



European Network for
Rural Development

LEADER LAG Survey 2017

Working Paper

Findings at Member State level

Member State: France

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
<i>Explanatory points</i>	<i>3</i>
Basic Implementation Data	4
<i>Question 1</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Question 2</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Question 4</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Question 7</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Question 8</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Question 9</i>	<i>8</i>
LAG Funding	9
<i>Question 10</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Question 11</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Question 12</i>	<i>11</i>
LEADER Principles	12
<i>Question 13</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Question 14</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Question 15</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Question 16</i>	<i>17</i>
LEADER Operation	19
<i>Question 17</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Question 18</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>Question 19</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>Question 20</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Question 21</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Question 22</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Question 23</i>	<i>28</i>



Question 24	29
Question 25	30
Question 26	31
LEADER Improvements	32
Question 27	32
Question 28:	34
Question 29	35
Question 30	36
Question 31	37
Question 32	39
Question 33	41
Question 34	43
Question 35	44
Question 36	45
Question 37	45

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

- France (FR)
- 86 LAGs responded, representing 12.1% of total LAG responses
- 26% of French LAGs responded to the survey

Total Number of Responses 86

Question 2

Please select your Rural Development Programme (RDP)

- Responses were received from 21 of 28 French regional RDPs.

Total Number of Responses 86

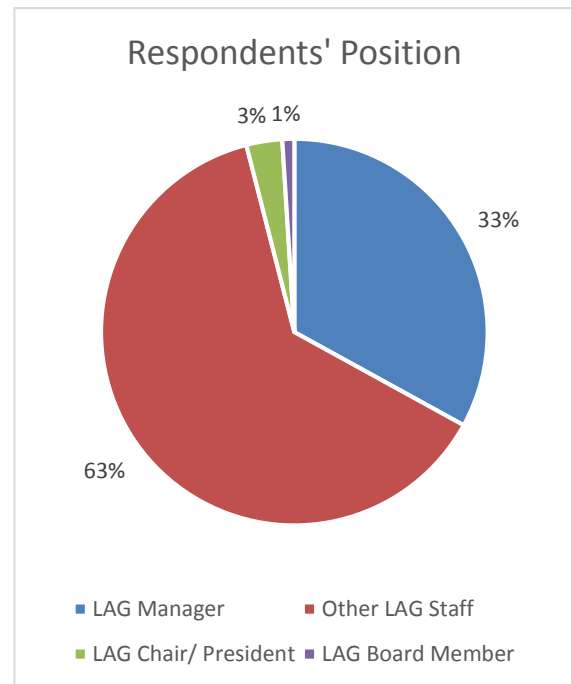
Question 4

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 86

- A much larger proportion of 'other' LAG staff have responded to the survey in France in comparison to the EU sample (63% vs 21%).



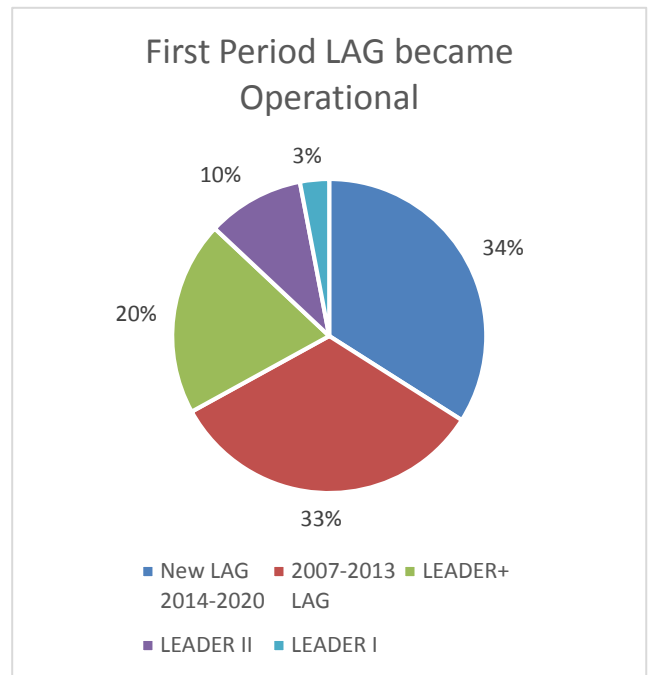
Question 7

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 86

- The composition of the French LAG responses is broadly similar to that of the EU sample, however there is a larger proportion of new LAGs from 2014-2020 (34% vs 22%).

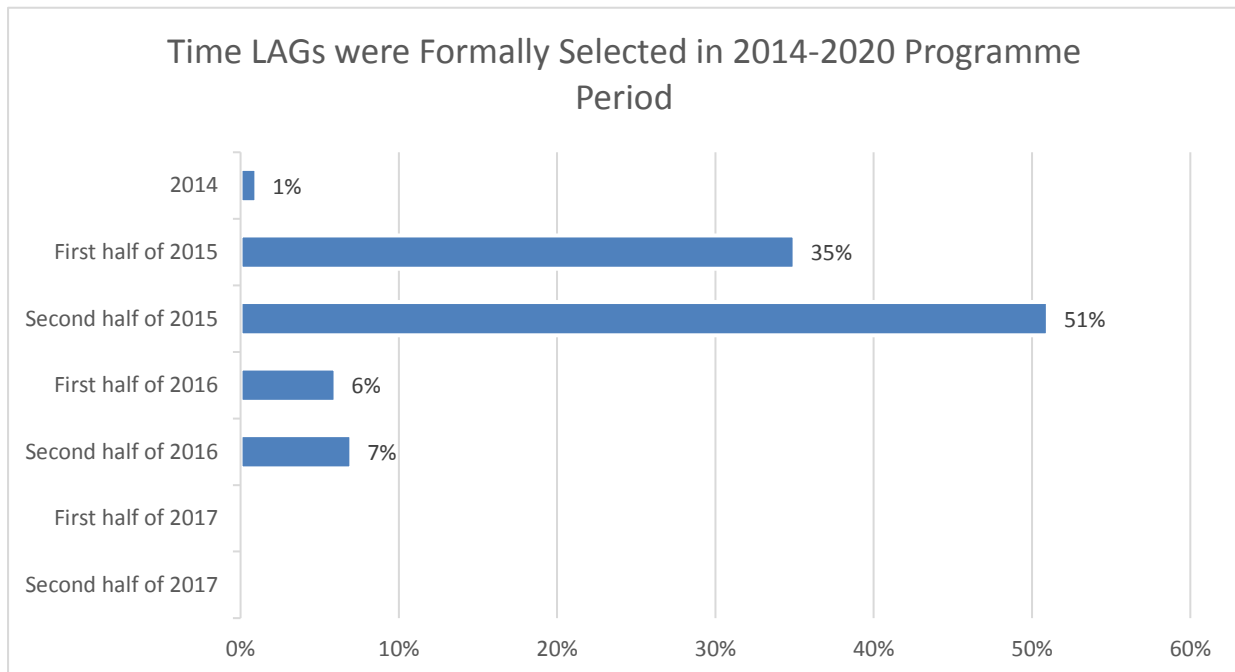


Question 8

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 86



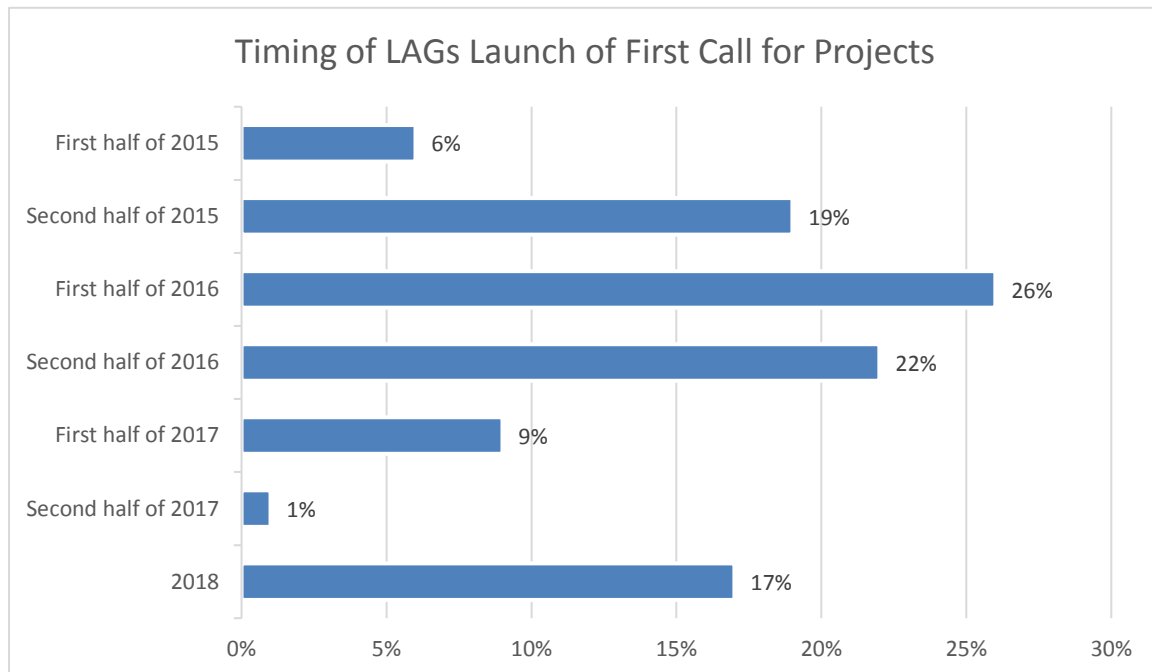
- By the end of 2015, the vast majority (87%) of responding French LAGs were formally selected in comparison to 59% of the EU sample.
- All the LAGs which responded were formally selected by the end of 2016, at which time 10% of the EU sample still needed to be formally selected.

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 86



- Almost three quarters of the French LAGs (73%) had their first calls for projects launched by the end of 2016, similar to the 67% of the EU sample that had also accomplished this task at this time.
- Slightly more French LAGS than European still had to launch their first call in 2018 (17% vs 10%).

LAG Funding

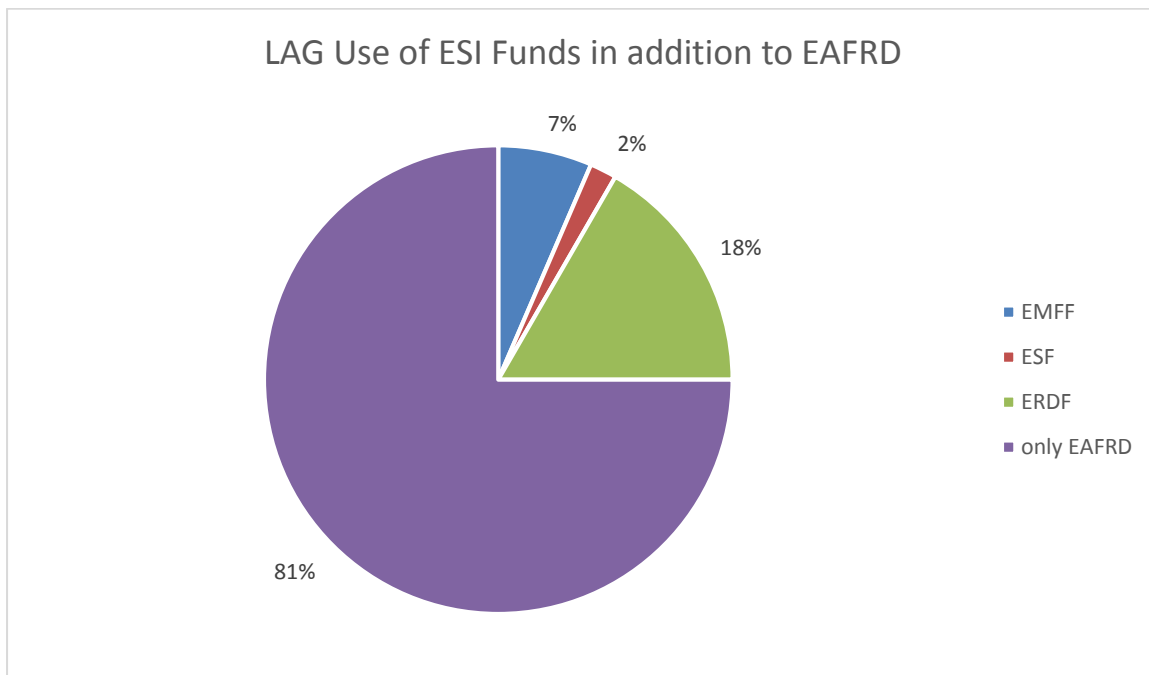
Question 10

Please select all the European Structural and Investment Funds that your LAG uses to financing 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)

It should be noted that the percentages sum up to more than 100% as this was a multiple choice question.

Total Number of Responses 85



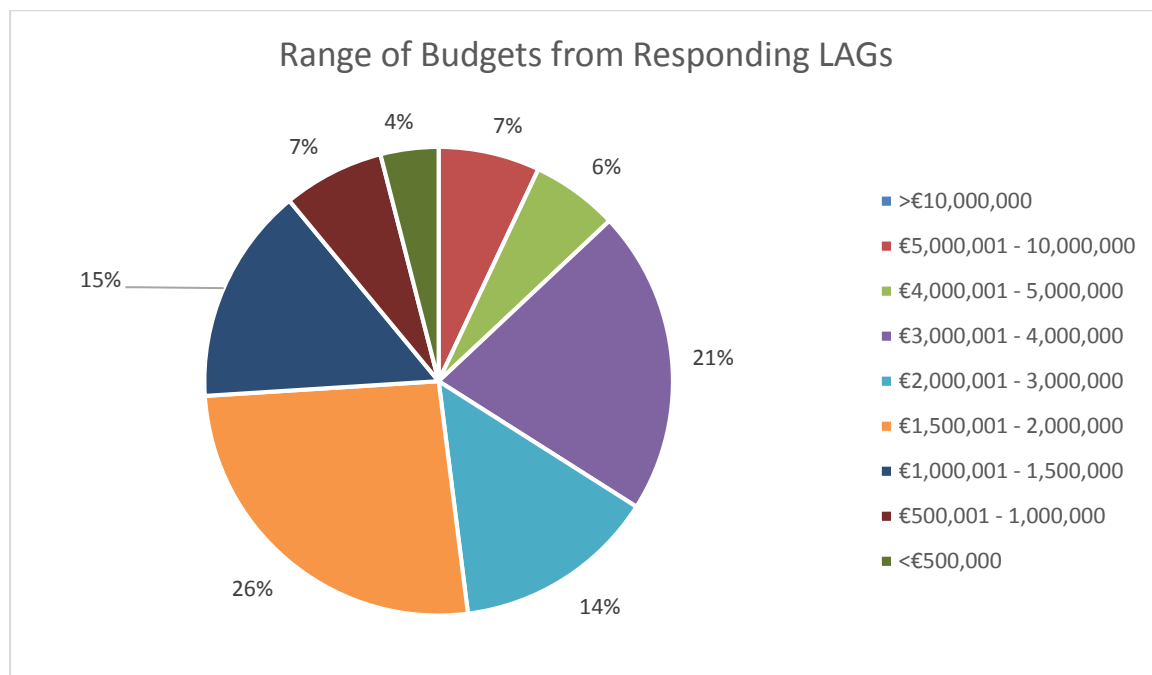
- A higher proportion of French LAGs reported using only EAFRD in comparison to other European LAGs (81% vs 67%).
- A smaller proportion of French LAGs report using ESF than in the EU sample (2% vs 16%)

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 85



- The range of budgets from responding French LAGs was broadly similar to that of the EU sample.
- The main variances are that 29% of the EU sample had large budgets over €4m vs 13% of French LAGs and respondents from France reported a larger share in the budget range €1.5 – 2m than the EU LAGs (26% vs 12%).

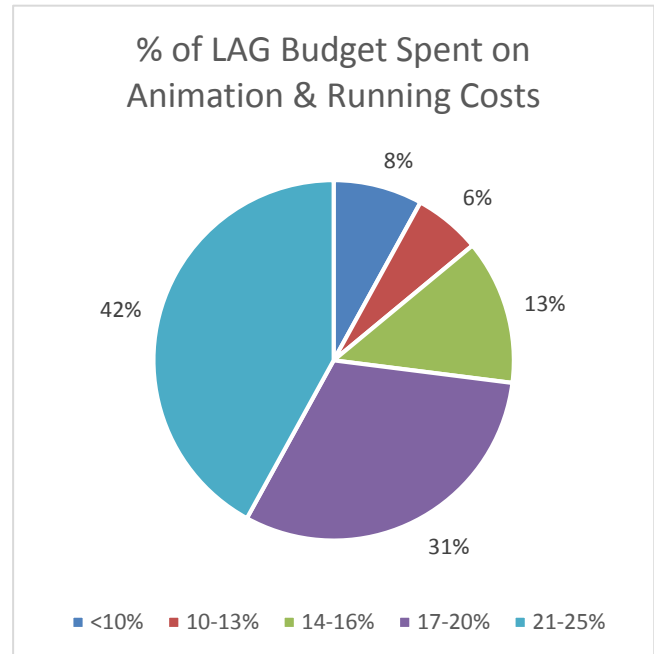
Question 12

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 85

- The French respondents reported that 42% of them had a budget allocation for animation and running costs between 21-25%. In comparison, only 31% of the EU sample stated this size of budget.



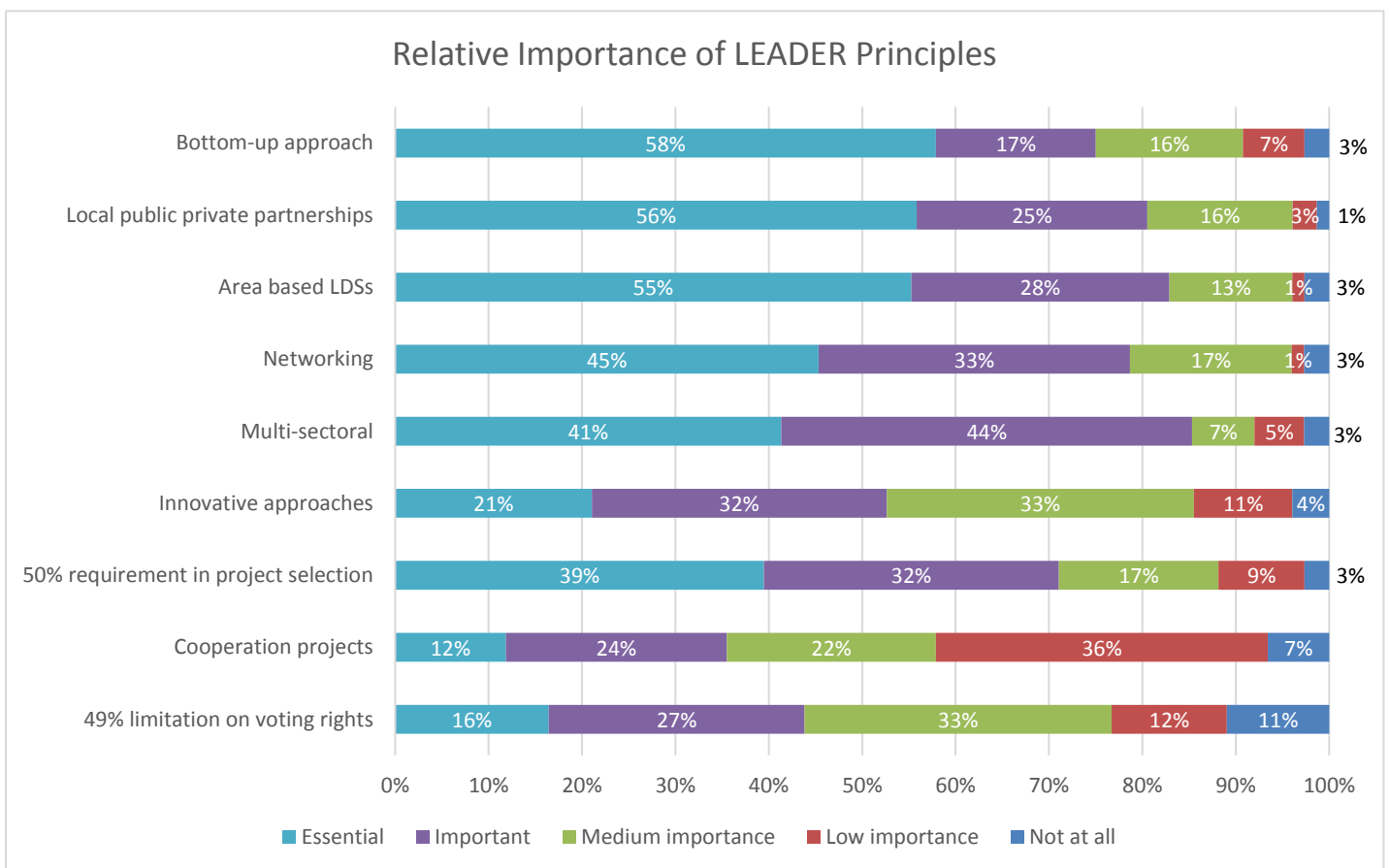
LEADER Principles

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 77



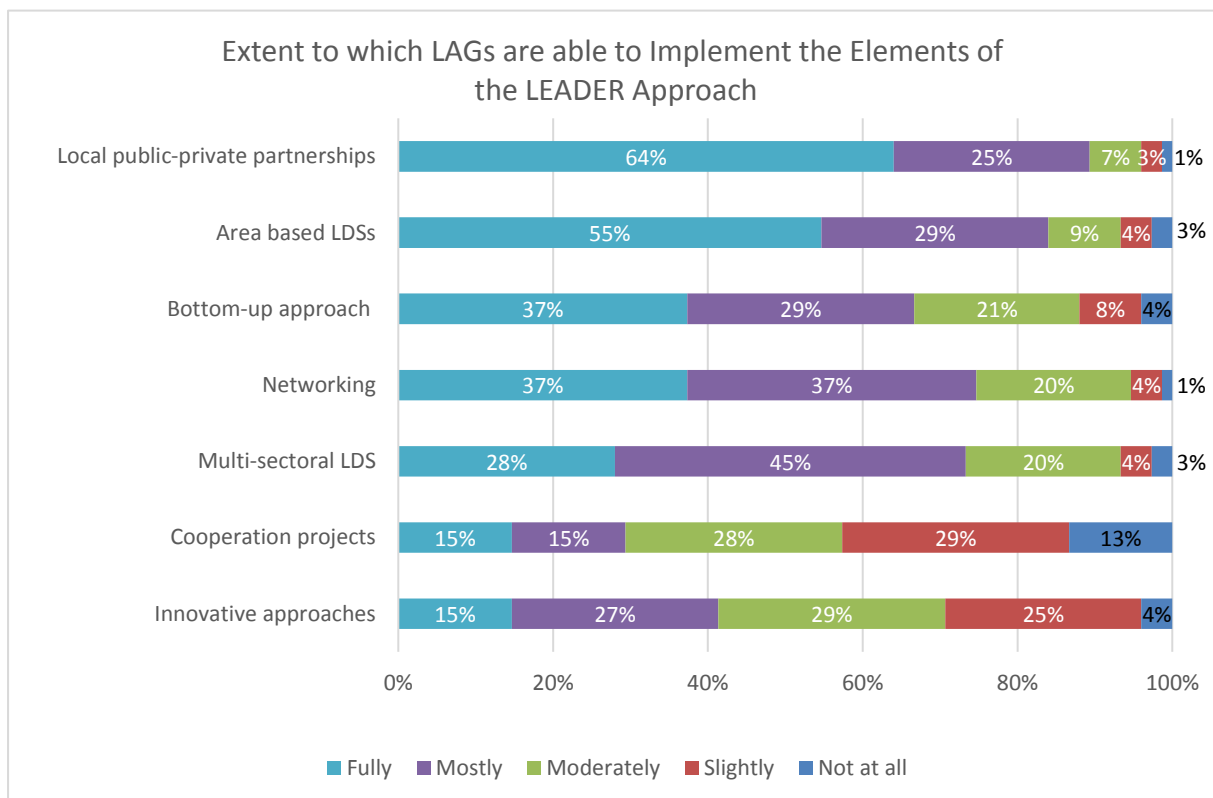
- In most cases, French respondents assessed the importance of LEADER approaches at a similar level to the EU sample, although rating them less frequently as 'essential'.
- In comparison to the European level, more French LAGs felt that 'cooperation projects' were of 'low importance' (French ratings were 42% vs 12% at the EU level).

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 75



- The French LAGs responded to this question very similarly to the EU sample with the exception of 'cooperation projects' whereby the French respondents felt less able to 'fully' and 'mostly' implement this approach than their EU peers (30% vs 58%).
- French LAGs also felt somewhat less able to fully implement the bottom up approach (37% vs 48%)

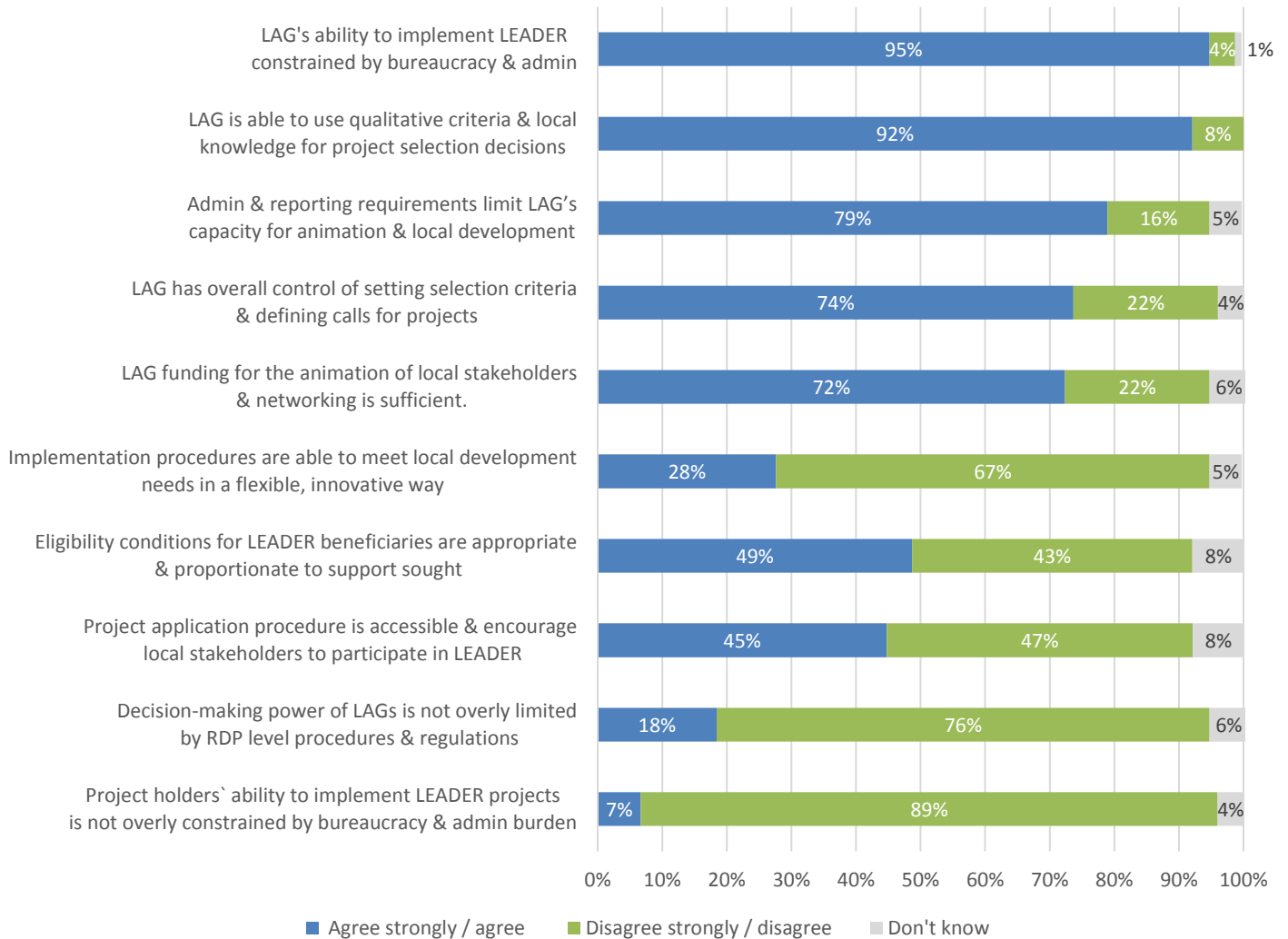
Question 15

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 76

Aspects of LEADER Implementation as seen by Local Action Groups



- The responses from the French LAGs were very similar to those from the EU sample.
- The greatest difference in responses was that French LAGs agreed more strongly that the 'LAG budget for animation and networking was sufficient' (72% vs 54%).

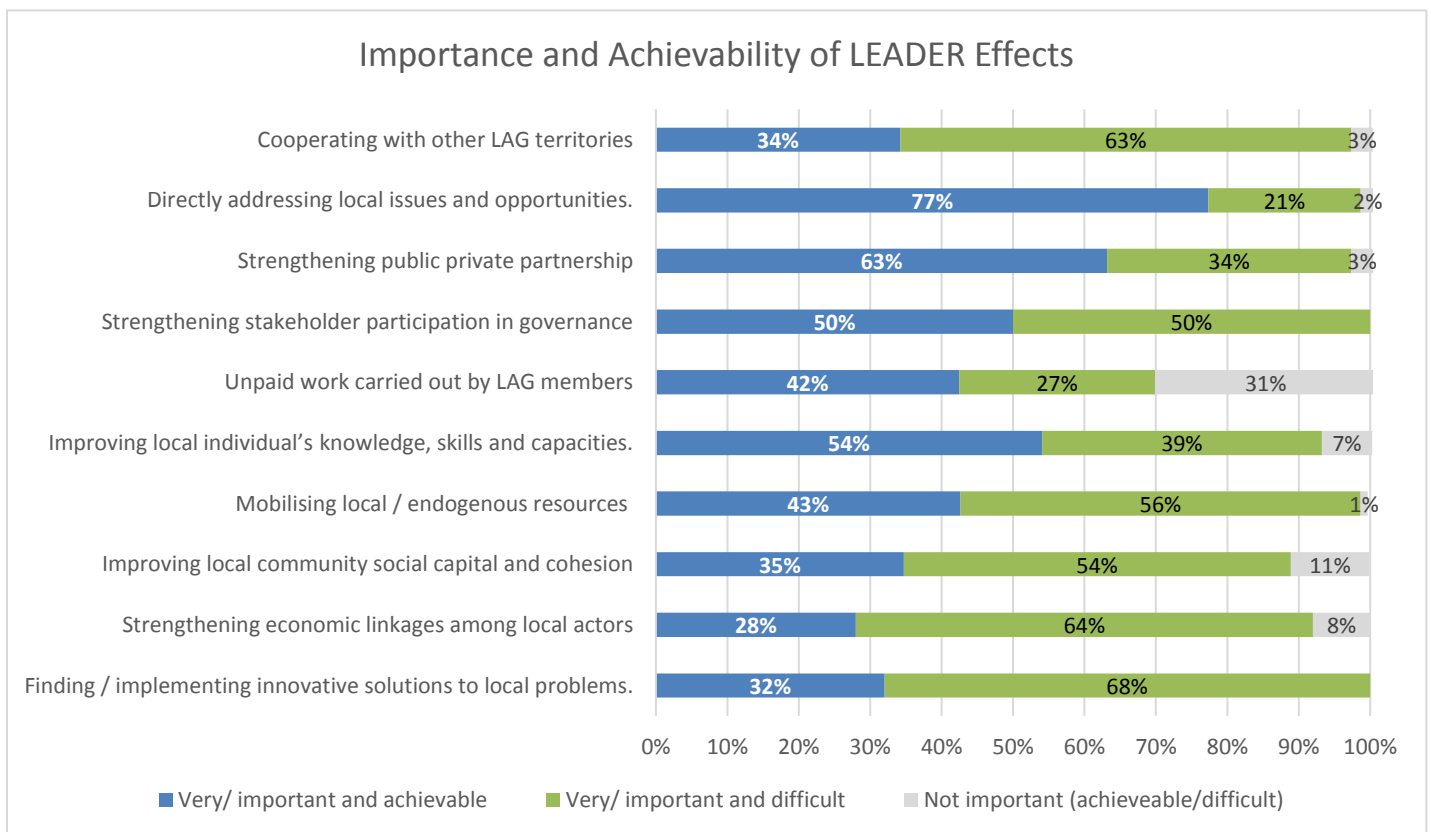
Question 16

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 76



- In comparison to the EU sample, proportionately more French respondents (77%) were optimistic about the achievability of 'directly addressing local issues and opportunities', compared to 63% at EU level.
- A much larger proportion of French LAGs regard cooperation with other LAG territories as difficult (63% vs 28%).
- Regarding 'unpaid work by LAG members', more French respondents considered this not an important task in comparison to the EU sample (31% vs 14%).

LEADER Operation

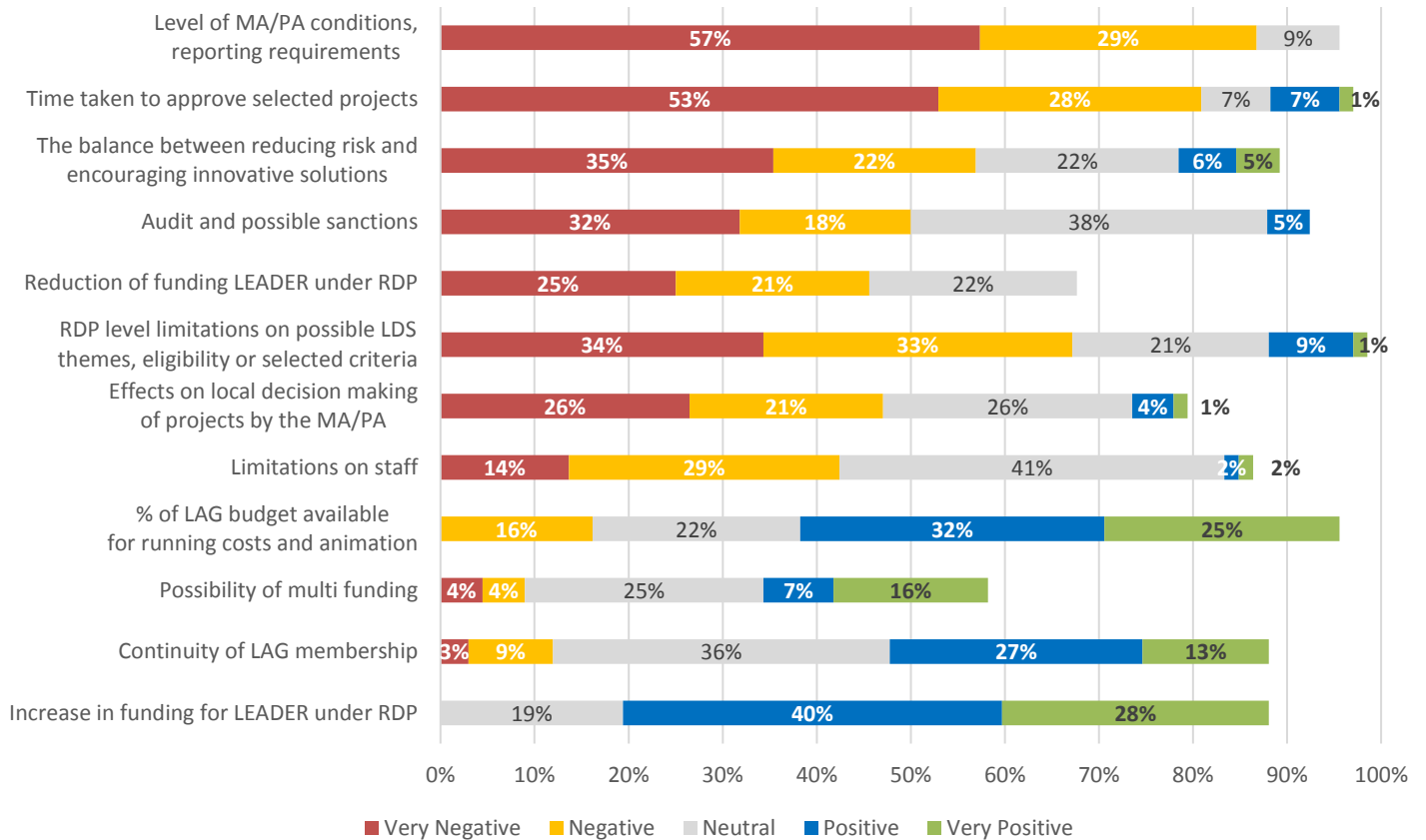
Question 17

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 68

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.

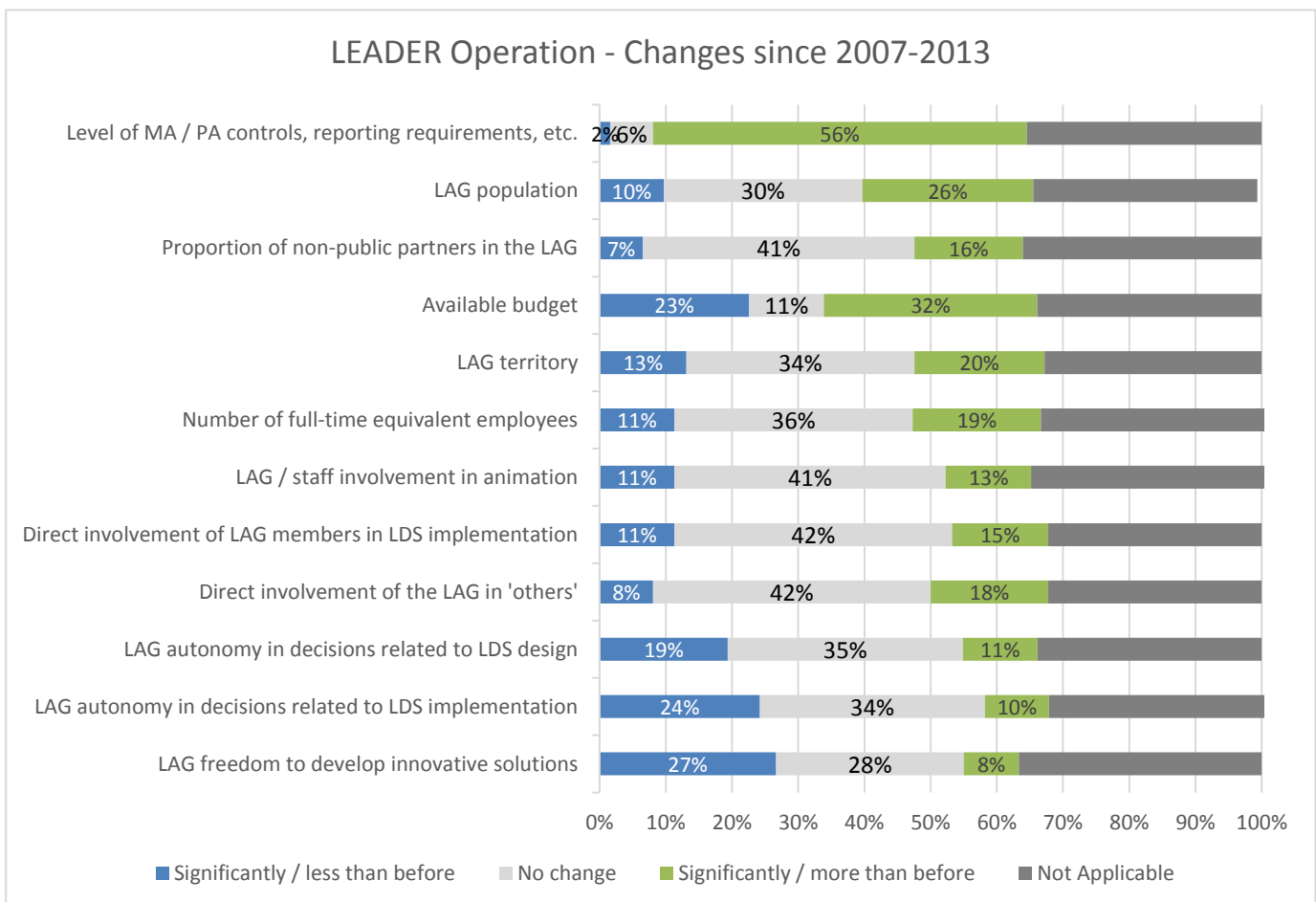
- Proportionately more LAGs in France than in the EU sample identified 'very negative' and 'negative' effects in following three areas:
 - RDP level limitations on possible LDS themes (67% vs 53%)
 - Level of MA/PA conditions, reporting requirements (86% vs 72%)
 - Time taken to approve selected projects (81% vs 69%)
- French respondents were notably more positive regarding the increase in LEADER funding (68% positive/ very positive vs 46%) and the % of LAG budget available for running costs and administration (57% vs 32%).

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 62



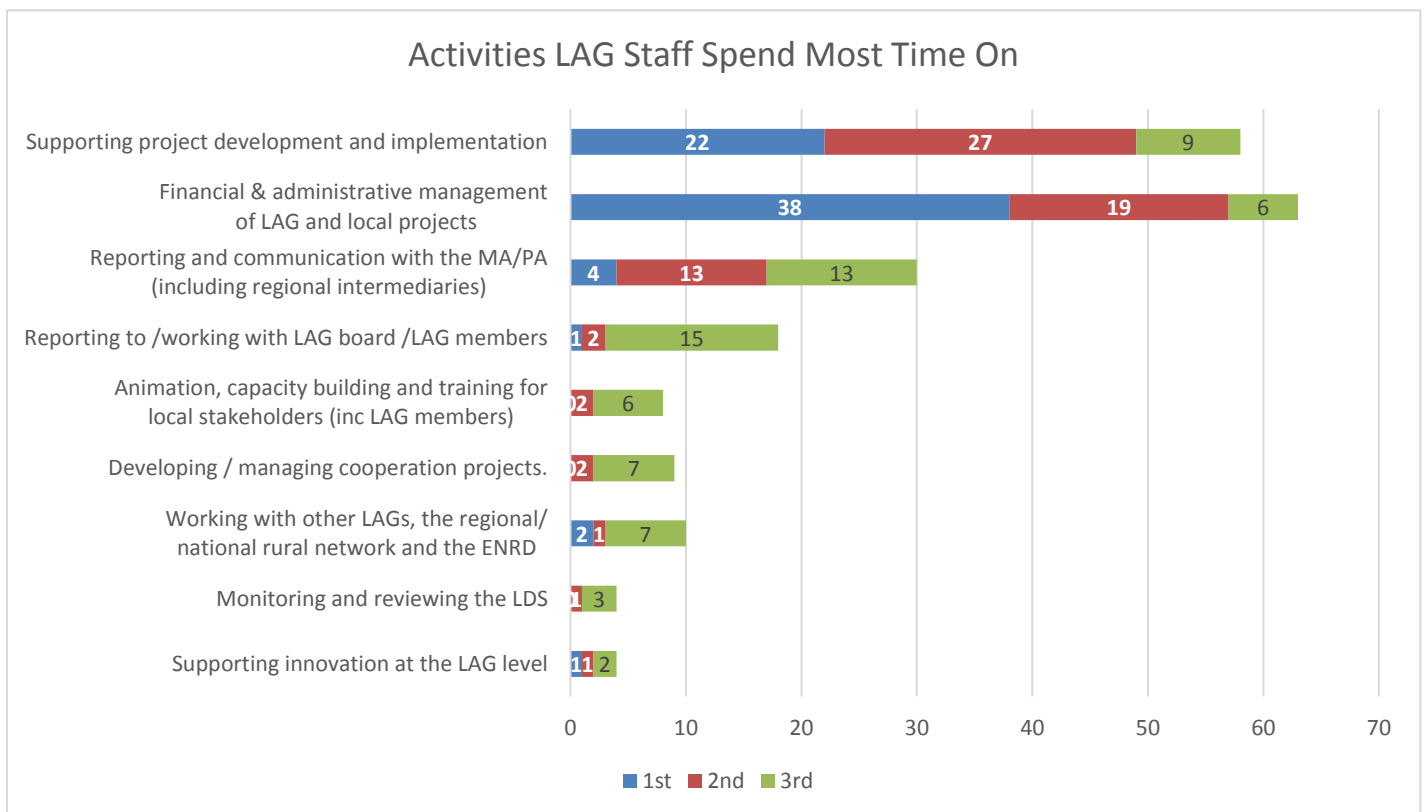
- In comparison to the EU sample, considerably more French respondents stated that the questions were 'not applicable' (generally more than 30% of the French, in contrast to around 15% of the European LAGs in each case).
- Fewer French than European LAGs experienced reductions in LAG budgets (23% vs 43% of the EU sample).

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 68



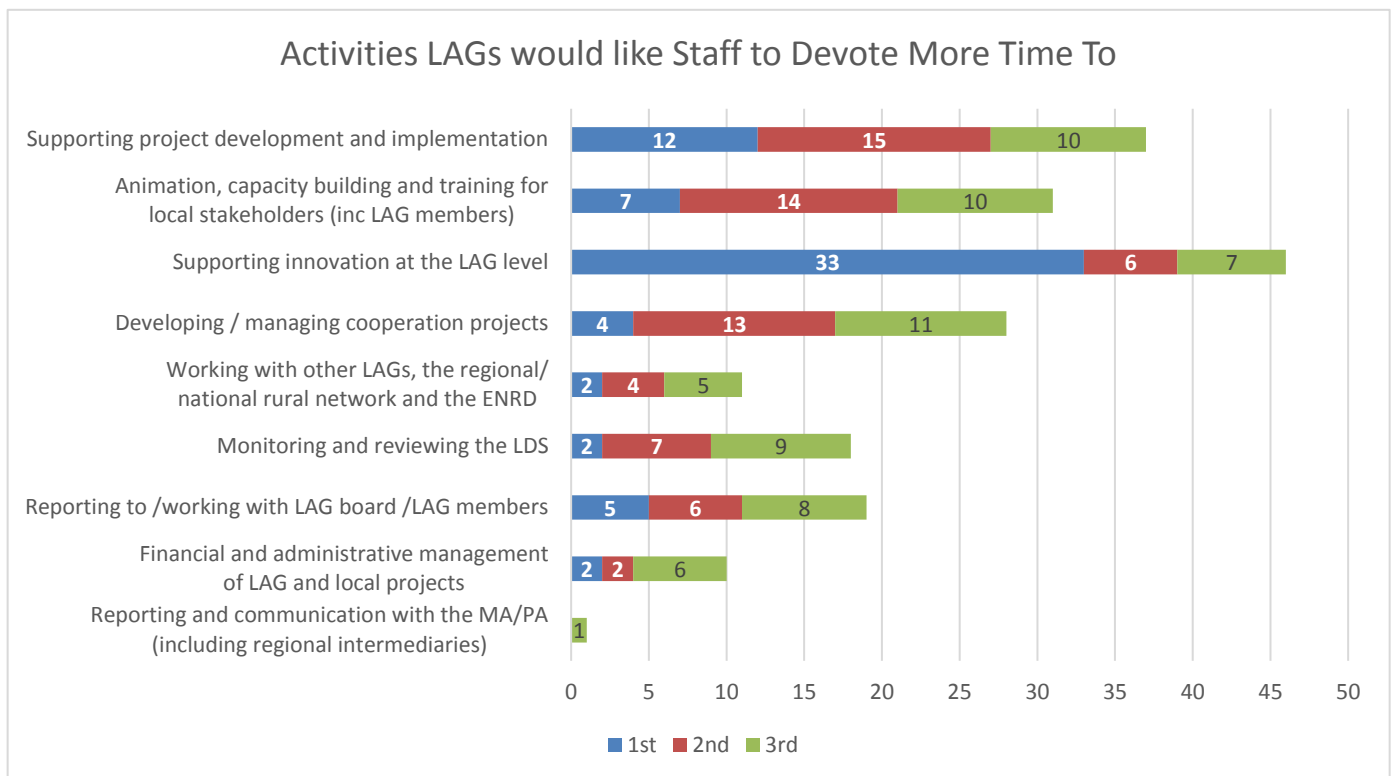
- The responses of the French LAGs follow the pattern of the EU sample. Slight differences relate to a higher ranking of time spent on ‘financial and administrative management’ and a lower ranking of time spent on ‘reporting and communication with the MA/PA’.

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 67



- There are no major differences between the responses of the French LAGs and the wider EU sample. With the exception that there seem to be more French than European respondents who prefer their staff to devote more time to 'supporting innovation at the LAG level'.

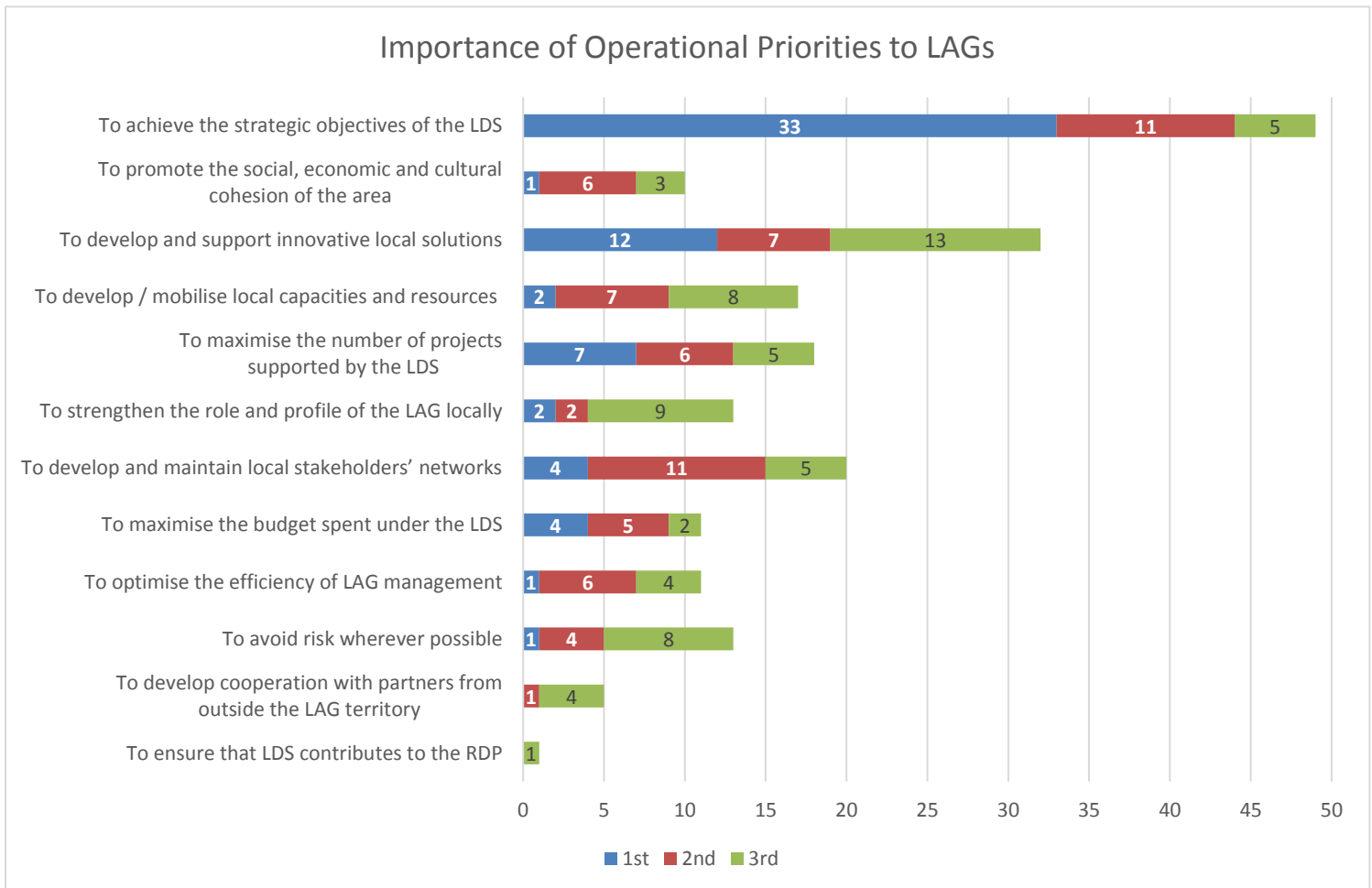
Question 21

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 67

Importance of Operational Priorities to LAGs



- The French LAGs ranked the operational priorities largely in a similar manner to the LAGs of the EU survey. The main difference is the relatively lower importance given to ‘promoting the social, cultural and economic cohesion’. and.
- Further minor differences exist in relation to ‘developing / mobilising local capacities and resources’, ‘developing and maintaining local stakeholders’ networks, where French respondents seem to apply a slightly higher priority in comparison to their EU counterparts.

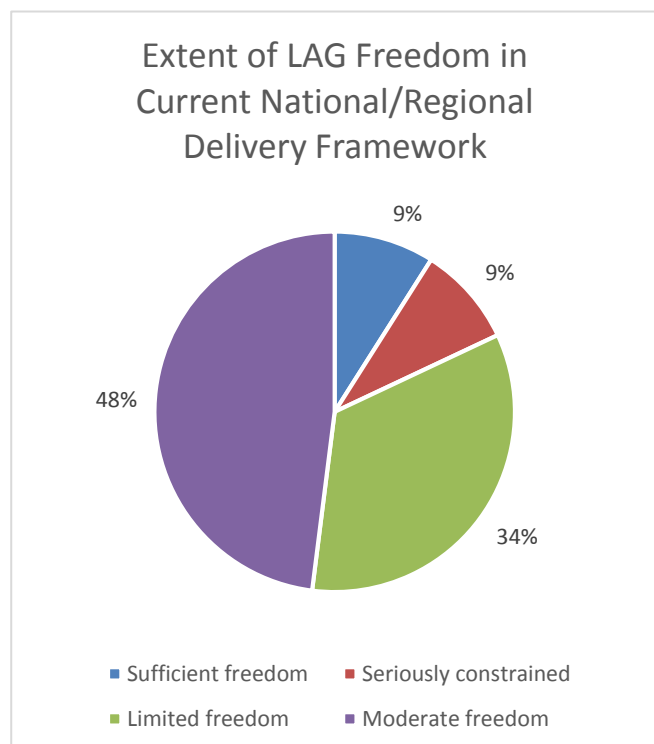
Question 22

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 67

- A lower proportion of the French sample thought that they were enjoying 'sufficient freedom' (9%) compared to the EU sample (17%) however the overall differences were small.

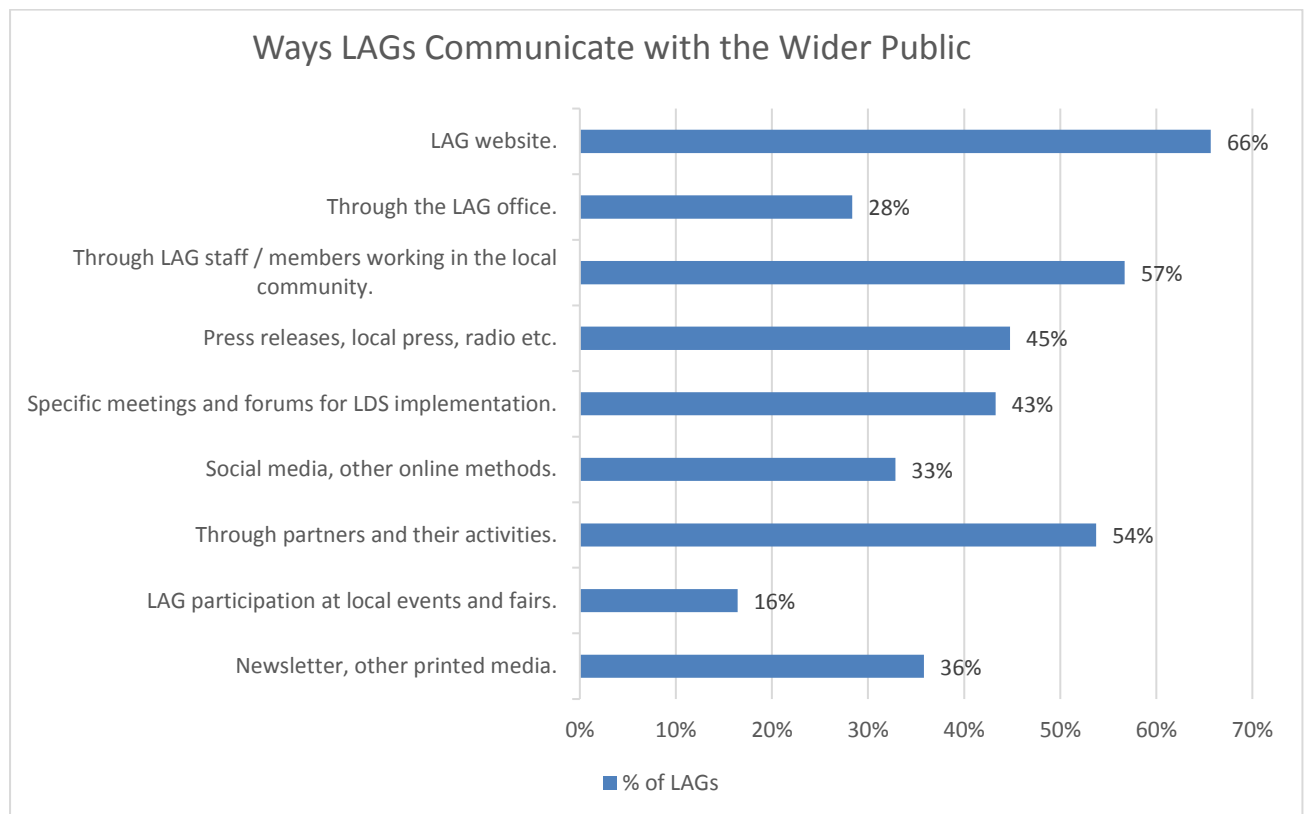


Question 23

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 67



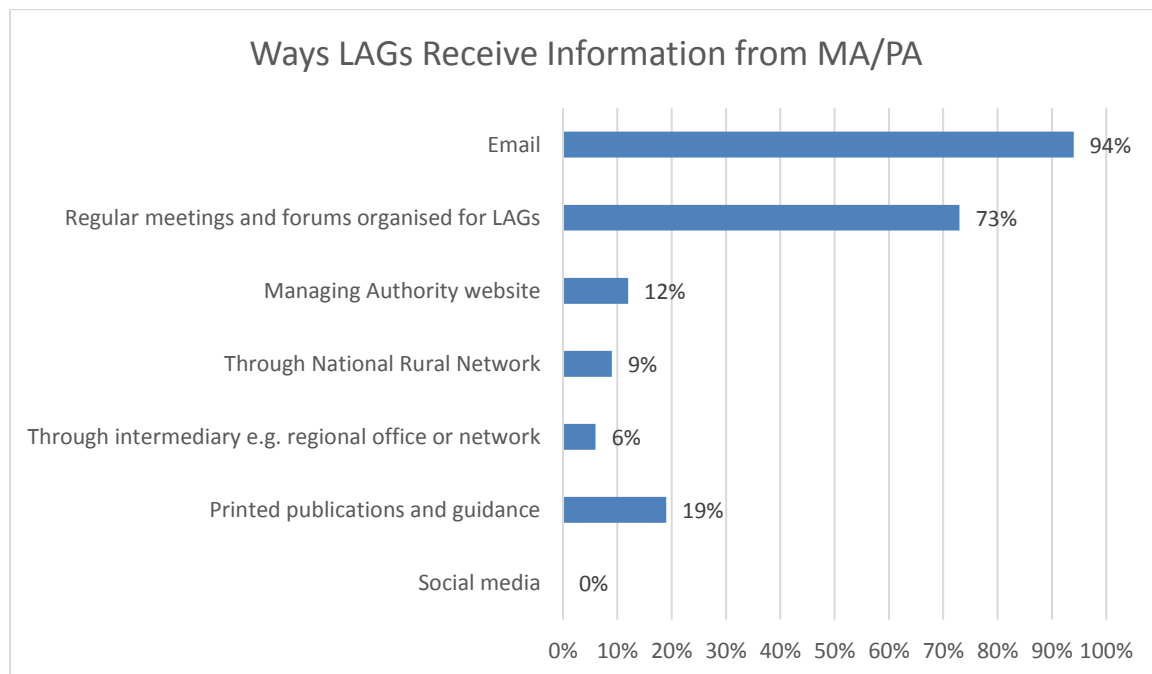
- The percentages for LAGs use of most means of communication are lower for the French LAGs than in the EU sample.
- French LAGs seem to communicate much less 'through their LAG office' (28% vs 71%), through 'participation at local events and fairs' (16% vs 52%), their 'LAG (66% vs 89%) and via social media (33% vs 61%).

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 67



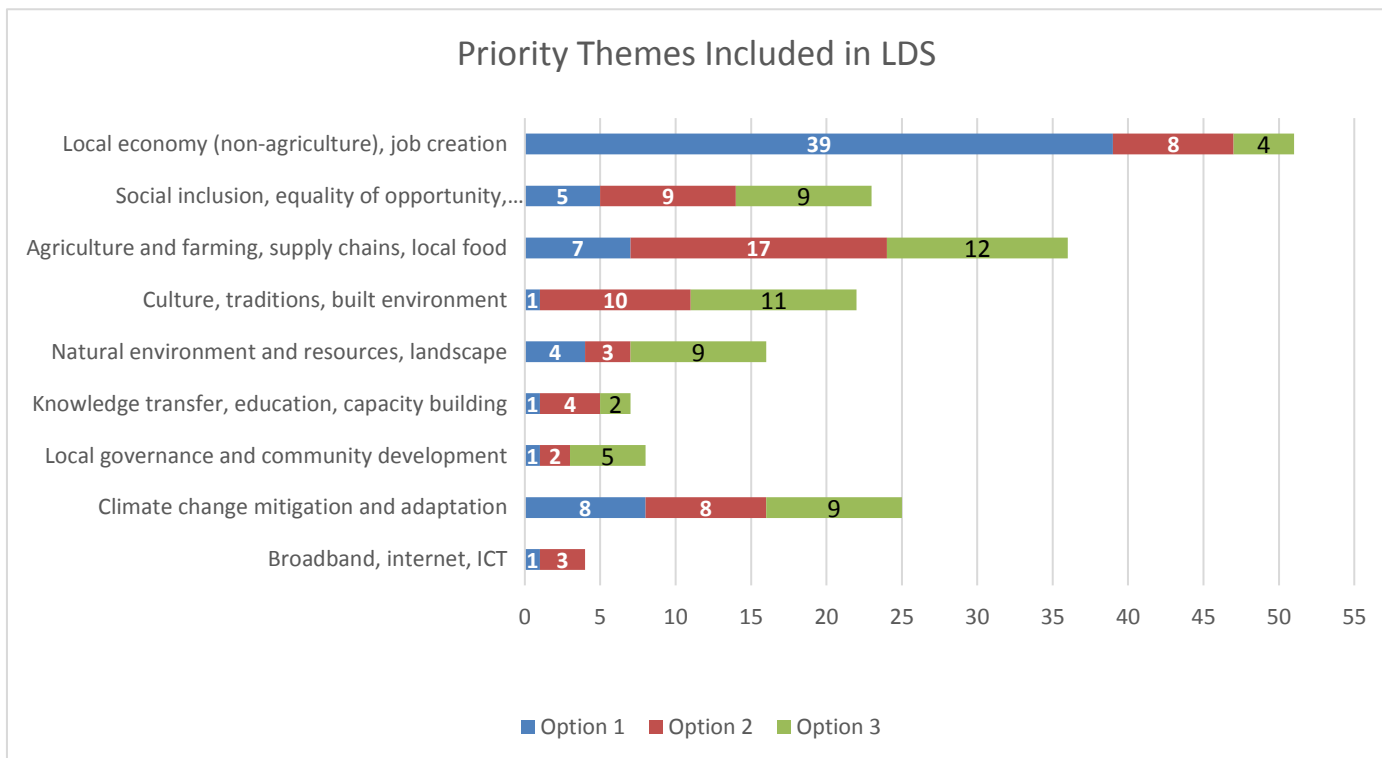
- With regard to receiving information via ‘e-mail’ and ‘regular meetings’, French responses were similar to those of the EU sample.
- A much smaller proportion of French LAGs report that they receive information via ‘the MA website’ (12% vs 34%), ‘through NRN’ (9% vs 31%) and ‘through intermediaries’ (6% vs 22%).

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 67



- The French responses to the question are largely in line with those provided by the EU sample.
- There is a stronger link of French LDS with the priority theme of 'climate change mitigation and adaptation' than in the EU sample.
- Less French LAGs indicated less strong inclusion of the 'social inclusion, equality of opportunity' theme in their LDS than at EU level.

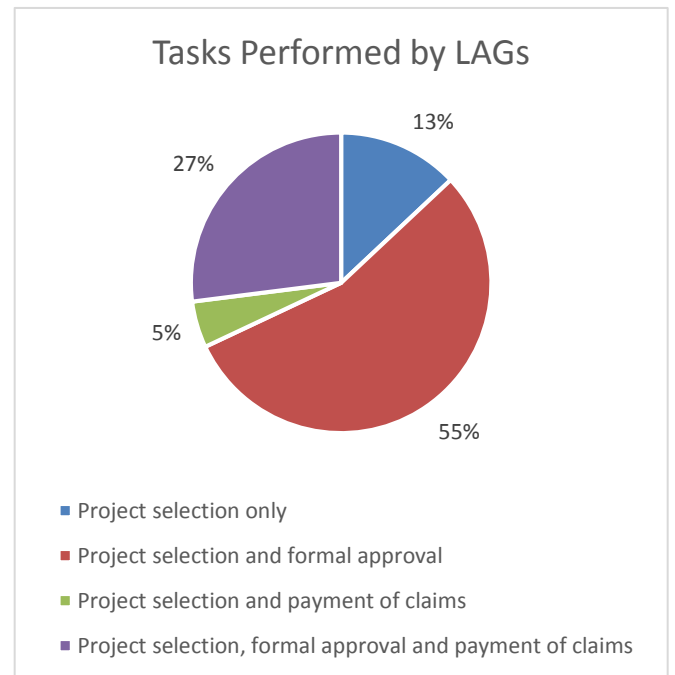
Question 26

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 67

- A significantly larger percentage of French LAGs (55%) reported that they 'select projects and formally approve them'. At EU level only 31% of LAGs perform this task.
- A much smaller proportion of French respondents reported that their LAGs were in charge of project selection, 13% as opposed to 48% of LAGs across Europe.



LEADER Improvements

Question 27

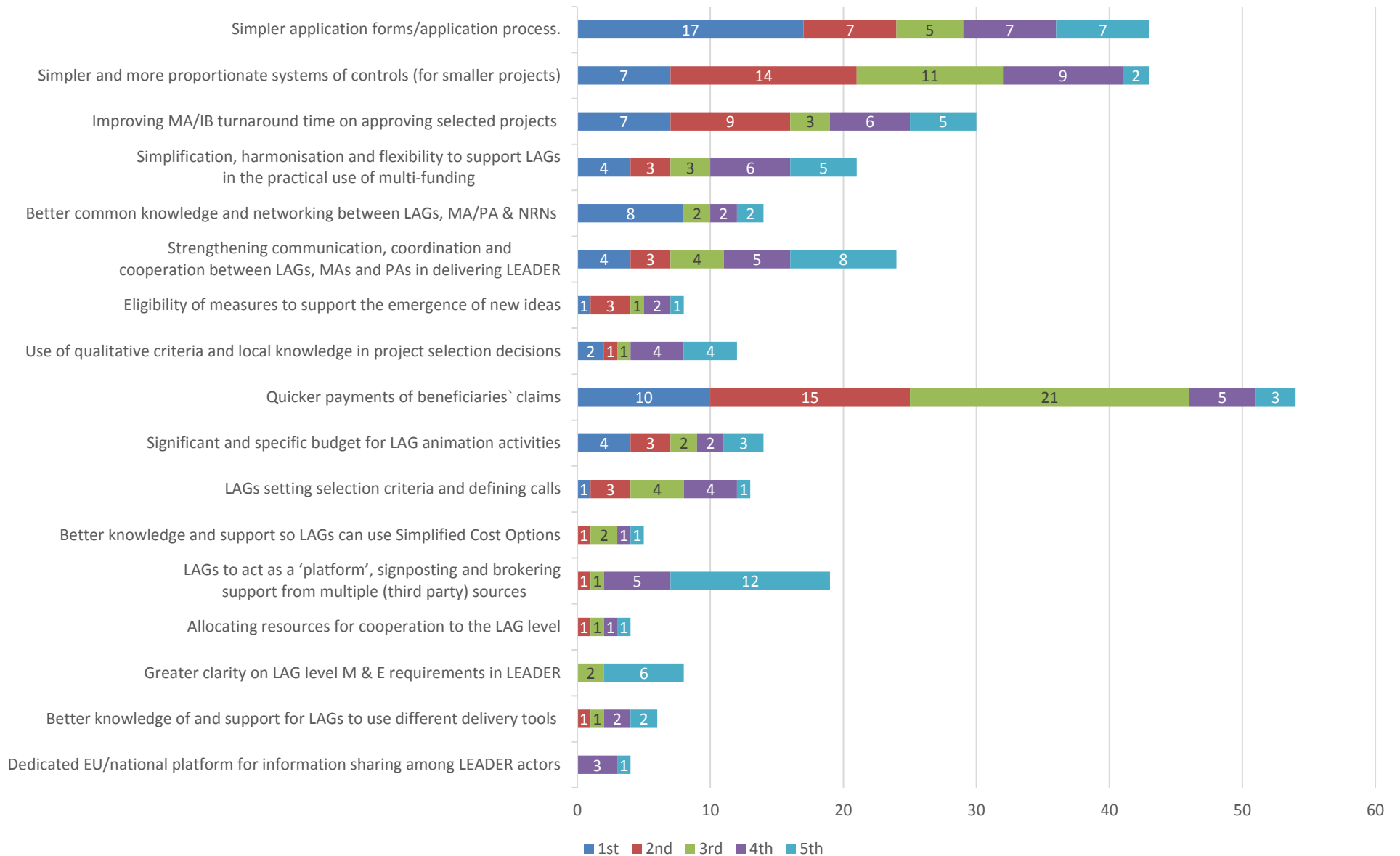
What is most important to address in helping LAGs to be effective in implementing LEADER now? Please select and rank your top five priorities from the following items in order of their importance in (where 1= highest importance and 5 = 5th most important)

- 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 65

- French respondents gave considerably more priority to improvements concerning 'quicker payments of beneficiaries' claims'.
- French respondents also accorded slightly higher importance ratings to changes in areas such as 'strengthening communication, coordination and cooperation with MA and PAs in delivering LEADER' and with regard to 'LAGs to act as platforms for brokerage and signposting'.

Most Important Changes to Improve Implementation Now

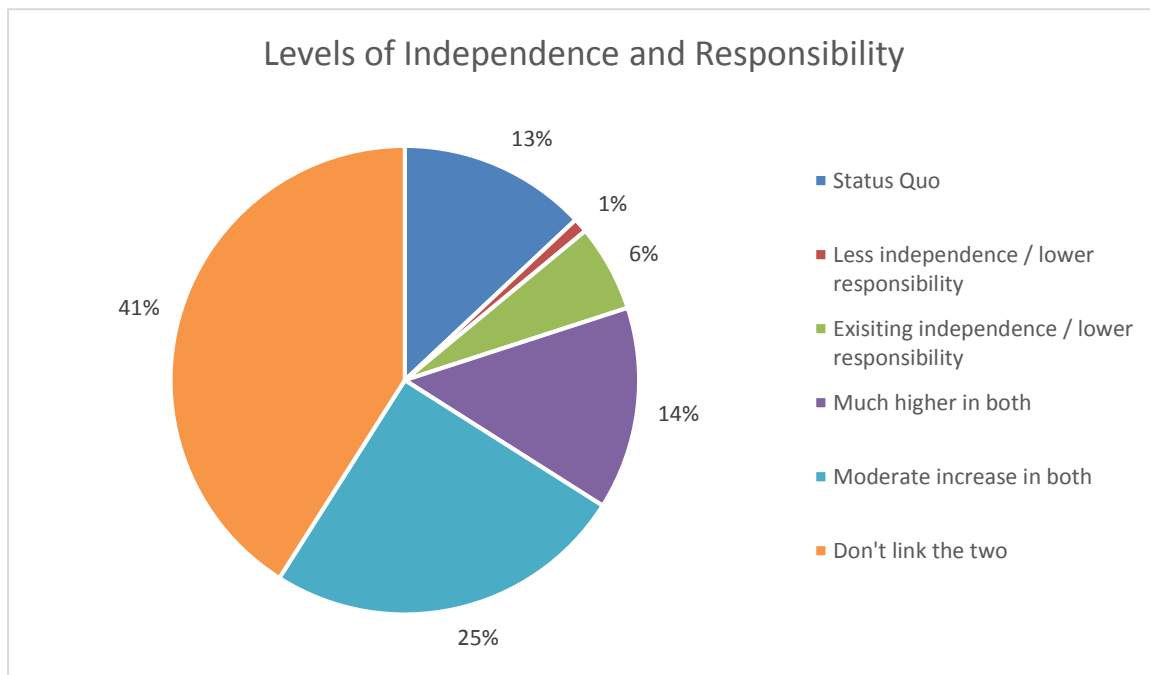


Question 28:

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 – 64



- There was a notably higher percentage of French LAGs who suggested 'not linking the two' topics (41% vs 24%), other differences were marginal.

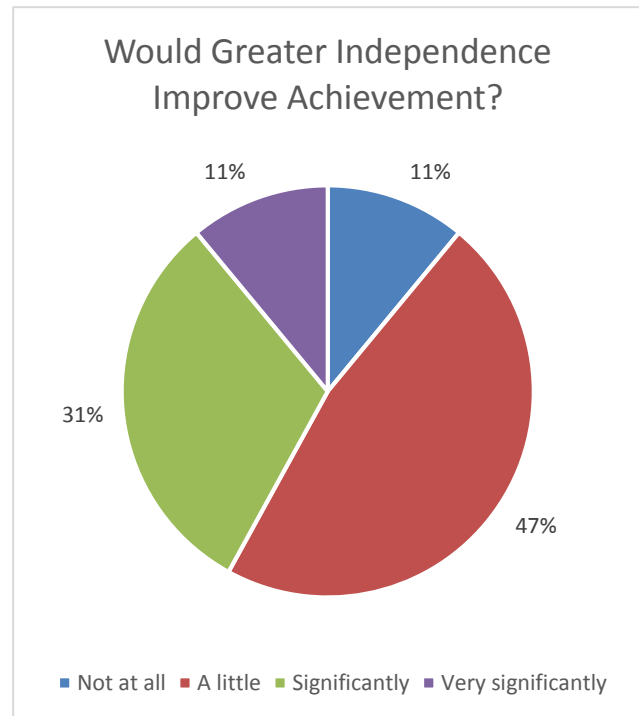
Question 29

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 64

- A larger proportion of French respondents indicated that greater independence would improve the achievement of LAGs 'a little', in comparison to the EU sample (47% vs 34%) with the effect that a smaller proportion thought it would do so significantly (31% vs 42%).

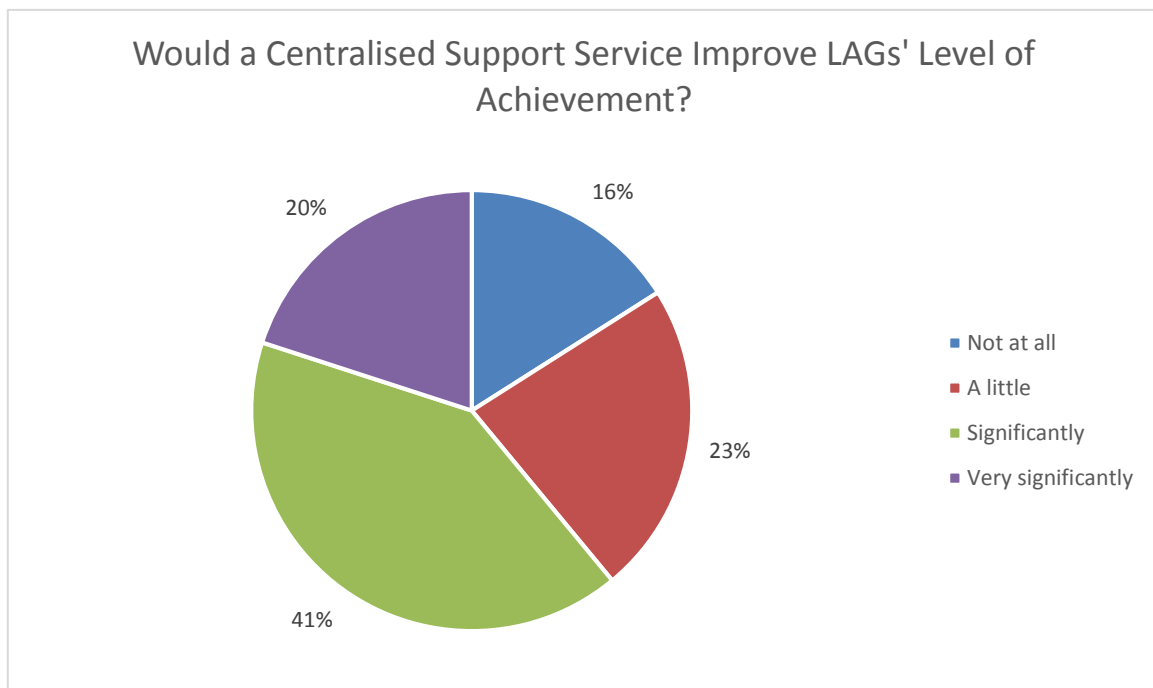


Question 30

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 64



- A much larger proportion of the French respondents thought that a centralised support service would improve the achievements of the LAG 'significantly' or 'very significantly' than at EU level (61% vs 37%).
- At the same time, a much smaller proportion of French LAGs thought that there would be no change at all in comparison to their EU peers (16% vs 36%).

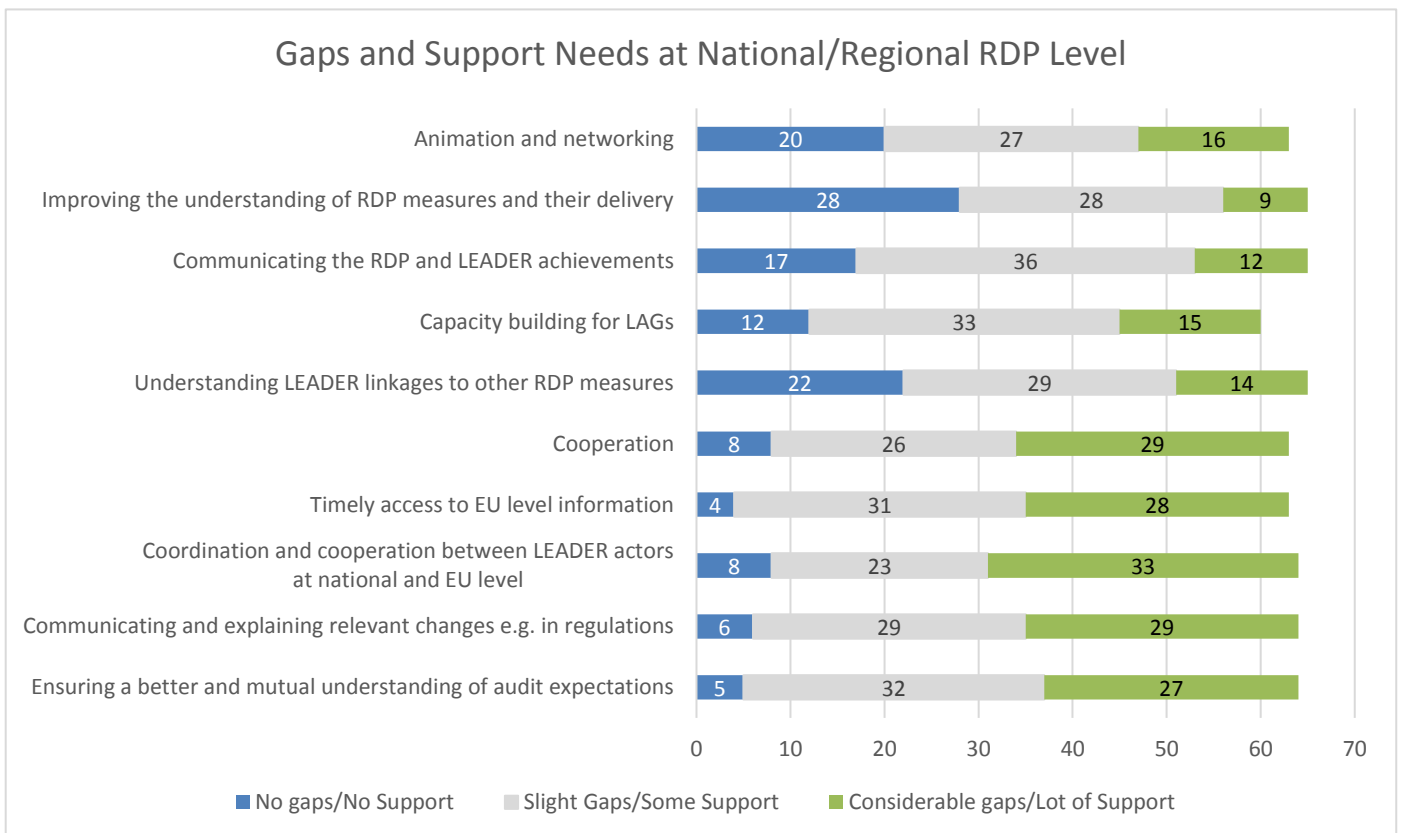
Question 31

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 65



- In a number of areas, the French LAGs responded slightly differently to those of the overall EU sample. Proportionally there were more French respondents identifying considerable gaps and support needs in areas such as ‘coordination and collaboration between LEADER actors at national and at EU level’ and in ‘cooperation’.
- by French respondents identified a lower level of gap or support need with regard to ‘understanding LEADER linkages to other RDP measures’ and ‘improving the understanding of RDP measures’.

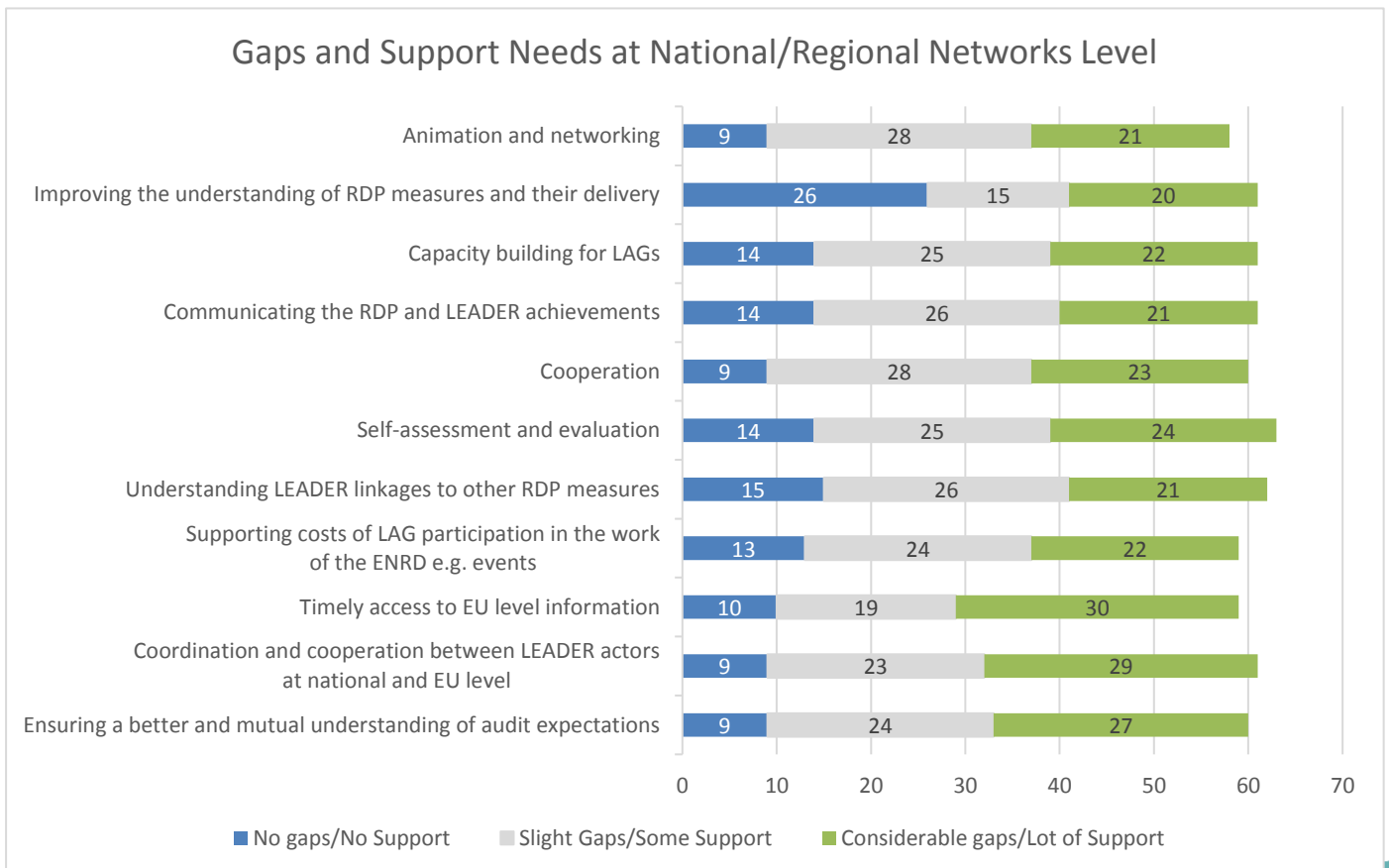
Question 32

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 63



- Proportionately more French LAGs believed that there were ‘no gaps and no support needs’ with regard to improving the understanding of RDP measures and their delivery than their European peers.
- A greater proportion of French respondents identified ‘considerable gaps and lot of support need’ than their European peers in areas such as ‘timely access to EU level information’ ‘cooperation’ and animation and networking.

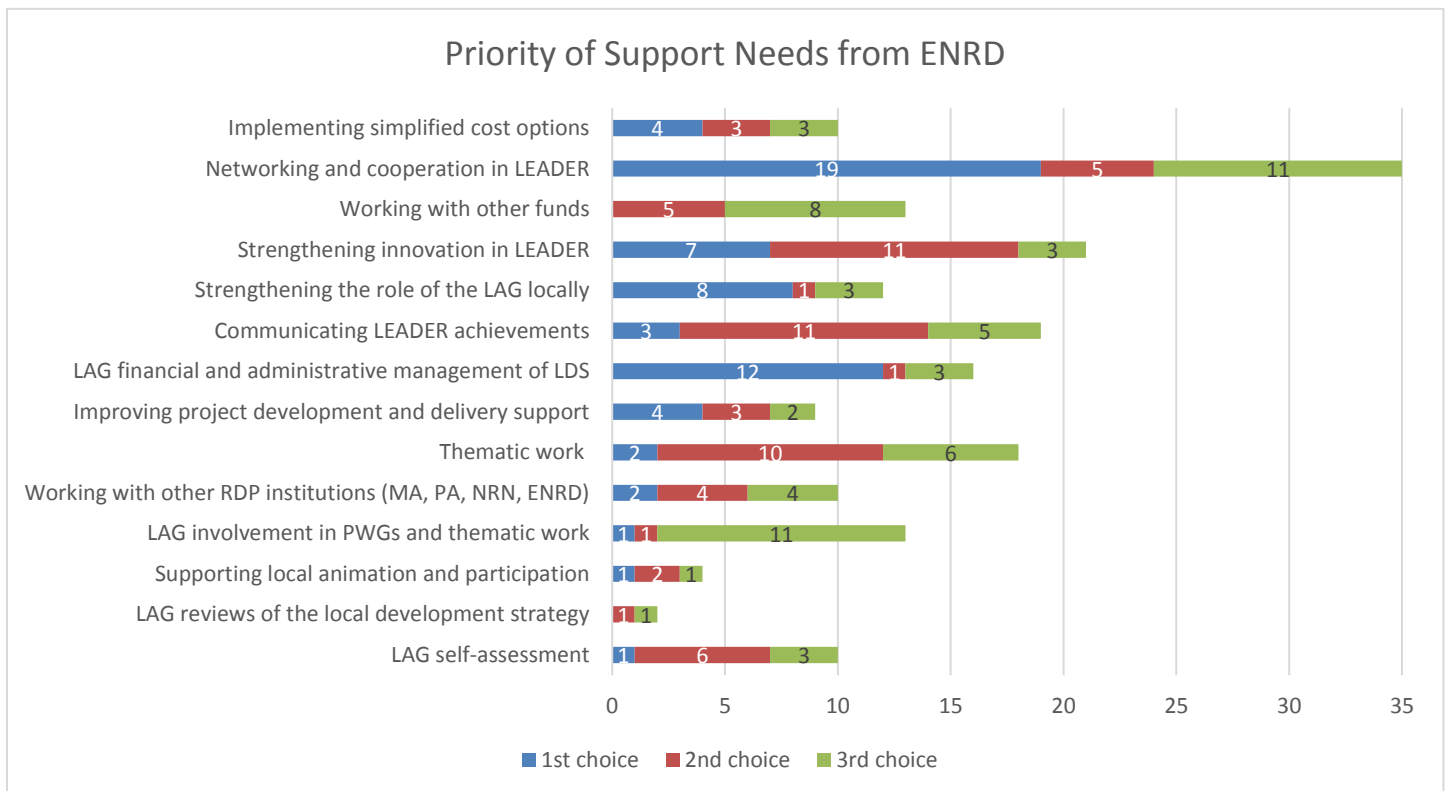
Question 33

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 64



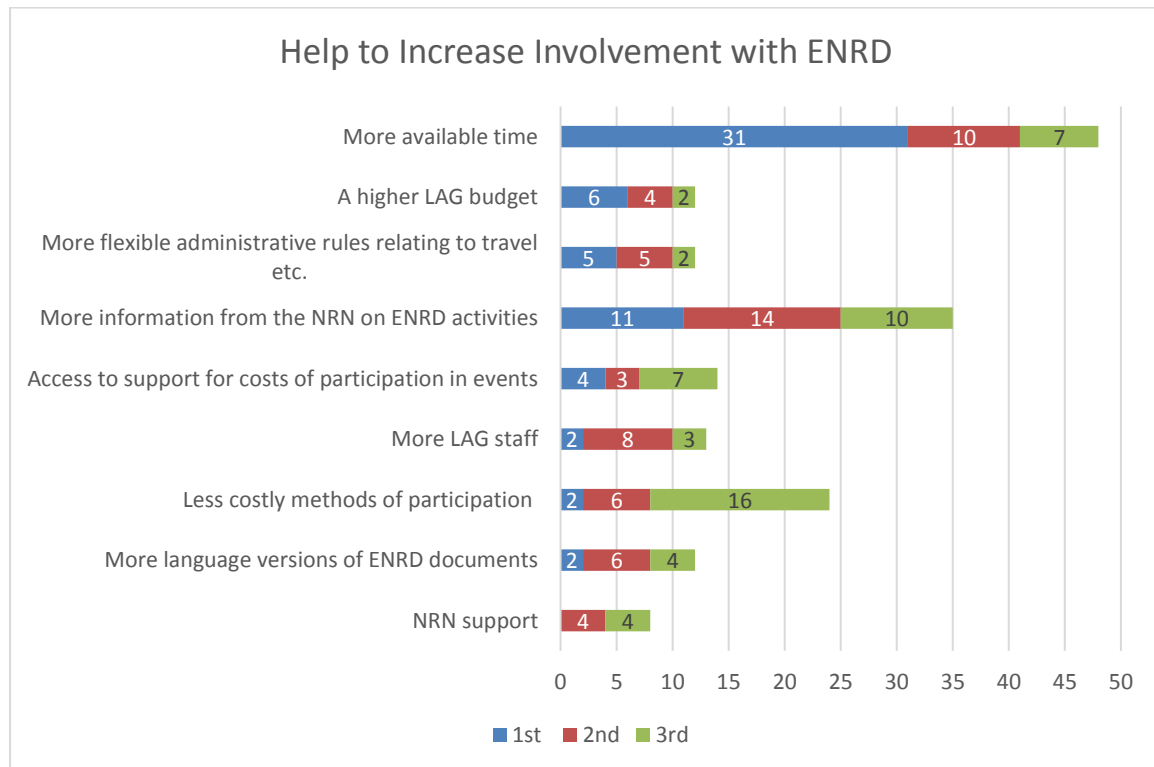
- The French responses largely followed the pattern of priorities identified by the EU sample.
- ‘Networking and cooperation in LEADER’ has been given highest overall and first level priority ranking by a greater proportion of French than European LAGs.
- French LAGs prioritised ‘LAG financial and administrative management of LDS’ as one of their top priority support needs more frequently than their European counterparts.
- ‘Working with other funds’ received noticeably lower priority ratings from the French respondents than in the EU sample.

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 63



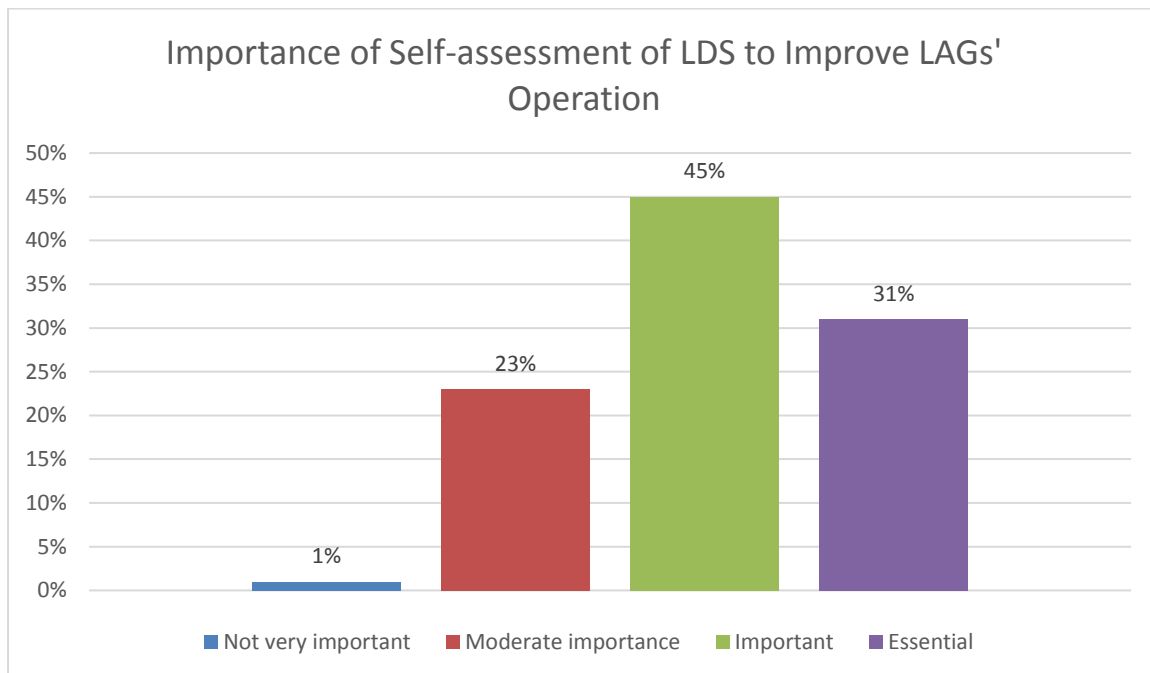
- The French responses place less emphasis on requiring help regarding ‘a higher LAG budget’ and ‘more flexible administrative rules relating to travel’.
- In comparison to the EU sample, the French respondents also place less priority on aspects such as ‘access to support for costs of participation in events’ and ‘more LAG staff’.

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 65



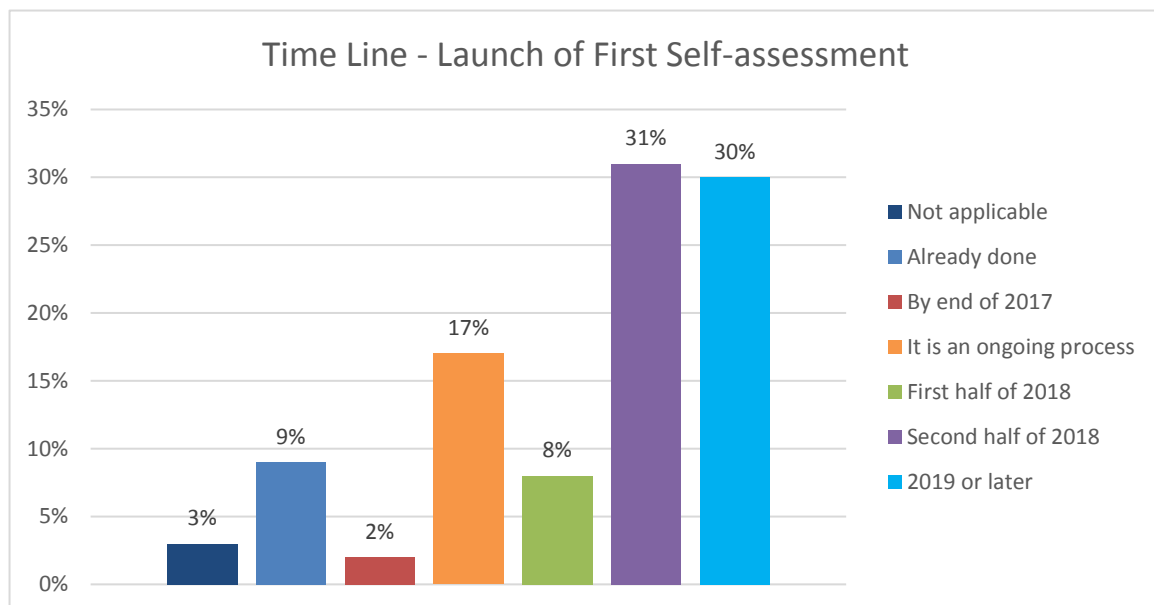
- The responses of the French LAGs regarding 'self-assessment' were very similar than those of the EU sample.

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 64



- A larger proportion (61%) of French LAGs had not yet completed their first self-assessment (second half of 2018 and later in 2019), in comparison to 35% 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 – 65%
- No – 35%

Total Number of Responses 63

- This is a notably lower positive response rate than the EU level of 81%.