



SCIENCE  
**EUROPE**  
Shaping the future of research

A decorative background pattern of stylized, overlapping leaves in various shades of blue, centered on a dark blue background.

# Postdoctoral funding schemes in Europe

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Science Europe

# SE priority: Improve career opportunities for researchers

- ◀ EU ambition: Attract the best talents to research
- ◀ Postdoc period a critical phase in a researcher's career
- ◀ WG's workplan: Mapping, evaluating, improving and coordinating mobility and career structuring instruments and schemes

# What is a postdoc?

*The postdoc phase is the period after the PhD*

*when the PhD holder is still not fully independent.*

*It can vary in length, mentoring, supervision, degree of leadership, type of funding, and so on. Though temporary appointment is prevalent,*

*it is also common to have permanent postdoc positions.*

# The mapping

- ◀ Funding schemes dedicated to individual career development for R2 and R3
- ◀ Template of 26 questions sent to European research organizations
  - ◀ Objectives
  - ◀ Scale
  - ◀ Working conditions
  - ◀ Career perspectives
  - ◀ Monitoring
- ◀ Funding schemes in which the postdoc can apply for his/her own salary (mainly R2, but also R3)

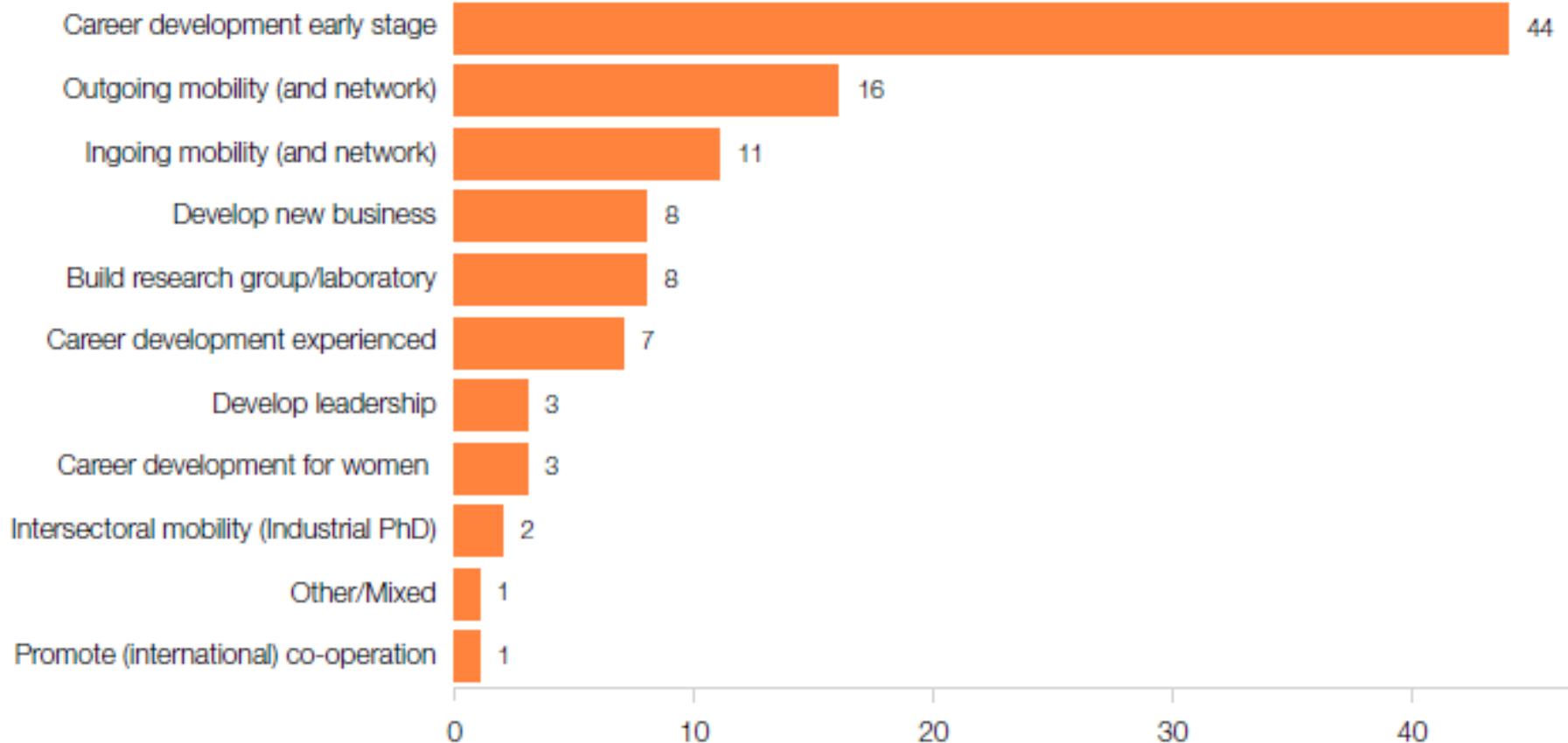
| Name of programme |  |
|-------------------|--|
| 1.                | Funding organisation   |
| 2.                | Name of the programme  |
| 3.                | Year the programme was initiated   |
| 4.                | Objectives   |
| 5.                | Target Group <sup>[1]</sup>  |
| 6.                | Discipline(s)  |
| 7.                | Host country <sup>[2]</sup>  |
| 8.                | Host laboratory/institution <sup>[3]</sup>                                     |
| 9.                | Requirements/eligibility <sup>[4]</sup>  |
| 10.               | Duration of the funding <sup>[5]</sup>   |
| 11.               | Long(er) term perspective/Tenure/support for career development <sup>[6]</sup> |
| 12.               | Total grant (€)  |
| 13.               | Funding for <sup>[7]</sup>   |
| 14.               | Position or stipend (incl. social security coverage or not)                    |
| 15.               | Annual salary of the applicant (€)   |
| 16.               | Training/Mentoring/Supervision <sup>[8]</sup>                                  |
| 17.               | Regular call(s) for proposals every year                                       |
| 18.               | Application deadline <sup>[9]</sup>  |
| 19.               | Beginning of the contract  |
| 20.               | Selection procedure  |
| 21.               | Number of applications and awards per year (and success rate)                  |
| 22.               | Web address  |
| 23.               | Contact e-mail address   |
| 24.               | Evaluation/Monitoring <sup>[10]</sup>  |
| 25.               | COFUND   |
| 26.               | Additional information   |

# The schemes

- ❏ 104 schemes from 23 European countries and 3 international organizations
  - ❏ Predominantly from research funding organizations
  - ❏ Huge variety in size and volume of funding (and success rate)
  - ❏ Reflecting a diverse academic landscape and funding structure
  - ❏ Not a full picture!



# Objectives of funding schemes indicated by respondents



# Working conditions I

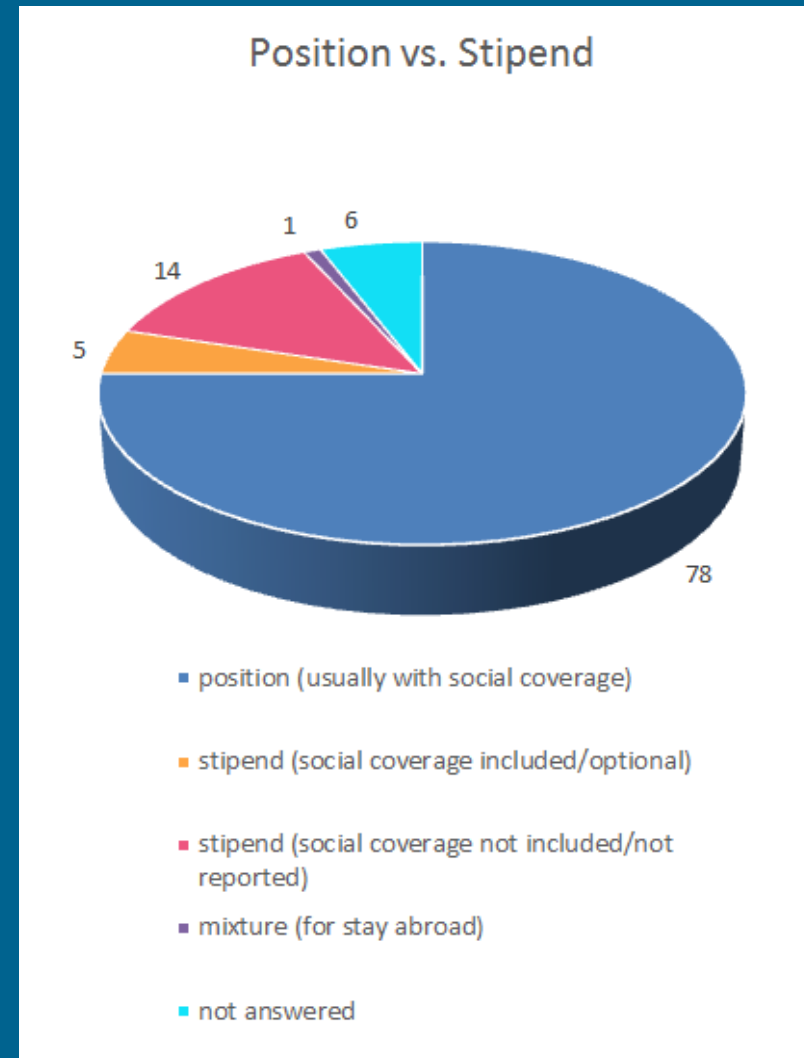
Vast majority offers *salary* (82/102)

- Indicates that most grant holders have position

*Social security contributions* offered by most schemes (83/102)

- Indicates that the funders are supportive of the recommendations in Charter & Code

*Stipends* predominant in mobility schemes (11/102)

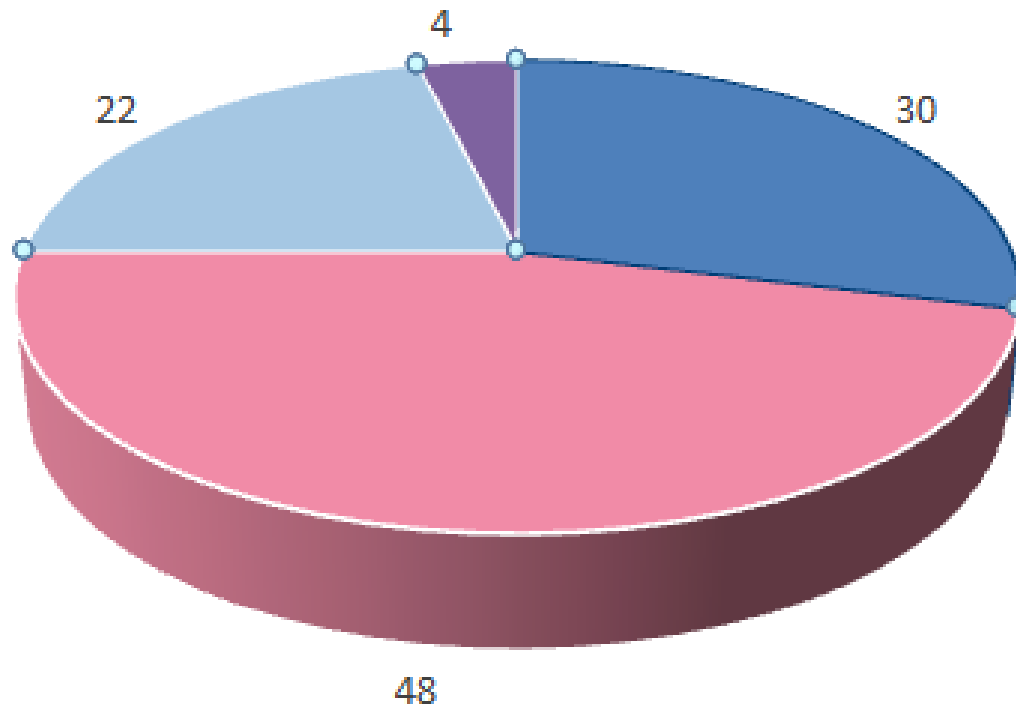




# Working conditions II



## Length of funding period

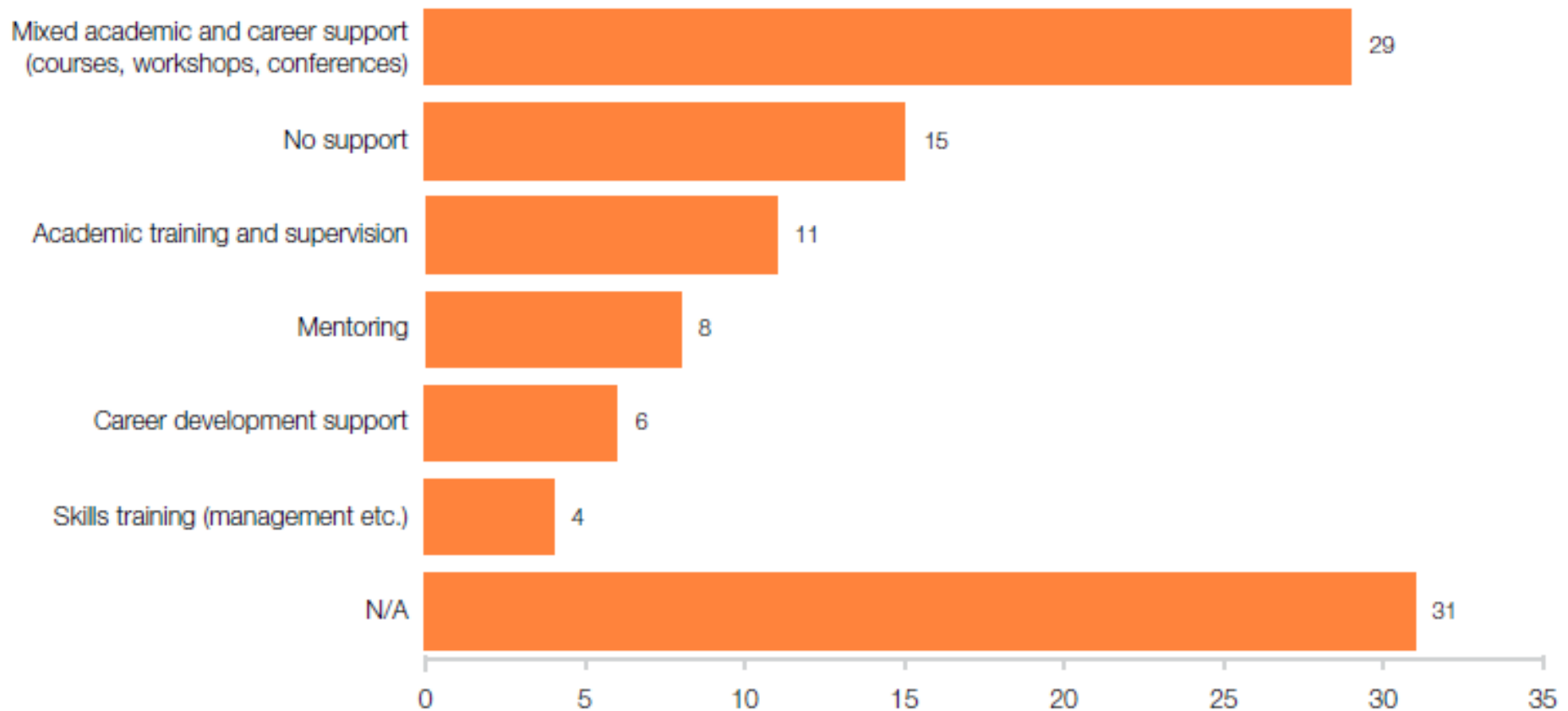


■ 0-2 yrs ■ 3-4 yrs ■ 5yrs + ■ no answer

# Career development

- ◀ Funding as such is regarded the most important career promoting element
  - ◀ ..increases the possibility to obtain a permanent position at a later stage
  
- ◀ Other objectives:
  - ◀ Building knowledge
  - ◀ Promoting excellence
  - ◀ Increasing innovation and growth
  - ◀ Enhancing co-operation and knowledge transfer

# Training, mentoring and supervision offered by funding schemes



# Mobility

- ▶ Promotes research career
  - ▶ Outgoing: Experience, collaboration, network, independence
  - ▶ Ingoing: Repatriation, attraction of foreign talent
- ▶ Less than half of the schemes expect mobility as prerequisite or support it (41/104).
- ▶ Some include funding for return phase
- ▶ Challenges:
  - ▶ Integration at host institution
  - ▶ Social security
  - ▶ Return

# Evaluation and monitoring

- ◀ 14/104 schemes were reported evaluated
- ◀ Evaluations in general positive about the programmes and their effects on research careers
- ◀ Some common issues:
  - ◀ Gender
  - ◀ Flexibility
  - ◀ Support and guidance
  - ◀ Mobility

# Recommendations I

- ◀ A common understanding as basis for policy
- ◀ Continuous development of the schemes through monitoring and evaluation
- ◀ Flexible funding schemes that adapt to the needs of researchers
- ◀ Good working conditions for work-life balance
- ◀ Gender aspect

# Recommendations II

- ◀ Guidance and mentoring towards independence
- ◀ Contractualise support for career development
- ◀ Greater effort to prepare and train for careers in industry and public sector
- ◀ Geographic mobility
- ◀ Preserve diversity of research

# Looking Ahead

- ◀ How to support the careers of early-career researchers?
- ◀ How to promote careers outside academia for post-doctorates?
- ◀ How to make careers in academia more attractive?
- ◀ Is 'postdoc' the right term?



# Thank you very much for your attention

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