



**EYV 2011 Alliance Working Group Closing Conference, 29 – 30 November 2011, Warsaw (Poland),
FINAL REPORT**



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Preparation:

The Working Group closing conference benefited from the support of Intel. This support was financial but also crucially contributed to the hosting of the event through the availability of two of the staff from the Warsaw office volunteering to assist both in the preparation and implementation phases of the event.

The volunteers helped to locate the venue and entertainment for the gala dinner and prepared the welcome packs through sourcing the material and compiling the packs to be delivered to all the participants upon arrival.

The participants for the conference and the EYV 2011 Alliance staff arrived in Warsaw in the afternoon of 29 November 2011. After checking in at Novotel Central hotel, which was the venue providing both the accommodation and meeting facilities, the participants registered for the small groups for the following day before walking to the restaurant for the gala dinner.



Implementation:

The EYV 2011 Alliance Executive Group (Magdalena Kurz, Martijn Pakker, Catherine Storry & Piotr Sadowski) welcomed everyone to the dinner and to Warsaw and led a traditional toast to thank all the working group members and their organisations, Intel, and the Secretariat staff for all the contributions to the working group process. The meal which included traditional Polish dishes was followed by a display of traditional Polish folk dancing in which the conference participants were invited to take part. To conclude the night a local cover band entertained the participants with well known tunes in celebration of all the hard work during the year.

The meeting opened on 30 November with an introductory session to explain the agenda, the purpose of the meeting and how it was connected with the EYV 2011 closing conference that would follow. During this session participants were also presented with a printed copy of the Policy Agenda on Volunteering in Europe (P.A.V.E) that was the main outcome of the working group process. Recognition and thanks were given to the additional support provided by the European Commission that had made it possible to have printed copies available for the meeting.



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The second part of the morning was for working group participants only and was a session to evaluate the overall working group process. The evaluation was facilitated by Marius Ulozas and used non-formal methodologies to reflect on the working process and the outcomes achieved. Part of the evaluation was spent together as a large group but space was also given for the participants to reflect on the evaluation in their working groups and six break-out rooms were provided for this. One of the reasons for using the services of an external facilitator was to enable the working group co-chairs to participate fully in the evaluation rather than having to be concerned about the process management. The evaluation showed that overall participants were satisfied with the process and outcomes but were mindful that they also had a role to play in the future in ensuring the legacy of their work through the dissemination and eventual implementation of the recommendations that they had developed. See Annex 1 for a full report of this session. Conference participants such as steering group members who had not been part of the working groups directly organised a variety of networking meetings.

The afternoon began with welcoming new participants to the event as those involved in the EC EYV 2011 closing conference had arrived in Warsaw and had taken the opportunity to join the EYV 2011 Alliance conference also. The first item was individual presentations from two working group members concerning the work of their local organisations and how their involvement in the working groups had impacted on their work.

This was followed by small group sessions to consider the future implementation of P.A.V.E and the legacy for the Year for each of the stakeholder groups targeted in P.A.V.E, namely the European institutions, the member states, the social partners and civil society.



After the individual sessions the groups shared their conclusions in a final plenary session that was attended by John Macdonald, Head of the EC EYV 2011 Task Force and Alexandra Krugly from the Polish NCB. As a key strategic partner for the working group process Mr Macdonald addressed the conference and expressed his satisfaction at the outcome of the working group process and reflected on the lessons learnt for future European Years in terms of working with other stakeholders to develop the policy agenda. This intervention was followed by one from Alexandra Krugly who in her role as the Polish NCB had been co-ordinating the drafting process of the NCB declaration that would be made in the EYV 2011 closing conference the following day. She described the intention and process of the drafting of the declaration and thanked the EYV Alliance for their interest and support for the initiative.

The conference closed with thanks to all the guests and participants who were invited to move on to the EYV 2011 closing conference also being held in Warsaw and to which all the participants were invited.

The statistics concerning the participation at the WG closing conference are provided as an annex to this report, as are the results of the evaluation of the event.



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Annex 1. Evaluation of the overall working group process

EYV 2011 Working Group Evaluation session

30 November 2011 11am Warsaw, Poland

The session was facilitated by Marius Ulozas and was conducted in three parts using participatory and non-formal education methodologies. During the evaluation session the participants were asked to reflect on what were the achievements of the working group process and its outcomes.



Part 1:

The first task was answer some key questions that had been placed on flip charts fixed to the walls around the room. Participants were invited to answer the questions on an individual basis, writing their response on post-its that were provided of different colours and sizes. The colours and sizes were used according to personal preference without any additional coding or meaning.



The questions and responses collected were as follows:

1. Composition of Working groups (size, mix of people, organizations)

- Group size was fine and also the variety of people countries and organizations represented. I would have liked to have had more volunteers in the group though – there were almost only employees and I find that their thinking is slightly different.
- Size was good
 - Allowed confidential and open discussions
 - Mix allowed to share diverse approaches how to work with volunteers
 - Allowed to exchange about the attitudes towards volunteers

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- A bit too big (WG1)m in same time interesting to share, but difficulties to work efficiently
- We worked in smaller groups so it was fine. Problem was in cultures because majority of people were from southern Europe.
- The composition of the working group was done in a good mixture in terms of countries, East-West North-South and also in terms of organizations especially the participating working group member of a CSR – organization in the infrastructure group.
- For an “European” WG, I felt that
 - I saw always the same people
 - Problem of composition as not mixed enough
- Very Nordic oriented not balanced to represent the south and the new member states. Few people out of which few attended, so more balanced groups would have been better.
- Good balance between “European” and “National” organizations
- I think that it was lacking young people.
- The changing of people each time was detrimental to the commitment process
- Probably it could be better. However, having in mind good quality of final document my opinion is that of composition of the WG satisfied the needs of overall process.
- The WG on Legal Framework of Volunteering was well functioned. Not many people, well organized meetings and participants with a thorough knowledge of the topics discussed
- The composition was good but it had its pro and contra because not every member was involved every meeting. What brings new perspectives but also burdens because of lack of information about the process
- It was good insight into EC work, when the CSR officer held a presentation

2. To what extent you could realize your potential with group?

- Had a number of opportunities to express views. “Wheel of quality” was initiated in my group as a drawing rather than long sentences
- In our group we often split up into even smaller groups of 2-3 concentrating on different issues. This was very good and made it possible for everyone to contribute with her/his own potentials
- In some case our work (as WG) was reviewed and not always this added value to our work but, in my opinion, eliminated very ‘interesting’ ideas.
- Open and safe environment for all to share and explore their potential
- As co-chair had to spend more time planning that able to contribute to content fully
- It was easy to get speaking time but more difficult to get through on the opinions. The differences between volunteers/employees and organisations doing social activities/other activities were quite big but also interesting
- We work together, I think there are no stars, but a reunion inside the group
- Felt minority views were not taken into account. Didn’t feel totally free to express my opinion
- Very much up to one-self. If wanted to be an active member this was very well made possible. I had the feeling I was listened to + able to share and learn
- A lot as a co-chair. But I would manage even as a member

- I was not proud of myself. I didn't feel confident enough
- I deeply regret that the work produced by us was rephrased!
- My potential as a lawyer in the infrastructure group and being an employee in an organization working with volunteers has been well realized: I could add some information from the national level of my organization. And I could support the group in finding more abstract wording which matches the "EU speak"
- Yes, because we're working in network, EYV working group in Europe, and EYV-working group in our own organization
- Not much, because I think I had a very good and wide understanding of the topic as compared to the other group members. It taught me to manage frustration of working with people at different level of knowledge on the topic
- Outcomes were over prescribed at the onset
- Seems that all had been decided in advance...
- More group work on definitions would have been good at the start, to baseline our understanding.
- I fear that all the framework answers were defined in advance! We worked in an organized framework.
- I am satisfied from my contribution however I couldn't give "my best" because of time, form of the work and balance of opinions. So, I know that I can do and offer more than my final contribution
- The work in the group required more my organizational skills than my professional experience, but I really felt needed for this purpose

3. Was framework supporting work of group? (number, length and setting of meeting)

- I found it useful that the 6 groups kept in contact during the process, in order to avoid overlapping
- Our co-chairs and chairs did an immense good job
- Co-chairs set up the framework in a very good way, because we are the largest group with orientation, objectives and final goals
- Sometimes we had very few people attending (6 out of which 2 were the co-chairs) so dynamics and discussion were not always great in such a small group.
- Enough number of meetings, but a bit of lack of coordination from chairs:
 - Orientation
 - Objectives
 - Methodology
- Little visibility of the work of other groups
- Too prescribed ahead of time
- September meeting seemed superfluous
- Was fine from May meeting. Difficulties at the beginning
- Generally yes. The co-chairs (No 5) were organized and we managed to cooperate with everything
- In Europe level is quite good, but we should have made this same group in our countries, even our regions/organizations
- Sometimes, lack of organization with the EU Conferences (Change of hotels...) but not so important
- We would have needed a stronger methodology and less content!
- More frequent WG meetings in the first semester.

- I could have imagined longer stay at a meeting. Not just 1.5 days but rather 2.5
- The number and setting of meeting was ok – very well organized!
- Sometimes more time was needed... especially after May meeting when our working plan changed... in order to be on time with proposals for the EC Communication...
- Well organized by the secretariat. Sometimes we could have needed more help/advice on where to focus/how to move on – from some kind of external facilitator visiting the group
- The framework was quite well but it was a pity that the last conference takes place within the week/volunteers can't participate
- Gaps between meetings could mean that momentum was lost – possibly more frequent but shorter meetings would have been useful. Locations fine for me
- We could have used more resources (printing, copying was an issue)
- Meetings in different countries are better

4. Was something blocking effective group work?

- We had experienced team members --> positive results
- Languages! Too much English + 27 languages in Europe
- We did not know what will be the result of these meetings (expectations)
- Lack of dynamic during and in between the meetings
- Nothing crucial that WG couldn't manage!
- Different levels of information depending on the co-chairs
- The different styles of the co-chairs worked when they were together – on balance – but on occasion when only one there this affected the slant
- Lack of organization and structuring the work from the co-chairs... Maybe due to lack of ownership?
- No! Excellent co-chairs work! We were guided very well and had a really smooth process.
- A missing link to the work at national level
- The native speaker was looking for the right “words” in English
- People were very much anchored in their local contexts and found it very difficult to think things out at a policy level/eu level.
- The one page outcome of the groups work in P.A.V.E is a bit disappointing! We should have made sure that a larger amount of our work was saved as Annexes to PAVE on the webpage
- The low responsibility of EU in the field of volunteering
- I think we should have had a stronger methodology before the year, and less detailed description of the content of the WGs
- I was disappointed with the changes between meetings related to format, number of pages etc. because in the beginning we had started to work on something, then we had to leave it and work on something else or in a different process! So we had to abandon the initial work...
- The introduction to the work and the goals should have been more clear in order for the groups to be able to work well from the beginning – we wasted a lot of time in our first meeting in January
- In some case, session with a guest blocked effective work because the discussion was about themes not so linked with our work
- The lack of future of the P.A.V.E (We give it tomorrow, then what?)

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- Confusion over what was needed/expected from final piece of work
- Too short deadlines to review documents. Bearing in mind everyone has a full-time job nothing under 5 working days is acceptable
- Feel could have achieved more if the timing of the P.A.V.E had been better integrated into Commission timeline there has been quite a mismatch of timing in retrospect + I think we lost a lot of opportunity to use more of the group potential
- Constant sub-groups under the main group. One smaller one would have been more effective
- There was not a standard of communication from steering group down to working groups – so different groups had different levels of information
- I feel that the timeline – recommendation in May, interfered with our own ideas and planning, we could have achieved more
- Changes in the instructions on how the final document should look like – especially section 1 of P.A.V.E.

5. Work and communication between meetings

- "Homeworks" didn't work. The majority of work was done in the meetings and by co-chairs in the meeting.
- Our chair was very active + ensured all possible means to involve every one all the time. Well done Pavel
- I expected more structure and guidance from the chairs, but the end result is fine
- Good! At the beginning especially, but later we lost a little the track!
- Time consuming but interesting. Unless some debates can't be done by email.
- Our group did not do great in between the meetings. Apart from very specific feedback provided sometimes, not much went on between the meetings (not because it wasn't needed, but...)
- Sometimes too much spam. People were telling all the same just in other words
- Great job by co-chairs. But because of the difficulty of some topics, it should have given more instructions
- There wasn't much work done between meetings which was a bit disappointing although co-chairs did give people the opportunity. Not sure there was enough sense of responsibility
- Work between meetings didn't work
- Communication was good, a lot of e-mailing, calling and phone conference. Everyone participated as much as they could
- Very good communication by Gabriella & Celine
- Well documented. Reminders were useful
- Lack of dynamic, even if we were all communicating
- Good enough! Often it has been more useful than which one during meetings
- This was not too good but hindered with changing people
- Didn't really utilized the shared workspace on the internet
- Communication was good - people "did whatever was possible" in-between. Good guidance from our co-chairs!
- It was good, but because we did not know each other before, it would have been good to get to know each other better (getting a list of participants)

- Well organized offering the opportunity for equal participation and to be informed about WG results achieved if you were not present. Also I would like to mention useful online tool for communication (on the official website)
- Relying almost entirely on e-communication does not succeed in geographically isolated areas (like Wales)
- Group interaction between meetings worked only at the end... The first half of the year nothing special happened. Also half of the group were involved in the second half...
- Excellently well: we kept in contact by emails + phone conferences - very good indeed
- Mail is not efficient. There should have been more than doc repository.
- Didn't work well, people too busy and email communication is not very efficient, but don't know how to change this

6. **Being involved in only a part of meetings. Co-nominees? How were they integrated?**

- We shared the same office so it was easy
- worked well
- We knew each other before, this made easy. And so working through mail easier.
- co-nominee system wasted resources
 - of the individuals, because it takes a lot of effort to catch up with the process
 - of the groups to ensure the full opportunity of participation
 - good that all co-nominees could attend some of the meetings
- Tricky and unclear as role division changed in the beginning TWICE. The unclear state of roles was annoying.
- My co-nominee never appeared in any meeting the whole year...
- So dynamic and proactive
- They were highly integrated. Always getting all the information and communicating with their nominees. Their inputs were taken into account.
- Possibility to work between the meetings helped to overcome this challenge. However there is a question how good was communication among the co-nominees during this process.
- It was in fact very difficult to keep the co-nominees updated, because so little written material was distributed after the meetings
- Only one meeting where I and my co-nominee couldn't make. I got the information how it went from my WG.
- At first difficult – later we were integrated + worked well together
- System of co-nominees did not function in my case, I never was in touch with this person
- No 1 person came just once!
- They were integrated but I think not participating in each meeting affected the process and I'm not sure how much discussion and sharing there was between each pair
- Sometimes difficult as it can slow down the speed of the group – probably not a bad thing
- Meeting schedule was not made for volunteers who had to take several days off their work
- Co-nominees were a little off-topic after not attending one meeting. Even if you read reports you do not understand or follow everything that was discussed in the meeting.

Part 2:

Participants were grouped according to the six working groups that had been active throughout the year. Each group was provided with a breakout room to consider as a group the following aspects.

1. Their team composition / mix of experiences, organisations etc
2. The facilitation and co-facilitation of the group's work by the co-chairs.
3. The framework of meetings (duration, agenda, setting)
4. Communication between the meetings.
5. The extent to which they knew what was happening in other groups and how this impacted on their work.

Their conclusions were compiled on flip charts and presented to the whole group in a plenary session.

There was general consensus that the perceived "goal post" changing and lack of clarity concerning expectations and methodology of the work of the groups made reaching the objectives more challenging. The role of the Steering Group and the proximity of the SG meetings to the WG meetings (the day before) were cited as challenging in this respect. Some groups mentioned that the lack of diversity of countries and sectors represented in their group meant that they were prevented from achieving a truly European overview whilst others said that they were happy with the balance. The changing situation with regard to the participation of co-nominees was also mentioned as something that affected the work (it was originally planned that only one of the co-nominees would attend each meeting and later there was the possibility for both of them to participate).

The need for shorter meetings as a way to involve more volunteers was highlighted as was the suggestion that all the meetings should have been held in the first half of the year and not spread either side of the summer break as this caused some slowing down in the working rhythm.

Not receiving the Draft 2 of P.A.V.E in good time to consider it in detail before the final working group meeting in September 2011 was also listed as a negative factor in the ability to achieve the expected outcomes. (Steering Group members had received the draft in August 2011 but not all had distributed it to their WG members that the secretariat did the day before the meeting following a decision in the SG meeting).

One working group mentioned that for communication the online workspace where all the WG documents and reports were stored and available to all WG members could have been utilized much more than it was. All the groups addressed the lack of communication between the groups and lack of awareness about what the other groups were doing.

There was general appreciation for the work of the co-chairs who had been positive throughout the process and managed to maintain the commitment and involvement of the WG members whilst

adapting to the changing situations. The idea of having co-chairs as opposed to a single chairperson was highlighted as positive.

Part 3:

Yes / No Statement exercise. Participants moved to their Right for No and their Left for Yes. They were then invited to share with the group why they were standing where they were.

1) Throughout the year I knew what was happening in other working groups



2) My organisation is satisfied with involvement and results of EYV2011 Alliance



3) We managed to achieve tangible results



4) With this meeting our cooperation will finish

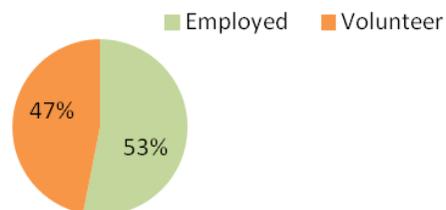


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Annex 2. Participation Statistics, EYV 2011 Alliance Working Group Closing Conference *

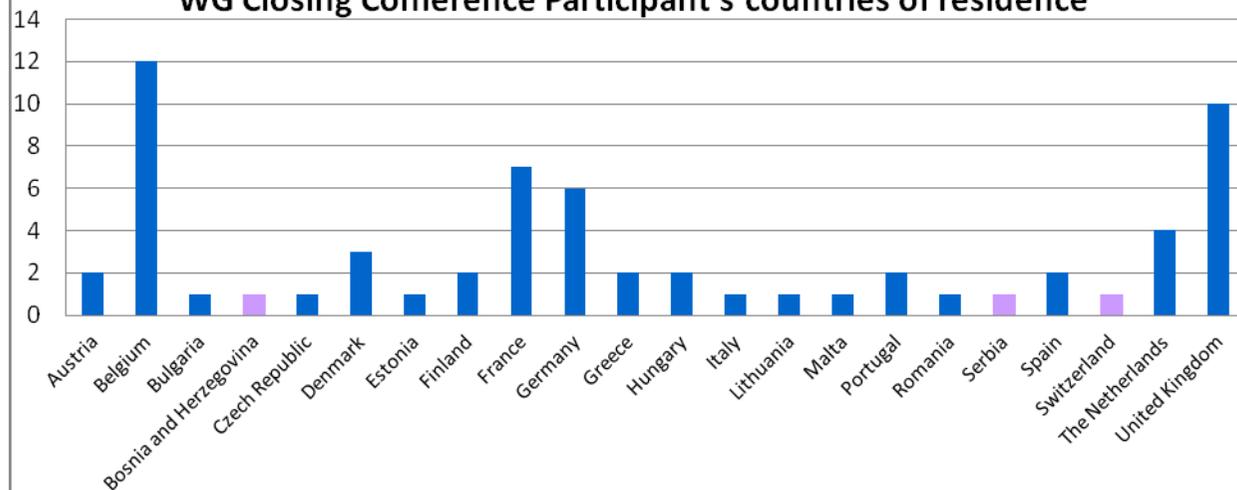
WG Closing Conference Participant's status



WG Closing Conf Participant's status	
Employed	53%
Volunteer	47%

KOC participant's countries of residence	
Countries	Number of Participants
Austria	2
Belgium	12
Bulgaria	1
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1
Czech Republic	1
Denmark	3
Estonia	1
Finland	2
France	7
Germany	6
Greece	2
Hungary	2
Italy	1
Lithuania	1
Malta	1
Portugal	2
Romania	1
Serbia	1
Spain	2
Switzerland	1
The Netherlands	4
United Kingdom	10
Number of EU countries	19
Number of Non-EU countries	3
Total number of countries	22

WG Closing Conference Participant's countries of residence



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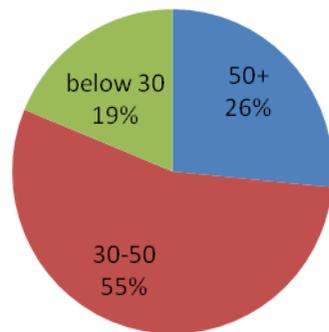
* Draft statistics based on registration

Number of EYV 2011 Alliance members participating in the WG KOC:	17 European networks active in volunteering
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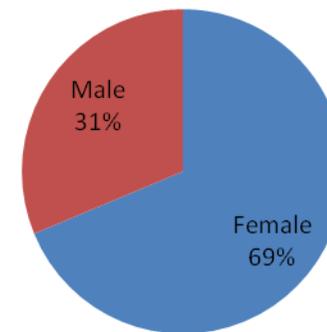
Age of participants		
50+ years old	Between 30-50 years old	below 30 years old
26%	55%	19%

Gender of participants	
Female	69%
Male	31%

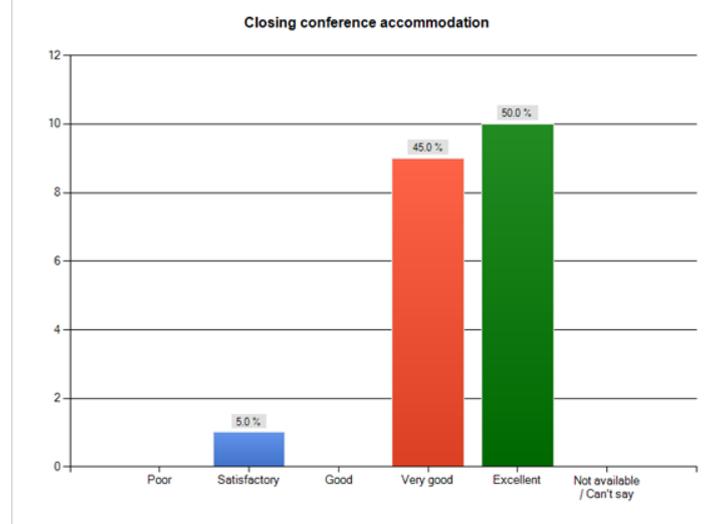
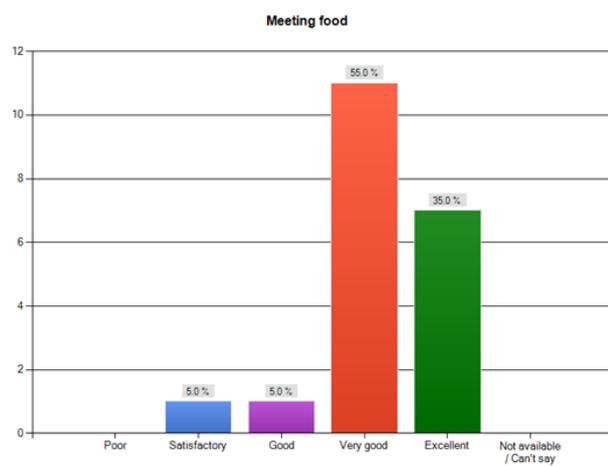
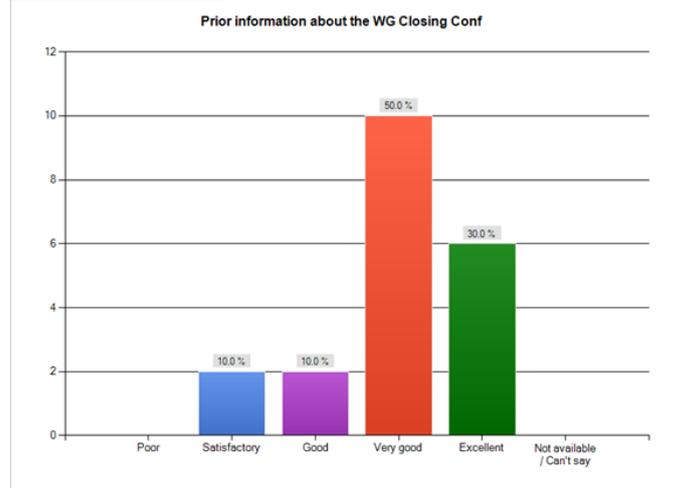
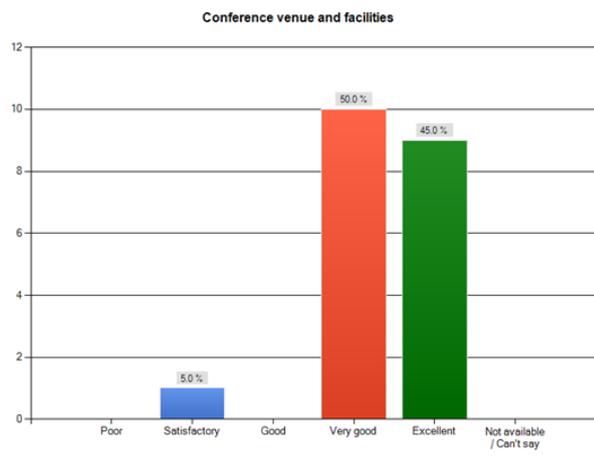
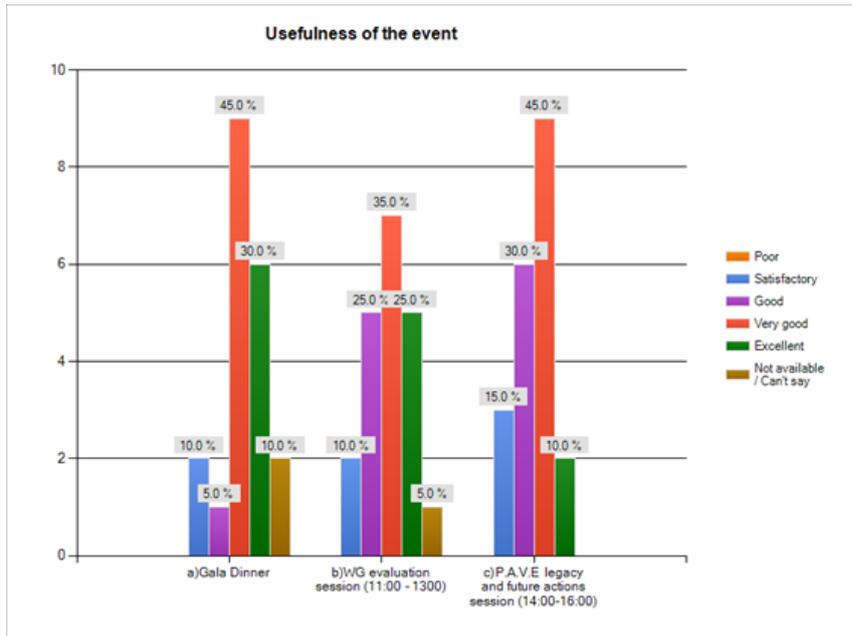
Age of WG Closing Conference participants



Gender of WG Closing Conference participants



Annex 3. Evaluation Reports WG Closing Conference



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