

SURVEY

ALBANIA AND EU YOUTH EXPECTATIONS





At a time when Youth Power is a theme that has permeated the vast majority of activities organized by the EU delegation in Albania in recent years, the “Municipalities for Europe” project, through this survey, aimed at receiving the opinions of young Albanians throughout the country, regarding their level of information about European Union issues, the role of the EU in Albania, the pace of integration and the roles of the main actors, the impact of EU projects on their communities, the role of local institutions as well as the opportunities that Albania’s integration in EU, would bring for their lives and careers.

The questions were prepared by the "Municipalities for Europe" Project team, and the survey was published online via the “Facebook Polls” application. Interested young people had the opportunity to provide answers during the period March-April.

The survey was published on the official website of the "Municipalities for Europe" Project, as well as on the official websites of 45 European Integration Units in 45 municipalities, with a significant geographical reach.

Over 980 young people answered the survey’s questions.



SHQIPËRIA DHE BASHKIMI EVROPIAN

What should young Albanians expect? _____

This online survey was carried out by "Municipalities for Europe", a EU funded project.



SUMMARY

Membership in the European Union remains an unchanging aspiration for young Albanians, who see Europe as the only and non-negotiable destination for their future and their children's future.

In line with recent surveys conducted by local and international organizations and the media, this online survey conducted by "Municipalities for Europe" Project confirms that the vast majority of young people (71%) remain firm in their conviction, that Albania's compass must continue to show Brussels as the only destination for the future of their country.

Among Albanian citizens and especially young people, an increase in awareness has been noticed, when it comes to the functioning of the European Union and its institutions. Despite this, taking into account that a large part of them state that they are only partially informed while 10% are little or not at all informed, there is a need for more information and awareness campaigns on how the EU works and what is expected in the future from Albania, regarding its relations with the European Union.

The data from the survey show that despite the fact that Albanians continue to believe in the integration process, the vast majority of them (82%) are dissatisfied with the pace at which this process is progressing. According to them, 30 years after the change of systems and 3 decades from the calls "We want Albania like all of Europe", the progress of Albania's integration process is very slow and the obstacles are unjustified.

74 percent of young people have identified the main factor affecting the process of Albania's integration into the EU. Only 13% of them assign this responsibility to the European Union itself, while the vast majority think that politics and politicians have a decisive role in the process, and their decision-making plays a first-hand role regarding the country's future within the big European family.

A future which, young Albanians believe, will bring more opportunities for them, both in terms of education and employment. A vast majority of young people think that the acceleration of the pace of EU integration will translate into better educational and employment opportunities for themselves and their peers.

And while their hopes are strongly linked to integration, the answers to the survey questions show a lack of information on the concrete opportunities that the EU provides, especially for young people.

SUMMARY

- ▲ Young Albanians see themselves becoming more and more equal to their peers in the EU member countries
- ▲ Young people think that much more needs to be done by politicians as well as central and local government institutions, to make it possible for them to have equal opportunities with their peers.
- ▲ There is still work to be done in terms of informing young people, about the tasks and benefits that Albanians, and especially young people, are to expect from Albania's membership in the EU, and in particular about the chances and horizons that this process would open for their education and career.

A figure which is somewhat higher, when they are asked about concrete programs, such as Erasmus+, for which the project "Municipalities for Europe" has held information sessions in cooperation with the European Integration Units in some of the municipalities. However, a great thirst for knowledge among young people, about similar EU programs with a focus on youth.

The above mentioned are their hopes for the future, while when asked about the past and present, or more precisely about the investments that the European Union has made in the municipalities where they live – projects and investments with great impact on the lives of citizens and especially young people - the need for more information is evident.

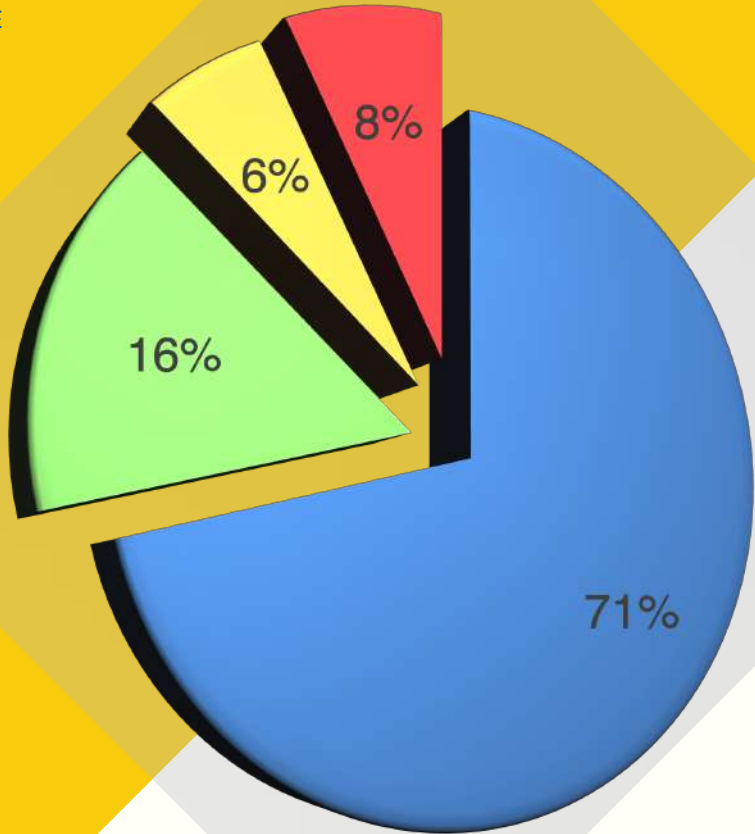
More meetings and info-sessions with young people, discussions on EU projects and investments, publications and especially informative videos and graphics on these investments, as well as the use of modern means of communication widely used by young people, as well as the inclusion of these young people in the implementation of information campaigns, are some of the measures needed, in order to raise awareness of the EU's presence in Albanian cities, through concrete projects and investments.

And while there is an almost equal distribution of answers between Infrastructure, Social Services and Education, when young people are asked about the concrete investments of the European Union in their city to date, it seems that most of them have no doubts when it comes to the field in which they would like to see more investments and projects in the future: EDUCATION. A significant figure of the survey, which makes the voice of young people clearly heard.

A voice which, apparently, does not have the necessary strength and does not reach the right ears when it comes to local authorities. The majority of young people either do not know or affirm that the municipality where they live do not have a strategy or action plan with a focus on young people, while almost 70 percent of them say that even if such strategies exist, they and their peers do not feel involved in the drafting of these policies.

Undoubtedly, one of the ways to make their voice heard is the establishment of Youth Councils. And at this point, the young people who answered the questions are divided almost in half, regarding the establishment and the active role of Youth Councils in their municipalities.

71% - YES
16% - MAYBE
6% - NO
8% - NOT SURE



EU MEMBERSHIP AS ASPIRATION

QUESTION 1
DO YOU THINK THAT MEMBERSHIP
IN THE EUROPEAN UNION SHOULD
REMAIN AN UNCHANGED
ASPIRATION FOR ALBANIANS? _____

- ▶ To the question regarding the continuity of Albanians' aspiration, that their country becomes a member of the European Union, **71 percent** of the young people asked gave a positive answer, which shows an unwavering support among young people, for Albania's aspirations to become part of the big EU family.
- ▶ **16%** of them answered positively but not fully convinced, while only **6%** were against. **8%** of the young people asked were unsure if Albania should persist in this direction.

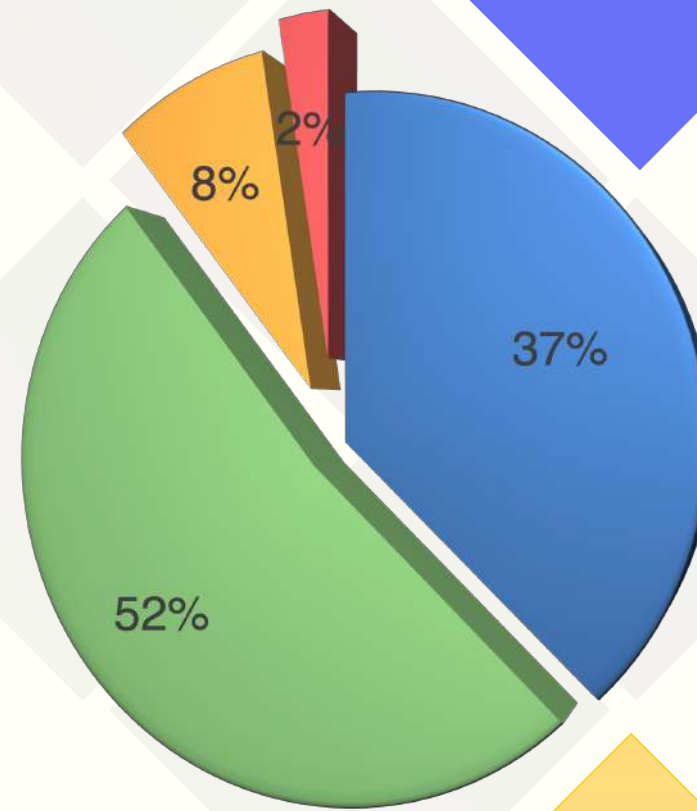
AWARENESS ON THE EUROPEAN UNION

QUESTION 2

HOW INFORMED ARE YOU ABOUT THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS FUNCTIONING

As for the awareness among young people regarding the EU and how the Union works, out of **980** respondents, **364 of them or 37%** answered that they are very well informed.

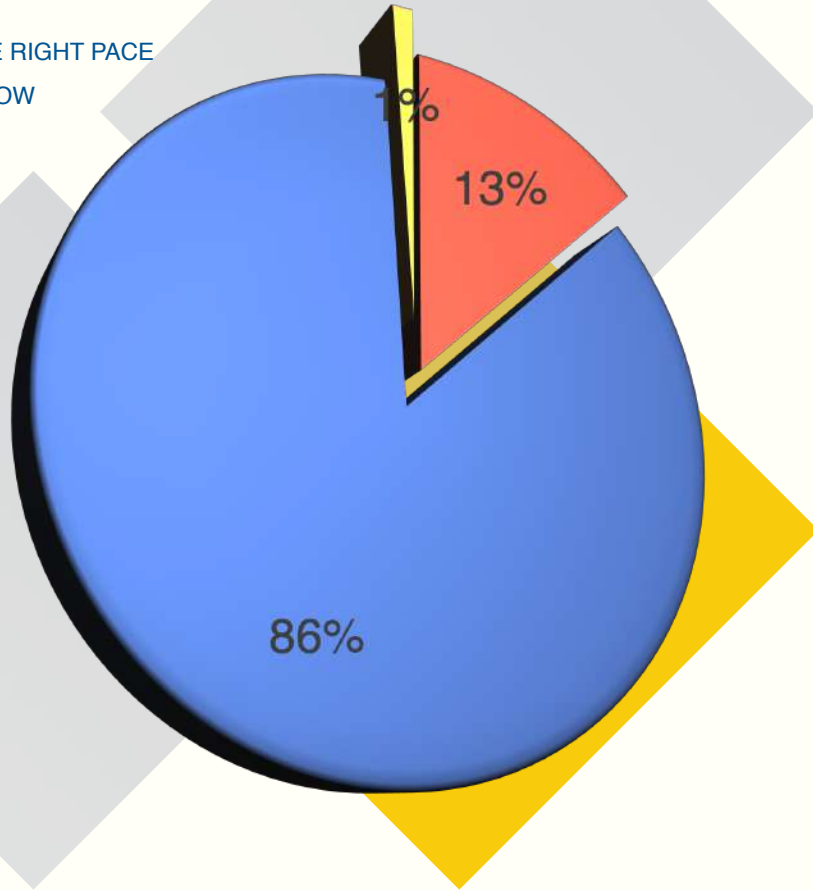
The need for raising awareness among young people about the way the EU works is evident, as **512 of them or 52%** answered that they are "somewhat informed". A little informed are **80 or 8%**, while the number of those who are not at all informed is minimal, **24 respondents or 2%** of them.



37% - VERY
52% - SOMEWHAT
8% - A LITTLE
2% - NOT AT ALL

ALBANIA'S EU INTEGRATION PACE

86% - SLOWLY
13% - WITH THE RIGHT PACE
1% - I DON'T KNOW



QUESTION 3

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE
PACE OF ALBANIA'S EU
INTEGRATION PROCESS

The vast majority of young people, **86% of them or 816** out of **980** of those who responded, seem to be dissatisfied with the pace of Albania's integration into the EU, saying that this process is moving slowly.

What is evident, is their desire for a higher when it comes to Albania's journey towards EU membership.

124 of the young people asked, or **13%**, think that the process is moving at the right pace, while **1%** answered "I don't know".

EU INTEGRATION PROCESS

INFLUENCING FACTORS

QUESTION 4

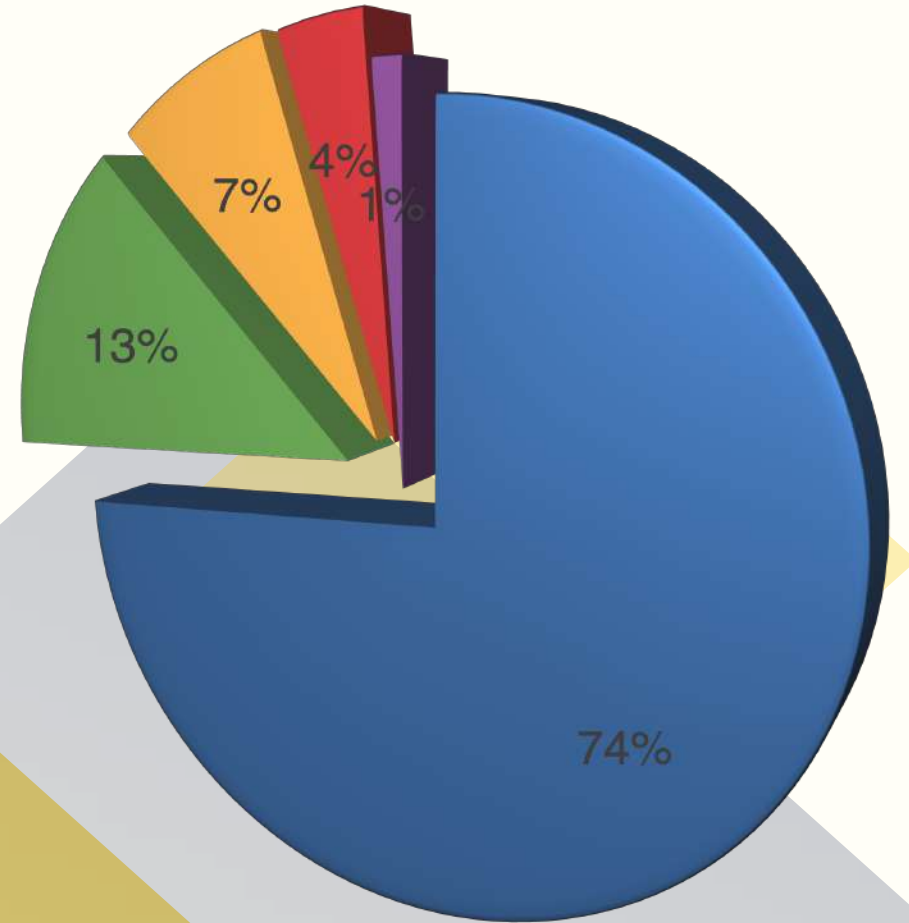
WHO DO YOU THINK ARE THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE ALBANIA'S EU INTEGRATION PROCESS

736 of the 984 young people who responded, or 74% of them, identify politics as the primary factor influencing the pace of Albania's integration into the European Union.

13% of them, or 132 of 984 young people, think that the European Union itself and its structures are the most influential factor in this process.

For 72 young people who responded, or 7% of them, the citizens themselves are the ones who have a direct impact on the integration process.

4% answered "I don't know", while only 1% see local institutions as influential factors in this process.



74% - POLITICS
13% - THE EU
7% - THE CITIZENS
4% - I DON'T KNOW
1% - LOCAL CITIZENS

EU MEMBERSHIP AND EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

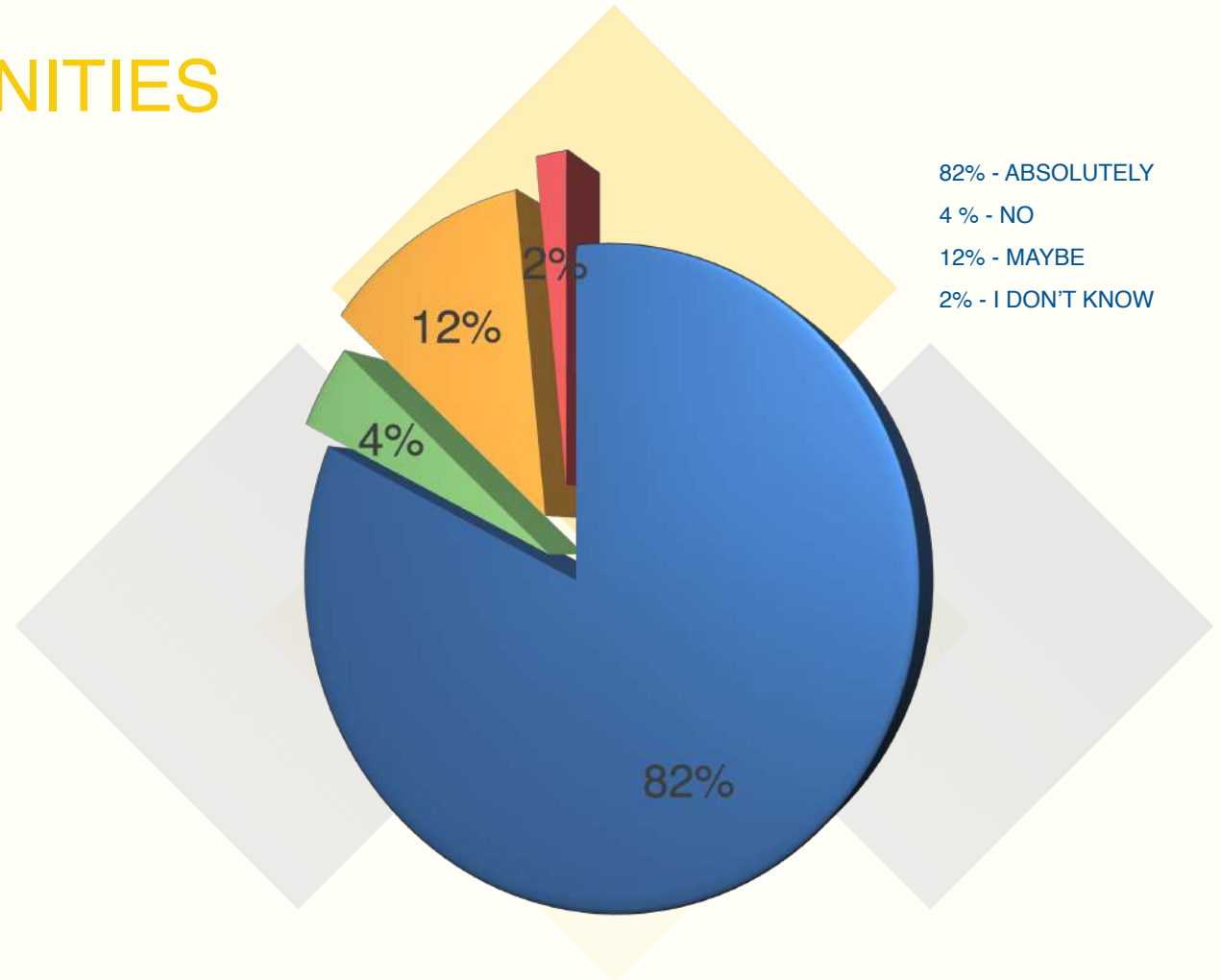
QUESTION 5

DO YOU THINK ALBANIA'S EU MEMBERSHIP WILL SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE YOUR EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES? _____

How do young people see the opportunities that Albania's membership in the European Union would provide for their education?

808 out of 984 young people who responded (**82%**), say that "yes absolutely", Albania's membership will bring greater opportunities for their education.

Only **4% or 44** young people answered negatively, **116 of them or 12%** were not sure and **2%** answered that they do not know how such a thing would affect their career and future.



EU INVESTMENTS IN MY CITY

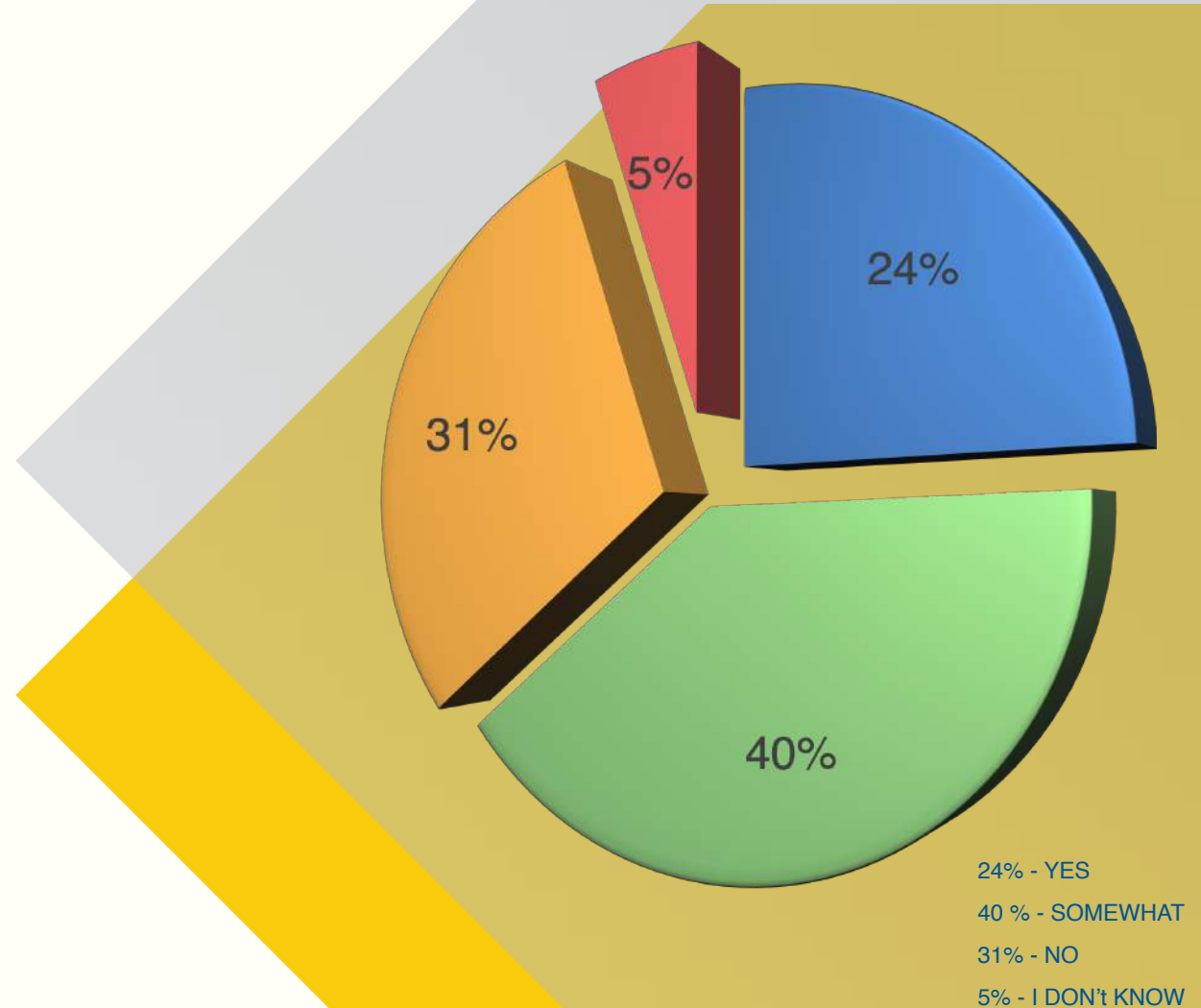
QUESTION 6

ARE YOU INFORMED ON EU'S
INVESTMENTS IN YOUR CITY? _____

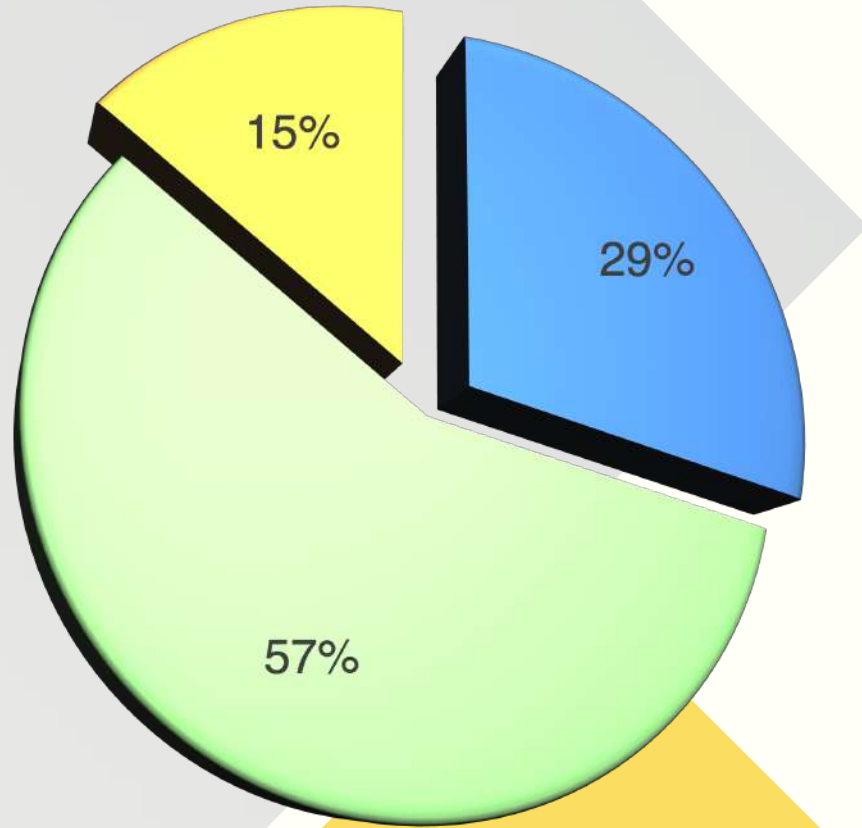
How informed are young people about the investments that the European Union has carried out in their city?

Out of **980** young people who responded, **240 of them** or **24%** say that they are well informed about EU investments in the city where they live. **40%** of them, or **388**, say that they are somewhat informed.

A considerable number - **300 out of 980**, or **31%** - state that they are uninformed, while **5%** or **52** of them say "I don't know".



THE IMPACT OF EU'S SUPPORT



29 % - YES
57 % - NO
15 % - NOT SURE

QUESTION 7

HAVE YOU AND YOUR FAMILY FELT THE IMPACT OF EU'S SUPPORT FOR YOUR CITY/MUNICIPALITY??

284 of the young people who responded, or **29%**, said that they felt the impact of the support that the European Union has provided to the city/municipality where they live.

556 or **57%** state that they have not felt this impact and **15%** or **144** of the respondents state that they are not sure.

Here it should be noted that the survey was conducted in all of Albania's municipalities, and there were young people responding even from cities/municipalities where there are still no EU projects implemented or under implementation.

EUROPEAN UNION'S AREAS OF SUPPORT

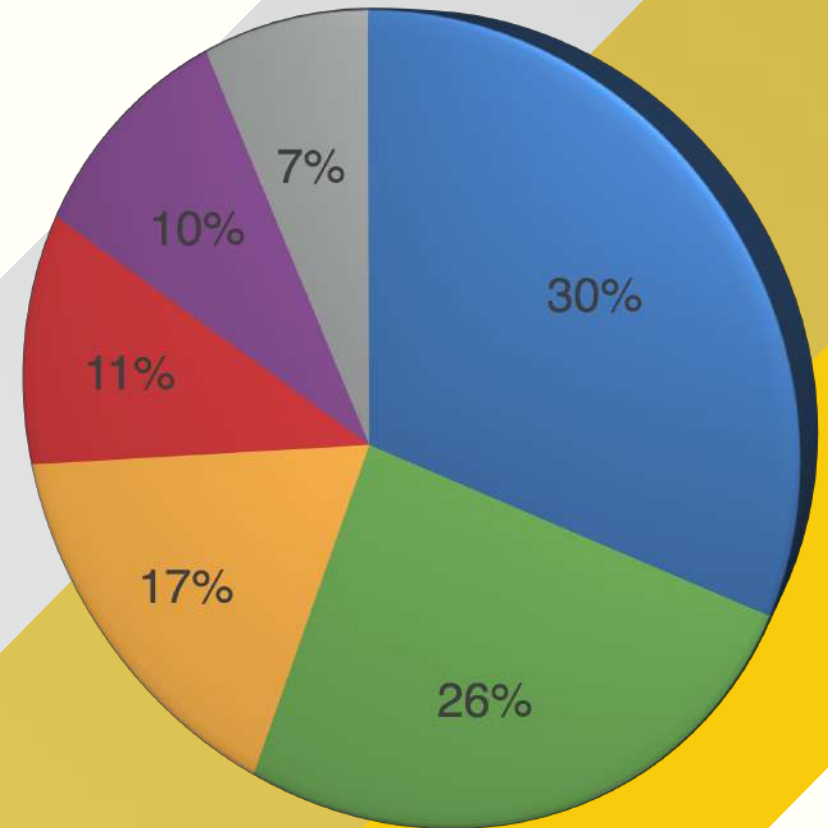
QUESTION 8

IN WHICH AREA HAS EU'S
SUPPORT BEEN MOSTLY FELT?

Infrastructure is the area in which, according to the young people asked, EU's support has been mostly felt in their city. **280 or 26%** of them have chosen this field, while **17% or 160** of the respondents have chosen social services.

104 of the 944 young people asked (**11%**) chose Environment, **92 of them or 10%** chose Education and 64 Culture (**7%**).

A significant number, **30%** of the respondents or **280** young people, chose "other".



26 % - INFRASTRUCTURE

17 % - SOCIAL SERVICES

11% - ENVIRONMENT

10% - EDUCATION

7% - CULTURE

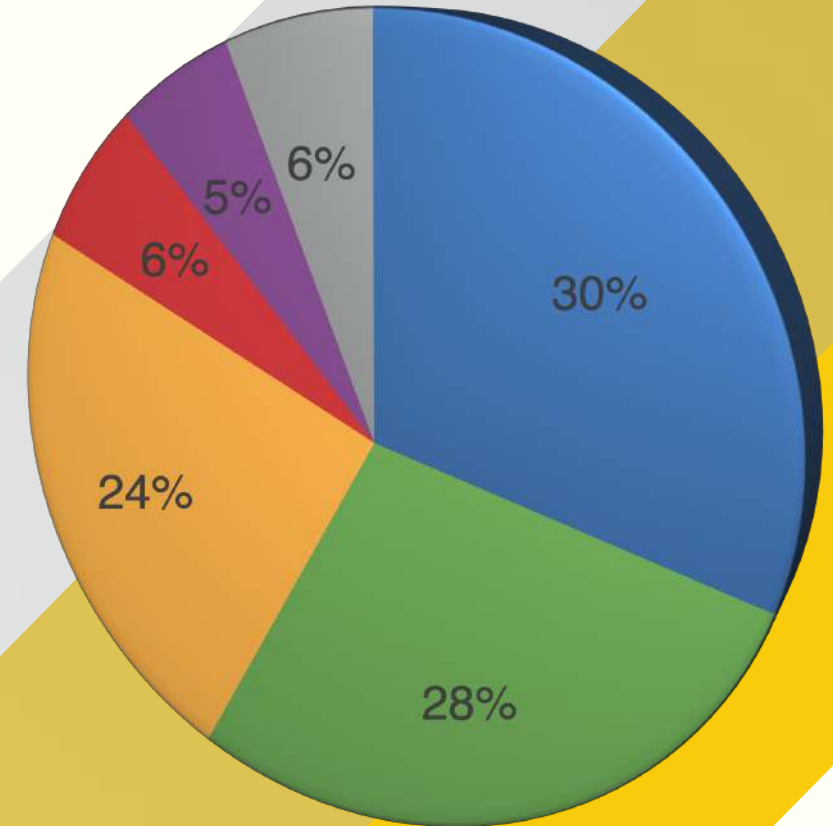
30% - OTHER

WHERE COULD THE EU DO MORE?

QUESTION 9

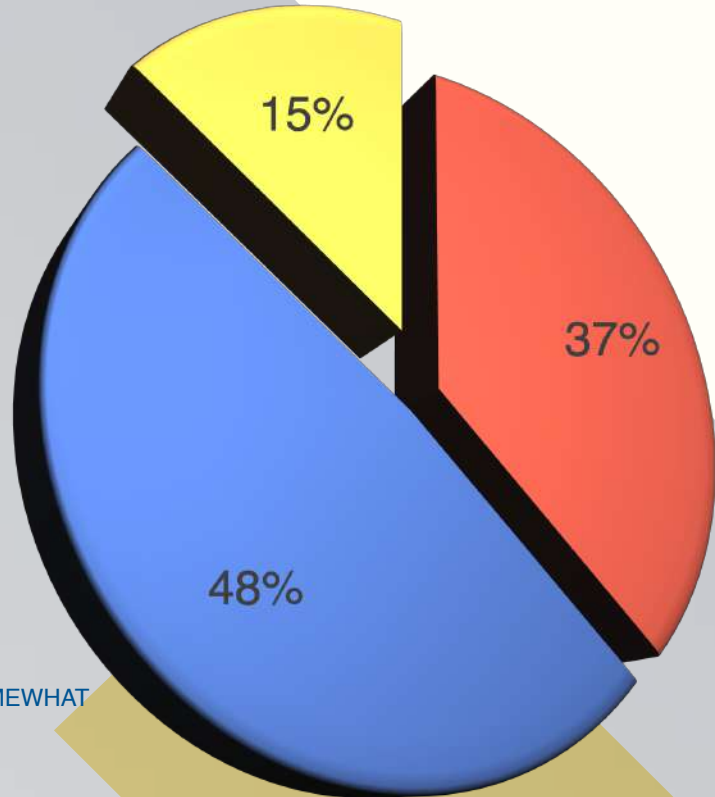
IN WHICH AREA YOU THINK EU
MAY DO MORE FOR YOUR CITY?

When asked in which area the EU can help the most, young people have no doubts: they choose Education as the most important area. Out of **984** respondents, **292 of them or 30%** choose Education while **280 or 28%** choose Infrastructure. **24%** of young people, or **240**, want more to be done for Social Services, while **60 and 52** of them respectively or **6 and 5%** want more to be done for Environment and Culture. **6%** of young people (**60**) chose “other”.



30 % - EDUCATION
28 % - INFRASTRUCTURE
24% - SOCIAL SERVICES
6% - ENVIRONMENT
5% - CULTURE
6% - OTHER

YOUTH AWARENESS ON EU OPPORTUNITIES



37 % - YES
48 % - SOMEWHAT
15 % - NO

QUESTION 10

ARE YOU INFORMED ON THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT THE EUROPEAN UNION PROVIDES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE? _____

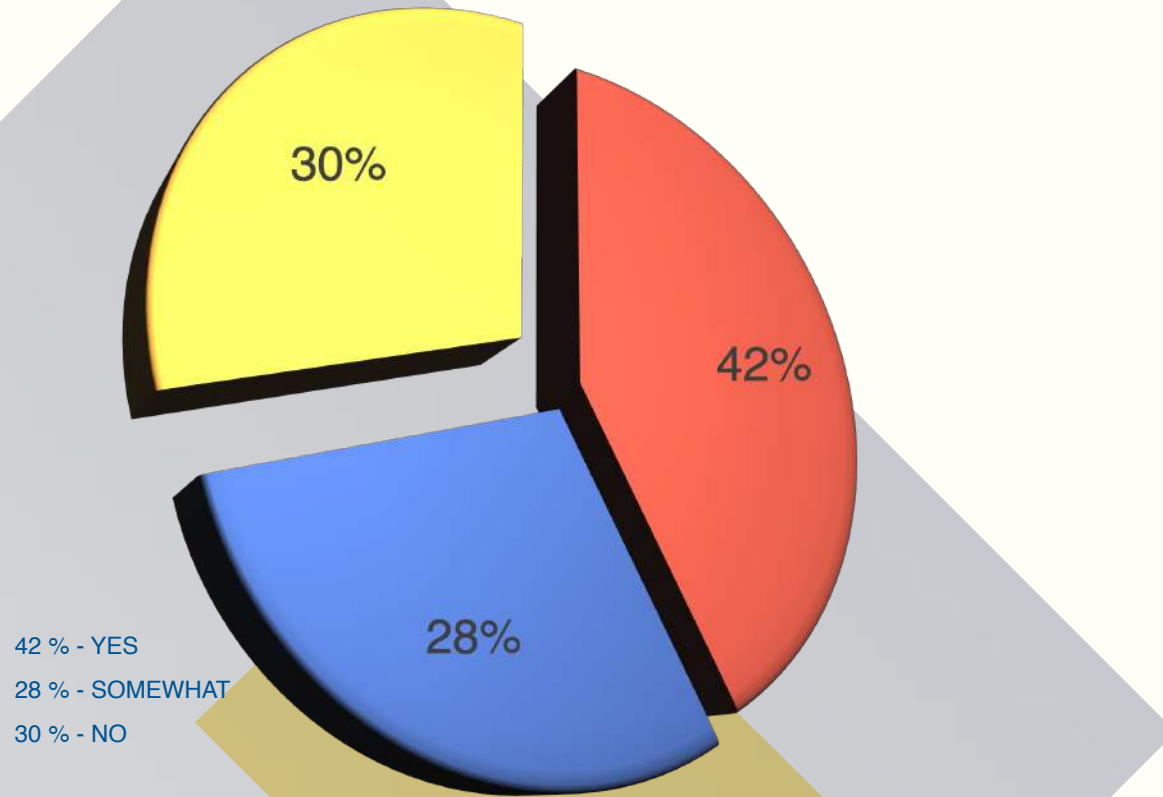
Only **37% of the 972** young people who responded, or **360** of them, said they are informed about the opportunities that the EU provides for them and their peers.

48%, almost half of the respondents (**468**) said they are somewhat informed, while **15%** of the respondents, or **144** said they are not informed at all, about the opportunities that the EU offers.

INFORMATION ABOUT ERASMUS+

QUESTION 11

ARE YOU AWARE OF THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAM AND THE OPPORTUNITIES IT PROVIDES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE? _____



42 % - YES
28 % - SOMEWHAT
30 % - NO

Regarding a specific program for young people, such as Erasmus+ and the opportunities it provides, out of 976 young people who answered the questions, 408 or 42% of them say that they are informed.

276 of them or 28% said they are somewhat informed, while 30 percent of the respondents, or 30 percent of them said they do not have information on the opportunities that this program offers.

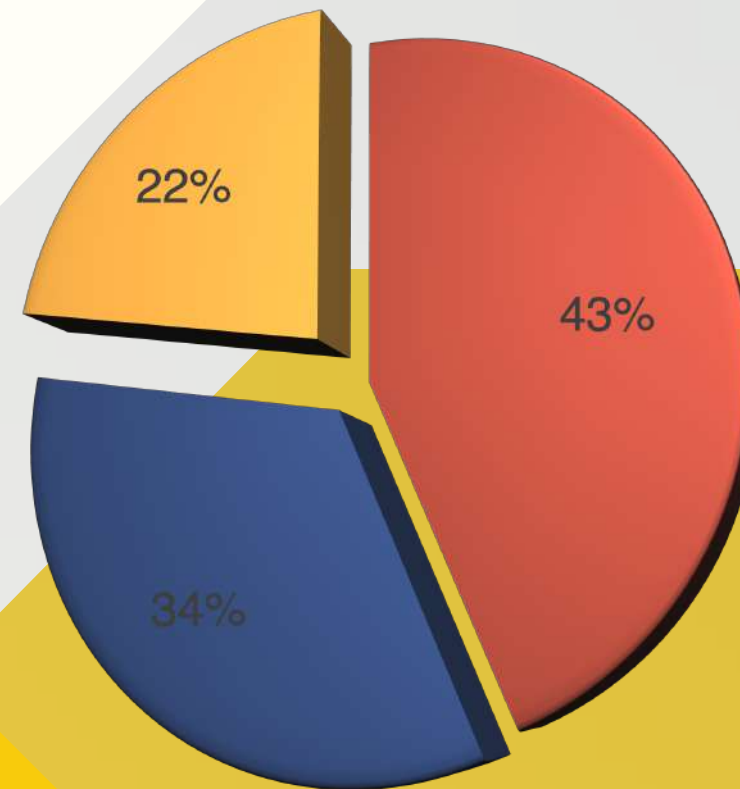
EU VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

QUESTION 12

ARE YOU AWARE THAT THE EUROPEAN UNION HAS SPECIFIC VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE? _____

Of the **984** young people who responded to the question, if they are informed about specific volunteering programs that the EU supports in Albania, **428 of them or 43%** say they are informed about these programs.

336 of those who answered, or **34%**, say they are somewhat but not fully informed, while **22%** of the young people, or **220** of them, say they have no information about these specific programs.



43 % - YES

34 % - SOMEWHAT

22 % - NO

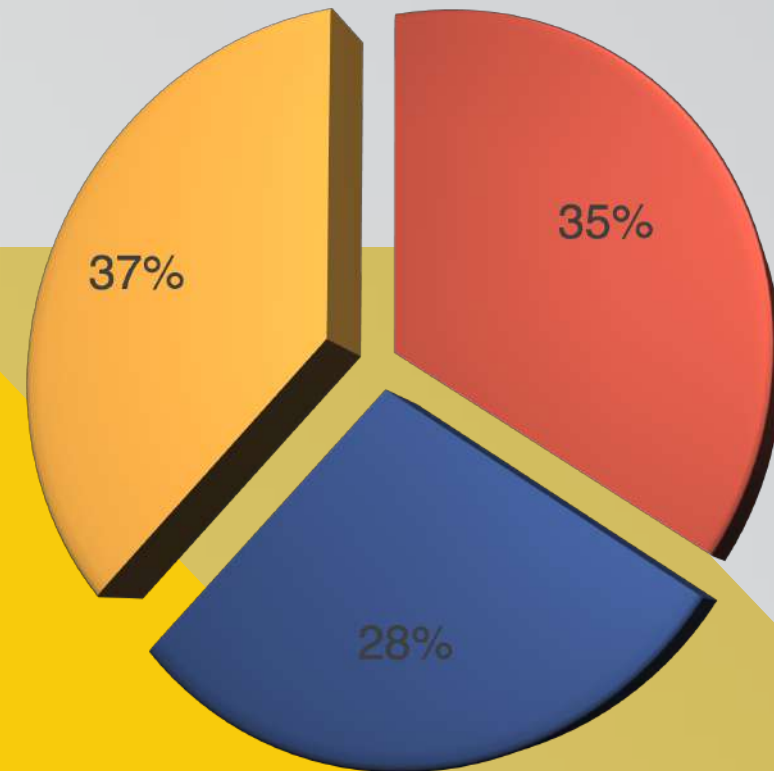
DO MUNICIPALITIES HAVE STRATEGIES FOR YOUTH

PYETJA 13

DOES YOUR MUNICIPALITY HAVE A STRATEGY OR ACTION PLAN TO SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE?

Of the 984 young people who answered the question, if the municipality where they live has a strategy or action plan to support them and their peers, **340 of them or 35%** answered positively.

276 out of 984 of those who responded, or **28%**, said the municipality where they live does not have such a plan, while **368, or 37%**, are uninformed about the existence of a strategy or plan from the local government authority.

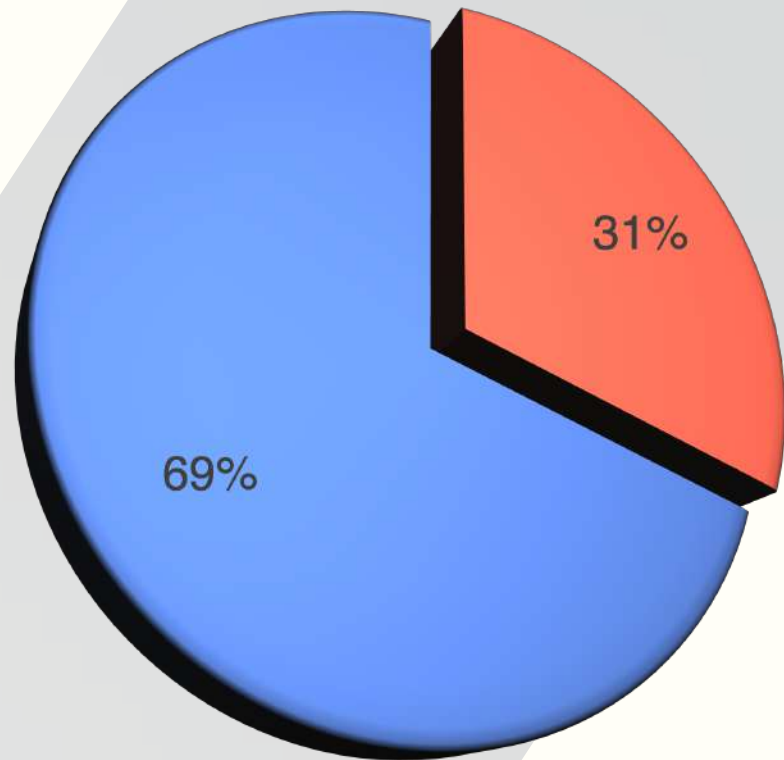


35 % - YES

28 % - NO

37 % - I DON'T KNOW

INCLUSION IN MUNICIPALITY'S PLANS



31 % - YES

69 % - NO

QUESTION 14

IF SO, DO YOU FEEL INVOLVED IN
DRAFTING SUCH A STRATEGY /
PLAN?

The answers to the question about the involvement of young people in the strategies/plans of the municipality for them are very significant.

A majority of them, **672 out of 984** who responded, or **69%** of young people, say that they are not involved in the youth strategies / plans of the municipality where they live.

Only **31%** of the respondents stated that they are involved.

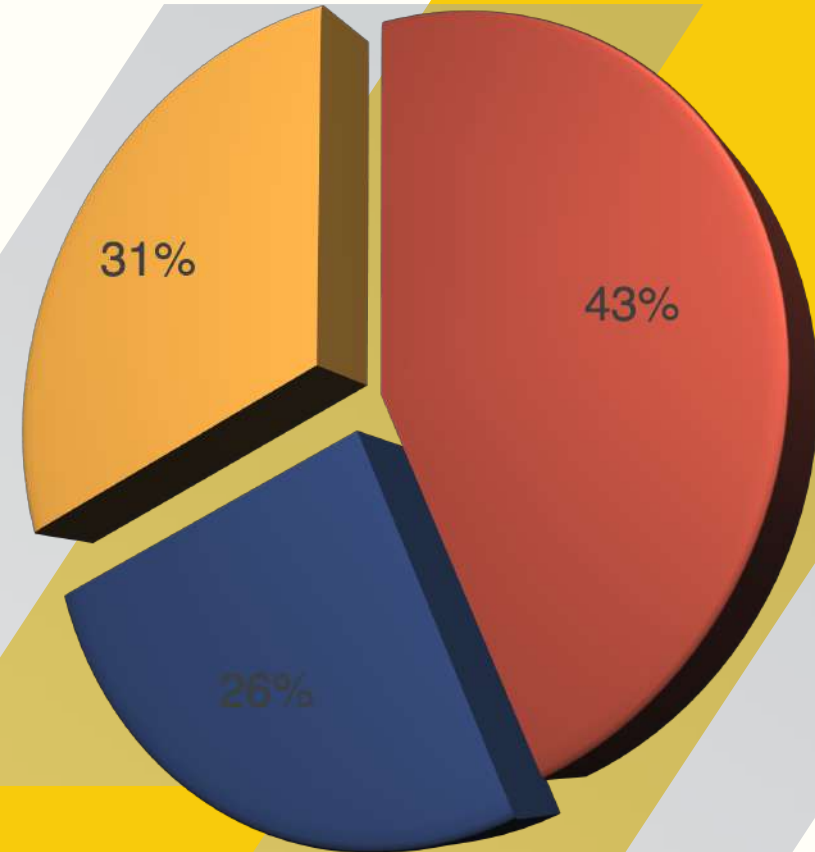
YOUTH COUNCIL IN THE MUNICIPALITIES

QUESTION 15

HAS THE YOUTH COUNCIL BEEN
ESTABLISHED IN YOUR MUNICIPALITY?

Of the **980** young people who responded, **43%** of them are aware of the establishment of the Youth Council in the Municipality they live in .

26% of them or **252 out of 980** say that the Youth Council has not been set up, while **31%** of young people, or **31%** say that no such structure has been set up in their municipality.



43 % - YES

26 % - NO

31 % - I DON'T KNOW

HOW ACTIVE IS THE CITY COUNCIL?

QUESTION 16

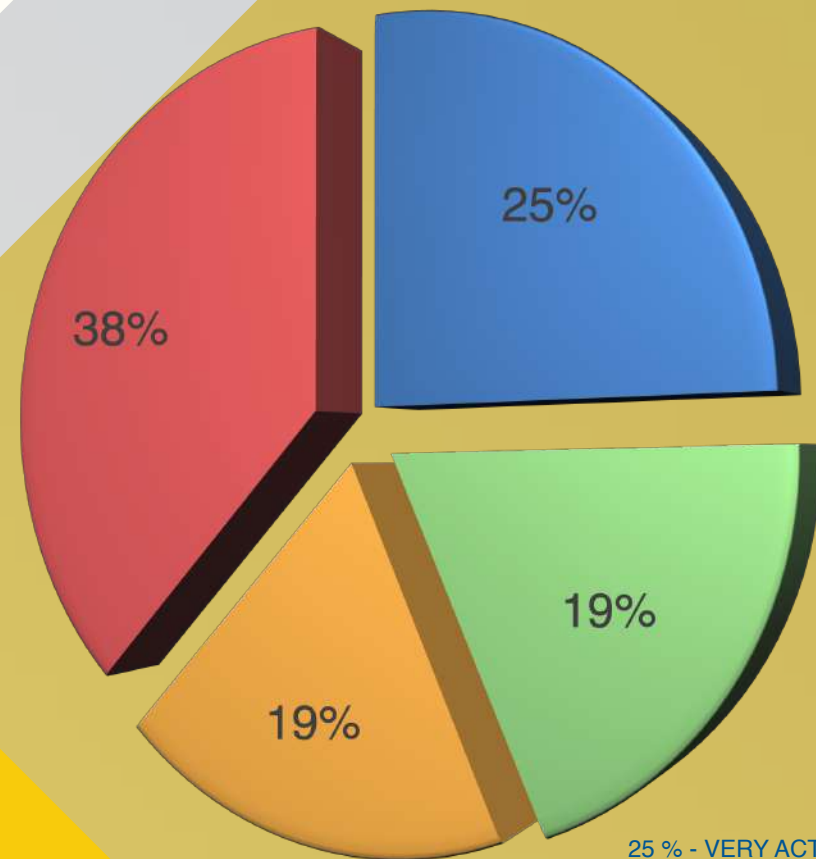
HOW ACTIVE IS THE CITY COUNCIL IN DISCUSSING ISSUES REGARDING YOUNG PEOPLE, WITH THE DECISION-MAKERS?

924 young people responded to this question.

It is noticeable that a large part of young people, 38%, are not at all informed about this.

25% of them or 228 out of 924 respondents say that the Youth Council is very active.

Meanwhile, 19% say that it is a little active, or not active at all.



25 % - VERY ACTIVE
19 % - A LITTLE ACTIVE
19 % - NOT AT ALL
38 % - I DON'T KNOW

MESSAGES OF YOUNG PEOPLE

What would be some of your suggestions for a greater involvement of you and your peers in the decision-making process in your municipality?

Part of the survey was a space where young respondents could leave their messages on their expectations regarding Albania's accession to the EU.

Here are some of their messages.



More practical and effective actions for young people in the areas they need

Cooperation of the municipality with young people and informing them in special meetings about their interests and problems.

A youth council should be created. The young people would be more active in the programs and organizations that the municipality does. To offer more internship opportunities for young people in their profession, but also to participate in decision-making in the municipality of our city.

To have more investments and projects to include young people. To work for a better life.

Usually sports activities or educational competitions are what have made us be more involved, but a suggestion would be to get together and have more solidarity initiatives for families in need, persons with disabilities as well as more support for art.

I think that the youth should be a very important part in the decision-making of the municipality. Not the members of the council who are all party members and make decisions based on personal and not community interest. My opinion is not heard anywhere because the municipality does not have a program where I give my opinion, the idea I have for a certain issue. Even more when I am an active part in many things in the municipality where I live. The EU gives funds but the municipalities do not show transparency at all, zero. I have many ideas for the municipality where I live, but I don't have any funds to implement the minimum of ideas for education, culture, environment.

MESSAGES OF YOUNG PEOPLE

What would be some of your suggestions for a greater involvement of you and your peers in the decision-making process in your municipality?

Part of the survey was a space where young respondents could leave their messages on their expectations regarding Albania's accession to the EU.

Here are some of their messages.

ALBANIA & EU

YOUTH EXPECTATIONS

This publication was produced by "Municipalities for Europe" Project, with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union