

Abstract: Gender mainstreaming is an obligation for EU-funded programmes. Nevertheless, there are still deficits. This article examines to what extent LEADER as a core funding measure for rural development is able to adopt a gender mainstreaming approach. Based on evaluation results from the 2014–2022 funding period, we look at the development of women's participation and the impact of different framework conditions set in the RDPs. Results underline that the participation of women should be strengthened via „top-down“ regulations (like quotas). Several studies suggest that there are differences in social preferences and priorities between men and women. Our analyses suggest that this is also the case for some of the topics discussed within the LAGs. Responses to the survey question on project selection indicated that women have higher demands for gender equality in implementing projects than men.

Key words: EU LEADER programme, gender representation, rural development, gender mainstreaming, gender quota, participation

Zusammenfassung: Gender Mainstreaming ist eine Verpflichtung für EU-finanzierte Programme. Bei der Umsetzung sind jedoch noch Defizite festzustellen. Im vorliegenden Artikel wird untersucht, inwieweit LEADER als zentrale Fördermaßnahme für die ländliche Entwicklung einen Gender-Mainstreaming-Ansatz verwirklichen kann. Anhand von Evaluierungsergebnissen aus der Förderperiode 2014–2022 werden die Entwicklung der Beteiligung von Frauen und die Auswirkungen unterschiedlicher Rahmenbedingungen der ELER-Programme untersucht. Die Ergebnisse unterstreichen, dass die Beteiligung von Frauen durch "Top-down"-Regelungen (wie Quoten) gestärkt werden sollte. Die Ergebnisse mehrerer Studien legen nahe, dass es Unterschiede in den sozialen Präferenzen und Prioritäten von Männern und Frauen gibt. Unsere Analysen deuten darauf hin, dass dies auch bei einigen der in den LAGs diskutierten Themen der Fall ist. Die Antworten auf die Frage zur Projektauswahl deuten darauf hin, dass Frauen bei der Umsetzung von Projekten höhere Anforderungen an die Gleichstellung stellen als Männer.

Schlagworte: LEADER, Geschlechterrepräsentanz, ländliche Entwicklung, Gender Mainstreaming, Geschlechterquote, Partizipation

Highlights

- Women are still underrepresented in LEADER LAGs.
 - The institutional background differs between female and male LAG members.
 - Gender equality is rarely considered in local development strategies.
 - Gender quotas are an efficient measure to improve gender balance in LAGs.
 - Thematic priorities of LEADER implementation would change with gender-balanced participation.
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1. Introduction

A glance at the literature shows that in rural and other areas, women have traditionally been linked to marginal positions in economic life, social activities and political representation at the local level (EU-COM, DG AGRI, 2012; Esparcia and Serrano, 2016, p. 206; Franić and Kovačićek, 2019). In light of such observations, equality between women and men is one of the fundamental objectives of the European Union (ECA, 2021, pp 10ff). For funding from all European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds), Article 7(1) of the ESIF Regulation stipulates that equality between men and women and non-discrimination shall be taken into account and promoted throughout the preparation and implementation of the programmes, including monitoring, reporting and evaluation.

One reason that the EU promotes gender mainstreaming in rural development policies is because retaining women in rural areas is seen as crucial to the long-term viability of rural areas (Bock, 2015, p. 738). But also, or even especially in rural contexts, there are barriers for female participation (Pini, 2006; Bock and Derkzen, 2008; Shortall, 2008). In rural development planning in context of Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) in the EU, the issue of female representation is starting to become part of the agenda in Germany as well (Raue, 2021). Gender balance in decision-making is one of the priorities of the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025 (EU-COM, 2020).

To examine the topic of gender representation and the results arising from different programming strategies/ approaches, we analyse empirical data from the evaluation of LEADER, in four federal states in Germany. LEADER is a place-based and participatory approach, which involves Local Action Groups (LAGs) composed of stakeholders from local government, civil society and economy steering the implementation of their respective local development strategies (LDS). LEADER started as a pilot programme in the early 1990s and as of 2007, it forms part of RDPs in the EU (Pollermann et al., 2020, p. 157). We elaborated two research objectives for this contribution:

1. **Analysing the representation of gender issues within the LEADER processes:** This especially includes the representation of females in the decision-making bodies of LAGs (2013–2022) and the effects of related regulations of programme authorities. Without special regulations, an underrepresentation of females could be expected as a result of societal conditions in rural areas. In addition, we examine the prominence of gender topics within local development strategies, especially regarding to what extent gender issues are defined as a field of action and are included in project selection criteria.
2. **Analysing the effects of gender representation for decision-making within the LAGs:** Different studies suggest that there is a gender gap in social preferences and priorities with related consequences for decision-making (Hessami and da Fonseca 2020, p. 7). For example, research shows that there is a small but persistent gender gap in environmental concern, whereby women typically express greater levels of concern for environmental issues than men (see Pearson et al., 2017, p. 19).

2. Theoretical background

2.1 LEADER as a space for (female) participation

A fundamental element of LEADER are the local development strategies which are developed by local stakeholders who outline the main objectives and strategies for implementation in LEADER regions. Each LAG is allocated to its own budget (approx. 3 million euro) by the managing authorities to support local projects in line with their LDS within a given EU funding period. Each LAG defines specific criteria to guide the selection of local projects to be supported through LAG funds. The project selection process uses a point system and eventually all submitted project proposals are ranked and funding is awarded based on the total number of points received².

Due to its bottom-up approach LEADER is perceived to promote a ‘new’ rural local governance and therefore, social scientists researching rural areas have demonstrated significant interest in documenting these new forms of governance emerging in rural areas. However, little attention has been given to examining the gender aspects of these new arrangements (Pini, 2006).

Despite its inherent bottom-up properties, LEADER implementation occurs in a multilevel system (Pollermann et al., 2020, p. 158). Managing authorities set basic funding conditions (in line with EU requirements) to define the room of manoeuvre for the LAGs (Pollermann et al., 2014a, pp. 4–5). Requirements/criteria for the approval of the LDS and LAGs are fundamental rules and guidelines that are publicly communicated before the start of each funding period to guide potential LAGs in the preparation of their LDS.

According to Bock (2015, p. 731) “The European Commission stresses the need to address the disadvantaged position of women, to support female employment and to take women’s specific needs

² Usually, a minimum number of points must be achieved in order to even be considered.

into account in order to prevent the rural exodus of women, which is perceived as a major problem for the sustainability of rural areas.”. This gives the impression that gender topics are an integral part of rural development policy, but the reality is still different. According to Bock (2015, p. 731), “when analysing the implementation of gender mainstreaming in national rural development plans, it appears that in practice, gender mainstreaming means little more than funding some separate projects for women”. This is also true for rural governance mechanisms like LEADER. Women still do not participate in these rural governance mechanisms on equal terms (Thuesen, 2016, p. 381).

Thus, crucial points in implementing gender mainstreaming in funding programmes are:

- to which extent programme strategies take gender differences into account and address the needs of the different demographic groups (men, women, older and younger people, people with care responsibilities etc.)
- the role of women in decision-making. The aim to support a higher share of women is based on different argumentations. First of all, the current state of knowledge is that women are underrepresented in political processes worldwide (Berevoescu and Ballongton, 2021; Inglehart and Norris 2003, p. 129) and this also holds true for rural areas. Tendencies are reported that gender differences in political activism are greatest in poorer developing societies, and moreover, that there is some closure on some indicators among the younger generations (Inglehart and Norris 2003, p. 118).
- to support local development, which takes into consideration the needs of different demographic groups, there is the need to include the views of both men and women. Different studies suggest there is a gender gap, for example concerning social and environmental preferences and priorities with potential consequences for decision-making (Pearson et al., 2017, p. 19; Hessami and da Fonseca, 2020, pp. 4–5). Nevertheless, several authors argue that only considering the participation of women in decision-making as a numeric issue is not enough (Shortall, 2002, p. 168; Pini, 2006, p. 406). Thus, it is also necessary to look at the extent to which the interests/views of women are considered in the decision-making on policies and projects.

Young (2002) refers to these two aspects of involvement in democratic processes as external and internal exclusion. External exclusion occurs, when persons who should participate in decision-making processes are absent, which might be because representation is made by appointment or self-selection or some concrete reasons like timing or accessibility of the meeting. Internal exclusion refers to the effect, that a person does not succeed in getting her views heard and/or considered because of the lack of informal networks, the fact that the argument is outside usual arguments or that the communication culture is competitive (see Young, 2002, pp. 53–57).

2.2 Female representation in LEADER

There is a vast literature on gender planning in urban contexts but little can be found on gender sensitive planning (formal and informal) when looking at rural contexts (Damyanovic and Reinwald, 2014; Zibell et al., 2019), but some hints can be found. At the beginning of the century, Little and Jones (2000) found that in the new informal rural governance models, alliances of local business people and political actors “privilege economic over social interests, and in doing so they favour men's interests over those of women”. Concerning EU funding in previous funding periods, rural development policies seldom addressed women's needs (Bock, 2015), and projects labelled as gender-sensitive where often specifically designed for women, following traditional gender roles (Prügl, 2010; Bock, 2015). The projects supported individual women to overcome their disadvantages, but structural causes and wider consequences for rural development were not addressed. This concealed women's agency and interest in all facets of rural development and reproduced traditional gender relations. Regarding LEADER, there are different previous observations in the literature. For the LEADER II program (1995–1999) the ex-post evaluation mentions that female participation in LAGs was higher in the Nordic states and lagging behind regions (so-called Objective-1-regions, for example Portugal, southern parts of Spain and Italy, former socialist countries in Eastern Europe) than in the rural areas in central and Western Europe (so called Objective 5- B-regions), to which all the four examined federal states belong (ÖIR, 2003) cited following Prügl (2010).

In case studies comparing an East German and a West German LEADER region Prügl (2010) found out that bureaucratic procedures and rules prevented the adoption of gender mainstreaming.

Although some research has been done to analyse the gender dimension of funding programs, little has been done concerning local development strategies (LDS) in LEADER. An evaluation study in Austria analysed the distribution of projects between three fields of action (value creation, nature/culture and common welfare) and the associated employment effect for women (Bergmann et al., 2019). An evaluation study on gender equality in Catalonia revealed for LEADER that 75% of the LAGs claim to have objectives included in their LDS for the promotion of equality. The answers obtained on what these objectives were, pointed to the fact that their LDS included gender equality as an objective of labour and social integration and/or applied project selection criteria for projects promoted by women, giving them a higher score in the evaluation of applications (RegioPlus Consulting, 2022, p. 35). Some more information can be found on female representation in LAGs. In Denmark, where women make up on average 31% of the LAG board members, an upward tendency is observed, the more the municipality is urbanized/centrally located in Denmark. According to Thuesen and Derkzen (2016), this could indicate a more 'modern' lifestyle in centrally located municipalities, with women having a higher propensity to be involved. The differences, however, are not that large with the share of women in "outsized municipalities" being 28% and in "intermediate municipalities" 34% (Thuesen and Derkzen, 2016). Also, data regarding female participation within LEADER in the previous funding period (2000–2006) shows that female underrepresentation was a common observation across the EU with especially low rates observed in some southern European countries. Looking at the entire EU-15, in nearly half of all 892 LAGs (47%), the share of women was below 25% in 2005 (Bock, 2015). In Greece, the share of women on the LAG boards lay below 25% in all LAGs, in Italy, this was the case for 73% and in Spain for 68% of the LAGs (Thuesen and Derkzen, 2016: table 11).

In Austria, during the 2007–2013 funding period, the share of female LAG board members was on average only 12% (Oedl-Wieser, 2016). For the funding period 2014–2020, one-third of all board members with voting rights had to be female, which according to (Bergmann et al., 2019) led to sustainable changes with regards to the consideration of gender mainstreaming in the implementation of LEADER.

In Germany, the share of females on LAG boards varied between 27% to 44%³ in the five federal states examined during the 2007–2013 funding period, the highest share was in the examined federal state in Eastern Germany and can be assumed as a post-socialist effect of higher integration of women in the labour market than in western Germany. On average, the share was 26% with regard to all 98 examined LAGs (Pollermann et al., 2014b). In Catalonia for the 2015–2019 funding period, the share of female board members was about 29% (RegioPlus Consulting, 2022, p. 37).

The literature review done by Thuesen (2016) concluded that rural governance arrangements like LEADER are characterized to a great extent by external exclusion of women and that further quantitative and in-depth studies are required to identify the reasons for this. She also found indications that internal exclusion exists, mentioning competitive and conflict-oriented meeting styles and jargon, as well as thematic foci on economic development. She further points to the need for more quantitative studies in order to identify the factors underlying the minority status of women in partnerships such as LEADER, as well as the need to consider meta-governance through laws and regulations set by the EU and ministries to identify structural opportunities to reduce external exclusion (Thuesen 2016, p. 386).

2.3 Factors influencing female representation on LAG boards

There are several possible reasons why fewer women than men end up on the LAG boards. Bock and Derkzen (2008) have outlined four different barriers to women's participation in rural policy making:

1. Women's position in rural society and their weak socio-economic and political integration,

³ The share of 44% was recorded in the federal state of Mecklenburg Western-Pomerania, which is however not included in the studies conducted in the 2014–2022 funding period.

2. a traditional gender ideology that underlines women's domestic responsibilities and civil and apolitical involvement in the community,
3. the dominance of agriculture and economy in the rural development discourse and
4. the lack of fundamental structural and cultural changes in new governance arrangements (Thuesen & Derzken, 2016)

But self-exclusion may also play a role (Thuesen, 2016, p. 386). Women might for example feel, that they do not have the time or that they are not competent enough (see Bock, 2015, p. 737).

Thus, governance arrangements such as those in LEADER tend to reproduce the power disparities of societies. Accordingly, the LEADER arrangements have a certain correlation to the actual representation of women in public policy, especially at the local level and in civil society.

Female representation in public policy and administration

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) publishes the gender equality index for the EU and the individual member states regularly. It constitutes seven dimensions, including work, time, health, violence and power. The latter is calculated based on the shares of women and men in parliaments (national, regional and local) and as ministers (subdomain political power), and the shares in leading positions in large companies (economic dimension) and selected civil society organisations (social dimension). With an index value of 59.1 (100 means complete equality), power received the lowest score at the EU level (EIGE et al., 2023), nevertheless showing the highest increase compared to other domains within the last 10 years. The share of women in regional assemblies (in Germany, this would be the federal state level) was only gender balanced in five member states (Bundesländer), meaning that the share of females was above 40%. At the local level (districts, cities), the share of women is lower. Concerning local councils, Germany has the fourth lowest share of women of all EU member states⁴ and falls far below the EU average.

The German report on gender equality as well as the EIGE report merely consider the representation of women at the district level incl. district free cities as these data are more readily available and comparable. Concerning local rural development in general and LEADER in particular, it is usually the municipalities below the district level which play a crucial role, as they are the main source of LAG members from the public sector. Therefore, attention should be given to the question, to which extent women participate in public policy and administration at this level, for example as council members or mayors.

In several German states, it could be observed, that the smaller the municipality, the smaller the share of women in municipal councils (see for example, Figure 1 for the federal state of Hesse⁵). Furthermore, women are rare in the position of mayors in small municipalities. In Hesse for example in 2021 only 8% of municipalities had female mayors.

Lassébie (2020) found that it is more likely for women to leave politics after one mandate than men. She further shows that, at the local level, the difference between the two genders in the likelihood to leave politics is correlated with attitudes concerning the place of women in society and labour market, and also varies with individual characteristics such as socio-professional background and age.

⁴ Followed by Greece, Cyprus and Romania with even lower shares.

⁵ For the elections in 2016 $r_{sp}=0.448$ ($p<0.0001$).

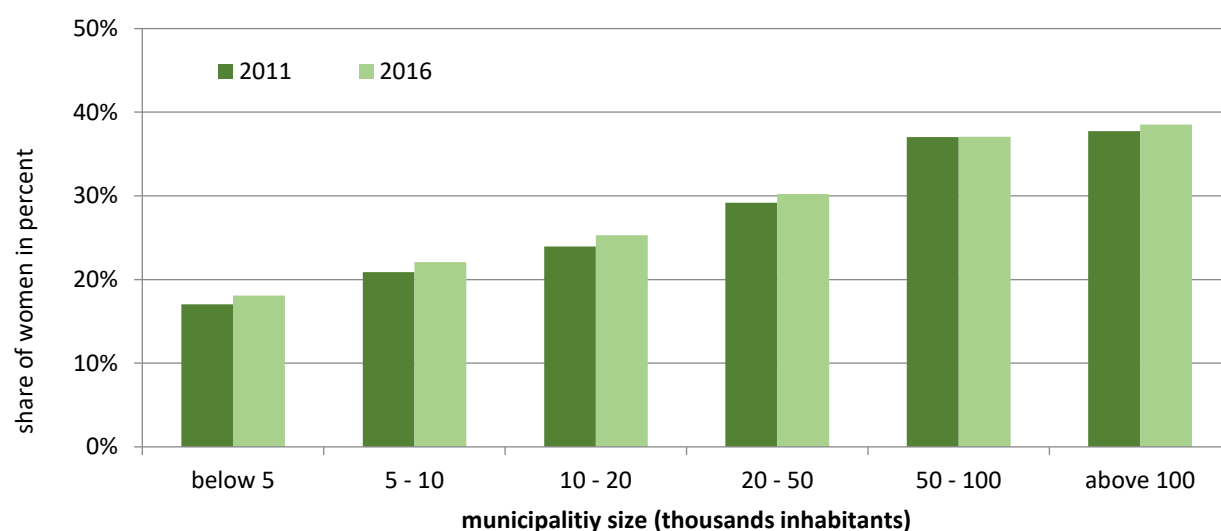


Fig 1. Share of women in municipal councils in Hesse, by size of municipality. Source: Raue (2022). Database: final results of municipal elections in Hesse in 2011 and 2016 (HSL, 2016) and data on inhabitants per municipality on 31.12.2016 (HSL 2017)

In civil society and economy

Underrepresentation of women in leading positions is continued in civil society and economy. Women have a significantly lower probability to take on a leadership position in their voluntary engagement (Erlinghagen et al., 2015). The results of the German Survey on Volunteering show a significantly higher share of men in leading positions in voluntary organisations than women (Simonson et al., 2021; Kleiner, 2022). In rural areas, men are more often found in leading positions of civil society organisations as well (vgl. Lengerer et al., 2022). Furthermore, just as in employment, there is a strong gender segregation concerning the areas of civic engagement, following to a great extent gendered norms (Dederichs and Graaf, 2023). Women are overrepresented in parents', social care, and religious associations, indicating an extension of domestic care responsibilities. Men are disproportionally involved in political, employment, hobby, and technical associations. Differences in preferences can also be observed for membership in sport associations with men being overrepresented in team sports and women dominating in gymnastics, aerobic and horse riding. Most types of community and social associations (for example, neighbourhood, sociability/carnival and youth associations) have rather even gender distributions. Nevertheless, within the associations, gender segregation continues (Dederichs and Graaf, 2023).

In the economic sector, leading positions are also mainly occupied by men (EIGE et al., 2023) and the prevailing inherent masculine norms make it more difficult for women to succeed (Dashper, 2019; Marlow, 2020). For large companies, board diversity has been a focus of recent corporate governance policy debates. Despite receiving much attention from the media and social activists, women directors remain underrepresented in the boardroom (Field et al., 2020). Many instances of inequality remain, most saliently in top corporate positions. The proportion of women at the board level is around only 23.9% in Europe's largest listed companies (Mensi-Klarbach and Seierstad, 2020). In agriculture in Germany, women made up only about 11% of farm holders in 2020 (Davies et al., 2023). Women are also underrepresented in the foundation of new enterprises (Liñán et al., 2024).

2.4 Influencing female participation

The EU's concern for equal opportunities for women in rural development increased in the early 2000's during the implementation of the LEADER+ programme (2000–2006). During this time, some EU member states set quotas for the participation of women in the LAGs, however, this was not mandatory for all countries and was not subject to monitoring and evaluation by the EU (Esparcia and Serrano, 2016).

To identify effective measures to increase female participation, one has to look at the reasons for underrepresentation. For the political sphere, the following explanations dominate (Holtkamp and Schnittke, 2008; Hessami and da Fonseca, 2020; Holtkamp et al., 2020):

- the lower preference for competition (although women's lower competitive orientation is most likely due to social norms),
- men are more likely to be encouraged to run for a position than women,
- male party leaderships are biased against women, accept fewer women as candidates and, when they do, tend to be in unpromising positions. Through rather closed "old-boy" networks, men support each other and reproduce the existing power inequality.

The (male-dominated) political culture also tends to have a deterrent/hindering effect in some cases. This includes the aspects that women do not feel competent, feel uncomfortable with the predominant communication culture and often have less time to spare, for example, due to care obligations. The same factors might also work in hindering women to take over leading positions in other spheres of society.

Setting quotas seems to be an appropriate measure to improve female representation in politics as well as in leading positions in civil society and economy.

A critical mass is required for heterogeneity to have a productive effect and to make room for the diversity of different perspectives. In the literature, a proportion of at least 30% is often cited for achieving a critical mass, sometimes supplemented by a lower limit of three people in order to make a substantial difference in the representation of previously underrepresented groups (Dahlerup, 2006; Binder, 2014; Bohnet, 2016).

However, both the figure of 30% and the setting of quotas have been criticised by various authors. Even with a share of 30%, women are still in the minority and this does not guarantee that they will be able to assert their interests (Dahlerup, 2006; Binder, 2014; Bohnet, 2016).

In most cases, the prediction of the effect of quotas depends on the world view of those who make this assessment (Bohnet, 2016). The pipeline problem is often cited, i.e., that there are not enough suitable women. This cannot be completely dismissed in LEADER with regard to representatives at the municipal level. However, studies also show that it is often more important to change recruitment channels and make them more open.

According to Bohnet (2016), there is more of a trend towards increasing the participation of qualified women and encouraging them to come to the fore, thus expanding the pool of qualified candidates. This could also be an expected effect of LEADER. In other words, a quota could encourage women both in local politics and in clubs/associations to become more actively involved in the LAGs.

Lassébie (2020) studied the effect of gender quotas on the representation of women in local politics in France. She found out that the French quota policy had a substantial impact on the share of female candidates and elected politicians, but failed to promote female mayors and list leaders. She also reported examples of gender quotas increasing the diversity of legislators, being associated with more younger politicians elected as well as with an increase in the average level of education but could not confirm the effect of increased diversity for France.

As gender segregation is quite widespread in civic engagement as well as in employment, the kind of organisations invited or selected for being part of the LAG, can influence the gender balance of the LAG board essentially.

2.5 Preferences and effects on decision-making

Several studies have shown that there are clear differences in social and political preferences between men and women. Women tend to adopt more positions towards common welfare and balance/adjustment. In terms of climate and environmental politics, women show more awareness of the problems and are more ready for change (Spitzner et al., 2020), female representation in national

parliaments leads to more stringent climate change policies across countries (Mavisakalyan and Tarverdi, 2019). Additionally, women pay more attention to animal welfare and are more willing to pay for animal welfare products than men (EU-KOM, 2016; Blanc et al., 2020). Hessami and da Fonseca (2020) found evidence in their literature review of a higher representation of women in parliaments corresponding with stronger political support for women's gainful employment, increased spending on child care, health, and development cooperation, and, in some cases, a decrease in defence expenditure. Ramstetter and Habersack (2020) analysed voting behaviour in the European Parliament and discovered differences in political decisions based on attitudes. The research indicates that female parliamentarians are more likely to vote in favour of proposals related to environmental protection than their male counterparts. McEvoy (2016) discovered that female candidates for the European Parliament held more liberal attitudes towards certain policy fields than male candidates. However, for developed countries, no evidence was found regarding the influence of female representation in local councils on the composition of spending (Hessami and da Fonseca, 2020). Other studies suggest that women make a difference in local councils. In an analysis of municipal elections in Bavaria, Baskaran and Hessami (2019) showed that expansion of public child care responded to the share of female councillors. They concluded that "female representation ostensibly helps to ensure that the preferences of women are adequately reflected by policies". Hessami and da Fonseca (2020) found the effect of additional women to go beyond their immediate effect. Therefore, "by changing council dynamics and by changing "the conversation", one additional woman may make all other women more effective."

A study on Italian municipalities found out that higher efficiency is observed in municipalities with a female mayor and a greater presence of women in their councils (Bucci et al., 2024). Ermini et al. (2023) found out that a higher share of women in municipal leadership and council bodies was associated with improved municipal well-being while Stanić (2023) shows that a greater representation of women in local councils has a positive effect on budget transparency.

Further evidence for gender-related differences in awareness and concerns regarding environmental issues and climate change is compiled by Pearson et al. (2017) and is based on a review of research on public opinion and theoretical perspectives and empirical findings within the fields of psychology and communication. Notable findings across research include (Pearson et al., 2017):

- Women express more knowledge about climate change and a stronger belief in scientific evidence,
- women are more likely to believe that climate change exists and less likely endorse and/or express denialist views/beliefs about climate change than men,
- in economically wealthier countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, and Italy, women are more likely to support the view that major lifestyle changes are necessary to reduce climate change effects and
- women typically show more concern for environmental issues than men.

The authors also discuss different theoretical explanations in gender research for the gender gap in the perspectives on the aforementioned issues. Several researchers propose that differences may be based on gender socialization with the tendency of women for example, to be more compassionate, nurturing and cooperative which may also play a role in different value orientations (e. g., altruism). This in turn might be reflected in their greater concern for environmental issues. Another theoretical perspective discussed in Pearson et al. (2017) is the vulnerability hypothesis and feminist perspectives, which suggest that women identify more with vulnerability regarding environmental exploitation due to their own history of oppression and thus, are more inclined to see the need to take action. System justification – i.e., the tendency to defend the status quo and not questioning the fairness and legitimacy of existing systems – is also hypothesized as a cause for the gender gap, whereby men more often defend prevailing institutions and systems (Pearson et al., 2017).

3. Methodology

To examine the topic of gender representation in rural development and the results and consequences arising from different programming strategies, we analysed empirical data from the evaluation of LEADER, which forms part of RDPs. Gender aspects within LEADER were examined using results from the 2014–2022 funding period, especially structural data of 115 LAGs in four federal states (all with their own RDP) in Germany. Thus, the analyses include 24 LEADER regions in Hesse, 41 in Lower Saxony, 28 in North Rhine-Westphalia, and 22 in Schleswig-Holstein.

Basic information and data on LEADER implementation were derived from various funding documents, especially the regulations and guidelines from the EU and the four federal states. An important element are the requirements for the approval of LDS, where the federal states could set preconditions for the selection of LAGs (Fynn and Pollermann, 2022).

Beyond this, the empirical data used for this contribution originates from four sources:

- Two LAG member surveys (mainly executed as online surveys): members of 115 LAGs decision-making bodies in 2017/2018 (requested persons N = 3308, answering persons n = 1999, response rate: 60 percent) and again in 2021 (requested persons, N = 3320, number of responses, n = 2000, response rate: 60 percent). Usually, a six-point Likert scale was used to classify personal estimations of the LAG members. However, when a middle/neutral rating seemed likely, we used a five-point Likert scale. Distinctions were made between different types of actors, such as male/female to allow a comparison of different views.
- Two (annual) requests of activities and organisational structures in the areas (LAG-data (structures/activities)). All LAG managers of the 115 LEADER regions provided data in 2017 and again in 2020 as part of the evaluation requirements. These include personal specifications about all members of the LAG boards (for example, gender and institutional affiliations).

For the analysis of gender representation in the LAG and in the LDS, a frequency analysis was conducted, using SAS. To estimate the effects of unbalanced gender representation, we used ordered logistic regressions. As dependent variables, we used the assessment of the LAG members expressed in the survey, to what extent specific target groups and topics have been considered and the level of agreement with the statement “Regarding project contents, gender justice is taken into account.” For the assessments on target groups and topics, we used a five-point Likert scale from 1 = too little up to 5 = too much, the middle value 3 meaning “adequately”. Due to the low number of observations in 1 (too little) and 5 (too much), the dependent variables were recoded as follows: 1 = too little/rather too little; 2 = appropriate; 3 = rather too much/too much. As explaining variables, we included, besides the gender of the individual respondent, factors such as the institutional background (coded as state, civil society and economy) and age, and as context aspects the share of women in the LAG and the federal state. Concerning the statement on project selection, a six-point Likert scale was used, with a range from 1 = fully agree to 6 = fully disagree. This variable also had to be recoded: 1 (categories 1 and 2, agreement), 2 (categories 3 and 4, neutral/middle), 3 (categories 5 and 6, disagreement). Where the assumption of proportional odds was not fulfilled, a multinomial logit model was estimated. The analysis was conducted with Stata and SAS.

Selected results of statistical analyses (regression models) are provided in the annex.

4. Results

4.1 Representation

Effects of regulations for female representation in LAGs

The decision-making bodies in LEADER (“LAG-board”) most often consist of 10 to 30 members. Their main task is to decide which projects are funded taking into account the project selection criteria developed for

each LDS. Since the EU regulations make no distinct specifications⁶, the responsibility for addressing female representation in LAGs lies with the federal states and therefore different approaches have been adopted. This begins with the requirements for the selection/recognition of LAGs presented for the 2014–2020 funding period:

- Hesse: No reference to gender aspects in the criteria for recognising LDS meaning no specifications or establishment of assessment criteria beyond the provisions of the EU, which refer to RDPs in general.
- Lower Saxony: The LAGs were to aim at achieving a gender balance when appointing the decision-making body. Also, it was stated that LDS address how the LAG intended to integrate or guarantee that gender-relevant aspects were to be taken into account in the implementation of its development strategy, as well as how the interests of women in particular were to be taken into account, even if they were underrepresented in the decision-making body.
- North Rhine-Westphalia: Required that at least one third of the full voting members be female. Additionally, it was stated that all LAG should endeavour to ensure that males and females were represented in proportion to their share of the population in all other committees of the LAG.
- Schleswig-Holstein: Introduced a quality criterion which stated that LAGs were to aim at achieving a gender balance in the decision-making body. An explanation was given for this "soft" requirement (possible male dominance in political offices which impede the achievement of a gender balance) and LAGs were required to offer a justification if the "target" could not be reached.

Regarding results, we looked at the share of females on LAG boards in the four study areas in the years 2020 and 2017. The results are shown in figure 2 with the percentages from the previous funding period (2007–2013) as a comparison.

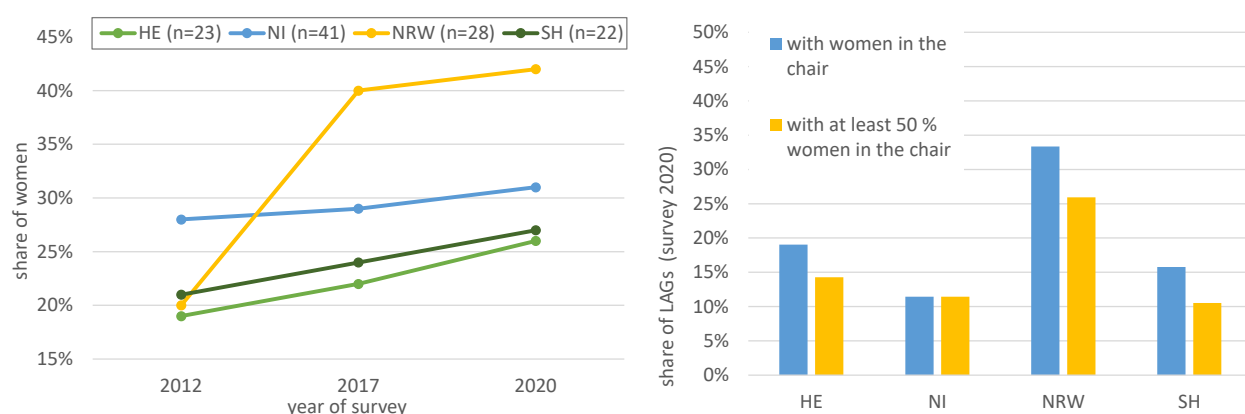


Fig 2. Share of women in decision-making bodies and in the chair of LAGs. Source: own calculation based on LAG data (structures/activities) for 2012, 2017, 2020. Hesse (HE), Lower Saxony (NI), North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), Schleswig-Holstein (SH)

Within the 2014–2022 funding period, a (slight) increase in the share of females is observed in all four federal states between 2017 and 2020. Also, North Rhine-Westphalia stands out with on average 42% of female board members in its LAGs. The reason for this is clear: it was the only federal state which introduced a fixed quota (one third of board members had to be females) transitioning from the 2007–2013 to the 2014–2022 funding period. The other three federal states also addressed gender in their requirements for LAGs/LDS but only made "soft" regulations, or rather recommendations, as along the lines of "there should be a balanced gender representation". This led to considerable variations in the composition of board members in the individual LAGs. If we consider a share of women in LAGs between 45 and 55% as balanced, altogether 13 LAGs have a balanced decision-making board (seven from NRW, five from NI and one from SH) and two LAGs are dominated by females (60%). Another observation

⁶ A recommendation that the decision-making body should aim to achieve a gender balance was however made in the original CLLD guidelines (EU-COM, 2014).

is that the federal state with softest requirements had the lowest share of females on average. Figure 3 shows the variation in the four federal states as boxplot diagram.

To conclude, the implemented regulations of the federal states reflect our expectations: a “should” regulation is generally not enough to change existing social constructs (path dependency). Meanwhile, a binding gender quota, as seen in NRW, is an effective instrument for promoting a better representation of women in decision-making processes. Indisputably, the issue of gender balance and “quotas” in particular tend to spark intensive discussions. However, the case of LAGs in NRW shows that introducing a 33% quota was not only effective, its implementation seems not to have been perceived as a major challenge by the affected LAG managements. This is noted by the fact that the issue was not addressed in a survey conducted in 2018, where the LAG managers were specifically asked about difficulties faced in fulfilling the requirements set by the programme authorities for LAGs/LDS. Evidently, fulfilling a 50% quota would be more challenging, for example, due to the ex-officio system and the high share of men in key positions of rural society. Nevertheless, it sometimes just comes down to the willingness to put in the effort to find women who are suitable and willing to participate.

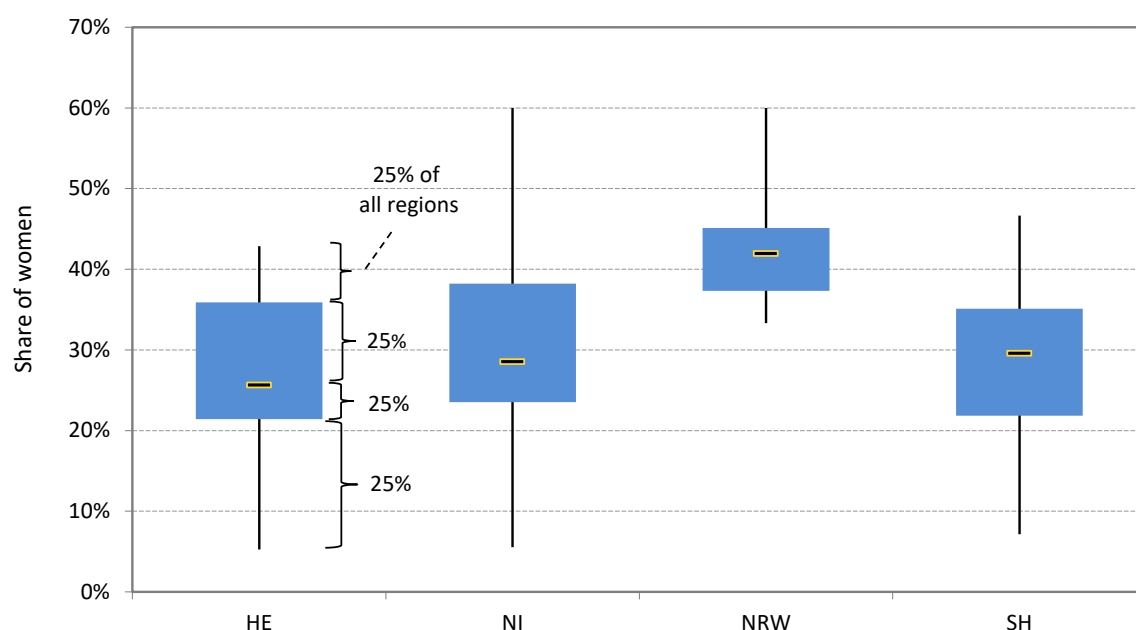


Fig 3. Boxplot: Share of women in LAG decision-making bodies in four German federal states. Source: own calculation based on LAG data (structures/activities) (2020)

Factors influencing female representation in the decision-making bodies of LAGs

There are other factors besides specific regulations for gender balance that can affect the share of females in LAGs such as the ratio of public and non-public actors. EU regulations require LAGs to involve a minimum of 50% non-public actors on the LAG board. In the four federal states examined, the share of members from the public sector usually lies around 40–50% while the members from civil society and the business sector make up around 50–60%. The public sector participants often take on an “ex officio” role, thus leeway in selecting representatives is limited. Municipalities are usually represented by their respective mayors, and within this specific group of actors, there is a clear male dominance. Regarding the civil society and local businesses, the “sending decision” is usually made by the organisations or groups themselves and is usually based on the position held, experience and commitment to LEADER. In both sectors, more men than women dominate in leading positions. In earlier funding periods, only around 20% of LAG board members were women, with some boards lacking female members completely (Pollermann et al., 2014b, p. 133).

As expected, the vast majority of representatives from the public sector in the LAGs examined is male (figure 4). In the other categories of institutional background, men outnumber women as well. 36% of female LAG members represent non-profit associations and 26% local municipalities or mayors. Most

male LAG members (41%) come from the local public sector and only 24% represent non-profit associations. As for NRW, the relatively high share of women achieved in the LAG since 2017 is mainly due to a higher share of non-profit associations (33%) compared to the federal states with a relatively low share of women, where only 25% (HE) and 23% (SH) of the LAG members come from non-profit associations.

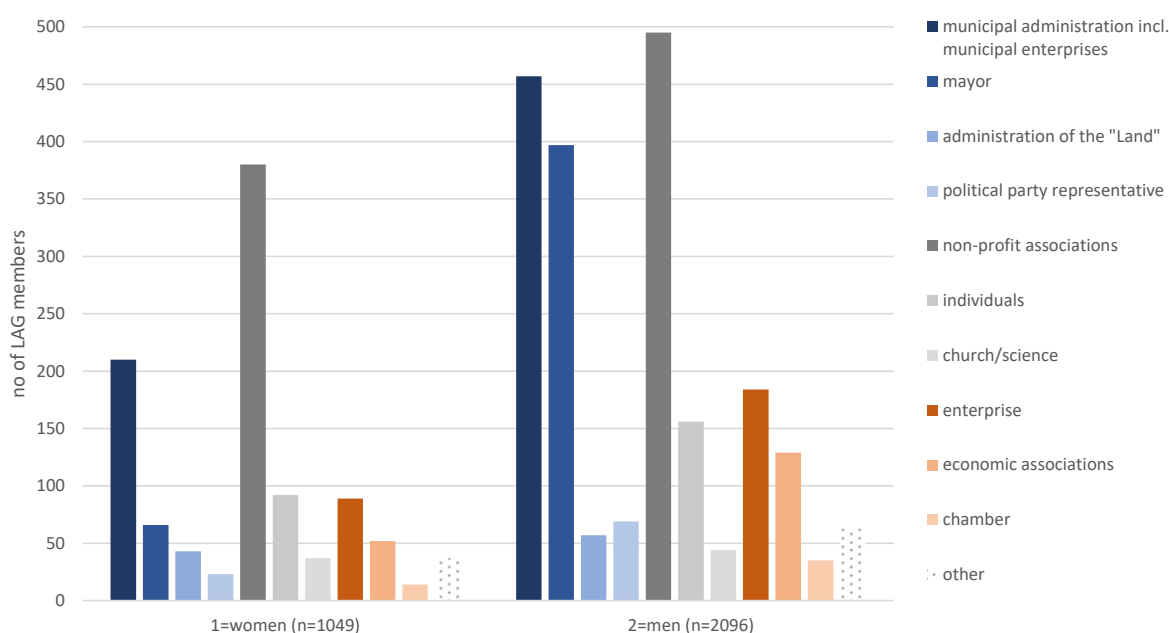


Fig 4. Institutional background of LAG members by gender. Source: LAG-data (structures/activities) (2020)

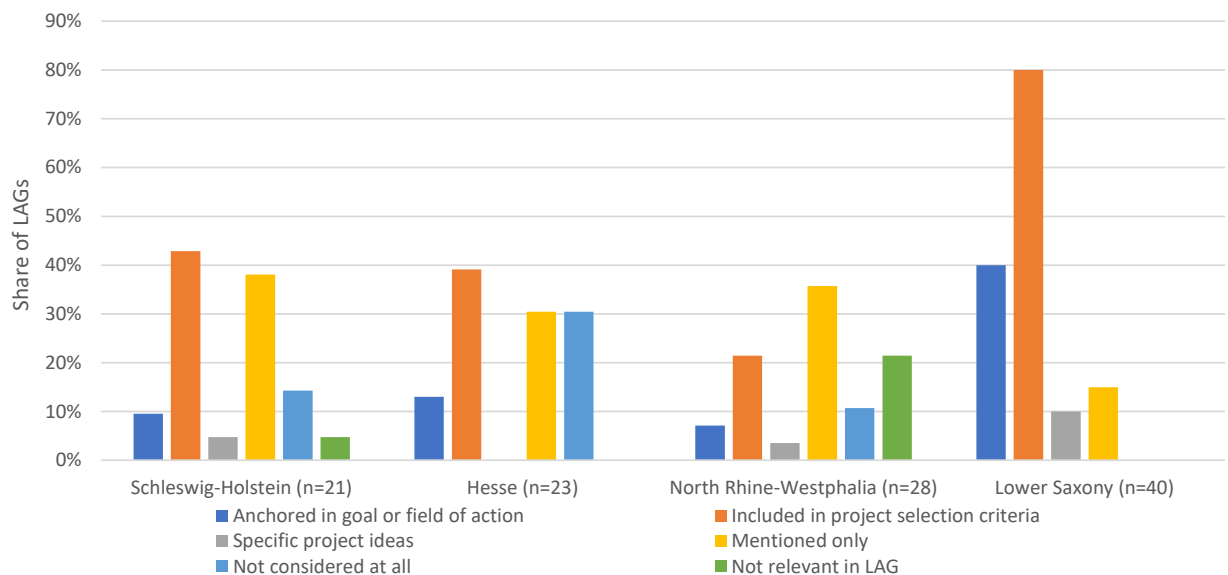
Altogether, it is confirmed that some structural discrimination is also present in LEADER (Bock & Derzken, 2008). Changes also depend on general shifts in society. Based on the observed trend in one federal state, if no binding(!) action is taken ("waiting for the trend"), a general gender balance in the LAGs would be reached no earlier than in 2050, the trends in the other federal states being similar (Raue, 2021, p. 33; 2022, p 44; 2023, p. 47).

Addressing gender topics in local development strategies

Both the objectives stated in LDS and the project selection criteria defined by LAGs offer room for integrating gender mainstreaming in the LEADER process. Figure 5 shows the extent to which gender equality was addressed in the LDS in the four study areas. The main area where gender mainstreaming took place were the project selection criteria. Here, Lower Saxony is the clear forerunner with 80% of the LAGs including criteria to promote gender equality in one form or another. In some cases, gender equality is anchored in a goal or one of the fields of action defined for the region and very few LAGs (10% or less, none in Hesse) had included specific project ideas in their LDS that address the issue. In a substantial number of cases, however, gender equality is only mentioned (without distinct objectives or requirements for projects) or not addressed at all. According to 21% of the LAG managers in NRW and 5% in Schleswig-Holstein, the issue of gender equality is of no relevance in their LAG.

The local development strategies as the basis for the recognition as a LEADER region should address the aspect of gender mainstreaming and guidelines or recommendations should be provided as to how this should be taken into account in the implementation of the strategies (Raue, 2023).

In order to ensure that female concerns are taken into account in the LEADER process, a targeted approach to female involvement in the preparation of LDS could be useful to help increase the participation of women or reduce male dominance. This could be done by issuing direct invitations or by organizing specific participation formats that address issues that are of relevance to women (Raue, 2023). The same approach can be taken to ensure that women are represented in the LDS implementation process.



*Multiple answers were possible in the first three categories.

Fig 5. Addressing gender equality in local development strategies. Source: survey of LAG managers (2018)

4.2 „What are the effects of unbalanced gender representation within the LAGs?“

To examine the influence of unbalanced gender representation within the LAGs we analysed differences in responses between male/female LAG-board-members concerning the aspects:

- Working process
- Consideration of selected target groups and subjects in implementation of the development strategy
- Project selection

As there is male dominance in most of the LAGs and especially the public sphere (municipalities) is predominantly represented by men, one could suppose that the working process within the LAG is influenced by this imbalance and that the perception of the quality of cooperation differs between female and male LAG members. In the questionnaire, the perception of the working process was captured by asking the level of satisfaction with Information flow, decision-making process and contents of decisions and the level of agreement with statements like “Meetings are results-oriented”, “Conflicts are dealt with constructively”, “The region as a whole is at the top of the agenda”, both on a scale from 1 = very satisfied/agree totally to 6 = not satisfied at all/disagree totally. A regression analysis (OLS) was done, controlling for other variables such as institutional background, age, share of women in LAG and federal state. No significant effect of the share of women in the LAG and the gender of the respondent were found, but some effects of age and federal state (context). The average value of satisfaction/agreement varied between 1.4 and 2.1 (variation between items and between federal states), indicating that the working process in the LAGs is predominantly good. According to Young (2002, 56) the degree of internal exclusion is determined by how individuals talk to each other and listen to each other’s views. The survey results suggest that internal exclusion because of communication culture might not be that distinct.

4.3 Consideration of different target groups and subjects in implementation of the development strategy

As outlined in Chapter 2.5, preferences of men and women differ, for example, on environmental and common welfare issues. This is also true for LAGs for some issues. In a survey, LAG members were asked for their opinion regarding whether certain topics and target groups were adequately considered in the implementation of the LDS. The target groups included in the question were families, elderly people, women, youth and people with disabilities, the topics were demographic change/basic services, agriculture, tourism, further economy/crafts/trade, environment and nature protection, climate

protection and migration. Figure 6 shows the results for the target group “women” and the topic “climate protection”. The results show clear differences in perception.

Regarding the question of how women/female-related topics are taken into account during the implementation of the local development strategies, 39% of women, but only 19% of men estimated that the target group “women” was inadequately considered (survey answers „too little“/„rather too little“). Climate protection is seen as insufficiently considered by 30% of male but 37% of female respondents, and 12% of male LAG members think that it is considered too much in LDS implementation compared to 7% of female LAG members.

A logit analysis was conducted to prove if the differences observed were valid, controlling for institutional background, age, federal state (context). Concerning the target group “women”, the probability to indicate „too little“/„rather too little“ is 19.2% points higher for women than for men, additionally also the institutional background and the context (federal state) has some influence with civil society representatives showing a higher probability to indicate „too little“/„rather too little“. Respondents from Lower Saxony indicating with higher probability “adequately” than respondents from the other three federal states, which corresponds with the more frequent integration of gender aspects in the LDS (see chapter 4.1.3). Significant differences were also found for the target groups elderly people and people with disabilities, where women also have a slightly higher probability to indicate that these groups were considered insufficiently. No differences in the assessment between female and male LAG members were found for the target groups “youth” and “families”.

The survey also delivers insights about the valuations of different societal topics. Controlled by age, institutional origin of respondent, context (federal state) and share of women in LAGs, significant differences between men and women were detected for the topics agriculture, tourism, environment/nature protection, climate protection and migration.

With regards to agriculture, the analysis reveals that women have an 8.2%-point higher probability to indicate that it is insufficiently considered in LDS implementation. But also, the share of women in the LAG has some impact. The higher the share of women in the LAG, the higher the probability that agriculture is assessed as considered too much/rather too much, which leads to the preliminary conclusion that women play a role in promoting the topic in the LAG discussions. And also, some context effects could be observed.

For the topics “tourism” and “environment/nature protection” female respondents have a 4.9%-point lower probability to indicate that it is considered too much in the implementation of the LDS. With respect to climate protection and migration, the probability of female respondents to find that the topics are insufficiently considered is 4.4%-points and 6.8%-points higher compared to men.

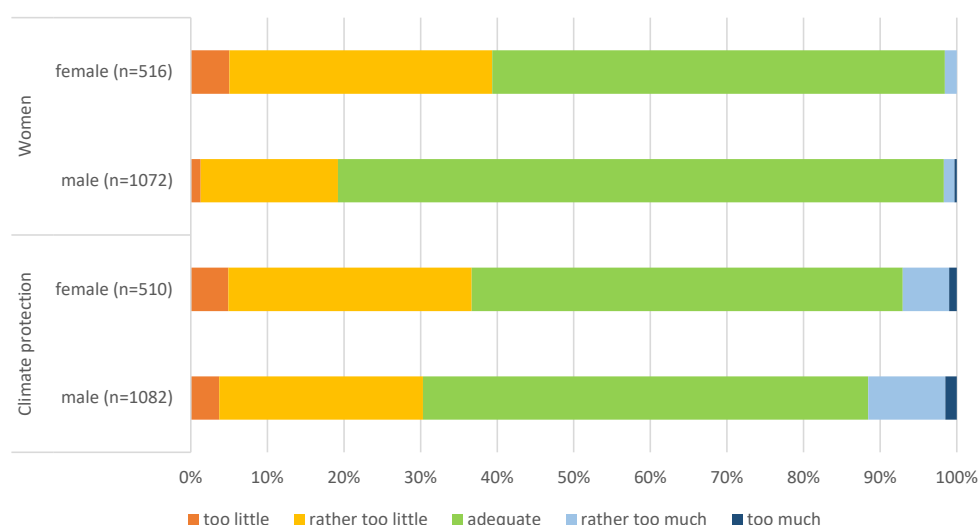


Fig 6. Assessment of the adequacy of consideration of selected target groups and topics during LDS implementation by gender (example) Source: LAG board member survey (2018)

Concerning the topics of demographic change/basic service provision and further economy/crafts/trade, there were no differences in the assessment between men and women.

Project selection

As mentioned above, gender equality is anchored in project selection criteria to a certain extent but the question remains, how it is put into practice. Figure 7 shows estimations made by LAG board members regarding gender aspects in project selection. The answers suggest that women have higher demands for consideration of gender justice within projects than men. Women have a 49%-point lower probability to agree with the statement (categories 1 and 2) than men. Some influence of the context could be identified: compared to North Rhine-Westphalia, LAG members from Hesse had a slightly lower probability to agree and respondents from Lower Saxony had a lower probability to give a more neutral estimation (categories 3 and 4). The share of female LAG members had no significant effect.

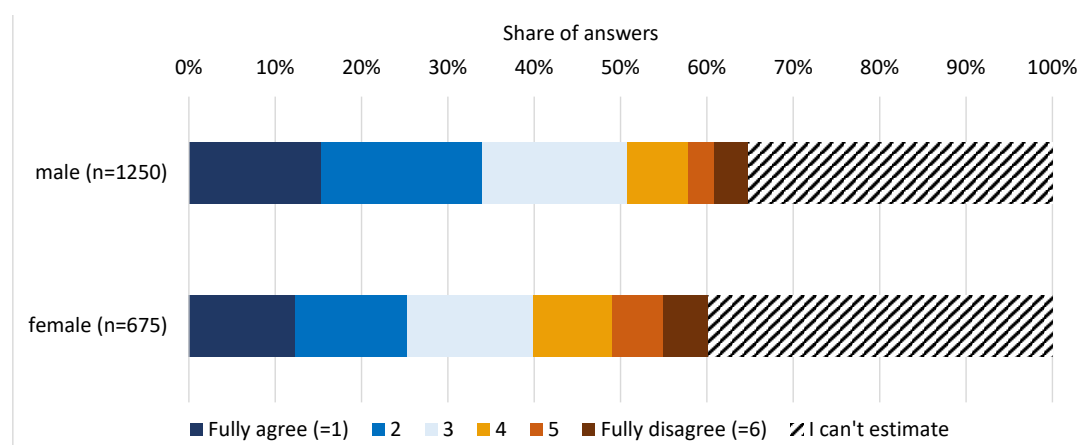


Fig 7. Estimations on the statement „Regarding project contents gender justice is taken into account“ by gender. Source: LAG board member survey (2021), own calculation

Beyond this expectable difference, we observed that a large share of both male and female respondents was unable or unwilling to express an opinion on the matter. The reluctance was lower among LAG members who already had experience in the previous funding period (2007–2013) compared to LAG members who only entered the LAG in the 2014–2020 funding period. Although experience seems to help, clarifications and an increase in gender competence are needed.

5. Conclusion and discussion

The research findings from our analyses of empirical data of surveys in LEADER regions confirm findings from the literature (Bock, 2015; Oedl-Wieser, 2016; Thuesen and Derkzen, 2016; RegioPlus Consulting, 2022).

Despite gradual increases in the share of females in the LAGs examined over two funding periods, a gender balance has not yet been achieved. This can be explained by the mostly “soft” regulations for gender representation and by the general prevailing male dominance in both the public and non-public sectors also in rural areas. Results also show quotas to be the most efficient instrument to increase the share of females on LAG boards of LEADER regions. Also, in LDS, gender is considered in a very limited way, predominantly in the criteria for project selection.

Regarding the effects of underrepresentation, some expectations were confirmed, mainly that there are gender-related differences in awareness for certain topics and the concerns of certain target groups. Female LAG members in our analyses are more inclined to show advocacy, not only for themselves (as a demographic group), but also for more vulnerable members of society, like elderly people and people with disabilities. Our findings also show that female LAG members are more aware or concerned

with issues of climate protection than their male counterparts, which is in line with research in other contexts (see various literature in Pearson et al., 2017; Spitzner et al., 2020). This implies that a gender balance in the decision-making bodies of LAGs could have an impact on the contents implemented with LEADER, e.g., promoting climate or environmental action on the local and regional levels. On the contrary, a persistent underrepresentation of females might have negative implications for rural development approaches such as a lack of democratic legitimation or a lower appraisal for urgent topics and tasks. In consequence, a male-dominated view could favour priority settings, which are not able to improve living conditions for females and may even contribute to creating environments that foster a gender-selective depopulation of rural areas.

The perceptions of gender justice in the project selection process are firstly an effect from the individual level. Men seem to have lower demands than women. However, a higher share of women in the LAG board does not have a significant influence to improve the estimations. The high number of respondents who were not able to make an assessment is a clear hint that more gender competence is needed in LEADER.

To make an effective contribution to gender mainstreaming, the participation of women should be fostered by implementing “top-down” regulations (like quotas). This also applies to “bottom-up” approaches like LEADER and action should be taken at the EU level as well as in the federal states. In the case of a bottom-up approach using the LEADER principles, it is important to take into account that the LAGs work with local resources and voluntary engagement of different stakeholders/local communities. Thus, the LAGs should have the freedom of decision about their members and a strict 50%-quota could create too narrow restrictions. Nevertheless, results show that only establishing “soft” regulations that merely require LAGs to aim at achieving a gender balance in their decision-making bodies tend to reproduce the prevalent exclusion mechanisms for women. Thus, we recommend that programme authorities introduce a fixed quota of 33% as one of the LAG approval criteria. Taking into account the various circumstances in the LEADER regions, an “opt-out” possibility is considered reasonable, for example, as it prevents relevant (male) LAG members from previous funding periods from being dismissed just for the sake of gender balance. However, it should be permitted only very restrictively so as not to induce demotivation in local women who might be suitable and interested in joining the LAGs.

Up to now, only some German federal states have followed the recommendations and implemented a quota. Also, at EU level, there is no regulation on this. Further debate can be expected for the post 2027 policy process.

In order to effectuate a sustainable structural change in the LAGs, it is essential to understand that quota regulations alone will not do the trick. Also, LAGs have to make an active effort to find women who are suitable and willing to participate. As gender segregation is still a consistent reality in rural development processes, the kind of organisations invited or selected for being part of the LAG can influence the gender balance of the LAG board essentially. Valuable questions for LAGs might be:

- How can we involve women more actively in the LDS development and LAG work?
- Are there organisations that can bring in more female perspectives that have not yet been involved in the LEADER process and that are worth approaching?
- Does it always have to be the mayors, or can others (women) also represent the municipalities?
- Can the LAG structures of a region possibly be further developed in such a way that long-standing male LAG members can relinquish their place on the decision-making body but continue to contribute with their experience?
- Should/could the meeting culture become more attractive and family-friendly?

Nevertheless, the results also reveal that a gender quota is not sufficient to include gender equality in LEADER implementation. Requirements for the LDS like performing gender segregated data analysis, explaining how to consider in the different fields of action of the LDS etc., are helpful to put the topic on the agenda. Further, there is a need to raise competence and awareness. This is linked to general societal developments and an increase of gender equality through long-term cultural changes (Inglehart and

Norris, 2003). This should be taken into account in future studies, which should include examinations of the attitudes of participants as well as long-term observations.

The topic of gender justice should be placed more in LEADER contexts. Issues surrounding gender representation/justice should be put on the agenda as a way of fostering capacity building and to raise awareness in local communities and within programme authorities. The LAGs also need assistance on how to consider gender equality in projects i.e., on public infrastructure, basic service provision. An example of possible instruments are guidelines for project selection processes and project implementations or service units offering advice on the issue.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Dr. Stefan Schwarze from Thünen Institute of Farm economics for carrying out parts of the statistical analyses.

This work is based on the findings of the Five-Länder-Evaluation, funded by the federal states of Hesse, Lower Saxony/Bremen, North Rhine-Westphalia and Schleswig-Holstein and the European Commission.

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Annex

Table 1: Consideration of the target group “women”: Multivariate model. Source: own calculation

			coefficient	Standard Error	z	P> z	95% Confidence Limits		
Too little									
Resp. is female	role	State	,4578081	,1528598	2,99	0,003	,1582085	,7574078	
		Economy	,4694627	,1759737	2,67	0,008	,1245606	,8143648	
			-,9794602	,1341238	-7,30	0,000	-1,242338	-,7165824	
		Age	-,0078893	,0055171	-1,43	0,153	-0,187026	,002924	
		% women/LAG	,4793149	,5680023	0,84	0,399	-,6339493	1,592579	
		Land							
		SH	,0111	,1902761	0,06	0,953	-,3618343	,3840343	
		HE	,0462013	,1983646	0,23	0,816	-,3425863	,4349888	
		NI	,4163745	,1495257	2,78	0,005	,1233095	,7094395	
		_cons	1,290115	,4334316	2,98	0,003	,4406052	2,139626	
appropriate (only differences are listed)									
Resp. is female	role	State	-1,143881	,5202756	-2,2	0,028	-2,163602	-,1241597	
		Economy							
		Age							
		% women/LAG							
		Land							
		SH							
		HE							
		NI							
		_cons	-3,716865	,4082158	-9,11	0,000	-4,516953	-2,91677	
			marginal effects	Standard Error	z	P> z	95% Confidence Limits		
Resp.is female	1		,1920749	,027557	6,97	0,000	,1380642	,2460855	
	2		-,1809375	,0266941	-6,78	0,000	-,2332569	-,1286181	
	3		-,0111374	,0027295	-4,08	0,000	-,016487	-,0057877	
Role									
State	1		-,0836255	,0276662	-3,02	0,003	-,1378503	-,0294007	
	2		,0954865	,0273895	3,49	0,000	,041804	,149169	
	3		-,011861	,0048114	-2,47	0,014	-,0212912	-,0024307	
Civil society (Reference group)									
Economy	1		-,0855311	,030451	-2,81	0,005	-,1452139	-,0258482	
	2		,0753743	,0265014	2,84	0,004	,0234324	,1273161	
	3		,0101568	,0047686	2,13	0,033	,0008104	,0195031	
NRW (Reference group)									
	SH	1		-,0021442	,0367497	-0,06	0,953	-,0741722	,0698838
		2		,0020191	,0346017	0,06	0,953	-,065799	,0698371
		3		,0001251	,0021482	0,06	0,954	-,0040853	,0043356
	HE	1		-,008866	,0379781	-0,23	0,815	-,0833017	,0655697
		2		,0083362	,0356852	0,23	0,815	-,0616055	,0782779
		3		,0005298	,0022969	0,23	0,818	-,0039721	,0050317
	NI	1		-,073982	,0273465	-2,71	0,007	-,1275801	-,0203839
		2		,0682408	,025366	2,69	0,007	,0185244	,1179572
		3		,0057412	,0024361	2,36	0,018	,0009666	,0105159

Table 2: Consideration of the target group “elderly people”: Multivariate model. Source: own calculation

		coefficient	standard Error	z	P> z	95% Confidence Limits	
Too little							
role	State	,4628125	,1510627	3,06	0,002	,1667351	,75889
	Economy	,1036885	,1682539	0,62	0,538	,2260832	,4334602
	Resp. is female	-,3919338	,1145383	-3,42	0,001	-,6164247	-,1674429
	Age	-,0349296	,0064289	0,30	0,766	-1,084852	1,473997
	%	,1945728	,6527797	0,30	0,766	-	1,473997
	women/LAG					1,8084852	
Land	SH	-,1419285	,2684114	-053	0,597	-,6680053	,3841483
	HE	-,2093986	,2539256	-0,82	0,410	-,7070837	,2882864
	NI	-,1291777	,1516459	-0,85	0,394	-,4263982	,1680427
	_cons	3,413503	,4706419	7,25	0,000	2,491062	4,335945
appropriate (only differences are listed)							
role	State	-,2714413	,2530718	-1,07	0,283	-,767453	,2245704
	Economy						
	Resp. is female						
	Age						
	%						
	women/LAG						
Land	SH						
	HE						
	NI						
	_cons	-,7465417	,4481431	-1,67	0,096	-1,624886	,1318027
		marginal effects	Standard Error	z	P> z	95% Confidence Limits	
Resp. is female	1	,0583818	,0166997	3,50	0,000	,025651	,0911127
	2	-,0385663	,0109791	-3,51	0,000	-,060085	-,0170476
	3	-,0198154	,006347	-3,12	0,002	-	-,0073755
						,0322554	
Role							
State	1	-,0676593	,0216889	-3,12	0,002	-	-,0251499
						,1101687	
	2	,0808624	,0207327	3,90	0,000	,040227	,1214978
	3	-,0132031	,0120862	-1,09	0,275	-	,0104855
						,0368917	
Civil society (Reference group)							
Economy	1	-,0168167	,0270387	-0,62	0,534	-	,0361781
						,0698115	
	2	,0108892	,0172613	0,63	0,528	-	,0447208
						,0229423	
	3	,0059275	,0098308	0,60	0,547	-	,0251955
						,0133405	

Table 3: Consideration of the topic “agriculture”: Multivariate model. Source: own calculation

		coefficient	Standard Error	z	P> z	[95% Confidence Limits]	
Too little							
role	State	-,2794867	,1547597	-1,81	0,071	-,5828101	,0238367
	Economy	-,6339292	,1877815	-3,38	0,001	-1,001974	-,2658843
Resp. is female		-,4093252	,1321107	-3,10	0,002	-,6682574	-,150393
Age		,0121363	,0060972	1,99	0,047	,0001859	,0240866
% women/LAG		0,002717	,0061952	0,44	0,661	-,0094253	,0148593
Land	HE	,7378379	,2216273	3,33	0,001	,3034563	1,172219
	NI	,3954144	,1473805	2,68	0,007	,106554	,6842748
_cons		,2518007	,4192767	0,60	0,548	-,5699665	1,073568
appropriate (only differences are listed)							
role	State	,452535	,2430064	1,86	0,063	-,0237489	,9288189
	Economy	,4401308	,2848663	1,55	0,122	-,118197	,9984585
Resp. is female							
Age							
% women/LAG		,0193023	,0074059	2,61	0,009	,004787	,0338176
Land	HE						
	NI						
_cons		-4,147153	,4474223	-9,27	0,000	-5,024084	-3,270221
		marginal effects	Standard Error	z	P> z	95% Confidence Limits	
Resp. is female	1	,0823871	,0272222	3,03	0,002	,0290325	,1357416
	2	-,0519092	,0184037	-2,82	0,005	-,0879797	-,0158387
	3	-,0304779	,0093971	-3,24	0,001	-,0488959	-,0120599
Role							
State (Reference group)							
Civil society	1	,0526132	,028833	1,82	0,068	-,0038985	,1091248
	2	-,0868798	,0275717	-3,15	0,002	-,1409193	-,0328404
	3	,0342667	,0188307	1,82	0,069	-,0026407	,0711741
Economy	1	,1281244	,0383325	3,34	0,001	,052994	,2032547
	2	-,1612758	,0373806	-4,31	0,000	-,2345404	-,0880112
	3	,0331514	,0228377	1,45	0,147	-,0116096	,0779124
% women/LAG	1 1	,2816943	,0127137	22,16	0,000	,2567759	,3066127
	1 2	,2712449	,0248786	10,90	0,000	,2224838	,3200061
	1 3	,2610345	,045703	5,71	0,000	,1714583	,3506107
	2 1	,6316985	,0118679	53,23	0,000	,6084378	,6549591
	2 2	,6069767	,021983	27,61	0,000	,5638907	,6500626
	2 3	,5706296	,0445604	12,81	0,000	,4832928	,6579664
	3 1	,0866072	,0071018	12,20	0,000	,072688	,1005264
	3 2	,1217784	,0172875	7,04	0,000	,0878955	,1556613
	3 3	,1683359	,0408577	4,12	0,000	,0882563	,2484155
NRW (Reference group)							
HE	1	-,1425453	,0405331	-3,52	0,000	-,2219887	-,0631019
	2	,0827261	,0227304	3,64	0,000	,0381754	,1272768
	3	,0598192	,0204056	2,93	0,003	,019825	,0998134
NI	1	-,0820189	,0313787	-2,61	0,009	-,1435201	-,0205176
	2	,0543459	,0217477	2,50	0,012	,0117212	,0969707
	3	,0276729	,0101408	2,73	0,006	,0077973	,0475485

Table 4: Consideration of the topic “climate protection”: Multivariate model. Source: own calculation

			coefficient	Standard Error	z	P> z	[95% Confidence Limits]	
Too little								
Resp. is female	role	Civil society	-,488007	,1132637	-4,31	0,000	-,7099998	-,2660142
		Economy	,2626147	,172397	1,52	0,128	-,0752771	,6005065
			-,2924888	,1251698	-2,34	0,019	-,537817	-,0471606
	Age		-,0014158	,0057842	-0,24	0,807	-,127527	,009921
	% women/LAG		,0030218	,0079496	0,38	0,704	-,0125592	,0186028
	Land	NRW	,1987053	,2788795	0,71	0,476	-,3478886	,7452991
		NI	,3811279	,2227103	1,71	0,087	-,0553763	,8176321
	_cons		,6743641	,3886137	1,74	0,083	-,0873048	1,436033
Appropriate (only differences are listed)								
Resp. is female	role	Civil society						
		Economy	0,8805643	,2337368	3,77	0,000	,424486	1,33868
	Age							
	% women/LAG							
	Land	HE						
		NI						
	_cons		2,527295	,3980969	-6,35	0,000	-3,307551	-1,74704
marginal effects			Standard Error	z	P> z	95% Confidence Limits		
Resp. is female	1	,0435369	,0311054	1,40	0,162	-,0174286	,1045025	
	2	,0094472	,0334219	0,28	0,777	-,0560584	,0749528	
	3	-,0529842	,0165728	-3,20	0,001	-,0854663	-,020502	
Role								
State (Reference group)								
Civil society	1	,1101825	,0256259	4,30	0,000	,0599566	,1604085	
	2	-,0780716	,0194732	-4,01	0,000	-,1162384	-,0399048	
	3	-,0321109	,0075042	-4,28	0,000	-,0468189	-,017403	
Economy	1	-,0518148	,0333111	-1,56	0,120	-,1171035	,0134738	
	2	-,0486699	,0392458	-1,24	0,215	-,1255903	,0282505	
	3	,1004847	,0312377	3,22	0,001	,03926	,1617094	
Role								
State	1	-,1345686	,0249265	-5,40	0,000	-,1834237	-,0857136	
	2	,1366202	,0250882	5,45	0,000	,0874483	,1857921	
	3	-,0020516	,0153622	-0,13	0,894	-,0321609	,0280577	
Civil society (Reference group)								
Economy	1	-,1923281	,0326718	-5,89	0,000	-,2563636	-,1282925	
	2	,1010757	,0189999	5,32	0,000	,0638365	,1383148	
	3	,0912524	,0202469	4,51	0,000	,0515693	,1309355	