

EEE Poland 2014 Evaluation Report

The following is a short report of the views, comments and ideas provided through the online evaluation. The report does not make any judgements or recommendations. It is simply a reflection of all the comments submitted. It is offered in good faith by those of us who designed the survey, as feedback to our hosts in Poland and as a guide for our new hosts in Italy as they start to plan EEE 2015.

Please note, that once I started to download the results, the Typeform programme was really not very helpful. So, I have tried to present the results in a way that I hope is readable and useful, and that I have respected your views.

Till next year – Lesley Greenaway ☺

Responses:

64% response rate (32/50)

Questions

1 Your experiences at EEE Poland conference

What people liked?
Conference facilities: The location, the setting, the venue, the accommodation and the food. <i>“The hotel and outdoor surroundings were good for outdoor workshops” “Liked the closeness of everything” “This year’s location was very beautiful, and was a good stage for our way of conducting everything”.</i>
Organisation: Welcoming hosts, the multicultural organising team, open to suggestions. The scheduling process, the programme structure, breaks between slots, free time in the evening, more time for informal sharing.
Workshops: Variety and quality of workshops, workshop topics, new ideas, methods, different approaches, opportunity for personal and professional development, opportunities for reflection, inspired by peers.
Atmosphere/people: The open atmosphere, the willingness to share, co-operation, friendly relationships, connecting to people, new and old friends, relaxed, fun, opportunity for networking, cultural and inter-generational mixing <i>“connecting to each other equally” “I did not feel like a stranger even if it was my first time”</i>
Some more specific likes included: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The addition of the mindfulness sessions.- The Bell-ringing ceremony- The online review- Entertainment – talent night, bonfire- Long distance session

Issues or problems - what people did not like?
Many people reported no real problems or issues.
Venue facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No opportunity for camping, but that's a minor issue - Distance from the airport and distance from a city - Some individual issues with rooms and food (too much, not very exciting, more variations in menu and more fruit appreciated) - Internet connections were very weak – this could become more of a problem as more tools for trainers become web-based.
Evening programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The end of the day when the energy was low, the evening gathering was too long and not effective. - For next conference, put more time into planning the evenings (time and programme) - The talent night was a good try at an alternative to the International dinner, but need to make more of it. - I missed the International Dinner
Conference time: <p>Keeping to time was an issue. In particular the effect that over-running sessions had on the whole programme.</p> <p><i>"The morning session crashing through the 15 minute break and into workshop time: workshops should always take priority."</i></p> <p><i>"...we were delayed every day and this caused problems in the first workshop slot".</i></p>
Workshops: <p>Not enough workshops, need enough slots for everyone to be able to offer something e.g. a poster session or a 10 minute exercise, standard of workshops needs to be high, redundant organisation - workshops were introduced 3 times: beginning, day before, and day of workshop, workshop rooms were not ideal.</p>
Conference space: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connection between the plenary and the coffee room - Need a more appropriate networking area – some notices were ignored.
Participation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not enough community participation – too much decision-making behind the scenes. - The conference space is for participants collectively. There should be more opportunities for people to ask questions and raise concerns.
Awareness of others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It was hard to be in a new group, which is called the family and is known for years. - Too much expectation that people were happy to touch and hug other people. Unclear expectations for new comers e.g. are you expected to offer a workshop? - The activities in the group meetings (loving heart touch) seemed a bit much for some people. We need to keep in mind that some people are more comfortable with this than others. Newcomers might also be a bit shy than old hands.
Other comments included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Post conference is not as rich as pre-conference - Missed a connection to the fact that we were in Poland, missed a cultural something. - Communication via email was a bit confusing. - Website is a bit basic - Missed a whole group photo – need it on 2nd day to include everyone. - Please provide information about visa application process.

2 How can we ensure new comers feel welcome and able to participate fully in EEE?

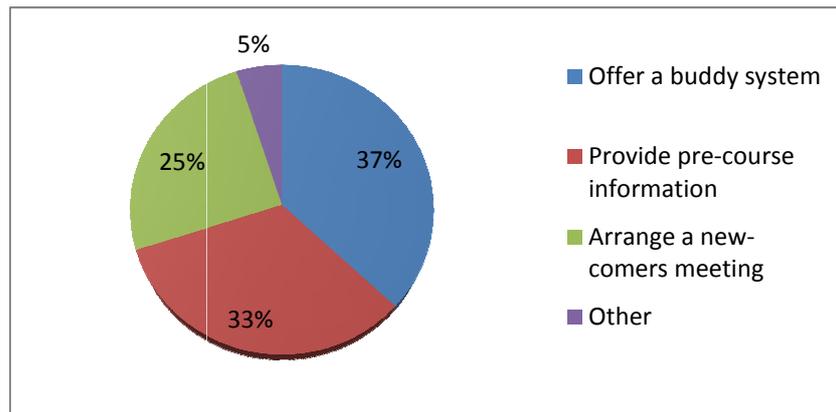


Figure 1 Possible options for welcoming new comers

Other:

- Just being natural. I am a newcomer, and felt just great the way it was.
- Provide a lot of integrating activities that are fun
- Ask the latest newcomers what they would have needed more and how they felt and if they felt anything was missing

3 We know that workshops are a vital part of the EEE Conference.

What works well?

Note: this question was answered in different ways – some expressing what they experienced at this conference and others expressing more generally what would make a good workshop. I have tried to collate the factors highlighted into a practical guideline for workshops.

The factors that you said contribute to good EEE workshops:
Good scheduling – the open preparation of the agenda
Good workshop spaces – indoor and outdoor and facilities e.g. internet
Variety of workshops, lots of trainers, lots of choices
Clear introductions and well described workshops
Planned and thoughtful workshops that have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear purpose/goal: What can you expect from this workshop - Clear topic/ content - Clear time frames/ timing - Clear structure - Are challenging and relevant - Allow time for discussion - Allow time for exchange of experience
Workshops that provide opportunities for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collecting ideas and sharing experiences - Trying out new games or approaches - Outdoor experiences - Active, fun, variety, practical, and playful. - Reflection – participants journey - Games/activities that can be transferred - Good /deep debriefing and high level discussion
New experiences, experiential learning, learning by doing, and includes train the trainers within the method.

Workshop leader/facilitator should aspire to be:

- Open, create a good atmosphere, flexible and able to adapt to the needs and interests of the group, professional and authentic

Engaged participants who are:

- Open, willing to participate, willing to share and explore.

How can workshops at the conference be improved?

Pre-conference information and planning:

- Analysis of needs before the conference – have a discussion about workshop topics.
- Provide encouragement for more detailed description before the conference.
- Better posting of workshop content before the conference – provide a channel set up for people to post information, handouts, notes etc.

Maximising opportunities for and in workshops?

- Reduce number of workshops by 1 or 2 per slot, give presenters more participants.
- Increase opportunities for others to present workshops by having one person to deliver only one workshop
- Increase the number of workshops by increasing the length of EEE – add an extra day to EEE.
- Limit the size of the group.
- Create more opportunities to share ideas in different ways e.g. 10 minute slots, bring back the 3 hour slot.

Workshop content:

- Increase/widen the variety of topics from conference to conference.
- Have at least one theoretical workshop (for academics)
- More options for innovation in the field of experiential education – we seem to have little contact with universities (or we do not show this)
- Workshops where you build own tools (not just seeing what you can buy)
- Workshops on developing business together, cross-country alliances, and using our network for business.
- Workshop content that goes beyond ice-breakers, content that is developmental and challenging.
- We should point out the values and vision of EEE in a separate slot.
- A workshop space for say Q&A's on how we each work or an open forum?

Other factors:

- Ensure workshop time is not eroded and also that workshops keep to time.
- Build 'sharing of learning' into the workshop session to be meaningful for those involved.
- Reduce the number of times that workshops are introduced and improve the quality of introduction.
- Less organisation / talking in the evening and more in the morning when we are fresh.

4 How important is a cultural element in the EEE Conference?

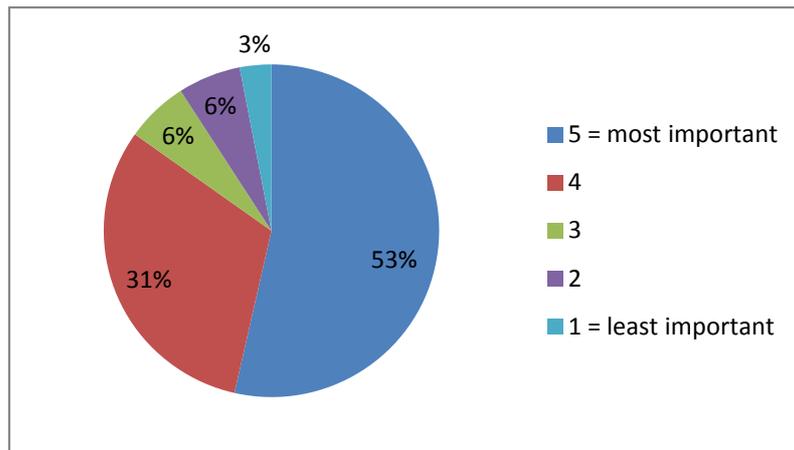


Figure 2 Rating of cultural element

5 What sort of cultural elements would you like to see included?

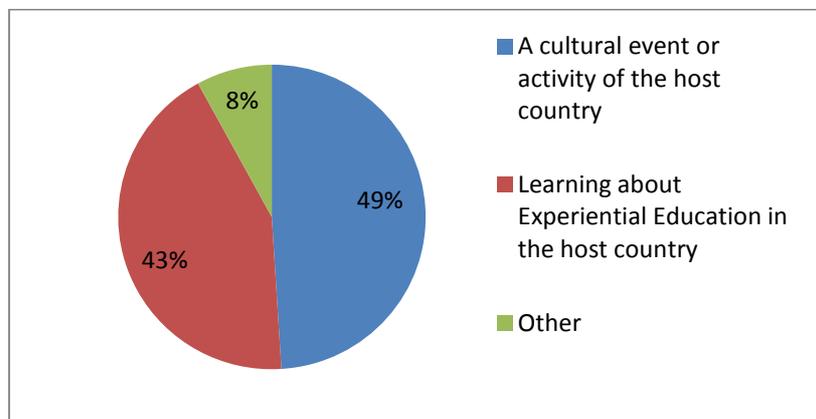


Figure 3 Cultural element preferences

Other:

- Challenges of the host country in comparison to other countries.
- Cultural elements during breaks:) and I feel no need organising it somehow.
- International dinner - food and drink tasting of all participants' countries.
- Pre-conference activities also play a part here.

6 EEE normally includes a pre or post conference programme.

Which would you prefer?

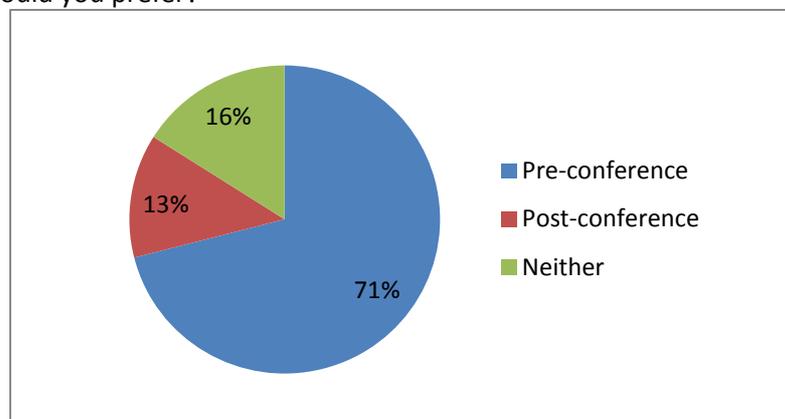


Figure 4 Pre/post conference preferences

7 What sort of activities would you most like to experience in a pre/post conference programme?

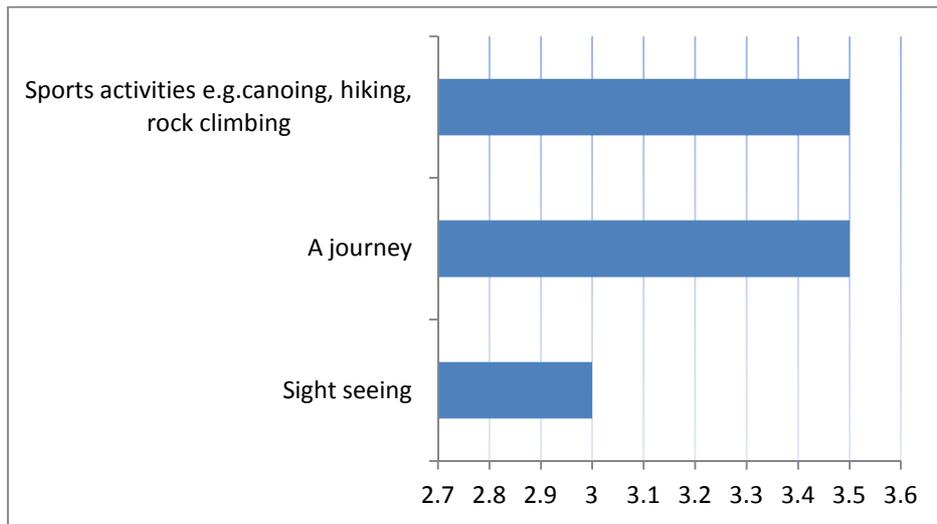


Figure 5 Average ratings for most desired activity

Other:

- Pre/post conference for me is about 2 things: doing something together to have a chance to get to know the other participants (for that hiking works better than canyoning) and to learn a bit about the host country through the eyes of the host.
- Activities that enable us to engage with each other and the hosts and the country as we participate e.g. walking and talking is always good.
- A mix of all of the above - being in the outdoors together, having time for sharing, getting a good feeling for the host country - not too much driving!

- cultural activities like typical dancing and singing
- Birding/Nature Experience
- Relaxing. Take time to relax and prepare for the conference.
- I like to do things that are typical for the region (e.g. the hot springs in Greece were great; they are not fitting in any of the categories above).
- Cooking together/ experience cooking a typical dish.

- Make an action (e.g. training, seminar) for local community to spread the mission.
- Coaching / experimental and experiential ways of reflecting.

- Would rather the whole thing was included

8 The venue contributes a great deal to the overall EEE experience.

What did you like about the venue in Poland?

Atmosphere, space, environment, the river, the woods, quiet and peaceful – nature all around us. Very comfortable, friendly staff, good food, sauna/spa/pool facilities, more or less exclusivity. Good value for money.

Any aspects you did not like?

Distance from airport and city, and limited choice of flights available. Poor wifi connection, small pool, difficult to find staff, limited indoor workshop spaces, cost, food, missing a 'lounge' area separate from the plenary/conference room, venue was not only for us.

Which of the following aspects are important to you in choosing a venue for next year?

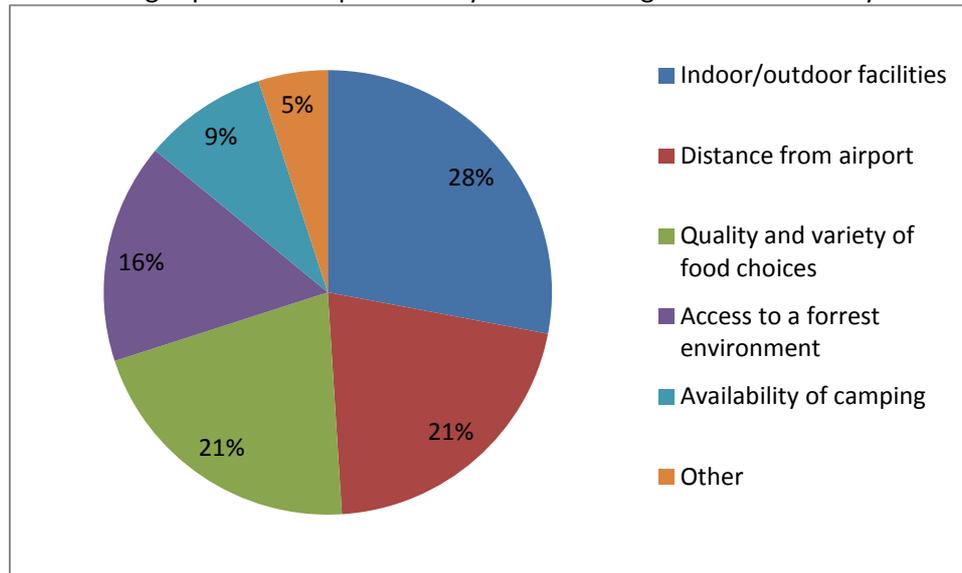


Figure 6 Aspects to consider for choosing a venue

Other:

- variety of indoor facilities and material
- access to lake/sea
- Sauna
- Distance to railway station
- Price - not more expensive as usual, quiet surroundings, not too many other people around, natural environment, enough space indoors for three workshops (if needed)

9 Any other comments?

- Kudos to the polish team / Thank you for this wonderful conference Team Poland!
- Poland did a great job, thank you Jacek and the team, looking forward with confidence in Sergio and the Italians for a great conference in Italy.
- Good evaluation work!! The only question I didn't fully understand was the one about the workshop experience
- Thank you, Leslie and others, for taking care of the evaluation this way. I think we've made an important step forward doing it this way.
- I liked the breaks between the workshop-slots, that kept everything relaxed
- I really like the idea of a workshop for the group inside as a workshop about the song or the EEE for evaluation.
- I felt warmth and love, acceptance and inclusiveness, respect and accept in the room each day on the conference.... Thank you!
- I value our small conference very much with experienced colleagues from all over Europe and Overseas. I hope we can increase the diversity even more and look for participants from countries such as: Norway, Finland, Sweden, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, France

And finally, let's continue this project ...