

Stakeholder consultation survey

Final report (*short version*)

October 2021

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1. Introduction

The overall **objective** of the survey was to collect feedback and input from current programme beneficiaries and future potential applicants on the policy objectives (POs), specific objectives (SOs) and types of actions (ToAs) considered in the draft proposal for the Interreg NWE Programme 2021-2027 as of January 2021. The survey focused on the expected content and logic and focus of the future cooperation programme (CP). The survey aimed to obtain responses regarding

- the level of interest in the different themes proposed at PO/SO level;
- the level of interest in the different topics proposed at ToA level;
- the topics within the proposed ToAs where there is the most potential for transnational collaboration;
- practical examples / spheres of application of the proposed ToAs;
- major topics that may be missing within an SO or ToA;
- the wording / the clarity of our ToAs and target groups;
- additional target audiences that may be relevant for different ToAs;
- the areas of common interest across programmes and address the question of complementarities between programmes.

To collect these responses the survey included closed questions with pre-defined categories and open questions with room for additional categories and explanations. Figure 1 illustrates the **survey structure**. Depending on the number of priorities, specific objectives and fields of interest selected, respondents had to answer at minimum eleven questions. Each additional field of interest selected implied three additional questions.

The survey was open for about 5 weeks, running from 25 February until 28 March 2021. To facilitate potential respondents' willingness to contribute the survey was accessible in four languages (Dutch, English, French and German). A total of **412 responses** has been collected, which is considerable above what was expected and may illustrate a high interest of stakeholders in the Interreg NWE Programme 2021-2027.

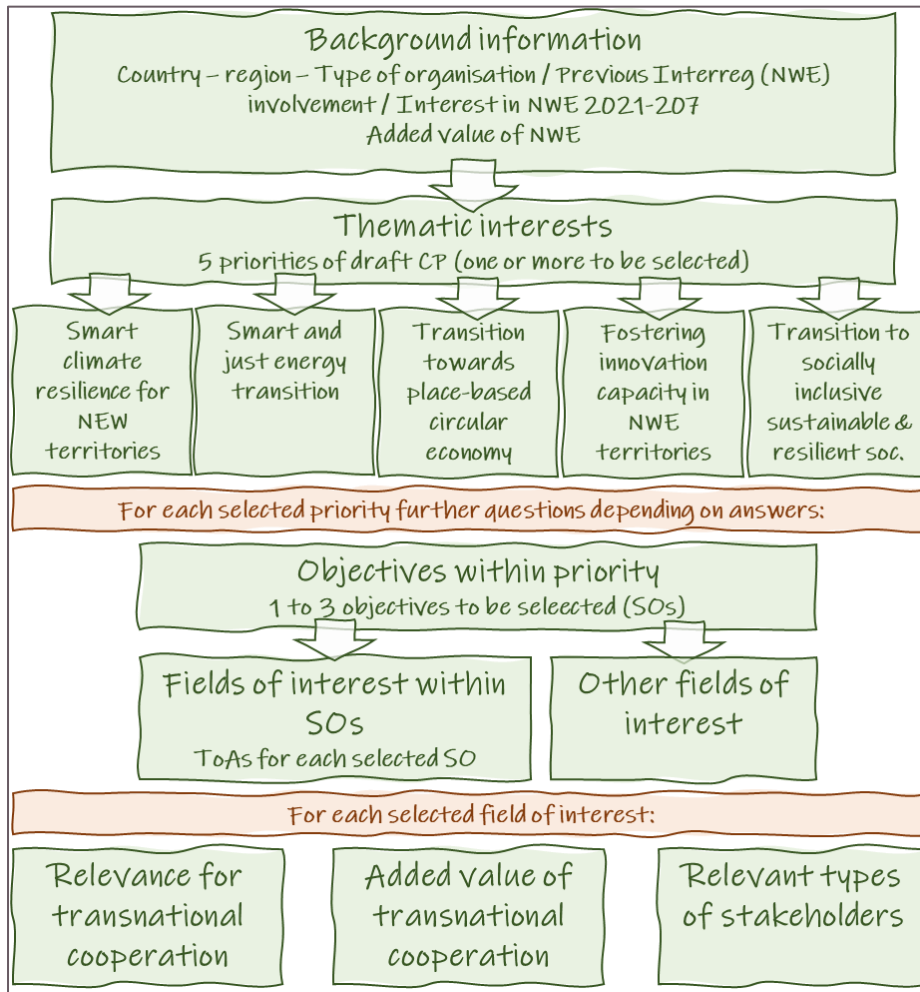
Following **analysis** provides insights into main structures of responses to feed into the final phase of the programming process. It consequently considers

- main characteristics of respondents, especially showing how balanced responses are in terms of geography and types of organisations (Sections 2.1 and 2.2);

- the main added value raised by respondents from cooperation in NWE (Section 2.3);
- an overview of the interest in the five priorities (Chapter 3);
- insights into the interests for each of the five priorities (Chapters 4 to 8) in terms of prioritised SOs and fields of interest, identified stakeholders and main added value;
- a cross-analysis of selected fields of interest across the five priorities (Chapter 9);
- an overview of other fields of interest raised by respondents across priorities (Chapter 10); and
- some conclusions (Chapter 11).

This report uses the formulation of priorities and fields of interest as applied in the survey at the beginning of 2021, notwithstanding any changes of how priorities and fields of interest may be formulated or considered at all in the final cooperation programme.

Figure 1: Overview of survey structure



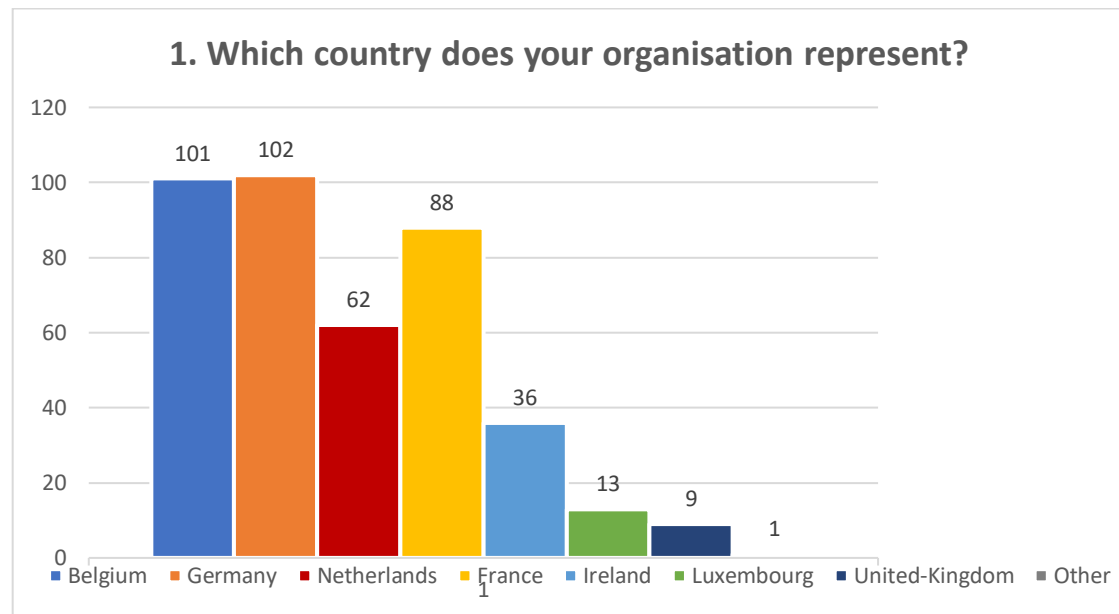
2. Respondents

The following chapter illustrates in how far the stakeholder survey managed to reach out in a balanced way to potential applicants and addressed newcomers to the Interreg NWE Programme.

2.1. Responses by geography and organisations

All but ten of the 412 responses were from the countries participating in the future CP.¹ Responses from **Belgium, France and Germany are quite balanced**, accounting each for 20% to 25% of all responses. Lower shares of responses from the Netherlands, Ireland and Luxembourg (3% to 15%) also mirror the sizes of the countries. Albeit the UK has stopped its participation in the CP for 2021-2027, nine respondents from UK answered the survey. The other answer from outside the NWE territory is from Sweden.

Figure 2



Responses from **15 NUTS 2 regions account for about 55%** of all responses. Respondents from 60 NUTS 2 regions participated, representing nearly all NUTS 2 regions of the NWE territory. Table 1 below lists the 15 NUTS 2 regions with the highest response rates, each of them having more than ten (>2.5%) of all responses.

¹ Switzerland was not considered as the Swiss participation was not yet agreed at the moment when launching the survey.

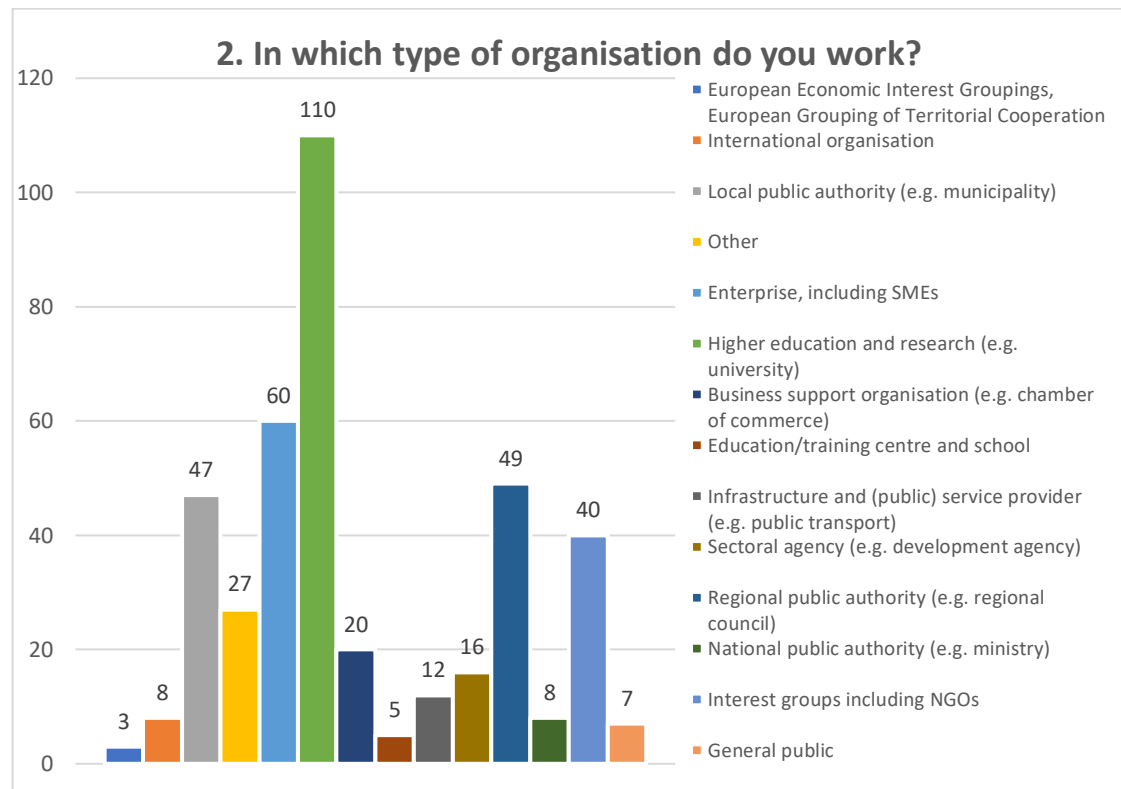
Apart from the outstanding participation from Nord Pas-de-Calais in the survey, responses seem to be relatively balanced at NUTS 2 level. Interesting is the relatively high participation from one of the new regions (Weser-Ems).

Table 1: Number of responses by NUTS 2 level – regions with more than 10 responses

NUTS 2 region	No. of responses	% share of all responses
FR30 - Nord - Pas-de-Calais	30	7,3%
BE10 - Région de Bruxelles-Capitale/Brussels Hoofdstedelijk Gewest	18	4,4%
NL33 - Zuid-Holland	18	4,4%
BE21 - Prov. Antwerpen	16	3,9%
IE04 - Northern and Western Region	16	3,9%
DE94 - Weser-Ems	15	3,6%
IE05 - Southern Region	15	3,6%
BE32 - Prov. Hainaut	13	3,2%
FR10 - Île de France	13	3,2%
LU00 - Luxembourg	13	3,2%
BE33 - Prov. Liège	12	2,9%
DEB3 - Rheinhessen-Pfalz	12	2,9%
FR52 - Bretagne	12	2,9%
NL32 - Noord-Holland	12	2,9%
DEA1 - Düsseldorf	11	2,7%

Participation by **types of organisation** mirrors the focus of the Interreg NWE CP in 2014-2020. Responses from **higher education institutions and universities** account for 27%, which is followed by **enterprises** including SMEs (15%) and regional public authorities (12%). On the other hand, if accumulating **public authorities'** participation across levels (from local to national), these account together for 25% of all responses.

Figure 3



Other organisations account for 7% of responses. The answers indicate that most of these can be attributed to one of the categories, which may sometimes be ambiguous for the respondents (e.g. sector agency, NGO, research institution). Few other respondents may be more difficult to assign to one of the categories (e.g. church) and several responses represent different types of networks, especially in the spheres of businesses and innovation.

More than **2/3 of respondents have been involved previously with Interreg NWE**, most of which in the 2014-2020 CP. The share of newcomers accounts for slightly less than 1/3. Only 12% of respondents have no EU programme experience. The remaining one fifth of respondents has experience with other EU programmes. The variation of these other programmes is high, although most experience relates to Interreg, Horizon 2020, ERDF programmes and Erasmus+ (together accounting for $\frac{3}{4}$ of experience with other EU programmes) and many of these respondents have experience with more than one other programme (133 programmes mentioned by 78 respondents).

Table 2: Respondents according to previous involvement in Interreg NWE and other EU programmes

	No.	%
Yes, between 2014 and 2020	184	45%
Yes, in previous NWE programmes	41	10%
Yes, in previous NWE programmes & Yes, between 2014 and 2020	56	14%
No	51	12%
No, but it has been involved with other EU programmes before	78	19%
Inconsistencies	2	0%
Total	412	100%

Most experience with other Interreg programmes refers to **cross-border programmes** (68%). Within these the programmes those of the Greater Region, Channel and France Wallonie Vlandereen have been mentioned most often. Other transnational Interreg programmes account for 25% of the respondents' other Interreg experience, most of which refer to the North Sea and Atlantic Area programmes.

Among potential **newcomers** to Interreg NWE nearly all types of organisations may be found. The distribution is fairly equal between local public authorities, enterprises including SMEs and higher education and research institutions. These are followed by interest groups and regional public authorities.

Figure 4

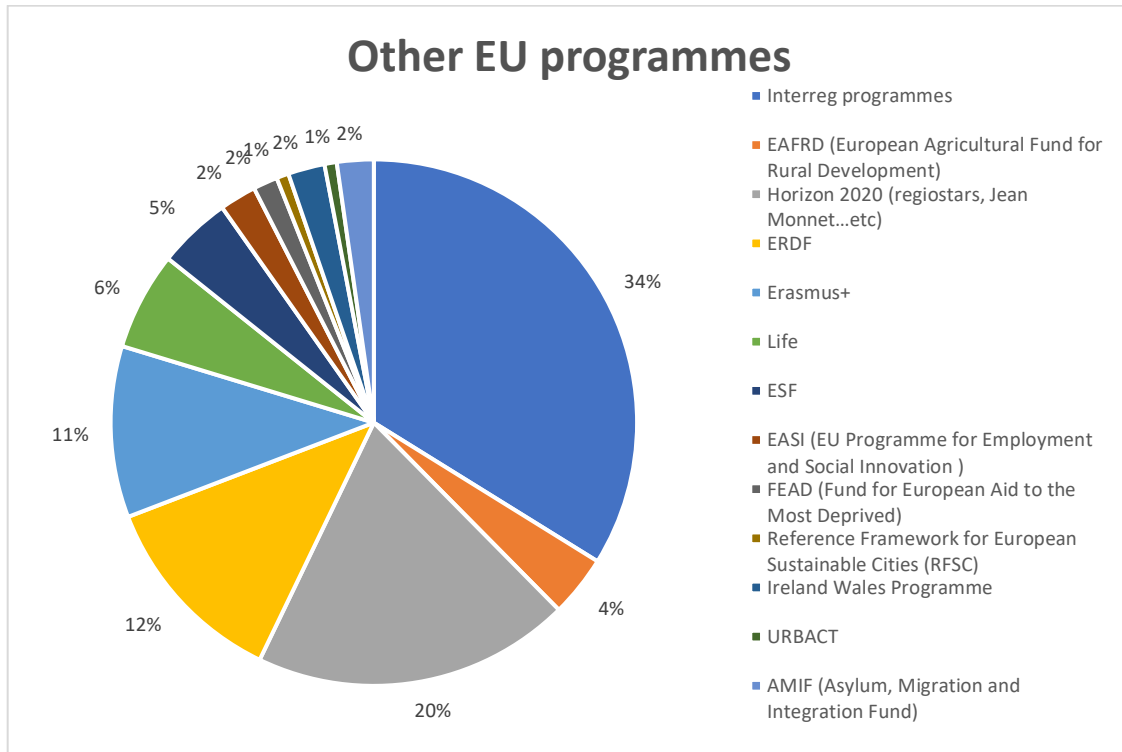
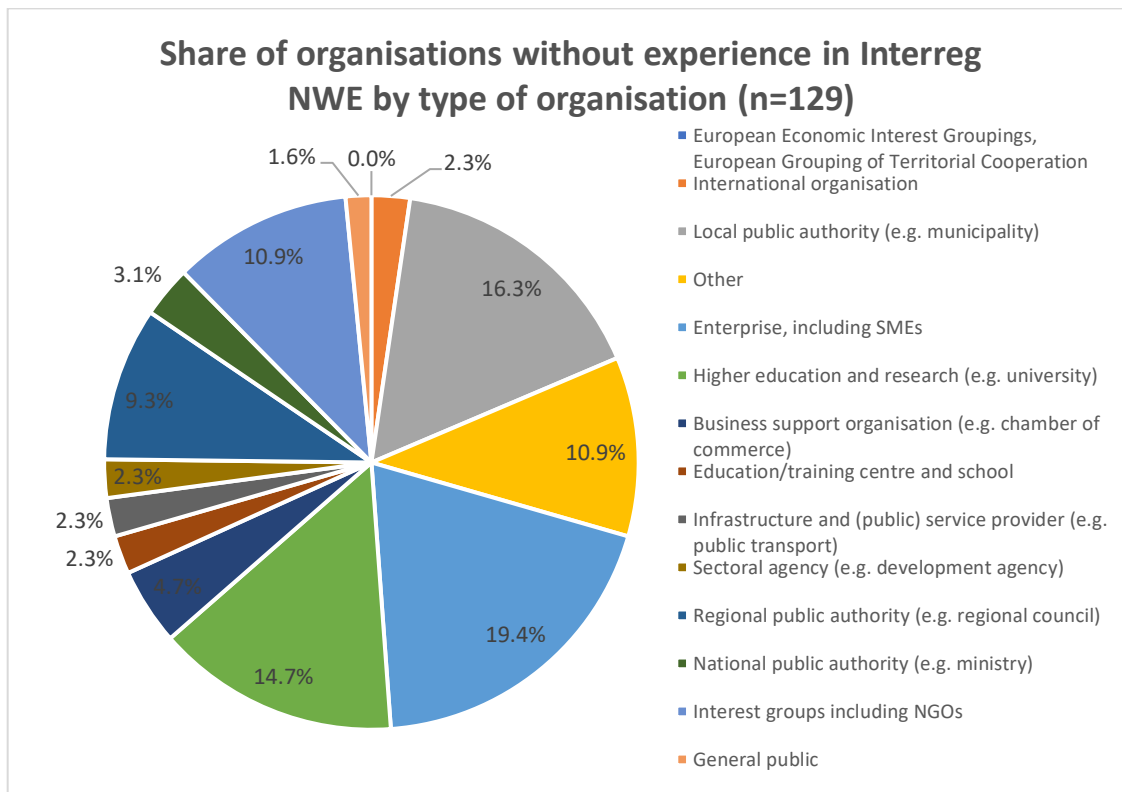


Figure 5



2.2. Interests in the programme

Interests in the programme may differ between stakeholders previously involved and newcomers to the Interreg NWE programme. The following illustrates the interest of previously involved stakeholders before looking into the interests of potential newcomers. Overall, 281 respondents have been previously participating in the Interreg NWE programme, 129 respondents have not been involved with Interreg NWE so far. The large majority of respondents are interested in **applying in the future NWE CP** (82%). The share of respondents with Interreg NWE experience who wishes to apply in the future again is somewhat higher than for the respondents without this experience. In consequence, respondents without Interreg NWE experience are twice as much interested in results and outputs or in other ways (e.g. supporting applicants or associated participation).

Figure 6

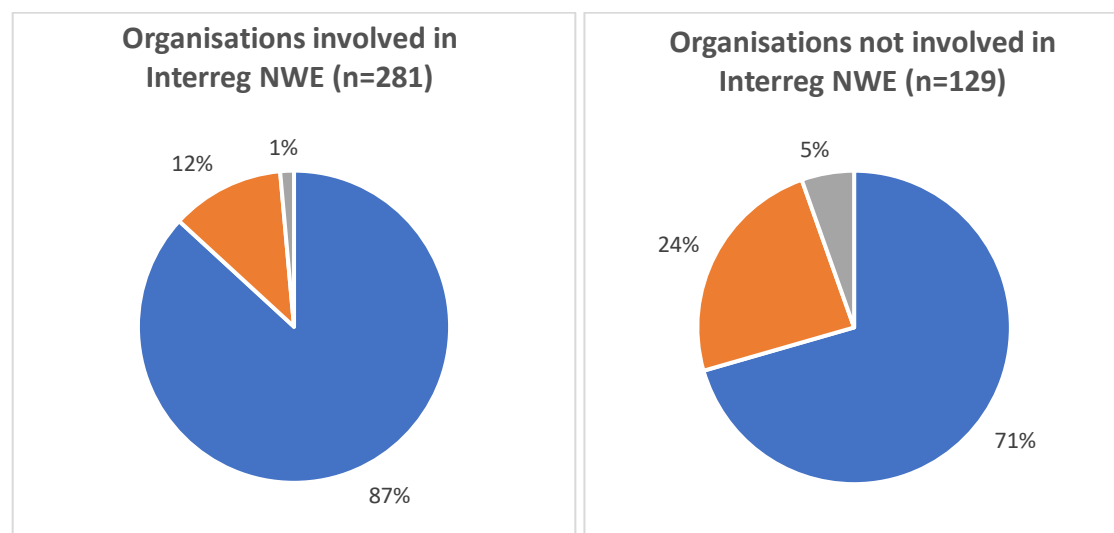
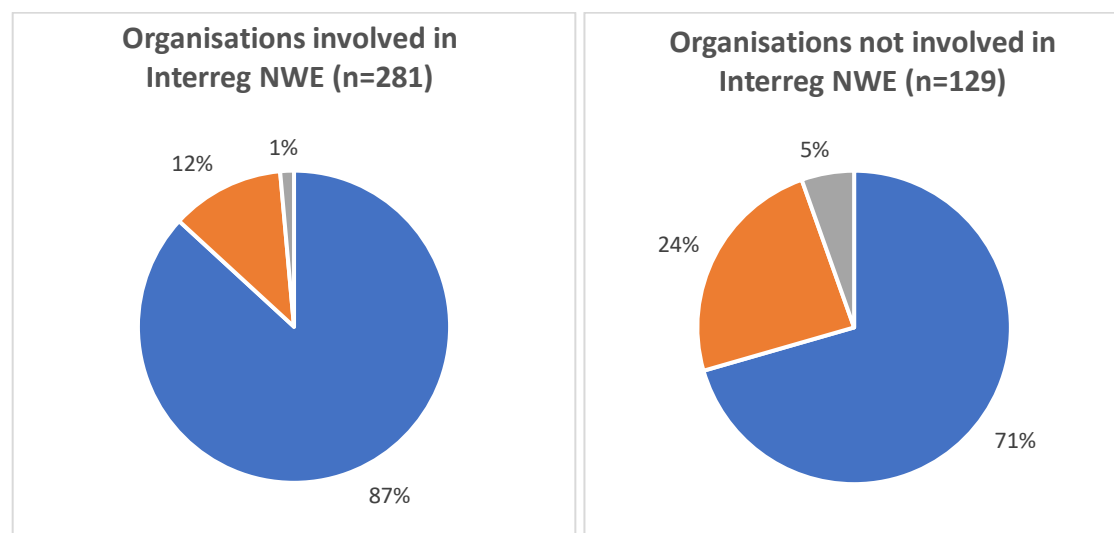


Figure 7

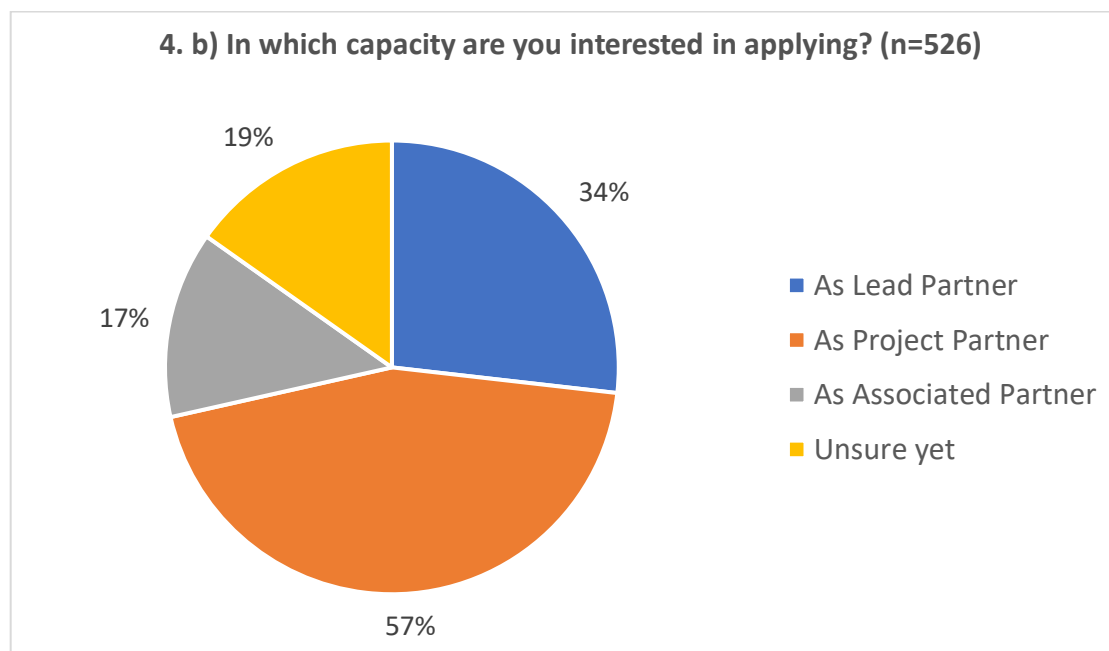


■ I am interested in applying ■ I am interested in the programme's results and impact ■ Other

Respondents could identify more than one capacity of interest when wishing to apply for Interreg NWE 2021-2027 projects. About **1/3 of the respondents may apply in the role of a lead partner**. Most are interested in being a project partner (often as alternative to being the lead partner). 1/5 of respondents are not yet sure, which may, inter alia, depend on final content and processes of the Interreg NWE Programme 2021-2027. If considering only respondents that have experience with

Interreg NWE, the share of potential lead partnership and project partners is slightly higher (40% and 60% of corresponding responses respectively).

Figure 8



2.3. Main added value

Respondents had the opportunity to shortly describe the main added value of transnational cooperation in the NWE territory from their perspective. Open answers of the respondents were categorised afterwards. This **categorisation** has led to **eight wider groups**, namely

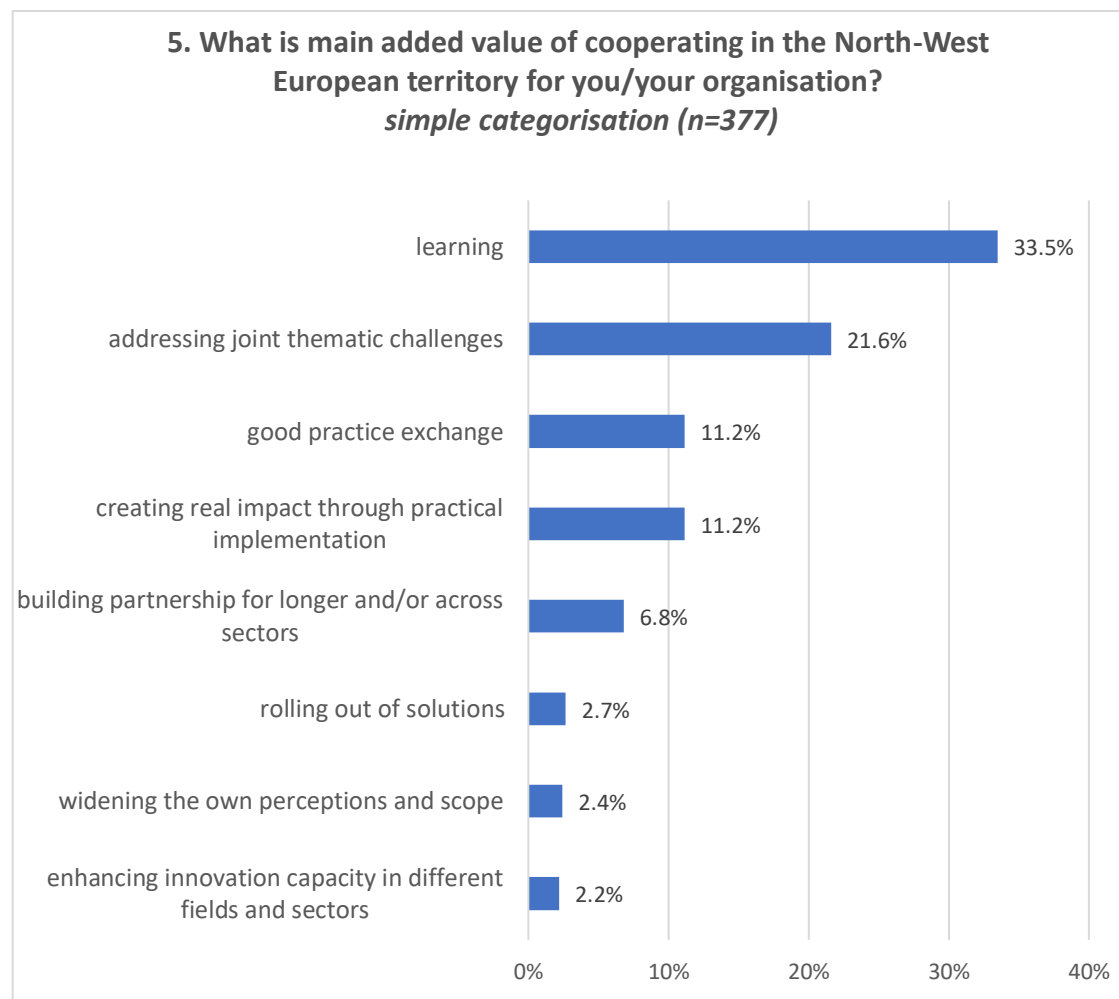
- learning;
- good practice exchange;
- building partnership for longer and/or across sectors;
- addressing (joint) thematic challenges (social, environmental);
- rolling out of solutions;
- widening the own perceptions and scope;
- creating real impact through practical implementation;
- enhancing innovation capacity in different fields and sectors.

In addition, some responses could not be assigned and were grouped as 'others' or referred more generally to networking or cooperation, which was also part of many answers to either of the above categories. Quite a few respondents referred

in their answers to more than one of the categories explicitly or implicitly. Figure 9 below illustrates the main tendencies of responses.

Overall, there is a clear focus on **learning**, both as the main added value and in combination with various other categories. If considered together with good practice exchange as a particular form of learning, this learning perspective gets even stronger. Other important added value is seen in terms of **achieving change** when respondents refer to “*addressing joint thematic challenges*” or “*creating impact through practical implementation*”. Overall, this leads to an ambivalence between the main value added seen by respondents (learning and exchange aspects) and the implementation and investment focus of the Interreg NWE 2014-2020 programme.

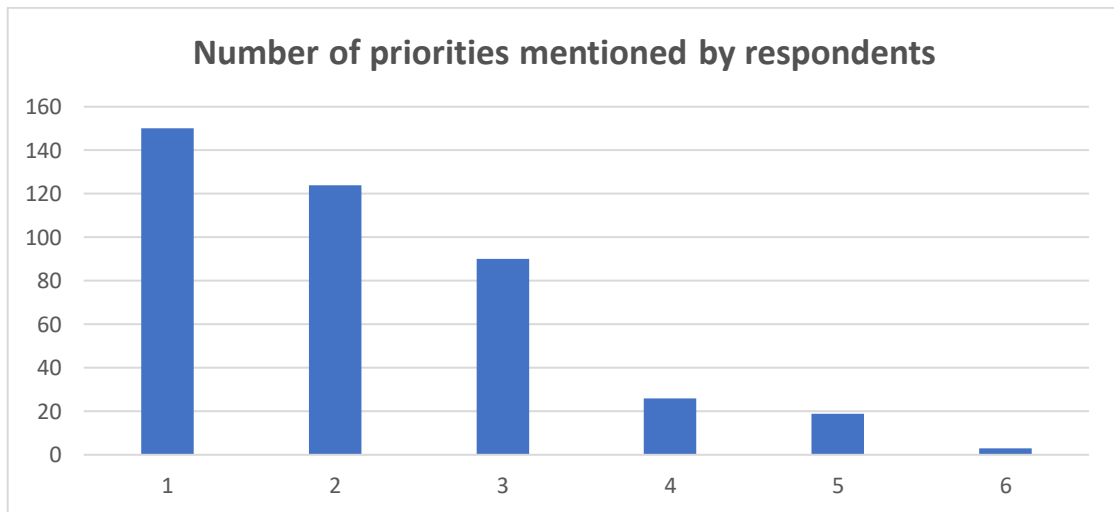
Figure 9



3. Overview of thematic interests

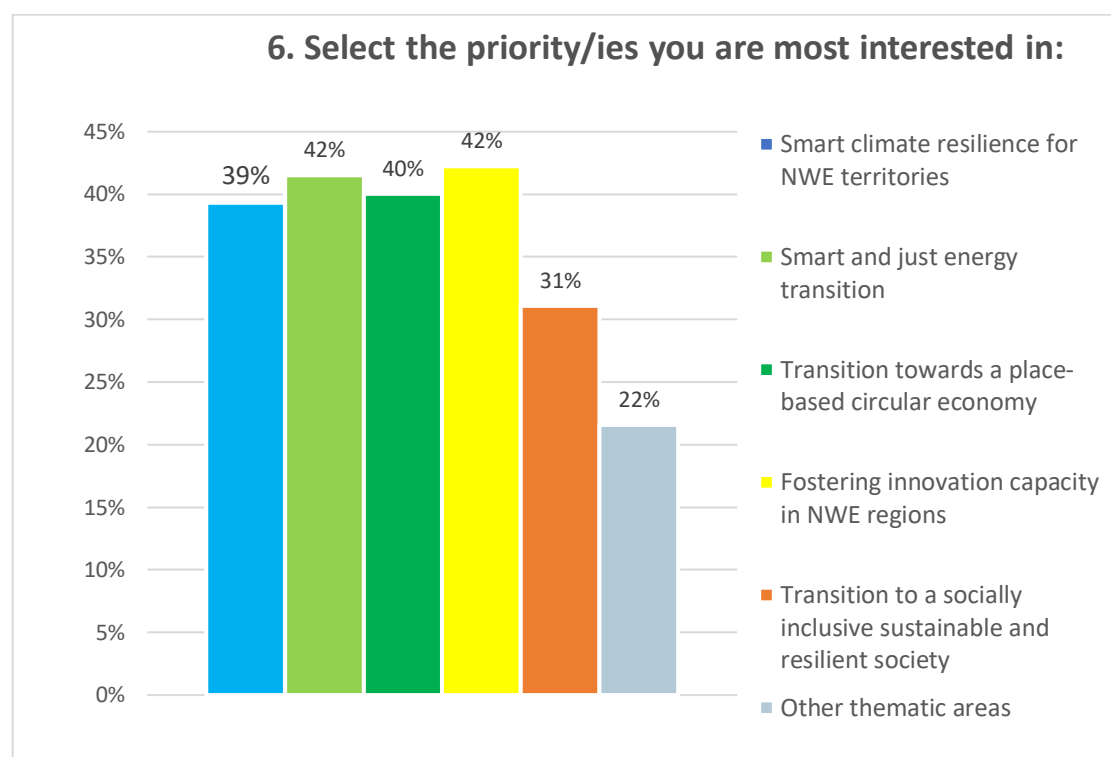
Respondents were asked to select the **most important thematic interests**. They could choose from the five priorities identified in work group themes (see figure 11) and name also other thematic interests. They could decide whether to select only one priority or more. On average, respondents selected at least two priorities, i.e. 889 mentions by the 412 respondents. However, more than one third of the respondents selected only one priority. A few selected not only all five priorities but also mentioned in addition other thematic areas.

Figure 10



The share of **mentions across the five priorities is relatively balanced**, especially between the first four priorities. Only the priority “Transition to a socially inclusive sustainable and resilient society” received about 10%-points less mentions than the other four priorities.

Figure 11



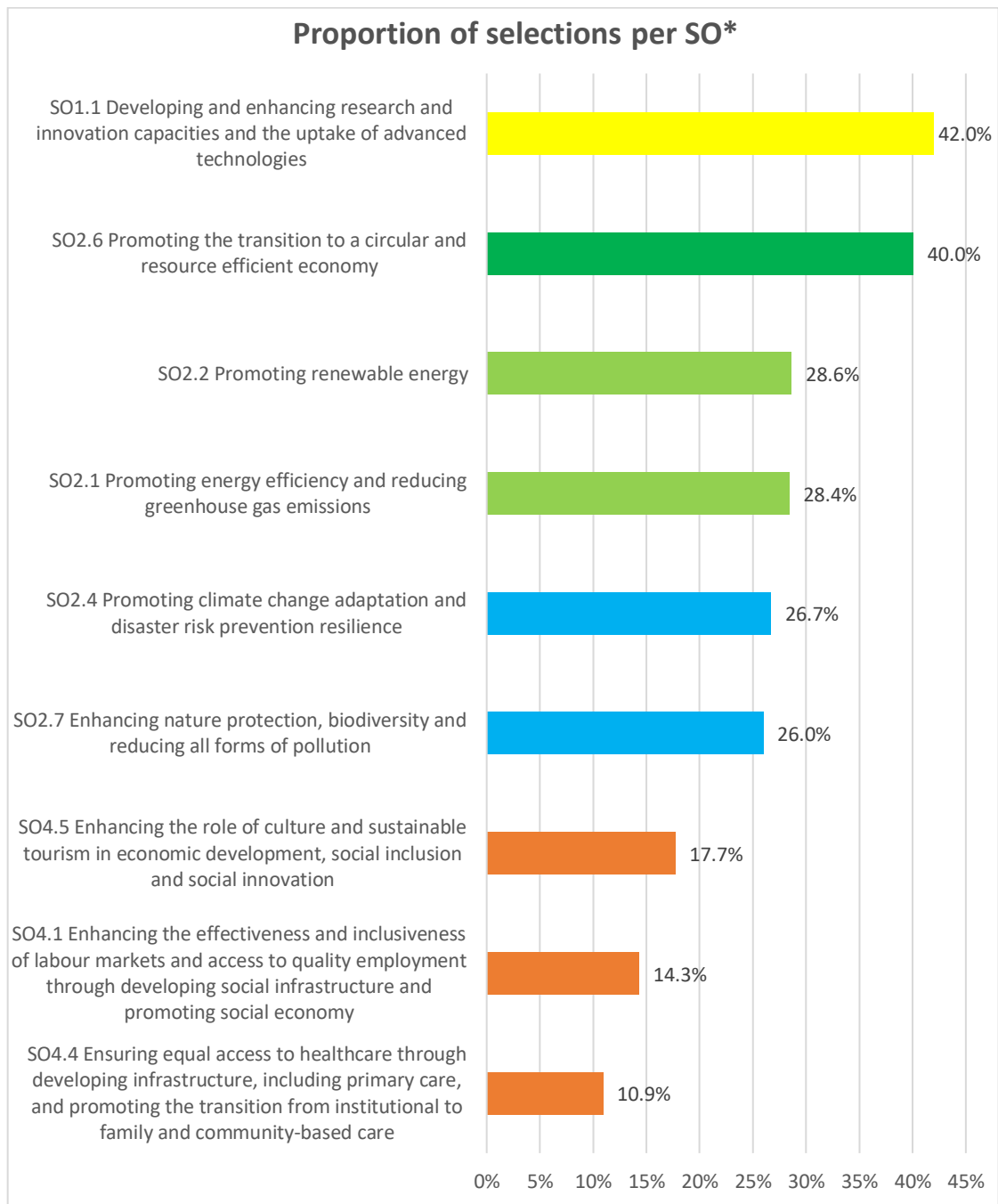
Altogether 89 respondents mentioned **other thematic area interests**, of which 88 specified their interests. Most of these interests may be addressed at least to some extent by one of the five priorities in the current draft of the future IP. For instance, this refers to responses in relation to health (priority 5) or sustainable mobility (priority 2). In fewer cases, responses also refer to other priorities included in the IP, for instance, in relation to biodiversity and climate change. However, a significant number of respondents (25 out of 88) indicated that they miss a focus on transport and mobility. As indicated for the example of sustainable mobility, at least some of these interests could nevertheless be addressed in the IP. A few respondents raised either the wish for more integrated approaches under PO 5 or manufacturing related topics only covered partially by innovation and/or digitalisation themes.

The analysis indicates that a **change of perspective** may need to be conveyed to the stakeholders soon. Apparently, stakeholders tend to look for a certain priority rather than addressing a certain sector or theme through horizontal themes. For instance, transport and mobility issues may be addressed from different perspectives in the future such as innovation, digitalisation, sustainability etc.

The number of SOs and fields of interest varies greatly between the five priorities. This implies different degrees of focus between them. The following emphasises this by providing the share of **selected SOs across the five priorities** (see figure 12). On average, respondents selected about 2.3 SOs, i.e. 967 mentions by the 412 respondents.

Priorities 3 (supporting a place-based circular economy) and 4 (on innovation capacity) are built upon one SO each. Thus, the share representing these two priorities in the previous figure is the same as for the corresponding SO in the figure below. The remaining priorities are built each on two to three SOs. Due to multiple selections of SOs within one priority the sum of shares of SOs for each of these other priorities is higher than at priority level. For instance, for the energy related SOs of priority 2 (smart and just energy transition), accumulated SO shares correspond to 57% compared to 42% of respondents principally interested in this priority. Thus, more than one third of respondents interested in the energy priority have selected both energy related SOs.

Figure 12

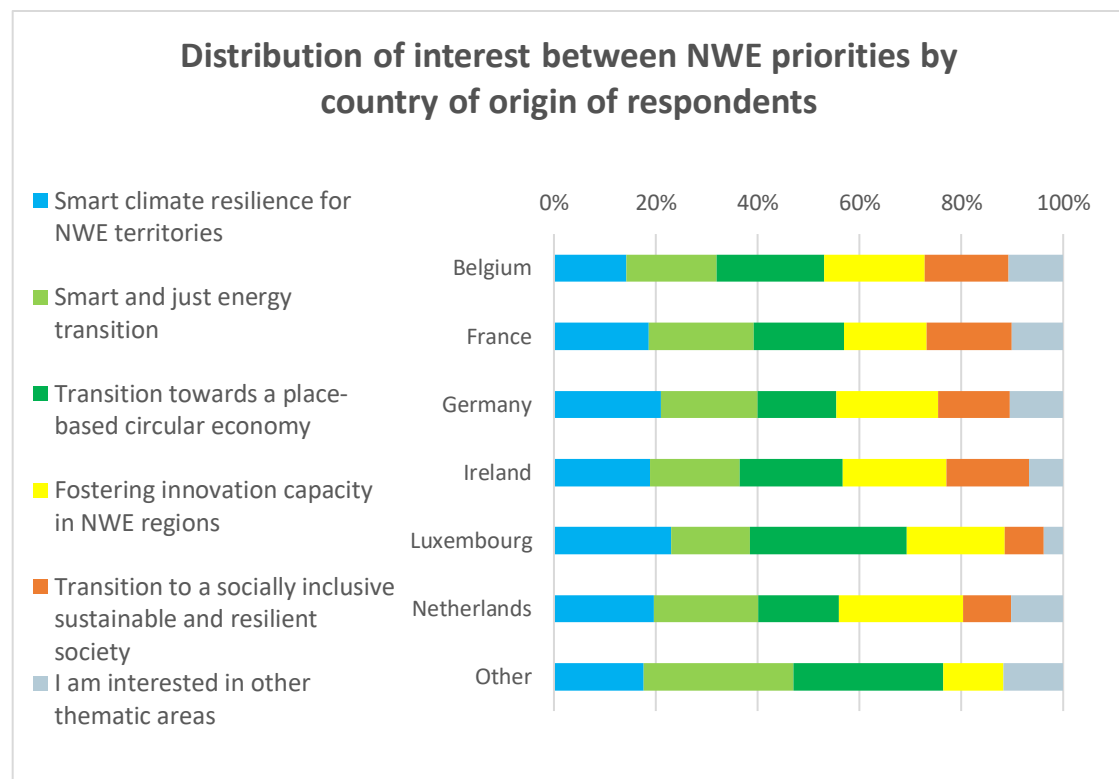


* Share in % of 412 respondents (multiple answers possible)

Overall, the selection of priorities and specific objectives shows that **respondents have more often selected topics they know from previous Interreg NWE programmes** than topics that are newly considered for the next programming period. This is most apparent for the priority and SOs with a strong social focus (priority 5).

Transnational projects should be based on **broad interest of stakeholders from many countries and regions in NWE**. The figure below cross-analyses the respondents' countries of origin with their thematic interests. The analysis shows that there is interest in all proposed priorities by respondents from all countries in NWE. However, intensity of interest seems to vary to some extent. It varies most strongly in relation to a place-based circular economy (priority 3), for which interest is the highest among the respondents from Luxembourg. The share of Dutch and German respondents accounts is only half as much. However, due to the different numbers of respondents from these countries, there is also considerable interest in this priority from German and Dutch respondents. Thus, it can be **concluded that interest in each of the five priorities is sufficiently balanced to support the development of transnational projects**.

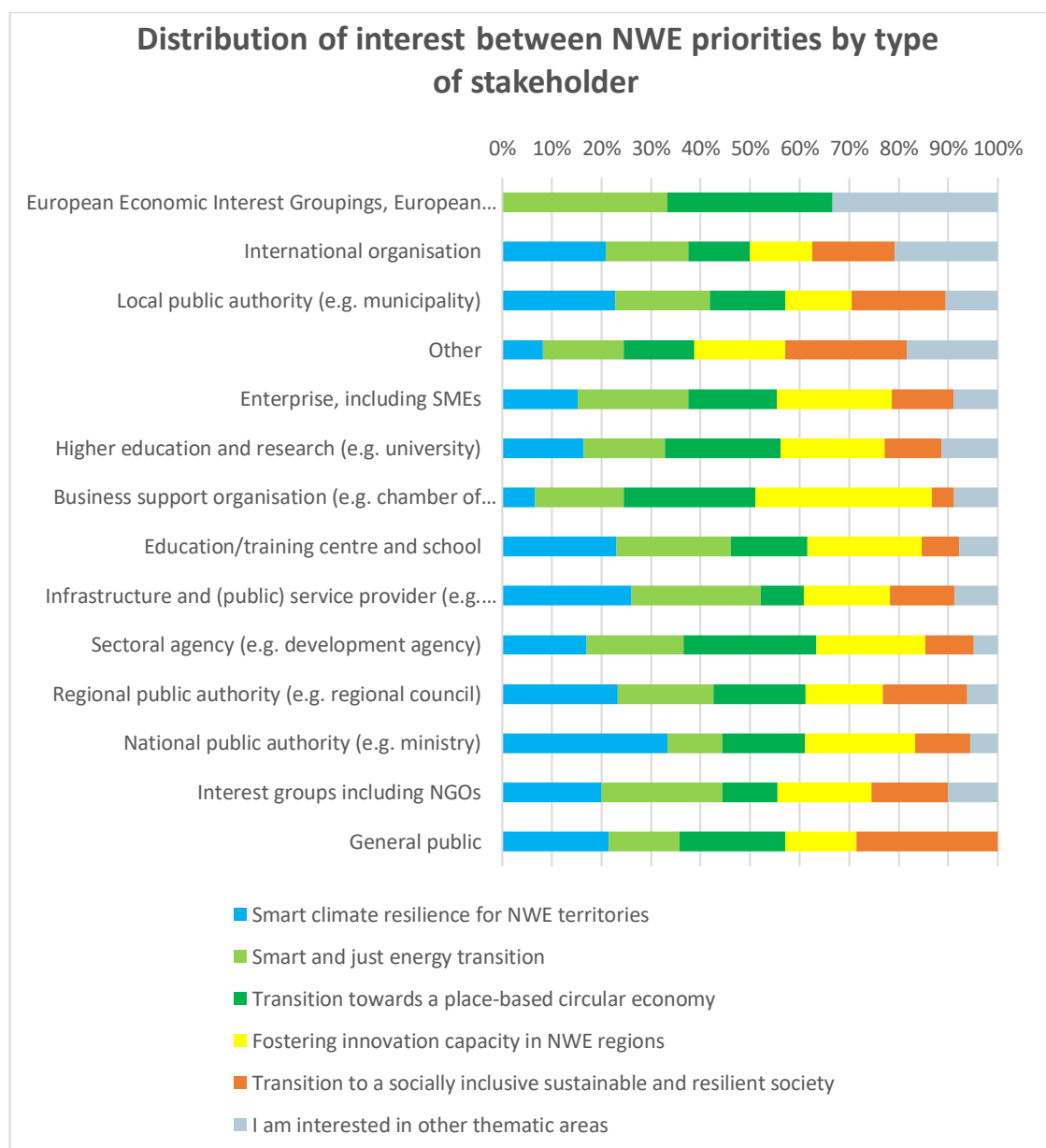
Figure 13



For many transnational projects, **combinations of different types of stakeholders** are expected and considered beneficial. The figure below cross-analyses the respondents' type of institution with their thematic interests. The analysis shows that all types of stakeholders (apart from the EEIG and EGTC with only three respondents) are interested in all proposed priorities. Intensity of interest varies however significantly between types of stakeholders. This is

expected in view of the different roles of these types of stakeholders. For instance, business support organisations and enterprises have a relatively high interest in fostering innovation capacity in NWE (priority 4). The same holds for sectoral agencies, which include regional development agencies as well as other sector agencies that may have primarily other interests. In view of the wide variety of types of stakeholders, it can be concluded that **interest in each of the five priorities is sufficiently broad despite the variation between the types of stakeholders.**

Figure 14



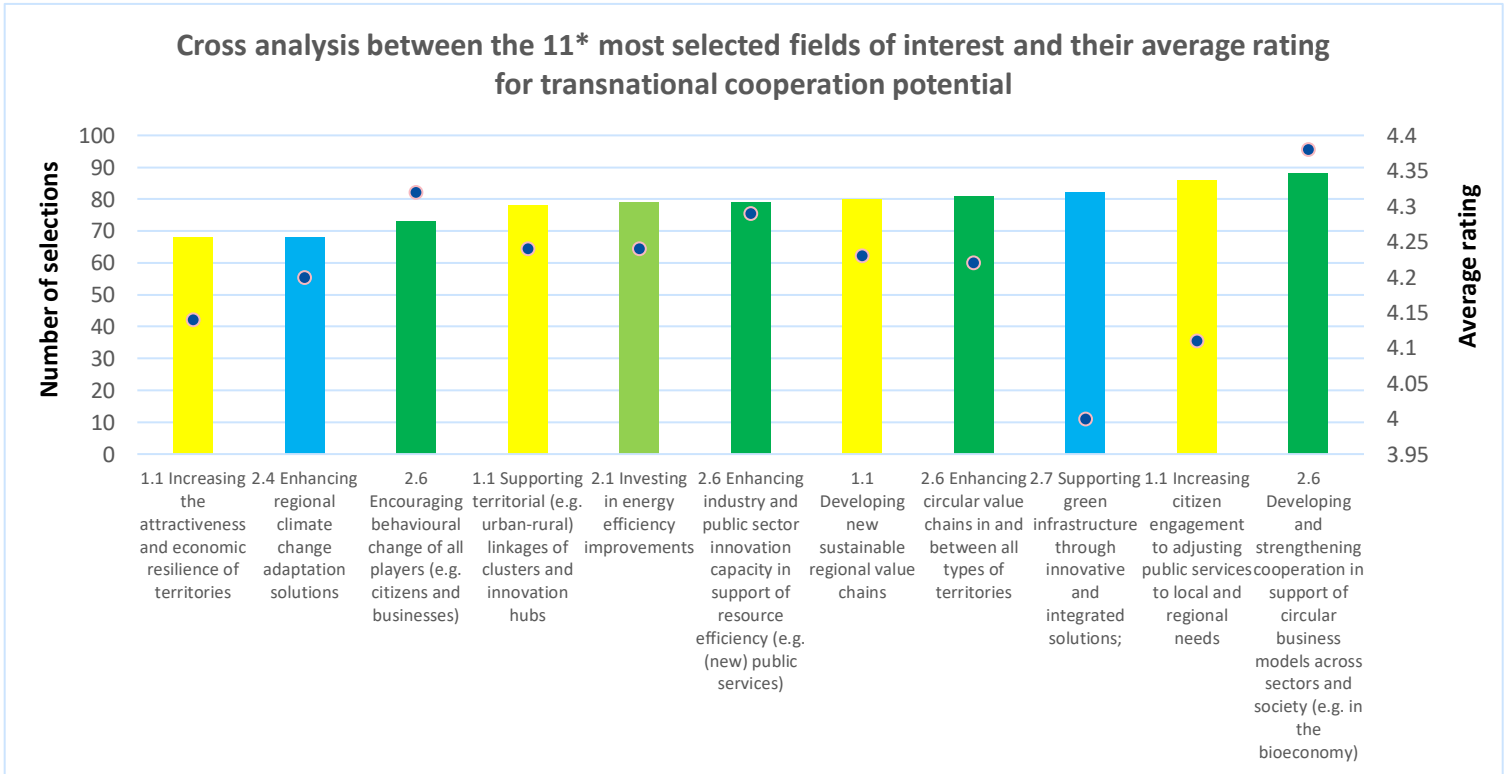
Fields of interest across priorities

So far, the analysis focused on the topics within each priority. This chapter complements by adding an analysis of fields of interest across the five priorities.

Overall, the 412 respondents selected nearly 2,400 fields of interest. Thus, in average **respondents have selected about 6** fields of interest **out of the 59** that were defined across the five priorities. The fields of interest could only be selected within the respectively selected priorities and specific objectives.

The field of interest selected most (2.6 – Developing and strengthening cooperation in support of circular business models across sectors and society) represents about one fifth of the respondents (88 out of 412) as indicated in the figure below. The fields of interest of **priorities 3 (circular economy – dark green) and 4 (innovation – yellow) have been selected most** by respondents. Fields of interest of priority 1 (climate change – blue) and priority 2 (energy – light green) are less visible among the most frequently selected Fields of interest. Fields of interest of priority 5 (social) are not among the most selected.

Figure 15



* The 10th rank has two Fields of interest with 68 respondents each.

The distribution between fields of interest is partially affected by **the number of fields of interest proposed per SO and priority**. For example, for priority 3 (circular economy), only 5 fields of interest were proposed whereas for priority 2 (energy) respondents could select from 15 fields of interest. However, among priority 4 (innovation) respondents could also select between 12 fields of interest and still three of these were selected more often than most other fields of interest.

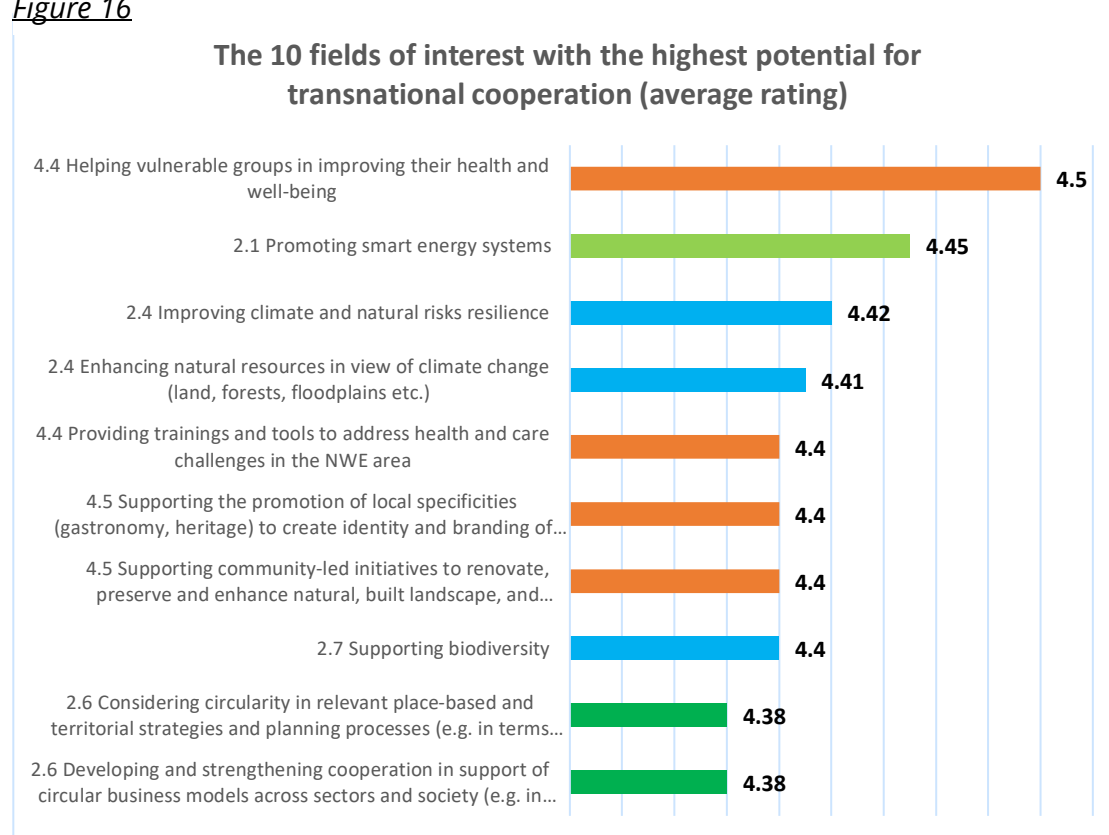
Interest tends to be the highest in fields of interest **that are formulated in a relatively broadly way** and in fields of interest that are within the priorities most familiar to the respondents from previous Interreg NWE programmes. Albeit the focus of the programme is more on the supply side, so far, respondents seem also to be interested in working on the demand side. Examples are the fields of interest 1.1 – Increasing citizen engagement to adjusting public services to local and regional needs and 2.6 – Encouraging behavioural change of all players.

These 11 fields of interest have been rated differently regarding their potential for transnational cooperation. All of them are rated positively² in average but only one (namely 2.6 – Developing and strengthening cooperation in support of circular business models across sectors and society) is among the Fields of interest for which respondents have indicated the highest potential for transnational cooperation as indicated by comparing the previous and following

² 1 refers to ‘very low potential’ and 5 to ‘very high potential’.

figure.

Figure 16



All other fields of interest that are considered to have the highest potential for transnational cooperation have been selected less often by respondents as their main interests.

A closer look at the potential for transnational cooperation reveals that there are **fields of interest among four of the five priorities that have been rated very high in average**. No field of interest of priority 4 (innovation) is represented among the highest rated field of interest. Indeed, most fields of interest rated highest regarding their transnational cooperation potential are either part of priority 1 (climate change –blue) or priority 5 (social – orange).

Many of the fields of interest with a particular high potential for transnational cooperation have a clear **focus on systems and processes**, which supports the value of transnational approaches to tackling these topics. Apart from two, these fields of interest rated the highest on their transnational cooperation potential are among the mid-range in number of selections (neither among the top or bottom 10 fields of interest). Only the field of interest 4.4 – *Providing trainings and tools to address health and care challenges in the NWE area* and field of interest and 4.5 –

Supporting the promotion of local specificities to create identity and branding of NWE territories, are among the topics that have been selected by respondents the least often.

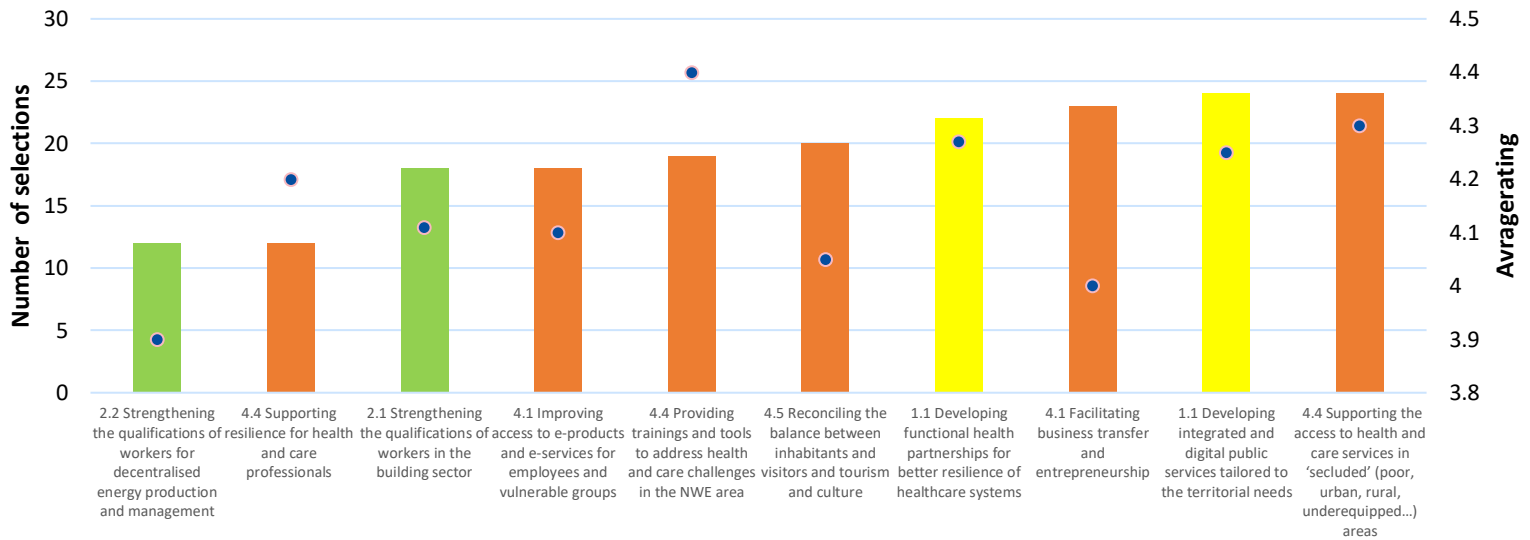
These are two of several field of interests **related to health and education, qualification or training across different priorities** that seem to be of lower interest to the respondents as indicated in the figure below. Field of interests of three priorities are among those selected least frequently by respondents. Among these are six out of the 16 field of interest of priority 5 (social – orange). This results from several other features of the survey:

- overall, the number of respondents selecting priority 5 was lower than for other priorities;
- the number of SO and Field of interest within priority 5 was particularly high (three and 16 respectively);
- the number of educational institutions (other than research or tertiary education) responding to the survey was particularly low and may thus also affect the preferences for education and learning in priority 5.

Despite this lower interest of respondents in these topics, in average, they are still rated positively regarding their potential for transnational cooperation. Indeed, even the lowest average rating is 3.8 (Field of interest 4.1 – Enhancing training adaptation to vulnerable groups' needs). Thus, **all identified topics may have sufficient relevance for transnational cooperation.**

Figure 17

Cross analysis between the 10 least selected fields of interest and the number of times they have been selected by respondents



To summarise, the cross-analysis of topics at the level of fields of interest supported the previously identified **disconnection between interests of respondents and the transnational potential**. Partially, different numbers of responses may affect the rating of the transnational potential (i.e. varying from 12 to 88 selections of a single field of interest). To some extent it may also matter how familiar respondents are with a certain topic in a transnational context beyond their own region. Finally, it also needs to be considered that the selection of fields of interest is very much subject to the working interest of the respondents.

4. Other fields of interest

Previous analyses have looked into the proposed fields of interest and each of these reflected on the specific added value of these fields in transnational cooperation. In addition, Chapter 3 also indicated at global level, what other thematic areas respondents listed in addition to the five priorities anticipated for the future NWE CP. The following will shortly reflect on additional fields of interest that have been mentioned by respondents in the context of individual priorities and specific objectives.

Below table summarises the answers for each objective and the last column indicates in how far the **topics may indeed be addressed** in the future Interreg NWE Programme – assuming that there will be no significant change in priorities or objectives.

The analysis indicates that **most topics suggested by respondents are part of the proposed fields of interest either** under the mentioned objective or in some cases they are subject to other priorities or objectives. Some proposals hint at preferred perspectives within the proposed topics rather than adding new topics or challenges. Several proposals take a sector specific focus but could be addressed under different objectives of the cooperation programme, depending on the main focus. Examples are references to the transport and agriculture sectors, which could focus on innovation, energy savings, pollutants etc. and may thus be considered under different objectives. Only few topics suggested by respondents may not fit easily under any of the objectives. Examples are projects following the innovation approach previously favoured by the Interreg NWE programme or addressing vulnerability beyond education, health and culture more generally.

Thus, **this analysis confirms above findings that the programme seems to cover well most aspects of transnational relevance in which respondents to the survey are interested.**

Objective	Other fields of interest mentioned	Consideration in the CP
Enhancing nature protection, biodiversity and reducing all forms of pollution	<p>Answers refer to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementation of eco-system service concepts in spatial planning; • tools for environmental monitoring at community level; • innovation in support of better recycling e.g. of nutrients in different industries including agriculture; • addressing fragmentation, biodiversity loss, quality of air, soil and water, water scarcity and any forms of pollution. 	Covered under different objectives & priorities
Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention resilience	<p>Answers refer to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strategies to avoid climate change; • linking energy infrastructure with climate resilient infrastructure & enhance system approaches for protection; • address specific sectors in view of climate change, such as agriculture and mobility; • supporting expertise, knowledge and skills for different actors and meeting demand of the labour market. 	Addressed in different objectives & priorities
Promoting energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions	<p>Answers refer to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the social implications of green investments (affordability issues) and means to change society needs to reduce energy demand; • different aspects related to transport such as modal split, use of energy sources, avoiding congestion; • means to reduce emissions through better land use, less material use, digital solutions and decentral grids, smart use of local energy sources 	Most aspects can be addressed under one of the objectives of the priority

Promoting renewable energy	<p>Answers refer to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> strengthening of energy communities and self-consumers in specific areas; enhancing renewable energy in mobility; fostering new types of renewables for more energy resilience. 	Examples that can be addressed within the objective
Transition towards a place-based circular economy	<p>Answers refer to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> addressing factors hampering circular economy initiatives including labour market, social aspects, economy, legal framework; circular economy aspects in specific sectors or using specific sectors, such as logistics or agriculture. 	Examples that can be addressed within the objective
Fostering innovation capacity in NWE regions	<p>Answers refer to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the social and environmental dimensions of innovation (including social innovation and pollution); innovation in specific sectors such as agriculture, new materials in industries or processes of Industry 4.0, smart mobility as well as smarter societies in general; innovation for more resilience in public services through digitalisation; promotion of European economic potentials beyond Europe. 	Some proposals may refer to the previous innovation approaches in NEW; others can be covered in different objectives & priorities
Enhancing the effectiveness and inclusiveness of labour markets and access to quality employment	<p>Answers refer to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> cooperation and innovation in health care; better digital accessibility and training for vulnerable groups and facilitating business transfer; adaptation of existing and developing new business models in specific sectors not well valued. 	Most aspects are subject of the objective; others can be addressed under other objectives of the same priority

Ensuring equal access to healthcare	<p>Answers refer to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving the resilience of vulnerable groups (families, children) through needs orientation; • health related innovation and needs orientation at working places. 	As far as health aspects are concerned the topics are covered by the objective
Enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation	<p>Answers refer to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the demand and accessibility of tourism and culture for vulnerable groups; • integrated locally led landscape management; • acknowledging the importance of culture for well-being; • the importance of sports activities for well-being that are not covered explicitly by 'tourism & culture'. 	Most aspects can be addressed either under this objective or elsewhere in the CP

5. Conclusions

The following points summarise the main findings from previous chapters adding further conclusions deriving from these findings, especially on what can be specifically relevant for the further development of the Interreg NWE Programme 2021-2027.

1. The overall number of respondents (412) to the stakeholder consultation is high and shows a strong interest in our programme. A solid majority of respondents have been previously involved in NWE (68%) and are planning to apply for the future programme (82%). This implies that expectations are high, with the current programme as a reference in terms of themes, processes and procedures. To avoid misunderstandings, **communicating clearly on the new aspects of the future programme will be of crucial importance.**
2. A large majority (68%) of respondents have already been involved in Interreg NWE, out of which 14% have benefited from NWE funding in both 4B and 5B. This shows that despite its bottom-up approach, the NWE programme does not “naturally” or easily attract newcomers and **pro activeness will be needed to make the programme more open.**
3. From a geographical point of view, most answers come from the same regions that were already well represented in the 4B and 5B programme: the Lille / Amsterdam / Dortmund triangle, Ireland, as well as the big cities. **A proactive approach in reaching out to the territories less involved will be needed** as the programme wishes to have a more balanced repartition of partners and funding allocation throughout NWE.
4. The most represented type of organisations shows a similar pattern as the current programme partners, with higher education and universities being most represented. A **specific effort towards local authorities, NGOs and interest groups as well sectoral agencies** will be needed for the future programme considering the new focus areas and target audiences.
5. The perspective of survey respondents shows a strong need for exchange of knowledge, experience, ideas etc. to create transnational added value. The types of projects expected by our programme should be adapted to this need. An **adequate communication and capitalisation approach should also be developed at programme level** to support durable / sustainable results & further uptake and roll-out to other regions.

6. The priorities, SOs and Fields of interest known to respondents from past programmes have received more interest than topics not known to previously involved stakeholders. New topics such as – in particular- the ones addressed within Priority 5 “*Transition to a socially inclusive sustainable and resilient society*” will **require extra efforts to raise awareness and reach out to potential applicants.**
7. Overall, the interest between priorities and SOs is well balanced across NWE countries. Thus, sufficient **interest for truly transnational projects can be assumed for all priorities.**
8. The interest of different types of stakeholders is rather well balanced between the five priorities. This **diversity of interest should ensure the quadruple helix approach expected for future projects**, combining the different perspectives needed to create valuable project ideas and results.
9. Survey answers indicate that many fields of interest and SOs bear the risk of overlaps, of misunderstandings and/or a lack of understanding. **This asks for clear and unambiguous communication from the programme on what is expected**, especially regarding innovation, due to the changed focus compared to the previous programmes, as well as health and education.
10. Fields of interest have been rated relatively high in terms of potential for transnational cooperation. **This tends to indicate that all identified fields of interest can be potentially relevant for the programme.** Nevertheless, this should be relativised by the fact that this question was only asked to respondents for fields of interest they selected as “most interesting”.
11. Overall the survey has confirmed the previously identified topics. Most indications on additional topics can be linked to one of the priorities foreseen. **Mobility issues seem not to be visible to respondents** though they can be covered by the anticipated priorities (2 and 4 in particular) and topics from specific angles. Therefore, there is no need to add additional themes, but to **give specific visibility to transport related topics in the programme’s communication.**