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Workshops Proceedings - 1st Batch

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1 Introduction

RESILIENCE places users at the core of its activities, offering to its users only those services that are requested or envisioned by the community. To fulfil this intention, WP3 - Users - has designed a workshop format in which future users of RESILIENCE are asked what an RI would have to offer to be relevant for them.

WP3 organises workshops in cooperation with WP4 - Communication, Dissemination and Exploitation - in which the RI and its possibilities are presented to the focus groups. The aim of these workshops, in alignment with the description offered in T3.1, is to find out the requirements of the users in detail, to understand the needs of the end users, to find out what their priorities are, to align the development of the services accordingly and to map existing services.

This deliverable presents the workshop design (2) by explaining the strategy (2.1), describing the guidelines for the interview (2.2) and the group discussion (2.3), as well as the structure of the workshop (2.4). Subsequently, the phases of Preparation (3.1) and Implementation (3.2) are explained in the chapter on Workshop Realisation (3). The collected data (4) and the evaluation of the workshop (5) are then briefly presented. Finally, the next steps (6) are examined in an outlook. Relevant documents¹ are included in an appendix to this deliverable, which is available for interested readers in the Project's repository.

¹ Contents of the Appendix: 1. Interview Guideline (relating to chap. 2.2); 2. Guideline Group Discussion (chap. 2.3); 3. Standardised Information Letter (chap. 3.1); 4. Programme Workshop Sofia 2023-02 (chap. 3.2.1); 5. Programme Meeting Ljubljana 2023-03 (chap. 3.2.2); 6. Programme Workshop Volos 2023-05 (chap. 3.2.3); 7. Programme Workshop Muenster 2023-10 (chap. 3.2.4); 8. Evaluation WP2 3 4 Workshop Sofia Feb 2023 Attendants (chap. 5.2); 9. Evaluation and Feedback Volos Workshop May 2023 (chap. 5.2); 10. Evaluation Training and Workshop Münster Oct 2023 (chap. 5.2).

2 Workshop Design

The user requirement workshop was developed in the first months of the RESILIENCE PPP by WP3 in collaboration with WP2 - Services - and WP4 and piloted out in cooperation with partners from the consortium at four locations. The workshop concept focused on presenting RESILIENCE to potential users and finding out from them what their challenges in doing research are and how RESILIENCE can add value for them. The core of the user requirements workshop consisted of individual and group interviews. The individual interviews serve to gain insights into their research and to identify and prioritise the challenges and needs of the individual users. The group discussions encourage the participants to think outside of the box together with other participants about what constitutes good research and how a research infrastructure can make this possible. Through this shift in perspective from their own challenges and demands on RI to a group discussion on what good research means, participants are challenged to find constructive solutions to the problems they face in conducting research, with the support of RESILIENCE.

2.1 Strategy

In order to meet the specified objectives, WP3 dealt with the following topics in the strategic concept of the workshop.

1. Content of the workshop:

Based on the goal of collecting and prioritising user requirements on the one hand and presenting RESILIENCE to potential users on the other, it was decided to design a workshop focusing on elements of the survey and presentation.

2. Potential User:

RESILIENCE aims to serve the study of religion in all academic fields. Researchers play the most important role here. Accordingly, WP3 decided in its strategic conception to focus initially on the prioritised user group of researchers.

3. Presentation method:

In close consultation with WP₄ and WP₂, it was agreed to prepare appropriate presentations for the target group, which on the one hand contain general information about RESILIENCE and on the other hand, where possible, already show which services are available and which services will be created in the future.

4. Survey method:

When surveying user needs, WP₃ opted for a qualitative rather than a quantitative survey. In the strategic preliminary considerations for the workshop, it was decided to conduct interviews with a number of researchers who deal with Digital Humanities [DH] and Religious Studies in their daily work. WP₃ expects the qualitative survey to generate detailed information for the direction of the Research Infrastructure. Qualitative interviews can take place both digitally and in person. In order to gain a comprehensive insight into the situation of researchers and their challenges, WP₃ considered it essential to conduct the interviews in the contexts of research institutions of potential users, if possible.

5. Location:

As RESILIENCE is a European based research infrastructure, it was evident from the outset that the surveys should also take place throughout Europe to collect representative data from potential users. The question arose in which part of Europe the first surveys should take place. As the WP₃ lead is located at a large university in Münster in Central Europe, it seemed sensible to carry out the first surveys in contexts that differ from this. Consequently, the first workshops were organised in Southeastern Europe. In order to collect representative data, further surveys will be carried out in various other parts of Europe.

2.2 Description of the Interview Guideline

WP₃ decided to use the guideline or expert interview method for the individual interviews in order to ascertain the needs of future users. Guideline or expert interviews are generally used to obtain in-depth perspectives from the interviewees on the topics addressed. This method allows the needs of users to be comprehensively identified and prioritised. An interview guideline, which can be viewed on request, was developed by WP₃ in advance to ensure optimal usability and comparability of the results so that the interviews could be conducted by different RESILIENCE team members. The development process focused on the question of the relevant topics in relation to a European based research infrastructure for all academic fields on religion. To this end, several preliminary discussions were held with experts in the field of DH at the

University of Münster and the surrounding area, e.g. with scholars of the Service Center of Digital Humanities of the University, the Excellence Cluster for Religion and Politics, the INTF (Institute for New Testament Textual Research), the BdN (Library of Neology) and fdm.nrw (Landesinitiative für Forschungsdatenmanagement). These discussions served to gain an insight into DH and research infrastructures, and to identify the most suitable topics for the interview guideline, which in consultation with WP2, were defined as follows: 1) Research Data, 2) Research Data Management, 3) Software / Tools, 4) Networking, 5) Digital Research Infrastructure, 6) Training.

The interview guideline is introduced with general information about a guided interview and about the guideline itself. In addition, there are tips on how to prepare for an interview, how to conduct it and how to reflect on it afterwards. The interview guideline offers "key questions", "introductory questions" and "specification questions" for each of the five topics. With the help of these categorically differentiated questions, the interviewers are supported in asking stimulating questions on the respective topics, which make it easier for the interviewee to provide information about their needs and the associated opportunities of RESILIENCE.

2.3 Description of the Guideline for the Group Discussion

In the group interview, participants are encouraged to find constructive solutions to the challenges they face in their day-to-day research-related work. The guideline for group discussions, which can be viewed on request, is introduced with general information, in which the role of the moderator is explained and the aim of the group discussion is stated: "to explore the added value of RESILIENCE in good research defined by the users". As group discussions are very dependent on the composition of the group in terms of their dynamics and choice of topic, the moderator has comparatively more autonomy in conducting the discussion. Consequently, there are no pre-formulated questions; instead there is a structure for the group discussion. This begins with an introduction of the participants and a presentation of the procedure of the group discussion, it continues with the group discussion itself, and ends with a final round. During the discussion, participants are encouraged to take notes on index cards. Red = Obstacles ; Green = Dreams ; Blue = Realistic. On the index cards, participants can note down topics that come to their attention during the discussion but may not fit in with the dynamics of the discussion at that moment.

2.4 Description of the Workshop Structure

The Workshop is structured by five phases.

Phase 1: Welcome and Introduction

In this phase, the host welcomes all participants to the workshop, introduces the project and the objectives of the workshop and gives each participant the opportunity to introduce themselves. It serves to create a pleasant workshop atmosphere and to get to know each other.

Phase 2: Presentation of RESILIENCE

RESILIENCE is introduced through various presentations prepared by WP4 and WP2 for the respective workshop. The presentations are followed by short Q+A rounds. This phase serves to familiarise the participants with the history, mission, vision and current topics of RESILIENCE.

Phase 3: Presentations of Attendees about their Work / Institute / Project

Presentations are given by participants about their work, their institute or their project, giving them the opportunity to name specific research questions and challenges. The presentations are followed by a Q+A round. As a result, RESILIENCE team members gain interesting insights into the work of potential users or made aware of their individual requirements, which usually differ according to the topics studied, disciplines and methodologies used by the presenters.

Phase 4: Interviews / Group discussion

In the interviews and group discussions, the user requirements are collected using the aforementioned procedure.

Phase 5: Feedback and Goodbye

In the final phase, there is the opportunity to give feedback on the experienced workshop. Furthermore, information is shared on how to participate in an online evaluation. This feedback is used by WP2 / WP3 / WP4 and the host to continuously improve the workshop.

3 Workshop Realisation

3.1 Preparation

Different types of preparation are required for different groups of participants:

Partner / Host:

In order to collect Europe-wide representative surveys, it makes sense to work together with various partners from the consortium and beyond to recruit them as hosts. The host is responsible for a variety of tasks. They take care of the logistics and infrastructure (conference room, catering, transport to the conference room, etc.), the daily schedule and the supporting programme. Most important is to invite and communicate with the participants. For the invitation, a standardised information letter was designed to support the host in communicating with the participants. WP3 is in close contact with the host during the preparation.

RESILIENCE staff:

All RESILIENCE team members participating in the workshop are provided with the interview guidelines in advance and briefed on the workshop procedure. Various templates were developed for internal organisation purposes ("RESILIENCE Preparation Workshop-template", "Registration-template", "Program-template", "List of participants-template", "Interviewer-survey-template", "Interview-schedule-template"), which are accessible on the project's shared repository.

Participants:

Participants are sent a questionnaire in advance which asks for general personal data (name, age, gender, level of education, institution, faculty, discipline). This general information is stored under password protection in a local repository and can be obtained from WP3 members on request. Participants are invited to the workshop with a standardised information letter, which can be viewed on request.

3.2 Implementation

After the workshop design was created in consultation with WP2 and WP4, the workshop was held at four locations (University of Sofia, University of Ljubljana, Volos Academy and University of Münster). These are briefly presented below, and the schedules of the workshops can be viewed on request.

3.2.1 University of Sofia

The workshop was held for the first time in Sofia on 23.–24.02.2023. TUA, KUL, University of Münster and the host University of Sofia “St. Kliment Ohridski” were involved in the planning and implementation. A total of eleven researchers from outside the RESILIENCE team took part in the workshop, all of whom were interviewed individually and also participated in a group discussion. The five phases described above were carried out in order. Half of the participants were questioned in individual interviews, while the others took part in a group discussion.

3.2.2 University of Ljubljana

On the 14th of March 2023 the University of Ljubljana became the first institution that received the Observer Status in the RESILIENCE Consortium. After a fruitful discussion on the future collaboration between the local staff and RESILIENCE (integration of Slovenian digital projects on Religious Studies etc.), which was joined by representatives of the Slovenian Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, WP3 took the chance of this meeting to conduct a group discussion, which was based on the original workshop design of this WP (See infra and D 3.5). The choice to implement this part of the Workshop-Design was based on temporal and practical reasons. However, the WP definitely wished to take the opportunity to interview the researchers present about their needs in regard to their research and the future enhancement and support by the RI. The interview methodology allows us to include the results of this interview in the collection of user requirements, which are fruitful for valuable insights in the reality of Religious Studies in South-Eastern Europe.

3.2.3 Volos Academy

The workshop in Volos was held on 19.–20.05.2023 in cooperation between TUA, INFAL, KUL, University of Münster, University of Sofia and the host Volos Academy for Theological Studies. A total of twelve researchers external to RESILIENCE took part in the workshop. The workshop was carried out in five phases,

as planned in the workshop design, and all participants were interviewed individually and in group discussions.

3.2.4 University of Münster

The workshop in Münster took place on 27.10.2023. It was prepared and carried out in cooperation with TUA, INFAI, KUL, Uni Warsaw, FSCIRE, AU-UFO, University of Sofia and the host, University of Münster. Nine participants external to RESILIENCE took part in the user requirement workshop and in a group discussion in accordance with the workshop design, after being questioned in an individual interview.

In addition to the user interviews, a special feature of this workshop was a full-day training course on qualitative interviews that preceded the workshop and in which all workshop participants associated with RESILIENCE took part. During the training of “Hand aufs Herz”, techniques for conducting successful interviews were developed, challenges and problems were addressed and various techniques were tried out in order to be even better equipped for the following interview day, both theoretically and practically. A detailed program and the evaluation of the training can be viewed on request.

4 Collected Data

A wide range of different data was collected in the workshops. This data shows the diversity of the participants (4.1), the presentations given by the participants (4.2), and interviews conducted with the participants on the topics mentioned (4.3).

4.1 Participants

A total of 32 interviewees took part in the workshops, and 25 participants returned the questionnaire. Information about age, gender, level of education and academic discipline of the latter group is presented below:

A. Age and Gender

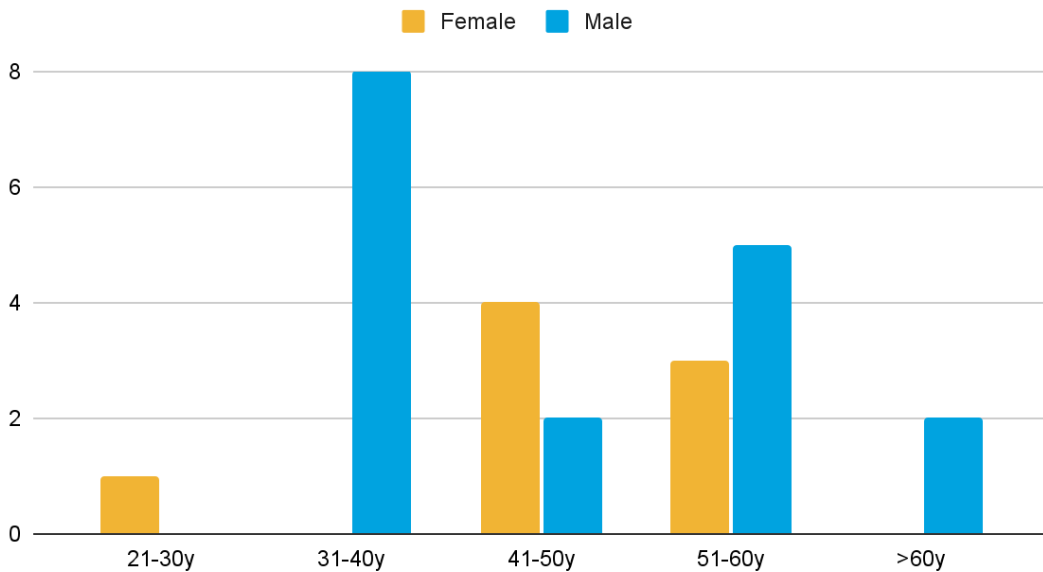


Figure 1: Age and Gender of the Interviewees



B. Level of Education

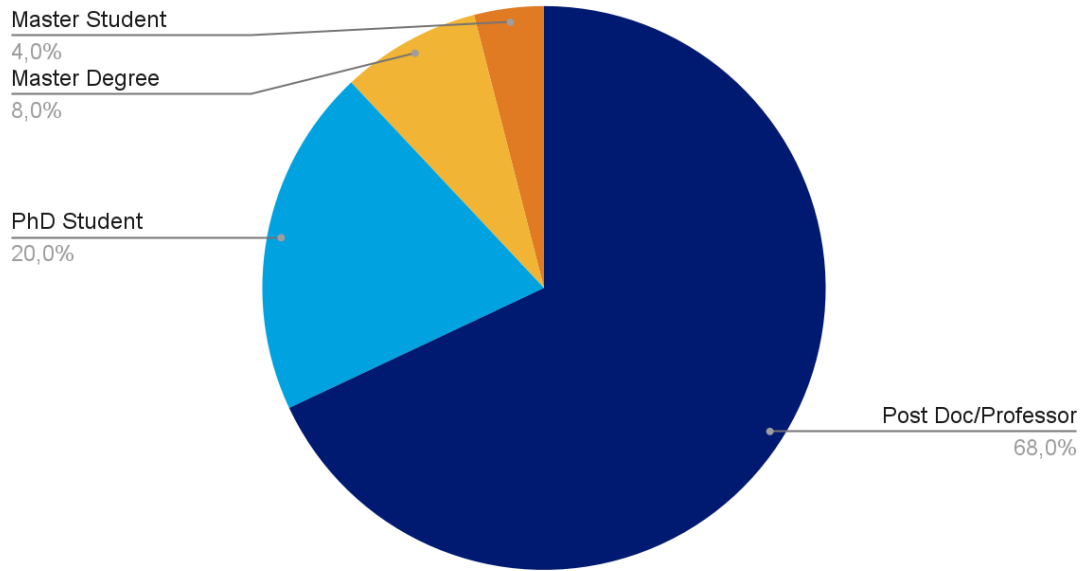


Figure 2: Level of Education of the Interviewees

C. Academic Discipline

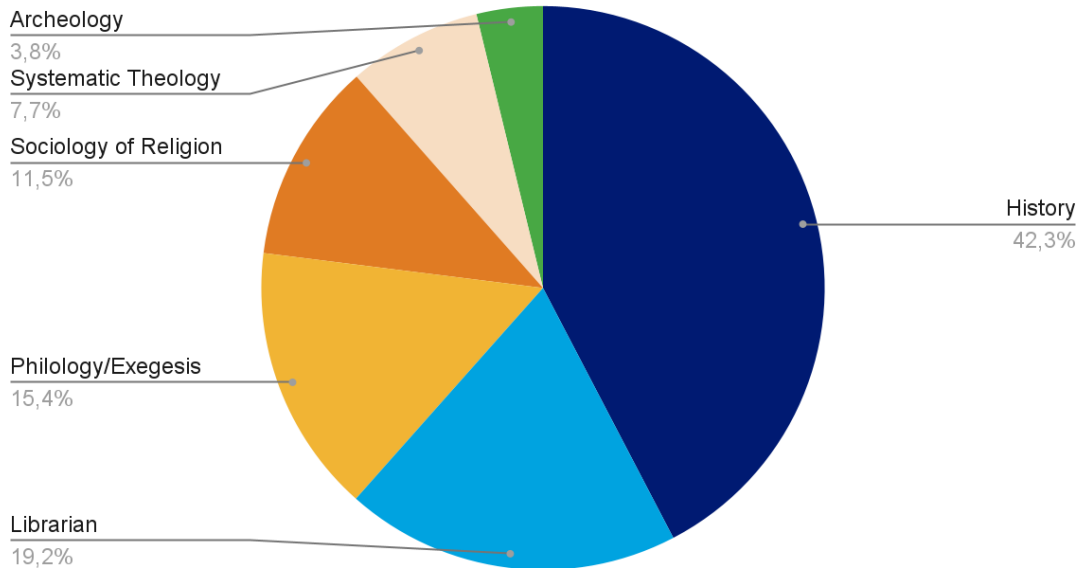


Figure 3: Academic Discipline of the Interviewees

The workshop participants who take part in the interviews were invited by the local host. The hosts endeavour to achieve as broad and representative a distribution as possible in terms of age, gender, academic discipline and career status, but they have no influence on who actually accepts the invitation to the workshop and the interviews.

The distribution should approximately reflect the structure of the researchers on religion at the workshop locations. This seems likely for the gender ratio (8 women, 17 men), although this can obviously vary greatly depending on the discipline, career status and individual location. The results of further workshops will show whether this ratio will shift or largely remain constant.

The planning and implementation of these workshops will continue to aim for a balance in terms of age, gender and discipline, in order to provide an approximate representation of the future RESILIENCE user groups.

Individual interviews are planned for the future, in addition to the workshops, which will be conducted by RESILIENCE members at their home institutions. They are strongly encouraged to ensure a balance for the different sections.

4.2 Presentations

In addition to the presentations in which the RESILIENCE Research Infrastructure was introduced to the participants, participants were asked to present their research and to raise and discuss open research questions. In these presentations, participants gave an in-depth insight into their work, their project or the work of their research institute and therefore provide a good overview of the situation of the researchers on site and often offer points of reference for the interviews:

A: "Manuscripts, Murals: Challenges" by Tsvetan Vasilev in Sofia, Bulgaria.

B: "A Case Study: The Telamon Database of Ancient Inscriptions in Greek from Bulgaria" by Dimitar Iliev in Sofia, Bulgaria.

C: "RESILIENCE and the Problems of Theology in the Context of Humanities Today. Georgia as a case study" by Nino Sadzaglishvili in Volos, Greece.

D: "RESILIENCE meets ICE PROJECT. How Innovative Cultural Experience can Upload and Diffuse Religious Studies" by Ioannis Milonelis in Volos, Greece.

E: "Researching and Teaching in Biblical, Theological, and Liturgical Studies for the Protestant and the Coptic Church: The Pluriform Service of Resilience" by Myrto Theocharus and Riad Ghobrial in Volos, Greece.

F: "Bibliothek der Neologie (BdN)" by Bastian Lemitz in Münster, Germany.

G: "The INTF Münster" by Annette Hüffmeier in Münster, Germany.

4.3 Interviews

A total of 32 individual interviews and six group discussions were conducted face-to-face. The average duration of the individual interviews was 51 minutes, of the group interviews 60 minutes. They were audio-



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recorded and subsequently transcribed. The anonymised transcripts are stored under password protection and can be obtained from WP3 members on request. See the following 5.1 for the results.

5 Evaluation

5.1 Evaluation of the Interviews

The data collected in the interviews is analysed and evaluated by WP₃ team members. The transcripts provide the basis for the coding, which is carried out using the MAXQDA programme. WP₃ systematically assigned codes to the relevant themes and patterns to structure and analyse the complex and extensive information from the interviews. The analysis of the interviews, their coding and the resulting prioritisation of needs result in the user stories. They show the different user roles that are aimed at specific RI services. The form used is: "As a <role>, I want <capability> so that <benefit>." The method and the results are described in detail in D3.5 User Stories Catalogue – 1st Batch (R1).

5.2 Evaluation of the Workshops

WP₄ has evaluated the three workshops in Sofia, Volos and Münster at various levels. After each workshop, organisers and attendants were asked about their experiences, using for each group a different online questionnaire created and evaluated by WP₄ and WP₂. The evaluation forms can be viewed on request. The responses were analysed and discussed in detail in separate meetings of WP₂, WP₃ and WP₄ on how the responses could be used to further improve the workshop design, structure and process. The evaluations were consistently positive with a few minor points of criticism. In the following, the average values of the answers that were to be answered quantitatively with points from 1 to 5, with 5 as the maximum value for highest agreement, are presented:

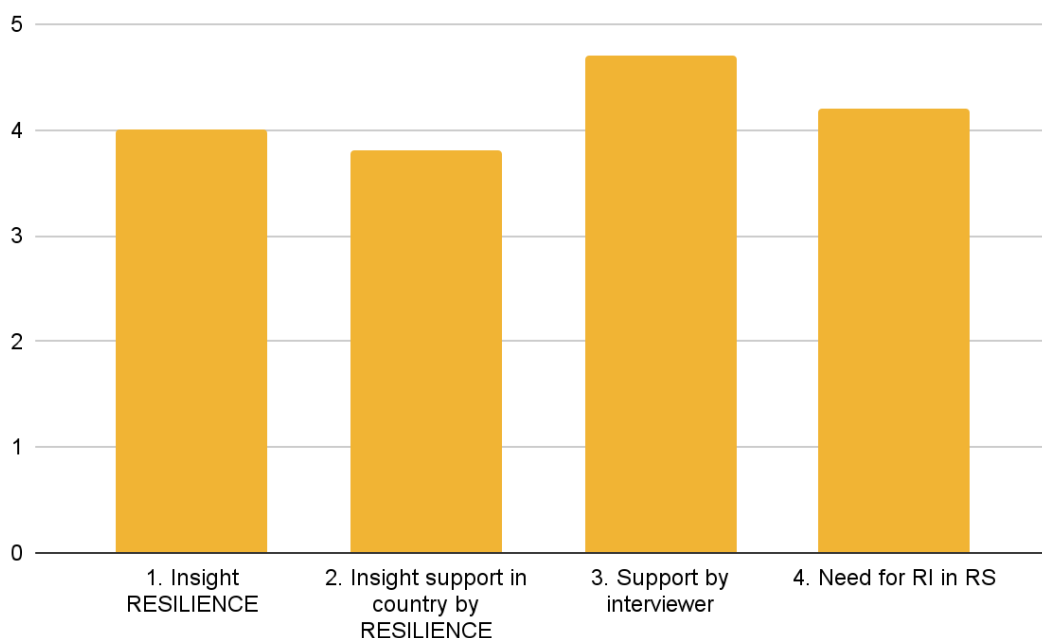


Figure 4: Feedback Results from the Workshop Participants

1. "I have gained a clear insight into RESILIENCE:" 4,0/5.
2. "I got a clear insight into how RESILIENCE can support me in doing research in [the respective country] in general:" 3,8/5.
3. "(In case you were interviewed): I feel adequately supported by the interviewer in putting into words what I need for my research:" 4,7/5.
4. "I am convinced of the necessity of a European Infrastructure for Religious Studies:" 4,2/5.

In addition to these questions, which had to be answered with a score, there were also questions that had to be responded to in verbal form. These answers were analysed after each event for suggestions on how to improve the next workshop.

1. "What did you like most about the meeting?":

The opportunity to network with related disciplines was particularly emphasised here. This is consistent with the result from D3.5², where it was shown that the need for networking/mobility/transnational access was the second most frequently mentioned. It was also perceived as very positive that an institution approaches the researchers and asks about their needs. It was stated, for example:

- “People, the interest in my needs as a researcher I see for the first time in my career; the direct contact.” (Sofia);
 - “The communication/networking aspect. It was a great opportunity to meet new people that work in related fields.” (Volos);
 - “I liked the approach that the scientists' needs were queried.” (Münster).
2. “How can we improve our future meetings with researchers?”:

Suggestions for improvement are always taken very seriously and discussed within the team. There were some requests for the objectives and expectations of the workshop to be better communicated in advance, which will be taken into account accordingly. Satisfaction was also often expressed on this point. It was pointed out, for example:

- “The present framework is good. Group discussions may be given priority. Providing more materials before and after the meeting.” (Sofia);
 - “Maybe a clearer expectation of what will happen in the meeting to be sent beforehand.” (Volos);
 - “It would be nice if the broad field of Religious Studies and religions were covered even better.” (Münster).
3. “How can RESILIENCE support you best?”:

In response to this question, it was also frequently stated that RESILIENCE should establish a network of researchers and facilitate networking and communication (e.g. 6 out of 8 respondents from Volos answered in this direction). It was also noted, for example:

- “possibility for mobility; events to sensitise the decision makers and the society about specificity of the research in Humanities.” (Sofia);

² Cf. Deliverable [D3.5 “User Stories Catalogue – 1st Batch”](#) (published in October 2023), p. 15.

- "Provide an AFFORDABLE and EFFECTIVE infrastructure platform." (Volos);
- "By enriching religious studies with an international DH perspective." (Münster).

6 Next Steps

Looking back on the workshops held, it became clear that some adjustments should be made for the future in the areas of strategy, diversification and extension, to collect more meaningful user requirements.

Strategy

Based on the decisions made in the design study researchers remain the prioritised user group for RESILIENCE, but we can expect that the user group of librarians and archivists will play a more important role in the future. To this end, a new questionnaire for this target group is being finalised, which will be used in future workshops and presented in D3.2.

Diversification

The next workshop is planned for 4–5 March 2024 in Sarajevo. Two further workshops are planned for 2024 in Zurich and Paris. Both locations have an exceptionally high level of expertise in the topics of DH and RI, from whose perspective on the topics much can be learned. In addition, the workshops will make it easier to pursue other topics such as the acquisition of partners (Zurich).

Extension of individual interviews

As reported above, a training course on interviews conduction took place in Münster in October 2023. It was attended by RESILIENCE staff, which is encouraged to conduct in 2024 at least two individual interviews at their institutions with volunteers from the prioritised user groups.

7 Reference Documents

Reference documents are intended to provide background and supplementary information.

ID	Date	Title/Reference
R1	18/08/2022	GRANT AGREEMENT, Project: 101079792 — RESILIENCE PPP — HORIZON-INFRA-2021-DEV-02
R2	31/10/2023	D3.5 User Stories Catalogue – 1st batch
R3	28/02/2024	Appendix 1 – D3.1, available on request



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