

SIXTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

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Contract 037504

SPECIFIC SUPPORT ACTION

REMaT

Development of **R**esearch **M**anagement **T**raining
for Doctoral Research Students

Deliverable D11

Evaluation of feedback questionnaires of all ReMaT workshops

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Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	2
2. EVALUATION OF THE FIVE REMAT WORKSHOPS FOR PHD CANDIDATES.....	2
2.1 Area 1: Statistical Data.....	2
2.2 Area 2: Results on existing PhD programmes and complementary skills training.....	5
2.3 Area 3: Evaluation of the workshop.....	19
3. CONCLUSION.....	22

ANNEXES

A TEMPLATE OF PARTICIPANTS' FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

B TEMPLATE OF OBSERVERS' FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Introduction

This deliverable reports the results of the evaluation of the five ReMaT workshops¹ given by the participants and observers in the feedback questionnaires filled out at the end of each workshop.

As a project, ReMaT followed a practical methodological approach. The project had as its goals

- to consider a format for delivering complementary skills training appropriate to the needs of PhD candidates,
- to develop a workshop taking into account different stakeholder views
- to deliver these workshops at various locations in Europe and assess the feedback given by both participants and observers

What is reported here is the assessment given in the feedback forms by the latter groups.

2. Evaluation of the five ReMaT workshops for PhD candidates

Two kinds of feedback questionnaires were handed out: one for participating PhD candidates and one for observers. The observers were typically those engaged in providing or contributing to PhD programmes. They took no active part in the workshop itself, but observed the interaction between trainers and participants. The questionnaires contained 15 or 12 questions respectively and are attached to this document. Identical questionnaires were used for all workshops.

The questionnaires covered three main topics: statistical data (area 1), information on existing PhD programmes and complementary skills training (area 2), and evaluation of the ReMaT workshop itself (area 3).

2.1 Area 1: Statistical Data

Number and origin of participants

In total, 126 PhD candidates from host institutions in 15 EU countries, Switzerland and 5 Accession States participated in the five workshops. 27 different nationalities were represented including non-EU citizens from Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, Pakistan, Colombia and China.

Of the total number of participants, 65 (52%) came from the hosting, or co-located institutions, which provided between 11 and 15 of the 25 participants at each of the workshops². Overall, 60 participants (48%) travelled to a country other than their own to attend a workshop. With regard to geographic distribution, 51 (41%) participants came from 10 countries in Eastern Europe including Turkey, while Western Europe provided 42% (52 participants) from six countries including Switzerland. Sweden, Denmark and Finland provided 13% (16 participants). It proved to be difficult to attract participants from Southern

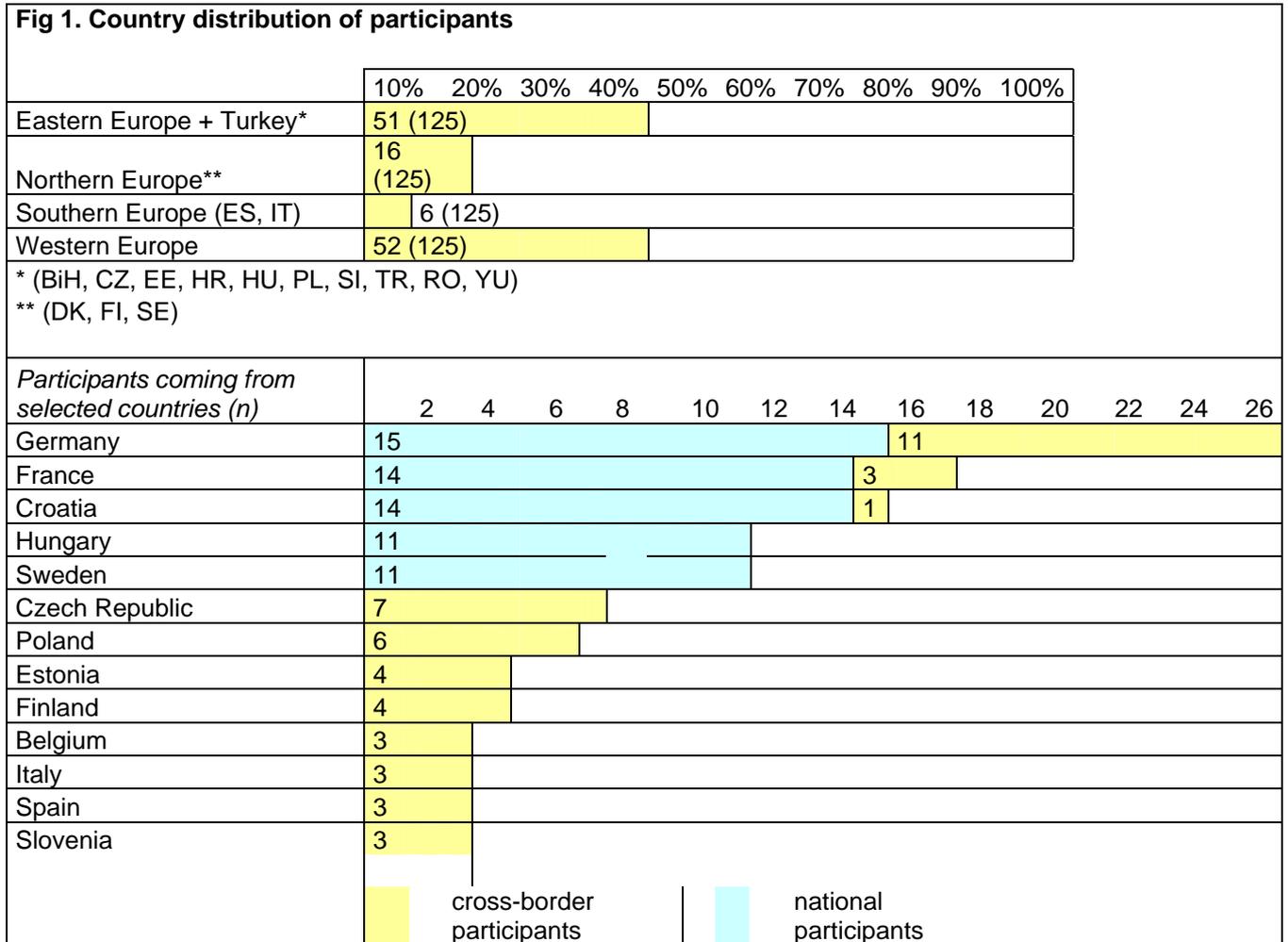
¹ ReMaT is a project offering research management training to early-stage bioscience researchers in the EU. The five pilot workshops were held in Zagreb (Croatia), Toulouse (France), Budapest (Hungary), Stockholm (Sweden) and Hamburg (Germany).

² The host institution for the workshop was invited to provide about half the workshop participants.

D11 Evaluation of feedback questionnaires

Europe, so extra efforts were made to publicise the workshops in Spain and Italy from which six participants came (5%).

Of the 60 cross-border participants, Eastern Europe accounted for 43% (26 participants), Western Europe 38% (23 participants), Southern Europe 10% (6 participants) and Northern Europe 8% (5 participants). The location of individual workshops appears to have had little influence on the decision of cross-border participants to attend. Most of the cross-border participants in workshops came from Germany (11), the Czech Republic (7) and Poland (6). Figure 1 illustrates the country distribution of the participants.



Number and origin of observers

The 11 observers came from Croatia, France, Germany, Spain, Switzerland and Sweden and comprised managers of doctoral training, heads of graduate schools and representatives of ministries of science and education. Several observers were interested in initiating similar workshops in their own institutions or in hosting a ReMaT course.

Feedback questionnaires – rate of return?

A total of 116 feedback questionnaires were returned by the participants (rate of return: 93%) and 11 by the observers (rate of return 100%). All returned feedback questionnaires were evaluated. In a few cases there was a discrepancy between boxes ticked and comments made

D11 Evaluation of feedback questionnaires

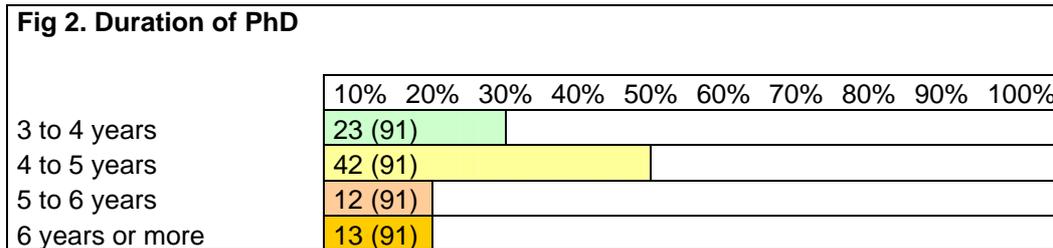
(i.e. positive comments contradicting low scoring). Not everyone provided answers to every question. Often the questions regarding personal details were omitted.

Question 11) What is your PhD subject? (participants' questionnaire)

A total of 101 participants answered this question. Of these, 85% were conducting their PhD research on a topic directly related to human biology, genetics or medicine, ranging from biomechanics to psychology. Another 12% were active in more general life science-related fields – chemistry, biology, ecology or food safety/production. Three participants came from related areas: commercial aspects of bio-energy or environmental topics seen from the perspective of the social sciences and philosophy.

Question 12 and 13) Which year are you in? / When do you hope to complete your degree? (participants' questionnaire)

In all, 100 participants replied to this question. Of these, 11 had already finished their PhDs, while most of the others were in their second to third year. In general, PhDs took between 3 and 5 years, with a maximum of 6 to 8 years. On average, PhDs seem to take longer in the new EU Member States of Eastern Europe than in the old Member States – 19 of 25 participants who thought they would need 5 years or longer were based in Eastern European countries. Most of the participants were aiming to complete their PhD in 2009 after 4 years of study. Figure 2 (Duration of PhD) illustrates the results.



The French PhD candidates attending the workshop in Toulouse were on average younger than their colleagues from other countries. In this group, 73% of them were content with the amount of complementary skills training offered and they needed four years or less for their PhD. Of the German participants 26% and all three Belgian participants were also content with the amount of complementary skills training in their institutions and needed 4 years or less for their PhD. It seems that participants who need more than 4 years for their PhDs are less content with the amount of complementary skills training they are offered. This correlates, with a lack of structured programmes in their institutions.

Question 14) What's your age? (participants' questionnaire)

This question received 106 answers. The average age of the participants was 27, the youngest being 23 and the oldest 40. The participants at the workshop in Toulouse were slightly younger on average than those at other workshops, but the difference is too small to be statistically relevant.

Question 15) Have you worked prior to your PhD? (participants' questionnaire)

About half of all participants had worked prior to commencing their PhD. This number is slightly higher in the Eastern European states than in the old Member States. There were no

significant differences between the 5 workshops. Some of the participants had entrepreneurial experience, including work experience in biotech companies, prior to the start of their PhDs.

Question 10 (observers' questionnaire) What percentage of your PhD candidates end up going into academic research? Industrial research? Leaving research and going into other fields?

The observers were asked about career tracking of participants in their institutions. Their answers to this question can provide only anecdotal evidence with no statistical significance because of the small number of observers. Three observers clearly responded that they did not know these numbers. Another three observers could only estimate the numbers staying in academic research. This seemed to be between 10% and 40%. One respondent stated that 90% stayed in academic research after completing their PhDs. This is confirmed by our observations during the five workshops. It seems that working as a post-doctoral researcher before definitely deciding whether to stay in academia is becoming the norm. With respect to numbers of PhD candidates going into industrial research, two responses gave a level of between 20% and 30%, while one observer said that 90% went into industry. A similar result holds for those going into other fields. Two responses indicate between 10% and 30%, another 70% – probably including careers in industry besides industrial research.

2.2 Area 2: Results on existing PhD programmes and complementary skills training

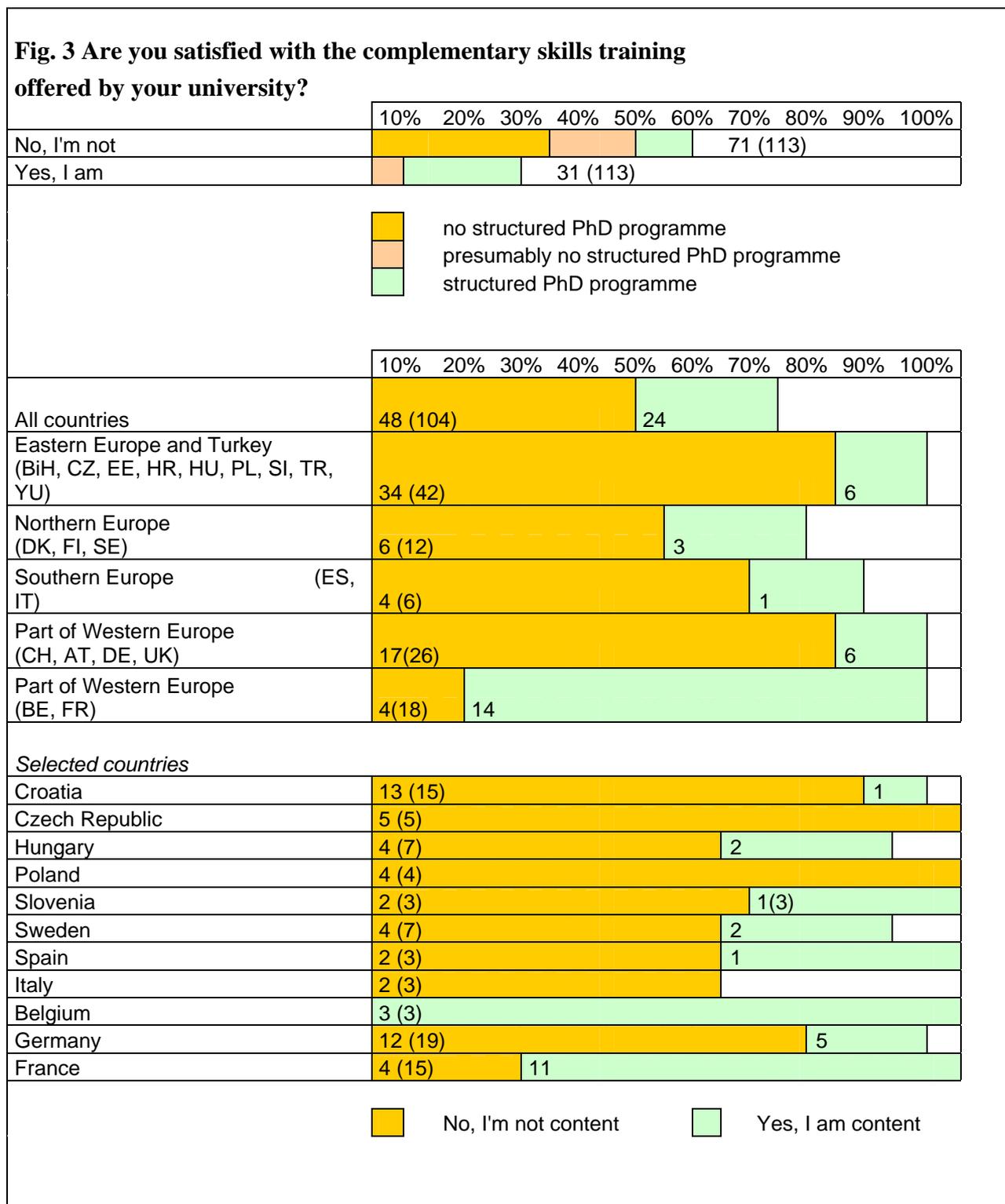
Question 9) Please provide a short description of the essentials of your individual PhD programme. How do you feel about your PhD programme? (participants' questionnaire)

The aim of this very open question was to get an insight into individual perspectives of the situation for PhD candidates in Europe and the variety of existing PhD programmes. We assumed that some of those participants doing a research-oriented PhD based on the apprenticeship model would not understand the question at all and thus reveal the non-existence of a programme. This assumption proved correct. In all, 100 participants answered this question. Of these, 81 of the answers can be categorised as: “yes, there are at least elements of a structured programme,” “no, there is no structured PhD programme” or “presumably there is no structured programme.”

While at least 52 PhD candidates seemed to be following the apprenticeship model, 29 PhD candidates were working in a PhD programme. Most of them (17) were French PhD candidates from Toulouse, who described a structured programme consisting of training and research. Some other participants described similar programmes. Many of those in structured programmes seemed content with their PhDs, while only a few of them were dissatisfied.

Most participants in the workshop in Zagreb failed to answer the question about a regular PhD programme, however, probably indicating that there is none. Correspondingly no one at this workshop was content with the provision of complementary skills training at his/her university.

The three remaining workshops generated a high diversity of answers, ruling out general conclusions. Most PhD projects were research oriented with no programme elements, some programmes showed structured elements and the offer of training courses, while some seemed to be highly structured.



Although a large number of participants were unhappy with the complementary skills training at their university (see evaluation of question 6 below), 24 of them expressed their satisfaction with their PhD studies as a whole because of the scientific interest and despite the working environment. Some praised their supervisors or stressed their importance. A further 12 participants were generally content, but cite a range of deficiencies in their PhDs. Fifteen participants were very critical of the support provided, expressing the feeling that their PhDs were poorly organised.

Question 6) Are you satisfied with the complementary skills training offered by your university? (participants' questionnaire)

A total of 113 answers were given. Of these, 71 (63%) were dissatisfied with the complementary skills training offered by their university, whereas only 31 (27%) were satisfied. The correlation with the existence of at least some structured elements in the PhD programme is high: A total of 49 unsatisfied participants either do not have or are assumed not to have any structured PhD programme. Only nine participants with a structured PhD programme were not content with the complementary skills training it offered (see figure 3).

On the other hand, 20 of 31 participants who were satisfied with the complementary skills training offered at their university clearly enjoyed a structured PhD programme, while only three of the participants thought to have no programme were content. The remaining eight satisfied participants made no indication of whether or not they were in a structured programme.

Among the participants from Eastern European countries including Turkey 81% were not content with the complementary skills training offered by their institutions, and 79% of them probably do not have a PhD programme. Among the Western European countries, 65% to 67% of participants from Italy, Spain, Austria, Germany, Switzerland and United Kingdom were not satisfied either, while for participants from Northern Europe the figure was 50%. Only the Belgian and French PhD candidates showed a high satisfaction rate of 78% for their complementary skills training, with an equally high percentage being in structured programmes.

There is a significant difference in satisfaction with complementary skills training revealed by the five workshops. The French PhD candidates from the doctoral school of medicine in Toulouse, which offers courses on research topics as well as complementary skills, are especially content (over 50%), though this assessment is based on a low sample size. On the contrary, hardly anyone is content with the training offered in Zagreb. The scores from the workshops held in Budapest, Stockholm and Hamburg lie in between, with participants in Hamburg being more content than those in Stockholm and Budapest. Figure 3 shows further selected results from the questionnaires and does not presume to be comprehensive.

Compared with question 9, which asked for a description of PhD programmes and how PhD students felt, it is clear that participants differentiate between their overall satisfaction with their PhDs and their satisfaction with complementary skills training. Most of them enjoy their research activities. Their individual satisfaction depends on the quality of supervision. Good supervision allows the enjoyment of freedom whereas inadequate supervision engenders a feeling of helplessness and a lack of orientation.

6a) If yes, why? (participants' questionnaire)

Of the respondents, 33 participants said why they were content with their complementary skills training, and 12 of them commended the good variety of different courses. Many of the others emphasised the necessity of complementary skills training. Some quotations are cited below.

**Q6a) Are you satisfied with the complementary skills training offered by your university?
If yes, why?**

Selected quotations of participants

"I am personally quite happy, because I've been fishing for useful training outside my university and don't even know that well what is offered. In any case these would be highly important."

"The complementary skills training gives us the opportunity to learn more things in our fields or different areas and to see some disciplines that we could not see in another way. Increases our competences."

"Good variety"

"Some are interesting but I miss external speakers to have different point of view because [here] I think it's often the same persons we discuss with. This workshop was very attractive for that reason."

"In principle I am satisfied, because we were offered all kinds of statistical, bioinformatic etc. courses as well as soft skill courses (speed reading, how to write a paper, scientific talk). The only thing that is still missing in my PhD programme was exactly these subject taught during ReMaT."

"1st of all; any skill; useful skill is welcome; it is complementary, it depends on personal goal. "

"At [our institute] we are lucky to have different kind of services provided - career, grant office and some courses in management as well."

"I am very interested in a full personality development and I find developping [sic] of my personal skills (communication) as important as specialized knowledge (research)."

"[Our university] has made an effort to create a transferable skills into programme for PhD students but I do not thinks it is enough."

"We have a relationship with industry - they take care about our future."

6b) If no, which kind of complementary training would you like to receive? (participants' questionnaire)

In all, 80 participants named the kind of complementary skills they would like to receive. Of these, 41 participants would like complementary skills training on research management, with project management singled out for special mention, but also personal management skills such as time management. Twenty participants would like more training on communication, scientific writing and presentation, 16 participants named the overall need for general training, including the presence of role models. Seven participants wanted training "like the ReMaT course" and three participants wanted more training on career development and finding jobs (see figure 4).

This result confirms other surveys on the need for complementary skills training and the advice we received from stakeholders during the project (e.g. in the two focus groups and our advisory board). The high number listing research management training also confirms that the content of the ReMaT workshop is well adapted to the needs of the PhD candidates. This was underlined by participants' answers to question 7 concerning additional topics for the ReMaT course (see below). Some quotations are cited below.

Q6b) Are you satisfied with the complementary skills training offered by your university?

If no, which kind of complementary training would you like to receive?

Selected quotations of participants

“About management – in future good scientist has to be good manager (no one is giving money on a plate – you have to know how to present yourself and your work.”

“There should be more courses on the topics that ReMat dealt with exp. interdisziplinary + multicultural projects.”

“At least some information about ways to work in science in Croatia (where can you work, how can you write projects, who can write projects, how to manage your career...)”

“More this type of skills, related to Europe and current issues in science.”

“Just like the course, something for the future, not only for research at the present moment of time.”

“ReMaT”

“How my PhD is valuable i.e pros and cons of a PhD for an employeer cause I think that as a "rat lab" we're not really aware of all our qualities and defaults and competences.”

“The training like ReMaT. I think it is really necessary.”

“As a project coordinator I am not satisfied, I think in Hungary there aren't enough management training for the research field.”

“Something that improves your more general skills. Team work,project management skills etc. Not on a theoretical level, more hands on, like solving a task in group, case studies etc.”

“I think it's necessary to get trained about how to manage your own carrier [sic], about communication and about general opportunities we can have after PhD.”

“European organisation of research / French organisation of research.”

“More managing skills to become more independent and confident to start sth. on your own.”

Question 5) What additional skills do you think PhD students need beyond scientific training (observers' questionnaire)

Question 5 in the observer feedback questionnaire corresponds to question 6b in the participants' questionnaire. The additional skills that were named in this question by the 11 observers are shown in Figure 4b below. They fall into the same categories as those mentioned by participants, with a significant similarity in the relative number of quotations.

Q5) What additional skills do you think PhD students need beyond scientific training?

All quotations of observers

“Communication and transferable skills.”

“Project management, communication skills, telling to industry”

“Scientific writing, presentation, communication, teambuilding, grant application, career opportunities in science, IP issues”

“Project management grant writing, career planning, communication skills, entrepreneurship, networking”

“Research management, economics, law, Bioinformatics (even more computer knowledge) and the list can be longer depending on in which direction the PhD wants to go.”

“communication, how to present, how to write project proposals, how to find relevant information”

“management, communication, IP, self development, risk management”

“interdisciplinary thinking + communication to discover the value of interdisciplinary acting, Team acting, Team management”

“organizing of learning and (lab) working social engagement”

“Project Management, teamwork skills, knowledge of competences, presentation skills, networking, preparation for professional and academic career, didactic skills, self-marketing”

”time/self management, fundraising, rhetoric/presentation skills, very good English skills, project leadership skills / training, networking skills”

Question 7) What would make PhD programmes attractive? (observers' questionnaire)

Additionally, the observers were asked what would make PhD programmes attractive. The answers covered many different aspects. Offering possibilities for networking between students and researchers, through conferences, social contacts and collaboration with different researchers was named six times, as was the availability of additional courses and/or training on transferable skills. One observer definitely expressed that “some programmes would have to be designed together with industry experts”. Other aspects were a good salary, good supervision, a good research environment and excellent research.

Q7) What would make PhD programmes attractive?

Quotations of observers

“To convince society that PhD is something ‘extra and useful’ ”

“more collaboration with other students & professors, more possibilities for networking, vocational training including professors/supervisors”

“PhD students are not in close relation to the supervisor, intensive networking with PhDs in and outside the institute, In addition to scientific courses, transferable skills”

“To become a researcher that is attractive for careers both within and outside academic good salary of course and that the programmes contain these extra things like courses and that there is opportunity to attend conferences and go abroad to present results.”

“Some programmes would have to be designed together with industry exports”

“Quality of research done, quality of research environment (initial man of research team) salary, good and controlled supervision, transferable skills developed in ‘professional’ environment”

“balance between mandatory and free courses, Network between PhD Students, receiving skills besides scientific knowledge”

“Networking, extra curricular courses, social contacts with other PhDs, excellent research environment”

“Quality of Supervisors, income level, Networking / career opportunities, offer of additional workshops e.g. for soft skills & reputation of instution / promotor (Dr. Väter / Mütter)”

Question 8, 8a, 8b) Are you satisfied with the complementary skills training offered by your institutions? If yes, why? If no, which kind of complementary training would you like to offer? (observers' questionnaire)

The observers were also asked whether they were satisfied with the complementary skills training offered by their institutions. Two observers who were not directly involved in doctoral training at an institution did not answer the question; two observers were satisfied (“We try to provide different types of courses and workshops for our PhD students for development of complementary skills, but we are continuously trying to get better” and “We have a wide range offer of training sessions dealing with many subjects those addressed here and others more linked to employment communication”), but seven were dissatisfied. One of the probable motives for participating as observers was the desire to improve their doctoral training. The kind of complementary skills observers would like to offer are very similar to those quoted by them in response to question 5.

Question 9) What problems do you encounter in offering such trainings in your institutions? (observers' questionnaire)

In addition, observers were asked what problems they encountered in offering such training (question 9). Five of the 11 observers answered this question. They had encountered a reluctance on the part of supervisors who did not see the sense of training or wanted to keep students in the lab (three times), the awareness of doctoral candidates themselves whose interest varies greatly and who did not have the time (twice), financial restrictions (twice) and perhaps a missing lobby for PhD (once). Additionally they found it difficult to find skilled trainers (once).

Question 8) Do you think such extra training would make you more attractive as a job candidate? (relates to Q6 in observers' questionnaire)

The observers and participants had to decide between 1 (yes, definitely) and 5 (no, not at all). The average score was 1.7, with most of the 108 participants thinking that such extra training would make them more employable. There were also some who did not think that employers would value such training or who assumed that this extra training would not be valued in their research system. Comments in response to this question showed more differentiated thinking. Respondents thought about pros and cons of the effect on employability and the limited effect of such training. Some felt that two days of training was too little to add value to a CV, others mentioned the importance of management skills in today's jobs. Some thought about the impact of training on their personalities and saw this as of value when it came to employability. Some quotations are cited below. Some thought the skills gained would be valued more by employers from industry than by research institutions, while some were convinced that such skills were necessary but had hitherto been insufficiently valued in the research system. Nevertheless, most felt that complementary skills training would enhance their employability –by giving them greater confidence in their skills, wider horizons and a demonstration of interest in more than pure research.

The average score of the observers was 1.3. Seven observers thought that such extra training would make PhD candidates very much more attractive to future employers, three scored with “2”. Thus the observers see the effect on transferable skills training more positively than the participants. Observers' comments on this question generally reflect their personal opinions that “PhD students will make different use of the training, but generally they and future employers will profit from the additional skills” and that “these extra trainings are absolutely

necessary”. One observer commented: “Yes definitively, I got different feedback from industry.”

Q8) Do you think such extra training would make you more attractive as a job candidate?

Selected quotations of participants

“Not this training listed in my CV but indirectly it will help to be more efficient [sic] as a scientist, i.e. better job candidate.”

*“For academics career in [our country] it still isn't appreciated, unfortunately.”
“More you know, more value you have.”*

“Not more attractive for another job; I think I need it for my current job as much as for some other. In these times you need to be good not only in your field - money gives opportunities for research, and you must to know how to find it, and how to present your work.”

“Depends on what job I would apply for. When trying to get a position at our university or academie of science, the contacts are usually more important than skills and trainings.”

“One reservation - can training really make up for lack of experience? (I am interviewing at the moment so I know that's the toughest issue!”

“At least this will show that you take some initiative to gain skills in research management, early in your career.”

“I feel myself more self confident about my capacities, skills and how to sell them. It gave me tips to understand how to take advantages of my successes but also of my errors.”

“Yes you are very well prepared for applying the EU projects, or at least think about applying in near future; thinking globally about your research - it's not a science for itself; we can see our research in a bigger picture.”

“A course by FP 6/7 and by EU (especially Belgian) company has a great power, pressure on my CV.”

“Directly it will not make a difference but ultimately it will. This training gives an opportunity to think in a different (business) way rather than only theoretical way.”

“Having a PhD degree is not enough for a person who wants to leave university and pure science and start to work in the industry, you should care of any additional trainings that make you more attractive.”

“When ReMaT gets more known it will be easy to put on the CV.”

Evaluation of feedback questionnaires

Fig. 4a) Which kind of complementary training would you like to receive? (participants' question 6b)											
	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%	
Research management skills						41 (80)					
Communication, scientific writing and presentation				20 (80)							
Grant application / fundraising					23 (80)						
Business / economy / technology transfer		8 (80)									
IPR and legal issues		8 (80)									
Career development and finding jobs		3 (80)									
Need for general training, incl. role models				16 (80)							
Training "like the ReMaT course"		7 (80)									

Fig. 4b) What additional skills do you think PhD students need beyond scientific training? (observers' question 5)											
	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%	
Research management skills									9 (11)		
Communication, scientific writing and presentation										9 (11)	
Grant application/ fundraising						5 (11)					
Business/economy/technology transfer						5 (11)					
IPR and legal issues						5 (11)					
Career development and finding jobs					4 (11)						
Networking				3 (11)							
Other additional skills						6 (11)					

Fig. 5 Overview of results to questions 1 to 2																					
	1	1.2	1.4	1.6	1.8	2	2.2	2.4	2.6	2.8	3	3.2	3.4	3.6	3.8	4	4.2	4.4	4.6	4.8	5
Q1 - Importance of topics																					
Q2 - Quality of presentations																					

Fig. 6 Importance of topics for future career (question 1)

Comments on Q1	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
Comments like " important, balanced, very good"	5 (54)									
Widens perspective for personal career plans	13 (54)									
Research management needed in research	8 (54)									
Skills usually not taught until and during PhD	7 (54)									
More valuable for people who want to go into industry	6 (54)									
Management skills needed for most jobs	4 (54)									
Even in academia	2 (54)									
No matter whether in academia or industry	1 (54)									
Would have liked more "problem case" exercises	1 (54)									
Negative comments	0 (54)									

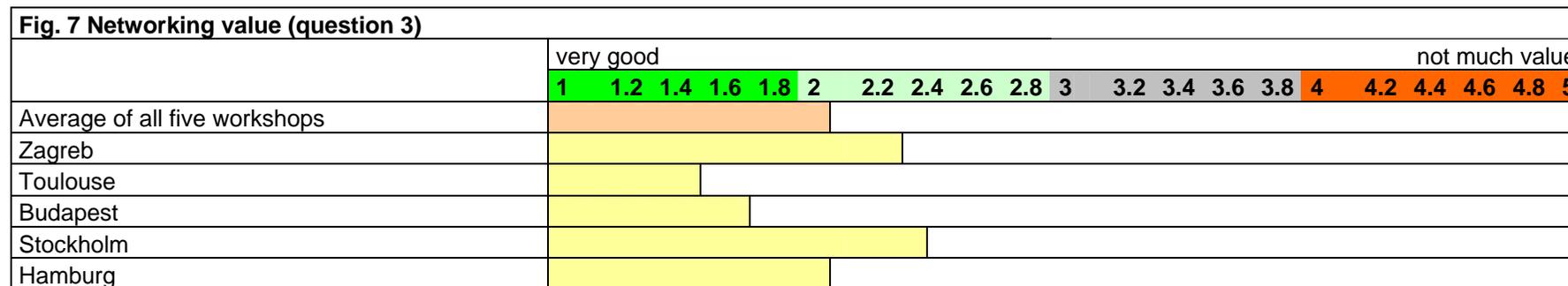


Fig. 8 Duration of the workshop (question 4)

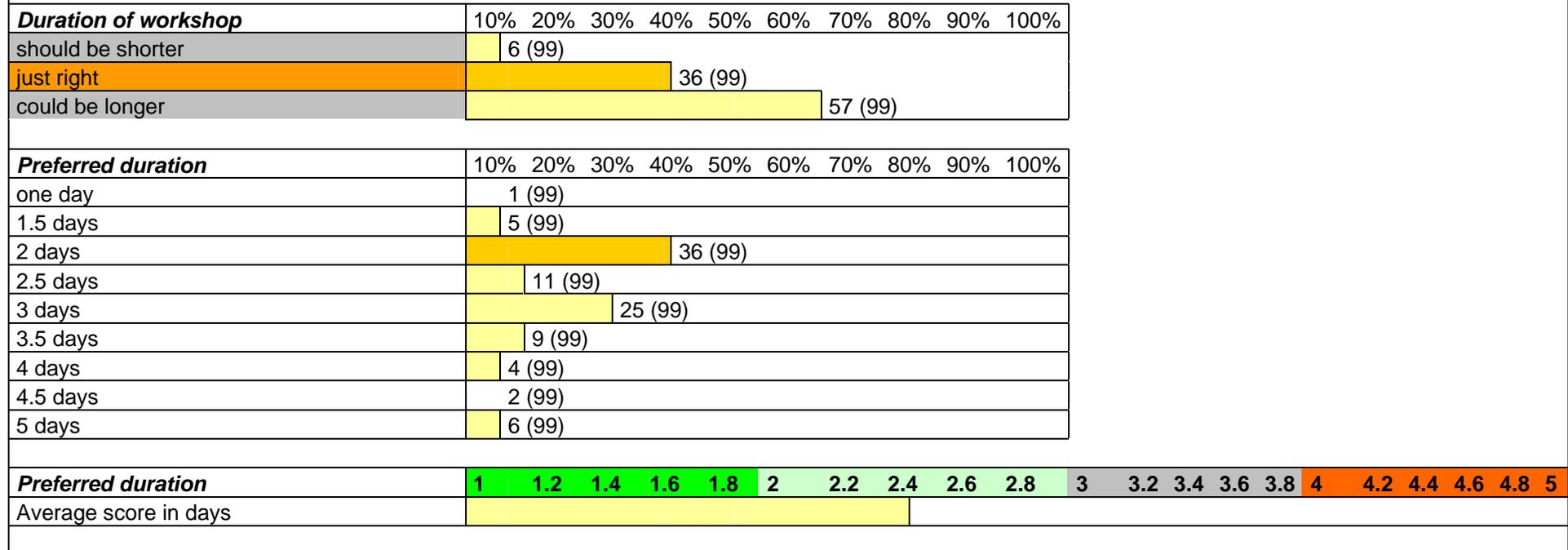


Fig. 9 What are the three most valuable things the workshop has given you and which was the best?

(Question 5 and question 5a total number of answers: 292 resp. 141)

More than three quotations per person were possible, the numbers indicate quotations (total number of quotations)

	Q5										Q5a											
	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%		
Look at the bigger picture outside the lab / new ideas / new ideas on career development	61 (292)												25 (141)									
Networking / contacts to interesting people	58 (292)												24 (141)									
Knowledge of project management	47 (292)												18 (141)									
Knowledge of grant acquisition and funding	41 (292)												20 (141)									
Knowledge of intellectual property issues	25 (292)												3 (141)									
Knowledge of commercialisation and technology transfer	15 (292)												8 (141)									
Open forum (guest speakers)	8 (292)												7 (141)									
Information on mobility portals	12 (292)												3 (141)									
Exercises: case studies and group work	12 (292)												11 (141)									
Everything was good / no favourite											11 (141)											

Fig. 10 What could be improved? (question 5b)

More than one quotation per person was possible, the numbers indicate quotations
(total number of quotations = 124)

	Q5c										
	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%	
More time for exercises				28 (124)							
More information (on different individual topics)			24 (124)								
More time in general / longer duration of workshop			17 (124)								
More on role models and jobs outside research		9 (124)									
More possibilities for networking		4 (124)									
Improvements in IPR module			16 (124)								
Other comments			24 (124)								

Fig. 11 What additional content would you have liked this course to cover? (question 7)

More than one quotation per person was possible, the numbers indicate quotations
(total number of quotations = 85)

	Q5c										
	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%	
Topics of workshops more detailed			13 (85)								
Nothing else			11 (85)								
Researcher mobility / personal grants and postdoc		8 (85)									
Other possibilities of finding funding (apart from EU)		7 (85)									
Communication skills		8 (85)									
About business and entrepreneurship		8 (85)									
Other topics concerning management		8 (85)									
Exercise on preparing my own project proposal		5 (85)									
Abound EU projects and research system		5 (85)									
Where to get more information		2 (85)									
Other wishes		10 (85)									

2.3 Area 3: Evaluation of the workshop

Question 1) Do you think the topics addressed by the workshop are important for your future career / for the future career of PhD students? (question 1 in both questionnaires)

Participants and observers had to decide between 1 (important) and 5 (not important). 114 participants answered this question. Almost all of the PhD students agreed that the topics were important or even very important for their future careers, the average rating being 1.6 (see figure 5). Only a few participants gave marks of 3, 4 or 5. Some ratings of “not important or not important at all” conflict with the comments section or to these participants’ activity/oral feedback during the course, however, suggesting a misunderstanding of the question. As these scores do not change the average significantly, we have not omitted them in the evaluation. There was no significant difference between the workshops. The participants in Toulouse gave the highest rating of 1.4 and those in Hamburg the lowest of 1.8. 54 participants used the space provided for comments on the importance of the topics. Comments can be classified in relation to the course itself, to future career prospects and to personal development. Results are shown in figure 6, while selected comments are cited below.

All 11 observers stated that the topics addressed were very important. One of them said: “It is very important to learn about other topics besides your specific research field. Otherwise you will have troubles after finishing your PhD.”

Question 2) Overall how did you find the presentations? (question 2 in both questionnaires)

Participants and observers had to decide between 1 (very good) and 5 (not much value). A total of 114 participants answered this question. Almost all participants rated the presentations as good or better, with the average rating 1.8 (see figure 5). There were only a few marks of 4 or 5. Again some marks indicating “not much value” do not tally with the respective commentaries or the activity/oral feedback of these participants during the course. Again the participants in Toulouse gave the best mark of 1.4 and the participants in Hamburg the lowest of 2.3.

The 11 observers evaluated the quality of the presentation at 1.2. 8 observers gave a mark of “very good”, 2 “good” and 1 between very good and good.

Question 3) Overall how did you find the networking value of the workshop? (question 3 in both questionnaires)

Participants and observers had to decide between 1 (very good) and 5 (not much value). 112 participants answered to this question. The networking value was recognised as “good” (1.9). The average marks for the five workshops ranged from good or better (Toulouse and Budapest), good (Hamburg) and between good and sufficient (Zagreb, Stockholm). No comments were made on this question, but the networking was among the best things in the workshop for a significant number of participants as can be seen from the responses to question 5 below.

The 11 observers evaluated the networking value with students from all over Europe with 1.2. Nine observers gave a mark of “very good (1)”, one “sufficient (3)” and one did not give an answer.

Q1) Do you think the topics addressed by the workshop are important for your future career / for the future career of PhD students? (question 1 in both questionnaires)

Selected quotations of participants

“This is the first time I spent some time working on this subject but the climate is changing - we need to learn more about management.”

“It was only during the workshop that I have realised just how much research management is important. I had never had this kind of training.”

“Yes, I think it’s important because jobs for PhD often require management, coordination and communication.”

“As PhD students we need to think about our future and ReMaT give us some important issues that we need to take into account to achieve our goals as researchers.”

“I think so. I also think that this workshop have matured me more to seek my next position.”

“It depends if you stay or not in academic research but even in academic research you need to know how to promote your innovation.”

“important, balanced, very good”

“Topics were very well prepared and organised.”

“Absolutely! This was a great idea!”

“I will now make more informed decisions [sic] and got a glimpse of what’s out there & pitfalls to avoid.”

“Certainly helps to make the choice of what career might look like and also what it will not look like.”

“The workshop gave a good overview how the real research world is working.”

“I’m glad I know more about my future options.”

Question 4) The duration of the workshop was...

The participants had to decide between “just right”, “should be longer” or “could be shorter” and were asked to specify their preferred duration (question 4a). In all, 113 participants answered the first question, 102 made clear suggestions on the preferred duration. Additionally, there were individual comments on how to adapt the duration of the workshop to the topics or which topics should be extended. These comments are too specific for further evaluation. On average the participants seemed content with the duration of the workshop or would have liked it to be longer. The average preferred duration is between 2 and 3 days, with

some wishing for a week's duration and others admitting that it would be difficult to attend a longer workshop than two days. There is no significant difference in the comments given at all five workshops, indicating that the ReMaT workshops achieved their aim of acting as an appetizer and eye-opener. Participants enjoyed being introduced to the topics and thus would have liked more. In correlation to the differing wishes for detailed trainings expressed in question 5c this indicates that the duration of 2 days fits fairly well into the schedules of PhD candidates. Figure 8 summarises the results.

On average the observers also preferred a duration of 2.4 days. This is almost exactly the same as for participants. Four observers preferred 2 days, one suggested a weekend, one suggested 2.5 days and 4 observers preferred 3 days.

Question 5) What are the three most valuable things the workshop has given you? and question 5a) Which was the best? (participants' questionnaire)

Of all respondents, 113 participants answered question 5, while 105 answered question 5a. As can be anticipated from the individual nature of the questions, the answers differ widely. Nevertheless 20% valued very highly insights gained into the outside world, new ideas in general and information on career options. Further, 20% valued the networking with PhD candidates and professionals from all over Europe. Favourite topics were "Managing interdisciplinary research projects" and "Acquiring grants in a European context" (each about 15% of quotations). Question 5a mirrors question 5. There are no significant differences. 11% indicated explicitly that they enjoyed everything and had no favourite. Figure 9 gives an overview of the three most valuable things participants gained from the workshop as well as their favourite thing.

Question 5b) What could be improved? (participants' questionnaire)

A total of 101 participants answered this question. As more than one answer was possible, there are 124 suggestions for improvement which differ highly according to the individual needs of the PhD candidates. Many would have liked more time for exercises or lectures or for the workshop to be longer. There was a great appetite for more information from role models who had switched between industry and research, or who had jobs outside research, as well as for plenty of detailed information on topics closely related to the workshop content. Figure 10 gives an overview of the results. All these suggestions fit well with the project team's aim of creating an appetite for more detailed information. Regarding the modules of the workshop, there were some hints on improvement but no generalisations can be made on missing topics or dispensable modules. A significant number of participants wanted improvements in the module on IPR issues. The comments differed widely from a wish for more detailed information to a desire to omit the subject altogether. Whereas some were already well informed, in part due to special courses on IPR at their universities, others had almost no knowledge of it and thus had difficulties with the topic. Additionally, awareness of the importance of IPR issues seemed less than that of other topics.

Question 7) What additional content would you have liked this course to cover? (participants' questionnaire)

We received 85 responses to this question. Of these, 13% of the participants would not have wanted the workshop to cover anything else, whereas 13% would have liked to have gone into the existing topics in more detail. Further results are shown in Figure 11. Most of the topics suggested expand on the overview given by ReMaT or reflect individual participants' needs

for in-depth knowledge of specific sub-topics. They provide further confirmation that the concept of the ReMaT workshop is sound and show that our aim of whetting participants' appetites has worked. This question is related to question 6b.

Question 10) If you would like to make any other comments please use the space below.

Question 10 received 49 comments, which gave a broad variety of individual impressions. Of the total responses, 31 used this space to express their appreciation and enthusiasm for the workshop. The remainder expressed very different suggestions for slight improvements and provided individual wishes or remarks on the workshop. Only one person expressed any real criticism and disappointment ("The scope of the workshop is a bit unclear. Thought it would be more hands on – project management training. Now it's more about how to commercialize science and be bilingual.") All comments reflected the desire for more training, which in some cases was obviously stimulated by attending the workshop. Some quotations from participants are cited below.

Seven written comments were provided by the observers. Six of them expressed their compliments on the workshop such as "Very nice team – a challenge to deliver so much information in such a short time, but a success – absolutely necessary to find ways to go on with this action". Two suggested that it would be sensible to deepen each topic, with one of them acknowledging the format of ReMaT as a teaser and another suggesting offering parallel and longer units on the second afternoon, probably in connection with the longer format of a weekend rather than two days. Six of the observers said in the questionnaire that they would like to host a ReMaT workshop, one would prefer another (longer) format of ReMaT and four did not answer this question.

3. Conclusion

The average marks on the quality of the workshop together with the comments in question 5 indicate that the concept of ReMaT fits very well into the current needs of PhD candidates. There is no indication for significant changes in duration or content. Especially the networking facilities provided by the international mixture of participants, the group work and additional networking facilities are highly recognised and valued by the PhD candidates.

The results of the evaluation cannot be regarded as representative with regard to general needs of PhD candidates or supervisors or country-specific answers as the total number of feedback questionnaires is less than 150 and not all European countries are represented among the participants. Additionally the participants were not selected by us but came on their own decision following a widespread invitation. This means that they themselves probably represent a group of people who are more active than others and reflect more about PhD education. Nevertheless the results produce a telling anecdotal snapshot which confirms other results based on our talks with members of the two focus groups and our advisory board as well as studies on transferable skills training in PhD education.

Given the high return rate of the feedback questionnaires, the evaluation is representative regarding the content of the workshop and its value for the participants.

Question 10) If you would like to make any other comments please use the space below.

Selected quotations of participants

“I liked a lot this workshop. I didn't come as complete "tabula rasa" but this new information put some new enthusiasm/curiosity in my way of looking on professional life.”

“More speakers can be invited in order to tell their experiences in research management, their communication skills & socialization skills, time for exercises was not enough to discuss.”

“You can work as much as you can but if you don't know how to present it to commission you just stay on the level your on - for high level of research you need to make groups of people (various preferations and skills), find money and bring your brilliant idea to end!”

“Dinner was very nice, not because of food (but it was tasty) but because of social interactions. This workshop should cost one more day. There's no chance to see the town. Second day lectures should start later (11 o'clock) because of parting last night. Very good organized!!!!!! Good speakers! Nice atmosphere. Need more discussions.”

“Thank you soo much. Now I have a much better view on the future and do not fear that time after PhD Great Workshop.”

“Thanks for the excellent workshop. You wet my appetite.”

“I benefit a lot from ReMat Workshop. Thank you very much for your organisation. I will share my knowledge as soon as I go to my institute.”

“I hope to see the Remat-Team giving a work-shop in Vienna, as a part of our PhD Programme.”

“I was positively surprised that the majority of lectures/trainers were women, since this is never the case in any conference. It encourages to see that women can be that successful and strong.”

A TEMPLATE OF PARTICIPANTS' FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: _____

Feedback questionnaire for ReMaT workshop in Toulouse, 5 to 6 February 2008 (participating PhD candidates)

1) Do you think the topics addressed by the workshop are important for your future career?

Important 1 2 3 4 5 *not important*

Comment

2) Overall how did you find the presentations?

Very good 1 2 3 4 5 *not much value*

3) Overall how did you find the networking value of the workshop?

Very good 1 2 3 4 5 *not much value*

4) The duration of the workshop was....

just right *should be longer* *could be shorter*

4a) Please specify your preferred duration:

5) What are the three most valuable things the workshop has given you?

5a) Which was the best?

5b) What could be improved?

A TEMPLATE OF PARTICIPANTS' FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

6) Are you satisfied with the complementary skills training offered by your university?

Yes no

6a) If yes, why?

6b) If no, which kind of complementary training would you like to receive?

7) What additional content would you have liked this course to cover?

8) Do you think such extra training would make you more attractive as a job candidate?

Yes, definitely 1 2 3 4 5 no, not at all

Comments:

9) Please provide a short description of the essentials of your individual PhD programme. How do you feel about your PhD programme?

10) If you would like to make any other comments please use the space below.

A TEMPLATE OF PARTICIPANTS' FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

Some personal details for our evaluation:

11) What is your PhD subject?

12) Which year are you in?

Not yet begun *year 1* *year 2* *year 3* *year 4* *year ___* *finished*

Comments

13) When do you hope to complete your degree?

2008 *2009* *2010* *2011* *2012* *_____*

Comments

14) What's your age?

15) Have you worked prior to your PhD?

B TEMPLATE OF OBSERVERS' FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

8b) If no, which kind of complementary training would you like to offer?

9) What problems do you encounter in offering such trainings in your institutions?

10) What percentage of your PhD candidates end up going into academic research? Industrial research? Leaving research and going into other fields?

11) If you would like to make any other comments please use the space below.

12) Are you interested in hosting ReMaT workshops?

Yes

no

If you're interested in hosting ReMaT workshops please contact:

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