DELIVERABLE

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Preservation**

DELIVERABLE DETAILS

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AUTHOR(S)	
Name(s)	Organisation(s)
Clive Billenness	University of Brighton
REVIEWER(S)	
Name(s)	Organisation(s)
Professor Janet Delve	University of Brighton

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Statement of originality:
This deliverable contains original unpublished work except where clearly indicated otherwise. Acknowledgement of previously published material and of the work of others has been made through appropriate citation, quotation or both.

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1. Executive Summary

This report contains details of the metrics of the E-ARK Project's Dissemination Activities during its 3-year life.

It also gives details of the findings of an Impact Survey undertaken at the end of the project to assess the consequences for individuals and organisations of the dissemination activities of the project.

The report demonstrates that all performance targets set by the project for itself been achieved and exceeded.

Feedback gathered shows that the E-ARK conference, organised in December 2016, was well-received by delegates originating from a wide range of geographical locations and types of organisation.

It also shows that respondents to our survey consider that the project has had a positive effect on both them personally and also on the organisations they represent. Personal knowledge of the topic of Digital Archiving has been increased and awareness raised of the issues and challenges which organisations must now confront. Organisations have similarly had their corporate awareness raised, with E-ARK resources being used to assist in this process, and this has led to increased commitment of resources to Digital Archiving activities.

Finally, the survey has shown that E-ARK has succeeded in raising general awareness of the European Commission's commitment to research work in this area.
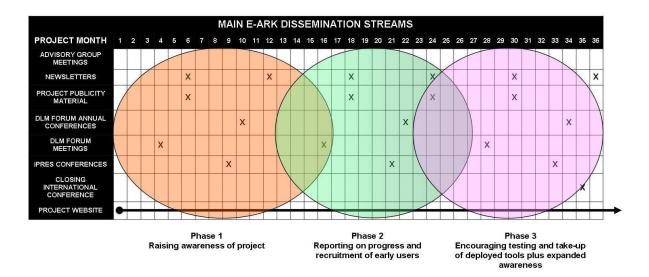

2. Introduction

This report contains an analysis of the Dissemination Activities undertaken within the E-ARK Project. It measures the impact and effectiveness of these activities using a number of indicators which have been maintained throughout the life of the project and also a User Survey conducted of across the various groups of people with whom the Project has been in contact during the past 3 years.

The E-ARK Project contains a Work Package dedicated to Dissemination and Outreach activities – WP8. The project's Dissemination Activities are undertaken in accordance with a Strategy updated and published annually, which identifies the different stakeholder groups with which we wish to engage, and the methods and contents of our communications activities over the following 12 months.

The overriding principle behind this Strategy was to raise awareness of and promote access to the archiving tools and knowledge base produced by the project to encourage adoption by both end-users and archiving systems manufacturers.

It was also responsible for the creation and implementation of measures to ensure the long-term sustainability of the project's outputs beyond the end of the project itself.

The Project's Communications Strategy identified three, overlapping phases of communications activities which reflected the stage of development of E-ARK and proposed a number of different Dissemination Streams to be used during the project's life.

MAIN E-ARK DISSEMINATION STREAMS

Activity (Project Month 1–36)	Months marked with X
ADVISORY GROUP MEETINGS	—
NEWSLETTERS	6, 12, 18, 24, 30, 36
PROJECT PUBLICITY MATERIAL	6, 18, 24, 30
DLM FORUM ANNUAL CONFERENCES	11, 22, 34
DLM FORUM MEETINGS	5, 16, 27
iPRES CONFERENCES	9, 21, 32
CLOSING INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE	35
PROJECT WEBSITE	continuous (months 1–36)

Phase 1 – Raising awareness of project

Phase 2 – Reporting on progress and recruitment of early users

Phase 3 – Encouraging testing and take-up of deployed tools plus expanded awareness

The Project also set itself a series of Performance Indicators by which its dissemination performance could be measured and reported throughout the life of the project. These were reviewed each year and updated in order to reflect actual performance achieved, and to challenge the project team to further extend this performance.

At the end of the Project, we have issued an anonymous, web-based survey using the Survey Monkey website, and communicated with every person with whom we have had contact during the project and invited them to provide feedback on the impact of dissemination activities on them personally, and also on the organisations with which they are associated.

3. Approach and Methodology

We connected the Project's website (www.eark-project.eu) to the Google Analytics system, thereby enabling us to conduct an in-depth analysis of all visits to our Website, identifying numbers of pages viewed, number of unique visitors to the website and the location of the visitor.

We created a similar link to the Project's Newsletter site (news.eark-project.eu) which is an online newsletter service, updated monthly, provided by the papers.li service. This newsletter was customised by the project team to include stories and announcements about E-ARK as well as other information of potential interest to the Stakeholder groups we were targeting.

We created an email group via the MailChimp service to which people who wished to be kept informed about project developments could subscribe. We used this group to issue regular updates about the project. Diagnostics provided by MailChimp enabled us to track the percentage rates of our e-mails being opened as well as providing a comparison with average performance of our e-mails with other comparable system users.

We have operated a Twitter account to disseminate information and announcements about our Project. We used Twitter's own Analytics service to measure the performance of our account in terms of followers, visits to the account profile and Tweet impressions. We have also conducted our own analysis of the accounts of Twitter users following our account, to attempt to determine the extent to which they are the accounts of people who are professionally connected with electronic archiving and digital preservation.

We have operated a dedicated LinkedIn Group since Year 2 of the Project to hold discussions about topics of interest concerning the work of the E-ARK Project. We have continued to monitor growth in this group.

We held a Closing Conference for the project in Budapest, Hungary, in December 2016. At the end of the conference, we sought (and obtained) detailed feedback from delegates.

Finally, at the end of the Project, we have issued a 10-question online survey questionnaire using the online Survey Monkey service and contacted every person in our mailing lists as well as making multiple announcements via our Newsletter and our Twitter account to encourage people to participate.

The purpose of our survey was to measure the extent to which respondents felt that their personal knowledge of electronic archiving has been expanded by their connection with the project and also the extent to which that personal connection had also had a positive influence on the organisation(s) with which they were associated.

4. Dissemination Measurable Outcomes

Project Website

As can be seen from Figure 1 below, we have seen continuous growth in website activity across the past 3 years, with web page hits rising from 4,280 in Project Year 1 to 33,000 in Year 3

The number of unique users visiting the site rose sharply from Year 1 to Year 2, but then apparently reduced in Year 3. We have received reports that users on corporate networks are not always separately identified. The actual level of traffic has, however, continued to rise year on year. This slight fall also coincides with the expansion of the E-ARK Github site as the main repository for our software. We believe it is likely that some visitors who might ordinarily have come to the website are now going directly to the Github site.

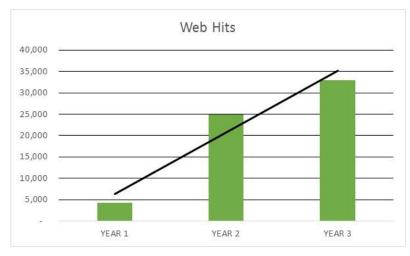|	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
Web Hits	4,280	24,252	33,000
Unique Users	1,146	7,966	5,644

Figure 1 – E-ARK Annual Web Hits

Project Mailing List

Our Project Mailing List was created at the outset of the Project, and at present 152 persons are subscribed to this group.

Whenever an e-mail is delivered to a recipient, a small transparent graphic, unique to that e-mail, is downloaded from the Mail Chimp e-mail site. This enables the web service to track how many e-mails are opened. Where graphical content is either blocked by the e-mail client or is not downloaded by the recipient, it is not possible to confirm that an e-mail has been opened. Similarly, e-mails which are previewed rather than being opened cannot be identified.

The percentage of e-mails which are actually opened is always therefore likely to be greater than the percentage of e-mails tracked to have been opened.

The Mail Chimp system confirms that an average of 32.2% of e-mails sent to this mailing list, which greatly exceeds the average of 22.4% of e-mails opened when sent to comparable Government mailing lists.

Project Twitter Account

During the 3 years of the Project, the number of Twitter users 'following' the E-ARK Project account has risen to 381. An analysis has shown that at least 233 (61%) of the profiles of users following the E-ARK indicate some connection with Digital Archiving.

The level of exposure of our Tweets has risen dramatically during the past 12 months. During Year 2, we recorded a total of 6,500 Twitter impressions (i.e. appearances in someone's Twitter stream). In Year 3, this has risen to 81,500 impressions. This represents a very substantial rise in the wider dissemination of E-ARK information via this medium.

Project LinkedIn Account

The Project opened a Linked In Group during Year 2. This group was used to make announcements regarding the project and also to open discussions on matters relating to E-ARK's activities. At the end of Year 2, 150 users had joined the group, far exceeding the target for the Year of 100. At the end of Year 3, this group has continued to grow, now achieving 253 members. This has again exceeding the target for the year.

Unlike Twitter, LinkedIn profiles are fully visible, and it is therefore possible to identify the professional backgrounds of group members. We have confirmed that our membership spans both public and private sectors with a heavy emphasis on people involved with archiving.

We have members in most EC Member States as well as in Iceland, India, the USA and Canada.

We have used this Group to disseminate information about the Project during its lifetime. We will continue to use the Group to inform members of future developments by partners working with the E-ARK tools and services and to promote discussions with archiving professionals about future developments to ensure maximum impact.

Project Newsletter

In preference to issuing a periodical newsletter focused entirely on E-ARK, we adopted an alternative strategy of creating a web-based newletter, using the *paper.li* service which enabled us to generate a monthly online bulletin containing up-to-date information not only about the project but also about other topics which we considered to be likely to be of interest to our stakeholder groups.

The newsletter, issued under the URL **news.eark-project.eu** was issued on the 1st Monday of each month, and announcements of its publication made via Twitter and also to the members of the E-ARK Mailing List and to internal project mailing lists.

Since January 2015, when the service was upgraded, it has been possible to use Google Analytics to track accesses to the newletter. In the past 24 months, there have been 6,356 visits to the newsletter website by 5,414 unique users.

We have noted that the greatest number of readers originate in the USA although we have recorded visits from 100 different countries including all member states of the EU.

Given that the newsletter comprises links to other websites, with a strong emphasis on redirecting visitors to our project website, we consider this to be an effective way of bringing traffic to our website as well as ensuring that new information about the project is disseminated as quickly as possible.

Dissemination via Third-Party Events and Publications

We have engaged with a wide range of events organised by third parties. We have given presentations, submitted papers and held workshops at a national and international events throughout the life of the project. We have also engaged with Government Agencies who are the original owners of the archived data. We provide a detailed report of all dissemination activities to the European Commission at the end of each year of the project.

Information provided includes estimated audiences reached as well as full details of the event.

We make use of these events to promote our website, our newsletter, our Twitter feed and our Linked In Group.

E-ARK Closing Conference

Throughout the project, our Partners DLM Forum and Digital Preservation Coalition have provided a valuable means of disseminating information about our work by a number of channels, including giving presentations at conferences and events organised by them.

At the end of the Project in December 2016, we organised our own 3-day conference, held at the premises of the National Archives of Hungary, Budapest. The conference comprised 2 days of presentations and discussions about the work of the project, followed by a day of interactive workshops where delegates were able to experience the tools personally in hands-on sessions.

61 delegates attended the conference representing a wide variety of organisations, including the United Nations and the World Meteorological Organisation.

All delegates were encouraged to provide detailed feedback about the event to enable us to determine its effectiveness. An incentive was offered to delegates to participate in the feedback process in the form of a gift voucher to be given to a randomly-selected delegate. This resulted in 20 forms being returned.

Delegates were invited to rate aspects of the event overall and also individual sessions on a scale of 1 (Very Poor) to 5 (Very Good). The project set itself the target for overall ratings that it would achieve a minimum of 70% of delegates scoring 4 or better.

100% of feedback received rated the event Overall as being 4 or better (average 4.8). 100% gave a similar rating to the content (average 4.65) and the organisation of the event (average 4.85).

Asked about what they considered the best aspect of the event, delegates commented positively on the scope and quantity of content provided and the accessibility of the presentations. Delegates were also invited to comment on ways to improve the event, and apart from a few suggestions concerning the technical arrangements at the event, the only other significant comment was from one delegate who felt that the event could have been longer owing to the volume of material which was being made available.

Overall, the Conference's objectives were met and performance targets were achieved.

5. Dissemination Subjective Outcomes

At the end of the Project, a short (10-question) survey was published on the Internet using the Survey Monkey service. E-mails were sent to every person with whom the project had had contact as well as announcements made on Twitter and the project website, inviting recipients to give us their personal view of the level of impact of the dissemination activities of the project. The survey was conducted anonymously and we received 52 responses.

The outcomes of the survey are summarised below.

Profession

Respondents were asked to identify **all** aspects of their professional lives.

69% described themselves as being Archivists, and 46% stated that they contributed to the Digital Preservation Strategy of their organisation. There were, however, a wide range of professions represented in the survey responses.
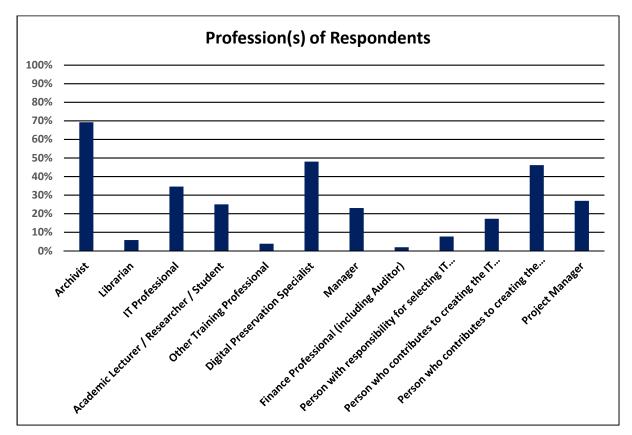

Figure 2 – Profession(s) of Survey Respondents

Means of Connecting with the E-ARK Project

Asked how they maintained connection with the E-ARK Project, most respondents (79%) indicated that they had visited the project website, while almost as many (73%) indicated that they had read the Project Newsletter. 50% of respondents had joined the E-ARK Mailing List and 54% stated that they had attended an event where presentations were made about E-ARK.

Only 37% of respondents had followed the Project on Twitter, and only 27% had joined the Linked In group.

This suggests that the most effective means of communication with the stakeholder community remains via a public web presence.

Figure 3 – Means of Connecting with E-ARK

Personal Knowledge About Digital Archiving and E-ARK

We sought to evaluate the extent to which the personal knowledge of respondents had grown while being connected to the E-ARK Project. We therefore invited respondents to assess their level of knowledge on a 4-point scale. We recognise that this is a highly subjective measure and the degree of growth in personal knowledge may differ between individual respondents. We hoped, however, to establish a general indicator of personal development achieved.

It will be seen that respondents reported there had been a major upward shift in personal knowledge while connected to E-ARK.
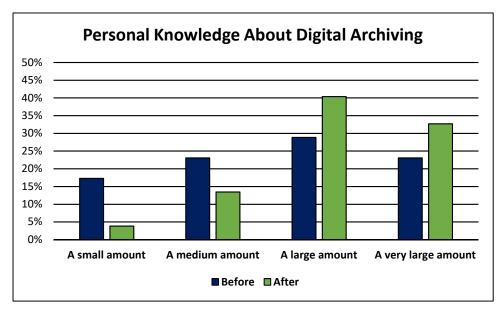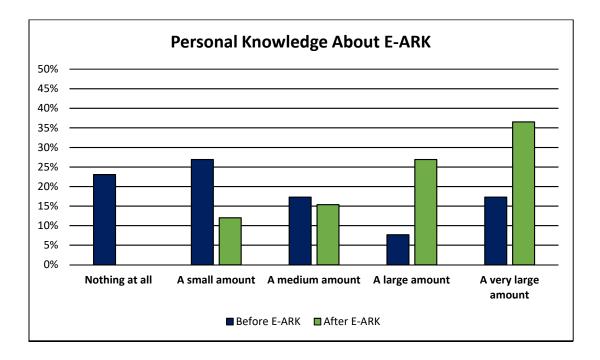
Figure 4 – Personal Knowledge about Digital Archiving

Given that respondents had remained connected to the project, we also wished to assess the extent to which we had increased their knowledge of the project itself.

Again, it will be seen that for the great majority of respondents, there was significant growth in the level of personal knowledge of the E-ARK Project which was acquired during the time that they were connected with the project.

Use Made of Downloadable E-ARK Material

We asked respondents how much use they had made of E-ARK material published on our own or other websites (e.g. DLM Forum where presentations from DLM events are also available).

As can be seen, most respondents have made at least some use of material provided, with 36% reporting that they made a large or a very large amount of use.
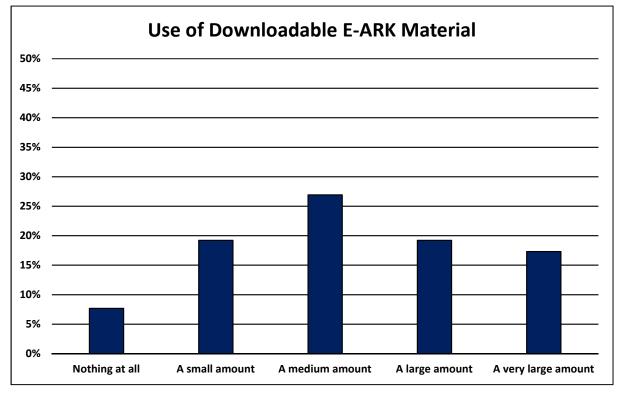
Use of Downloadable E-ARK Material

Figure 6 – Use Made of Downloadable E-ARK Material

Expansion of Personal Views

We wished to discover the extent to which respondent's personal views and understanding of a number of issues relating to Digital Archiving had been expanded by connection with the Project.

We noted that 48% of respondents felt that they were now more aware of the different challenges which arise with different types of material to be archived. 71% felt that their awareness of tools and services had been increased, and 62% intended to discuss the E-ARK outputs with their colleagues.
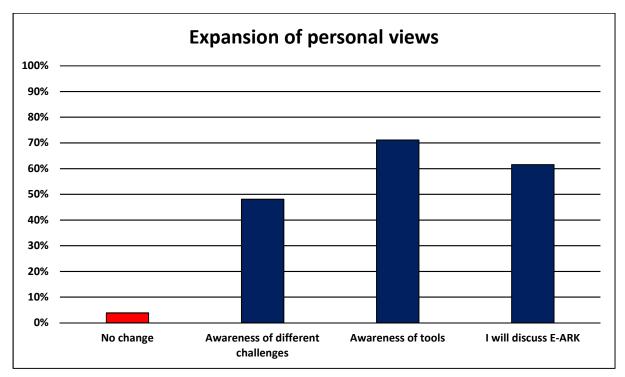
Figure 7 – Expansion of Personal Views

Impact on Employer Organisations

One of the objectives of our Dissemination Strategy was to provide resources to enable individuals to disseminate information to their organisations about the general issues relating to Digital Archiving and also about the E-ARK Outputs.

We therefore asked respondents the extent to which they had been able to inform their organisations about the issues relating to Digital Archiving. 78% of respondents reported that they had been able to inform their organisations at least a Medium amount about Digital Archiving Issues using E-ARK material.
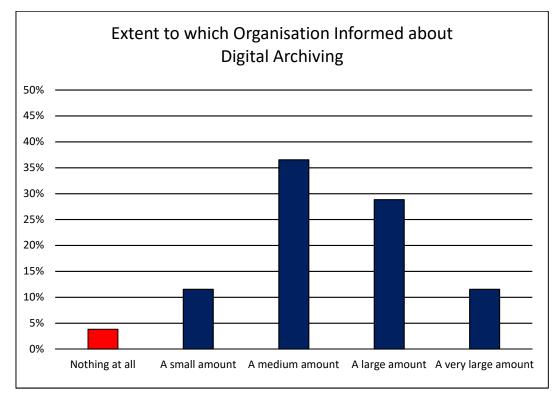
Figure 8 – Extent to which Employer Organisations Informed via E-ARK Material

Increased Organisational Commitment to Digital Archiving

We wished to discover whether increasing the awareness of organisations about Digital Archiving would lead to a commensurate increase in the commitment of resources to addressing Digital Archiving Issues within respondents' organisations.

We therefore asked respondents to assess the extent to which there had been an increase in commitment, and if so, how much.

Although 11% reported No Change in commitment, two-thirds of respondents reported at least a Medium increase in commitment by their organisation.
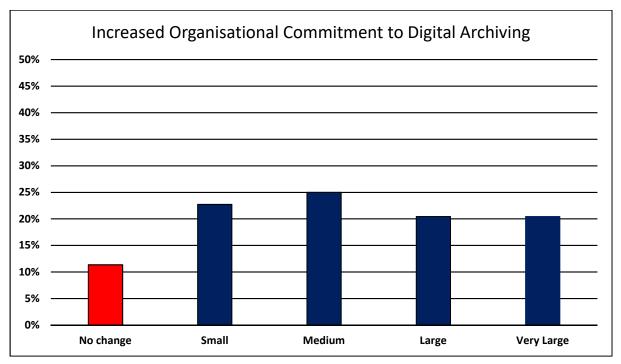
Figure 9 – Increased Organisational Commitment to Digital Archiving

Usefulness of E-ARK Outputs to Organisations

We asked respondents to assess the usefulness of the project's outputs to their organisations.

With the exception of 1 respondent, all other respondents felt that E-ARK would be either Quite Useful or Very Useful, with the majority of respondents (57%) expressing the opinion that the outputs would be Very Useful.
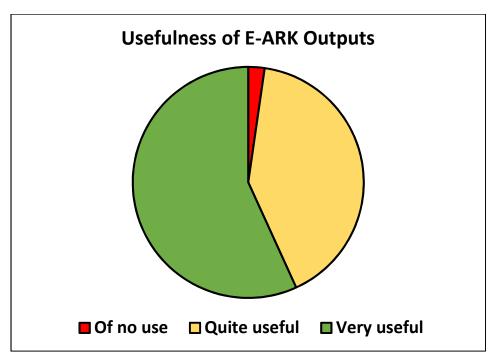

Figure 10 – Usefulness of E-ARK Outputs to Organisations

Ongoing Interest in E-ARK

Finally, we asked respondents if they wished to continue to be kept informed about the work of E-ARK as it was developed after the project was complete.

80% of respondents confirmed that they definitely wanted to remain in touch with the work of the Project. 100% of respondents indicated that, were there to be a follow-on project to E-ARK, they would wish to be informed about it.
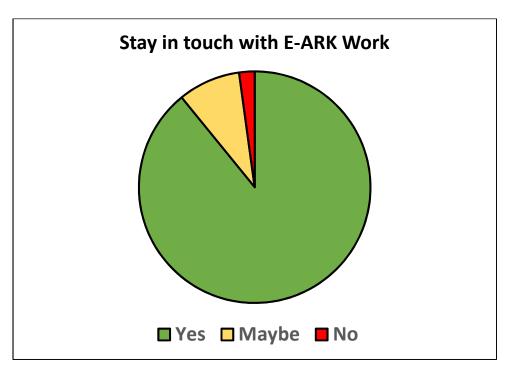
Stay in touch with E-ARK Work

☐ **Yes** ☐ **Maybe** ☐ **No**

Figure 11 – Intention to remain in touch with E-ARK work

Wider Awareness of EC Digital Archiving Research

One of the project's objectives was to raise awareness of work by the European Commission to support research in the field of Digital Archiving. We therefore asked respondents to assess the extent to which their own personal awareness of the Commission's involvement in this area had been increased by connection with the project, and the extent to which their organisation's awareness had been increased.

Respondents stated that there had been a marked increase in their awareness of the EC's work in this area and also that their organisations had become more aware of this work.
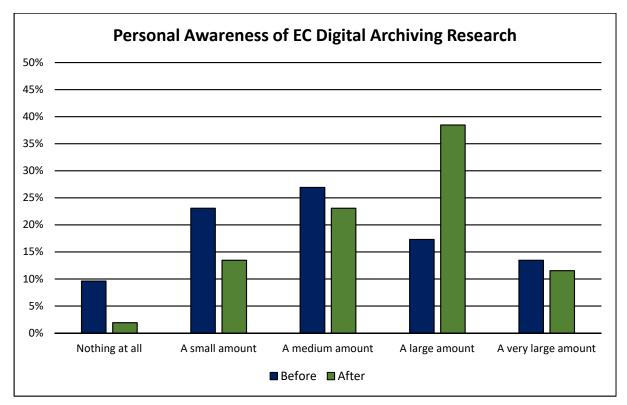
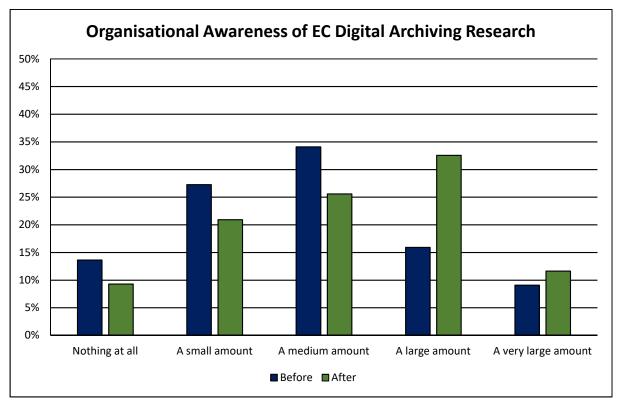*Figure 12 – Personal Awareness of EC Digital Archiving Research*

Figure 13 – Organisational Awareness of EC Digital Archiving Research

6. Conclusions

The E-ARK project has adopted a wide variety of channels in order to disseminate information about its work. We have put in place measures to monitor performance of our various dissemination channels. These have contained measurable targets which have been updated and, because they were consistently exceeded, 'stretched' for the following year.

At the end of the Project, we have conducted a survey to measure the impact of our dissemination activities on both individuals who have been in contact with the project during its 3-year life, and also on the organisations for which they work.

We have identified that E-ARK has succeeded in increasing personal and organisational knowledge and awareness of the issues and challenges of Digital Archiving in general, and also of the work being undertaken by E-ARK.

We have succeeded in encouraging organisations to make a greater commitment of resources to address Digital Archiving issues.

There is a general agreement amongst those who responded to our survey that the outputs of the E-ARK Project would be of use to their organisation, and almost every respondent intended to continue to remain in touch with the ongoing work of the project as it is taken forward by the partners.

Finally, we have been successful in raising more general awareness amongst both individuals and organisations of the research work being undertaken in the area of Digital Archiving under the sponsorship of the European Commission.

7. Next Steps

As the project is now coming to an end, arrangements are being made to archive the contents of the Project website, with a commitment by the partners that the domain name eark-project.eu will continue to be supported for a minimum of 10 years.

The Project's Twitter account will continue to be operated by project members in order to promote the ongoing work to further develop the outputs of E-ARK by the project's partners.

The Project LinkedIn group will similarly continue to be supported and used as a centre for ongoing discussion about developing issues and challenges in the field of digital archiving.

The Project's partners will continue to work with the DLM Forum, the Digital Preservation Coalition and the Open Preservation Foundation to promote the work, methods, tools and also the identified Best Practice in digital archiving identified in the project.