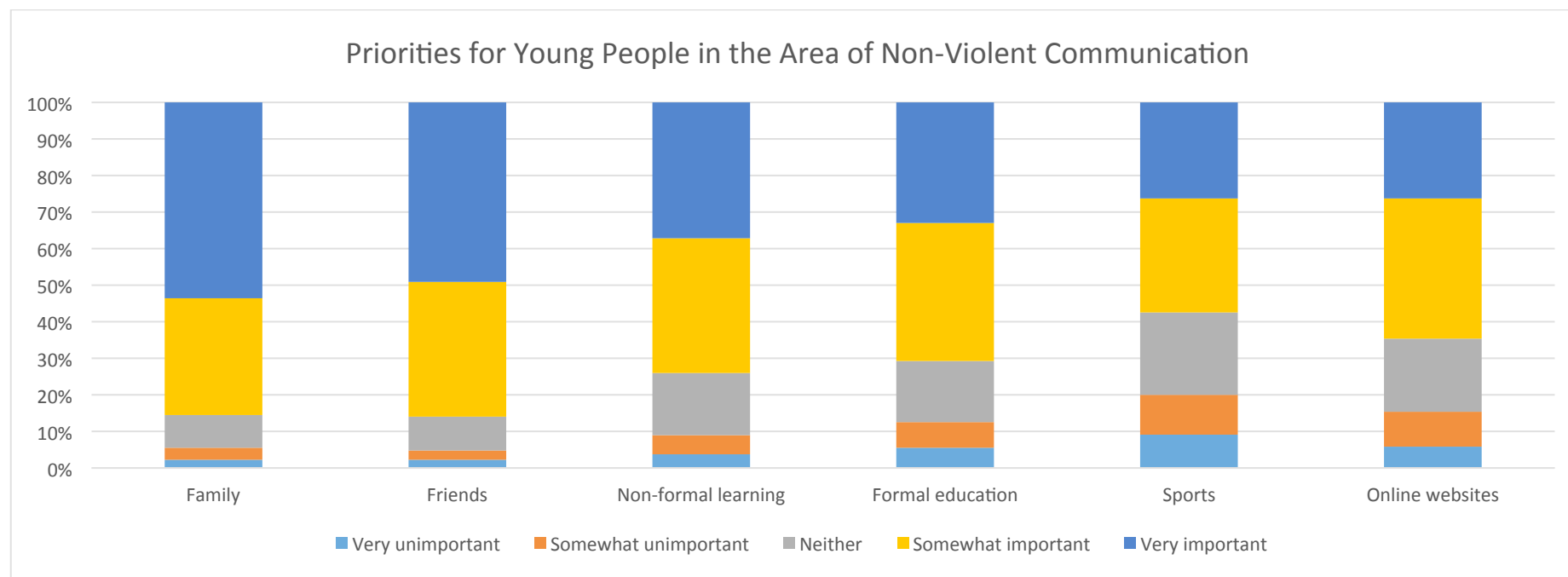
Interesting Fact

As is visible from the graph below, Young People with Minority Backgrounds (financial aspects excluded) seem to be even more in favour of non-formal learning as a source of their ability to have a non-violent communication with people holding different positions, than the majority youth population. Inclusive approach of the non-formal learning sector might be one of the reasons for this result; and non-formal learning should be considered one of the major players in this area.

Graph 34: Non-formal learning by minority background; percentages.
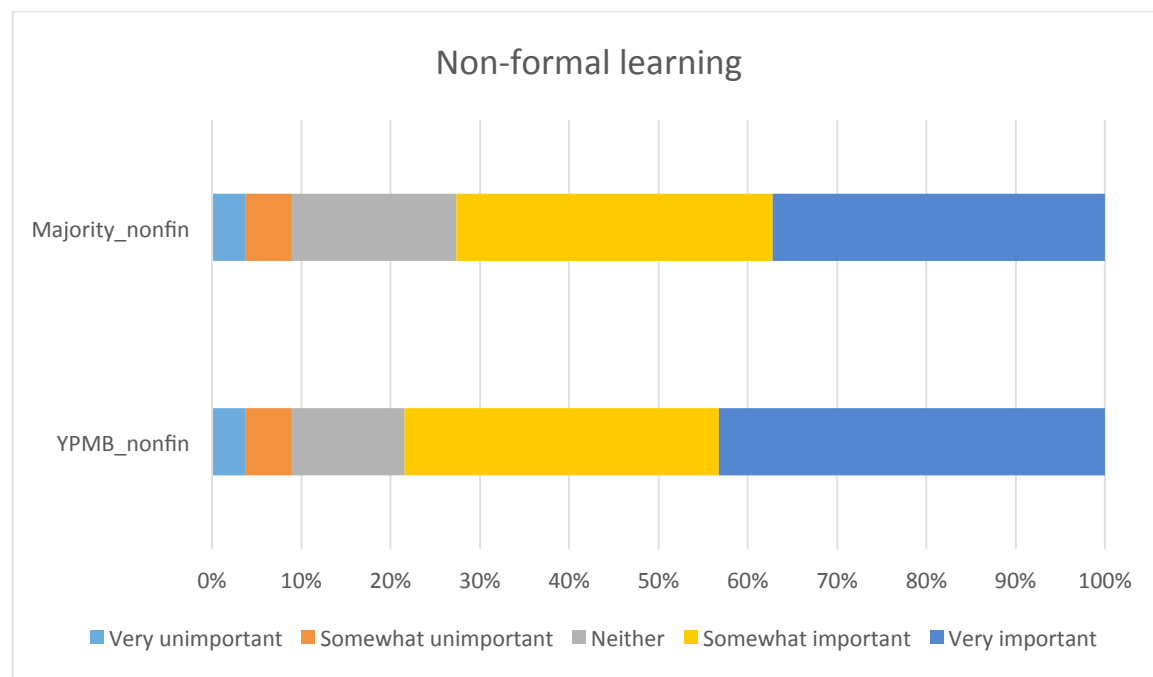
3.7 What needs to change so that more young people fully understand and support the EU and its institutions?

Findings suggest that information on both the general level (principles and rules of operations) and concrete matters (news on decisions and processes) are needed by the young people.[15]

Graph 35: The most important support mechanisms for supporting understanding and support of the EU in young people; average scores.

Priorities for Young People in the Area of Understanding and Support of the EU

Clear information sources on EU principles	Clear information sources on EU functioning	Regular news on outcomes of the EU decisions	Regular news on EU processes
4.2	4.19	4.13	3.88

■ Importance of Support Mechanisms

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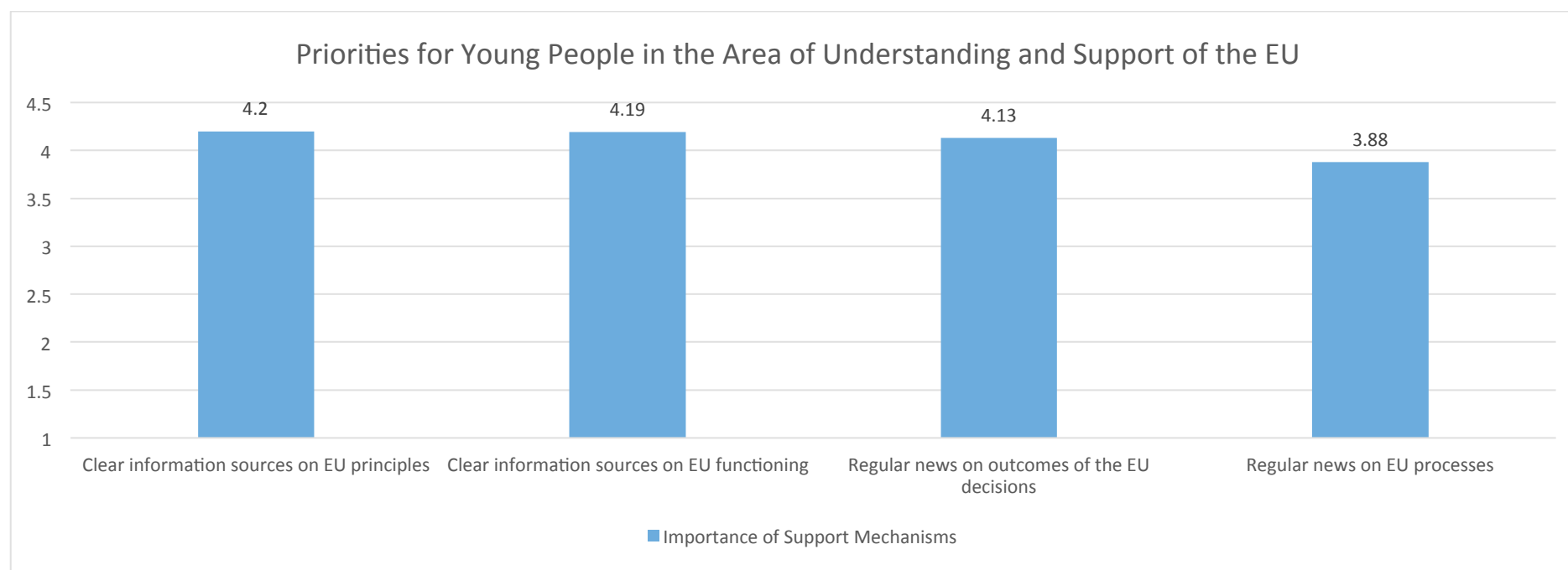
[15] The item read: "How important are the following options to you when trying to get a better understanding of the EU (e.g. institutions of the EU, the overall functioning, current EU affairs, etc.)?"

The detailed graph below shows that information on general principles and rules of operation as well as on decisions of the EU are the most important, with processes of the EU being slightly in the background of the young people´s attention.

Graph 36: The most important support mechanisms for supporting understanding and support of the EU in young people; percentages.

Priorities for Young People in the Area of Understanding and Support of the EU

Interesting Fact

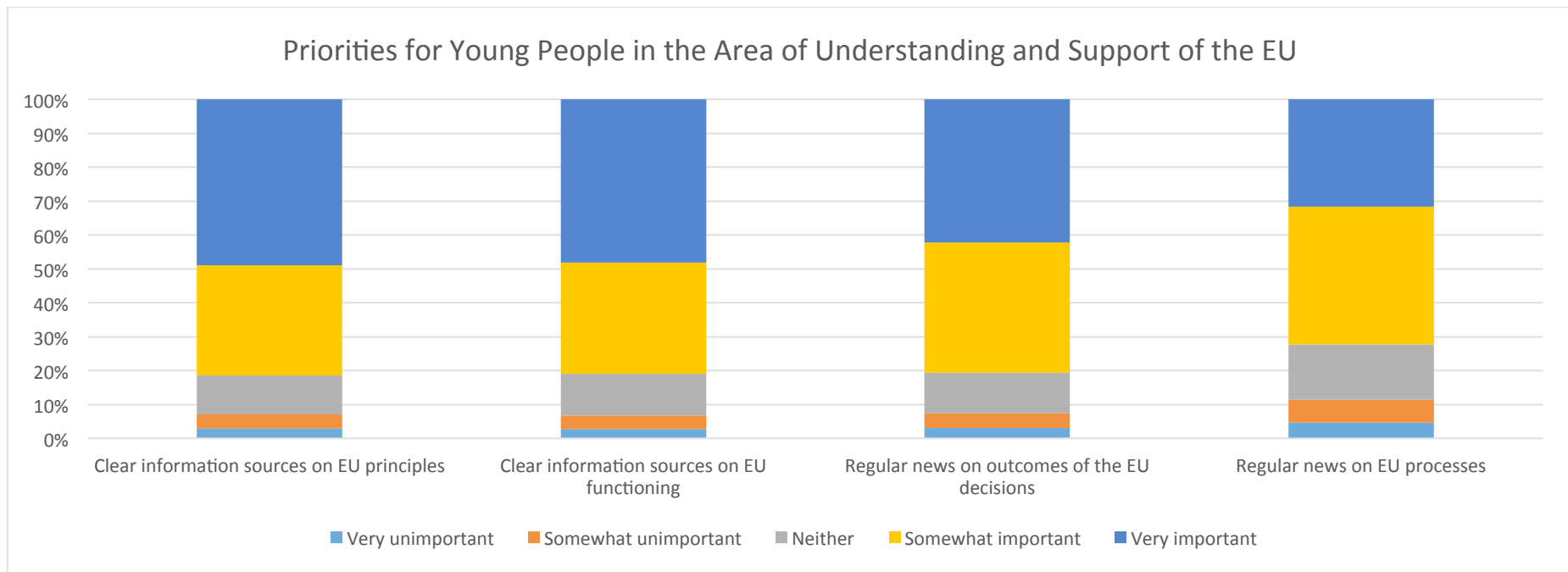More detailed analyses show that the Young People with Minority Backgrounds (financial aspects excluded) consider all of the aforementioned supporting mechanisms to be even more important than the majority youth population. It is important to take this into account, when dealing with the information strategy of the EU, and to include also channels and formats suitable for various minority groups within the EU.

3.8 How could the EU support young migrants who come to the EU countries?

In this respect, young people feel the whole range of the suggested mechanisms is needed in order to support young migrants coming to the EU.[16] It is obvious, that rather high average scores in basic support systems, such as language education, or medical care, mirror the view of the young people to provide the young migrants with the means to become active society members as soon as possible. Noteworthy is the importance the young people put on the non-formal learning and youth work, which in their view comes before other activities connected to leisure time spending, such as sports or cultural life in general.

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[16] The item read: "How important do you think access to the following areas is in supporting the young migrants in the EU (e.g. to help the young migrants to settle down and become part of the community, etc.)?"

Graph 37: The most important support mechanisms for supporting young migrants in the EU; average scores.

Priorities for Young People in the Area of Supporting the Young Migrants in the EU
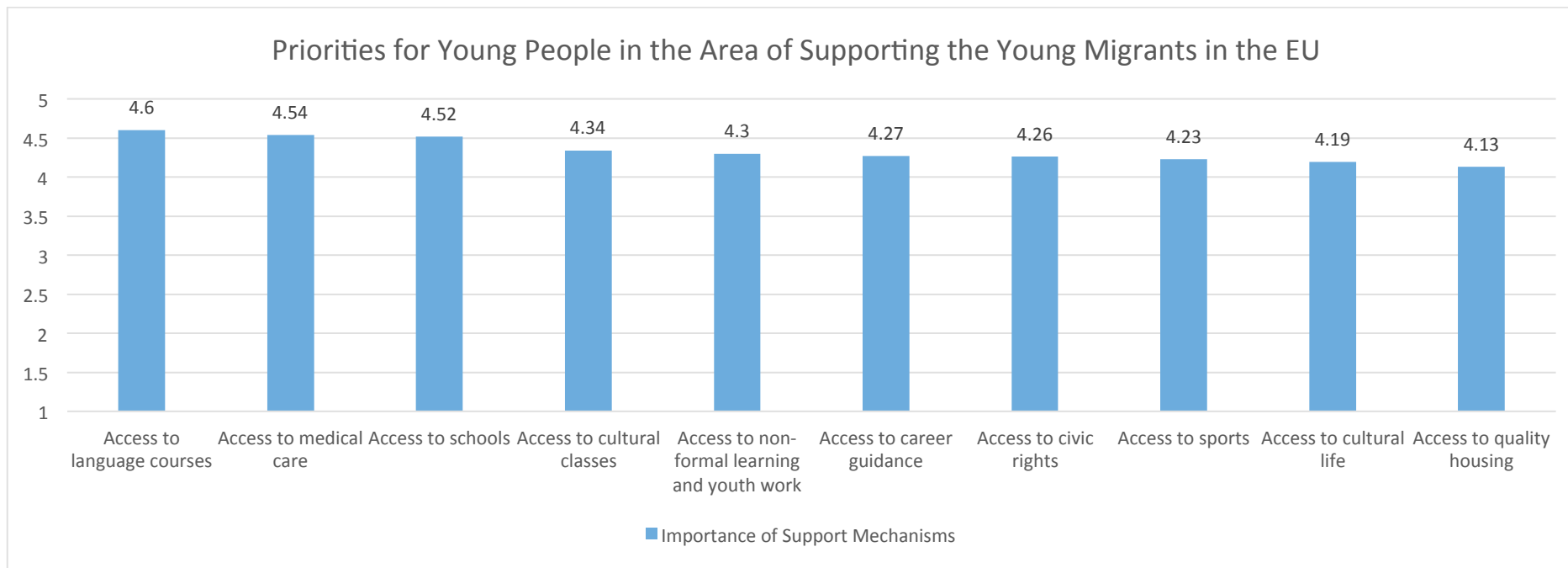
Detailed analysis brings forward the importance the young respondents put on three basic needs of young migrants: language education, access to medical care, and access to schooling. All other support systems are stressed as well but come with a visible distance from the first three.

Graph 38: The most important support mechanisms for supporting young migrants in the EU; percentages.
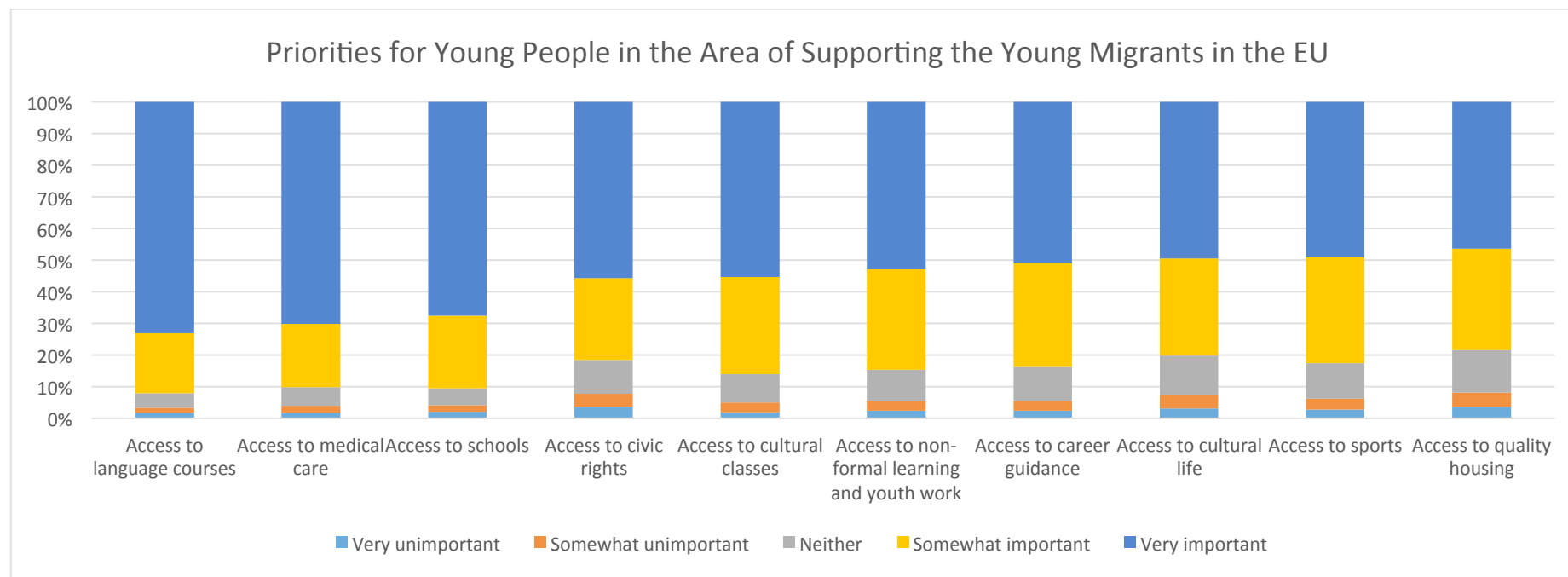
Interesting Fact

Interestingly, there are no fundamental differences when it comes to gender or minority backgrounds; age group analysis, however, shows, that in almost all cases there is a correlation between the growing age and growing support for the migrant-related mechanisms. In other words, the older the respondents, the more they would support the given migrant-related mechanisms. This phenomenon would be better explored in a migrant-focused study on young populations across Europe.

3.9 What would enable young women and girls and women to overcome discrimination and inequality?

3.10 What can be done to enable young people from marginalized backgrounds to fully participate in society?

Inclusion has been one of the topics of the national consultations, namely focusing on young girls and women and generally on marginalized communities.[17] General analysis shown in the graph below suggests that the young people believe more stress should be put on the topic of gender equality mainly in schools, with law changes where appropriate, and an attention from the non-formal learning sector as well. At the same time, average scores are rather similar for all support mechanisms, which suggests that the young people would welcome a wide variety of support in this matter.

Graph 39: The most important support mechanisms for combating discrimination; average scores.

Priorities for Young People in Combating Discrimination

- Formal education: 4.48
- Laws: 4.3
- Non-formal learning: 4.22
- Accessible information on discrimination: 4.18
- Volunteering: 4.16
- Career guidance: 4.1

■ Importance of Support Mechanisms

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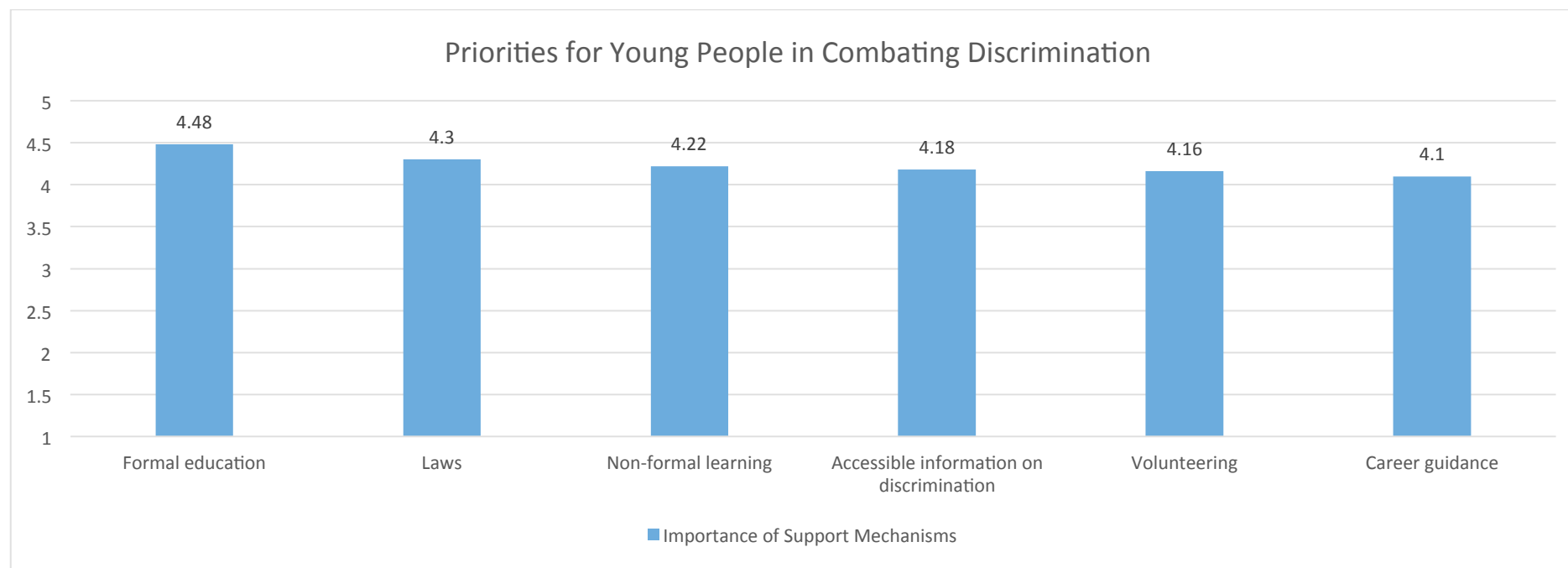
[17] The item read: „ How important do you think the following steps are in order to combat discrimination (e.g. to help the young girls and women to be able to fully participate in labour market, to enable marginalized groups to participate in community life, etc.)?"

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Authors: Dan Moxon and Ondrej Barta from The Pool of European Youth Researchers

Detailed analysis in the graph below confirm the finding stated above, that the young people´s preferences in this area are more towards a wider palette of support mechanisms, than towards any particular set; with a preference on schooling, support in laws, and non-formal learning.

Graph 40: The most important support mechanisms for combating discrimination; percentages.

Priorities for Young People in Combating Discrimination

Structured Dialogue Cycle VI Quantitative Data Analyses
Authors: Dan Moxon and Ondrej Barta from The Pool of European Youth Researchers
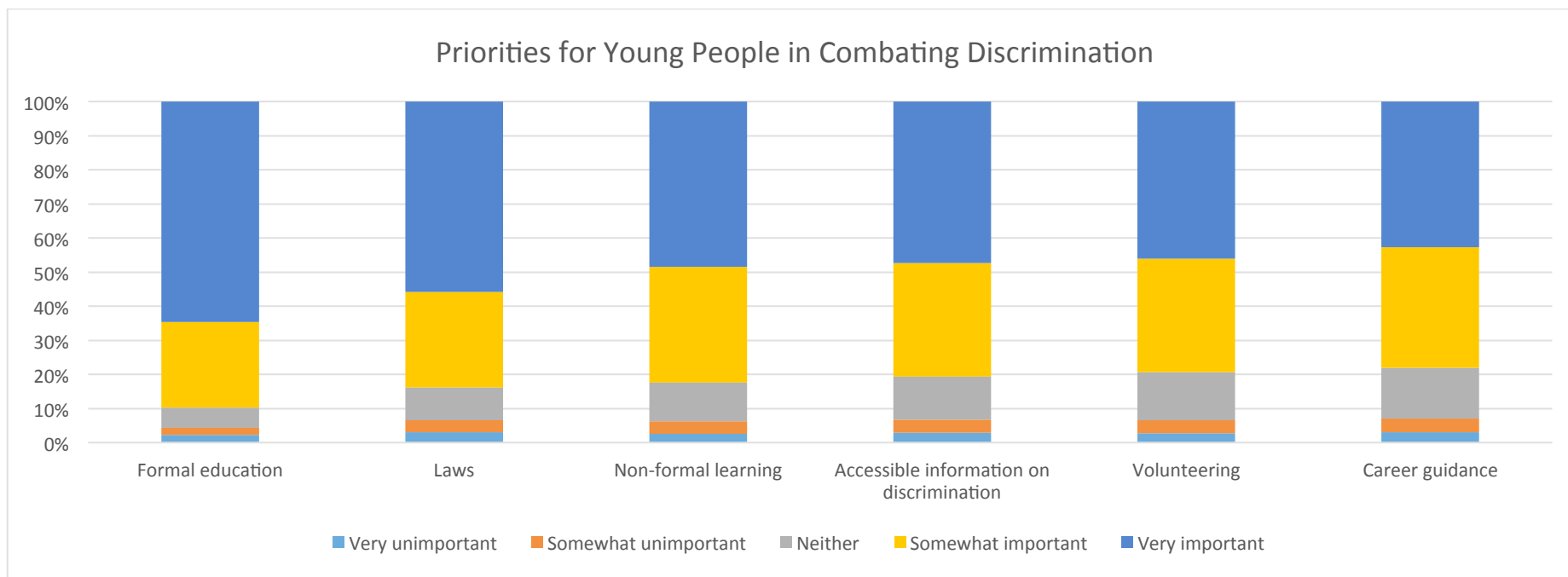
Interesting Fact

The group of "Young People with Minority Backgrounds (financial aspects excluded)" indicates systematically more importance in case of all stated support mechanisms to battle discrimination and inequality; this might suggest, that this topic is more important to this particular group than to the young people from majority society. If this is the case, it should be one of the problems tackled in relation to improving the discrimination in society: to ensure the discrimination is seen as an important issue to the majority society.

Graph 41: The most important support mechanisms for combating discrimination; average scores.

Priorities for Young People in Combating Discrimination
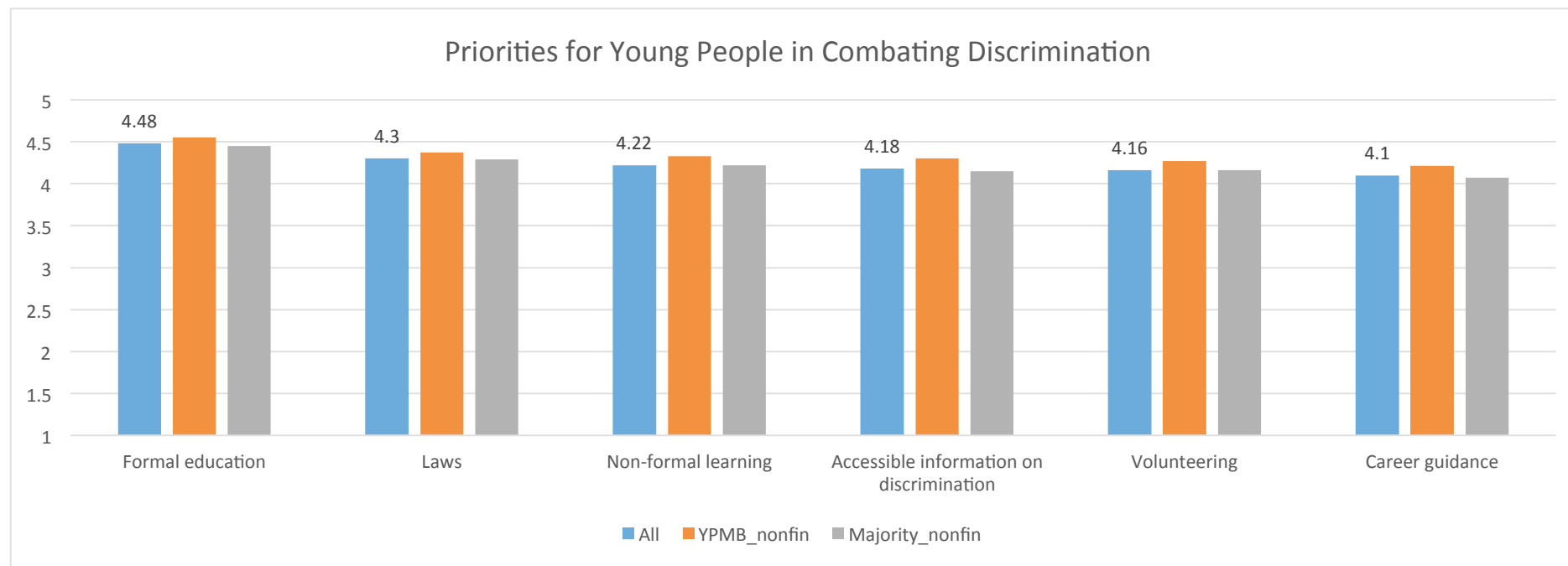
3.11 What needs to change to ensure young people living in rural areas are provided with the similar opportunities to young people in city areas?

3.12 What needs to change in order to make rural areas more attractive for young people?

Rural areas and their further development have been one of the topics of the national consultations[18]. The average scores in the graph below suggest that the young people see the public transportation, health care, and quality jobs to be the most important issues in terms of improving the attractiveness of the rural areas. This finding, connected to the fact that "better shopping opportunities" came to be the least preferred priority among young people, suggests that the young people have a rather reasonable stance towards rural areas: they would not like them to become cities, they would like them to have the basic infrastructure, so that the life in such areas does not differ in basic standards from the life in urban places.

Graph 42: The most important support mechanisms for increasing attractivity of the rural areas to young people; average scores.

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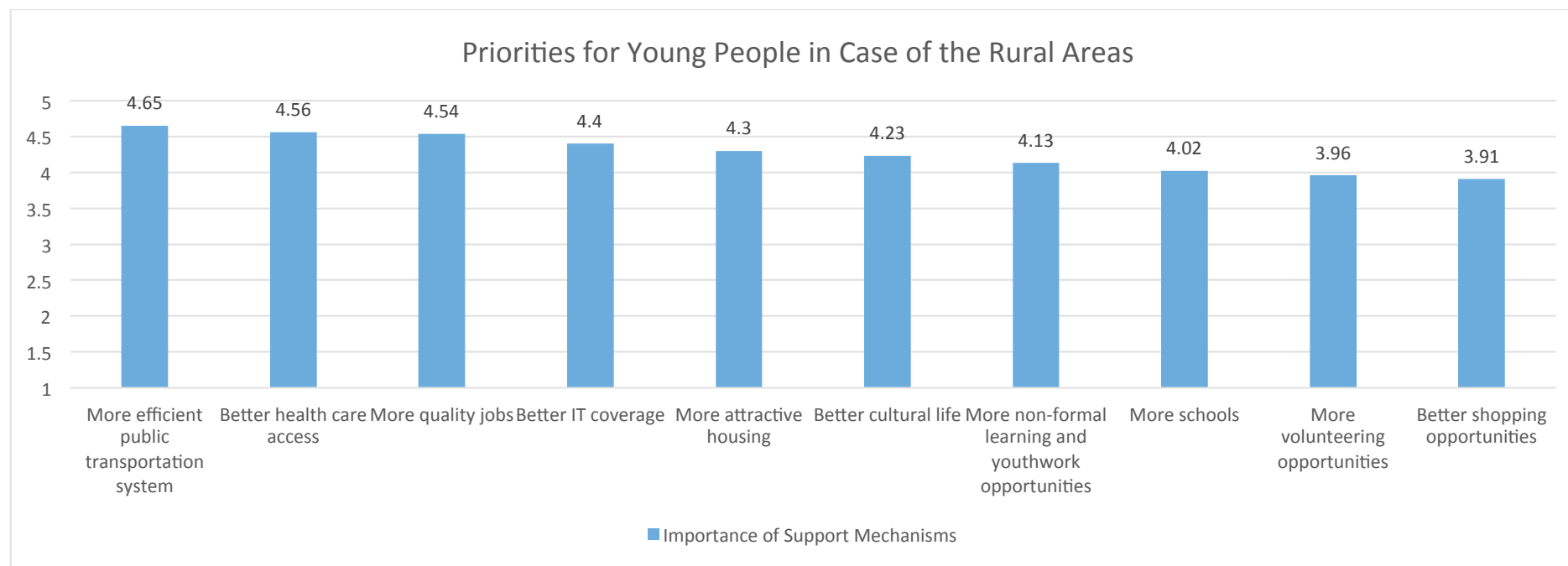
[18] The item read: "How important do you think the following opportunities are in order to make rural areas more attractive?

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Authors: Dan Moxon and Ondrej Barta from The Pool of European Youth Researchers

The detailed analysis in the graph below confirms the findings above: there is a rather strict distinction between the first three basic infrastructure-related points, and other priorities. The young people respect the unique nature of the rural places, but wish for the basic standards to become higher.

Graph 43: The most important support mechanisms for increasing attractivity of the rural areas to young people; percentages.
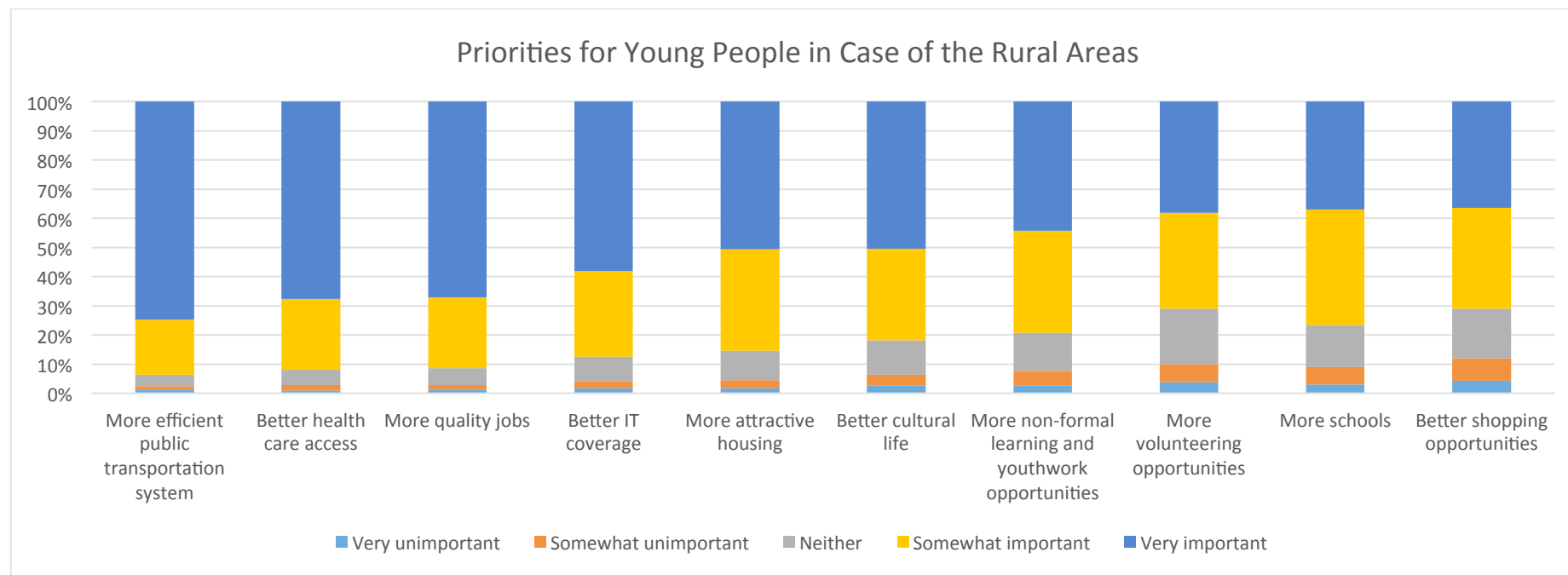
Interesting Fact

There are differences among age groups when it comes to the importance of the support mechanisms for the rural areas development. Younger respondents substantially more prefer increase in school numbers in the rural areas, as well as more shopping opportunities, and health care system development. Older respondents are more substantially missing non-formal learning opportunities, public transport, or IT coverage.

3.13 What role can young people play in the environmental and sustainable development agenda and how can this be enabled?
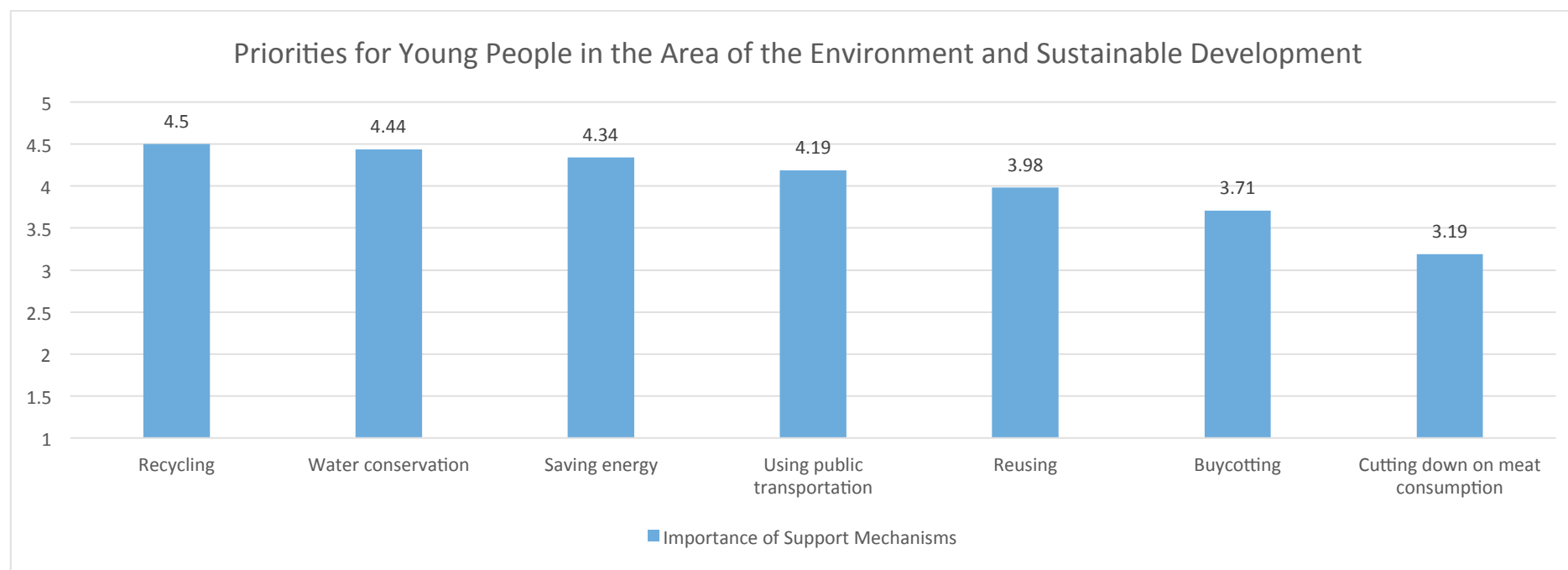
Environmental issues were part of the survey with young people[19]. The findings presented in the graph below suggest that the young people consider it important to stick to the most widely spread means of sustainable development: recycling, water conservation, and energy saving. On the other hand, relatively new forms of environmental actions, such as reusing, boycotting, or cutting down on meat consumption, seem to be of considerably lower interest to young people.

Graph 44: The most important support mechanisms for the environmental and sustainable development agenda; average scores.

Priorities for Young People in the Area of the Environment and Sustainable Development

- Recycling: 4.5
- Water conservation: 4.44
- Saving energy: 4.34
- Using public transportation: 4.19
- Reusing: 3.98
- Buycotting: 3.71
- Cutting down on meat consumption: 3.19

■ Importance of Support Mechanisms

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[19] The item read: „ How important are the following environment-related activities to you personally?"

The graph below summarizes a more detailed analysis of the findings on environmental and sustainable development area. Two breaking points are visible, creating three categories of mechanisms: the most important for the young people are recycling and water conservation; the second group consists of energy saving, using the public transportation, and reusing; and the third, least favoured group includes boycotting and cutting down on meat consumption. These results lead to a question of information available to the young people, since clear contradictions can be found: in case water conservation is in the most important group, how come cutting down on meat consumption is in the least important? It might be the case that some links (e.g. between the animal production and water waste) might not be clear to the young people. The fact that the first group (the most important mechanisms) consist only of the notorious measures taken all over the world, there also is a question of the general level of information on what boycotting, for instance, stands for.

Graph 45: The most important support mechanisms for the environmental and sustainable development agenda; percentages.

Priorities for Young People in the Area of the Environment and Sustainable Development
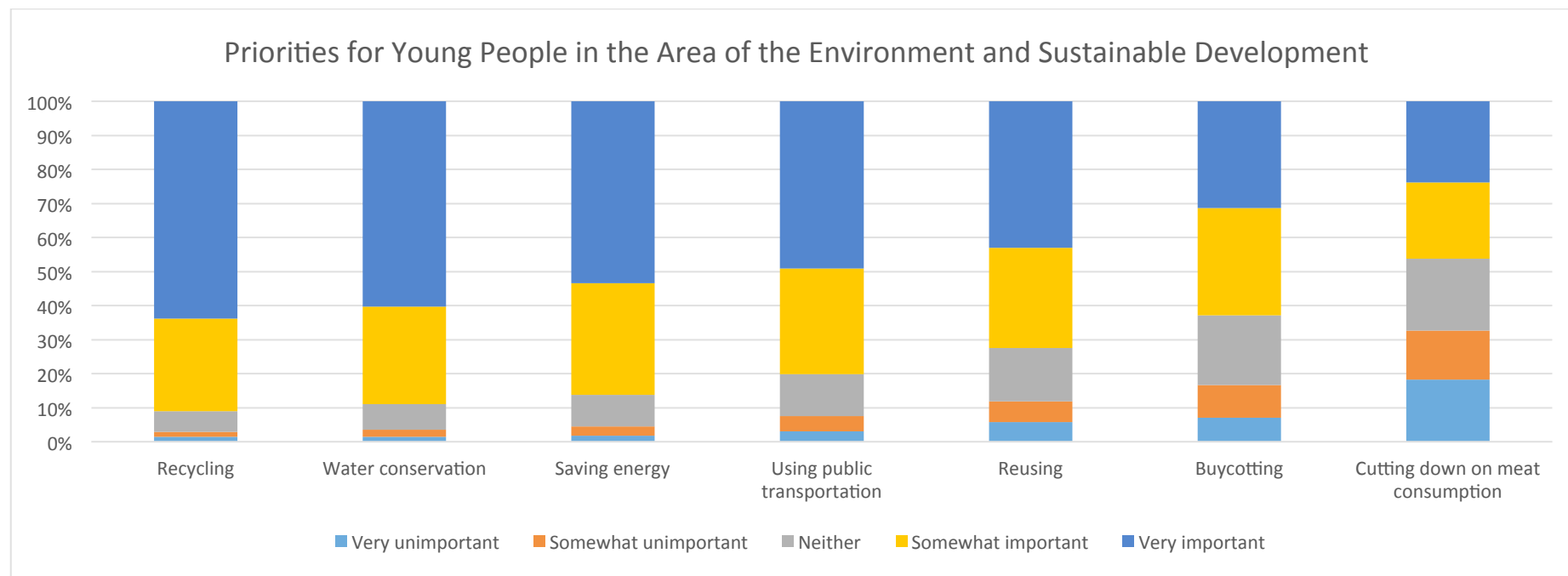
Interesting Fact

Interestingly, the older age groups consider almost all of the aforementioned mechanisms of sustainable development more important than their younger counterparts. And there are also gender differences in importance of sustainable development mechanism, with females exhibiting a tendency to be more in favour of the various mechanisms, than their male counterparts; this tendency is systematic and includes even the least favoured option of cutting down on meat consumption.

3.14 How can European programmes dedicated to youth and organised youth activities become accessible to a wider and more diverse range of young people?

European youth programmes and their further development were discussed in surveys with the young people[20]. In this case, interesting projects linked to the labour market usefulness and supported through easily accessible information and sufficient financial help seem to be the most important aspects to the young people. Surprisingly, support from the parents came to be the least important of all.

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[20] The item read: "How important is the following to you in order to enable you to participate in the EU youth projects?"

Graph 46: The most important support mechanisms for the European youth programmes; average scores.

Priorities for Young People in the Area of the European Youth Programmes

Category	Score
Interesting project topics	4.5
Projects helping to rise employability	4.47
Easily accessible information on the projects	4.45
Financial help	4.43
Projects directly linked to actual community topics	4.21
Official excuse from the formal education during the project	4.16
Support for young families	4.05
Group applications	4.04
Support from parents	3.89

■ Importance of Support Mechanisms

The detailed analysis below shows that the first four options are the most important to the young people, with the rest coming in as least important, but with none of the options being marked as completely irrelevant to the young people.

Graph 47: The most important support mechanisms for the European youth programmes; percentages.

Priorities for Young People in the Area of the European Youth Programmes
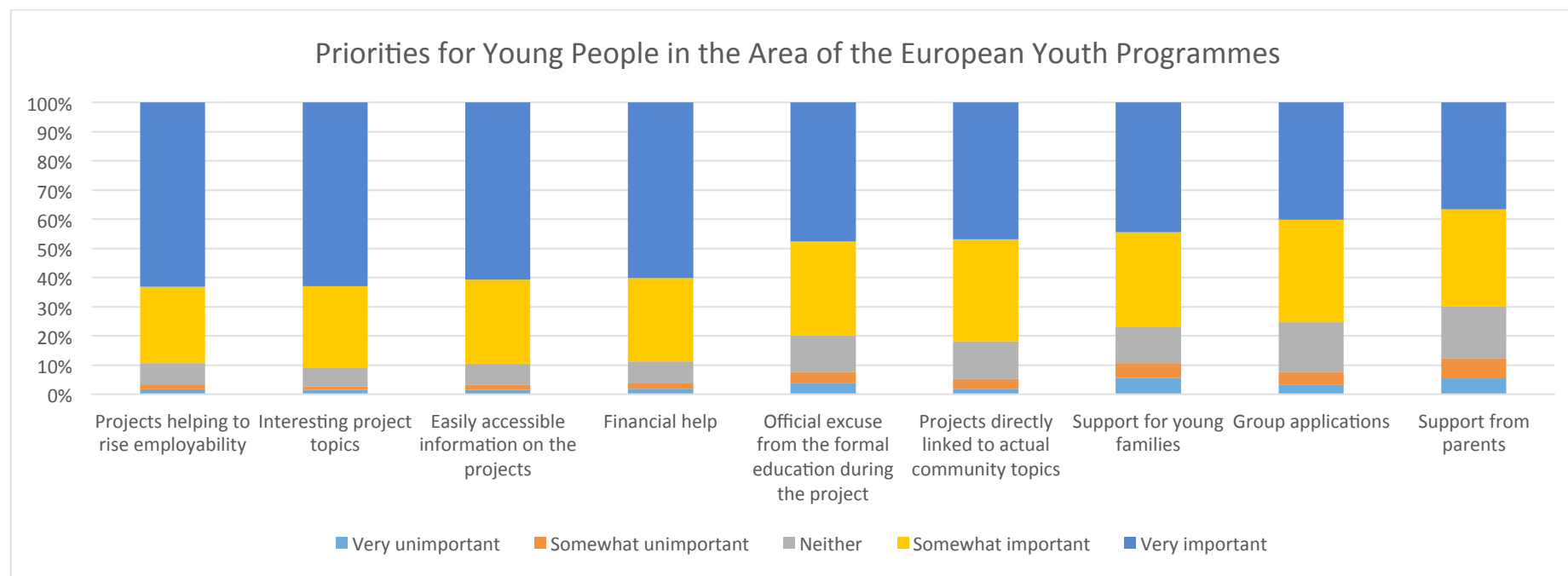
Interesting Fact

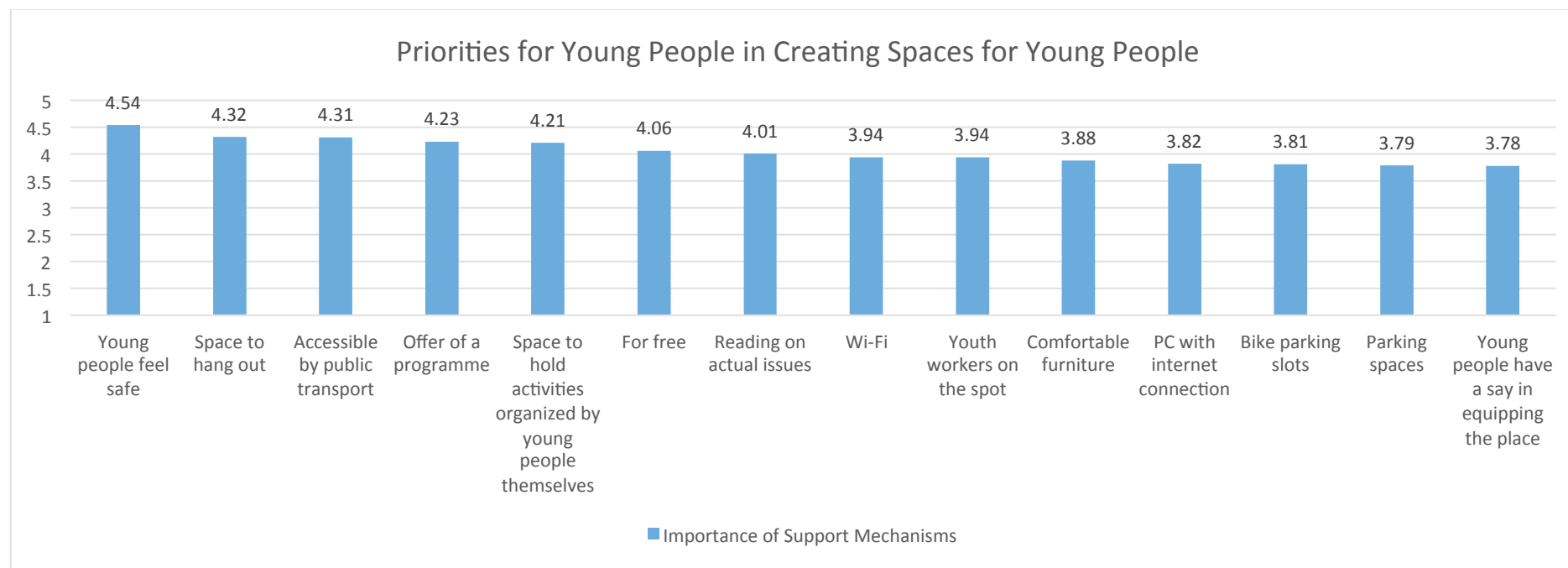Parental support is, as expected, more important to the younger respondents, than to the older ones, and so is the case for the group applications. On the other hand, the financial help is more important to the older participants, than to their younger counterparts.

3.15 What sort of spaces do young people need access to, in order to support their personal, cultural and political development?

Spaces for young people were one of the topics of the consultation process[21]. The absolutely most important quality of a place where young people like spending their free time is for the young people to feel safe. This can, and very likely does, hold many meanings, but it is clearly ahead of any other priorities. Such spaces should also provide a chance to hang out with friends and should be accessible by the public transport. ICT related issues, like a presence of a Wi-Fi or a computer are not among the top priorities, and so are not bike or car parking spaces.

Graph 48: The most important support mechanisms for creating spaces for young people; average scores.

Priorities for Young People in Creating Spaces for Young People

Young people feel safe	Space to hang out	Accessible by public transport	Offer of a programme	Space to hold activities organized by young people themselves	For free	Reading on actual issues	Wi-Fi	Youth workers on the spot	Comfortable furniture	PC with internet connection	Bike parking slots	Parking spaces	Young people have a say in equipping the place
4.54	4.32	4.31	4.23	4.21	4.06	4.01	3.94	3.94	3.88	3.82	3.81	3.79	3.78

■ Importance of Support Mechanisms

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[21] The item read: "How important is the following to you when it comes to finding a place where you feel fine and you are developing yourself at the same time?"

The detailed analysis in the graph below even more stresses the importance the young people put on "feeling safe" – almost 70% of the respondents pointed this as "very important" to them. It also shows that there are several other important aspects, such as the place for hanging out with friends, accessibility by the public transport, programme offer, or the chance to organize programme by themselves.

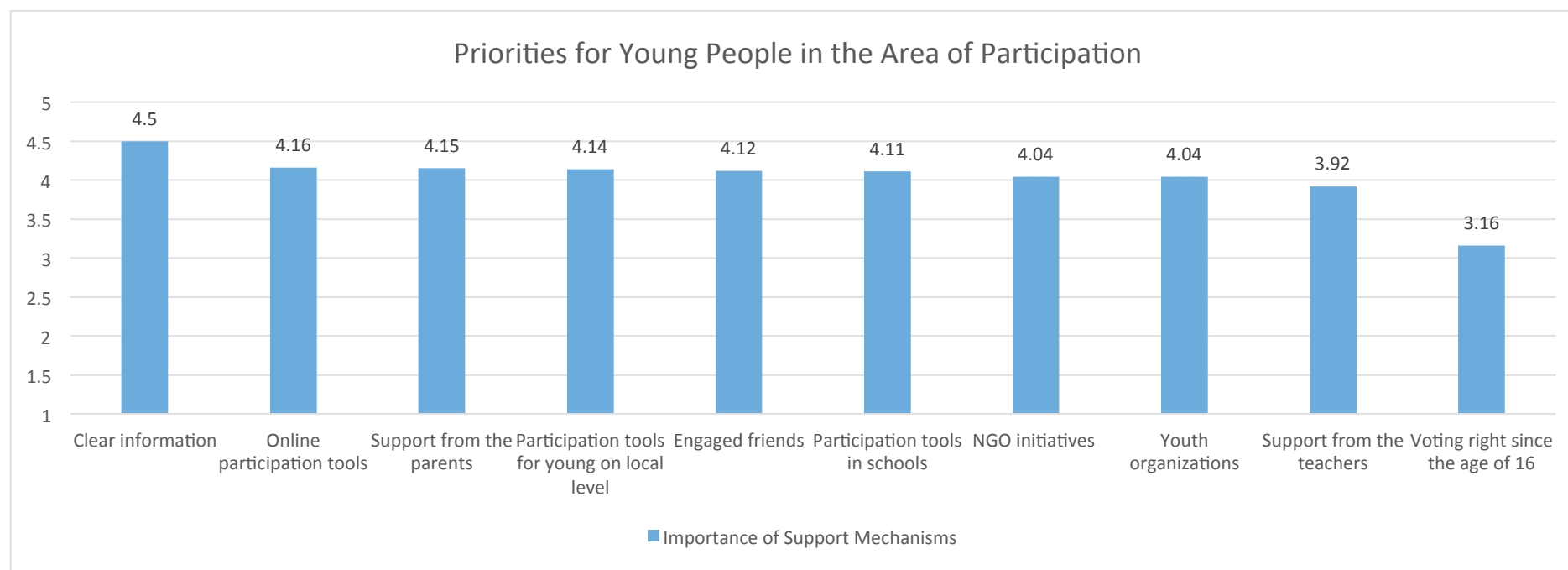**Graph 49:** The most important support mechanisms for creating spaces for young people; percentages.
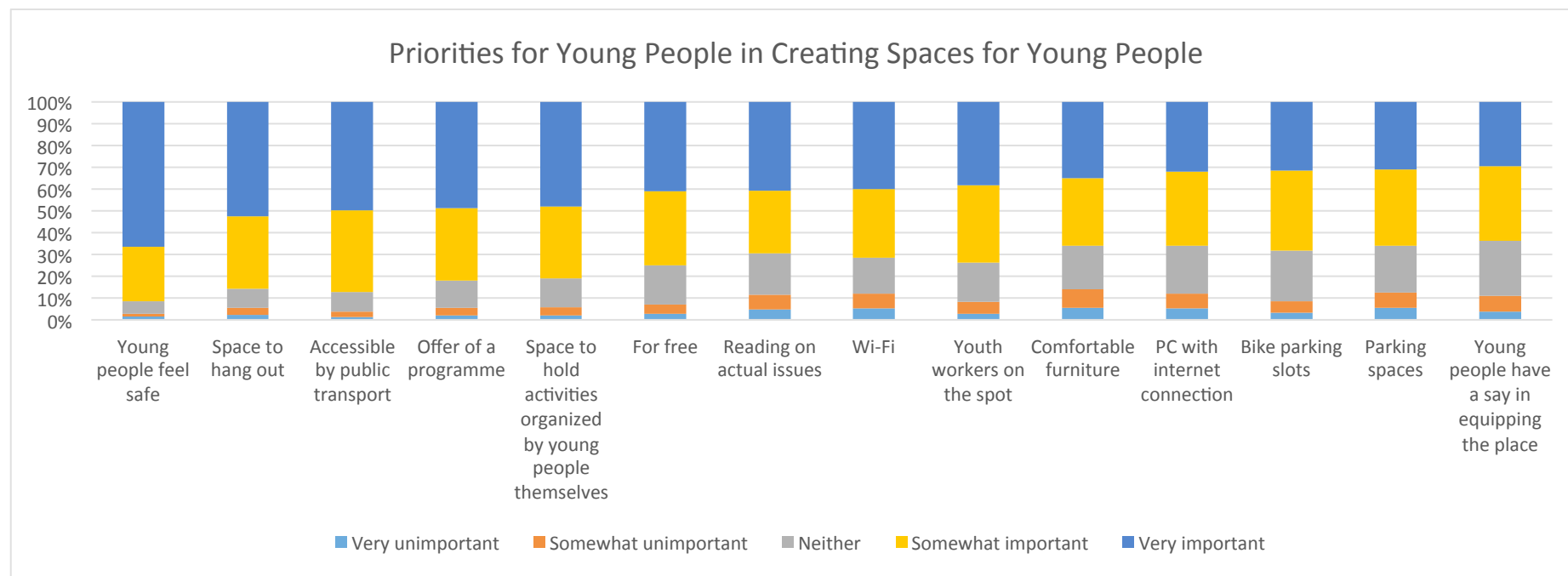
3.16 What opportunities and tools do young people need to influence democratic and societal decision making as part of their everyday lives?

Active participation on social and societal issues has been discussed with young people during the consultations as well[22]. There is an aspect that young people stress as by far the most important to them in this area, and that is the availability to the clear information. This seems to take priority in young people. On the other hand, the issue of having the voting right from the age of 16, as is the case in some European countries, has been rated rather low, coming in last in the list of priorities, and bringing forward a considerably lower average score than the other suggested supporting mechanisms.
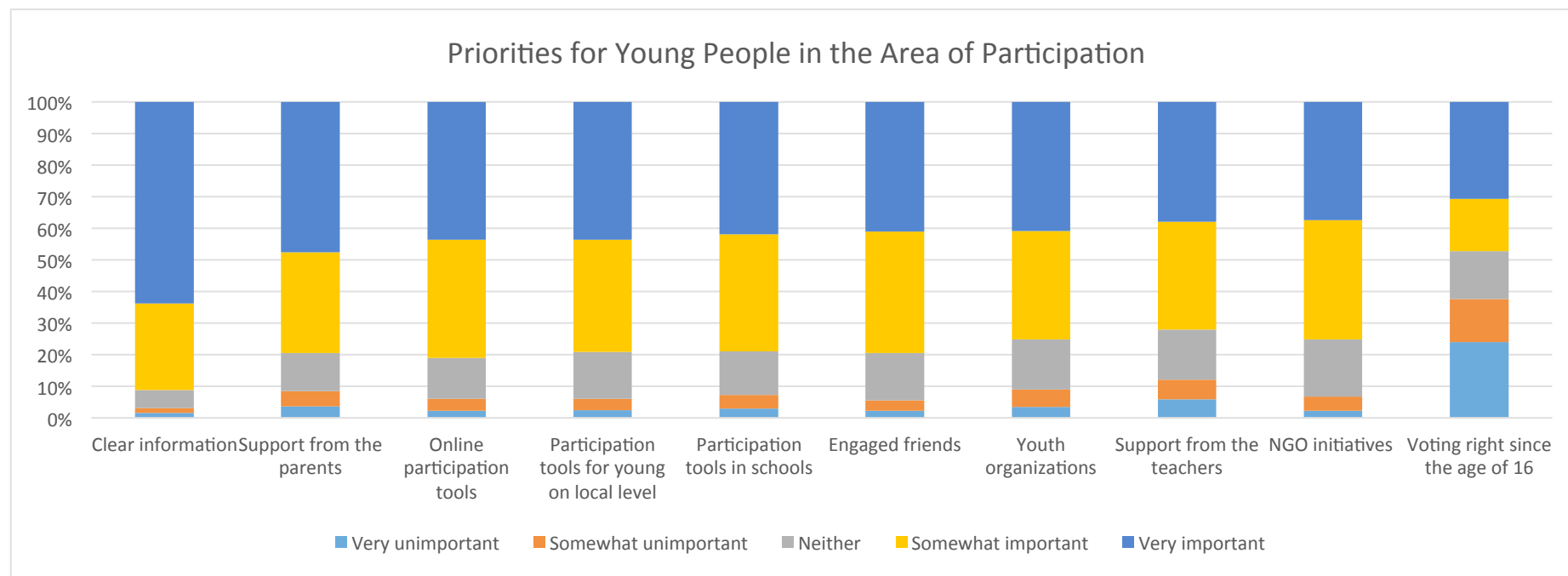
Graph 50: The most important support mechanisms for enhancing participation of young people; average scores.

Priorities for Young People in the Area of Participation

- Clear information: 4.5
- Online participation tools: 4.16
- Support from the parents: 4.15
- Participation tools for young on local level: 4.14
- Engaged friends: 4.12
- Participation tools in schools: 4.11
- NGO initiatives: 4.04
- Youth organizations: 4.04
- Support from the teachers: 3.92
- Voting right since the age of 16: 3.16

■ Importance of Support Mechanisms

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[22] The item read: "How important is the following to you when it comes to engaging in the public issues (e.g. local politics, general decision making, etc.)?"

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The detailed analysis in the graph below supports the conclusions of the first analysis above: more than 60% of the young people surveyed consider it to be "very important" to them. It also shows, as outlined above, that the voting right at the age of 16 is by far the most problematic and polarized issue, with over 20% (sic!) of the respondents stating that this is "very unimportant" to them, in opposition to 30% who consider this to be "very important".

Graph 51: The most important support mechanisms for enhancing participation of young people; percentages.

Structured Dialogue Cycle VI Quantitative Data Analyses
Authors: Dan Moxon and Ondrej Barta from The Pool of European Youth Researchers

Interesting Fact

Interestingly, but not surprisingly, the very controversial topic of voting right at the age of 16, is highly polarized among age groups, with only about 12% or 30-34-year olds finding this "very important", in comparison to almost 60% or 11-14-year olds; results are summarized in the graph below.

Graph 52: Voting right at the age of 16 by age groups; percentages.
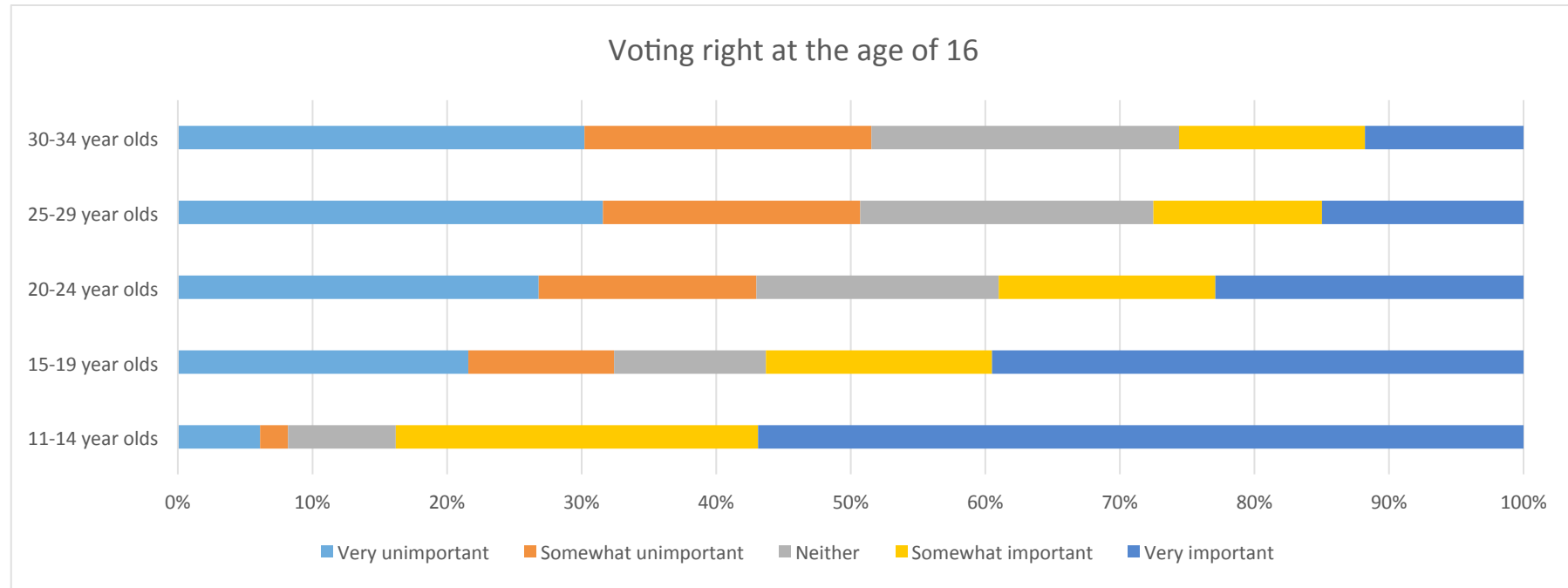
Conclusions

The aforementioned findings indicate that, first and foremost, a rather wide variety of young people responded to the surveys during the national consultation processes of Structured Dialogue, VI Cycle: we see young people under 15, majority of 15-19 year olds, but also young people 20-34 years of age; there are people from various minority backgrounds, starting with religion, ethnicity, sexuality, and health problems, to financial troubles; we see a rather balanced sample in terms of gender, with some respondents even claiming other gender than the most used in Western societies (males and females). All in all, a wide variety of countries came together to create a data corpus of several tens of thousands of respondents.

It is clear that young people are able to contribute to the discussion on the topics that concern them, with younger cohorts expressing their opinions in less profound terms (lower scores on scales) than their older counterparts. It is also visible, that while there may be instances in which different age groups of young people express diverse standpoints, in the majority of issues, all of the young people stand united.

What also becomes visible in the analyses, is the cross-sectoral nature of the issues that affect and relate to young people. Many times, the most important mechanism the young people see in terms of support or a better solution, or a development, of a given issue in the future, is schooling, their own families, or other general public systems (health care, public transport, etc.). This strongly relates to the ongoing discussion on cross-sectoral cooperation of the youth sector, and youth policy in particular, with other sectors, as well as with the group of young people to be recognized and treated as a specific target groups by the national and international policies in general.

There are also some controversial issues, which can be seen in the survey findings: rather low support for voting at the age of 16 or for cutting down on meat consumption among young people, to name just the two. These topics are not without response among young people, but the findings of the survey show that there is definitely no wide consensus on their importance.