

The European Research Council: Funding opportunities for Frontier research



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B3: Advanced Grants**

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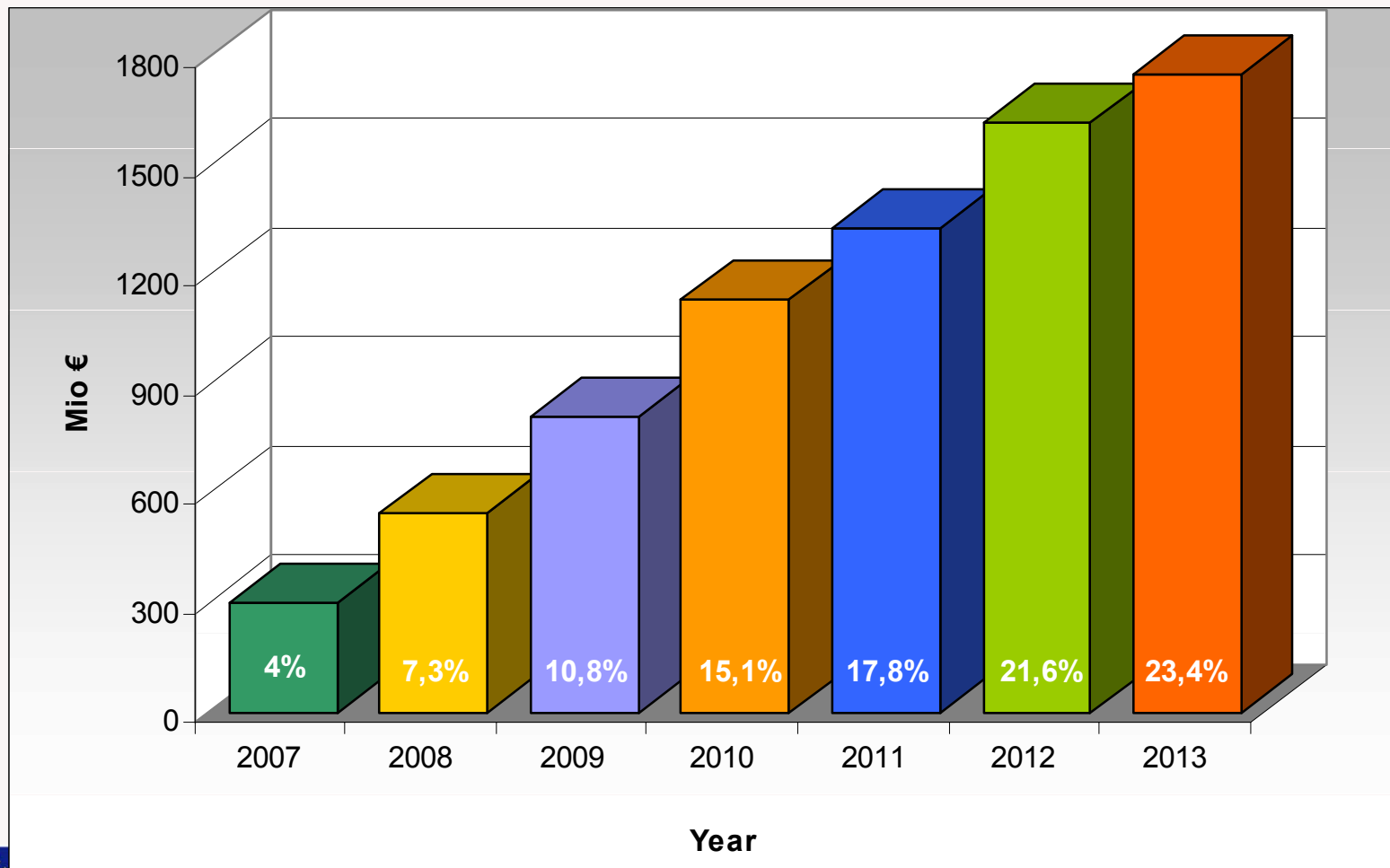
ERC's main features

- First European funding body supporting **frontier research** through open and direct competition.
- **Excellence** - only selection criterion
- In all fields of research
- **Bottom-up** approach (no predetermined themes)
- Support to **individual** scientists (no networks)
- International **peer-review**



ERC Budget 2007 – 2013 : € 7.51 bn

Annual budget evolution (prospective schedule)



ERC Funding schemes

Two complementary funding schemes

ERC Starting Grant (StG):

- Researchers starting or consolidating their own independent research team (up to 12 years after phd)
- Transition from working under a supervisor to an independent research leader €1.5M over 5 years (up to 2 certain circumstances)

ERC Advanced Grant (AdG):

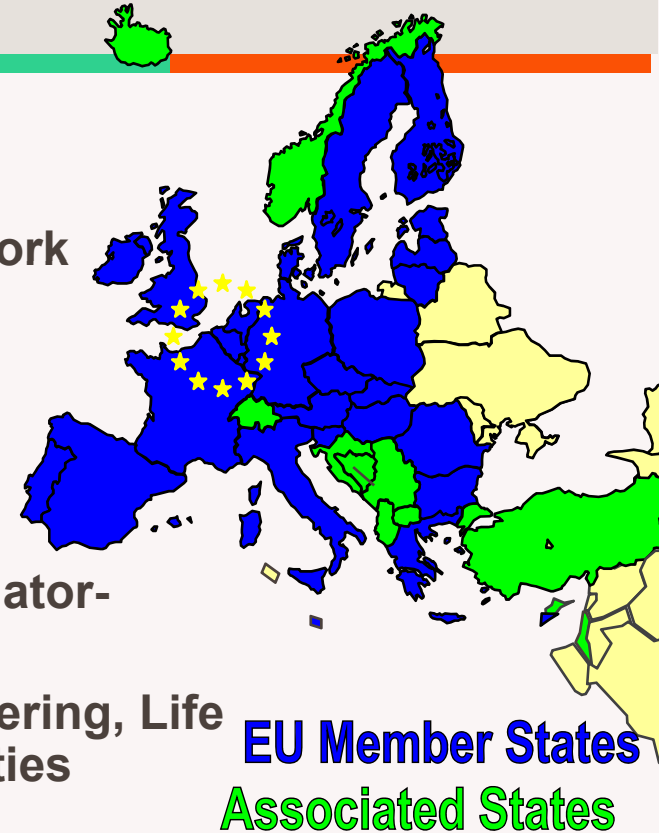
- Established independent research leaders
- Excellent track record over the last 10 years
- €2.5M over 5 years (up to 3.5M)



ERC Funding schemes

Who can apply? – General requirements

- **Researcher**
 - Any nationality, age or current place of work
- **In conjunction with a Host Institution**
 - Based in EU or associated countries
- **Frontier Research project**
 - All fields of research are eligible (investigator-driven, bottom-up)
 - All domains: Physical Sciences & Engineering, Life Sciences, and Social Sciences & Humanities
- **Individual research team**
 - Researcher has freedom to choose national or trans-national team, if scientific added value proven

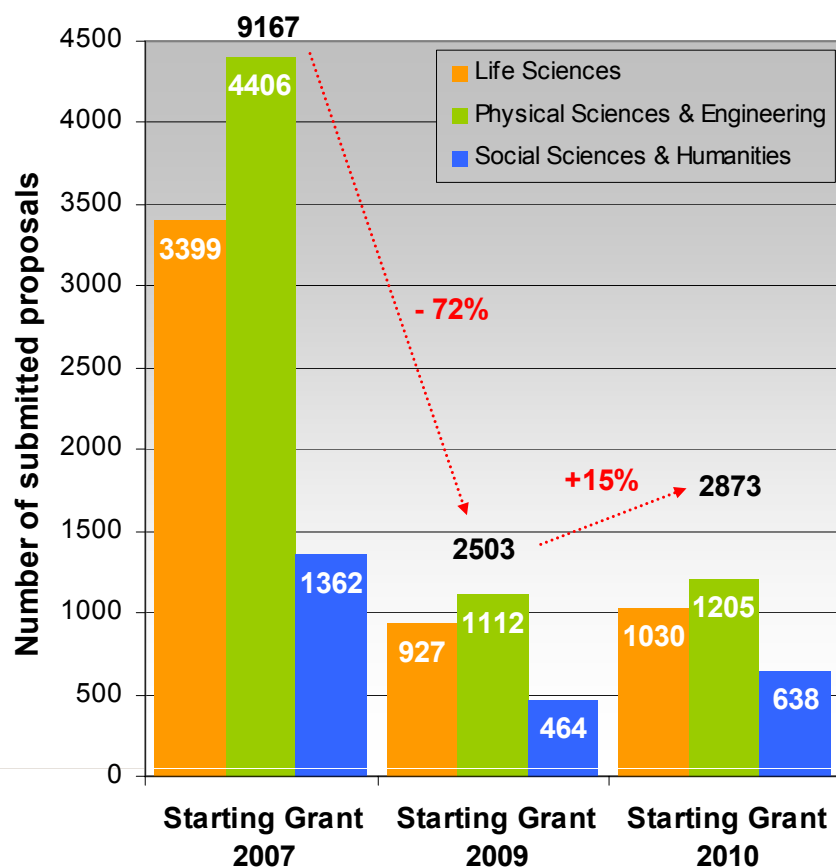


ERC Starting & Advanced grant calls 2007 - 2010

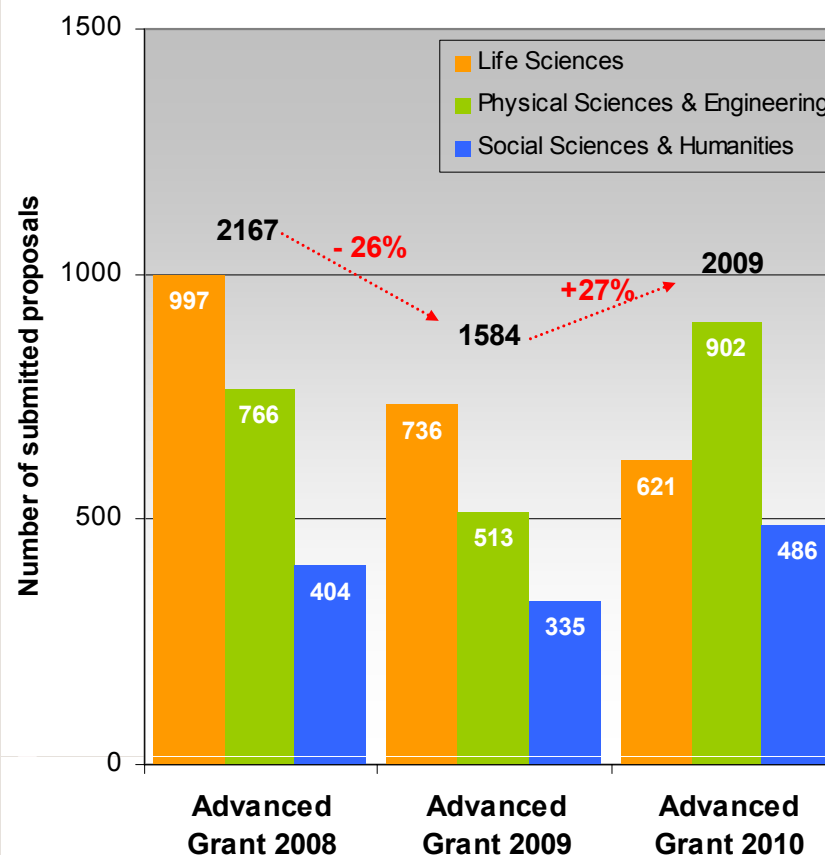
Submitted proposals by domain



Starting Grant Calls

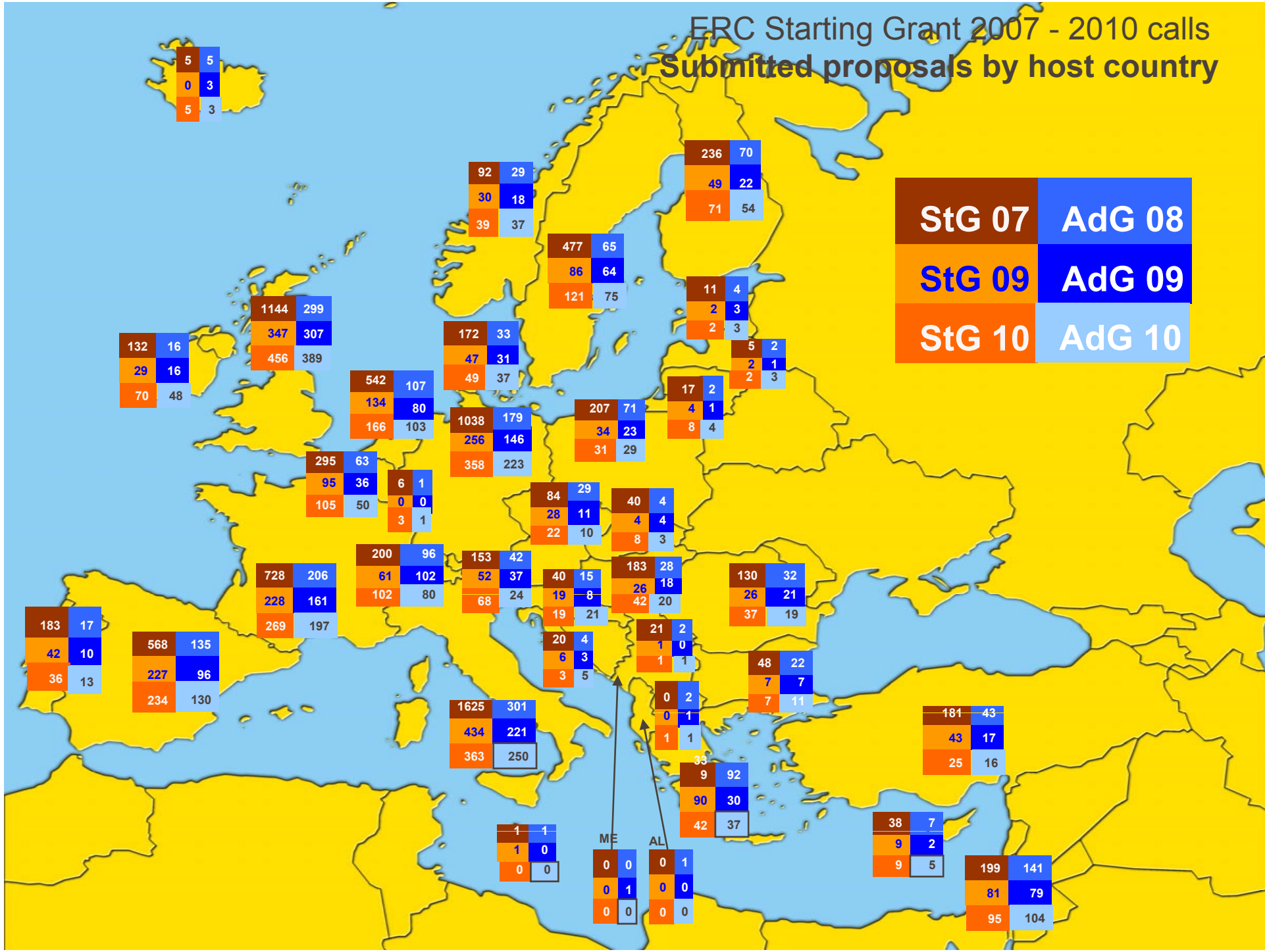


Advanced Grant Calls



ERC Starting Grant 2007 - 2010 calls Submitted proposals by host country

StG 07	AdG 08
StG 09	AdG 09
StG 10	AdG 10



Success rates

	StG 2007		StG 2009		StG 2010	
	Submitted	Selected	Submitted	Selected	Submitted	Selected
Total	9167	299	2503	244	2873	427
success		3.3%		9.7%		14.9%

	AdG 2008		AdG 2009		AdG 2010	
	Submitted	Selected	Submitted	Selected	Submitted	Selected
Total	2167	282	1584	244	2009	266
success		13.0%		15.4%		13,2%



Advanced Grant: Application & Evaluation



Panel structure

- 3 domains – 25 panels
 - ➔ 10 PE panels (Physical Sciences and Engineering)
 - ➔ 9 LS Panels (Life Sciences)
 - ➔ 6 SH Panels (Social Sciences and Humanities)
- **Some changes in panel descriptors for 2011 calls**
- Each panel consisting of 10-15 panel members

Timetable 2010-2011

- **Advanced Grant 2011 deadlines:**
 - ➔ PE domain: 09/02/2011
 - ➔ LS domain: 10/03/2011
 - ➔ SH domain: 06/04/2011
- **Next starting grant call will be published in summer 2011, with deadlines in the autumn 2011**

Call budget for 2011 calls

- Total budget for Starting Grant and Advanced Grant: **€661.4 Million each**, i.e. a total of **€1.323 Billion**
- Indicative call budget
 - Physical Sciences – 40%
 - Social Sciences – 15%
 - Life Sciences – 35%
 - + 10% for Interdisciplinary – Cross Panel / Cross domain
- ➔ Within each domain, budget is broken down according to total funding requested per panel (equal chance in each panel)

Submission is to Panels

- Applicant submits to a *Targeted Panel* (of PI choice)
 - ➔ Can flag one “*Alternative Review Panel*”
- **Applicant chooses his/her panel**, that panel is “responsible” and takes ownership for the evaluation of that proposals
- Only switch proposals between panels in case of clear mistake on part of applicant
- Switching proposals between domains (deadlines) not possible
- But: In case cross-panel or cross-domain proposals, evaluation by members of other panels possible

Evaluation Criteria

Excellence as sole criterion, to apply to:

1. Principal Investigator

- **Intellectual capacity and creativity:** Track-record, capacity to go significantly beyond the state of the art. **For StG:** To what extent would ERC grant make a significant contribution to the establishment or consolidation of independence?
- **Commitment:** Willing to devote a significant part of PI's working time

2. Quality of the research project

- **Ground-breaking nature of the research:** Important challenge? Substantially beyond the current state of art?
- **Potential impact:** Possibility of a major break-through?
- **Methodology:** Feasibility, high-gain/high-risk balance

ERC Advanced Grant (AdG)

- **Researcher's profile**

- ➔ Active researchers (any age, nationality, and current place of work)
- ➔ Track-record of significant research achievements (last 10 years, extension in case of career breaks possible)
- ➔ Exceptional leaders in terms of the originality and significance of their research contribution
- ➔ Freedom to choose team members (national or trans-national character, according to scientific added value)
- ➔ In case of combination of knowledge and skills from different fields (interdisciplinary proposals) → a team member can be identified as Co-Investigator

Submission of proposals

- Single submission
 - ➔ “1 stage, 2 step” evaluation
- Electronic submission via EPSS only
- Deadlines strictly enforced
- Proposals have two parts:
 - ➔ Part A: Administrative forms
 - ➔ Part B: Scientific proposal itself

Proposal structure: Part A

- **Part A:** “Administrative forms” containing
 - ➔ A1 Information on PI
 - ➔ A2 Information on Host Institution
 - ➔ A3 Budget breakdown by year and partner
 - Not detailed

Proposal Structure: Part B

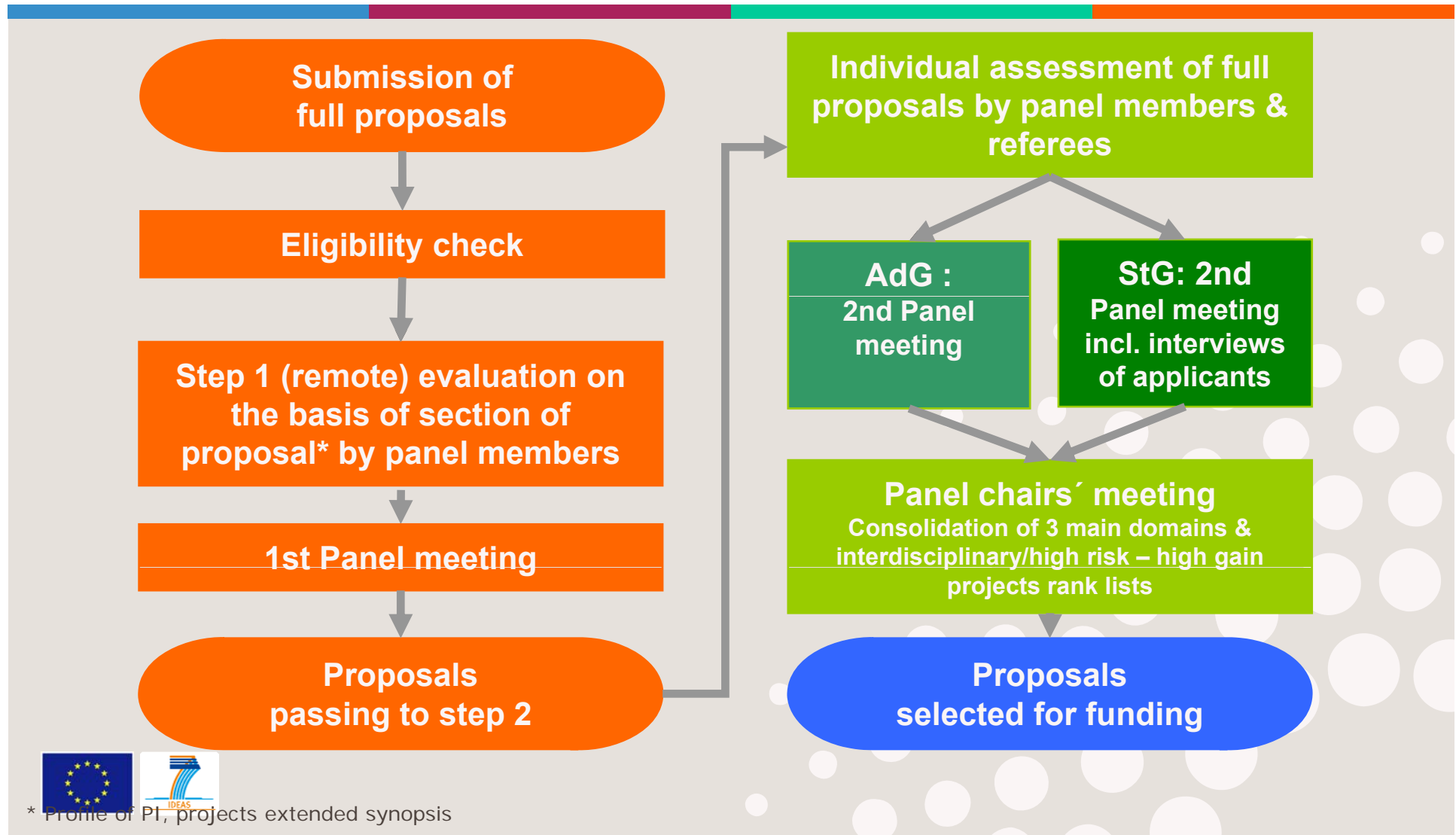
- **Section 1 = “The PI” [30% of time on project, 50% in Europe]**
 - Scientific Leadership profile (1 page)
 - CV (including “funding ID”) (2 page)
 - 10-year track record (or “early achievements” for StG) (2 page)
 - Extended synopsis (5 page)
- **Section 2 = Full Scientific proposal (15 page)**
- Ethical Review information (where appropriate)
- Separate additional document:
 - ➔ **Host Institution Support Letter** (compulsory StG + AdG)
 - ➔ Copy of Ph.D. (compulsory StG)
 - ➔ Documents to prove extension to 10 year eligibility window (StG)

Two step evaluation

- Step 1:
 - ➔ **Section 1 of Part B** evaluated against Criterion 1 (PI) and 2 (Research Project)
 - ➔ Proposal needs to pass threshold for both criteria to pass to second step
 - ➔ Evaluated by Panel Members
- Step 2:
 - ➔ Sections B1 + B2 evaluated
 - ➔ Evaluated by Panel Members + **Remote Referees**

ERC Grants: Submission, evaluation and selection

European Research Council

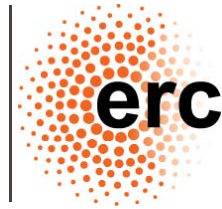


* Profile of PI, projects extended synopsis

Interdisciplinary Proposals

- Primary approach for Interdisciplinary proposals: **“mainstreaming”**
- Proposal submitted to a target panel primarily responsible for its evaluation
- Both Step 1 and Step 2:
 - ➔ Assigned for reviews from PMs outside primary panel, if necessary
- Step 2:
 - ➔ Remote reviewers: any reviewer in the world (hence any domain)
- Interdisciplinary Research domain (cross-domain & cross-panel) → indicative budget of 10% total budget
- Decision taken by combined panel of all Panel Chairs

WP 2011 main changes



- Cross panel proposals (10% of budget)
- Further emphasis on supporting high-risk/ high-gain proposals
- The removal of the research environment criterion
- Simplified evaluation criteria overall
- Progressive removal of resubmission restrictions (StG and AdG now aligned)
- Extension of the StG to 2-12 years to support mid-career researchers (2-7 for "starters", 7-12 for "consolidators")
- Overall simplification of the text



Key Documents & Information Sources

European Research Council



- ERC 2009 Work Programme
- Call Text
- Rules for Submission
- **Guide for Applicants**

All of the above documents can be downloaded at
<http://erc.europa.eu>

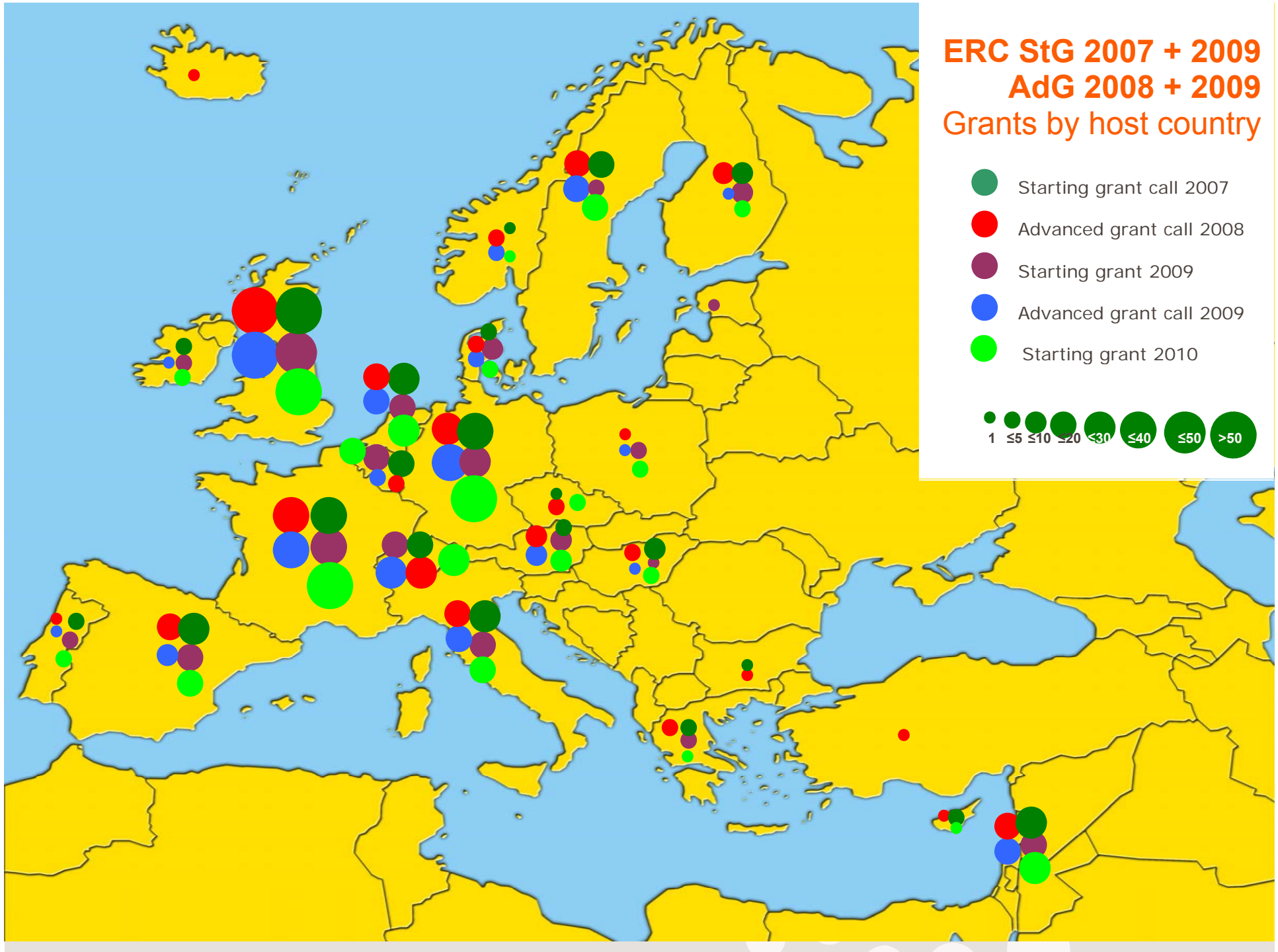
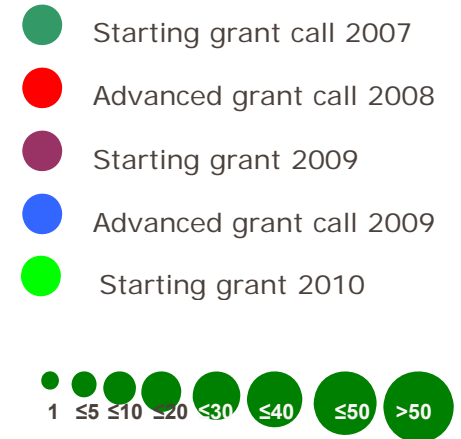




Thank you for your attention!

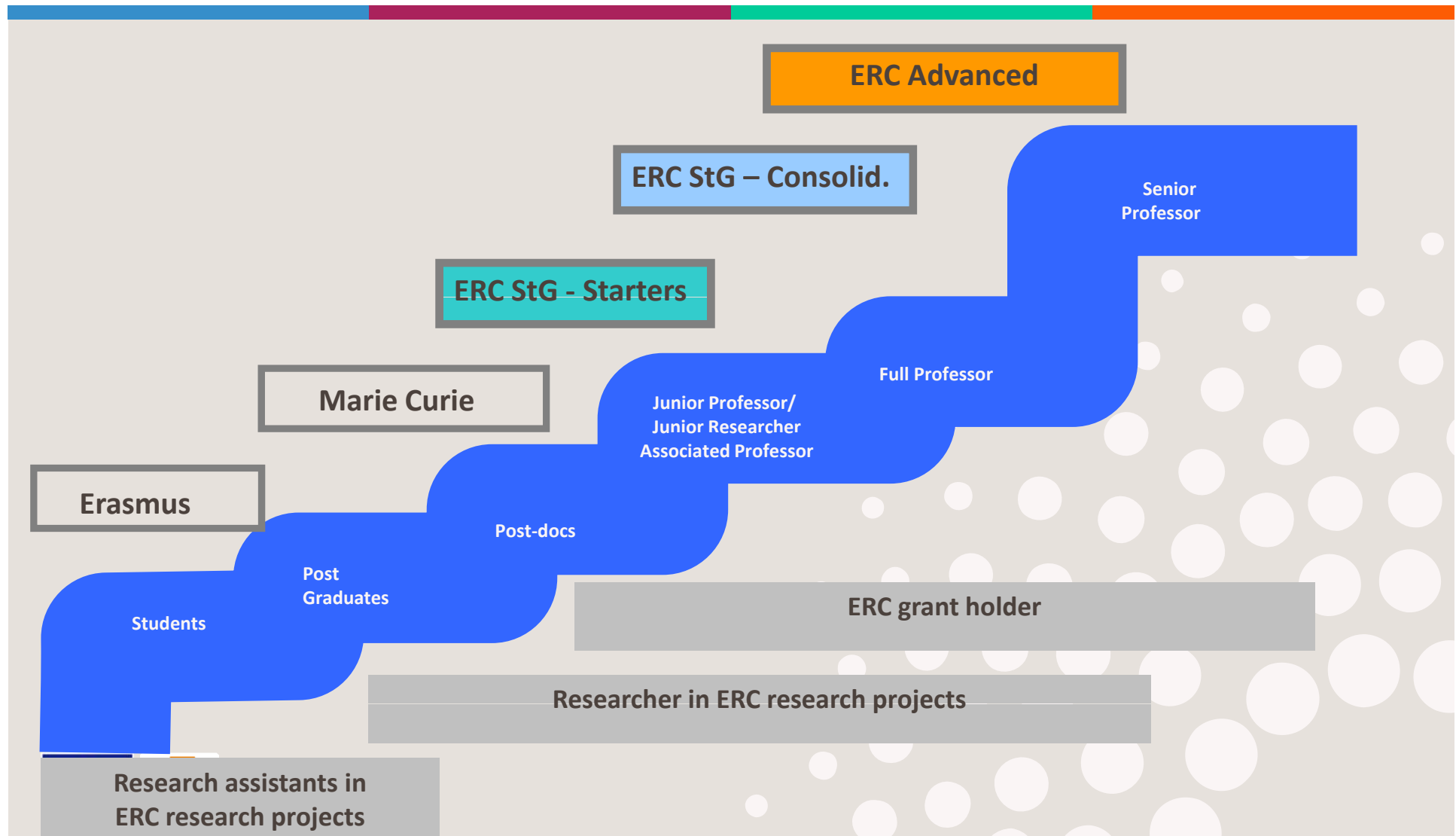


ERC StG 2007 + 2009
AdG 2008 + 2009
Grants by host country



Researchers Career development and complementary funding schemes

European Research Council



ERC Starting Grant (StG)

- **Researcher's profile**

- Potential for research independence: at least one publication without the participation of the PhD supervisor
- Promising track-record of early achievements (including significant publications as main author)
- First PhD awarded between 2 and 12 years prior to the call publication date – extensions allowed for eligible career breaks (max 14,5 years after PhD)
- Specific career stage: Starters (2 to 7 years after PhD award) and Consolidators (7 to 12 years after PhD award), two streams to accommodate different career stages.



Variable R&D intensity (as % of GDP)

