

Permaculture Forum 2025

Evaluation report – part of Monitoring & Evaluation for
Budweis2028 European Capital of Culture

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Basic information about the Forum & research

When: 20-21.02.2025

Where: Ceske Budejovice, Beseda venue

By whom: B2028 ECoC team

For whom: mainly culture actors from Budweis and the region + ECoC team and curators, but inspirations coming from experts coming from all places, including abroad

What for:

1. Presentation of the ECoC program with the underlying idea / philosophy for every year + special focus on how topic presented every year is linked to ECoC goals and values -> informing and engaging people into ECoC
2. Bringing new inspirations and good practices on the topic undertaken (2025: growth and its, as seen by local and international experts -> encouraging people to reframe their perspective, not necessarily pushing to do concrete things, but more of providing opportunity to learn about alternatives and some new trends, bringing focus on topics that are important for the ECoC and across Europe, resonating with other people on the spot, finding motivation to change things

Sources of data for this report:

- information about the project available online and in internal project sheets
- an online questionnaire sent out to all Forum participants, including speakers and organisers; data gathered from 21 February till 4 March 2025; in spite of numerous requests and reminders only 48 answers gathered (30,2% of attendees)

Research design, data collection, analysis, and interpretation was conducted by Aleksandra Koltun. AI language models provided technical assistance in preliminary identification of patterns in data and draft text generation, with all outputs critically reviewed, fact-checked, and extensively revised to ensure accuracy and analytical rigor.

Who took part in the Forum?

159 people were registered and participated in the Forum which is a significant increase comparing to 2024 edition when there were 111 participants. In 2025 25,8% of participants represented various NGOs, 20,1% - public institutions, 17,0% owned a business or were hired in private companies. Every tenth person worked in the public administration sector (mainly city halls). Overall, 88 organisations were represented, which is more than double the previous year's figure (when there were 25 organisations). 38,4% of organisations represented in the Forum were located in Ceske Budejovice, another 24,5% - in South-Bohemian region, and 23,3% - elsewhere in the Czech Republic.

Table 1. Organisations represented in Forum in 2025

| Registered participants of the Forum by type of organization represented | N | % |
|--|-----|--------|
| nevládní organizace | 41 | 25,8% |
| veřejná instituce | 32 | 20,1% |
| firma | 27 | 17,0% |
| other / not known | 19 | 12,0% |
| public administration | 17 | 10,7% |
| artist | 4 | 2,5% |
| institute terciárního vzdělávání - univerzita | 3 | 1,9% |
| total | 159 | 100,0% |

The Forum achieved its goals of attracting diverse participants from various types of organizations and different regions. The data shows successful cross-sector

representation spanning NGOs, public institutions, businesses, and public administration, while geographically extending from local České Budějovice organizations to the broader South Bohemian region and other parts of the Czech Republic.

In the survey we asked whether respondents had to rearrange their personal or professional life in order to take part in Forum. One in four respondents denied this (25,0%). 39,6% had to take some actions at their workplace, e.g. transfer some meetings or find a person to fill in during the Forum. 16,7% of respondents said they participated in Forum during their private time. Noticeably, 6 people (12,5%) had to take a holiday at work.

Complete results to the question “Museli jste kvůli účasti na fóru přearganzovat něco ve svém pracovním a/nebo soukromém životě?” are below (one could choose more than one answer):

- ne, nemusel/a jsem: 12 respondents; 25,0%
- ano, musel/a jsem přearganzovat své činnosti (např. posouvat termíny, najít někoho jiného pro denní úkoly,...) : N=19 ; 39,6%
- ano, musel/a jsem najít osobu, která by mě zastoupila v práci, nebo si přearganzovat vlastní práci, abych tam mohl/a být N=12 ; 25,0%
- ano, bralo mi to z času s rodinou / jiných soukromých aktivit: N=8; 16,7%
- ano, musel/a jsem si vzít volno (z vlastní dovolené): N=6; 12,5%
- ano, musel/a jsem zajistit péči o své děti nebo jiné osoby v mé péči: N=6; 12,5%
- ano, musel/a jsem si zajistit speciální dopravu na fórum – nebylo snadné se sem dostat z místa mého bydliště: N=4; 8,3%

58,3% of respondents were already engaged into some activities organized by ECoC, 31,3% - were not. This shows that Forum works well as space of encounter for people that are close to ECoC, but also as an entry point for those who are yet not connected to the initiative.



79,2% of respondents took part in some professional capacity building before the Forum, in 2023 or 2024; 20,8% said they did not.

Motivations

The survey revealed different reasons for Forum attendance, with relationship-building as the main driver. Two-thirds of participants (66,7%) were motivated by the opportunity to meet and build relationships with other organizations and people. This was followed by seeking inspiration for new activities and ideas (45,8%) and connecting with people who share similar interests (41,7%).

Trust in the Budweis 2028 team played a significant role, with over one-third of participants (35,4%) attending based on positive previous experiences with the organizing team. Specific content interest was less common, with less than a quarter (22,9%) motivated by particular lectures or workshops. Learning objectives in general attracted fewer participants (16,7%), suggesting that networking and inspiration took precedence over formal educational goals.

Personal reasons were less common, with small numbers attending for enjoyment and entertainment (8,3%) or upon recommendation from friends or colleagues (4,2%).

Complete results to the question “Z jakých důvodů jste se přihlásil/a do tohoto ročníku fóra??” are below (one could choose up to three answers):

- seznámit se a budovat vztahy s ostatními organizacemi / lidmi: 32 respondents chose this answer; 66.7%
- najít inspiraci (pro nové aktivity, nápady): N=22; 45.8%
- setkat se s lidmi, kteří se zajímají o podobné aktivity: N=20; 41.7%
- na základě předchozích zkušeností s týmem Budějovic 2028 jsem věděl/a, že to bude stát za to / bude dobré / přínosné: N=17; 35.4%
- zajímala mě konkrétní přednáška/workshop: N=11; 22.9%
- naučit se něco nového: N=8; 16.7%
- pro radost a zábavu: N=4; 8.3%
- na doporučení (přátel / spolupracovníků): N=2; 4.2%

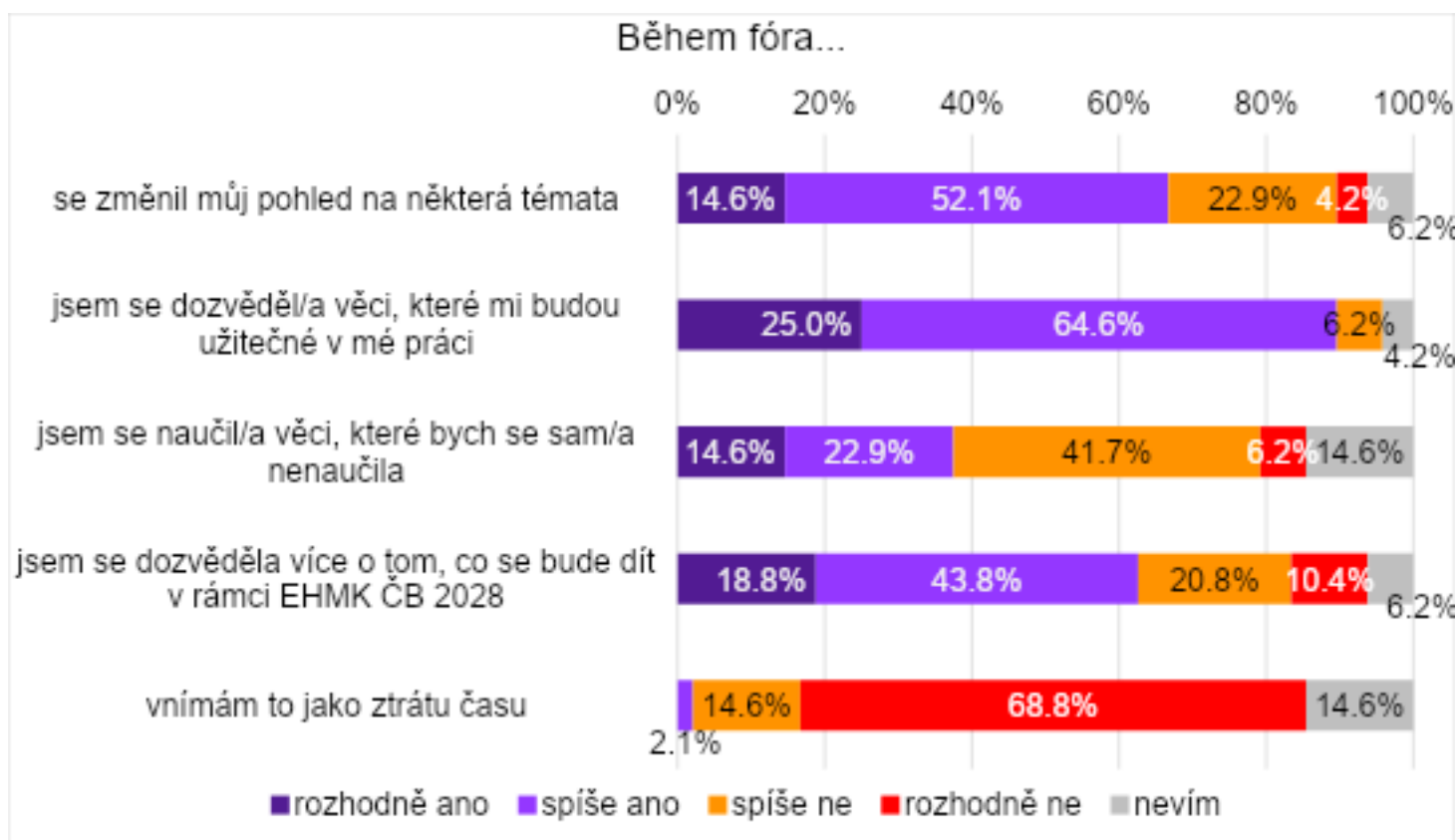
Knowledge transfer and follow-up actions

Most participants found the Forum useful for their work. Nearly 90% of respondents (89,6%) reported learning things useful for their work, with 25% expressing strong agreement. Two-thirds of participants (66,7%) experienced a shift in perspective on certain topics, though only 14,6% characterized this change as definitive. Results were more limited regarding unique learning experiences, with 37,5% of participants indicating they learned things they wouldn't have learned independently, while 41,7% disagreed with this statement.

The Forum achieved moderate success in informing participants about the ECoC program, though the 62,6% knowledge gain rate suggests room for improvement in program communication effectiveness.

The great majority (83,4%) did not perceive the Forum as a waste of time, with only 2,1% viewing it negatively in this regard.

Figure 1. Knowledge transfer in the Forum



Participants expressed varied levels of commitment to follow-up activities. The strongest intention was sharing Forum experiences with absent colleagues and friends (79,2% positive responses). Knowledge development showed solid commitment, with 64,6% planning to further develop acquired knowledge and skills. Program-related sharing with colleagues and supervisors attracted 60,4% positive responses, while direct engagement with the Budweis 2028 team interested 58,3% of participants.

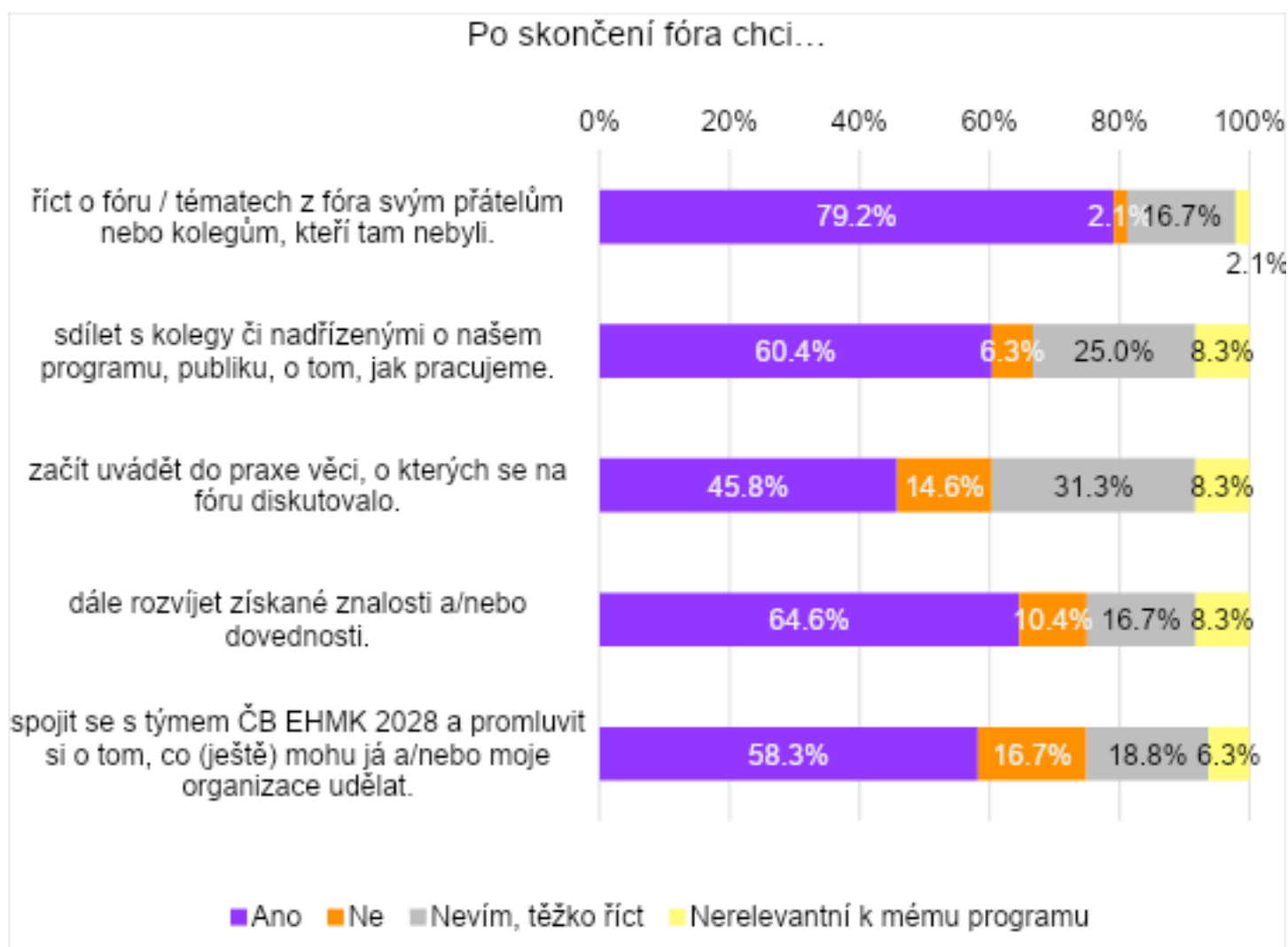
The most challenging area proved to be practical implementation, with only 45,8% expressing intention to put Forum discussions into practice, while 14,6% explicitly stated they would not, and 31,3% remained uncertain. This suggests a gap between inspiration and practical application.

A notable pattern emerges when examining uncertainty levels across different follow-up intentions. The “don’t know/hard to say” responses were relatively high, particularly for program-related sharing with colleagues (25,0%), practical implementation (31,3%), and connecting with the Budweis 2028 team (18,8%). Even



knowledge development, despite showing strong positive commitment, recorded 16,7% uncertainty.

Figure 2. Follow-up initiatives after the Forum



Comparison with 2024 data reveals some concerning trends. Intentions regarding practical implementation declined from 73,8% to 45,8%, while the proportion of uncertain responses increased significantly from 21,0% to 31,3%. Similarly, knowledge development commitments decreased from 81,0% to 64,6%, with uncertainty rising slightly from 14,3% to 16,7%. These patterns suggest that while the 2025 Forum maintained participant engagement, it may have generated less clarity about concrete next steps compared to the previous year's edition.

Overall, the Forum performed well in its inspirational objectives, with two-thirds of participants experiencing perspective changes and nearly 90% gaining work-relevant knowledge. However, the translation from inspiration to concrete

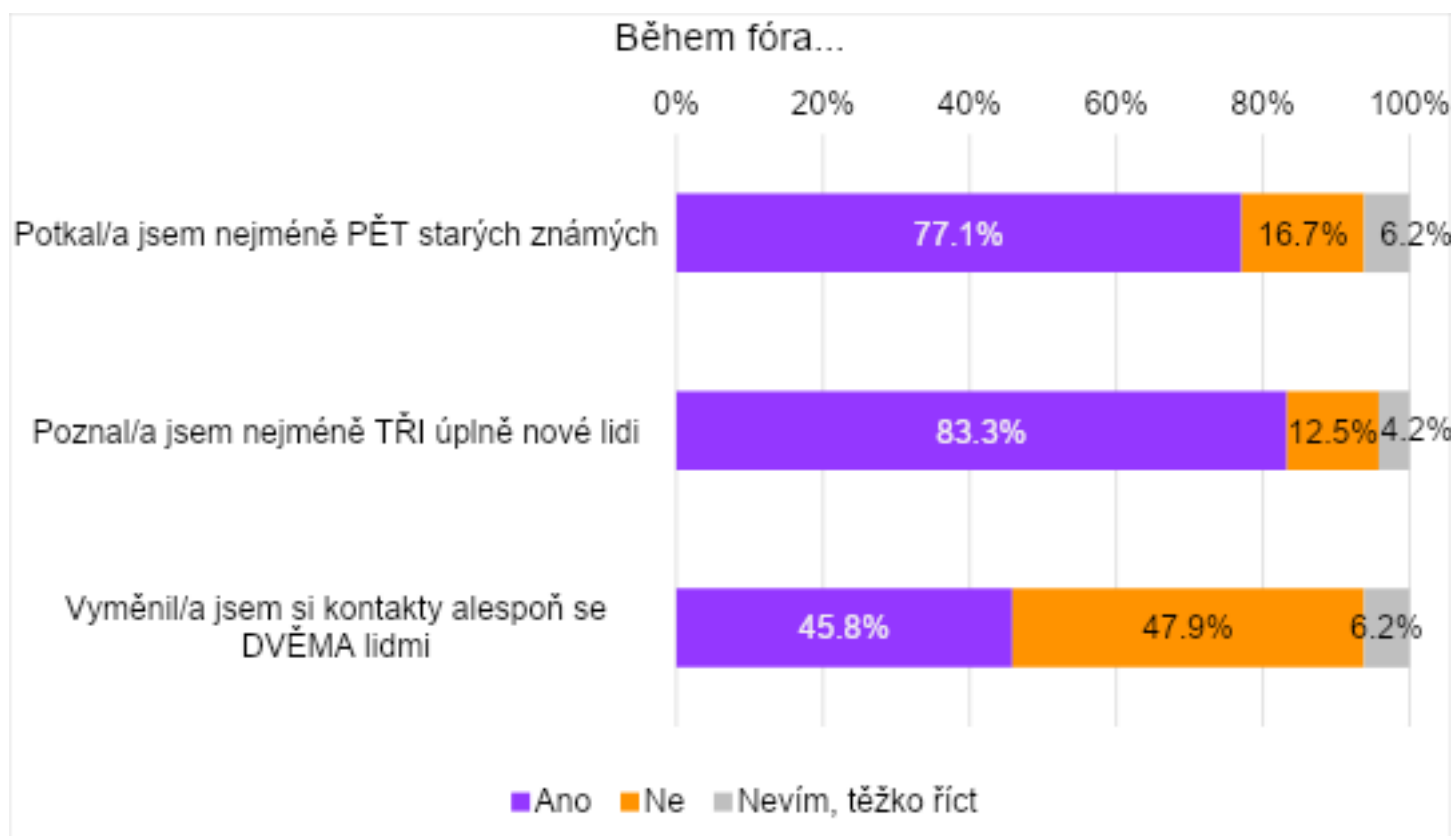


implementation appears more challenging, as evidenced by the lower commitment rates to practical application (45,8%). The elevated uncertainty levels in 2025 may also indicate either that Forum content was more complex or abstract, or that participants needed more concrete guidance on how to translate inspiration into action.

Networking

The Forum succeeded more in facilitating new connections than strengthening existing ones. While 83,3% of participants met at least three completely new people, a smaller but still substantial majority (77,1%) encountered at least five old acquaintances. The intensity of networking varied, with 45,8% exchanging contact details with at least two people, though nearly half (47,9%) did not engage in this level of contact sharing. 61,9% of survey participants arranged follow-up meetings with at least one person encountered during the Forum. In 2024, the results in all networking categories were very similar, suggesting consistent performance in relationship-building objectives across both Forum editions.

Figure 3. Networking effects in the Forum



Satisfaction with the Forum

Satisfaction levels were notably high, with 93,8% of respondents glad they attended and 81,2% willing to recommend the Forum to colleagues. Only one respondent (2,1%) would not recommend participation, while 16,7% remained uncertain about making recommendations.

Figure 4. Satisfaction with the Forum



Figure 5. Forum recommendations

