

Ten Years of Portugal's HTA System Through Stakeholder Eyes: Reflections and Future Priorities

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OBJECTIVES

Portugal's National System for HTA (SiNATS) was created to support evidence-based decisions in the adoption and funding of health technologies within the National Health Service (SNS). After a decade of implementation, this study aimed to understand how well SiNATS has addressed stakeholder needs and how it should evolve considering current and future national and European HTA challenges.

METHODS

An online survey was distributed to a diverse group of stakeholders, including patient representatives, healthcare professionals, public sector managers, HTA experts, and industry representatives from the pharmaceutical and medical device sectors. The survey collected data on perceptions of SiNATS' effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence, and overall value. Participants were also asked to rank key priorities for the future and to assess SiNATS's capacity to respond.

RESULTS

Among the respondents, 64% were affiliated with the public sector, and 68% had more than ten years of experience in HTA. Pharmacists represented 47% of participants, while the remaining respondents included representatives from the pharmaceutical industry, patient associations, health economists, and HTA specialists.

■ 45 to 54 years
 ■ 35 to 44 years
 ■ 25 to 34 years
 ■ 55 to 64 years
 ■ 65 years or older

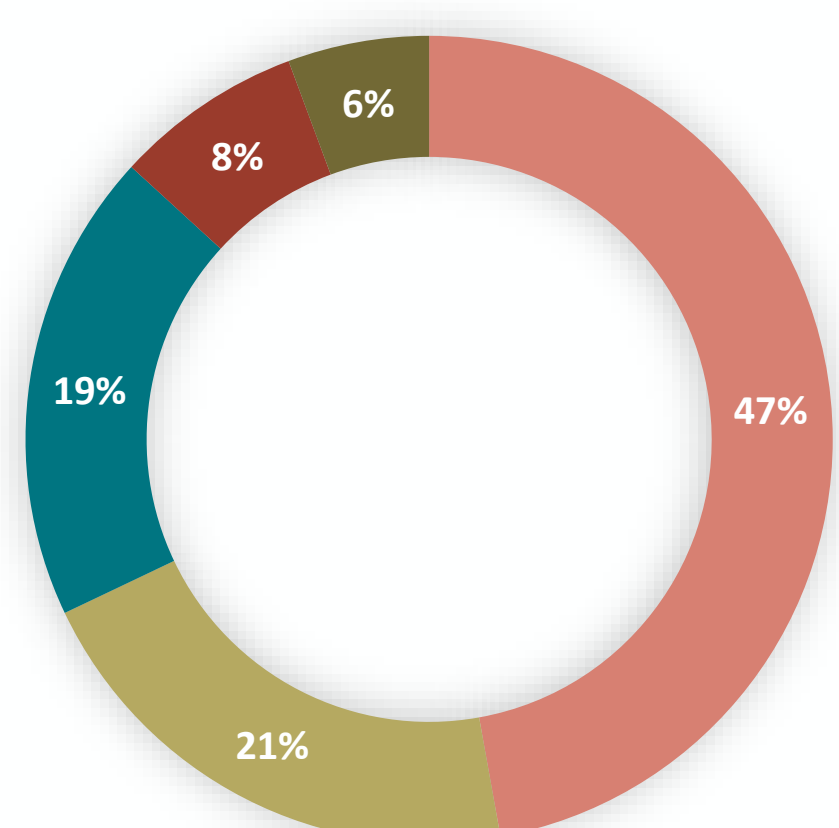


Figure 1. Age distribution of survey respondents.

■ Not applicable
 ■ 1 to 3 years
 ■ 4 to 6 years
 ■ 7 to 10 years
 ■ more than 10 years

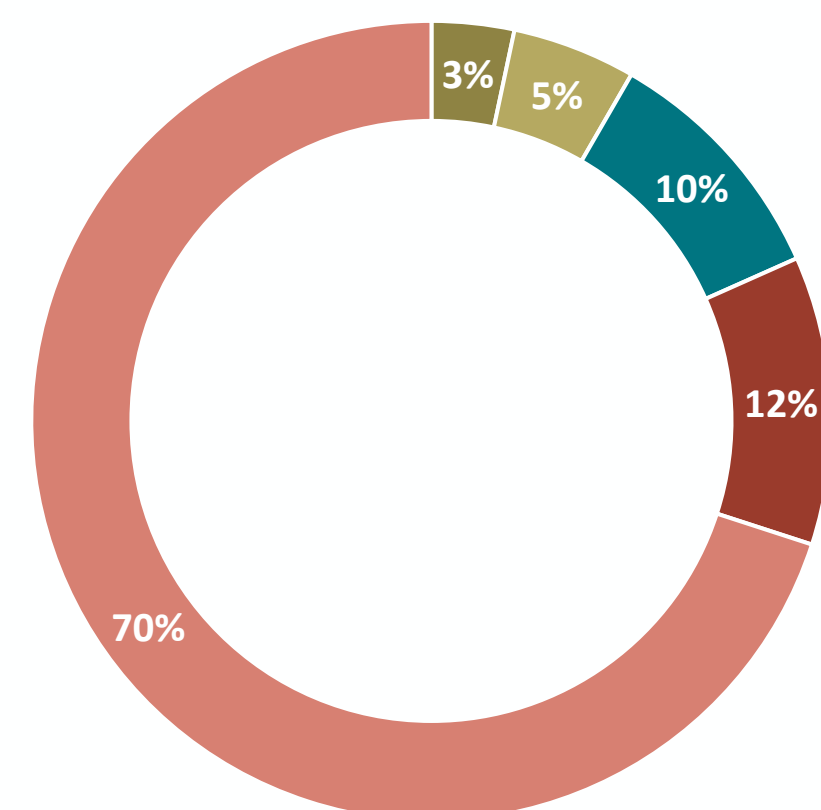


Figure 2. Years of experience in Health Technology Assessment (HTA) among respondents.

The survey assessed SiNATS across three dimensions: coherence, efficiency, and relevance. While 66% of respondents considered SiNATS to be efficient, lower scores were observed for its relevance in addressing stakeholders' needs and ensuring their involvement in HTA processes. Regarding coherence, coordination with the Ministry of Health received a relatively low rating (5.39/10). The highest coordination score was observed for the implementation of sustainability measures within the National Health Service (6.08/10), followed by promoting access to health innovation (5.59/10). The lowest rating (4.39/10) was attributed to coordination in monitoring health effectiveness.

66%

of stakeholders considered that, over the past 10 years, SiNATS has been efficient in terms of the relationship between the costs involved and the benefits obtained. These results reflect a generally positive perception of SiNATS' cost-effectiveness over the past 10 years.

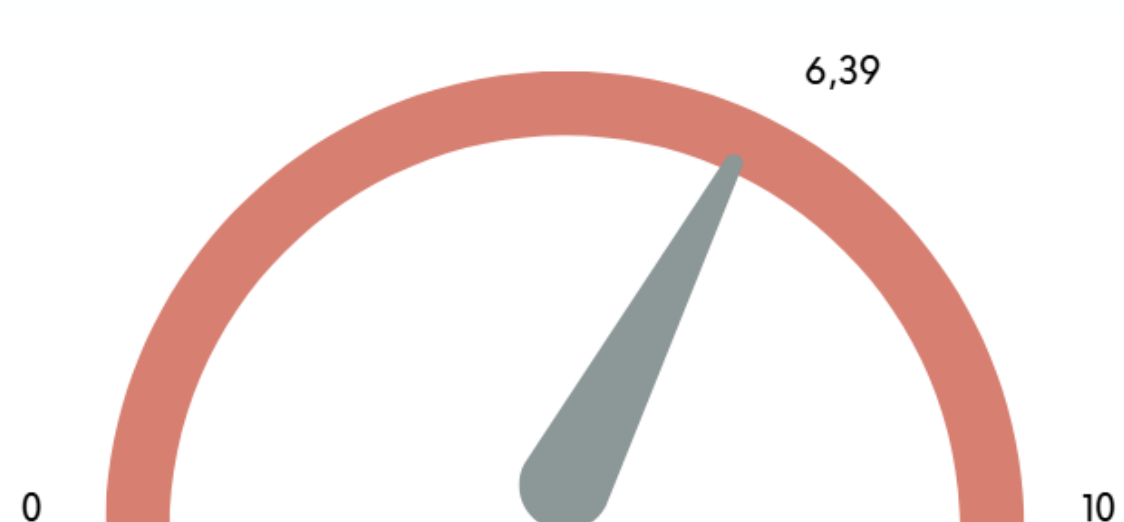


Figure 3. Stakeholders' perception of SiNATS' inclusiveness in the evaluation and decision-making process (mean score: 6.39/10).

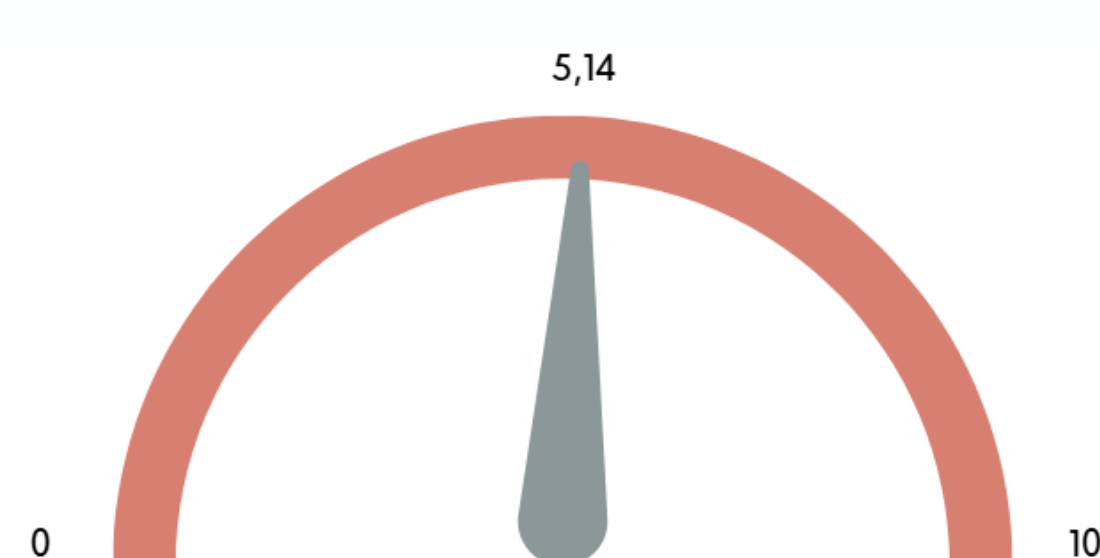


Figure 4. Stakeholders' assessment of the extent to which SiNATS has responded to their needs over the past 10 years (mean score: 5.14/10).

Stakeholders rated the original objectives of SiNATS on a 0–100 scale according to the extent to which they believe these objectives have been achieved over the past 10 years. The highest score was attributed to SiNATS' contribution to the sustainability of the National Health Service (70), while the lowest corresponded to the monitoring of technology use and effectiveness (54) (Figure 3).

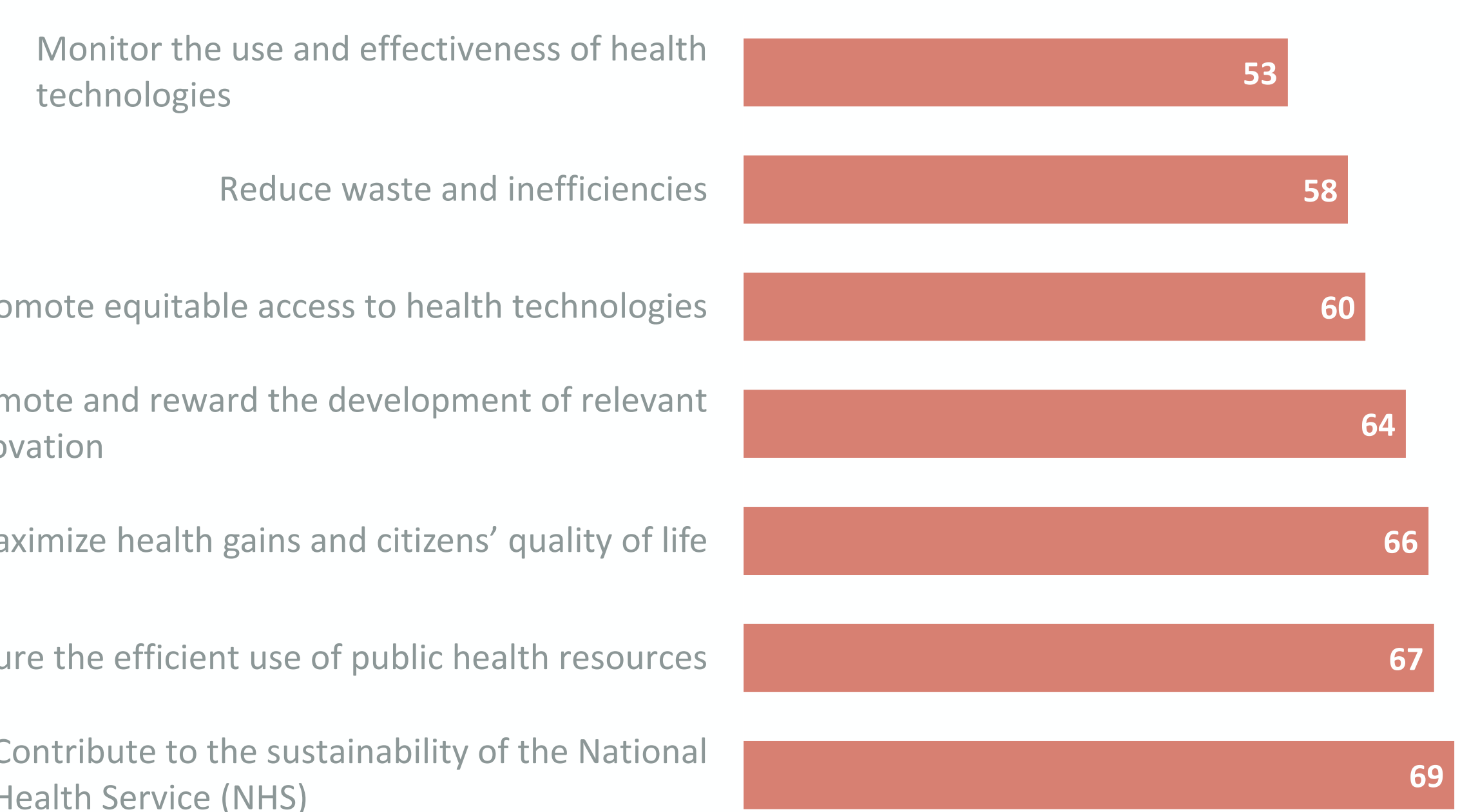


Figure 5. Stakeholders' ratings (0–100 scale) of SiNATS' original objectives, indicating the perceived level of achievement over the last 10 years.

Among survey respondents, 95% recognized at least a significant value in SiNATS as a public health policy tool, with 68% describing its impact as exceptional and transformative. For the next five years, stakeholders identified the following system priorities: effective implementation of public funding decisions, monitoring the effectiveness of funded technologies, and the robust assessment of innovation. Regarding processes, the main priorities were the integration of real-world data into HTA and greater stakeholder involvement throughout the HTA process.

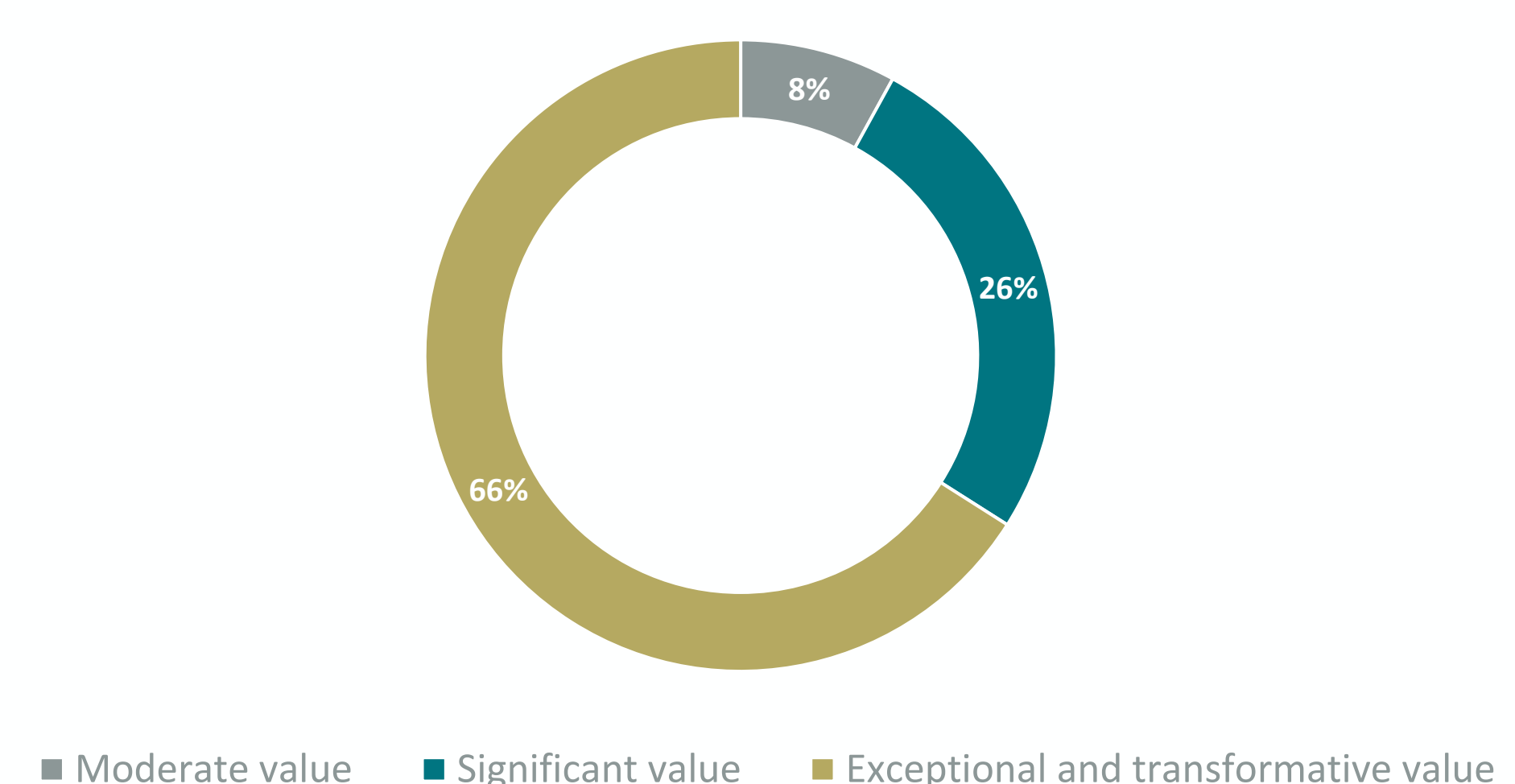


Figure 6. Stakeholders' perceptions of the added value of SiNATS as a public health policy measure in Portugal over the past 10 years.

= CONCLUSION

SiNATS is seen as a key part of Portugal's healthcare decision-making, but stakeholders call for greater transparency, responsiveness, and alignment with broader health policies. Enhancing the use of real-world data, methodological clarity, and re-evaluation of technologies is considered essential. Strengthening stakeholder engagement will be crucial to ensure SiNATS remains aligned with future health system needs.

