



LearnersMot

**How to Trigger Primary Motivation for Learning
in Low Educated Adults Using ICT Tools**

project number: 2017-1-ES01-KA204-038414

The State of Art of Education for Low Educated and Low Skilled Adults in Cyprus

English



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

The state of art of education for low educated and low skilled adults in Cyprus

Introduction

In the framework of the Erasmus+ project “**LearnersMot: How to Trigger Primary Motivation for Learning in Low Educated Adults Using ICT Tools**”, which is meant to empower adult educators to motivate low educated and low skilled adult learners to continuous learning, we carried out a survey aiming at collecting the opinions of adult educators on this topic.

The survey is based on a questionnaire with 67 questions distributed in 5 main sections which were answered by educators from 5 different educational centres from Slovenia, Italy, Cyprus, and Spain.

In this report, we explain the results obtained in Cyprus. The survey was carried out all over the island. 10 adult educators, working in different public and private institutions, answered the survey, especially prepared for this purpose.

1. What is the current status of adult education in your country?

The Strategy of the Republic of Cyprus for LLL for the period 2014-2020 covers the development of all kinds of learning (formal, non-formal and informal). The report was prepared by the Directorate General for European Programmes, Coordination and Development (DG EPCD) in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC), the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance (MLWSI), the Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA) and the Productivity Centre (CPC). The Strategy was sent to the involved social partners for comments and their views have been incorporated in it. The Council of Ministers approved the Strategy in its meeting held on 18.06.2014.

The National Lifelong Learning Strategy 2014-2020 identifies the strategic objectives/priorities and specifies the categories of actions that will be promoted in Cyprus. The four priority axes are the following:

- Promoting Access and Participation in Lifelong Learning for All and recognition of learning outcomes
- Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training

- Promoting Research and Development for the Support of Lifelong Learning
- Promoting employability (promoting integration/reintegration into the labour market)

The vision of Cyprus as for Lifelong Learning is to define an integrated strategy which covers all kinds/types of learning - formal, non-formal and informal at all levels - from pre-school, primary, secondary general and vocational education to higher education, vocational training and adult education. This strategy aims to form a system that ensures that all individuals have the motivation, support, means, resources and time to participate in learning activities throughout their lifetime, with the aim of creating a society in which all citizens have the skills that enable them to deal with any challenges, will have the opportunity to move freely between learning settings, jobs, regions and countries, will participate actively and equally, and will help to strengthen the country's productivity, innovation, competitiveness and dynamism.

Increasing adult participation in LLL:

The percentage of adults (% of people aged 25-64) participating in LLL was 6.9% in 2013 (compared to 7.4% in 2012 and 8.5% in 2008) which is less than the 10.4% EU28 average. The EU's target is to increase this percentage to 15% by 2020. The national target is to increase this percentage to 12% by 2020.

The participation of Cyprus in the International Survey PIAAC (Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies) of OECD, carried out for the first time during 2008-2013, recorded for the first time the basic cognitive skills (mathematical literacy (numeracy), language literacy (literacy) and problem solving) of the adult population aged 16-65 years old.

Regarding the targeting indicators, Cyprus appears to differ from the international and European average in language skills, mathematical and technological literacy, with indicators being lower. In relation to reading literacy, the largest percentage of Cypriots aged 16-65 years old appears to have skills that allow them to read and understand words, sentences and simple texts. As for technological literacy skills, the PIAAC showed that almost one in four Cypriots have no experience or basic computer skills. The survey also reveals that the percentage of low skilled adults is below the average of the EU (11% for literacy and 15% for numeracy, compared with 20% and 24% respectively). The unskilled persons in Cyprus are three times less likely to participate in work -related learning than highly skilled people.

2. What is functional illiteracy (usually the state of low educated and low skilled adults) and what are the characteristics of low educated and low skilled adults?

“Functional illiteracy is when people have difficulty reading, writing and/or accessing written and digital information, as a result of which their skills are inadequate to enable

them to function independently in society, to achieve their goals and to develop themselves as a person. Functional illiteracy is not the same as illiteracy, which refers to people who cannot read or write at all” (Maastricht University, 2015)

3. How to motivate adults to enrol and stay in educational/ training programmes?

As low-educated and low-skilled adult learners have different learning experiences, needs and expectations, it becomes very demanding and challenging to design educational programmes which will attract their attention and interest.

An encouraging, supportive, motivating and dynamic environment which will incorporate several learning techniques (digital and non-digital) is significant for achieving the maximum participation and engagement of that target group in continuous learning.

4. How to design/organize low educated students' learning process?

In Cyprus, a national action plan aims at a more modern and flexible programme of formal second-chance education for adults. In January 2017, an ad hoc committee submitted a report including specific suggestions on the planned reform of the operational framework of second-chance schools.

Challenges remain in relation to:

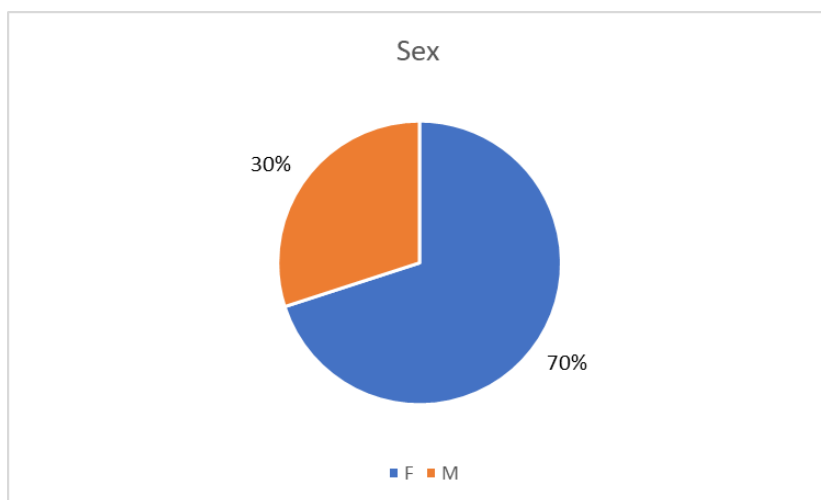
- the integration and efficiency of the adult learning governance structures;
- the development of mechanisms for validating non-formal and informal learning;
- the systematic training of trainers involved in adult education;
- more broadly, the need to boost participation in adult learning (in particular among low-skilled adults).

5. Which methods should be used while educating low educated and low skilled students?

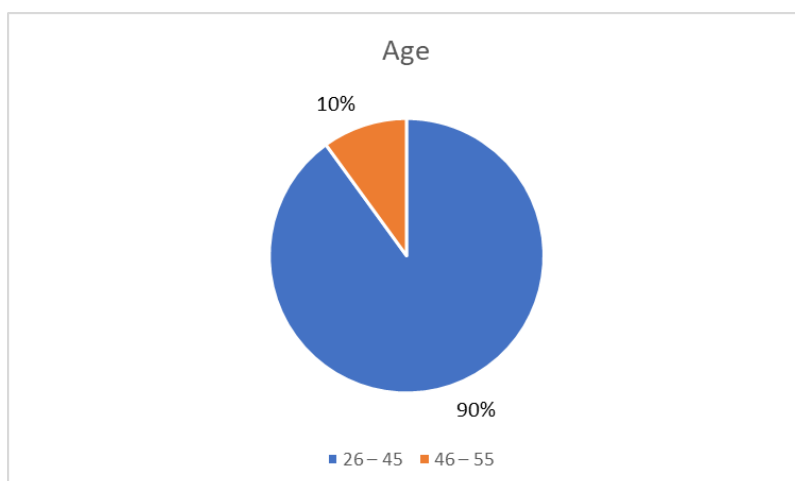
Group exercises, motivational techniques, formal and non-formal learning, digital technologies and many other methods shall be used while education low-educated and low-skilled adult learners.

The survey

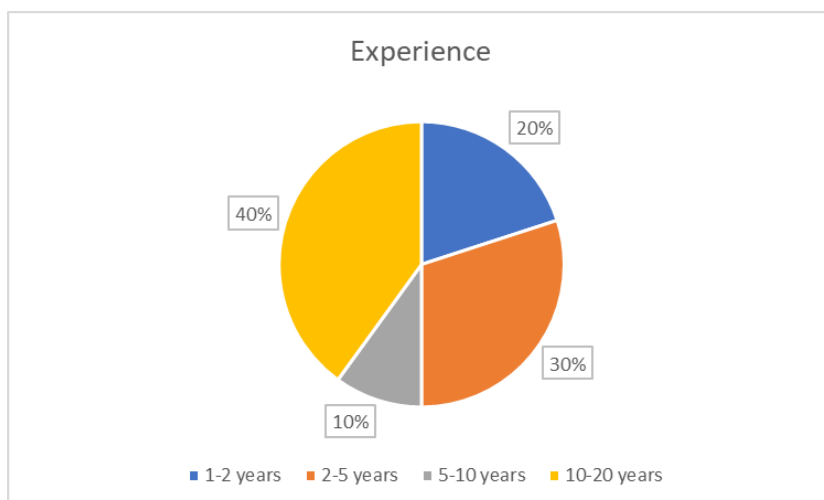
Demography: Information about the sample (gender, age, duration of their involvement in education, current work...)



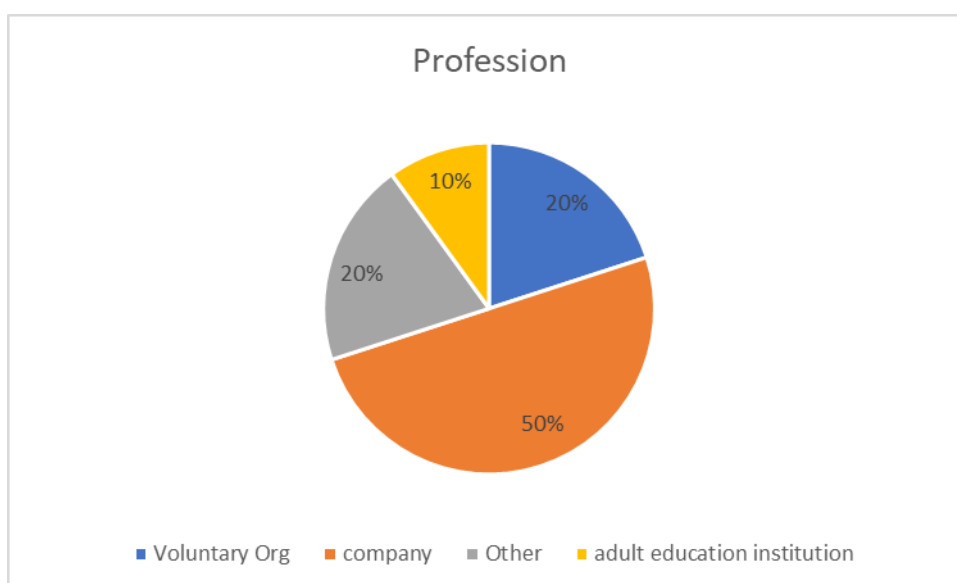
The majority of the respondents (70%) are female, while 30% are male educators.



The vast majority of the respondents, 90%, belong to the age group 26-45, while only 10% is between 46-55 years old.



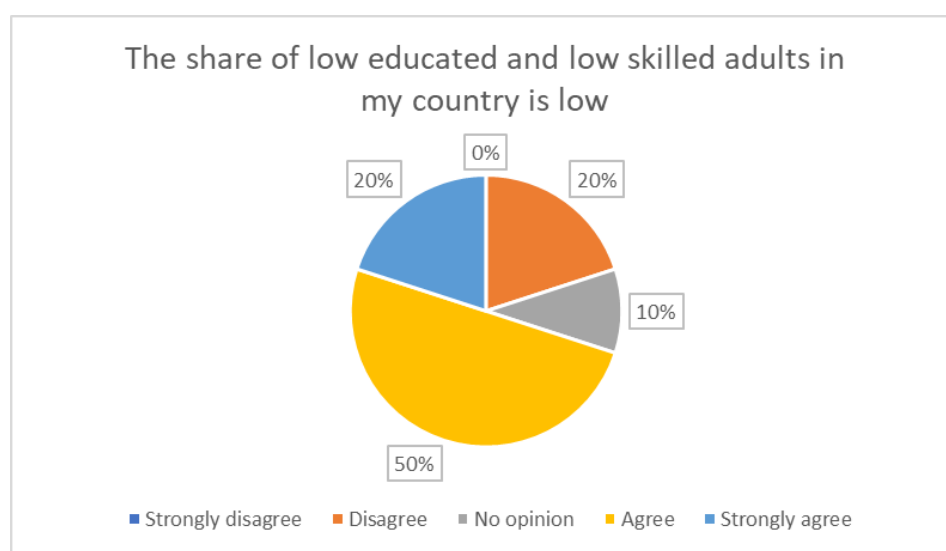
The majority of respondents has a quite long experience in the sector – 40% stated that they have an experience between 10-20 years, while another 10% has experience of 5-10 years in the sector. Moreover, 30% declares to have an experience between 2 and 5 years, while 20% is involved in the sector only for 1-2 years.



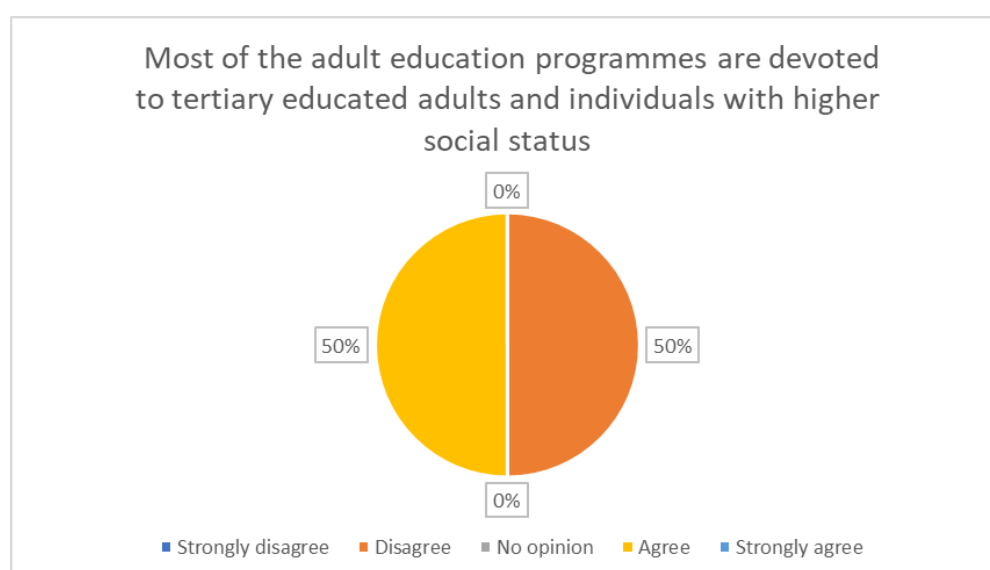
Half of respondents (50%) stated that they work for a private entity, while 20% works for a voluntary organization and another 20% for other entities. Last, only few respondents (10%) work for an adult education institution.

Graphs' description

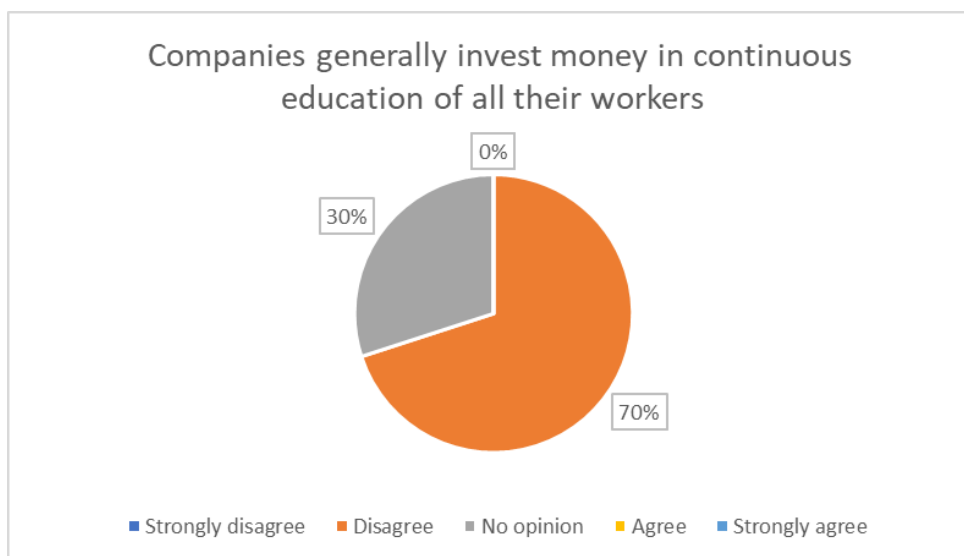
1. What is the current status of adult education in your country?



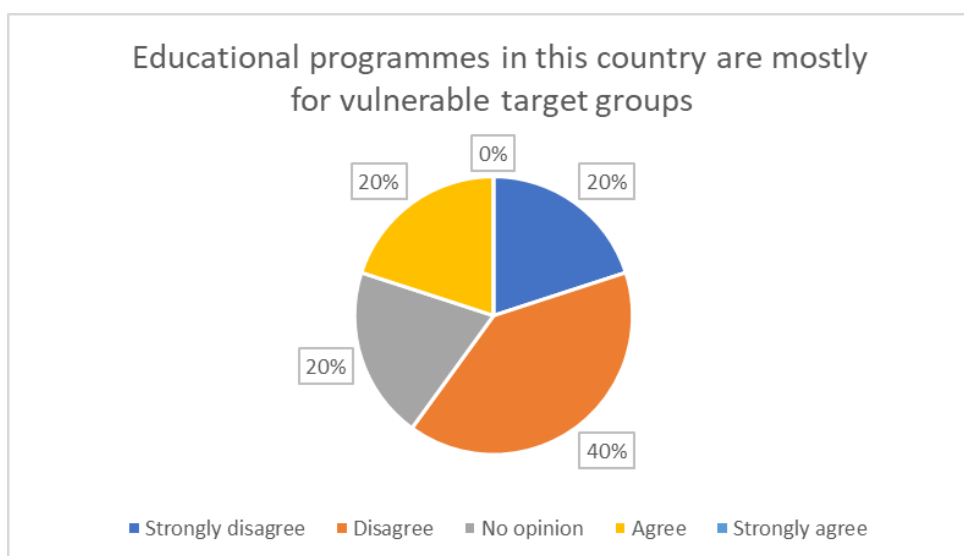
The majority of the educators in Cyprus are of the opinion that the number of low-educated and low-skilled adults in Cyprus is low. More specifically, half of the educators (50%) agree with the statement while 20% of them strongly agree with the statement.



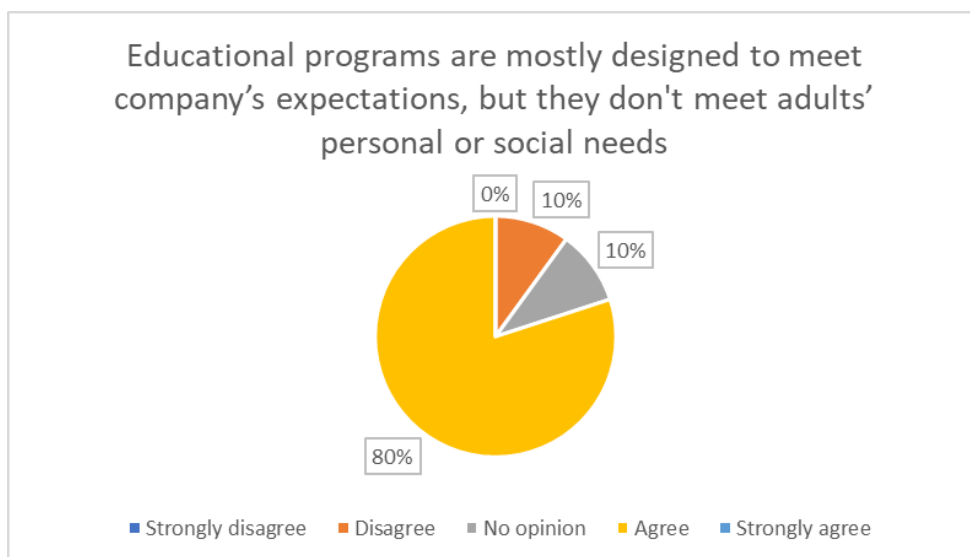
Concerning this question, respondents have diametrically opposed views. Half of the educators (50%) who replied in this question agree that most of the adult education programmes are devoted to highly educated learners, while half of them (50%) disagree with the statement.



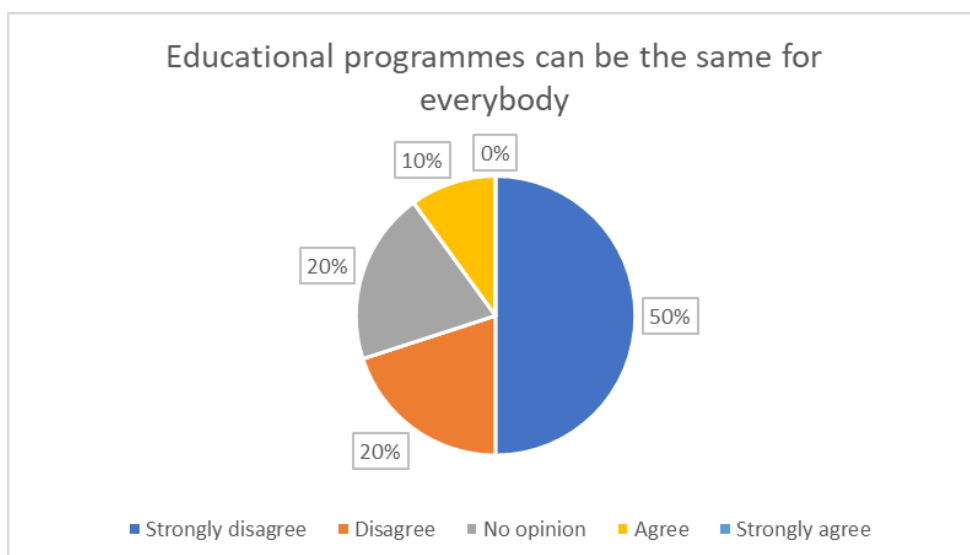
The majority of the respondents disagree with the statement (70%) while 30% stated that they have no opinion on that. This means that in Cyprus, many companies do not invest much money in the induction and retention of their workers.



Educators expressed different views under this topic. 40% of them disagree on the fact that educational programmes in Cyprus are mostly for vulnerable target groups, while 20% strongly disagree on that. However, 20% of them have no opinion on that and another 20% agree on the statement.

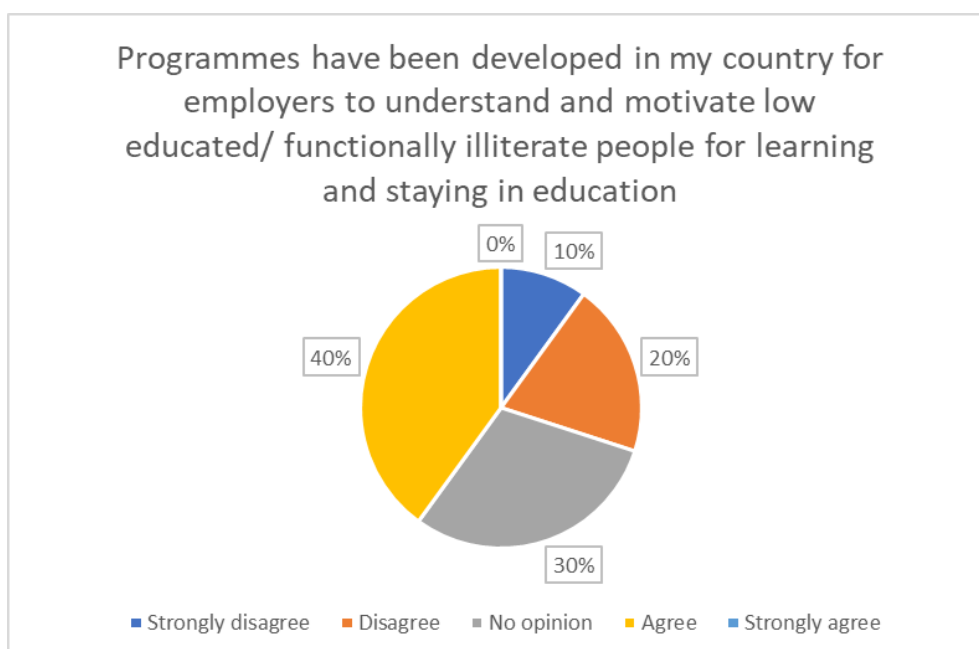


The vast majority of the educators (80%) agree that adult education programmes do not meet personal and social needs of the adults, but focus on the company's expectations.

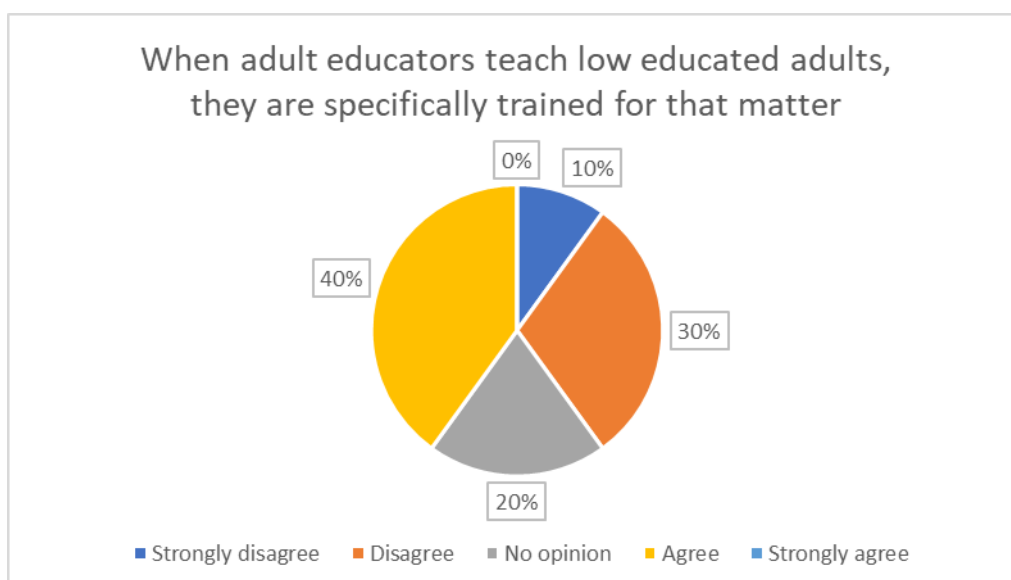


The majority of respondents (70%) do not think that educational programmes can be the same for everyone. In fact, 50% of them strongly disagree on the statement and another

20% stated that they disagree. However, 20% of the educators do not have an opinion on that, while a small percentage (10%) agrees on the statement.



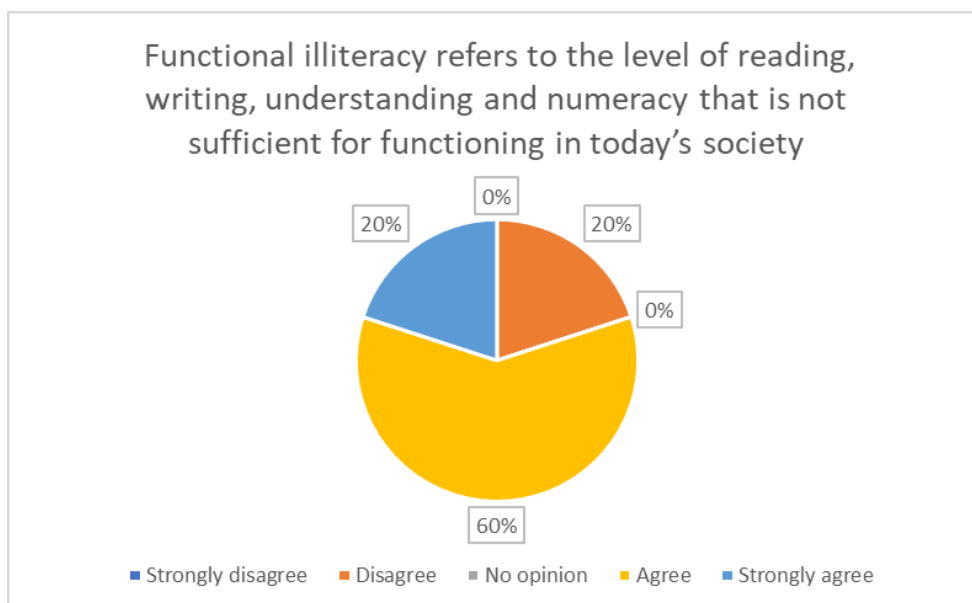
For this statement, there is a variety of opinions. That is, 40% of the educators agree on the statement, while 30% expresses no opinion on that. On the contrary, 20% of them disagree and a small percentage of them (10%) strongly disagree.



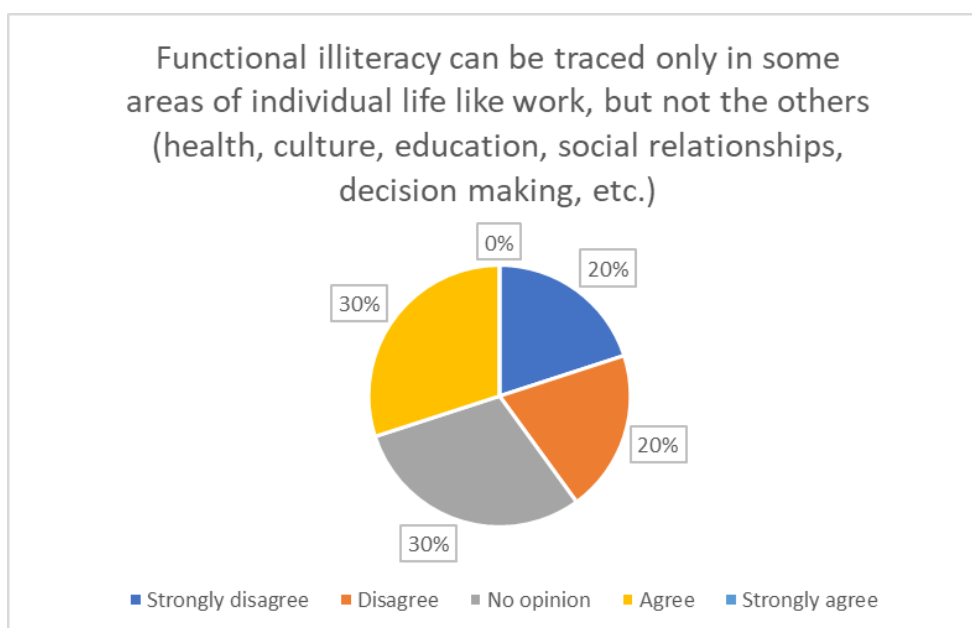
Regarding the training provided to adult educators, there is also a variety of opinions expressed. That is, 40% of the educators agree on the statement, while 20% expresses

no opinion on that. On the contrary, 30% of them disagree and a small percentage of them (10%) strongly disagree.

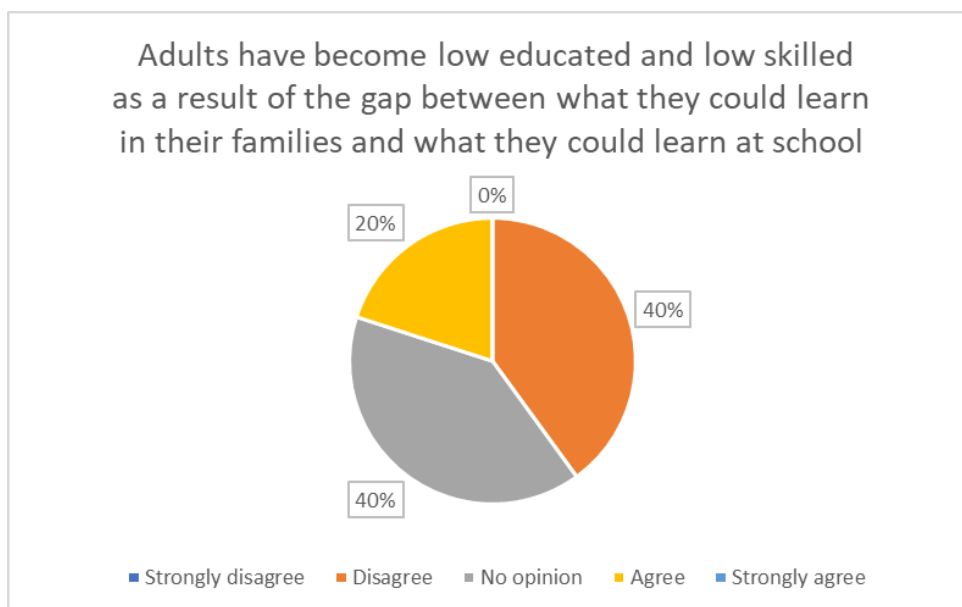
2. What is functional illiteracy (usually the state of low-educated and low-skilled adults) and what are the characteristics of low-educated and low-skilled adults?



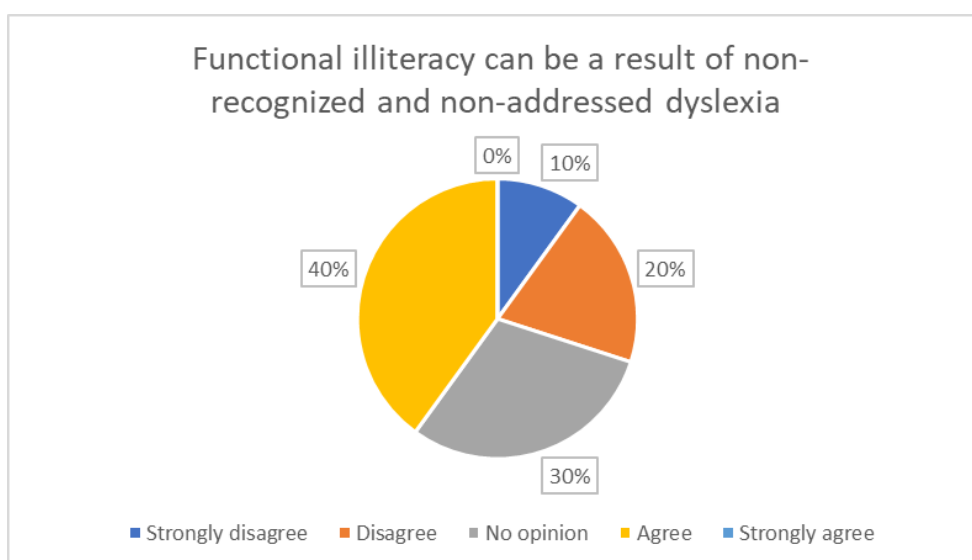
The vast majority of the respondents (80%) agree with the definition of functional illiteracy provided in the statement (60% agree and 20% strongly agree). Only 20% of them disagree with the statement.



For this statement, there is a variety of opinions. That is, 30% of the educators agree on the statement, while another 30% expresses no opinion on that. On the contrary, 20% of them disagree and another 20% strongly disagrees.

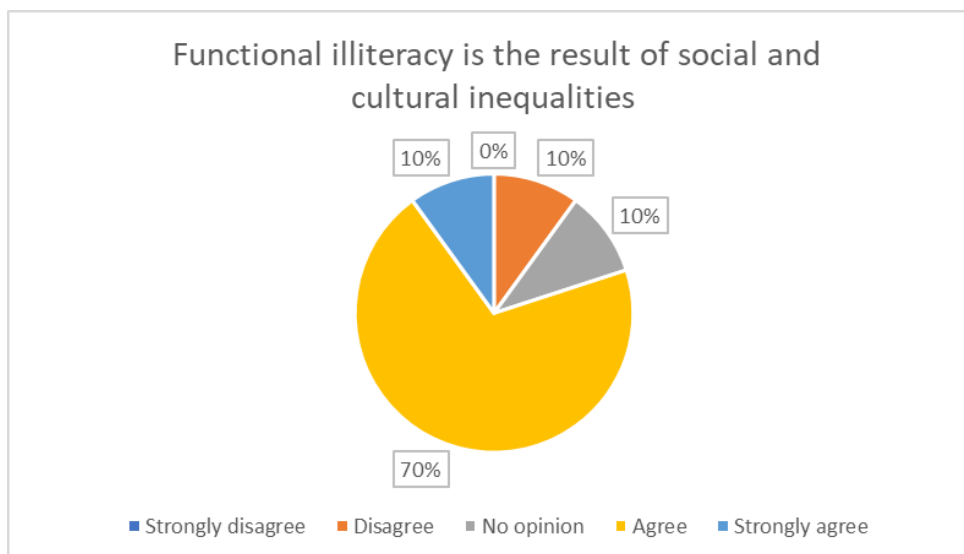


A big amount of the respondents (40%) disagree on the statement, while another 40% is of no opinion. Only 20% of the educators agree with this statement.

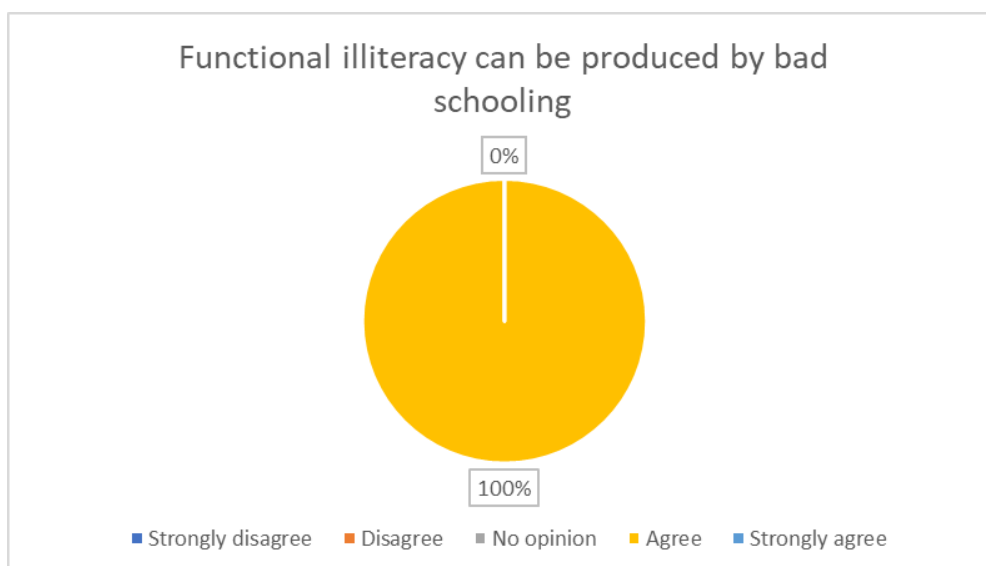


There is a variety of opinions for this statement, too. 40% of the respondents think that functional illiteracy can be the result of non-recognized dyslexia, while 30% expressed

no opinion on that. In addition, 20% disagrees with the statement, while 10% strongly disagrees.

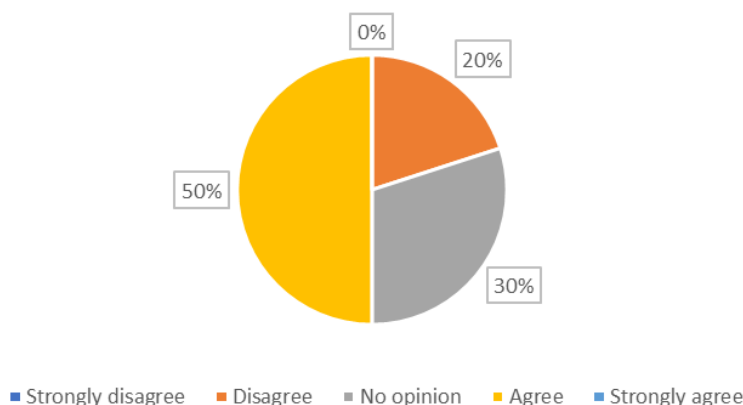


The majority of respondents, that is 80%, is of the opinion that functional illiteracy is the result of social and cultural inequalities (70% agrees on the statement – 10% strongly agrees). Only, a small percentage (10%) disagrees and another 10% has no opinion on the statement.



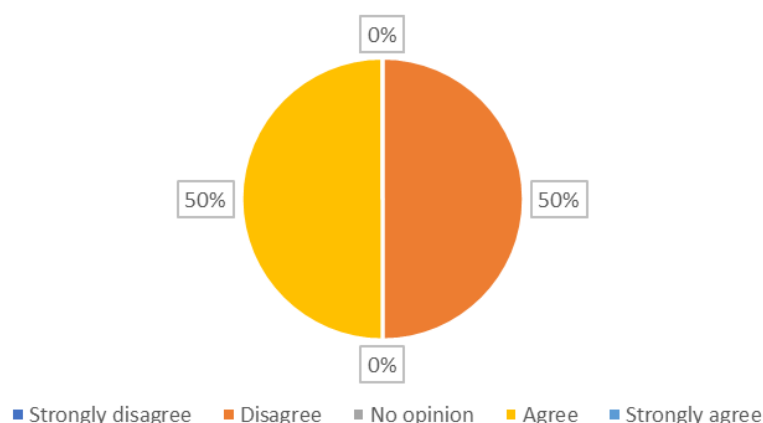
The absolute majority agrees that functional illiteracy can be the result of bad schooling.

Low educated and low skilled adults who have not used their skills for a long time can lose them and become functionally illiterate

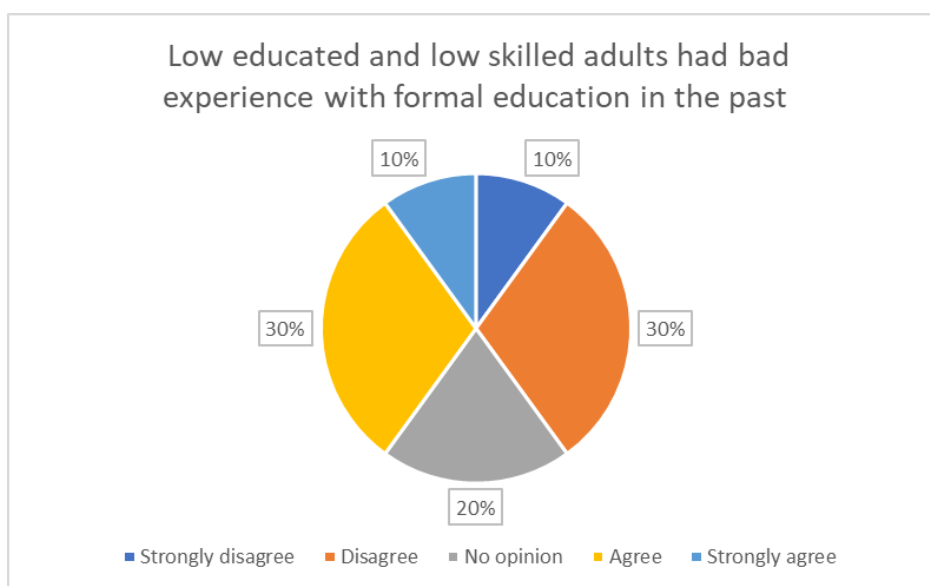


Half of the respondents – 50% - think that adults may become functional illiterate if they don't use their skills for a long time. 30% expressed no opinion on the topic and another 20% disagrees on the statement.

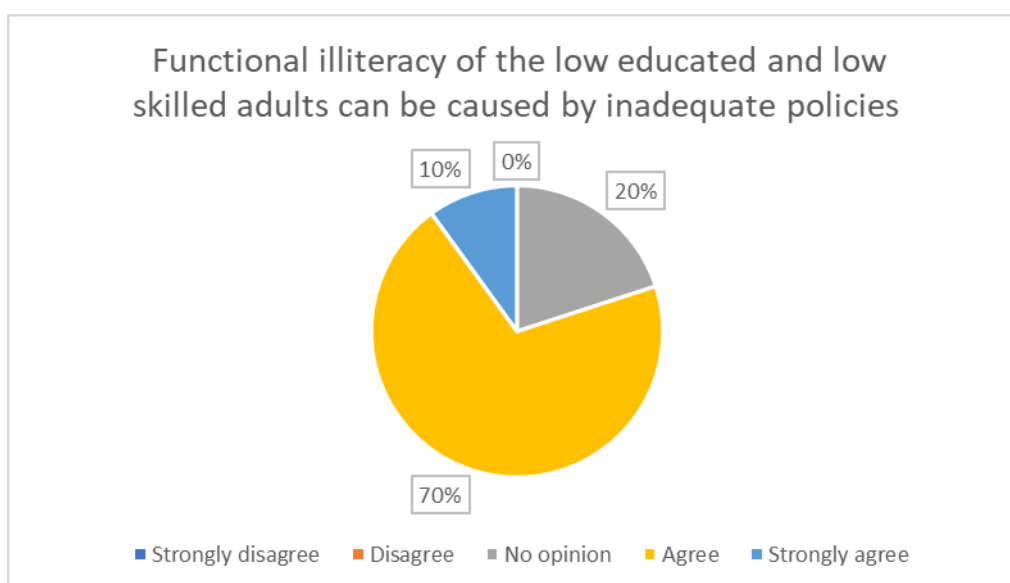
Young adults are not functionally illiterate even though they are low educated and low skilled



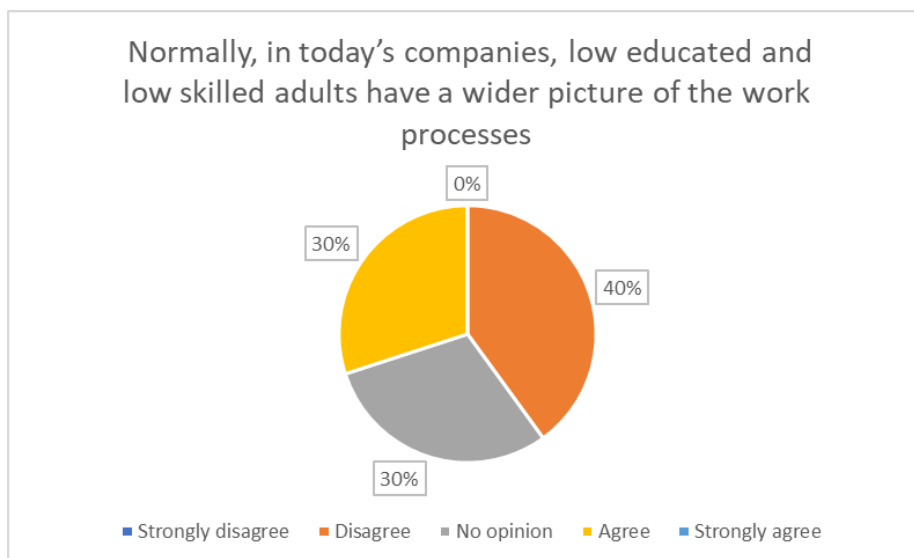
There is a big contrast between the views of the respondents on this statement. Half of them believe that young adults are not functionally illiterate even if they are low-educated and low-skilled, while the other 50% thinks the opposite.



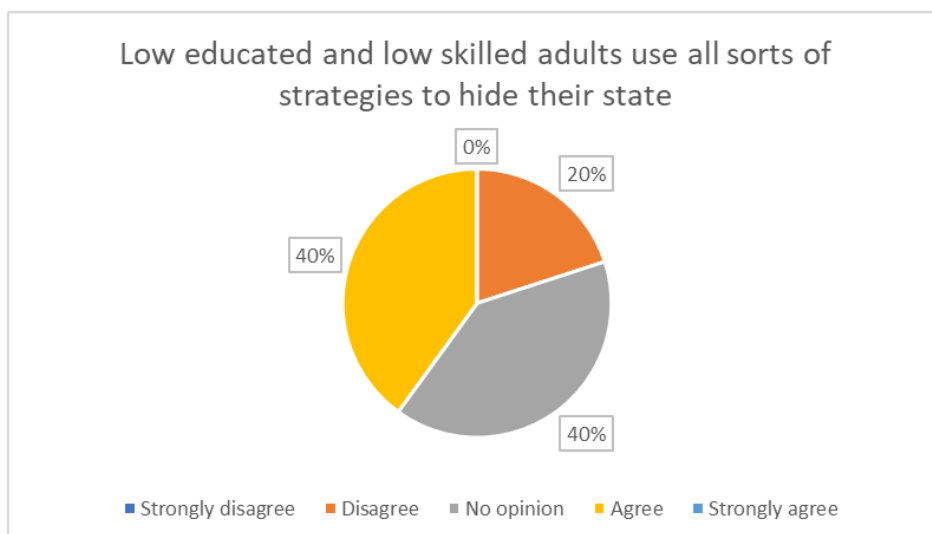
There is a contrast between the views of the respondents on this statement, too. 40% agrees on the statement, 40% disagrees on the statement and the rest (20%) has no opinion on the topic.



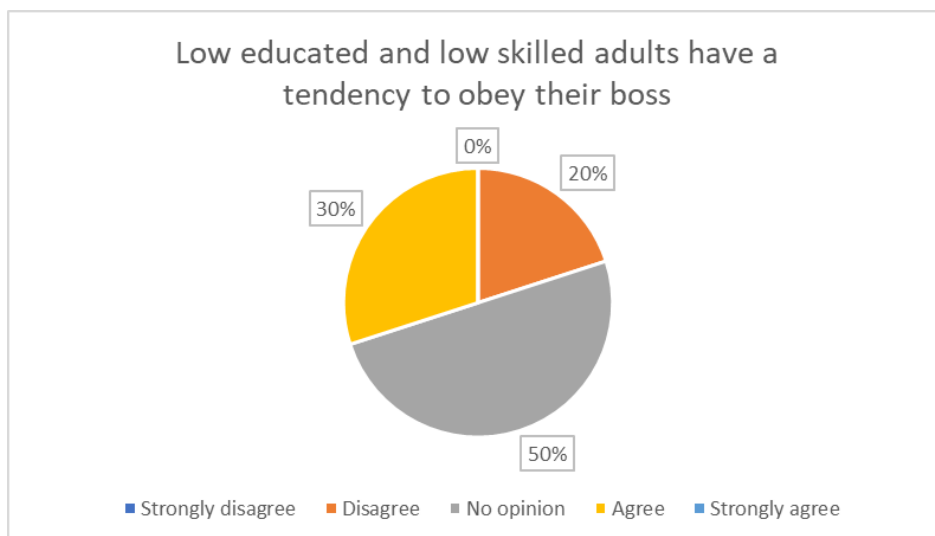
The majority of the respondents think that inadequate policies can cause functional illiteracy. In fact, the 70% agrees with the statement and 10% strongly agrees.



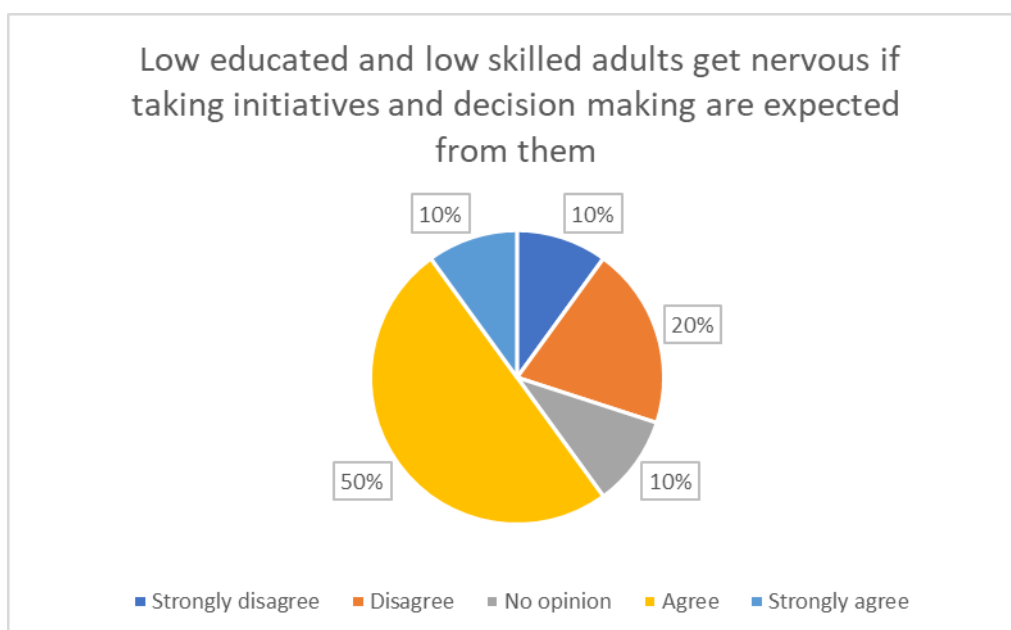
Regarding this statement, 40% of the respondents disagree with the statement, while 30% of them expressed no opinion. However, 30% of the educators agree that low-educated adults have a wider picture of the work processes.



As for this statement, 40% of the respondents agree with the statement, while another 40% of them expressed no opinion.

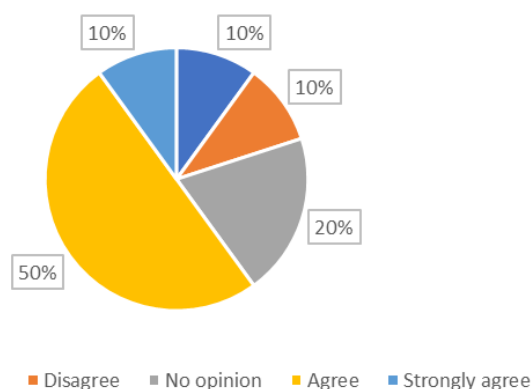


Half of the educators do not express their view on the topic while 30% of them agree with the statement.



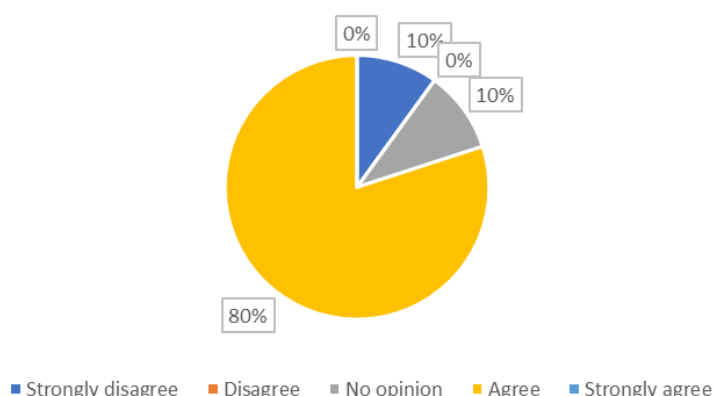
The majority of the educators think that low-educated people get nervous if decision-making is expected from them.

Companies do not know that low educated and low skilled adults are a threat to themselves and others

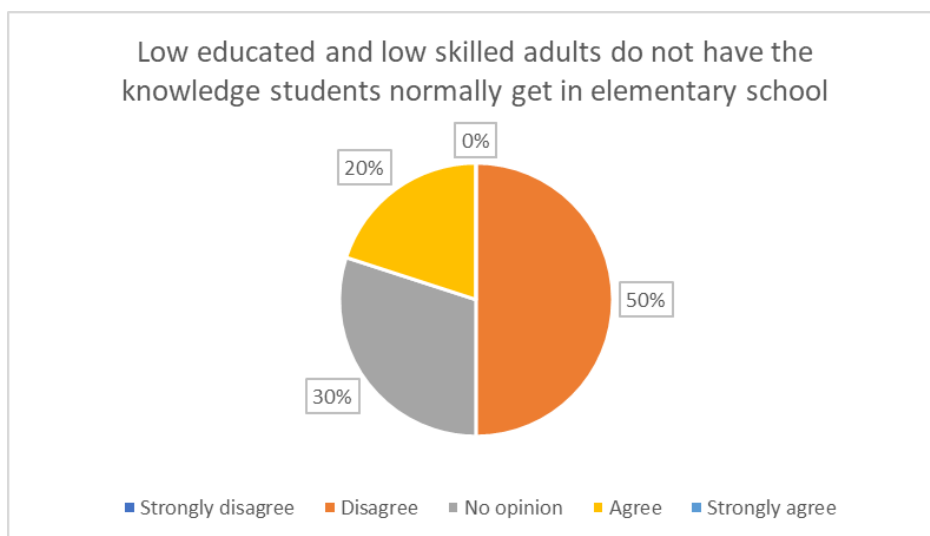


The majority of respondents (60%) agrees with the statement that companies don't consider low educated as a threat to themselves and others.

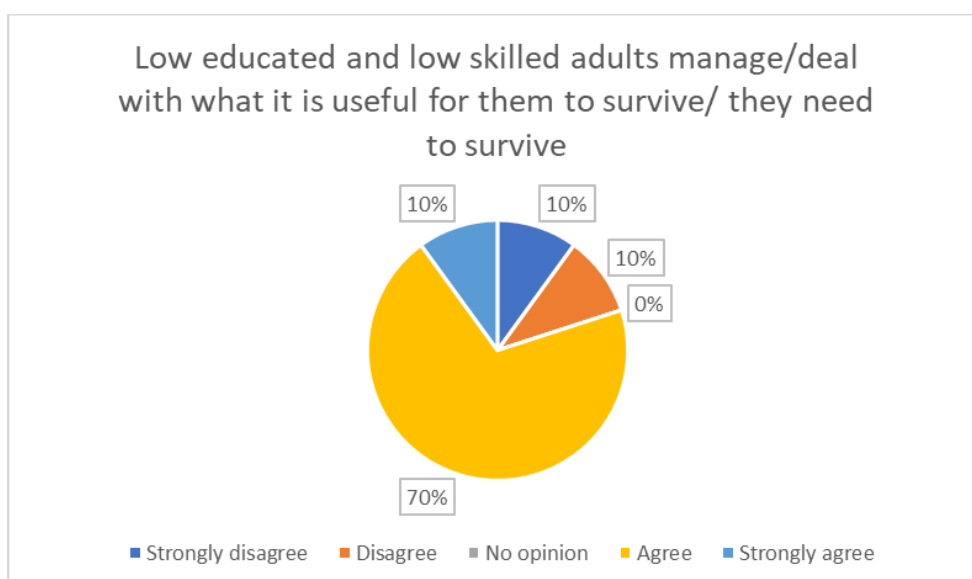
Low educated and low skilled adults do not develop together with their company



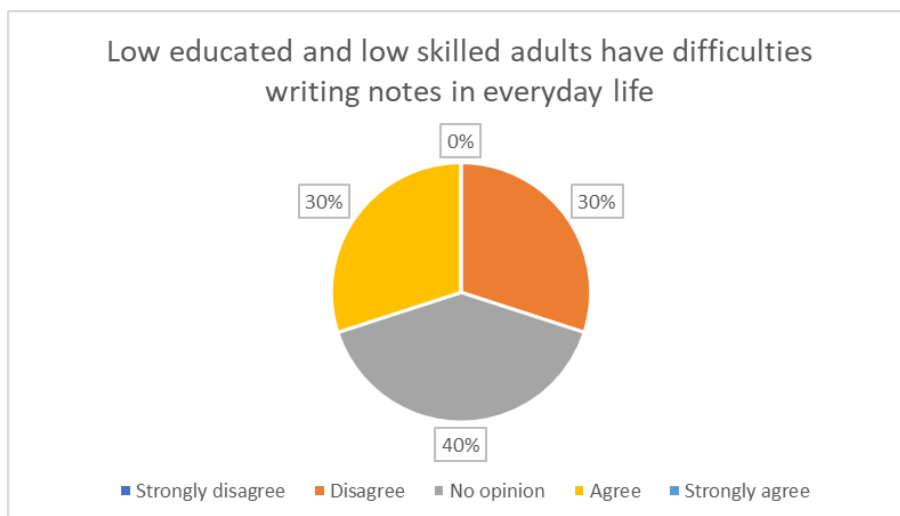
The vast majority of educators (80%) agree with the fact that low-educated adults do not develop along with their company.



Half of the respondents disagree with the statement, while 30% of them do not express their opinion.

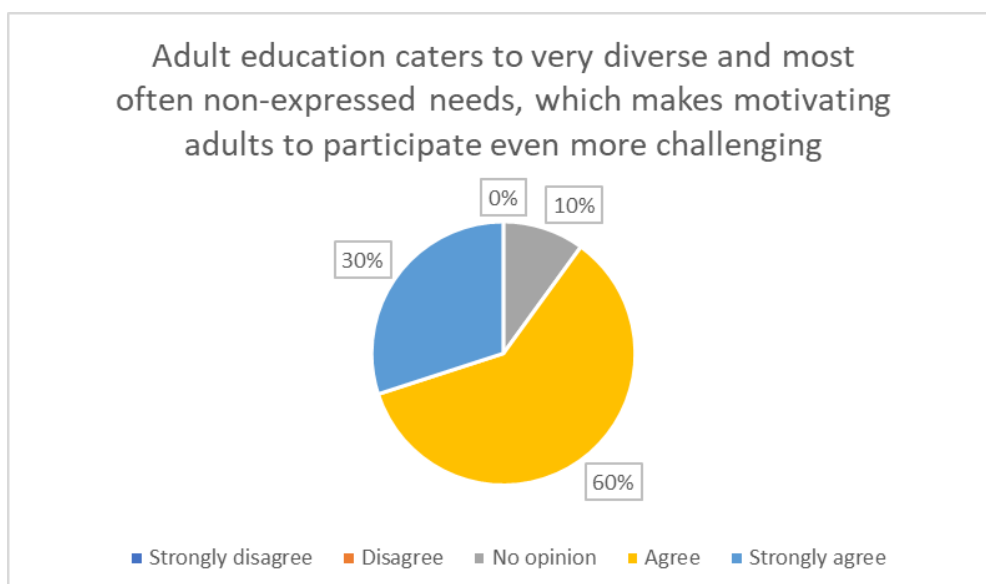


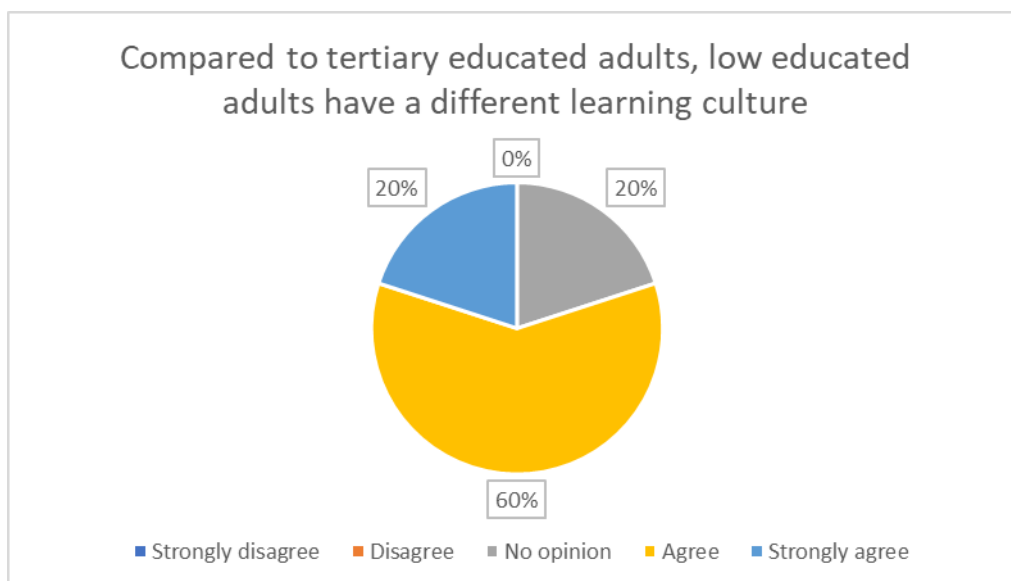
Based on the educators' opinion, 80% of them agree that low educated adults deal with what is useful for them.



Regarding this statement, 40% of the respondents expressed no opinion, while an equal amount of 30% disagrees with the statement and 30% agrees that low-educated adults have difficulties in writing notes in their everyday life.

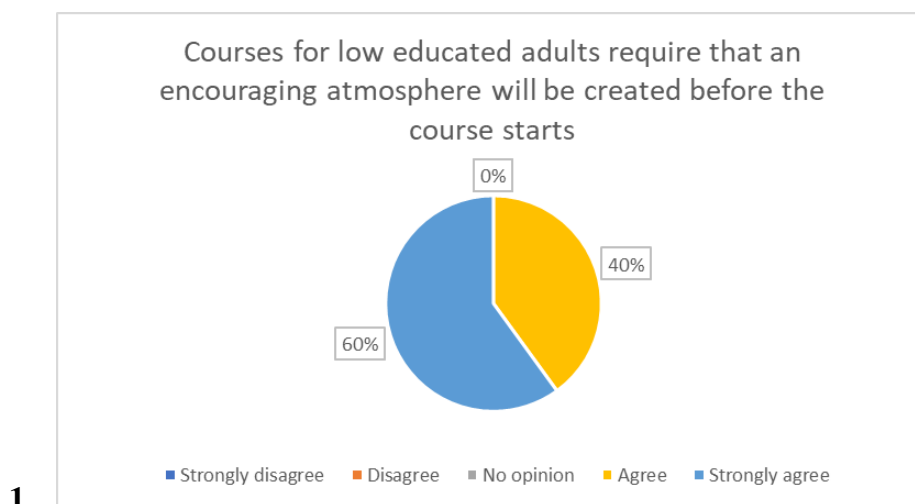
3. How to motivate adults to enrol and stay in educational/ training programmes?



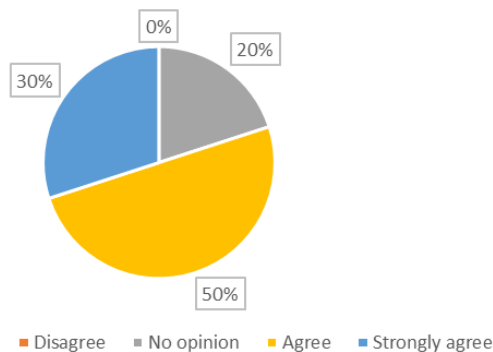


Based on the above statements, the vast majority of the educators agree that low-educated adults require targeted educational programmes and have a different learning culture compared to other learners.

In the following statements, **there is a huge agreement between the respondents who strongly support the following strategies** when educators are working with low-educated adults.

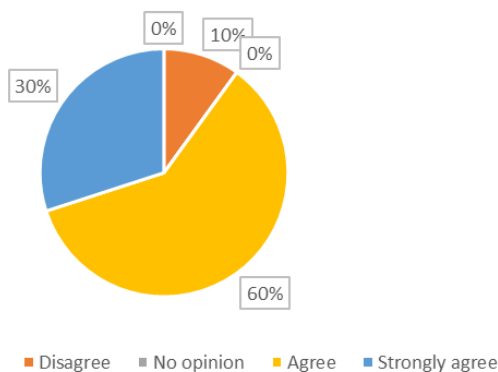


Motivating functional illiterates for learning starts by motivating Human Resources Departments, employers and/or the wider social environment



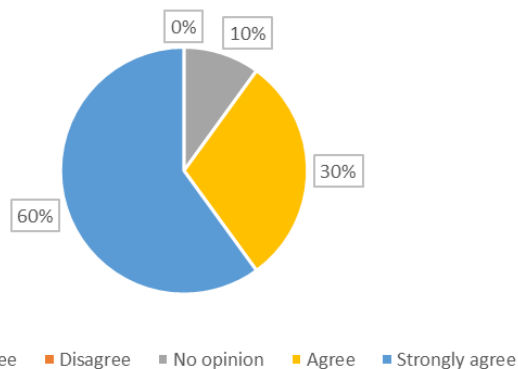
2.

Personal interviews with potential students are motivating and fruitful for programming the course



3.

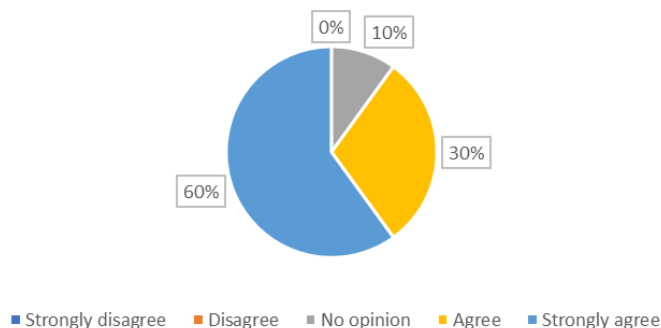
Low educated and low skilled adults have to feel accepted for who they are



4.

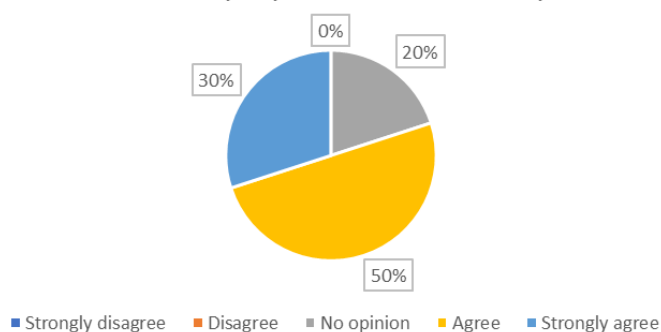
5.

Low educated and low skilled adults should be given learning opportunities which are interwoven with their everyday life



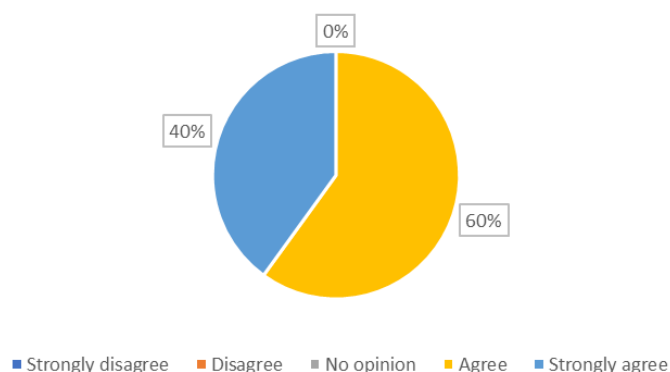
6.

When correcting mistakes that low educated and low skilled adults make, it is mostly about resuming what they say, but in a correct way



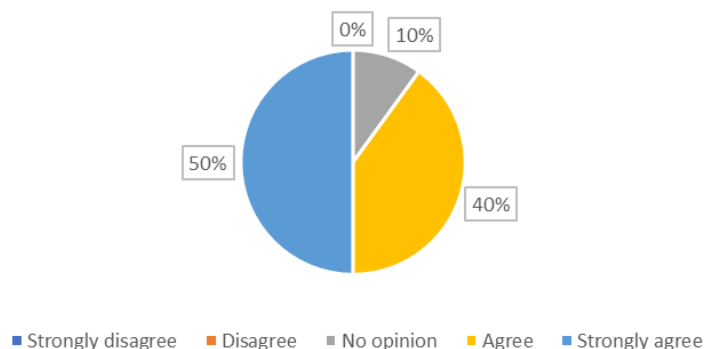
7.

During the course, low educated and low skilled often lose confidence and need constant support



8.

When delivering educational programmes adult educators should act both as learners and as a good, well-informed learning source

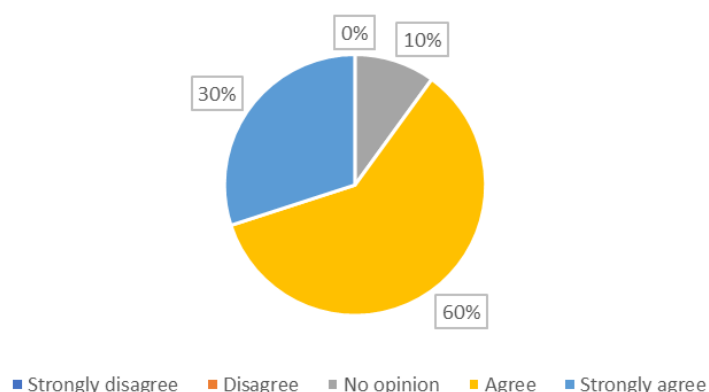


To sum up, almost all the respondents in Cyprus agreed that a supportive and encouraging environment should be provided to low-educated and low-skilled adult learners as well as an interesting and interactive programme which will be directly linked to their everyday experiences and challenges.

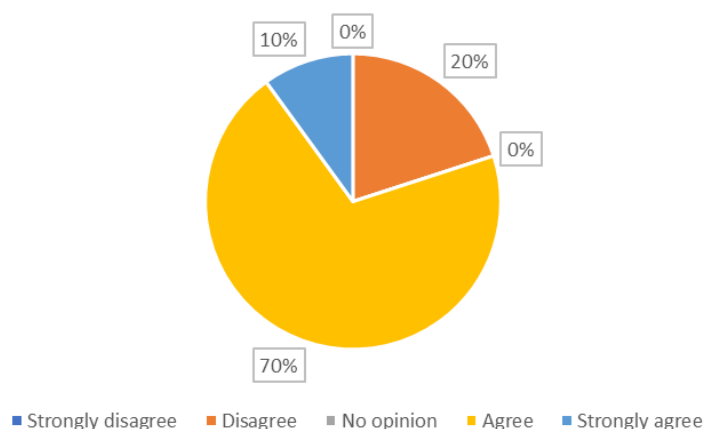
4. How to design/organize low educated students' learning process?

Based on the following statements, the **vast majority of the educators agreed** that educational programmes should be developed based on each target group's needs and particularities, and that the learning process is both a recuperative and a developmental one.

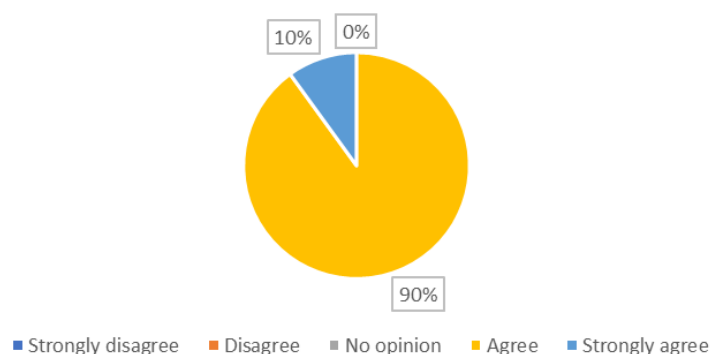
Adult educators design programmes for each target group separately



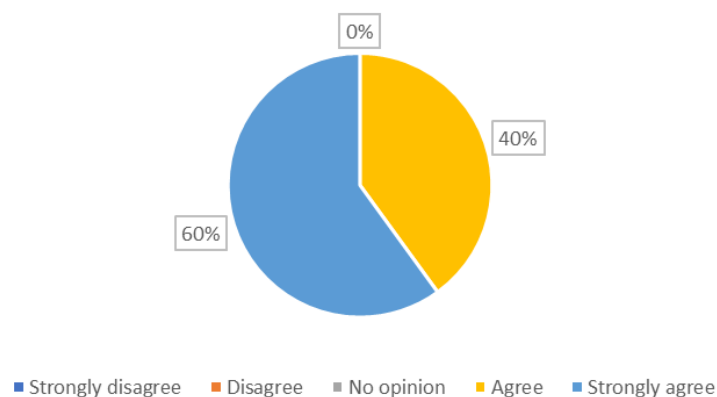
Programmes are based on situational analysis



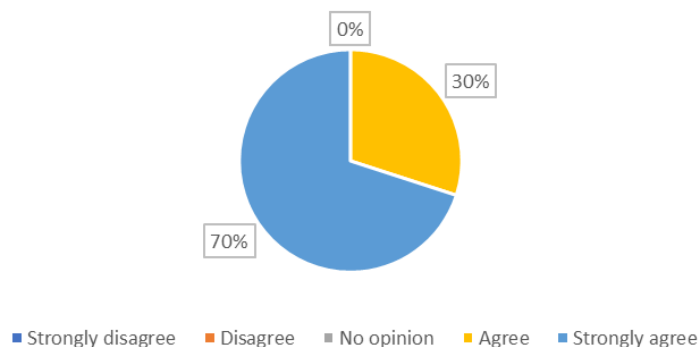
Educators should perform situational analyses by identifying their students' past, present and eventual future situations, and their ideal situation



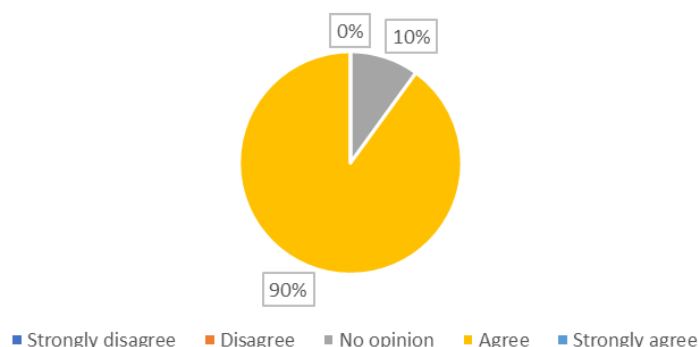
Educators should implement an initial analysis of needs (personal, work, social and educational needs)



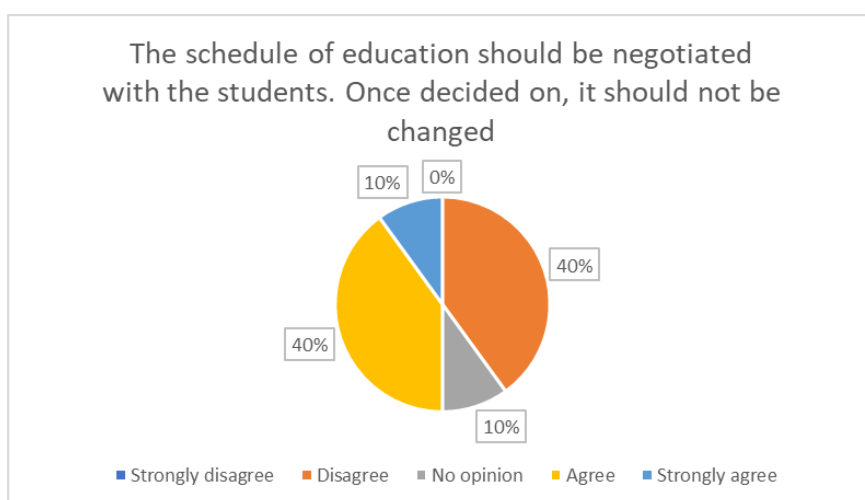
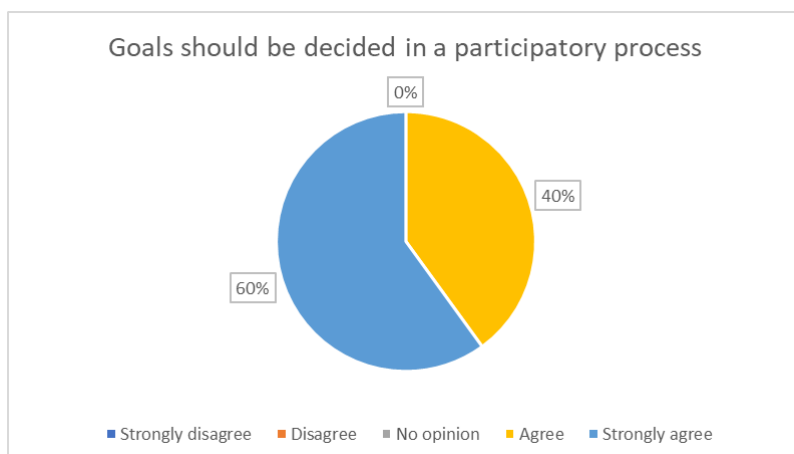
The learning program/curriculum should be designed taking into consideration each individual's needs as well as the common needs of the group



Acquiring missing competencies, however, is not seen only as a recuperative intervention, but also as a developmental one



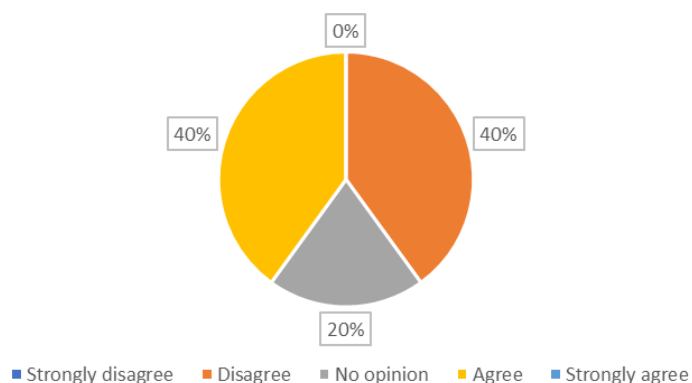
The absolute majority of the educators believe that goals should be decided in a participatory process, but the opinions are divided whether the content/schedule of the programme could be changed once decided (50% agree, 40% disagree).



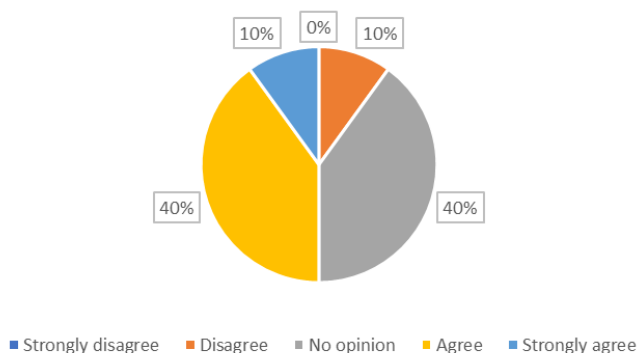
The best way to reach the target group

The results of this question did not reveal clearly what is the best way to reach the target groups. The company and regional level seem to be the right method for 40-50% of the respondents, but a large percentage disagrees or has no opinion.

Target groups are best reached on the level of the company



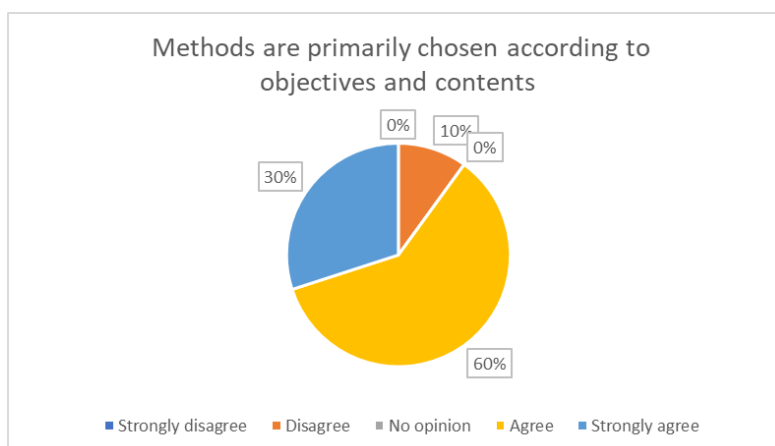
Target groups are best reached on the level of the region



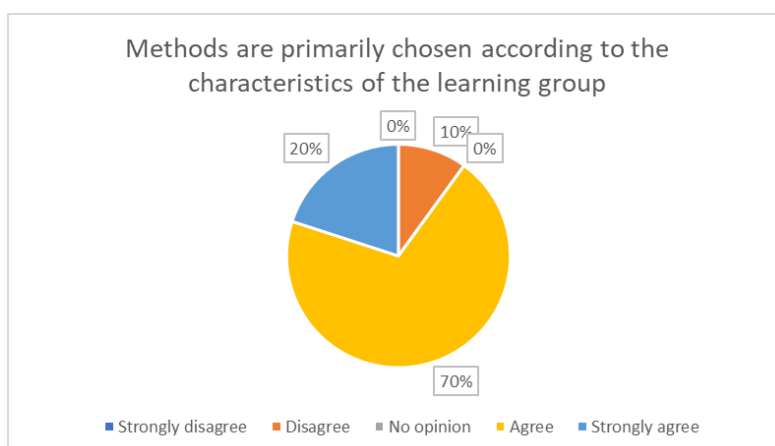
5. Which methods should be used while educating low educated and low skilled students?

The most suitable methods

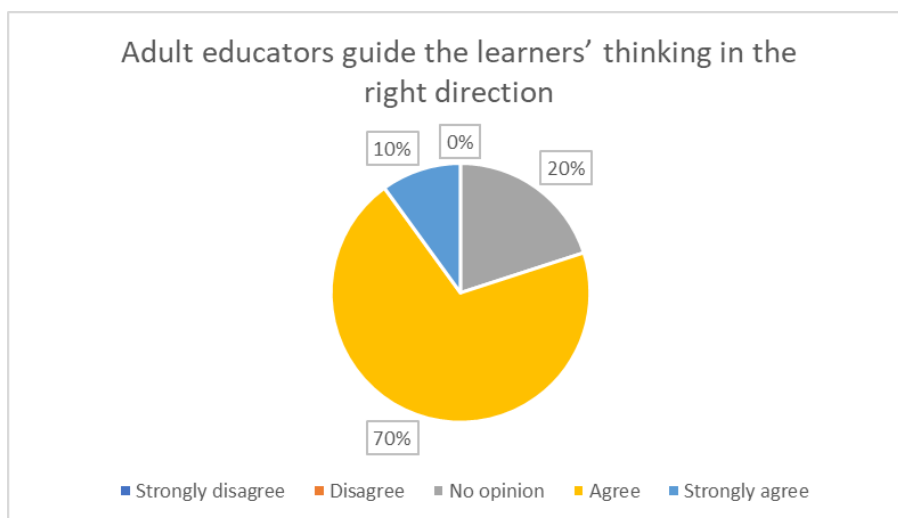
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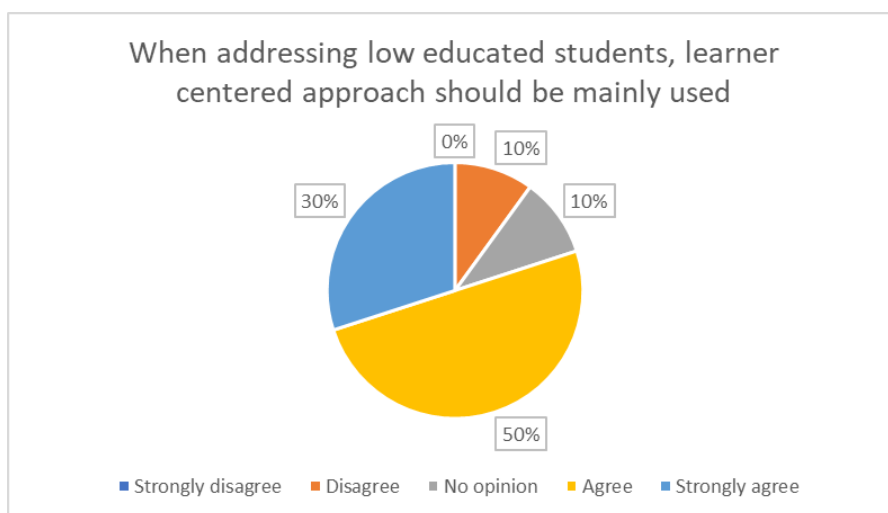
2.



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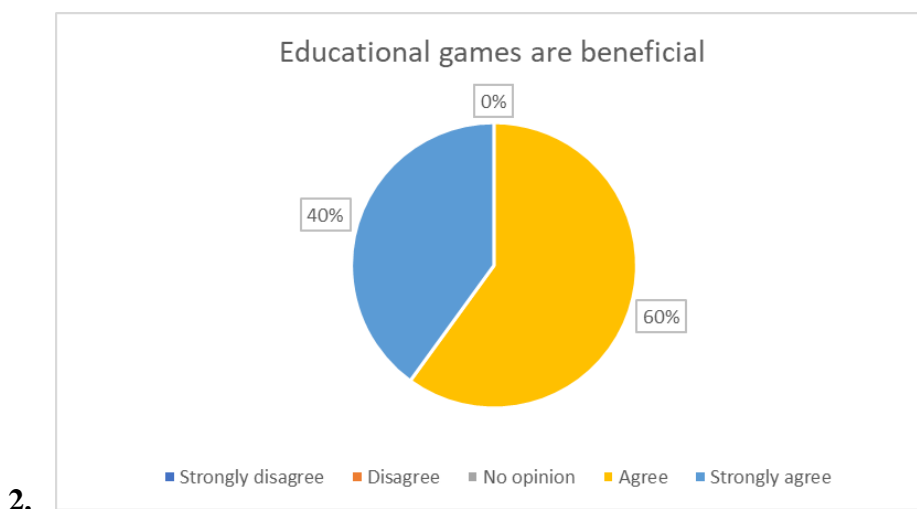
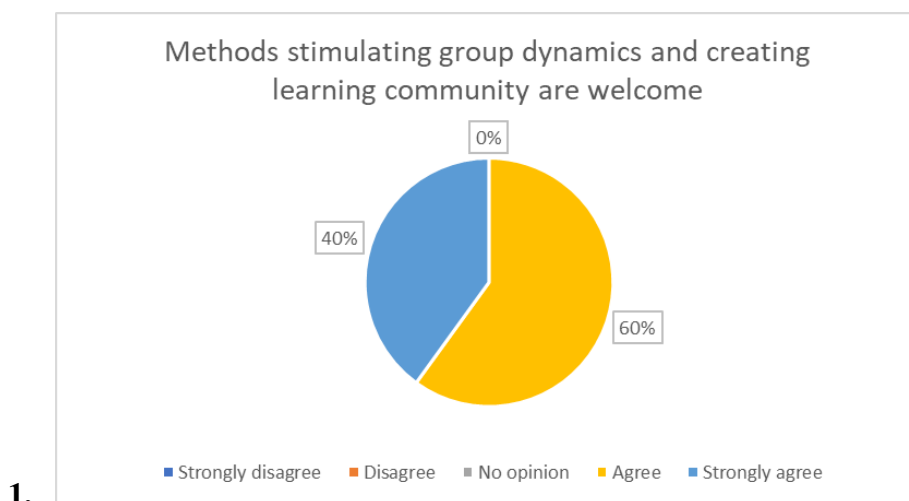
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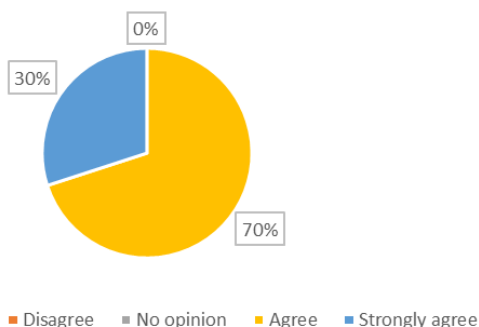
According to 90% of the respondents, methods should be chosen in accordance with the objectives and contents while 90% believe that they should be chosen according to the characteristics of the learning group. In addition, 80% considers that the best teaching approach should be mainly student-centred approach, while 80% considers that adult educators should guide the learner's thinking to the right direction.

The most suitable learning activities

The absolute majority agrees that methods stimulating group dynamics and creating a learning community should be incorporated in the educational programme with low-educated adults. The same applies for educational games and practical examples taken from real life.



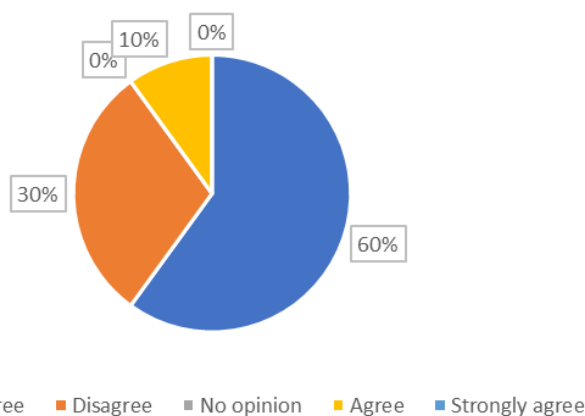
When abstract concepts are to be introduced to low educated and low skilled adults, students should be given examples they are familiar with, for example about their family, their community and, finally, the general concepts



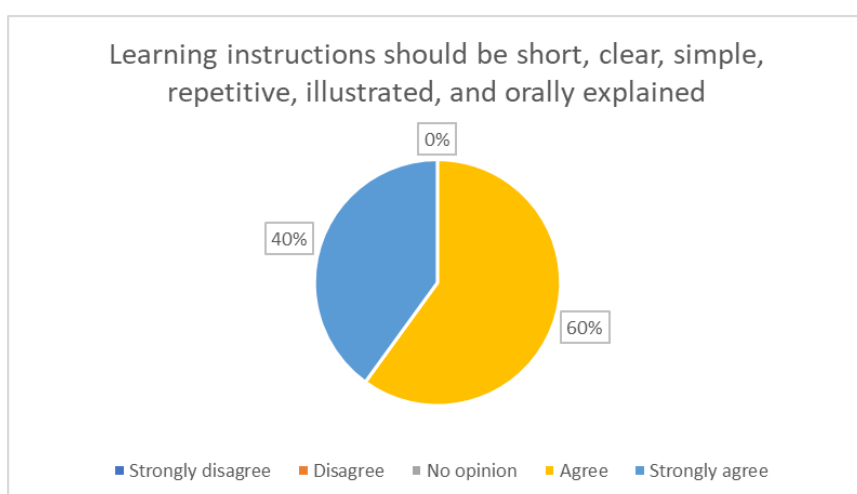
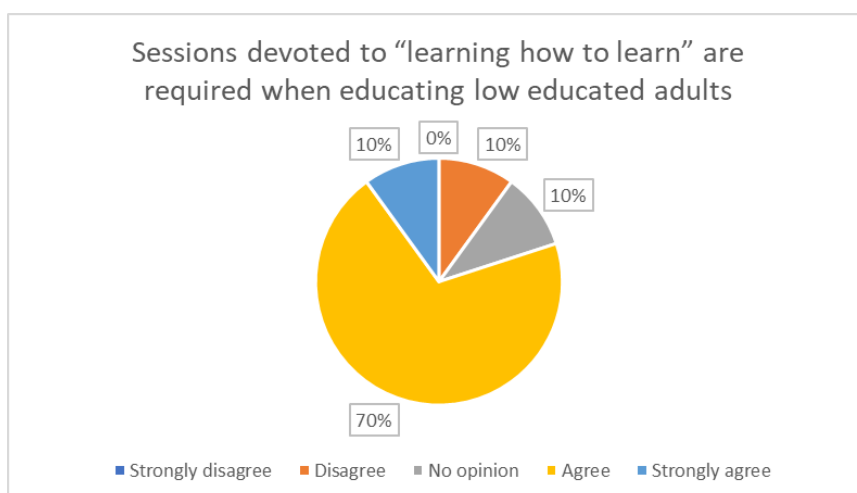
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It is very interesting that the majority of the respondents disagree with the fact that discussion is not a method of choice while working with low-skilled adults.

Discussion is not a method of choice when working with low educated adults

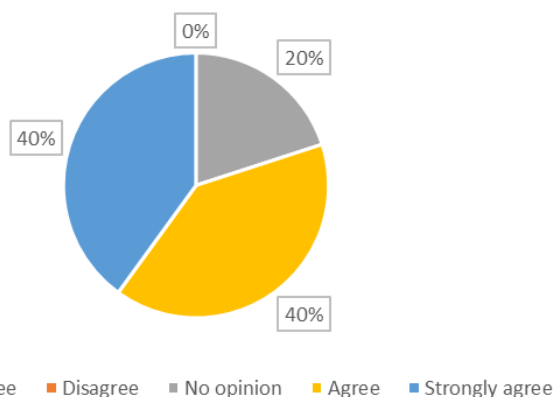


According to the respondents, some sessions to “learning how to learn” should be devoted when educating low-skilled people (80%), while the absolute majority considers that learning instructions should be short, clear, simple, repetitive, illustrated and orally explained.

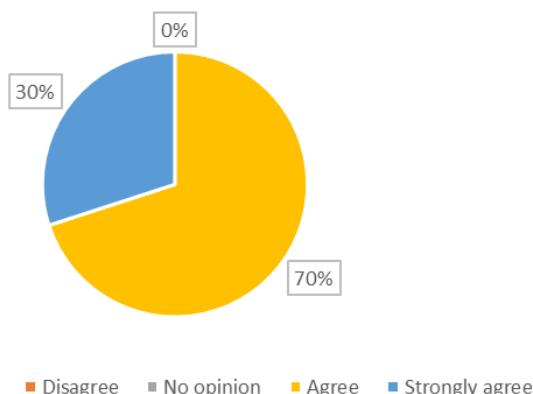


In addition, educators believe that face-to-face sessions (80%) are more appropriate to teach low-skilled and low-educated adults, while the absolute majority thinks that different learning approaches and methods should be combined while educating low-skilled adults.

Low educated and low skilled students prefer face-to-face sessions

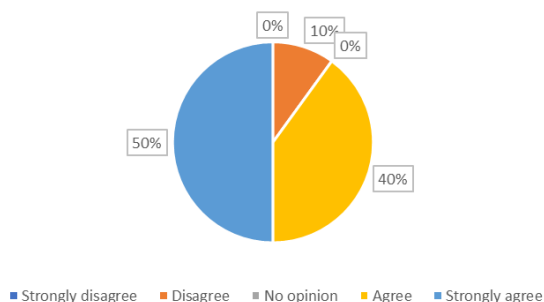


Different learning approaches and methods should be combined while educating low educated adults



Last but not least, educators also believe that they should protect their students and give them the opportunity to be proud of themselves (90%).

Educators should protect their students and give them opportunities to be proud of themselves



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The authors would like to thank all researchers, experts and educators involved in the project.



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