



Executive Board of the United Nations
Human Settlements Programme
First session of 2024
Nairobi, 6-8 May 2024

Results of the survey conducted by the secretariat following the third session of the Executive Board of 2023, to evaluate the effectiveness of that session so as to further improve the process and outcome of future sessions

Note by the secretariat.

I. Introduction

A. Background to and purpose of the survey

1. In line with rule 1.1 of its rules of procedure, the Executive Board of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) “shall meet in regular session two or three times per year, as appropriate, at such times and for such duration as it shall determine”. The functions of the Executive Board are set out in rule 5 of the rules of procedure and include overseeing the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat and ensuring the accountability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of the Programme.

2. In Recommendations on the methods of work of the Executive Board contained in document HSP/EB.2020/20 and which were adopted by the Executive Board at its second session of the year 2020 through Decision 2020/6, paragraph 2, the secretariat is expected to “conduct a survey following each meeting of the Executive Board to evaluate the effectiveness of the meeting, so as to further improve the process and outcome of future meetings”.

3. Following the third session of the Executive Board for the year 2023 which was held from 28 to 30 November 2023, the secretariat conducted a survey to evaluate the effectiveness of that session and explore ways to further improve both the process and outcome of future sessions.

4. On 30 November 2023, the secretariat circulated an electronic link to the survey to all 103 permanent missions accredited to UN-Habitat, with a deadline for submitting responses by 27 December 2023

5. This report which relays the results of the survey is for information to the Executive Board at its first session of 2024.

II. Participation

4. By 27 December 2023 the secretariat had received seven (7) responses only. The seven respondents had completed the online survey, which had been set up in such a way, that the responses received were anonymous and the submitters could not be identified. The response rate stood at 6.8 per cent (7 of 103 potential respondents, which are the Permanent Missions accredited to UN-Habitat)

III. Approach and methodology

6. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the 2023 third session of the Executive Board, the survey was designed to explore various themes. Under each of these themes, various questions were designed. The survey followed the same structure used to evaluate the first session of the Executive Board of the year 2023. The survey was structured in the following six sections:

- (a) Alignment of the functions and competence of the Executive Board with the provisional agenda of the sessions of the Board.
- (b) Quality and usefulness of the pre-session documents.
- (c) Briefing by the Executive Director.
- (d) The number of sessions per year for the Executive Board; (e) Preparations and implementation of the third session of 2023 of the Executive Board.
- (f) Other questions to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Executive Board.

7. The survey comprised of open-ended questions, ranking questions, multiple-choice questions and single choice questions to explore themes.

8. For ranking questions, a rating scale of level 5 (Strongly agree) to level 1 (Strongly disagree) was used. The scale was as follows:

- Level 5: Strongly agree
- Level 4: Agree
- Level 3: Somewhat agree
- Level 2: Disagree
- Level 1: Strongly disagree

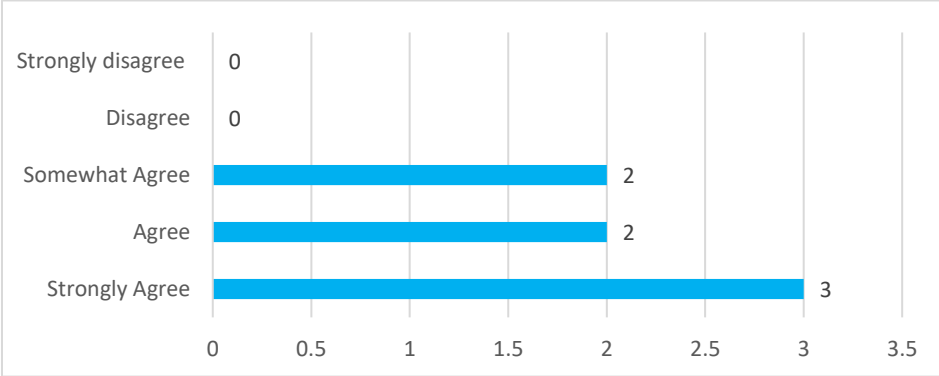
9. The survey comprised 20 questions. Below are the results of the Survey based on the questions.

IV: Survey Results

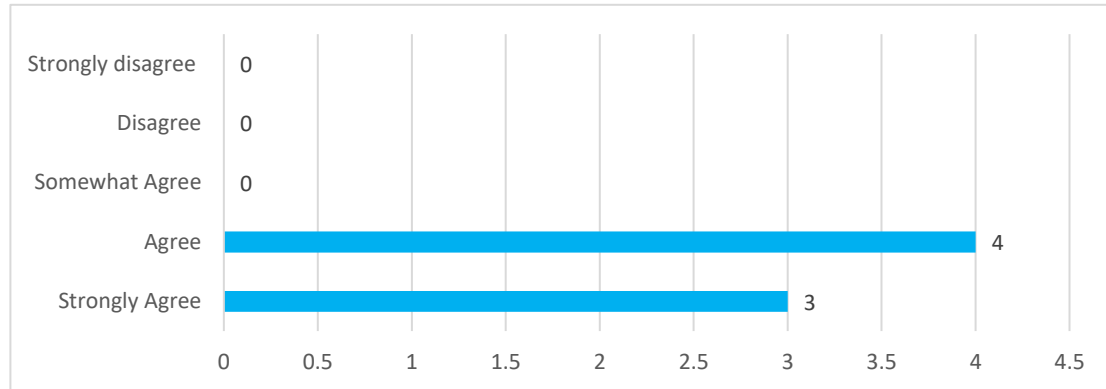
Question 1: How well aligned is the Agenda for each session of the Executive Board to its functions and competence in terms of strengthening the accountability and transparency of UN-Habitat, and providing an effective oversight to enhance its normative and operational activities?

Responses:

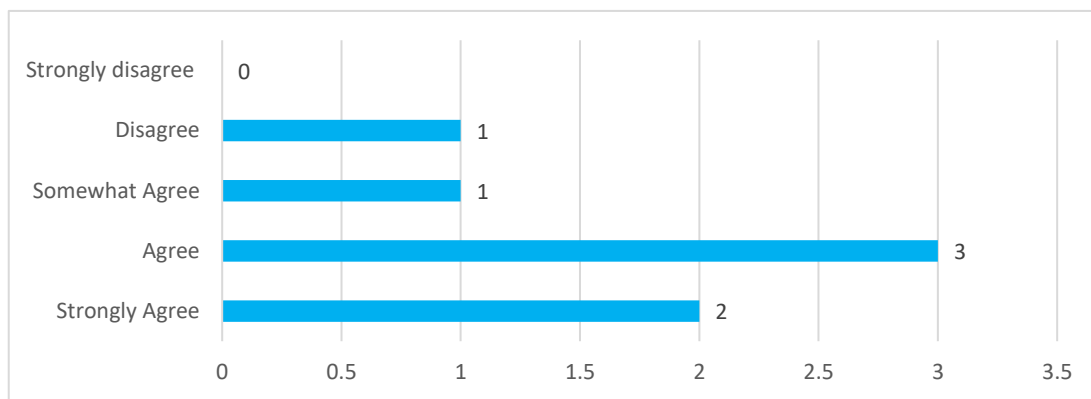
The Executive Board’s functions and competence are clearly understood and consistently.



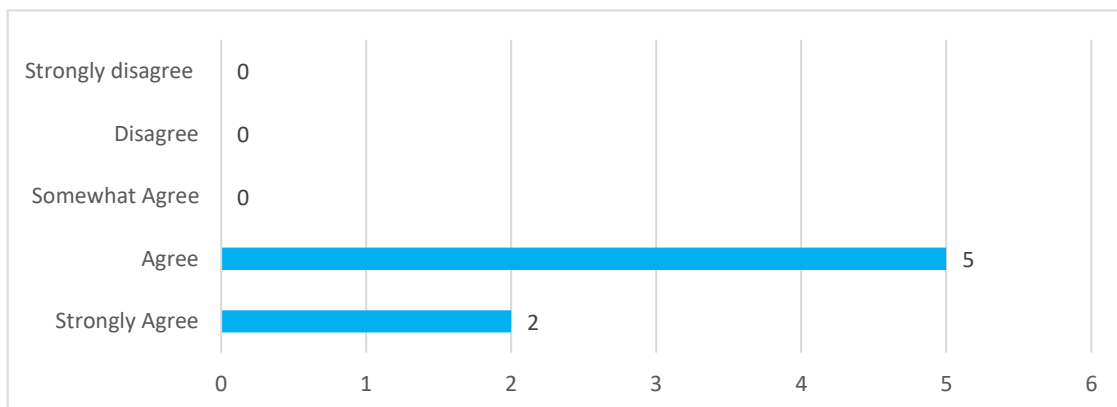
The Agenda for each session is well aligned with the functions and competence of the Executive Board.



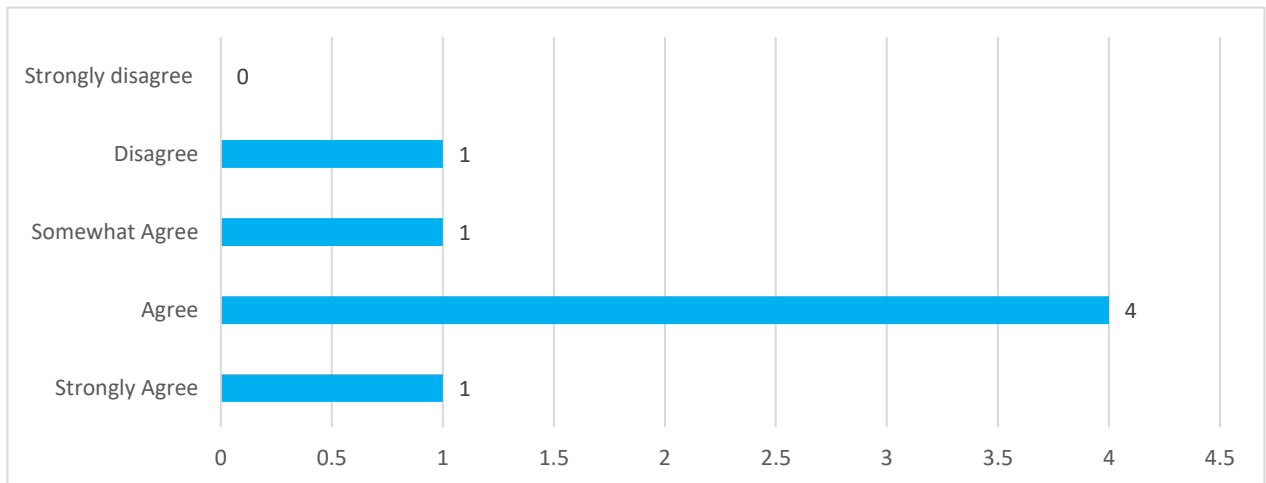
The provisional Agenda is clearly communicated to the Executive Board members for their inputs before being finalized.



The Executive Board Bureau is flexible and responsive in the planning process of the provisional Agenda of the Session to ensure effective oversight role of the Executive Board

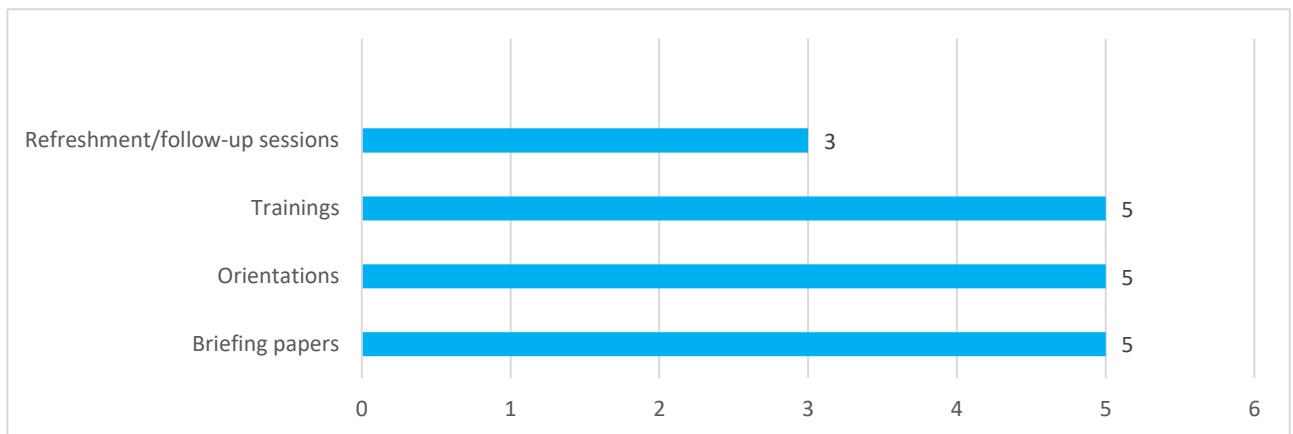


The Executive Board should review its decision 2019/ 4 which pre-determined what agenda items must be covered at each session.



Question 2: If the Secretariat were to help Member States and their Delegation understand the functions and competence of the Executive Board, what would be a better way to do so?

Responses:



Question 3: Please provide your views/ideas on how the process of drafting of the provisional Agenda for each session of the Executive Board can be improved?

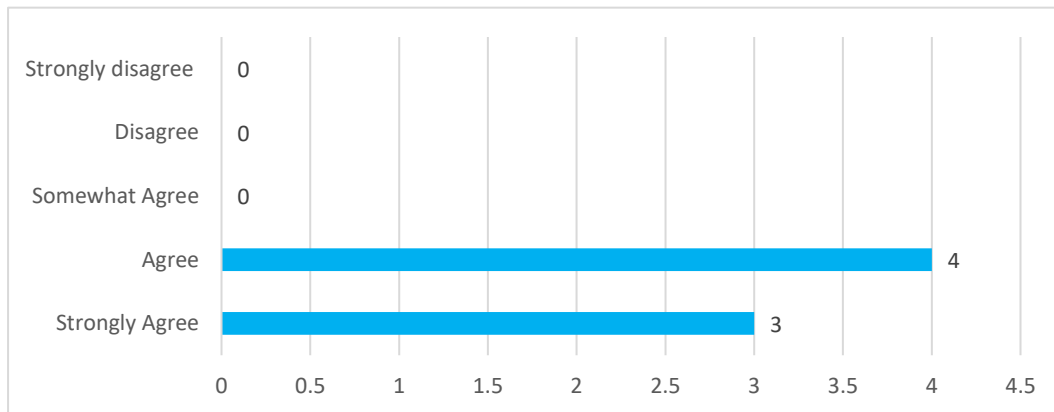
Responses:

1. The Secretariat to solicit inputs from Member States prior to drafting the provisional agenda.
2. Regarding informal consultation during EB, would be better to use lunch time to late night discussion.
3. Prior communication to Member States communicating an indicative end time of informal consultations during the EB.

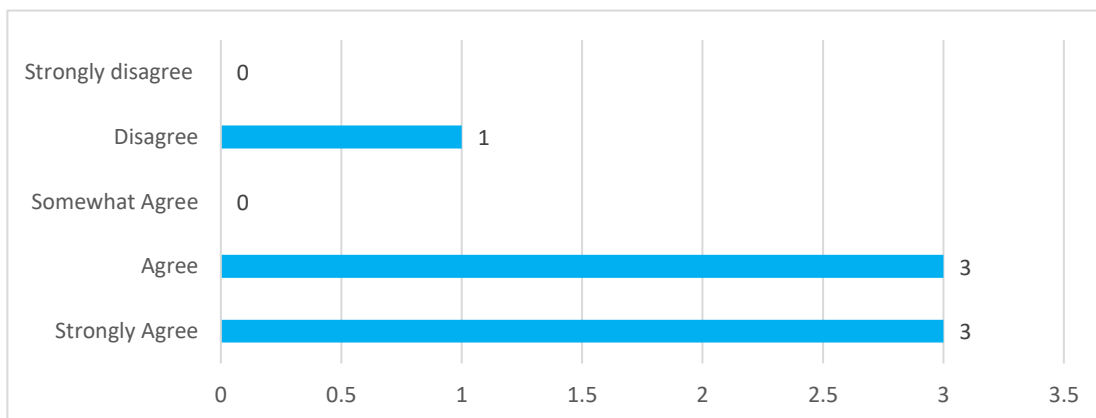
Question 4: How useful are the pre-session documents in their timing submission, accessibility, content and length in helping delegates to prepare adequately for the Executive Board sessions?

Responses:

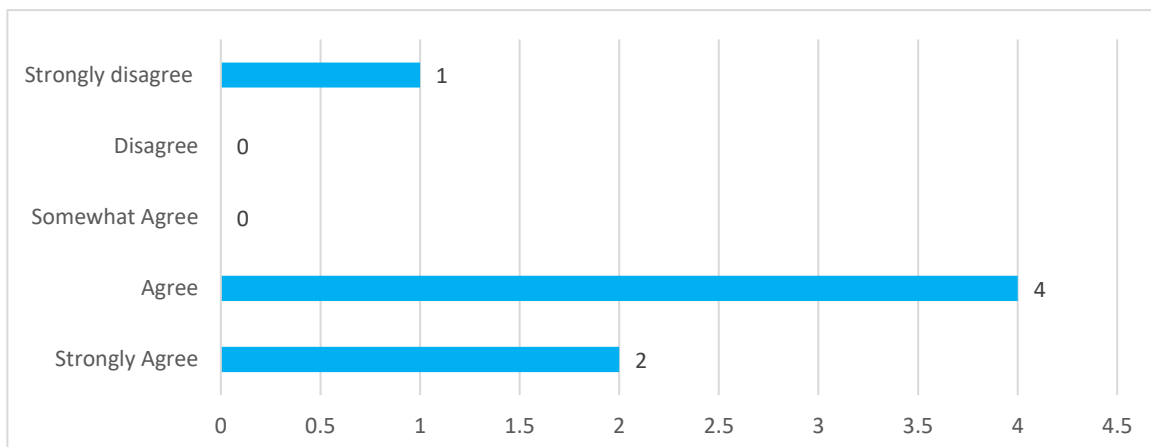
Timely submission and distribution of pre-session documents, in accordance with the Rules of the Executive Board of 4 weeks is adequate.



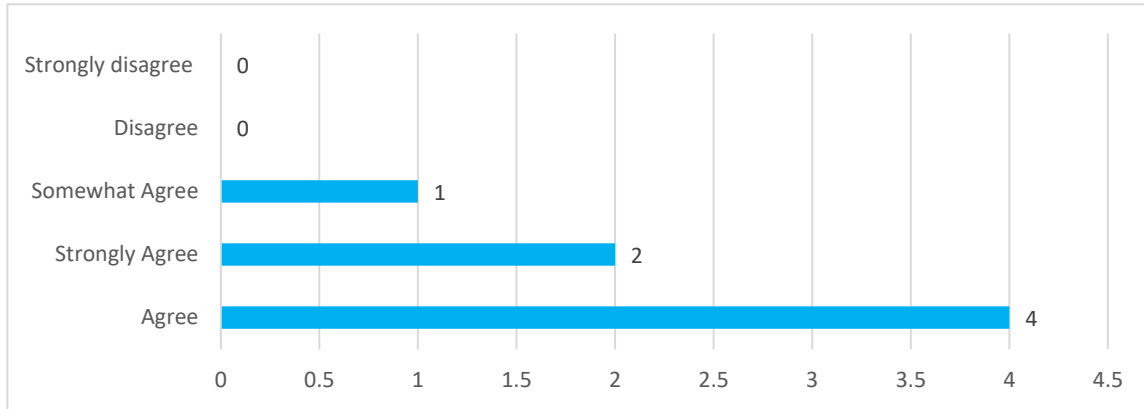
Pre-session documents of 2023 third session were easily accessible to the Executive Board members in a timely manner.



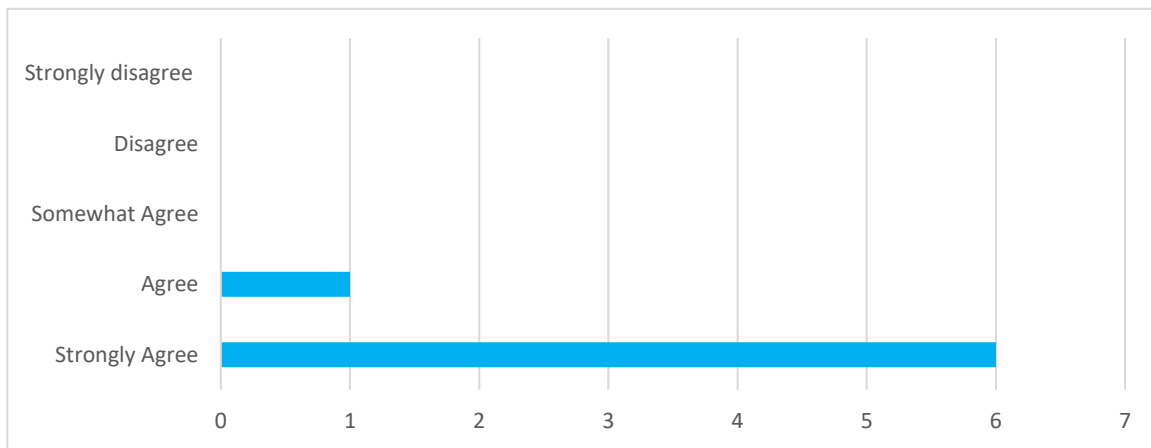
The General Assembly guidance on the length limit of 8,500 words per pre-session document is sufficient, with the exception of specific documents like the work programme and budget and the strategic plan.



The documents presented at the 2023 third session of the Executive Board were informative and focused in content.



Sharing Executive Director/Secretariat presentations prior to the Executive Board sessions would bring about effective and active participation during discussions of Agenda Items.



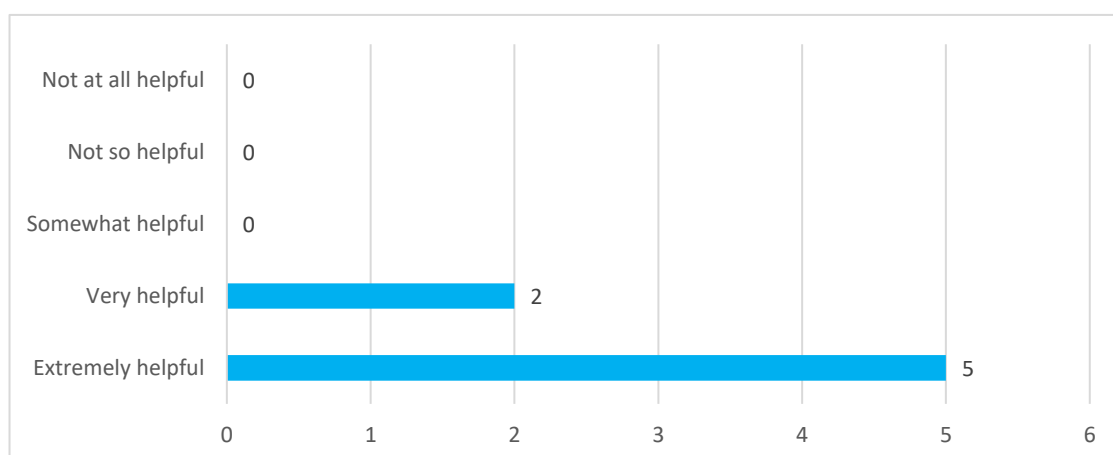
Question 5: Please suggest on how the quality and the usefulness (including content and length) of the pre-session can documents be improved.

Responses:

- Timely submission of all Executive Board (EB) documentation 4 weeks prior to the EB is sufficient, although, all documents need to be made available at that time. Several documents such as the terms of reference for the funding window were not easily accessible.
- Presentations made during working groups and Executive Director’s briefing to be shared in good time with more detailed explanations.

Question 6: Please rate the usefulness of the Executive Director’s pre-session briefing which takes place two weeks prior to each session as provided for under rule 6.10 of the rules of procedure.

Responses:



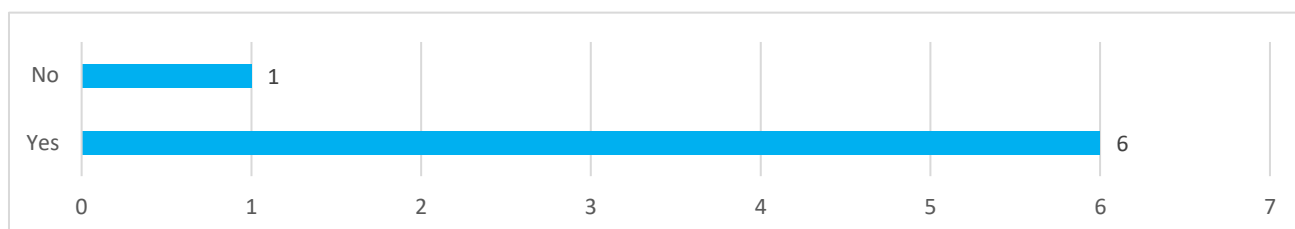
Question 7: Please provide your views and ideas on how the Executive Director’s pre-session briefings can be improved for both Member States and the Secretariat.

Responses:

- Presentations for the Regional Group meetings to be shared prior to the meeting.
- Presentations to be shared prior or immediately after the meeting.

Question 8: Rule 1 of the [rules of procedure](#) of the Executive Board provides that “The Executive Board of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme shall meet in regular session two or three times per year.” Since the establishment of the Board in May 2019, the Board has met twice in 2020, twice in 2021, twice in 2022 and three times in 2023. As per your experience, do you think holding two sessions per year is adequate to cover the necessary agenda items and relevant matters?

Responses:



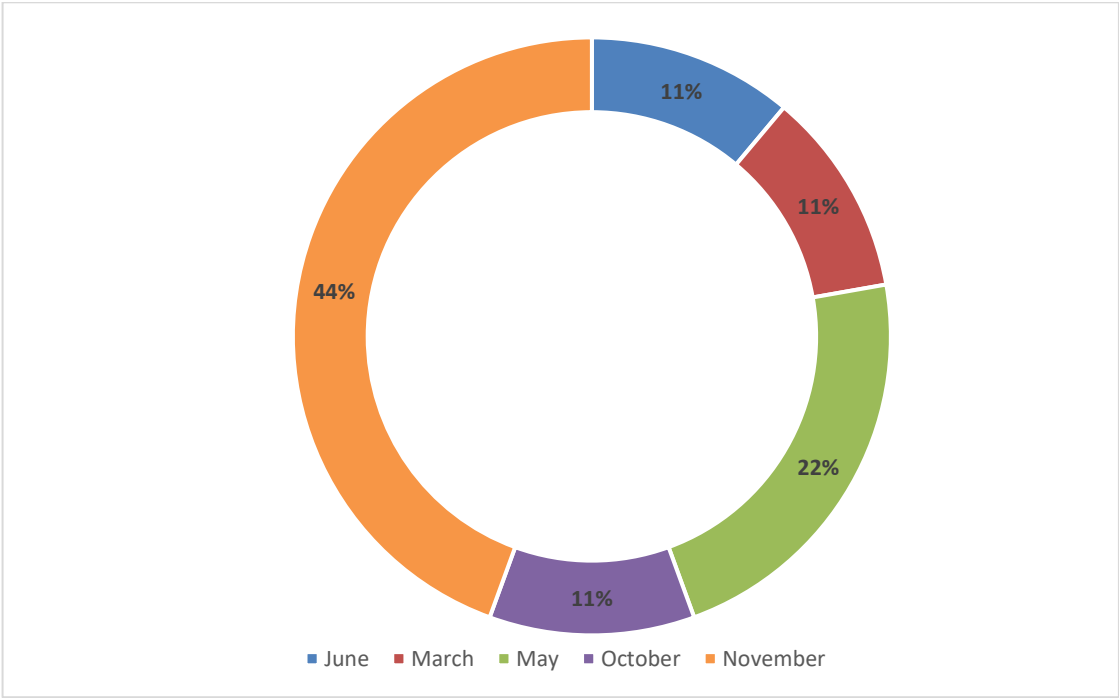
Comment on your answer given above. If ‘Yes’, why; If ‘No’, why.

Responses:

Yes	No
Two times each year is reasonable	
Two sessions a year is adequate unless under extraordinary circumstances. Any dates selected should not conflict with the UNEP schedule to allow for adequate preparation by Nairobi-based delegations.	

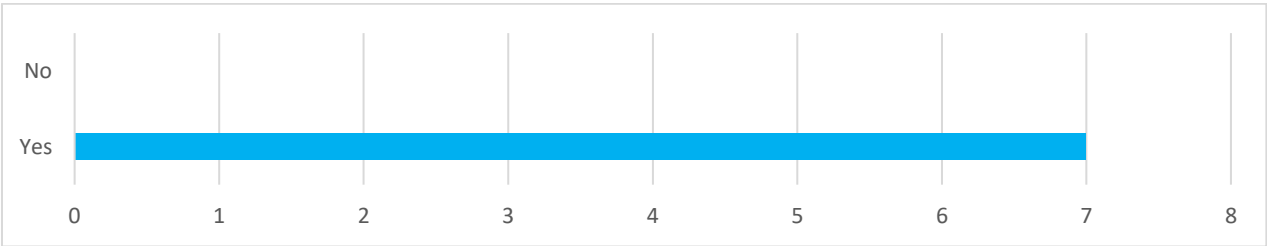
Question 9: With the understanding that the General Assembly and the Executive Board rules on documentation require about 12 weeks of preparations of pre-session documents, and with the understanding that in line with Rule 1.3, the dates of the sessions of the Board when being set, should take into account the dates of meetings of the UN-Habitat Assembly and other United Nations bodies, including the high-level political forum on sustainable development, when, in your view, during the year should the Executive Board sessions take place? (Indicate months)

Responses:



Question 10: The 2023 third session of the Executive Board was held over three days. Was the allocated number of days for that session adequate?

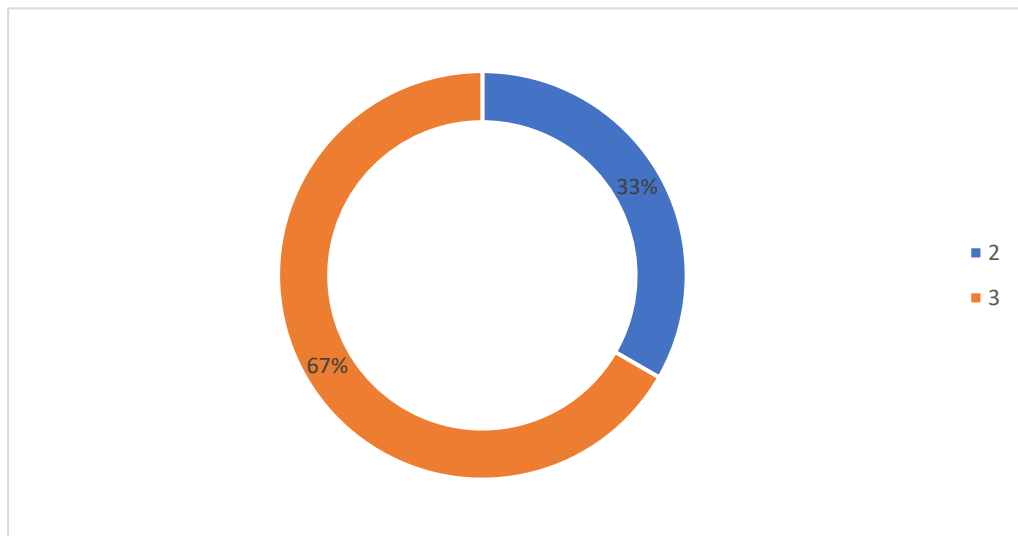
Responses:



If 'No', please specify why not

Question 11: In your view, how many days should each Executive Board session be and why? (Indicate number)

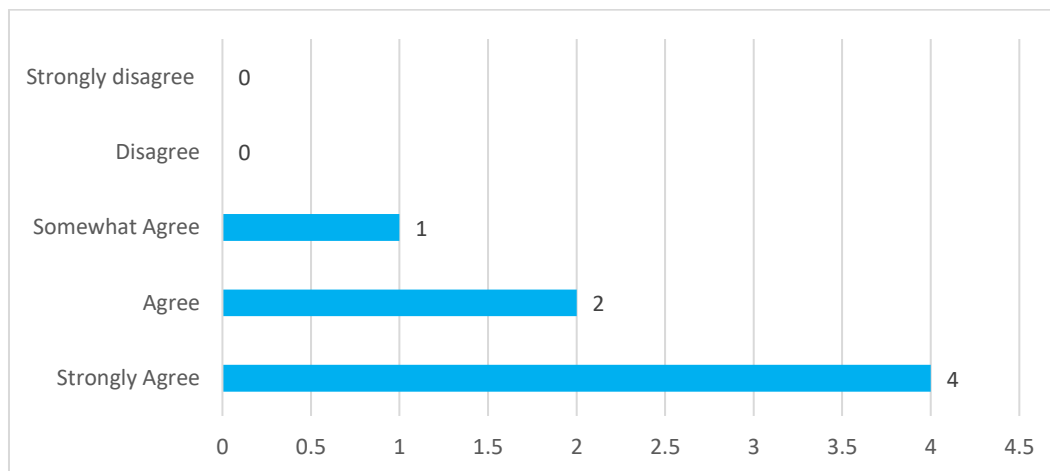
Responses:



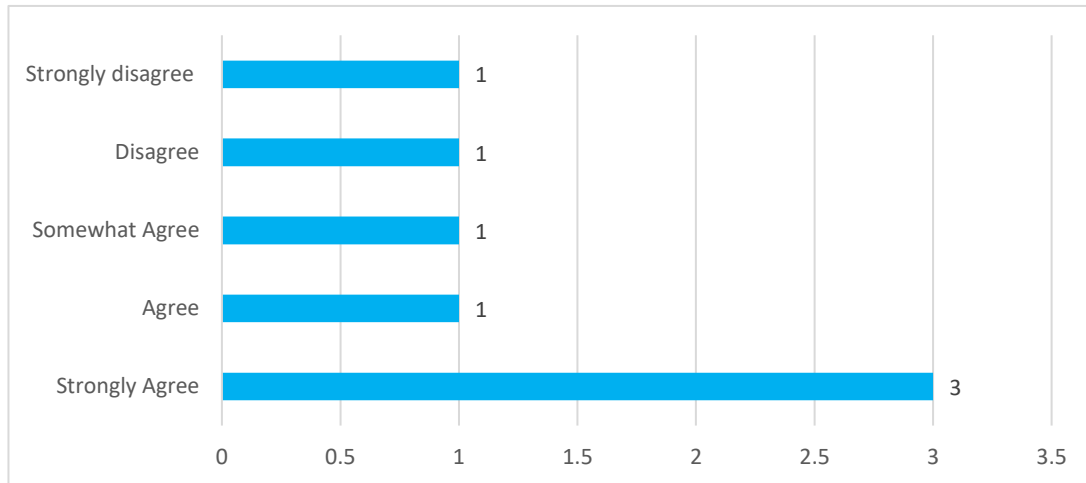
Question 12: The 2023 third session of the Executive Board was fully in person. How do you evaluate the fully in person format of 2023 third session and its possible application to future Executive Board sessions?

Responses:

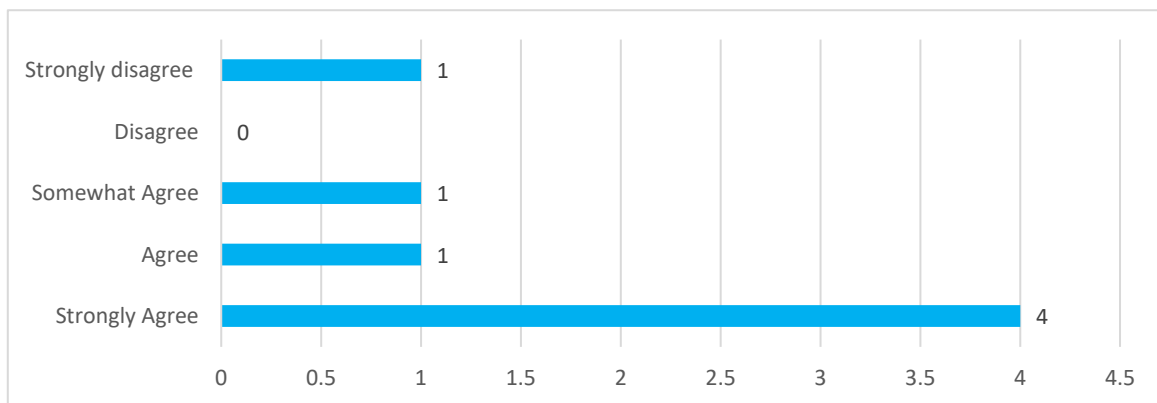
In-person participation resulted in the third session of the Executive Board in 2023 being successful



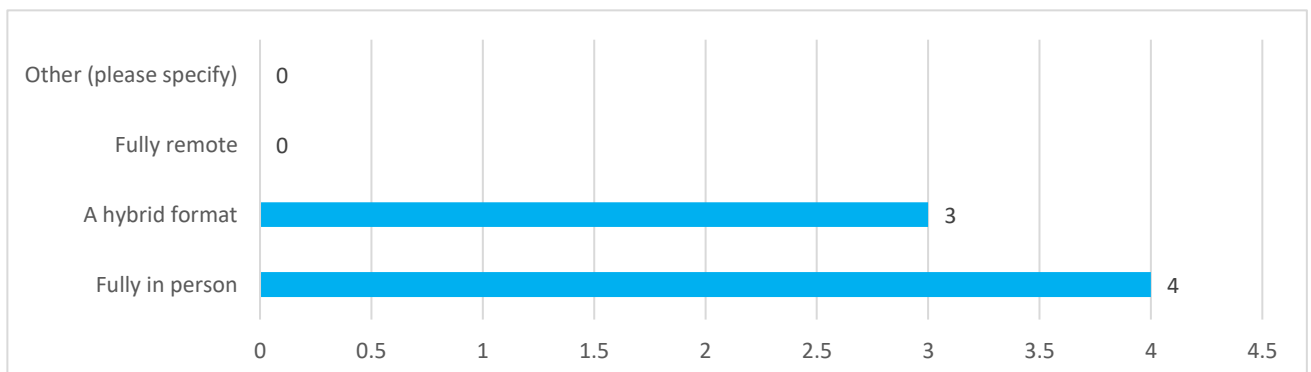
The fully in person format placed remote participants who had only an open link to follow the proceedings without the possibility to interact at a disadvantage.



The in-person format was a more conducive format for complex discussions like on taking decisions on outcomes.



Question 13: For future Executive Board sessions, what format would you recommend? (single choice only)



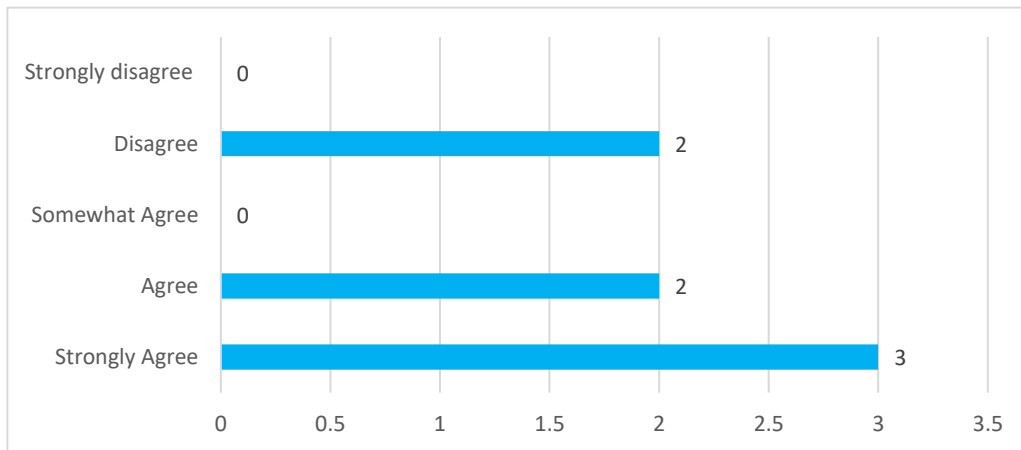
Question 14: Please, provide reasons for choosing the format you recommend.

A hybrid format	Fully in person
Hybrid would be better, using Microsoft Teams.	Fully in person for Executive Board members and available online to other interested Member States as observers
There should be options for remote participation and interventions by capital representatives, although planning should be given towards the outcome negotiations, particularly regarding controversial topics, which were successful due to impromptu informal. Hybrid format with interventions permitted by online participants would allow for a more inclusive and robust dialogue.	

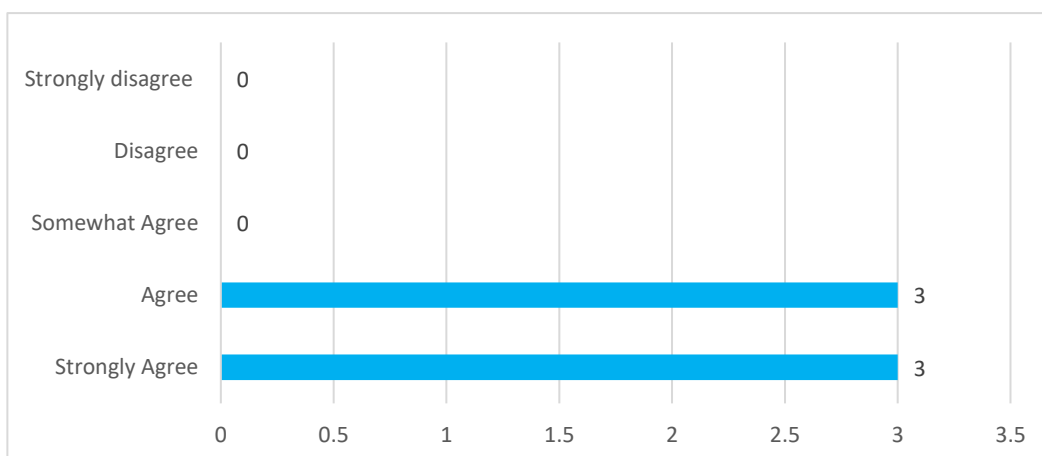
Question 15: How adequate were preparations for the 2023 third session of the Executive Board including meetings of the ad hoc working groups of the Executive Board and Informal consultations on draft decisions?

Responses:

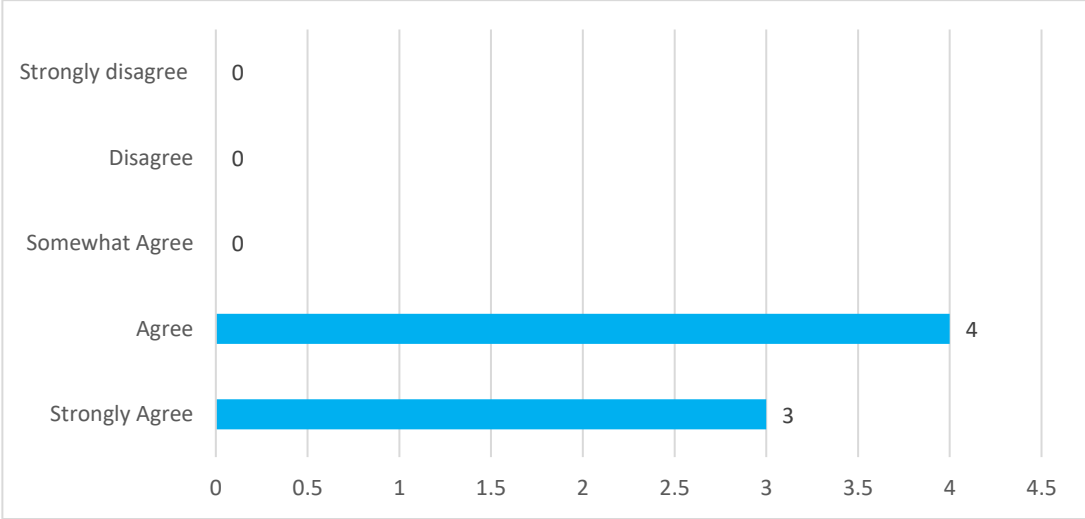
Time allocated to informal consultations on draft outcomes during the session itself was adequate.



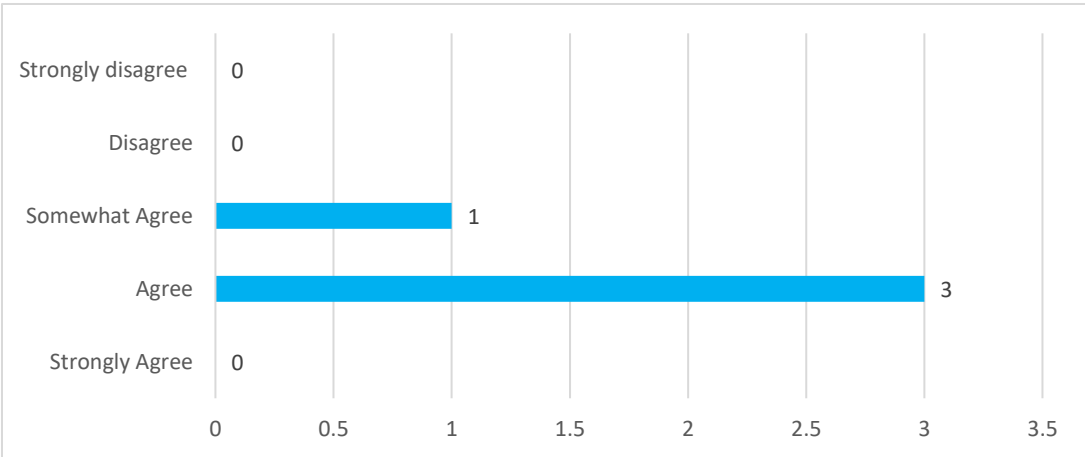
Time allocated to informal consultations on draft outcomes during the session itself was adequate.



The delegates discussed openly, stimulating inclusive debate and dialogue on substantive items that resulted in outcome decisions.



Draft decisions and technical inputs prepared for the Executive Boards’ consideration were manageable, in line with the mandate of the Executive Board



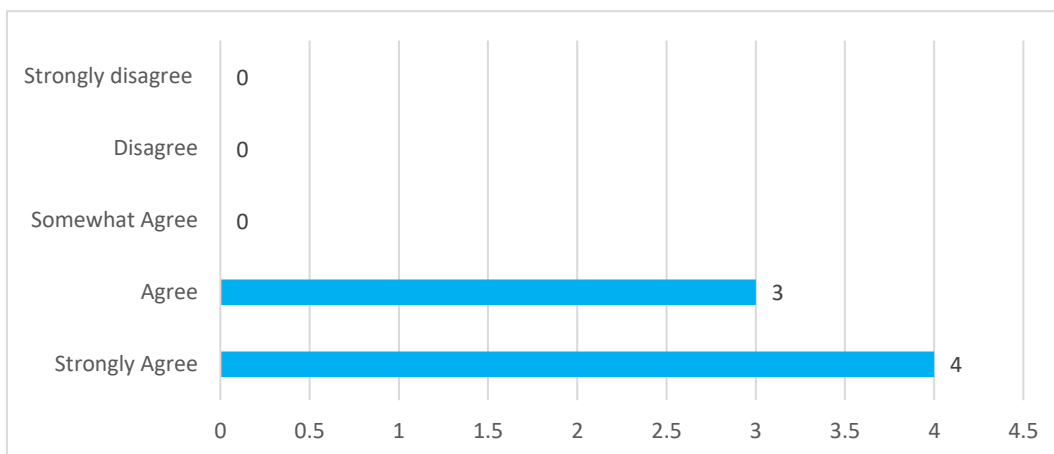
Comments/feedback on the preparation if any.

The number of informal consultations on the draft outcomes were sufficient, however, informal discussions were required to facilitate negotiations on controversial text, more time for the outcome negotiations are welcome.

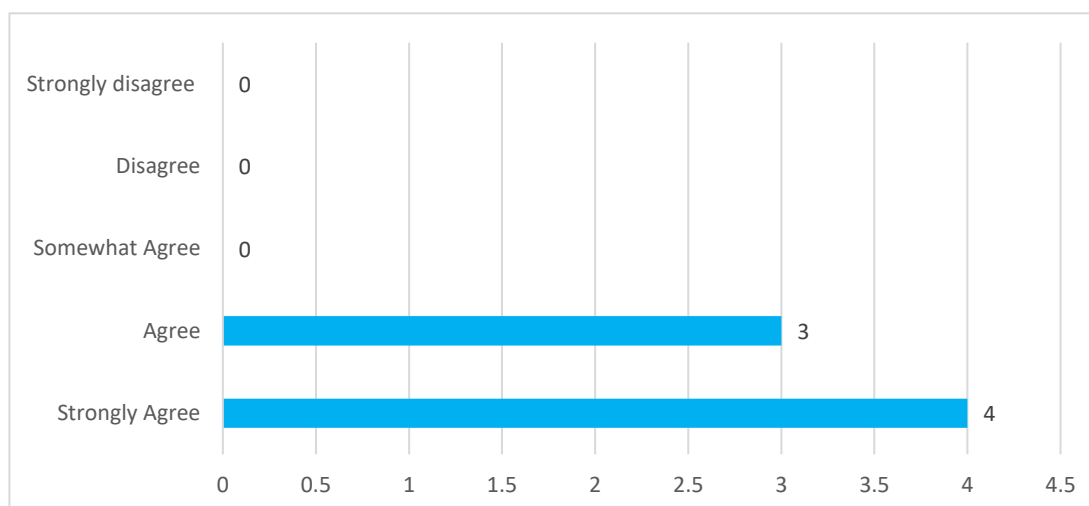
Question 16: How efficient was the management of time allocated for statements during the third session of the Executive Board for the year 2023, including Group and National Statements?

Responses:

Time available to the delegates to discuss and debate on important issues was adequate.



Time available to the speakers during the session was adequate.



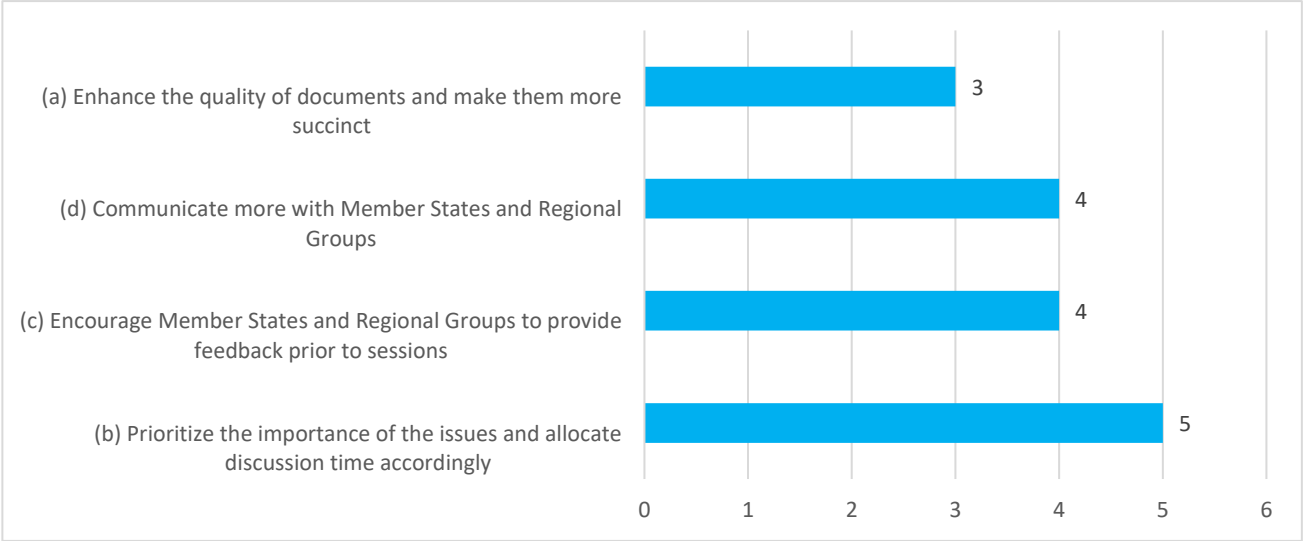
Question 17: Please suggest on how time management of Executive Board sessions can be improved?

Responses:

- Project a timer on the screen for interventions, and the list of speakers.
- In the third session of EB in 2023, Chair made time management well. It would be the best to set a time limit on speaking time.
- The Chair very effectively, at the outset, provided Member States with clarity on how statements, interventions and rights of reply would be handled which should be considered a best practice for Executive boards moving forward.

Question 18: Based on your views of the 2023 third session of the Board, give suggestions on how the Executive Director and Secretariat could better support Member States to ensure their active and substantive engagement during the sessions of the Executive Board.

Responses:



Question 19: What measures can the Executive Board consider to improve its effectiveness?

Responses:

- There were no responses to this question.

Question 20: What other comments would you like to make about the Executive Board?

Responses:

- The Chair of the Executive Board to remind the Bureau Members to collectively share updates with their respective regional groups, as appropriate.
- The Secretariat to be more transparent, especially during regional group briefings, for a more candid exchange of views and comments with Member States.
- Member States appreciates all of the time and effort the Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director and the Secretariat put into planning and executing a successful session of the Executive Board!