SMART SPECIALISATION IN PRACTICE
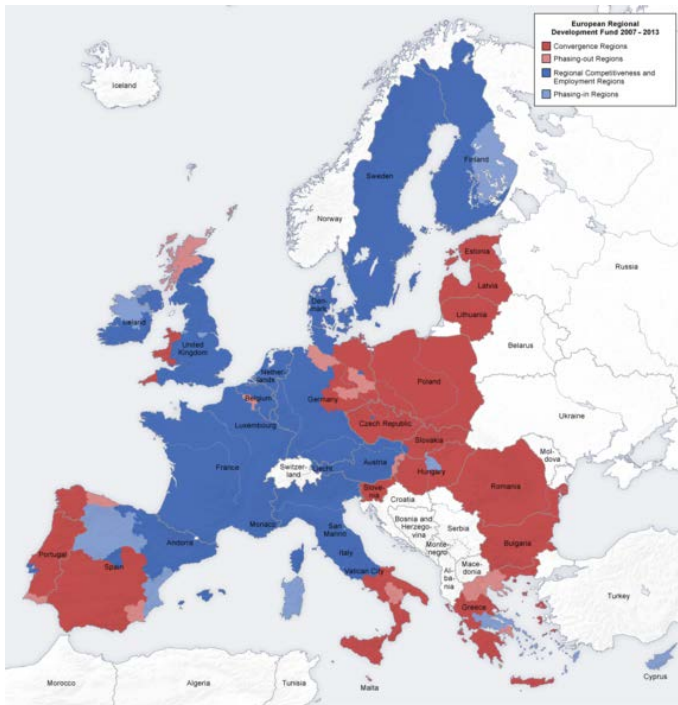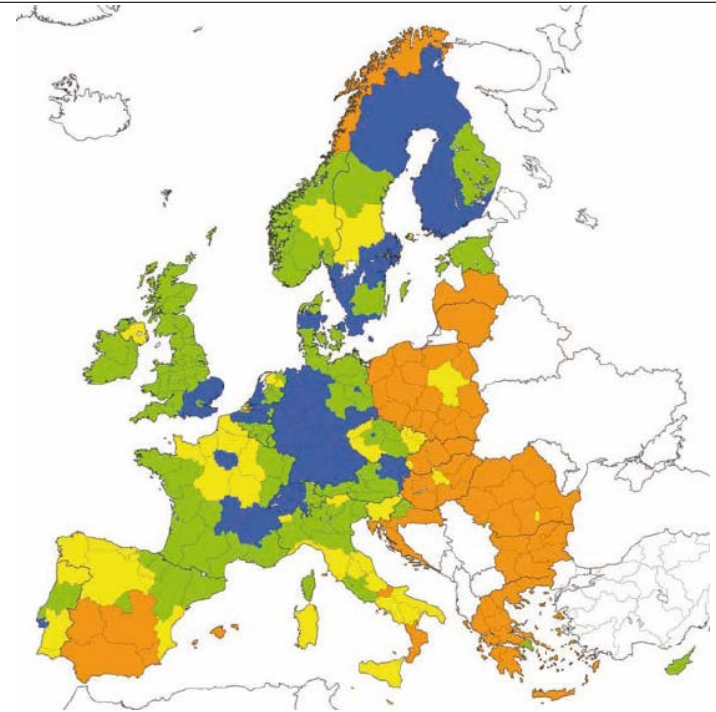
"one year onwards" – a follow-up to our 2013 survey (link)

= final results =

Source: DG Regio Website

Source: Regional Innovation Scoreboard

Our Motivation

➔ Beyond general conceptual considerations regarding the best possible approach – determine to what extent the policy agenda is taking root in practical policy making

- Understand the state of play regarding the submission and approval of RIS3 strategies, follow up on our 2013 survey

- Understand whether the overall notions of the RIS3 guidelines and the Sevilla Discussions have – in the policy maker's opinion – been captured in the actual strategy documents

- Understand to what extent a linkage has been established between RIS3 Strategies (as now submitted) and the to be approved Operational Programmes

- Understand how regional (or national) policy makers in charge of RIS3 processes are approaching the new challenge of developing comprehensive monitoring systems for their novel innovation strategies

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Our Evidence

- Survey of **relevant regional innovation policy makers and selected consultants** across all 28 member states (Online Survey, Questback EFS)

- Information collected during the period from early **May 2014** to late **August 2014** ➔ **a follow up to our 2013 study**

- **Who is a relevant policy maker?**
  - Despite much improved coverage: Far from all are listed on the S3 Platform
  - Managing authorities may or not be the right addressees
  - Factual responsibilities have changed since 2013 due to elections, reorganisation etc.
  ➔ The complete sample of the 2013 was re-used, but substantially complemented

- **Over 1,000 potential respondents contacted > 160 started to answer** and **more than 80 completed the questionnaire in full**

- Reference: around 230 ‚standard' OPs (nat. or reg.), less managing authorities

- 65 regional and 5 national level representatives completed the questionnaire in full, 47 regional and 17 national level representatives answered some questions
  ➔ fairly limited 'double counts' per region*

*although the total number of duplications is notable with 39, 31 of those are incomplete cases which, as anecdotal evidence and the pattern of drop-outs suggests are often due to internal delegation, i.e. cases in which two or three persons from a region looked at the first page and then decided which of them should fill in the questionnaire

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Coverage
(Regional Distribution of Responses)

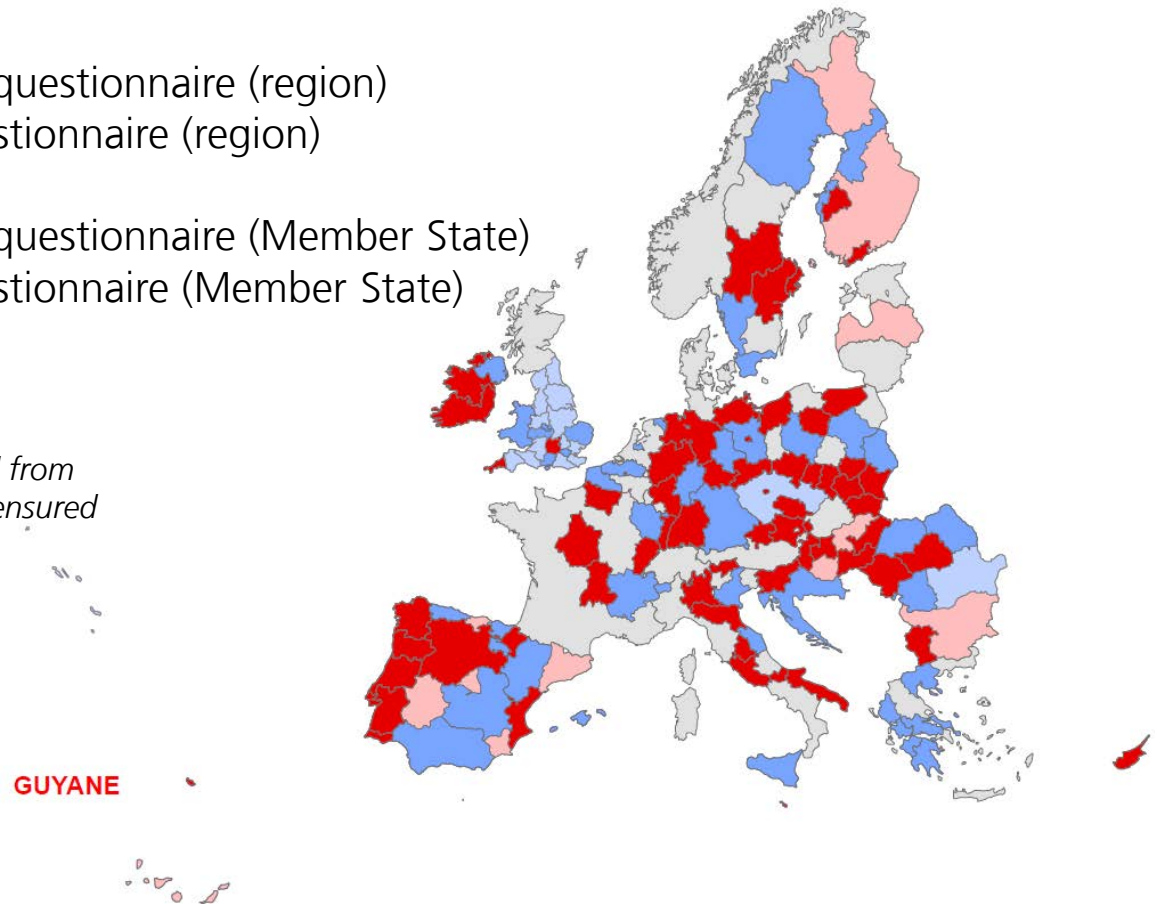dark blue: partially completed questionnaire (region)
dark red: fully completed questionnaire (region)

light blue: partially completed questionnaire (Member State)
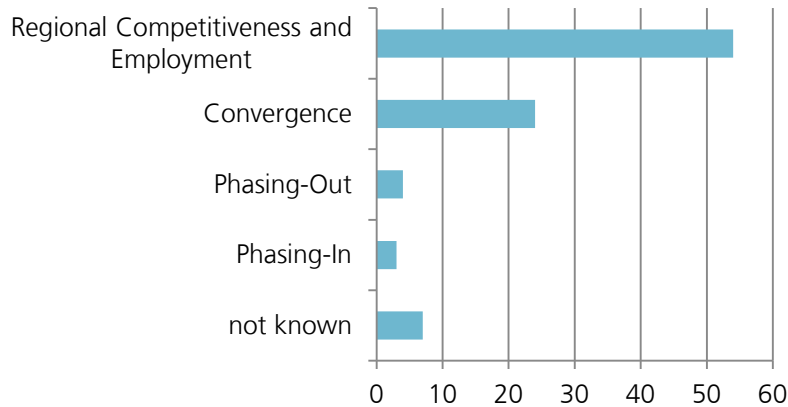light red: fully completed questionnaire (Member State)

grey: not taken part

*the information on coverage is separated from
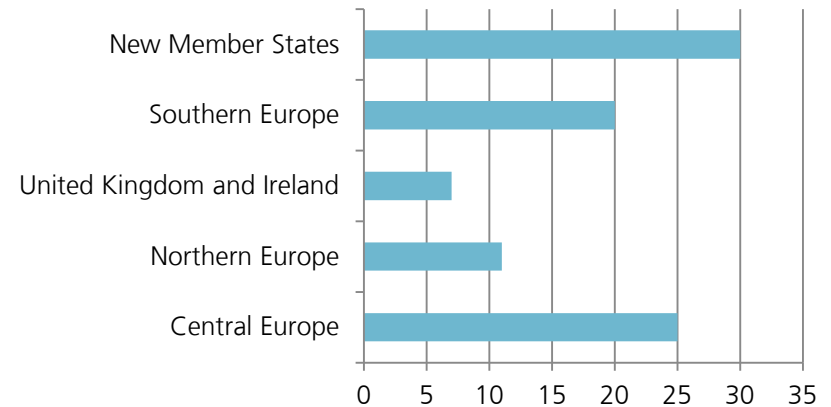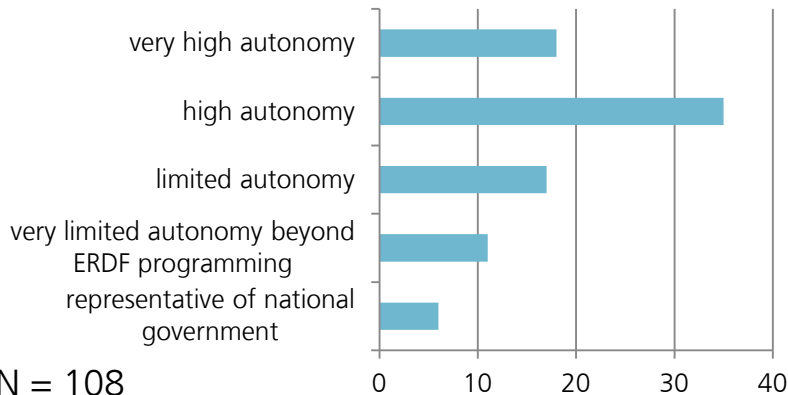the actual survey data, full anonymity is ensured*

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Coverage
(Respondents by Characteristics)

Support Category of Region 2007-13

- Regional Competitiveness and Employment
- Convergence
- Phasing-Out
- Phasing-In
- not known

Group of Member States

- New Member States
- Southern Europe
- United Kingdom and Ireland
- Northern Europe
- Central Europe

Autonomy of Region

- very high autonomy
- high autonomy
- limited autonomy
- very limited autonomy beyond ERDF programming
- representative of national government

N = 108

Role of Respondent in RIS3 Process

- responsible for the RIS3 process within the administration
- responsible for the RIS3 process outside of the administration
- acquainted with the RIS3 process within the administration
- acquainted with the RIS3 process outside of the administration
- other

N = 108

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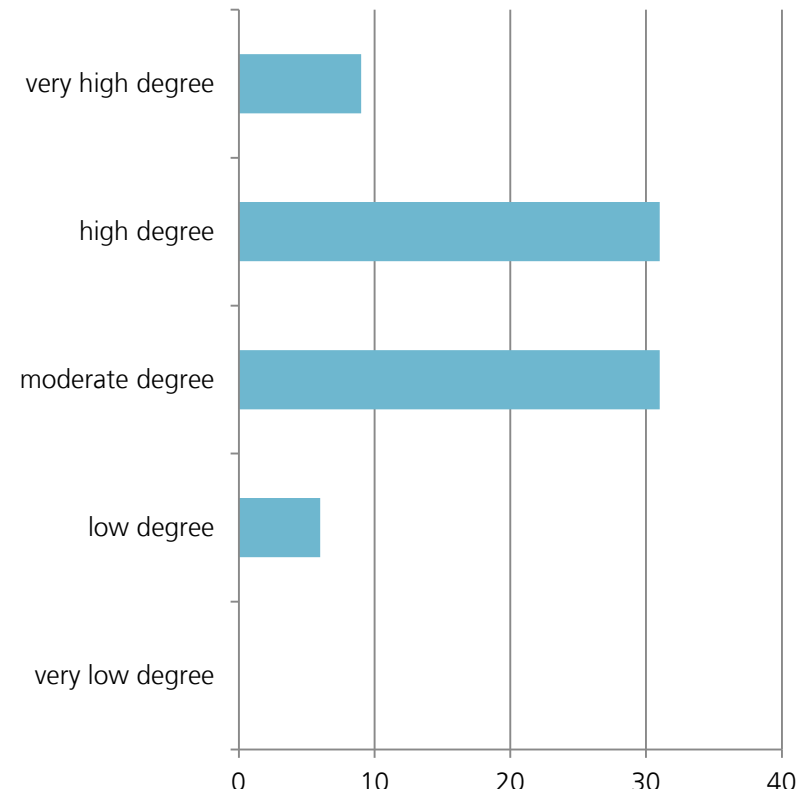ISI
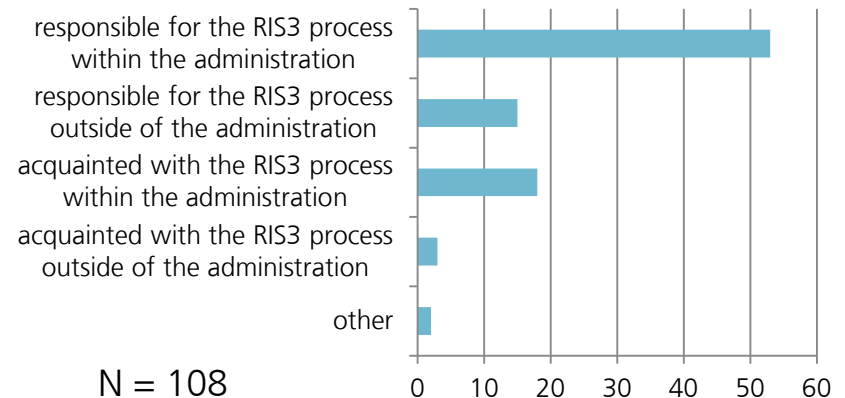
General Belief in Political Strategies: Reasonably High – for Policy and for Impact

Potential of the RIS3 Process to Prompt Changes in Support Policy

Degree	Value
very high degree	5
high degree	32
moderate degree	29
low degree	9
very low degree	2
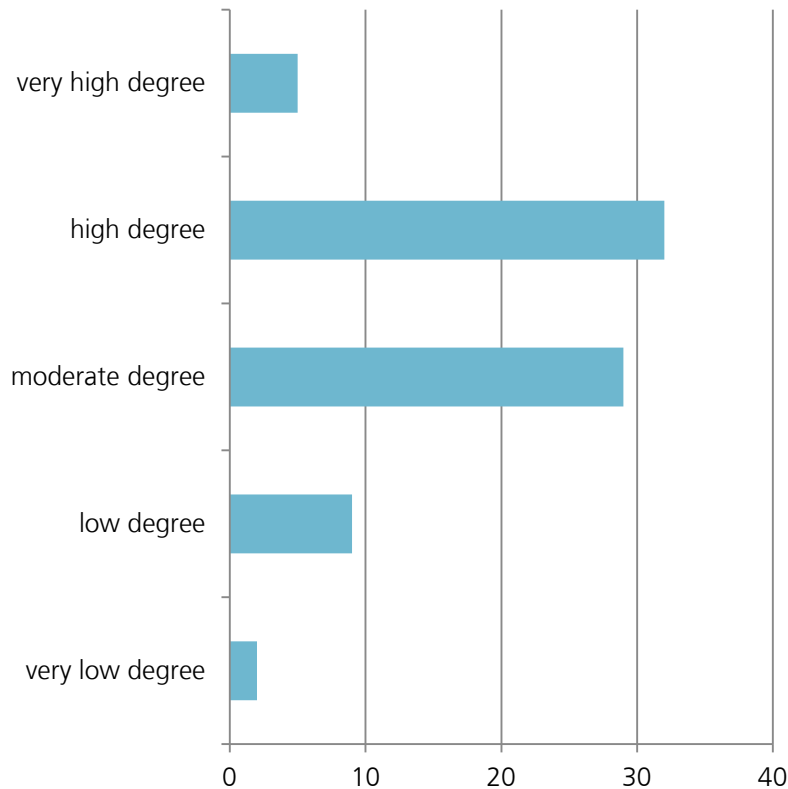
N = 92

General Potential of Innovation Strategies to Prompt Economic Transformation

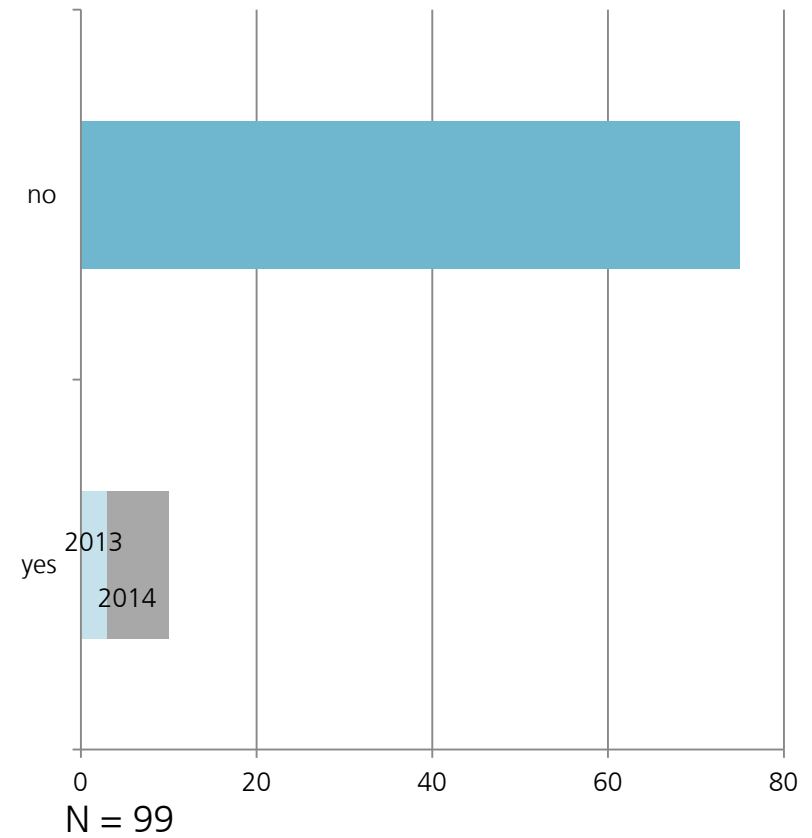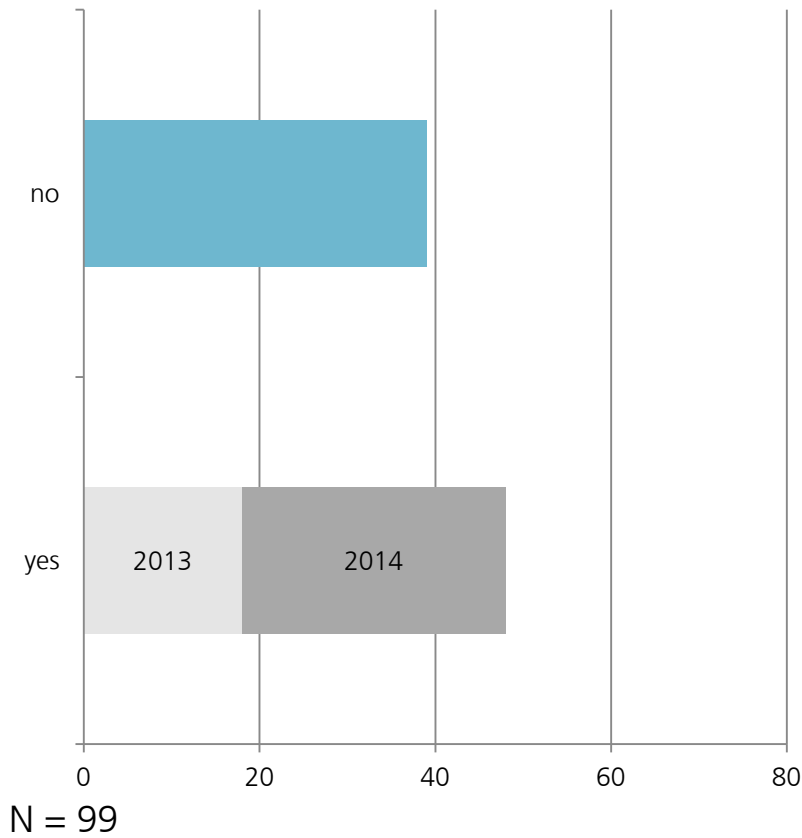| Degree	Value
very high degree	9
high degree	31
moderate degree	31
low degree	6
very low degree	0

N = 92

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State of Play with Regard to RIS3 Strategies: Advancing but far from Completed

…strategy **submitted** to EC

…strategy **approved** by EC

no	
yes	2013 2014

N = 99

no	
yes	2013 2014

N = 99

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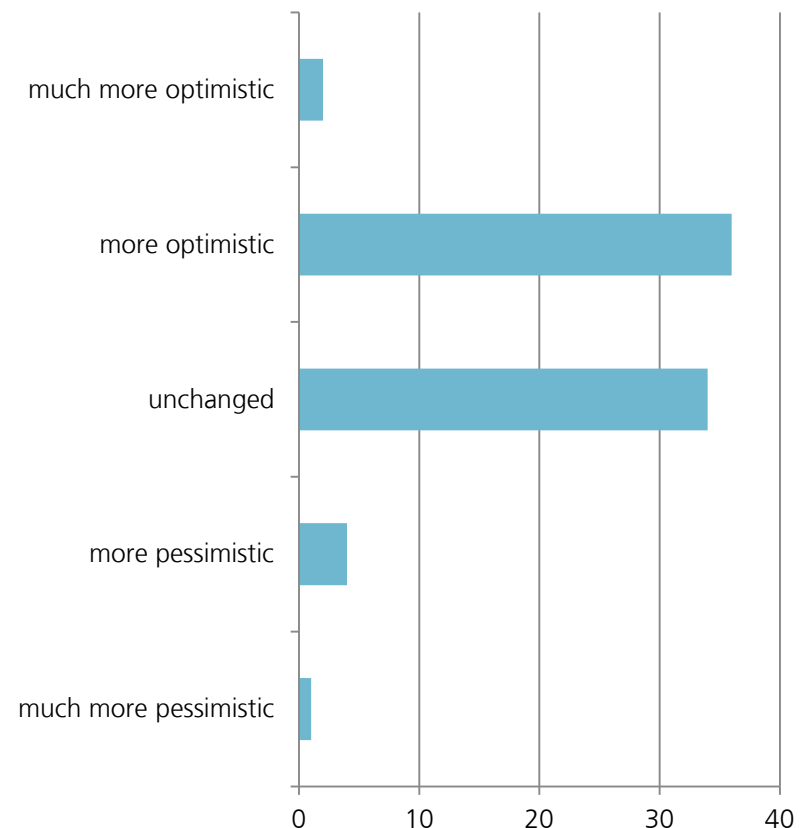# RIS3 Process is Perceived more Positively than One Year Ago

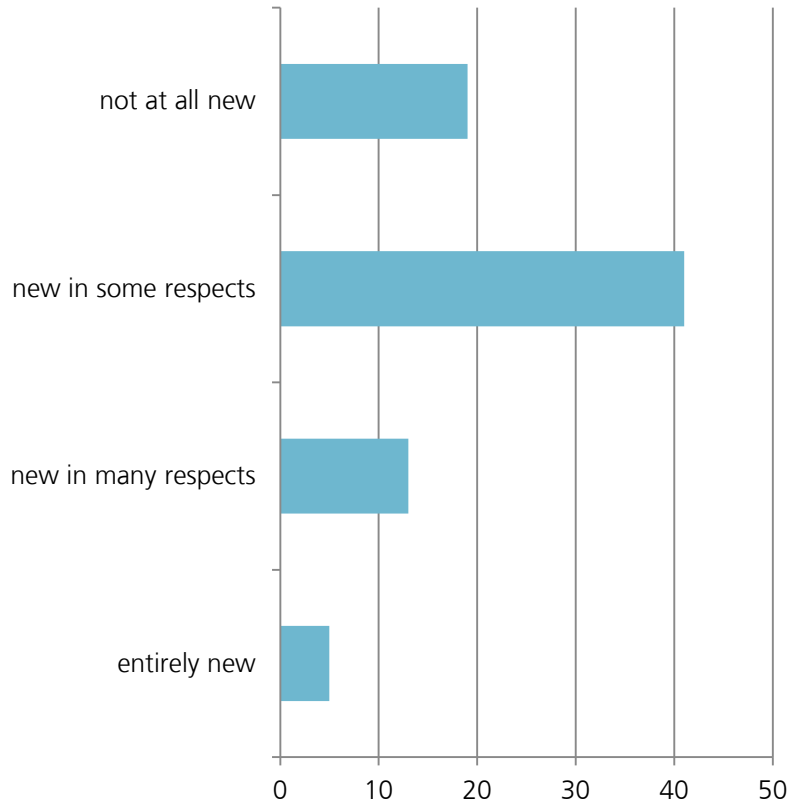Feeling that Process is Imposed
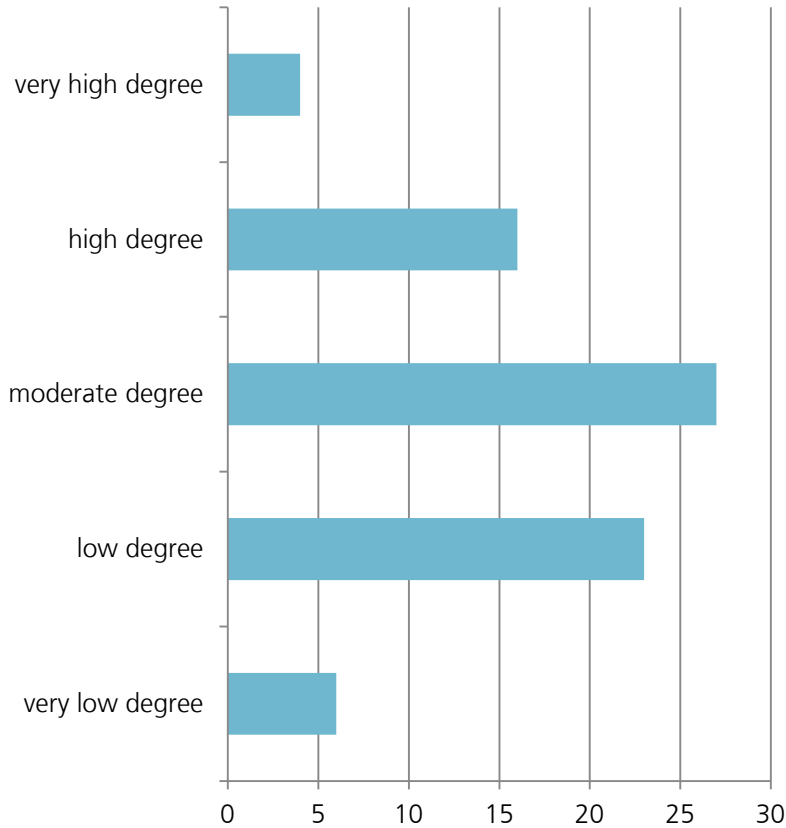
Feeling about Process compared to 1 Year Ago
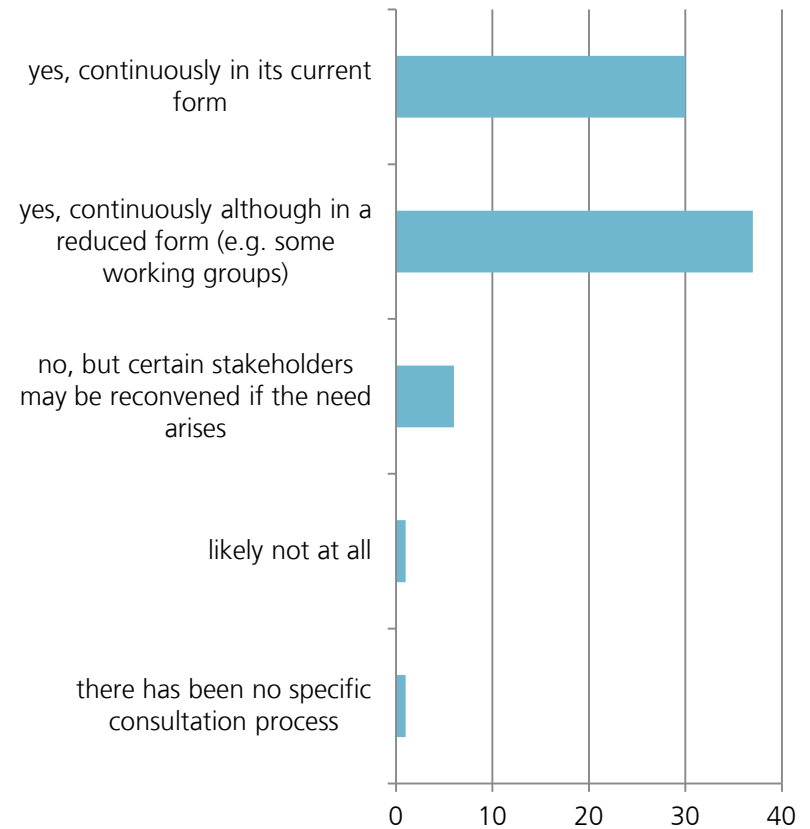
N = 92

N = 92

EDP is not Entirely Novel as an Approach but the Transformation Seems Lasting

Degree of Novelty of Planning Approach
(vis-a-vis regional / national traditions)

N = 91

Degree to which EDP will be Continued

N = 92

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Key Notions of the RIS3 Guidelines have been Considered in Strategy Development

...a more future-oriented analysis of regional challenges and potentials

...the role of "enabling" - i.e. modern, general purpose - technologies in traditional sectors

...connecting existing European Research Infrastructures (e.g. ESFRI) to the regional economy

...an outward-looking, international, rather than inward-looking, purely regional approach

...relevant societal challenges rather than "fashionable" technologies

...engaging, leveraging the knowledge base of the private-sector, specifically SME

...the role of non-technological innovation (service, marketing, organisational innovation)

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90%

N = 88

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Number of Priorities:
A Clear Focus Seems Attained

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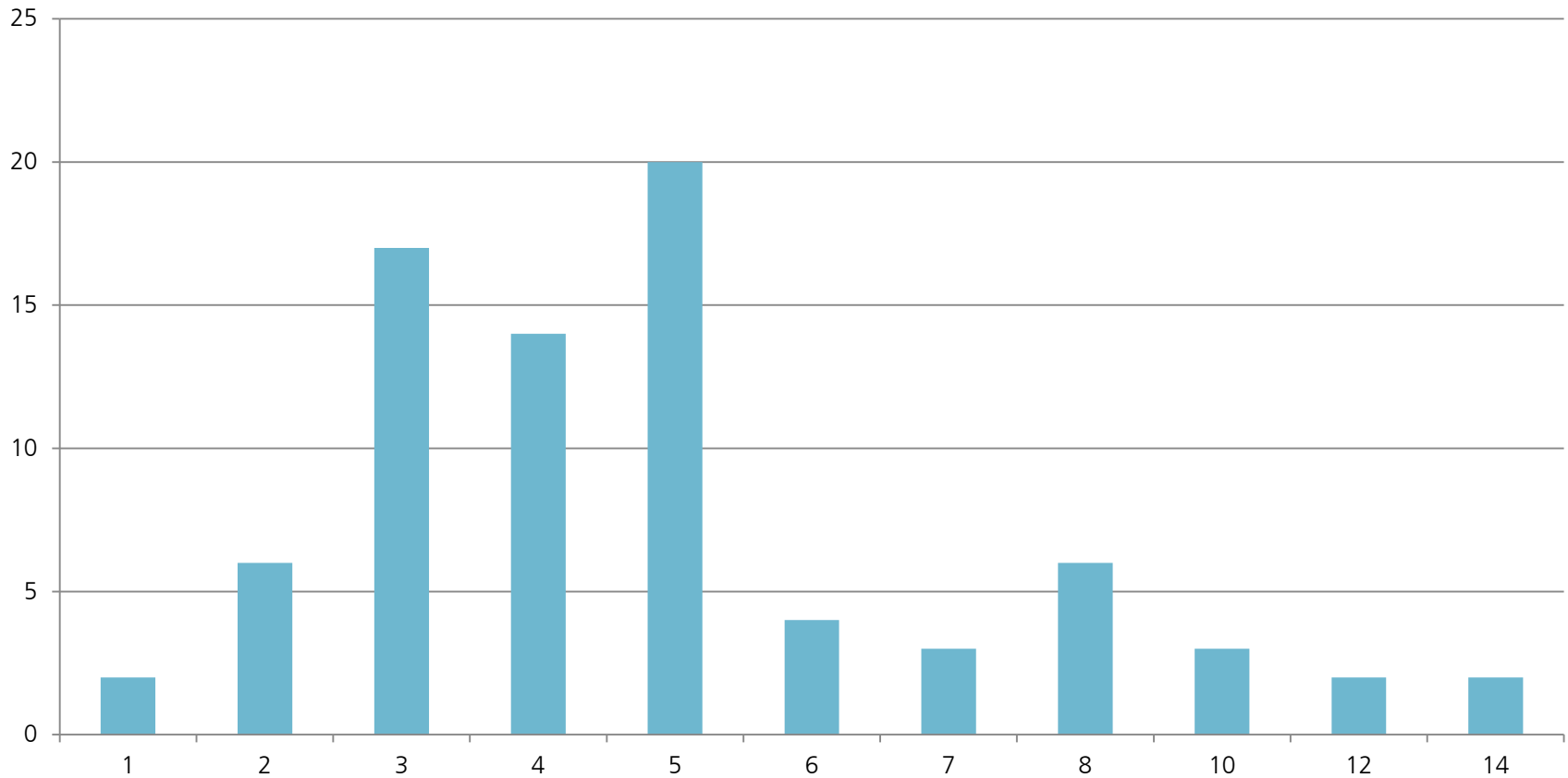
Relation between Strategy and Practice
RIS3 is linked to Operational Programming

N = 87

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Key Result of RIS3: Better Understanding
Yet: Not Always Groundbreaking

Key Outcome of RIS3 Process

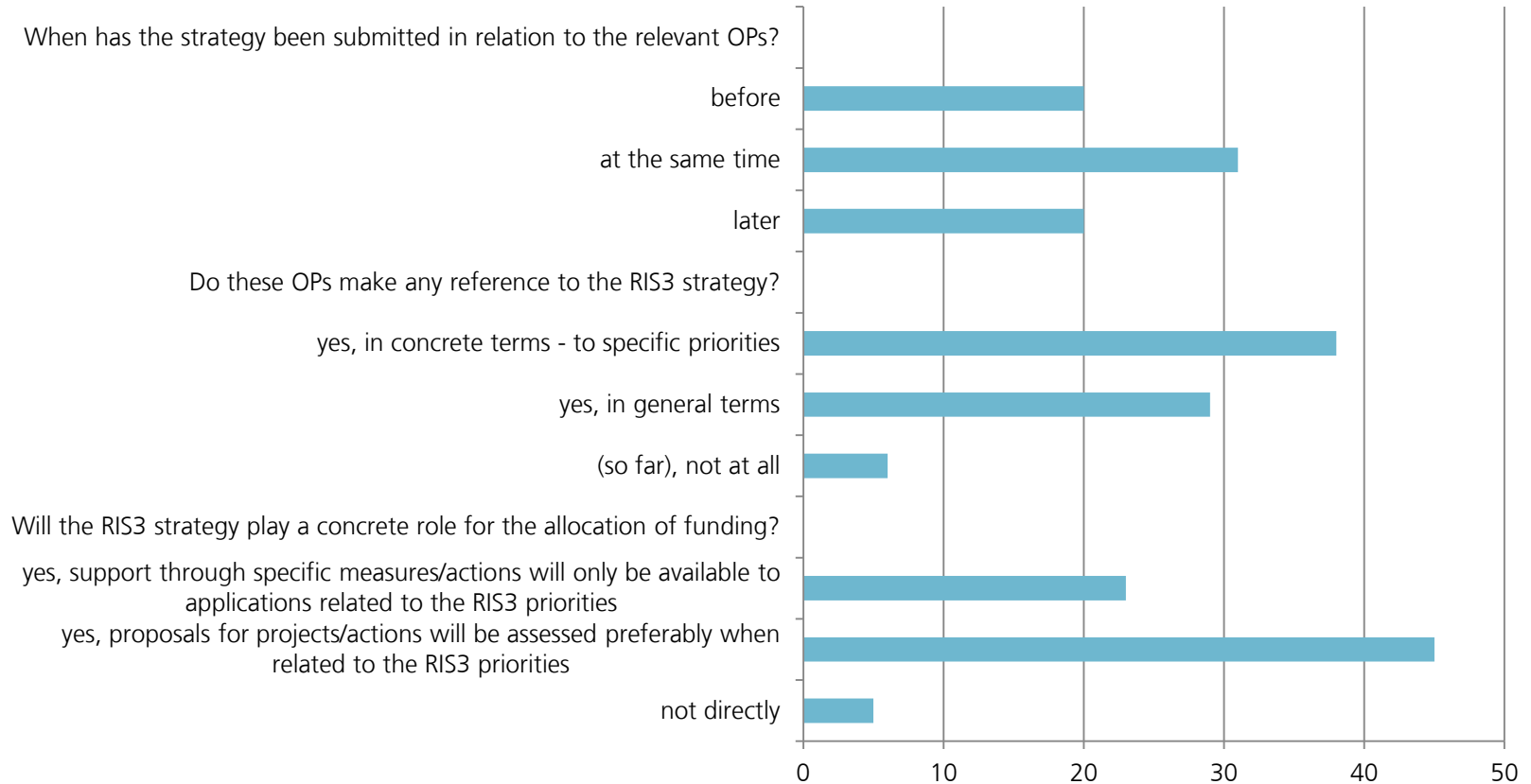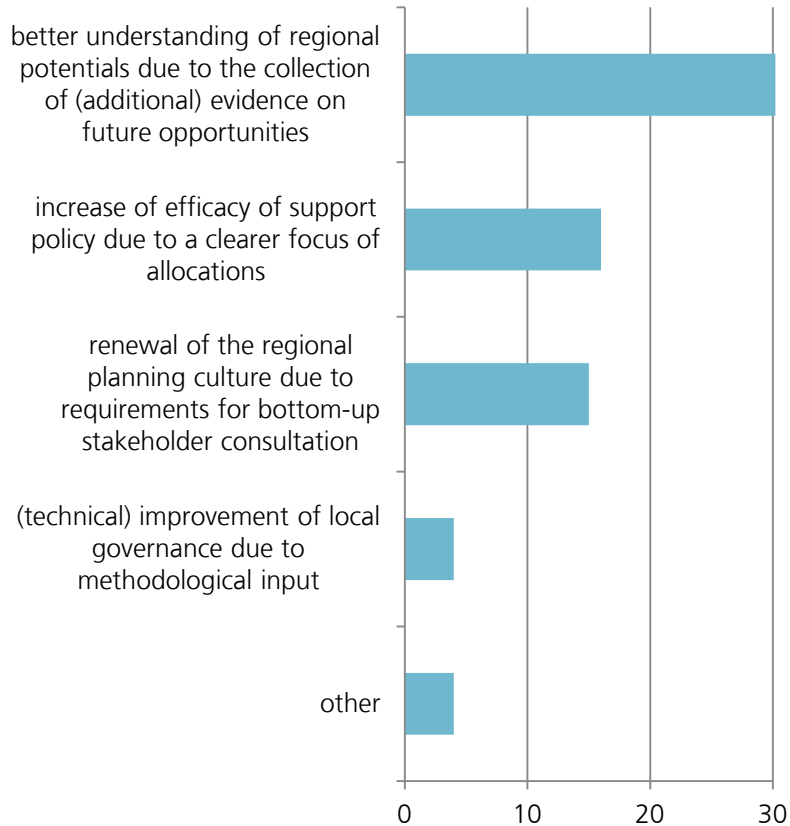better understanding of regional potentials due to the collection of (additional) evidence on future opportunities

increase of efficacy of support policy due to a clearer focus of allocations

renewal of the regional planning culture due to requirements for bottom-up stakeholder consultation

(technical) improvement of local governance due to methodological input

other

N = 91

Novelty of Findings of EDP

very high degree

high degree

moderate degree

low degree

very low degree

N = 86

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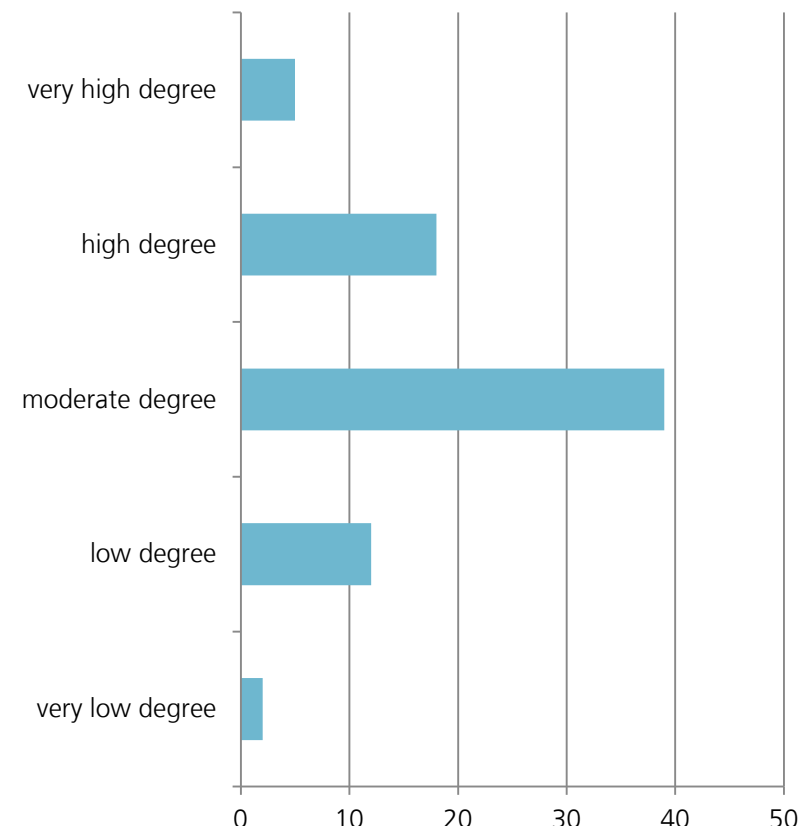
Overall Assessment:
Benefits Outweighed Costs

N = 91

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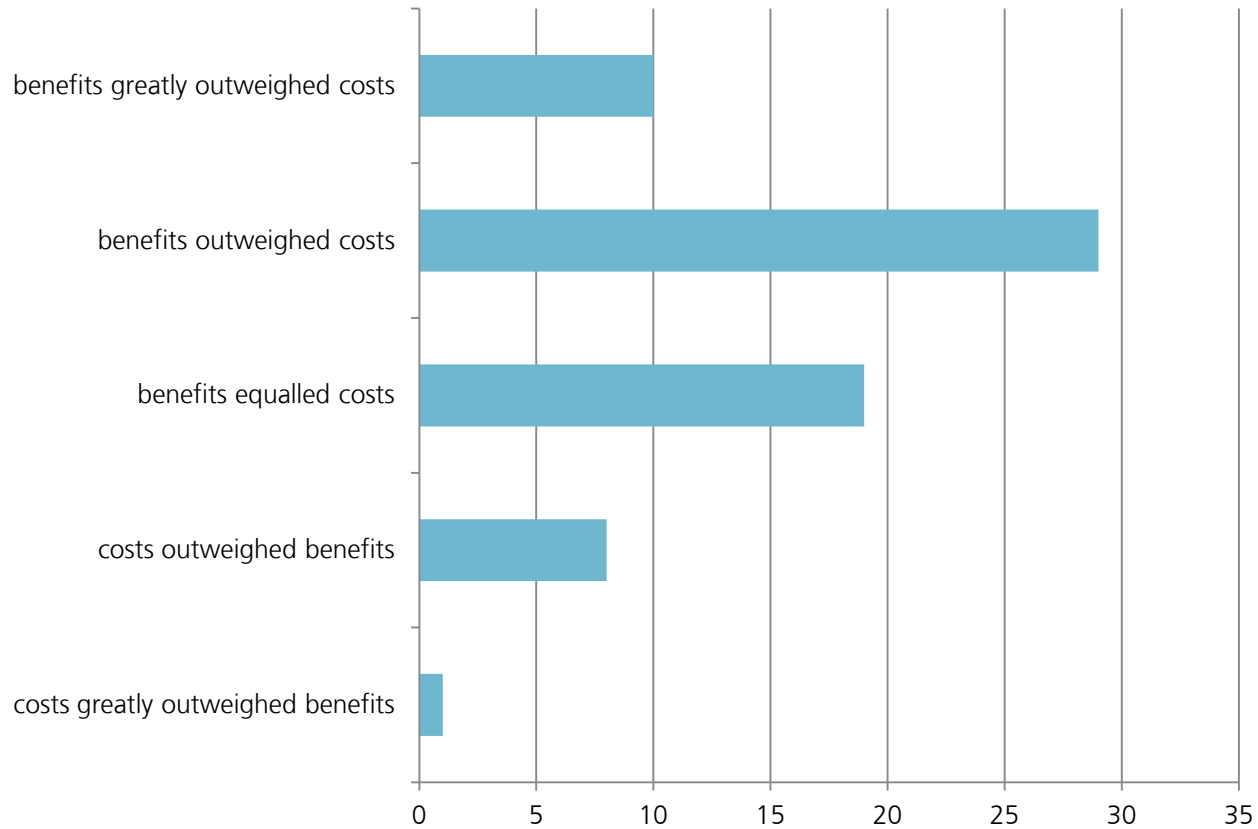
The Next Challenge: RIS3 Monitoring State of Play and Approach

What is the state of development of your RIS3 monitoring concept?

be developed	17
under development	48
completed	11

What type of indicators does your RIS3 monitoring concept use?

output indicators	50
result indicators	61
context indicators	35

Will your monitoring use "qualitative indicators"?

yes, as a central approach	10
yes, but only where quantitative indicators are not available and cannot be used without undue effort	49
not at all	10

Axis: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70

N = 87

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Basis for RIS3 Monitoring: Available Data Sources Prevail
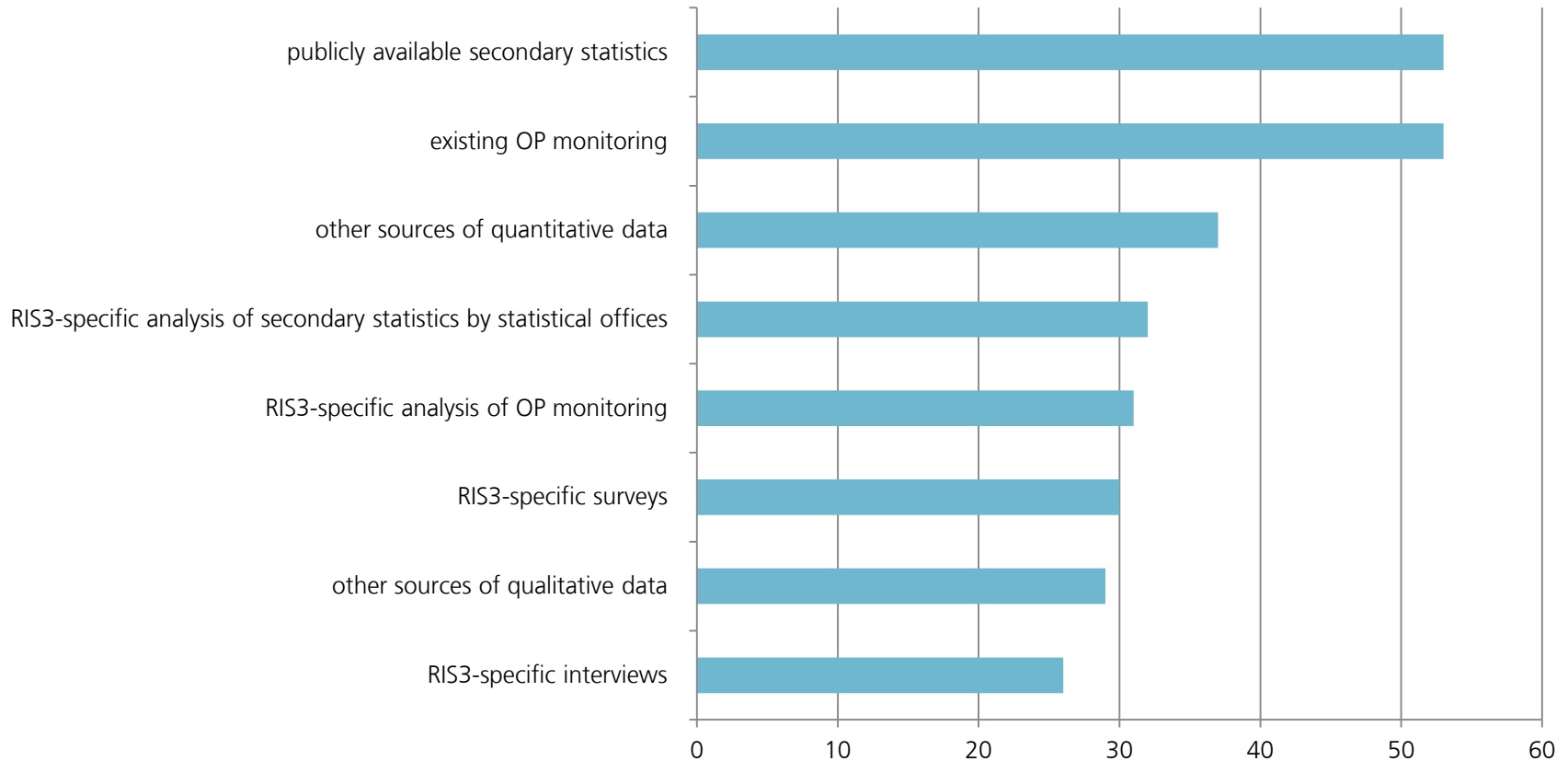
N = 86

Summary

- As a tendency, the RIS3 Agenda has become accepted more broadly and viewed more positively in the course of the past year

- It is, however, an ongoing process with many strategies still under negotiation

- While there is a general belief in the potential efficacy of political strategies

- In most places, the EDP based process is not considered disruptively new, the degree of novelty of the EDPs' findings, however, remains limited ('moderate')

- When asked to focus on one, a better and more evidence based understanding of the regional situation is considered as *the* key outcome of the RIS3 process by many

- In many cases, there seems to be a quite robust integration (foreseen) between RIS3 strategies and the relevant Operational Programmes

- The development of RIS3 Monitoring Concepts appears as the next challenge ahead – one that regions have so far only begun to address

- The prevalent approach to RIS3 Monitoring Concepts seems to be a conservative one, based on existing indicators

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Policy Conclusions

- The political persistence in following the approach through seems to have paid off, the RIS3 agenda has gained rather than lost popularity in the process of implementation

- It seems worth monitoring what to make of the fact that the actual budgetary refocusing of support allocations features as a secondary rather than primary result of the RIS3 agenda

    - On the on hand, it seems worth monitoring to what extent the RIS3 strategies and operational programmes are actually that well integrated – given that a reallocation of funding or raise in efficacy is not mentioned as the process' most prominent result

    - On the other hand, this may well be due to the fact that many RIS3 strategies, particularly in better-off regions , mostly tend to re-adjust and formalise existing policies that have been pursued for a number of years

- The "renewal of the regional planning culture" seems to have been a quite important secondary outcome for number of regions in which the EDP has been a novel approach with a view to their administrative traditions, related challenges will likely remain acute

- It seems worth following to what extent conservative monitoring approaches that are to a large extent based on existing data collections can in a suitable manner capture central RIS3 notions like future-orientation, outward-orientation or cross-innovation

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Thank you !

Contact:

Dr. Henning Kroll

Competence Center Policy and Regions
Fraunhofer Institute for Systems and Innovation Research ISI
Breslauer Straße 48 | 76139 Karlsruhe | Germany
Phone +49 721 6809-181 | Fax +49 721 6809-176
henning.kroll@isi.fraunhofer.de

This study is a follow-up to a first study conducted in 2013
(see the respective findings here)

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