National Report – Study no. 2

COUNTRY: Romania

Activity A2.3

”Ready for positive&supportive organizations for practitioners in Youth Work?”

Developed by

ACE-ES Romania – Navodari Branch

ZAMOLXES Foundation

Positive
Wellbeing & Resilience
In Youth Work for Social Change

Co-funded by
the European Union

Section I: Context and rationale of national study

The national study in Romania is developed in a period where youth work organisations are expected to deliver increasingly complex social value under high uncertainty. Youth workers and practitioners are asked to respond to intensifying psychosocial needs among young people, while simultaneously managing project volatility, administrative pressure, staff turnover risk and emotional overload inside organisations.

In this environment, the core strategic question is no longer only whether organisations can deliver youth activities, but whether they can sustain the people who deliver them. The focus of Study no. 2 is therefore highly relevant for Romania: organisational readiness for positive and supportive practice is now a condition for both practitioner wellbeing and service quality for young people.

European policy and research directions have progressively moved from individual-level resilience narratives toward organisational responsibility for wellbeing and psychosocial safety. This means that leadership style, supervision quality, psychological safety, mental-health-protective practices, communication fairness, and structural resources are not peripheral management topics. They are core determinants of whether youth workers can remain engaged, effective and healthy in the medium and long term.

For Romania, the relevance of this study is amplified by the structural profile of the youth NGO ecosystem: a strong reliance on project-based funding cycles, mixed staff-volunteer teams, unequal organisational capacity across regions, and uneven access to institutional support functions such as supervision, HR systems, reflective practice and mental health protection.

The national legal and policy framework provides foundations for youth work organisations (legal recognition, volunteering framework, labour protections, safeguarding and equality duties). However, these foundations do not automatically

produce positive and supportive internal climates. In practice, organisational wellbeing remains uneven and strongly dependent on local leadership capacity, system maturity and resource stability.

The national study is therefore not a generic descriptive exercise. It is a targeted diagnostic process meant to identify where Romanian organisations are already resilient and where they remain vulnerable in relation to practitioner support.

The study uses two interlinked concepts that must be translated into operational organisational realities:

Positive organisation: an organisation that enables practitioners and teams to thrive through meaningful work, quality relationships, growth opportunities and a sustained culture of wellbeing.

Supportive organisation: an organisation that creates physical, psychological and social conditions through leadership, participation, communication and risk prevention, so that practitioners can maintain and improve health and functioning over time.

The rationale of national study is built on the assumption that these are not symbolic values. They require observable organisational capacities that can be measured, compared and improved. So, in Romania, youth organisations need not only legal legitimacy and project delivery capacity, but also robust internal conditions that protect and develop practitioners over time. National study responds to this need through a multidimensional and practice-oriented framework that can identify concrete readiness gaps and could facilitate optimal organisational transformation toward positive and supportive environments.

Section II: Objectives and research questions of national study no. 2

a. Specific objectives

The overall purpose of Study No. 2 was to assess the extent to which Romanian youth organisations and organisations working with young people are prepared to function as positive and supportive environments for practitioners, staff members and volunteers.

More specifically, the study aimed to:

- assess the current level of organisational readiness across five key dimensions associated with positive and supportive organisations;
- identify the gap between the importance assigned to supportive organisational practices and their actual implementation within organisations;
- examine how leadership, organisational culture, wellbeing practices, communication systems and organisational resources influence practitioners' experiences;
- compare the perceptions of youth workers, practitioners, leaders and managers regarding organisational strengths and development needs;
- identify organisational factors that contribute to practitioner wellbeing, resilience, motivation and long-term engagement in youth work;
- explore the main barriers preventing organisations from translating positive values into sustainable organisational practices;
- generate evidence-based recommendations for strengthening organisational readiness and supporting the development of healthier and more resilient youth work environments.

b. Research Questions/Working Hypotheses/Targeted Indicators

The study was guided by the following central research question:

To what extent are Romanian youth organisations and organisations working with young people prepared to become positive and supportive environments for practitioners, staff and volunteers?

The study explored the following operational research questions:

• How effectively do leadership, supervision and professional development practices support practitioners in their daily work?

• To what extent do organisational cultures promote inclusion, psychological safety, trust and respectful relationships?

• How well do organisations address wellbeing, mental health and burnout prevention?

• How effectively do communication processes, participation mechanisms and interpersonal support systems function within organisations?

• Do organisations possess adequate resources, systems and adaptive capacities to sustain supportive organisational environments over time?

The study was based on the following working hypothesis:

Although Romanian youth organisations generally recognise the importance of supportive organisational practices and demonstrate strong commitment to positive organisational values, significant gaps continue to exist between organisational intentions and the practical systems, resources and procedures required to sustain practitioner wellbeing and resilience.

To investigate this hypothesis, the study assessed organisational readiness through five targeted indicators:

Indicator 1 – Leadership, Supervision and Professional Development

Indicator 2 – Organisational Culture, Inclusion and Psychological Safety

Indicator 3 – Wellbeing, Mental Health and Burnout Prevention

Indicator 4 – Communication, Participation and Interpersonal Support

Indicator 5 – Organisational Resources, Systems and Adaptability

Together, these indicators provide a comprehensive framework for understanding whether organisations are capable not only of delivering youth work activities, but also of creating conditions that allow practitioners to remain engaged, supported, healthy and effective over time.

Section III: Description of how the national study no. 2 was carried out

Research design: In Romania, Study no. 2 was organized and implemented based on the specific Methodology (the general framework&design), developed within consortium for Activity A2.3.

To carry out the national study, ACE-ES Romania Navodari Branch and ZAMOLXES Foundation applied both quantitative and qualitative methods and instruments to obtain a variety of data with a high degree of relevance for the main topic of the research. Thus, the following tools were created and used:

1. The survey based on the questionnaire - its administration was done online (based on Google forms).

Two questionnaires have been developed:

- ✓ Questionnaire 1 applied to 27 youth workers and practitioners within the organisations.
- ✓ Questionnaire 2 applied to 25 leaders and managers within organisations.

2. The interview-based survey - a semi-formal instrument was used; its administration was done face-to-face with 3 managers/leaders. The tool included predefined items allowing the interviewer to introduce the topic and leave the respondent free to come up with more qualitative information. Also, the interview helped us to deep the data collected through both online questionnaires.

3. The focus group was organized on March 31, 2026, in an online format (via Zoom), a total of 9 participants took part, of whom 5 were managers/leaders; the activity allowed obtaining opinions, suggestions, additional and valuable feed-back to the answers given through the 2 online questionnaires.

During the entire period of the application of research methods and tools in Romania, the main concerns of ACE-ES Romania Navodari Branch and ZAMOLXES Foundation were the following:

- facilitating a balanced representation of the two groups of respondents.
- motivating them to provide relevant answers and opinions related to the topic of

Study no. 2.

- presentation of the project and its activities, for better awareness.

Implementation stages - the implementation steps in Romania were as follows:

- Mapping and identification of relevant youth organisations and organisations working with vulnerable young people.
- Selection and recruitment of participants from the two target groups: youth workers and practitioners; leaders and managers.
- Preparation and adaptation of the national data collection process, including the creation and administration of the two online questionnaires through Google Forms.
- Collection of quantitative data through Questionnaire 1 (youth workers and practitioners) and Questionnaire 2 (leaders and managers).
- Collection of qualitative data through semi-structured interviews with representatives of Target Group no. 2 (leaders and managers).
- Organisation and facilitation of an online focus group involving representatives of both target groups in order to validate, deepen and contextualise the questionnaire findings.
- Data processing, systematisation and analysis of quantitative and qualitative information collected through all research instruments.
- Interpretation of findings, formulation of conclusions and development of evidence-based recommendations regarding organisational readiness to become positive and supportive environments for practitioners in youth work.
- Preparation of the National Report of Study no. 2 to support the development of the transnational analysis within the POSITIVE project.

Ethical considerations (voluntariness, anonymity, consent)

The implementation of Study no. 2 in Romania respected the ethical principles outlined in the methodological framework of Activity A2.3:

- Participation in all research activities was entirely voluntary. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, the objectives of the POSITIVE

project, and the intended use of the collected data before deciding whether to participate.

- All participants provided informed consent prior to completing the questionnaires, participating in interviews, or joining the focus group.
- Data obtained were anonymised during the analysis and reporting stages.
- The collected information are used exclusively for research purposes within the framework of the project.

Difficulties and limitations encountered

Although the implementation of the study was successfully completed and the planned number of participants was achieved, some limitations should be acknowledged.

- the study relied primarily on self-reported data. As a result, responses reflect participants' perceptions and experiences, which may be influenced by personal expectations, organisational roles or individual interpretations of organisational realities.
- the study was conducted within a specific time frame and therefore provides a snapshot of organisational readiness at the moment of data collection. Organisational cultures, leadership practices and wellbeing systems may evolve over time and could produce different results in future assessments.
- some respondents may have tended to provide socially desirable answers, particularly when evaluating their own organisations, leadership practices or organisational culture. To minimise this risk, anonymity and confidentiality were emphasised throughout the research process.

Despite these limitations, the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, the inclusion of two complementary target groups provided a good basis for understanding the level of organisational readiness to become positive and supportive environments for practitioners in youth work especially since such analyses have not been conducted in Romania before.

Section IV: Specific national legislation related to the study topic

The Romanian legislative framework provides a legal basis for the functioning of youth organisations, establishing minimum standards related to organisational governance, employment protection, volunteering, safeguarding, occupational safety, equality and accountability.

Youth organisations are formally recognised through Youth Law No. 350/2006 and Government Ordinance No. 26/2000 on Associations and Foundations, which provide the legal foundation for youth NGOs and organisations working with young people. These provisions support the institutional legitimacy of youth organisations and their participation in funding, consultation and public policy mechanisms.

Relevant legislation:

• Youth Law No. 350/2006 – https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/193502

• Government Ordinance No. 26/2000 – https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/20740

From the perspective of Study No. 2, however, the key issue is not only whether youth organisations are legally recognised, but whether the legal and policy environment supports them in becoming positive and supportive organisations for practitioners. The analysis shows that Romanian legislation regulates organisational functioning primarily through compliance requirements, while providing relatively limited guidance regarding practitioner wellbeing, supervision, mentoring, reflective practice and burnout prevention.

Labour legislation creates important foundations for supportive working environments. The Labour Code guarantees equal treatment, dignity at work, regulated working time and access to professional development. In particular, employers are required to provide opportunities for professional training and skills development. These provisions do not specifically regulate youth-work supervision, coaching or reflective practice.

Relevant legislation: Labour Code – Law No. 53/2003 – https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/139945

Volunteering legislation also plays a significant role in supporting organisational readiness. Law No. 78/2014 establishes requirements related to volunteer contracts, volunteer training, coordination and recognition of volunteer experience. The law also protects against the misuse of volunteering as a substitute for paid employment, reinforcing ethical organisational practices and the protection of practitioners involved in youth work activities.

Relevant legislation: Volunteering Law No. 78/2014 – https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/280946

The legal framework further supports organisational safety through Occupational Safety and Health Law No. 319/2006, which extends protection not only to employees but also to volunteers and other participants involved in organisational activities. Together with Child Rights Law No. 272/2004, these provisions create a strong safeguarding framework that promotes safe environments for both young people and practitioners. However, they remain focused primarily on protection and risk prevention rather than on organisational wellbeing or resilience.

Relevant legislation:

- Occupational Safety and Health Law No. 319/2006 – https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/73772
- Child Rights Law No. 272/2004 – https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/255200

A particularly important contribution to supportive organisational cultures comes from anti-discrimination and equality legislation. Government Ordinance No. 137/2000 and Law No. 202/2002 establish legal obligations related to equal treatment, anti-harassment measures and inclusive organisational practices. Nevertheless, legal compliance alone does not automatically generate psychological safety, trust or inclusive organisational cultures.

Relevant legislation:

• Government Ordinance No. 137/2000 –
https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocument/228297

• Law No. 202/2002 on Equal Opportunities –
https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocumentAfis/35778

At policy level, the National Youth Strategy 2024–2027 recognises several structural challenges affecting the youth sector, including insufficient professionalisation of youth work, uneven territorial coverage of youth services, limited monitoring systems and the need to strengthen youth-worker training and professional development. These findings are highly relevant to the present study because they suggest that organisational readiness is influenced not only by individual organisations but also by broader systemic conditions.

Relevant policy document: National Youth Strategy 2024–2027
https://legislatie.just.ro/Public/DetaliiDocumentAfis/283473

Overall, the Romanian context can be described as legally regulated but professionally under-systematised.

The legislative framework provides important safeguards and minimum standards for organisational functioning, yet it does not offer a comprehensive national framework addressing supervision, practitioner wellbeing, burnout prevention, mentoring, reflective practice or organisational quality in youth work.

Consequently, the readiness of organisations to support practitioners effectively is likely to vary considerably depending on their internal capacity, leadership practices, commitment to staff and volunteer development, and ability to translate legal requirements into meaningful organisational support systems.

Section V: Description of organisations involved in study no. 2:

Typology of participating organisations

The organisations involved in Study no. 2 form a Romania-based youth-work and youth-programme ecosystem. Across both questionnaires, the sample is dominated by NGOs that provide programmes or activities for young people, complemented by youth NGOs. This indicates that the study captures both specialised youth organisations and broader NGOs with youth-related missions.

Questionnaire 1, answered by youth workers and practitioners (n=27), shows a stronger concentration of organisations providing programmes or activities for young people (63.0%) than youth NGOs (37.0%).

Questionnaire 2, answered by leaders and managers (n=25), presents a similar but slightly more balanced structure: 56.0% NGOs providing youth programmes/activities, 40.0% youth NGOs and 4.0% organisations identifying with both categories.

In terms of field of activity, both questionnaires point to organisations operating mainly at the intersection of education, youth development, social inclusion and community development. Practitioners emphasise youth development and empowerment (29.6%) and education and lifelong learning (25.9%), while leaders/managers place education first (32.0%), followed by social inclusion (24.0%), youth development (20.0%) and community development (20.0%).

Regarding stage of development, the participating organisations are predominantly mature, but the samples also include newer and developing organisations. Mature organisations active for more than 10 years represent 55.6% of Questionnaire 1 and 48.0% of Questionnaire 2. If consolidated organisations active for 6-10 years are added, organisations with at least six years of activity represent 63.0% of Questionnaire 1 and 56.0% of Questionnaire 2.

The overall picture is therefore one of a relatively established organisational field, but

with visible developmental diversity. This is important for the POSITIVE study because mature organisations may already have routines, governance structures and accumulated experience, while start-up and developing organisations may require more support to formalise positive and supportive organisational practices.

Comparative overview

Dimension	Questionnaire 1: practitioners (n=27)	Questionnaire 2: leaders/managers (n=25)
Dominant typology	NGOs providing programmes/activities for young people: 63.0%; Youth NGOs: 37.0%.	NGOs providing programmes/activities for young people: 56.0%; Youth NGOs: 40.0%; both: 4.0%.
Main fields	Youth development and empowerment (29.6%) and education/lifelong learning (25.9%) are the leading fields.	Education/lifelong learning (32.0%), social inclusion (24.0%), youth development (20.0%) and community development (20.0%) are most visible.
Stage of development	Mature organisations are the majority (55.6%); 63.0% are consolidated or mature.	Mature organisations are the largest group (48.0%); 56.0% are consolidated or mature.
Readiness	70.4% selected at least one positive readiness option; 22.2% are neutral and 7.4% rather poorly prepared.	64.0% selected at least one positive readiness option; 12.0% are neutral and 24.0% rather poorly prepared.

Synthetic charts:

Figure V.1. Typology of participating organisations

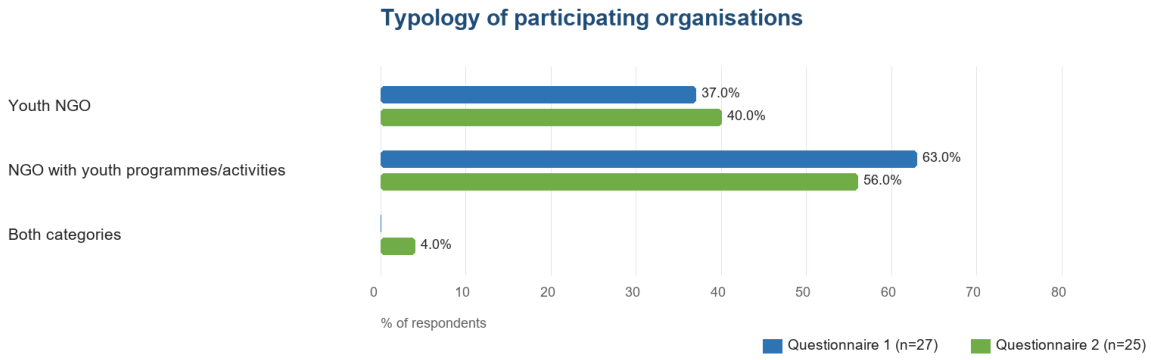
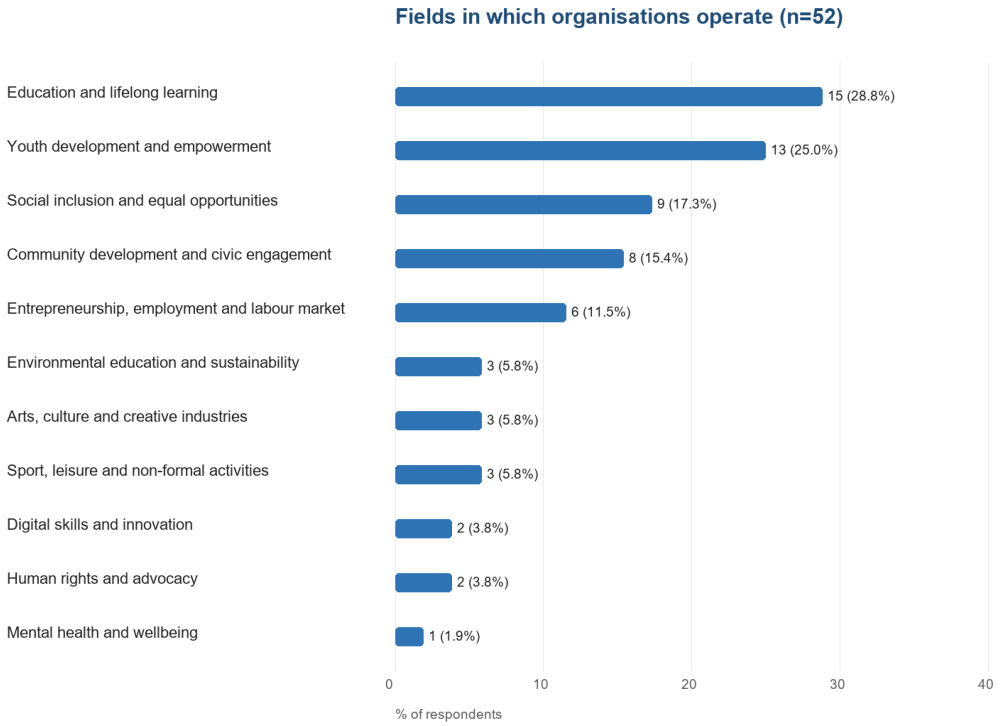
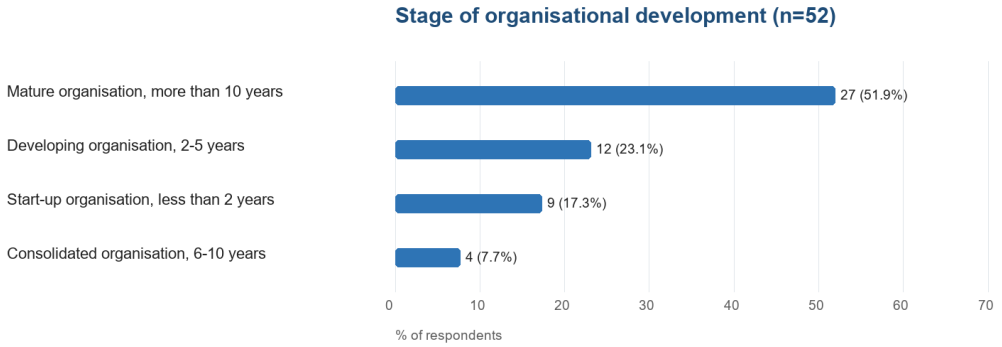


Figure V.2. Fields in which organisations operate



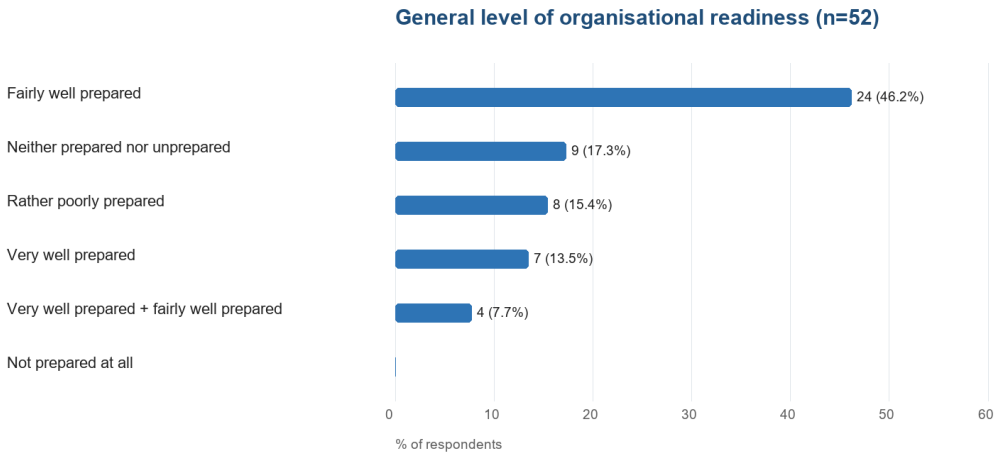
The fields of activity confirm this broad youth-support ecosystem. The most frequently represented area is education and lifelong learning, selected by 15 respondents (28.8%), followed by youth development and empowerment, selected by 13 respondents (25.0%). Social inclusion and equal opportunities is also prominent, with 9 respondents (17.3%), followed by community development and civic engagement, with 8 respondents (15.4%). Entrepreneurship, employment and labour market appears in 6 responses (11.5%). Other fields, such as environmental education, arts and culture, sport and non-formal activities, digital skills, human rights and mental health, are present at lower levels.

Figure V.3. Stage of organisational development



The combined sample is predominantly mature. Organisations active for more than 10 years represent 27 respondents, or 51.9% of the total. A further 4 respondents (7.7%) come from consolidated organisations active for 6-10 years. Taken together, consolidated and mature organisations represent 59.6% of the combined sample. At the same time, the study also includes developing organisations active for 2-5 years (12 respondents, 23.1%) and start-up organisations active for less than two years (9 respondents, 17.3%).

Figure V.4. General level of organisational readiness



The aggregated readiness profile is moderately positive but not fully consolidated. In the combined sample, 35 respondents (67.3%) selected at least one positive readiness option: very well prepared, fairly well prepared or a combined positive response. However, 9 respondents (17.3%) selected a neutral position and 8 respondents (15.4%) considered their organisation rather poorly prepared. This suggests that the participating organisations provide a meaningful base for developing positive and

supportive organisational cultures, while also indicating a clear need for capacity-building and practical tools.

Main findings:

Most organisations operate in fields that require intensive interaction with young people and significant practitioner engagement, including education, social inclusion, empowerment and community development. Although many organisations possess substantial organisational experience, the study findings indicate that experience alone does not automatically guarantee positive and supportive organisational environments.

The organisational profile presented in this section provides an important context for interpreting the five analytical indicators explored in the study. The combination of organisational diversity, varying developmental stages and differing levels of perceived readiness helps explain why respondents reported both strengths and gaps across leadership, organisational culture, wellbeing, communication and organisational systems.

Overall, the participating organisations might have a good basis for developing into positive and supportive environments for practitioners in youth work. At the same time, the findings suggest that further investment in supervision, practitioner wellbeing, communication systems, professional development opportunities and organisational support structures remains necessary to ensure sustainable and resilient youth work organisations.

Section VI: Description of respondents

VI. 1 Target group no. 1

Target group no. 1 consists of 27 respondents: youth workers and practitioners working with young people. The respondent profile is professionally relevant for the study because it combines direct youth-work roles, project/programme roles, mentoring/training/counselling roles, and volunteering or employment statuses within organisations. The profile is also marked by a high level of practical experience: most respondents have been working with young people for at least six years.

a. Position within the organisation

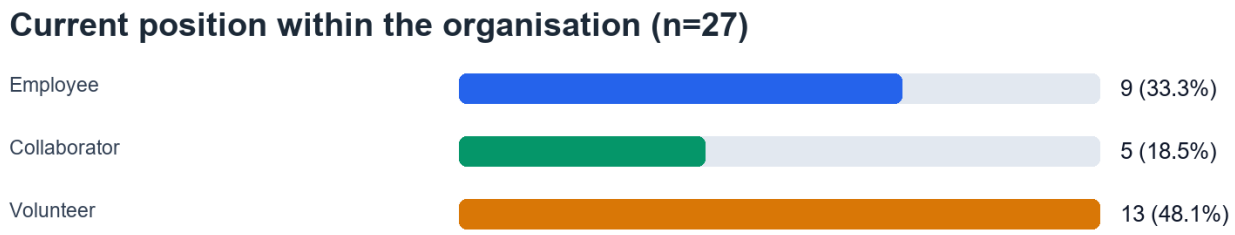
The largest group of respondents are volunteers: 13 out of 27 respondents (48.1%). Employees account for 9 respondents (33.3%), while collaborators account for 5 respondents (18.5%). This distribution is important for interpreting organisational wellbeing and support needs.

A sample with a strong volunteer component may perceive organisational support differently from paid staff: volunteers may rely more strongly on informal support, team belonging, mentoring, clarity of tasks and recognition. Employees, in contrast, may be more directly exposed to workload, supervision, organisational policies and formal wellbeing measures.

The strong presence of volunteers also reflects the operational reality of many youth organisations, where volunteer involvement is central to programme delivery. Therefore, when the report discusses positive and supportive organisations, it should not limit the concept of staff wellbeing to paid employees only. In this sample, the organisational environment must be understood as affecting employees, collaborators and volunteers alike.

Table VI.1. Position within the organisation

Category	No.	% of respondents
Employee	9	33.3%
Collaborator	5	18.5%
Volunteer	13	48.1%



b. Current role when working with young people

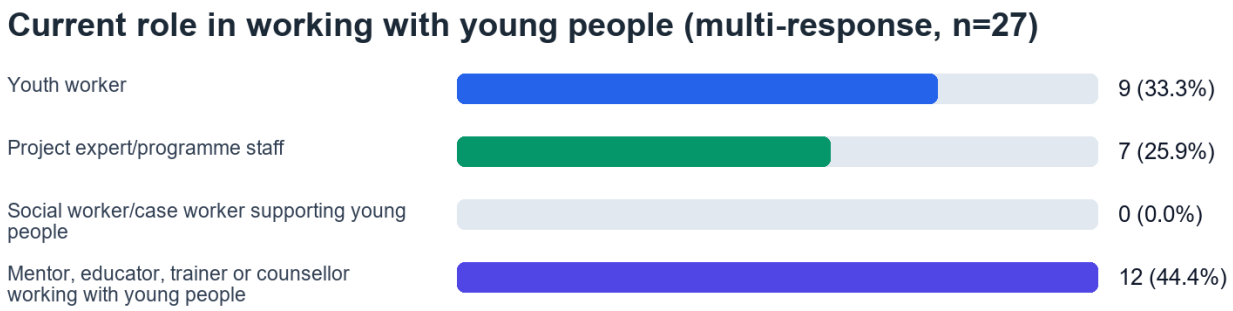
Respondents reported several roles in their work with young people. The most frequent role is mentor, educator, trainer or counsellor working with young people, selected by 12 respondents (44.4%). Youth worker was selected by 9 respondents (33.3%). Project expert/programme staff was selected by 7 respondents (25.9%). No respondent selected the social worker/case worker option.

These results show that the respondent group combines direct relational work with young people and programme-level responsibilities. The almost equal presence of youth workers and mentor/trainer/counsellor profiles suggests that many respondents engage in facilitation, guidance, non-formal learning and personal development processes. The substantial share of project or programme staff also indicates that organisational support is not only relevant for frontline interaction, but also for planning, coordination, reporting and implementation work. Because this is a multi-response item, the overlap between roles should be treated as meaningful: some practitioners likely combine several functions in the same organisation.

Table VI.2. Current role in working with young people

Category	No.	% of respondents
Youth worker	9	33.3%
Project expert/programme staff	7	25.9%
Social worker/case worker supporting young people	0	0.0%
Mentor, educator, trainer or counsellor working with young people	12	44.4%

Multi-response item; percentages indicate the share of respondents selecting each role.



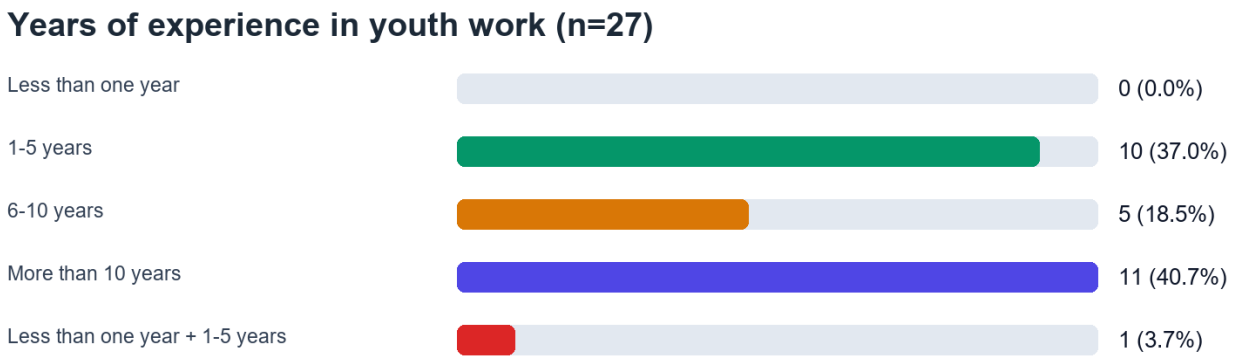
c. Years of experience in working with youth

The experience profile is strong. Eleven respondents (40.7%) have more than 10 years of experience in working with young people. Five respondents (18.5%) have 6-10 years of experience. Together, 16 respondents (59.3%) have at least six years of experience. Another 10 respondents (37.0%) selected 1-5 years, while one respondent (3.7%) selected both less than one year and 1-5 years. No respondent selected only the "less than one year" category. This means that the sample is dominated by respondents with established experience rather than by practitioners at the very beginning of their work with young people.

This distribution gives weight to the findings because most responses come from practitioners with sustained exposure to youth work. The views captured in the questionnaire are therefore not mainly introductory impressions, but assessments informed by repeated experience with organisational practices, young people's needs, programme delivery and the pressures placed on practitioners. This is especially relevant for interpreting questions on organisational readiness, supervision, wellbeing and burnout prevention.

Table VI.3. Years of experience in working with youth

Category	No.	% of respondents
Less than one year	0	0.0%
1-5 years	10	37.0%
6-10 years	5	18.5%
More than 10 years	11	40.7%
Less than one year + 1-5 years	1	3.7%



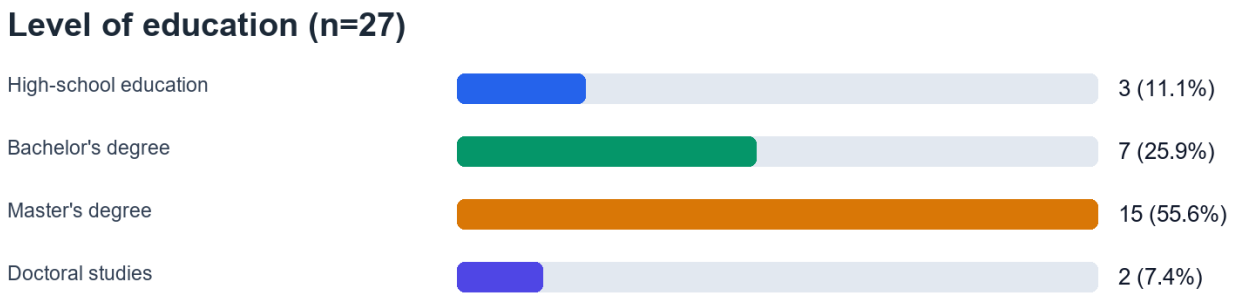
d. Level of education

The respondent group is highly educated. Fifteen respondents (55.6%) hold a master's degree, and 7 respondents (25.9%) hold a bachelor's degree. Two respondents (7.4%) report doctoral studies, while 3 respondents (11.1%) report high-school education as the highest level completed.

The educational profile suggests that respondents are likely to have the conceptual and reflective capacity needed to assess organisational culture, support systems and wellbeing-related practices. This does not mean that formal education replaces practical experience; rather, the dataset combines both. The presence of a large master's-level group, together with a high share of respondents with more than six years of experience, strengthens the credibility of the qualitative interpretation of organisational needs.

Table VI.4. Level of education

Category	No.	% of respondents
High-school education	3	11.1%
Bachelor's degree	7	25.9%
Master's degree	15	55.6%
Doctoral studies	2	7.4%



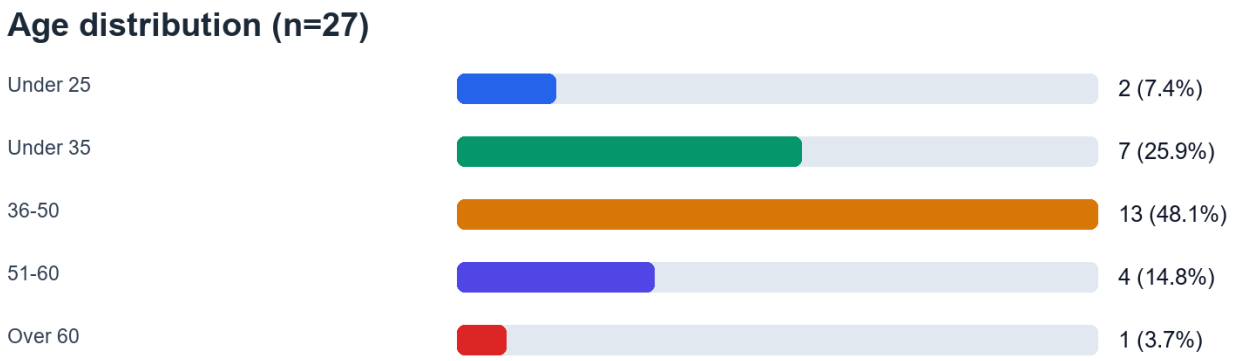
e. Age

The largest age group is 36-50 years, with 13 respondents (48.1%). Seven respondents (25.9%) are under 35, 2 respondents (7.4%) are under 25, 4 respondents (14.8%) are aged 51-60, and one respondent (3.7%) is over 60. Overall, 18 out of 27 respondents (66.7%) are over 35.

The age distribution points to a respondent group situated mostly in mid-career or later-career stages. This is relevant because practitioners in these age groups may have accumulated broader organisational comparisons and may be more able to distinguish between occasional interpersonal support and systematic organisational support. At the same time, the presence of younger respondents ensures that early-career perspectives are not entirely absent.

Table VI.5. Age of respondents

Category	No.	% of respondents
Under 25	2	7.4%
Under 35	7	25.9%
36-50	13	48.1%
51-60	4	14.8%
Over 60	1	3.7%

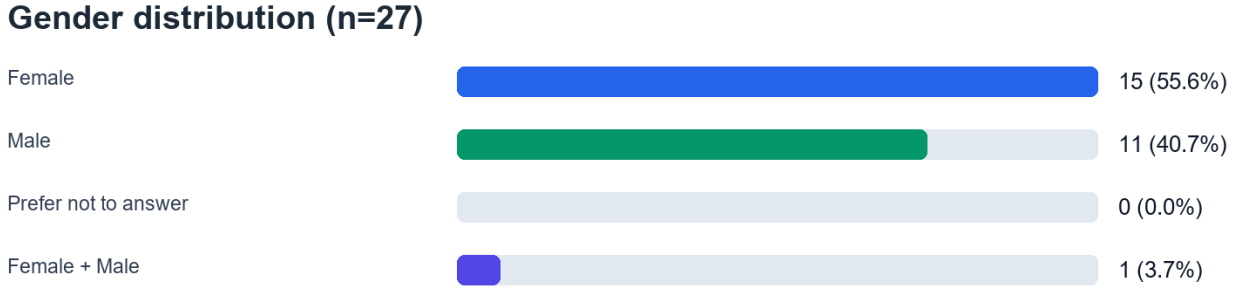


Additional respondent context: gender

The gender distribution is relatively balanced, although women are the majority: 15 respondents (55.6%) selected female only and 11 respondents (40.7%) selected male only. One respondent (3.7%) selected both female and male.

Table VI.6. Gender of respondents

Category	No.	% of respondents
Female	15	55.6%
Male	11	40.7%
Prefer not to answer	0	0.0%
Female + Male	1	3.7%



Interpretative synthesis for Section VI.1

The target group no. 1 sample is particularly useful for the study because it combines three characteristics: practical experience, organisational embeddedness and diversity of roles. Most respondents are not newcomers to youth work, and many operate in roles that connect direct work with young people to programme delivery, mentoring,

training or counselling. This creates a strong basis for interpreting their perceptions of what a positive and supportive organisation should provide.

The high share of volunteers suggests that organisational wellbeing and resilience in youth work cannot be framed only around formal employment relations. Supportive youth organisations need to consider how volunteers are welcomed, guided, supervised, recognised and protected from emotional overload or unclear expectations. At the same time, employees and collaborators remain a substantial part of the sample and may be more directly affected by formal workload, leadership, supervision and organisational policies.

Overall, the questionnaire responses describe a respondent group that is credible and well placed to assess the readiness of youth-work organisations. The group is experienced, relatively mature in age, highly educated and active across multiple youth-work functions.

Short analytical bridge from Section V to Section VI.1

Taken together, Sections V and VI.1 show that the questionnaire captures perceptions from practitioners embedded in Romanian organisations with substantial youth-related activity and, in many cases, considerable organisational maturity. The organisations are mostly mature or consolidated, but the respondent profile also reveals a strong volunteer component and multi-role practice. This combination is important: even when organisations are institutionally mature, the people delivering youth work may still depend heavily on relational, motivational and wellbeing-oriented support systems.

The finding that 70.4% of respondents selected at least one positive readiness option is encouraging, but it should be interpreted alongside the respondents who are neutral or critical. The practical implication is that positive and supportive organisational practices exist in the ecosystem, but they are not yet consistently experienced by all practitioners. So, readiness is not a completed achievement being understood as an uneven but promising foundation for further capacity building.

VI. 2 Target group no. 2

Target group no. 2 consists of 25 leaders and managers within organisations - this group includes people who hold leadership, coordination, project-management, board or administrative management responsibilities. The respondent profile is therefore particularly relevant for understanding organisational readiness, because these respondents are likely to influence strategy, internal culture, staff support, supervision arrangements and the allocation of organisational resources.

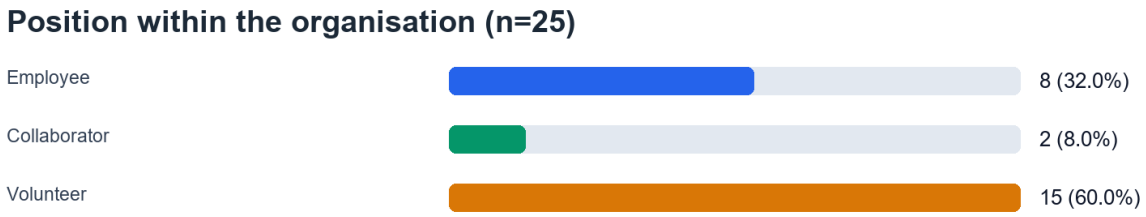
a. Position within the organisation

The largest group of respondents are volunteers: 15 respondents (60.0%). Employees account for 8 respondents (32.0%), while collaborators account for 2 respondents (8.0%). This is a important result for a leadership and management target group. It suggests that leadership and coordination responsibilities in the participating organisations are not carried only by paid staff, but also by volunteers.

This has direct implications for interpreting organisational readiness. In volunteer-heavy leadership structures, positive and supportive organisational practices must be designed not only for employees but also for people who coordinate, govern or lead while not necessarily being formally employed. Support, clarity, supervision and recognition therefore become important organisational mechanisms for both paid and unpaid leadership roles.

Table VI.1. Position within the organisation

Category	No.	% of respondents
Employee	8	32.0%
Collaborator	2	8.0%
Volunteer	15	60.0%



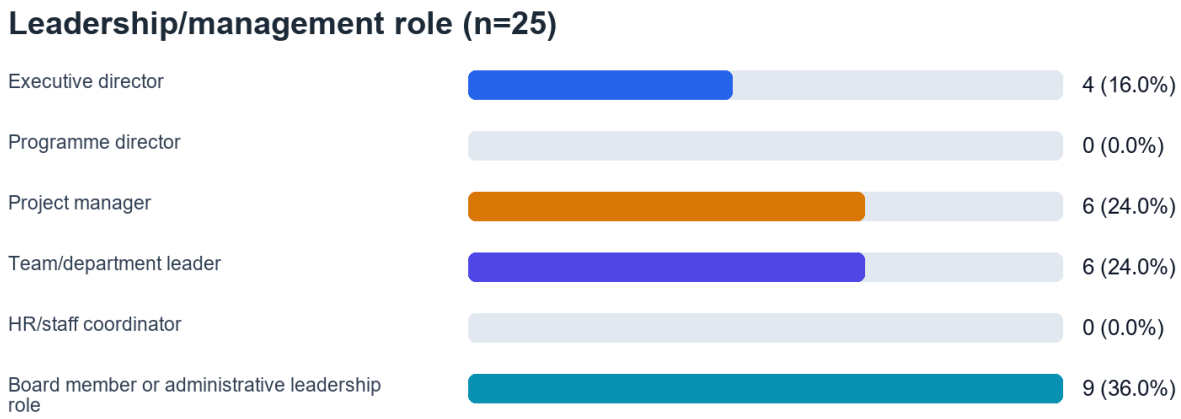
b. Current leadership or management role in organisation

The most frequent leadership/management role is board member or administrative leadership role, selected by 9 respondents (36.0%). Project managers and team/department leaders are each represented by 6 respondents (24.0%). Executive directors account for 4 respondents (16.0%). No respondents selected programme director or HR/staff coordinator. The distribution shows that the target group includes both governance-level and operational leadership roles. Board or administrative leaders may influence strategic direction, governance and organisational culture, while project managers and team leaders are closer to implementation, team coordination and day-to-day support.

The absence of HR/staff coordinator responses is also meaningful: it may indicate that participating organisations do not have specialised HR functions, or that human-resource responsibilities might be distributed across other leadership roles. This can affect how systematically staff wellbeing, supervision and burnout prevention are addressed.

Table VI.2. Current leadership or management role

Category	No.	% of respondents
Executive director	4	16.0%
Programme director	0	0.0%
Project manager	6	24.0%
Team/department leader	6	24.0%
HR/staff coordinator	0	0.0%
Board member or administrative leadership role	9	36.0%



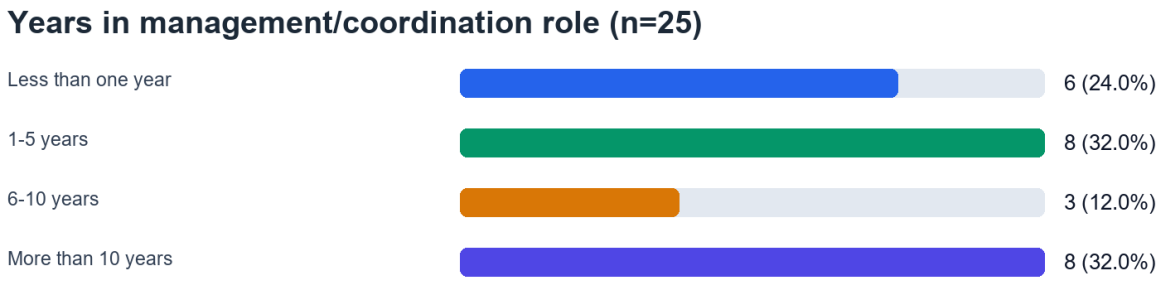
c. Years of experience in management or coordination

Management and coordination experience is divided between very experienced leaders and more recent leaders. Eight respondents (32.0%) have more than 10 years in a management or coordination position, and 3 respondents (12.0%) have 6-10 years. Together, 11 respondents (44.0%) have at least six years of leadership or coordination experience.

Another 8 respondents (32.0%) have 1-5 years of management or coordination experience, while 6 respondents (24.0%) have less than one year. This means that the target group combines established leadership experience with a substantial early-leadership segment. The early-leadership segment is important because newer leaders may be more aware of gaps in systems, supervision and organisational processes, while long-serving leaders may have deeper knowledge of institutional constraints and organisational history.

Table VI.3. Years in management or coordination role

Category	No.	% of respondents
Less than one year	6	24.0%
1-5 years	8	32.0%
6-10 years	3	12.0%
More than 10 years	8	32.0%



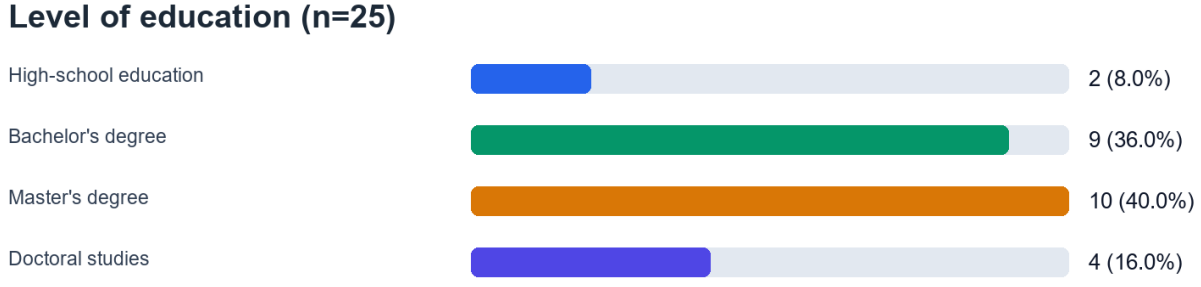
d. Level of education

The education profile is high. Ten respondents (40.0%) hold a master's degree, 9 respondents (36.0%) hold a bachelor's degree, and 4 respondents (16.0%) report doctoral studies. Two respondents (8.0%) report high-school education as the highest level completed.

This profile suggests that the leadership/management sample has substantial formal educational capital. Combined with the leadership roles described above, this supports the relevance of the respondents' assessments of organisational culture, readiness and support needs. The sample is not only operationally embedded; it is also relatively well equipped to reflect on organisational systems and institutional development.

Table VI.4. Level of education

Category	No.	% of respondents
High-school education	2	8.0%
Bachelor's degree	9	36.0%
Master's degree	10	40.0%
Doctoral studies	4	16.0%



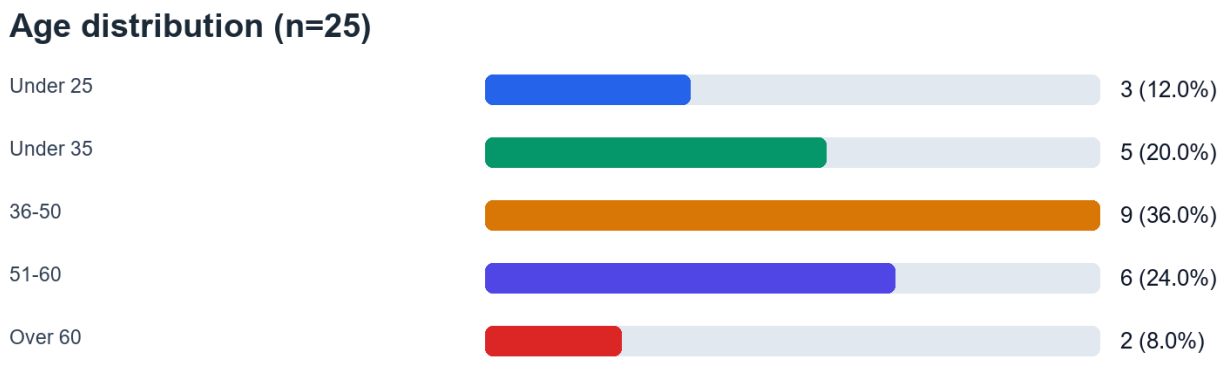
e. Age

The largest age group is 36-50 years, with 9 respondents (36.0%). Six respondents (24.0%) are aged 51-60, and 2 respondents (8.0%) are over 60. Together, 17 respondents (68.0%) are older than 35. Younger respondents are also present: 5 respondents (20.0%) are under 35, and 3 respondents (12.0%) are under 25.

The age profile therefore combines mature leadership perspectives with a smaller but relevant younger-leader component. This is useful for interpreting readiness: older or mid-career leaders may bring long organisational memory and comparative experience, while younger leaders may be closer to emerging practices, volunteer dynamics and newer expectations around wellbeing and participation.

Table VI.5. Age of respondents

Category	No.	% of respondents
Under 25	3	12.0%
Under 35	5	20.0%
36-50	9	36.0%
51-60	6	24.0%
Over 60	2	8.0%



Additional respondent context: gender

The gender distribution is female-majority: 17 respondents (68.0%) are female and 8 respondents (32.0%) are male.

Table VI.6. Gender of respondents

Category	No.	% of respondents
Female	17	68.0%
Male	8	32.0%

Interpretative synthesis for Section VI.2

Target group no. 2 provides a leadership-side view of organisational readiness. The sample is especially valuable because it includes governance roles, executive leadership, project management and team coordination. These are the roles most likely to influence whether positive and supportive organisational practices become systematic rather than informal or occasional.

A key finding is the combination of high normative commitment and only moderate organisational readiness. On Q11, leaders and managers give very high mean scores to the idea that positive and supportive organisations should be important: 4.64/5 for their own organisation and 4.84/5 for both NGOs working with young people and NGOs in general. This shows strong agreement with the principle. However, Q12 shows that only 64.0% selected at least one positive readiness category, while 36.0% are neutral or critical. The gap between principle and readiness are treated as analytically important.

The profile also shows that leadership is not exclusively professionalised in paid positions. With 60.0% of respondents identifying as volunteers, organisations appear to rely heavily on voluntary leadership, board involvement or unpaid coordination. This can be a strength, because it reflects civic commitment and participatory organisational cultures. It can also create vulnerability if support systems, role clarity, workload boundaries and supervision are not sufficiently formalised.

Overall, the target group no. 2 responses suggest that Romanian organisations in the sample have a meaningful base for becoming positive and supportive environments, but that this base still requires strengthening. The presence of mature organisations and experienced leaders is encouraging; nevertheless, the readiness distribution and the absence of specialised HR/staff coordination roles point to the need for more systematic internal support structures.

Short analytical bridge from Section V to Section VI.2

Sections V and VI.2 together show that leadership and management respondents are embedded in organisations that are mostly youth-related, often mature, and active mainly in education, youth empowerment, inclusion and community development. These are mission-driven fields where staff, volunteers and practitioners may face complex emotional, relational and workload demands.

The questionnaire results therefore support a nuanced interpretation: leaders and managers value positive and supportive organisations very strongly, but they do not uniformly perceive their own organisations as fully prepared.

This suggests that future capacity-building should focus not only on awareness, which already appears high, but on practical organisational systems: supervision, feedback, role clarity, mental-health and wellbeing support, workload management, participatory communication and concrete procedures for supporting both paid and volunteer practitioners.

Section VII: Key findings – quantitative results and qualitative insights

Indicator 1: Leadership, Supervision and Professional Development

This section analyses Indicator 1 across all 52 questionnaires: 27 responses from Target group no. 1, youth workers and practitioners working with young people, and 25 responses from Target group no. 2, leaders and managers within organisations. The indicator focuses on how the organisation supports practitioners' growth and guidance through leadership and learning.

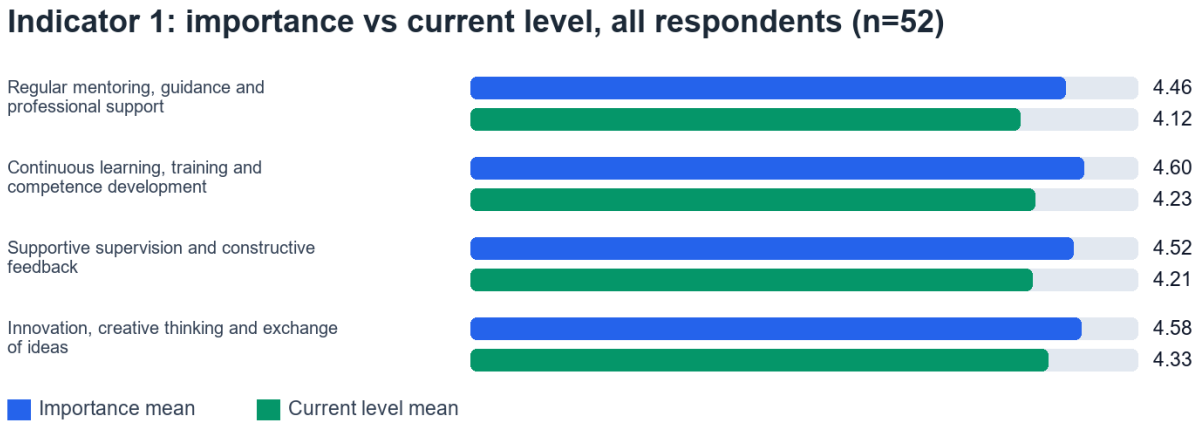
The quantitative analysis uses the four paired items from Q13.1 and Q14.1. Q13.1 measures **perceived importance** on a 1-5 scale, where 5 means very important. Q14.1 measures **the current level in the respondent's own organisation** on a 1-5 scale, where 5 means very good. The interpretation therefore focuses not only on the absolute scores, but also on the gap between what respondents consider important and what they perceive as currently present in their organisation.

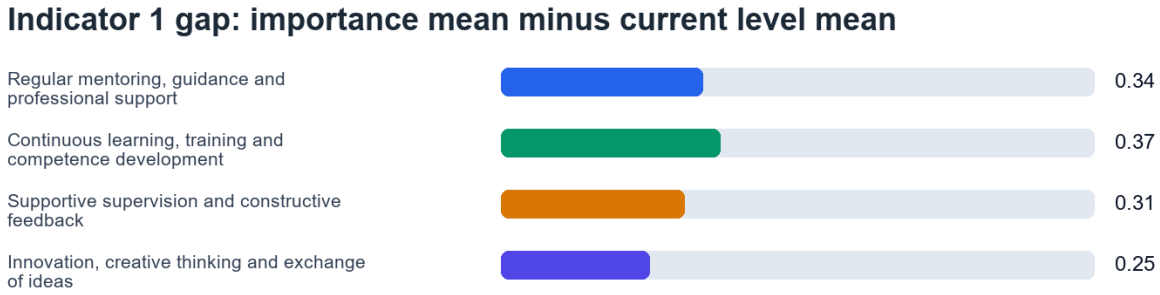
Main results:

Table VII.1. Indicator 1 - importance, current level and implementation gap, all respondents

Sub-item	Importance mean	Current mean	Gap	Importance 4-5	Current 4-5	Current 1-2
Regular mentoring, guidance and professional support	4.46	4.12	0.34	92.3%	82.7%	7.7%
Continuous learning, training and competence	4.60	4.23	0.37	92.3%	78.8%	3.8%

development						
Supportive supervision and constructive feedback	4.52	4.21	0.31	90.4%	76.9%	5.8%
Innovation, creative thinking and exchange of ideas	4.58	4.33	0.25	86.5%	82.7%	5.8%





The overall pattern is clear: all four Indicator 1 dimensions are considered highly important. The highest importance mean is recorded for continuous learning, training and competence development (4.60/5), followed by innovation, creative thinking and exchange of ideas (4.58/5), supportive supervision and constructive feedback (4.52/5), and regular mentoring, guidance and professional support (4.46/5). In three of the four

cases, more than 90% of respondents selected 4 or 5 for importance; innovation is also very highly rated, with 86.5% selecting 4 or 5.

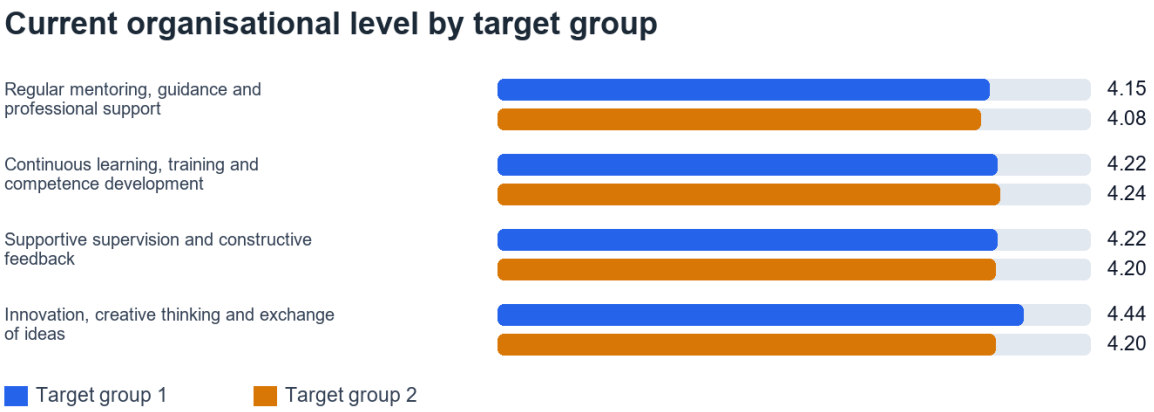
Current organisational capacity is also evaluated positively, but consistently lower than importance. The strongest current dimension is innovation, creative thinking and exchange of ideas, with a mean of 4.33/5 and 82.7% current high ratings. The next strongest is continuous learning, training and competence development (4.23/5), followed by supportive supervision and constructive feedback (4.21/5), and regular mentoring, guidance and professional support (4.12/5).

The largest implementation gap is found for continuous learning, training and competence development: 4.60 importance versus 4.23 current level, a gap of 0.37 points. Regular mentoring, guidance and professional support follows with a gap of 0.34 points, while supportive supervision and constructive feedback has a gap of 0.31 points. Innovation has the smallest gap, 0.25 points.

The pattern indicates that organisations are not starting from a weak baseline, but their current practice does not fully match the level of importance attributed to leadership, supervision and professional development.

Table VII.2. Indicator 1 - Current organisational level by target group

Sub-item	Target group no. 1 mean	Target group no. 2 mean
Regular mentoring, guidance and professional support	4.15	4.08
Continuous learning, training and competence development	4.22	4.24
Supportive supervision and constructive feedback	4.22	4.20
Innovation, creative thinking and exchange of ideas	4.44	4.20



The comparison between the two target groups shows broad convergence, but also some meaningful differences. Target group no. 1 rates the current level of innovation and exchange of ideas particularly high (4.44/5), higher than leaders/managers (4.20/5). Practitioners and leaders/managers rate continuous learning almost identically: 4.22/5 among practitioners and 4.24/5 among leaders/managers.

Practitioners rate mentoring, guidance and professional support slightly higher (4.15/5) than leaders/managers (4.08/5), although the difference is small. For supportive supervision and constructive feedback, the groups are also very close: 4.22 among practitioners and 4.20 among leaders/managers. The main group difference is therefore not a sharp disagreement, but the somewhat stronger practitioner perception that innovation and idea exchange are currently present.

The findings for Indicator 1 show a strong and coherent pattern across the full sample of 52 respondents. Leadership, supervision and professional development are perceived as fundamental dimensions of a positive and supportive organisation. The very high importance scores indicate a broad consensus that youth work organisations cannot become genuinely supportive environments without regular mentoring, learning opportunities, constructive supervision and openness to innovation.

At the same time, the current-level scores reveal that these capabilities are not yet implemented with the same strength as their perceived importance. The overall implementation gap of 0.32 points is moderate, but consistent. The largest gaps relate to continuous learning and regular mentoring, indicating that organisations may need

to move from informal or occasional support towards more stable, systematic and planned professional development structures.

The comparison between practitioners and leaders/managers is particularly meaningful. Practitioners assessed the current level slightly more positively than leaders and managers, while leaders and managers reported a larger gap between importance and current implementation. This may suggest that leaders are more aware of organisational limitations and resource constraints, while practitioners evaluate support mainly through their immediate lived experiences. The difference confirms the methodological assumption that perceptions may vary according to organisational position.

Qualitative data strengthens the quantitative interpretation. Respondents did not describe leadership development in abstract terms. Therefore, Indicator 1 should be interpreted as a strategic area for organisational development. Strengthening leadership, supervision and professional development would likely have positive effects not only on staff competence, but also on wellbeing, motivation, retention and organisational sustainability.

Romanian participating organisations are relatively well oriented towards supportive leadership practices, but still need more structured systems for mentoring, learning and supervision. The priority is not only to increase awareness, which is already high, but to translate this awareness into consistent organisational routines, dedicated resources and leadership development mechanisms.

Indicator 2: Organisational Culture, Inclusion and Psychological Safety

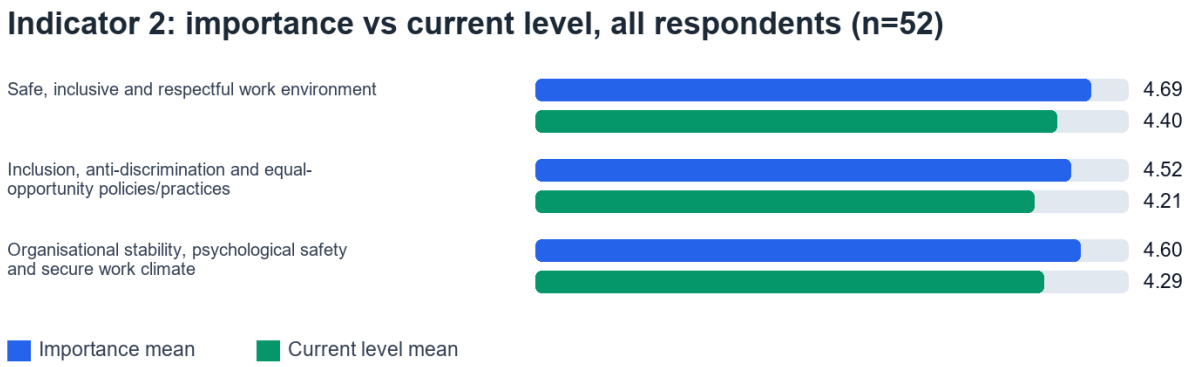
This section analyses Indicator 2 across all 52 questionnaires: 27 responses from Target group no. 1, youth workers and practitioners working with young people, and 25 responses from Target group no. 2, leaders and managers within organisations. Indicator 2 focuses on the quality of the work environment and the values promoted by the organisation.

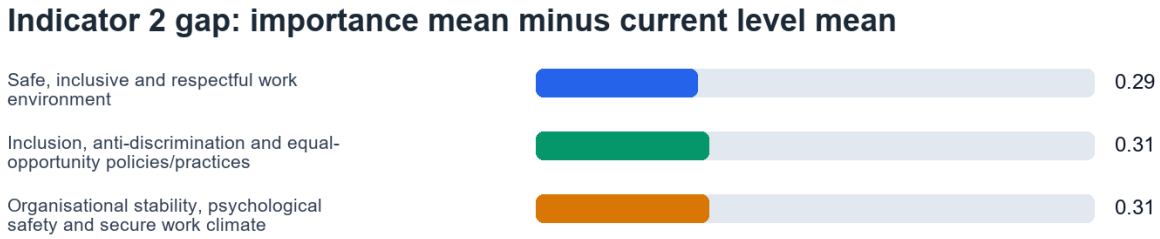
The quantitative analysis uses the three paired items from Q13.2 and Q14.2. Q13.2 measures **perceived importance** on a 1-5 scale, where 5 means very important. Q14.2 measures **the current level in the respondent's own organisation** on a 1-5 scale, where 5 means very good. The analysis therefore examines both the level of agreement around the importance of culture, inclusion and psychological safety, and the extent to which these dimensions are perceived as currently present.

Main results:

Table VII.1. Indicator 2 - importance, current level and implementation gap, all respondents

Sub-item	Importance mean	Current mean	Gap	Importance 4-5	Current 4-5	Current 1-2
Safe, inclusive and respectful work environment	4.69	4.40	0.29	92.3%	86.5%	3.8%
Inclusion, anti-discrimination and equal-opportunity policies/practices	4.52	4.21	0.31	90.4%	82.7%	7.7%
Organisational stability, psychological safety and secure work climate	4.60	4.29	0.31	88.5%	84.6%	7.7%





The overall quantitative pattern is very strong. All three Indicator 2 dimensions receive high importance scores. The highest importance mean is recorded for safe, inclusive and respectful work environment (4.69/5). The other two dimensions are also above 4.50/5, showing that respondents widely recognise organisational culture, inclusion and psychological safety as core features of a positive and supportive organisation.

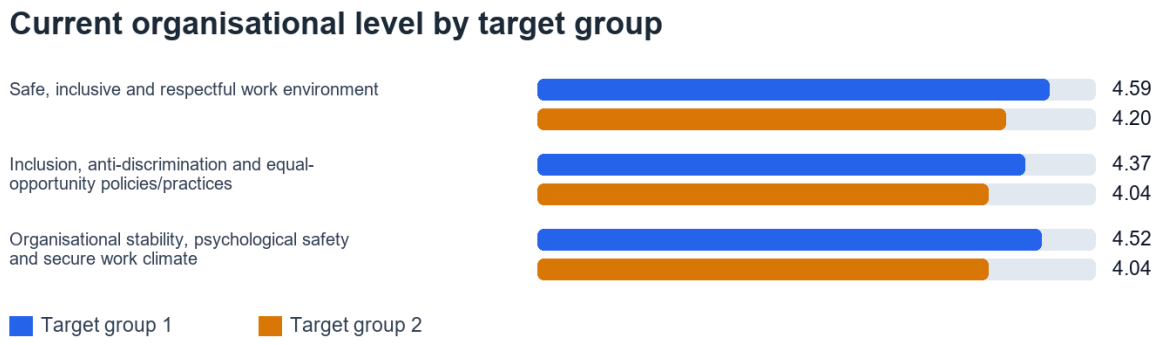
Current organisational capacity is evaluated positively as well, but it remains lower than importance on every sub-item. The strongest current dimension is safe, inclusive and respectful work environment (4.40/5). The lowest current mean is recorded for inclusion, anti-discrimination and equal-opportunity policies/practices (4.21/5). This indicates that the participating organisations are generally perceived as having a solid cultural base, but policy-level inclusion and/or psychological safety practices are not always experienced at the same level as the broader value of respect and safety.

The largest implementation gap is found for inclusion, anti-discrimination and equal-opportunity policies/practices: 4.52 importance versus 4.21 current level, a gap of 0.31 points. This gap is analytically important because it shows where the distance between values and practice is most visible. Respondents strongly value this dimension, but

current organisational arrangements are perceived as less fully developed.

Table VII.2. Indicator 2 - Current organisational level by target group

Sub-item	Target group no. 1 mean	Target group no. 2 mean
Safe, inclusive and respectful work environment	4.59	4.20
Inclusion, anti-discrimination and equal-opportunity policies/practices	4.37	4.04
Organisational stability, psychological safety and secure work climate	4.52	4.04



The target-group comparison shows that practitioners generally rate the current organisational level higher than leaders/managers on all three Indicator 2 sub-items. The difference is especially visible for a safe, inclusive and respectful work environment, where Target group no. 1 gives a mean score of 4.59/5, compared with 4.20/5 among leaders/managers. For inclusion, anti-discrimination and equal-opportunity policies/practices, the practitioner mean is 4.37/5, compared with 4.04/5 among leaders/managers. For organisational stability, psychological safety and a secure work climate, the practitioner mean is 4.52/5, compared with 4.04/5 among leaders/managers.

This pattern is interesting because it reverses a common assumption that leaders

might rate organisational culture more positively than practitioners. In this dataset, leaders/managers appear more cautious. Their lower scores may reflect a stronger awareness of internal policy gaps, structural fragility or the difficulty of sustaining psychological safety across paid staff, collaborators and volunteers.

Indicator 2 shows a strong normative consensus: respondents across both target groups consider organisational culture, inclusion and psychological safety highly important for a positive and supportive organisation. The high importance scores suggest that these are not secondary or optional dimensions. They are perceived as central conditions for practitioners, staff and volunteers to work well with young people.

At the same time, current-level results show that organisational culture is stronger as a general climate of respect and safety than as a fully systematised set of policies and practices. The most visible development need concerns inclusion, anti-discrimination and equal-opportunity policies/practices, where the implementation gap is 0.31 points. This indicates that values such as inclusion, respect and psychological safety need to be translated into consistent mechanisms: policies, feedback channels, anti-discrimination procedures, role clarity, participation in decisions and practical adaptations for diverse needs.

The target-group comparison is particularly meaningful. Practitioners rate the current level higher than leaders/managers across all three dimensions of Indicator 2. This may suggest that leaders and managers are more aware of what is still missing at organisational-system level. Rather than reading the lower leadership scores as negative, they can be interpreted as a useful sign of organisational self-awareness: leaders recognise that culture and psychological safety require continuous development, not only good intentions.

The qualitative findings from the focus groups and interviews deepen this conclusion. Leaders/managers do not describe culture and inclusion as abstract principles. They connect them to concrete practices: transparent decisions, feedback routines, inclusive

and accessible environments, and safe spaces for discussing stress or conflict.

Romanian respondents see organisational culture, inclusion and psychological safety as essential and already partly present, but not yet fully institutionalised. Future capacity-building should therefore focus on turning shared values into explicit organisational practices: inclusion and anti-discrimination policies, accessible participation, psychological-safety routines, anonymous or safe feedback channels, regular reflection meetings, recognition systems and clear procedures for responding to stress, conflict and exclusion.

Indicator 3: Wellbeing, Mental Health and Burnout Prevention

This section analyses Indicator 3 across all 52 questionnaires: 27 responses from Target group no. 1, youth workers and practitioners working with young people, and 25 responses from Target group no. 2, leaders and managers within organisations. Indicator 3 focuses on the organisation's capacity to protect staff wellbeing and mental health.

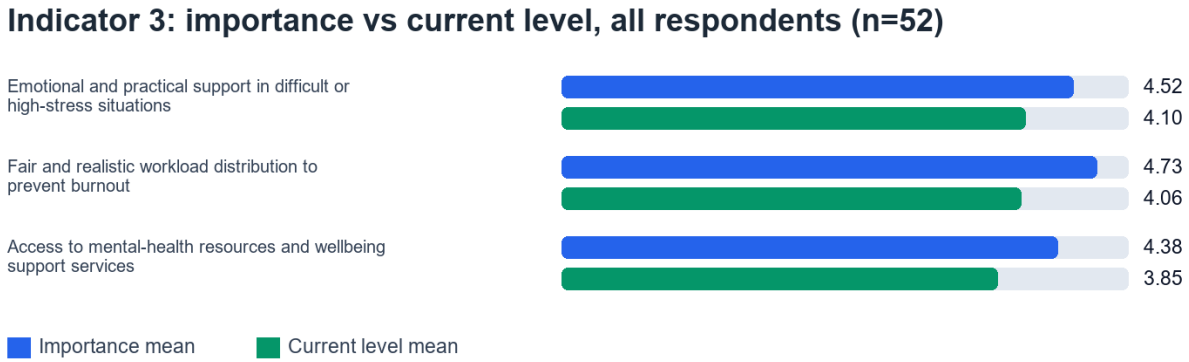
The quantitative analysis uses the three paired items from Q13.3 and Q14.3. Q13.3 measures **perceived importance** on a 1-5 scale, where 5 means very important. Q14.3 measures **the current level in the respondent's own organisation** on a 1-5 scale, where 5 means very good. This indicator is particularly important because youth work often involves emotional labour, complex beneficiary needs, volunteer engagement, project pressure and limited organisational resources.

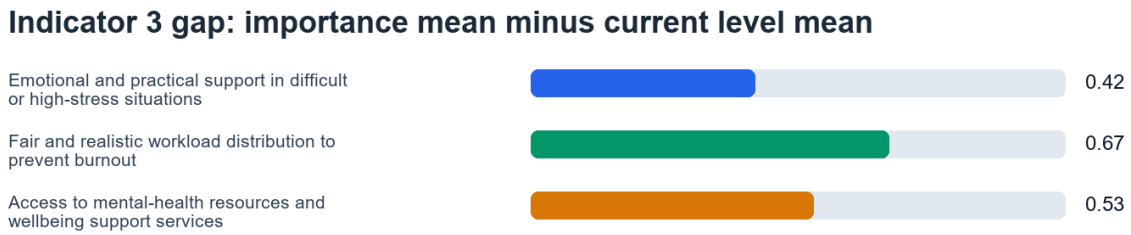
Main results

Table VII.1. Indicator 3 - importance, current level and implementation gap, all respondents

Sub-item	Importance mean	Current mean	Gap	Importance 4-5	Current 4-5	Current 1-2
Emotional and	4.52	4.10	0.42	90.4%	78.8%	9.6%

practical support in difficult or high-stress situations						
Fair and realistic workload distribution to prevent burnout	4.73	4.06	0.67	96.2%	78.8%	11.5%
Access to mental-health resources and wellbeing support services	4.38	3.85	0.53	82.7%	75.0%	17.3%





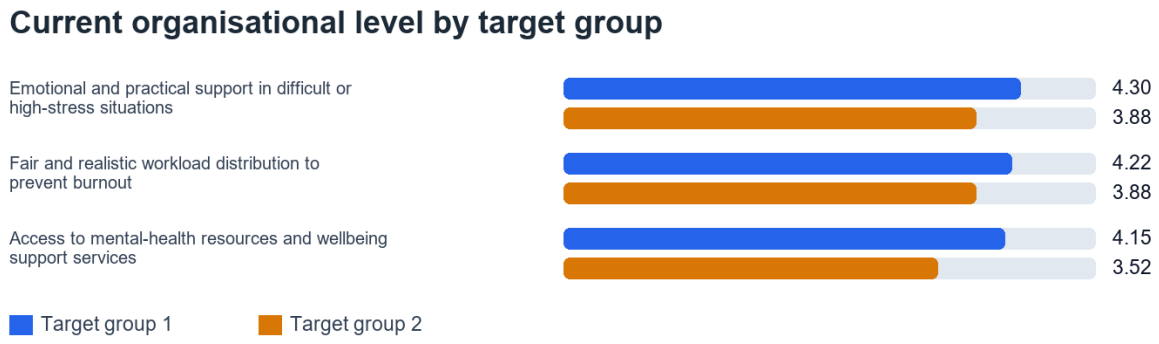
Indicator 3 is rated as highly important across all three dimensions. The highest importance score is recorded for fair and realistic workload distribution to prevent burnout (4.73/5). This shows that respondents strongly recognise burnout prevention and realistic workload distribution as central to organisational readiness. Emotional and practical support in difficult or high-stress situations and access to mental-health resources are also rated highly, confirming that wellbeing is understood both relationally and structurally.

Current organisational capacity is positive but clearly lower than importance. The strongest current dimension is emotional and practical support in difficult or high-stress situations (4.10/5). The lowest current dimension is access to mental-health resources and wellbeing support services (3.85/5). This is a very important finding: respondents consider access to mental-health and wellbeing resources important, but they perceive this as the least developed current organisational capacity among the three wellbeing-related items.

The largest implementation gap is found for fair and realistic workload distribution to prevent burnout: 4.73 importance versus 4.06 current level, a gap of 0.67 points. Compared with Indicators 1 and 2, Indicator 3 shows a more pronounced tension between what organisations should provide and what respondents experience as already available. The gap is not only technical; it points to a need for more explicit, accessible and systematic wellbeing support.

Table VII.2. Indicator 3 - Current organisational level by target group

Sub-item	Target group no. 1 mean	Target group no. 2 mean
Emotional and practical support in difficult or high-stress situations	4.30	3.88
Fair and realistic workload distribution to prevent burnout	4.22	3.88
Access to mental-health resources and wellbeing support services	4.15	3.52



The comparison between target groups is especially relevant for Indicator 3. Practitioners rate the current level higher than leaders/managers on all three dimensions of Indicator 3. For emotional and practical support in high-stress situations, Target group no. 1 gives a mean score of 4.30/5, compared with 3.88/5 among leaders/managers. For fair and realistic workload distribution, practitioners give 4.22/5, compared with 3.88/5 among leaders/managers. For access to mental-health resources and wellbeing support services, practitioners give 4.15/5, while leaders/managers give 3.52/5.

The leadership/management scores are notably more cautious. This may reflect leaders' awareness that wellbeing systems are not yet institutionalised, even if informal support exists. It may also indicate that leaders see the structural limits of

their organisations more clearly: insufficient resources, lack of specialised wellbeing support, workload pressures and weak formal procedures for preventing burnout.

The strongest qualitative themes are wellbeing/mental-health/emotional support, workload balance and burnout prevention, feedback/reflection/safe communication, training for difficult situations, recognition, networking and inclusion. Several suggestions directly call for internal wellbeing policies, prevention of professional exhaustion, emotional support procedures, access to mental-health sessions, and a confidential reference person or wellbeing officer. These are concrete organisational mechanisms, not just general wishes.

Workload appears as a recurring concern. Respondents mention realistic planning, limiting overtime, fairer distribution of work, more care for workload, and real breaks during intense activities. This directly confirms the quantitative importance of fair and realistic workload distribution. It also suggests that burnout prevention is understood as a management and planning issue, not only as an individual resilience issue.

Indicator 3 reveals one of the most important development areas in the dataset. Respondents strongly agree that positive and supportive organisations must protect wellbeing, mental health and prevent burnout. However, current organisational capacity is weaker than importance on every dimension of this indicator, especially regarding access to mental-health resources and wellbeing support services.

The integrated quantitative picture suggests that organisations may be better at offering informal or relational support than at providing systematic wellbeing infrastructure. Emotional and practical support in stressful situations receives the highest current score, while access to mental-health resources receives the lowest. This implies that people may experience care from colleagues or leaders, but formal resources, services and procedures are less consistently available.

The target-group comparison adds an important layer. Leaders/managers rate current wellbeing capacities lower than practitioners across all three dimensions. This could

indicate that leaders are more aware of organisational gaps in workload planning, burnout prevention and access to professional wellbeing support. Rather than contradicting practitioner views, this difference suggests that informal support may be visible in day-to-day practice, while leaders recognise that formal systems remain underdeveloped.

The qualitative responses strongly support this interpretation. Leaders/managers ask for wellbeing policies, burnout prevention, workload rules, realistic planning, mental-health sessions, confidential support, regular reflection and feedback spaces, and recognition of work. These suggestions show that wellbeing is not reducible to individual coping. It is an organisational responsibility that requires leadership, planning, resources, communication and culture.

Romanian respondents see wellbeing, mental health and burnout prevention as essential to a positive and supportive organisation, but current systems are not yet sufficiently developed. Future capacity-building should focus on practical wellbeing infrastructure: workload monitoring, realistic task planning, access to mental-health resources, confidential support channels, burnout-prevention policies, regular reflection spaces, staff and volunteer support routines, and leadership practices that normalise asking for help before exhaustion occurs.

Indicator 4: Communication, Participation and Interpersonal Support

This section analyses Indicator 4 across all 52 questionnaires: 27 responses from Target group no. 1, youth workers and practitioners working with young people, and 25 responses from Target group no. 2, leaders and managers within organisations. Indicator 4 focuses on how people connect, collaborate, and participate inside the organization.

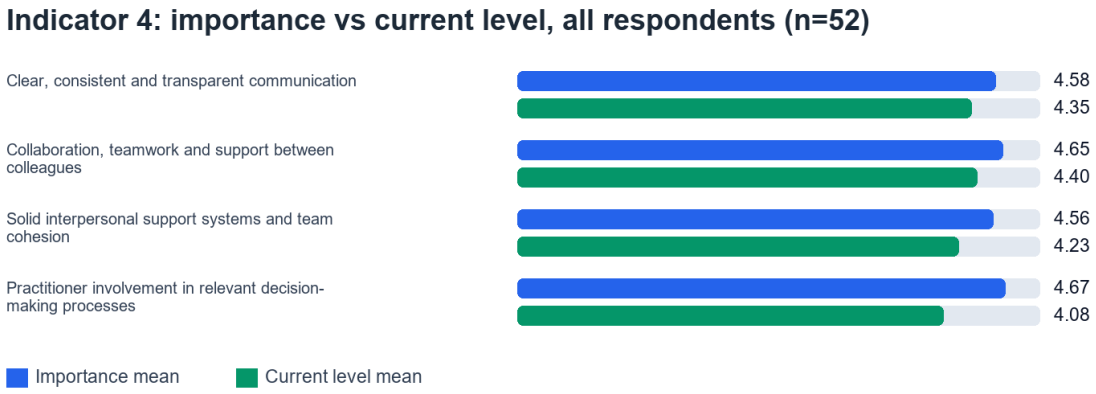
The quantitative analysis uses the four paired items from Q13.4 and Q14.4. Q13.4 measures **perceived importance** on a 1-5 scale, where 5 means very important. Q14.4 measures the **current level in the respondent's own organisation** on a 1-5 scale,

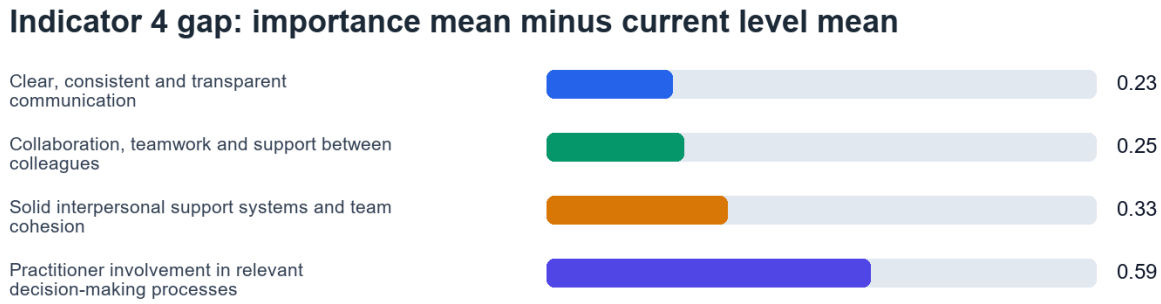
where 5 means very good. This indicator is particularly relevant because positive and supportive organisations depend not only on policies, but also on everyday relational practices: transparent communication, teamwork, peer support and participation.

Main results

Table VII.1. Indicator 4 - importance, current level and implementation gap, all respondents

Sub-item	Importance mean	Current mean	Gap	Importance 4-5	Current 4-5	Current 1-2
Clear, consistent and transparent communication	4.58	4.35	0.23	94.2%	88.5%	0.0%
Collaboration, teamwork and support between colleagues	4.65	4.40	0.25	92.3%	88.5%	0.0%
Solid interpersonal support systems and team cohesion	4.56	4.23	0.33	90.4%	80.8%	7.7%
Practitioner involvement in relevant decision-making processes	4.67	4.08	0.59	94.2%	80.8%	13.5%





Indicator 4 is rated as highly important across all four dimensions. The highest importance score is recorded for practitioner involvement in relevant decision-making processes (4.67/5). This shows that respondents place particular value on participation and involvement in decisions, not only on communication as information flow. Collaboration, peer support and interpersonal support systems are also rated very highly.

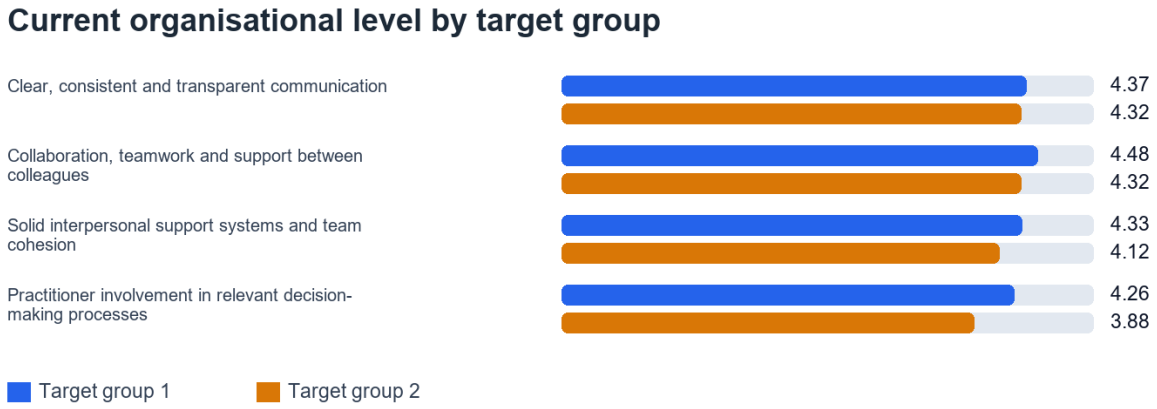
Current organisational capacity is positive, but lower than importance for every sub-item. The strongest current dimension is collaboration, teamwork and support between colleagues (4.40/5). The lowest current mean is recorded for practitioner involvement in relevant decision-making processes (4.08/5). This is an important finding because it suggests that organisations are relatively strong in communication and teamwork, but less consistent in building deeper interpersonal support systems and participatory decision-making.

The largest implementation gap is found for practitioner involvement in relevant decision-making processes: 4.67 importance versus 4.08 current level, a gap of 0.59

points. This gap indicates that respondents value participation very strongly, but do not experience practitioner involvement in decision-making as equally developed in current organisational practice.

Table VII.2. Indicator 4 - Current organisational level by target group

Sub-item	Target group no. 1 mean	Target group no. 2 mean
Clear, consistent and transparent communication	4.37	4.32
Collaboration, teamwork and support between colleagues	4.48	4.32
Solid interpersonal support systems and team cohesion	4.33	4.12
Practitioner involvement in relevant decision-making processes	4.26	3.88



The target-group comparison shows that practitioners rate the current level higher than leaders/managers on every Indicator 4 dimensions. For clear, consistent and transparent communication, Target group no. 1 gives a mean score of 4.37/5, compared with 4.32/5 among leaders/managers. For collaboration, teamwork and support between colleagues, the means are 4.48/5 and 4.32/5. For interpersonal support systems and team cohesion, the gap widens: 4.33/5 among practitioners compared with 4.12/5 among leaders/managers. For practitioner involvement in

decision-making, the difference is also visible: 4.26/5 compared with 3.88/5.
This pattern suggests that leaders/managers are more cautious about how structurally embedded communication and participation are. Practitioners may experience positive communication and support in daily work, while leaders may see that these practices are not yet consistently formalised into systems, routines or decision-making processes.

Qualitative insights come mainly from the open suggestions provided by Target group no. 2, both in the questionnaires and during the focus groups and interviews.
The most frequent qualitative theme is communication, feedback and reflection routines. Respondents mention regular feedback sessions, anonymous feedback meetings, team reflection, internal communication, spaces where people can say what they feel and need, and clearer roles and responsibilities. These suggestions point to the need for regular, safe and structured communication mechanisms rather than occasional informal conversations.

Participation also appears in the open responses. Respondents refer to the need of active involvement of experts and volunteers in decision-making, participatory organisational cultures and spaces where ideas can be expressed. This reinforces the quantitative finding that practitioner involvement in decision-making has the largest gap. Participation is valued, but it needs clearer mechanisms.

Interpersonal support is imagined both inside the organisation and across organisations. Supportive organisations are therefore not isolated units; they learn and sustain practitioners through wider relational ecosystems. Team cohesion and role clarity are also present. Suggestions about clarifying roles and responsibilities, preventing conflicts and creating healthier internal networks indicate that interpersonal support depends on structure. People support each other more effectively when roles are clear, communication is predictable and conflict can be addressed early.

Indicator 4 shows that communication, participation and interpersonal support are

highly valued across the full sample. Respondents do not reduce organisational support to individual wellbeing or formal policies; they also emphasise everyday relational infrastructure: transparent communication, teamwork, peer support, networks and participation in decisions.

The current-level results are relatively positive, especially for communication and collaboration, but the gaps show that participation and interpersonal support systems are less developed than their importance would require. The largest gap concerns practitioner involvement in relevant decision-making processes. This suggests that organisations may communicate and collaborate reasonably well, while still needing stronger participatory routines that allow practitioners, volunteers and staff to shape decisions affecting their work.

The target-group comparison is analytically important. Practitioners rate current organisational practice more positively than leaders/managers across all four dimensions of Indicator 4. This may mean that practitioners experience supportive communication and teamwork in daily interactions, while leaders/managers are more aware of the absence of formal systems, consistent routines or explicit participatory structures. The difference is particularly visible for interpersonal support systems and decision-making involvement.

Romanian respondents perceive communication, collaboration and interpersonal support as essential and partly present, but not yet fully structured. Future capacity-building should focus on practical participatory mechanisms: regular team reflection meetings, safe feedback channels, clearer decision-making processes, role clarity, peer-support networks, communities of practice and structured opportunities for practitioners and young people to contribute to organisational decisions.

Indicator 5: Organisational Resources, Systems and Adaptability

This section analyses Indicator 5 across all 52 questionnaires: 27 responses from Target group no. 1, youth workers and practitioners working with young people, and 25 responses from Target group no. 2, leaders and managers within organisations.

Indicator 5 focuses on the structural and systemic capacity of organisations to support practitioners effectively.

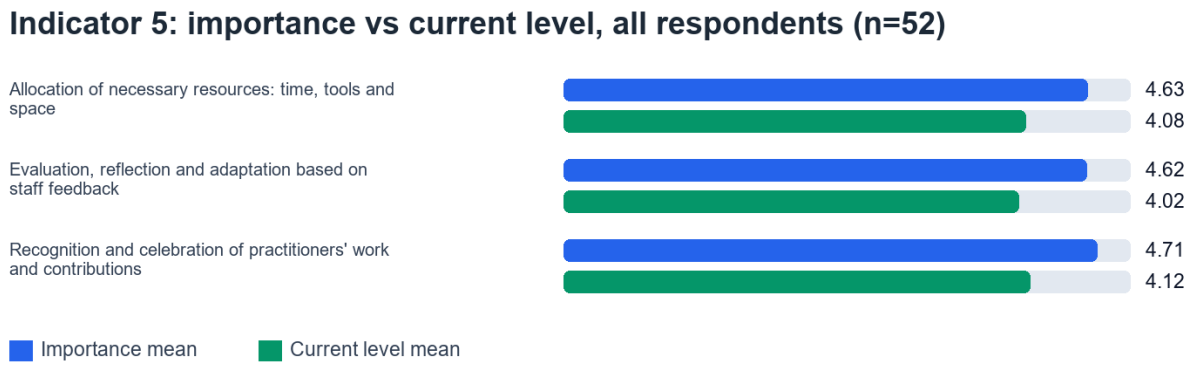
The quantitative analysis uses the three paired items from Q13.5 and Q14.5. Q13.5 measures **perceived importance** on a 1-5 scale, where 5 means very important. Q14.5 measures **the current level in the respondent's own organisation** on a 1-5 scale, where 5 means very good. This indicator is especially important because positive and supportive organisations require more than goodwill: they need time, tools, space, feedback systems, adaptive learning and recognition practices.

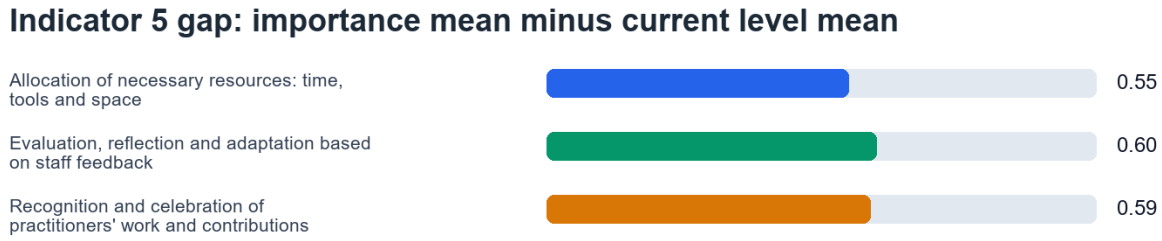
Main results:

Table VII.1. Indicator 5 - importance, current level and implementation gap, all respondents

Sub-item	Importance mean	Current mean	Gap	Importance 4-5	Current 4-5	Current 1-2
Allocation of necessary resources: time, tools and space	4.63	4.08	0.55	96.2%	78.8%	11.5%
Evaluation, reflection and adaptation based on staff feedback	4.62	4.02	0.60	92.3%	76.9%	7.7%
Recognition and celebration of practitioners'	4.71	4.12	0.59	96.2%	86.5%	9.6%

work and contributions						





Indicator 5 is rated as highly important across all three dimensions. The highest importance score is recorded for recognition and celebration of practitioners' work and contributions (4.71/5). This shows that respondents strongly value recognition and the celebration of practitioners' contributions as part of organisational support. Resource allocation and feedback-based adaptation are also rated highly, confirming that systemic capacity is seen as essential to organisational readiness.

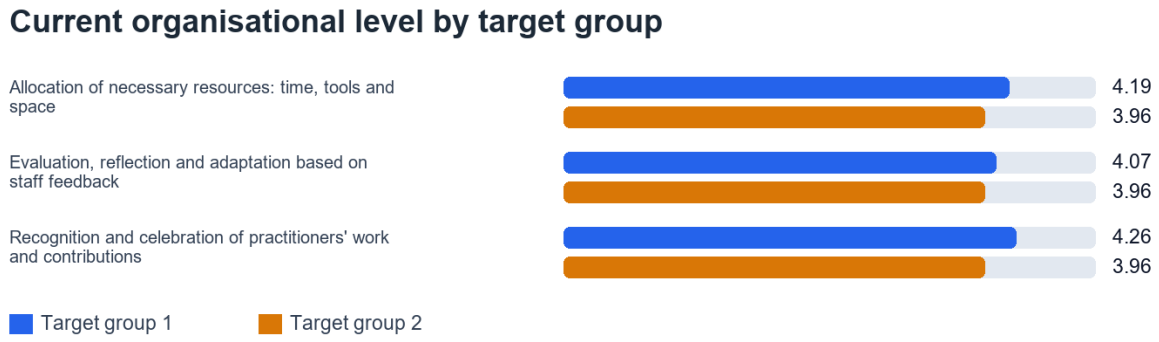
Current organisational capacity is positive, but lower than importance across all three dimensions. The strongest current dimension is recognition and celebration of practitioners' work and contributions (4.12/5). The lowest current mean is recorded for evaluation, reflection and adaptation based on staff feedback (4.02/5). This suggests that organisations may be better at recognising effort than at consistently evaluating, reflecting and adapting practices through staff feedback.

The largest implementation gap is found for evaluation, reflection and adaptation based on staff feedback: 4.62 importance versus 4.02 current level, a gap of 0.60

points. This is analytically important because it points to a structural need: organisations need stronger feedback, reflection and adaptation systems, not only more positive interpersonal culture.

Table VII.2. Indicator 5 - Current organisational level by target group

Sub-item	Target group no. 1 mean	Target group no. 2 mean
Allocation of necessary resources: time, tools and space	4.19	3.96
Evaluation, reflection and adaptation based on staff feedback	4.07	3.96
Recognition and celebration of practitioners' work and contributions	4.26	3.96



The target-group comparison shows a nuanced pattern. Practitioners and leaders/managers give similar current-level scores for resource allocation: 4.19/5 among Target group no. 1 and 3.96/5 among Target group no. 2. For evaluation, reflection and adaptation based on staff feedback, the scores are also close: 4.07/5 and 3.96/5.

The larger difference appears in recognition and celebration of practitioners' work and contributions: 4.26/5 among practitioners compared with 3.96/5 among leaders/managers. Leaders/managers are therefore more cautious about the extent to

which recognition is currently embedded in organisational practice. This may indicate that recognition exists informally, but is not yet systematic, visible or consistently institutionalised.

The qualitative responses coming from the questionnaires, the focus groups and interviews confirm that Indicator 5 is not only about material resources. Respondents connect organisational resources with planning, systems, reflection, feedback, recognition, external support and sustainability. The open answers suggest that organisations need to move from project-by-project functioning toward more stable, learning-oriented and adaptive organisational systems.

Resources are experienced as time, tools and organisational space, not only as money. The quantitative item on resources is reflected qualitatively in the need for practical conditions that allow people to work well: enough time, adequate tools, structured planning and spaces for activity, reflection and coordination. Without adequate resources and planning, positive and supportive organizations for practitioners remain fragile.

Feedback becomes valuable only when it produces visible change. Several open responses refer to feedback, reflection, evaluation or internal discussions. The underlying message is that staff consultation should not remain symbolic. A supportive organisation needs a feedback cycle: collect input, analyse it, decide what changes, communicate the decision and monitor effects.

Adaptability is linked to organisational maturity. The data suggests that organisations are expected to learn and adjust continuously. This is especially important in youth work, where needs change quickly and where practitioners work with complex social, emotional and educational challenges.

Recognition is a missing system in many organisations. Qualitative suggestions about appreciation, public acknowledgement and celebration of contributions indicate that recognition often remains occasional. Turning recognition into a regular organisational

practice would strengthen motivation and reduce the feeling that emotional and invisible work is taken for granted.

Romanian respondents see organisational resources, systems and adaptability as essential foundations for becoming positive and supportive. Future capacity-building should focus on practical organisational infrastructure: resource planning, access to tools and spaces, staff-feedback systems, monitoring and evaluation routines, adaptive decision-making, organisational sustainability support, pilot initiatives, and visible recognition of practitioners' contributions.

Section VIII: General conclusions and recommendations

This section integrates all evidence streams used in the national study: the two questionnaire datasets (52 total respondents; target group no. 1 = 27, target group no. 2 = 25), the indicator-level quantitative analyses, open-ended questionnaire responses, the three interview files and their synthetic interpretation, the focus-group findings, and the contextual-methodological-legal framing developed in previous sections.

The purpose is strictly practical: to transform evidence into decisions that Romanian youth organisations can apply in real operations, under real constraints, within the thematic scope of Study no. 2:"Ready for positive and supportive organizations for practitioners in youth work?".

Conclusions (what we learned):

Conclusion 1. Organisational intention is stronger than organizational infrastructure. Across all five indicators, importance scores are consistently high, while current implementation is lower. This confirms that organisations largely understand what a positive and supportive environment should look like, but implementation capacity is uneven.

Conclusion 2. The most severe structural pressure points are Indicator 5 and Indicator

3. The average gap is highest for organizational resources/systems/adaptability, followed by wellbeing/mental health/burnout prevention. The data indicate that sustainability and wellbeing are the main bottlenecks in the current organizational model.

Conclusion 3. Burnout prevention is the most urgent capability problem. The single largest gap in the entire dataset is fair and realistic workload distribution to prevent burnout. Access to mental-health resources and practical support in high-stress situations are also among the largest deficits.

Conclusion 4. Communication quality is relatively stronger than participatory power-sharing. Communication and teamwork are rated positively, but practitioner involvement in relevant decision-making has one of the largest gaps, showing that voice is not yet fully embedded in governance.

Conclusion 5. Leadership is present but still too dependent on personal style. Evidence from interviews and focus group shows supportive leadership practices exist, but formal supervision, mentoring and structured development pathways are often absent or project-dependent.

Conclusion 6. Inclusion values are relatively strong, but psychological safety remains context-sensitive. During pressure periods, teams report more tension, avoidance of difficult conversations and hidden exhaustion. This indicates a need for formal safety and conflict-response routines.

Conclusion 7. Feedback is collected more often than it is converted into organizational change. One of the largest gaps is feedback-based evaluation and adaptation, confirming an implementation bottleneck between listening and system redesign.

Conclusion 8. Interpersonal solidarity is a major protective strength, but it currently compensates for missing systems. The qualitative material consistently shows that empathy and peer support carry significant organizational load that should be shared

by formal structures.

Conclusion 9. The two target groups do not show idealized optimism from leadership; in several domains leaders/managers rate current reality lower than practitioners. The strongest divergence appears around access to mental-health resources, suggesting managers perceive deeper structural limitations.

Conclusion 10. The readiness verdict is mixed but actionable: conceptual readiness is high, relational readiness is moderate-to-high, and structural readiness is moderate-to-low. Romanian youth organisations are ready to improve, but they need system-building support to move from informal care to sustainable supportive organisations.

Recommendations (what should be done)

The findings of Study No. 2 demonstrate that Romanian youth organisations and organisations working with young people generally embrace the values associated with positive and supportive organisations. Across all five indicators, respondents assigned consistently high importance scores to leadership support, inclusion, wellbeing, communication and organizational adaptability. However, the study also identified significant implementation gaps, indicating that many supportive practices remain informal, inconsistent or dependent on individual commitment rather than embedded organizational systems.

The recommendations below are directly derived from the quantitative and qualitative findings and address the specific areas where the largest gaps emerged.

Recommendation 1: Institutionalise supervision and reflective practice

The study revealed that practitioners highly value supervision, mentoring and professional development opportunities, yet these remain insufficiently in many organisations. Leadership support is frequently provided through informal discussions rather than structured supervision mechanisms. Organisations should therefore introduce regular supervision and reflective practice sessions for both staff members

and volunteers. At minimum, organisations should ensure one protected supervision or reflective learning session per month, facilitated either internally or externally. Particular attention should be given to practitioners working directly with vulnerable young people or exposed to emotionally demanding situations.

Recommendation 2: Move from reactive wellbeing support to preventive wellbeing systems for positive and supportive organizations.

Indicator 3 generated some of the largest implementation gaps identified in the study, particularly regarding workload management, burnout prevention and access to wellbeing support resources. Respondents consistently reported that support often becomes available only after difficulties emerge. Organisations should adopt formal wellbeing and burnout-prevention policies that include:

- regular workload monitoring;
- early warning mechanisms for overload;
- recovery periods following intensive activities;
- wellbeing check-ins during team meetings;
- access to professional psychological support whenever possible.

Wellbeing should be treated as a strategic organizational function rather than an individual responsibility.

Recommendation 3: Improve workload planning and resource allocation

The single largest gap identified in the entire study concerned fair and realistic workload distribution. Both practitioners and leaders pointed workload pressure as one of the most important threats to organizational positivity and supportiveness. Organisations should introduce simple workload monitoring systems, including:

- regular workload reviews;
- workload allocation procedures;
- organizational mechanisms during peak activity periods;
- transparent redistribution of responsibilities when overload occurs.

Funding applications and project planning processes should also include realistic staffing assumptions and dedicated resources for organizational support functions.

Recommendation 4: Strengthen participatory decision-making processes

The findings show that communication is generally perceived positively; however, practitioners report limited involvement in organizational decisions that affect their work. Organisations should establish clear participation mechanisms, such as:

• periodic consultation meetings;

• staff and volunteer representation structures;

• feedback rounds before major organizational decisions;

• transparent communication regarding how feedback influences final decisions.

Participation should become a routine of organizational process rather than an occasional consultation exercise.

Recommendation 5: Develop formal feedback-to-action mechanisms

The study identified a substantial gap between collecting feedback and implementing improvements based on that feedback. While many organisations gather opinions through evaluations and informal discussions, respondents reported uncertainty regarding whether feedback results in actual organizational change. Organisations should implement a quarterly feedback cycle including:

• collection of staff and volunteer feedback;

• organizational of issues;

• assignment of responsibilities;

• monitoring of implementation;

• communication of results back to staff and volunteers.

Visible organizational responses to feedback are essential for strengthening trust and organizational credibility.

Recommendation 6: Invest in supportive leadership development

The findings demonstrate that organizational culture, organizational positivity and supportiveness are strongly influenced by leadership behaviours. However, many leaders operate under significant pressure and often lack formal preparation in people management, supportive leadership and wellbeing-oriented organizational development. Leadership development programmes should therefore prioritise:

• supportive leadership approaches;

• emotional intelligence;

• conflict management;

• coaching and mentoring skills;

• inclusive management practices;

• psychosocial risk awareness.

Building positive and supportive organisations requires leadership competencies that extend beyond project and administrative management.

Recommendation 7: Formalise recognition and appreciation practices

Recognition emerged as one of the most important yet underdeveloped organizational practices. Participants repeatedly highlighted the importance of feeling valued and appreciated for their contribution. Organisations should create structured recognition systems that acknowledge:

• individual achievements;

• team achievements;

• volunteer contributions;

• innovation and initiative;

• learning and professional growth;

• contributions to organizational wellbeing and team support.

Recognition should be regular, transparent and embedded within 60organizational culture.

Recommendation 8: Strengthen psychological safety and inclusive organizational cultures

Although inclusion and respect received very high ratings, qualitative findings indicate that psychological safety often depends on leadership style and interpersonal relationships rather than formal organizational mechanisms. Organisations should establish:

• confidential feedback channels;

• anti-discrimination procedures;

• conflict-resolution protocols;

• safeguarding mechanisms for staff and volunteers;

• regular discussions on inclusion, respect and wellbeing.

Psychological safety should become an explicit organizational objective supported by both policies and daily practice.

Recommendation 9: Build organizational learning and adaptability systems

Indicator 5 highlighted weaknesses regarding organizational learning, adaptation and the use of evidence for organizational improvement. Organisations should strengthen:

• monitoring and evaluation systems;

• lessons-learned reviews;

• organizational reflection processes;

• strategic planning informed by staff and volunteer feedback;

• data-based organizational decision-making.

Adaptive organisations are better positioned to respond to changing youth needs while maintaining organizational positivity and supportiveness.

Recommendation 10: Protect organizational support functions within funding and sustainability strategies

The study clearly shows that many organizational weaknesses are linked to structural resource limitations. Participants repeatedly show that positive organizational cultures cannot be sustained solely through goodwill and commitment. Organisations should therefore integrate dedicated budget lines for:

• supervision;

• staff wellbeing;

• leadership development;

• mentoring;

• organizational learning;

• mental health support services.

Supportive organizational practices should be seen as essential operational investments rather than optional expenditures.

Overall recommendation

The central conclusion emerging from Study No. 2 is that Romanian youth

organisations are generally rich in values but less developed in organizational infrastructure. Positive organizational cultures already exist; however, their sustainability remains heavily dependent on informal support, personal commitment and organizational goodwill.

Future organizational development efforts should therefore focus on transforming supportive practices from informal behaviours into formal organizational systems. The transition from goodwill-based support to system-based support represents the most important strategic step towards becoming truly positive and supportive organisations for practitioners in youth work.

Annexes

Annex 1:

The summary tables below support the national report 10 conclusions.

Table 1. Cross-indicator quantitative synthesis (all 52 questionnaires)

Indicator	Average importance	Average current level	Average gap	Largest specific gap	Readiness interpretation
Indicator 1: Leadership, Supervision and Professional Development	4.54	4.22	0.32	Continuous learning, training and competence development (0.37)	Consolidate and institutionalise (moderate gap)
Indicator 2: Organisational Culture, Inclusion and Psychological Safety	4.60	4.30	0.30	Inclusion, anti-discrimination and equal-opportunity policies/practices (0.31)	Consolidate and institutionalise (moderate gap)
Indicator 3: Wellbeing, Mental	4.54	4.00	0.54	Fair and realistic workload	Priority risk (high gap)

Health and Burnout Prevention				distribution to prevent burnout (0.67)	
Indicator 4: Communication, Participation and Interpersonal Support	4.62	4.27	0.35	Practitioner involvement in relevant decision-making processes (0.59)	Development pressure (moderate-high gap)
Indicator 5: Organisational Resources, Systems and Adaptability	4.65	4.07	0.58	Evaluation, reflection and adaptation based on staff feedback (0.60)	Priority risk (high gap)

Table 2. Ten largest implementation gaps (importance minus current level)

Rank	Indicator	Capability area	Gap	Practical risk if not addressed
1	Indicator 3	Fair and realistic workload distribution to prevent burnout	0.67	Burnout and retention risk
2	Indicator 5	Evaluation, reflection and adaptation based on staff feedback	0.60	System fragility and inconsistent support
3	Indicator 4	Practitioner involvement in relevant decision-making processes	0.59	Lower engagement and reduced implementation quality
4	Indicator 5	Recognition and	0.59	Lower

		celebration of practitioners' work and contributions		engagement and reduced implementation quality
5	Indicator 5	Allocation of necessary resources: time, tools and space	0.55	System fragility and inconsistent support
6	Indicator 3	Access to mental-health resources and wellbeing support services	0.53	Burnout and retention risk
7	Indicator 3	Emotional and practical support in difficult or high-stress situations	0.42	Lower engagement and reduced implementation quality
8	Indicator 1	Continuous learning, training and competence development	0.37	Lower engagement and reduced implementation quality
9	Indicator 1	Regular mentoring, guidance and professional support	0.34	Lower engagement and reduced implementation quality
10	Indicator 4	Solid interpersonal support systems and team	0.33	Lower engagement and reduced implementation

		cohesion		quality

Table 3. Cross-group perception divergences in current implementation (TG1 vs TG2)

Rank	Indicator	Capability area	TG1 current	TG2 current	Absolute difference
1	Indicator 3	Access to mental-health resources and wellbeing support services	4.15	3.52	0.63
2	Indicator 2	Organisational stability, psychological safety and secure work climate	4.52	4.04	0.48
3	Indicator 3	Emotional and practical support in difficult or high-stress situations	4.30	3.88	0.42
4	Indicator 2	Safe, inclusive and respectful work environment	4.59	4.20	0.39
5	Indicator 4	Practitioner involvement in relevant decision-making processes	4.26	3.88	0.38
6	Indicator 3	Fair and realistic workload	4.22	3.88	0.34

		distribution to prevent burnout			
7	Indicator 2	Inclusion, anti-discrimination and equal-opportunity policies/practices	4.37	4.04	0.33
8	Indicator 5	Recognition and celebration of practitioners' work and contributions	4.26	3.96	0.30

Table 4. Organisational support priorities from Q15 (need intensity) and Q16 (rank order)

Support area	Need intensity (1-5)	High-need share (4-5)	Mean rank (lower = higher priority)	Ranked 1st by respondents
Leadership and management development	4.21	73.1%	1.90	32/52
Organisational culture and inclusion	3.96	67.3%	2.69	8/52
Wellbeing and mental-health support systems	4.17	78.8%	2.52	17/52
Participatory structures and communities of practice	4.00	71.2%	3.00	9/52
Organisational	4.17	76.9%	2.94	15/52

development and sustainability				

MAIN SOURCES OF NATIONAL REPORT:

a. Project Documents of the POSITIVE Project – Activity A2.3:

POSITIVE – Wellbeing&Resilience in Youth Work for Social Change - Study No. 2 Methodology/general framework.

POSITIVE – Wellbeing&Resilience in Youth Work for Social Change. Questionnaire 1 – Youth Workers and Practitioners.

POSITIVE – Wellbeing&Resilience in Youth Work for Social Change. Questionnaire 2 – Leaders and Managers.

POSITIVE – Wellbeing&Resilience in Youth Work for Social Change. Interview Guide.

POSITIVE – Wellbeing&Resilience in Youth Work for Social Change. Focus Group Guide.

POSITIVE – Wellbeing&Resilience in Youth Work for Social Change. National Report Template – Study no. 2.

b. Legislative and Public Policy Sources analysed in Section IV:

- Government of Romania. Youth Law No. 350/2006.
- Government Ordinance No. 26/2000 on Associations and Foundations.
- Labour Code – Law No. 53/2003.
- Volunteering Law No. 78/2014.
- Occupational Safety and Health Law No. 319/2006.
- Child Rights Law No. 272/2004.
- Government Ordinance No. 137/2000 regarding the prevention and sanctioning of all forms of discrimination.
- Law No. 202/2002 on Equal Opportunities and Equal Treatment between Women and Men.

- National Youth Strategy 2024–2027.

c. European-Level Sources:

European Commission. EU Youth Strategy 2019–2027.

European Commission. European Youth Work Agenda (2020).

Council of Europe. Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)4 on Youth Work.

Bonn Declaration on Youth Work (2020).

SALTO Youth. Competence Model for Youth Workers to Work Internationally.

d. Empirical data sources for the National Report – Romania:

Questionnaire 1 responses (N = 27 youth workers and practitioners).

Questionnaire 2 responses (N = 25 leaders and managers).

Semi-structured interviews conducted with representatives of participating organisations.

National focus group organised on 31 March 2026.

Quantitative and qualitative analysis conducted within Study No. 2.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools

As part of the data processing and reporting phase, Artificial Intelligence (AI)-assisted tools, including ChatGPT and Codex (OpenAI), were used as supportive analytical instruments to facilitate the organisation, visualisation, synthesis and interpretation of quantitative and qualitative data collected through questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and focus group.

The AI tools were employed exclusively to support data analysis, generate draft visualisations, identify patterns and assist in the preparation of narrative interpretations. All datasets originated from primary research conducted within the project, and all analytical outputs generated through AI-assisted processes were reviewed, validated and refined by the research team.

The use of AI tools did not replace human judgement, expert analysis or the researchers' responsibility for the interpretation of findings. Final conclusions, recommendations and analytical interpretations remain the responsibility of the project partners and the national research team.