

Gender representation and related consequences in planning for rural development

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Addressing racial, ethnic, gender
and other divides
in cities and regions

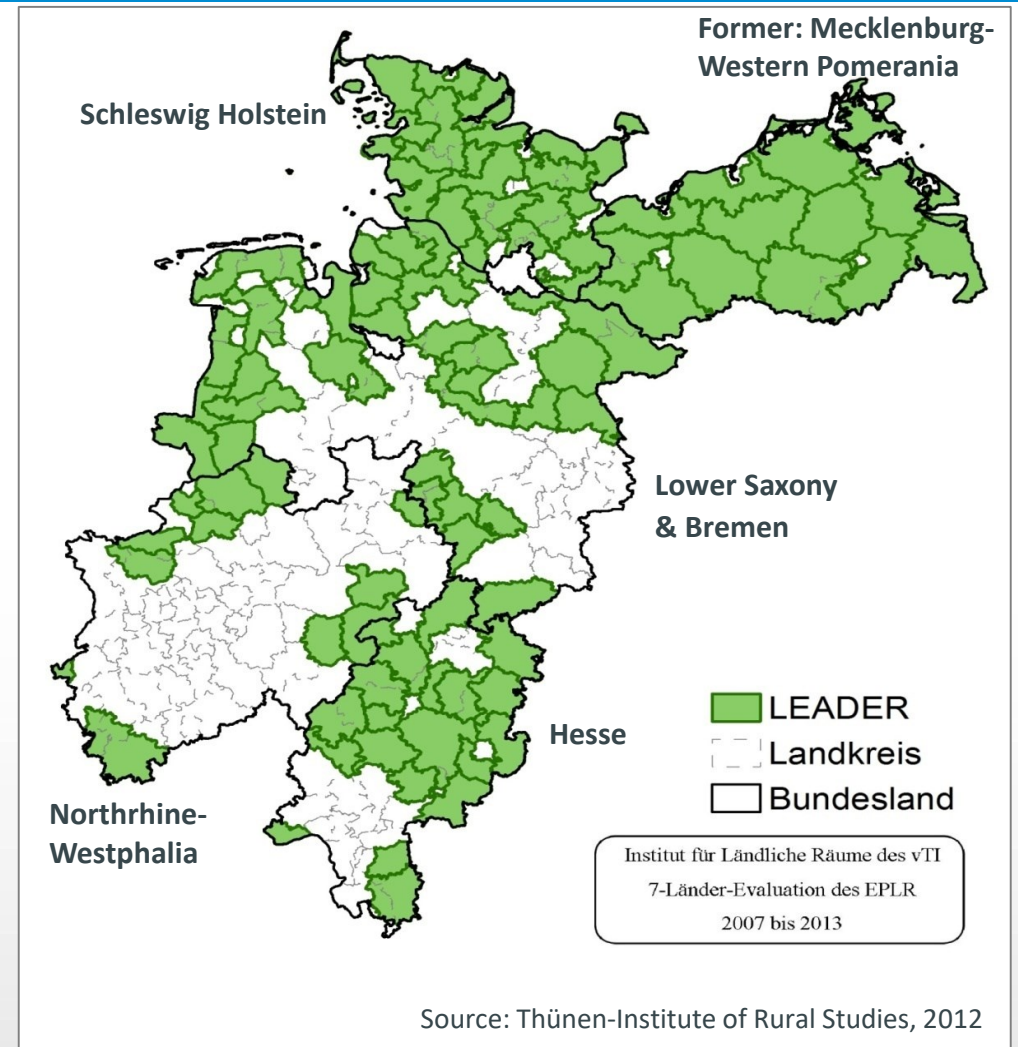
Virtual conference
28th March 2022

RSA Conference
Regions in Recovery Second Edition 2022

5-“Länder” Evaluation: Project Background

„Länder“ = „Bundesländer“
= federal states in Germany

- Analysing the **effects of financing rural development** on agriculture, the environment and **well-being/quality of life** in rural areas
- Evaluation of **Rural Development Programmes (RDPs)**
- Ongoing research: 2007 – 2016, 2016 – 2026
- **Mixed methods** approach:
 - Interviews with project initiators and government employees
 - Different surveys (written questionnaires, mostly as online surveys) with various stakeholders
 - Quantitative analyses of data from the funding databases



Outline

1. Gender related issues in planning for rural development
2. What is LEADER?
3. Research question / Focus
4. First results
 - Gender representation in LEADER
 - Effects of gender representation
5. Preliminary conclusion



Source: Manfred Bathke

1. Gender related issues in planning for rural development

In rural development planning, the issue of female representation is starting to become part of the agenda in Germany.

One readily available measure to capture the gender gap is the share of women compared to men in different fields.

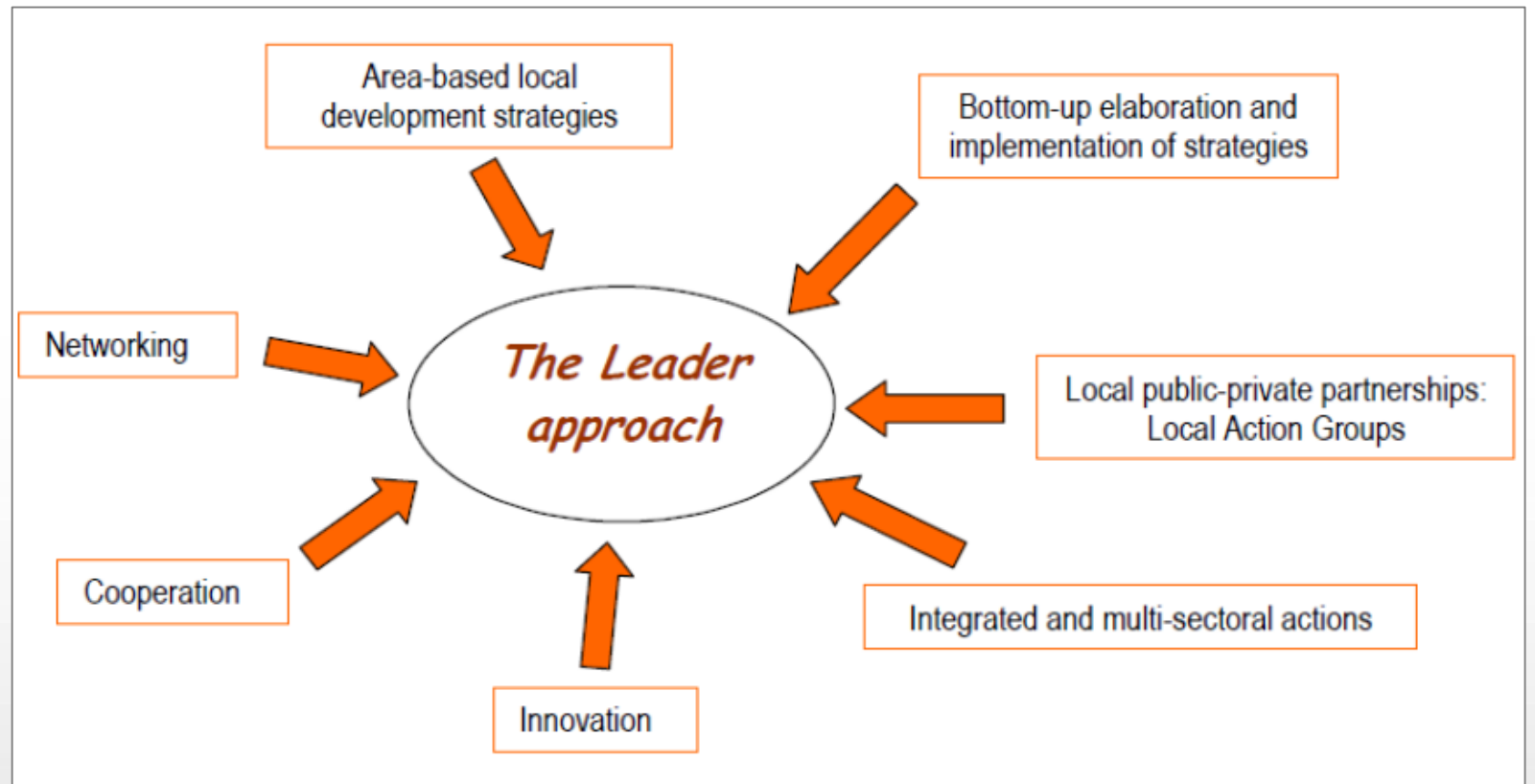
Research aim: To examine the topic of gender representation in rural development and the results and consequences arising from different programming strategies/ approaches, we focus on the share of women in decision-making bodies of Local Actions Groups (LAGs) as part of LEADER funding.

2. What is LEADER?

LEADER = „*Liaison entre actions de développement de l'économie rurale*“

- **Links between actions for the development of the rural economy**
- Synonym: CLLD (=Community-led local development); applicable for other EU funds
- EU funding to support rural development through locally initiated projects, decision making at local level
- Decision-making body (often with underrepresentation of females)

LEADER principles



Source: European Commission, 2006 (modified)

3. Research question / Focus of presentation

LEADER implementation occurs in a multilevel system

- Programme authorities set basic funding conditions (in line with EU requirements) to define the room of manoeuvre for LEADER / the LAGs.

Research questions I + II:

(I) “What is the share of females in the decision-making bodies of LAGs and how is this affected by regulations of program authorities?”

(II) “What are the effects of gender representation for decision-making within the LAGs?”

- **Research approach:** utilisation of insights from the evaluation of rural development programmes (RDP)
- **Study areas:** Hesse (HE), Lower Saxony (NI), North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), Schleswig-Holstein (SH) (115 LAGs)
- **State of knowledge:** An underrepresentation regarding the share of females is widely known in political processes (also for rural areas). Experimental and survey-based studies suggest there is a gender gap in social preferences and priorities with related consequences for decision-making



Angela Parszyk / pixelio.de

4. Results:

(I) “What is the share of females?”

Decision-making bodies in LEADER:

- Generally consisting of 10 to 30 members
- Main task is decision about funding of projects
- Usually share of 40-50% public sector, 50-60% civil society/business
- Public sector often „ex officio“ (thus leeway in selection is limited)
- Civil society/business: „sending decision“ by groups themselves, depending on position, experience and commitment to LEADER
- in both sectors more men than women dominate in leading positions
- in earlier funding periods often only 15-25% females, some LAGs without any women

Argumentations and options for improvement

The aim to support a higher share of women is based on different argumentations:

- fair representation
- development for all (different needs)
- include views of women and men (for this in literature a minimum representation of 3 persons per group is strongly recommended)

Possible regulations set by the *Länder*: most important are requirements/criteria for the approval of LAGs at start of funding period

Results:

(I) “What is the share of females?”

...Implementation in the federal states

Federal state ¹	HE	NI	NRW	SH
Regulation	No specific requirement (only EU framing)	„should“ be a gender balance	Fixed Quota of 33%, „should“ be a gender-balance	„should“ be a gender-balance
Results:	26 % (2020) 22 % (2017) 19 % (2013)	31 % (2020) 29 % (2017) 28 % (2013)	42 % (2020) 40 % (2017) 20 % (2013)	27 % (2020) 24 % (2017) 21 % (2013)

¹ Hesse (HE), Lower Saxony (NI), North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), Schleswig-Holsten (SH)

Only individuals with voting rights were counted

Source: Fynn/Pollermann (2022)

4. Results: I “What is the share of females?”

- In general, structural discrimination is also relevant in LEADER (Bock & Derzken 2008)
- Share of women in LAGs has increased in all federal states (but to different extents)
- If no action is taken („Waiting for the trend“) a gender balance would set in no earlier than 2050
- Changes also depend on general shifts in society
 - Taking a look at eastern Germany (former GDR) which has a historically higher participation of women in labour market and a higher share of females in LAGs nowadays (in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania often 50%)

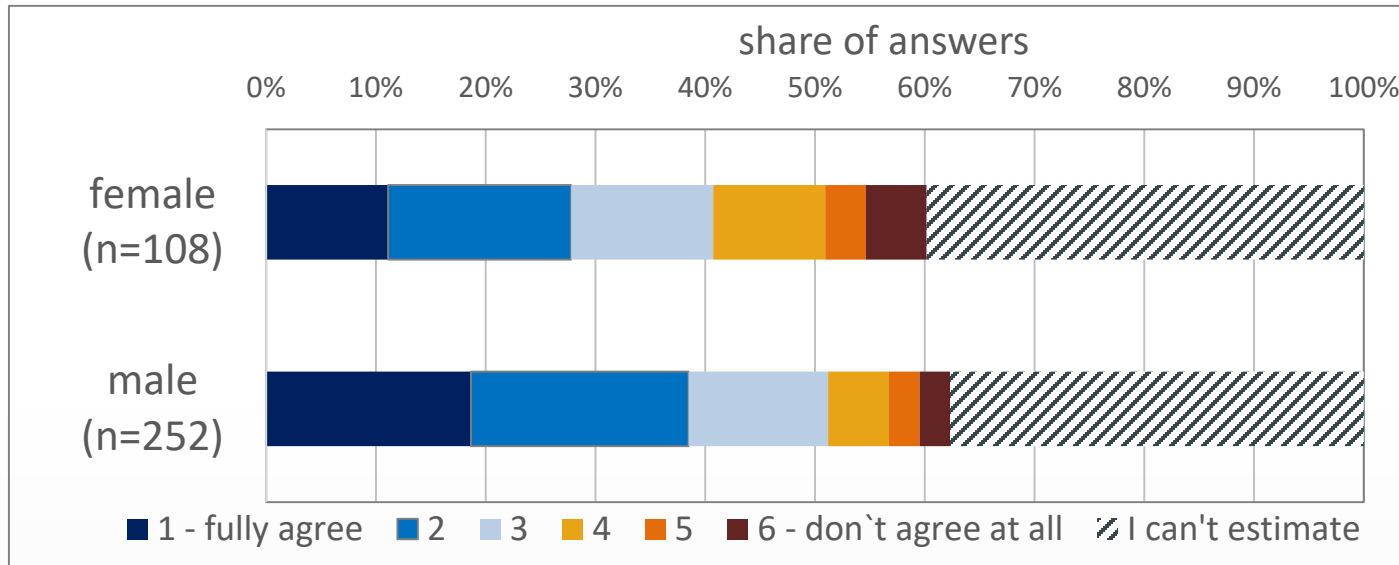
Effect of regulations

Regulations show expected results:

- „Should“ is not enough! (path dependency)
- Quota works!
 - The issue „quota“ always leads to intensive discussions, but in the end a 33% quota was effective and not that difficult to implement (e.g. not mentioned in open questions in surveys of LAG-management)
 - a 50% quota would probably be more difficult to fullfill (ex-officio, high share of men in key positions of rural society (although sometimes it only comes down to the search effort))

II „What are the effects of gender representation ...”

Estimations of LAG-members regarding project selection: „Regarding project contents gender justice is taken into account“.

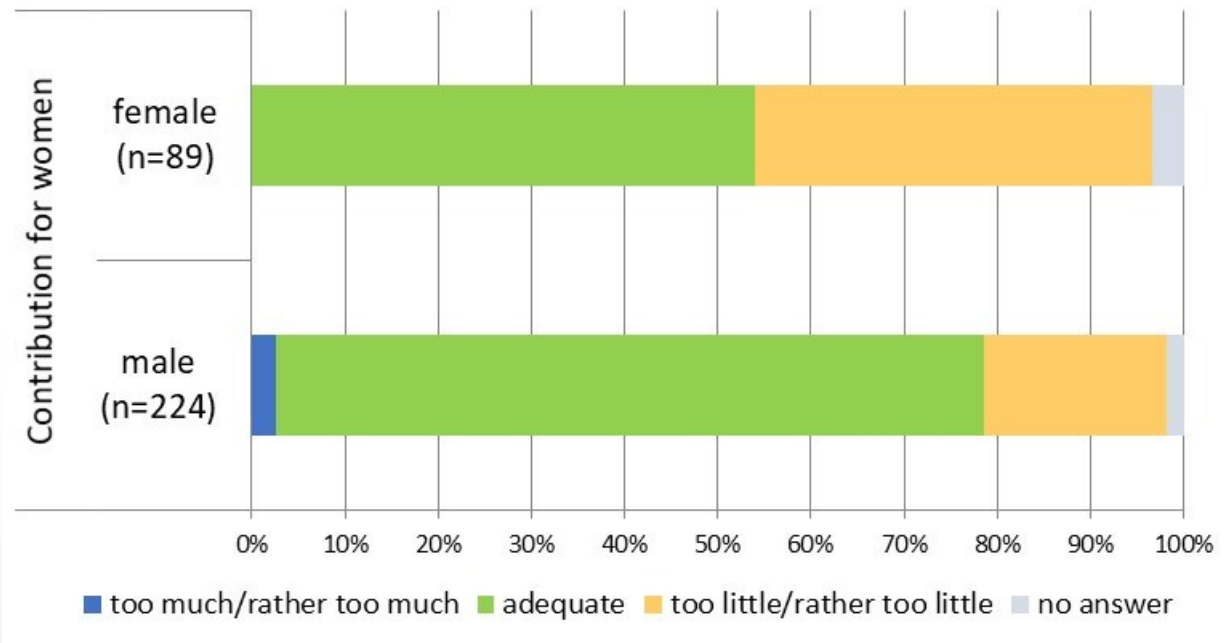


Source: LAG member survey 2021, Schleswig-Holstein (Fynn/Pollermann) / Raue (2021)

- Expected differences between men/women, based on different aspirations?
- Both genders have a very high share of „I can't estimate“ => clarification/ awareness rising needed !

Consideration of different target groups: male/female view

How are the following target groups (here: women) taken into account during the implementation of the local development strategy?

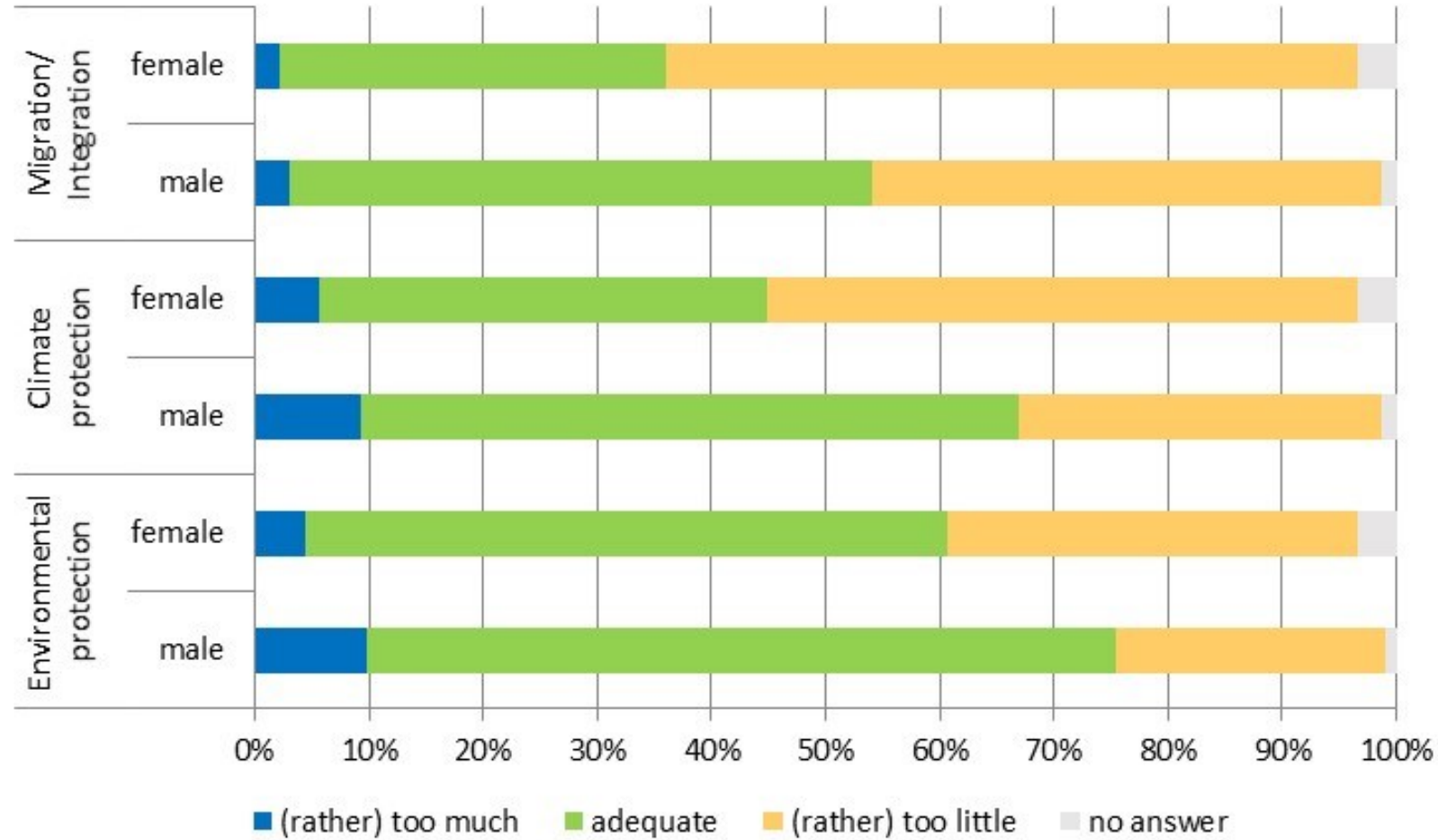


- 43 % of women, but only 20% of men estimate that the target group „women“ is considered: „too little“ / „rather too little“
- The difference is significant and remains so even regardless of the institutional background of the respondents

Source: LAG member survey 2018, Hesse

Consideration of different topics: male/female view

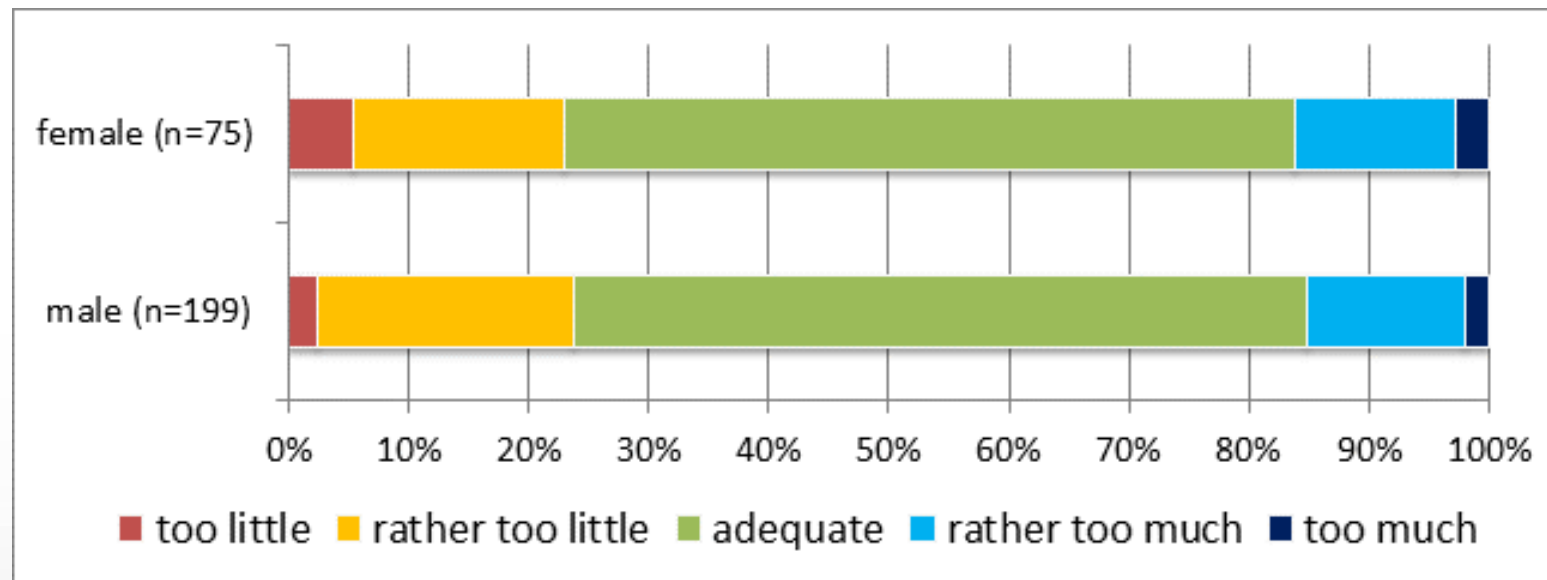
How are the following topics taken into account during the implementation of the local development strategy?



Source: LAG member survey Hessen 2018 / Raue 2022

But: Results for climate change in another federal state ...

Estimations of LAG members regarding consideration of different topics: „To which extent are different topics taken into account“ ? Results for: climate change / energy



Source: LAG member survey 2018, Schleswig-Holstein (Fynn/Pollermann)

Based on literature, differences could be expected (higher aspiration for climate by women), but no significance

Conclusion / recommendations for balanced participation of men and women

- In a bottom-up approach like LEADER, female participation should be fostered by „top-down“ regulations (quota) at beginning of the EU funding period
- Recommendation for LAG approval criteria:
 - fixed quota of 33%
 - Opt-out should be allowed only very restrictively (for approval criteria: „hidden in a footnote“). Nonetheless, the possibility to opt-out is reasonable as it prevents relevant (male) LAG members from previous funding periods from being dismissed just for the sake of gender balance
- There is a need to discuss topics surrounding gender representation/justice as a way of fostering capacity building and to raise awareness in local communities and within programme authorities
- Outlook 2023 - 2027: No quota regulation on EU-level or federal level in Germany, but it is in discussion; some more federal states to adopt quota;
post 2027: Policy process starts soon

Literature

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- Raue, P. (2021): Beitrag des Landesprogramms ländlicher Raum (LPLR) des Landes Schleswig-Holstein 2014 bis 2022 zur Gleichstellung von Männern und Frauen. 5-Länder Evaluation 5/2021
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