LEADER LAG Survey 2017

Working Paper

Findings at Member State level

Member State: Luxembourg

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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

- Luxembourg (LU)
- 5 LAGs responded, representing 0.7% of total LAG responses
- 100% of LU LAGs responded to the survey

Question 2

Please select your Rural Development Programme (RDP)

- LU has one national programme.

Total Number of Responses 5

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 5
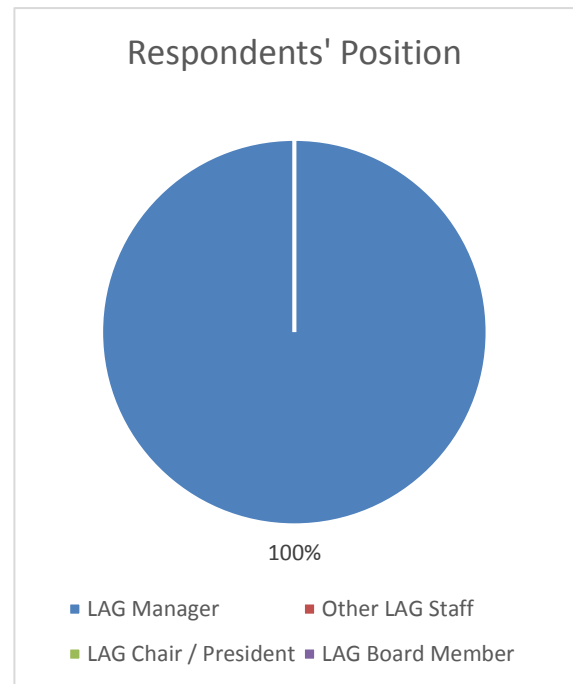
Question 7

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)
- 2007-2013 Programming Period
- LEADER+
- LEADER II
- LEADER I

Total Number of Responses 5

- A higher proportion of LU LAGs than the EU average were formed during LEADER+ (40% vs 19%). There were no new LU LAGs, whereas across the EU 22% of LAGs were new.

First Period LAG became Operational
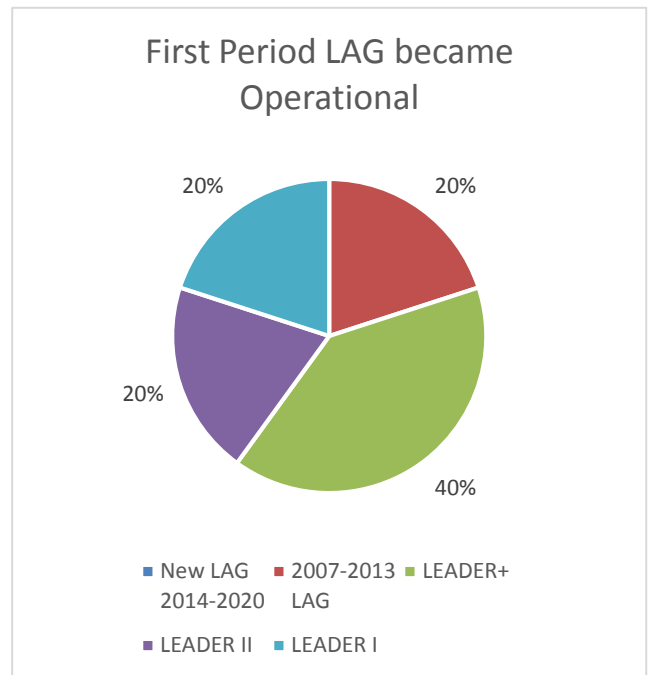
Question 8

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 5

Time LAGs were Formally Selected in 2014-2020 Programme Period

Category	% of LAGs
2014	
First half of 2015	20%
Second half of 2015	
First half of 2016	
Second half of 2016	80%
First half of 2017	
Second half of 2017	
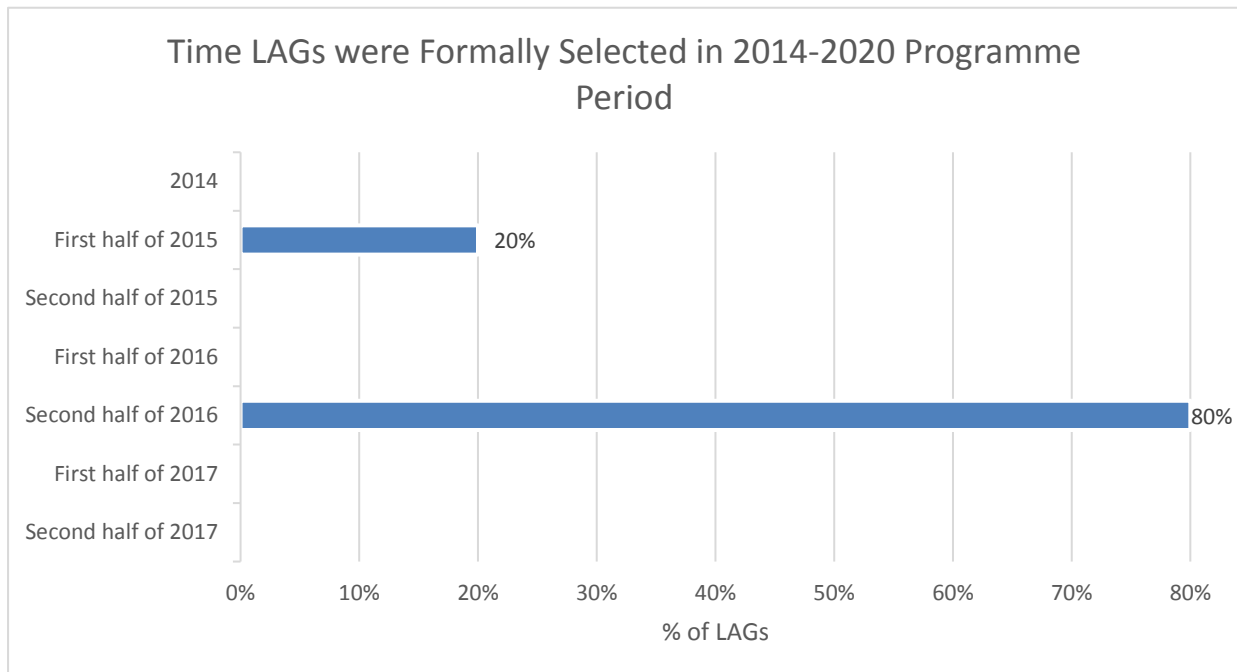
- All LU LAGs were selected by the end of the second half of 2016, as opposed to the EU average of 90% however only 20 % of LU LAGs had been selected by mid 2016 as opposed to 73% of the wider sample.

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 5

Timing of LAGs Launch of First Call for Projects

Category	Percentage
First half of 2015	20%
Second half of 2015	20%
First half of 2016	40%
Second half of 2016	
First half of 2017	20%
Second half of 2017	
2018	
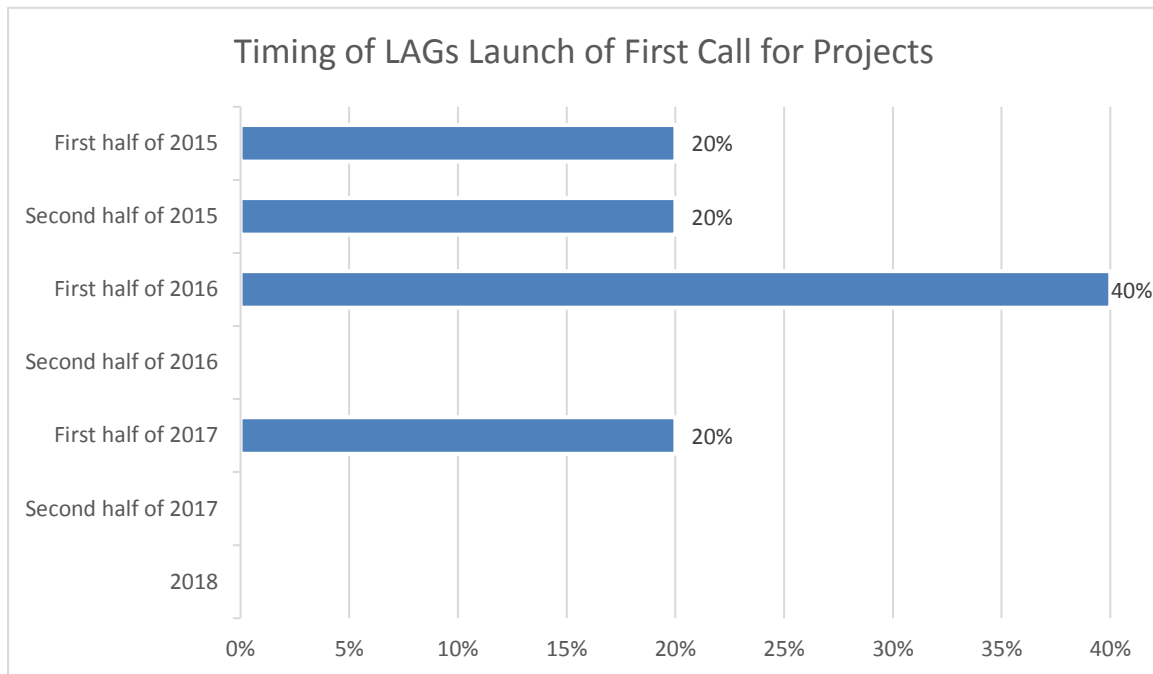
- By the end of the first half of 2016 80% of LU LAGs had launched a call compared to 51% of EU LAGs. A proportion of this appears to be in advance of the final selection of some LAGs.

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 5

LAG Use of ESI Funds in addition to EAFRD

100%

Legend:
- EMFF
- ESF
- ERDF
- only EAFRD
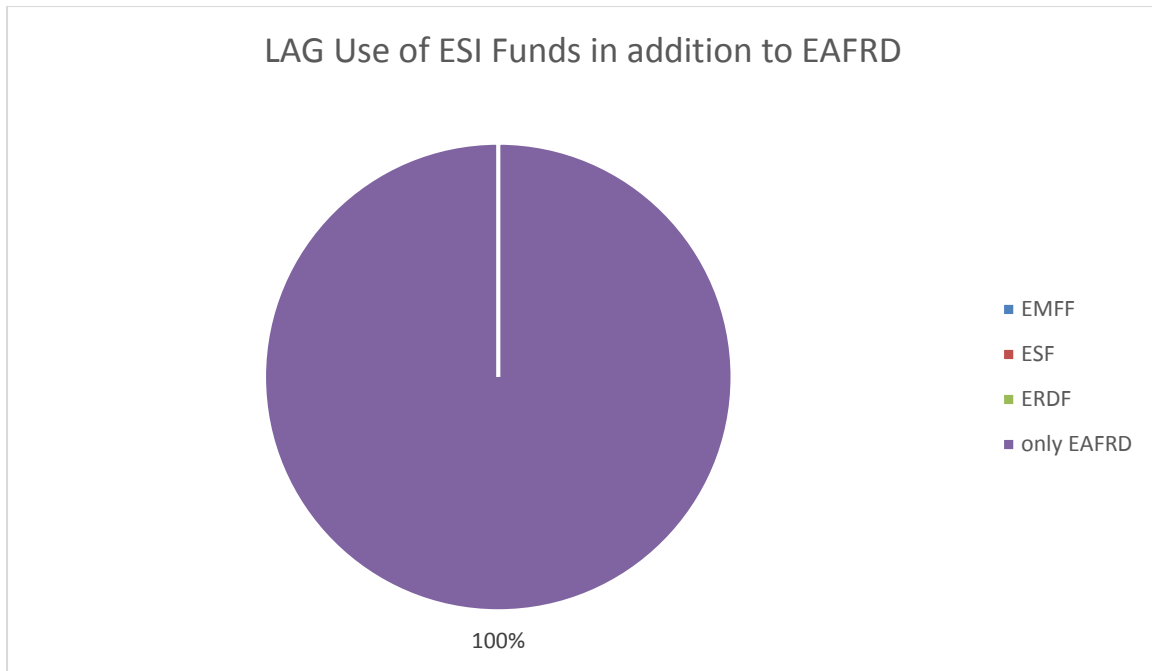
- All LU LAGs used EAFRD only compared to 67% of LAGs responding across the EU.

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 5

Range of Budgets from Responding LAGs

20%

80%

- >€10,000,000
- €5,000,001 - 10,000,000
- €4,000,001 - 5,000,000
- €3,000,001 - 4,000,000
- €2,000,001 - 3,000,000
- €1,500,001 - 2,000,000
- €1,000,001 - 1,500,000
- €500,001 - 1,000,000
- <€500,000
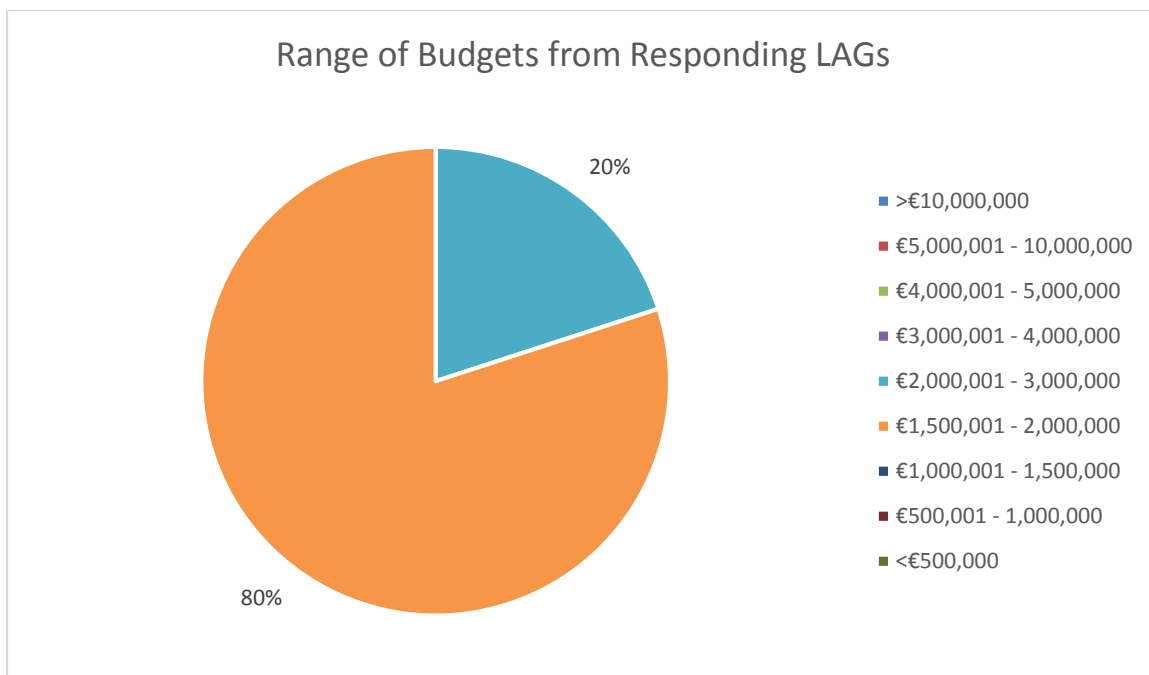
- A much higher proportion of LU LAGs than the EU-wide average have a budget between €1,500,001 and €2,000,000 (80% vs 12%).

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 5

- All LU LAG respondents said they spend 21-25% of their budget on running costs and animation, whereas across the EU only 31% of LAGs do so.

% of LAG Budget Spent on Animation & Running Costs

100%

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

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).
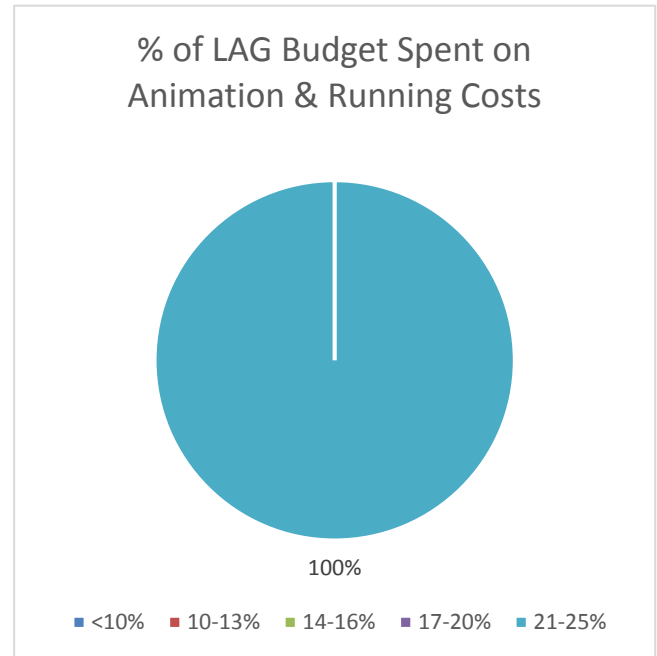- Bottom-up approach with decision-making power for local action groups concerning the elaboration and implementation of local development strategies.
- The 49% limitation on voting rights of any single interest group.
- The 50% requirement for non-public sector votes in project selection.
- Multi-sectoral 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 5

Relative Importance of LEADER Principles

Principle	Essential	Important	Medium importance
Bottom-up approach	100%		
Local public private partnerships	100%		
Area based LDSs	80%	20%	
Networking	100%		
Multi-sectoral	80%	20%	
Innovative approaches	80%	20%	
50% requirement in project selection	80%		20%
Cooperation projects	80%		20%
49% limitation on voting rights	80%		20%

Legend: ■ Essential ■ Important ■ Medium importance ■ Low importance ■ Not at all
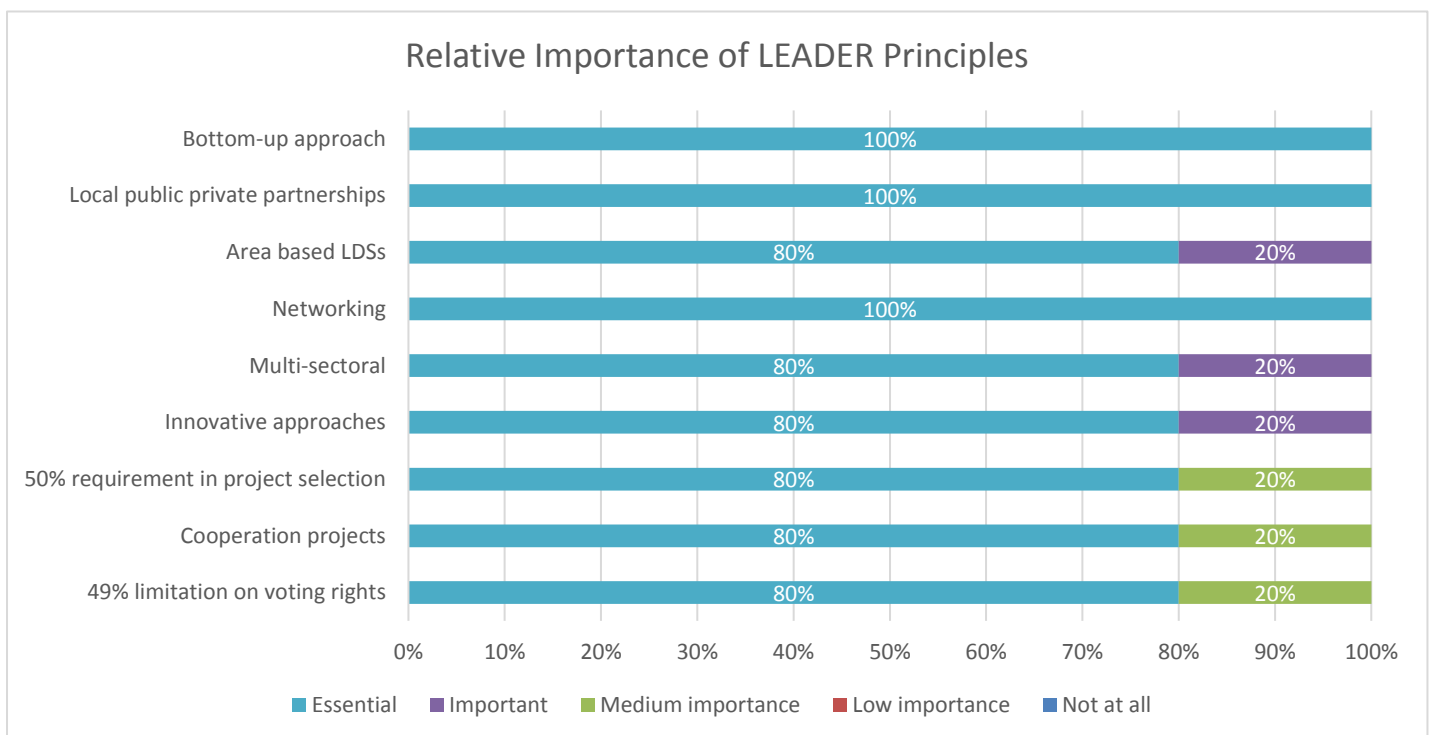
- The importance placed on LEADER principles by LU LAGs was generally higher than across the EU-wide sample, with at least 80% of respondents stating that each principle considered was essential.

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Question 14

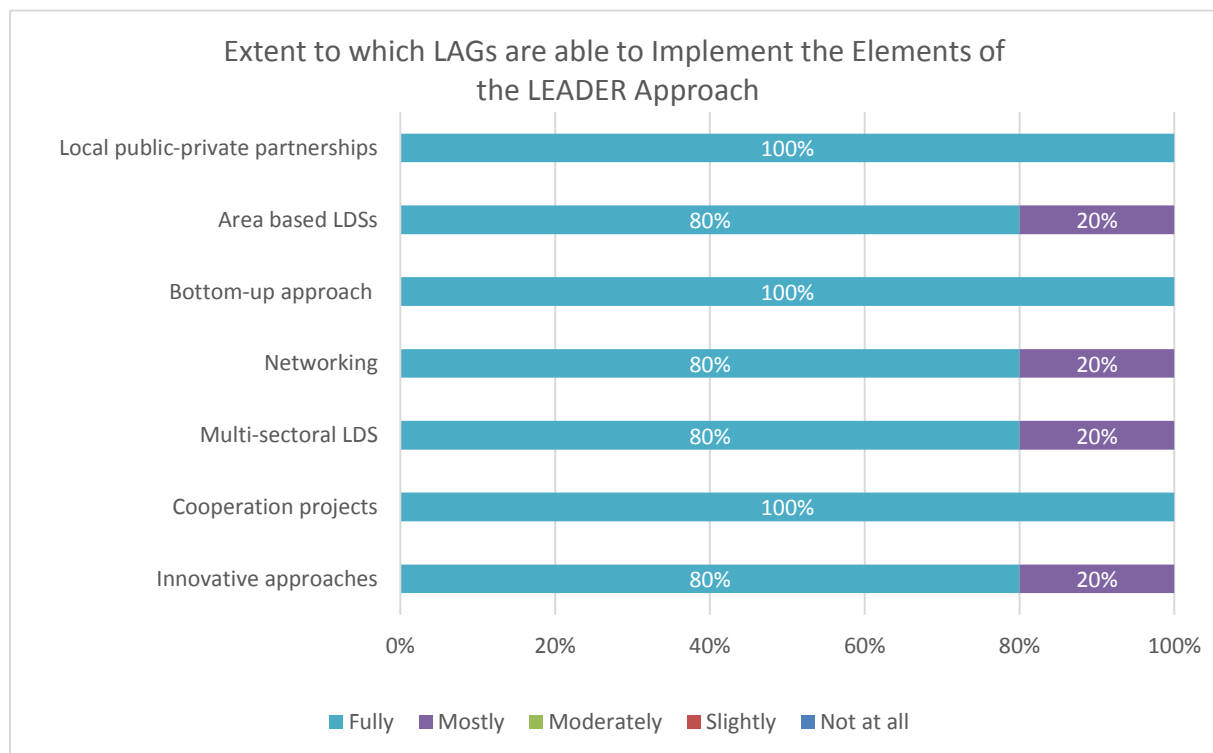*To what extent is your LAG able to implement the following elements of the LEADER approach? (please rate each option from 1-5, where 1= not at all, 5 = fully)*

- 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 5

Extent to which LAGs are able to Implement the Elements of the LEADER Approach

Element	Fully	Mostly
Local public-private partnerships	100%	
Area based LDSs	80%	20%
Bottom-up approach	100%	
Networking	80%	20%
Multi-sectoral LDS	80%	20%
Cooperation projects	100%	
Innovative approaches	80%	20%

Legend: ■ Fully ■ Mostly ■ Moderately ■ Slightly ■ Not at all

- LU LAGs reported that they are able to implement all elements of the LEADER approach to a greater extent than the EU-wide average. Indeed, at least 80% of LU LAGs said they were able to implement each element of the LEADER approach fully, whereas across the EU innovative approaches, cooperation projects and multisectoral LDS were said to be implemented fully by just 19%, 27% and 29% respectively.
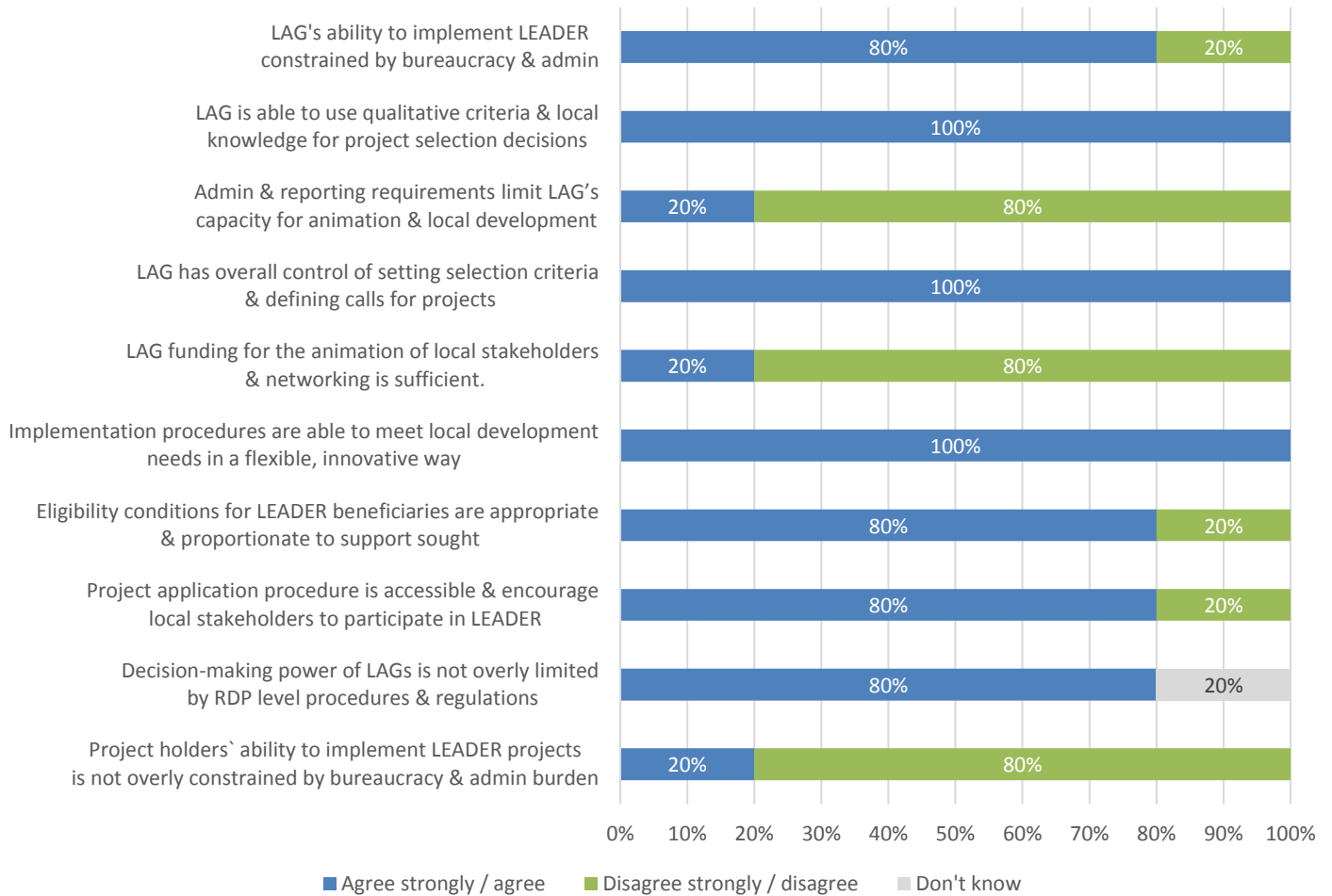
Question 15

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 5

Aspects of LEADER Implementation as seen by Local Action Groups

Statement	Agree strongly / agree	Disagree strongly / disagree	Don't know
LAG's ability to implement LEADER constrained by bureaucracy & admin	80%	20%	
LAG is able to use qualitative criteria & local knowledge for project selection decisions	100%		
Admin & reporting requirements limit LAG's capacity for animation & local development	20%	80%	
LAG has overall control of setting selection criteria & defining calls for projects	100%		
LAG funding for the animation of local stakeholders & networking is sufficient.	20%	80%	
Implementation procedures are able to meet local development needs in a flexible, innovative way	100%		
Eligibility conditions for LEADER beneficiaries are appropriate & proportionate to support sought	80%	20%	
Project application procedure is accessible & encourage local stakeholders to participate in LEADER	80%	20%	
Decision-making power of LAGs is not overly limited by RDP level procedures & regulations	80%		20%
Project holders` ability to implement LEADER projects is not overly constrained by bureaucracy & admin burden	20%	80%	

Legend: ■ Agree strongly / agree ■ Disagree strongly / disagree ■ Don't know

- Compared to the EU average more LU LAGs were positive in their assessment for most aspects of LEADER implementation. All LU LAGs agreed that there was an accessible project application procedure that encourages local participation in LEADER whereas across the EU sample only 33% of LAGs agreed with the statement.

- Implementation procedures ability to meet local needs in a flexible, innovative way, were universally agreed to be present by LU LAGs compared to 51% agreement across the EU.

- Only 20% of LU LAGs agreed that admin and reporting requirements limit LAG's capacity for animation and local development, compared to 69% agreement across the EU.
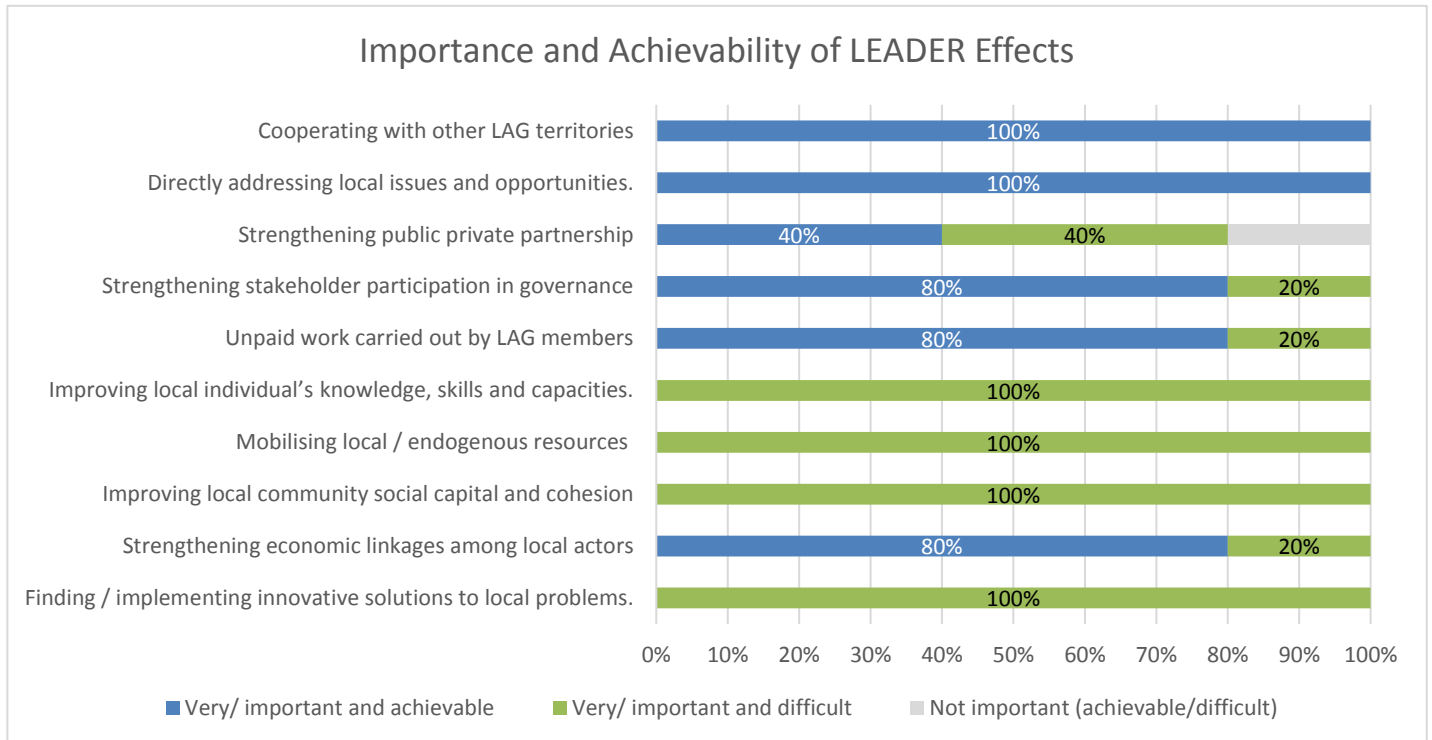
Question 16

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 5

Importance and Achievability of LEADER Effects

Effect	Very/ important and achievable	Very/ important and difficult	Not important (achievable/difficult)
Cooperating with other LAG territories	100%		
Directly addressing local issues and opportunities.	100%		
Strengthening public private partnership	40%	40%	
Strengthening stakeholder participation in governance	80%	20%	
Unpaid work carried out by LAG members	80%	20%	
Improving local individual's knowledge, skills and capacities.		100%	
Mobilising local / endogenous resources		100%	
Improving local community social capital and cohesion		100%	
Strengthening economic linkages among local actors	80%	20%	
Finding / implementing innovative solutions to local problems.		100%	

■ Very/ important and achievable   ■ Very/ important and difficult   ■ Not important (achievable/difficult)

- LU LAGs judged several LEADER effects to be important and achievable more frequently than the EU average; cooperation with other LAG territories (100% compared to 67%), directly addressing local issues and opportunities (100% vs 63%), strengthening stakeholder participation in governance (80% vs 56%), unpaid work carried out by LAG members (80% vs 55%) and strengthening economic linkages among local actors (80% vs 37%).

- However, improving individual's knowledge, skills and capacities (100% vs 42% across the EU), mobilising local endogenous resources (100% vs 56%), improving local community social capital and cohesion (100% vs 56%) and finding / implementing innovative solutions to local problems (100% vs 64%), were more frequently regarded as important but difficult amongst the LU LAGs compared to the EU average.
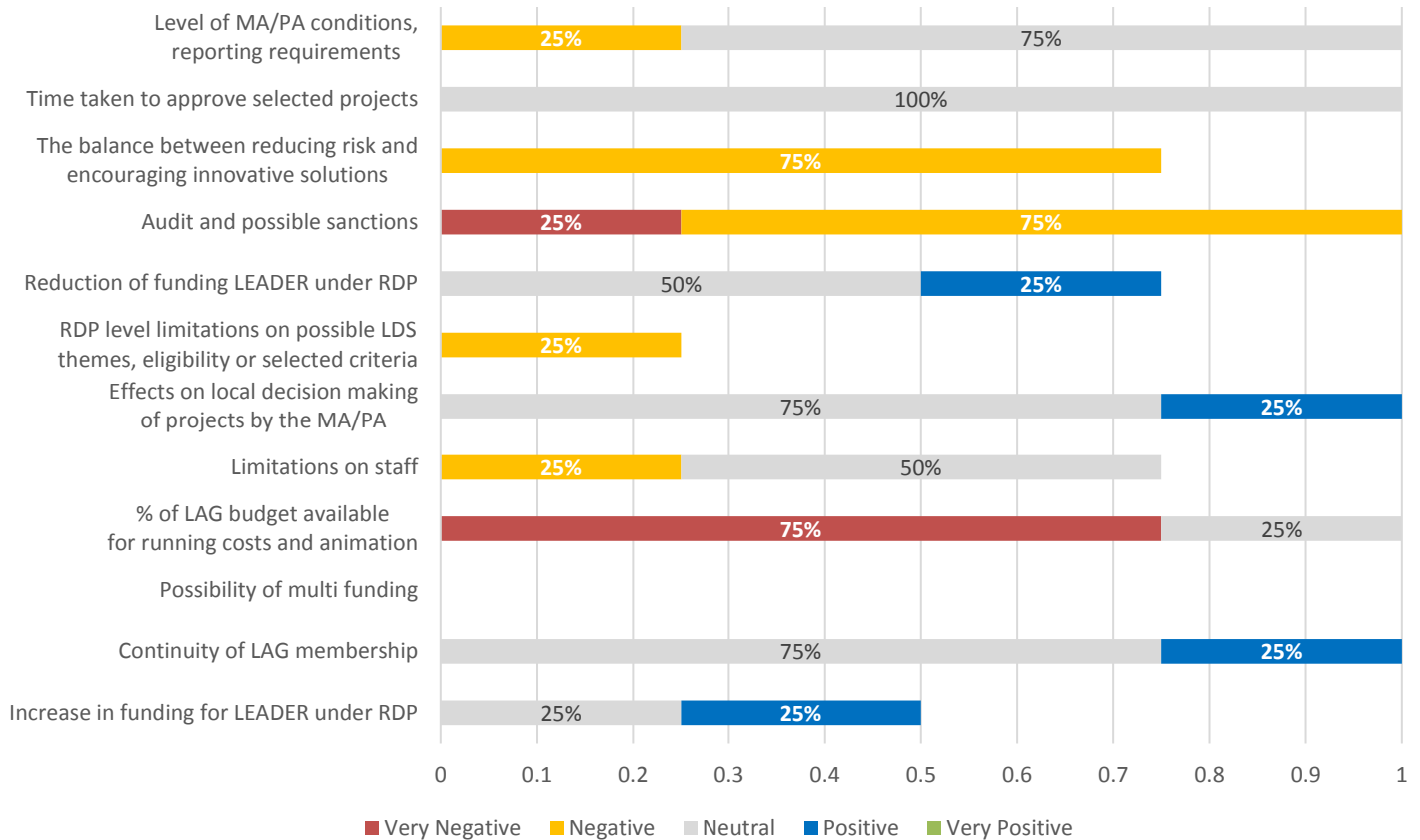
LEADER Operation

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 4

Level of Effects on LEADER Implementation

	Very Negative	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Very Positive
Level of MA/PA conditions, reporting requirements		25%	75%		
Time taken to approve selected projects			100%		
The balance between reducing risk and encouraging innovative solutions		75%			
Audit and possible sanctions	25%	75%			
Reduction of funding LEADER under RDP			50%	25%	
RDP level limitations on possible LDS themes, eligibility or selected criteria		25%			
Effects on local decision making of projects by the MA/PA			75%	25%	
Limitations on staff		25%	50%		
% of LAG budget available for running costs and animation	75%		25%		
Possibility of multi funding					
Continuity of LAG membership			75%	25%	
Increase in funding for LEADER under RDP			25%	25%	

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

- LAGs in Luxembourg felt that audit and possible sanctions would have a more negative effect on LEADER implementation than the EU sample (100% negative or very negative vs 56%), and the percentage of LAG budget available for running costs and animation was also seen more negatively than across the EU sample as a whole (75% vs 30%).

- The time taken to approve selected projects and the effect on local decision making of projects by the MA / PA were both seen less negatively in Luxembourg than across the EU sample, with all LU respondents stating the effect as neutral or positive.

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 4

LEADER Operation - Changes since 2007-2013

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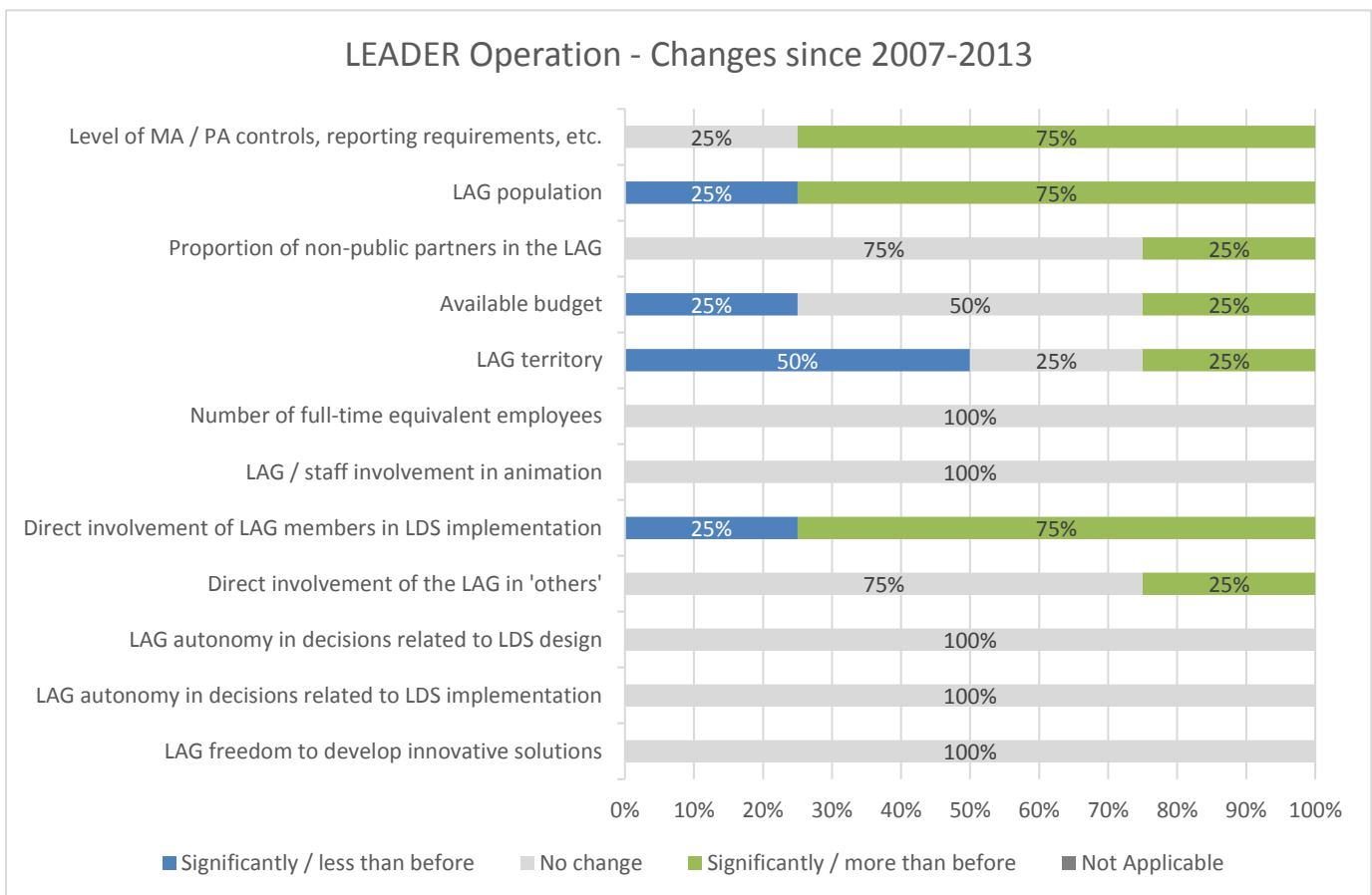
- Luxembourg LAGs reported 'no change' top a greater extent than the wider sample.

- LAG population is reported to have increased to a greater extent in Luxembourg than across the EU, with 75% of LU LAGs reporting an increase compared to 34% across the EU while LAG territory is said to have decreased to a greater extent in Luxembourg compared to the EU as a whole (50% vs 10%).

- Direct involvement of LAG members in LDS implementation is reported to have increased to a much greater extent in Luxembourg than across the EU (75% vs 26%),

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 4
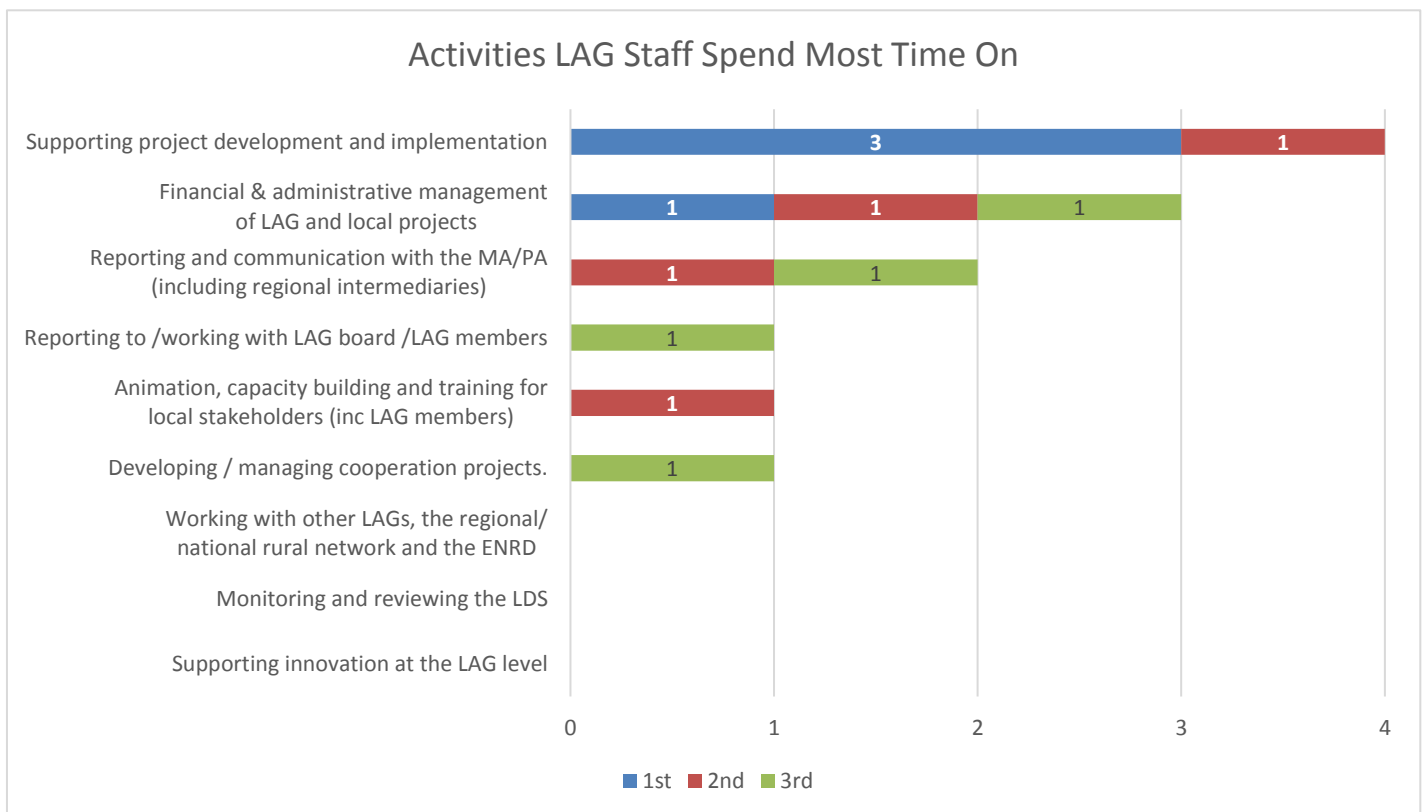
- The activities on which LU LAG staff spent most time were similar to the European average.

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 4

Activities LAGs would like Staff to Devote More Time To
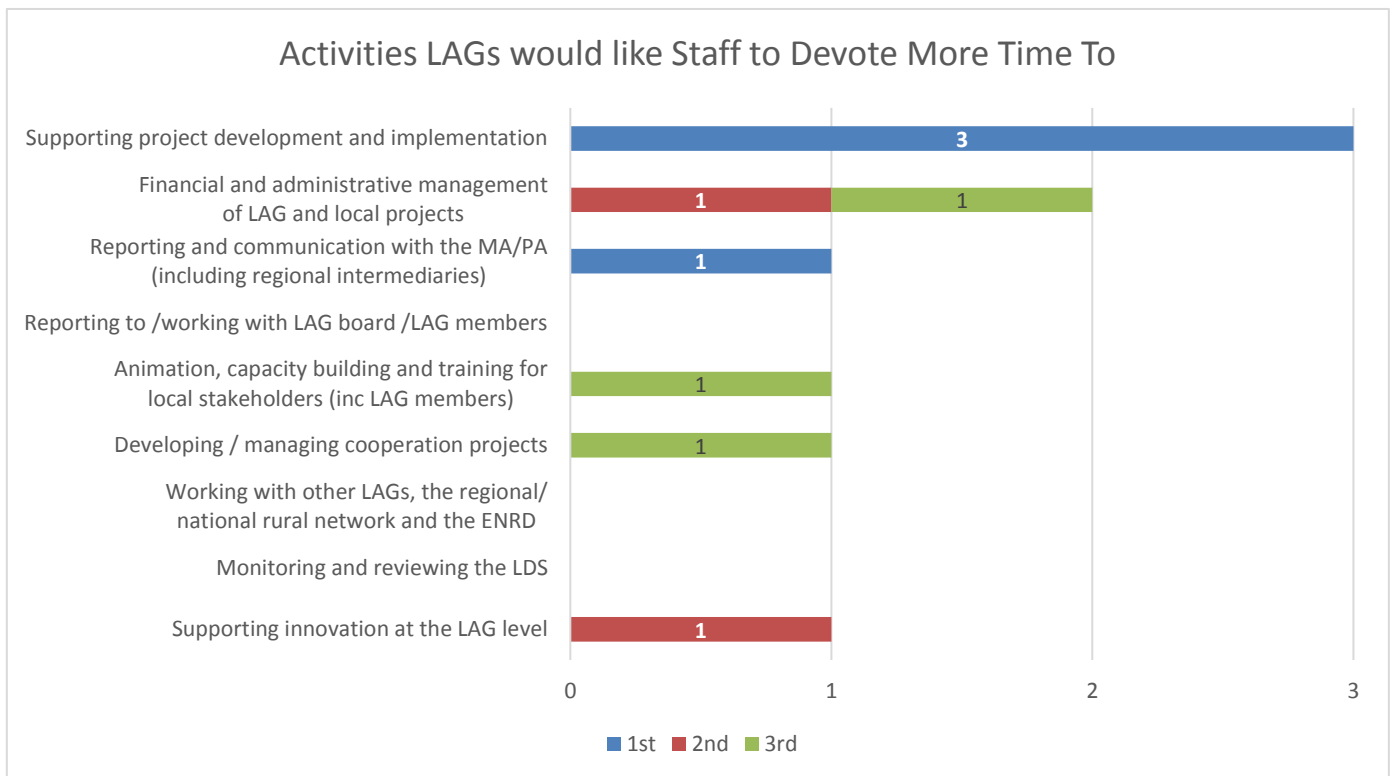
- LU LAG priorities are similar to the EU-wide sample.

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 4
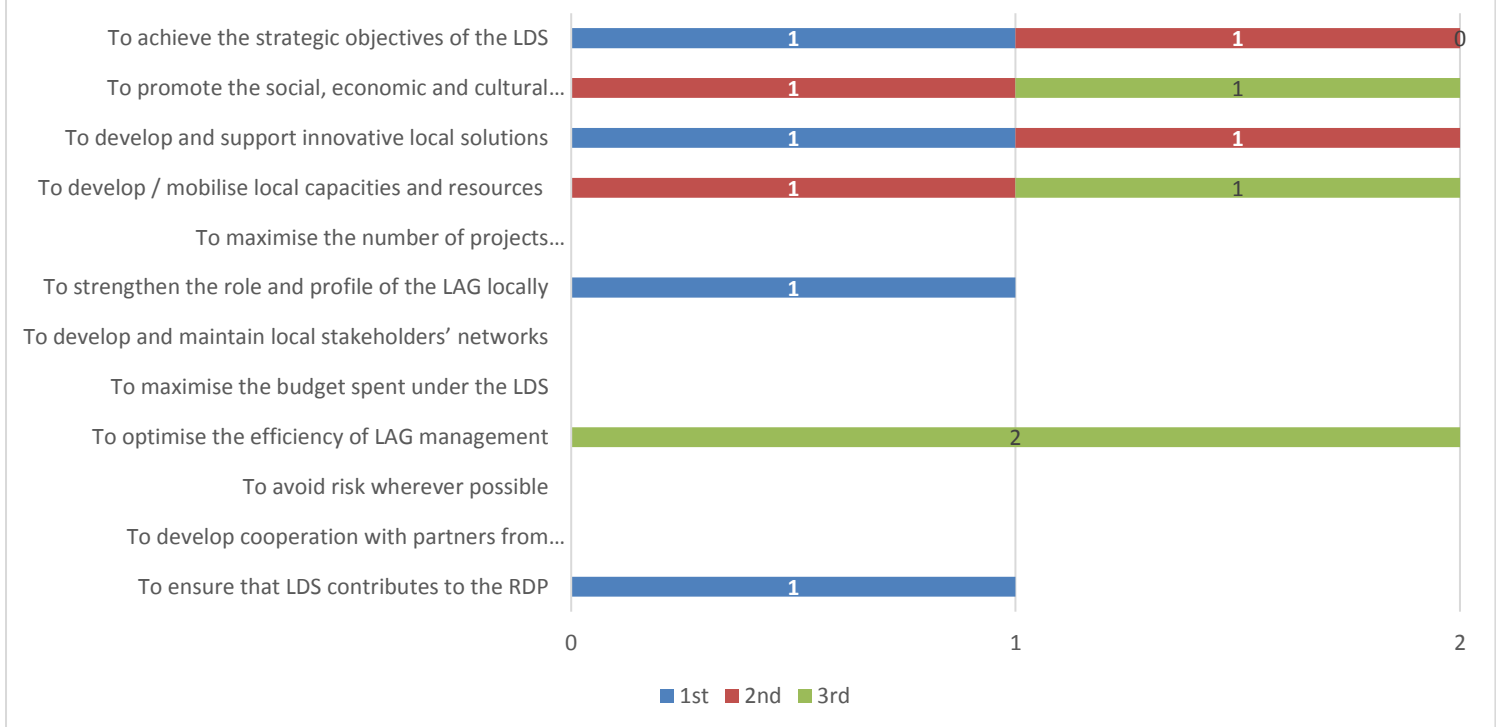
- The four most frequently ranked LAG operational priorities across the EU were all mentioned by two of the four LU respondents. Optimising the efficiency of LAG management was also mentioned twice but was only the ninth most frequently ranked priority across the EU.
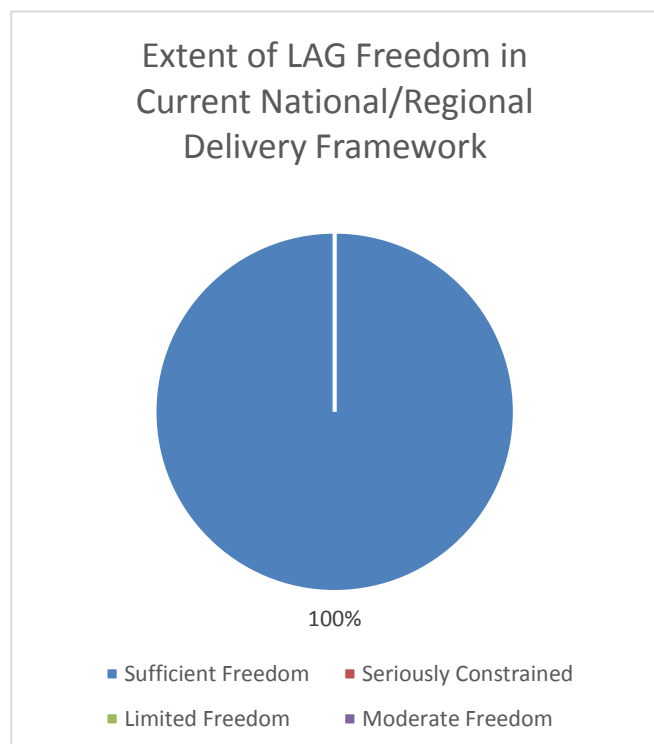
Question 22

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 4

- All LU LAG respondents felt that their freedom in current national / regional delivery frameworks was sufficient, whereas only 17% of LAG respondents across the EU felt this to be the case.

Extent of LAG Freedom in Current National/Regional Delivery Framework

100%

- Sufficient Freedom
- Seriously Constrained
- Limited Freedom
- Moderate Freedom

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 4

Ways LAGs Communicate with the Wider Public

|	% of LAGs
LAG website.	100%
Through the LAG office.	75%
Through LAG staff / members working in the local…	50%
Press releases, local press, radio etc.	75%
Specific meetings and forums for LDS…	25%
Social media, other online methods.	25%
Through partners and their activities.	75%
LAG participation at local events and fairs.	25%
Newsletter, other printed media.	50%
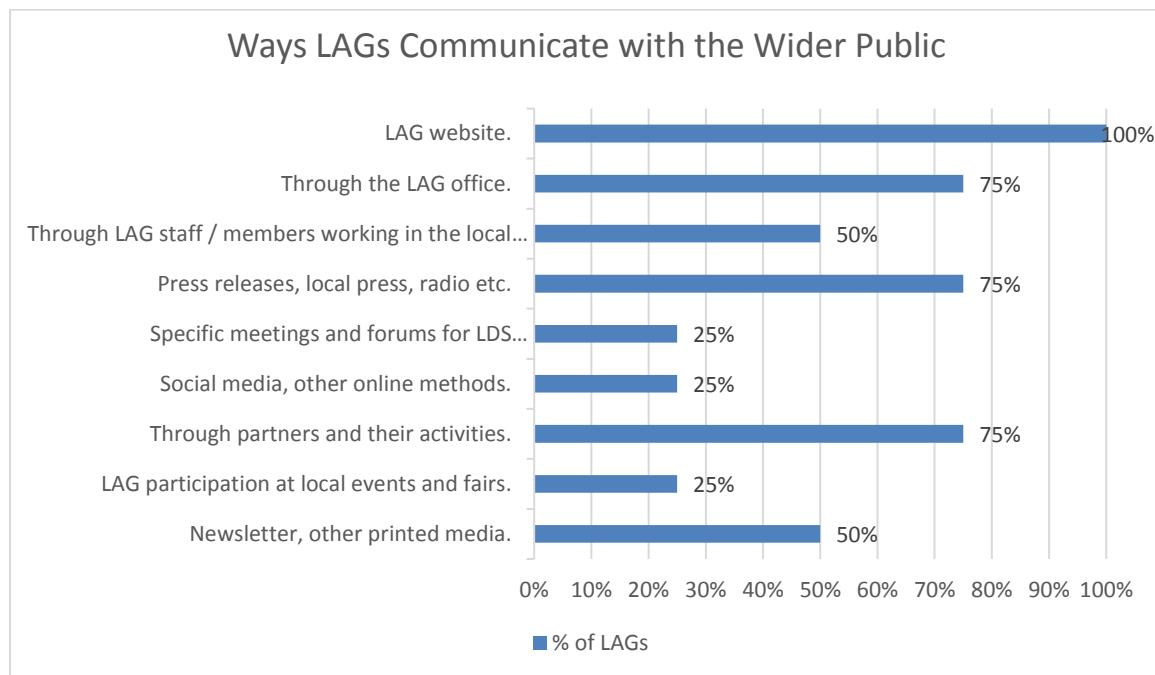
- The ways in which LU LAGs communicate with the wider public is broadly similar to the methods used across the EU.

- Compared to the EU average LU LAGs communicate less frequently through specific meetings and forums for LDS implementation (62% vs 25%) and social media and other online methods (61% vs 25%). LAG participation at local events and fairs is also lower in LU compared to the EU average (25% vs 52%).

- Proportionately greater use is made of partners and their activities than in the wider sample (75% vs 54%).

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 4

Ways LAGs Receive Information from MA/PA

Category	Value
Email	100%
Regular meetings and forums organised for LAGs	75%
Managing Authority website	
Through National Rural Network	100%
Through intermediary e.g. regional office or network	
Printed publications and guidance	
Social media	

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
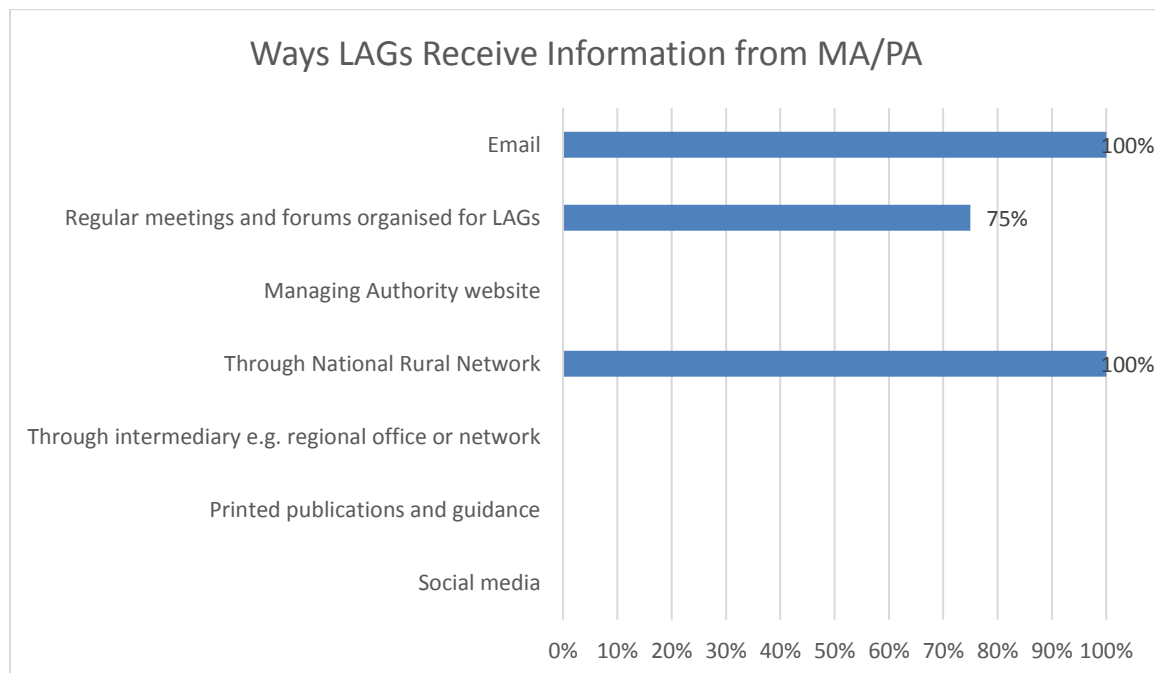
- The NRN is reported to have a much more prominent role in information dissemination between the MA/PA and LAGs compared to the EU-wide average (100% vs 31%). The MA website, intermediaries, printed publications and social media were not used at all by the MA or PA in Luxembourg to communicate with LAGs.

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 4
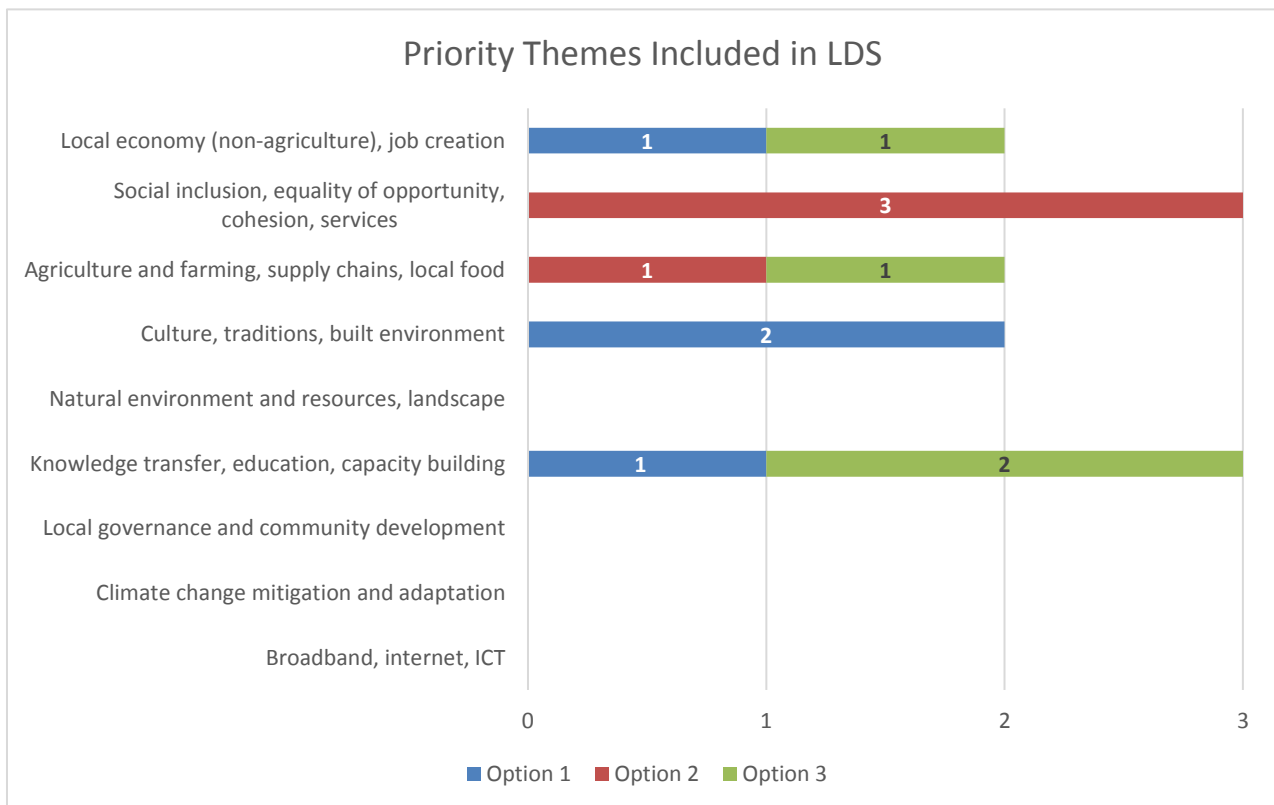
- Compared with the EU wide sample, knowledge transfer, education, capacity building was more frequently identified as a priority theme included in the LDS in Luxembourg, with three out of four respondents indicating it was a priority theme.
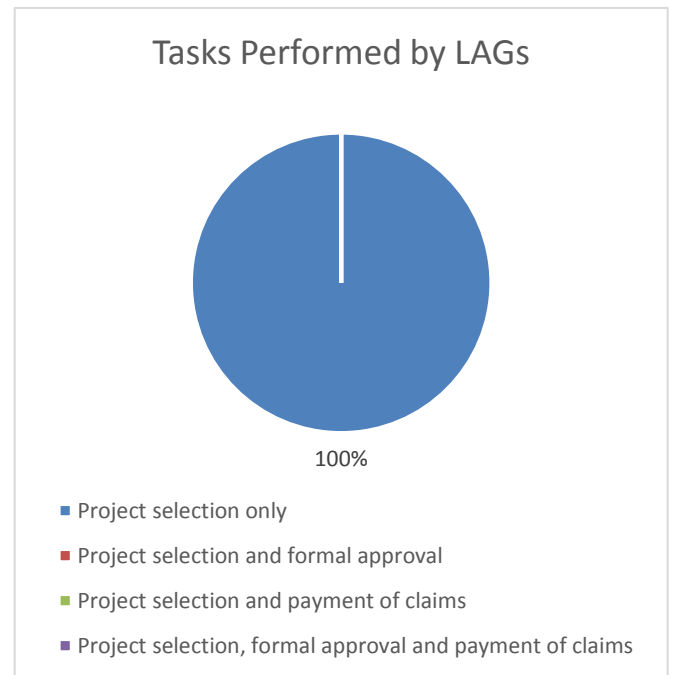
Question 26

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 4

- All four LU LAGs said that they performed the project selection task only. This was the case in 48% of cases across the EU.

Tasks Performed by LAGs

100%

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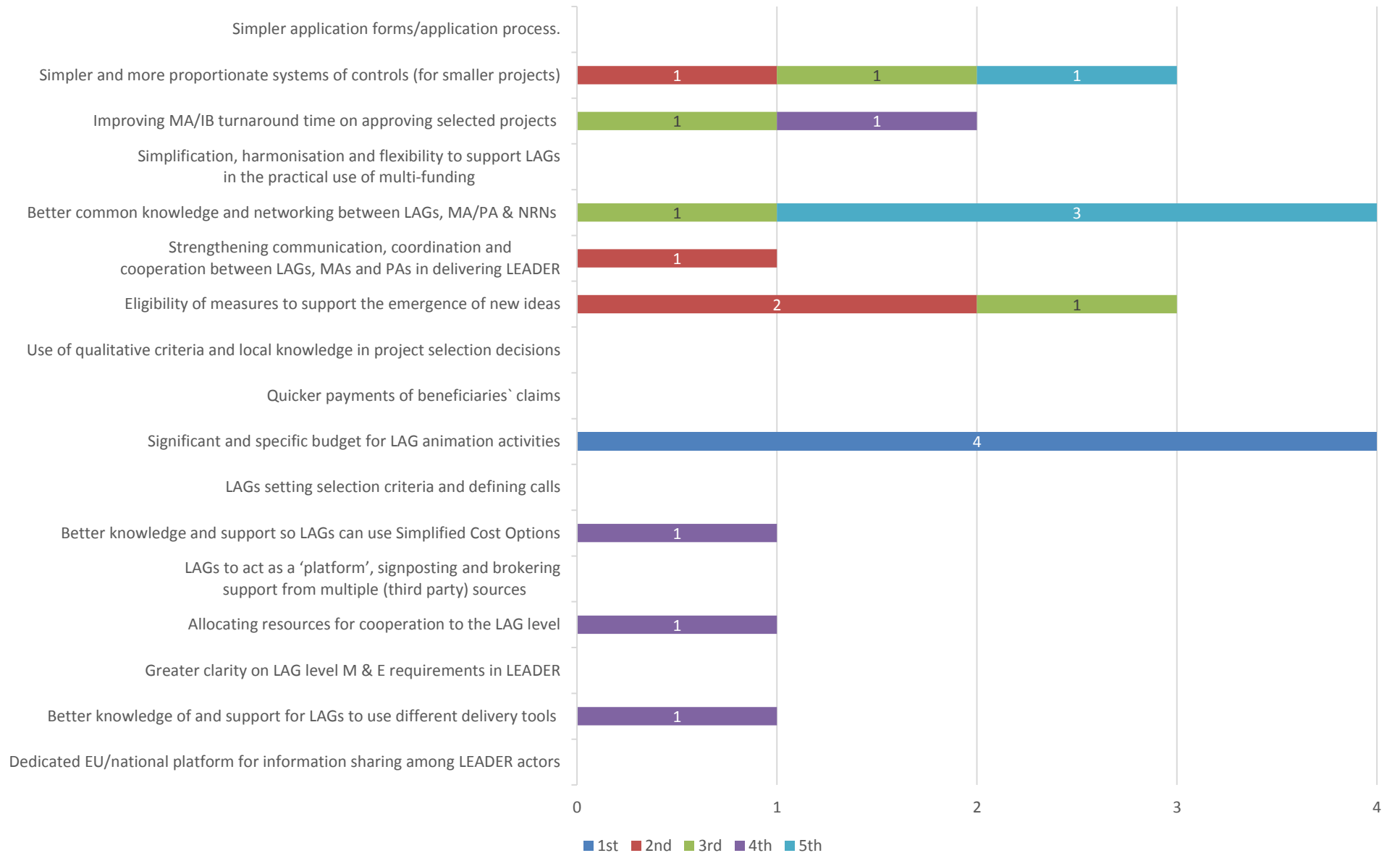
LEADER Improvements

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 4

- All LU respondents indicated that the most important change to improve implementation now would be a significant and specific budget for LAG animation activities. Across the EU this change was only 10th most frequently ranked by respondents.

- Two of the top four EU priorities for change were not selected by LU LAGs, simpler application forms / application process and simplification, harmonisation and flexibility to support LAGs in practical use of multi-funding.

Most Important Changes to Improve Implementation Now

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Simpler application forms/application process.					
Simpler and more proportionate systems of controls (for smaller projects)		1	1		1
Improving MA/IB turnaround time on approving selected projects			1	1	
Simplification, harmonisation and flexibility to support LAGs in the practical use of multi-funding					
Better common knowledge and networking between LAGs, MA/PA & NRNs			1		3
Strengthening communication, coordination and cooperation between LAGs, MAs and PAs in delivering LEADER		1			
Eligibility of measures to support the emergence of new ideas		2	1		
Use of qualitative criteria and local knowledge in project selection decisions					
Quicker payments of beneficiaries` claims					
Significant and specific budget for LAG animation activities	4				
LAGs setting selection criteria and defining calls					
Better knowledge and support so LAGs can use Simplified Cost Options				1	
LAGs to act as a 'platform', signposting and brokering support from multiple (third party) sources					
Allocating resources for cooperation to the LAG level				1	
Greater clarity on LAG level M & E requirements in LEADER					
Better knowledge of and support for LAGs to use different delivery tools				1	
Dedicated EU/national platform for information sharing among LEADER actors					

■ 1st ■ 2nd ■ 3rd ■ 4th ■ 5th

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 4
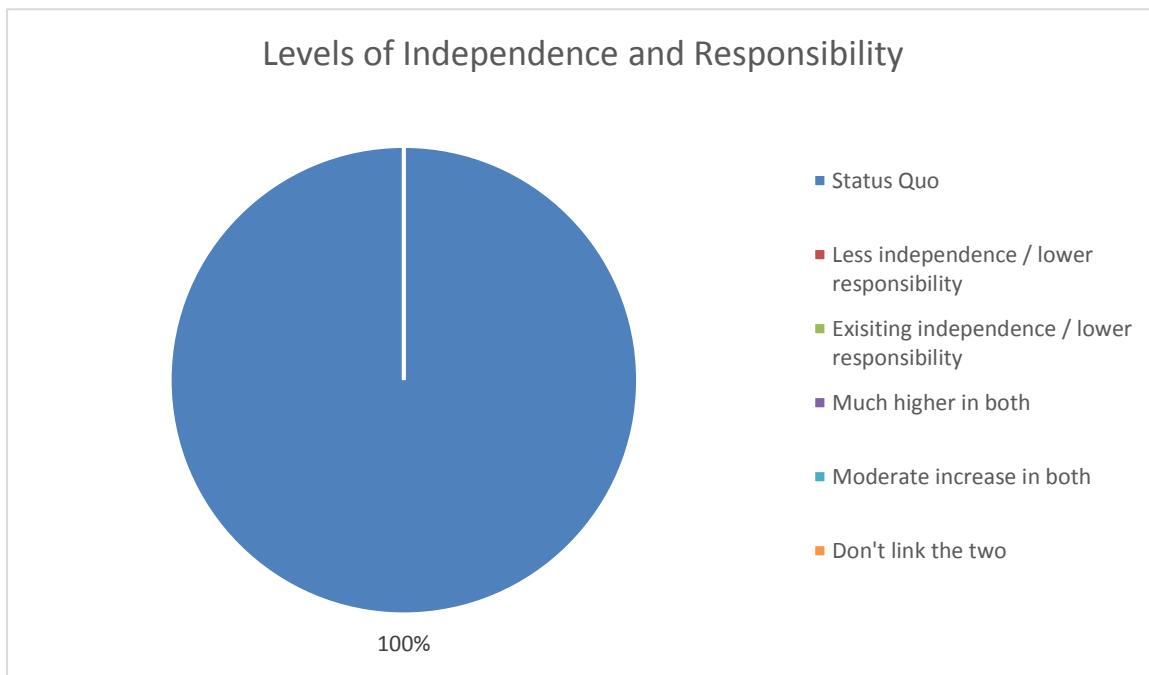
- All LU LAGs were in favour of maintaining the current levels of independence and responsibility, as opposed to only 20% being in favour of the status quo across the EU.
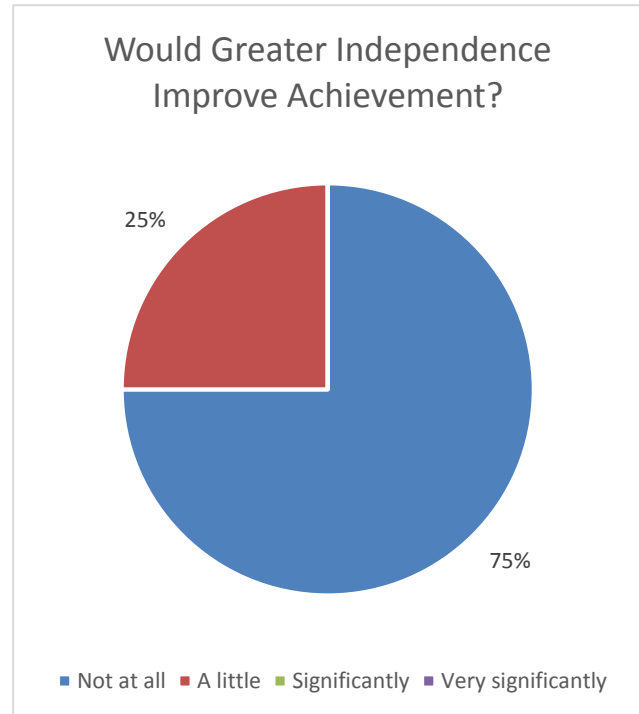
Question 29

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 4

- 75% of LU LAGs thought that greater independence would not improve achievement at all compared with the EU wide sample average of 12%. The remaining 25% thought the impact of greater independence would be slight, which is less than the EU-wide average of 34% who held this view.

Would Greater Independence Improve Achievement?

25%

75%

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

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 4
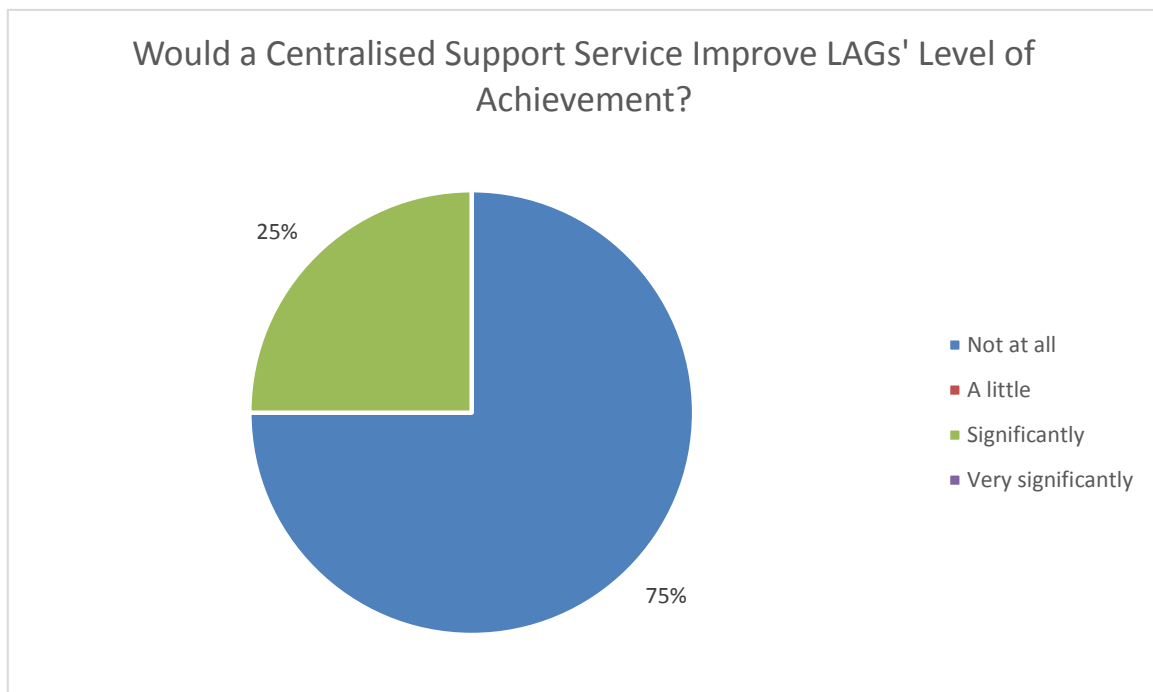
- Compared to the EU wide sample, a higher proportion of LU LAGs thought that a centralised support service would not improve LAGs' level of achievement at all (75% vs 36%).
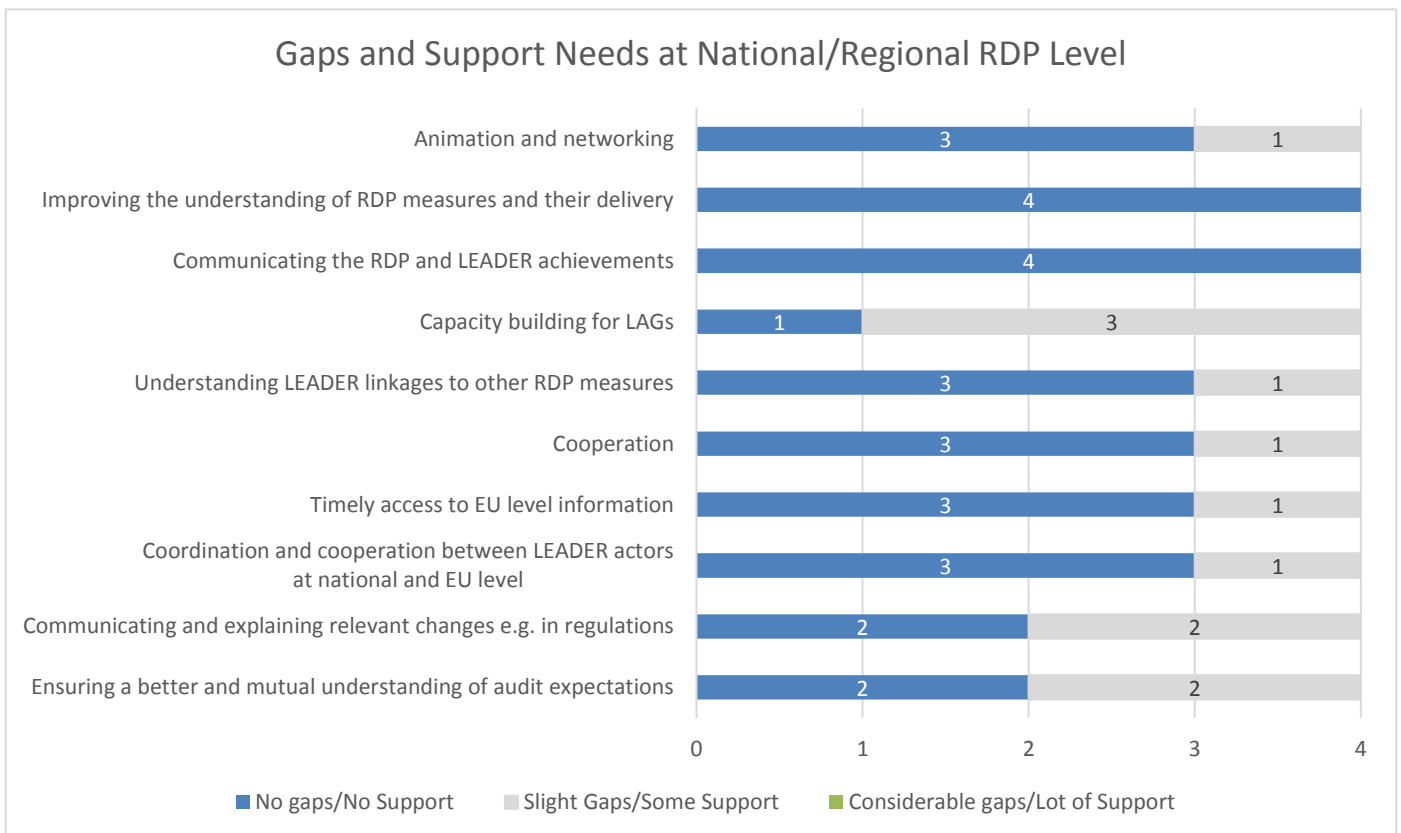
Question 31

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 4

- Across the board LU LAGs felt that there were fewer gaps in support needs at the RDP level compared to the EU-wide average. Capacity building for LAGs was the only area where the majority of LU respondents felt that there were slight gaps and support needs.
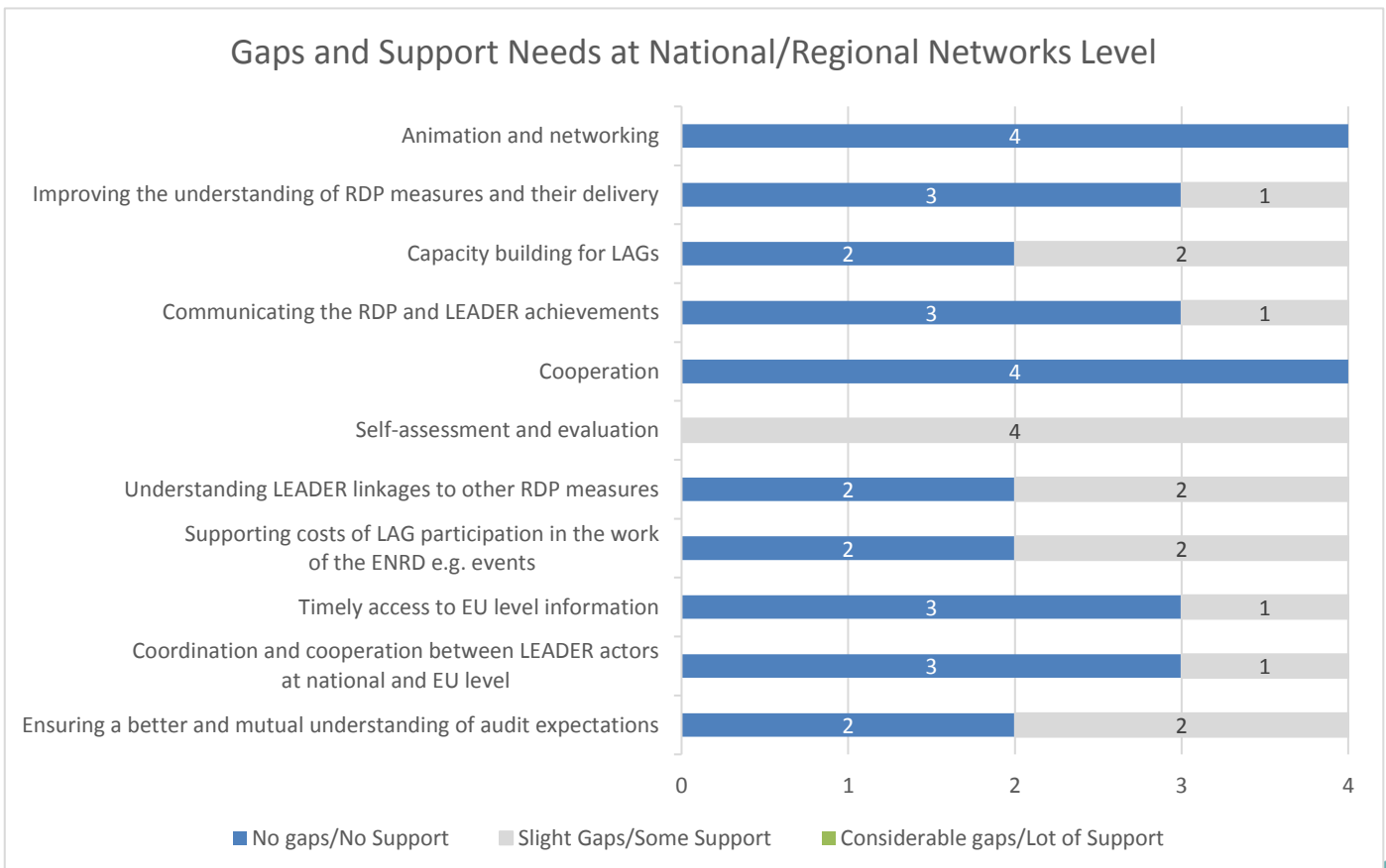
Question 32

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 4

Gaps and Support Needs at National/Regional Networks Level

Category	No gaps/No Support	Slight Gaps/Some Support
Animation and networking	4	
Improving the understanding of RDP measures and their delivery	3	1
Capacity building for LAGs	2	2
Communicating the RDP and LEADER achievements	3	1
Cooperation	4	
Self-assessment and evaluation		4
Understanding LEADER linkages to other RDP measures	2	2
Supporting costs of LAG participation in the work of the ENRD e.g. events	2	2
Timely access to EU level information	3	1
Coordination and cooperation between LEADER actors at national and EU level	3	1
Ensuring a better and mutual understanding of audit expectations	2	2

■ No gaps/No Support ■ Slight Gaps/Some Support ■ Considerable gaps/Lot of Support

- In general fewer gaps and support needs were identified amongst LU LAGs than across the EU-wide sample. Self-assessment and evaluation was the one area where all four LU respondents agreed there was a slight gap in and need for support provision; across the EU this was only the sixth most frequently mentioned area in need of support

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 4


Priority of Support Needs from ENRD
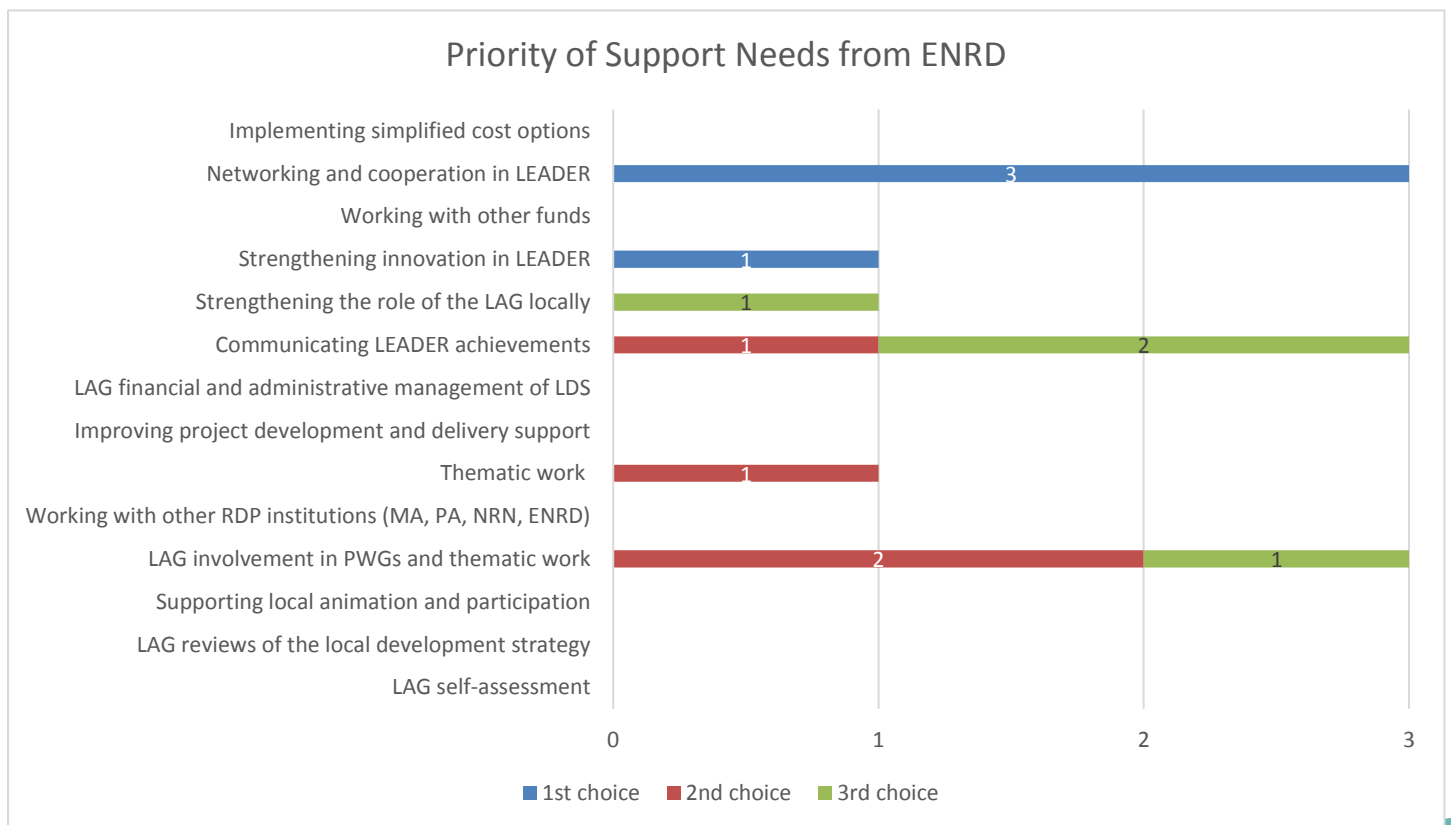
- Implementing simplified cost options and working with other funds, the first and third most commonly ranked priorities respectively across the EU, were not mentioned by any of the LU respondents. Compared to the EU-wide sample LAG involvement in PWGs and thematic work, and communicating LEADER achievements, were more frequently ranked as priorities for ENRD support in Luxembourg.

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 4

Help to Increase Involvement with ENRD

	1st	2nd	3rd
More available time	2	1	1
A higher LAG budget	1		
More flexible administrative rules relating to travel etc.		1	3
More information from the NRN on ENRD activities	1		
Access to support for costs of participation in events		2	
More LAG staff			
Less costly methods of participation			
More language versions of ENRD documents			
NRN support			
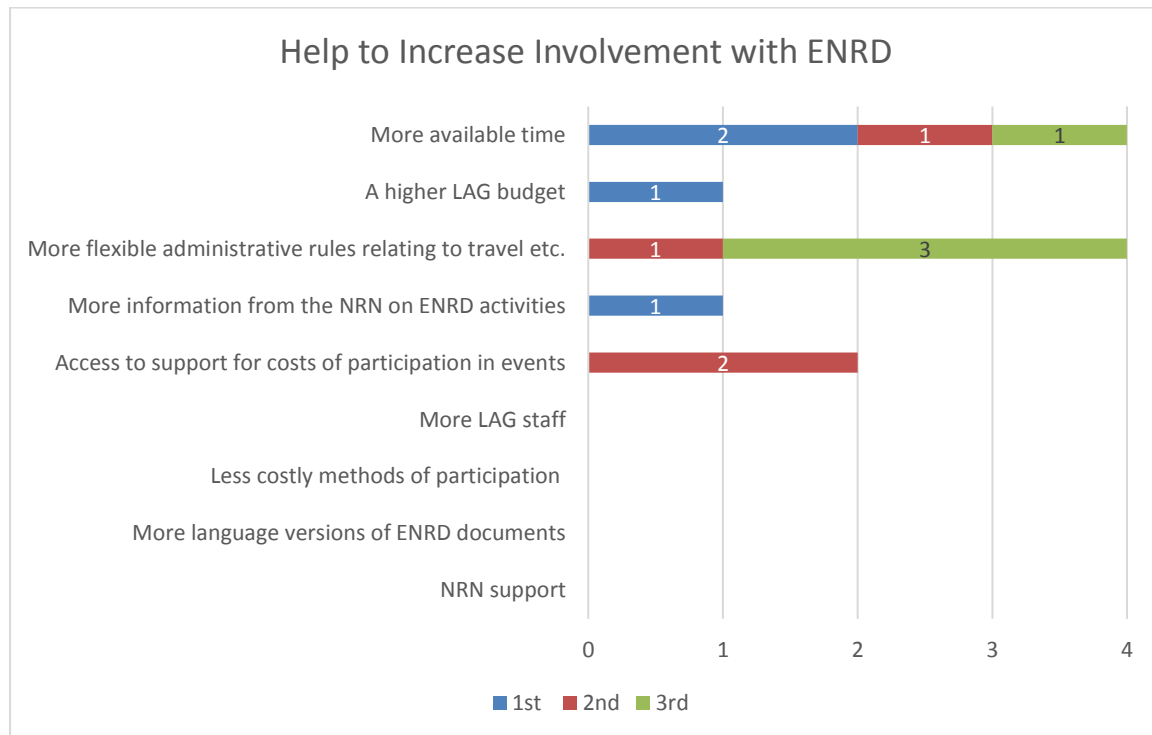
- The five most commonly ranked constraints to increased involvement with ENRD across the EU were all mentioned by the LU LAG respondents.

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 4

Importance of Self-assessment of LDS to Improve LAGs' Operation
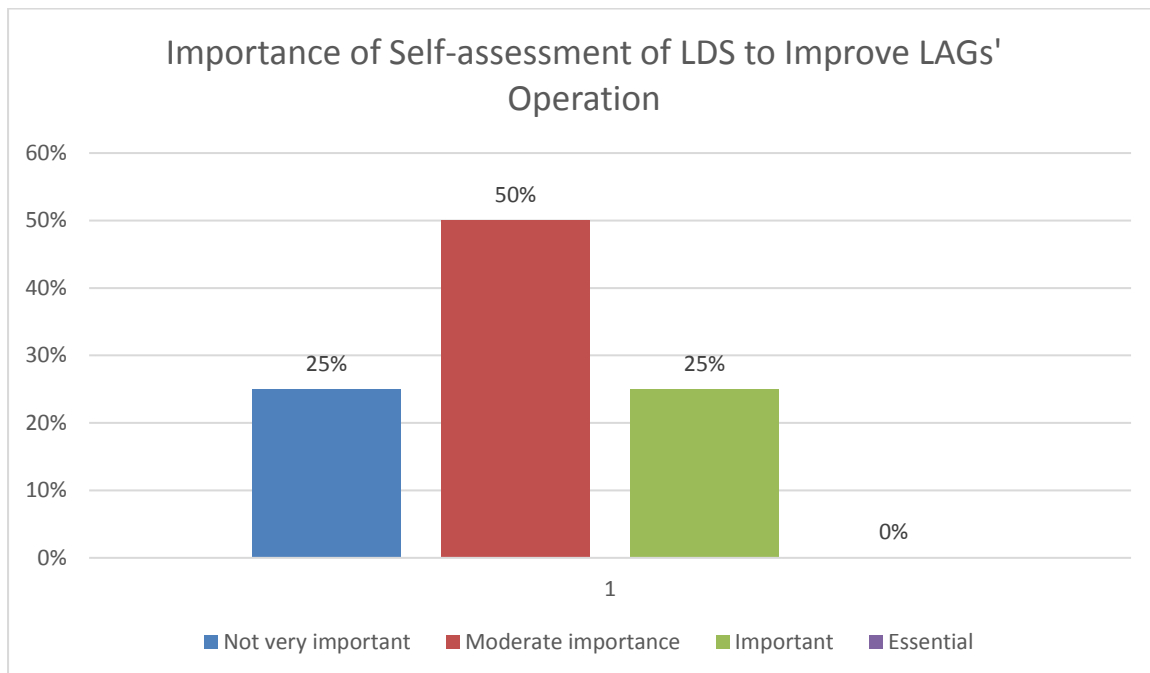
- Compared to the EU wide sample, LU respondents placed a lower importance on LDS self-assessment, with 75% of respondents stating that it was either not very important or moderately important, compared to 30% across the EU.

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 4
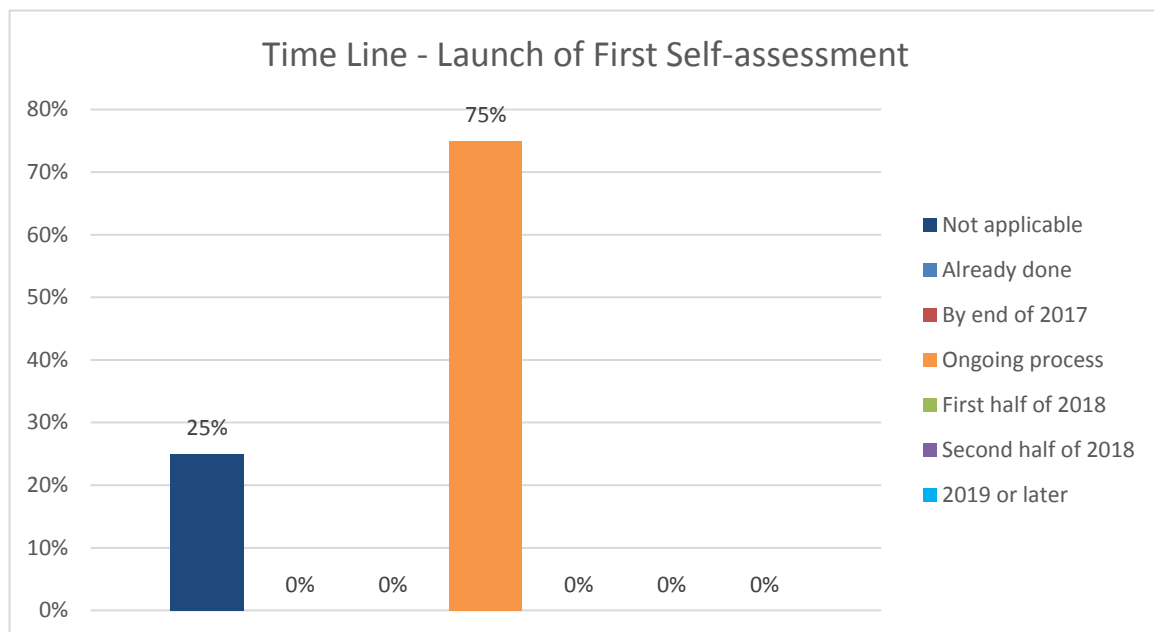
- 75% of LU respondents said that self-assessment was an ongoing process, much higher than the EU-wide figure of 18%.

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 4