



Newfoundland
Labrador



Open

Open Government Initiative

Public Engagement Session
Gander-New-Wes-Valley Region
September 8, 2014
Glovertown, NL

EE2012-G

An open government...

- Is transparent, accountable and responsive to the public (both citizens and stakeholder groups)
- Increases access to information/data
- Provides meaningful opportunities for dialogue and collaboration between/with government and the public
- Uses innovative activities, strategies and approaches to better connect people to their government
- Leads to enhanced knowledge-sharing, innovation, dialogue, trust and collaboration which in turn leads to better policies, decisions, programs and services

What is the Open Government Initiative?

- A bold and ambitious Government-wide initiative launched by the Premier in March (with the OPE as 'lead-department')
- An initiative that will result in GNL's first ever Open Government Action Plan
- An effort that is underpinned by an extensive public engagement process
- An effort that will lead to enhanced data and information sharing, better engagement and collaboration

Open Government Initiative

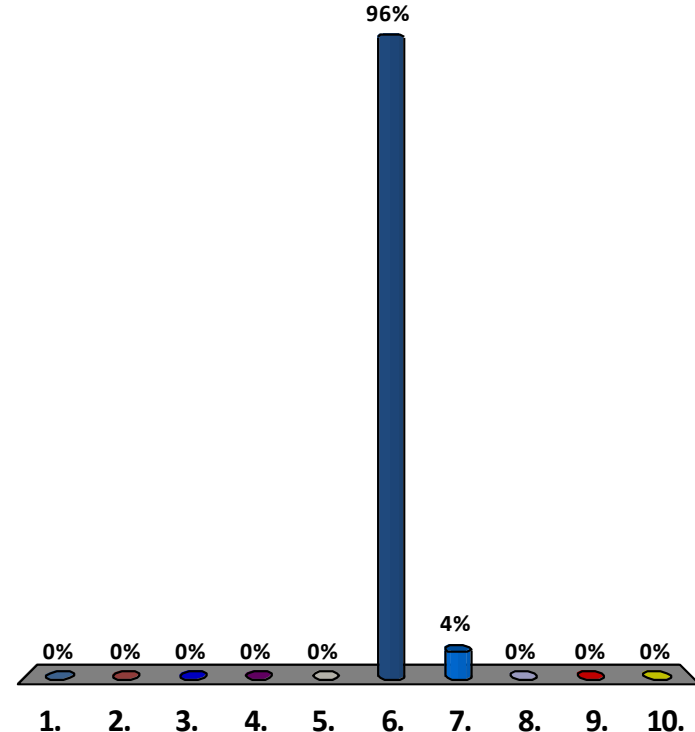
- Based on international standards/best practices
- In keeping with many other jurisdictions
- 4 pillars:
 - Open Information
 - Open Data
 - Dialogue
 - Collaboration

Purpose of this session

- Information sharing
- Idea generation (brainstorming possible actions)

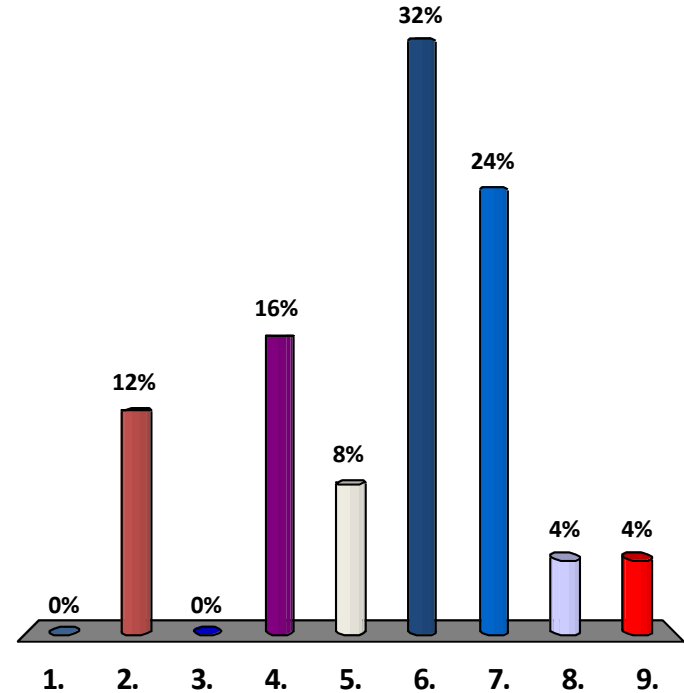
The region in which I live is...

1. Labrador
2. St. Anthony - Port au Choix
3. Corner Brook - Rocky Harbour
4. Stephenville - Port aux Basques
5. Grand Falls - Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton
6. Gander - New-Wes-Valley
7. Clarenville - Bonavista
8. Burin Peninsula
9. Northeast Avalon
10. Other Avalon



Today I am or am representing:

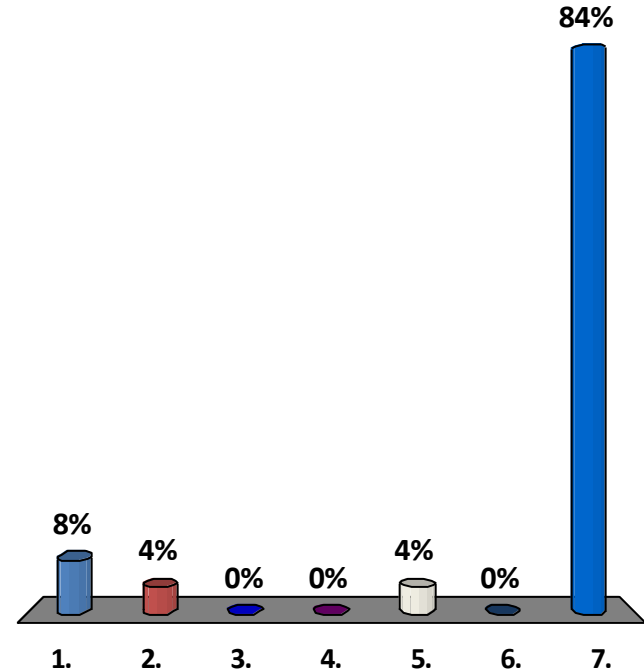
1. Academic Institution
2. Business
3. Labour
4. Not-for profit
5. Interest/Advocacy/Advisory group
6. Citizen
7. Municipality
8. Government
9. Other



I previously provided input into the Open Government Initiative by:

(Select all that apply)

1. Attending an in-person session
2. Completing an online survey
3. Email submission
4. Mail submission
5. Social media
6. Telephone conversation
7. I have not provided input prior to today



Public Engagement Process

- Overview -

What we heard

Engagement Efforts

- 30 information and engagement sessions
- 400+ participants
- 30 online feedback forms collected
- 260+ questionnaires completed
- 1500 unique ideas, comments and suggestions about how to make GNL more open

Emerging Themes

- Accessibility/User friendliness
- Participation/Technology
- Collaboration Challenges
- Government Responsiveness

Theme Discussion

Accessibility/User friendliness

Examples: What we heard

- “Sometimes we know the info/data is available, but we can’t access it or find it”
- “Right now, you have to open like 60 different documents and search them all individually”
- “No central place to collect and store data”
- “Not every report has it available to pull out the specific data that the public are looking for”
- “Public accounts, estimates, budget speeches, etc. they are in pictures not data formats. Need to pull out every piece of data. It is not in an excel or usable format.”

Key Ideas: Other Jurisdictions

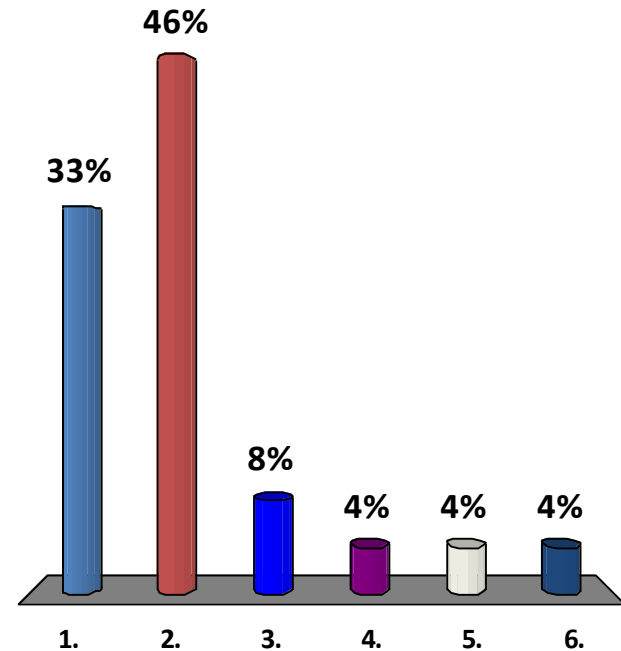
- “One stop shop” for data/information
- Making data/information easier to use
- Getting public input re: what data/information is priority
- “Open by Default” approach

Accessibility/User friendliness

Polling

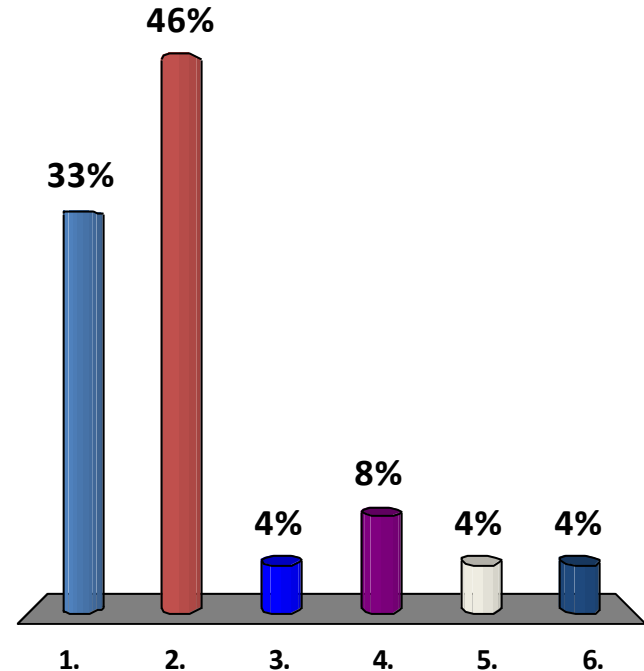
Government should create a “one stop shop” website and app that would make it easier to access government information and data.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Unsure
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree
6. I do not know



Government should develop an 'open by default' data and information policy that would improve access to government information and data.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Unsure
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree
6. I do not know



Do you have other ideas or suggestions about how government information and data could be more accessible and user friendly?

Discussion Question

Theme Discussion

Participation/Technology

Examples: What we heard

- “The current [GNL] website is not designed to reach out to people”
- “We are asked to attend sessions but there’s a feeling that the decision has already been made”
- “Most times I think that it is a done deal. It’s more optics. It’s disingenuous, not open enough and no follow up”
- “Public sessions are intimidating; will I be asked something?, how do I dress?, will I be smart enough?, etc...”

Examples: What we heard

- “Locations are not always accessible. Public Sessions are not geared or accommodating to persons with disabilities. Logistics need to be accessible to individuals with disabilities (physical, hearing, seeing)”
- “Something to remember with online things such as social media is to keep in mind an older population who don’t use such technologies”
- “Need something in place for seniors, those that are not tech savvy”

Key Ideas: Other Jurisdictions

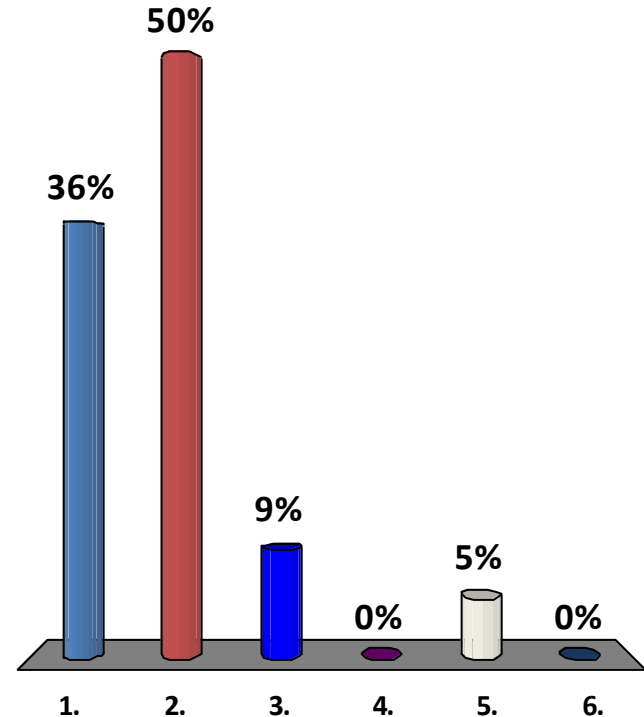
- “Open Policy-Making”
- Online Platforms for Engagement (including apps)

Participation/Technology

Polling

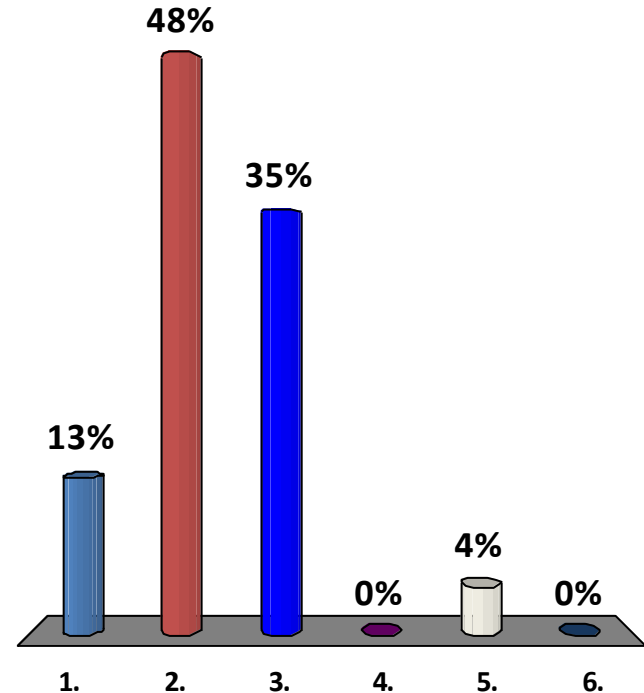
Government should use innovative engagement tools/approaches to increase opportunities for public input

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Unsure
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree
6. I do not know



Government should create a tool (app) that serves as a one-stop-shop for engagement (lists and reports on all opportunities; allows citizens to provide input, etc.).

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Unsure
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree
6. I do not know



Do you have other ideas or suggestions about how government can do a better job of engaging the public?

Discussion Question

Theme Discussion

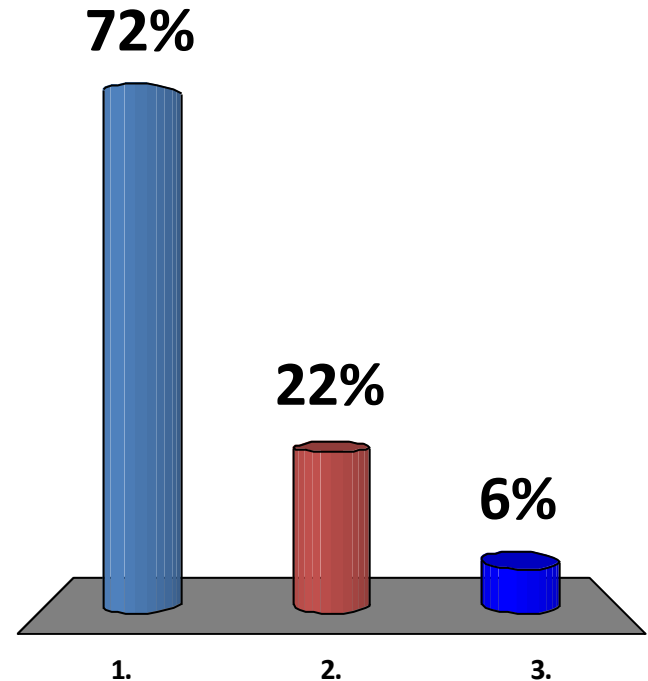
Collaboration Challenges

Examples: What we heard

- “Access to bureaucrats is very limited”
- “Clarification of roles in the collaboration is needed upfront”
- “Determining where like-minded entities with a lot in common exist and building bridges”
- “Providing money doesn’t equal a partnership”
- “Manage and clarify the expectations of such collaborations or partnerships”

Have you been part of a group that has had collaborative relationships with the GNL?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Unsure



Do you have any ideas or suggestions on how government can be a better partner when collaborating with external groups?

Discussion Question

Theme Discussion

Government Responsiveness

Examples: What we heard

- “There needs to be a balance struck. ‘Engaging just to engage’ or ‘engaging to look good’ is not a good way to engage”
- “Engagement should only take place if the process will influence the decision at hand, and ensure that participants feel respected and heard”

Examples: What we heard

- “Timely reporting and follow-up needs to be a priority, preferably within a matter of weeks”
- “No acknowledgement from government that your opinions were received or of any value. If you pay money to consult with the public then it would be nice to get some form of acknowledgement that what you had to say was heard”

Key Ideas: Other Jurisdictions

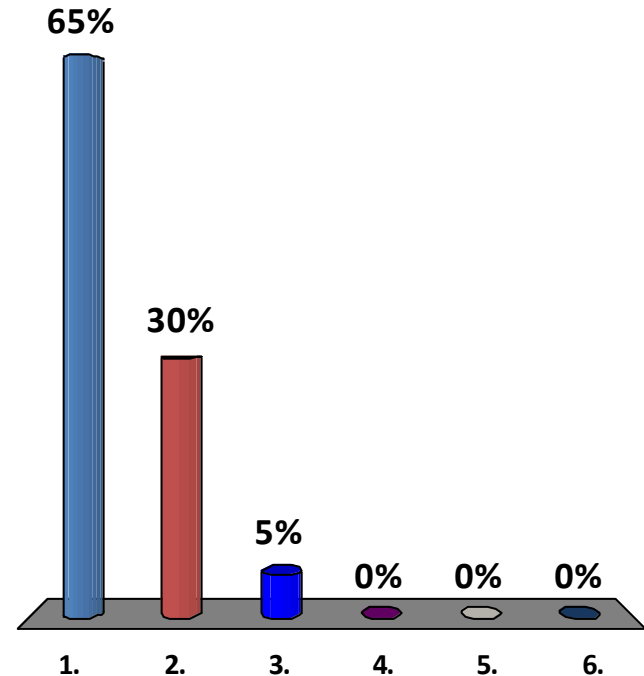
- Pilot projects to improve communication
- Obtain/use (with permission) contact information to keep people up to date re: how their input affected decisions)

Government Responsiveness

Polling

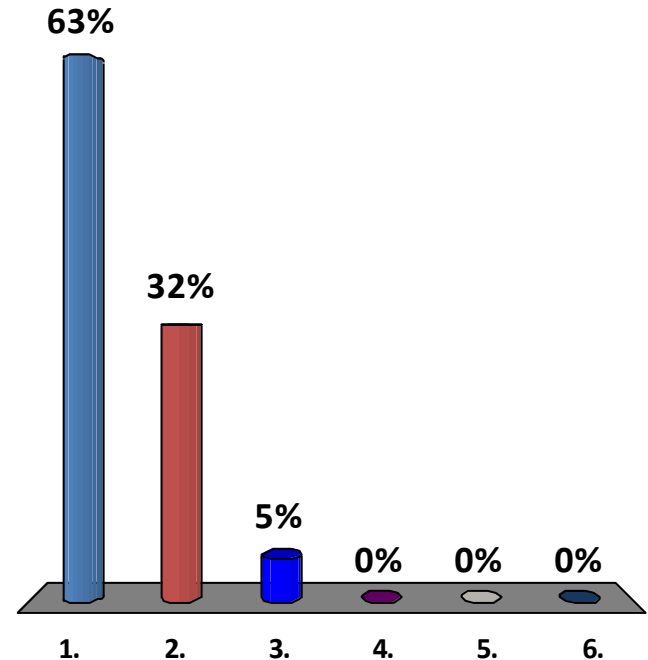
Government should consider new ways to improve its communications with citizens.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Unsure
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree
6. I do not know



Government should obtain/use contact information (with permission) to keep citizens up to date on engagement events and results.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Unsure
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree
6. I do not know



Do you have other ideas or suggestions about how government could be more responsive or proactive when it comes to informing citizens of the outcomes of a public engagement activity or process?

Discussion Question

Do you have any additional ideas re: possible actions that the GNL should consider when developing its first Open Government Action Plan?

Discussion Question

Theme Team

Report Back

Idea/Suggestions: Accessibility/User friendliness

- More information needs to be made available but it should not negatively affect or incriminate an individual/group
- Technology as lead to a loss of personal connections at government offices – sometimes need to talk to a person
- Government website needs to be more user friendly – simple to search for information, up to date, simple language, timely release
- Better access to government members

Idea/Suggestions: Participation/Technology

- More public awareness – utilize technology (twitter, email, bizpal)
- Need to create a cultural shift within government to create trust – people need to feel that they are being listened to
- Development of a pro/con fact sheet on the impacts of potential policies
- Need communication/engagement on major projects – engage before they start
- MHA's work in tandem with engagement officials

Idea/Suggestions: Collaboration Challenges

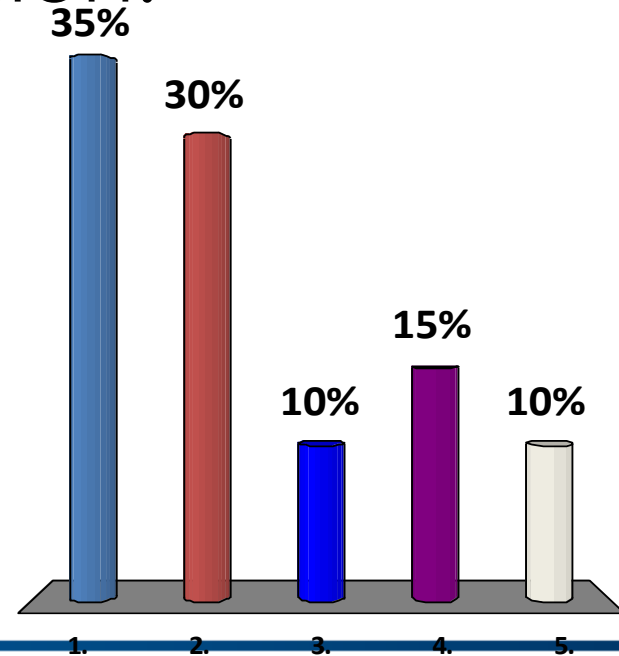
- Departments need to establish trust with their partners – decisions can't be “pre-made”, need to listen to others in the partnership, treat everyone as equals
- Need decision makers at the table – participating the collaboration
- Government needs to keep people informed on the progress of decision making
- Decisions need to be made faster

Idea/Suggestions: Government Responsiveness

- Make use of regional networks to circulate information (municipalities, community groups, etc.)
- Need to make better use of technology (Facebook, other social media, TV programming similar to CPAC)
- Government needs to communicate the impact of the input collected
- Implement a progress tracker – show how information is being used, progress on how is it impacting decisions/policies

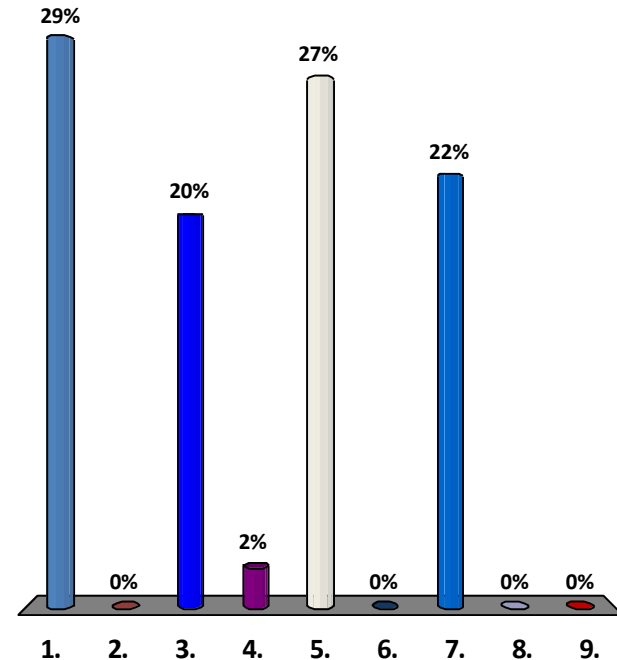
I was given enough notice to participate in today's session.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree



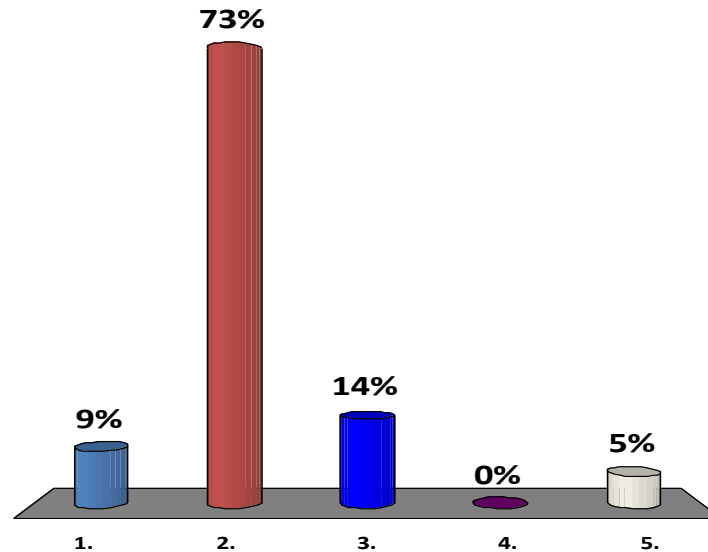
I found today's session (select all that apply)

1. Informative
2. Uninformative
3. A good use of my time
4. A waste of my time
5. Engaging
6. Unengaging
7. Relevant
8. Irrelevant
9. Other



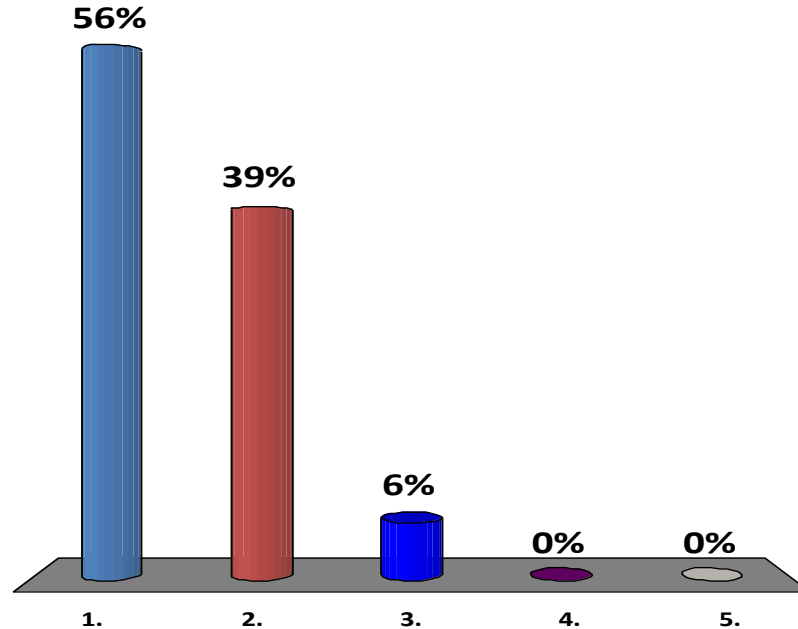
I liked the format of today's session.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree



I had an opportunity to have my say today.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree



Open Government Commitment

- Comprehensive Public Engagement (ongoing)
- Online tools; social media; feedback forms (ongoing)
- Face to face meetings and other interactive dialogue sessions (ongoing)
- Input received posted, in a timely manner (ongoing)
- Determine themes and prepare and release a “what we heard” document (fall)

Open Government Commitment

- Release a Draft Action Plan with a request for additional public input (fall)
- Release a final Action Plan (late fall/early winter)

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