



European Network for
Rural Development

LEADER LAG Survey 2017

Working Paper

Findings at Member State level

Member State: Lithuania

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Introduction

The ENRD Contact Point (ENRD CP) launched a survey of LEADER Local Action Groups (LAGs) in November 2017 to explore on the ground experiences of implementing LEADER from the LAG perspective. Drawing on the ENRD LAG database over 2,200 LAGs were contacted and 710 confidential responses were received from 27 EU Member States making this the largest and most comprehensive LEADER survey conducted. LAGs from 19 national and 70 regional Rural Development Programme (RDP) 'territories' responded. Germany, France, Spain, Czech Republic and Austria provided over 50% of the total responses.

The online survey included 38 questions in four sections and the questionnaire was provided in six languages. Each section addressed several key themes. The main chapters of this report follow the structure of the questionnaire and are as follows:

1. Basic LAG data.
2. LEADER principles.
3. LEADER operation.
4. LEADER improvements.

This working paper has been prepared by the ENRD Contact Point and its content does not necessarily reflect the official position of the European Commission. The order of results presented for each question is consistent with the ranking from [the EU level report](#) to enable direct comparison. Please note that this report **does not present a comparative analysis** but where clear and significant differences are evident between the Member State LAG responses and the overall survey sample these have been highlighted.

In this paper all references to LAGs relate specifically to those LAGs who responded to the survey.

Explanatory points

The questionnaire used a multiple choice format allowing respondents to choose the answers most appropriate to their LAG's circumstances. The text of some questions has been simplified in the charts that follow. The full text of each question and all possible answers are listed in the sections below.

The total number of responses for each question is recorded individually as response levels varied between questions throughout the survey.

Questions three, five and six of the original questionnaire are not relevant for this paper being primarily for survey management and have been omitted. Where necessary a limited level of data cleaning has been undertaken to ensure consistency and correct obvious errors.

Please note that there is a degree of variation in the number of responses by RDP and question. Where relevant this should be taken into account when considering or interpreting the wider implications of the findings for some questions. It is not possible to reflect regional RDP differences e.g. the date of RDP approval although this may explain some of the variations within regionalised Member State responses. For example, the date of RDP approval will influence the timing of LAG selection and approval and subsequent LAG actions.

Basic Implementation Data

Question 1

Please select your country

- Lithuania (LT)
- 7 LAGs responded, representing 1% of total LAG responses
- 14% of LT LAGs responded to the survey

Question 2

Please select your Rural Development Programme (RDP)

- LT has one national RDP.

Total Number of Responses 7

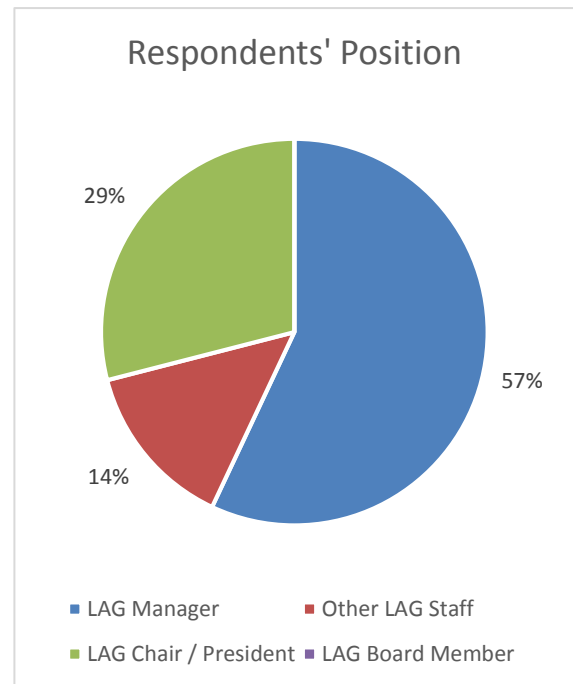
Question 4

Respondents were asked to identify which position they held within the LAG.

- LAG Manager
- Other LAG staff
- LAG Chair /President
- LAG Board Member

Total Number of Responses 7

- A higher proportion of LT responses were from the LAG chair/ president (29%) than in the EU sample (5%).



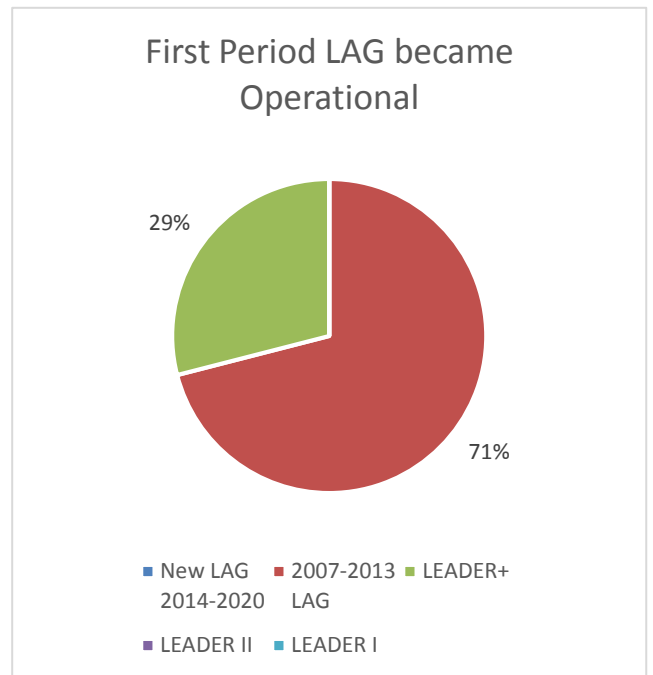
Question 7

In which period did your LAG first begin its operation? Please select the option that applies to you. (i.e. point from where there is a significant degree of continuity in membership or territory)

- Newly established LAG (2014-2020 Programming Period)
- the 2007-2013 Programming Period
- LEADER+
- LEADER II
- LEADER I

Total Number of Responses 28

- 71% of responding LT LAGs were established in the 2007 – 2013 programming period, compared to 34% across the EU. The remaining LT LAGs were first established during LEADER+.

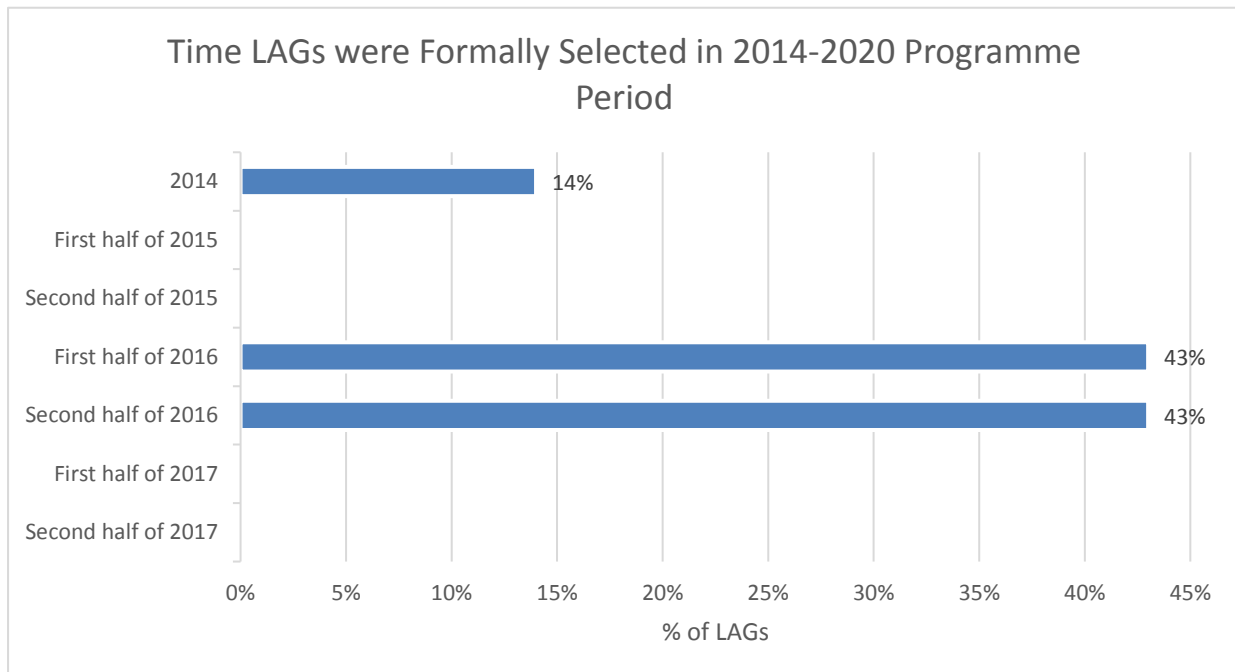


Question 8

When was your LAG formally selected in this (2014-2020) Programming Period?

- 2014
- First half of 2015 (Jan - June)
- Second half of 2015 (July – December)
- First half of 2016
- Second half of 2016
- First half of 2017
- Second half of 2017

Total Number of Responses 7



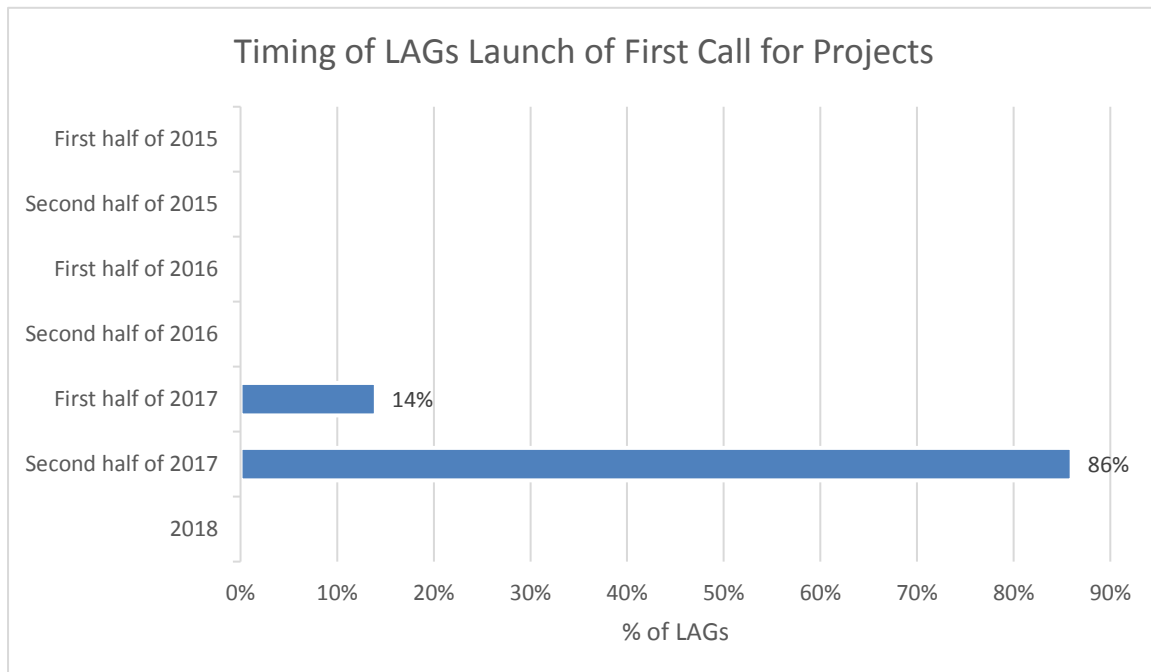
- LAG selection was concentrated in 2016 in LT for 86% of the LAGs responding as opposed to 31% of LAGs in the wider sample. 59% of the wider sample were selected by end 2015 vs 14% in LT.

Question 9

When did / will your LAG first launch a call for projects?

- First half of 2015
- Second half of 2015
- First half of 2016
- Second half of 2016
- First half of 2017
- Second half of 2017
- 2018

Total Number of Responses 7



- 67% of EU LAGs had launched their first project call by the end of 2016, whereas in LT no LAG had done so, with all launching their first call for projects in 2017.

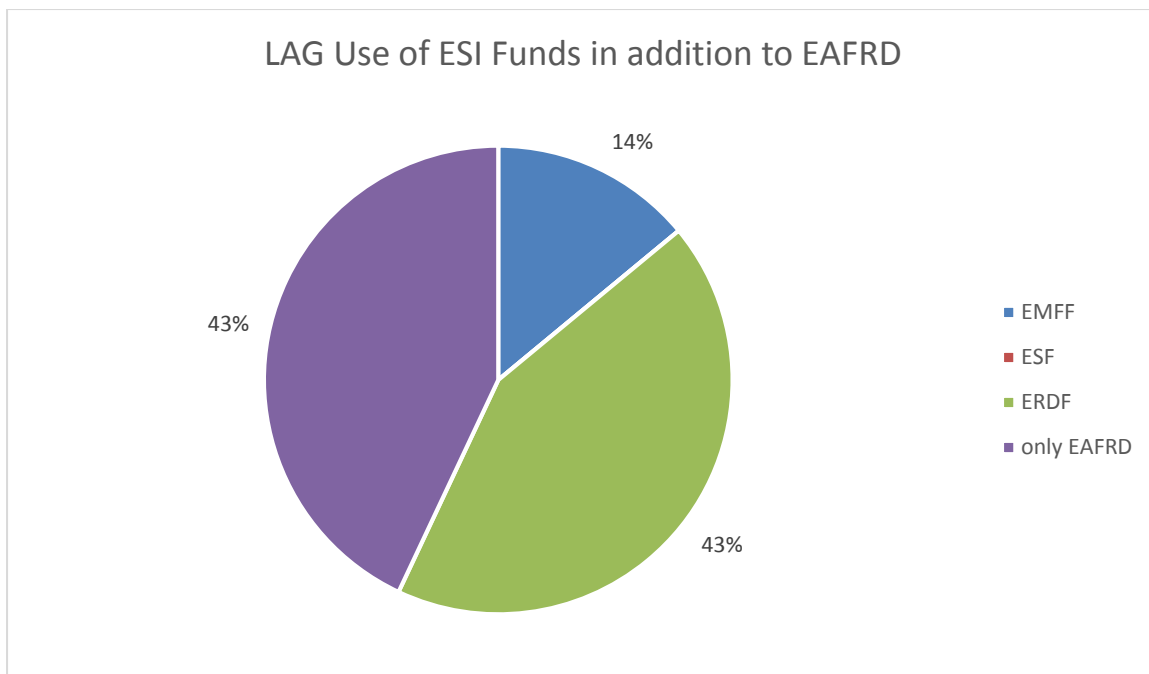
LAG Funding

Question 10

Please select all the European Structural and Investment Funds that your LAG uses to finance your Local Development Strategy (in addition to EAFRD).

- European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)
- European Social Fund (ESF)
- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
- None of the above (only EAFRD)

Total Number of Responses 7



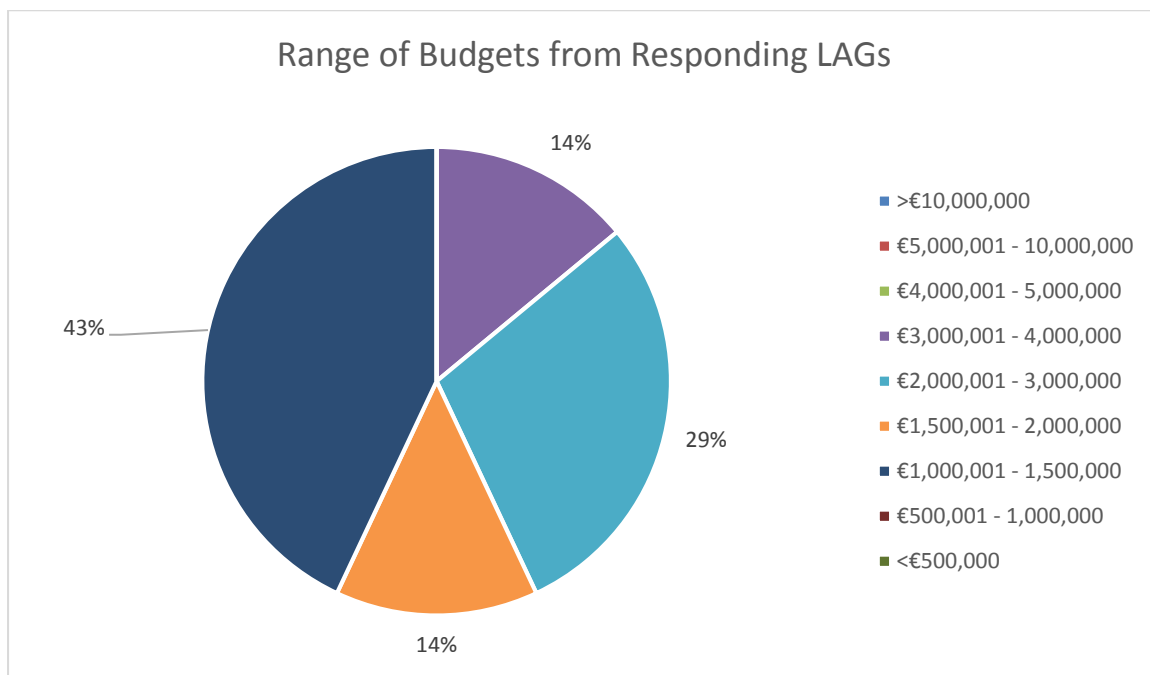
- In LT 43% of LAGs responding only use EAFRD whereas across the EU sample 67% do so. In LT a higher proportion of LAGs use ERDF than is the case across the EU (43% vs 25%).

Question 11

What is your LAG budget (total public expenditure Euro, i.e. EAFRD plus all other EU and domestic public funds) for the 2014-2020 Programming Period? Please provide your best estimate if data are not available.

- < €500,000
- €500,001 – 1,000,000
- €1,000,001 – 1,500,000
- €1,500,001 – 2,000,000
- €2,000,001 – 3,000,000
- €3,000,001 – 4,000,000
- €4,000,001- 5,000,000
- €5,000,001 – 10,000,000
- >€10,000,000

Total Number of Responses 7



- Compared to the EU-wide average a higher proportion of respondent LT LAGs have a budget below €2m (57% vs 27%).

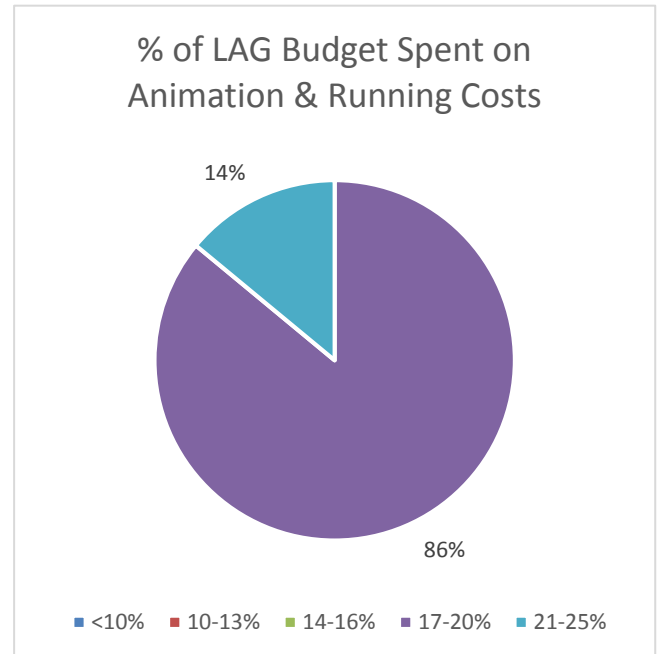
Question 12

What % of this total LAG budget is allocated to running costs and animation?

- < 10%
- 10 – 13%
- 14 – 16%
- 17 – 20%
- 21 -25%

Total Number of Responses 7

- All LT LAGs who responded allocated more than 17% of their total budget to running costs and animation, whereas across the EU only 64% did so.



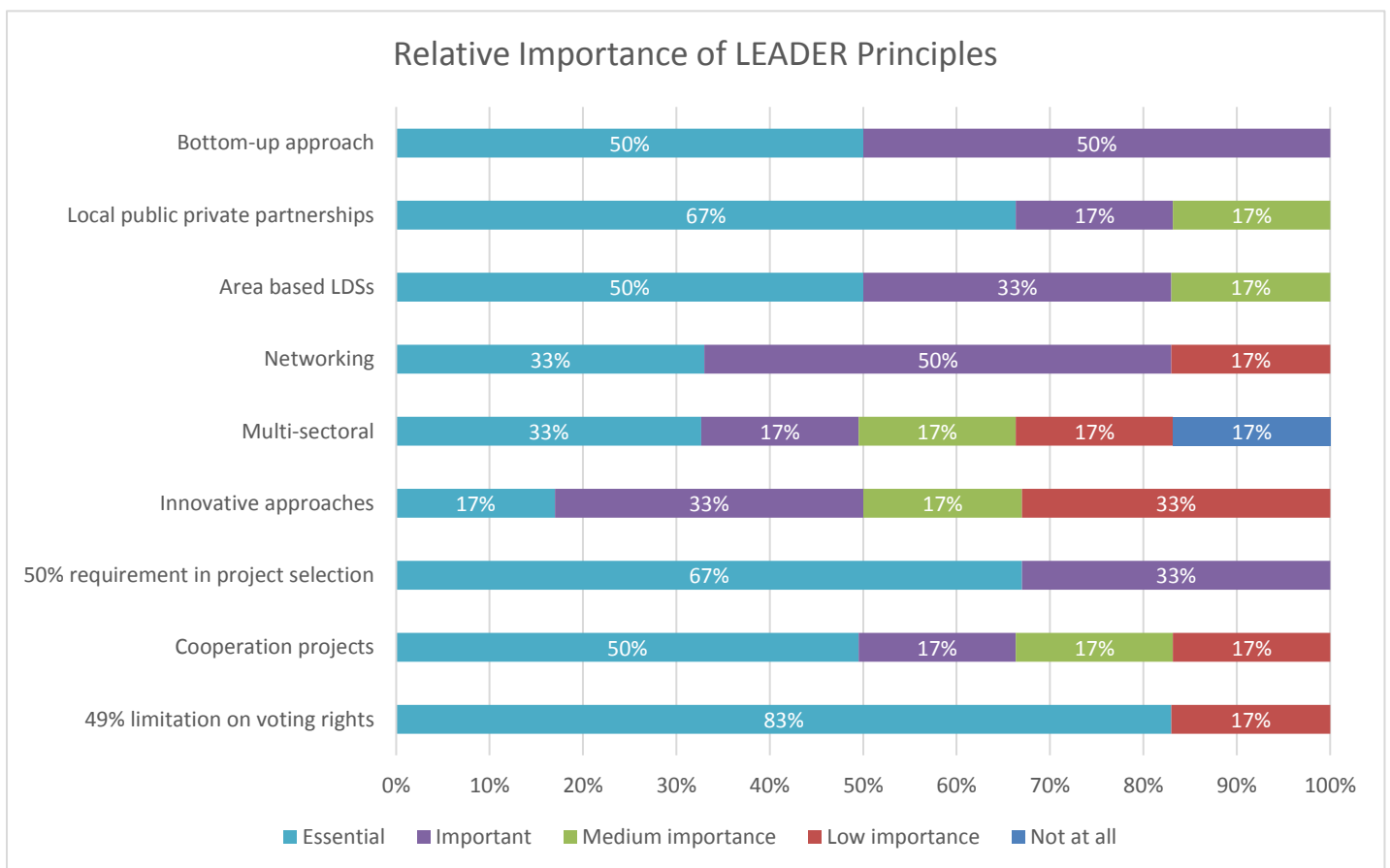
LEADER Principles

Question 13

How important are each of the following LEADER principles for your LAG in delivering real benefits on the ground? (Please rate each option from 1= not at all to 5 = essential).

- Area-based local development strategies intended for well-identified sub-regional rural territories.
- Local public-private partnerships (local action groups).
- Bottom-up approach with decision-making power for local action groups concerning the elaboration and implementation of local development strategies.
- The 49% limitation on voting rights of any single interest group.
- The 50% requirement for non-public sector votes in project selection.
- Multi-sectoral design and implementation of the strategy based on interaction between actors and projects of different sectors of the local economy.
- Implementation of innovative approaches.
- Implementation of cooperation projects.
- Networking of local partnerships.

Total Number of Responses 6



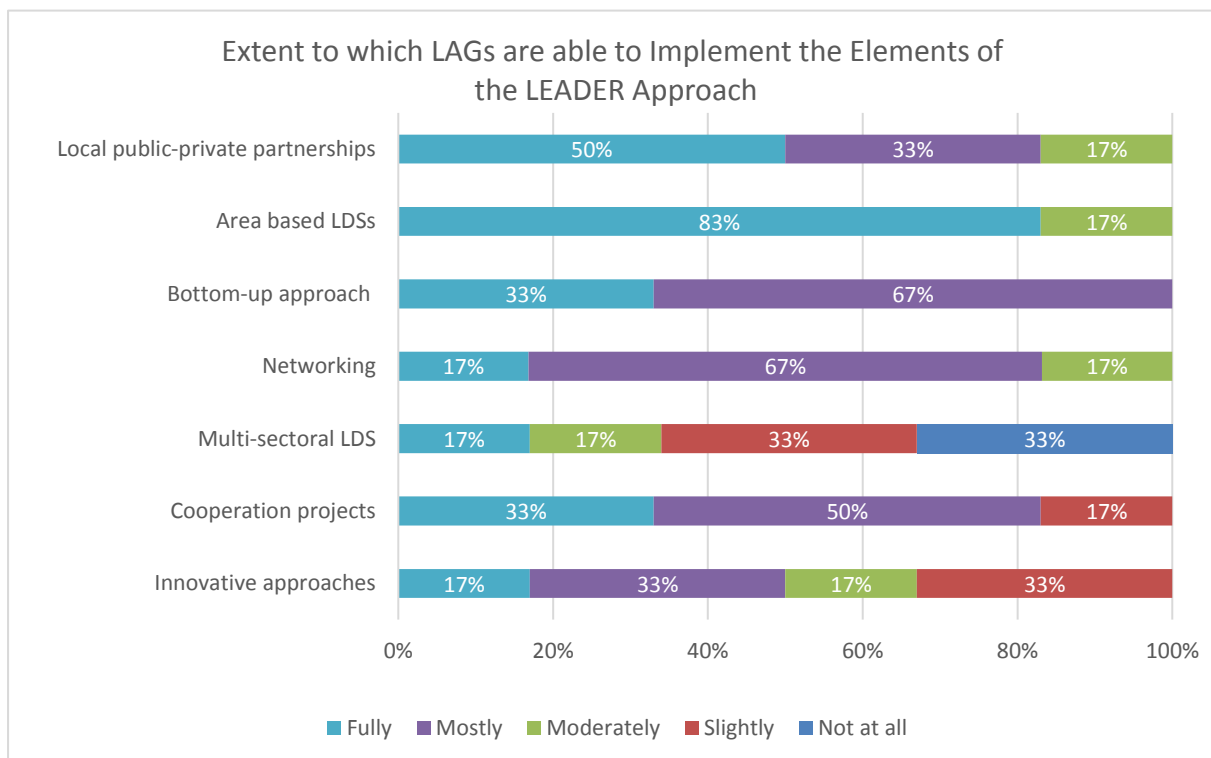
- The 49% limitation on voting rights was the most important LEADER principle in LT, with 83% of LAGs regarding it as essential, across the EU it was regarded as least important, with only 25% regarding it as essential.
- The 50% requirement in project selection was also regarded as much more important amongst the LT LAGs, with 67% of LAGs regarding it as essential, compared to just 34% across the EU.
- LT essential and important rankings for innovative approaches (50% vs 68%) and multi-sectoral strategies (50% vs 76%) were lower than the EU responses.

Question 14

To what extent is your LAG able to implement the following elements of the LEADER approach? (please rate each option from 1-5, where 1= not at all, 5 = fully)

- Area-based local development strategies intended for well-identified sub-regional rural territories.
- Local public-private partnerships (local action groups).
- Bottom-up approach with decision-making power for local action groups concerning the elaboration and implementation of local development strategies.
- Multi-sectoral design and implementation of the strategy based on interaction between actors and projects of different sectors of the local economy.
- Implementation of innovative approaches.
- Implementation of cooperation projects.
- Networking of local partnerships.

Total Number of Responses 6



- The extent to which LT LAGs are able to implement elements of the LEADER approach varies from the EU-wide picture. A much higher proportion of LT LAGs said that the area based LDSs was an element fully implemented (83% vs 51%). However the multi sectoral LDS could be fully or mostly implemented by only 17% of LT LAGs vs 69% of EU respondents.
- All LT LAGs said that the bottom-up approach is implemented fully or mostly, compared to 77% across the EU.

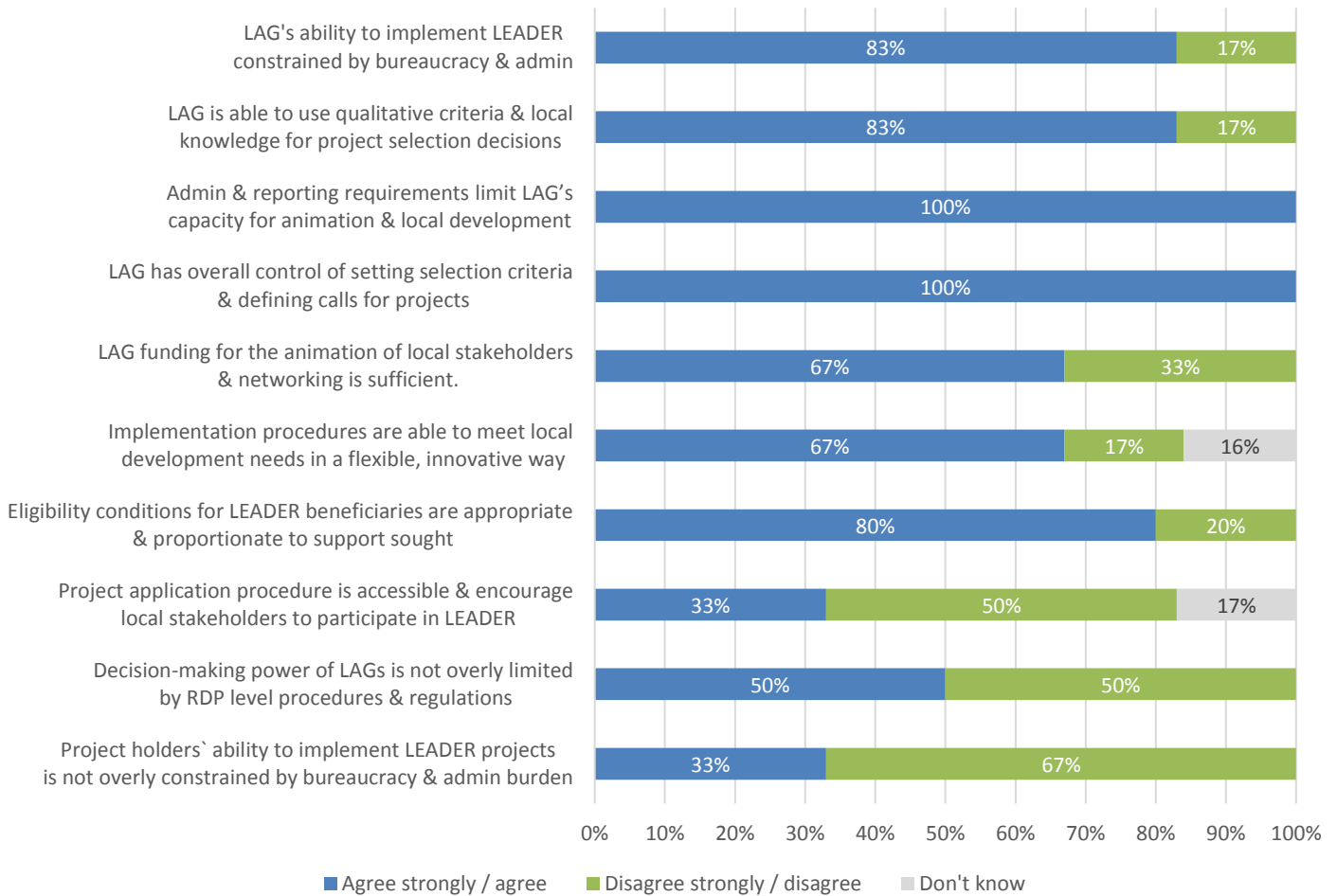
Question 15

Please consider the statements below and for each statement select the option that best reflects your practical experience from this scale: 1 = disagree strongly, 2 = disagree, 3 = don't know, 4 = agree, 5 = agree strongly.

- LEADER implementation procedures are able to meet local development needs in a flexible, innovative way.
- The project application procedure is designed to be accessible and encourage local stakeholders to participate in LEADER.
- The LAG has overall control of setting selection criteria and defining calls for projects.
- The LAG is able to use qualitative criteria and local knowledge to inform project selection decisions.
- The decision-making power of LAGs is not overly limited by Rural Development Programme (RDP) level procedures and regulations.
- Your LAG's ability to implement the LEADER approach is constrained by bureaucracy and administrative burden.
- Project holders' ability to implement LEADER projects is not overly constrained by the level of bureaucracy and administrative burden.
- Eligibility conditions for LEADER beneficiaries are appropriate and proportionate to the amount of support sought.
- LAG funding for the animation of local stakeholders and networking is sufficient.
- Administrative and reporting requirements limit your LAG's capacity for animation and other development oriented activities.

Total Number of Responses 24

Aspects of LEADER Implementation as seen by Local Action Groups



- All LT LAGs agreed that admin and reporting requirements limit LAG's capacity for animation and local development and that the LAG has overall control of setting selection criteria and defining calls for projects, whereas across the EU 69% and 66% agreed respectively.
- A further noticeable difference with the EU-wide average is that 80% of LT LAGs agreed that eligibility conditions for LEADER beneficiaries are appropriate and proportionate to support sought, whereas across the EU only 39% agreed. Furthermore, half of LT respondents agreed that the decision-making power of LAGs is not overly limited by RDP level procedures and regulations, whereas across the EU only 29% did so.
- Only 17% of LT LAGs disagree that implementation procedures are able to meet local development needs vs 45% of the wider sample.

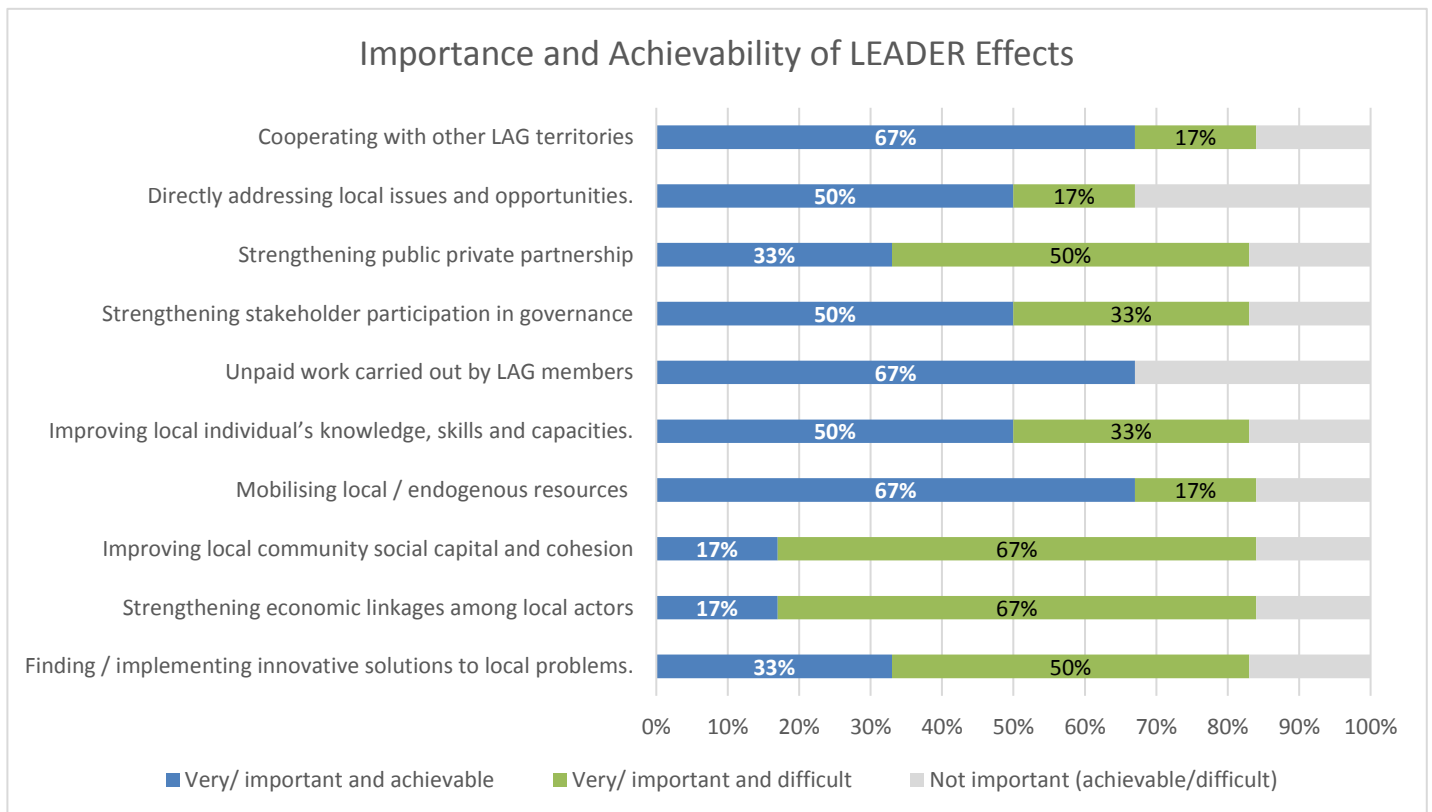
Question 16

The LEADER approach can deliver qualitative local effects which are distinctive from those of other rural development activities. The importance of these effects and how easy they are to achieve may vary by LAG.

Please rank how important and how achievable each of the possible effects is for your LAG according to the following scale. 1= Very important and achievable, 2 = Very important and difficult, 3 = Important and achievable, 4 = Important and difficult, 5 = Not important but achievable, 6= Not important and difficult.

- Directly addressing local issues and opportunities.
- Strengthening stakeholder participation in local partnership and its governance.
- Strengthening economic linkages among local actors.
- Strengthening public private partnership.
- Unpaid work carried out by LAG members.
- Mobilising local / endogenous resources (human, physical, financial).
- Improving local community social capital and cohesion.
- Improving local individual's knowledge, skills and capacities.
- Finding / implementing innovative solutions to local problems.
- Cooperating with other LAG territories.

Total Number of Responses 6



- LT LAGs judged the LEADER effect of mobilising local / endogenous resources to be important and achievable more frequently than the EU average (67% vs 42%). Unpaid work by LAG members also ranked higher in LT (67% vs 55%)
- However, LT LAGs felt that various important LEADER effects were more frequently difficult to achieve, most notably improving local community social capital and cohesion and strengthening economic linkages among local actors, with both effects judged to be important and difficult by 67% of LT LAGs vs 56% of LAGs across the EU. Strengthening public private partnership was also regarded as important but difficult to achieve by LT LAGs more frequently than across the EU (50% vs 38%).

LEADER Operation

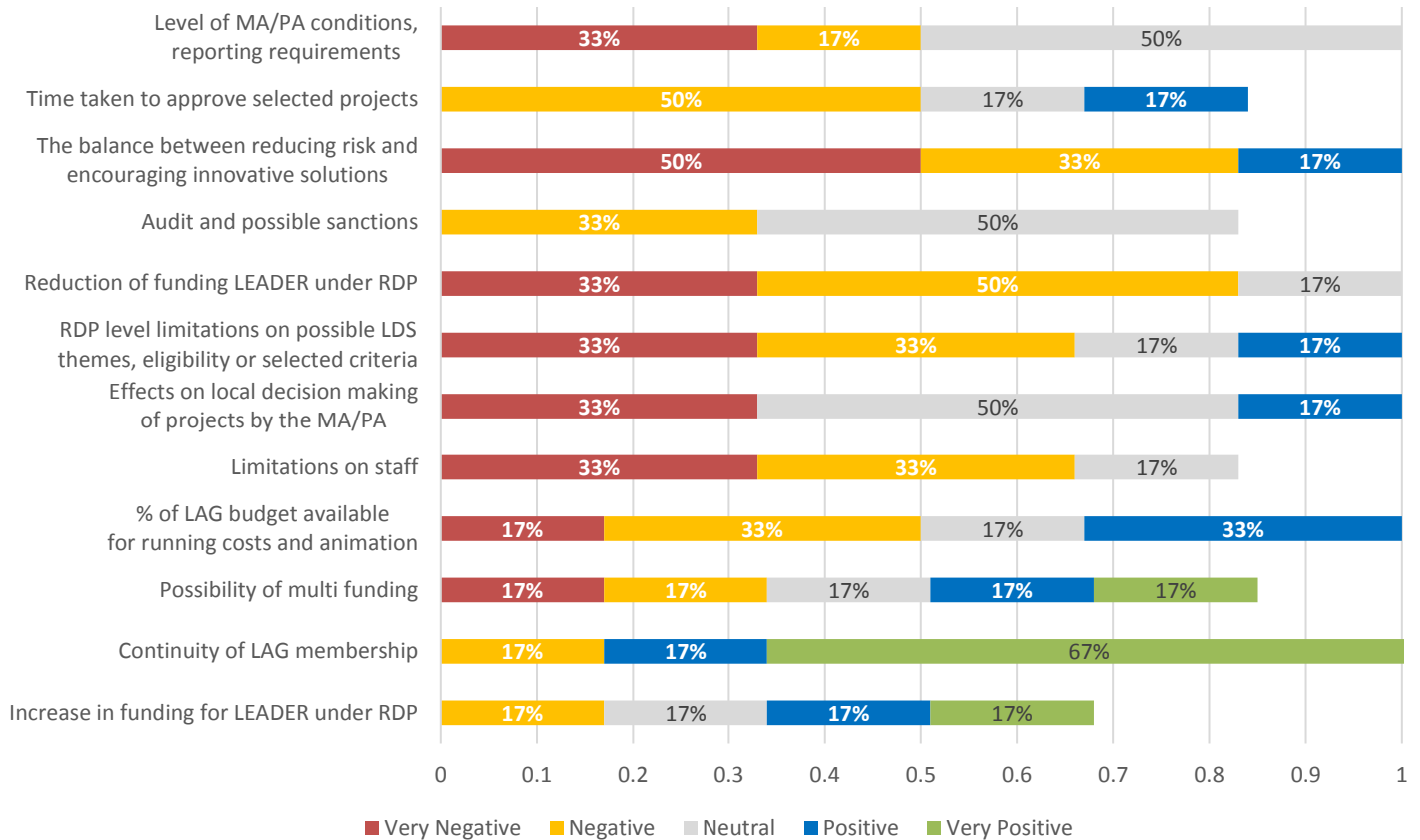
Question 17

What level of effect have the following factors had on the implementation of LEADER in your LAG territory? (for each option enter either 0 = not applicable, 1 = very negative, 2 = negative, 3 = neutral, 4 = positive, 5 = very positive)

- Reduction of funding for LEADER under the RDP.
- Increase in funding for LEADER under the RDP.
- RDP level limitations on possible Local Development Strategy themes, eligibility or selection criteria.
- Level of Managing Authority/Paying Agency conditions, reporting requirements.
- Time taken to approve selected projects.
- Audit and possible sanctions.
- The balance in implementation procedures effects between reducing risk and encouraging innovative solutions.
- Effects on local decision-making of final approval of projects by the managing authority or paying agency.
- Percentage of LAG budget available for running costs and animation.
- Limitations on staff (continuity, skills, number).
- Continuity of LAG membership.
- Possibility of multi funding.

Total Number of Responses 6

Level of Effects on LEADER Implementation



For the purposes of improving the clarity of the analysis the ‘not applicable’ responses have been removed from the chart.

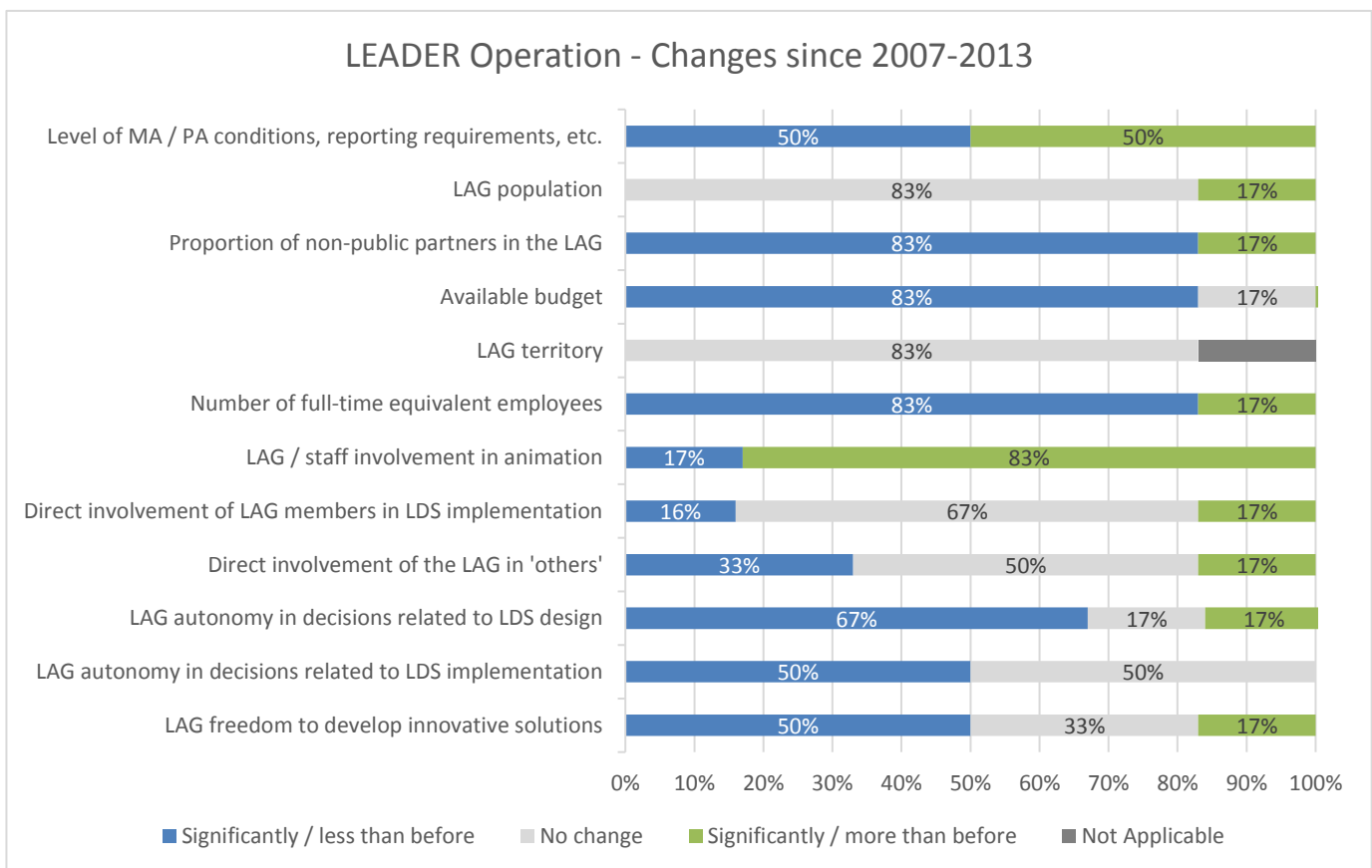
- LAGs in LT were more positive about the effect on LEADER implementation of continuity of LAG membership, with 84% stating its effect as positive or very positive compared to 38% across the EU.
- Several effects were judged as negative or very negative by a higher proportion of respondent LAGs in LT than across the EU as a whole; for limitations on staff (83% vs 63%) thought its effect was negative or very negative, similarly for the balance between reducing risk and encouraging innovative solutions (66% vs 40%), RDP level limitations on possible LDS themes, eligibility or selected criteria (66% vs 53%) and reduction in funding (83% vs 55%).

Question 18

How have the following aspects changed for your LAG between the 2007 – 2013 and 2014-2020 Programming periods? (1 = significantly less than before, 2 = less than before, 3 = no change, 4 = more than before, 5 = significantly more than before) (routed for only those LAGs previously operational)

- Available budget.
- LAG territory.
- LAG population.
- Number of full-time equivalent employees.
- LAG / staff involvement in animation.
- LAG autonomy in decisions related to local development strategy design.
- LAG autonomy in decisions related to local development strategy implementation.
- Level of MA controls, reporting requirements etc.
- LAG freedom to develop innovative solutions.
- Proportion of non-public partners in the LAG.
- Direct involvement of LAG members in LDS implementation.
- Direct involvement of the LAG in other regional and territorial development actions or structures.

Total Number of Responses 6



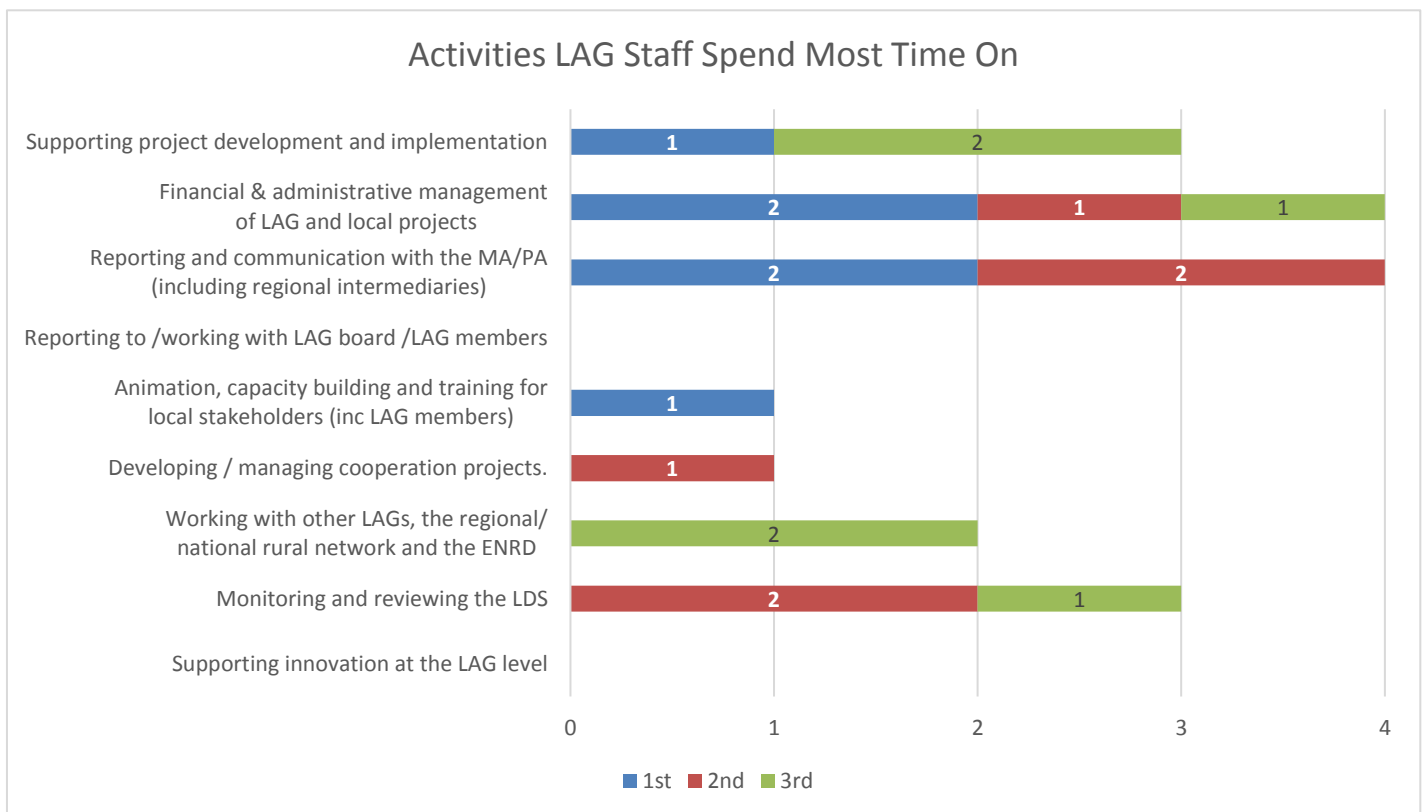
- The proportion of non-public partners in the LAG population has decreased to a greater extent in LT than across the EU, with 83% of LT LAGs responses reporting a this was less than before compared to just 6% across the EU.
- A greater proportion of LT LAGs report that the number of full-time equivalent employees has decreased than in the EU sample (83% vs 20%), as has the available budget (83% vs 43%).
- LAG autonomy in decisions related to LDS design is also more frequently reported to have decreased in LT than across the EU as a whole 67% vs 23%.
- However, LAG / staff involvement in animation has increased to a greater extent in LT compared to the EU-wide sample, with 83% of LAGs reporting an increase compared to just 26% across the EU.

Question 19

Please think about your day-to-day work in the LAG and rank the three types of activity which your LAG staff spend most time on overall on a scale of 1 – 3 where 1 = most time spent.

- Reporting to /working with LAG board and members.
- Supporting project development and implementation.
- Financial and administrative management of LAG and local projects.
- Reporting and communication with the Managing Authority and Paying Agency (including regional intermediaries).
- Animation, capacity building and training of local stakeholders (inc LAG members).
- Supporting innovation at the local level.
- Monitoring and reviewing the local development strategy.
- Developing /managing cooperation projects.
- Working with other LAGs, the regional/national rural network and the ENRD.

Total Number of Responses 6



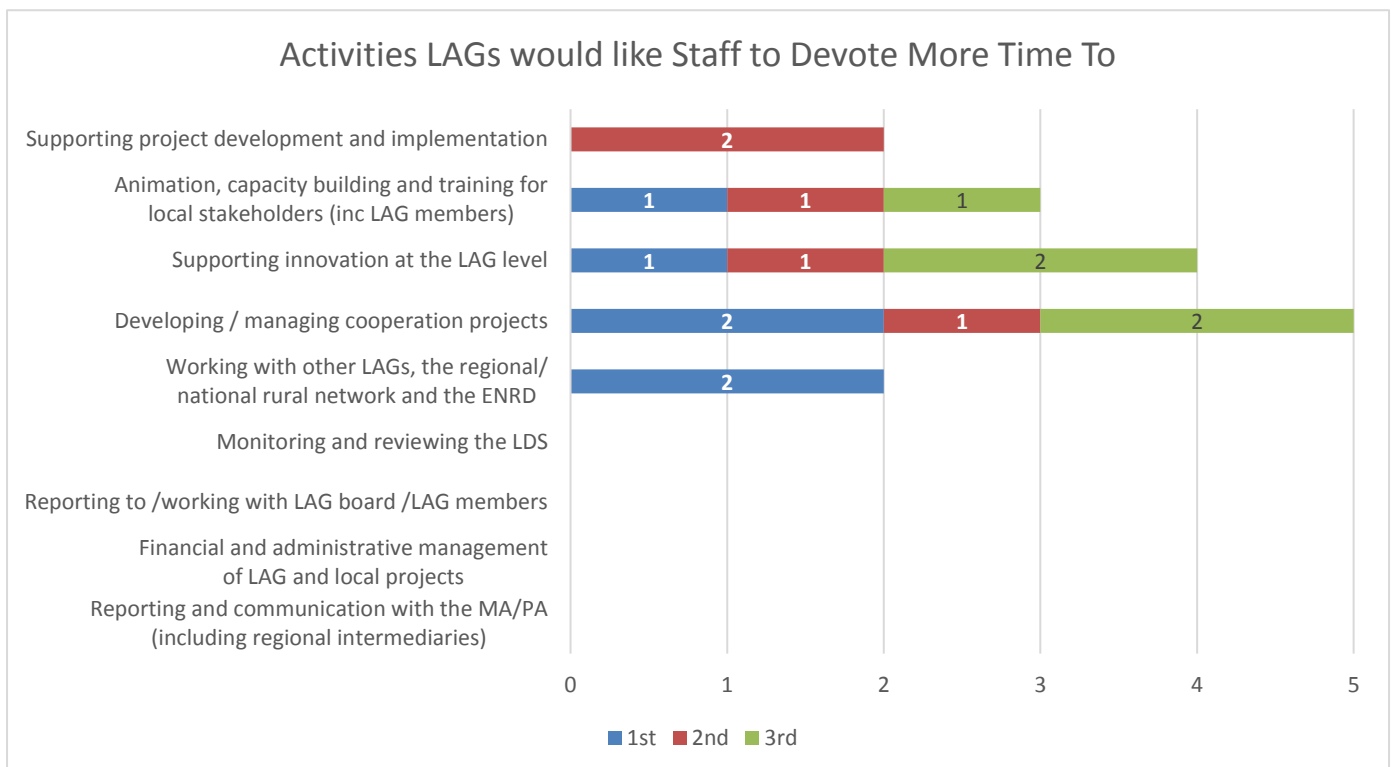
- When compared as a proportion of overall respondents monitoring and reviewing the LDS was a more frequently ranked as a top 3 activity in LT, compared to the EU-wide sample.
- Reporting to / working with LAG board / LAG members was not ranked as a top 3 time-consuming activity by any of the LT LAGs, across the EU-wide sample it was the fourth most frequently ranked activity.

Question 20

Where would you like to be able to devote more of your LAG team's time or resources in order to maximise the benefit of LEADER to your LAG territory? Please rank the three most important options below on a scale of 1 – 3 where 1 = most important.

- Reporting to /working with LAG board /LAG members.
- Supporting project development and implementation.
- Financial and administrative management of LAG and local projects.
- Reporting and communication with the Managing Authority and Paying Agency (including regional intermediaries).
- Animation, capacity building and training of local stakeholders (inc LAG members).
- Supporting innovation at the local level.
- Monitoring and reviewing the local development strategy.
- Developing /managing cooperation projects.
- Working with other LAGs, the regional/national rural network and the ENRD.

Total Number of Responses 6



- LT and EU sample LAGs have the same top five priorities that they would like to devote more time to however the relative order of priority is virtually reversed.

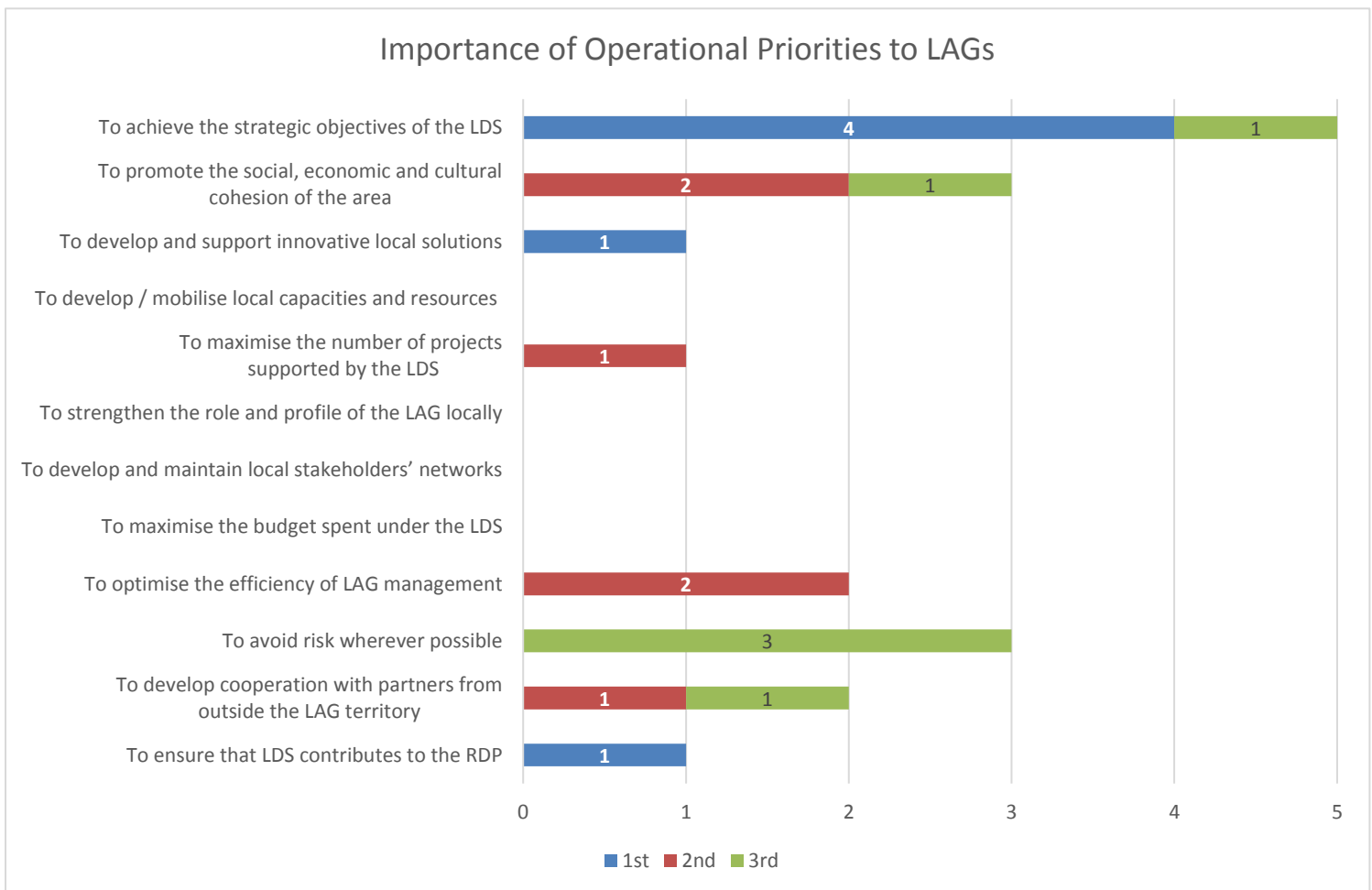
Question 21

How important are the following operational priorities to your LAG? Please select your top 3 most important options below in order of importance on a scale of 1 – 3 where 1 = most important.

- To achieve the strategic objectives of the local development strategy (LDS).
- To maximise the number of projects supported by the LDS.
- To maximise the budget spent under the LDS.
- To ensure that LDS contributes to the RDP.
- To optimise the efficiency of LAG management.
- To strengthen the role and profile of the LAG locally.
- To promote the social, economic and cultural cohesion of the area.
- To develop and support innovative local solutions.
- To avoid risk wherever possible.
- To develop and maintain local stakeholders' networks.
- To develop cooperation with partners from outside the LAG territory.
- To develop / mobilise local capacities and resources (human, funding, knowledge, etc.)

Total Number of Responses 6

Importance of Operational Priorities to LAGs



- The priority of achieving the strategic objectives of the LDS was comfortably the most important priority amongst LT respondents, which mirrored the picture across the EU sample.
- The avoidance of risk wherever possible was the joint second most frequently ranked priority in LT, whereas across the EU it was only 10th.
- To develop / mobilise local capacities and resources wasn't ranked by any of the LT respondents, whereas across the EU it was the fourth most frequently ranked priority.

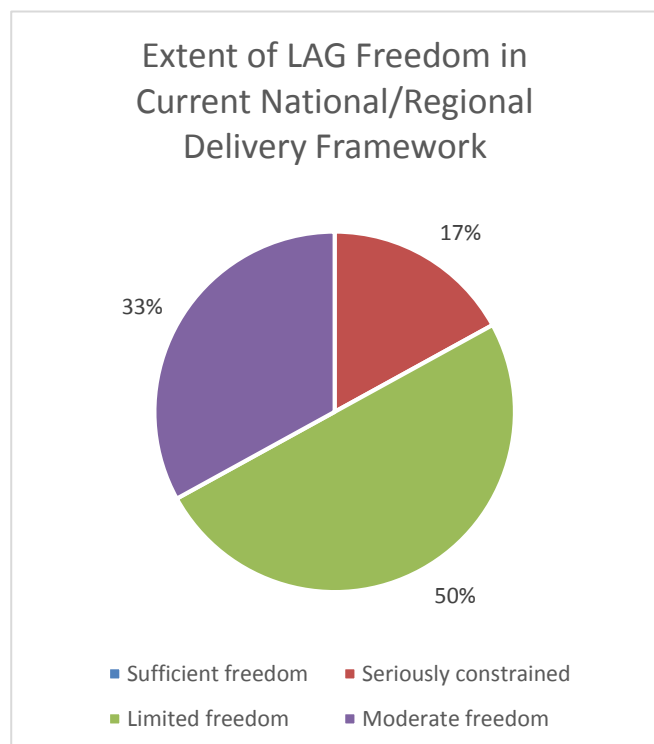
Question 22

To what extent does your national or regional LEADER delivery framework enable your LAG to pursue these operational priorities? Please select the option most appropriate to your LAG.

- The LAG has sufficient freedom to allow it to pursue its preferred priorities.
- The LAG has a moderate degree of freedom which allows it to partially address its priorities.
- The LAG has a limited degree of freedom which substantially compromises its freedom to address its priorities.
- The LAGs freedom to address its operational priorities is seriously constrained

Total Number of Responses 6

- The LT respondents more frequently felt that their freedom in current national / regional delivery frameworks was limited than the EU wide sample (50% vs 27%).

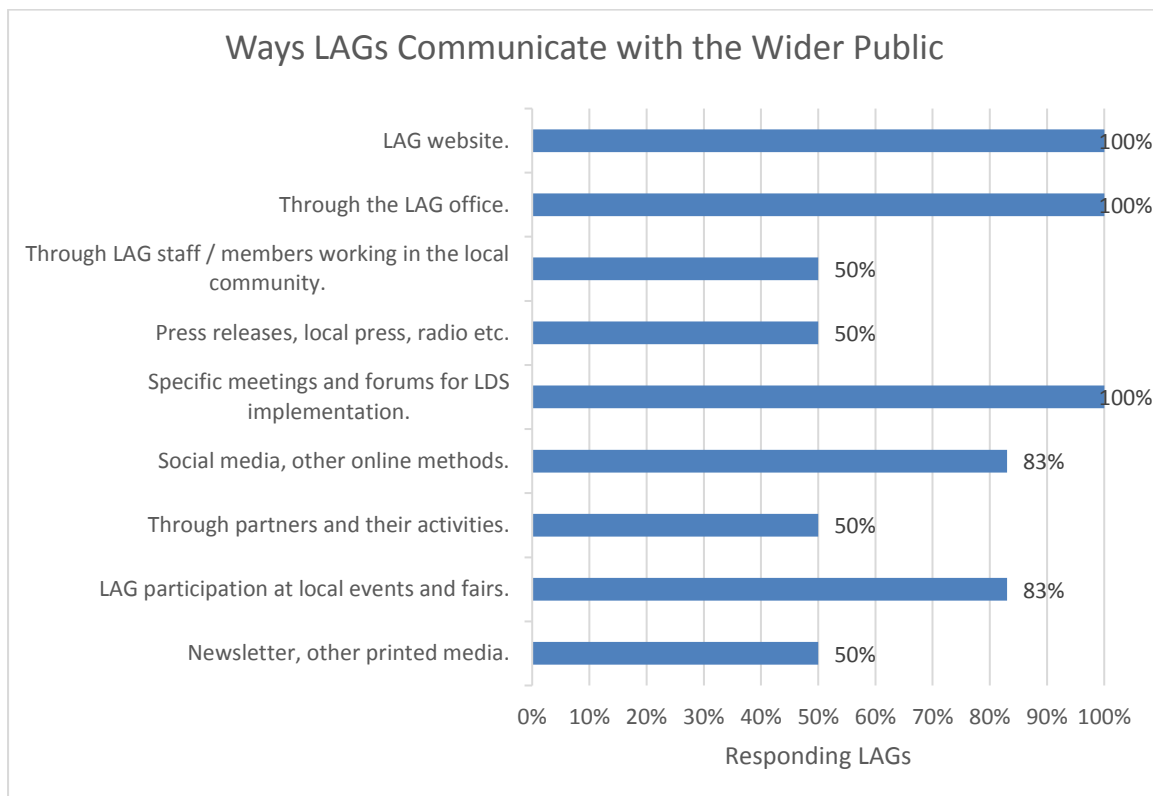


Question 23

What is the main way your LAG communicates with the wider public in your LAG Territory (including potential beneficiaries)? Please select those methods which your LAG uses.

- LAG website.
- Specific meetings and forums for LDS implementation.
- Through the LAG office.
- Through LAG staff / members working in the local community.
- LAG participation at local events and fairs.
- Press releases, local press, radio etc.
- Newsletter, other printed media.
- Social media, other online methods.
- Through partners and their activities.

Total Number of Responses 6



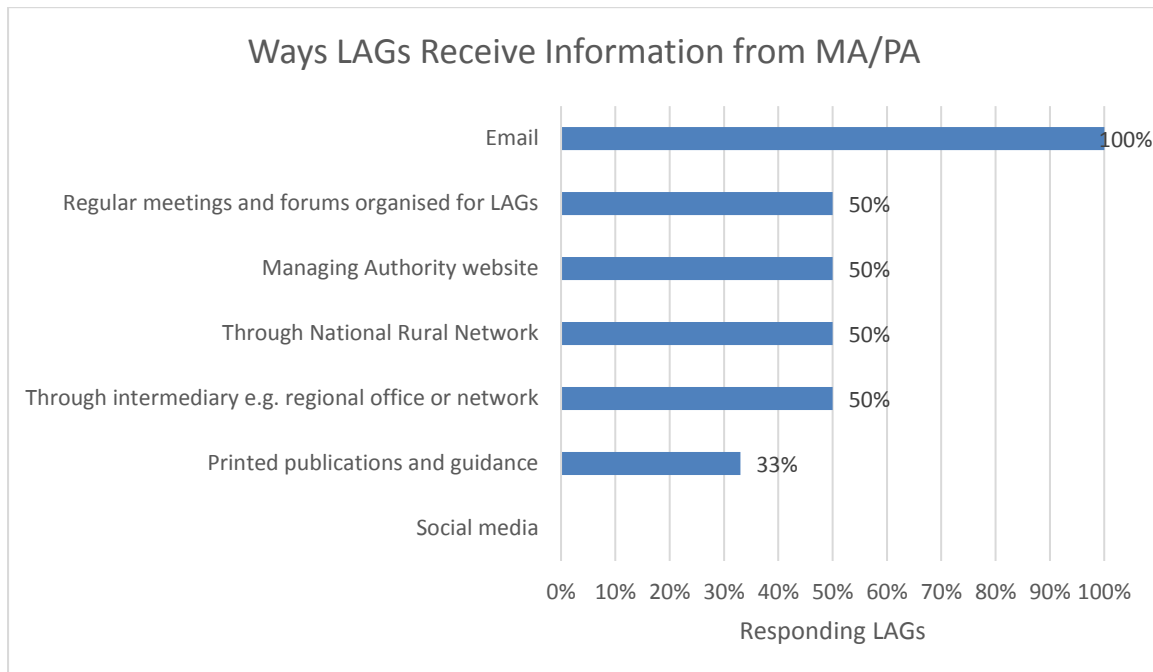
- LT LAGs communicate with the wider public through multiple channels, with three of the nine methods used by 100% of LAGs in LT, through LAG website (89% EU), LAG office (vs 71%) and specific meetings and forums for LDS implementation (vs 62%).
- LAG participation in local, events etc was notably higher also in LT (83% vs 52%).

Question 24

What are the main ways in which you receive information from the Managing Authority? Please select those methods which are most used

- Managing Authority website.
- Regular meetings and forums organised for LAGs.
- Through National Rural Network.
- Social media.
- Printed publications and guidance.
- Email.
- Through intermediary e.g. regional office or network.

Total Number of Responses 6



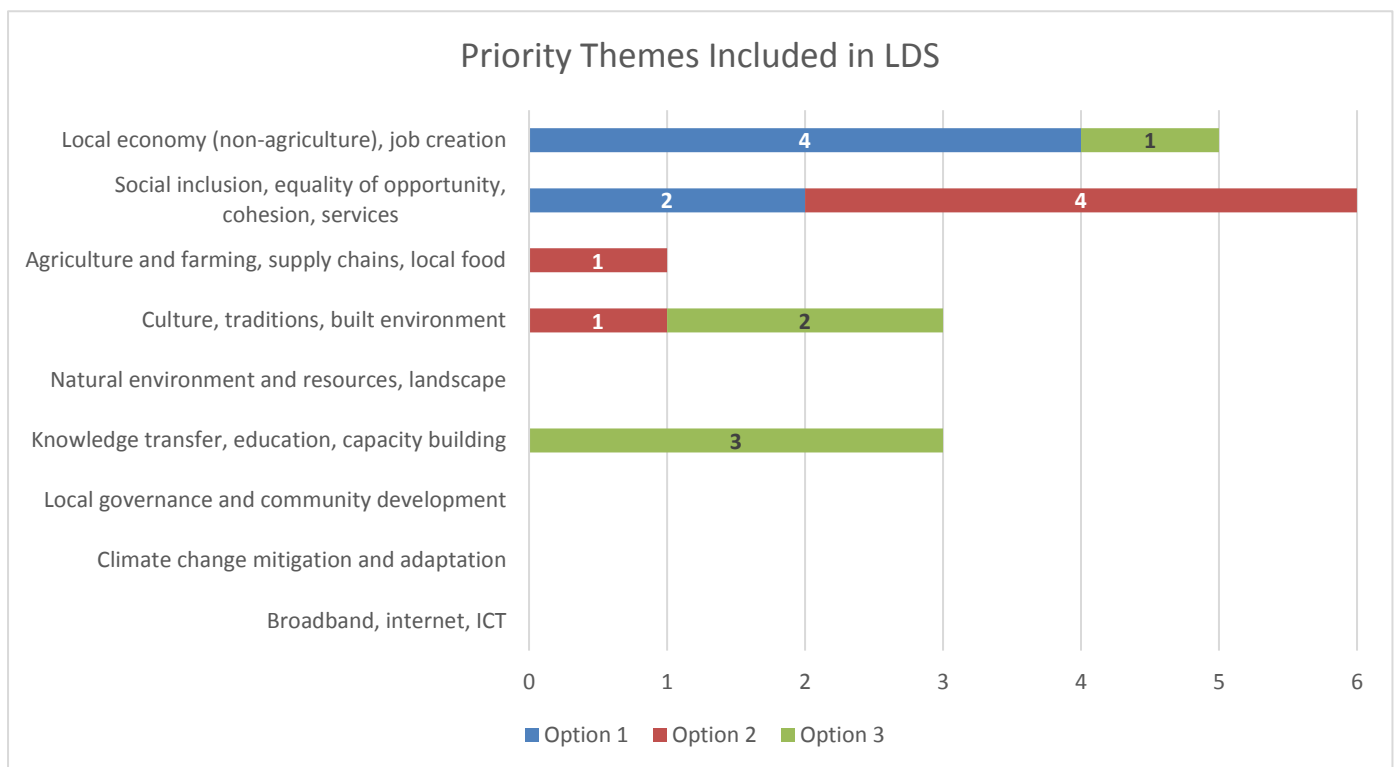
- There were no significant differences evident here.

Question 25

Which of the following priority themes relate most closely to your Local Development Strategy objectives? Please select (up to) the three most relevant ones from the options provided.

- Knowledge transfer, education, capacity building.
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Agriculture and farming, supply chains, local food.
- Local economy (non-agriculture), job creation.
- Culture, traditions, built environment.
- Natural environment and resources, landscape.
- Social inclusion, equality of opportunity, cohesion, services.
- Local governance and community development.
- Broadband, internet, ICT.

Total Number of Responses 6



- In common with the EU wide sample, local economy (non-agricultural), job creation and social inclusion, equality of opportunity, cohesion, services and were the two most frequently ranked priority themes included in the LDS.
- Agriculture and farming, supply chains, local food ranked fourth by LT respondents, across the EU it was ranked third. Natural environment and resources, landscape was not ranked by any LT respondents, across the EU it was the fifth most frequently ranked priority theme.

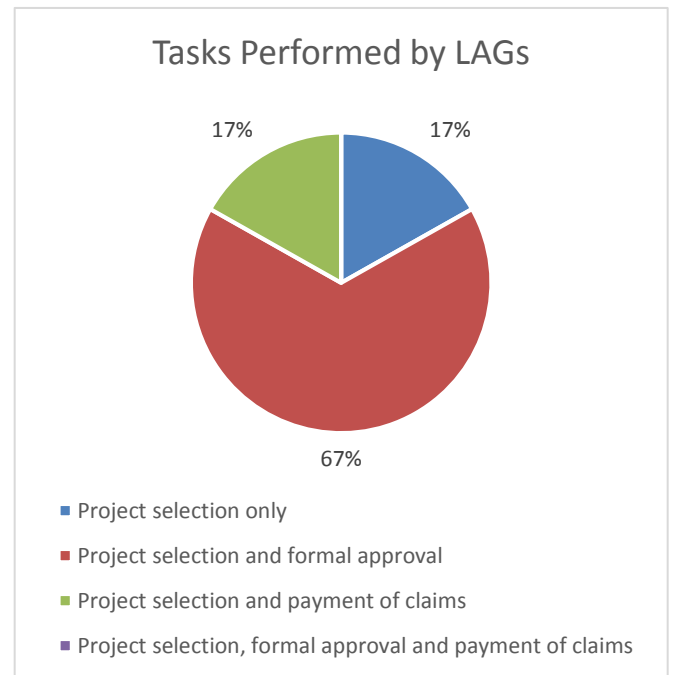
Question 26

What tasks does your LAG perform in relation to LEADER projects as part of your LDS implementation?
Please select one of the options.

- Project selection only
- Project selection and formal approval
- Project selection and payment of claims
- Project selection, formal approval and payment of claims

Total Number of Responses 6

- Compared to the EU-wide sample, the LT LAGs are reported to be more frequently involved in project selection and formal approval (67% vs 31%) and less frequently perform project selection only (17% vs 48%).



LEADER Improvements

Question 27

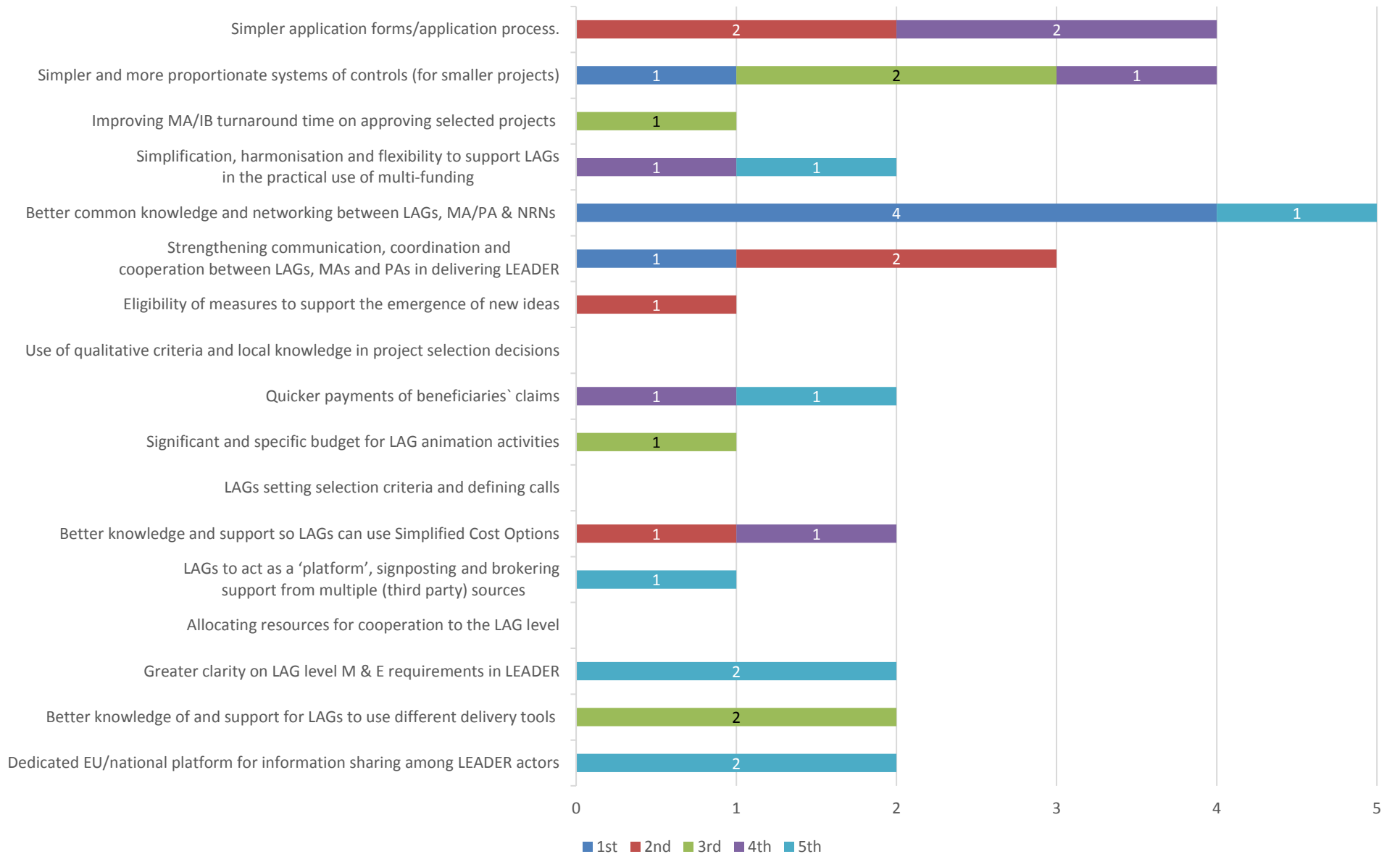
What is most important to address in helping LAGs to be effective in implementing LEADER now? Please select and rank your top five priorities from the following items in order of their importance in (where 1= highest importance and 5 = 5th most important)

- Better common knowledge and support through networking of LAGs, Managing Authorities and Paying Agencies and National Rural Networks and exchanges on transferable experience and practices
- The eligibility of measures to support the emergence of new ideas, e.g. the use of feasibility studies, LAG led projects, pilot projects, preparatory work etc. should be ensured from the EU level down.
- Setting aside a significant and specific budget for LAG animation activities.
- Allocating resources for cooperation to the LAG level.
- Ensuring better common knowledge of and support for LAGs to take advantage of using simplified cost options.
- LAGs setting selection criteria and defining calls
- LAGs using qualitative criteria and local knowledge to inform project selection decisions.
- Ensuring better common knowledge of and support for LAGs to take advantage of using different delivery tools e.g. 'Umbrella projects'.
- Improving MA or intermediary body turnaround time on approving selected projects.
- Improving timeliness of payments of beneficiaries' claims.
- Simpler and more proportionate systems of controls (for smaller projects?).
- Simplification, harmonisation and flexibility to support LAGs in the practical use of multi-funding.
- Greater clarity on LAG level monitoring and evaluation (M&E) requirements in LEADER.
- Strengthening communication, coordination and cooperation between LAGs, Managing Authorities and Paying Agencies in delivering LEADER.
- A dedicated EU/national platform for information sharing among LEADER actors.
- Simpler application forms/application process.
- Allowing LAGs to act as a 'platform', signposting and brokering support from multiple (third party) sources to further LDS objectives.

Total Number of Responses 6

- Better common knowledge and networking between LAGs, MA/PA and NRNs was clearly ranked as the change regarded as most important to improve implementation in LT, compared to fifth most frequently ranked in the EU-wide sample.
- Improving MA turnaround time on approving selected projects is clearly less of a priority in LT than in the EU responses (11th vs 3rd).

Most Important Changes to Improve Implementation Now

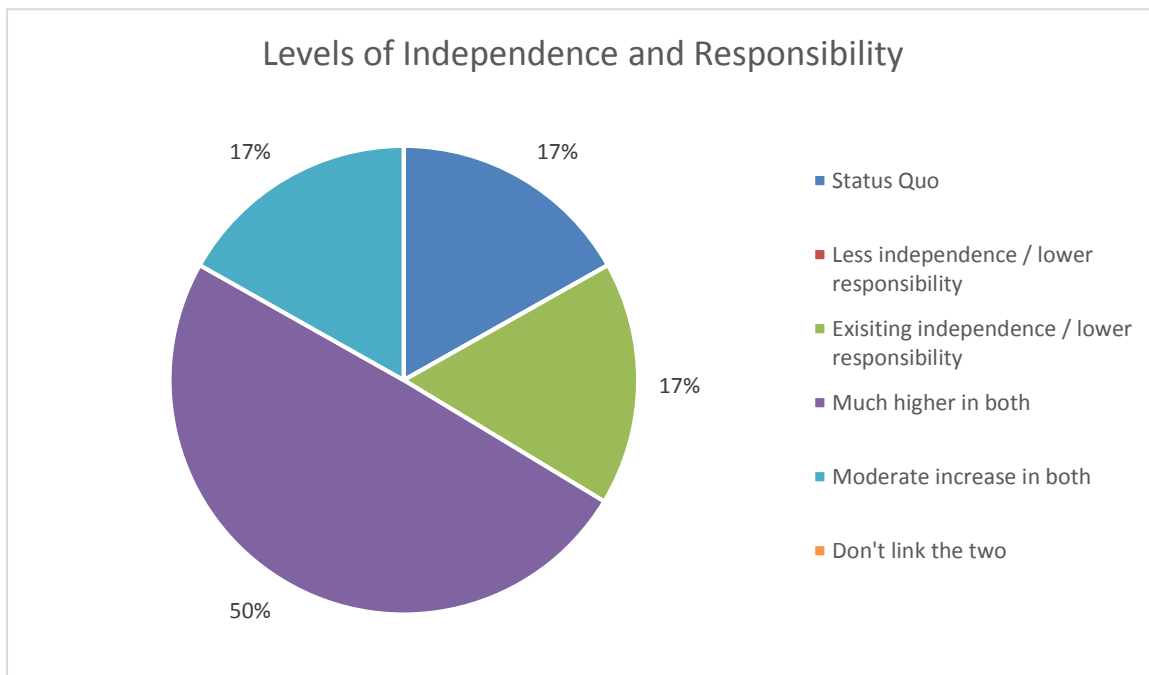


Question 28:

Some LAGs desire greater independence in their operations with more power and responsibility e.g. in project selection and approvals, project management, use of funds, managing risk etc. Which one of these statements best reflects your LAG's position?

- We are happy with the existing levels of responsibility, independence and accountability
- We prefer less independence with a lower level of direct LAG responsibility and financial accountability
- We prefer the existing level of independence with a lower level of direct LAG responsibility and financial accountability
- We prefer a much higher degree of independence and would be happy with a significantly higher degree of direct responsibility and financial accountability
- We prefer a moderate increase in independence with a moderate increase in direct responsibility and financial accountability
- Any increase in independence should not be linked to increased LAG responsibilities and accountability

Total Number of Responses 6



- Compared to the EU-wide average a greater proportion of LT LAGs would prefer much higher levels of both independence and responsibility (50% vs 19%).

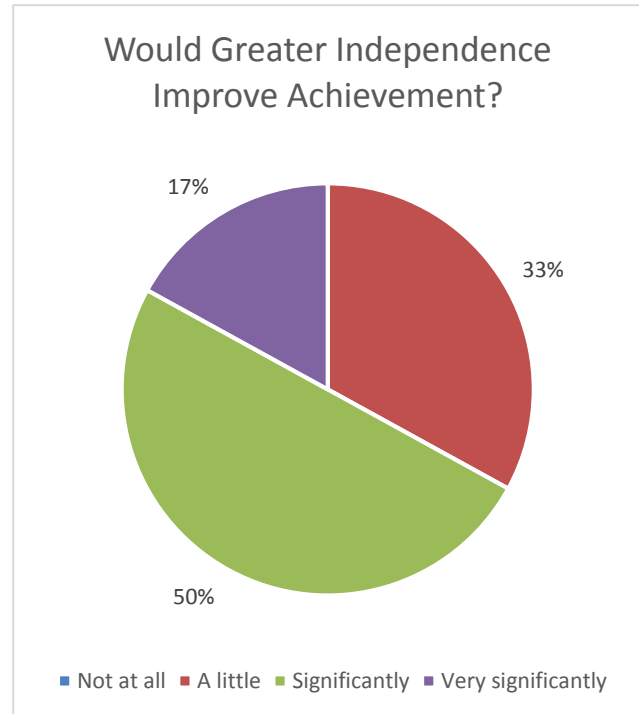
Question 29

To what extent would greater independence, power and responsibility for your LAGs improve what you are able to achieve? Please select one option.

- Not at all
- A little
- Significantly
- Very significantly

Total Number of Responses 6

- Half of LT LAGs thought that greater independence would significantly improve achievement compared with the EU wide sample average of 42%. LT LAGs broadly thought the impact of greater independence would be similar to that of the EU-wide sample.

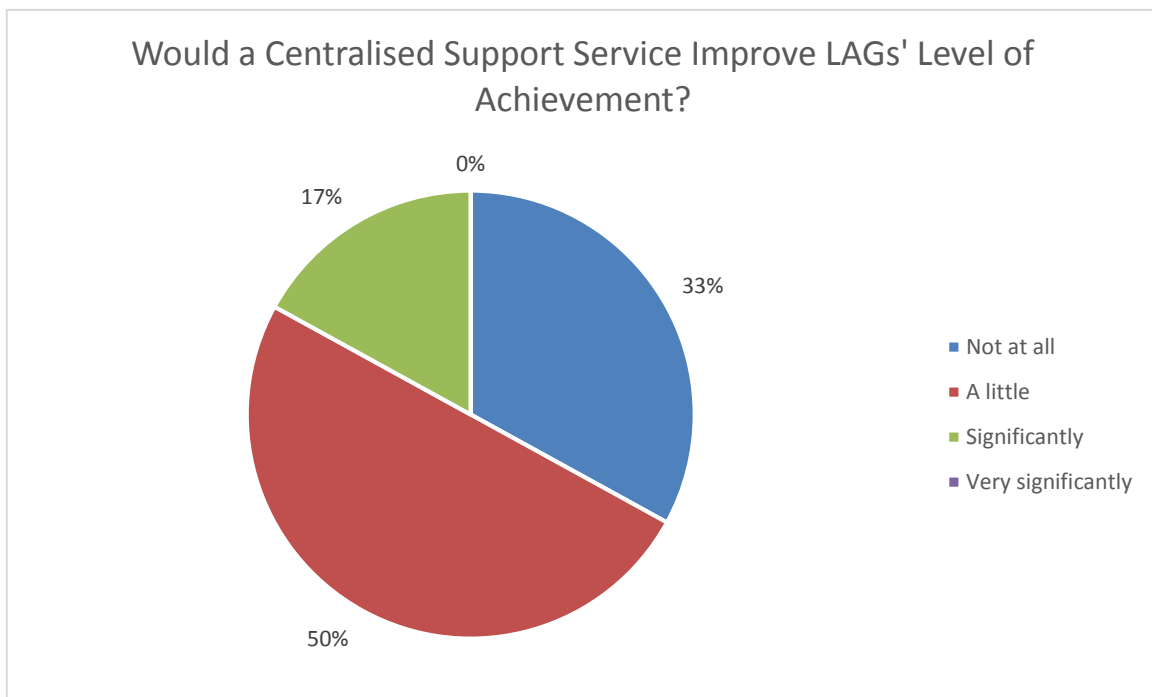


Question 30

If it was possible to reduce LAG administration through the provision of a centralised support service (e.g. shared and managed by multiple LAGs) to what extent would that improve your LAGs level of achievement?

- Not at all
- A little %
- Significantly
- Very significantly

Total Number of Responses 6



- Compared to the EU wide sample, a higher proportion of LT LAGs thought that a centralised support service would improve LAGs' level of achievement to a small extent (50% vs 27%), with a smaller proportion (17% vs 37%) believing the impact would on achievement would be significant or very significant.

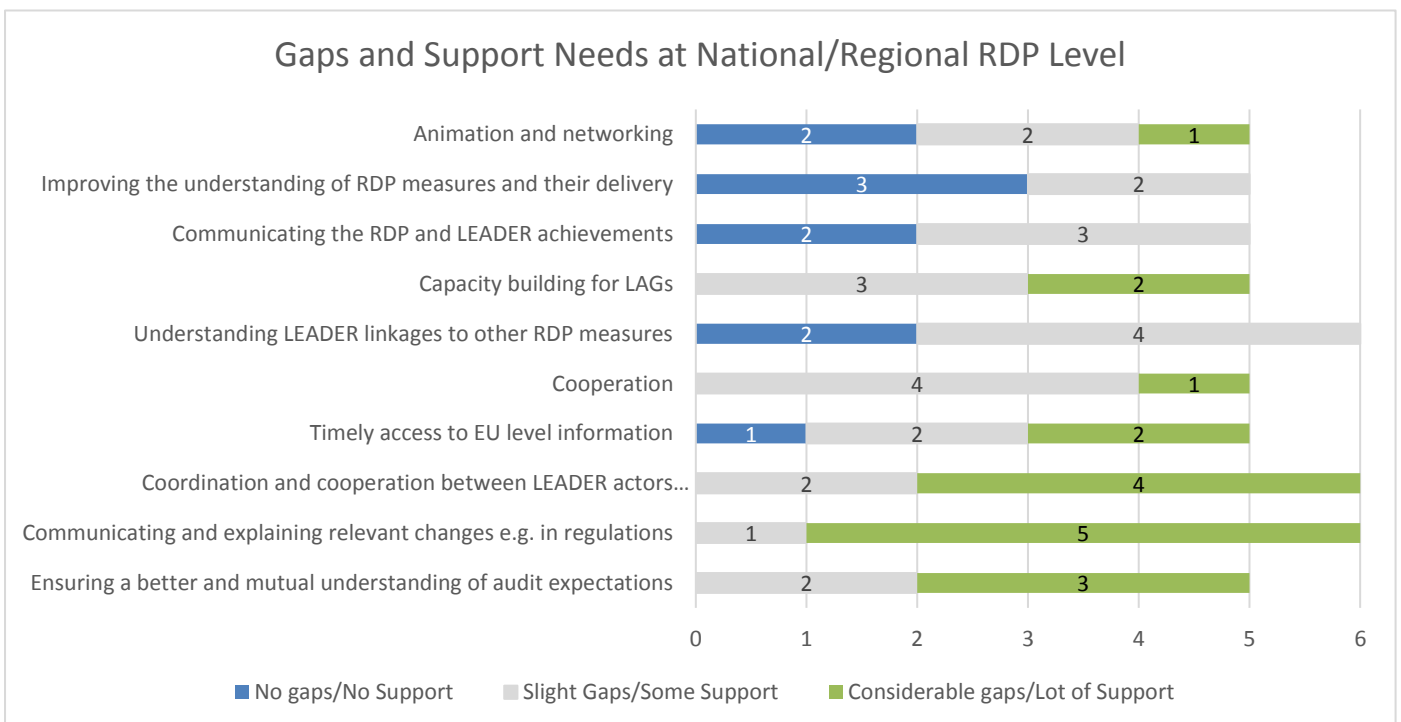
Question 31

To what extent does support from national and regional Rural Development Programme authorities (e.g. Managing Authority, Paying Agency) meet LAG needs and enhance LEADER implementation? Please, use the following scale to rank the provision against the specified needs:

- 1= no gaps in support – no support needed,
- 2 = slight gaps – some support needed,
- 3 = considerable gaps – lot of support needed.

- Improving the understanding of RDP measures and their delivery.
- Communicating the RDP and LEADER achievements.
- Understanding LEADER linkages to other RDP measures.
- Capacity building for LAGs.
- Animation and networking.
- Cooperation.
- Timely access to EU level information.
- Coordination and cooperation between LEADER actors at national and EU level.
- Communicating and explaining relevant changes e.g. in regulations.
- Ensuring a better and mutual understanding of audit expectations.

Total Number of Responses 6



- Overall the LT / EU responses are broadly similar. Gaps and support needs were more frequently identified by LT LAGs in the areas of communicating and explaining relevant changes etc than by EU respondents.

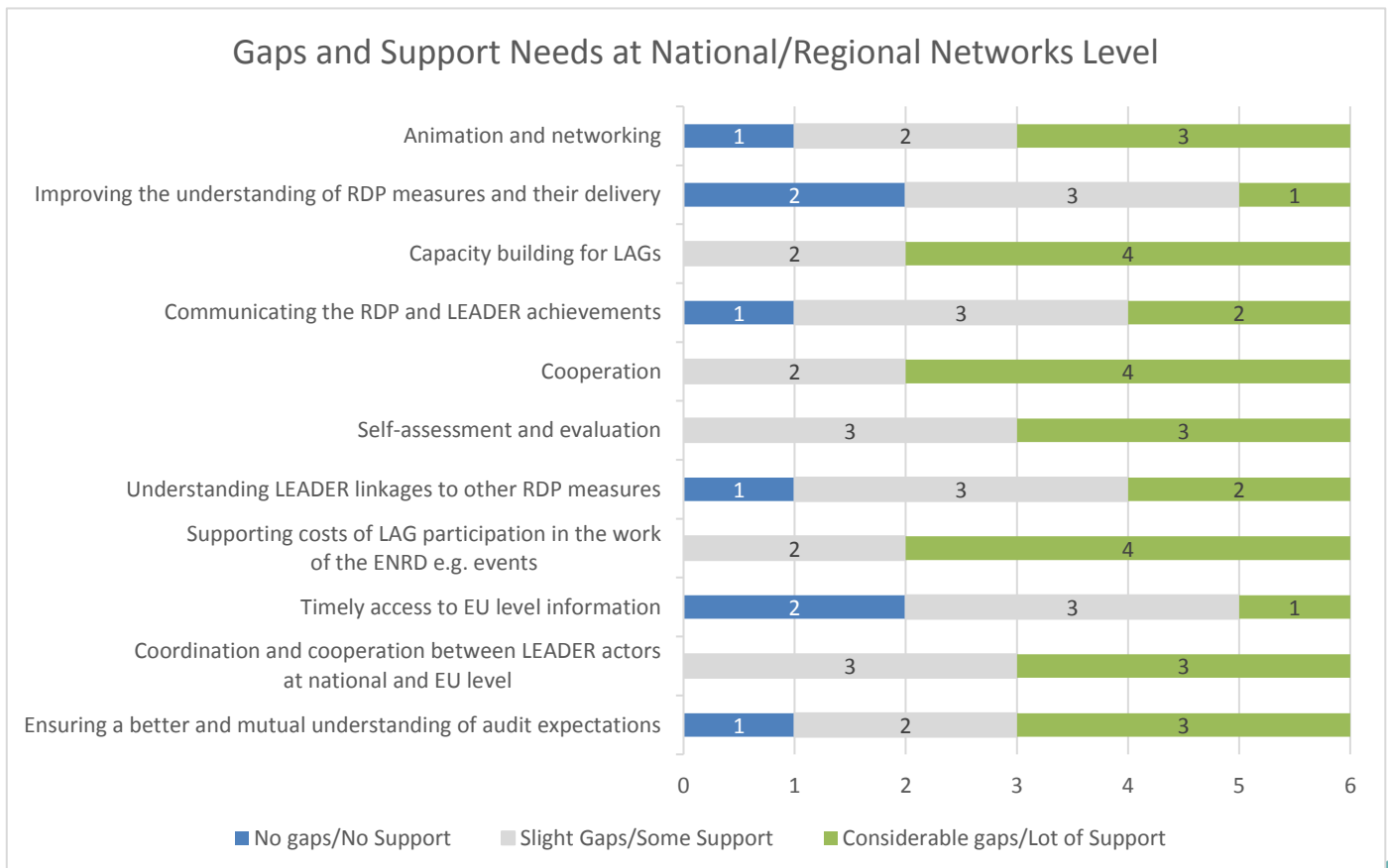
Question 32

To what extent does support from national and regional Rural Networks meet LAG needs and enhance LEADER implementation? Please, use the following scale to rank the provision against the specified needs:

- 1= no gaps in support – no support needed,
2 = slight gaps – some support needed,
3 = considerable gaps – lot of support needed.

- Improving the understanding of RDP measures and their delivery.
- Self-assessment and evaluation.
- Communicating the RDP and LEADER achievements.
- Understanding LEADER linkages to other RDP measures, e.g. EIP Operational Groups.
- Capacity building for LAGs.
- Animation and networking.
- Cooperation.
- Timely access to EU level information.
- Supporting costs of LAG participation in the work of the ENRD e.g. events
- Coordination and cooperation between LEADER actors at national and EU level.
- Ensuring a better and mutual understanding of audit expectations.

Total Number of Responses 6



- The gaps and support needs identified by LT LAGs show that compared to the EU-wide sample there is greater need for support in cooperation and LAG capacity building and in supporting costs of LAG participation in the work of the ENRD.

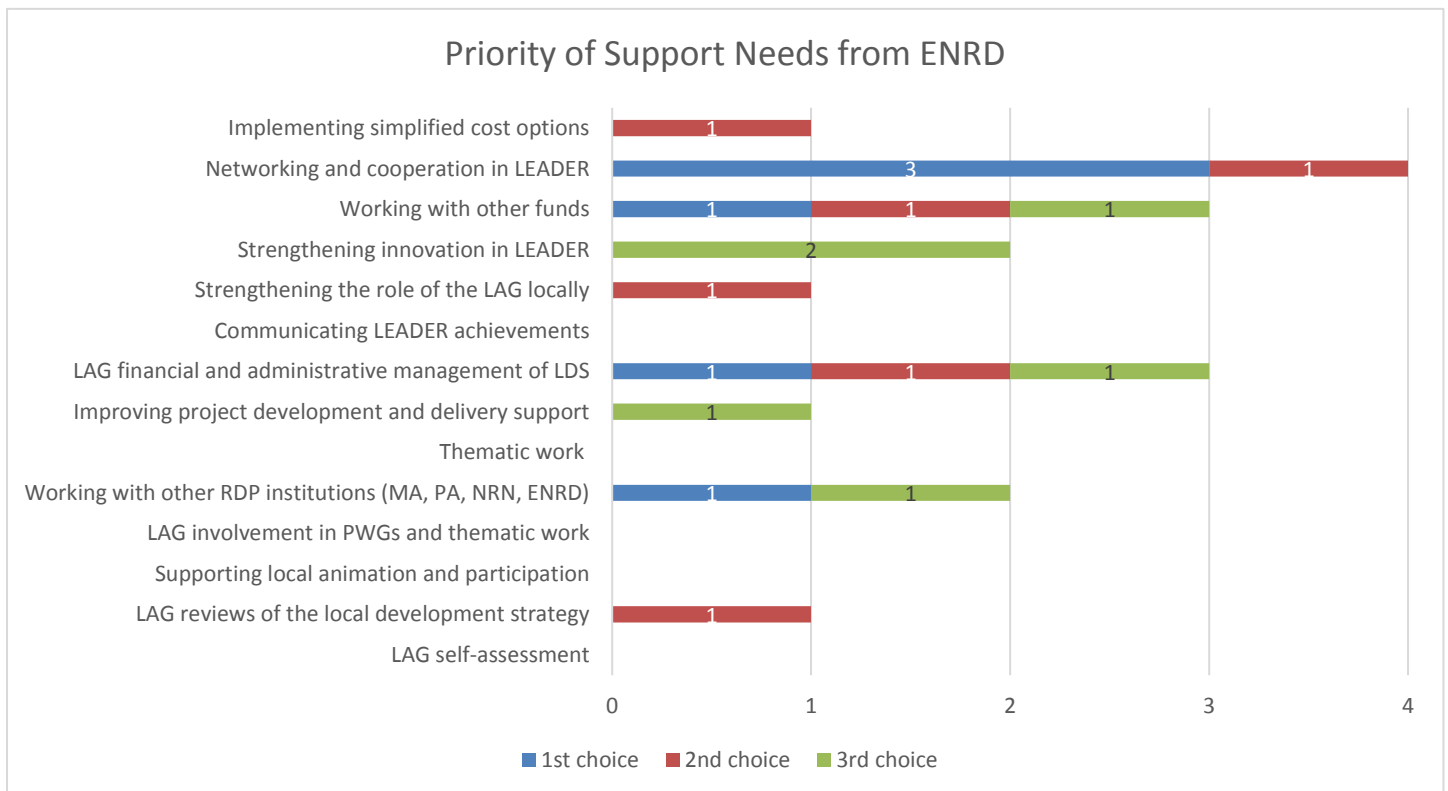
Question 33

Which of the following areas of your LAG's activity are the priorities which the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) should work on to help your LAG most?

Please rank the three most important options below on a scale of 1 – 3 where 1 = most important.

- LAG reviews of the local development strategy.
- LAG financial and administrative management of local development strategy implementation.
- Improving project development and delivery support.
- Implementing simplified cost options.
- Networking and cooperation in LEADER.
- Communicating LEADER achievements.
- Strengthening innovation in LEADER.
- Strengthening the role of the LAG locally.
- Supporting local animation and participation.
- Thematic work (e.g. Greening the local economy, social innovation, ICT & broadband, smart villages, etc.).
- Working with other RDP institutions (MA, PA, NRN, ENRD).
- LAG self-assessment.
- Working with other funds.
- LAG involvement in practitioner-working groups and thematic work.

Total Number of Responses 6



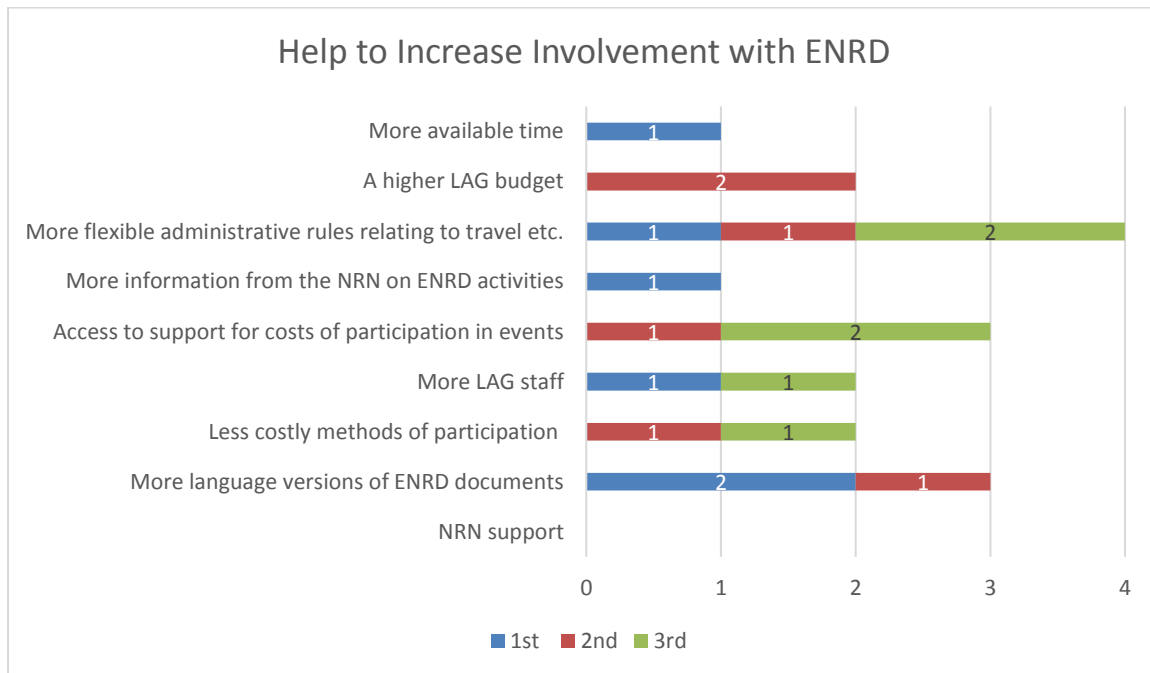
- LT LAG respondents identify networking and cooperation in LEADER followed by working with other funds and LAG financial and administrative management of the LDS as the priority support needs from ENRD, they place a lower priority on implementing simplified cost options and communicating LEADER achievements than the EU sample does.

Question 34

What could help you get more involved in the work of the ENRD? You may select up to three of the options below. Please rank the three most important options below on a scale of 1 – 3 where 1 = most important.

- More flexible administrative rules relating to travel, participations in conferences etc.
- A higher LAG budget
- More available time
- More LAG staff
- More language versions of ENRD documents
- More information from the NRN on ENRD activities
- NRN support
- Less costly methods of participation (e.g. Online meetings)
- Access to support for costs of participation in events
- Other, please describe

Total Number of Responses 6



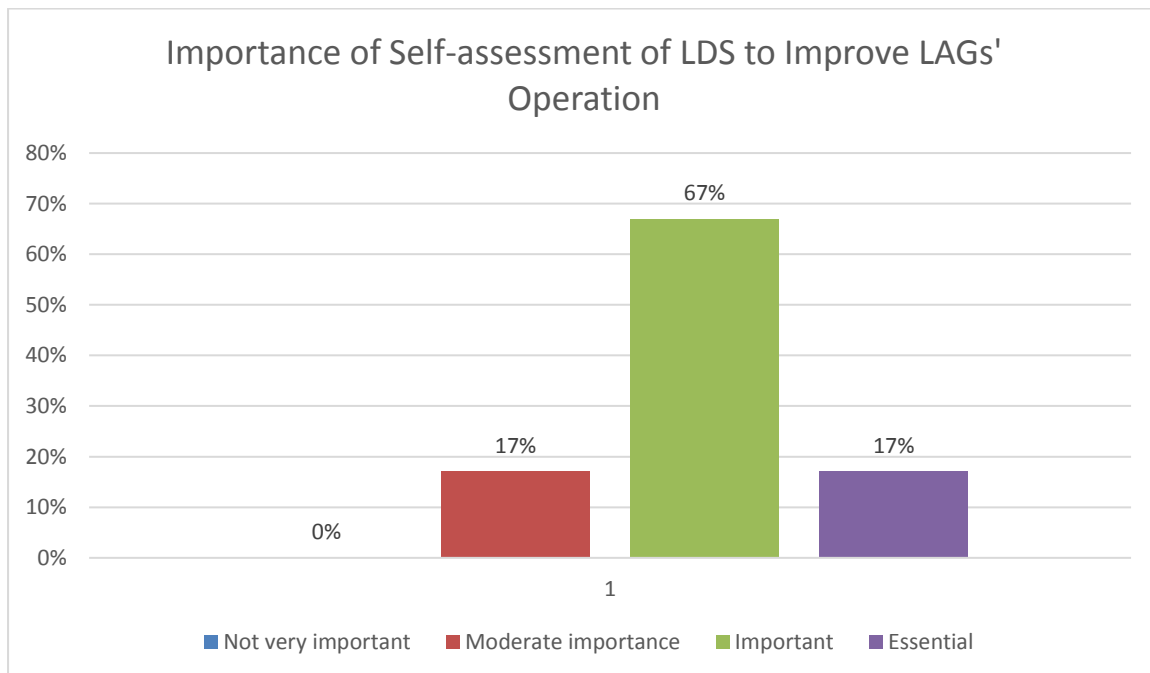
- In LT more available time was ranked seventh, across the EU this was the most highly ranked way in which involvement could be increased. More flexible administrative travel rules, access to support for participation costs and more language versions of ENRD documents were prioritised to a greater extent in LT than across the EU.

Question 35

How important do you think self-assessment (internal review) of your own Local Development Strategy is to improving your LAG's operation?

- Not very important
- Moderate importance
- Important
- Essential

Total Number of Responses 6



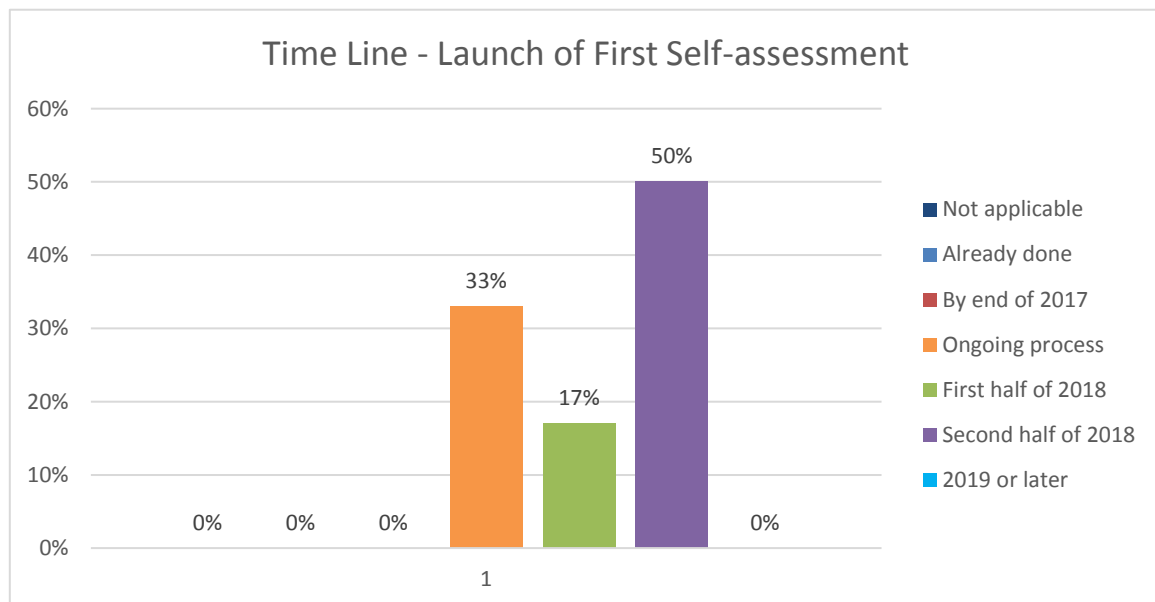
- LT respondents placed slightly higher importance on LDS self-assessment, with 84% of respondents stating that it is either important or essential, compared to 71% across the EU.

Question 36

When are you planning to launch your first self-assessment?

- Already done
- By end 2017
- First half of 2018
- Second half of 2018
- In 2019 or later
- It is an ongoing process
- Not applicable

Total Number of Responses 6



- Whereas 20% of the EU-wide sample said that they had already conducted self-assessment work or would do so by end 2017, no LT respondents indicated that it would have taken place by then. 33% said it was an ongoing process vs 18% of the EU sample.

Question 37

Are you willing to participate in further LEADER work with the ENRD (e.g. a focus group, practitioner-working group, other forms)?

- Yes – 100%
- No – 0%

Total Number of Responses 6