

Special Report No 4/2014

Integration of EU water policy objectives with the CAP: a partial success

Survey of farm advisory bodies



EUROPEAN
COURT
OF AUDITORS

Survey of farm advisory bodies

- In the absence of studies at EU level on the impact of cross-compliance and rural development on farmers' awareness and farming practices in relation to water, the Court carried out an online survey of 140 farm advisory bodies in seven Member States: the Netherlands, Italy (Lombardy), Denmark, France, Slovakia, Spain (Andalusia) and Greece.
- The survey was carried out between the 27 February and 31 May 2013. Sixty-seven out of 140 bodies (48%) replied to the survey. Its results are presented below.

Part 1 – Cross-compliance

Are water-related cross-compliance requirements known to farmers you advise and have they encouraged them to comply more with water-related obligations in their activities?

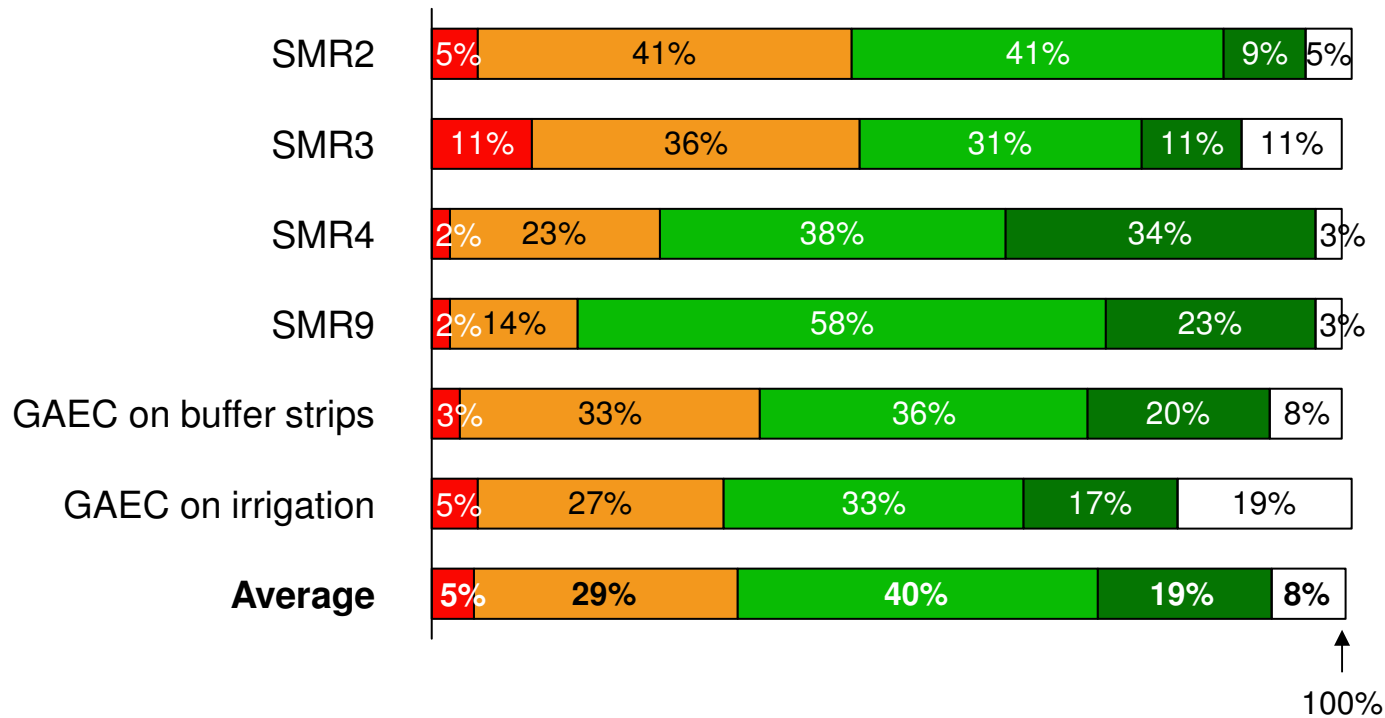
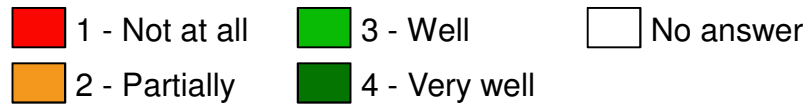
Note: By water-related cross compliance requirements, we mean:

- Statutory Management Requirement 2 regarding groundwater protection (SMR2)
- Statutory Management Requirement 3 regarding the usage of sewage sludge (SMR3)
- Statutory Management Requirement 4 regarding pollution caused by nitrates (SMR4)
- Statutory Management Requirement 9 regarding pesticides (SMR9)
- Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition regarding buffer strips (GAEC on buffer strips)
- Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition regarding irrigation (GAEC on irrigation)

Information and awareness

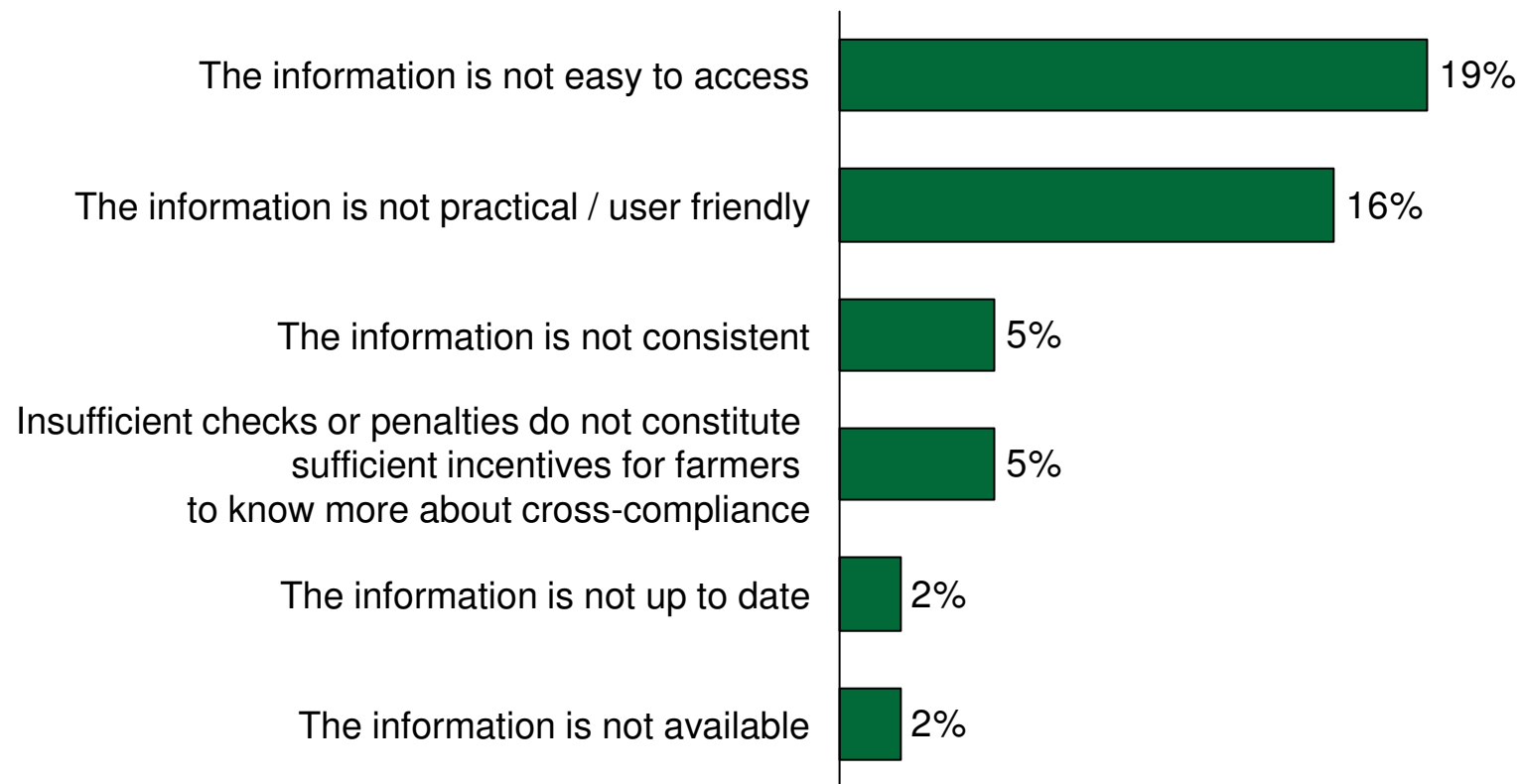
On a scale from 1 (not at all) to 4 (very well), how well do you consider that the farmers you advise were informed about the cross-compliance requirements related to water they have to comply with?

Percentage of respondents



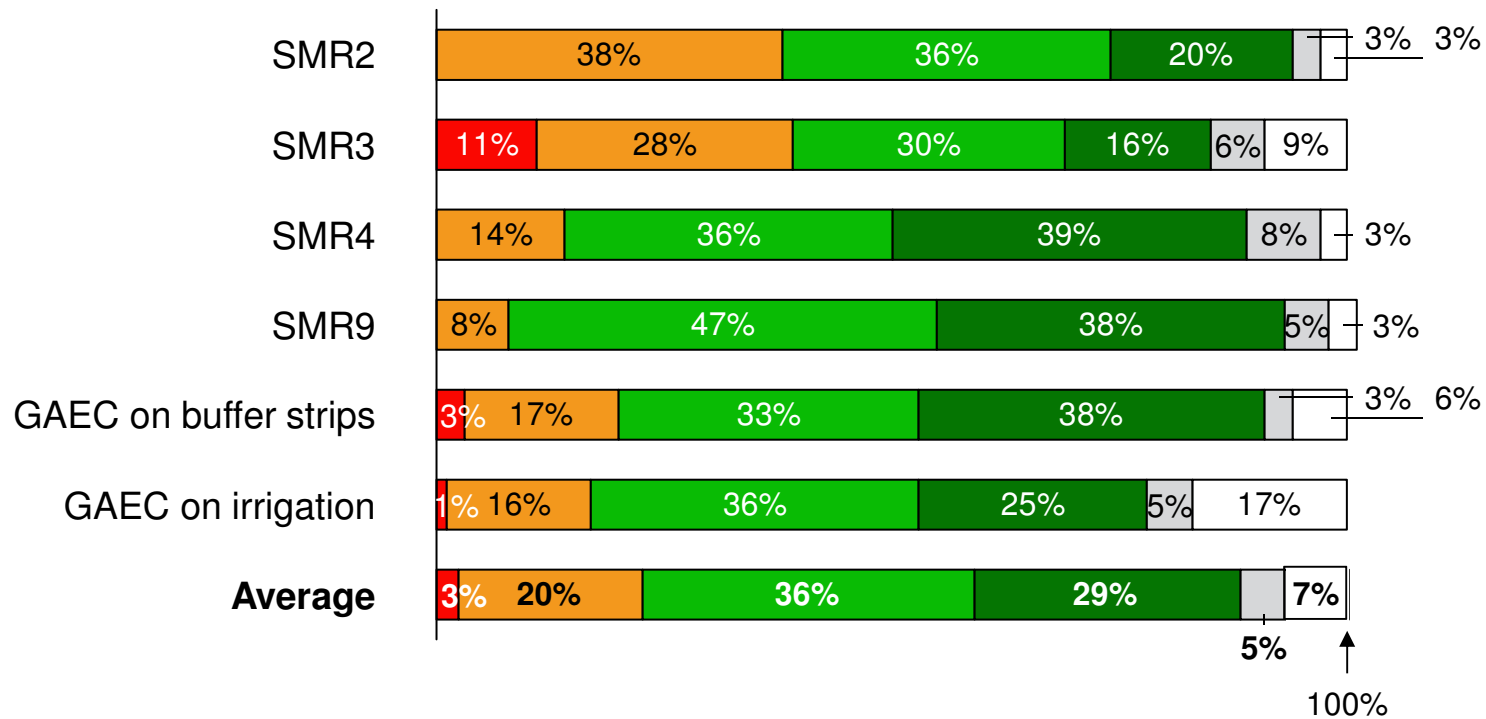
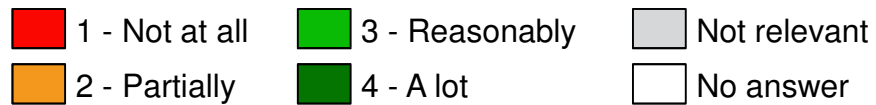
Where knowledge of these requirements is inadequate (ranked 1 or 2 in the previous question), why do you think this is the case?

Percentage of respondents



On a scale from 1 (not at all) to 4 (a lot), how much do you consider that the introduction of cross-compliance increased farmers' awareness regarding the impact of agriculture on water?

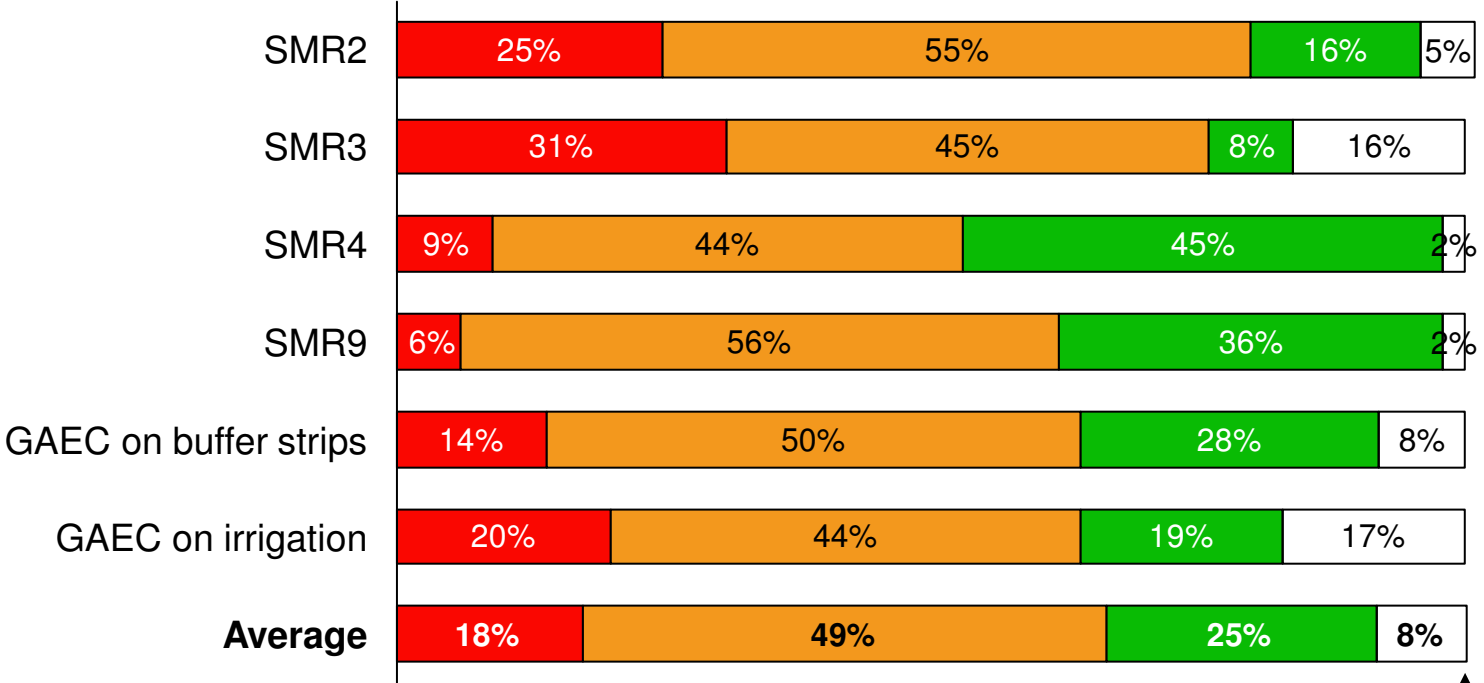
Percentage of respondents



Impact – changes made as result of cross-compliance

Overall, did you observe no change, some changes or major changes in farm practices due to the introduction of cross-compliance?

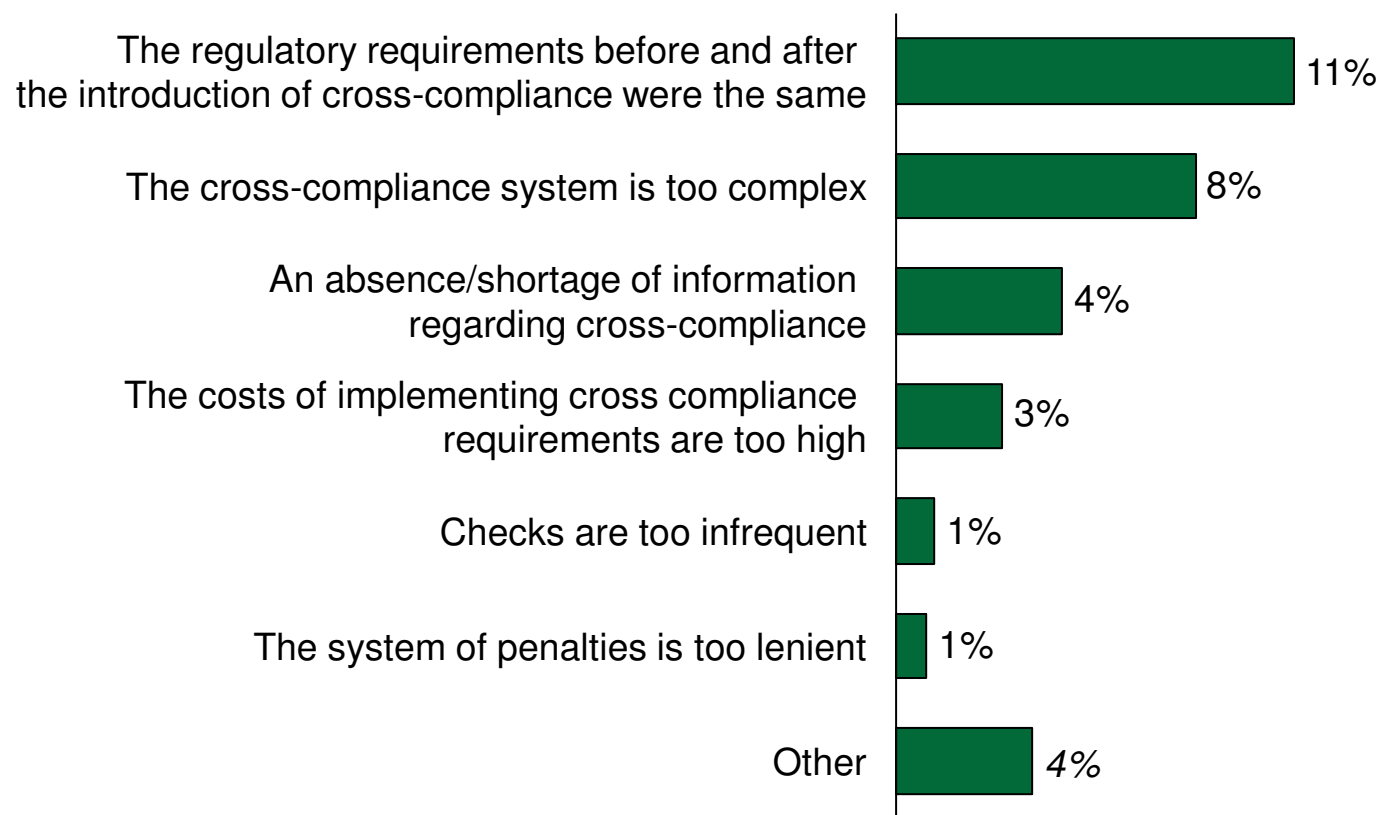
Percentage of respondents



100%

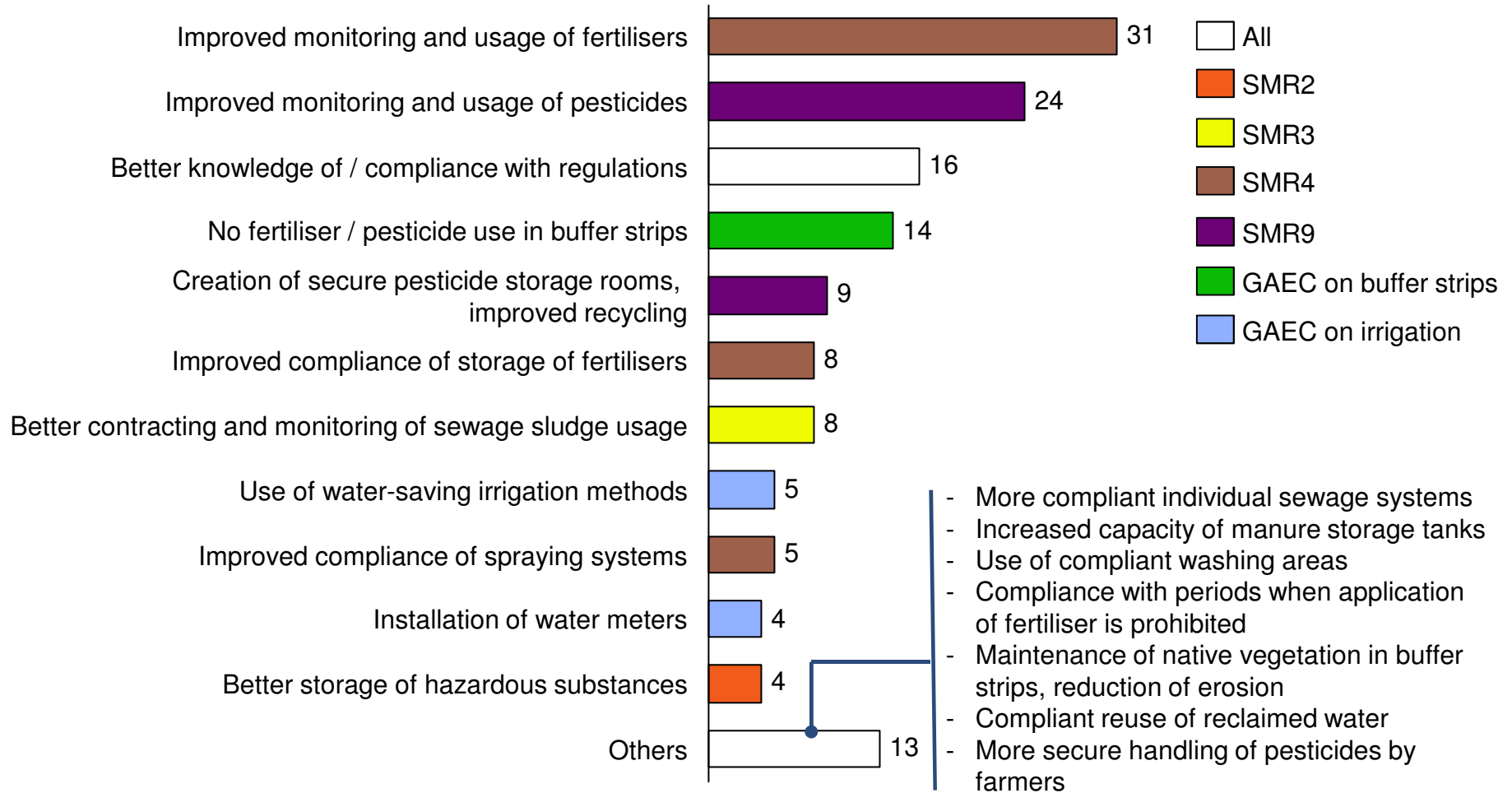
If you have answered "no change" for one or more requirements in the previous question, what are, in your opinion, the reasons for this?

Percentage of respondents

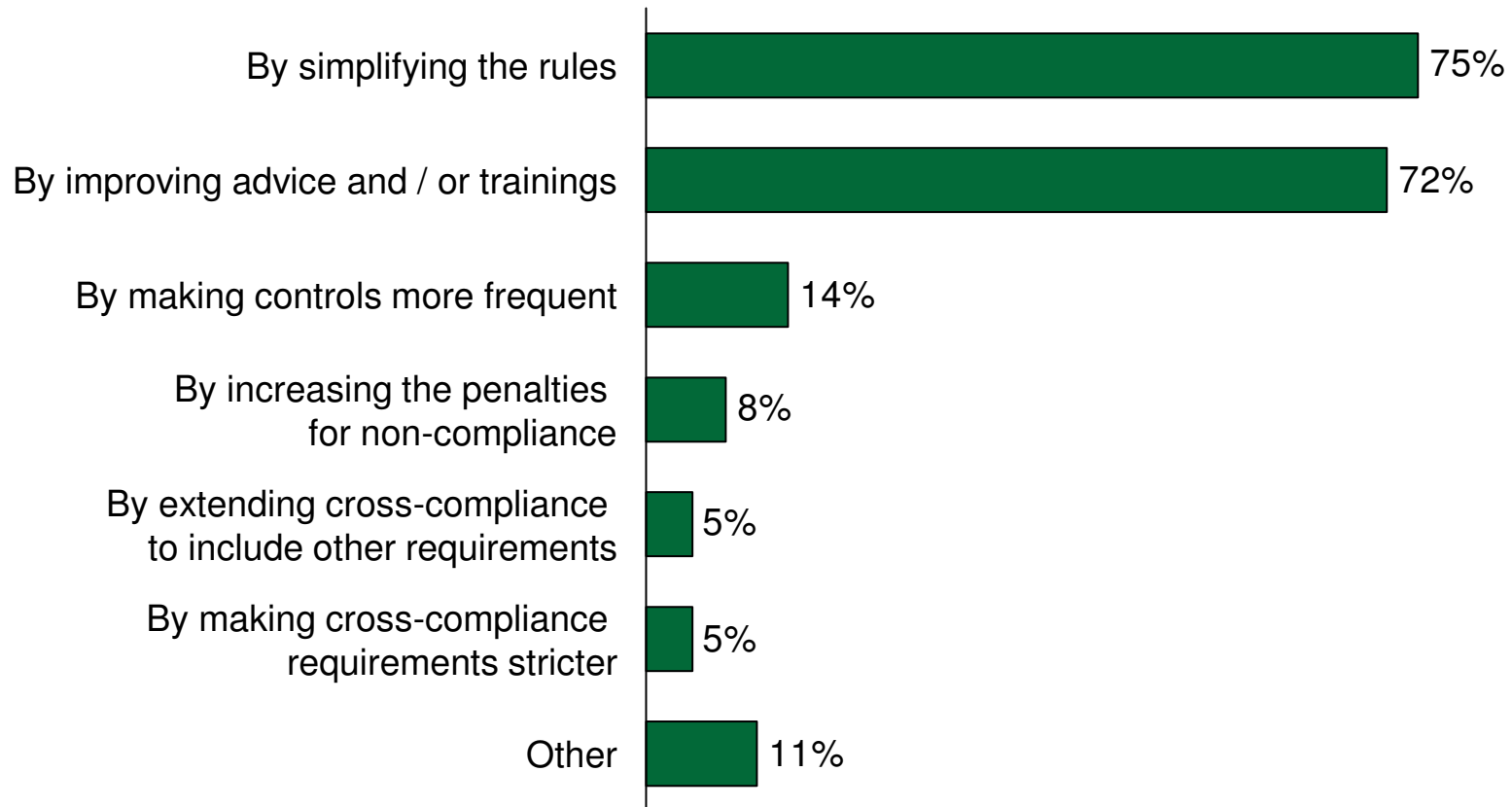


Please provide examples of changes in farm practices that you have observed, if any, since the introduction of cross compliance

Number of quotes



How could cross-compliance be made more effective as regards water protection? Percentage of respondents



Part 2 – Rural development

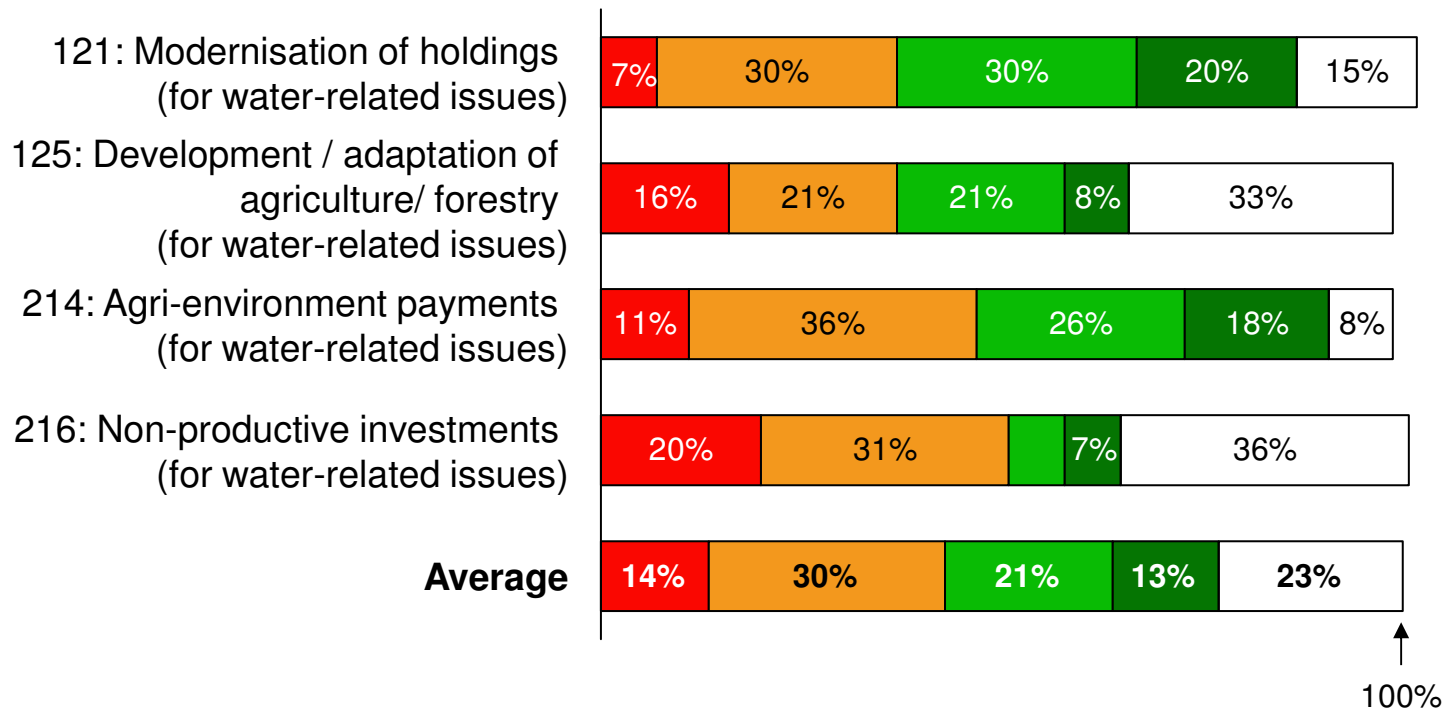
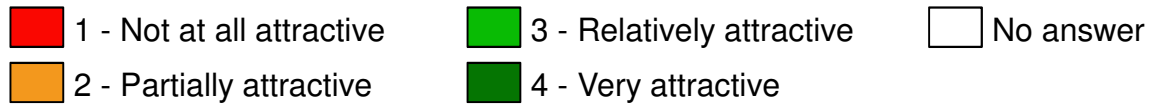
Are rural development measures attractive enough to have encouraged the farmers you advise to adopt water-protection oriented farming practices that go beyond the compulsory requirements?

Note: The main water-related rural development measures we are referring to are the five following land management and investment measures, provided they exist in your country and are actually used to impact water, at least partly:

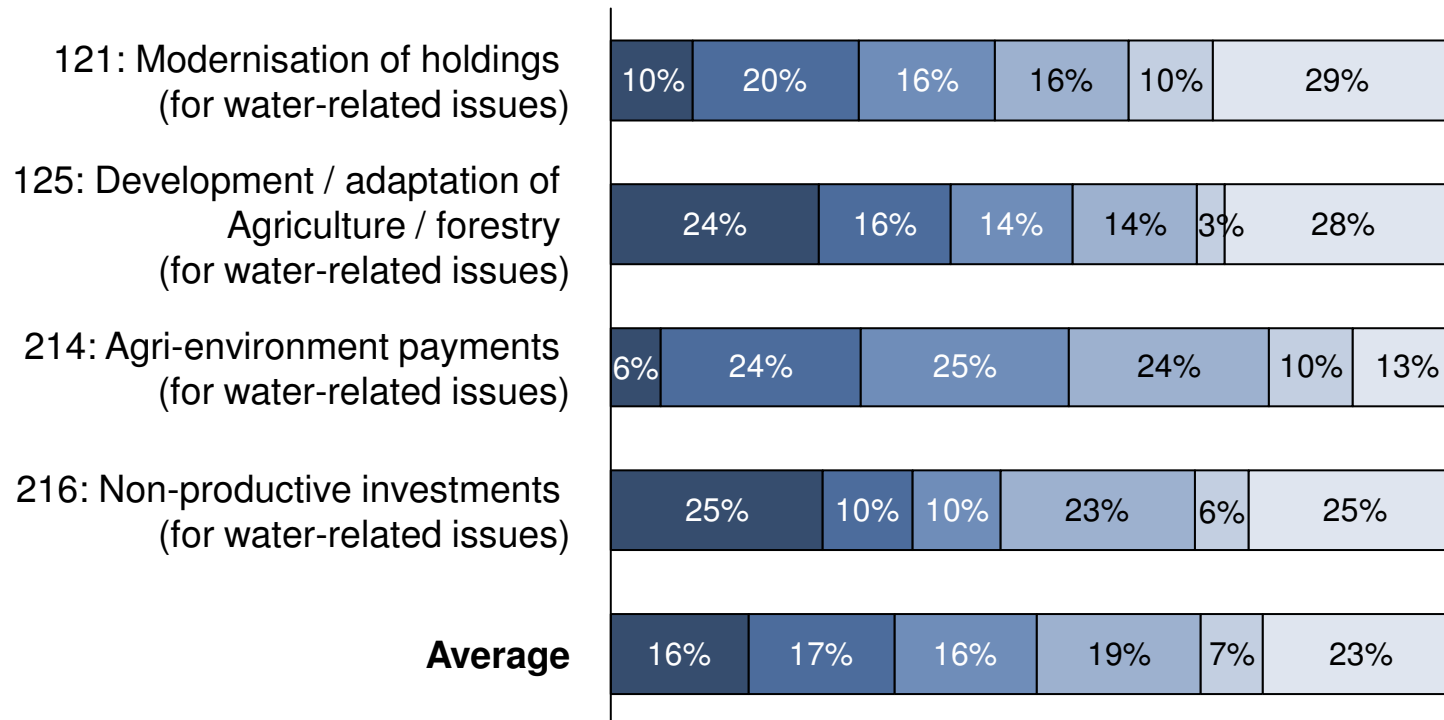
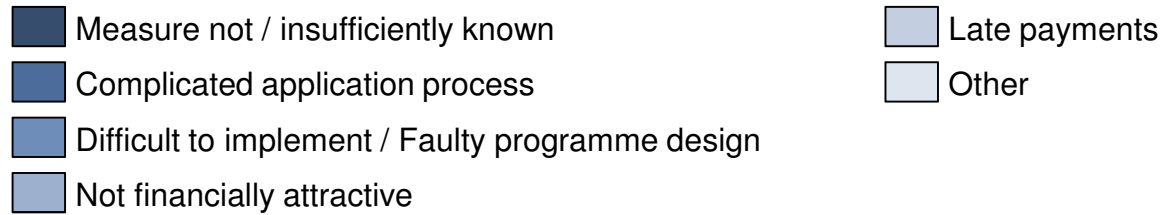
- 121: Modernisation of agricultural holdings
- 125: Infrastructure related to the development and adaptation of agriculture and forestry
- 213: Natura 2000 payments and payments linked to Directive 2000/60/EC (Water Framework Directive)
- 214: Agri-environment payments
- 216: Support for non-productive investments

On a scale from 1 (Not at all) to 4 (Very), how attractive do you consider that the water-related rural development measures are for the farmers you advise?

Percentage of respondents

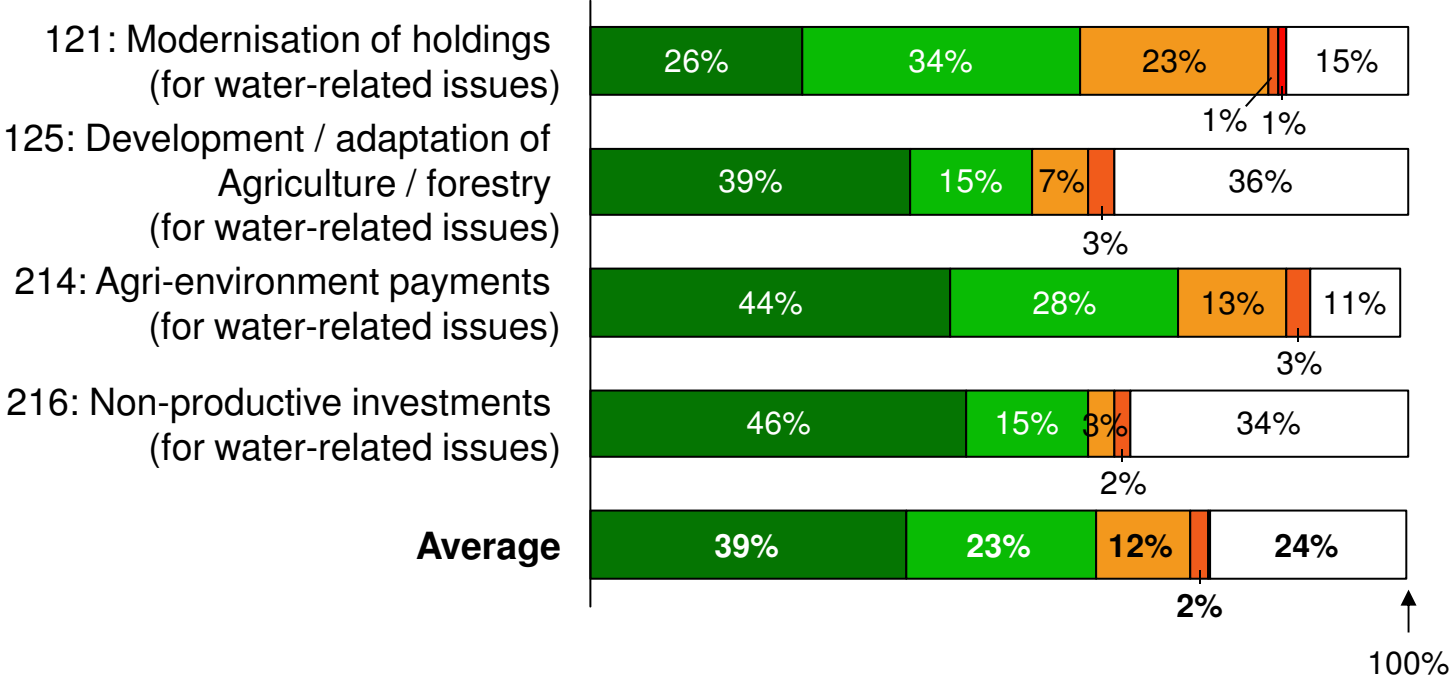


Where applicable, what are the reasons for this lack of attractiveness? Percentage of respondents



In your opinion, what percentage (approximately) of the farmers you advise who actually benefited from water-related rural development measures would have applied for the measure anyway without financial support from the Rural Development Programme?

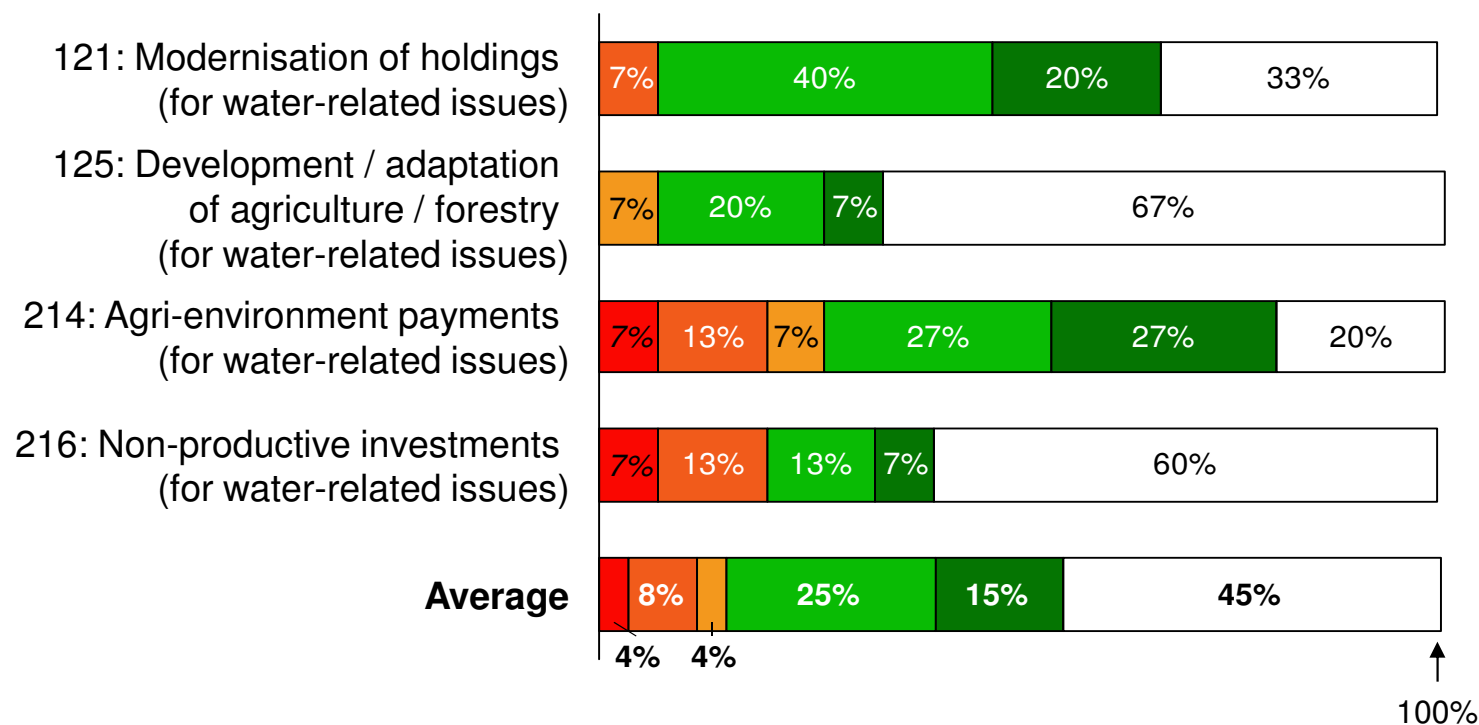
Percentage of respondents



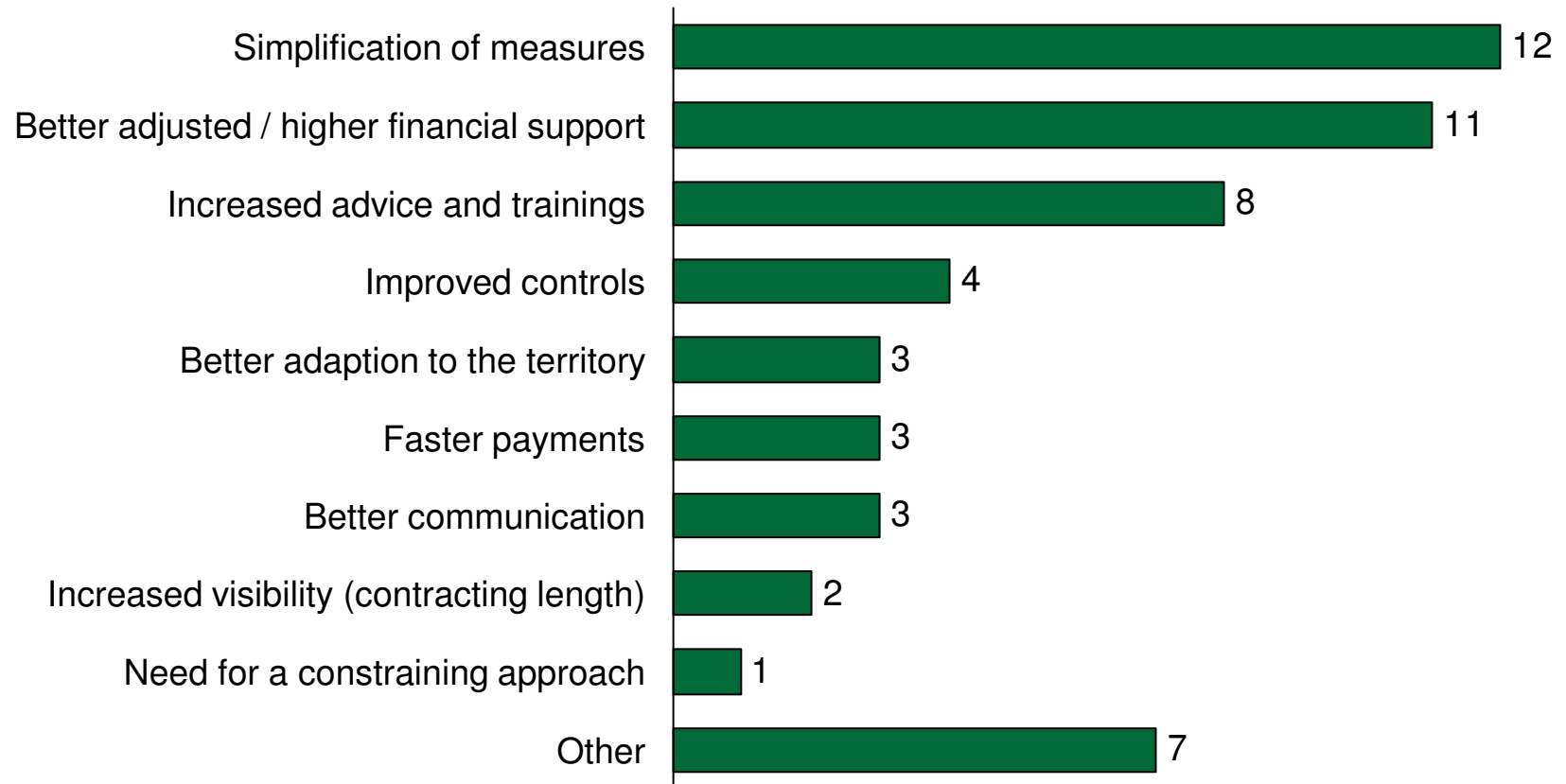
In your opinion, what percentage (approximately) of the farmers you advise who actually benefited from water-related rural development measures will apply for these measures again?

Percentage of respondents

■ <5%
 ■ 6-20%
 ■ 21-50%
 ■ 51-80%
 ■ >81%
 No answer



In your opinion, how could existing water-related measures be improved? Number of quotes



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