

Global Wellness Agreement
GAM

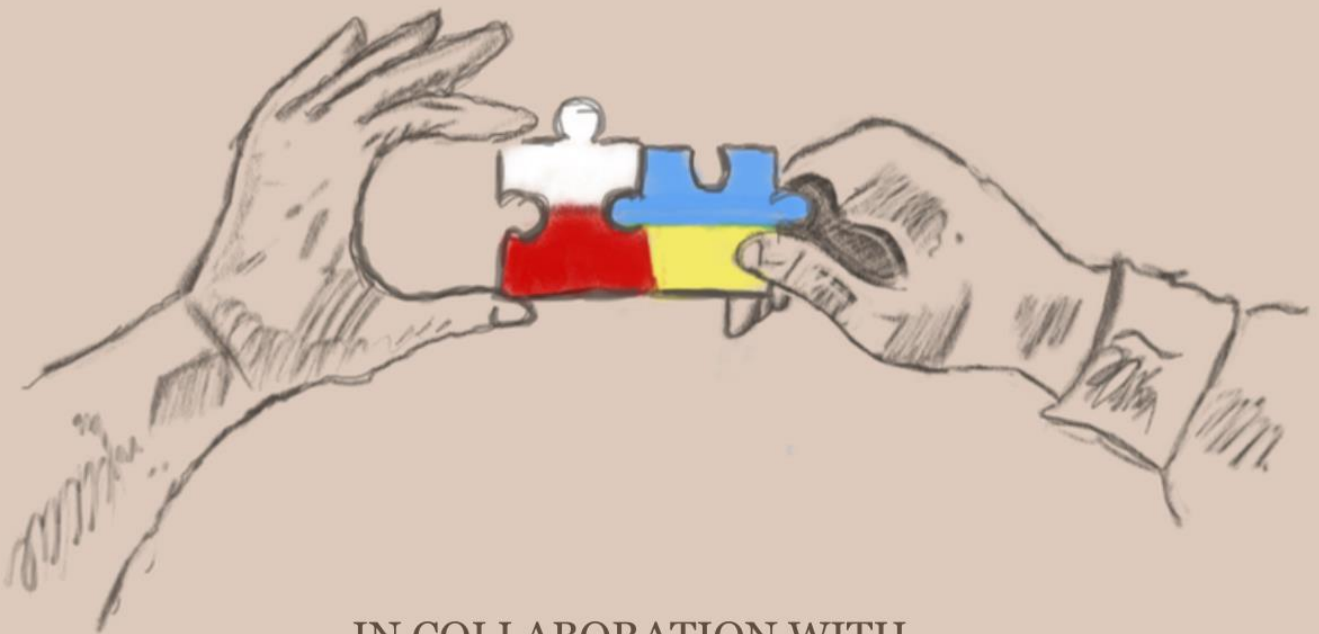


GAM

RESEARCH PRESENTS


**NO PAIN
IN YOUR BRAIN**
INTERNATIONAL

Education and Adaptation of Ukrainian Refugees in Poland



IN COLLABORATION WITH
NO PAIN IN YOUR BRAIN

illustration inspired by ALEXANDR BAKANOV



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Expert Commentary

“Very often in various studies and statements, we come across references regarding youth, especially those belonging to Generation Z. On one hand, there are voices suggesting that these individuals have an entitled and selfish attitude towards their surrounding reality. On the other hand, there is information indicating that **Generation Z is characterized by openness to change, a lack of fear in taking on new challenges, and engagement in social actions and projects.**

With such a positive and creative approach, we encounter an initiative created by young people from Poland - the *Global Awareness Movement (GAM)*. One of the projects carried out by the team under the direction of Olga Drygała is the study titled „Education and Adaptation of Ukrainian Refugees in Poland”, which aimed to answer the key question: *What does education look like for Ukrainian refugees residing in Poland?*

As someone involved in public opinion research for many years, I would like to address the methodological aspects of this project first and foremost. **Both the applied CAWI research method and the contrasting approach to the selection of the research sample are entirely appropriate and interesting from a cognitive standpoint.**

Due to the limited scope of the study, focusing on primary and secondary school students primarily in the Mazovian voivodeship, the study results should be interpreted as a case study. However, this does not change the fact that they are a significant contribution concerning migratory processes, particularly regarding the education of refugee children. When interpreting the study results, one must also consider the numbers of analyzed groups and significant disparities between Polish and Ukrainian respondents.

An undeniable advantage of the project is the authors' awareness of the differences between migrants, i.e., Ukrainian citizens who arrived in Poland before February 24, 2022, and refugees whose departure from their home country was determined by military actions.

The analysis of respondents' answers contains many interesting observations, which serve as excellent starting material for further in-depth research. What particularly caught my attention is the inconsistency in the responses of Ukrainian students, as pointed out by the researchers. **Some of the drawn conclusions align with my observations regarding research conducted on Ukrainian refugees.** One of the key issues is Ukrainians' reluctance to participate in public opinion research and its implementation. I believe this is one of the crucial questions worth addressing. It is difficult to build a civil society aspiring to EU membership without verifying public opinion.

The research project „Education and Adaptation of Ukrainian Refugees in Poland” is an excellent exercise for further research, and I wish Olga Drygała's team success in its continuation.”

Robert Staniszewski, PhD

Dr. Robert Staniszewski is an assistant professor at the Faculty of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Warsaw. Member of the Scientific Council of the Disciplines of Political Science and Administration and Security Science. He specializes in economic policy in Poland during the period of political transformation, sociology of politics, marketing, marketing and social research, public opinion, migration and social perception of systemic transformation in Poland. Author of 63 publications available at:

<https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Robert-Staniszewski>

Background

Global Awareness Movement (GAM) is an initiative created by young people from Poland, which is spreading all over the world. We aim to highlight the importance of social and environmental issues by creating awareness campaigns, projects, competitions and online events. We want to provide a safe space for active discussions and allow people to learn from each other and inspire one another. We believe that even the smallest actions can drive positive change. *GAM Research* is where you can find all the data, statistics and knowledge we have gathered while working on our projects. We believe it is extremely important to explore what we are passionate about as it is the best way to learn and we do that in collaboration with experts from different fields.

In 2022, we launched our very own “*GAM Sharing is Caring*” project providing educational help to Ukrainian children and teenagers in need, who had to flee their homes because of war. Our six amazing “Big Brother & Sister” Tutors from around the globe have now delivered over 1000 lessons to our students – Arsenii, Nadia and Sasha. Since their arrival in Poland, we have watched Arsenii, Nadia and Sasha grow academically, make new friends and discover Poland and its language and culture. In a way, we lived these difficult changes with them. We even took Arsenii to London where he visited some of the top universities in the world and participated in the UCL Leaders interdisciplinary student conference. And, we invited him to help us with this project. A project so interesting and important to all of us.

What was the educational integration journey like for other Ukrainian refugees? Why do some Ukrainian students not go to Polish schools? And, what can we do for them? We designed a study and asked them. Here, we report on our findings.

Olga Drygała

Global Head of Project, Education and Research at GAM

About the Authors

Olga Drygała, Project Leader

Currently, a Data Science student at *University College London* with experience in data collection, harmonization and analysis. Multiple conference producer with an interdisciplinary approach to learning and a passion for creating a positive impact. Summer Biomedical Engineering Researcher at the University of Tokyo. Global Head of Project, Education and Research at *Global Awareness Movement*.

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Methodology

- The report is based on three targeted surveys designed and distributed by the members of *Global Awareness Movement* Education Department. The authors also thank Zuzanna Campalastri from the *University of Cambridge* for her kind support in questionnaire design and youth from *No Pain in Your Brain* for their help in survey distribution.
- The initiators of the research project and people in charge of the work are Jolanta Kulik, the founder of *Global Awareness Movement* and Olga Drygała, the Global Head of Education and Research at *GAM*.
- The surveys were carried out in June and July 2023, targeting two distinct groups of students:
 - Polish students – students of Polish nationality enrolled in the Polish educational system
 - Ukrainian students – students of Ukrainian nationality who **came to Poland as refugees after the onset of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022**, studying in either Polish or Ukrainian schools (online or in person within the borders of Poland).
- The surveys were administered primarily through collaboration with Polish elementary and secondary schools in the Masovian Voivodeship inscribed into the database of WCIES (Warszawskie Centrum Innowacji Edukacyjno-Społecznych i Szkoleń) as well as several Ukrainian organizations in Poland.
- Computer Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI) was used as the surveying technique. Respondents received a link to an online questionnaire via e-mail and completed it on their own.
- Sampling methods employed include convenience and snowball sampling.
- The surveys were originally designed and conducted in Polish and Ukrainian languages for Polish and Ukrainian students respectively. For the purpose of this

report, both questions and answers were translated into English with great attention to word choice. Thank you to Arsenii Hlaholiev for his contribution.

- In the initial stages of this research, the intention was to employ a stopping optimization algorithm to determine when to halt the collection of new survey responses and proceed to the data analysis phase. However, despite efforts, reaching the desired sample size of minimum 100 responses per respondent group became increasingly challenging, rendering the algorithm less practical. Consequently, when drawing conclusions from the study, it is important to take into account the size of the analyzed group. This applies particularly to the open-ended questions.
- However, despite the smaller-than-expected sample size and limited generalizability of results, the responses provided valuable insights into some new interesting issues and participation patterns described in the following sections.

Participant Characteristics

Number of Participants: The study comprises 130 individuals.

Participant Groups: 72 Polish students, 38 Ukrainian students in Ukrainian schools online and in person in Poland and 20 Ukrainian students in Polish schools.

Character of Participation: The students participated voluntarily with informed consent / consent of their parents and received no compensation for their involvement.

Gender Distribution: There were 76 female participants, 49 male participants, and 5 individuals who identified as different gender.

Age Range: The age range of respondents was 7 to 18 years old, with the highest proportion falling in the 13 to 15 years old category.

Geographic Representation: While the majority of participants went to a school in Warsaw, the study included participants from various locations, including 13 out of 16 Polish voivodeships. Some of the cities represented include Katowice, Lublin, Białystok, Gliwice and Wrocław.

Main Findings

I. Polish Students

- Most Polish students would describe their relationship with Ukrainian students as “very good”, “good” or “neither good nor bad”, with none describing it as “bad” or “very bad”.
- 70% of Polish students would describe the Ukrainian students as moderately open to making new friends.
- Only 3% of Polish students have their closest friends amongst the Ukrainian students.
- The attitude of Polish students towards Ukrainian students has worsened over time. However over 50% of Polish students have a positive attitude towards Ukrainian students.
- 76% of Polish students have offered some kind of help to Ukrainian students in their class or school.

II. Ukrainian Students in Polish Schools

- 90% of Ukrainian students that go to a Polish school also attend a Ukrainian school either online or in person in Poland.
- The main reasons behind Ukrainian students going to a Ukrainian school apart from the Polish one are unspecified length of stay in Poland and wanting to study in the Ukrainian language.
- 65% of Ukrainian students that go to a Polish school go to a mixed class.
- 95% of Ukrainian students in Polish schools came to Poland over a year ago.
- 80% of them joined a Polish school within a month from coming to Poland.
- 90% of Ukrainian students would describe their relationship with Polish students as “very good”, “good” or “neither good nor bad” and 10% would describe it as “very bad”.

- 95% of Ukrainian students would describe their relationship with their teachers as “very good”, “good” or “neither good nor bad” and 5% would describe it as “bad”.
- Most Ukrainian students claim their closest friends to be Polish and Ukrainian students equally.
- Ukrainian students feel that their Polish classmates’ / schoolmates’ attitude towards them changed for the better over time.
- 10% of Ukrainian students claim to need help of a school psychologist but no respondents use it. However, 30% of Ukrainian students see a psychologist elsewhere.
- 15% of Ukrainian students in Polish schools would like to use free educational materials that promote mental well-being and 10% of Ukrainian students would like to participate in free online workshops about mental health. Some of them also expressed potential interest.
- Most Ukrainian students in Polish schools have had additional Polish language classes and now feel they know Polish well.
- Most Ukrainian students would describe the changes in teaching and assessment methods in the Polish school compared to a Ukrainian school as moderate or big, with 60% of them claiming they have managed to complete almost no assignments successfully.
- Most Ukrainian students also struggle to actively participate in class and do not participate in extracurricular activities in school.
- 22% of Ukrainian students claim that the biggest challenge in the Polish school are unpleasant behaviours of Polish students. At the same time, 50% of Ukrainian students claim that what they like the most in the Polish school is having new Polish friends.
- 50% of Ukrainian students study in a year below compared to which year they would be in their Ukrainian school.
- According to Ukrainian students main things that could be done to improve their experience in the Polish school are more psychological support and more friendly behaviours of Polish students.
- 60% of Ukrainian students feel that they understand the Polish grading system and the process of conducting exams at the end of school.

- 95% of Ukrainian students in Polish schools claim to not have experienced any kind of bullying, humiliation, violence or other negative behaviours from Polish students or teachers.
- 45% of Ukrainian students in Polish schools claim that if they could choose, they would still go to a Polish school over a Ukrainian one.

III. Ukrainian Students in Ukrainian Schools (online or in Poland)

- 65% of Ukrainian students that study in a Ukrainian school while in Poland study online.
- Most Ukrainian students that study in a Ukrainian school while in Poland came to Poland 3-6 months ago.
- 50% of Ukrainian students that study in a Ukrainian school while in Poland studied in a Polish school, most of them for 1-3 months.
- 80% of Ukrainian students that dropped out of a Polish school studied in a mixed class alongside Polish students.
- 90% of Ukrainian students that dropped out of a Polish school joined it within the first month from coming to Poland.
- 60% of Ukrainian students who dropped out of a Polish school would describe their relationship with their Polish classmates / schoolmates as “very good”, “good” or “neither good nor bad” and 40% as “bad”.
- All Ukrainian students that dropped out of a Polish school would describe their relationship with their teachers as “very good”, “good” or “neither good nor bad”.
- Most Ukrainian students that dropped out of a Polish school identified other Ukrainian students as their closest friends at the Polish school.
- 60% of Ukrainian students that dropped out of a Polish school said that they felt “bad” in the Polish school.
- Most of them would describe their Polish classmates’ / schoolmates’ initial attitude towards them as “positive” or “neutral”.
- 40% of Ukrainian students that dropped out of a Polish school claimed to have needed help of a psychologist during their studies in the Polish school but none of them used it. However, 70% of them sought psychological help elsewhere.

- 90% of Ukrainian students that dropped out of a Polish school had additional Polish language classes while at the Polish school.
- Most Ukrainian students that dropped out of a Polish school would describe the changes in teaching and assessment methods in the Polish school compared to a Ukrainian one as “neither small nor big” or “big”.
- Most Ukrainian students that dropped out of a Polish school struggled to actively engage in activities in the Polish school and none of them took part in any extracurricular activities.
- Most Ukrainian students that dropped out of a Polish school felt that the teachers demanded “much less”, “less” or “the same amount” from them as from the Polish students, in terms of knowledge.
- They identified the language barrier as the biggest challenge in the Polish school and extra Polish languages classes as the biggest advantage of studying in the Polish school.
- According to Ukrainian students that dropped out of a Polish school, more friendly behaviours from Polish students could make their experience in the Polish school better.
- 50% of Ukrainian students studied in a year below compared to their Ukrainian school.
- 80% of Ukrainian students that dropped out of a Polish school were not sure whether they understood the Polish grading system and the process of conducting exams at the end of school.
- 30% of Ukrainian students that dropped out of a Polish school experienced some kind of bullying, humiliation, violence or other negative behaviours from Polish students or teachers. While most of them did not want to provide details on their experience, some identified their language and nationality as the reasons for bullying.
- Most Ukrainian students that study in a Ukrainian school identify the language of teaching as the main reason behind it.
- Most Ukrainian students in Ukrainian schools feel that they know Polish “well” or “neither well nor poorly”.
- Most of them learn Polish by attending additional Polish language classes.
- 35% of Ukrainian students that study in a Ukrainian school claims to need help of a psychologist but only 5% use the help of a school psychologist. However, 55% of them see a psychologist elsewhere.

- Only 30% of Ukrainian students that study in Ukrainian schools expressed potential interest in using free educational materials that promote mental well-being and only 15% expressed potential interest in free mental health workshops.
- 45% of Ukrainian students that study in a Ukrainian school would like to go to a Ukrainian school if they could choose. The second most popular option, with 25%, is a Polish school.

Discussion

Although most Polish students have a positive attitude towards Ukrainian students, our study showed that it has worsened over time. These findings also align closely with other similar studies conducted amongst adults and in particular, the one carried out by Dr Robert Staniszewski and published in Newsweek in March 2023. Still 76% of Polish students declared to have offered Ukrainians in their school some sort of help and we all have seen them and their families take action.

Answers provided by Ukrainian students in Polish schools seem to be slightly inconsistent and no clear conclusions can be made. While no Ukrainian students use psychological help available to them for free in their Polish school, they claim that more psychological support could improve their experience. Similarly, some claim that the biggest challenge in the Polish school are unfriendly behaviours of Polish students and others identify their new Polish friends as the best part of studying in a Polish school. Additionally, 90% of Ukrainian students in Polish schools describe their relationship with their Polish peers as a positive one and only 5% claim to have experienced some kind of bullying in a Polish school. Our study also revealed that 90% of Ukrainian students that go to a Polish school also attend a Ukrainian school either online or in person in Poland. We identified the main reasons for that to be uncertainty related to their stay in Poland and wanting to use their native language more.

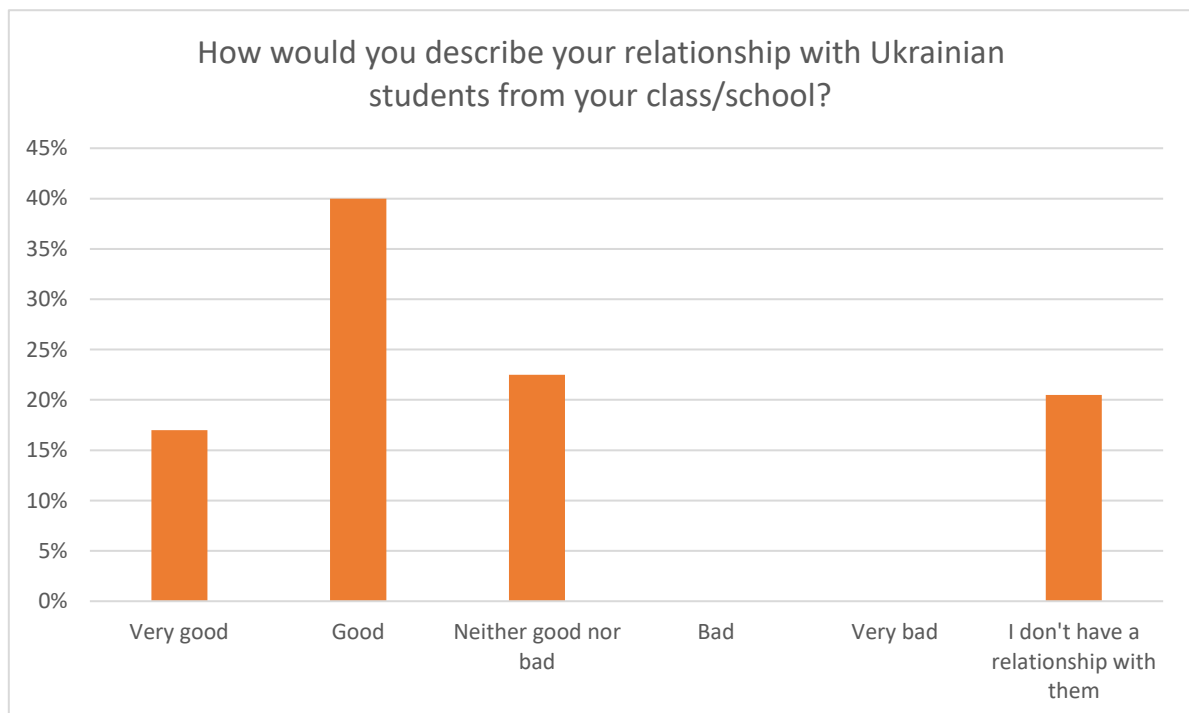
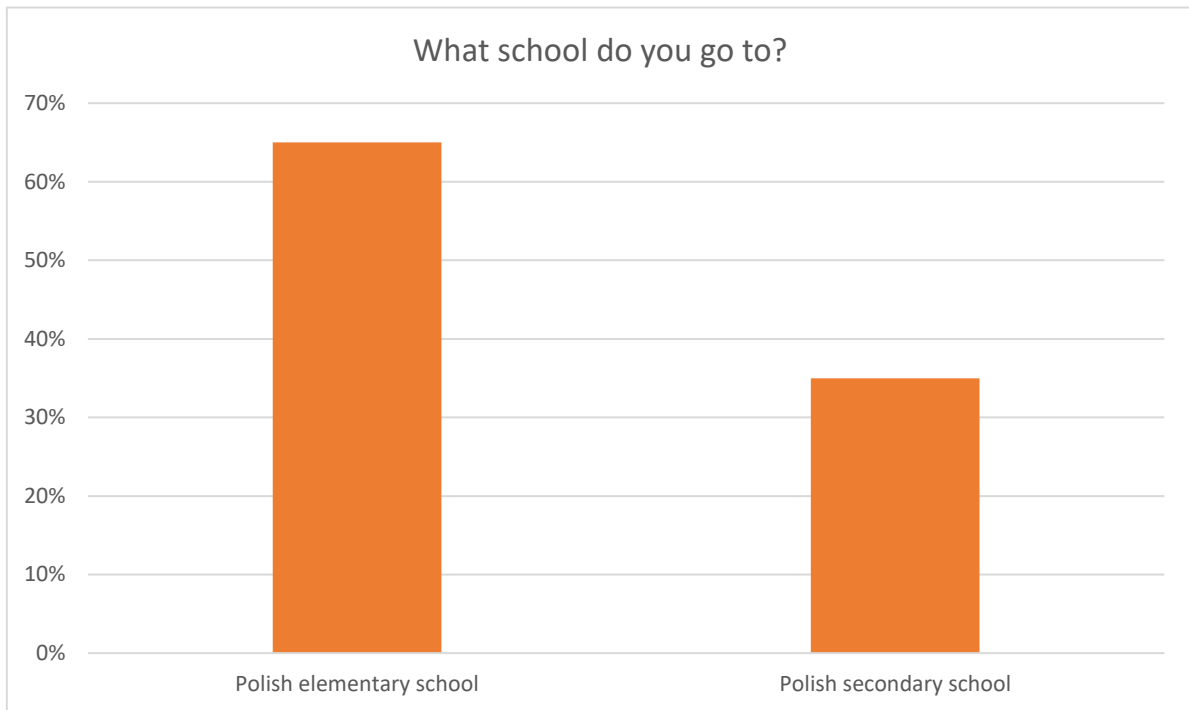
Interestingly, most Ukrainian students that dropped out of a Polish school pointed out language as the biggest challenge in their studies and at the same time additional Polish language classes as the thing they liked the most. However, most of them only went to

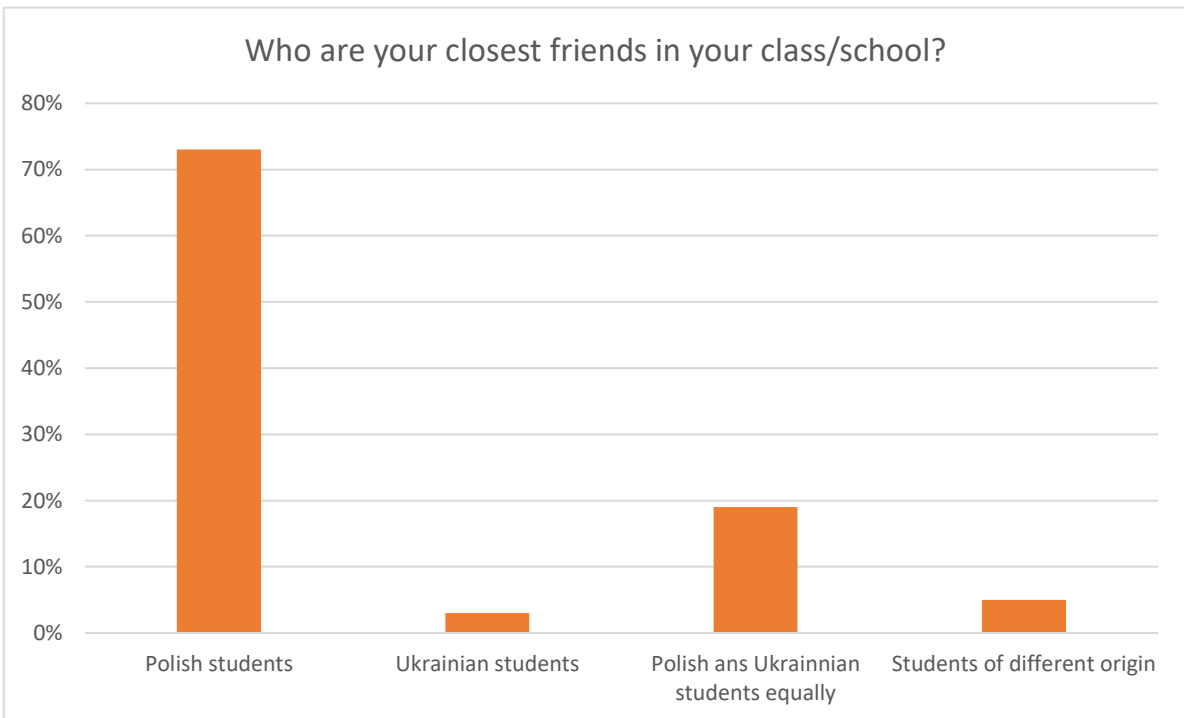
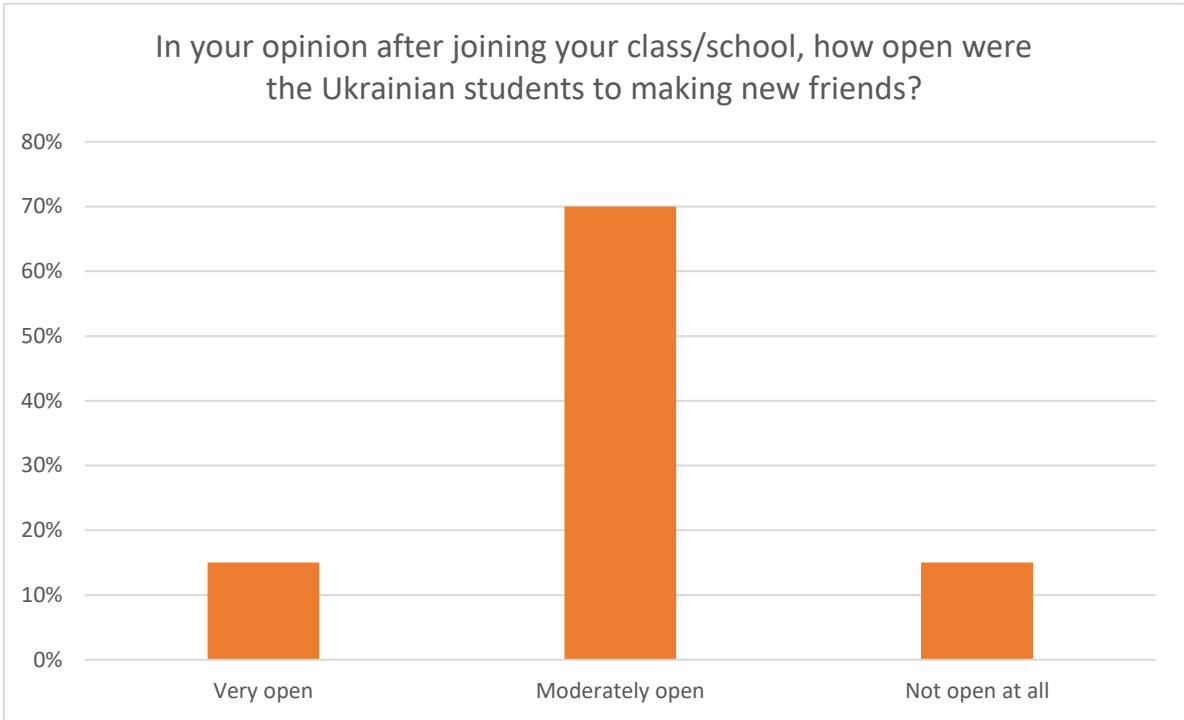
a Polish school for 1-3 months. It seems to us that Ukrainian students that dropped out of a Polish school did not give themselves enough time to learn the language and make new friends. Especially, since they claimed to not have felt too much of an academic pressure and in general described their relationship with their classmates / schoolmates as a positive or neutral one. Although some episodes of bullying were reported, we believe that feeling generally “bad” in a Polish school was above all connected to the language barrier, cultural differences, lack of understanding of the Polish educational system and not making use of psychological support available. This is confirmed by the majority of Ukrainian students ultimately preferring to study in a Polish school over a Ukrainian one.

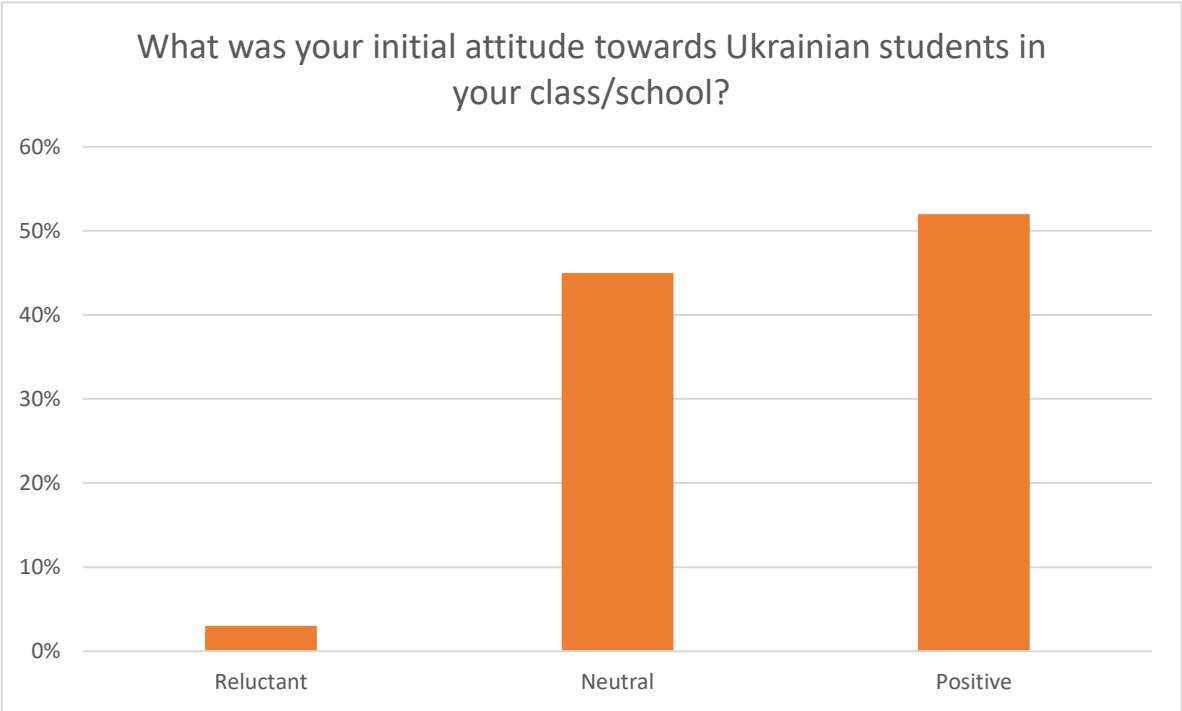
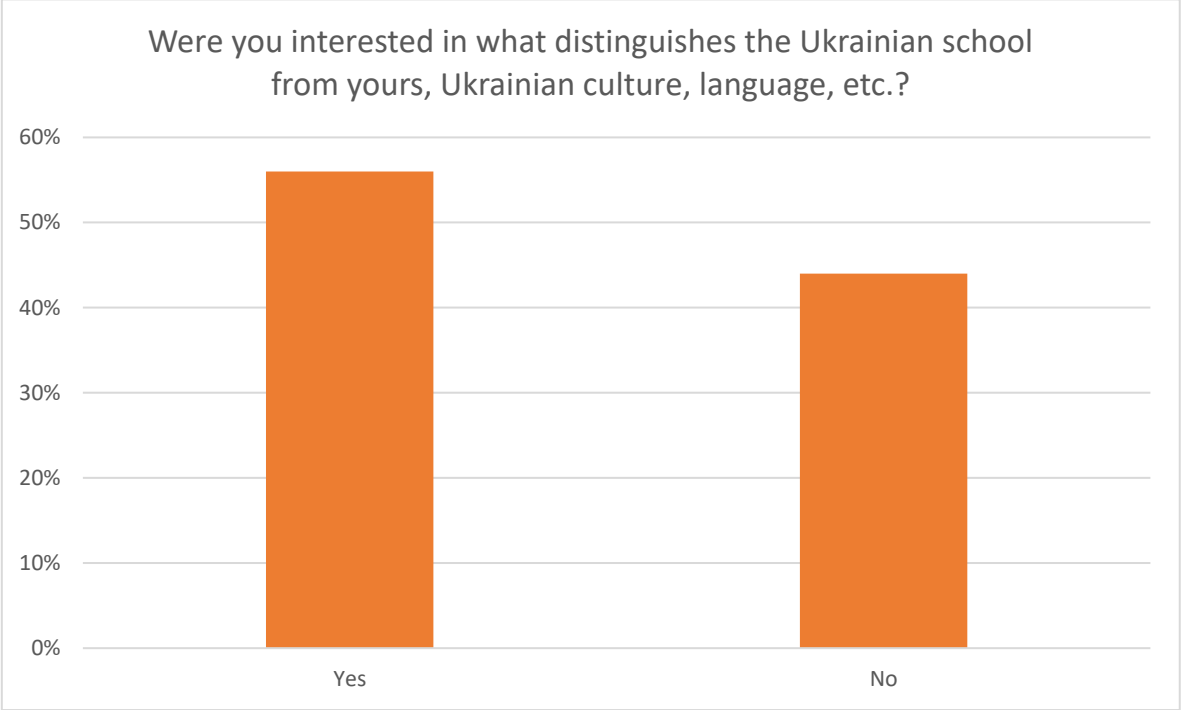
Interestingly, although many Ukrainian students claimed to need psychological support, very few were interested in workshops and self-help materials promoting mental well-being. Nevertheless, we have partnered with a youth initiative *No Pain in Your Brain* to deliver a mental health guidebook to those interested, which will be also made available on our official website: <https://globalawarenessmove.wixsite.com/home>.

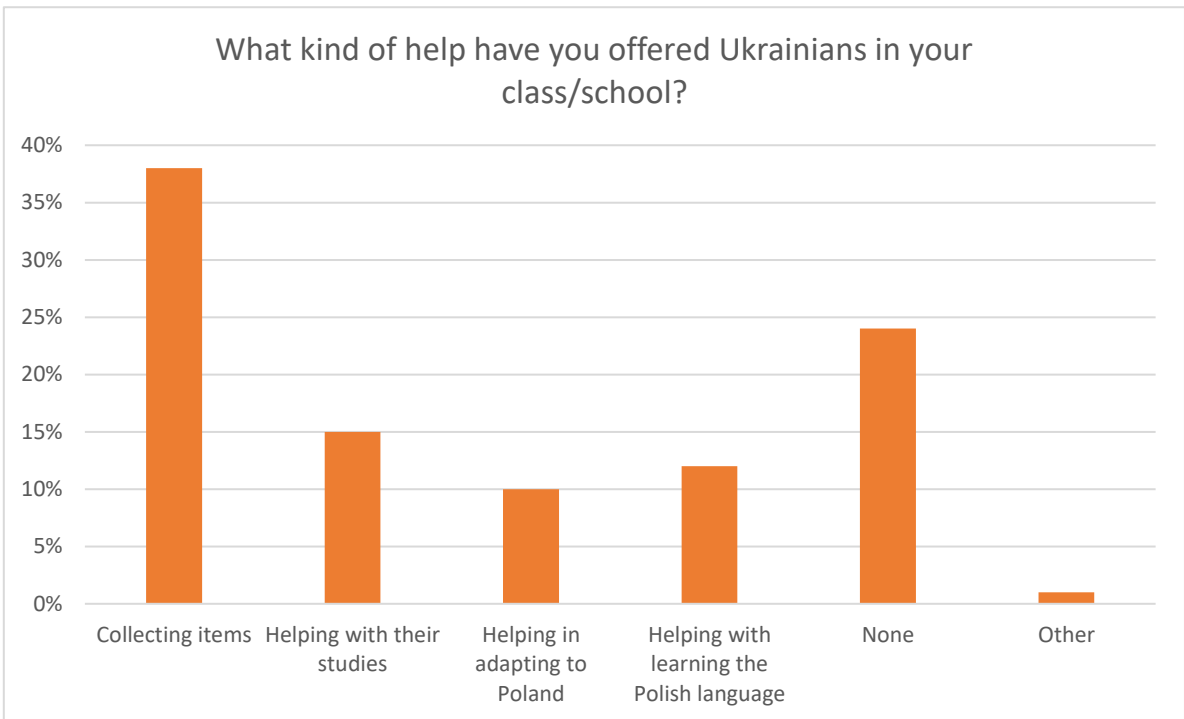
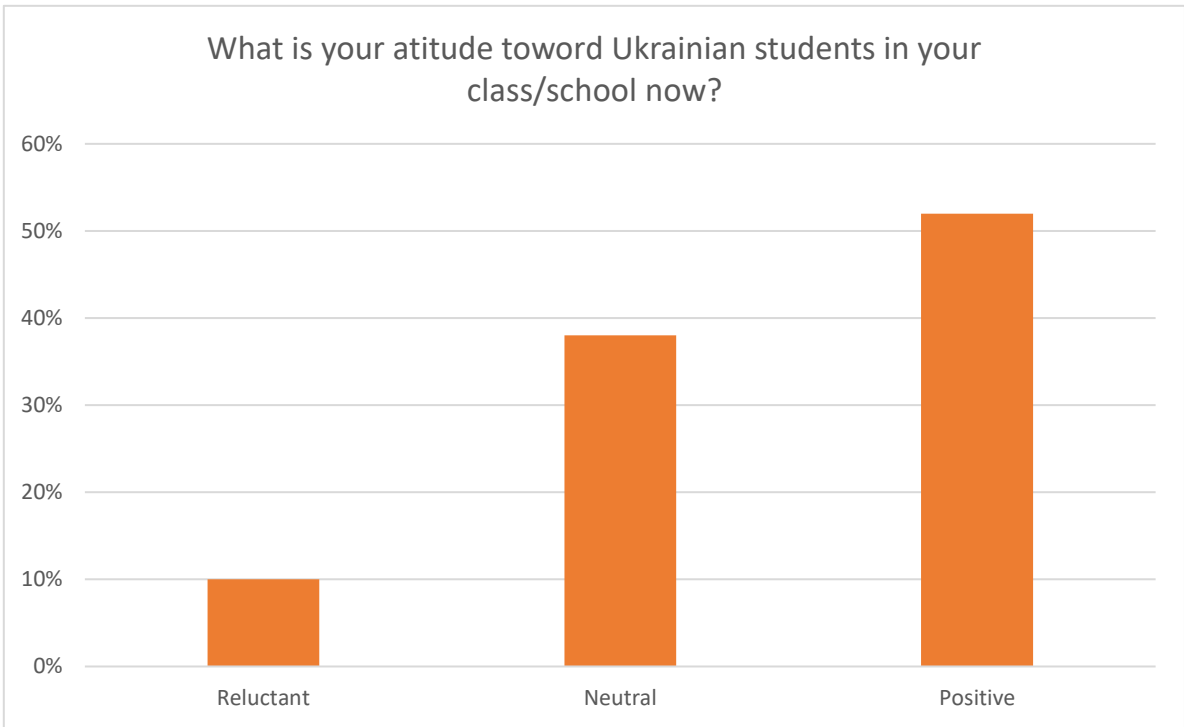
Another unexpected trend we have discovered while collecting responses to our surveys is the difference in the attitude towards social studies between Polish and Ukrainian people. While many Polish people and organizations happily helped us in survey distribution, unfortunately the vast majority of Ukrainian people and organizations, including friends, were notably less eager to contribute to our project. This brings to light a new important topic with potential for an interesting future qualitative social study.

Results in Figures: Insights from Polish Students

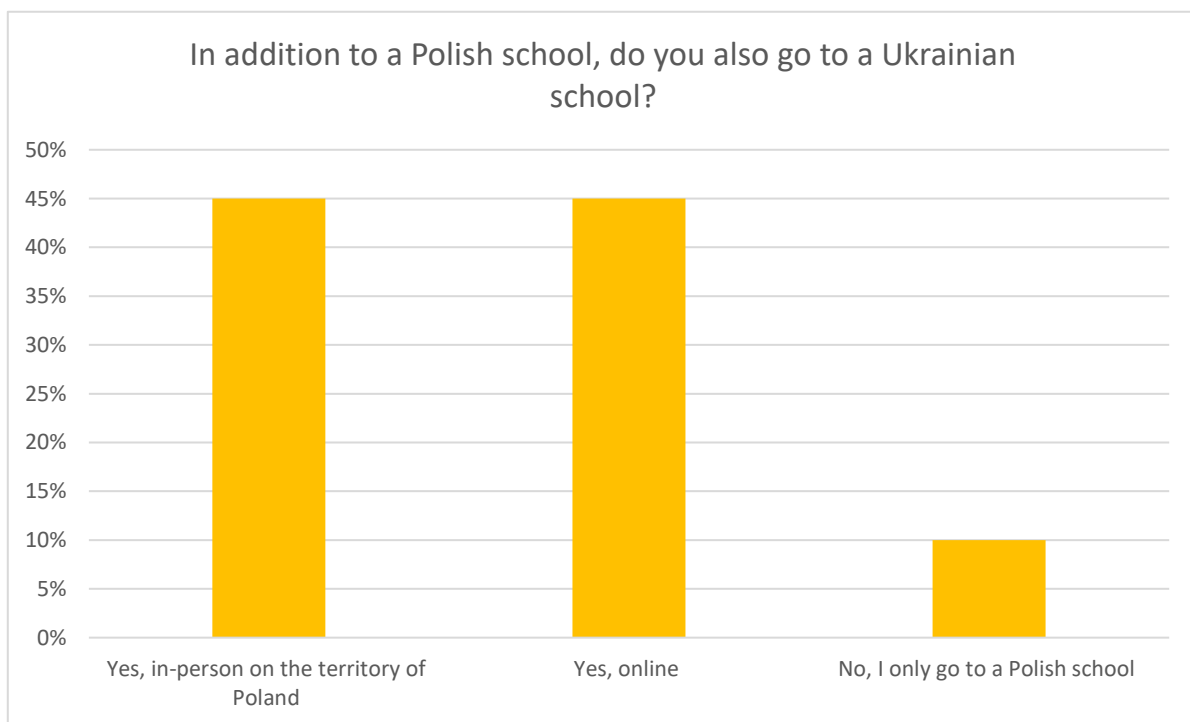
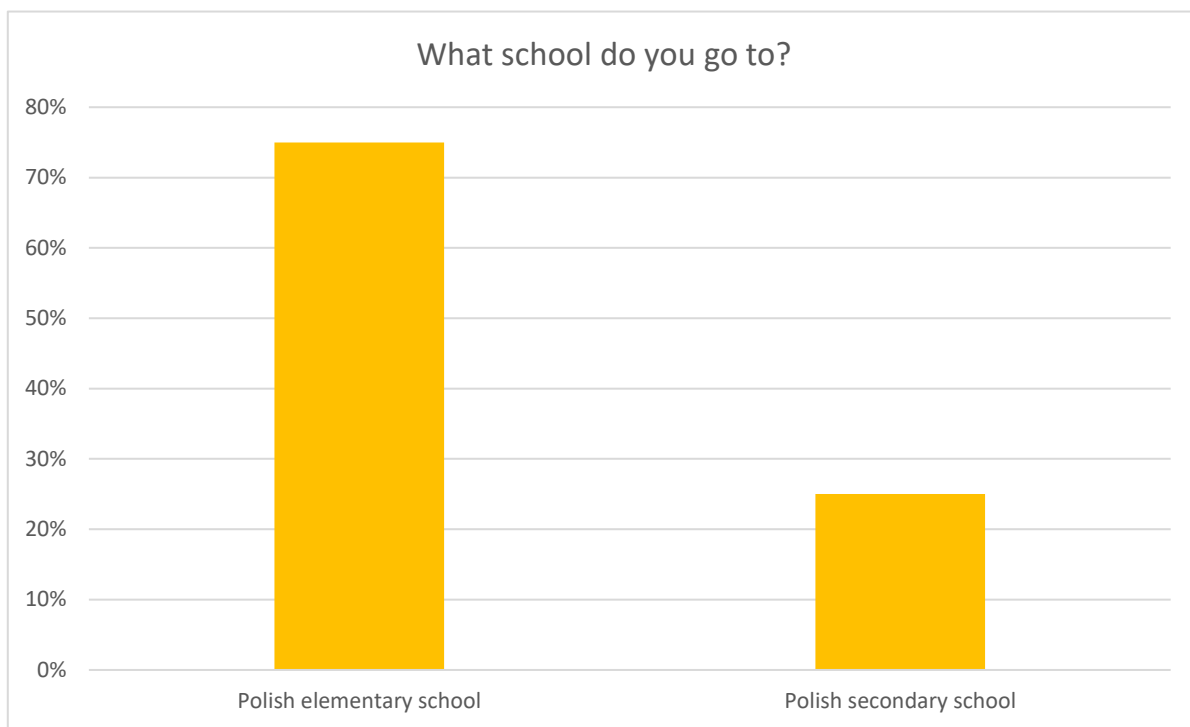


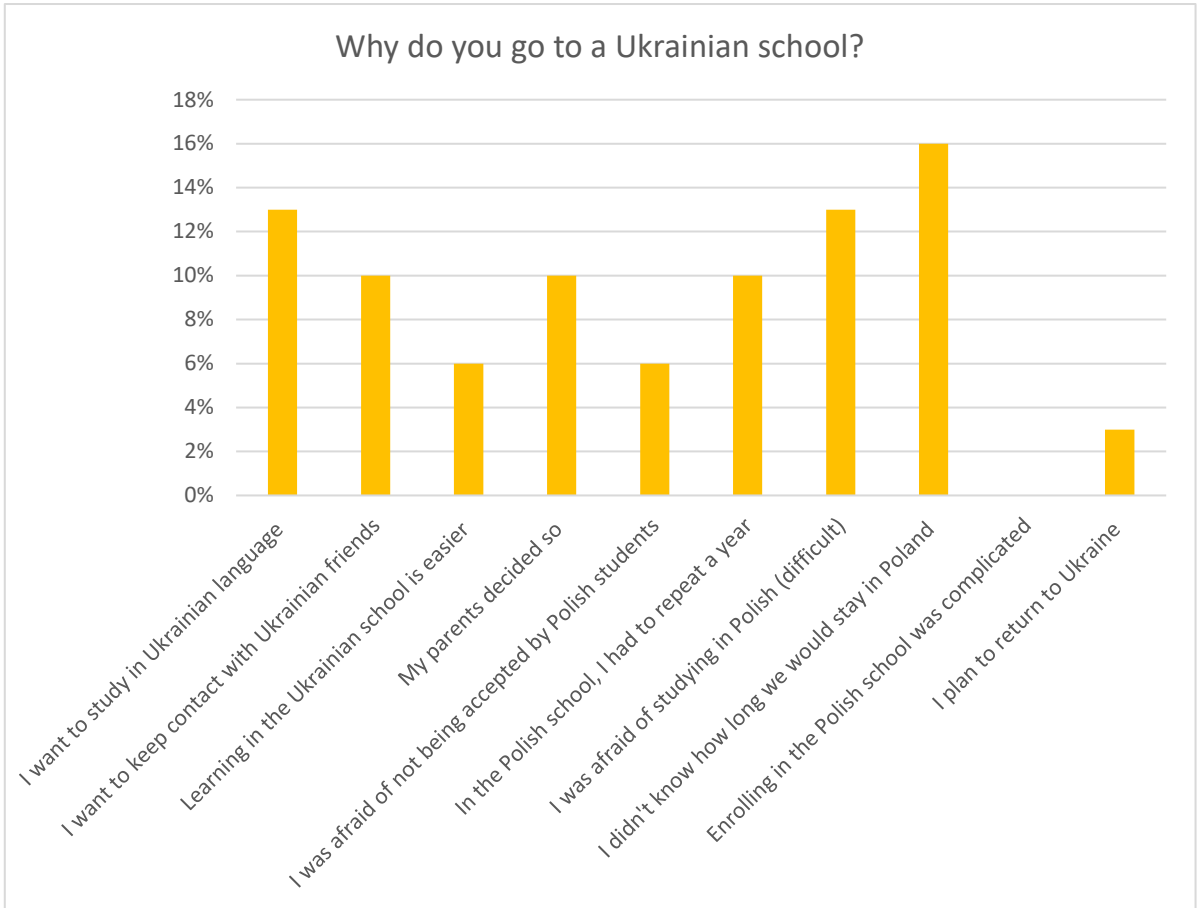




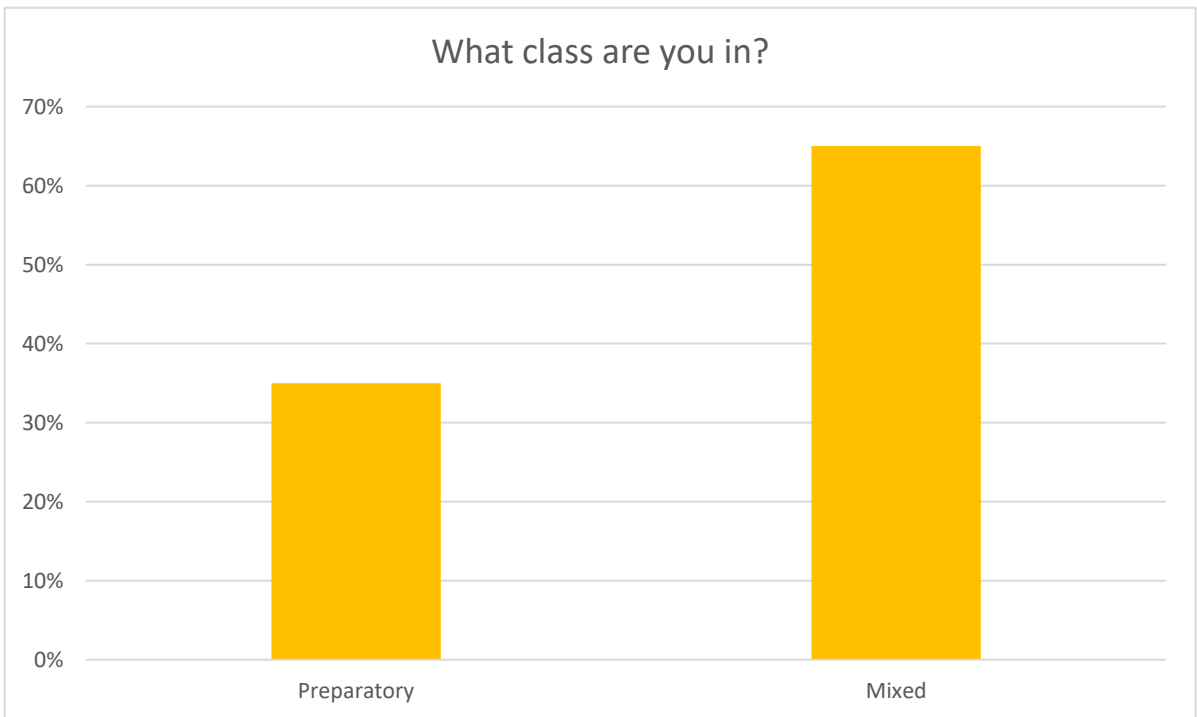


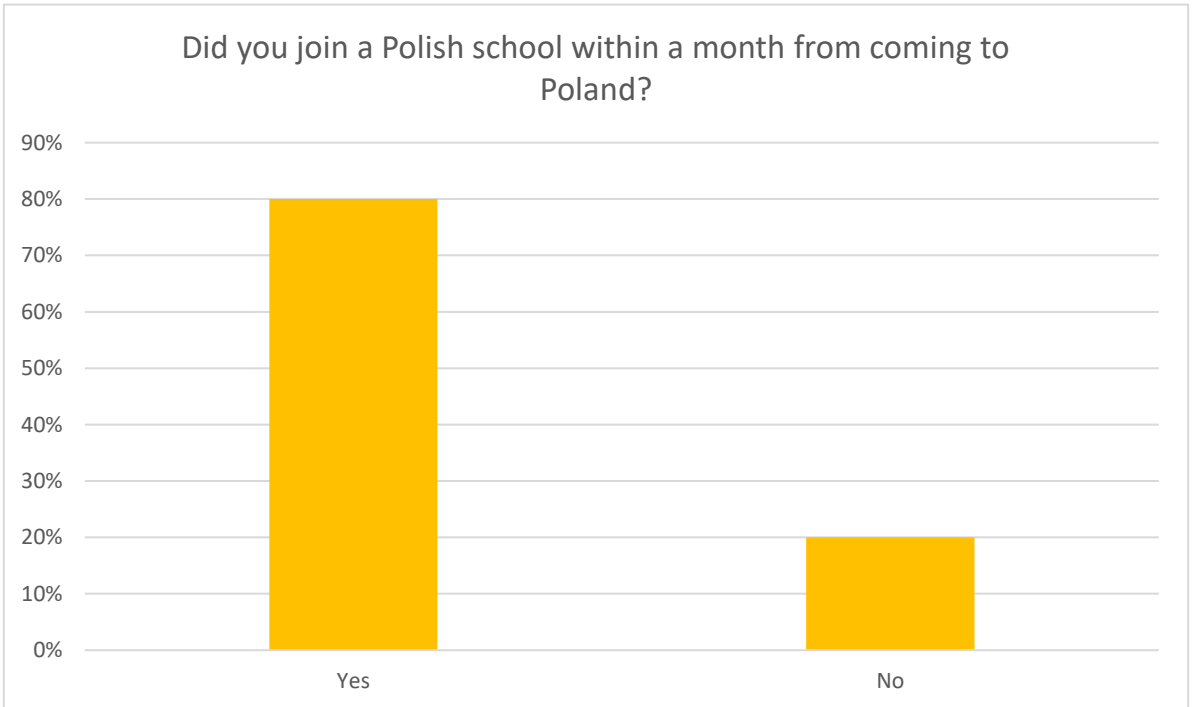
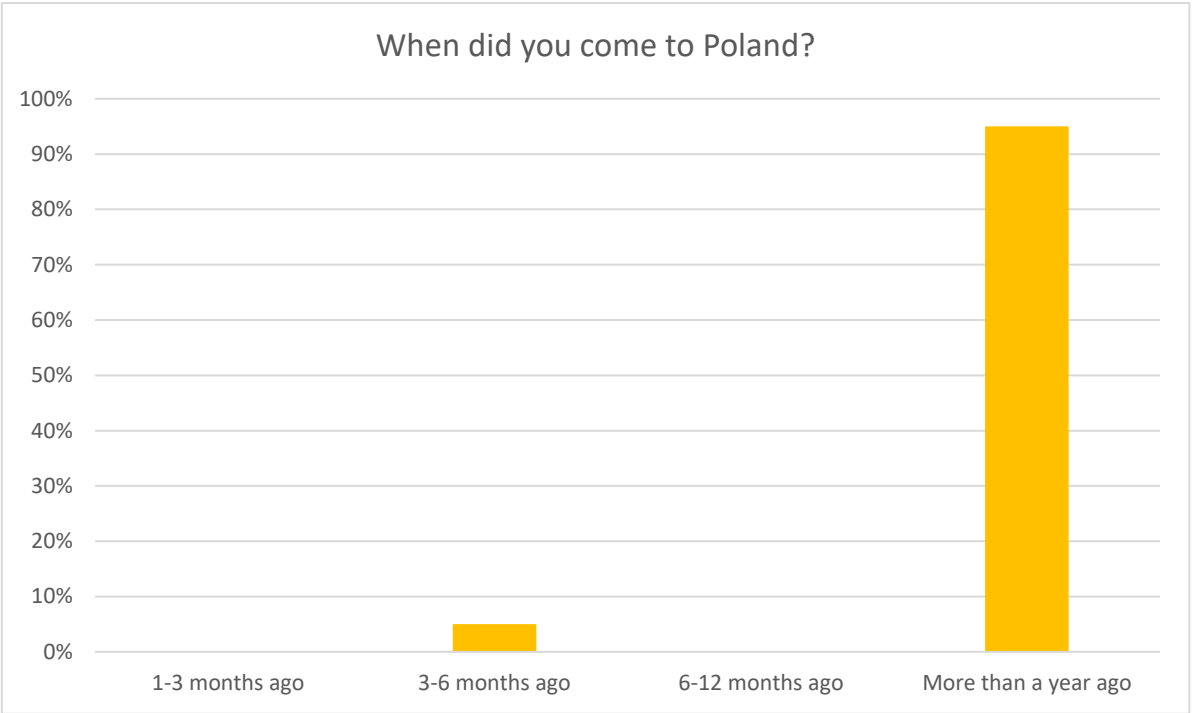
Results in Figures: Insights from Ukrainian Students in Polish Schools

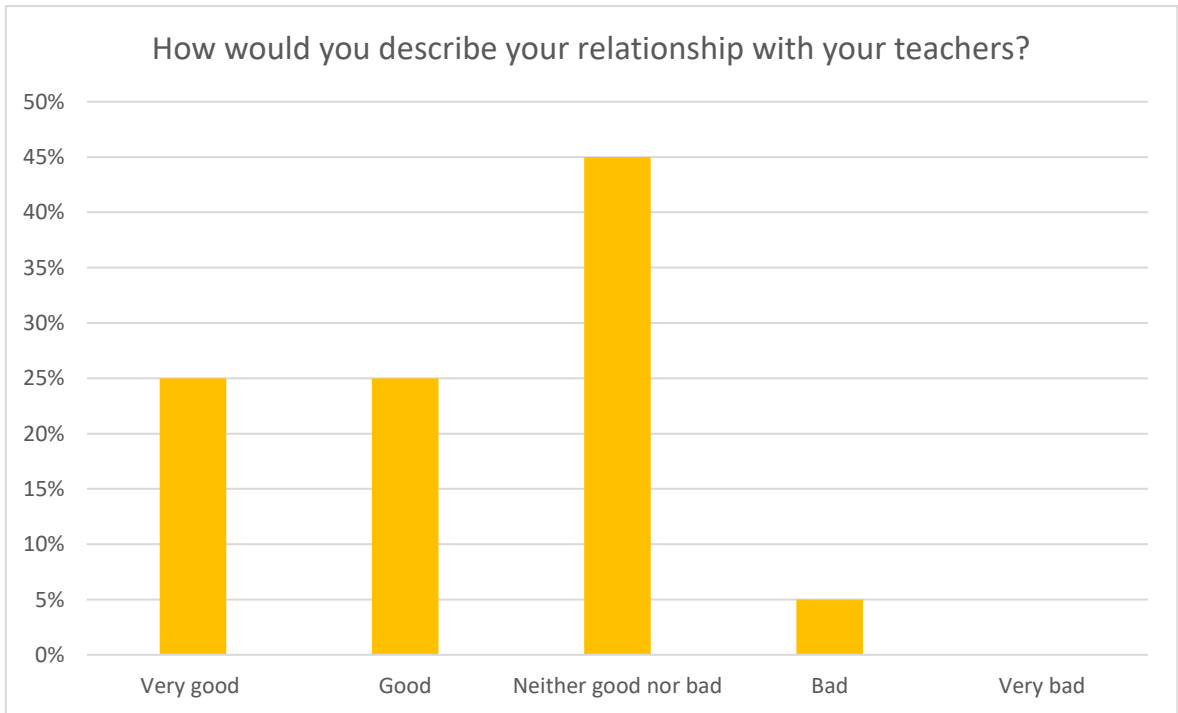
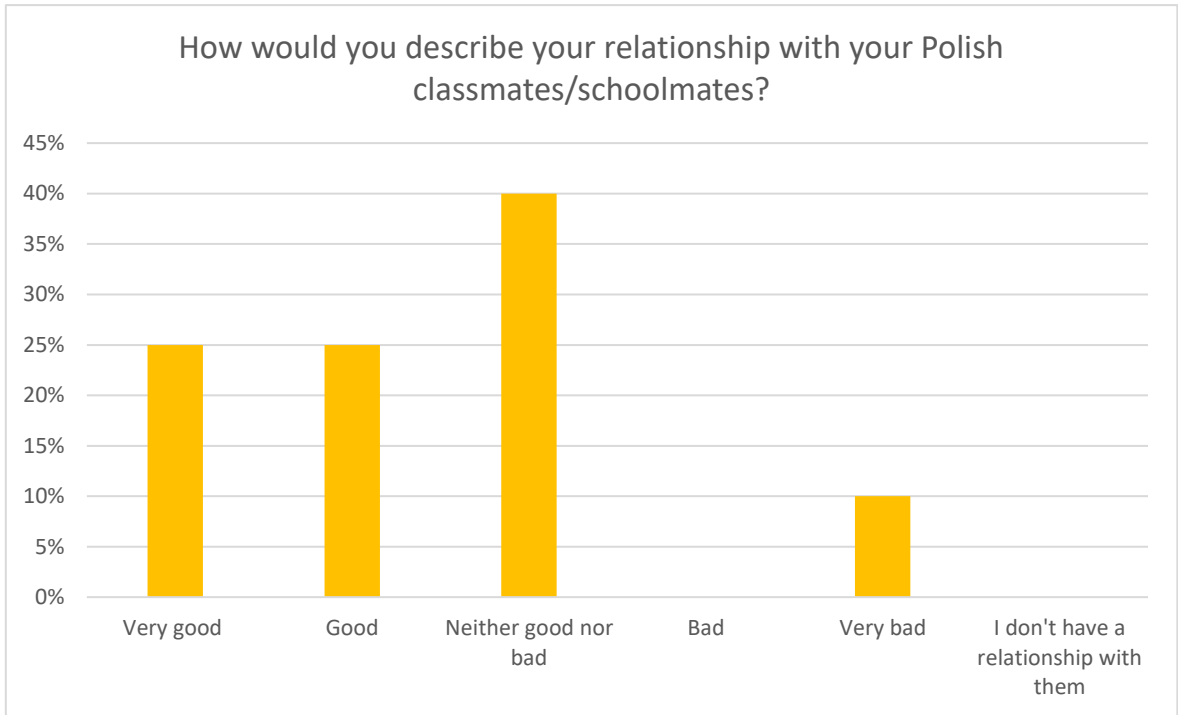


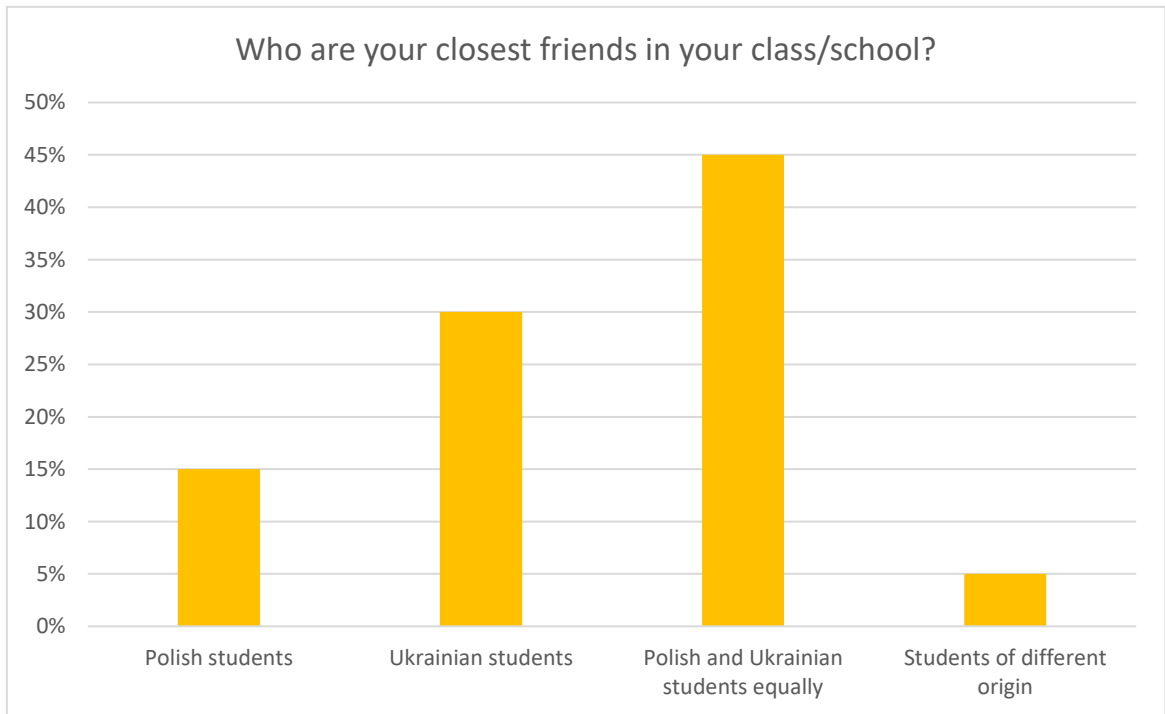
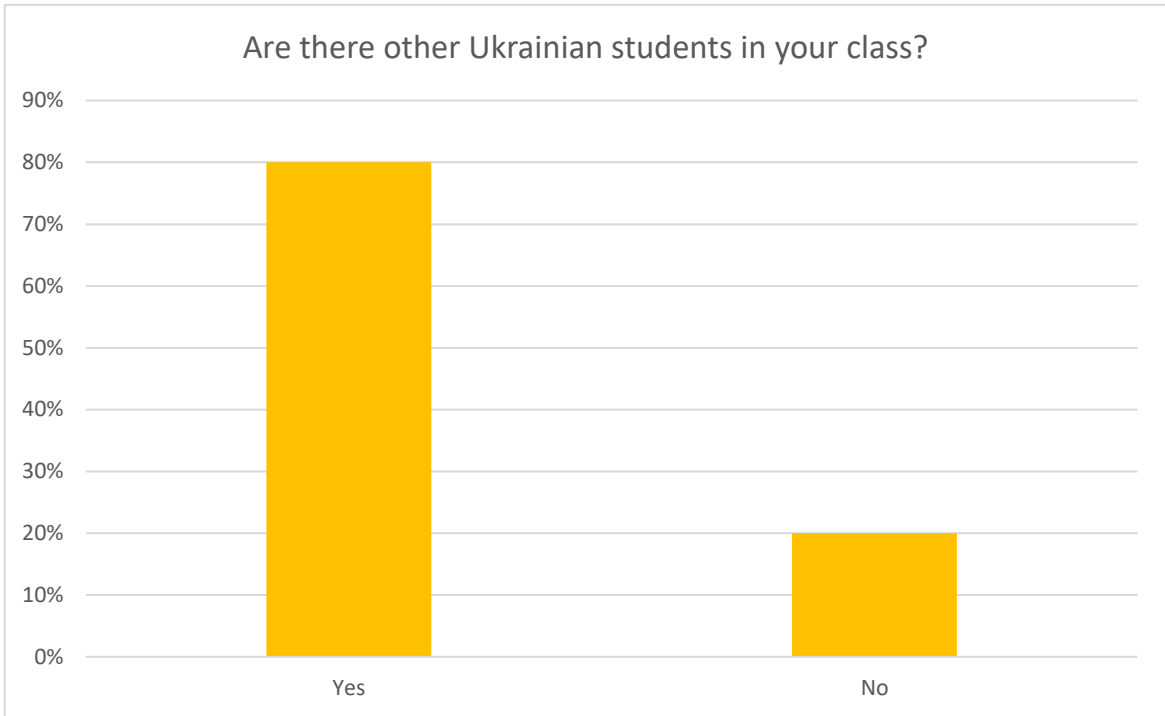


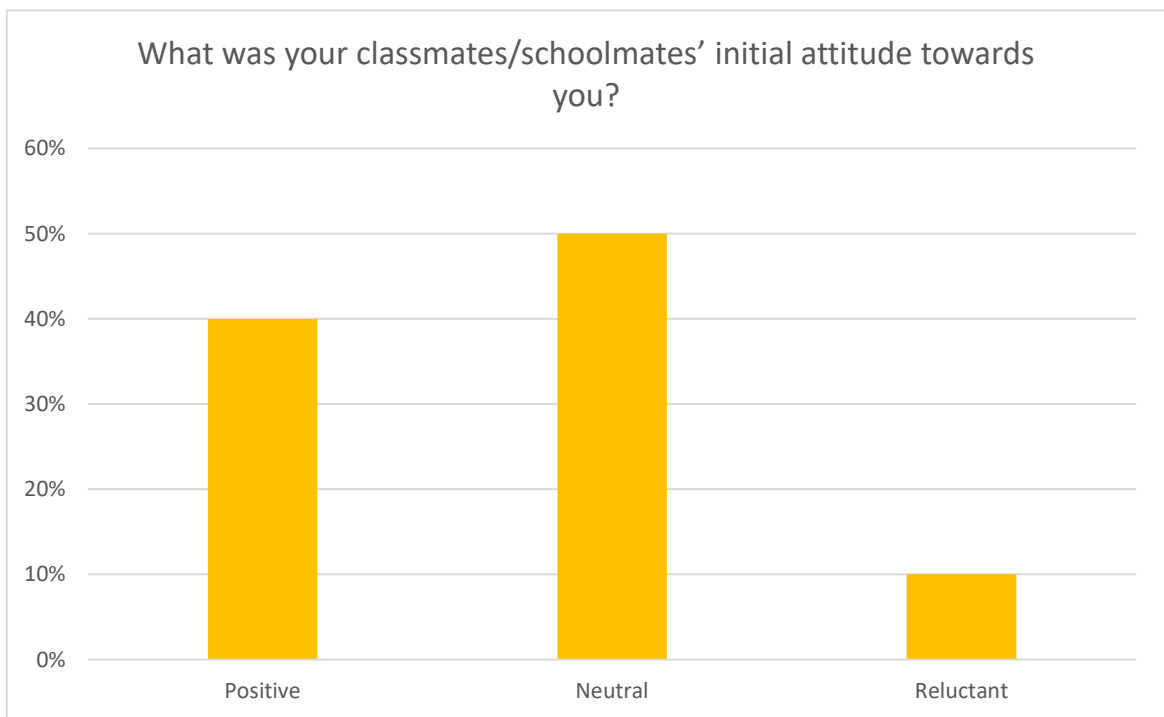
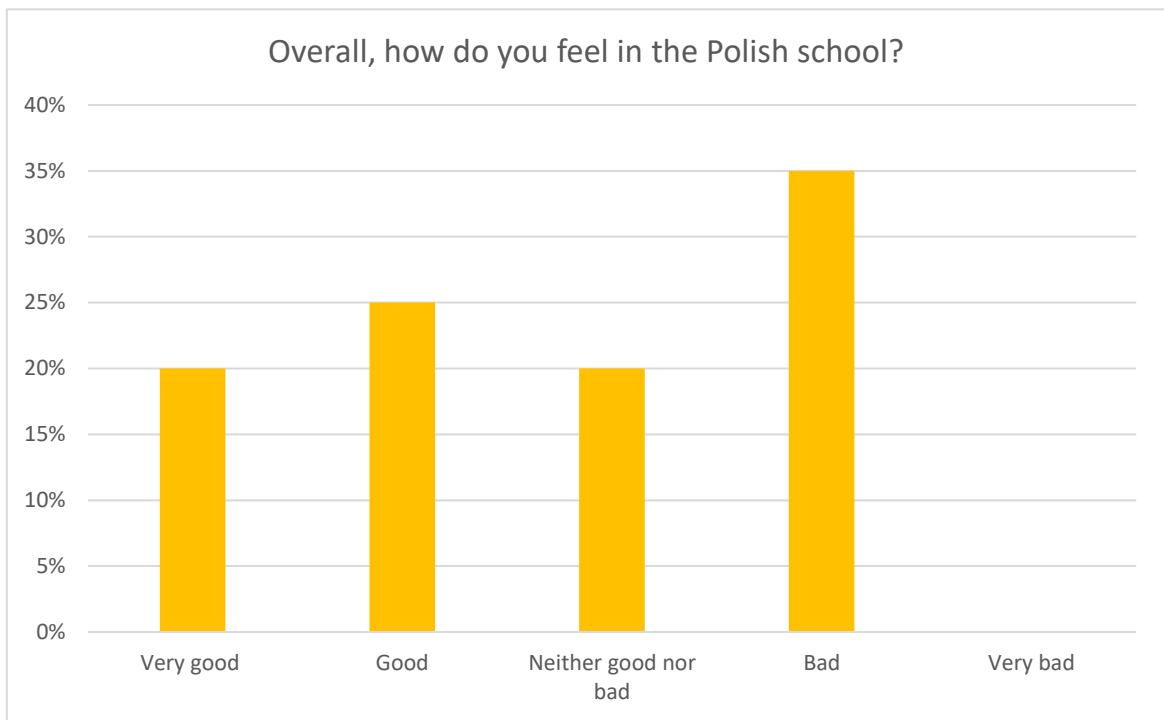
This question was asked to students who responded “Yes” to “In addition to a Polish school, do you also go to a Ukrainian school?”

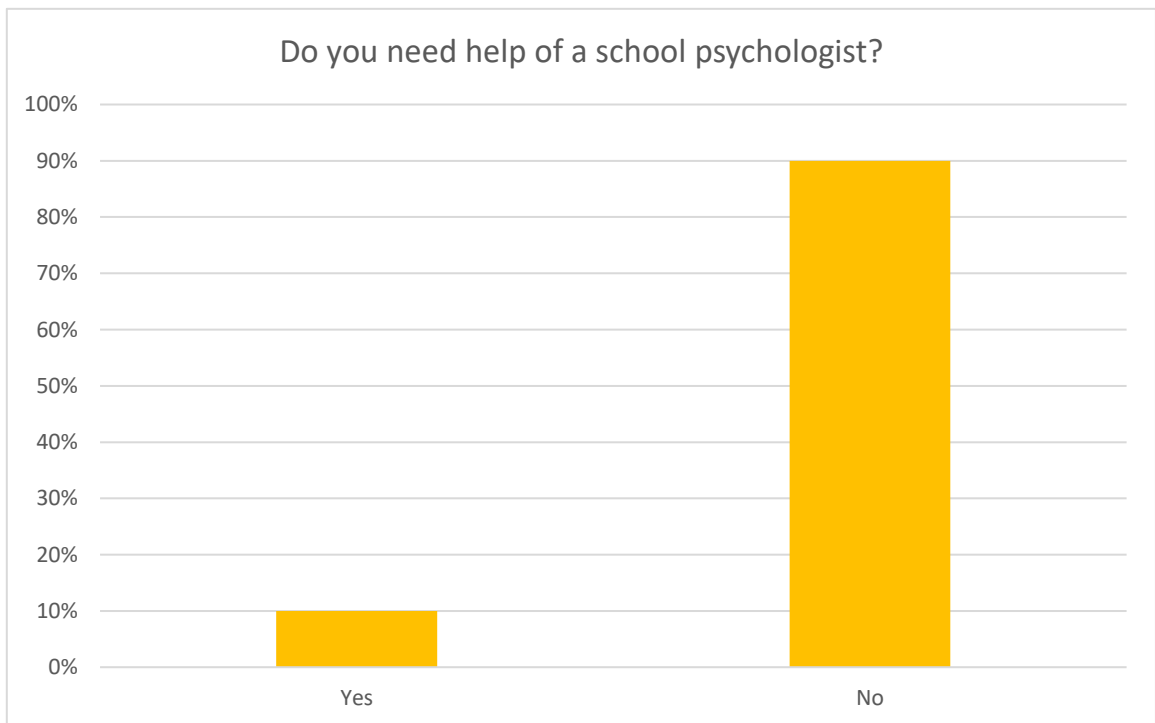
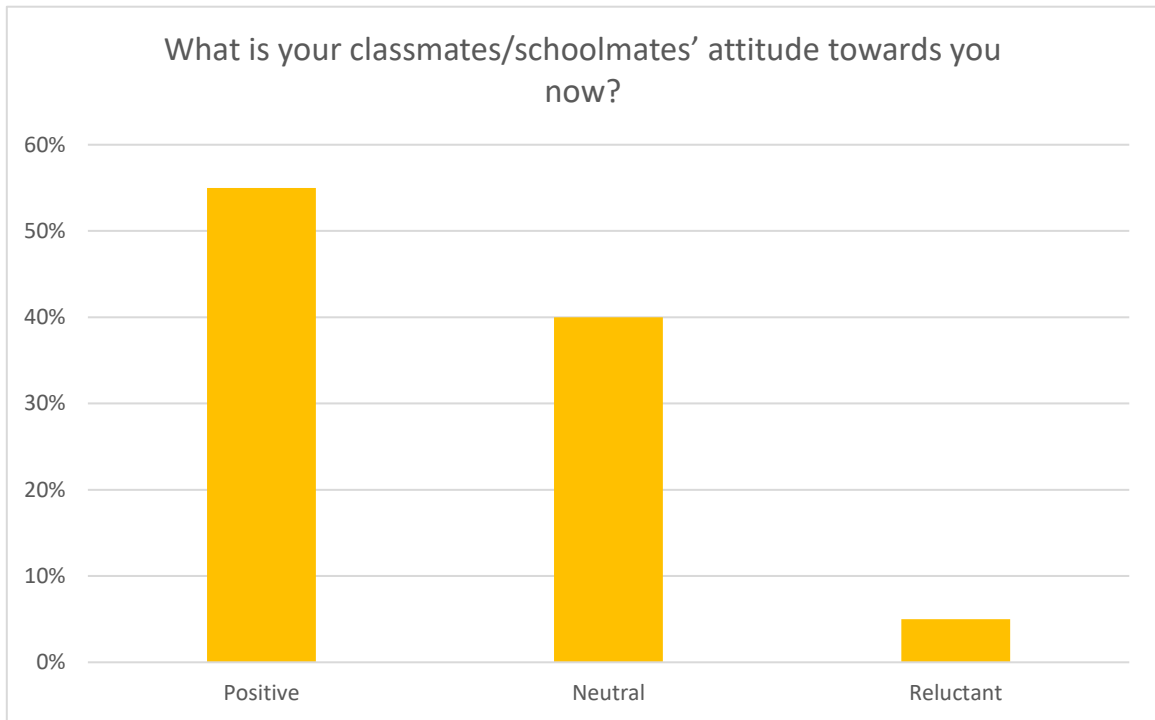


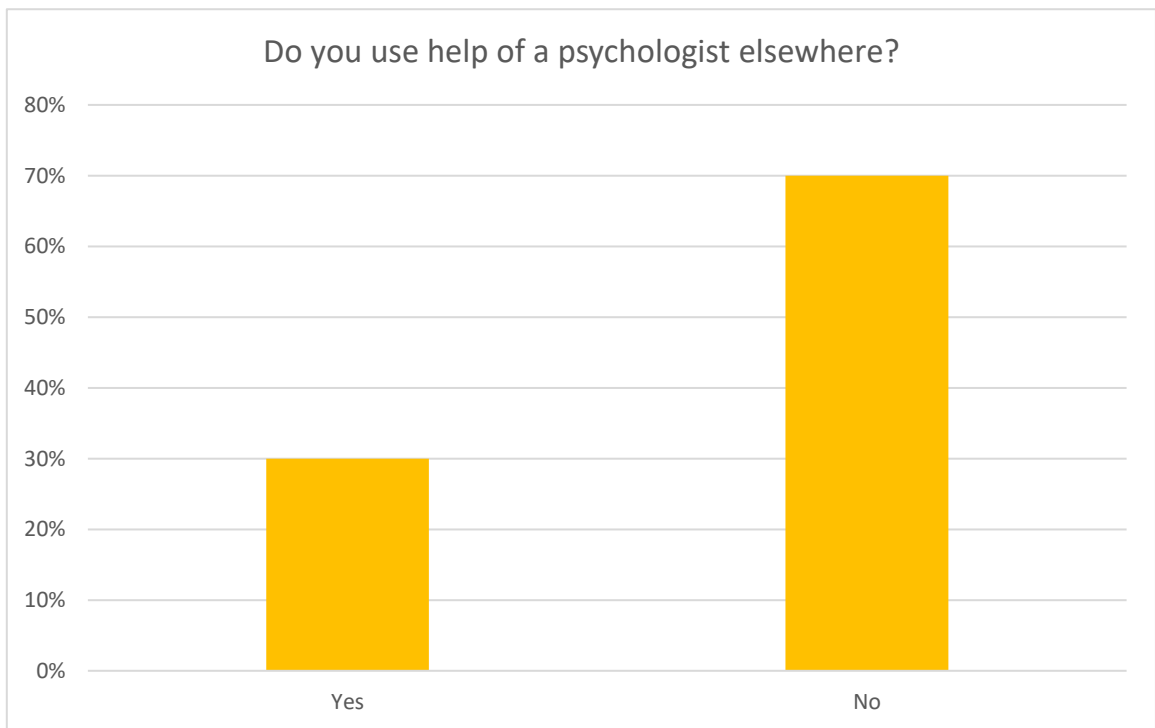
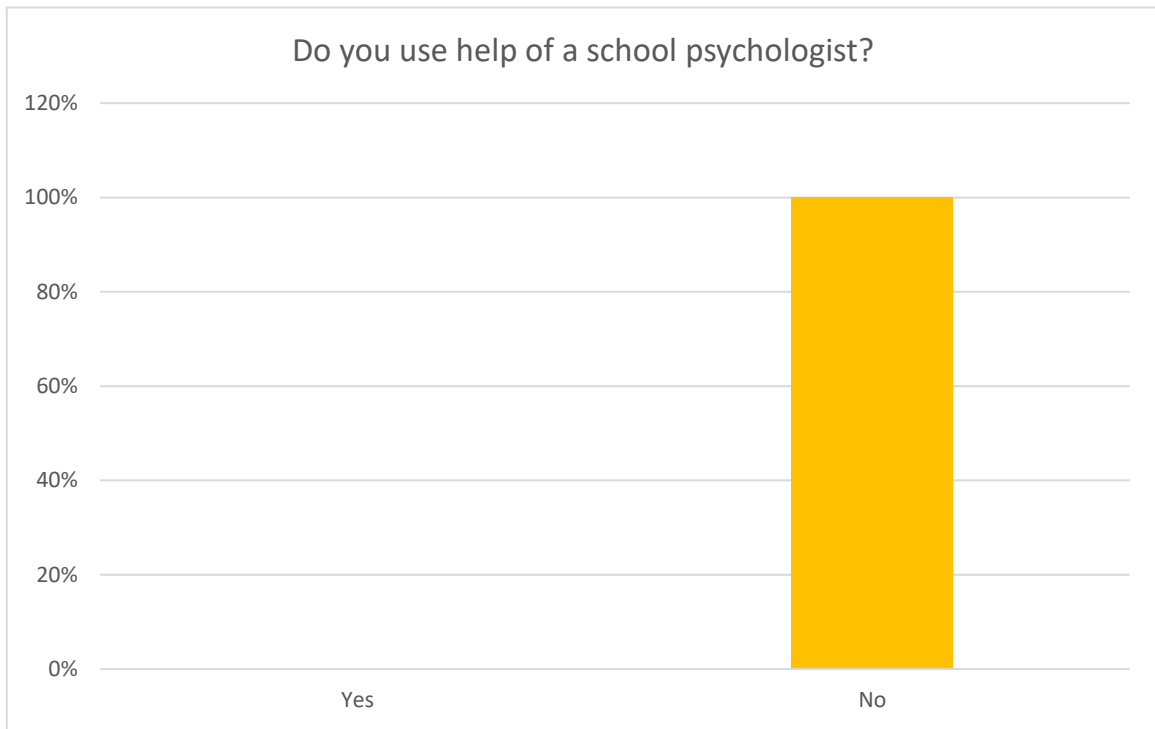


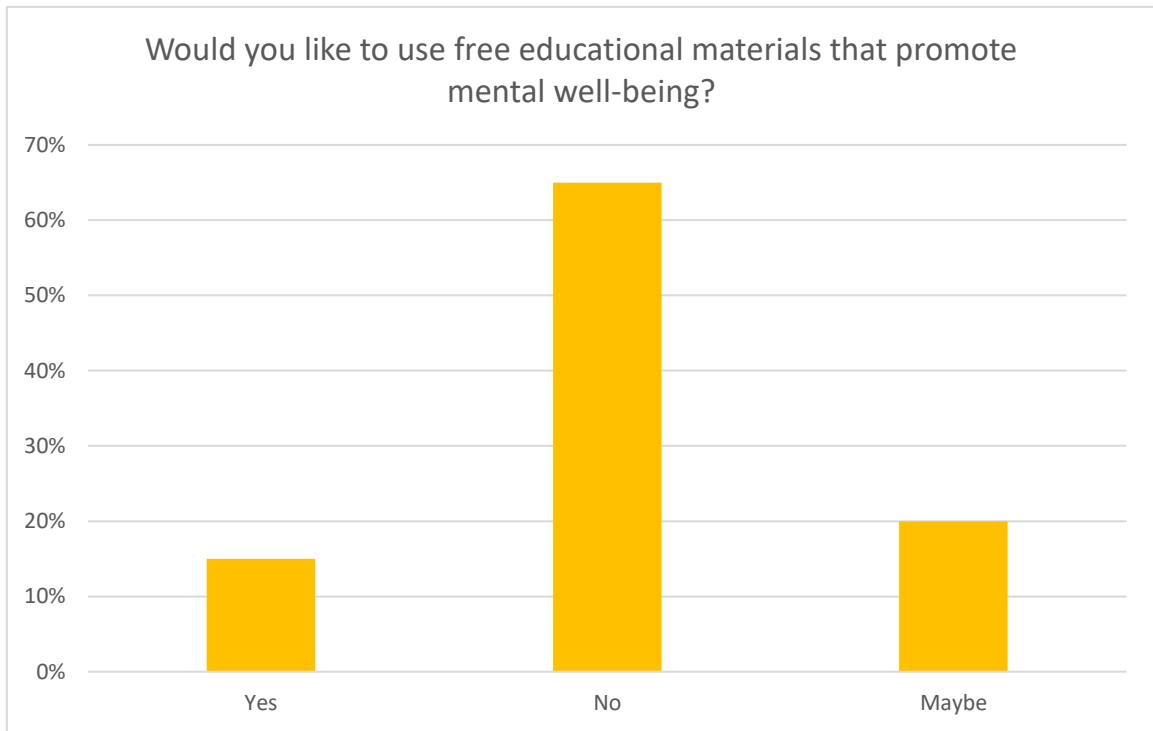


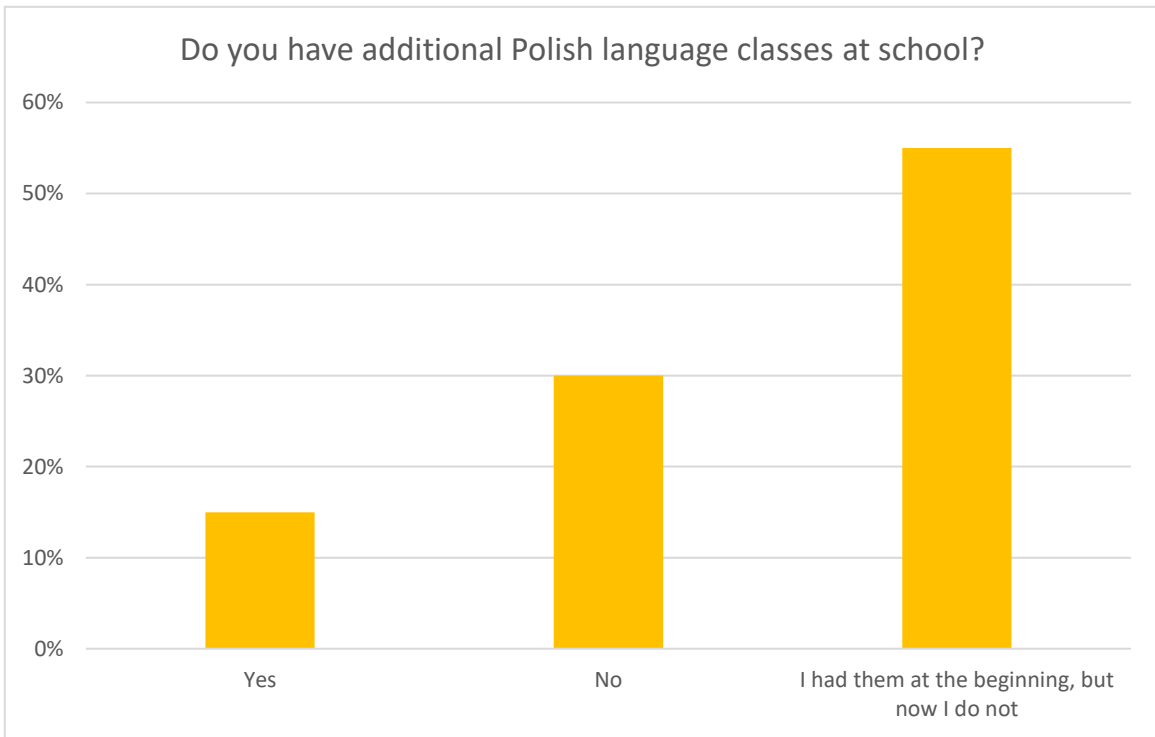
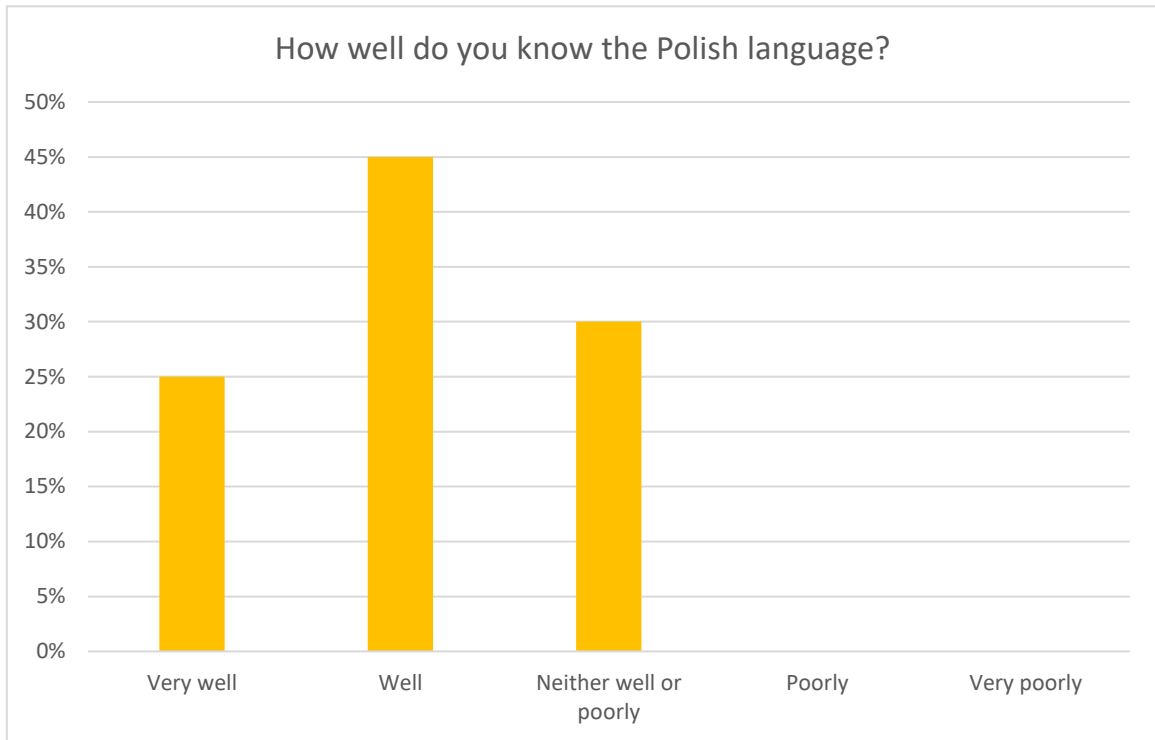


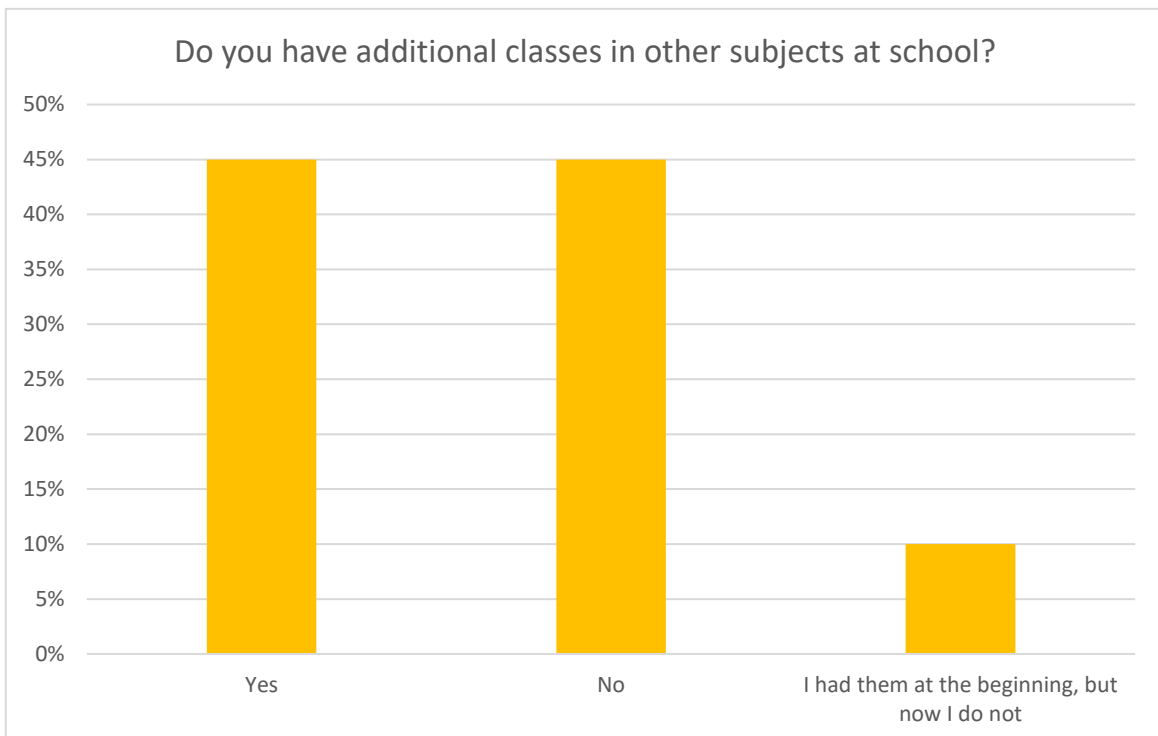


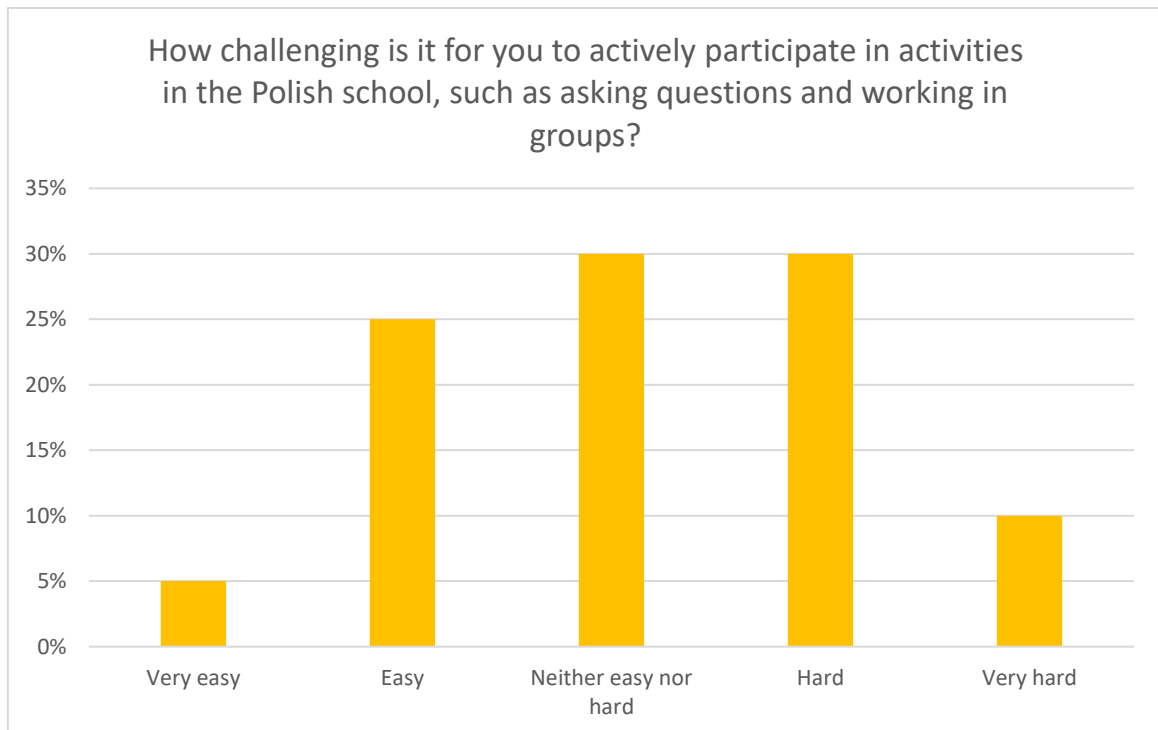
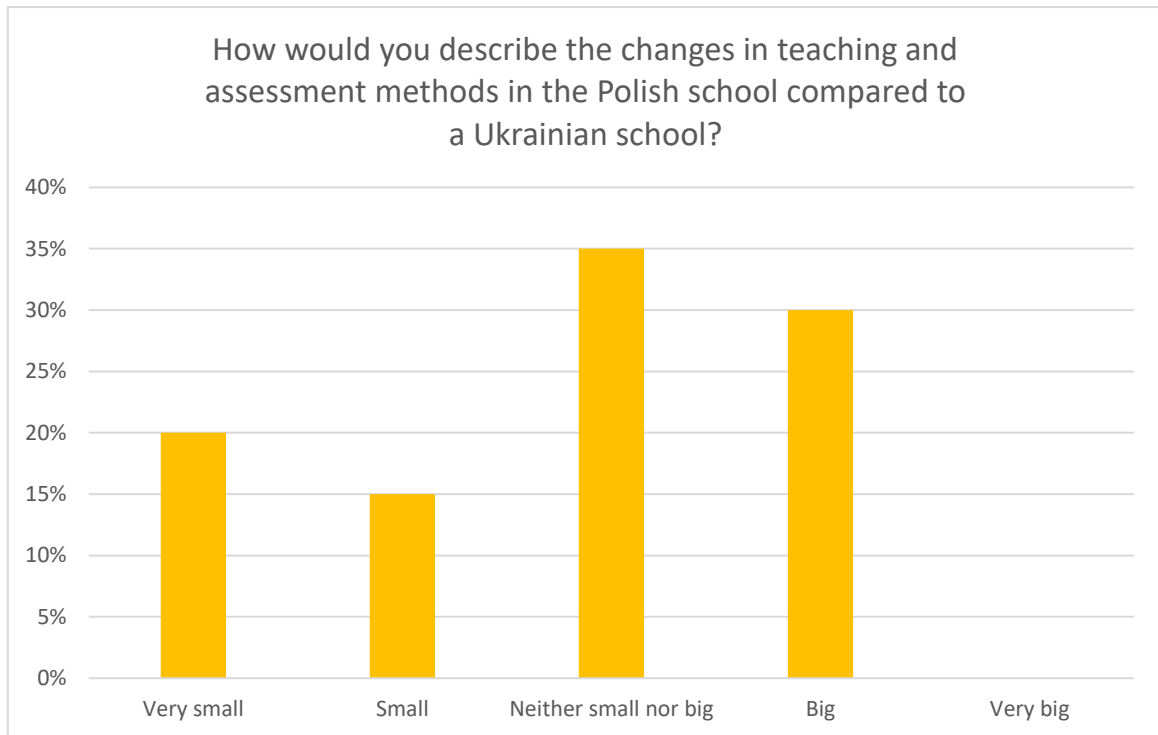


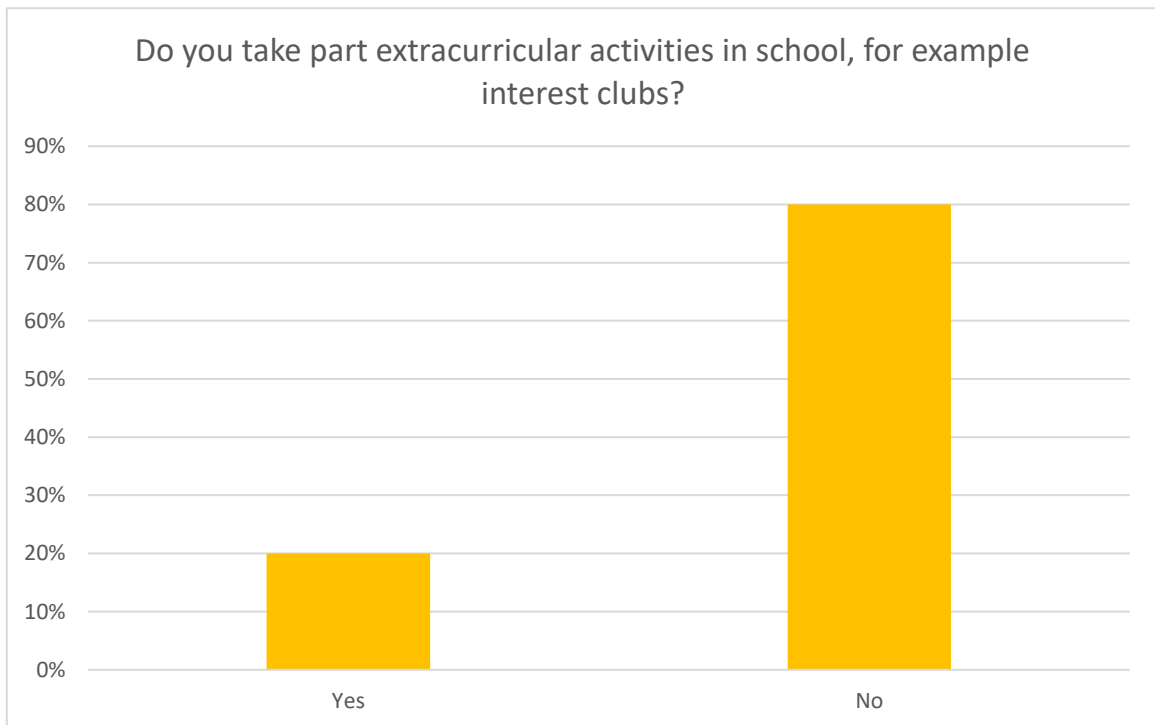
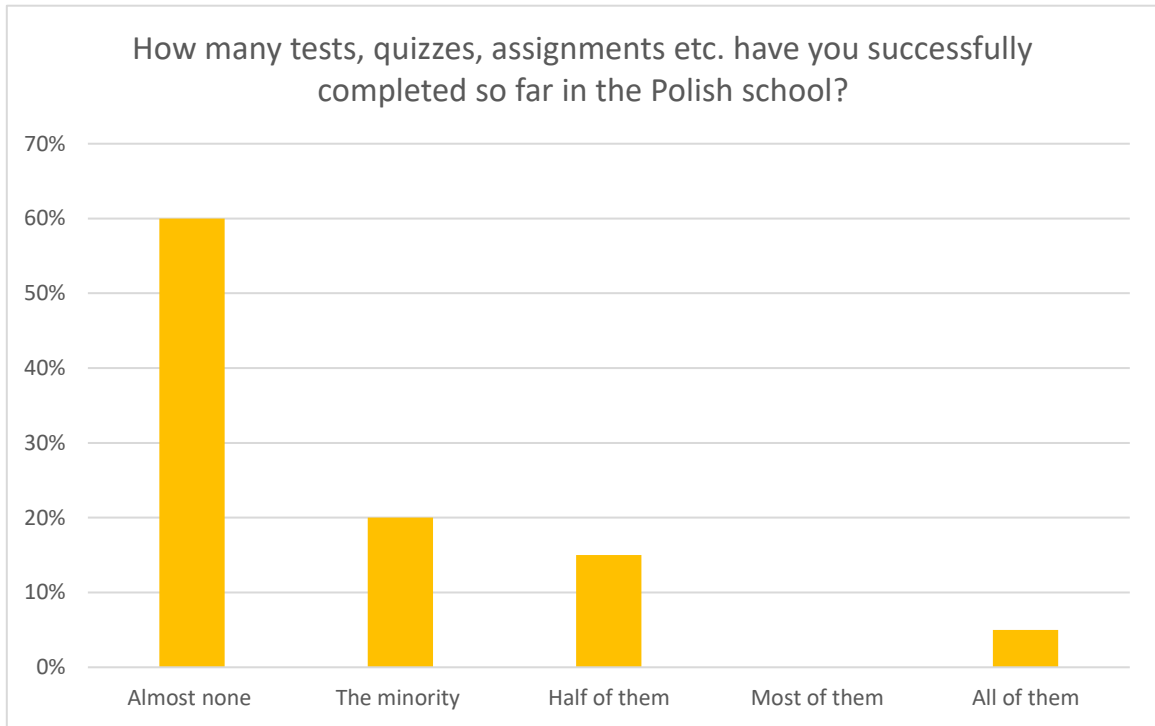


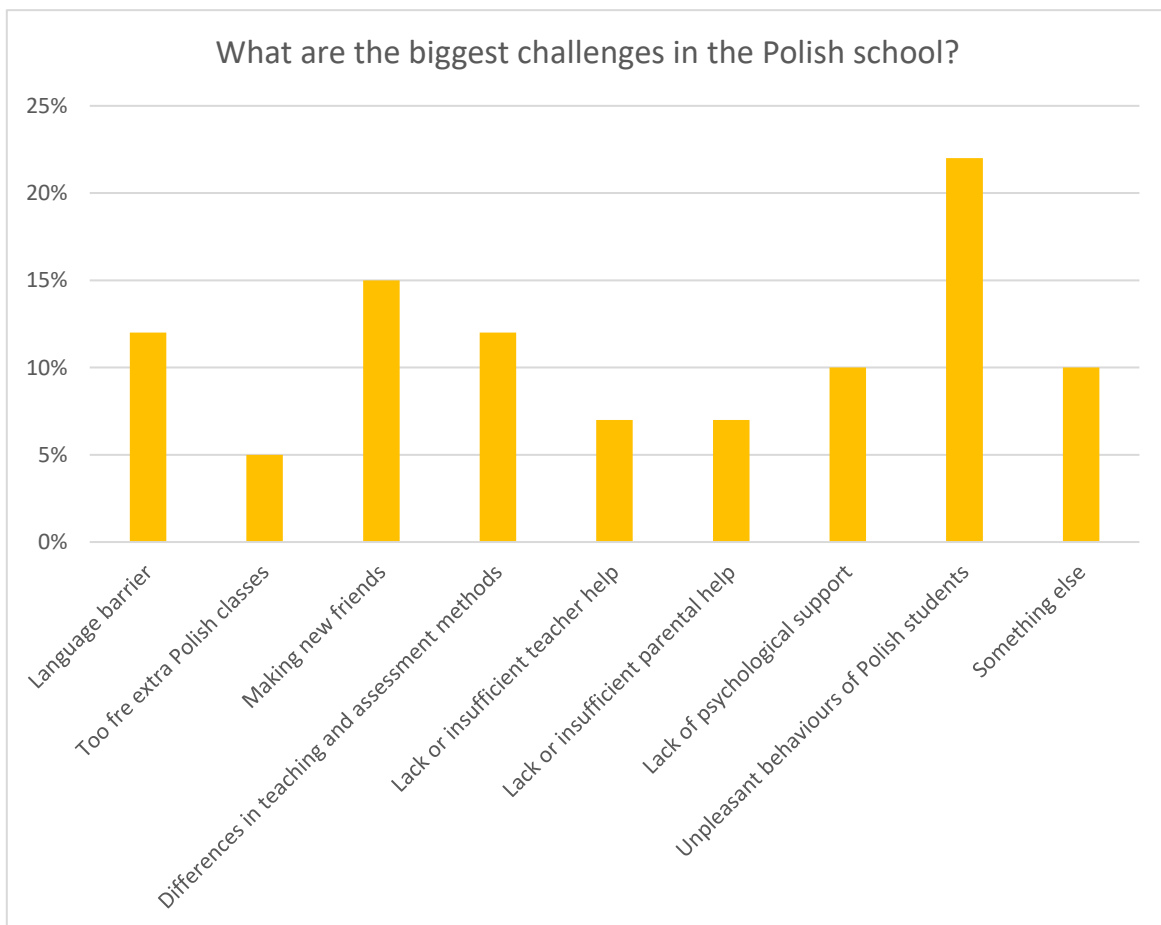
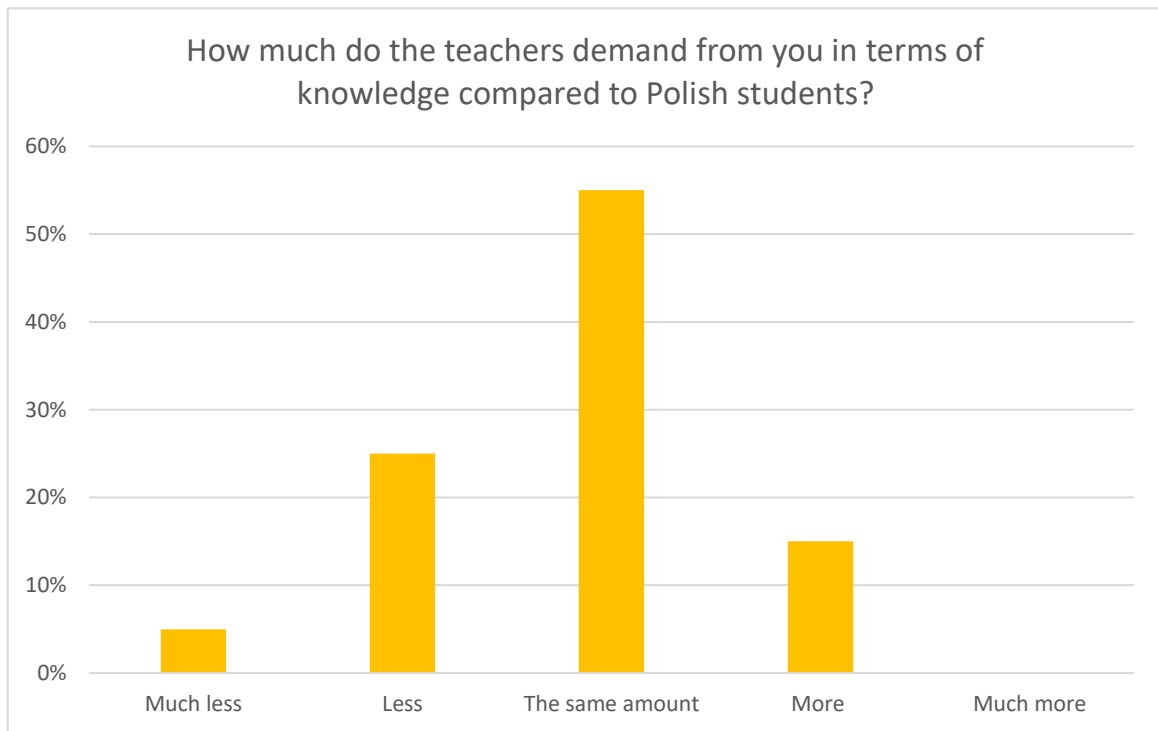


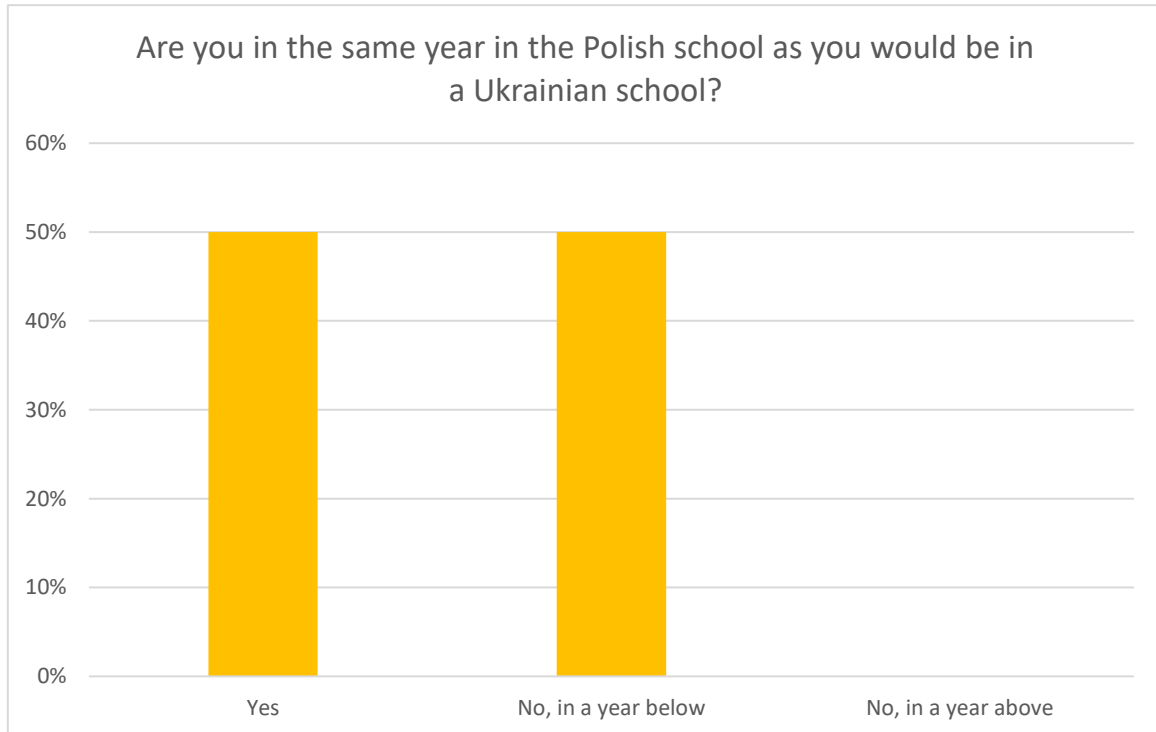
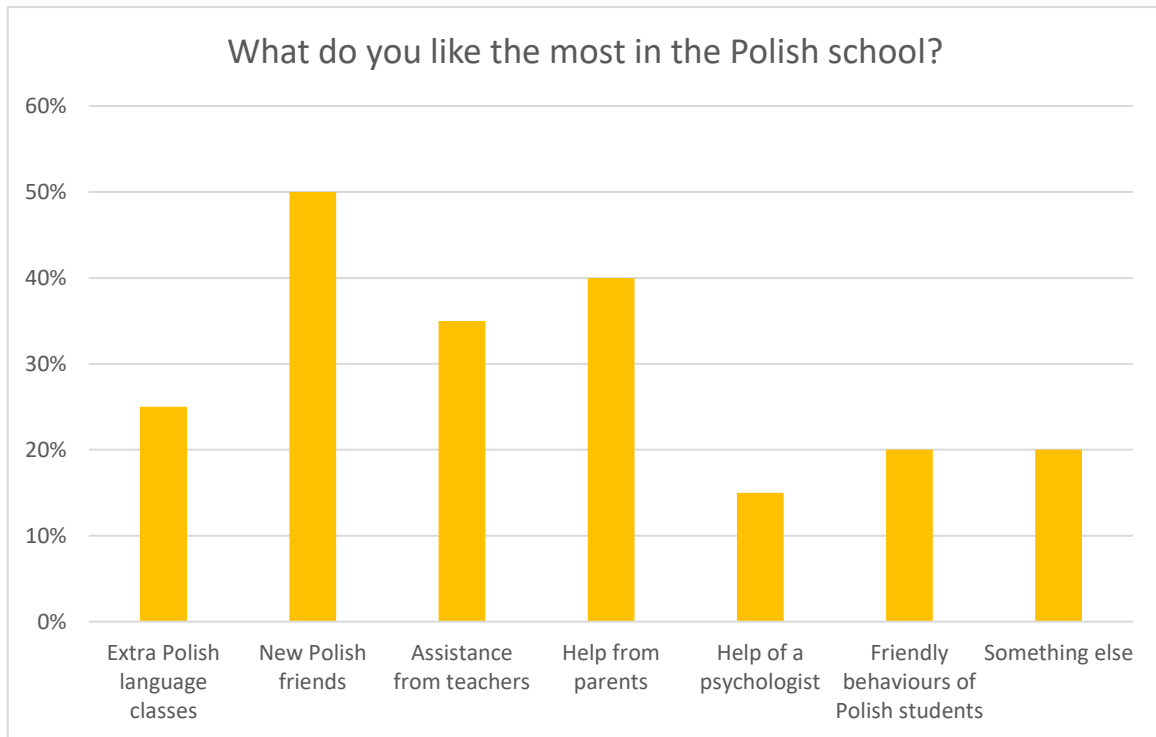


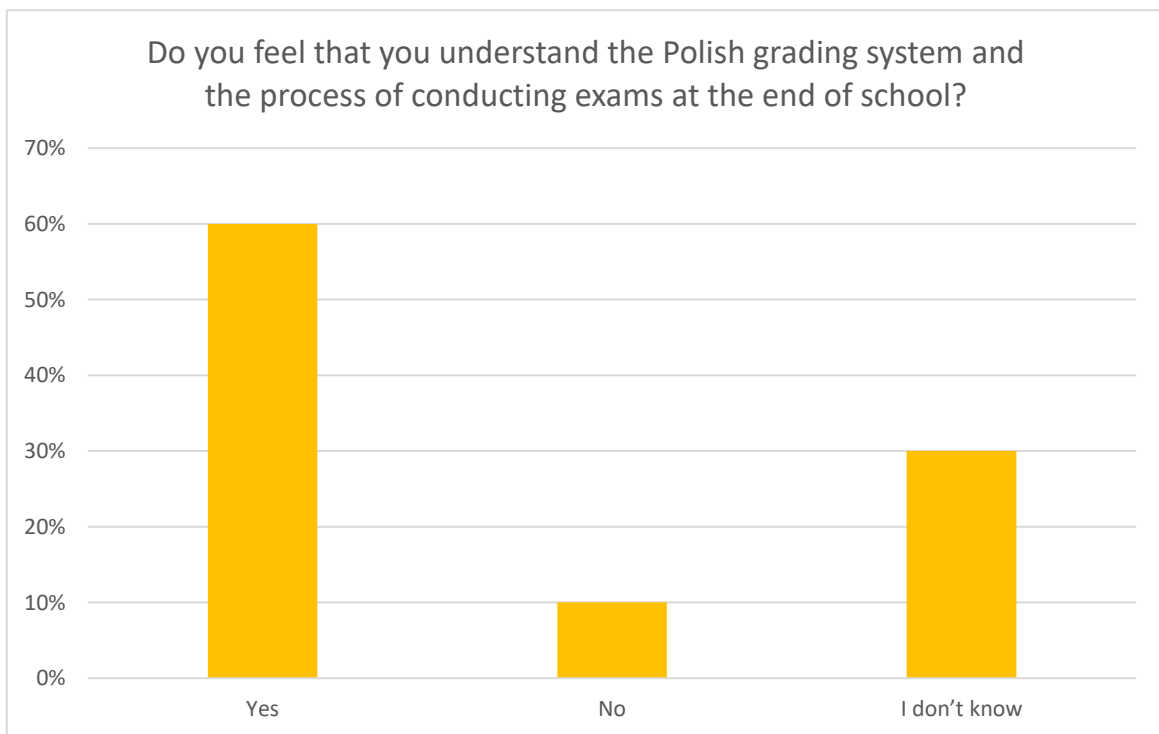
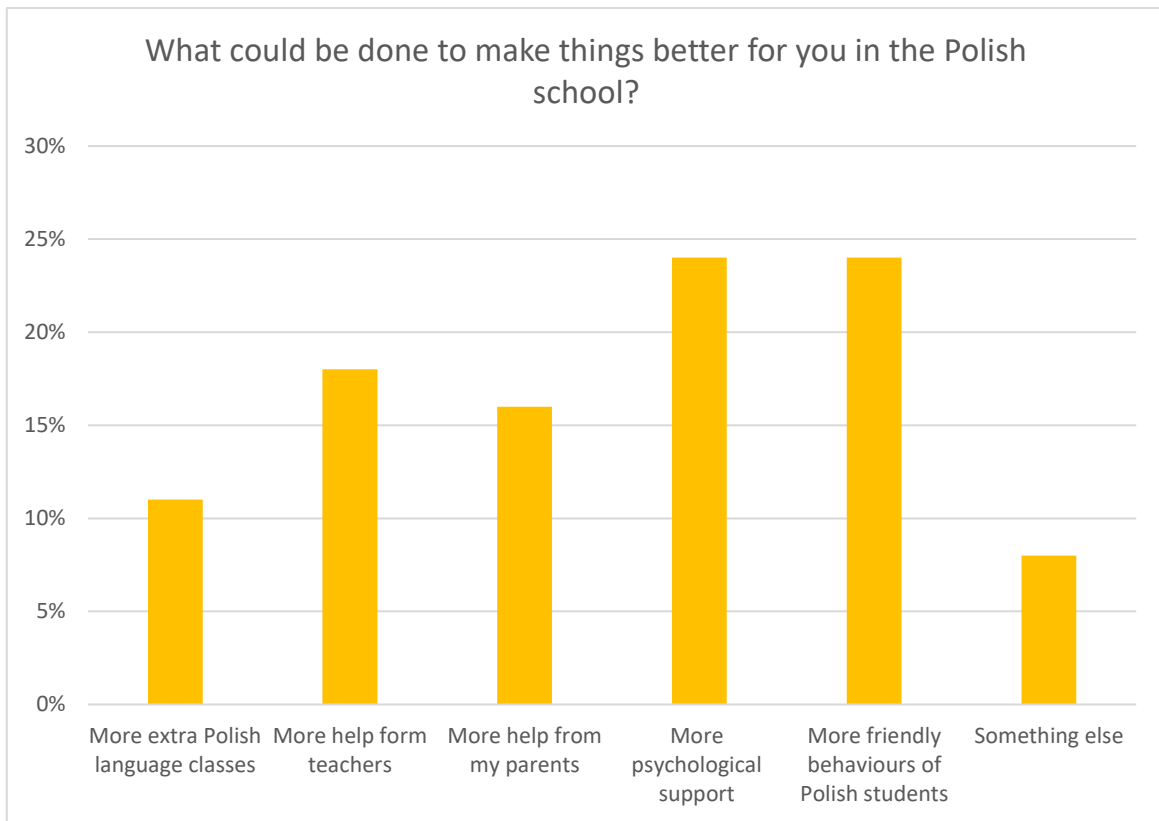




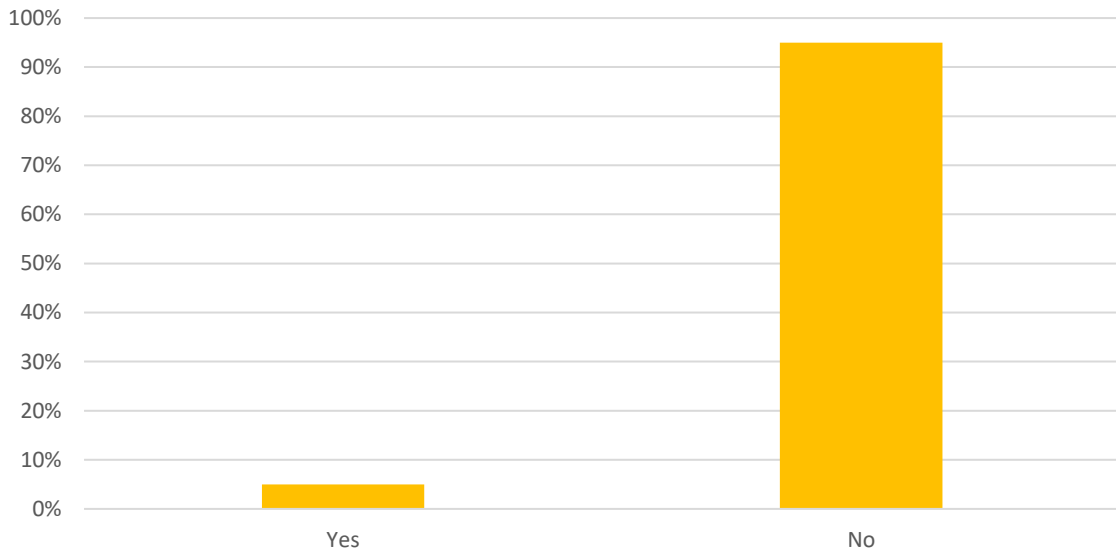




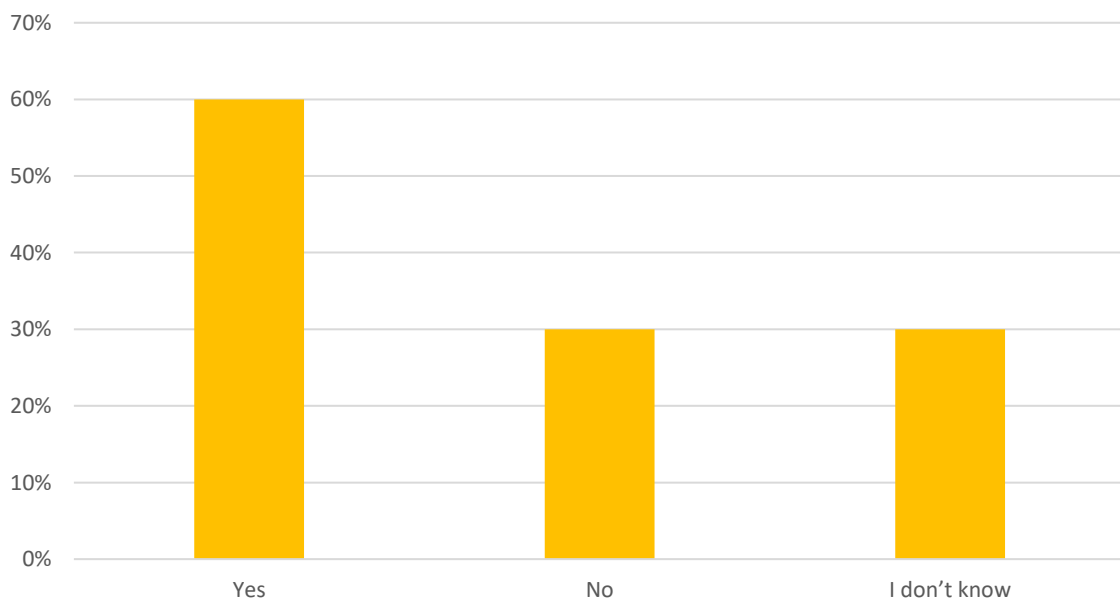


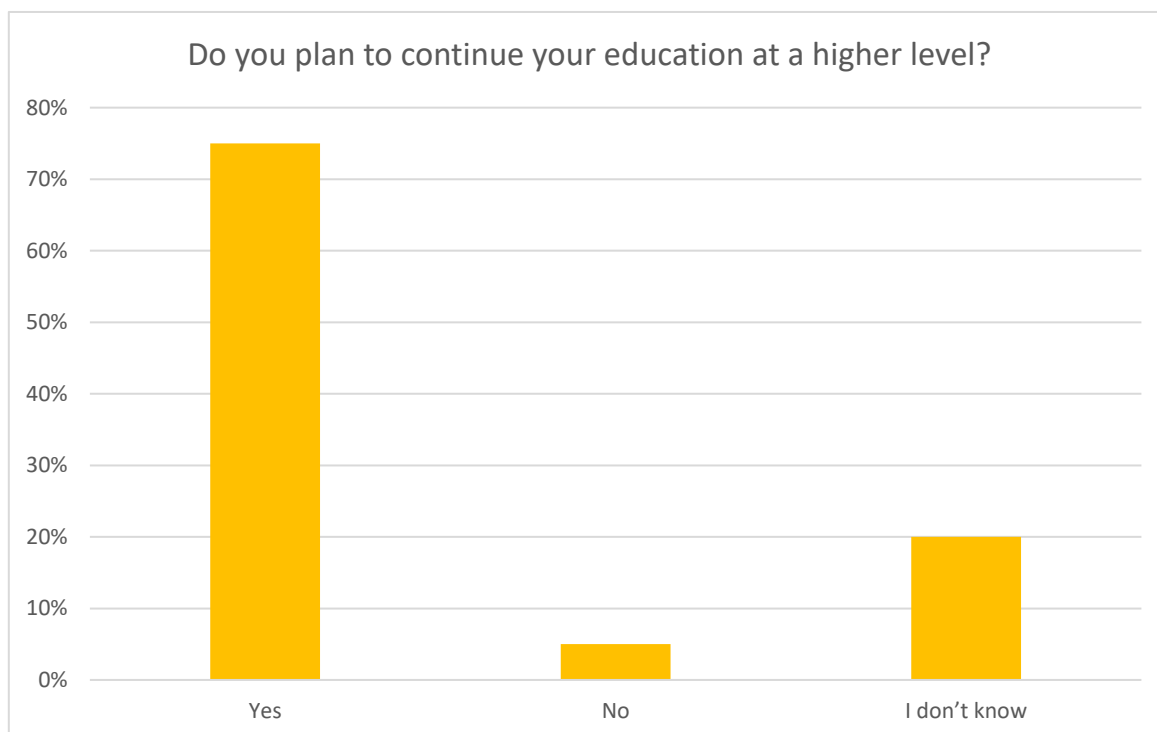
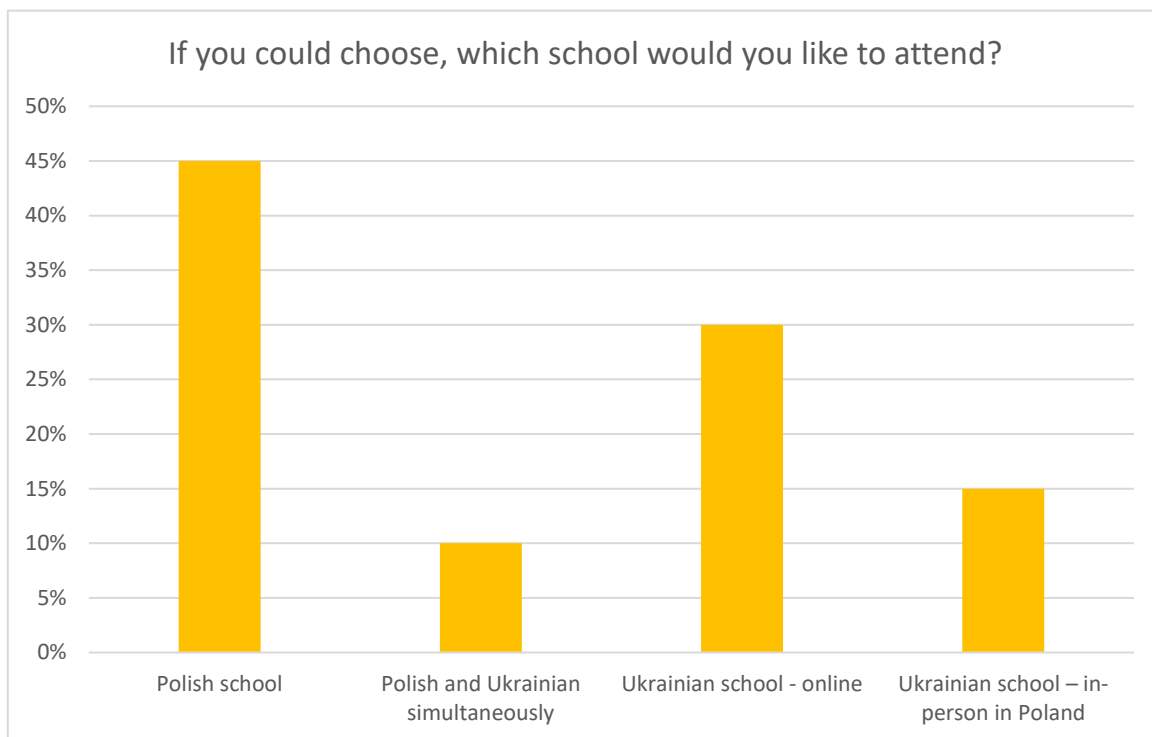


Have you ever experienced any kind of bullying, humiliation, violence, or other negative behaviours from Polish students or teachers?

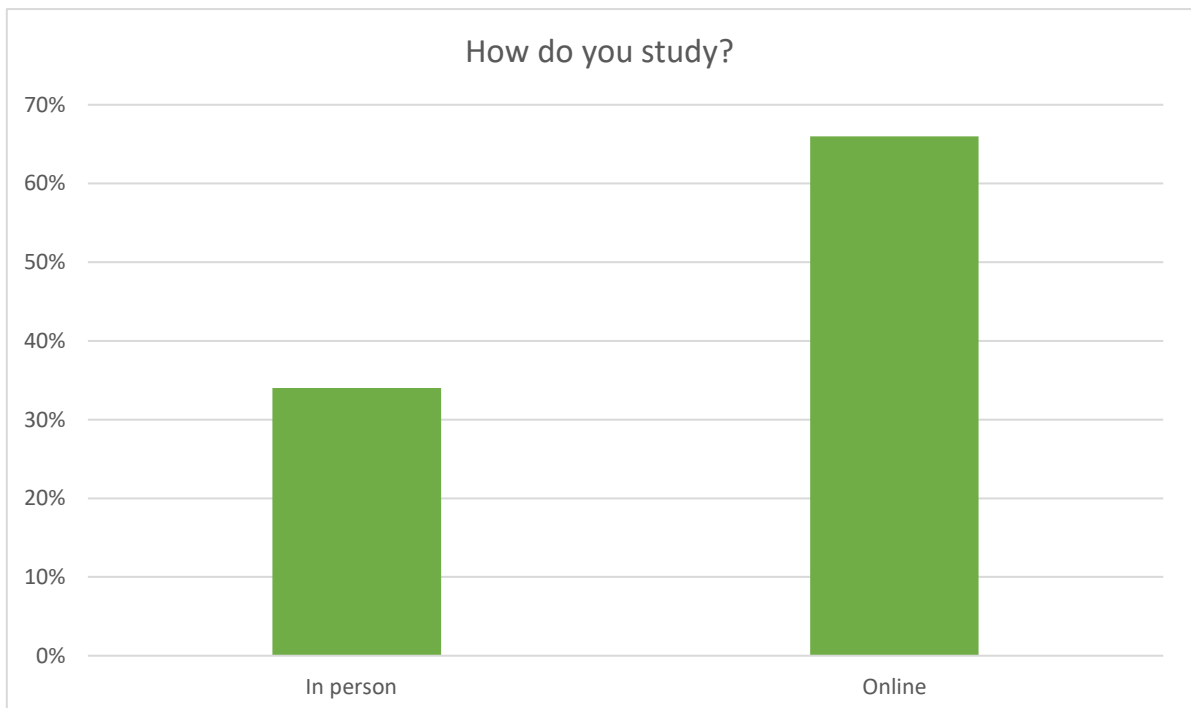
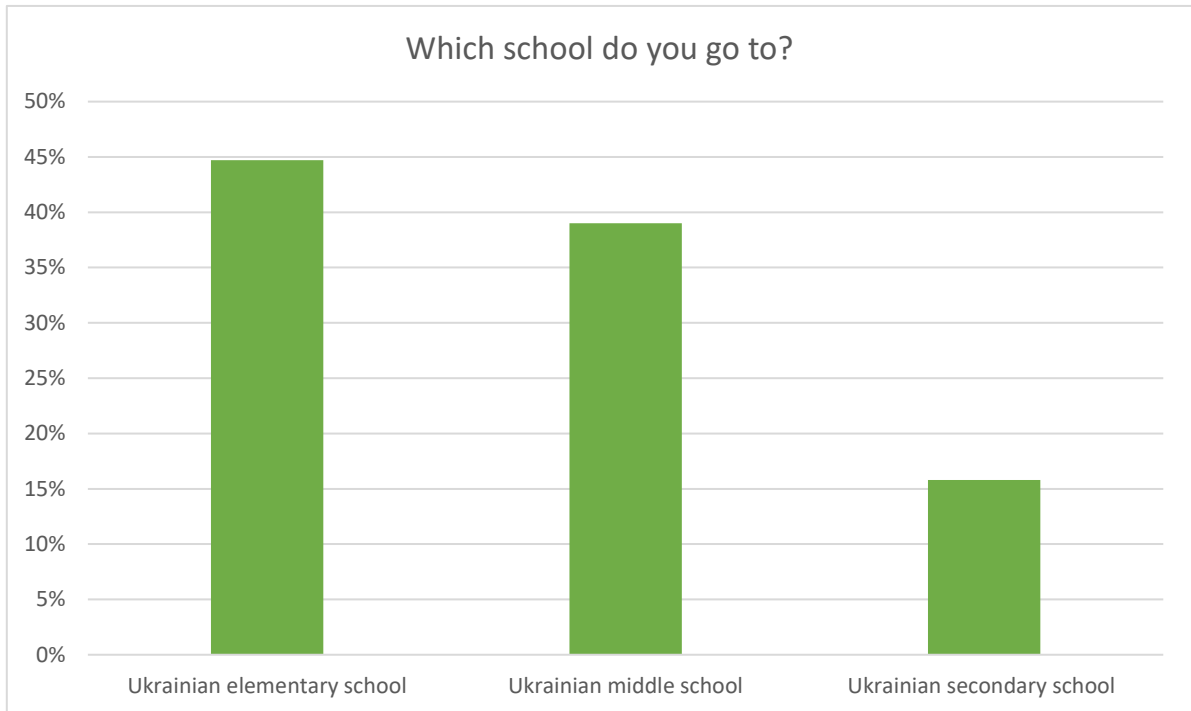


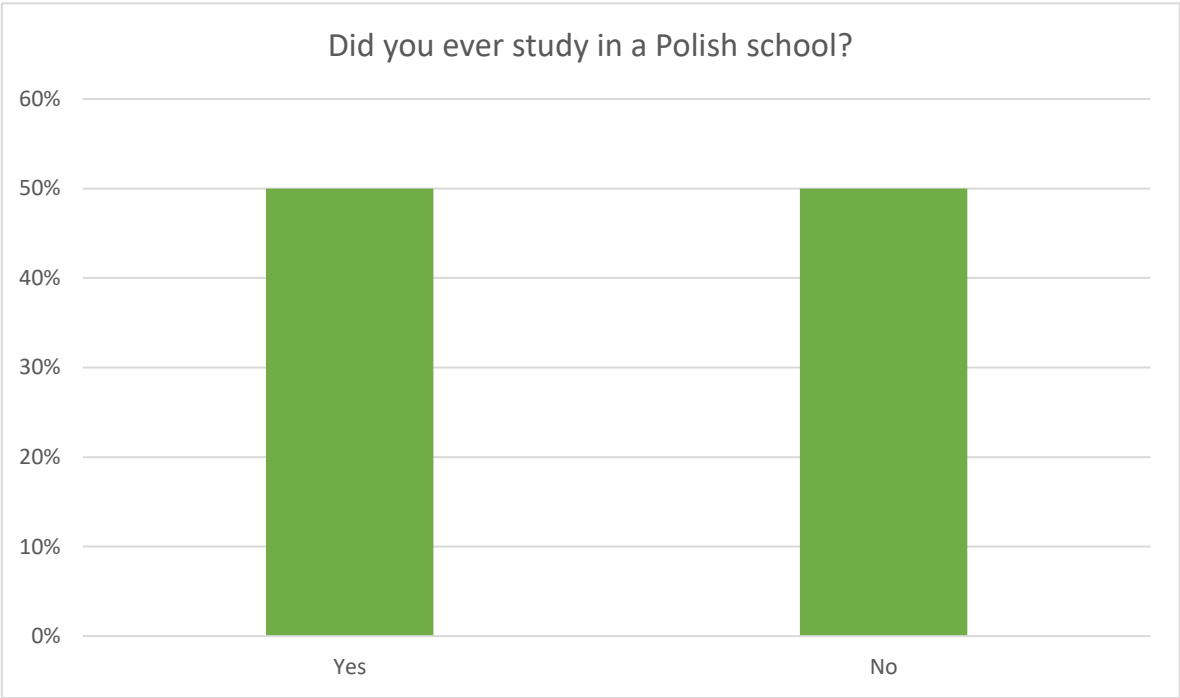
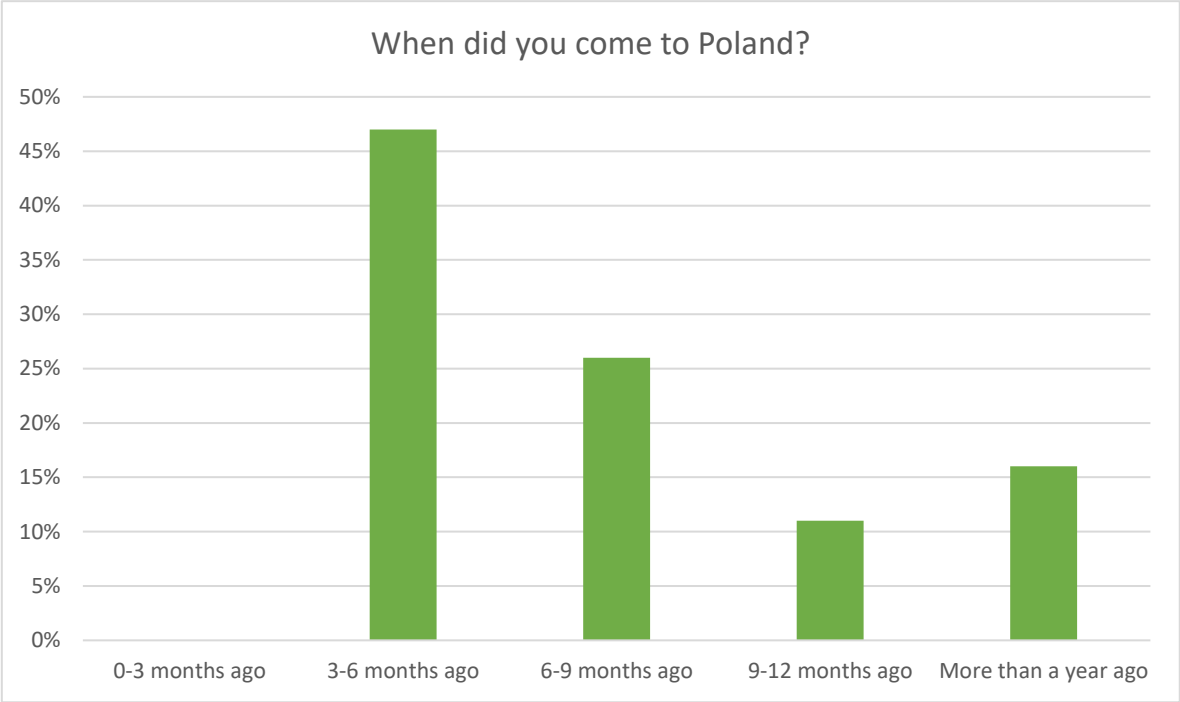
Do you think that studying in a Polish school will prepare you for further education in Poland or abroad?





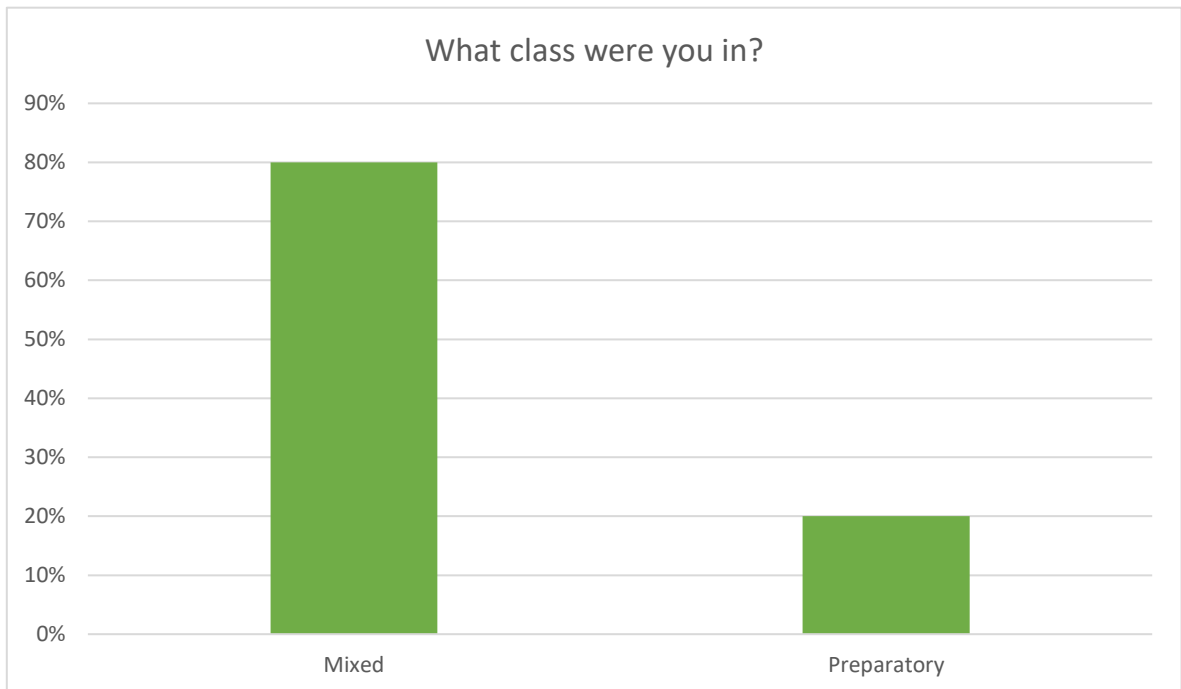
Results in Figures: Insights from Ukrainian Students in Ukrainian Schools



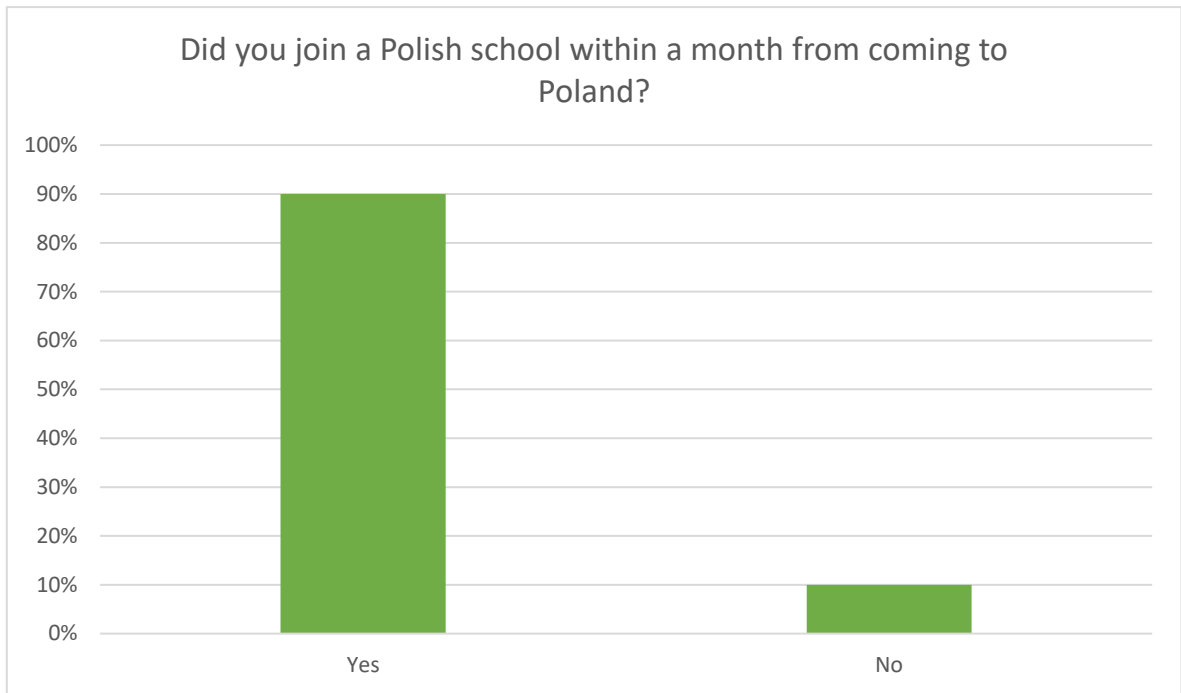




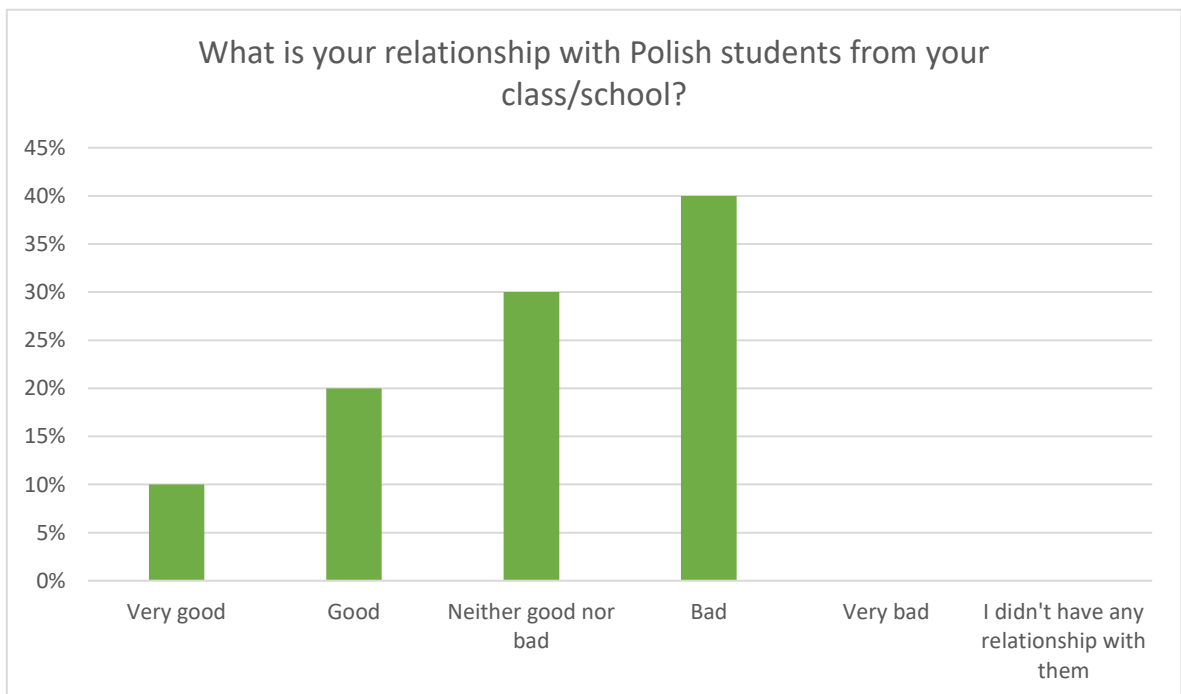
This question was asked to students who responded “Yes” to “Did you ever study in a Polish school?”



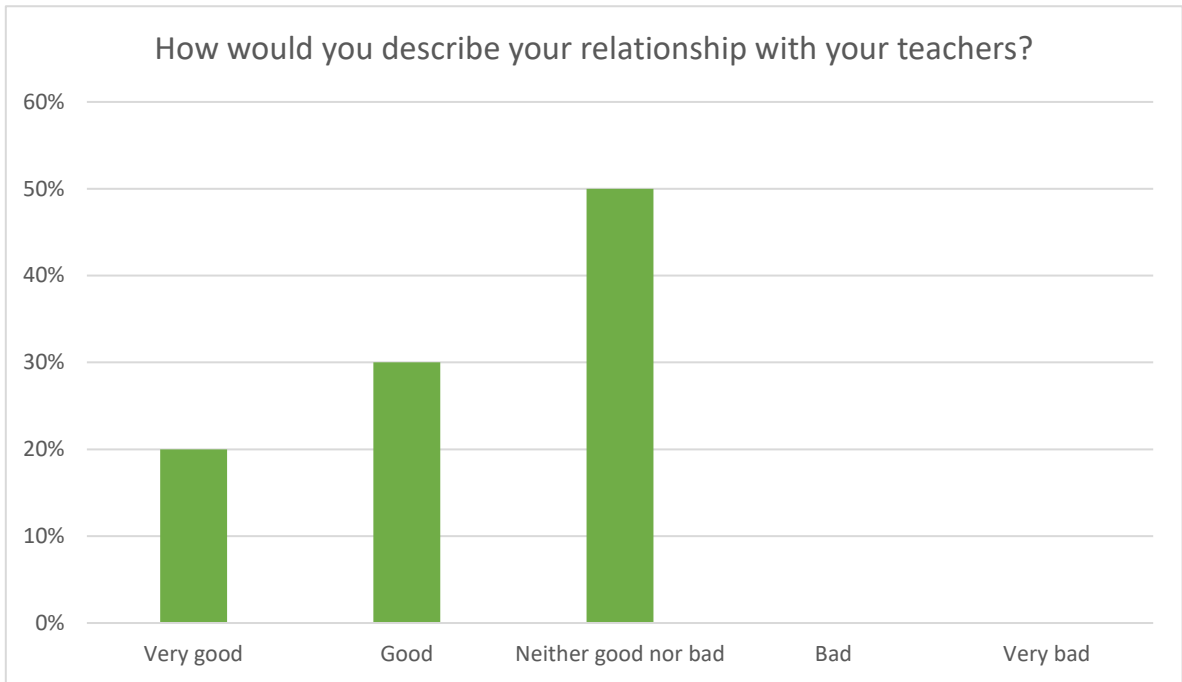
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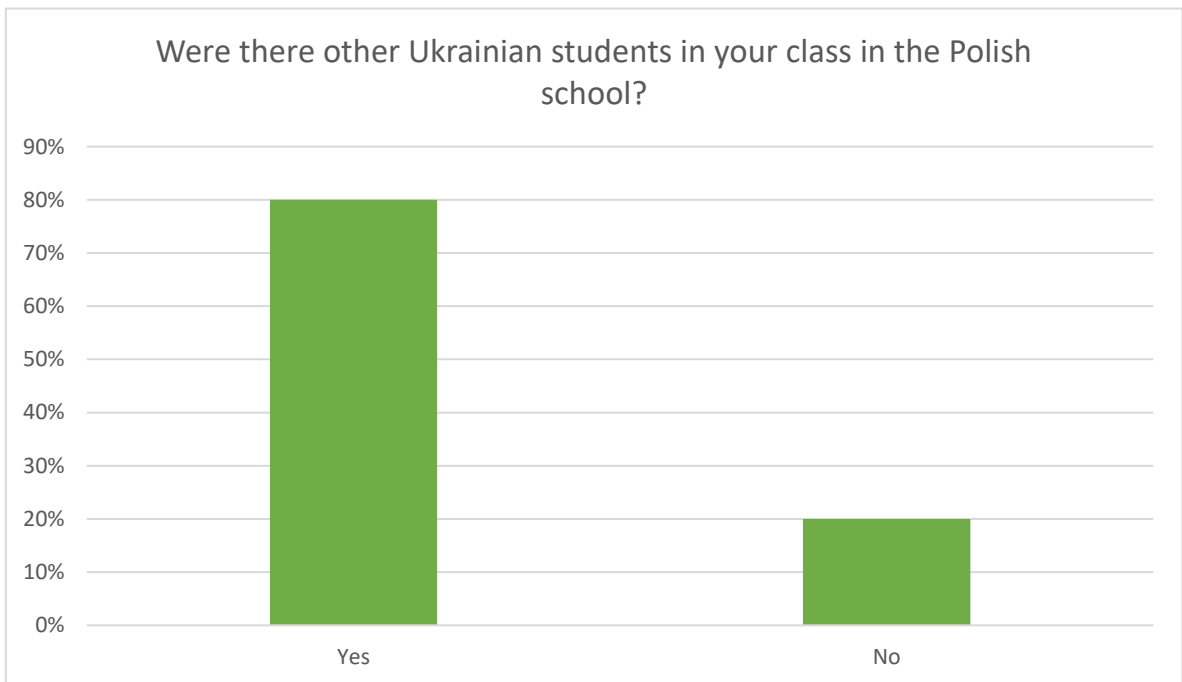
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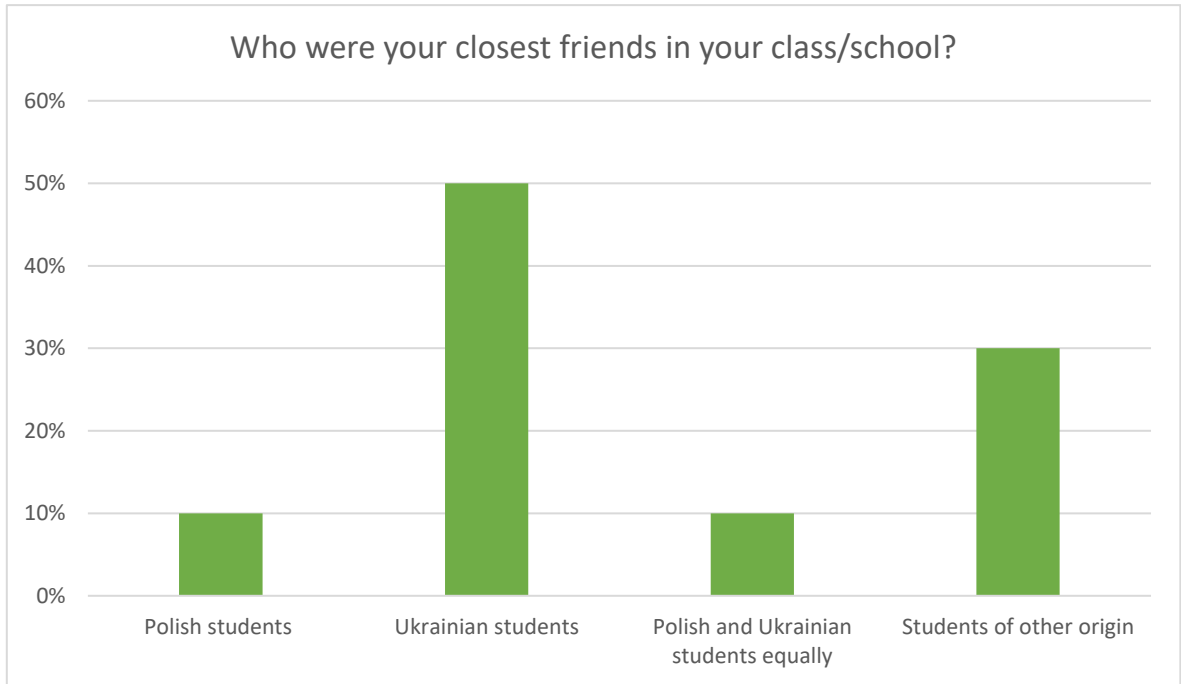
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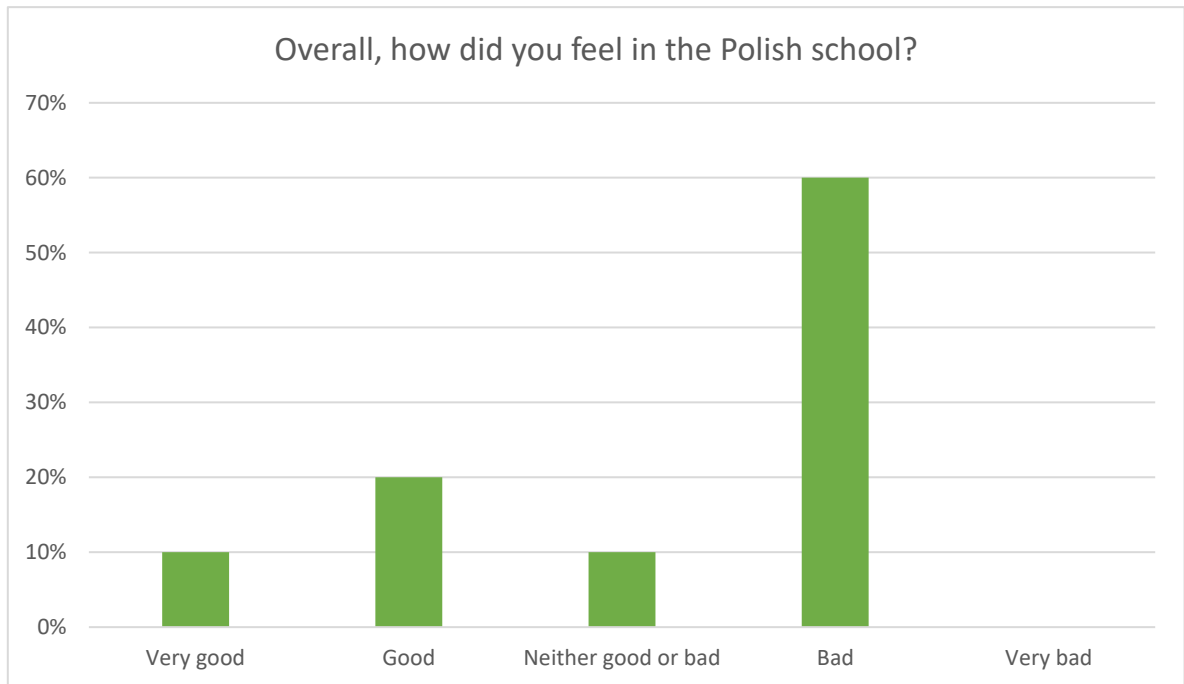
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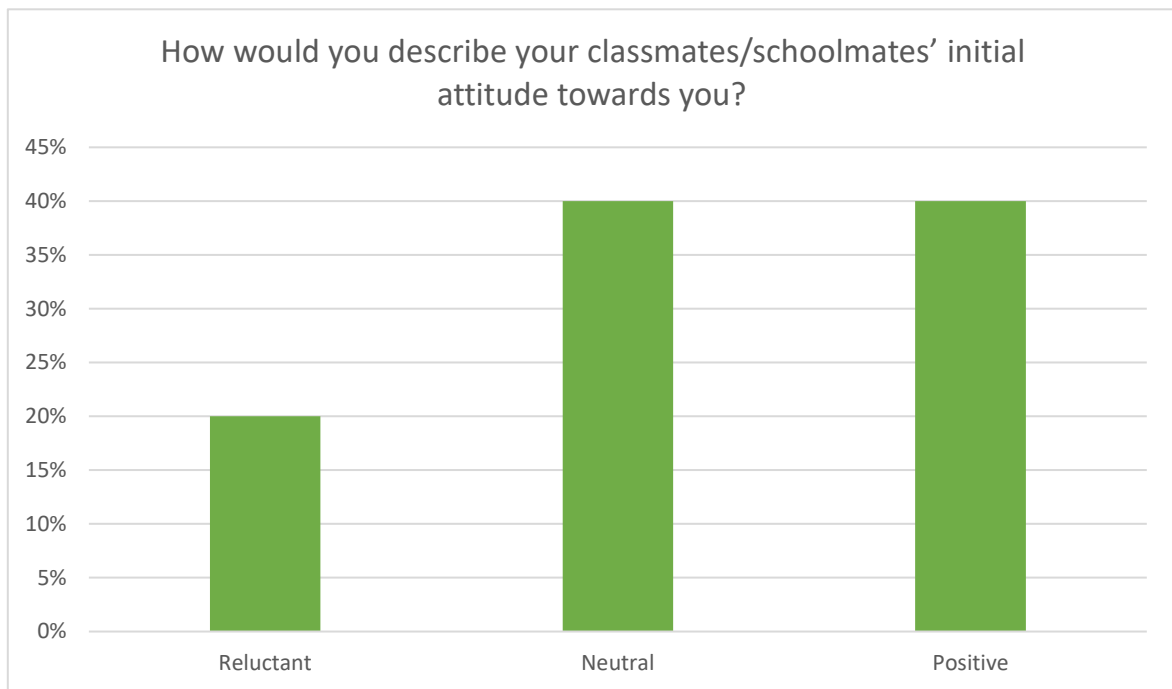
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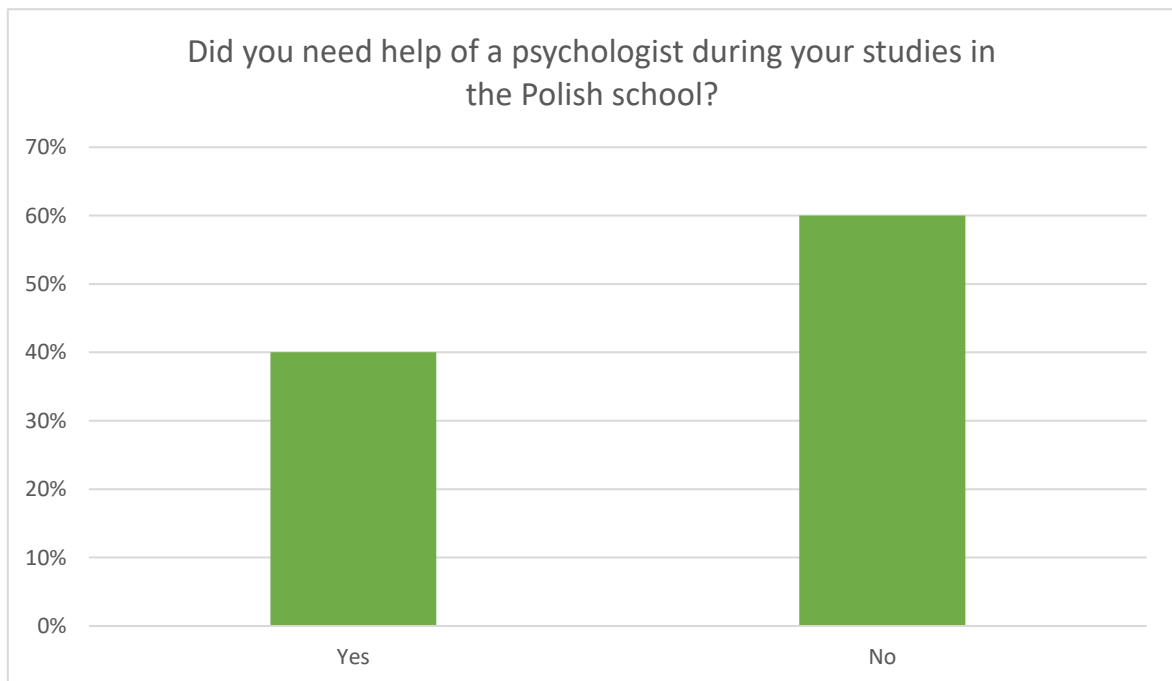
This question was asked to students who responded “Yes” to “Did you ever study in a Polish school?”



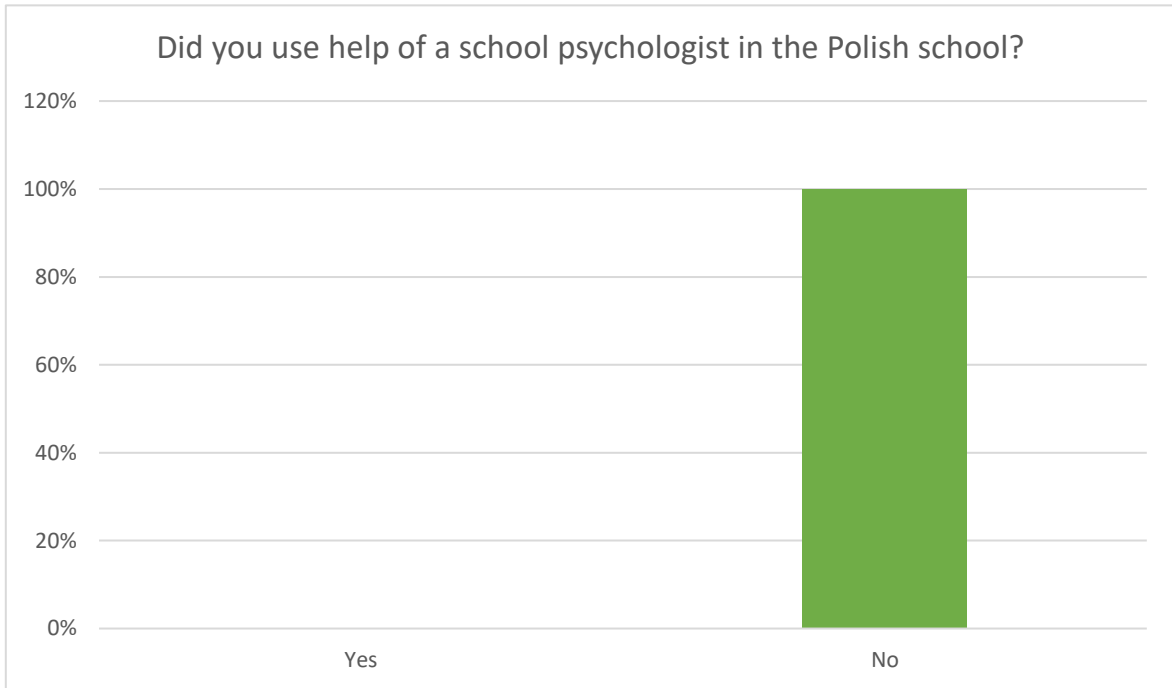
This question was asked to students who responded “Yes” to “Did you ever study in a Polish school?”



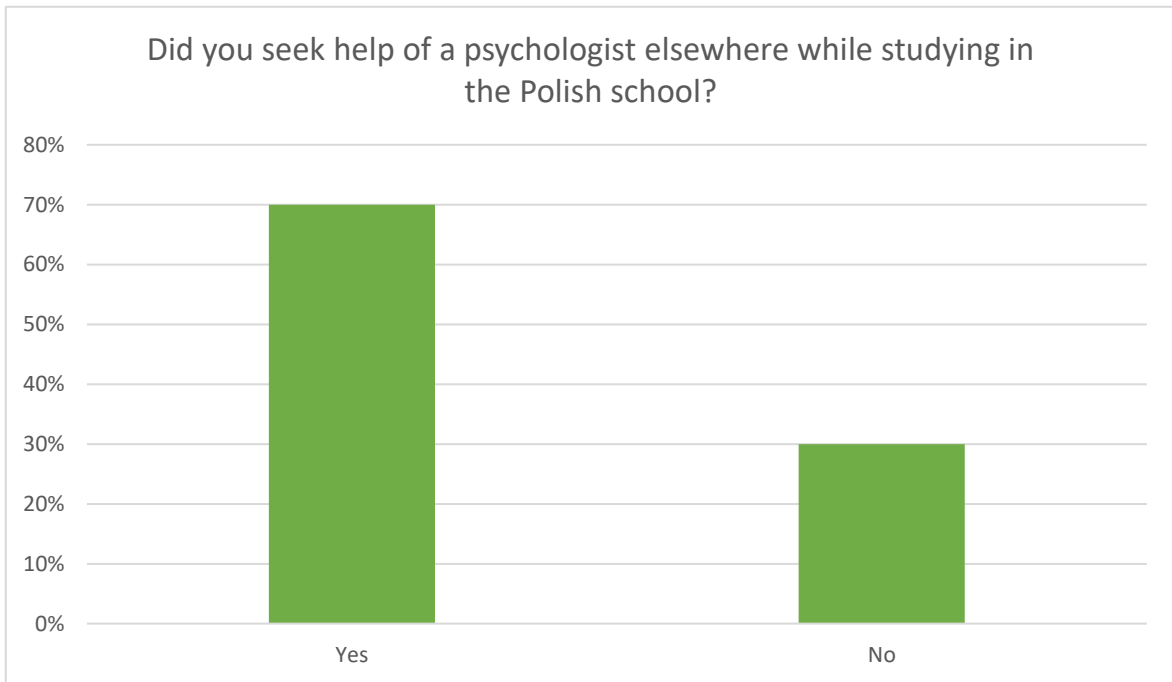
This question was asked to students who responded “Yes” to “Did you ever study in a Polish school?”



This question was asked to students who responded “Yes” to “Did you ever study in a Polish school?”



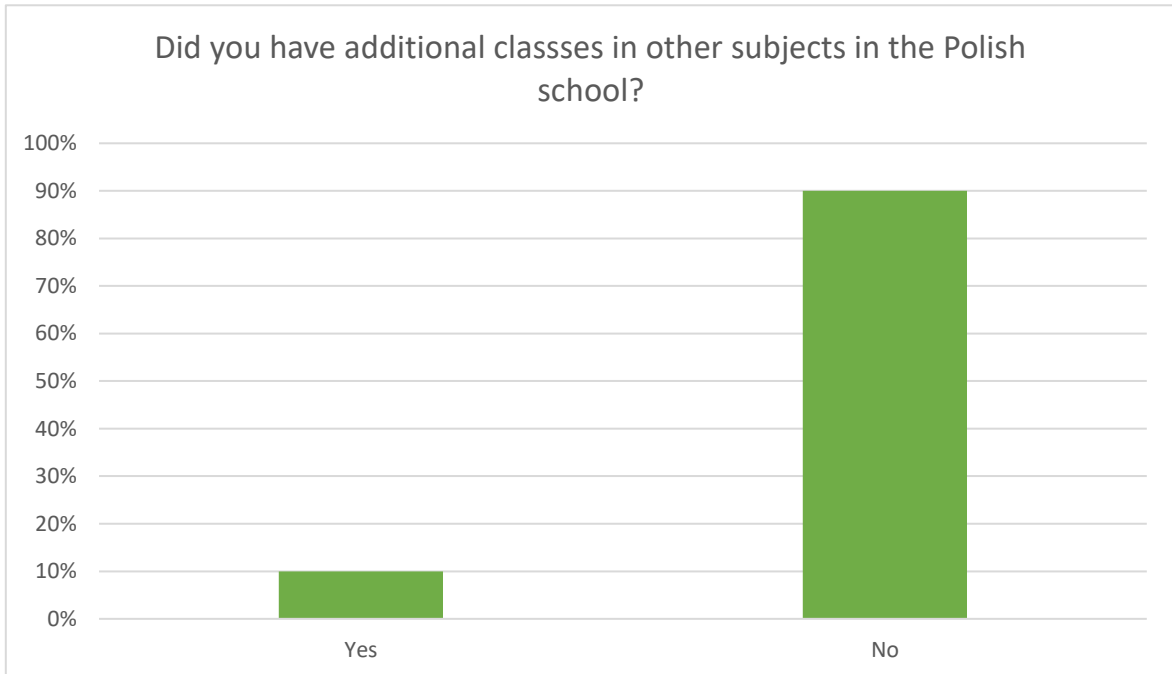
This question was asked to students who responded “Yes” to “Did you ever study in a Polish school?”



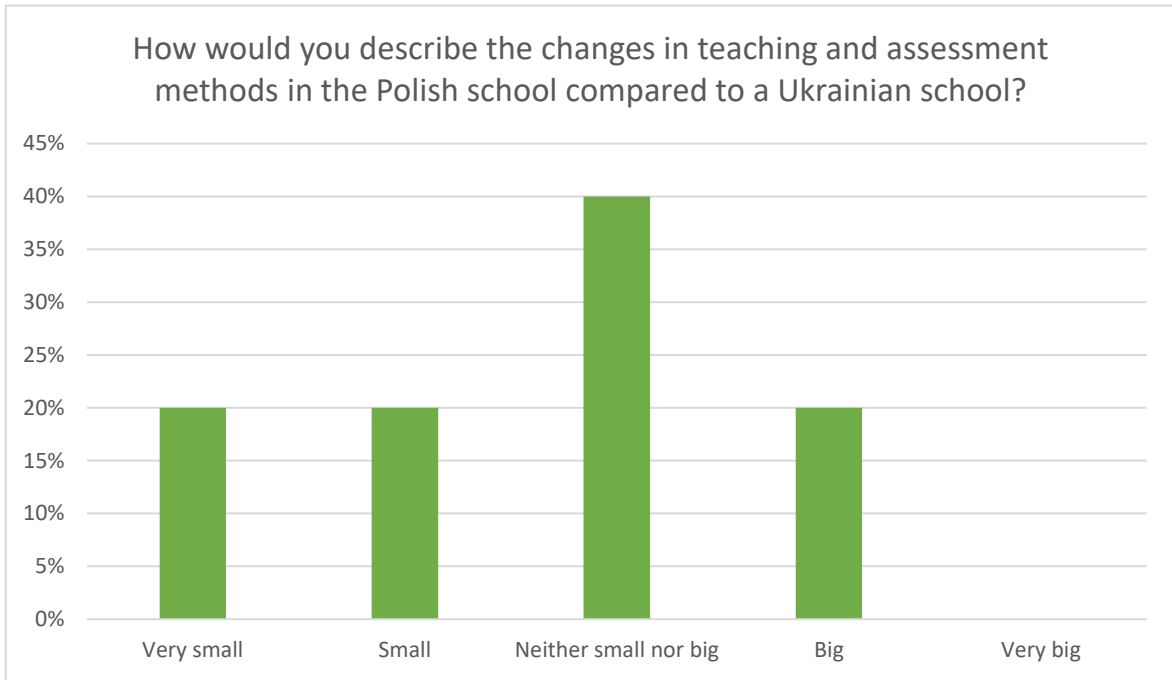
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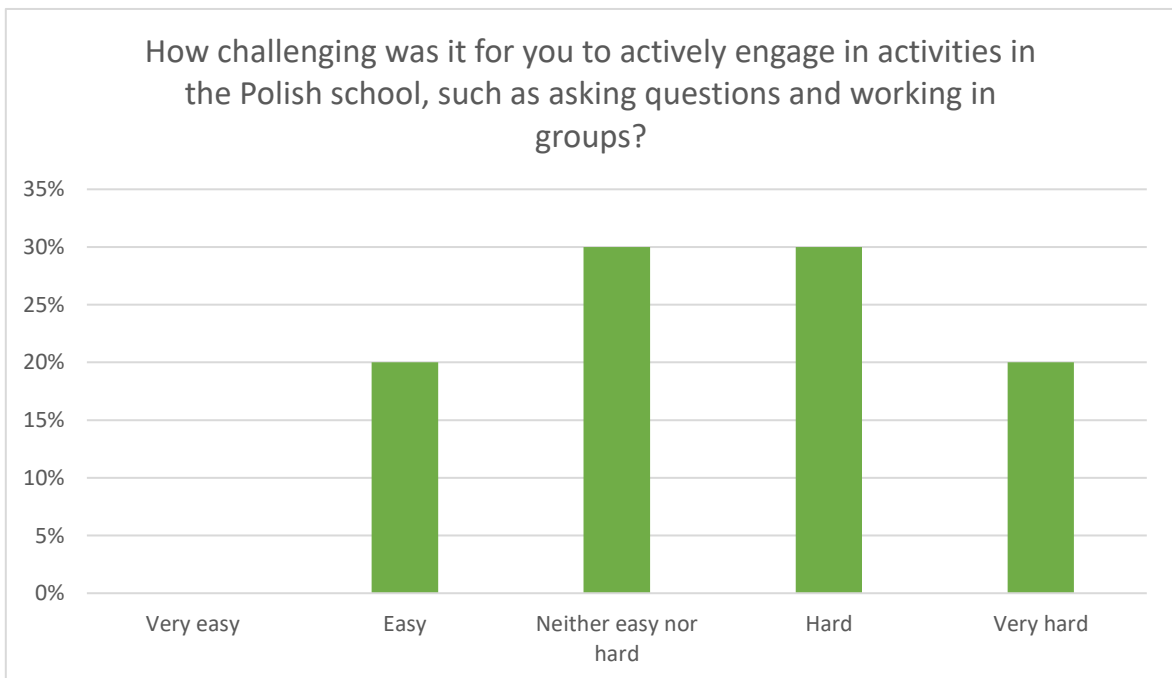
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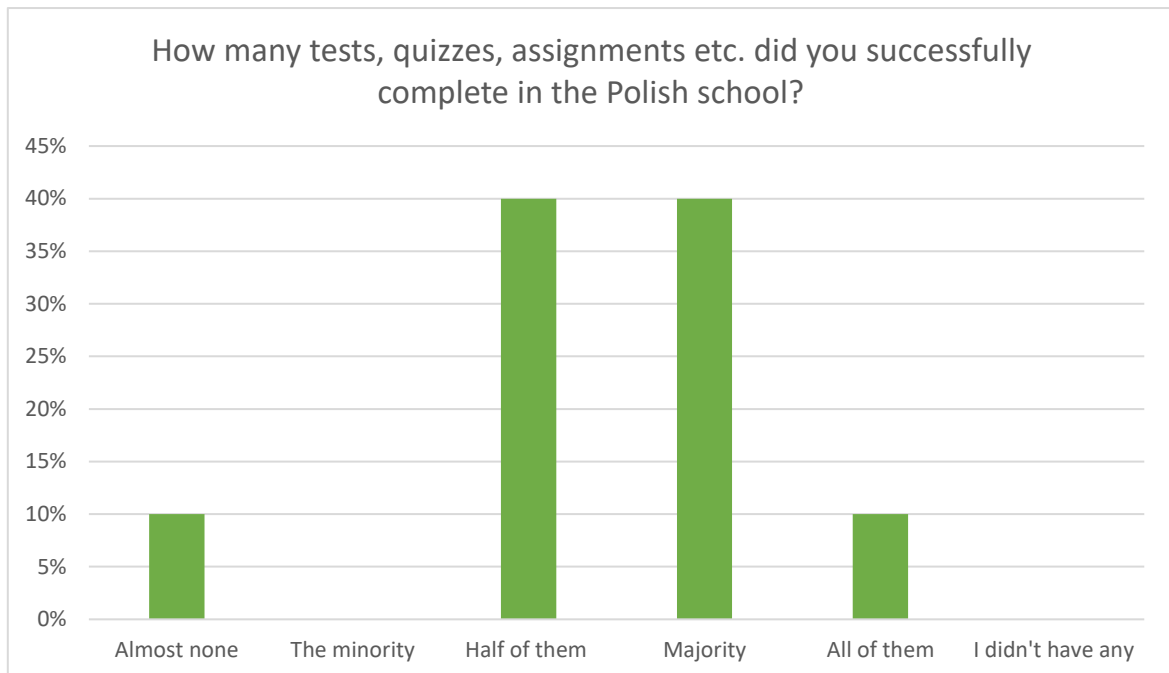
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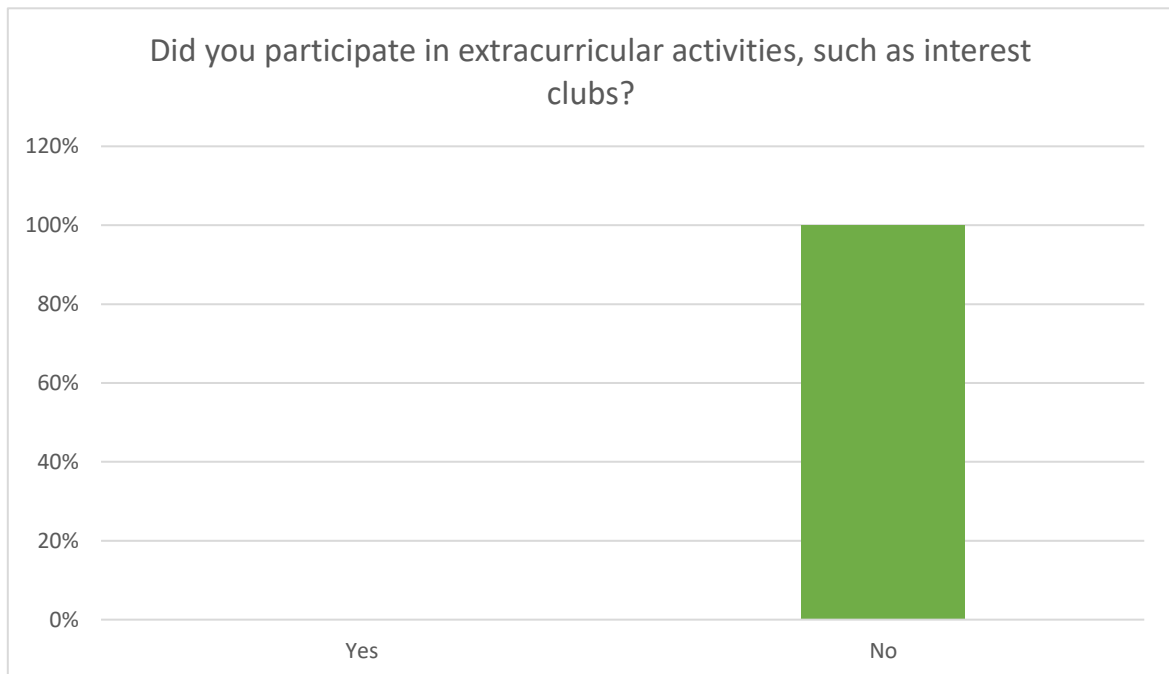
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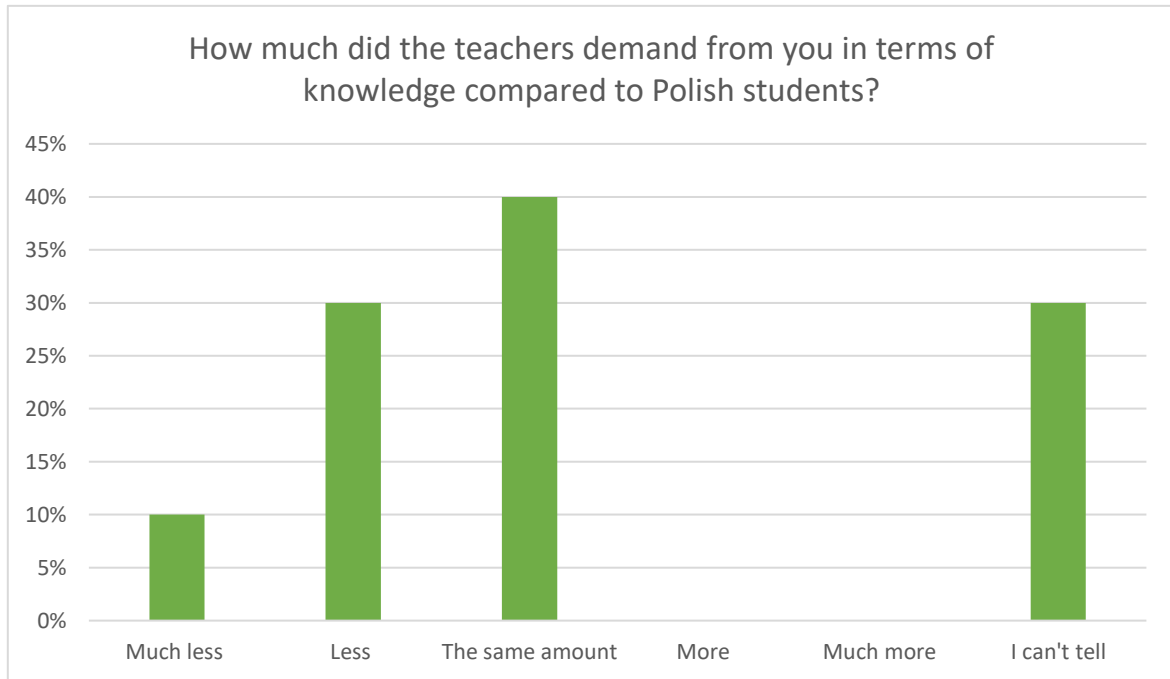
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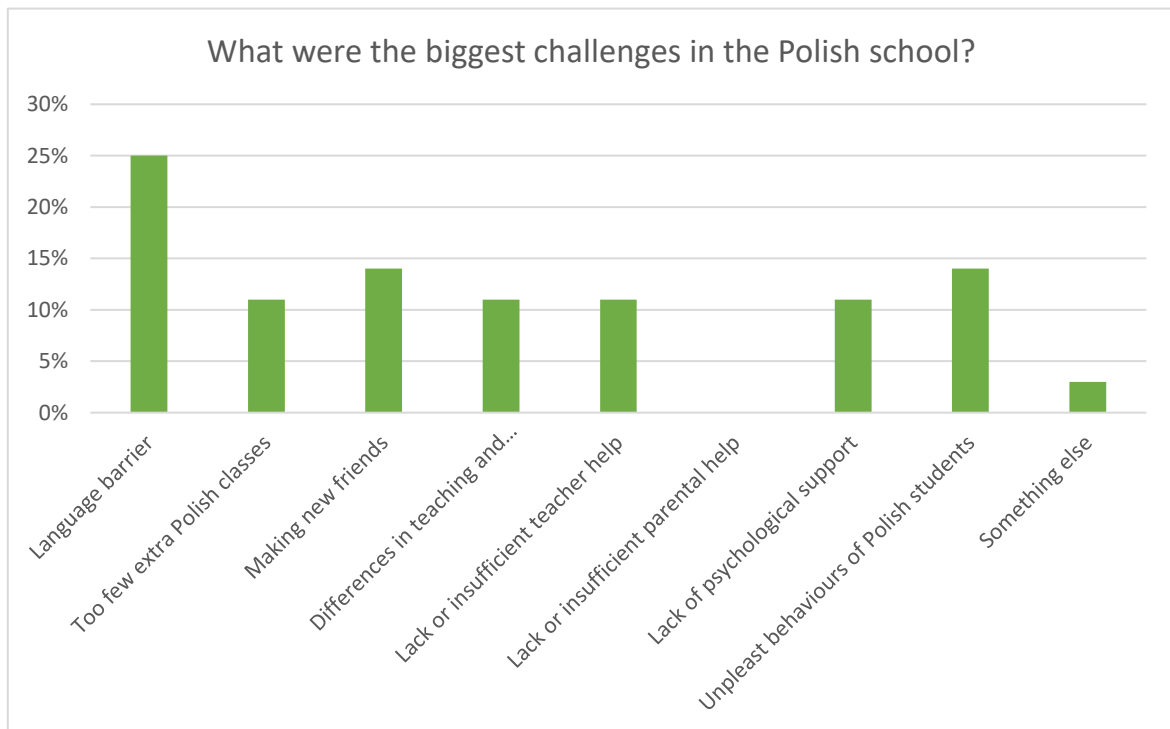
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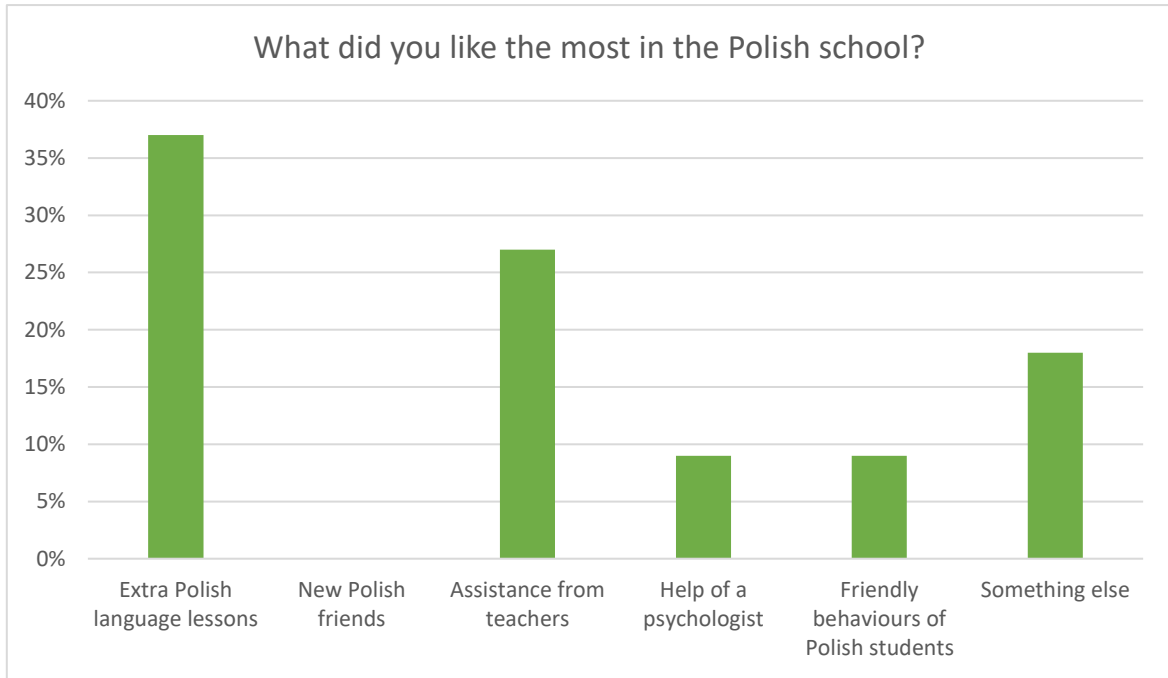
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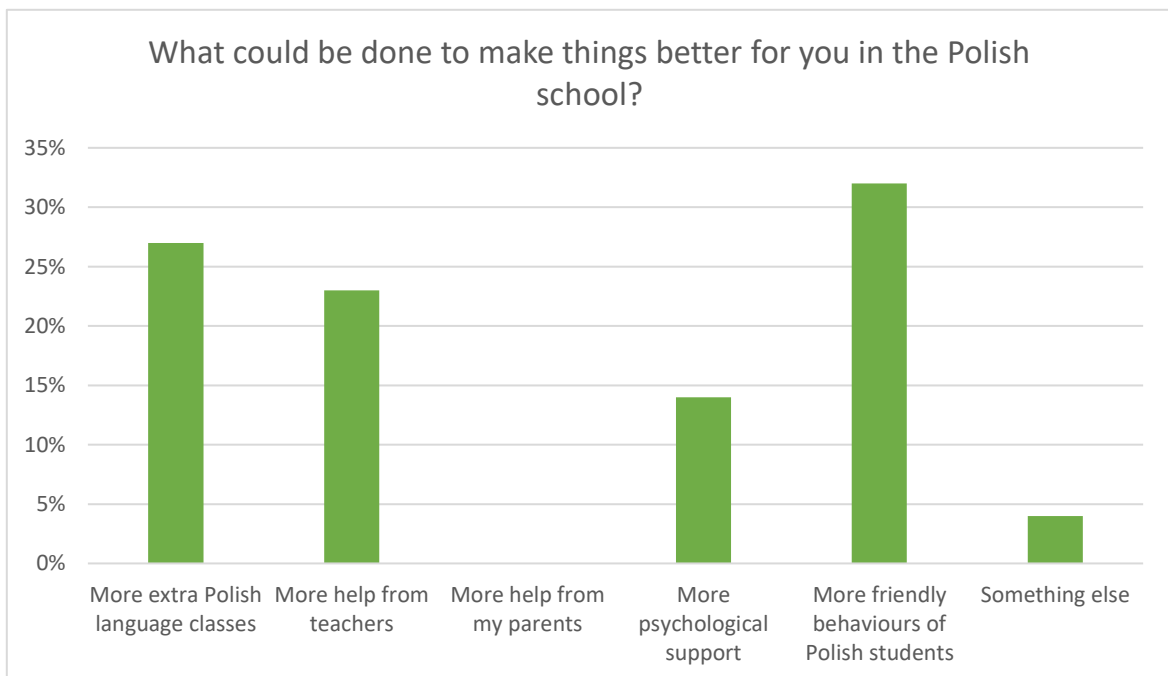
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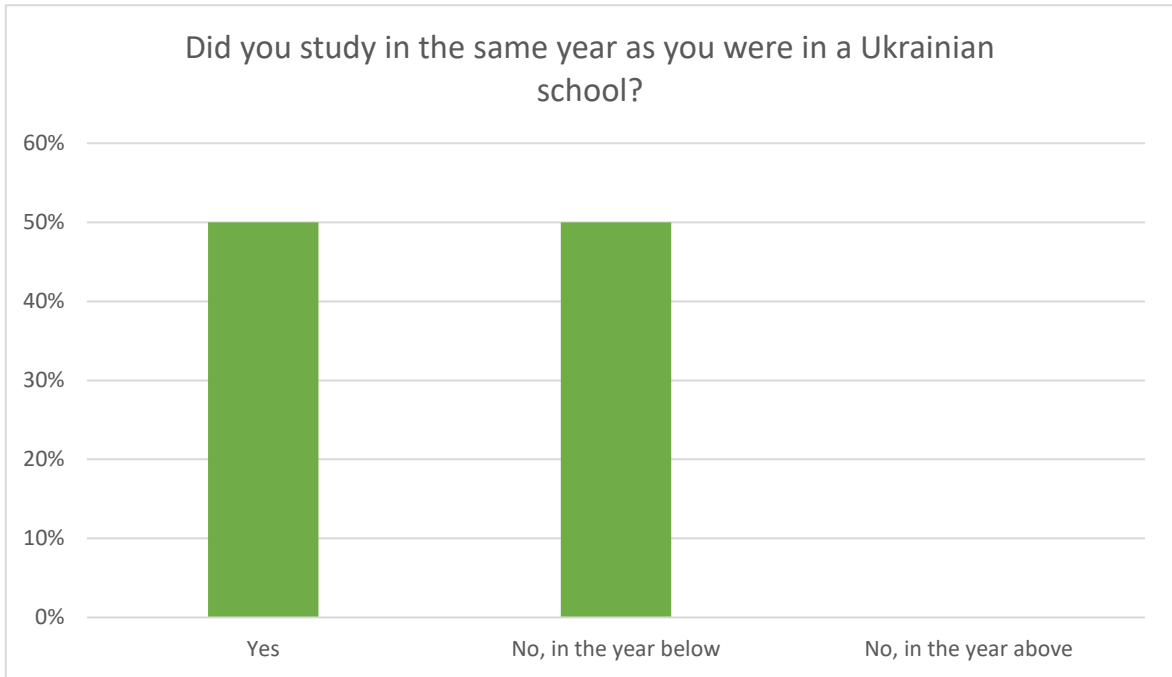
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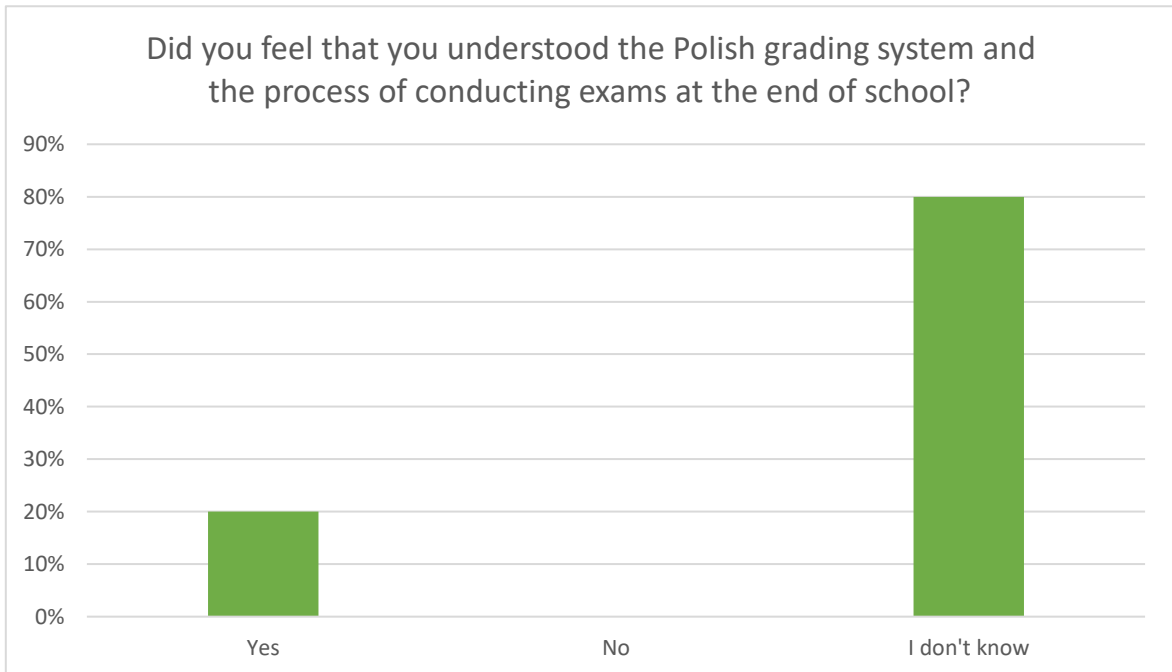
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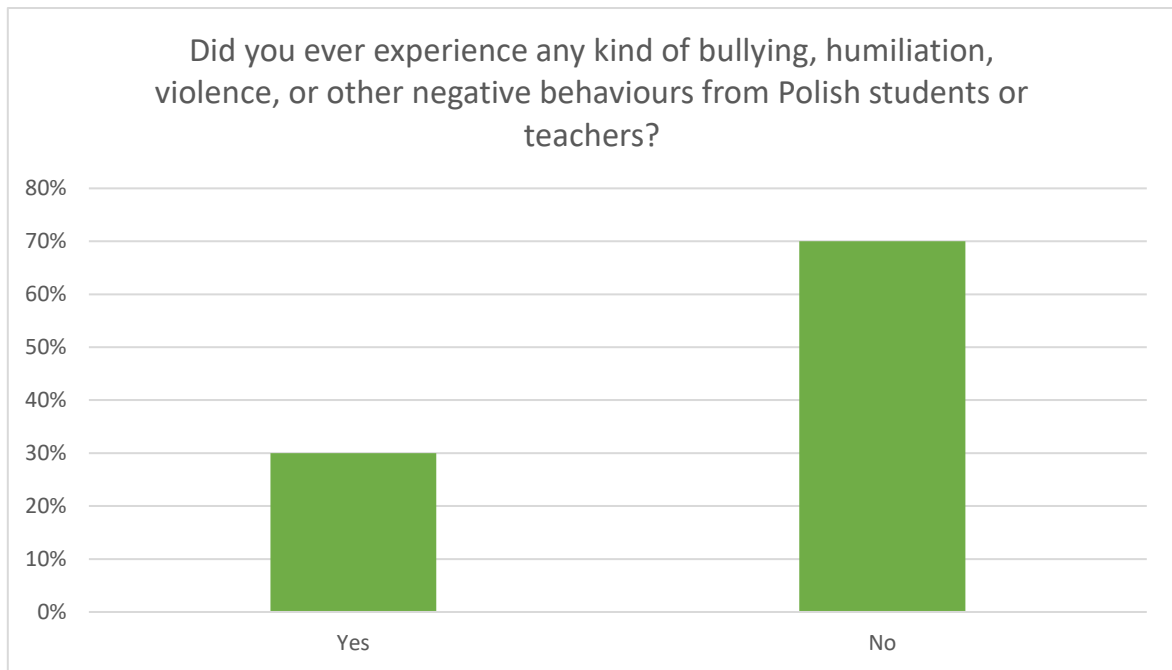
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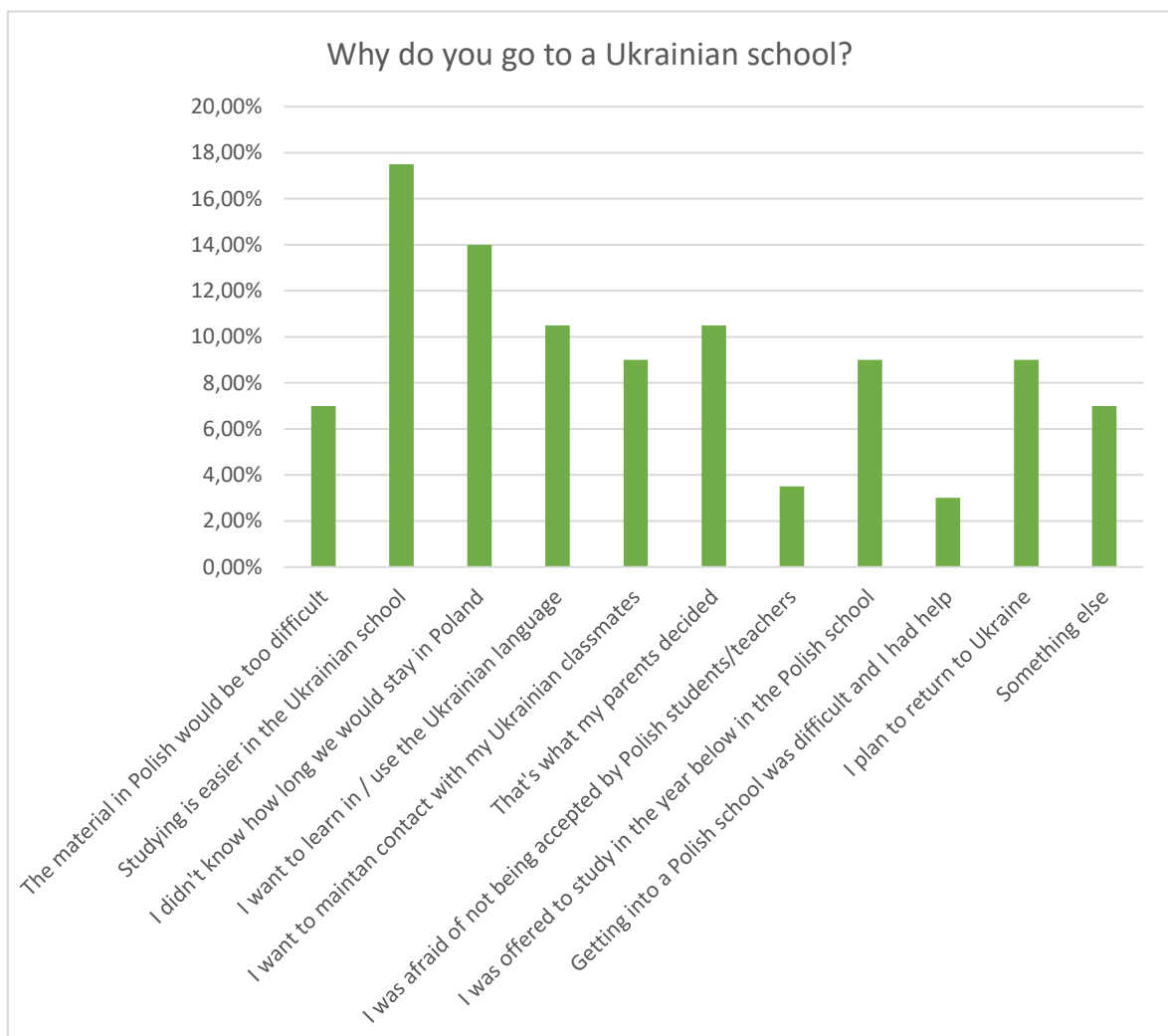
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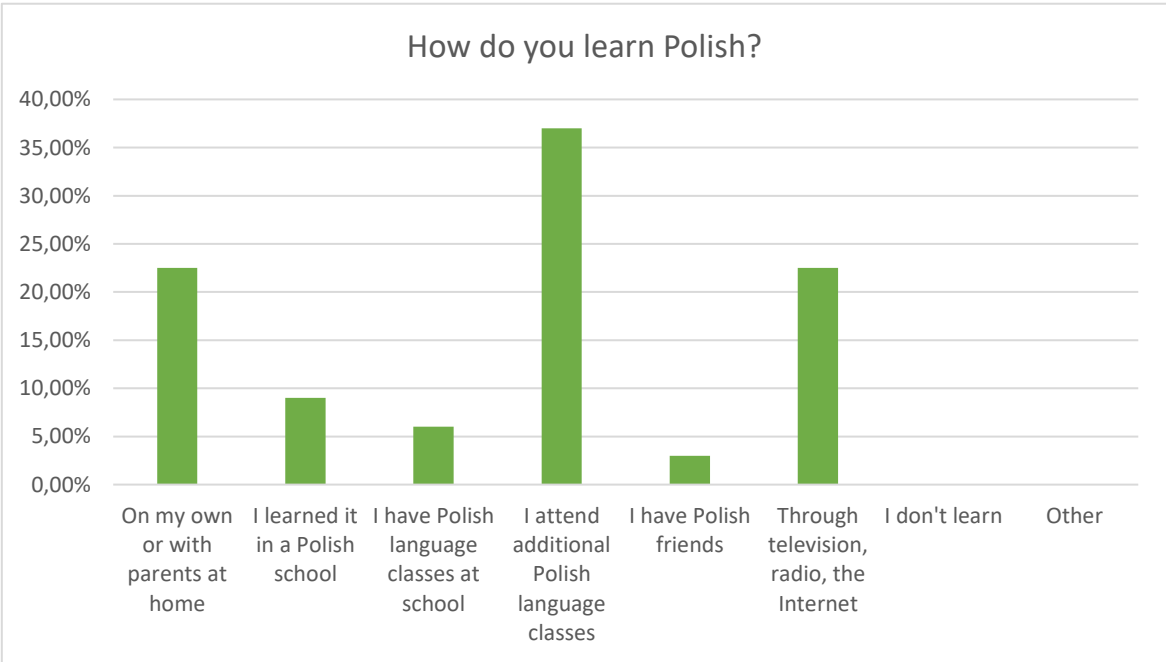


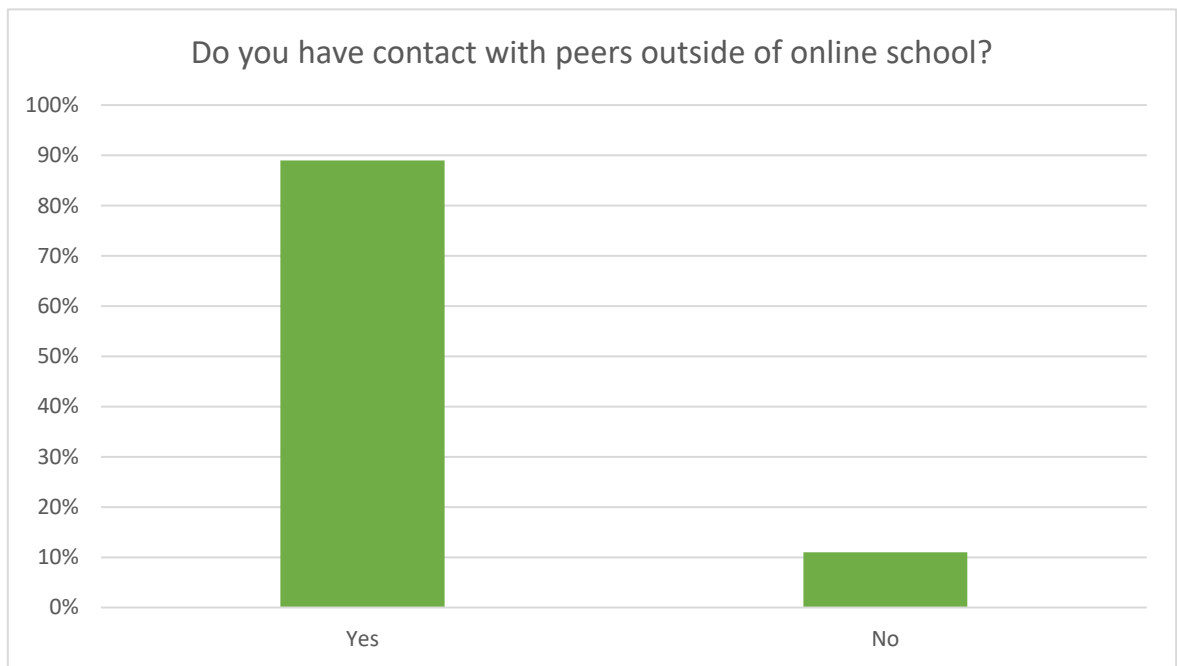
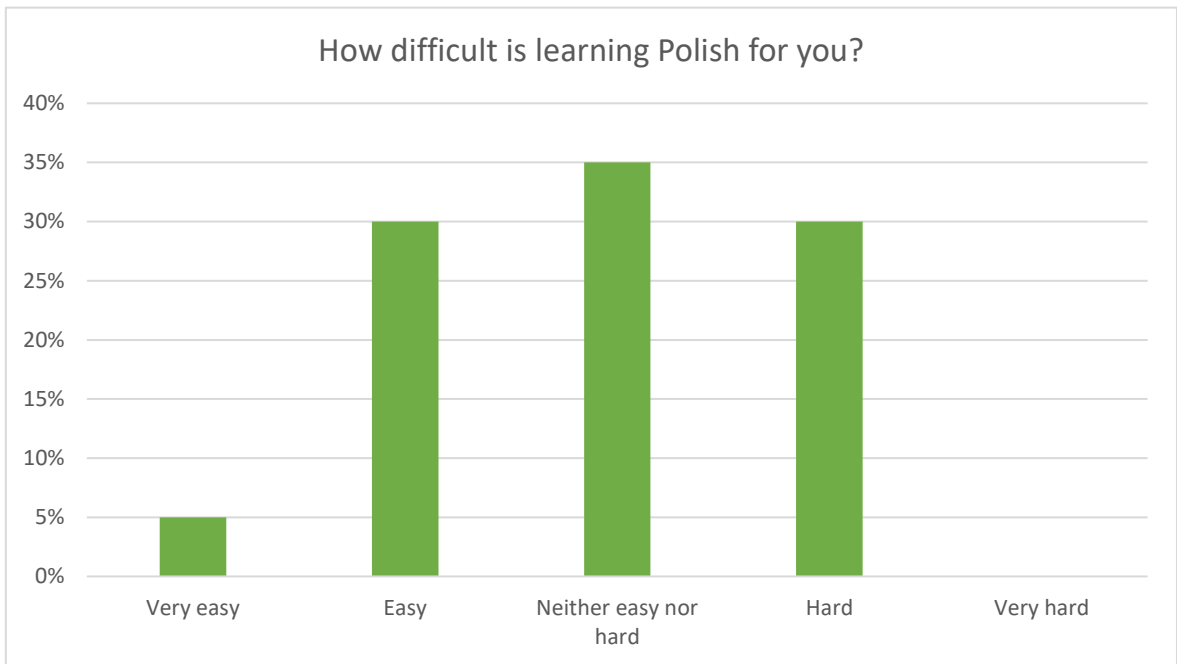
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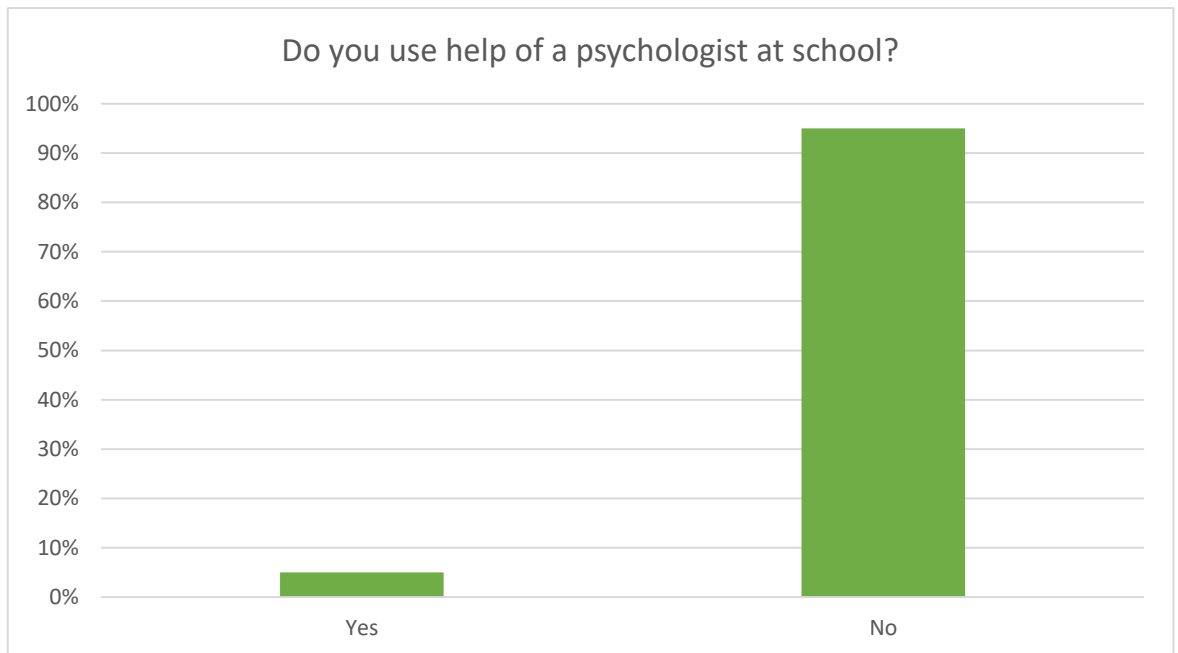
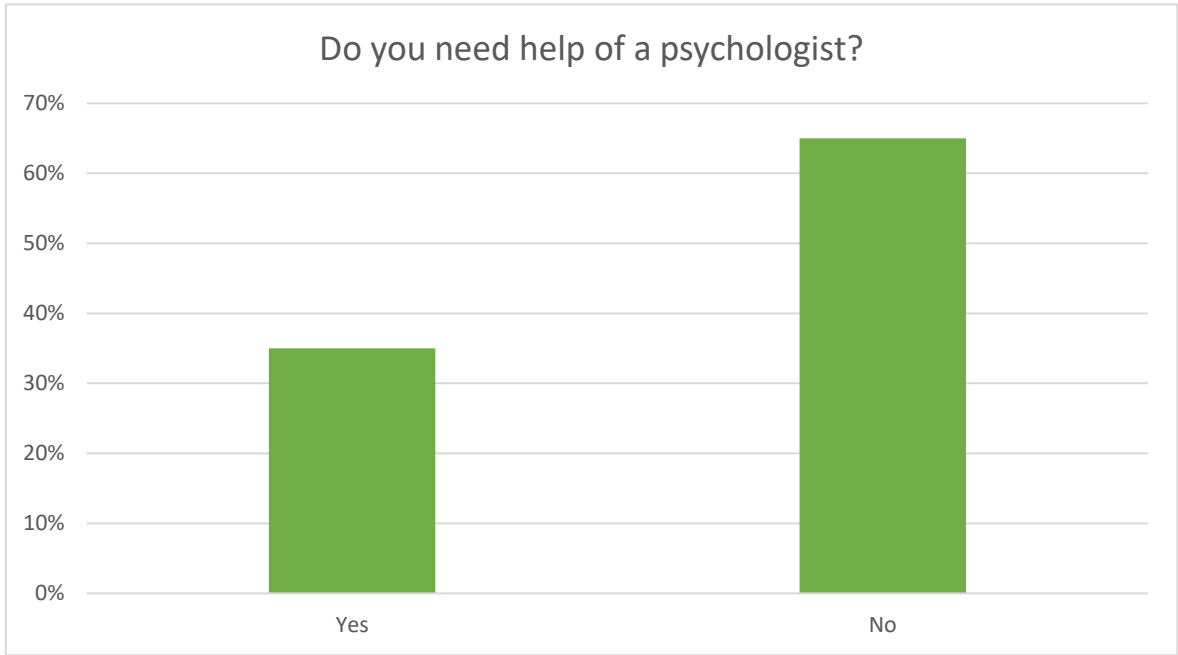


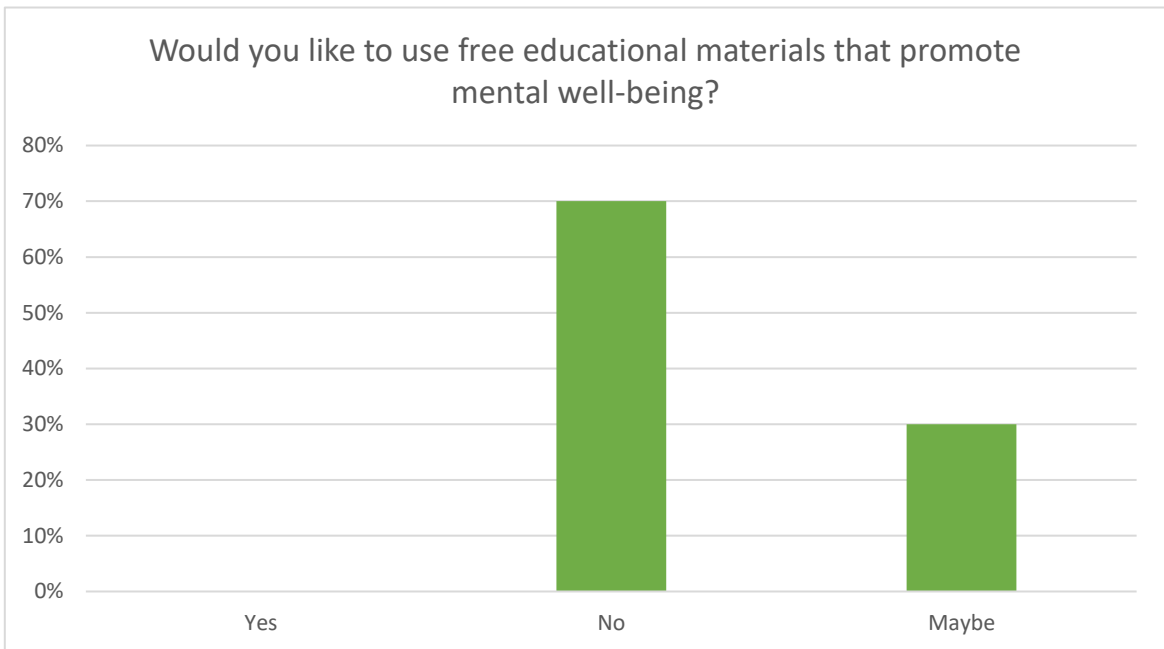
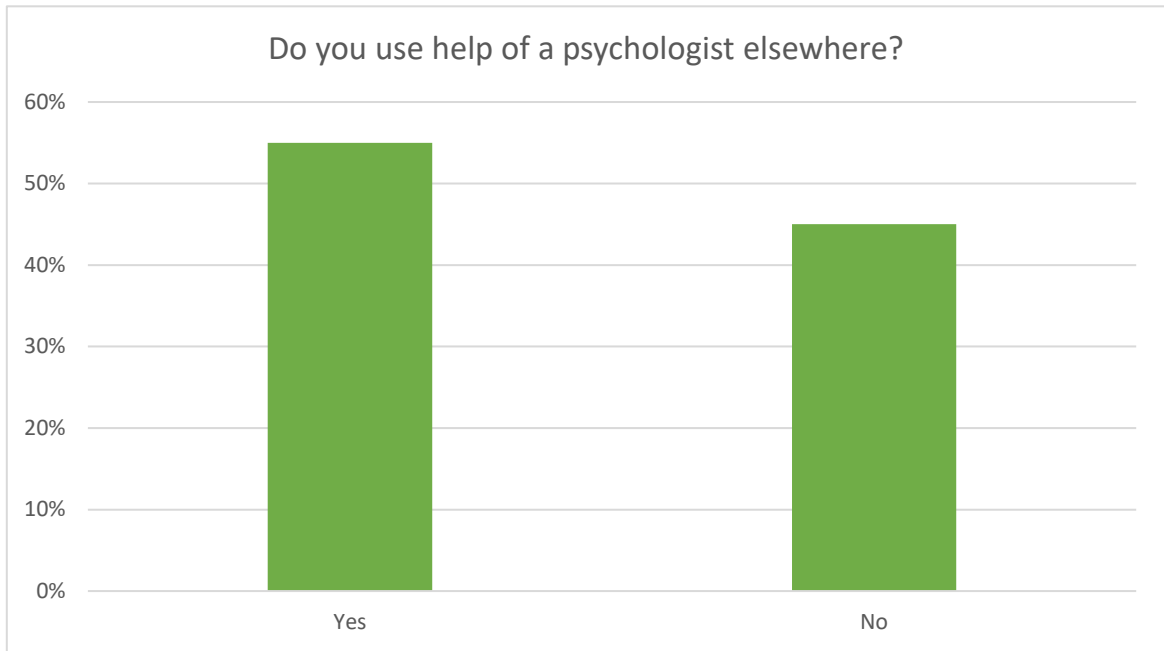
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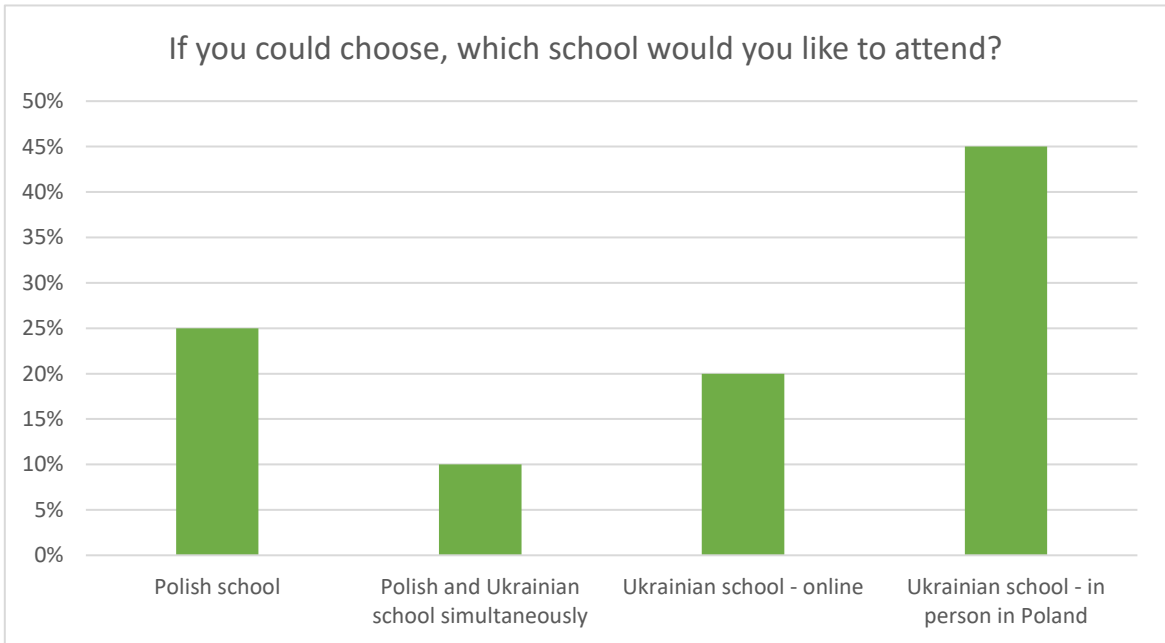


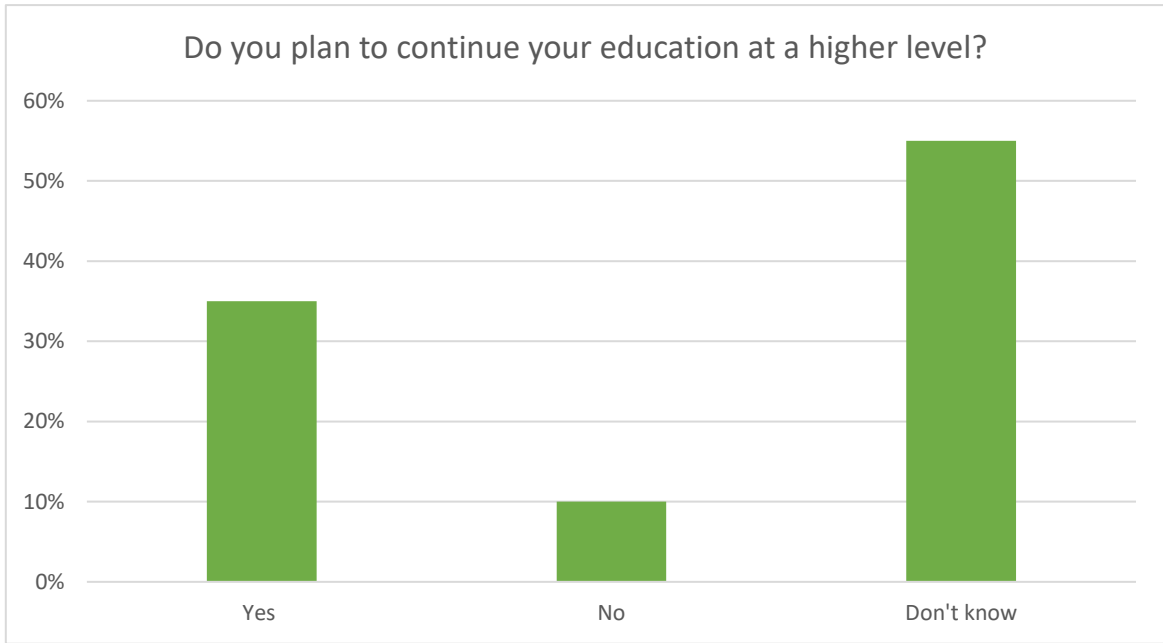












Participant Characteristics in Figures

