



University of Verona  
Pilot 1 - EISENERZ

# socio-economic assessment report

# Main aim

**Describe and understand an alpine community struggling with profound processes of social change:**

- DE-INDUSTRIALIZATION
- SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION
- GLOBALIZATION
- DESIGNING A DIFFERENT FUTURE FROM THE PAST

**Focus on the community of Eisenerz**

Wellbeing is a possible and appropriate interpretation for this objective in accordance with the EU Interreg program and those of Alpine Space - trALLs

- Priority: “Liveable Alpine Space”
- Specific objective: “Sustainable valorize Alpine Space cultural and natural heritage”

# Mixed Methods: Quanti-Qualitative analysis

SOURCES

AUSTRIAN  
STATISTICS  
DATASET

SURVEY

IN-DEPTH  
INTERVIEWS

METHOD



Survey



Statistics  
Datasets



In-depth  
interviews

# Element of analysis

**Socio-  
demographic  
profile of  
Eisenerz**



**Alpine Identity**



**Quality of life**



**Transformation  
of the site/  
Projections on  
the future**



**Material  
conditions**



**Main perceived  
problems**



# Main Results

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC AND SYMBOLIC  
PROFILE OF EISENERZ

MATERIAL CONDITIONS

QUALITY OF LIFE

MAIN PERCEIVED PROBLEMS

THE FUTURE OF THE SITE

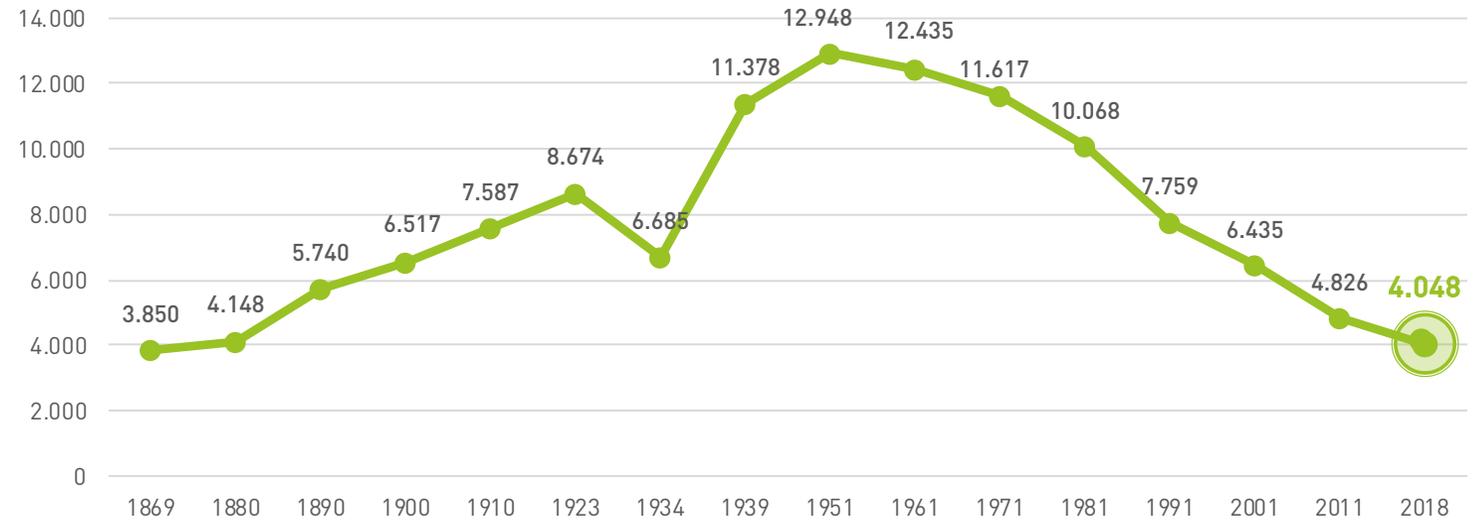
The population in Eisenerz is in constant decline since 1951



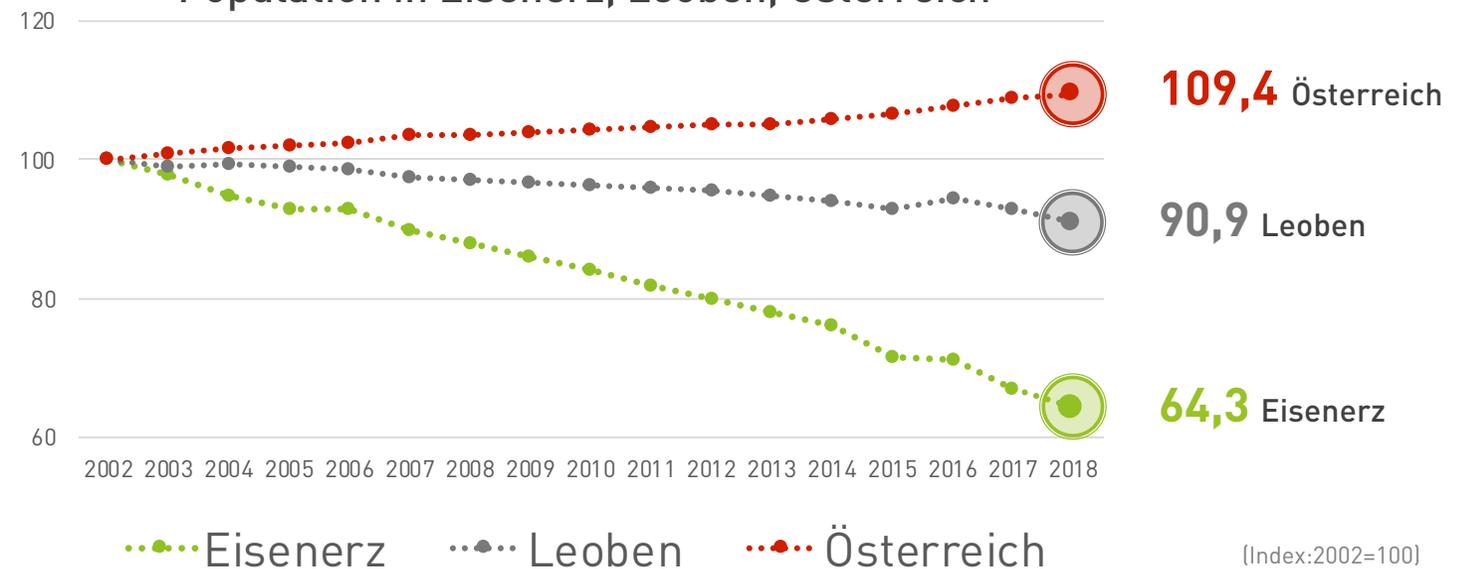
on a 2002=100 base

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC AND SYMBOLIC PROFILE OF EISENERZ

Population in Eisenerz



Population in Eisenerz, Leoben, Österreich



(Index:2002=100)

# Increase of the elderly population



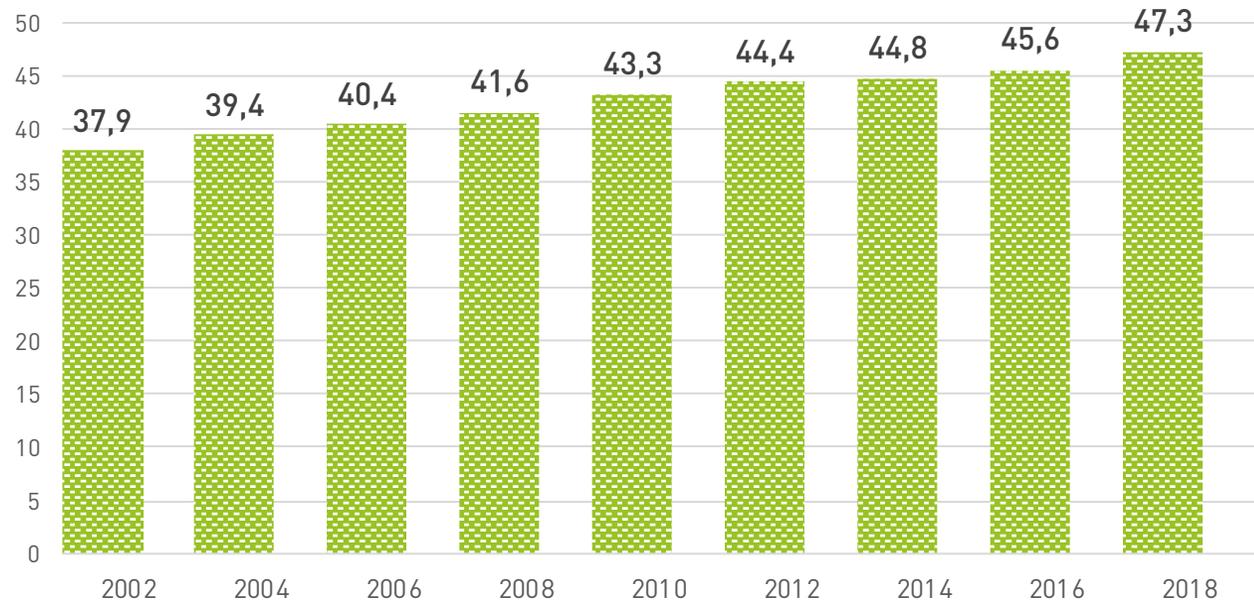
**Leoben**  
46,8  
years



**Austria**  
42,6  
years

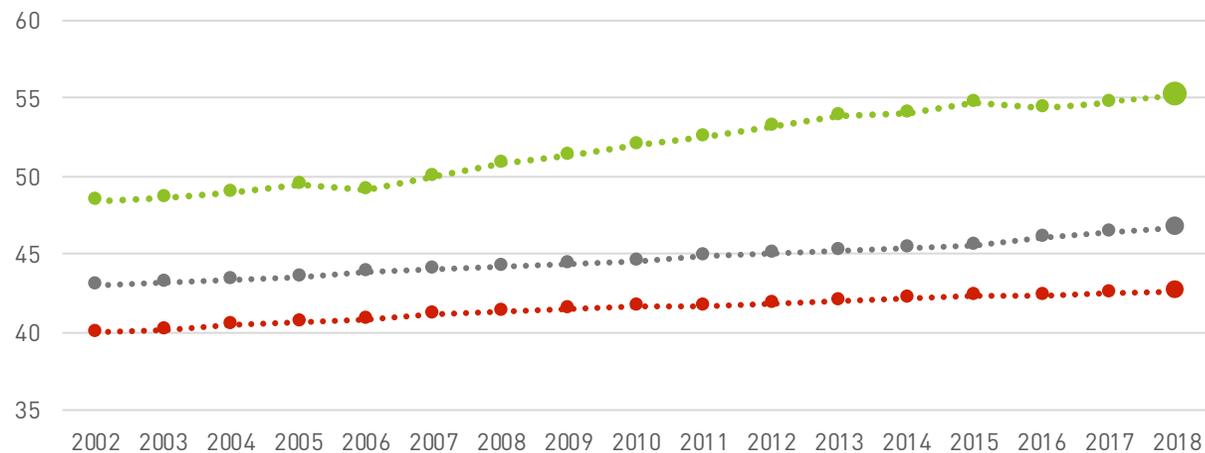
SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC AND SYMBOLIC PROFILE OF EISENERZ

## Eisenerz population aged 60 years old or over



Increase of residents aged more than 60 year old

## Average age



Constant increase of average age

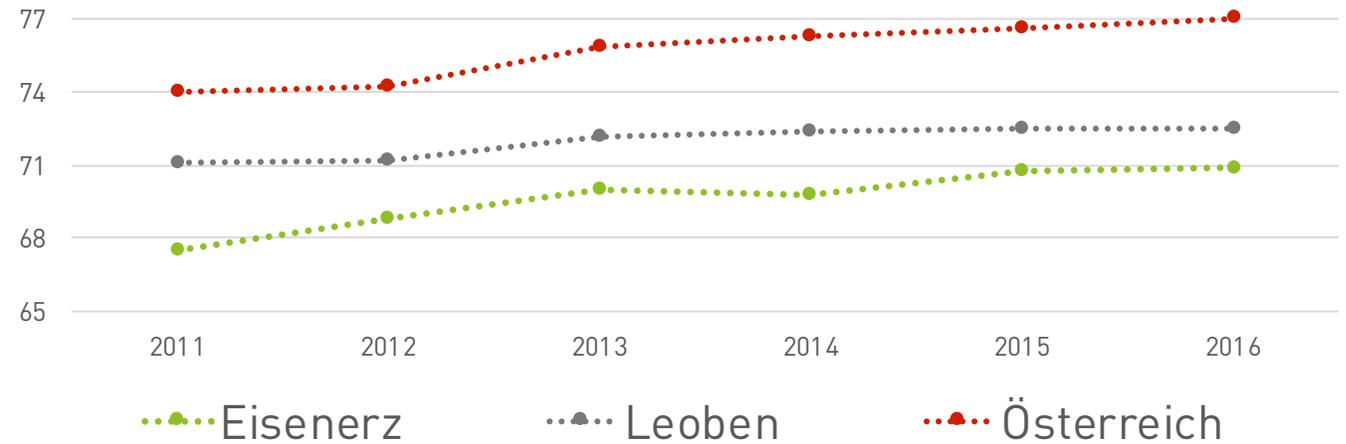
●●● Eisenerz    ●●● Leoben    ●●● Österreich

Labour force is one of the main input of industrial process.  
Eisenerz's activity rate is low

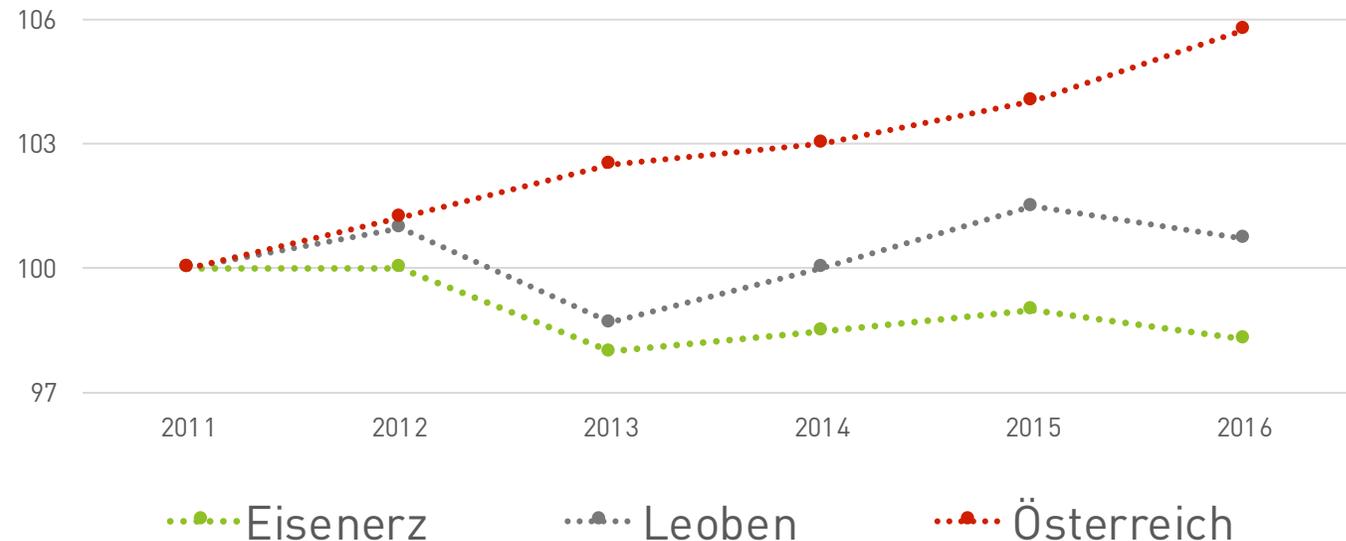
about  
71%

MATERIAL CONDITIONS / JOB

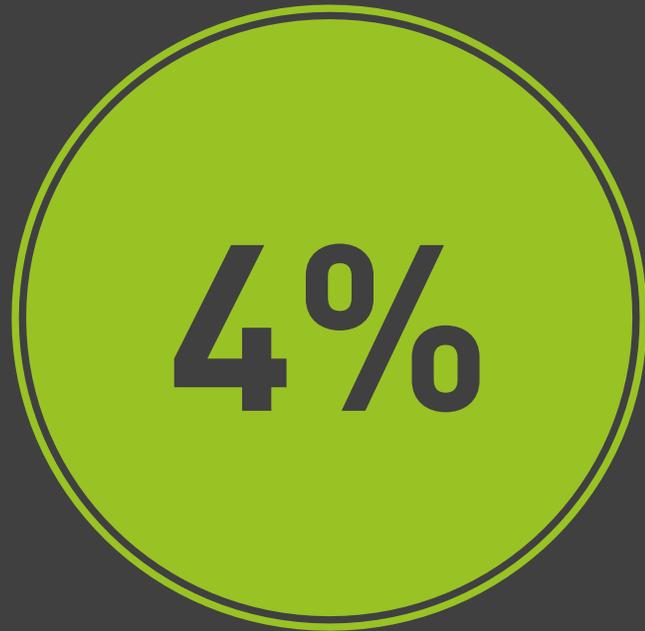
Activity Rate (15-64 years) since 2011  
*in %*



Employed persons since 2011  
*Index:2011=100*



There's no serious economic hardship at household level

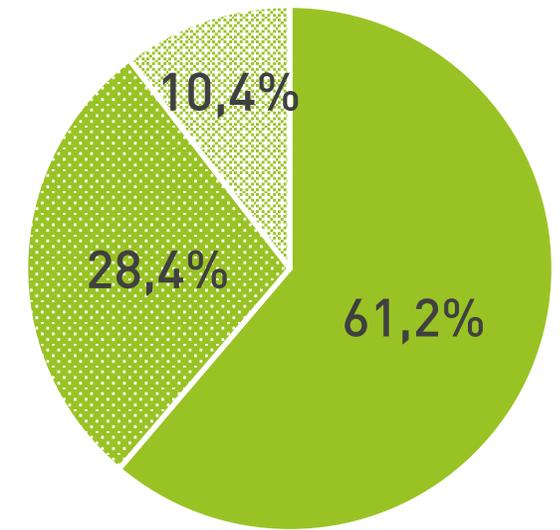


may be considered poor or at risk of poverty with a yearly household income less than €12.000

MATERIAL CONDITIONS / INCOME

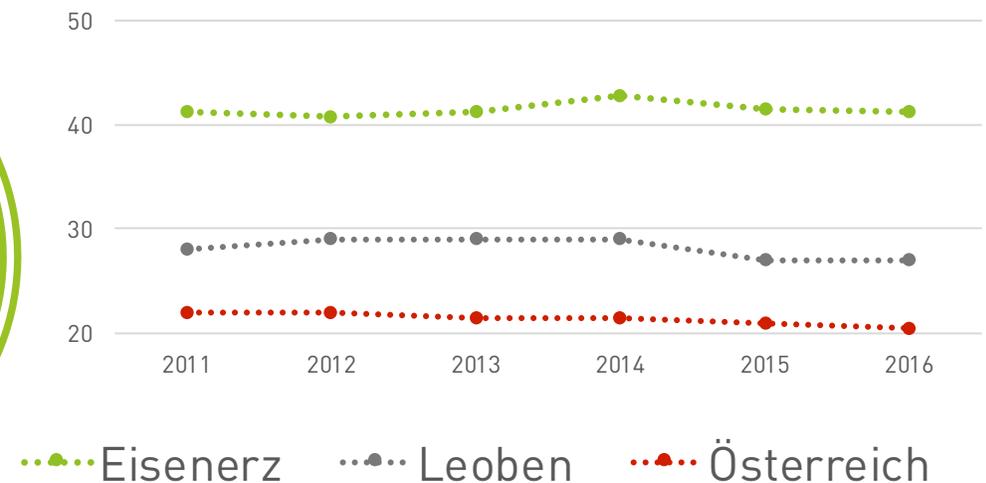
Share of households making ends meet with difficulty or great difficulty

- without difficulty
- with few difficulties
- with some difficulties



A significant share of families receive income from retirement

Persons receiving a pension in %



# Housing market is economically accessible

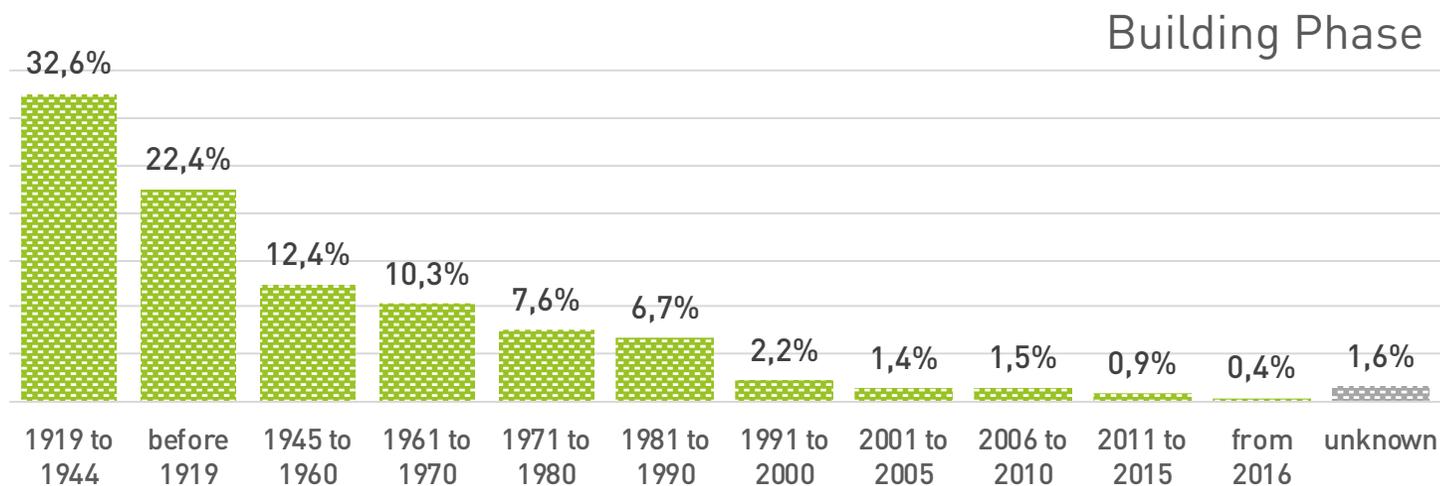
900 - 1.000  
€ / sqm

in 2017  
average prices  
for houses and  
flats

For land suitable for  
construction average price  
is 26,4€ per square metre

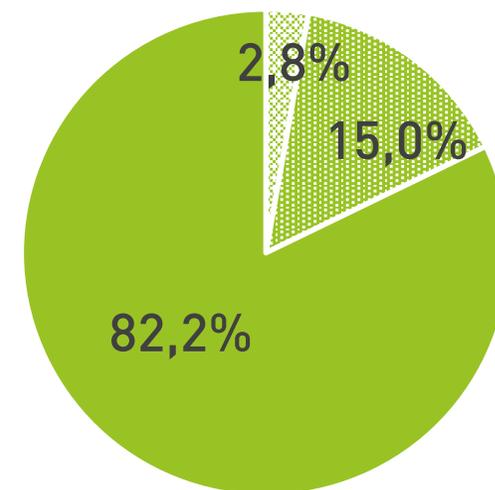
MATERIAL CONDITIONS / HOUSING

## Eisenerz' real estate wealth is made up of rather dated dwellings: more than 60% were built before 1960

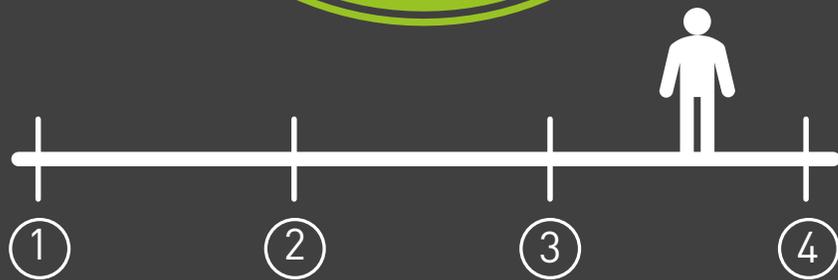


## Share of people living in dwellings with environmental problems

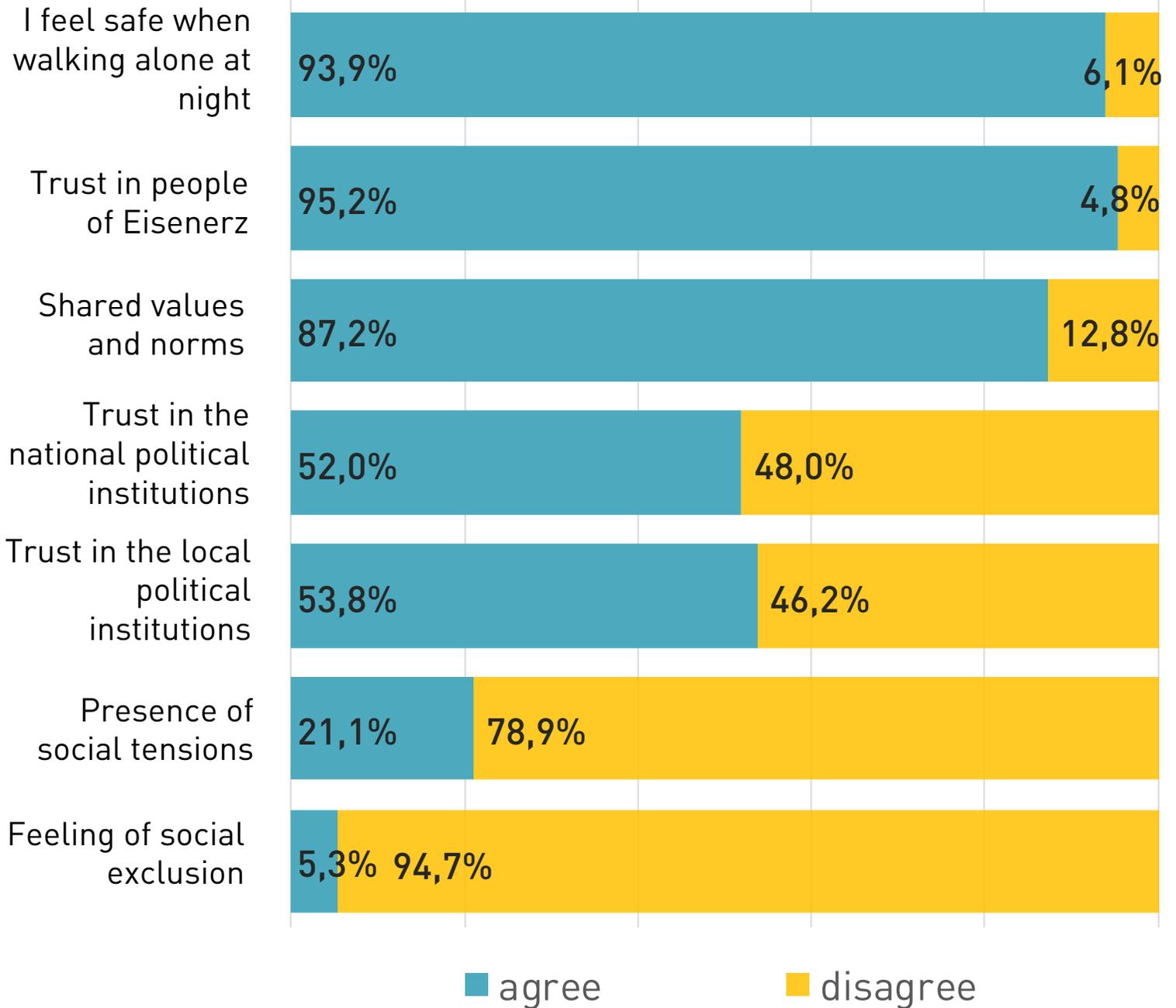
- Yes, very serious
- Yes, but not relevant
- No problem



# The residents of Eisenerz are very satisfied with their life



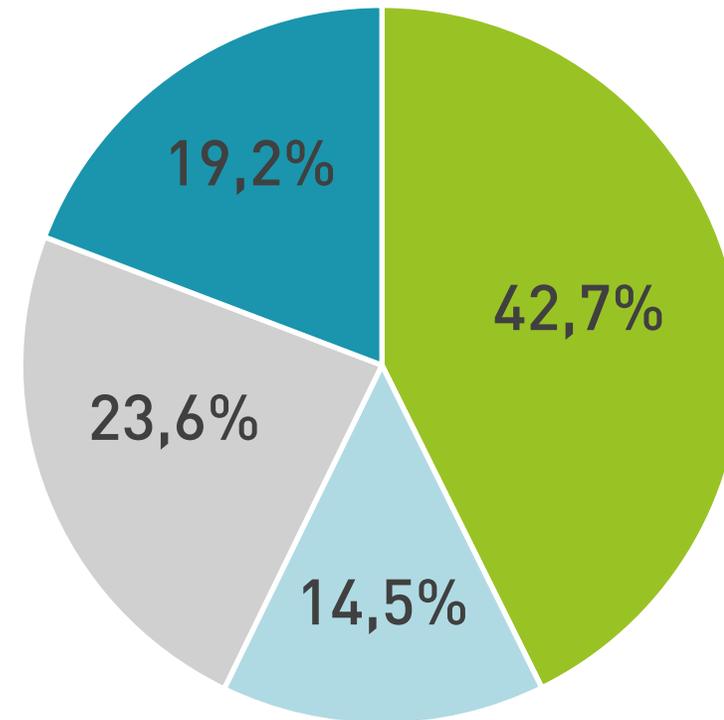
QUALITY OF LIFE / SOCIAL COHESION



Sense of local  
belonging:  
respondents  
perceive themselves  
as citizen of Eisenerz



Perceive themselves as citizen of



■ Eisenerz ■ Styria ■ Austria ■ Europe

on average respondents have been  
living in Eisenerz for **49 years**



How would  
you describe  
the people  
of Eisenerz?

QUALITY OF LIFE / ALPINE IDENTITY

"A bit mountain people"

but

"I also believe that we have a very faithful and also very  
reliable character"

"It must be said that Eisenerz is determined by the  
monoculture of the mountain"

"Open-minded people are very helpful and also hospitable  
to the tourists..."

"They are a somewhat withdrawn people..."

but

"They are very soft, ultimately also social and close to  
each other"

# The residents of Eisenerz are supportive among each other

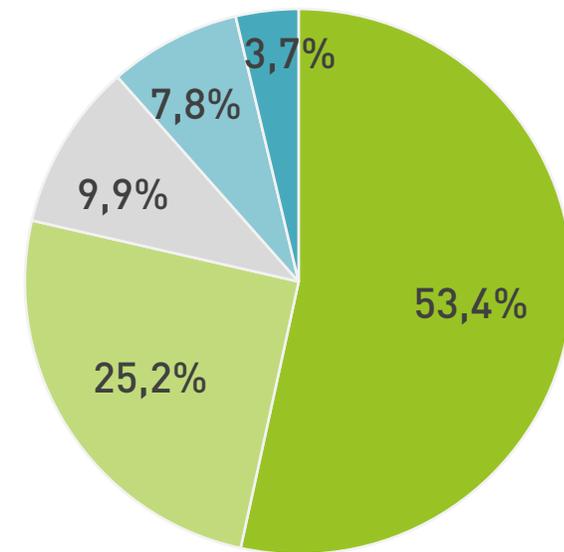


On average can rely on 6,2 people in case of need  
3 of these are neighbours

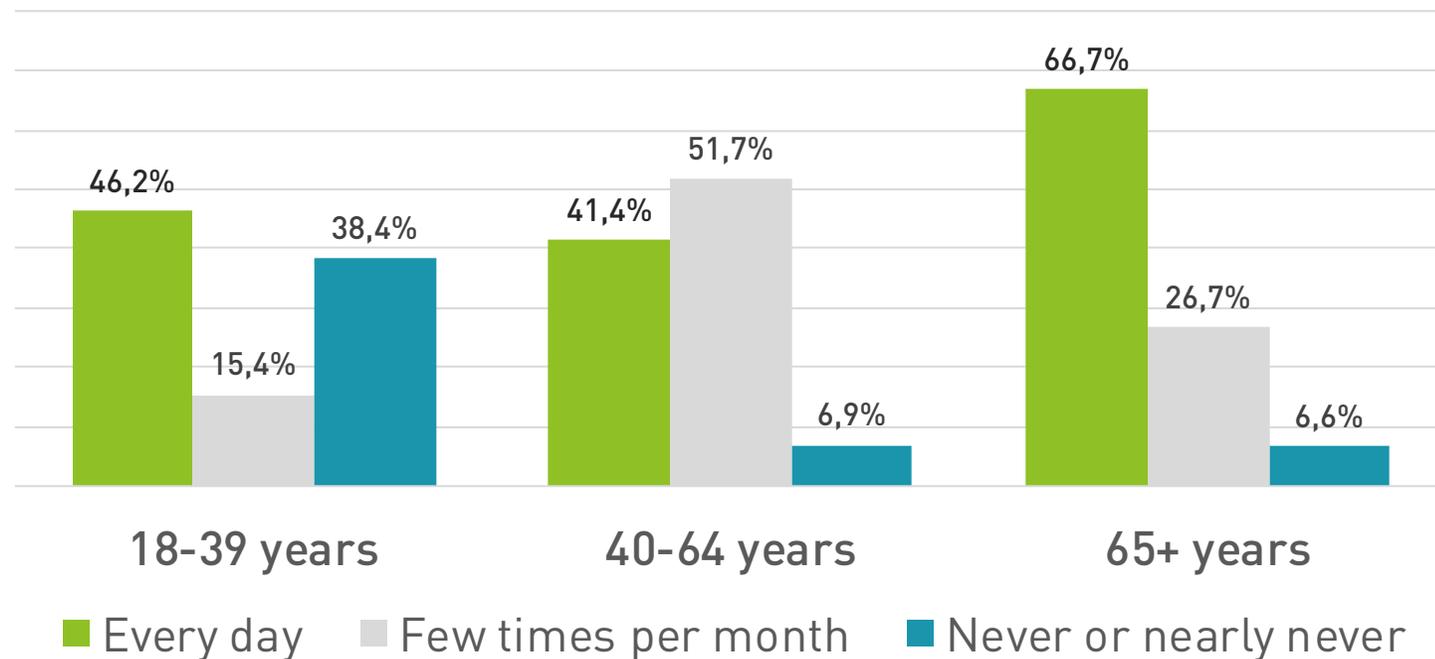
QUALITY OF LIFE / SOCIAL RELATIONS

## social contacts with neighbours

- Every day
- At least once a week
- Once/Twice per month
- A few time a year
- Never or nearly never



## social contacts with neighbours by age groups



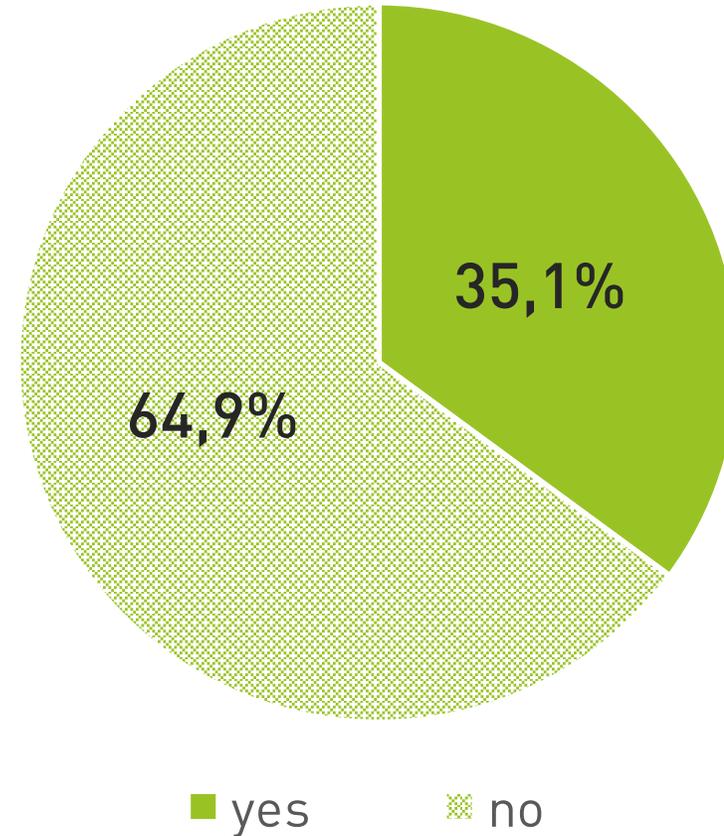
People are quite engaged in the civic and political life of their local community

**75,8%**

voted in the last local political election

QUALITY OF LIFE / PARTICIPATION

Participation to local events in the last 12 months



on average the respondents are **members of 2 associations**



**“There will be no reason for the young people to stay in Eisenerz and I believe that the population will continue to decline”**

**“I believe this is the future... And then, here, life goes more slowly and people will come to seek peace “**

**“It will always remain a village of Steiermark and Austria. Once visited, it’s a place where it is good to live“**

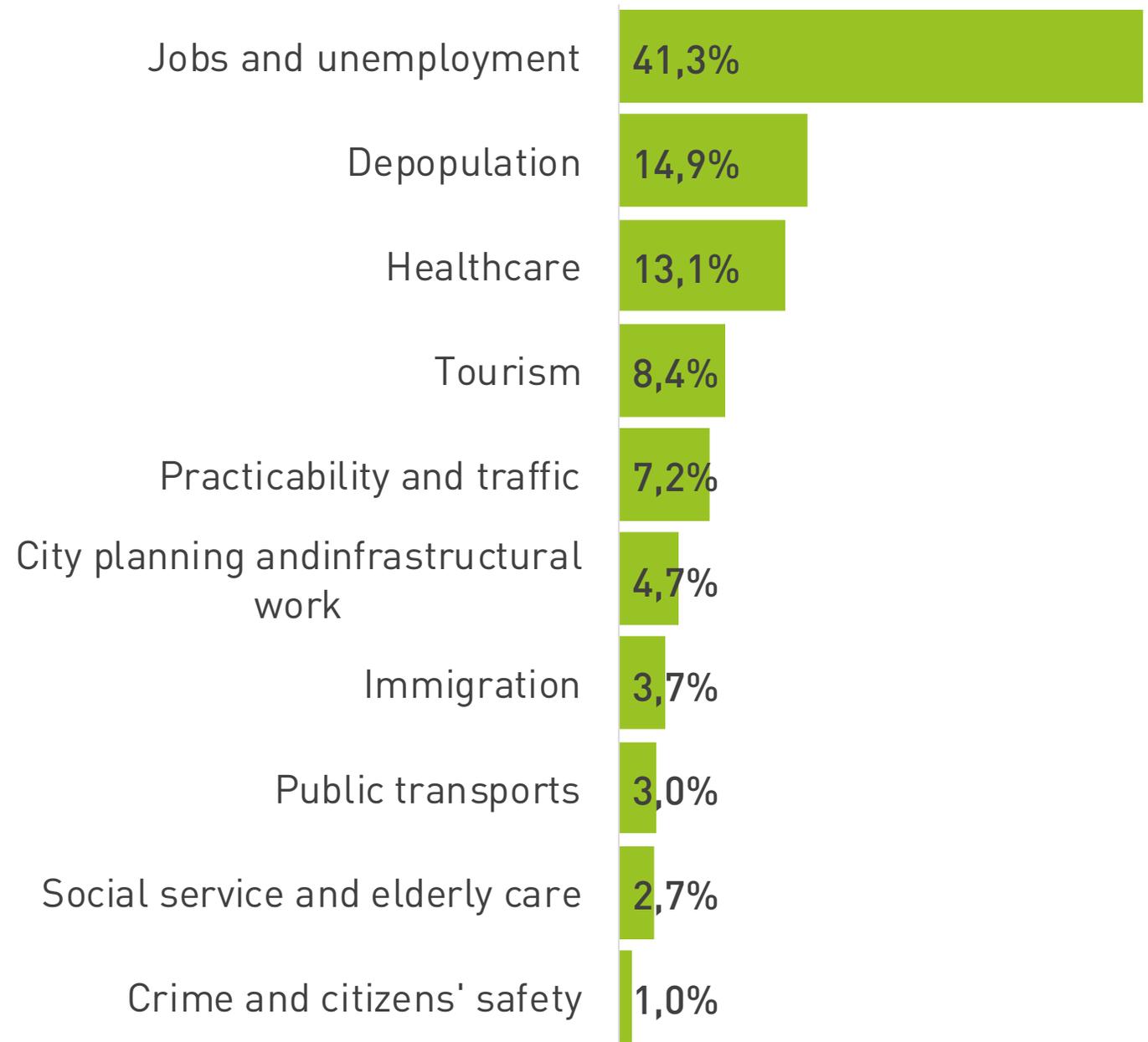


**Jobs and unemployment are considered the main local problem**

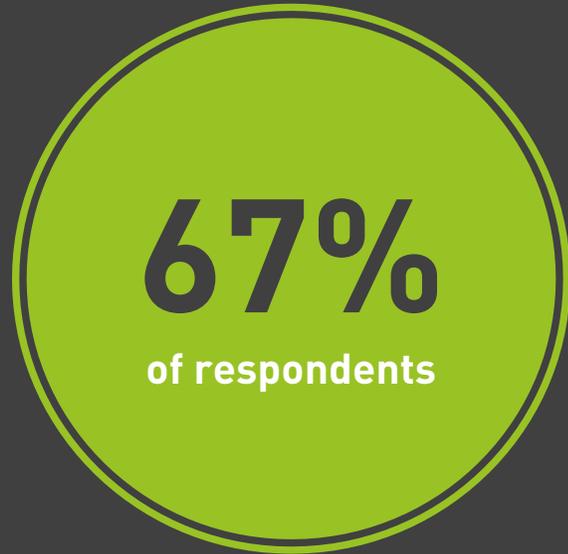


MAIN PERCEIVED PROBLEM

## Perceived local problems



# A negative economic impact on local living conditions and on the market value of dwellings

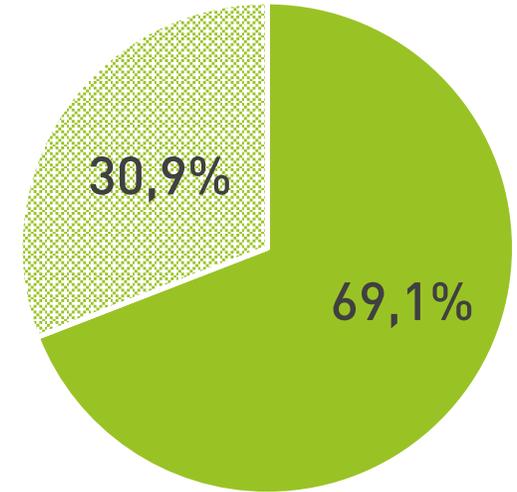


believe that the negative spillovers to the local economy are quite or very negative

MAIN PERCEIVED PROBLEM

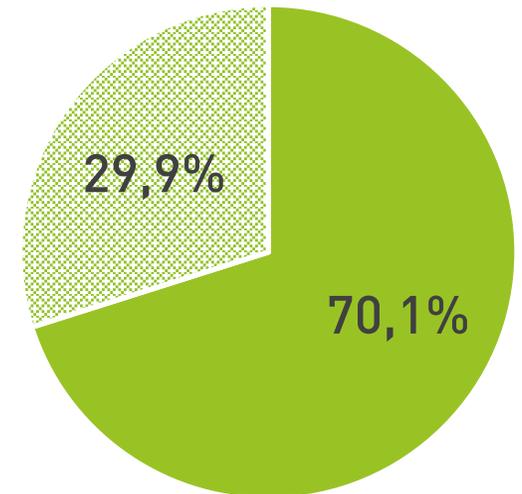
## Type and intensity of economic impact on local living conditions

- Very/quite negative
- ▨ Very/quite positive



## Presence of a negative economic impact on the market value of dwellings

- Yes
- ▨ No



How has Eisenerz  
changed over time,  
as long as you  
can remember?

MAIN PERCEIVED PROBLEM

“The population is still dwindling, shrinking 3-4% annually.”

“Due to the work situation [...], people had to go away to look for work”

“Fewer and fewer students were coming to school, year after year “

“The Erzberg is still our biggest employer“

“A loss of confidence in entrepreneurial skills“

“We were victims in the trap of globalization“

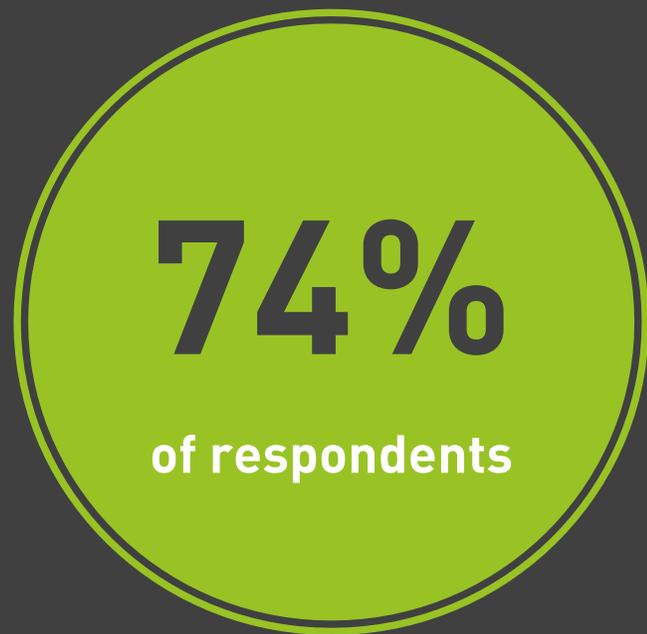
## A community:

- cohesive
- with a great sense of belonging
- satisfied with the quality of life
- that ages and becomes less populated
- bonding social capital
- with no serious economic hardship at household level
- with a low activity rate
- that experiences employment difficulties



**How does the  
community relate  
to Münichtal?**

People know a lot or quite a lot about the Münichtal site's past and recent vicissitudes

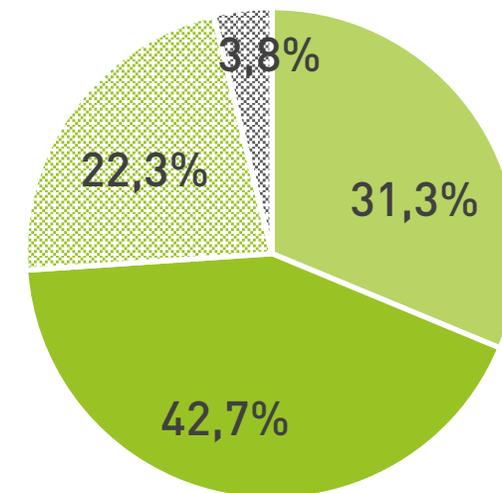


only 3,8%  
knows nothing about it

THE FUTURE OF THE SITE

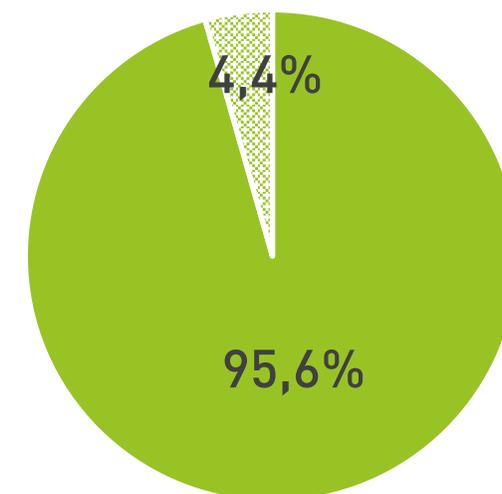
### Knowledge about the Münichtal site

- Very much
- Somewhat
- ▨ Not much
- ⊠ Not at all



### Citizens' involvement in the requalification process

- Yes, citizens should be involved
- ▨ No, only experts and local decision-makers need to be involved

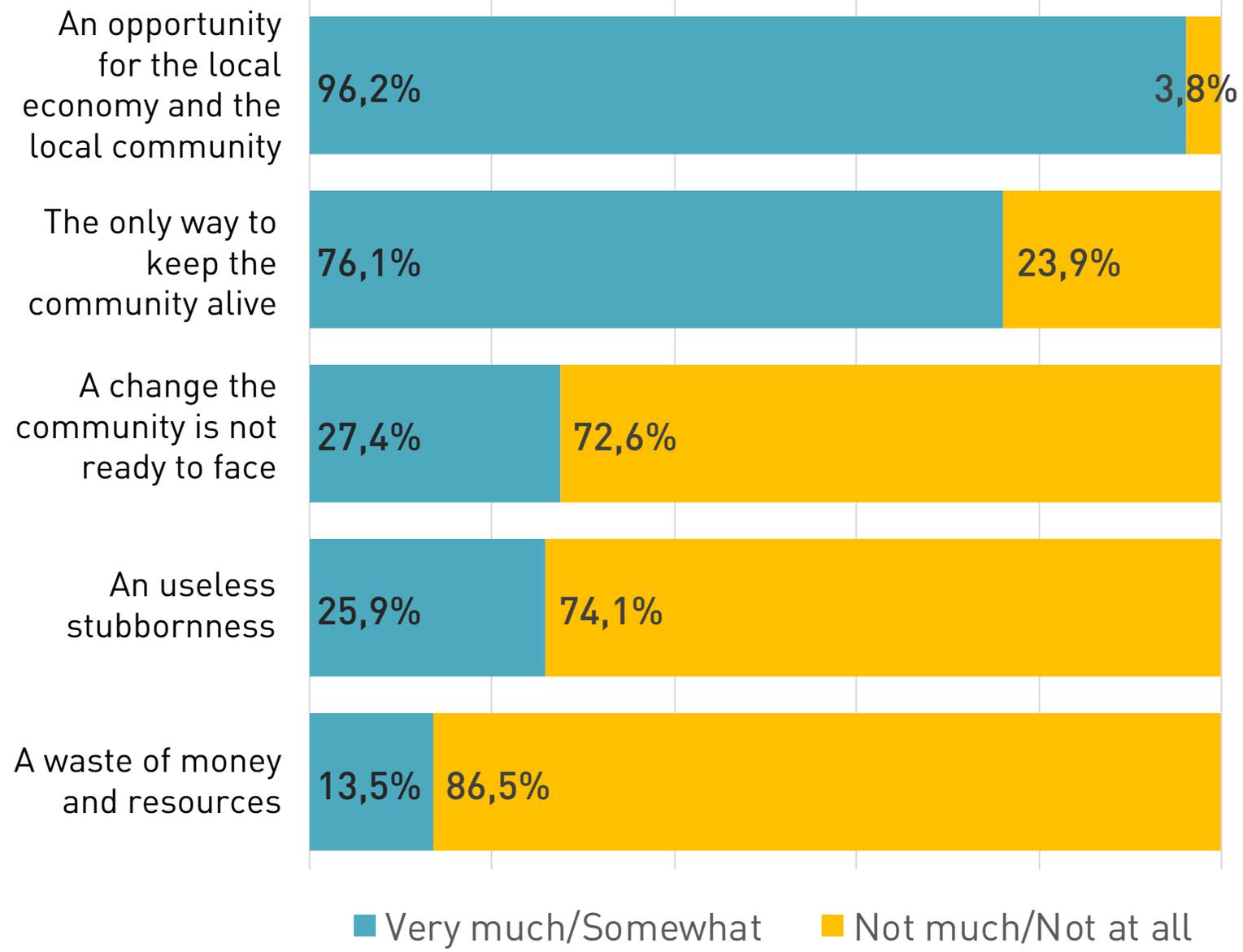


# Requalification projects is an opportunity for the local economy and for the local community

**96,2%**  
of respondents

THE FUTURE OF THE SITE

Requalification projects as:



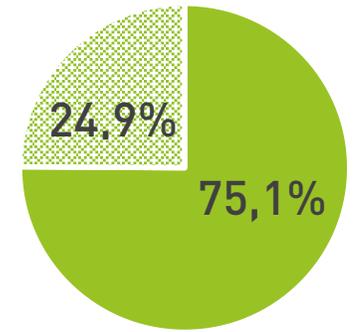
# Requalification projects need to pay attention to economy and local occupation



THE FUTURE OF THE SITE

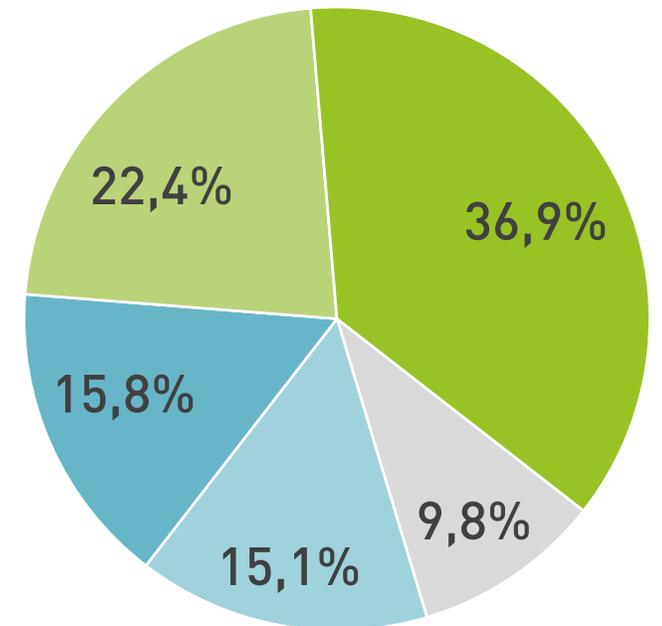
Do young people associate the professional future to the transformation of Münichtal site?

■ Yes    ▨ No

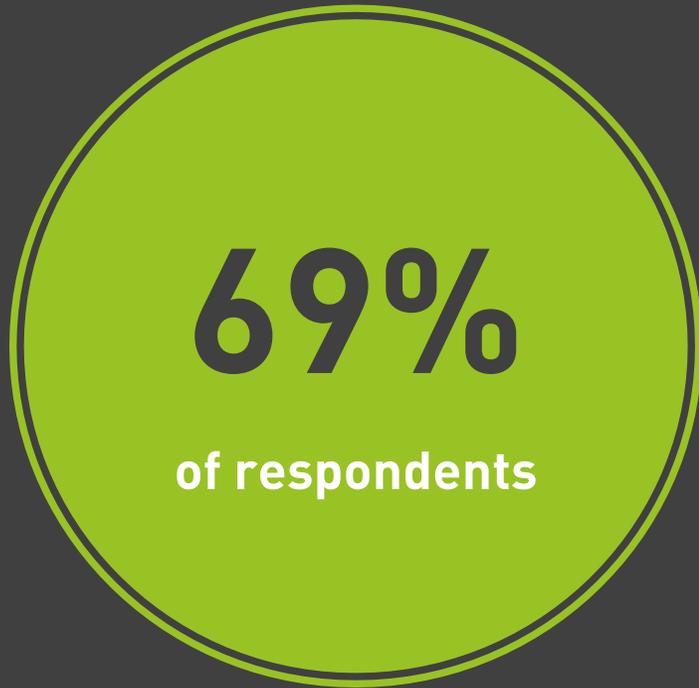


Requalification projects need to pay attention to the following aspects:

- Public services/facilities
- Cultural offer
- Tourism
- Respect for the environment
- Economy and local occupation

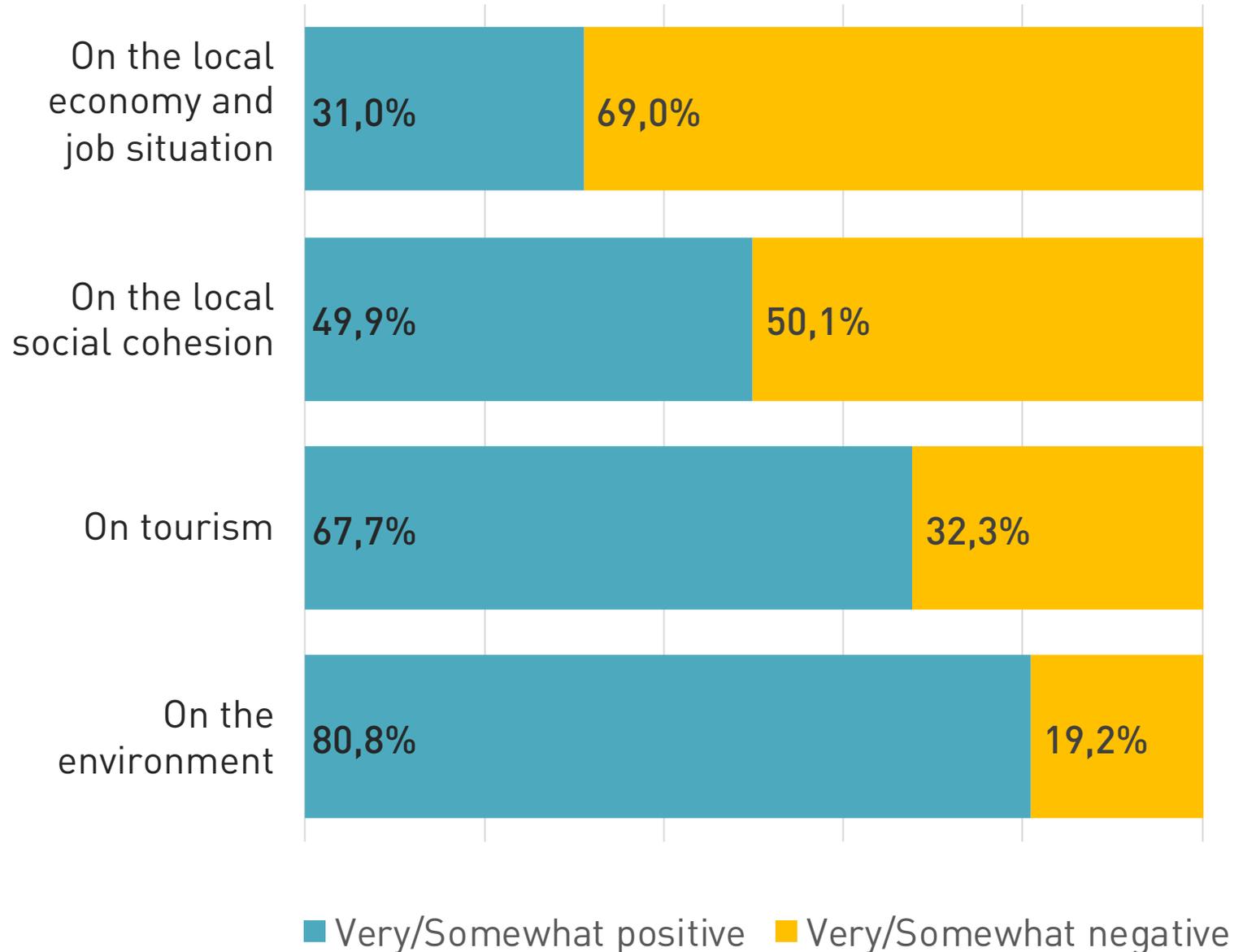


The current condition of the industrial site impacts negatively on the local economy and occupational conditions



THE FUTURE OF THE SITE

Impact of the current condition of the site





If you could invest one million euros in the Münichtal industrial area, what would you do with it?

THE FUTURE OF THE SITE

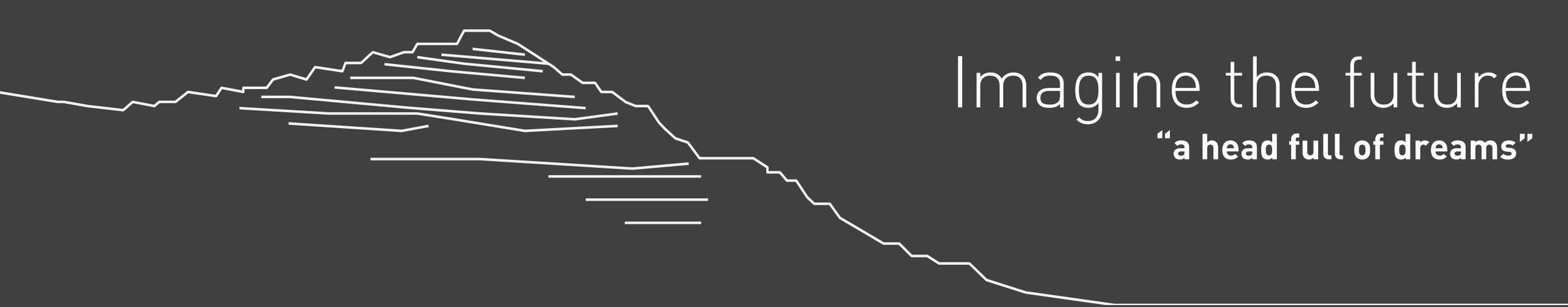
“I would invest in companies and thus encourage the creation of new jobs [...] I would invest the money in recreational activities for young people”

“We don't have a single hotel where it is possible to host a bus [...] scientists who will work at Zentrum am Berg”

“I would certainly bring the Montanuniversität of Leoben and Styria here.”

“Small businesses or micro-enterprises have a future also in Eisenerz”

“I would make a small “Silicon Valley” in the Münichtal”



# Imagine the future

“a head full of dreams”

“I think Eisenerz will **always resist, survive**, perhaps become depopulated [...] It will always remain a village of Steiermark and Austria“

“I imagine Eisenerz **rising slightly** both in population and labour“

“I think we need to make our place beautiful, because we have **a beautiful intact nature**“

“Eisenerz can be **“all over the world”** with IT, globalization and broadband“