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C.O.N.T.A.C.T*

As a part of a European project, we tried to assess the opinion of different social categories of people on the online comments directed towards certain social categories

Information about the respondents:

Age: 40 respondents answered to our questionnaire, out of which 67% belong to the group target of 18-23 years old, 24% to the group of age 24-29, and the rest being a part of the age group 30-35 years old.

Sex: From 40 respondents, 67.5% are females and 32.5 % males; the rest identified themselves in the category of “Other”.

Religion: The majority of the 40 respondents, 90% of them, practice Christianity, while 7.5% are atheist and the rest are Muslims.

Citizenship: From 39 respondents, 94.9% are Romanians and the rest have mixed citizenship.

Sexual orientation: All the 37 respondents considered themselves to be heterosexual.

1. You will be given six examples of what people write on public forums and you are required to indicate the level of acceptability with regards to the writing manner.

To this question, the respondents had to answer to each statement with: acceptable, somehow acceptable, not that acceptable, unacceptable.

To the first statement “This is a Muslim invasion, not immigration.” one person responded with acceptable and 6 persons responded with somehow acceptable, 11 reacted with not that acceptable and the vast majority of 22 perceived the statement as unacceptable. The second statement, “The refugees are stealing our jobs.” was responded to as somehow acceptable by 3 persons, not that acceptable by 15 persons and the majority responded with unacceptable, the majority being formed of 22 persons.

To the third statement, “We should send them back home.” the majority of 23 respondents reacted with unacceptable, only one considered the statement acceptable, 3 of them said it was somehow acceptable and 12 reacted with not that acceptable.

Another statement was “We can’t let our children playing outside because they can be robbed and bullied by a bunch of children.” And it was seen as unacceptable by 29 respondents. None of the respondents reacted with acceptable, but 3 of them considered it was somehow acceptable. To the statement, 8 persons responded with not that acceptable.

The last two statements concern the tolerance towards sexual orientation and L.G.B.T. In this manner, to the statement “The homosexuals are not normal people.” 3 persons responded with

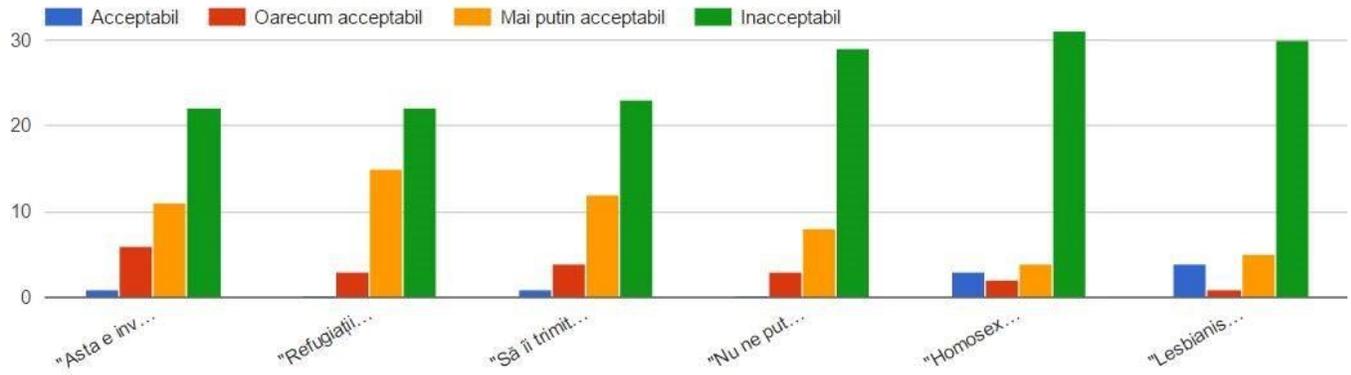
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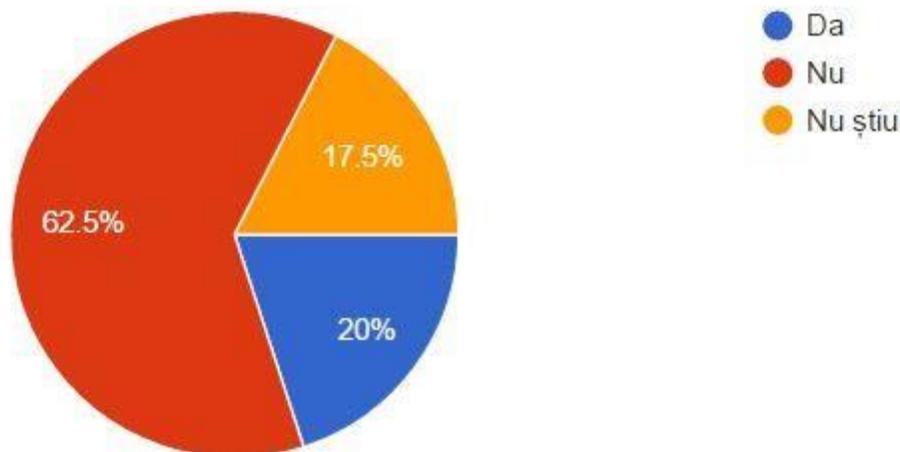


acceptable, 2 of them considered it was somehow acceptable, 4 said not that acceptable and the vast majority of 31 persons reacted with unacceptable. The last statement, “Being lesbian is against human nature” was responded to as acceptable by 4 persons, one of them considered the statement somehow acceptable, only 5 responded with not that acceptable and the rest of 30 persons reacted with unacceptable



2. The comments to question 1 were written as public comments to press articles. Would the level of acceptability change if they were written in a private online context (e.g. personal e-mail, private chat, private Facebook pages)?

At the second question of the survey, 62.5% of the 40 respondents considered that the level of acceptability wouldn't be changed if the statements were made on a more private online context, 20% of the respondents considered that the level of the acceptability would indeed be changed and the rest of 17.5% of them reacted with I don't know.



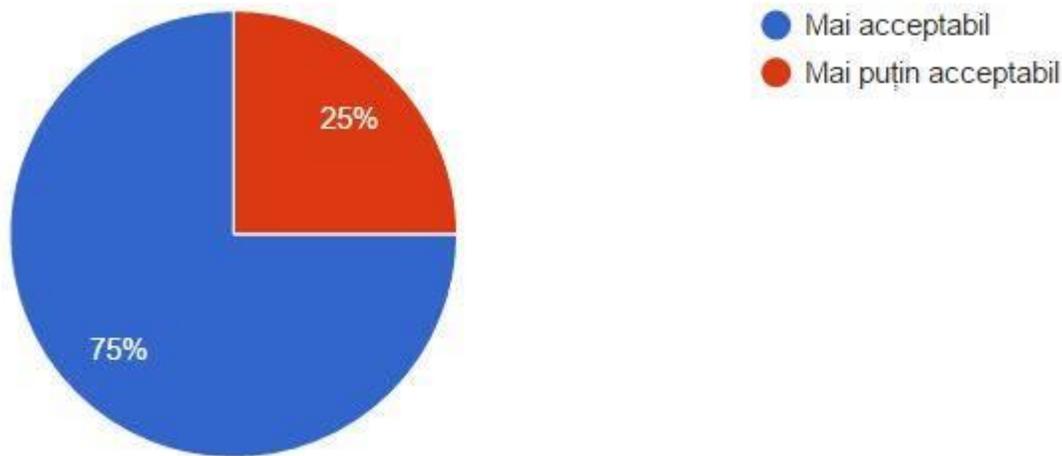
3. If your answer to question 2 is “yes”, what kind of change would you support ?(tick the appropriate box)



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The respondents had the opportunity to choose between more acceptable and less acceptable when talking about the changing of the level of acceptability concerning the statements from the first point. In this manner, 75% stated that it would be more acceptable to put the previous statements on a more private online context, while the rest of the 12 respondents reacted with less acceptable



4. Were you ever a target of insults or threats due to:

When asked about being the target of insults, the respondents had the chance to react with: yes, frequently; yes, rarely; no and I don't know. They could express their opinion on different issues that are frequently a topic of insults. For example, when asked about nationality, 6 of the respondents reacted with yes, rarely, 31 of them, representing the majority reacted with no and only 2 of the respondents stated I don't know. Another topic was the skin color, to which the most of the respondents, 35 of them, reacted with no while 2 of them were rarely a target of insults and only 2 responded with I don't know.

When talking about ethnicity, only one of the respondents stated yes, rarely, while 36 reacted with no and another 2 respondents reacted with I don't know.

Concerning the religion, 1 of the responded stated that it was frequently insulted, 3 of them were rarely insulted, the majority of 33 respondents reacted with "no" and the rest of 2 respondents don't know if they were insulted.

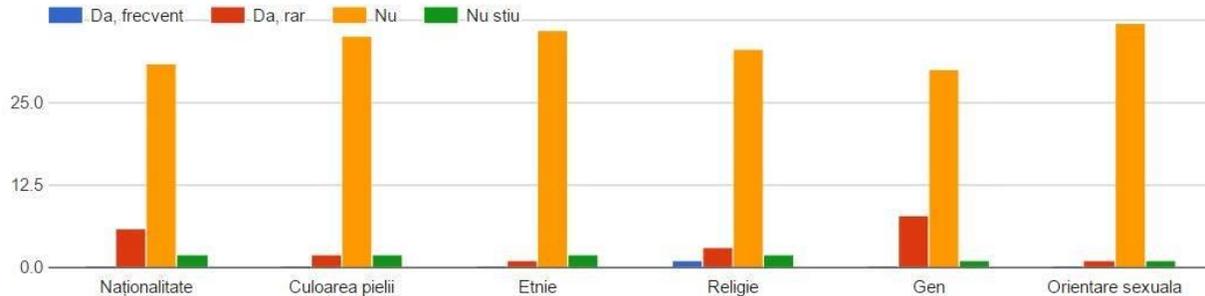
Another target of insults stated in the survey is the gender. In this case, 8 of the participants responded with "yes, rarely", 30 of them stated they weren't insulted and only one reacted with "I don't know."



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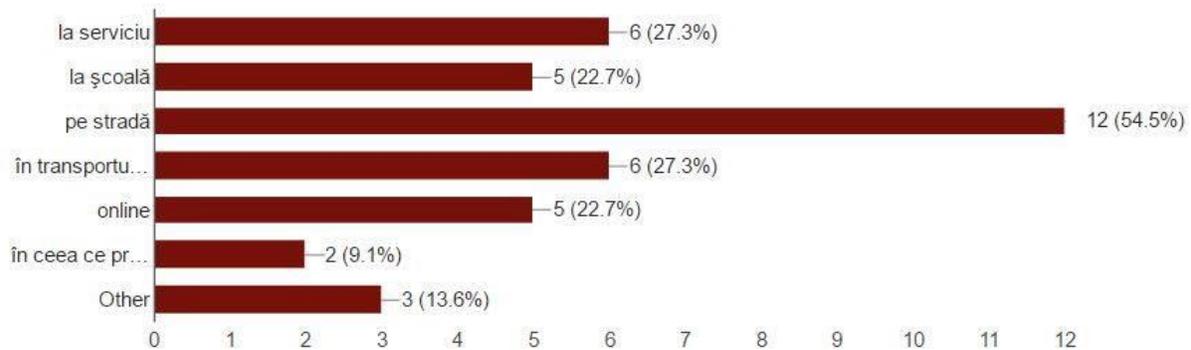


The last topic at this point is the sexual orientation; only one responded reacted with “yes, rarely”, another one with “I don’t know” and the vast majority of 37 people stated they weren’t insulted because of their sexual orientation.



5. If yes, where if it happen (multiple answers are permitted) (22 responses)

When asked about the place where they have been insulted the respondents could submit themselves to the following scenarios, concluding with the following results: at the employment (27% of the respondents, representing 6 persons), at school (22.7% of the respondents, representing 5 persons), on the street (where 54.5% and the majority of the respondents submitted themselves, meaning 12 persons.), in public transportation (6 respondents representing 27.3% of the total), online (22.7% of them, with 5 respondents) in what concerns the sport field (9.1% meaning 2 respondents) and other (with 2 respondents representing 13.6% of the total)



6. Have you ever witnessed someone being the target of insults or threats due to...

When asked about witnessing someone being the target of insults, the respondents had the chance to react with: yes, frequently; yes, rarely; no and I don’t know. The causes of insults stated in this survey caused different reactions, such as when talking about nationality, 2 of the respondents reacted with yes, frequently, 18 with yes, rarely and 20 reacted with no.

The other topic of skin color was responded to as “yes, frequently” while 11 of the respondents reacted with rarely, and the rest of 20 said they didn’t witness such a scenario.



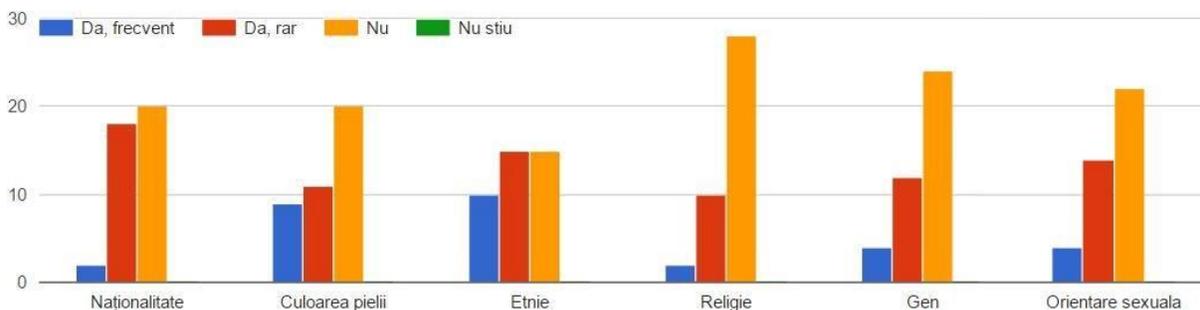
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Regarding the ethnicity, 10 persons stated that they frequently witness someone being a target of insults because of its ethnicity, 15 reacted with “yes, rarely” and the rest of 15 reacted with “no”.

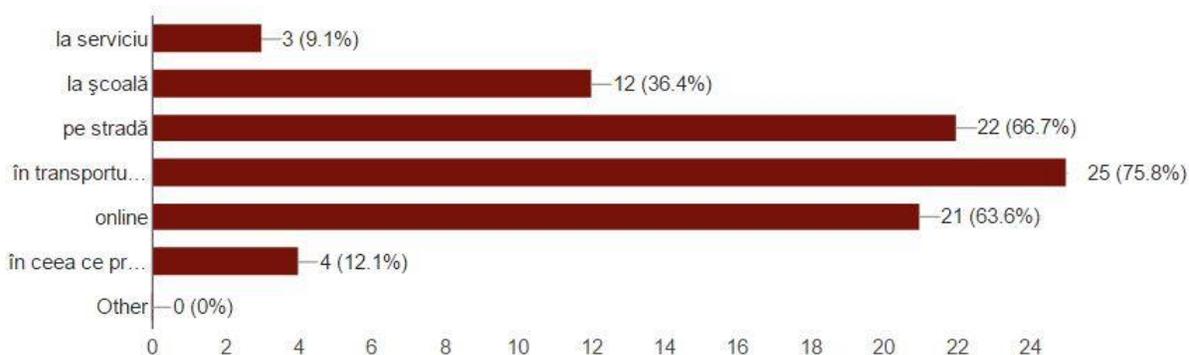
It can be observed that in the matter of Religion, 2 persons considered they frequently witnessed discrimination, 10 of the respondents have seen this as well, but rarely and 28 of them didn’t observed this.

Another causes of insults stated in the survey was the gender; the respondents reacted in a number of 4 with “yes, frequently”, 12 of them responded “yes, rarely” and 24 reacted with “no”. The last topic is the sexual orientation and the most of the respondents stated they didn’t witness any episode of discrimination, 4 of them had frequently witnessed discrimination and the rest of 14 respondents had rarely witness.



7. If yes, where did it happen? (multiple answers are permitted)

When asked about the place where they have witness people insulted the respondents could submit themselves to the following, concluding with the following results: at the employment (9.1% of them, meaning 3 respondents), at school (12 respondents representing 36.4% of the total), on the street (66.7% of the respondents, meaning 22 persons), in public transportation (75.8% meaning 25 respondents), online (21 respondents, representing 63.6% of the total) in what concerns the sport field(4 respondents representing 12.1%) and other (without any respondent)



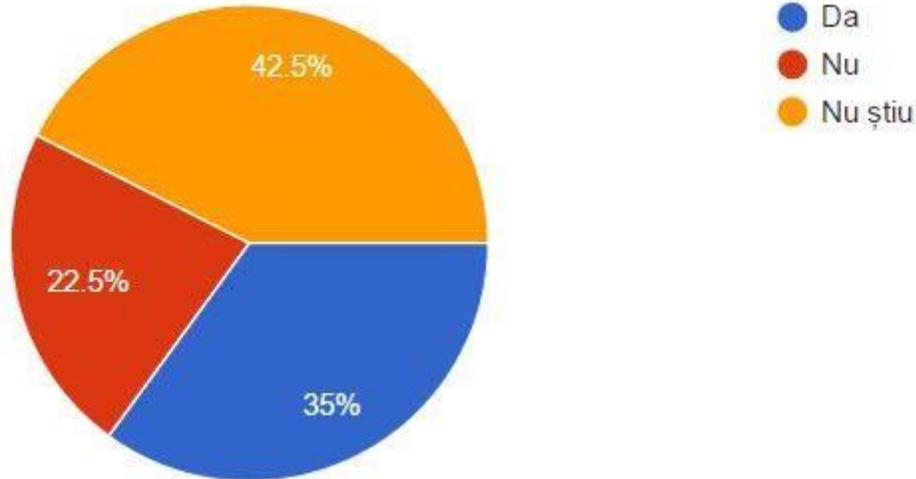
8. Would you report insults or threats related to your nationality, skin color, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation?



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When asked if they would report the insults related to the previous stated issues, the 40 respondents reacted in this way: 35 % of them responded that they would report it, 22.5% of them said they wouldn't report it, and the rest of 42.5% said they don't know if they would report it.

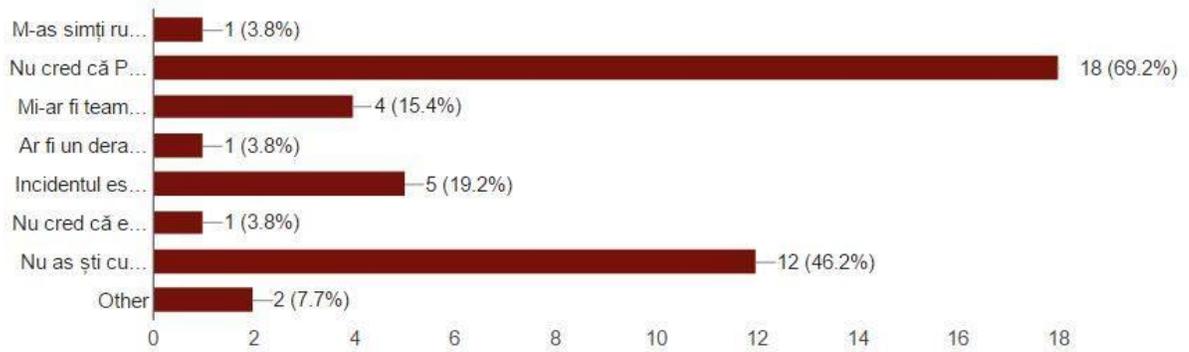


9. If your answer is “no” or “I don’t know”, please mention the reason (tick everything applicable in your case)

It can be noticed that when the respondents of the survey were asked to give some reasons to why they wouldn't report such a behavior or why they are not decided upon this, the answers were as following: 1 of them, representing 3.8% of the total gave-redundant, E UN INS. presented as a reason the fact that it would make them feel ashamed or uncomfortable. To the statement of “I don't think the Police would do anything about it” 69.2% of the respondents, meaning 18 persons agreed. Another statement of the survey is “I would be afraid of repercussions”, to this statement 4 persons agreed upon, representing 5.4% of the total. One person, representing 3.8% of the respondents agreed on “It would be too much of a trouble” and to the statement “This situation is too frequently happening to react” 5 respondents agreed, representing 19.2%. To the statements “I don't consider it is serious enough for being reported” and “I don't know how I can report this” was responded by 1 person for the first statement, respectively by 12 persons for the second, representing 46.2% of the total. The last category is “Other” for which 2 persons reacted, representing 7.7% of the respondents.

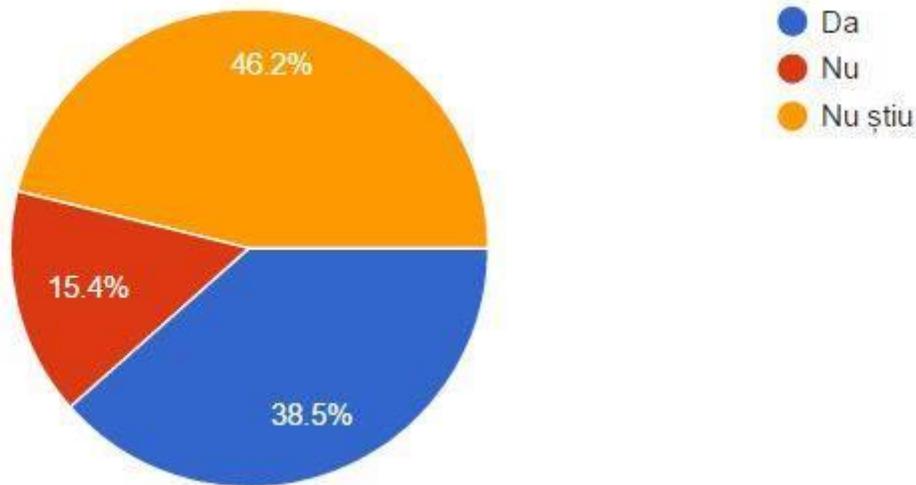


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10. If you witnessed someone being insulted or threatened because his or her nationality, skin color, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation, would you report it?

It can also be noticed that when asked if they would report this insults or threats witnessed, the respondents could react with: yes, no, I don't know. In this manner 62.5% responded positively, responded negatively and the rest of reacted with "I don't know"



11. If your answer is "no" or "I don't know", please mention the reason (tick everything applicable in your case)

When the respondents of the survey were asked to give some reasons of why they wouldn't report such a behavior when witnessing to insults or why aren't they decided upon this, the answers were as following: none of them gave as a reason the fact that they would feel ashamed or uncomformable. To the statement of "I don't think the Police would do anything about it" 73.1% of the respondents, meaning 19 persons agreed. Another statement of the survey is "I would be afraid of repercussions", to this statement 3 persons agreed upon, representing 11.5% of the total. One person, representing 3.8% of the respondents agreed on "It would be too much of a trouble" and to the statement "This situation is too frequently happening to react" 3 respondents

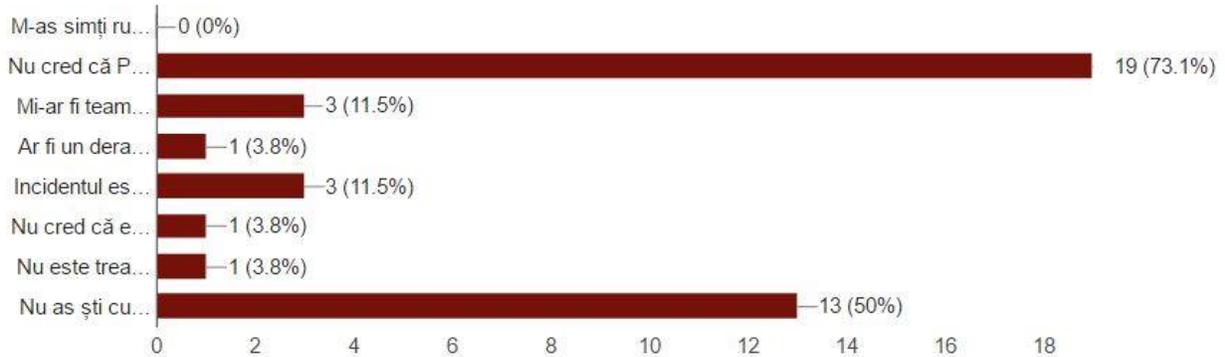
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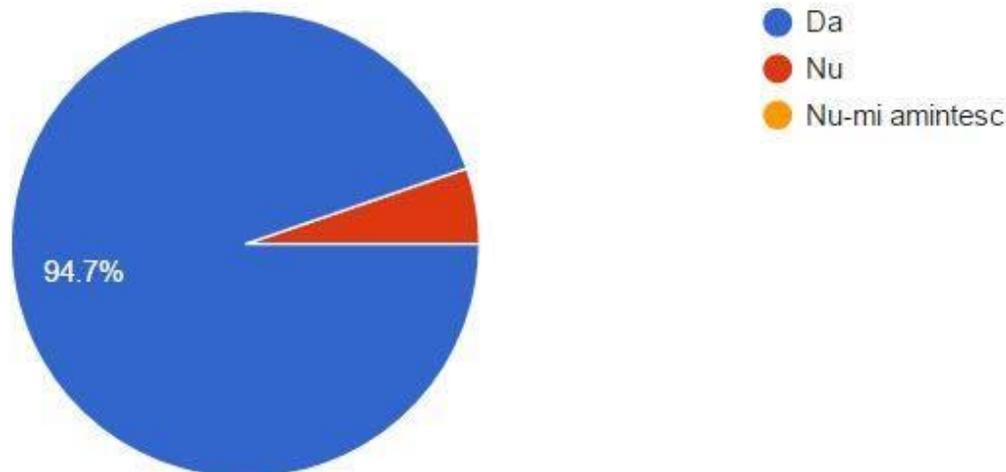


agreed, representing 11.5%. To the statements “I don’t consider it is serious enough for being reported” and 7 “ This is not my business” was responded by 1 person for the first statement representing 3.8% of the total, and one person responded for the second one as well. 8 The last category is “I don’t know how I can report this” for which 13 persons reacted, representing 50% of the respondents.



12. Have you ever heard of discriminatory language?

The 38 respondents could react to this question with: yes, no, and I don’t remember. Giving this, 94.7% of them did hear about the discriminatory language, while the rest of the respondents reacted with “no”.



13. The concept of discriminatory language exists and can be defined in different ways. Below you will be given some definitions and you will be asked to indicate if you agree or not with each of them.

The survey also asked the respondents to choose among four different possibilities, the definition which suited best the meaning of ‘discriminatory language’ and rank them on a scale starting with a ‘strongly in favor’ and going to the other pole represented by ‘strongly disapproving’.



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19 respondents think that discriminatory language refers to ‘negative preconceived remarks about people related to their ethnicity, nationality, race, gender or sexual orientation’. Other 16 respondent rated this with the statement ‘in favor’, while 4 people positioned them ‘somehow in favor’. This shows a relatively high awareness about one of the main definition of the discrimination.

The next statement excluded from the definition the possibility to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation. This resulted in different responses, so only 12 people positioned themselves as ‘strongly in favor’, 13 respondents chose the ‘in favor’ answer and 10 people were ‘somehow in favor’. Only 1 person chose to respond with the statement ‘neither in favor, nor in disapproval’. The respondents were relatively equally distributed along the scale when asked to rate the definition according to which discrimination can be made only on the basis of nationality, ethnicity and race. This could prove a relatively amount of awareness about the fact that discrimination is also rooted in other sorts of differences.

The last definition was about encouragement of the others, and brought a clear result that 12 people- most probably the ones in favor of the first or the second definition- know that discriminatory language means exactly the opposite of this statement. Nonetheless, 13 persons were positioned towards the ‘in favor’ pole, which could demonstrate a lack of solid information on the topic of discrimination



14. Do you believe there should be laws against these 4 types of discriminatory language? (mentioned at the previous question)

By asking the responders about the possibility of the establishment of these 4 types of discriminatory speech, we have reached the following conclusions:

- 31 out of 40 defined discriminatory speech as negative remarks related to someone’s race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation or religion , 5 said that they don’t know what if that is what it represents and 4 denied that given definition.

- A vast majority of voters (35 out of 39) accepted as a proper definition of discriminatory speech that of directly insulting those belonging to a minority Group. 2 persons claimed that that is false and 2 said that they don’t know.

- The same number of people accepted the definition of discriminatory speech as that of threatening people belonging in minority Groups. 3 persons claimed that the definition is incorrect and one person said that he/she did not know.

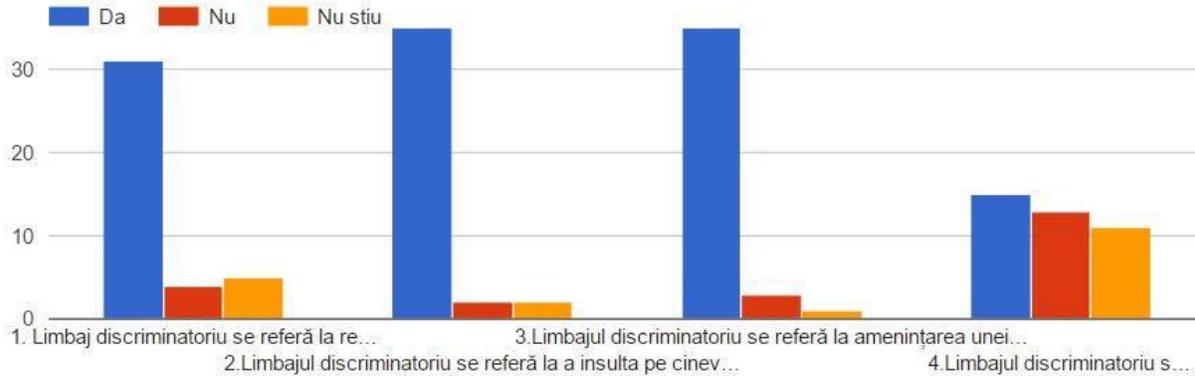
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- As for the last definition, opinions were shared: 15 accepted the given definition, 13 claimed it as incorrect and 11 stated that they don't know whether it is correct or not. The given definition was that discriminatory speech occurs when people encourage other people.



To sum up, as a further conclusion, the Qvorum Institute tried to observe a general opinion upon discrimination in Romania. The respondents were in a great majority represented by youth and it was noticed that most of them don't consider discrimination a normal behavior nor the lack of reaction of witnesses could be considered normal. Furthermore, due to our respondents, it could be also noticed that discrimination is happening in many environments: at school, on the street and even in the public transportation, but a positive conclusion is that the majority of the young people answering to this survey, would react in front of these discriminatory scenarios.