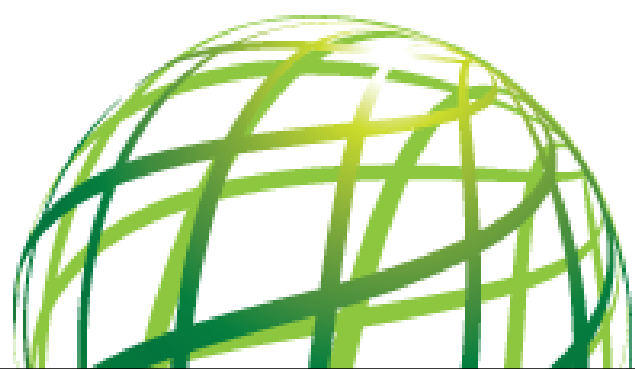# Open Source and Agile Methods: Similar practices, different paths
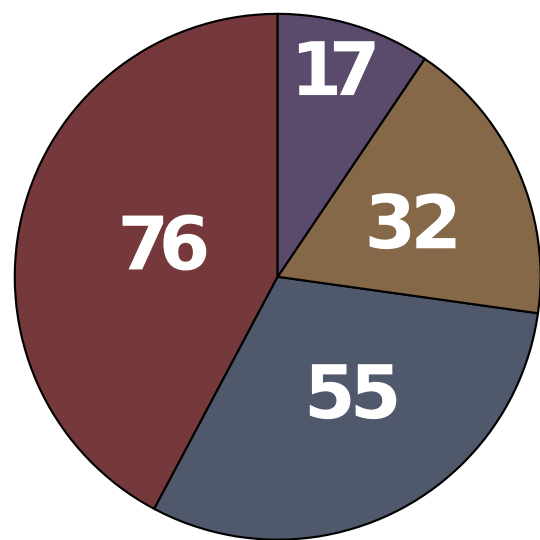
Hugo Corbucci <corbucci@ime.usp.br> and Alfredo Goldman <gold@ime.usp.br>
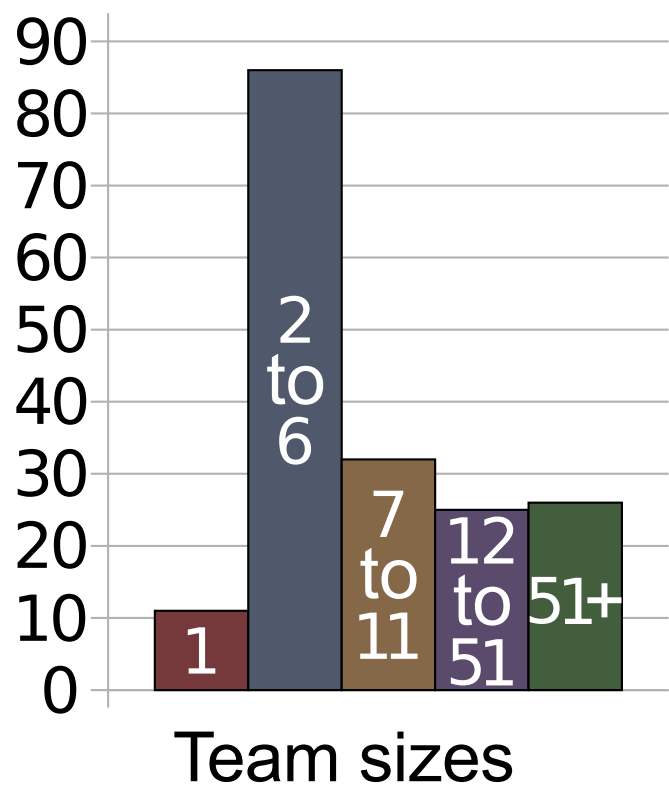
Introduction

This poster is the result of two surveys. The first one directed to FLOSS contributors (www.ime.usp.br/~corbucci/floss-survey) received 180 valid answers and the second directed to Agile practitioners (www.ime.usp.br/~corbucci/agile-survey) counted 161 valid answers. Their goal was to identify the main communication issues perceived by the communities and tools to mitigate them.

Results of a survey to the FLOSS community

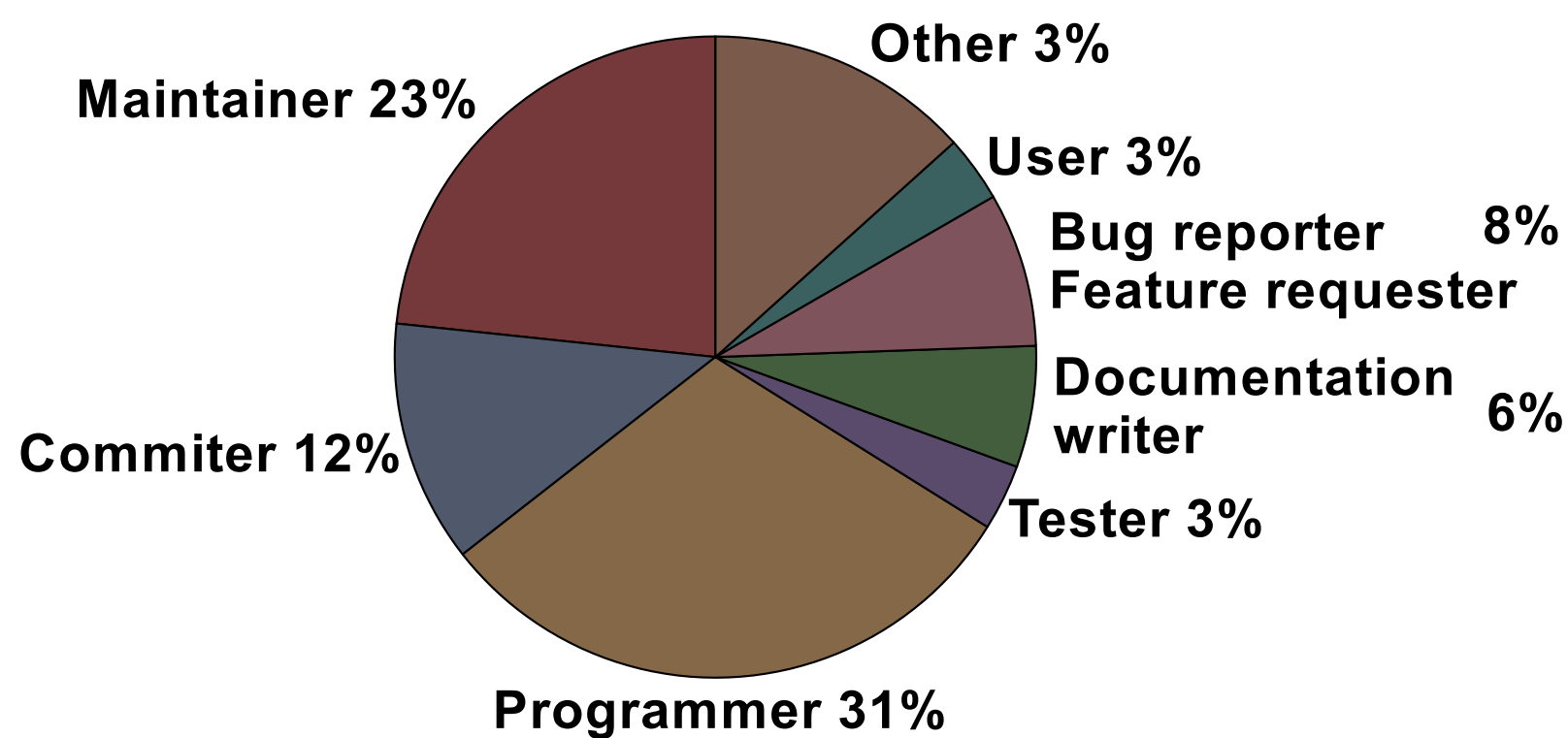Legend: South America, North America, Europe, Others

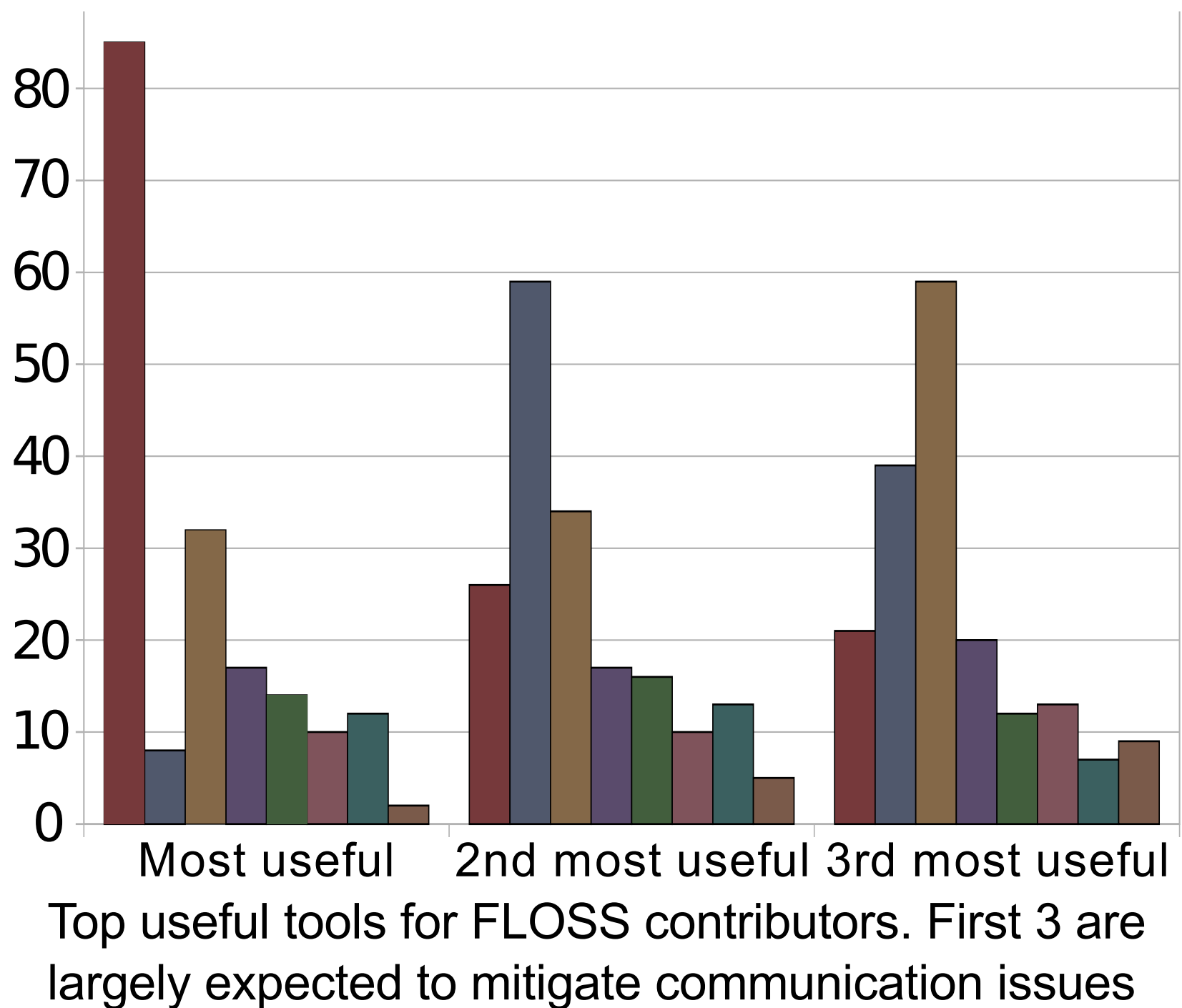FLOSS participants per region of the world

Team sizes

Both surveys included characterization questions. Results show that the FLOSS community involved was representative of the world community.
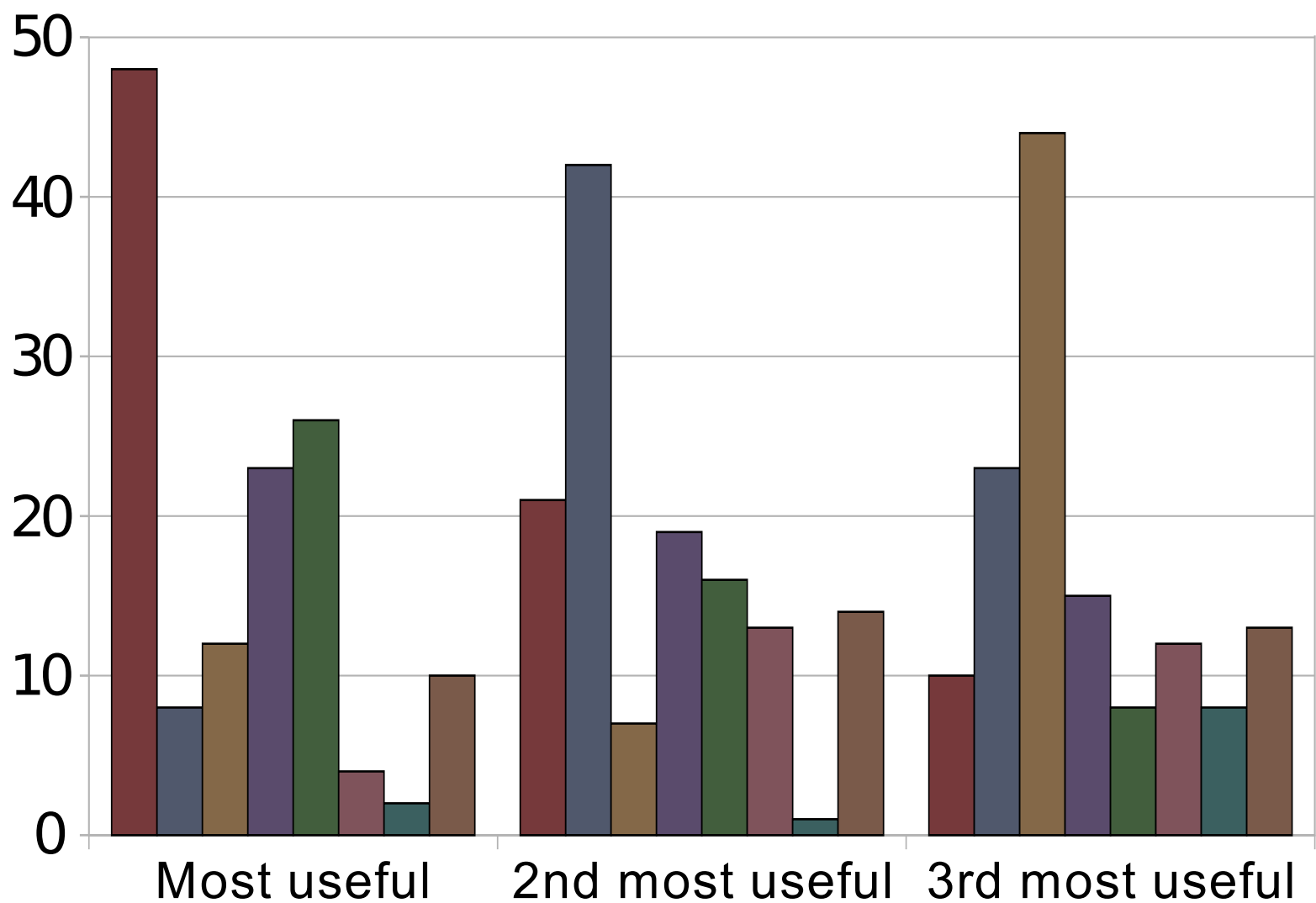

Role distribution in FLOSS projects - various roles listed. Task separation closer to heavy processes.

Channel	with Team		with Users	
	Use	Efficiency	Use	Efficiency
Mailing Lists	27%	**44%**	32%	**44%**
IRC	23%	**52%**	11%	**49%**
Website	6%	50%	18%	37%
E-mail	9%	37%	11%	23%
Face to face	15%	**49%**	5%	37%
Issue tracker	8%	50%	12%	32%
Other	12%	-----	11%	-----

Top useful tools for FLOSS contributors. First 3 are largely expected to mitigate communication issues
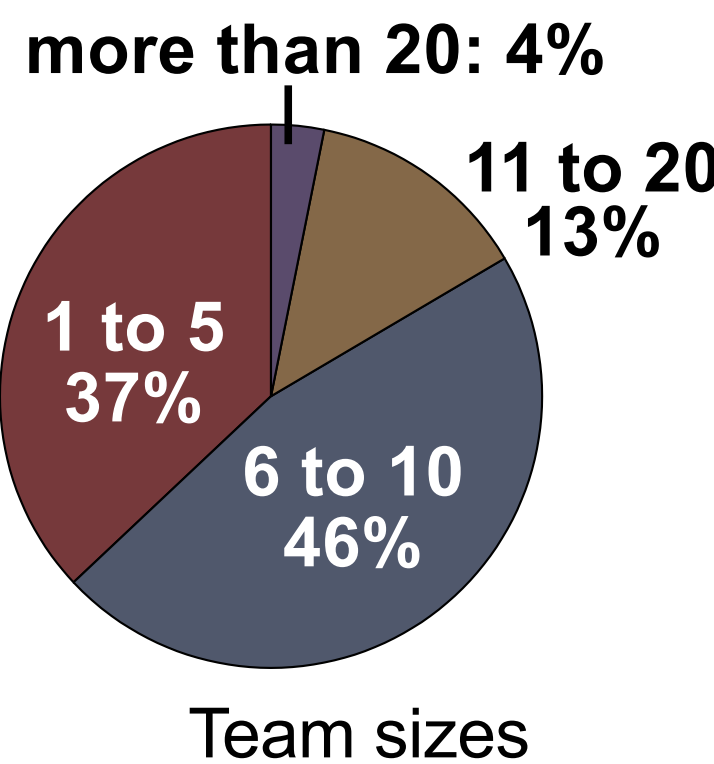
- Automatic email/message on build failure
- Dynamic roadmap status from Issue Tracking System
- Issue tracking management from repository commit logs
- Collaborative issue priority sorting
- Website one-click release build from repository
- Timeline on website that allows notes or comments to facilitate retrospective analysis
- A robot on your communication channel to keep log of the last events
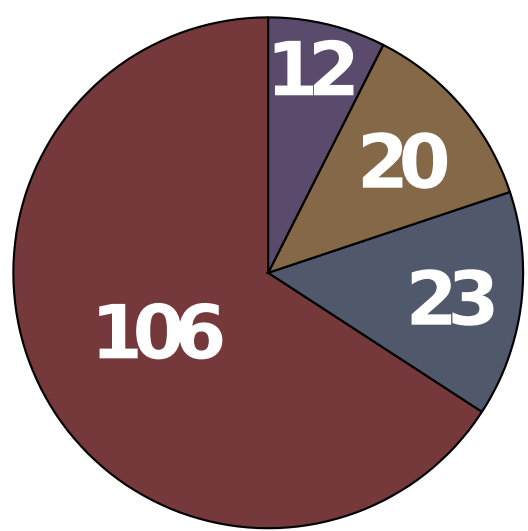- Automatic metric graphic generation and updating from repository

Similar results for Agile practitioners with more requests for one-click release builds

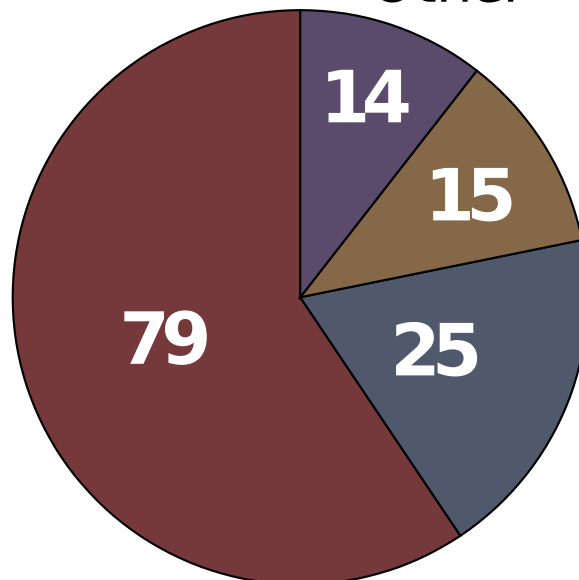## Results of a survey to the Agile community

Team sizes

Legend: South America, North America, Europe, Others

Answers per region of the world

For this survey, the sample population was not as characteristic as for the FLOSS community since most answers were from South America. Other data show a profile matching agile adoption patterns.

Legend: Programmer, Team Leader, Project Manager, Other

Role distribuition in Agile projects - fewer roles because of multi disciplinary teams?

Channel	with Client co-located team		with Client distributed team	
	Use	Efficiency	Use	Efficiency
Face to face	67%	**70%**	6%	**40%**
Telephone	6%	54%	24%	**52%**
VoIP	1%	53%	15%	**58%**
Instant Message	4%	72%	15%	15%
Email	7%	50%	18%	19%
Other	15%	-----	22%	-----

Conclusion

On a first view, FLOSS is in no way related with Agile methods since one is a licensing choice while the second is a process methdology. Looking closer, the practices existing in both communities are similar just like the needs felt. However, the background seems different and the principles adopted vary. It indicates that reducing the gap between those communities could have positive effects on both.