



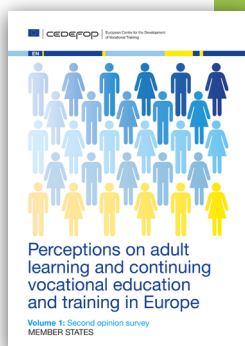
Chapter 4. **PERCEPTIONS: ACCESS**

Perceptions on adult learning and continuing vocational education and training in Europe

Volume 1: Second opinion survey

MEMBER STATES

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CHAPTER 4.

Perceptions: access

The survey shows that information provision in Member States about adult learning and continuing vocational education and training (CVET) opportunities is good overall; most respondents in all countries seem aware of them. The positive image of adult learning and CVET extends to perceptions of availability and access.

This chapter examines public awareness of and access to adult learning and CVET. It also discusses barriers to participation and perceptions of measures to overcome them.

Reflecting views on their importance, most respondents in all Member States had looked for information about adult learning and CVET opportunities in the 12 months prior to the survey. Generally, Member States have made information easy to find through many different sources, which people use to various degrees and combine in different ways in different countries, with the internet being the most popular source of information. However, people feel less well-informed about the availability of opportunities for work-related adult learning and CVET.

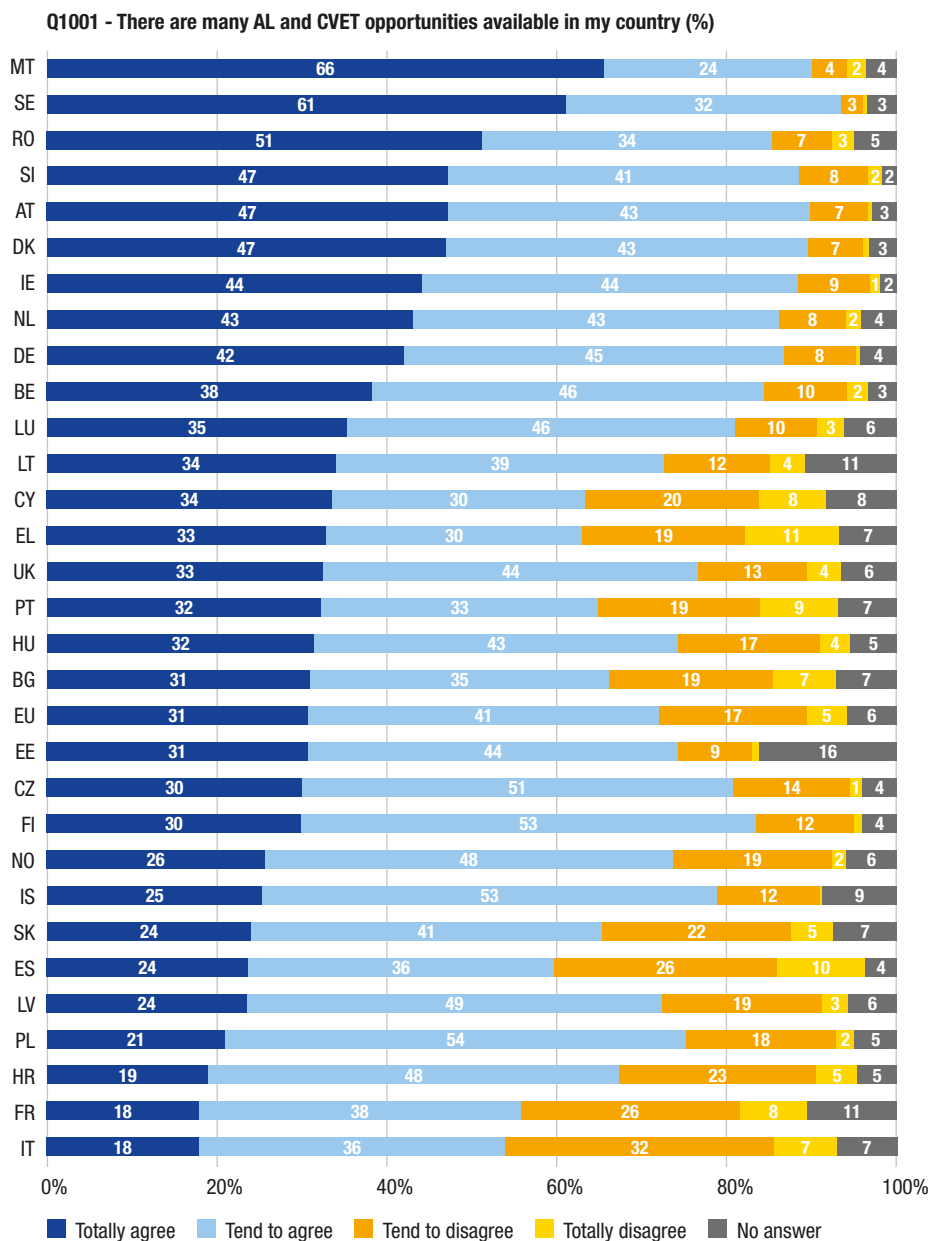
Member States provide various types of support for people to encourage participation in adult learning and CVET. However, in almost all countries family and friends remain the principal source of support. There is also strong support for measures to overcome barriers to participating in adult learning and CVET in Member States. However, the main reason that people in all Member States do not participate in adult learning and CVET is that they see no need to do so.

4.1. Opportunities, information and guidance

Some 72% of all respondents agree that there are many adult learning and CVET opportunities in their country (31% totally agree; 41% agree) (Figure 20).

Most respondents totally agree in Malta (66%) and Sweden (61%), followed by Romania (51%) and Denmark, Austria and Slovenia (all 47%).

Figure 20. **Access: available opportunities, country**
(EU-28, Iceland and Norway)



Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

Respondents in Italy are most likely to disagree (39%), followed by Spain (36%), France (34%) and Greece (31%).

Most respondents (55%) had looked for information on adult learning and CVET opportunities in the last 12 months (Figure 21). Specifically, 19% had often looked, 21% sometimes and 15% rarely.

In the 12 months preceding the survey most respondents had looked for information on learning and training 'often'. Respondents in Czechia (24%) and Spain and Romania (both 23%) are most likely to have 'often' looked for information on adult learning and CVET opportunities in the last 12 months. The proportion of respondents who have looked for information 'often' or 'sometimes' is highest in Spain (52%) and Ireland (50%) and lowest in France (24%), Denmark (28%) and Norway (29%).

Respondents in France (65%) are the most likely not to have looked for information in the last 12 months, followed by Denmark (57%), Lithuania (56%) and Bulgaria (55%).

Countries where respondents are least likely to have often looked for information are also those with the highest levels of actual participation (including Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden) ⁽¹¹⁾. This may suggest either that personal efforts to search for information on adult learning and CVET do not necessarily influence rates of participation, or that these countries have active information policies that give information to people rather than just making it available for people to go and find.

Most respondents (66%) agree that it is easy to find information on adult learning and CVET opportunities (Figure 22); some 27% disagree. Respondents in Malta (60%) and Romania (47%) are the most likely to totally agree that it is easy to find information. Those in France (44%) and Spain (41%) are most likely to disagree.

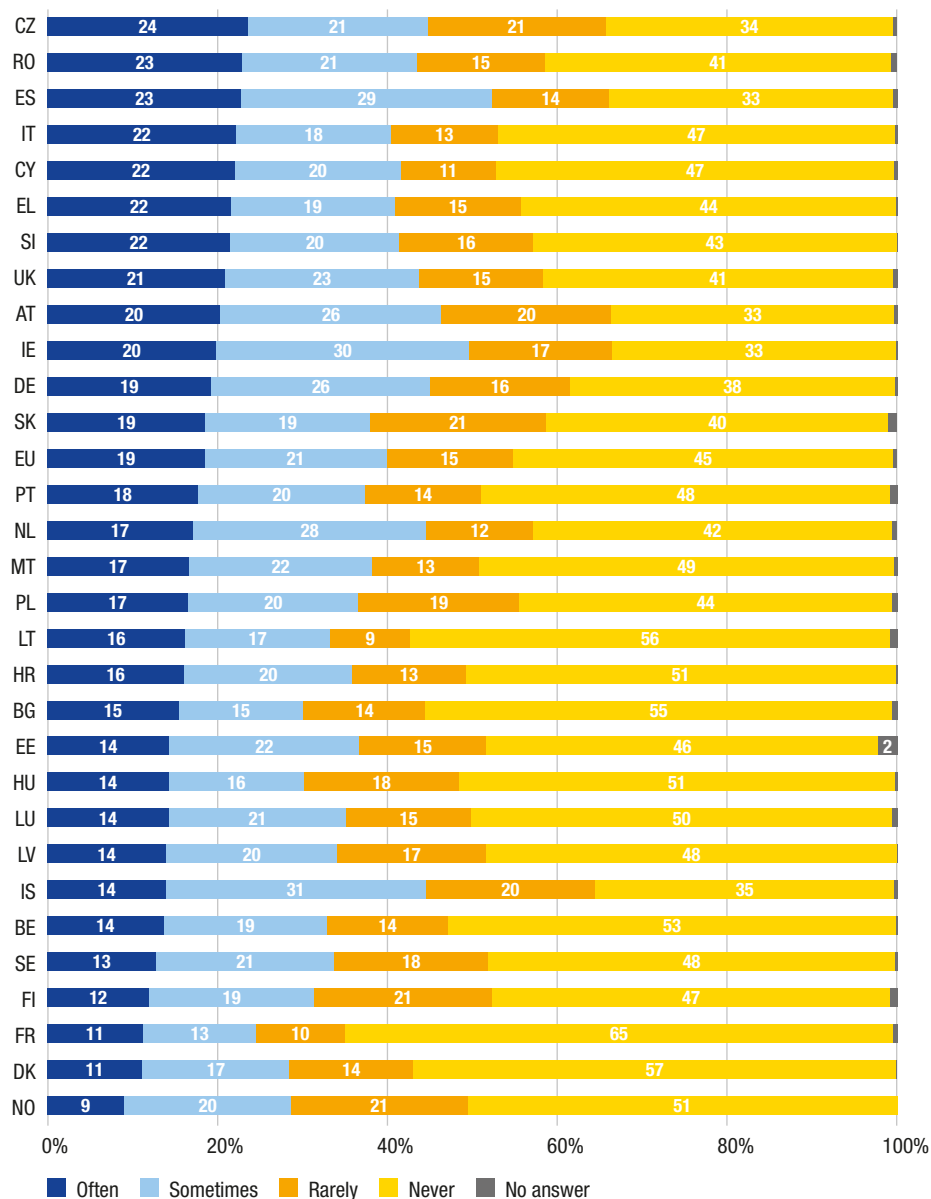
Some 61% of respondents agree that suitable work-related training activities are easily available; 31% disagree (Figure 23). Respondents in Malta (55%) are most likely to totally agree, followed by Romania (45%), Sweden (36%) and Cyprus (32%). Disagreement is highest in Italy (45%) and Greece (42%).

Respondents' perceptions are mixed over how well-informed they feel about work-related training and how accessible training opportunities are (Figure 24). Some 60% of respondents in the EU totally agree or agree that they are well-informed about organised work-related training activities; 34% disagree.

⁽¹¹⁾ Based on Eurostat data on participation in adult learning from 17 May 2019.
<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/DDN-20190517-1>

Figure 21. **Access: looked for information in the past 12 months, country (EU-28, Iceland and Norway)**

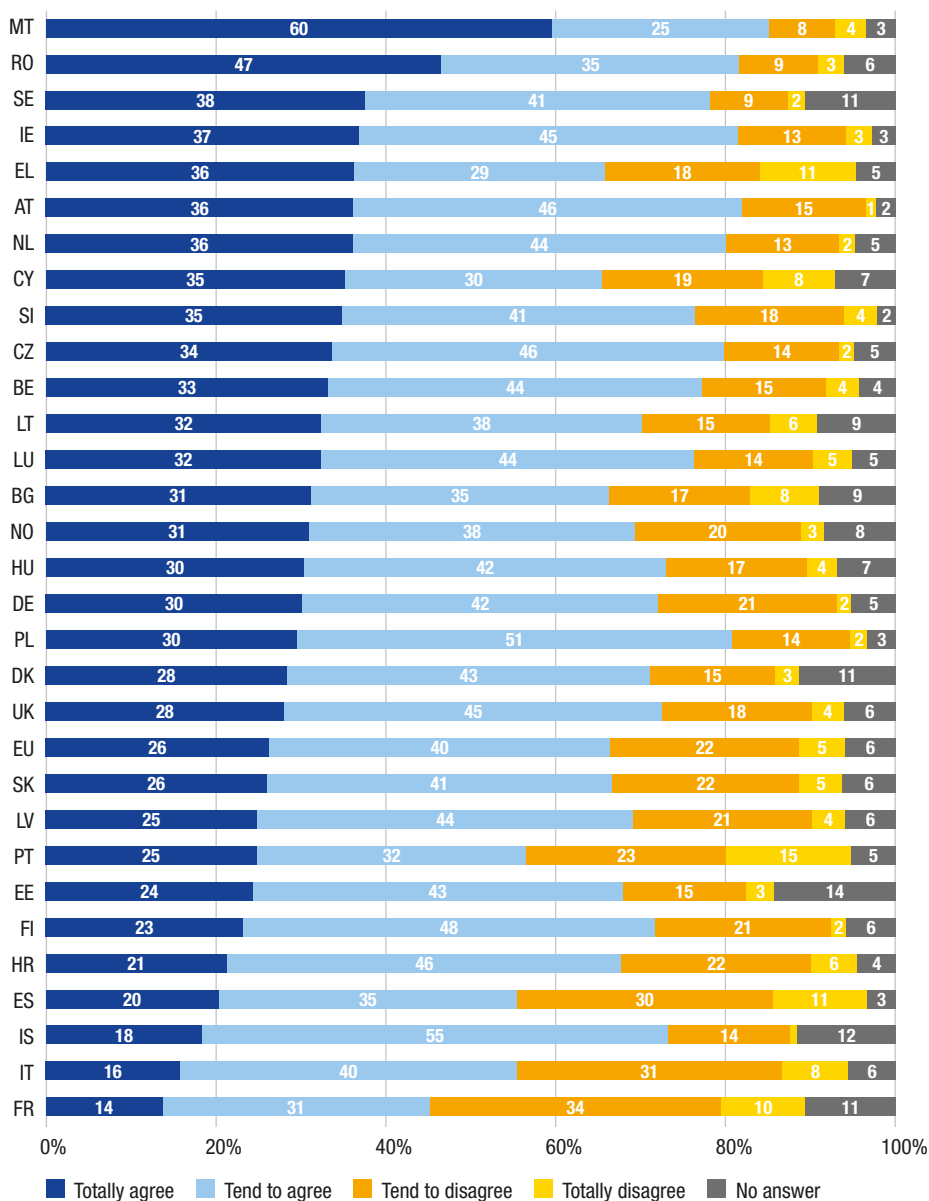
Q1600 - How often have you looked for information on learning and training opportunities in the last 12 months? (%)



Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

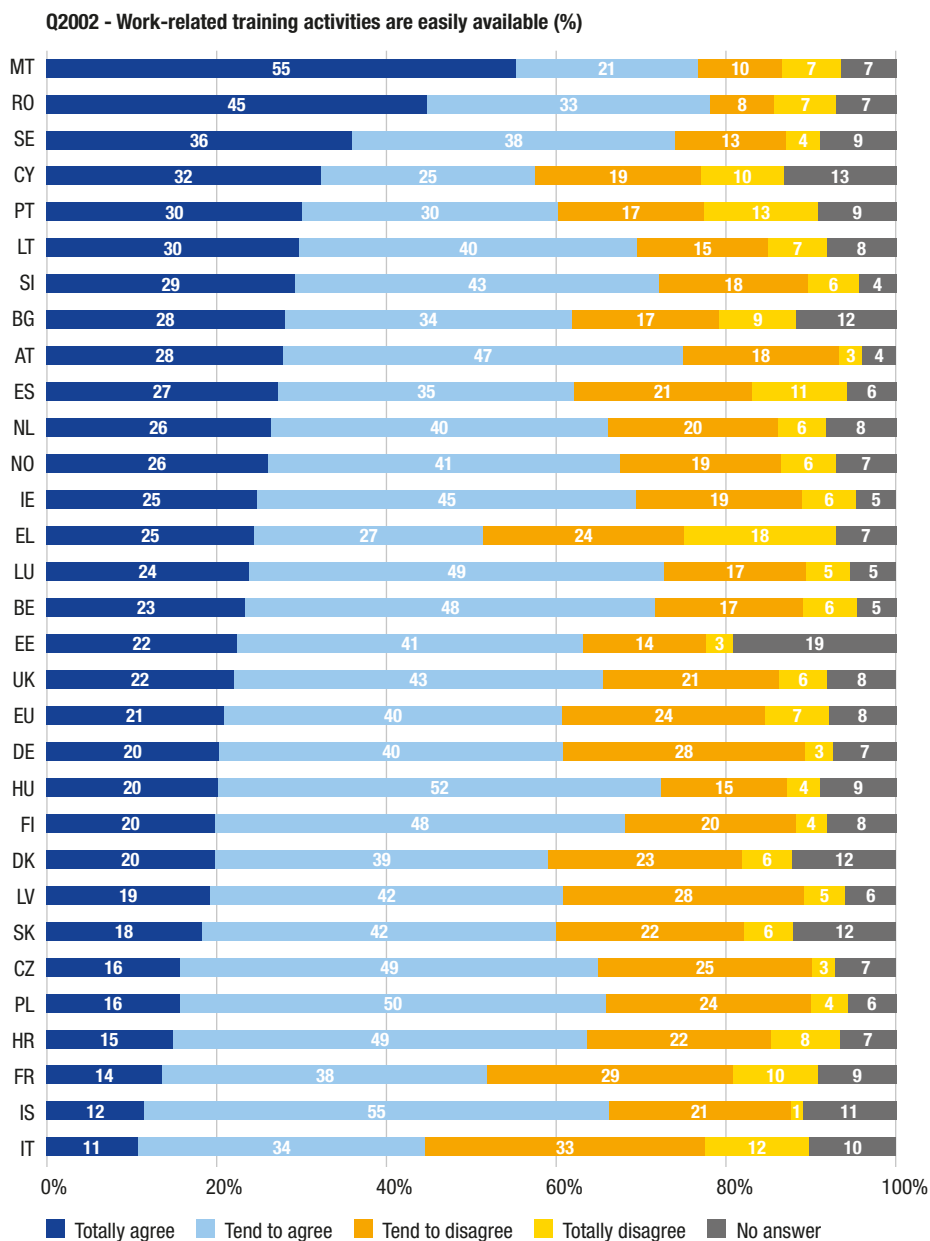
Figure 22. **Access: ease of finding information, country (EU-28, Iceland and Norway)**

Q1002 - It is easy to find information on AL and CVET opportunities (%)



Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

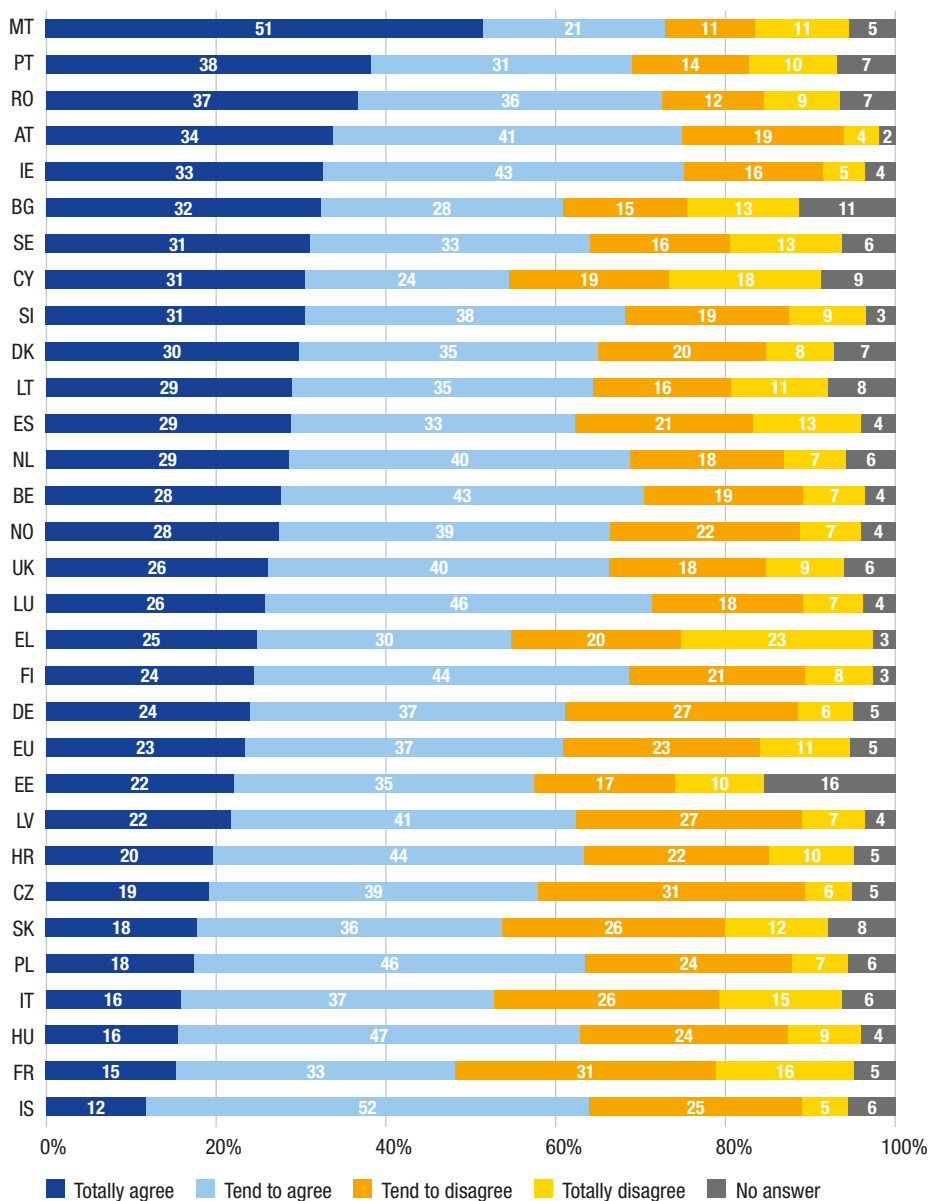
Figure 23. **Access: availability of work-organised activities, country (EU-28, Iceland and Norway)**



Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

Figure 24. **Access: well-informed about organised work-related activities, anything, country (EU-28, Iceland and Norway)**

Q2001 - I feel well informed about work-related training (%)



Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

In Malta, 51% of respondents totally agree that they are well-informed followed by Portugal (38%), Romania (37%), Austria (34%) and Ireland (33%). Levels of disagreement are highest in France (47%), Greece (43%) and Italy (41%).

When given the option of multiple answers, 63% of respondents in the EU-28 Member States said that the internet is the best source of advice about adult learning and CVET, followed by local colleges or universities (47%) and professional or sector associations (43%) (Table 3).

The internet is seen as giving the best advice about adult learning and CVET in all countries except Romania, where professional or sector associations come first with 48%. Respondents in Poland (82%), Czechia (81%), the UK (80%) and Iceland (78%) are most likely to say that they would get the best advice about adult learning and CVET from the internet. Only in Romania (31%), Italy (39%), Portugal (43%), Croatia (48%) and Bulgaria (49%) do less than half of respondents say the internet would give them the best advice.

These multiple answers indicate that people combine sources, using the internet as the first contact point and to filter information. How information sources are combined varies considerably between countries.

Respondents in the UK (71%), Ireland (70%), Belgium and Iceland (both 64%) and Czechia and Germany (both 63%) are most likely to combine the internet with advice on adult learning and CVET obtained from a local college or university. In contrast, Estonia (13%), Lithuania (16%), Hungary (18%), Slovakia (19%) and Italy and Latvia (both 20%) are least likely to consult local colleges or universities.

In Germany (63%), Luxembourg (61%), Belgium (58%), France (55%) and Ireland (52%) more than half of respondents say that professional or sector associations give the best advice about adult learning and CVET. In contrast, only a few agree in Lithuania (7%), Estonia (12%), Croatia (13%), Hungary (14%) and Slovakia (15%).

4.2. Support

Some 52% of respondents see family as the best form of financial or practical support if they want to take part in training, followed by an employer (39%), government (31%), professional or sector associations (29%), friends or colleagues (27%), employment agencies (23%) and trade unions (15%) (Table 4).

Table 3. **Access: guidance about learning, country (EU-28, Iceland and Norway)**

Q1101 Q1112	On the internet (08)	Local college or university (09)	Professional or sector associations (07)	Friends or colleagues (03)
EU-28	63	47	43	41
BE	76	64	58	56
BG	49	29	22	42
CZ	81	63	49	64
DK	61	49	41	39
DE	72	63	63	50
EE	71	13	12	27
IE	75	70	52	60
EL	58	37	18	34
ES	60	51	44	42
FR	56	40	55	37
HR	48	30	13	30
IT	39	20	23	13
CY	54	30	20	20
LV	68	20	17	39
LT	60	16	7	25
LU	72	54	61	44
HU	64	18	14	27
MT	52	30	18	21
NL	75	60	43	44
AT	64	53	43	39
PL	82	41	24	49
PT	43	41	38	39
RO	31	34	48	33
SI	67	41	23	41
SK	58	19	15	35
FI	72	39	23	34
SE	69	52	37	45
UK	80	71	49	55
IS	78	64	47	58
NO	65	43	21	32

Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

An employment agency (excluding temporary job agencies) (04)	Your employer (01)	Your family (02)	The government (other public administration services than employment agency) (05)	Trade Unions (06)
30	30	27	27	20
55	40	36	50	32
25	18	25	8	6
45	42	43	28	18
35	32	26	9	51
36	43	31	36	35
33	13	13	3	3
38	39	42	46	16
15	12	25	17	12
31	26	32	29	31
43	36	22	35	18
26	10	13	4	3
12	7	6	5	11
13	10	14	19	6
43	18	19	8	7
16	12	11	7	4
50	43	29	61	35
11	18	15	24	3
18	16	23	25	8
32	47	27	34	20
32	31	27	30	29
19	21	26	25	10
30	38	33	22	17
41	30	42	17	11
25	21	27	8	7
26	17	21	7	6
38	20	16	17	21
24	27	23	21	24
29	43	38	38	20
32	36	42	20	47
10	25	18	27	26

Table 4. **Access: support for participation, country**
(EU-28, Iceland and Norway)

Q1201-Q1219	Your family (02)	Your employer (01)	The government (other public administration services than employment agency) (05)
EU-28	52	39	31
BE	61	46	48
BG	67	24	8
CZ	70	68	34
DK	47	45	16
DE	62	53	44
EE	35	33	7
IE	64	48	47
EL	63	16	16
ES	60	31	30
FR	41	39	40
HR	68	19	6
IT	33	12	12
CY	53	12	20
LV	59	32	14
LT	37	22	6
LU	56	52	60
HU	56	30	21
MT	45	23	41
NL	54	60	39
AT	55	44	39
PL	53	34	24
PT	49	40	22
RO	59	29	18
SI	69	36	7
SK	51	30	6
FI	47	27	21
SE	43	37	42
UK	52	53	40
IS	65	49	14
NO	32	46	36

Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

Professional or sector associations (07)	Friends or colleagues (03)	An employment agency (excluding temporary job agencies) (04)	Trade Unions (06)
29	27	23	15
42	40	41	26
13	26	15	5
42	41	42	22
31	33	26	43
38	36	33	24
5	10	28	2
34	42	26	12
9	20	9	7
28	26	20	21
42	24	37	13
6	17	11	2
22	8	7	6
7	7	5	3
11	19	24	6
5	18	13	3
45	39	45	28
8	17	7	3
13	12	12	6
21	27	17	12
28	30	30	27
19	36	16	9
23	24	19	10
31	22	23	7
12	24	15	5
9	20	21	5
14	27	31	17
21	18	13	16
37	35	21	17
36	37	15	64
11	11	3	20

In most countries, respondents see family as the best support option. Exceptions are the Netherlands, Norway and the UK where an employer is regarded as most likely to offer support; France, where it is professional or sector associations and Luxembourg, where government is the most frequent response.

Respondents regard family as the best support option notably in Czechia (70%), Slovenia (69%), Croatia (68%) and Bulgaria (67%). The proportion is lowest in Norway (32%), Italy (33%), Estonia (35%) and Lithuania (37%).

In five countries, more than half of respondents say that their employer would offer the most support if they wanted to take part in training: Czechia (68%), the Netherlands (60%), Germany and the UK (both 53%) and Luxembourg (52%). Respondents are least likely to say they would be supported by an employer in Cyprus and Italy (both 12%), Greece (16%) and Croatia (19%).

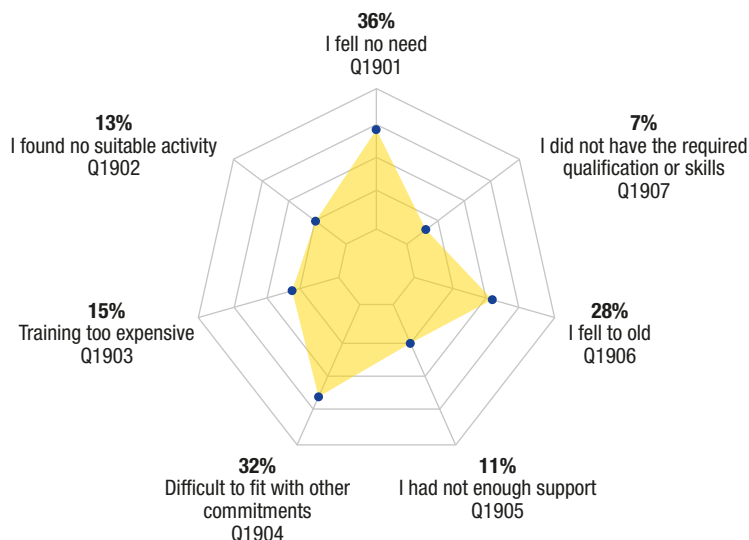
Countries vary in their perceptions of government's role in providing support for training. Respondents are most likely to say that the government would offer support in Luxembourg (60%), Belgium (48%), Ireland (47%) and Germany (44%). However, fewer than one in 10 respondents say this in Croatia, Lithuania and Slovakia (all 6%), Slovenia and Estonia (both 7%) and Bulgaria (8%).

4.3. Measures to encourage participation

Section 2.2 discussed why adults learn. This section, in the context of access, considers why adults do not participate in adult learning and CVET and what measures may encourage them to do so.

Respondents who had not taken part in any organised training in the past year were asked why. The three most common reasons respondents give are that they do not need any training (36%), it is difficult to fit in with other commitments (32%) and that they feel too old (28%) (Figure 25). Less frequent responses are that training is too expensive (15%), a lack of suitable opportunities (13%), insufficient support (11%) and lacking the right skills or qualifications (7%).

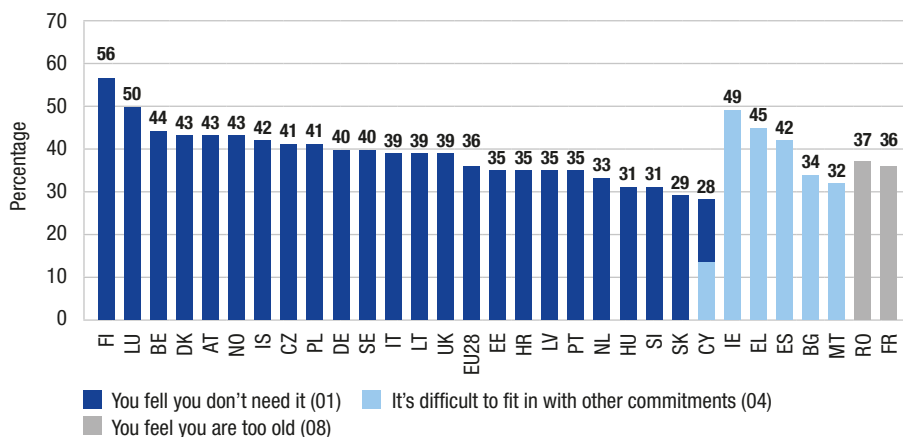
In 22 countries, the most frequent reason respondents give for not taking part in organised training is that they feel they do not need it (Figure 26). Respondents are most likely to give this reason in Finland (56%) and Luxembourg (50%). In five countries, the most common reason is difficulties

Figure 25. **Access: reasons for non-participation, overall**

Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

Figure 26. **Access: reasons for non-participation, country (EU-28, Iceland and Norway)**

Q1901-Q1910/Q19 - You said you have not taken part in any organised training in the last year. What were the main reason for this? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)
(% - Most answered question per country)



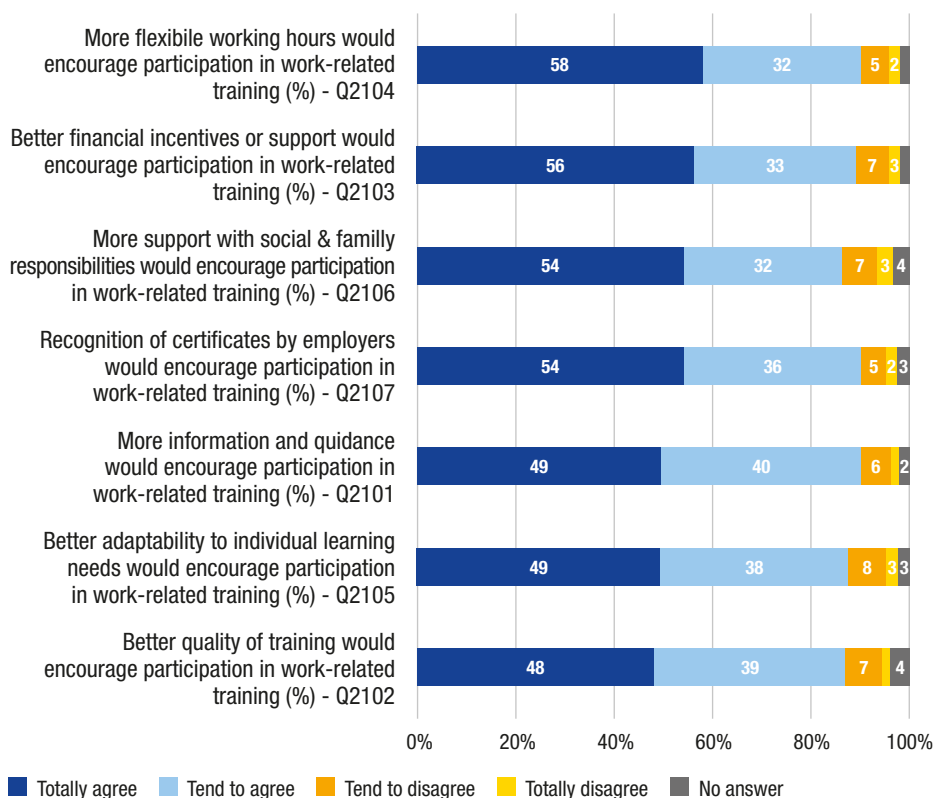
Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

fitting in training with other commitments, with the highest proportions in Ireland (49%), Greece (45%) and Spain (42%). In Cyprus, the answers no need and difficult to fit in with other commitments are joint highest. In Romania (37%) and France (36%) feeling too old is the most common reason for not taking part in organised training.

Respondents were positive about measures to encourage more adults to participate in work-related learning and training (Figure 27). Some 58% totally agree that flexible working hours or time off work to learn would encourage people to participate; 56% that people would be encouraged by

Figure 27. **Access: measures to encourage participation in training, overall**

Q21 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding work-related learning and training participation (EU-28)



Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

financial incentives or support; 54% by certification of learning and training recognised by employers; and 54% through support with childcare and other caring responsibilities.

Just under half of respondents totally agree that the following would encourage more adults to participate in work-related learning and training: more information and guidance (49%); being able to adapt the learning to individual needs (49%); and better-quality training (48%).

Respondents in Greece and Malta (both 79%) are most likely to totally agree that more information and guidance would encourage more adults to participate in work-related learning and training (Figure 28), followed by those in Cyprus (73%), Romania (70%) and Spain and Portugal (both 69%). Respondents are most likely to disagree in Czechia (13%), Germany, the Netherlands, Austria and Slovenia (all 12%).

Respondents in Greece and Malta (both 78%) are most likely to totally agree that better quality training would encourage more adults to participate in work-related learning and training, followed by those in Cyprus and Portugal (both 71%), Romania (70%) and Spain (68%) (Figure 29). Respondents are most likely to disagree in Germany and the Netherlands (both 15%) and Denmark and Slovenia (both 14%).

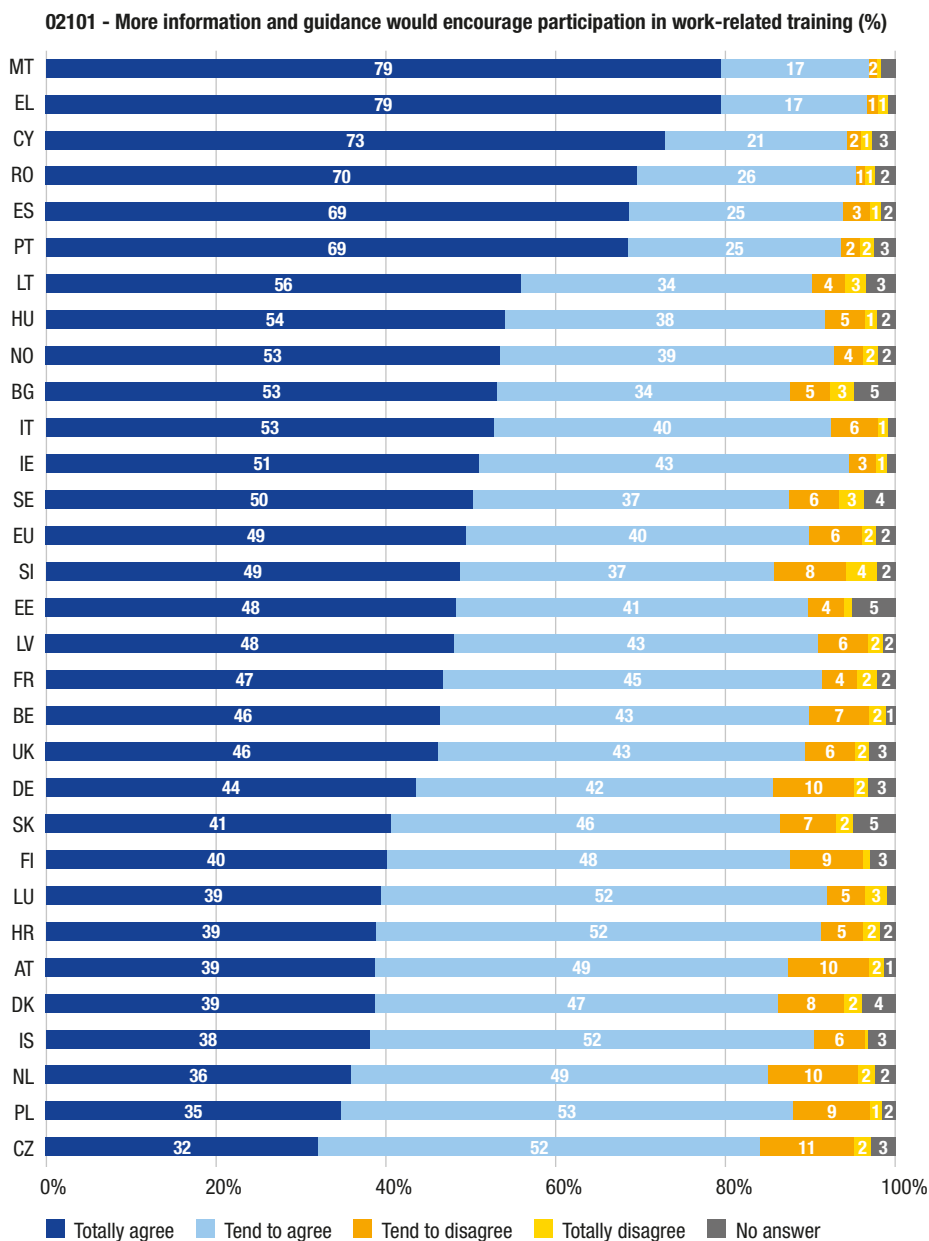
Overall, 56% of respondents totally agree that financial incentives or support would encourage greater participation in work-related learning and training (Figure 30). The highest level of total agreement is in Greece (81%), Malta (79%) and Cyprus (75%). In contrast, in six countries less than half of respondents totally agree: the Netherlands (43%), Luxembourg (45%), Denmark, France and Austria (all 47%) and Czechia (49%).

Some 58% of respondents totally agree that flexible working hours or time off work to learn would encourage more adults to participate in work-related learning and training (Figure 31).

The highest level of total agreement is in Malta (77%), Greece and Cyprus (both 72%), Spain (71%) and Portugal (70%). The highest levels of disagreement are in Austria (13%), France (12%) and Germany, the Netherlands and Slovenia (all 10%).

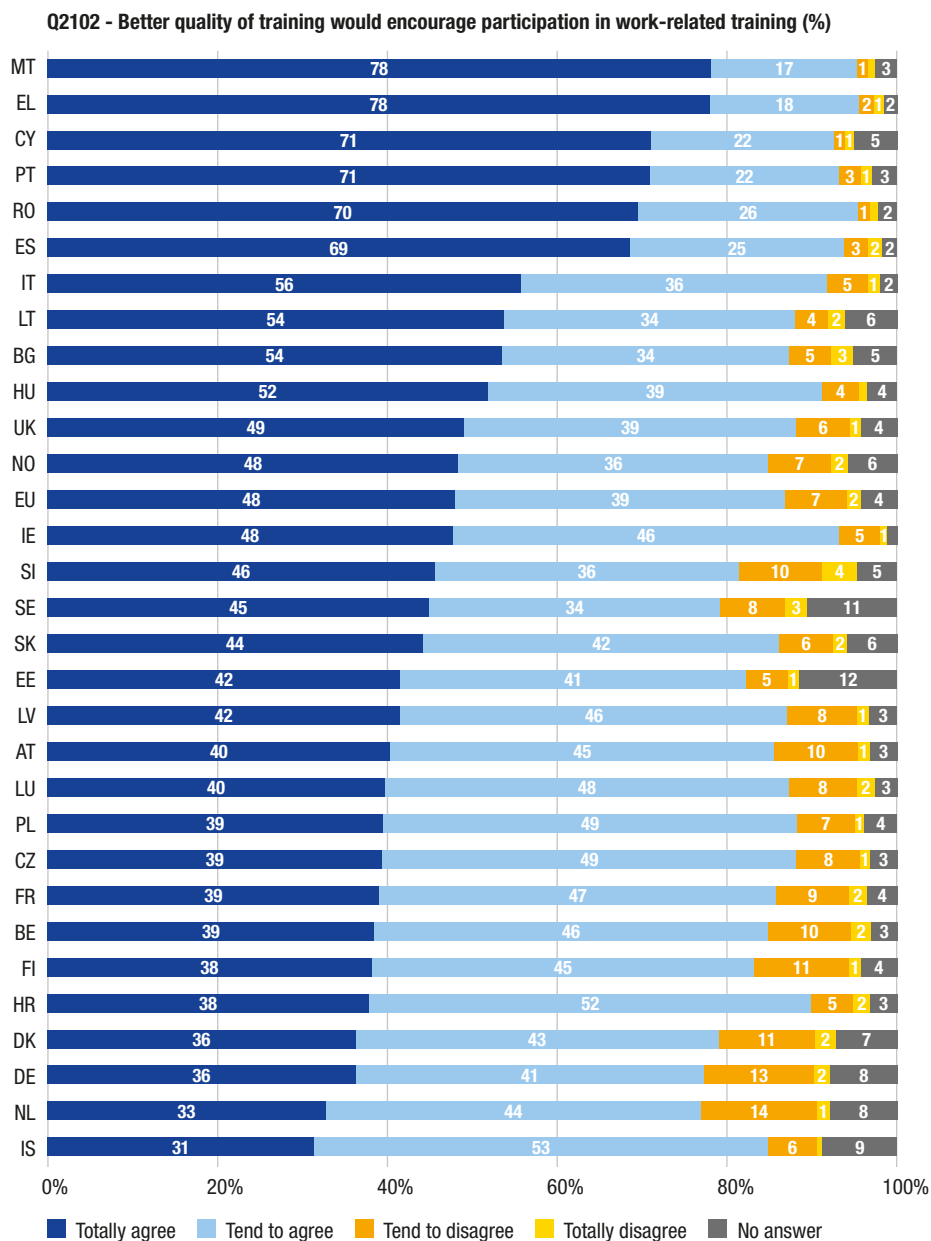
Some 49% of respondents totally agree that being able to adapt learning to individual needs would encourage more adults to participate in work-related learning and training (Figure 32). Respondents are most likely to totally agree in Malta (76%), Greece (70%), Spain and Cyprus (both 65%), Romania (64%), Sweden (63%) and Portugal (62%). The highest levels of disagreement are in Germany (16%), Belgium and France (both 13%) and Austria (12%).

Figure 28. **Access: need for more information and guidance, country (EU-28, Iceland and Norway)**



Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

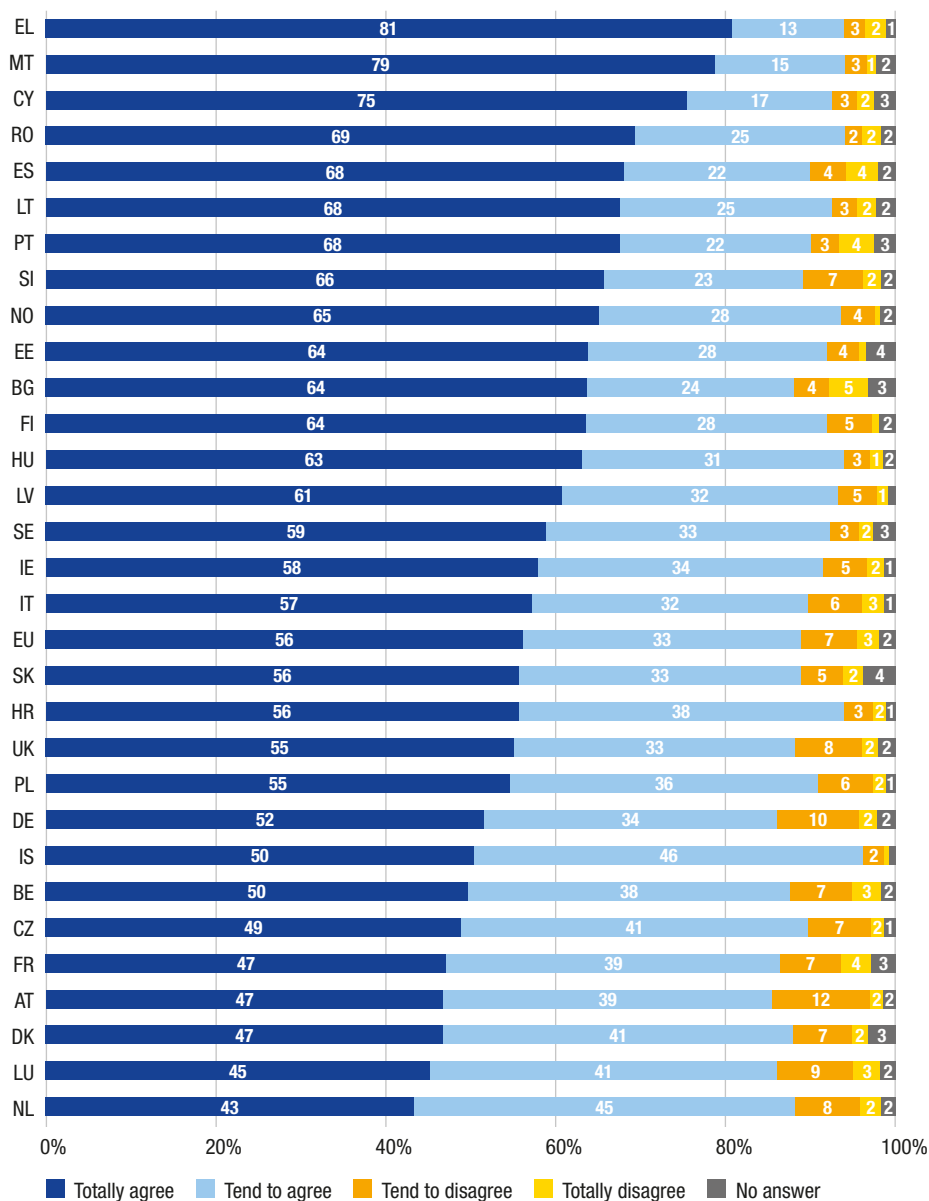
Figure 29. **Access: improve the quality of training, country**
(EU-28, Iceland and Norway)



Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

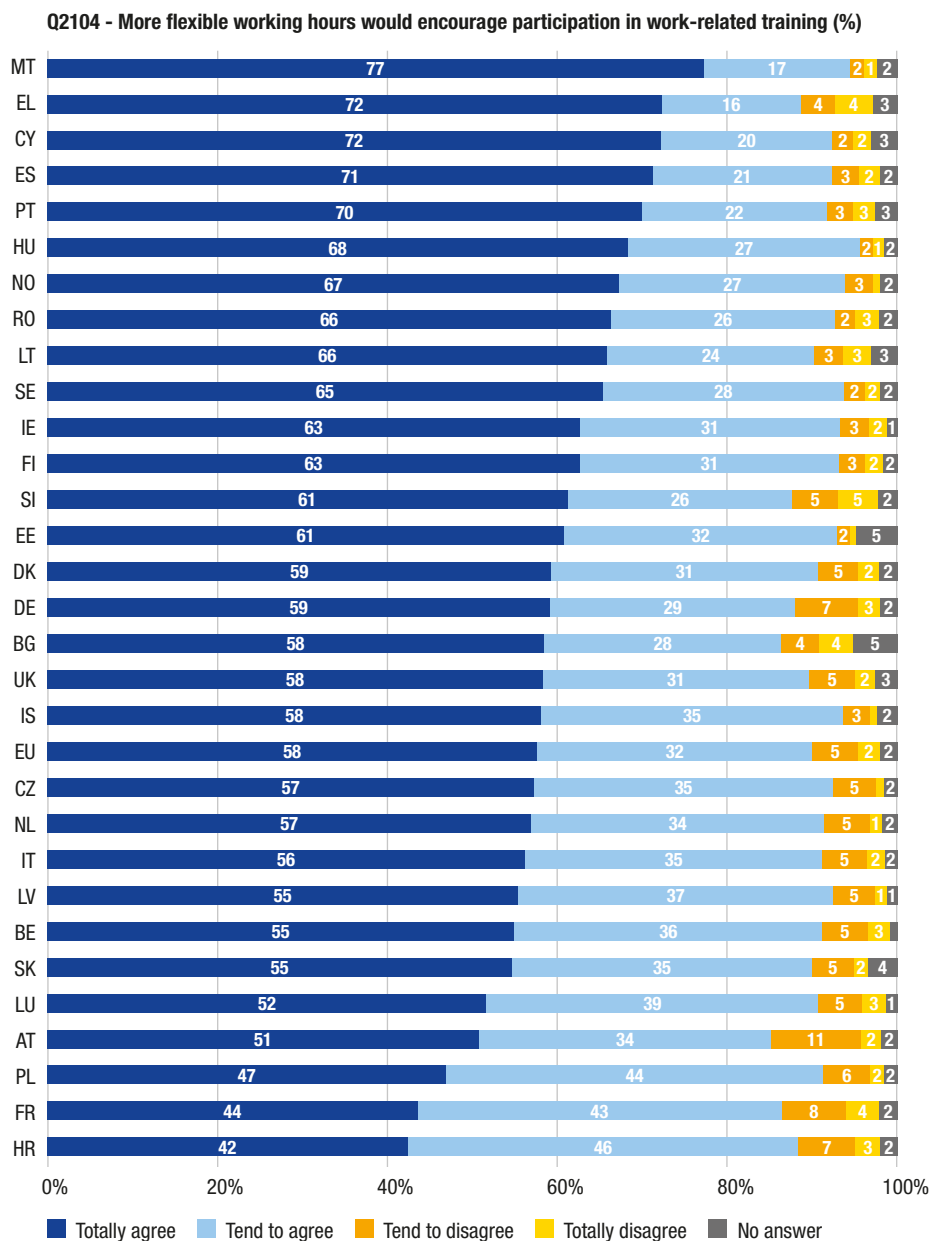
Figure 30. **Access: financial support, country**
(EU-28, Iceland and Norway)

Q2103 - Better financial incentives or support would encourage participation in work-related training (%)



Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

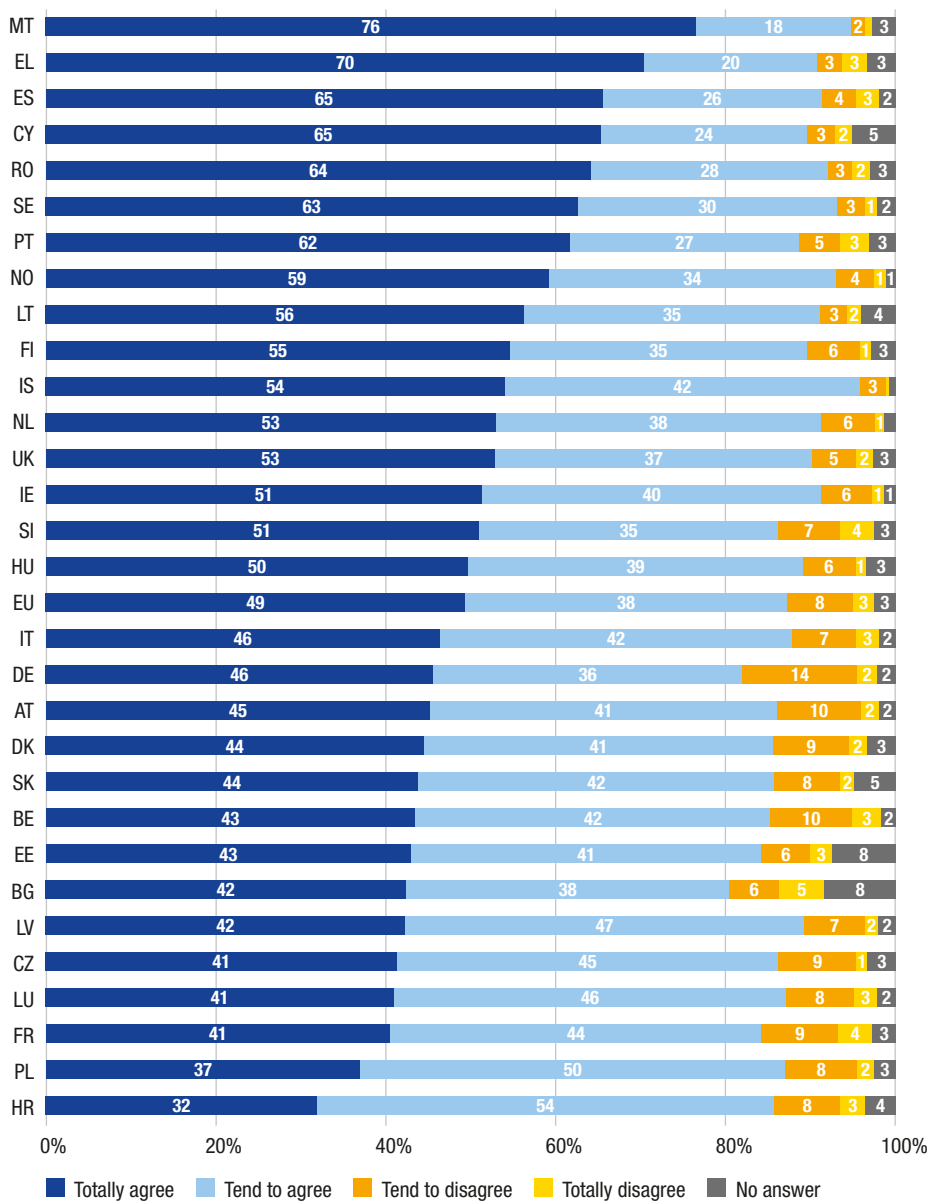
Figure 31. **Access: flexible working hours, country**
(EU-28, Iceland and Norway)



Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

Figure 32. **Access: adapting learning to individual needs, country**
(EU-28, Iceland and Norway)

Q2105 - Better adaptability to individual learning needs would encourage participation in work-related training (%)



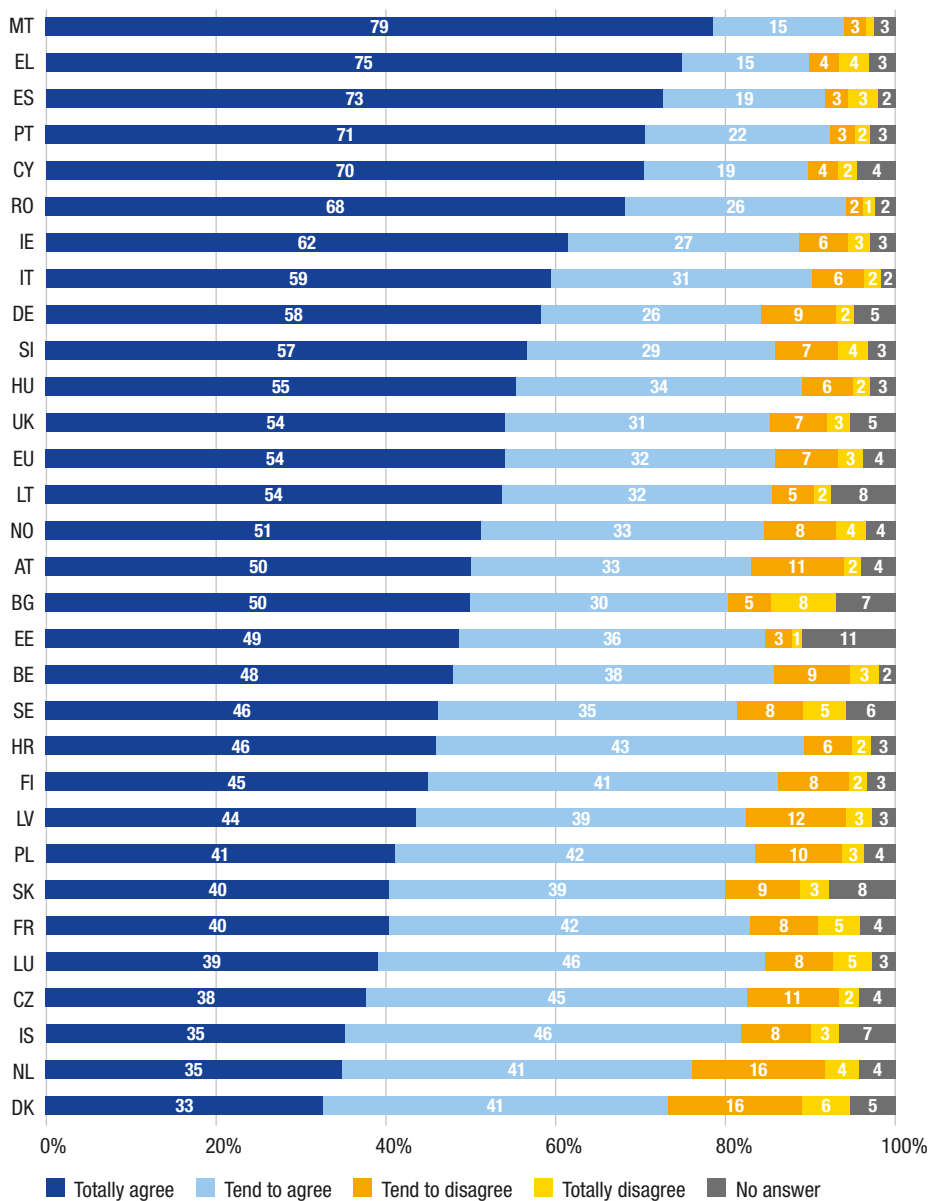
Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

Some 54% of respondents totally agree that participation in work-related learning and training would be encouraged by support with childcare and other caring responsibilities (Figure 33). In six countries more than two-thirds of respondents totally agree: Malta (79%), Greece (75%), Spain (73%), Portugal (71%), Cyprus (70%) and Romania (68%). Denmark (22%), the Netherlands (20%) and Latvia (15%) show relatively high levels of disagreement.

Some 54% of respondents totally agree that certification of learning and training recognised by employers would encourage more adults to participate in work-related learning and training (Figure 34). Respondents in Malta (77%), Spain (74%), Greece (73%), Cyprus (72%), Portugal (71%) and Romania (69%) are the most likely to totally agree. Finland (19%) has the fewest respondents who 'totally agree'.

Figure 33. **Access: support with childcare, country**
(EU-28, Iceland and Norway)

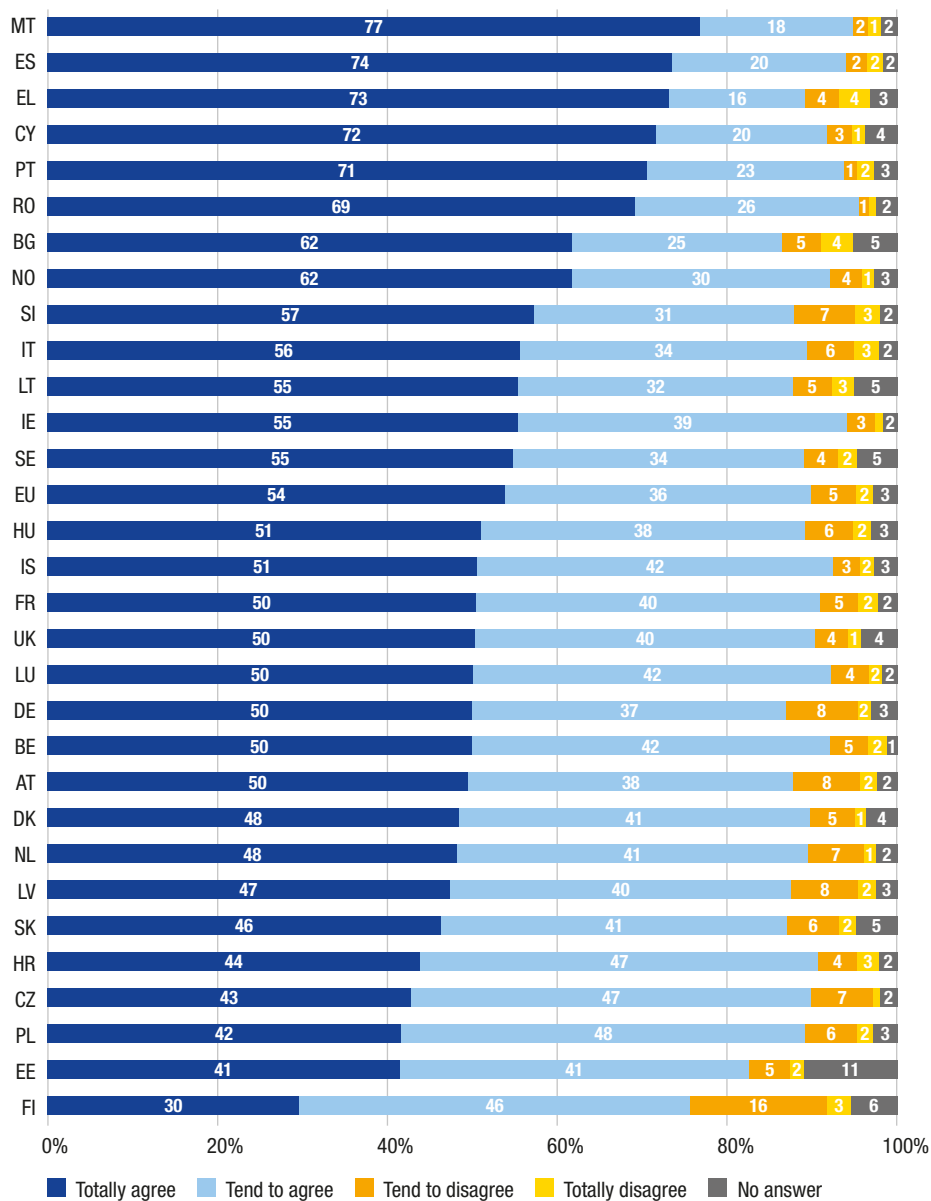
Q2106 - More support with social and family responsibilities would encourage participation in work-related training (%)



Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.

Figure 34. **Access: learning certificates recognised by employers, country (EU-28, Iceland and Norway)**

Q2107 - Recognition of certificates by employers would encourage participation in work-related training (%)



Source: Cedefop opinion survey on adult learning and CVET.