



**SERVICES FOR
INTERNATIONAL
EDUCATION
MARKETING**

Post-event report for

Education UK exhibition in Bulgaria

25 October 2014

Sheraton Sofia Hotel Balkan

Sofia, Bulgaria

Introduction

Thank you for your participation at the Education UK exhibition in Sofia (Bulgaria) in October 2014.

This report provides a summary of the event, including visitor and exhibitor feedback as well as other useful information. We trust that this information will enable you to report return on investment and assist with future decision making.

The event, **targeted at HE market**, hosted representatives from **25 UK institutions** (listed below in Appendix A on page 12) and provided opportunities to engage with **prospective students, visitors and partners**.

Education UK 2014 attracted over **1,200 high quality visitors** due to the extensive and precisely targeted **marketing campaign** and also **media interest**. The event was featured in the news bulletin of the Bulgarian National Television.

We managed to reach even wider audiences through the **live streaming (broadcasting online) of 15 presentations** by exhibitors. They were watched by people from across the country. **The presentations programme** can be found on the British Council Bulgaria website <http://www.britishcouncil.bg/en/study-uk/education-uk/programme>. Recordings of the presentations are still available to watch and we will maintain this online content for one year.

At British Council Bulgaria we highly appreciate your support and hope that we can continue to provide valuable marketing services in terms of both our exhibitions and also our range of other targeted activities during the year. We hope to see you again at our next exhibition.

Regards,

Diana Stefanova | Study in the UK adviser, Bulgaria

This report includes:

Introduction - Page 2

Highlights - Page 3

Visitor profile – Page 3

Marketing - Page 7

Visitor Feedback - Page 9

Exhibitors Feedback - Page 9

Future Steps - Page 11

Appendices: A - List of exhibitors (p12) , B - Exhibitor survey results (p13), C - Visitor survey results (p19), D - Advertising (p21)

Highlights

This exhibition was held at:

Venue	Sheraton Sofia Hotel Balkan, Sofia Saturday 25 October 2014
Opening hours	11.00-17.00
Stand costs	£1,015.00 (plus VAT)

The cost included

- Venue hire and refreshments
- Extensive promotional campaign
- **Live streaming** (online broadcast) of presentations by exhibitors
- Market briefing and **networking reception** with local agents
- **Stand assistant** free of charge
- **Left-over materials** displayed at the British Council office in Sofia
- **Further promotion** at another high-profile British Council event (materials displayed at a dedicated Education UK stand during the **Sofia Science Festival**).

Advantages of live-streaming a presentation

- Reaching larger audiences from across the country through digital channels
- The presentations are live streamed (broadcast from the British Council office) on the day before the exhibition). Therefore:
 - ➔ No need to leave the stand and miss visitors on exhibition day
 - ➔ Visitors focused on meeting exhibitors, not distracted by a parallel presentation programme at the venue.
- Every presentation and the number of viewers can be seen on the British Council Bulgaria channel on Livestream.com
<http://new.livestream.com/BritishCouncilBulgaria/events/3509439>
- Presentations available online for a period of one year after the exhibition

What some of our exhibitors said

'Very well organised event with really good quality students. We were busy all day.'

'One of the best BC fairs in Europe. Great customer service from BC team! Definitely will attend next year!'

We are very much focused on targeting highest quality candidates and ensuring that every year there is both stable and sustainable growth of the number of visitors. In 2014 there was a **10% increase** to a total of 1,200 visitors. **60%** of them were high school students.

Attendance	Sofia	
	2013	2014
Number of visitors	1,100	1,200

85% of our exhibitors rated the quality of students between 8 and 10 on a scale from 1 to 10, with 10 being Excellent. (Exhibitor's survey)

52% of our exhibitors strongly agree and another **42%** 'agree that 'This was a high quality event'. (Exhibitor's survey)

Visitor profile

62% of visitors looking for Undergraduate courses

34% of visitors looking for Postgraduate courses

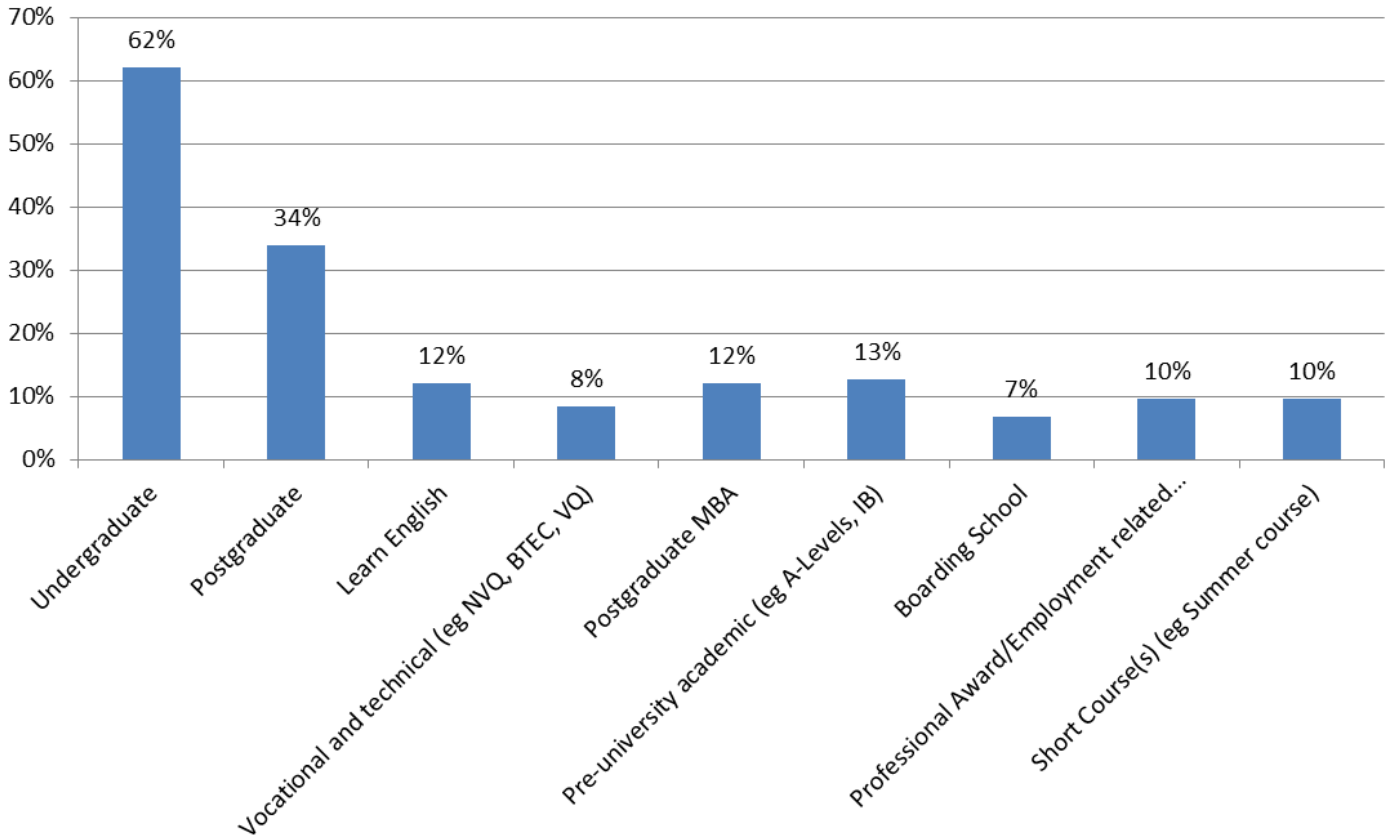
12% of visitors looking for MBA's

10% of visitors looking for Professional qualifications

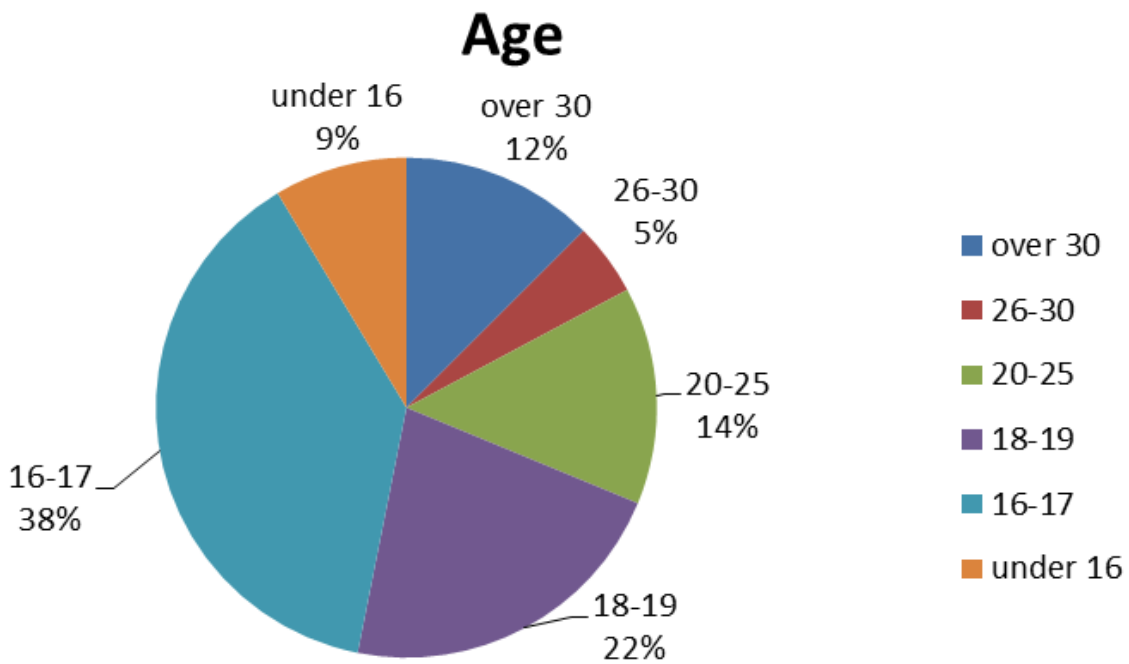
40% male

60% female

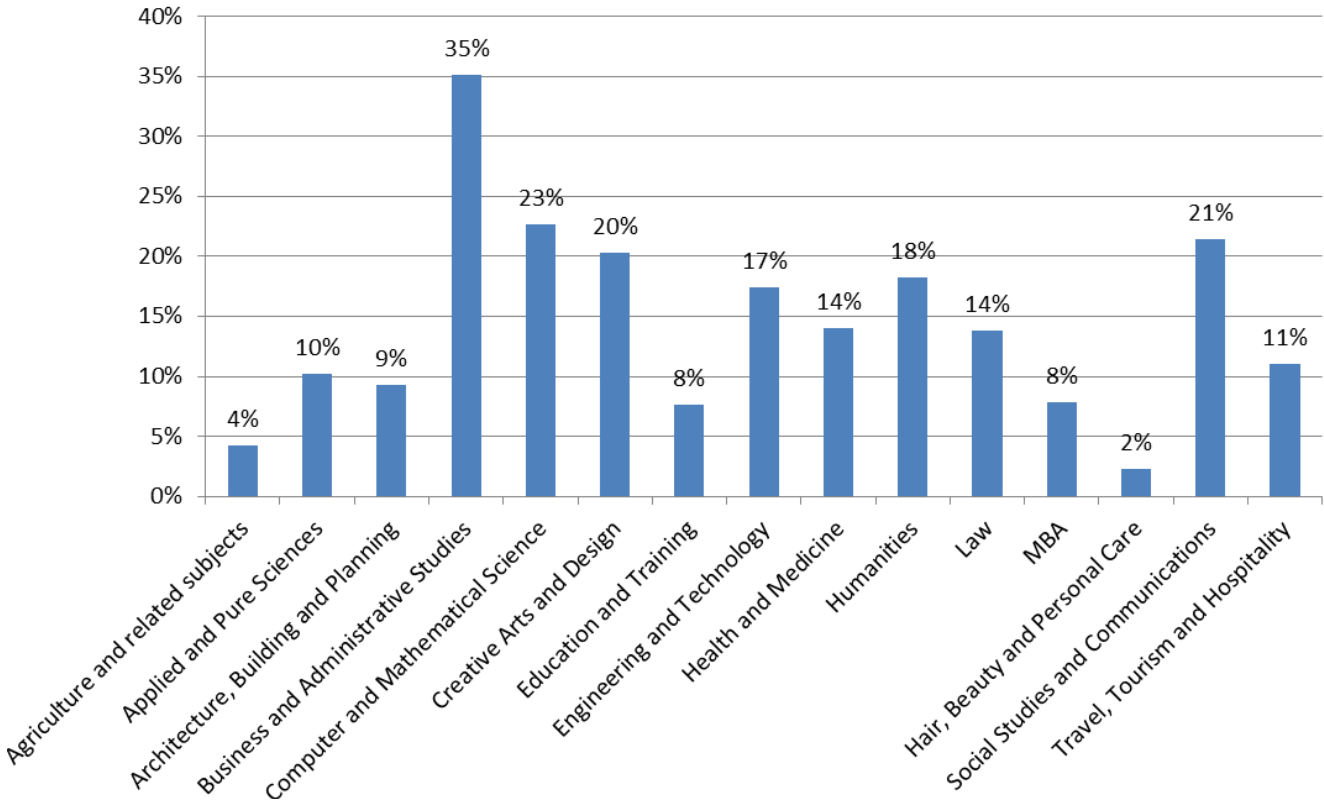
Visitors' preferred level of study



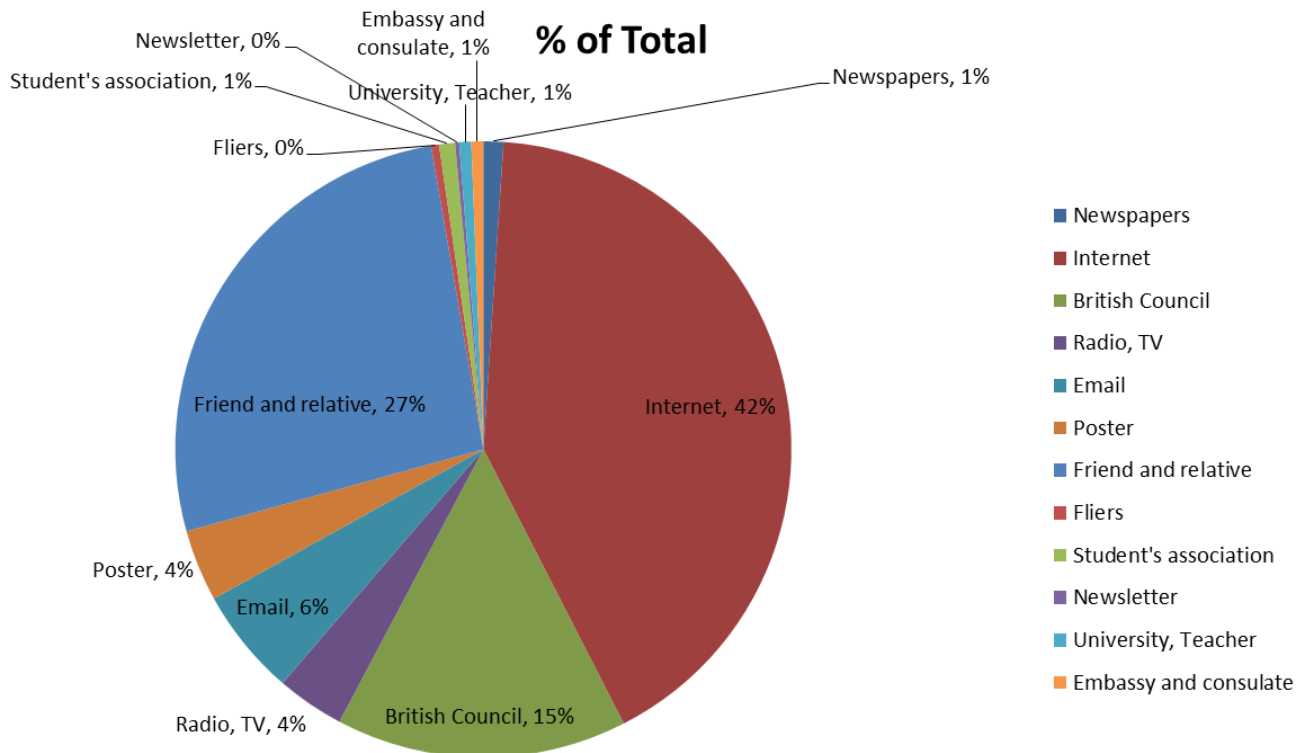
Visitors' age



Visitors' preferred areas of study



How visitors heard about the exhibition



Marketing

The exhibition was promoted through an integrated marketing campaign leveraging the strength of British Council's digital communication channels in Bulgaria, as well as our extensive local expertise in education programmes and services.

More than 50% the exhibition budget was spent on Marketing.



British Council customers

The exhibition was promoted to all British Council customers such as English students, IELTS and Cambridge exam candidates. Each of them was given exhibition leaflets upon registration or visiting the office.

Social media

We delivered a large scale social media campaign through British Council Bulgaria's very popular fan page on Facebook, with around 27,000 fans. The campaign included both paid advertising and organic reach in combination with enhanced social targeting of potential candidates to study in the UK.

Reach:
518,000 opportunities to view

Google advertising network

The social media promotion was combined with Google ads through various online display networks and using re-marketing techniques.

Reach
**3,836,108 impressions
(opportunities to view)**

15,441 clicks to the website

Radio

Three weeks of radio advertising on two of Sofia's most listened to radio stations (music and news & talk) during morning rush hours.



Outdoor (underground)

48 posters on the tube, inside trains, for a period of two weeks.



Print

Advertisements in the Study Abroad magazine which is the only Bulgarian publisher specialising in international

Schools

Exhibition posters were sent to the best secondary schools in Sofia, where most prospective candidates to study in the UK come from. Additionally, the head masters of these schools were sent letters from the Country Director of British Council



Visitor's Feedback

An online survey was filled out by **104 visitors** at the exit of the exhibition venue and visitors could win a prize for completing it. The questions were designed to gather quantitative statistics as well as qualitative remarks on reactions to our exhibition. Please see Appendix C for more details.

49% of visitors strongly agree and another **35% agree** that **'this was a high quality event'**.

89% of visitors answered with 'Yes' when asked **'Does visiting the exhibition help you decide to apply to a UK higher education institution?'**

53% of visitors strongly agree and another **39% agree** that **'the contact and interaction with British Council was easy'** for them.

Some visitors' quotes

'The exhibition met and even was beyond my expectations'

'Leading universities should be presented by 3 or more people – I had to queue'

'More leading universities'

'Bigger choice of universities from various parts of the UK'

'The exhibition fully met my expectations. It was very well organized and I easily found out which university was where. It was really helpful that British Council emailed me a reminder about the exhibition and its programme.'

Exhibitor's Feedback

At the exhibition there were **25 exhibitors** from UK HEIs of whom **21 filled our online exhibitor's feedback survey**.

90% of exhibitors answered with 'Yes' and **9%** were undecided when asked '**Would you consider coming back to the next British Council event in Bulgaria?**'

44% of exhibitors, who have been to a non-British Council exhibition in Bulgaria, thought that the **British Council event was better**.

When asked '**How likely are you to recommend the British Council to your peers and colleagues?**' **71%** of exhibitors answered with '**very likely**' and another **29%** answered with '**likely**'.

Some positive quotes from exhibitors

"The British Council staff have gone far and beyond what I would expect to be 'reasonable' professional help. They were absolutely fantastic and I felt completely supported throughout."

"I go to many British Council events around the world, and find Sofia the friendliest and best organised, which is why I love coming back"

"I think the events in Bulgaria are organised extremely well and can't in general criticise them"

Some negative quotes from exhibitors

'Perhaps a designated lunch break when stands are closed as I struggled to leave my post (it was very busy!).'

'There was no student database.'

'Maybe an organised meal when the event has been completed'

Future steps

There are several areas that both British Council and the UK institutions can work on to improve the overall arrangement and outcomes of the exhibition. The main findings and recommended next steps are outlined below:

British Council

- Exhibitor access to visitor data for the candidates they have meetings with. Some exhibitors complained that no database of visitors was provided to them. British Council is currently developing a global solution which is soon expected to be available to the Bulgaria team.
- A one-page brief with key points about the Bulgarian school system to be provided before the event together with the pre-departure documents.
- We will consider having an organised dinner with UK exhibitors at a restaurant serving traditional Bulgarian food on the evening of the exhibition day depending on budget constraints. This would be a good opportunity for networking between British Council staff and exhibitors and for collecting feedback about the exhibition.

UK Institutions

- As the visitors tended to have very specific questions and to have researched the institutions whose stands they visited, it is recommended that exhibitors be well-prepared to answer detailed and quite specific questions on programmes.
- It is suggested that university representatives have more information in work/study options and also that they are able to provide clear information on student finance.
- Bulgaria is a cost-sensitive market, therefore exhibitors are advised to be well prepared to answer questions about funding opportunities or scholarships that their institution might be able to offer.

The above points, though important, should not detract from what was a very successful exhibition. Next year's exhibition (Currently Scheduled for **24 October 2015**) will build upon the lessons learned and prove even more popular. We hope to see you there!

Appendix

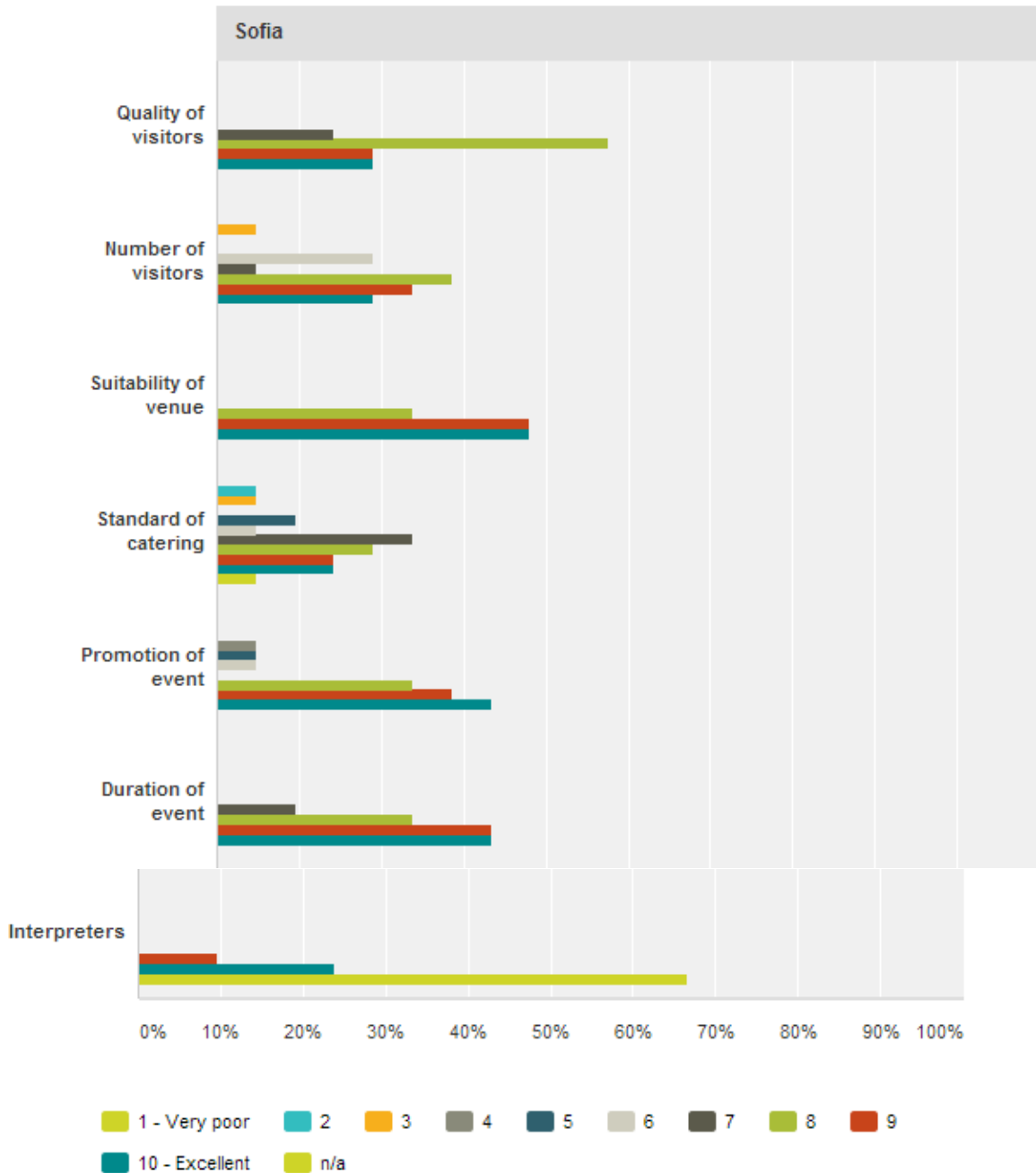
Appendix A - List of exhibitors (Alphabetical Order)

- 1 Bristol, University of the West of England
- 2 Cardiff University
- 3 De Montfort University
- 4 Kaplan Holborn College and Kaplan Financial
- 5 London Metropolitan University
- 6 London South Bank University
- 7 Nottingham Law School
- 8 Queen Mary University of London
- 9 Royal Holloway, University of London
- 10 Swansea University
- 11 Teesside University
- 12 The University of Law
- 13 The University of Sheffield International Faculty, City College
- 14 UCAS
- 15 University of Bath, School of Management
- 16 University of Birmingham College of Engineering and Physical Sciences
- 17 University of Cumbria
- 18 University of East Anglia
- 19 University of East London
- 20 University of Essex
- 21 University of Kent
- 22 University of Manchester
- 23 University of Reading
- 24 University of West London
- 25 WMG, University of Warwick

Appendix B - Exhibitor's survey

Please rate the following aspects of the event(s) that you participated in

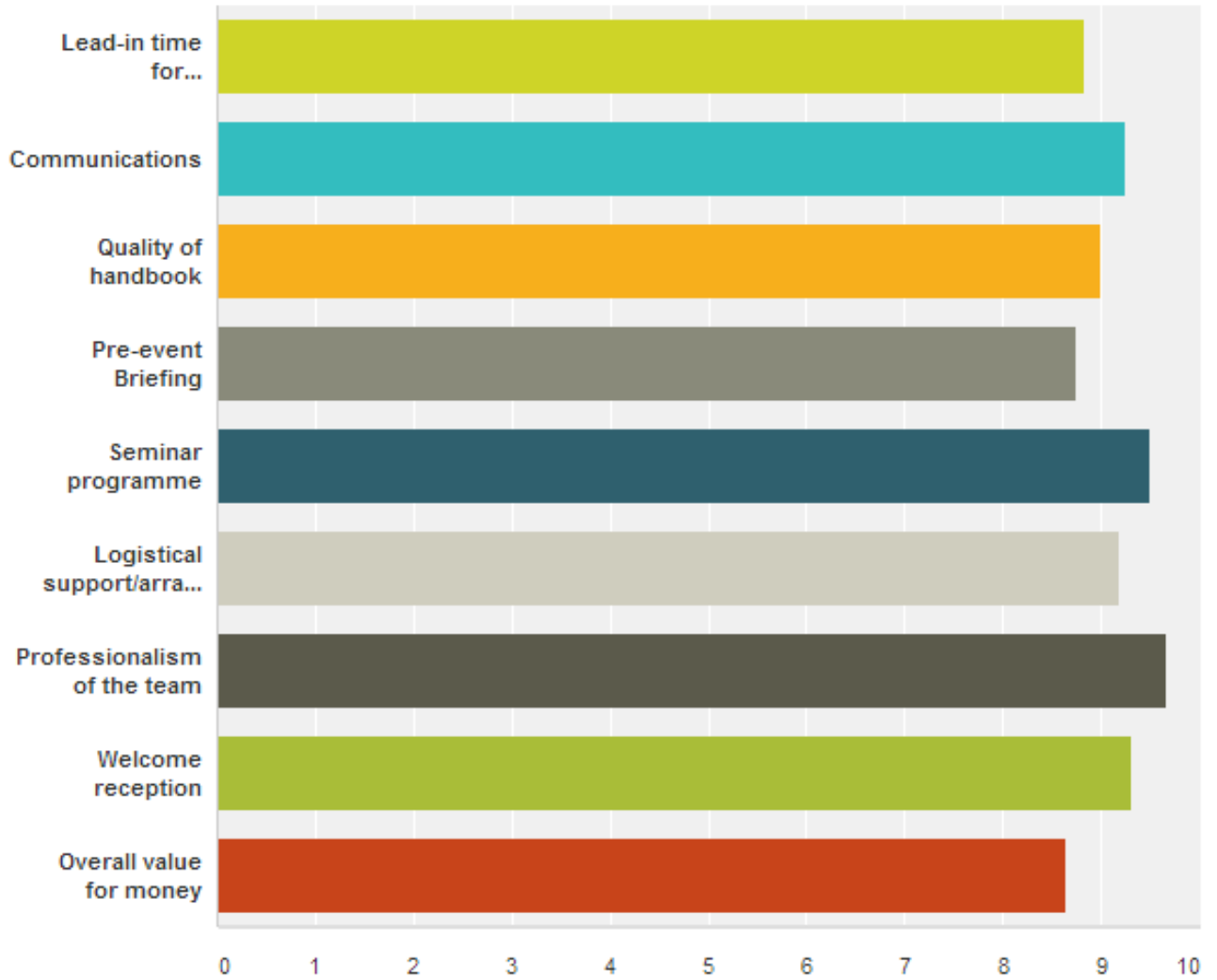
Answered: 21 Skipped: 0



Sofia										
	1 - Very poor	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 - Excellent
Quality of visitors	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	14.29% 3	47.62% 10	19.05% 4	19.05% 4
Number of visitors	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	4.76% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	19.05% 4	4.76% 1	28.57% 6	23.81% 5	19.05% 4
Suitability of venue	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	23.81% 5	38.10% 8	38.10% 8
Standard of catering	0.00% 0	4.76% 1	4.76% 1	0.00% 0	9.52% 2	4.76% 1	23.81% 5	19.05% 4	14.29% 3	14.29% 3
Promotion of event	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	4.76% 1	4.76% 1	4.76% 1	0.00% 0	23.81% 5	28.57% 6	33.33% 7
Duration of event	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	9.52% 2	23.81% 5	33.33% 7	33.33% 7
Interpreters	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	9.52% 2	23.81% 5

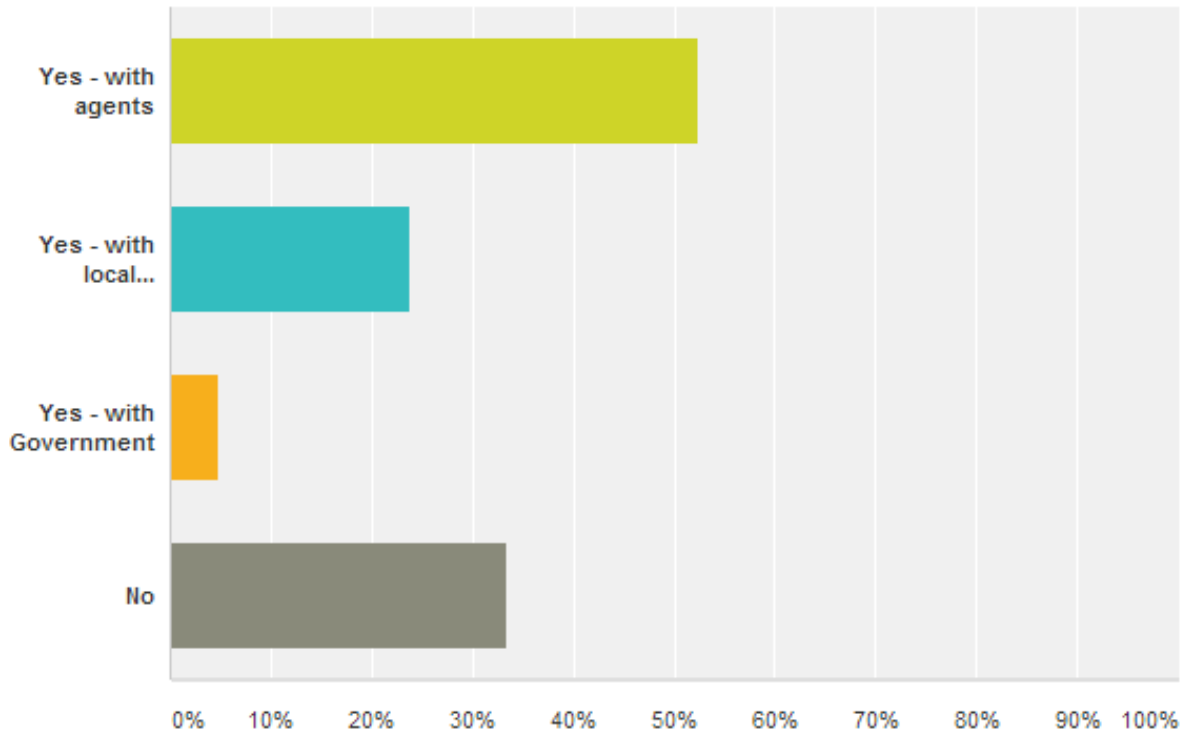
Please rate the following aspects of the British Council

Answered: 21 Skipped: 0



Have you developed/built on existing relationships during your visit?

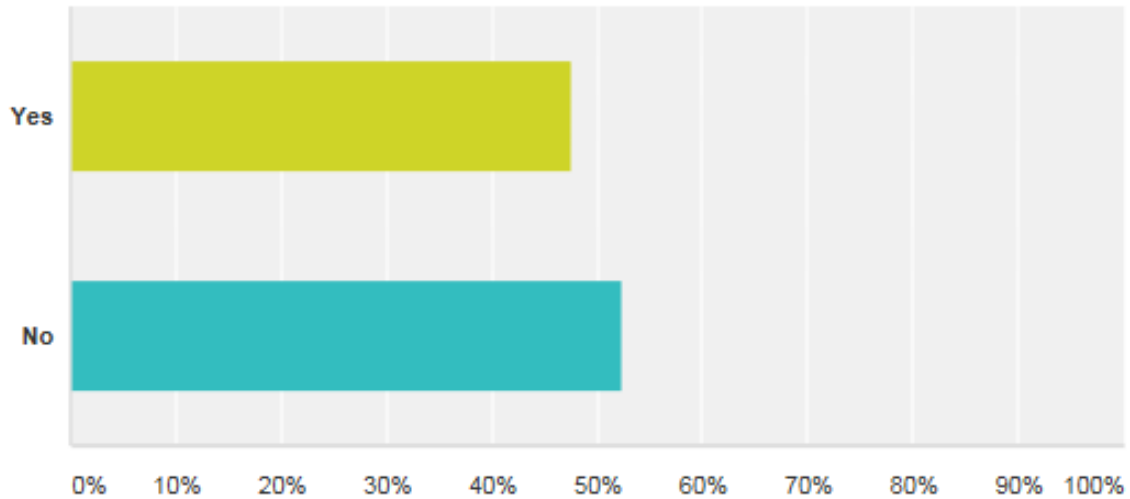
Answered: 21 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes - with agents	52.38%	11
Yes - with local institutions	23.81%	5
Yes - with Government	4.76%	1
No	33.33%	7

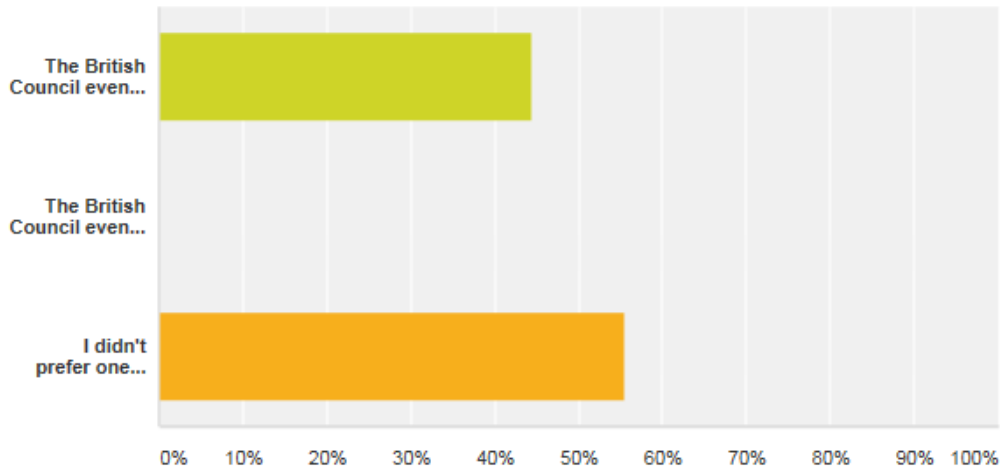
Have you been to any non-British Council organised events in Bulgaria previously?

Answered: 21 Skipped: 0



How does the British Council event compare to that event

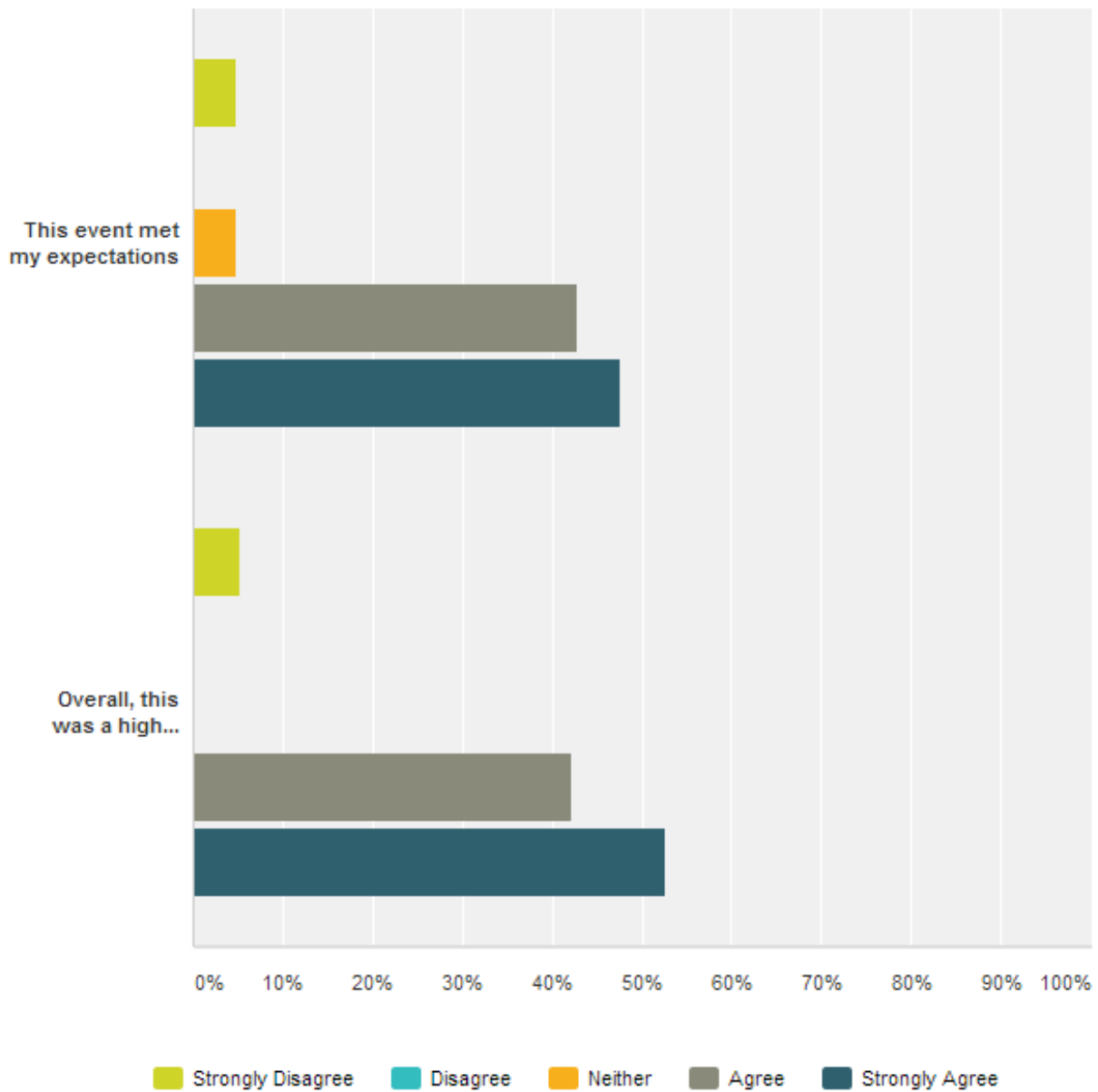
Answered: 9 Skipped: 12



Answer Choices	Responses	
The British Council event was better	44.44%	4
The British Council event was worse	0.00%	0
I didn't prefer one event over the other	55.56%	5
Total		9

Overall summary

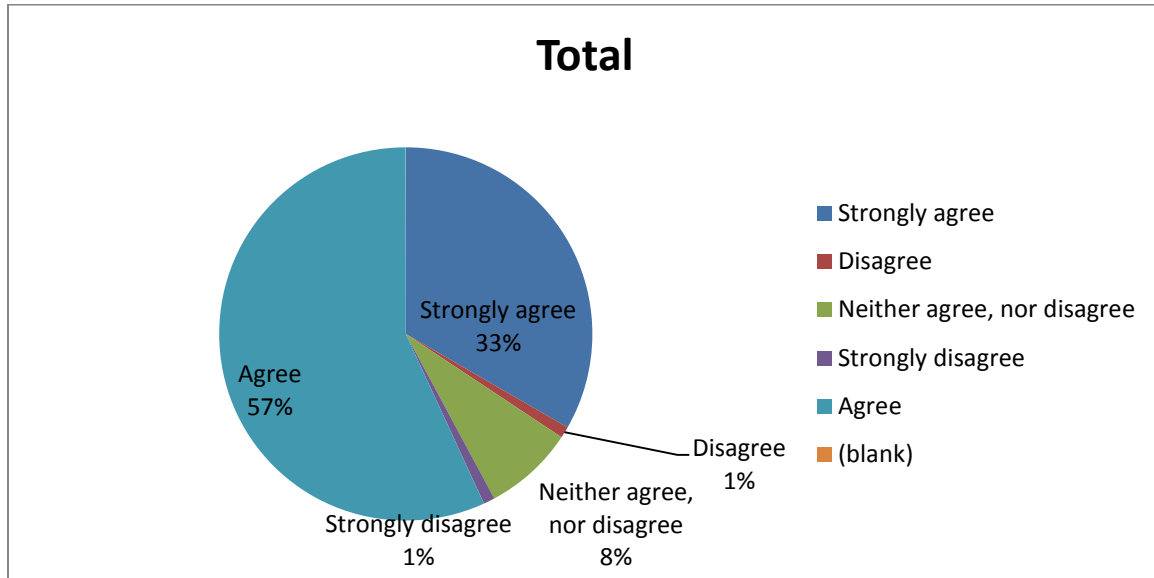
Answered: 21 Skipped: 0



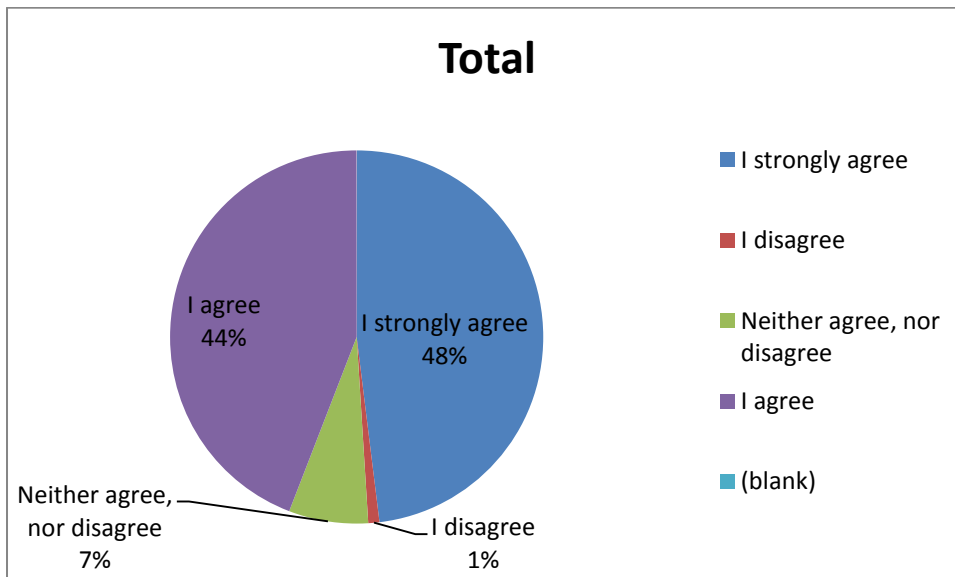
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
This event met my expectations	4.76% 1	0.00% 0	4.76% 1	42.86% 9	47.62% 10	21
Overall, this was a high quality event	5.26% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	42.11% 8	52.63% 10	19

- Appendix C - Visitor survey

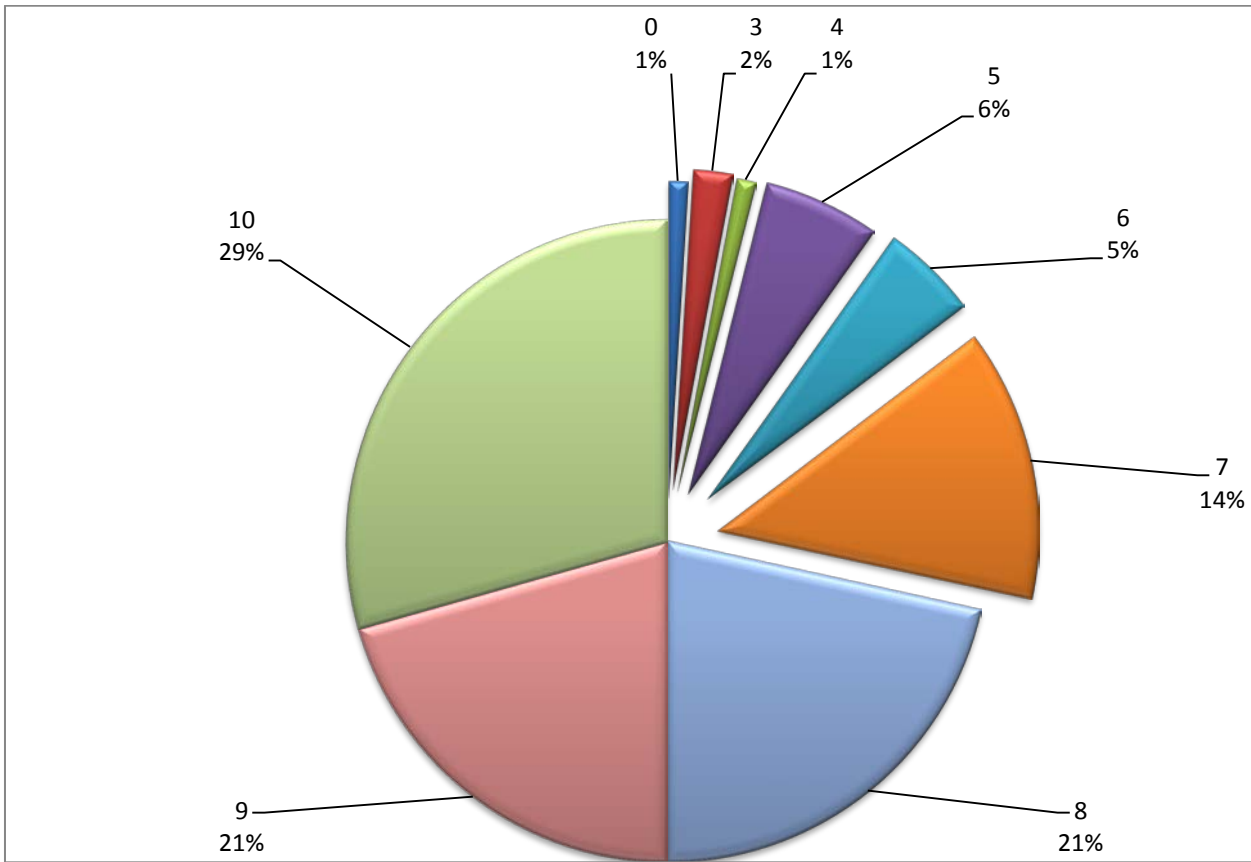
This exhibition met my expectations



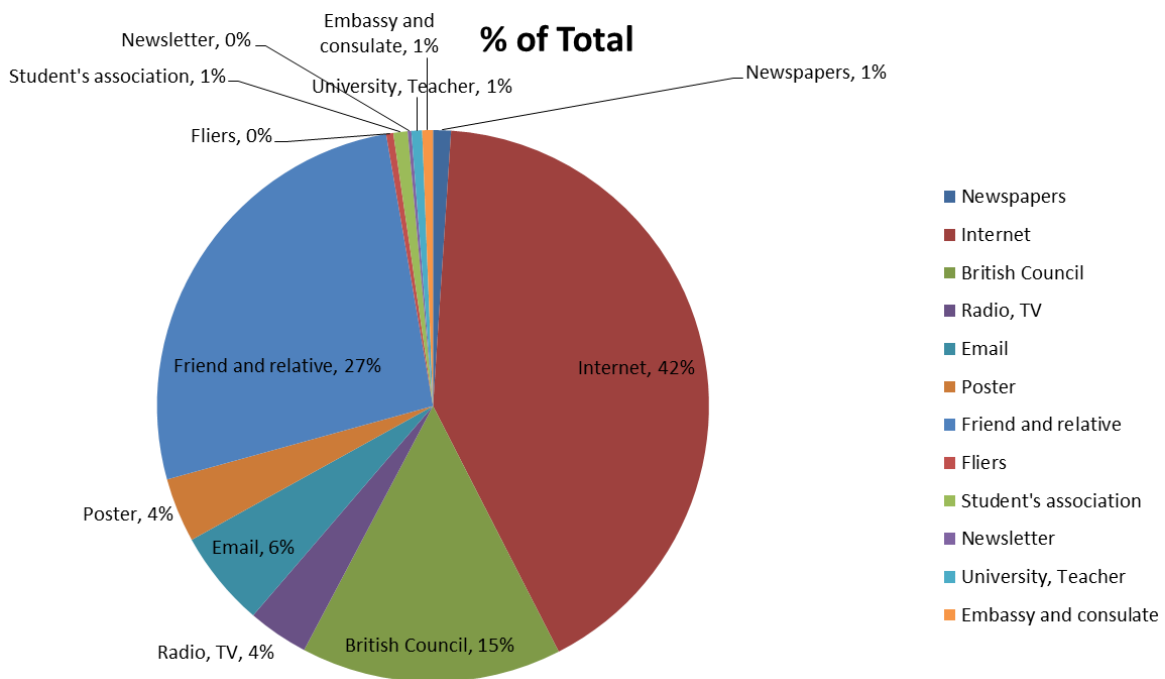
The British Council is among the leaders in this field



How likely is it that you would recommend the British Council to a friend or colleague?
(0=very unlikely to recommend; 10=very likely to recommend)



How did you hear about the exhibition?



Appendix D - Advertising and promotion plan

	Activity		Media/ Marketing Channel/ Company					
	Type	Details		June	July	August	Sept	Oct
1	PRINT	Distribution of event leaflets - to all BC customers registering for exams and courses	BC Customer Service Centre	X	X	X	X	X
2	PRINT	Distribution of event leaflets - all offices of Orange Education (BC partner) across the country	BC registration system			X	X	X
3	OUTDOOR	Targeted distribution of posters - at and around 120 schools and 40 universities and faculties	BG Plakat				X	X
4	OUTDOOR	Ads on central tube stations	Metroreklama					X
5	DIGITAL	Web banners	dnevnik.bg/ karieri.bg				X	X
6	DIGITAL	Facebook social ads	Facebook			X	X	X
7	DIGITAL	Facebook organic posts campaign	Facebook			X	X	X
8	DIGITAL	Facebook promoted posts	Facebook				X	X
9	DIGITAL	Google ads - remarketing campaign	Google				X	X
10	DIRECT MAILING	BC monthly newsletter (BC mailing list - 10,000+ contacts)	Newsletter			X	X	X
11	DIRECT MAILING	through partner networks	email					X
12	DIRECT MAILING	Special newsletter (BC mailing list - 10,000+ contacts)	Newsletter					X
13	RADIO	Radio ads	bTV radio					X
14	DIRECT MAILING	BC teacher contacts	Email				X	
15	PR	Press release sent to the media	Press					X
16	PR	PR text in specialised media	karieri.bg				X	X
17	PRINT	Study Abroad Magazine ad (media partnership)	Study Abroad Magazine				X	X
18	ONLINE	Study Abroad Magazine web banner and news item (media partnership)	Study Abroad Magazine				X	X

End of Report