

ERANID: Analysis of recent European research publications on illicit drugs

Introduction

ERANID

•ERANID, the European Research Area Network on Illicit Drugs, can be considered as a first fundamental step towards long-term European co-operation in the field of scientific research on illicit drugs.

•The development of shared priorities for research on illicit drugs and the funding of joint research projects in this field are the main objectives of this project. The project operates mainly in the field of socio-economic sciences and humanities and aims to strengthen and widen the network of research programmes and participants.

•The participating countries are Belgium, France, Italy, the Netherlands (coordinators of the project), Portugal and the United Kingdom. The project, which will last for four years, will also collaborate closely with two important organisations: the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) and the Pempidou Group of the Council of Europe.

•This literature review is the initial phase of the ERANID project to determine the scope and themes of the call for proposals. In this stage cannabis was omitted for a later dedicated analysis.

Global objectives

•Look at previous results from national and European research programs and related funding within Social Sciences (2006-2013) in the field of illicit drugs.

Specific objectives

•Using scientific publications, map national research activities within Social Sciences in the six EU member states (2006-2013) in the field of illicit drugs.

•Providing a synthesis of the results with a description of strengths and weaknesses of research in Social Sciences on illicit drugs in Europe.

Methods

Main analysis: PubMed inquiry excluding cannabis

•Listing all the publications in medical and social sciences.

- Search on PubMed [country name] AND (drug OR substance OR product) AND (heroin OR cocaine OR amphetamine OR ecstasy OR methadone OR buprenorphine OR illicit OR illegal OR hallucinogen OR LSD OR opiates OR opioid) AND (treatment OR prevention OR behavior OR supply OR dealer OR crime OR clinical OR intervention OR (harm reduction)) NOT (mice OR rats) AND ("2006"[Date - Publication]: "2013"[Date - Publication]).

- Search on social sciences electronic libraries (PsychLink,...) all the publications regarding drug use research using key words in appropriate language.

•Research programme, publications, research team, funding source(s), research fields and area(s) of expertise.

Research fields:
EMCDDA classification

1. Prevalence, incidence and patterns of drug use.
2. Responses to the drug use (prevention, treatment, drug policy...).
3. Determinants of drug use.
4. Consequences of drug use.
5. Mechanisms of drug use and effects.
6. Supply and markets.
7. Methodology issues.

•Count of all the publications per country and per research field :

- Total of publications for each research field within the 6 EU member states.
- For each country, all the papers by research field with a specific category for reviews/meta-analyses and European projects were classified.

Complementary search: focus on SSH literature

•Methodology search for Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) literature.

- Literature search was conducted through indexed journals.
- For France, SSH researches were carried out through following data base/search engines: Cairn, Francis, Sociological Abstracts. We added publications from main French SSH research teams.
- For other countries, literature searches were carried out through Sociological Abstract with a focus on several specialized journals on substance abuse: Addiction, Drug and Alcohol Dependence, Substance Use and Misuse, International Journal of drug policy, Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy.

- As a first step, the following key words were used: Substance Use and Abuse, Drug Use, Illicit Drugs; and then on a product category class search was conducted.

•Limits of SSH research

- French publications are probably over-represented due to our better knowledge of research teams involved in the topic.
- Disciplines such as economics are under-represented in the literature synthesis: research on cannabis is dominant within the theme of drug markets and supplies.
- Exclusion of books and grey literature has limited identification of research SSH teams.

Preliminary results of PubMed inquiry

Research fields covered by publications in the 6 European countries involved in ERANID from 2006 to 2013 in Social Sciences.

Research field	Prevalence, incidence and patterns of drug use	Responses to the drug use	Determinants of drug use	Consequences of drug use	Mechanisms of drug use and effects	Supply and markets	Methodology issues	European projects	Reviews and meta-analyses	Total
Country										
Belgium	5	11	1	5	5	1	2	0	5	35
France	29	42	13	20	6	4	16	1	2	133
Italy	30	45	7	32	12	3	3	0	13	145
The Netherlands	10	25	10	19	29	4	4	8	4	113
Portugal	3	0	1	1	0	0	2	9	3	19
UK	55	70	20	94	26	5	11	3	28	312
Total	132	193	52	171	78	17	38	21	55	757

Research fields covered by publications in the 6 European countries involved in ERANID from 2006 to 2013 in Social Sciences.

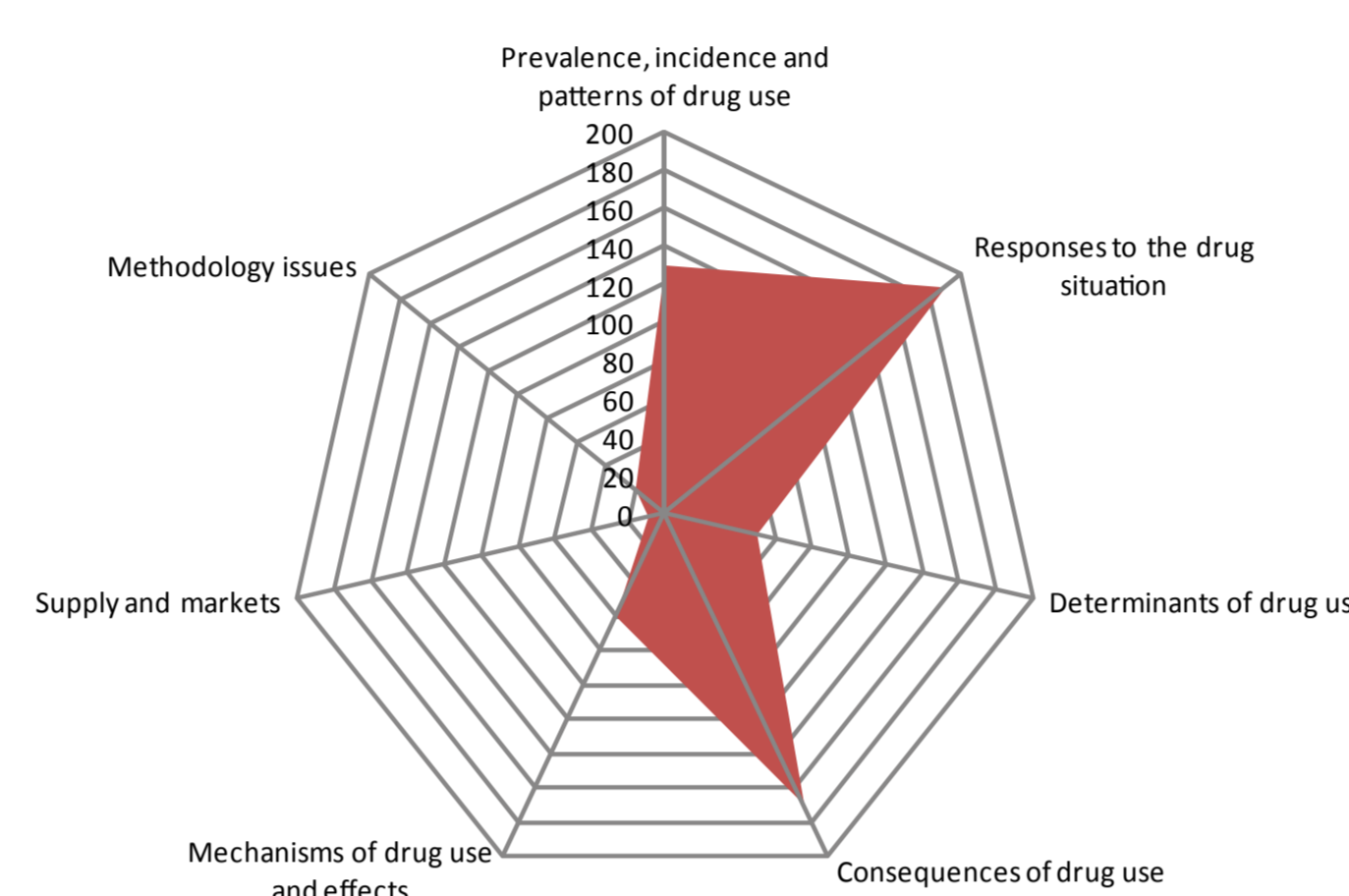
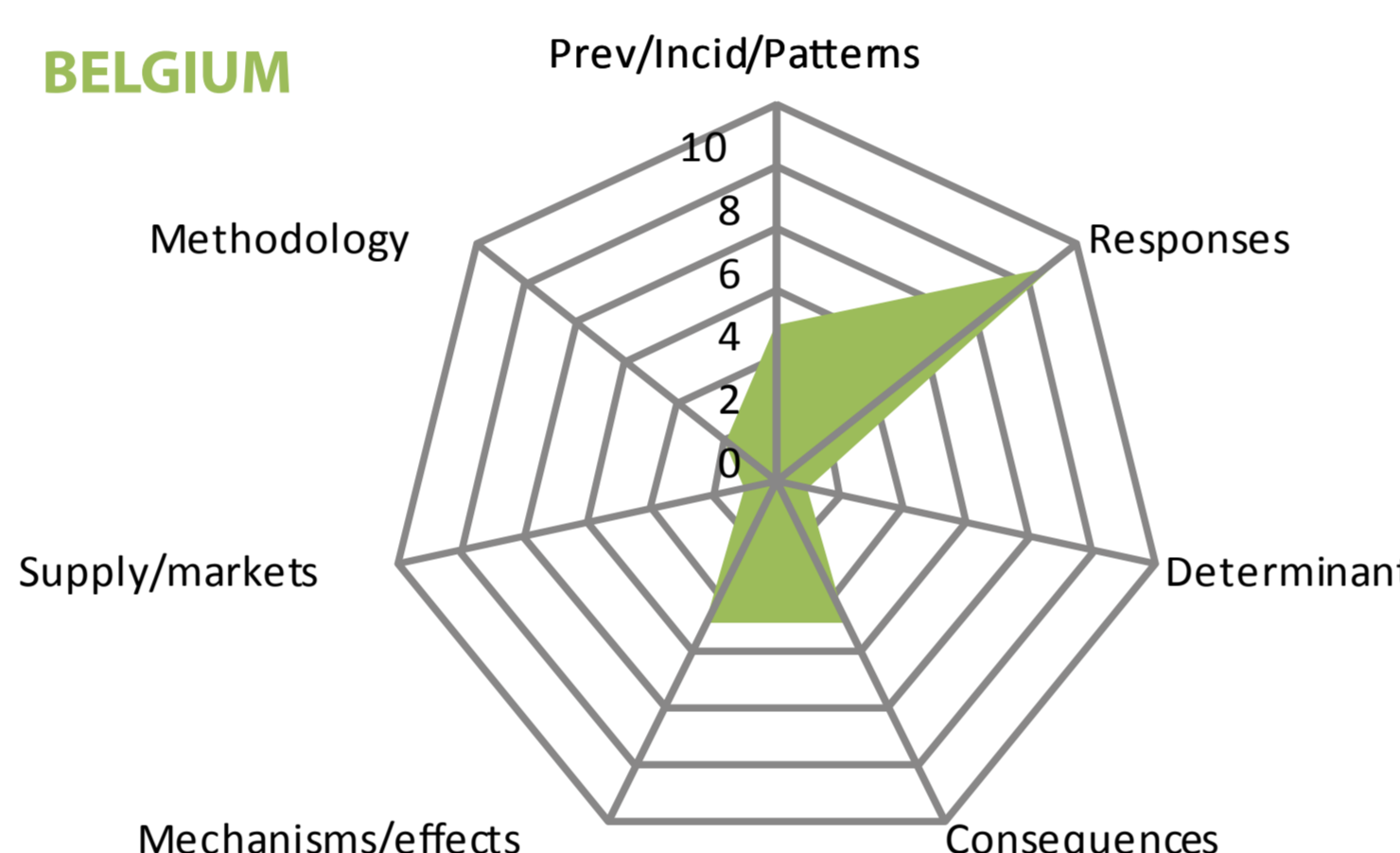
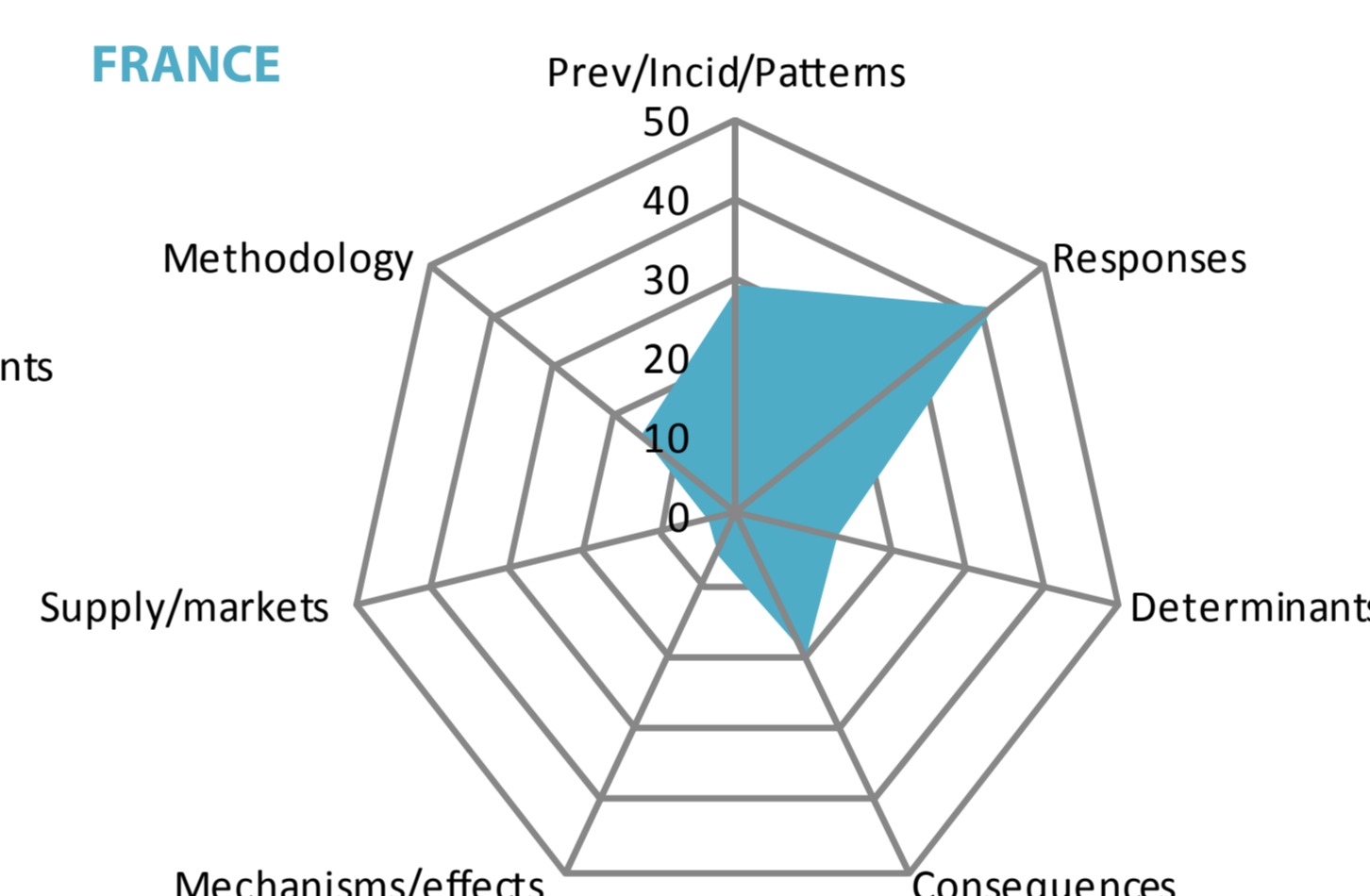


Figure 3. Research fields covered by publications in each ERANID country.

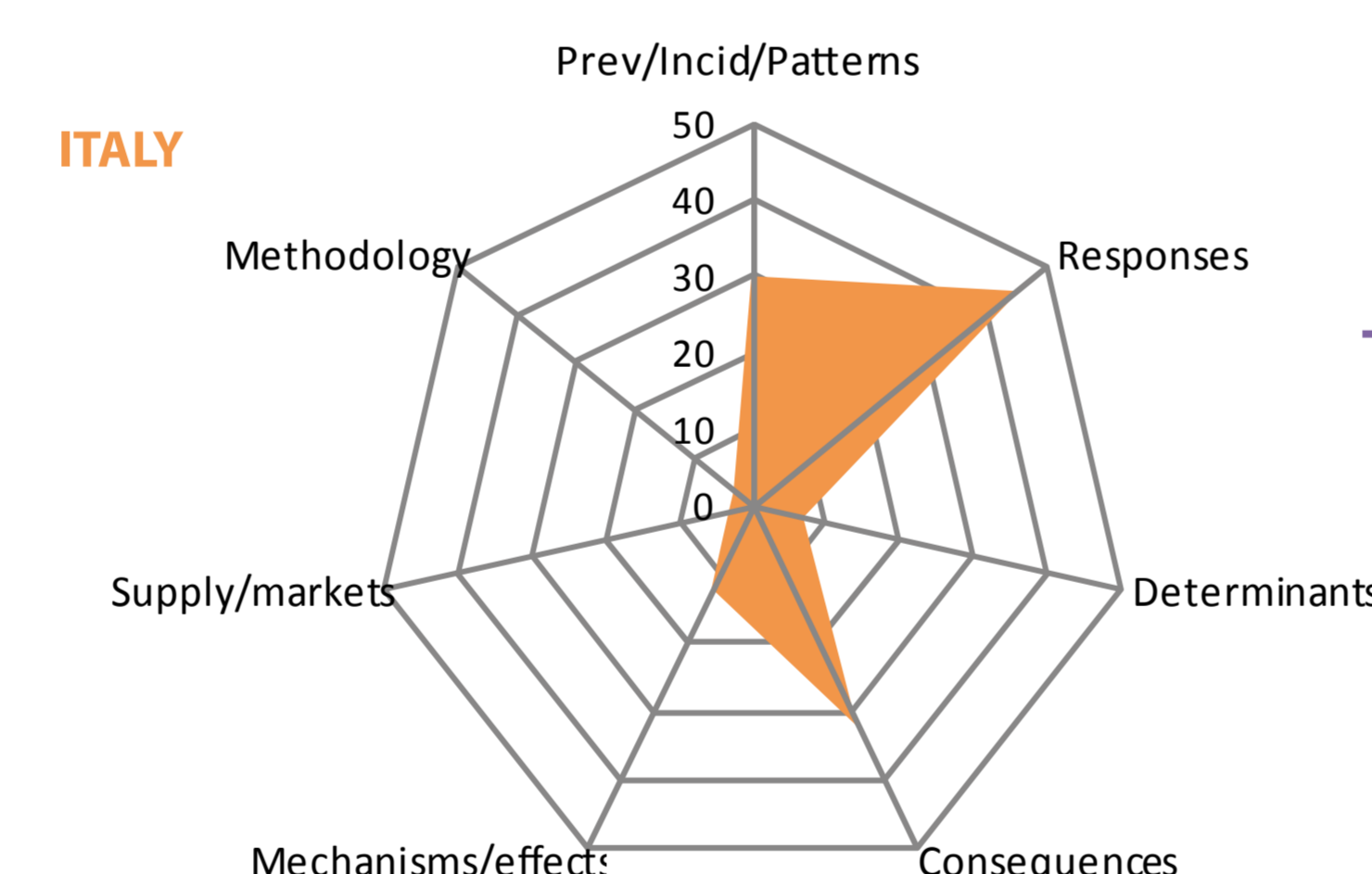
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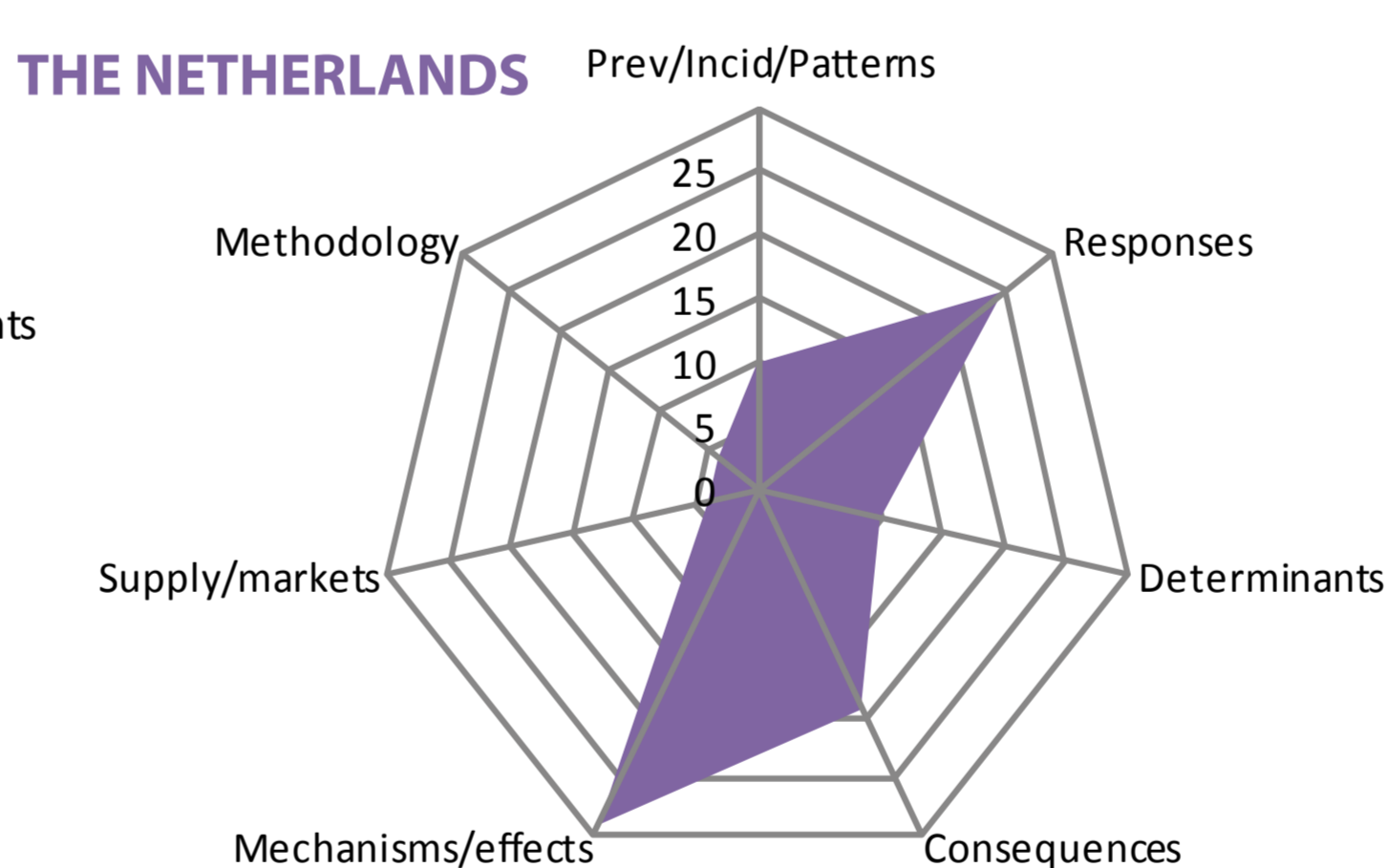
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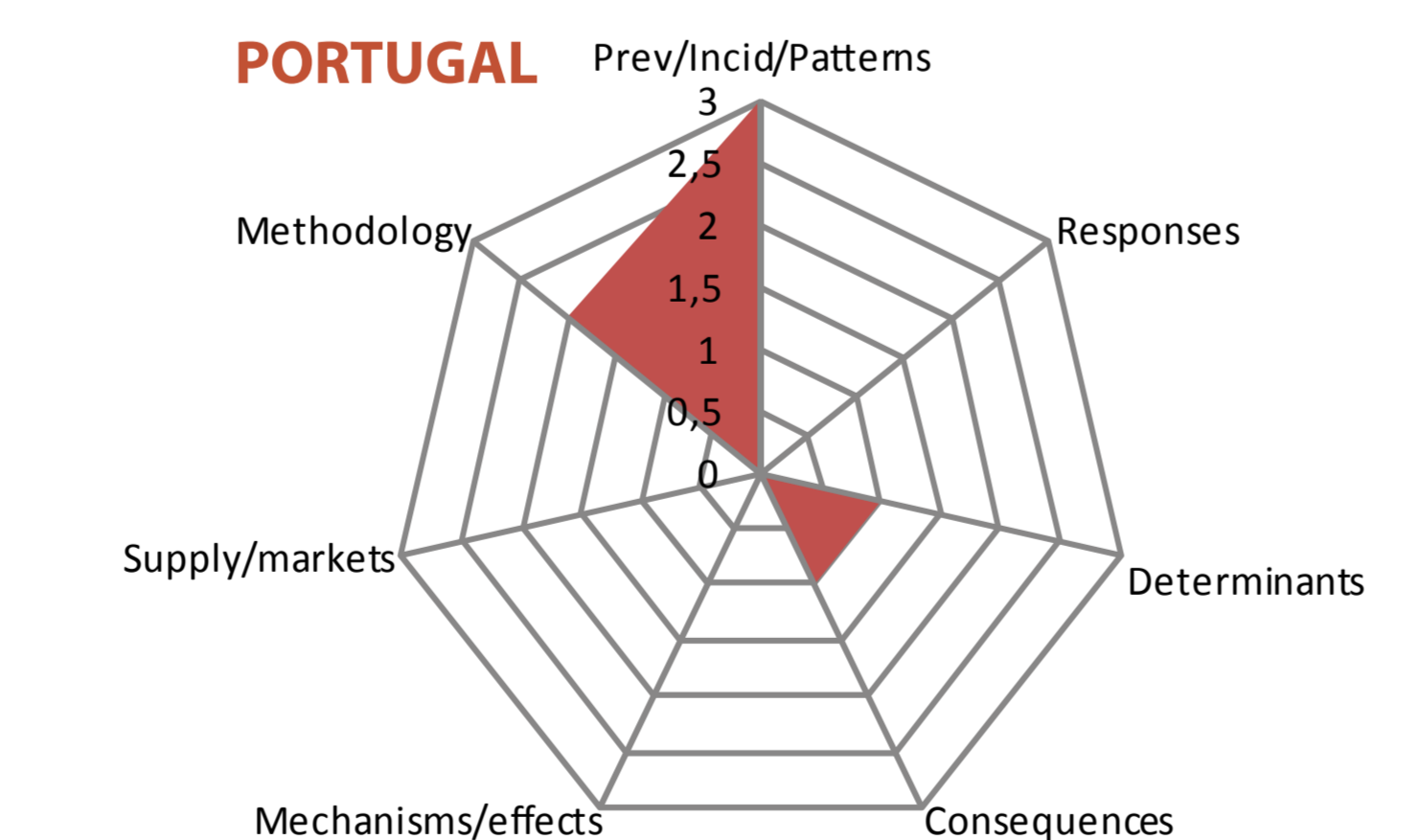
ITALY



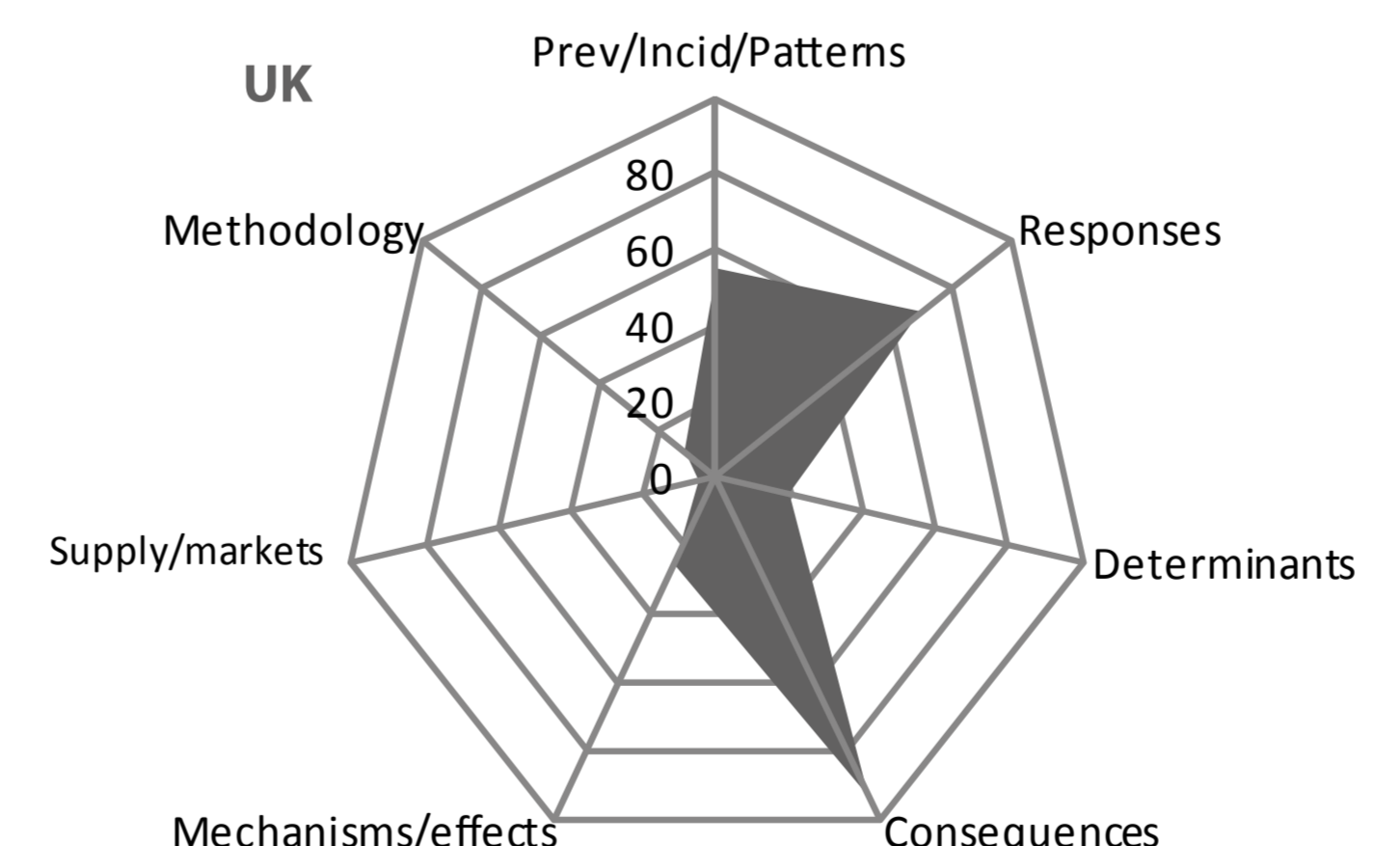
THE NETHERLANDS



PORTUGAL



UK

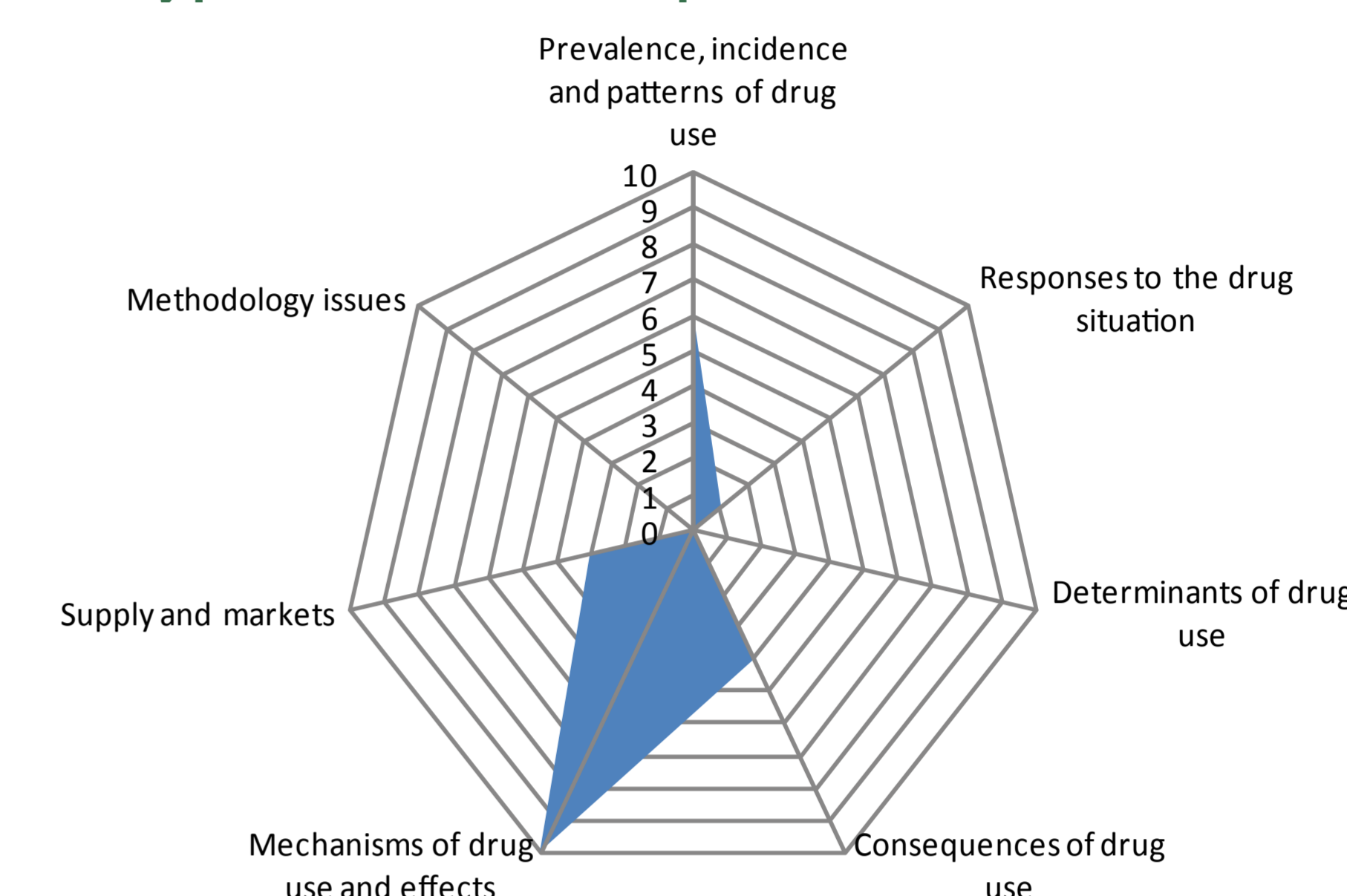


Preliminary results of SSH focus

Social Sciences focus on Research fields covered by publications in the 6 European countries involved in ERANID from 2006 to 2013.

Research field	Prevalence, incidence and patterns of drug use	Responses to the drug use	Determinants of drug use	Consequences of drug use	Mechanisms of drug use and effects	Supply and markets	Methodology issues	European projects	Reviews and meta-analyses	Total
Country										
Belgium	1	8	2	2	0	0	0	1	0	14
France	25	34	21	19	5	3	6	1	2	116
Italy	3	12	4	2	1	0	2	1	0	25
The Netherlands	3	3	5	4	1	1	4	3	0	24
Portugal	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	6
UK	30	47	12	15	1	5	3	0	3	116
Total	63	105	45	43	8	9	15	7	6	301

Research fields covered by publications from European studies from 2006 to 2013 in Social Sciences.



Conclusions

1. Through the PubMed searching, the main research fields are:

Responses to drug use: Prevention, treatment, drug policy

Consequences of drug use: Infectious diseases, psychiatric comorbidities, social issues, impact on environment/relatives

Prevalence, incidence and patterns of drug use

➔ **Epidemiological data and public health interventions**

2. Some fields are less covered:

Determinants of drug use: Understanding early predictors and current determinants of drug use (severity of drug use but also abstinence process)

➔ **Other areas of expertise less published in PubMed (anthropology, qualitative studies, ...)**

Mechanisms of drug use and effects

3. Forgotten areas in research on illicit drugs:

Supply and markets:

➔ **More related to economics that were not found in Social Sciences research.**

Methodology issues:

➔ **Some areas in the field of drug testing but fewer in preventive and operational research or interventions.**

4. Current classification too large:

This classification is not able to evidence the lack of studies for specific populations (ex: prisoners, family of drug users) or better detail the possible lack of research in specific subissues of treatment for drug dependence.

➔ **For the next "call for proposal" it would be beneficial to specify some targeted specific issues or subpopulations.**

Contact

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