



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



UNESCO Youth Forum  
8th Edition  
29-31 October 2013

## 8<sup>th</sup> UNESCO Youth Forum

### Evaluation (on-line survey results)

#### ***Executive summary***

*The 8<sup>th</sup> UNESCO Youth Forum was a Forum of change, taking innovations introduced in previous Fora, one step further. This marked a considerable break from previous editions in terms of the content, the level of youth participation and the Forum's outcomes. This report presents the results of an online evaluation survey addressed to all Forum participants, both those physically present during the three days of the Forum and all those who participated in its on-line preparations.*

*The analysis reveals a very positive overall feedback, particular appreciation of the efforts to engage a maximum number of young people in the Forum's design, online preparation, running, events and outputs, as well as the reinforced capacity-building dimension.*

*Possibilities for improvement are also pointed out, most notably, the preparation of guidelines for the Forum's participants, more space for region-based discussion and less parallel activities, as well as a better restitution of the Forum's outputs and a clear reporting system on its Recommendations.*

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## Context

The [8th UNESCO Youth Forum](#) (29-31 October 2013) underwent important changes, building on innovations introduced in previous Fora, further making a break from the Forum's traditional model. Young women and men were fully involved in the entire process, participating in the conception and organization of the Forum, notably through broad-based online consultations that allowed for the topics and format of the Forum, as well as its outputs to be designed by and for youth. This approach was extended to the three days of the Forum where all sessions and events were led or facilitated by young women and men. This commitment to openness and collaborative reflection was accompanied by a greater emphasis on capacity development, with multiple opportunities for collective work (workshops) or one-to-one interactions (coaching/mentoring). Moreover, for the first time in a UNESCO Youth Forum, all young people were considered fully fledged participants, with a less formal format and no distinctions between delegates, observers or others.

In the aftermath of the Forum, UNESCO launched an online survey, in English and French, to evaluate the relevance of these innovations, in view of the organization of the next UNESCO Youth Forum (2015). The survey was addressed to all Forum participants, both those physically present during the three days at UNESCO's Headquarters, and all those who participated in its preparations through the Forum's on-line WSIS Knowledge Community (see the UNESCO Online Youth Community at <http://www.wsis-community.org/>). The survey was open from 24 March to 14 April 2014. Responses were received from a total of 212 Forum participants.<sup>1</sup>

This report presents the results of the online survey, which will be part of a more general evaluation that will guide the work of UNESCO's Secretariat in the follow-up to the Forum and its related initiatives, as well as in the organization of the 9<sup>th</sup> UNESCO Youth Forum (2015).

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<sup>1</sup> There were approximately 500 young women and men who participated during the three days of the Forum, and the on-line discussion community counted about 800 participants.

## PART I. Evaluation results

### I.1. Expectations from the Forum

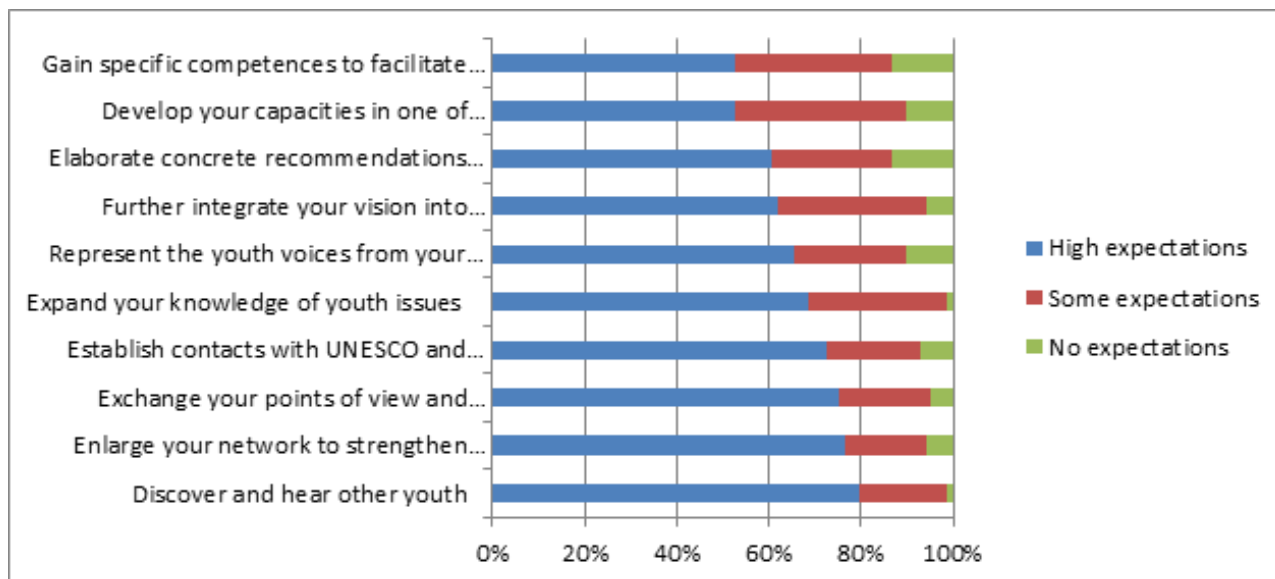


Figure 1. Specific expectations from the Forum

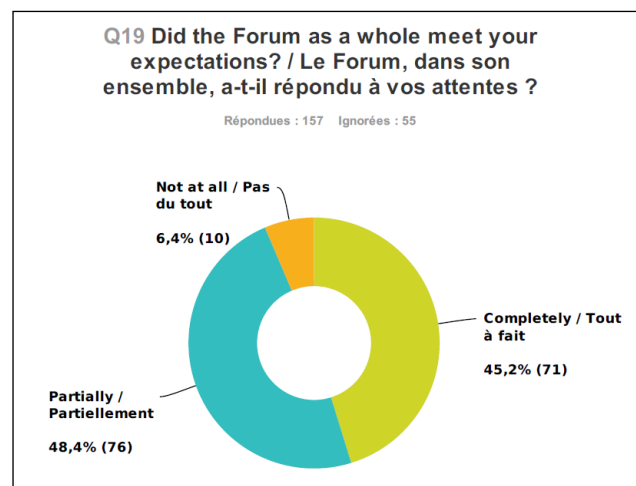
As regards their specific expectations of the Forum (Figure 1), respondents had the highest interest in **discovering and hearing other youth, enlarging networks to strengthen their community engagement, and exchanging points of view and sharing experiences**. “Some expectations” were also created in terms of gaining competencies to facilitate project implementation and developing their capacities in one of UNESCO’s areas of expertise.

Figure 2. Meeting participants’ expectations

For the vast majority of respondents the Forum met their expectations, either fully (45.2%) or partially (48.4% - Figure 2). Respondents also made proposals for main changes that they would like to see introduced in the Forum’s next edition, namely:

#### Preparing the Forum

- Better control of participants’ selection processes by their Member States
- More attention to the participants’ preparation, including through clear guidelines
- Processes enabling national and regional preparation of the recommendations before the Forum
- Development of a Facebook page for the Forum



- Clearer information in advance about capacity-building sessions and shortlisted Action Projects
- Partnership with universities from France to attract as many local youth as possible
- Better facilitation of the process to acquire a visa to France

#### *Participation*

- Strict gender balance ensured throughout the Forum
- Funded participation of the most vulnerable youth and those from LDCs, particularly Africa
- Presence of shortlisted action project leaders to present their projects
- Greater participation of local youth organizations (beyond national or regional)
- Greater presence of private sector (including industry) and of youth development partners

#### *The Forum's format*

- Duration of the Forum extended
- Participation enabled in all working sessions (Recommendations, action projects and capacity-building ), instead of running them in parallel
- More working sessions on the Recommendations, including by region, as well as topic-related UNESCO workshops before the discussions on the Recommendations, in order to inform and create awareness among participants
- Greater focus on social entrepreneurship and more space for youth success stories, not only focusing on economic success
- Marketplace held in a more prominent space, with more opportunities for networking (such as through side events), particularly between youth, youth-focused organizations and potential donors
- Clearer logistical indications about the Forum's activities and guaranteed use of both French and English during all sessions and, if possible, other official languages

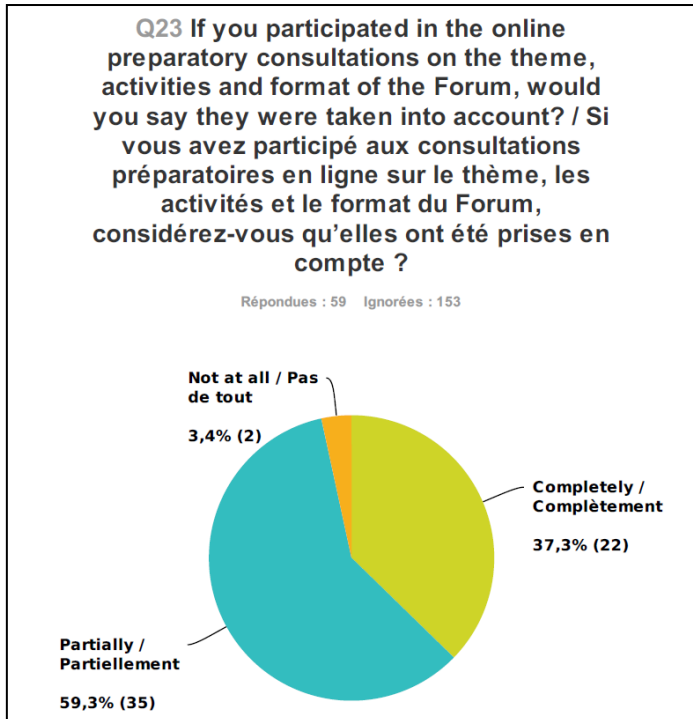
#### *Structuring the discussions*

- Opportunities provided for youth to define the way the discussions are structured and the decision-making procedures on the Forum outputs
- Clearer guidelines about engagement in the discussions, including through advance training and a greater guidance by experts and UNESCO representatives
- More professional facilitation of discussions, greater impartiality and more balanced voting rights for the selection of the Action Projects
- More structured discussions, including by a return to a more formal and informed debate on the Forum's Recommendations, following the model of UNESCO's Executive Board or General Conference, with the inclusion of elected positions and a distinction between delegates and observers

#### *Follow-up*

- Restitution of the Forum's results, including to all actors involved in the Forum's preparations
- Development of clear mechanisms to ensure the implementation of the Forum Recommendations, including through a reporting system by the participants and Member States
- Establishment of team to monitor the implementation of the selected Action Projects
- Establishment of direct connection between the activities and results of the Forum and UNESCO's activities (C/4 and C/5)

## I.2. Preparatory work



Only **38.2%** of the respondents had participated in the on-line preparatory consultations focusing on the theme, activities and format of the Forum. This is partly related to the fact that a number of the Forum's actual participants - who responded to the survey - had not contributed in the pre-Forum consultations.

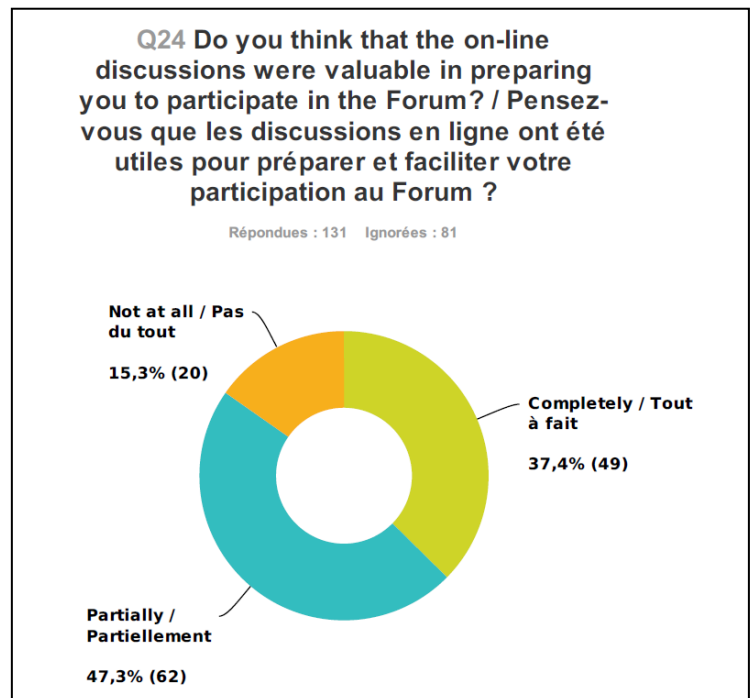
Of these respondents, the **majority (59.3%)** consider that the results of these consultations had been **partially taken into account** in the Forum's preparations, whereas 37.3% believe that they were completely taken into account. (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Use of on-line preparatory consultations

**47.3%** of the respondents found the on-line discussions on the Forum's recommendations **partially** valuable in preparing youth for their participation in the Forum, as opposed to **37.4%** who found they were **fully** valuable (Figure 4).

While for some the discussions were an innovative tool to get to know in advance the participants and their views and also to allow the participation of youth who could not be physically present at the Forum, for others the dominant languages of the on-line discussions (English and French) constituted a barrier.<sup>2</sup> Some of the respondents had technical difficulties or found the platform complicated to use and considered that exchange would have been easier through social media.

Figure 4. Value of on-line discussions for preparation of Forum participants



<sup>2</sup> Despite the fact that discussion threads were also open in the four other official languages of UNESCO

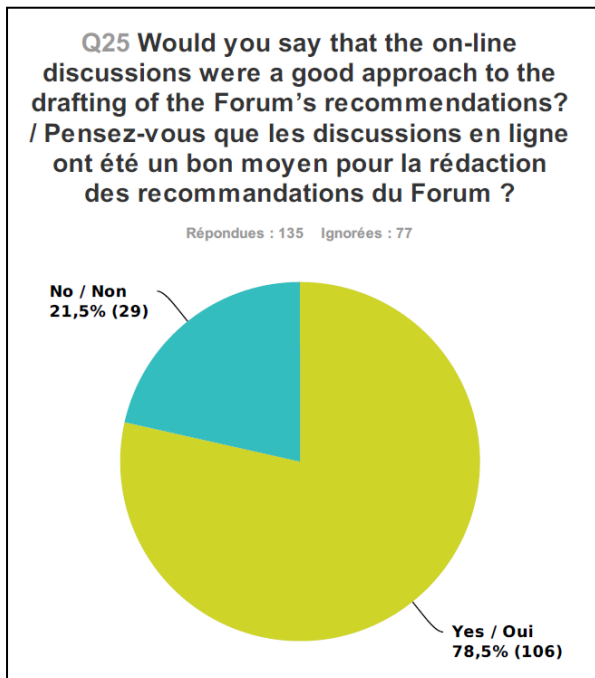


Figure 5. Use of on-line discussions to draft the Forum's Recommendations

A vast majority of respondents, **78.5%**, found that the use of the on-line discussions for the elaboration of the Forum's Recommendations (Figure 5) **was a good approach**, allowing a better understanding of the needs of youth across the world to feed into the Recommendations, an efficient and time-saving drafting of the final document during the Forum itself, as well as the participation of as many youth as possible in this process.

A main concern here was the feeling that online debates were not used to their full potential for the production of the final Recommendations, due to disparities between the content of on-line discussions and of the final document. Apart from the fact that the youth participants of the online discussions and the Forum were not always the same, another reason for such concern was

that it had been difficult –particularly for the Rapporteurs - to follow, guide, channel and summarize the different and numerous online interventions and views into specific final recommendations.

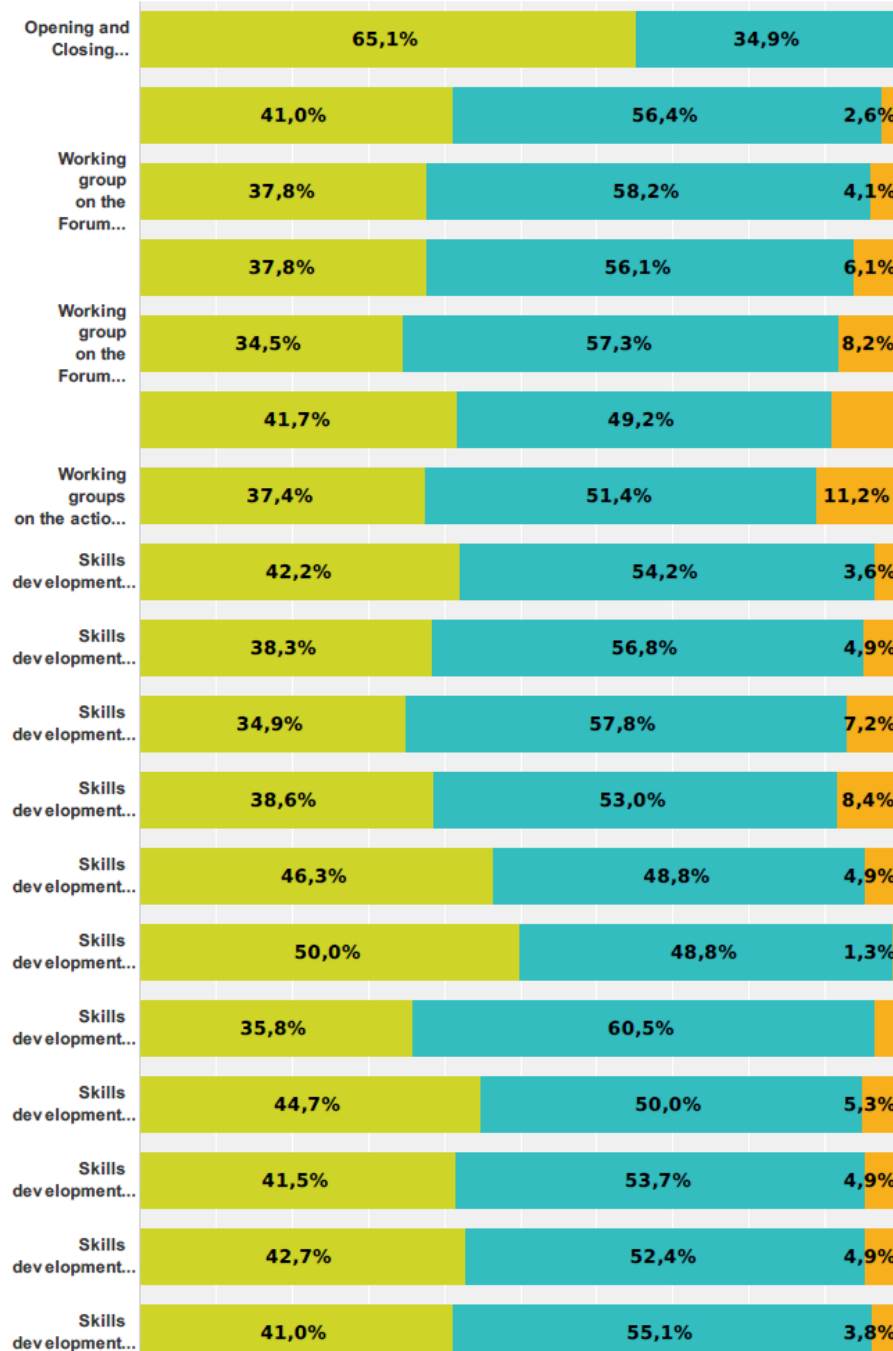
A related matter, which impacts the early involvement of the participants in the Forum's (online) preparations and work, is their timely nomination. Among the proposals made by respondents on ways to involve the participants as early as possible in the Forum process are the following:

- Disseminating the information to national institutions and youth actors, including educational institutions, well ahead of the Forum, with National Commissions spreading it at national level a year ahead. In the same perspective, launch a call for voluntary national resource persons who would spread the information and prepare the Forum at national level
- Send invitation letters, background, briefing and working documents, as well as participation guidelines well ahead of the Forum and define and communicate clear timelines
- Host preparatory or information meetings with National Commissions to raise awareness about the Forum's preparations
- Organize preparatory national or regional committees or forums on the themes of the UNESCO Forum and have National Youth Councils select youth delegates
- Organize preparatory on-line training for participants before the Forum (Google Hangouts, webinars) or trainings at national level. Similarly, organize national-level information and briefing meetings for newly appointed participants, including with the participation of past Forum participants
- Open on-line discussions earlier and disseminate information on the Forum not only through internet but also through traditional media, and in more languages than English and French. Also, incorporate greater and regular use of social media and video materials to attract youth attention
- Create ownership among stakeholders by regularly providing information about outcomes of past Forums, including an overview of past Recommendations and their follow-up in Member States, and by sending regular updates of the Forum's preparations

### I.3. Activities of the Forum

**Q27 Please evaluate the different activities of the Forum / Veuillez évaluer les différentes activités du Forum**

Répondues : 133 Ignorées : 79





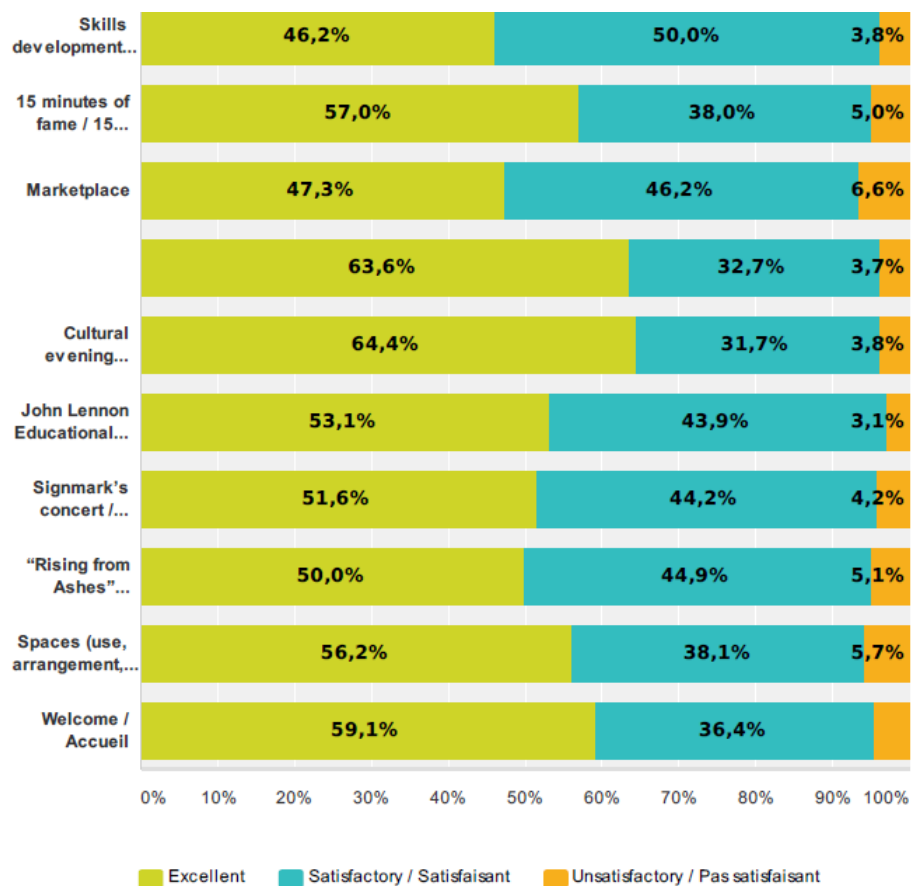


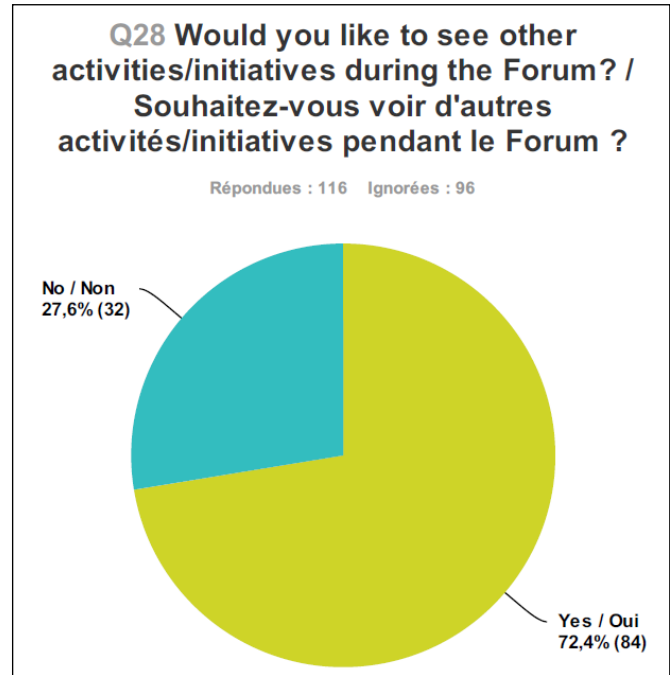
Figure 6. Evaluating the activities of the Forum

With respect to the specific activities of the Forum (Figure 6), all of them received high satisfaction rates with very low percentages of non-satisfied respondents. Among the most satisfactory activities, the **Opening and Closing Ceremonies (65.1% of the evaluations qualify them as “excellent”)**, as well as the Cultural Evening organized by the Goi Peace Foundation (64.4% of evaluations are “excellent”) and the Award ceremony of the UNESCO-Juan Bosch Prize for the Promotion of Social Science Research in Latin America and the Caribbean (63.6% “excellent”) received the highest satisfaction rates. In terms of those respondents who were not satisfied with the activities, the highest percentages concern the working groups on the selection of the action projects that received the Forum’s Label (11.2% evaluating them as “unsatisfactory”), followed by the plenary debate on the Forum’s recommendations (9.2% evaluations as “unsatisfactory”).

Figure 7. New initiatives

**72.4%** of the respondents were **in favour** of introducing new activities or initiatives for future editions (Figure 7). Proposals for such initiatives include:

- Presentations by Member States of their follow-up of the Forum’s Recommendations
- More thematic workshops, such as on sustainable development, climate change, the NTICs, and on specific topics covered by the General Conference
- More and in-depth capacity-building sessions
- Meetings between youth, UNESCO officials and Member States’ representatives
- More presentations by youth on their career paths and local initiatives
- Free spaces for artistic and national performances, also involving youth with disabilities
- Workshops on the evaluation and follow-up of action projects
- More side events organized by participants or youth organizations
- Dinner-based events, local cultural visits, outdoor and sports activities, allowing youth to meet in a less formal context.



Nevertheless, some respondents stressed that parallel activities sometimes competed with each other and, to a degree, distracted the participants from finalizing the Forum’s conclusions.

The skills development workshops, a novelty at the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the Forum, were highly appreciated by the participants, **60.9% qualifying them as completely useful** (Figure 8). According to the respondents, they enabled youth to have more information, be able to better debate on specific issues, be more performant and competitive in the job market, thereby contributing to their personal and professional development. Some asked for more time for such workshops in the future, organized in such manner so as to give the opportunity to participants to take part both in thematic discussions and in the skills development workshops.

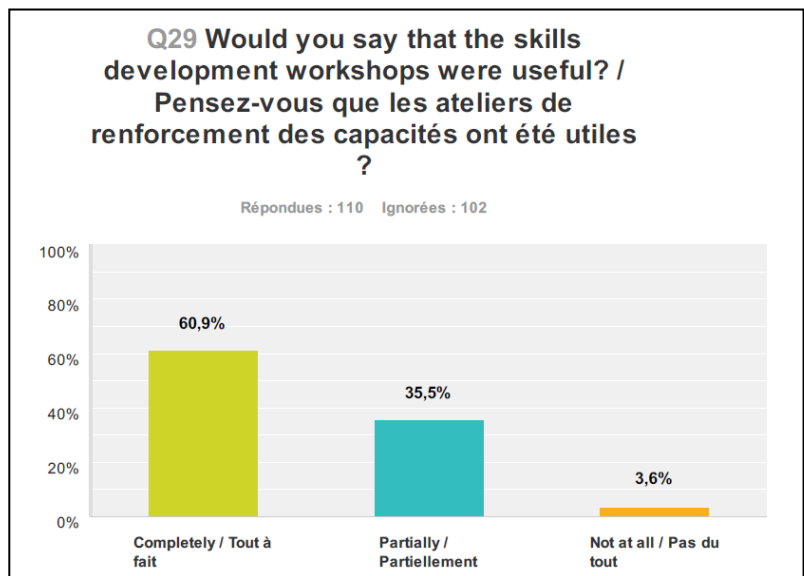
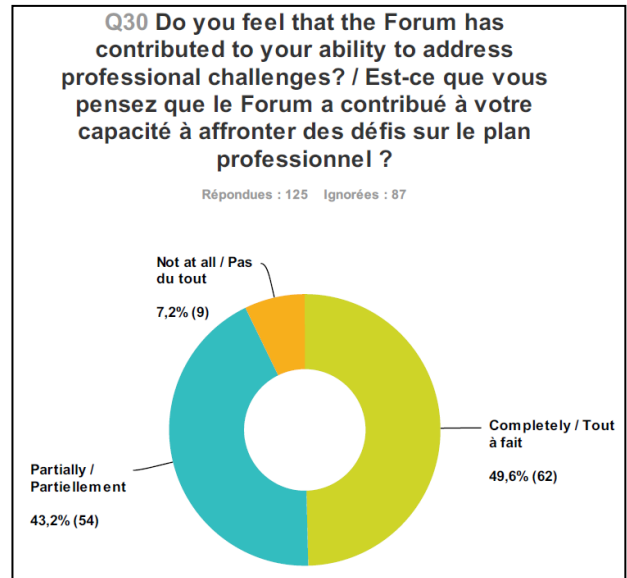


Figure 8. Evaluation of the skills development workshops

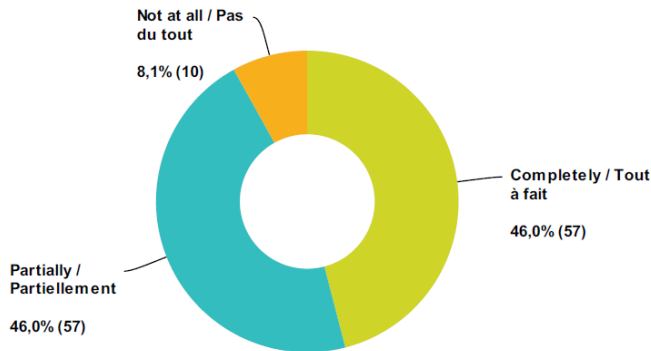
In the same logic, **the majority (49.6%)** felt that the Forum **fully** contributed to their ability to address their **professional challenges** (Figure 9). They were able to meet a lot of people, enhance their knowledge and skills, clarify their ideas, build a new vision of the professional world, learn about international diplomacy, enhance their capacities of public communication as well as their teamwork capacities and critical thinking, and meet young women and men from different cultures.

Figure 9. Contribution of the Forum to youths' abilities to address their professional challenges



**Q31 Do you feel that the Forum has contributed to your ability to identify and undertake concrete activities in your community/country/region? / Pensez-vous que le Forum ait contribué à votre capacité à identifier et à mettre en œuvre des activités concrètes dans votre communauté/pays/région?**

Répondues : 124 Ignorées : 88

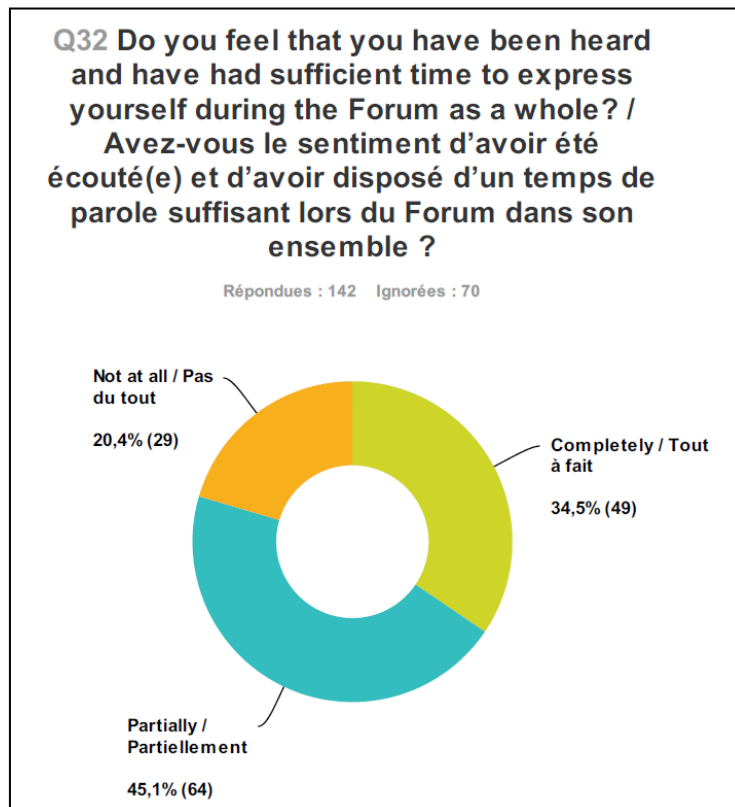


**92%** of respondents assessed that **their participation in the Forum has contributed completely (46%) or partially (46%)**, to their **abilities to engage in concrete activities in their communities, countries and regions** (Figure 10). Some mention that they absorbed the energy from other youth and were able to learn from best practices from other countries or regions, while others left more determined to engage in their communities, initiate specific activities and with greater ability to “think outside the box”.

Figure 10. Contribution of the Forum to youths' abilities to identify and undertake concrete activities in their communities/countries/regions

In terms of the possibility of participants to express themselves and have their voices heard during the Forum process (Figure 11), the **vast majority** of respondents esteem that this was **fully (34.5%) or partially (45.1%)** the case. Respondents appreciated the fact that all participants (not only the official delegates) could participate actively in the discussions. Some would have however wished to see a longer Forum and thus even more time for discussion. The distinction was often made between, on the one hand, space and ability to express oneself (including through on-line discussions), and, on the other, the way these ideas are translated into the final Recommendations of the Forum. A respondent would have, for instance, wished to see more structured debates. Another would have preferred a better balance between English and French-language discussions.

*Figure 11. Sufficient time for participants to express themselves and be heard*



Respondents were also asked to make concrete suggestions for an efficient follow-up of the Forum's recommendations. Proposals include:

- Drafting measurable Recommendations and developing an action-plan for their implementation
- Restituting the Forum's outputs
- Ensuring regular reporting by National Commissions and Forum participants, including through an on-line system of reporting and evaluation
- Creating youth-led follow-up committee(s) – at international, regional and/or national level, with the participation of national youth structures
- Organizing regional follow-up meetings or networks of the Forum's participants and supported by National Commissions, to raise awareness, advocate the implementation of the Recommendations and provide advice as needed
- Develop an on-line publication of progress in implementation per country and region
- Organize on-line discussions through on the ways to implement the Recommendations and on-going progress
- Assign a UNESCO focal point to follow-up the implementation of the Recommendations

Concerning the Action projects that received the Forum's label, respondents believe that there should be continued UNESCO support for their implementation, including through financing, as well as reporting on their implementation and results.

As regards other suggestions to ensure a specific follow-up to the Forum, respondents propose:

- Build-up the Forum’s momentum and increase its ownership by youth by beginning with local, national and regional events, with the UNESCO Forum as a final event
- Organize post-Forum communication campaigns notably through social media
- Set up regional / six-monthly follow-up forums
- Maintain the Forum’s momentum through on-line platform, social media interactions and videos
- Create an international network of youth forums.

## I.4. Overall evaluation

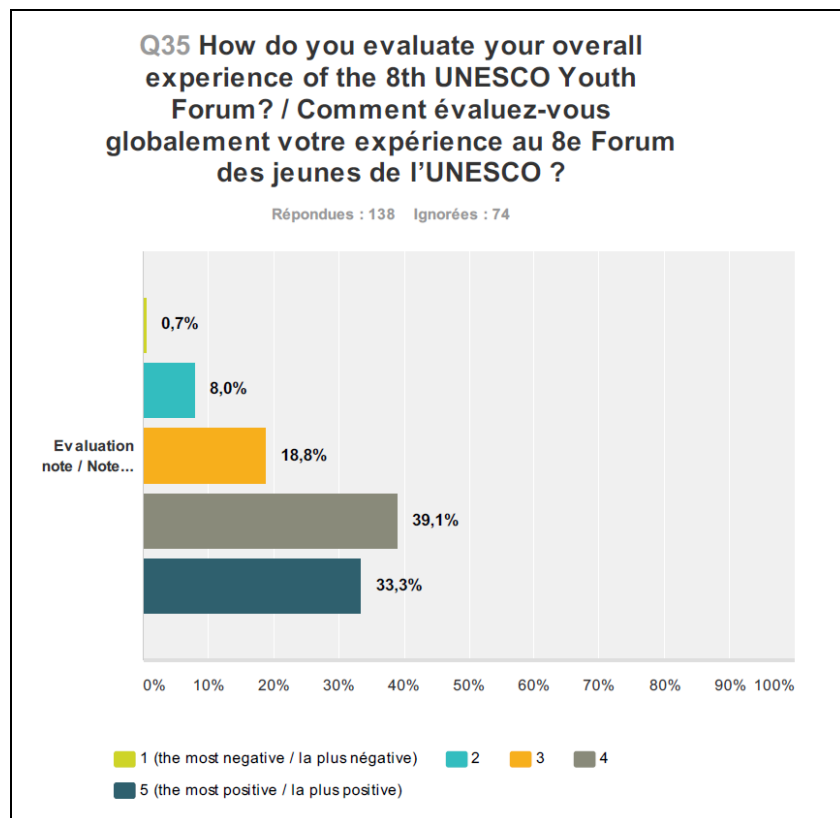


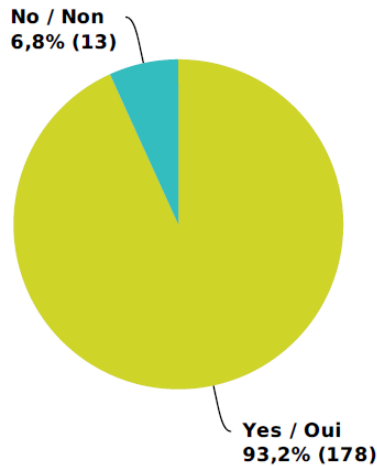
Figure 12. Overall evaluation of the Forum

Evaluating their overall experience with the 8<sup>th</sup> UNESCO Youth Forum (Figure 12), on a scale from 1 (most negative) to 5 (most positive), the majority of respondents rated it between 4 and 5, with **33.3% giving the highest mark (5)** and 39.1% giving the second highest mark (4). Only 0.7% gave a negative evaluation of the Forum (1).

Almost the totality of the respondents, or **93.2%**, were **satisfied** with the efforts to involve as many young women and men as possible in the Forum (Figure 13).

**Q13 Did you appreciate this Forum's efforts to involve as many young people as possible? / Avez-vous apprécié les efforts de ce Forum d'impliquer le plus grand nombre de jeunes possible ?**

Répondues : 191 Ignorées : 21



Respondents appreciated in particular the on-line consultations and discussions, the diversity of youth involved, the possibility of Member States to send several participants to the Forum, although, according to some, this did not preclude against an over-representation of European and North American countries. According to the respondents, greater participation of youth allowed hearing the voices of more than a few delegates per country. It created a better opportunity to exchange ideas, experiences and challenges including between youth from different regions, enabled wider networking, and a greater possibility to accept and inspire others. Youth particularly appreciated the fact that the Organization's General Conference discussed the Forum's outcomes. Some respondents however regretted a lack of coordination among them or the de facto exclusion of some of them due to lack of interpretation during working sessions that went beyond the envisaged hours.

Figure 13. Appreciation of efforts to involve as many young people as possible in the Forum

**Respondents' quotes:**

*"In a process of institutionalizing a youth strategy it is absolutely important to not only consult but really involve youth from all over the world. It is hard to do logistically but UNESCO Youth Forum remains the biggest level of commitment I experienced in the area. I think this work was fundamental."*

*"In terms of addressing issues that concern the youth, the best people to involve in the discussion or take decision with are the youth themselves. UNESCO has been able to recognize this fact, and has created the opportunity for youth from all walks of life (even allowing online participation) to meet and deliberate on strategies on how to move forward as young persons, to which development would be enhanced. Therefore the effort by the UNESCO Forum cannot be underestimated, it should be highly appreciated and applauded!"*

## PART II - Respondents' characteristics

### II.1. Gender, Age and Region

In terms of the respondents' sex, **54.72% are female** and 45.28% are male.

The age group that responded the most to the Questionnaire (**50%**) is that of young women and men **between 18 and 24 years of age**, followed by those aged between 30 and 35 years (25.47%) and between 25 and 29 years (24.53%).

As regards regional representation (Figure 14), the greatest part of the respondents are from **Europe and North America (39.15%)**, followed by Africa (28.8%). Youth from Asia and the Pacific represent 11.3% of the respondents whereas 10.8% come from the Arab region. The lowest percentage is for Latin America and the Caribbean, with 9.9%.

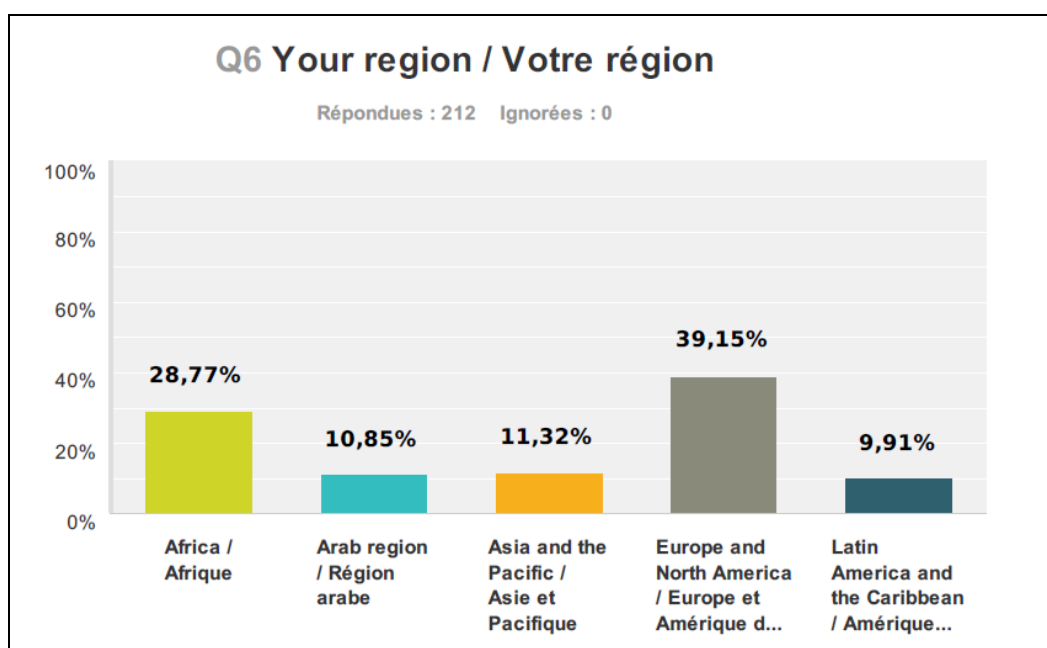
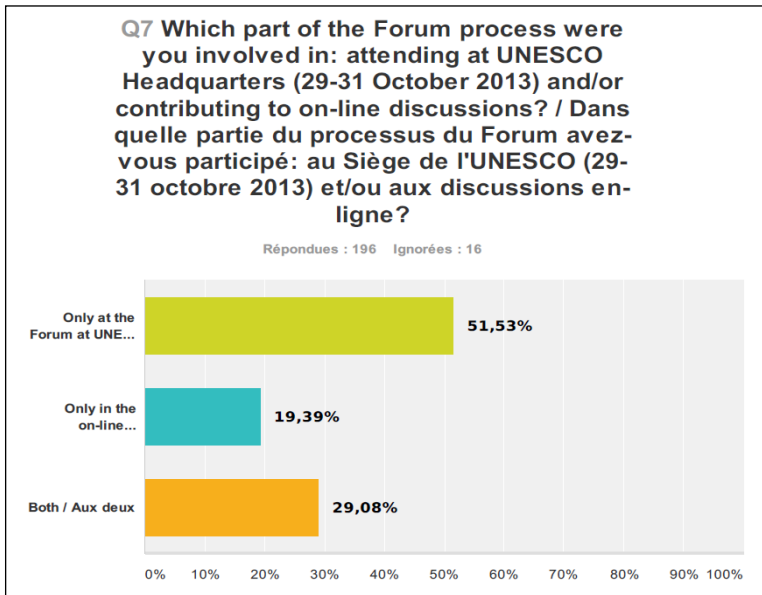


Figure 14. Respondents per region

Concerning responses from specific countries within the different regions, for **Africa** most respondents are from **Cameroun** (with 10.45% or 7 respondents), while the number of respondents from the **Arab region** is the highest for **Morocco** (13.43% or 7 respondents). In **Asia and the Pacific**, most come from **Afghanistan** (16% - 4). The part of respondents from **Europe and North America** is the highest in **France** (36.71% - 29), and with regard to those from **Latin America and the Caribbean**, most are from **Mexico** (22.22% - 4 respondents).



## II.2. Involvement in the Forum



**51.5%** of the respondents **participated only in the Forum's actual event**, held at UNESCO's Headquarters from 29 to 31 October 2013; whereas 19.39% were involved **only** in the on-line discussions. **Almost a third, 29.1%, contributed to the Forum through both these processes.** (Figure 15).

Figure 15. Involvement in the Forum process

As regards the capacity in which they participated in the Forum process (Figure 16), the greatest part, or **40.3%**, **participated as representatives of NGOs working for and/or with youth**. A lesser part, 31.1%, were selected by the National Commission and/or Permanent Delegation of their respective countries. The smallest proportion of respondents are members of National Commissions for UNESCO (3.1%), public institutions working on youth, or intergovernmental organizations outside the UN system working on youth (5.1% each).

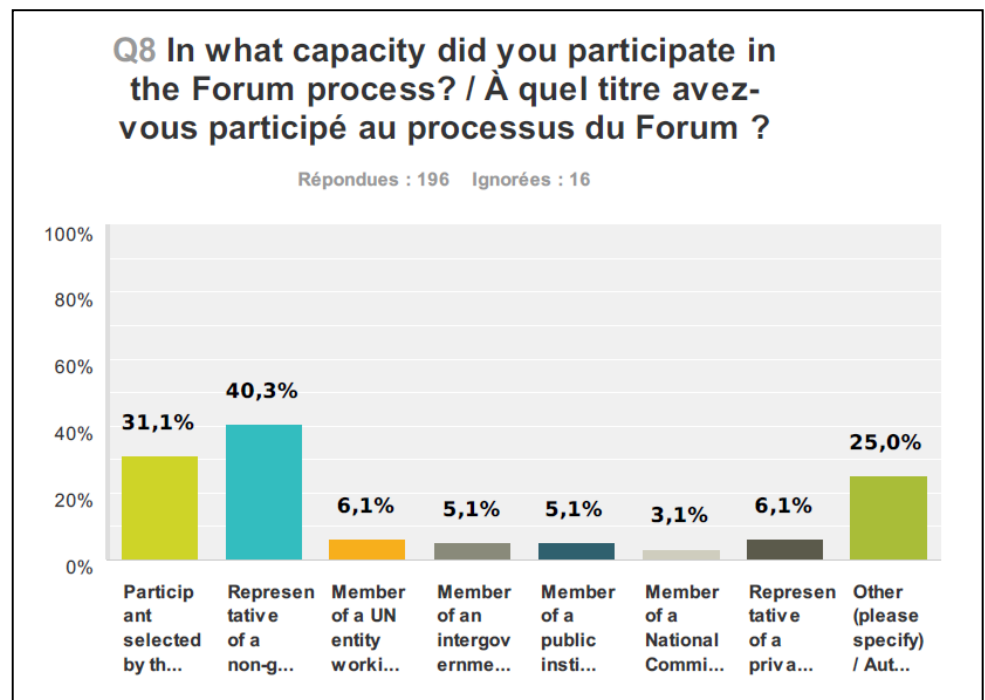
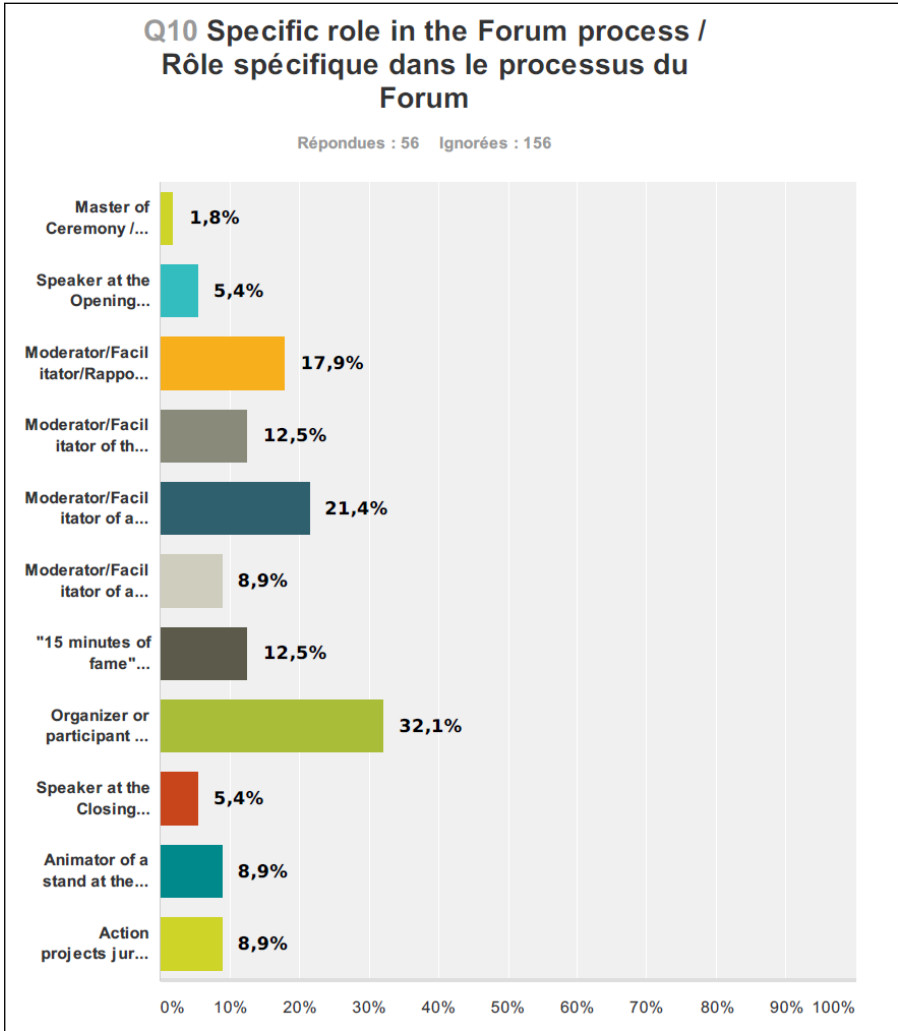


Figure 16. Capacity in which respondents participated in the Forum process

The fact that the response rate is higher for those participants representing civil society organizations demonstrates a higher degree of ownership of the Forum's process by these participants which would be partly due to the greater participation opportunities that these participants had in this edition of the Forum, as opposed to previous editions where they were "Observers".



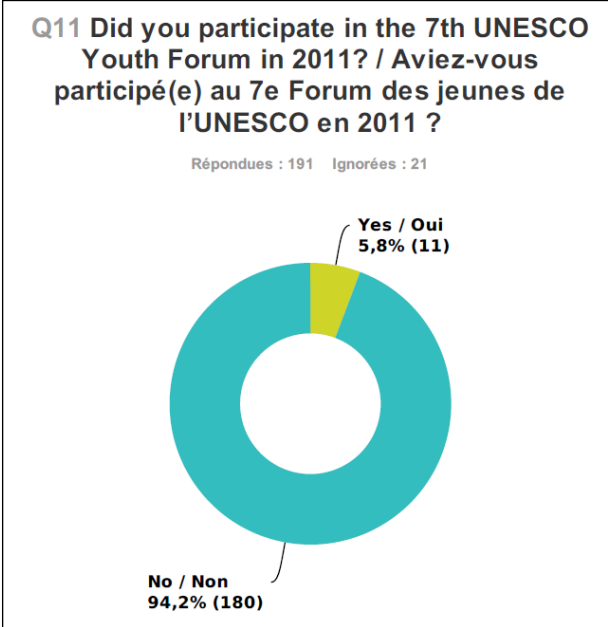


56 of the respondents (37.2%) had a specific role during the Forum, other than participating in the pre-Forum or Forum debates. Of them, the greatest part were **engaged in a special event of the Forum (32.1%), moderating a working group for the selection of action projects (21.4%)** and acting as **moderators/rapporteurs of a working group for the drafting of the Forum's recommendations** (Figure 17).

Figure 17. Specific roles of participants in the Forum

**94.2%** of the respondents were **“newcomers”** to the **2013 Forum** and had not participated in its previous edition (Figure 18). **52.9%** of the respondents had also **never participated in an international or regional event dedicated to youth**, such as the Forum.

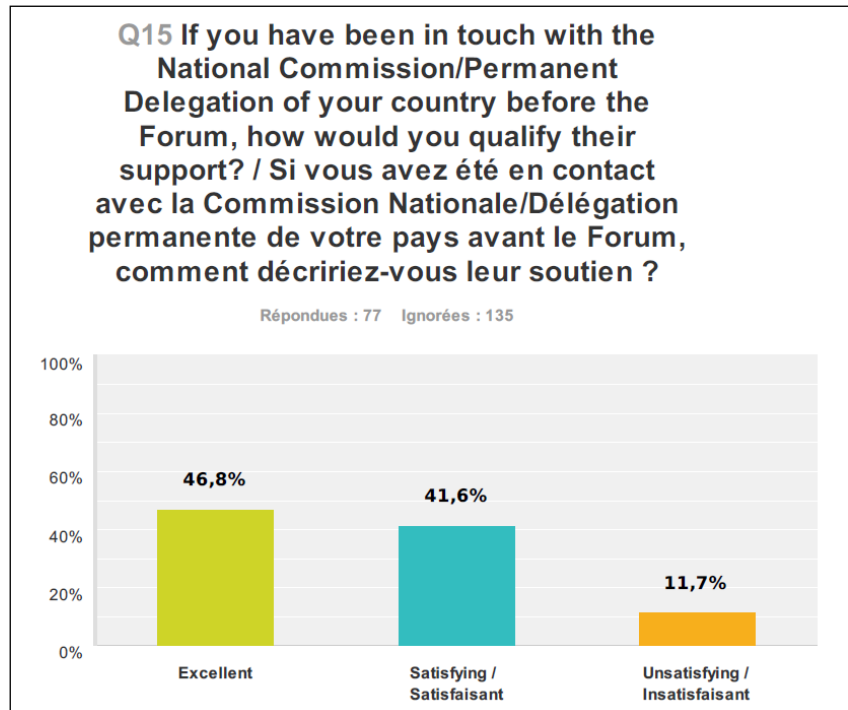
Figure 18. Participation in the previous, 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the Forum (2011)



## II.3. Coordination with participants' countries

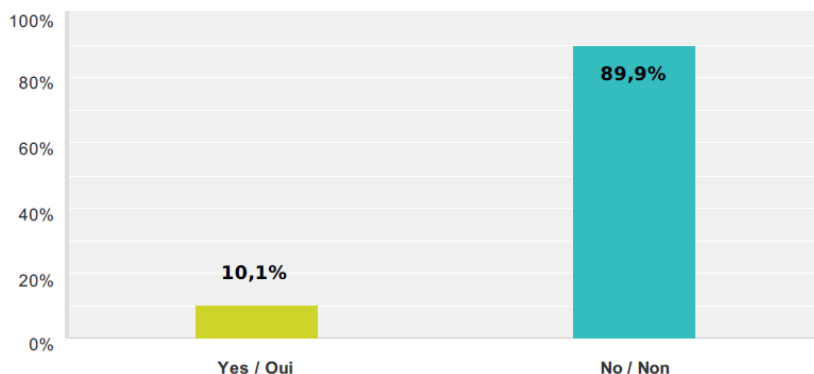
**43.1%** of the respondents were in communication with the National Commission and/or Permanent Delegation of their country to UNESCO before the Forum. Of them, **46.8%**, qualify the support provided as excellent, whereas only 11.7% qualify it as unsatisfactory (Figure 19).

Figure 19. Support provided by National Commissions/permanent Delegations of Member States to the Forum's participants



**Q16 Were you a member of your country's delegation at the 37th session of the General Conference of UNESCO (November 2013)? Étiez-vous membre de la délégation de votre pays à la 37e session de la Conférence générale de l'UNESCO (novembre 2013) ?**

Répondues : 189 Ignorées : 23



In spite of the relevant [recommendation of the 7th UNESCO Youth Forum \(2011\)](#), only **10.1%** of the respondents were also members of the official delegation of their country to the 37<sup>th</sup> session of the UNESCO General Conference (Figure 20).

Figure 20. Respondents who were also members of delegations of their Member States to UNESCO's General Conference

## Respondents' quotes:

- *“Overall a great cultural experience, magnificent contacts, I have heard many useful experiences in my contacts with the people I got to know. A great view on such a high-scale event and a good practice of diplomatic skills.”*
- *“Despite some criticism from my side, I must say that it was a great experience. Thank you!”*
- *It was great and real pleasure to meet so many beautiful people. My last suggestion is that 3 days aren't enough to so many activities. I attended the recommendations the first and the third day and the action projects the second day, but I was so interested in the workshop but there was no time. It was sad not to attend as much as I could. But really in the end thank you all, and I hope 9th edition will be as great as you guys are!”*
- *“I am really grateful for the opportunity to participate in the 8th UNESCO Youth Forum. I feel very privileged with the gained experience. It was a well-organized and colorful forum.”*
- *“An excellent opportunity for young people and partners of UNESCO. Action projects a valuable new initiative.”*
- *« Ma participation au 8e Forum des jeunes de l'UNESCO m'a ouvert l'esprit sur deux choses importantes: premièrement, la valeur de l'union dans la diversité quand il s'agit de prendre en main le future. Nous étions 500 jeunes leaders venant de pays très différents et parlant des langues différentes, mais cela n'a affecté en rien notre détermination commune à s'assurer que la stratégie jeunesse de l'UNESCO 2014 - 2021 reflète ce que mérite une jeunesse prise en compte et effectivement intégrée dans les années à venir. J'ai senti que notre contribution a été valorisée à un moment clé de l'histoire. Deuxièmement, j'ai retenu l'importance de mettre à profit les bonnes relations qui puissent exister entre la jeunesse d'Haïti et celle du Canada. J'ai été positivement réceptif à la pureté de cœur et le leadership des jeunes Canadiens de la mission. Leur amour pour Haïti m'a inspiré des projets d'échanges intéressants qui pourraient s'implémenter dans un futur proche. »*
- *“Thank you UNESCO for this amazing initiative especially for African young people.”*
- *« Ce Forum était un événement incroyable et j'ai été ravie d'aider à son organisation au sein d'une équipe de volontaires très motivés et venus de pays différents. »*