

An european multidisciplinary Industrial symbiosis community

Yearly internal evaluation report – First Grant Period

Introduction

This Yearly Internal Evaluation Report provides a comprehensive overview of the LIAISE COST Action's achievements, challenges, and overall progress during the first grant period. The purpose of this report is to evaluate the effectiveness of the Action activities, assess the alignment with strategic goals, and outline areas for improvement as they prepare for the next second grant, which just started in November 2024.

The first grant period set the foundation for our long-term objectives, emphasizing collaboration across Working Groups, stakeholder engagement, and effective resource allocation. Through structured assessments and feedback from participants, we have identified key successes in fostering interdisciplinary exchange and advancing knowledge dissemination.

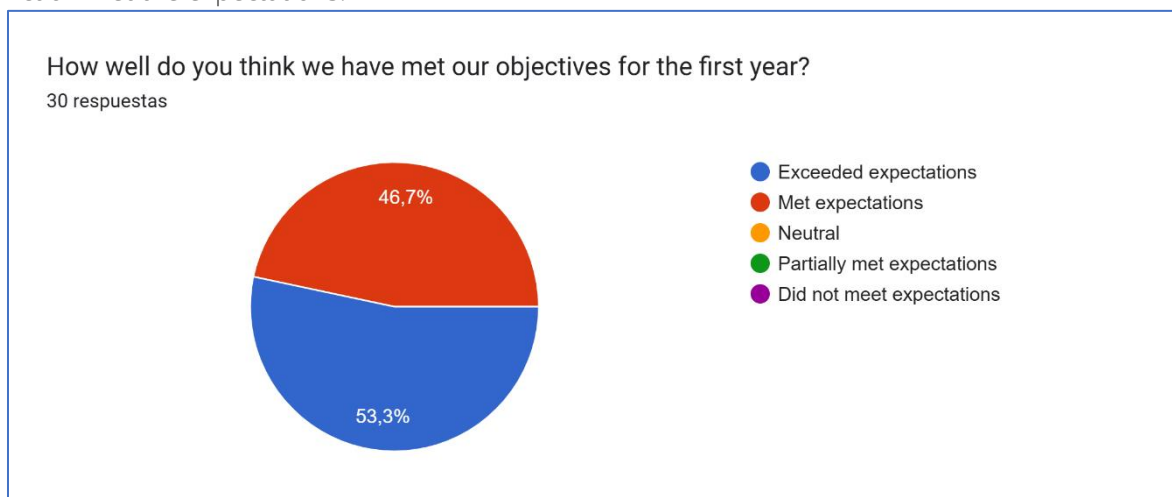
In the following sections of this report, it presents an in-depth analysis of the progress made, as well as recommendations for enhancing future efforts. This report serves as a tool to reinforce accountability, transparency, and strategic planning within our Management Committee and broader network.

This is why two evaluations have been carried out. One to the management committee and one to all members of the COST Action. The results of both are presented below.

Analysis of the results of the Management Committee

In total, 30 answers were achieved from a total of 69 potential respondents.

The first question wanted to ask whether **LIAISE COS Action has fulfilled their objectives** in the first year, and 53.3% answered that the Action exceeded expectations while 46.7% answered that the Action met the expectations.



In terms of the **most significant achievements** of this first year, here are some answers:

- *Meeting excellent people.*
- *A lot of new great colleagues, a lot of new information.*
- *Networking, meeting new people, and working on different activities.*
- *Lots.*
- *Establishing international teams dedicated to work spreading the word about industrial symbiosis.*
- *Excellent planning and initial execution of project activities.*

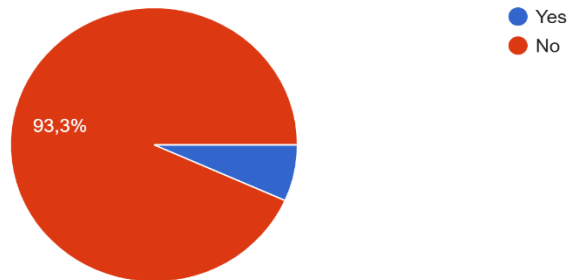
- *Activity organization and responsibilities division.*
- *Very smooth run of an action (compared to other ones where am I involved).*
- *Networking.*
- *State of the art report.*
- *Network of cooperation.*
- *Setting up efficient project management and establishing workflows in the working groups in order to achieve goals.*
- *Identifying IS cases in different countries, with more than 150 cases.*
- *Webinars.*
- *All the opportunities of exchange and interaction among researchers*
- *The engagement of most participants in the activities of the Action and the State-of-the-Art report*
- *creating the working teams*
- *Almost all done, budgeted almost spent a huge achievement for a Cost Action with so many participants! Well done guys*
- *Several interesting workshops and meetings*
- *If for me and in my country individually increase of my network, organization of workshop "Green connection" in Armenia, introduction of the idea to "Industrial Symbiosis" in the country, etc.*
- *The networking, research activities and debates around industrial symbiosis*
- *The greatest achievement is definitely the connection of professionals from all over Europe and beyond, creating a positive community for the exchange of knowledge and skills.*
- *Set up a common, integrated, inter- and multidisciplinary network with the objective of sharing knowledge, experiences, best practices and benchmarks in IS by bringing together participants from several communities, origins and expertise. In addition, an open, inclusive, gender-balanced and societal- driven network will be created.*
- *Completion of reports for WGs and successful distribution of grants*
- *Development of a network of experts on IS, leading to further collaborations.*
- *The extensive and very complete state-of-the-art report generated in a relatively short time. (ii) The active consolidation of the action groups and the variety of activities backed by the action management.*
- *State of the art report in WG1*
- *Great joint work and active engagement of Action members to complete the targeted results.*
- *Dynamic and rhythmic work towards results, without unnecessary stress and holiday/night e-mails (very slowly, but we got there).*
- *New contacts and joint work on deliverables*

The following question was if there is **something to change in the Action** and there are only two positive answers, which have specified the following points:

- *Way to motivate other members of WGs which are not working*
- *We would like to be better informed about opportunities offered by the project. Also, creating opportunities for the network to know each other better and cooperate in future projects.*
- *Better coordination of the individual WGs. I think there should be a common management approach across the main WGs and better communication.*

Would you like to change anything about the Action?

30 respuestas



In terms of **problems or issues encountered** during the first year of the Action, again two person answer positively, making the following comments:

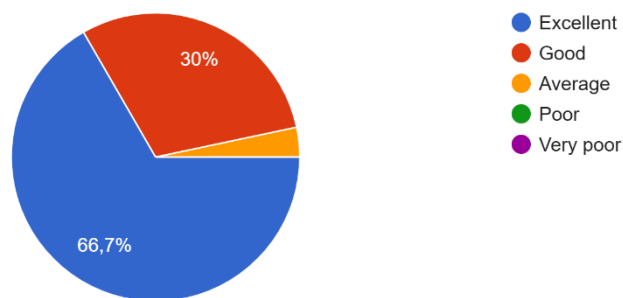
- *Problems in keeping up with all the e-mails and not missing important information*
- *Personal time limitations to be more involved in the project*
- *It was just personal family issues which prevent me to be quite proactive and support more*

The next part of the survey evaluated different aspects of the Action:

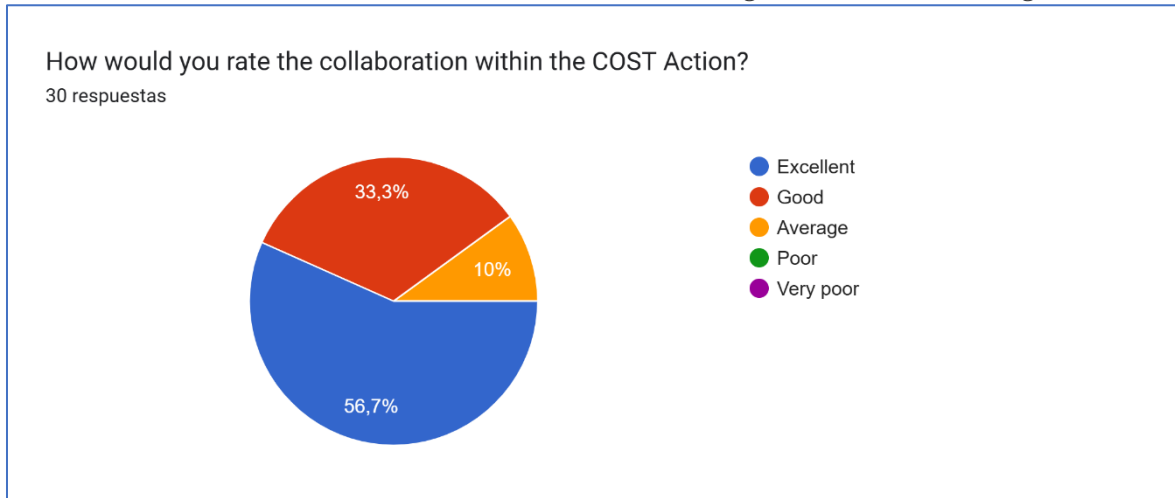
In terms of **effectiveness of communication**, more than 66% of respondents believe it is excellent and 30% scored it as good. One person evaluated it as average.

How would you rate the effectiveness of communication within the COST Action?

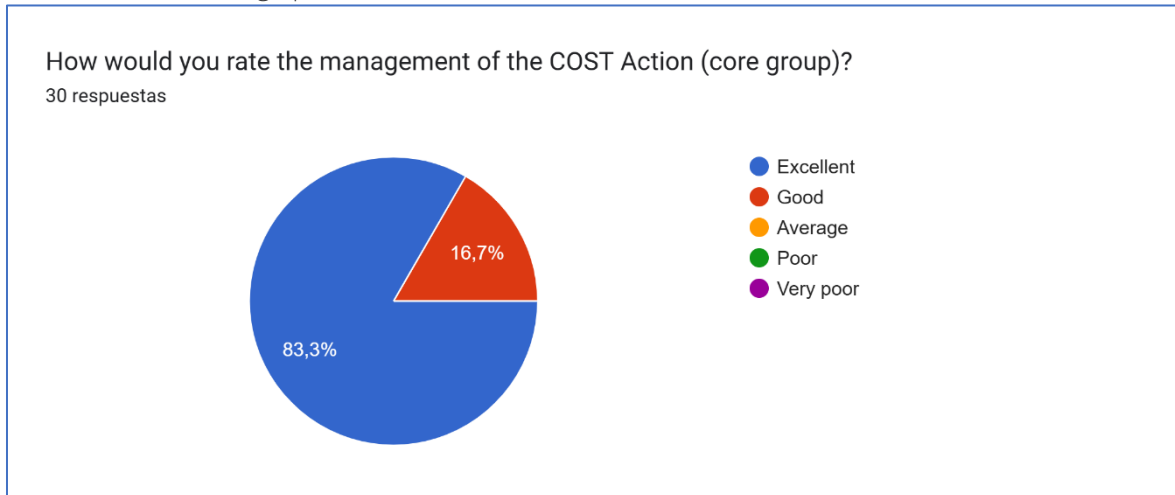
30 respuestas



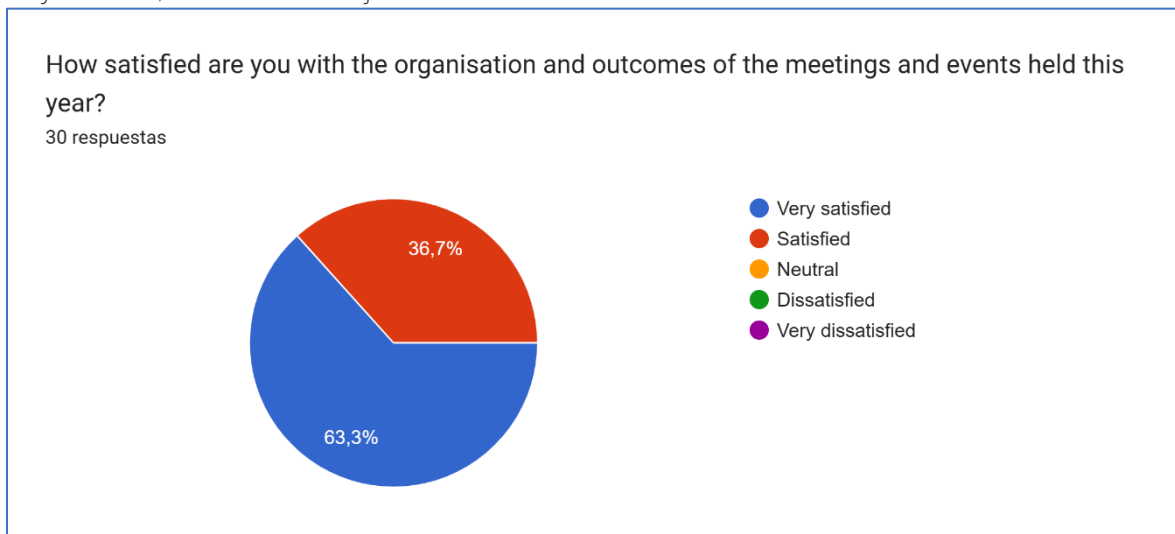
In terms of **collaboration**, 57% evaluate it as excellent, 33% as good and 10% as average.



In terms of the **management of the Core Group**, the percentage of excellent increase up to 83.3% and there is no average punctuation.



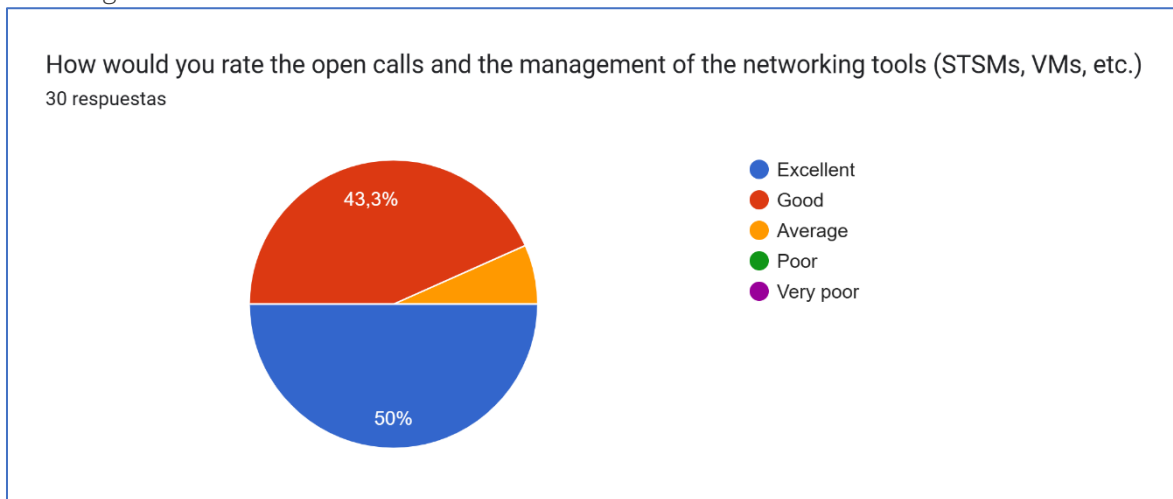
Finally, in terms of the of the **organisation and outcomes meetings and events**, more than 60% is very satisfied, while the rest is just satisfied.



Regarding comments for the future, here we are some:

- *Considering the plan for next year (and future years), just maybe to organize all events in places, which are easily accessible (referring to proposed meeting in Korce, Albania, where the transport might be an issue).*
- *Some WGs work and cooperate better, some do not. In Action, gender equality was taken into account, but it was also necessary to ensure that the number of WG members was evenly represented by country. In some WGs, the majority of members are from one or two countries.*
- *I will soon be the editor of an Elsevier Special Issue on Biomass waste /Bioenergy role in industrial symbiosis. Was wondering if we can pay for a few open access publications from our participants of our Cost action to that special issue . I will be in contact with Almudena as the Elsevier approved my idea.*
- *Keep the level for the future.*

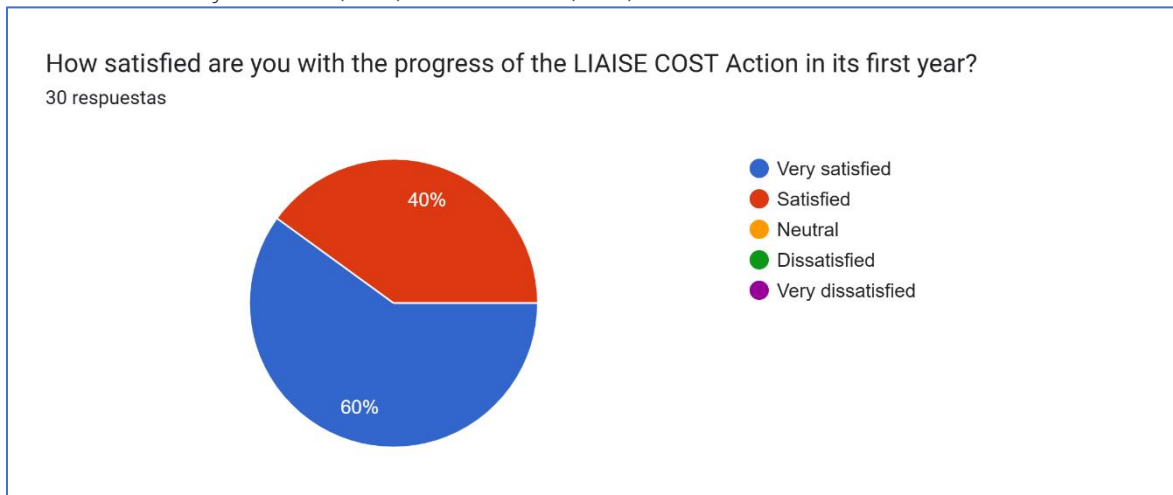
In terms of **networking tools (STSM, VMs, etc.)**, 50% evaluate it as excellent, 43% as good and 7% as average.



There was a comment about the networking tools:

- *Would be great if there'd be more STSMs, but of course, depends on budget.*

A final general question was the **satisfaction about the LIAISE COST Action in the first year**, and the answers were very satisfied (60%) and satisfied (40%).



In terms of **key strengths of the Action**, respondents mentioned the following:

- *Good atmosphere, high knowledge level.*
- *Everything is great*
- *People from different countries, network, new knowledge*
- *Participants' dedication to activities is crucial. A large share of researchers with technical expertise which streamlines research.*
- *good team leaders and great supreme leader*
- *LIAISE studies an innovative topic, while organising several related events*
- *Management and dedication of team leaders*
- *I strongly believe that we will be not only good friends but also long term collaborators by the end of this action which will lead to more successful things*
- *Big efforts of Almudena and her team!*
- *Management and communication*
- *The network power*
- *Inclusion of sectoral partners and possibility to collaborate with academics from various fields of circularity*
- *Spreading the knowledge and importance of symbiosis.*
- *Collaborative work of Action members, clear communication, opportunities for networking.*
- *This is the best project application I have ever read. We have a very excellent project manager. Thank you, Almudena!*

In terms of **areas to be improved**:

- *How to motivate WG members*
- *Raise the visibility of social networks (content is fine, but not many followers and majority are just from MC)*
- *The meetings could be taken place in more accessible cities since many members have limited available time*
- *Maybe a few more reminders on the events which are also held online as I missed some workshops (hybrid).*
- *Sometimes, I feel like there are too many WGs meetings and I become confused or not having time to join every meeting unfortunately*
- *More intense collaboration among the partners, equal involvement, or more recognition for the one working for the project.*
- *Communication between WG members may have a more agile structure*
- *Better communication by the WG leaders (not by the Chair).*
- *How to intensify the communication with national stakeholders?*
- *Sending appointments with calendar entry/connection and reminder. :) Access to project documents.*

Finally, to close the evaluation, **extra comments or suggestions** were asked and some respondents included a couple of them:

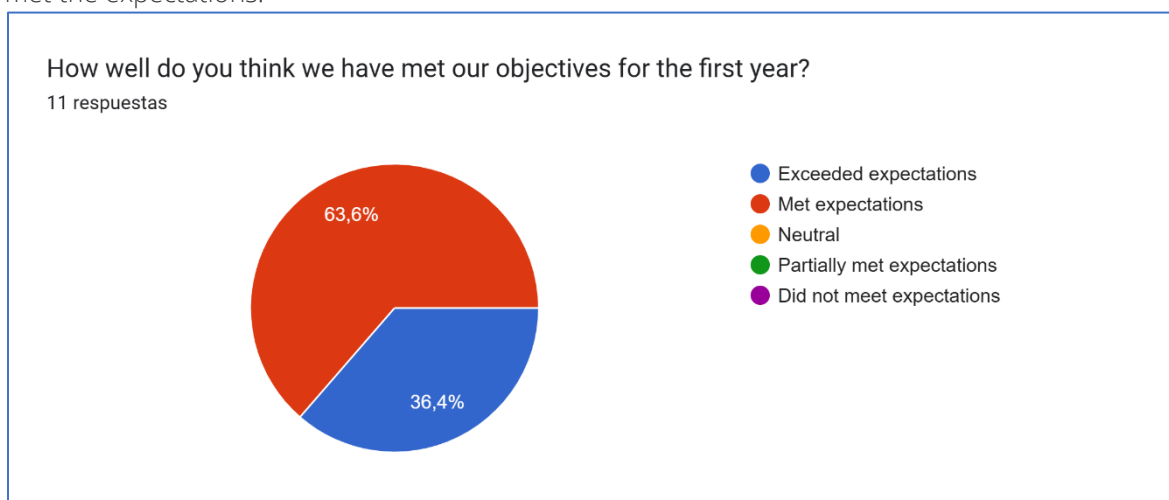
- *All good, very good cooperation, information, all clear*
- *Combining a few events, because it can be challenging for participants to organize their personal schedule and itinerary for one event that demands only a few hours of attendance.*
- *Would be great to have some strategic plan for the organisation of MC meetings for long term run and possible workshops (approx. when and where) as will be easier for time management :)*
- *Congratulations to all members, especially the leaders of the WPs.*
- *Fingers crossed, happy to be a member of team*
- *themed face-to-face workshops*

- *When someone send an email for a WG meeting, teach them how to send it as a calendar invite and not just an email. It is useless to receive an email with a zoom link, without a calendar blocking.*
- *Good luck.*

Analysis of the results of the WGs members

In total, **10 answers were achieved** from a total of 209 potential respondents. The first thing to realise is that there are a lot of people in action, but people are not very involved in certain activities. This will have to be improved in the evaluation of the second year.

The first question asked is whether **LIAISE COST Action has fulfilled their objectives** in the first year, and 36.4% answered that the Action exceeded expectations while 63.6% answered that the Action met the expectations.

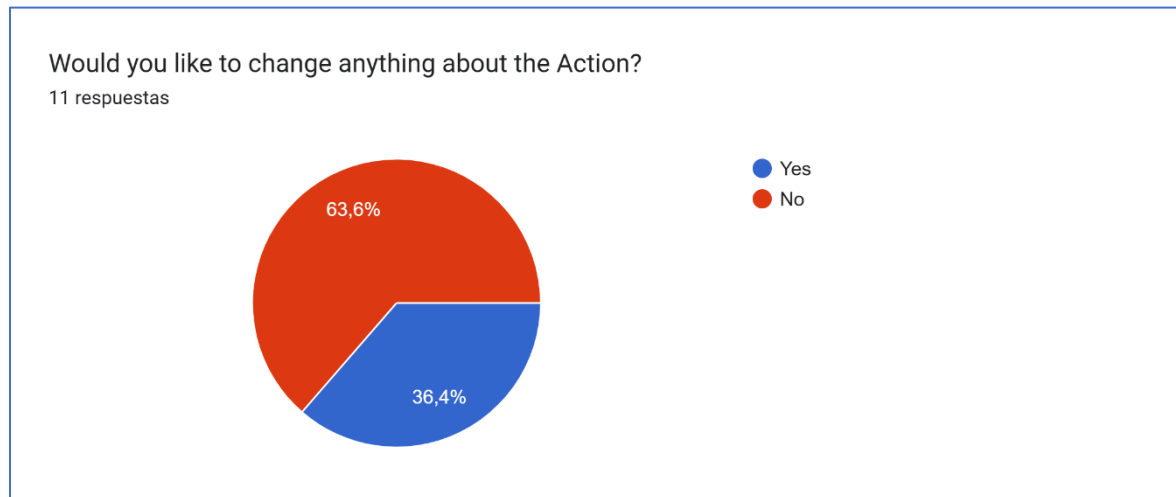


In terms of the **most significant achievement** of this first year, here are some answers:

- *The transmission and sharing of knowledge.*
- *The main tasks are realized.*
- *Lots of dissemination and communication events.*
- *Government of Ghana Ministries Agencies Departments & Authorities Contacts Established Online Mobilisation For Working Group Membership LIAISE COST Action Project in person meeting one on one at the Head Office in Accra including Top Management of Wechau Hippo Sanctuary & His Royal Majesty Osagyeyefu Amoatia Oforipani Okyeman Akyem Aboakwa State Susu Biribi State Secretary. Soon to secure personal funds into my bank account at Garanty Trust Bank PLC Ghana from WASCAL as Principal Investigator of MVE Internationale Consortium Green Climate Initiative Bangladesh Ghana ECYG CYEAIGH. Kaizer* Karmah***
- *Taking the grants.*
- *Collaboration.*
- *Networking and bringing together the knowledge of different experts in the field. Also the reports and publications produced.*
- *The coordination between the different parties and how we were able to write a paper together.*
- *The strong communication.*

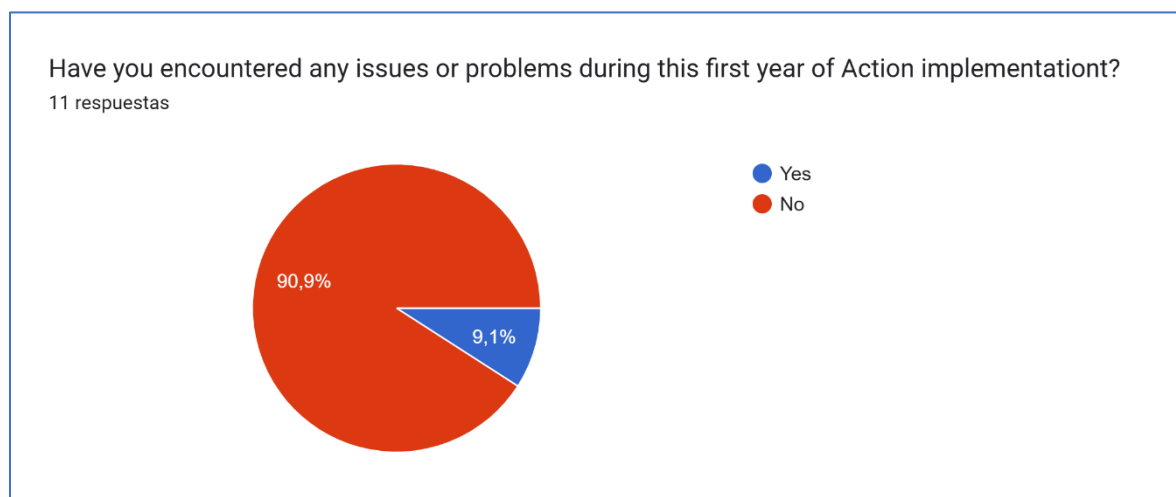
The following question was if there is **something to change** in the Action and there are only four positive answers, which have specified the following points:

- *How do I get additional financial support grants for my membership on European Union funded fully Co-Funded Projects & programs such as Scientific Missions. Kaizer* Karmah**.*
- *Increasing the practical application and research.*
- *I'd like us to try harder to bring more value to the topics we write about in the papers, I feel like we are a little bit redundant with what has already been written (concerning state of the art and barriers of IS).*
- *More in-person meetings.*



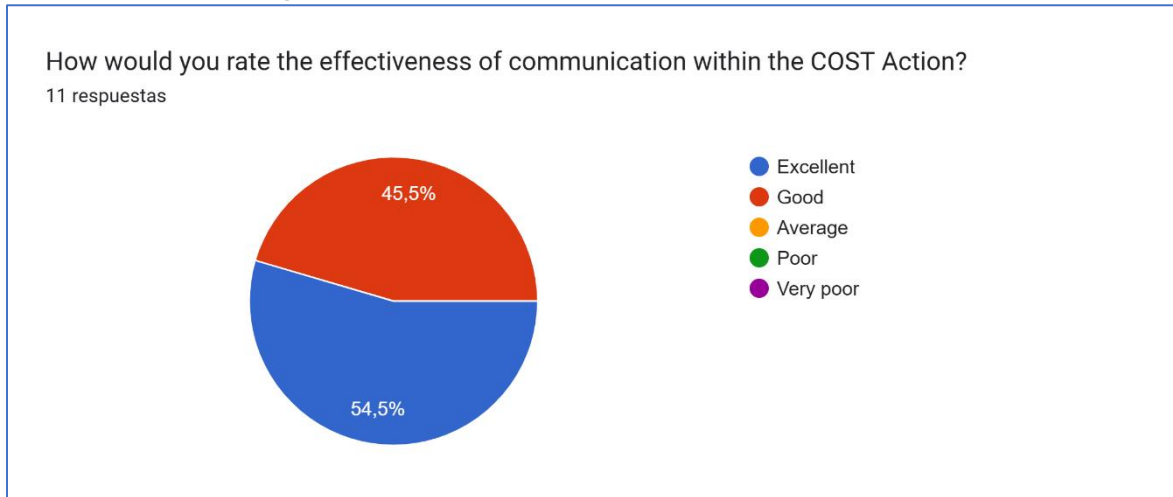
The next question asked members if they have **encountered any problem** during this first year of implementation and there was only one positive answer.

- *Grants denial threats from ADRA association with SDA Clinic at Dzorwulu Paul Nurse Ghana Health Service Rotary LGBTQI + Homosexuality Dr. Haruna Dr. Yamoah Ghana Police Service Service with Integrity. Kaizer* Karmah***

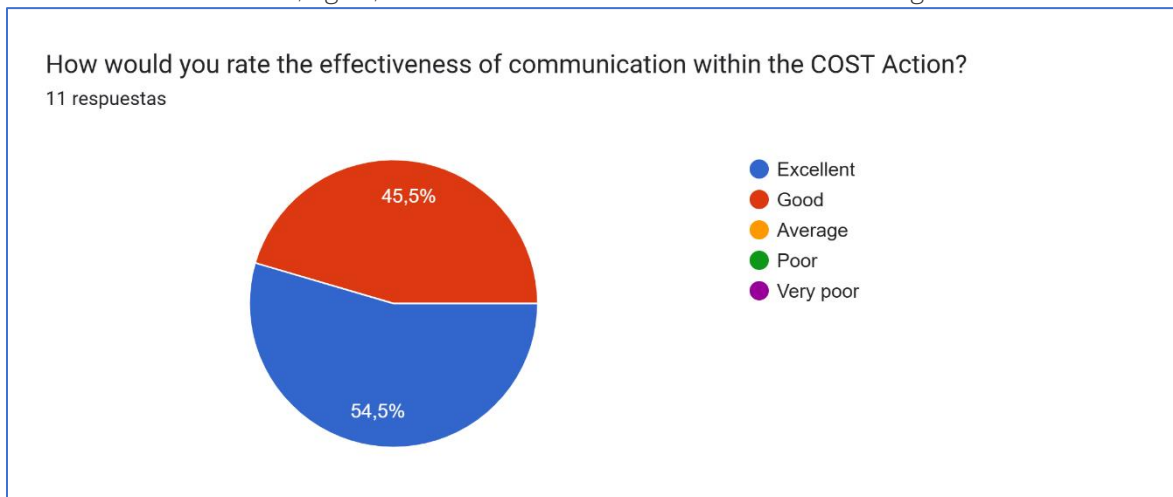


The next part of the survey evaluated different aspects of the Action:

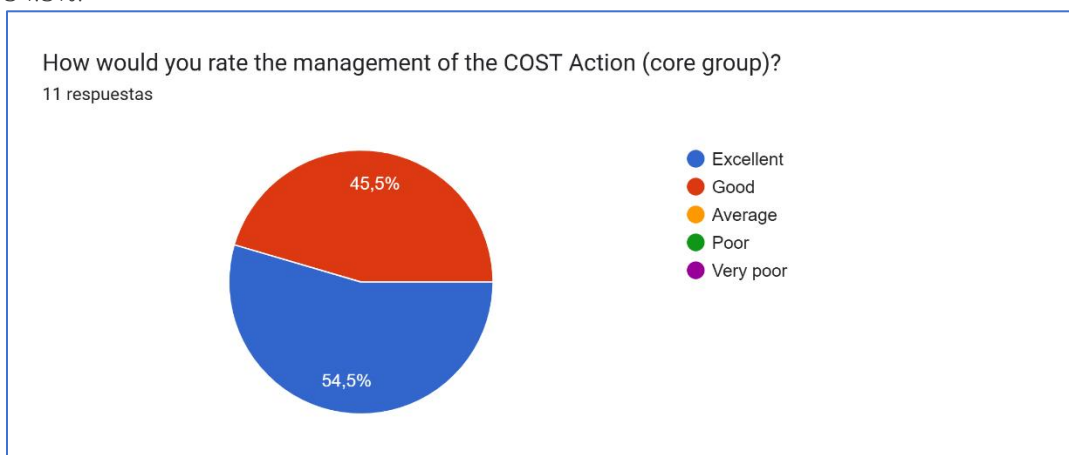
In terms of **effectiveness of communication**, more than 54.5% of respondents believe it is excellent and 45.5% scored it as good.



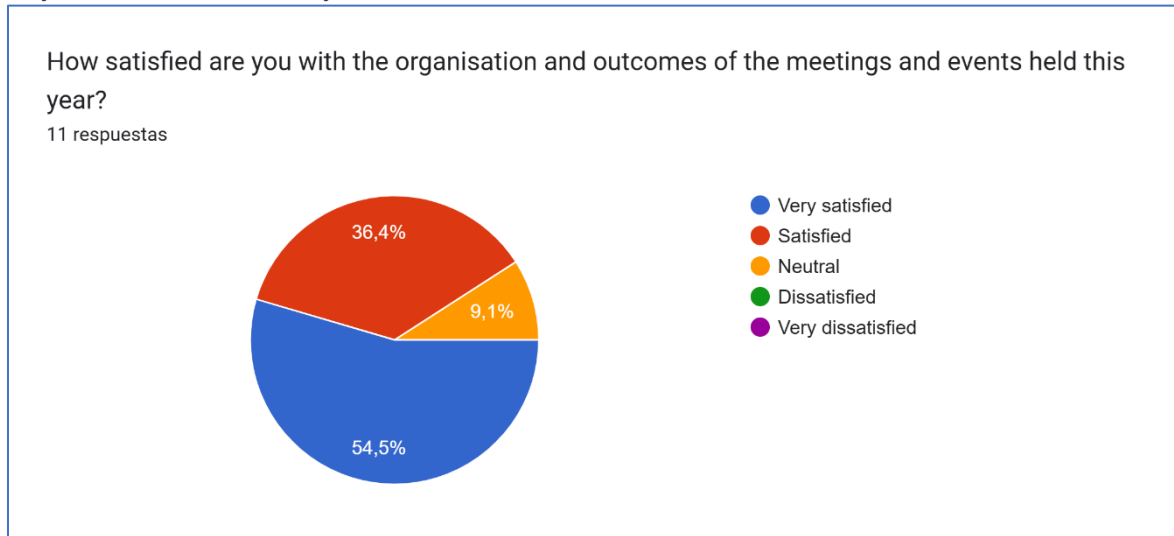
In terms of **collaboration**, again, 54.5% evaluate it as excellent and 45.5% as good.



In terms of the **management** of the Core Group, the percentage of excellent was again the same, 54.5%.



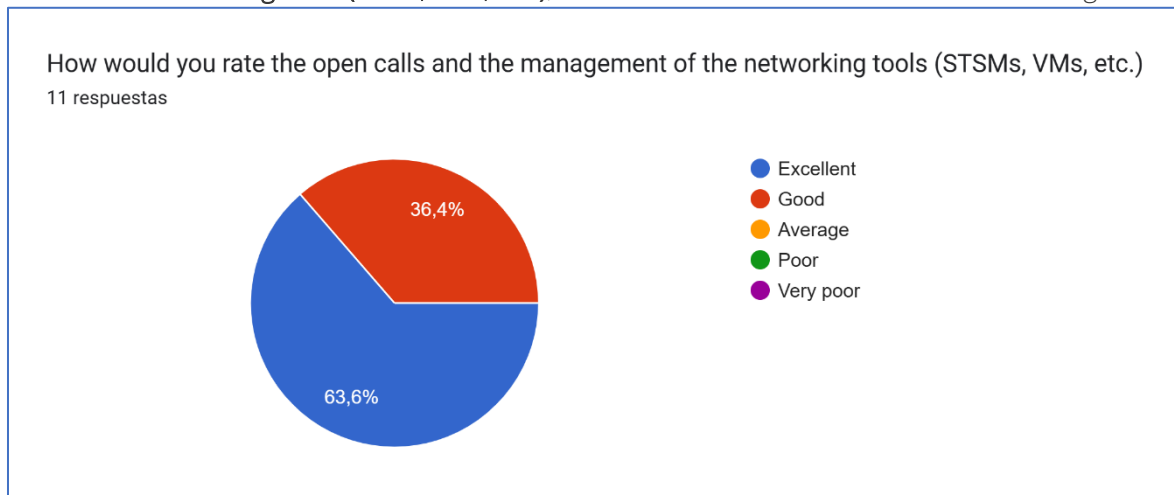
Finally, in terms of the **organisation and outcomes** of the meetings and events, more than 54% is very satisfied, while 36% is just satisfied and 9.1% is neutral.



Regarding **comments for the future**, here we are some:

- *Keep up the good work.*
- *Walking in the same path.*
- *The advertising approach for some WG meetings or actions events could be improved.*
- *More grants for collaboration.*

In terms of **networking tools (STSM, VMs, etc.)**, 63.3% evaluate it as excellent and 36.4% as good.



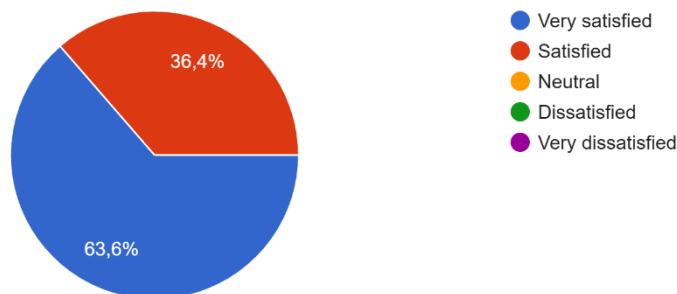
There was a comment about the networking tools:

- The team has made a great work, there are plenty of networking opportunities and diverse tools and formats to attain it.
- No, everything is perfect!
- They are great opportunities and should be integrated in the reports we publish as an Action.

A final general question was the **satisfaction about the LIAISE COST Action** in the first year, and the answers were very satisfied (63.6%) and satisfied (36.4%).

How satisfied are you with the progress of the LIAISE COST Action in its first year?

11 respuestas



In terms of key strengths of the Action, respondents mentioned the following:

- *People and their commitment and know-how.*
- *Transparence, competetiveness, collaboration and motivation to participate in different activities.*
- *Very active team.*
- *Communication and collaboration.*
- *Building strategy in creating IS. Solving or just detecting problems in IS implementation.*
- *The knowledge everyone brings to the table from the different profiles and countries.*
- *Individuals from diverse multidisciplinary backgrounds.*

In terms of **areas to be improved**:

- *Maybe some grants for publishing papers.*
- *Communication*
- *Maybe international relations.*
- *Scientific approach with reflections of society in integration of sites that will create IS. That could be part of workshops (organized within the COST action members or together with universities (research institutes) where these topic is one of the main research).*
- *Have methodology-oriented research and apply it, and communicate it in ways governments and other entities will want to use it.*

Finally, to close the evaluation, **extra comments or suggestions** were asked and some respondents included a couple of them:

- *I don't. Just keep up the initiatives and the excellent work.*
- *Real in-person meetings, workshops, conferences and summer schools.*

Conclusions

The Yearly Internal Evaluation Report demonstrates the significant progress and accomplishments of the LIAISE COST Action during its first grant period, establishing a strong foundation for its future endeavours. Participants acknowledged substantial achievements, including effective networking, the creation of interdisciplinary teams, and the completion of deliverables such as the State-of-the-Art report. These outcomes highlight the Action's capacity to foster collaboration, knowledge dissemination, and engagement among its diverse network of researchers and stakeholders.

While the Action exceeded or met expectations for most respondents, areas for improvement were identified. Key challenges included varying levels of participation among Working Group members, logistical concerns for event accessibility, and the need for more streamlined communication and coordination. Suggestions such as sending calendar invites for meetings, promoting events on social media, and enhancing communication strategies within and across Working Groups reflect actionable steps to address these issues.

Feedback from the Management Committee and Working Group members consistently emphasized the Action's strengths, including effective leadership, strong management practices, and a supportive community. The evaluation further underscored the importance of maintaining transparency, strategic planning, and opportunities for networking.

Looking ahead, the insights gained from this evaluation provide a valuable framework for refining operations in the second grant period. By addressing areas of concern and building on established successes, LIAISE COST Action is well-positioned to advance its objectives, drive impactful research, and strengthen its contributions to industrial symbiosis and sustainability.