RETHINK

Needs analysis for WP3
Report with summary of findings

WP3 Remembrance education: MOOC training programme

Elaborated by

Summary

Needs analysis for WP3 – Report with summary of findings

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V1.0	21/04/2019	1st draft version	Alessia Valenti
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Background and objectives

RETHINK project

This Needs Analysis Report was produced by CESIE as part of the work for WP3 of the Erasmus+ co-funded project "RETHINK: Remembrance Education for THINKing critically" (https://rethink-education.eu/). RETHINK is a collaboration between 8 partners in the field of formal and informal education from six partner countries: France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, Poland, Ireland and Austria [1]. The project aims to facilitate the dissemination of programmes that promote tolerance and respect towards diversity, while developing media literacy and critical thinking skills. By "Remembrance Education", we refer to programmes that employ a historical perspective and reflect on the past to highlight contemporary issues of antisemitism, racism, xenophobia, intolerance, radicalisation, polarisation, collective violence, and genocide and that promote dialogue and engagement by relating considerations of past events to current affairs and debates, providing tools for analysing and understanding the present.[2]

WP3 – Remembrance education: MOOC training programme

Work Package 3 will lead to the development of the RETHINK e-learning platform (https://rethink-education.eu/elearning-platform/) hosting training modules. Its purpose is to provide teachers across Europe with the skills needed to fight against polarisation and radicalisation at school by using Remembrance Education as a tool to:

- tackle these challenges and the risk of the rise in antisemitism, racism, xenophobia and radicalisation;

- reflect about the value of diversity in our multicultural societies;

- enhance their students' critical thinking skills, encouraging a fruitful reflection based on facts from our shared European history.

RETHINK Need analysis

In the WP3 pre-evaluation stage, the aim of the RETHINK Needs Analysis was to get insight into the issues teachers deal with when teaching about current (and past) sensitive and controversial issues. The key purpose of this Needs Analysis Report is to share findings based on descriptive statistics and to serve as a reference document for the RETHINK partners to facilitate further conversations around designing of the RETHINK e-learning platform. The final intent of the RETHINK partnership is to produce online modules that are best suited to the teachers' needs and those of their students.

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[1] More information about RETHINK partnership at https://rethink-education.eu/about-us/

[2] More information about definitions at https://rethink-education.eu/glossary/

Needs Analysis method
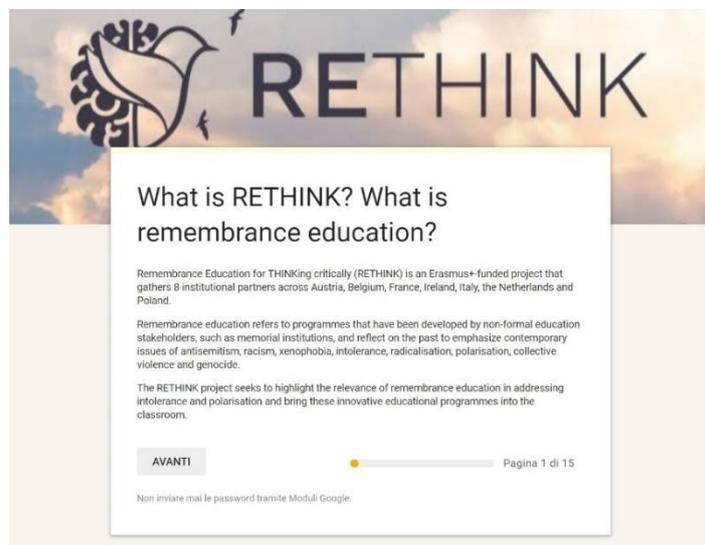
Data Collection Instrument Design

To achieve the objective, a questionnaire was designed to collect information from teachers. The questionnaire was designed by the CENTRE INTERNATIONAL D'ETUDES PÉDAGOGIQUES (CIEP), coordinator of RETHINK project and validated by all partners [3]. The items included in the questionnaire were principally related to:

- Teaching Practice;
- Remembrance Education;
- New approaches and methods;
- Primary sources;
- Memorial sites visit;
- Testimonies;
- Dealing with Mass Atrocities;
- RETHINK e-learning modules.

Partners decided to not ask for personal information (gender, country, age, years of teaching experience, etc.) since this data was not relevant to the Needs Analysis's purpose. Anonymity and confidentiality have been assured to responders.

The questionnaire was validated in English and uploaded to Google Forms (an application from the Google Drive Suite [4] which allow to create custom forms for surveys and questionnaires at no cost).

Figure 1 - RETHINK Needs Analysis - Welcome page

Data Collection Process

After finalisation of the questionnaire, it was disseminated using mailing lists, social media and other resources available to partners. CIEP and CESIE proceeded with the translation of the questionnaires to their local languages in order to meet the needs of local teachers. The final data have been included in the English form

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[3] More information about RETHINK partnership at https://rethink-education.eu/about-us/

[4] Google Drive is an office suite of collaborative online software. More information about Google Drive at https://www.google.it/intl/en/forms/about/

in order to guarantee the similarity of data to analyse. The data were collected between March and April of 2019. The survey sample consisted of 449 people.

Needs Analysis results

Teachers are a key factor in the implementation of RETHINK project. RETHINK tools are relevant to any teacher with an interest in inclusive education, who wish to develop their students' media literacy and improve their critical thinking skills [5]. This questionnaire was created to ask teachers about their experience in Remembrance Education, teaching practices they apply when teaching about current (and past) sensitive and controversial issues and opinion regarding which RETHINK online modules can be best suited to their needs and those of their students.
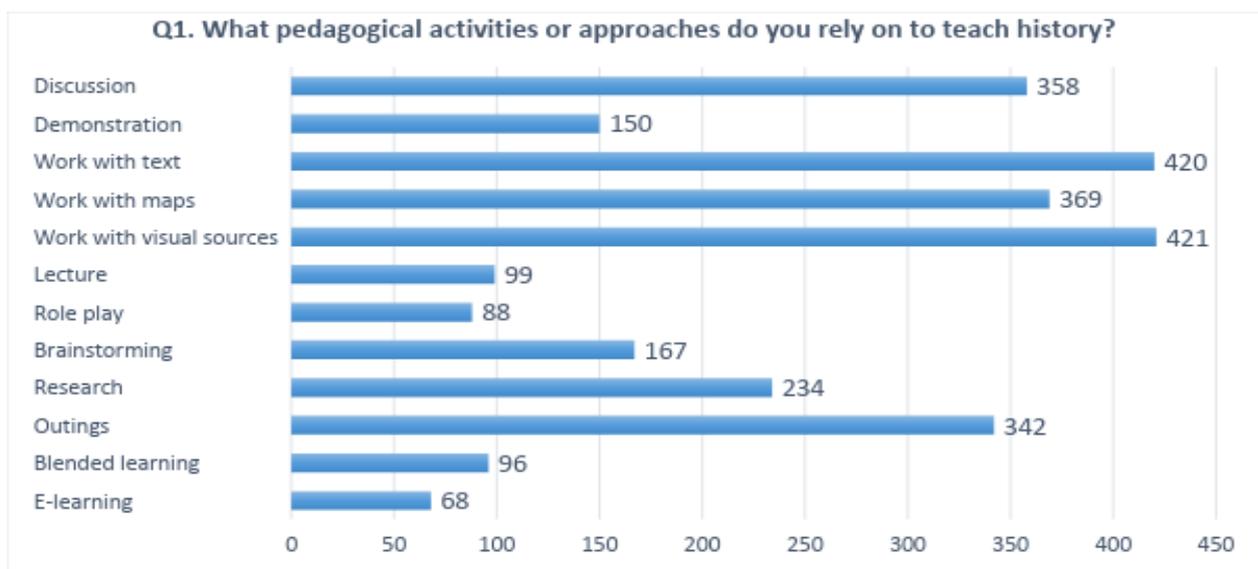
Teaching Practice

In the first part of the questionnaire, teachers were asked to provide responses on their current teaching practice. Full wording of response options (in order presented below):

- Discussion;
- Demonstration;
- Work with text;
- Work with maps;
- Work with visual sources (films, pictures, artefacts…);
- Lecture;
- Role play;
- Brainstorming;
- Research;
- Outings (visits to museums, memorial sites, historical sites…);
- Blended learning;
- E-learning.

In Figure 2 we can see that teachers generally rely on traditional methods such as Work with visual resources (93,8%), Work with text (93,5%), Work with maps (82,2%), and Discussion (79,7%), much more than more active methods of learning such as E-Learning (15,1%), Role Play (19,6%) and Blended Learning (21,4%).

Figure 2 - Q1. What pedagogical activities or approaches do you rely on to teach history?

When it comes to how often history teaching practice relies on materials other than textbooks, as displayed by Figure 3 the 89,3% of teachers declared they often use other resources (254 "Very often"; 147 "Often"), which

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[5] More information about relevance of RETHINK results at: https://rethink-education.eu/rethink-for-all/

mostly include: lesson plans (71,9%), guidelines and resources from international organisations (EU, UNESCO…) (52,8%) and history didactics trainings/guidelines (45,9%) (Figure 4).

Figure 3 - Q2. How often do you use materials other than textbooks, to prepare for/in your teaching?
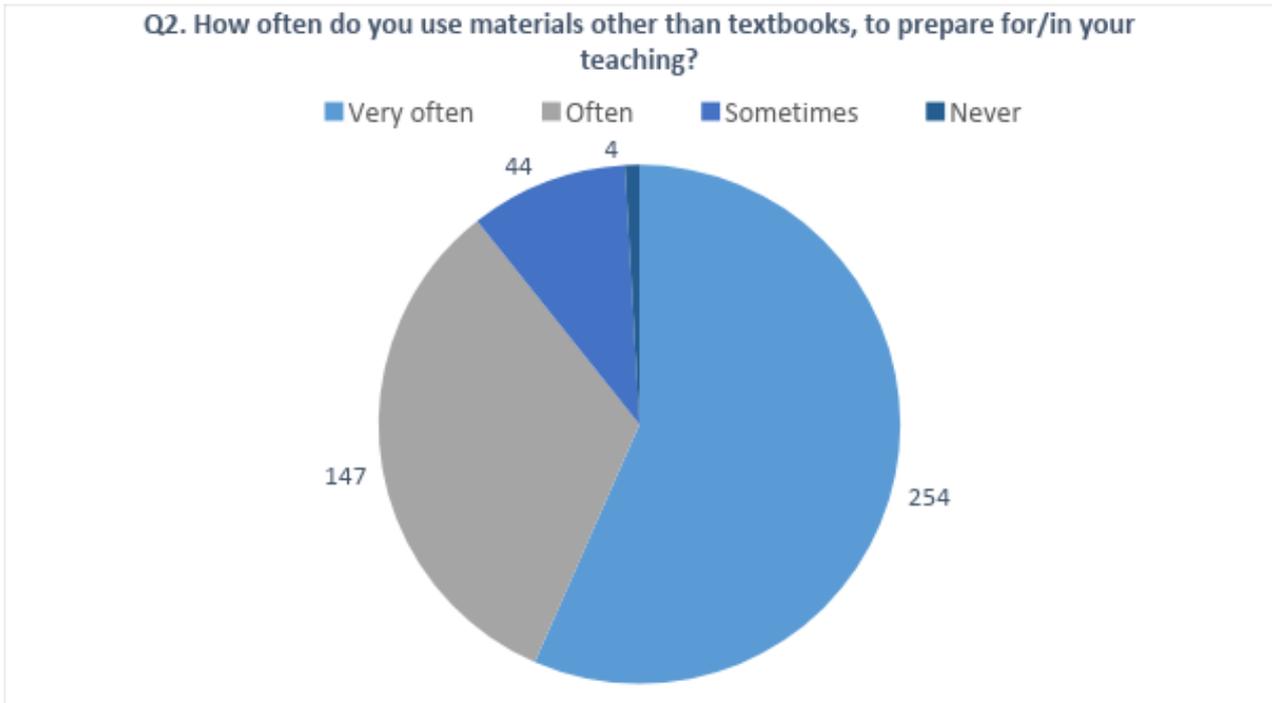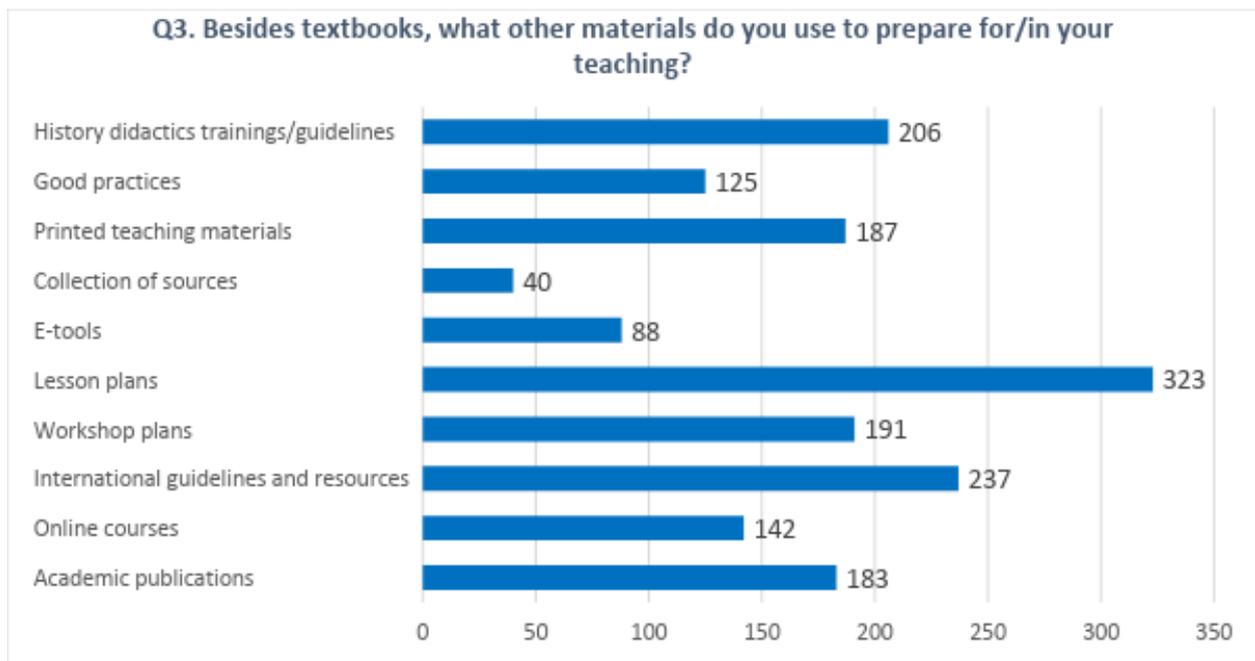
Figure 4 - Q3. Besides textbooks, what other materials do you use to prepare for/in your teaching?

Remembrance Education

A specific section of the questionnaire addresses the capacity of teachers and of their approach to support student in the understanding and critical analysis of contemporary challenges. Most teachers (97%) teach history with this purpose in mind (Figure 5): 73,7% encourage students in making historical parallels between

past and present and 71,9% foster a critical attitude towards knowledge, beliefs and values, while less than half of the teachers (47,2%) focus on critical analysis types and sources of information (Figure 6).

As showed by Figure 7, 98% of teachers actually do teach sensitive topics, and more than half of teachers declared they actively focus on them in order to tackle controversial issues (55%), and encourage students to find and analyse roots of those controversies (47,7%).

Figure 5 - Q17. Do you use history to help students get a better understanding of contemporary challenges such as the rise in antisemitism, racism, xenophobia and radicalisation?

Q17. Do you use history to help students get a better understanding of contemporary challenges such as the rise in antisemitism, racism, xenophobia and radicalisation?

Yes   No 3%

97%
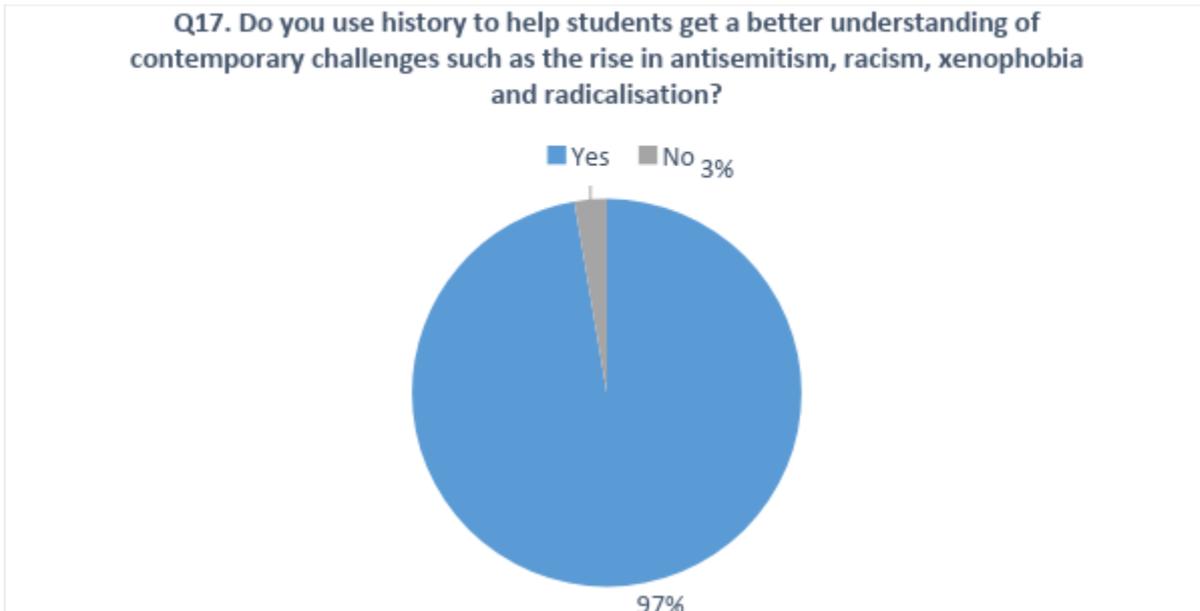
Figure 6 - Q18. If so, which techniques or methods do you use?

Q18. If so, which techniques or methods do you use?

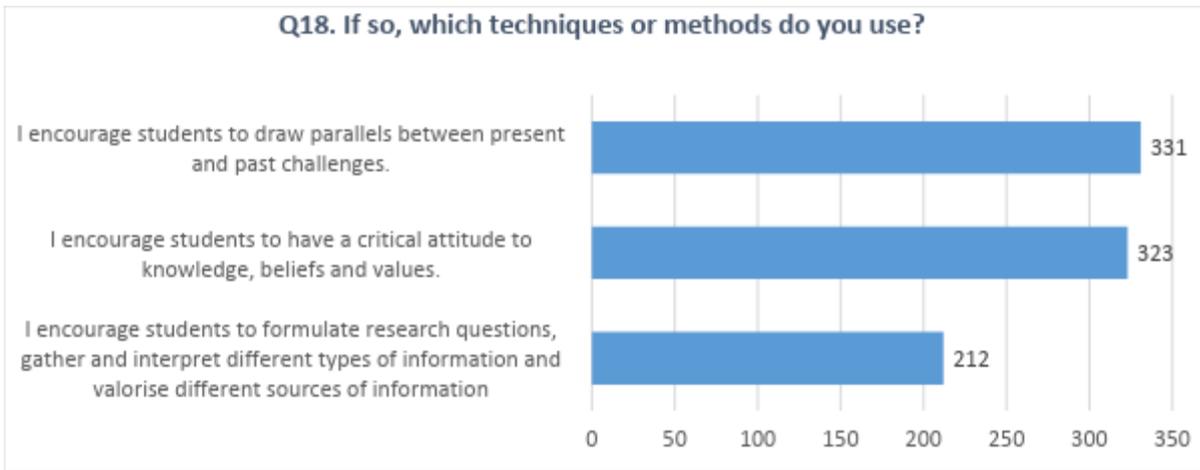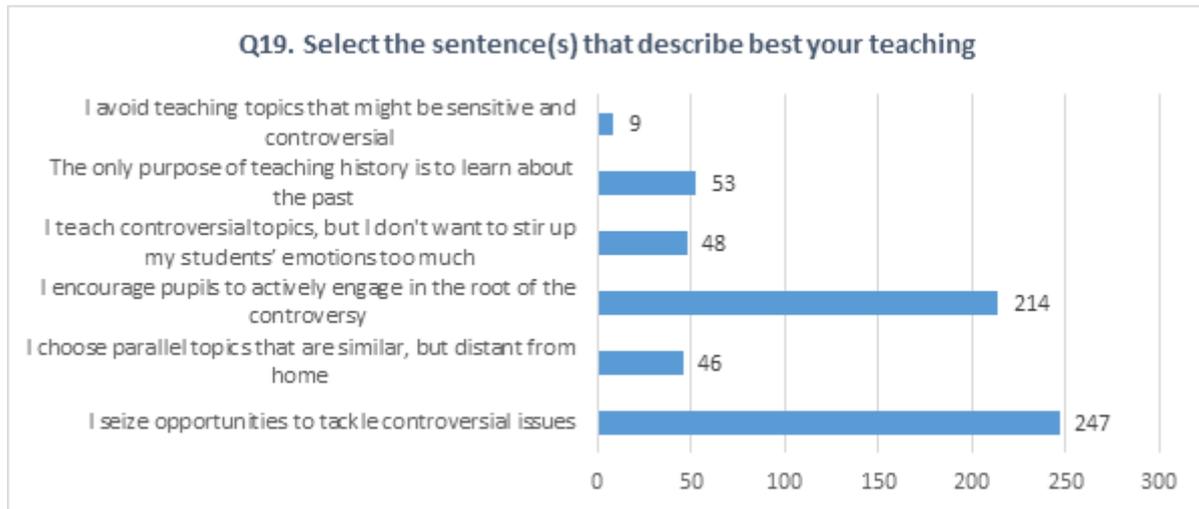| Method	Value
I encourage students to draw parallels between present and past challenges.	331
I encourage students to have a critical attitude to knowledge, beliefs and values.	323
I encourage students to formulate research questions, gather and interpret different types of information and valorise different sources of information	212

Figure 7 - Q19. Select the sentence(s) that describe best your teaching

New approaches and methods

Need analysis was also aimed at investigating the real opportunity for teachers to apply new approaches and methods in their teaching practice, taking into consideration possible restraints and practical difficulties. The 65,7% of teachers often apply new methods and approaches (82 "Very often", 213 "Often), while the 34,3% made sporadic attempts or none (Figure 8). Full wording of response options related to reasons discouraging teachers from applying innovative approaches and methods were (in order presented below):

- Lack of training on new methods and approaches;
- Satisfaction with approaches and methods I [teacher] use;
- Too much content in national curriculum to cover;
- Lack of support in my [teacher's] school for using new methods and approaches;
- State graduation exams;
- Lack of IT equipment for my [teacher's] students;
- Limited internet access for my [teacher's] students;
- Language barrier.

Figure 9 shows that discouragement for all teachers mainly come from Too much content in national curriculum to cover (62,4%), State graduation exams (49,2%), Lack of IT equipment for students (40,5%) and Lack of training on new methods and approaches (38%).

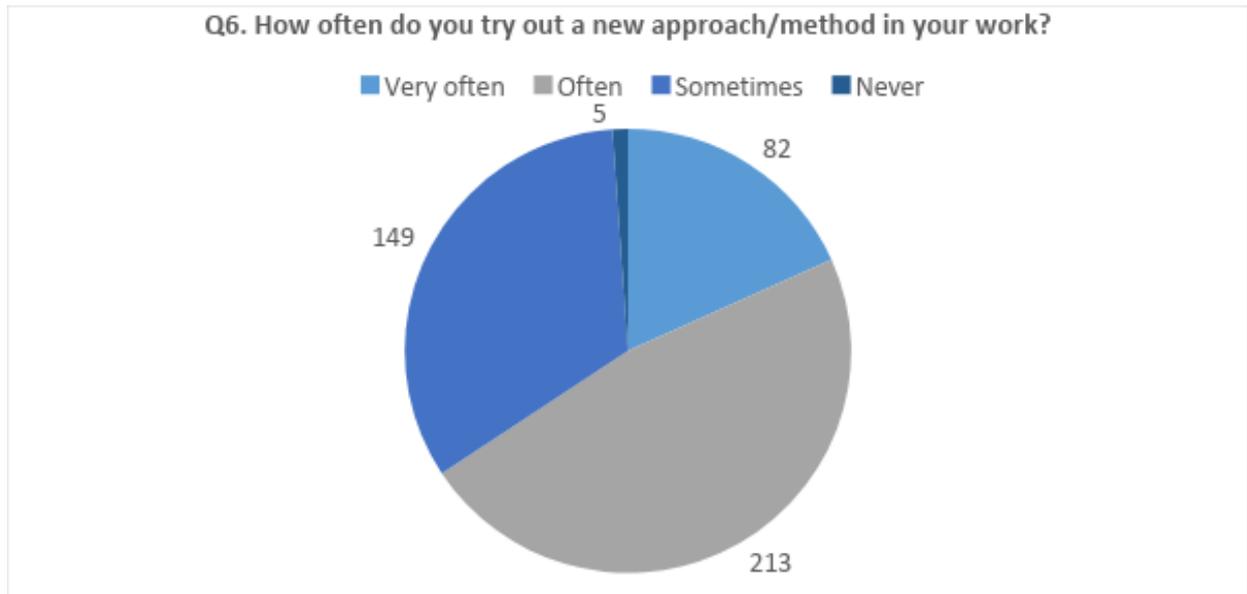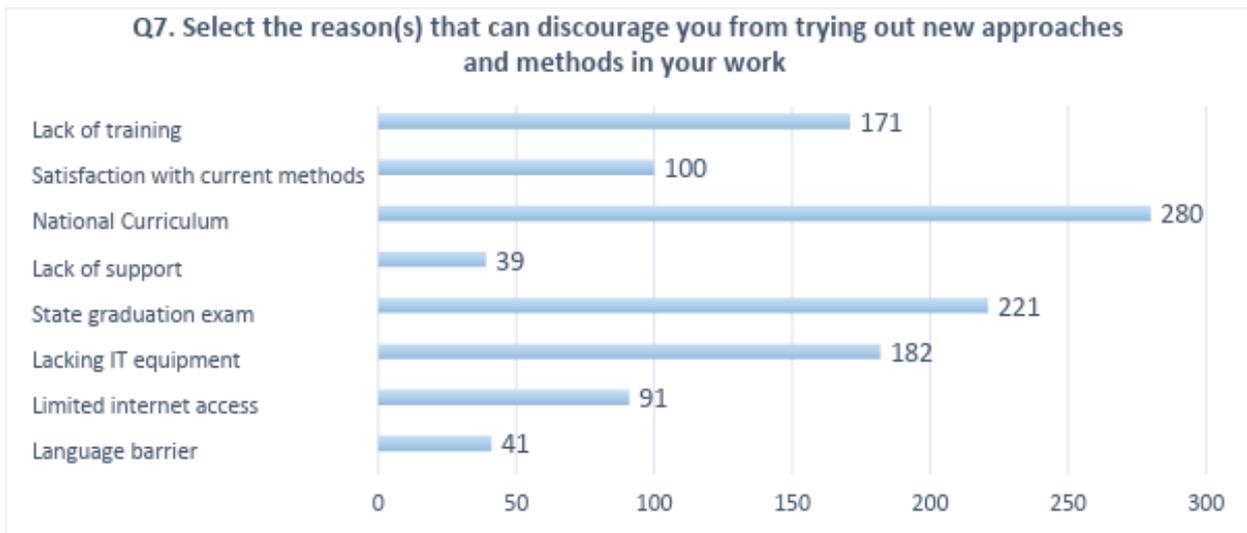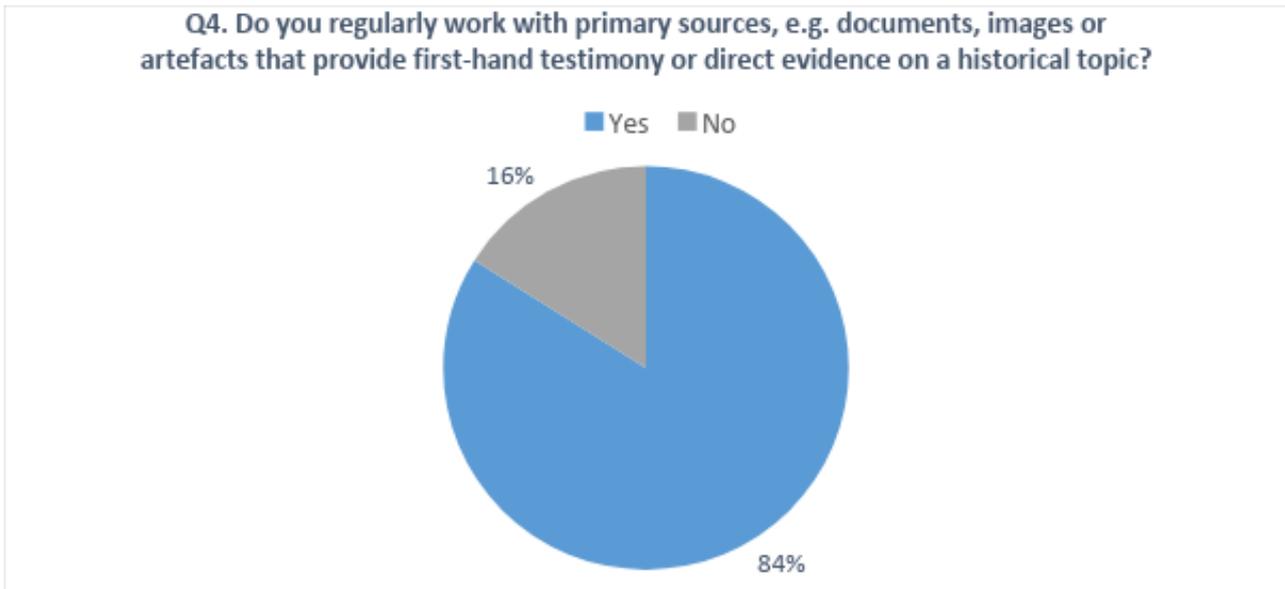*Figure 8 - Q6. How often do you try out a new approach/method in your work?*

Q6. How often do you try out a new approach/method in your work?

■ Very often ■ Often ■ Sometimes ■ Never

5
82
149
213

Figure 9 - Q7. Select the reason(s) that can discourage you from trying out new approaches and methods in your work

Q7. Select the reason(s) that can discourage you from trying out new approaches and methods in your work

Category	Value
Lack of training	171
Satisfaction with current methods	100
National Curriculum	280
Lack of support	39
State graduation exam	221
Lacking IT equipment	182
Limited internet access	91
Language barrier	41

Primary sources

Primary sources, Memorial sites visit, and Testimonies are the main tools to actively focus on Remembrance, therefore Need Analysis specifically researched about their use in school teaching. First treated item in the questionnaire was Primary sources, meaning by "primary" any document, image or artefact that provide first-hand testimony or direct evidence on a historical topic. Primary sources are used regularly by at least 4 teachers out of 5 (84%) (Figure 10) and for nearly the 34% of teachers (152) their use is not an issue (Figure 11).

Q4. Do you regularly work with primary sources, e.g. documents, images or artefacts that provide first-hand testimony or direct evidence on a historical topic?
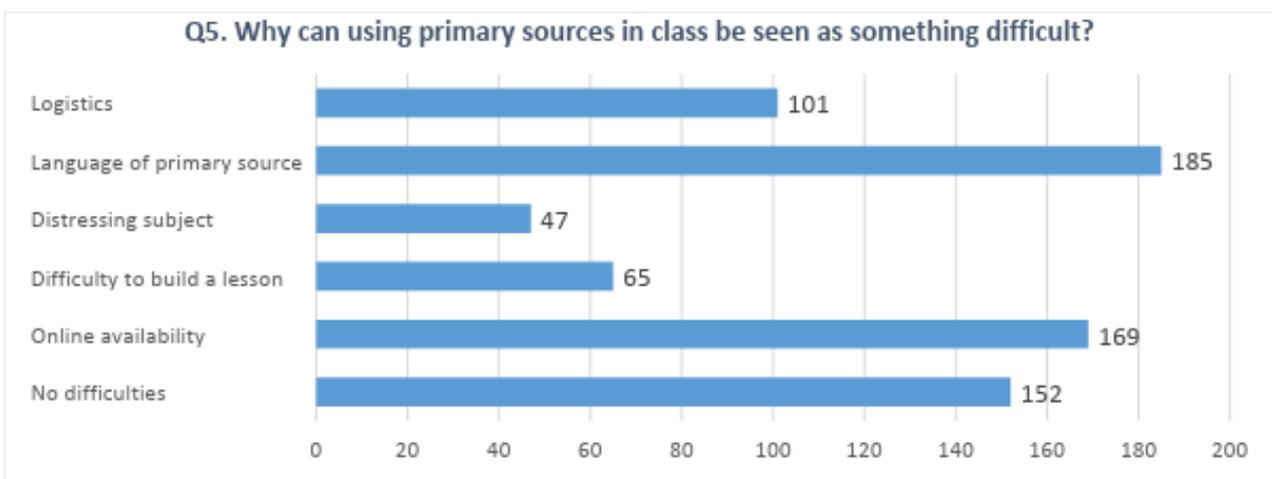
■Yes ■No

16%

84%

Full wording of response options related to possible reasons affecting use of primary sources in class were (in order presented below):

● Logistics;
● Language of primary source;
● Distressing subject matter;
● Difficulty to build a lesson around primary source(s);
● Problem with online availability;
● None of the above – I do not see the use of primary sources in class as an issue.

For teachers the top three reasons provided are related to: Language of primary source (41,2%), Problem with online availability (37,6%) and Logistics (22,5%) (Figure 11).

Figure 11 - Q5. Why can using primary sources in class be seen as something difficult?

Q5. Why can using primary sources in class be seen as something difficult?

Logistics	101
Language of primary source	185
Distressing subject	47
Difficulty to build a lesson	65
Online availability	169
No difficulties	152

Memorial sites visit

When the Need analysis turned its attention to the relationship teachers have with Memorial sites, 18% of teachers declared they have never organised a visit for their students (Figure 12) putting as main reasons

against a lack of financial resources (48,2%), No memorial sites in immediate surroundings (44,6%) and Too much content in national curriculum to cover and no time left for outings (41%) (Figure 13).

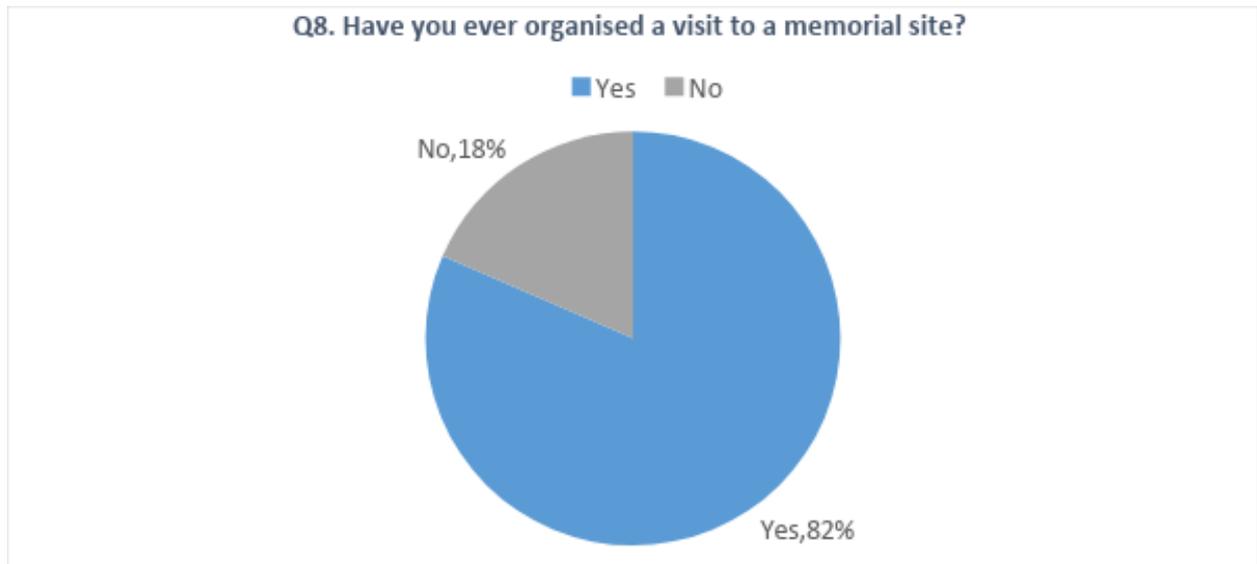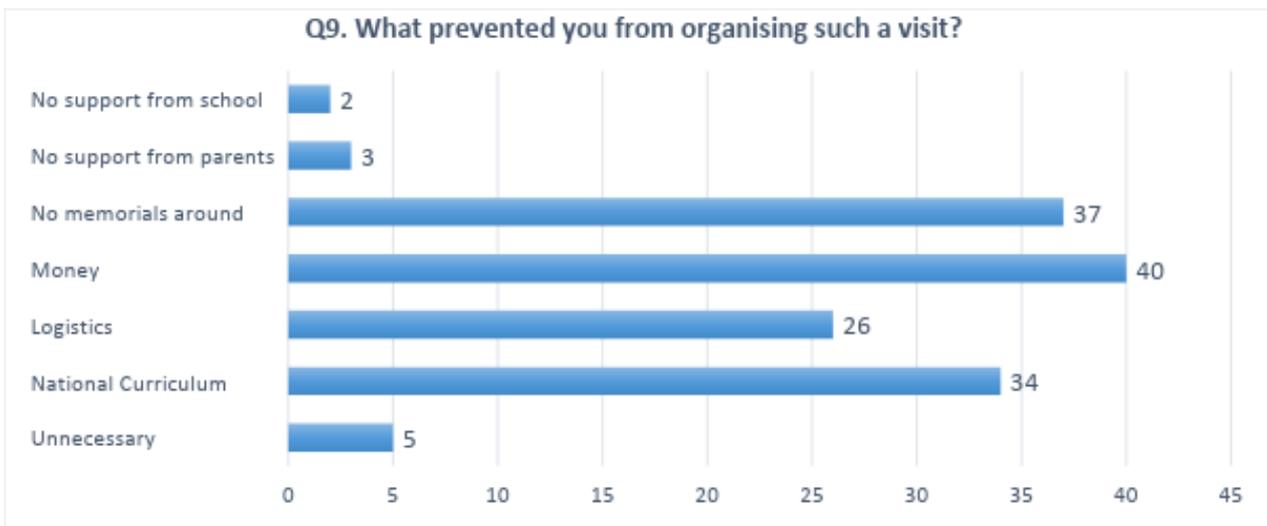*Figure 12 - Q8. Have you ever organised a visit to a memorial site?*

Q8. Have you ever organised a visit to a memorial site?

■Yes ■No

No,18%

Yes,82%

Figure 13 - Q9. What prevented you from organising such a visit?

Q9. What prevented you from organising such a visit?

Category	Value
No support from school	2
No support from parents	3
No memorials around	37
Money	40
Logistics	26
National Curriculum	34
Unnecessary	5

For those teachers who have organised visits to Memorial sites, they value as necessary elements for preparation of students the Historical background of related period (94,8%), Group discussion on expected behaviour while at site (51,4%), Historical background of the memorial site (48,6%) and Exploration of affected community's life, before the events that are now being remembered (45,6%) (Figure 14).

Regarding actual benefits students get from the experience of a Memorial site (Figure 15), teachers mostly report three main benefits related to Increased understanding of the events and how they evolved over time (86,3%), Increased awareness of the dangers of all forms of racism and intolerance pose to society (67,7%) and Increased awareness of the effects intolerance has on individuals and groups (58,2%).

Tools and approaches used by teachers to help their students to reflect on the experience include Group discussion of their initial personal impressions (ex: did the experience mirror their expectations? ...etc.) (77,6%), Creating a personal project to reflect a moment or place which captured their experience at the memorial site (33,9%) and Creation of a group display, presentation or drama to share their experiences with other students (28,1%) (Figure 16).

Figure 14 – Q10. Select the elements that you feel are necessary, to prepare your students for a memorial site visit
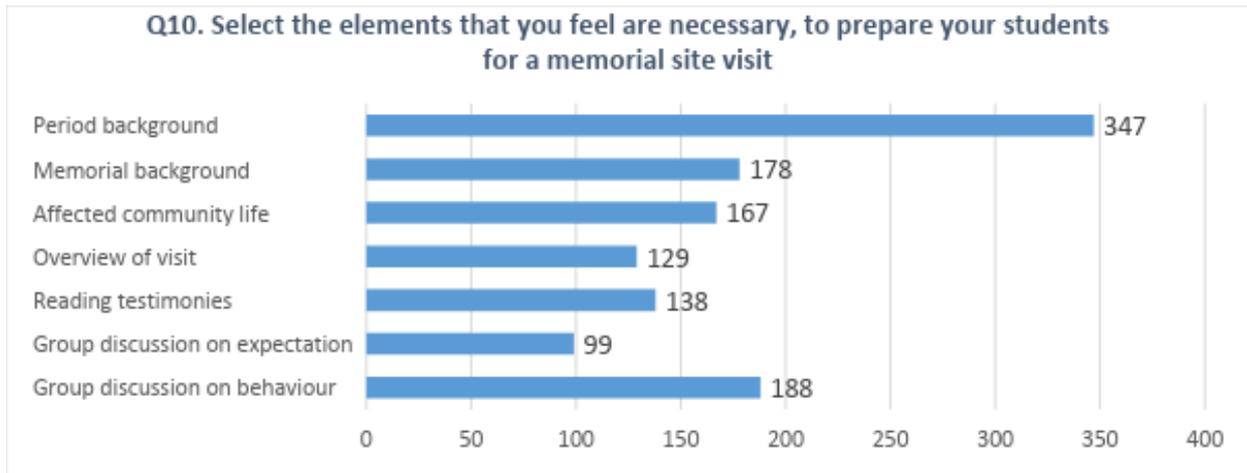
Q10. Select the elements that you feel are necessary, to prepare your students for a memorial site visit

Element	Value
Period background	347
Memorial background	178
Affected community life	167
Overview of visit	129
Reading testimonies	138
Group discussion on expectation	99
Group discussion on behaviour	188

Figure 15 – Q11. How did your students benefit from the experience?

Q11. How did your students benefit from the experience?

Benefit	Value
Increased understanding of the events and how they evolved over time	316
Increased awareness of the dangers of all forms of racism and intolerance pose to society	248
Increased awareness of the effects intolerance has on individuals and groups	213
Increased engagement with other school / extracurricular activities which focus on inclusion, diversity and anti-racism	39
Increased confidence to rebut denial and distortion amongst their peers	61
No discernible benefit	2

Figure 16 – Q12. Please indicate the tools/approach that you used to help them reflect on the experience

Q12. Please indicate the tools/approach that you used to help them reflect on the experience

Tool/Approach	Value
Group discussion	284
Personal project	124
Memorial event	58
Group display, presentation or drama	103
None	22

Testimonies

Differently from visiting a memorial site, percentage of teachers who have ever had a mass atrocity survivor give a testimony to their students is considerably less (54%) (Figure 17). Yet, possibility to access and use testimonies would be truly appreciated, since most teachers (92%) declared being interested in working with video-testimonies from survivors (Figure 18).

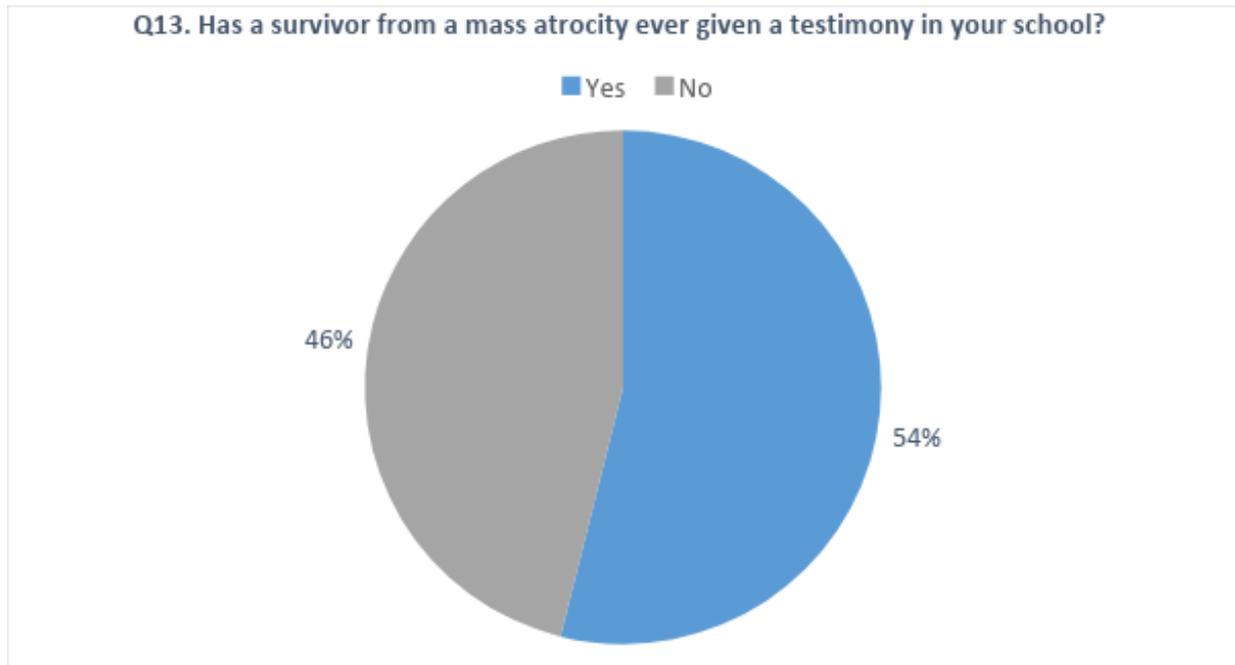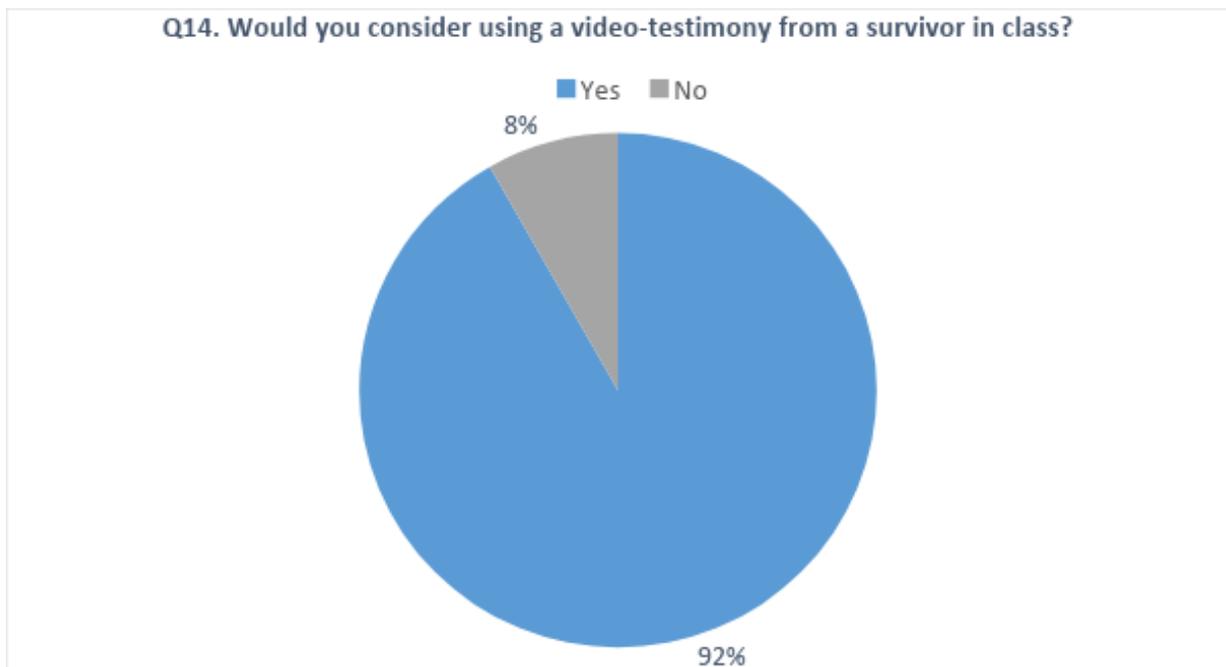*Figure 17 - Q13. Has a survivor from a mass atrocity ever given a testimony in your school?*

Q13. Has a survivor from a mass atrocity ever given a testimony in your school?
■ Yes ■ No

46%

54%

Figure 18 - Q14. Would you consider using a video-testimony from a survivor in class?

Q14. Would you consider using a video-testimony from a survivor in class?
■ Yes ■ No

8%

92%

Dealing with Mass Atrocities

Last part of the Needs Analysis is focused on how teachers deal with discussing the subject of mass atrocities with their students. As highlighted by Figure 19, more than half of teachers (54,8%) state that their main difficulty lies on the fact of having to deal with Distressing subject matter / Age appropriate challenges; more than one third (38,3%) has problems in finding what to focus on or with time constraints.

Regarding mass atrocities, teachers mainly focus on Victims and perpetrators and Chronology, and address concepts like those of Propaganda, Causality and Multiple perspectives (Figure 20).

Figure 19 - Q15. What do you find most difficult when teaching about instances of mass atrocity, such as the Holocaust?
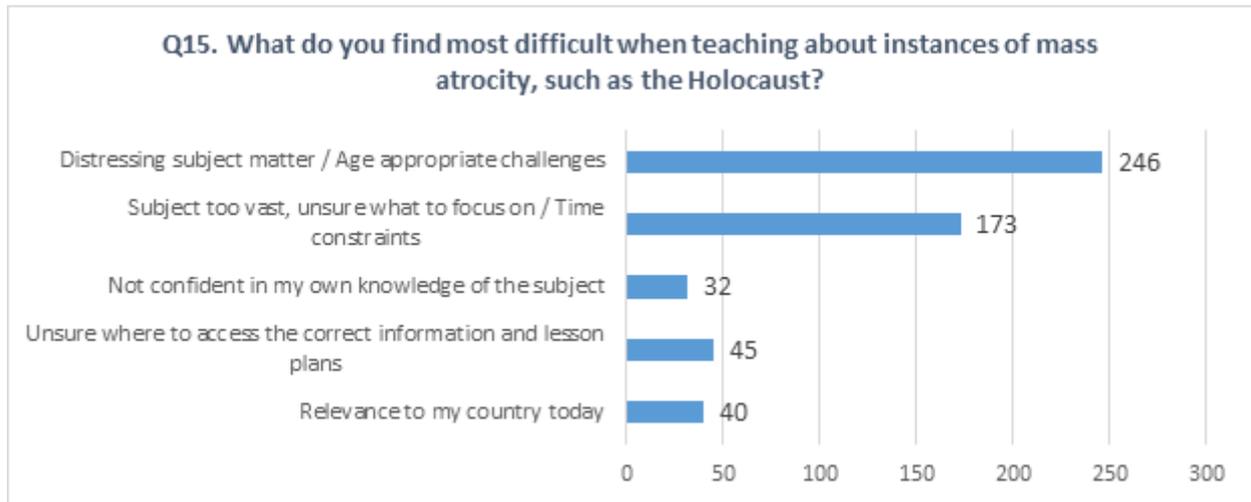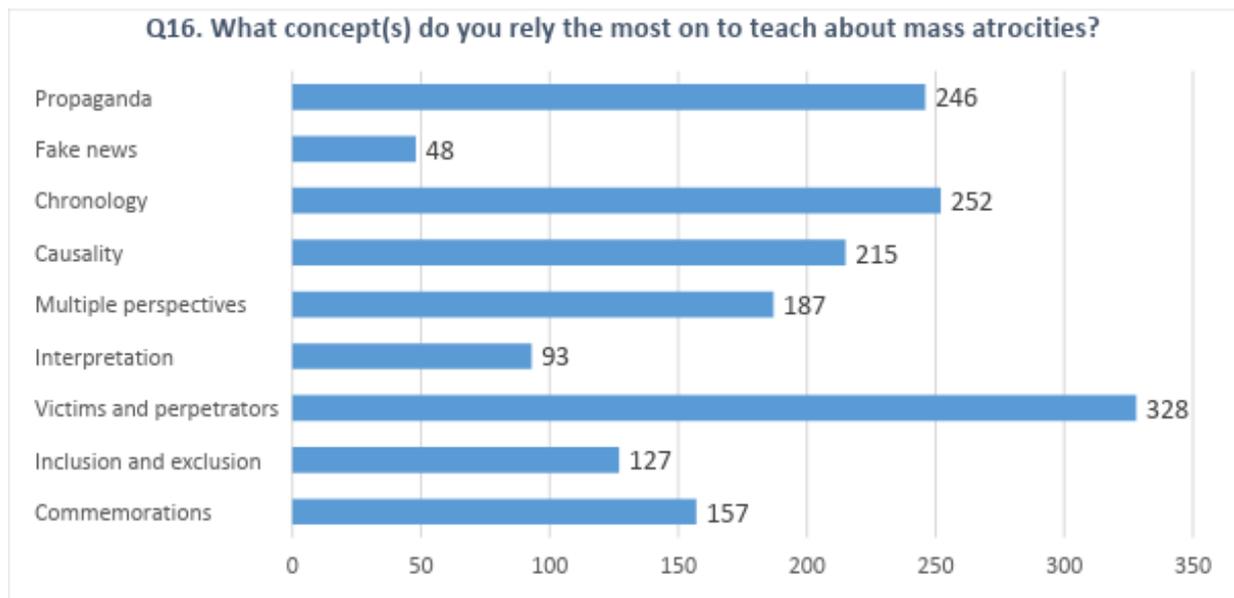

Figure 20 - Q16. What concept(s) do you rely the most on to teach about mass atrocities?
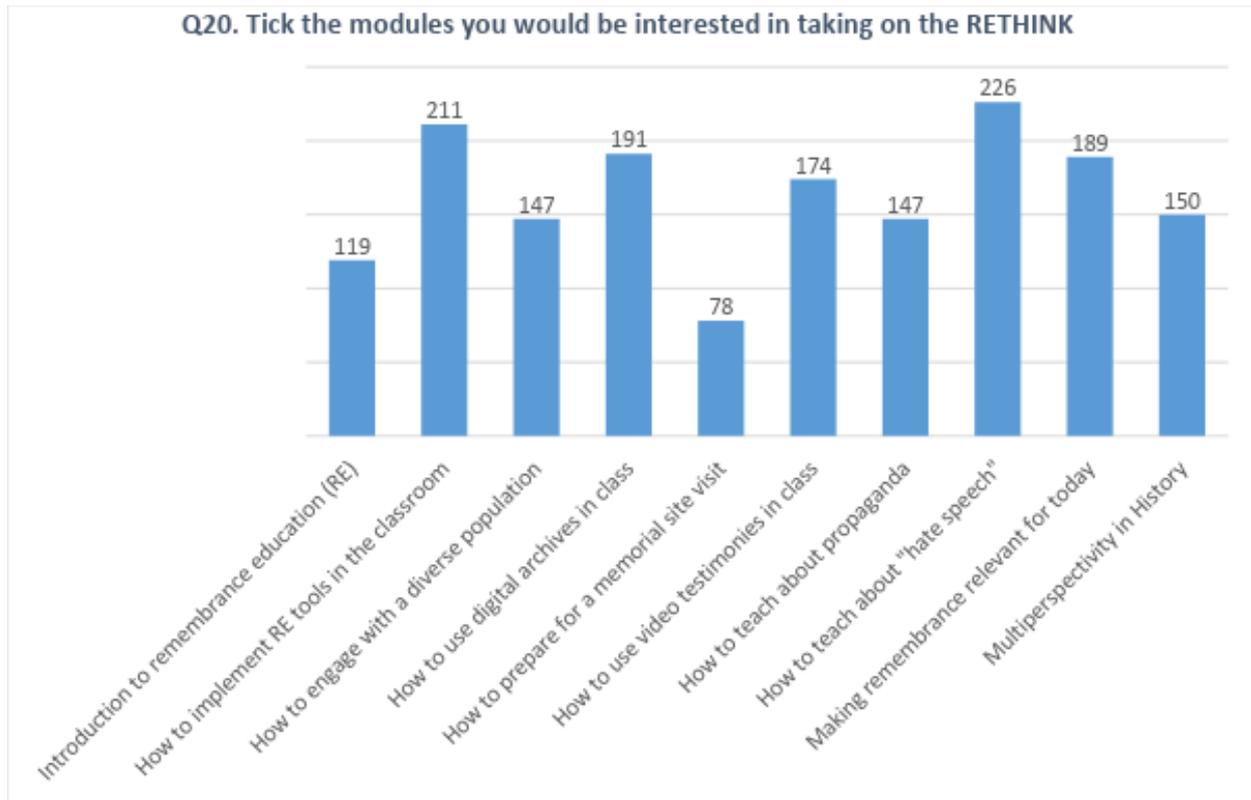

RETHINK e-learning modules

Final part of the Need Analysis is specifically related to surveying teachers' interest regarding the online modules foreseen by project RETHINK as one of the innovative tools offered to school teaching. Partners of RETHINK has previously identified specific topics which could be useful when dealing with Remembrance Education in a school environment:

- Introduction to remembrance education;
- How to implement remembrance education tools in the classroom;
- How to engage with a diverse population;
- How to use digital archives in class;
- How to prepare for a memorial site visit;
- How to use video testimonies in class;
- How to teach about propaganda;
- How to teach about "hate speech";
- Making remembrance relevant for today;
- Multiperspectivity in History.

Ranking topics in order of interest,

1. **How to teach about "hate speech"** (50,3%);
2. **How to implement remembrance education tools in the classroom** (47%);
3. **How to use digital archives in class** (42,5%);
4. **Making remembrance relevant for today** (42%);
5. **How to use video testimonies in class** (38,7%);
6. **Multiperspectivity in History** (33,4%);
7. **How to teach about propaganda** and **How to engage with a diverse population** (both 32,7%);
8. **Introduction to remembrance education** (26,5%);
9. **How to prepare for a memorial site visit** (17,4%).

Figure 21 - Q20. Tick the modules you would be interested in taking on the RETHINK

Q20. Tick the modules you would be interested in taking on the RETHINK

Conclusions and Recommendations

This Needs Analysis has focused on teachers' experience in dealing with applying Remembrance Education approaches and tools in a school context. Aim of the Needs analysis was to collect teachers' experiences in order to design contents for the RETHINK e-learning platform (https://rethink-education.eu/elearning-platform/) addressing their needs (and declared inadequacies/deficiencies of their Remembrance Education practices) in the best possible way. Goal of the RETHINK partnership is to create training materials which are valuable for teachers, both during the project and after its completion.

Points of interest that arose from the RETHINK Needs Analysis:

- **Teaching Practice**: general approach teachers use in teaching history includes not only text as well as visual sources and maps, integrated with open discussion with students. Teachers often refer to established lesson plans, history didactics trainings/guidelines as well as guidelines and resources from international organisations (EU, UNESCO…) to integrate their teaching routine. However, practices hardly include more active and interactive teaching approaches where knowledge is put into practice, such as E-learning or Blended Learning.

- **Remembrance Education**: in order to support their students in understanding nowadays issues and contemporary challenges, most teachers encourage making parallels between past and present and foster a critical attitude towards knowledge, beliefs and values by analysing roots of the controversies. Anyway, less than half of the surveyed teachers have their students inquire into the types and sources of information they encounter.

- **New approaches and methods**: teachers are generally open to trying new approaches, anyway the real possibility to do that often clashes with the "time" factor: national study curricula have too many topics to be covered, State graduation exams (and their preparation) get into the way, leaving a limited amount of time for teachers to experiment new methods. Also, for those methods requiring access to ICT tools, teachers report unavailability of equipment for all students.

  More than a third of teachers admits being short training on new methods and approaches.

- **Primary sources**: most of teachers stated using primary sources regularly. When surveyed about difficulties in their use, language, online availability and logistics (accessibility) have been the most reported.

- **Memorial sites visit**: those teachers who have never been able to offer their students a Memorial site visit, mostly complain a lack of financial resources and/or the lack of a memorial site in their school's surroundings, along with the "time" factor previously mentioned.

  Teachers who have been able to organise visits deemed Historical background of related period as the most important element to prepare the students for the visit as well as a discussion about behaviour rules and report as highly effective openly discuss with students of the experience and involve them in a related group or individual project. Regarding their achieved results, the Memorial site visit is reported to generate evident benefits in students in terms of understanding of the crucial matter and awareness of how racism and intolerance can affect society.

- **Testimonies:** there is a strong interest in testimonies by atrocity survivors, but slightly more than half of the teachers had a possibility to have students met survivors, therefore accessibility of video-testimonies would be really appreciated.

- **Dealing with Mass Atrocities**: teachers' main difficulties in approaching discussion about Mass Atrocities lie in making the topic less distressful for the students or more appropriate to their age. There is a certain level of uncertainty about what to select and present to students to be able to effectively convey information about a vast subject while efficiently lead students to face the related issues. Also in this sense, the "time" factor previously mentioned plays a role.

- **RETHINK e-learning modules**: regarding the proposals of modules presented in the survey, there is a general interest on all subjects related to use of Remembrance Education in a school context.

Modules addressing issues like "hate speech" and use of digital archives and video testimonies are the most favourites, while the less favourite is the one regarding memorial site visits. This last result can be explained in reference to the lack of time and resources teachers find in their schools in relation to outings.

RETHINK

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