

# EUA Survey on Universities and Innovation

## Selection of results

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- **Universities have become more focused on innovation in recent years.**
- **Need of an evidence base to help build a wider picture of university innovation activities.**

### **Survey investigates...**

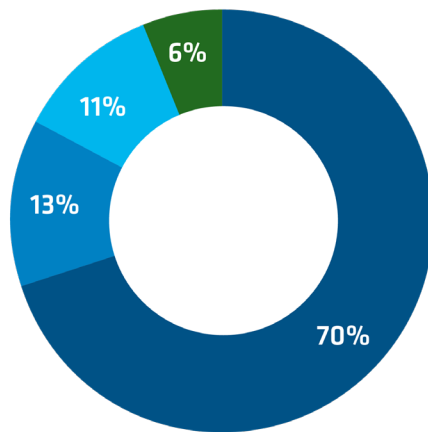
- **What is the strategic attention to innovation at universities?**
- **What is the innovation capacity of universities?**
- **How are universities acting as ‘honest brokers’ in innovation ecosystems?**
- **How are universities delivering on the sustainable (green) and digital transitions?**

**Innovation** is a process of knowledge co-creation and transfer that generates social, economic, and environmental benefits by means of novel ideas, approaches, technologies, or ways of organising. Examples of innovation at universities:

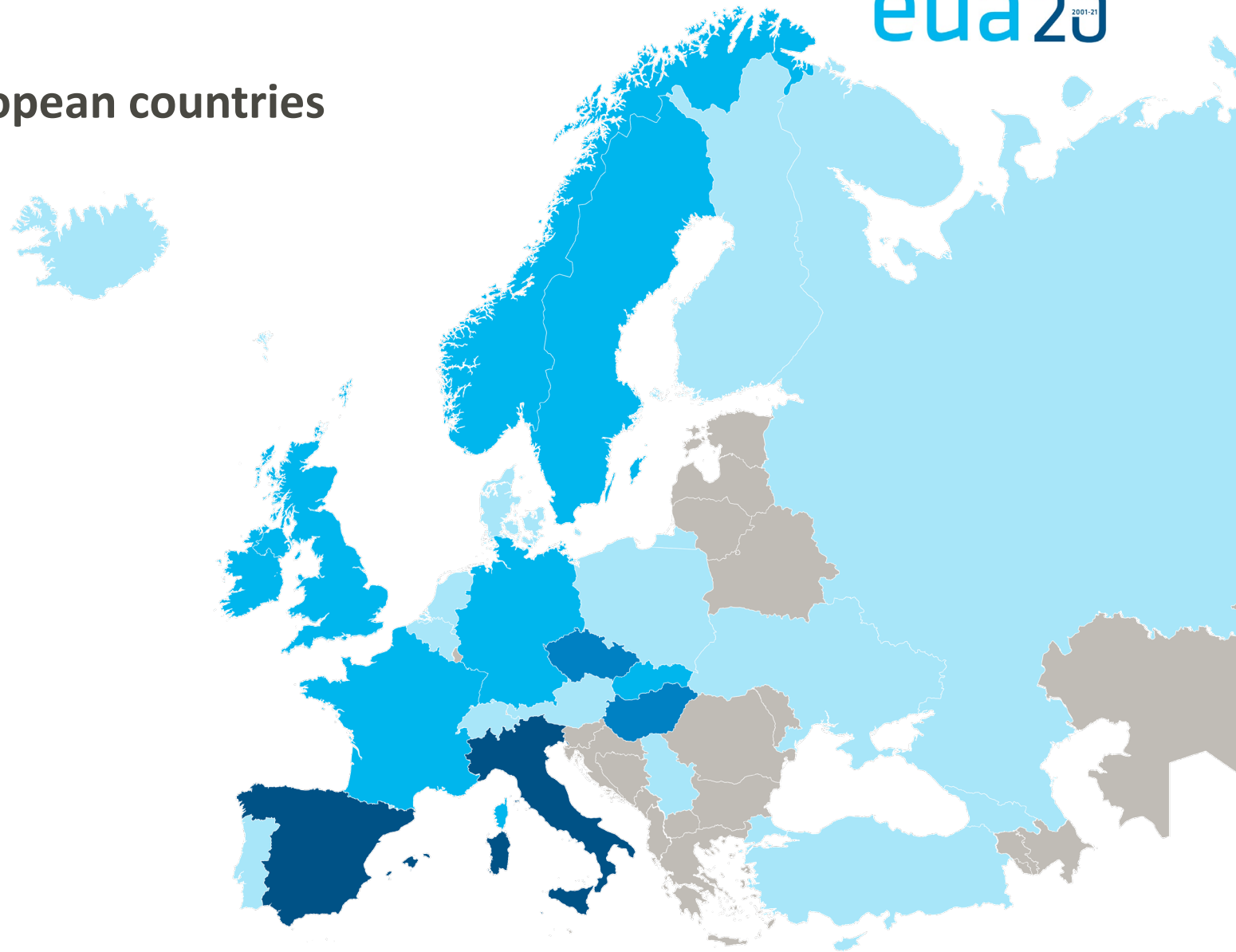
- Specific infrastructures, such as: start-up hubs, technology clusters, science parks.
- Strategic partnerships with companies, government agencies or civil society groups.
- Joint university-industry laboratories/institutes, industrial doctorates.
- Patenting and IP, technology transfer offices.
- Promoting entrepreneurial and innovation mindsets among students and staff.
- Educational approaches that enable more flexible learning paths, project and challenge based learning, flipped and international classrooms, etc.

## 166 valid responses from 28 European countries

### Profile of the surveyed institutions



- Comprehensive institution
- Technical university/ University of technology
- University of applied sciences or university college
- Specialist institution



Number of survey respondents per country



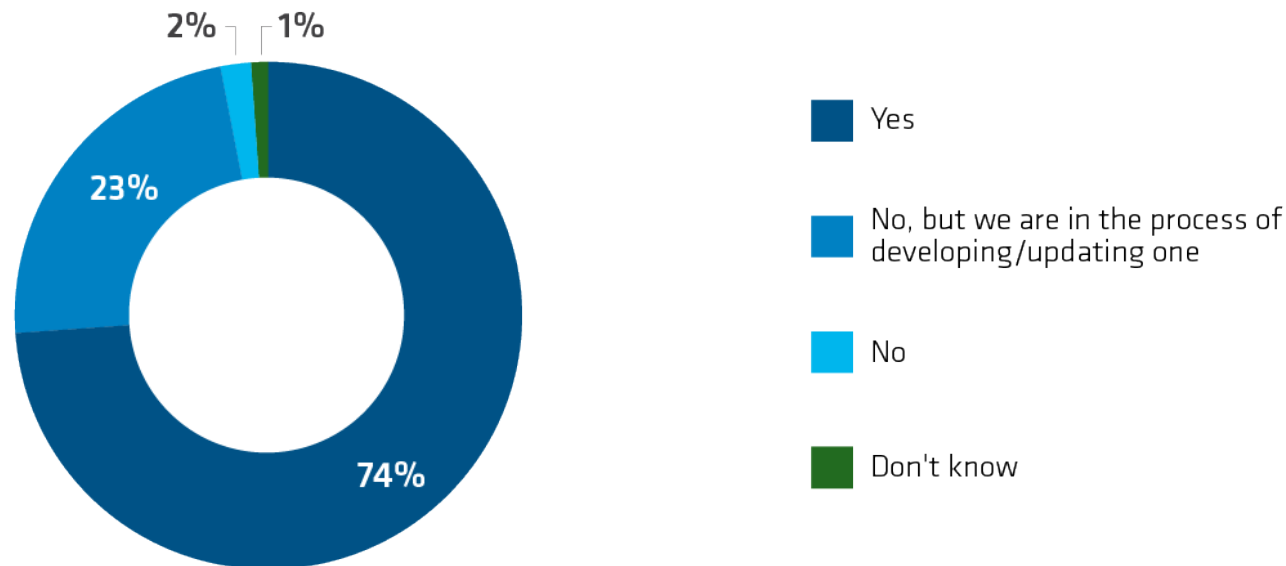
## EUA Survey on universities and innovation

- Innovation capacity section
- Sustainable transition section
- Digital transition section

## University innovation strategies

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Q1. Does your institution have a strategy or mission statement that reflects its innovation agenda? (N=166/166)



### Key aspects addressed:

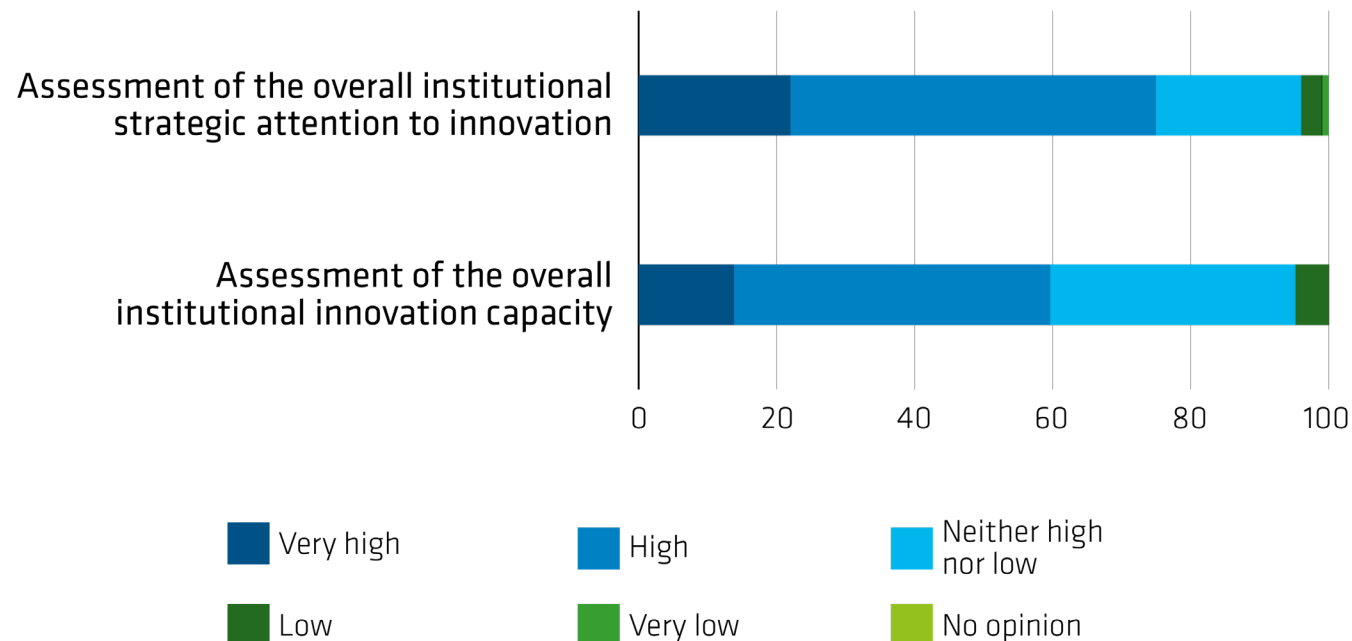
- knowledge and tech transfer, IP management
- research-based innovation,
- innovation in learning & teaching
- student innovation
- entrepreneurship
- social innovation
- contribution to sustainable society, responding to societal needs
- collaboration with partners
- contribution to the regional innovation ecosystem
- and many others

# Assessment of the overall institutional strategic attention to innovation and innovation capacity

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Q2. How would you assess your institution's overall strategic attention to innovation? (N=166/166)

Q3. How would you assess your institution's overall innovation capacity? (N=166/166)

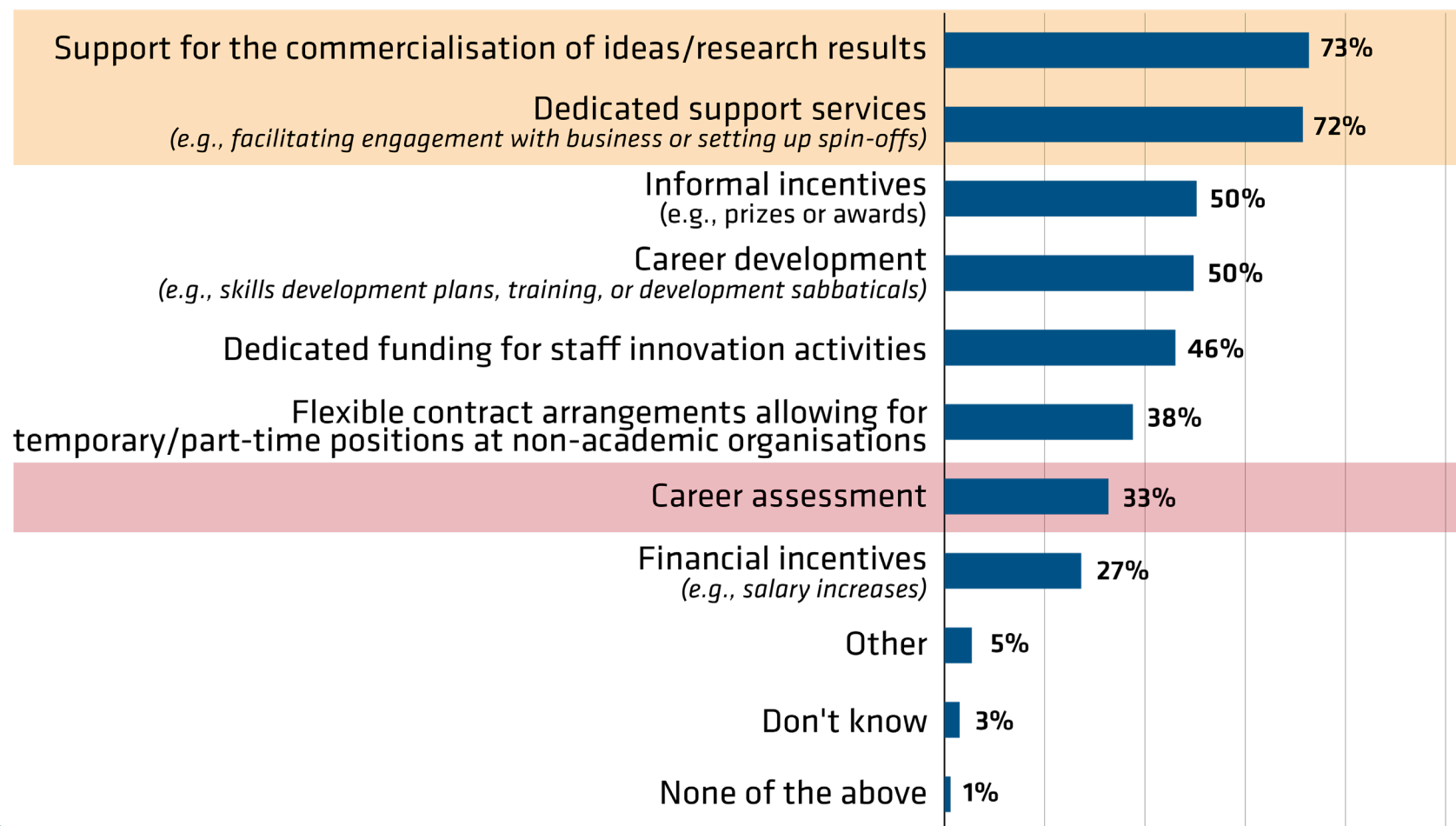


Resources, in particular **staff, funding and space**, play a key role in meeting university ambitions in the area of innovation

## Support for academic staff to enhance institutional innovation capacity

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Q9. What support does your institution give (research, teaching, and management) staff to enhance institutional innovation capacity? (N=165/166)



University staff  
innovation activities  
not yet fully recognised  
in **academic career  
assessment**

## Framework conditions for enhancing the university innovation capacity

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Q5. How important are the following framework conditions for enhancing your institution's innovation capacity? (N=164-166/166)

### Ranked as most important (% very important and important)

Qualified teaching, research and administrative staff	96%
Sufficient and sustainable funding for innovation activities	96%
Cooperation among different actors in the innovation ecosystem	95%
Efficient institutional governance structures	92%
Institutional autonomy	90%
Connections to global innovation communities	84%

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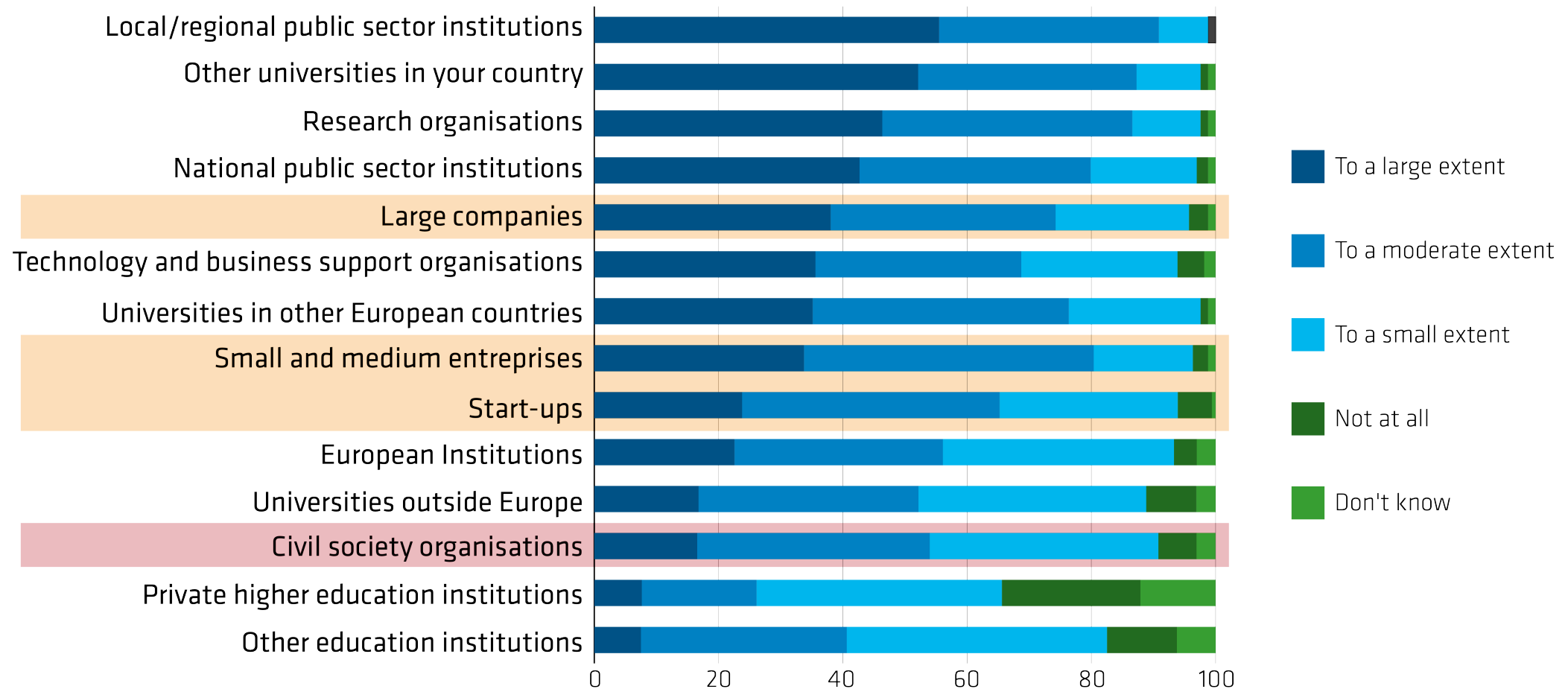
Regulatory framework such as state-aid rules or procurement regulations seems to be less important, except for IP regulations



## Partnerships in the area of innovation

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Q10. Which partners does your institution work with in the area of innovation? (N=157-165/166)



## Funding sources for innovation activities at universities

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Q12. Please specify how important the following different funding sources used by your institution are for innovation activities. (N=158-164/166)

### European funding sources (% very important and important)

Erasmus+	71%
European Structural and Investment Funds	65%
R&I Framework Programme	
Societal/global challenges pillar	66%
Research infrastructures	65%
ERC	63%
MSCA	59%
FET actions/EIC	52%
EIT	49%

### Other funding sources (% very important and important)

National competitive funding	89%
Funding from regional governments	71%
Core university funding	66%
Funding from the private sector	61%
Income from tuition fees	27%
Funding received from other university income	25%
Philanthropic funding from foundations	25%
Private donations	19%

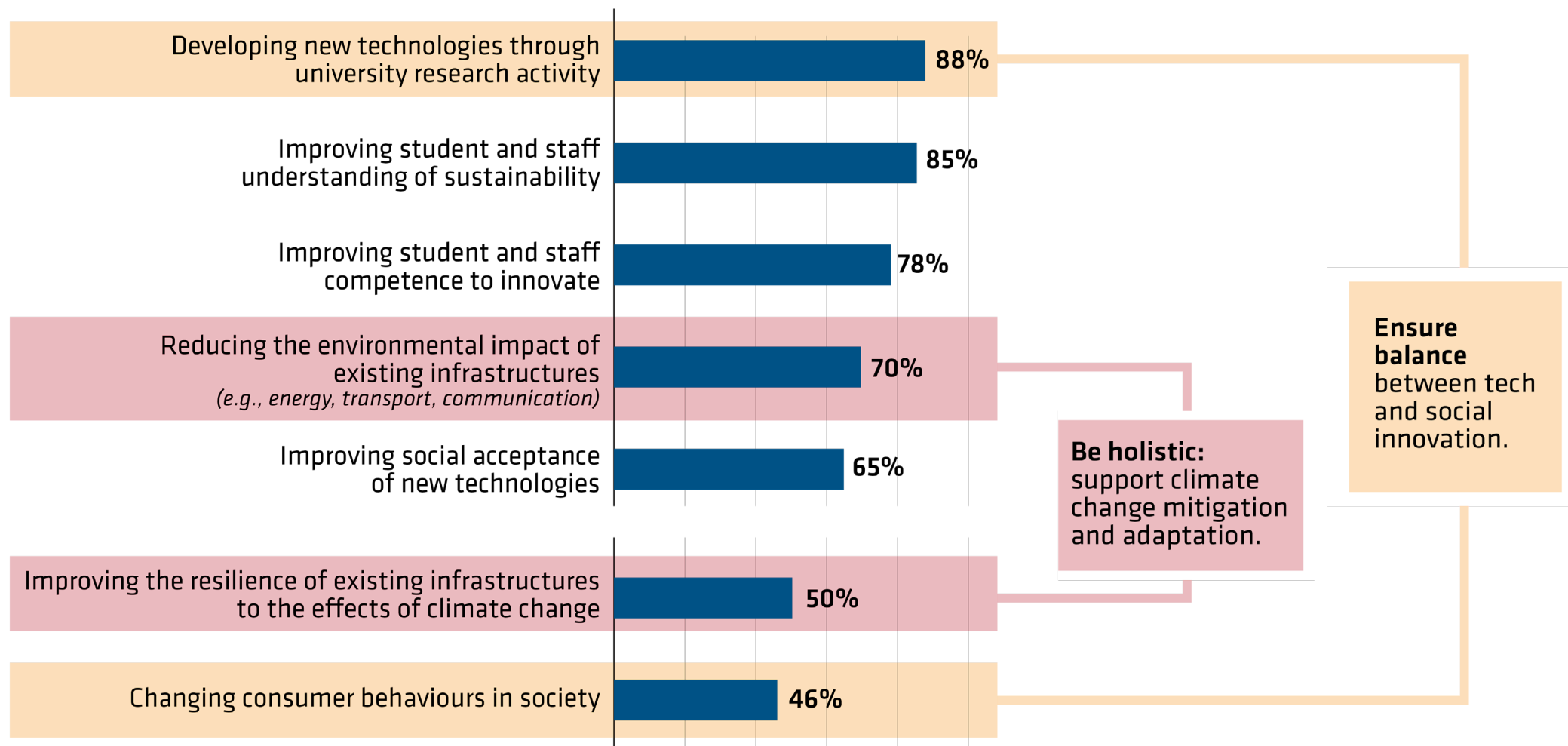
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## University contributions to innovation for a sustainable transition

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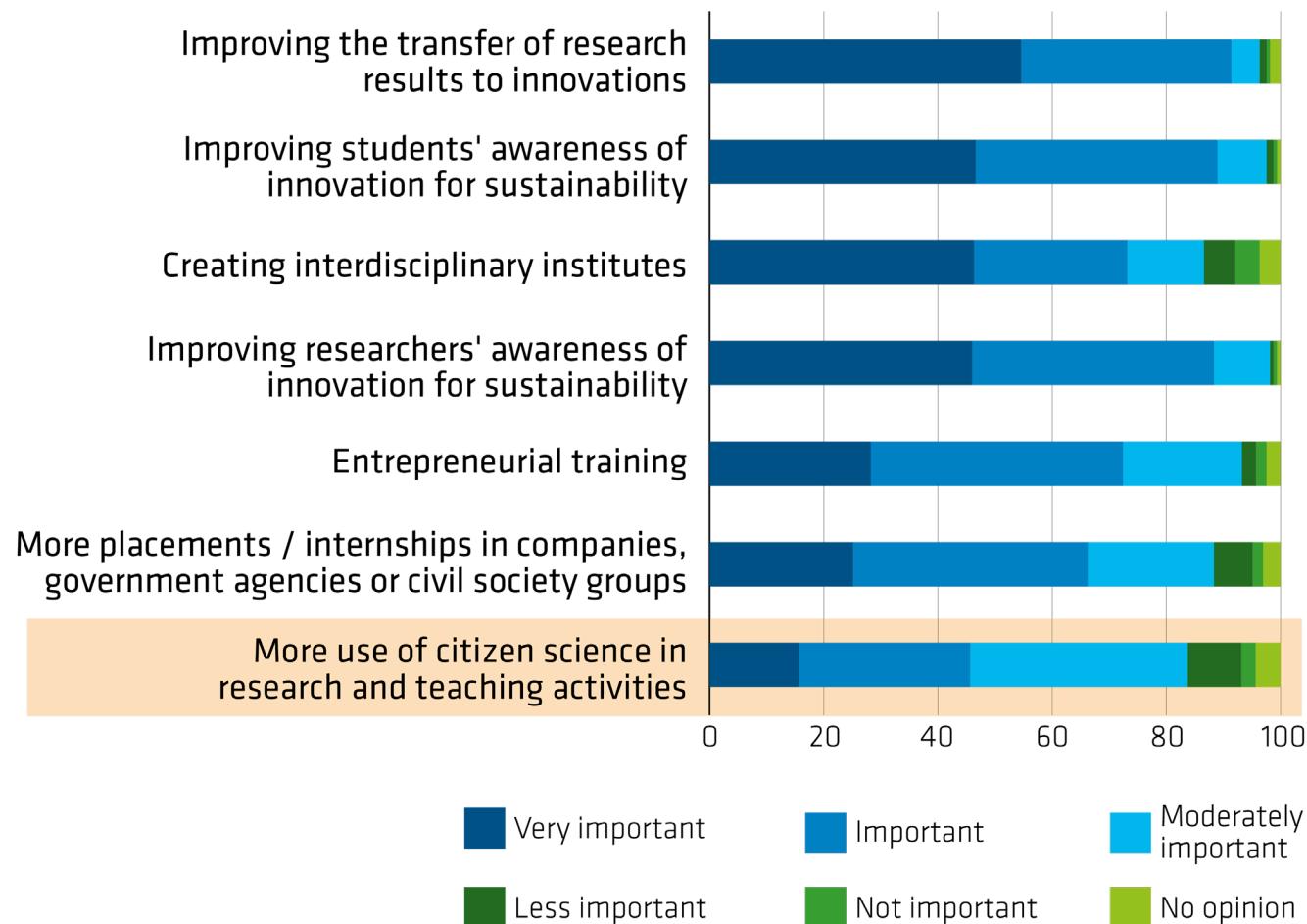
Q13. How does your institution contribute to innovation for a sustainable transition? (N=165/166)



## University research and education activities in delivering innovation for a sustainable transition

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Q16. At your institution, how important are the following research and education activities in delivering innovation for a sustainable transition?  
(N=160-164/166)



Support a more widespread use of citizen science

## Measures of success for innovation in the area of sustainable transition

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Q17. Which measures of success does your institution use for innovation in the area sustainable transition? (N=159-163/166)

### Ranked as most used (% to a large and to a moderate extent)

Number of partnerships for sustainability-related activities	68%
Number of study programmes addressing sustainability in the curriculum	65%
Introducing sustainable solutions and/or practices into different economic sectors	56%
Number of graduates from study programmes addressing sustainability in the curriculum	55%
Helping develop new public services in your city/urban community	55%
Number of patent applications	53%
Nurturing the start-up sector for sustainable tech and non-tech solutions	53%
Number of patents used/achieved	52%
Contributing to industrial reconversion at local/national level	52%

Closest partners:  
other universities  
and research  
organisations, civil  
society  
organisations,  
national public  
sector institutions

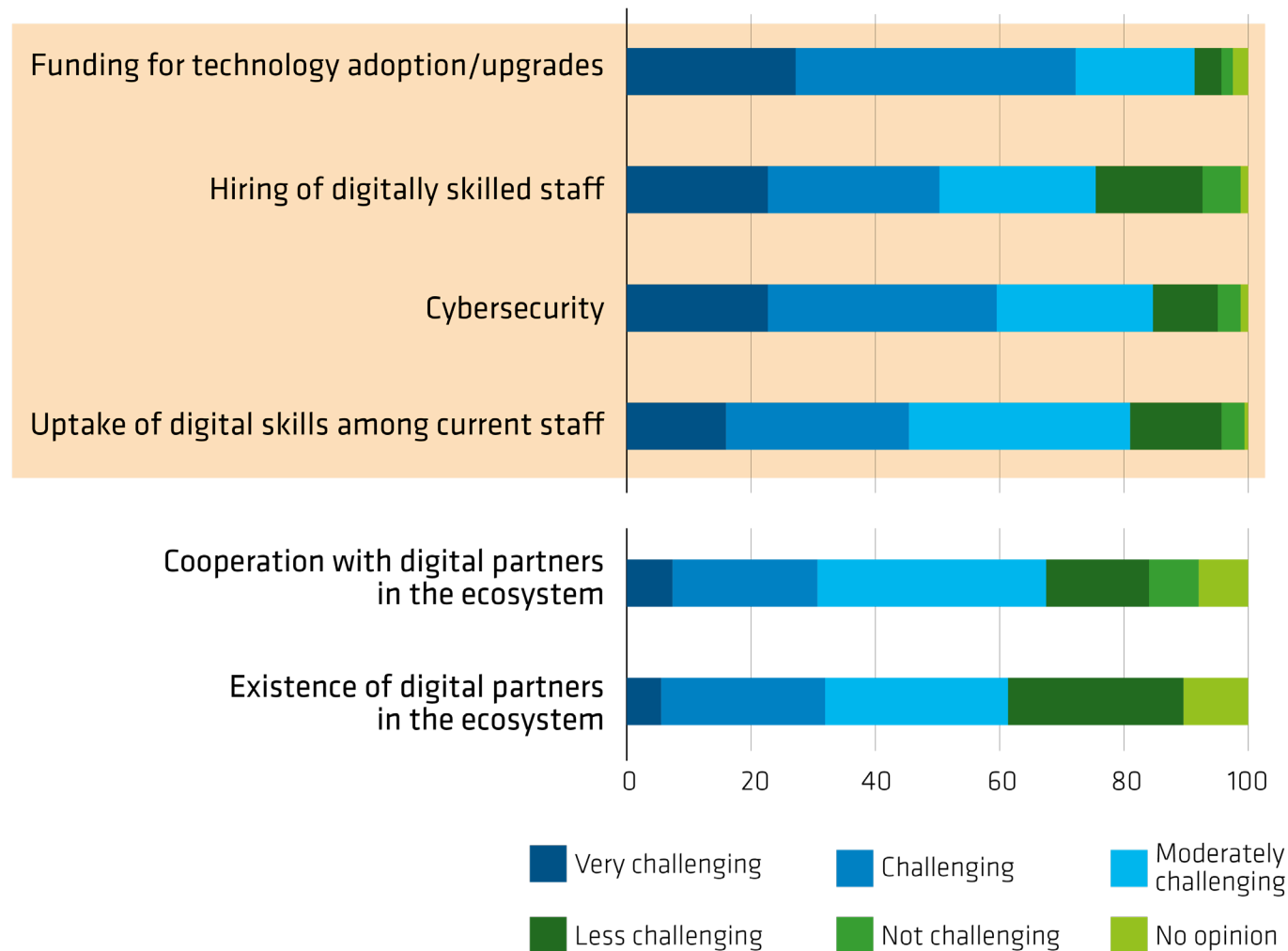
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## Challenges to innovation in the area of digital transition

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Q23. Please rate the following factors in terms of the challenges they pose for your institution's capacity to innovate in the area of digital transition. (N=161-163/166)



Capacity building has precedence over tech leadership



## Measures of success for innovation in the area of digital transition

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Q26. How does your institution measure digital innovation success? (N=161-163/166)

### Ranked as most used (% to a large and to a moderate extent)

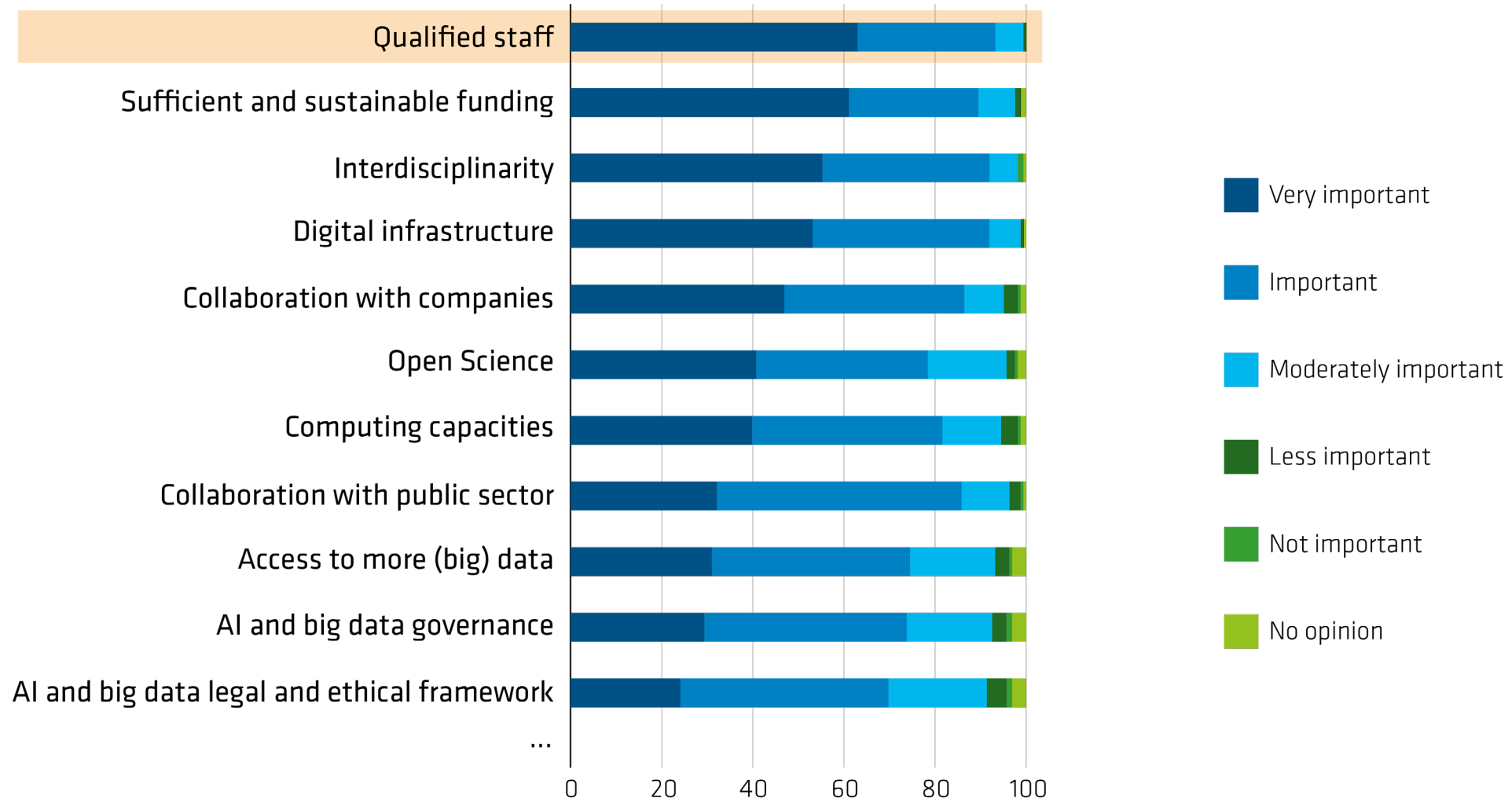
Number of partnerships for activities related to digital innovation	57%
Number of study programmes addressing digital innovation in the curriculum	53%
Contributing to the digitalisation of industries and/or other economic sectors	52%
Nurturing the start-up sector for digital solutions	51%
Number of graduates from study programmes addressing digital innovation in the curriculum	49%
Number of patents used/achieved	48%
Number of patent applications	47%
Contributing to the digitalisation of public services in your city/urban community	44%

Closest partners:  
SMEs

## Enablers of innovation for the digital transition

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Q28. How important are the following elements in allowing your institution to support innovation for the digital transition? (N=159-163/166)



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## Recommendations

Recommendations for national and European policy makers and funding agencies	Recommendations for universities
How to enhance universities' innovation capacity	Support the development of efficient institutional governance structures and promote university autonomy as a fundamental value.
	Support long-term oriented research, including curiosity-driven research, as one of the fundamental ways to improve the innovation capacity of universities and of the ecosystems in which they are situated.
	Support universities in interacting with companies and other actors of the innovation ecosystem.
	Support universities in reforming their academic career assessment approaches with the aim of recognising a wide range of academic staff contributions, including innovation activities.
	Strengthen strategic attention to innovation across all departments, faculties and services.
	Provide incentives, rewards and support mechanisms for academic staff innovation activities.
	Engage with other stakeholders of the European innovation ecosystem and global network.
	Increase integration of entrepreneurship training into all study programmes.

Recommendations for national and European policy makers and funding agencies		Recommendations for universities
How to enhance universities' contribution to the <b>sustainable transition</b>	Pursue a holistic approach to the sustainable transition in which innovation activities contribute equally to climate change mitigation and adaptation.	Deepen commitment to interdisciplinarity as a driver of research, education and innovation for the sustainable transition.
	Support a more widespread use of citizen science in innovation for the sustainable transition.	Streamline internal processes to deliver on the institution's environmental commitments.
How to enhance universities' contribution to the <b>digital transition</b>	Ensure that funding programmes and policies for the digital transition reflect the precedence of digital capacity building over pursuing technological leadership.	Foresee a clearer role for the digital transition when defining the institution's innovation mission.
	Develop digital policies that acknowledge the various impacts of digitalisation on society.	Boost the preparation of the next generation of digital innovators.

# Thank you for your attention

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