

Mendel University in Brno

MENDELU Employees Satisfaction Survey 2018



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

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Table of contents

Introduction	3
Survey methodology	3
Respondents.....	4
Abbreviations used.....	4
Results	5
Ethical and professional aspects	6
Recruitment and selection of employees.....	12
Working conditions	14
Training and development	23

Introduction

In June 2018, an online survey was conducted at our University to find out how people (especially researchers because of HR Award) felt at the University, how they perceived the work environment and which areas needed to be improved in the future. The aim of the survey was to obtain information that would help to objectively set action plans within the process of applying for HR Award.

Survey methodology

The survey was conducted anonymously using the Google Forms tools and was available to all employees in two language versions (in Czech and in English).

The survey contained 34 questions, 5 of which were general to get the profile of the respondent.

The questions were then divided into areas based on the principles of the [Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers](#). These were the following four areas:

1. Ethical and professional aspects
2. Recruitment and selection of employees
3. Working conditions
4. Training and development

All questions were optional, so each of them had a different number of answers in the final sum.

The questionnaire contained both closed and open questions that gave room to respondents for commentary on current status and suggestions for improvement.

The questionnaire survey was anonymous for all who participated in the survey. At the same time, however, we decided that the results would be transparent and each respondent, after completing the last question, had the opportunity to see aggregate results of the questionnaire survey and answers to the open questions of all those who participated in the survey before him or her.

The analysis of the results was carried out with regard to the whole sample and also with regard to the category of science-research staff and academic staff.

Respondents chose the answers on the Likert scale from 1 – “yes, satisfactory”, to 4 – “no, unsatisfactory”, made selections from pre-defined responses and included their own responses. The average values in the charts were calculated only from the valid answers. Invalid responses – i.e. uncompleted, or responses such as “I cannot judge” or “I do not perform this activity” – were excluded. The more the average value approached 1, the “more positive” the answer was, the more the average value approached 4, the “more negative” the answer was.

Respondents

The request for the participation in the survey was sent to e-mail addresses of each employee from the database of MENDELU employees. The questionnaire was completed by 447 respondents from the total number of 1600 employees addressed; the return rate of the questionnaires was thus 27.9%. The respondents included 170 academics and 116 science-research non-academic staff, of whom there were 32 young early stage researchers (PhD students). Other respondents were those who did not primarily deal with science. They included, in particular, the staff from Rector's Departments providing administrative support to the University, Training Forest Enterprise, etc. Staff from all parts of the University, different age categories, both sexes and various job positions participated in the survey. With regard to the rate of return and the cross-sectional nature of the basic sample of respondents, the results are sufficiently representative.

Abbreviations used

Due to the need to find answers from the research-related staff (as a basis for the GAP analysis and the Action Plan to apply for HR Award), we worked with the following terms:

AF – Faculty of AgriSciences

AP – an academic, academic staff

CP – University-wide workplaces, i.e. Rector's Department, University-wide workplaces, University farms, special-purpose facilities

FRRMS – Faculty of Regional Development and International Studies

ICV – University Institute – Institute of Lifelong Learning

LDF – Faculty of Forestry and Wood Technology

PEF – Faculty of Economics and Management

THP – technical and administrative staff

VVP – science-research staff of a non-academic type; we also included students of the doctoral form of study in this category

ZF – Faculty of Horticulture

Results

Basic categorization of respondents:

Chart No. 1A - Structure of respondents by age

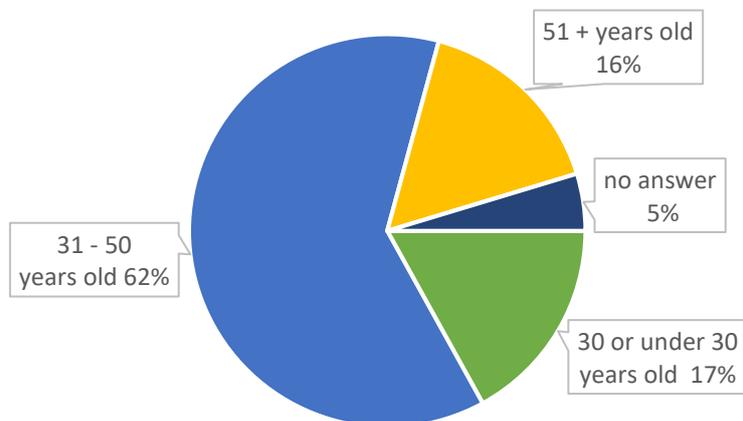


Chart No. 1B – Structure of respondents by gender

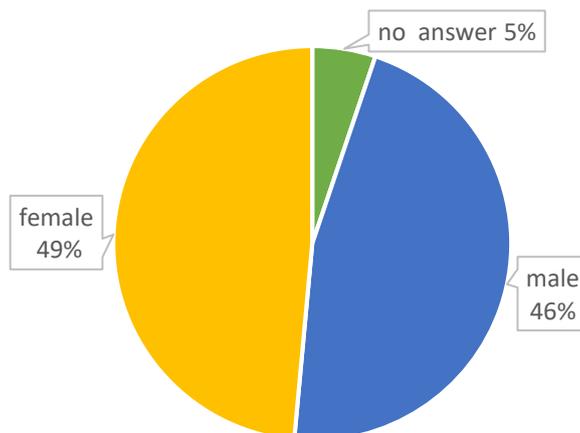


Chart No. 1C - Structure of respondents by job position

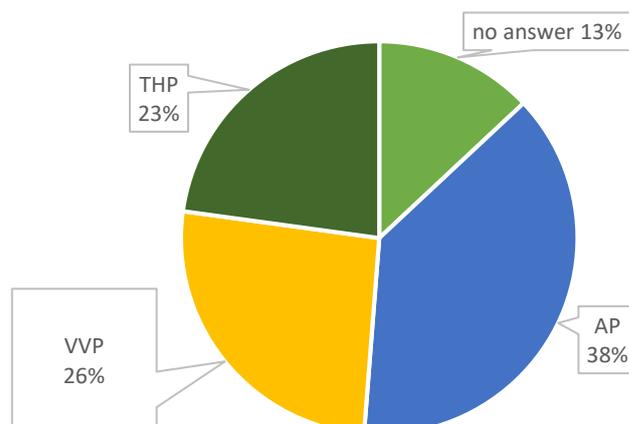
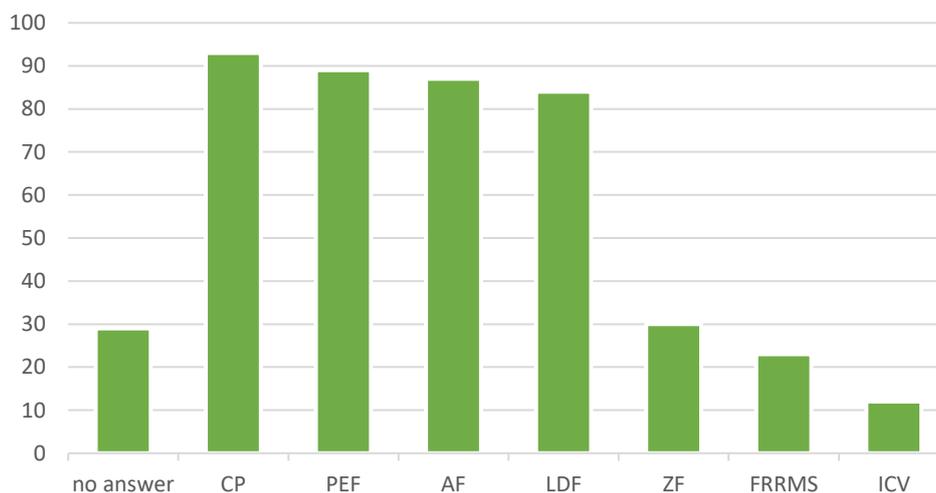


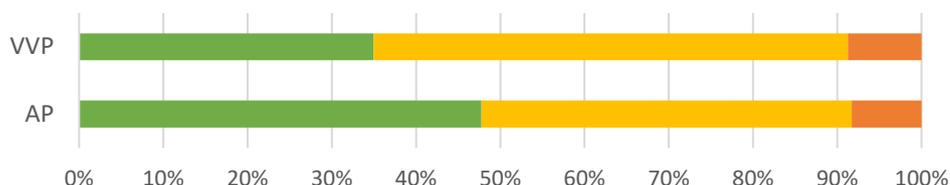
Chart No. 1D - Structure of respondents by University constituents



Ethical and professional aspects

With respect to the question of how the respondents perceived whether their research activity was sufficiently free, the main goal was, in particular, to get the answers from academic and science-research staff involved in science and research. The questionnaire survey showed that **87% of respondents** from these groups **considered** the research **activity as free** (answers “yes” and “rather yes”).

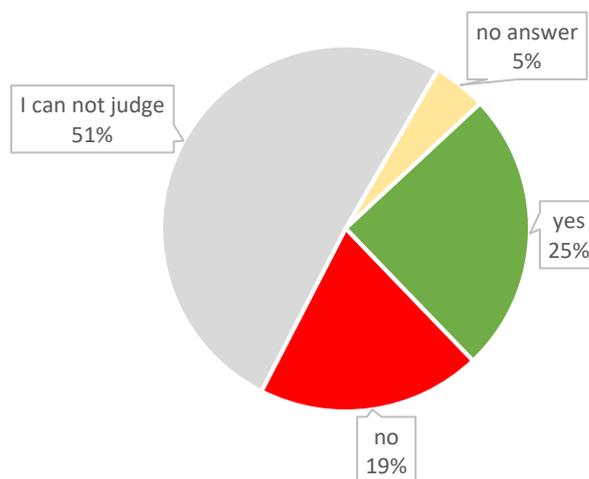
Chart No. 2 - Freedom of research
yes / rather yes / not really / no



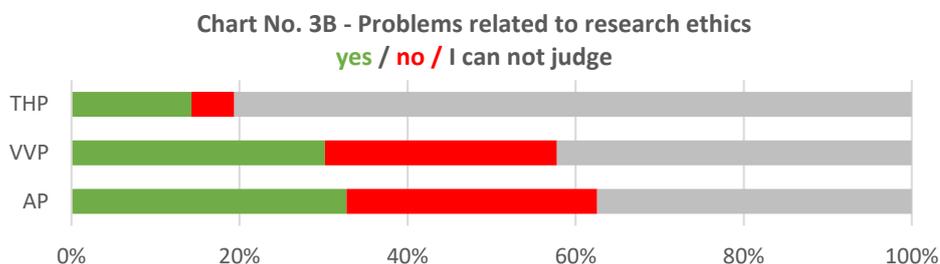
As to the question of whether the survey participants felt that there were **problems** at MENDELU **related to** research **ethics** and the publishing of results, **51%** of the total number of all respondents answered that they could not judge with respect to that area. Of the remaining 49%, the overwhelming opinion (25% of the total number of answers) prevailed that the problems existed. In the answers to the open question where respondents were able to identify individual problems related to ethics, they listed, for example:

- *(auto)plagiarism;*
- *the absence of publishing ethics and etiquette in the sense of publishing fundamentally new or fundamentally significant only;*
- *ghostwriting, i.e. some are just "ascribed" the results;*
- *not quoting resources;*
- *violation of ethical and professional rules by doing research only for its own sake, not for the benefit of the society or directly of the workplace;*
- *predatory magazines.*

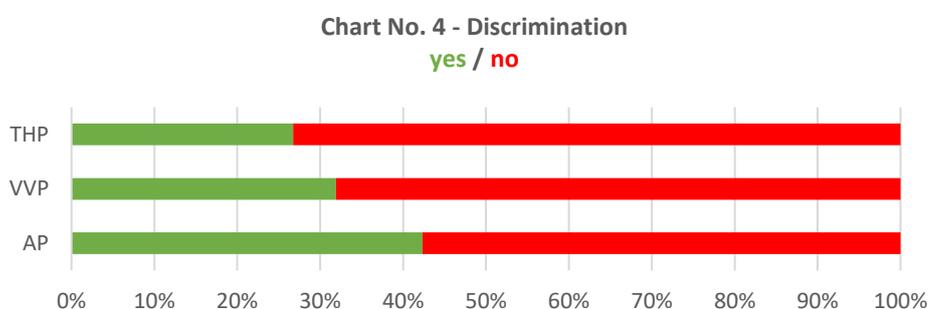
Chart No. 3B - Problems related to research ethics



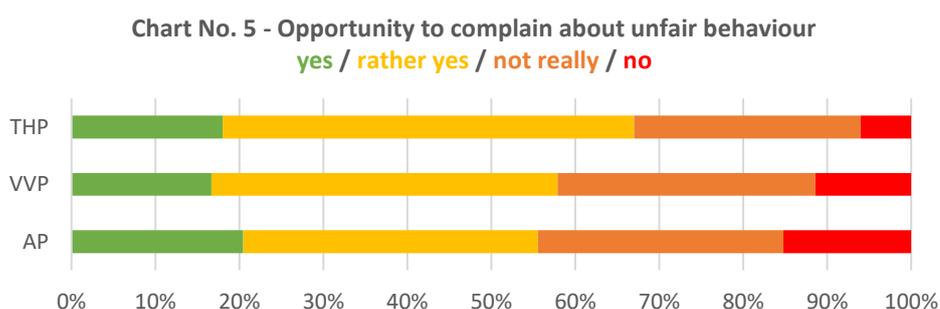
Individual categories of employees are listed further according to their classification and their opinion on the given subject. All responses the respondents gave in the open part of the questionnaire where they had the opportunity to express their views verbally are listed in Appendix No. 1.



More than one third of respondents said that they had encountered discrimination at MENDELU. This mainly concerned age (45.5%), gender (29.9%) and social (26.9%) discrimination.



More than 58% of respondents thought that in case of **unfair behaviour**, they had enough **opportunities to complain** about such behaviour (answers “yes” or “rather yes”).



Respondents positively assessed the activity of MENDELU for the **implementation of scientific outputs in practice**, whether social or commercial. Approximately 70% of responses (if we do not include the answers “I am not involved in research”) were positive (answers “yes” or “rather yes”).

In negative comments, the following appeared:

- *there is no concept of any way of publicizing the results;*
- *there is no system, no processes are set;*
- *there is no motivation system;*

- nobody knows what the colleague next door does, let alone the colleague one floor up or one faculty further;
- orientation is primarily on science and theory as such. The application is addressed only marginally;
- in the case of large teaching workload, it is not possible to invest so much time in these activities;
- given the necessary quantity of publication outputs, it is difficult to apply the results in practice.

A summary of all the answers given by the respondents to the open question on this topic is included in Appendix No. 2.

Chart No. 6A - Application of scientific outputs in practice
Answers of all respondents

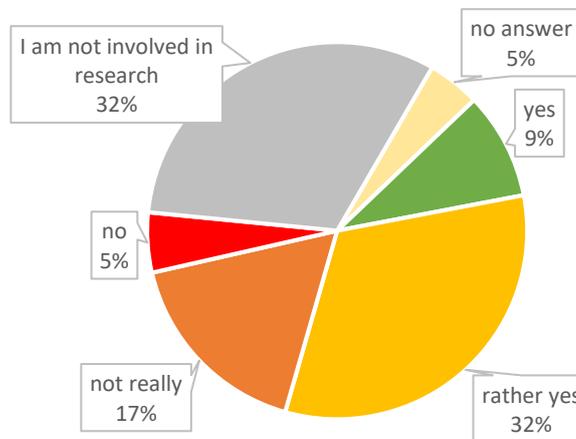
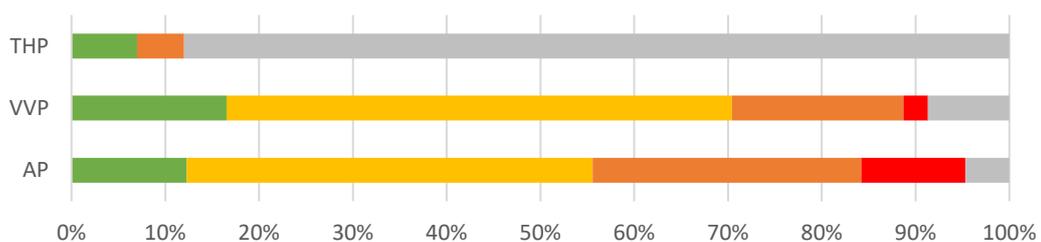
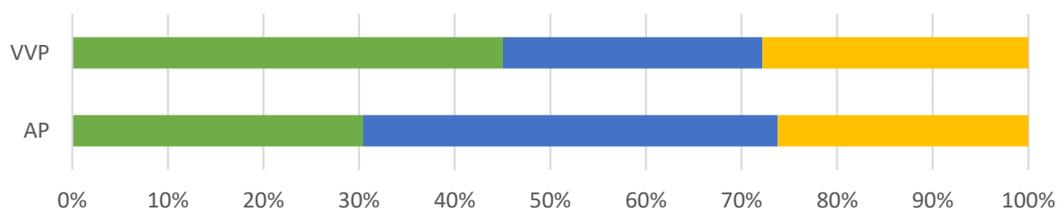


Chart No. 6B - Application of scientific outputs in practice
Answers by categories **yes** / **rather yes** / **not really** / **no**



Each of the survey participants also had an opportunity to comment on what activities he or she was doing in his or her work. Questions about working time organization aimed to find out how much time academic and science-research staff had for their own research and science, but also for teaching, and how much time they spent on other activities. Overall, the academics replied that they spent more than 30% on science and research and more than 40% on teaching. Science-research staff replied that they spent over 45% of time at work on science and research. Considering the nature of teaching, we dropped the THP staff from the table.

Chart No. 7A - What percentage of working time you spend with the following activities? Results by job classification
science and research / teaching / other activities



In terms of gender distribution, **women said that they devoted 25%** of their time to science, and men spent more than a third of their time on science. See Chart No. 7B.

Chart No. 7B - What percentage of working time you spend with the following activities? Results by gender
science and research / teaching / other activities

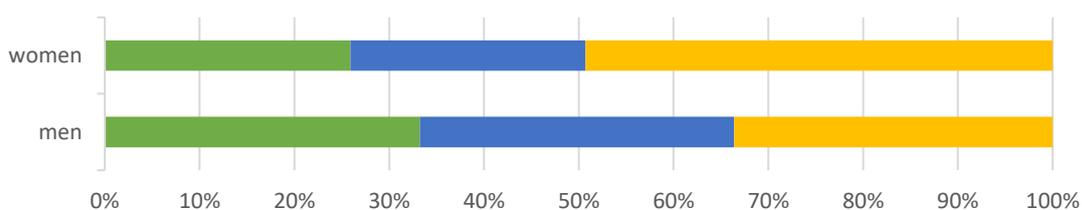
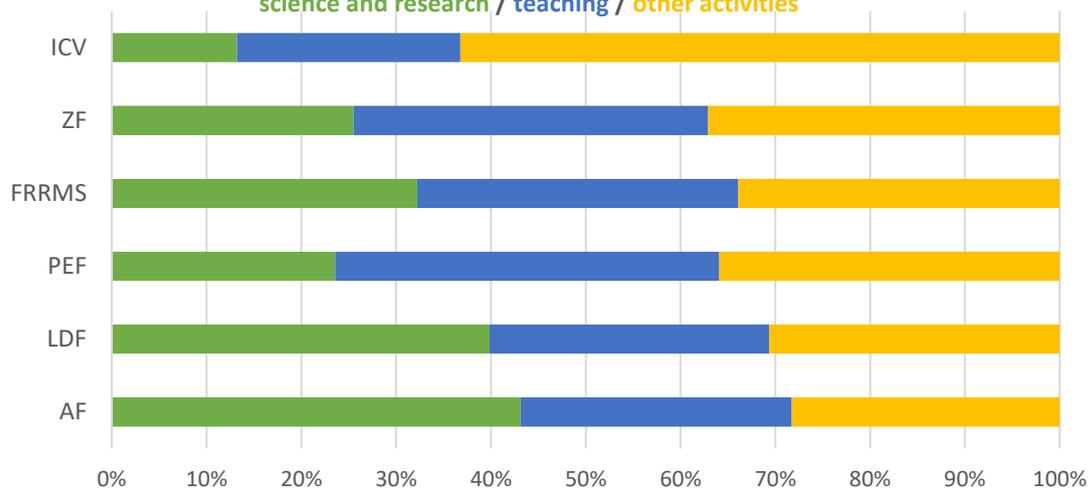
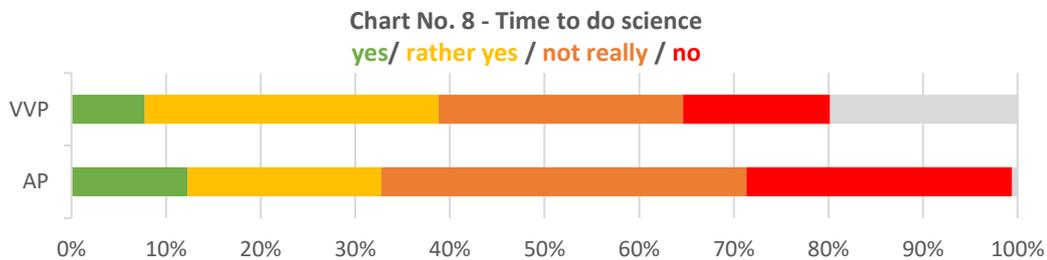


Chart 7C shows the results according to what constituent the respondents come from.

Chart No. 7C - What percentage of working time you spend with the following activities? Results by individual constituents
science and research / teaching / other activities

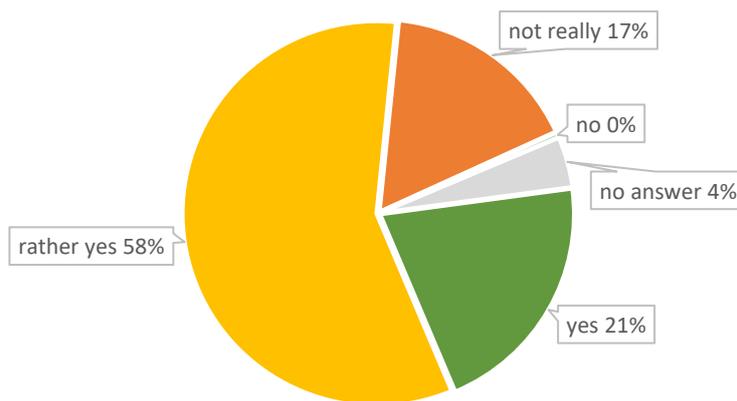


The above information is also closely related to the question of whether the employees had enough opportunities to perform science and research activities if they were supposed to teach. **Nearly 2/3 of the academic staff** responded that they **did not feel to have enough opportunities to devote themselves to science and research**.



Almost 80% of respondents replied that they **knew their rights and obligations enshrined in particular in internal regulations**.

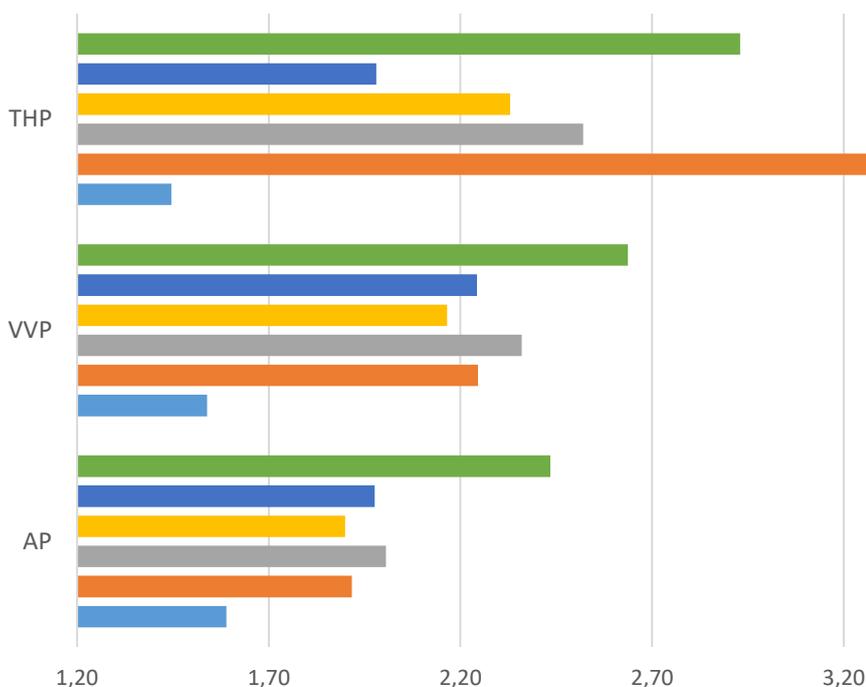
Chart No. 9A - Knowledge of rights and obligations enshrined in internal regulations in particular



The **best is the knowledge in the field of occupational health and safety and in the area of labour-law**, poorer is the knowledge in the field of research and development, intellectual property protection and the code of ethics. The lowest level of knowledge was acknowledged by the respondents in the area of the administration of projects; with respect to this area, they would very much welcome a possibility of training. Altogether, over 166 respondents took the opportunity to provide an open answer. The responses further showed that training would be welcome in all of the discussed areas. A need has also been expressed to have all regulations better presented on the website / Intranet, as it is difficult to get bearings in them in their current form – see Appendix No. 3.

In Chart 9B, it is also possible to compare the results according to the respondents' job classification.

Chart No. 9B - Knowledge of rights and obligations enshrined in internal regulations in particular
(Project Management / Labour Law / Code of Ethics / Intellectual property protection, copyright / Science and Research / Occupational Health and Safety)



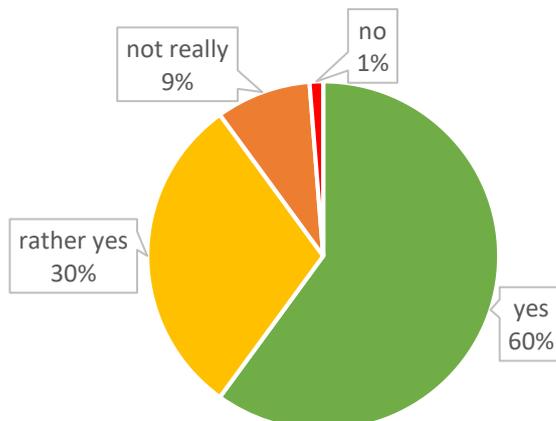
Answers according to scale 1 "yes" to 4 "no" - see explanation on page 2

Recruitment and selection of employees

Due to their relevance, the questions related to the recruitment and selection of the staff were only shown to those respondents who had worked at the MENDELU for less than 2 years.

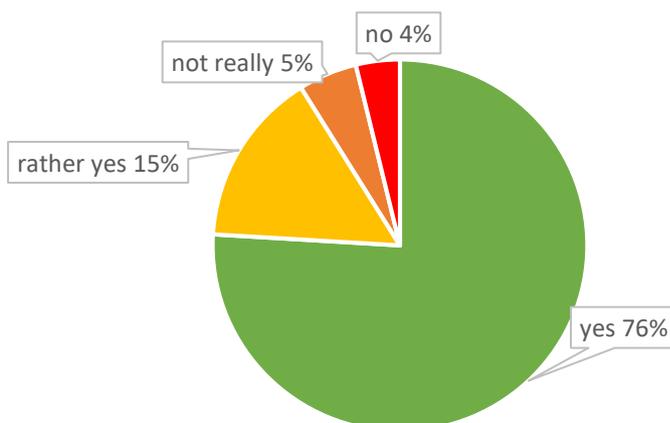
From the answers to the question of whether the position requirements were sufficiently clearly formulated and fair in the selection procedure, it was obvious that 90% of the respondents answered "yes" or "rather yes".

Chart No. 10 - Clearly formulated and fair requirements for a position



As for the course of the selection procedure, more than ¾ of the respondents said that it had been fair. Another 15% rather agreed with this statement (i.e., for example, that the questions had focused on the qualification, experience, benefits or ideas the applicant could offer, etc., and they had experienced no ridicule, discrimination or similar matters during the procedure).

Chart No. 11 - Fair course of the selection procedure



Working conditions

The survey has generally outlined a very positive picture regarding the working conditions at MENDELU. **80% of staff are satisfied with the work environment and equipment.** Less than that, people were satisfied with further education, when almost one third considered further education as unsatisfactory or rather unsatisfactory.

Chart No. 12A - Working environment

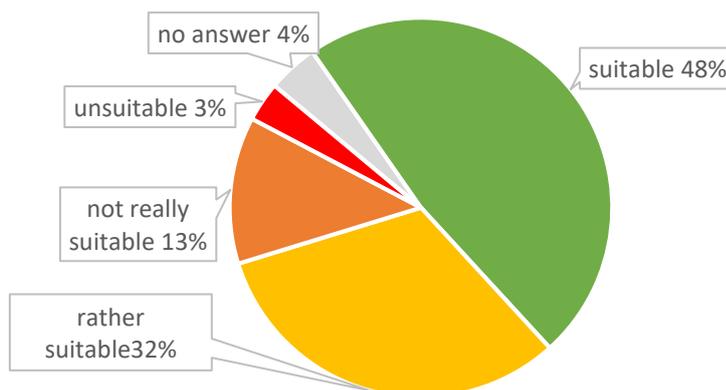


Chart No. 12B - Working environment

suitable / rather suitable / not really suitable / unsuitable

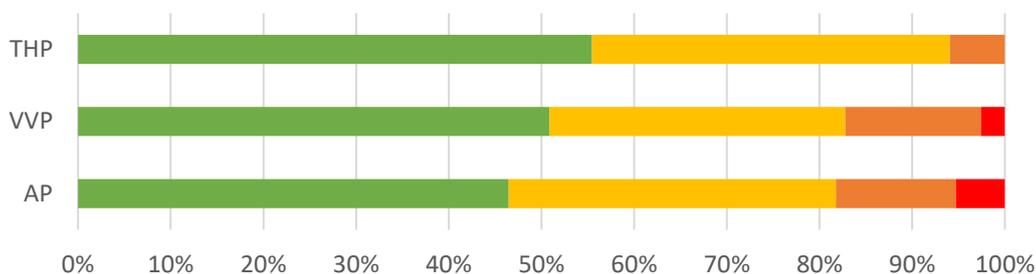


Chart No. 13A - Equipment

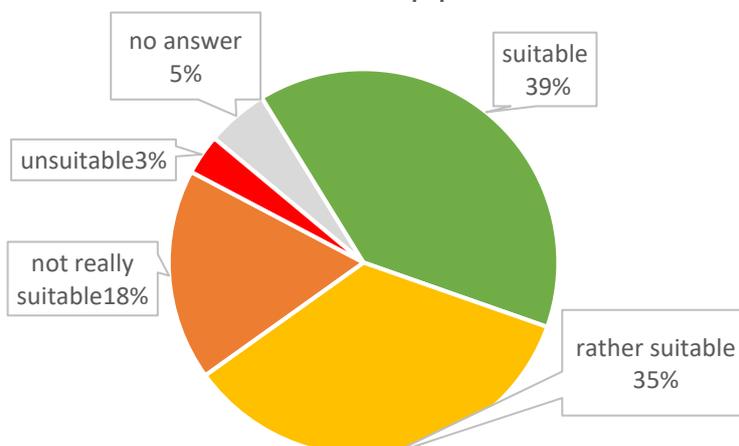


Chart No. 13B - Equipment

suitable / rather suitable / not really suitable / unsuitable

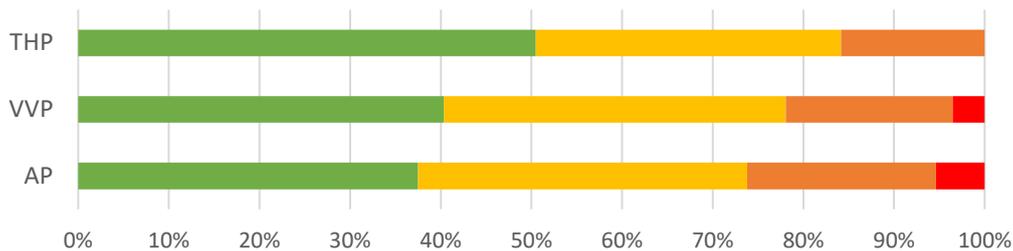


Chart No. 14A - Further education

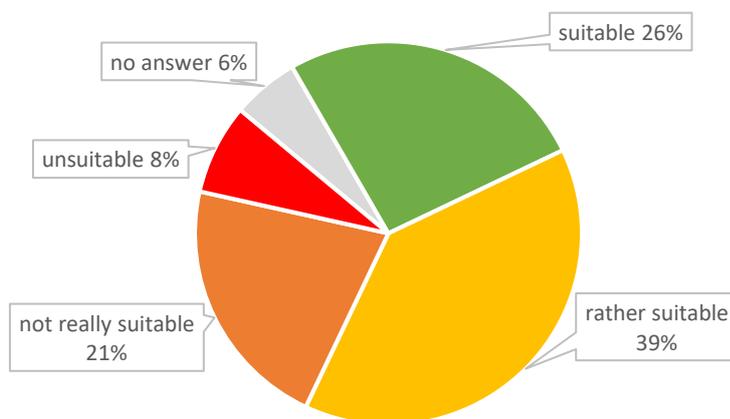
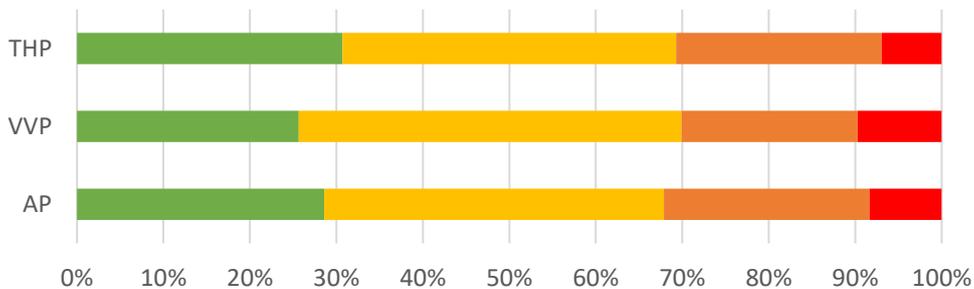


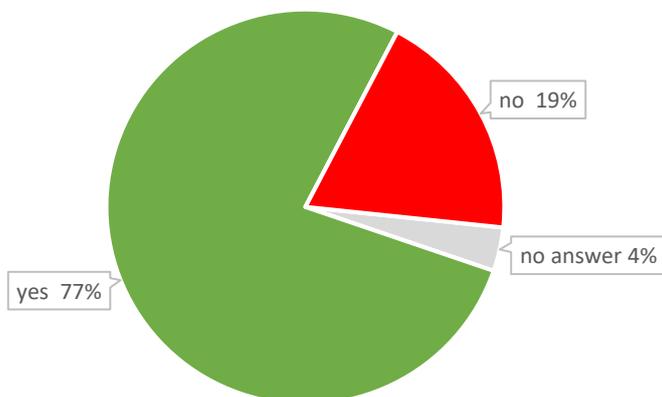
Chart No. 14B - Further education

suitable / rather suitable / not really suitable / unsuitable



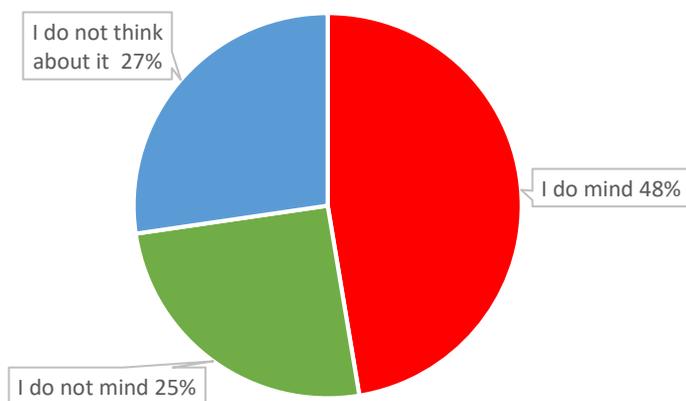
77% of respondents stated that they still had a **temporary contract** at MENDELU.

Chart No. 15A - Did you have a permanent contract at MENDELU?



A total of 48% of those who responded to this question at the same time stated that it did matter to them.

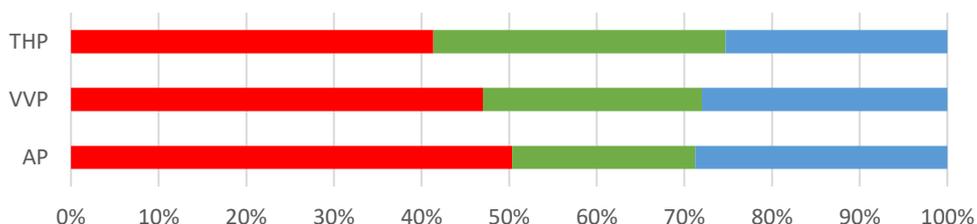
Chart No. 15B - How do (did) you perceive (perceived) the fact that you still have (had) a temporary contract of employment?



When split into individual groups of employees, even 50% of academic staff chose the answer that the temporary contracts did matter to them.

Chart No. 15C - How do (did) you perceive (perceived) the fact that you still have (had) a temporary contract of employment?

I do mind / I do not mind / I do not think about it



51% of respondents were dissatisfied with their **financial evaluation**, as they did not consider it adequate to the work done. This mainly included the academic staff who expressed this view in nearly 60%.

Chart No. 16A - Satisfaction with financial evaluation

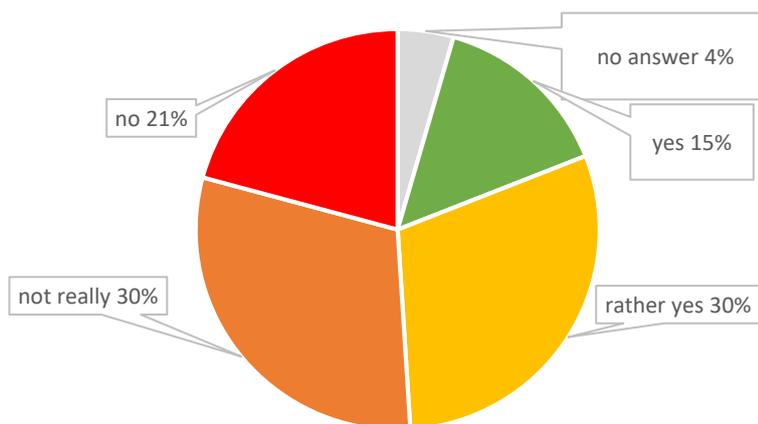
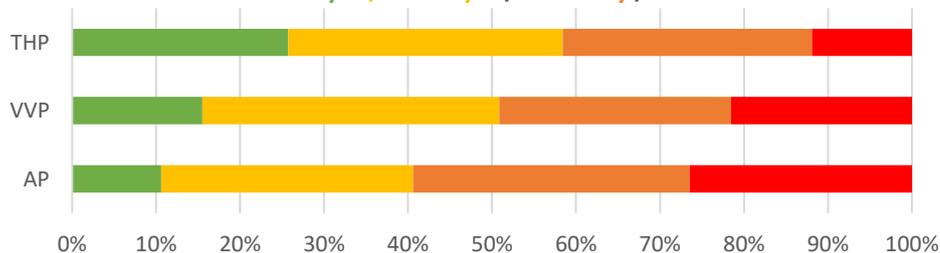


Chart No. 16B - Satisfaction with financial evaluation

yes / rather yes / not really / no



Of the total number of responses, 47% of respondents did not consider the **evaluation of the work performance** as sufficiently transparent and clear (the sum of the results “no” and “rather no”). The group that most considered the evaluation as non-transparent was the group of academic staff.

Chart No. 17A - Transparency of work performance evaluation

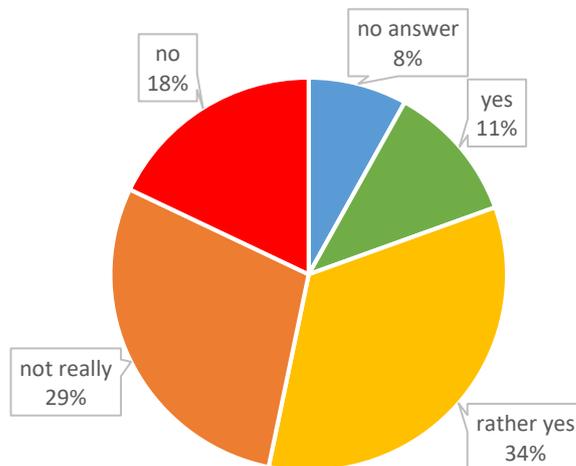
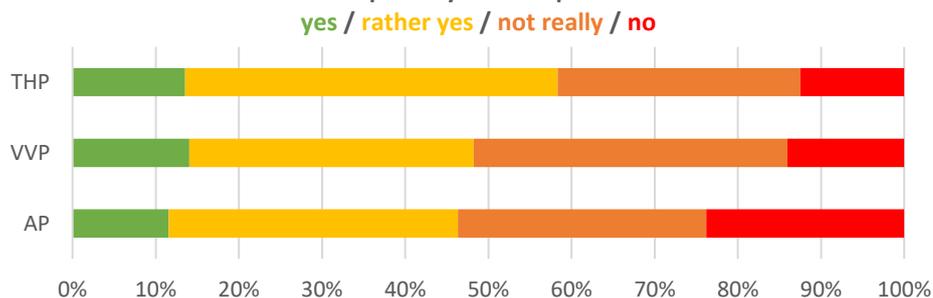


Chart No. 17B - Transparency of work performance evaluation



55% of respondents felt that they had the **potential for career growth** in their job position. Career growth opportunities were positively perceived mainly by academic staff, who chose the “yes” option in almost 50%. The group of science-research staff chose the “yes” option in more than 30% and “rather yes” in another more than 30%.

Chart No. 18A - Do you have the potential for career growth in your job position?

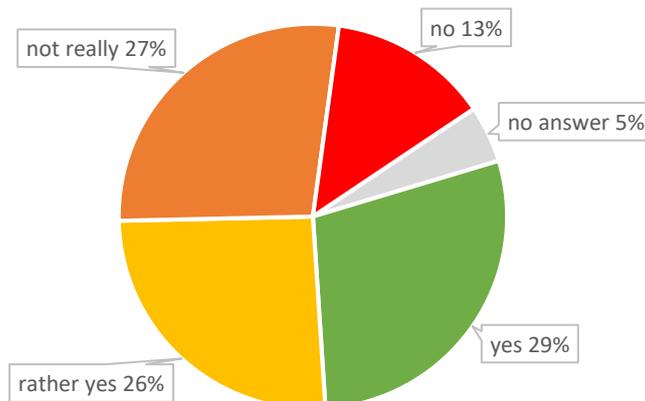
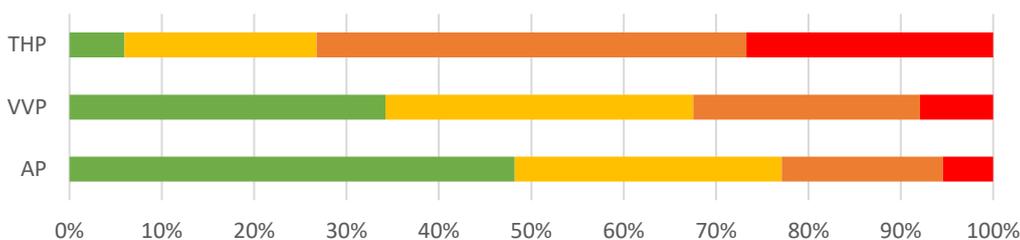
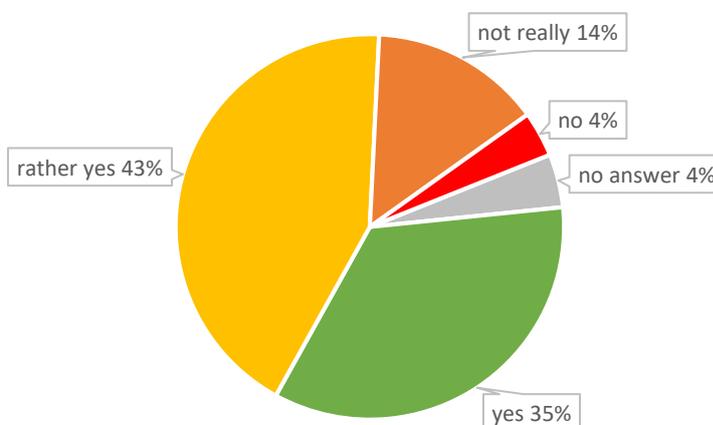


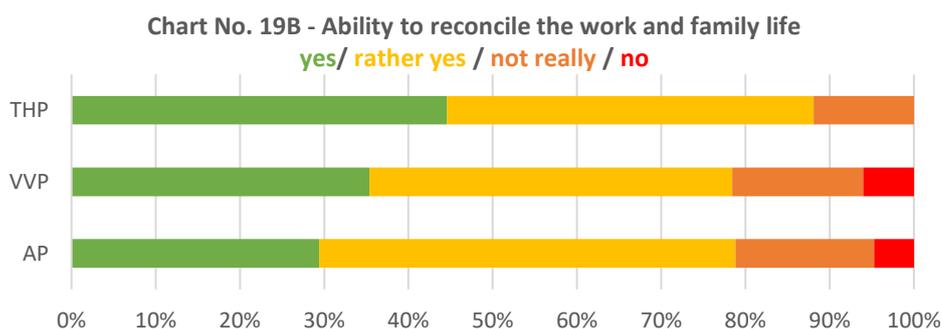
Chart No. 18B - Do you have the potential for career growth in your job position? yes / rather yes / not really / no



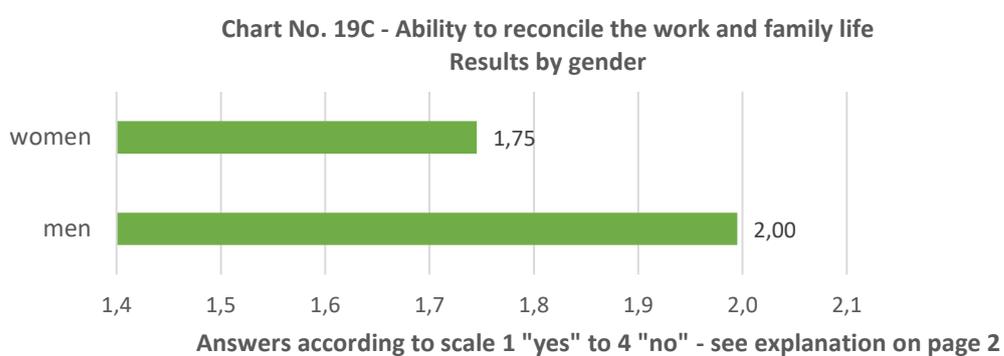
Positive responses were noted in answers to the question of whether the working conditions made it possible to **reconcile the work and family life**, for example with regard to the care of children or family members; 78% of the responses were positive.

Chart No. 19A - Ability to reconcile the work and family life





We were interested in whether this feeling would be different for women and men. You can see the comparison in Chart 19C. The summary result for women is more positive.



68% of employees had a feeling that MENDELU sufficiently **supported mobility** to foreign institutions; 20% had a feeling that the University did not support mobility.

Chart No. 20A - Support of mobility

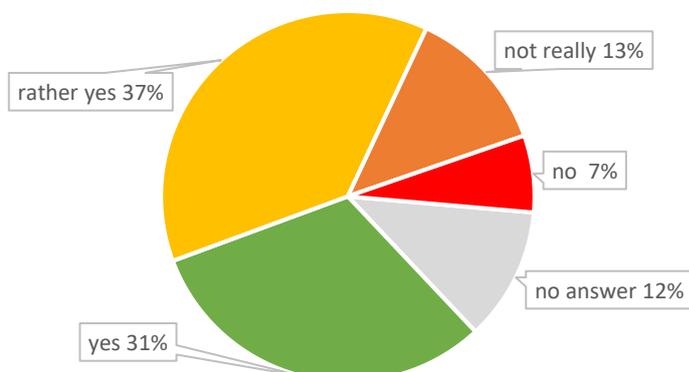
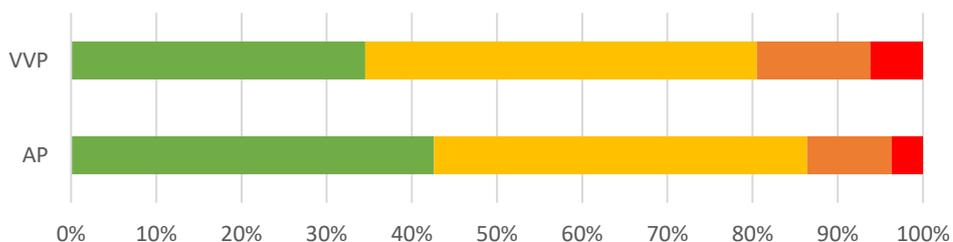


Chart No. 20B - Support of mobility

yes / rather yes / not really / no



60 % of respondents felt that they did not have sufficient **possibilities to influence the events at the particular constituent** and consequently also in the wider institutional context at MENDELU.

Chart No. 21A - Possibilities to influence events at the constituent

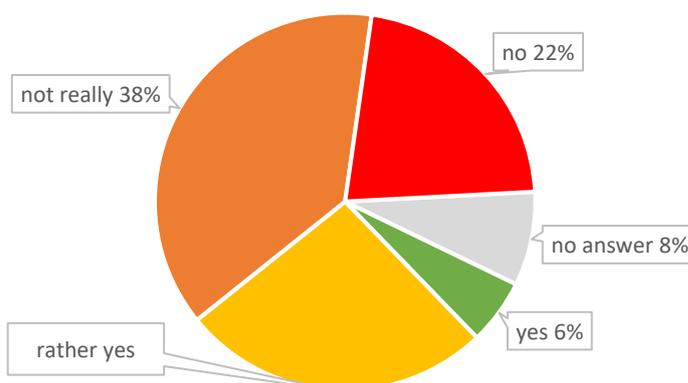
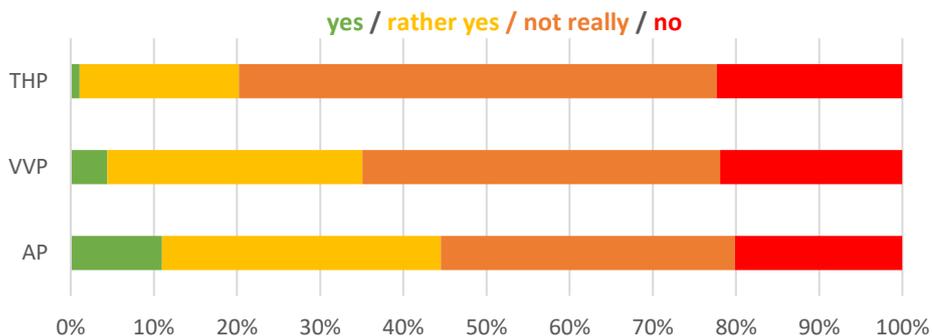
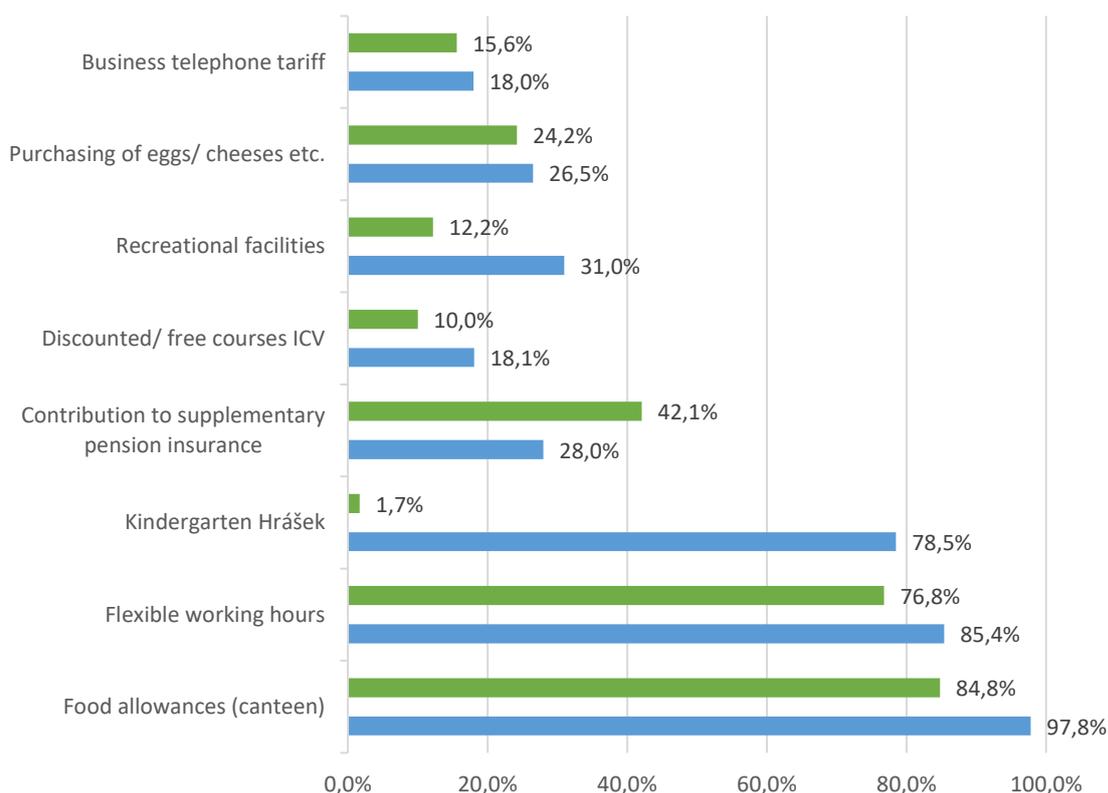


Chart No. 21B - Possibilities to influence events at the constituent

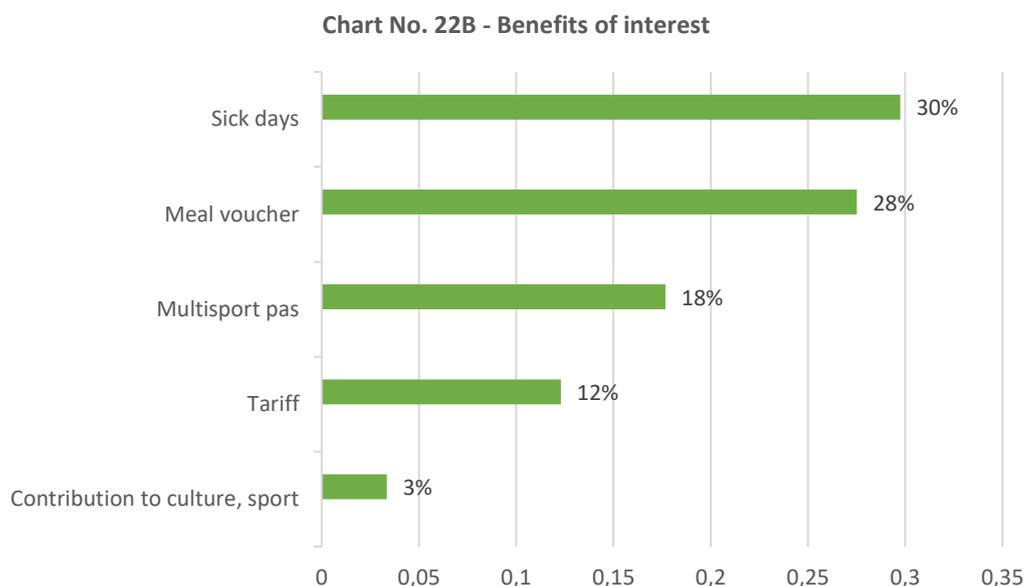


Employees are highly aware of the **benefits** provided by MENDELU as an employer, such as: subsidized food in the canteen, flexible working hours, University kindergarten called Hrášek or a recreational facility. More than 84% of respondents take meals in the canteen, over $\frac{3}{4}$ use flexible working hours and 42% of respondents receive the contribution to the supplementary pension insurance.

Chart No. 22A - Known and used benefits



The questionnaire survey clearly showed what benefits the employees would be interested in: The employees would especially **welcome home office, sick days and meal vouchers**.



Training and development

The survey also included the question of whether the respondents had participated in training events in the past 3 years. It was clear from the answers that nearly 80% of academics and more than 70% of science-research staff had participated in the past 3 years in a seminar, workshop or course organized by MENDELU. Participation in conferences organized by MENDELU was 75% for both groups; in 65% of cases, the participation was active.

Participation in educational events at MENDELU

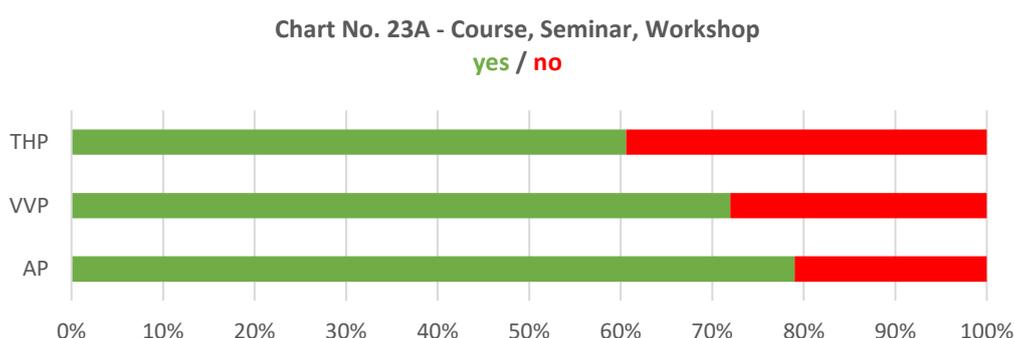


Chart No. 23B - Participation in conferences

yes / no

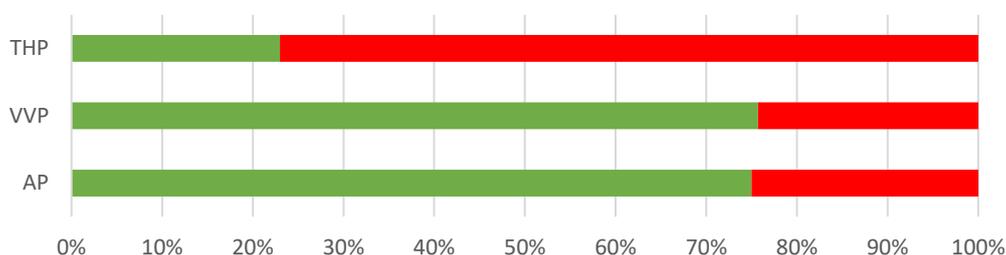
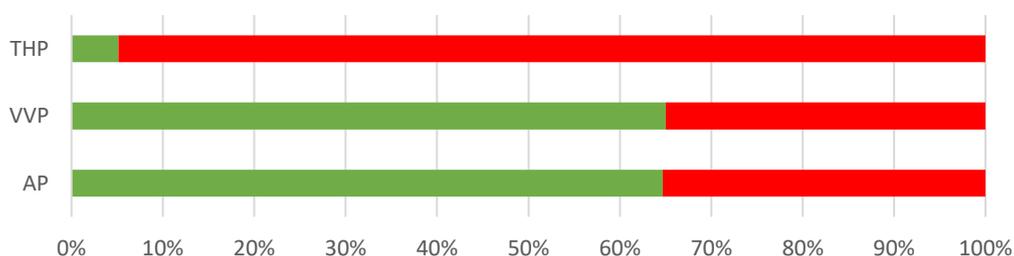


Chart No. 23C - Participation in conferences - presentation of a paper

yes / no



Participation in educational events outside MENDELU

Participation in a seminar, a workshop or a course held outside MENDELU was over 80% for the academic staff, i.e. higher than for the same events held directly at MENDELU. For science-research staff, it was the opposite – the participation in events organized at MENDELU prevailed by several percent.

According to the respondents from both groups mentioned, participation in conferences held outside MENDELU was higher compared to the conferences held at MENDELU; at these outside conferences, the participants had also more often presented their paper than at the conferences organized at our University.

Chart No. 24A - Course, Seminar, Workshop

yes / no

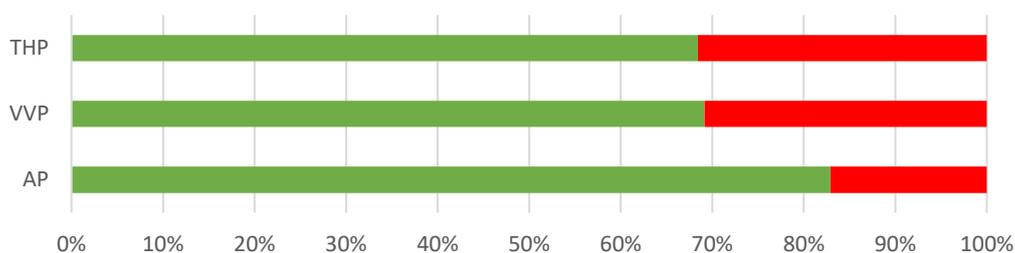


Chart No. 24B - Participation in conferences

yes / no

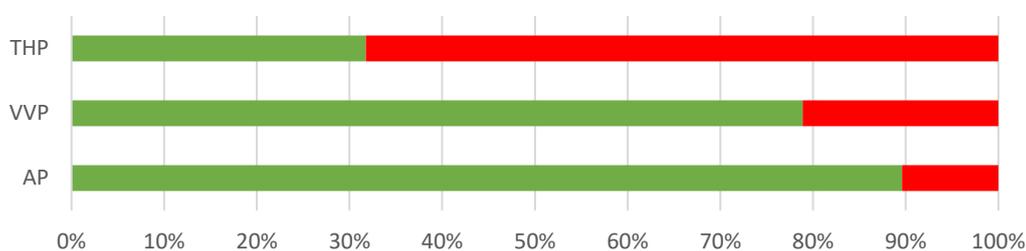
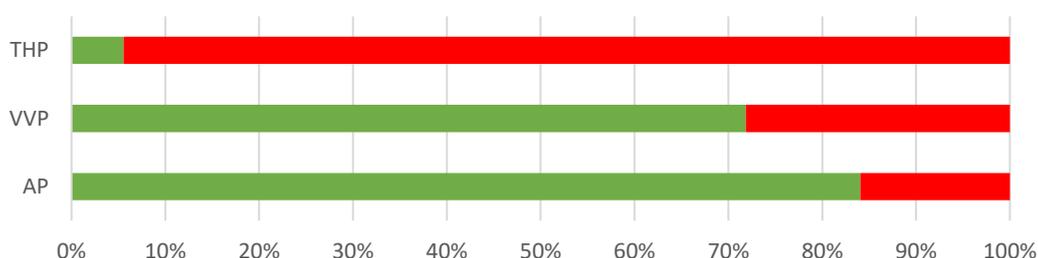


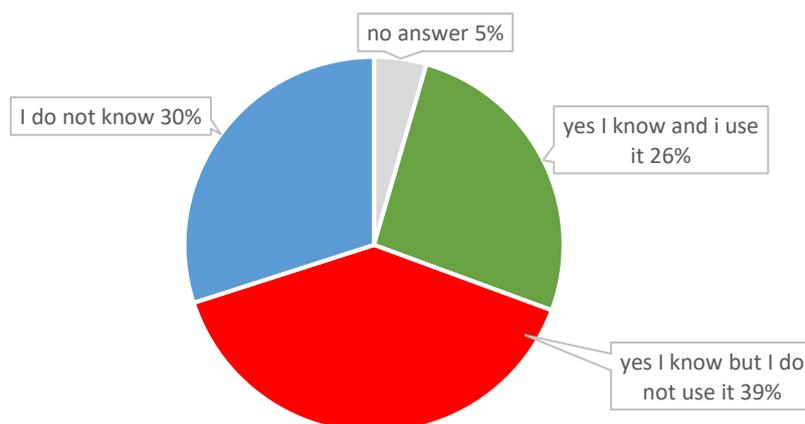
Chart No. 24C - Participation in conferences - presentation of a paper

yes / no



The answers to the question of **whether respondents knew** the University portal kurzy.mendelu.cz and whether they used it showed that 30 % of respondents did not know this portal at all and another 39 % did know it, but did not use it.

Chart No. 25 - www.kurzy.mendelu



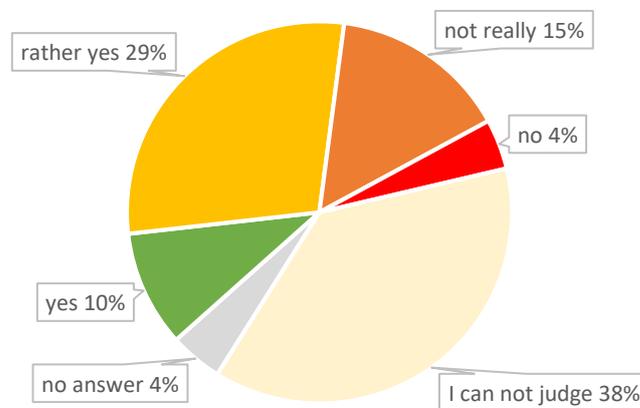
To the open question of whether they would welcome any possibility of further training at MENDELU beyond the scope of their workload, the respondents listed the following types of courses:

- language courses,
- courses on evaluation of science and research,
- courses aimed at improving the quality of teaching,

- soft skills courses (including the course of communication with people, personal development),
- courses on correct publishing of scientific achievements (ethics, principles, procedures),
- courses of statistics,
- legislative changes in areas in which MENDELU profiles itself,
- managerial courses,
- Windows, SAP and other areas of IT.

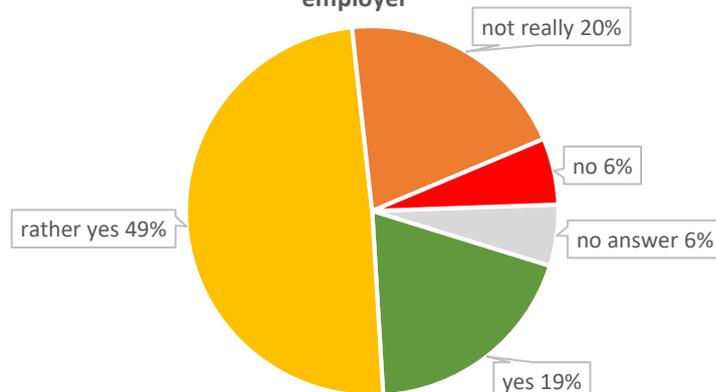
As to the question of whether **supervisors provide to young researchers** (doctoral or post-doctoral students) **expert advice** for their development, 38% of respondents said that they could not judge this area. Of the remaining 60%, 2/3 of respondents answered “yes” or “rather yes”.

Chart No. 26 - Providing expert advice to young researchers



In the end, the question was asked as to **whether the respondents would recommend (not recommend) MENDELU as a potential employer**. Of the total number 415 responses, 68% would recommend MENDELU as an employer.

Chart No. 27 - Recommendation of MENDELU as a potential employer



We have chosen the following examples of the positive responses:

Good conditions, acceptable working relationships, possibility of development, pleasant location, multifunctional campus, contact with young people.

If one finds a good supervisor/colleagues, the work here is pleasant. In the case of my own research, I have a free hand and my research contains my mistakes that I can learn from and possibly use as a basis for further research; but in the case of complete uncertainty, it is easy to get advice from my colleagues/experts.

Prestigious educational institution offering a stable job position and the possibility of career growth.

Meaningful and interesting work, good working conditions, possibility to use one's own knowledge and skills, good interpersonal relationships, respect to the employee and his or her contribution to MENDELU.

All positive responses are provided in **Appendix No. 4**.

We have also chosen some negative insights:

There are no working benefits; temporary (fixed-term) contract; insufficient wage conditions.

Lack of concept with respect to the infrastructure; historical damage to the trust in superior levels.

It is not good, for example, for the heads of the institutes to be chosen only on the basis of their publications or title. The heads of the institutes are managers (directors), expert staff are researchers. That is a big difference. And that is really not being understood here. Often, this results in a great burden of activities on project staff because managers fail.

Great administrative burden, poor cooperation between individual constituents of the University, few opportunities for independent and responsible work.

All negative responses are provided in **Appendix No. 5**.

Respondents had the opportunity to comment on the overall situation at the University as they perceived it personally. Responses are provided in **Appendix No. 6**.

All attachments (Appendix No. 1 – 6) are available only in the Czech version of the document.