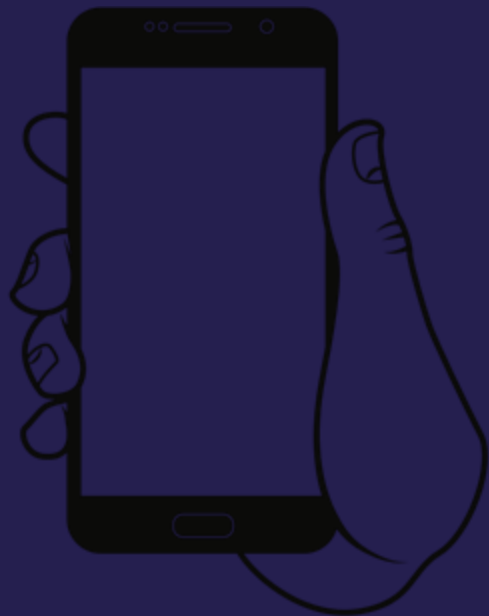




INITIATIVE LOGOS ET COSMOS



SEMINAR January 22, 23, 24, 2025

**SMARTPHONES AND LIFE BALANCE :
A REFLECTION FOR TODAY!**

LCI LEVEL 2 PROJECT (JUNE 2024 - MARCH 2025)

Project leader and speaker: Andr  a RAZANATSARA

Project team :

Didier NOMENJANAHARY & Ambinina RAPAOLY



FIRST SESSION OUTLINE

I. Introducing the LCI

II. Analysis of the impact of smartphone use on students' lives

III. Ethical challenges associated with smartphone use

IV. Discussion and sharing session (Workshop)

I. Introducing the LCI

The Logos et Cosmos Initiative is a five-year IFES program that began in 2020 and operates in **Latin America** and **Francophone Africa**.

The LCI equips young Christian academics to run projects within their universities to **awaken curiosity** and **wonder about God's Word and God's world**, as well as about **theology and science**.

This program provides training, mentoring and funding for participants, known as **"CATALYSTS"**, to carry out projects in collaboration with IFES national movements.



INITIATIVE
LOGOS ET COSMOS



Some of the Catalyst projects bring together theological and scientific perspectives to address challenges such as mental health, injustice, poverty and climate change. At the same time, there are other ILC projects that promote dialogue between theology and science, or offer mentoring and training to help students as they interact with their universities and academic disciplines. Project activities include small-group thematic Bible studies, workshops, writing and publishing resources, developing online courses and implementing hands-on programs.

In short, **the Logos and Cosmos Initiative** is the fruit of IFES' global vision, summed up in the Engaging the University (ETU) objective: to have an impact on the whole of society for the glory of Christ.



INITIATIVE
LOGOS ET COSMOS

Theme of Session 1 - Smartphones and students : exploring impact and meeting ethical challenges

At a conference entitled "The Design of Future Things" in 2015, Sebastian Deterding said:

"Just when technologies were supposed to liberate us, we feel increasingly overwhelmed and overworked. We're becoming addicted to the distraction these technologies produce, checking our smartphone an average of 150 times a day."

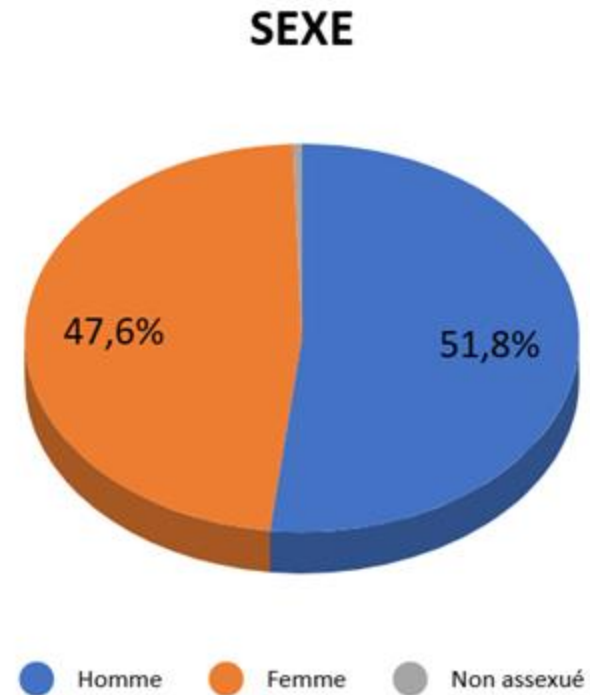
II. Analysis of the impact of smartphone use on the lives of students at the University of Antsiranana (UNA)

Survey results (July - August 2024)

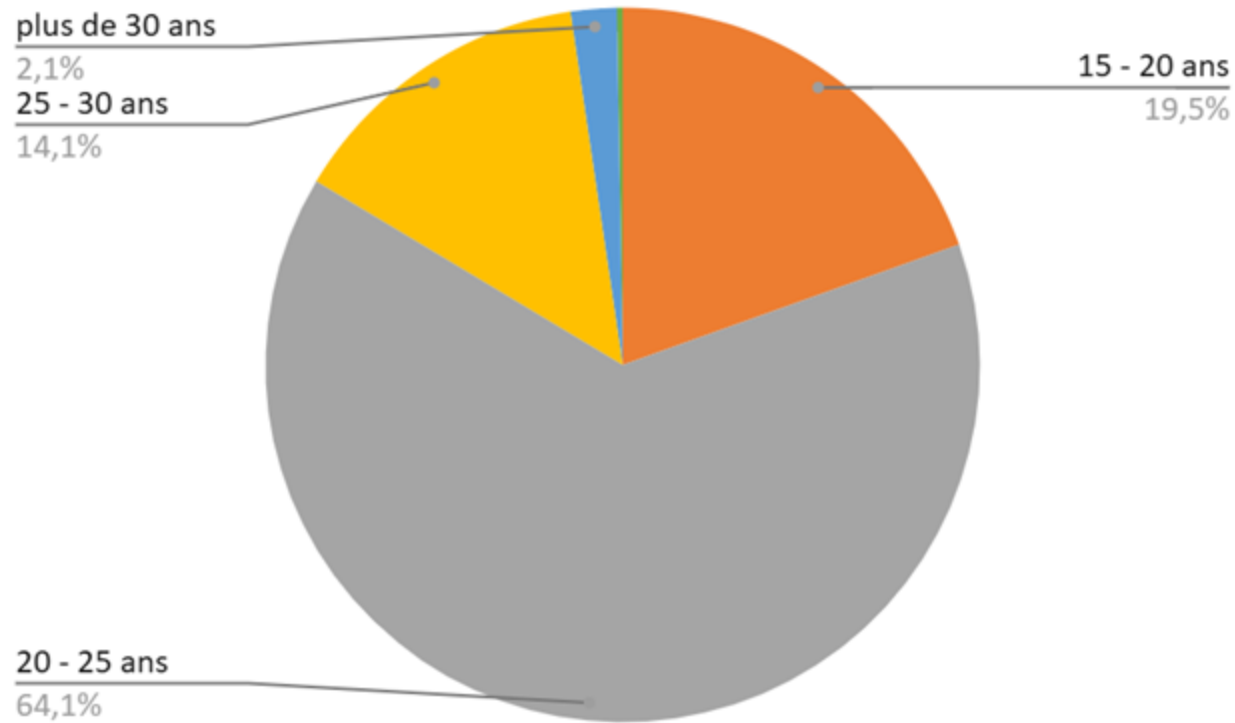
Forms distributed: 400

Forms returned: 382

Form not returned: 18

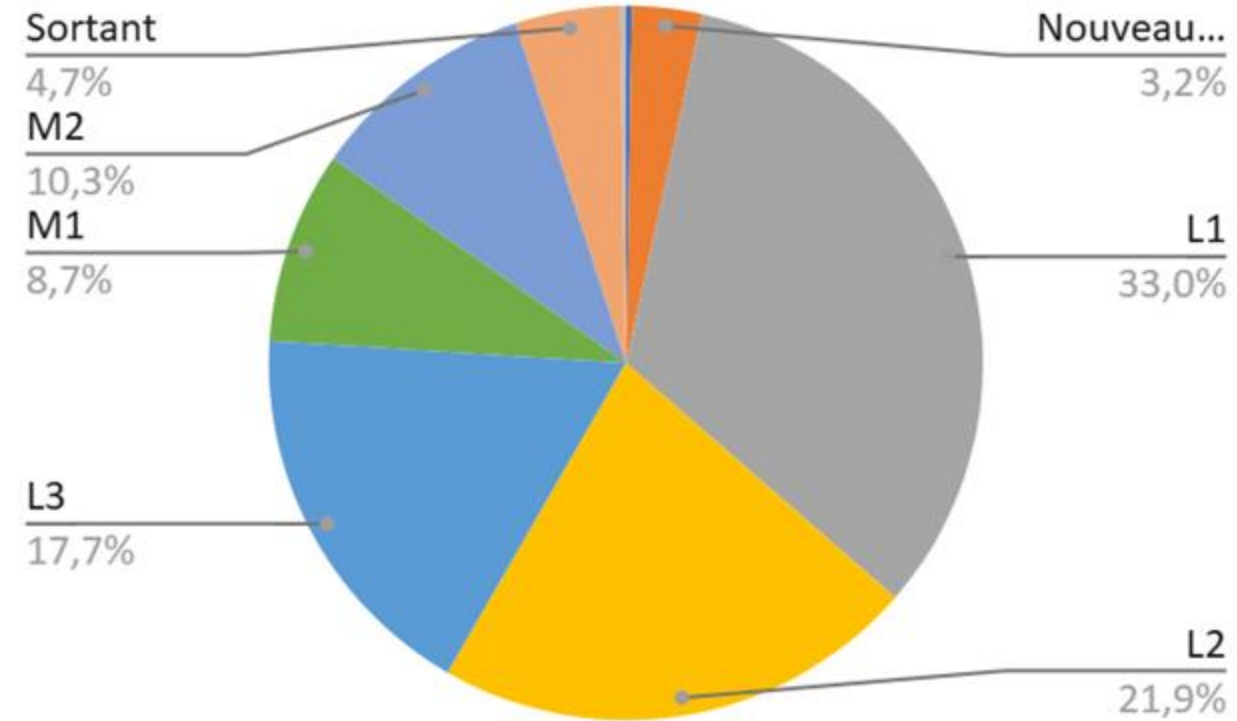


Age distribution



Majority: 15 - 25 years: 83.6%
Minority: over 25: 16.2%

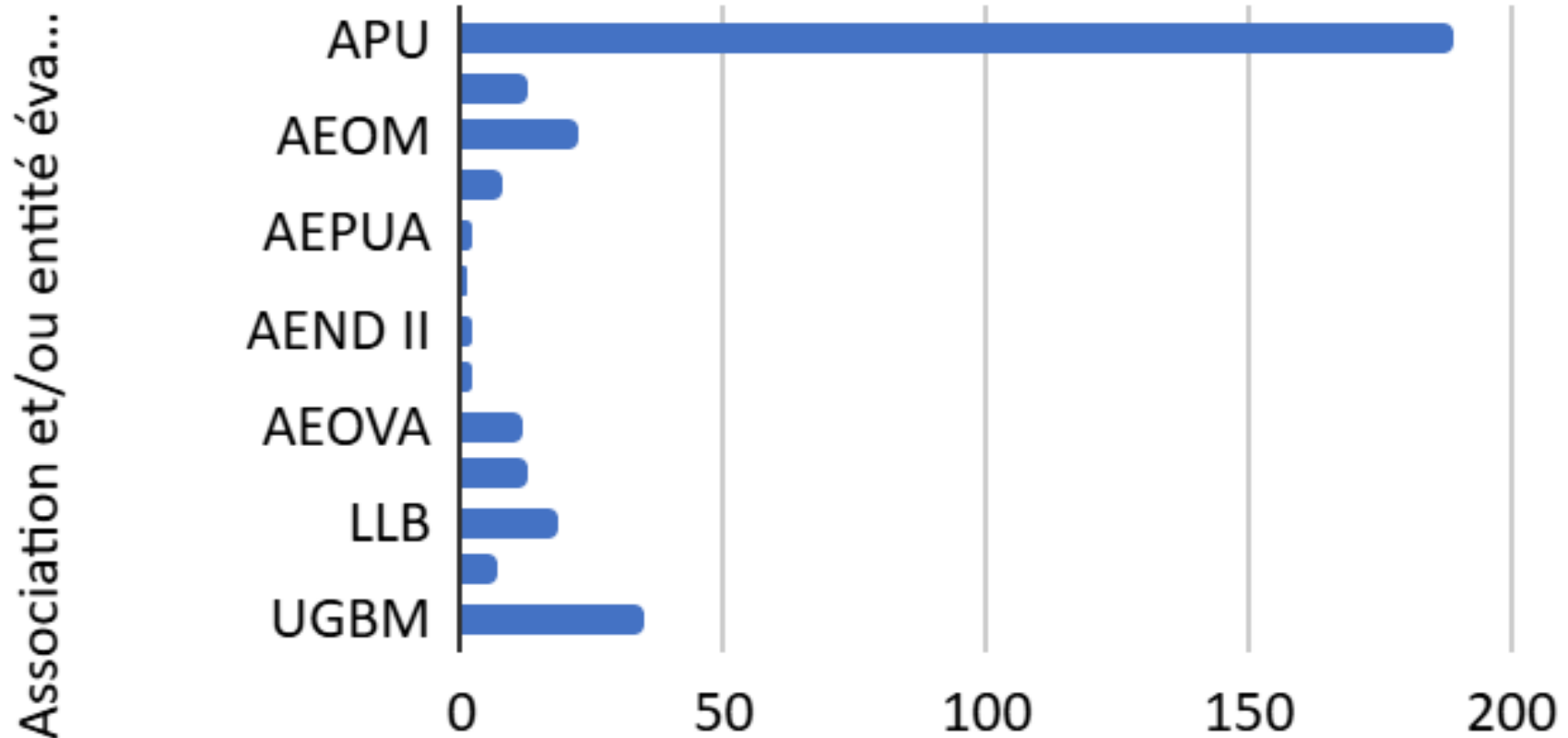
Academic level



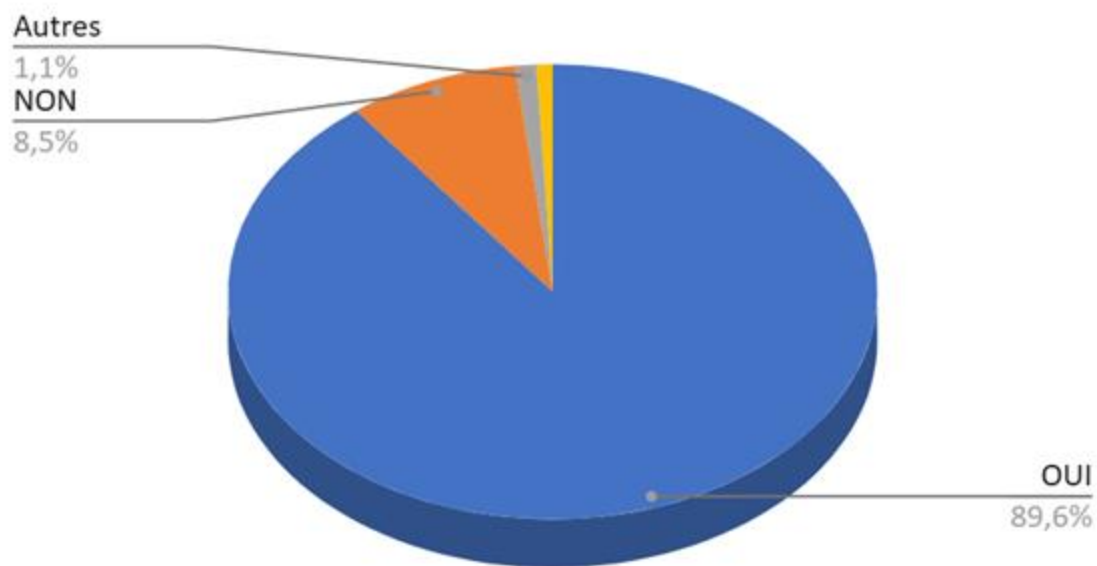
Majority: Bachelor's degree level: 75.8%
Minority: Master's level and above: 23.7%

Membership in Evangelical Group

par rapport à Association et/ou en...

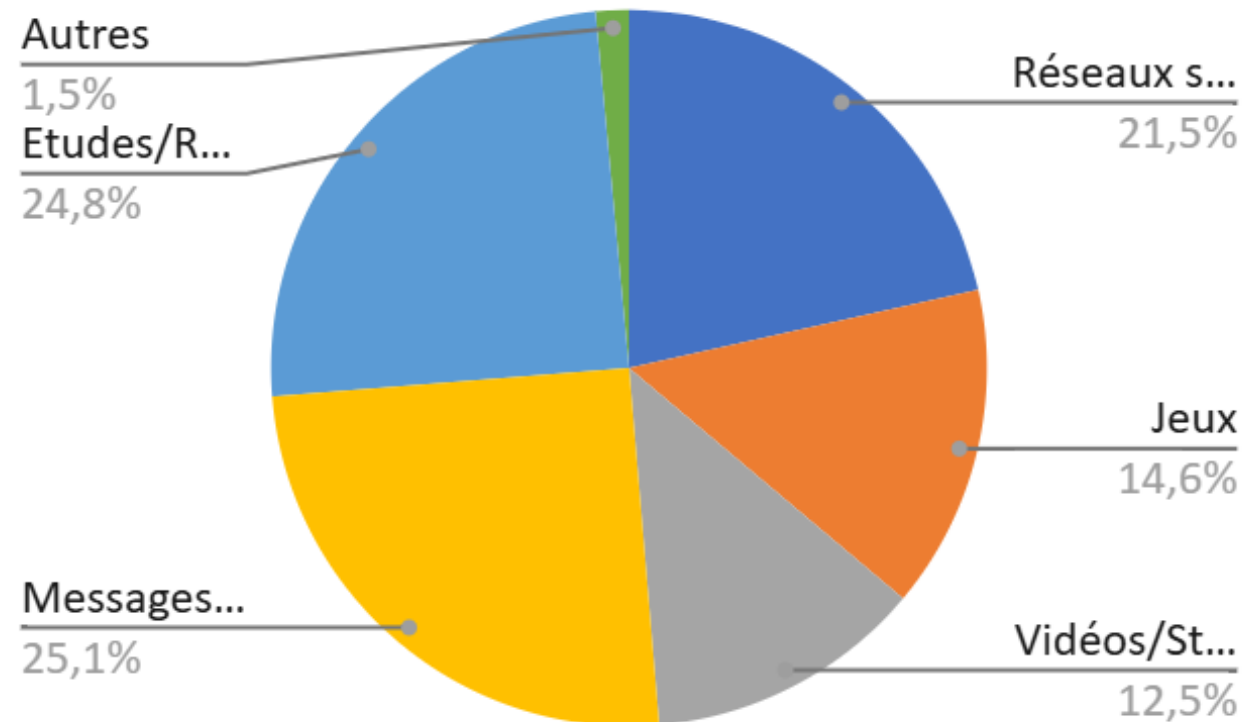


Smartphone ownership



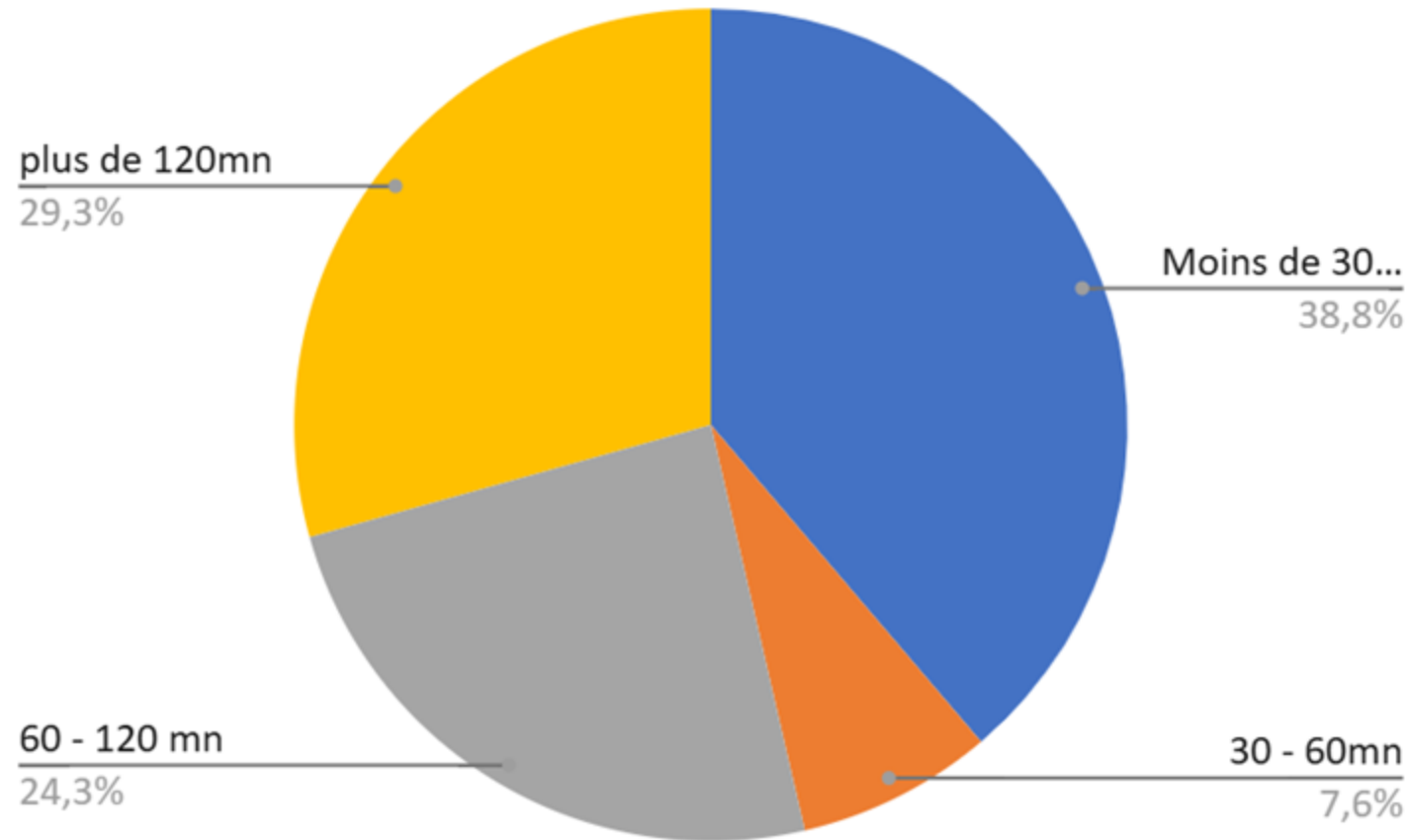
Majority: yes: **89.6%**
Minority: no and other: **9.6%**

Main smartphone activities



Majority: communication and research: **49.9%**
Minority: entertainment: **48.6%**

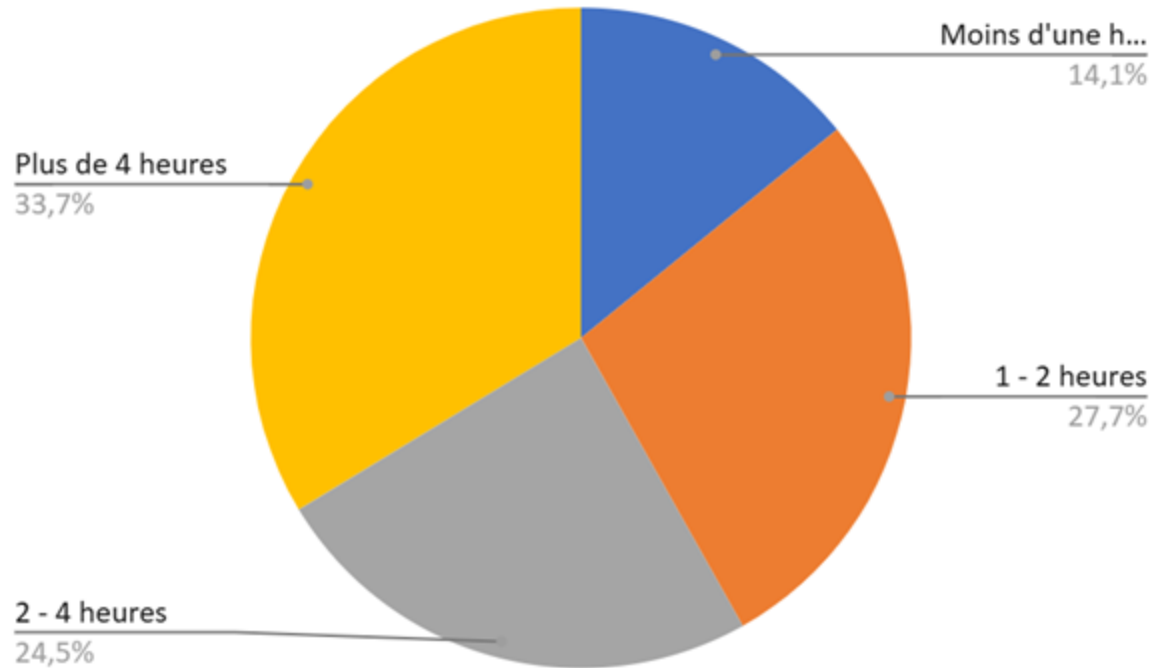
Monthly call frequency



Majority: more than 60 minutes: 53.6%

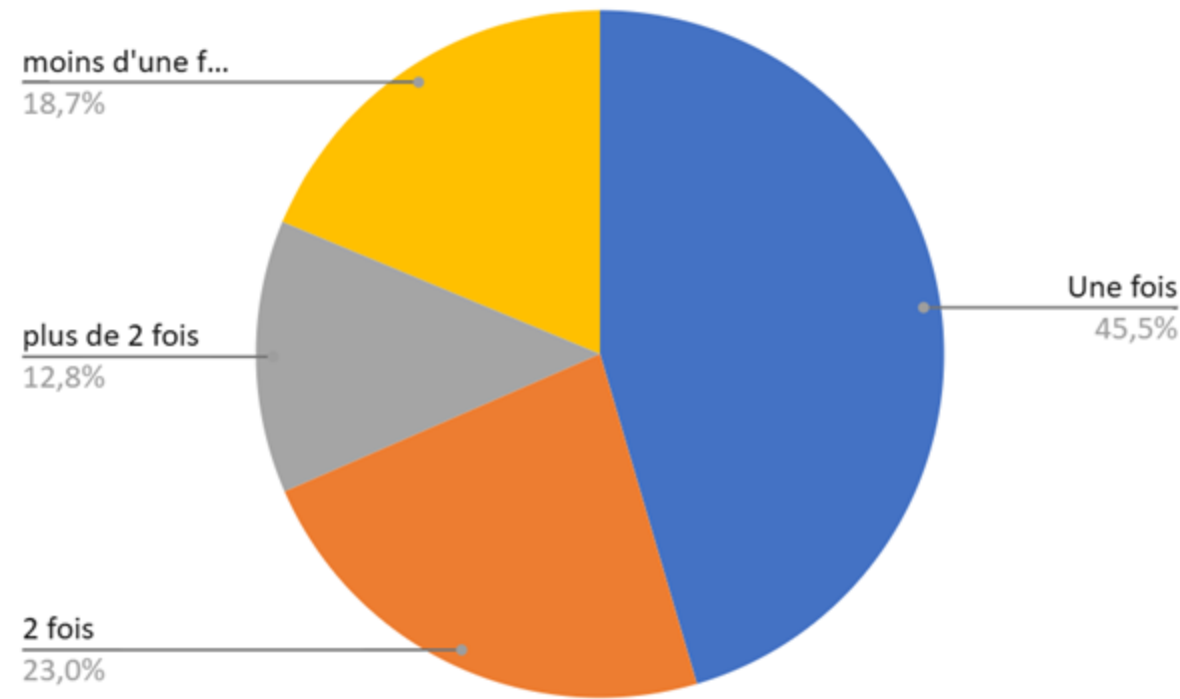
Minority: less than 60 minutes: 46.4%

Time spent on the smartphone per day



Majority: over 2h: **58.2%**
Minority: less than 2h: **41.8%**

Daily battery recharge frequency



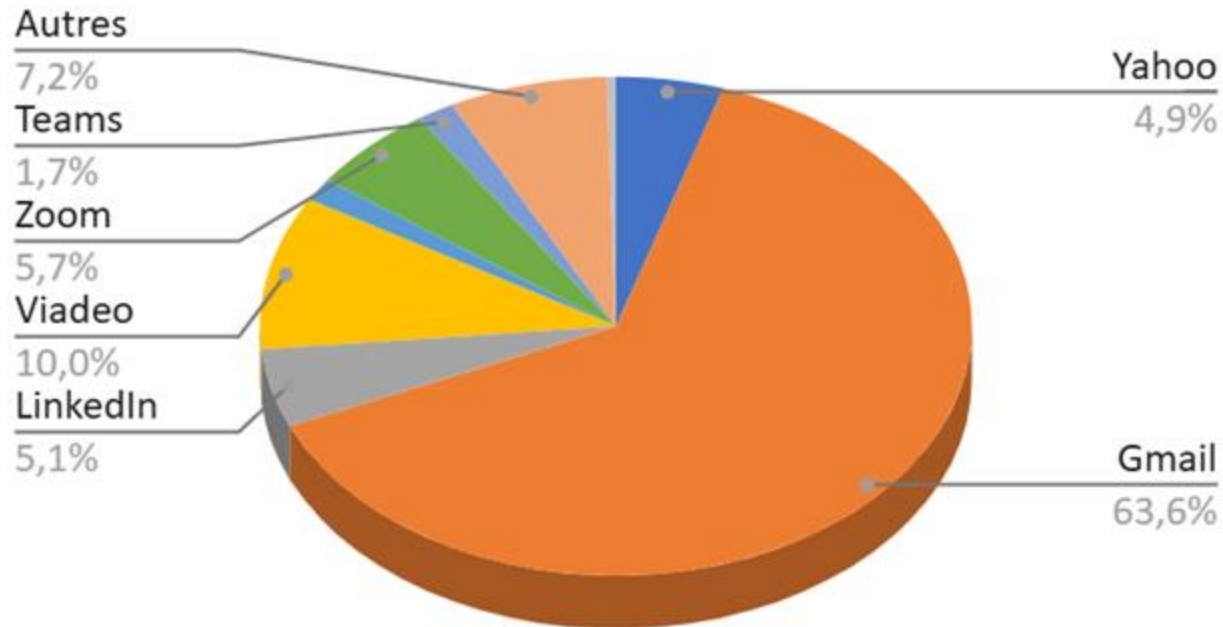
Majority: One time or less: **64.2%**
Minority: 2 times or more: **35.8%**

Professional networks (PR)

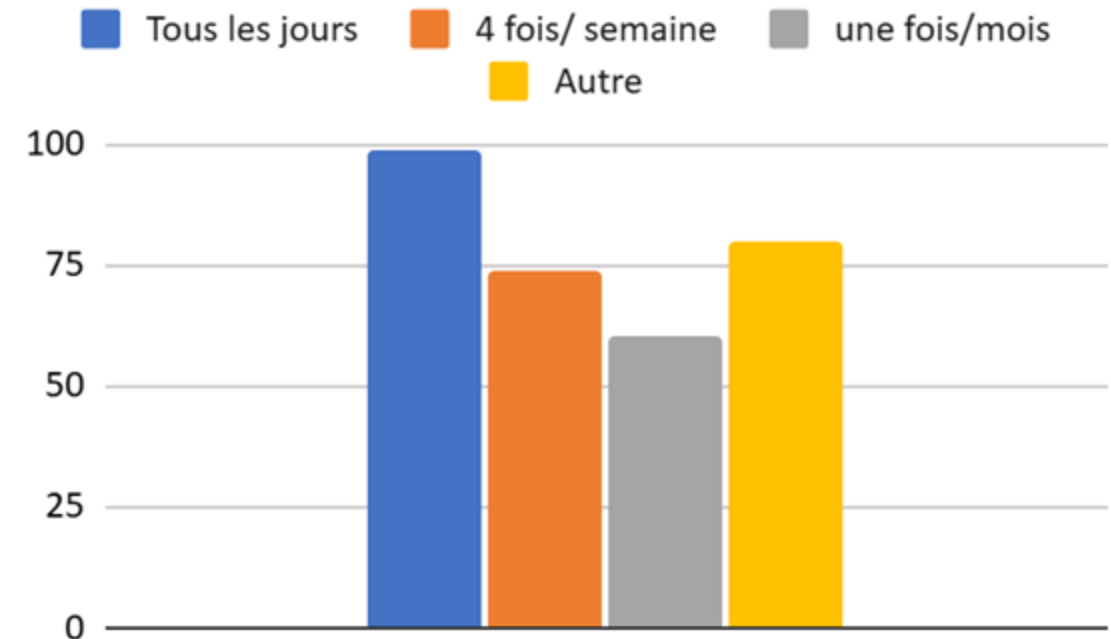
334 students use PRs: 87.4%.

36 students do not use them: 9.4%.

12 students did not respond: 3.1 %.



Frequency of PR use

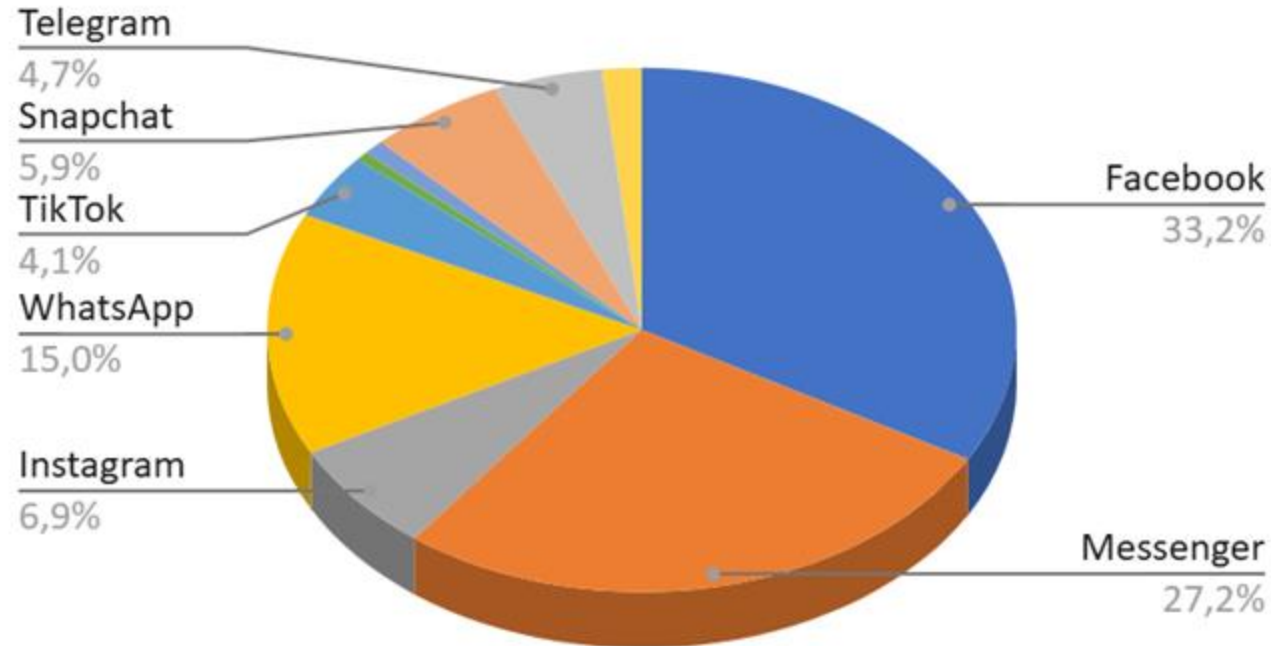


Daily	4 times/ week	Monthly	Other
99	74	60	80

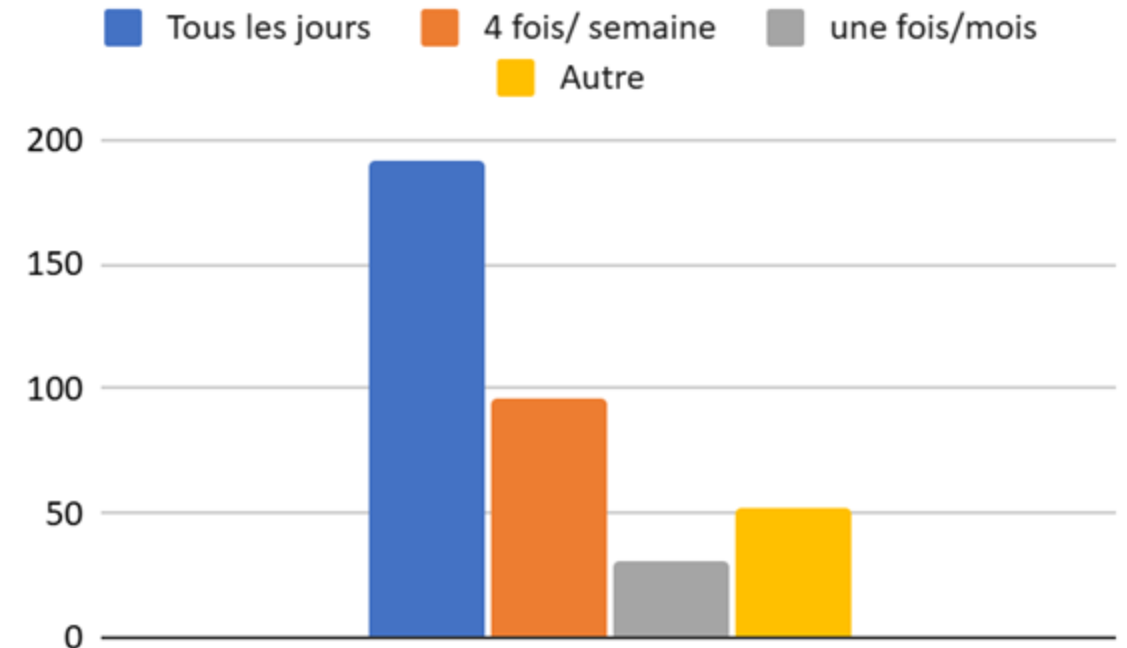
Social Networks

375 students use social networks: 98.1%.

7 students did not respond: 1.8%.



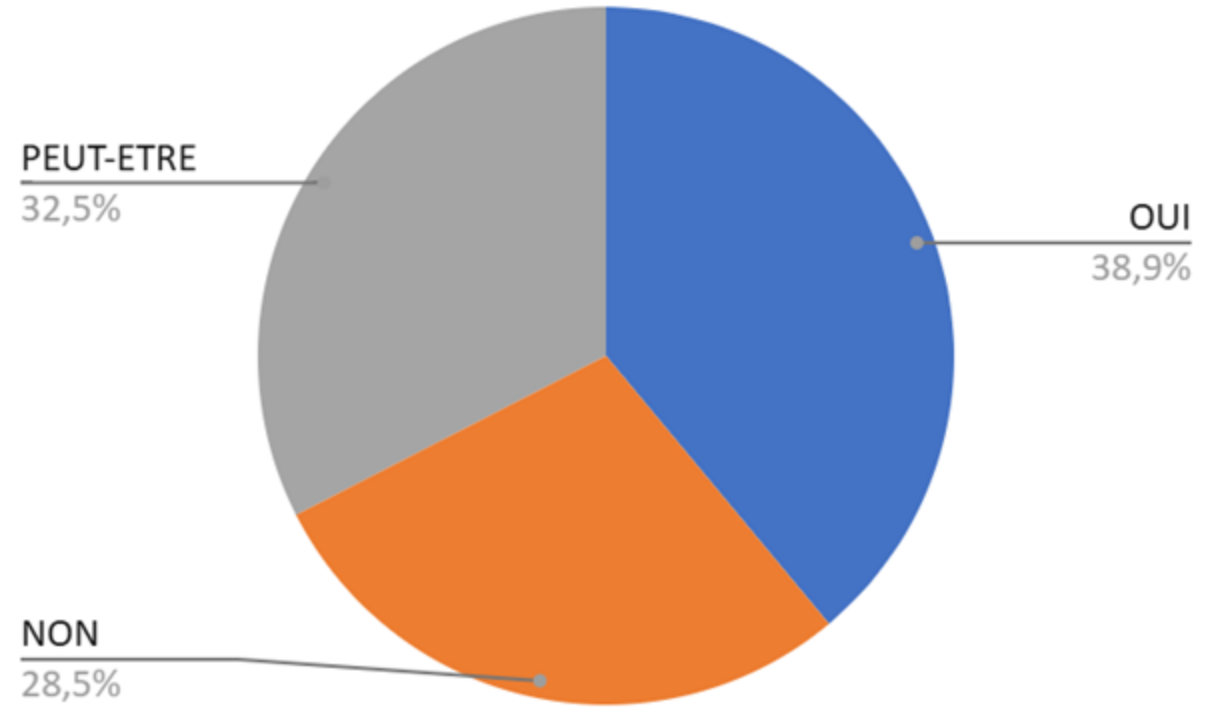
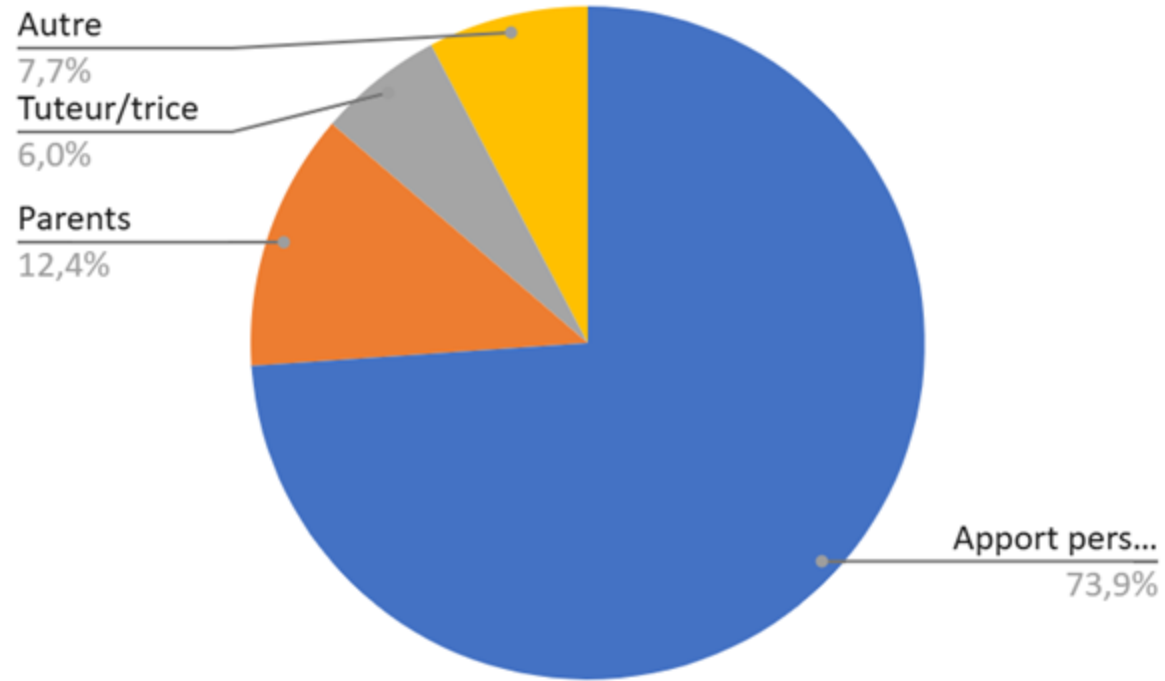
Frequency of social network use



Daily	4 times/ week	Monthly	Other
191	96	31	52

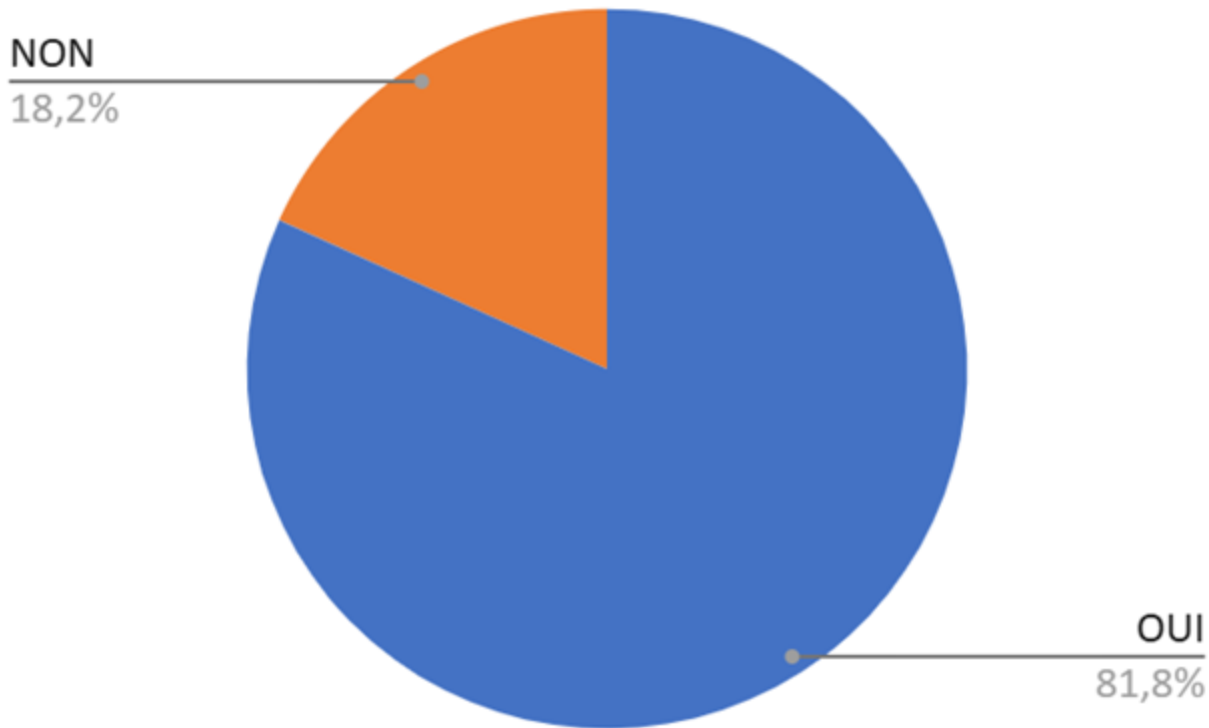
Ability to go a whole day without a smartphone

Who pays for internet access

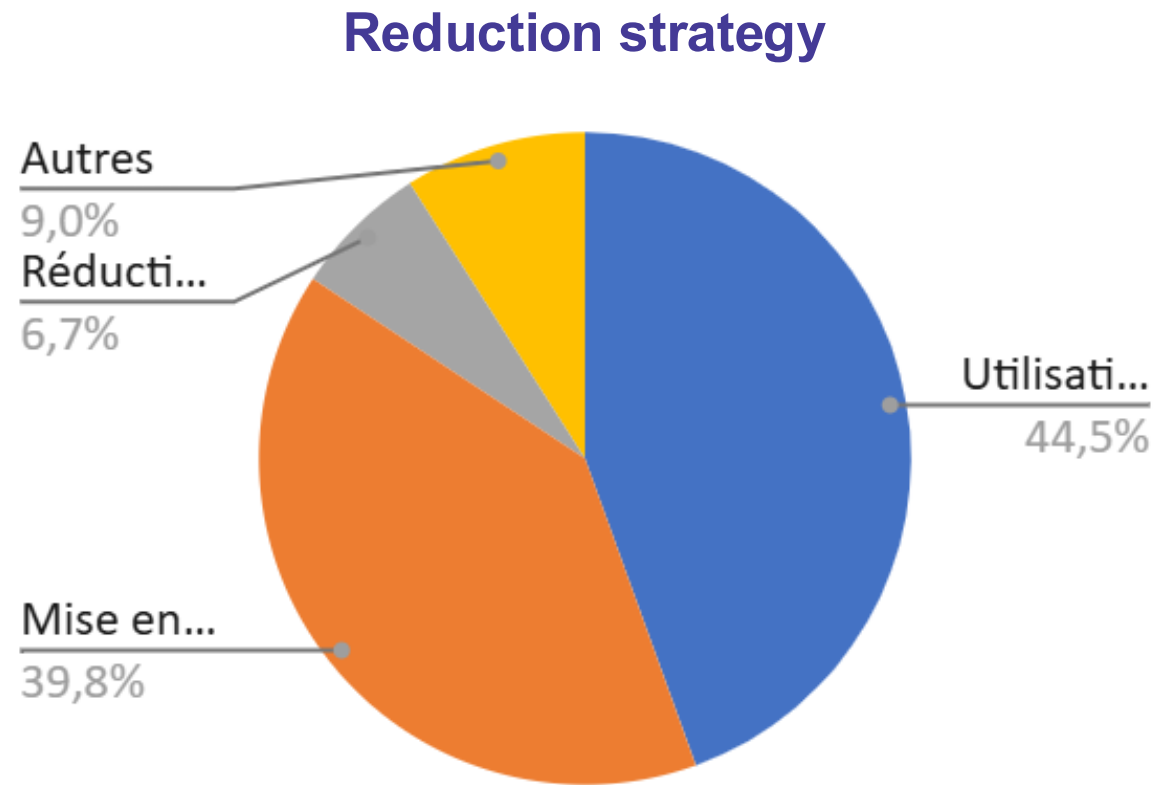


Majority: self: **73.9%**
Minority: other people: **26.1%**

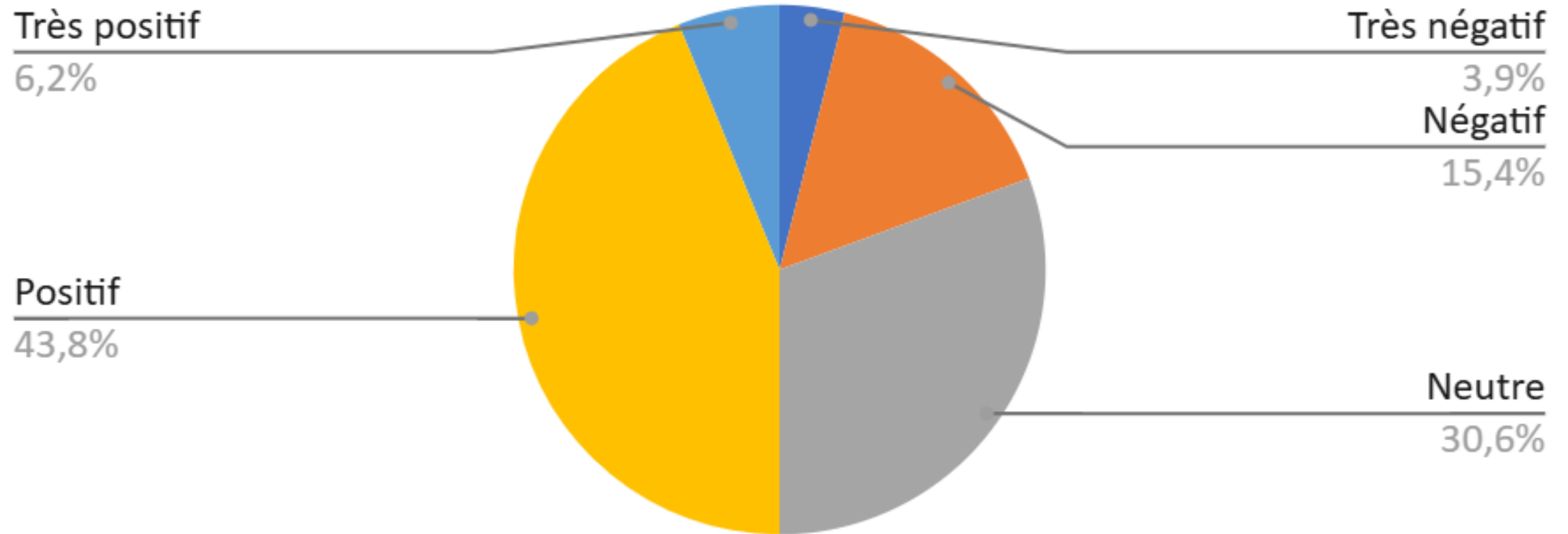
Have you thought about reducing your smartphone use



If so, what strategies did you use?	Number
Use of time management applications	133 (44.5%)
Setting time limits	119 (39.8%)
Limiting notifications	20 (6.7%)
Other	27 (9%)



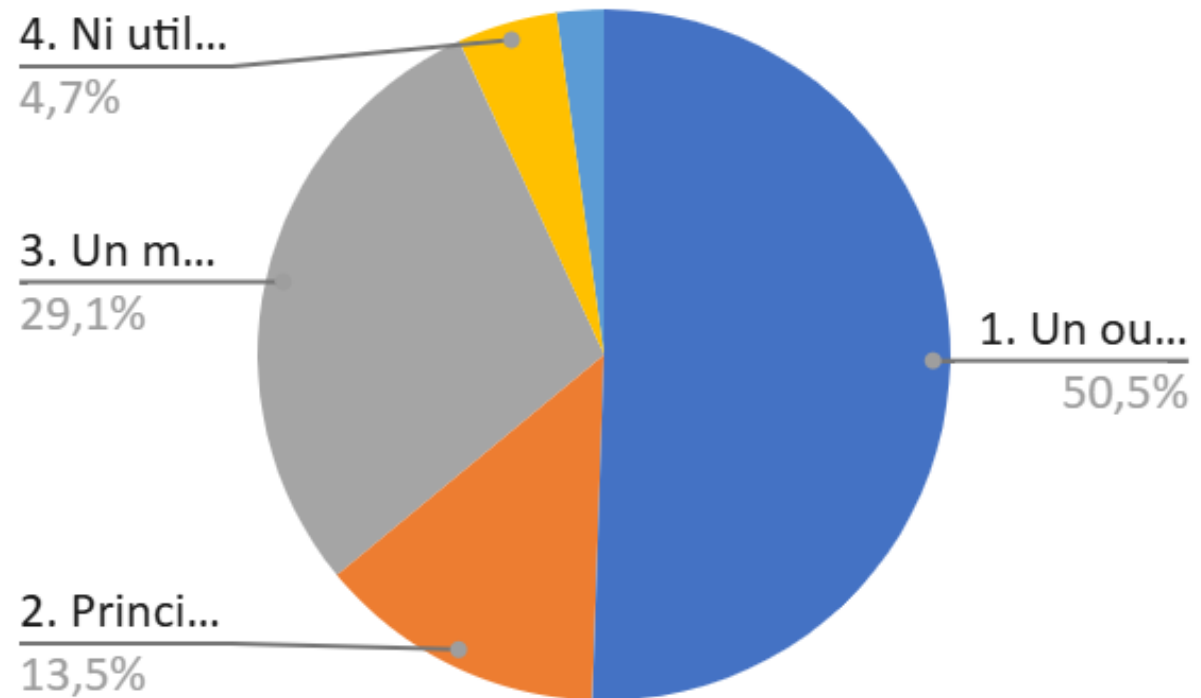
Overall impact of the smartphone on you



Majority: positive: **50%**
Minority: negative: **19.3%**

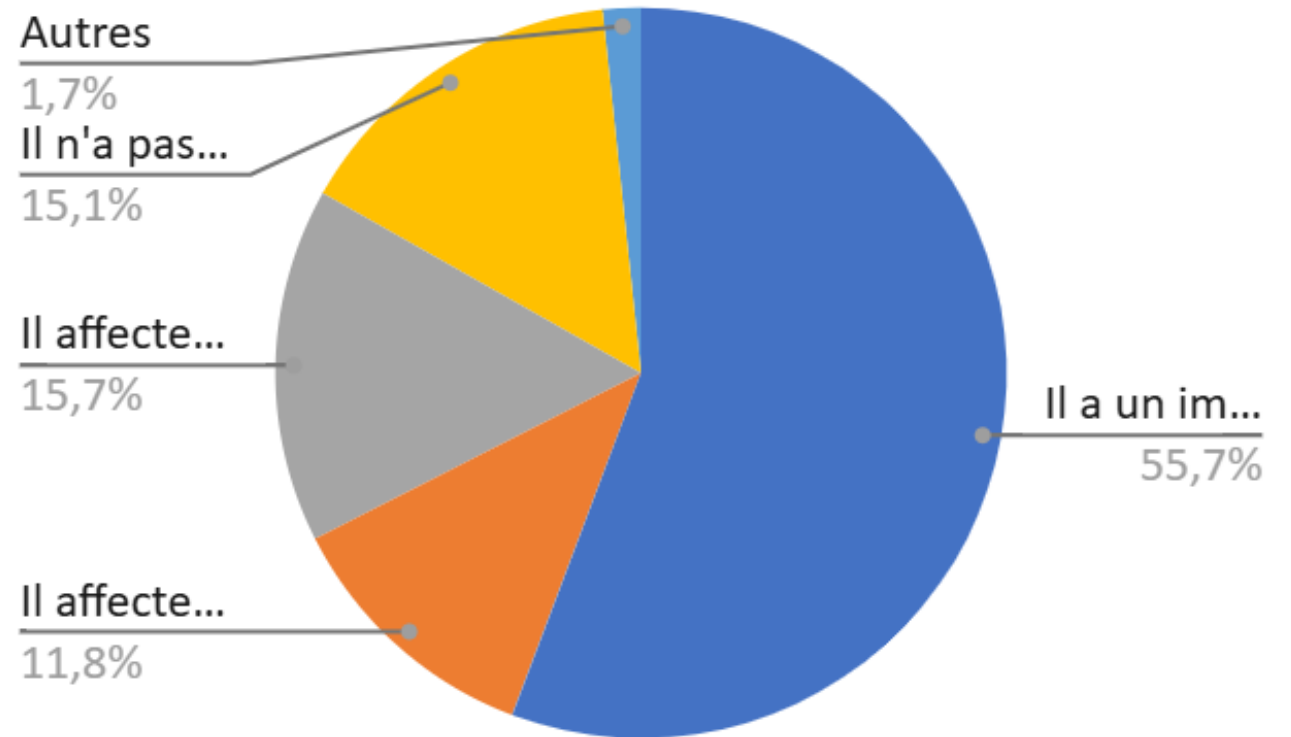
1. An indispensable tool in my daily life	184 (48.7%)
2. Mainly a means of entertainment	49 (12.8%)
3. A mix of both, useful and entertaining	106 (27.7%)
4. Neither useful nor entertaining, I rarely use it.	17 (4.4%)
5. Other	08 for 02% of the total

The smartphone: indispensable tool or means of entertainment?



It has a significant impact on my spiritual life and my studies.	199 (55.7%)
It affects my spiritual life somewhat, but not my studies.	42 (11.8%)
It affects my studies somewhat, but not my spiritual life.	56 (15.7%)
It has no great impact on either my spiritual life or my studies.	54 (15.1%)
Other	6 (1.7%)

ITS INFLUENCE:
On your spiritual life?
On your studies?



III. Ethical challenges of smartphone use

What does "ethical" mean?

ETHICAL adjective
(Latin *ethicus*, from Greek *êthikos*, moral)

Concerning ethics

ETHICS noun
(Latin *ethica*, from Greek *êthikon*)

1. The area of philosophy concerned with the foundations of morality.
2. The set of moral principles that underly an individual's conduct.

Synonym: morality

Ethics of technology, especially the SMARTPHONE

What do we think?

What are the ethical challenges associated with smartphone use?

What would we say?

According to Yusufu Taraki's preface to the book *African Christian Ethics*:

We have a duty to obey God based on His revelation. Men and women seek to obey God through the correct reading and interpretation of Scripture. The Bible read and interpreted correctly is normative - and binding on all people in all times and places. Ethics are not what Christians seek to do for themselves, but rather what they seek to do to please God.

Samuel Waje Kunhiyop (ed.), *Éthique Chrétienne Africaine* (LivresHippo, 2017).

Ethical foundations

"Every society is influenced by its history, beliefs and values. We need to know Africa's history in order to understand and respond to its current political and economic issues. Similarly, we need to understand the ethical values and beliefs that guide moral action in Africa if we are to develop an ethical system that is both Christian and African. Without this understanding, teaching Christian ethics is like pouring water over a duck's back. The water runs off without even getting wet! To fail in this essential goal devalues the teaching of Christianity, which often has little influence on individual behavior."

- **Social ethics and personal ethics :**

Westerners emphasize **personal ethics** (the desires, satisfactions, decisions and successes of individuals take precedence over those of the community), while in **social ethics**, **Africans** emphasize shared values and interpersonal relationships over individual desires and decisions.

- **Values and ethics:** Even after religious conversion, many African societies remain attached to the traditional beliefs that underpin their moral conduct.

- **African ethics** developed under the influence of Western ethics, Christianity and Islam.

The foundations of contemporary African ethics

Sources for the study of African ethics: "One of the difficulties inherent in the study of African ethics is that, traditionally, there has been no written trace, no particular place where all the principles were clearly stated: "Unlike modern Western ethics, African thought does not consider ethics as a separate discipline, since morality is inseparable from the whole of African social life. To set out to discover and understand African ethics through abstract moral principles is to embark on a journey of frustration. On the contrary, to determine what constitutes moral behavior, we must "observe and reflect on people's social lives, i.e. their rites, customs, practices, events, and relationships." Our sources for learning about African ethics are therefore not writings, but rather the customs and rich oral tradition of Africa." **Samuel Waje Kunhiyop**

The roots of African values and ethical behavior:

Customs and taboos,	Proverbs, riddles and wise sayings,
Oral tradition,	The role of religion in African ethics,
Myths and legends,	The existence and nature of God (Morality is therefore closely linked to belief in God),
Storytelling,	Spirits,
Songs,	The role of community in African ethics.
Liturgy,	

The foundations of Western ethics

Principles influencing Christian ethics and African morality

Major influences on Western ethics:

- Greco-Judeo-Christian philosophy,
- The Enlightenment
- Technological and electronic revolutions.

The main theories of Western ethics

Teleological theories,
Deontological theories,
Virtue or character ethics.

Foundations of Christian Ethics

Christian theology is central to the development of Christian ethics. It would be a mistake to think that it is too abstract to be applicable to present-day life. As Alister E. McGrath so aptly put it: "To ignore the important role doctrine plays is to ignore the foundation of faith, and thus to open the door to groundless ethics."

The source of knowledge: revelation

- **General revelation** (information about God's attributes) **Psalms 19:1-4, 147:8-9**
- **Special revelation** (in the whole Bible: observe the usual rules of grammar and interpretation, read the whole Bible, take into account the historical and literary context, read the word with respect and with the will to obey)

The source of ethics: The Triune God

God the Father: The standard of Christian ethics

Jesus Christ: The model of Christian ethics

The Holy Spirit: Power for Christian ethics

Lev 20:26, Matt 5:48, Phil 2:5, John 14:16



INITIATIVE
LOGOS ET COSMOS

The recipients of ethics: human beings

- Created in God's image
- After the fall and their need for SALVATION (God forgave us)

The community of the redeemed

- The nature of the community (sinful nature in need of salvation)
- Community members (born again)
- Eternal perspectives: 1 John 2:16-17

Ethical Foundations

The foundations of African Christian ethics

Ethical teachings are normative and binding on everyone. However, they must be applied to specific situations or contexts.

The question of African Christian ethics:

African ethics (based in the community) and Christian ethics (recognizing that the God who is the source of Christian ethics is the Triune God - the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit).

The role of community in African ethics **(African ethics is more a social than a personal matter).**

Discussion and sharing session

- Where do you classify your career path (stream): Is it in the hard/applied sciences or the human & social sciences?
- What exactly do you need your smartphone for?
- What is the challenge of African ethics in the face of technological development?
- What do the Scriptures have to say about this problem?
- What do I need to change in myself in order to do the right thing as an African Christian when it comes to using my smartphone?



INITIATIVE

LOGOS ET COSMOS

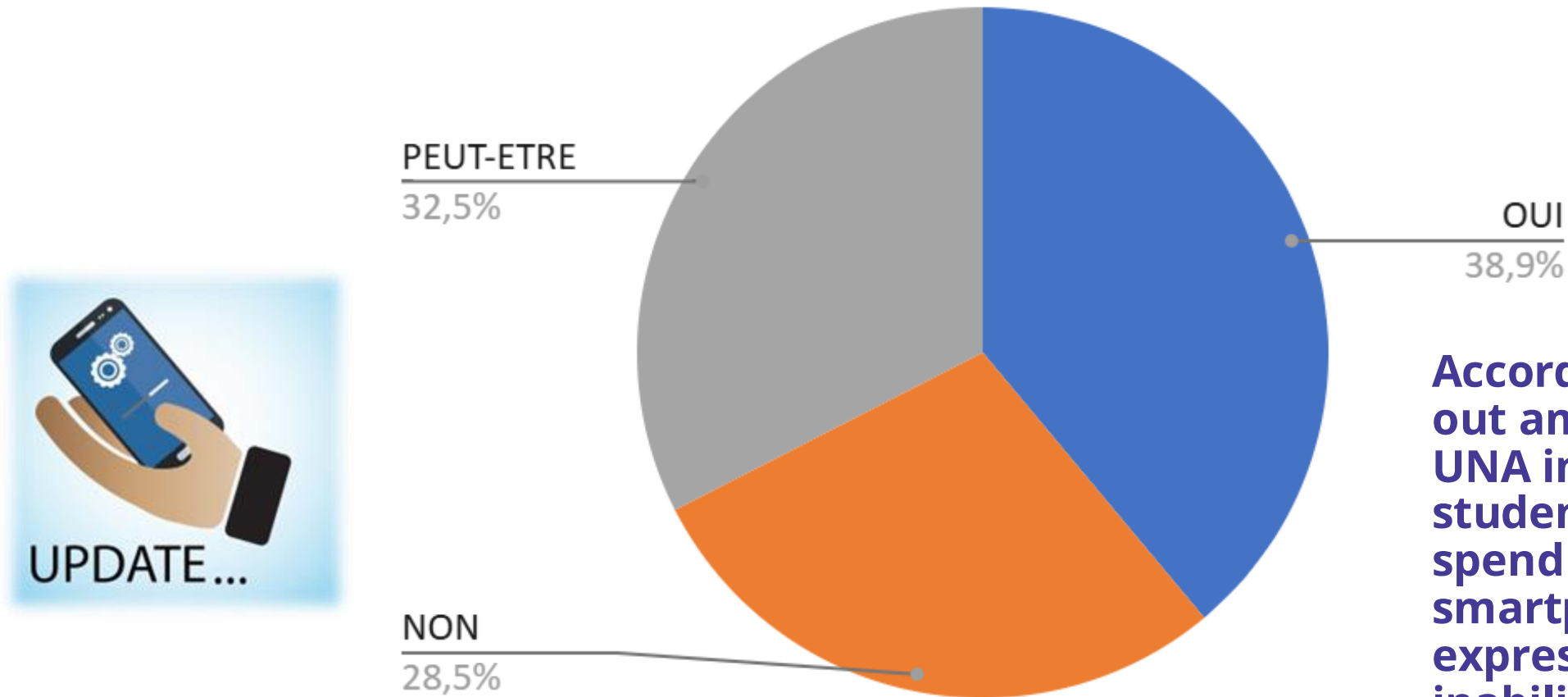
SESSION 2

Communication and Faith:
between tradition, digital technology
and biblical perspectives

Objective

Analyze how modes of communication influence our relationship with others and with God, while proposing an ethical and spiritual framework for navigating the digital age.

Students' ability to go a day without a smartphone



According to a study carried out among students at the UNA in 2024, 38% of students said they could spend a full day without a smartphone, whereas 61% expressed doubt or inability.

- *Think about it!*



INITIATIVE LOGOS ET COSMOS

TRADITIONAL COMMUNICATION

According to the seminar presentation on the source of African ethics, our mode of communication is rooted in oral culture.



"The words of the ancients are lanterns in the darkness".

Modes of Traditional Communication



- ❑ Lovan-tsofina (Mouth to Ear)
 - ❑ Tale
 - ❑ Chant
 - ❑ Dance
- ❑ Speeches (Kabary), Proverbs
 - ❑ Palaver



Although this form of communication is authentic and rich in emotion, it is now faced with limitations: **geographical constraints, distorted messages** (filaza-masaka), **and difficulties of intergenerational and intercultural access.**

Traditional Communication

ADVANTAGES

- Cultural transmission and preservation of traditions,
- Facilitates social cohesion,
- Participative and collective approach,
- Low cost.

DISADVANTAGES

- Geographical limitation,
- Deformation (Filaza-masaka),
- No formalization or archiving,
- Difficulty of understanding for those having different cultures or languages.

Traditional Communication

- ❑ "Likewise, it is to the aged that wisdom is attributed; a long life is synonymous with discernment." Job 12:12
- ❑ "The commandments I give you today will be in your heart. You shall repeat them to your children; you shall speak of them when you are at home, when you are on a journey, when you lie down and when you rise up." Deut 6:6-7
- ❑ "A soft answer calms wrath, while a hard word increases anger." Prov 15:1



INITIATIVE LOGOS ET COSMOS DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

Proverbs 17:27-28

"Someone who is master of his words shows his experience. He who keeps calm is intelligent. Even stupid people can appear wise if they keep silent. When they keep their mouths shut, you can believe they're intelligent."

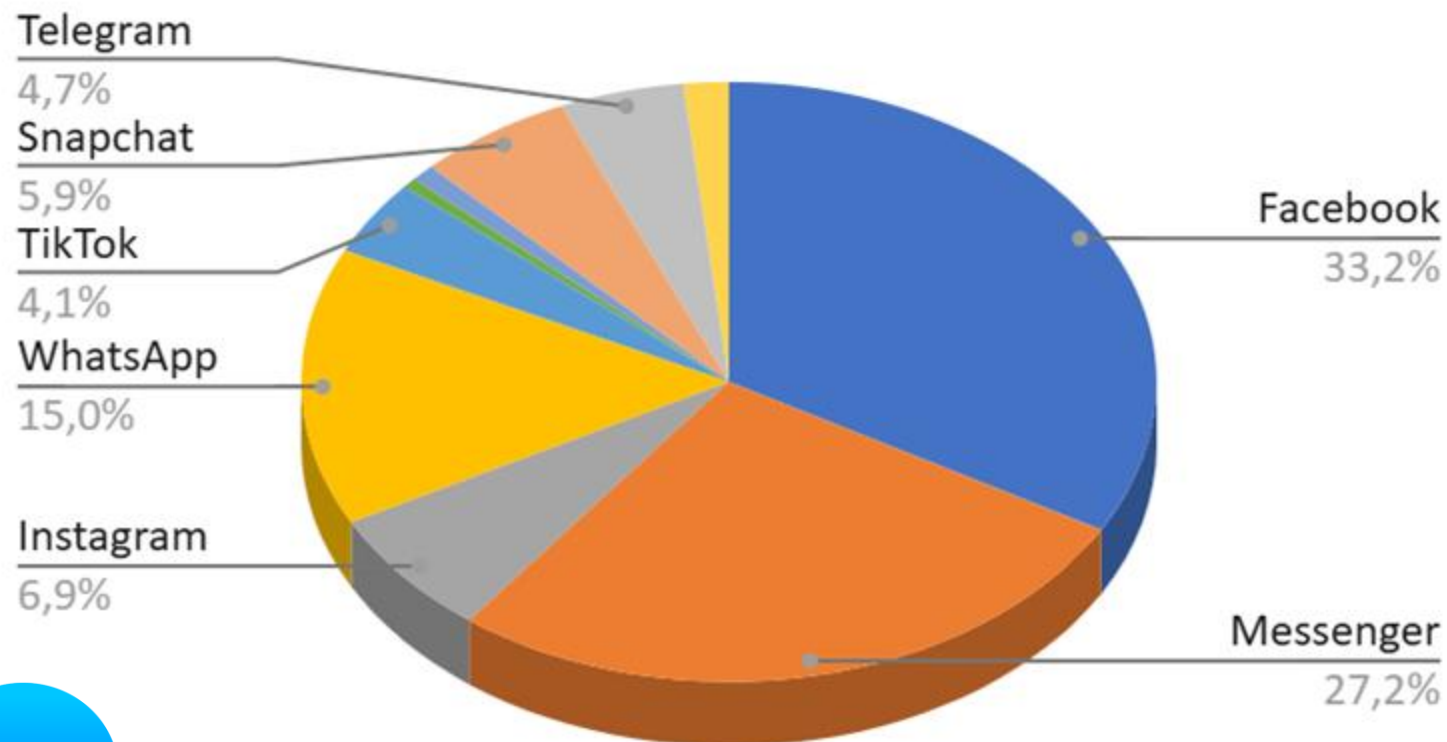


James 1:26

"If anyone thinks he is a good Christian, but is not master of his tongue, he deceives himself, and his way of practicing religion is worthless."

"He who controls his words online controls his reputation."

Statistics on the use of social networks by students at the University of Antsiranana



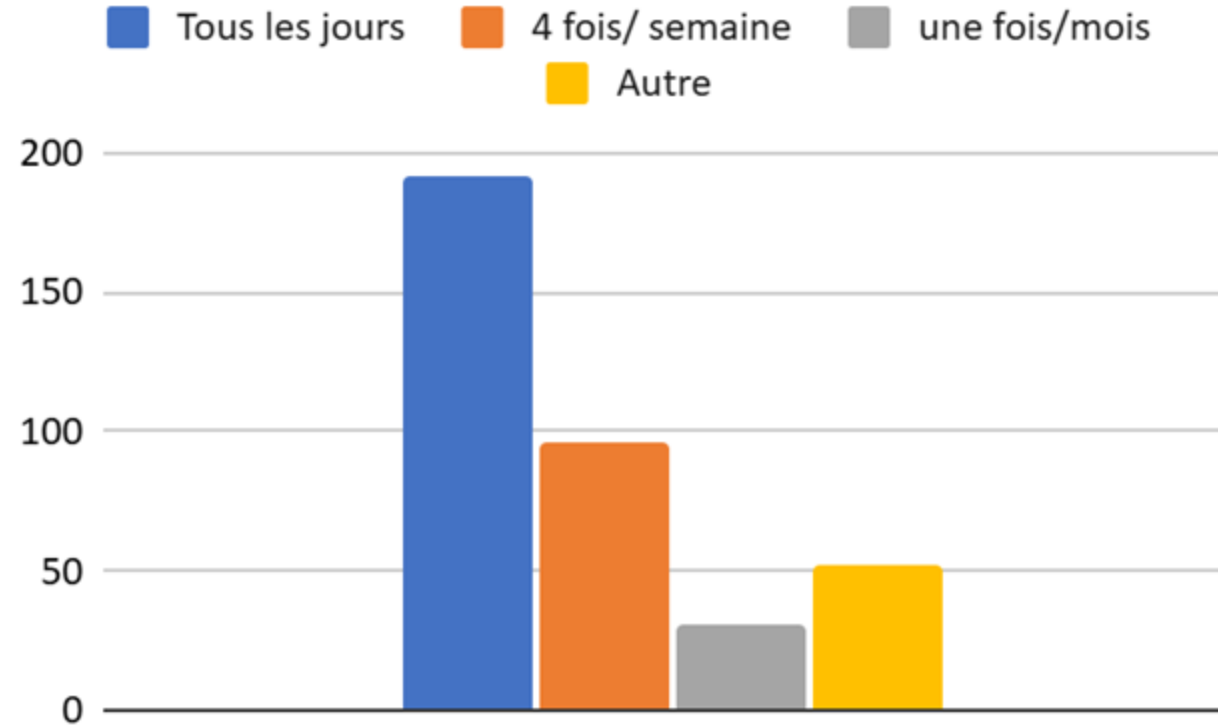
AND



are the social networks most used by UNA students

How often do you use your social networks? *

Daily	4 times/ week	Monthly	Other
191	96	31	52



The majority use them every day.

Digital Communication

WEB 1.0 Period: 1990 - early 2000s

This is the era of static web pages, created by a handful of developers and intended to be passively consulted by users. Little or no interaction.

- Static sites (HTML),
- Read-only,
- Low interactivity,
- One-To-Many (broadcasting).

Ex: Yahoo, Directories,...

WEB 2.0 Period: 2004 - today

(coexisting with Web 3.0)

The Web is becoming interactive, collaborative and community-based. Users are no longer just readers, but also content creators (bloggers, influencers, etc.).

- Dynamic (UGC),
- Reading and writing,
- Increased interactivity,
- Social media: one-to-one, one-to-many, intercommunication.

Digital Communication

WEB 3.0 (Decentralized Web) Period: Since 2014 (in progress)

The Web is becoming intelligent, based on artificial intelligence, blockchains, decentralization and advanced personalization. The aim is for machines to understand content and interact in a relevant way.

- Data decentralization,
- Reading, Writing and Owning,
- AI and automation,
- Personalized, intelligent content.

Ex: NFT, Mastodon,...

Digital Communication

❑ " Hitanao va ny olona faingam-bava, ny adala aza misy hantenaina kokoa noho izy." Oha 29:20 (hot reaction)

"If you see someone talking without thinking, you can expect more from a fool than from that man." Proverbs 29:20

❑ "Aoka tsy haloaky ny vavanareo izay teny maloto, fa izay tsara ho fampandrosoana, araka izay tokony hanaovana, mba hahazoan'ny mihaino fahasoavana." Efe4:29 (exhortation)

"No evil words should come from your mouth. Speak only helpful words that help others according to their needs, and do good to those who hear you." Ephesians 4:29

❑ " Aoka hazava eo imason'ny olona toy izany koa ny fahazavanareo, mba hahitany ny asa soa ataonareo ka hankalazany ny Rainareo any andanitra." Mat5:16

"In the same way, your light must shine before everyone. Then others will see the good you do. They will be able to sing the glory of your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:16

Translation of PDV2017 (Malagasy) version



INITIATIVE
LOGOS ET COSMOS

COMMUNICATION

TRADITIONAL

- physical, oral interaction,
- geographical constraints,
- limited scope,
- increased reliability,
- strong human interaction,
- limited by the local language,
- rich in emotion and authenticity.

DIGITAL

- internet, social networks,
- accessible anywhere with connection,
- global reach,
- possibility of fake news,
- less direct interaction,
- translation tools,
- cold exchange with less emotion.

COMMUNICATION AND ETHICS

**"A great leader speaks to hearts through
tradition and to minds through technology."**

"Ethics from the biblical point of view can in no way be a blind obedience to laws, principles or virtues; but rather a response to the living, all-powerful God of the universe, who is Himself the foundation of these moral principles. The content of our moral responses is certainly known and shaped by biblical norms; but it is also the result of all the reflections on God's character; purposes and actions in the world." **Samuel Waje**

COMMUNICATION AND FAITH

Living in harmony with new technologies in the light of Scripture

Our God is a God of communication

John 1:1

"In the beginning, the Word already existed. The Word was with God and the Word was God."

**Digital discernment: everything is permitted,
but not everything is useful**

1 Corinthians 6:12

"Some people say, 'Anything goes.' Yes, but not everything is good for you. 'Anything goes' is true, but I don't want to be a slave to anything."

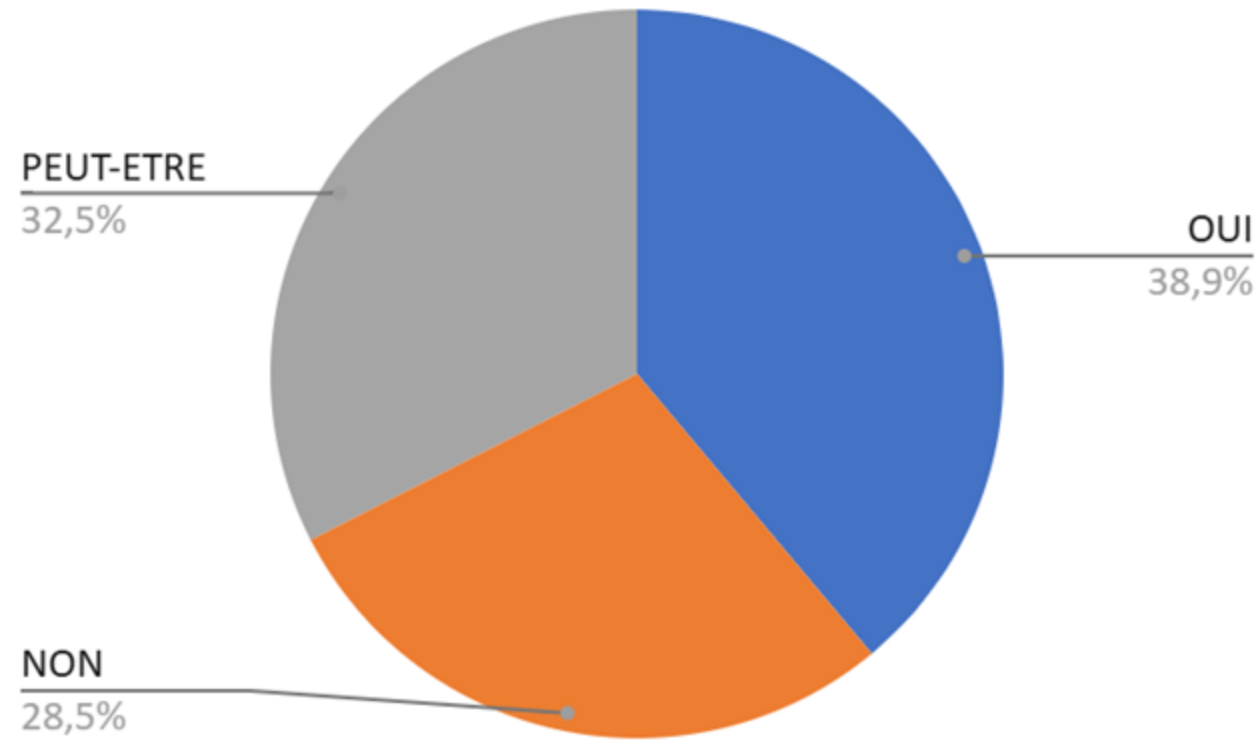


INITIATIVE **LOGOS ET COSMOS**

SESSION 3

Smartphones and Faith:
A Christian compass for the digital age

Students' ability to go a day without a smartphone



From a spiritual perspective, this figure can be read as a call to rediscover **the value of detachment, voluntary simplicity and full presence**, all virtues made more difficult by the omnipresence of screens.



INITIATIVE **LOGOS ET COSMOS**

SMARTPHONE: DANGER OR BLESSING?



Addiction to distraction

- ❑ **Constant distraction**
- ❑ **Decreased critical thinking**
- ❑ **Less meditation, prayer**
- ❑ **Obsession with novelty**



Phubbing on the rise

- ❑ Degradation of physical relationships
- ❑ Feelings of abandonment & exclusion
- ❑ Reduced productivity
- ❑ Social isolation



The Endless Search for Affirmation



- Number of likes, comments, shares (dopamine)
- Unstable self-esteem
- Comparison with others
- Envy, Anxiety,....

Galatians 1:10

So, am I seeking the approval of human beings or of Go? Am I seeking to please human beings? If I wanted to please human beings, I would no longer be a servant of God.

Consumers



- ❑ Reduced ability to concentrate
- ❑ Mental fatigue
- ❑ Addiction, dopamine dependence





INITIATIVE LOGOS ET COSMOS

Your **phone** isn't just a **phone**, it's a megaphone.

Every call, every message, every publication,
every interaction has the potential to amplify
your voice and your impact.





INITIATIVE LOGOS ET COSMOS

" Koa amin'izany, na mihinana na misotro ianareo, na inona na inona ataonareo, dia ataovy ho voninahitr' Andriamanitra izany rehetra izany."

1 Kor 10: 31

"Therefore, whatever you eat, whatever you drink, or whatever you do, do all for the glory of God."

1 Cor 10: 31

In short, the smartphone is not just a scrolling machine, but a super-useful tool.

However, it's time to wake up and take responsibility.

Taking the time to learning to use this gadget wisely should not be a luxury for just a few but an invitation for all of us.

So the suggestion would be to set aside smartphone-free time periods, reserved for prayer, meditation or study, to encourage better concentration and quality time with God.

Next, it is necessary to deactivate non-essential notifications, to minimize frequent interruptions and preserve moments of silence for reflection or contemplation.

What's more, following the example of regular "digital fasts" encourages a more thoughtful use of technology and strengthens our spiritual discipline.

In short, there's nothing wrong with loving technology. But we do need to learn how to use it wisely, as Craig Groeschel confirms in his book "TechnoAddict: Living smart with your smartphone".



INITIATIVE
LOGOS ET COSMOS

Misaotra betsaka
Thank you very much!

