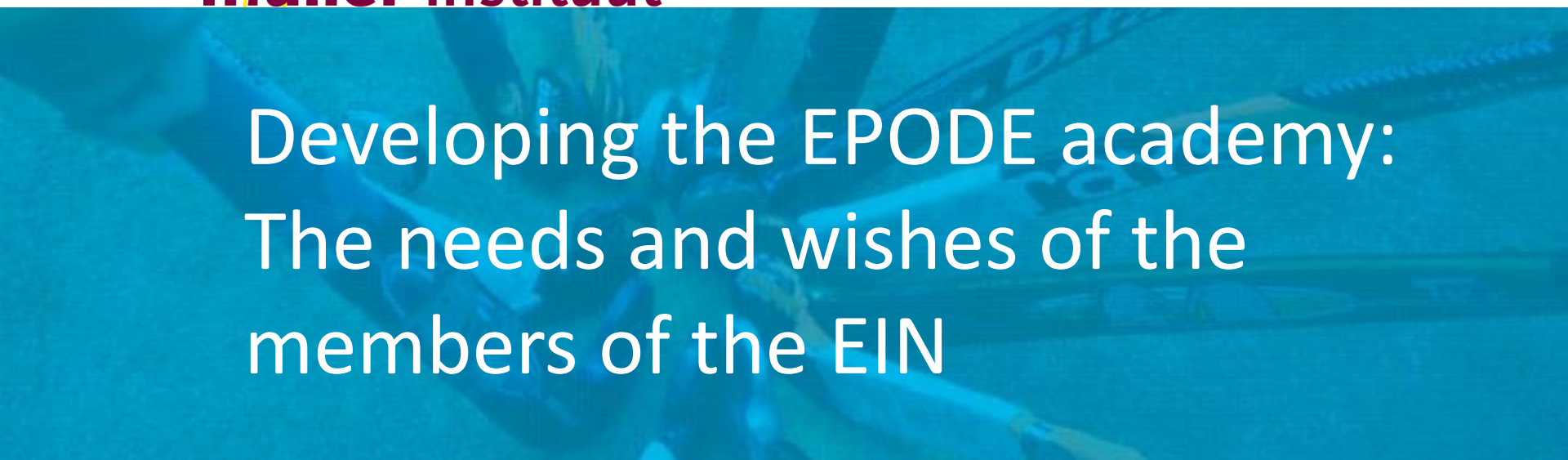


The logo for Mulier Instituut, featuring a stylized yellow and orange swirl above the text.

mulier instituut

A blue-tinted background image showing several hands reaching out to hold a globe, symbolizing global collaboration and development.

Developing the EPODE academy: The needs and wishes of the members of the EIN

Jorien Slot-Heijs
Dorine Collard

Summary

The EPODE International Network (EIN) wants to develop a new learning centre: the EPODE Academy. Useful for this development is a greater insight into how their members experience the existing support, the kind of support they need, and what support could help them increase the impact of their programme. In order to collect this information, EIN developed an online questionnaire and distributed it among 41 EIN members who are implementing community-based programmes based on the EPODE methodology. The results of the completed questionnaires are analysed and presented in this report (n=22) .

Most community-based programmes take place in a school or municipal setting. The target population is usually directly involved in one or more stages of the programmes, mostly in the programme evaluation. Professionals from the health care, well-being and sports sectors are the primary collaborators.

EIN members are satisfied with the initial and continuing existing support, especially with the information from EIN publications and EIN website. They consider all the existing support to be (very) useful.

EIN members feel that continually upgrading skills is (very) important. That is why they support the idea of an EPODE Academy. When implementing a new programme, the most appreciated learning method is on-site training by consultant(s). EIN members would also highly appreciate an intensive two-day training course preceding the EPODE Obesity Forum. At least two thirds of the members consider all the potential training options proposed by EIN to be (very) useful. However, 64% report that there is no training budget set aside for their programme. A mere 23 percent are willing to pay for the EPODE Academy.

In conclusion, there is a significant desire and need for training and support from EIN. The current training options are definitely appreciated. Members feel positive about a new learning centre, but not all have set a budget for training and are willing to pay for the services of an EPODE Academy. Therefore, EIN should develop the EPODE Academy in a sustainable way so that the costs will be low and the quality of the training courses will remain high.



Introduction

The EPODE International Network (EIN) supports organisations worldwide wanting to implement or already implementing community-based programmes to combat obesity and non-communicable diseases, using the EPODE methodology. The network wants to develop a new learning centre.

This presentation provides insight into the results of the research concerning the needs and wishes of the EIN members in order to develop the so-called EPODE Academy.

The EPODE Academy is considered to be a formal training and support package for the members of the network. In order to develop such an EPODE Academy, it is useful for EIN to know how their members experience the existing support, the kind of support they need, and what support could help them increase the impact of their programme.

In order to investigate these questions, EIN has approached the Mulier Institute to coordinate, analyse and present the results. The Mulier Institute is an independent, non-profit, scientific sport research institute in the Netherlands.



Method

In order to determine the needs and wishes of the members of the EPODE International Network, EIN designed a questionnaire. The questionnaire included questions about:

- characteristics of the programme;
- use of, and satisfaction with, existing support (initial and continuing support);
- training options and topics for new training courses, the EPODE Academy;
- budgets to participate in the new training opportunities;

With a view to improving knowledge and skills and share good practices, the members were also asked if they have useful manuals, forms, reports or other materials to share.

The Mulier Institute created the online version of the questionnaire and sent it to 41 EIN members. After a three week period the online questionnaire was closed. All the participants received a reminder by email to complete the questionnaire.

26 members started to answer the questionnaire, 22 members completed all the questions.

The following results are solely based on the fully completed questionnaires, representing 20 different community-based programmes from 18 different countries (54% response).

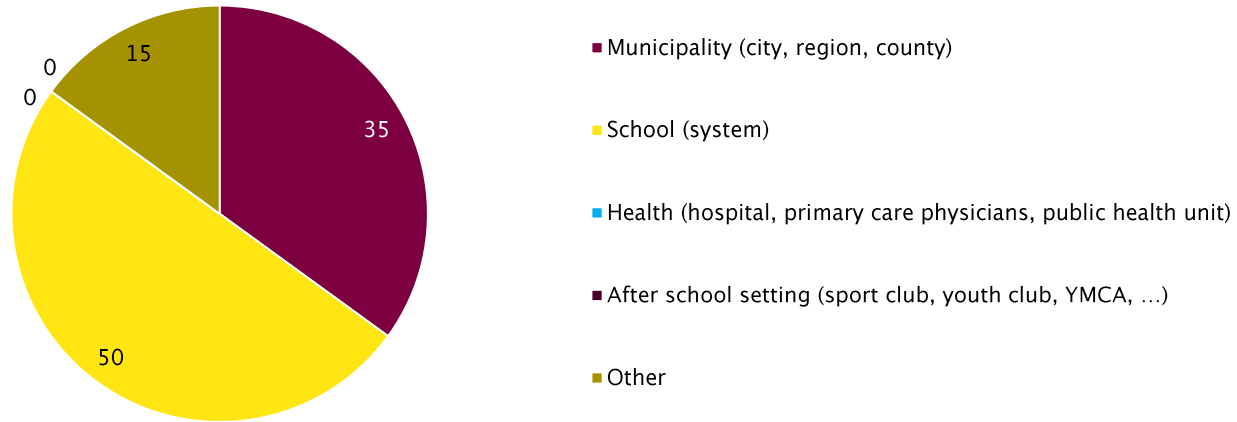
The results regarding the characteristics of the programmes represent the 20 community-based programmes.

The results are presented in the next slides. EIN can use these results to develop a proper and suitable Epode Academy for its members.

1. Characteristics of the programme: main setting

All the programmes started between 2005 and 2016. Most programmes started in 2009 (4 programmes), 2012 (4 programmes) and 2014 (5 programmes)

Figure 1. Main setting of the programme (n=20, %)



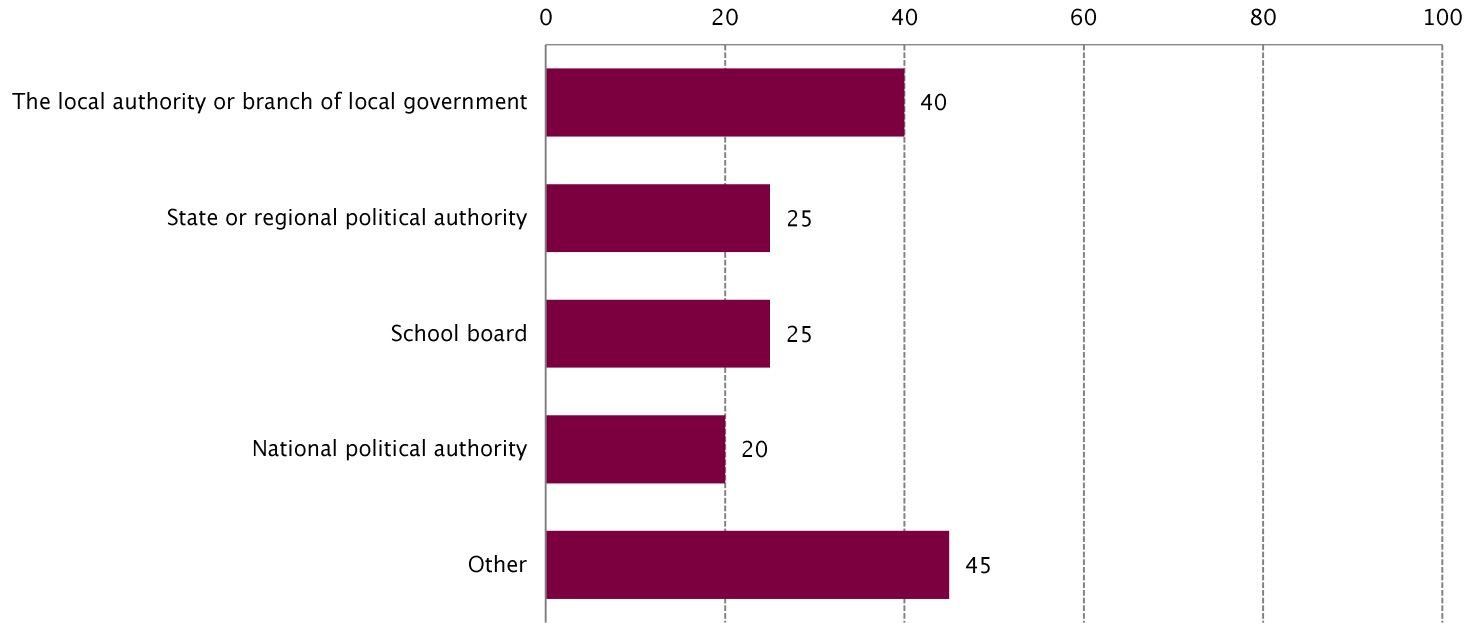
Most of the programmes are implemented as a municipal programme or in a school setting (85%, Figure 1). Half of the programmes (50%) are run mainly in schools. Approximately one third of the programmes are municipal programmes (35%). 15% of the respondents answered: other (setting). Other settings mentioned are kindergartens, for instance, or a combination of more settings. Notably, one of the programmes includes both a health care setting and after school as a main setting. The answers are summarised in Attachment 1.

Respondents reported that the programmes have reached a great number of children. Three indicated that they have reached more than 10,000 children, 8 have reached between 1,000 and 10,000 children, and another 8 have reached less than 1,000 children.



1. Characteristics of the programme: authority

Figure 2. Authority under which the programme is operating (n=20, %)



The programmes are mostly operating under one or more authorities (Figure 2). 40 percent of the programmes are operating under the local authority or branch of local government. Operation under local authorities is more frequent than under state or regional political authorities (25%) or national political authorities (20%).

Two programmes are operating under both state/regional and local authorities. One programme is operating under national and regional authorities and one under national, regional as well as local authorities.

45 percent of the members indicated that their programme operates under a different authority than mentioned above (other). These are summarised in Attachment 2 and include 'Universities' and 'Non-Governmental Organisations'.

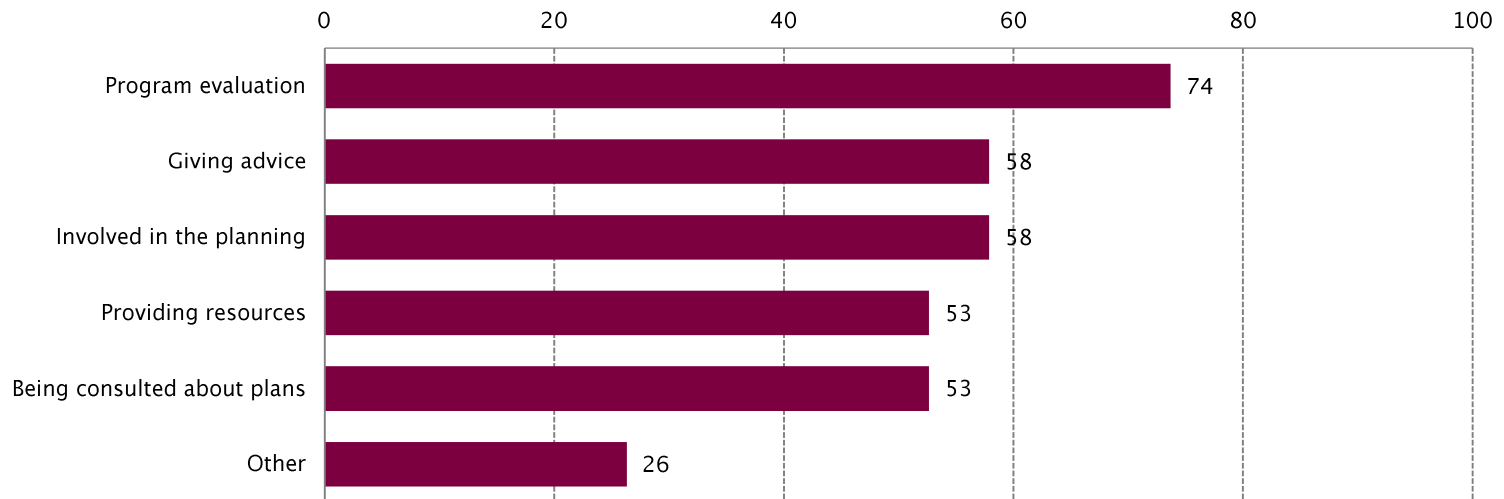


1. Characteristics of the programme: involvement target population

In almost all the programmes, the target population has been directly involved in one or more stages of the programme (n=19), mostly in the implementation stage (90%) or evaluations of actions/interventions (85%, not in figure). In almost 50% of the programmes the target population is involved in the planning stage (45%).

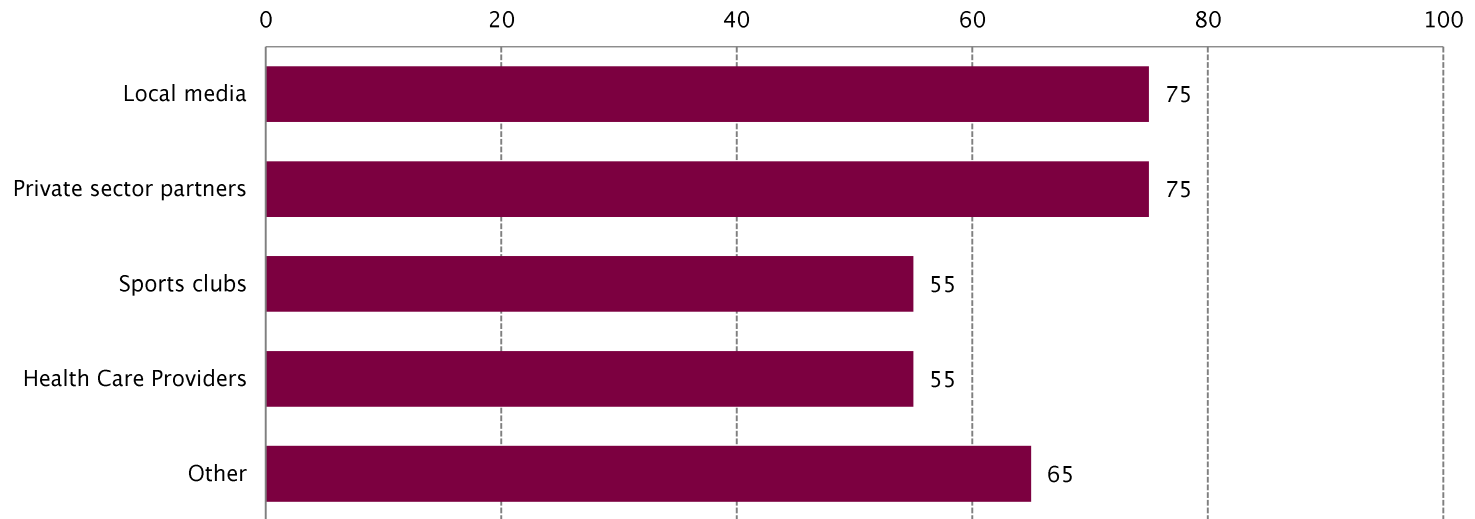
Most programmes involve their target population in the programme evaluation (74%, Figure 3). In 58 percent of the programmes the target population gives advice and is involved in the planning. Another striking way of involving the target population is through focus group discussions (see Attachment 3).

Figure 3. How the target population is involved in the programme (n=19, %)



1. Characteristics of the programme: involvement stakeholders

Figure 4. Stakeholder groups involved in the programmes (n=20, %)



Stakeholder groups are involved in all the programmes (Figure 4). The local media and private sector partners as stakeholders are involved in 75 percent of the programmes. Sport clubs and health care providers are usually also involved (both 55%). Apparently, health care providers are often involved in the programme, but the health sector is not mentioned as the main setting of the programme.

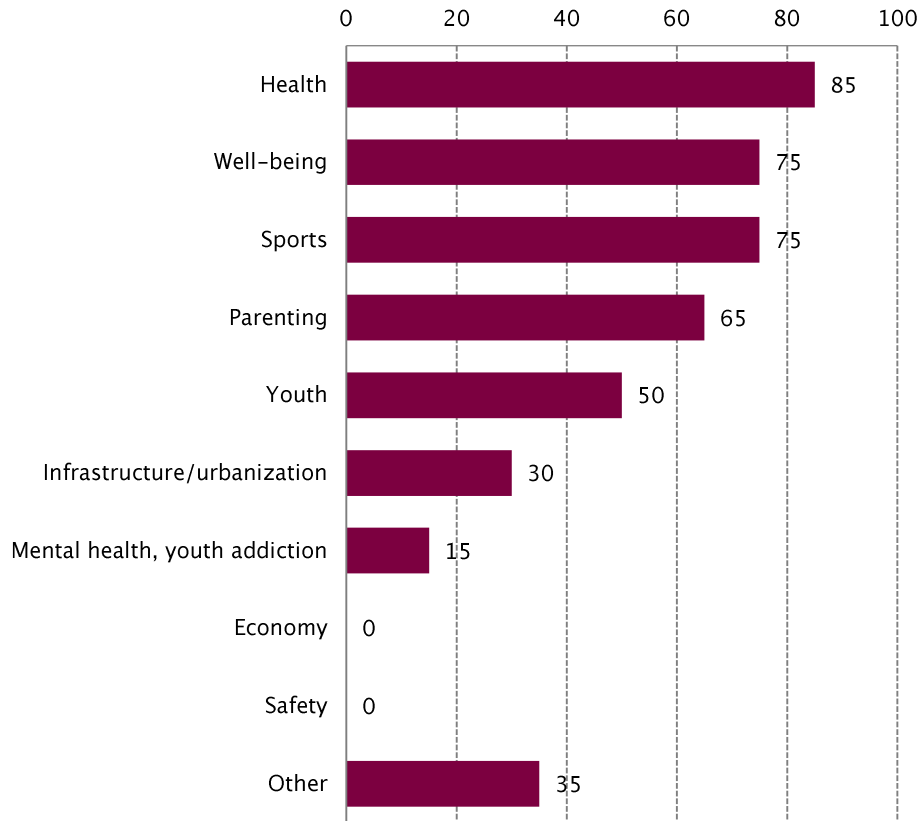
When respondents indicated that private sector partners were involved, they were asked to specify this in a follow-up question. We hereby discovered, for instance, that food and beverage industries are involved (for example Nestlé, Coca-Cola and supermarkets, see also Attachment 4).

Many other stakeholder groups are also involved. Schools and education are mentioned the most (see Attachment 5).



1. Characteristics of the programme: policy domains

Figure 5. People from policy domains collaborating in the programme (n=20, %)



Professionals from more than one policy domain are collaborating in all the programmes (Figure 5).

Most frequently mentioned are professionals from the domains of health care (85%), well-being (75%) and sports (75%).

This is corresponding to the results that we described earlier about the stakeholder groups involved (Figure 4).

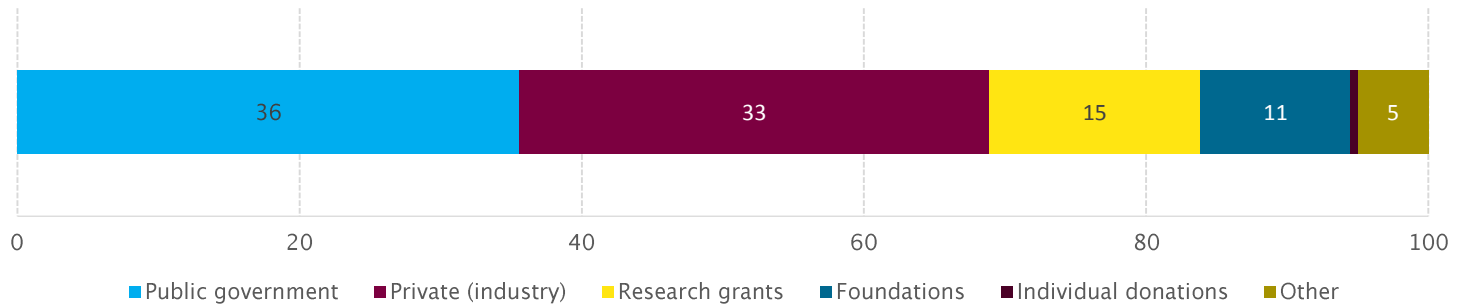
Results show that there are no colleagues from the economic or safety domains collaborating in the different programmes.

Other mentioned policy domains collaborating in the programmes are education, pedagogy and nutrition (see Attachment 6).



1. Characteristics of the programme: funding

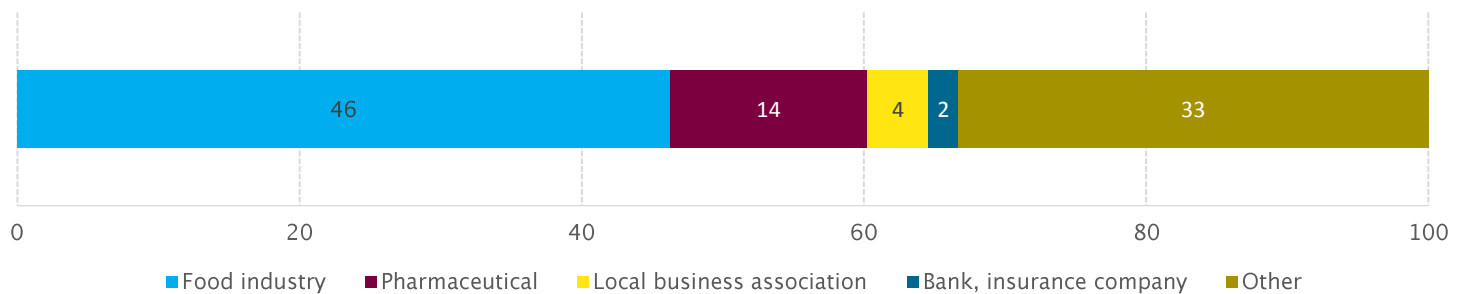
Figure 6a. Mean percentage of total budget funded by different organisations (n=20, % of total budget).



Results show that the programmes are mostly funded by public government and private industry. On average, a 36 percent of the total budget is funded by public government and 33 percent by private industry (Figure 6a). A minor part of the programme budget is funded by research grants or foundations. Eight programmes are funded by 1 source exclusively, 4 of which are fully funded by the public government. One programme is not funded at all.

When respondents answered that their programme is funded by a private (industry) resource, they were asked to specify the type of private (industry) organisation (Figure 6b). Food industry is one of the private resources stated the most (46%). Other private sectors reported are, strikingly, media firms and the clothing industry (for more answers see Attachment 7).

Figure 6b. Mean percentage of the budget funded by different kinds of private (industry) (n=12, % of total budget)



2. Use and satisfaction with the current support: initial training

EIN is already offering training and support. This section provides more information about the use of, and satisfaction with, this support. In this slide members have given their opinion about *initial training* and support, that is: preceding the start of the programme. The next slide is about *continuing training* and support during the programme.

Table 1. Use and satisfaction of initial training or support from EIN (n=22, numbers)

| | Yes, used | Not useful at all | Not useful | Neutral | Useful | Very useful |
|---|-----------|-------------------|------------|---------|--------|-------------|
| Information from EIN publications and the EIN website | 21 | | | 4 | 14 | 3 |
| Workshops at an EPODE Obesity Forum | 19 | | | | 8 | 11 |
| Consultants visiting you on site | 11 | | | 2 | 6 | 3 |
| Meetings with consultants at the EIN office | 9 | | | 1 | 4 | 4 |
| Visits to other EIN operating programmes | 8 | | | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| Other | 4 | | | 1 | 2 | 1 |

Respondents were asked about five training options available at this moment and could mention other training options. 21 of the 22 members of EIN have made use of one or more options of the available training courses or support. All of them used information from EIN publications and the website, 17 of whom have found this information (very) useful (Table 1). None of the members considered the information as useless. 19 of the 22 members attended workshops at an EPODE Obesity Forum and all found this (very) useful. 50 percent of the members have had consultants visiting their site. Nine of them have experienced this as (very) useful. The respondents also mentioned other types of support they received, for example via audit and skype consultations. They felt that this which was (very) useful.



2. Use and satisfaction with the current support: continuing training

Table 2. Use and satisfaction of continuing training or support from EIN (n=22, numbers)

| | Yes, used | Not useful at all | Not useful | Neutral | Useful | Very useful |
|---|-----------|-------------------|------------|---------|--------|-------------|
| Information from EIN publications and the EIN website | 20 | | | 3 | 15 | 2 |
| Attendance at an EPODE Obesity Forum | 19 | | | | 5 | 14 |
| programme Information via website | 19 | | | 5 | 11 | 3 |
| Networking with other programme managers | 19 | | | 3 | 6 | 10 |
| Formal workshops or webinars | 17 | | | 1 | 12 | 4 |
| Phone (Skype) or email support from EIN coordinators | 17 | | 1 | 3 | 9 | 4 |
| Presentations | 16 | | | 1 | 10 | 5 |
| Other | 3 | | | 1 | | 2 |

All of the members have made use of EIN training or support during their programmes. All but one member have found it (very) useful. Some answered 'neutral' (table 2).

All the training or support options were used by at least sixteen members (73%). Almost everyone consulted EIN publications and the website.

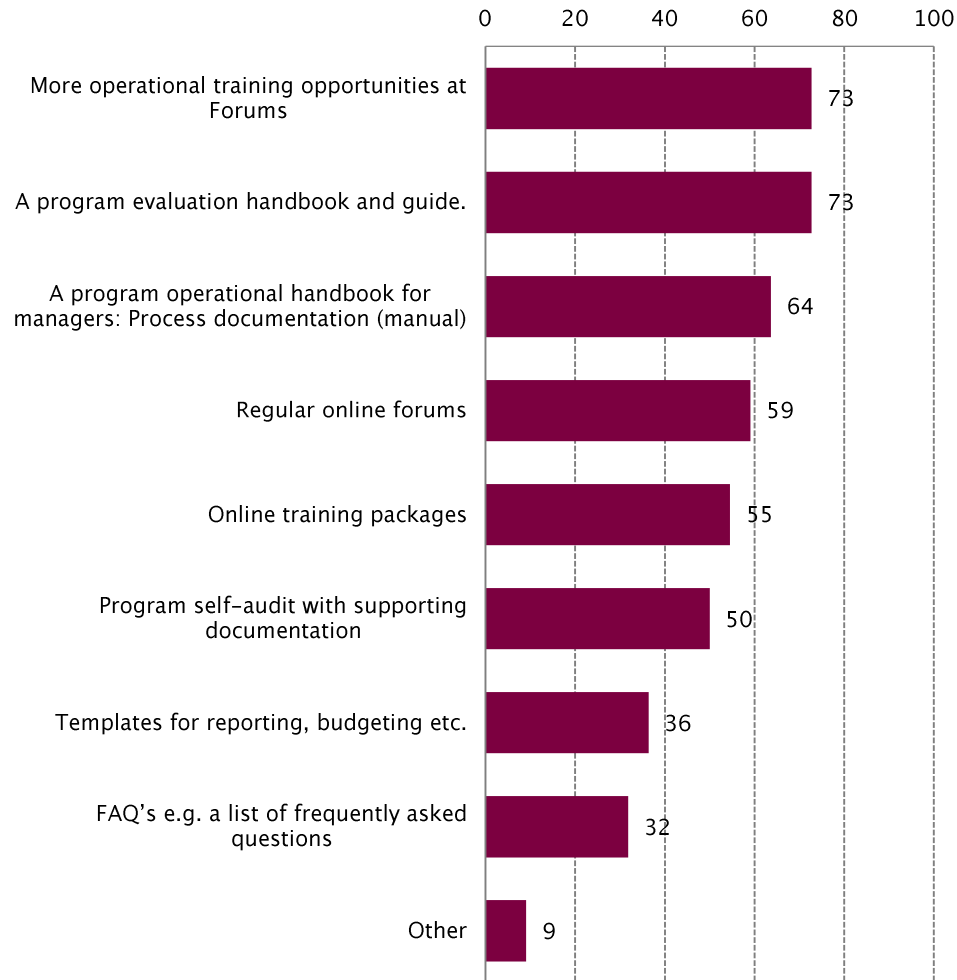
Many members cited the (workshops at) EPODE Obesity Forum as particularly useful. Members experienced this as a place where they can network. They also considered the workshops to be very useful. When asked if they had considered any training course or support to be particularly disappointing, no one answered that question.

In conclusion, all the respondents have received training or support from EIN and found it (very) useful.



2. Use and satisfaction with the current support: additional offerings

Figure 7. Additional useful offerings (n=22, %)



In accordance with the existing training options and support, EIN likes to know what additional options would be appreciated by the members. None of the members believed that they do not need any more than is already available. All the members provided at least two ideas.

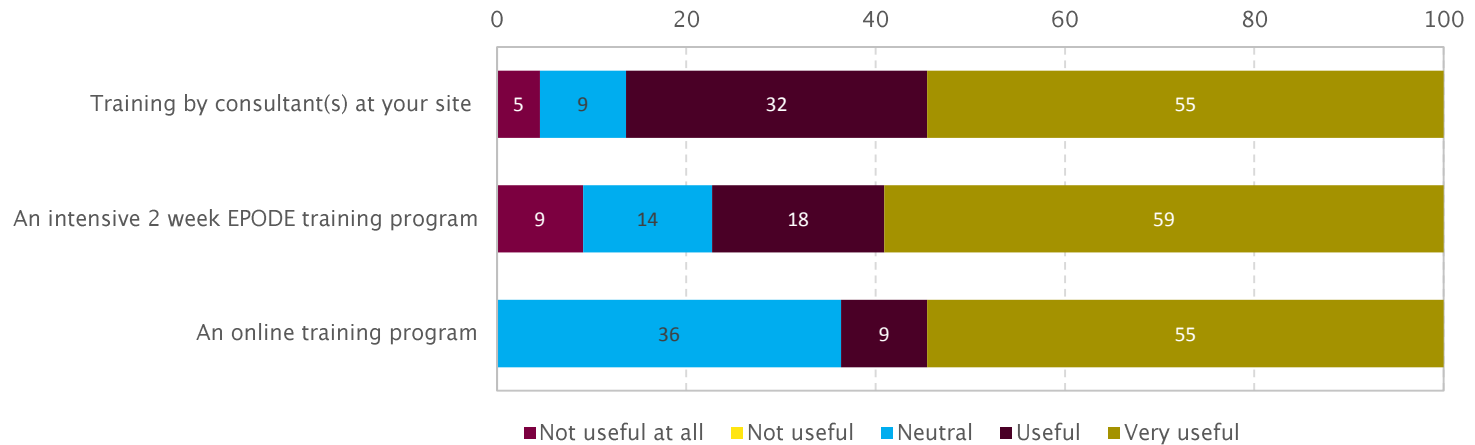
73 percent of the members would like to have more operational training opportunities in forums. A programme evaluation handbook and guide is also a useful tool, according to 73 percent. A handbook would be appreciated for process documentation (64%). More than 50 percent believe that regular online forums (59%) and/or online training packages (55%) would be useful (Figure 7).

Other useful ideas are organised trips to best practice examples of EPODE and meetings at the EIN offices.

3. Developing a new learning centre, EPODE Academy: new programmes

EIN is creating and developing a new learning centre, called EPODE academy (EPAC), in collaboration with JOGG (The Netherlands). This section presents opinions about some preliminary ideas for training/support for managers of (existing) community-based programmes wishing to learn and upgrade their skills.

Figure 8. The potential usefulness of new trainings options (n=22, %)



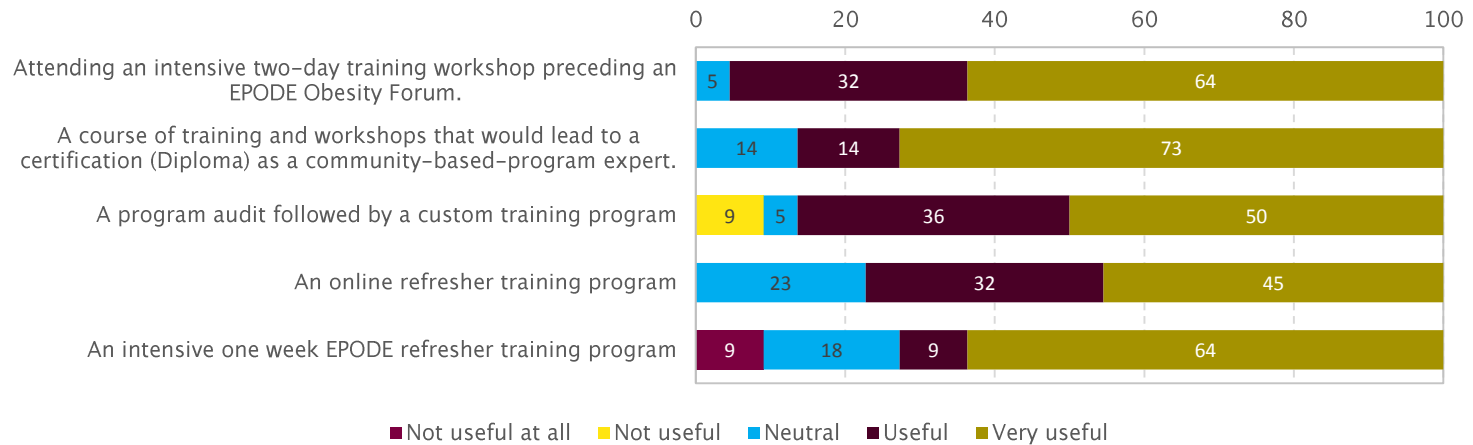
One of the preliminary ideas of EIN is an on-site training by one or two consultants (usually for a period of 3 to 5 days), followed by phone or email coaching. This is considered (very) useful by 87 percent of the members (Figure 8). One member (9%) thinks this is not useful at all.

Another idea is to let members participate in an intensive 2-week EPODE training programme at JOGG (The Netherlands) or associated institutes, including on-site interaction with the JOGG programme and periodic monthly follow-ups over a 12-month period. 77 percent of the members would find this (very) useful. On the other hand, 9 percent considers this not to be useful at all.

64 percent of the members believe access to an online training programme (MOOC) to be (very) useful. Nobody regards this as not useful (at all).

3. Developing a new learning centre, EPODE Academy: upgrading skills

Figure 9. The potential usefulness of new trainings options for upgrading skills when already operating along the EPODE methodology (n=22, %)



When the programme is already implemented, upgrading skills is possible in several ways. The answers to almost all the options proposed to the EIN members were at least neutral (Figure 9).

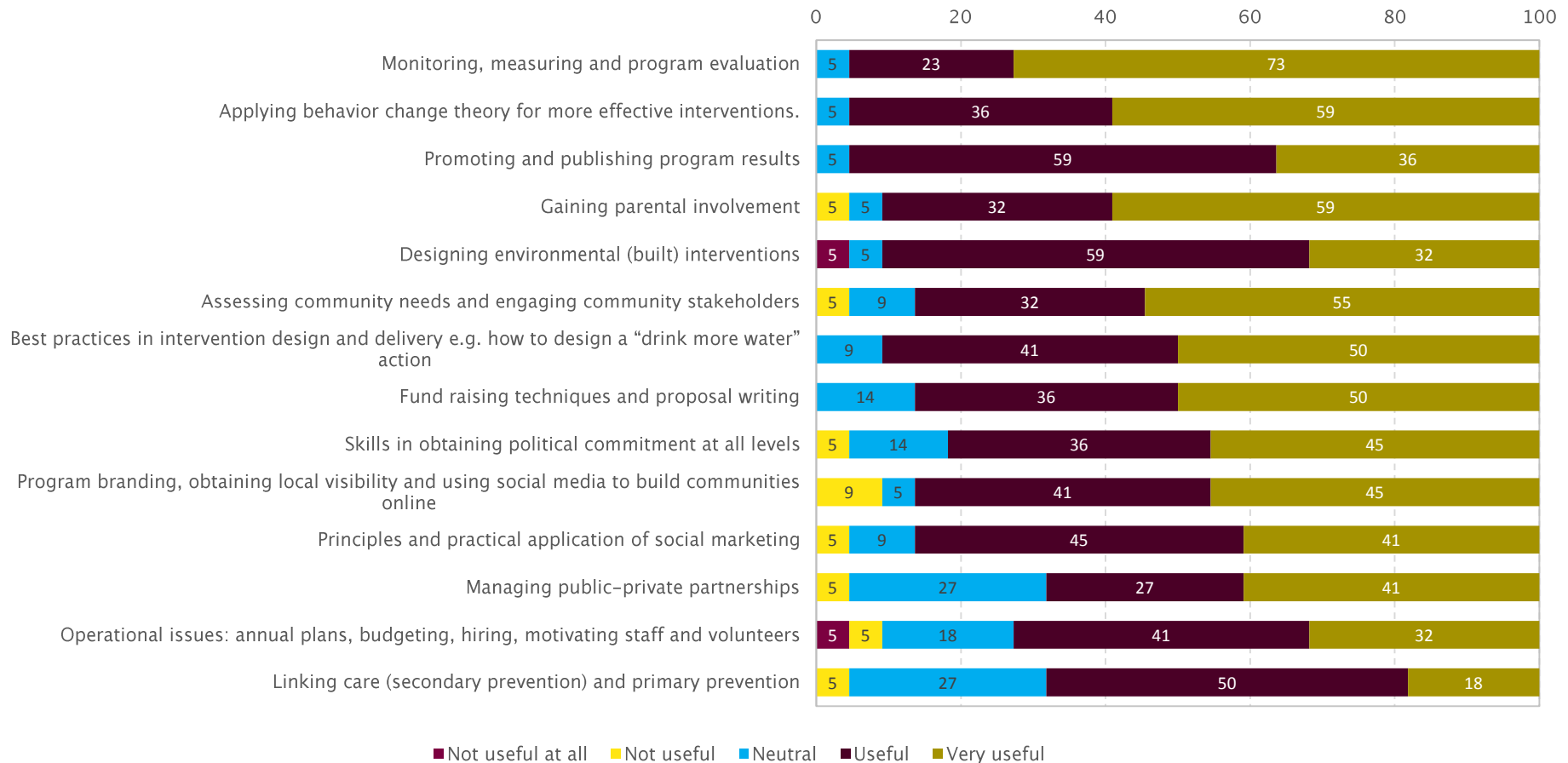
An intensive two-day training preceding an EPODE Obesity Forum is considered to be (very) useful by 96 percent of the members. Becoming a certified community-based-program expert as a result of attending a training/workshop is also considered to be (very) useful (87%). Completing a programme audit followed by a bespoke on-site training programme offered by one or two consultants (usually for a period of 3 to 4 days) followed by telephone or email assistance, would also be (very) useful for 86 percent of the members. An online refresher training programme (MOOC) received a neutral response from 23 percent, and is regarded as useful by 32 percent and very useful by 45 percent. Attending an intensive 1-week EPODE refresher training programme at JOGG or associated institute including a programme audit, interaction with the JOGG programme communities and periodic monthly follow-ups over a 12-month period is considered to be (very) useful by 73 percent of the members.

In conclusion, members find it useful to complete a training to upgrade their skills at the start of a new programme or while the programme is running. The members prefer on-site training by consultants, attending a 2-week or a 2-day training, and a programme audit followed by a bespoke training programme.



3. Developing a new learning centre, EPODE Academy: topics of training

Figure 10. The potential usefulness of different topics in training and support (n=22, %)



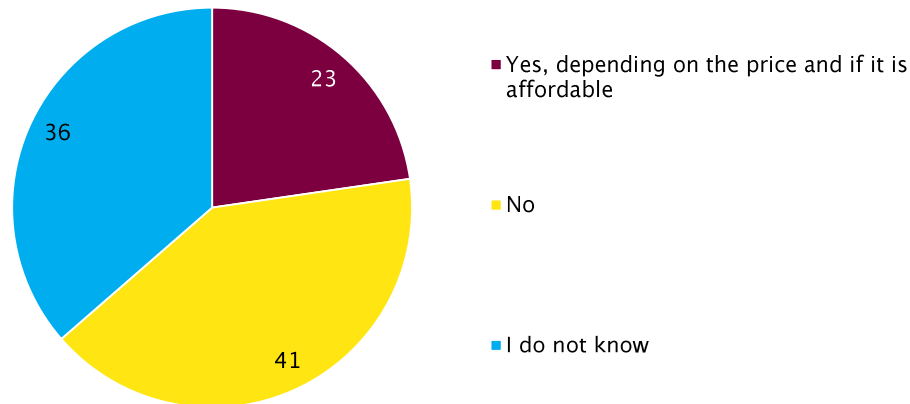
When developing a training course, it is important to know what topics are most useful to discuss. All potential options are considered (very) useful by at least 68% percent of the members (Figure 10). Only a few members believed that some training options would not be useful (at all). Most useful topics are: ‘monitoring, measuring and programme evaluation’, ‘applying behaviour change theory for more effective interventions’, and ‘promoting and publishing programme results’. The topics considered to be the least useful are managing public-private partnerships and linking care and primary prevention.

4. Budget

Apart from the needs and wishes for training possibilities and topics, it is also important to look into the budget available for training.

The results show that 23% of the members would be willing to pay for the services delivered by the EPODE Academy, depending on the price and their affordability. 41 percent of the members indicate that they are not willing to pay, and 36 percent do not know.

Figure 11. Willingness to pay for services delivered by the EPODE Academy (n=22, %)

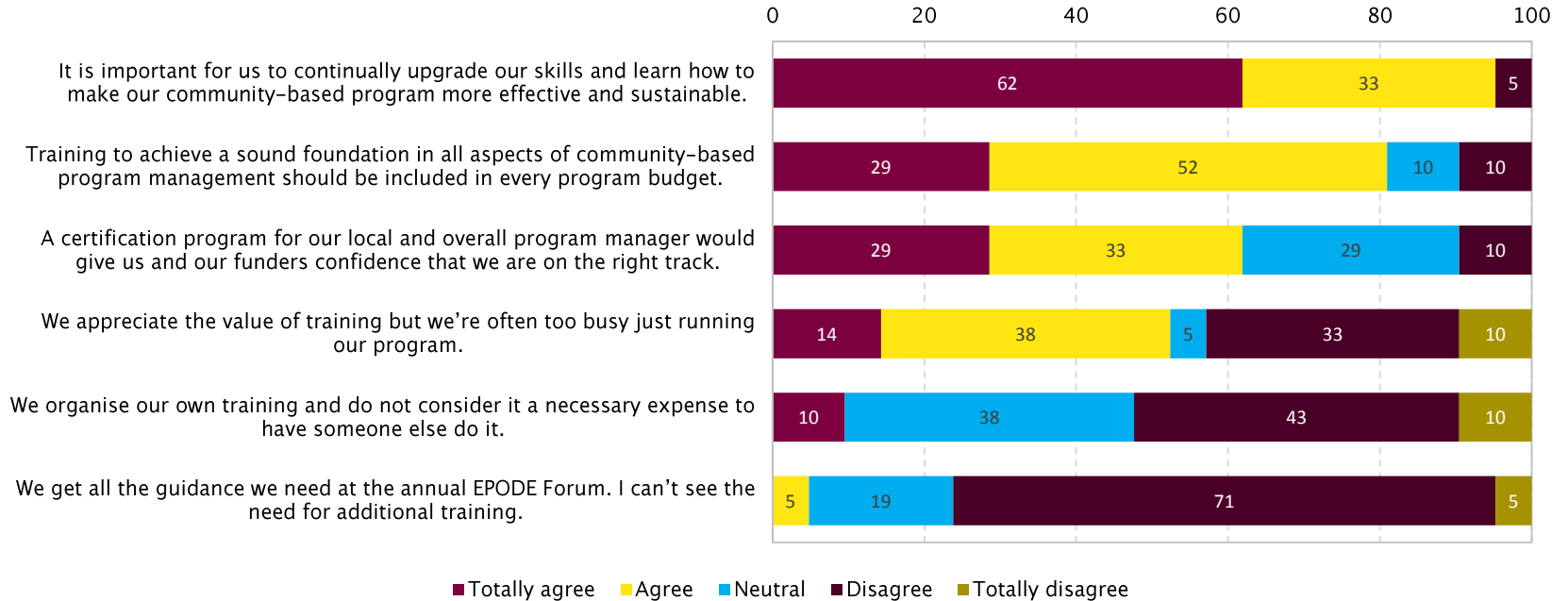


We also asked the members to inform us about the availability of budget to attend training courses. 64 percent of the members stated that there is no training budget. Only 27 percent of the members indicated that there is a budget available. Two members (9%) report that they do not know.

Finally, we asked how much money members spent on training each year. 68 percent of the members do not know the average amount of money spent on training per year. In two cases (9%) no money is spent, and the others spend approximately 100 (5%), 300 (5%) and 600 (14%) euro on training courses per year.

5. Attitude towards training and improving skills

Figure 12. Statements regarding training (n=22, %)

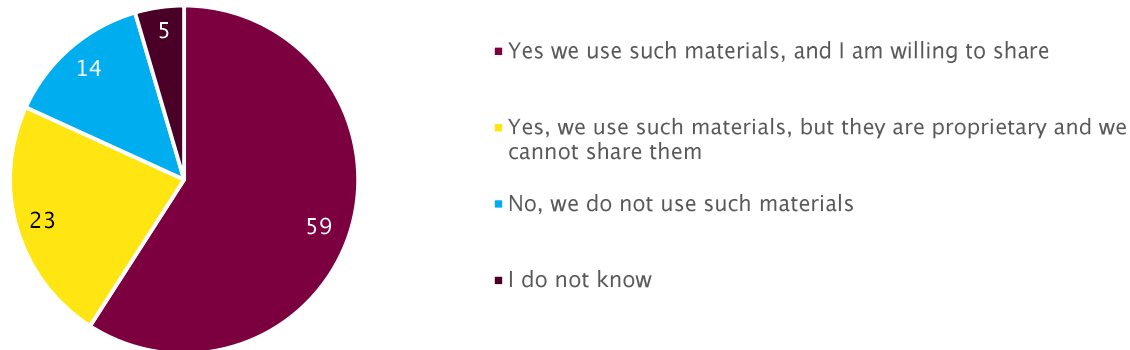


Members were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with a series of statements. Results show that all but one member find it (very) important to continually upgrade their skills and learn how to make a community-based programme more effective and sustainable (Figure 12). Furthermore, the majority of the members (81%) (totally) agree that training should be included in every programme budget. This is remarkable, since 64 percent of the programmes do not have a training budget at this moment (see section budget). A certification programme would certainly provide the confidence that the members are on the right track, because 62 percent (totally) agree with that statement.

The majority of the members (totally) disagree with the following statements: 'there is no need for an external person to organise a training' (53%) or 'there is no need for additional training because we already get all the guidance we need at the annual EPODE forum' (76%).

6. Sharing and collaboration

Figure 13. Do you use manuals, forms, reports, charts or other materials that are useful in daily practice and would you be willing to share these with other EIN programmes? (n=22, %)



The EPODE International Network wants to gather good practice-based examples for use by all its members, so that they can improve their knowledge and skills in the field. That is why we asked all the respondents about their usage of useful manuals, forms, reports, charts or other materials. 59 percent of the members use such materials and are willing to share them (Figure 13). They indicate that the EPODE International Network can contact them to gather the materials in order to share these with others.

Because the EPODE International Network would also like to collaborate with its members in the development of the EPODE Academy, members were asked whether they are willing to collaborate. Most of the members (77%) indicated that they are willing to collaborate and provided their contact information.

7. Conclusion

The results of an online questionnaire among members of the EPODE International Network gives insight in the needs and wishes of the members in order to develop the EPODE Academy.

Current support and training

- At the start of a programme, almost all the members make use of initial training and support and none of them thinks this is useless. Most members consult EIN publications and website as well as workshops at an EPODE Obesity Forum.
- During the programme, all the members attend continuing training. Particularly (the workshops at) the EPODE Obesity Forum are appreciated. Almost all kinds of training or support are considered (very) useful or received a neutral answer.

Needs and wishes for the EPODE Academy

- An intensive 2-week EPODE training programme, on-site training by consultants and an online training programme for new programmes are all considered to be (very) useful by at least 64 percent of the members.
- The members find it useful to be trained during the programme to upgrade their skills.
- Regarding the content of the training, the members are eager to learn. All 14 topics mentioned are regarded as (very) useful by at least 69 percent.
- As for the budgets for training, more than half of the members (68%) are not aware of the average amount of money spent on training. Only 23 percent of the members are willing to pay for the services delivered by the EPODE Academy.
- All but one of the members find it (very) important to continually upgrade their skills and learn how to make their community-based programme more effective and sustainable.

In conclusion: the need for training and support from EIN is significant. The current training is definitely appreciated and members are positive in respect of an EPODE Academy. However, not all the members have budget available for training and are willing to pay for the services of an EPODE Academy. Therefore, EIN should develop the EPODE Academy in a sustainable way so that the costs will be low and the quality remains high.



8. Attachments

Attachment 1. Other main settings in which programmes take place

- Kindergarten
- Kindergarten
- Community venues & school setting
- All of the above (all sectors of community)

Attachment 2. Other authorities under which the programme is operating

- NGO
- Ananey Communications - a media content provider
- Private NGO: CEIDSS
- University and tertiary-level Children's hospital; we are not government-affiliated
- Board of NGO /experts committee/
- Croatian Medical Association
- Croatian Medical Association
- University
- University, Department of Sport Science & Kinesiology
- Ngo
- Cork Institute of Technology
- Cork Institute of Technology



Attachment

Attachment 3. Other main settings in which programmes take place

- In lessons, workshops and specific events designed for the target population (2x)
- Focus groups discussions
- They receive the intervention during school hours
- To clarify - our primary target population is community stakeholders (secondary is children/families)

Attachment 4. Other private sector partners which are involved in the programmes

- Ananey Communications - a media firm
- Banks, food industry, local entrepreneurs
- Private companies as sponsors - Nestle, Mondelez, Coca-Cola, Unilever, Pepsico, Carrefour
- Polish Federation of Food Industry representing the private sector is the programme co-organiser
- Various individual local business in some communities
- Food and Beverage industries
- FOOD INDUSTRIES
- Coca-Cola Foundation, Novo Nordisk, Printera, Biovega and other partners
- Coca-cola Foundation, Novo Nordisk, Printera, Biovega and others
- Depending on the kindergarten and community, private sector partners such as grocery stores are involved by offering and delivering healthy food to the kindergarten, farmers are showing children around their farm or teaching parents how to bake bread
- Market traders, shop keepers, cafes and restaurants
- Skechers have provided funding
- Supermarkets, restaurants, food outlets



Attachment

Attachment 5. Other stakeholder groups which are involved in the programmes

- Associations
- City of Zagreb
- Depending of the towns but potentially all stakeholders working in the community
- Faculties/Academia
- Faith groups, community groups, education, various local authority services, businesses, play services
- Kindergarten
- Local council, non-government agencies e.g. church, welfare, schools
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry officials, school health coordinators, teachers, health educators
- ORT Educational Network
- Partner Community & voluntary organisations
- Recreation, municipal government, schools, community services, childcare
- Diabetes and metabolic disease organisations



Attachment

Attachment 6. People from other policy domains collaborating in the programme

- Education, Agriculture and Rural Development
- Nutrition, Public Health, Psychology, Education
- Nutrition, Public Health, Psychology, Education
- Science and child care
- Environmental health, arts and culture, media, children services and education
- Education
- Uncertain if this is meant to be at a community level, or at a larger provincial backbone/initiative level?


Attachment 7. Other private (industry) sectors funding the programme

- Roquette Industry - sectors of activities : human nutrition, pharmacy-beauty care, paper-cardboard corrugated cardboard, chemistry-bio industry and animal nutrition.
- Ananey Communication is a media firm
- Clothing industry (shoes), heavy industry, media;
- Superfit/Foot wear, Salzburg AG/Power Grid, Palfinger AG/Cran Company
- Nil
- Skechers, Ireland
- They sell trainers/exercise shoes to the general public
- Not applicable



The logo for Mulier Instituut features a stylized yellow swoosh that curves over the text. The text 'mulier instituut' is written in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font. The 'm' and 'i' are dark red, while the rest of the letters are black.

mulier instituut

A blue-tinted photograph of a bicycle frame and handlebars, showing the front fork, handlebars, and the top tube. The image is semi-transparent and serves as a background for the contact information.

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