

# Survey to inform the development of an Early Careers Forum within the EUSPR

## SUMMARY REPORT

### *Background*

- An online survey was undertaken in December 2014 and January 2015 to inform the development of an Early Careers Forum within the European Society for Prevention Research (EUSPR).
- The survey was accessible via a public URL, and invitations were sent to EUSPR Members and previous conference attendees, and circulated via social media. Participation in the survey was open to non-Members of the EUSPR. Senior staff were also invited to complete the survey as well as to forward the invitation to early-career colleagues who might benefit from the Forum.
- The survey collected data to help answer questions raised in an internal discussion paper (circulated among the EUSPR Board in November 2014), including:
  1. What definition of 'early career' should be used to determine eligibility to join?
  2. Should the Forum be addressed to early-career researchers only, or target also early-career practitioners and policy-makers working in the prevention field?
  3. What are the key benefits that members would expect to obtain? What are the key needs that should be addressed? Should the Forum provide general support to ECRs, or be aligned specifically with the aims of the EUSPR (e.g. promote methodological skills relating to prevention science)? What should be priority activities of the Forum?
  4. Is there any interest in such a Forum? Who would participate in the Forum?
- A copy of the questionnaire is attached to this report (Annex II).

### *Key findings*

- There were 53 respondents. Respondents were diverse in terms of their professional background and expertise. Most respondents fit the profile of potential members of the Early Careers Forum (e.g. self-identified as being early career, involved in prevention research). The survey also benefitted from the views of senior staff.
- A number of individuals participated in the survey (and expressed an interest in the Forum's activities) even though they were not currently working in the prevention field or involved in prevention research, suggesting that some may be interested in

the Forum's activities even it is not directly relevant to their current work. Questions about whether they would be prepared to pay a fee to participate in the EUSPR/Forum were not explored in the survey.

- Participation from outside Europe was relatively high, suggesting that some may see the Forum as a way to foster international collaboration.
- There seemed to be consensus that individuals holding a doctoral degree should be considered as 'early career' up to five years following award of their degree. The picture with regard to individuals without a doctoral degree was less clear (whether 5 or 10 years following start of first job in the prevention field).
- There was broad consensus that the Forum shouldn't be limited to researchers, but should involve also early-career practitioners and policy-makers, although it was less clear whether this should happen immediately or later when the Forum is established.
- Respondents saw the Forum as a general platform for prevention-related news, networking opportunities and methodological support. Fewer respondents expressed an interest more in-depth activities (e.g. discussing one's own work, getting involved in EUSPR conference planning). This was reflected in respondents' preferences for priority activities (announcements, methodological forum or listserv, mentor/mentee-type scheme, pre-conference workshop, special networking event).
- Interest in joining the Forum was high, and respondents felt this was a worthwhile initiative.

#### *Recommendations as agreed with the Board following presentation of the draft report*

- **The Early Careers Forum will be open to Masters and doctoral students in prevention-related disciplines, as well as early-career preventionists (maximum 8 years since entering the prevention field, either through starting a job or commencing doctoral studies).**
- **The Forum will be open from the beginning to early-career researchers, practitioners and policy-makers with an interest in prevention research.**
- **Activities will be built up gradually over time, starting with a mailing list for Forum members and a number of activities during the Annual Conference. Implementation of further activities (e.g. summer/school, mentor-mentee schemes, etc.) would depend upon interest, preferences and availability of Forum members (as well as availability of financial resources where relevant).**

#### *Annexes*

Annex I – Detailed results

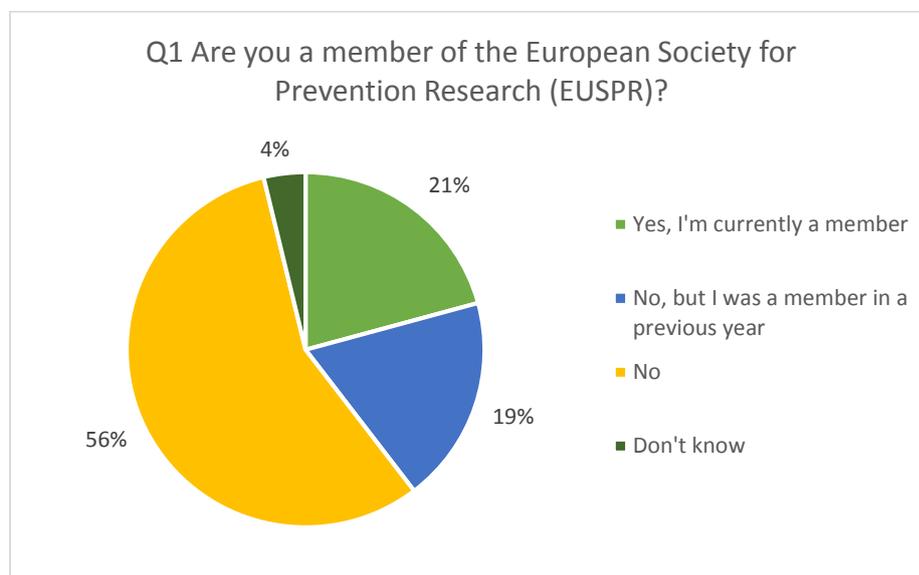
Annex II – Copy of the questionnaire

## Annex I: Detailed results

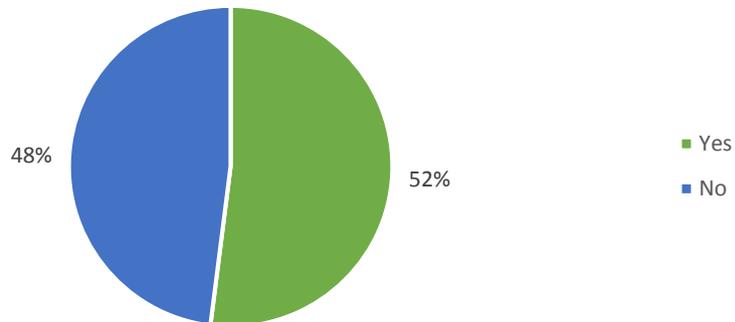
- This report considers all individuals who completed at least the first eight questions of the survey.
- The question numbers correspond to those in Annex II. Bold numbers indicate key questions for that heading, italic numbers refer to relevant questions included under another heading.
- n = 53 unless otherwise stated

### Survey respondents (Q1, Q2, Q10, Q12-Q18)

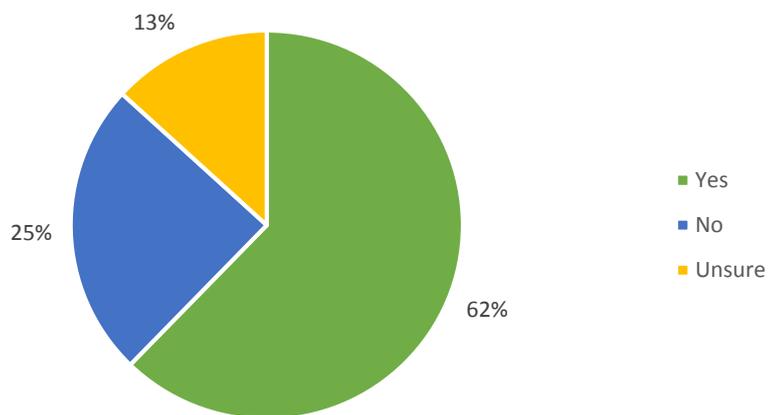
- The dataset comprises 53 individuals, including two EUSPR Board Members.
- 62% of respondents were current/former EUSPR members or had previously attended the EUSPR annual conference, while 38% had never been an EUSPR member or attended the annual conference (data not shown)
- Most respondents considered themselves to be 'early career' or were unsure about this. A quarter of respondents said they were not 'early career'. About half of respondents held a doctoral degree. The average age of survey respondents (median) was 35 years; most respondents were aged 40 years or under.
- Survey respondents were diverse in terms of their professional background and expertise. Most respondents were researchers, however there were also a number of respondents who self-identified as practitioners, policy-makers, funders, and so on. Although most respondents had worked in prevention research for a number of years, there were also respondents who had not (yet) worked in the prevention field or who were not currently involved in prevention research.
- Most respondents were from higher-income countries in Europe. About a quarter of respondents were from outside Europe, mostly USA.



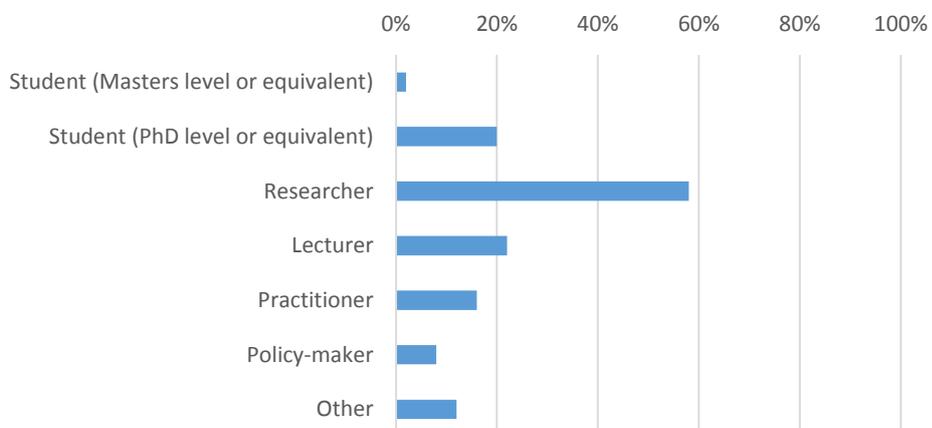
Q12 Have you ever attended the Annual Conference of the European Society for Prevention Research (EUSPR)?, n=50



Q2 Do you consider yourself as being 'early career'?

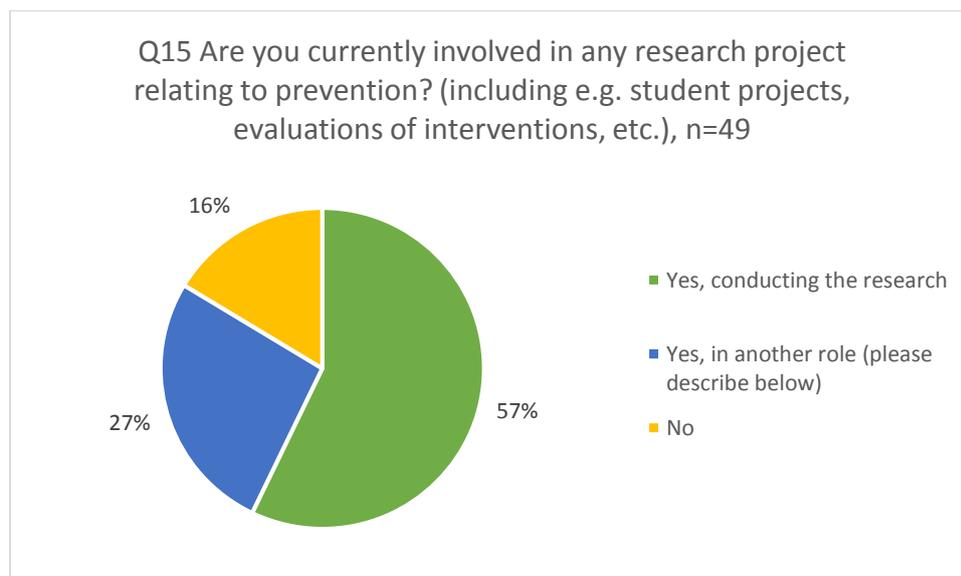
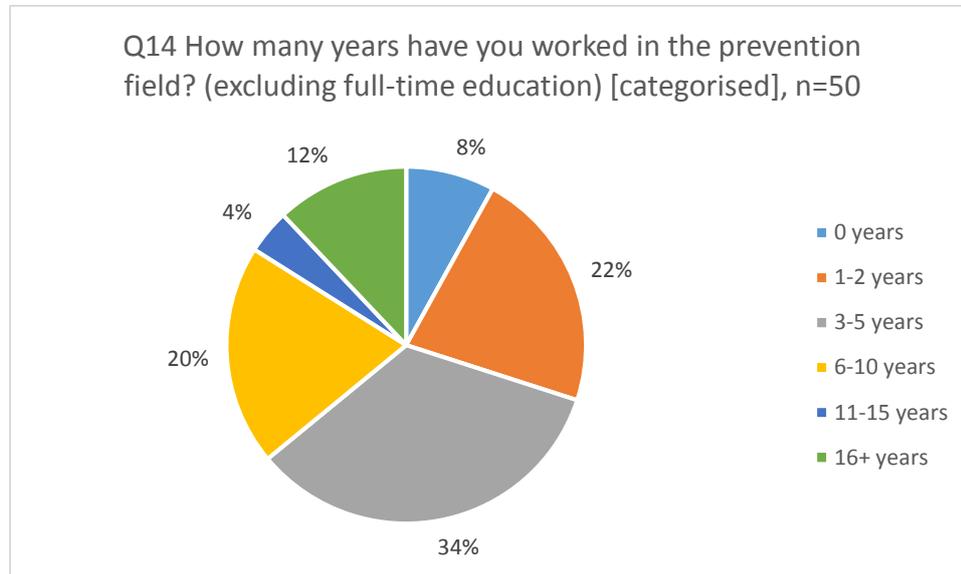


Q13 Which options best describe your professional role?, n=50



Examples of “Other” answers:

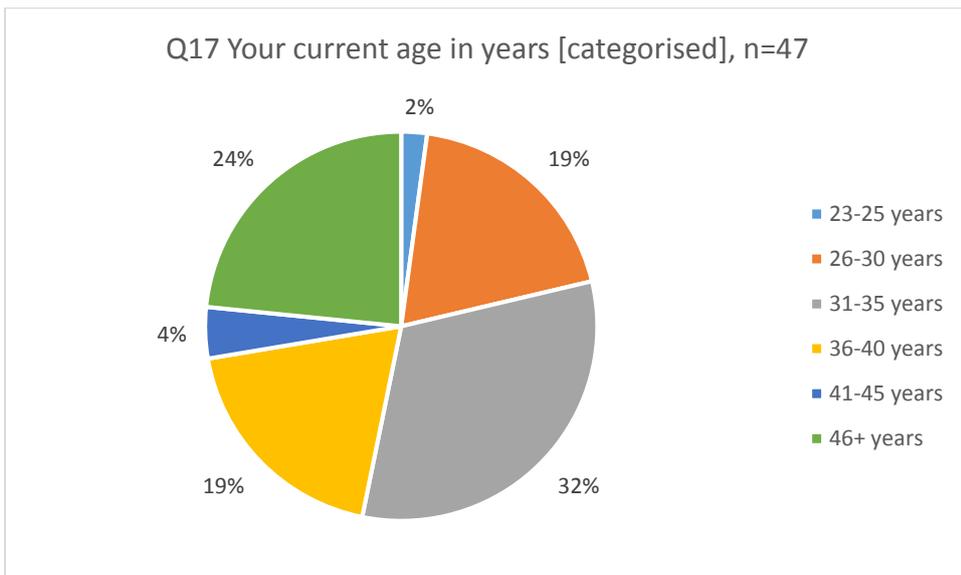
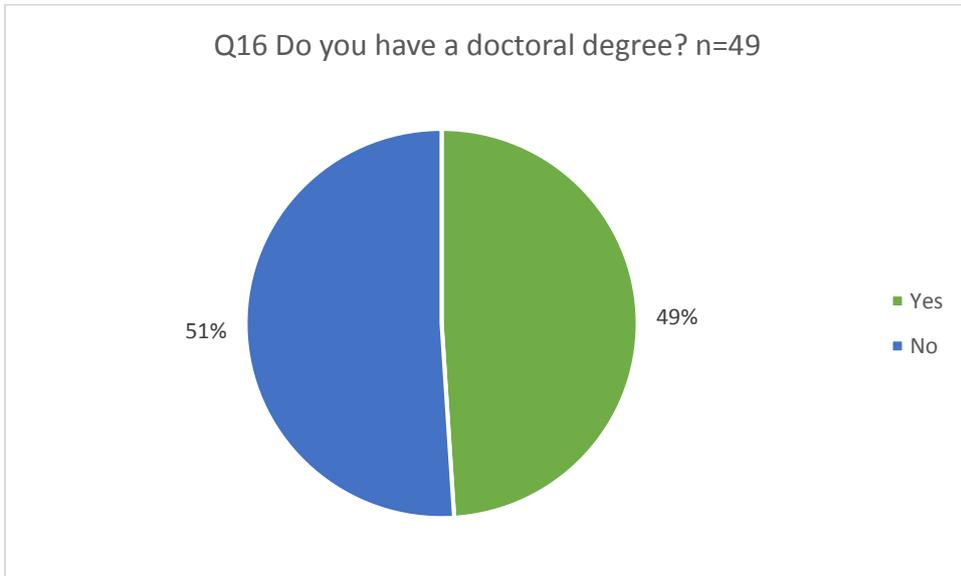
- “Development and coordination of prevention system”
- “Writer/commentator”
- “Supporter/donor for national practitioners and policy makers”
- “Programme assistant [...] working on drug use prevention programmes”

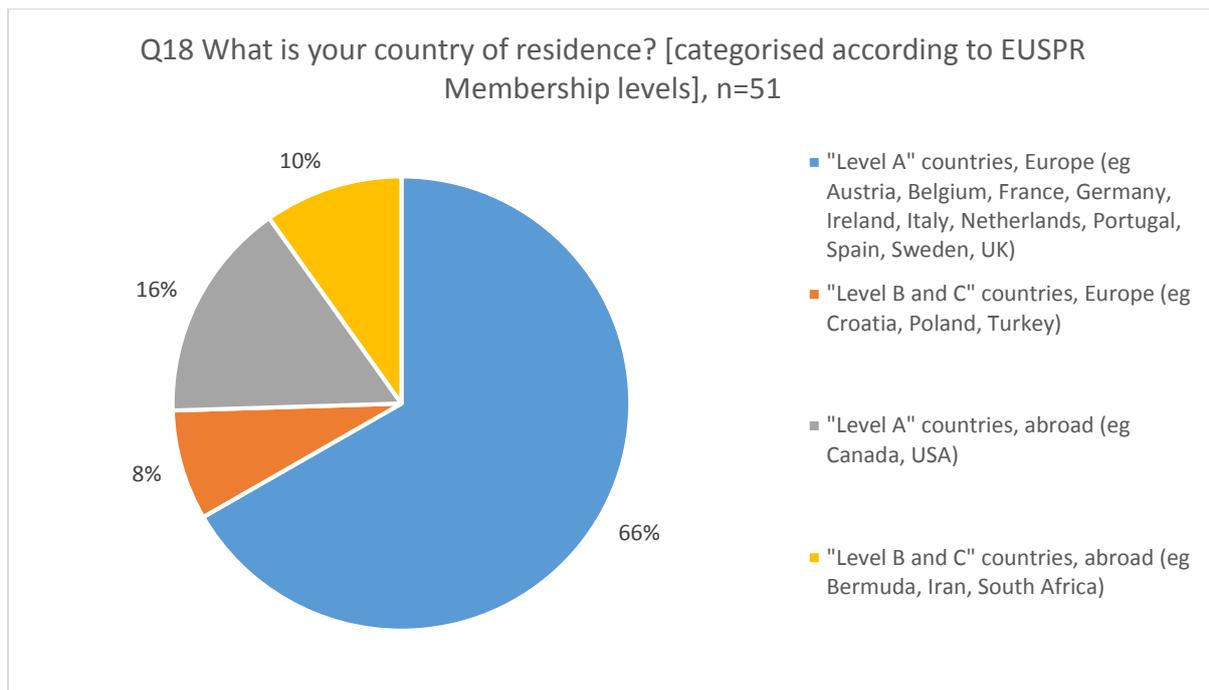


Further details on “another role” (examples):

- “both doing research and cooperating with research institutes in various forms, from advisory roles to activating practitioners to cooperate”
- “Prevention expert attached to National Focal Point for EMCDDA”
- “Practitioner connected to a University”
- “I am making required translations to update data when necessary.”
- “Part of a research team, so conducting the research; also supervising/advising some students who are conducting research”
- “Methodological support”
- “addiction and high risk behaviours”

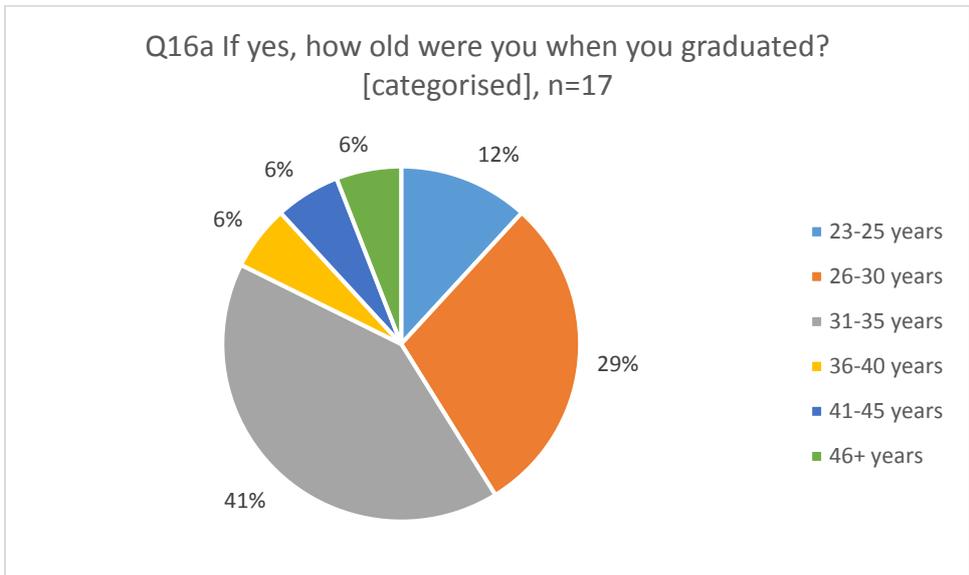
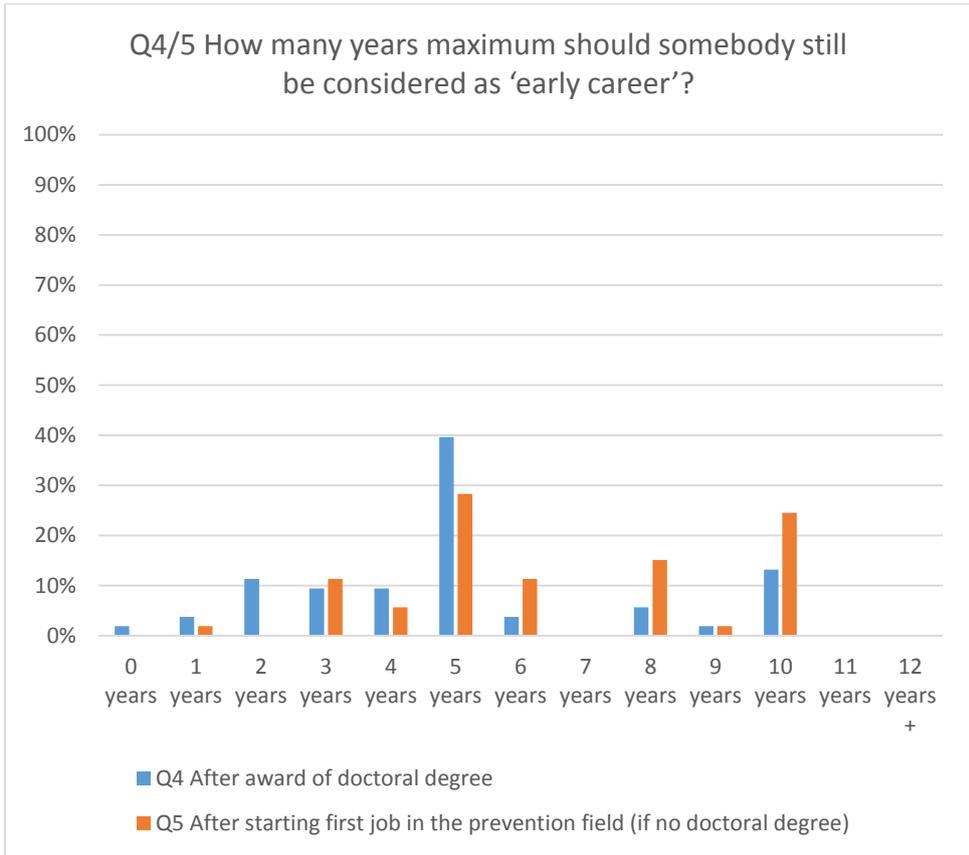
- “Financially support and provide technical input to the process led by Government”
- “We are running regular programmes and interventions on drug use prevention”
- “Data analysis [...]; writing manuscripts, presenting results at meetings [...]”





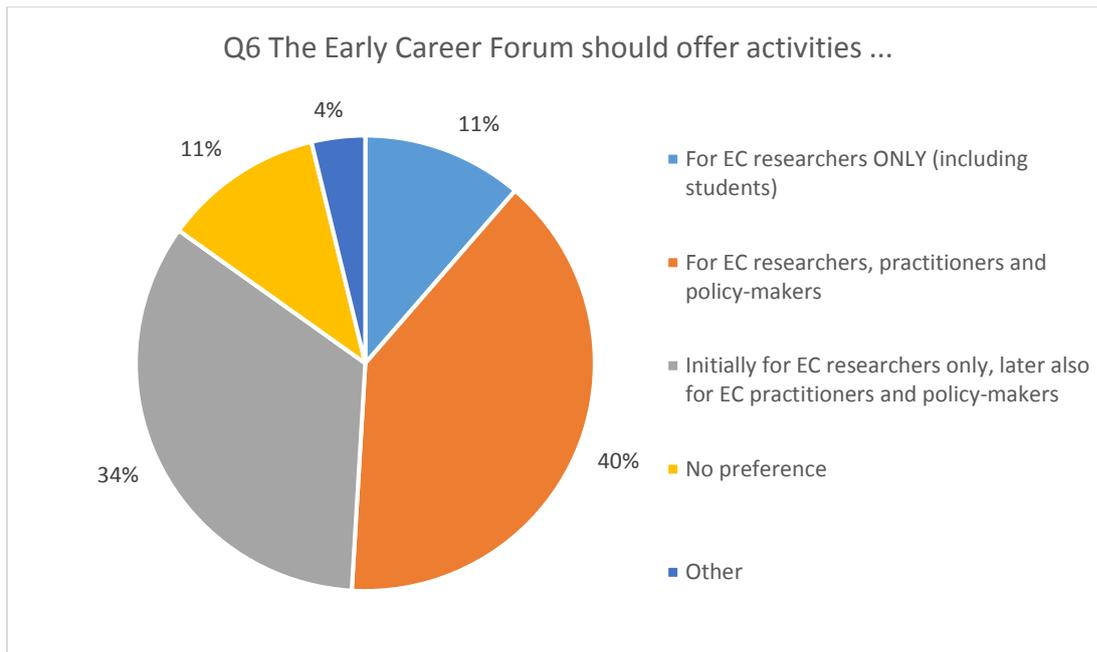
1. What definition of 'early career' should be used to determine eligibility to join? (Q2, Q4, Q5, Q14, Q16, Q16a, Q17)

- There seemed to be consensus that individuals holding a doctoral degree should be considered as 'early career' up to five years following award of their degree.
- The picture with regard to individuals without a doctoral degree was less clear (whether 5 or 10 years following start of first job in the prevention field).
- The average age (median) of those who considered themselves 'early career' was 33 years, of those who were unsure 35 years, of those who did not consider themselves 'early career' 57 years. (data not shown)
- Of those who did not hold a doctoral degree: The average number of years worked in the prevention field (median) for those who considered themselves 'early career' was 4 years, of those who were unsure 2 years, of those who did not consider themselves 'early career' 2 years. (data not shown)
- Of those with a doctoral degree: The average number of years since graduation (median) for those who considered themselves 'early career' was 4 years, of those who were unsure 3 years, of those who did not consider themselves 'early career' 15 years. (data not shown)



2. Should the Forum be addressed to early-career researchers only, or target also early-career practitioners and policy-makers working in the prevention field? (Q6, Q13, Q15)

- There was broad consensus that the Forum shouldn't be limited to researchers, but should involve also early-career practitioners and policy-makers.



Other:

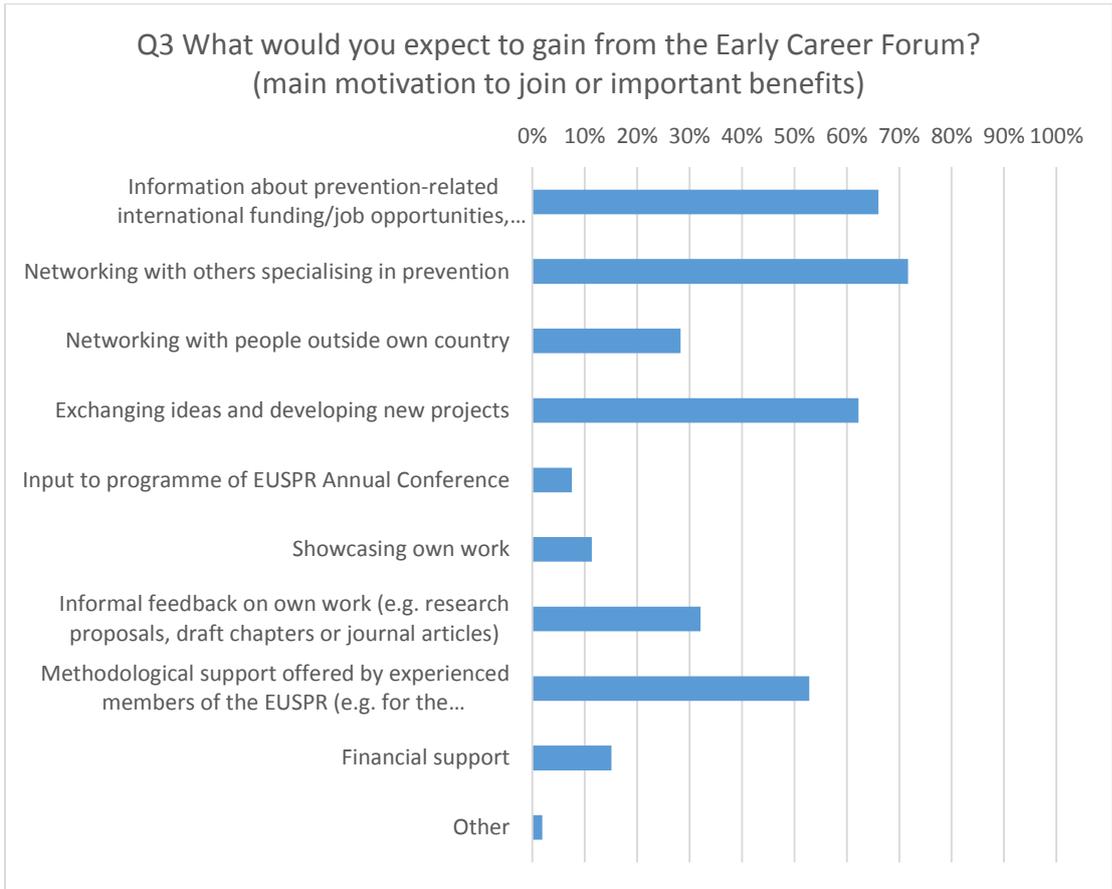
- “For both researchers and practitioners, but with the constraint that these latter should be involved as practitioners in a research Project with a substantial role (e.g. not secretary to the PI)”
- “A mix -- some for early career only; some including more experienced people”

Q19 “Any other comment”:

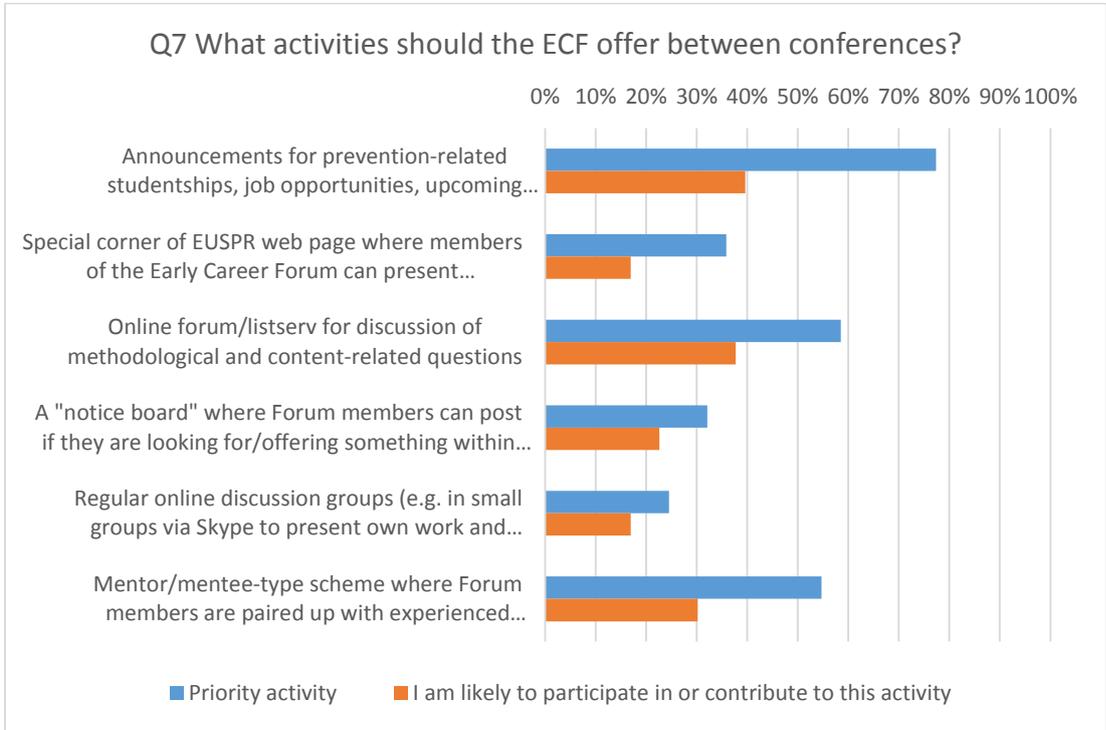
- “I feel an almost exclusive stress on academic research. However, especially in early careers, it is important we all know each other inside the prevention circle: researchers, policy makers, developers, implementers and disseminating bodies for sustainability of effective interventions, real stakeholder involvement and support!”

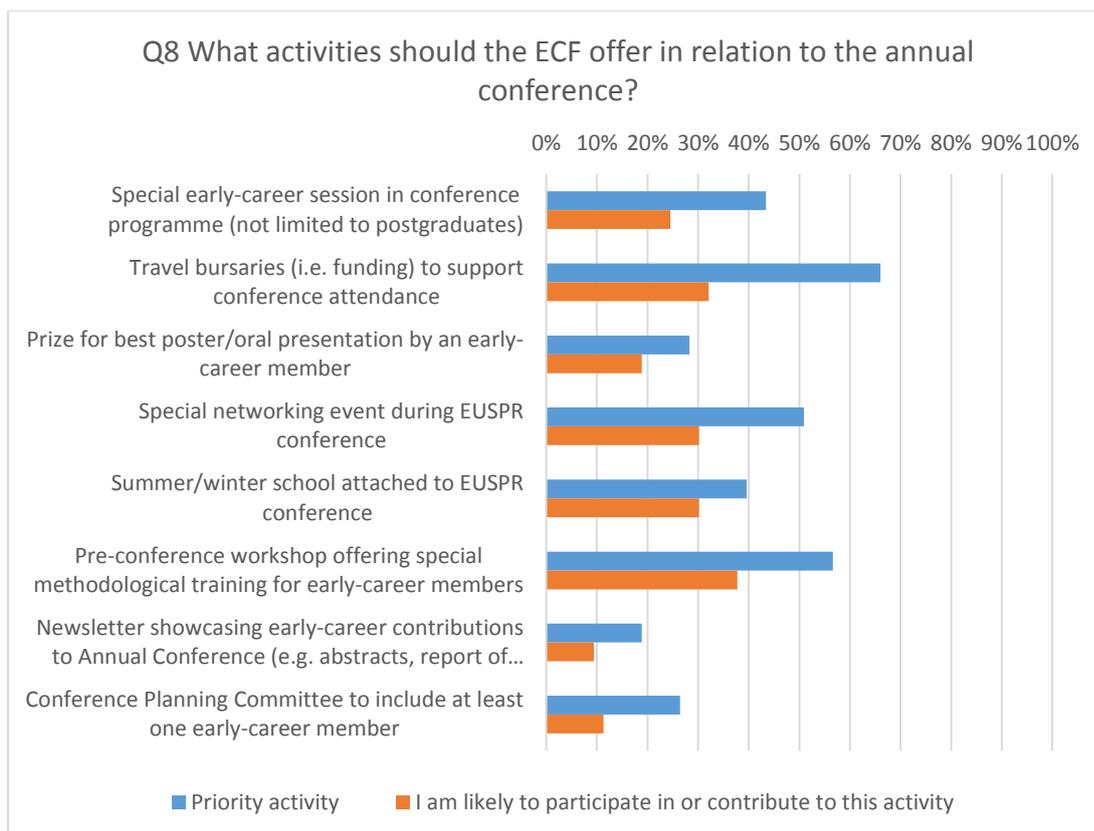
3. What are the key benefits that members would expect to obtain? What are the key needs that should be addressed? Should the Forum provide general support to ECRs, or be aligned specifically with the aims of the EUSPR (e.g. promote methodological skills relating to prevention science)? What should be priority activities of the Forum? (Q3, Q7, Q8, Q19)

- Main expected benefits related to: networking with other specialising in prevention; information about prevention-related funding/job opportunities and so on; collaborating on new projects; and methodological support. This was reflected in the preferences for priority activities (announcements, methodological forum or listserv, mentor/mentee-type scheme, pre-conference workshop, special networking event).
- There was relatively less interest in having input to the EUSPR annual conference, or showcasing/discussing one’s own work (although this does not preclude this from being established as a sub-group activity). This was also reflected in the preferences for priority activities (e.g. special corner of EUSPR web page less of a priority).
- Potential members didn’t generally expect to receive financial support through the Forum, however when asked about travel bursaries for attendance at the EUSPR annual conference, respondents felt that this should be a priority activity.



Other: "Training opportunities / professional development"



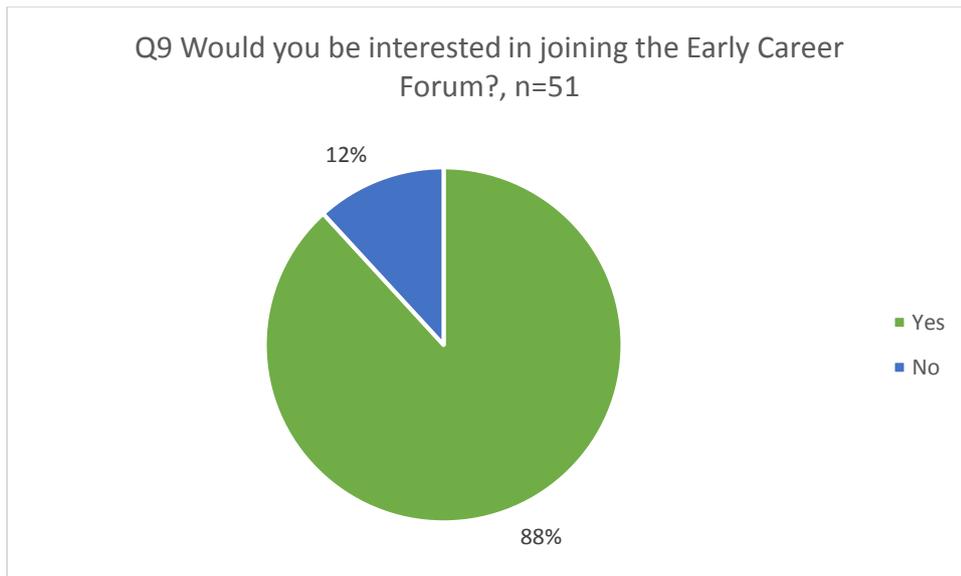


**Q19 “Any other comment”:**

- “People without PhD are mentioned; it could perhaps be interesting to dedicate in the website a part about how to get a PhD, how to do one with two universities, how to get funding etc.”
- “This seems to me to be a useful initiative, in particular to assist early career professionals in distinguishing between evidence based initiatives and those which are variously well-meaning, enthusiastic, attractive to funders and unlikely to have any impact on behaviour.”
- “Once established, this early career network may want to collaborate / coordinate with the Early Career Preventionist Network that is part of the [US] Society for Prevention Research. This would be a great way for both groups to expand their network and training opportunities.”

**4. Is there any interest in such a Forum? Who would participate in the Forum? (Q1, Q7-Q8, Q9-Q11, Q15-Q18, Q19)**

- Interest in joining the Forum was high (although note that the questionnaire did not ask whether non EUSPR members would be prepared to pay the EUSPR Membership fee in order to join the Forum), and respondents felt this was a worthwhile initiative.
- The two main reasons for not wishing to join the Forum were: not being ‘early career’; and not living in Europe.
- In Q7/Q8, over 30% of respondents indicated that they would personally participate or contribute to activities of the Forum.



Q10: 42 respondents provided their contact details (i.e. wishing to receive further information about the Forum)

Q11 Reasons why wouldn't be interested to join the EUSPR Early Career Forum:

- "I am a senior researcher since many years."
- "I am a university professor with many PhD students and postdocs. I think this is the best way I can make a contribution to prevention research and career development by the time I have. However, EUSPR early career forum is a good initiative."
- "I'm not an early career professional - I'm basing my responses on my own previous experience in the field."
- "As a researcher based [outside Europe], it would be difficult to consistently take part in the forum and meaningfully contribute, in part, because I'm early in my career and don't have the resources to be an active member in the society."
- "I am not a member of EUSPR and am unlikely to join at this point (I am an early career researcher [outside Europe] and unlikely to have funds to travel to international conferences). I am also heavily involved as a member of [another early career network] and find that my early career needs [...] are mainly met through that forum."

Q19 "Any other comment":

- "Great idea! :)"
- "Congratulations to you for this initiative!"
- "I am very enthusiastic about the Early Career Forum and would like to contribute to the activities organized within this context."

## Welcome

Thank you very much for visiting this survey.

We would like to establish an Early Career Forum within the European Society for Prevention Research (EUSPR; <http://www.euspr.org>).

This forum will offer support and a platform for exchange to those members of the prevention community who are still in the early stages of their career. Participation in the Forum will be free of charge to EUSPR members. Current non-members of the EUSPR will be able to join the Forum by paying the EUSPR membership fee (currently ranging from €25 to € 80 per year depending on country of employment and employment/student status).

Your answers to this survey will allow us a better understanding of what this forum should look like (e.g. members, activities) and thus, ensure that the forum is relevant and interesting to early-career members of the EUSPR.

**The survey is open to any qualified worker in a discipline relevant to prevention**, including all European and international researchers, practitioners, policy makers and students. You do **not** have to be a member of the EUSPR to complete this survey, and you can complete it even if you do not consider yourself as being 'early career'.

The survey will take approx. **10 minutes** to complete.

Please note that aggregated data from the survey may be circulated among EUSPR Members and survey respondents to report on the results of the survey. However, individual data will not be released.

This initiative is being led by Angelina Brotherhood, Liverpool John Moores University, and Kimberley Hill, University of Northampton, UK. If you have any questions or comments concerning the survey or the planned Early Career Forum, please contact Angelina at [a.brotherhood@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:a.brotherhood@ljmu.ac.uk).

## Before we start ...

1. Are you a member of the European Society for Prevention Research (EUSPR)?

- Yes, I'm currently a member
- No, but I was a member in a previous year

- No
- Don't know

Note, this is for informational purposes only. You don't have to be a member of the EUSPR to complete this survey.

2. Do you consider yourself as being 'early career'?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

**Please note that your answers to this survey will be valuable to us even if you do not consider yourself as being 'early career'.**

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## Expected benefits

3. If you were to join the Early Career Forum, what would you expect to gain from it? What would be your **main motivation to join**? Please select no more than 3 options.

If you are no longer in the early stages of your career, please highlight what you would consider the **3 most important benefits** that would make this Forum unique and useful to its members.

*(select all that apply)*

- Information about prevention-related international funding/job opportunities, publications, upcoming conferences
- Networking with others specialising in prevention
- Networking with people outside own country
- Exchanging ideas and developing new projects
- Input to programme of EUSPR Annual Conference
- Showcasing own work
- Informal feedback on own work (e.g. research proposals, draft chapters or journal articles)
- Methodological support offered by experienced members of the EUSPR (e.g. for the development, evaluation and implementation of interventions)
- Financial support
- Other *(please specify)*:

## Who should participate in the Early Career Forum?

We suggest to define an upper limit on who should be considered 'early career' and thus eligible for participation in the Forum.

This **upper** limit would be based on how many years have passed since completing a doctoral degree (e.g. PhD) or, for those who do not hold a doctoral degree, how many years have passed since entering paid employment in the prevention field (excluding any period of career break, e.g. for family care or health reasons).

More experienced individuals would still be able to participate in the Forum, but with a different role, i.e. offering support instead of receiving it.

**4.** In your opinion, if somebody holds a doctoral degree, how many years maximum **after award of their degree** should they still be considered as 'early career'?

*[Pulldown menu from 0 years to 12 years+]*

**5.** ... And if somebody is already working but doesn't hold a doctoral degree, how many years maximum **after starting their first job in the prevention field** should they still be considered as 'early career'?

*[Pulldown menu from 0 years to 12 years+]*

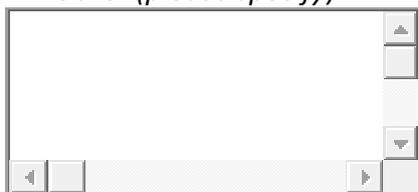
Another important consideration is whether the Forum should focus on **early-career researchers** only, or offer support also to **early-career practitioners and policy-makers** who are involved in research activities (e.g. evaluations). In giving your answer, please consider potential benefits (e.g. fostering collaboration and shared understanding of prevention issues) as well as potential challenges (e.g. different practical needs and working conditions) of offering activities for different professional groups.

Please note that we see practitioners and policy-makers as important contributors to the development of the prevention field, but the question here is whether the Early Career Forum specifically should offer special activities for these groups.

**6.** Please indicate your preferred option. The **Early Career Forum** should offer activities ...

- For early-career researchers only (including students) (i.e. no need for special activities targeting early-career practitioners and policy-makers)
- For early-career researchers, practitioners and policy-makers
- Initially for early-career researchers only, and once the Forum is well-established, for early-career practitioners and policy-makers
- No preference

Other (please specify):



## Activities of the Early Career Forum

There are different ways to ensure members of the Early Career Forum benefit as described earlier. The EUSPR already offers a number of activities to support its early-career members (e.g. Postgraduate Forum at the Annual Conference, travel bursaries and Poster Prize with support from SPAN project). The Forum would seek to continue and extend these activities.

Below you will find a list of potential Forum activities. Considering early-career needs, please indicate which activities should be priority activities for the Early Career Forum. If you would personally like to be involved in or contribute to any activity, please make a tick in the last column.

Please note that we may not be able to **immediately** offer all activities within the Early Career Forum, and your answers to this question will therefore also inform our long-term planning.

### 7. Between the EUSPR Annual Conferences:

	Priority activity for the Early Career Forum? (please select up to 3 priorities)	I am likely to participate in or contribute to this activity
a. Announcements for prevention-related studentships, job opportunities, upcoming conferences, interesting publications shared through listserv, newsletter or special web page	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Special corner of EUSPR web page where members of the Early Career Forum can present themselves and their work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- |   |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>c.</b> Online forum/listserv for discussion of methodological and content-related questions  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>d.</b> A “notice board” where Forum members can post if they are looking for/offering something <b>within</b> the EUSPR community (e.g. if somebody would like to evaluate an intervention in their PhD study but hasn’t identified a suitable intervention yet) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>e.</b> Regular online discussion groups (e.g. in small groups via Skype to present own work and obtain feedback from other Forum members)  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>f.</b> Mentor/mentee-type scheme where Forum members are paired up with experienced members of EUSPR   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**8. In relation to the EUSPR Annual Conference:**

- |   | <b>Priority activity for the Early Career Forum? (please select up to 4 priorities)</b> | <b>I am likely to participate in or contribute to this activity</b> |
|---|---|---|
| <b>a.</b> Special early-career session in conference programme (not limited to postgraduates)       | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| <b>b.</b> Travel bursaries (i.e. funding) to support conference attendance                          | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| <b>c.</b> Prize for best poster/oral presentation by an early-career member                         | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| <b>d.</b> Special networking event during EUSPR conference  | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| <b>e.</b> Summer/winter school attached to EUSPR conference   | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| <b>f.</b> Pre-conference workshop offering special methodological training for early-career members | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |
| <b>g.</b> Newsletter showcasing early-career contributions to Annual                                | <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/>  |

Conference (e.g. abstracts, report of postgraduate forum, features of Poster Prize winners etc.)

**h. Conference Planning**

Committee to include at least one early-career member

## Your involvement in EUSPR's Early Career Forum

**9.** Would you be interested in joining the Early Career Forum? Your answer is non-binding. Remember that even if you are no longer in the early stages of your career, you can still join the Forum to offer support to those who are.

- Yes  
 No

Note, we intend to send a follow-up message detailing the outcomes of this survey to all individuals who express an interest in the Early Career Forum and who give their contact details below.

**10.** If **Yes**, please enter your details below so we can contact you. All EUSPR Members will automatically receive information about the Forum and so if you are an EUSPR Member you do not need to enter your details.

**a. Name:**

**b. Institution, Country:**

**c. E-mail address:**

**11.** If **No**, can you briefly explain why you wouldn't be interested to join the EUSPR Early Career Forum?

## Your background

Finally, please answer the following questions so we can better understand who completed the survey. All answers will be treated confidentially.

**12.** Have you ever attended the Annual Conference of the European Society for Prevention Research (EUSPR)? (i.e. Palma/2014, Paris/2013, Krakow/2012, Lisbon/2011, or Amsterdam/2010)

- Yes  
 No

**13.** Which options best describe your professional role?  
(select all that apply)

- Student (Masters level or equivalent)  
 Student (PhD level or equivalent)  
 Researcher  
 Lecturer  
 Practitioner  
 Policy-maker  
 Other (please specify):

**14.** How many years have you worked in the prevention field, if any? Please do **not** include any years spent in full-time education. If you have not yet worked in this field, please select '0'.

[Pulldown menu from 0 years to 20 years+]

**15.** Are you currently involved in any research project relating to prevention? (including e.g. student projects, evaluations of interventions, etc.)

- Yes, conducting the research  
 Yes, in another role (please describe below)  
 No

If you are involved in prevention research in another role, please provide details:

**16.** Do you have a doctoral degree?

- Yes  
 No

If yes, how old were you when you graduated?

*[Pulldown menu from 16 years to 99 years]*

**17.** Your current age in years

*[Pulldown menu from 16 years to 99 years]*

**18.** What is your country of residence?

*[Pulldown menu with list of countries]*

If you selected Other, please specify:

**19.** Any other comments on the Early Career Forum or this survey? Please note here if you have any particular interest in joining the Forum (e.g. you would like to lead a particular activity within the Forum). Or perhaps you would like to suggest an activity for the Forum not included in the earlier questions.



**Please submit the survey by clicking the button below.**

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Thank you - the survey has been submitted.

Thank you very much for taking the time to give us your views. If you provided your email address or are a Member of the EUSPR, we will contact you again in a few weeks.

You can obtain more information about the activities of the EUSPR at <http://www.euspr.org> or by contacting Angelina Brotherhood at [a.brotherhood@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:a.brotherhood@ljmu.ac.uk).