

# Central Mountains

*Promoting a joint perspective for better cooperation governance among the Carpathians and the Alps - the Central Mountains project experience.*

Interreg  
CENTRAL EUROPE



Co-funded by  
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Central Mountains

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Mr Isidoro De Bortoli  
*Institute for Regional Development*  
Eurac research

# CONTEXT AREA

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*“History is all explained by geography”*



## CENTRAL MOUNTAINS - CONTEXT AREAS





## CENTRAL MOUNTAINS - CONTEXT AREAS





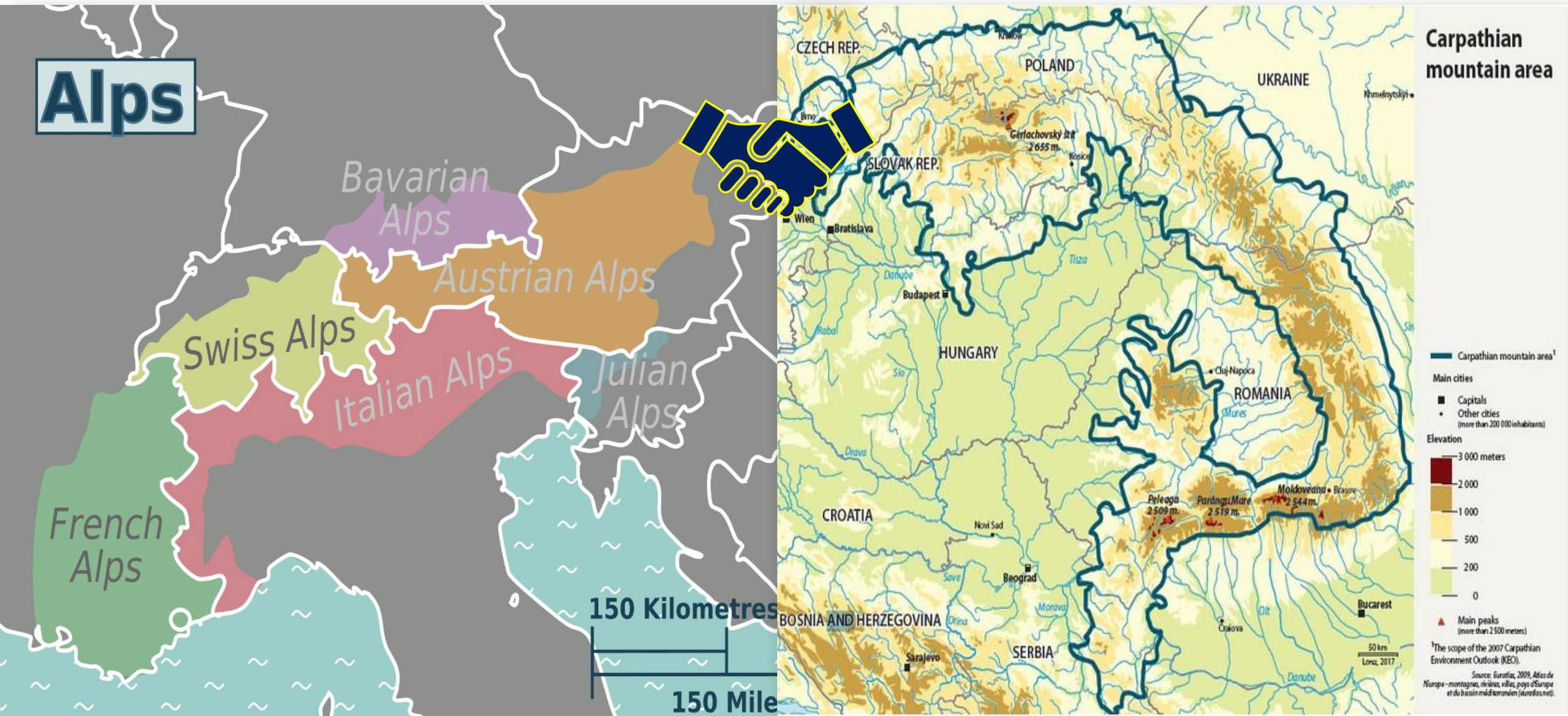
## CENTRAL MOUNTAINS - CONTEXT AREAS

The Carpathians at their highest altitude are only as high as the middle region of the Alps, with which they share a common appearance, climate, and flora. **The Carpathians are separated from the Alps by the Danube.** The two ranges meet at only one point: the Leitha Mountains at Bratislava.





# CENTRAL MOUNTAINS - CONTEXT AREAS







## CENTRAL MOUNTAINS - CONTEXT AREAS

**Borders are not necessarily natural...**

*“There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things”*

**THIS EXPLAINS HOW CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION WORKS**



## CENTRAL MOUNTAINS - CONTEXT AREAS

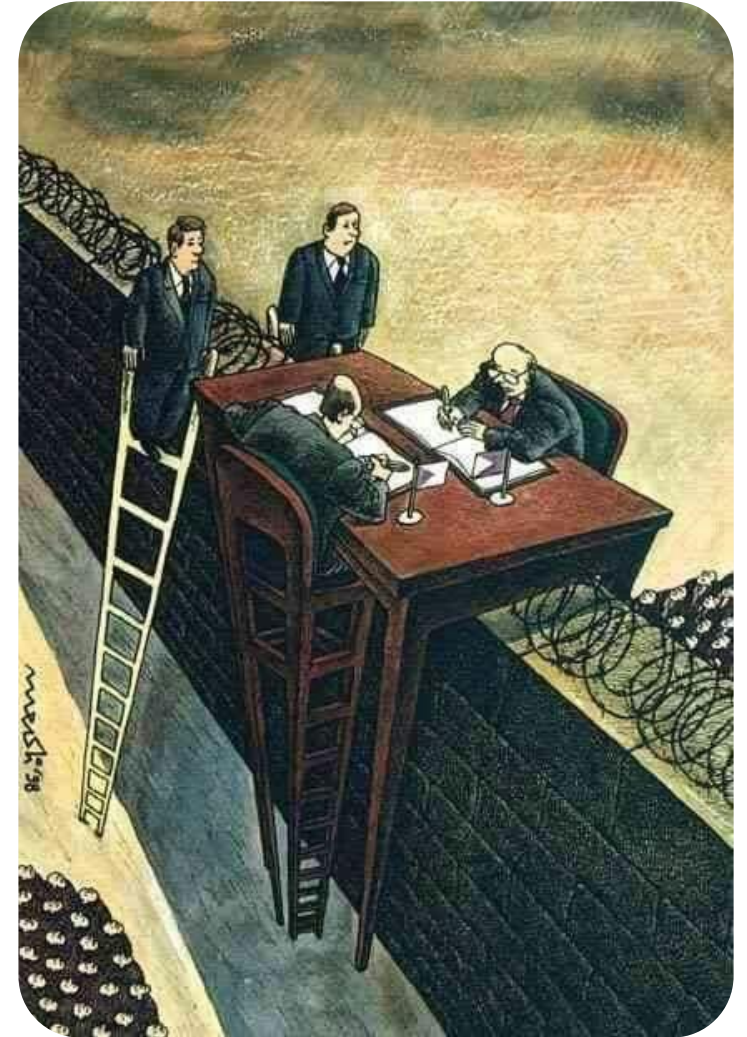
**“Institutional” fragmentation**





## CENTRAL MOUNTAINS - CONTEXT AREAS

“Diversity and challenges to coordination among private and public norms, treaties, and organizations that address a given issue area of international politics”(van Hasselt, 2013).





## CENTRAL MOUNTAINS - CONTEXT AREAS

**Cross Border Cooperation (CBC)** is a key element of the EU policy towards its neighbours. It supports sustainable development along the EU's external borders, helps **reducing differences in living standards**, and addressing common challenges across these borders.

It has three main objectives:

- promoting economic and social development in border areas;
- **addressing common challenges** (environment, public health, safety and security);
- putting in place **better conditions for persons, goods and capital mobility**.

In Europe has become a sophisticate field of work.





# GOVERNANCE, COOPERATION, ENGAGEMENT

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*Good governance requires working  
toward common ground. It isn't easy.*



## GOVERNANCE, COOPERATION, ENGAGEMENT

Governance should be understood as “*the act of governing*,” a political decision-making process where actors organize themselves through relationship structures, shaping a set of principles and rules.

According to the Central Mountains project approach, the governance concept should be **adaptive and integrative**, to cope with the **complexity of transformative changes in mountain areas** as well as the need to reach marginalized areas and their main demands



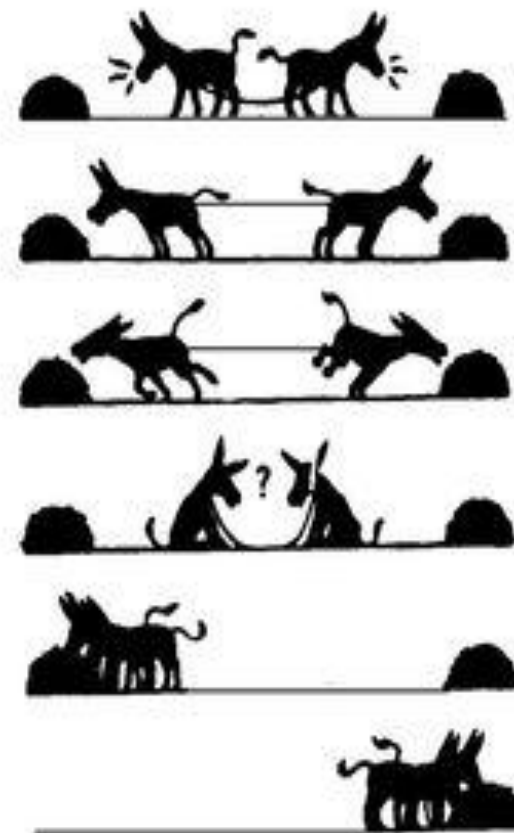
## GOVERNANCE, COOPERATION, ENGAGEMENT

From the Central Mountains point of view, cross-border governance should be an opportunity for rethinking integration and development aspects at border regions.



**Cross-border cooperation** should be considered a fundamental strategy (according to the project's outputs) to promote territorial integration by exploiting the opportunities within the border mountain regions embraced by the project.

### **"Co-operation"**





## GOVERNANCE, COOPERATION, ENGAGEMENT

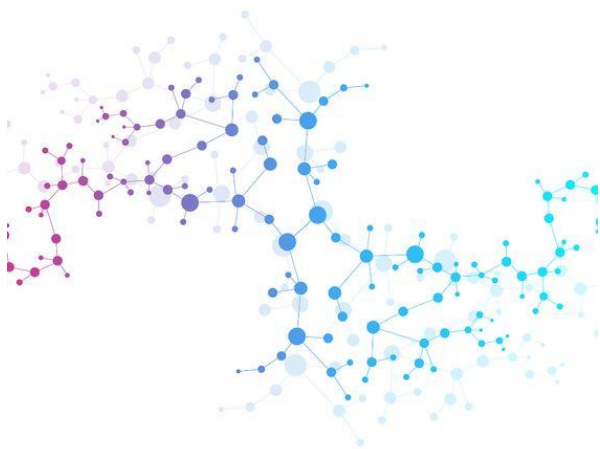
The role of the stakeholders is of central functionality to the construction of a solid and active cooperation network involving local communities and other actors, and it must be strengthened for cross-border governance and decision-making, implementing transnational development strategies.



They need **more effective coordination** in the process of multilevel governance, connecting, collaborate and empower among each other across Central Mountain to realise common challenges and jointly find solutions.



## GOVERNANCE, COOPERATION, ENGAGEMENT



The Central Mountains “mission”:



Analyze the current situation in the Carpathian and the Alps and set an appropriate framework: **define roles, tasks and responsibilities**, plan accurately but leave **enough space for young people** and their ideas. Consider also potential risks.

**Define specific and reachable goals** and develop a clear decision-making procedure. Make sure that there is a link between participation processes and the final project's decisions.

**Integrate youth participation in the institutional framework of a municipality or a region.** It should not rely only on the will of one political actor.



# YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE COMMUNITIES THEY LIVE IN: WHAT FUTURE?

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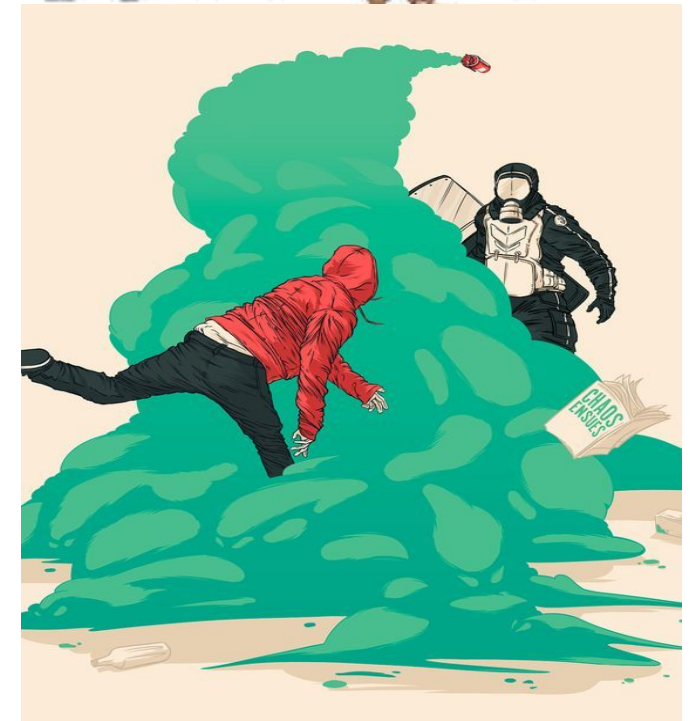
*"Never tell a young person that  
anything cannot be done"*

## YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE COMMUNITIES THEY LIVE IN: WHAT FUTURE?

The majority of decision-makers remain unaware of the benefits a young active population brings to society.



Young people are, however, **increasingly harder to reach**. And there is a clear and growing dissatisfaction among youth with the way politics is conducted and with “politicians” in general.

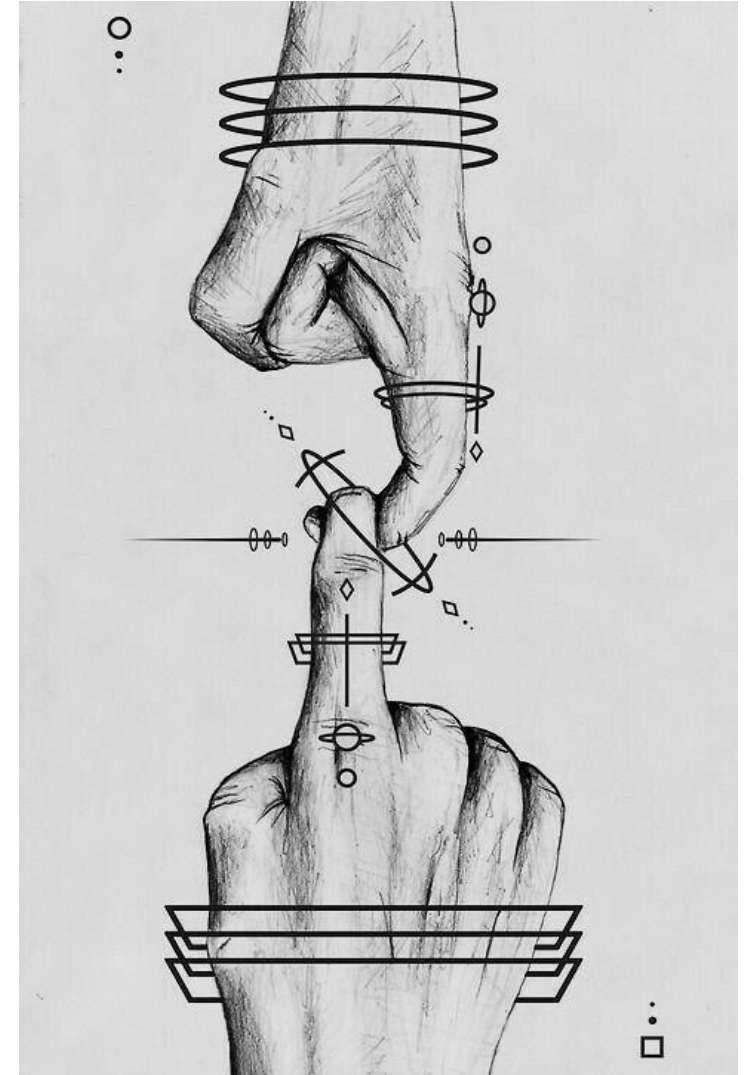




## YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE COMMUNITIES THEY LIVE IN: WHAT FUTURE?

Youth work often faces a **lack of recognition and resources**. It is, however, a crucial prerequisite to **establishing trust and showing young people that they and their ideas matter**. It is, besides school and family, an important tool for personal development, social integration, and the active citizenship of young people.

In CM vision, politicians, administrations and youth organisations need to know **how they connect to youth and implement youth participation**.



## YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE COMMUNITIES THEY LIVE IN: WHAT FUTURE?

Empower youth by recognising **modern, flexible and dynamic forms of organisation** as social institutions which are listened to. **Create platforms** through which young ones can exchange and develop ideas, and through which they can meet on an equal footing with administrations and decision-makers.

Make **youth work a priority in public services** and recognise it as the basis for more and better citizen participation.





## GOVERNANCE, COOPERATION, ENGAGEMENT



The Central Mountains “mission”:



Develop cross-border and regional youth participation processes. The life of young people is not limited to the municipality where they live, especially in rural areas (many young people go to school, study or spend free time elsewhere)

Support the exchange of good (and bad) practices between politicians, administrations and youth at all levels - local, regional, national and European. Workshops with youth will be organized in the Alps and the Carpathians

Consider young people and their associations as interest groups to be involved in the development of mainstream funding schemes



### D.1.3.1 Joint workshop with young students



Community

Engagement

Ambitions

Belonging  
to own  
territory

Critical  
thinking

Participation

Awareness

Willingness



## Joint workshop with young students

	Location	Target	Participants
3 workshops finalized			
28.09.2023	Krakow (Poland) <i>7th Forum Carpaticum Conference</i>	University students	18
29.09.2023	Rzeszow (Poland)	High school students	33
18.10.2023	Dornbirn (Austria)	Secondary school students	40
30.11.2023	Feltre (Italy)	Secondary school students	13





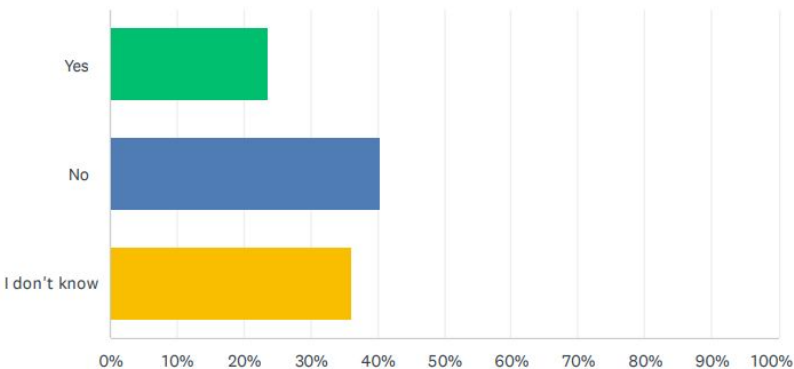
Focus\_1

D.1.3.1 Joint workshop with young students

Partial results

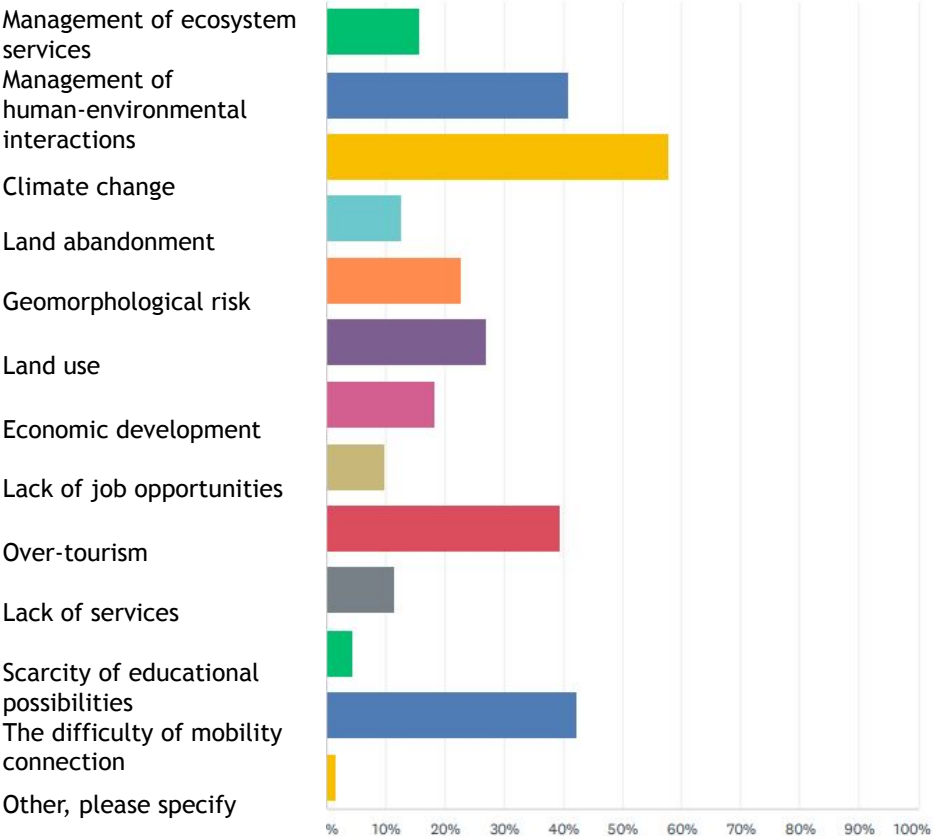
Q7 Does your municipality involve young people in public decision-making (youth city council, surveys and events for young people, recruitment for participative activities, youth debates, promotion and involvement in civic service...)?

Answered: 72 Skipped: 0



Q12 In your opinion, what are the greatest challenges and problems that a mountain area (or an area bordering the mountain) like the one you live in must face today? Please, select max 3 areas you think are the most relevant

Answered: 71 Skipped: 1





# WP1 Joint perspective for better cooperation governance in mountain areas in Central Europe

Progress of work (at 21.11.2023)

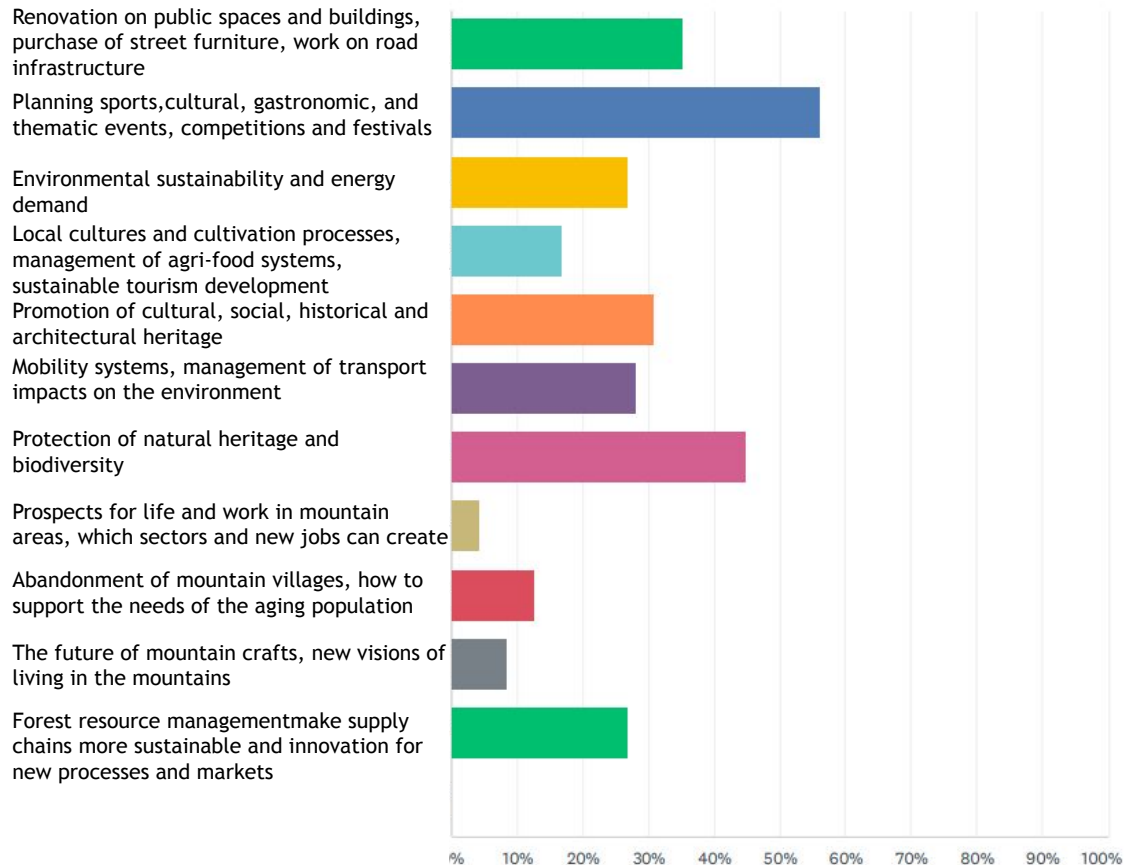


## D.1.3.1 Joint workshop with young students

### Partial results

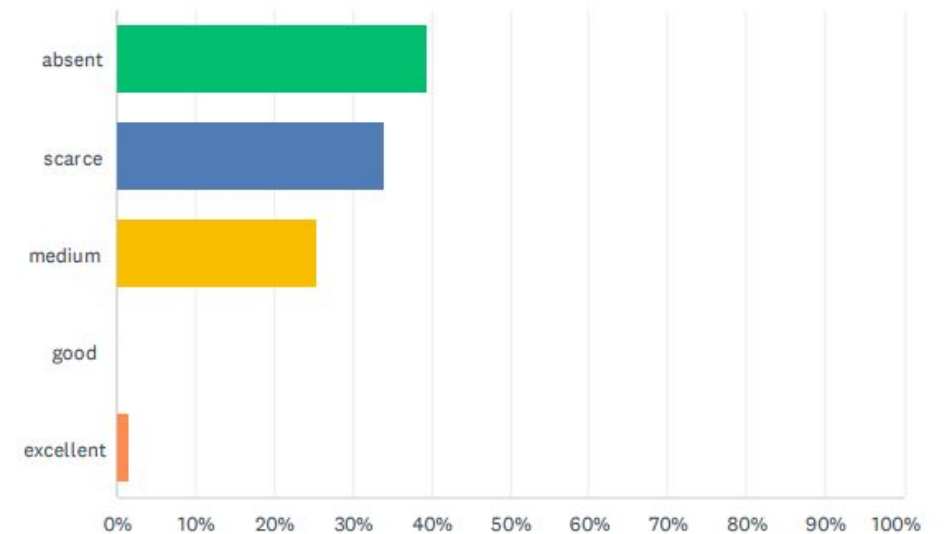
Q16 On which themes and aspects of the territory and the environment in which you live would you like to be more actively involved at the level of decision-making? Please, select max 4 topics

Answered: 71 Skipped: 1



Q18 How would you assess your interaction/dialogue/collaboration with local government bodies of your city?

Answered: 71 Skipped: 1



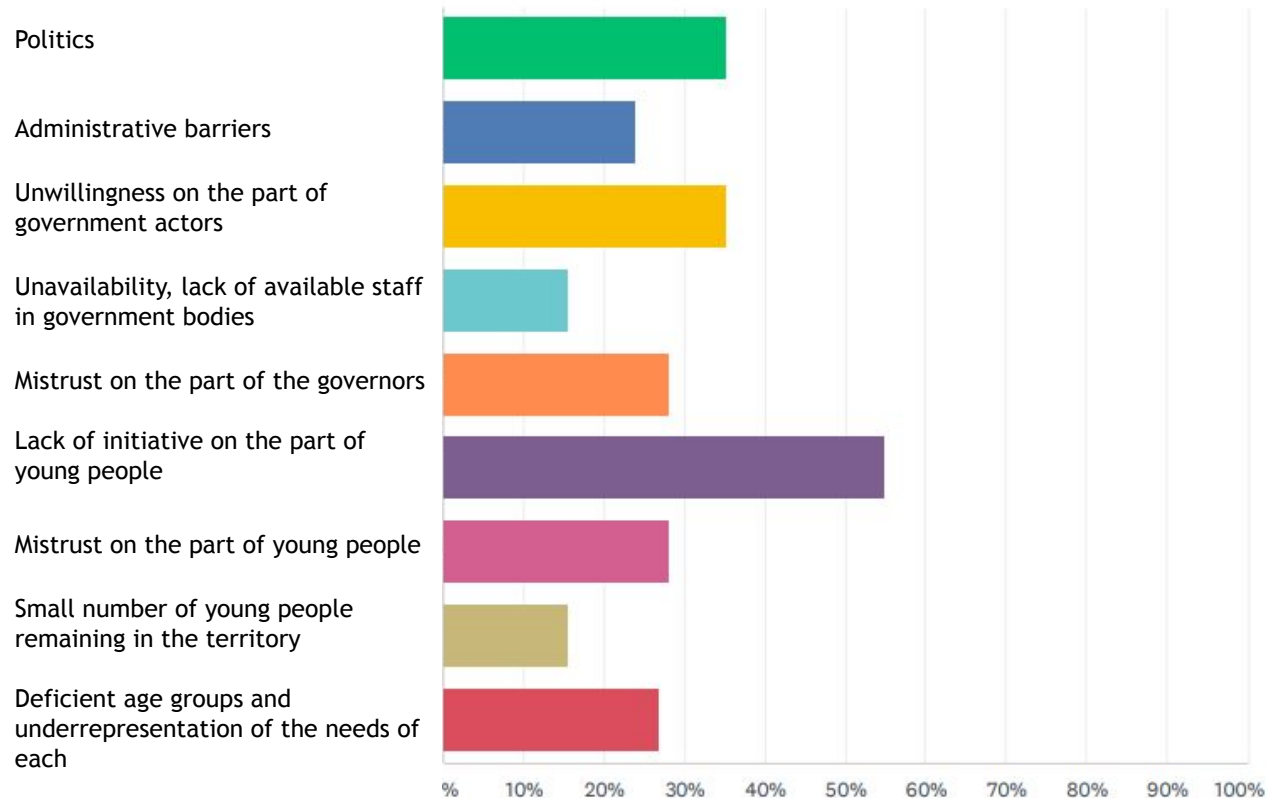


### D.1.3.1 Joint workshop with young students

#### Partial results

Q19 In your opinion, which are the greatest obstacles to more participation of young people in local decision-making in the local government bodies? Please, select max 3 aspects

Answered: 71 Skipped: 1



## What is youth participation?



In a nutshell, participation means to be involved, to have tasks and to share and take over responsibility. It means to have access and to be included.

LAURITZEN, 2016





## WP1 Joint perspective for better cooperation governance in mountain areas in Central Europe

### Progress of work (at 21.11.2023)

#### D.1.3.1 Joint workshop with young students

September, 28<sup>th</sup> – Kraków (Poland) at the 7th Forum Carpathicum Conference





## WP1 Joint perspective for better cooperation governance in mountain areas in Central Europe

### Progress of work (at 21.11.2023)





# SECTION N 2

## YOUTH ENGAGEMENT NT

*Good habits formed at youth  
make all the difference...*

## YOUTH ENGAGEMENT: REINFORCING CAPACITIES TO WORK WITH YOUTH

*Four collaborative workshops* have been conducted with young students to explore the design of youth participation initiatives in the Alpine-Carpathian mountain regions.

The workshops with young stakeholders aimed to **engage youth in decision-making processes** and empower them to actively contribute to their communities.

These sessions are envisioned as crucial forums for interaction and knowledge exchange, **seeking to investigate the current and potential relationship between the youth population in mountain areas and the functions of local governance.**



## YOUTH ENGAGEMENT: REINFORCING CAPACITIES TO WORK WITH YOUTH

We met **more than 100 students** from both the Carpathians and the Alps.

*The workshop is structured into two main stages:*

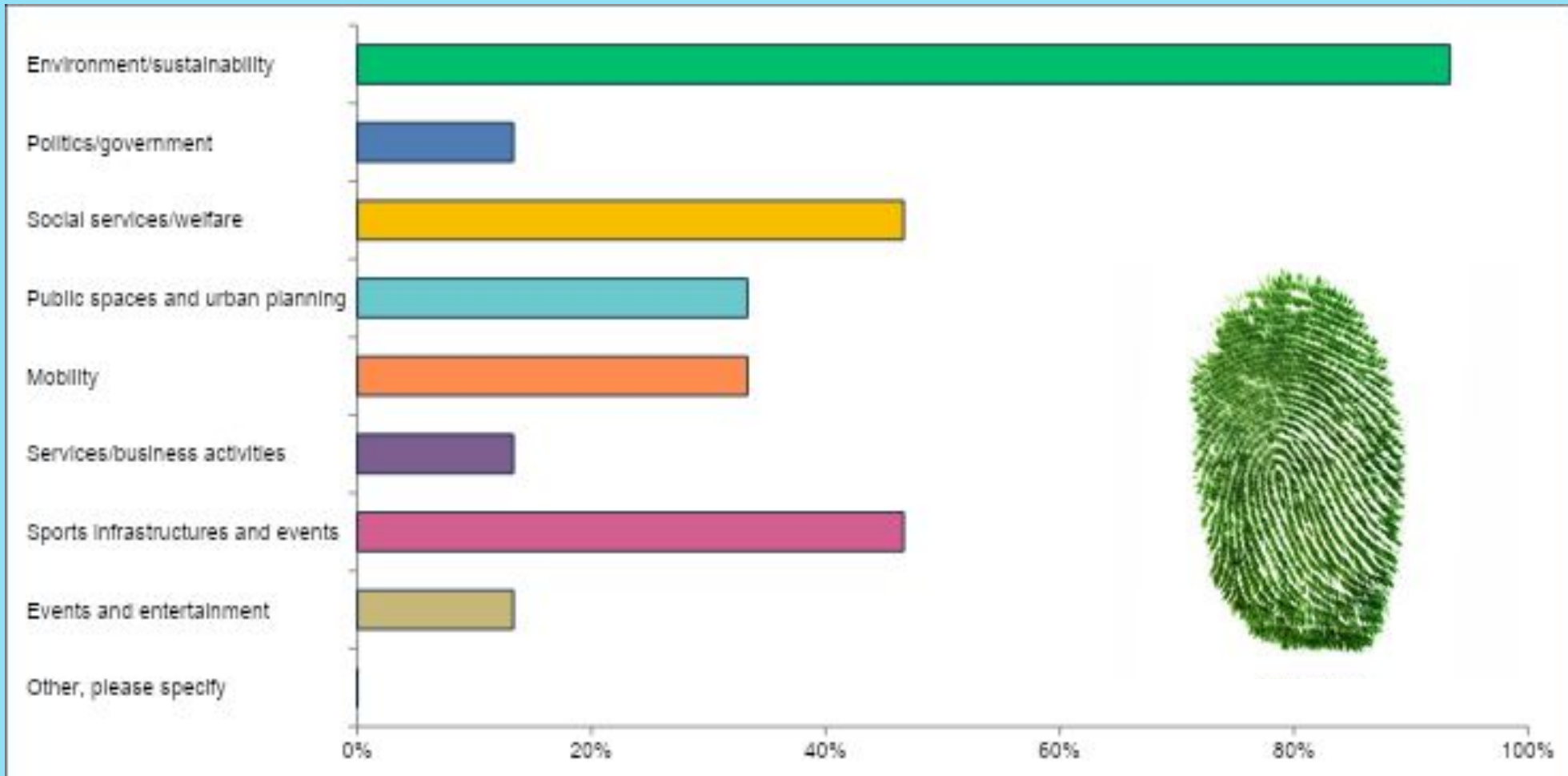
1. The initial phase involves a **common exploratory questionnaire** for all groups.
2. The subsequent key phase consists of **participatory activities** with the young participants. This latter stage is further divided into two distinct activities tailored for **high school students and university students**, respectively.





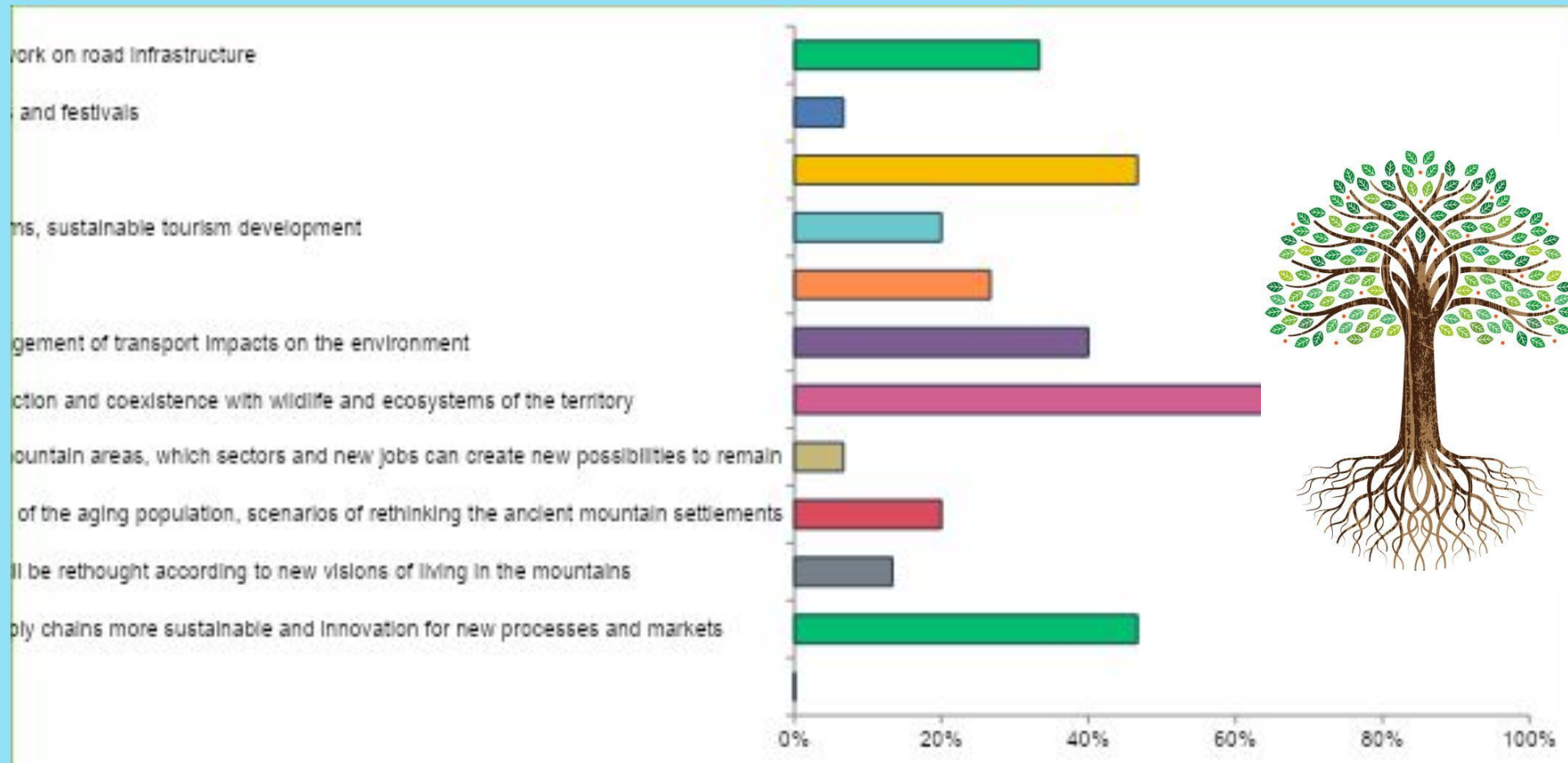
# YOUTH ENGAGEMENT: REINFORCING CAPACITIES TO WORK WITH YOUTH

*What specific aspects of your local area capture your interest the most?*



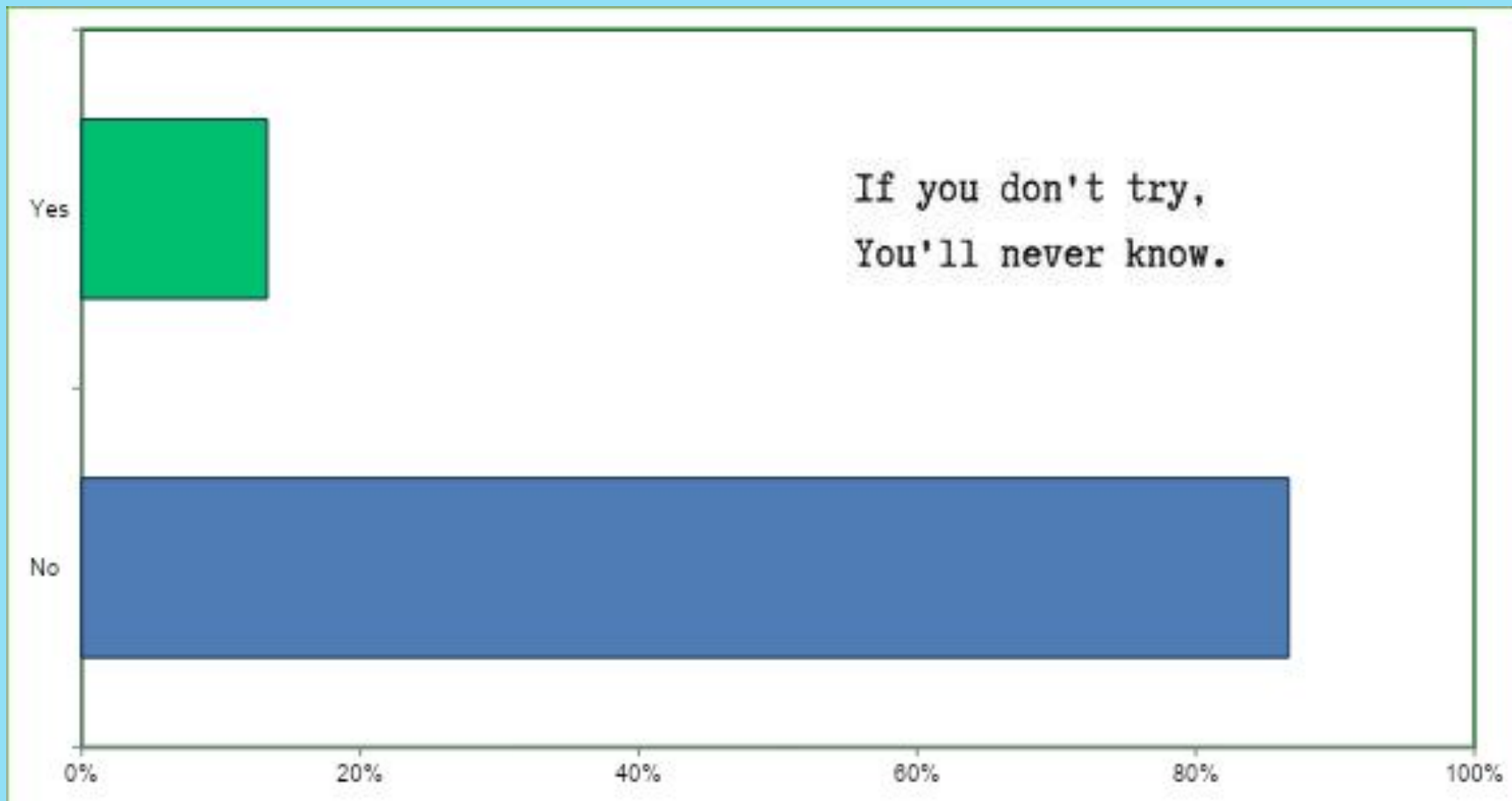
# YOUTH ENGAGEMENT: REINFORCING CAPACITIES TO WORK WITH YOUTH

*What themes and aspects of your local environment would you prefer to have a more active role in decision-making?*



# YOUTH ENGAGEMENT: REINFORCING CAPACITIES TO WORK WITH YOUTH

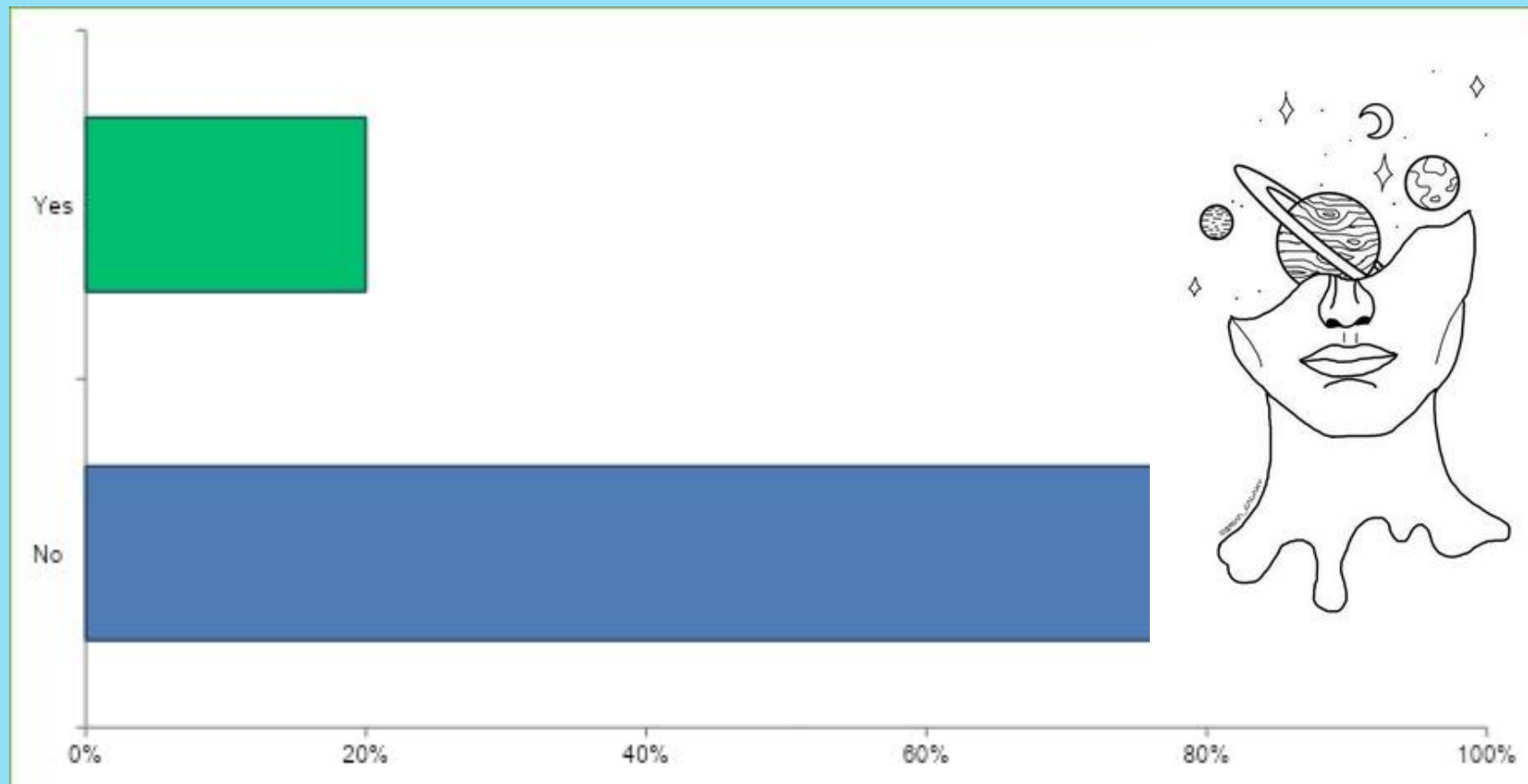
*Are you familiar with projects and initiatives that aim to enhance and boost the participation of young people in decision-making processes within your municipality, province, region, or nation?*





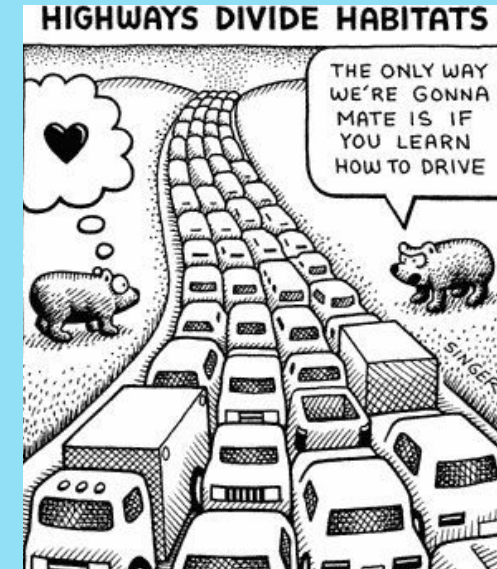
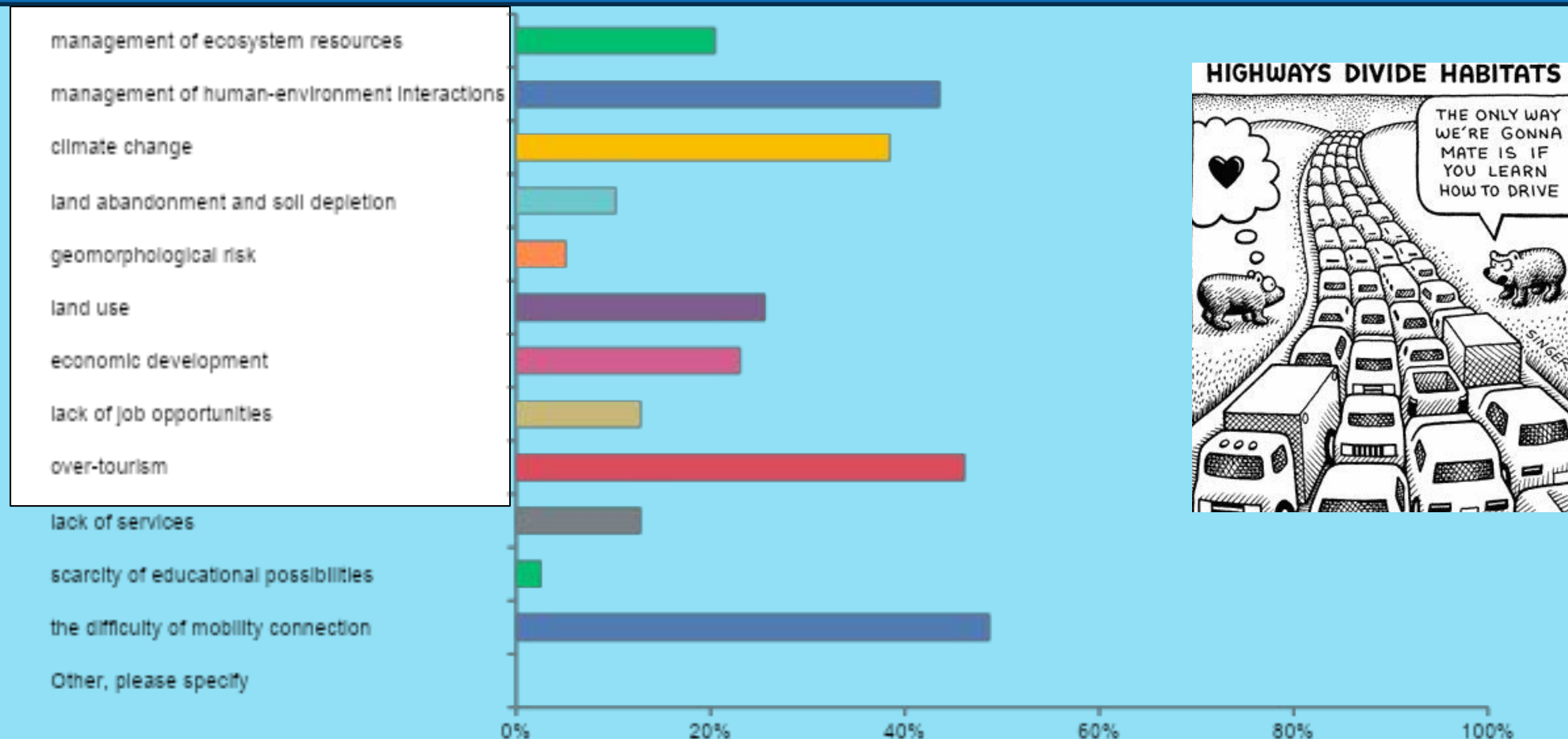
# YOUTH ENGAGEMENT: REINFORCING CAPACITIES TO WORK WITH YOUTH

*Do you have knowledge about the presence of local cross-border governance structures, specifically in the realm of youth cross-border governance?*



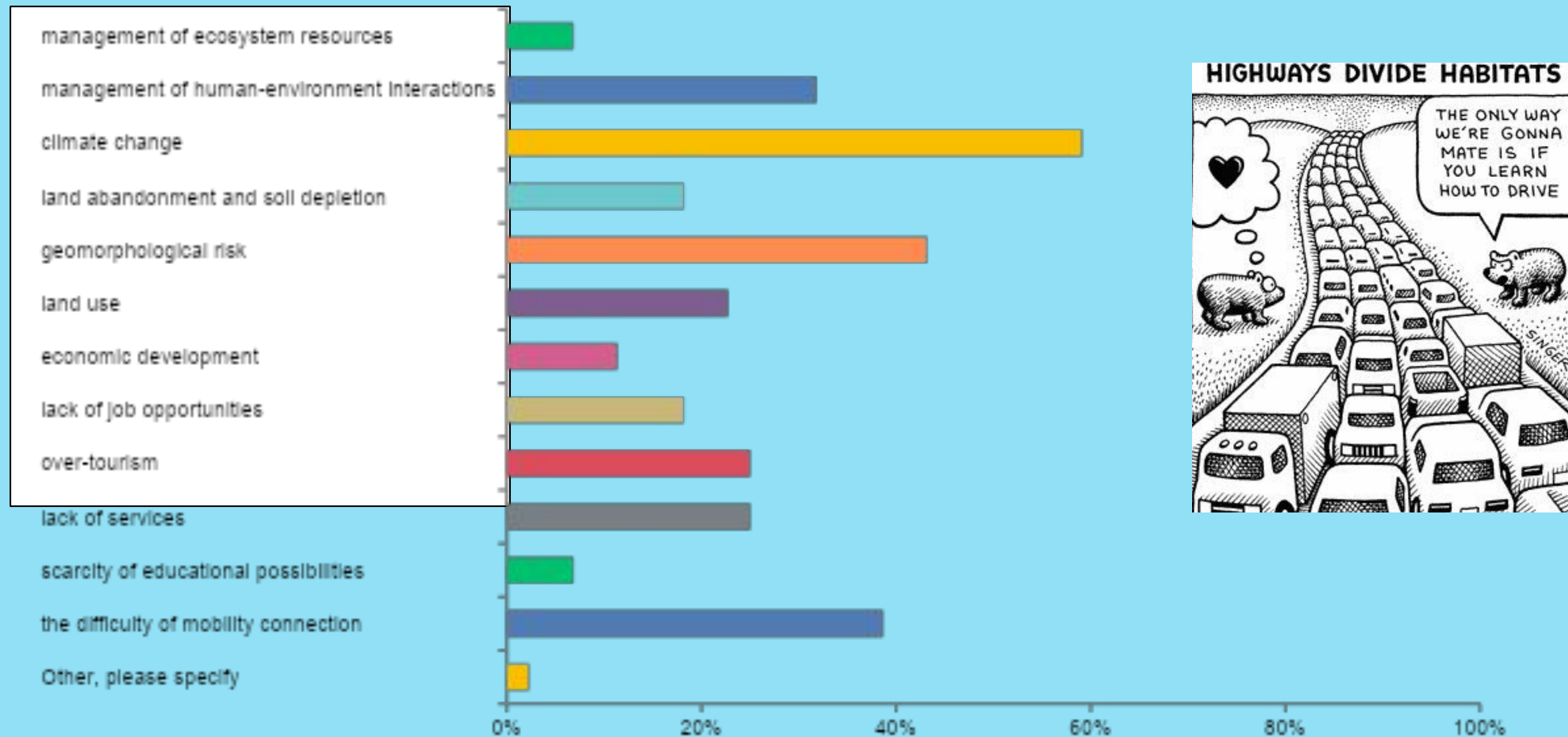
# YOUTH ENGAGEMENT: REINFORCING CAPACITIES TO WORK WITH YOUTH

*In your opinion, what are the greatest challenges and problems that a mountain area (or an area bordering the mountain) like the one you live in must face today?*  
(Carpathians)



# YOUTH ENGAGEMENT: REINFORCING CAPACITIES TO WORK WITH YOUTH

*In your opinion, what are the greatest challenges and problems that a mountain area (or an area bordering the mountain) like the one you live in must face today? (Alps)*





## YOUTH ENGAGEMENT: COMMON CHALLENGES / DOWNSIDES

- ❖ *Students participating in the project are conscious of occasional shortcomings in their initiative. They recognize the corresponding responsibilities of governing bodies, which, in turn, may face challenges in establishing closer connections due to limited availability and opportunities.*
- ❖ *Interviewed students believe that the communication currently provided by government bodies is insufficient and not oriented towards the creation of effective involvement of the community at all levels.*
- ❖ *The low level of involvement and the equally low level of knowledge about projects and initiatives involving young people in governance processes are the reasons why respondents argue that they need more and clearer references from the society, in their territory, to which to refer.*



## YOUTH ENGAGEMENT: COMMON CHALLENGES / DOWNSIDES

- ❖ The involvement of young people in *evaluating the effectiveness and interest of what local governments can implement* towards them, initiatives, information campaigns, and training activities, *is still lacking*.
- ❖ Various non-institutionalized forms of youth participation already exist, including consultations, workshops, and youth events, which can contribute to advancing youth involvement. However, these *approaches carry the risk of remaining isolated, lacking sustained political commitment, and insufficient follow-up and control of subsequent political actions, potentially leading to unequal opportunities for all young people over time*.





## YOUTH ENGAGEMENT: CENTRAL MOUNTAINS CALLS FOR ACTION

- *Develop a targeted communication plan for young people, utilizing specific channels and initiatives to directly and effectively disseminate information discussed at the governance level. Highlight ways in which the youth community can actively contribute to the discussed initiatives.*
- *Actively engage key stakeholders who are in direct contact with young people, beginning with schools and associations they are affiliated with. These stakeholders can serve as crucial bridges between governing bodies and the youth, facilitating effective communication and collaboration.*



# Thank you very much for your time!

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*“The only thing that will redeem mankind is cooperation”.*

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[www.eurac.edu](http://www.eurac.edu)



[Isidoro.debortoli@eurac.edu](mailto:Isidoro.debortoli@eurac.edu)



+39 0471 055421



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