



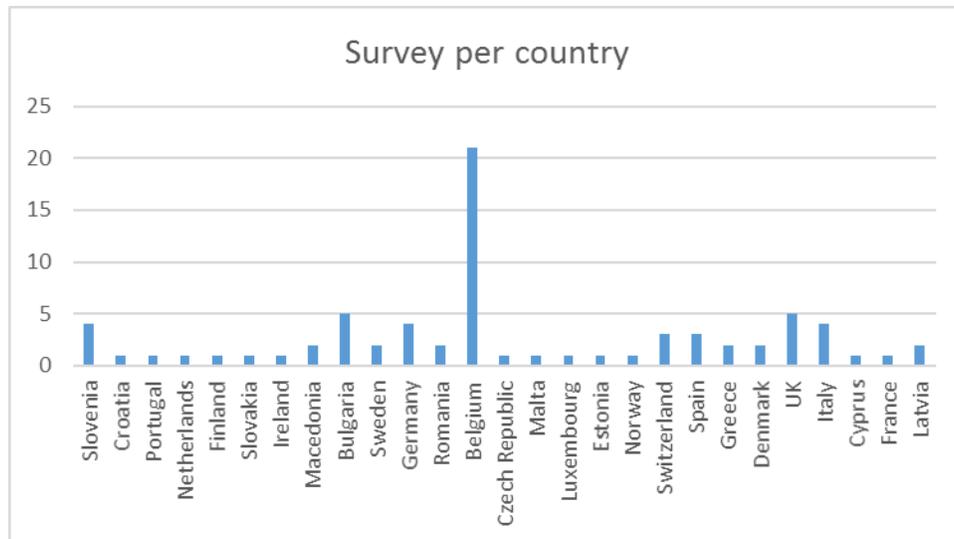
Beware of the dog!

SURVEY – MEMBERS FVE

FVE | Beware of the dog! | 11 January '17



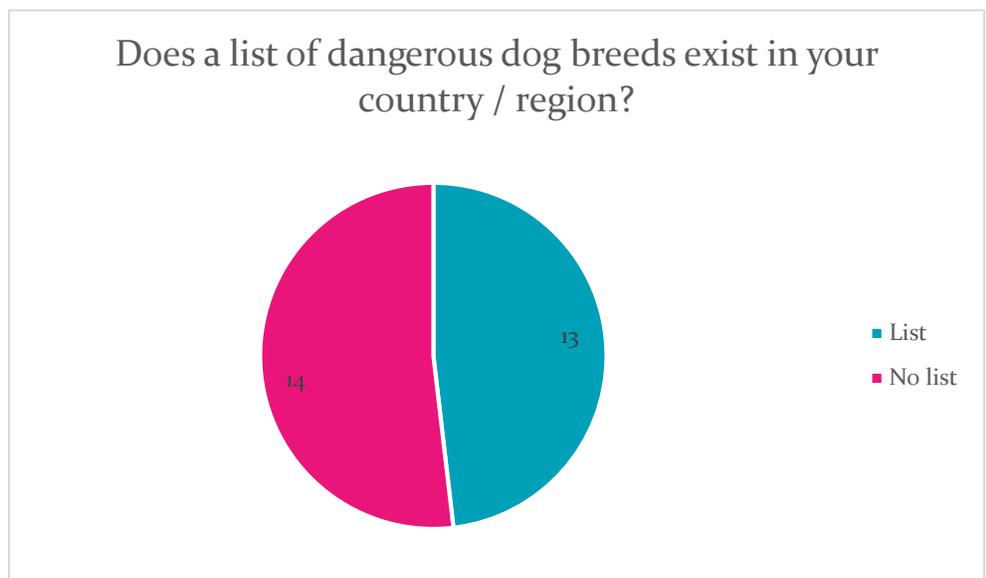
Response of members of FVE



In November '16 we started the survey 'Beware of the dogs'. All members could reply. As seen in the figure, 75 answers were received from 27 countries.

Question 1: Does a list of dangerous dog breeds exist in your country / region?

Countries which have a list of dangerous dog breeds:
Croatia, Portugal, United Kingdom, Denmark, Ireland, Germany, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Norway, Cyprus and France.



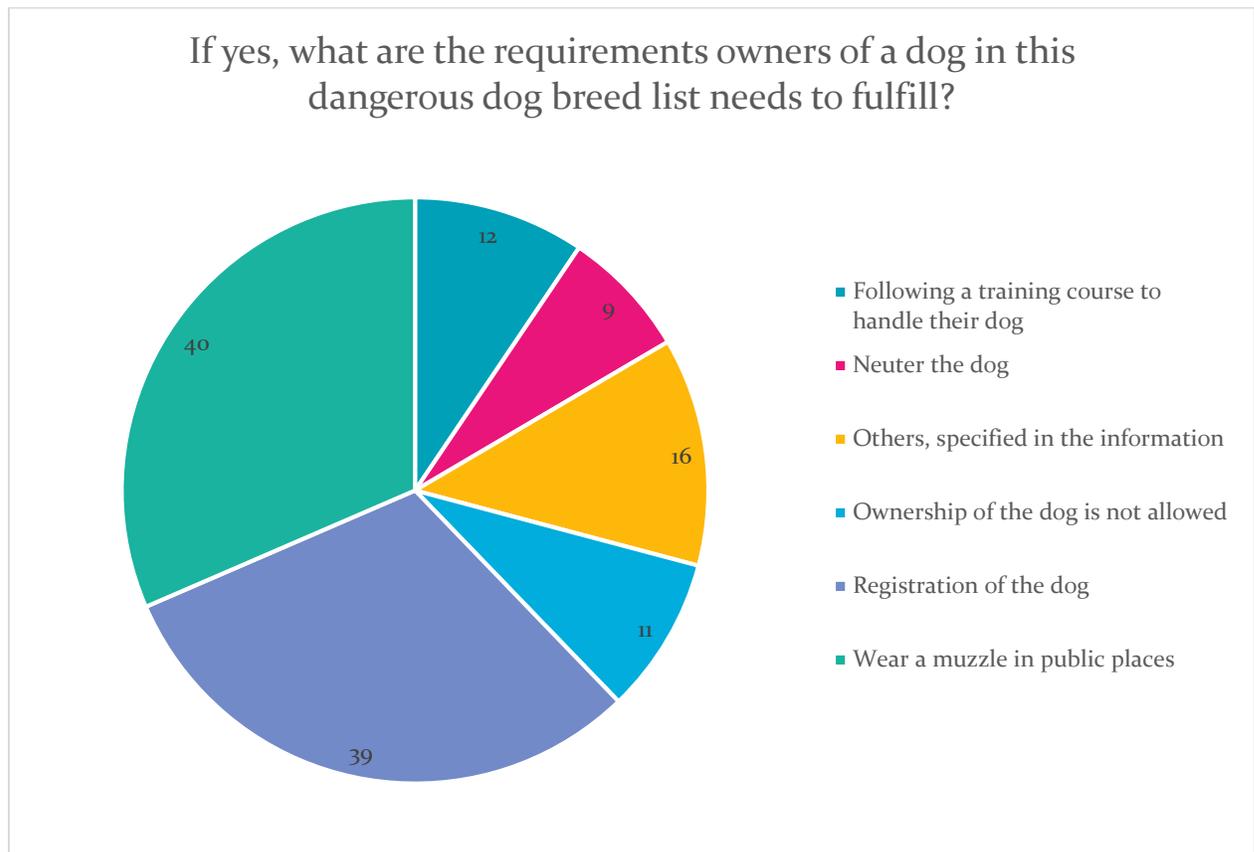
Question 2: If yes, what are the requirements owners of a dog in this dangerous dog breed list needs to fulfill?

In the UK, Denmark, Germany, Denmark, Norway, Italy, Switzerland and Cyprus ownership of dangerous breed dogs is not allowed. An exception is possible in the UK, namely when the owner can prove that the dog is not a danger to public safety, the Court may allow it to be registered on the 'Index of Exempted Dogs' and there will then be stringent conditions that the owner must comply with (including: on a lead, muzzled in public space, neutered and covered by insurance).

In Germany, the dog has to be on a leash and under control of a person who is 16 year or older.

In some countries, it is allowed to keep a dog on the dangerous dog breed list under the condition that the owner has a liability insurance.

Some other countries allow ownership if more taxes are paid and the owner has passed a special education and knowledge test.



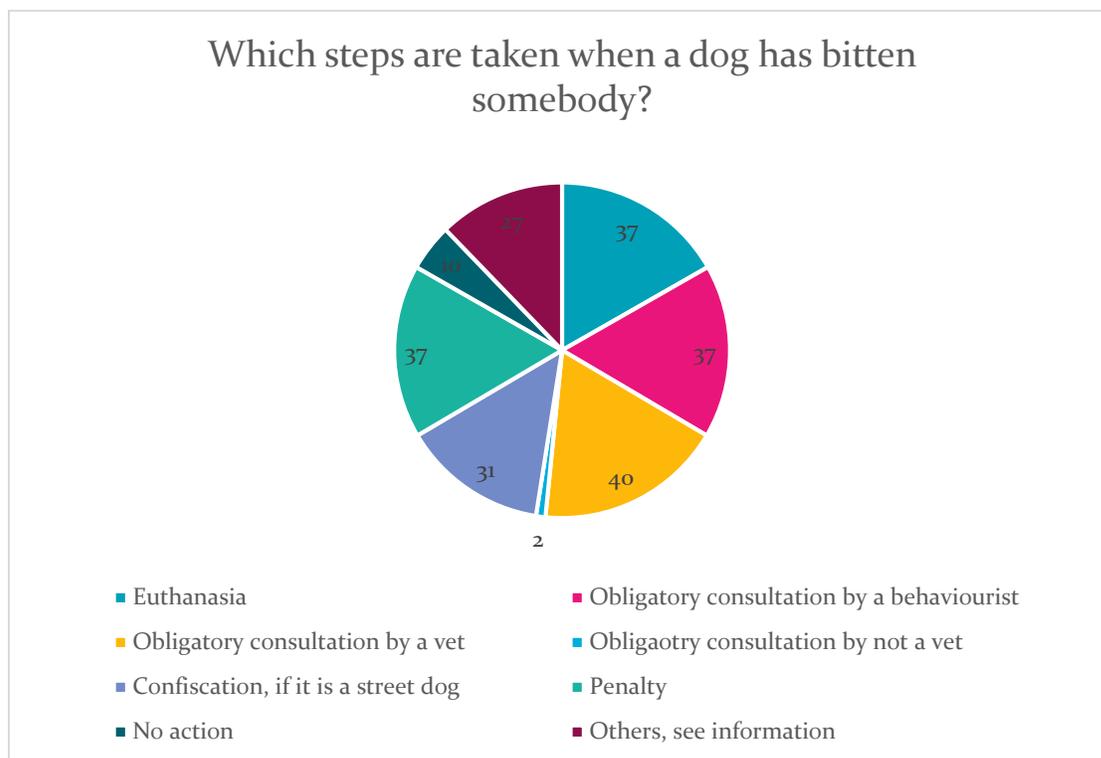
Question 3: Which steps are taken towards dogs which have bitten somebody?

In the case that a dog has bitten somebody, no matter what breed, different steps would be taken. If chargers are pressed, the Court decides what to do – otherwise no obligatory steps.

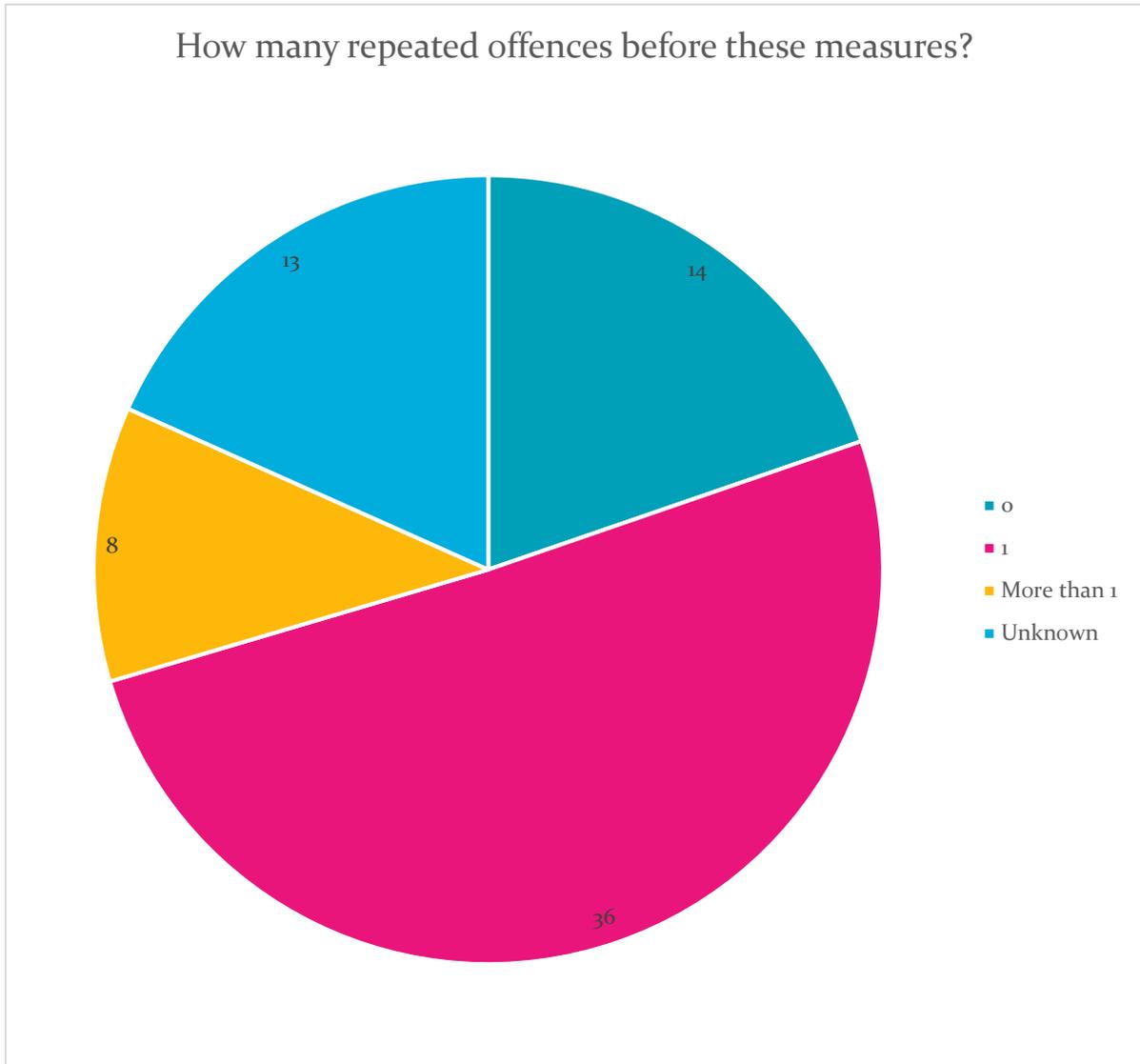
Other options, which are also considerable:

- Valuation of the dog by a veterinarian behaviourist;
- For serious bites – death or injured person – valuation, and perhaps euthanization;
- Check on the rabies vaccination status;
- Neutering, if not neutered already;
- Training course, if the dog has never bitten before;
- Registration as a dangerous dog in database;
- Mandatory training for the owner;
- Keep on a lead in public place;
- When dogs are registered for bites in the central register, preference for muzzle.

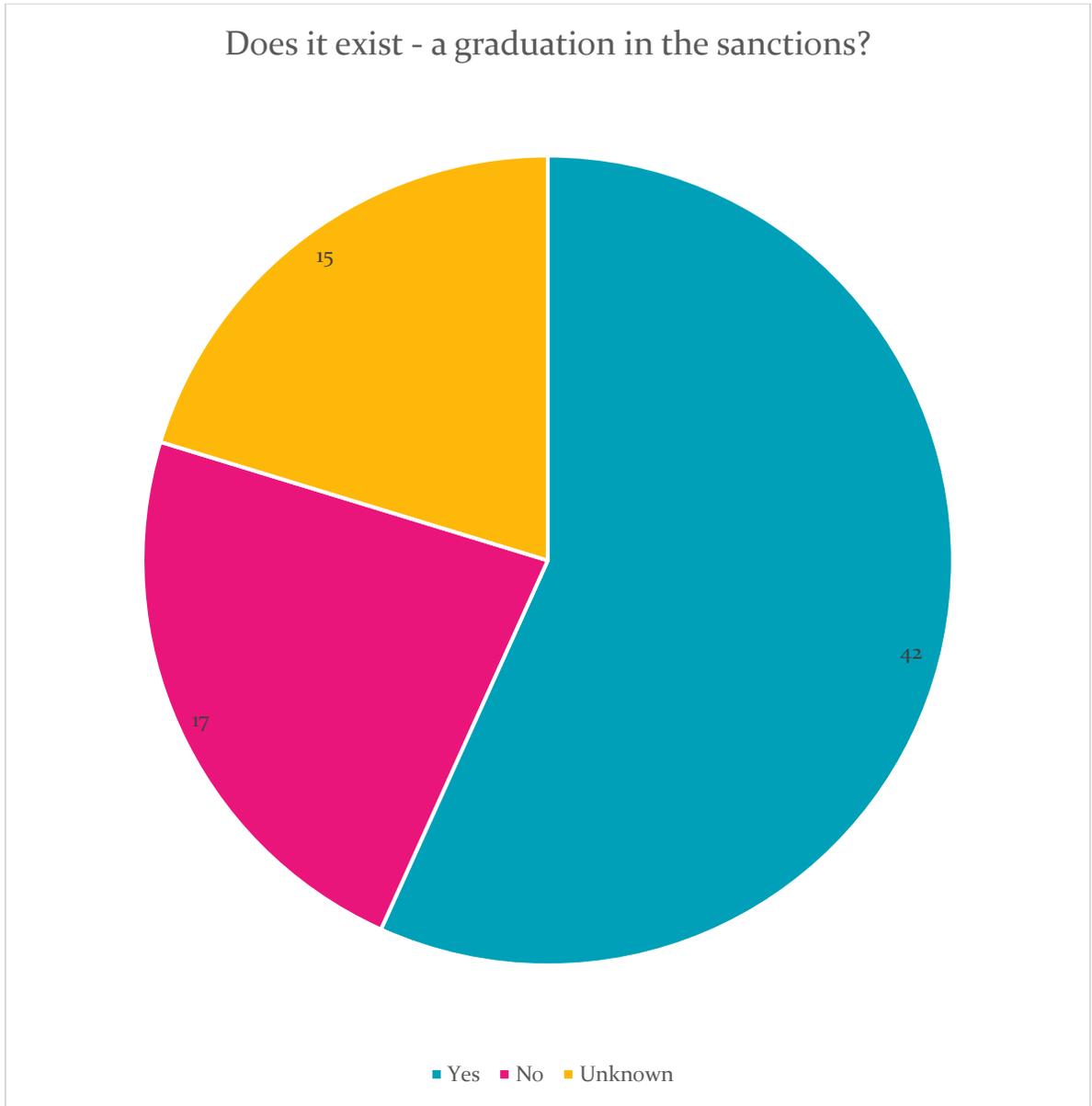
Nb. Always advice by bite – check validity rabies vaccine and symptoms. In Slovenia, it is obligatory to bring the dog for veterinary observation on days 1, 3 and 10 after the bite, to look for symptoms of rabies.



Question 4: How many repeated offences before these measures?

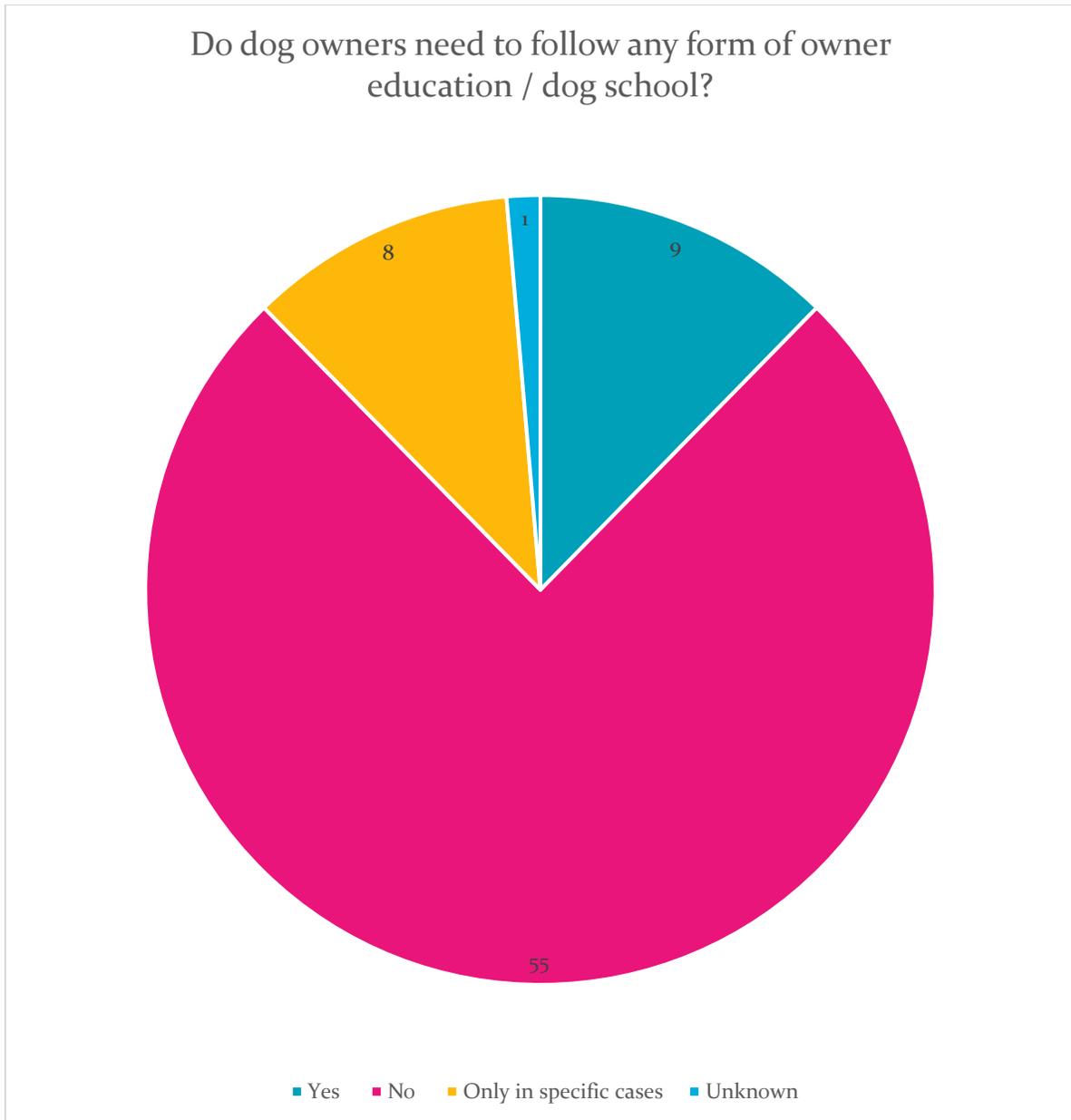


Question 5: Does it exist a graduation in the sanctions?



Question 6: Do dog owners need to follow any form of owner education or dog school?

Only on voluntary base. However, in some countries it is mandatory, if dogs are declared dangerous. In Swiss it is mandatory to do a theoretical exam before your first dog. In Italy, there are two different types of education: (1) Voluntary for all dog owners, (2) Mandatory in case of the dog has bitten.



Question 7: In the case of need for owner education or dog school, which kind?

It depends on the dog and the situation, but most members replied:

- Education for the owner;
- Positive reinforcement;
- Obedience and socialization training;
- Dog school approved by the municipality, with a preference for a vet who is specialized in animal behaviour.
- Training approved by the Health Ministry and other organizations (eg. in Italy 'Fnovi', organizing training 'patentino');

Question 8: Are there any other measures you would like to share being important to prevent dog bites?

- The highest number: **good owner education and focus on owner responsibility!** This will start with education on schools - educate people from the beginning about preventative measures to minimize potential conflicts between dog and human (mainly, children). Educate both owners and the public about dog stress signals and the dog language;
- Dog socialization, training and control of the dog has to improve, to prevent accidental contact between dog and the public;
- It is advisable to put dogs on a leash in public places. Suspicious or dangerous dogs only with muzzle;
- Education of the future owners (eg. veterinarians have to inform people before buying a dog about their character, the breed, costs and needs);
- Dogs should *never* be left unattended with young children, under the age of 10 – 12;
- The possibility to own a dog has to be harder, every dog owner should participate at a basic course on dog behaviour and dog communication to prevent dog bites. (However, some think this is unhelpful, as it focuses attention on dogs that are considered as dangerous);
- Promote the legal charges (e.g. fines, jail time) on the owner in the National Legislation;
- More supervision of all legal measures;
- All dogs with aggressive potential have to be registered at local kennel club and local police station, and the age of the owner at least above 18 years;

- Obligatory castration and sterilization of all animals before the age of 1 years old; this age is by behaviourist research the age as the threshold of the behaviour of an animal;
- Obligatory training of the large breed animals that can potentially harm a human, but not a forbidden list that can produce the opposite result (in experience).

Some specific examples given by country, with good results experience / prevention of diseases.

- In Slovenia, in the case that the dog is not vaccinated against rabies and has bitten a person, there is a special fine for the owner of 400 euros. The dog must be vaccinated, registered and identified. If not before, costs for this procedure are around 120 euros – additional to the financial fine;
- In Swiss, spaces exclusively for dogs (playing, physical activities, interactions between dog and dog) are offered by the city councils, with great success!

Further information

1. http://www.fve.org/uploads/publications/docs/004_stray_dogs_position_paper_ad_opted_22_may_2015.pdf
2. http://www.fve.org/uploads/publications/docs/fve_00_039_dangerous_dogs.pdf
3. <https://vimeo.com/album/3855035>