Summary

From August 12th to August 24th, the UX team along with the Community team ran a survey to test the Forum Structure for our new discourse instance.

Most of the Forum structure proposed seemed to work with a reasonable rate of success. While three tasks (task 2, 3, and 5) had some dispersions between participants.

Methodology

To run this test, we used the *Tree Testing* [methodology](#) to understand the user experience with the flow, and generate a quantitative analysis report. This method enables us to understand our users flow, ensuring we are using the right (or not) structure for the forum.

We recruited participants who are already part of the Tor Community or some communication channel, such as mailing lists, and other platforms, such as reddit.

We created eight tasks, where participants should look for categories in the proposed structure for the forum, where they would find help or publish an issue. Followed by the tasks, users might have to answer a subcategory and then they are asked how hard it was to find the category and how much confident they were that it was the right choice.

To collect answers for this survey, we used Tor's self hosted LimeSurvey with anonymized responses.

Sample size and Limitations

In total, we gathered 47 completed responses for this survey, which was active for twelve days. Findability research requires a relatively large number of study participants. For less than 53 participants, we have a [13% margin of error](#) (+/-).

DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion)

Most survey participants identify themselves as male (66,67%), while 12,50% participants identify as female and 4% non-binary. This confirms our previous research regarding Tor users.

70% of participants identified as male say they need high (5) protection and privacy, represented by a Likert Scale (1 to 5), while 33% of participants identified as female said the same.

Regarding the uses of Tor related products:

- 81,5% use Tor Browser Desktop
- 36,5% use Tor Browser for Android
- 23% use Onion Browser
- 38,3% use OnionShare
- 29,8% use Tails
- 21,3% use Orbot

Other Tor related products mentioned by users were Whonix, Tor Relays/Brigdes, SecureDrop, Ricochet, Cwtch.
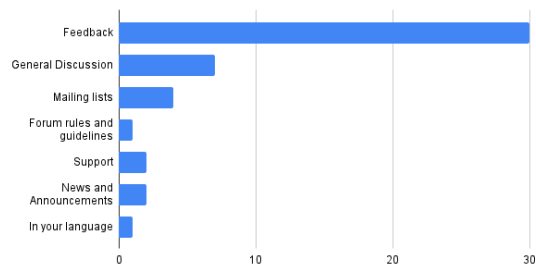
One participant said they never used any Tor related products, and another said it was their first time using Tor.

Findings

First task

A recent Tor Browser update has changed the way a feature works, and you don't like it. Where would you voice your opinion about the change?

68,78% of participants choose Feedback to voice their opinion. As a subcategory, 58% chose Tor Browser Android, while 30% were not sure which option to choose.

This gives us 95% of confidence that between 55% and 81% of users would go to Feedback then between 45% and 71% would go to Tor Browser Android, while 17% and 43% wouldn't be sure.

When asked about their confidence in choosing the right answer, most participants are very confident (41%), confident (31%) or neutral (20%). When asked if it was easy to answer, most users think it was easy (43%), somehow easy (37%), or are neutral (10%), a significant percentage think it was hard (4,17%).

Second task

A recent Tor Browser update has changed the way a feature works, and you don't like it. Where would you voice your opinion about the change?
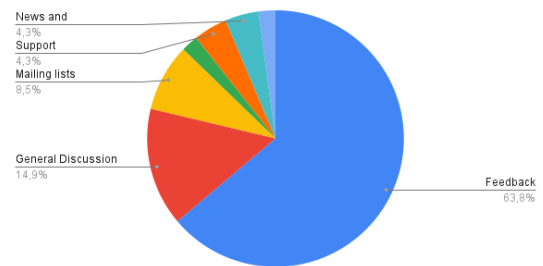
63,8% of participants would go to Feedback to report a feature change they didn't like, while 14,9% would go to General Discussion. When asked where they would go after choosing Feedback, 30% would go to Feature Request, while 56% would go to UI/UX suggesting some confusion between these categories.

Their rate of confidence answering the question were between neutral (23%), somehow confident (23%) and confident (52,4%); while most of the participants thought the question was easy (62,8%), somehow easy (16,8%) or are neutral about it (17,3%).

Third task

An onion site you're trying to visit is not loading. Where would you ask for help?
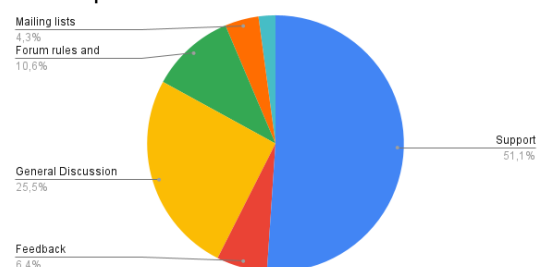
Participants seemed less sure where to go when an onion site is not working. Still, most of them would go to Support (51,1%), General Discussion (25,5%) or

Feedback (6,5%). Those that chose Support, 79,2% would go to the subcategory Onion Services, while 8,3% would go to Censorship Circumvention or Tor Browser Android.

While it seems users are more dispersed answering this task, their rate of confidence was mostly high (63,8%), somehow confident (18,4%) and neutral (15,3%). Agreeing with this, most users thought the question was easy (57%) or somehow easy (26,9%), while some were neutral (14%) about it.

Fourth Task

You've noticed an erroneous translation on the Tor Project website. Where would you report this?

04. You've noticed an erroneous translation on the Tor Project website. Where would you report this?

Support
6,4%
Forum rules and
8,5%

In your language
12,8%

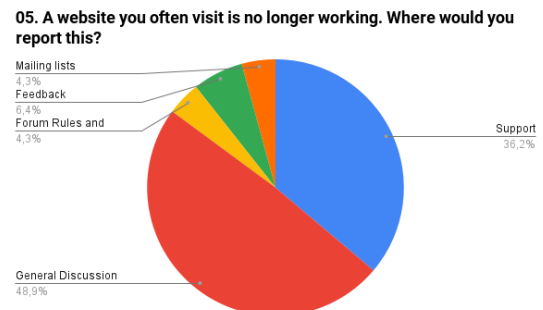Mailing lists
6,4%
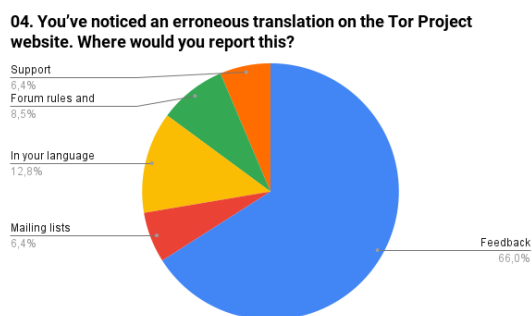
Feedback
66,0%

66% of participants would go to Feedback to report an erroneous translation, while 12,8% would go to Your language. When asked where they would go after choosing Feedback, subcategories seem to not meet users' needs, as 54,8% would go to Localization, while 41,9% would go to Website.

Most participants are confident (63,1%) or somehow confident (20,2%) about their answer, while some (13,6%) are neutral. In accordance with this, most participants think the task was easy (59,3%) or somehow easy (20,8%), while some (18,6%) say they are neutral about it.

Fifth task

A website you often visit is no longer working. Where would you report this?

05. A website you often visit is no longer working. Where would you report this?

Mailing lists
4,3%
Feedback
6,4%
Forum Rules and
4,3%

Support
36,2%

General Discussion
48,9%

The rate of answers for this task shows some confusion about categories. 48,9% participants would go to General Discussion to report a website that is no longer working, while 36,2% would go to Support. In Support, participants are also dispersed, 35,5% would go to Tor Browser Desktop, 23,5% to Onion Services, while 23,5% would go to Circumvent Censorship.

Still, 42,5% of participants are confident about their answer, while 27,4% are neutral, and 22% are somehow confident. 51,9% think the task was easy, while 21,9% find it somehow easy, and 21% are neutral about the ease.

Sixth task

You contribute to the Tor Network by running a relay, but you've noticed it's very slow. Where would you seek advice?

06. You contribute to the Tor Network by running a relay, but you've noticed it's very slow. Where would you seek advice?

Forum rules and
2,1%
General Discussion
12,8%

Mailing lists
17,0%

Feedback
2,1%
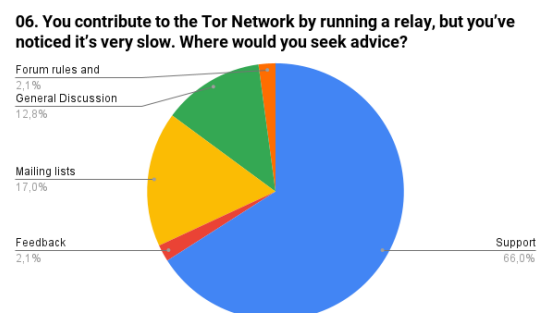
Support
66,0%

Most participants would go to Support to report a problem with their relay, while 17% would report it using Mailing Lists, and 12,8% would go to General Discussion to report it. For those that chose Support, 90,3% would choose the subcategory Relay Operator.

Most participants are confident (69%) or somehow confident (21,7%) of their answer, while a small part (7,4%) are somehow confident. In accordance with the previous question, most participants thought the task was easy (70,4%) or somehow easy (16,1%), while some (10,6%) are neutral.

You live in a country that is blocking Tor, and you need to configure a bridge. However, the bridges provided are not working. Where would you ask for help?

07. You live in a country that is blocking Tor, and you need to configure a bridge. However, the bridges provided are not working.
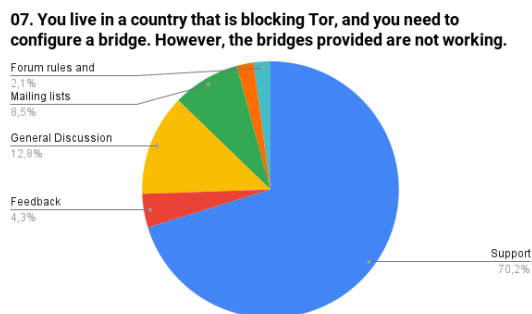
Most participants (70,2%) would go to Support to ask for help using bridges, while some would go to General Discussion (12,8%) or Mailing Lists (8,5%). From those that chose Support, most of them (87,9%) would choose the subcategory Circumvent Censorship, while others would go to Onion Services or Relay Operator (both 6,1%).

Most participants are confident (59%) or somehow confident (26,7%) of their

answer, while some (12,3%) are neutral. Most of them also think it was easy (67,2%) or somehow easy (17,9%), while some (13,4%) are neutral about this task.

Conclusion

With the presented tasks, participants seemed confused about where to report a problem accessing an onion service (task three) or a website (task five) in the proposed Forum structure. However, not being able to access a website using Tor is one of the recurring problems reported in previous studies. This issue should be reevaluated by Community and UX Teams.

When reporting a problem with a feature (task two), there is also some dispersion on choosing "Feature Request" or "UI/UX", suggestion would be to merge these two subcategories, using the label UI/UX as it has the highest rate of participants.