



5TH EUROPEAN PUBLIC HEALTH CONFERENCE

All inclusive Public Health

7-10 November 2012, St. Julian's, Malta

MALTA 2012 

RESULTS OF THE PARTICIPANTS' EVALUATION

This publication arises from the conference "Malta 2012" which has received funding from the European Union, in the framework of the Public Health Programme (20114301).

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In collaboration with EUPHA and the Maltese Association of Public Health Medicine

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Summary of main results

A total of 1198 public health professionals from 60 countries attended the Malta 2012 conference, of which 324 participants (30% of all registrants) filled out the evaluation form.

Overall outcome:

72.7 % of the participants were very satisfied/satisfied with the Malta 2012 conference

Networking:

75.8 % of the participants were very satisfied/satisfied with the networking possibilities offered at Malta 2012

Information provided:

83.4 % of the participants were very satisfied/satisfied with the information provided before, during and after Malta 2012

Exhibition area:

81.5% of all respondents visited the exhibition area. 59.4 % of the participants were very satisfied/satisfied with the exhibition area at Malta 2012

Plenary programme:

72.3% of the participants were very satisfied/satisfied with the plenary programme at Malta 2012.

Parallel programme:

76.9% of the participants were very satisfied/satisfied with the parallel programme at Malta 2012.

Moderated posters programme:

75.1% of participants participated in the moderated posters programme. 58.0% were very satisfied/satisfied with the moderated posters programme at Malta 2012.

Pre conferences:

32.5% of participants attended one or more pre-conferences; 89.8% were very satisfied/satisfied with the pre conferences at Malta 2012.

Registration:

90.8% of the participants were very satisfied/satisfied with the registration at Malta 2012.

Conference venue:

83.7% of the participants were very satisfied/satisfied with the conference venue at Malta 2012.

Catering:

74.2% of the participants were very satisfied/satisfied with the catering and the social programme at Malta 2012.

Abstract submission:

88.2% of the respondents were very satisfied/satisfied with the abstract handling system at Malta 2012.

Future conference (Brussels 2013):

85.8% of the participants remember receiving the first announcement for our next conference;

32.1% of the participants were aware of the second brochure (Partnership and exhibitor prospectus) in the conference bag.

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Introduction

The 5th European Public Health Conference took place in St. Julian's, Malta from 7-10 November 2012. The conference was organised by EUPHA, the Maltese Association of Public Health Medicine and ASPHER. A total of 1198 public health professionals from 60 countries attended the conference. 802 abstracts and 73 workshops were submitted, scored and evaluated. The programme included 7 plenary sessions, 182 oral presentations in 31 parallel sessions, 35 workshops, and 441 posters presented in 59 moderated poster sessions. More information on the conference and the organisation can be found in the Malta 2012 report.

Each European Public Health Conference is subject to a multi-layered evaluation. The objectives of this evaluation are:

- to learn from our experiences;
- to improve the organisation of future conferences.

The full evaluation report is an internal document that is distributed to our partners and future organisers. This part of the evaluation, the participants' evaluation, is made publicly accessible on the conference website.

The results presented here are based on the evaluation by the conference participants. 1089 participants¹ received two emails shortly after the conference (on 14 and 20 November 2011) inviting them to evaluate the conference through a web-based questionnaire. A total of 324 participants (29.8% of all invitees) filled out the evaluation form.

The questionnaire included 66 questions:

- 35 questions to indicate satisfaction using a 5-scale rating (poor, sufficient, average, good, excellent)
- 16 open questions (for comments)
- 13 Yes/No questions
- 2 tick box questions.

The questions in the evaluation form were divided in 15 parts:

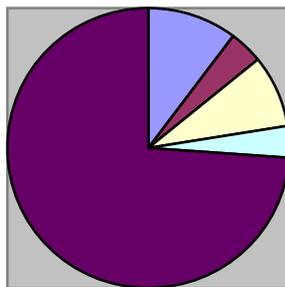
1. Background of the participants
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13. Abstract handling
14. Future conference (Brussels 2013)
15. Any other input

¹ Of the 1198 registered for the conference, we did not include the late cancellations (45) and the pre conference only participants (64) in this evaluation.

1. Background of the participants

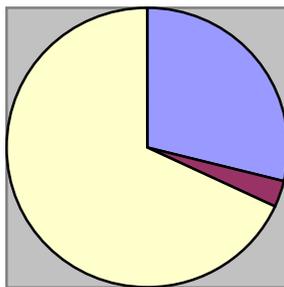
For the first time, we included two questions on the background of the participants and the reason why they participated in the Malta 2012 conference. The rationale was to find out who we are reaching with our conference. Unfortunately, the answers do not give a clear picture and do not answer the rationale for adding these questions. In future evaluations, we will adapt the questions.

What is your background/work field?



Respondents: 324

Why did you attend Malta 2012?



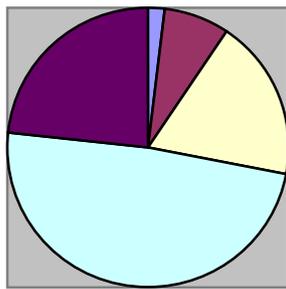
Respondents: 125

2. General questions

72.7 % of the participants were very satisfied/satisfied with the Malta 2012 conference

How important was the conference theme "All inclusive Public Health" for your work?

The European Public Health Conference in Malta 2012 had a very general theme to include the very large definition of public health. Comments from the respondents included the theme being too broad and the focus being too much on research.

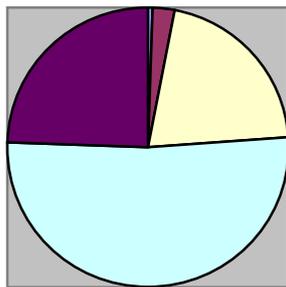


Respondents:	324
Average score:	3.84

How would you rate the conference as a whole?

The Malta 2012 conference included one Satellite conference, 13 pre conferences, one cancelled pre conference, the scientific programme (see below) and 47 closed meetings (EUPHA, ASPHER, APHEA, WHO Europe, EuSanH, etc.).

Most comments received appreciated the scientific content and technical organisation. The atmosphere was described by one respondent as 'friendly'. Some comments were received on the high number of activities (too many parallel sessions) and the walking distance between the two locations.

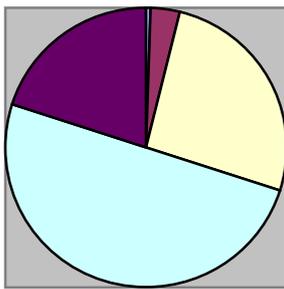


Respondents:	324
Average score:	3.97

How would you rate the scientific programme as a whole?

The scientific part of the programme included the 7 plenary sessions, the 66 oral sessions, 59 moderated poster sessions and the 11 lunch meetings. Comments included below are on the scientific programme as a whole. More detailed comments on individual parts of the scientific programme are included under sections 6, 7, and 8.

Most respondents appreciated the wide range of interesting and topical issues, which provides a good overview of (public) health in Europe. The fact that some plenaries went beyond the health perspective was appreciated. Several commented on the overlap of sessions on a similar topic or underrepresented themes (e.g. infectious diseases). It was recommended that more practice relevance is included and that the division into sessions can be improved.



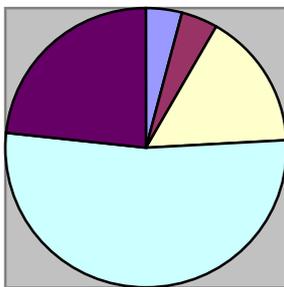
Respondents:	324
Average score:	3.86

3. Networking

75.8 % of the participants were very satisfied/satisfied with the networking possibilities offered at Malta 2012

We aim to offer networking at our conferences, how did this work for you?

Comments were mainly received on the wish that the time for networking could be increased. There were some comments on the difficulty to network for newcomers to the conference. The pre conferences and the EUPHANxt Coffee Corners were seen as an excellent opportunity to network.



Respondents:	314
Average score:	3.87

Do you have any ideas on how to improve the networking at our conferences?

Several interesting ideas were proposed in this free text box, among which:

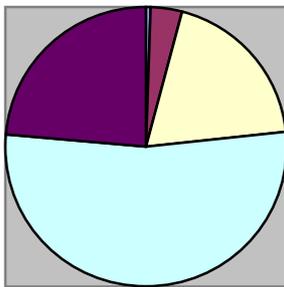
- Explore the possibility of using the EPICOH congress experience of linking a senior and junior researcher through a database and have a lunch meeting;
- Thematic meet and greet coffee break or lunch sessions ('Mix and mingle' example of the APHA conference);
- Organise more activities for the younger participants;
- Ensure to have enough lounge areas to meet;
- Organise sessions to find partners for research/projects;
- Offer to subscribe to 'meet the experts' sessions.

4. Information provided

83.4 % of the participants were very satisfied/satisfied with the information provided before, during and after Malta 2012

How would you rate the conference website?

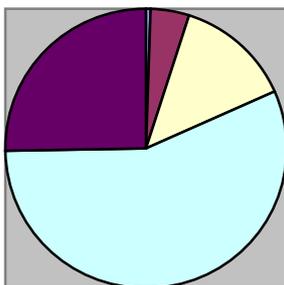
The conference website is well appreciated. Comments were mainly aimed at improving the information on poster location and presentation.



Respondents:	318
Average score:	3.96

How would you rate the online conference programme?

The online conference programme offers the possibility to plan your activities, search for specific presentations, topics or authors and is – in general – highly appreciated. Comments included that the changes in the programme could be better indicated and information on the location of some of the poster sessions could have been better.



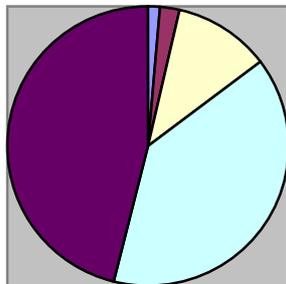
Respondents:	317
Average score:	4.01

Did you create your own personal programme?

More than one third of the respondents (N=265) used this extra service, which allowed for creating and printing your personal preferences for the conference programme.

If yes, how would you rate this extra service?

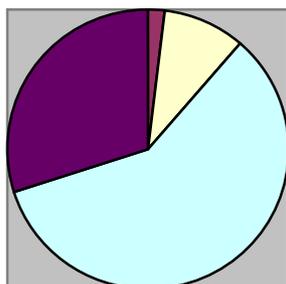
Even though this extra service was highly appreciated, some improvements were proposed. For instance the possibility to download the personal programme into PDF or readable on a mobile device were mentioned.



Respondents:	137
Average score:	4.26

How would you rate the information provided in the conference newsletters?

The email newsletters (two are sent out to all registered participants before the conference) remain highly appreciated.



Respondents:	306
Average score:	4.17

How can we improve the provided information on the conference?

Some ideas to improve the conference information were proposed, including the idea to develop an app based conference programme.

5. Exhibition area

*81.5% of the participants visited the exhibition are at least once.
59.4 % of the participants were very satisfied/satisfied with the exhibition area at Malta 2012*

The exhibition area was organised in the Spinola Suite, where coffee and lunch was served. There were 16 exhibitors present:

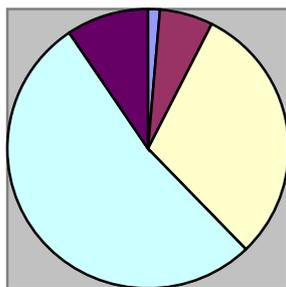
- 4 European institutions;
- 5 publishers;

- 2 European NGOs;
- 2 national members; and
- 3 commercial exhibitors.

Did you visit the exhibition area?

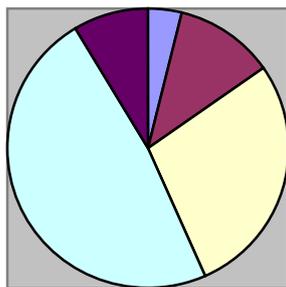
Of the 314 respondents, 81.5% confirmed they visited the exhibition area at least once.

If yes, how would you rate the stands at the conference?



Respondents:	264
Average score:	3.63

How relevant were the exhibition stands according to you?



Respondents:	266
Average score:	3.46

More information on the exhibition area

More than two-thirds of the respondents took brochures/leaflets from the exhibition stands.

8.6% would like to see more exhibition stands at the EPH conferences. Several respondents gave tips on who to contact for more exhibition stands, which included universities/schools of public health; publishers; other NGOs working in this field; and national institutes.

6. Plenary programme

72.3% of the participants were very satisfied/satisfied with the plenary programme at Malta 2012

The 5th European Public Health Conference included 7 plenary sessions, an opening and a closing ceremony.

The seven sessions:

Plenary 1: Translating evidence into practice: policies and funding to improve public health in Europe

Chair: Martin Seychell, European Commission

Opening of the session

Martin Seychell, European Commission

Valorisation

Louise Gunning-Schepers, The Netherlands

Turning evidence into policy: case study of austerity

David Stuckler, United Kingdom

Why can't we get from the evidence to the policy? Perspectives from North America

Laura Morlock, United States

Plenary 2: Technology and environment: Getting smart with health determinants

Chair: Natasha Muscat, Malta

The G20 response to the challenges relating to global food security: the agriculture production pillar

Leonard Mizzi, European Commission

Genomes, environment and public health: the end of the beginning or the beginning of the end?

David Strachan, United Kingdom

What are the smart drivers of infectious diseases?

Karl Ekdahl, European Centre Disease Prevention and Control

Plenary 3: Research across health - services, sectors and policy

Chair: Peter Groenewegen, The Netherlands

Using Expert Knowledge and Single Patient Studies

Paul H Garthwaite, United Kingdom

What does it mean to be a public health researcher?

Łukasz Balwicki, Poland

Plenary 4: Keynote address by the Regional Director for Europe of the World Health Organisation

Chair: Julian Mamo, Malta, assisted by Walter Ricciardi, EUPHA president, and Helmut Brand, ASPHER president

The WHO European Action Plan for strengthening public health services and capacities (EAP) - implementation pillar of the new WHO European Health Policy Health 2020

Hans Kluge, WHO Europe

Plenary 5: Life choices - Population, economic activity and lifestyle

Chair: Julian Mamo, Malta

Active and healthy ageing in Europe: The role of the Association of Schools of Public Health in Europe (ASPHER)

Helmut Brand, ASPHER

Active ageing for the Europeans: the leading role of EUPHA

Walter Ricciardi, EUPHA

Healthy and Active Aging: Perspectives from AARP

Robert Romasco, United States

Plenary 6: Mind, body and spirit - a multifaceted approach to health

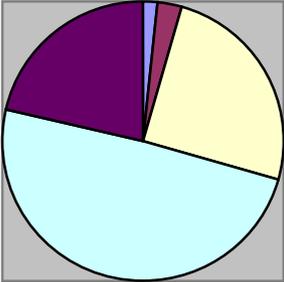
Chair: John M. Cachia, Malta
Health, disease, and work capacity
Kristina Alexanderson, Sweden
Can and should and how can (private) sex be a public health issue?
Roger Ingham, United Kingdom

Plenary 7: Small, few and different - Inequality in Europe's health

Chair: Simon Busuttill, Member of the European Parliament, PPE
Inequalities in noncommunicable diseases: implications for action
Gauden Galea , WHO Europe
Validation of any improvement comes from the people on the ground
Nesime Salioska, Macedonia
Presentation by:
Ahmed Bugri, Malta

What was your general impression of the content of the plenaries?

It was appreciated to have diverse opinions and debate ('gives inspiration'). The plenary sessions were seen as well prepared, locally relevant and scientifically sound. Some comments were received on the broadness of the topics and that sometimes the message is the same as 20 years ago.

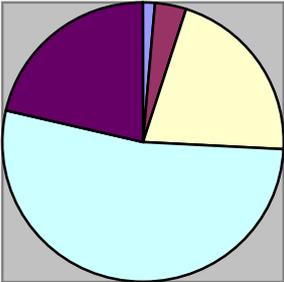


■ Poor
■ Sufficient
■ Average
■ Good
■ Excellent

Respondents:	312
Average score:	3.86

What was your general impression of the keynote speakers?

The keynote speakers were much appreciated. The practical examples (Balwicki and Bugri) were specifically mentioned as interesting. Some would like to have more engaging speakers.



■ Poor
■ Sufficient
■ Average
■ Good
■ Excellent

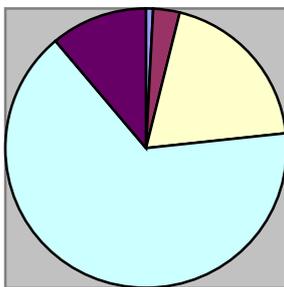
Respondents:	312
Average score:	3.89

7. Parallel programme

76.9% of the participants were very satisfied/satisfied with the parallel programme at Malta 2012

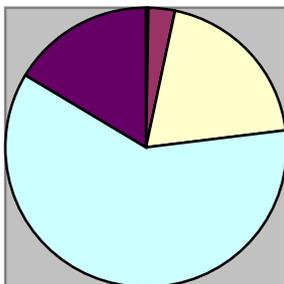
What was your general impression on the content of parallel sessions?

Most respondents reported the variety of experiences from across the countries as very positive. Comments focussed on the little time left for discussion in the oral sessions (6 presentations in 90 minutes) and the variety of quality in the presentations. The problem of too many interesting sessions at the same time was reported again.



Respondents:	313
Average score:	3.83

What was your general impression concerning the chairs?



Respondents:	312
Average score:	3.90

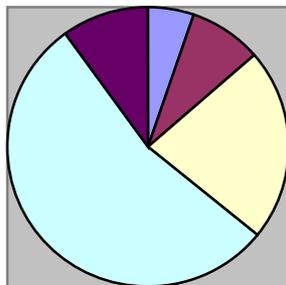
8. Moderated posters programme

75.1% of participants participated in the moderated posters programme. 58.0% were very satisfied/satisfied with the moderated posters programme at Malta 2012

75.1% of the respondents attended at least one moderated poster session.

What was your general impression of the content of the moderated poster sessions?

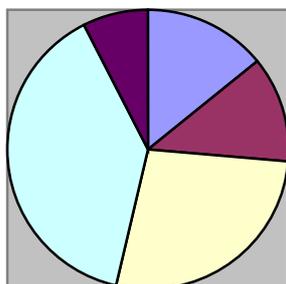
There were a number of problems reported by the respondents. The first was that the format of the moderated poster sessions was unclear. Some sessions were organised in the poster area, others were organised in the session rooms. The format of a PDF of the poster on screen is not satisfactory. The question was raised whether all posters should be included in moderated sessions. Most comments were received on the absence of posters and/or presenters.



Respondents:	251
Average score:	3.55

What was your general impression of the location of the posters?

Even though it was appreciated that the posters were very visible as they were displayed throughout the conference venue, trying to find your poster session or individual poster was more difficult. More information on the location and on the presentation should have been made available. Also the programme should include time to view the posters.

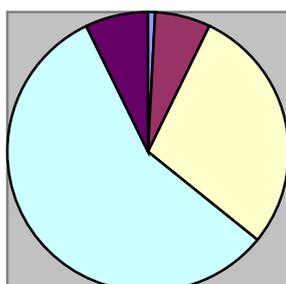


Respondents:	268
Average score:	3.13

Could you easily find the location of your poster session?

The posters were displayed throughout the conference venue, which may explain that only 58.2% of the respondents had no problem finding their session.

How would you rate the quality of the posters?



Respondents:	267
Average score:	3.63

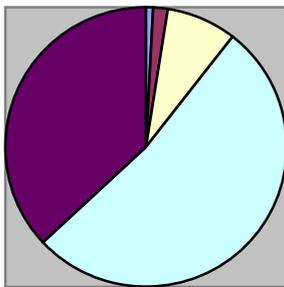
9. Pre conferences

32.5% of participants attended one or more pre-conferences; 89.8% were very satisfied/satisfied with the pre conferences at Malta 2012

One third of the participants attended at least one pre conference (N=308).

What was your general impression on the content?

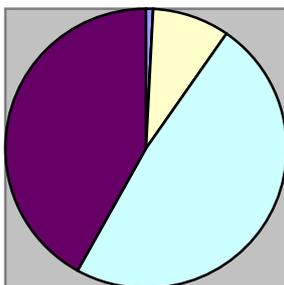
Overall the pre conferences are seen as very informative, interactive and interesting. Pre conferences offer an excellent opportunity to network and interact with others in the same field. There was some overlap in pre conferences on similar themes (vaccination, infectious diseases).



Respondents:	122
Average score:	4.23

What was your general impression on the organisation?

The organisation of the pre conferences was highly appreciated.



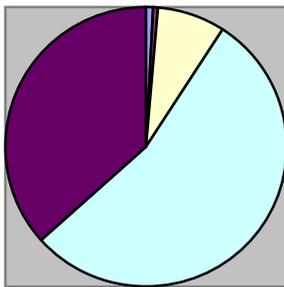
Respondents:	124
Average score:	4.31

10. Registration

90.8% of the participants were very satisfied/satisfied with the registration at Malta 2012

What was your general impression of the online registration process? online

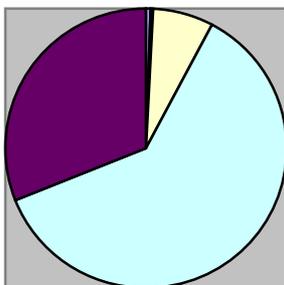
Online registration was highly appreciated. Some comments were received on the difficulty of paying (paypal and by bank transfer).



Respondents:	312
Average score:	4.25

What was your general impression of the information you received prior to the conference?

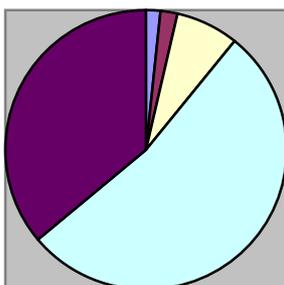
The information prior to the conference was highly appreciated. Some respondents reported lateness in providing local information (e.g. travel to welcome reception and dinner).



Respondents:	313
Average score:	4.22

What was your general impression of the on-site registration process in Malta?

Onsite registration was described as friendly and helpful. Comments were given on the travel tickets to the welcome reception and gala dinner (which had to be purchased).



Respondents:	286
Average score:	4.20

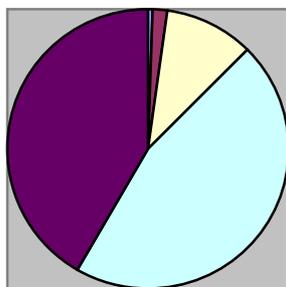
11. Conference venue

83.7% of the participants were very satisfied/satisfied with the conference venue at Malta 2012

What was your impression of the conference venue in general?

The conference was organised in the Hilton Conference Centre and the Hilton Business Centre. Most respondents were very positive about the conference venue, with natural light and helpful staff mentioned specifically. Some comments were received on the distance between the two conference locations and on the lack of natural light in the parallel session rooms.

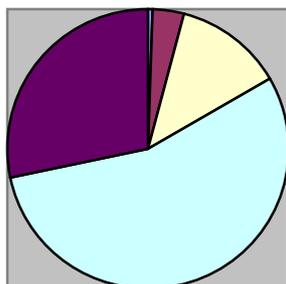
The 'Ask Me' volunteers were highly appreciated and described as proactive, helpful and friendly.



Respondents:	313
Average score:	4.26

What was your impression of the session rooms?

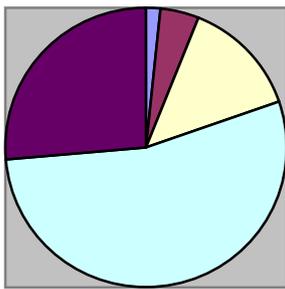
The session rooms were also appreciated. There were some comments on the darkness of some rooms, the air conditioning (too cold), and the fact that some rooms were not suitable for the sessions (e.g. workshops in the plenary hall).



Respondents:	312
Average score:	4.07

How would you rate the technical support at the conference?

The technical support was rated as good, but a number of IT problems were reported. Most of these were on the internet access and the fact that the computers for presenters were not (always) readable by speakers.

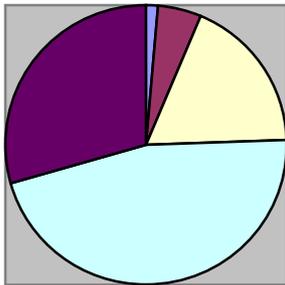


Respondents:	314
Average score:	3.99

12. Catering and social programme

74.2% of the participants were very satisfied/satisfied with the catering and the social programme at Malta 2012.

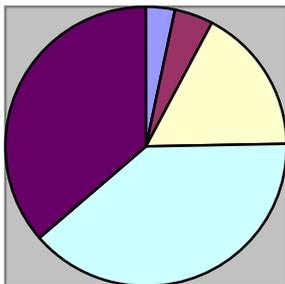
How would you rate the social programme (Welcome reception, Conference Dinner, Charity activities) as a whole?



Respondents:	286
Average score:	3.97

How was the catering provided at the conference venue?

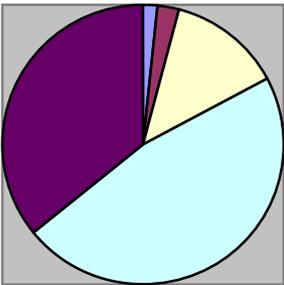
The catering was highly appreciated by most respondents. Some comments were received on the lack of water during sessions (especially for speakers) and the absence of sitting areas for lunch. As in previous years, the call for healthier food was also made.



Respondents:	300
Average score:	4.01

How did you enjoy the Welcome Reception?

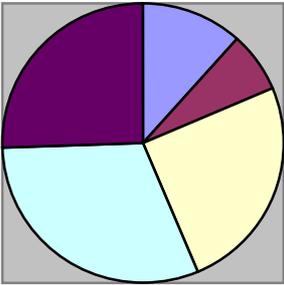
The Welcome Reception took place in the Palace of the President of Malta. Fire regulations limited the number of participants to 600, which led to a large number of complaints (not being able to attend). It was advised that in the future, these limitations in numbers should be announced clearly beforehand. The fact that transportation was charged extra to the participant also led to several comments.



Respondents:	234
Average score:	4.13

How did you like the conference dinner?

The conference dinner was organised at the Mediterranean Conference Centre in Valletta. The dinner location was highly appreciated ('fabulous'); the dinner was commented upon as not being balanced between price and food provided. The room (very long) made it difficult for some to hear/see what was going on.

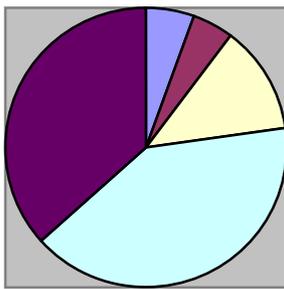


Respondents:	172
Average score:	3.52

How would you rate the EUPHA choir performance?

The EUPHA Choir is a voluntary initiative open to all conference participants (since 2009). During the first two days of the conference, the Choir practiced and then performed at the start of the conference dinner. 6.3% of the respondents actively participate in the EUPHA choir (N=268).

The comments we received was that audio support should have been necessary to hear the Choir throughout the dinner location. Now, only those sitting in the middle or coming forward could enjoy the choir.



Respondents:	106
Average score:	3.98

Were you aware of the charity events?

This year, we organised two charity events. On Friday morning, the President’s Trust Fund organised a powerwalk and on Saturday morning, Swimaid Malta organised a swim in the sea. 81.3% were aware of these two charity events, 6.8% actively participated in at least one charity event.

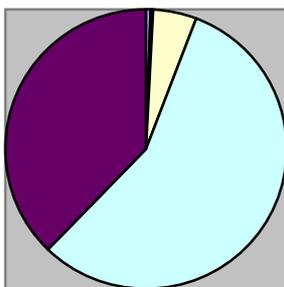
Practically all respondents saw the Charity events as an excellent initiative; a good way to meet colleagues in a relaxed atmosphere; linking sport with charity and being active. The few comments we received were that information could have been communicated earlier and the early morning time of both events.

13. Abstract handling

88.2% of the respondents were very satisfied/satisfied with the abstract handling system at Malta 2012

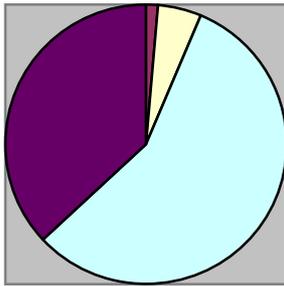
How would you rate the abstract submission process?

Abstract submission is organised via internet, with a possibility to update your abstract/workshop until the deadline of 1 May 2012. Information on submission is also provided on the website of the conference. Both the abstract submission process and the information on how to submit abstract remains highly appreciated.



Respondents:	238
Average score:	4.31

How would you rate the information on the abstract submission?

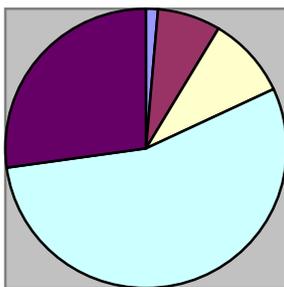


Respondents:	239
Average score:	4.29

How would you rate the selection process?

Abstracts and workshops were selected by the International Scientific Committee which consisted of 51 experts from 21 countries. On average, each abstract was scored by 7.1 scorers, each workshop by 6.8 scorers.

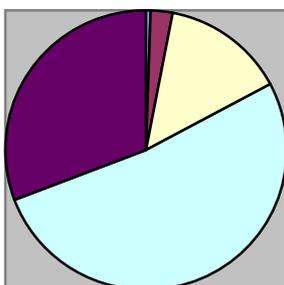
Comments received included the lack of transparency in the selection process. One respondent appreciated the detailed feedback on rating and scoring.



Respondents:	234
Average score:	4.00

How would you rate the information after the selection process?

The feedback after the selection process was changed this year. Instead of individual emails, all information (accepted, oral/poster, rejected) was visible in the personal profile of the submitters.



Respondents:	233
Average score:	4.10

14. Future conference (Brussels 2013)

85.8% of the participants remember receiving the first announcement for our next conference;
32.1% of the participants were aware of the second brochure (Partnership and exhibitor prospectus) in the conference bag

85.5% of the respondents (N=324) were conscious of the first announcement for the Brussels 2013 conference; only 32.1% realized that the second prospectus included in the conference bag was for partnership and exhibitor's possibilities.

15. Any other input

As a last open question, we asked whether the respondents felt that something (specific topics or activities) are missing at the EPH conferences? 23.2% (N=250) gave their thoughts on this. Input received include:

Ideas on organising the conference:

- Offer more networking opportunities at the conference;
- More skills building activities organised during the conference;
- More social events for young researchers or graduate students;
- Assistance in submitting abstracts for those who request this. Experienced researchers could offer assistance;
- Professionals from other fields than public health should be more involved;
- Offer possibilities for research/project meetings;
- Better coordination of poster presentations;
- More sessions on 'what to do about...';
- More physically active networking opportunities (charity walk; tennis tournament).

Ideas on topics to be included:

- Public health and political decision making;
- Changes and socio-demographic differences in health behaviours (food, physical activity, alcohol, smoking) among European populations;
- A closer collaboration between health promotion and epidemiology;
- More health services research;
- Ageing;
- Behaviour change and ethical aspects of intervening in people's lifestyle;
- Marginalised populations such as the homeless;
- Health economics evaluation;
- Including the host country's public health challenges;
- Injury and safety
- Media and public health;
- Practical aspects of working in infectious diseases control;

16. Comparison of the participants' evaluation with the data from 2009-2012

Main evaluation questions	2009	2010	2011	2012
Number of respondents	85	348	345	324
% of participants responding	9	20,6	24	29,8
Question	% good to excellent			
Conference as a whole	-	82,5	89	72,7
Networking opportunities				75,8
Information provided				83,4
Visited the exhibition area				81,5
Exhibition area				59,4
Plenary sessions: content	60	80,5	86,7	70,5
Plenary sessions: speakers	62	85,2	92,2	74
Parallel sessions: content	77	67,3	75,9	76,7
Parallel sessions: speakers	79	75,5	83,3	-
Poster sessions: participated	67,6	64,8	85,6	75,1
Poster sessions: content	82	62,7	79,2	64,1
Poster sessions: location	26	59,4	75	46,3
Poster sessions: technical			84,6	-
Pre conferences: participated	33,8	38,1	30	32,5
Pre conferences: content	72	80,4	82	89,3
Pre conferences: organisation	91	83,8	86	90,3
Registration online	81	83,4	83,8	90,7
Registration information	84	84,7	83	92,3
Registration onsite	96	80,1	87,9	89,2
Conference venue	96	81,4	90,8	87,5
Parallel rooms	93	77,8	79,8	83,3
Technical support		80	86,8	80,3
Catering	78	71,8	94,2	75,3
Welcome reception				82,9
Conference dinner	86	61,5	67,1	56,4
Abstract submission	90	89,9	89,2	93,7
Abstract submission info	87	89,5	89,3	93,7
Abstract decision	79	78,5	78,7	82
Abstract decisional information	88	80,9	78	82,8
Next conference	87	79,4	78,3	85,5