



Can discussions only actually help us?

Katerina Danilova

Head of communications, Estonian Opinion Festival (“Arvamusfestival”), Estonia

**International conference „Integration Challenges in a Radicalizing World“
29 – 30 November 2016, Tallinn, Estonia**



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Making of: Arvamusfestival 2016



What is the Opinion Festival?

Opinion Festival is a **meeting place** for the **entire community**, that gives a word to different political views. The festival is **open to all** active-minded people in Estonia as well as elsewhere, who together would like to discuss **issues that are important** for all of us.



Is it popular?

Participants



2013

2000
participants



2014

4000
participants



2015

10 000
participants



2016

9 000
participants

Discussions



2013

80 topics



2014

160
topics



2015

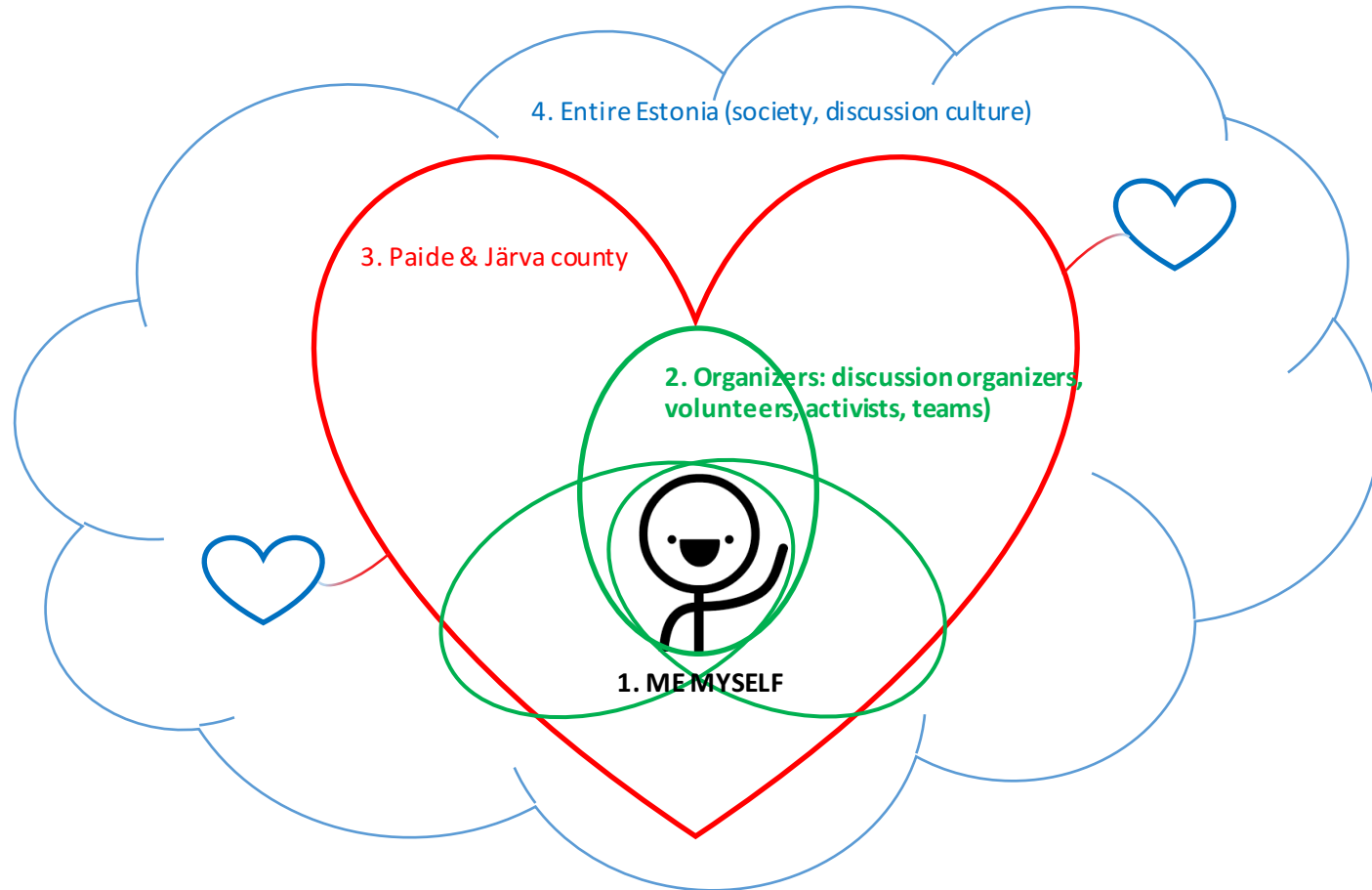
224
topics



2016

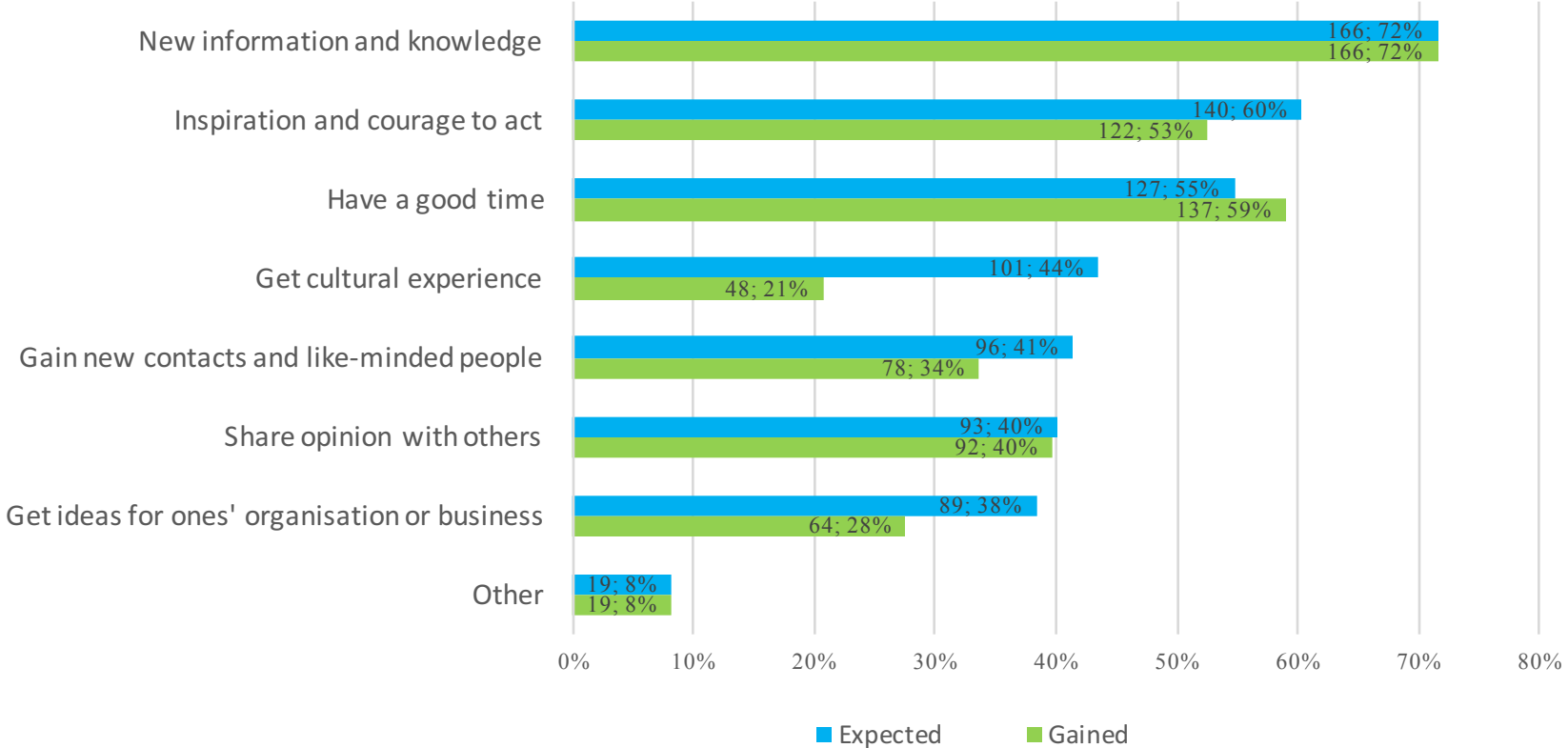
230
topics

How is Opinion Festival useful?



What do participants get from festival?

Feedback: what was expected (blue) and gained (green)



Your way to Opinion Festival...

Call for suggesting topics. Open for everybody. You propose = you organize

January

We give a feedback and choose topics

February

In cooperation with others you create your thematical area: 3 to 5 organiz./area

March

Create your discussion & learn how to make it great

April

May

Draft of festival programme is ready!

June

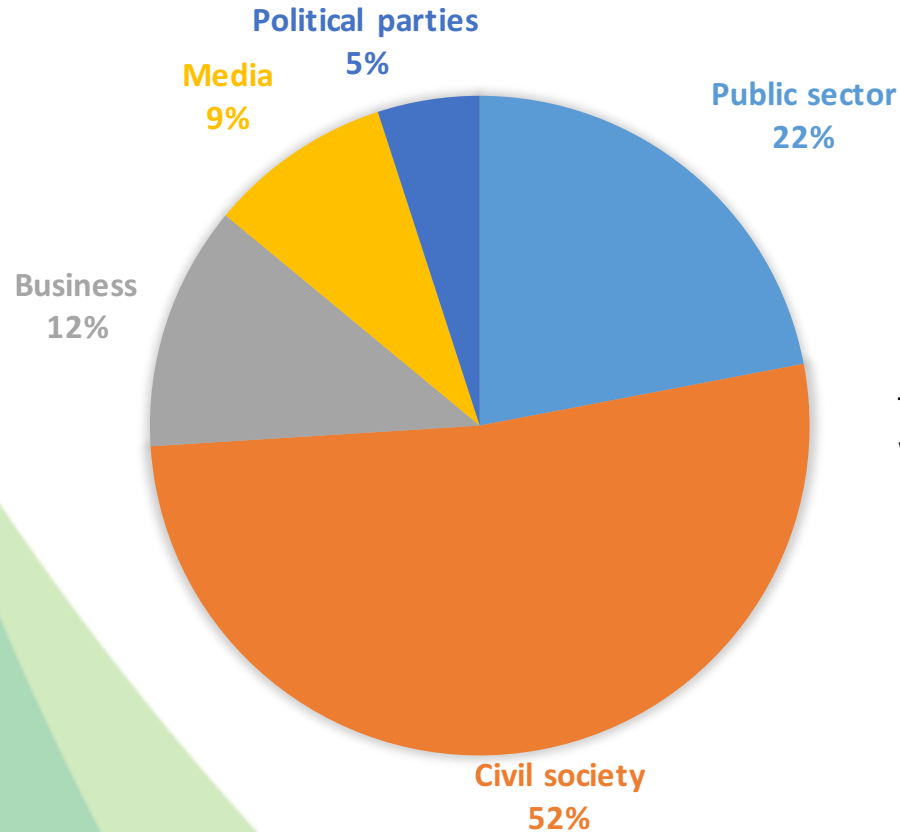
Deal with technical details

July

It's festival!

What about cooperation?

ORGANIZERS 2016



Total number on topics: 230
We organized: 1

How do discussions help to understand each other and accept plurality of opinions?

In order to create a polite and constructive atmosphere, we suggest that the festival participants remember and follow some 'rules of the game':

1. We respect the time limit, the discussion leaders and all the other festival participants.
2. We prove what we claim.
3. We listen: it is as important as speaking.
4. We are not biased towards or against the people who participate in the discussion.
5. We react to the idea, not to the person.
6. We focus on the solution: stop briefly to criticise and then offer solutions.

What about real changes and actions?

1. How do you measure the change in ones' head after 1 discussion? Is it necessary? Is action always necessary?
2. We've got some: new theater, new school, new theatre performance, new magazine, new local cafe, new organizations, new ideas, new contacts.
3. But at the end – we give people good emotions, hope and a little more trust in fellow citizens

Challenges to accomplish. How to...

1. ...achieve, that all discussions have good arguments, different opinions and some new opinion leaders?
2. ...attract participants from small villages and / or with non-liberal views?
3. ...affect media coverage in a way, that is heard voice of non-prominent leaders and topics?
4. ...achieve, that political parties see festival as an opportunity to be open-minded and populism-free?
5. ...achieve, that festival's atmosphere is transferred to all everyday discussions (in school, at work or in public and also in leading the country).



Presentation given at International conference **Integration Challenges in a Radicalising World**

29 – 30 November 2016 in Tallinn, Estonia

For more conference materials and presentations
please visit www.misakonverents.ee



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