



Regional Studies Association

Policy Expo 2018



Universities and Regional Development

Putting Universities in their Place – An evidence based approach to understanding the contribution of higher education to local and regional development



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Policy Expo 2018



What is an RSA Policy Expo?

Session Overview

- 13:10 – 13:30 Introduction to the Policy Expo
- 13:30 – 14:00 Initial findings from an online survey
- 14:00 – 14:30 Panel discussion – reactions, thoughts, advice, questions
- 14:30 – 15:10 Comments and questions from the floor

Introduction to our approach and
methodology

Team

- Lucir Alves - Western Paraná State University, Brazil
- Louise Kempton – Newcastle University, UK
- Conceição Rego – Evora University, Portugal
- Mauricio Serra – University of Campinas, Brazil
- Mark Tewdwr-Jones - Newcastle University, UK
- Paul Vallance – Sheffield University, UK

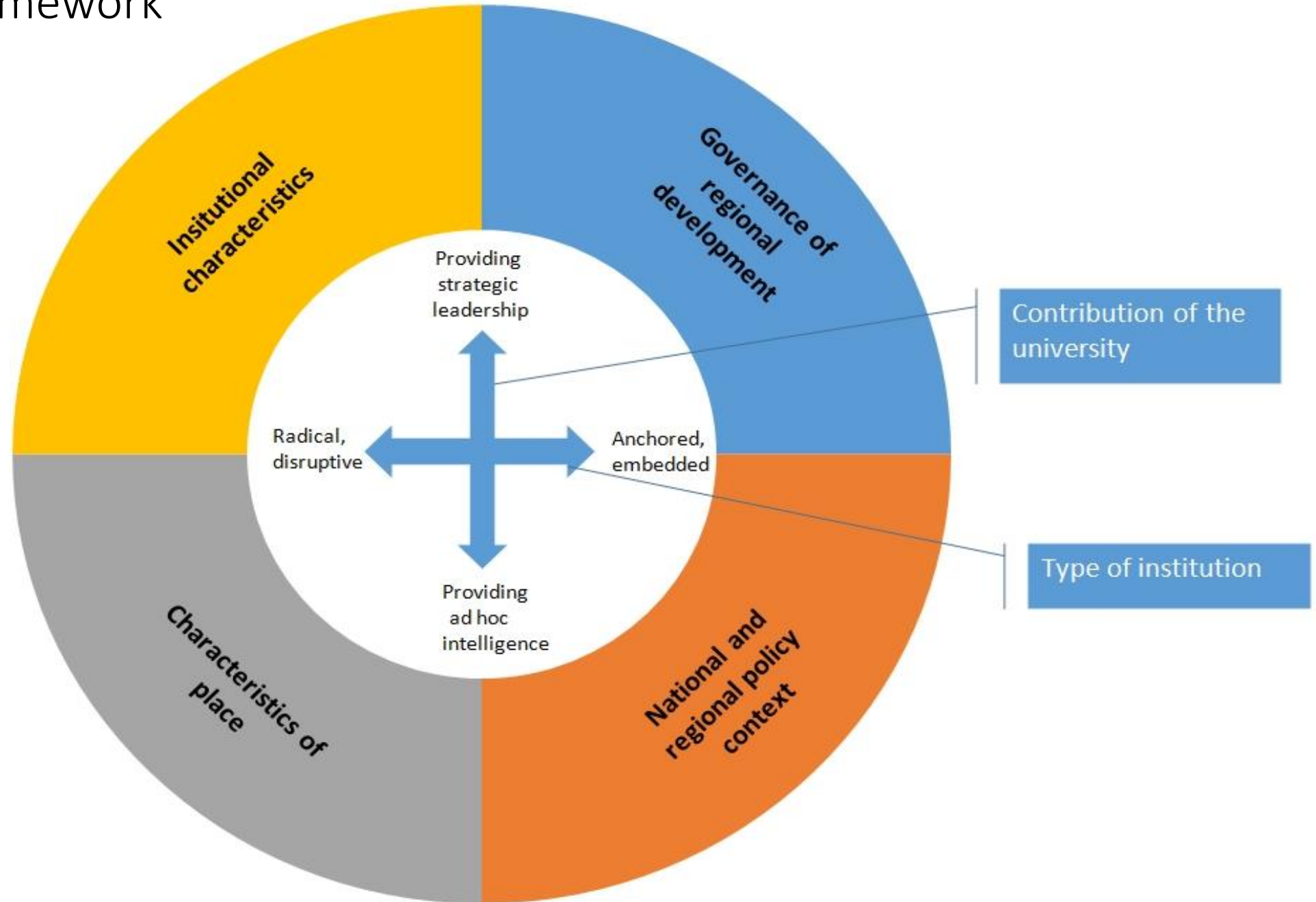
Justification

- There have been several attempts in recent years to create conceptual frameworks and models to help universities and policy makers understand the role and contribution of higher education to local and regional development.
- However these models have failed to fully reflect (or give insufficient attention to) the impact of the regional context (economic, social, political), the policy environment for higher education and territorial development and the diversity of management and leadership structures of universities themselves.
- This has led to the development of static models that rarely work outside of the immediate context in which they were developed and therefore risk leading to design of policies that are not fit for purpose.
- This Policy Expo will work with partners in Europe, South America, Africa, Asia and Australia to develop a new approach to thinking about the university that can be adapted to the specificity of institutional and local contexts.

Research questions

- What are the different roles that universities play in local and regional development and how do these manifest themselves? What can we learn from comparing practice and experience internationally? To what extent are policies aimed at promoting university-region relationships transferrable?
- What are the internal (e.g. HEI management and leadership, history, mission, structures) and external (e.g. HE and territorial development policy context, governance system, nature of the 'place') drivers and how do these explain the nature of the relationship?
- How can we think about the university in new ways that can embrace the breadth and diversity of its relationships with its place by providing a framework to understand and assess its role and provide guidance for universities, local leaders and policy makers to embed and deepen the contribution of HE to regional development?

Underpinning framework



Methodology

- Review of the literature that analyses the problems and challenges in mobilising universities for regional development, particularly in less developed regions, and on policy mobility and transfer
- Call for evidence and survey
- Develop underpinning toolkit for analysis
- Test with partners in a variety of geographies, institution types and policy contexts
- Develop a practical tool that can be applied in any context around the world to help shape place-sensitive policies that are appropriate to local circumstances

Milestones

- September 2018 - Project initiation
- September to November 2018 – Literature and evidence review, online survey
- RSA Winter Conference November 2018 – Present the Expo
- December 2018 – Develop model 1.0
- January to March 2019 – Test phase in 10 case study regions
- April to May 2019 – Analysis of results, modifications and adjustments
- RSA Annual Congress June 2019 – Present findings and model 2.0
- June 2019 – Stakeholder consultation 1 with up to 20 key policy stakeholders (e.g. DG Regio, DG EAC, OECD, EUA etc.) in Brussels to seeks feedback and insights on the model
- July and August 2019 – Stakeholder consultation 2 with local and regional stakeholders (at least 10) in case study regions to test applicability of the model
- September 2019 – final model produced
- December 2019 – two publications produced. One academic paper for Regional Studies, Regional Science and an edited book describing the model and 10 case studies of its implementation

Findings from an online survey

Overview

- Results captured between 19th October and 2nd November
- 110 responses from RSA members representing just under 8% of total membership
- Online survey using onlinesurveys.ac.uk (formerly Bristol Online Surveys)
- 29 questions in total – mostly closed questions but opportunities for free text in places

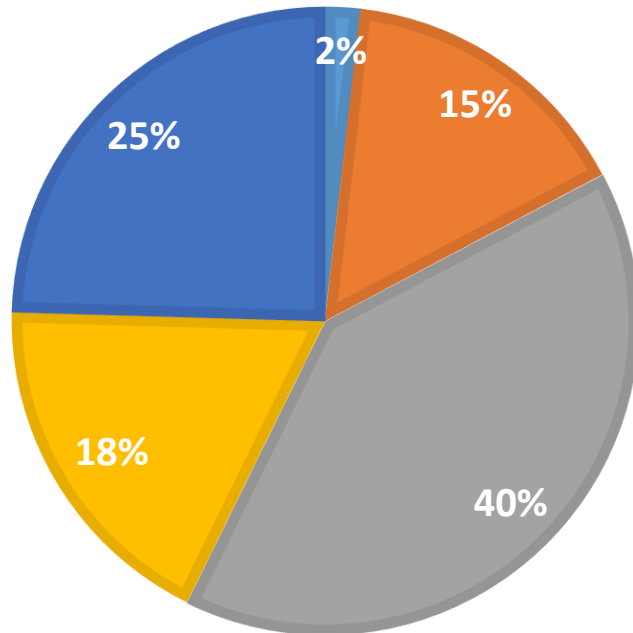
Definitions

- **HEI** – A higher education institution or university (public or private) that teaches students to at least first degree (or equivalent) level. May also be involved in postgraduate teaching and research.
- **Region** – A defined geography which can have either formal (e.g. region, state, city-region, federation of local authorities) or informal (e.g. regional associations) structures of governance between national central/federal government and local administration (e.g. county, local authority, city, municipality etc.) levels.
- **Engagement** – Activities undertaken by individuals, groups or at institution level in a HEI that are not only focused on the teaching of students or academic research. Other terms include outreach, third mission, extension work, community work, service learning etc. It should only refer to activities where at least one participant, partner or beneficiary is from a non-HEI sector (business, government, charity, community group, school etc.)

Part 1- About You

Age

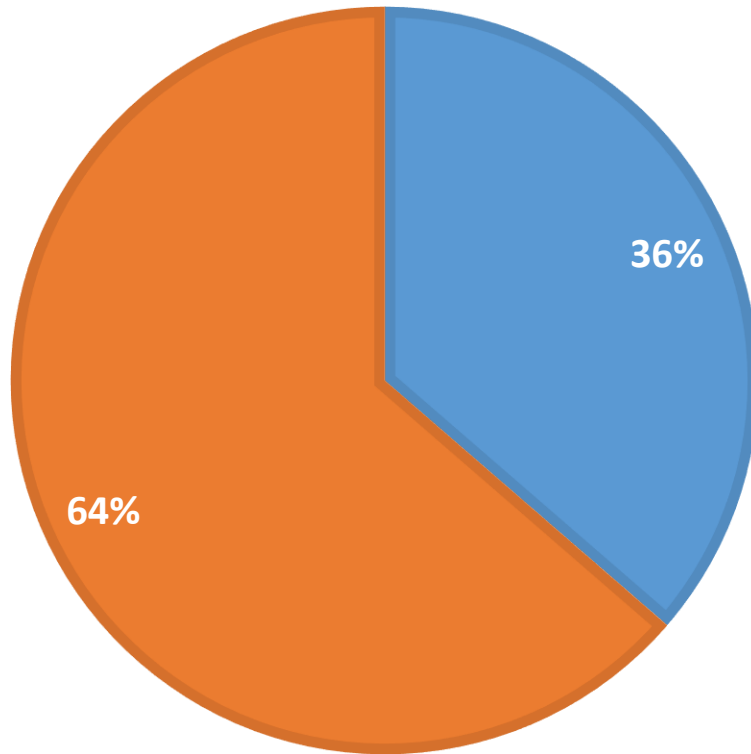
■ Under 25 ■ 25-34 ■ 35-44
■ 45-54 ■ Over 55



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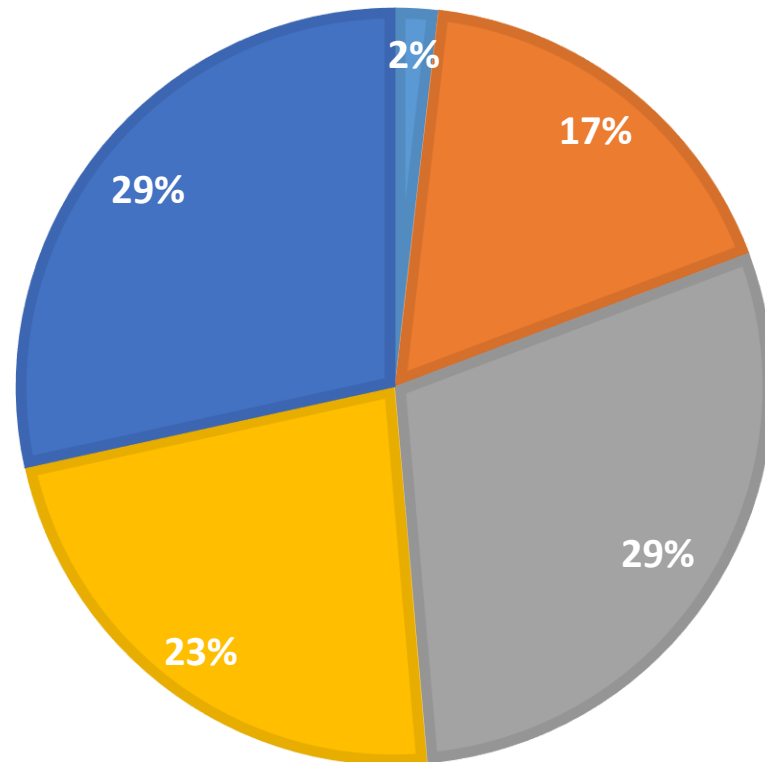
Gender

■ Female ■ Male ■ Prefer not to say



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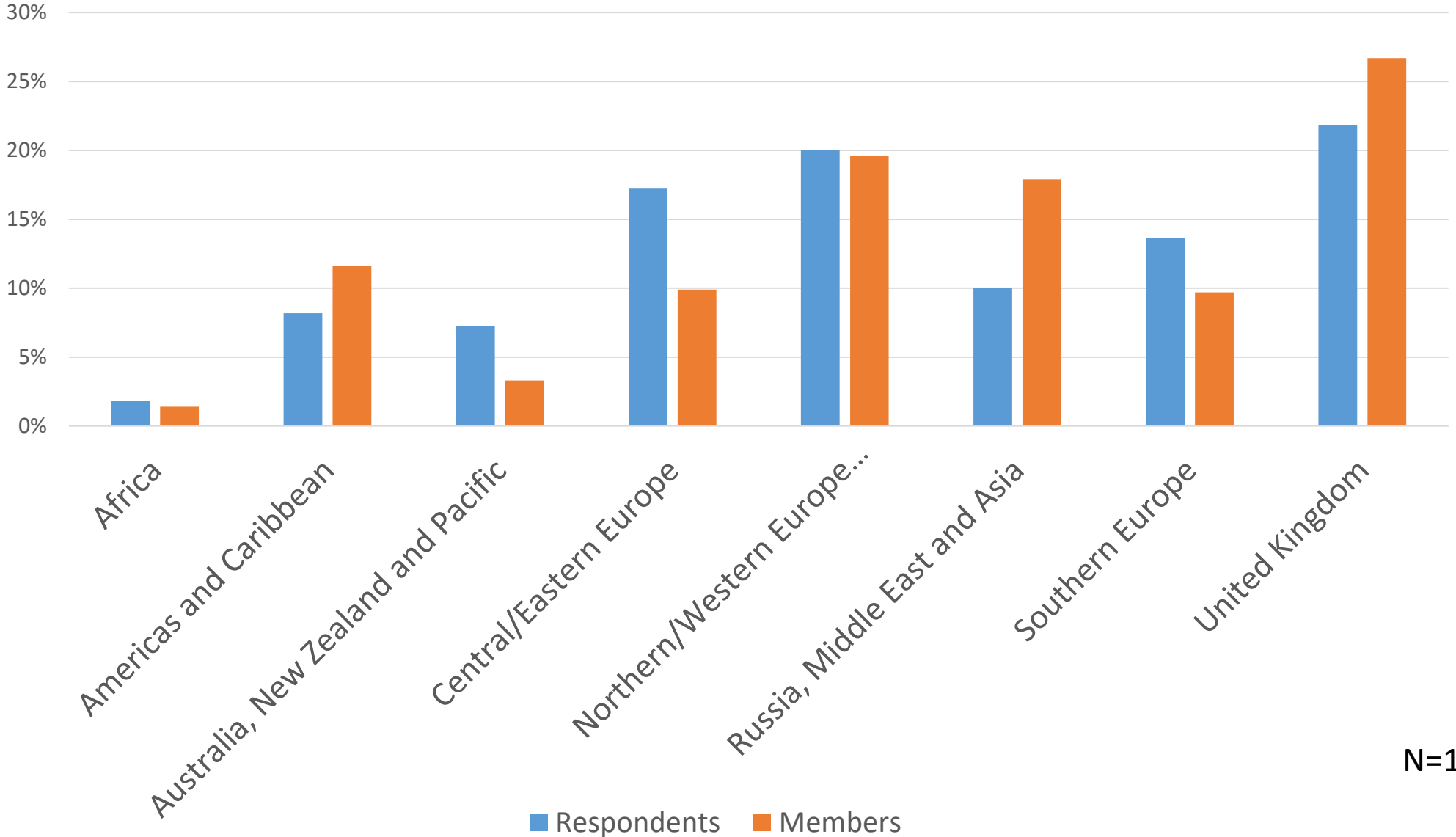
Number of years working in HE



- Less than one year
- 1-5 years
- 5-10 years
- 10-20 years
- More than twenty years

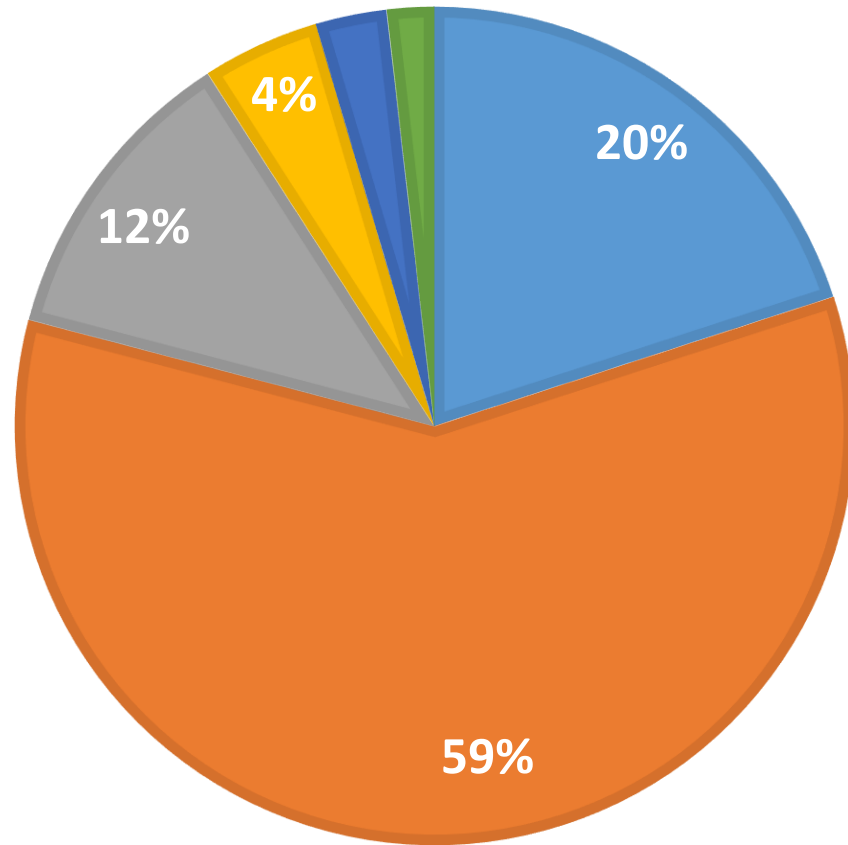
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Location



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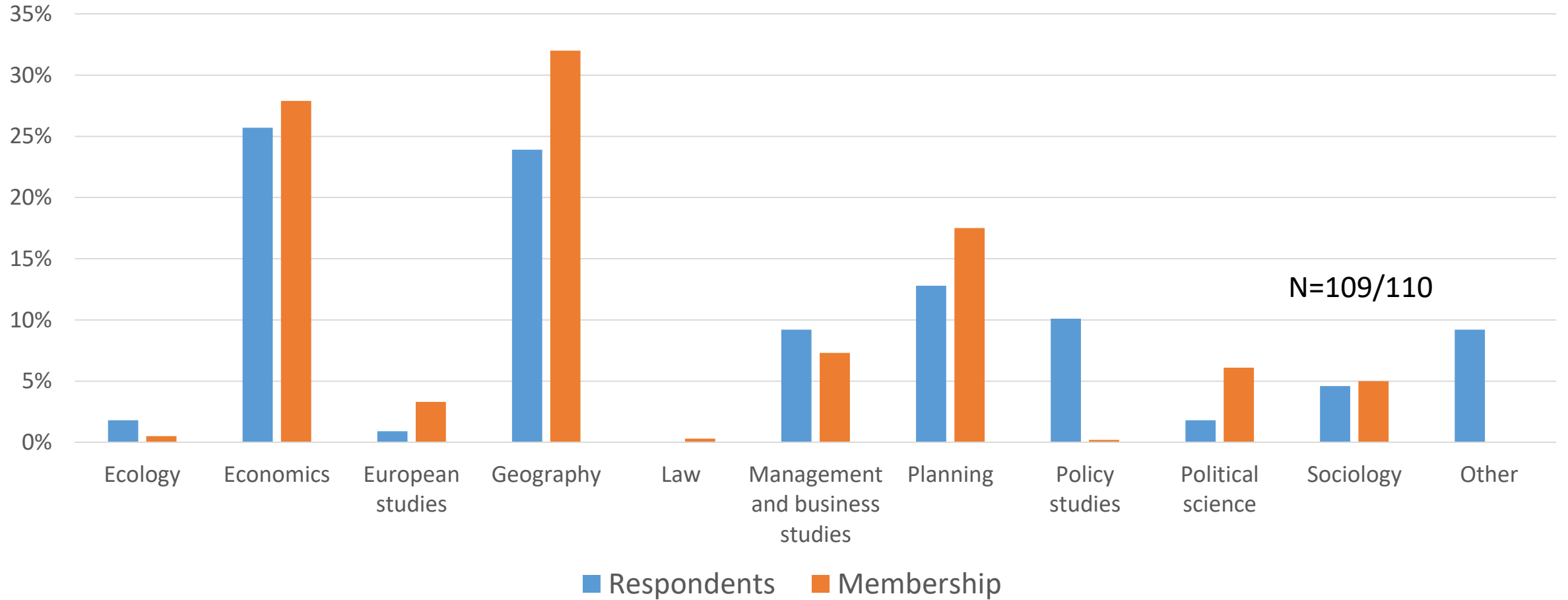
Role



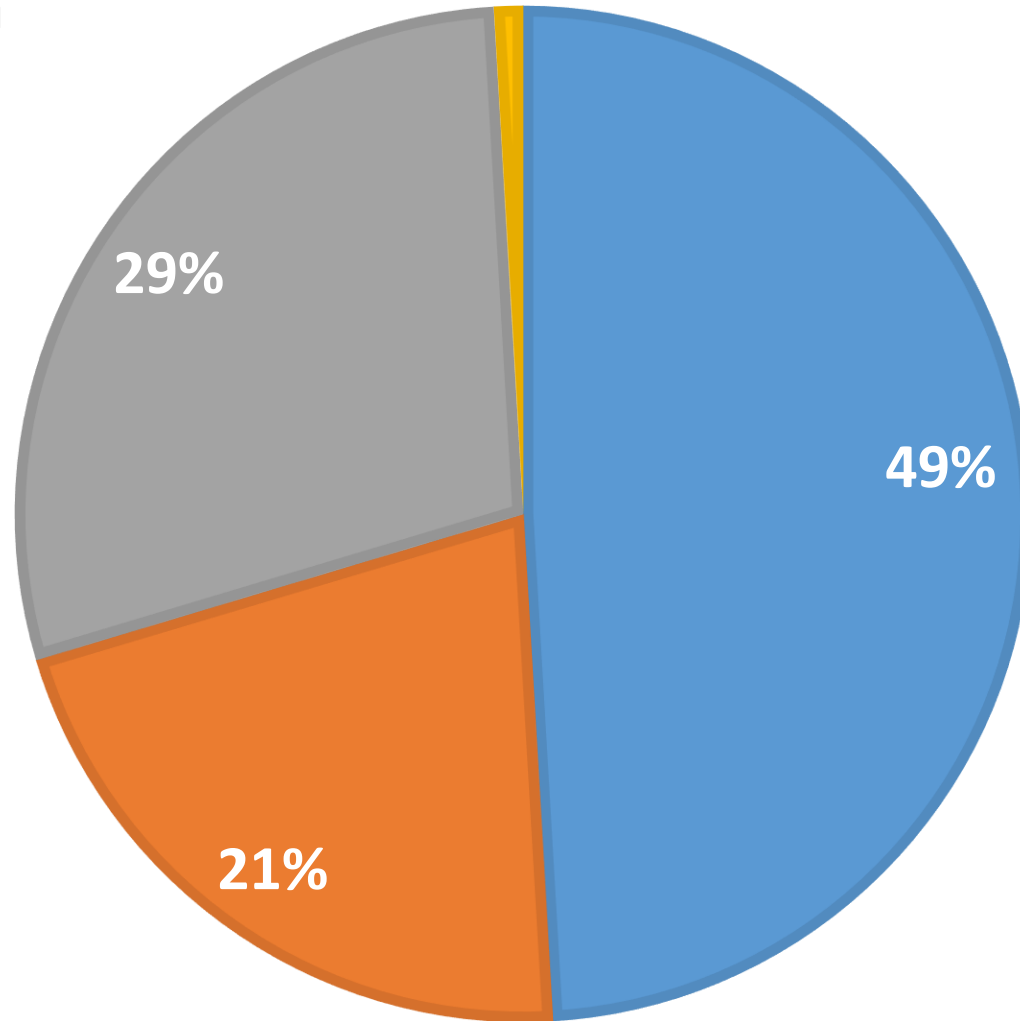
- Senior management, head of department or institute
- Academic (professor, fellow, lecturer)
- Doctoral student
- Retired or emeritus
- Professional
- Other

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Discipline



Origin

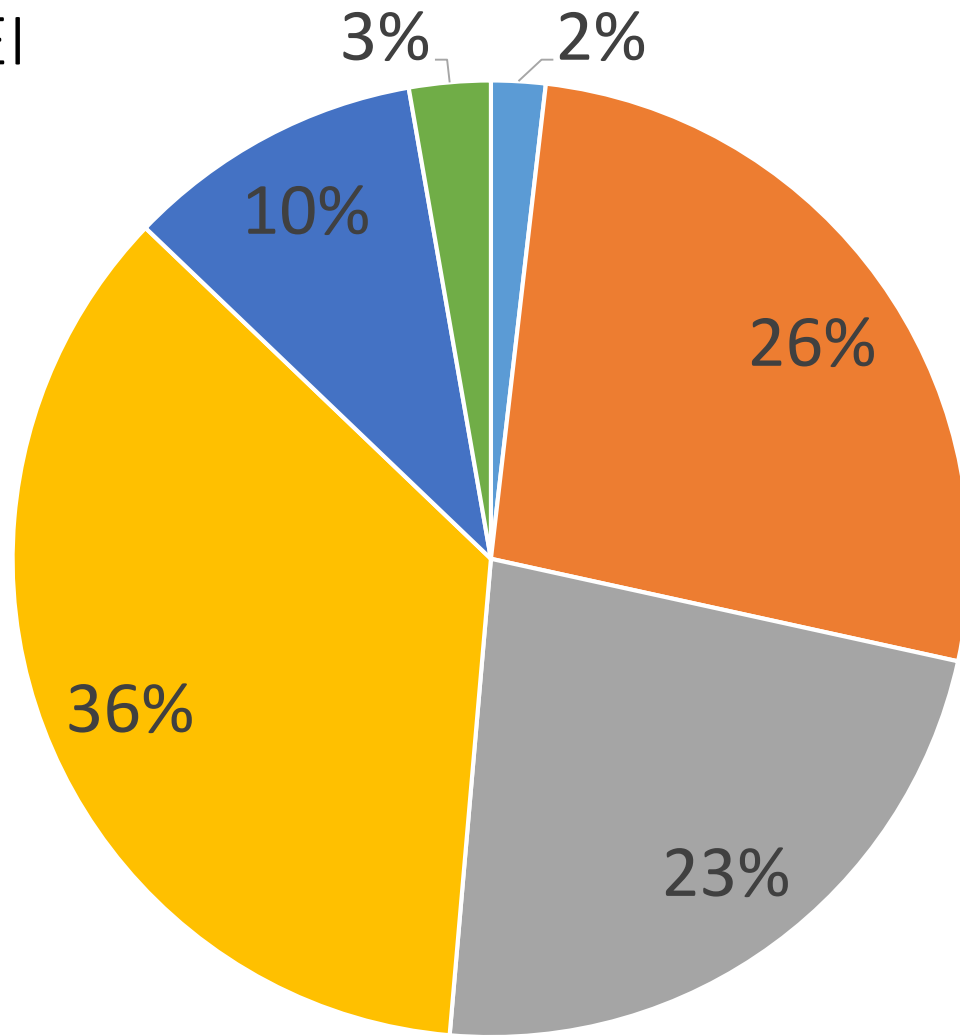


- I am originally from the region where I now work
- I am from the country where I now work but moved from another region
- I am from another country
- Other

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Part 2- About Your HEI

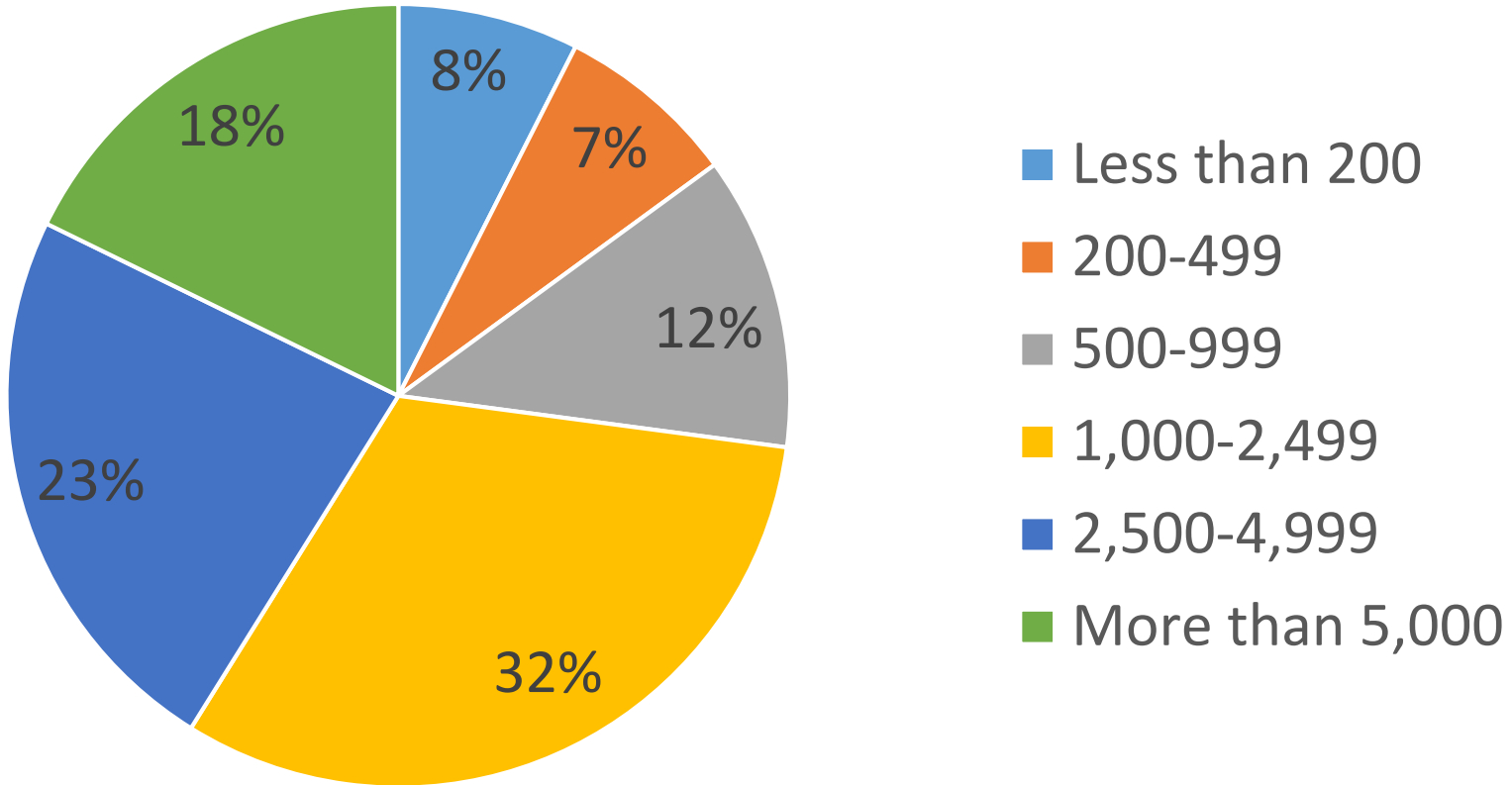
Age of HEI



- Less than 10 years
- 10-49 years
- 50 to 99 years
- 100-200 years
- More than 200 years

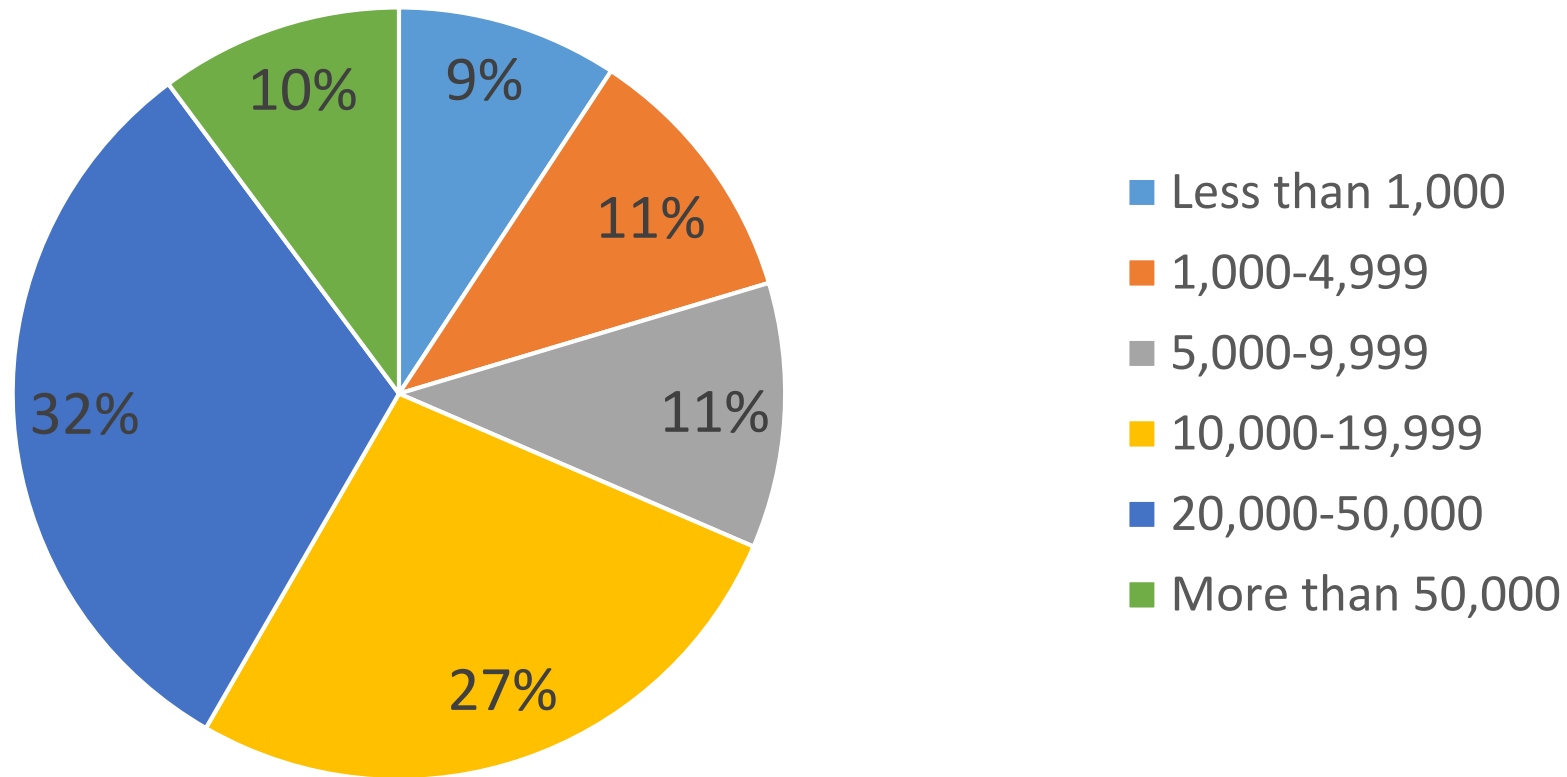
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Size of HEI (staff numbers)



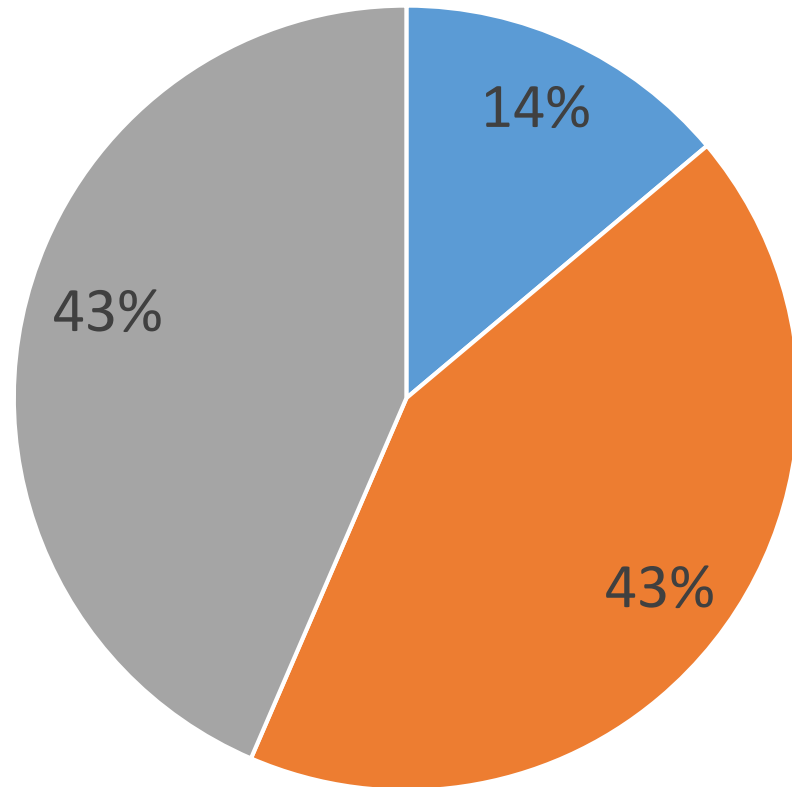
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Size of HEI (student numbers)



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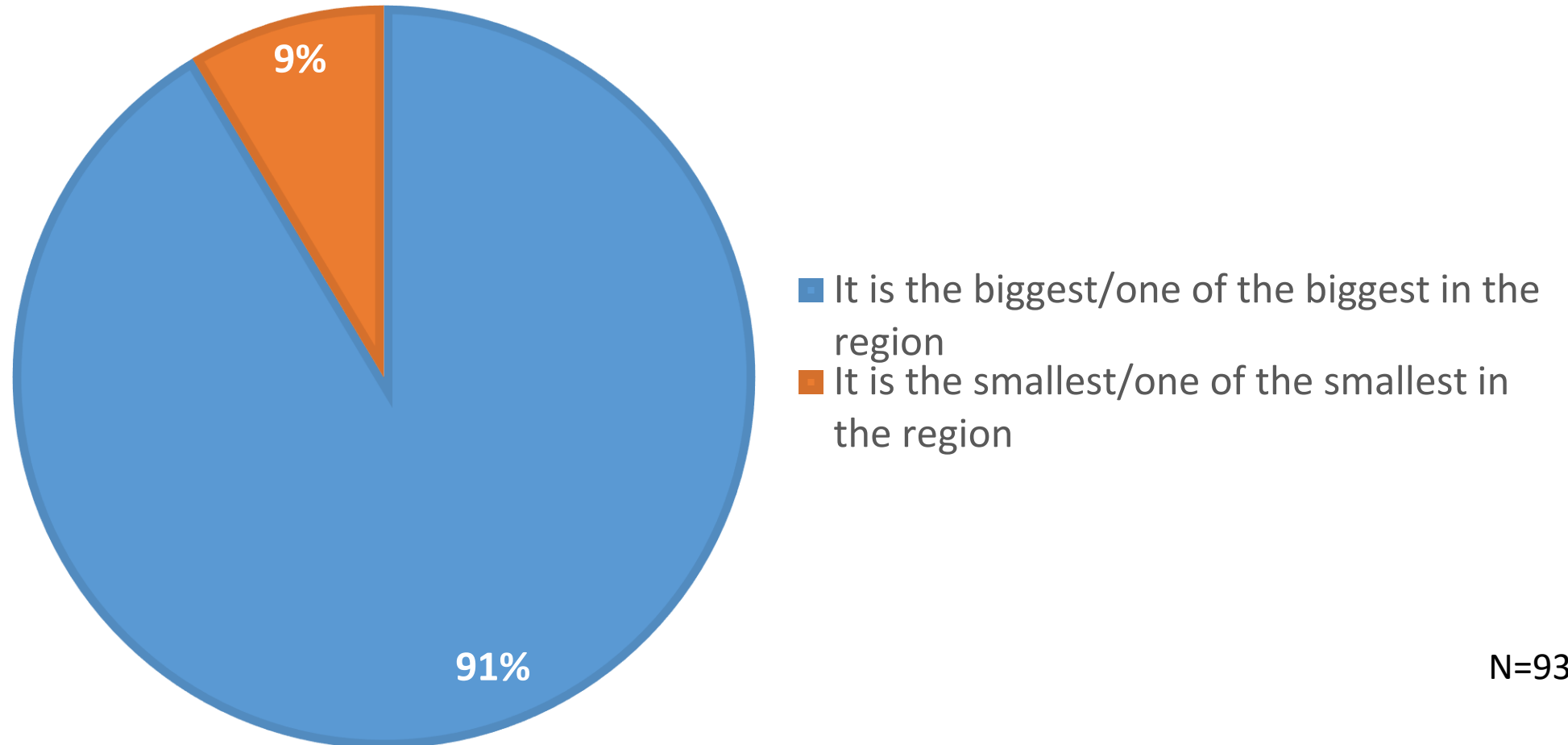
HEIs in the region



- It is the only HEI in the region
- It is one of a few (5 or fewer) HEIs in the region
- It is one of many (more than 5) HEIs in the region

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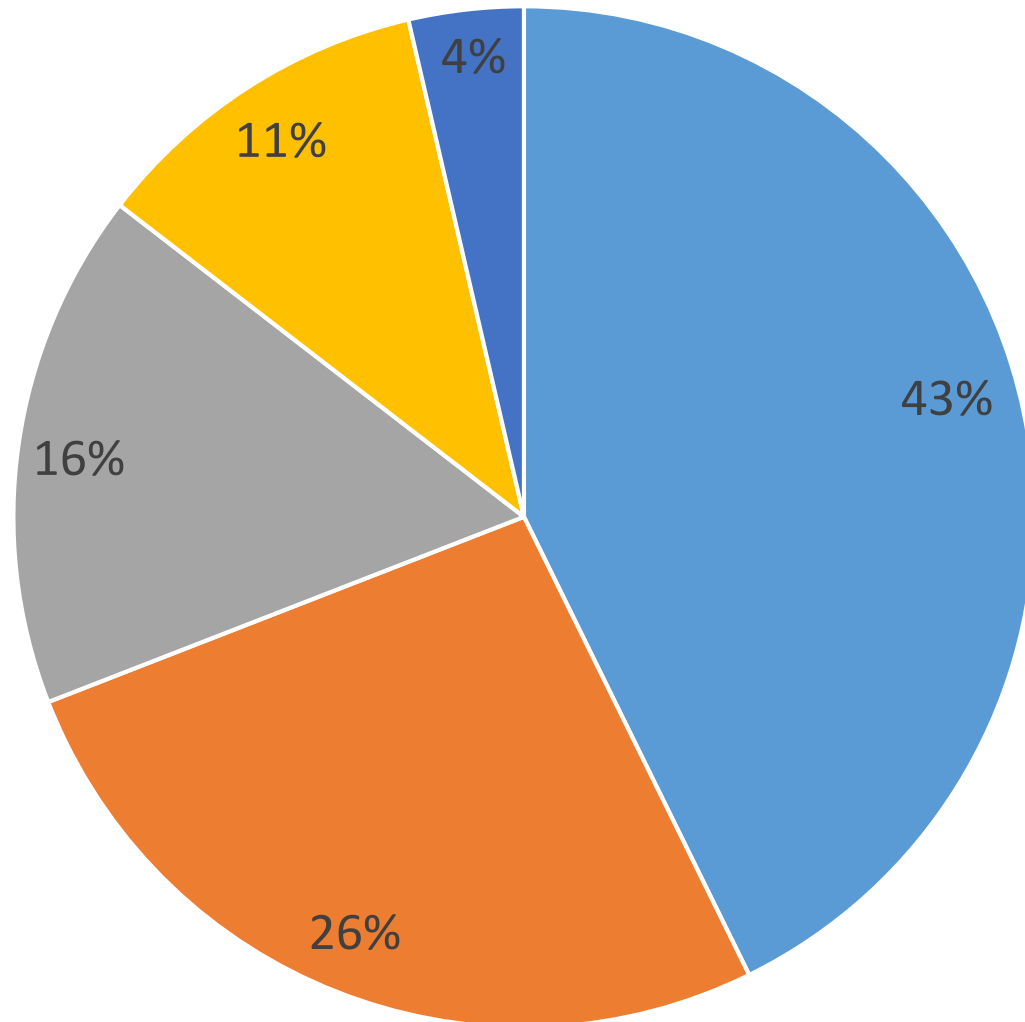
Where there is more than one HEI in the region



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Part 3- About Your Region and Governance

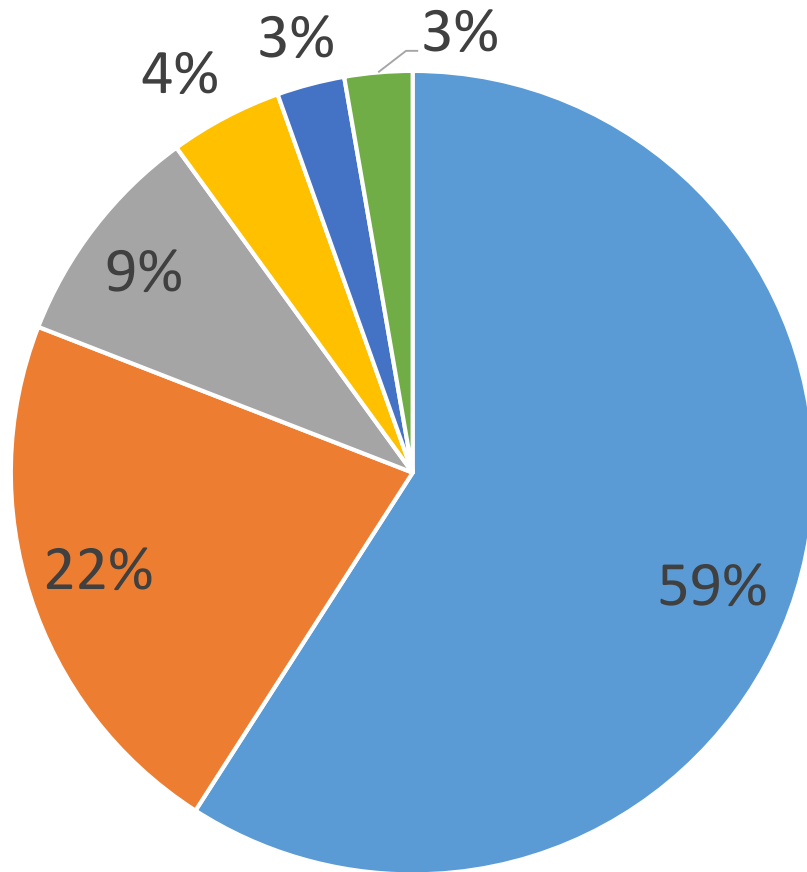
Region type



- Developed country/Developed region
- Developed country/Lagging region
- Less developed country/Developed Region
- Less developed country/Lagging Region
- I don't know

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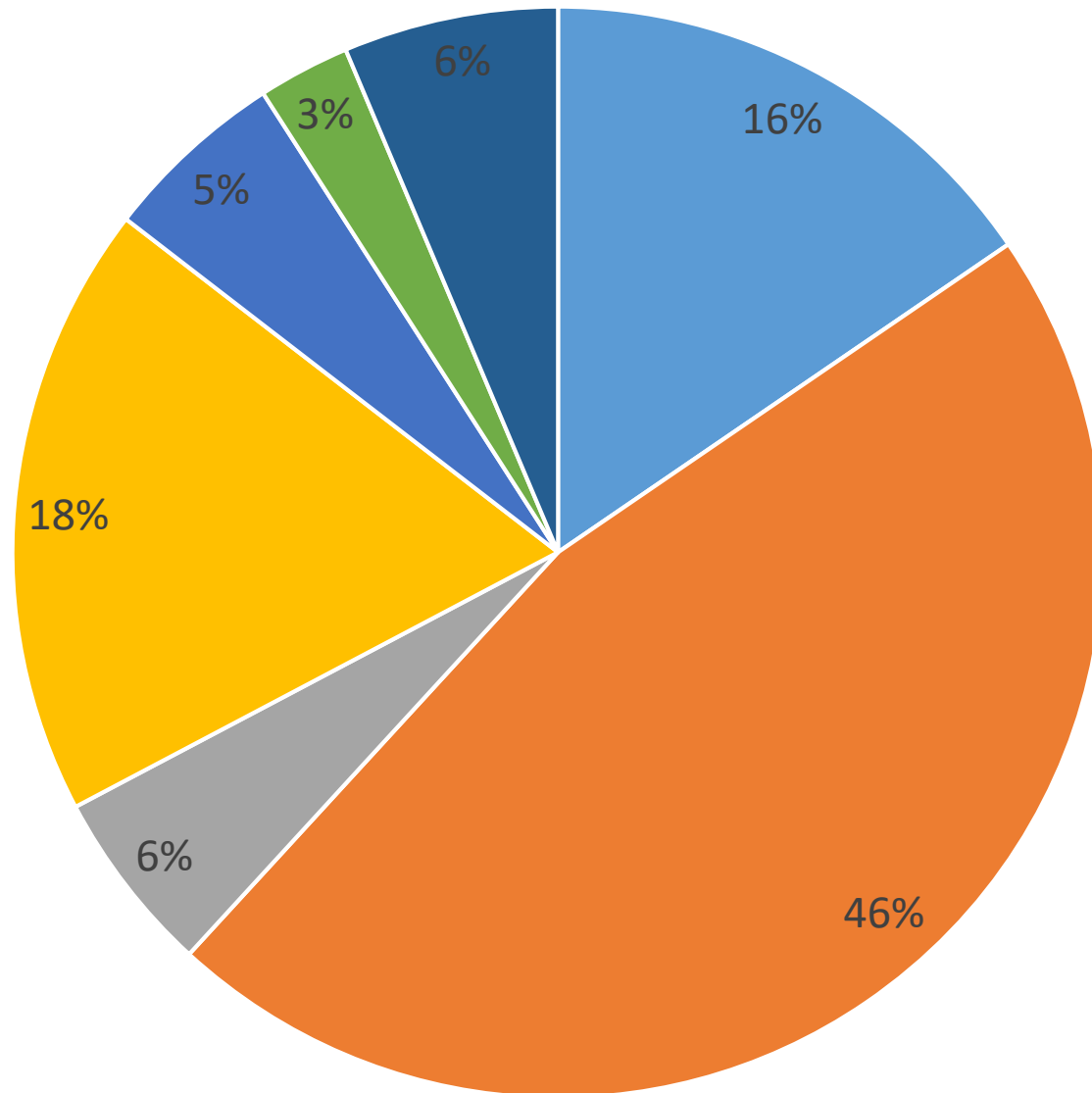
Governance of HE



- National
- Mix of national and regional
- Mostly regional
- Entirely regional
- Don't know
- Other

N=110/110

Governance of Regional Development



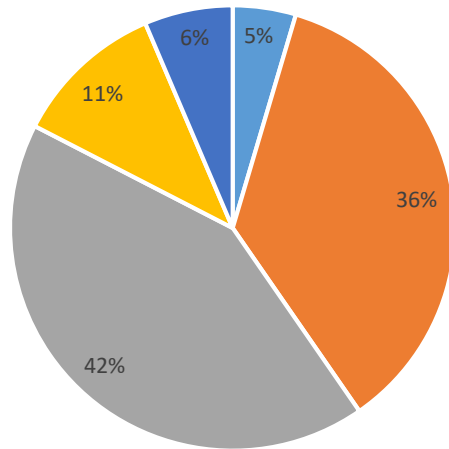
- All decisions and policies are determined by the national government
- There are a few regional agencies but major decisions and finances are centrally controlled
- There is no formal regional governance but there is significant devolved regional autonomy
- Most of the money and decision making for regional development is devolved
- The region has total control over decision making and finance for regional development
- Don't know
- Other

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Part 4- About Your HEI's Engagement

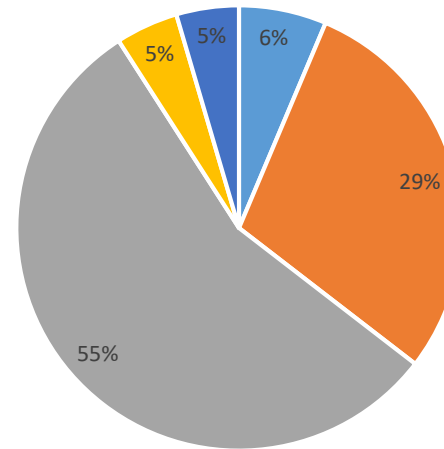
How aligned are the following activities at your HEI to regional need?

Teaching



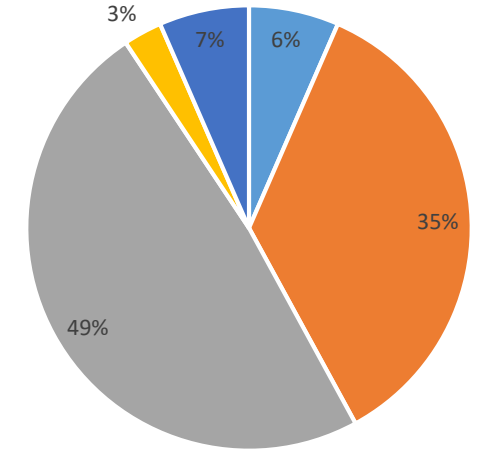
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Research



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Engagement



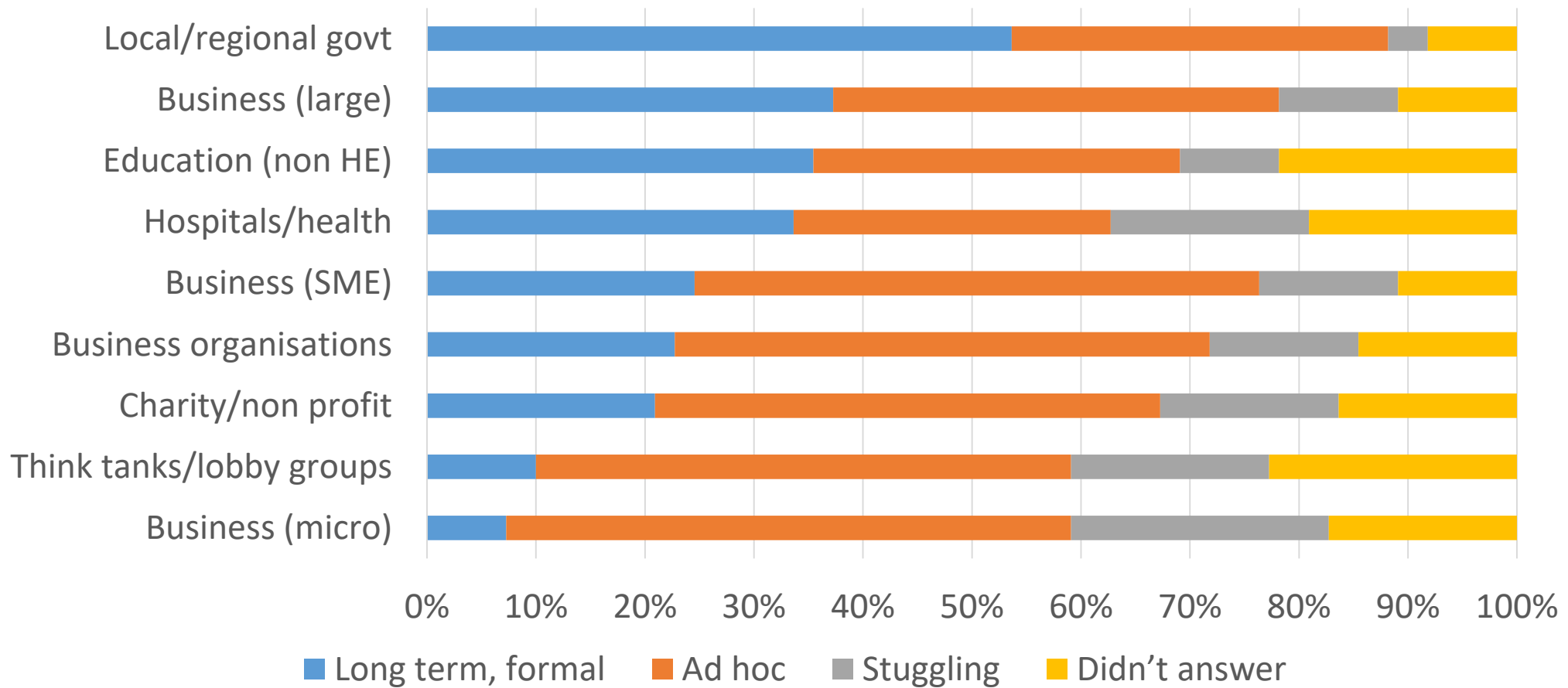
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- Totally
- To a large extent
- To some extent
- Not at all
- Don't know/not applicable

Analysis

- Research in lagging regions of developed countries and developed regions of less developed countries more likely to be oriented to regional need
- Little difference in terms of orientation of teaching to regional need by any variable apart from age of HEI (youth positively correlated)
- Sole HEIs much more likely (almost 90%) to say research is aligned to regional need compared to one of few or one of many (30% and 25%)
- Autonomous regions much more likely to say teaching and research oriented to regional need (but very small number)
- Younger (under 100) HEIs more likely to align research to regional need (++)
- No notable differences in alignment of engagement by any variable
- Gender and where the person is originally from did not have any effect on responses

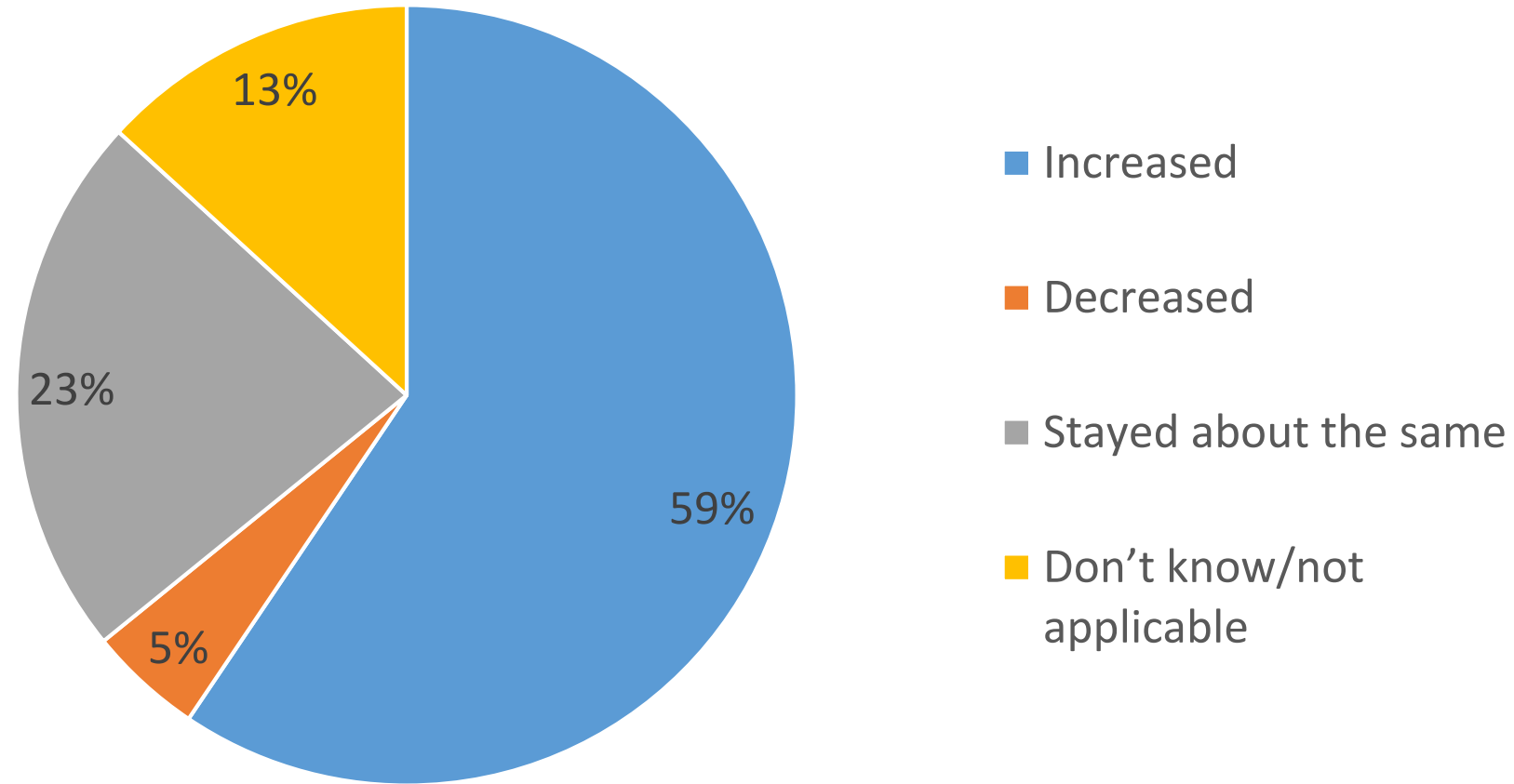
Who your HEI engages with and nature of engagement



Analysis

- Universities in developed regions of developed countries much more likely to have formal relationships with big business, hospitals and think tanks
- Lagging regions more likely to engage with with micro business, schools and charities
- Lagging regions in developed countries much more likely (2x – 5x) to have formal relationships with business organisations
- Sole HEIs more likely to have formal relationships with local/regional government and business organisations
- HEIs in more devolved systems of governance more likely to be engaged with local and regional government
- Women more likely to be formally engaged with local and regional government, schools, think tanks and charities (++)
- Younger HEIs more likely to be engaged with SMEs, local and regional government and business organisations
- People from other countries or regions more likely to be engaged with large businesses and local and regional government
- People from the region or country more likely to be engaged with SMEs

HEI engagement with non academic partners in the region – past 3 years

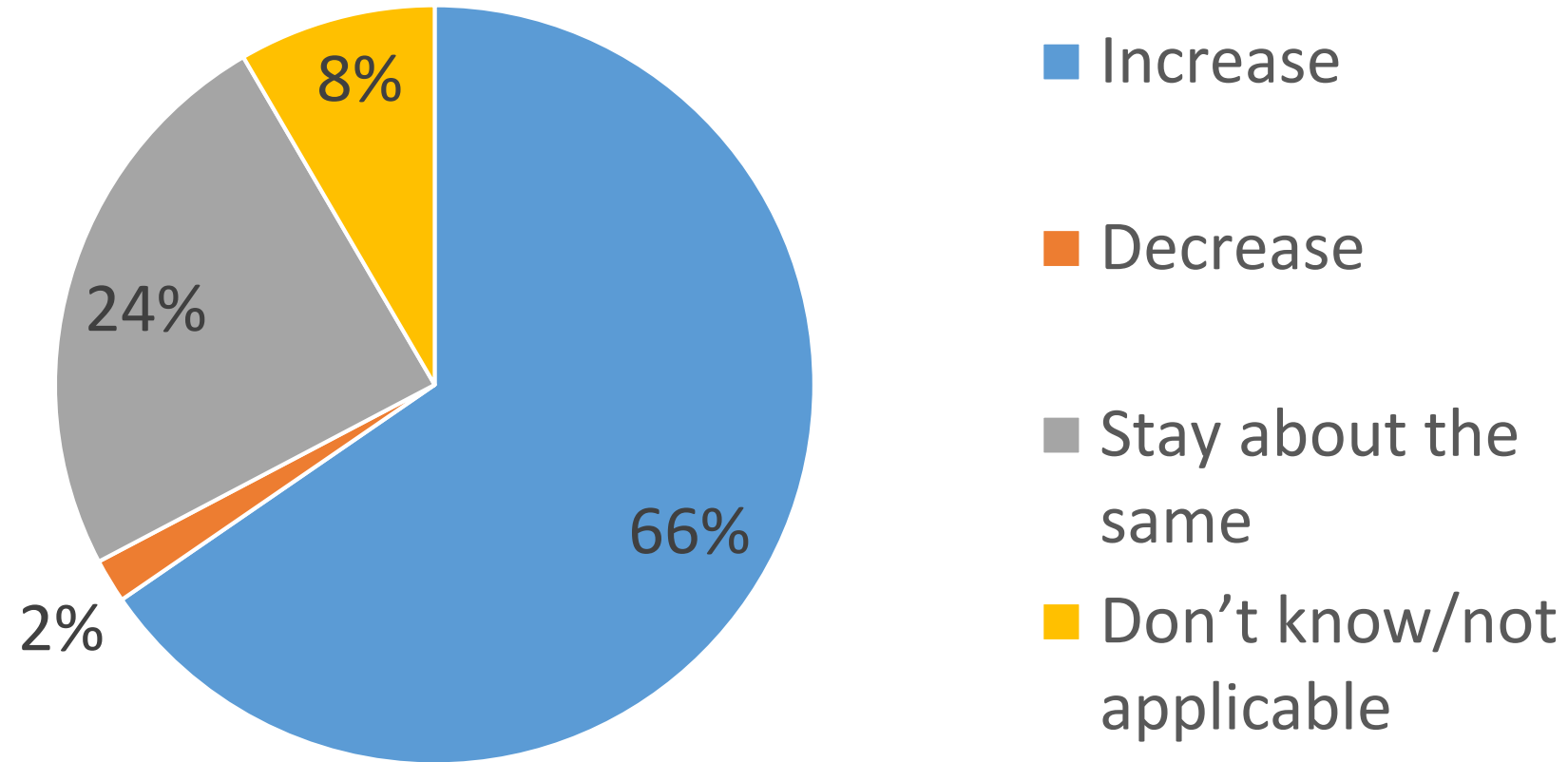


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Analysis

- Most likely to say engagement has increased
 - Younger HEIs
 - From the region/country

HEI engagement with non academic partners in the region – next 3 years

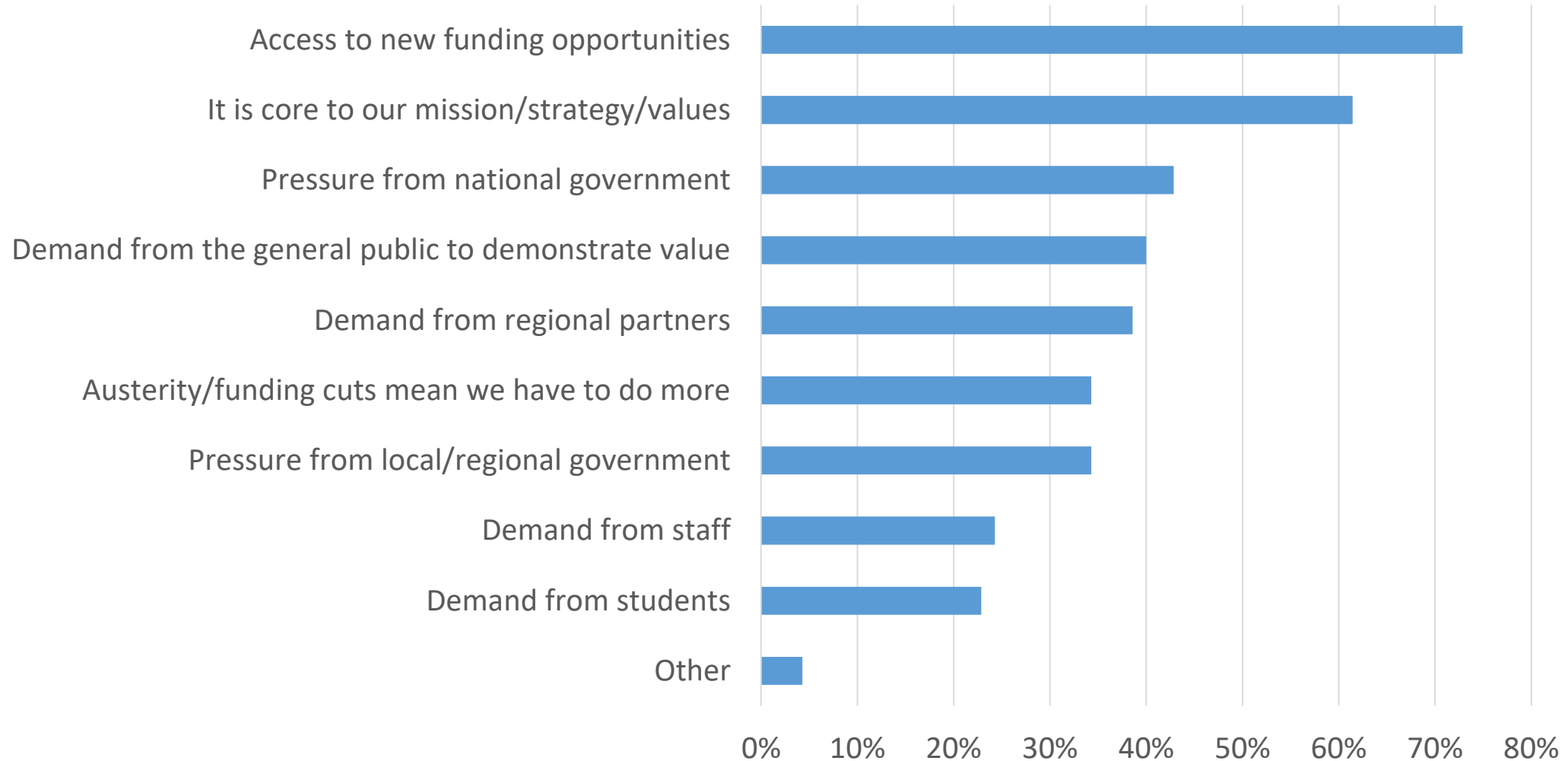


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Analysis

- Most likely to expect engagement to increase
 - Devolved governance systems
 - Women
 - Younger HEIs
 - From the region/country
- Least likely to expect engagement to increase
 - Lagging regions in less developed countries

Why do you expect it to increase?

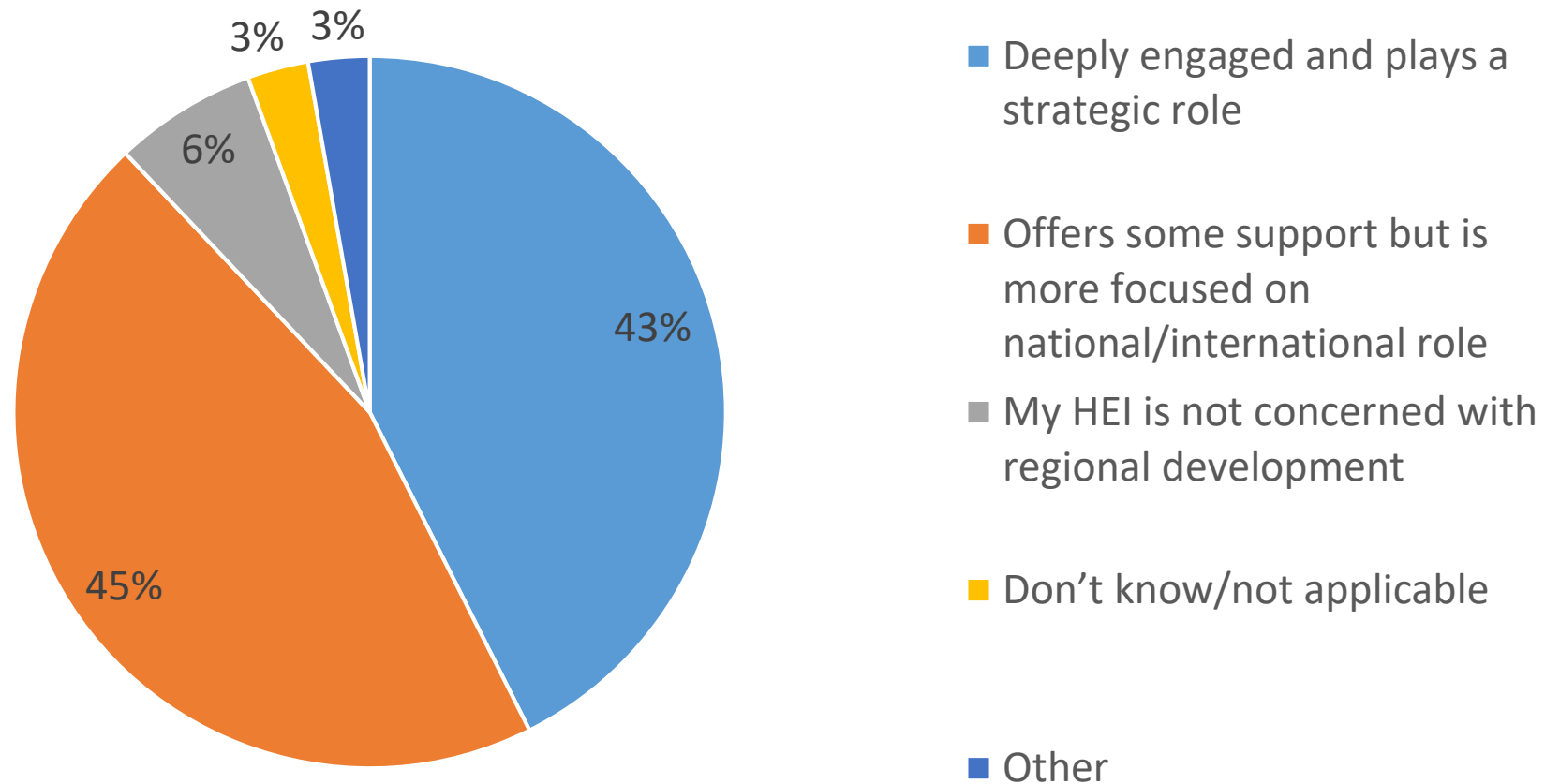


N= 70/70

Analysis

- Only significant variability was on the basis of number of HEIs in the region
 - Sole and one of few HEIs in the region more likely to cite pressure from local/regional government
 - One of many regional HEIs more likely to cite pressure from staff and students

How committed is your HEI to regional development?

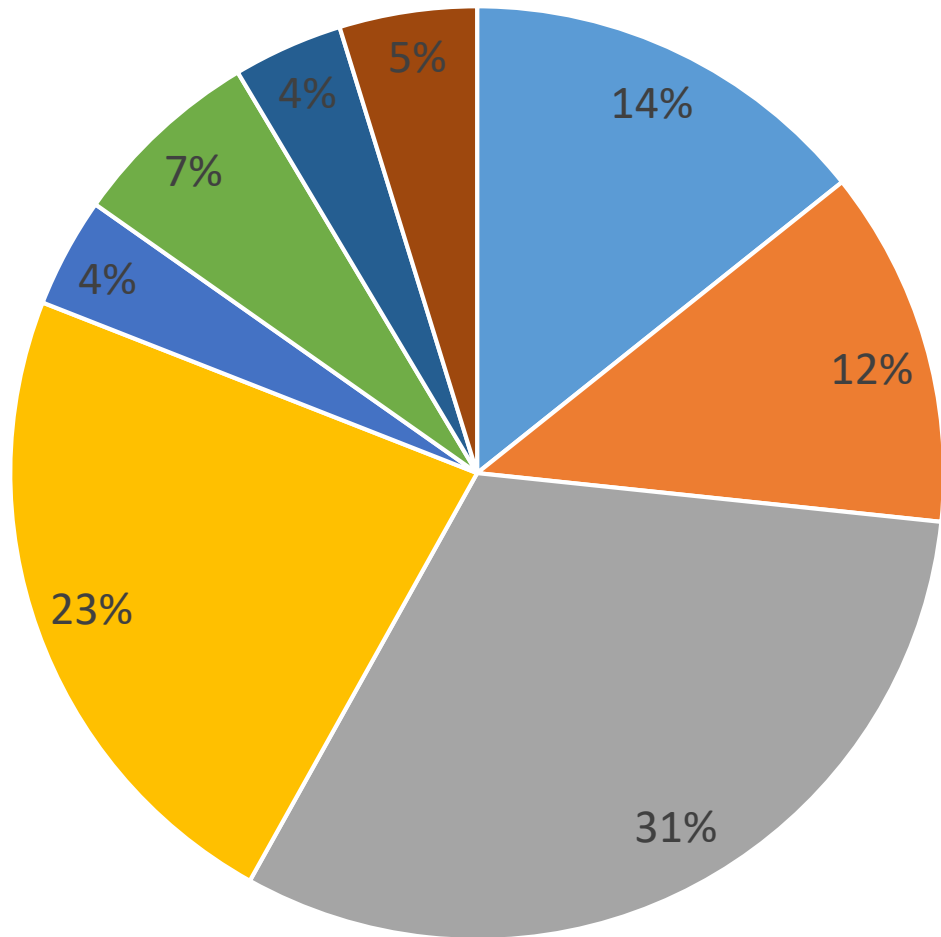


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Analysis

- Lagging regions in developed countries and developed regions in less developed countries more likely (2x – 3x) to describe their institutions as deeply engaged and playing a strategic role in the region.
- Developed regions in developed countries and lagging regions in less developed countries more likely to say their institutions are more focused on it national/international role (50%+)
- Lagging regions in less developed countries more likely than other region types to say their institution is not concerned with regional development
- Younger HEIs more likely to say they are deeply engaged
- People from the same country but different region more likely to see their HEI as deeply engaged
- Sole HEIs much more likely to be a critical actor in regional development, one of few much more likely to contribute by spearheading new initiatives

Which best describes the role of your HEI in regional development?



- It is a critical actor and plays a central role
- It leads by example through spearheading new initiatives
- It gets involved in regional issues when asked to but doesn't play a proactive role
- It provides evidence and intelligence for the region to help decision making
- It challenges and provokes business and government to think and act differently
- It does not formally contribute to regional affairs
- Don't know/not applicable
- Other

N=105/110

Analysis

- Lagging regions in developed countries most likely to say their institution is a critical actor and plays a central role in regional decision making
- Lagging regions in less developed countries and people from the region most likely to say their institution does not play a proactive role
- Respondents from universities in centralised governance systems more likely to see the institution as a critical actor in regional development
- People in younger HEIs more likely to see it as a critical actor
- People in older HEIs and people from other countries more likely to see its role as spearheading new initiatives

Analysis (organisation of regional engagement)

- Lagging regions in less developed countries more likely than other region types to say their institution is not concerned with regional development
- Sole HEIs much more likely (x2) to see their regional engagement as strategic and core to their mission
- One of few/many HEIs more likely to see it as up to individual's motivation (2x and 3x more likely than sole)
- Men more likely than women to say engagement is driven by personal motivations

Panel Discussion

Questions, Comments,
Suggestions