

VIEWS OF FOREIGN INVESTORS AND RESEARCHERS
ON INVESTMENT CLIMATE AND INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM
ACROSS THE BALTIC STATES

FICIL SENTIMENT

INDEX

2026



FICIL

RBS

RIGA BUSINESS SCHOOL
Riga Technical University

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

This report has been prepared by the Foreign Investors Council in Latvia (FICIL), in collaboration with the RTU Riga Business School (RBS). The data collection has been assisted by the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia (LIAA).



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FOREWORD

In an era defined by rapid technological change, shifting geopolitical realities, and intensifying global competition, innovation has become the principal currency of national competitiveness. Countries that invest systematically in their capacity to generate, absorb, and commercialise new knowledge are those that raise living standards, attract talent, and build resilient economies. For Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania - three small, open economies on the north-eastern edge of the European Union - these stakes have never been higher, and the opportunities have never been more tangible.



This research brings together the perspectives of foreign investors and researchers across the three Baltic States, drawing on first-hand accounts of what it means to operate within these investment and innovation ecosystems. It offers a view from the inside: from the scientists trying to bridge the laboratory and the market, to the investors assessing where to place their confidence and how to convert research, scientific, and technological achievements into market value. Taken together, these voices form a picture that is frank and genuinely instructive.

The current edition of the FICIL Sentiment Index presents a combined analysis of Latvia's investment climate and of the Baltic innovation ecosystem, highlighting innovation-driven investment opportunities across Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and proposing policy instruments that would help unlock both the investment and innovation potential of all three countries.

For the second year in a row, the research explores the case for stronger Baltic collaboration, but this time through the lens of innovation. The three countries share a historical experience that has forged a particular kind of pragmatic resilience, one that shapes their priorities, industrial base, and cultural relationship with risk and change. In light of a new geopolitical reality, the terms of that collaboration must be revisited. Deeper integration is no longer a choice. It is a strategic necessity.

The central ambition of this research is to build a bridge - between the Baltic States themselves, between the researchers who generate knowledge and the investors who allocate capital, between the unfulfilled potential that exists across the region and the reality of what has so far been achieved. This is not a straightforward bridge to build. It demands ambition, courage, and genuine collaboration. It requires thinking and acting beyond borders - beyond cultural and psychological constraints, beyond structural and institutional inertia - toward the future the Baltic States have the capacity to create.

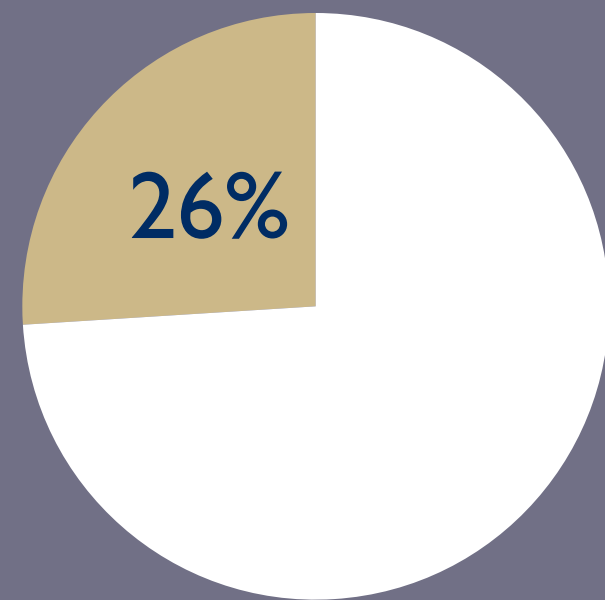
Foreign investors in Latvia are sending a clear message to national, Baltic, and EU policymakers, and to all innovation-related stakeholders: let us not waste the opportunities that can be generated if we work together, let us stop wasting potential! The opportunities identified in this study are real and time-sensitive. The countries and ecosystems that act with focus, commitment, and coordination across borders will be the ones that emerge with competitive positions worth holding. This research is offered in the spirit of urgency and in the conviction that Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and their innovation ecosystem stakeholders, acting together, have more to offer the world than the sum of their individual parts.

Reinhold Schneider
FICIL Chairperson of the Board

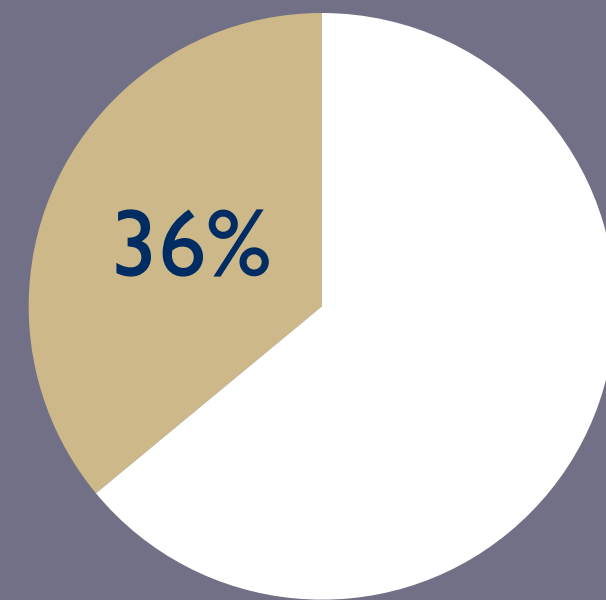
THE NUMBER OF COMPANIES
ABOVE 145K EUR TURNOVER
AND 50% FOREIGN CAPITAL

3161

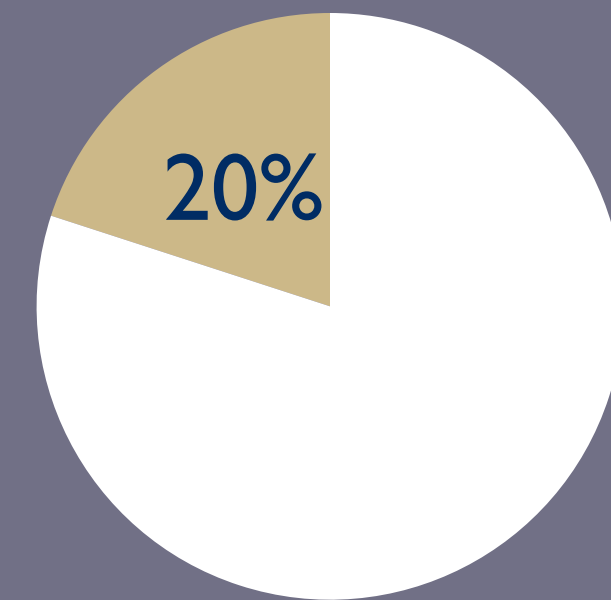
OR 1/9 OF TOTAL NUMBER OF COMPANIES IN **LATVIA**



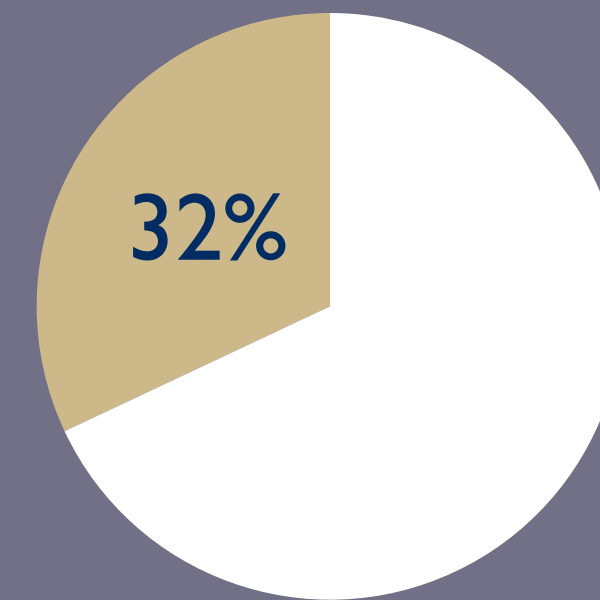
OF TOTAL SOCIAL
TAX



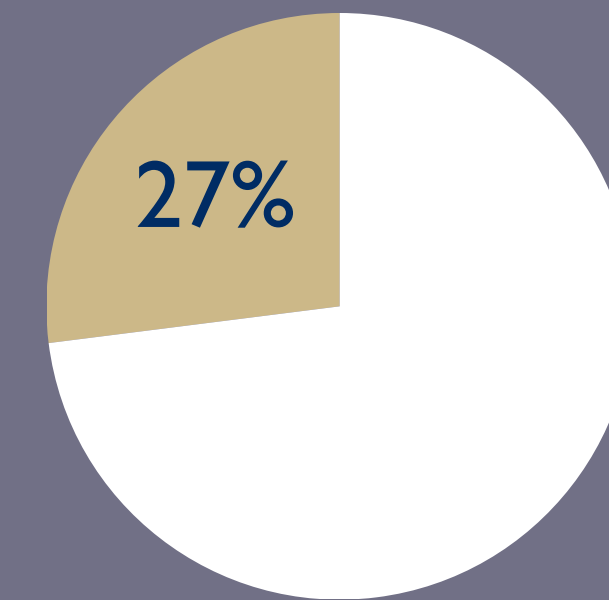
OF TOTAL TAXES
PAID



OF TOTAL
WORKFORCE



OF TOTAL
TURNOVER



OF TOTAL
PROFIT

INTRODUCTION

The FICIL Sentiment Index was established in 2015 by FICIL, in cooperation with the SSE Riga.

This is the eleventh FICIL Sentiment Index report. It aims to foster evidence-based policy decisions and promote a favourable investment climate by summarising the key concerns and suggestions of the foreign investors, specifically companies that have chosen to invest and operate in Latvia.

For the second year in a row, the Sentiment Index research expands its geographic scope by collecting data across the three Baltic States - Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

In total, 63 foreign investors in Latvia have participated in the study and 16 of them have been interviewed. In addition, 36 research community representatives from Latvia, 35 from Lithuania, and 26 from Estonia completed the survey. Besides the survey completion, in each Baltic State, 5 in-depth interviews have been conducted.

FOCUS OF THE 2026 STUDY:

Analysis of Latvia's foreign investors' sentiment regarding the investment climate, and the comparative analysis of the foreign investors and Baltic researchers on innovation ecosystems.

PARTICIPANTS:

Foreign investors

LATVIA - 63

Research community

LATVIA - 36

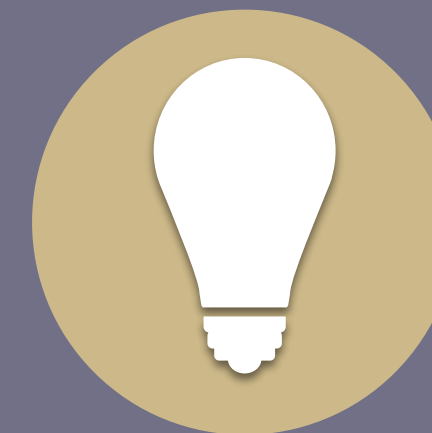
LITHUANIA - 35

ESTONIA - 26

AREAS HIGHLIGHTED IN THIS STUDY:



INVESTMENT
CLIMATE



INNOVATION
ECOSYSTEM



POLICY INSTRUMENTS TO
STIMULATE INVESTMENT
AND INNOVATION



COLLABORATION
BETWEEN THE BALTIC
STATES

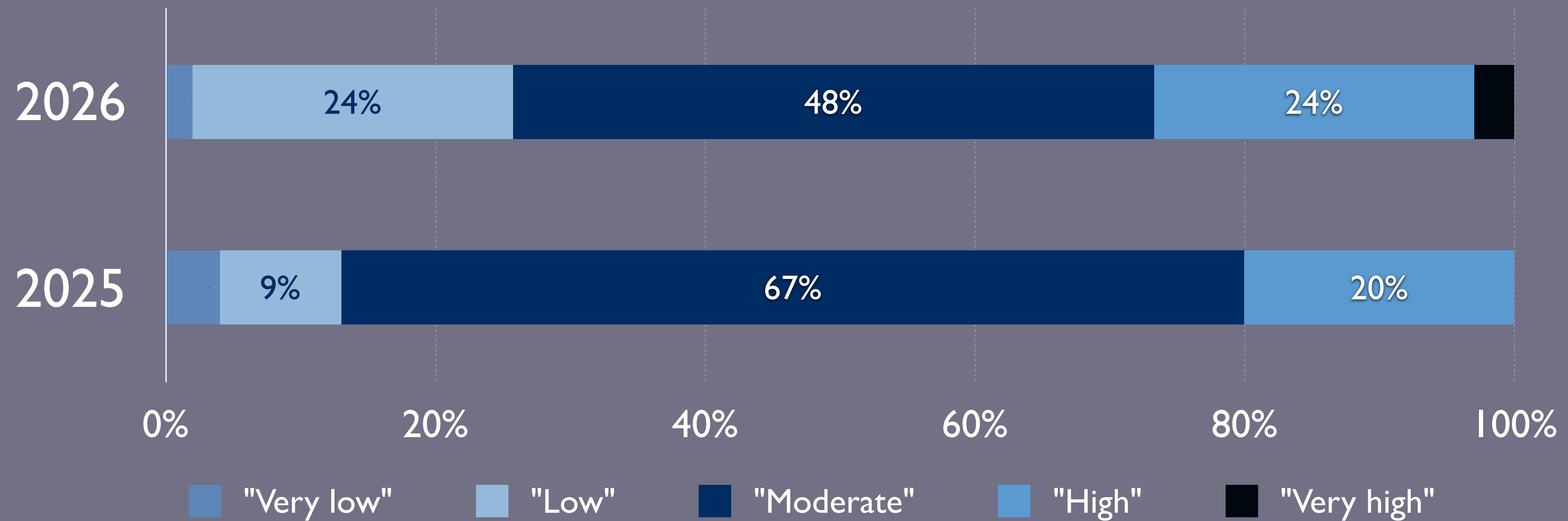


KEY RESULTS

INVESTMENT CLIMATE IN LATVIA: VIEWS OF THE FOREIGN INVESTORS IN LATVIA



CURRENT INVESTMENT ATTRACTIVENESS OF LATVIA



KEY FACTORS THAT DETERMINE ASSESSMENT OF THE INVESTMENT CLIMATE



Geopolitical concerns



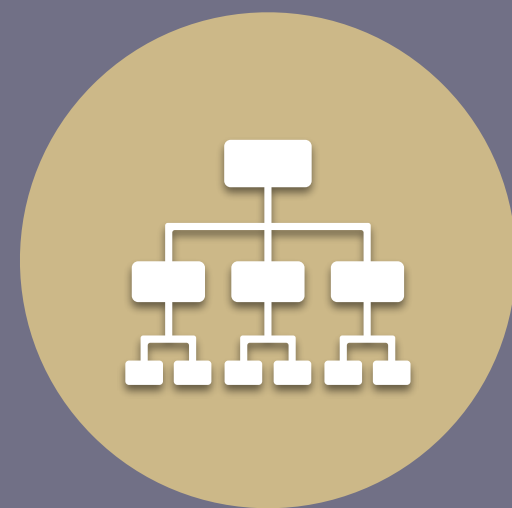
The gap between plans and execution



Political environment and coalition instability

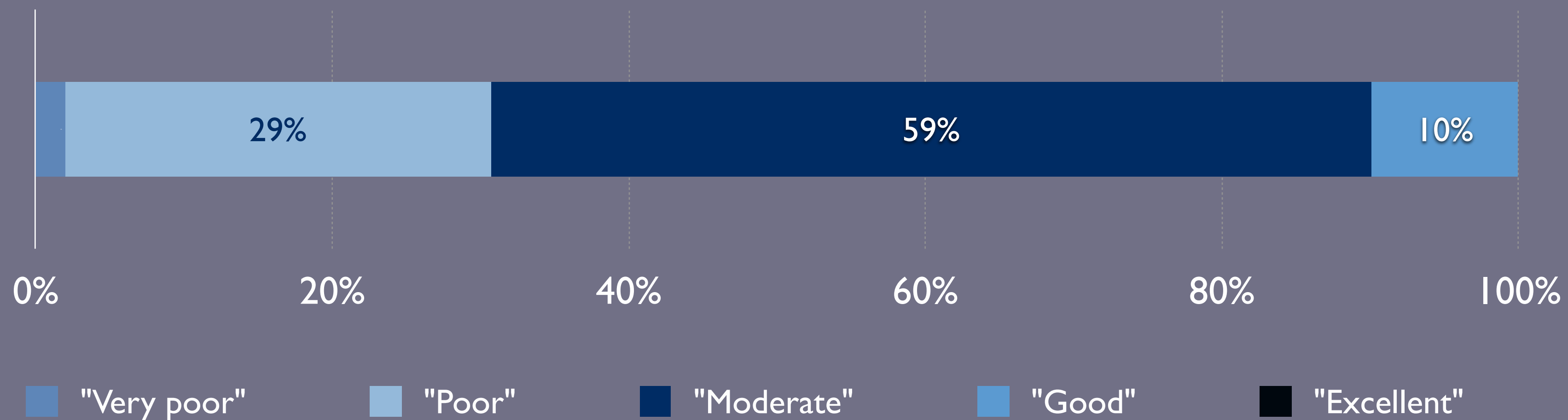


Latvia's structural strengths



Institutional coordination and transparency

ASSESSMENT OF PUBLIC SECTOR OFFICIALS' WORK TO IMPROVE INVESTMENT CLIMATE IN LATVIA OVER THE LAST YEAR



TOP-5 PRIORITY AREAS, WHERE URGENT ATTENTION OF THE POLICYMAKERS IS NEEDED

EDUCATION AND
REQUALIFICATION



AVAILABILITY OF LABOUR
(‘HANDS’)



DEFENCE



INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM

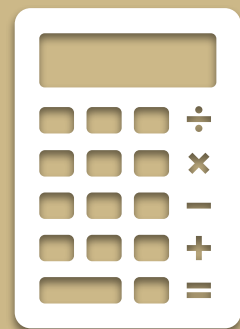


TAX SYSTEM



TOP-6 CURRENT STRENGTHS OF THE INVESTMENT CLIMATE IN LATVIA

DIGITAL
INFRASTRUCTURE



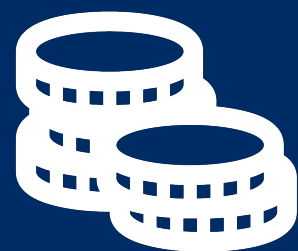
PHYSICAL
INFRASTRUCTURE



QUALITY OF LIFE



LABOUR COSTS



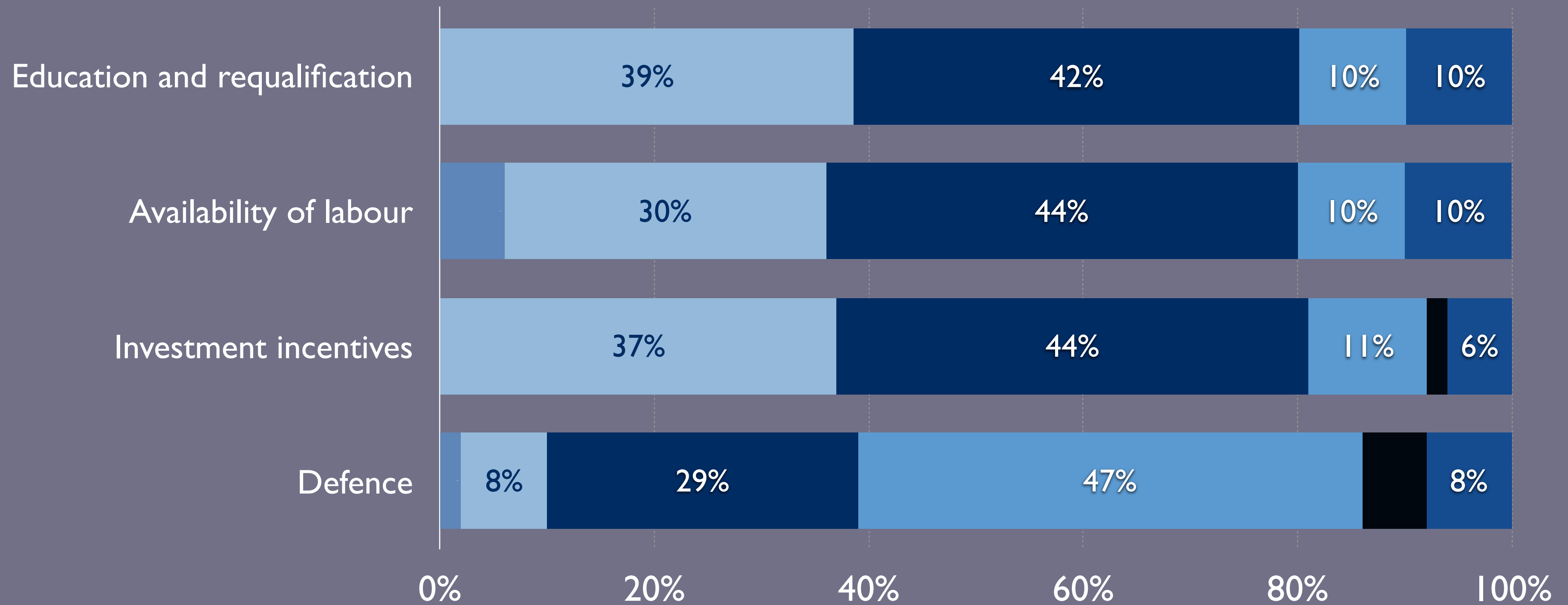
TALENT POOL



TECHNOLOGY &
KNOWHOW

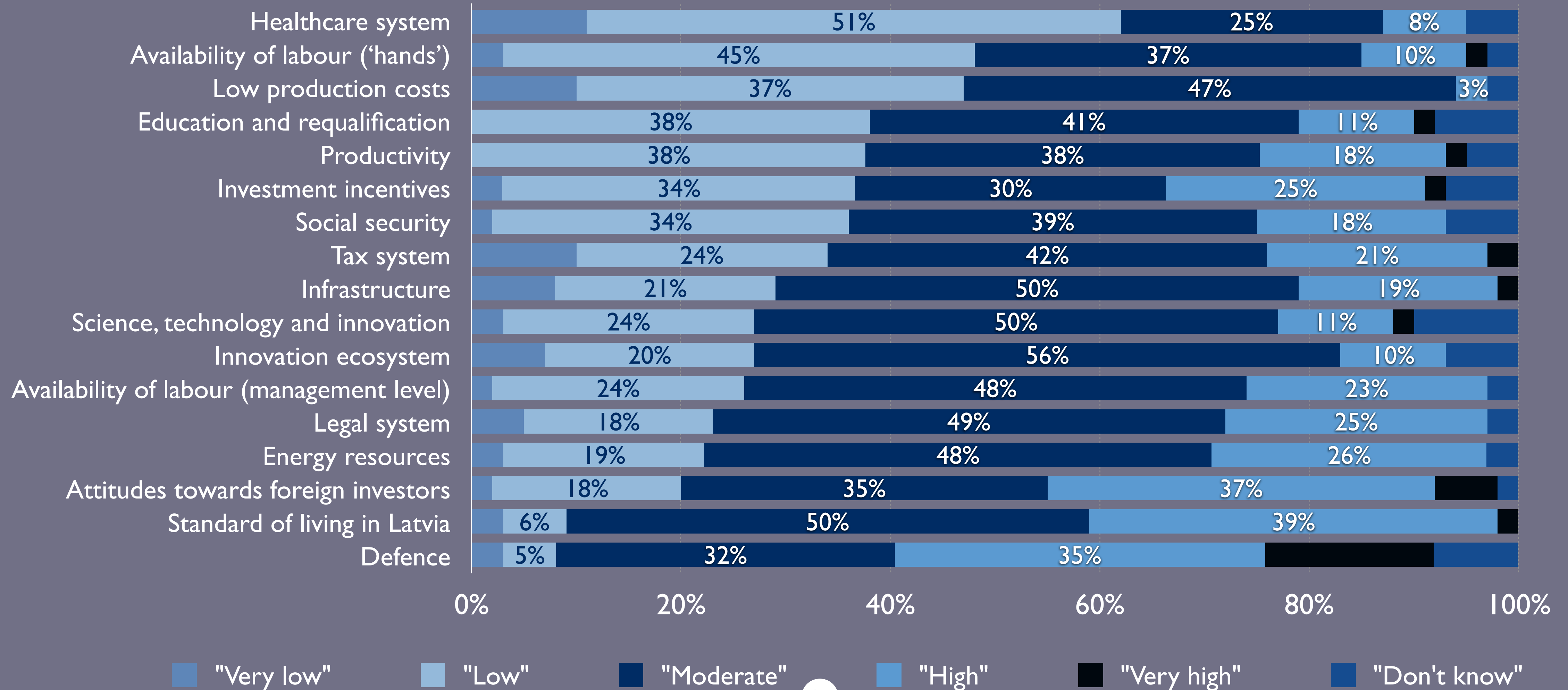


ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN KEY AREAS



■ "Very low"
 ■ "Low"
 ■ "Moderate"
 ■ "Good"
 ■ "Excellent"
 ■ "Don't know"

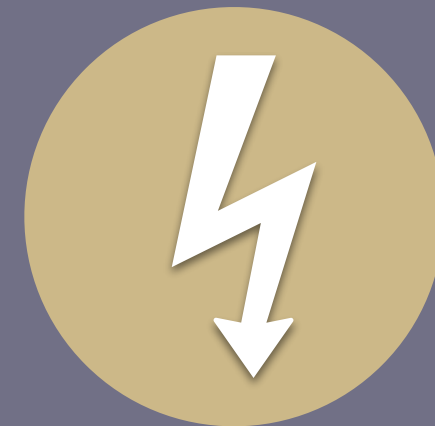
ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS OF THE MAIN DRIVERS OF LATVIA'S ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS OVER THE LAST 4 YEARS



KEY PRIORITIES FOR THE NEW GOVERNMENT



Human capital, education and demographics



Energy interdependence and competitive energy prices



Defence and regional security cooperation



Reducing over-regulation and the administrative burden on business



Tax policy



Infrastructure and large projects

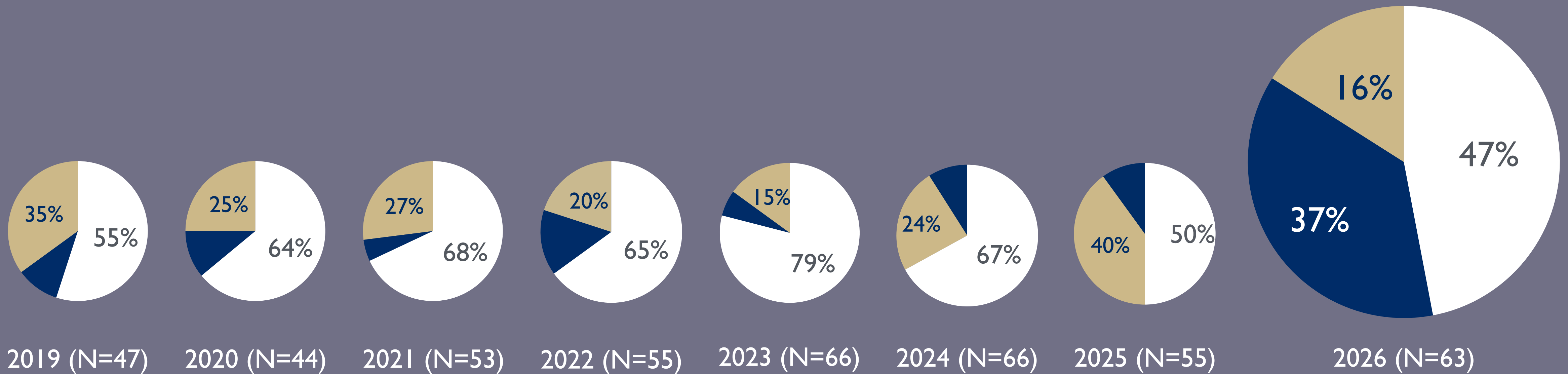


Political stability, predictability and accountability



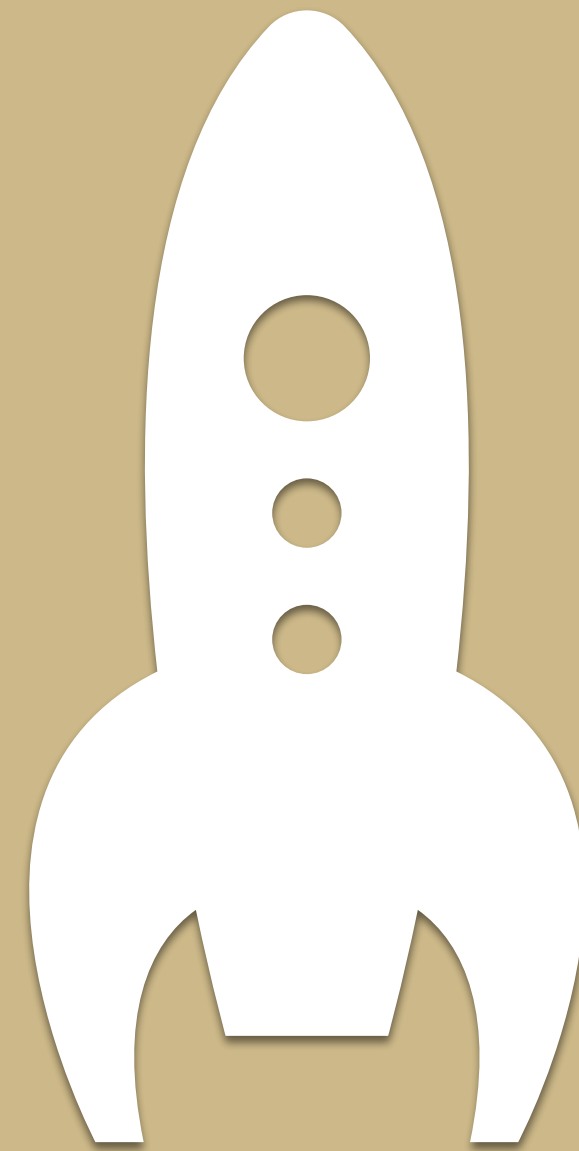
Attracting foreign investment more effectively

FURTHER INVESTMENT PLANS

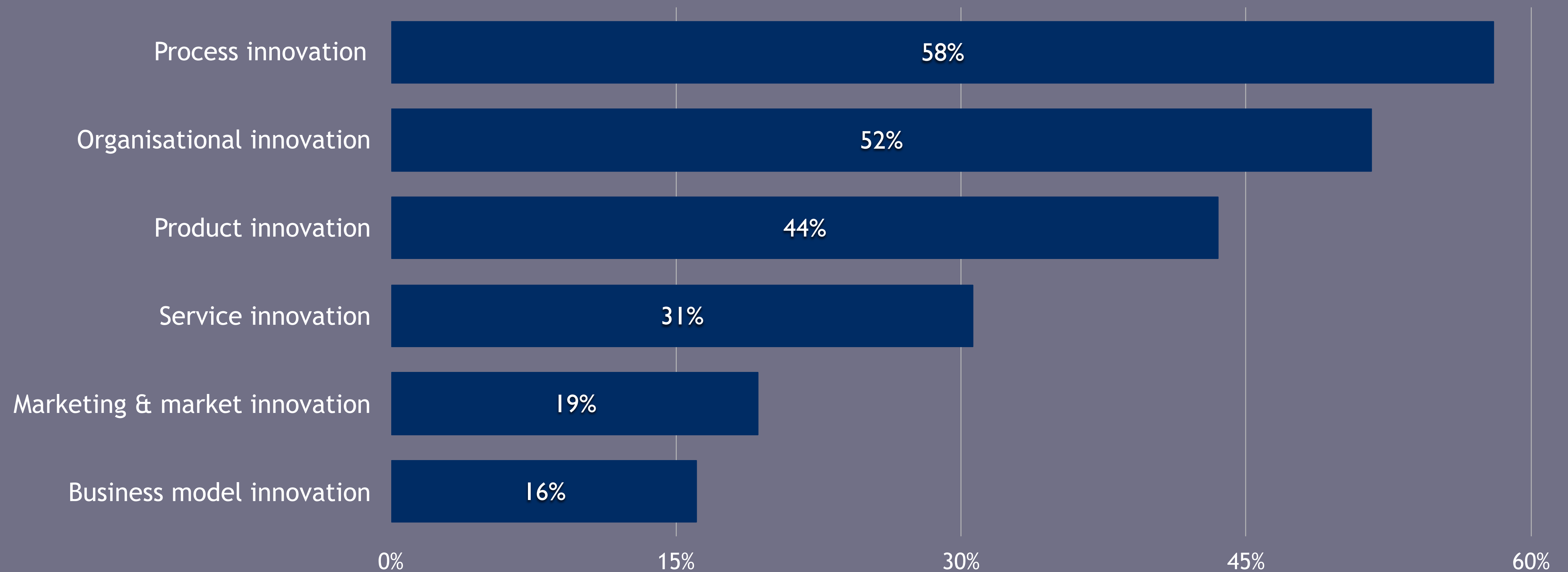


YES, WE PLAN TO INCREASE INVESTMENT
 NO, WE DO NOT PLAN TO INCREASE INVESTMENT
 IT DEPENDS / NOT SURE

R&D&I ACTIVITIES OF FOREIGN INVESTORS AND RESEARCHERS



TYPE OF INNOVATION(S) THE FOREIGN INVESTORS INTRODUCED OVER THE PREVIOUS 4-5 YEARS



KEY INNOVATION PATTERNS OF FOREIGN INVESTORS



AI and data analytics



Digitalisation of products and services



Process automation and operational efficiency



Green and sustainability innovation

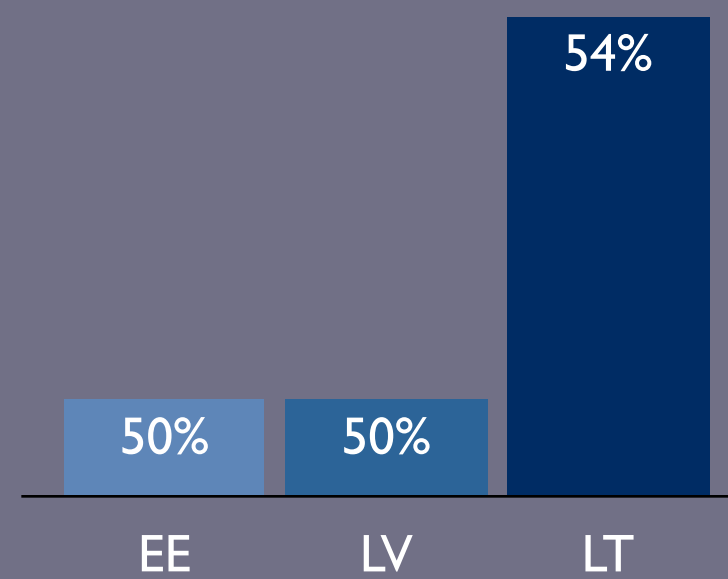


Service innovation and customer experience

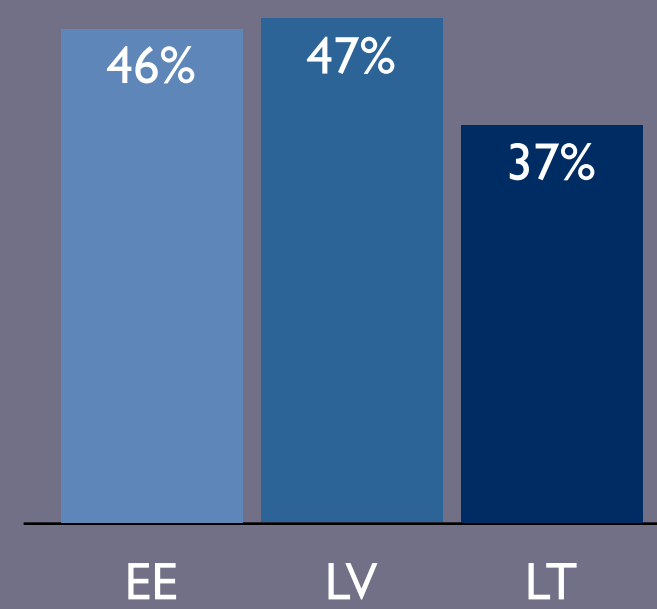
TOP-8 INDUSTRIES, FOR WHICH THE BALTIC RESEARCHERS HAVE PRODUCED APPLIED RESEARCH LAST YEAR



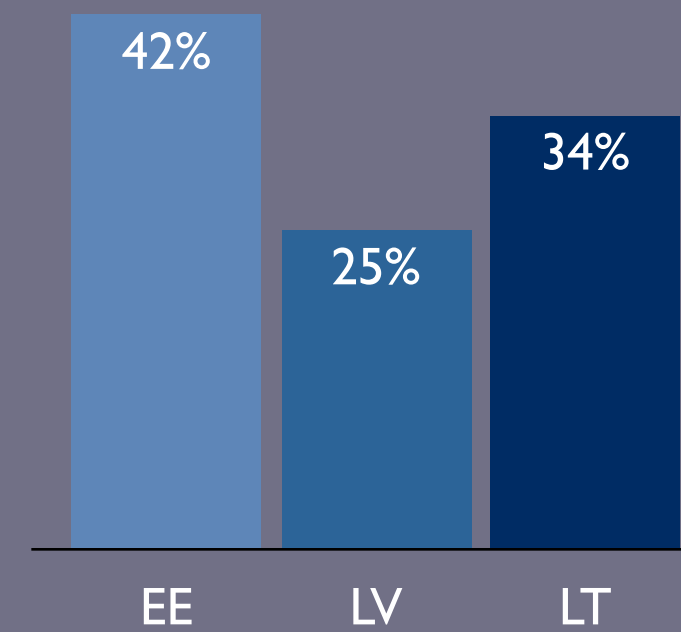
PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES



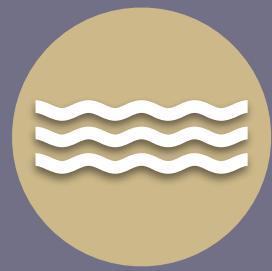
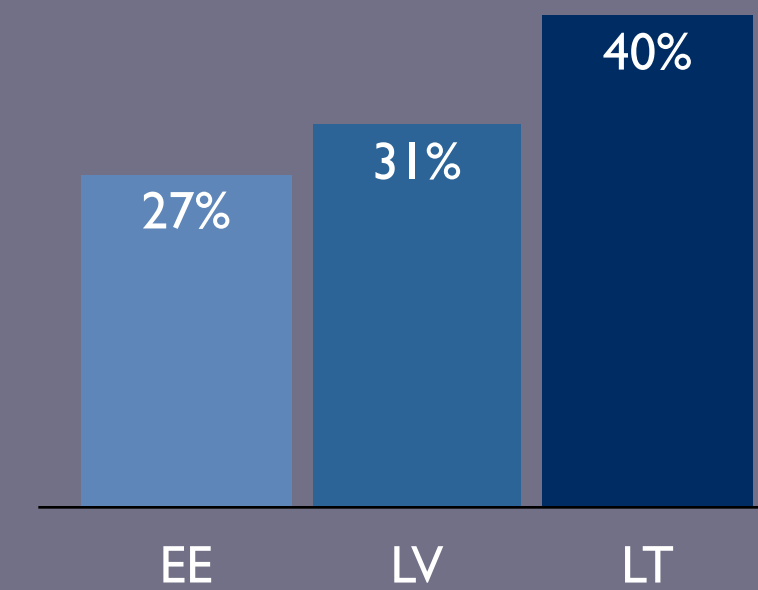
EDUCATION



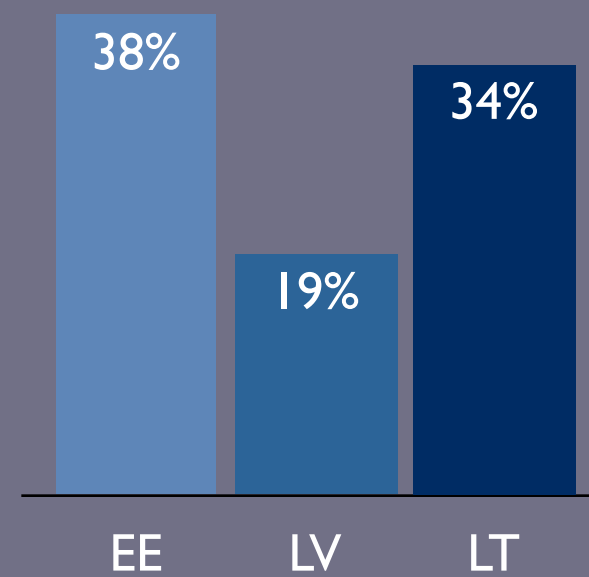
AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHING



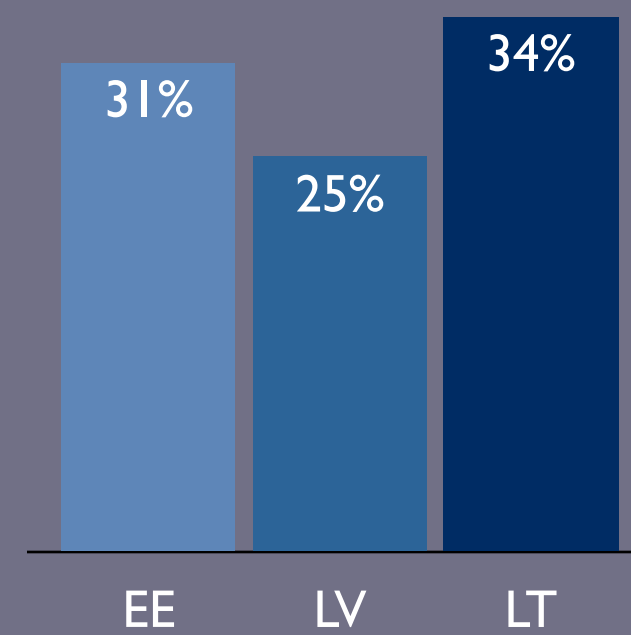
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION



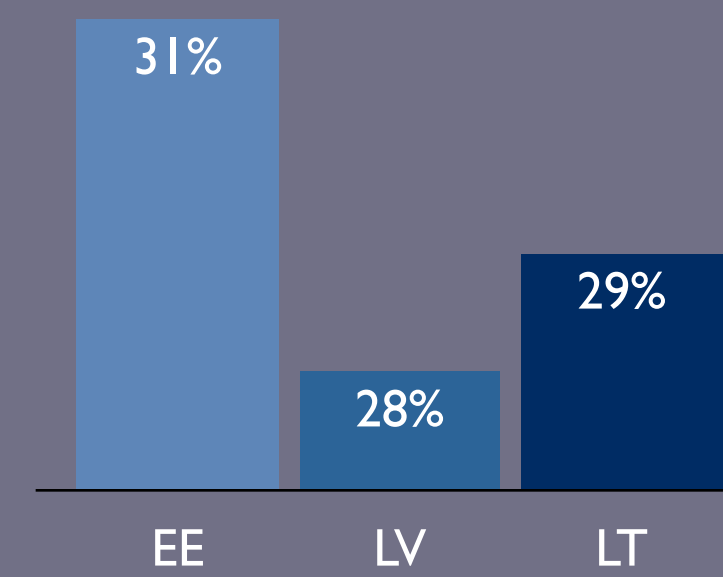
WATER SUPPLY; SEWERAGE; WASTE MANAGEMENT



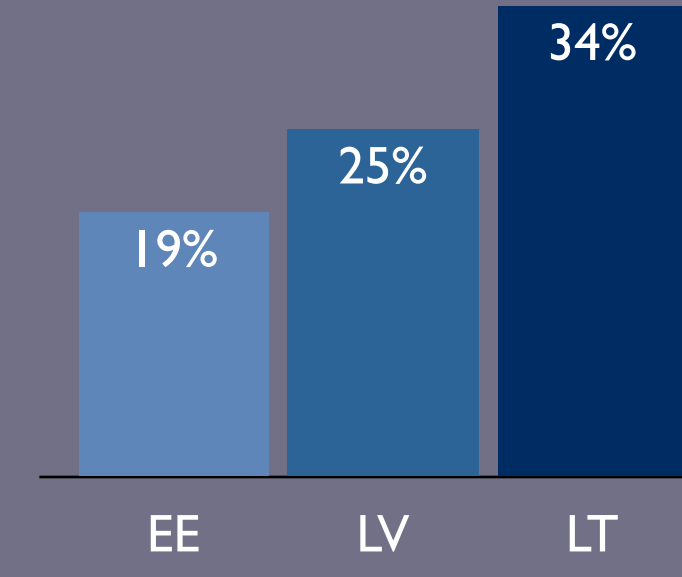
MANUFACTURING



HUMAN HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK ACTIVITIES



PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND DEFENCE



CRITICAL R&D&I STAKEHOLDERS FOR FOREIGN INVESTORS OVER THE PREVIOUS 4-5 YEARS



LARGE

39%



STARTUPS

24%



SME

21%



NGO

15%



UNIVERSITIES

12%

CRITICAL R&D&I STAKEHOLDERS FOR BALTIC RESEARCHERS OVER THE PREVIOUS 4-5 YEARS



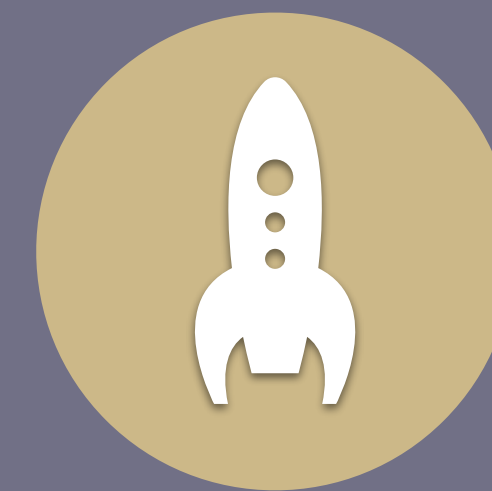
UNIVERSITIES



SME



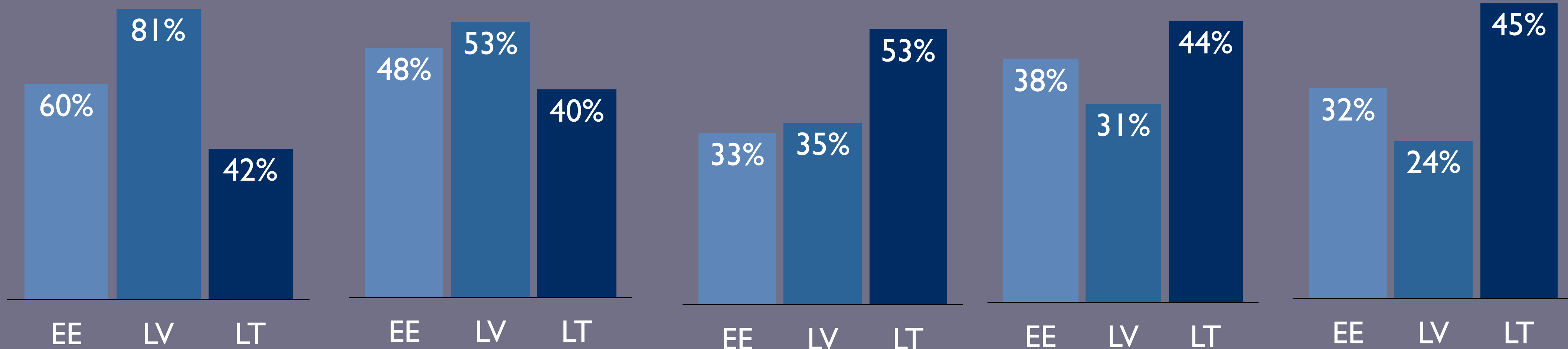
LARGE



STARTUPS



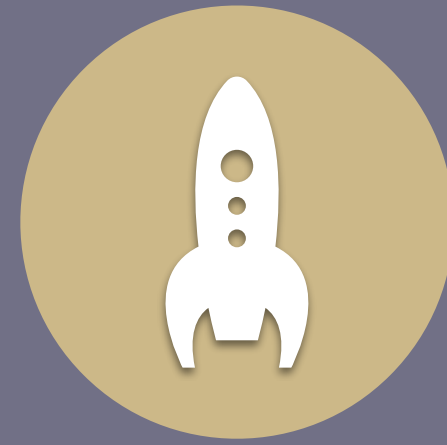
NGO



GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF BALTIC STATES' RESEARCHERS' MOST CRITICAL R&D&I COLLABORATION PARTNERS



NGO



STARTUPS



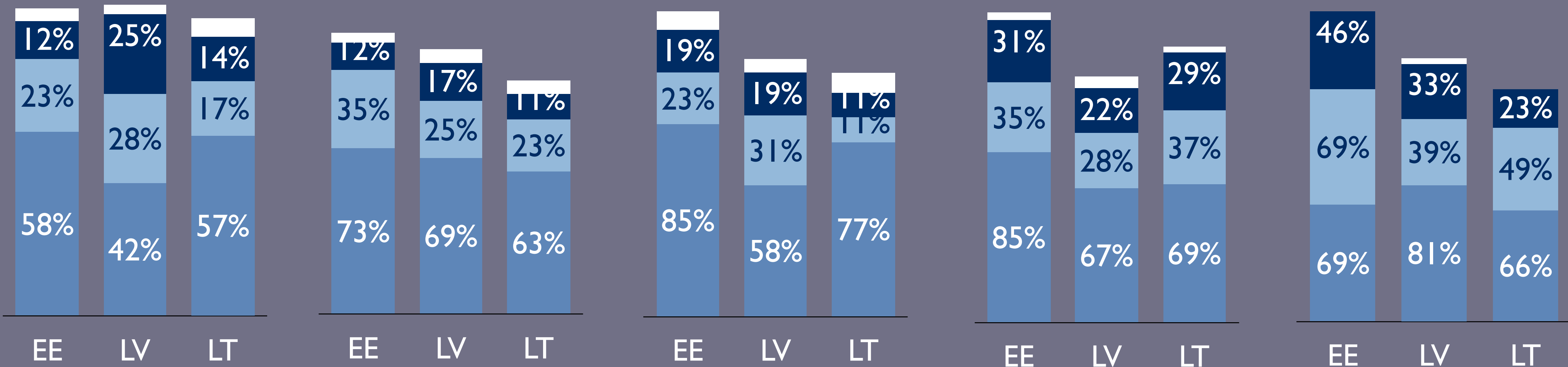
LARGE



SME

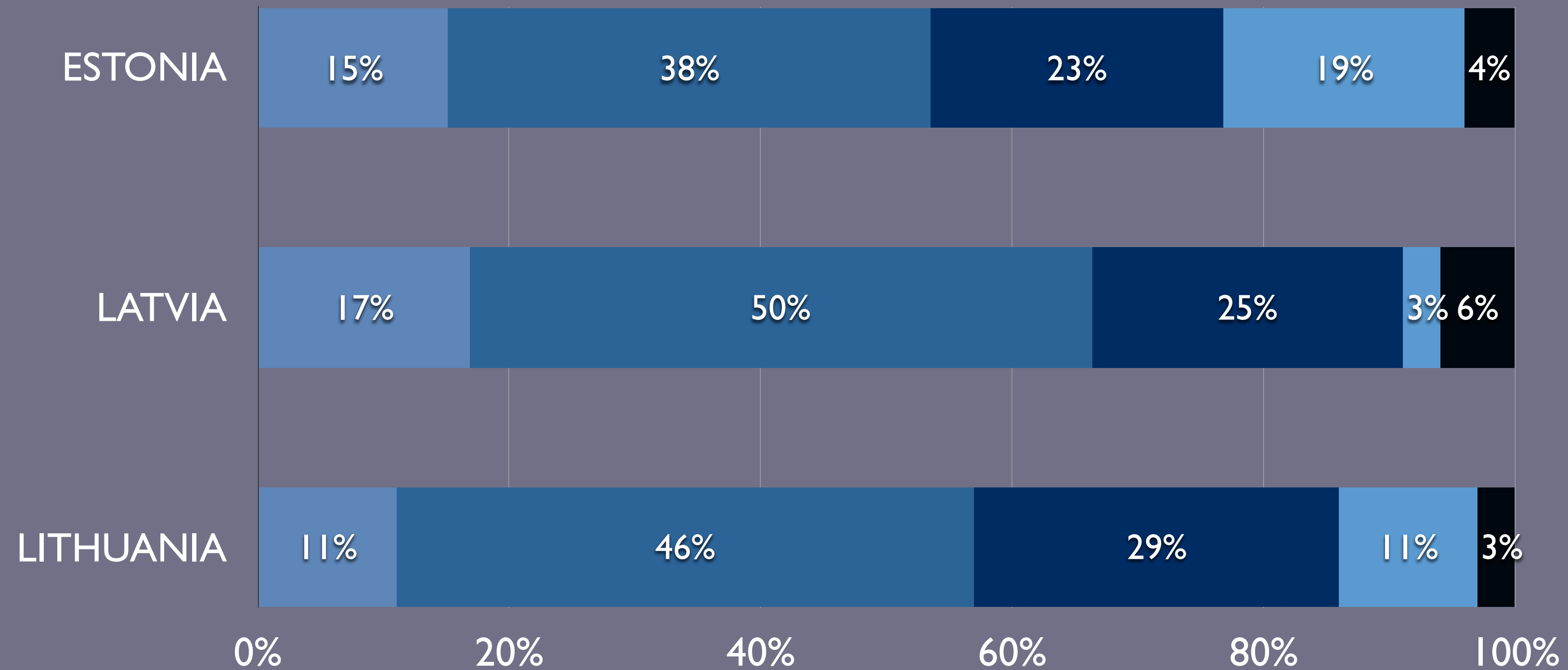


UNIVERSITIES



■ DOMESTIC
 ■ EU
 ■ BALTIC STATES
 ■ NON-EU

SHARE OF R&D&I ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY BALTIC RESEARCHERS IN COLLABORATION WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR



■ Below 5%
 ■ Between 5% and 20%
 ■ Between 20% and 50%
 ■ Between 50% and 70%
 ■ Above 70%

TOP-4 FACTORS THAT LIMIT THE ABILITY OF BALTIC RESEARCHERS TO CONDUCT R&D&I IN COLLABORATION WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR

ESTONIA



LATVIA



LITHUANIA



FACTORS THAT IMPACT MOTIVATION OF BALTIC RESEARCH ORGANISATIONS TO CONDUCT APPLIED RESEARCH AND COLLABORATE WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS



PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND TRUST

EU AND NATIONAL FUNDING

COOPERATION CAPABILITIES IN BOTH RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS AND COMPANIES



PUBLICATION-BASED EVALUATION SYSTEM

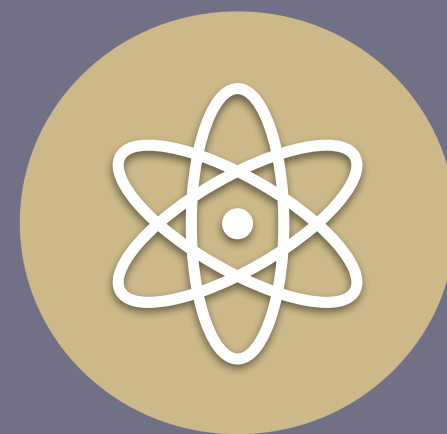
CULTURAL RESISTANCE AMONG RESEARCHERS

ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN

BALTIC RESEARCHERS' VIEW ON KEY CHALLENGES, WHICH PREVENT RESEARCH COMMERCIALISATION



CULTURE AND ORIENTATION
TOWARDS ACADEMIC OUTPUTS



GAP BETWEEN TRL 3 AND TRL 7

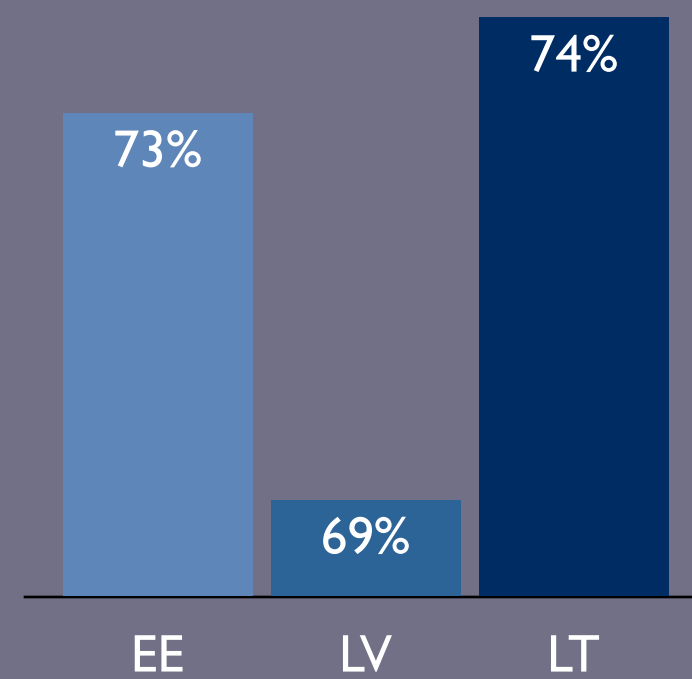


PERCEIVED INDUSTRY RESISTANCE
TO INNOVATION

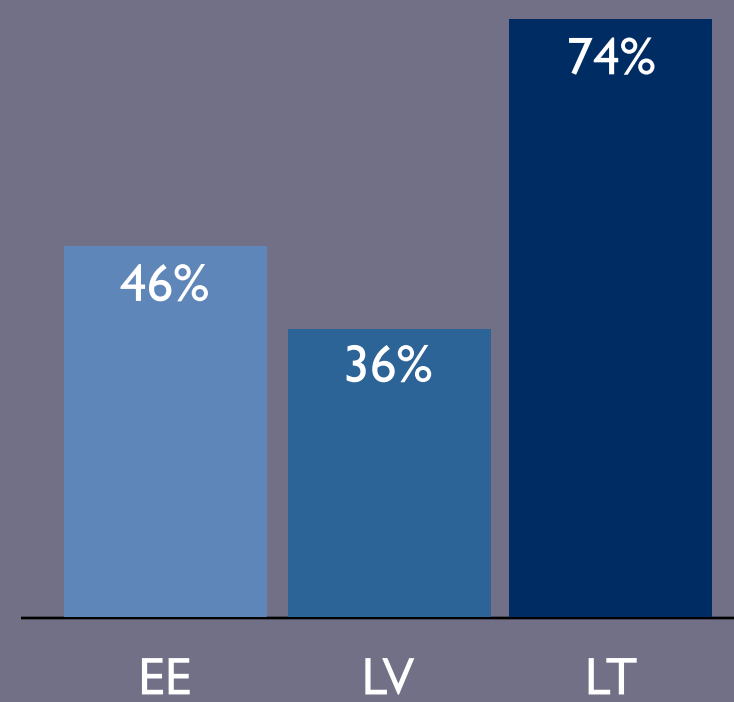
BALTIC RESEARCHERS' BEST PRACTICES TO STIMULATE RESEARCH COMMERCIALISATION



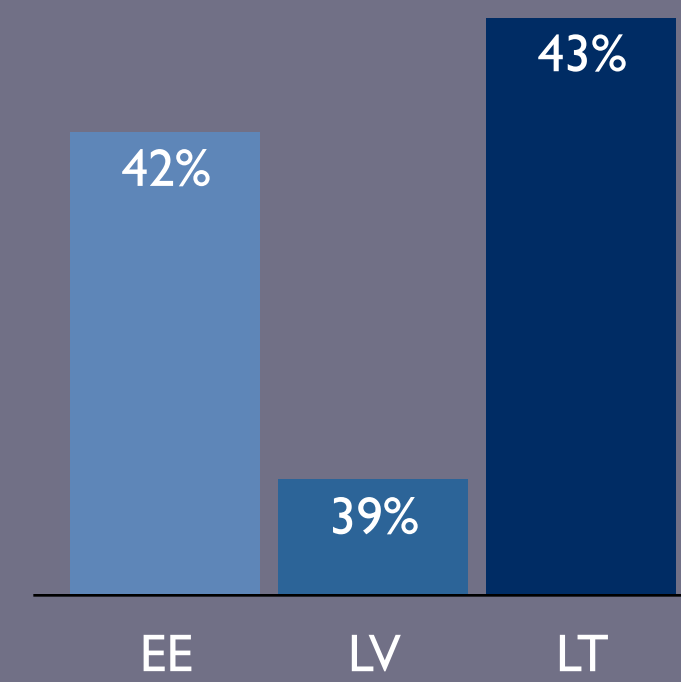
COLLABORATION WITH INDUSTRY AND OTHERS



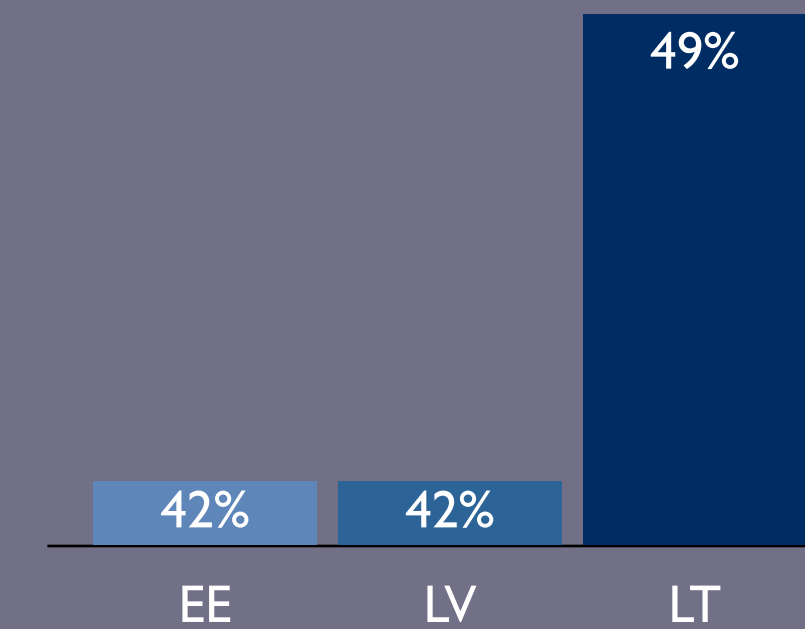
TRAINING FOR COMMERCIALISATION OF RESEARCH



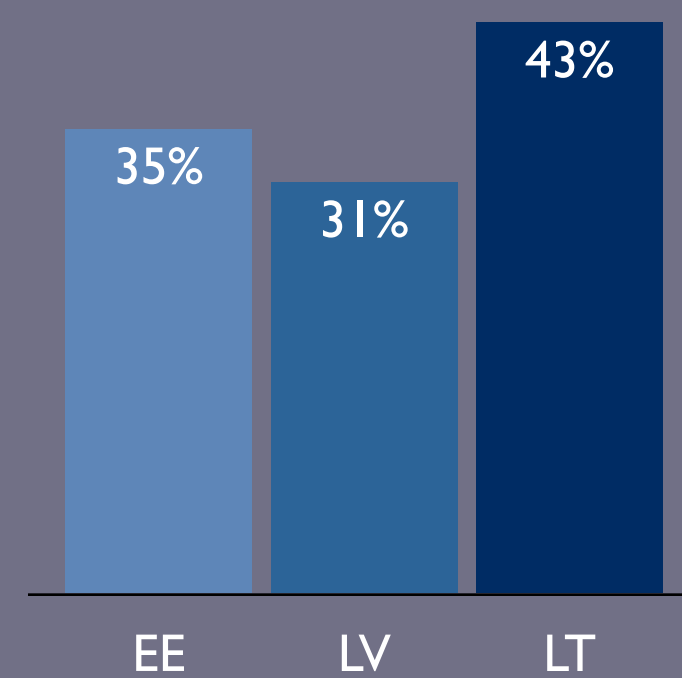
COLLABORATION WITH THE TTO



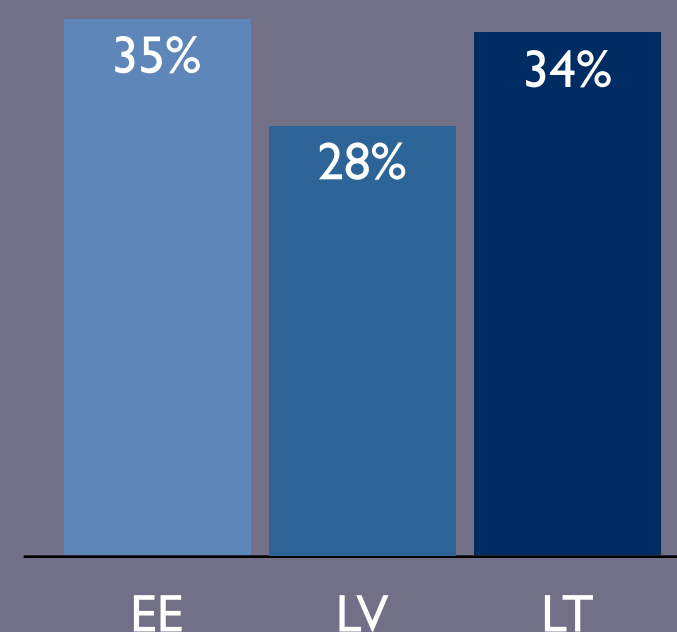
TRAINING ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR RESEARCHERS & INNOVATION CULTURE



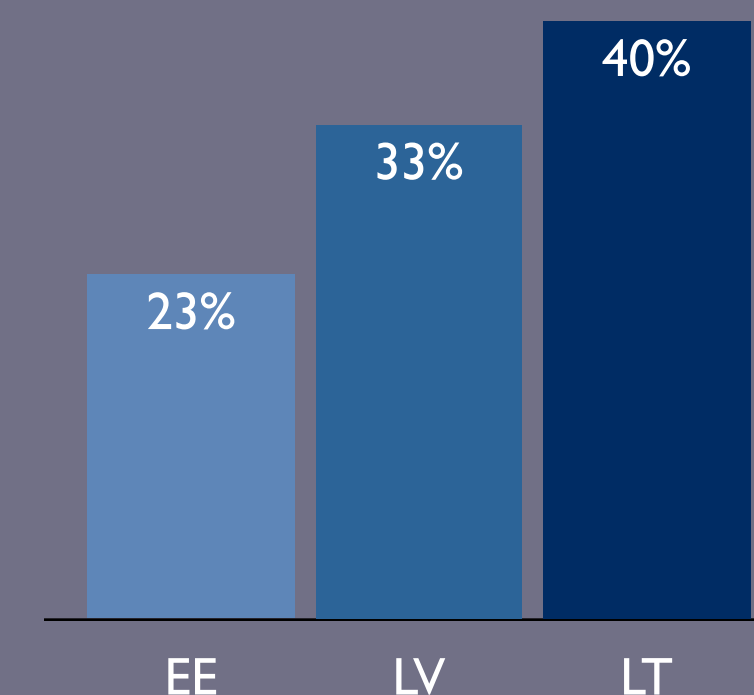
CLEAR AND RESEARCH-FRIENDLY IP RULES



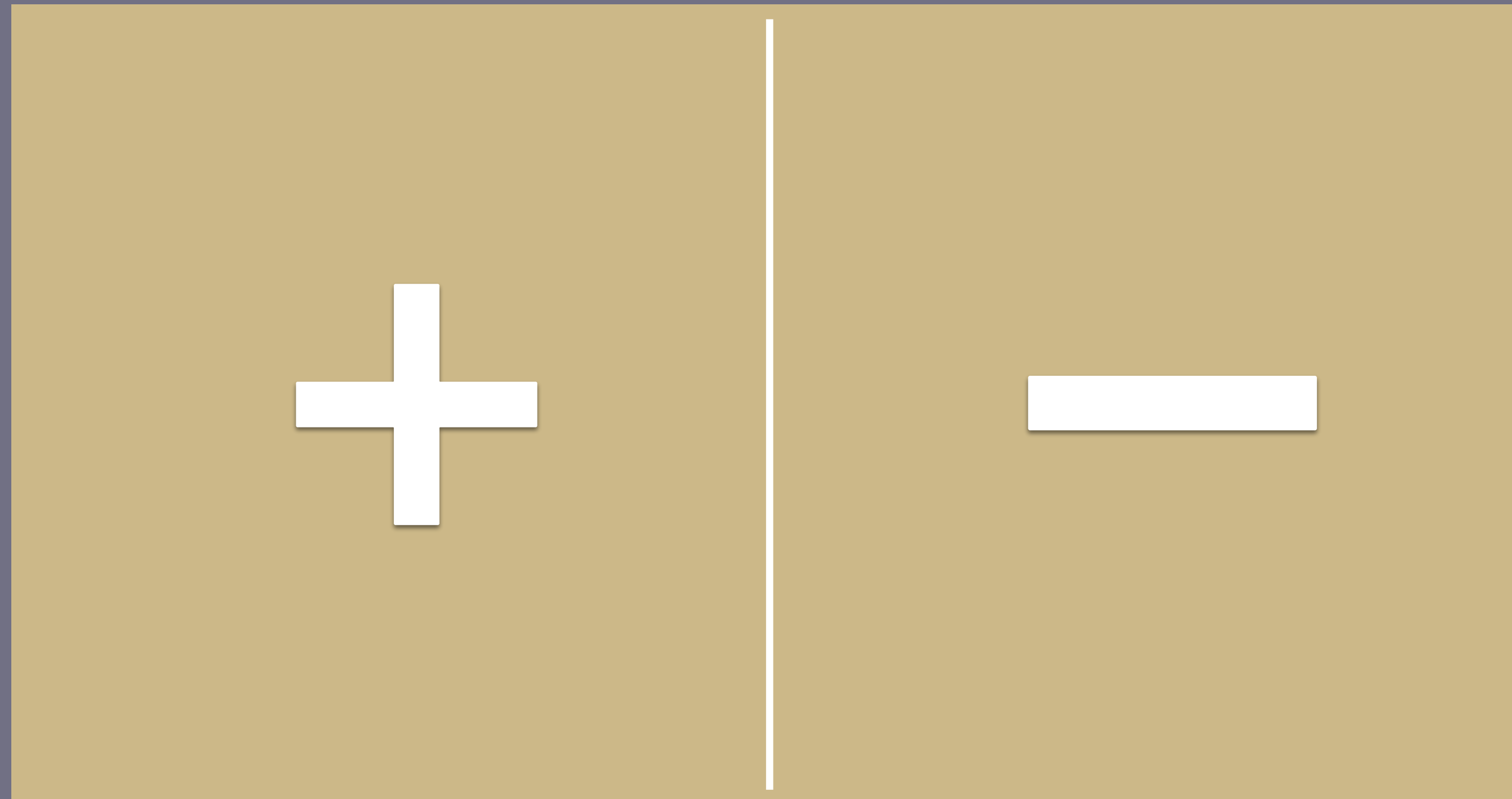
CAPACITY AND LINKAGES TO WORK WITH TOP RESEARCH GROUPS



INCENTIVES IN ACADEMIC CAREERS



KEY STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF BALTIC INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS



BALTIC RESEARCHERS' VIEW ON KEY STRENGTHS OF A NATIONAL INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM

ESTONIA



LATVIA



LITHUANIA



BALTIC RESEARCHERS' VIEW ON KEY WEAKNESSES OF A NATIONAL INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM

ESTONIA



LATVIA



LITHUANIA



FOREIGN INVESTORS' VIEW ON KEY STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF LATVIA'S INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM

STRENGTHS



INFRASTRUCTURE
FOR R&D&I



AVAILABILITY OF
STAKEHOLDERS FOR
COLLABORATION



AVAILABILITY OF
TALENT FOR R&D&I

WEAKNESSES



INNOVATION
CULTURE

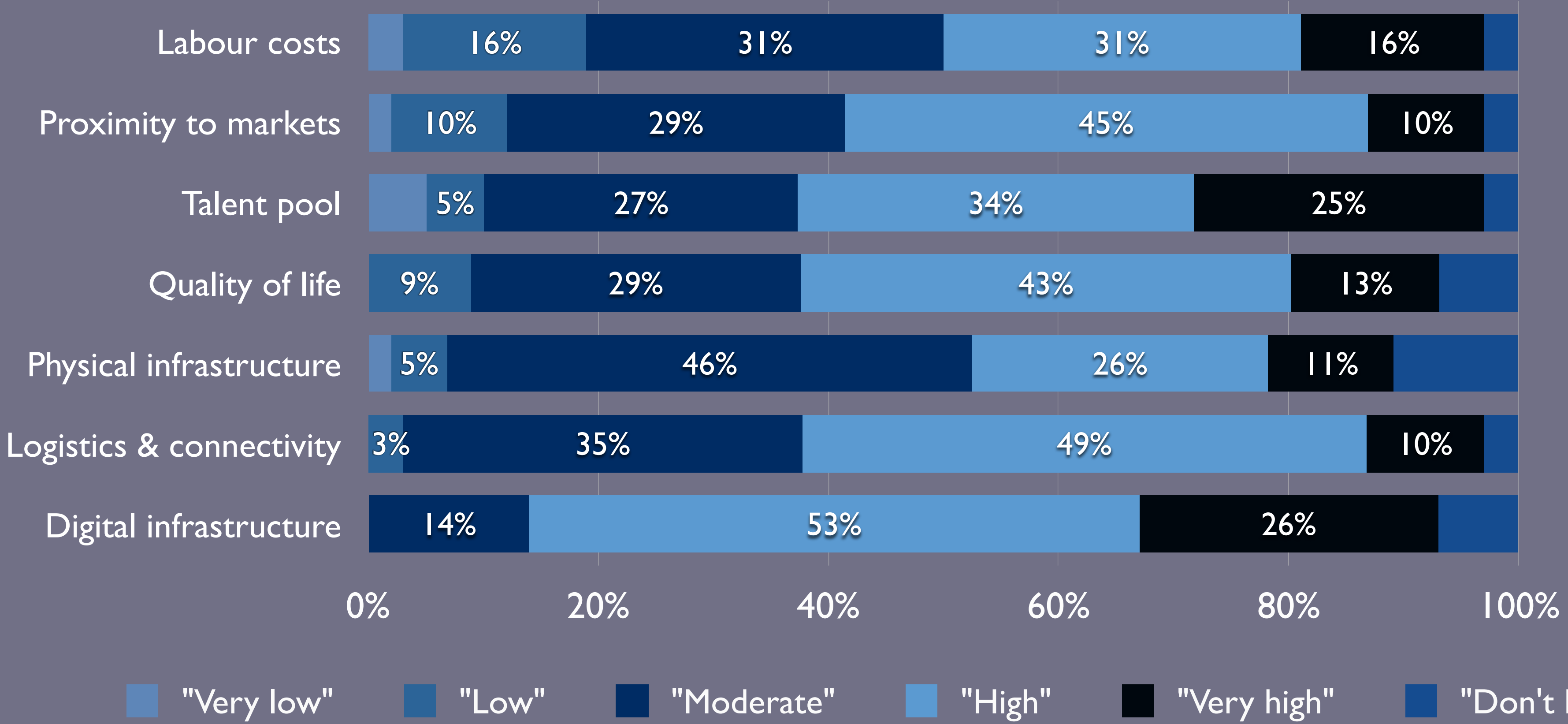


LOCAL DEMAND
FOR INNOVATIVE
PRODUCTS



QUALITY OF
INNOVATION
GOVERNANCE

FOREIGN INVESTORS' ASSESSMENT OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE STRENGTHS OF LATVIA CONTRIBUTE TO ITS INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM



CHARACTERISATION OF A NATIONAL INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM BY BOTH GROUPS OF RESPONDENTS

OVERALL ECOSYSTEM MATURITY:
PROGRESS ACKNOWLEDGED, PACE
QUESTIONED

STRUCTURAL LEGACY OF THE 1990

REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT: THE
MOST CONSISTENT OBSTACLE

FUNDING: INSUFFICIENT, MISDIRECTED,
AND STRUCTURALLY DISTORTING

TALENT: THE BINDING CONSTRAINT

FRAGMENTED SUPPORT OF R&D&I-
FOCUSED INSTITUTIONS

BOTH GROUPS OF RESPONDENTS ON KEY RESEARCH, SCIENTIFIC, TECHNOLOGICAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF THEIR COUNTRY DURING THE LAST 3-5 YEARS

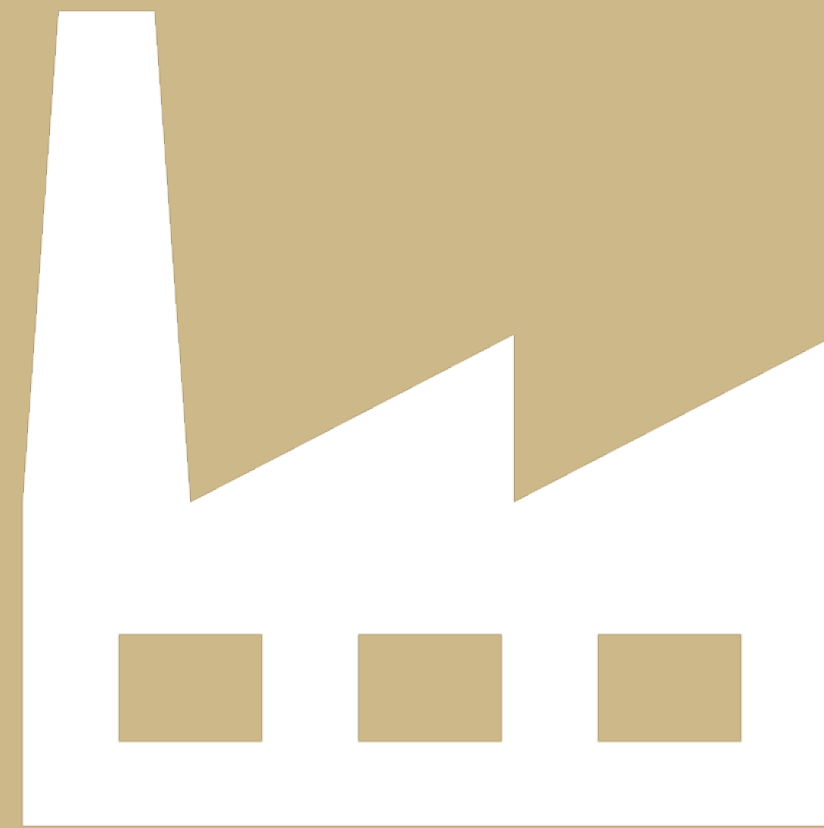
POOR SCIENCE COMMUNICATION
INFRASTRUCTURE

LARGE VISIBILITY AND
COMMUNICATION GAP

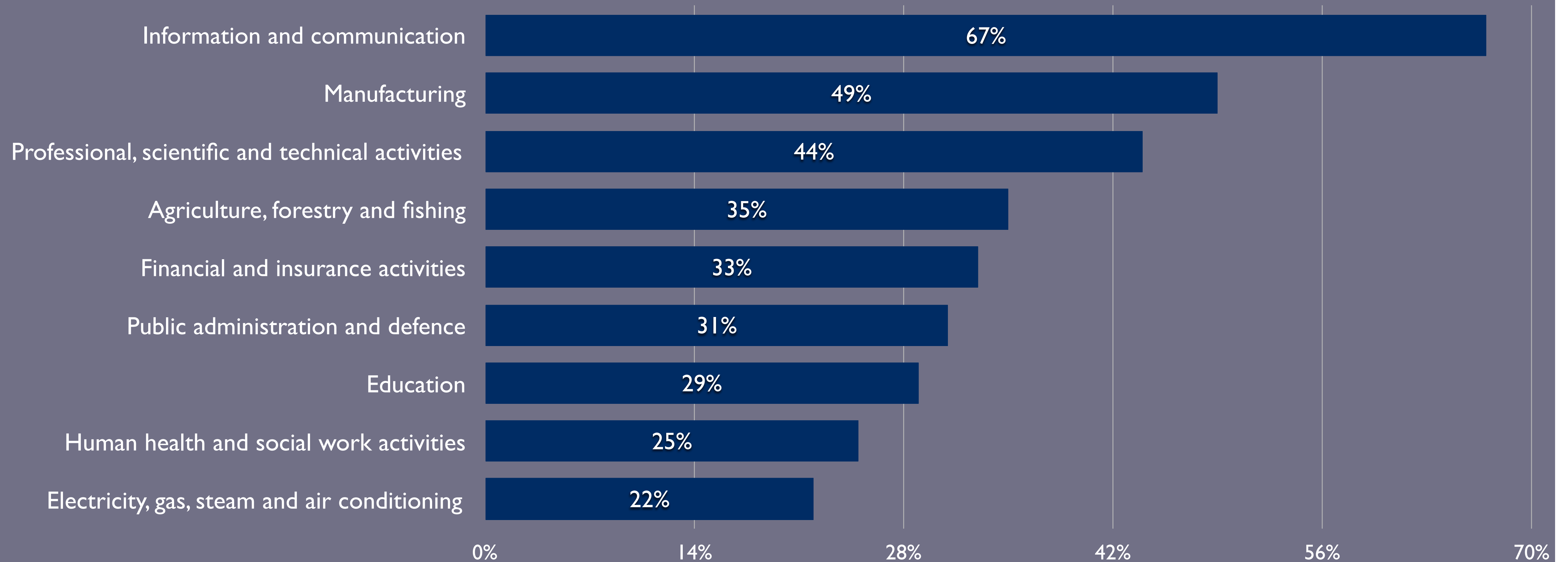
SILOED INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS



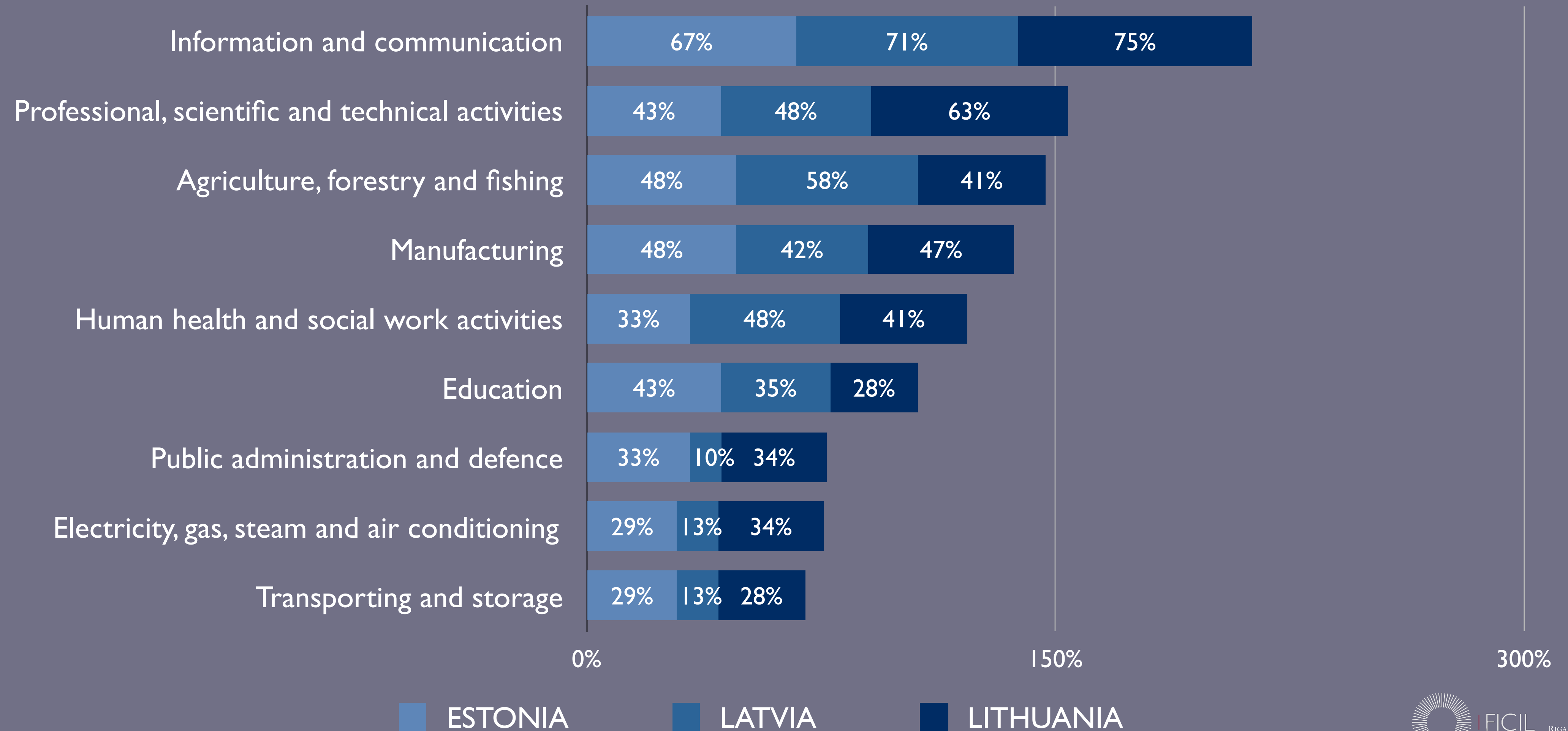
INDUSTRIES WITH HIGH INNOVATION POTENTIAL AND INDUSTRIES, WHICH WOULD BENEFIT FROM STRONGER PAN-BALTIC R&D&I COLLABORATION



FOREIGN INVESTORS' VIEW ON INDUSTRIES WITH THE HIGHEST INNOVATION POTENTIAL IN LATVIA



BALTIC RESEARCHERS' VIEW ON INDUSTRIES WITH THE HIGHEST INNOVATION POTENTIAL IN THEIR COUNTRY



CLARIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS ON THE SELECTION OF INDUSTRIES WITH THE HIGHEST INNOVATION POTENTIAL

FOCUS ON EXISTING STRENGTHS
(E.G., IT, HEALTH-TECH)

RESOURCE ENDOWMENT SHAPES
PRIORITIES – VALUE ADDITION OVER
RAW EXTRACTION

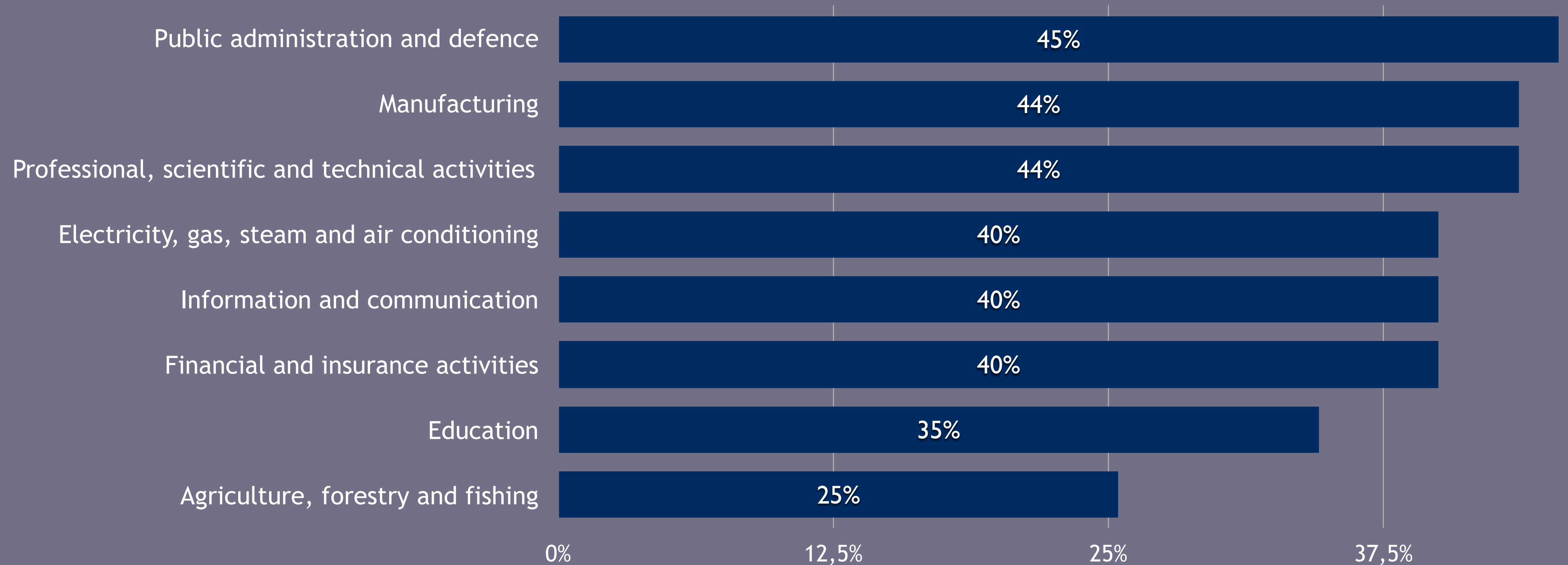
EXPERTISE AND HUMAN CAPACITY IS
A KEY CONDITION

DATA IS A UNIVERSAL ENABLER OF
INNOVATION

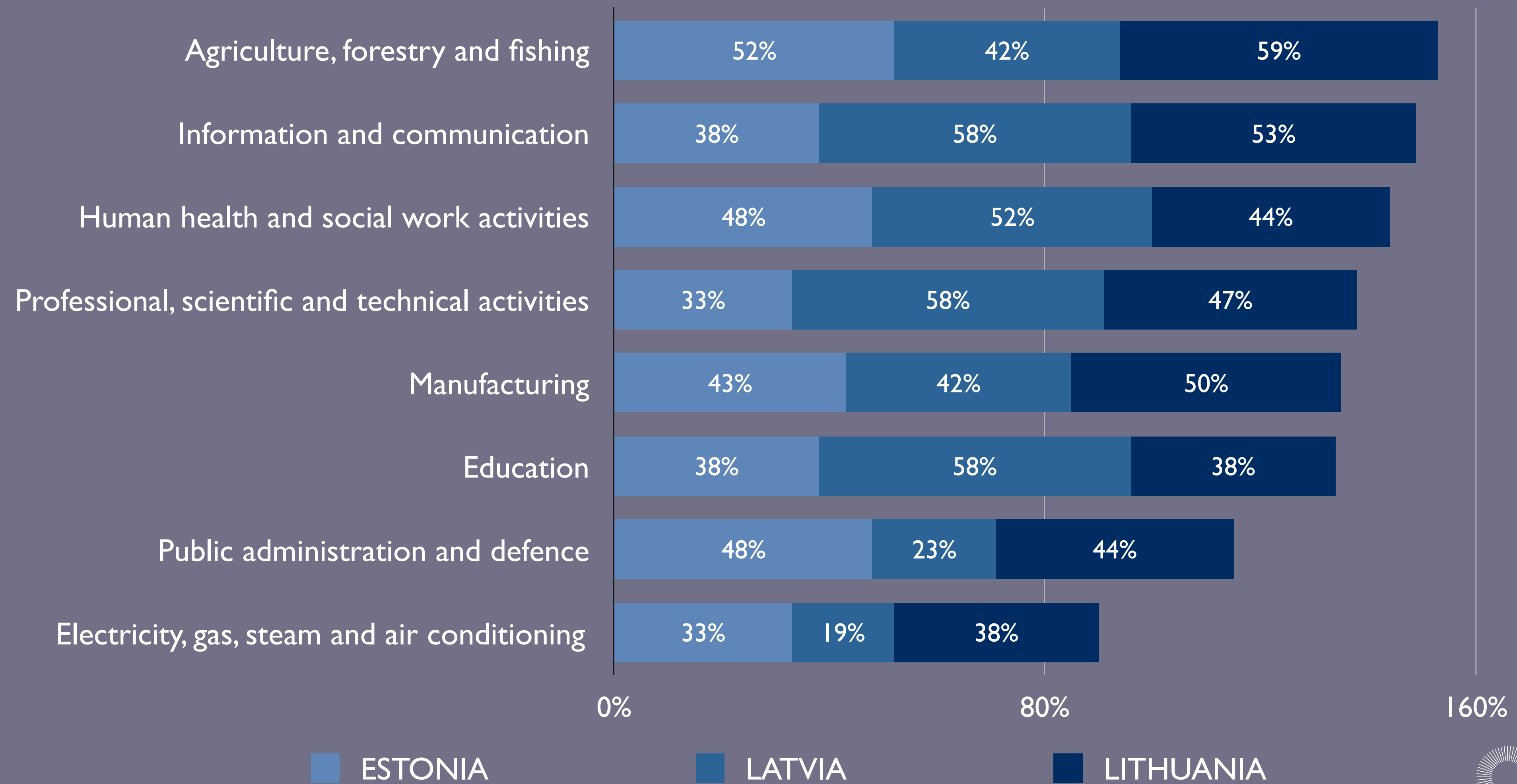
STRATEGIC PRIORITY (E.G., DEFENCE,
ENERGY INDEPENDENCE,
EDUCATION)

INNOVATION SPILLOVER EFFECTS FOR
OTHER INDUSTRIES

FOREIGN INVESTORS' VIEW ON INDUSTRIES, WHICH WOULD BENEFIT FROM STRONGER R&D&I COLLABORATION WITH THE BALTIC STATES



BALTIC RESEARCHERS' VIEW ON INDUSTRIES, WHICH WOULD BENEFIT FROM STRONGER R&D&I COLLABORATION WITH THE BALTIC STATES



BENEFITS OF STRONGER R&D&I COLLABORATION WITH THE BALTIC STATES IN VIEW OF RESPONDENTS

SCALE COULD BOOST
COMPETITIVENESS

DEFENCE COLLABORATION COULD
BOOST RESILIENCE

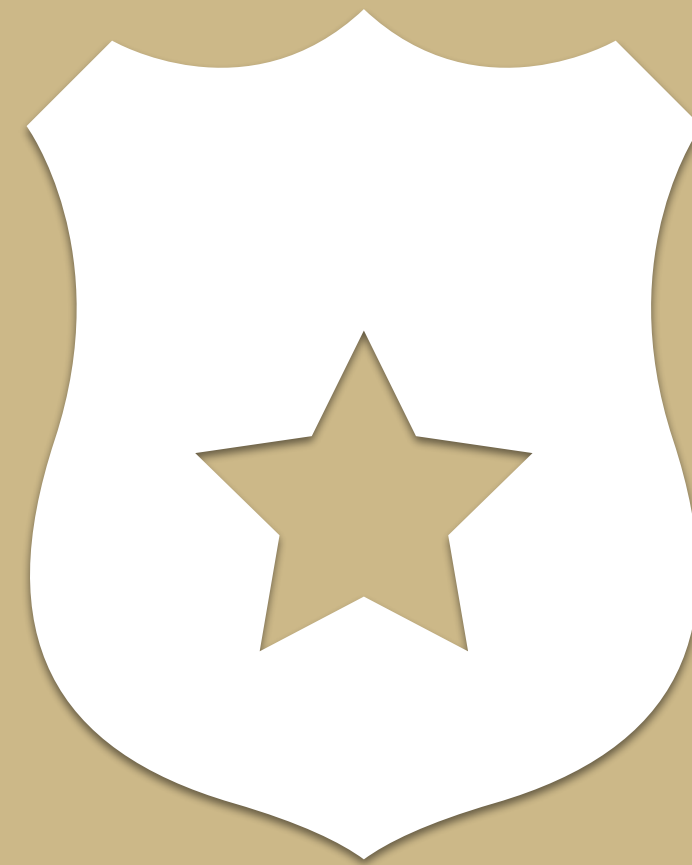
ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND
BETTER INFRASTRUCTURE

BETTER INTERNATIONAL BRAND &
REPUTATION
(E.G., BALTIC DIGITAL TIGERS)

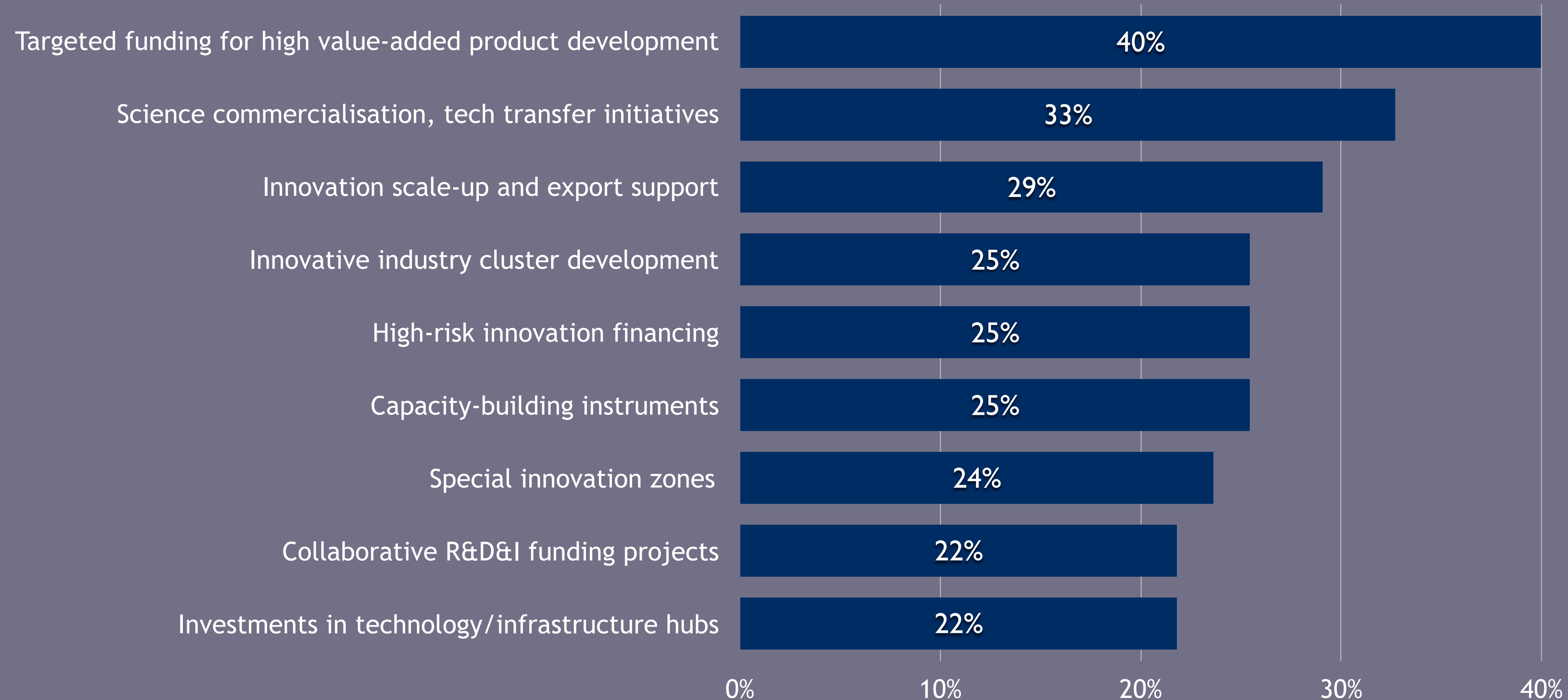
GREATER POLITICAL VOICE

GREATER ATTRACTION OF HUMAN
CAPITAL, FOREIGN INVESTMENT

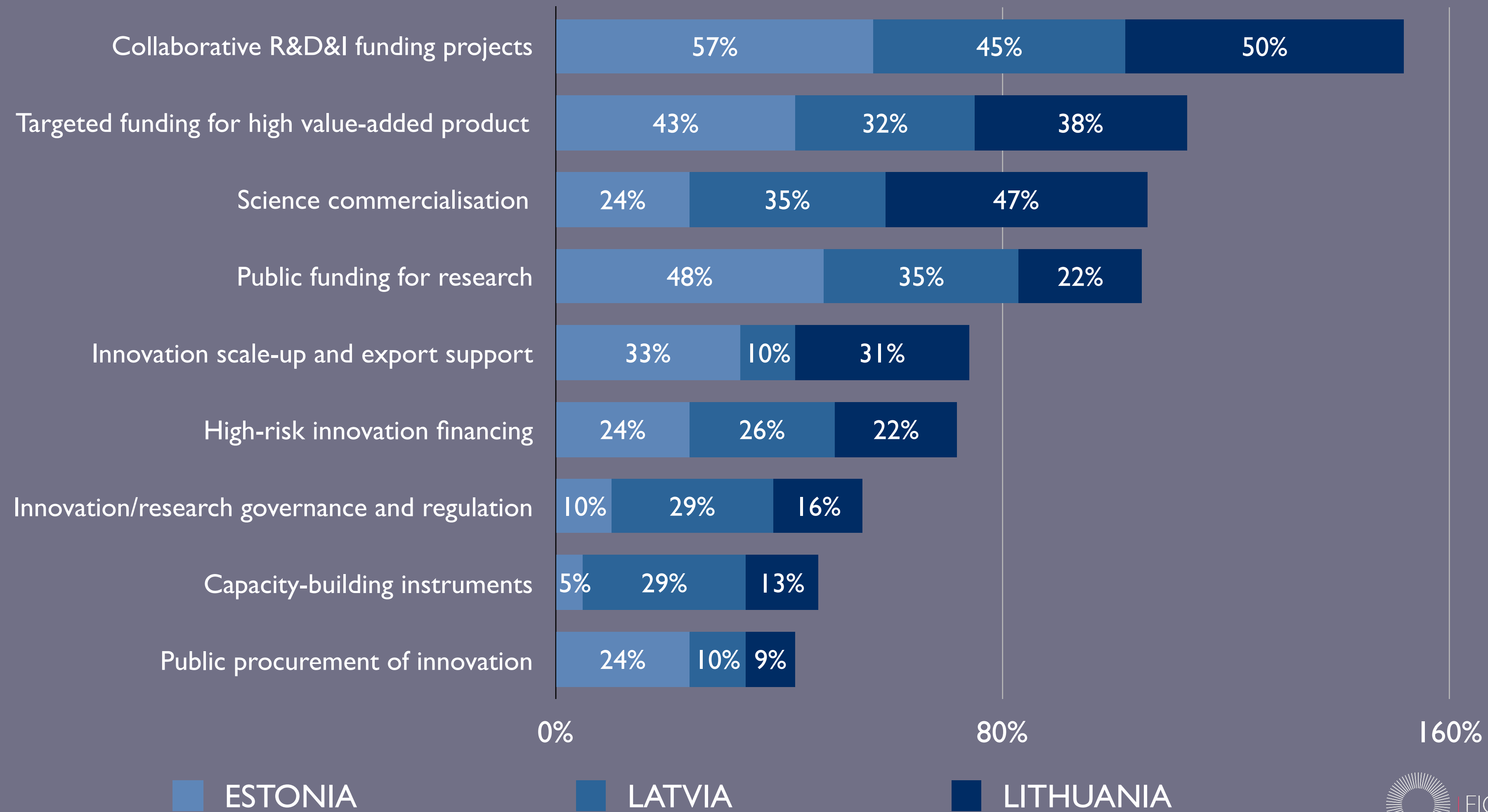
POLICY INSTRUMENTS THAT WOULD UNTAP INNOVATION POTENTIAL OF THE BALTICS



FOREIGN INVESTORS' VIEW ON THE TYPES OF POLICY INSTRUMENTS THAT WOULD UNTAP LATVIA'S INNOVATION POTENTIAL



BALTIC RESEARCHERS' VIEW ON THE TYPES OF POLICY INSTRUMENTS THAT WOULD UNTAP INNOVATION POTENTIAL OF THEIR COUNTRY



KEY MESSAGES ON POLICY INSTRUMENTS

NO POLICY INSTRUMENT WILL BE EFFECTIVE WITHOUT GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES ON INNOVATION, COMPETITIVENESS AND CLEAR INDICATION OF PRIORITISED INDUSTRIES

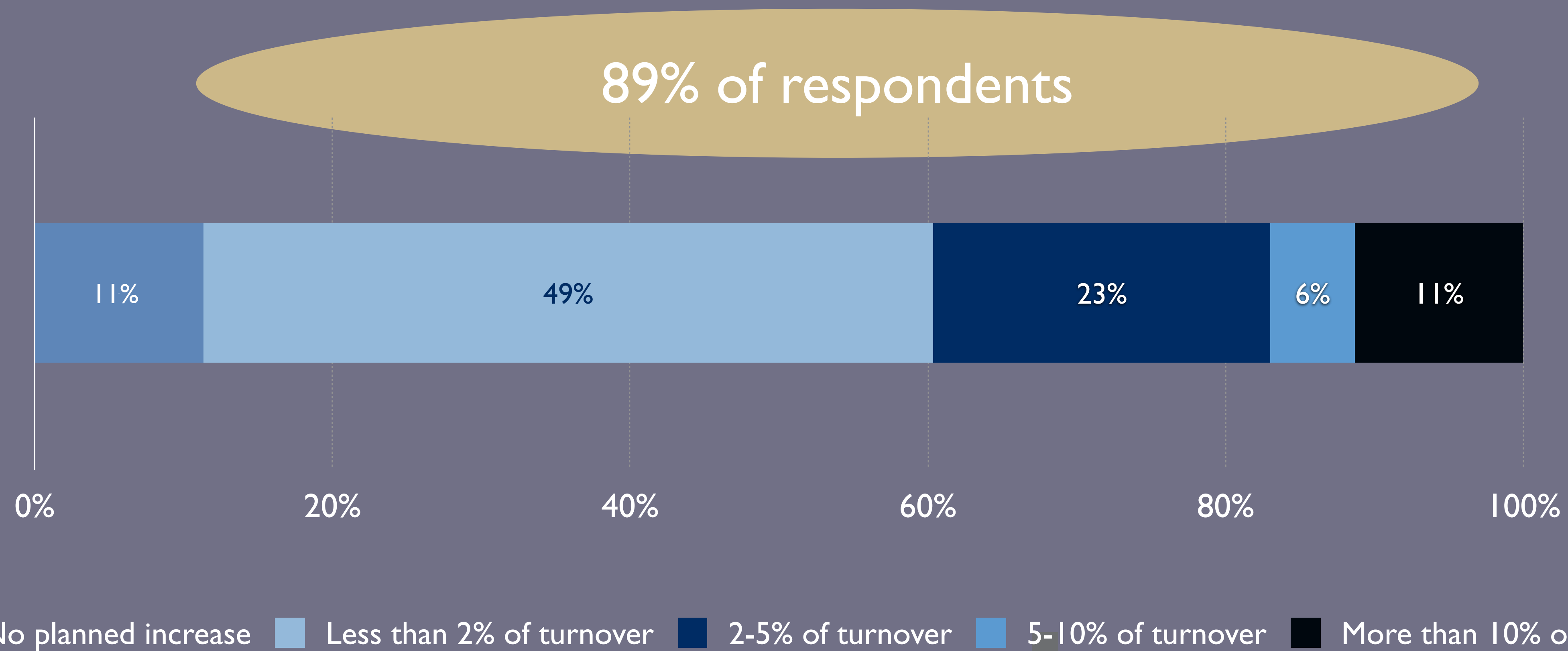
ECOSYSTEM DEVELOPMENT OVER ISOLATED EFFORTS IS NEEDED: AWAY FROM SILOED PROJECT-BASED SUPPORT TOWARDS COORDINATED, MULTI-STAKEHOLDER ECOSYSTEMS

PUBLIC FUNDING IS A CRITICAL ENABLER FOR BOTH RESEARCH ORGANISATIONS AND PRIVATE SECTOR

FIGHT RISK-AVERSE CULTURE, ATTRACT & DEVELOP TALENT

REMOVE EXCESSIVE BUREAUCRACY, OVERREGULATION, OVERLY RIGID ADMIN PROCEDURES

FOREIGN INVESTORS' PLANS TO INCREASE R&D&I INVESTMENTS DURING THE NEXT 5 YEARS IF THE PUBLIC POLICY INSTRUMENTS BE PROVIDED



SUGGESTIONS ON IMPROVEMENTS OF KEY ASPECTS OF THE INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM

ASPECTS	SUGGESTIONS
INNOVATION CULTURE AND RISK TOLERANCE	SOCIAL, INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP INITIATIVES AT EVERY LEVEL: IN SCHOOLS, STATE INSTITUTIONS, LARGE CORPORATIONS, AND PUBLIC FORUMS.
EDUCATION, TALENT AND SKILLS	UPDATE CURRICULA WITH A FOCUS ON AI, ADVANCED IT, ENGINEERING AND CREATIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS.
ACCESS TO FINANCE	INCREASE AVAILABILITY OF HIGH-RISK CAPITAL, DEVELOP A CAPITAL MARKET ECOSYSTEM, BETTER USE OF EUROPEAN FUNDING INSTRUMENTS.
BUSINESS-ACADEMIA COLLABORATION	LAUNCH ECOSYSTEM POLICY INSTRUMENTS, CONNECT ACADEMIC RESEARCH WITH REAL INDUSTRY CHALLENGES, FOSTER TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND COMMERCIALISATION OF RESEARCH.
STRATEGIC FOCUS	DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT A COHERENT, LONG-TERM INNOVATION STRATEGY, CONNECTED TO INDUSTRIAL, RESEARCH, INVESTMENT POLICY. PRIORITISE A SMALL NUMBER OF HIGH-POTENTIAL INDUSTRIES AND INSTRUMENTS.
EFFECTIVENESS OF R&D&I-FOCUSED INSTITUTIONS	PROACTIVE, STRATEGICALLY FOCUSED, RESULT/IMPACT-ORIENTED.
REDUCING BUREAUCRACY	MORE PERMISSIVE, RESULTS-ORIENTED REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT THAT ENABLES EXPERIMENTATION.
INTERNATIONALISATION AND SCALING	SUPPORT IN REACHING INTERNATIONAL MARKETS FOR SCALING INNOVATIVE IDEAS.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

LATVIA'S INVESTMENT CLIMATE: CAUTIOUS CONFIDENCE, YET FRUSTRATION WITH A LACK OF PROGRESS IN CRITICAL AREAS

GOOD INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM FOUNDATION IN THE BALTICS, YET A LACK OF COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION

NUMEROUS NON-FINANCIAL BARRIERS BLOCK DEVELOPMENT OF THE INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM

HIGH POTENTIAL OF MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION

CONCLUDING REMARKS

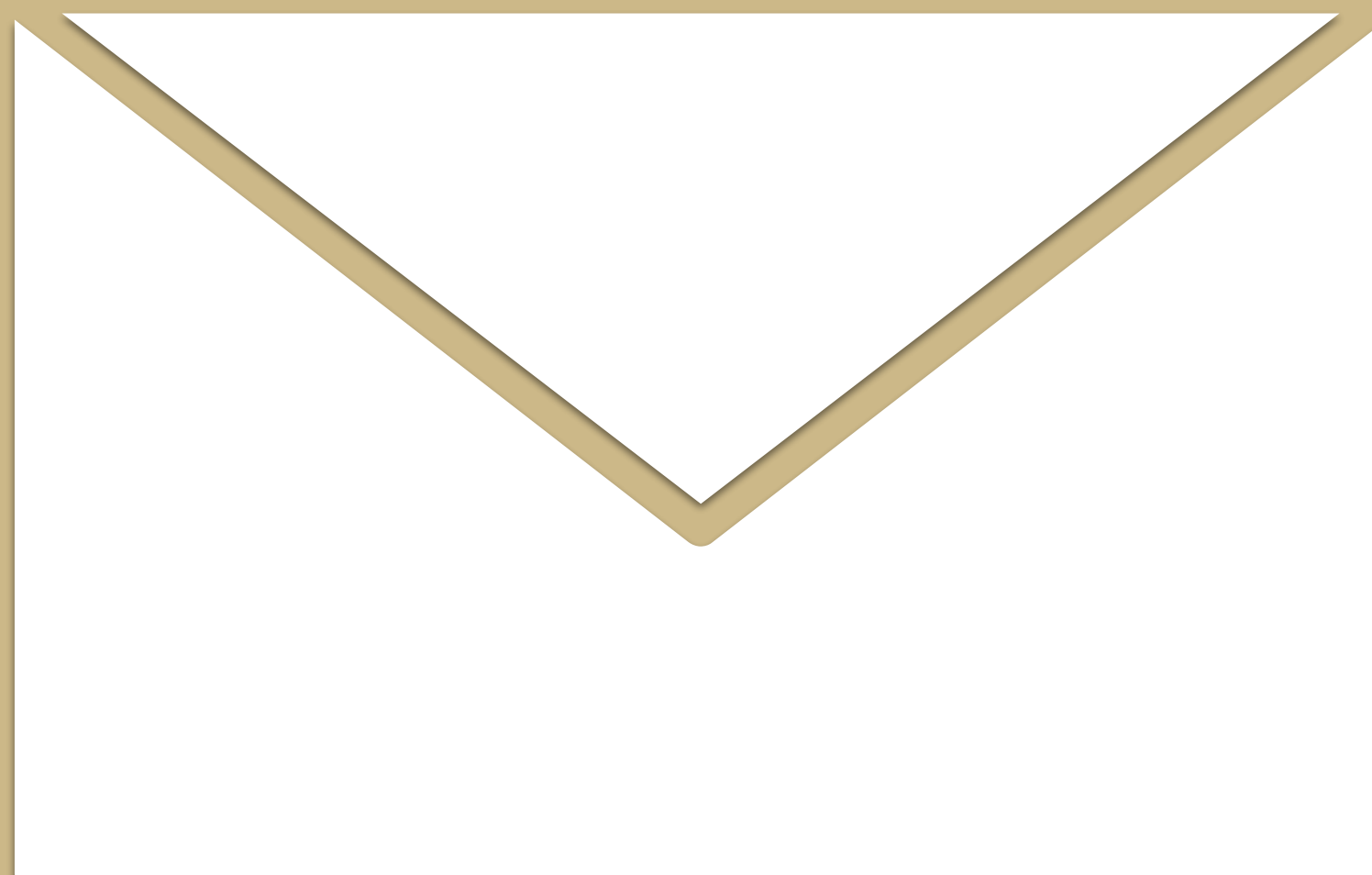
ECOSYSTEM ORCHESTRATION IS CRITICAL

THE CURRENT BALTIC INNOVATION ECOSYSTEMS LACK POWERFUL DRIVERS

PAN-BALTIC COLLABORATION: SHARED CHALLENGES, COMPLEMENTARY CAPABILITIES, NUMEROUS BENEFITS

TIME TO BE AMBITIOUS, TO MOVE BEYOND BEING RESILIENT, BUT INNOVATIVE AND COMPETITIVE

MESSAGES TO THE POLICYMAKERS



FOREIGN INVESTORS' IN LATVIA: KEY MESSAGES TO THE LATVIAN PRIME MINISTER



If a problem is framed as a general challenge, policy often becomes an ongoing process without a clear endpoint. We should start calling things as they really are.



Ensure a stable, predictable business environment, reduce bureaucracy, and support innovation through tax incentives and preferential financing. Strengthen cooperation between industry and academia.



Focus on automation in government services and cost efficiency, upskill employees of public sector in AI, remove bureaucracy.



Feeling is that the current Latvian Economical Development Strategy is on paper, but real actions are missing.



Focus resources where Latvia can dominate globally: Deep tech (AI, quantum-adjacent software); Bioeconomy / forestry innovation.

FOREIGN INVESTORS' IN LATVIA: KEY MESSAGES TO THE NEIGHBOURING BALTIC STATES



Identity areas where Baltics can cooperate so the market is perceived as more homogenous, e.g. defence, infrastructure, tax, business legislation.



Put more resources into Nordic-Baltic Eight. Evidently, we are nearly perfectly aligned in terms of values and current priorities, and we have already demonstrated that we punch above our weight when we are together. Looks like it's our turn to bring back energy, courage, and ambition to the rest of the EU.



Stop competing in a jealous way! It looks ridiculous from the outside. Everybody perceives Baltics as one region and this is your advantage. Use it!



Use strengths of each other, position yourself as a joint attractive market for foreign investors.



Baltics is a region, it is something you can sell together. Alone you are too small. Accept it and work together. It will also look good internationally.

FOREIGN INVESTORS' IN LATVIA: KEY MESSAGES TO THE EU POLICYMAKERS



Set benchmark criteria that are most important to develop competitiveness and steer/ report these in a transparent manner.



Simplify access to funding, reduce administrative burden, and focus support on practical, industry-driven innovation - especially in sustainability and circular economy.



Create a “Baltic Innovation Corridor”; Pilot simplified EU regulations here first.



More investments into people assets (grants to universities, institutes, innovating companies), less in bricks.



Provide long-term predictability of decision, targeted and fair funding, move from pure R&D funding to more project execution funding based on innovation.

RESEARCHERS' IN ESTONIA: KEY MESSAGES TO THE ESTONIAN PRIME MINISTER



Support scale-ups, not just early-stage startups (growth capital, export support), encourage anchor companies.



The most steady and historically proven path towards prosperity is through the innovation. Tax measures and more collaboration programs can untap this potential. Give universities and firms stable long-term translational funding tied to collaboration and scale-up.



Do not hesitate to invest more into worldwide competitive blue-sky research.



Technological advancement comes from fundamental research. There has to be more support for that.



The main strategic goal should be growing and attracting talent able to develop and commercialise products with higher added value for international markets. Also, keep business environment predictable, constant change with taxes is a no go.

RESEARCHERS' IN ESTONIA: KEY MESSAGES TO THE NEIGHBOURING BALTIC STATES



Provide more opportunities for Baltic RTOs and companies to interact and cooperate cross border, matchmaking events, joint development projects should be strongly supported.



Treat the Baltics not as three small innovation markets, but as one credible innovation region. The practical next move is to harmonise regulatory sandboxes, coordinate defence and energy procurement, create joint researcher-founder mobility schemes, and promote the Baltics together.



Let's collaborate more regionally and maybe even with the Nordics. Baltics have a good potential and together we can be stronger.



Feedback needs to come for people who do the work, not who 'analyse and guess' what's being done.



Use more widely the potential of your top scientists and finance successful research areas.

RESEARCHERS' IN ESTONIA: KEY MESSAGES TO THE EU POLICYMAKERS

“

More flexible and clearer support measures and less bureaucracy.

“

Technological advancement comes from fundamental research. There has to be more support for that.

“

Less conservative approach, otherwise US makes all the innovation; more flexible legislation.

“

Figure out a way to go from 'ticking boxes to get the highest points for applications for funding' to 'understanding what really makes sense to do and who can actually deliver it.'

“

Create genuinely EU-wide operating conditions for innovative firms, make public procurement more innovation-friendly

RESEARCHERS' IN LATVIA: KEY MESSAGES TO THE LATVIAN PRIME MINISTER



Less industrial policy trying to pick winners; improve the institutions - in particular the legislation; increase competence in the public sector; and less detailed regulation and reporting in higher education.



Continue supporting R&D at universities and research institutes.



We need to invest much more in competitive research funding to support the best teams. A sufficient budget should be allocated to science.



*Latvia is in quite a unique position on multiple ends - let's exploit it.
Support small business and startups/spin offs.*



Latvia has many talented students with the potential to become influential researchers if offered the right opportunities and funding. However, we still lose much of this talent to emigration, and returning talent is not always easy to retain.

RESEARCHERS' IN LATVIA: KEY MESSAGES TO THE NEIGHBOURING BALTIC STATES



Let's collaborate more together and build synergies. As a region, we would be stronger. It is time to realise that our strength could be in our unity. The Western Europe remains a closer club.



Innovation needs new ideas and collaboration. Create joint programmes for R&D&I.



Dear Policymakers, The Baltics must move from regional competition to collaboration. To compete globally, we must act as a single, unified innovation ecosystem. I urge you to focus on integrated academia-industry pipelines.



We need to cooperate and know each other. Which means there should be annual Baltic joint research conferences and innovation events.



Cooperate across the borders and look at the Baltic countries as a region understanding it is not a zero-sum game.

RESEARCHERS' IN LATVIA: KEY MESSAGES TO THE EU POLICYMAKERS



Europe's growth is supported by higher education and fundamental and applied research. The cardinal reduction of bureaucracy in European Union projects is one of the most important factors in economic growth.



Closing the R&D funding gap between 'emerging' and 'leading' innovators is a prerequisite for EU competitiveness.



Regional grants according to predefined priorities, rather than competition.



Competition for EU funding is huge and administration is too complex for start-ups and even for researchers. Please simplify!



More support for Baltic states.

RESEARCHERS' IN LITHUANIA: KEY MESSAGES TO THE LITHUANIAN PRIME MINISTER



Sustain long-term investment in research excellence and talent while simplifying science-business collaboration rules to ensure that Lithuania's strong research base consistently translates into high-value economic growth.



Strengthen demand-side innovation policies by prioritising public procurement of local R&D&I outputs and improving support for scaling innovations from pilot to market.



Enable the financial support for collaboration programme between private sector and research institutions.



Prioritise deep-tech development by aligning funding, talent policies, and academic incentives with high-risk research, commercialisation, and global scaling of science-based innovations.



Increase support for scientific research and development of scientific infrastructure.

RESEARCHERS' IN LITHUANIA: KEY MESSAGES TO THE NEIGHBOURING BALTIC STATES



Strengthen the Baltic region as a unified deep-tech hub through joint funding schemes, shared infrastructure, and cross-border collaboration in strategic technologies.



Deepen cross-Baltic coordination of research infrastructures, funding instruments, and innovation programs to achieve critical mass and compete globally rather than nationally.



Joint efforts to improve innovation ecosystem, common innovation market and stronger advocacy in EU structures.



The most effective way to untap the innovation potential of Baltic States would be to create more collaborative initiatives and events for international teams to develop.



Develop a joined Baltic innovative cluster, focusing on high-risk innovations.

RESEARCHERS' IN LITHUANIA: KEY MESSAGES TO THE EU POLICYMAKERS



The most effective way to untap the innovation potential of the EU would be sharing the good practices and shared policy creation for supporting the R&D&I development.



Increasing flexible, high-risk funding and simplifying regulations to enable faster scaling.



*Enable special calls for TTOs of the Baltic States to increase research valorisation.
Assess the geographical location of the Baltic States and increase funding for defence research, distinguishing this region from other EU countries.*



Maintain predictable, mission-oriented EU R&I funding and reduce administrative complexity, while strengthening support for scaling deep-tech innovations from research organisations into global markets.



Land your dreams - avoid overengineered solutions, localise software, engineering know how for developing and governing scaling outside EU.

COMPANIES THAT TOOK PART IN THE STUDY



ORGANISATIONS THAT TOOK PART IN THE STUDY



Foreign Investors' Council in Latvia (FICIL) is a non-governmental organisation that brings together the largest foreign companies in Latvia, the foreign chambers of commerce and the Stockholm School of Economics in Riga.

FICIL actively searches for and proposes solutions to improve and develop the business and investment environment in the country in cooperation with the Government of Latvia.

Full FICIL Sentiment Index report available at

WWW.FICIL.LV

