



**World
Physiotherapy**
Europe region

**Report - Research Awareness in the
Europe region - A Survey of Member
Organisations**

Education Matters Working Group (EMWG)

NOTED

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**REPORT - RESEARCH AWARENESS IN THE EUROPE REGION - A SURVEY OF MEMBER
ORGANISATIONS**
Europe region
Education Matters Working Group (EMWG)

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1. ABSTRACT

1.1. Aim

To provide an outline of the current position of research interests, awareness and participation of Member Organisations (MOs) that may be required for the Europe region.

1.2. Methods

Information was collected via an online survey instrument sent directly to 37 Member Organisations (MOs) in Europe. The survey, developed by the Education Matters Working Group (EMWG) for this purpose, was circulated in September 2021. A reminder email was sent in November 2021.

1.3. Results

A total of 31 responses were received from MOs (response rate 84%). 22 responses (59.5%) were collected initially and 9 responses (24.3%) after the first reminder. A representation of the MOs that responded is presented below in Figure 1.



Figure 1 Survey Respondents

Respondents were asked the question 'How important do you think that research is for our profession?'. MOs could respond on a five point scale ranging from very important to not important and 94% of respondents (n=29) believed that research was very important, while others thought it was important (n=1) or moderately important (n=1) (Figure 2).

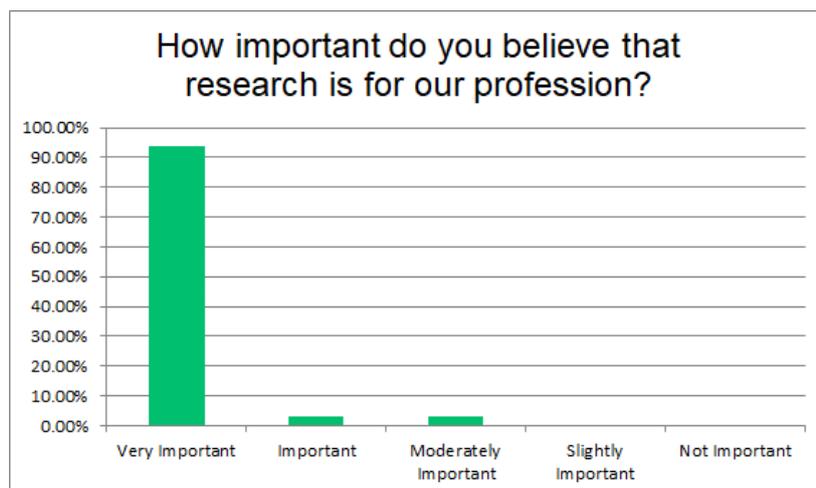


Figure 2 The importance of research to MOs

Further information collected through the survey is presented in the following sections:

- Research Supports and Structures
- Research Activity
- Research Awareness
- Research Needs of Member Organisations

2. RESEARCH SUPPORTS AND STRUCTURES

MOs were asked if they had any research policies. Respondents reported yes 45% (n=14) and no 55% (n=17) (Figure 3).

When asked for more detail on this, MOs reported having research priorities and research statements within their corporate plans and constitutions. MOs also responded on following policies for research of the Ministry of Health as well as Ministry of Education and internal policies of particular universities. MOs reported using the results of research in political work, e.g. implementation of Direct Access, Advanced Practice and to inform the public/politicians about the positive effects of physiotherapy. One physiotherapy association reported trying to support and start up research communities through sponsoring professorships and using part of the membership subscription for a research foundation.

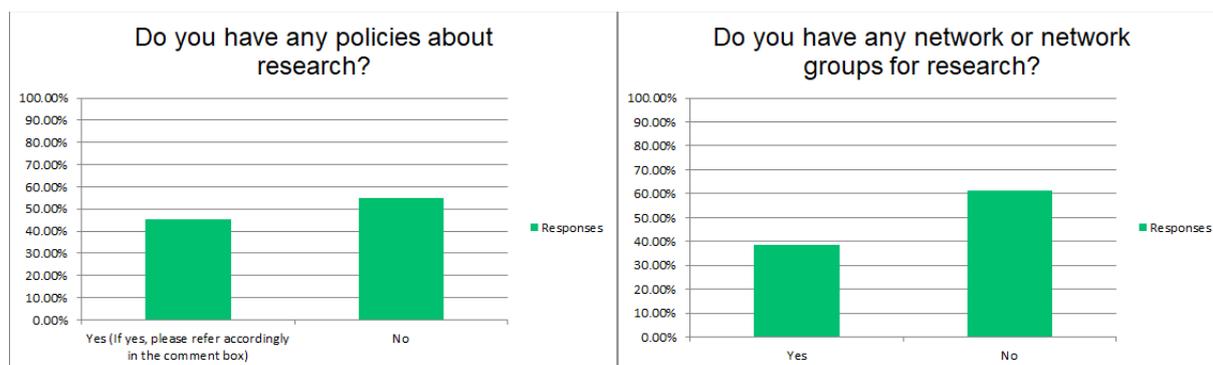


Figure 3 Research Policies and Networks

MOs were also asked if they had any network or network groups for research. In total 39% (n=12) of respondents reported yes while 61% (n=19) replied no. MOs were asked if they had a special member/ members who promote/s research within their association. A total of 8 MOs replied yes (26%) while 23 MOs replied no (74%).

In response to the question 'Do you have any funds/ financial support for research in your budget?' 35% of MOs replied yes (n=11) while 65% replied no (n=20). The MOs that reported yes to this question, were then asked what organisations/ sectors/ individuals support them. The most common response was government ministries (54%, n=7) (Figure 4). Additional responses listed under 'other' sources of funding included other non-governmental civic organisations, municipalities, self-funded by society, collaborations with academic institutions or universities, physiotherapy association funding etc.

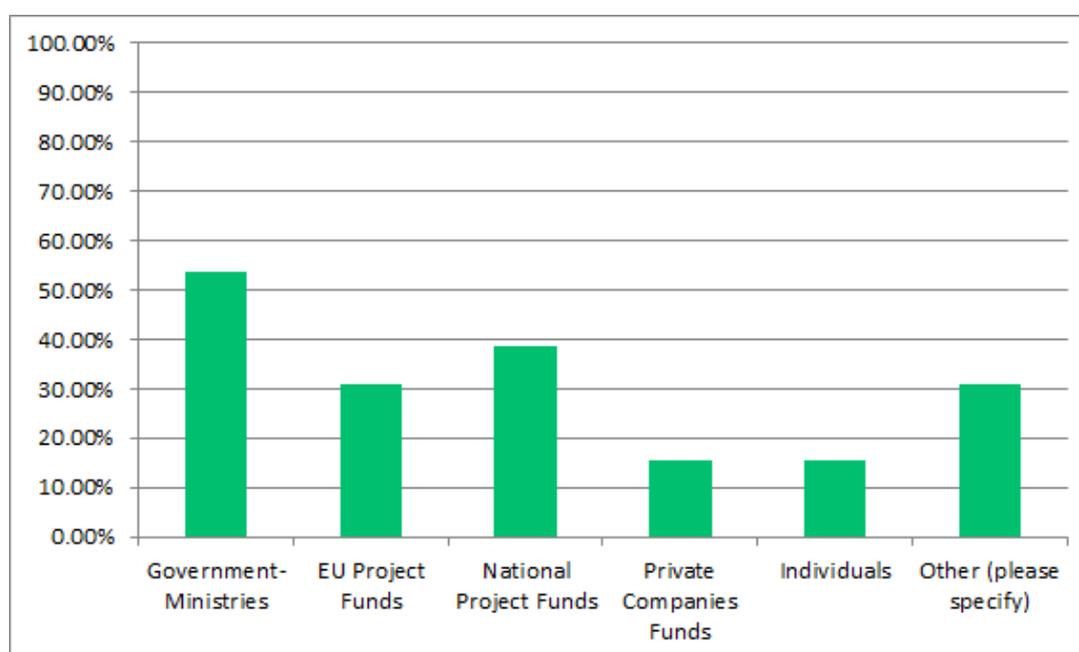


Figure 4 Sources of Research Funding Identified by MOs

3. RESEARCH ACTIVITY

MOs were also asked if they or their physiotherapy association are involved in or running any research studies or projects as coordinator or partner. In response, 42% (n=13) of MOs replied yes, while 58% (n=18) replied no.

MOs were asked what type of support they offered these studies. The most common response to this question was financial support (77%, n=10), followed by expertise (69%, n=9), access to resources and facilities (46%, n=6). Responses listed under 'other' support included coordination, advice and implementations for health promotion and prevention, clinical practices or exercise programs, coordinator or group membership for some health policies.

The majority of respondents (MOs) estimated that 0-20% of their members engage in research (77%, n=24 MOs). Only one MO reported that 20-40% of members engage in research while 19% of MOs (n=6) responded 'don't know' to this question.

MOs were asked about any barriers to being involved in or running any research studies or projects in their association (Figure 5). The most common barrier identified was financial barriers (84%, n=16) followed by knowledge (21%, n=4), lack of interest (37%, n=7) and other (21%, n=4). 'Other' responses included time constraints, as many members are already engaged in research but time remains a barrier within their institutions

'Other' responses included time constraints, as many members are already engaged in research but required time remains a barrier within their institutions or a lack of time for the research among physiotherapists working clinically because of high clinical workloads.

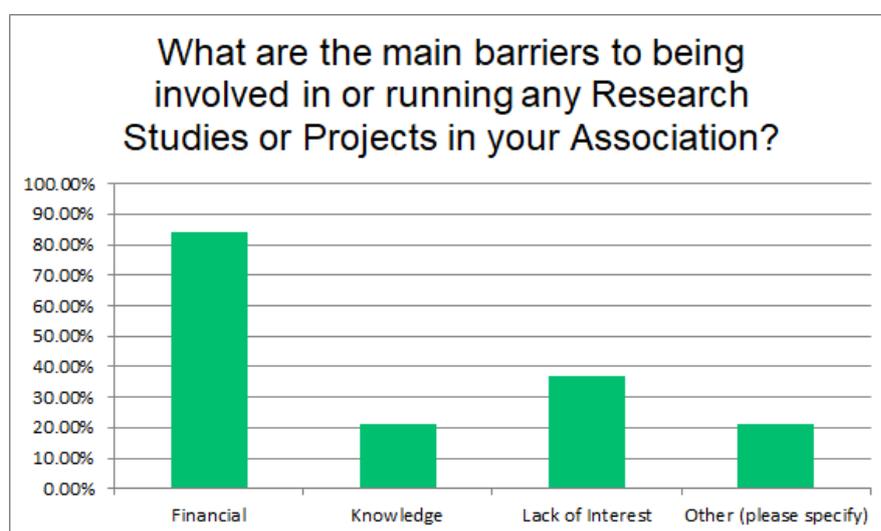


Figure 5 Barriers to Engaging in Research

4. RESEARCH AWARENESS

A total of 90% of MOs (n=28) reported that they encourage their members to engage in research. The kind of activities undertaken to facilitate awareness of research among their members are listed in Figure 6. Activities listed under 'other' included national congresses, awards at national congresses, publication of research results in the associations' magazine, provision of research bursaries for members and access to research networks.

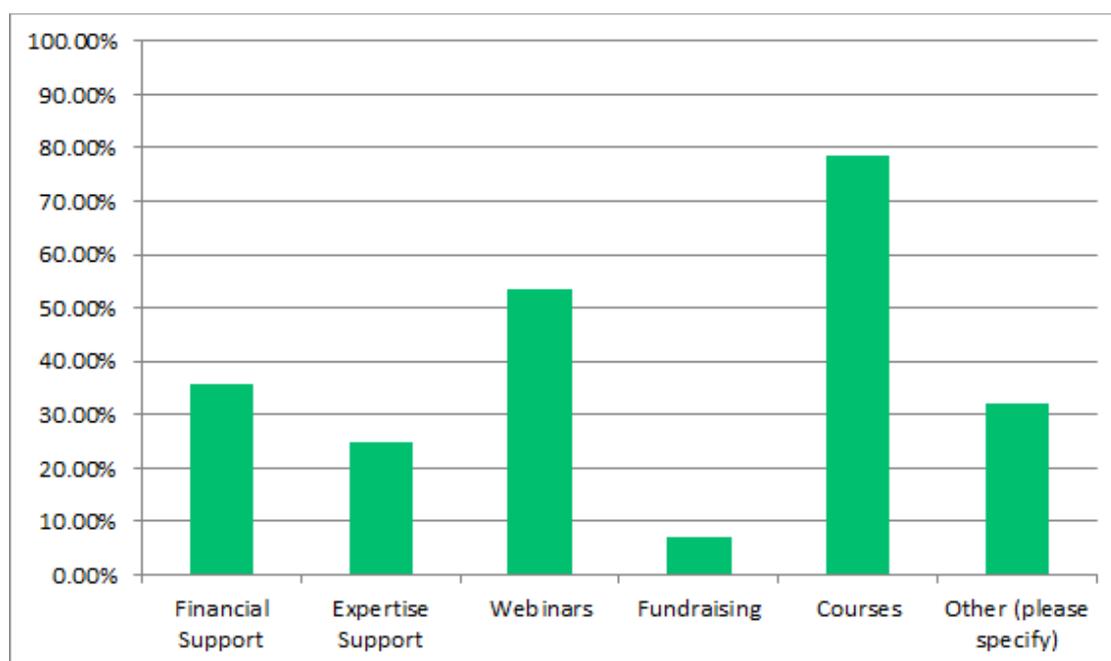


Figure 6 Activities undertaken by MOs to facilitate awareness of research among members

When asked the question do you run/offer any platform or congress for your members to present their research results, 81% (n=25) of respondents replied yes, while 19% (n=6) replied no. The majority of MOs run these events every two years (37%, n=9) followed by every year (42%, n=10). Responses in 'other' included more than twice a year since MOs have other congresses of subgroups, joint congresses and some webinars in a year, every 4 years, every third or fourth year. The main reasons for not offering a platform/congress are outlined in Figure 7.

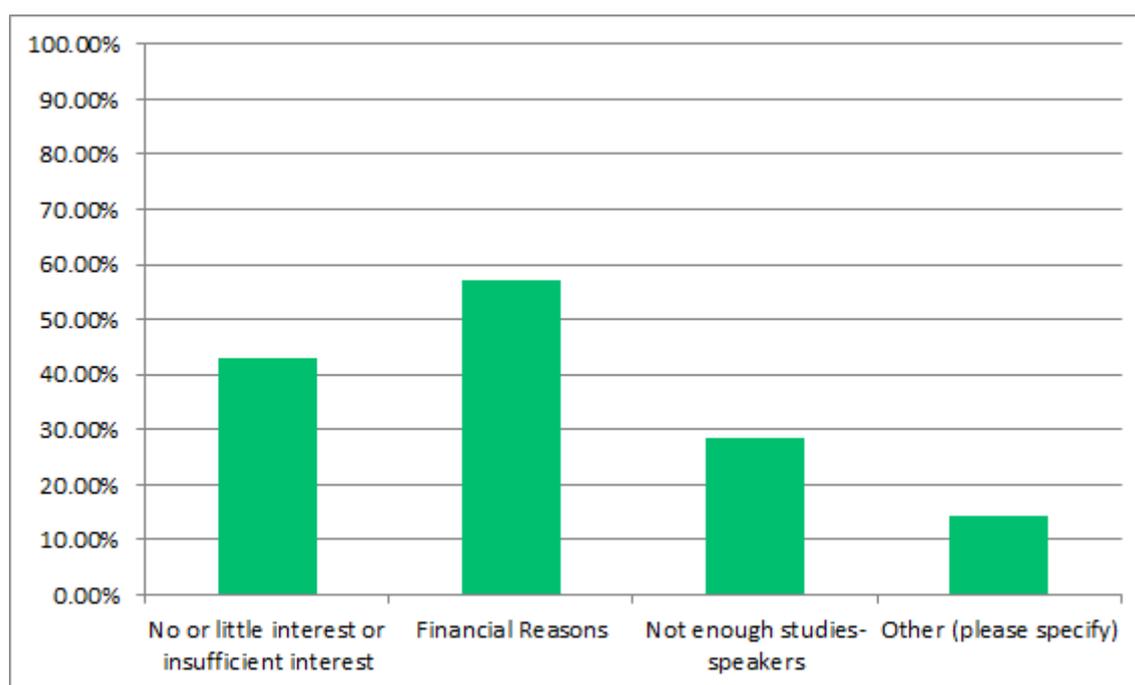


Figure 7 Main Barriers to MOs offering congress

5. RESEARCH NEEDS OF MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

A total of 74% of MOs (n=23) reported that they need help in facilitating/ promoting research activities in their country. When asked what help was needed, the responses given are included in Figure 8. Responses under 'other' included the logistics of co-ordinating a large-scale research study, raising overall awareness among physiotherapists and how to convince policy makers that time for research within working time is necessary and further collaboration with academic institutions.

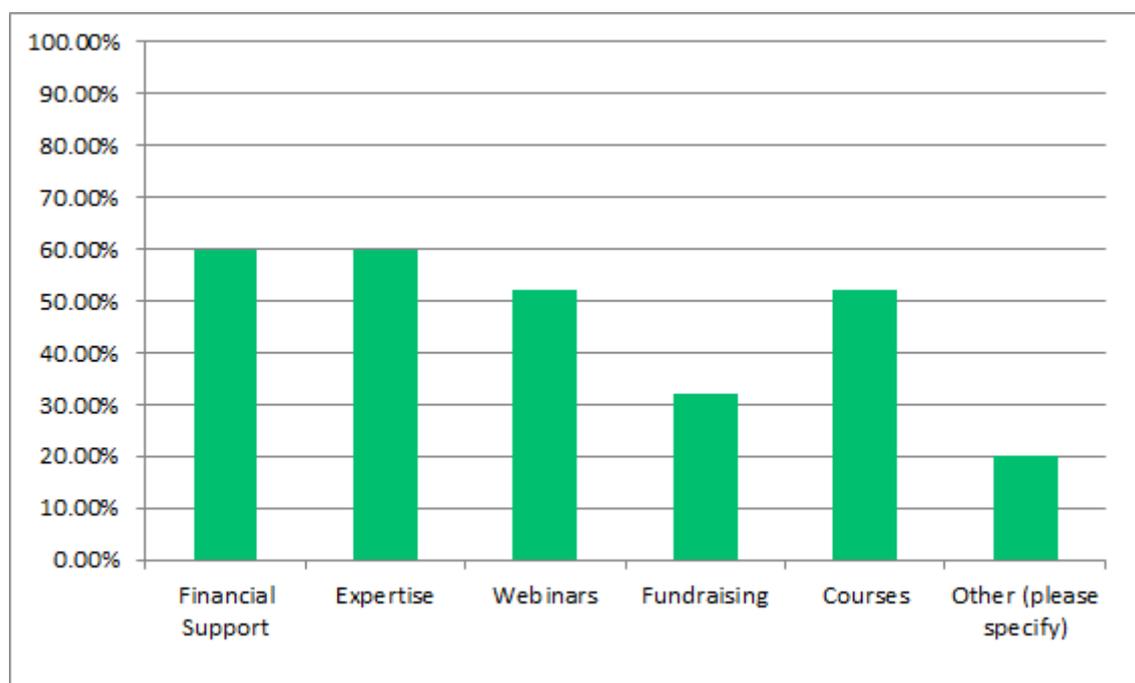


Figure 8 Help needed by MOs to promote research

The main barriers, apart from finance, to engaging their members in research reported by MOs are given in Figure 9. Responses under 'other' included where a large number of members are private practitioners and have no time to engage in research, lack of time, lack of schedule flexibility in busy workplaces, lack of time for collecting the data for the research and lack of a clear career path for members who want to pursue a research career (there are not enough research positions).

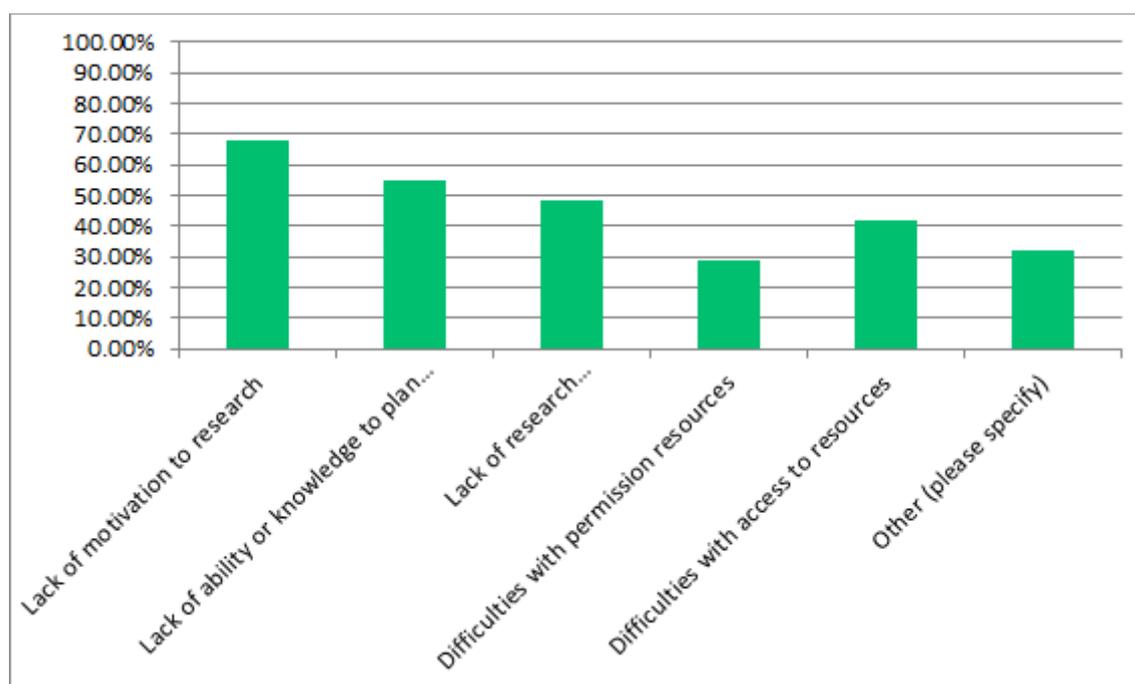


Figure 9 Main barriers to engaging members in Research reported by MOs

When asked to give recommendations to facilitate research among their members, the most common response was access to financial resources. All responses are listed in Figure 6. Recommendations under ‘other’ included networking with other professions (Doctors/Nurses/engineers etc). A total of 70% (n=21) of MOs believed that webinars/courses on research offered by the Education Matters Working Group would be helpful to facilitate research awareness among their members. A variety of webinars/courses topics were suggested by MOs including research methodology, webinars on research awareness and usefulness, the pathway from clinician to researcher, how to be funded in another EU country and the value of research. Other suggestions included information on developing a research hypothesis, identifying literature, critiquing the evidence and extracting information, types of research studies, research ethics and governance, data analysis and visualisation, writing for grants and publications, patient and public Involvement in research, dissemination issues in research, international collaboration in research, mentorship in research, introduction to qualitative research, the implementation of evidence-based research into practice.

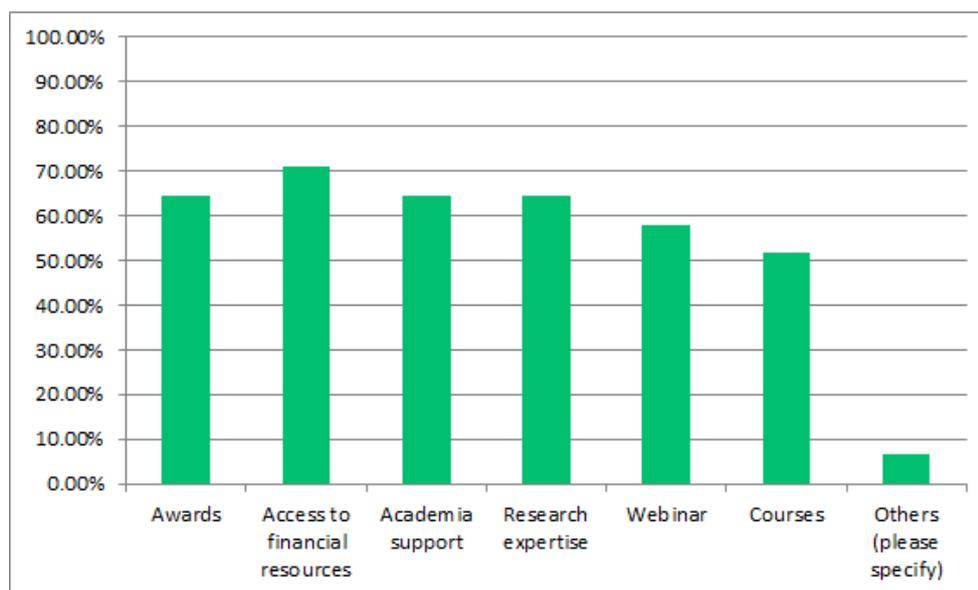


Figure 10 Recommendations from MOs on how to facilitate research among members

6. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The following comments were made by MOs under additional comments:

- We have to have more collaborations and networking with the industrial sectors and the companies of health care products and health technology to find funds and resources for research in addition to professional advocacy.
- There is a minority of our members that are able to participate or to do research due to their connection with the Universities (and some HEIs) and their remunerated efforts for time spent.
- The main problem appears to be how to get people involved - not offering courses, webinars etc.

7. LIMITATIONS OF THIS REPORT

It is not known who completed the survey for the member organisations or the familiarity of the respondent with the subject matter.

8. POINTS OF CONSIDERATION

- Some MOs have a more organised research structures in place and offer more support than other MOs.
- A large proportion of MOs report they would benefit from help with promoting research to their members.
- Many of the suggested webinars and topics are the areas that the Europe region could be involved in creating and delivering.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR CLINICAL EDUCATION IN PHYSIOTHERAPY IN EUROPE REGION

According to the results of the survey and additional comments directed by the MOs, the EMWG makes the following recommendations and future directions:

- Europe region has to emphasise the importance of research for professional development to the MOs and to note that MOs also have to participate and raise research activities both in the association and on a member basis.
- Europe region could give some help to MOs by organising webinars, courses and seminars for promoting research.
- MOs would facilitate members to undertake research and promote their engagement of research.
- MOs could promote research awareness to their members by organising congresses, courses and webinars in collaboration with some universities and academic staff
- MOs would also establish a “research group” which facilitates research and provide education for research for their members.
- MOs may find financial and academic support for their research if they engaged with industrial sector, companies, universities, other civic organisations, national institutions or governmental departments as research partner/s.

10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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