



EU DEAR Programme Exchange Hub

Report of the online workshop for EU
DEAR projects - 26th Nov 2020



The content of this report does not necessarily
reflect the views of the European Commission

Purpose and participants

- Purpose:
 - To exchange ideas and experiences of using social media and online activities in creating public engagement in DEAR projects and issues;
 - To provide an opportunity for DEAR projects that are about to be completed to discuss final reporting requirements.
- Participants:
 - Representatives of EU DEAR projects and programmes (25 CfP2016 + 10 CfP2018 + Presidency project + direct grant funded programmes) and communication officers from CfP2018 projects;
 - European Commission DEAR sector staff.



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Social Media: what can DEAR projects do?

A [study](#) developed in August 2020 looked at **opportunities to achieve DEAR project objectives using social media.**

Social media is more than publicity:

- It promotes exchanges between projects;
- It boosts project results, particularly in a time of COVID-19;
- It assists in creating high-level engagement;
- It keeps the EC up-to-date with DEAR project events.

The Social Media report: Key recommendations



- Create a DEAR Programme Facebook Page 👍
- Create a DEAR Programme Facebook Group
- Use the event Facebook function
- Hashtags: #DEARProgramme 👍 + develop new ones
- Develop best practice guide for social media use
- @DEARSupportTeam 👍/ DEAR projects to systematically follow each other, like and share

See more at [Capacity4Dev](https://www.capacity4dev.org/)

‘Active public engagement’ – meaning what?

(See presentation on capacity4dev.eu/dear)



Who are the activists?

But these ones are
the actively
engaged...

And these ones are
particularly active...

Neither these
ones ...

Not these ones ...

Engagement

Awareness

Indirect

Level 6: Innovator: Is committed to the action/the issues and develops and implements (new) ideas for its promotion

Level 5: Multiplier: Is committed to the action and promotes it to others

Level 4: Activist: Is committed to (parts of) the action

Level 3: Supporter: Agrees with and expresses support for (parts of) the action

Level 2: Follower/Interested: Is interested in the project/the issue and keeps or agrees to be kept up to date, without further commitment

Level 1: Spectator/Aware: Is aware of the project

Level 0: Consumer: Is exposed to information about the project

For more details about the problem of quantifying audiences see:

<https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/dear/documents/problem-quantifying-public-engagement>



The problem for this Hub:

Recruiting and supporting

MULTIPLIERS

through **ONLINE** and **SOCIAL MEDIA**: how?

- Developing their understanding about the project and what it wants to do, and
- Developing their skills so they can take the project's ideas forward in their own social and/or work settings



Multipliers: how do you recruit, develop and involve multipliers if you cannot use face-to-face contacts?

Group 1

Opportunities

- experiences in transferring festivals from real world to online space - can be very positive. 'Big name' individuals more likely to get involved with an online event (with a larger potential audience) than a real world one with a restricted audience

COVID took all the space so tied project goals to the COVID crisis Turning a challenge into an opportunity!

Challenges

language barriers

multiple countries, multiple languages and visuals

- how measure the level of success or the measure of engagement? How do you know you've reached a multiplier?

- coordination -- the projects are operating on multiple levels

COVID took all the space on social media (See opportunities)

Ideas & Suggestions

Training for target group on using social media for effective message sharing

Explore the opportunities between Twitter and Facebook. Facebook being good for hosting online and streamed events. Twitter being good for sharing news of those events with mainstream media and reaching a wider audience

Group2

Challenges

-long-term commitment for the entire project duration

-different levels of challenges: 1. maintain commitment via social media 2.difficult to focus on social media within the project during the pandemic 3. bringing together/enforcing interaction among different target groups like for example local authority and students through the same channel

-complexity of SDGs is not easy to communicate and as well how to take action for it

-informal contact is hard to establish through online tools

-huge variety and amount of online offers (meetings, workshops, webinars)

-zoom fatigue

Ideas & Suggestions

-opportunity to link the pandemic to the SDG topics and communicate it
-roundtables with decision-makers and being open/transparent of the difficulties/challenges

-production of video of an event

-nano-courses

-illustrations, comics

Group 3

Challenges

- Participation & collaboration: This is difficult online. You can't shoot a video together. Use breakout rooms effectively to support this. Common guidelines.
- Replicating informal communication: Zoom is really effective but can be very formal. Tools like Miro and Wonder.Me recommended to network with people at different stages of engagement during an event.
- Young people are not on Facebook: Looking at using Instagram, actions on TikTok. Launch a world food day or earth day challenge. Dance challenge related to food.
- To keep audience and young people engaged: If you can reach them through social media how do you keep them engaged or actually change behaviour?
- The link between online / offline activism: How to do this?

Ideas & Suggestions

- Online school for activists (Food Wave): After a stakeholder analysis, invited selected people. Great results - 30 people signed up. Online trainings. Social media slogans. Use testimonials and ask participants to be advocates on social media, building on their training.
- Different tools for different audiences/types of communications (see above)
- Research and know your local audience - what channels do they use?
- Online volunteering: Youth unemployment is rising, how to build their competencies and experience for their CVs online. Going beyond just competitions.
- Involve influencers as multipliers on social media. Evaluating to involve different types of influencers who can engage the target.
- Using young people to develop messages for other young people: Co-create with your audience to create content.
- Make the most of national level partners: Different pockets of networks, or different formats of workshops with regional specific activity, link topics to a specific technology.

Group 4

Challenges

- special characteristics of a Local Authority (as lead applicant)
- particularly difficult to reach YOUNG people
- multilingual approach of the project
- finding the right "voice/tone" for each target groups
- high no show-rate for online events
- decrease in response of policy makers during the pandemic through online tools

Ideas & Suggestions

- partnering with a communication agency
- (- increased number of social media accounts of local authorities)
- building on CSOs on the ground to reach youth
- gamification as a strategy to reach youth
- getting expert consultation
- a very flexible communication strategy is needed to be used by the huge variety of project partners
- focussing on positive aspects rather than negative ones (ex: cycling is good for health rather than cars are climate killers)
- create awards/prizes/quizzes (=incentives) to increase level of commitment and engagement in online events
- using testimonials and real faces of active project participants
- especially for Instagram: inviting influencers
- analysing your target groups and their social media behaviour

Group 5

Challenges:

- Hard to show the project within the stream of news coming out
- How to profile the project online to stand out?
- Too many similar events. How to keep multipliers active with online contact.
- Really hard to identify spokespeople for the target group, especially in a long term perspective, and on the right platform
- How to keep multipliers engaged long term
- Find the right terms, how to speak to youth in an effective manner.

Ideas & suggestions

- Youth panel, who in turn influence their constituency. Youth panel involved in the development of the materials.
- Online training
- Expert classes to multipliers to keep them involved.
- Support skills development of multipliers
- Research in use of terms to the target group

Group 6

Challenges:

- Difficult to recruit new multipliers online (social media works for maintaining relationship with existing multipliers)
- Facebook is #1 but does not work to engage young people - it's obsolete for them
- People are overwhelmed by the use of social media in times when most of their lives happen online
- Commitment is hard to achieve in the online space
- Everyone is competing for people's attention online

Ideas

- Making a good analysis of the social media you want to use in relation to the most used channels by the target audience you are engaging
- Making sure the content needs to be appealing and relevant to your target audience
- Remain flexible to keep adjusting your strategies for engagement, based on the ever changing times



Online and social media communications

Ideas and exchanges from DEAR 2018
Call for Proposals projects

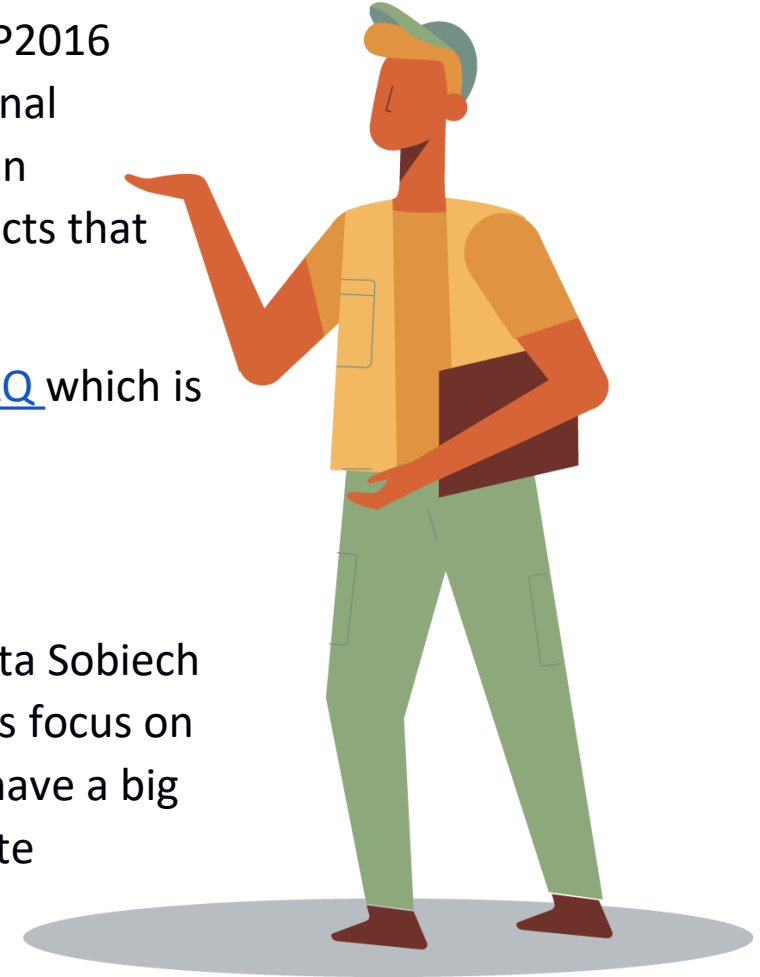


Challenges of using different channels and tools

- TikTok for young audiences: ‘there are ethical issues’ but no legal restrictions on the use by the EU or EU supported projects – projects should be careful in how they use this platform.
- Use dedicated project media channels or the organisation’s existing channels? CfP2016 projects and older ones have a mixture and even also hybrid solutions, with national channels and languages, but then pulling all together in the project or organisation channel. A lot of learning to be pulled out from pairing with similar CfP2016 projects that are closing now.
- AI tool [Sentione](#) - produced this <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4G9rfsY9PAQ> which is useful for media monitoring.

European Commission channels

Do not forget the Commission’s social media channels - keep Brussels informed. Agata Sobiech mentioned that “there is more space now than there used to be – with your project’s focus on youth there is more scope for that, so please contact your Task Manager when you have a big event so that we [i.e. EC DEAR Sector] ask the EC Communications Unit to disseminate information”.



EU Flag

When something is funded by the EU that needs to be clear –but there are exceptions. Participants were reminded of the Inception Seminar about communications: “[the EC does] not want to create straitjackets!”.

For instance, when creating content for young people, we can learn from influencers. Inserting the EU flag or a logo can be problematic, because if a message appears to come from an institution it might not be seen as so genuine or personal and therefore might not work so well. Contact your Task Manager in case you think it would be prejudicial to the action to show the EU flag on some of the communication products. In general: if you show your logo then also show the EU flag.

Branding and strategy

At project implementation level, Communication branding can have huge variations (among different partners, countries, channels, materials) and make huge differences – how to deal with this and keep coherence?

Communication technical staff generously offered to share their project’s comms strategy, brand book, partnership handbook – in order to do so, DST created a mailing group with all 10 PM/communication staff to facilitate sharing





Q&A Final reporting

for the DEAR 2016 Call for Proposals
projects



All projects supported through the 2016 CfP are coming to an end in the near future. This session focussed on the expectations the Commission has of final narrative reports that describe the process and achievements of work done.

The session was introduced by Markus Pirchner, DEVCO B1 DEAR Sector, referring to an annotated guidelines document supporting final narrative reporting: [Final narrative project reporting for EU DEAR projects](#)

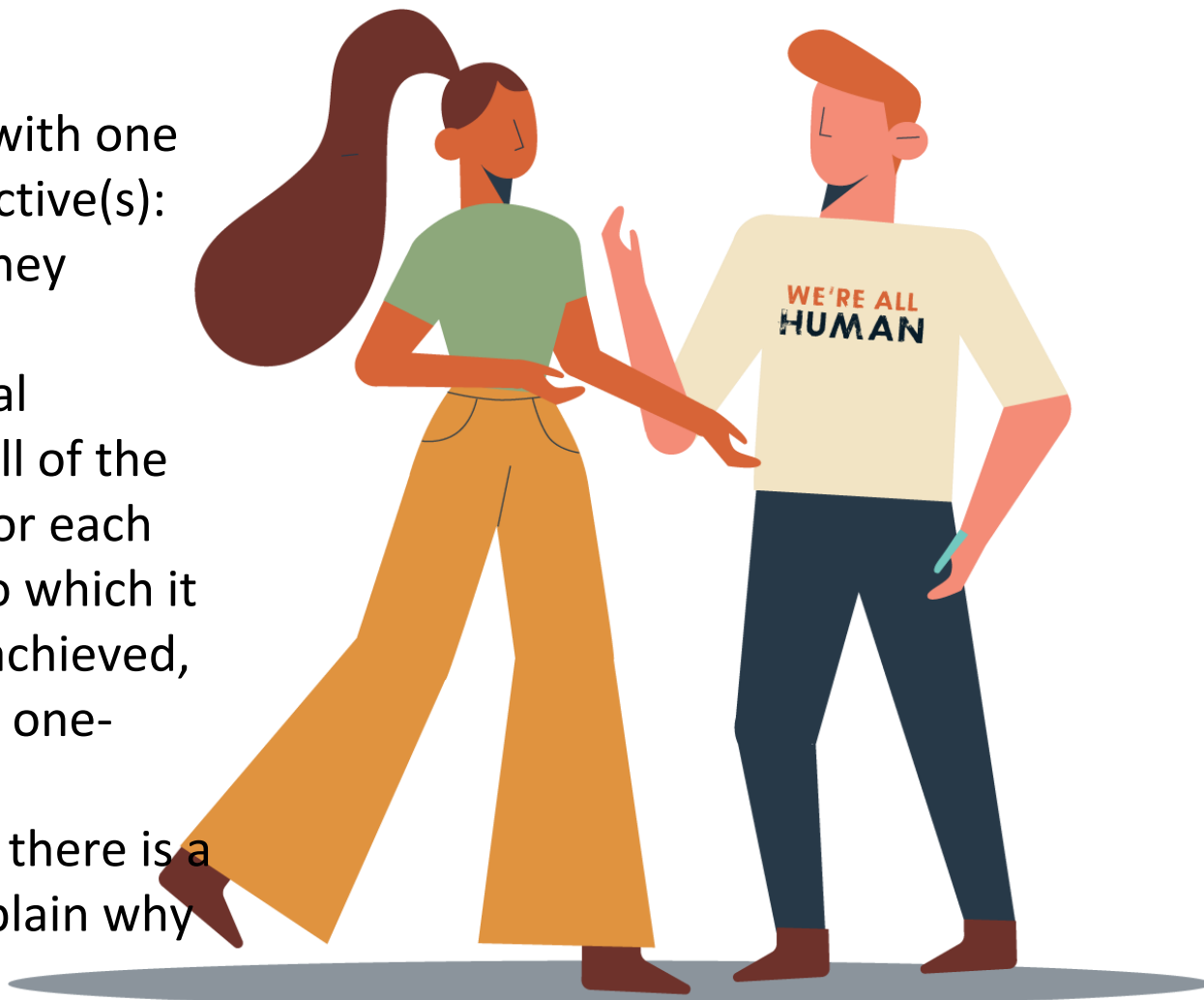
A number of general points to take into account:

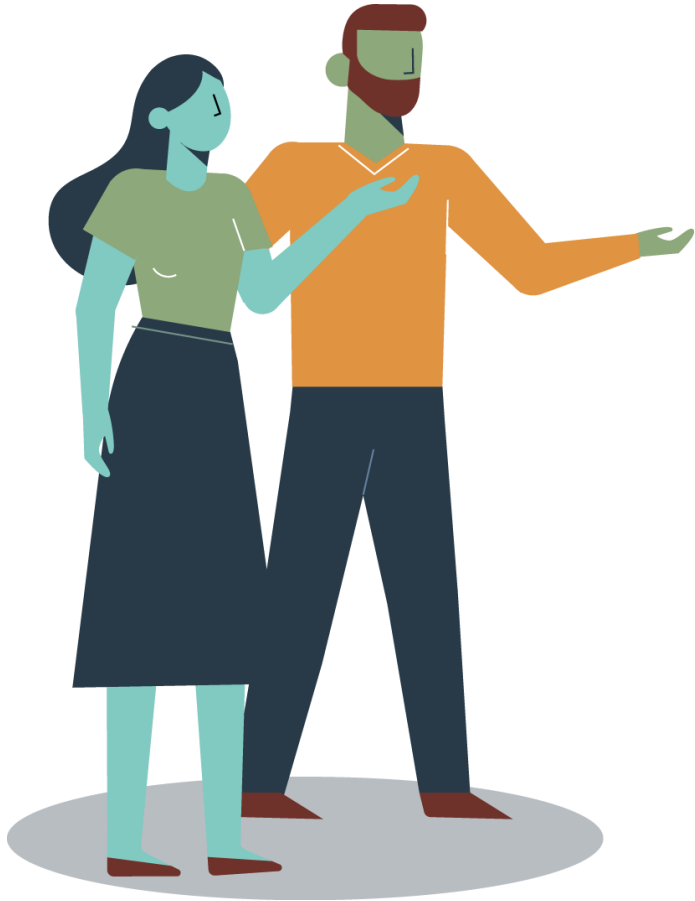
- The final report should cover the whole implementation period of the project, and not only the period since the submission of the last interim report.
- The report should be concise and to the point, which doesn't mean that it has to be a 'dry' document. It should help the Commission to get a sense and feel for the project: what it did and why, what didn't work quite as expected and why, what learning project staff and organisations/LAs have drawn from their experiences that may be useful for future work.
- Do use visual illustrations, diagrams, photos, etc if they help in illustrating a point that is made in the text but don't use them just to make the report 'look nice'
- Over- and under-achievements of aspects of a project are normal: describe them and explain why they were over- or under-achieved



In the Executive Summary of the report (para. 2.1):

- Give a short description of the project with one or two paragraphs on the Specific Objective(s): what were they, to what extent were they achieved (fully, partially, not at all)
- Drawing on the project's updated logical framework (para 2.4), show in a table all of the intended intermediate outcomes and for each describe a) what it was, b) the extent to which it was achieved (e.g. overachieved, fully achieved, three-quarters achieved, half achieved, one-quarter achieved, not achieved, or give percentages of achievement), c) where there is a large deviation from the intentions, explain why this was the case.





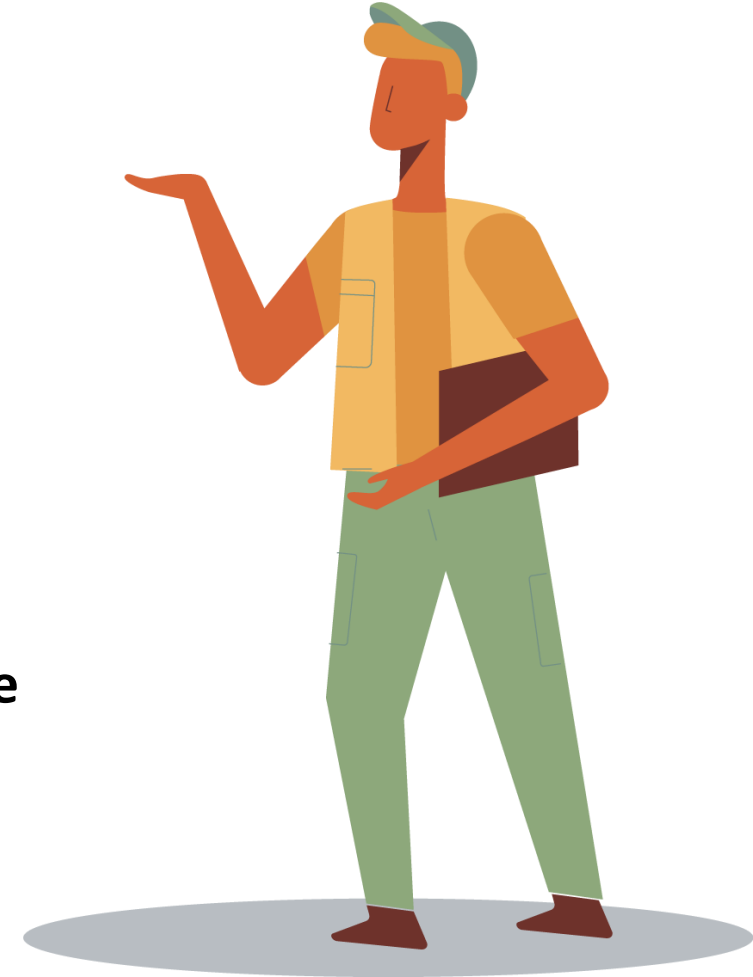
In describing the Results (para 2.2.A):

- Again drawing on the logframe, in a table show the Outputs relating to each intermediate objective, the indicator(s) for that Output, and the extent to which information about the indicators is available
- For each output then list the relevant Activities (again as shown in the logframe) and a short description of each, together with an assessment of the Activity's success in contributing to the Output (including, if it did not do this, the reasons for this)
- Conclude para 2.2.A with a statement on the overall success in creating Results, drawing on the evidence you have available for this.

In describing the Activities (para 2.2.B):

- In reporting on the Activities it is not necessary (or even wanted) to list all the various actions carried out by all partners. The information needs to be aggregated, hence, In in the report summarise them and reflect on the extent to which each activity (listed in the updated logframe) was successful or not (and why).

In the discussion that followed the presentation questions were asked and clarifications were made





Financial reporting Q & A



“Are physical copies of all materials produced required to be sent to the Commission, or will a photo be adequate?”

- Send the reports (narrative, financial, external evaluation), exp. Verification and payment request as foreseen in the contract in electronic and paper format.
- For materials produced (for example T-shirts, brochures, books, banners, leaflets used in different languages as hand-out), include electronic copies of a select few / very relevant materials produced by the project over the entire project life in a USB stick and include pictures (incl. a short description of the item) of a select few / very relevant products in an annex to the narrative report, indicating the file name, how they can be found on the USB stick.

Cross-cutting issues and how to report on how “the Action has ‘mainstreamed’ those”

- In the report provide a summary description of those cross-cutting issues that the project has related to, and how this has been done. It is not necessary to refer to all the cross-cutting issues listed, but only those where the project has at some point given explicit or more than a passing attention to.

Financial reporting: explanation of variations: “is there a threshold, e.g. all variations over 25%?”

- The general conditions art 9.4 allow the transfer between the main budget headings involving a variation of 25% or less. Successive modifications to the budget shall be taken into account in a cumulative way of its initial value as set in the original budget or the last signed addendum. This method may not be used to amend the headings for indirect costs, for the contingency reserve, for in-kind contributions or the amounts or rates of simplified cost options defined in the Contract.

“When we charge salary costs to the project for the months after the project has ended, the documentation might not be available at the time of the audit. What to do in this instance and what should be provided to back up costs?”

- o Only salary costs of key staff in the project’s applicant organisation/LA, e.g. the Project Manager and/or the project’s finance staff, can be claimed after the official finishing date of the project (for a reasonable period, but in any event before the submission of the final report) to bring the project to a successful close. This needs to be requested (justified request per e-mail) to the task manager, who will confirm it in consultation with the financial unit. Any amount above EUR 500 which is unpaid on the date of submission of the final reports has to be clearly listed in the "List of Pending payments" in the final financial report (worksheet "Final sources of funding")

In case of queries about final reporting, projects should contact their Task Manager for clarification.

Feedback on the Hub from participants



Post-Hub feedback from participants



Extent to which participants expectations were met	8.12
Extent to which Hub objectives were met	7.94
Relevance of the Hub to participant's work	8.75
Appropriateness of Hub methodologies	8.53
Value of European Commission staff participation	9.06
Quality of technical support and tools provided	9.12
Quality of facilitation provided by the DST	9.06
Overall success of the Hub	8.53

Scores out of 10 maximum.

Suggestions made by respondents to be taken into account in future workshops:

- More time for Q&A and Experienced projects to 'Mentor' new projects;
- Capacity building or inspirational moments (eg. with experts) - in this case, social media as impact tool or good practices on social media/public engagement from projects;
- Provoke more participation by direct questioning/facilitation, do not use too many links/tools;
- DST creating a friendly atmosphere and making participants feel comfortable is appreciated!

When asked about the length of online events, respondents were split: 10 expressing a preference for a single 2 to 2½ hour event, 5 preferring two events of a similar length taking place on different days or in two consecutive days. And 2 respondents expressed a preference for 2 sessions on the same day.

