



Art4Wellbeing

Project nr. 2025-2-NL02-KA210-YOU-000368916

Research & Need Analysis for Art-based mental well-being tools

developed by Associazione Bubburriga

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1. Introduction of the Work Package

The purpose of this research was to identify the needs, challenges, and expectations of youth workers, educators, and stakeholders regarding emotional well-being and the use of art-based methodologies in youth work.

The findings will directly inform the development of the Art4Well-being Digital Toolkit and Handbook, ensuring that the selected methodologies respond to real needs identified by practitioners working with young people.

2. Survey sample overview

The research was conducted across the three partner countries involved in the Art4Well-being project: Italy, the Netherlands, and Türkiye. These countries were selected in line with the operational contexts and target communities of the partner organisations—Associazione Culturale Bubburiga (Italy), Stichting Artmonia Foundation (Netherlands), and ESİGED (Türkiye). By involving participants from different geographical, cultural, and professional backgrounds, the study aimed to capture a diverse range of perspectives on emotional well-being, youth work practices, and the use of arts-based methodologies.

The survey was distributed through the partners' local and international networks, reaching individuals actively engaged in youth-related activities and educational settings. This approach ensured that the collected data reflected the realities, challenges, and needs experienced by professionals and community members working with young people in different contexts.

A total of 158 responses were collected. The sample included a variety of stakeholders connected to the youth field, representing different levels of experience and areas of expertise. Participants included youth workers, educators,

teachers, students, trainers, and other professionals involved in youth development, non-formal education, community engagement, and well-being initiatives.

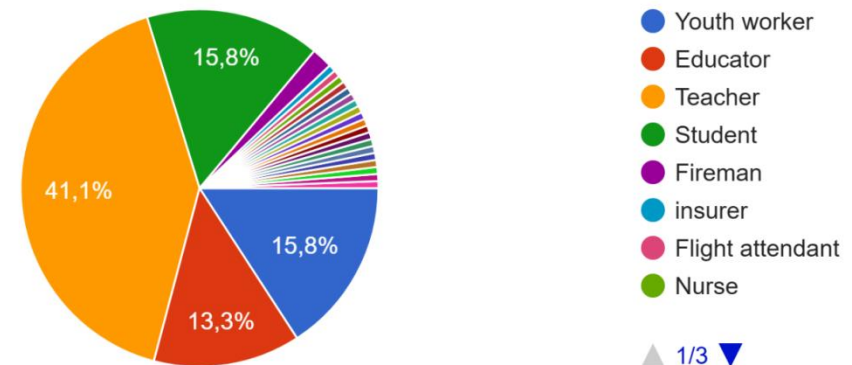
The diversity of the respondents provided valuable insights into current practices, existing challenges, and opportunities for integrating arts-based approaches into youth work. This broad representation strengthens the reliability of the findings and supports the development of a Digital Toolkit that is relevant, practical, and adaptable to different local and international contexts.

Respondent Profiles

The survey reached a diverse group of professionals and young people. This diversity provides a broad perspective on youth well-being needs and educational practices.

Main categories:

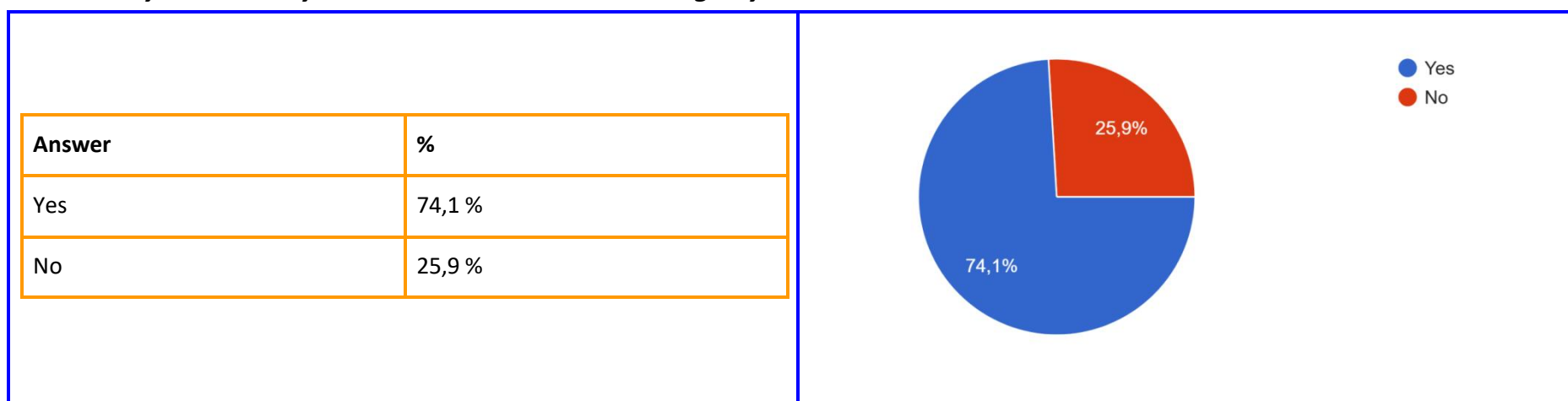
- Teachers
- Students
- Educators
- Youth Workers
- Other professionals



3. Emotional well-being in Youth Work

One of the main objectives of the survey was to explore the extent to which emotional well-being is addressed in the daily practice of youth workers, educators, and other professionals working with young people. Understanding current approaches to well-being is essential for identifying existing practices, gaps, and support needs within the youth sector.

→ *Do you currently address emotional well-being in your activities?*



Almost three quarters of respondents already address emotional well-being in their activities, demonstrating a strong awareness of the topic within the youth field.

4. Integration of emotional well-being activities in professional practice

Addressing emotional well-being is not only a matter of awareness but also of practical implementation. For this reason, the survey explored how frequently respondents incorporate activities related to emotional well-being into their daily work with young people.

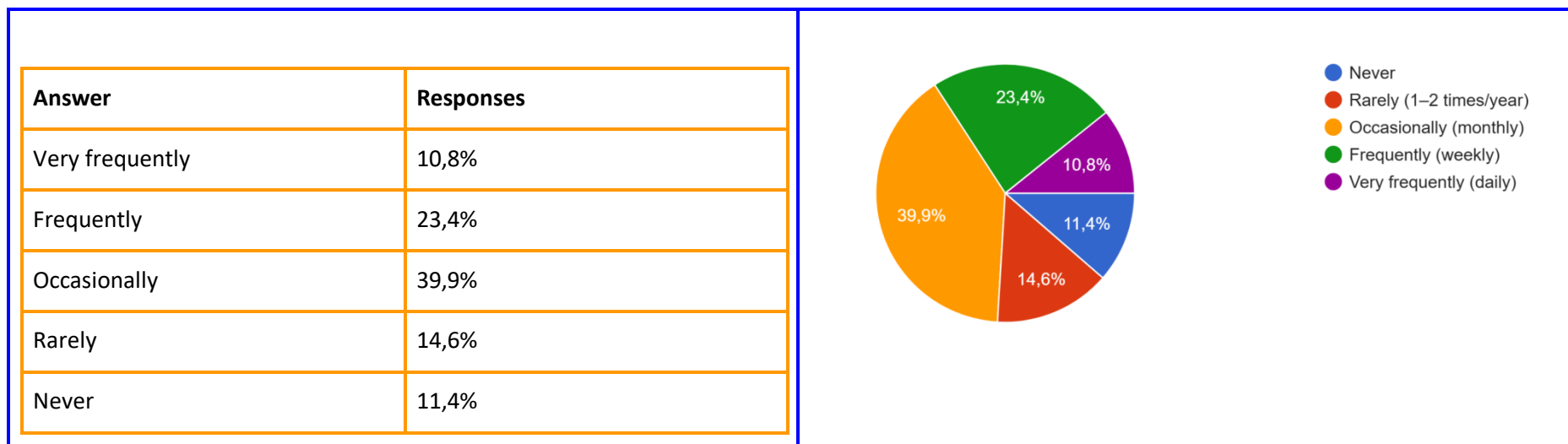
Understanding the regularity with which well-being-related activities are implemented provides valuable insights into current practices within the youth sector. It also helps identify whether emotional well-being is treated as a core component of youth work or as an occasional topic addressed only in specific circumstances.

The findings contribute to assessing the level of integration of well-being approaches across different professional contexts and provide a basis for identifying areas where additional support, methodologies, and resources may be needed.

39,9% of respondents reported incorporating emotional well-being activities into their work at least occasionally, demonstrating a strong awareness of the importance of well-being within youth work and educational settings.

However, nearly one quarter of participants address the topic only rarely or not at all, highlighting **the need for additional tools, training opportunities, and practical methodologies to support the systematic integration of well-being practices.**

→ *How often do you include activities related to emotional well-being in your work?*

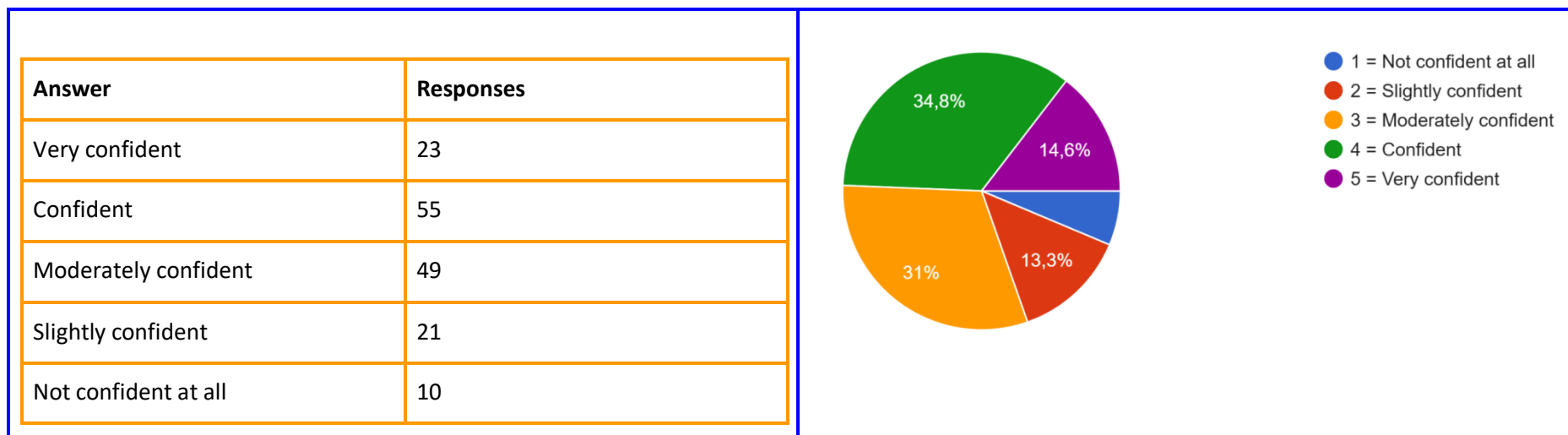


5. Confidence in supporting Young People's emotional well-being

Supporting the emotional well-being of young people requires not only awareness of the importance of mental health and personal development, but also the confidence and skills to respond effectively to young people's needs. For this reason, the survey explored how confident participants feel when addressing emotional well-being within their professional practice.

Assessing respondents' level of confidence provides valuable insights into existing capacities within the youth sector and helps identify potential gaps in knowledge, skills, and practical tools. The findings also contribute to understanding the extent to which additional training, guidance, and innovative methodologies may be needed to strengthen youth workers' ability to support young people's emotional well-being.

→ Self-assessed confidence level



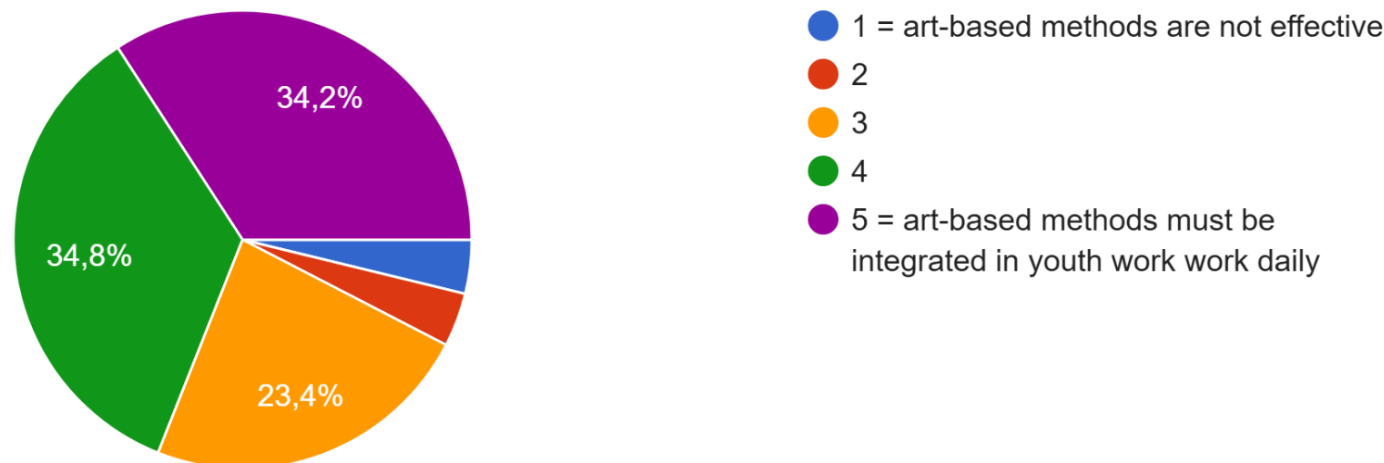
Almost **40%** still **report moderate or low confidence**, highlighting the need for additional **capacity-building opportunities**.

6. Perceived effectiveness of art-based methods

As the Art4Well-being project is centred on the use of arts-based approaches to support young people's emotional well-being, it was important to explore how respondents perceive the effectiveness of such methodologies. Understanding these perceptions helps assess the level of acceptance and interest in creative approaches within the youth sector.

This section examines participants' views on the potential of art-based methods to foster emotional expression, personal development, inclusion, and well-being. The findings provide valuable insights into the perceived relevance of arts-based practices and support the identification of methodologies to be included in the Art4Well-being Digital Toolkit.

→ *How effective do you think art-based methods are?*



69% of respondents rated art-based methods as highly effective (scores 4–5).

This demonstrates **strong confidence in the potential of arts as a tool for promoting well-being, inclusion, and personal development.**

7. Access to tools and methodologies

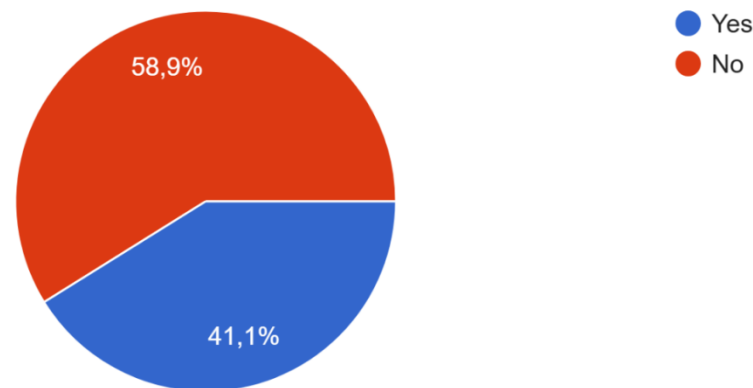
The effective promotion of emotional well-being among young people requires not only motivation and awareness but also access to practical tools, methodologies, and educational resources. For this reason, the survey explored whether respondents currently have access to structured tools that support their work in the field of emotional well-being and youth development.

Understanding the availability of such resources is essential for identifying existing gaps and determining the level of support needed by professionals working with young people. The findings also contribute to assessing the relevance and potential impact of the Art4Well-being Digital Toolkit.

The results reveal a significant gap in access to structured tools and methodologies.

These findings suggest that many professionals working with young people are required to address emotional well-being without the support of dedicated methodologies, practical guidelines, or structured educational materials. The lack of accessible resources may limit the consistency and effectiveness of well-being-related activities and reduce professionals' confidence in addressing complex emotional and social challenges.

→ Do you currently have access to structured tools or methodologies for emotional well-being?

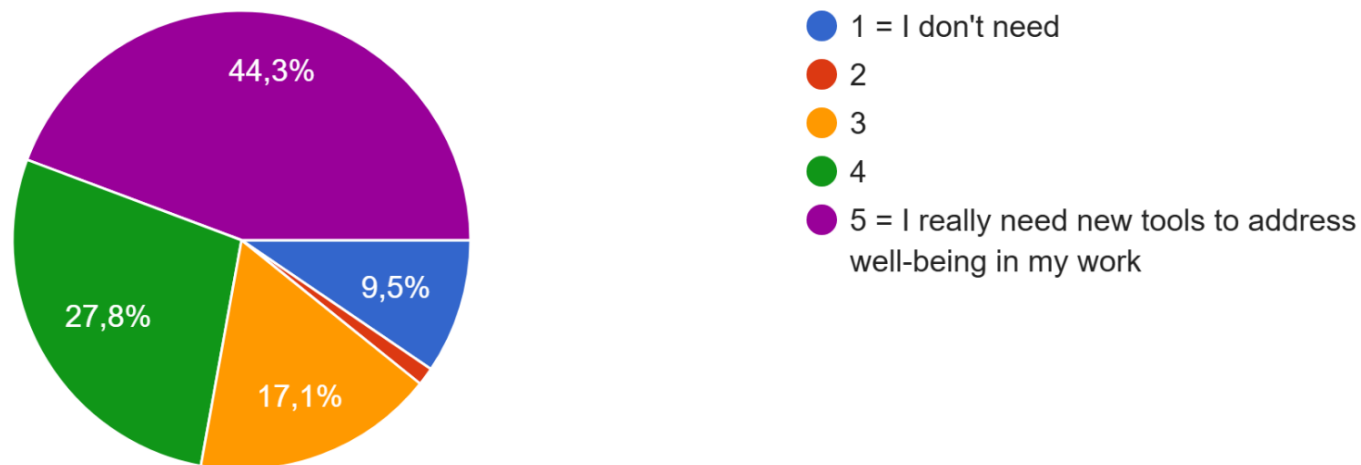


The data clearly highlight a need for accessible, user-friendly, and adaptable tools that can support practitioners in different educational and youth work settings. This reinforces the relevance of developing the Art4Well-being Digital Toolkit as a practical resource designed to respond to the needs identified through the research.

8. Need for additional training and resources

Access to tools and methodologies alone is not always sufficient to effectively support young people's emotional well-being. Professionals working in the youth field also require the knowledge, skills, and confidence to apply appropriate approaches in their daily practice. For this reason, the survey explored respondents' perceived need for additional training on art-based methods and emotional well-being.

→ ***Do you feel the need for additional training on art-based methods?***



The findings reveal a strong demand for additional training among respondents. A significant majority expressed a moderate to high need for further learning opportunities related to art-based methodologies and emotional well-being.

In particular, 72,1% of participants rated their need for additional training as high or very high (scores 4–5), demonstrating a clear interest in strengthening their knowledge and practical skills in this area. Only a small proportion of respondents indicated little or no need for further training.

These results suggest that professionals working with young people recognise both the importance of emotional well-being and the potential of arts-based approaches, while also acknowledging the need for greater support in applying such methodologies effectively. The findings reinforce the importance of providing accessible training opportunities alongside practical resources and tools.

9. Art-based methods for the Toolkit

Respondents were asked which artistic approaches they would like to find in the Digital Toolkit.

Most Requested Methods	Responses <i>(interim report)</i>
Music	97
Storytelling	94
Visual Arts	90
Photography	76
Movement-Based Activities	77
Theatre	69

The results show a strong preference for accessible and versatile methodologies that can be implemented in different youth work settings.

The Toolkit should prioritize:

- Music-based activities
- Storytelling techniques
- Visual arts practices
- Photography
- Movement and body expression
- Theatre and role-play activities

10. Challenges to address through Arts

One of the key objectives of the research was to identify the main challenges that youth workers, educators, and practitioners believe can be effectively addressed through arts-based approaches. Understanding these priorities is essential for ensuring that the methodologies developed within the Art4Well-being project respond to the real needs of young people and the professionals who support them.

Arts-based methods offer unique opportunities for self-expression, participation, reflection, and social interaction. Therefore, respondents were asked to identify the areas in which they believe artistic and creative activities can have the greatest impact. The findings provide valuable guidance for the design of future activities and for the selection of methodologies to be included in the Art4Well-being Digital Toolkit.

→ ***What type of challenge do you face and you would like to address by using arts?***

Challenge	Responses
Self-expression	96
Social inclusion	88
Creating safe spaces	73
Community problem-solving	62
Conflict management	58
Marginalization	53

Respondents view arts primarily as a tool for:

- encouraging self-expression;
- fostering inclusion;
- creating safe environments;
- strengthening social cohesion.

The results indicate that respondents primarily view arts-based approaches as powerful tools for supporting personal expression and social inclusion. Among the identified challenges, self-expression emerged as the most frequently selected area, with 96 respondents highlighting it as a priority. This finding suggests that participants recognise the importance of providing young people with safe and creative opportunities to express their emotions, experiences, and perspectives.

Social inclusion and the creation of safe spaces were the second most frequently selected challenges. These results highlight the potential of artistic activities to foster belonging, participation, and positive interpersonal relationships, particularly among young people facing social or emotional barriers.

Community problem-solving was identified by 62 respondents, indicating that arts-based approaches are also perceived as valuable tools for encouraging active participation, dialogue, and collaborative thinking within communities. Similarly, conflict management received 58 responses, suggesting that creative methodologies may support communication, empathy, and peaceful conflict resolution.

Finally, 53 respondents identified marginalisation as a key challenge that could be addressed through arts-based activities. Although less frequently selected than other categories, this finding reinforces the role of arts in promoting inclusion, diversity, and equal participation for young people with fewer opportunities.

Overall, the data demonstrate that respondents perceive arts-based methodologies not only as creative activities, but also as meaningful tools for personal development, social cohesion, emotional expression, and community engagement.

11. Themes for the Toolkit

To ensure that the Art4Well-being Digital Toolkit responds effectively to the needs of youth workers and young people, respondents were asked to identify the themes and personal development areas they consider most important to address through arts-based activities.

Understanding these priorities helps define the educational focus of the Toolkit and provides guidance for the selection and design of methodologies. The identified themes reflect the competencies, attitudes, and emotional skills that participants believe are essential for supporting young people's well-being, personal growth, and social participation.

The findings presented below highlight the areas that should be prioritised when developing arts-based activities, ensuring that the Toolkit remains relevant, practical, and responsive to the needs identified through the research.

Most requested themes	Mentions
Self-confidence	99

Empathy	95
Motivation	94
Emotional Awareness	91
Stress Management	82
Resilience	69
Courage	62
Acceptance	55
Patience	53
Inner Strength	51
Self-Compassion	45

The results indicate a strong interest in methodologies supporting:

- self confidence;
- empathy;
- emotional development;

- resilience;
- self esteem;
- stress management.

12. Target groups

In addition to gathering information about the professional profiles of respondents, the survey explored the characteristics of the target groups they work with. Understanding the age range and social composition of beneficiaries is essential for ensuring that the Art4Well-being Digital Toolkit responds to the realities and needs of the communities served by youth workers and educators.

The results show that respondents work with a wide variety of age groups, with a particular focus on young people and adults. The most represented categories were adults aged 18 and above (59 responses) and young people aged 18 and above (62 responses). Participants also reported working with adolescents aged 16–18 (41 responses), young people aged 13–16 (28 responses), children aged 11–13 (25 responses), and children aged 6–10 (21 responses). A smaller number of respondents indicated working with children aged 0–5 (4 responses).

The survey also explored the cultural composition of the communities served by respondents. The majority of participants (94 respondents, 59,5%) reported working with multicultural groups composed of people from different cultural backgrounds and nationalities, while 64 respondents (40,5%) mainly work with local or nationally homogeneous groups.

These findings highlight the diversity of the target groups reached by the partner organisations and underline the importance of developing flexible and inclusive art-based methodologies that can be adapted to different age groups and multicultural contexts.

13. Conclusions and recommendations

The research conducted within the framework of the Art4Well-being project provides valuable insights into the current practices, needs, and expectations of youth workers, educators, teachers, students, and other professionals involved in youth development across Italy, the Netherlands, and Türkiye.

The findings demonstrate that emotional well-being is already recognised as an important component of youth work and educational practice. In fact, 74.1% of respondents reported actively addressing emotional well-being in their activities, while 74.7% indicated that they integrate well-being-related activities at least occasionally into their work. These results

reflect a growing awareness of the importance of supporting young people's emotional development and mental well-being.

At the same time, **the data reveal significant challenges that limit the effective implementation of well-being initiatives.** Although many respondents are already engaged in this field, only 49.4% reported feeling confident or very confident in supporting young people's emotional well-being. Furthermore, **58.9% indicated that they do not currently have access to structured tools or methodologies that could support their practice.**

The findings also highlight a strong demand for professional development opportunities. More than seven out of ten respondents (72.2%) expressed a high or very high need for additional training on arts-based methodologies and emotional well-being, while over 89% reported at least a moderate need for further capacity building. This suggests that practitioners recognise both the importance of emotional well-being and the need to strengthen their competencies through practical guidance, innovative methods, and accessible educational resources.

The survey further confirmed the relevance of arts-based approaches within youth work. Nearly 60% of respondents reported previous experience using arts-based methodologies, and a clear majority perceived these approaches as effective tools for supporting emotional expression, inclusion, participation, and personal development. Respondents

identified self-expression, social inclusion, and the creation of safe spaces as the most important challenges that could be addressed through artistic and creative activities.

In terms of content development, **participants expressed a strong interest in methodologies that foster self-confidence, motivation, empathy, emotional awareness, resilience, and stress management. These themes emerged as key priorities for the future Digital Toolkit and reflect the competencies most needed to support young people's well-being and active participation in society.**

Recommendations for the Art4Well-being Digital Toolkit

Based on the findings of the research, the following recommendations are proposed for the development of the Art4Well-being Digital Toolkit:

1. **Prioritise practical and user-friendly methodologies** that can be easily implemented by youth workers, educators, and community practitioners with different levels of experience.
2. **Focus on arts-based approaches that promote self-expression, inclusion, and emotional awareness**, as these emerged as the most relevant areas of need among respondents.
3. **Include a variety of artistic disciplines**, such as storytelling, visual arts, music, theatre, movement-based activities, and photography, allowing practitioners to select methods that best suit their target groups and contexts.

4. **Provide clear facilitation guidelines and step-by-step instructions**, addressing the identified lack of structured tools and methodologies.
5. **Integrate training and capacity-building components** alongside the Toolkit, responding to the high demand for additional learning opportunities expressed by respondents.
6. **Ensure adaptability and inclusiveness**, enabling the methodologies to be used with diverse age groups, multicultural communities, and young people with fewer opportunities.
7. **Promote emotional well-being through experiential and participatory learning**, encouraging active engagement, creativity, reflection, and peer interaction.

Overall, the research confirms the relevance and timeliness of the Art4Well-being project. The identified needs clearly demonstrate the importance of developing innovative arts-based resources and training opportunities that can strengthen youth work practices and contribute to the emotional well-being, inclusion, and personal development of young people across Europe.