



Berner Fachhochschule
Haute école spécialisée bernoise
Bern University of Applied Sciences



Swiss Open Cultural Data Hackathon 2016 at the Basel University Library, image: M. Schwendener, CC BY-SA (Wikimedia Commons)

Swiss Open Cultural Data Hackathon 2016 Results of the Participants' Survey

Beat Estermann, 14 January 2017

► Bern University of Applied Sciences | E-Government Institute || OpenGLAM CH

Response Rates

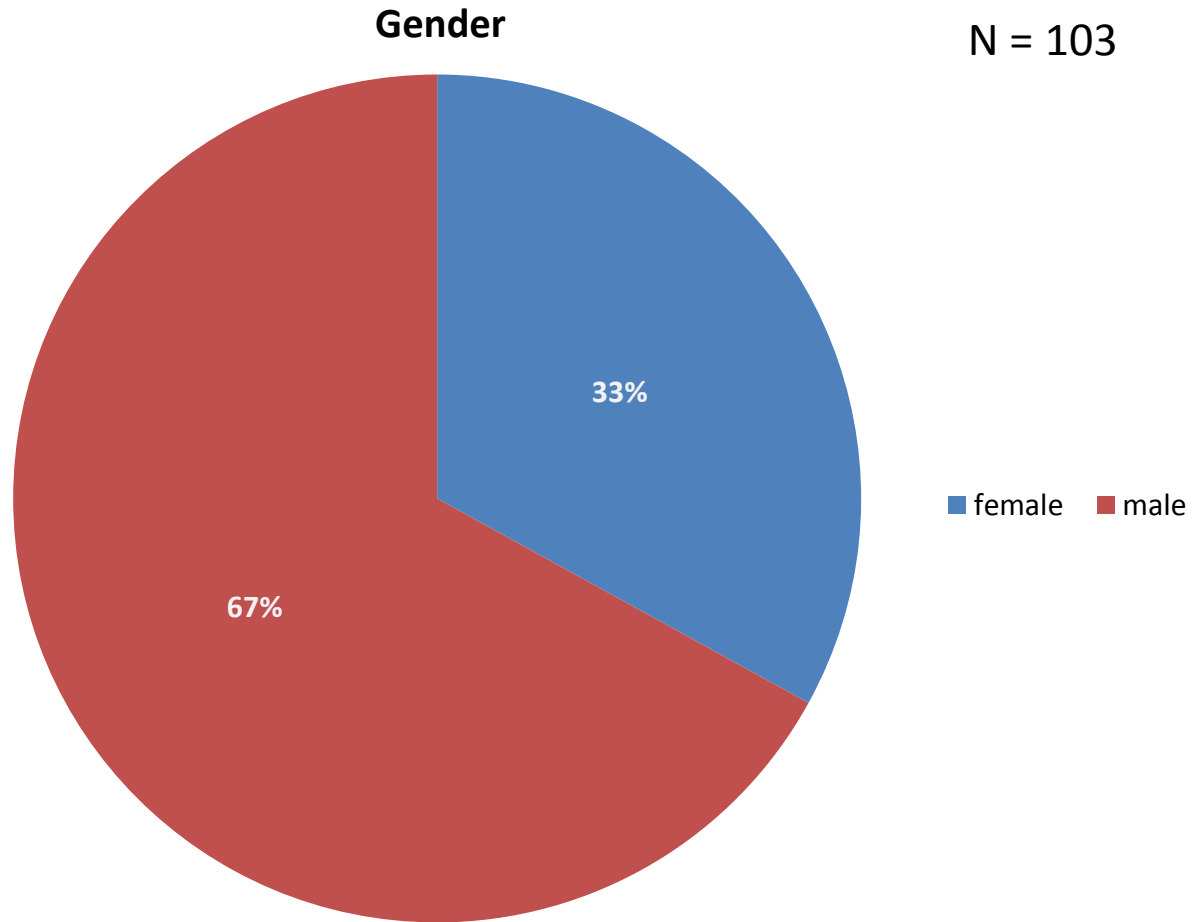
	Hackathon Participants	Survey Sample	Response Rate
N	103	51	50%
Gender			
male	69	34	49%
female	34	17	50%

Remarks

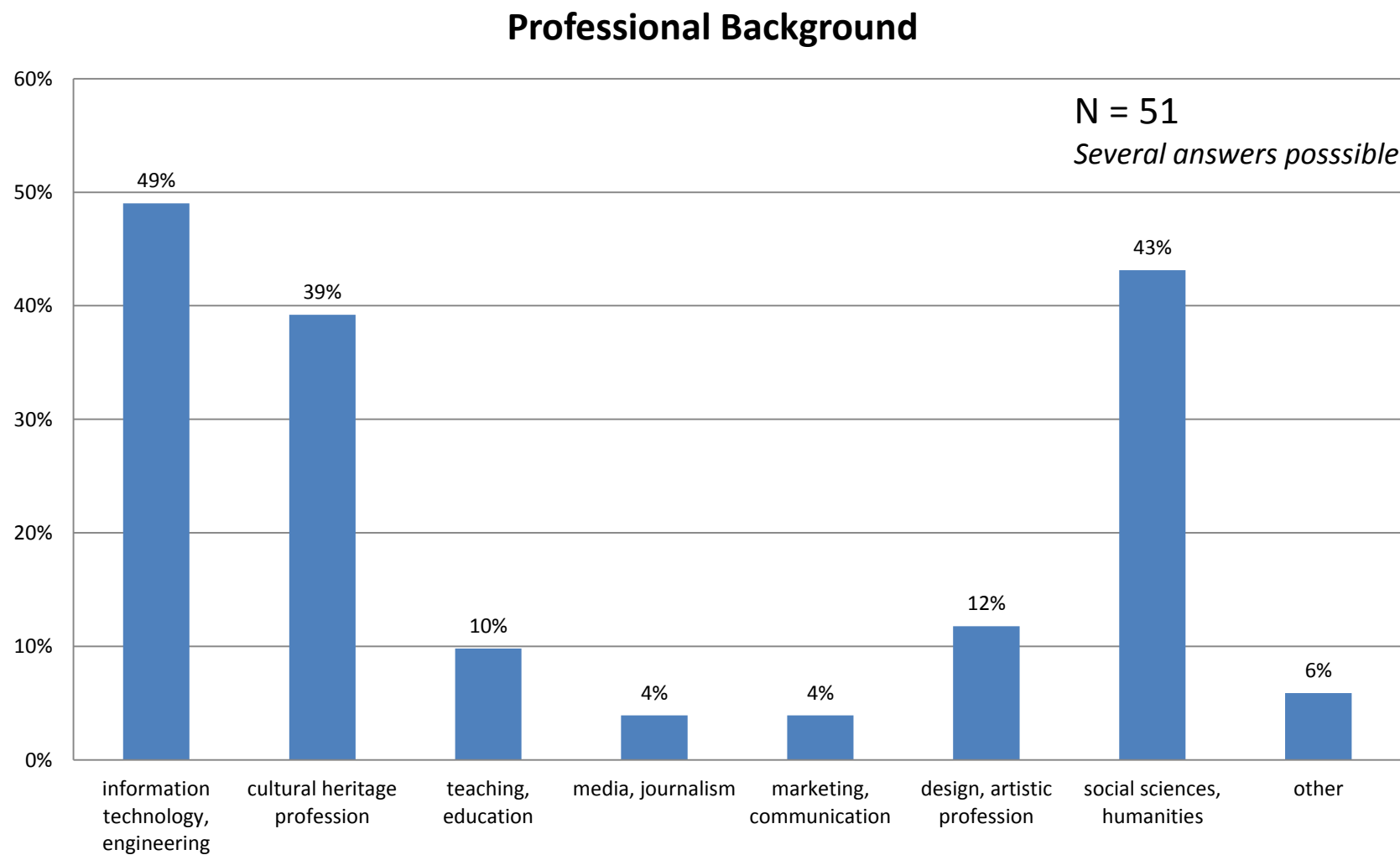
- ▶ The data was collected by means of an online survey between 28 November 2016 and 10 January 2017, i.e. ca. 5 months after the event; one invitation mail and two reminders were sent out.
- ▶ The response rate of 50% is rather good for this kind of survey (slightly better than the previous year).

Composition of the Participants

Gender Distribution (based on registration data)



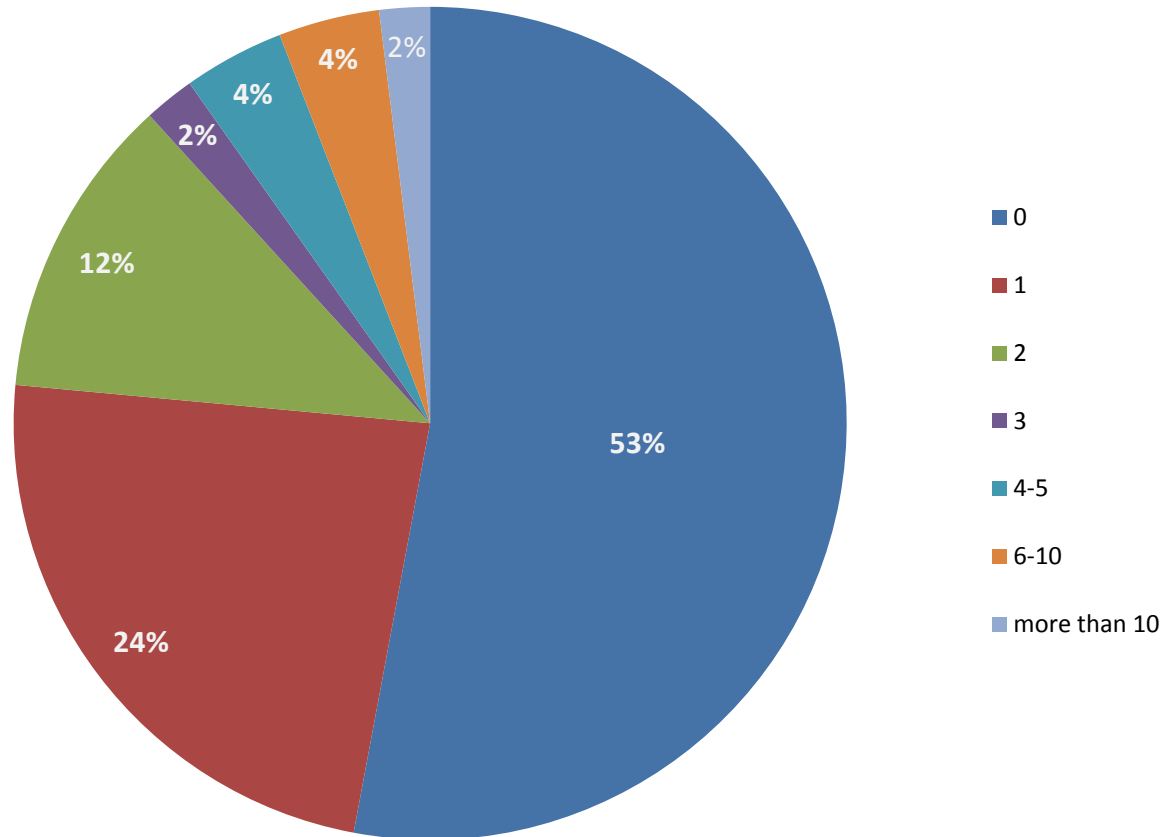
Participants' Professional Background



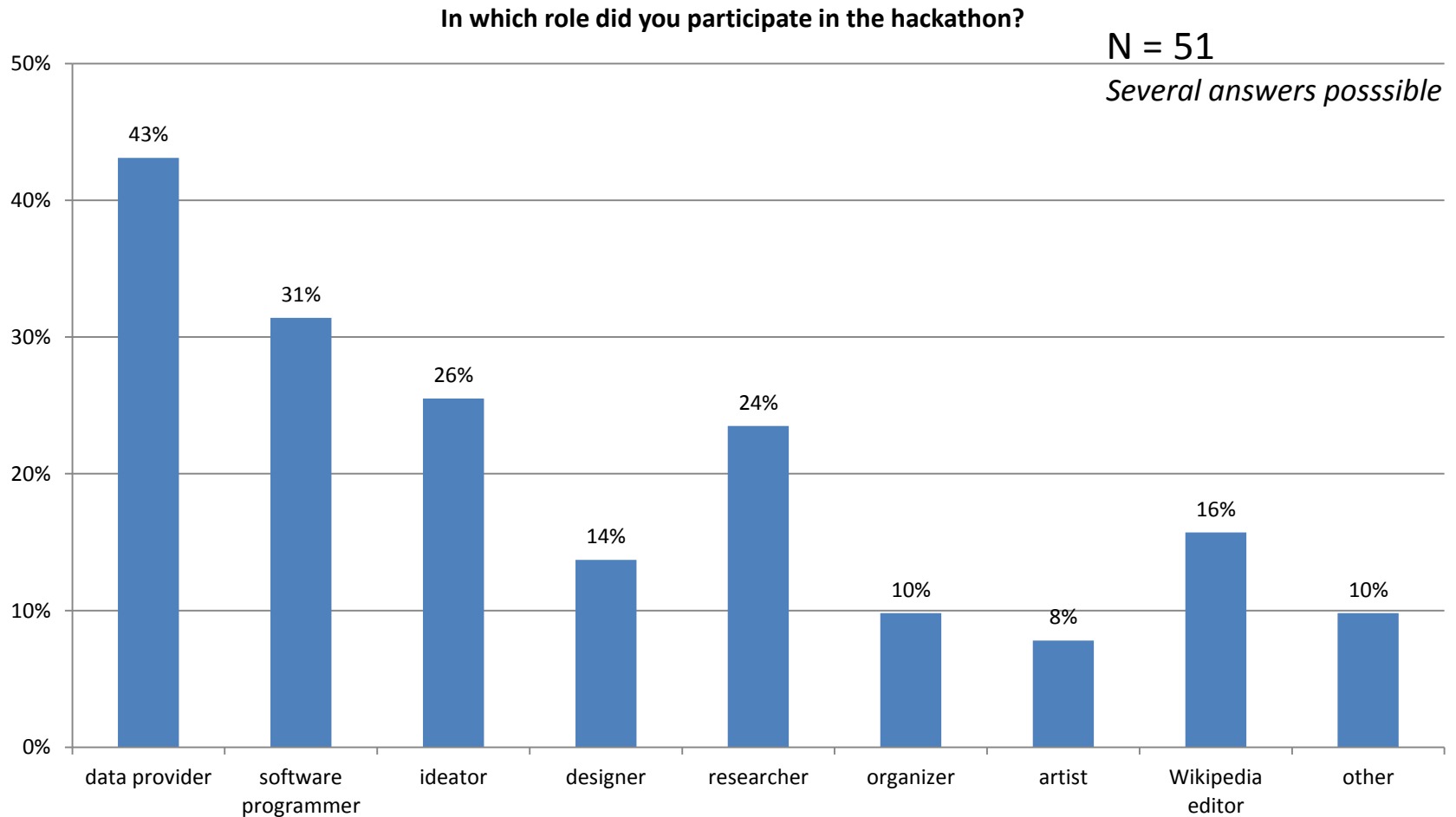
Participants' Previous Hackathon Experience

How many other hackathons had you attended before?

N = 51



Participants' Role(s) During the Hackathon



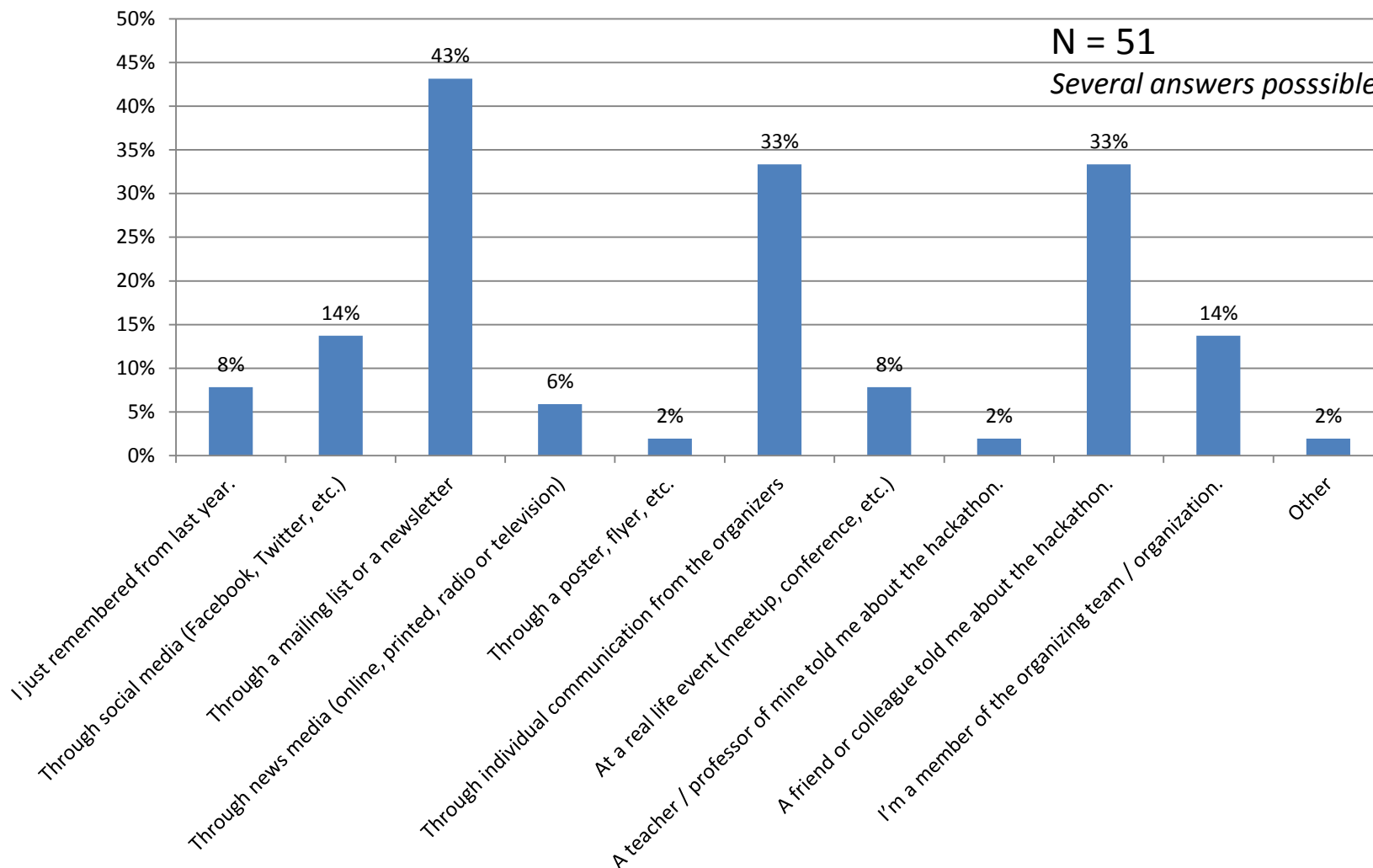
Remarks / Insights

- ▶ **Women were under-represented** at the hackathon, but with 33% their ratio was significantly higher than in the previous year (2015: 19%).
- ▶ The hackathon **largely attracted new hackathon-goers** (53%); this number is slightly down from the previous year (2015: 61%). At the difference from the previous year, the ratio of new hackathon-goers did not vary significantly across different types of participants.
- ▶ **Data providers** (43%) and **software programmers** (31%) made up the largest participant groups, followed by **ideators** (26%) and **researchers** (24%). Compared to the previous year, the ratio of data providers slightly increased, while the ratio of software programmers slightly decreased (in 2015 they were both at 35%).
- ▶ Roughly half of the participants had an **IT or engineering background**. The other two professional groups that were most strongly represented were **cultural heritage professionals** and people with a **background in the social sciences or in the humanities** (approx. 40% each).

Communication Channels

How Participants Learned About the Hackathon

How did you learn about the hackathon?



Remarks / Insights

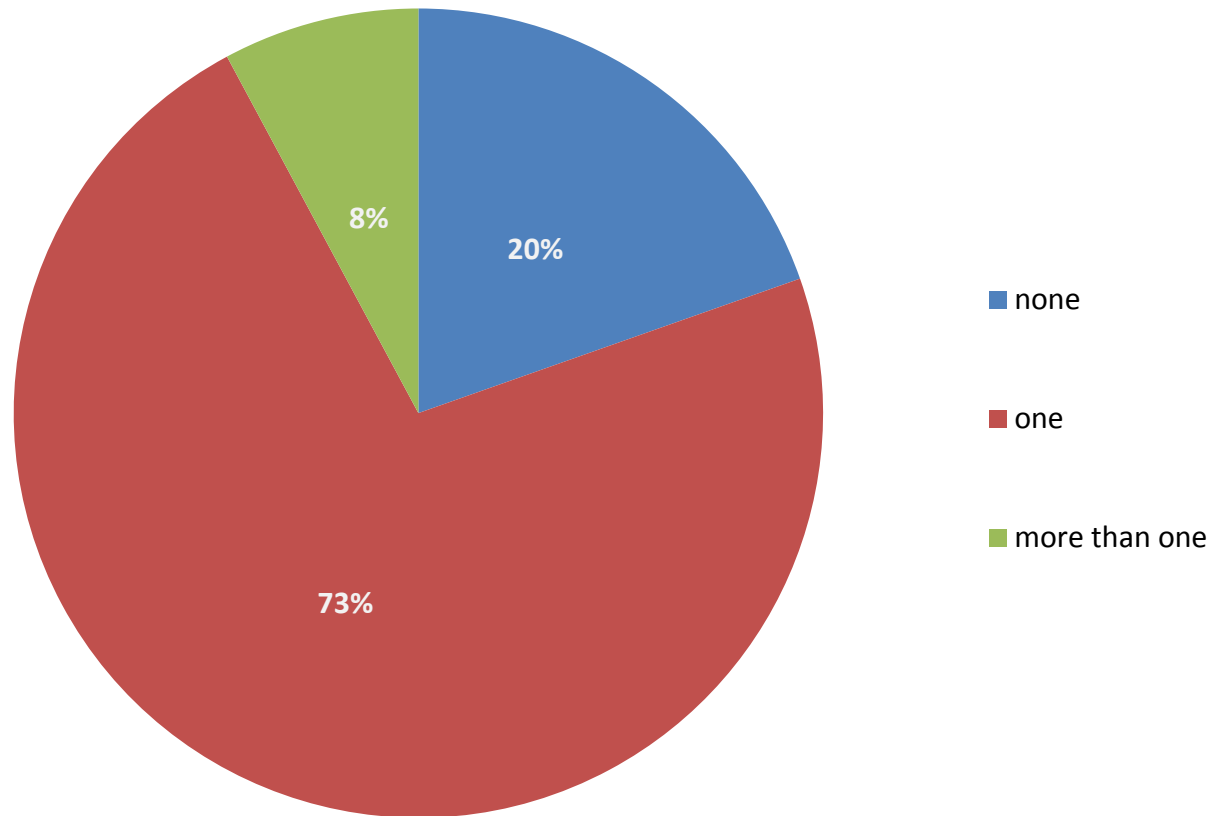
- ▶ The communication channels that worked best to attract participants were mailing lists / newsletters (43%) as well as word of mouth, either directly from the members of the organizing team (33%) or through friends or colleagues (33%).

Participants' Activity During and After the Hackathon

Involvement in Hackathon Projects

How many projects did you work on during the hackathon?

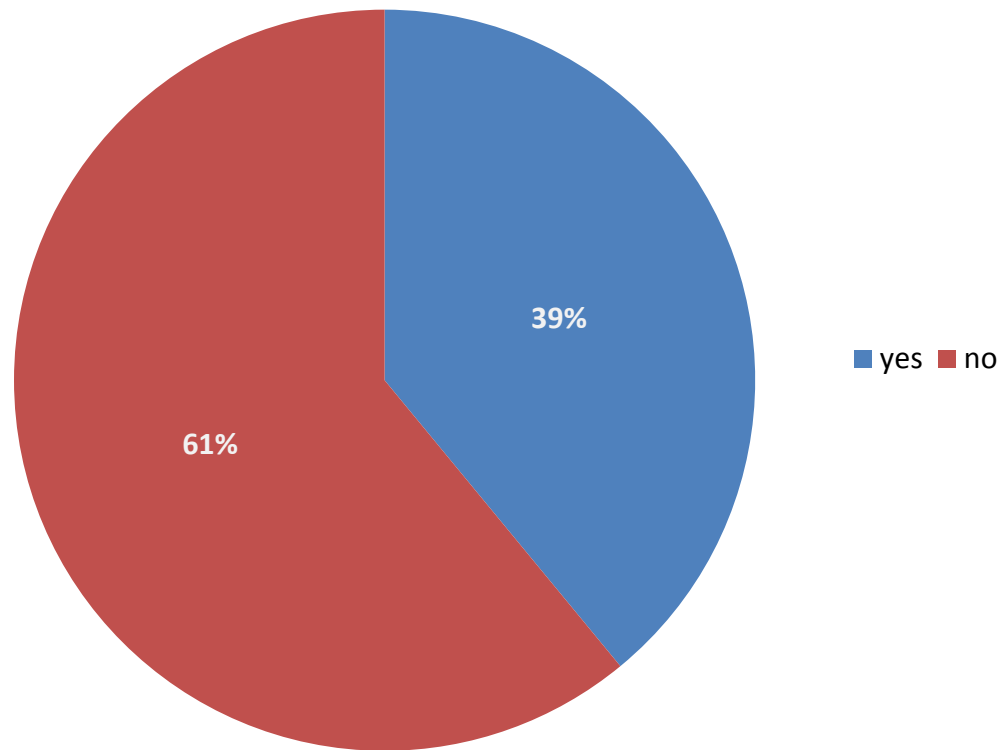
N = 51



Activity around Hackathon Projects after the Event

Have you further pursued the project(s) you worked on during the hackathon?

N = 41

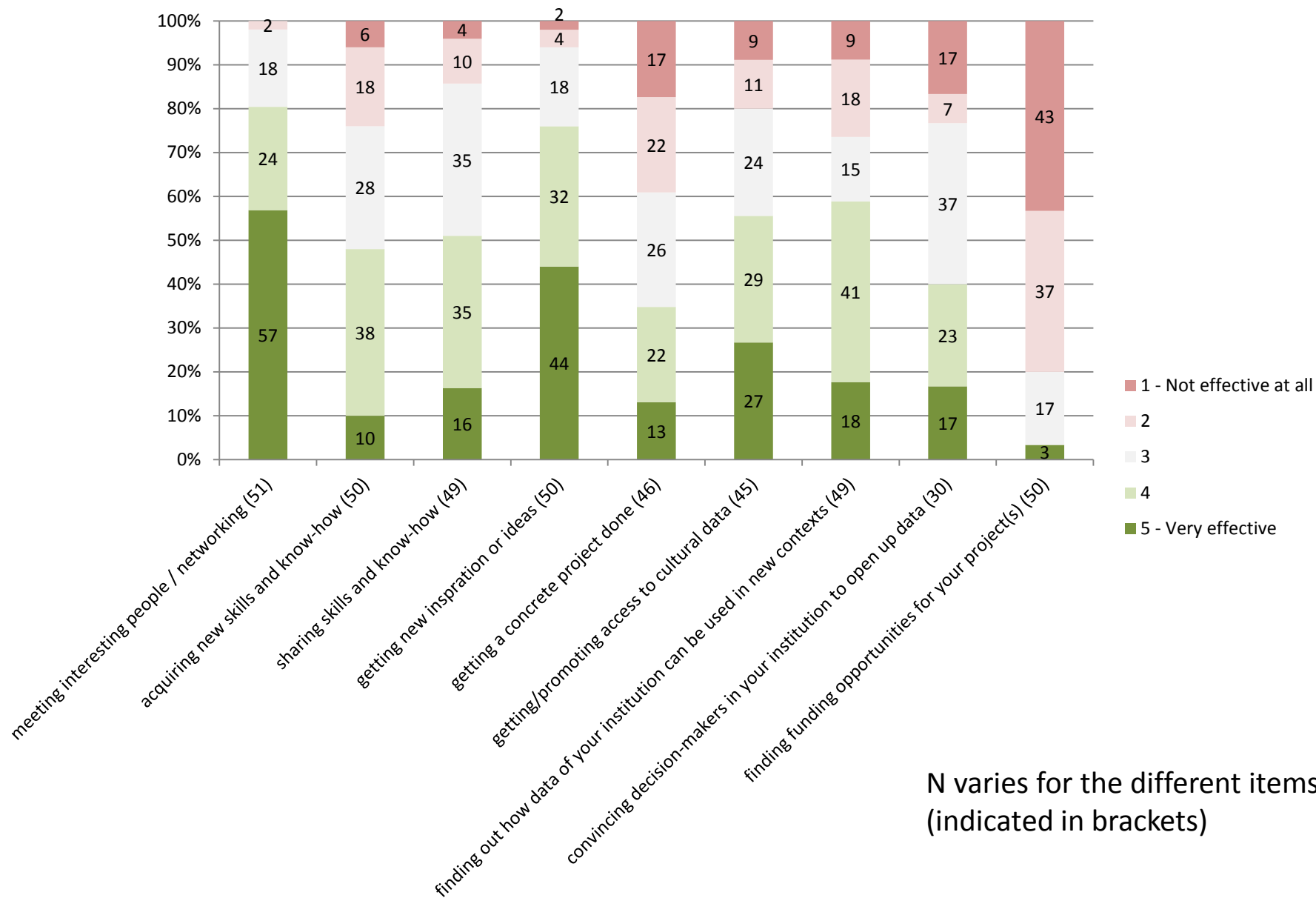


Remarks / Insights

- ▶ **80% of hackathon participants took an active part** in at least one of the approx. 20 hackathon projects. Some of the remaining 20% acted as organizers or participated as “observers” or as data providers.
- ▶ **Approx. 40% of the participants** who had taken an active part in at least one of the hackathon projects **further pursued their project(s)** after the event. This number is a bit lower than in the previous year (2015: 50), but the time lag between the event and the survey was also shorter (5 months compared to 9 months).
- ▶ About 40% those who haven't further pursued their project(s) haven't done so due to a **lack of time**.

Effectiveness of the Hackathon

Effectiveness of the Hackathon



Strategies to Improve the Sustainability of the Hackathon's Impact

Measure	Score (scale: 1-5)
systematically involve students (e.g. by integrating hackathon-related activities into their curriculum)	4.05
offer coaching to assist hackathon teams to further pursue their project	3.94
offer hands-on workshops and introductory courses before the hackathon	3.88
present the outcome of hackathon projects at conferences and events for a specialized audience	3.77
present the outcome of hackathon projects at events for a broader public	3.71
improve the media coverage of the hackathon and the resulting projects	3.51
improve the quality and/or completeness of open datasets	3.50
offer hands-on workshops and introductory courses during the hackathon	3.43
create hackathon teams in advance of the event	3.26
increase the number of open datasets	3.25
hold smaller-scale hackdays several weeks before the larger hackathon	3.17
narrow down the thematic scope of the hackathon by formulating specific goals	3.02
apply structured creativity methods	2.93
hold a competition among hackathon teams	2.43
limit the number of datasets to be used during the hackathon	2.40

Remarks / Insights

- ▶ The hackathon has been **most effective** in terms of “meeting interesting people / networking” (rated positively by 81% of respondents) and “getting new inspiration or ideas” (76%), followed by finding out how data of one's institution can be used in new contexts (59%), getting/promoting access to cultural data (56%), as well as sharing or acquiring skills and know-how (51% and 48% respectively).
- ▶ The hackathon has been **somewhat effective** in terms of convincing decision-makers to make cultural data/content openly available for re-use (41%), and in getting a concrete project done (35%).
- ▶ The hackathon has been **rather ineffective** in terms of finding funding opportunities for hackathon projects (20%), although this number is up by about 10 percentage points compared to the previous year, and there is feedback from some individuals indicating that the hackathon helped them to secure funding.

Note: The latter had not been a goal of the 2015 edition of the hackathon; for the 2016 edition, the aspect of funding /sponsoring of hackathon projects had however been included in the goals.

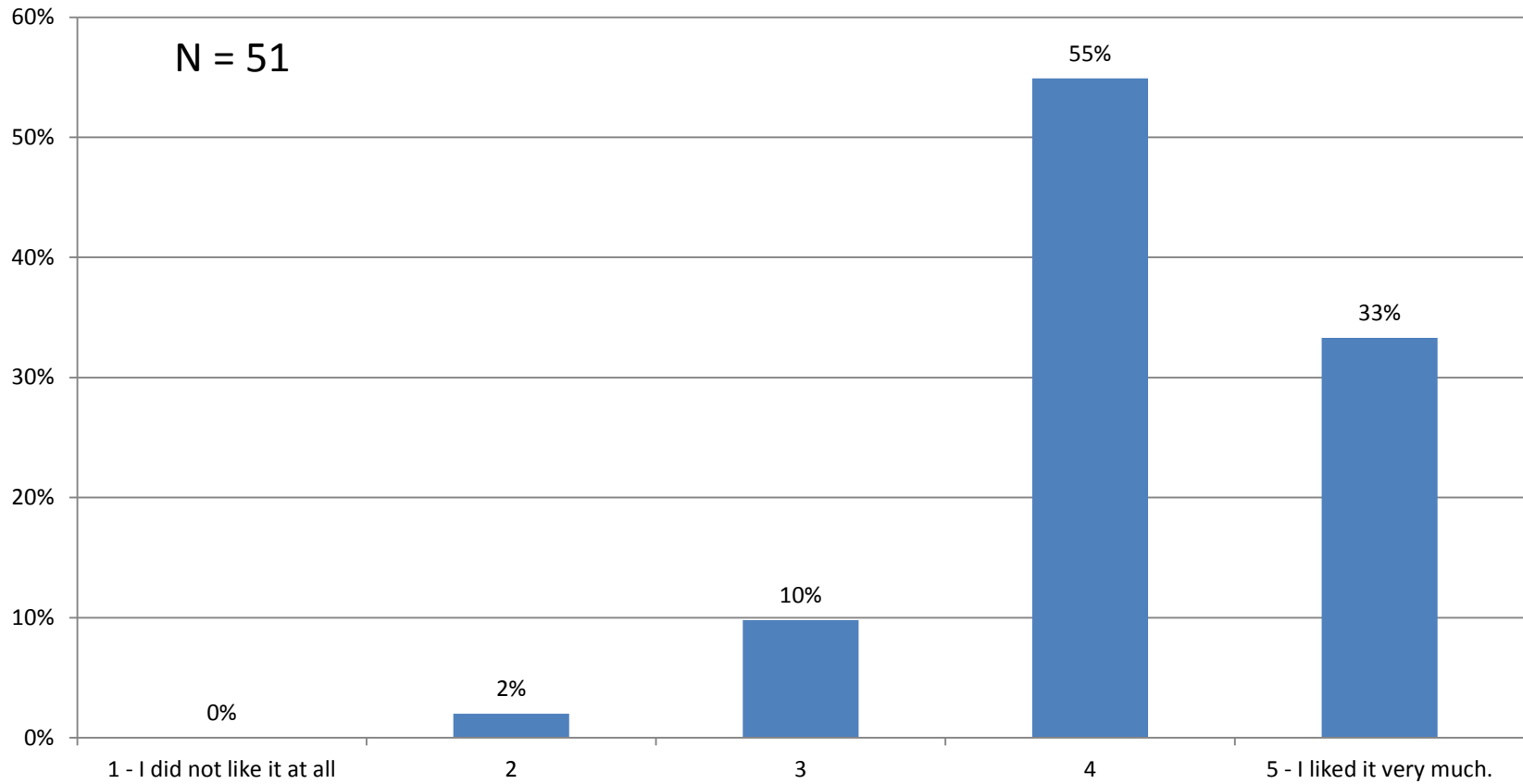
Remarks / Insights (continued)

- ▶ The five top-ranked measures to improve the long-term impact of the hackathon include:
 - ▶ **systematically involving students**
 - ▶ **offering coaching to assist hackathon teams to further pursue their project**
 - ▶ **offering hands-on workshops and introductory courses before the hackathon**
 - ▶ **presenting the outcome of hackathon projects to specialized audiences or to a broader public**

Participants' Satisfaction

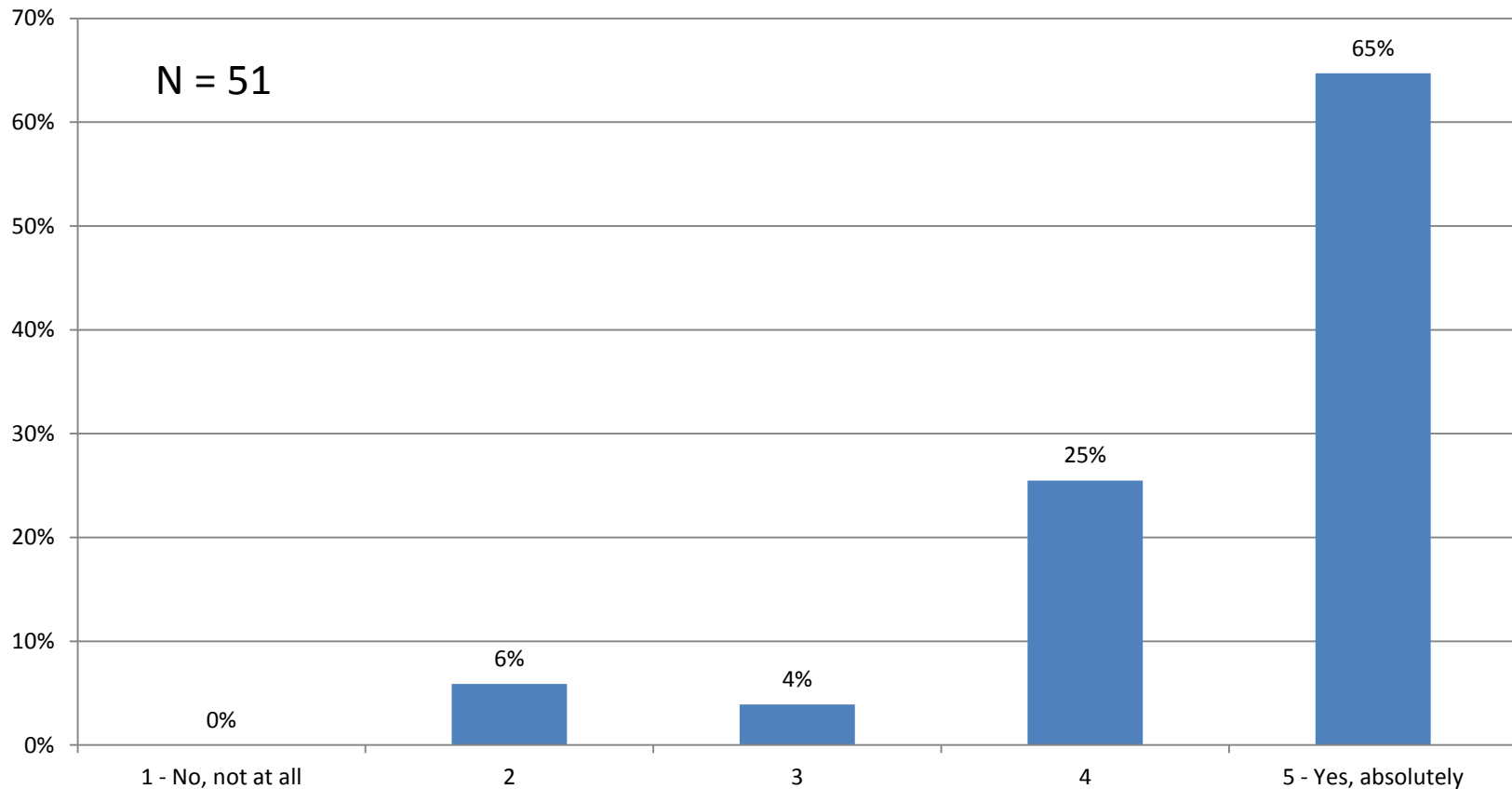
General Satisfaction

How did you like the hackathon in general?



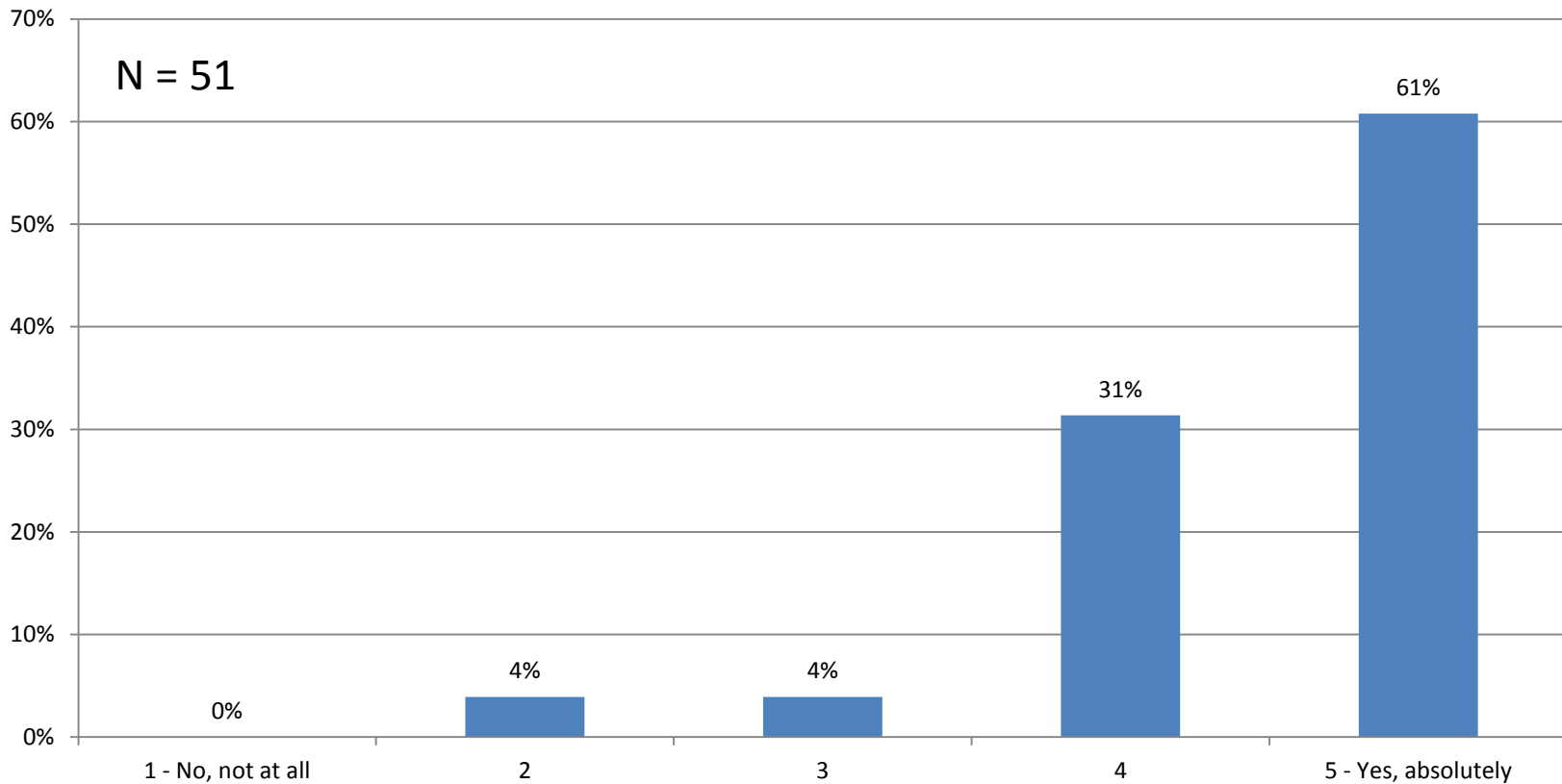
Readiness to Participate in Another Cultural Hackathon

Would you participate in a cultural data hackathon again?



Readiness to Recommend the Hackathon

Would you recommend a friend/peer to participate in the upcoming hackathon?



Conclusions

Conclusions

- ▶ From a participants' perspective, **the hackathon has been a large success**, satisfaction rates ranging from 88% to 92%.
- ▶ The hackathon has again successfully **attracted many participants who hadn't been involved in hackathons before**.
- ▶ The hackathon has been most effective in terms of **networking, spurring and exchanging ideas, promoting access to cultural data, finding out how data can be used in new contexts**, as well as **exchanging skills and know how**.
- ▶ From a sustainability point of view, the survey results paint a mixed picture: **Two fifths of the participants actively involved in at least one of the projects had further pursued their project(s)** 5 months after the event. At the same time, the hackathon hardly improved the participants' chances to get funding for their projects, and about 20% said they didn't further pursue their project due to a lack of time.
- ▶ The most promising measures to improve the hackathon's long-term impact are:
 - systematically involving students;
 - coaching for hackathon teams;
 - workshops and introductory courses in-between hackathons;
 - presentation of hackathon projects at various occasions.