

Micro-44 Survey Results

December 3 – 7 , 2011

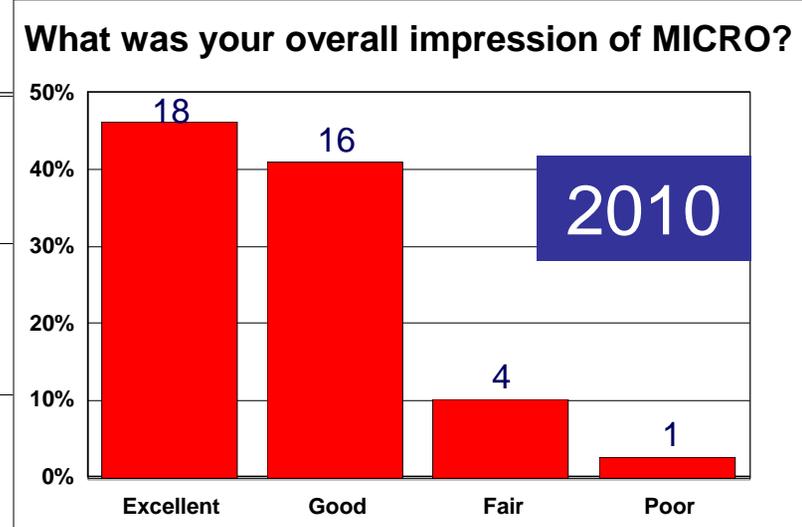
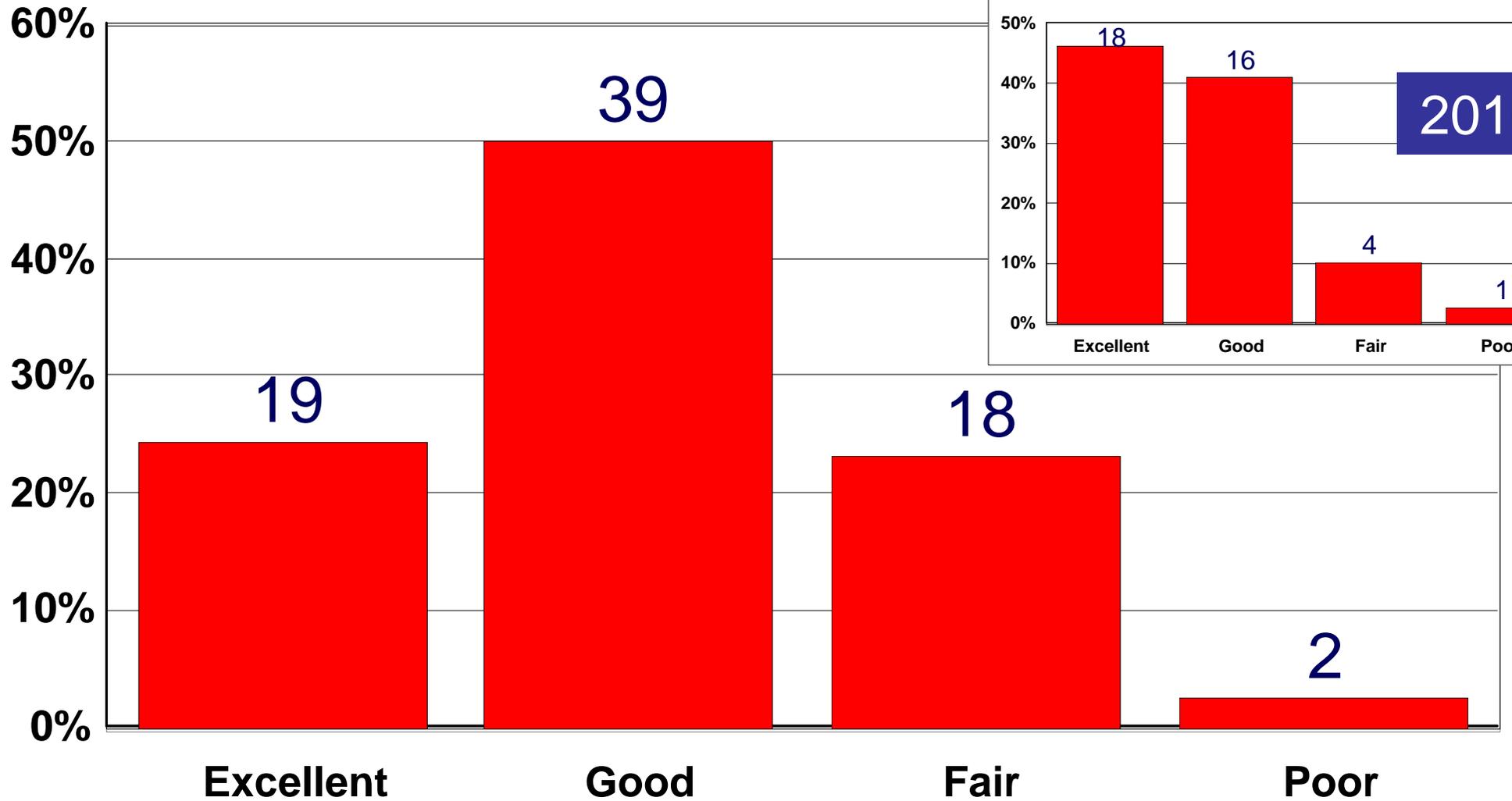
Porto Alegre, Brazil

Survey Questions

1. What was your overall impression of MICRO?
2. What was your impression of the Workshops and Tutorials?
3. What was your impression of the Tuesday social event and dinner?
4. What was your impression of Porto Alegre and the Novotel Hotel?
5. What was your view of distributing proceedings on jump drives instead of a printed volume?
6. What was your impression of the organization of MICRO?
7. How would you characterize the decision to put "Best Paper" candidates in special sessions?
8. What is your overall view of IEEE?
9. What is your overall view of ACM?
10. Please provide any other comments

78 Respondents total (through January 2, 2012)

What was your overall impression of MICRO?



Comments: What was your overall impression of MICRO?

GOOD

- Great program, though.
- Keynotes were good.
- Presentations were really good. This might be related to attendance. It seemed many more senior authors were making presentations than in prior years.
- This was a good MICRO. The keynotes were very interesting, especially the last one. The program was very good.
- Always good to meet up with colleagues and to meet new researchers.

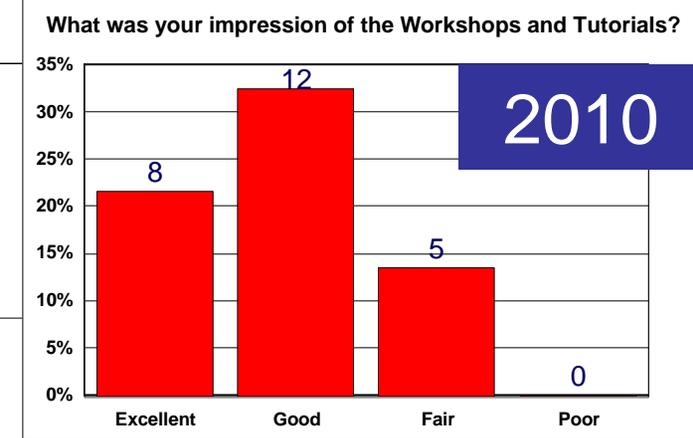
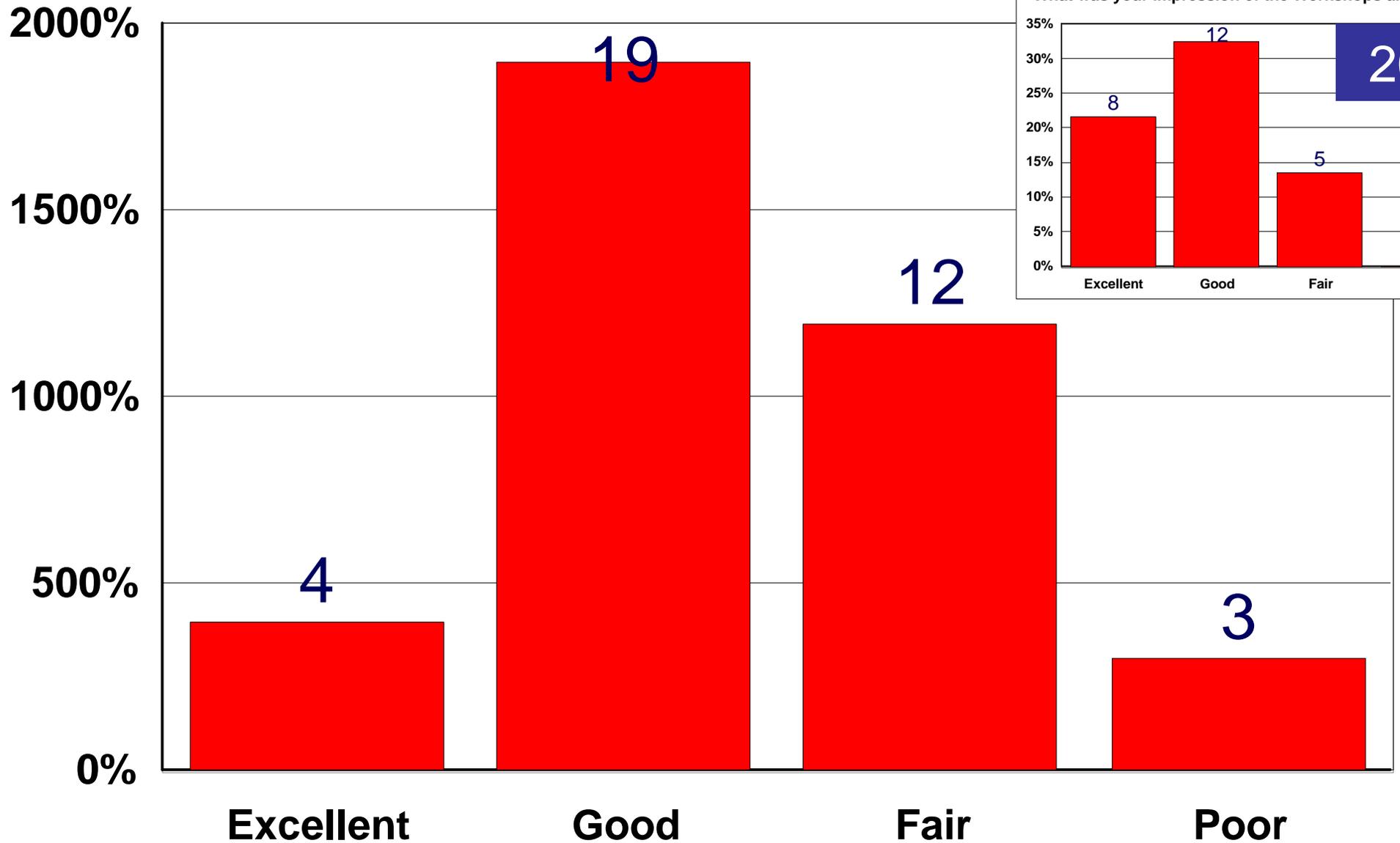
MIXED

- program was excellent. organization was quite poor.
- The program was good, but the organization less so.
- Technical +, Organization -
- Great, but somewhat smaller and less fancy than usual.
- The technical program was outstanding among the best in many years, the general organization was so shockingly bad, I have to give a fair for overall impression

BAD

- Hotel sucked, Wifi sucked.
- Serious negatives: quality/price for hotel; best paper candidates were NOT best papers
- Some papers have very little novelty. Moreover, some papers in best paper sessions had even little novelty.
- The organization of this year's MICRO was less than satisfactory.
- More power cords in the seats would be nice. And while Brazil was nice, the travel to Porto Alegre was not fun.
- Starting at 8/8:15 with 15 minute breaks is crazy. Go to more dual track sessions if necessary, or 20 minute talk slots.

What was your impression of the Workshops and Tutorials?



Comments: What was your impression of the Workshops and Tutorials?

GOOD

- The VM-codesign workshop I went to was well organized and had interesting and accessible content.

MIXED

- Low attendance mostly. I was also expecting a little more sophisticated material. But definitely a productive time.

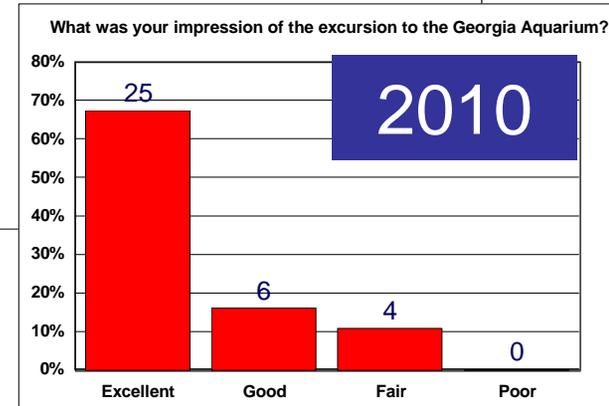
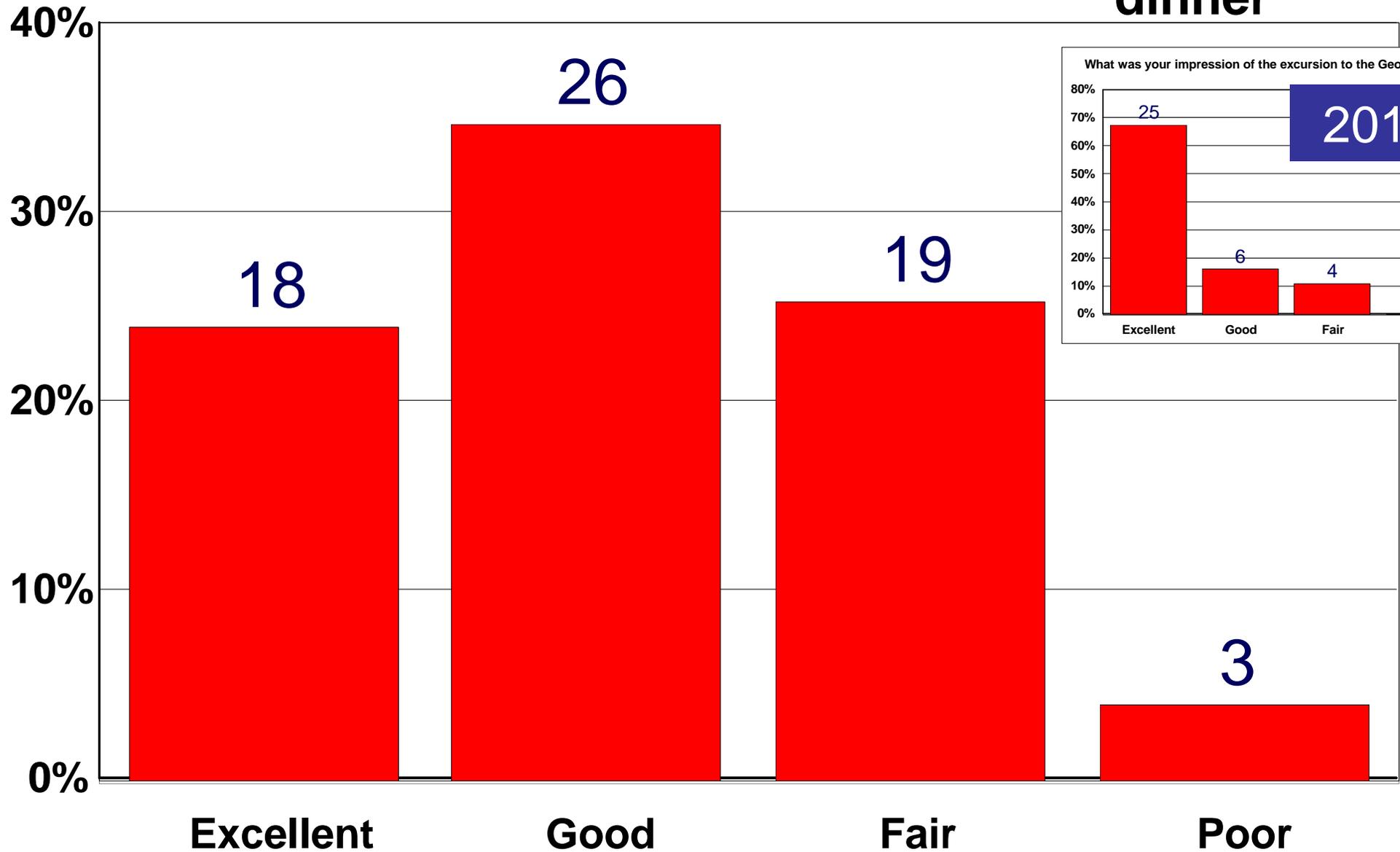
BAD

- The tutorial on Cd-VM could have been better. There were hardly any animation slides. Secondly, the instructors tried to cover many topics in brief. It would have been better if fewer topics had been covered in details and providing insights. Thirdly, at portions there were significant overlap in content among different speakers.
- poorly attended
- Late posting of workshop schedule made me not know ahead of time what day to arrive. Ended up getting here a day earlier than needed. Web information/updates was horrible.

OTHER

- I could not attend any of those

What was your impression of the Tuesday social event and dinner



Comments: What was your impression of the Tuesday social event and dinner?

GOOD

1. It was nice to see some of the areas near Porto Alegre
2. I liked that it was representative of the country we are in.

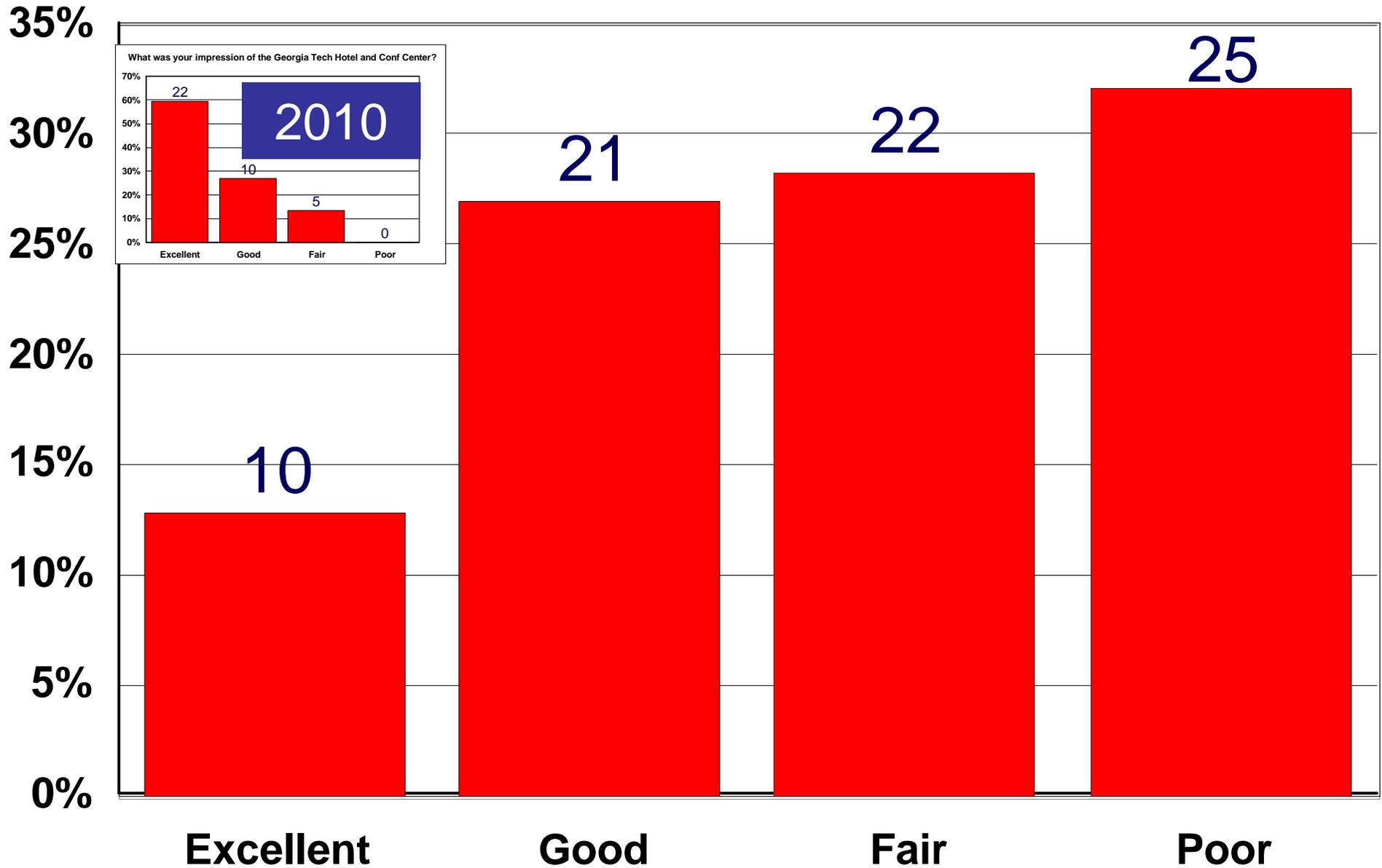
MIXED

1. Not well planned. Boat tour was decent. Dinner was very good.
2. As many other mentioned, the students should have been given the chance to attend the event without having to pay extra. Other than that, the event was good and diner also.
3. Yet another boring and loud boat ride. The banquet was good.
4. a buffet kind of dinner without pre-arranged seating arrangements would have been better to socialise and move around. i feel people were sitting with their close groups rather than mingling with people from other group.
5. Dinner was very good, boat ride was somewhat superfluous
6. Food and restaurant was good - boat ride was unnecessary. It wasn't particularly scenic - I would have preferred a mix and mingle reception.

BAD

1. The boat ride was too expensive for what it was (discounting the rain). The food for vegetarians was poor.
2. Would love to see that excursion is planned to include everyone (faculty+industry+students).
3. the boat trip is a little pricey...
4. Somewhere between poor and fair. The dinner food was satisfactory, but there were a number of issues: (1) the boat could not host all conference attendees, but the excursion should be open to all; (2) no drink tickets for the excursion? \$50 to sit on a boat is not a good deal. Would still pay it again but only for the networking opportunities I would otherwise miss; (3) The boat had almost zero cultural significance. I can go on a boat ride anywhere; (4) dinner was okay but the long rectangular tables and very open space made socializing difficult; (5) no accessible wine or other drink options at dinner; (6) sharing the dinner space with other groups of people furthermore made the experience seem less intimate.
5. Should have been able to leave early without having to take a taxi.
6. There was not much to see on the boat ride. Having a cash bar complicated exiting the boat.
7. Could have had buses leave earlier
8. Music at dinner made talking to other people difficult.
9. The social event was barely satisfactory. We had to pay for the boat, the dinner, and on top of that drinks at the boat. Furthermore, the transportation back from the restaurant was very poorly planned, most people took a cab home.
10. Excluding students from the event was not fair and counter-productive to the goals of the conference, since these events provide a valuable forum for students to interact with other students/faculty/industry.
11. Honestly wasn't the best churrasco around, but I understand that only so many places could support a group of our size. I think enough has already been said about the boat ride organization.
12. The food was a bit heavy on my stomach.

What was your impression of Porto Alegre and the Novotel Hotel?



Comments: Impression of Porto Alegre and the Novotel Hotel? (1)

GOOD

- The hotel was good.
- The venue was good, but Porto Alegre, without knowing Portuguese, was hard to get around.

MIXED

- Porto Alegre was great, but in terms of food, there wasn't much for the vegetarians at the conference hotel.
- Porto Alegre is fine, Novotel was too run down.
- Excellent but internet access was limited
- The hotel itself worked pretty well for the conference. Porto Alegre was difficult to get to and not particularly appealing. The hotel also felt isolated and far from any points of interest or social opportunities in the city.

Comments: Impression of Porto Alegre and the Novotel Hotel? (2)

BAD

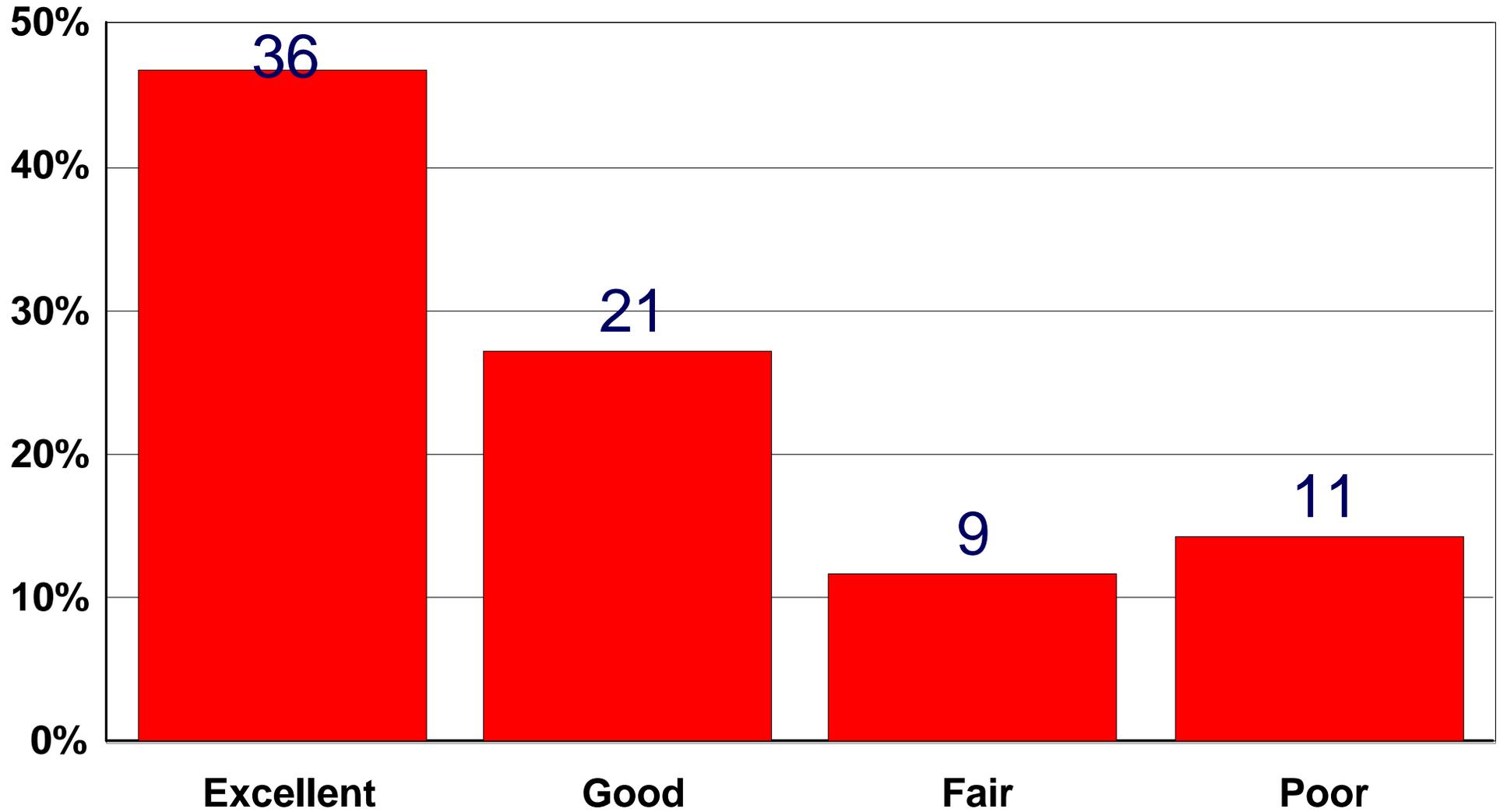
- hotel was BAD for its price, hotel location was BAD. I came all the way to Brazil and did not experience Porto Alegre
- The venue left a lot to be desired. Speakers could have made use of lapel mics. Food for vegetarians could have been better.
- Overall, the meeting space was too small. The rooms were cramped. There was not enough room outside of the meeting space for informal discussions. Not enough variance in food during breaks.
- very hard accessibility, little or no restaurants nearby within walking distance
- Very poor location and lousy hotel.
- The local attractions in Porto Alegre did not justify the required travel time. Not enough rooms were available at Hotel Novotel under the conference block.
- Porto Alegre had little unique experiences to offer and the hotel was mediocre, but ostensibly we come for the conference program and not for luxuries.
- Would have preferred a less dangerous town. Hotel could not provide acceptable wifi service.
- The venue was disappointing. If we are going to travel half way around the world, it should be to a nicer city (and ideally a better hotel). I spent a half day trying to do some sight seeing and there was absolutely nothing to do except check out the public market. That is what I expected from the MICRO-44 website, but still disappointing. If we have the conference in Brazil, why not Rio or Sao Paulo?

Comments: Impression of Porto Alegre and the Novotel Hotel? (3)

BAD

- Accommodation was borderline, especially the hotel! Here are a few negative observations: very poor wireless connection in the room, only one restroom for 200 attendees!, small conference rooms, etc.
- The venue was totally substandard and was a shock to me. Food was almost unpalatable.
- Speakers should be given a raised platform, so that screen would be visible to audience in back. Chairs with laptop/ writing pads would have been better.
- Not enough to see and do in Porto Alegre for spouses, hotel is far from anywhere, too few amenities, so-so to worse food; terrible internet access
- The hotel was *sub-standard* for a conference event. Given that lack of tourist attractions in Porto Alegre, the cost and distance to travel was excessive.
- The hotel was sub-par for the brand, star rating, and price. The location of the hotel was somewhat poor, since there is nothing to see/do in the vicinity (although it's a safe neighborhood, which is good).
- Hotel food and coffee were bad; rooms were run down and uncomfortable
- WiFi/internet was unreliable, frequently unusable
- Relatively small town, with not much to do nearby the hotel. Not much tourist activities. Hotel out of the way.
- WiFi at the Novotel was inconsistent

Distributing proceedings on jump drives instead of a printed volume?



Comments: Distributing proceedings on jump drives instead of a printed volume?

GOOD

- I think it is time to move forward
- Printed proceedings make good souvenirs, but they're heavy and impractical. It's time we move past them as a community.
- Should have been introduced much earlier. Nevertheless, better later than never.
- About damned time. Paper == heavy and waste of trees.
- Less weight to carry and easier to search

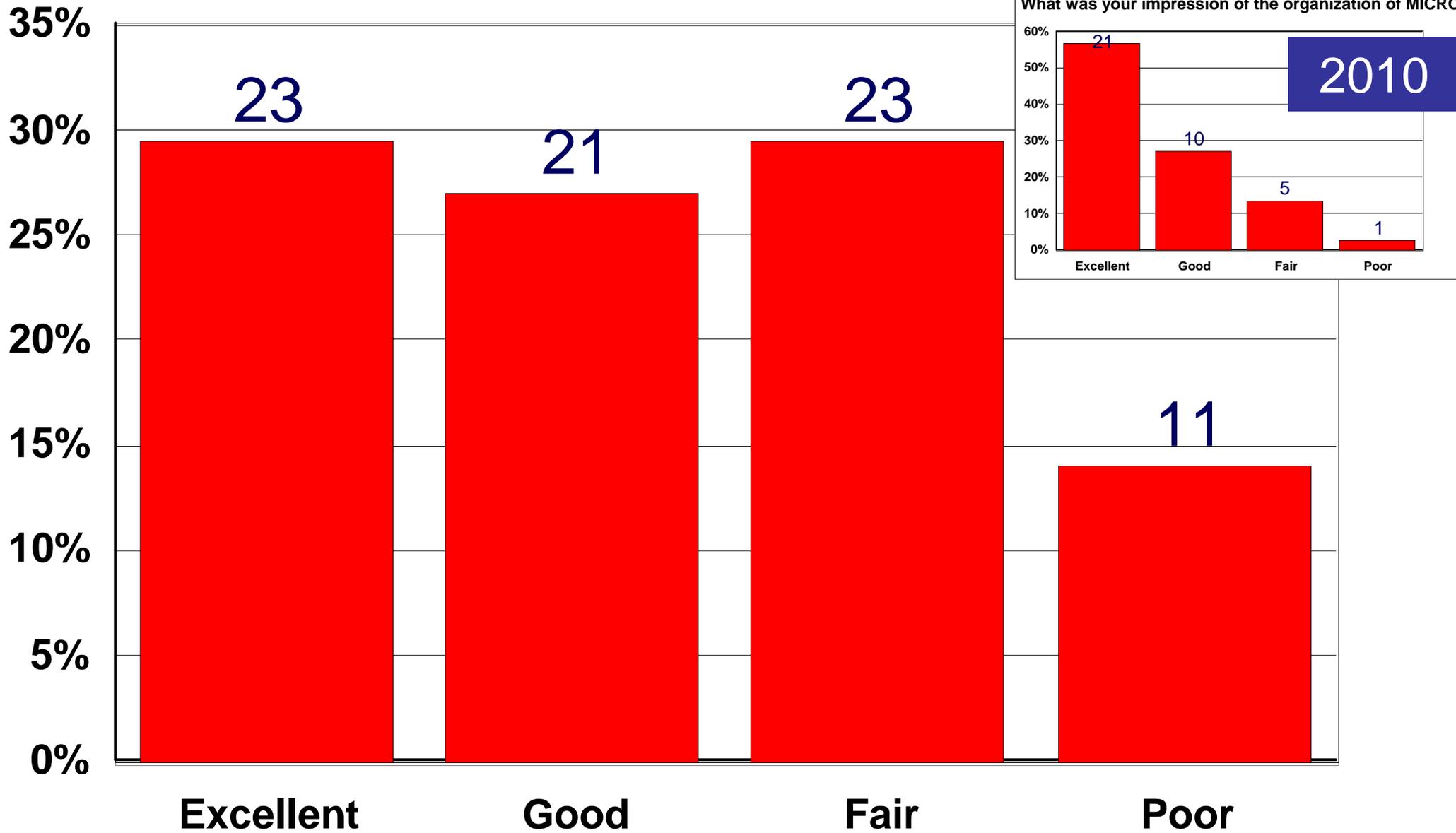
MIXED

- Digitization is a good thing, but the single monolithic PDF was really tough to navigate on my netbook. Would prefer papers as separate PDFs sub-grouped into folders by session as I have seen at other conferences. They could be linked via a main html page.
- I would be in favor of eliminating the jump drives and just posting papers online.
- Personally I like it, but I have heard a few complaints for people wanting printed volumes.
- I like the going green....but I kinda miss the printed proceedings. BTW, are we sure that the current process of shopping for cheapest USB stick is greener than going recycled paper printing?
- Get rid of the jump drives and put the papers on the conference site to download
- Jump drives aren't useful because we can always download the documents, and my laptop's battery is limited. However, I agree that printed proceedings get read only during the conference and thus it's wasteful.
- Both would be nice, but I understand the cost sacrifices that must be made. Electronic version is preferred.
- Need to make sure that digital library access is enabled; those with iPads don't have USB slots

BAD

- I prefer having a hardcopy as a souvenir but it's not the end of the world. If it saves a few bucks then fine.
- Hard copies would be helpful, perhaps still have them available for those that would like a hard copy.
- I prefer printed proceeding
- I prefer reading these printed volume.

What was your impression of the organization of MICRO?



Comments: What was your impression of the organization of MICRO? (1)

GOOD

- Very strong technical program. The choice of city probably contributed to lower attendance, at least from the US and European schools and companies.

MIXED

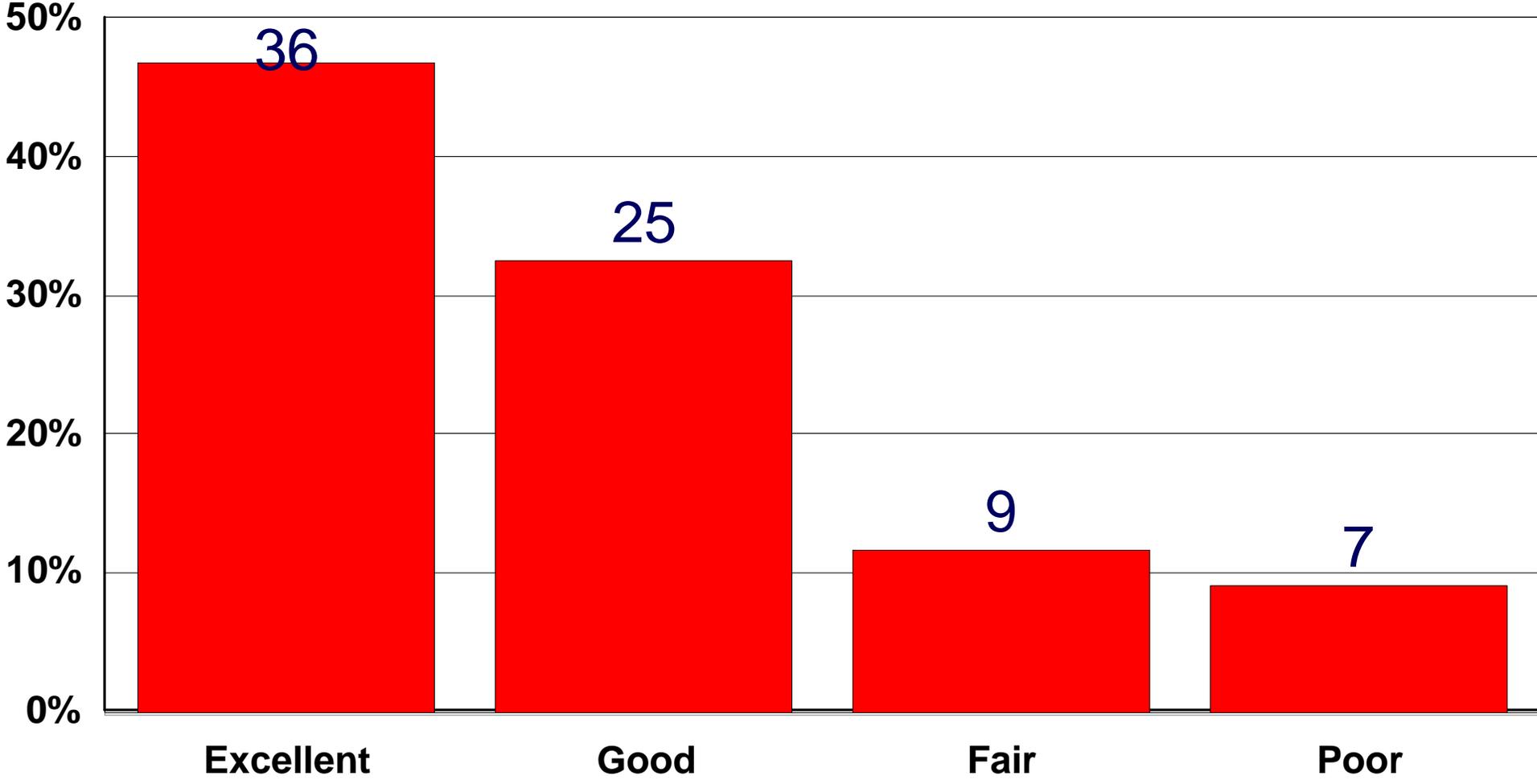
- Web site was slow getting there. otherwise, seemed fine.
- I liked the conference program, but was disappointed by the rest.
- Issue with the social event was a major concern! Other than that it was ok.
- I would have said poor until the social event/dinner; that was a partial save
- Technical Program chairs did a great job, but general conference logistics and planning were poor.
- The only shaky part was if the boat would fit us all.

Comments: What was your impression of the organization of MICRO? (2)

BAD

- Students were unable to apply for travel grants, limiting the overall attendance.
- it would have been useful to have more panel and discussion forums
- Organization was not good. Everyone recognized the fiasco with students on the boat trip and this was addressed (albeit inadequately). Communication afterwards was poor. I was shocked to hear the students were not told that they would be refunded. There did not appear to be any coordination of student travel support. The website was not well updated or organized.
- Separate student registration for the social event and dinner was a bad idea. The website was not well maintained. As of 12/8 there is still no information available about student travel grants.
- Very little information was posted on the web site (no information on which visa to get, no info on student travel grants, no info on outing, keynote info was posted only after external prodding.
- very poor compared with prior MICRO's
- Too messy. Not much forethought, it seemed.
- WORST conference in terms of organization I have been to in my past 10 years. And it was an ABSOLUTE SHOCKER to hear one of the award speakers congratulate the general chair on a well run conference. And it was an absolute shocker for the steering committee to not accept responsibility for this fiasco. And act like everything is ok. Our community needs to develop a backbone and a sense of morals and ethics and not shameless go on this back-scratching old-bay network mode. We need to be able to stand up and criticize at least when the evidence is so shocking and glaringly obvious. Among my most disillusioning experience in the past 10 years. The absolute shocker again was the congratulation of the general chair by one of the speakers. Heights of hypocrisy and back scratching!!!!
- in the future MICRO should always have someone from the community be GC, or at least co-GC, i.e. someone who knows what is supposed to happen at MICRO

How would you characterize the decision to put "Best Paper" candidates in special sessions?



Comment: Decision to put "Best Paper" candidates in special sessions? (1)

GOOD

- Good choice so attendees could view a good selection of papers together.
- Sounds good. Maybe more than 6 candidates next time?
- All were good papers and I might not have seen them otherwise, especially if two had been in opposing tracks
- I have no problem with this. If the vote for best paper is to be done by a secret committee (which is good), you might want to put one of these sessions at the end of the conference to keep attendees from leaving early (seems like flight schedules from Brazil are making it that folks aren't leaving too early anyway).

MIXED

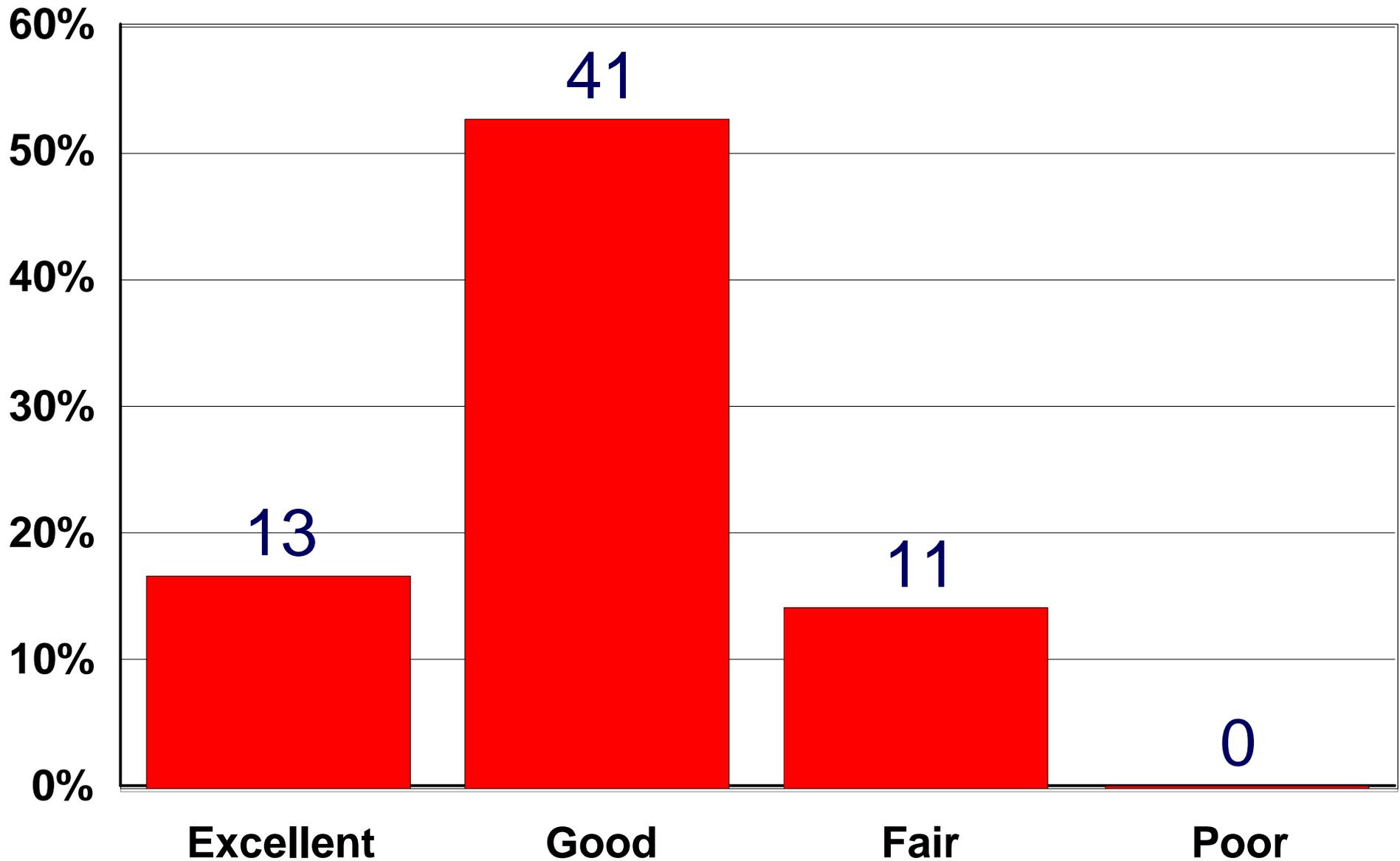
- Excellent, but next time make them Best Paper Candidates, instead of mediocre and bad.
- Fair if we assume that the PC selects the best paper candidates.
- then, are the other sessions - "non-best paper" sessions?
- I don't particularly care either way.
- Doesn't matter to me one way or the other
- I agree with the decision so that the sessions are not parallel for the best papers. However, the whole concept of best papers the way it's currently done has random variables. However, no system is perfect. How about a system similar to ISCA's, but with a shorter timeline.

Comment: Decision to put "Best Paper" candidates in special sessions? (2)

BAD

- Not sure ****who**** voted for the best paper and the criteria used to evaluate each of Best Paper candidates
- Award should be best student paper. Professors and industry don't need the money.
- This again is nonsense. I can say the so-called top 6 were absolutely NOT the top-6. I suggest we make the best-paper a random choice. Which is what it is, btw!
- As a PC member, I think the this process was deeply flawed. I think many of us were too tired or too busy after the PC meeting to invest the energy voting well would require. Also, if the selection is going to be based upon submitted papers the award should be called the "best *submitted* paper award". It seems to me the papers that were selected were primarily those that scored well. This is before authors have a chance to revise their work to address reviewer comments. Perhaps the senior folks in the community think nobody actually revises their paper to address reviewer feedback, but some of us do. Also, I am not sure about others but I think many PC members do not significantly update their overall merit scores based upon their reading of the rebuttal (it seems to me they usually just allow the rebuttal to sway their vote at the meeting). So, let me ask: How is ground breaking work going to be recognized if we simply hold up the highest scoring papers which tend to be simply the most polished at submission time? In my view, these are often very incremental papers. In fact, I wonder how many of the "best paper candidates" in recent conferences (HPCA, PACT now MICRO) have been rejected multiple times in the past for being too incremental. This is not to say that prior rejection should be held against a paper. Rather the problem is that such papers have had more time to have their writing polished than work that is accepted the first time it gets in (likely because it is more revolutionary).

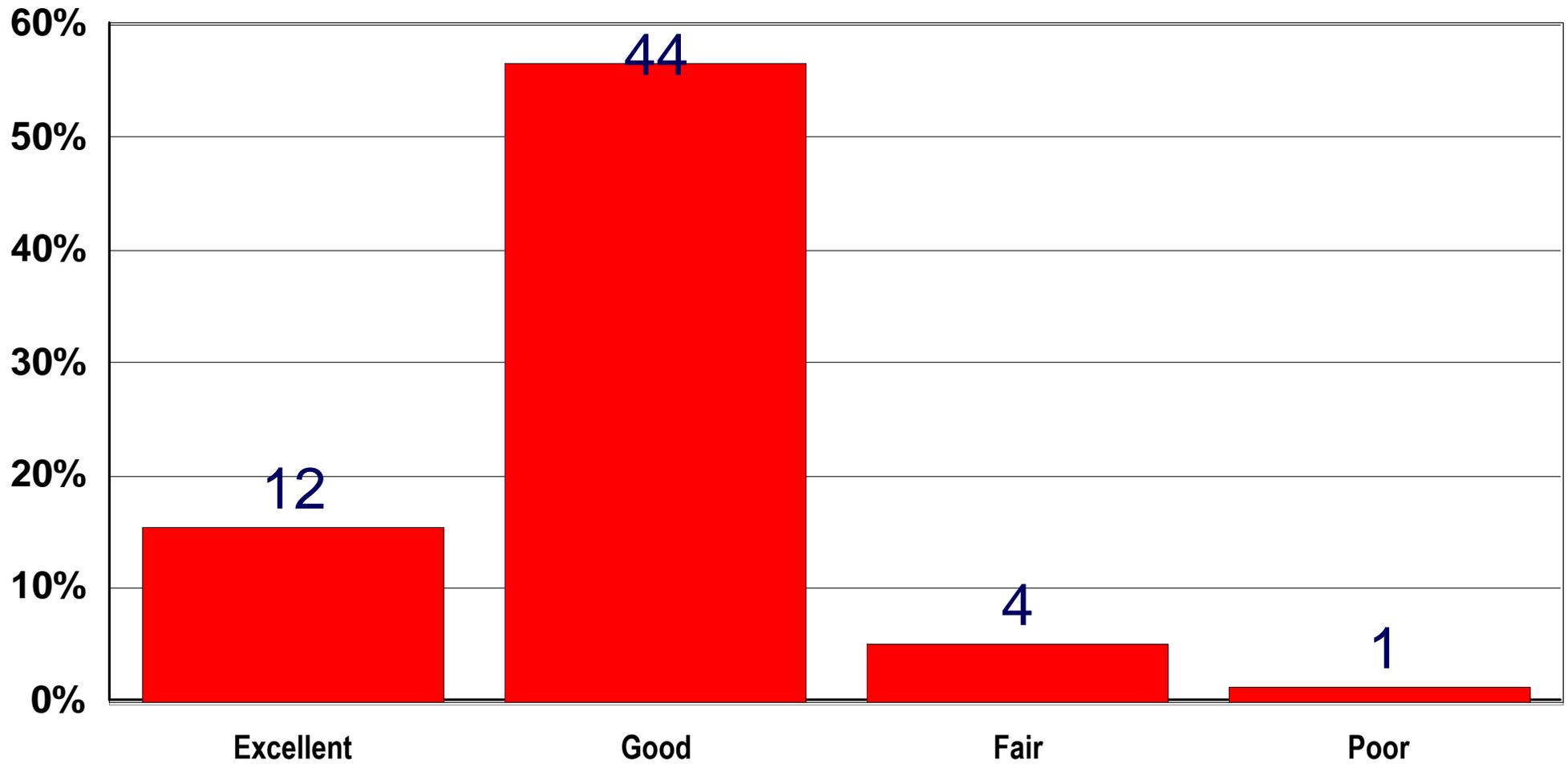
What is your overall view of IEEE?



Comments: Overall view of IEEE?

- This seems irrelevant. How would attending MICRO-44 change this either way?
- I am in industry and have been too lazy to pitch in.
- IEEE should return their half of the surplus to the conference/sponsoring TC like ACM does.
- Not an IEEE member
- Can't justify membership from the benefits.

What is your overall view of ACM?



Comments: Overall view of ACM?

- This seems irrelevant. How would attending MICRO-44 change this either way?
- Not a member.
- I am not a member.

Other Comments – Organizers – 1

- Rich, Luigi, Milos, Andreas -- all get A+ for effort!
- Excellent work from Prof Luigi carro and team and cheers to all. The team at registration desk was very helpful. keep this spirit going.
- A nit: Probably should run the conference on "local" time. Start later, finish at the time normally done in local area. That allows better access to dinner. Overall great job. Great to have it in Brazil
- As I said in Q6. WORST conference in terms of organization I have been to in my past 10 years. And it was an ABSOLUTE SHOCKER to hear one of the award or keynote speakers congratulate the general chair on a well run conference. I assume he was being sarcastic! And it was an absolute shocker for the steering committee to not accept responsibility for this fiasco. And act like everything is ok. Our community needs to develop a backbone and a sense of morals and ethics and not shamelessly go on with this back-scratching old-boy network mode. We need to be able to stand up and criticize at least when the evidence is so shocking and glaringly obvious. Among my most disillusioning experience in the past 10 years. The absolute shocker again was the congratulation of the general chair by one of the speakers. Heights of hypocrisy and back scratching!!!
- Various aspects of the conference were poorly run/disorganized. I think a lot of this was already hashed out at the business meeting. Part of this falls on the MICRO-44 organizing committee, but I think the Steering Committee (SC) was asleep at the wheel. It seems like the overall organizing committee should be reviewed by the SC, and either the SC did not, or missed some glaring omissions (e.g., no web chair, no student grants chair). Whether it's in their charter or not, I feel that the SC should be providing more oversight, at least when the organizing committee consists of many folks without significant previous experience in the attendance and organization of computer architecture conferences.

Other Comments – Organizers – 2

- 1. I don't know why there is no travel grant for students. 2. There seems little information on the website (e.g., I have no idea about reception). 3. On Monday, the presentations were severely delayed (extended). And there was little control on timing. 4. Boat tour was not available for students. And we need to pay for the drinks in boat ourselves (at least we should have got some warning on that, because that doesn't happen frequently for conference events). 5. The dinner was excellent.
- Other issues not addressed in other points: (1) Student travel grants? (2) Students treated as second-class attendees. No excursion and no dinner by default. Boo. No extra freebies like the drink mixer thing. I don't even know what it was because they wouldn't even let me hold it up to take a look. (3) Student travel grants? (4) Lunch was adequate, but sub-par compared to previous conferences. (5) Student travel grants? (6) Extremely hot coffee in PLASTIC cups?! I'll have my coffee without carcinogens next time, thanks. (7) No healthy hors d'oeuvres. All that fried stuff can't be good for me.
- The organization of sessions was catastrophic, most sessions were late in beginning and ending to around 25 mins in some cases. The hotel rooms are very small, the conference rooms are not that superior either. The boat trip was horrible, I doubt Porto Alegre is that bad. The conference dinner was not good, there was an excellent restaurant on the other side of Novotel hotel that had excellent food, it was the best that I ever had in Brazil, its name is Marquise restaurant. I hoped the dinner would be there. There was not student travel grant. The wireless presentation remote did not have laser pointer. There is a new discovery called Tea, there was only coffee as a hot drink, I hope the organizers can respect other cultures.
- The rooms for the technical presentations were setup poorly. The handheld microphones did not work as well as a clip-on microphone. The location of the podium next to the projector resulted in many presenters blocking the audience's view of the screen.
- Information flow to attendees regarding various things such as protocols for using tickets, getting to the social event, etc. could have been better. It would have been helpful if the rooms for plenary sessions were larger.

Other Comments – Organizers – 3

- I guess the speakers should be told in advance of the time limitations. Way in advance.
- The welcome (cocktail) reception probably should have had more space and food.
- I believe the hotel should have been checked out before the arrangements were made. This hotel (while a Novotel) does not even live up to the standards of Novotel, from room condition, internet, to pretty much whatever the basics are that are needed for a world-class gathering.
- Communication was very poor. I was never told that there was a reception on Sunday night; I happened to come down while it was going on. Similarly, the SIGMICRO business meeting was not on the program; I only found out an hour or so before it happened. No one explained how the bar tabs on the boat worked. etc. Especially for overseas conferences, it is important that venues have reasonable activities available nearby for spouses/companions.
- Being general chair is a time-consuming and thankless job. If you want a good set of future site proposals, you need to lay out better written/web site proposal guidelines so that people know what they are getting into before they get into it.

Other Comments – Brazil

- I was glad to see MICRO in Brazil, but Rio or Sao Paulo would have been a much more convenient location. Also, it would have been useful to know the length of time required to get a visa--for me, about 6-7 weeks--before planning the trip.
- Why was Porto Alegre chosen as the host city? There was nothing special about this city, and there was nothing to do here. The conference was poorly organised. People missed the reception because it wasn't advertised. Students were asked to pay twice for the social event.
- Porto Alegre was a wrong place to put MICRO44. Flying far distance to a place and Hotel which are fair was not appropriate. The Conference was good and the organization was OK.
- Why Porto Alegre? Very poor organization.
- Please select future venues in safe pedestrian-friendly areas. Also more tourist friendly with sites and things that are worth seeing, or at least less out of the way and more convenient to travel to.

Other Comments – Best Paper

- We need to encourage students, especially the younger generation, to take up and contribute to the field. Best paper awards are one way to do so. Perhaps we can also reintroduce the best student presentation award. When announcing the award, why not also announce why the committee thought the paper deserved it.
- I don't necessarily think the the best paper candidates should only be nominated by the PC. Here is one suggestion. We can have the PC nominating a fraction of the papers selected for the best paper award (may be 50% or more or less). The best paper committee or the attendees can nominate the rest. That way it is fair to everyone. The best paper is a subjective notion (importance of topic, quality of paper, presentation, score, etc). If the best paper was only selected based on the score, we would not need a committee for this (just pick the highest ranked paper).
- The quality of MICRO is determined by the quality of the papers in it. Given that MICRO has low acceptance rate, the readers/attendees anticipate good papers. This expectation is pronounced even further when a paper appears in Best Paper session. If Best Paper is a random process, as many people argue, then its not solving the purpose it was intended for. I believe its worth preserving the sanctity of this award.

Other Comment: Paper vs Jump Drives

- I like the idea of distributing proceedings on a jump drive and saving money/paper on printed proceedings. I also fully support making the printed proceedings available by special order. My only suggestion is to make the printed proceedings free and not have them cost extra. Thus, those who wish to order them can do so, but at no extra cost to the registrant.