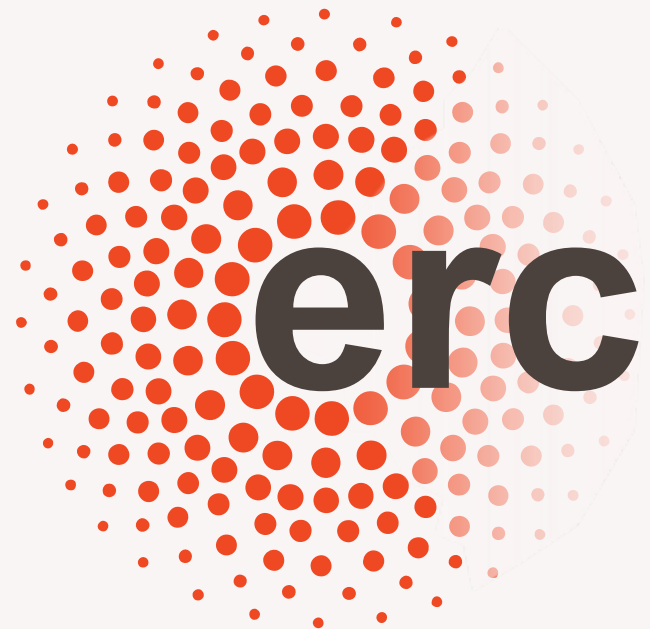


# ERC - Starting Grant Call 2010

## 4th Max Weber Programme Academic Careers Observatory Conference

Alejandro MARTIN HOBDEY  
ERC Unit – B2

Florence, 11 November 2009



# Overview of presentation

- Outline of ERC
- Practical info on StG scheme
- Results & experience to date
- Examples of funded projects in the SSH

# ERC, “Ideas” and FP7

## Main features

- Part of the “family” of FP7 and complementary to other FP7 supports to research
  - **Bottom-up** vs targeted research
  - **Individual teams** vs consortia
- FP7 “Ideas” programme provides funding
  - Budget (2007-2013) : **€ 7.51 bn** (around 15% of FP7 budget)
  - Average budget: € ~1 bn per year
- An “integrated structure” with a specific vocation
  - Independent scientific governance  
**Scientific Council** with 22 members
  - Dedicated Implementation Structure  
**Executive Agency** with 389 employees by 2013



European Research Council  
Scientific Council



European Research Council  
Executive Agency



# ERC Grant Schemes



Boost European excellence in frontier research

Funding Strategy: 3R and 2 schemes

## **Aim:** Retain – Repatriate – Recruit

⇒ Favour “brain gain” and “reverse brain drain”

- improve **career opportunities and independence** - especially for young researchers
- increase **competition, recognition and international visibility** - for excellent individual scientists and scholars in Europe
- raise **aspiration and achievement** of basic research in Europe

## **Activities:** Two complementary funding schemes

- **ERC Starting Grant (StG)**: attract & retain the next generation of independent research leaders
- **ERC Advanced Grant (AdG)**: attract & reward established independent research leaders



# Overall Goal of Starting Grants

- Support *ground-breaking, high-risk/high-gain* research that opens new opportunities and directions including those of a multi- and inter-disciplinary nature
- Not looking for *“incremental”* research
- Aimed at young investigators starting or consolidating their own independent research team or independent research programme
- Significant awards : i.e. up to a max. of 2 M Euro per grant for up to 5 years

# Strategic principles of Starting Grants

## → All fields of science and scholarship are eligible

- Investigator-driven, bottom-up

## → Excellence is the only valid criterion

- Individual team + research project

## → Investment in research talent

- Attractive, flexible grants, up to five years
- Under control of the lead researcher (Principal Investigator)

## → Independent individual teams in Europe

- Nationality and Age of researchers is not relevant
- Host organisation to be located in the EU or AS

## Life Sciences

- LS1 Molecular & Structural Biology & Biochemistry
- LS2 Genetics, Genomics, Bioinformatics & Systems Biology
- LS3 Cellular and Developmental Biology
- LS4 Physiology, Pathophysiology & Endocrinology
- LS5 Neurosciences & neural disorders
- LS6 Immunity & infection
- LS7 Diagnostic tools, therapies & public health
- LS8 Evolutionary, population & environmental biology
- LS9 Applied life sciences & biotechnology

## Social Sciences and Humanities

- SH1 Individuals, institutions & markets
- SH2 Institutions, values, beliefs and behaviour
- SH3 Environment & society
- SH4 The Human Mind and its complexity
- SH5 Cultures & cultural production
- SH6 The study of the human past

## Physical Sciences & Engineering

- PE1 Mathematical foundations
- PE2 Fundamental constituents of matter
- PE3 Condensed matter physics
- PE4 Physical & Analytical Chemical sciences
- PE5 Materials & Synthesis
- PE6 Computer science & informatics
- PE7 Systems & communication engineering
- PE8 Products & process engineering
- PE9 Universe sciences
- PE10 Earth system science

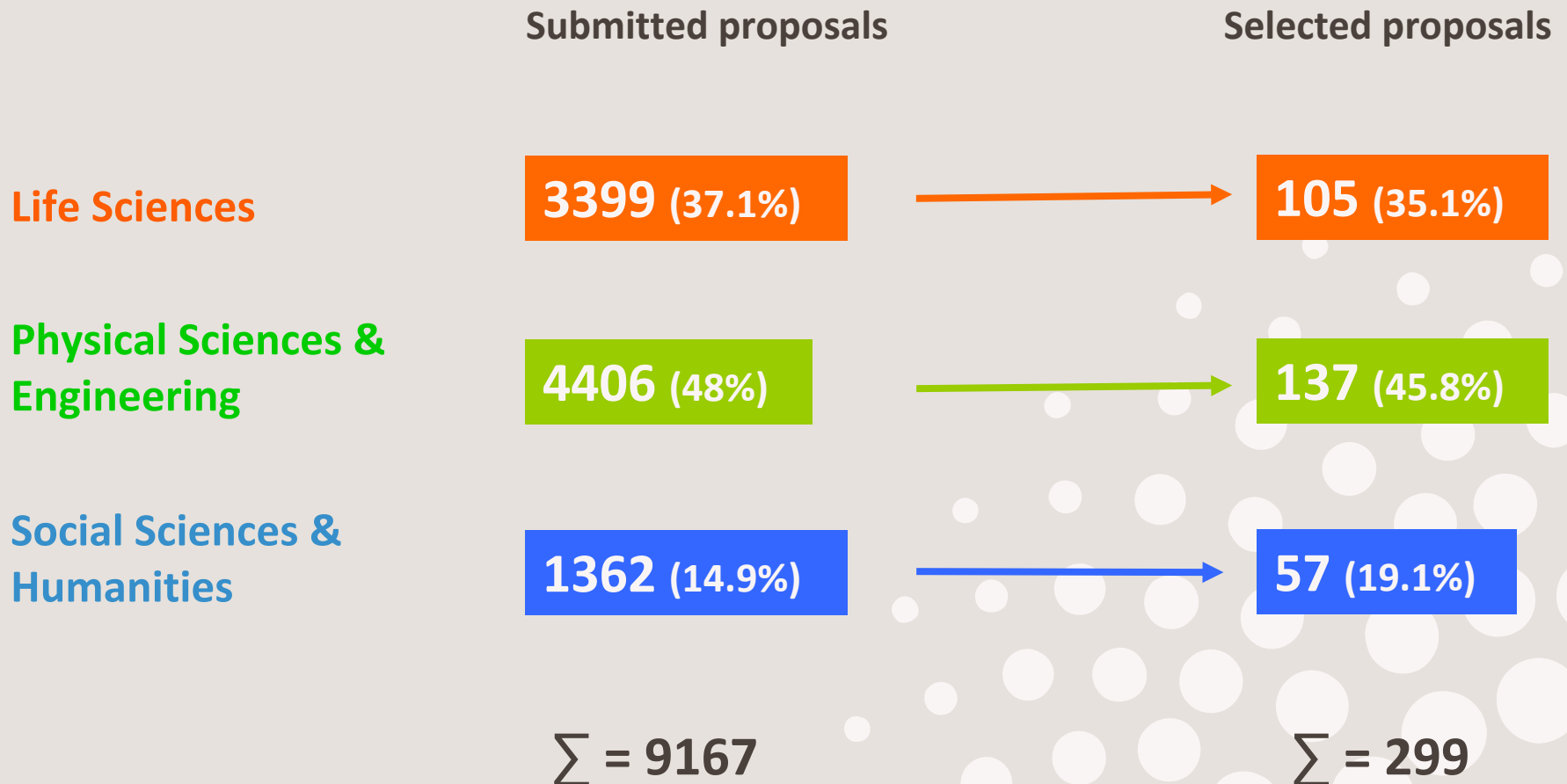
# StG applicant: PhD requirement

- First PhD awarded 2-10 years before call publication date (30 July 2009)
  - **starters** (PhD award: 2-6 years)
  - **consolidators** (PhD award: 6-10 years)
  - responsibility of applicant to justify change the stage (exceptionally)
  - final decision by the panel
- **Extension** may be requested:
  - up to 14.5 years
  - maternity (up 18 months/child) / paternity leave (up 12 months/child),
  - long-term illness, military service, statutory reasons (clinical qualification)
  - applies to starter / consolidator stage
  - must be supported by official documents



# ERC Starting Grant: 2007 call

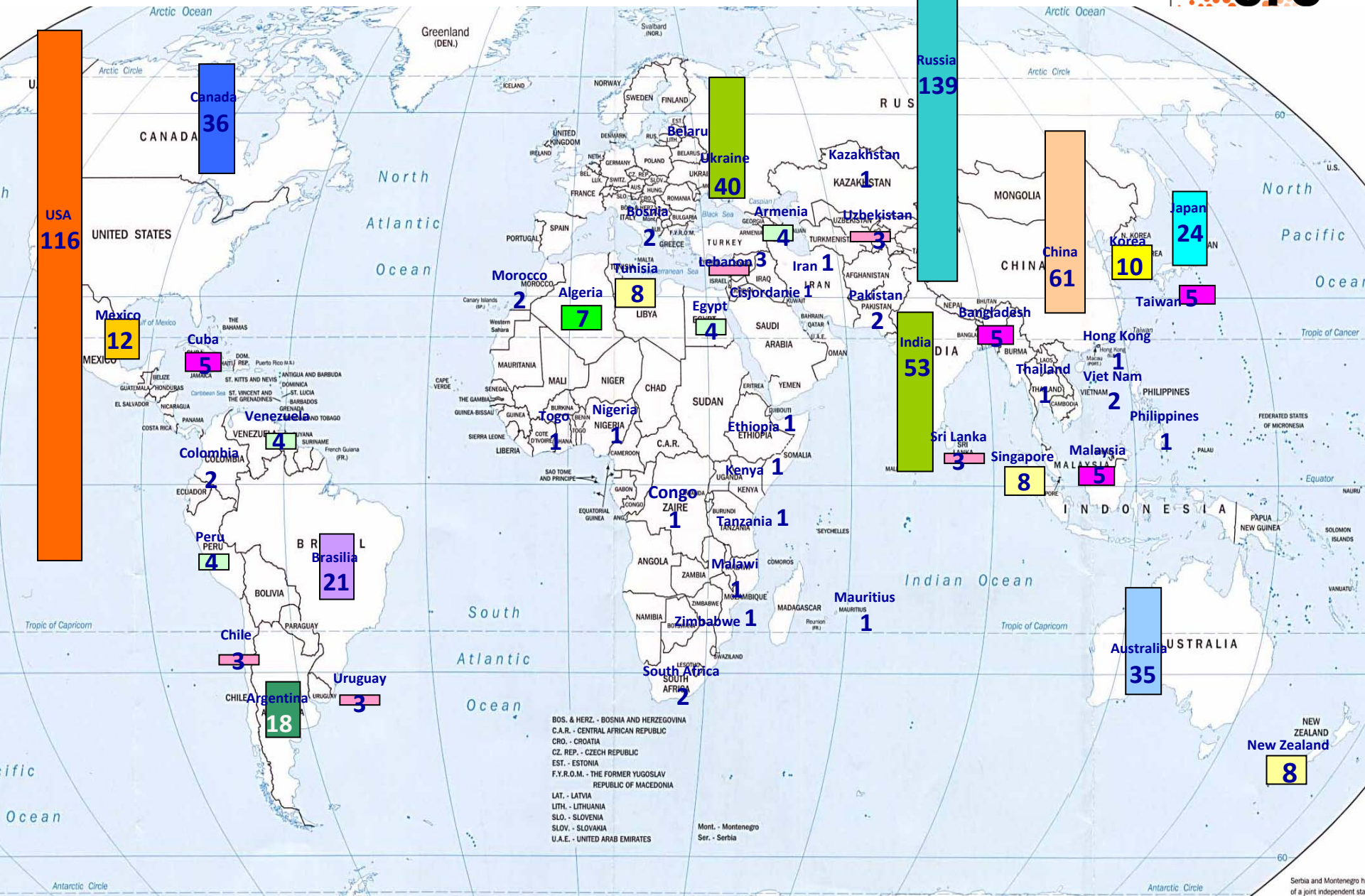
## Number of proposals submitted and selected by domain



# ERC Starting grant calls 2007

## Submissions from citizens of third countries

European Research Council

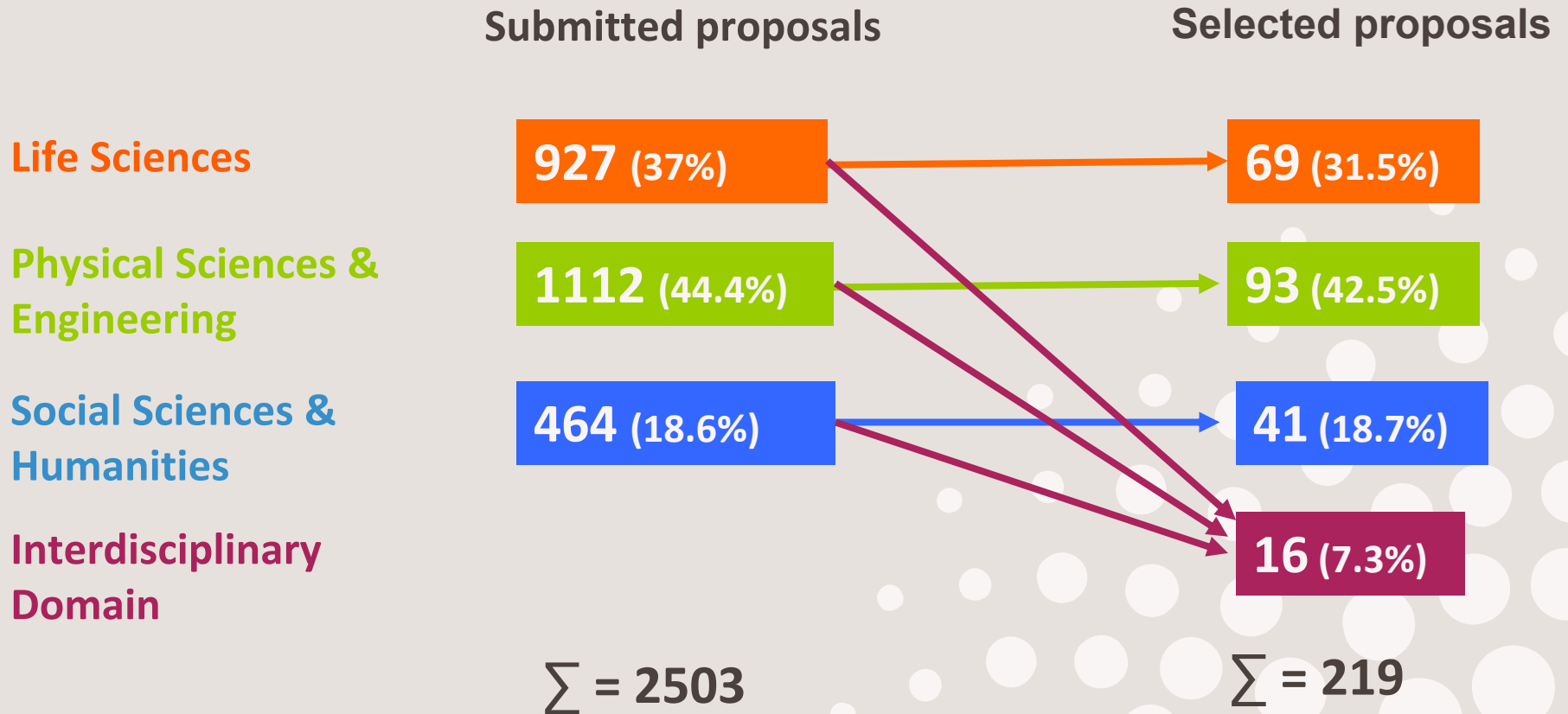


BOS. & HERZ. - BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA  
 C.A.R. - CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC  
 CRO. - CROATIA  
 CZ. REP. - CZECH REPUBLIC  
 EST. - ESTONIA  
 F.Y.R.O.M. - THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA  
 LAT. - LATVIA  
 LTH. - LITHUANIA  
 SLO. - SLOVENIA  
 SLOV. - SLOVAKIA  
 U.A.E. - UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Serbia and Montenegro have been included in the statistics as a joint independent state, although they have not been formally recognized by the European Union.

# ERC Starting Grant 2009

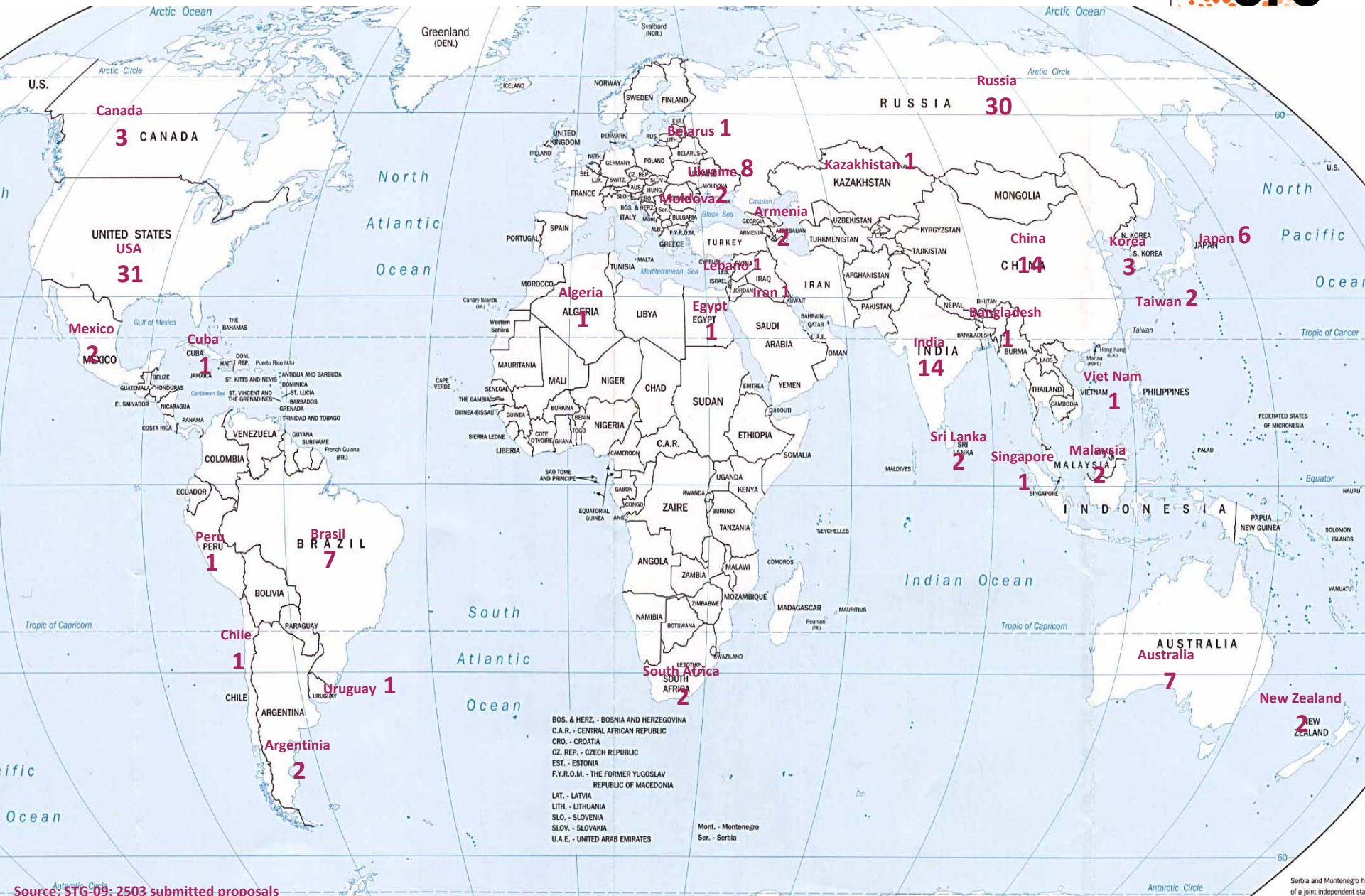
## Number of proposals submitted and selected by domain



# ERC Starting Grant 2009



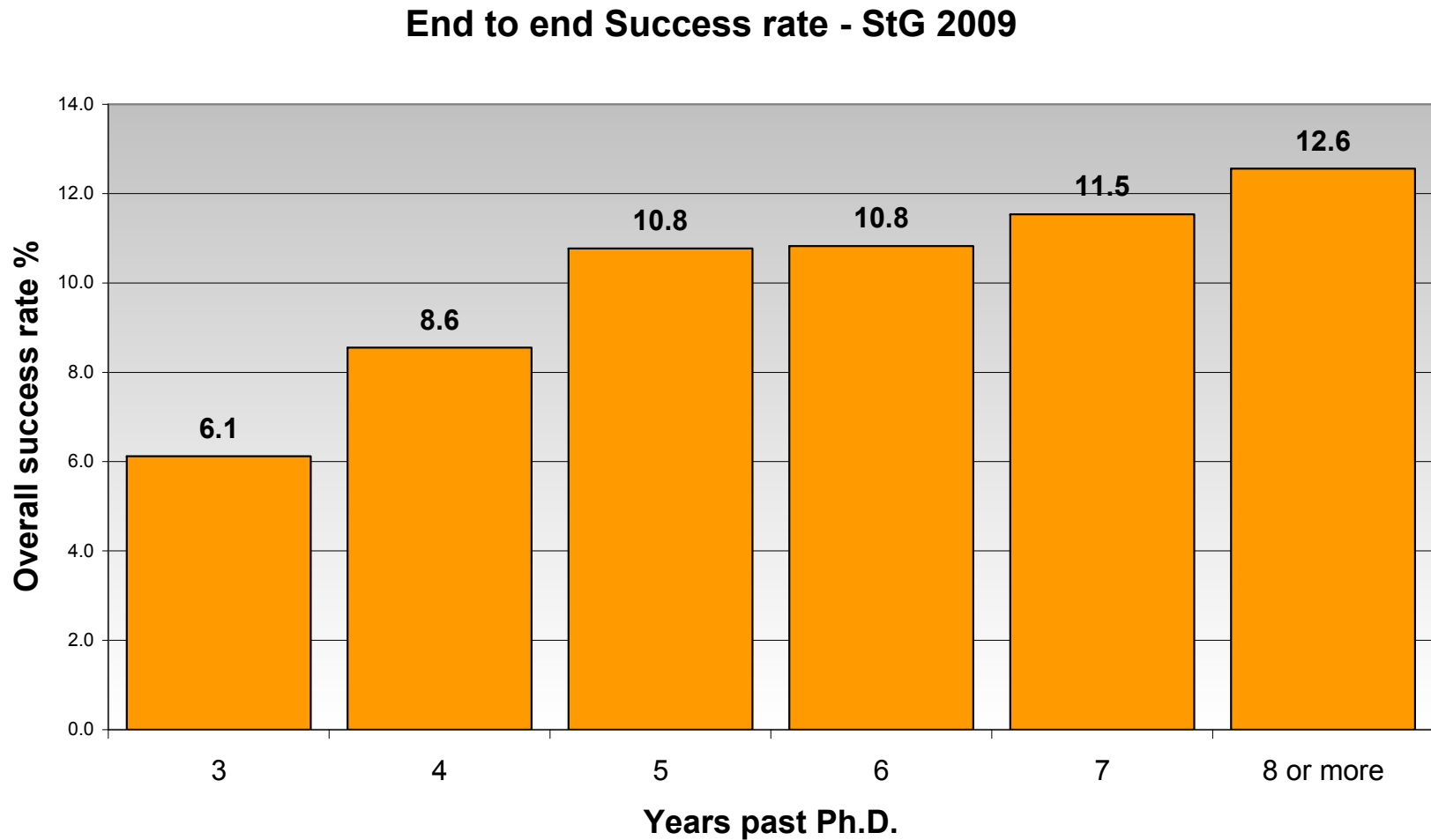
## Submissions from nationals of third countries



Source: STG-09: 2503 submitted proposals

Serbia and Montenegro is a joint independent state not been formally recognized

# End to end success rate – StG 2009



# Main parameters StG 2010

- Increase in budget from StG2 by ~75% (to **€530M**)
- Increase in eligibility window from 3-8 to 2-10 years
- Introduction of Starter and Consolidator tracks (years after PhD)



# New “feature”: Streaming

- First time implemented
- Allows to run “two calls in parallel” with a flexible (non-bureaucratic) separation between them.
- Success rate will be kept “comparable” between the two streams
- Unlike “eligibility”, ultimate decision on streaming is with the panels

# Implementation of “streaming”

- Work programme states: *PIs will be assessed by the evaluation panels as "starters" or "consolidators" taking into account the specific stage of their research career at the time of the application.*
- “By default” people fall into the stream that corresponds by the number of years past Ph.D.
- Applicants need to argue their case for different consideration.
- All “**objective**” (parental leave, military service, long term illness, etc) reasons that apply for extending the eligibility window apply by analogy to extending the “starter” window.



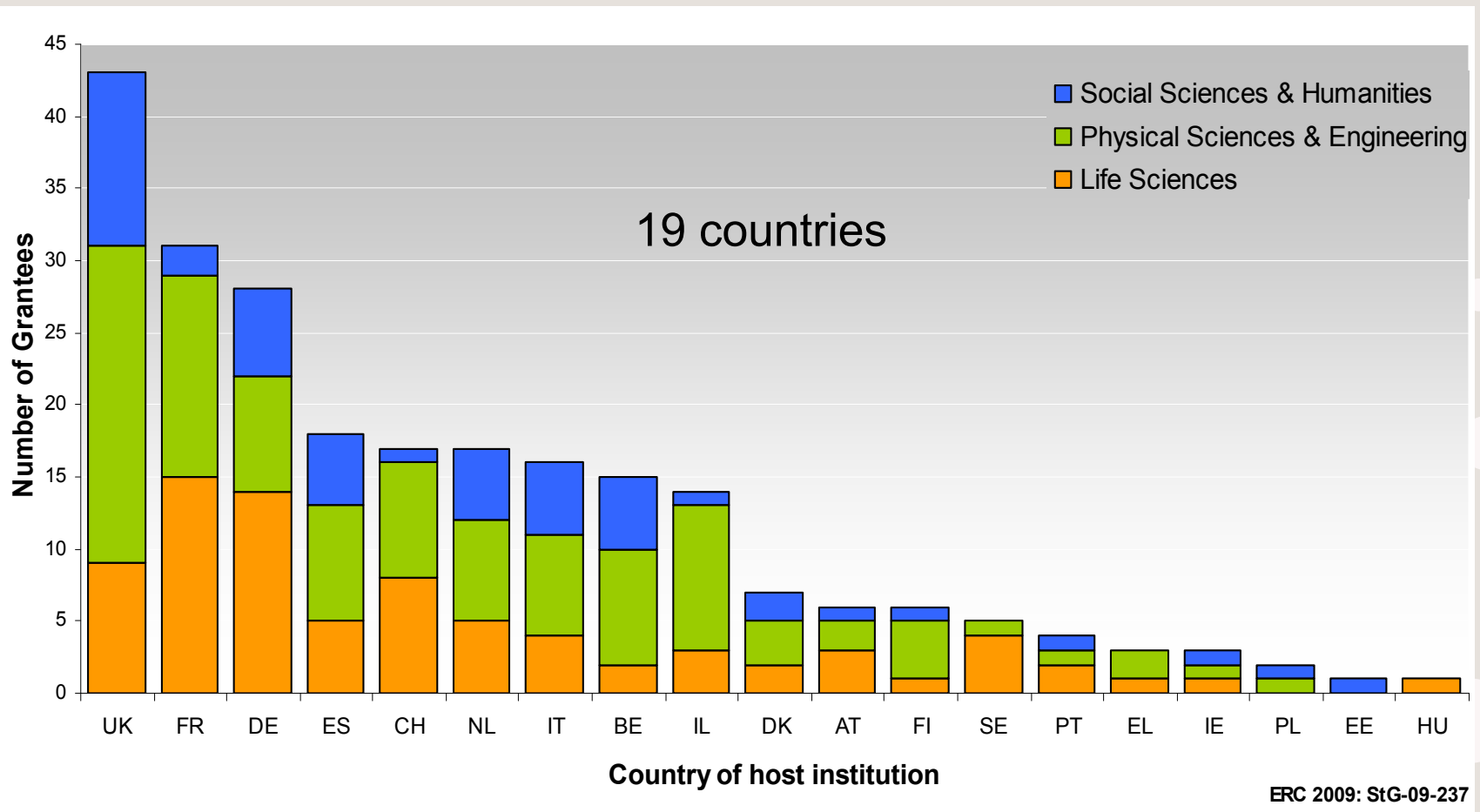
# “Subjective” reasons of change of stream

- Need a similar approach in each panel on “subjective” reasons
- Cannot have situation where approach is radically different depending on the panel applied to.
- **Valid reasons: “Career break”** outside science/research (e.g. volunteer work, professional activity *completely unrelated to research career*, unemployment, etc)
- **Non valid reasons:** Difficulties with experiments, personal difficulties with post-doc supervisor, two Ph.D.s, working as a professional in a company in same or close field
- Need, and will arrange, a common inter-panel approach.
- Ultimate decision power with panel and panel chair



## Grantees by country of host institution & domain

Source: top 237 proposals



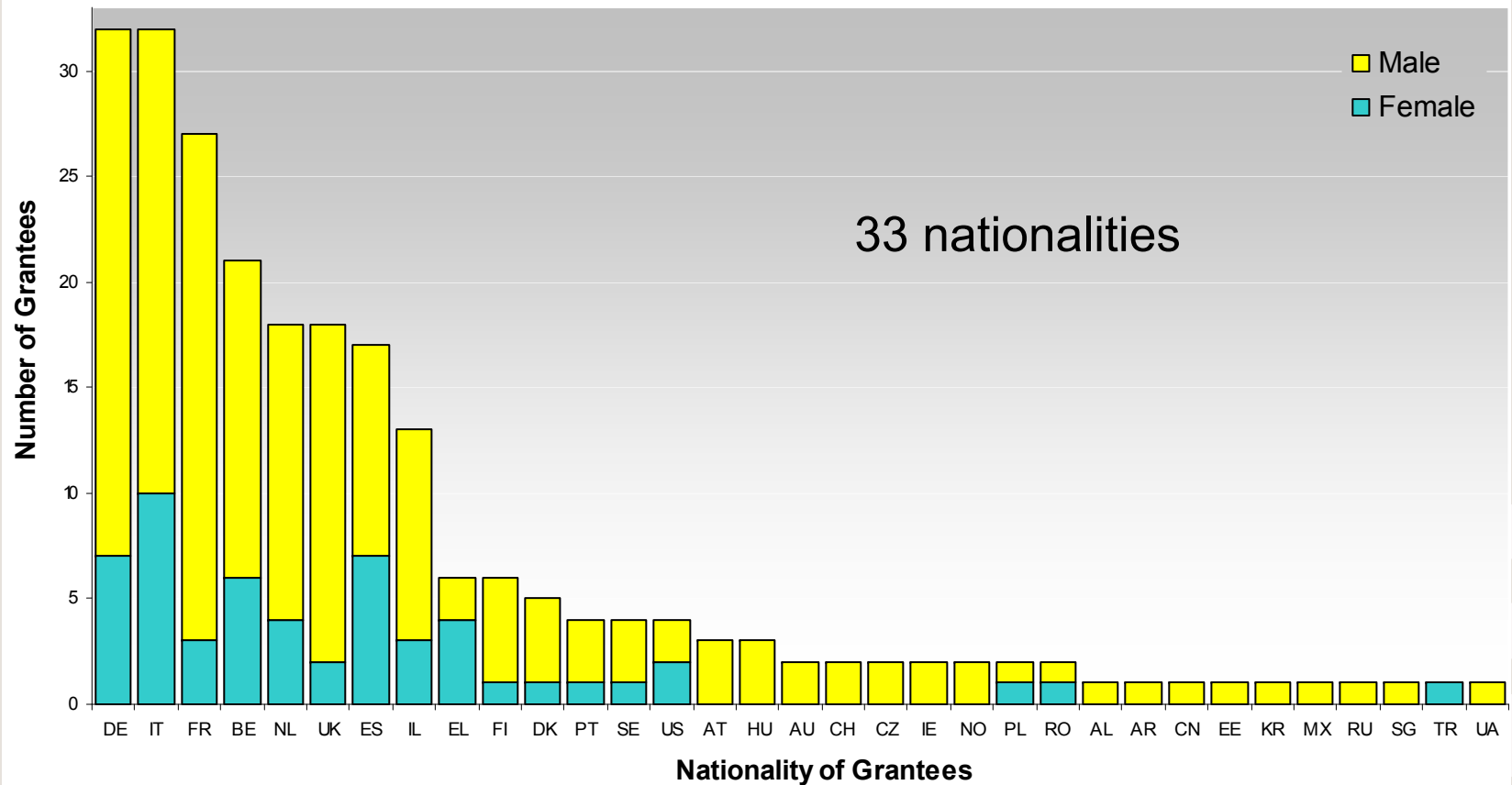
ERC 2009: StG-09-237



# ERC Starting Grant: 2009 call

## Grantees by nationality & gender

Source: top 237 proposals



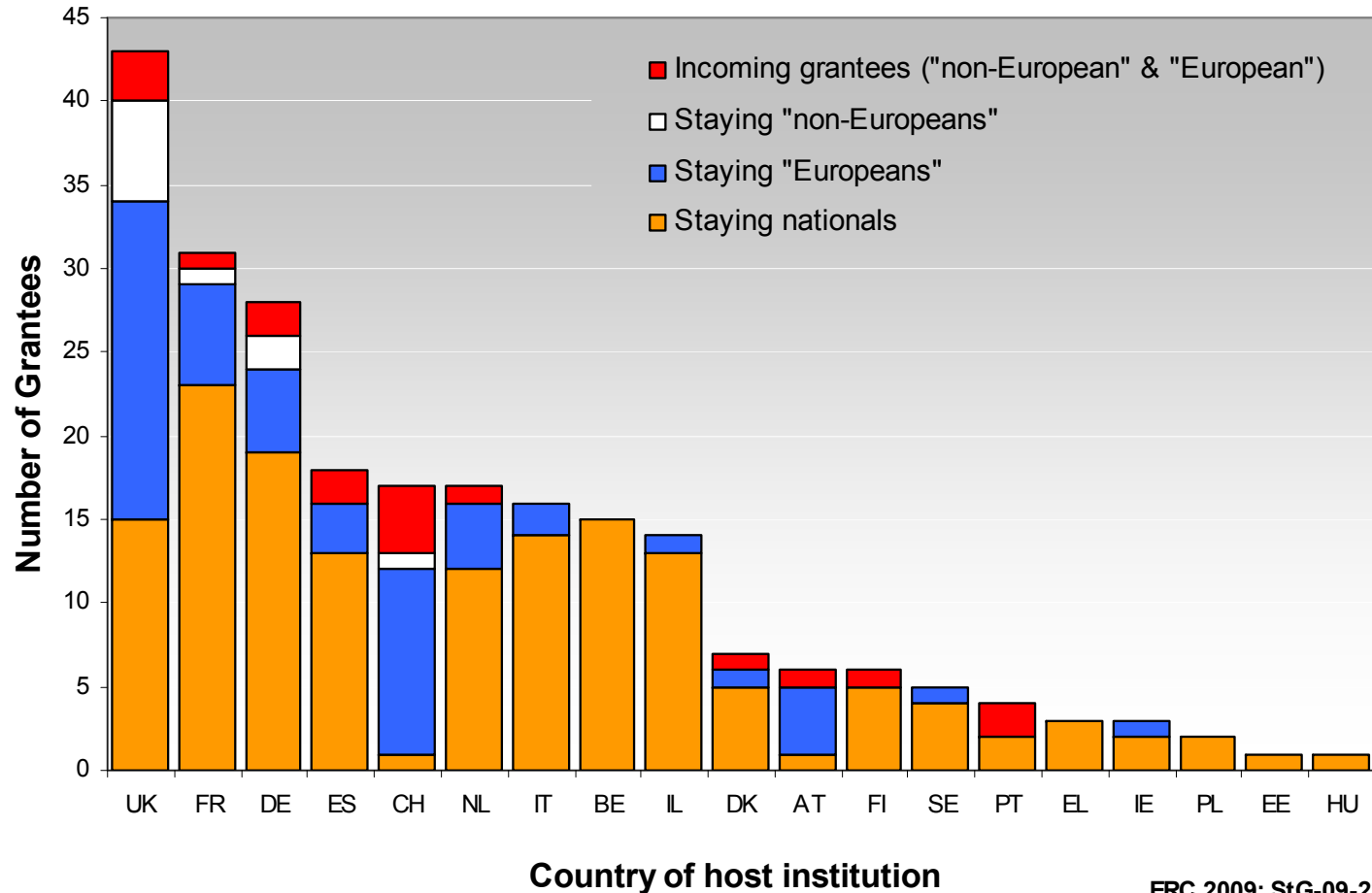
ERC 2009: StG-09-237



# ERC Starting Grant: 2009 call

## Mobility: Incoming & staying candidates

Source: top 237 proposals



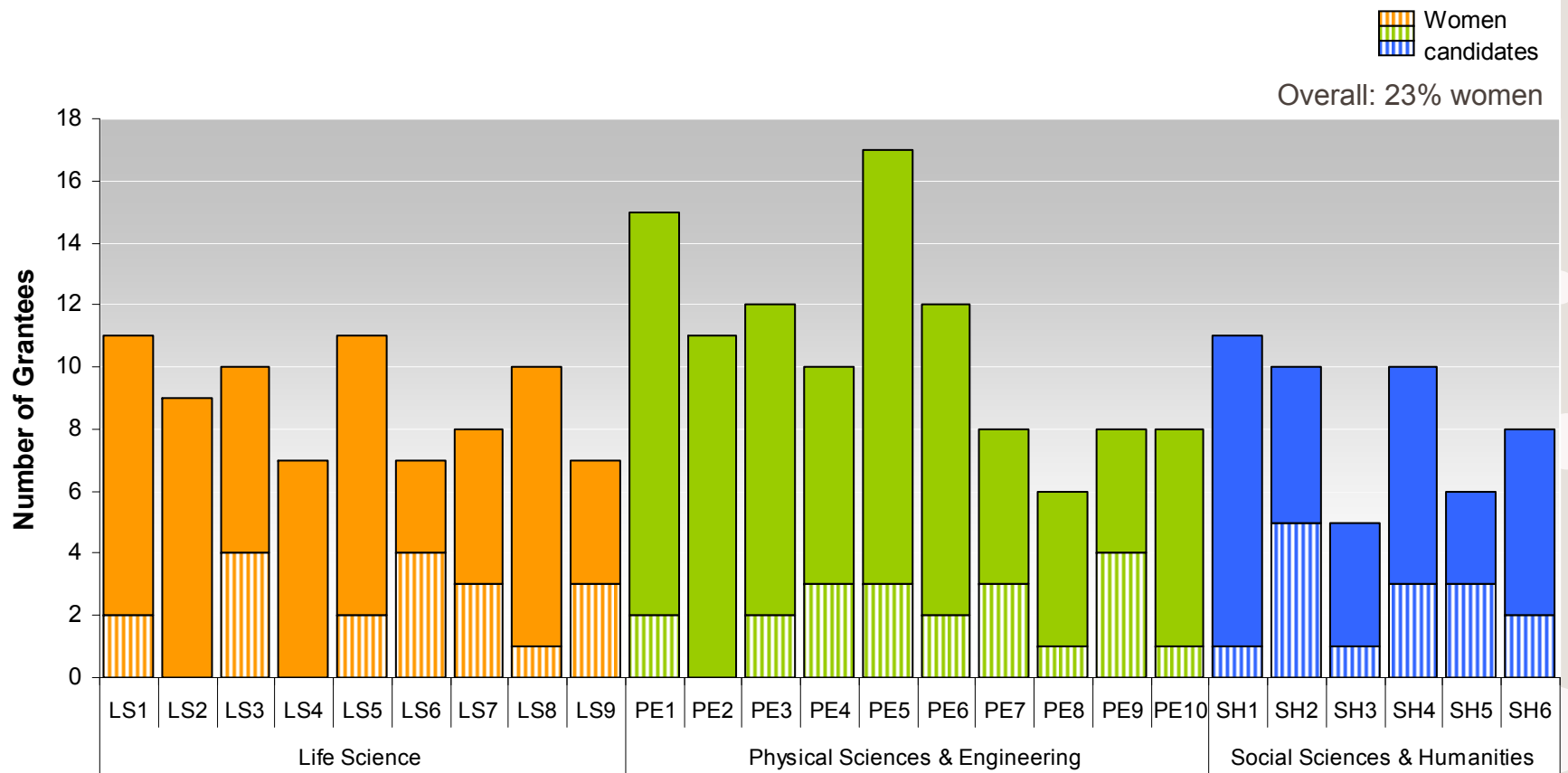
ERC 2009: StG-09-237



# ERC Starting Grant: 2009 call

## Grantees by panel & gender

Source: top 237 proposals



ERC 2009: StG-09-237



List of panel accronyms: see Annex I



# Social Sciences and Humanities Grantees

Selected successful grant applications

- **Project:** Trade, Productivity, and Firm Capabilities in China's Manufacturing Sector
- **Applicant Gender (age)/Nationality:** Male (36)/ Belgian
- **Host Institution:** Katholieke Universiteit Leuven - Department of Economics
- **Budget:** € 944940
- **Duration:** 60 months
  
- **Project :** Bosnian Bones, Spanish Ghosts: 'Transitional Justice' and the Legal Shaping of Memory after Two Modern Conflicts
- **Applicant Gender (age)/Nationality:** Female (41)/ US
- **Host Institution:** Goldsmiths, University of London - Department of Department of Visual Cultures
- **Budget:** € 1 420 000
- **Duration:** 48 months

# Social Sciences and Humanities Grantees

## Selected successful grant applications

- **Project:** The Last Song of the Troubadours: Linguistic Codification and Construction of a Literary Canon in the Crown of Aragon (14th and 15th centuries)
- **Applicant Gender (age)/Nationality:** Female (37)/Spanish
- **Host Institution:** Universitat de Girona- Departament de Filologia i Filosofia
- **Budget:** € 436200
- **Duration:** 36 months
  
- **Project :** Consciousness In basic Science And Neurorehabilitation
- **Applicant Gender (age)/Nationality:** Male (34)/ Danish
- **Host Institution:** University of Aarhus - Hammel Neurocenter Research Unit
- **Budget:** € 1 641 232
- **Duration:** 60 months



# Social Sciences and Humanities Grantees

Selected successful grant applications

- **Project** : Innovation for Climate change mitigation: a study of energy R&D, its Uncertain effectiveness and Spillovers
- **Applicant Gender (age)/Nationality**: Female (36)/ Italian
- **Host Institution**: Sustainable Development Programme – Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei  
**Budget**: € 920 000
- **Duration**: 36 months
  
- **Project**: The Design of International Institutions: Legitimacy, Effectiveness and Distribution in Global Governance
- **Applicant Gender (age)/Nationality**: Male (37) / Swedish
- **Host Institution**: Stockholms Universitet - Department of Political Science
- **Budget**: € 1 651 200
- **Duration**: 60 months

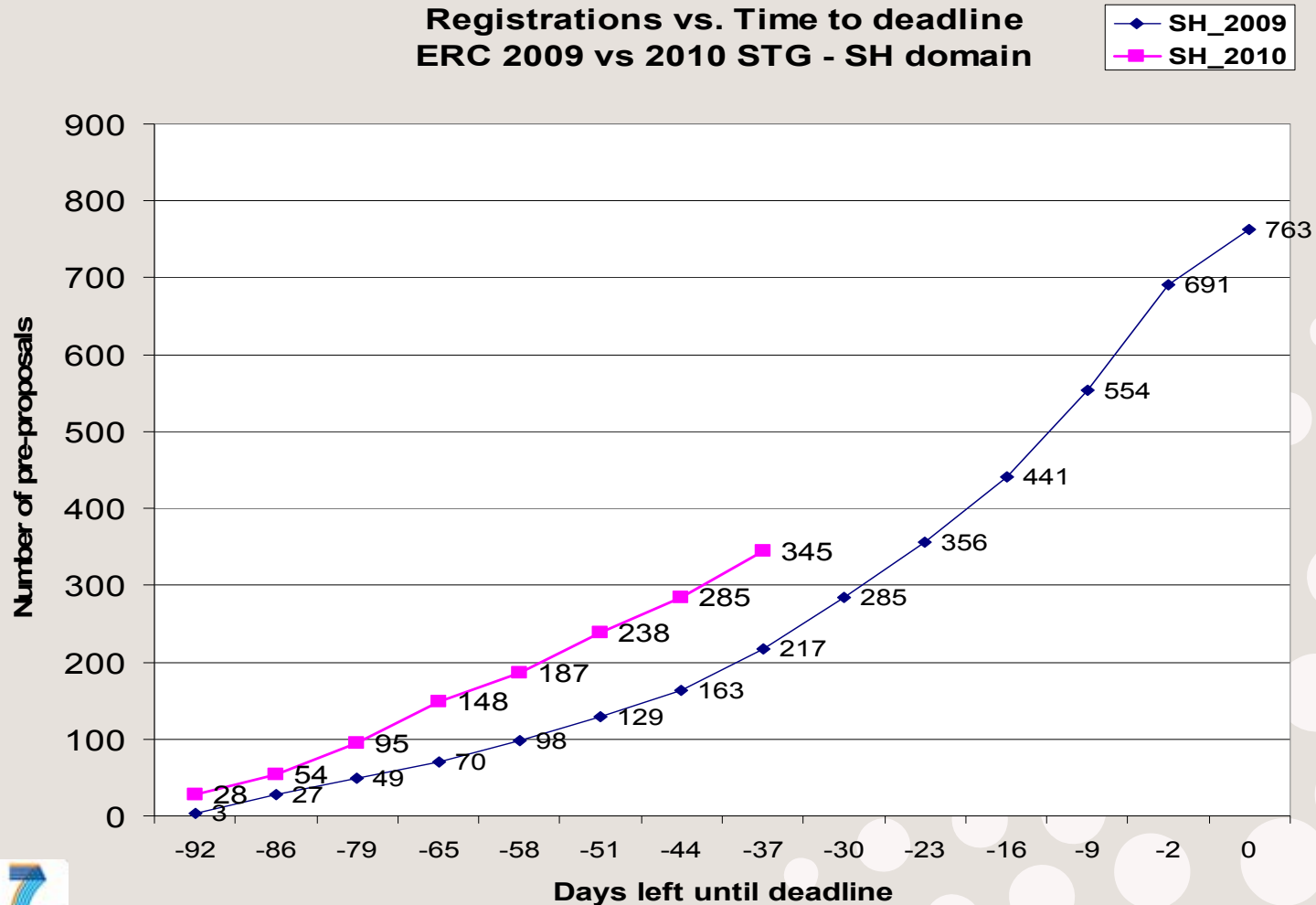






# Registrations for SH Domain

Registrations vs. Time to deadline  
ERC 2009 vs 2010 STG - SH domain



- Thank you for your attention!