



What motivates and hinders municipal adaptation policy activity? Exploring vertical and horizontal diffusion in Hessen and Finland

UACES RN Research Workshop, Angers

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Growing climate impacts

- While climate change is a global problem, many impacts are felt locally
- Municipalities as a key site of adaptation → key planning competences
- Diffusion as one way in which municipal adaptation may spread
- Municipalities come in different sizes → effects on diffusion?



Image source: Pixabay/Hans Braxmeier

Theory – policy diffusion

Internal and external barriers and motivators of adaptation policy

- Internal: policy-maker motivations, resources, other policies within the jurisdiction etc.
- External: What other jurisdictions do
- Diffusion focuses on external factors and related, causal pathways (e.g., interests, ideology, rights, coercion, recognition – Blatter 2021)

Vertical + horizontal diffusion

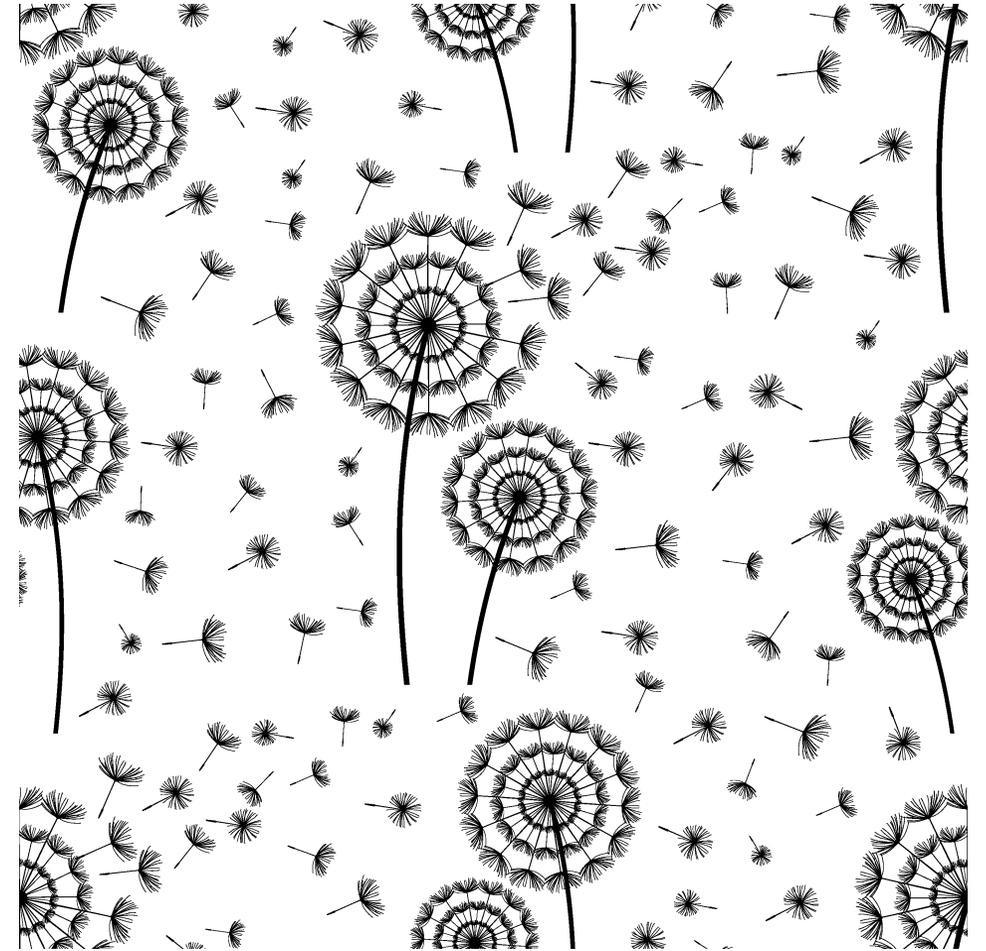


Image source: iStock

International level

EU level

National level

State level

County level

Regulations Resources Strategies Capacity building

External barriers and drivers

Extreme weather events

Adaptation action

Vertical diffusion

Adaptation policy

Municipality 1

Internal barriers and drivers

Short term economic interest

Policy entrepreneur / policy opposition

Civil society

Scientific knowledge

Adaptation policy

Municipality 2

Internal barriers and drivers

Short term economic interest

Policy entrepreneur / policy opposition

Civil society

Scientific knowledge

Adaptation policy

Municipality 3

Internal barriers and drivers

Short term economic interest

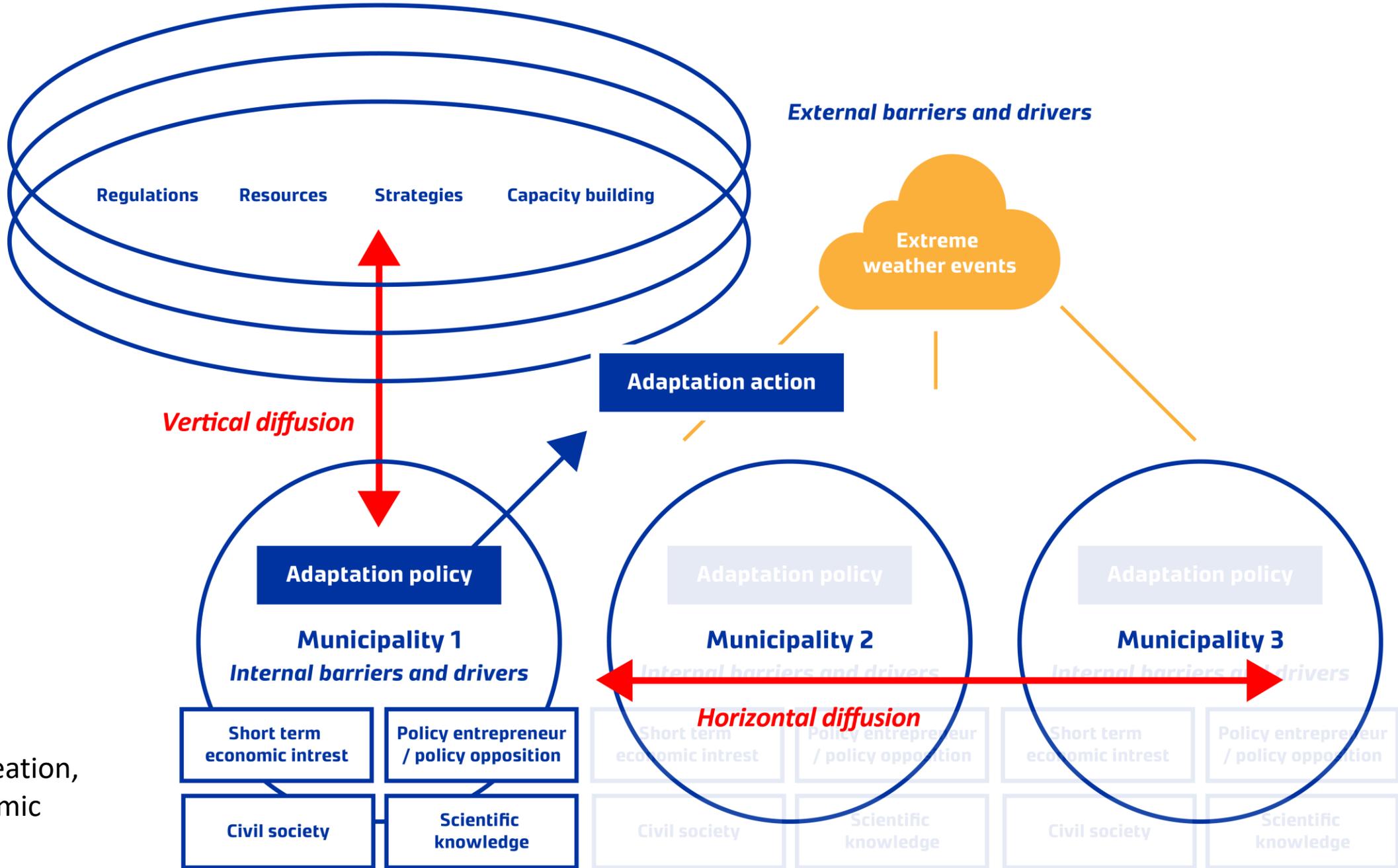
Policy entrepreneur / policy opposition

Civil society

Scientific knowledge

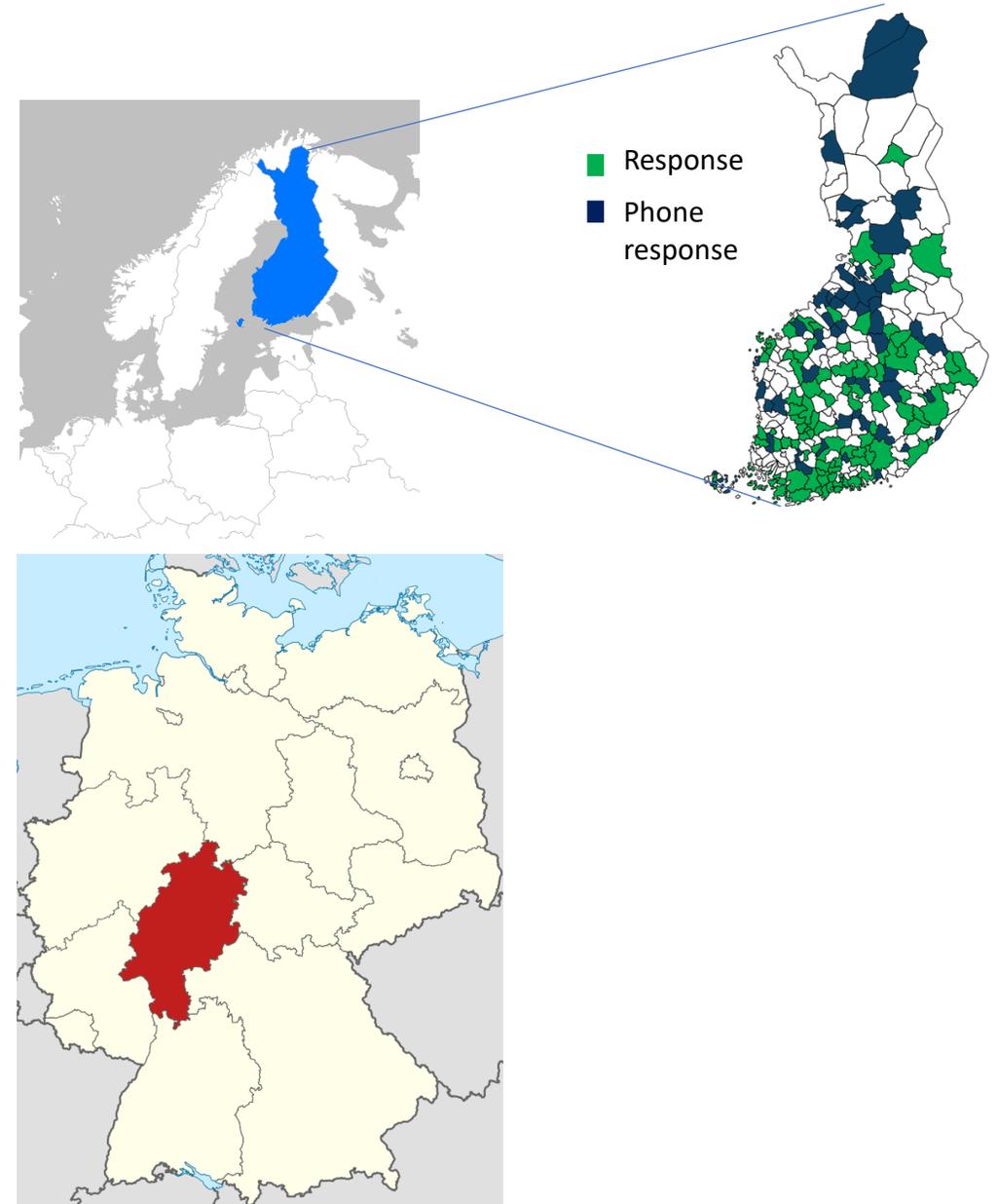
Horizontal diffusion

Source: Own creation, based on academic literature.

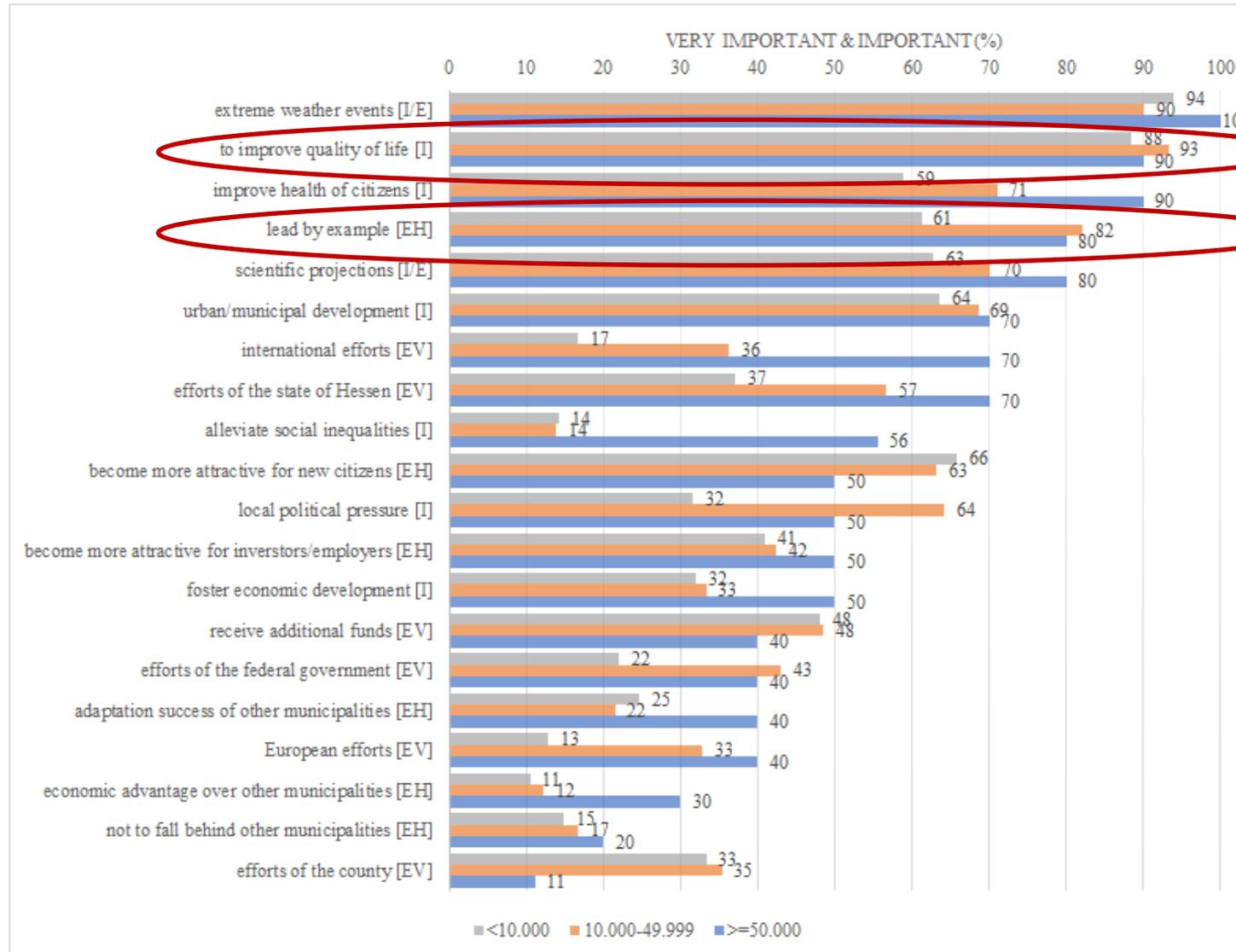


Empirical approach

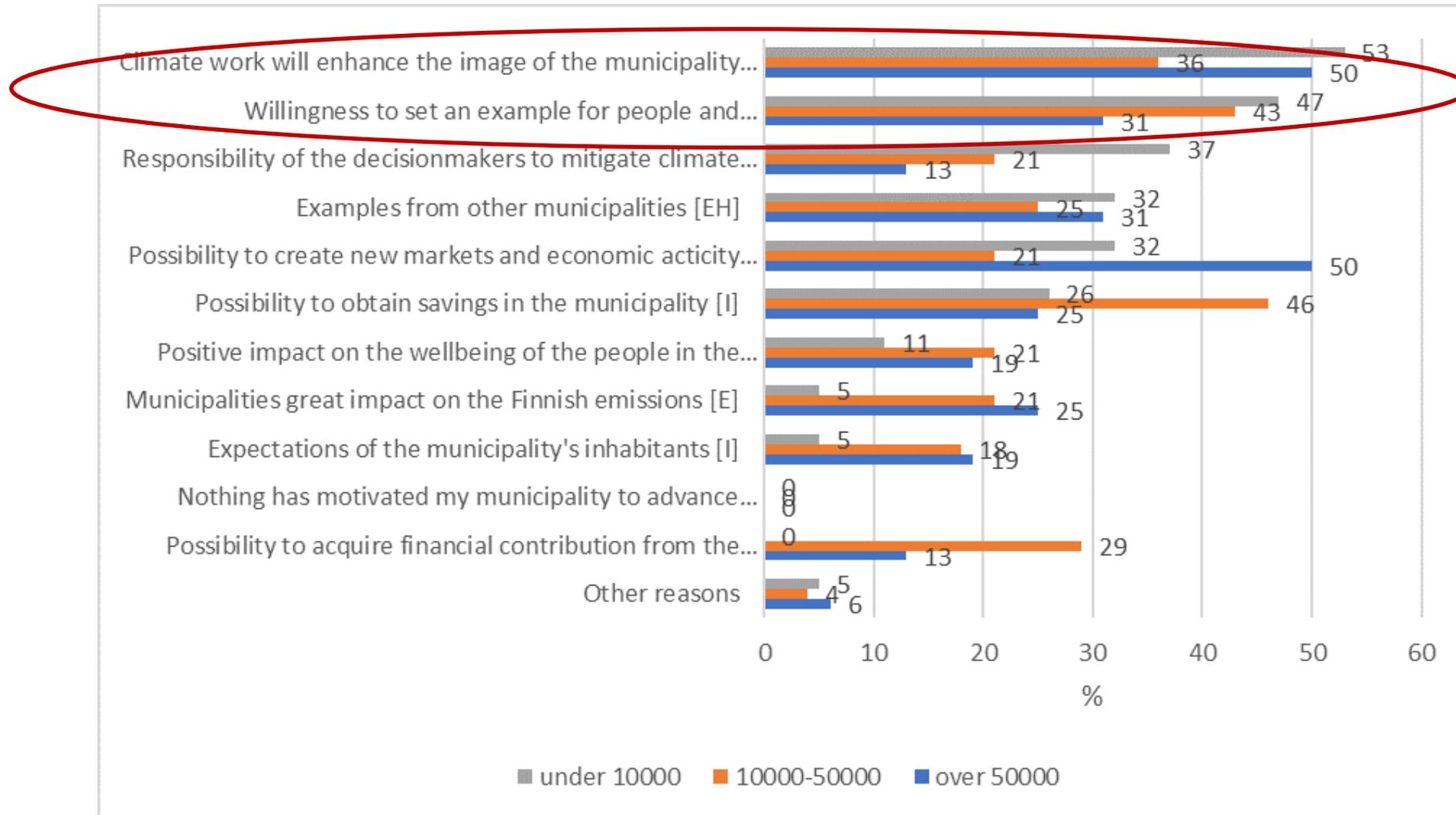
- Focus on the state of Hessen/Germany and Finland
- Similar adaptation rules, similar population size
- Finland = unitary state; Hessen a federal state
- 2 independent surveys (Hessen: Nov 2020-Jan 2021, 51% response rate; Finland Dec 2021-Jan 2022, 31% response rate)



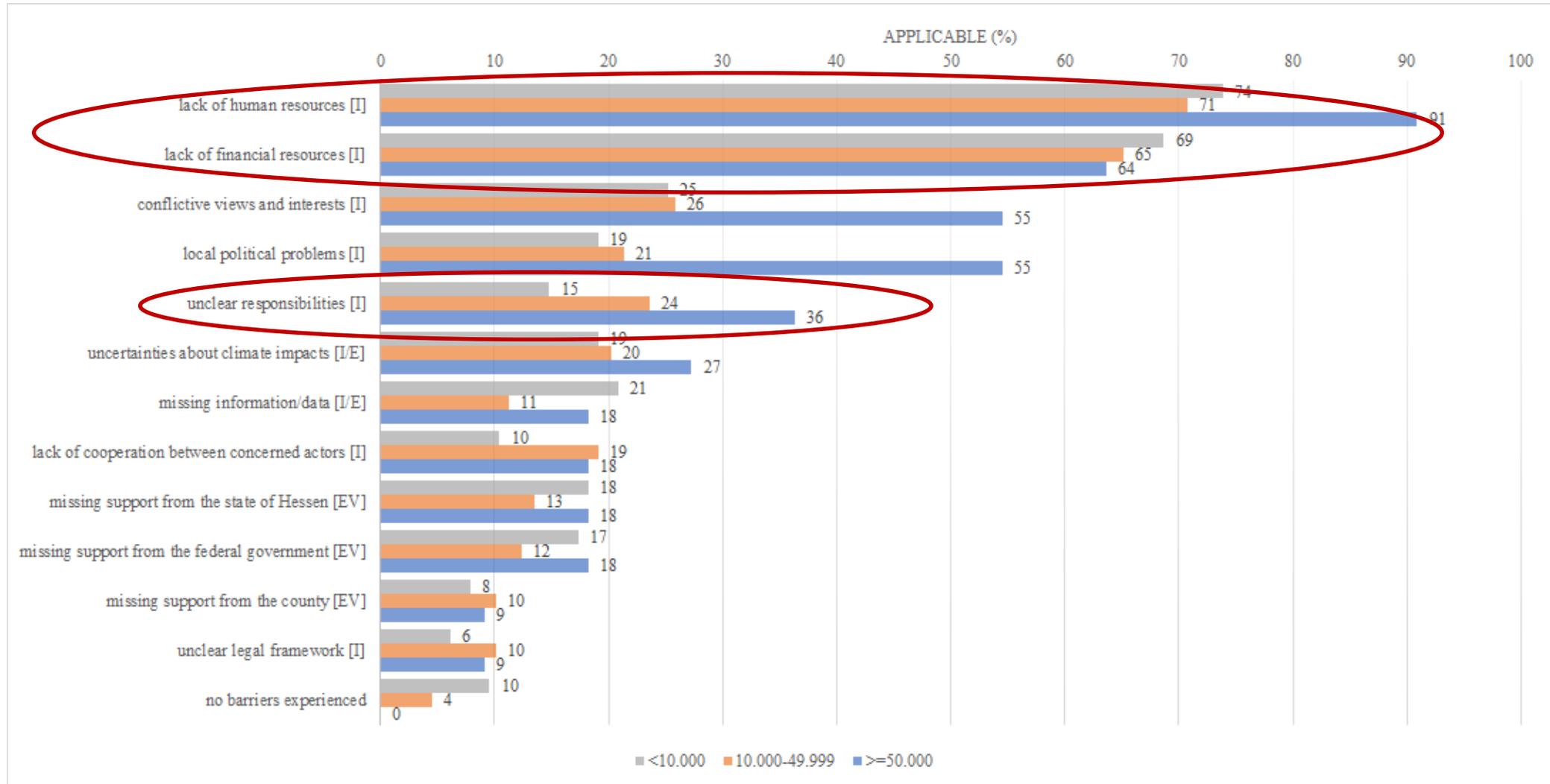
Results: Internal & external motivations, Hessen



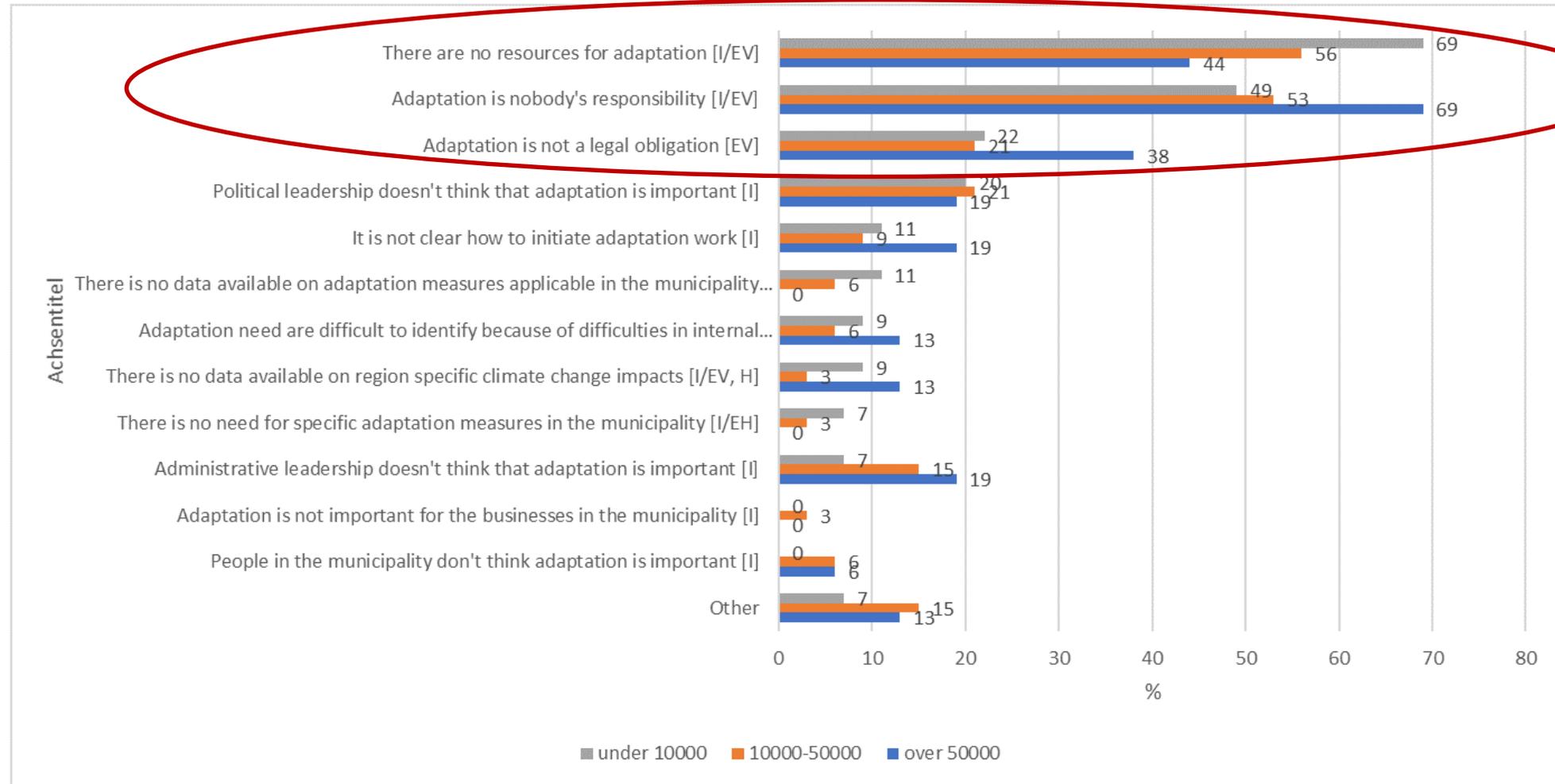
Results: Internal and external motivations Finland



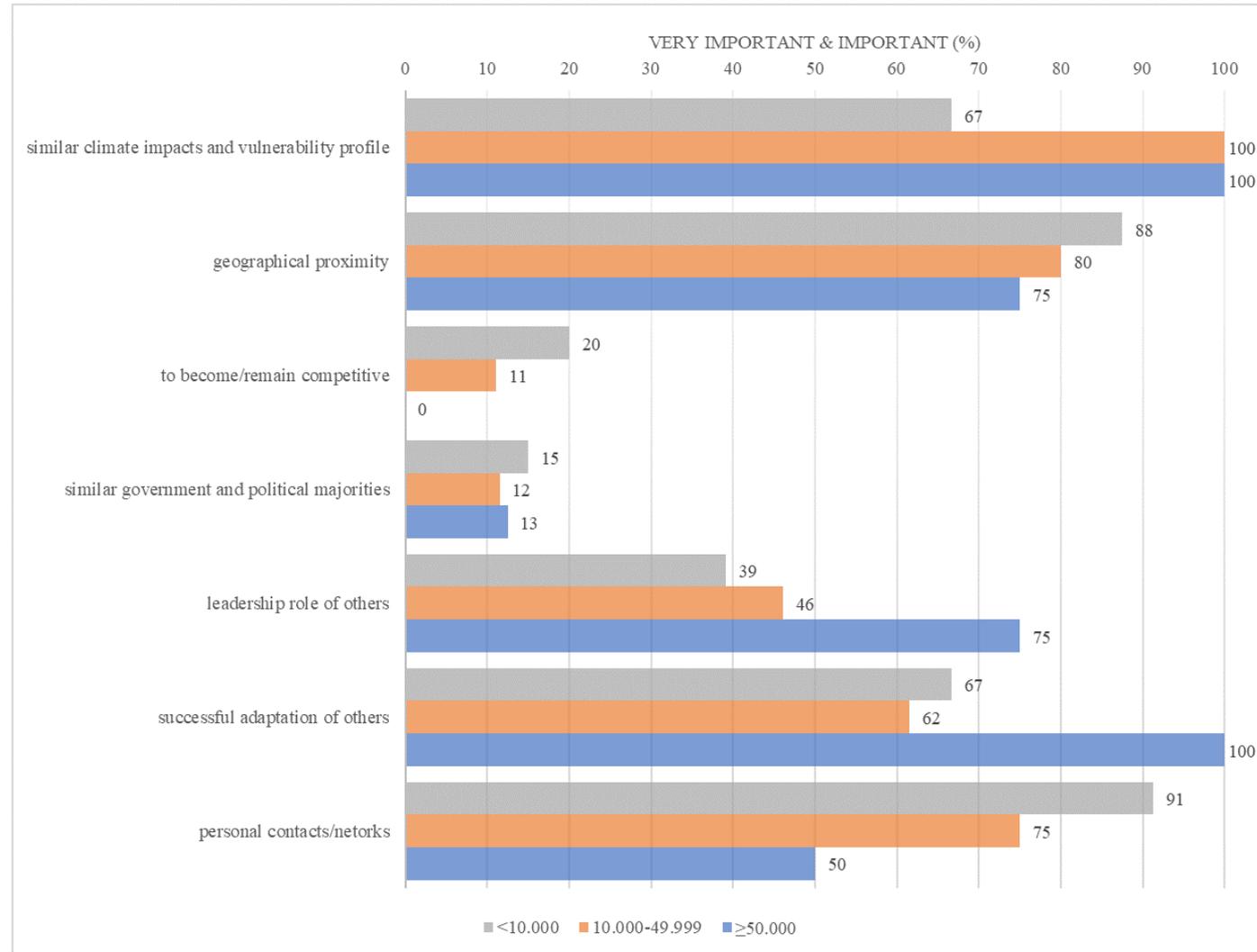
Barriers: Hessen



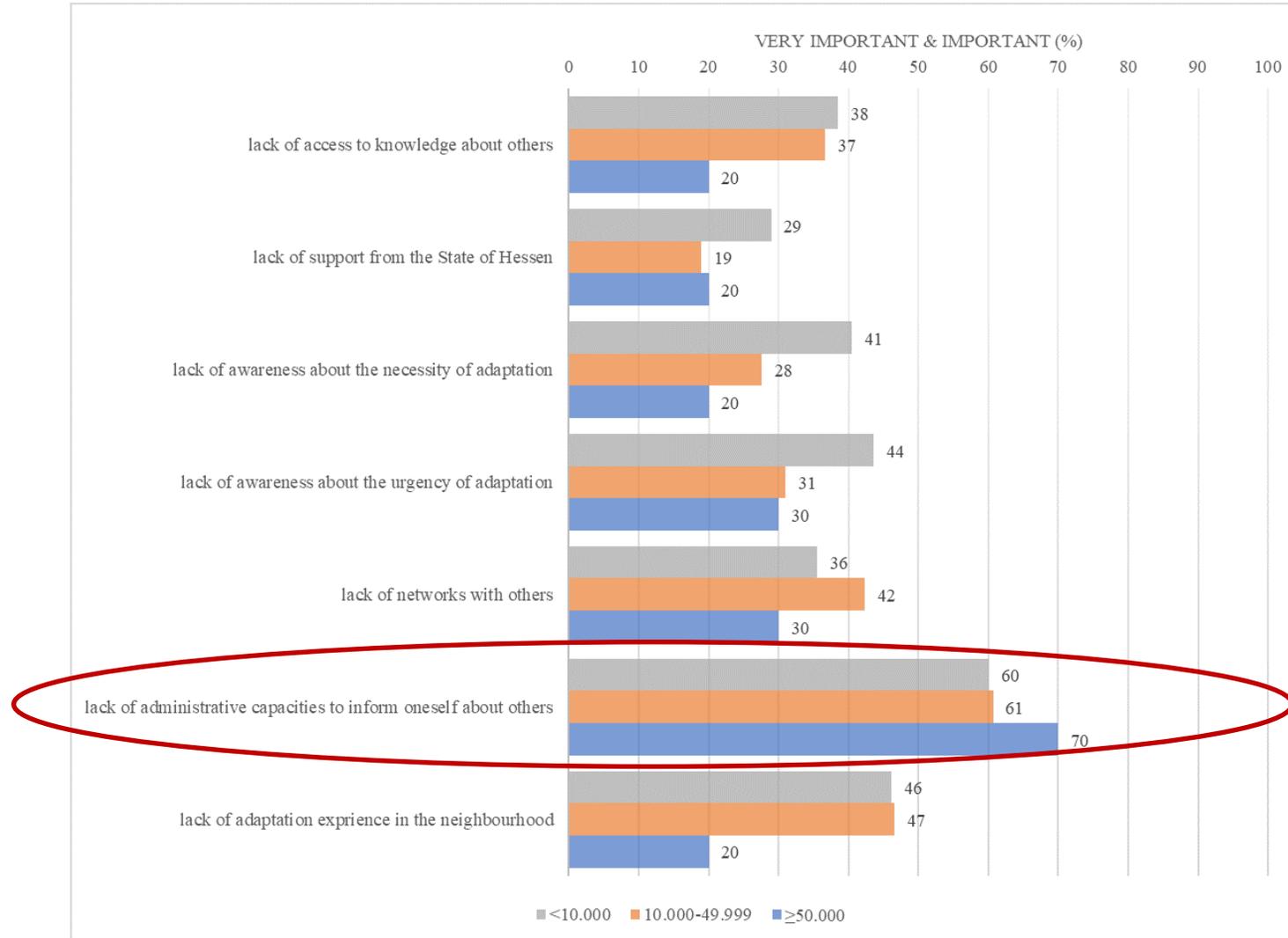
Barriers: Finland



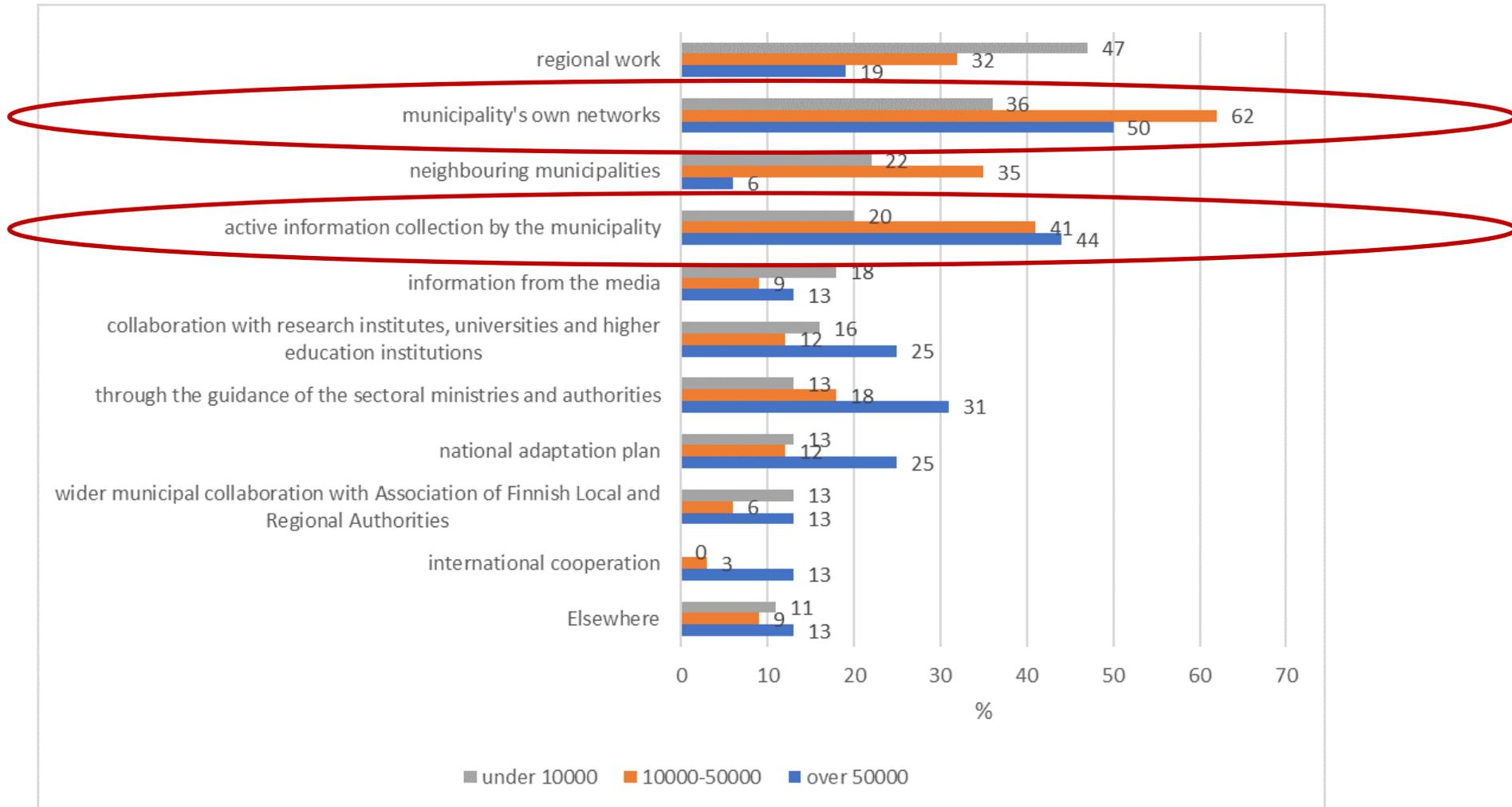
Hessen: Why consider what others do?



Hessen: Barriers against considering others



Finland: Where do ideas for adaptation come from?



Discussion & Conclusions

Motivations for municipal adaptation → reputational factors matter

- Hessen: climate impacts, quality of life, reducing social inequalities
- Finland: well-being; smallest municipalities see less responsibility

Barriers to adaptation

- Lack of personnel and financial resources; esp. smaller municipalities
- Unclear responsibilities in multilevel governance structures
- Smaller municipalities turn to the closest governance level for support; large municipalities interact with more levels
- Towards place-based adaptation?

Thank you!

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References

Blatter, J., Portmann, L., & Rausis, F. (2021). Theorizing policy diffusion: from a patchy set of mechanisms to a paradigmatic typology. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 29(6), 805-825.

Schoenefeld, J.J.; Hildén, M.; Schulze, K.; Sorvali, J. (under review) What motivates and hinders municipal adaptation policy activity? Exploring vertical and horizontal diffusion in Hessen and Finland

Schoenefeld, J. J., Schulze, K., & Bruch, N. (2022). The diffusion of climate change adaptation policy. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change*, e775. Available at: <https://wires.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/wcc.775>