

**Evaluation Report**

# **WJEC3**



***3 – 5 July 2013  
Mechelen, Belgium***

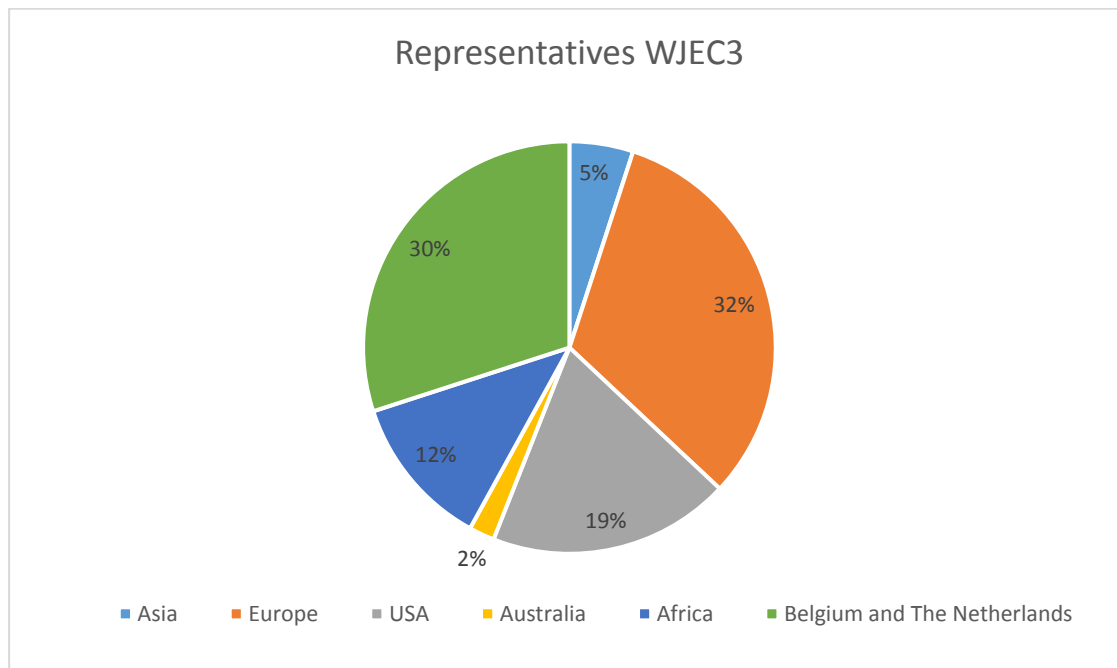
## Introduction

*The third World Journalism Education Congress in Mechelen (Belgium) has been a success. Under the auspices of UNESCO, WJEC3 has brought together teachers, students, researchers and practitioners, from 55 countries to discuss a variety of themes, from press freedom to accountability and from conflict reporting to empowerment. The central theme of the congress focused on the question how journalism education can play a more directive role in shaping the future of journalism: ‘Renewing journalism through education’.*

*After winning the bid at the council meeting in Istanbul in 2011, the preparations of WJEC3 started immediately. A consortium was formed, consisting of ten journalism schools from Belgium and the Netherlands united in the Vlaamse en Nederlandse Opleidingen Journalistiek (VNOJ) on one hand and the European Journalism Training Association (EJTA) with its 60 member schools on the other. These partners provided a solid backbone and were of great support, also financially. It also led to a rather complicated communication structure, in which it was not always easy to fine tune all suggestions and ideas and to keep everyone equally involved.*

*The Steering Committee – consisting of five members: Nadia Vissers, Marianne Peters, Wiel Schmetz, Herman Duponcheel and Nico Drok (chairman), and supported by a general coordinator, Leen van Tolhuysen – played a key role in keeping everything on track.*

*We welcomed 330 participants from 55 countries.*



*Belgium and the Netherlands were strongly represented , with 15% of the participants each; 12% came from African countries, 19% from the Americas, 32% from other European countries, 2% from Australia and 5% from Asian countries.*

*This last figure was disappointing; the annual meeting of the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC) was planned on the same dates as the WJEC. Apart from that WJEC3 possibly suffered from the competition of other conferences in the same period: ICA in London at the beginning of June, IAMCR in Dublin at the end of June and AEJMC in Washington at the beginning of August. Furthermore it seemed that the economic problems in the world have led to cutbacks in travelling budgets for teachers and scholars.*

*One out of three participants filled in the online questionnaire after the congress. The outcomes were very satisfying; most respondents were positive about the programme, the keynote speakers, the plenary sessions, the panel sessions, the paper presentations and the social programme. Almost everyone was very positive about the charming, medieval, small-scale city of Mechelen, which turned out to be an excellent choice. The practical organization, the availability of rooms, the quality of the food, the help of the student-stewards, the fact that all sessions started and ended on time, it all added to the idea that people felt they were really welcome and taken care of on this conference.*

*One of the major problems was the difficulty of getting sufficient funding. Many potential sponsors were approached, but only a small proportion of them were actually able to give substantial financial support. Some of them share the ideals of WJEC, but are not capable of giving any money, like Unesco. All efforts to gain support of large American foundations failed. One of the positive exceptions was the Open Society Foundation that sponsored participants from low income countries. Other main sponsors were Thomas More Mechelen, Windesheim University of Applied Science, the Brussels-based Institut des Hautes Etudes des Communications Sociales, the city of Mechelen, the Flemish Minister of Media, the Sanoma Media Group, Stimuleringsfonds voor de Pers and the earlier mentioned partners from VNOJ and EJTA.*

*The organizers of WJEC3 have succeeded in their task of bringing together journalism educators from all over the globe to discuss themes that are important to all of us. WJEC has become an established brand that really meets actual needs and demands. One of the participants wrote:*

*“So much is happening in journalism and journalism training that the three-year gap is too big. We are all struggling to keep up with developments. As we experienced here in Mechelen, we can learn so much from each other. It would be good to have at least one smaller scale meeting in between the ‘big’ WJEC-congresses.”*

*In 2015 EJTA will celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We are planning on inviting teachers from the other continents to have this kind of in-between congress. More important is that in 2016 we will have WJEC4. This evaluation report is written to help the organizers of WJEC4 to take the World Journalism Education Congress to the next level. In the ongoing process of globalization it is getting more and more important for journalism educators to expand their networks and exchange views; to help 21<sup>st</sup> century journalism to keep playing its vital role in society. That is our obligation to the new generations of both journalists and citizens, worldwide.*

## 1. Evaluation survey WJEC3

All participants have been invited to fill in the digital evaluation survey. The survey was created by [www.enquetemaken.be](http://www.enquetemaken.be). The conference participants got an url to access the questionnaire. 117 participants completed the survey. That's about 30 percent of the number of participants. There are 57 closed questions and at the end of the survey respondents had the option to address the WJEC organization suggestions. One question was asked twice by mistake (question 22). One question was invalid (question 7). The total number of valid questions is therefore 55. The full survey results are included in appendix 1.

The questions in this report are divided in three themes : ahead of the congress , the organization and the programme.

### 1.1. Ahead of the congress

Questions regarding the start of the congress are: the congress information on the website ; practical information on visas and hotels, general information about the programme and registration, information about the location.

Participants are generally satisfied with the information at their disposal in the run-up to the conference:

- 89 % is satisfied with the information about the location of the conference,
- 88 % finds it obvious how to register for the conference,
- 84 % is satisfied with the information about visas , hotels and travel matters ,
- 79 % is satisfied with the conference website.

When asked whether the information about the programme was clear, responses diverge:

- 67 % is satisfied with this information, while 22 % reacts neutral.

### 1.2. Organization

It can be said that the participants were (very) satisfied with the overall organization of the conference .

The participants appreciate the general organization of the conference with an 8.4 on a scale of 1 to 10 . The social aspect of the conference is rewarded with an 8.0. The content of the conference with a 7.6 . Furthermore:

- 84 % of the respondents (totally) agrees that there was plenty of opportunity for networking,

- 97 % is (very) satisfied with the organization of the opening of the congress,
- 85 % of the participants who attended the closing ceremony is (very) satisfied with the organization of this part of the conference.

Looking at the organization of specific components, we see more differentiated opinions.

The organization of the panels is well appreciated with a score of 74 % of the participants being (very) satisfied.

- 75 % is (very) satisfied with the organization of Wednesday panels,
- 89 % of the participants in the Friday panels is (very) satisfied with the organization of this section.

The syndicates get a lower score:

- 61 % is (very) satisfied with the organization of the syndicates and 23 % (very) dissatisfied .
- 39 % thinks it is a good idea to have three syndicate sessions in a row, but 36 % think it is not.

The paper sessions contained four presentations per session.

- 67 % is (very) satisfied with the number of paper presentations per session.

During the congress student - stewards were deployed for escorting guests and to support sessions.

- 92 % finds that the student stewards were very helpful.



### 1.3. Programme

The respondents were asked to express their opinion on the **keynote speakers**, the **panel sessions**, the **syndicate meetings** and the **paper presentations**.

#### Keynote speakers

The keynote speakers at the *opening* session are highly appreciated (N=99).

- 84 % is (very) satisfied with the speakers.

The comments are more diverse with regard to the speakers at the *closing* ceremony (N=55).

- 64 % is (very) satisfied with the speakers and 10 % is (very) dissatisfied.

#### Panel sessions

There were two panel sessions on Wednesday: a set of six at 14:00 and a replay at 16:00 . On Friday, a new set of panels was offered, including the popular Ignite-panel.

The valuation of the **first panel session** (Wednesday, first round, 14:00) is as follows (N=101):

- 68 % appreciates the panel they attended *informative* (agree / totally agree), 18 % finds the panel not informative (disagree / totally disagree),
- 71 % appreciates the panel they attended *interesting*, 12 % finds the panel not interesting,
- 55 % has *learned* from the panel they attended, 26 % says they have learned not much,
- 51 % says the attended panel added *value* to their institution, 23 % says it did not,
- 74 % says that the attended panel was connected with the training of, 12 % says it was not.

The valuation of **the second panel session** (Wednesday, second round,16:00) is as follows (N=73):

- 75 % appreciates the panel they attended *informative* (agree / totally agree) , 10 % says not informative (disagree / totally disagree),
- 75 % appreciates the panel they attended *interesting*, 10 % not interesting,
- 64 % says they have *learned* from the panel they attended, 15 % says not much,
- 55 % says the attended panel added *value* to their institution, 15 % says it did not,
- 68 % says that the attended panel was connected with the training of journalists, 9% says it was not.

The valuation of the **third panel session** (Friday) is as follows (N=72):

- 83 % appreciates the panel they attended *informative* (agree / totally agree) , 7 % mentions the panel not informative ( disagree / totally disagree )
- 83 % appreciates the panel they attended *interesting*, 10 % not,
- 73% says they have *learned* from the panel they attended, 13 % not much
- 74% says the attended panel added *value* to their institution, 13 % says it did not,
- 90% says that the attended panel was connected with the training of journalists (agree / totally agree), 7% says it was not.

### Syndicate meetings

The questions on the syndicates were completed by 114 respondents. The appreciation of the syndicates is less positive compared to the other parts of the programme.

The valuation of the syndicates is as follows :

- 65 % appreciates the syndicate they attended *informative* ( agree / totally agree ) , 23 % finds the syndicate not informative ( disagree / totally disagree ) ,
- 64% appreciates the syndicate they attended *interesting*, 21% not,
- 55 % says they have *learned* from the syndicate they attended , 28 % says not much,
- 51 % says the attended syndicate added value for their, 23 % it did not,
- 77% says that the attended syndicate was connected with the training of journalists, 30% says it was not.

On Friday a round-up of the syndicates was presented as part of the closing session.

- 52 % of respondents finds the round-up of the syndicates useful (agree / totally agree ) ; 21% does not find the round-up useful ( disagree / totally disagree ) .



## Paper presentations

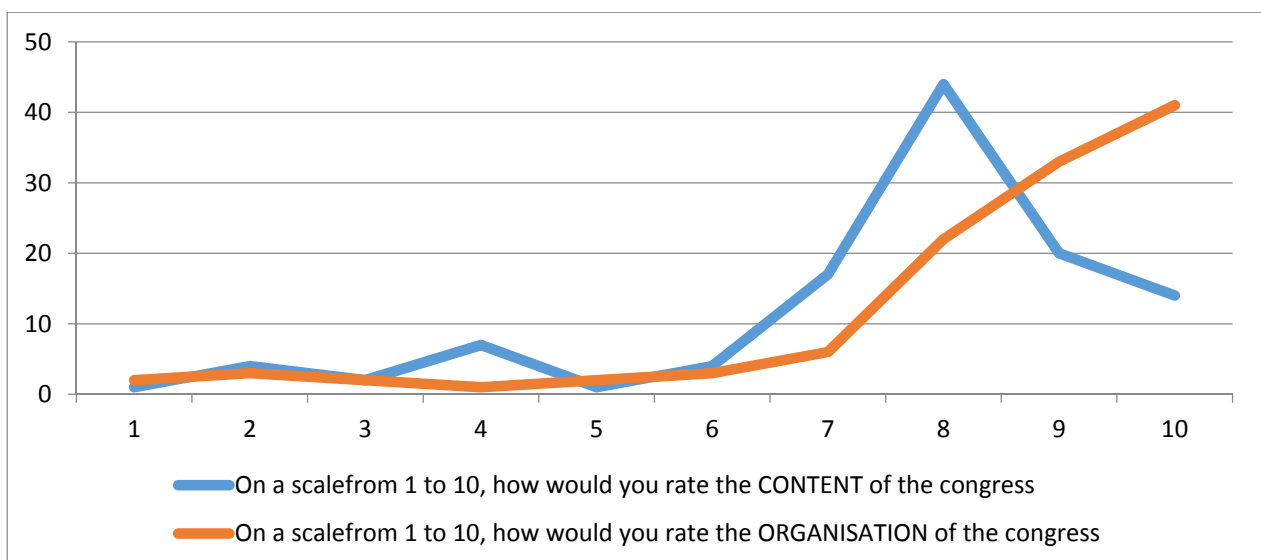
The paper presentations were valued as follows (N=97):

- 79 % finds the attended paper presentation *informative* (agree / totally agree), 10 % not informative (disagree / totally disagree),
- 76 % finds the attended paper presentation *interesting*, 7 % not,
- 68 % says they have *learned* from the paper presentation, 16 % has learned little,
- 53 % says the attended paper presentation added *value* to their, 20 % says it did not,
- 75 % says that the attended paper presentation was *connected* with the training of journalists, 14 % thinks it was not.

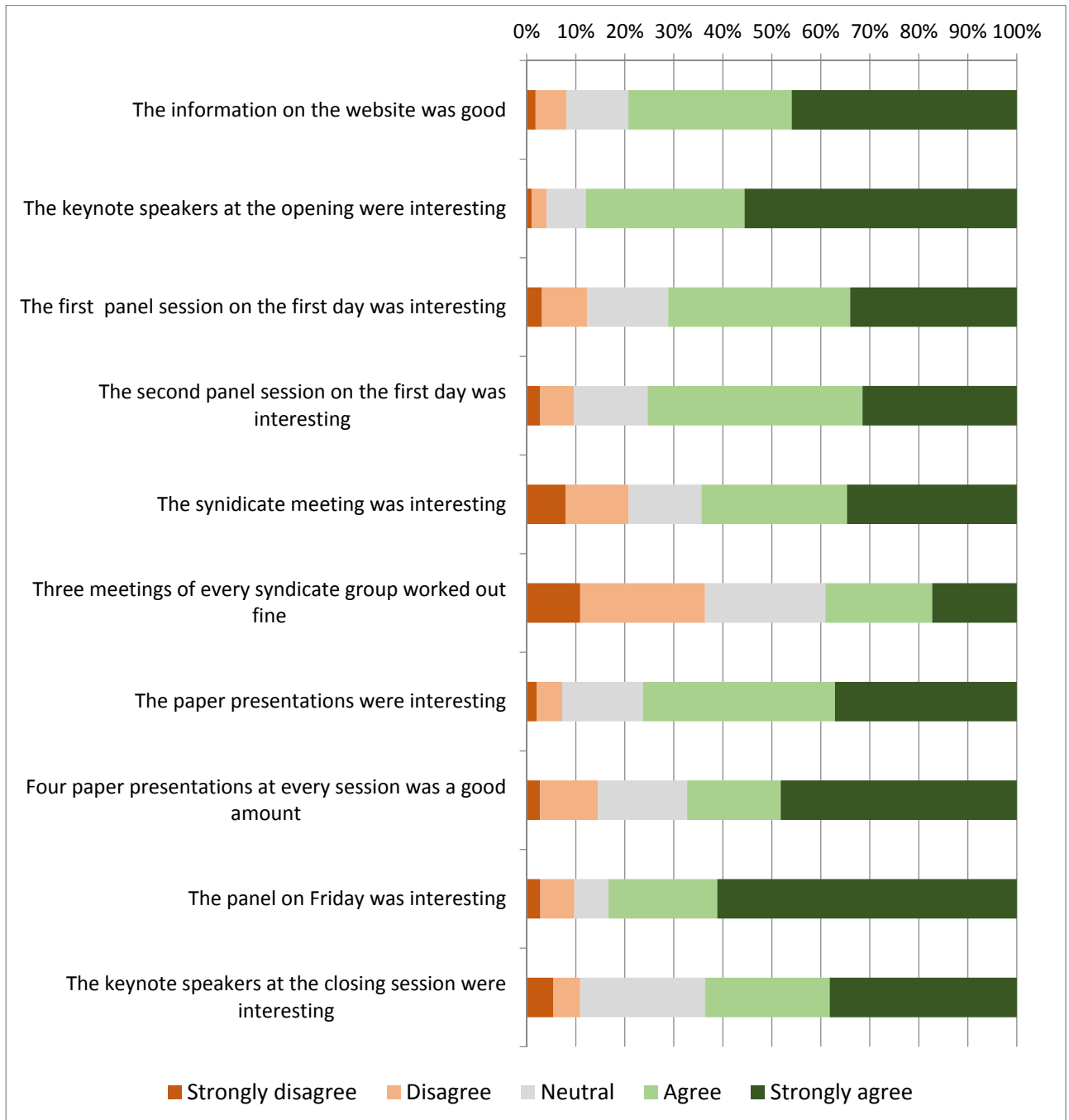
The questionnaire has one question on the value of **interaction with colleagues**..

- 85 % says that they have learned a lot from colleagues (agree / totally agree), 8 % have not (disagree / totally disagree), (N=114).

## Some major results:







## 2. WJEC 3: Recommendations and advise;

Based on the experience of the Organising Committee.

*In between August 2011 and July 2013 the Organising Committee of WJEC3 spent 23 months of preparing and setting up the actual congress. During that period hundreds of problems were solved and all kinds of obstacles had to be evaded. In the following pages the Organising Committee share presents 30 recommendations for the organisation of WJEC4.*

### 2.1. Programme and content

#### 1. Basic outline:

- a. The programme is about journalism *education*, rather than about journalism.
- b. Although it is important to continuously stress the WJEC is a world conference, the *organising continent* can be clearly present in the programme through the choice of themes or keynote speakers.

#### 2. Keep the programme as simple as possible.

#### 3. Give more room to (controlled) informal networking. People tend to stay close to people they already know.

#### 4. Syndicates

- Reconsider the number, type and name of the syndicates:
  - they take a lot of organisational efforts;
  - attendance is relatively low, especially during the second and third meeting rounds;
  - they are by far the less valued meeting form;
  - their quality is too dependent of the moderator's competences.
- Reconsider the final rounding up of the syndicates.

#### 5. Panels

Make more use of panels. Panels are a highly valued organisation form, provided that there is enough interaction between the experts and the audience. The number of panel-moderators is much lower than the number of syndicate-moderators, which makes it easier to guarantee good quality.

Best practice sessions (like the Ignite session in Mechelen) are much appreciated by the delegates. It would be good to have more attention for best practices.

## 6. Papers

- The call for papers should start earlier than November. On January 15<sup>th</sup> it should be clear which abstracts are accepted. More room is needed between this deadline and the early bird deadline.
- WJEC needs to state more clearly what exactly is the responsibility of the host organisation concerning the papers.
- The host organisation should appoint one *responsible person* who has the authority to organise the time schedule and to control the quality and quantity of the papers.
- Make sure there is room for diversity in form and organisation of the paper presentations.
- Every paper session needs a chairperson to guard the time schedule and lead the discussion.

## 2.2. Organisation and logistics

7. The WJEC Council should provide the host organisation a clear blueprint of what it expects from the congress organisers.

8. The host organisation should compose a small Steering Committee. A small committee is much more flexible and efficient, although broad support from partner organisations is very useful. For WJEC3 we worked together with EJTA (60 members) and VNOJ (10 members), which meant more support, extra finances and varied expertise but at the same time made the organisation of the congress much more complex.

## 9. Location

- Look at an early stage at access, vicinity of hotel rooms, prices and so on.
- Having the congress in a smaller city that supports the congress fully and appreciates the benefits of a large world congress, is of an enormous advantage.
- Have venues within walking distance.
- Reserve hotel rooms and show the offers on the website, but make sure delegates have to book themselves. Rule out responsibility for misbehaviour of participants (no-show or worse).

#### 10. Preparation

- Start early: 2 years in advance.
- Set a fixed date for the three congress days in a very early stage and stick to it.
- Make sure you have one central coordinator who is not only working on voluntary basis, but who is paid by the host organisation.
- This coordinator should be familiar with the location itself.
- Set up a time line.
- Set up a website.
- Set up a registration system; we have very good experiences in doing this in close collaboration with an external company.
- Make sure you work with different types of fee and think about the necessity for an extra reduced fee for Low Income Countries. We were confronted with a dilemma because in European context we spent lots of time and energy on this issue, whilst most participants of LIC's were sponsored guests.
- Start at a very early stage with looking for keynote speakers, this is important because you can't invite lots of renowned speakers simultaneously; you need to move about successively.
- Plan beforehand whether you opt for day tickets or only for full congress (= three days) tickets. We made the deliberate choice for full tickets, although there were some questions for day tickets.

#### 11. Students

- Include students in the congress, both as participants and as social media reporters. We have very positive experiences with the youngsters reporting on Facebook and Twitter.
- The student-stewards that were present at the locations during the full congress, were very much appreciated by the participants and we would strongly advise the next host to install a similar system.
- Also at the registration desk during the conference, there were always student-stewards present. This worked very well.

12. Set up a social programme and decide whether you'll invite the spouses to the dinners or evening activities.

13. Organise annual meetings of organisations and other groups and set these meeting sessions parallel to the congress.

14. Conference bag: think about sustainability and decide whether the bags are useful. In Mechelen more than 20% of them were left behind...

15. Beware speakers may drop out, we have a very positive experience in drawing up lists of extra speakers in case of no show.

#### 16. Website

- A website is the most important communication tool; it should start running at an early stage. The WJEC3-site was fully operational eight months before the congress, which is acceptable. Delegates were very positive about the site.
- Ask students – graduates to develop the site.
- After the congress the website should be moved to the Council's archive and WJEC should be hosting all congresses' websites to create this archive.

17. Programme booklet: bring all the information about the various sessions (name of the session, content, speakers, timeslot, location) together in one overview per activity. Looking back, the Mechelen programme booklet could have been more clearly structured.

### 2.3. Communication

18. The relationship between the World Journalism Education Council and the host organization should be open and direct. In this relationship it is of utter importance that the responsibilities of the Council versus the host organization are more clearly defined.

- The Council should define in detail which activities, roles, tasks etc. are the responsibility of whom.
- To be efficient, the host should be able to decide about the content and practical arrangements as autonomously as possible. The congress's content and practical organisation should be in the hands of one responsible body.

19. External communication from WJEC to its partners and members can be better and more adequate.

- Refer systematically to the newly created website for the upcoming congress (in 2013: [www.wjec.be](http://www.wjec.be)).
- Important information such as location and date should be communicated as soon and as efficiently as possible by the WJEC to its members, so no other events will interfere with the congress.

20. The Council should set up firm connections and structural relationships with global organisations such as UNESCO and Open Society, in order to ensure their support for the congress and make

sure these organisations give financial input. It is difficult for every new host organisation to start from scratch.

21. Be aware that it is hard to get funding for low income country participant from local or regional organisations. Our efforts did not match the results. This makes it even more important that the Council establishes sustainable relations with global players.

## 2.4. Finances

22. The Council has to go in greater detail as to who is responsible for which costs. For instance: who will pay for any preliminary travels of members of the Council to the host country.
23. It is very important to start in time / two years in advance, but this also poses a dilemma because most sponsors / funding organisations won't start with their budgeting until the actual year of the congress. We did manage to collect some risk capital, thanks to EJTA and VNOJ, which helped us in our decision making processes where we sometimes had to take a certain risk. As not every host organisation will have this possibility, WJEC should think about the formation of some financial reserves to cover risks and calamities.
24. The organisation committee should have a concrete and detailed financial plan at a very early stage. We recommend to work with two different scenarios: a 'lean' and a 'full' scenario and constantly monitor the financial possibilities and their feasibility.
25. Funding for Low Income Countries
  - This was a huge problem for WJEC3, certainly because of the economic crisis.
  - WJEC should therefore use its global contacts more centrally and structurally, so they can continuously provide funding for LIC-delegates. There should be a permanent link on the WJEC site to these organisations.
26. Organise a well-structured sponsoring system such as the one we used (from EAIE) with different types of sponsorships so future sponsors know exactly what value they'll get for their money and what exactly they're paying for (lunches, keynotes, etc...). On the other hand, it is also important to have non-labelled funding which you can keep for 'free' use.

## 2.5. Miscellanea

27. Membership of the WJEC should be more clearly defined. One important issue is how the voting should be organised, e.g. whether an international organisation with 60 members has an equal vote to a national or regional organisation.
28. The Council should set up a secretariat and an archive for new organisers to learn from previous experiences and organisations.
29. Make use of a digital questionnaire about the Congress. We used a content-friendly system and had 117 responses which are mentioned in the previous pages of this report.
30. We recommend to take our recommendations serious. We believe they can be very useful to the World Journalism Education Council and to the future hosts of the World Journalism Education Congress.



*(From left to right)*

**General Coordinator WJEC3:** Leen Van Tolhuysen (Thomas More Mechelen)

**Chairman of the Steering Committee WJEC3:** Nico Drok (Hogeschool Windesheim Zwolle)

**Steering Committee WJEC3:** Nadia Vissers (AP Hogeschool Antwerpen), Herman Duponcheel (Thomas More Mechelen), Marianne Peters (Advisor), Wiel Schmetz (Fontys Hogeschool Tilburg)

### 3. Financial Overview WJEC3

#### WJEC 3 - Costs and Revenues

<b>COSTS</b>	
Meeting / Dining Rooms	€ 1.600,00
Logistics, ICT and Congress Material	€ 15.256,31
Congress Speakers	€ 3.218,08
Entrance tickets guests	€ 1.210,00
Interns and Student Stewards	€ 6.160,72
Marketing and communication	€ 3.722,29
Registration ( by Congress By Design)	€ 11.894,42
WJEC coordinator	€ 30.000,00
Catering	€ 57.234,50
Expenses Expert - Marianne Peters	€ 2.647,35
Travel - Meeting with AEMJC	€ 1.055,42
Hotel costs speakers/steering committee/WJEC crew	€ 7.586,06
Low Income Country Participants	€ 24.665,53
Miscellaneous	€ 3.426,40
	<b>€ 169.677,08</b>

<b>REVENUES</b>	
Entrance fees	€ 79.317,92
Open Society Foundation	€ 18.433,86
Sponsors	€ 63.184,11
* <i>outstanding payments</i> *	€ 9.134,35
	<b>€ 170.070,24</b>

<b>SURPLUS</b>	<b>€ 393,16</b>
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*Appendix 1 : Full Survey Results*

*Appendix 2 Question 59 : Do you have suggestions for the organisation team?*

