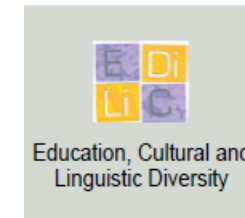
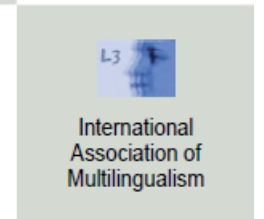


WEBINAR

The future of language education – learning lessons from the pandemic

"It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to *change*."

Charles Darwin (1809 - 1882)



The Steering Group for the Initiative

From the
Professional Network Forum



Frank Heyworth,
Equals



Richard Rossner,
Equals



Peter Brown,
Equals



Bernd Rüschoff,
AILA



Sabina Schaffner,
CERCLES




Bronka Straus,
Slovenia



Pille Põiklik,
Estonia



Just another survey?

- It's Europe-wide, including teachers from all sectors, trainers, managers, administrators ...
 - It's specifically about language education
 - There are many open-text questions where respondents can express their opinions and feelings
- 

The plan of the webinar

- **Presentation of the results of the survey on the Covid pandemic and language education** – Peter Brown, Eaquals
- **Teachers' voices about the experience of teaching languages during the pandemic** – Pille Põiklik, Estonia
- **Challenges to be faced** – Bronka Straus, Slovenia
- **Lessons to be learned for the future** – Bernd Rüschoff, AILA
- **Further actions** – Frank Heyworth



What were the main questions?

- What has been your experience of teaching in the pandemic?
- What effect has it had on your teaching – and your students' learning success?
- What lessons have you learned from the pandemic?
- What challenges have had to be faced?
- How will it change language education?

What information did we gather?

Statistical information – some examples

- Has remote learning affected teaching methods?
- Has there been there adequate technical support?
- Have teachers received training for the new situation?
- What has been the effect of the pandemic on disadvantaged learners?
- What steps have been taken to cope with learner stress? And stress on teachers?

Open text responses – respondents gave their opinion on questions, such as

- What are the lessons to be learned for language educators from the experience of teaching in the pandemic?
- What positive aspects of the experience can be integrated into future practice?
- What present and future challenges will need to be addressed?



OVERVIEW OF THE RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

Peter Brown, Equals



4,438

 Viewed

1,735

 Total Responses

1,735

 Completed

100%

 Completion Rate

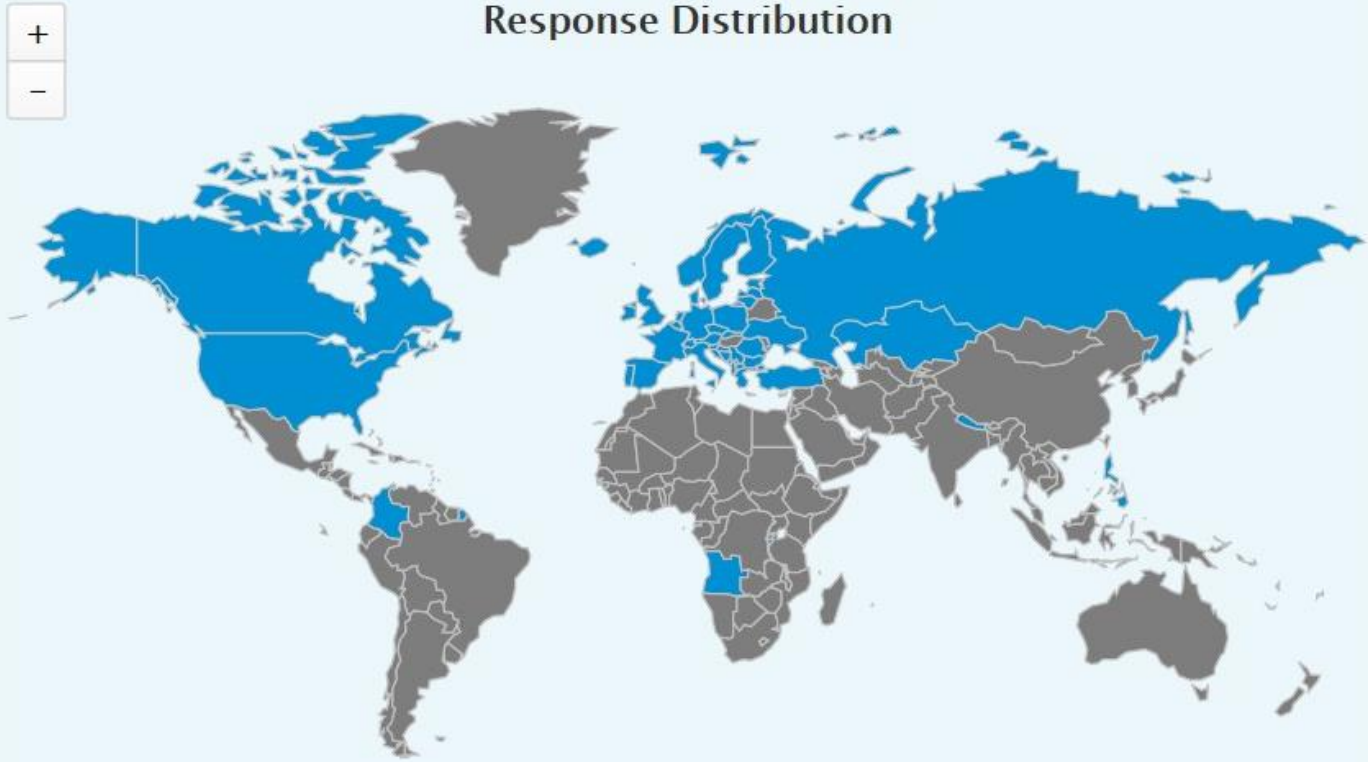
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 Dropouts

30 mins

 Average Time

Response Distribution



Countries	Responses
IT	9.34%
ES	5.76%
DE	All data anonymised 3.92%
BA	No data excluded 2.54%
AT	Work in progress ... 2.36%
FR	1.73%
CH	1.67%
SK	1.50%

4,438

Viewed

1,735

Total Responses

1,735

Completed

100%

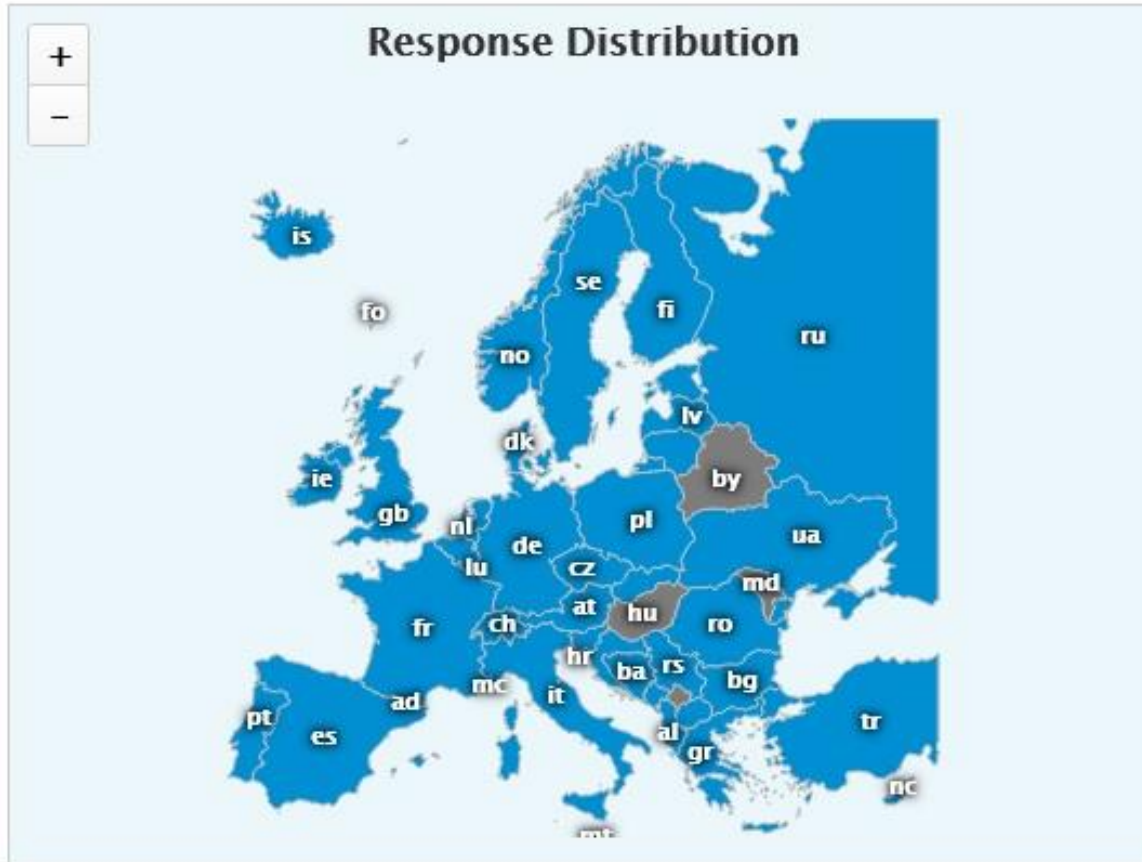
Completion Rate

0

Dropouts

30 mins

Average Time

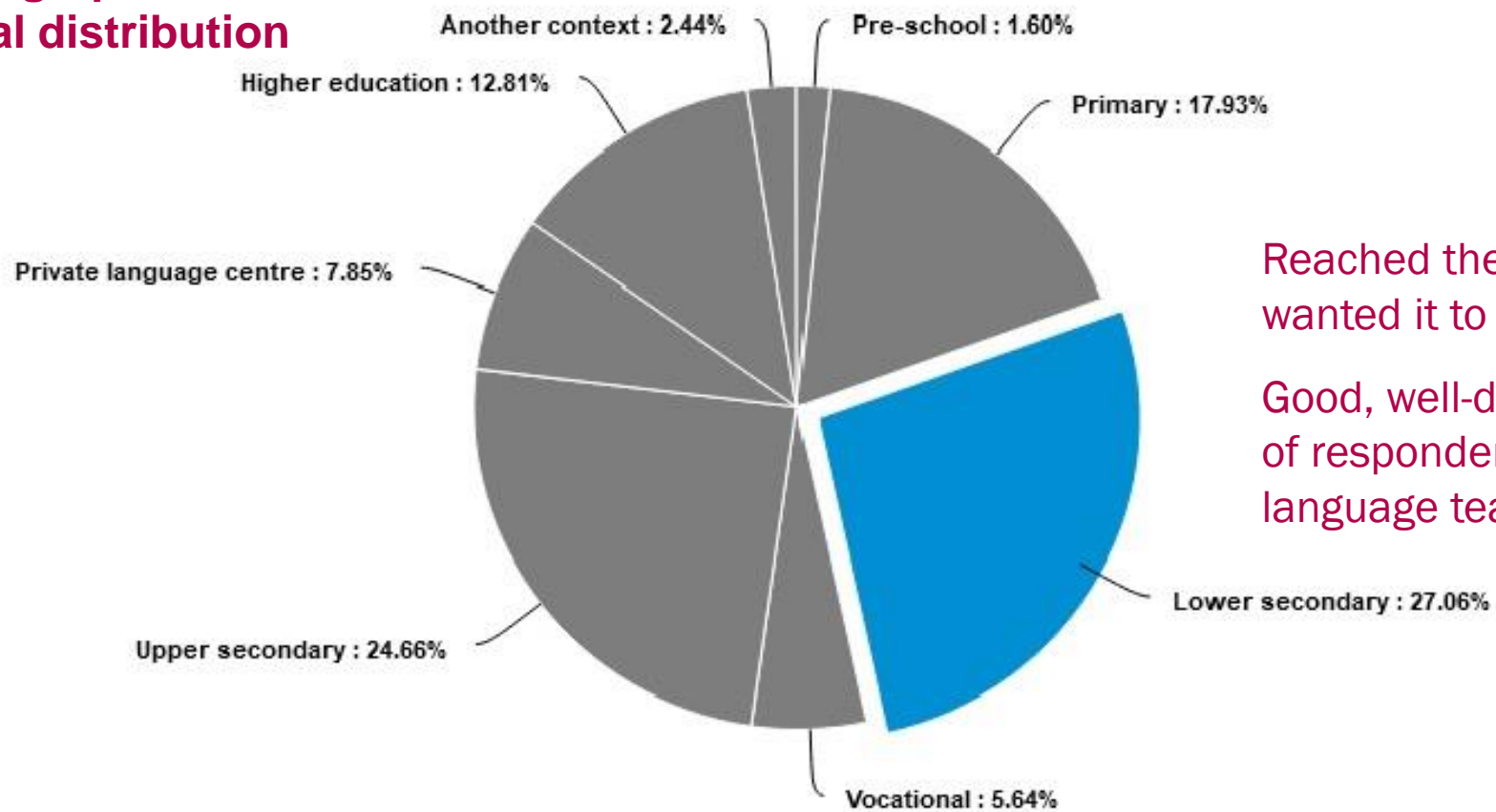


Countries	Responses
GR	29.68%
RO	23.23%
IT	9.34%
ES	5.76%
DE	3.92%
BA	2.54%
AT	2.36%
FR	1.73%
CH	1.67%
SK	1.50%

Good geographical distribution

5. What kind of institution(s) do you work in? (you may tick more than one)

Good demographic & institutional distribution



Reached the people we wanted it to reach

Good, well-distributed range of respondents, 52% language teachers

Answer

Count

Percent

20%

40%

60%

80%

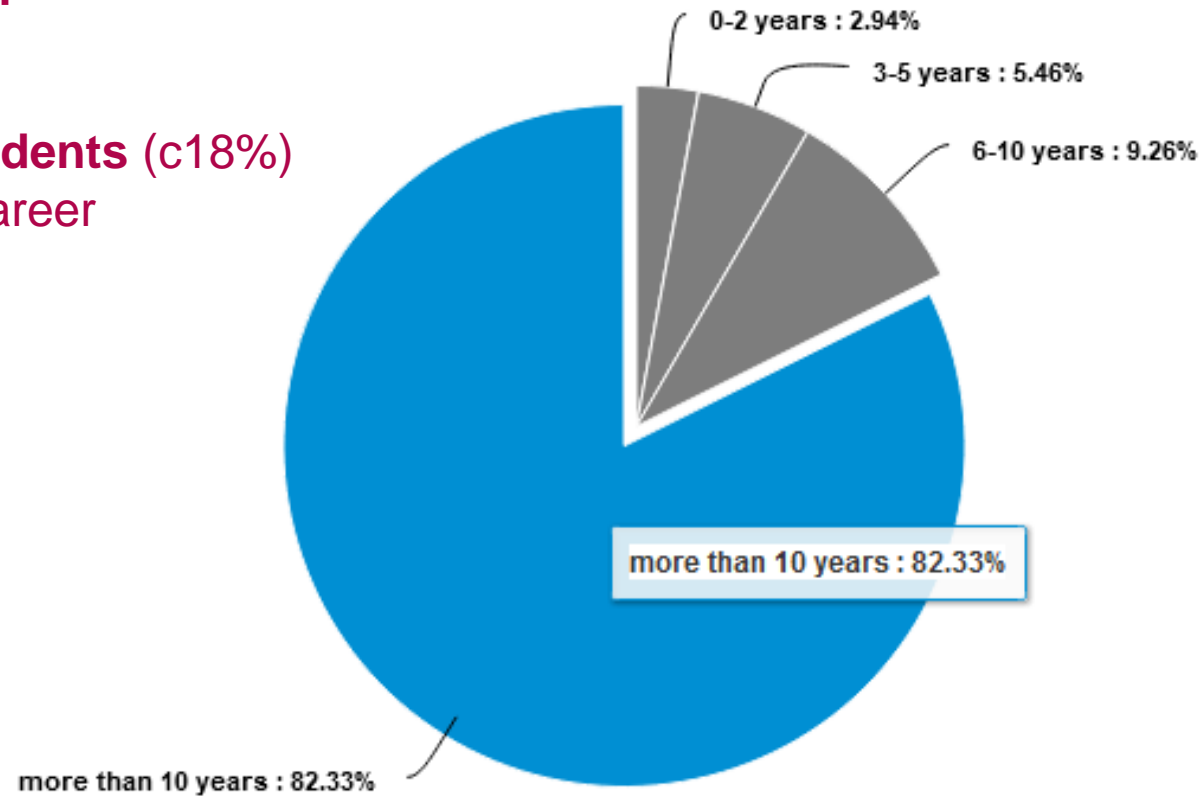
100%

6. How long have you been working in language education?

c 82% > 10 years experience

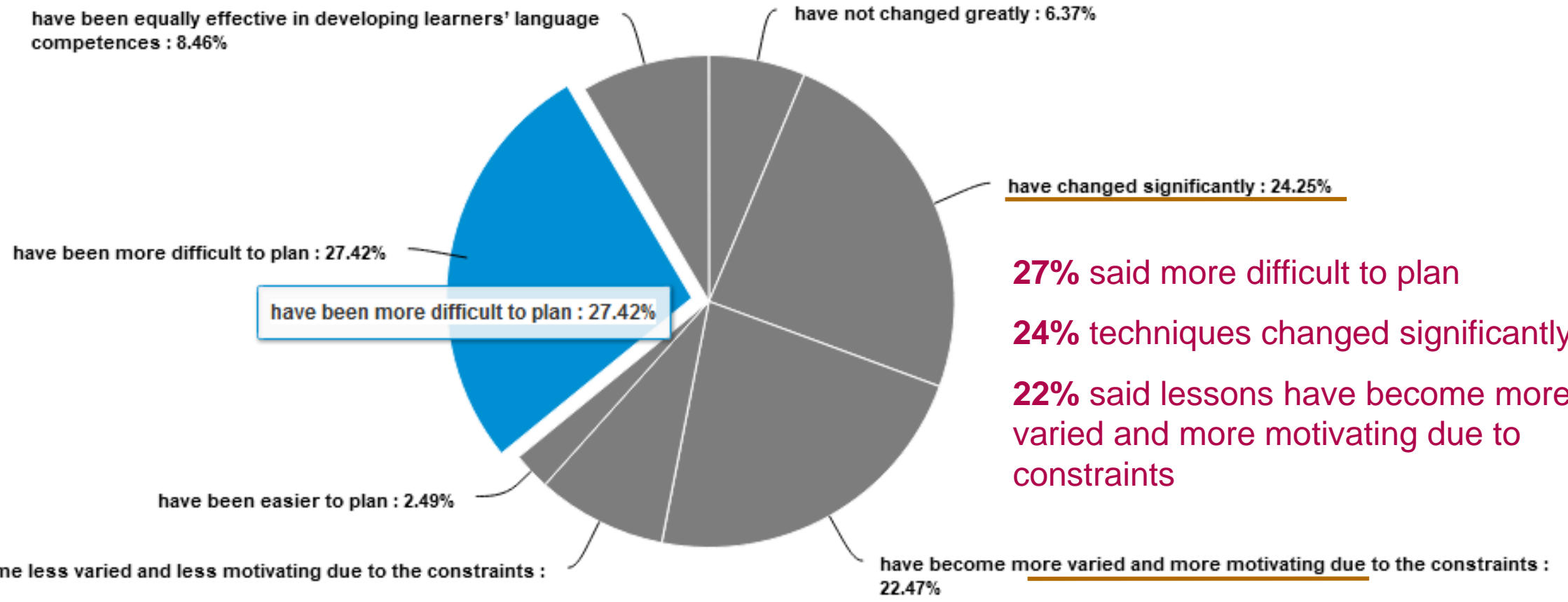
offset

by some 300 respondents (c18%)
at earlier stages of career

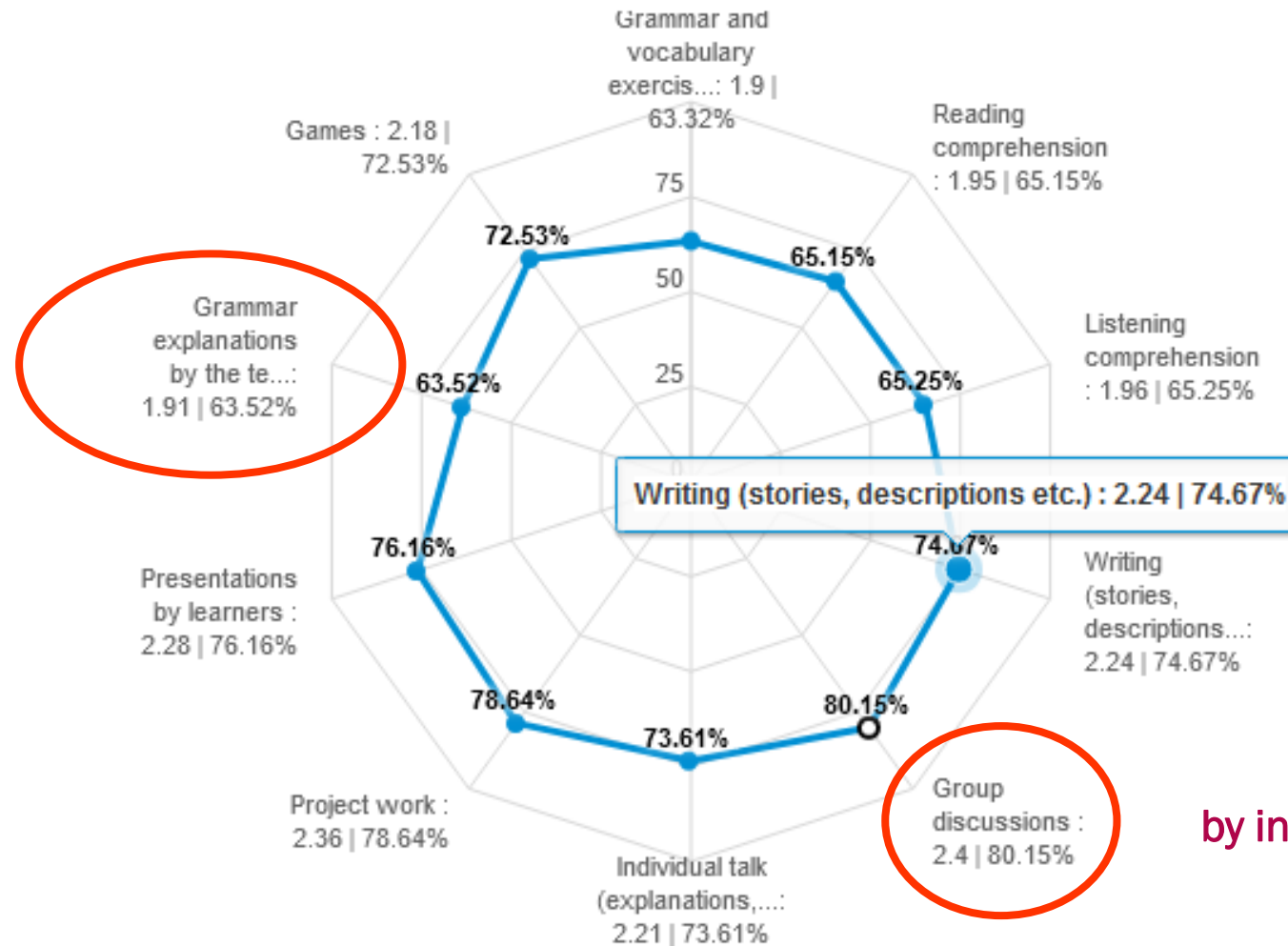


Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
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13. In comparison with the situation before the pandemic, which of these statements corresponds to your experience of language teaching? (you may tick more than one) Language teaching techniques, and learning tasks used by teachers:

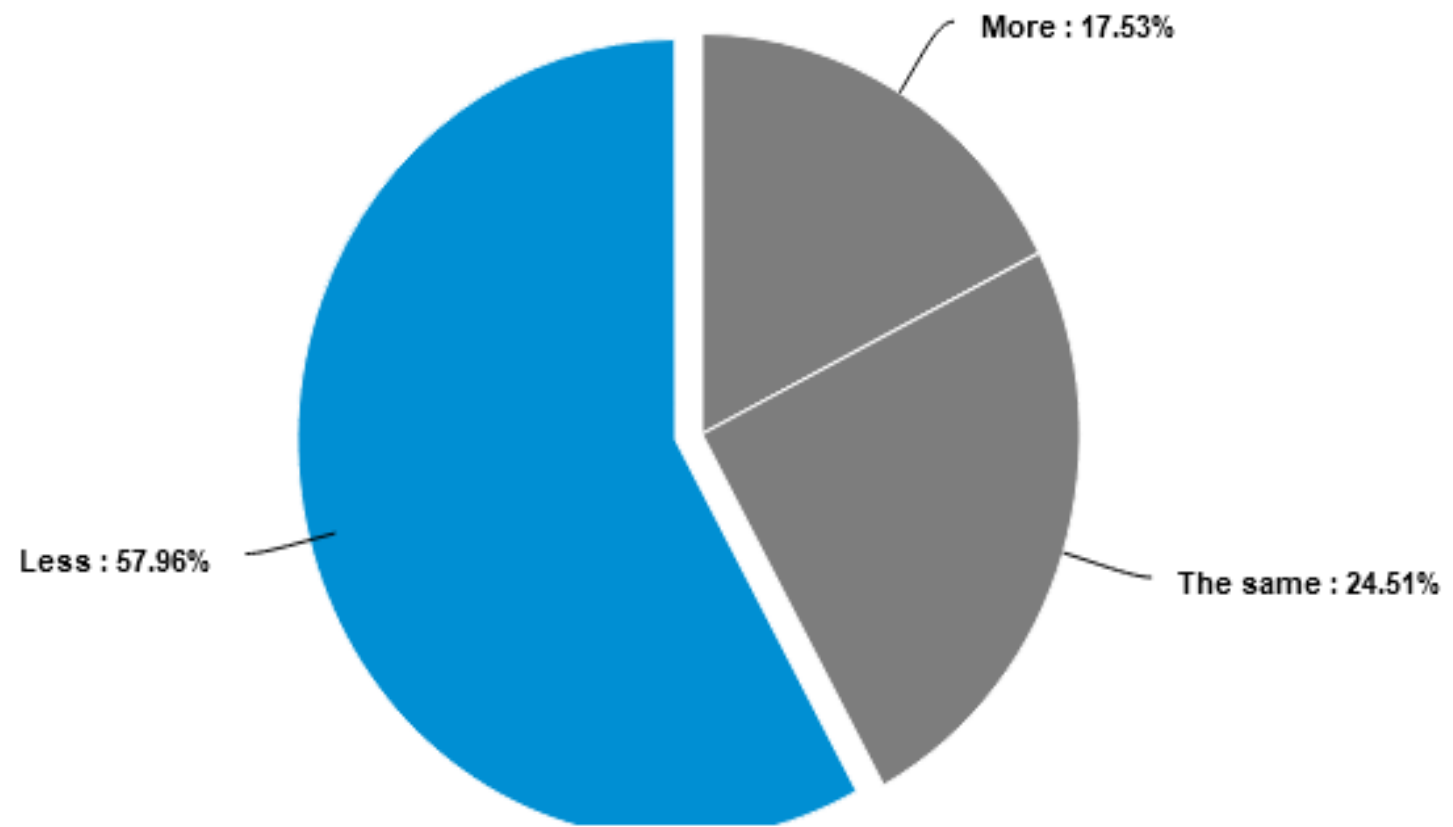


14. RECEPTIVE AND PRODUCTIVE LANGUAGE SKILLS Here are some language learning activities. Which ones have learners done more of during the period of the pandemic?
Which ones have they done less?



by inverse proportion

Group discussions





Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
mainly remote (not in the physical presence of learners)	511	29.69%					
sometimes remote and sometimes face-to-face in classrooms	651	37.83%					
When remote, it has been mainly synchronous, with the teacher and learners participating in the same online lessons at the same time.	478	27.77%					
When remote, it has been mainly asynchronous: the teacher gives tasks to learners remotely (e.g. via a learning platform, by e-mail); then learners, work on the tasks, and later the teacher provides feedback on the tasks remotely.	54	3.14%					
None of the above	27	1.57%					
Total	1721	100%					

Since the beginning of the pandemic language teaching has been:

38% sometimes remote and sometimes face-to-face

30% mainly remote

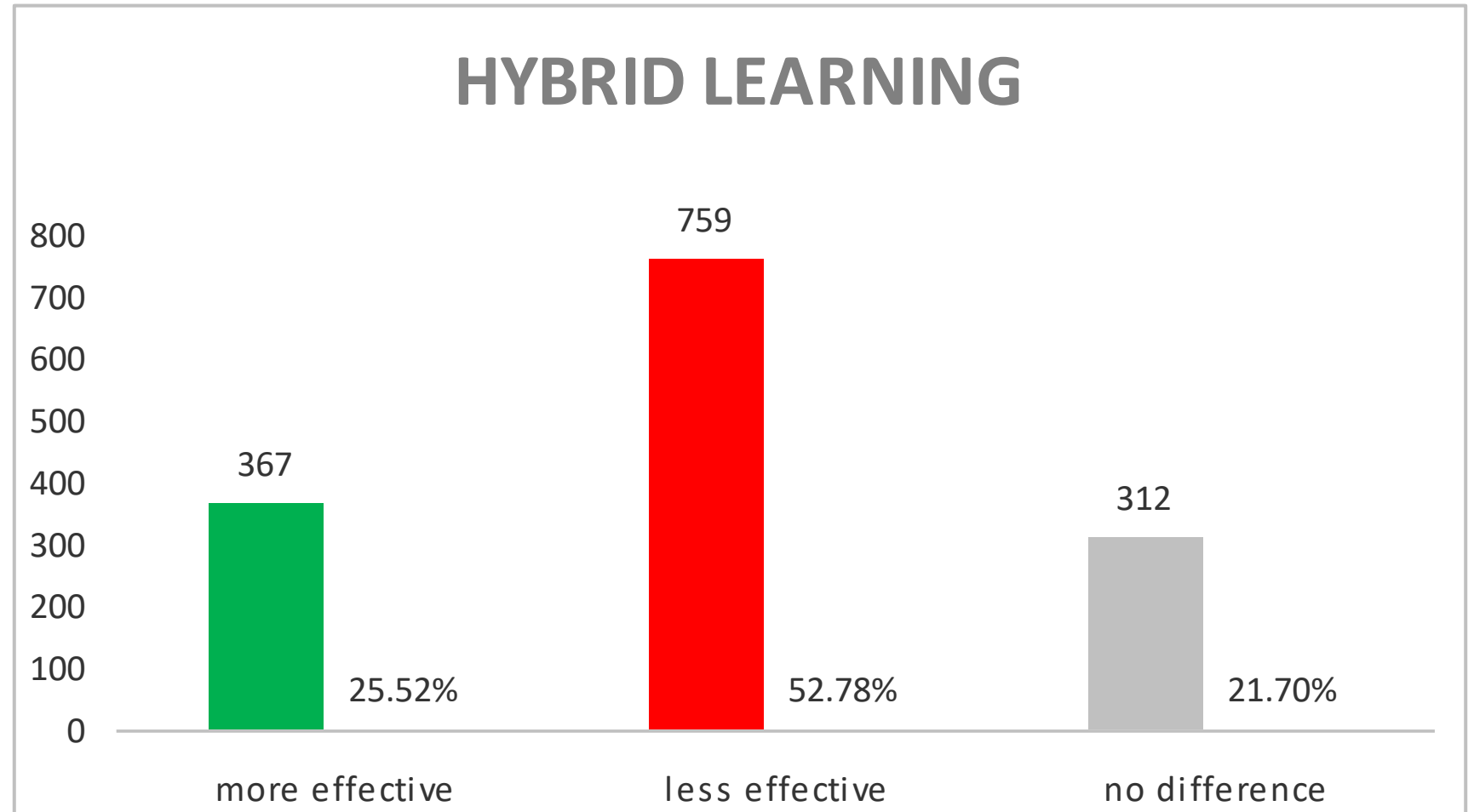
28% mainly synchronous

17. HYBRID LEARNING (combining remote learning and classroom learning) If you or your institution has combined remote language learning and socially distanced classroom learning in a hybrid model, what are your experiences of this model? How effective has the combined model been in comparison with simply remote learning or classroom learning by themselves?

53% judged it less effective

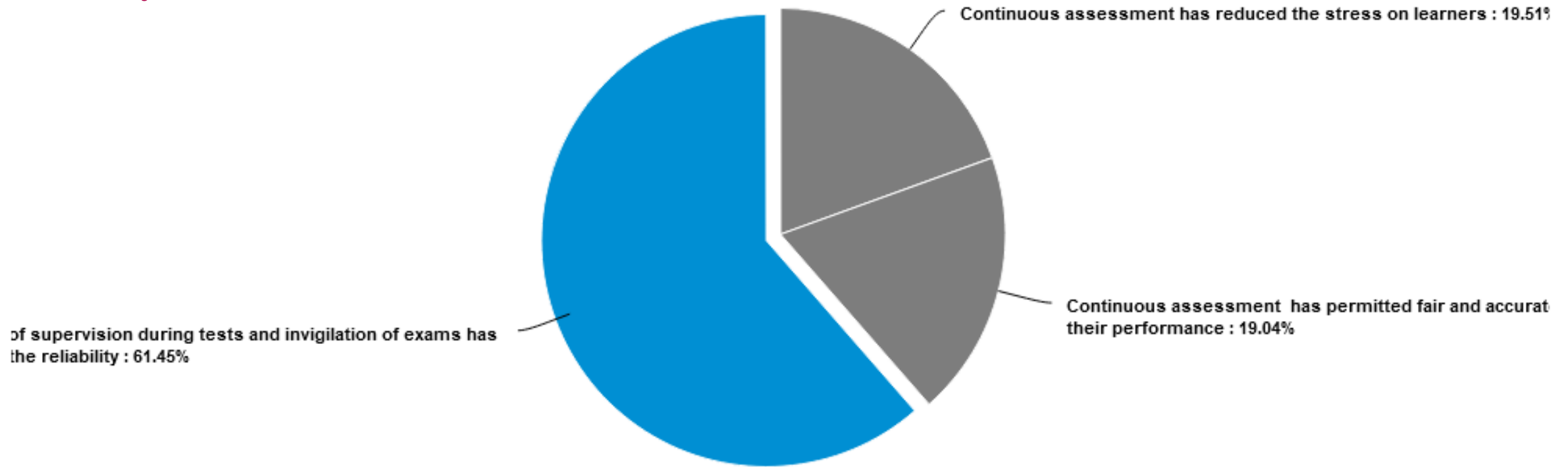


1:3 added comments



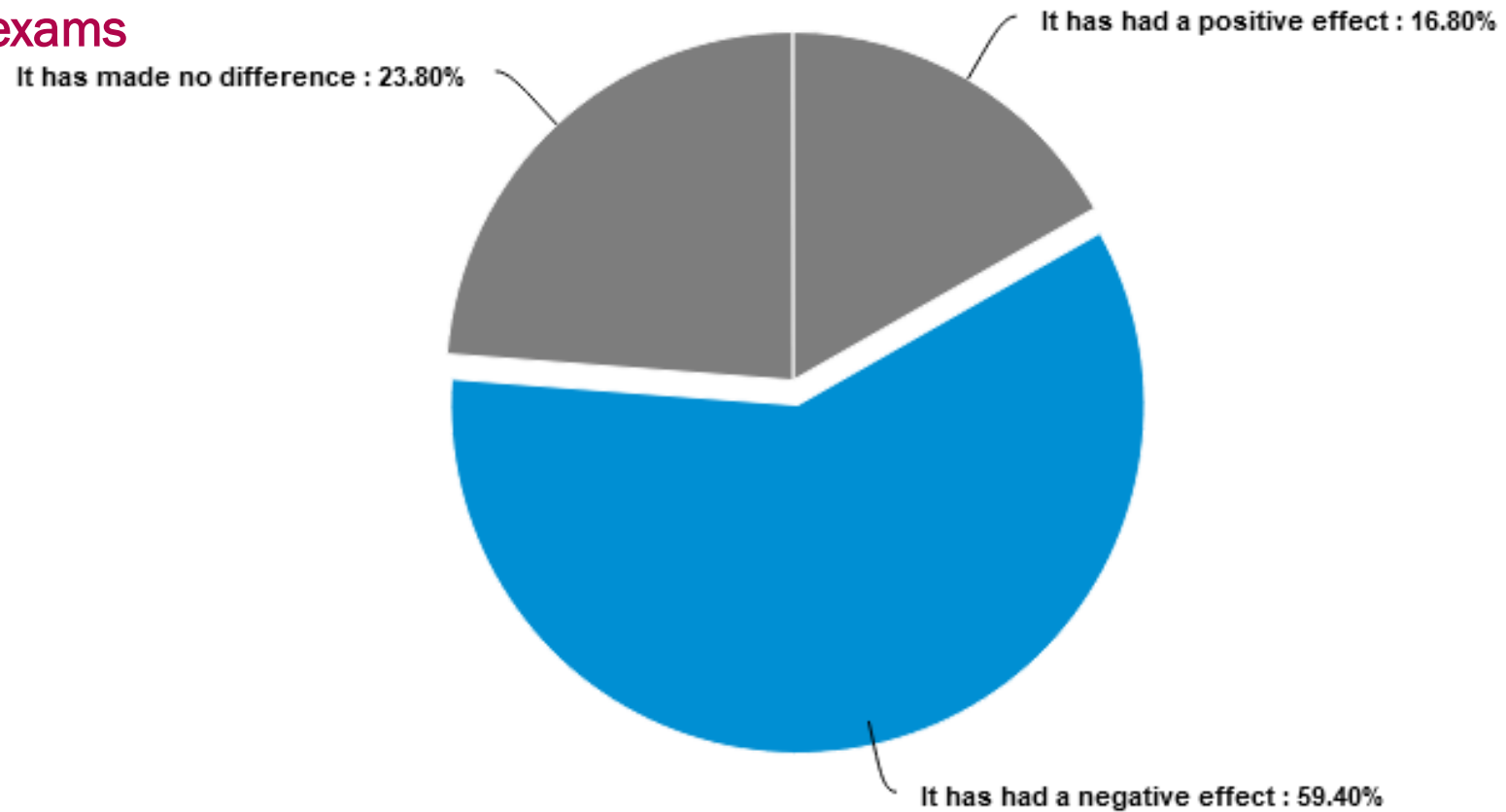
26. What, in your view, has been the effect of the pandemic on examinations? (you may tick more than one)

c. 62% reported reduced reliability of exams



27. If there has been cancellation of examinations, what in your view has the effect of this been on learners' motivation?

c. **60% reported learner demotivation due to cancellation of exams**



Feedback and comments you contributed:

15 questions elicited a total of 4150 comments, anchored in statistical data

These are the top 7 items covered c. 3800 comments = 92%

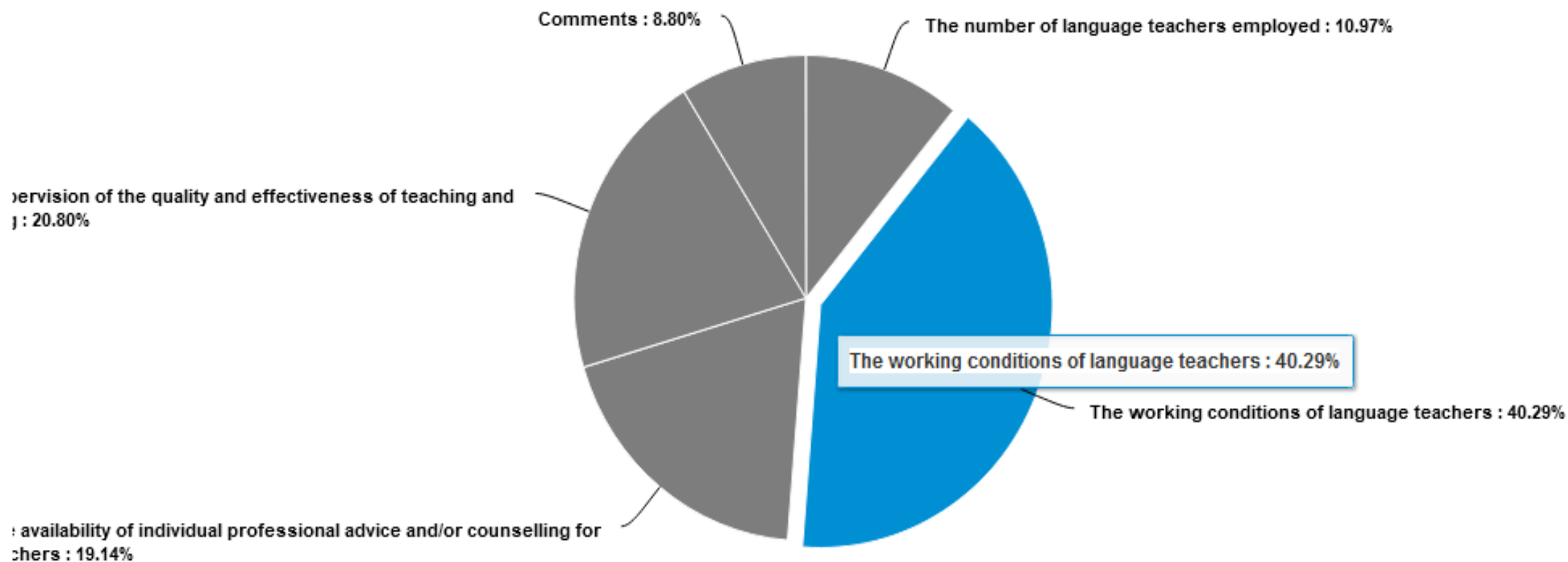
- c. 630 comments regarding **important lessons learned** – Q.48
- c. 610 on the continuing **challenges** – Q.53
- c. 600 on **hybrid** teaching issues – Q.18
- c 600 comments on **teachers' welfare** – Q.36
- c. 600 on the important **positive aspects** that will continue in future – Q.52
- c. 490 on **assessment & testing** issues – Q.30
- c. 310 on impact on **timings** – Q.11

Correlations e.g. 'challenges', 'hybrid', 'testing' etc occur frequently in several survey open items

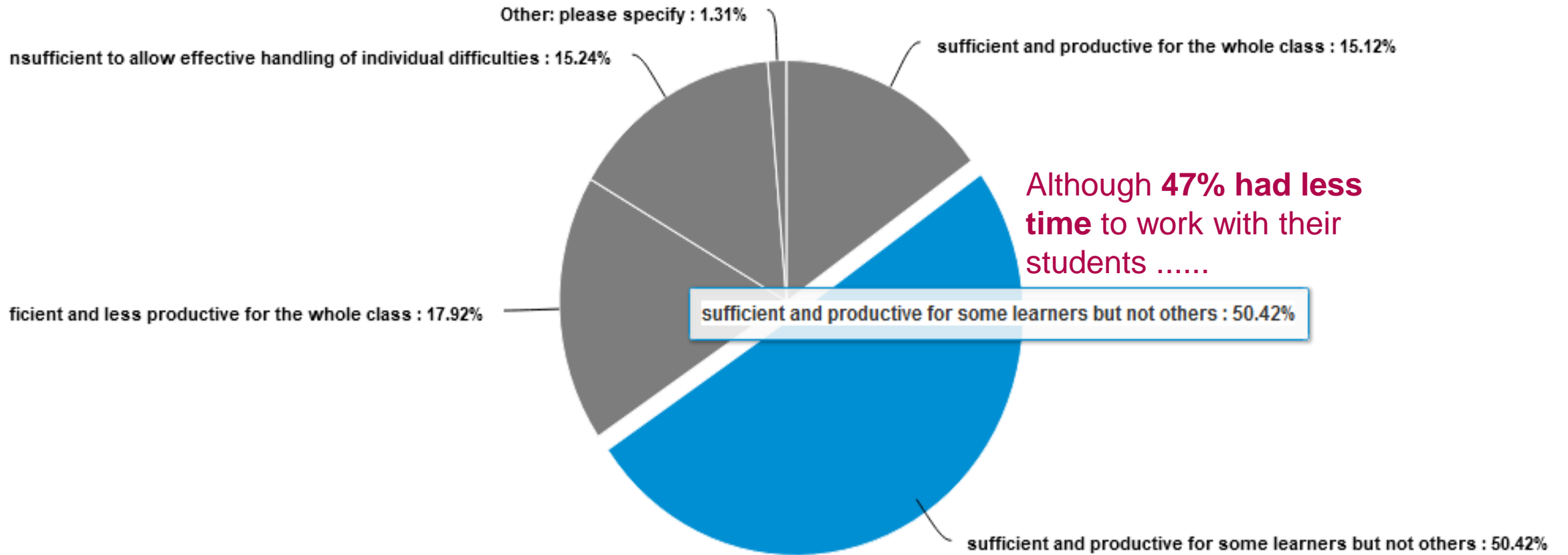
Not to be judged only as single items



41. Have there been changes in the organisation of the institution where you work? If so, which of the following, if any, have been affected (you may tick more than one):

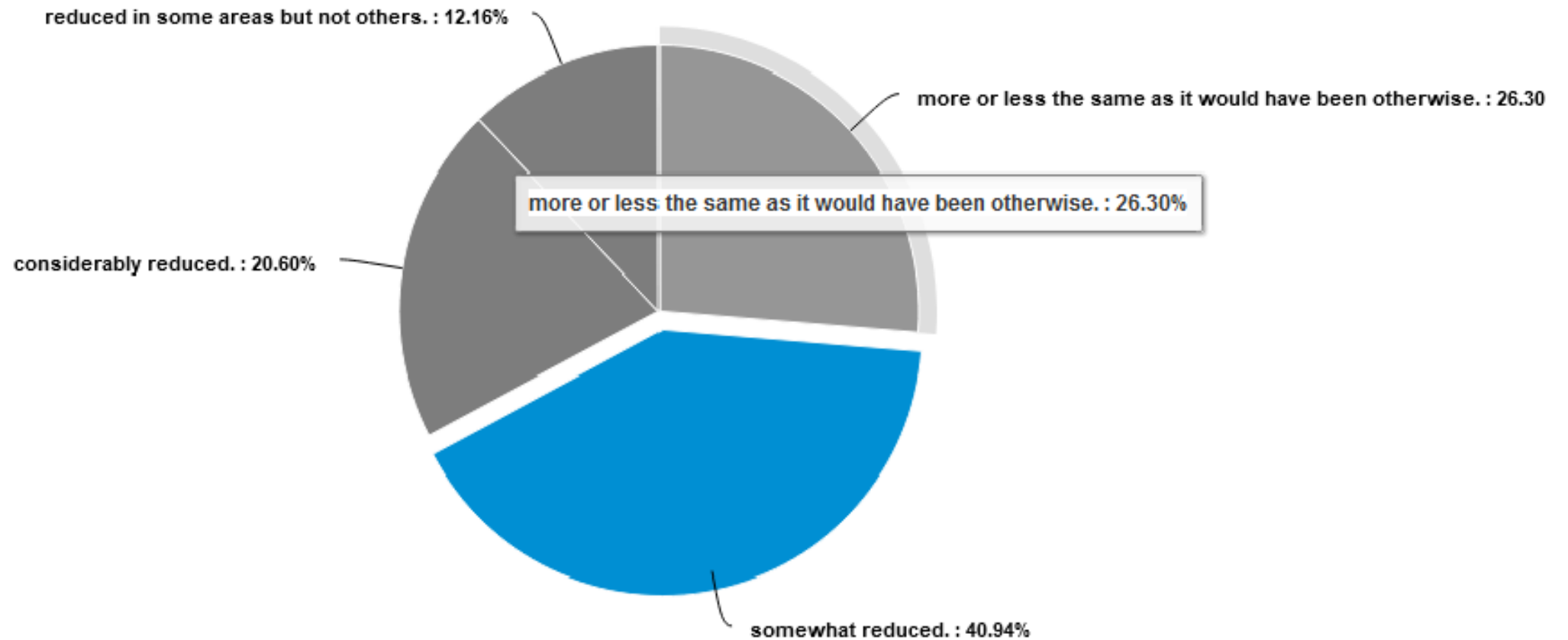


43. Which of the following statements best correspond to the situation during the period of the pandemic? The amount of time allotted to working remotely with learners (synchronously and/or asynchronously) has been:



44. Learner achievement and progress with their language learning during the pandemic has been:

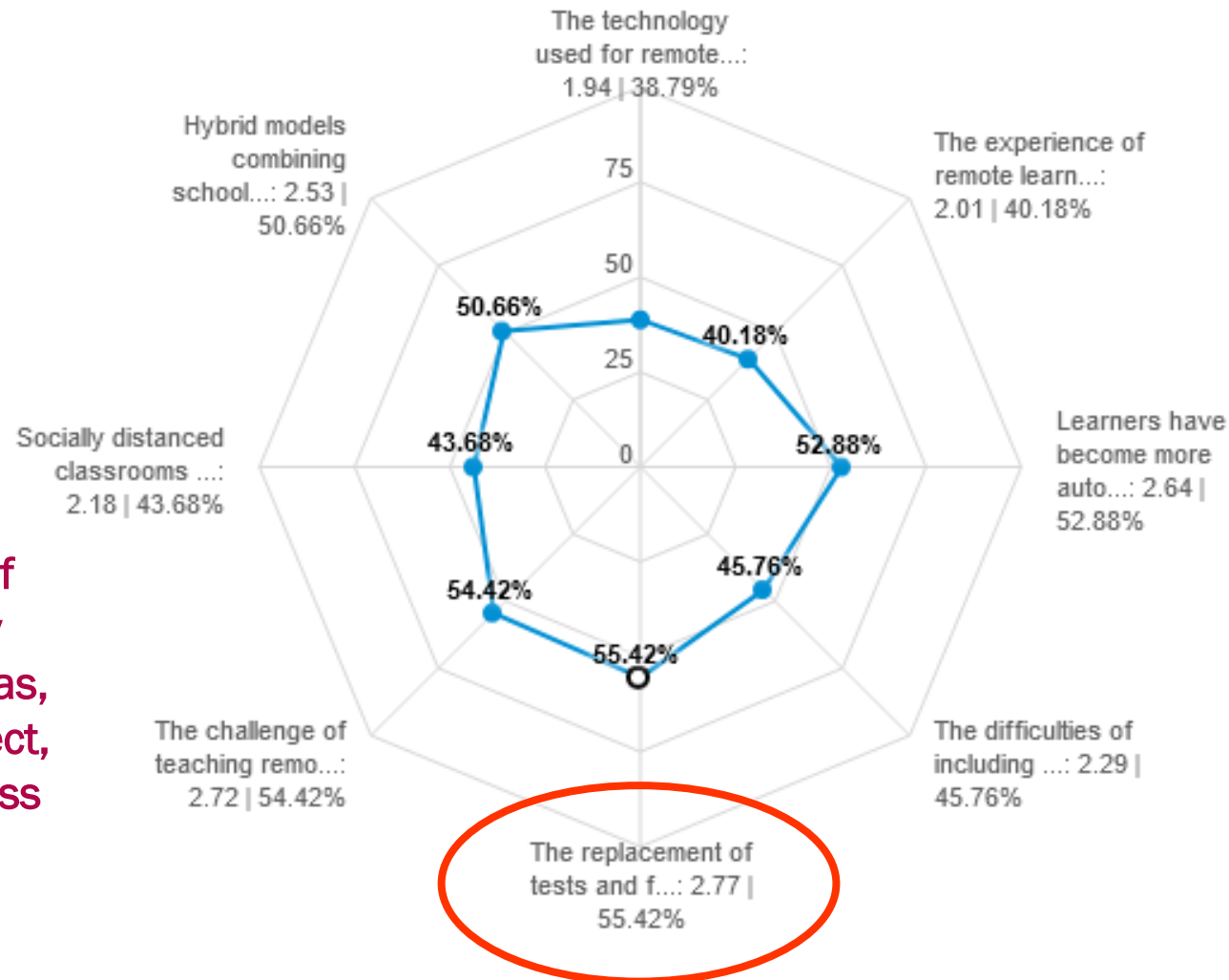
41% (blue segment) reported somewhat reduced but ...



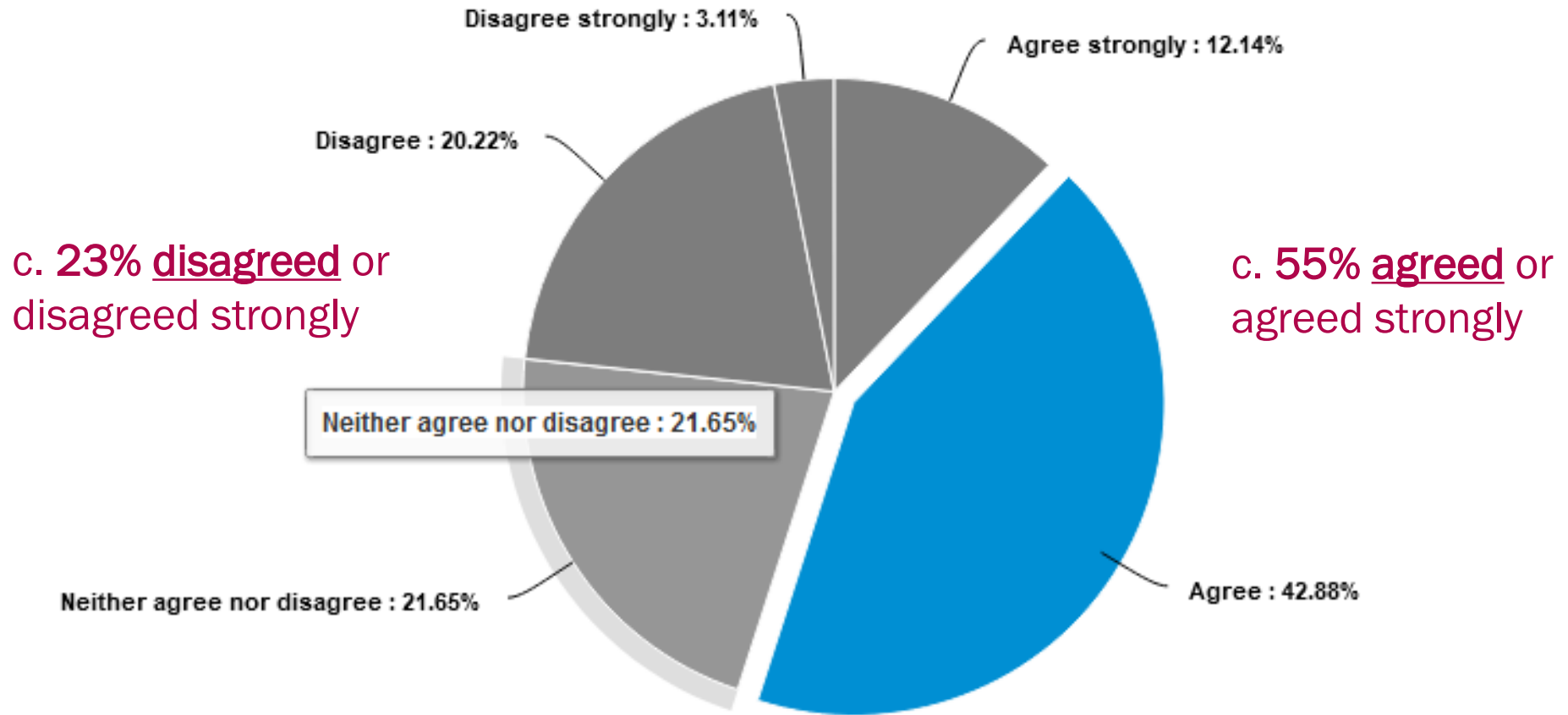
50. The experience of coping with the pandemic and the different formats of provision of language education may have impact on our practice when the pandemic is over. How far do you agree with the following statements?

Comment with leading consensus:

c. 55% The replacement of tests and formal exams by continuous assessment has, overall, had a positive effect, especially in reducing stress on learners.



We have been able to maintain the quality & variety of learners'/ students' language learning experiences, and their achievement.



Take home messages – ‘where hope and history rhyme’

- **Well distributed and rich data set** by demographics | location | professional roles and institutions | educational sector | experience ... | which **provides anchorage, reliability and validity for comments**
- **Respondents from over 40 countries - top 5 countries cover 70% replies**, in descending order:
Greece | Romania | Italy | Spain | Germany
- As expected, the **pandemic has had significant impact** on timings | methods & techniques | phases of lessons | assessment | welfare (stress) | increasing gaps between those doing well and those falling behind
- However, **55% believe they have been able to maintain the quality & variety of learners’ / students’ language learning experiences, and their achievement**
- **Equilibrium** between the **positives** gained from the experience and the **challenges** to be faced
- Not all doom and gloom: greatest single focus was on **lessons learned by adapting to change**
- Next steps: **analyse correlations using statistics, logic trees and concordancing**, for outcomes: think tanks, a colloquium, and publication
- **Huge ‘thank you’** to all our respondents – it would not have been possible without you

LANGUAGE EDUCATORS' VOICES

**Pille Põiklik,
Estonia, ECML
Governing Board**

- The survey provided opportunities for teachers and other professionals to describe their experiences, to launch ideas, to express opinions and feelings.
- Here are some quotations from the hundreds of contributions – they may correspond to how you have “lived” Covid, or they may make you think again.

It's been a challenge
... I liked it!

CRÉATIVITÉ!!!!

We were not prepared!

Less is more.

Building routine helps.

Be fearless and adapt.

Learning is interacting with others.

We all need to develop flexibility and resilience.

I have needed to rethink my role as a teacher.

To be more patient.

Teachers are amazing.

ONLINE TEACHING: WHAT'S THE VERDICT?

I rather enjoyed having to use my wits and leave my comfort zone, thus experiment with Zoom, flipped classroom, super clarifying instructions, using learners' recordings more.

It has given teachers a confidence boost since at the outset it was a daunting thought to have to teach online and now teachers are experts at it.

When distance learning is "imposed" /.../, the educational process becomes stressful, frustrating and impersonal for the learner as well as the teacher. Continuous training, assessment and new technologies /.../ cannot compensate for the lack of real human contact, which is a prerequisite for foreign language learning and should take place [in school].

THE STRESS OF COPING WITH REMOTE LEARNING

I know I have many weaknesses still as a new teacher, but my “you-do-not-need-any-more-stress-this-year“ attitude has received very positive feedback so far.

I've learned during the pandemic that all of us should be more tolerant, more patient, more understanding and we should improve our skills, we should study and be able to produce effective lessons for our students.

Remote learning is very stressful and tiring for both teachers and learners. The former have to prepare the lessons in a way that learning is productive, the latter get extra work in order to anticipate activities that cannot work online. They all have to work too long on their computers before and after class, resulting in physical, mental and psychological exhaustion.

SUPPORT (OR LACK OF IT)

Teachers worked together to find solutions to problems and attended seminars and free classes provided by universities to support teachers in adapting in-class teaching to distance teaching or in learning about new online teaching and learning environments.

Digital competence has grown dramatically – both for students and teachers, including different digital platforms, online materials. A lot of space for professional development for teachers – wide variety of webinars to attend.

It is an experience not worth living again. Teachers have gained more sources to work from, but they have been left without any professional help, which they could count on. Endless hours of personal work have been required to face the challenges of the pandemic. Also, the psychological well-being of both students and teachers is an aspect that has not been taken into consideration at all.

TEACHERS' CONTROL OF THE PROCESS AND CONTACT WITH STUDENTS

Listen to students. Let them feel welcome and relaxed. Leave them to do the work amongst themselves as much as possible.

I have learned that there can be new ways of assessing students other than wasting time and energy /.../ on traditional tests and how to avoid plagiarism. Learners are the main characters in the learning process and the more teaching is personalised the better is the result that can be achieved.

What I feel I've lost is the control over the students that need to be pushed by others in order to perform. I'm not able to identify the moments they need to be pushed. We need social interaction and during this pandemic I've come to realize the importance of body language, the ability to see what your students want and need even when they don't want to tell you.

There is also the issue of honesty of the test-takers and, disappointingly, some students have not participated honestly.

STUDENT MOTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The pandemic has taught /.../ me how to deepen my commitment to learner-centred approaches, build a new framework in the process of teaching. I have focused on the primary goal of teaching: keeping students' motivation high.

I have rediscovered the limitations of my role and the importance of motivation and development of personal skills, autonomy, curiosity and self-teaching abilities.

The biggest problem in teaching languages online is that students should switch on their cameras and unmute if they want to say something /.../
They can hide more easily in an online lesson with the result that weaker students do not advance!

Many learners resist autonomy (as in face-to-face, but worse, as they feel let down and panicked).



CHALLENGES TO BE FACED

Bronka Straus, Slovenia, ECML Governing Board
(including a contribution prepared by Sabina Schaffner)





WHAT TEACHERS SAID ABOUT THE CHALLENGES

The words most frequently associated with “challenge”:

- **Reliable internet connection, motivation, inclusion (disadvantaged students, students with learning difficulties), assessment, effective teaching, new ways, autonomous learning, stress, (lack of) contacts**

TECHNOLOGY

1. Need for appropriate equipment: computers, reliable internet connection, helpline support
2. Teachers: need continuous training in digital competences
3. Students: need to develop autonomous learning competences
4. Approaches to teaching online:
 - Ensuring effectiveness of new methods
 - Maintaining students' motivation
5. Rethinking the curriculum: which objectives are the most suitable for online teaching?
6. Resources: developing new interactive teaching materials, if possible in collaboration with colleagues; creating a common database at national level; maintaining a balance between using textbooks and authentic materials

MORE CHALLENGES

Inclusion of all students: maintaining access and equal opportunities, supporting students with learning difficulties, creating safe and inclusive environments

Effective language education: assessment, (oral/written) production, communication, interaction

Emotions: how to overcome stress, anger, fear, burning out; how to make teachers willing to change and to adapt

New roles: teachers, students, parents; managing their expectations

HOW CAN GOVERNMENTS HELP?

Equipping	schools, teachers and students with suitable and reliable devices (vouchers were mentioned several times)
Providing	relevant teacher training
Revising	curricula
Creating	space for developing efficient common approaches to online education and assessment

CHALLENGES IN HIGHER EDUCATION


Find ethically acceptable ways of carrying out **summative assessment**

Implement valid, efficient means of **continuous assessment** as a standard supplement to summative assessment

Give more regular formative individual feedback

Plan group activities for language production based on clear instructions

Choose a flipped-classroom approach, using synchronous online teaching for oral interaction and expert feedback.



LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FOR THE FUTURE

Some examples of good practice

Bernd Rüschoff, AILA
(including a contribution prepared by Richard Rossner)



1. APPROACHES TO TEACHING

"I've learned that 1) teachers and learners can adapt to any environment when in need. 2) technology is an integral part of our daily lives and of education as well. 3) when we learn to use new methods of e-teaching, we have a great tool in our hands. Teaching can be motivating, interesting, pleasant, free of stress."

"Classroom management is much easier to handle when teaching online. Most of my students feel relaxed and resilient, and I personally find distance learning more effective than face-to-face learning with social distancing and wearing masks."

2. ASSESSMENT

”Difficult”, “impossible”, “not effective ..”

- lack of adequate tools
- opportunities for learners to ‘cheat’
- weakening of testing regimes
- Unreliable results.... But:

“Reducing stress on learners by shifting from assessing via an examination to assessing via a continuous assessment model has led to more receptive learners who are enjoying the experience more. Although a necessary evil, examinations are not always a fair model of assessment.”

“Continuous forms of assessment and a variety of tasks and other methods of assessment have made the learning process very motivating for students. A lot of responsibility was put on the learners and at university level this has been highly efficient.”

3. ENGAGING WITH AND MOTIVATING LEARNERS

“Since we work with minors, attention and interest must be constantly motivated and stimulated in an indirect, sometimes playful and lively way. In this context, teaching online does not in any way guarantee the effectiveness of educational practice, even if some new initiatives have arisen. In my opinion, children from underprivileged backgrounds were automatically excluded from education.”

“It has demonstrated me that it is in our hands to find solutions to the problems we are facing as teachers - the role and attitude of teachers towards online learning have a huge effect and dramatically influence learners' attitude towards this type of learning, i.e. a positive, optimistic teacher will help students to adapt better and get more involved in the process of learning.”



NORMALISATION

- technology is so integrated into our lives that it becomes invisible = 'normalised'. (Bax: 2003)
- technology is used without our being consciously aware of its role as a technology, as a valuable element in the language learning process. (Bax: 2011)
- normalisation [means] to carefully analyse what learning means, [what] learners do & need [in the real world], and then use technology to serve those needs. (Bax: 2003)
- Has the pandemic confirmed normalisation?



USE OF TECHNOLOGY

“Personally, I did not need the pandemic to realize the importance of technology in language learning. Most schools in [my country] lack reliable ... equipment, so during the pandemic I had the opportunity to use my own internet access and equipment from home, which made my [teaching] ... more productive.”

4. USE OF TECHNOLOGY

“It was an important though very stressful experience for all the teachers who had not used similar platforms before or were not so much acquainted with technology.”

“students felt a bit intimidated by the use of technology”

„It has been a real revelation to me that some **students**, ... , who refused or were too embarrassed to speak in class, spoke easily through chat

“I have learnt the importance of the internet and ... online resources which I rarely used before. I have developed a lot of new skills.”

“as teachers ... we must keep on working [and take] advantage of all the resources & materials that come in handy, depending on the circumstances: it's a must to provide both face-to-face [and] remote teaching /learning with a purpose ... “

5. ADVANTAGES OF HYBRID LEARNING

« je suis mis en contact pour la première fois avec la plateforme e-me et en général avec l'enseignement à distance, hybride et asynchrone. C'était une expérience assez stressante mais fantastique. »

“Despite some difficulty in interacting with students ... the wide range of materials available has made teaching more varied and enticing.”

“In future I would like to continue with ... hybrid learning. I think that combining school learning and remote learning offer advantages which could be useful after the pandemic.”

“Technology in Classroom - must have! Not only online learning in Pandemic time. We have to do it always as hybrid.”

THE FUTURE?



Need for "considerable increase in professional development programmes"

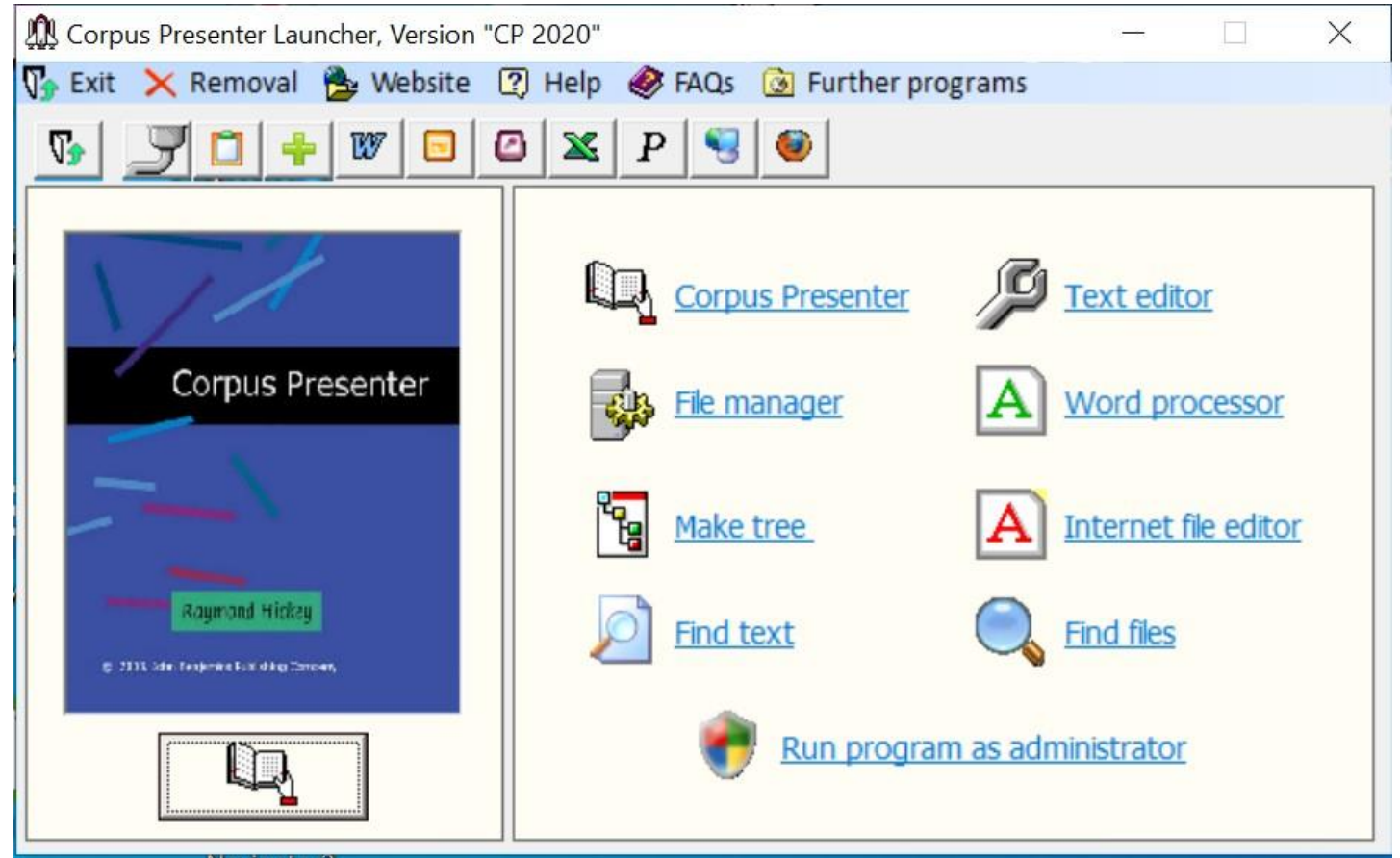


“On the positive side, new possibilities have been created to include students in different activities, with different means and methods. This enormous work will not be lost and can be used in the future to improve teaching in general.



“Communication and the sense of belonging to a community is very important.”

PLANS FOR FUTURE ANALYSIS



The general conclusions will provide an overview, but this will need to be refined:

- Are there differences related to different sectors – primary, secondary, higher and adult education?
- Are the results influenced by the large number of respondents from two countries?
- How are the different roles of respondents reflected in their answers?

The detailed analysis will be carried out over the next few months and will form the basis for two think tanks and a colloquium.

HOW WILL WE ANALYSE THE DATA?





THE NEXT STEPS

Frank Heyworth



WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE WITH THE INITIATIVE

A record of language teaching during the pandemic – through analysis and study of the data

A guide to successful practices used during the pandemic that can be applied in “normal” times

Approaches to a rethink of language education taking account of the experience of the pandemic



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The future of language education in the light of Covid

Lessons learned and ways forward

The initiative explores how the ongoing Covid pandemic has affected language education, and at ways in which the skills and insights gained may bring about beneficial lasting changes in the teaching and learning of languages.

Web address: www.ecml.at/future-of-language-education