

CAM Research in Austria – an inventory survey*

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History:

In 2008 ESIHR initiated a survey on the status of CAM research in Austria. In 2009 we recorded

- research topics and views of CAM researchers and the
- pertinent financial needs.

Methods used:

- questionnaire, querying both qualitative and quantitative matters
- sent to about 200 researchers, institutions and practitioners known to be interested in CAM research.
- 122 researchers answered and returned the questionnaire.

Main results:

- Inventory of CAM research fields in Austria, and
- the need for support by public funding

We show the

- importance of CAM and CAM research in universities, non-university research institutions and other institutions (like hospitals), in the general healthcare practices and in particular for medical practitioners.
- high significance of Austrian research regarding medicinal plants (Pharmacognosy, Phytotherapy) and natural products in the local and international research areas.
- diversity of traditional and modern healing practices and their continuing reconstructive development methods for health promotion, preventive healthcare, for preventive and curative medicine and rehabilitation.

Conclusions:

Because CAM research offers the opportunity to improve health services, CAM researchers should be funded by public sources. Furthermore we suggest network activities, which can stimulate partnerships and sustainably promote CAM research.

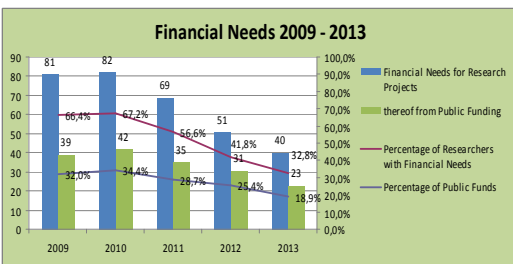
Outlook:

To integrate the currently scattered researchers in a research community, and to provide a long term perspective as well, we suggest installing a national coordination and contact point in order to

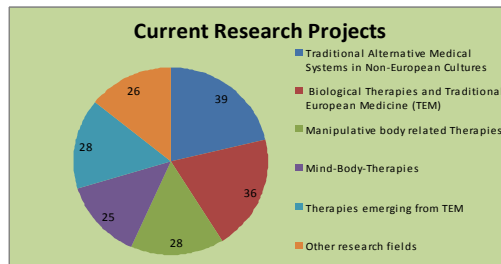
- actively promote networking
- constitute a national research platform
- serve as an international contact point
- promote public awareness
- promote public health



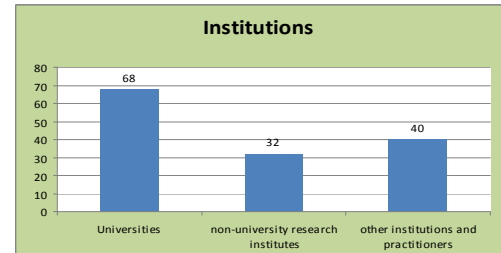
Geographical distribution of research sites: The main research institutions are located in the capital (Vienna) and other university cities



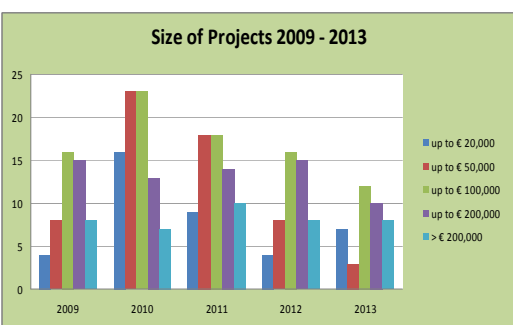
Financial needs for the next five years, as envisioned by the scientists. Note that the assumed financial needs in the distant future are lower than for 2009 and 2010.



Current Research Projects in 5 categories.



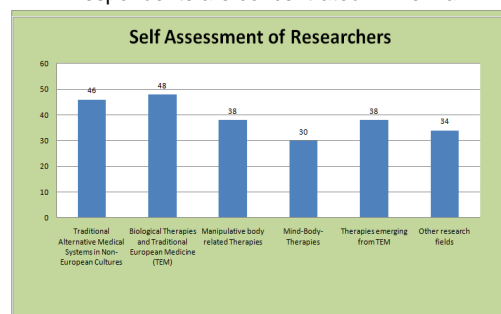
Research affiliations (multiple choices were possible): 56% of the CAM researchers (68 persons) are employees of 8 universities throughout Austria. 32 persons work in specialized non-university research institutions. 40 of the respondents are working in hospitals or in private practices. 75 of the 122 respondents are concentrated in Vienna.



Envisioned project size, for the next five years. Note that researchers interested in large projects (> € 200.000) plan far ahead, while those researchers interested in smaller projects (< € 50.000) do not.



Priority 1 research topics: The chart shows the importance of research topics concerning Traditional Alternative Medical Systems from non-European Cultures (like TCM, Ayurveda) and for biological therapies and Traditional European Medicine (like herbal medicine and water therapies) as well as new therapies emerging from TEM (like homeopathy, anthroposophy, heart-rate-variability-diagnosis or biofeedback). The distribution of the stated priorities for research categories by the researchers are rather similar to the distribution of categories of current research projects (even if many other research topics were stated to have priority).



Self assessment to CAM categories:

Prevalent topics are:

- Traditional European Medicine with Medicinal plants and herbs, Water therapy and other biological therapies,
- Traditional Non-European Medicines: TCM, Acupuncture, Ayurveda, TTM (Tibet), Kampo,
- Manipulative Body Related Therapies and Mind-Body-Therapies, mind based therapies,
- Music therapy, biofeedback,
- Homeopathy,
- Osteopathy,
- Chronomedicine.

