

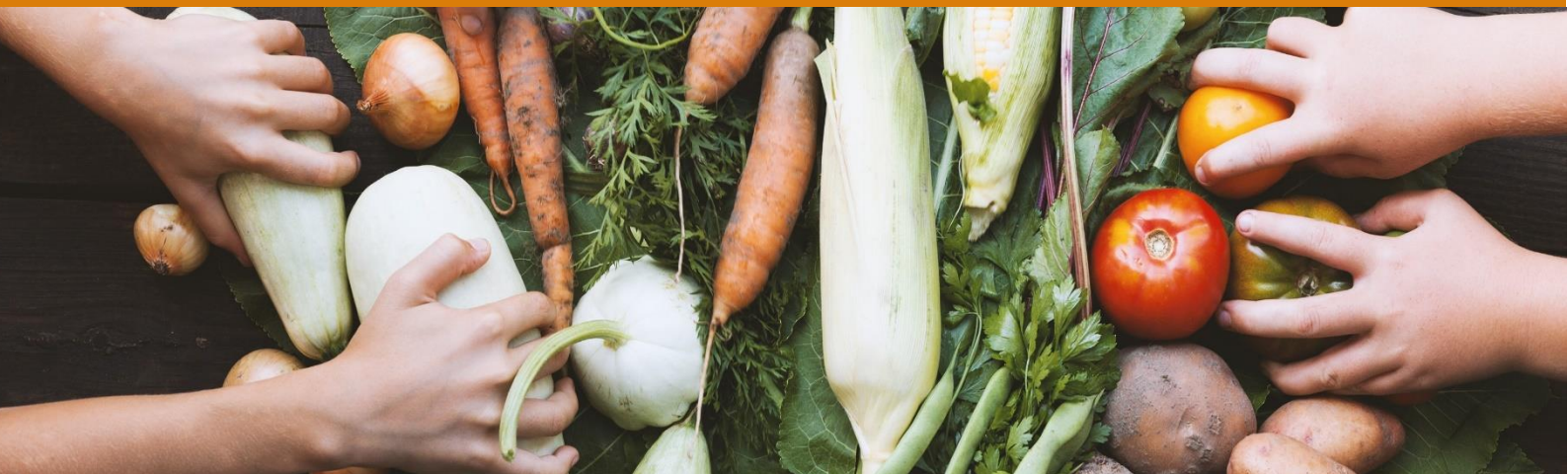
agro BRIDGES

**“Building bridges between consumers and producers
by supporting short food supply chains through a
systemic, holistic, multi-actor approach-based Toolbox”**

(Grant Agreement 101000788)

Coordination and Support Action

**“Let’s Build our SFSC”
Event Validation Report
Responsible Partner: VTT**



This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under Grant Agreement N° 101000788.



"Let's Build our SFSC!" Event Validation Report - Finland

Issued by: VTT
Issue date: 03/04/2023
Due date: 30/04/2023
Work Package Leader: MTU (Task Leader: Q-PLAN)

Start date of project: 01 January 2021

Duration: 36 months

Document History

Version	Date	Changes
1.0	31/03/2023	First version of the report
2.0	03/04/2023	Final version

Dissemination Level

PU	Public	X
PP	Restricted to other programme participants (including the EC Services)	
RE	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the EC Services)	
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the EC)	



Name	Organisation
Minna Kulju, Kaisa Vehmas	VTT

Quality reviewers	
Name	Organisation
George Malliopoulos, Eirini Efthymiadou	Q-PLAN

LEGAL NOTICE

The information and views set out in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the European Union. Neither the European Union institutions and bodies nor any person acting on their behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein.

© agroBRIDGES Consortium, 2022 - 2023

Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.



Table of Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION	5
2.	“LET’S BUILD OUR SFSC” EVENT ORGANISATION DETAILS	6
2.1	Event programme / agenda	6
2.2	Personnel involved in the organisation of the event.....	7
2.3	Event material	8
2.4	Invitation of attendees and promotional activities implementation	11
3.	EVENT IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTCOMES	12
3.1	Event implementation	12
3.2	Event participation.....	13
4.	EVENT VALIDATION	14
4.1	Validation of event by participants.....	14
4.2	Validation of the “Let’s build our SFSC” event by the organising partner	15
4.3	Limitations and barriers of the organising partner	16
5.	CONCLUSIONS	16

List of figures

Figure 1: Invitation.....	9
Figure 2: Program	10
Figure 3: Social media ad.....	11
Figure 4: Event in Brella.....	12

List of tables

Table 1: Event programme	6
Table 2: Estimated effort and expertise needed for the event.....	8
Table 3: Event participation.....	13
Table 4: Event validation	14



1. Introduction

The present report summarises the activities of VTT for the organisation and validation of the **“Let’s build our SFSC” event in Finland organised on Wednesday on March 15th, 2023**. This event is an online brokerage and networking event, to bring stakeholders of the local agri-food sector to present their products, meet others and negotiate partnerships based on the concept of Short Food Supply Chains (SFSC). The event was organised using the Brella matchmaking platform that was selected as the most appropriate for the needs of the agorBRIDGES consortium, based on market research and negotiations with the sales departments of various candidate providers, in the frame of task 3.4.

The present report outlines all steps taken for the design, planning and implementation of the regional event, as well as the outcomes and evaluation of the event by the participants and the organising agroBRIDGES partner, to produce suggestions for the improvement of the “Let’s build our SFSC!” tool and measure its impact to the agrifood sector at local level. The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 1** – Introducing the event report
- **Chapter 2** – Describing the concept selection, design, organisation, and implementation of the “Markkinoinnilla ja viestinnällä boostia lyhyisiin elintarvikeketjuihin” – “Boosting short food supply chains with marketing and communication” event in Finland.
- **Chapter 3** – Outlining the validation results for the events by participants and the value found in the “Let’s build our SFSC” guidelines by the organising partners when creating and launching their event.
- **Chapter 4** – Concluding remarks for the event and suggestions for improvement of the “Let’s build our SFSC” tool.



2. “Let’s build our SFSC” event organisation details

2.1 Event programme / agenda

Before we started to plan our agenda to the event, we sent email to selected MAP members in Finland asking their comments about themes or topics that will interest producers. Based on the feedback received, we decided to focus on communication and marketing. During this communication activity, we ended up arranging the “Let’s Build our SFSC” event in Finland together with national Food Sector Coordination Project. The project aims, primarily, to enhance cooperation between the food sector’s developers and businesses and to increase activity in development functions. They are having regular networking meetings with food sector actors and that was the main reason why we ended up joining efforts with them.

The event in Finland was held on Wednesday March 15th, 2023, at 9:00-12:00. We organized the event in one online room (main stage). We opened the room for attendees already at 8:30 so they could test and make sure that Brella platform is working for them.

We started the event at 9:00 with welcoming words by the organizers. In addition, we gave a short instruction about using the Brella platform. The first presentation was targeted for producers, and the topic was about using the social media in marketing their business in different channels. The second presentation was a concrete example how the organic meat producer uses social media in marketing their business. The third presentation was about agroBRIDGES project and especially presenting the communication tools targeted for producers. The last presentation session included several speakers who presented different direct sales platforms to enhance SFSC. After these presentations we had 50 minutes reserved for networking and there were three networking slots. As a final session we had a short closing session by organisers which summed up the event.

Table 1: Event programme

Title of activity	Topic / Short description	Date & Time (local)	Speakers	Location
Welcome	Welcoming words and some instructions for using Brella	9:00 – 9:10	Event organizers	Central stage
Marketing in different channels	What an entrepreneur needs to know about social media 2023 + trends and channels. The importance of content in social media marketing - what is done, who is it done to, WHY is it done? Since an entrepreneur's time is money, let's discuss how a company can communicate effectively on social media. Finally, concrete tips for effective content production.	9:10 – 9:40	Mira Nyrhinen, Fano Ltd.	



How do I use social media in marketing my business?	A concrete example how the producer uses social media in communicating and marketing the farm and its business.	9:40 – 10:00	Tanja Kyckling, Hietala's organic farm	
agroBRIDGEs tools	A brief presentation of the agroBRIDGEs communication related tools	10:00 – 10:15	Minna Kulju, VTT	
Direct sales platforms	Presentations related to the existing direct sales platforms in Finland	10:15 – 11:00	Olli Repo, Uusimaa foodhub Laura Varjotie, Laari - the place to buy local food products Samuel Svegin, northern Savo foodhub Jenni Kähkönen, Forest Foody Jouni Halkosaari, DeliPlate Tommi A. Vuorenmaa, Korjuu.com Thomas Snellman, REKO	
Networking	One-to-one meetings, 3 slots	11:00 – 11:50	N/A	Breakout rooms
Conclusion	Ending the event	11:50 – 12:00	Event organizes	Central stage

2.2 Personnel involved in the organisation of the event

For the organisation of the event, effort distribution has been made between VTT and Food Sector Coordination Project. From VTT, two persons participated actively in planning, preparing the promotional material, setting up the event in Brella platform, and organising the event. In addition, one person took care of the event's registration form.

From the Food Sector Coordination Project, two persons were involved in planning, promoting, and organising the event.



Table 2: Estimated effort and expertise needed for the event

Specialisation	Number of employees	Expected role	In-house / External	Estimated effort (person days)
Assistant, VTT	1	Registration form design	In-house	1
Session moderator/host, VTT	1	Setting up the Brella and Coordination of the online session	In-house	5
Organisers, VTT	2	Event planning, promotional material development, participants' invitations	In-house	2
Organisers, Food Sector Coordination Project	2	Event planning, promotion, participants' invitations	External	N/A

2.3 Event material

The material used to promote and market the event is shown and described below, see Figures 1, 2 and 3. Figure 1 present the invitation, Figure 2 the programme, and Figure 3 the social media ad used. The invitation and program were attached to the invitation emails. The social media ad was used in promoting the event in LinkedIn and Instagram. The templates developed by the agroBRIDGES project were used as a basis for making these materials.

For registration to the event, we decided to have **Lyyti platform** since it is widely used in VTT. The link to the registration form was opened one month before the event. The registration form offered by the project was used as a basis for our registration form.



Figure 1: Invitation



Markkinoinnilla ja viestinnällä boostia lyhyisiin elintarvikeketjuihin

Yhteistyö- ja verkostoitumistapahtuma

 Keskiviikko, 15.03.2023  9.00 - 12.00  Brella online-alusta

Kutsumme sinut agroBRIDGES ja LähiRuokaa, luomua ja luonnontuotteita – Ruokasektorin koordinaatio –hankkeiden järjestämään yhteistyö- ja verkostoitumistapahtumaan.

Tapahtuma järjestetään verkostoitumista tukevalla Brella online-alustalla keskiviikkona 15.3.2023 klo 9-12.

Oletko tuottaja, vähittäismyyjä, tukkumyyjä tai onko sinulla yritys ravintola- tai elintarvikealalla? Koetko paikallisten tuotteiden ja tuottajien tukemisen sekä tuottajien tuomisen lähemmäksi kuluttajia tärkeäksi? Pohditko, millä tavoin saisit yrityksellesi lisää näkyvyyttä? Jos vastasit kyllä, niin tämä tapahtuma on sinua varten!

Tapahtumassa sinulla on mahdollisuus kuulla puheenvuoroja sosiaalisen median käytöstä osana yrityksen markkinointia ja viestintää sekä esittelyjä lyhyitä ruokaketjuja tukevista suoramyynnin alustoista. Voit myös tuoda esiin toimintaasi ja tutustua muihin yrityksiin, jotka ovat mukana lyhyisiin elintarvikeketjuihin liittyvässä toiminnassa. Tapahtuman aikana sinulla on myös mahdollisuus varata henkilökohtaisia tapaamisia yritysten ja osallistujien kanssa.

Ilmoittaudu tapahtumaan alla olevasta linkistä.

[Ilmoittaudu tapahtumaan tästä!](#)

 HANKE ON SAANUT RAHOITUSTA EUROOPAN UNIONIN HORIZON 2020 TUTKIMUS- JA INNOVAATIO-OHJELMASTA SOPIIMUKSEN NRO 101000788 MUKAISESTI.



Figure 2: Program

VTT **TURUN YLIOPISTO** **agroBRIDGES** **RUOKASEKTORIN KOORDINAATIOHANKE**
lähiruoka - luomu - luonnontuotteet

Markkinoinnilla ja viestinnällä boostia lyhyisiin elintarvikeketjuihin
Verkostoitumis- ja yhteistyötapahtuma lyhyen elintarvikeketjun toimijoille

📅 Ke 15.03.2023 ⌚ 9.00 - 12.00 📍 Brella online-alusta

OHJELMA

Tilaisuuden avaus

Päivi Töyli & Kaisa Vehmas

🕒 9.00 - 9.10

Yrityksen puheenvuoro

Tanja Kyckling, Hietalan luomutila

🕒 9.40 - 10.00

Suoramyyntialustat

Lyhyitä puheenvuoroja eri toimijoilta:

Uudenmaan Ruoka, Olli Repo
Laari Lähiruokapiste, Laura Varjotie
Pohjois-Savon ruoka, Samuel Svegin
Forest Foody, Jenni Kähkönen
DeliPlate, Jouni Halkosaari
Korjuu.com, Tommi A. Vuorenmaa
REKO-toiminta, Thomas Snellman

🕒 10.15 - 11.10

Tilaisuuden päätös

Päivi Töyli & Kaisa Vehmas

🕒 11.50 - 12.00

Markkinointi & viestintä eri kanavissa

Mira Nyrhinen, Fano Oy

🕒 9.10 - 9.40

agroBRIDGES työkalut

Minna Kulju, VTT

🕒 10.00 - 10.15

Verkostoitumista

Osallistujien keskinäiset keskustelut

🕒 11.10 - 11.50



HANKE ON SAANUT RAHOITUSTA EUROOPAN UNIONIN HORIZON 2020 TUTKIMUS- JA INNOVAATIO-OHJELMASTA SOPIMUKSEN NRO 101000788 MUKAISESTI.



Maa- ja metsätalousministeriö

Figure 3: Social media ad

Markkinoinnilla ja viestinnällä boostia lyhyisiin ruokaketjuihin

Verkostoitumis- ja yhteistyötapahtuma lyhyen elintarvikeketjun toimijoille

Keskiyö 15.03.2023 9.00 - 12.00 Brella online-alusta

agr BRIDGES RUOKASEKTORIN KOORDINAATIOHANKE TURUN YLIOPISTO HANKE ON SAANUT RAHOITUSTA EUROOPAN UNIONIN HORIZON 2020 TUTKIMUS- JA INNOVAATIO-OHJELMASTA SOPIMUKSEN NRO 101000788 MUKAISESTI. Maa- ja metsätalousministeriö

2.4 Invitation of attendees and promotional activities implementation

The first invitations to the event were sent out to speakers at the beginning of February 2023. Invitations for potential attendees were sent as soon as we got our registration form ready on mid-February, one month before the event.

The Food Sector Coordination Project took main role in promotional activities by marketing the event via their networks and in their website (<https://aitojamakuja.fi/event/markkinoinnilla-ja-viestinnalla-boostia-lyhyisiin-elintarvikeketjuihin/>) as well as in their weekly newsletter. The social media ad (in Figure 3) was delivered through LinkedIn and Instagram. In addition, the MAP members of Finland to use their networks as well as social media channels to promote the event. Especially the association partners of the MAP like Finnish organic food association, Finnish glasshouse growers' association and fruit and berry growers' association were asked to do promotional activities to their network.

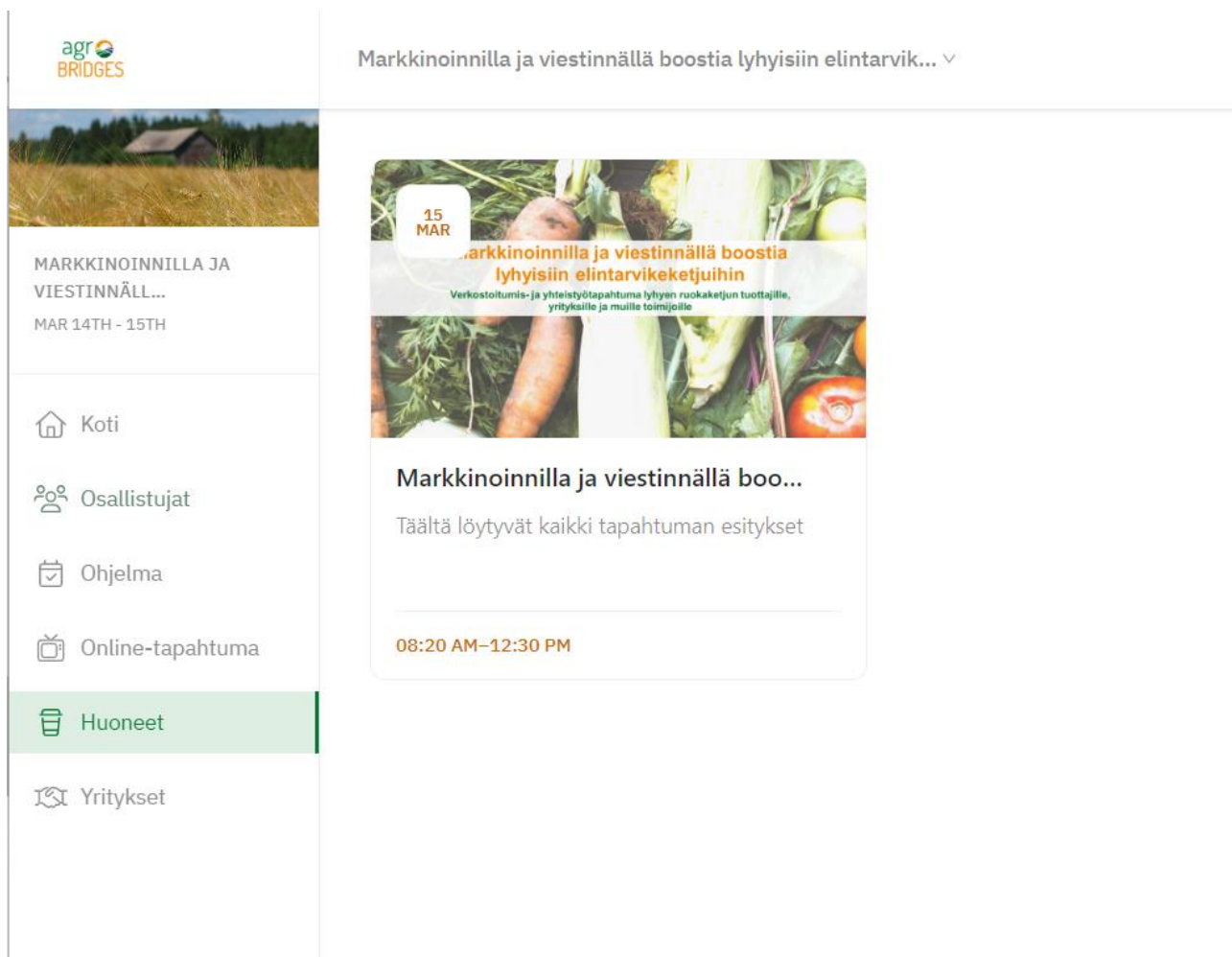
3. Event implementation and outcomes

3.1 Event implementation

The main theme of the event was about communication and marketing from the producer's perspective; namely how producers could enhance their business by doing different communication and marketing activities in social media. In addition, different existing direct sales channels were presented to increase producers' awareness of these different options to sell their products.

The Brella platform was set up well before the event and it was also tested a day and one hour before the event by the event organisers. In Brella, we had one break out room where all the presentations were kept (see figure 4). In addition, we had reserved 50 minutes for networking. The presentations part of the event was recorded. During the event no pictures were taken.

Figure 4: Event in Brella





3.2 Event participation

Through registration process 37 people showed their interest towards the event. Instructions how to do the registration to the Brella platform were sent participants two weeks before the event. For those participants who registered to the event after there were less than two weeks to the event, the instructions were sent right away. The registered participants were sent a reminder both a week before and a few days before the event. The last reminder was sent the day before the event for those who had not registered to the Brella.

Finally, 29 people registered to the Brella platform and participated to the event (see table 3). The participants were not very interested to have one-to-one meetings via Brella even though we encouraged them to do so and gave them instructions how to arrange them. Only one one-to-one meeting was held. In addition, there was one case where two participants wanted to have one-to-one meeting together, but for some reason they failed even though they were offered technical support.

Table 3: Event participation

Audience type	No. of participants
Event organisers	4
Farmers/Producers	3
Developers	10
Technology providers	3
Entrepreneurs	5
Other (e.g. trainer)	4
Total	29



4. Event Validation

4.1 Validation of event by participants

The day after the event participants received a “thank you” message with the link to the materials presented in the event. The email also contained the link to the Google form via which we asked them to give feedback about the event. Only 4 participants filled in the form. After one week of the event, we sent participants an email, which contained a link to the recording of the event, and reminder and link to the feedback form. However, we did not receive any additional feedback from participants.

Table 4: Event validation

Question	Yes		No		Not sure	
Were you familiar with the concept of Short Food Supply Chains before this event?	4		0		0	
Question	Absolutely agree	Agree	Do not agree or disagree	Disagree	Fully Disagree	No answer
Did you find this event helpful to meet professionals and businesses you can collaborate with?	0	3	0	1	0	0
Do you think that this event helped you see Short Food Supply Chains as a promising business alternative?	0	2	2	0	0	0
Did you find the matching and booking of one-to-one meetings with other people useful to identify and negotiate collaborations?	0	0	0	0	0	4
Was the event useful in supporting you to find interesting opportunities to collaborate with other businesses for the development of Short Food Supply Chains?	0	1	3	0	0	0
Question	Monthly or more often	3-4 times a year	Twice a year	Once a year	Never	I prefer not to answer
Would you like another similar event to be organised in your region? How often?	4	0	0	0	0	0



In feedback form we had an open-ended question where participants could give their comments related to the event. There were few comments:

- Apparently, I didn't know how to enter Brella correctly. It would have been nice to practice the platform first before the actual event.
- The platform was quite bad. For example, you couldn't view the program from the side menu, since the system threw you out of the conversation and you had to log in again. There should be a platform where you can explore other sections and listen to speeches at the same time.
- It would have been nice to hear more comments from the producer side and how they ended up with different marketing solutions. But has the marketing of the event reached them? Social media marketing presentation was catchy and good, thank you for that. The others about the direct sales activities via different channels were also interesting and I got new information about existing solutions.

4.2 Validation of the “Let’s build our SFSC” event by the organising partner

Question #1: Did you find the event relevant to your local agri-food ecosystem and organization?

The Let’s Build our SFSC event was relevant for the local agri-food ecosystem in Finland and the theme of communication and marketing was in the interest of different stakeholders.

It was a good idea to organise the event in collaboration with the national Food Sector Coordination Project, because they have an existing valuable network. Organising the event in collaboration with another project was relevant also from the perspective of farmers and other stakeholders who have a limited time to participate different events. This way we did not offer too many events for them and received a nice number of participants for our event.

VTT as a research organisation, however, might not be the best possible organisation to organise these types of events in the future.

Question #2: Would you organise the same event again in your region? If yes, would you make any adjustments? If not, please explain your thinking.

Yes, it is valuable to provide farmers and other stakeholders information about new findings and results as well as possibilities related to SFSC.

- In the future, collaboration between parties is also preferred to ensure that interesting content can be provided.
- Matchmaking would be more natural and easier in the face-to-face event. However, online participation might be easier for busy farmers and other stakeholders. Farmers would like to use these types of tools from the field while working, so they would prefer to have a mobile option available.



4.3 Limitations and barriers of the organising partner

- The low number of the producers participating in the event might influence how useful different participants experienced the event. In Finland, it has been challenging to get farmers to participate the events.
- Brella was quite laborious to set up. Since Brella was used for the first time, it required lots of work to clarify all the details. The sessions with Brella and another one with Q-PLAN helped in implementing necessary arrangements. However, the meeting with Brella could have been implemented a later when partners are a bit familiar with the platform.
- Even if clear guidelines were provided related to timeline and registration, it was hard to get participants to register and create profile to the platform well before the event. Several emails were sent to them. Still, participants seemed to imagine that they can just jump into the online event (as it is in Teams or Zoom).
- Due to the late registration, participants were not familiar with the possibility to have one-to-one discussions (even if it was highlighted in the emails and invitation) and get to know other participants.
- One-to-one discussions are not natural in online platform.
- One people did not want to create the profile and was not able to participate. She did not want to give all the information asked in Brella.
- Hosting the Brella meeting was very challenging, including issues such as sharing the screen in host view vs. handling the chat / participants etc. Brella was not working like other platforms we have used to work with (e.g., Teams or Zoom).
- Also, participants had difficulties in following the presentations and navigating in Brella.
- Gathering feedback from participants was challenging after the online event, even we sent them few reminders to fill in the feedback survey.

5. Conclusions

Organising the event in collaboration with the other project was very fruitful. It also helped us to contact and invite participants to the event. However, it was not very easy to get producers to participate in the event which seems to be very common challenge in Finland. The event itself got quite positive feedback from those participants who filled in the feedback form. The participants also responded that they are willing to have similar events to be organised in Finland once or twice a year.

The main advantage that the Brella platform has is possibility to have one-to-one meetings. Unfortunately, in our region the participants did not utilize this option. It might be due to their late registration to the platform, so they did not have time to get to know other participants. In addition, we think that this kind of networking is maybe more natural in face-to-face meetings than in online.

The Brella platform was new to us, so setting up the event and getting familiar with Brella required some effort from us. We tried to keep the event structure in Brella simple enough and there might be a lot of useful possibilities that we did not have time to familiarise with.