

Local concepts for carbon-neutrality and 100% renewables - a chance for sustainable consumption patterns?



ERSCP 2017
Skiathos Oct 1-5, 2017
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The IOEW - Institute for Ecological Economy Research



- IOEW is a leading scientific institute
- practice-oriented research for a sustainable economy
- Founded in 1985
- non-for-profit
- Objective: to devise strategies and approaches for viable, long-term economic activity – for an economy which enables a good life and preserves natural resources
- In 2000 recognition by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) as “center of excellence in social-ecological research“
- More than 500 completed research and consulting projects



Content

- 1. Project background**
- 2. Analysis of climate concepts**
- 3. Survey among districts and municipalities**
- 4. Conclusions**



BACKGROUND



The project

- **Client: German Federal Environmental Agency (UBA)**
- **Partner:**
 - Institute for Ecological Economy Research (IÖW) Berlin/Heidelberg/DE
- **Duration: 09/2016 - 10/2018**



The project: Basic idea

- **Climate neutral districts / 100% renewables districts as local/regional approaches/strategies for a transformation of the energy system**
- **Sustainable consumption (SC) as an approach to transform consumption practises of private consumers**
- **Main hypotheses:**
 - Sustainable consumption constitutes one element on the path towards a climate neutral district/municipality
 - Strategies of regions/municipalities including climate-neutral goals and sustainable consumption can rarely be found
 - Such regional/local strategies could enrich and push discussions and further strategies supporting sustainable consumption patters
 - Sustainable consumption research (&policy) should consider this



The project: questions & methods applied

– Research questions:

- Identification of the prio activities (from point of view of regions/municipalities) to strengthen sustainable consumption patterns considering explicit targets
- Development of politcal recommendations for a involvement of regions/municipalities for the implementation of the German „National programmes for sustainable consumption“
- Is the approach „Climate neutrale region“ as a meta strategy adequate to strengthen sustainable consumption patterns?

– Methods applied:

- Desk research among districts, cities and municipalities with climate strategies (n = 89)
- Online quantitative survey among them (n = 154)
- Qualitative interviews (still ongoing) (n = 5-7)
- Expert workshop (foreseen spring 2018)



ANALYSIS OF CLIMATE CONCEPTS



Desk analysis

- **Desk research based analysis of 89 climate concepts**
- **Focus:**
 - Which need fields are dealt within the concepts?
 - Which consumption-oriented measures are dealt with?
- **Need fields based „National programme on sustainable consumption“ (2016) of German Federal Government**

– **Domains:**

- nutrition/food
- leisure
- clothing
- work
- energy consumption in households
- housing
- mobility
- funds

– **Measure types:**

- education
- information
- labels
- production (especially prosuming)
- GPP
- field research
- financial aids
- monitoring



The sample

Different approaches (in Germany):

- „**Masterplan plan**“ cities/districts, i.e. receiving subsidies by German Ministry for the Environment for planning a reduction of their GHG-emissions by 95% up to 2050
- „**100% renewables regions**“, i.e. pursuing the goal of a complete energy self-sufficiency
- „**Energy cities**“, i.e. implementing creative or innovative measures for an expansion of renewables
- „**Bioenergy-cities**“, i.e. generating structures for production and use of biomass

Identification of relevant sample:

- 311 districts/cities identified with a concept
- 160 districts/cities with concept accessible
- **89 districts/cities pursuing a climate neutrality objective (i.e.: -40%GHG emissions up to 2020 and/or -80% up to 2050) in their concepts**
→ **our sample for deeper analysis**



Results of desk analysis I – need fields

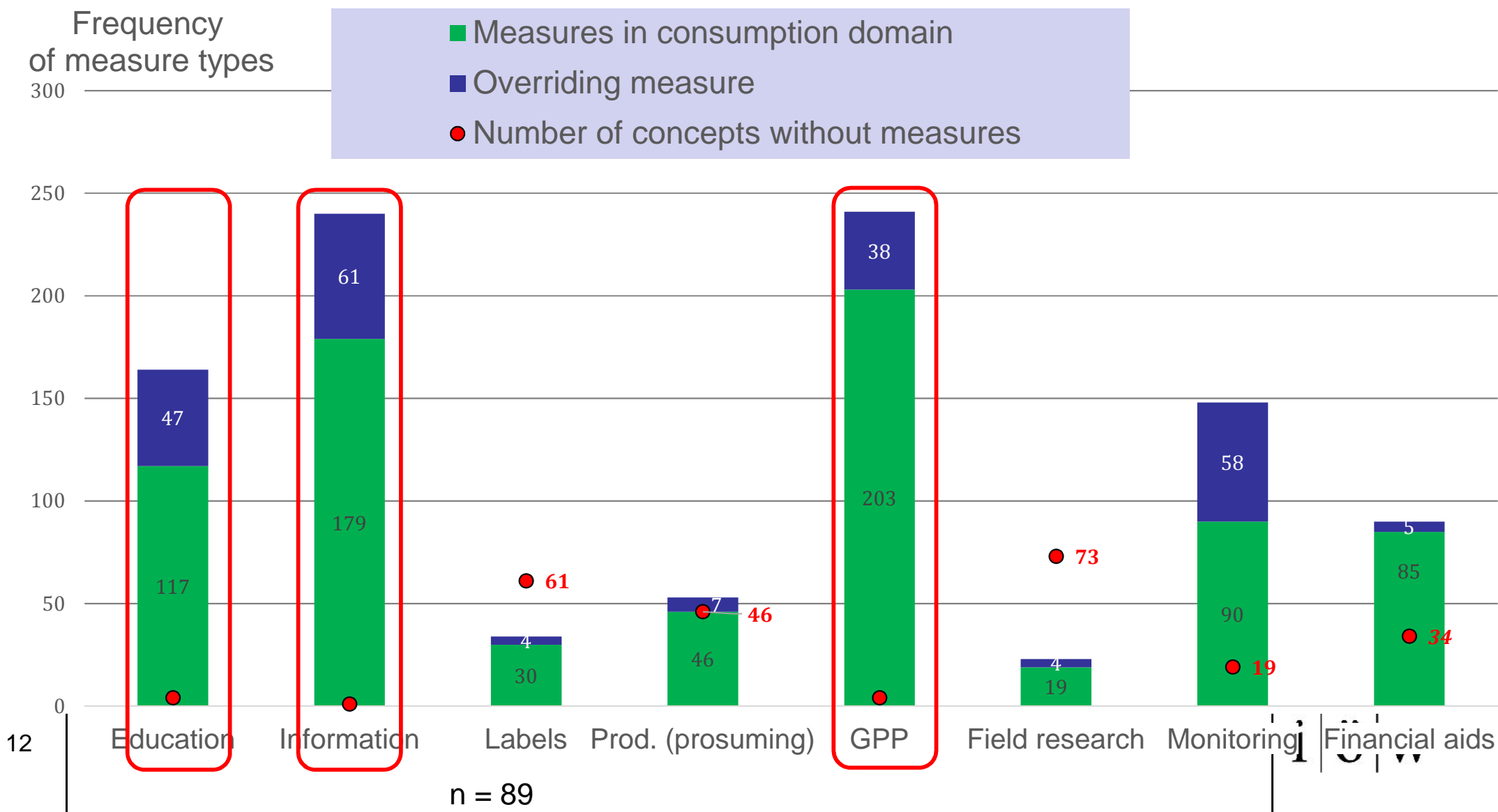
Focus: Consideration of need fields within the concepts

Need fields	General mention	Concepts with measures	Concepts without measures
Nutrition/food	30	28	61
Leisure	19	16	73
Clothing	1	1	88
Work	49	47	42
Energy consumption in private households	89	89	0
Housing	2	1	88
Mobility	84	81	8
Funds	30	3	86



Results of desk analysis II - measures

Focus: Number of identified consumption-oriented measures according to measure types





SURVEY AMONG DISTRICTS, CITIES & MUNICIPALITIES



Survey

- **Sample: 154 districts, cities and municipalities with accessible climate concepts**
- **Online survey May-July 2017**
- **Questionnaire 15-20 minutes**
- **Participants: n = 117, of which 85 were usable**
- **Return rate: 55%**
- **Target audience: Responsible climate managers within districts/cities/municipalities**



Results of online-survey I – 3 types

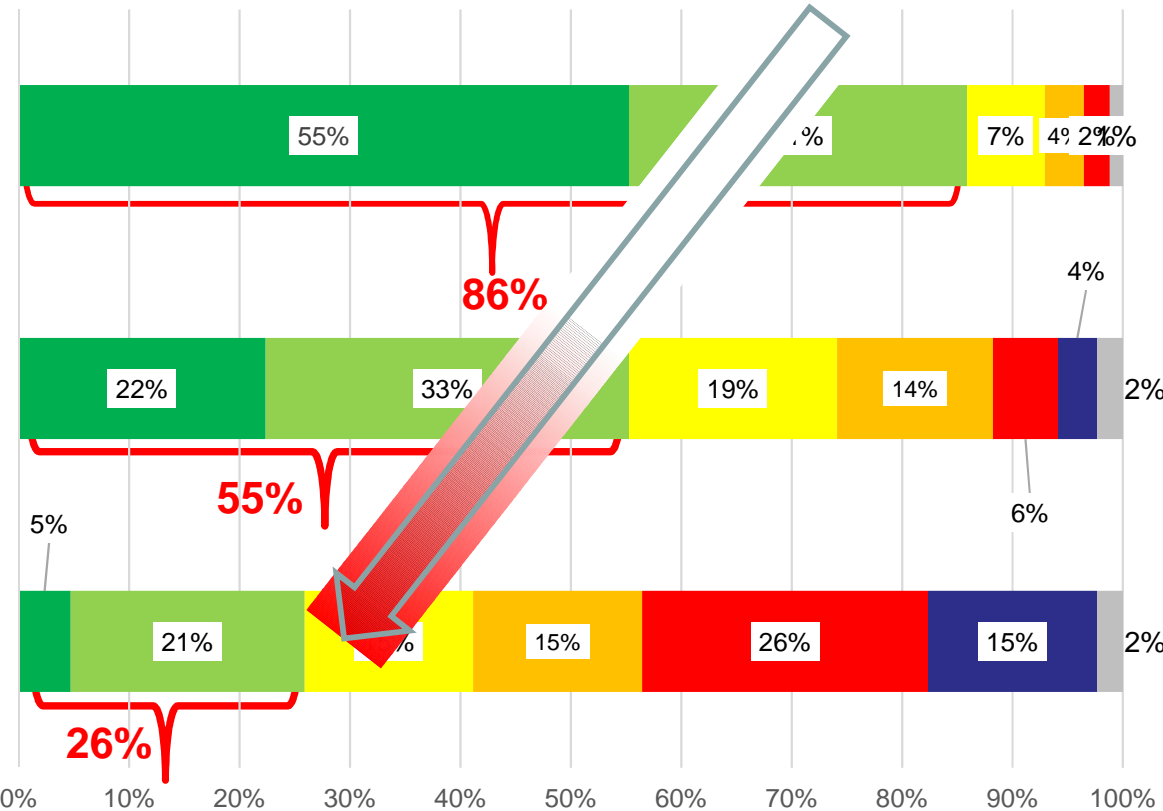
- **„Zero“-state**, i.e. municipalities **without** consumption-related measures neither planned nor implemented – **N = 25**
- **Beginning state**, i.e. municipalities which **plan** consumption-related measures – **N = 13**
- **Advanced state**, i.e. municipalities which **implement** consumption-related measures – **N = 47**

SUM: 85



Results of online-survey II – strategic approach

Importance of participation of consumers, NGO and CSO to reach climate objectives



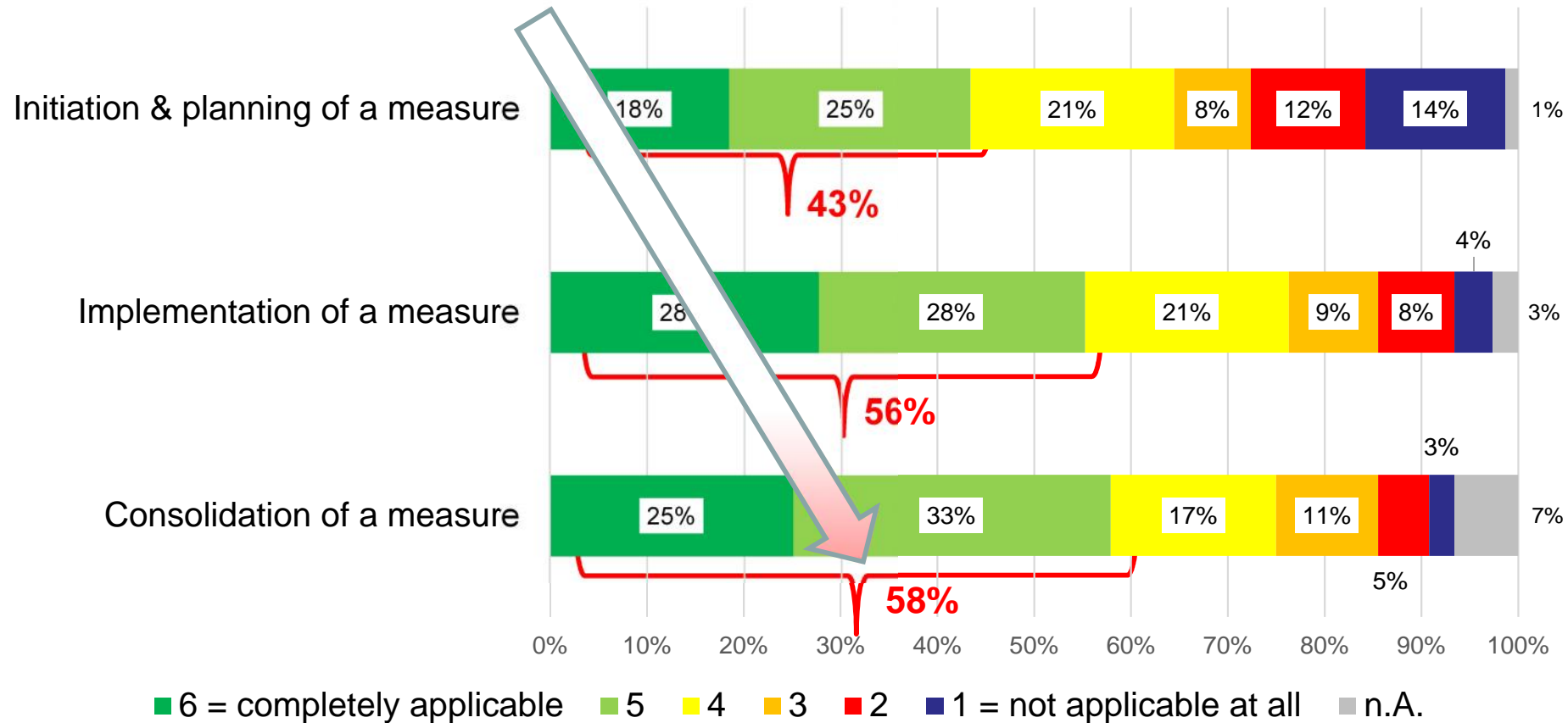
■ 6 = very high ■ 5 ■ 4 ■ 3 ■ 2 ■ 1 = very low ■ n.A.

N = 85

→ High importance of participation of consumers / NGOs / CSOs
→ Modest importance of support of sustainable consumption



Results of online-survey III – time of participation

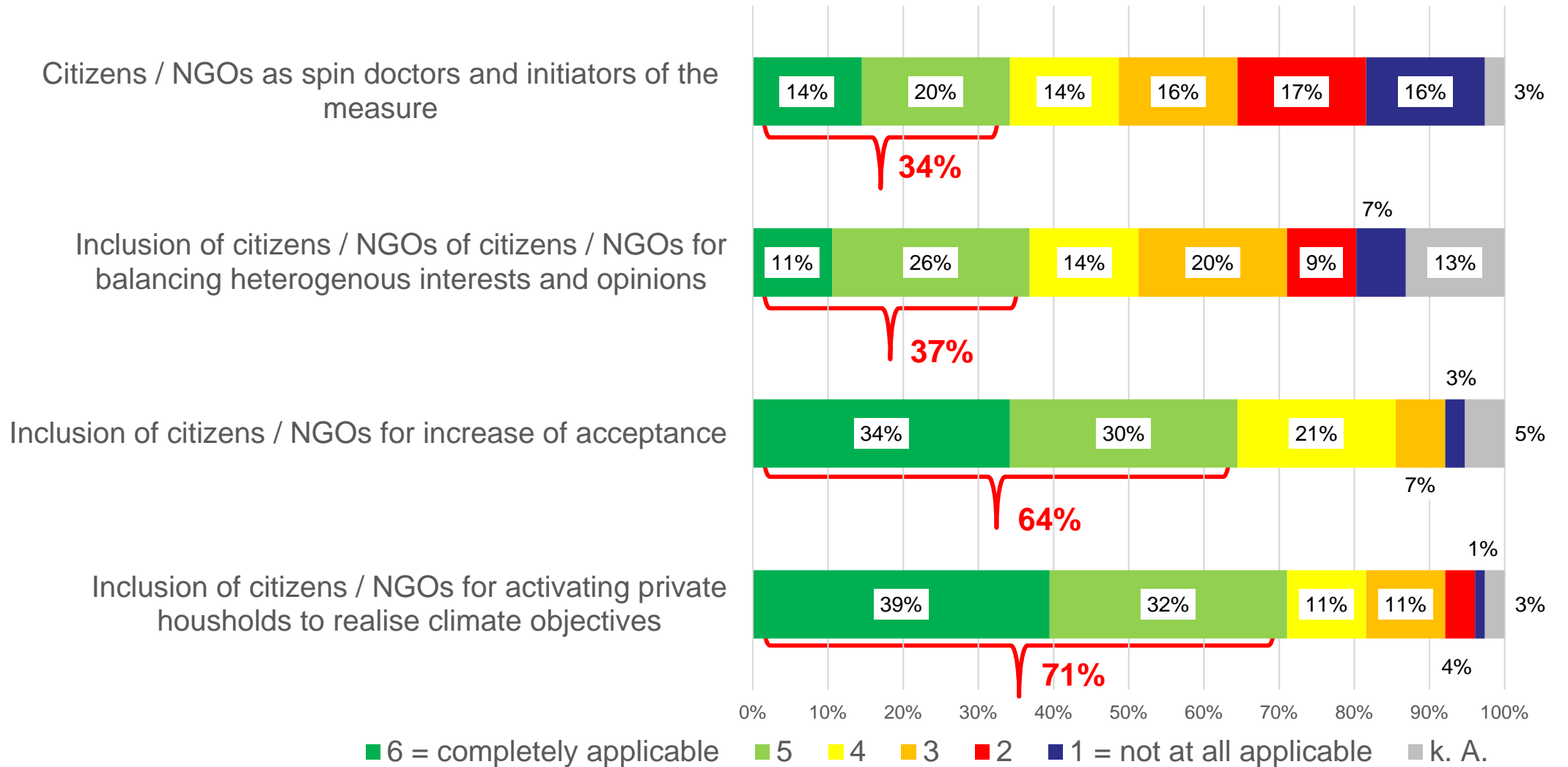


N = 85

→ Importance of participation: Modest at planning, significant at consolidation



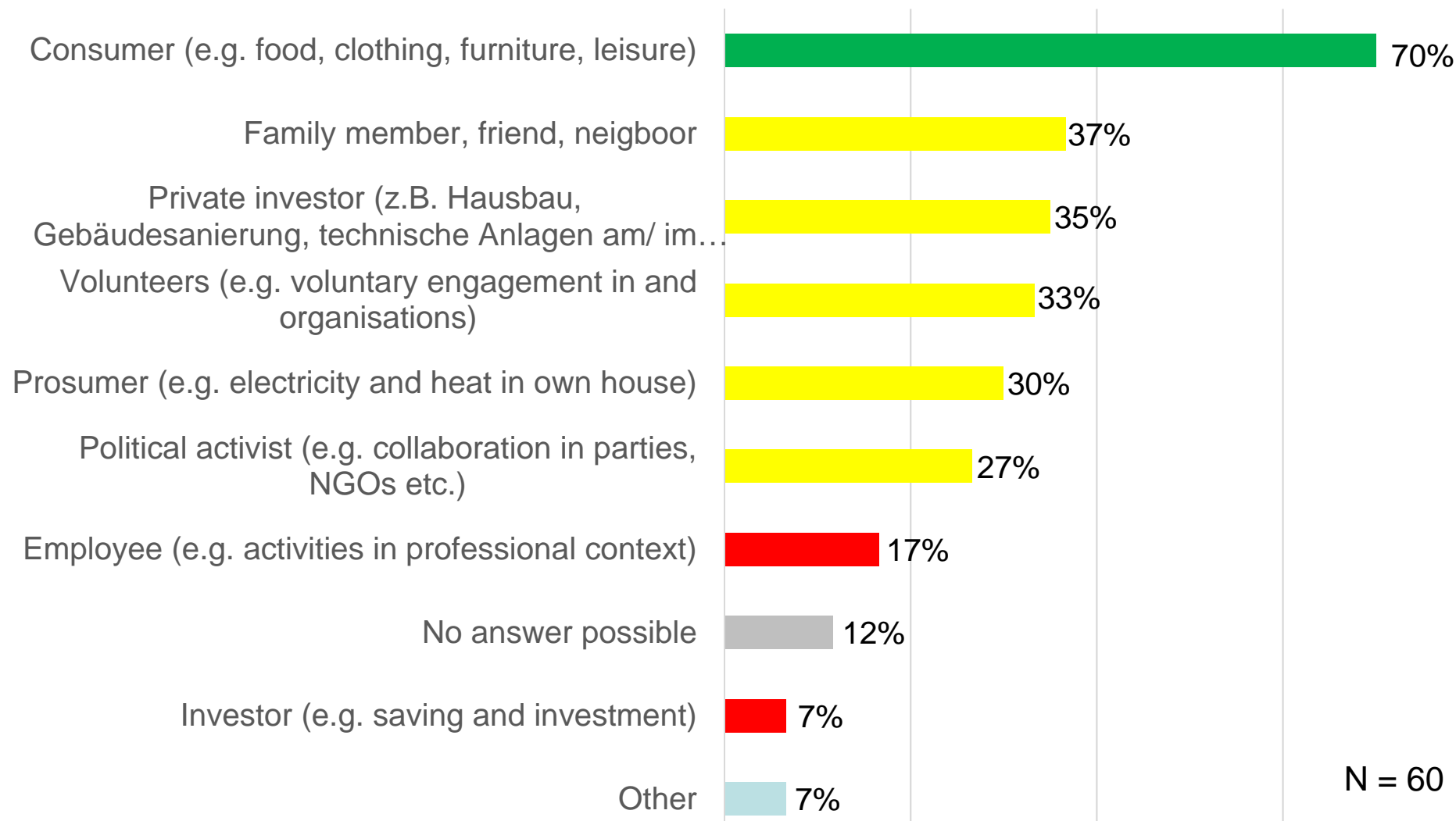
Results of online-survey IV – spins & participation



→ Spins modest (~34%)
 → Dominance of acceptance or activation of consumer role (64-71%)



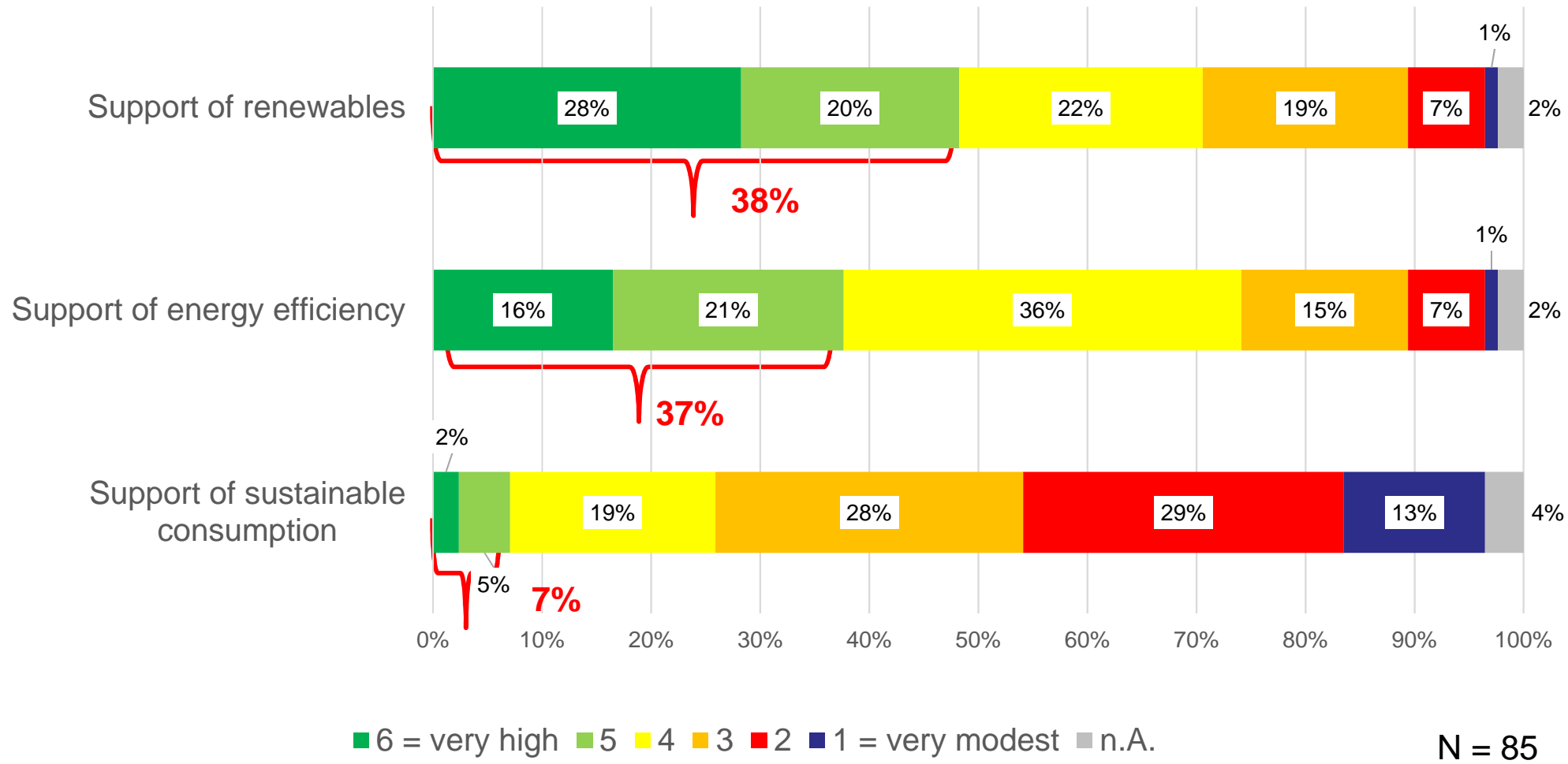
Results of online-survey V – adressed roles of citizen



→ Main emphasis on role of citizen as consumer
→ Modest / insufficient perception of other roles



Results of online-survey VI – effectivity of local politics



→ Effectivity of focus on support of SC is regarded as very modest
→ „Traditional“ approaches are regarded as more effective

Results of online-survey VII – reasons for non or modest consideration of sustainable consumption



N = 85

→ Personnel and financial resources as barriers (all)
 → Responsibility for topic („zero“ state municipalities)



Conclusions

- **„Misperception“ due to principle of territoriality of GHG statistics (focus on GHG emissions within the considered territory)**
 - „exclusion“ of relevant fields outside („grey energy“) → provide databases
- **Contradiction between participation of private consumers and recognition of sustainable consumption as strategic approach**
 - Strengthening of strategic alliances between consumption communities and climate protection communities
- **Citizens and roles**
 - From acceptance and target groups → spin doctors
 - From implementation → initiation
 - From consumers → other roles
- **Formal and personnel competences**
 - Supporting bottom up approaches
 - Training and exemplary good practises
- **Altogether:**
 - Considerable potential to strengthen sustainable climate-neutral consumption within climate protection strategies
 - SC policies need to form new alliances and use new arguments

Thank you for your attention.

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October 2017

