



HDHL-INTIMIC

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Table of Content

	Page
Definitions	3
1. Introduction	4
2. Evaluation Procedure	5
3. Statistical analysis	6
3.1 Geographical Distribution of the applicants	6
3.2 Size of the Consortia	8
3.3 Gender Distribution	8
3.4 Budget	10
3.5 Organisation type	11
3.6 Topic of the proposals	12

Definitions

Consortium	Association of research groups/entities with the objective of achieving a common research project
Partners	Research groups participating in a project
Eligible Partner	A partner participating to the consortium and applying for funding
Collaborator	A partner participating to the consortium without applying for funding. Collaborators are expected to secure their own funding.
Coordinator	Eligible partner who is in charge of the coordination of the consortium
Principal Investigator (PI)	People representing a research group or entity

1. Introduction

The Impact of Diet, Food Components and Food Processing on Body Weight Regulation and Overweight Related Metabolic Diseases (METADIS) call was the second non-co-funded joint activity (JFA2) under the framework of the ERA-Net HDHL-INTIMIC. The call was launched on 5th of February 2019. The call aimed to support collaborative transnational research projects that address important research questions regarding the effects of food (components) or diets and/or food processing on overweight and related metabolic diseases. An additional objective of the call was to support Early Career Scientists in the area of food, nutrition and health.

Two different topics were described in the call text:

- Identification of food (components) or diets that affect appetite and/or satiety, body weight regulation and/or risk factors for the development of overweight related metabolic diseases as well as the underlying mechanisms. This includes the understanding of individual responses to food components or diets.
- The effect of food processing and/or storage conditions on food components, and the mechanisms by which this will influence appetite and/or satiety, body weight regulation and/or risk factors for the development of overweight related metabolic diseases. This can include studying how to modify the amount of these food components during food processing without affecting consumer acceptance

The following 11 countries participated in this call: Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain and Sweden. Table 1 presents an overview of the participating countries and funding organisations including their initial committed budget.

Table 1: Participating countries, funding organisations and their committed budget

Country	Funding Agency	Initial Committed budget
Belgium (BE)	F.R.S.-FNRS	0,2 M€
Czech Republic (CZ)	MEYS	0,5 M€
France (FR)	ANR	1,5 M€
Germany (DE)	BMEL BMBF	0,5 M€ 2,0 M€
Israel (IL)	MOST	0,4 M€
Italy (IT)	MIPAAFT ISS	0,25 M€ 0,25 M€
Latvia (LV)	IZM	0,3 M€
The Netherlands (NL)	ZonMw	0,75 M€
Norway (NO)	RCN	2,0 M€
Spain (ES)	ISCHII	0,25 M€
Sweden (SE)	FORMAS	0,9 M€
Total		9,8 M€

2. Evaluation procedure

The METADIS Call followed a two-step evaluation procedure (pre-proposal and full proposal submission).

In the first step of submission, closed on April 2, 2019, 42 pre-proposals were submitted. Among those, 39 pre-proposals were declared formally eligible. According to the recommendations done by the Scientific Evaluation Committee (SEC), 20 consortia have been invited to submit a full proposal before July 9, 2019. One of the invited consortia withdrew from the call. Based on the ranking list elaborated by the Scientific Evaluation Committee and the available funding, the Call Steering Committee finally selected 6 full proposals for funding (Figure 1&2).



Figure 1: Flow chart of the submitted and selected proposals.
The six awarded projects represent a global success rate of 15% (considering the eligible proposals only).



Figure 2: Flow chart of the requested and awarded budgets.

The six funded projects requested a total amount of 6,5 million Euros. This amount represents approximately 15% of the budget requested during the first stage by the

eligible pre-proposals and approximately 31% of the budget requested during the second stage by the submitted full proposals.

Seventeen international experts from thirteen different countries composed the Scientific Evaluation committee (Figure 3). Each pre-proposal/full proposal was independently reviewed by at least three committee members.



Figure 3: Geographic origin of the Scientific Evaluation committee members

3. Statistical analysis

3.1 Geographical distribution of the applicants

The six funded projects involve 26 funded partners from eight different countries (Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, The Netherlands, Spain and Sweden). In addition to the funded partners, 12 additional collaborators participate to the funded projects with their own resources.

The geographical origin of the partners asking for funding is represented in Figure 4. All participating countries were represented in the eligible pre-proposals. In those pre-proposals, more than half of the principal investigators asking for funding came from Germany, Spain, Italy and France. The prevalence of these four countries among the applicants is similar to what has already been observed during the first call for projects launched under the umbrella of the ERA-Net HDHL-INTIMIC and entitled “Interrelation of the Intestinal Microbiome, Diet and Health”.

After selection, half of the funded principle investigators were localized in Germany, in Spain or in Sweden. Unfortunately, no applicants from Israel, Belgium and Latvia were present in the selected projects.

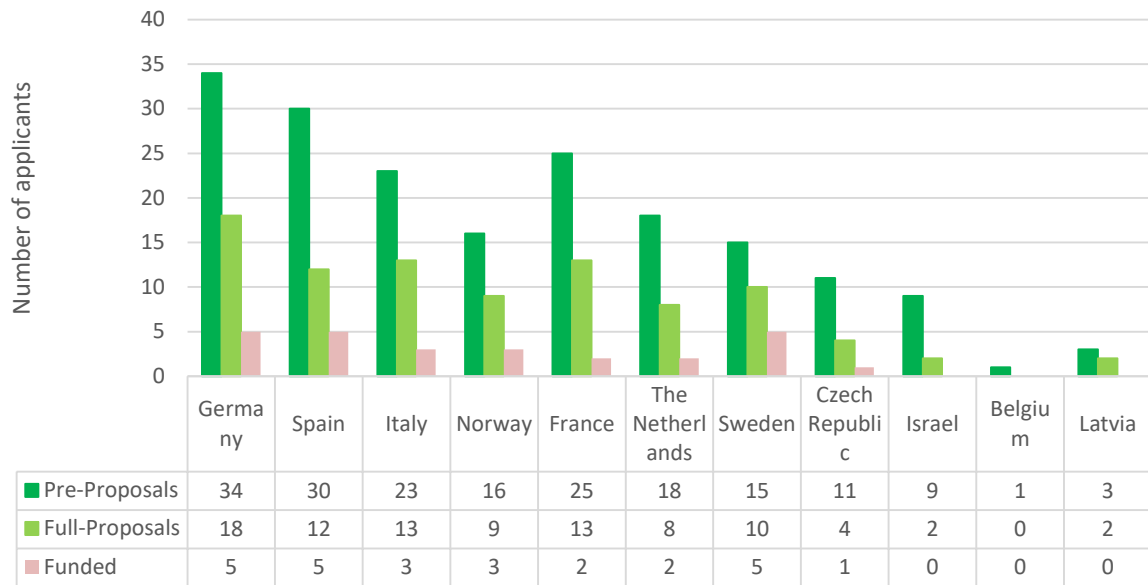


Figure 4: Geographic distribution of the partners asking for funding. (Only eligible proposal have been considered.)

The geographical origin of the project coordinator is represented in Figure 5. One quarter of the pre-proposals were coordinated by a German researcher leading to the fact that Germany was the most represented country among the coordinators of the eligible pre-proposals. However, reported to the number of applicants by country, Norway has the highest rate of coordination within the applicants (Norwegian applicants coordinate the submitted pre-proposal in 31% of the case, whereas German applicants coordinate the submitted pre-proposal in 27% of the case). No applicants from Belgium or Latvia were coordinating a research pre-proposal.

The six funded projects were coordinated by researchers coming from four different countries: France, Norway, The Netherlands, and Sweden.

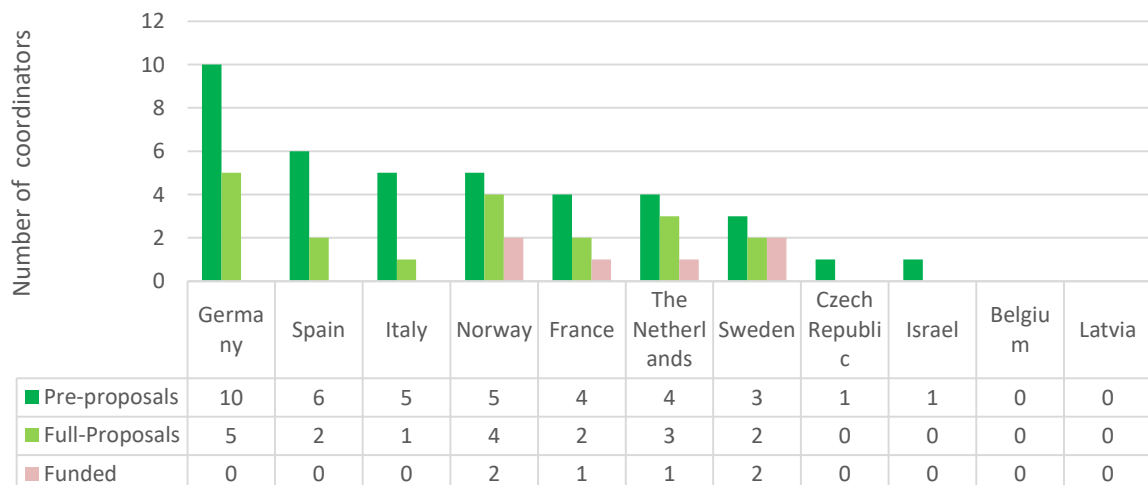


Figure 5: Geographic distribution of the project coordinators. (Only eligible proposals have been considered.)

The number of collaborators per consortia increased during the evaluation process. Indeed, collaborators represent only 12% of the consortium partners during the first evaluation step and increased up to 24% in the submitted full proposals and 32% in the funded proposals. This increase is in line with the recommendations of the scientific

evaluation committee between the two evaluation steps to include new industrial partners in order to increase the exploitation of the foreseen results. The geographical distribution of the collaborators is presented in Figure 6. In line with previous calls, we observed a high percentage of collaborators coming from countries that were not directly engaged in the call (UK, Canada, and Denmark).

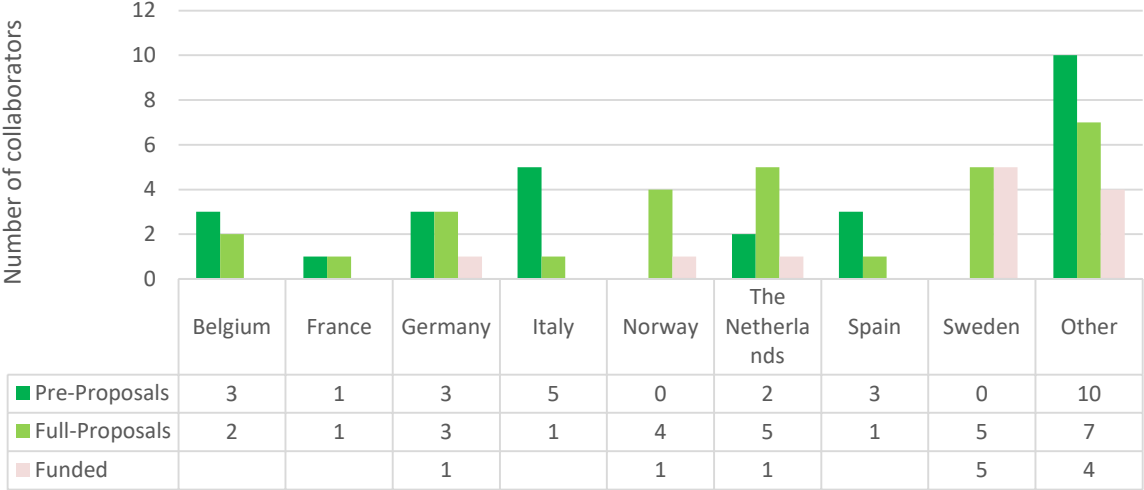


Figure 6: Geographic distribution of the collaborators. (Only eligible proposals have been considered.)

3.2 Size of the consortia

The eligible submitted pre-proposals had an average of 4.8 partners asking for funding. The average number of partners asking for funding was similar in the full proposal (4.7 partners); while this number slightly decreased in the funded projects (4.3 partners). However, the reduction of partners asking for funding does not correlate with a decrease in the consortium size. Indeed, the number of collaborators (that were not asking for funding) increased during the selection process. Whereas, each consortium had an average of 0.7 collaborator per project during the pre-proposal stage, this number increased to 1.5 in the submitted full proposals and to 2.0 in the funded project. This increase reflects the recommendations given to many applicants by the Scientific Evaluation Committee to include additional collaborators from the food industry.

3.3 Gender Distribution

The gender distribution was almost balanced among the partners asking for funding (Figure 7 and Table 2). Indeed, women represent 45% of the eligible project partners during the first evaluation stage and 42% of the eligible project partners in the funded projects. Unfortunately, the gender distribution is more unbalanced when speaking about coordination (Figure 8). Indeed, only 38% of the pre-proposals and 33% of the funded projects are coordinated by a woman.

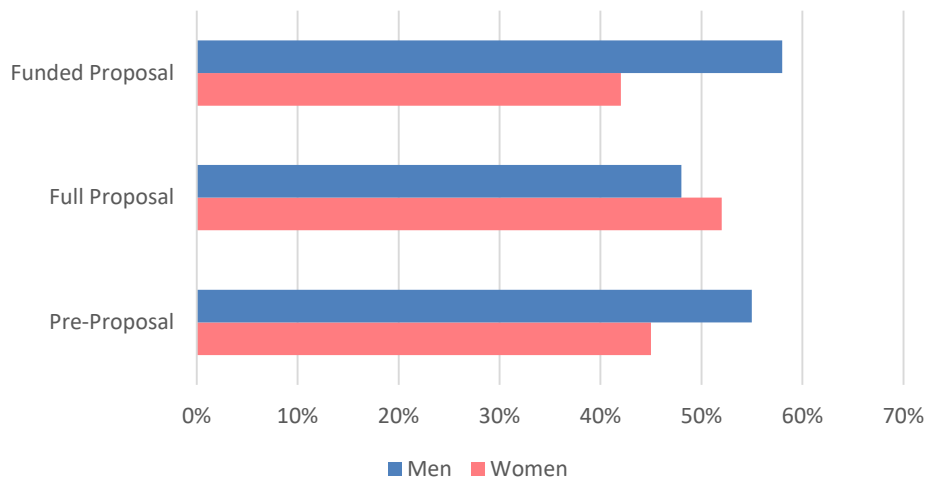


Figure 7: Gender balance (partners asking for funding). Only eligible proposals and eligible partners have been considered.

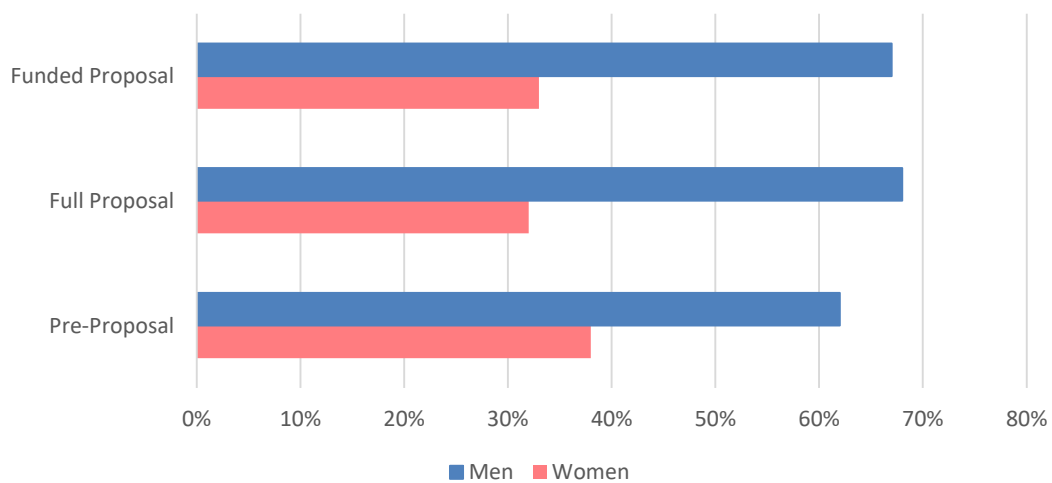


Figure 8: Gender balance (coordinators). Only eligible proposals have been considered.

Table 2: Women representation by country in the eligible pre-proposals.

	Coordinator			Partners Eligible for funding (Coord. Excluded)		
	Total Number	Number of Women	Women representation	Total number	Number of Women	Women representation
BE	0	0	/	1	1	100 %
CZ	1	1	100 %	10	2	20 %
DE	10	3	30 %	24	10	42 %
ES	6	1	17 %	24	9	38 %
FR	4	3	75 %	21	11	52 %
IL	1	1	100 %	8	2	25 %
IT	5	2	40 %	18	10	56 %
NL	4	0	0 %	14	6	43 %
NO	5	3	60 %	11	4	36 %
SE	3	1	33 %	12	6	50 %

3.4 Budget

Figure 9 is a graphical representation of the requested funding by country and by funding organisation for each evaluation step.

The initial committed budget was about 4 times over-subscribed in the pre-proposal phase and about 2 times over-subscribed in the full proposal phase (Table 3). 66% of the initial committed budget was allocated to the funded projects. Italy, Spain and Sweden increased their budget for this call in order to finance the awarded projects.

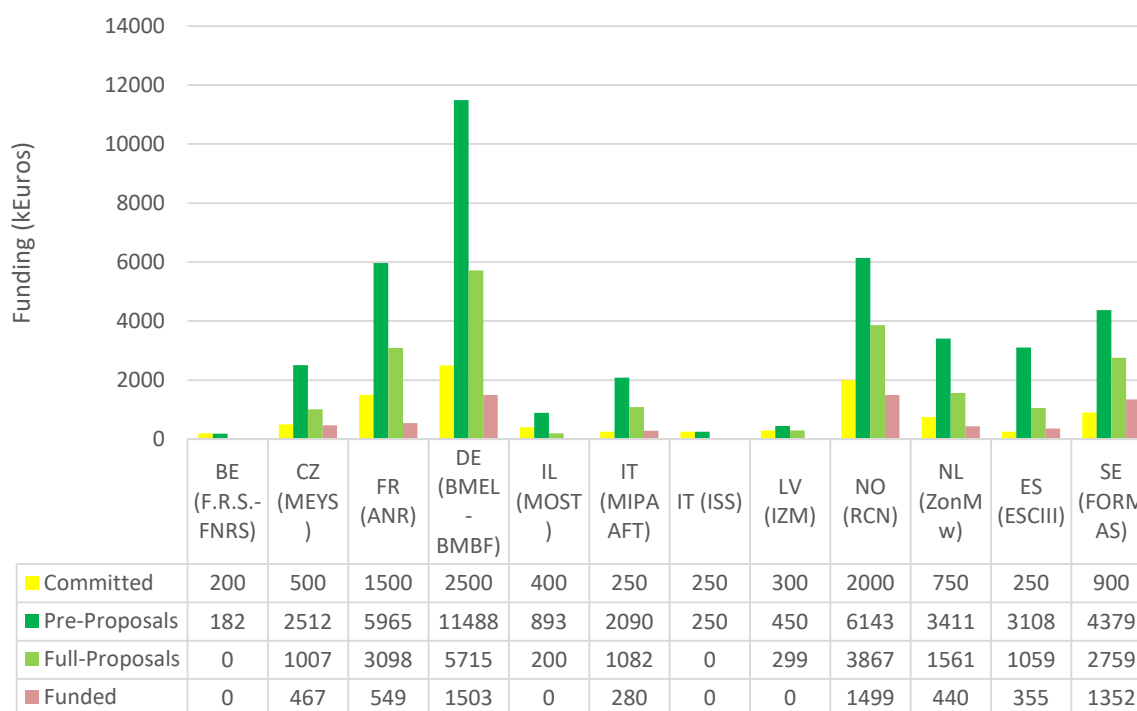


Figure 9: Budget distribution (in kEuros) by country and by funding organization.

Only eligible proposals have been considered. In this table, the committed budget refers to the initial committed budget.

Table 3: Over-subscription factor. (Only eligible proposals were considered)

	Pre-Proposals	Full-Proposals
BE (F.R.S.-FNRS)	0,9	0,0
CZ (MEYS)	5,0	2,0
FR (ANR)	4,0	2,1
DE (BMEL-BMBF)	4,6	2,3
IL (MOST)	2,2	0,5
IT (MIPAAFT)	8,4	4,3
IT (ISS)	1,0	0,0
LV (IZM)	1,5	1,0
NO (RCN)	3,1	1,9
NL (ZonMw)	4,5	2,1
ES (ESCI)	12,4	4,2
SE (FORMAS)	4,9	3,1
Total over-subscription	4,2	2,1

3.5 Organisation type

Applicants are mainly coming from Universities, Academic Research centres, and public entities such as hospitals (Figure 10). The proportion of private entities, such as SME and Large enterprises has increased during the selection process. Indeed, private entities represent only 4% of the partners present in the pre-proposals but 16% of the partners present in the funded projects. This observation is in line with the call topic and with the recommendations done by the Scientific Evaluation Panel to include private entities in order to increase the exploitation of the research outputs inside the society. Private companies, not always eligible for funding by the participating funding organisations, are generally financed by their own funds (Figure 11).

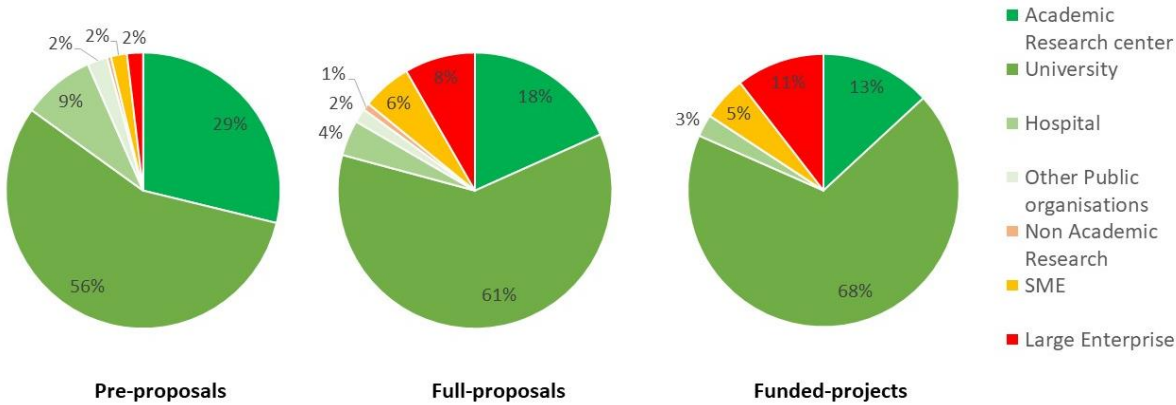


Figure 10: Organisation type distribution during the selection process. (Only eligible proposals have been considered.)

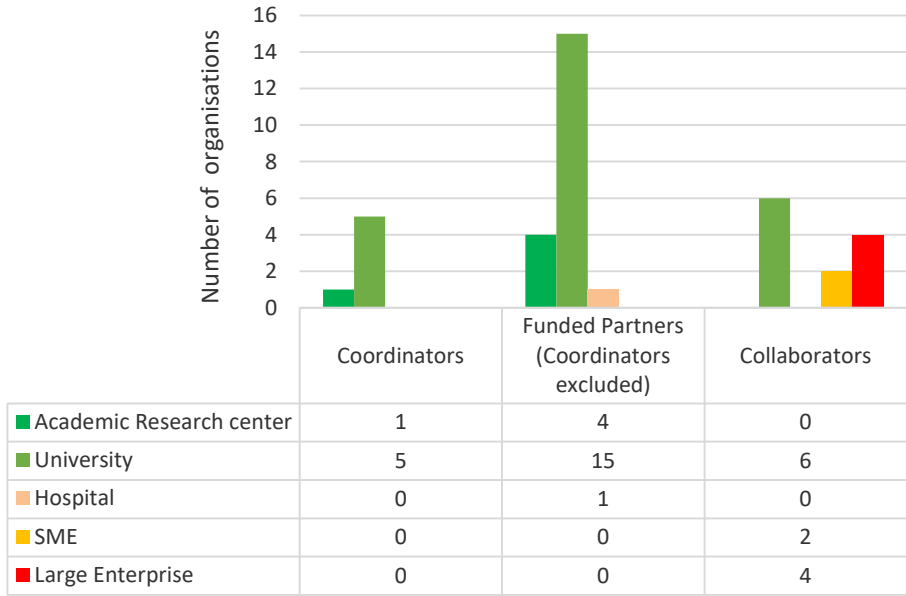


Figure 11: Organisation type distribution (funded projects)

Universities involved in this call are covering a wide spectrum of expertise: medicine, biochemistry, physiology, molecular biology, nutrition, food and agriculture science. Different technical universities were also present among the applicants.

3.6 Topics of the proposals

The following two topics were described in the call text:

- Identification of **food (components) or diets** that affect appetite and/or satiety, body weight regulation and/or risk factors for the development of overweight related metabolic diseases as well as the underlying mechanisms.
- The effect of **food processing and/or storage** conditions on food components, and the mechanisms by which this will influence appetite and/or satiety, body weight regulation and/or risk factors for the development of overweight related metabolic diseases.

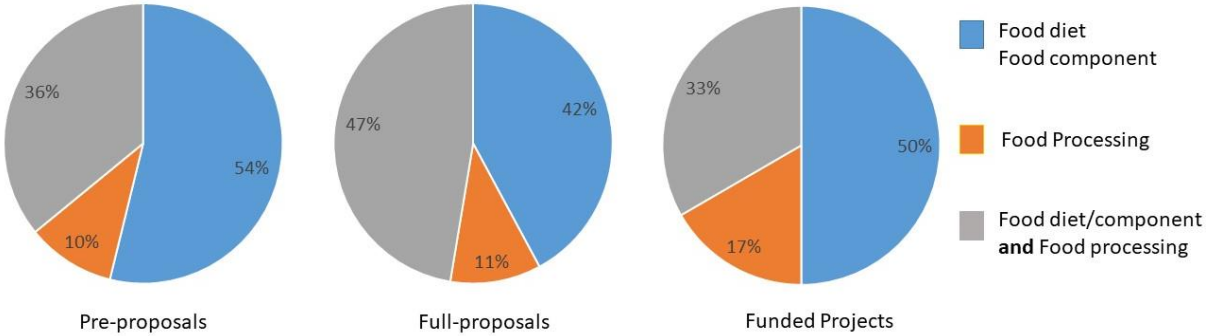


Figure 12: Topic of the proposals. (Only eligible proposals have been considered.)

90% of the pre-proposals were exclusively (54%) or not exclusively (36%) focused on the first topic of the call (identification of food components and food diet) (Figure 12). This prevalence remained unchanged during the evaluation process. A low participation of the food industry during the initial submission step could explain this observation.