



**MEET  
NEIGHBOURS 2**



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**“THE IMAGE OF THE OTHER”  
Study by  
Center for Educational and Development Initiatives  
INNOVA LAB Bitola, North Macedonia**

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## 1. History Curriculum Overview

History as a subject has one of the central places in education in the Republic of North Macedonia. As a separate teaching subject, history begins to be studied in primary education, with students from 10 to 11 years of age, and remains a compulsory subject throughout secondary education. In secondary general high school education, history is a three-year compulsory subject for all students with two hours per week, and in the last fourth year of high school education, history is an optional subject for those students who decide to continue their higher university education at one of humanities faculties. In secondary vocational education, history is a compulsory subject for all students in the first two years of their education. Also, in the final exams of the State Matura, history is one of the subjects that can be chosen and a large part of the students choose history as the subject they will take for entrance to the universities in the state or outside it.

The history curriculum in the educational system of the Republic of North Macedonia is cyclical, i.e. for the most part all the curriculum is taught once in primary education, and then the same historical content is repeated in secondary education (which in the Republic of North Macedonia is mandatory for all students up to 19 years of age), normally by deepening the contents, adjusting them to the age of the students.

The contents of the history curriculum cover the entire history of mankind and deal with the most significant events related to world history, the history of the Balkan peoples and the national history of the Macedonian people and the nationalities living in the Republic of North Macedonia. In terms of the teaching contents that are processed in the history curriculum, there is no particular emphasis on one period of history, but prehistory, ancient history, the Middle Ages, modern history, and the contemporary history of the 20th century are equally processed. The least content is about the latest contemporary history of the 21st century, which is very little or not represented at all, which is certainly a weakness of the history curriculum.

The proportion between world history, the history of the Balkan people and national history in the history curriculum in the Republic of North Macedonia is almost equal, i.e. world history is represented with about 35 percent, then Balkan history or the history of neighboring nations with a proportion of about 30 percent and national history about 35 percent or in the same proportion as world history, and a little more than the history of the Balkan nations.

The most significant moments in the history of the neighbors are also represented in the history curriculum in the Republic of North Macedonia. In all the periods covered in the textbooks and teaching contents, historical events significant for the history of Bulgaria,



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Greece, Serbia, Montenegro, Albania and Turkey (Ottoman Empire) are adequately represented. In the period of ancient history, the history of Ancient Greece is mostly represented, in the Middle Ages mostly the history of Bulgaria and Serbia, while in modern history the Ottoman Empire has the largest space, but the creation of the national Balkan states is also represented. In modern history, the most attention is paid to the history of Albania, the Balkan Wars and the two world wars, which had a great impact on the life of the people of the Balkan Peninsula. The only thing that is not represented is the history of Kosovo, which is studied as part of other Balkan histories.

The national narrative is an integral part of the history curriculum. It has been developing since the creation of the first states on the Balkan Peninsula, from the Ancient Macedonian State. But the creation of the Macedonian nation, as a separate one on the Balkan Peninsula, is most prominent in the Middle Ages, with the arrival of the Slavic tribes. Here the historical events are intertwined with the medieval histories of Bulgaria and Serbia, and also with the period of the creation of the Slavic literacy and alphabet. A special place belongs to the period of the creation of the Ohrid Archdiocese as a separate autocephalous church, which has its own continuity of existence since the tenth century. Medieval national history is based on the struggle to reject the Ottoman rule and obtain basic rights for the Christian population, so the histories of almost all Balkan nations coincide here. The common struggle of the Orthodox population is emphasized, but also the place of the Macedonian people's history in modern history. The most important place in the historical narrative in the history curriculum is the historical events related to the twentieth century, i.e. the first attempt to create an own state through the Ilinden Uprising of 1903, the Balkan Wars which in the context of the national narrative in North Macedonia are presented as a national tragedy, due to the division of the territory and the military actions in these areas. The First World War is presented as a continuation of the Balkan Wars and as a war in which the Macedonian people were mobilized by the two belligerent sides in the war, and thus it represents a fratricidal war. The Macedonian or Thessalonica front is mostly fought on the territory of Macedonia, so the consequences are very difficult for the population living there. The period between the two world wars is presented as a dark period of assimilation in the states that divided the territory of Macedonia after the Balkan wars. The Second World War is presented as an Anti-Fascist but also a liberation war with a special emphasis on the creation of the Macedonian state within the federal Yugoslavia.

Heroes used in the national narrative, as in any national history, are usually fighters, soldiers, politicians, less often poets, writers, and very rarely women. From antiquity, the most significant person is certainly Alexander the Great, who is also part of Greek ancient history, from the Middle Ages Karposh and Skanderbeg, who is also part of Albanian history. Gotse Delchev, a fighter for national freedom and for the creation of a Macedonian state, has a special place in the national narrative in the Republic of North Macedonia. The partisan movement in the Second World War is presented in a positive sense, credited for the formation of the modern Macedonian republic.



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Many religious figures such as the holy brothers Cyril and Methodius, their students Kliment Ohridski, Naum Ohridski, writers Grigor Prlichev, Krste Petkov Misirkov, Kocho Racin have a very significant place in the national history.

Two events have a central place in the national history: the Ilinden Uprising of 1903 and the creation of the short-lived Krushev Republic and the creation of the first parliament - ASNOM in 1944, with which the Macedonian state was formed.

### 2. Workshops “Imagine the Europe”

A group of high school students and University students were part of the workshops “Imagine the Europe”. They were given the task of creating a map of Europe, using different photographs that represented European history and tradition, Balkan and national Macedonian culture and history.

Students were divided into three groups, two groups with high school students and third group older students. They debated the position of N. Macedonia in the European framework, and each of the groups working individually, placed the pictures differently and presented Europe.





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The first group of students was mainly guided by the geographical origin of the images, so they arranged the photos on the map of Europe according to national and cultural landmarks.

The second group of students thought differently, so they moved the photos through historical periods and the development of Europe from antiquity to the present day.

The third group looked for connections, for example between cultural influences, such as the appearance of the Cyrillic alphabet and its spread, and the central place was Tolstoy's work, War and Peace, with the conclusion that Europe is always on the verge of war, as it is today, but also peace, which brings prosperity and well-being.



The work of the groups of students and young people leads to the conclusion that they are all aware of the importance of European culture, tradition and history and the close relationship with the Balkans and of course with Macedonian history and culture.



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It was interesting to note the active discussion and the different thoughts in each of the three groups of students, which led to a different arrangement of the photos in each group and a different story composed in each of the groups of students and young people. One of the conclusions should certainly be that young people are aware of the connection of European history and tradition with Balkan histories and traditions.



### 3. "Rewriting history"

For the imagined scenario "Rewriting history of the I World War", we decided to make a combination of a group of students over the age of 19, who had to think and write an essay explaining their vision of the end of the First World War, and then the same students, together with the younger ones under the age of 18, to have two workshops where they would discuss the war, its consequences and share their views on the end of the war with the students who had little or no work according to the curriculum for The First World War and its consequences.



Ten students worked on the preparation of essays and first a workshop was held, where they were presented with the idea of writing an essay with the working title "Rewriting history of the I World War". First they discussed how they would present their views, and then they were given a period of two weeks to complete their essays, which had to be short and concise. The idea was then extended to discuss their ideas in groups with the younger students

and to see their views on each war and also how much the First World War was known to them.



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Each of the ten essays created by the students is unique and presents its own point of view, but all of them are guided by historical facts and analyze what changes the war could have brought, if it had a different end.

Everyone agrees that war would certainly happen, so in each of the essays the First World War is often presented as an inevitability of the time in which it happened. In some of the essays, the position of the Balkans and the fate of all the Balkan nations, which are opposed to each other in this war, are considered.

It is interesting to observe a student who says: *"I do not understand why people choose to point guns at each other first, before they have a talk about their needs and wants. Stakeholders should discuss the problem before they decide to start killing each other. This involves having a meeting with the goal of finding solutions to the dispute and resolving the conflict. If they had*



*a talk before they took out the guns, I am sure they would have come to an agreement. It is unbelievable how a few disagreements led to a war which killed many innocent people, because the one who started the fire, were the first ones to hide. Innocent people should not be involved in wars. Justice would have been served if the ones who started the war were the ones to be punished the most."*

Other essays also consider different scenarios, from the fact that the October Revolution was not successful, so it made others think and stop the war, to the creation of a status quo situation.

The discussion in groups with students up to 18 years of age was especially interesting, to whom the essays from those who created them were presented, so the discussion was also fruitful and sustained. It was discussed about the borders, whether changing the borders





should be used as a punishment, then who bears the burden of the punishments from the Paris Peace Agreements.



In the end, we can conclude that this was an interesting way to think about a historical event, which affected the entire humanity, and through their insights and thoughts, young people evaluated historical decisions and assessed their meaning and impact in people's lives.

The group discussion and joint presentation is best captured in a quote from one of the essays that was most often used in the debate: "**Never think that war, however necessary or justified, is not a crime,**" with this quote best describes the tragedy and chaos that engulfed the world in the First World War, a war of too many losses of human life, a war of destroyed families, suffering, pain, sorrow and longing for loved ones, warfare in pursuit of power, wealth, territory, power and the fulfillment of personal ambitions and goals at the expense of other people's lives."

## 4. Group interviews

### 4.1. Group interviews with students and youth

Interviews were conducted with two groups divided by age, one up to 19 years old and the other up to 27 years old. Both groups were asked the same questions, basically 10 identical questions, based on the "Me and Europe" questionnaire. The two groups answered the same questions and gave very similar answers, but if we analyze the answers themselves, we can come to the conclusion that the answers differ to a large extent.



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To the first question "Do 'being European' and 'being an EU citizen' have the same meaning for you?" in both groups the answer is the same, i.e. the answer is No, with several explanations that you are European if you live on the European continent, and not only if you are an EU citizen.



And to the second question "Do you think 'being European' is a unifying factor?" the answer of all respondents in both groups is the same - Yes, except in one case where the answer is No!

The third question was "Do you think that the EU respects its values (rule of law, human rights, non-discrimination, free market, private property...)" is the first question where differences in answers appear. Among younger students, the affirmative answer prevails, with a note that this is not the case to a full extent in all EU member states, and while the older students answer is positive, with an addition - they are absolutely respected. Only one answer is that only human rights are respected and not the others.

The interviewees answered identically to the fourth question, "Do you want Europe to have no borders and become a single country?" Both in one and the other group, half answered - No, they would not like to see Europe as one country, and the other half answered that they want to see Europe as one country and that it would be amazing! However, the prevailing opinion is that there should not be one state, if only there were no borders between states that would make life easier for everyone.



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The fifth question was intended for the expansion of the EU towards the Balkans. "Do you want the EU to expand by accepting new countries from the Balkan Peninsula?" All respondents in both groups of interviewees had the same answer - YES, some of them with the addition that it would be fair for the Balkan countries, would bring more opportunities and improve the economy. Only one of the answers is negative, that is, it is against the expansion.

The next few questions, where a subjective answer and selection of characteristics are required, the answers are very different, but one can make an observation and analysis.

The sixth question was "Choose 5 things that best describe a European?" A variety of answers can be observed here, which is normal due to the breadth and freedom to answer, but the difference in the answers is also evident in terms of the age of the interviewees. The most frequently chosen characteristics among those interviewed up to 27 years old were - freedom, high standard, conflict, human rights, and equality. But tourism, education, environment, languages, mobility, Euro, democracy, Eurovision were also chosen. Among the younger interviewees up to the age of 19, the five most frequently chosen terms were - education, democracy, non-discrimination, free market and freedom. They also have additional terms, security, tradition, nationalism, civility, etc.

The next, seventh question asked was "Choose 5 things that best describe Bulgarian/Greek/Macedonian/Romanian/Serbian/Turkish (here each partner specifies)". As in the answers to the previous question, the difference in the priorities of the interviewees can be seen here, depending on their age. Among older students up to the age of 27, the terms - corruption, patriotism, conflict, low standard and history prevail, and the terms - food, hospitality, tradition, music, nationalism, and too much history are also common. Among those interviewed up to the age of 19, the most common terms are - patriotism, poor standard of living, tradition, food, loud people, and the terms music, stereotypes, conservative, friendly are also common.

For the eighth question "What threatens Europe to a greater extent?" we again have a difference in the answers, depending on the age group of the interviewees. But it still prevails in both groups that the biggest danger for Europe at this moment is the war, the economic crisis and the lack of cooperation. The answers are also present - climate change,

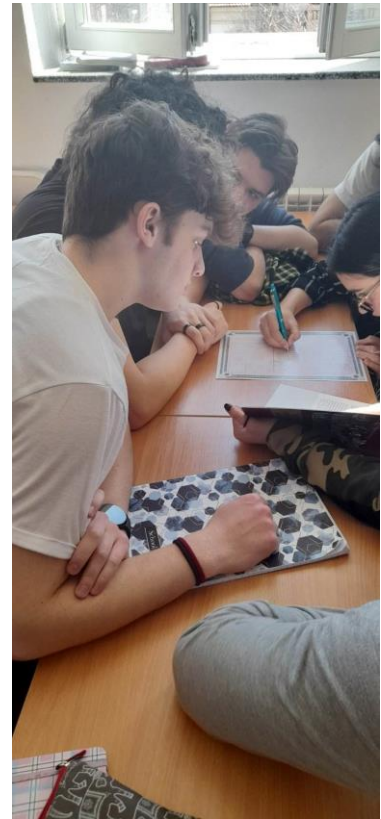


Russia, USA, the big gap between rich and poor, drugs, etc.

The ninth question was related to his country N. Macedonia "What threatens your/our country more?" A common answer that dominates in both groups of interviewees is the immigration of young people from outside the country, and related to that is the aging of the nation. The next danger is corruption, then the rule of the first, the politics of the neighbors, the politicians and their desire for power.

The last question that the two groups of interviewed young people received was "In your opinion, what can contribute to the good relations of the Balkan countries in the future?", and a common answer found among all the interviewees is to get to know the peoples of Balkan countries, let's cooperate and defeat stereotypes. An interesting answer was to respect diversity, increase cultural ties and have less history!

From this brief analysis of the answers, it can be seen that the largest number of interviewees have a positive attitude towards Europe, but also towards the European Union and its expansion to the Balkan Peninsula, which would also improve the life of the ordinary population.



#### 4.2. Group interviews with teachers

As part of the interviews, a group of seven teachers, who teach languages and literature, as well as history teachers, were interviewed. Each of them received three questions and each of the teachers gave detailed answers.



To the first question "Are they excited about the issues of the day?" What excites them the most?", only one teacher answered that the students are very excited when they work in class, while the others answered that they are rarely excited or only some of them, and one answer was that it is also related to the subject. They are most excited when new material is learned through games, new techniques.

To the second question "Are they interested in national history?" Where does their interest in history come from - family, school, and media", all the teachers answered that the



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students are interested in national history, except for one teacher who answered that the students' interest in history in general is not great. The largest number of teachers agree that the interest in history is encouraged through the media, but also through them they are introduced to many historical events. Next on the list of the most influential in developing interest in history is the family, and according to the opinion of the teachers, the last place is the school. The opinion that the interest also depends on the teacher who teaches history should be emphasized here.

The last question that was asked to the interviewed teachers "Do they read, apart from the mandatory authors in the curricula, and what kind of literature do they prefer to read -foreign authors, national" brought a variety of answers. Most teachers think that students read often, but in terms of whether they are interested in the mandatory literature and authors from the curriculum, the answers are different. Some think that the authors that are part of the curriculum are not interesting to them, and others think that they want to read more science fiction and crime novels. Regarding whether they read domestic or foreign authors, the prevailing opinion is that it is the foreign authors. Some teachers believe that students prefer to watch movies than to read a book.





## 5. Questionnaire “Me and Europe”

Within the project "Meet our Neighbors", a survey was conducted. The purpose of the survey was to measure the perspectives of the young people and high-school students living in Balkan countries towards the EU and the Balkan countries. The data obtained in the study will be a source for the development of training programs to be prepared for the training of young people and youth workers.

The survey includes 62 students from 14 to 18 years old and 54 young people 18-29 years old.

### Statistics<sup>a</sup>

		Gender:	Country:	Age
N	Valid	159	162	162
	Missing	3	0	0

a. Country: = Macedonia

### Frequency Table

Gender:<sup>a</sup>

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	65	40,1	40,9	40,9
	Female	94	58,0	59,1	100,0
	Total	159	98,1	100,0	
Missing	System	3	1,9		
Total		162	100,0		

a. Country: = Macedonia

Age<sup>a</sup>

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	14-18	109	67,3	67,3	67,3
	19-30	53	32,7	32,7	100,0
	Total	162	100,0	100,0	

a. Country: = Macedonia



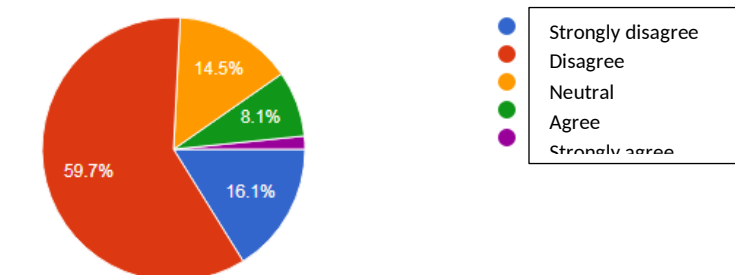
Regarding the demographic characteristics of the participants in the survey, 51.6% were female students, 45.2% were male, and 3.2% did prefer not to say. Among young people, 64.8% are female, 33.3% are male and only 1.9% prefer not to say.

On the statement “Cultural differences between my own and European cultures are unimportant, and everyone should conform to one set of cultural norms and values”, 33.9% of the students answered that they are neutral, 30.6% of students disagree with this statement and 22.6% answered that they agree. On the other hand, 37% of youth are neutral regarding this statement, 27.8% agree and 24.1% of youth disagree with this statement.

On the statement “There are no significant differences between Bulgarian/ Greek/ Macedonian/ Romanian/ Serbian/ Turkish cultures”, 59.7% of the students answered that they disagree, while only 1.6% strongly agree with this statement (Figure 1).

Figure 1 “There are no significant differences between Bulgarian/ Greek/ Macedonian/ Romanian/ Serbian/ Turkish cultures” – responses from students (14-18)

62 responses



Source: Survey results

On Figure 2 are presented results for the same statement: 31.5% of youth do not agree with this statement, and 7.4% strongly agree.

Figure 2 “There are no significant differences between Bulgarian/ Greek/ Macedonian/ Romanian/ Serbian/ Turkish cultures” – responses from youth

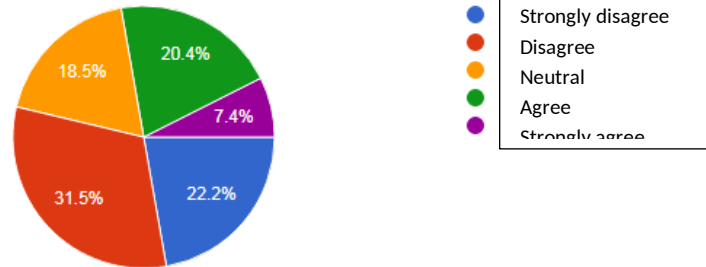


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54 responses

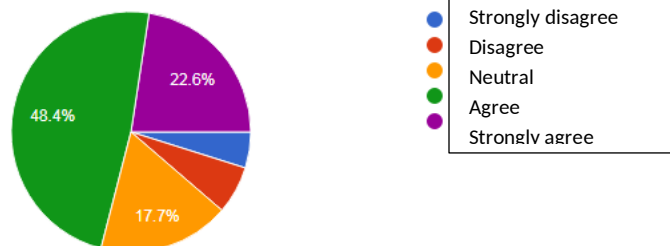


Source: Survey results

“It is essential to defend and preserve my cultural values and beliefs when interacting with people from European cultures” is the statement on which 48.4% from students answered that they agree, 22,6% strongly agree, while the percentage is the smallest of students that strongly disagree (4.8%) with this statement (Figure 3).

Figure 3. “It is essential to defend and preserve my cultural values and beliefs when interacting with people from European cultures” – responses from students (14-18)

62 responses



Source: Survey results

According to this statement 48.1% of youth agree, while 1.9% disagree with this statement (Figure 4).





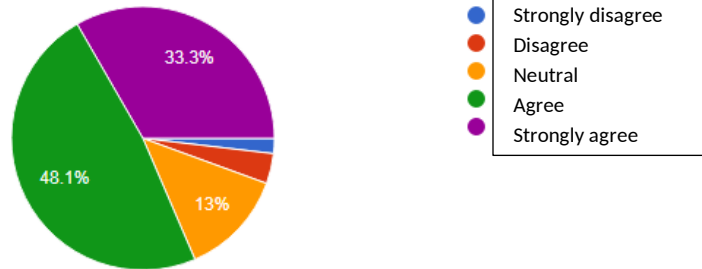
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Figure 4. “It is essential to defend and preserve my cultural values and beliefs when interacting with people from European cultures” – responses from youth

54 responses

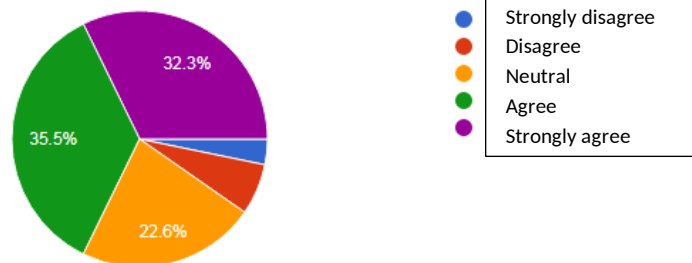


Source: Survey results

On the statement “I need to defend my cultural practices and traditions when I meet with a person from Bulgarian, Greek, Romanian, Serbian, and Turkish cultures”, 65,8% of the students agree or strongly agree, 22,6% are neutral and 6.5% disagree with this statement (Figure 5).

Figure 5. “I need to defend my cultural practices and traditions when I meet with a person from Bulgarian, Greek, Romanian, Serbian, and Turkish cultures” - responses from students (14-18)

62 responses



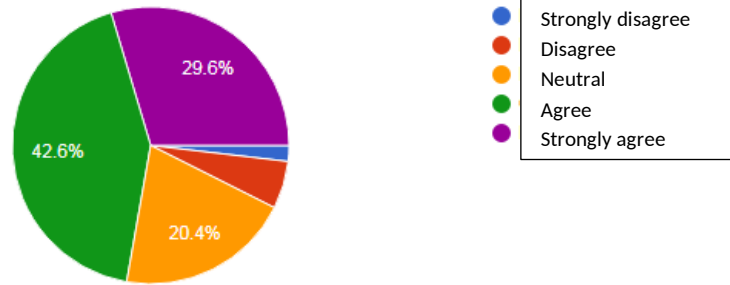
Source: Survey results

42.6% from youth agree, while 1.9% from youth disagree with that statement (Figure 6).



Figure 6. “I need to defend my cultural practices and traditions when I meet with a person from Bulgarian, Greek, Romanian, Serbian, and Turkish cultures” - responses from youth

54 responses



Source: Survey results

“It is better to be Macedonian than to be European” is the statement on which 48.4% of students were neutral in their answer, while only 3.2% totally agree with that statement.

46.3% from youth are neutral regarding this statement, 22,2% agree with the statement, only 9,3% strongly agree, 16,7% disagree, while 5.6% of them strongly disagree. In total more than half of the young people are neutral to this statement.

38.7% of students agree with the statement “Cultural differences between my own and European cultures are minimal and can be ignored or overlooked in communication and interactions”, while 24.2% disagree and 6.5% strongly agree. 24.1% of youth agree with this statement, while 33.3% strongly disagree and 31, 5 % are neutral to this statement.

On the statement “Values, beliefs, customs, traditions, and practices between Bulgarian, Greek, Macedonian, Romanian, Serbian, and Turkish cultures are minor and insignificant”

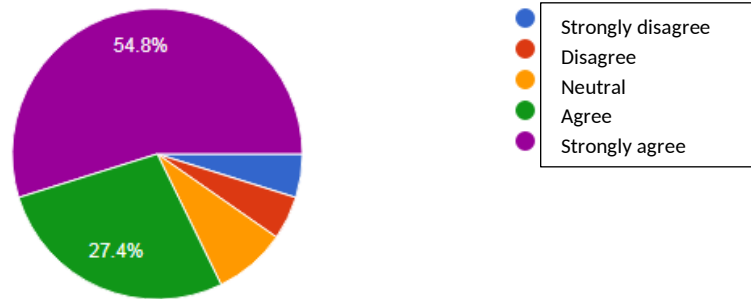
54, 8% of the students disagree and only 1, 6% agree with this statement. 40.7% of youth disagree with this statement, while 11, 1% agree, while 31, 5% are neutral.

54, 8% of students strongly agree with the statement “When interacting with people from European cultures, I try to understand and respect their values, beliefs, and behaviors, even if they differ from my own”, while 4, 8 disagree (Figure 7).



Figure 7. When interacting with people from European cultures, I try to understand and respect their values, beliefs, and behaviors, even if they differ from my own – responses from students (14-18)

62 responses

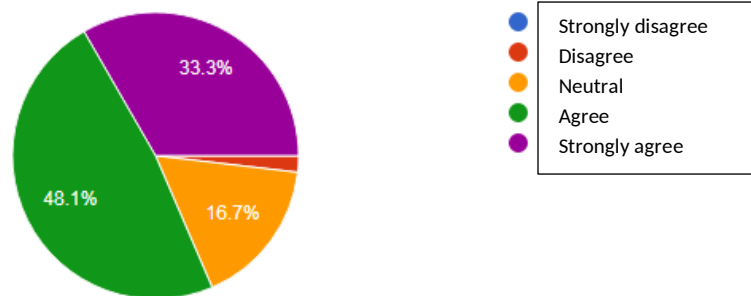


Source: Survey results

On the other hand, the majority of youth (48.1%) agree with this statement, 33, 3% strongly agree, while only 1.9% disagree (Figure 8).

Figure 8. When interacting with people from European cultures, I try to understand and respect their values, beliefs, and behaviors, even if they differ from my own – responses from youth

54 responses



Source: Survey results

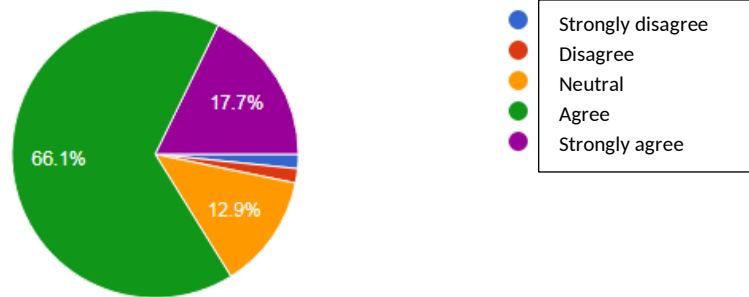
67,7% of the students agree with the statement “When confronted with cultural differences between Bulgarian, Greek, Macedonian, Romanian, Serbian, and Turkish cultures, I try to find common ground and appreciate diversity”, while only 1,6% disagree. 53, 7% of the youth agree with this statement, 22, 2 % strongly agree, while 3, 7% strongly disagree.

66, 1% of the students agree with the statement “It is essential to adapt and adjust my communication and behavior when interacting with people from European cultures to communicate and collaborate with them effectively”, while 1, 6% disagree (Figure 9).



Figure 9 “It is essential to adapt and adjust my communication and behavior when interacting with people from European cultures to communicate and collaborate with them effectively”- responses from students (14-18)

62 responses

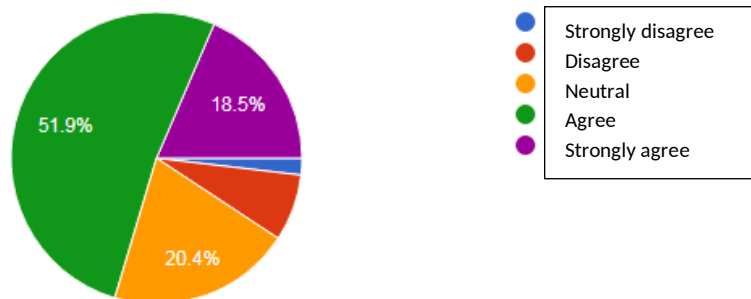


Source: Survey results

51,9% of youth agree with this statement, while 7,4% disagree (Figure 10).

Figure 10 “It is essential to adapt and adjust my communication and behavior when interacting with people from European cultures to communicate and collaborate with them effectively”- responses from youth

54 responses



Source: Survey results

On the statement “In my interactions with people from Bulgarian, Greek, Romanian, Macedonian, Serbian, and Turkish cultures, I tend to adapt my behavior or communication style to fit in with these cultures by avoiding my cultural practices and expectations”, 54,8% of the students disagree, while 11,3% agree with this statement. 37% of the youth in this survey disagree with this statement, while 27, 8% agree.

41, 9% of the students agree with the statement “Integrating and incorporating elements from European cultures into my own is crucial to building a more inclusive and diverse community or society”, while 4, 8% strongly disagree. 50% of the youth are neutral



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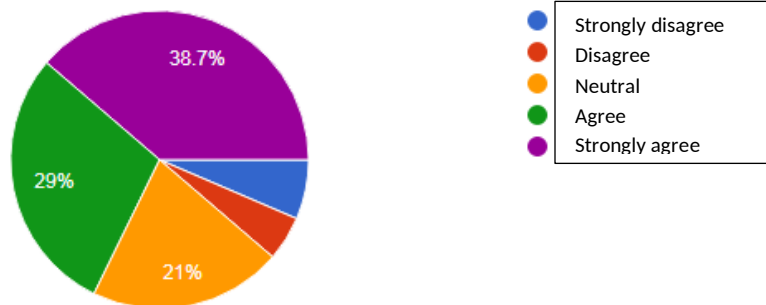
according to this statement, while 33, 3% agree, 11, 1% disagree and only 1, 9% strongly disagree with this statement.

On the statement “Since Bulgarian, Greek, Macedonian, Romanian, Serbian, and Turkish cultures intersect and influence each other in terms of language, customs, traditions, and values, I try to integrate aspects of these cultures into my own”, 46,8% agree with this statement, 1,6% strongly agree and 35,5% disagree. 46,3% from youth are neutral according to this statement, 27, 8% agree, 24, 1 % disagree, while only 1, 9% strongly disagree with the statement.

“I want the EU to expand by accepting new countries from the Balkan Peninsula”, 67,7% of students agree or strongly agree with this statement, 21% are neutral, while 4,8% disagree.

Figure 11 “I want the EU to expand by accepting new countries from the Balkan Peninsula” - responses from students (14-18)

62 responses

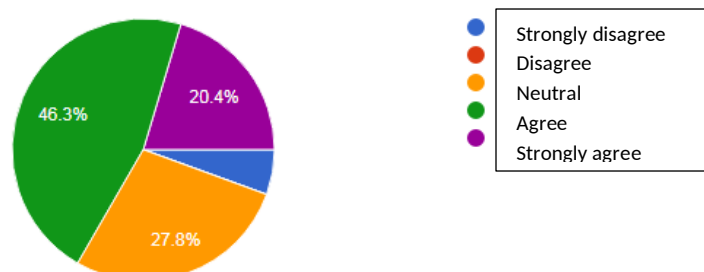


Source: Survey results

46,3% of youth agree with this statement, 20,4% strongly agree and only 5,6% disagree (Figure 12).

Figure 12 “I want the EU to expand by accepting new countries from the Balkan Peninsula” - responses from youth

54 responses





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Source: Survey results

“Food serves as a point of connection between the Balkan peoples, 50% of the students strongly agree, 37,1% agree and 12,9% are neutral. Among youth, the situation is as follows: 50% agree, 27,8% are neutral and only 1,9% are strongly disagree.

For the statement “The differences in religion between Balkan nations have contributed to conflicts or divisions between Balkan societies” 75,9% of students agree and strongly agree and only 3,2% strongly disagree. 44,4 % of youth strongly agree and agree, 33,3% are neutral, 20,4 % disagree and only 1,9% strongly disagree with this statement.

On the question “What can contribute to good relations between the Balkan countries in the future? (Choose the three most appropriate responses in your opinion)” students valed the most: Visiting and getting to know better other Balkan countries (66,1%), Increasing awareness of mutual respect and feeling of closeness and togetherness (50%) and Economic cooperation and exchange (48,4%).

The situation is similar among youth: Increasing awareness of mutual respect and feeling of closeness and togetherness (59,3%) and Economic cooperation and exchange (50%) and Demonstrating sincerity, empathy and friendship to other Balkan nations (46,3%).

On the question “Choose five of the distinguishing characteristics below that best describes, in your opinion, a European” the students chose: Human rights (69,4%), Collaboration (58,1%), Freedom (54,8%), Equality (48,4%) and High living standard (48,4%) and Democracy (43,5%). Situation with the youth is following: Human rights (77,8%) and High living standard (77,8%), Freedom (57,4%), Security (48,1%) and Environmental protection and sustainable development (40,3%), Equality (40,7%) and Collaboration (40,7%).

On the question “Choose five of the distinguishing characteristics below that best describe term Macedonian, students choose this 5 characteristics: Low living standards (82,3%), Conflict (72,6%), Democracy (69,4%), Freedom (64,5%) and Human Rights (40,3%) and Racism (40,3%). Youth choose this 5 characteristics: Low living standards (84,9%), Freedom (58,5%), Conflict (58,5%), Security (32,1%), Racism (32,1%) and Democracy (30,2%).

### Case Summary<sup>a</sup>

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
\$BalkanCooperation <sup>b</sup>	162	100,0%	0	0,0%	162	100,0%
\$EUCharacteristics <sup>b</sup>	162	100,0%	0	0,0%	162	100,0%



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\$NationalCharacteristics <sup>b</sup>	161	99,4%	1	,6%	162	100,0%
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a. Country: = Macedonia

b. Group

## \$BalkanCooperation Frequencies<sup>a</sup>

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
BalkanCooperation <sup>b</sup>	Economic cooperation and exchange	81	17,2%	50,0%
	Cultural cooperation	56	11,9%	34,6%
	Intercultural education in schools	34	7,2%	21,0%
	Non-interference of great powers	40	8,5%	24,7%
	Regional association based on common needs and interests	41	8,7%	25,3%
	Increasing awareness of mutual respect and feeling of closeness and togetherness	82	17,4%	50,6%
	Visiting and getting to know better other Balkan countries	82	17,4%	50,6%
	Demonstrating sincerity, empathy, and friendship with other Balkan nations	56	11,9%	34,6%



Total	472	100,0%	29
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a. Country: = Macedonia

b. Group

**\$EUCharacteristics Frequencies<sup>a</sup>**

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
EUCharacteristics <sup>b</sup>	Freedom	91	11,8%	56,2%
	Democracy	67	8,7%	41,4%
	Human rights	118	15,3%	72,8%
	Environmental protection and sustainable development	65	8,4%	40,1%
	Support for vulnerable groups and assistance for disadvantaged individuals	50	6,5%	30,9%
	Equality	74	9,6%	45,7%
	High living standards	90	11,6%	55,6%
	Low living standards	13	1,7%	8,0%
	Security	67	8,7%	41,4%
	Cooperation	77	10,0%	47,5%
	Conflict	23	3,0%	14,2%
	Racism	28	3,6%	17,3%
	Dictatorship	10	1,3%	6,2%
Total		773	100,0%	477,2%

a. Country: = Macedonia

b. Group

**\$NationalCharacteristics Frequencies<sup>a</sup>**





		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
National Characteristics <sup>b</sup>	Freedom	101	13,7%	62,7%
	Democracy	92	12,5%	57,1%
	Human rights	50	6,8%	31,1%
	Environmental protection and sustainable development	16	2,2%	9,9%
	Support for vulnerable groups and assistance for disadvantaged individuals	24	3,3%	14,9%
	Equality	33	4,5%	20,5%
	High living standards	6	,8%	3,7%
	Low living standards	135	18,3%	83,9%
	Security	46	6,3%	28,6%
	Cooperation	40	5,4%	24,8%
	Conflict	108	14,7%	67,1%
	Racism	60	8,2%	37,3%
	Dictatorship	25	3,4%	15,5%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>736</b>	<b>100,0%</b>

a. Country: = Macedonia

b. Group

## 6. Summary



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Most of the young people 15-29 from North Macedonia and youth believe that the cultural differences between their and European culture are unimportant and everyone should conform to one set of cultural norms and values. They also consider that there are significant differences between Bulgarian/Greek/Macedonian/Romanian/Serbian/Turkish cultures.

What is particularly significant is that the majority of students and youth who were included in survey consider it essential to defend and preserve their cultural values and beliefs when interacting with people from European cultures. Also, most of the respondents (students and youth) are interested in defending their cultural practices and traditions when they meet a person from Bulgarian, Greek, Romanian, Serbian and Turkish culture.

Both students and youth from N. Macedonia, when interacting with people from European cultures, try to understand and respect their values, beliefs and behaviors, even though they differ from their own. They try to find a common language and respect diversity when faced with the cultural differences between Bulgarian, Greek, Macedonian, Romanian, Serbian and Turkish culture.

It is essential for students and young people from N. Macedonia to adapt and adjust their communication and behavior when interacting with people from European cultures in order to effectively communicate and cooperate with them. They also tend to adapt their behavior or communication style to fit into these cultures by avoiding their cultural practices and expectations.

Most of the respondents (students and youth) included in this survey want the EU to expand by accepting new countries from the Balkan Peninsula. Both students and youth believe that food serves as a point of connection between the Balkan peoples.

Most of the surveyed students and youth think that: visiting and getting to know better other Balkan countries, increasing awareness of mutual respect and feeling of closeness and togetherness and Economic cooperation and exchange, can contribute to good relations between the Balkan countries in the future.