

O 5.3 BALTIC CIRCULAR PROCUREMENT CONGRESS: SUMMARY REPORT

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Introduction

On 2-3 September 2020 procurement experts, suppliers, researchers and key opinion leaders from all over Europe met online to share their experiences and best practices of using procurement as an effective tool for transition towards the circular economy. The purpose of the [Baltic Circular Procurement Congress](#) was to raise awareness of circular concepts, procurement in particular, highlight good practices, share experiences and pave the road ahead for circular procurement to enter the mainstream.

The Congress was organised by the [Circular PP](#) project, which is funded by the Interreg Baltic Sea Region programme. The organisation was led by Rijkswaterstaat, with support from INNOWO (Poland), Alan Caldwell Associates (Scotland) and all project partners. Originally planned as an in-person event, to take place in Warsaw, Poland between 27th and 28th of May, the Congress had to be postponed and reorganised as an online event due to COVID-19. The Congress used an innovative new online conference platform called HopIn.

The Congress programme was designed around the Circular PP project's outcomes, a full overview of which can be found in Annex A.

Congress in Numbers

- 418 registrations from 14 countries
- 302 participated over 2 days
- 180 participants online at same time
- 12 speakers and 19 workshop sessions
- 7 country rooms
- 4 study visits and 14 Expo Booths

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Visitors by Country

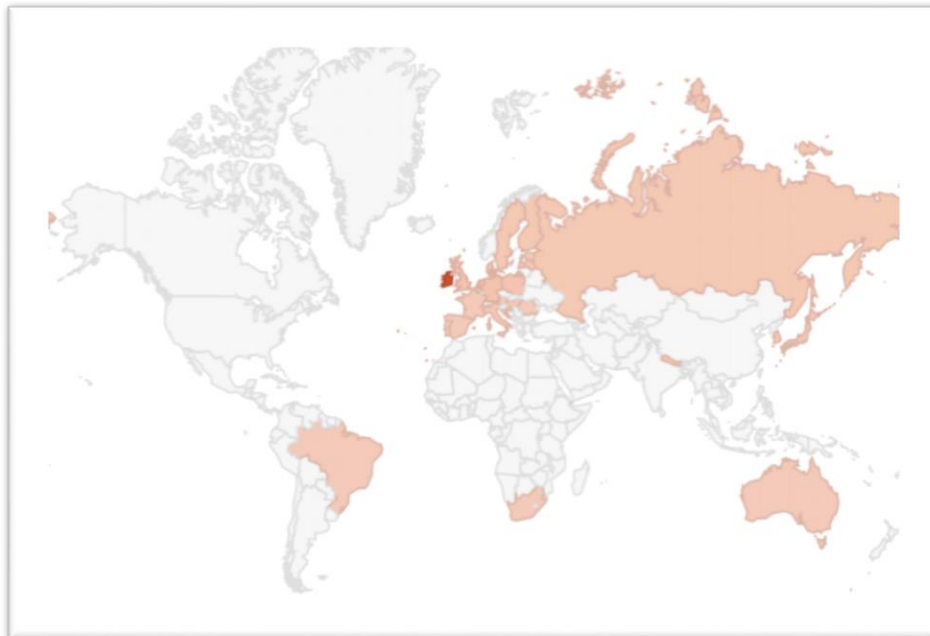


Figure 1: Map showing location of participants the Baltic Circular Procurement Congress

The Baltic Circular Procurement Congress attracted participants from 14 countries. Two-thirds of participants were located in the Baltic region countries. Countries represented by a partner in the Circular PP project had the highest concentrations of participants, as follows: Poland (52 participants), Denmark (29), Latvia (28), Sweden (26), Netherlands (23), Russia (12), and Finland (10). Visitors from other Baltic countries also participated – including Germany (9), Lithuania (5) and Estonia (1) – while a further 107 participants were located outside the Baltic area, including other European countries (Spain, Portugal, Italy, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Austria, Hungary, Romania and Croatia) as well as other countries including Brazil, South Africa, Australia, Nepal, South Korea and Japan.

Pre-conference Videos

In the run-up to the Congress, three videos were prepared to help prepare delegates to actively participate in the online HopIn Platform.

- [Welcome from the Co-Chairs](#)
- [Introduction to HopIn](#)
- [Choosing your workshop: Introduction from workshop leaders](#)

Congress Main Stage

The proceedings of the “main stage” of the online Congress was facilitated by co-chairs:

- Agnieszka Sznyk, President of the Board, INNOWO

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- Joan Prummel, International Advisor Circular Economy, Rijkswaterstaat.

Day 1

- Current state and pathways forward for the circular economy and procurement - Joan Prummel, International Advisor Circular Economy, Rijkswaterstaat.
- Keynote Address to Congress - Walter Stahel, Founder and Director at the Product- Life Institute.
- CPP Project Overview - Emile Bruls, Rijkswaterstaat. Project overview video available here.
- Main findings and lessons from Aalborg pilot - Birgitte Krebs Schleemann Environment and Energy Office of the City of Aalborg.
- Main lessons from the research on the CircularPP project: state of the art on circular procurement, circular business models and alternative business models - Alberto Huerta Morales, Aalborg University

Day 2

- Message to the Congress from Emmanuelle Maire, Head of Unit, DG Environment, European Commission
- Introduction from Interreg Baltic Sea Region from Sebastian Hentsch, Interreg BSR Secretariat
- Circular Procurement in Malmö: Non-new furniture and related services - Emma Börjesson, Environmental Department of City of Malmö.
- Circular Procurement in Practice - circular catering services for the Plavinu Gymnasium - Dr Jana Simanovska, project expert, Latvian Environmental Investment Fund.

Workshops

- **Workshop 1: ICLEI: [Circular procurement for beginners](#)** by Ashleigh McLennan (Sustainable Economy and Procurement Officer at ICLEI);
- **Workshop 2: [Intel on Circular Economy as a Way to Reignite the Post- Covid-19 Economy](#)**, Kaspar Nielsen (Cluster Excellence);
- **Workshop 3: [EcoDesign and procurement](#)** by Conrad Dorer (German Environment Agency);
- **Workshop 4: [Pilot study on school catering within StratKit project](#)** - prof. Ewa Rembiałkowska, Doc. Renata Kazimierczak, mgr Rita Góralaska- Walczak (Warsaw University of Life Sciences), mgr Piotr Masłowski (Deputy Mayor of the City of Rybnik);
- **Workshop 5: [Incorporating circular economy principles into IT procurement](#)**, Dmytro Kapatia, Stefan Carlberg (TCO Development);
- **Workshop 6: State of the art of public procurement policy and practices ([Day 1](#) and [Day 2](#))**, Alberto Huerta Morales (Aalborg University) and Hanna Salmenperä & Katrina Alhola (SYKE).
- **Workshop 7: [Supporting circular procurement for construction, furniture and ICTs and Circular Flanders](#)** (ProCirc and LCA4Regions), Philippe Micheaux Naudet (ACR+), Melody Van den Acker (Circular Flanders)
- **Workshop 8: [Danish Effort for green procurement](#)**, Rune Buchdal Nielsen (Danish Ministry of Environment and Food)

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- **Workshop 9: [Presentation of the One Planet SPP programme](#)**, Mervyn Jones (UN One Planet Network, Director, Sustainable Global Resources)
- **Workshop 10: [The EU and Danish Ecolabels of environmental excellence and their importance in the circular economy](#)** by Rikke Dreyer (Chief Consultant at Ecolabel Denmark)

Country Rooms & Panel Session

Seven 'Country rooms' were provided had a space in which they could speak to others in their own language. All country rooms prepared questions for the final plenary panel discussion.

Country Rooms were provided for the Baltic countries of Poland, Latvia, Finland, Russia, Sweden, and Denmark. These countries could all be moderated by members of the Circular PP consortium. A room for the "Rest of the world" was also provided and moderated by ICLEI.

Questions from Latvia

1. What was the main driver for procurers to implement CPP? Because we quite often hear reasons why we/they as procurers can't implement it.
2. Question form Central Monitoring Bureau - how we can support procurers?
3. During market consultations and meet the buyer events, how far you can go with consultations without creating restrictions for competition?

Questions from Sweden

1. How do we get more procurers to demand circular products?
2. How do we market CP to organisations?
3. How can we choose circular suppliers when they are the only ones in the market?

Questions from Denmark

1. How do we set the right level of circularity in tenders?
2. How do we make sure that local SMEs can bid on circular tenders?

Questions from Finland

1. How could public procurers utilize modern technology in their procurement process? (e.g., in market platform, in impact assessment etc.) What kinds of experiences and examples do panellists have on this?
2. How do panellists see the possibilities to measure SPP/CPP (would it be possible to measure real impacts instead of number of green criteria in calls for tender)?
3. What are the main obstacles for CPP from the panellists' point of view?

Questions from Poland

1. What kind of economic incentives should be offered to circular companies?
2. How should law be changed in order to promote green public procurement?
3. What kind of criteria should be included to make public procurement more circular?

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4. How could the army become more circular?

Questions from Russia

1. What are the effectiveness of existing methods and criteria of CPP tenders? How can the effect be calculated and assessed?
2. How will the current pandemic affect the development of Circular Public Procurement (including in low-income countries)? What prerequisites for faster or slower development of CPP do you see (on both business and governmental sides)?
3. How can we influence and shift the consciousness and priorities of public policy makers towards implementation of Circular economy principles? Because of budget deficits and other priority tasks the questions of circularity are not prioritised and not raised.

Questions from rest of the world:

1. How best can we speed up the transition to circular procurement? By focusing on existing businesses, or encouraging innovation?
2. How can we measure circular procurement, in order to demonstrate the transition to business and procurers?
3. How can we manage the change from procurement as a single act, to a process which involves design and use, while meeting users' needs?

Panel session

A plenary panel session, facilitated by Joan Prummel (RWS), discussed the future of circular procurement and answered a selection of questions devised in the country rooms. Panelists included Mervyn Jones (SGR), Emma Börjesson (City of Malmö) and Arne Remmen (University of Aalborg).

Company Visits

- **Accus:** Accus specializes in circular signage for branding, way-finding, and overall visual communication in buildings and facilities. They supply signage as a service, their business model is based on renting as well as selling signage. [More info.](#)
- **Closing the loop:** Achieving sustainability goals with your mobile devices. Contribute to e-waste reduction today by paying Closing the Loop a small fee to collect scrap phones in emerging markets on your behalf. This creates a 'closed loop' solution for devices; for every new device you buy, we collect and responsibly recycle a scrap phone. [More info.](#)
- **Work Ahead:** Work Ahead is mission-driven technology startup that helps enterprises survey anonymously workers in their supply chain, focusing on human rights, decent working conditions, and advancing sustainable development. [More info.](#)
- **Kaffe Bueno:** Kaffe Bueno upcycles Spent Coffee Grounds (SCG, a.k.a coffee "waste") into active and functional ingredients for cosmetics, nutraceuticals and functional foods. [More info.](#)

Expo booths

The Expo Booths were open all through the two days of the Congress for anyone to visit at any point.

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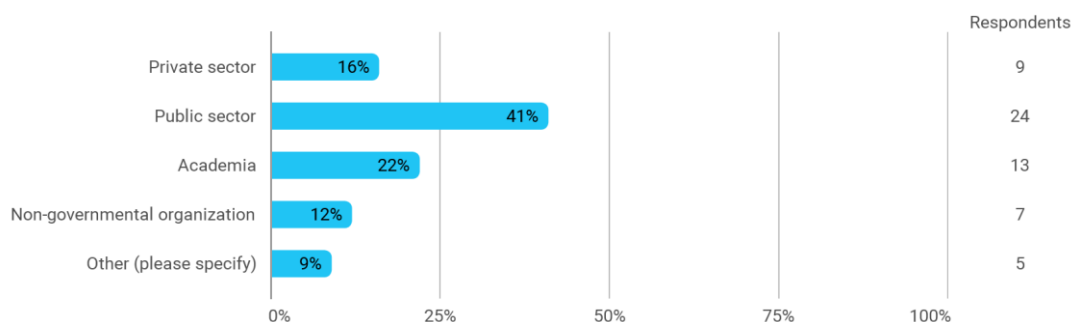
- **RE.NEWED Design, Poland:** Rec.on brand gives recovered auto parts a new chance to shine again. Using a unique upcycling process, they transform used, unwanted parts into new, high-quality, functional designs, adding style and an industrial aesthetic to any interior.
- **Clariter:** Clariter delivers a solution for the global plastic waste epidemic by transforming plastic waste into 3 industrial products such as oils, waxes, and solvents. These are used as fossil-fuel alternative ingredients to make over 1000 clean, plastic-free everyday consumer products such as detergent, degreaser, and even shoe polish!
- **WOFIL, Poland:** WOFIL has been dealing with the application of new technologies in water and wastewater treatment processes for over 20 years.
- **Usitoo, Belgium:** Usitoo provide a functional economy (renting) solution that promotes Refuse and Reuse, while systematically Repairing everything we rent.
- **Venturis HoReCa, Poland:** this initiative develops a food waste management with a spin which adds the aspect of weighing, tracking and mapping food waste.
- **PSML - XBS Group Sp.z o.o.- Poland:** XBS Group, which specializes in POS material logistics, has initiated the EkoPOSytywni campaign whose goal is to encourage a sustainable production of POS materials across the supply chain.
- **Dvelas, Spain:** DVELAS merges functionality and aesthetics to create a product from reused sails that brings together design, comfort, beauty and emotion.
- **Plastic Repair System (PRS), Spain:** repair service of returnable /reusable plastic items (Returnable Transport Packaging)

Feedback and Evaluation

After the Congress, attendees were asked to provide feedback. The survey asked questions on both the content of plenary and workshop sessions, as well as attendees' experience using the online HopIn Platform.

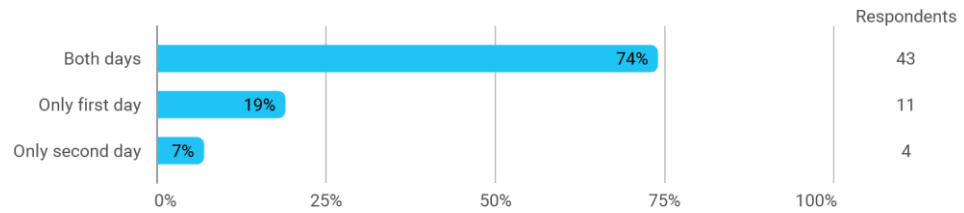
Out of 302 participants, 58 responses were received (19% response rate).

1. Which type of organization are you most closely associated with?

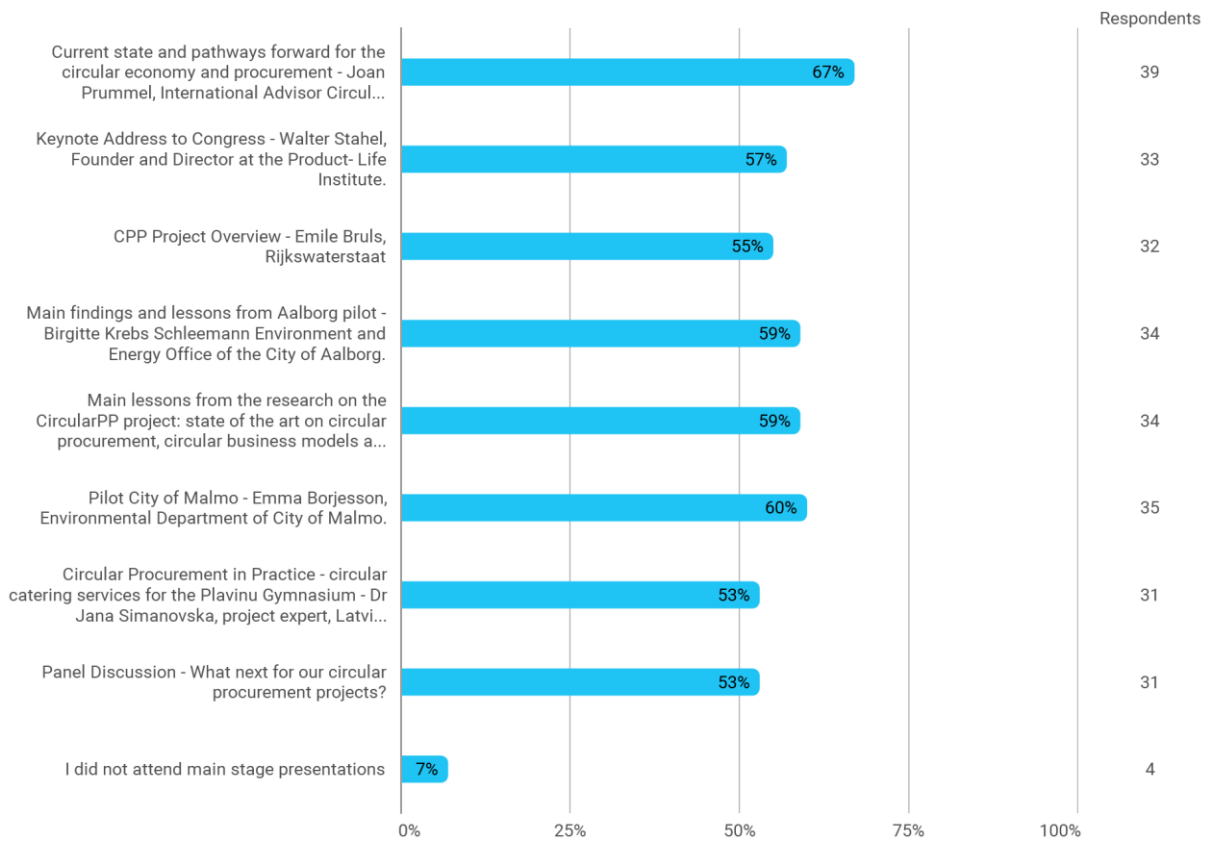


2. How was your attendance to the congress?

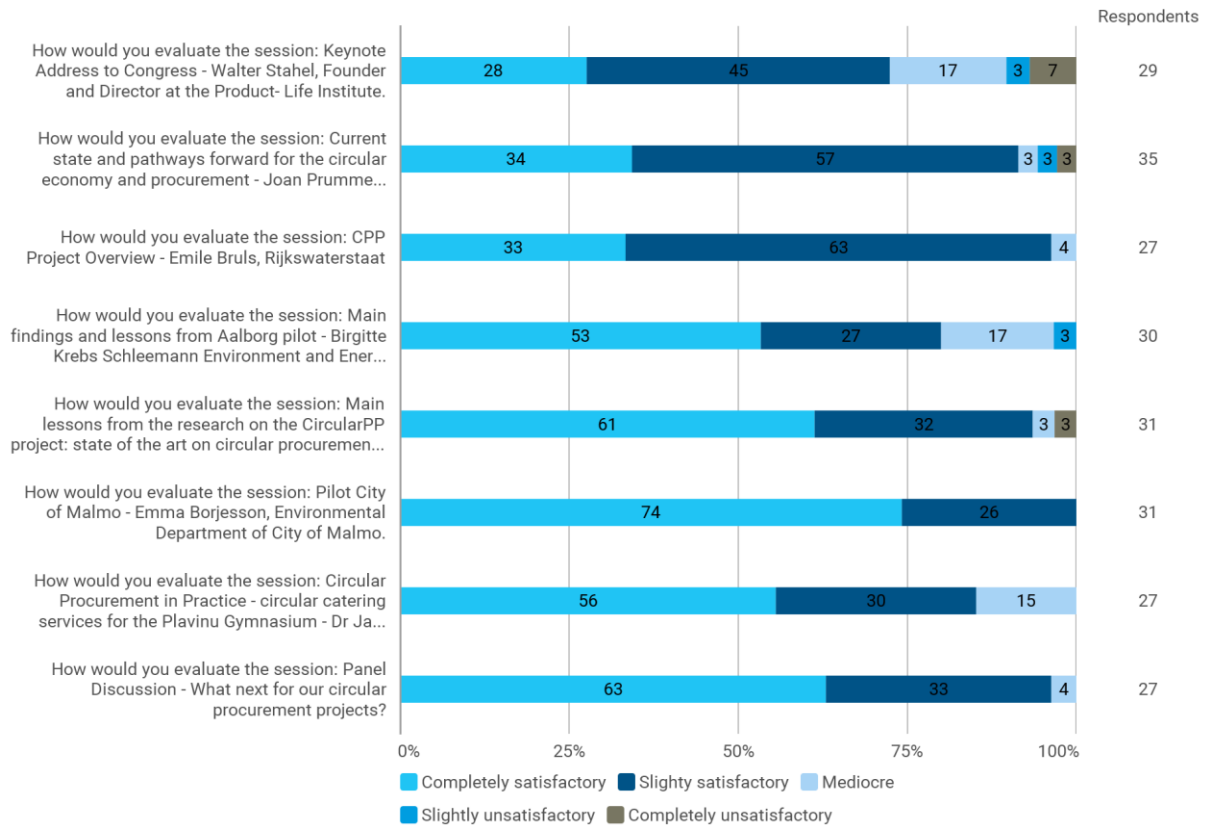
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3. Which main stage presentations did you attend?

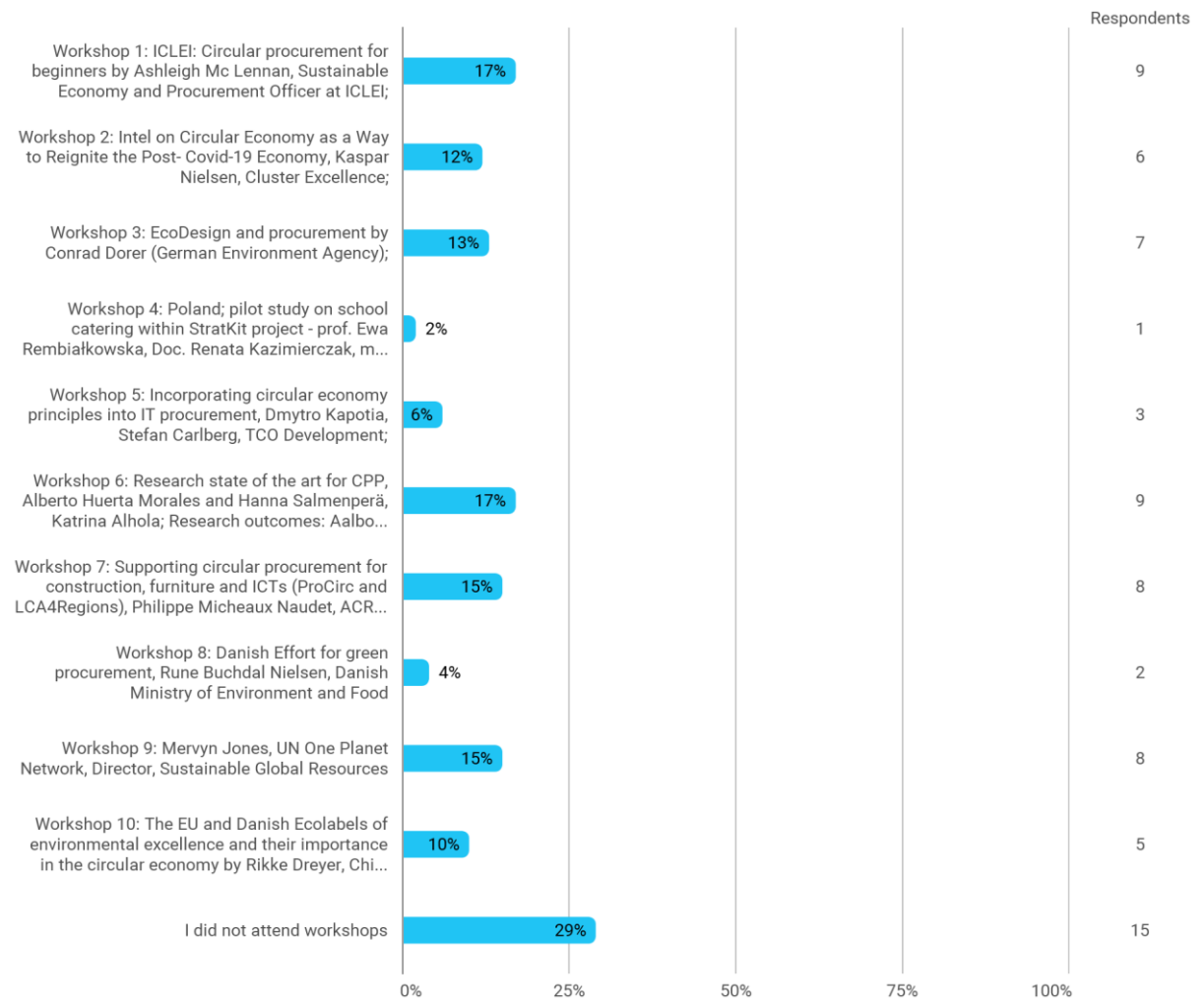


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4. Which workshops did you attend?

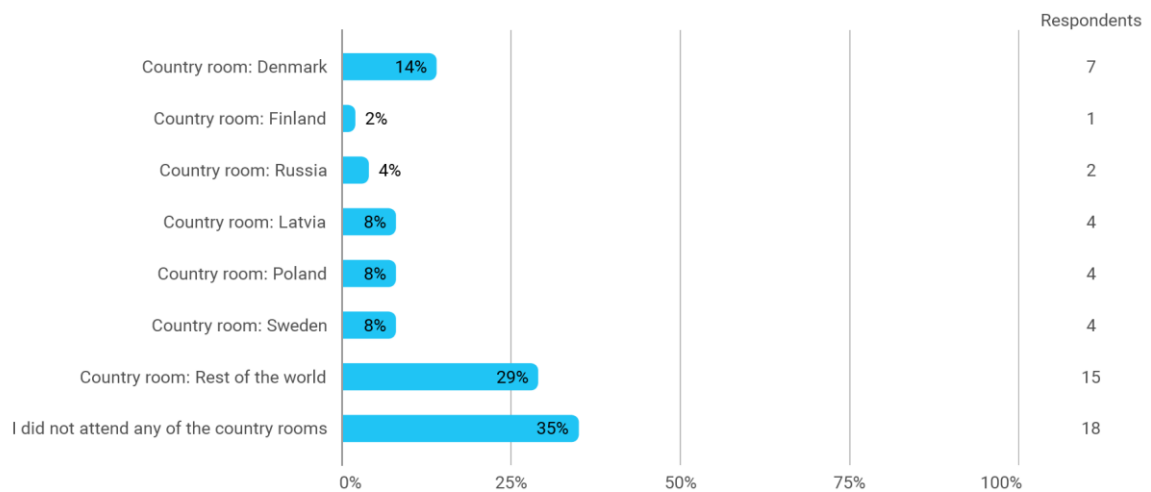
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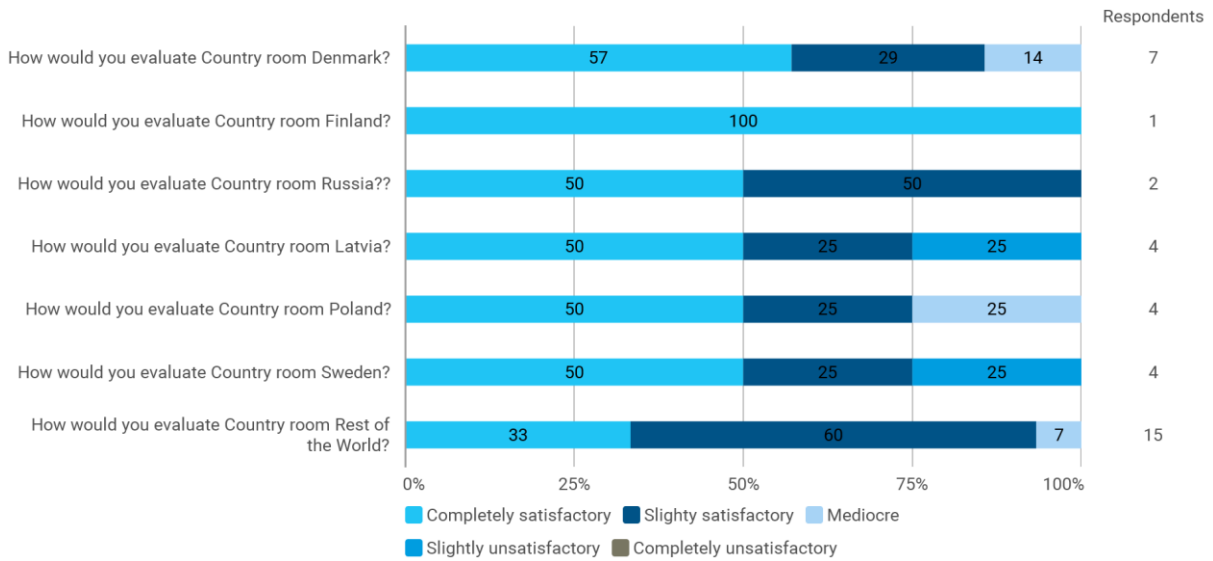
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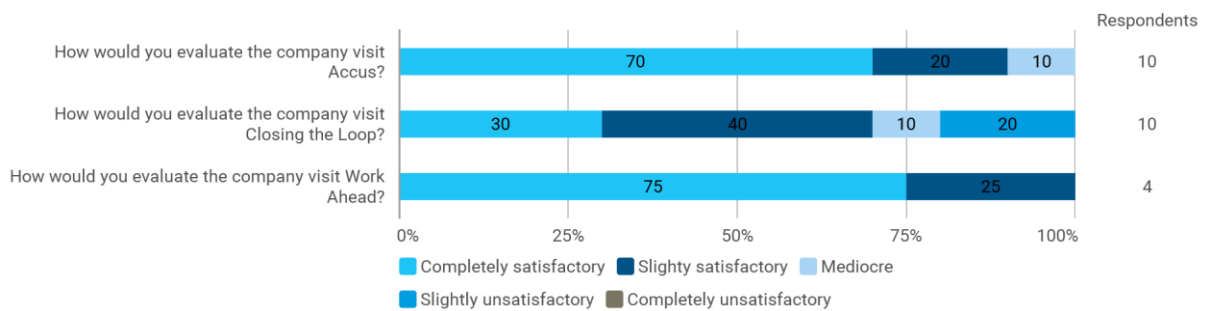
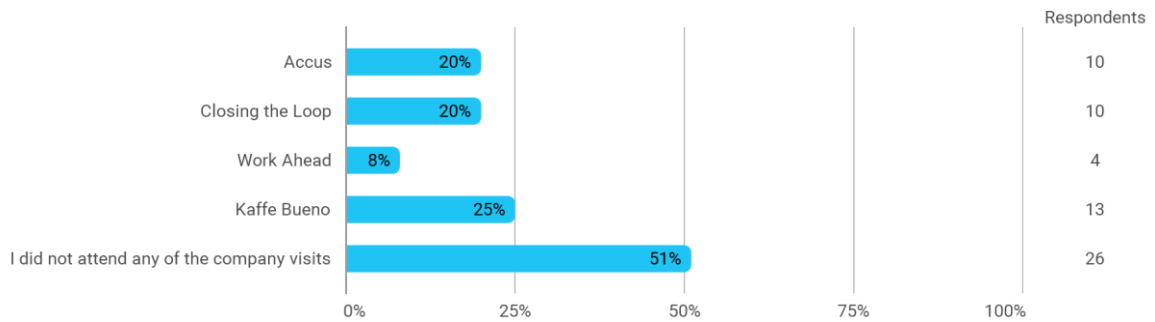
5. Which country room did you attend?



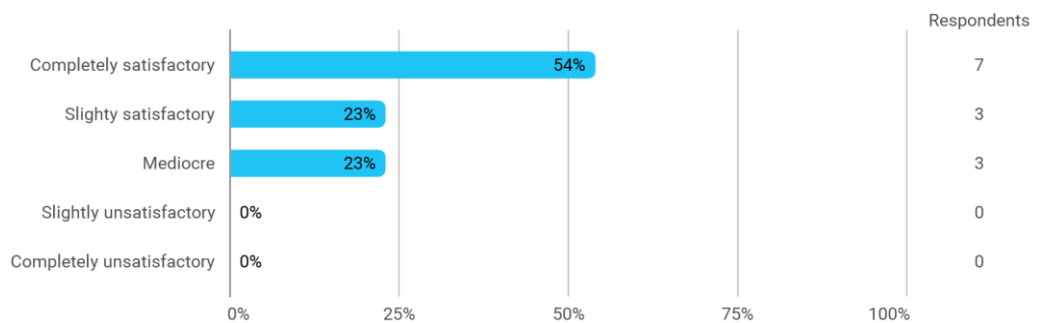
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6. Which company visits did you attend?

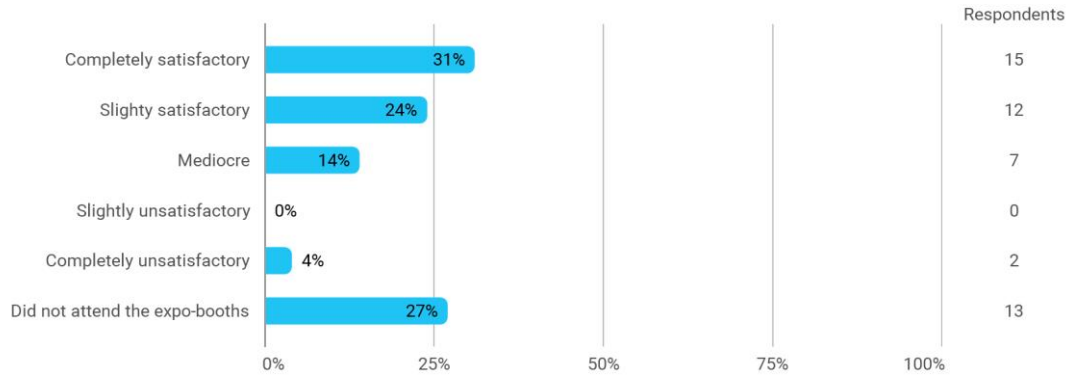


KaffeBueno

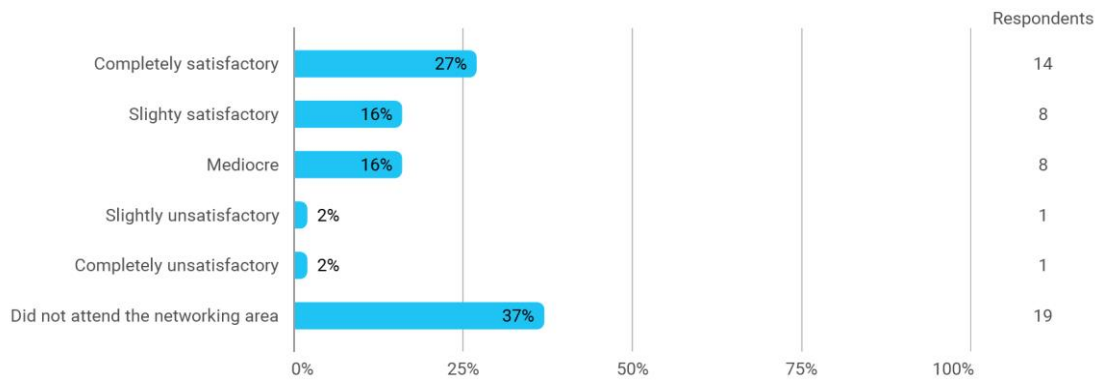


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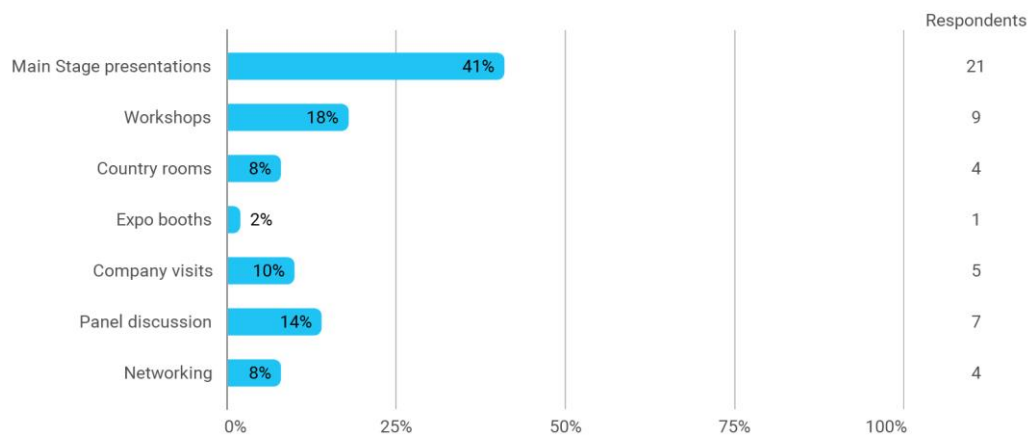
7. How would you value the expo booths?



8. How would you evaluate the networking area?



9. Please select the part of the congress you found to be the most useful?



10. Why did you find this part the most useful?

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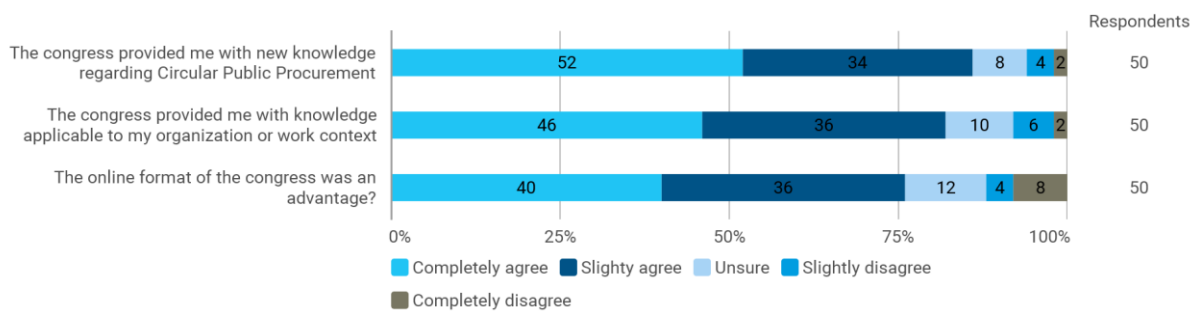
Real cases and experiences were highlighted by several respondents. Not only was this practical, but also inspirational.

Good discussion on procurement issues. The fact that different perspectives were offered, by people from different countries and sectors was also highlighted as a strength.

Smaller groups provided an opportunity to discuss specific questions. The country rooms was one example – they provided people an opportunity to get to know one another, and develop a feeling of being part of the event.

For someone new to the subject, it provided a good overview of the topic.

11. Overall outcome



12. Are there any comments regarding to how to improve the next Circular Procurement Congress?

Some feedback acknowledged the advantages of meeting online, for instance reducing the need to travel. Some respondents stated that they would not have been able to attend if it was not online. More people, however, are looking forward to the next opportunity for a live event, where it's possible to meet people and talk through issues in an informal atmosphere.

At another online event, improvements could include more time for interaction, including longer time for discussion, more workshops, a facilitated 'backcasting' session, using polls and surveys, and having a better idea of the other attendees online.

Other suggested improvements included more company pitches, and more good practice, including examples of contracts and actual criteria.

Some respondents mentioned technical difficulties, but many also acknowledged the novelty of the platform and expressed confidence that this could be improved.