



**Summary of Results:
2014 and 2017 EuroBurner Surveys**

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Methodology and Sampling

The Burning Progeny research team based at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland conducted a preliminary EuroBurner survey in 2014 (S1) and a second survey in 2017 (S2). We received 283 responses in S1, and 102 responses in S2.

These surveys featured quantitative and qualitative components. The quantitative component in S1 featured 18, mainly sociodemographic, questions, enabling comparison with the Black Rock City Census. These questions were retained in S2, with the exception of two questions addressing sexual orientation, which were discarded.

The qualitative component gauged the motivations of participants and their views on the Ten Principles. Ten open-ended questions were posed in S1 and eight in S2 (with a significant overlap between the questions).

Notes: The occasional invalid or missing entries are omitted from the analysis. Percentage values are rounded to the nearest whole number in the main text.

Non-probability Sample of “EuroBurners”

This survey was not designed to be a “census” of EuroBurners. In addition to the surveys, the project’s composite methods combine multi-sited ethnography (including participant observation and interviewing). While this document summarises the survey results only, the net result of this composite methodology will shape future publications.

Please note: the data is not statistically representative of the whole EuroBurner community (and is not a random sample). Respondents were comprised of European Leadership Summit (ELS) participants and those responding to invitations promoted on Burning Man media.

S1 promotions:

- during the Berlin ELS: Feb 7–9, 2014
- *Jack Rabbit Speaks* newsletter, Feb 7 and 21, 2014
- *Burning Man Journal*, Feb 28, 2014

The number of responses rose significantly during and after the Berlin ELS. There were 90 responses over three consecutive days: Feb 27–March 1, 2014.

S2 promotions:

- during the Stockholm ELS: March 1–7, 2017.
- *Jack Rabbit Speaks* newsletter Feb 28 and March 30, 2017.

We saw a rise in the number of responses during the summit and during the newsletter promotion. We received over 43% of responses during the *JRS* promotion (Feb 28, March 30 and 31, 2017).

A minority of survey participants identify as “Community Leaders” or “Regional Contacts” (17% of S1 respondents; 11% of S2 respondents).

The majority of our respondents confirm their participation in European Regional Events (60% of respondents in both S1 and S2). However, a minority of the respondents (15% of S1 and 9% of S2 respondents) note that they are not connected to Burning Man communities in their region. These “renegade” respondents arrive from a variety of countries, and their majority went to Black Rock City at least once.

Conclusion: Those who consider themselves “EuroBurners” arrive from a loosely defined spectrum, with participants of European descent who are Burner-friendly on one end of the scale, and those who are deeply involved in European Regionals (e.g. Community Leaders or Regional Contacts) on the other.

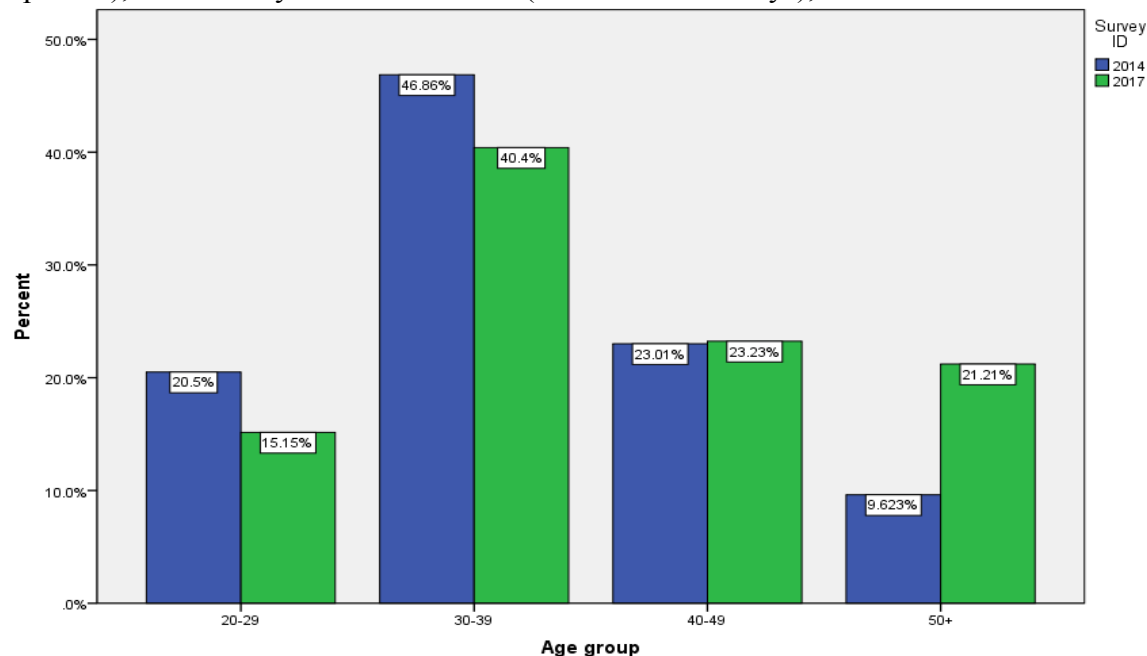
Part I: Quantitative Data

1 Sociodemographic Characteristics

Note: Where possible, we compared Burning Progeny 2014 and 2017 survey findings with the BRC Census results from the year before. The majority of our responses were from early 2014 and 2017, while the Census is conducted during and after Burning Man (in the second half of the year). Noteworthy deviations from the BRC Census results are indicated in the grey text boxes of this report.

1.1 Age

The lowest age group is 20–29 in both surveys (our youngest respondent was born in 1995). Both surveys are dominated by the 30–39 cohort (47% and 40% of responses), followed by the 40–49 cohort (23% in both surveys), while the distribution of the youngest and oldest (50+) age group varies:



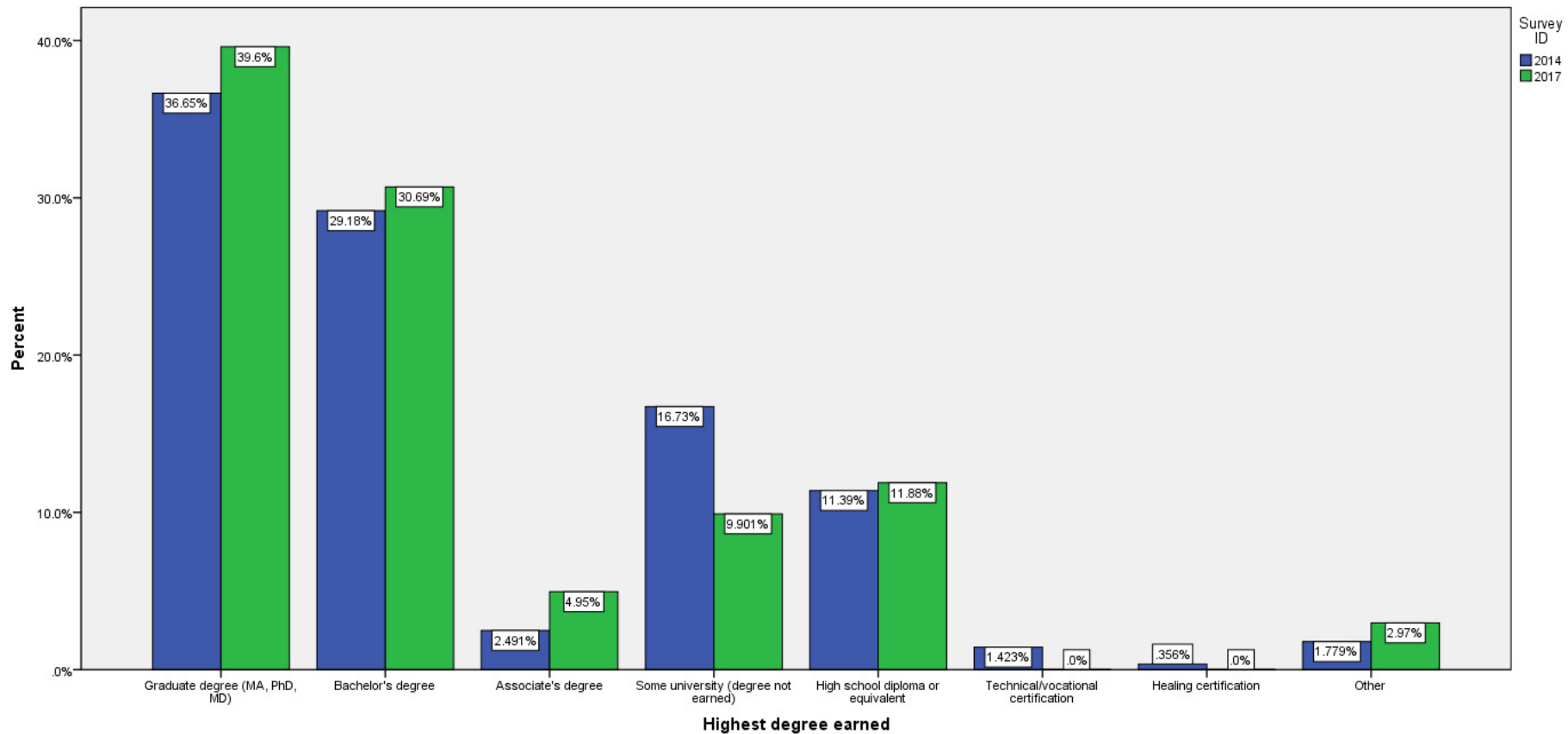
The median age is 35 in S1, and 37 in S2.

These median scores are slightly higher than the BRC Census findings (median age is 33 in 2013, and 34 in 2016).

1.2 Education

In both surveys the largest cohort of respondents earned a graduate degree, which is followed by those who received a BA degree. Some university (degree not earned) and high school diploma are also quite significant groups (in the range of 10–17%).

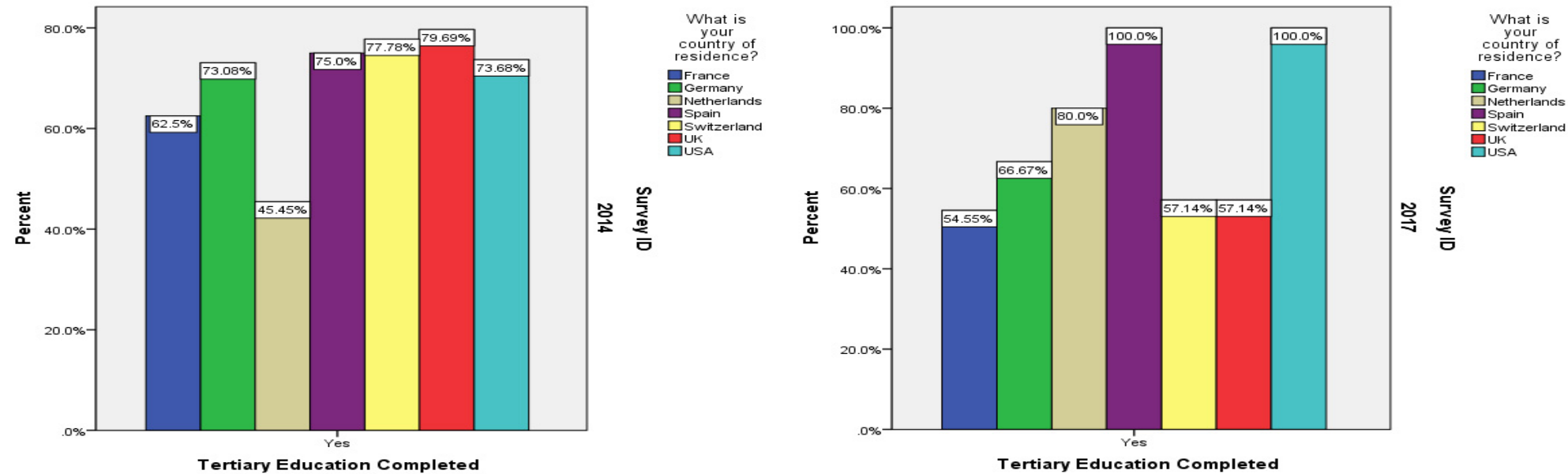
In the BRC Census (2013 and 2016) most respondents have a BA degree, followed by graduate degrees and some college; high school diplomas are only at around 5%.



Comparison of Education to OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) National Indicators

We measured “Tertiary Education Completed” while limiting our sample to ages 25–64. This allowed direct comparison with OECD scores.

Separate comparisons: We looked separately at the countries with the highest number of respondents: France, Germany, Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, UK, USA (see 1.6).



Although our sample size is very limited, and is not statistically representative, scores are all significantly higher than the national indicators in the OECD datasets for 2014–2016 (the OECD scores for 2017 were not yet available at the time of this report). For comparison, the 2016 OECD scores are the following: France 35%; Germany 28%; Netherlands 36%; Spain 36%; Switzerland 41%; UK 46%; USA 46% (all seven countries have slightly lower scores for 2014 and 2015).

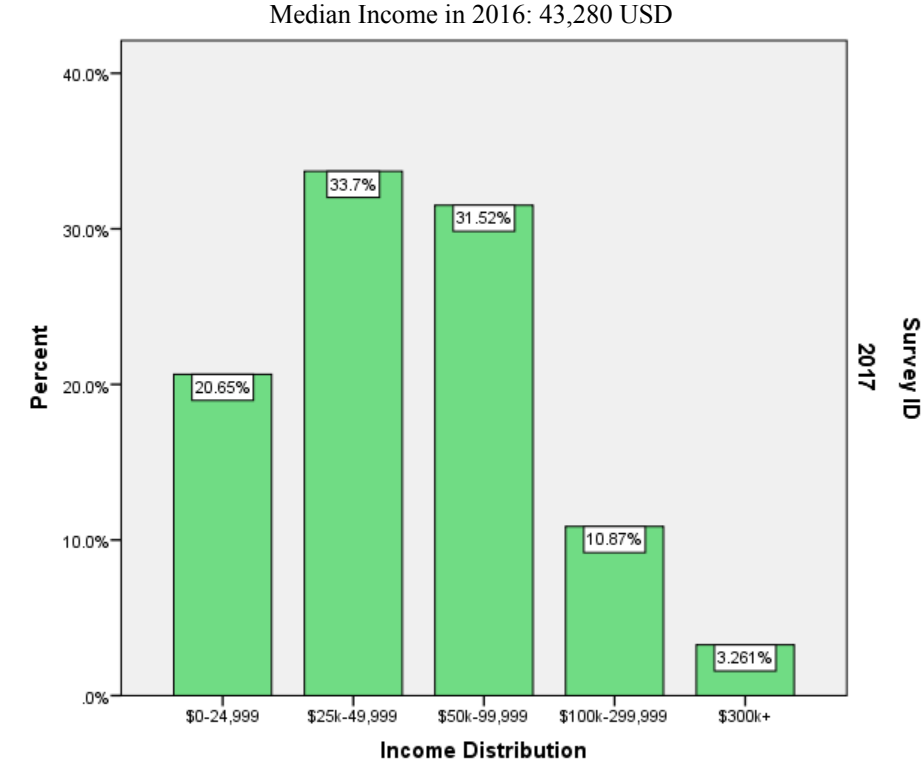
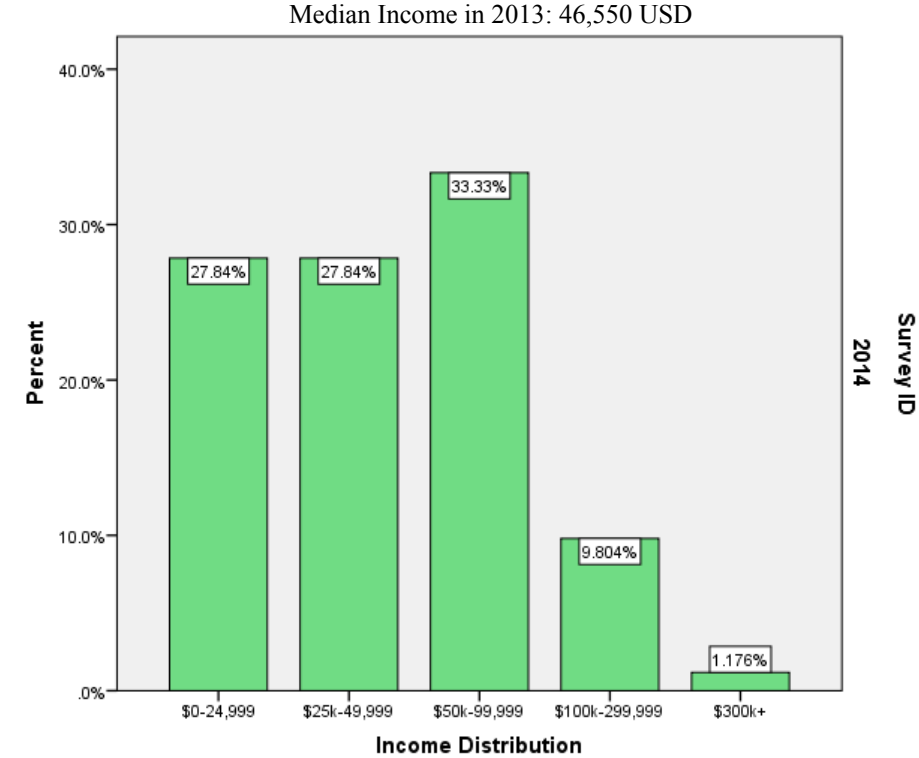
Aggregate comparison: In comparison with the OECD dataset, the mean results for “Tertiary Education Completed” are very high in both S1 (72%) and S2 (77%). The OECD average for “Tertiary Education Completed” in 2016 is 36% (with slightly lower scores for 2014 and 2015).

Source: OECD (2017), Adult education level (indicator). doi: 10.1787/36bce3fe-en (accessed on 26 March 2018)

Conclusion: our respondents are highly educated compared to the national indicators.

The BRC Census shows similarly high results (in the past four years between 72% and 79% of the respondents had their Tertiary education completed).

1.3 Income



Our median income in 2013 is 46,550 USD, which is 14% lower than the median income for the same year in the BRC Census (53,900 USD). Our median income in 2016 is 43,280 USD, which is 28% lower than the median income for 2015 in the BRC Census (60,000 USD). The BRC results for Calendar Year 2016 were not yet available at the time of this report, but the median income of BM participants has been steadily rising in the last four years. Compared to our results, the \$100K-\$299K cohort is significantly overrepresented in the BRC Census.

This may suggest that the ratio of “wealthy” people is lower among EuroBurners than at BRC.

BRC Census Results:

Response	2013		2014		2015		2016	
	Percent	MoE+/-%	Percent	MoE+/-%	Percent	MoE+/-%	Percent	MoE+/-%
\$0-24,999	27.5	1.0	25.9	1.0	24.6	1.0	21.9	1.2
\$25,000-49,999	21.8	0.8	21.5	0.8	22.0	1.0	21.2	1.2
\$50,000-99,999	29.5	0.8	29.2	1.0	29.5	1.0	29.5	1.2
\$100,000-299,999	18.9	0.8	20.7	0.8	21.0	0.8	24.0	1.2
\$300,000+	2.3	0.2	2.7	0.4	2.9	0.4	3.4	0.4

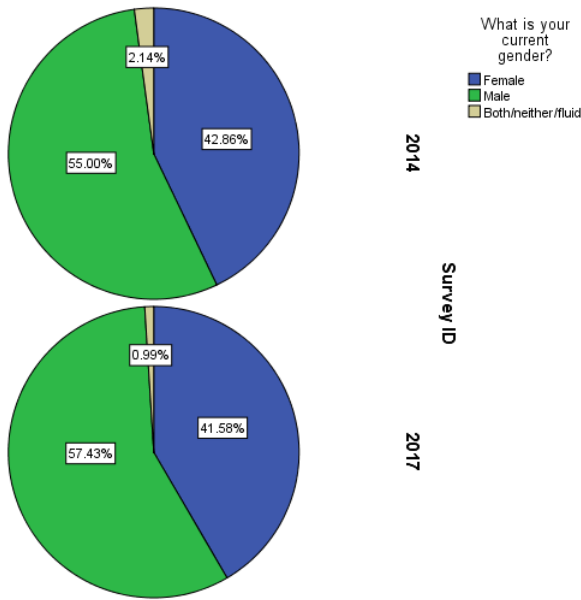
MEDIAN PERSONAL INCOME:

2013: \$51,100
2014: \$53,900
2015: \$54,900
2016: \$60,000

Error bars indicate the upper and lower bounds of the 95% confidence intervals

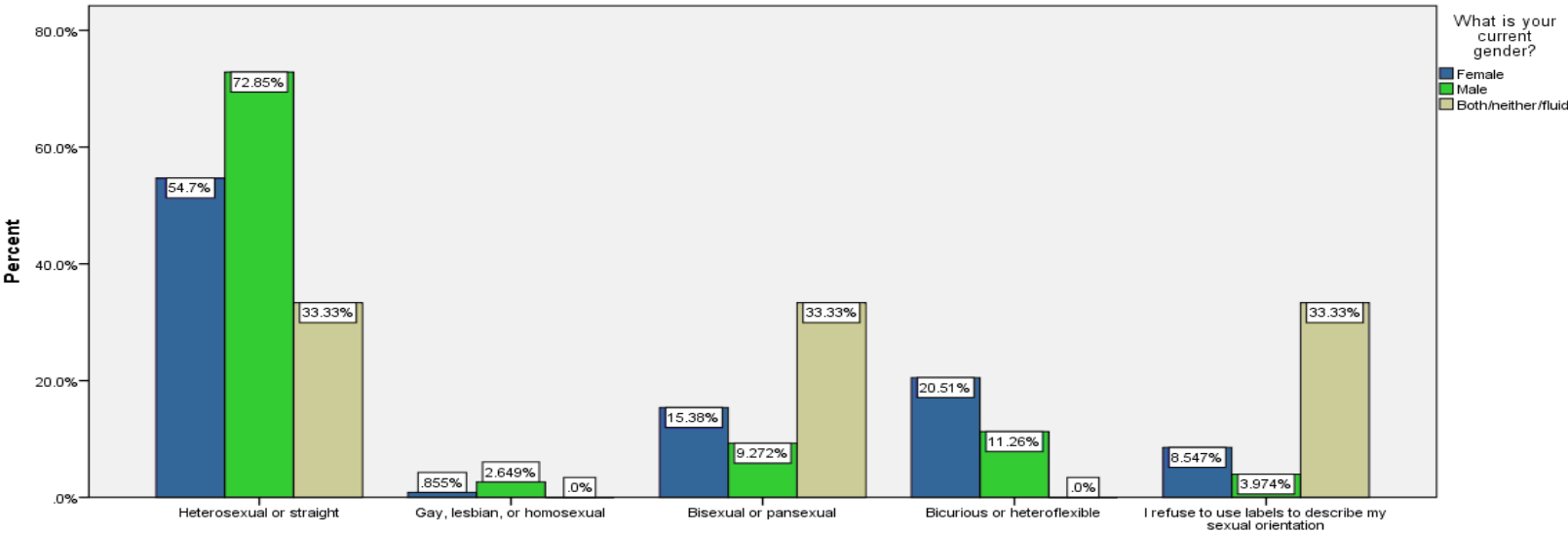
1.4 Gender

The balance is slightly shifted towards males in both surveys:



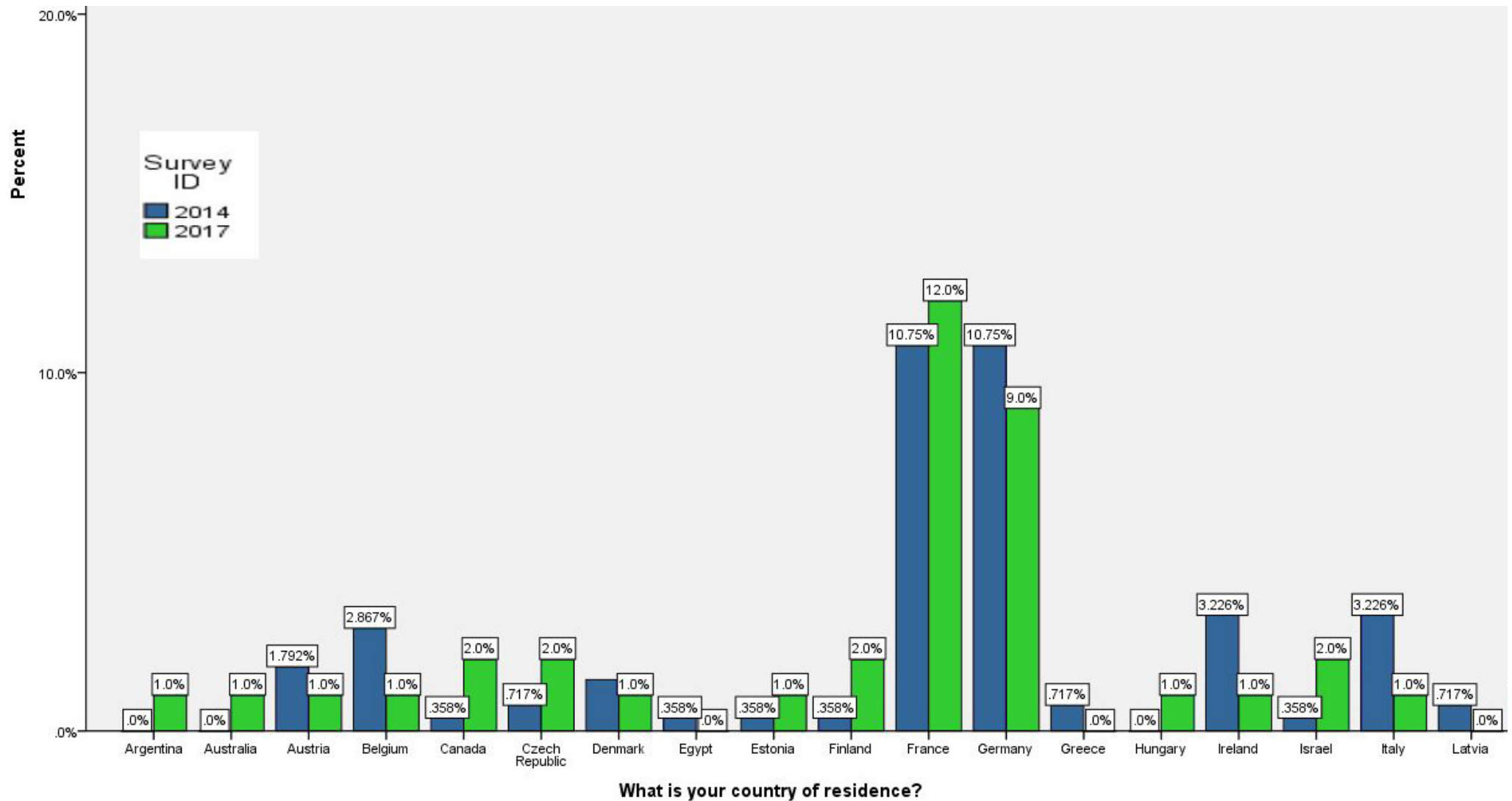
1.5 Sexual Orientation

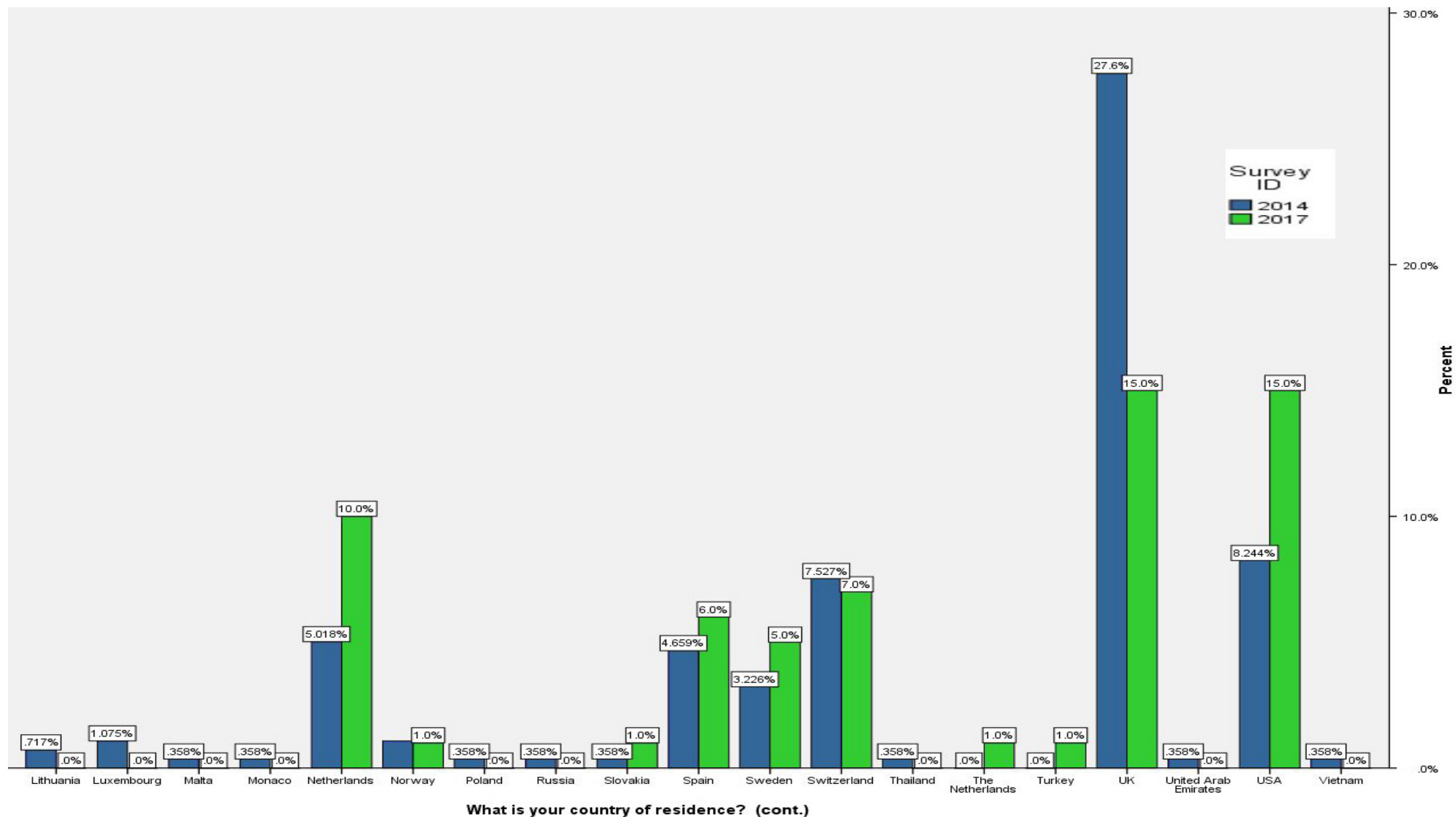
This question was removed in S2. S1 respondents tend to be attracted to the opposite gender, and the majority identify as heterosexual (although this is more prevalent among males).



1.6 Country of Residence

While UK is in a leading position in both S1 and S2 (28% and 15%), the percentage of respondents from the US increases from 8% in S1, and reaches the percentage of UK respondents in S2 (15%). The percentage of non-European residents (countries of residence excluding mainland Europe and UK) is higher in S2 (22% of respondents) than in S1 (9% of responses).

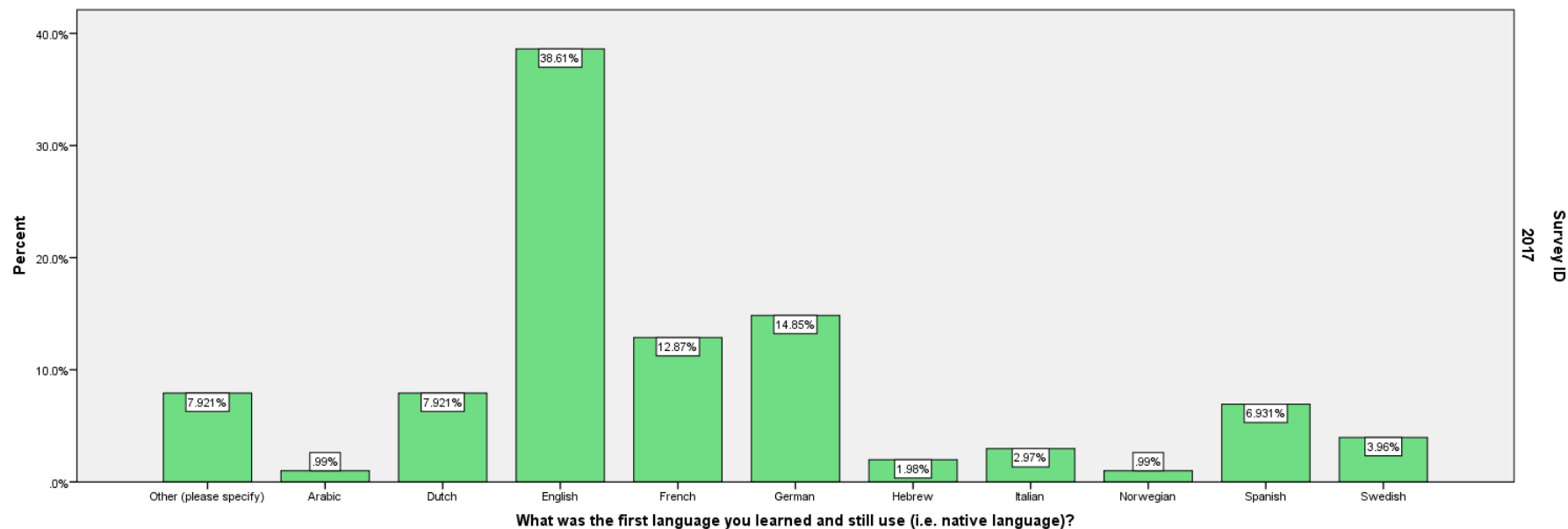
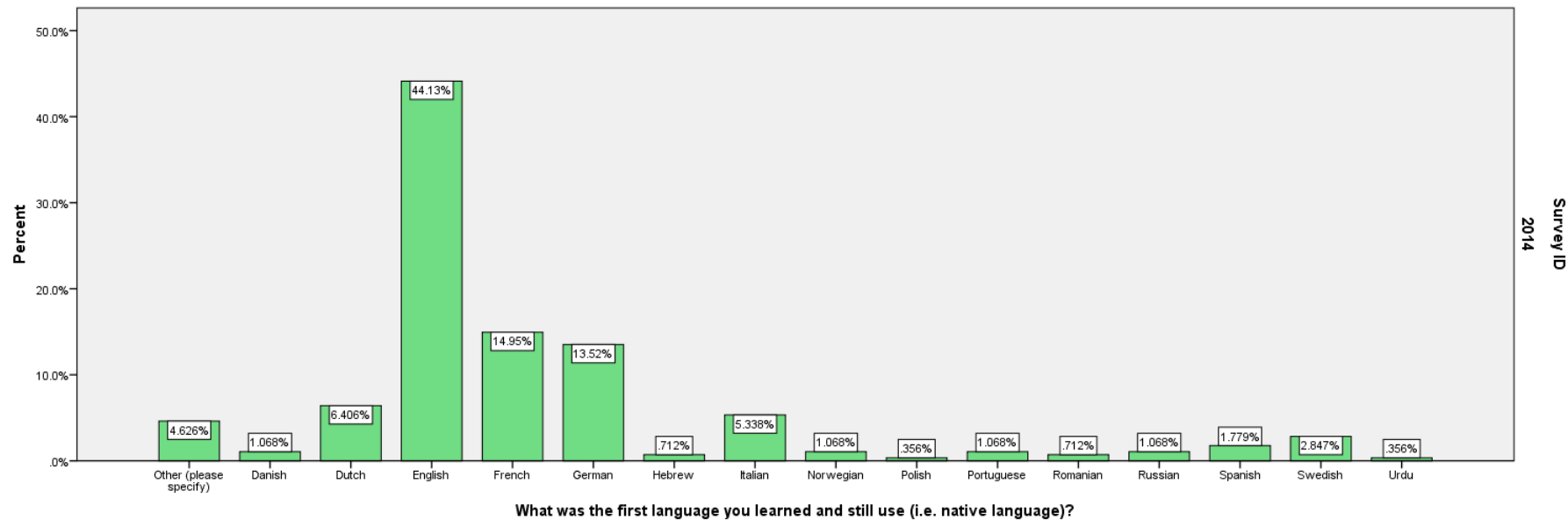




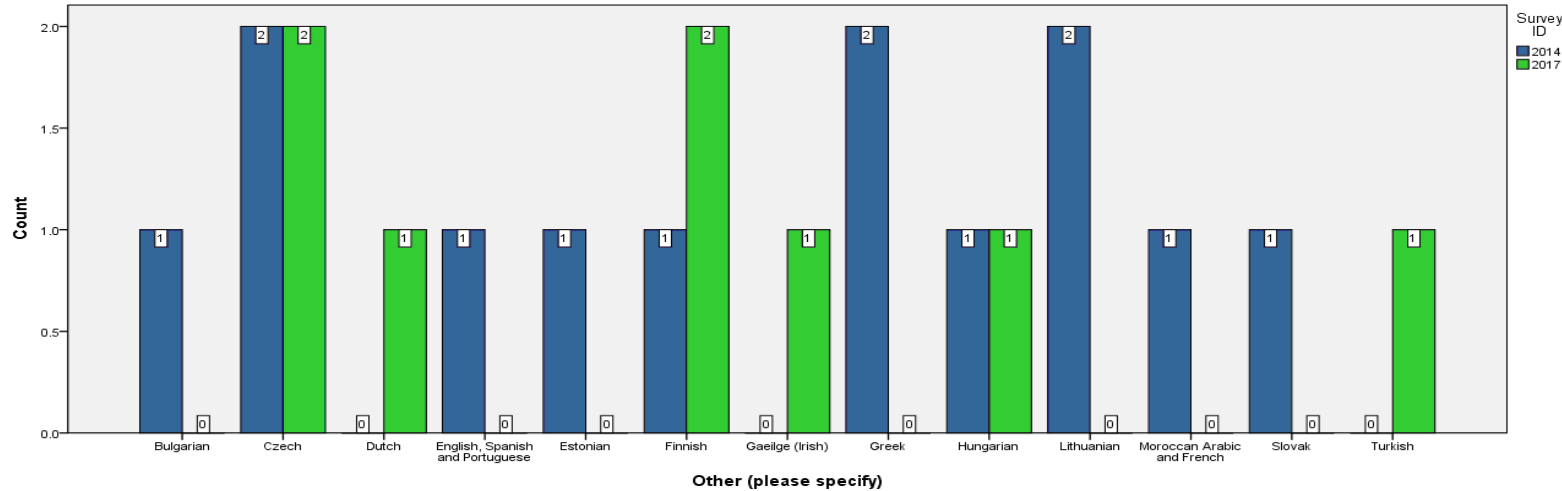
In the 2016 BRC Census 80% of the respondents were US residents (this figure was 82% in 2013).

1.7 Native Language

English comes up first in both surveys (44% and 39%), followed by French and German (with similar scores between 13% and 15%).



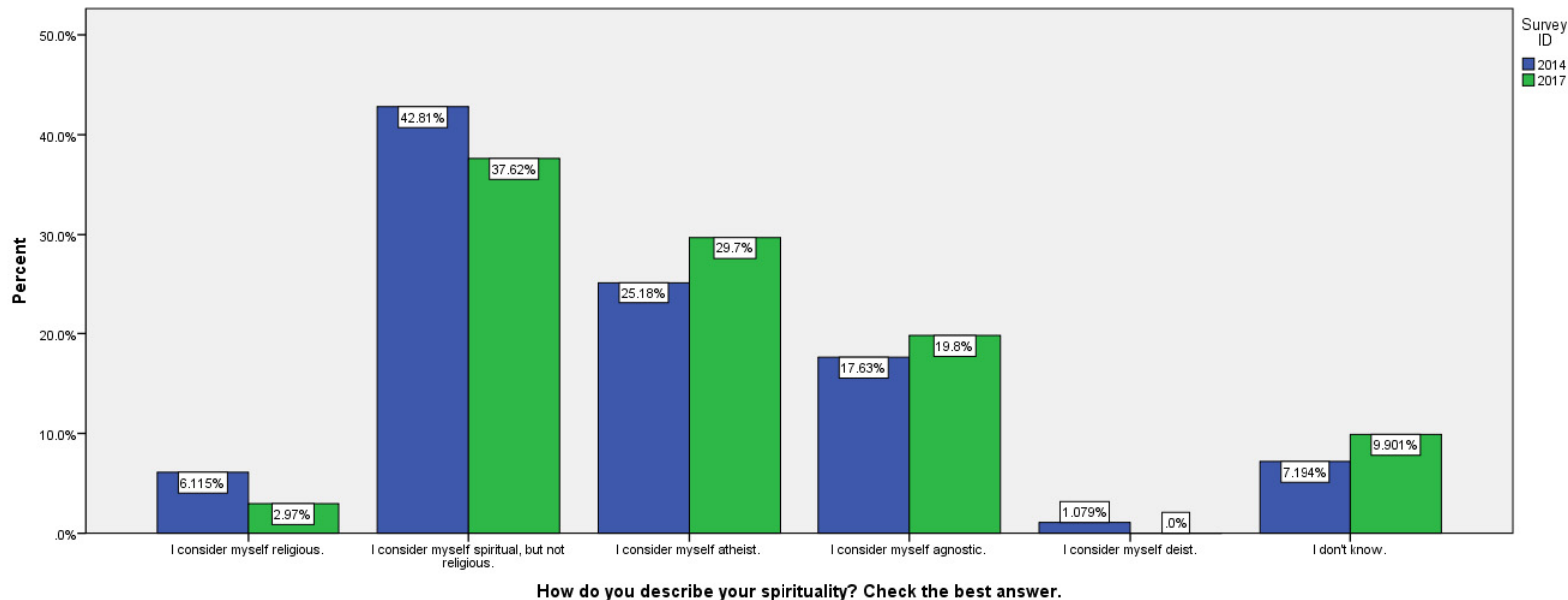
Several “Other” languages were identified as native language (sometimes as a combination of two or three languages):



In the 2016 BRC Census 78% of the respondents marked English as native language. This score was 88% in 2013; 84% in 2014; 80% in 2015 (declining tendency).

1.8 Spirituality

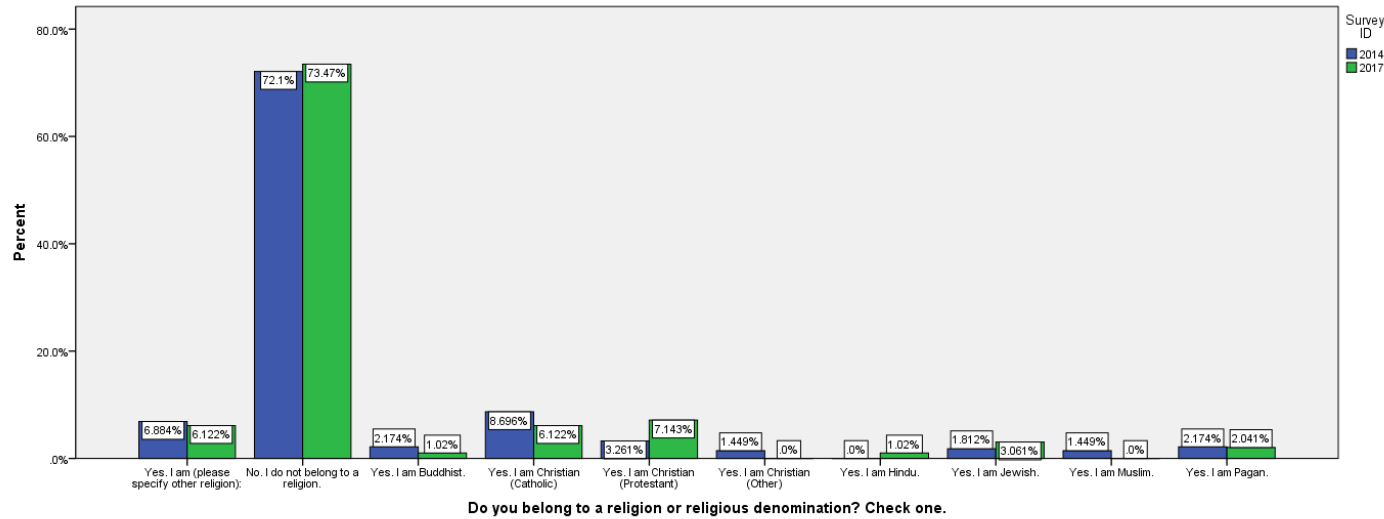
The tendency is similar across surveys. The highest percentage group is “spiritual, but not religious”, followed by atheists and agnostics. The percentages of “religious” respondents are low in both surveys (6% and 3%). In S2 the cumulative percentage of atheist and agnostic respondents is higher than in S1, accounting for 50% of the responses.



The tendency is similar in the BRC Census (Spiritual, not Religious; Atheist; Agnostic scores appearing in decreasing order), although the percentage of “spiritual, but not religious” responses is higher than in our surveys (47% in 2016; 49% in 2013).

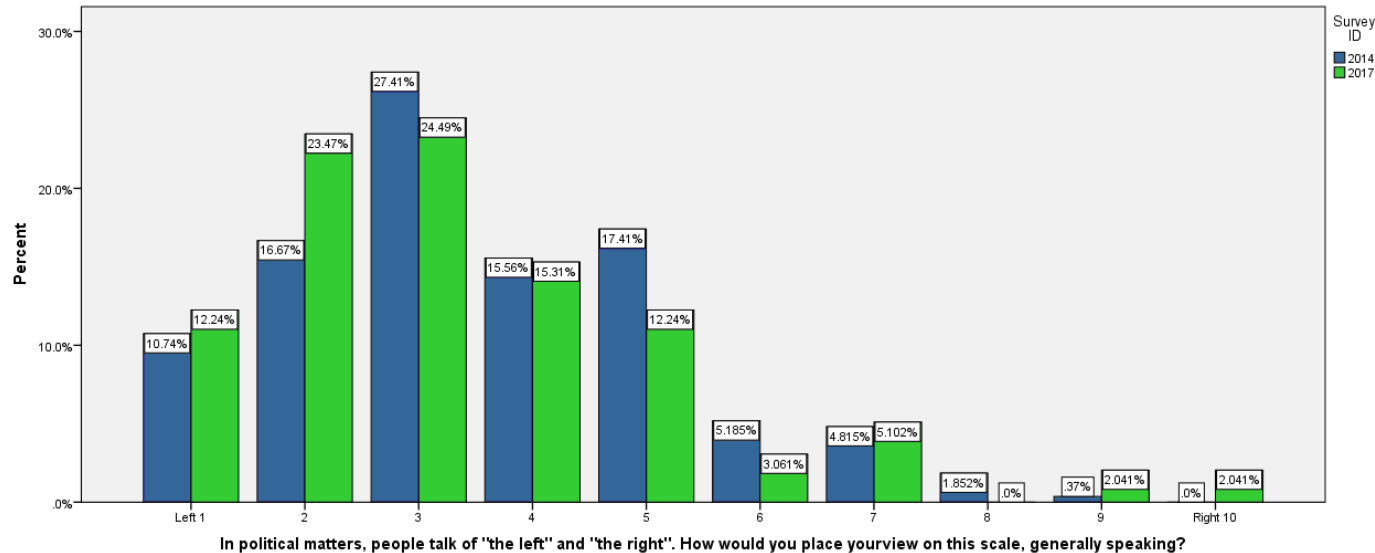
1.9 Religion or Religious Denomination

In both surveys the majority of respondents (72% and 73%) do not belong to a religion. They are followed by those who identify as Christian (Catholic or Protestant).



1.10 Political Orientation

The surveys deliver similar results. The vast majority (almost 90%) of respondents are situated on the left of the political spectrum.

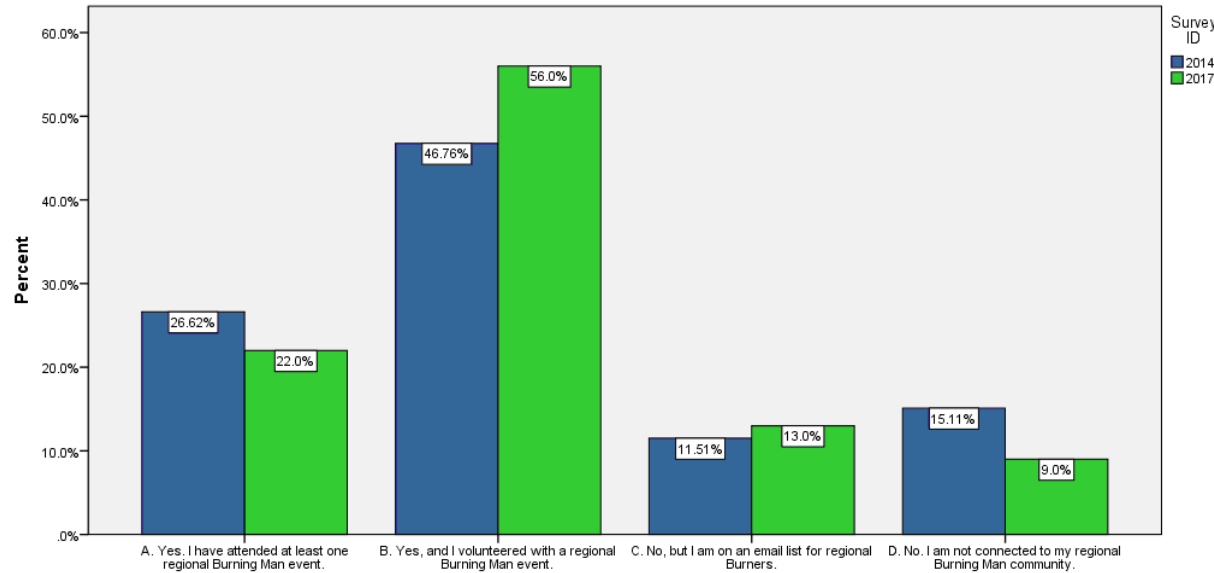


The BRC Census measures US political party affiliation. The vast majority of those who are affiliated with a political party are Democrat supporters.

2 Attendance at Burn Events and Attitudes regarding Black Rock City

2.1 Regional Event Attendance

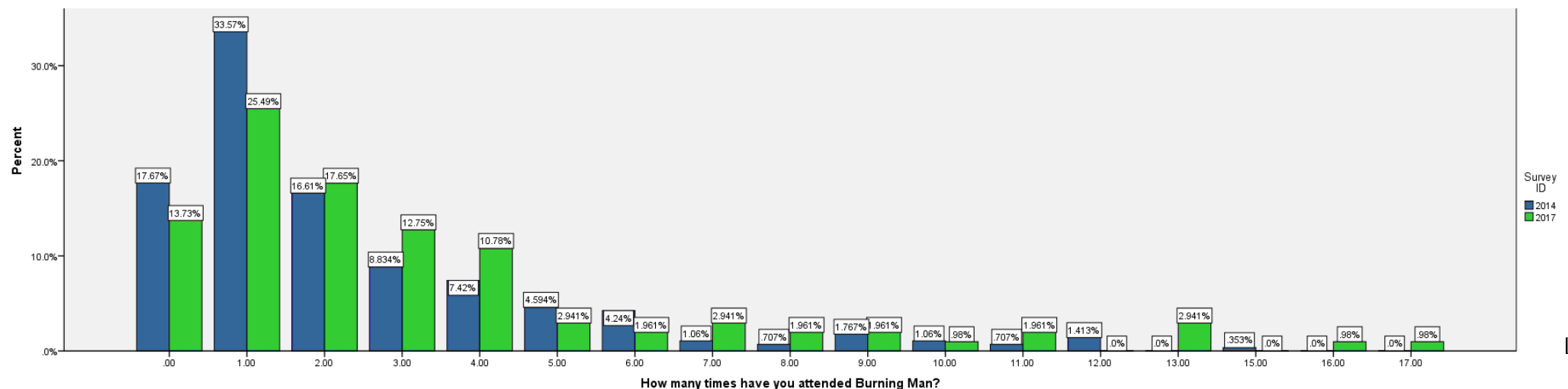
Some of the respondents (15% [S1] and 9% [S2]) are not connected to Burner communities in their region.



Unsurprisingly, the percentage of those who attended and/or volunteered at Regional Events is significantly higher than among the BRC Survey respondents (the aggregate BRC scores were 48% in 2013 and 43% in 2016).

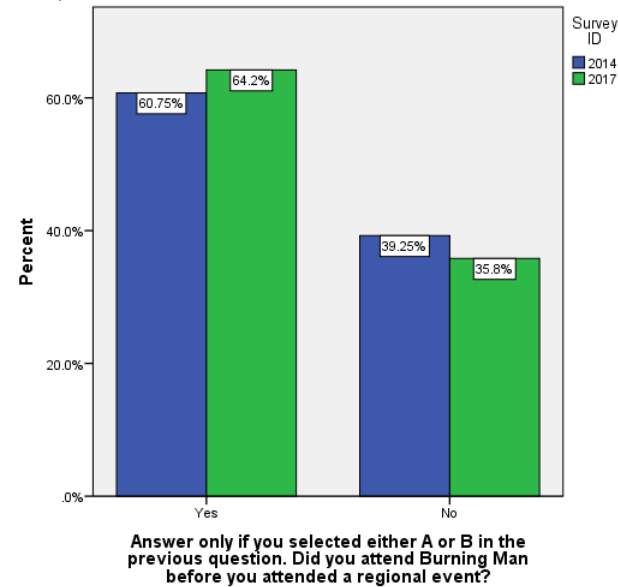
2.2 Black Rock City Attendance

The number of times each respondent attended Burning Man (Black Rock City) was recorded. Across surveys the largest cohort is the one-timer. The percentage of one-timers and of those who had not attended BRC is higher in S1. Overall, the percentage of the more seasoned Burners is higher in S2 (which suggests the possible seasoning of participants over time).

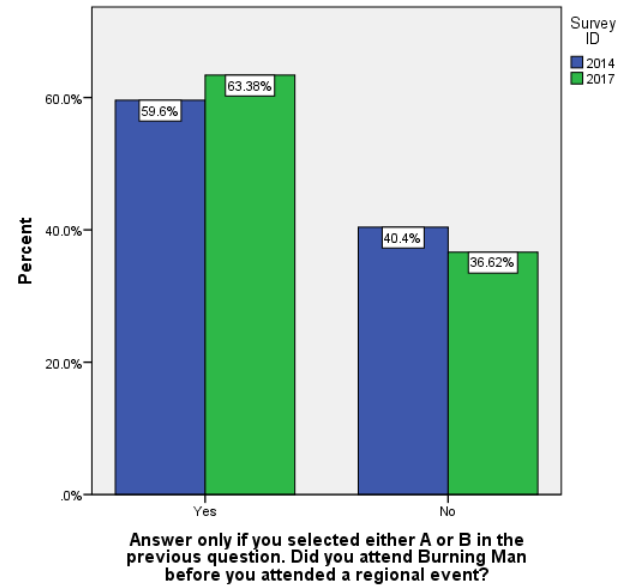


Further findings—Although a significant minority of respondents had not attended BRC before attending a Regional Event, the vast majority had previous knowledge and intended to go in future:

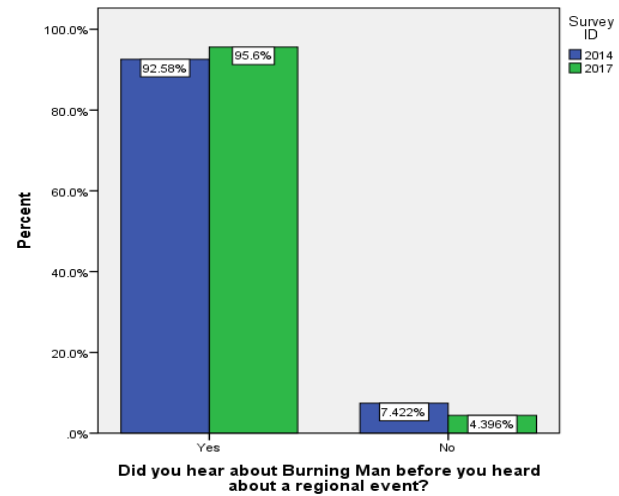
Of those who attended a Regional Event, a considerable minority (39% and 36%) had not attended BRC before.



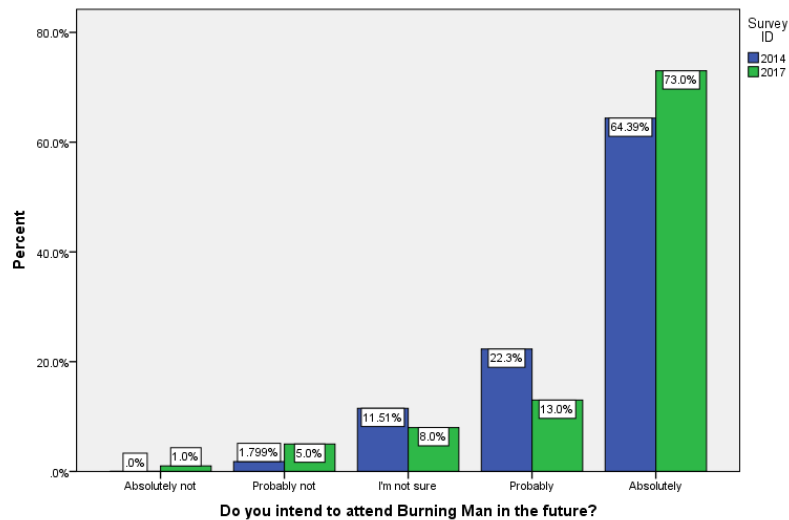
The results were similar when we excluded US residents from the sample:



The vast majority (93% and 96%) of respondents had heard about BRC/Burning Man before they heard about a Regional Event.

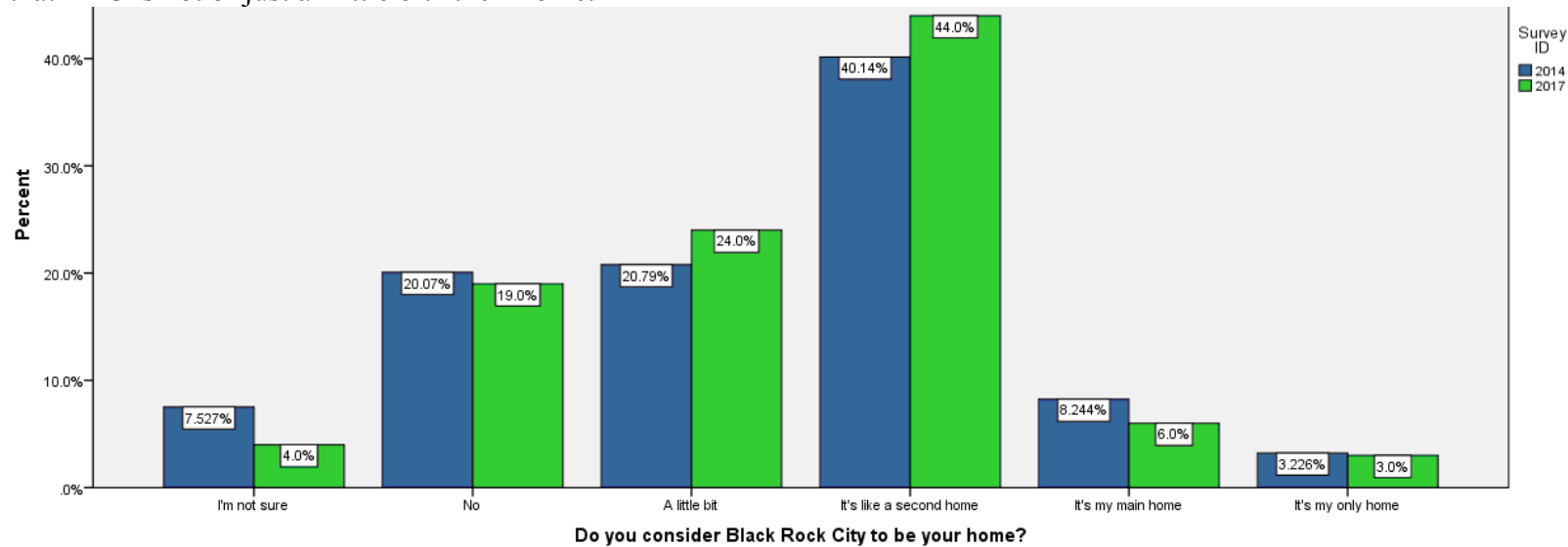


The vast majority (87% and 86%) of respondents intend to attend BRC in the future; most of them are absolutely sure about this.

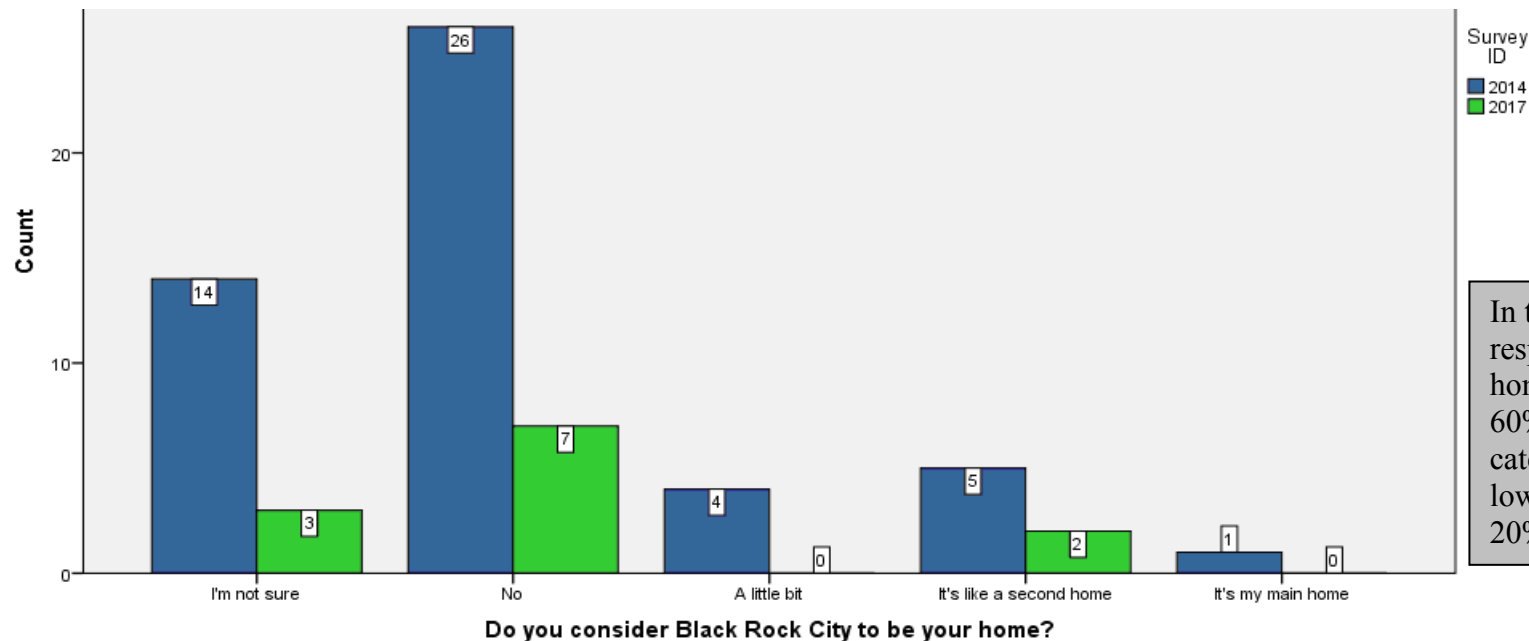


3.3 Black Rock City as (Second) Home

In both surveys, over 50% of respondents treat BRC as their home (or, as in most cases, their second home). Furthermore, over 40% of the respondents think that BRC is not or just a “little bit” their home.



A few of those who never attended Burning Man still feel that BRC is to some extent their home:



In the BRC Survey the percentage of respondents who consider BRC to be their home or their second home is higher (over 60%). At the same time, the percentage of categorical “No” answers is somewhat lower (14% in both years, compared to 20% [S1] and 19% [S2]).

Part II: Qualitative Data

1 Qualitative Analysis: Methodological Remarks

We coded all responses manually to identify the recurring categories and themes in our data. We employed an adapted version of the open coding technique from grounded theory. The coding was done with several revisions. Each valid survey response was treated as a single unit of data and linked with one or more codes emerging progressively from the text. Where needed, we also employed axial coding to identify themes and relationships between the open codes.

We sorted the categories according to the frequency of their occurrences among the responses given in S1 and S2. Our investigation of frequencies is not meant to be statistically representative and does not aim for a positivist interpretation of our findings. Instead, it provides a general idea of the magnitude of our observations and a starting point for further qualitative analysis.

Note. Some of the surveyed did not respond to any of the qualitative questions (we received 254 and 94 valid responses in the qualitative sections of S1 and S2, respectively).

2 Regional Events: Participation, Motivations, Comparisons

2.1 Motivations to Participate in European Events

Respondents were asked to name their motivations to participate in Regional Events in Europe. Based on the answers, we identified various categories (characteristics or factors) that encourage attendance at Regionals. Most respondents mentioned several factors.

Unsurprisingly, **convenience and accessibility** is frequently mentioned (also in the responses to some other questions): European events are **easier to access** and **cheaper** than BRC.

The other categories can be distributed into two thematic groups: community; other (general) impressions. In the remainder of this report the categories are listed according to their rankings in the combined frequency lists (S1 and S2).

Community (Social Intimacies and Interactions)

Being part of the Burner community is by far the most important motivation to attend Regionals. The **sense of this shared identity** is evident in the use of expressions such as “Burners”, “tribe”, “the people”, “community” or “family”. In many cases, this identification is associated with a strong **emotional affection and sense of intimacy**. The **participatory** aspect of this membership (an urge to contribute and co-create) is often emphasised. Participation is sometimes coupled with **gratitude** that can be expressed through **gifting**—which eventually goes back and forth: “the more you put in the more you get out”. Quite a few respondents are keen to meet **local members of the Burner community**, which is often enabled by a sense of shared European identity or a motivation to encounter Europeans.

Some participants emphasise the importance of **encountering friends and forging long-lasting friendships** at Regionals. For Europeans, it is easier to maintain these friendships than those made at BRC. A few praise the **diverse, tolerant and non-judgemental** community.

General Impressions

This group includes other general impressions of European events. Many respondents commend the possibilities of **(artistic) expression** ranging from producing artworks to other ways of self-expression and social experimentation. For many, participation has a **transformational or educational** potential, be it “personal growth” or educating others by “spread[ing] the word”. A similar number of respondents praise the **pervasive presence of the Burner spirit or vibe** at Regionals, which is kept alive by acting in accordance with the Ten Principles. Some respondents claim that the event’s environment is **special or different** from the “default world”. Another incentive to participate is the expectation of **fun and play**. A smaller number of respondents emphasise the powerful **sense of freedom** gained at Regionals. This may refer to the freedom of expression, uninhibited personal and social experimentation, a sense of liberation, or just “feeling free”. The **small size** of European events is sometimes mentioned. A few respondents note that Regionals provide **mementos of their BRC experience** or an occasion for encountering acquaintances from BRC (as a reunion).

“Motivations to Participate in European Events” Word Cloud (S1 and S2 aggregate)



2.2 Reasons for Not Attending Black Rock City Recently (S1 only)

S1 respondents were requested to name their reasons for not attending BRC in recent years. A classification of answers follows (a single response could fall into multiple categories):

Lack of money is by far the most prevalent reason: BRC is expensive, particularly for European residents. Three respondents mention their expected total costs, which fall between 2500 and 3000 USD per person. **Lack of time**, usually due to job commitments, comes up second in the list, with some respondents mentioning that they chose other holiday destinations. Some Burners mention **various family, health or life issues**, ranging from marriage to pregnancy to relationship problems to illness, as well as “doing other things”. **Distance from Europe** is also mentioned, often in relation with costs of travel and logistics. Certain respondents think that **BRC is corrupted**, seeing it as just another large-scale festival, which is no longer in touch with the Principles. Criticisms include: the event is not participatory enough; the sense of community has eroded; the environment feels unsafe or sexist. Others note that they **went to one or more Regional Events instead of BRC**. This is commonly associated with a desire to support the local Burner scene or experiencing a better sense of community or “home” at Regionals. Several respondents admit that they are **new to Burner culture** and haven’t had the chance to visit BRC yet. In terms of preparation, travel and participation, attendance at BRC can be **too demanding or even frightening** for some. The **ecological footprint** is another concern (particularly for European residents). The **large size of BRC** can be daunting for those who prefer more intimate events. Finally, three respondents note that they are unwilling to support a US-based event due to their **discontent with the country’s political and social affairs**.

2.3 Comparisons with Black Rock City

S1 and S2 respondents were asked to compare European Regional Events with Black Rock City. The responses can be distributed into the following groups: differences (no clear value judgement), merits, shortcomings and similarities.

Differences

These differences are not necessarily connected to a specific value judgement—or they can be seen as both merits and shortcomings.

By far, the most often mentioned (and most obvious) difference is the **smaller size** of Regional Events. Respondents also note that different **local conditions such as the cultural context or the use of European languages** may lead to the development of various event styles. Some respondents reflect on the influence of **different landscapes and environments**: the conditions at Regional Events are not as demanding as that prescribed by the unforgiving vastness of the playa, although it is mentioned that temperatures in Spain and Israel can be just as hot sometimes. The **intensity** of the vibe in BRC—enabled by the desert environment, the presence of large-scale art, the general spectacle and the sheer volume of Burners—is also acknowledged. Other respondents emphasise the **professionalism and maturity** of Black Rock City, which has a considerably larger budget to fund art. A few participants mention that Regionals are **more dance music or party-focused**.

Merits

The most common opinion, by far, is that Regionals excel in terms of “**community**”: the large majority of respondents value the **intimate**, cozy and familiar atmosphere, which is enabled by the relatively small size of events. Some mention that Regionals enable **stronger or longer-lasting friendships**, which are cherished after the event or are continued at other European events. Another recurring opinion is that Regionals Events are more conducive to **participation and co-creation** than BRC, which is sometimes seen as being more about the spectacle than participation. Others think that it is easier to make a difference as a “bigger fish in a smaller pond”: consequently, **participation has greater impact and is more rewarding than at BRC**. A few respondents mention that Regionals are **more egalitarian** than BRC (“there’s no exclusive first camp feel”).

Another thematic group addresses the various aspects of **freedom**. For some respondents, Regionals are endowed with a “**raw**”, **underground authenticity**, whereas BRC seems **more commercial or “flashy”**. Others emphasise how European events are **less regulated**, with less pronounced police presence and a “wilder”—or just more relaxed—vibe. Others still, celebrate the **cultural and environmental diversity** that is thought magnified at local events. Two participants mention the **sexually loaded atmosphere**, while two others note an **increased sense of general freedom** at Regionals.

Shortcomings

The most common opinion is that the scale, spectacular character or quality of **artistic expression at Regional Events is incomparable to BRC** (the lack of fire art at Nowhere is also mourned). A frequent idea is that **BRC**, sometimes known as the “Mothership” or “the real thing”, **is unique**: “nothing can compare with the Playa”. This inimitability is sometimes vehemently defended (even by respondents who have never been to Regionals or to BRC). Some respondents feel that **Regionals deviate from the Ten Principles**, providing inadequate translations of the spirit or ethos. Others think **BRC enables** a series of **anonymous, spontaneous and unrestricted interactions** with (friendly) strangers, which is hardly possible at small events, where people get to know each other better. Others still, note that that **BRC** provides a **friendlier, warmer or more inclusive** environment. A few participants mention that the scale of the event and the sheer amount of activities to choose from enables an **increased feeling of freedom at BRC**. Two respondents think that **European Regionals are too “druggy”**, and two others feel that they are **less safe** than BRC.

Similarities

Some respondents note that Regionals are **local manifestations of a common Burner spirit**: despite the various differences, the interactions, the values, the “energy” or the “spirit” of the people are similar.

3 Transformation in the “Default World”

The principles of Burning Man can be integrated into the “default world” in various ways, igniting changes in the way of life of the participants. We identified 22 such transformations (almost exclusively positive) evinced by the responses to the following question:

- Has Burning Man inspired you to change or modify your behaviour, or otherwise change the way you live, in the “default” world? If so, how?

Personal Attributes

The responses include a number of personality changes. **Open-mindedness** comes up as the most common response in this group. Participants experience more empathy towards other people, they feel less judgemental, or are more open towards new ideas. Many respondents think that Burning Man has given them **confidence and courage** to follow their own path or explore new avenues in life. They now have more room for self-expression, are less shy, more social or more self-reliant. An **increased awareness of oneself or one’s goals** in life is frequently mentioned. This may contribute to the feeling of leading a more conscious and authentic life, being conscious of one’s possibilities for development, being in peace with oneself or living life to the fullest. Better self-awareness is sometimes coupled with an **increased awareness or understanding of one’s immediate surroundings and the social world one inhabits**. Participants feel that they are more focused on the moment, are able to think more critically and are less manipulated by the media. Being more open towards others often leads to **more generosity, care and affection, or just being a “nicer person”**. Participants also report **improved emotional wellbeing**, having found or getting closer to happiness or serenity in life, which is sometimes transmitted to others. Several respondents report an **opening up towards others**, and some also emphasise the importance of **being honest with oneself**, which may contribute to the sense of an authentic self. A **general sense of freedom** is sometimes reported and connected to personal evolution and transcending boundaries, to a defiance of constraints and inhibitions, or to an opening up of possibilities. A few participants note that **money no longer plays a central role in their life** as they have learned that happiness cannot be bought with capital.

Daily interactions

Many respondents note that Burner culture has inspired profound alterations in their daily interactions. The most common response involves **gifting or helping others, sharing resources or volunteering in community projects**. Others mention the widening of friend circles, **connections with new people** or the **building of new communities**. An **increase in creativity** is often experienced and coupled with an enthusiastic, “doer attitude”. The creative flow can be channelled into art projects, crafting workshops, DIY activities or hobbies. An **increase in energy, motivations or curiosity** is frequently mentioned, which may result in a **more active, intense or adventurous lifestyle**. Burning Man encourages the various ways of **self-expression**, which some respondents have now **integrated into their daily lives**. The benefits are twofold: this integration contributes to a personal sense of freedom; it facilitates connection with and provides inspiration to others. Some other respondents have been keen to introduce Burning Man, and its principles, to others. Here, **Burner culture** is typically **promoted as an example of better living**.

Career

Some respondents report that Burning Man provided inspiration for their professional activities, **positively affecting their work projects or processes**. The Burner spirit is sometimes brought to the workplace with a focus on community building. For three respondents Burning Man ignited changes that, although regarded as positive, were **detrimental to their career**.

The Greater Good

The following changes concern processes or principles that transcend the level of the individual and possess a universal significance. Burning Man promotes endeavours towards a more sustainable living, and the **increased ecological awareness** of participants often translates into everyday practices such as recycling and minimising waste. Some respondents report an intention to **live according to the Principles** or follow the general ethos of Burning Man. Others note that by promoting universal values such as the respect of self, others and the environment, Burner culture provides inspiration for social activism and may contribute to the **improvement of wider society**. The model of Burning Man may also offer “hope that humanity is going in the right direction”. Finally, a few respondents **discovered spirituality** at Burning Man, or feel that its ethos may provide a viable **substitute for religion**.

No Change

Several respondents note that they had been **living close to the principles before encountering Burner culture**, with some mentioning that it was not the attendance at Burning Man events that influenced their lifestyle, but the other way around. One respondent is **dismissive of those he sees as taking Burner culture too seriously** and states that self-awareness, moral conduct and personal values should emerge from within, from the contexts of everyday life, and not from a festival environment.

“Transformation in the Default World” Word Cloud (S1 and S2 aggregate)



4 Ten Principles

Note: The Ten Principles are extended to eleven or even twelve principles by some respondents (see below).

4.1 Principles as Accurate Guidelines for European Regional Events

Slightly different variations of the same question are posed in the two surveys:

- S1: Do you consider these principles to be accurate guidelines for the European Burning Man Regional Events with which you are familiar? If not, please explain. You may respond in your first language.
- S2: Do you consider the Ten Principles of Burning Man to be accurate guidelines for European Regional Events? Please clarify.

The answers can be distributed into four main cohorts (Yes, Accurate with Reservations, Not Accurate, Don't Know).

Yes (Accurate)

The majority of both S1 and S2 respondents are confident that the Ten Principles serve as accurate guidelines for European Regionals. Most respondents **provide no further explanation**. S2 respondents are more likely to provide clarification—this can be attributed to the change in the question's wording. Some respondents consider the guidelines accurate and also note that they can be **extended with additional principles**. The typical examples given are Consent (to sexually loaded activities in particular) and Education (of less experienced Burners).

Some respondents think that the Principles should be seen as **ethical guidelines with universal (global) validity**: they can be applied to daily life regardless of the location of the participant. Others note that the **Ten Principles are at the heart of Burner culture** and constitute the identity of Burner events, distinct from other events and “festivals”. Three respondents think that unlike Regionals, **BRC has lost touch with the Ten Principles** in certain aspects (ecological footprint, plug n' play camps, spectators).

Accurate With Reservations

Some respondents express that the Ten Principles are only partially (or with some reservations) accurate in the context of European Regionals. A frequent opinion in this cohort is that the Principles are not to be taken as unshakeable commandments; **as general guidelines they leave space for interpretation and adjustment** according to the local contexts and requisites of Regional Events. Another prevalent view is that while most Principles are accurate, **one or some of them are not adhered to at European Regionals**. The most common objections include: **Leave No Trace** is not respected or insufficient (the events could be more sustainable); **Inclusion** is not “radical” (it is corrupted by elitism and cultural expectations); **Decommodification** is not always achieved at Regionals (or it is considered of secondary importance in a European context). Several respondents note that the

Ten Principles are **less influential at European Regionals than at BRC**. One opinion is that European crowds tend to be less educated or aware of their meaning; another argument is that some of the US-derived Principles (such as Civic Responsibility and Decommodification) are less relevant at European events. Further to the previous argument, some respondents emphasise their **preference for a localisation or rewording of the guidelines** (such as Nowhere's core principles) to better suit the European context. A few respondents note that the Principles are only **partially accurate without giving further explanation**.

Not Accurate

Only a small number of respondents think that the Principles do not provide accurate guidelines for European Regionals at all. It is stated that the **Principles are US- or BRC-oriented**, and cannot be accurate for European Regionals due to the sharp contrast in the environmental contexts and the linguistic or cultural particularities. Three respondents are **dismissive of the Principles** on the grounds that (some of) these are too **dogmatic or hypocritical**. Two respondents mention that the Ten Principles were **not influential at Decompression or urban events** they visited. According to two additional respondents, **too many principles are disregarded at Regionals**, and these can no longer be considered accurate guidelines.

Don't Know

A few S1 respondents **have never been to European Regionals, or they do not feel experienced enough** to answer the question.

4.2 Most Important and Least Important Principles (S1 only)

S1 respondents were asked, in two separate questions, to consider the most and least important among the Ten Principles. Some of them named more than one principle, while others noted that all principles are equally important (and interrelated).

Most Important Principles		Least Important Principles	
Radical Inclusion	50	All Are Important	44
Participation	45		
Leave No Trace	31	Immediacy	34
Radical Self-Expression	29	Gifting	19
Communal Effort	23	Radical Self-Reliance	18
Radical Self-Reliance	22	Civic Responsibility	16
Gifting	19	Decommodification	11
Immediacy	19	Radical Self-Expression	10
Decommodification	17	Communal Effort	6
Civic Responsibility	14	Leave No Trace	6
		Participation	5
All Are Important	18	Radical Inclusion	4

An evaluation of the highest scoring principles from both lists follows:

Most Important Principles

Radical Inclusion and Participation are the two most frequently prioritised principles.

Radical Inclusion is often seen as the key enabling force of Burner culture. It contributes to the development of a healthy community as it promotes openness, diversity, peace and hope, and helps combat prejudice, discrimination, xenophobia and elitism (including Burner elitism). On the personal level, **Radical Inclusion** permits self-expression, inviting event-goers to open up and explore their potential. As close second, **Participation** is recognised to be at the core of Burner events and culture. Respondents often stress that a Burner event is not (or should not be) consumed as a spectacle: Burners are part of the community co-creating the event. The principle of **Participation**, which signifies for many, a deviation from a culture of mass consumption and entertainment, is recognised to hold the potential to facilitate (social) change. It also empowers the participant, enabling interactions with other community members and allowing self-expression.

The honourable mentions on the priority list are given to Leave No Trace and Radical Self-Expression (with very similar scores). **Leave No Trace** is often mentioned in combination with other principles. Environmental responsibility extends beyond the boundaries of events, even beyond the bounds of humanity, and is considered to hold “paramount priority in our times”. **Leave No Trace** may also refer to the transience and impermanence of Burner events. Seen as the prerequisite to Burner identity by some respondents, **Radical Self-Expression** enables the (artistic) creativity of an individual that is considered a “true” expression of self. As prototypically transformational, Burning Man tends to permit freedom from the limitations, constraints and expectations of everyday life, enabling relatively uninhibited experiments in authentic selfhood.

Least Important Principles

The largest group of respondents would rather not single out one principle as insignificant. It is often stated that the **principles are synergetic or dependent on each other**; all principles performing a role in binding the community together.

Immediacy is seen as the most “disposable” principle. Some respondents are not sure what the term means or suspect that it is used as a marketing ploy. Others agree that the prioritising of immediate experience is an integral aspect of Burner events but highlight that mediation and programming are essential features of everyday life. Some conflate the meaning of **Immediacy** with “immediately” and associate it with improvised and uninformed decision making.

Runners-up in the list of least important principles are: Gifting, Radical Self-Reliance and Civic Responsibility (with very similar scores). The principle of **Gifting** is often considered valuable but not indispensable. Some mention that it is an implication of Decommodification; others would prefer gifting to happen without explicit endorsement. A single respondent notes that the principle may endorse the fetishisation of “object-gifts”, whereas one should strive to be generous and helpful in a broader sense. Some respondents feel that **Radical Self-Reliance** may gravitate towards egocentricity, straying away from the communal ethos of Burner culture. It may clash with other principles such as Civic Responsibility, Gifting and Leave No Trace (e.g. avoidance of car pooling). It is also stated that the principle is less important in the context of most European Regionals, where the environment is not as harsh as the playa of the Black Rock Desert. Finally, with respect to **Civic Responsibility**, adherence to local (safety) regulations is seen as mandatory in the organisation of *any* event, and it is not considered to be as defining or integral to Burner culture as the other principles.

5 Miscellaneous Questions

S1 respondents were asked to provide stories of noteworthy experiences in relation to the Ten Principles as practiced in the context of European Regional Events. There were 46 valid responses, most limited to a few sentences. One possible thematic classification:

Impressed by Principles in Action	16
Enrichment of Daily Life	6
Problems With LNT	5
Translation and Introduction of Principles	5
More Optimal than BRC	3
Problems and Dilemmas of Event Organisation	3
Problems With Community Values (Care, Consent, Reliability)	3
Sense of Flow and Freedom	3
Sense of Love and Trust	3
You Have to Be There!	2

**“Stories and Experiences from Regionals in Relation to the Principles”
Word Cloud (S1)**



5.1 Reasons for Self-identifying as Burner (S2 only)

S2 comprises the closed-ended question “Do you consider yourself to be a Burner?”, which received the following responses: Yes (75), Somewhat (18) and No (1). Those who checked Yes or Somewhat were asked to explain their choice. The explanations can be distributed into seven (overlapping) cohorts.

Acceptance of the Ten Principles or adoption of corresponding ethical codes is what defines Burner identity among most respondents. Another common view is that **being a Burner entails a certain attitude or lifestyle**. In most responses this is explicitly connected to transposing the Ten Principles into daily life, which leads to a very significant overlap between this cohort and the previous. A few of these respondents also mention that they are determined to make a change in their surroundings (e.g. by spreading the word). **Attendance at Burner events** is an obvious part of one’s self-identification as a Burner. Some respondents mention an **intimate sense of belonging to the Burner community**, which is seen as a global group of people who share similar values, world-view and experiences. Participation in this community may entail the exploration and enactment of an authentic self that is not always enabled by other social environments. In some cases, **no rational explanation** is given: for some, the definition of Burner identity seems problematic or absurd; for others it refers to an inner feeling that is hard to put into words. Certain respondents emphasise the importance of being proactive in the Burner community and beyond—e.g. by **volunteering at events and being creative in daily life**. Finally, two respondents refer explicitly to **spirituality or religion**.

Conclusion: Results and Recommendations

The quantitative part of our survey measured sociodemographic characteristics and attitudes towards Burning Man that are mostly consistent with the BRC Census. Some notable deviations include:

- Looking at the median income and the income distribution, wealthy people are less represented in our sample than at BRC over the same period.
- The ratio of English native speakers is two times higher in the BRC Census.
- The respondents in our surveys are less likely to consider BRC to be their “home” than in the BRC Census.

Further observations:

- In comparison with the national indicators, our respondents are highly educated. The BRC Census shows similarly high education scores.
- The vast majority of our respondents situate themselves on the left side of the political spectrum. In the BRC Census the vast majority of those who feel affiliated with a political party are Democratic Party supporters.
- A significant minority of our respondents had not attended Black Rock City before attending a regional event, but the vast majority of respondents had heard about it before and do intend to go there in the future.

The most valuable results for the scope of study are delivered in the qualitative section of our survey.

Within these responses, references to Nowhere are the most frequent among all event references. Consequently, Nowhere can be seen as the prototypical European Regional Event in our sample.

Community and co-creation are the most important motivations to visit European Regionals. The intimate sense of community is often seen as that which can no longer be found at BRC. On the other hand, BRC is seen to deliver more in terms of large-scale artworks and its sheer intensity, which is attributed to the scale of the event and the environment of the Black Rock Desert. Lack of money is the most important factor for not visiting BRC.

Respondents tend to see the Ten Principles as accurate guidelines for European events. The need to adapt them according to the local circumstances is also mentioned. The core principles of Nowhere offer one such example of cultural and linguistic adaptation.

Radical Inclusion and Participation are most often seen as the core principles of Burner culture. Leave No Trace and Radical Self-Expression are also frequently prioritised. It is often stated that the principles are synergetic with, or dependent on, each other.

According to most S2 respondents, an acceptance of the Ten Principles is what defines Burner identity, which also entails a unique attitude or lifestyle when the Principles are transposed into daily life. These factors seem to be more important than attendance at Burner events.

Recommendations

Much of our sample was taken from ELS participants, as well as subscribers and readers of *Jack Rabbit Speaks* and *Burning Man Journal*. To better distinguish respondents in such circumstances, it would be advisable to promote separate online links providing different cohorts access to the same survey, and enabling researchers to refine the composition of the sample.

Our surveys used a very loose definition of “EuroBurner”. It may have been worthwhile to ask respondents to define EuroBurner.