



Ecsite Annual Conference 2012
Evaluation and Recommendations

Lucy Schweingruber
Event & Fundraising Manager, Ecsite
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1. Introduction

The Ecsite Annual Conference 2012

Dear Ecsite Annual Conference participants,

The Ecsite Annual Conference 2012 was held from **31 May to the 2 June in Toulouse, France**. The conference, hosted by the **Cité de l'Espace** had **Space and time, unlimited** as the theme. It consisted of two days of pre-conference meetings and training courses followed by three days of a main conference with **75 sessions**. The 75 programme sessions were **selected from amongst 175 proposals** that Ecsite received by October 2011. **995 delegates from 46 countries in Europe and worldwide** participated in the Ecsite AC2012.

Ecsite would like to thank all of you for your contribution to the success of this event. We are particularly grateful to the ones who took some time to give us their valuable feedback and recommendations for improvement of future conferences.

This document gives an overview of the Ecsite Annual conference 2012 as seen by its delegates.

It is a summary report drawn from the 241 conference feedback forms gathered from the delegates after the conference via an online form that was posted on the Ecsite conference website, as well as from the individual comments and from the session feedback forms gathered after every session. Due to the open questions, and individuals' comments are included in this report. Ecsite would like to thank La cité de L'Espace for its precise and hard work on the feedback forms.

These results are analysed and used by the Annual Conference Programme Committee (ACPC) and the Ecsite Executive office while speakers and convenors have received individual emails regarding their sessions. Both results (from session feedback forms and conference feedback forms) are important and are taken into consideration when the next Annual Conference is organized and the sessions are being selected.

The ACPC, the Executive Office, the Ecsite Board and the next host will carefully look at your comments to improve the most significant annual gathering of the network.

Thanks again for your contribution,

The Ecsite Team

2. Overview of the evaluation of the Ecsite Annual Conference 2012

The ACPC likes to thank you for having taken the time to respond to our questions. Be assured that your feedback has been reviewed in detail and that many comments and ratings have been taken up in order to improve the quality of the Ecsite Annual Conference constantly.

As keyfindings the points with outstanding positive ratings and with the less best ratings are pointed out.

	Components	Key findings
1	Event	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The Nocturne was perceived as excellent, participants especially favored this social event.- The Gala Dinner and the Farewell Party received fewer positive ratings, the ACPC will discuss what is needed to improve their format.
2	Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The on-site registration desk improved a lot compared to the 2011 conference- The online registration was perceived as better than in previous years.- Participants are not fully satisfied with the conference website.
4	Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The keynote speeches received excellent ratings
5	On site	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Another outstanding result was achieved by the on-site helpers - participants found them to be very professional.

3. Results

Out of the 995 participants of the conference, 241 forms were gathered (24% of the participants, exactly as many as in 2011). Results were received from an anonymous questionnaire that was put online and sent to all participants once the AC2012 ended.

3.1. Characterize the conference with three words

People gave 674 words for characterizing the conference. 97% of the words given were positive and 3% were negative (4% less negative words than 2011). The number preceding each word corresponds to the number of people who selected this word as one of their keywords.

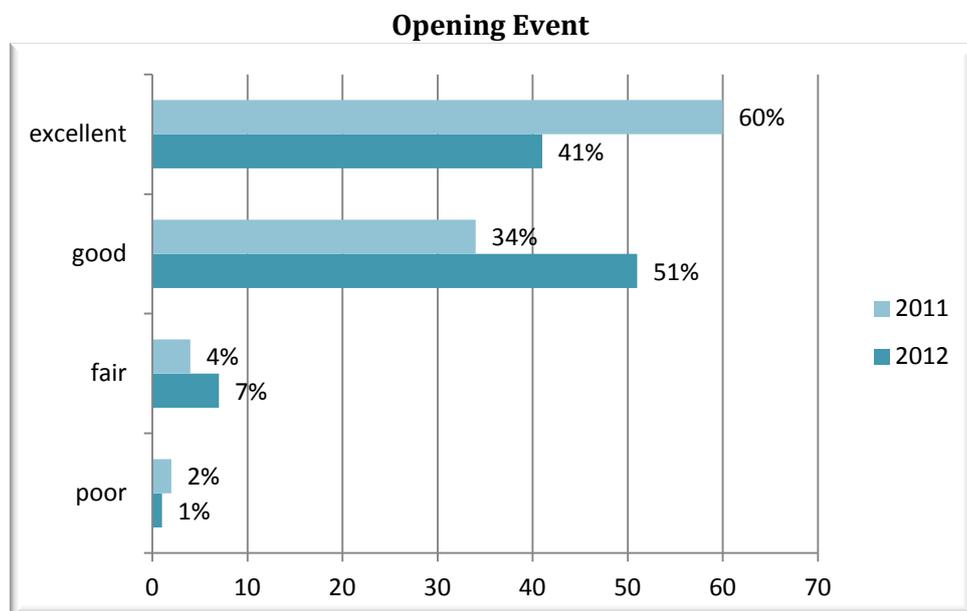
Here are the words most often used:

50 networking , 46 interesting/informative, 44 inspiring, 19 fun, 17 well organized, 13 friendly, 12 contacts, 12 exciting, 7 motivating, 7 professional, 6 great, 6 innovative

3.2 Quality of the content

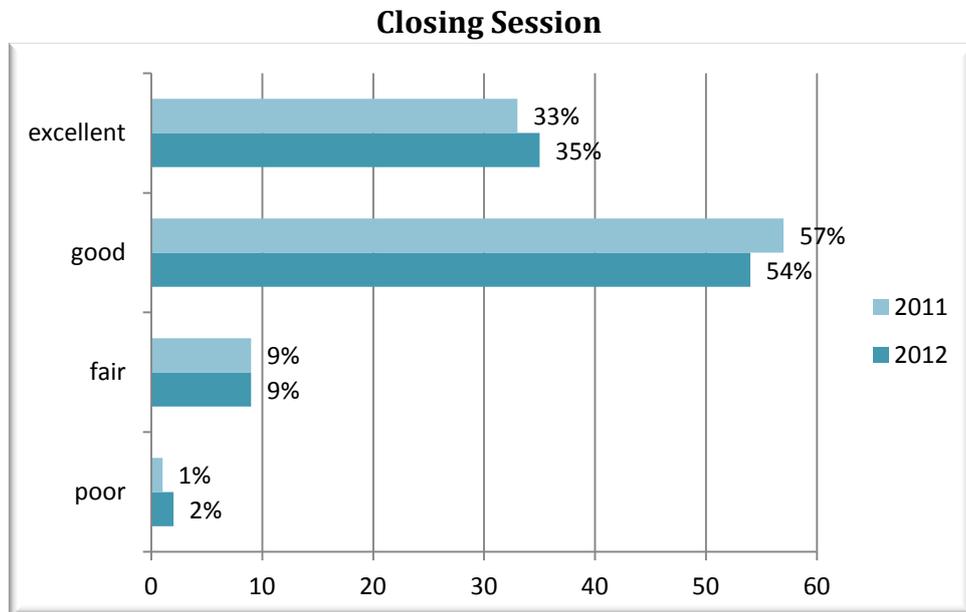
3.2.1 The Opening Event

The Opening Event took place in the Pierre Baudis Conference Centre and was co-chaired by Mr Jean Baptiste Desbois of Cité de l'Espace and Pierre Cohen, Mayor of Toulouse, and consisted of three parts: The welcoming speech of the host and the ESA astronaut, Paolo Nespoli, and words from Ecsite representatives, Mr Robert Firmhofer and Ms Catherine Franche. In between the speeches two intervals took place featuring a local clown using juggling to illustrate principles of gravity.



3.2.2 The Closing Event

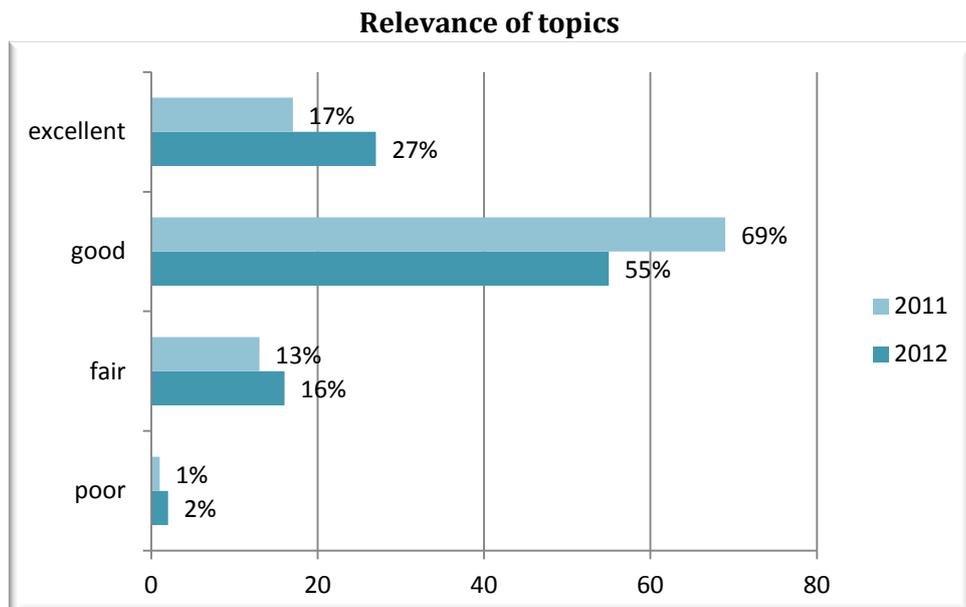
The closing event was attended by approximately 400 participants. It consisted of short speeches from Jean Baptiste Desbois, , Robert Firmhofer, as well as Camille Pisani, Chairperson of the Annual Conference Programme Committee.. What followed was a speech from Lars Rehman, Director of Universeum in Gothenburg, Sweden, (Host of the AC2013) and a dance performance by the team of Universeum which took the audience into a dream world – referring to next year’s theme: *Dreams, – the spirit of innovation.*



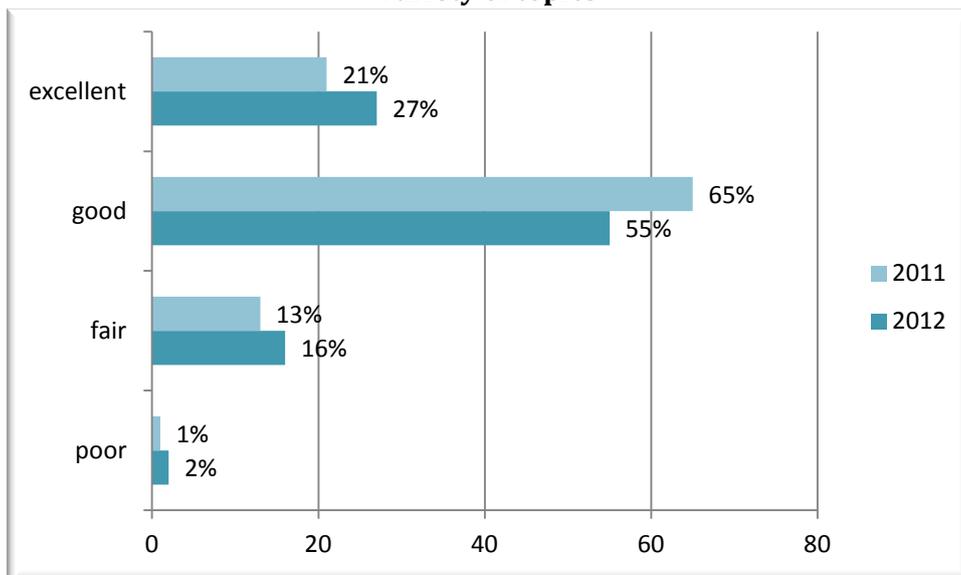
The rating for this event was equal to the Closing Event of 2011, which is also still more positive when compared to past years.

3.2.3 Overall quality of sessions

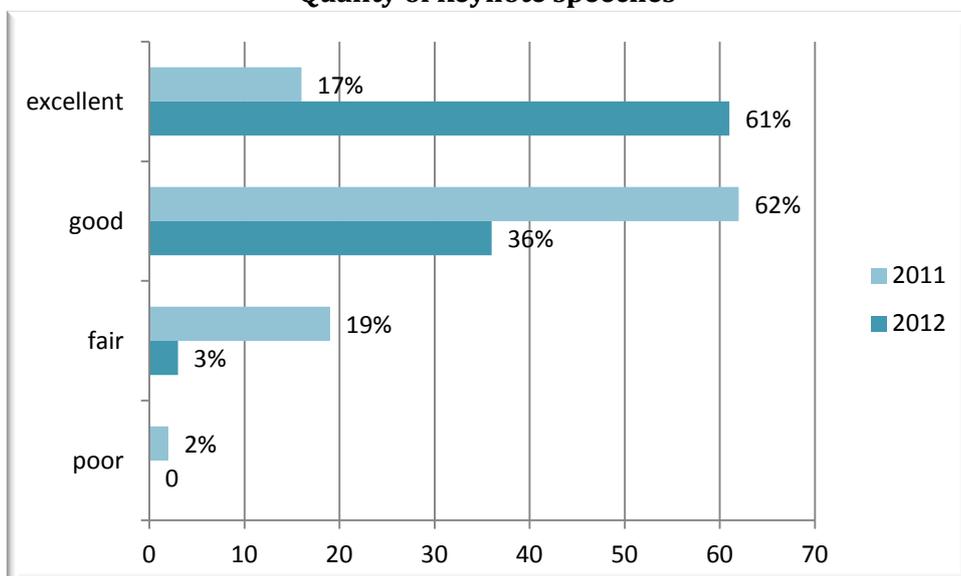
The delegates were asked to rate the sessions on the following aspects: relevance of topics, diversity of topics and quality of the keynote speakers. Here are their views:



Variety of topics



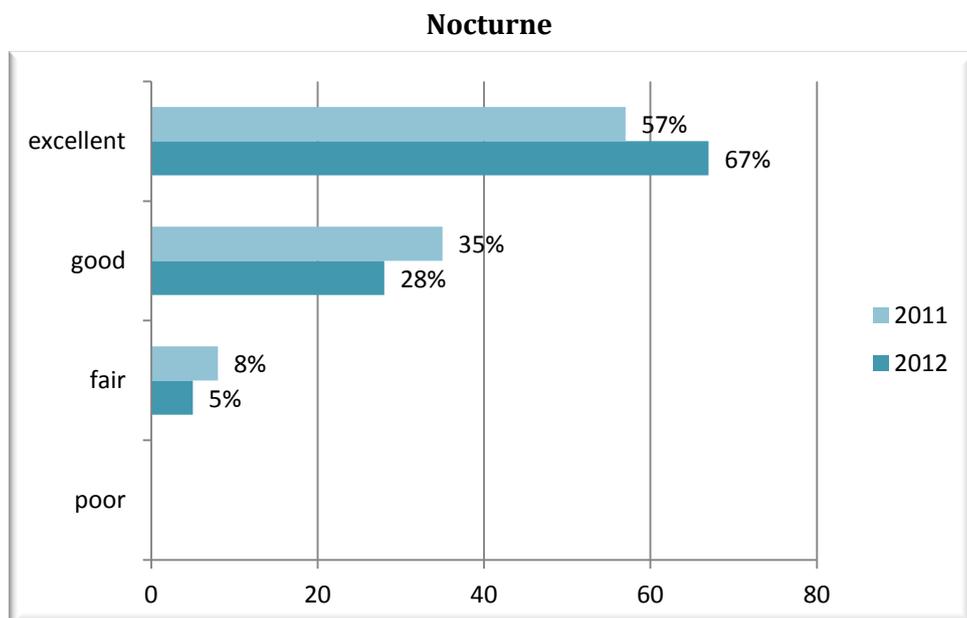
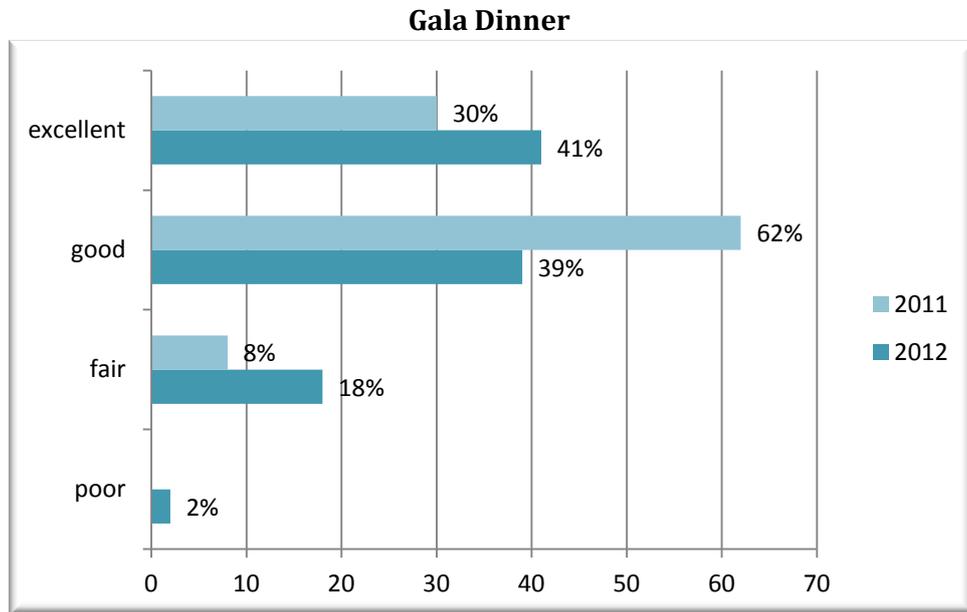
Quality of keynote speeches



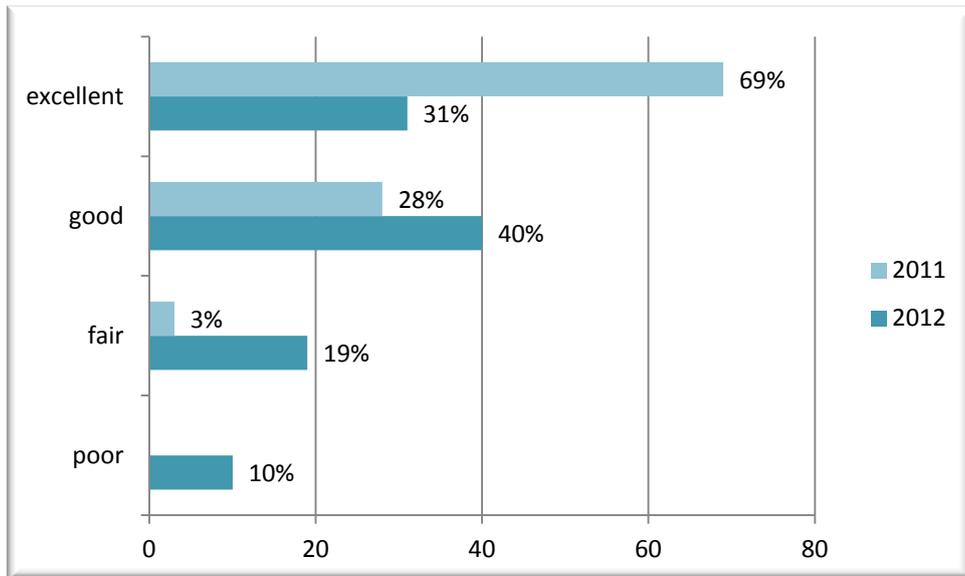
All three results were very well rated –especially the keynote speeches which were rated extremely well with two-thirds of respondents using the word “excellent” in their review.

3.3 Social programme

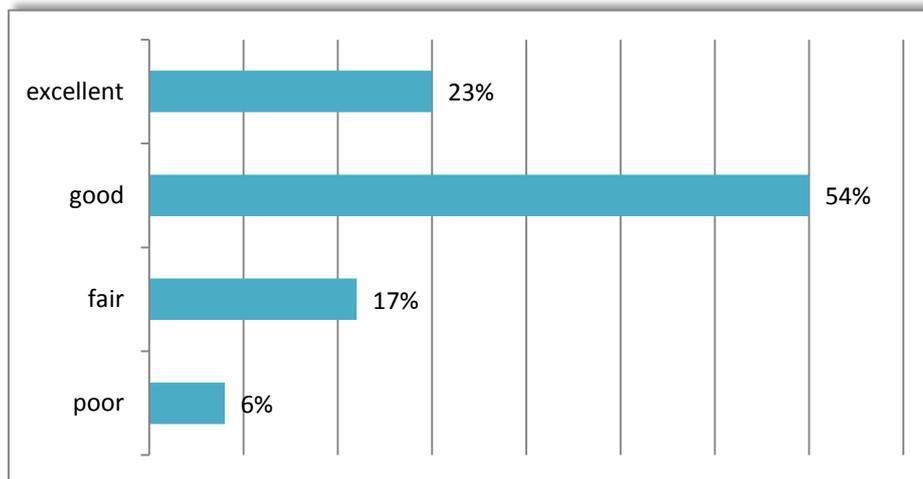
The 241 participants of our online feedback questionnaire also shared their opinion with us about the social events and the Business Bistro.



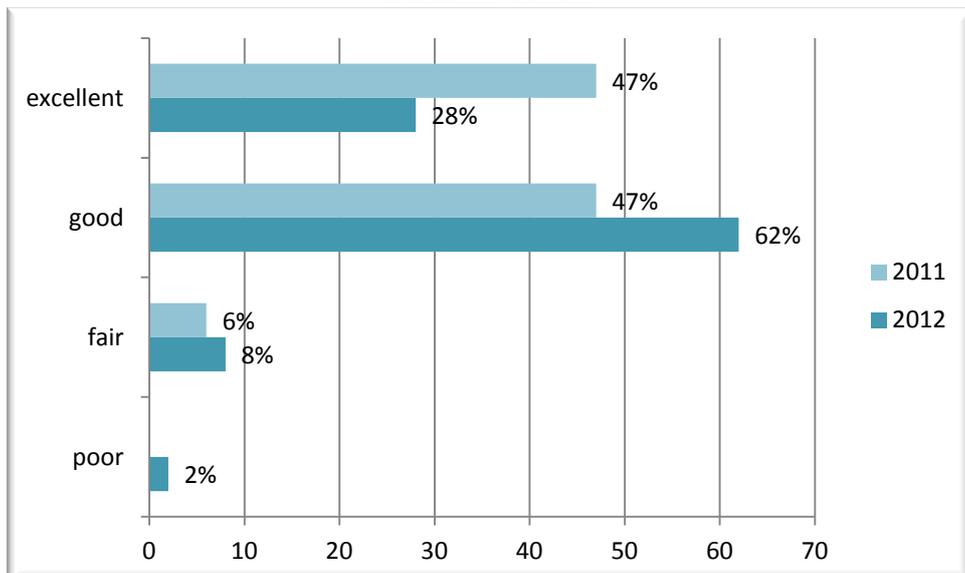
Farewell Party



Newcomers breakfast

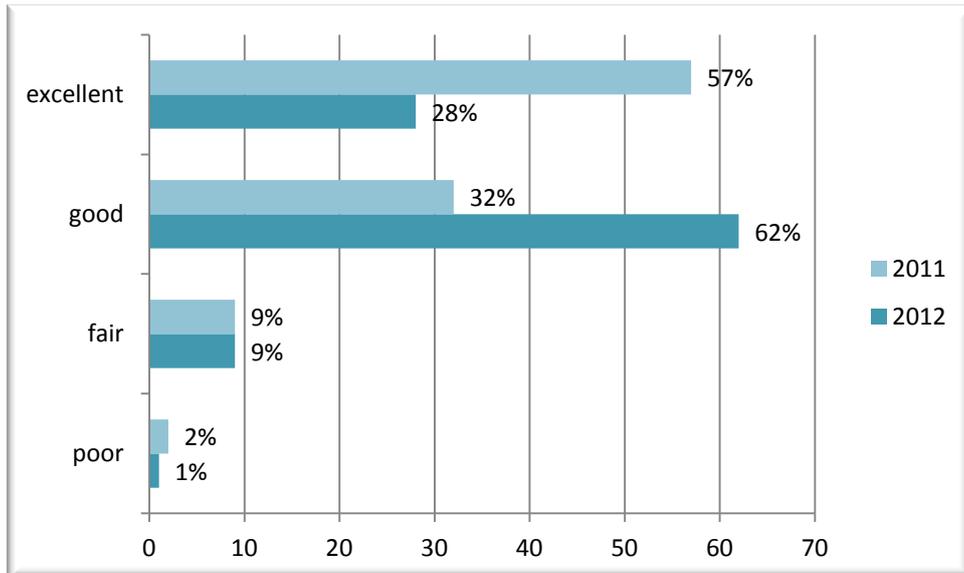


Business Bistro

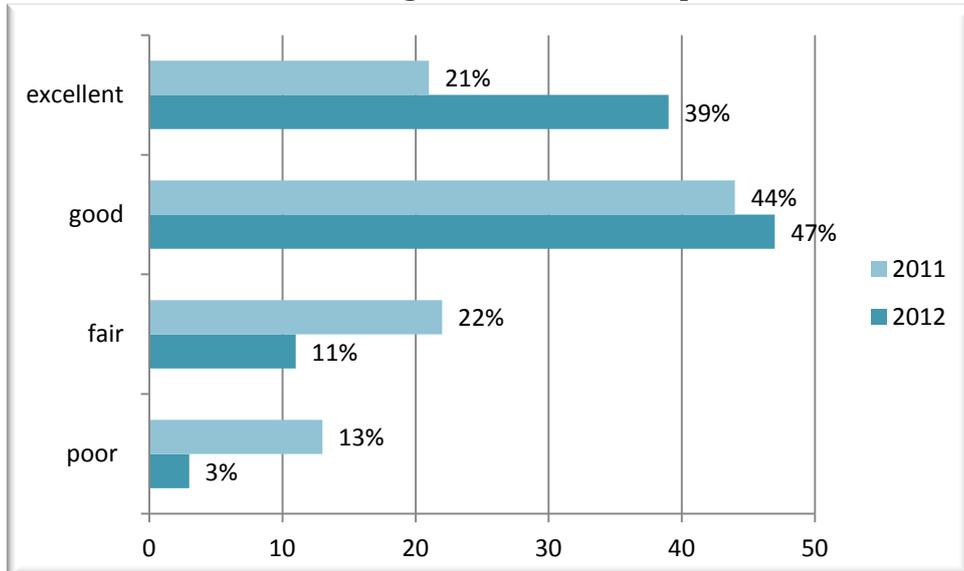


3.4 Organisation

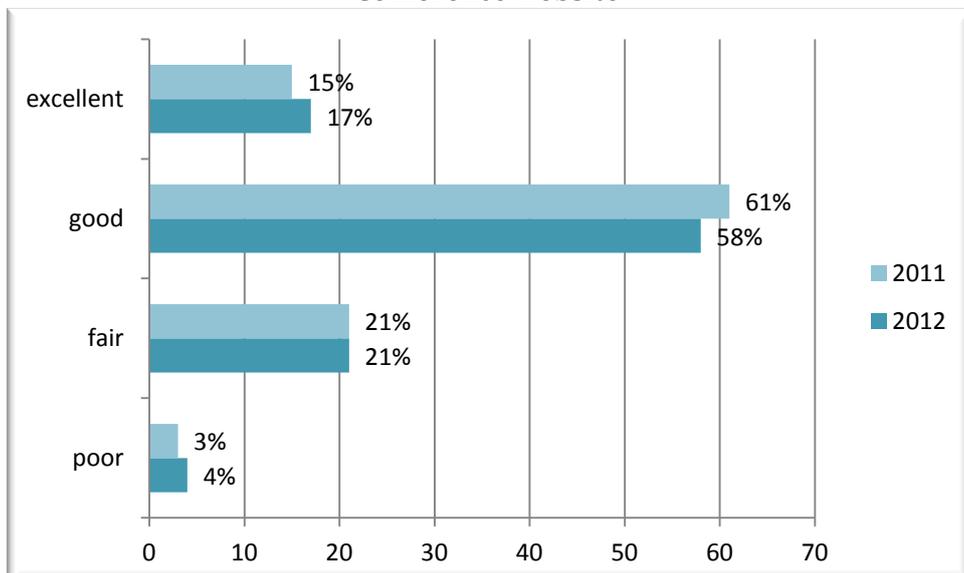
Conference announcements



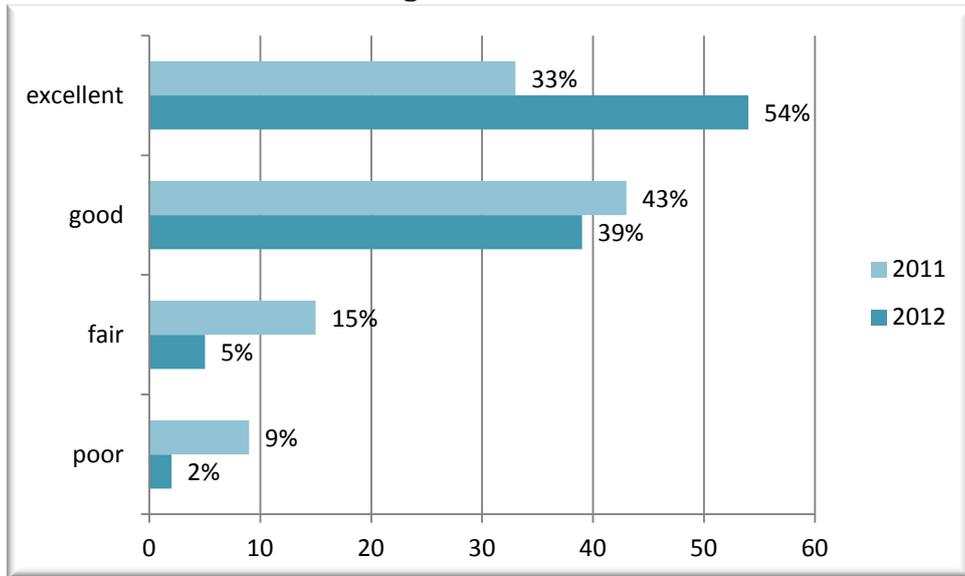
Online registration & follow up



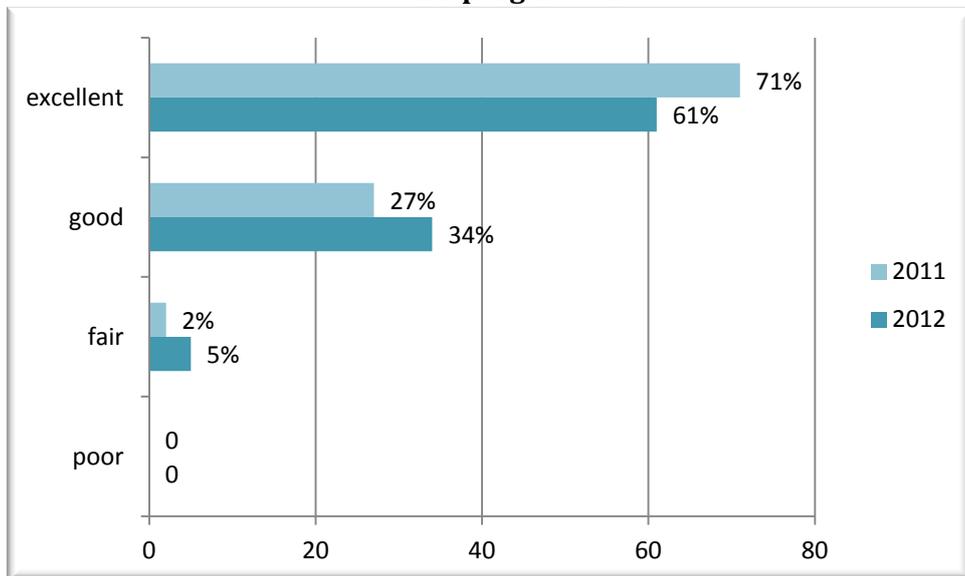
Conference website



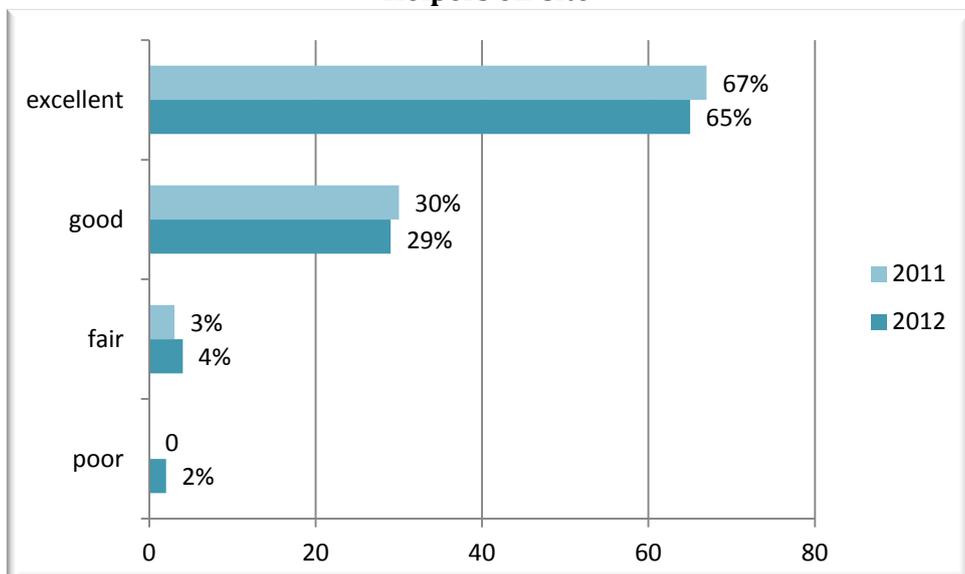
Registration desk



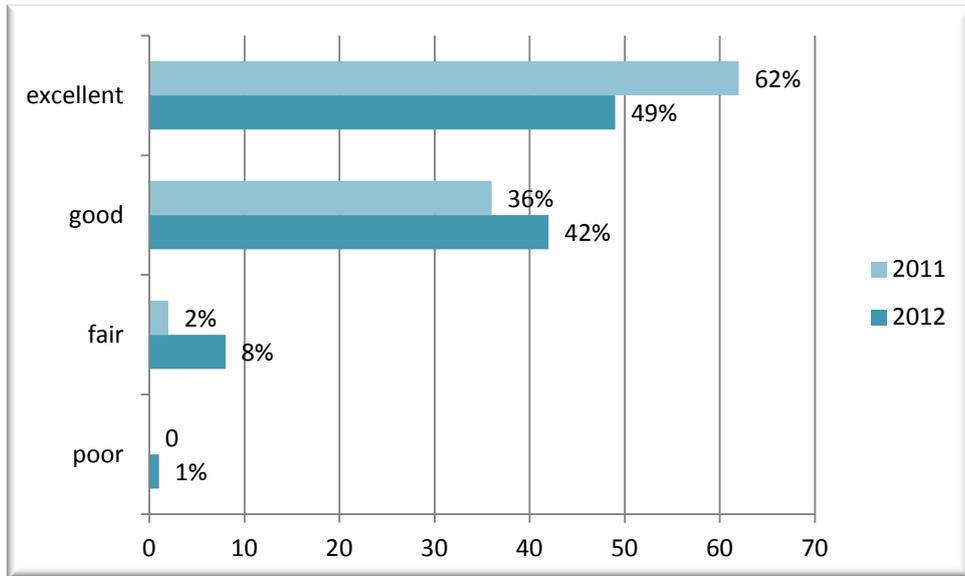
Printed programme



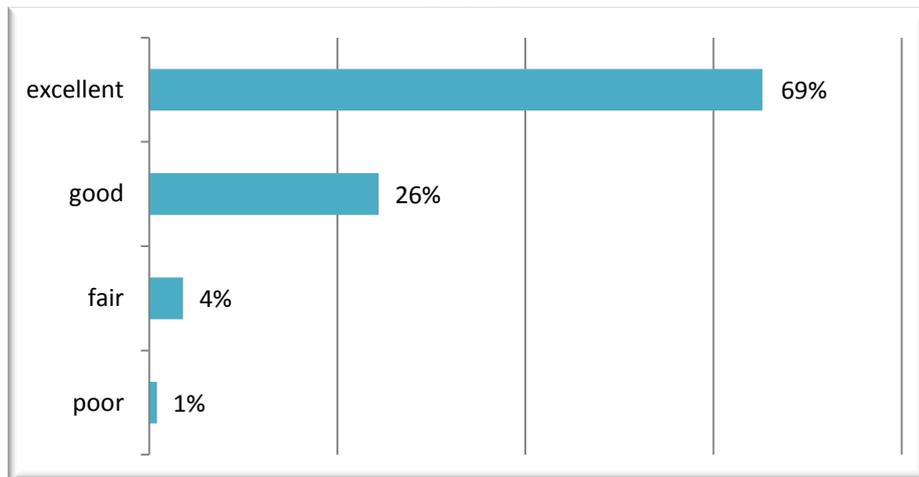
Helpers on-site



Facilities of the conference venue



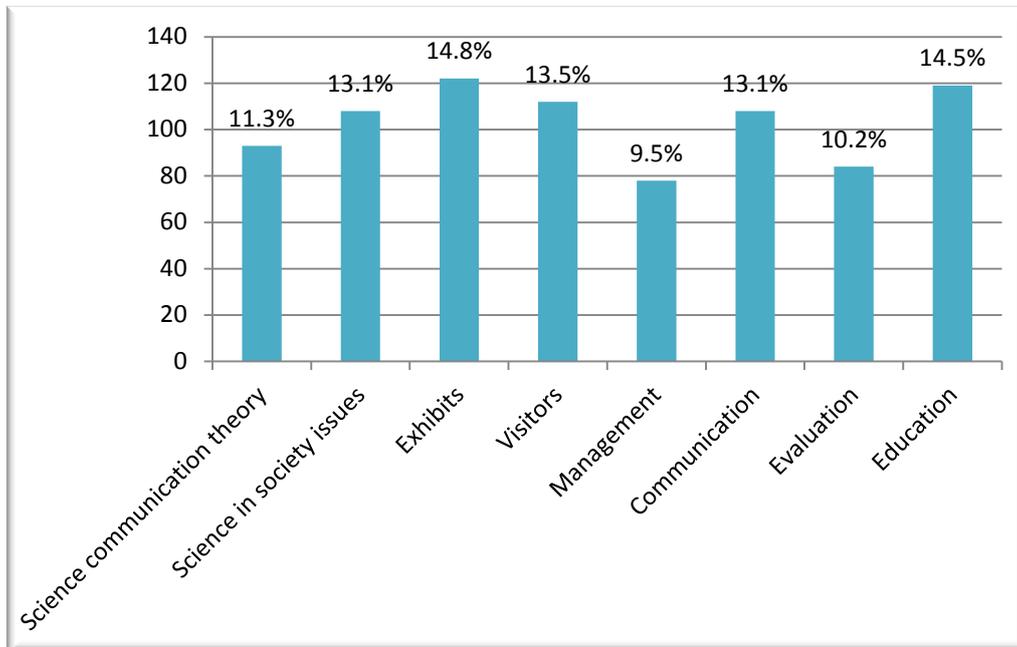
Lunches



3.5 Participants' recommendations for next year's conference

3.5.1 Proposed topics for next year's conference

What topics would you like to have covered more?
(Participants could select 8 topics and selected 3.4 on average)



EXHIBITS

- Museum collections and objects (mentioned 2 times)
- New technologies for exhibits
- Prototypes
- Shops
- How to do a exhibit with the ressources limits of a small science centre
- Temporary exhibitions
- Modern exhibitions display techniques
- Co-creating exhibits, visitor participation (not just children, uninterested audiences)

MANAGEMENT

- Marketing & PR (mentioned 5 times)
- Social networks, scientific journalism (mentioned 3 times)
- Business Development and strategy of a science centre (mentioned 3 times)
- Fundraising (mentioned 3 times)
- Organizing Events and conferences
- Design and visual identity of museums
- Financing, setting up science centres
- Stuff management and human resources
- Economic issues of operating science centres
- Innovative business models
- How to inspire teams to be innovative
- Good examples of collective work and not top-down management

SCIENCE IN SOCIETY

- Science centres, nice or necessary?
- New ways of communicating science
- Participative science
- Science centres roll in society
- Cities of scientific culture
- Inclusion of communities that reflect a museum's context
- How to involve humanities in science

EDUCATION

- New ideas. Integrating language training into science and technology. The "edutainment" aspect of Science centres
- Intergenerational learning

OTHER

- Hands-on sessions (mentioned 4 times)
- Best practices of different fields (mentioned 4 times)
- Innovations in any field of science centres (mentioned 3 times)
- Art and shows (mentioned 2 times)
- Architecture of science centres
- Training for explainers
- Research (who creates science and innovates every day)
- Senior visitors
- Nanotechnology
- Reusable forests, bioenergy
- Disable accessibility
- Relationship between science centres and laboratories
- More varied museum such as zoos, botanical gardens and planetariums
- Scenographie
- Ecoconception
- Advances in science and where research is going

3.5.2 Recommendations for different aspects of the conference

The delegates were able to answer an open question about their remarks on the sessions and speakers. 78 people posted a comment – the following comments were mentioned more than twice:

Sessions

- ⇒ Sessions should be put in different categories for beginners, experts etc.
- ⇒ More interaction desired
- ⇒ Demand for fewer "show and tell" Power Point presentations in favour of more hands-on
- ⇒ More ICT and new media themes
- ⇒ More marketing and communication content
- ⇒ Speed dating session was very well perceived as it is a new, lively format
- ⇒ There shouldn't be more than 3 speakers for a 90 minute session, as it gets superficial if more than 3 are contributing
- ⇒ The content of the sessions should be creative, not their title > better session descriptions are needed

Speakers

- ⇒ Should upload their presentation and be better prepared (not just reading their slides)
- ⇒ English natives should speak slower
- ⇒ Speakers should use microphones
- ⇒ Speakers should be of both genders in one session
- ⇒ Speakers should not be featured in too many sessions

Organization

- ⇒ First-timers feel lost and want better networking opportunities because many people seem to know each other
- ⇒ Gala Dinner was not appropriate for 1000 people, many were served very late
- ⇒ Start the keynote later in the morning (participants are tired after the evening programme of the preceding day)
- ⇒ Presentations must be uploaded on the web immediately
- ⇒ Should fewer sessions be allowed? Programme is very complex
- ⇒ More seating outside the session rooms
- ⇒ Water should be made available all around the conference centre
- ⇒ Business Bistro was not well located, not enough interested visitors
- ⇒ Schedule is too tight, no time to visit science centre and town
- ⇒ Coffee should be offered ahead of the first morning session

Creative Inputs

- ⇒ Provide an App to exchange electronic business cards
- ⇒ It should be possible to download presentations via WiFi in the session rooms
- ⇒ Gala Dinner should be replaced with an informal networking event with movement, such as a speed dating evening
- ⇒ A few sessions should be held in the science centre for those who would like to see it
- ⇒ Have brokers during the breaks to bring people together, in order to facilitate improve networking
- ⇒ Put flags on the badge in order to immediately spot compatriots