



Call for proposals 2009 Evaluation

Report



Directorate-General for
Health & Consumers



Executive
Agency for
Health and
Consumers

**PROGRAMME OF COMMUNITY ACTION
IN THE FIELD OF HEALTH
(2008 – 2013)**

**EVALUATION OF THE
CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2009**

September 2009

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1. INTRODUCTION

The 2009 Call for Proposals under the Second Programme of Community action in the field of Health¹ (2008-2013) was launched on 26 February and closed on 20 May 2009. It was published in the Official Journal², on the Executive Agency for Health and Consumer website³ and on the Public Health Europa website⁴. The Call was based on Work Plan for 2009⁵ for the implementation of the Second Programme of Community action in the field of Health (2008-2013).

1.1. Specification of the Call

As in the 2008 Call, proposals could be submitted for four financing mechanisms: projects, joint actions, operating grants, and conferences. The indicative available budget for the 2009 Call for Proposals was €34,969 million, representing €24,130 million for projects, €7,239 million for joint actions, €2,500 million for operating grants, and €1,100 million for conferences (€300 000 for conferences organised by the Presidency of the Union and €800 000 for other conferences). Variations of +/- 20% of these amounts are possible under each financing mechanism. Compared to 2008, the indicative available budget was higher for all mechanisms except projects (Table 1). The overall budget was also lower than in 2008.

Table 1: Indicative available budget for the 2008 and 2009 Calls for Proposals by financing type (in million euros)

	2008 2009	
Projects	28,541	24,130
Joint Actions	2,300	7,239
Operating Grants	2,300	2,500
Conferences		
Presidency	0,200	0,300
Other	0,500	0,800
Total	37,095	34,969

As customary, information days were held for potential applicants. One of these took place in Luxembourg, on 18 March 2009. About 270 persons attended from 25 countries. On this day, a general presentation was given on programme content and priorities as well as on the procedures for application and the evaluation criteria, followed by specific workshops on each strand, on tender and on project management. Specific information was given on financial aspects, IT issues and on practical hints on how to fill the form. A special Information day on Joint Actions was held on 16 March 09 in Luxemburg. In addition to these EU-wide events, national information days with a similar programme were organised in Oslo (20 January), Dublin (29 January), Verona (23 March), Madrid

¹ OJ L 301, 20.11.2007, p.3.

² OJ L 53, 26.02.2009, p.41.

³ <http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/health/health.html>

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_programme/howtoapply/call_for_propal_en.htm

⁵ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:053:0041:0073:EN:PDF>

(23 March), Bari (24 March), The Hague (24 March), Warsaw (24 March), Zaragoza (24 March), Rome (25 March), Vilnius (25 March), Bucharest (26 March), Stockholm (27 March), Brussels (30 March), Bratislava (2 April), Nicosia (6 April) and Zagreb (28 April).

An updated version of the applications forms for projects, joint actions, operating grants and conferences as well as guidelines for applicants was made available with a step-by-step approach guiding the applicant along the application forms and the award criteria. The call help desk received ca. 310 e-mails and 163 phone calls requesting information and guidance. The guide for evaluation was also updated based on the 2008 version.

1.2. Evaluation procedure

The evaluation of the submitted proposals was done in conformity with the *Commission Decision of 23 February 2009 on the adoption of the work plan for 2009 for the implementation of the second programme of Community action in the field of health (2008 – 2013), and on the selection, award and other criteria for financial contributions to the actions of this programme*⁶, and according to the texts related to each call made available on the Executive Agency's website.

Before the evaluation process could start, each proposal was opened and registered by the Opening Committee. The Committee verified whether proposals had been submitted on time, were using the appropriate application forms and included other supporting documents mentioned in each call for applications. Fourteen proposals were excluded during the screening phase, as they were not eligible. Among these, 7 were proposals for operating grants which did not pass the specific criteria with regard to transparency and legal and financial independence or the required geographical coverage. The other proposals were further examined with regard to the operational capacity and financial viability of the applicants.

Following the selection and screening, a technical evaluation took place in two phases. First, an individual peer review of each proposal was carried out by three external experts. For that purpose, 39 external reviewers were invited to take part in the evaluation of the 2009 Call for proposals. They were selected from a list resulting from a call for expressions of interest for 'Experts for the second programme of Community action in the field of health in various evaluation activities'⁷. All experts participated in the evaluation in their private capacity. All of them had to indicate any potential conflict of interest with projects submitted to the calls and the Executive Agency took great care in avoiding potential conflict of interest when allocating projects to the reviewers. To evaluate the proposals, the experts assigned award scores on a list of pre-defined criteria (see paragraph 3.1). Their evaluation was complemented with the individual opinion of a Commission's official from Directorate-General for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO) on the policy relevant criteria. The individual reviews were then consolidated into a collective evaluation form (consensus evaluation report) for each proposal during a consensus meeting moderated by the Executive Agency's staff. This technical evaluation

⁶ OJ L 53, 26.2.2009, p. 41

⁷ OJ S 28, 9.02.2008. Also available on the internet: http://ec.europa.eu/phea/phea_ami/.

took place between 8 and 19 June 2009 at the Executive Agency's premises in Luxembourg.

The second phase consisted of a meeting by the Evaluation Committee appointed by the Authorizing Officer and composed of Commission representatives from DG SANCO Directorate C, Directorate-General for Research, Directorate-General Justice, Freedom and Security and of the Executive Agency. The Evaluation Committee ensured that the evaluation of all proposals had been carried out according to the criteria set in the work plan for 2009. Any inconsistencies were addressed, duplications were analyzed and the comments made in the consensus reports were scrutinized. Final recommendations on level of funding were endorsed or modified. The Evaluation Committee produced a final list of proposals recommended for funding, per mechanism and, for the projects, per area, as well as reserve lists for projects, conferences and operating grants. It also agreed on the proposals to be rejected.

The total time between the closure of the Call for Proposals and the conclusion of the Evaluation Committee was six weeks.

This report provides an overview of the results of the evaluation. In addition to the overall descriptive statistics for the Call, it gives a detailed analysis of the evaluation results in terms of the different financing mechanisms, strands and priority areas, countries, and types of organisations. In addition, it presents the results of an analysis of the evaluation criteria that were used, and provides an evaluation of the Luxembourg Information day.

2. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

2.1. OVERALL STATISTICS

2.1.1. Submissions

Following the Call for Proposals 2009, a total of 257 applications were received, which is 32 more than in 2008. The highest number of applications was received for projects: of a total of 183 project proposals, 44 were submitted under the "Improve citizen's Health Security" (HS) area, and 139 under the "Promote Health" (HP) area. The "Generate and Disseminate Health Information and Knowledge" (HI) area was not opened in the Call for proposals this year. The call for conferences received 44 proposals (8 assigned to HS, 19 to HP and 16 to HI). The call for operating grants received 26 applications (3 submitted for HS, 19 for HP and 4 for HI). Finally, 4 proposals for a joint action were received, 1 under HP, 1 under HS and 2 under HI.

The total requested funding was €151,562 million, of which €135,027 million concerned proposals for projects (€34,257 million for HS and €100,769 million for HP). For conferences, the requested funding amounted to €2,811 million, for operating grants to €5,723 million, and for joint actions to €8,000 million.

Table 2: Number of submissions and requested budget (in million €) for the 2008 and 2009 Calls for Proposals by financing type

	2008		2009	
	Submissions	Requested funding	Submissions	Requested funding
Projects	154	114,005	183	135,027
Joint Actions	2	6,214	4	8,000
Operating Grants	26	3,771	26	5,723
Conferences	43	1,065	44	2,881
Total	225	125,055	257	151,562

2.1.2. Screening and selection results

Of the 257 proposals that were submitted, 14 were excluded during the screening phase due to incompleteness or ineligibility of the submission. All projects passed the selection criteria for operational capacity and financial viability of the applicants. This leaves a total of 243 proposals to be evaluated (27 more than in 2008). The number of proposals that were excluded for evaluation is higher in 2008, when only 4 proposals were excluded during screening and 5 during selection.

2.1.3. Evaluation results

Of the 243 proposals that were evaluated, the Evaluation Committee accepted 58 proposals for funding: 34 project proposals, 12 conference proposals, 9 operating grants, and 4 joint actions. This represented acceptance rates of 19% for project proposals, 27% for conferences, 42% for operating grants, and 100% for joint actions. Of the accepted projects, 12 (out of 43 evaluated proposals) had been submitted under the HS Strand, and 22 (out of 136 evaluated proposals) under the HP Strand. of the operating grants 8 to the HP strand, and 2 to the HI strand; of the conference proposals 3 to the HS strand, 4 to the HP strand, and 4 to the HI strand; and of the joint actions 1 to the HP strand and 1 to the HI strand. In addition, a reserve list was drawn up with 18 proposals (10 projects, 4 conferences and 4 operating grants), for a total amount of €4,902 million. Table 3 gives an overview of the number of proposals received, evaluated and recommended for funding with the corresponding budget.

Table 3: Proposals received and recommended for funding by financing type and by strand

	Number of proposals			Co-funding (million €)		
	Evaluated	Accepted	Reserve list	Accepted	Reserve List	Total
Projects	179	34	10	23,327	4,102	27,429
<i>Health Security</i>	43	12	2	9,586		
<i>Promoting Health</i>	136	22	8	13,741		
Conferences	41	12	4	0,859	0,264	1,123
<i>Health Security</i>	6	3	0			
<i>Promoting Health</i>	19	6	4			
<i>Health information</i>	16	3	0			
Operating Grants	19	8	4	2,488	0,536	3,024
<i>Health Security</i>	2	1	1			
<i>Promoting Health</i>	15	6	2			
<i>Health information</i>	2	1	1			
Joint Actions	4	4	- 8,000		-	8,000
<i>Health Security</i>	1	1				
<i>Promoting Health</i>	1	1				
<i>Health information</i>	2	2				
Total	243	58	18	34,674	4,902	39,576

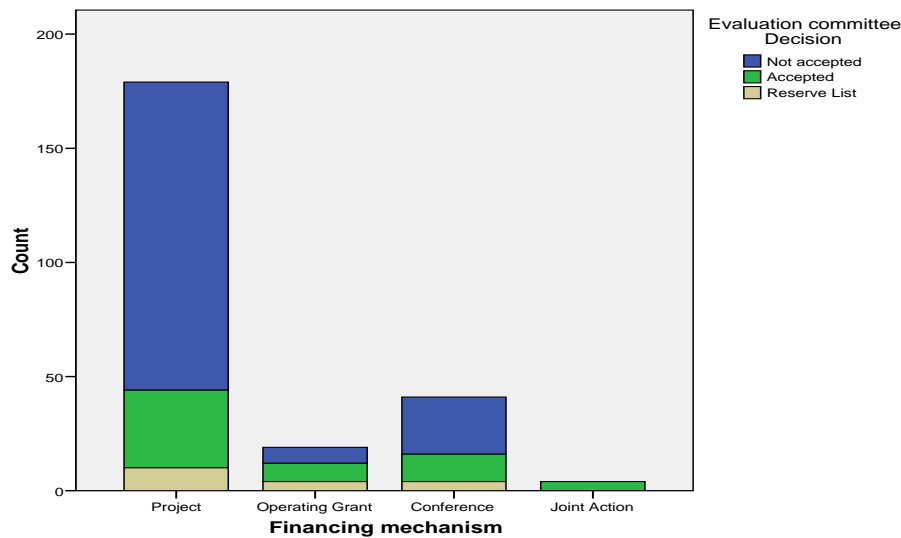
The overall percentage of proposals accepted for funding (23.9% without the reserve list and 31.3% with the reserve list) is lower than for previous Calls (40.7% in 2008, 42.3% in 2007, and 42.7% in 2006).

2.1.4. Acceptance rate by financing mechanism

While overall 58 of the evaluated proposals (23.9%) were recommended for funding by the evaluation committee, the percentage of successful applications differed markedly for the different financing mechanisms. All of the joint actions were accepted. Of the operating grants, 8 out of 19 (42.1%) were accepted for funding. In contrast, only 12 out of 41 conference proposals (29.3%) and 34 out of 179 project proposals (19.0%) were accepted. The latter is considerably lower than the acceptance rates of 2008 (27.3%) and

2007 (42.3%). For operating grants and conferences, the acceptance rate is slightly higher than in 2008. The difference on acceptance rate between the financing mechanisms is significant (likelihood ratio chi-square = 25.212, $p < .001$).

Table 4/Fig 1: Percentage of proposals accepted for funding per financing mechanism

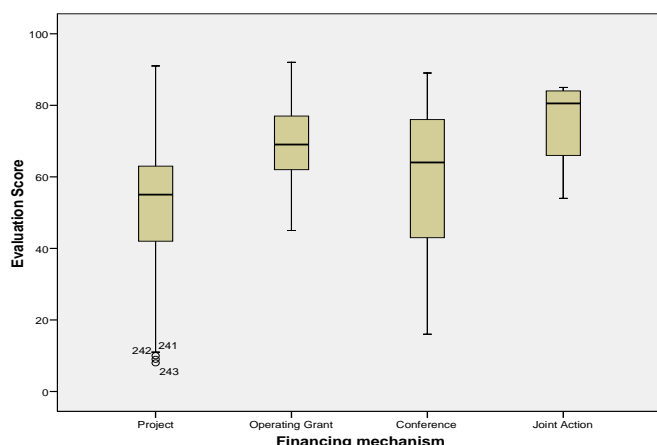


Financing mechanism * Evaluation committee Decision Crosstabulation

			Evaluation committee Decision			Total
			Not accepted	Accepted	Reserve List	
Financing mechanism	Project	Count	135	34	10	179
		% within Financing mechanism	75,4%	19,0%	5,6%	100,0%
	Operating Grant	Count	7	8	4	19
		% within Financing mechanism	36,8%	42,1%	21,1%	100,0%
	Conference	Count	25	12	4	41
		% within Financing mechanism	61,0%	29,3%	9,8%	100,0%
	Joint Action	Count	0	4	0	4
		% within Financing mechanism	,0%	100,0%	,0%	100,0%
Total		Count	167	58	18	243
		% within Financing mechanism	68,7%	23,9%	7,4%	100,0%

The different acceptance rate for projects, operating grants, conference proposals and joint actions reflects a difference in quality of the proposals. As shown in table 5 (figure 2), the mean total marks for joint actions (74.5/100) and operating grants (73.2) awarded by the evaluators is slightly higher than for projects (53.9) and conferences (58.9). The differences is statistically significant ($F(3,239) = 7.665, p < .001$).

Table 5/ Fig 2: Mean consensus marks by financing mechanism



Financing mechanism		Consensus Score	Evaluation Score
Project	Mean	53,98	53,64
	N	179	179
	Std. Deviation	18,119	17,792
Operating Grant	Mean	73,16	69,63
	N	19	19
	Std. Deviation	11,221	11,828
Conference	Mean	58,85	58,54
	N	41	41
	Std. Deviation	22,918	22,664
Joint Action	Mean	74,50	75,00
	N	4	4
	Std. Deviation	15,286	14,306
Total	Mean	56,64	56,07
	N	243	243
	Std. Deviation	19,321	18,880

2.1.5. Acceptance rate by Strand

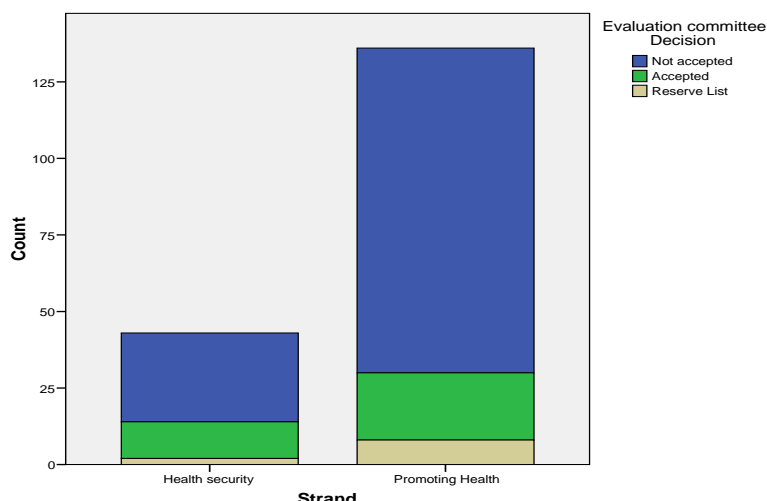
In addition to the differences for financing mechanisms, success rates of proposals also vary by strands. We will consider these differences for each financing mechanism separately.

2.1.5.1. Projects

For the project proposals, the highest success rate was found for the HS strand, where 12 out of the 43 evaluated proposals (27.9%) were recommended for funding, and 2 placed on the reserve list. For the HP strand, 22 out of 136 submissions (16.2%) were accepted, and 8 (5.9%) placed on the reserve list. For both strands⁸, the acceptance ratio for project proposals is lower than in 2008 (44.4% for HS and 27.9% for HP).

⁸ The HI Strand was not opened in the Call for proposals in 2009.

Table 6/Fig 3: Acceptance for funding per strand: projects



Strand * Evaluation committee Decision Crosstabulation

			Evaluation committee Decision			Total
			Not accepted	Accepted	Reserve List	
Strand	Health security	Count	29	12	2	43
		% within Strand	67,4%	27,9%	4,7%	100,0%
	Promoting Health	Count	106	22	8	136
		% within Strand	77,9%	16,2%	5,9%	100,0%
Total	Count	135	34	10	179	
	% within Strand	75,4%	19,0%	5,6%	100,0%	

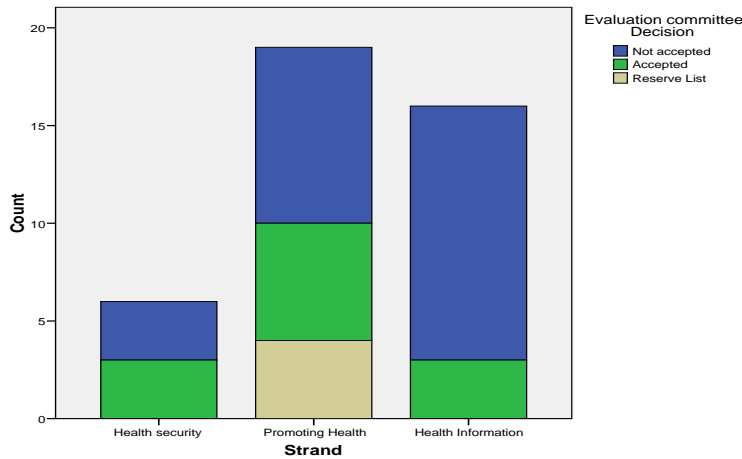
As in 2008, the difference in acceptance rate is not statistically different (likelihood ratio $\chi^2 (2df) = 2.750, p = .253$). This is consistent with the fact that the mean award scores for project proposals submitted to the two strands are not statistically different: 57.3 for HS and 52.5 for HP ($t = 1.534, p = .127$). For the total group of 179 evaluated project proposals, the mean award score was 53.64 with a standard deviation of 17.79. This is lower than the scores of 2008 ($M = 59.75, SD = 15.10$). Compared to the previous years, a significant downward trend of the award scores given to project applications is noticed ($M=63.24, SD 14.96$ in 2007 and $M = 64.73, SD = 14.38$ in 2006) ($F (3,789) = 20.053, p < .001$).

2.1.5.2. Conferences

With 29.3% of the proposals accepted for funding, the overall success rate for conference proposals is higher than for projects and similar to 2008. The highest success rate is found for the HS strand, where 3 out of the 6 evaluated proposals (50%) were recommended for funding. For the HP strand, 6 out of 19 conference proposals (31.6%) were accepted, and another 4 (21.1%) placed on the reserve list. For the HI strand only 3 out of 16 (18.8%) conferences proposals were accepted for funding. The difference in

acceptance rate for the three strands approaches statistical significance (likelihood ratio $\chi^2 (4df) = 9.334, p = .053$), reflecting a difference in consensus award scores ($M = 63.5, SD = 13.40$ for HS; $M = 66.7, SD = 20.88$ for HP; and $M = 47.0, SD = 23.47$ for HI; $F (2,38) = 3.953, p = .028$).

Table 7/Fig 4: Acceptance for funding per strand: conferences



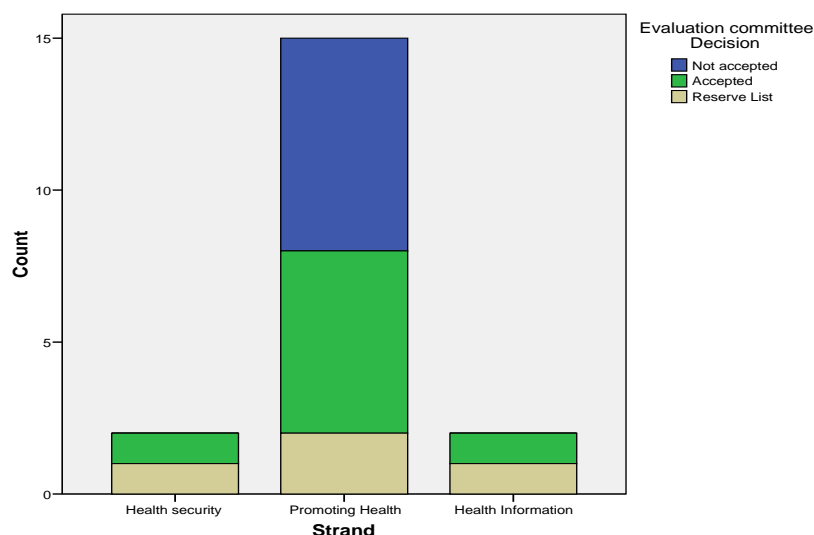
Strand * Evaluation committee Decision Crosstabulation

		Evaluation committee Decision			Total	
		Not accepted	Accepted	Reserve List		
Strand	Health security	Count	3	3	0	6
		% within Strand	50,0%	50,0%	,0%	100,0%
	Promoting Health	Count	9	6	4	19
		% within Strand	47,4%	31,6%	21,1%	100,0%
	Health Information	Count	13	3	0	16
		% within Strand	81,3%	18,8%	,0%	100,0%
Total		Count	25	12	4	41
		% within Strand	61,0%	29,3%	9,8%	100,0%

2.1.5.3. Operating Grants

Like in 2008, the acceptance rate for operating grants is generally higher than for projects or conference proposals. The majority of operating grant proposals were submitted to and accepted within the HP strand, where an acceptance rate was obtained of 40% (6 out of 15), with another 2 proposals (13.2%) placed on the reserve list. For both the HS and HI strands, only 2 proposals were submitted, of which one was accepted in each strand. The award scores for proposals in the three strands are comparable ($M = 69.0, SD = 5.66$ for HS; $M = 68.8, SD = 12.73$ for HP; and $M = 76.5, SD = 10.61$ for HI). Statistical testing of the differences in acceptance rates was not performed because of the low number of proposals in the HS and HI strands.

Table 8/Fig 5: Acceptance for funding per strand: operating grants



Strand * Evaluation committee Decision Crosstabulation

			Evaluation committee Decision			Total
			Not accepted	Accepted	Reserve List	
Strand	Health security	Count	0	1	1	2
		% within Strand	,0%	50,0%	50,0%	100,0%
	Promoting Health	Count	7	6	2	15
		% within Strand	46,7%	40,0%	13,3%	100,0%
	Health Information	Count	0	1	1	2
		% within Strand	,0%	50,0%	50,0%	100,0%
Total		Count	7	8	4	19
		% within Strand	36,8%	42,1%	21,1%	100,0%

2.1.5.4. Joint Actions

All four applications for joint actions were accepted for funding: one within the HS strand, one within the HP strand, and two within the HO strand.

2.1.6. Acceptance rate by priorities in the Work Programme

The percentage of successful applications not only varied between strands within each financing mechanism, but also for the different priority areas within the strands.

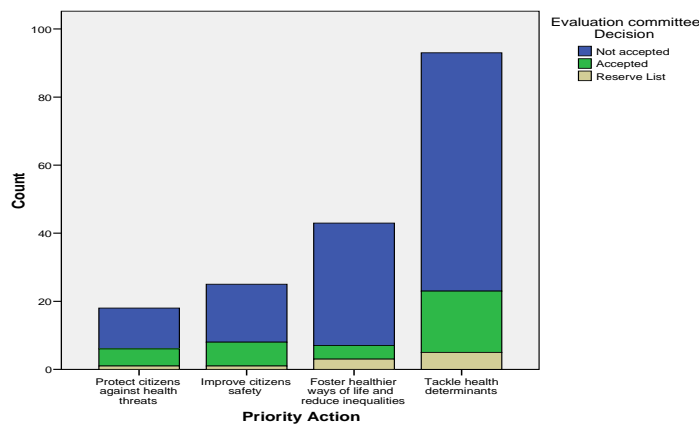
2.1.6.1. Projects

Figure 6 shows the proportion of project proposals accepted for funding or placed on the reserve list for each of the priority areas specified in the 2009 work programme. Only four priority areas are covered by projects. This number is much smaller than in 2008, when project proposals addressing 11 priority areas were submitted. The lower number of priorities addressed is partly due to the fact that, as opposed to 2008, no applications for projects could be submitted to the HI strand. Another reason is that the Call documents for 2009 clearly indicated the preferred funding mechanisms for each priority area in the work programme.

Within the **HS Strand**, the percentage of proposals accepted for funding is similar for the two priority actions: improve citizen’s safety (7 out of 25 submissions, or 28%), and protecting citizens against health threats (5 out of 18 submissions). For both priority areas an additional proposal was placed on the reserve list.

Within the **HP Strand**, two thirds of the proposals addressed the priority to “promote health and reduce ill health and prevent injuries by tackling health determinants”. Of the 93 applications addressing this priority, 18 (19.4%) were accepted for funding, and another 5 (5.4%) placed on the reserve list. For project proposals on fostering healthier ways of life and reducing health inequalities, the acceptance rate was 9.3% (4 out of 43 proposals, and 3 on the reserve list).

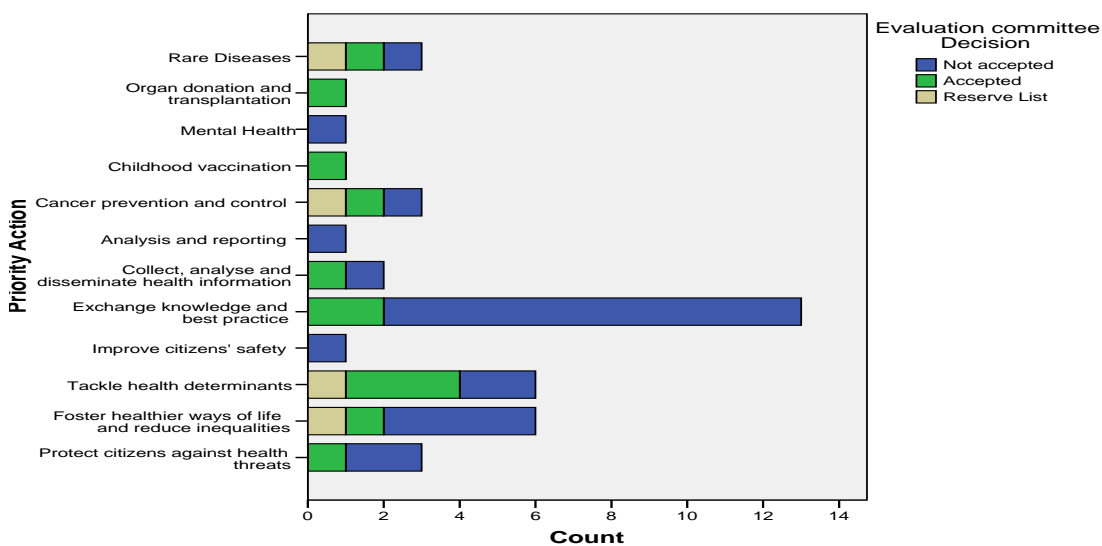
Fig 6: Acceptance for funding per Priority area: Projects



2.1.6.2. Conferences

Figure 7 shows the proportion of conference proposals accepted for funding by the priority areas specified in the 2009 work programme.

Fig 7: Acceptance for funding per Priority area: conferences

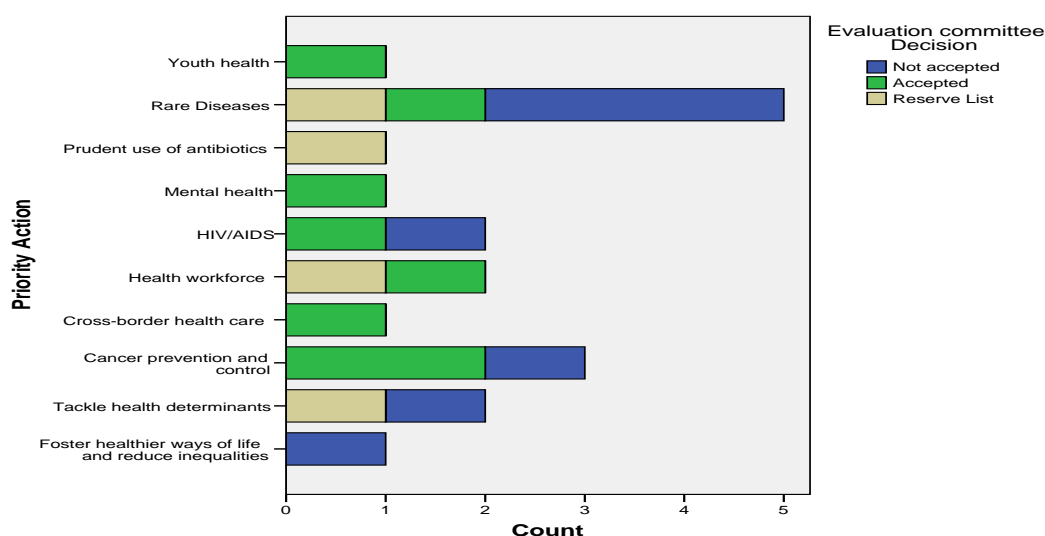


Conference proposals were submitted for a large number of priorities (12). The highest number of proposals (13) was submitted for the priority “Exchange of knowledge and best practices” within the HI Strand, yet only two of these (15.4%) were accepted and one placed on the reserve list. In contrast, 3 out of 6 conference proposals on tackling health determinants were accepted for funding, and one placed on the reserve list. For reducing inequalities, one out of 6 proposals was accepted, and one placed on the reserve list. For cancer prevention and health threats the acceptance rate was one out of three, and for collecting, analysing and disseminating health information one out of two. The one proposal submitted for childhood vaccination was accepted. For organ donation and transplantation, mental health and citizen safety none were accepted.

2.1.6.3. Operating grants

Figure 8 shows the proportion of proposals for operating grants accepted for funding by the priority areas specified in the 2009 work programme. The number of proposals and acceptance rate varies markedly between priority areas. The highest number of submissions (5) is observed for rare diseases, yet only one of these submissions was accepted for funding, and one placed on the reserve list. On the other hand, of the 3 proposals for operating grants related to cancer prevention and control, 2 were accepted for funding. For youth health, mental health, and cross border care only one proposal for an operating grant was submitted each, and accepted.

Fig 8: Acceptance for funding per Priority area: operating grants

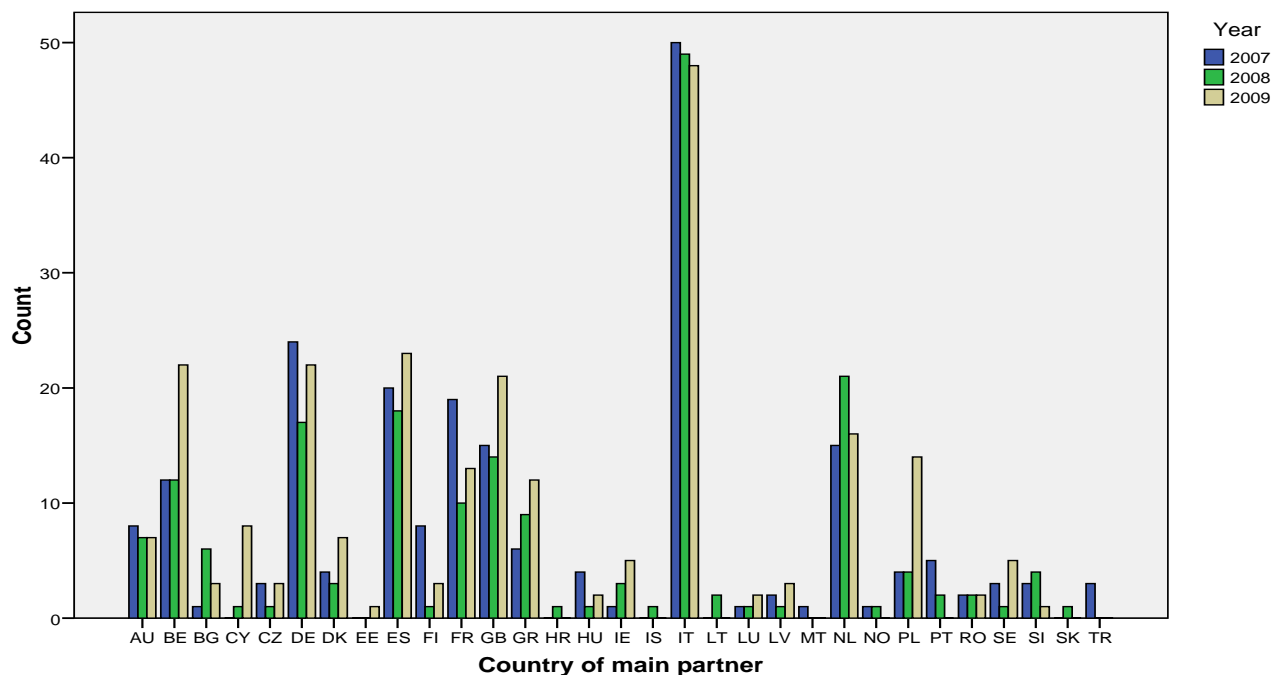


2.2. STATISTICS BY COUNTRY

2.2.1. Participation rate by Member States

The number of proposals submitted by organisations from the different EU Member States varies considerably (Figure 9). The highest number of proposals was submitted by organisations from Italy (48), followed by Spain (23), Belgium and Germany (22), the UK (21), the Netherlands (16), Poland (14) and France (13). These numbers are fairly similar to the submissions in 2007 and 2008, although more submissions are noted in 2009 from Belgium, Cyprus, the UK, Greece, Poland and Denmark. On the other hand, fewer submissions were received from Bulgaria and Slovenia. No proposals were received in 2009 from Lithuania, Malta, Iceland, Portugal or Croatia⁹. In general, the overall profile of submissions per country did not change over the past years, and shows a constant overrepresentation of the EU Members States before the 2004 enlargement (EU15), whereas the “New Member States” (EU12) stay underrepresented.

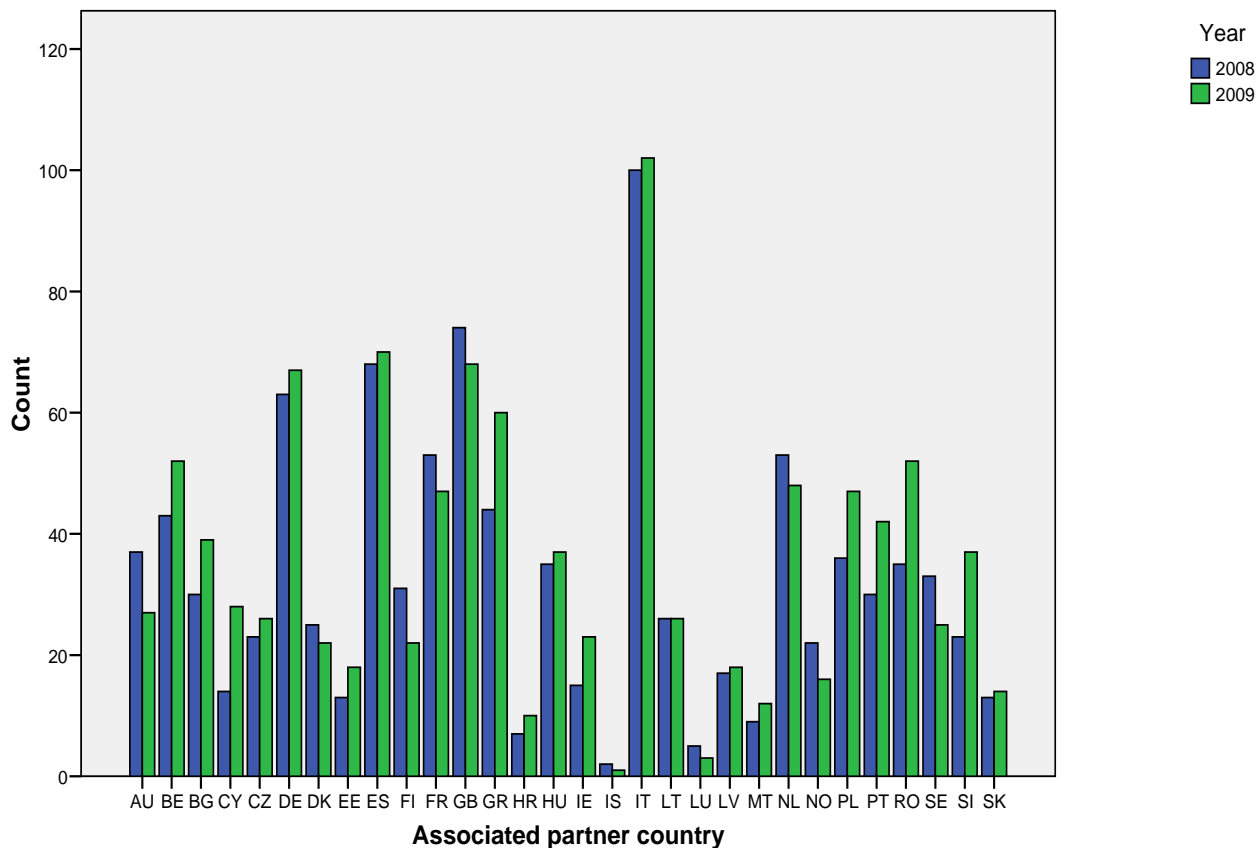
Fig 9: Participation rate per country, 2007 - 2009



However, a different picture emerges when participation as associated partners is considered. Figure 10 shows the number of times an organisation from each MS participated in a proposal as an associated partner in 2008 and 2009. As this table indicates, all EU Member States as well as Croatia, Iceland and Norway are represented in proposals in 2009. Most countries participate in several proposals, and some - especially from the EU12 - are represented in a very large number of proposals: Italian organisations participate in 102 proposals, Spain in 70, the UK in 68, and Germany in 67. These participation rates are similar to those of previous years (2006 to 2008). However, compared to 2008 there is a significant increase of organisations from Belgium (+9), Bulgaria (+9), Cyprus (+14), Greece (+16), Ireland (+8), Poland (+11), Portugal (+12), Romania (+17), and Slovenia (+14) which participate as associated partners. For Austria (-10), Finland (-9), France (-6), the UK (-8), Norway (-6) and Sweden (-8) a decrease is noticed.

⁹ Turkey does not participate in the Health Programme 2008-2013.

Fig 10: Participation rates of MS as associated partner (2008 and 2009)

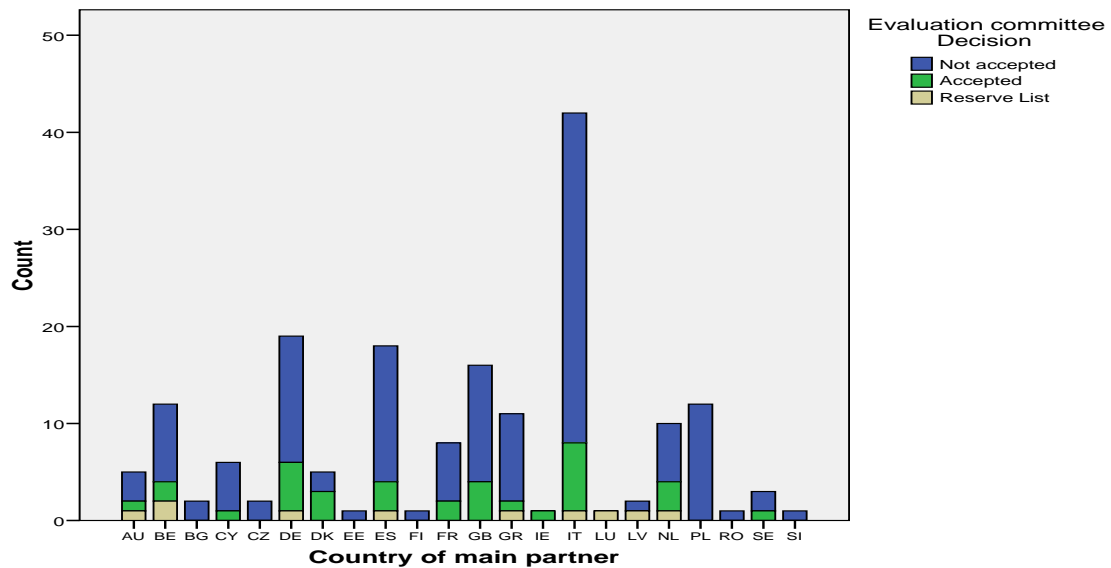


2.2.2. *Acceptance rate for Member States*

2.2.2.1. *Projects*

Figure 11 shows the proportion of project proposals accepted for funding for each MS. Ireland has the highest success rate (100%), but this only concerns one project submitted and accepted for funding. Other countries with a high success rate are Denmark (3 out of 5 submitted projects accepted, or 60%), Germany (5 out of 19, or 26.3%, plus one on the reserve list), The Netherlands (3 out of 10 and one on the reserve list), Sweden (1 out of 3), the UK (4 out of 16, or 25%), and France (2 out of 8). For Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Poland, Slovenia and Romania none of the project proposals that were submitted were accepted for funding. Luxembourg and Latvia each have one project on the reserve list. The difference in acceptance rate per country is considerable but not statistically significant (likelihood ratio $\chi^2 (42df) = 40.006, p = .559$).

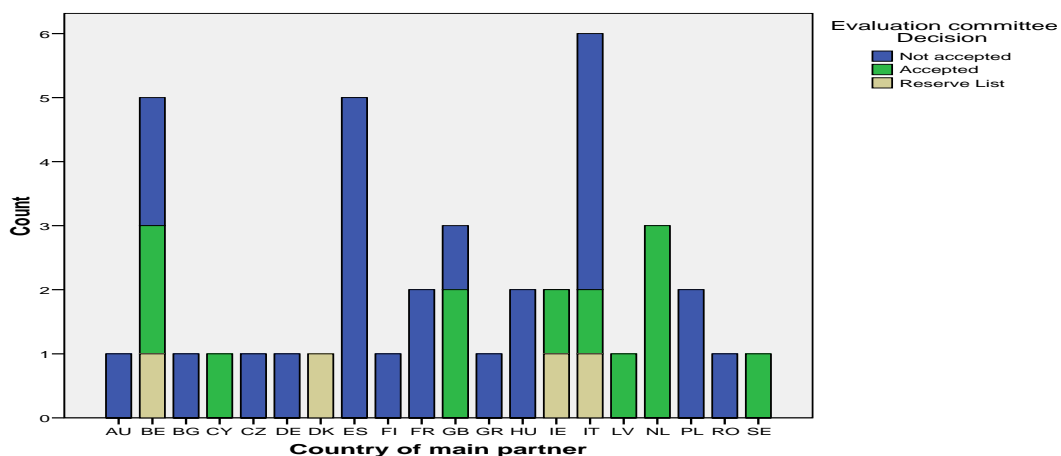
Fig 11: Acceptance rate per MS: Projects



2.2.2.2. Conferences

The proportion of accepted conference proposals for each MS is shown in Figure 12. As in 2008, the number of countries from which successful conference proposals have been submitted is relatively small. The highest success rate is noted for The Netherlands (3 out of 3 proposals), the UK (2 out of 3), and Belgium (2 out of 5, with one on the reserve list). Cyprus, Latvia, and Sweden each have one successful conference proposal. Ireland has two proposals, one of which is accepted and one placed on the reserve list. The difference in acceptance rate per country is considerable but not statistically significant (likelihood ratio χ^2 (38 *df*) = 45.289, $p = .194$).

Fig 12: Acceptance rate per MS: Conference Proposals

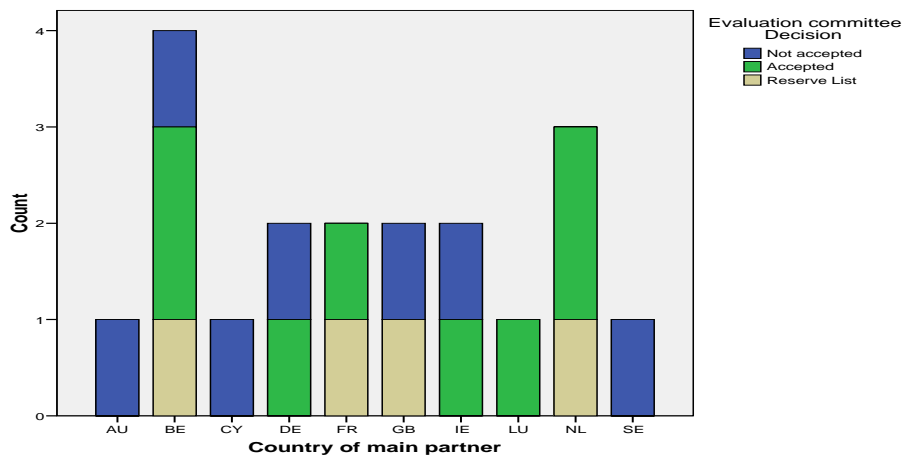


2.2.2.3. Operating Grants

Figure 13 shows the proportion of operating grants proposals accepted for funding per

MS. As in 2008, submissions for operating grants were made by organisations from a limited number of countries. Most of them are EU15 countries, Cyprus being the only New Member State. Accepted proposals were from organisations based in Belgium (2 out of 4), The Netherlands (2 out of 3), France, Germany, Ireland and Luxembourg (one each). For Belgium, France, the UK and the Netherlands operating grant proposals were also placed on the reserve list. While the acceptance rates for operating grants varies considerably per country, testing for significance was not considered appropriate on account of the small number of data.

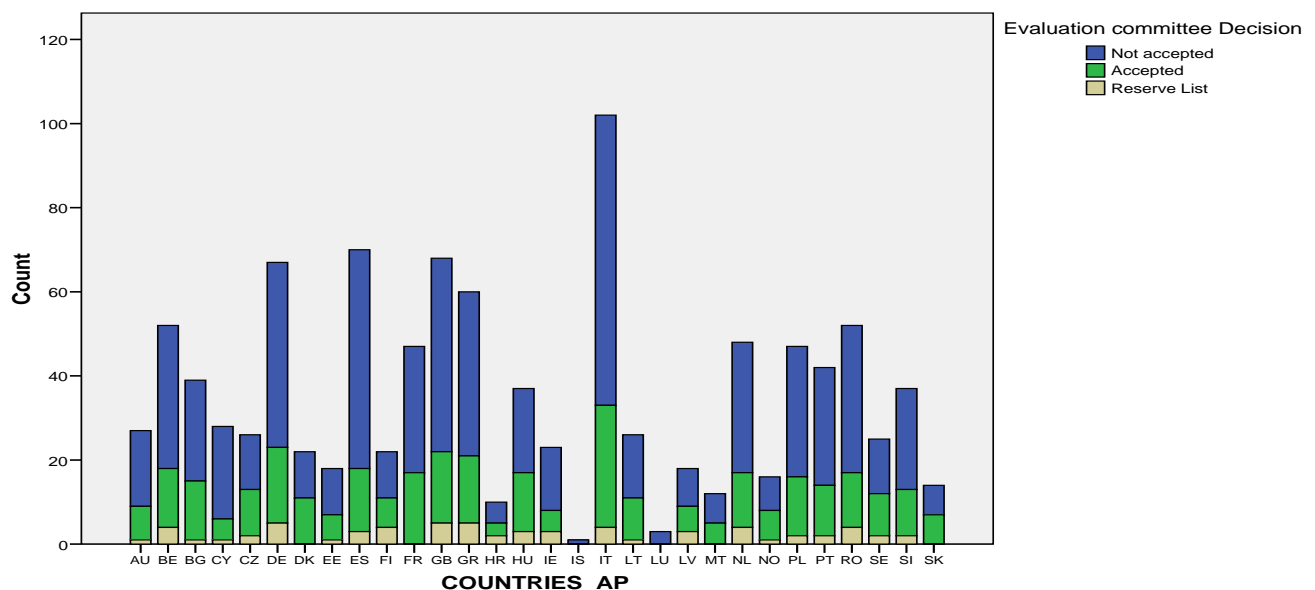
Fig 13: Recommendation for funding per country: Operating grants



2.2.2.4. Participation as associated partners

Figure 14 shows the proportion of acceptance for funding of proposals with participation by organisations from each MS as associated partners.

Fig 14: Acceptance rate of applications for MS as associated partners



As for participation as the main partners, the rate of success when participating as an associated partner varies considerably between countries. A high acceptance rate (between 40% and 50%) was seen for proposals in which organisations from Denmark,

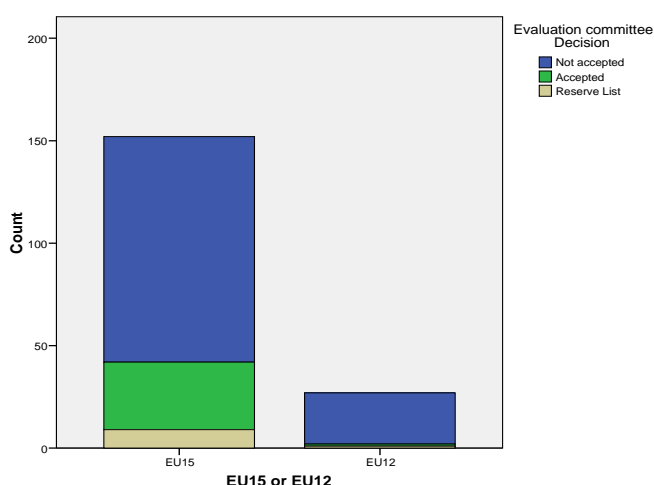
Slovakia, Norway, the Czech Republic, Malta, or Sweden participated as associated partners. In contrast, for organisations from Cyprus the success rate of participating as an associated partner is only 17.9%, and of the proposals in which organisations from Luxembourg and Iceland were involved as associated partners, none were accepted for funding. It is important to note, however, that overall the success of participating as an associated partner is higher than as a main partner.

2.2.3. Participation and acceptance rate for New Member States

2.2.3.1. Projects

Although the number of project proposals submitted by organisations from the New Member States has significantly increased since 2008 (27 as compared to 13), the majority of project proposals (152 out of 179) is still submitted by organisations from the EU15. Moreover, projects submitted by organisations from the EU 15 are more likely to be accepted for funding than those from the EU 12, as is shown in Table 9 and Figure 15. The difference in success rates is significantly different (likelihood ratio χ^2 with $2df = 6.950$, $p = 0.031$), with 33 projects (21.7%) of the EU15 accepted for funding, and another 9 (5.9%) placed on the reserve list, as opposed to only one proposals of the EU12 (3.7%) accepted, and one on the reserve list.

Table 9/Fig 15: Acceptance rate for EU15 and EU12: Projects



EU15 or EU12 * Evaluation committee Decision Crosstabulation

		Evaluation committee Decision			Total	
		Not accepted	Accepted	Reserve List		
EU15 or EU12	EU15	Count	110	33	9	152
		% within EU15 or EU12	72,4%	21,7%	5,9%	100,0%
	EU12	Count	25	1	1	27
		% within EU15 or EU12	92,6%	3,7%	3,7%	100,0%
Total		Count	135	34	10	179
		% within EU15 or EU12	75,4%	19,0%	5,6%	100,0%

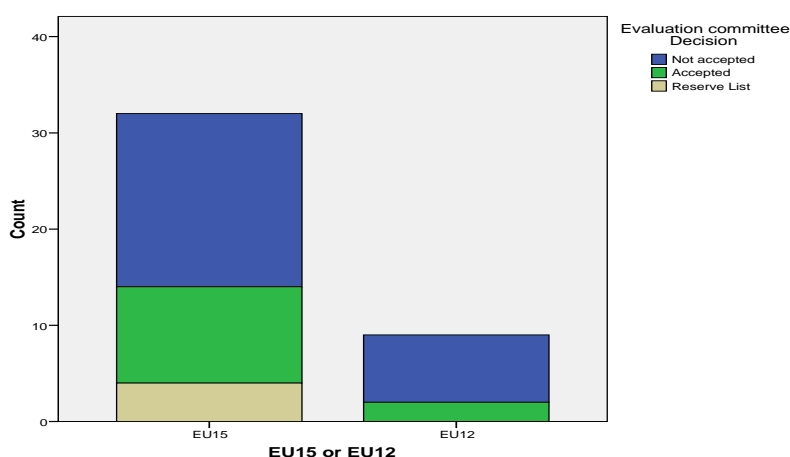
The acceptance rate for EU12 project proposals is lower than in 2008 (15.4%, and 7.7% reserve list) and 2007 (5.0% acceptance). The consensus scores awarded by the external experts are on average also significantly different (55.6/100 for the EU15, 44.9 53.9/100

for the EU12; $F(1,177) = 8.259$; $p = 0.005$), and are somewhat lower than those awarded in previous years (60.4 for EU15 and 53.9 for EU12 in 2008; 64.8 for EU15 and 51.6 for EU12 in 2007; and 65.8 for EU15 and 57.0 for EU10 in 2006).

2.2.3.2. Conferences

Table 10 and Figure 16 show the proportion of accepted conference proposals submitted by organisations from the EU 15 and the EU 12. As for the projects, the number of proposals by organisations from the EU15 (32) is much higher than by the EU12 (9). However, with 31.3% acceptance (plus 12.5 reserve list) for the EU15 and 22.2% for the EU12, the success rate for this financing mechanism is not significantly different for the EU12 and EU15 (likelihood ratio χ^2 with $2df = 2.695$, $p = 0.260$). In 2008 the acceptance rates were 27.3% and 25.8% for the EU 15 and EU12, respectively. The absence of a significant difference in acceptance between conference proposals from the EU15 and EU12 reflects the overall award scores, which are 61.5/100 for the EU15 and 49.3 for the EU12 ($F(1,39) = 2.042$; $p = 0.161$). In 2008, the award scores were comparable (63.8 for EU15 and 54.1 for EU12).

Table 10/ Fig 16: Acceptance rate for EU12 and EU15: Conferences



EU15 or EU12 * Evaluation committee Decision Crosstabulation

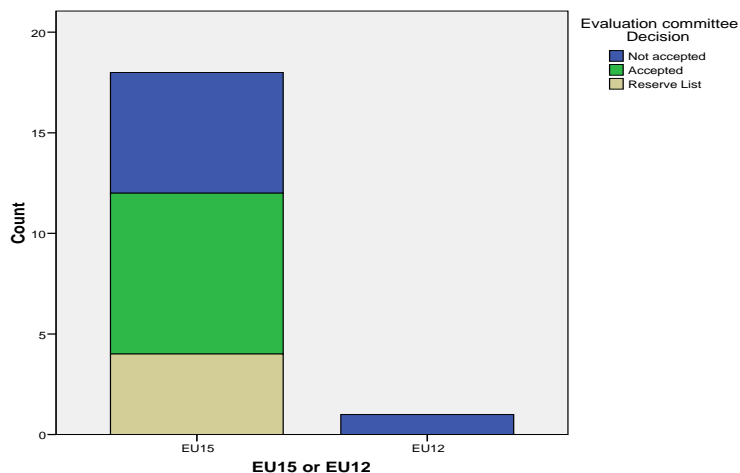
		Evaluation committee Decision			Total	
		Not accepted	Accepted	Reserve List		
EU15 or EU12	EU15	Count	18	10	4	32
		% within EU15 or EU12	56,3%	31,3%	12,5%	100,0%
	EU12	Count	7	2	0	9
		% within EU15 or EU12	77,8%	22,2%	,0%	100,0%
Total		Count	25	12	4	41
		% within EU15 or EU12	61,0%	29,3%	9,8%	100,0%

2.2.3.3. Operating Grants

Table 11 and Figure 17 show the proportion of accepted operating grant proposals

submitted by organisations from the EU 15 and EU 12. Only one proposal for an operating grant was submitted by an organisation from the EU12 and was not accepted, as opposed to 8 out of 18 accepted applications (44.4%) and another 4 on the reserve list (22.2%) for organisations from the EU15. No significance test was carried out due to insufficient data.

Table 11/Fig 17: Acceptance rate for EU15 and EU12: Operating Grants



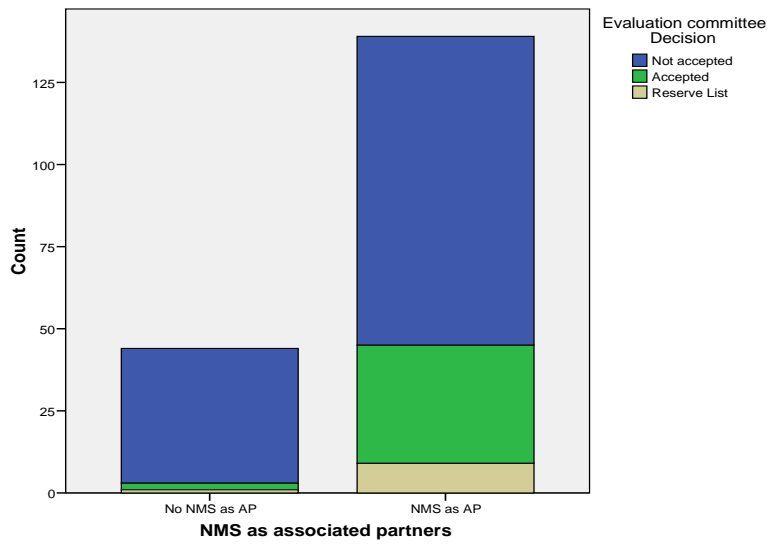
EU15 or EU12 * Evaluation committee Decision Crosstabulation

		Evaluation committee Decision			Total	
		Not accepted	Accepted	Reserve List		
EU15 or EU12	EU15	Count	6	8	4	18
		% within EU15 or EU12	33,3%	44,4%	22,2%	100,0%
EU12	EU12	Count	1	0	0	1
		% within EU15 or EU12	100,0%	,0%	,0%	100,0%
Total		Count	7	8	4	19
		% within EU15 or EU12	36,8%	42,1%	21,1%	100,0%

2.2.3.4. NMS as associated partners

Although the majority of proposals were submitted by organisations based in one of the EU15 Member States, organisations from the EU12 were well represented as associated partners. In 139 of the 183 project proposals and joint actions (76%), at least one associate partner was from the NMS. Figure 18 and Table 12 show the different success rates for proposals with and without participation from the EU12. As the figure indicates, the success rate is significantly higher (25.9%) for proposals with participation from the EU12 than those were no NMS participate (4.5%) (likelihood ratio χ^2 with $2df = 13.935$, $p = 0.01$). The difference success rates reflect the overall award scores, which are 57.4 for proposals with associated partners from the EU12 and 45.0 for proposals without ($F(1,181) = 16.657$; $p < 0.001$).

Table 12/Fig 18: Acceptance rate of organisations with and without participation from the EU12



NMS as associated partners * Evaluation committee Decision Crosstabulation

			Evaluation committee Decision			Total
			Not accepted	Accepted	Reserve List	
NMS as associated partners	No NMS as AP	Count	41	2	1	44
		% within NMS as associated partners	93,2%	4,5%	2,3%	100,0%
	NMS as AP	Count	94	36	9	139
		% within NMS as associated partners	67,6%	25,9%	6,5%	100,0%
Total		Count	135	38	10	183
		% within NMS as associated partners	73,8%	20,8%	5,5%	100,0%

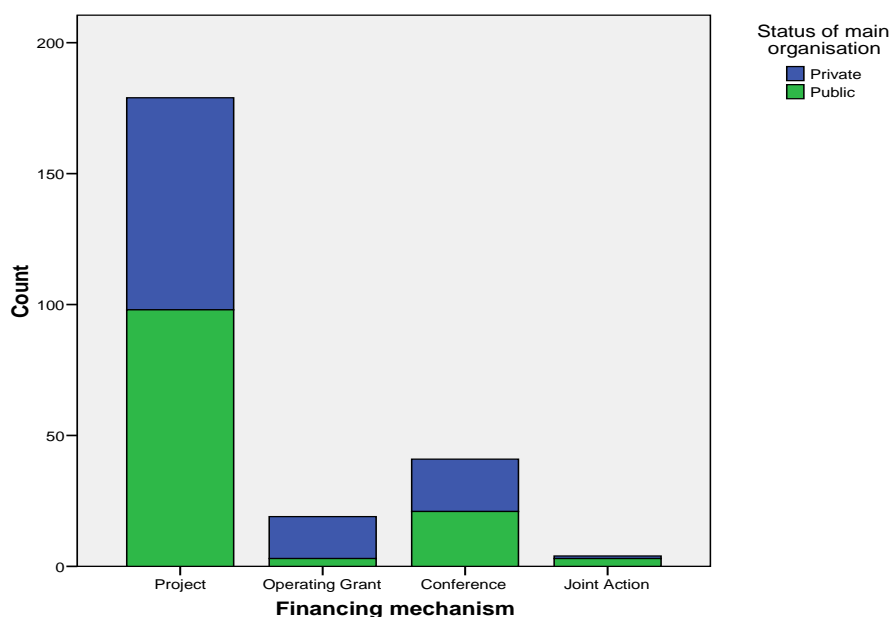
2.3. STATISTICS BY ORGANISATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

2.3.1. Organisational status of main applicant

2.3.1.1. Participation

The proposals that were submitted for funding within this call were submitted by public and private organisation. Figure 19 shows the organisational status (public or private) of the main partners for the consortia submitting proposals to the different financing mechanisms.

Fig 19: Organisational status of main organisations by financing mechanism

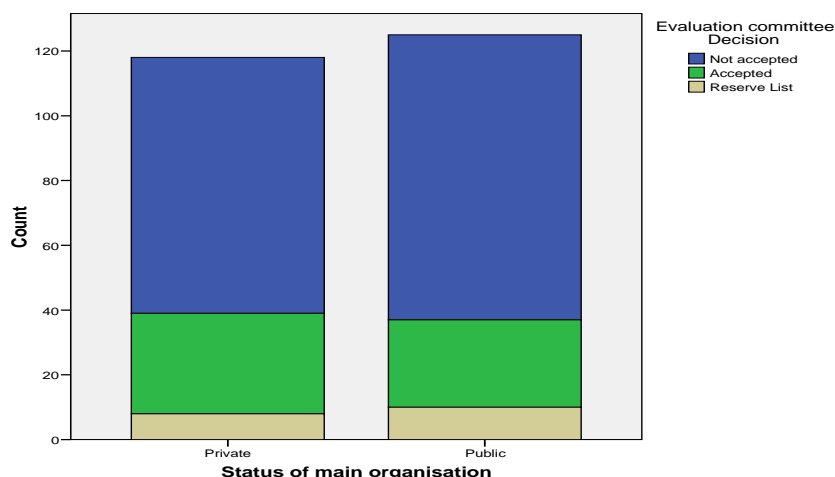


As the table show, public and private organisations are almost equally well represented among the submitters for project proposals (54.7% public and 45.3% private) and conference proposals (51.2% public and 48.8% private). In contrast, only 3 out of 19 proposals for Operating Grants (15.8%) were made by public organisations. Of the 4 applications for Joint Actions, 3 were submitted by public organisations.

2.3.1. Success rate

Table 13 and Figure 20 show the acceptance rate for submissions by public and private organisations. As the table indicates, the acceptance rates are very similar, at 26.3% acceptance (and 6.8% on the reserve list) for private organisations, and 21.6% (8.0% on the reserve list) for public organisations. The difference is not significant (χ^2 with $2df = 0.782$, $p = 0.676$), and reflects similar overall award scores (55.6 and 57.7 for proposals by private and public organisations, respectively; ($F(1,241) = 0.703$; $p < 0.403$).

Table 13/Fig 20: Acceptance rate by main partners' organisational status (public or private)



Status of main organisation * Evaluation committee Decision Crosstabulation

			Evaluation committee Decision			Total
			Not accepted	Accepted	Reserve List	
Status of main organisation	Private	Count	79	31	8	118
		% within Status of main organisation	66,9%	26,3%	6,8%	100,0%
	Public	Count	88	27	10	125
		% within Status of main organisation	70,4%	21,6%	8,0%	100,0%
Total		Count	167	58	18	243
		% within Status of main organisation	68,7%	23,9%	7,4%	100,0%

2.3.2. Type of organisation of the main applicant

2.3.2.1. Participation

The proposals that were submitted for funding within this call were submitted by different types of organisation. Nearly half (45.9%) of the evaluated proposals for projects and joint actions¹⁰ were submitted by nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) (83 projects and 1 joint action proposal). The other proposals were submitted by academic organisations (41 or 22.9%), governmental organisations (37 projects and 3 joint actions, or 29.9%), commercial organisations (13 projects, or 7.1%), and international public organisations (5 projects, or 2.7%). These numbers are similar to the submissions in 2006 and 2007¹¹.

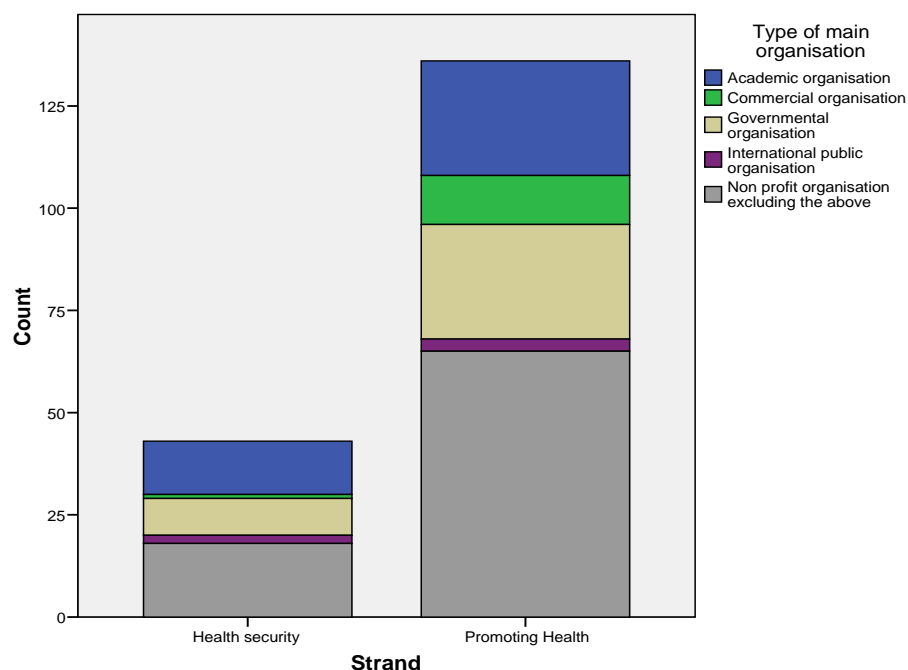
As shown in Figure 21, the distribution of the types of organisation is similar for the two

¹⁰ For the Conference and Operating Grant proposals these data were not available.

¹¹ In the evaluation of the 2008 Call for Proposals, no data were presented on type of organisation, only on the organisational status (public and private).

strands to which proposals were submitted (health security and promote health). In both strands, nongovernmental organisations account for nearly half of the submissions (41.9% for health threats and 47.8% for health promotion), and governmental organisations for approximately one fifth (20.9% for health threats and 20.6% for health promotion). Although academic and international public organisations are better represented in the health security strand, and commercial organisations better in the health promotion strand, the difference is not statistically significant (likelihood χ^2 with $4df = 4.519$, $p = 0.340$).

Table 14/ Fig 21: Type of organisation of main partner by strand



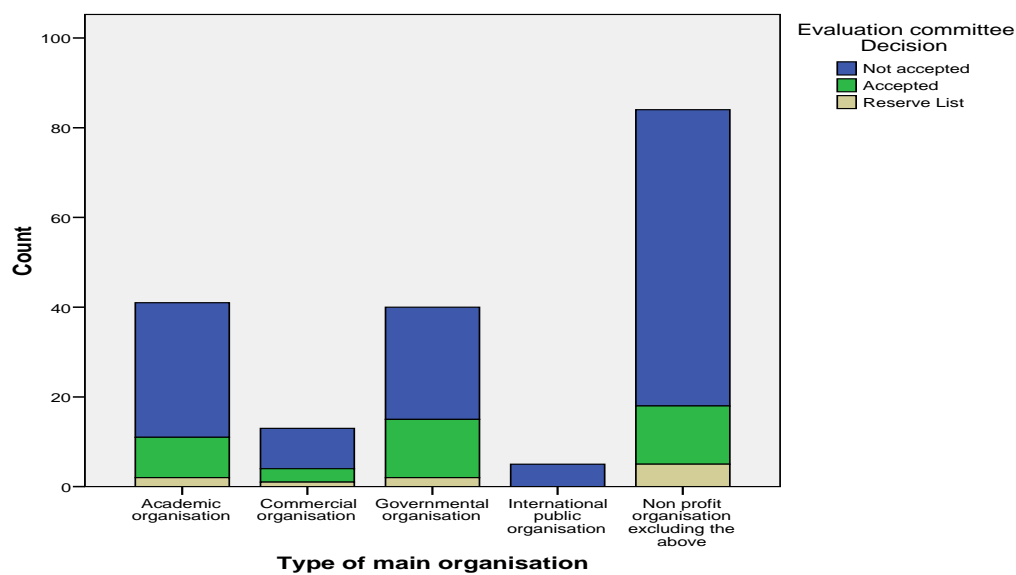
Type of main organisation * Strand Crosstabulation

			Strand		Total
			Health security	Promoting Health	
Type of main organisation	Academic organisation	Count	13	28	41
		% within Strand	30,2%	20,6%	22,9%
	Commercial organisation	Count	1	12	13
		% within Strand	2,3%	8,8%	7,3%
	Governmental organisation	Count	9	28	37
		% within Strand	20,9%	20,6%	20,7%
	International public organisation	Count	2	3	5
		% within Strand	4,7%	2,2%	2,8%
	Non profit organisation excluding the above	Count	18	65	83
		% within Strand	41,9%	47,8%	46,4%
Total		Count	43	136	179
		% within Strand	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

2.3.2.2. Success rate

Looking at the success rate by the type of organisation (Table 15 and Figure 22), it is seen that despite the different participation rates, the different types of organisations have comparable success rates, with the exception of international governmental organisations. The highest success rate is seen for commercial organisations (30.8%), and the lowest for NGOs (21.4%). None of the submissions accepted for funding by international governmental organisations were accepted. The difference is not statistically significant (likelihood χ^2 with $4df = 6.662$, $p = 0.155$), and reflects similar overall award scores which range between 50.9 (for NGOs) and 58.9 (for governmental organisations) ($F(1,178) = 1.782$; $p < 0.134$).

Table 15/Fig 22: Acceptance rate by main partners' organisation type



Type of main organisation * Evaluation Committee Decision Crosstabulation

			Evaluation Committee Decision		Total
			Not accepted	Accepted	
Type of main organisation	Academic organisation	Count	30	11	41
		% within Type of main organisation	73,2%	26,8%	100,0%
	Commercial organisation	Count	9	4	13
		% within Type of main organisation	69,2%	30,8%	100,0%
	Governmental organisation	Count	25	15	40
	% within Type of main organisation	62,5%	37,5%	100,0%	
	International public organisation	Count	5	0	5
	% within Type of main organisation	100,0%	,0%	100,0%	
	Non profit organisation excluding the above	Count	66	18	84
	% within Type of main organisation	78,6%	21,4%	100,0%	
Total	Count	135	48	183	
	% within Type of main organisation	73,8%	26,2%	100,0%	

3. VALIDITY OF THE EVALUATION CRITERIA

As mentioned in the introduction (paragraph 1.2), the evaluation of the proposals by the external experts was done through awarding scores on a list of pre-defined criteria. To assess the adequacy of these criteria for the purpose of the evaluation, we will consider the validity and reliability of these criteria.

Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument is relevant to a particular purpose. A distinction can be made between *content* validity, i.e. the degree to which elements of an assessment instrument are relevant to and representative of the targeted construct for a particular assessment purpose, and *predictive* validity, i.e. the degree to which elements of an assessment instrument contribute to the prediction of certain outcomes¹².

Reliability refers to the consistency of the measurement, i.e., the degree to which an instrument measures the same way each time it is used under the same condition with the same subjects. Reliability can be estimated using only a single administration of the test by calculating the internal consistency, i.e. the correlations between groups of questions in a questionnaire which measure the same concept.

3.1. CRITERIA FOR PROJECTS AND JOINT ACTION PROPOSALS

3.1.1. Criteria

For the project proposals, the same criteria were used as in 2007 and 2008. The latter had been established following a critical analysis of the evaluation of projects submitted to the CFP 2006, and validated on the basis of the 2007 and 2008 Calls. These criteria were also used for the evaluation of applications for joint actions. Specifically, the checklist to evaluate the project proposals and proposals for joint actions contained 3 groups of criteria (Table 16).

Table 16: Award criteria for project proposals and joint actions

<p>A. Policy and contextual relevance of the project (40 points, threshold: 20 points)</p> <p>(a) Project's contribution to the "Public health" programme and its annual work plan in terms of meeting the objectives and priorities (8 points)</p> <p>(b) Strategic relevance in terms of expected contributions to the existing knowledge and implications for health (8 points)</p> <p>(c) Added value at European level in the field of public health (8 points)</p> <p>(d) Pertinence of the geographical coverage (8 points)</p> <p>(e) Adequacy of the project with social, cultural and policy context (8 points)</p> <p>B. Technical quality of the project (30 points, threshold: 15 points)</p> <p>(a) Evidence base (6 points)</p> <p>(b) Content specification: aims and objectives, target groups, methods, anticipated effects and outcomes (6 points)</p>

¹² Haynes, S.N.B, Richard, D.C., & Kubaly, E.S. (1995). Content validity in psychological assessment. A functional approach to concepts and methods. *Psychological Assessment*, 7(3): 238-247.

<p>(c) Innovative nature, technical complementarities and avoidance of duplication of other existing actions at EU level (6 points)</p> <p>(d) Evaluation strategy (6 points)</p> <p>(e) Dissemination strategy (6 points)</p> <p>C. Management quality of the project and budget (30 points, threshold: 15 points)</p> <p>(a) Planning and organisation of the project (5 points)</p> <p>(b) Organisational capacity (5 points)</p> <p>(c) Quality of partnership (5 points)</p> <p>(d) Communication strategy (5 points)</p> <p>(e) Overall and detailed budget, including financial management (10 points, threshold: 5 points)</p>

3.1.2. Content validity

The content validity of the evaluation checklist for projects had been established in 2007 and conformed in 2008 by means of principal component analyses. A similar analysis was performed on the data for 2009, using the consensus scores on each of the criteria assigned to the proposals for projects and joint actions.

When the number of components was established at 3 (to reflect the three groups of criteria outlined in Table 16), the analysis identified three components or “factors” which together explain 80.496% of the common variance. After Varimax rotation, the first component explains 29.641% of the variance, the second 25.775%, and the third 25.081%.

As shown in the right-hand columns of Table 17, all 5 criteria related to policy relevance have a high loading on the second component (0.63 or more), and 3 of the 5 criteria for technical quality have a high loading (0.57 or more) on the third component. Evaluation and dissemination strategy load highest on the first component, along with all 5 the criteria measuring management quality (all 0.63 or more). Except for evaluation strategy, none of the criteria have a high loading on more than one component, which attests to the specificity of the dimensions.

Table 17 also shows the factor loadings obtained for project proposals in 2007 and 2008. A comparison of the loadings obtained in the three years shows that some minor changes notwithstanding, the factor structure remains robust. As such, the result of this principal component analysis confirm the underlying structure of the checklist as established earlier, demonstrating that the criteria measure three sufficiently distinct components.

Table 17: Rotated Component matrix for a Factor Analysis of the evaluation criteria for projects and joint actions 2007-2009

Component	2007			2008			2009		
	Component			Component			Component		
	1	2	3	1 2	3 1 2	3			
Contribution to PHP and WP	,203	,853	,177	,798	,173	,198	,245	,774	,440
Strategic relevance	,436	,732	,264	,802	,361	,259	,352	,733	,499
EU added value	,475	,735	,302	,771	,429	,313	,413	,626	,566
Geographical coverage	,517	,511	,405	,660	,230	,495	,565	,648	,243
Adequacy to context	,610	,425	,250	,579	,495	,392	,408	,651	,381
Evidence base	,579	,375	,401	,401	,670	,332	,313	,433	,699
Content specification	,655	,308	,459	,432	,583	,472	,450	,359	,731
Innovation and complementarity	,642	,493	,274	,551	,672	,201	,295	,394	,769
Evaluation strategy	,645	,317	,401	,172	,761	,344	,569	,316	,568
Dissemination strategy	,713	,388	,132	,326	,652	,378	,558	,490	,440
Planning and organisation	,681	,198	,435	,375	,502	,570	,718	,186	,497
Organisational capacity	,704	,250	,393	,221	,461	,647	,752	,260	,414
Partnership quality	,502	,316	,555	,436	,244	,726	,801	,354	,235
Communication strategy	,762	,228	,139	,159	,387	,778	,681	,547	,179
Overall and detailed budget	,255	,316	,715	,276	,212	,694	,631	,396	,401
Financial management	,206	,125	,824	-	-	-	-	-	-

Note: The order of the components in the factor solutions for the three years differs due to the different eigenvalues obtained for the three datasets.

3.1.3. Internal consistency

The psychometric value of the evaluation checklist is further attested by the level of reliability for the scales obtained on the basis of the criteria. As in the previous years, reliability was assessed by means of Cronbach's alpha statistic¹³ to measure the level of internal consistency.

¹³ Cronbach's alpha can be interpreted as the percent of variance the observed scale would explain in the

The Cronbach alpha coefficients for each of the pre-established dimensions (policy relevance, technical quality and management quality) are shown in Table 18. As the table shows, high levels of reliability (i.e., Cronbach alpha values of 0.90 or more) are obtained for each of the three scales. The level of internal consistency is even higher than in 2007 and 2008. Furthermore, the Cronbach alpha values are not increased when items are removed, except for the criterium “Overall and detailed budget including financial management” in the third scale; removal of the latter would result in a very slight increase of alpha (0.910 instead of 0.903). The same was observed in 2008 for the same item. Overall, however, each of the criteria contributes to the scales. In conclusion, the data confirm the findings of 2007 and 2008 that the pre-conceived dimensions of policy relevance, technical quality and management have a sufficient level of content validity and reliability.

Table 18: Reliability Statistics for the scales for the evaluation of projects, 2007-2009

Scale	Number of items	Items	Cronbach's Alpha		
			2007	2008	2009
Policy relevance	5	Contribution to PHP and WP Strategic relevance EU added value Geographical coverage Adequacy to context	.903	.919	.944
Technical quality	5	Evidence base Content specification Innovation and complementarity Evaluation strategy Dissemination strategy	.907	.900	.929
Management quality	5	Planning and organisation Organisational capacity Partnership quality Communication strategy Overall and detailed budget/ Financial management	.875	.861	.903

3.1.4. Predictive validity

To consider the predictive validity of the evaluation checklist, the relationship between the award scores on the criteria given by the external evaluators and the result of the evaluation was examined by means of a Discriminant Function Analysis (DFA). This technique is used to classify cases into the values of a dichotomous or categorical dependent. It basically involves the creation of a latent variable – the discriminant function or *canonical root* – as a linear combination of discriminating (independent)

hypothetical true scale. Alpha equals zero when the true score is not measured at all and there is only an error component; it equals 1.0 when all items measure only the true score and there is no error component. By convention, a lenient cut-off of .60 is common in exploratory research; alpha should be at least .70 or higher to retain an item in an "adequate" scale; and many observational research studies require a cut-off of .80 for a "good" scale.

variables. If the discriminant function is effective for a set of data, it can be used to investigate differences between or among groups. Specifically, it can determine the most parsimonious way to distinguish among groups and/or assess the relative importance of the independent variables in classifying the dependent variable.

For a first analysis, the three scales (policy relevance, technical quality and management quality) were entered into the analysis as discriminating variables, with the result of the evaluation (accepted for funding, reserve list or not accepted) as the dependent. As a result, a discriminant function was obtained with a canonical correlation coefficient¹⁴ of 0.710, which significantly discriminated between proposals recommended or placed on the reserve list and not recommended for funding (Wilks' lambda = 0.494, χ^2 (6df) = 123.298, $p < 0.001$). A second function, distinguishing between the proposals placed on the reserve list and the others, was not significant (canonical correlation 0.055, Wilks' lambda = 0.521, χ^2 (2df) = 0.521, $p = 0.771$). The relative contribution of the three scales to the discriminating function was inferred from the structure matrix, which shows the unique correlation of each independent variable with the discriminant function. This matrix is given in Table 19. It shows that, similar to 2007 and 2008, each of the three scales is highly correlated with the function, indicating that all three dimensions contribute to the decision to accept a project for funding or not.

Table 19: Correlation of scale scores for evaluation of projects with discriminant function for decision to fund, 2007-2009

Scale	Correlation with Discriminant Function		
	2007	2008	2009
Policy Relevance	,864	,860	,968
Technical Quality	,930	,965	,900
Management Quality	,769	,740	,841

When all the criteria were entered into the analysis as discriminating variables, with the result of the evaluation (accepted for funding or not) as the dependent, two significant discriminant functions were obtained. The first function, with a canonical correlation coefficient of 0.736, discriminated between proposals that were accepted for funding and those that weren't, with proposals on the reserve list taking an intermediate position (Wilks' lambda = 0.383, χ^2 (30df) = 162.167, $p < .001$). The second function discriminated between the project proposals on the reserve list and those that were either accepted or not accepted (Wilks' lambda = 0.836, χ^2 (14df) = 30.328, $p = 0.007$). The structure matrix showing the unique correlation of each independent variable with the two significant functions is given in Table 16. As this table indicates, all criteria correlate highly with the first function, but the criteria which contribute most strongly to the decision to accept for funding are strategic relevance, communication strategy, innovation and complementarity, and EU added value (all over 0.80). Two of these -

¹⁴ The canonical correlation is a measure of the association between the groups formed by the dependent and the discriminant function.

strategic relevance and EU added value - were also the criteria which contributed most strongly to success in 2008. The lowest contribution is noticed for organisational capacity (less than 0.60), which was also the least contributing criterium in 2008. Compared to 2008 and 2007, the quality of the communication strategy, innovation and complementarity, adequacy with context, and the budget and financial management became more important, and the geographical coverage, evidence base and evaluation strategy less important.

Table 20: Correlation of criteria scores for evaluation of projects with discriminant function for decision to fund, 2007-2009.

Criteria	Correlations with Discriminant Function ¹			
	2007	2008	2009	
			Function 1	Function 2
Strategic relevance	,629	,785	,863	,265
Communication strategy	,475	,486	,863	,269
Innovation and complementarity	,760	,727	,863	,009
EU added value	,743	,823	,816	,010
Content specification	,726	,753	,787	,131
Adequacy to context	,571	,723	,770	,017
Overall and detailed budget	,449 (,330)	,527	,731	-,113
Geographical coverage	,699	,730	,672	-,081
Dissemination strategy	,532	,551	,670	,151
Contribution to PHP and WP	,444	,560	,667	,217
Evaluation strategy	,609	,466	,662	-,120
Partnership quality	,531	,565	,625	-,220
Evidence base	,618	,721	,612	,207
Planning and organisation	,620	,645	,606	-,052
Organisational capacity	,578	,467	,582	,223

¹ Correlations are ordered by the absolute size of the correlation with the first function for 2009

For the second function, discriminating between the project proposals on the reserve list and those that were either accepted or not accepted, the correlations are generally lower. The function is most strongly determined by the scores on communication strategy, strategic relevance, organisational capacity, contribution to the public health programme

and evidence base, and negatively by partnership quality. So, the higher the scores on these criteria or the lower on partnership quality, the more likely it is that a proposal would be placed on the reserve list rather than being definitely accepted or not accepted for funding.

Finally, a stepwise discriminant function analysis indicated that the most parsimonious discrimination between project proposals that were accepted or not accepted for funding can be made on the basis of two criteria: strategic relevance and overall and detailed budget. With these criteria, significant discriminant functions are obtained discriminating between accepted and non-accepted proposals (canonical R = 0.714; Wilks' lambda = 0.479, χ^2 (4df) = 129.273, $p < .001$), and between proposals on the reserve list and those that were either accepted or not accepted (canonical R = 0.155; Wilks' lambda = 0.976, χ^2 (1df) = 4.255, $p = .039$). This set of criteria is different from the most parsimonious sets of criteria obtained in 2008, when EU added value and evidence base were retained, and from 2007, when innovative nature, geographical coverage, and content specification were retained.

3.2. CRITERIA FOR CONFERENCE PROPOSALS

3.2.1. Criteria

For the evaluation of the applications for conferences, the same criteria were used as for the Call for Proposals in 2008. The latter had been developed on the basis of the experience with the selection of conference proposals in other Community Programmes. The checklist to evaluate conference proposals contained 2 groups of criteria: content of the proposal, and management quality (Table 21).

Table 21: Award criteria for Conference proposals

<p>A. Content of the proposal</p> <p>(a) Relevance of content and expected results in relation to the objectives and priorities of the work plan (15 points)</p> <p>(b) Expected number and profile/function of the target participants (15 points)</p> <p>(c) European dimension of the event (15 points)</p> <p>(d) Follow-up and evaluation methodology (15 points)</p> <p>B. Management quality</p> <p>(a) Planning of event (15 points)</p> <p>(b) Organisational capacity (10 points)</p> <p>(c) Overall and detailed Budget (15 points)</p>

3.2.2. Content validity

To determine the content validity of the evaluation checklist for conference proposals, a principal component analysis was performed using the consensus scores on each of the

criteria. When the number of criteria is established at 2, the analysis identifies two components which together explain 86.57% of the common variance. After Varimax rotation, the first component explains 54.386% of the variance, and the second 32.182%.

Table 22: Rotated Component matrix for a principal component analysis of the evaluation criteria for conferences

	2008		2009	
	Component		Component	
	1	2	1	2
Relevance of content and results	,843	,246	,808	,343
Participation	,872	,356	,805	,501
European dimension	,843	,394	,815	,423
Follow-up and evaluation	,649	,637	,813	,410
Planning of event	,487	,680	,798	,523
Organisational capacity	,505	,773	,626	,679
Budget	,180	,884	,389	,896

As shown in Table 22, the factor loadings of the evaluation criteria on these components largely correspond with the intended structure of content of the proposal and management quality, with the exception of the criterium “planning of the event”, which loads higher on content than on management quality. In addition, organisational capacity loads nearly as high on the content dimension as on the management dimension. Apart from that, no other criteria have high loading on more than one component, which attests to the specificity of the dimensions. So overall, we may conclude that the structure of the evaluation checklist is confirmed.

3.2.3. Internal consistency

The psychometric value of the evaluation checklist for conferences is also attested by the level of reliability for the scales obtained on the basis of the criteria. Table 23 shows the level of internal consistency (Cronbach alpha) for both scales, which are both more than 0.90. Cronbach alpha values are not increased when items are removed, suggesting that all criteria contribute to the scale. In conclusion, the data suggest that the pre-conceived dimensions of content of the proposal and management quality have a sufficient level of content validity and reliability.

Table 23: Reliability Statistics for the scales for the evaluation of conference proposals

Scale	Number of items	Items	Cronbach α	
			2008	2009
Content of proposal	4	Relevance of content and results Participation European dimension Follow-up and evaluation	.918	.933
Management quality	3	Planning of event Organisational capacity Budget	.837	.911

3.2.4. Predictive validity

To consider the predictive validity of the evaluation checklist for conference proposals, the relationship between the scores on the criteria and the result of the evaluation (accepted for funding or not) was examined by means of a Discriminant Function Analysis (DFA). A discriminant analysis using the two dimensions (content of the proposal and management quality) as discriminating variables and the result of the evaluation as the dependent variable resulted in a discriminant function with a canonical correlation coefficient of 0.760, which significantly discriminated between conference proposals that were accepted for funding or placed on the reserve list, and those that were not selected (Wilks' lambda = 0.388, χ^2 (4df) = 35.477, $p < 0.001$). A second function, discriminating between proposals placed on the reserve list versus accepted or non-accepted proposals was not significant (Wilks' lambda = 0.919, χ^2 (1df) = 3.152, $p = 0.076$).

The structure matrix (Table 24) shows that both scales are very strongly correlated with the function, and that the decision to fund can be fully predicted from the content of the proposal.

Table 24: Correlation of scale scores for evaluation of conferences with discriminant function for decision to fund

Scale	Correlation with Discriminant Function	
	2008	2009
Content of proposal	.992	1,000
Management quality	.600	.828

When all the criteria are entered into the analysis as discriminating variables, a significant discriminant function is obtained to distinguish between accepted and non-accepted proposals (Canonical R = 0.858, Wilks' lambda = 0.201, χ^2 (14df) = 56.148, $p < .001$). The structure matrix (Table 25), showing the unique correlation of each independent variable with the significant function, reveals that all criteria except budget are correlated with the function. However, the criteria which contribute most strongly to the decision to fund are follow-up and evaluation, relevance of the content, and planning of the event. The budget contributes lowest, as in 2008. European dimension and participation seem to contribute less to the decision to fund than in 2008, while planning of the event becomes more important. A stepwise discriminant function analysis reveals that follow up and evaluation is the single best predictor of the decision to fund.

Table 25: Correlation of criteria scores for evaluation of conference proposals with discriminant function for decision to fund, 2007-2009.

Criteria	Correlations with Discriminant Function	
	2008	2009
Follow-up and evaluation	,649	,726
Relevance of content and results	,843	,632
Planning of event	,487	,629
European dimension	,843	,553
Organisational capacity	,505	,524
Participation	,872	,482
Budget	,180	,389

3.3. CRITERIA FOR OPERATING GRANT PROPOSALS

3.3.1. Criteria

For the evaluation of the applications for Operating Grants, the same criteria were used as for the Call for Proposals in 2008. These criteria were developed on the basis of the experience with the selection of operating grants in other Community Programmes. The checklist to evaluate proposals for Operating Grants contained 11 criteria, grouped into 3 groups (Table 26).

Table 26: Award criteria for Operating Grants

<p>A. Policy and contextual relevance of the proposal</p> <p>(a) Consistency with EU health programme (10 points)</p> <p>(b) The organisation's activities (10 points)</p> <p>(c) Geographical distribution of the activities (5 points)</p> <p>B. Quality of the proposed work programme</p> <p>(a) Purpose annual work programme (10 points)</p> <p>(b) Operation framework (10 points)</p> <p>(c) Evaluation strategy (10 points)</p> <p>(d) Dissemination strategy (10 points)</p>

C. Management quality

(a) Planning of work (10 points)

(b) Organisational capacity (10 points)

(c) Budget (10 points)

(d) Financial management (5 points)

3.3.2. Content validity

To determine the content validity of the evaluation checklist for conference proposals, a principal component analysis was performed on the consensus scores for the criteria. The analysis identified three components with an eigenvalue greater than 1, which together explain 81.98% of the common variance. After Varimax rotation, the first component explains 39.199% of the variance, the second 27.934%, and the third 14.842%. The factor loadings of the evaluation criteria on these components are shown in Table 27, along with the data for 2008. As this table demonstrates, the factor solution partially resembles the structure that was found on the 2008 data, yet some criteria have moved dimensions. This is notably the case for geographical coverage, planning of work, and organisational capacity. More importantly, the factor structure does not correspond with the hypothesised scales of policy and contextual relevance, quality of the work programme, and management quality. The first component seems to measure mostly technical planning issues, including planning of work, evaluation and dissemination, and organisational capacity, together with geographical coverage and purpose of the annual work programme. The second component reflects the consistency with the EU health programme and the operational framework, and the third component mainly looks at the budget and financial management. As in 2008, a number of criteria have a high loading on more than one component, which suggests that the dimensions are not very specific. In conclusion, the underlying structure of the set of criteria that is used to evaluate the operating grant proposals is not stable and does not provide a sufficient basis to support the content validity of the resulting scales.

Table 27: Rotated Component matrix for a principal component analysis of the evaluation criteria for Operating Grants

	2008			2009		
	Components			Components		
	1	2	3	1	2	3
Consistency with the EU Health Programme	,749	,387	,175	,202	,919	,163
Organisation's activities	,847	,209	,233	,364	,888	-,052
Geographical coverage	,220	,195	,891	,776	,225	,046
Purpose of annual work plan	,817	,268	,395	,650	,579	,255
Operation framework	,653	,592	,297	,635	,662	,086
Evaluation Strategy	,387	,683	,389	,820	,074	,151
Dissemination strategy	,449	,641	,502	,835	,265	,015
Planning of work	,602	,383	,601	,811	,332	-,118
Organisational capacity	,589	,428	,558	,799	,437	,157
Overall and detailed budget	,504	,533	,517	,209	,483	,739
Financial management	,220	,913	,144	,013	,074	-,959

3.3.3. Internal consistency

Table 28 gives the internal consistency indices for the three pre-established dimensions (policy relevance, quality of the work programme and management quality). Although the levels of internal consistency are reasonable ($\alpha = 0.80$ or more) for the two first scales, it is low for management quality, which showed the highest consistency in 2008. Moreover, for all three the scales, the Cronbach alpha values can be increased by removing certain items, notably geographic distribution from the first scale, dissemination strategy from the second, and financial management from the third. This again suggests that the composition of the criteria scales is not optimal.

Table 28: Reliability Statistics for the scales for the evaluation of Operating Grant proposals

Scale	Number of items	Items	Cronbach α	
			2008	2009
Policy and contextual relevance	3	Consistency with EU health programme Organisation's activities Geographical distribution	.754	.799
Quality of proposed work programme	4	Purpose annual work programme Operation framework Evaluation strategy Dissemination strategy	.917	.883
Management quality	4	Planning of work Organisational capacity Budget Financial management	.908	.531

In conclusion, these findings confirm those obtained in 2008, showing that the composition of the hypothesised dimensions of policy and contextual relevance, quality of the programme and management quality used for the evaluation of grant proposals has a sub-optimal level of content validity and reliability.

3.3.4. Predictive validity

To consider the predictive validity of the evaluation checklist for operating grants, the relationship between the scores on the criteria and the result of the evaluation was examined by means of a Discriminant Function Analysis (DFA).

A discriminant analysis using the three scales (policy relevance, quality of the programme and management quality) as discriminating variables and the result of the evaluation (accepted for funding or placed on the reserve list) as the dependent variable produced only a marginally significant discriminant function (canonical R = 0.710, Wilks' lambda = 0.461, χ^2 (6df) = 11.615, $p = .071$). The structure matrix (Table 19) shows that only two of the three scales (management quality and quality of the proposed programme) correlate highly with the function, while policy and context relevance contributes much less than in 2008.

Table 29: Correlation of scale scores for evaluation of operating grants with discriminant function for decision to fund

Scale	Correlation with Discriminant Function	
	2008	2009
Management quality	,973	,805
Quality of proposed work programme	,841	,759
Policy and context relevance	,800	,391

When all the criteria are entered into the analysis as discriminating variables, a discriminant function is obtained which significantly discriminates operating grants that are accepted for funding from those that are placed on the reserve list, with unaccepted proposals taking an intermediate position (Canonical R = 0.962, Wilks' lambda = 0.031, χ^2 (22df) = 38.035, $p = .018$). A second function, discriminating grant proposals that are accepted for funding or placed on the reserve list from those that are not accepted, approximates significance (Canonical R = 0.883, Wilks' lambda = 0.221, χ^2 (10df) = 16.609, $p = .083$).

Table 30: Correlation of criterium scores for evaluation of operating grants with discriminant function for decision to fund

Criteria	Correlations with Discriminant Function	
	Function 1	Function 2
Purpose of annual work plan	,236	,199
Consistency with the EU Health Programme	,164	-,019
Financial management	-,092	,016
Dissemination strategy	,003	,374
Geographical coverage	,294	,349
Planning of work	,086	,322
Organisational capacity	,238	,308
Evaluation Strategy	,201	,289
Operation framework	,221	,228
Overall and detailed budget	,153	,153
Organisation's activities	,053	,145

The structure matrix (Table 30) shows that the correlations of the scores with both functions are rather low. The highest contribution to the first function (i.e., to not be placed on the reserve list) is given by geographical coverage, followed by organisational capacity, purpose of the work plan, and operation framework. The other criteria contribute little extra. The discrimination between proposals that are accepted or not accepted for funding is mainly determined by dissemination strategy, geographical coverage, planning of work, and organisational capacity.

A step-wise discriminant analysis indicated that the only variable contributing to the discrimination between funded and non-funded operating grant was geographical coverage.

To conclude, in addition to the poor content validity and reliability of the scales that are used for the evaluation of operating grant proposals, the contribution of the individual criteria to the decision to fund is not clear.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report presents data on the proposals submitted for funding to the 2009 Call for Proposals of the Second Programme of Community action in the field of Health (2008-2013). In addition to statistical data regarding the submissions and the acceptance rates for the different financing mechanisms and strands of the programme, for the different EU Member States and for the type of submitting organisations, the report also provides insight into the evaluation criteria established by the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers.

4.1. CONCLUSIONS

The results of the analysis allow the following conclusions:

1. While the total number of submissions to this Call for Proposals was higher than in 2008, the pattern of submissions in terms of distribution across the different financing mechanisms, strands and priorities is similar to that observed in 2008. A large majority of submissions (70%) were project proposals, followed by conference proposals and operating grants, and only a few proposals for joint actions. For all financing mechanisms, the majority of the submissions were done within the Promoting Health strand, followed by Health Information, with Health Security receiving fewer submissions. Exceptionally, however, no project proposals were received for the Health Information strand, as this strand was not open to project proposals for this Call.
2. The overall percentage of proposals accepted for funding is lower than for previous Calls. Since 2006, there has been a steady decline of the acceptance rate from 43% to 24% (31.3% with the reserve list). Yet the trend is different for the different financing mechanisms, in the sense that the acceptance rate for conferences and operating grant proposals increased slightly compared to 2008, while that for project proposals decreased. This difference reflects the change in available budget for the different funding mechanisms, but also reveals a decrease of the quality of project proposals, in the sense that compared to the previous years, a significant downward trend of the award scores given to project applications is noticed.
3. Acceptance rates are also different for the three strands of the Public health programme, with the highest acceptance rate for the Health Security strand, and the lowest for Health Information. However, the difference is only statistically significant for conference proposals.
4. The overall profile of submissions per country remains stable over the period 2006-2009, and shows a constant overrepresentation of countries that were EU Member States before the 2004 enlargement (EU15), whereas the New Member States (EU12) stay underrepresented, although the number of submissions with organisations from the EU12 as main applicant have doubled compared to 2008.
5. When participation as associated partners is considered, it is seen that all EU Member States as well as candidate countries and EEA Members are represented. Most countries participate in several proposals, and some, including an increasing number

of EU12 countries, are represented in a very large number of proposals. This suggests that the barrier to become an associated partner is lower than for taking charge of a project leadership.

6. There are considerable differences in acceptance rate per country, but these differences are not statistically significant for any of the financing mechanisms.
7. Proposals submitted by organisations from the EU12 are less likely to be accepted for funding than those from the EU15, although the difference is only statistically different for project proposals, and not for proposals for conferences or operating grants. On the other hand, contrary to 2008, participation of EU12 countries enhances the likelihood of a proposal to be accepted for funding.
8. The distribution of submissions per type of organisations shows a good balance between public and private organisations and between NGOs, academic organisations, governmental organisations, and commercial organisations. The difference between the types of organisations in terms of success rate of the applications is not significant. This is similar to the previous Calls for Proposals, where only marginally significant differences were found in the success rates of different types of organisations.
9. In terms of the evaluation criteria and process, the results indicate that the award criteria for project proposals adopted in 2007 and used for the Second Community Programme for Health in 2008 again demonstrate their content and predictive validity. The criteria for the evaluation of the conference proposals are acceptable in terms of validity. In contrast, the criteria to evaluate the operating grants attain less validity and need to be revised.
10. Similar to 2007 and 2008, the three scales that are used for the evaluation of project proposals (policy relevance, technical quality and management quality) contribute to the decision to accept a project for funding. In terms of specific criteria, all criteria are positively linked to the decision to fund, but there is a shift in the pattern of criteria which contributed most strongly to this decision: while strategic relevance, innovation and complementarity and EU added value continue to have a high impact on the funding decision as in previous years, geographical coverage, evidence base and evaluation strategy became less important. On the other hand, the quality of the communication strategy, adequacy with context, and the budget and financial management became more important. The lowest contribution is noticed for organisational capacity which was also the least important criterium in 2008. The difference between project proposals on the reserve list and those that were either accepted or not accepted was primarily based on communication strategy, strategic relevance, organisational capacity, contribution to the public health programme and evidence base, and negatively by partnership quality.
11. For conference proposals, the criteria which contribute most strongly to the decision to fund are follow-up and evaluation, relevance of the content, and planning of the event. The budget contributes lowest, as in 2008. For operating grant proposals, the contribution of the individual criteria to the decision to fund is not clear.

4.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the analyses of this Call and the comparison with the results of the evaluation in preceding years demonstrate that the Call for Proposals 2009 has attracted a wide interest from various organisations in all MS, with submissions largely covering the various priorities of the EU Health Programme and the 2009 Work Plan. They also show that the evaluation entails a robust and coherent evaluation process, and that the criteria developed by the EAHC to select project proposals for funding are valid and can be used reliably. The criteria for conference proposals and, especially, the operating grants, attain less validity and need to be revised.

Making use of adequate criteria in itself does not guarantee the objectivity of the evaluation process or the success of projects, however. The latter also depends on the correct application of the criteria by the evaluators, and on the quality of the management and follow-up of the projects during implementation. To enhance the objectivity and reliability of the evaluation process, the EAHC has developed guidelines for the evaluators, and offers training to ensure a correct understanding and application of the criteria. Careful monitoring of the evaluators' individual scores can demonstrate if these guidelines are followed, in order for the evaluation of the applications to be systematic and objective.

Future efforts of the Agency could focus on the elaboration of criteria and tools for the systematic follow-up of projects during their implementation and evaluation.

Structural modifications in the process of selecting, monitoring and reviewing projects based on conceptual models of project management and quality assurance can be a valuable way to improve the procedures and provide a stronger basis for the decision making process regarding the funding of proposals.