



## Analysis report of the Slovak climbing clubs

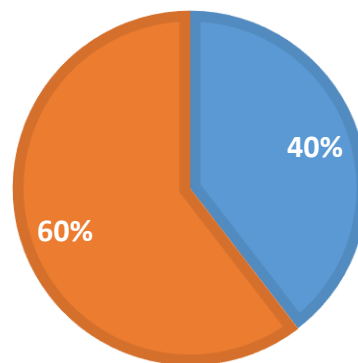
The survey was sent to 67 climbing clubs that are registered under the Slovak Mountaineering Union and in 2021 have at least one member 19 years old and younger. It is important to note that not all children and youth registered are active climbers. We received answers from 48 clubs (72%). Since we don't have all of the answers, the results can be incomplete.

Note: Some clubs found questions sensitive because of different reasons and therefore decided not to fill in the survey.

### GENERAL INFO

#### 1. Does your club specialize in any other activity (other than climbing)?

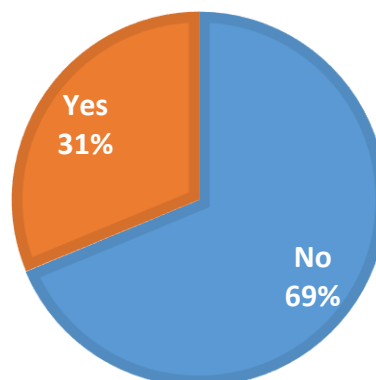
- No, we are focused only on climbing
- Yes (e.g. mountaineering, orientation, ski touring, etc.)



We can see from the graph that 40% of the participating clubs are strictly climbing clubs. 60% of the clubs are specializing in other sports as well.

#### 2. Is any member of your club part of some minority (e.g. ethnic minority, racial minority, religious minority, sexual minority, or disabled people)?

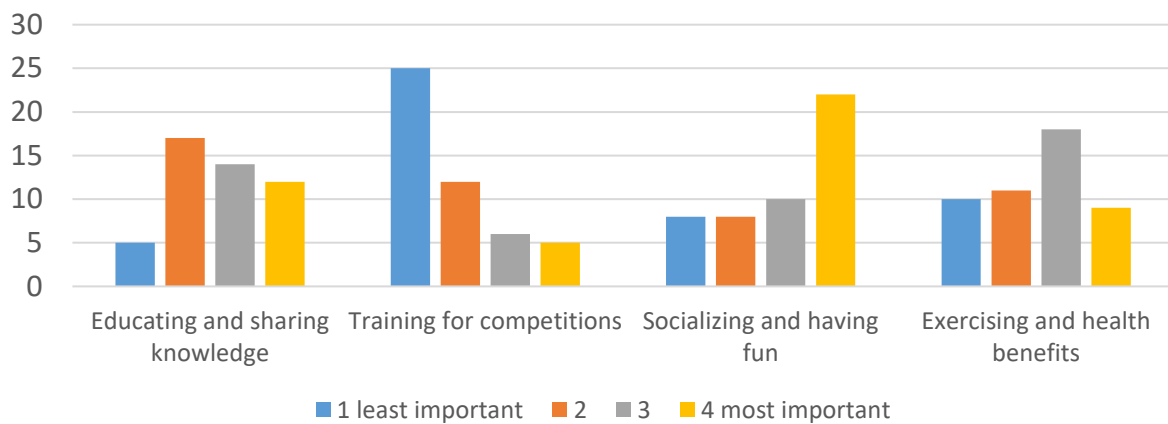
- No
- Yes



One third of the clubs state they have at least one member representing some minority. Minorities are not being excluded from the climbing community.



### 3. How would you prioritize your goals regarding young climbers in your club?

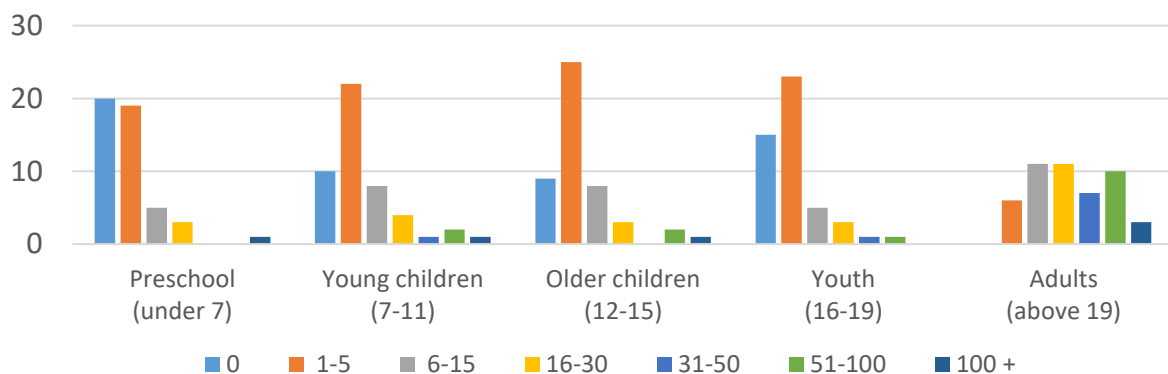


We can see from the answers that for most of the clubs, the focus is on socializing and having fun, while the least important goal is training for competitions. This could be partially explained by the fact mentioned in the first question, that the registered climbing clubs are not focused only on climbing and they see climbing clubs as an interesting way how to integrate youth into climbing community life and enjoy the beauty of this sport while having fun with friends.

'Educating and sharing knowledge' and 'Exercising and health benefits' are somewhere in the middle of prioritized goals.

## CLIMBING ACTIVITIES

### 4. Roughly estimate the number of climbers in your club in different age brackets:

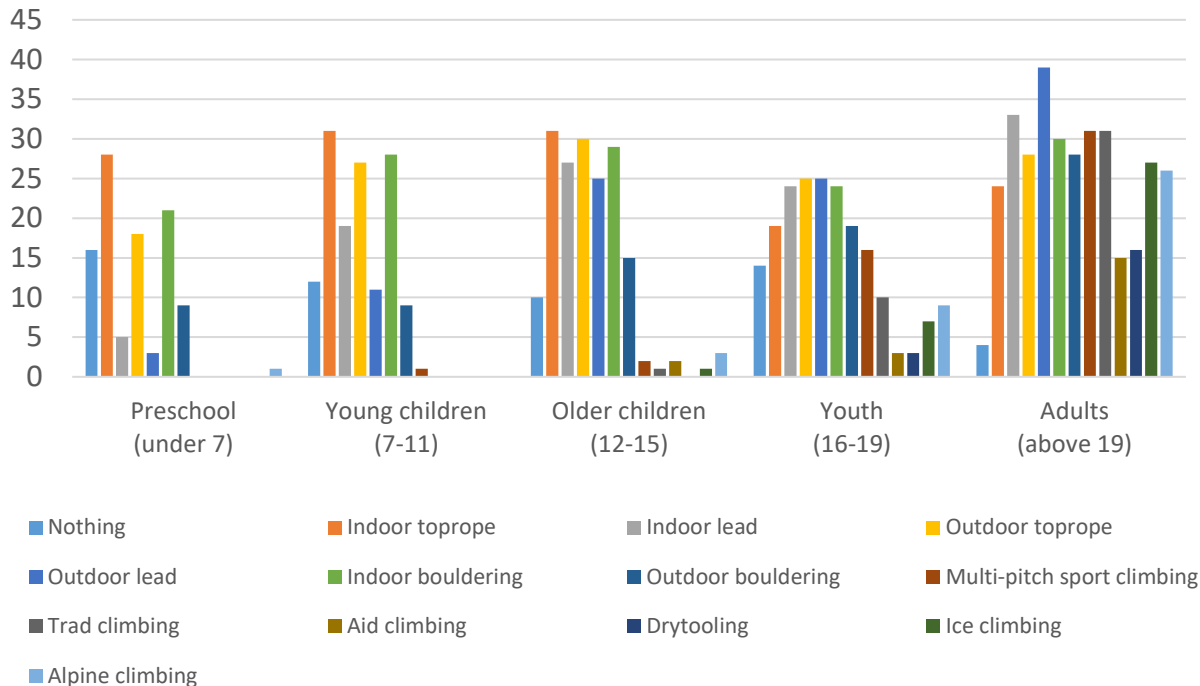


More than 80% of the clubs have less than 6 preschool children. Young and older children are a bit more numerous in most of the clubs. The numbers drop again for the youth climbers. It shows it is much easier to attract children from primary schools.

The structure of clubs as well as their size varies. From small clubs with fewer than 15 members to more than 500 climbers of all ages. Some are specialized in younger children, some in youth and adults.



5. Choose the types of climbing you do in your club with children/youth in different age brackets:

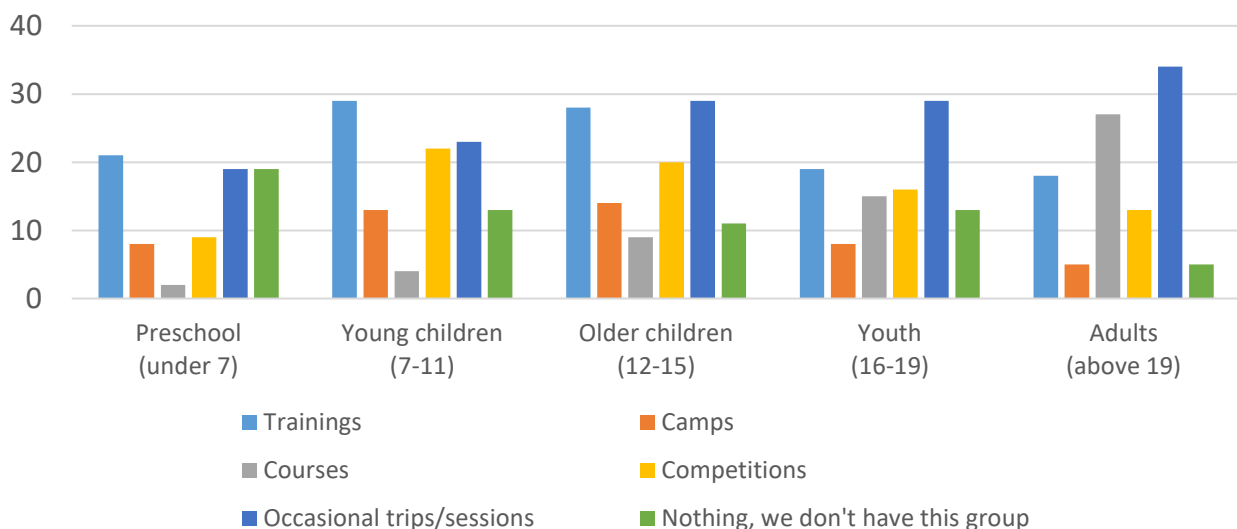


The answers show natural progression through the years. Preschool children mostly climb top rope and boulder, mostly indoors since it is easier to control and it's safer. Some clubs, usually the ones which are competing, introduce lead climbing even to preschool children as well.

In general, children are introduced to more serious types of climbing e.g. multi-pitch climbing, trad climbing, aid climbing, ice climbing and alpinism around the age of 12-15. Dry-tooling lags a bit, which is probably caused by a lack of training possibilities in Slovakia.

Indoor bouldering is highly popular in all age groups. Outdoor bouldering and outdoor lead are getting more and more popular with age.

6. Choose the climbing activities you organize in your club for children/youth in different age brackets:



Trainings and occasional trips are very popular in all age groups. We can see that the number of camps, trainings and competitions decreases with the age, but the number of learning courses and occasional trips increases.



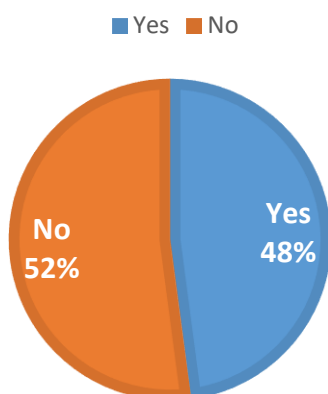
**7. Write if you organize any other climbing activities for young climbers that weren't mentioned in the last question:**

Some clubs mentioned specific activities they organize for young climbers:

- Special open for public weekend thematic days e.g. Halloween, Christmas, Children's day, etc.
- Via ferrata for youth (16-19) and adults (19+)
- Courses in the form of games and physical training for preschool children (0-6)
- Cleaning of climbing areas, participating in the creation of new routes
- Methodical days for children and youth
- Skialp trips, canyoning, rafting
- Training camps for competitors

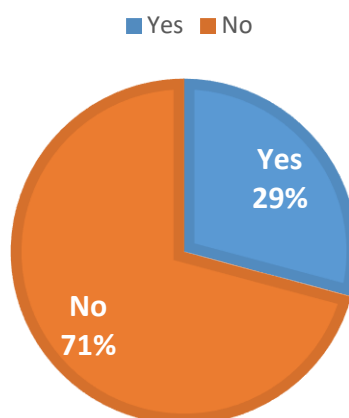
### COMPETITORS

**8. Do you have any young competitors in your club that compete on a national level?**



Almost half of the clubs have at least one young competitor on the national level.

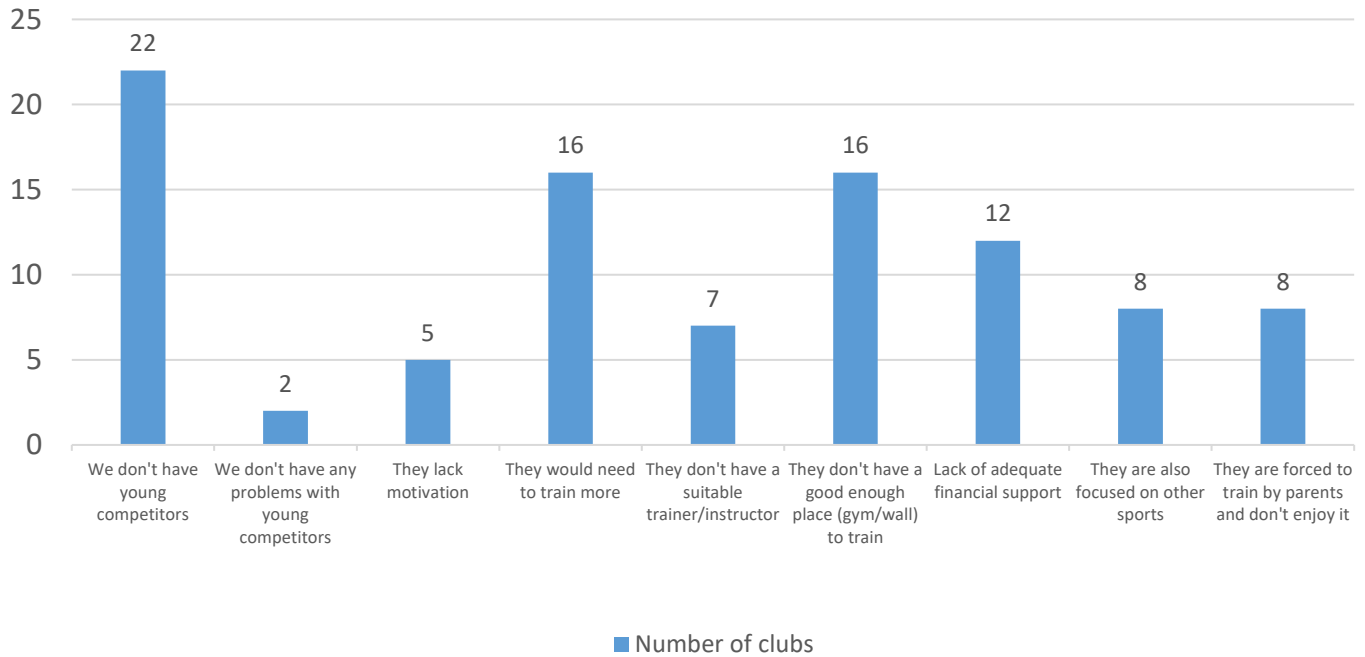
**9. Do you have any young competitors in your club that compete in other climbing competitions or leagues (not on a national level)?**



The number of clubs that have young competitors that compete on the regional or municipal level is lower at 29%. It raises the question of the popularity of regional or municipal level competitions as well as the opportunities for their organization.



### 10. Does your club face any problems regarding young competitors (on any level)?



We can see that 22 clubs have no young competitors, so we have a total of 26 clubs whose answers we can analyze.

16 of the clubs have answered that two important problems they face are not having a good enough gym/climbing wall to train and that young competitors would need to train more. Almost half of the clubs don't have adequate financial support to help young competitors. Only 5 clubs say that young competitors lack motivation, and 7 don't have a suitable trainer/instructor.

8 of the clubs face the problem of too many hobbies and sports, which makes it hard to concentrate on one of them.

8 of the clubs face the problem that young competitors are forced to train by parents and don't enjoy it, which sounds quite alarming.

2 clubs luckily have no problems.

Clubs specifically mentioned the current negative corona situation that forced all Slovak gyms to stay closed and competitors didn't have a place where to train.

### 11. Does your club have any program for young competitors who stopped competing? (Please share your tips & tricks on how to keep them motivated and avoid losing their interest in climbing)

33 clubs don't have any program, 2 clubs didn't answer and 1 club doesn't have any competitors at all because competing is not that interesting for their young climbers, so they don't face this problem.

Most of the respondents mentioned they are not pushing anybody to compete so former competitors continue climbing in a way they enjoy it and their failures in competitions don't discourage them. Usually, they continue climbing recreationally and join club trainings and club competitions, weekend outdoor events, and camps in mountains.

3 clubs shared their strategy and wrote a bit more:

- Former competitors take care of the climbing classes in the club. Sometimes they go to competitions, which they choose according to their preferences (their time schedule, friendly atmosphere, etc.). We



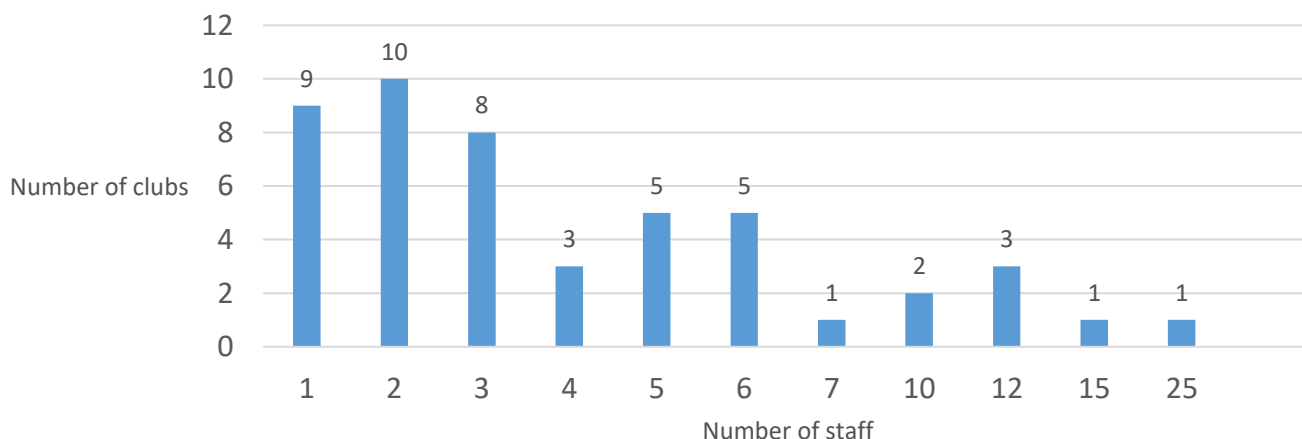
also provide information on the classes for 12-15 year old, partially the content of the instructor’s course, so they can then climb alone and safely out of the classes on the big walls and be independent. We have the experience that competitors are mostly people who enjoy climbing if they competed with love and not being pushed.

- Children, youth, and adults are involved in our club activities related to the creation of new routes and rock climbing areas, so they become part of the climbing community, which creates climbing conditions for future generations and learn them to understand that climbing is one of the few sports where it's not about numbers and winning at competitions.
- We have a program ‘Activate yourself’ - there are 3 levels - Top representatives, Representatives, and Active. Each group must fulfill certain obligations. Active is for non-competitors. During the year, the child collects points for activities - e.g. climbing in various climbing gyms, participating in non-competing union events, regional events, climbing camps, club events, outdoor bouldering, etc. This motivates them to be active and keeps their interest and passion for climbing. It doesn't matter if the climber is a non-competitor. He has the same chance to become a club representative as a competitor.

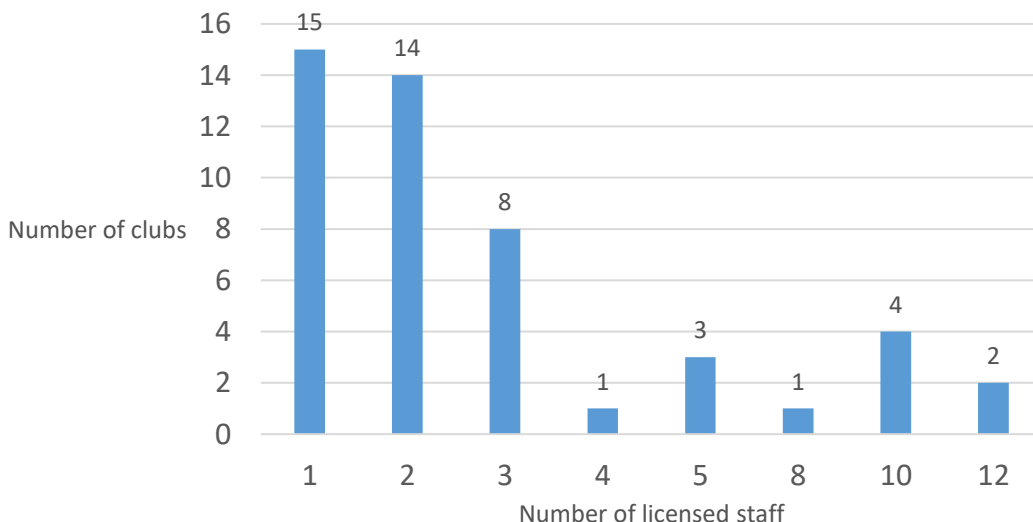
### STAFF

Write the number of professional staff in your club that work with children/youth (instructors/coaches/trainers/leaders/assistants/helpers):

#### 12. Number of all staff (with licence or not):



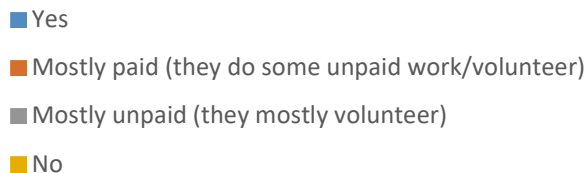
#### 13. Number of staff with licence:





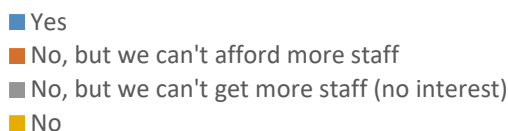
In total we can see from the graphs that 48 clubs have 223 people working with children and youth. 158 out of 223 have licenses. Most of the clubs are in terms of staff quite small, having 1-3 people taking care of children and youth. The biggest club has a staff of about 25 people, which is actually not a Slovak climbing club but a Hungarian which is registered with the Slovak Mountaineering Union.

#### 14. Are the instructors (and other staff) paid for their work?



More than 30% of the staff is fully or mostly paid for their work. 68% of the staff does their work for free or they mostly volunteer. As we can see, a lot of clubs manage their work in their free time as volunteering.

#### 15. Is the number of your staff sufficient for all the climbing activities that you organize for children/youth?



More than half of the clubs (26 out of 48) have enough staff for their activities. Less than half (22 out of 48) do not, some of them cannot get more staff because of no interest (9) and some cannot afford more staff (3).

3 clubs specifically commented:

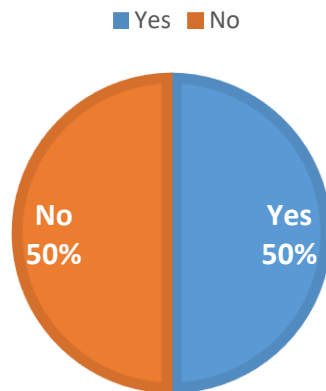
- We cannot afford to pay licensed instructors/trainers so they would stay long-term. They do this work just as a part-time besides their full-time work and it often results in lack of time for regular trainings.



- We work mostly with parents of our children as we can't afford more staff and we can't get more staff (no interest).
- Courses to get a license are only occasional and very long.

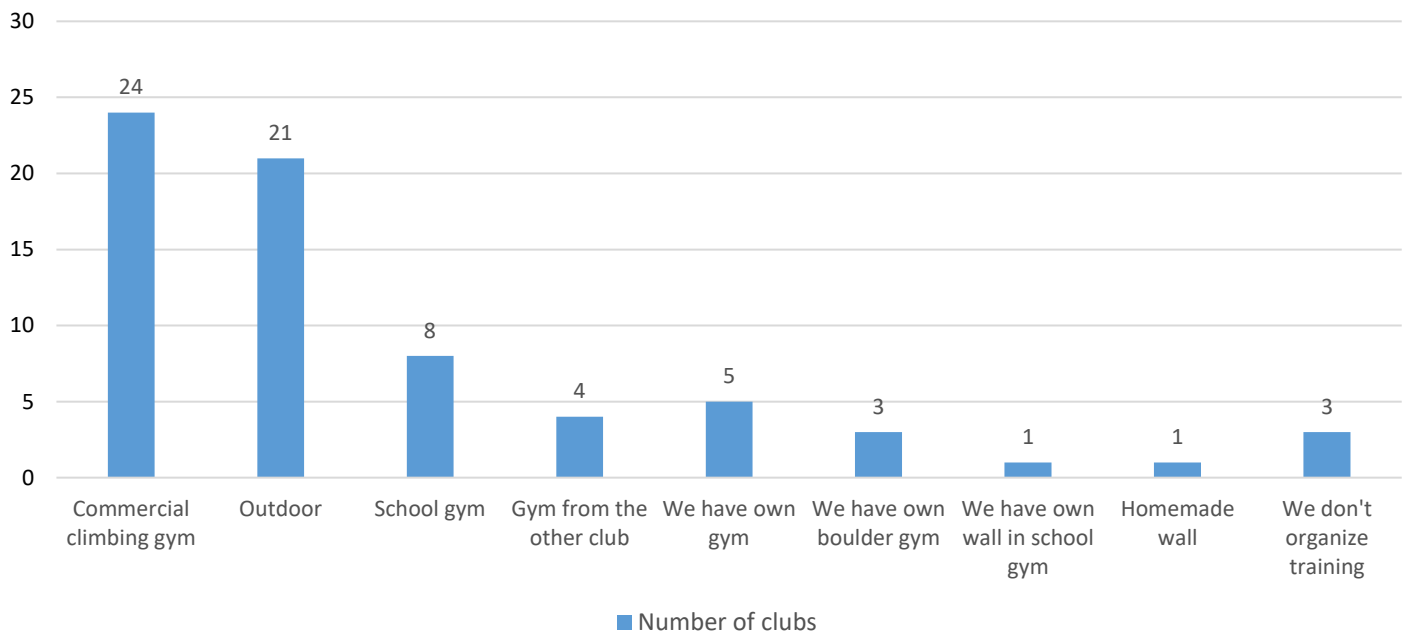
### ORGANIZATION

#### 16. Does your club have its own climbing gym/wall?



Exactly half of the clubs have some kind of climbing wall.

#### 17. If your club doesn't have its own climbing gym/wall, how do you organize your training?



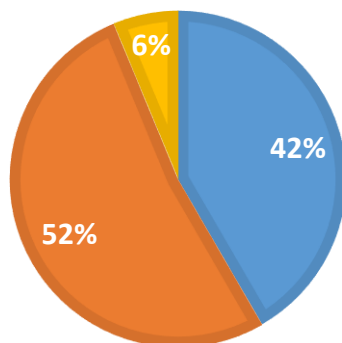
From the variety of options, we can see a different approach to organization of training. 3 clubs stated they don't organize regular training at all. Some of the clubs are clubs of commercial gyms/boulder gyms. 24 clubs, which don't own a gym, mostly train in some commercial gym or outdoors.





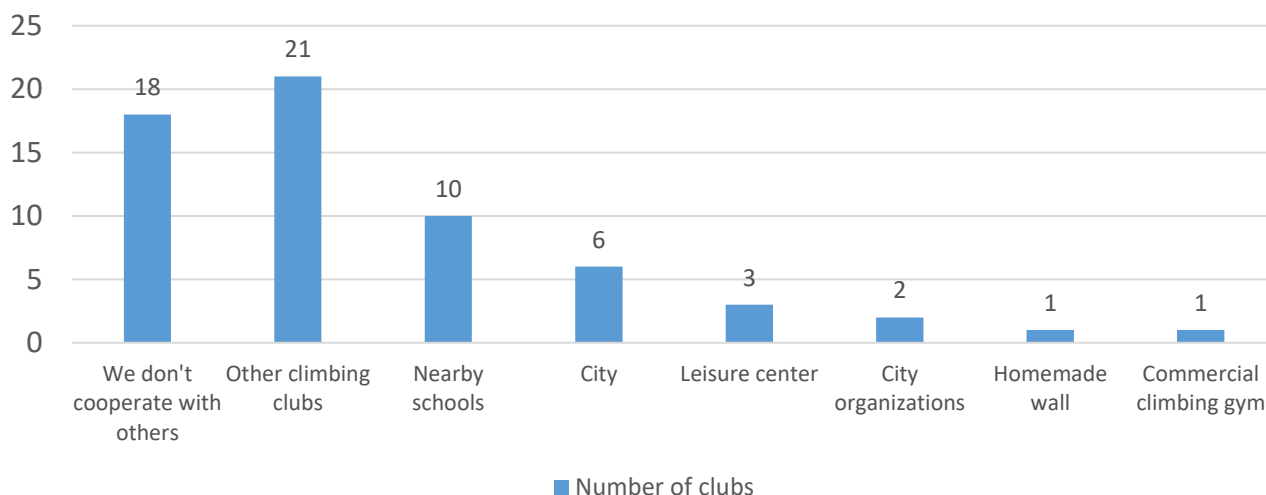
### 18. Do you organize any type of 'open for public' climbing events, where children can try climbing for free?

■ No ■ Yes, once a year ■ Yes, once a month ■ Yes, more than once a month



42% of the clubs don't have any event, where children could try climbing for free. More than half of the clubs organize public events once a year, while some of the clubs organize public events more than once a month.

### 19. Choose the organizations that your club cooperates with:

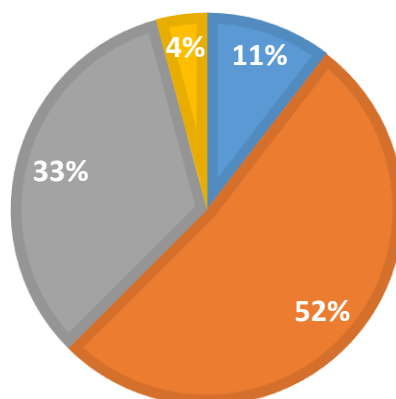


Almost half of the clubs is cooperating with other climbing clubs, which is very positive in terms of building a climbing community. Some of them also cooperate with nearby schools, city or city organizations and leisure centers. One cooperates with commercial climbing gym and one with homemade wall. 18 clubs don't cooperate with others.



**20. What is the average cost for one visit to the climbing gym (your gym or any other near you) for a young climber from your club?**

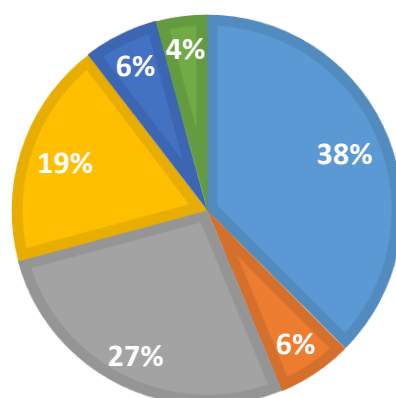
■ 0 € (it is free) ■ < 5€ ■ 5 - 10 € ■ 10 - 15 € ■ > 15 €



Half of the young climbers pay less than 5€ for a visit to a gym. 33% of young climbers have to pay double that amount (5-10€), 4% have to pay a bit higher entry fee (10-15€), while 11% can do that for free.

**21. What is the average cost per month for regular weekly training (training once a week) for a young climber from your club?**

■ We don't have weekly training ■ 0€ (it is free) ■ < 20 € ■ 20 - 30 € ■ 30 - 40 € ■ > 40 €

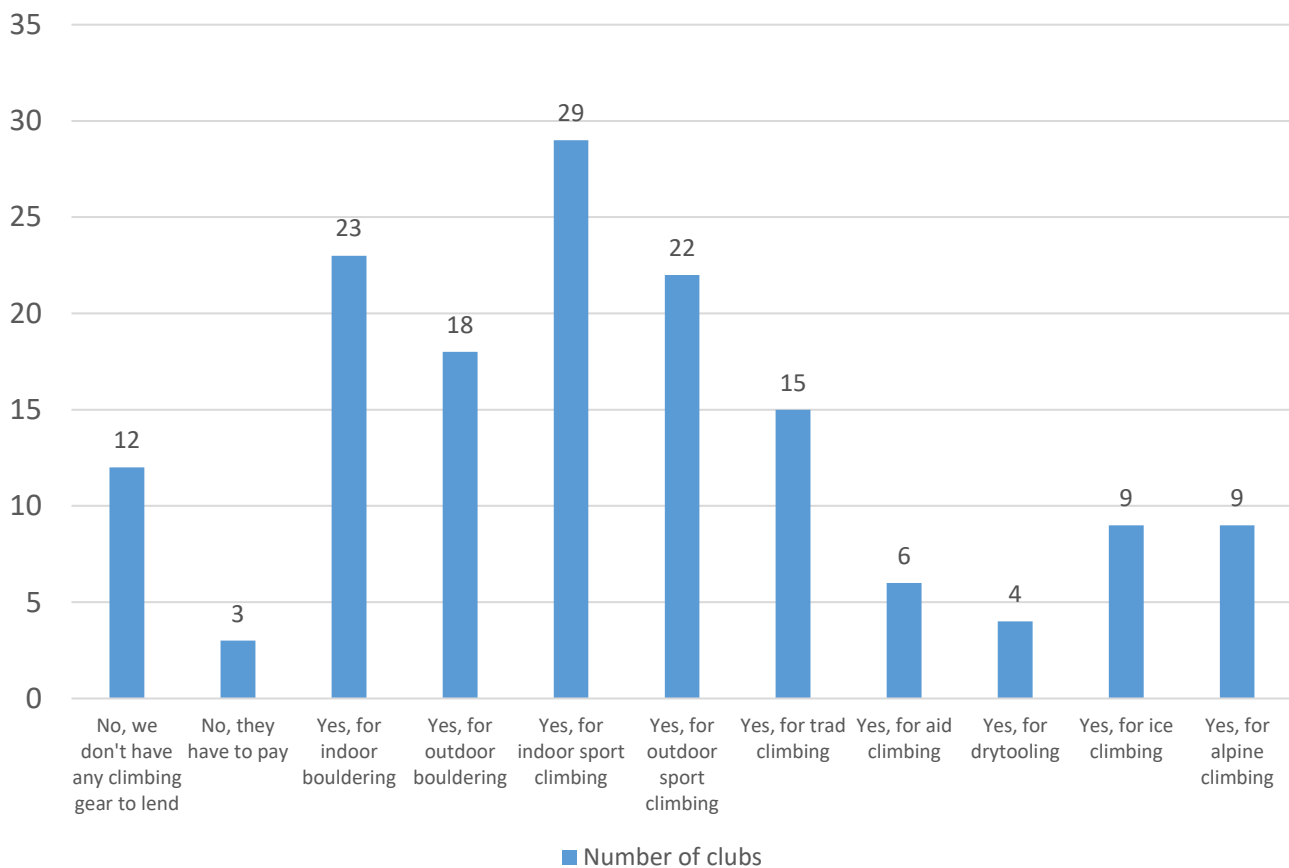


38% of clubs don't organize weekly training.

For 6% of young climbers, it is free. 27% of the young climbers pay monthly less than 20€, 19% pay 20-30€, 6% pay 30-40€ and 4% pay more than 40€.



## 22. Can young climbers from your club borrow climbing gear for free from your club?



12 out of 48 clubs don't have any gear to lend. In 3 clubs climbers have to pay for gear. Most of them lend the gear for sport climbing (indoor/outdoor) and bouldering, while it's harder to borrow more technical gear for aid climbing, dry-tooling, or alpine climbing.

## 23. Who do you think could benefit from being introduced to climbing as a sport in the future? (Please write target groups who could benefit from climbing)

Most of the clubs replied everybody, especially children and youth.

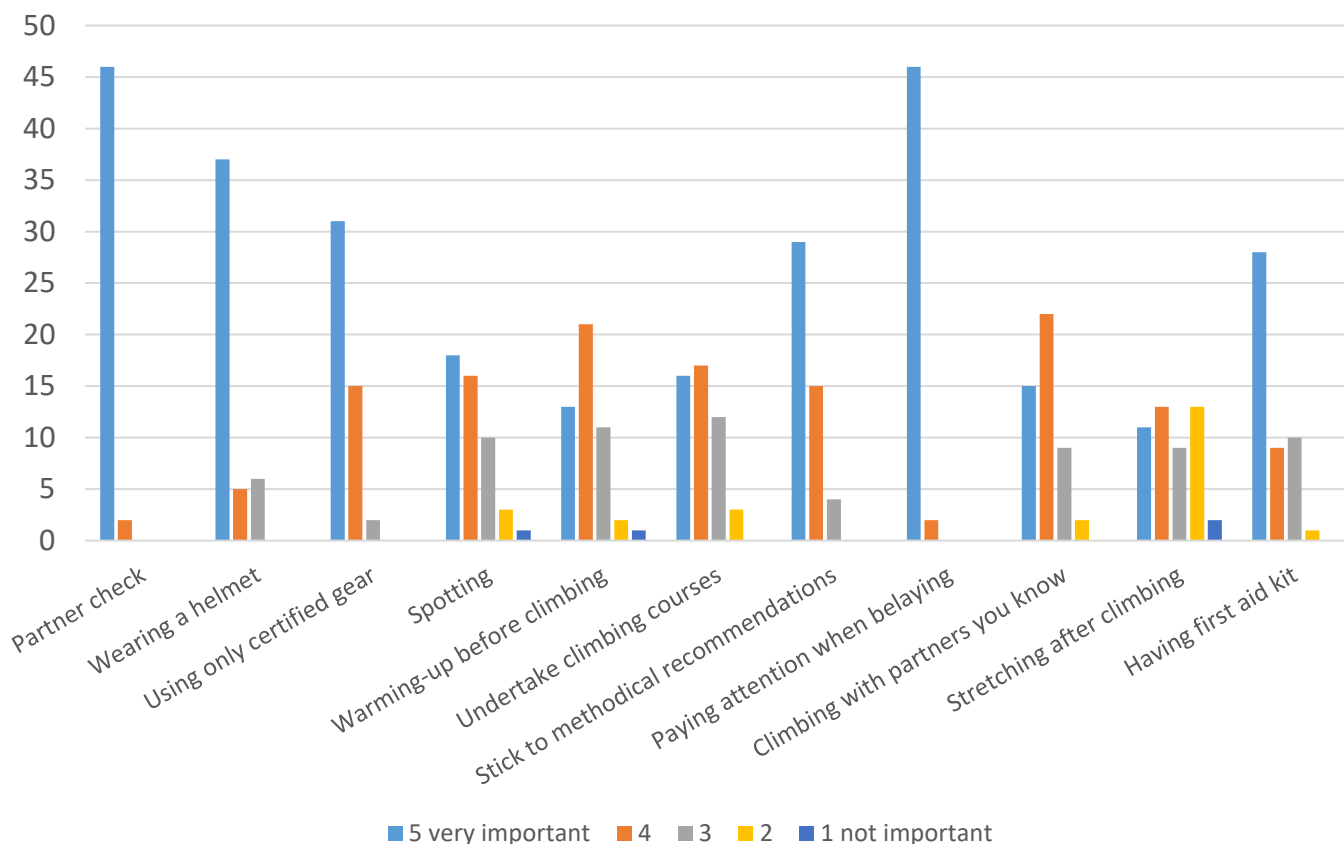
Some specific answers were:

- All people who are seeking regular exercise while having fun.
- Children with difficulties with ADHD, with inclusion in the team, children with low self-esteem, who need to learn to trust their abilities and experience success, etc.
- Children with some problems with the spine and other physical problems, recommended by the physiotherapist.
- Preschool children in the overall physical development (special educator knows that it supports children's development so they won't have learning difficulties later and dysfunctions to such an extent because everything develops through motor skills.
- Working with juveniles as prevention against addictions (drugs, food, mobile phones, etc.) and crime, etc.
- Children in primary schools, of all ages because of health aspects.
- All children, climbing is a very healthy sport because it uses the whole body as well as the head.
- Everybody. Climbing should reach the level of "basic sports activities".
- Anyone with a lack of exercise, imbalance in the body, posture problems, handicapped people, etc.



## SAFETY

24. Please rate how important you find the following in terms of climbing safety while climbing outdoor:



All of the clubs agree that partner check and paying attention when belaying is very important, both rated 5 (very important) in 95,8% of the clubs. Spotting (belaying before clipping the first bolt), warming-up before climbing, and stretching after climbing were the only ones rated as not important. But in general, all the other ones are varying in between important and medium important.

According to the total points gained, we could create a list from the most to the least important:

1. Partner check & Paying attention when belaying
2. Wearing a helmet
3. Using only certified gear
4. Stick to methodical recommendations
5. Having a first aid kit
6. Climbing with partners you know
7. Spotting
8. Undertake climbing courses
9. Warming-up before climbing
10. Stretching after climbing