

Ready for the next step?

The Human Capital of German Renewable Energy Cooperatives´ Management with a view to implementing new business models

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Community energy as success model

- European Commission and national governments ask for citizen involvement in the energy transition
- Different forms of community energy projects evolved, e.g. cooperatives, non-profit and not-only-for-profit organisations... (see Becker et al. 2017)
- Community energy as “projects where communities (of place or interest) exhibit a high degree of ownership and control, [and are] benefiting collectively from the outcomes” (Seyfang et al. 2013: 978).
- Renewable Energy Cooperatives (RECs) in Germany as...
 - ... „new“ actors on the German energy market (Müller et al. 2015)
 - ... democratic organization and governance of RE projects (Yildiz et al. 2015; Herbes et al. 2017)
 - ... basis for acceptance, regional added value and identification (Ohlhorst 2018)
 - ... relevant players (DGRV 2016)

→ COMMUNITY-BASED DRIVERS OF THE ENERGY TRANSITION

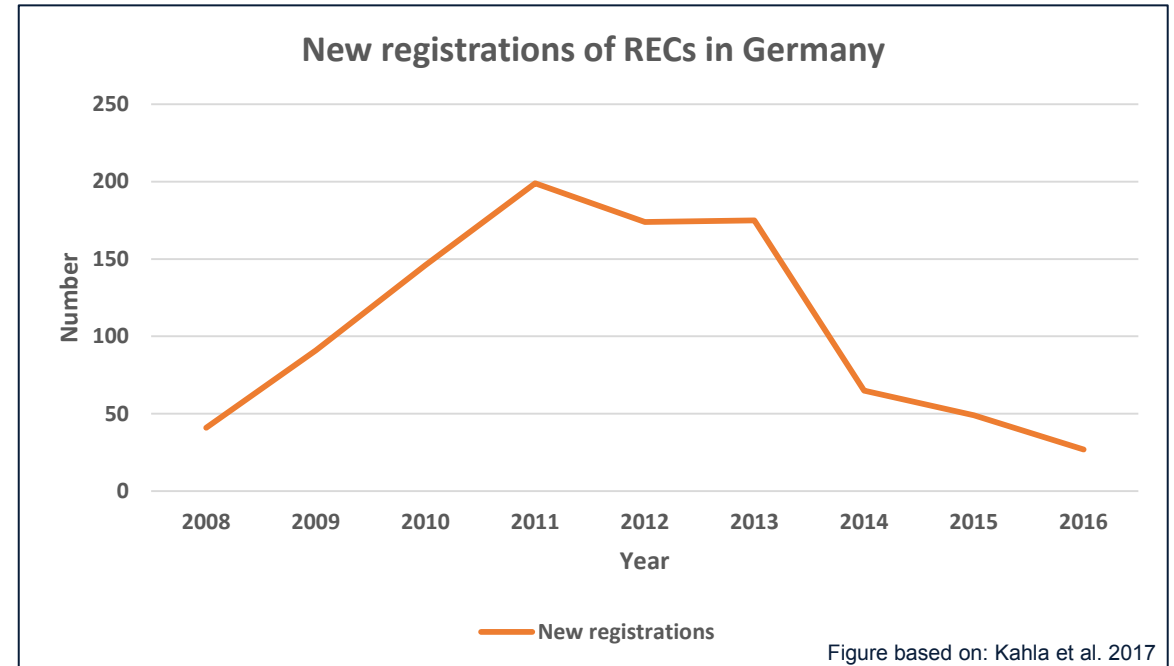
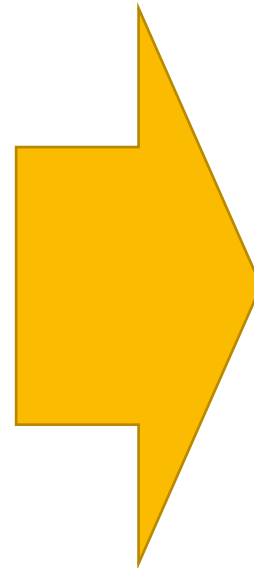
Community energy bogged down

Reduced feed-in-tariffs (Klagge et al. 2016)

Uncertainties through the Capital Investment Act (Herbes et al. 2017)

Direct marketing (Herbes et al. 2017)

Tendering system (Müller et al. 2015)



Problem:

- Decline in (new) cooperative engagement
- New business models more complex and risky
- **Managers often overstrained** (time and qualifications)

(Müller et al. 2015; Herbes et al. 2017)

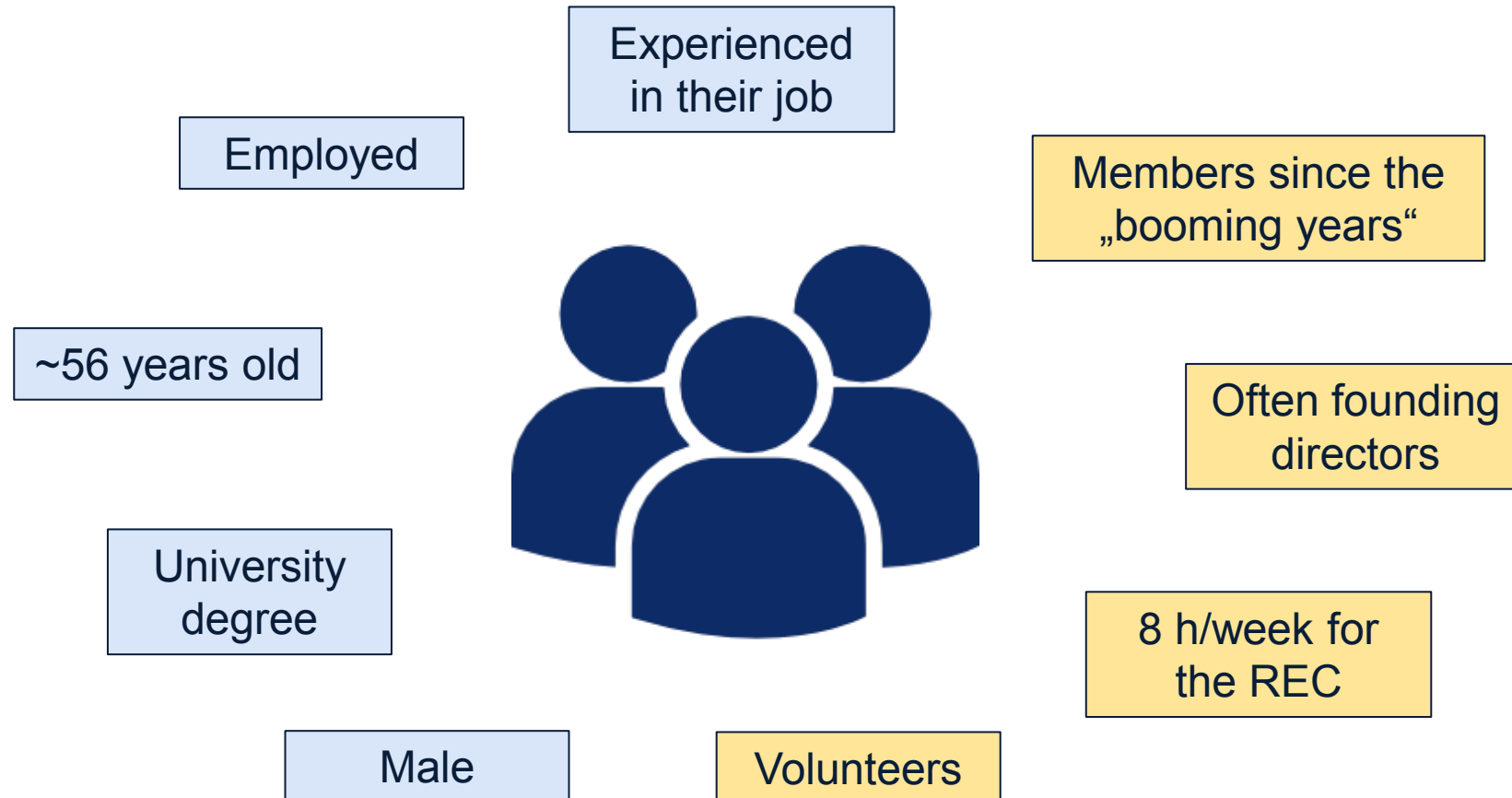
Research Questions

- Who are the management board members of RECs in Germany (demographic characteristics)?
- What are the qualifications of management board members with regard to implementing new business models?

Methodological Approach

- Online survey among REC management board members (and supervisory board members)
- Extensively pretested in autumn 2017
- Field phase: 10/2017 – 02/2018 (including a dedicated follow-up via telephone)
- ~ 760 RECs contacted (out of 1024 coops in Germany (Kahla et al. 2017))
- Response rates:
 - RECs in the sample: 125, i.e. at least 12% of all RECs
 - Management board members in our sample: 187, i.e. at least 6.6% of all management board members in Germany
- Calculation of an aggregated human capital (HC) index

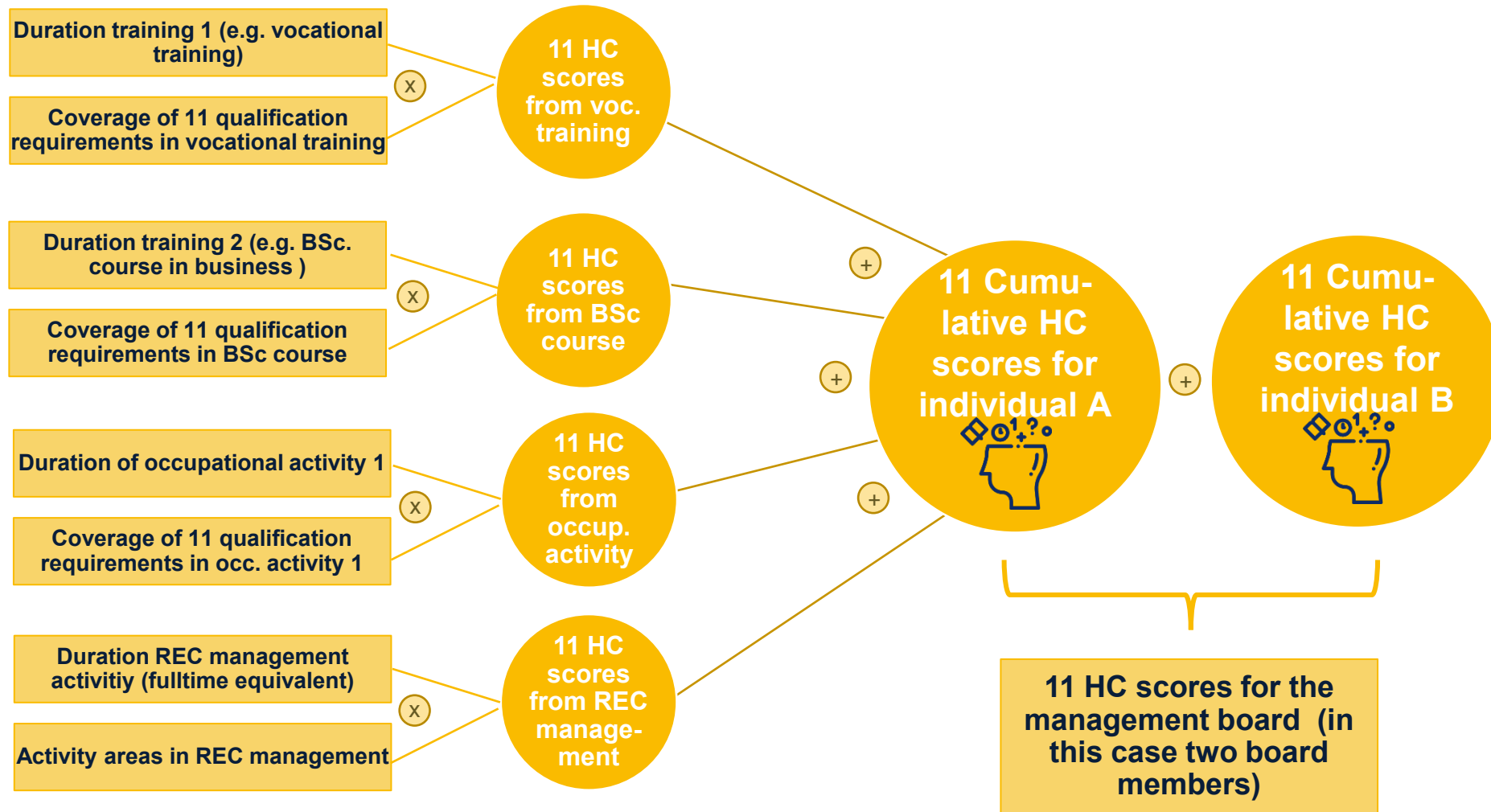
Results: Typical REC managers



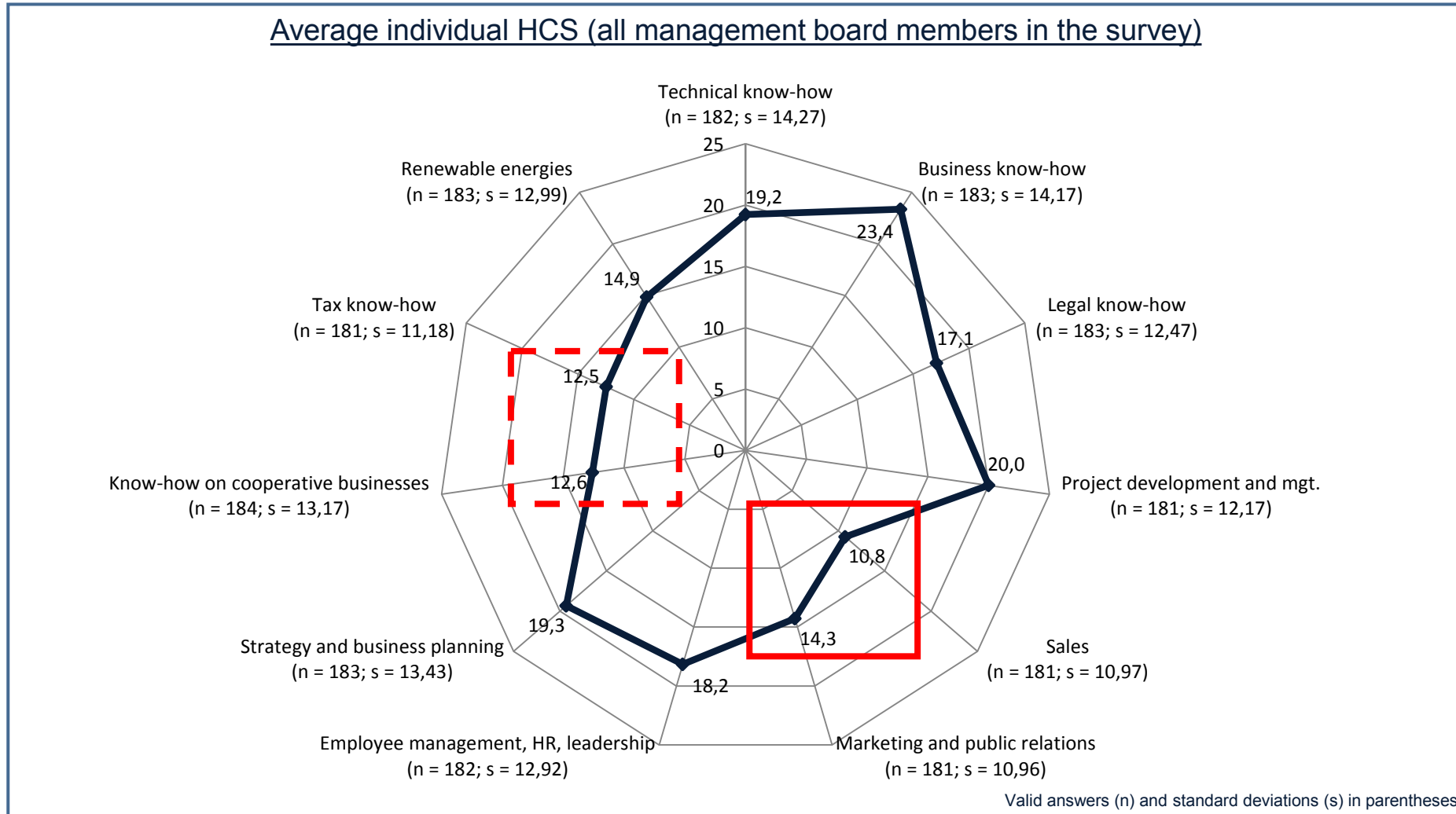
General information

REC information

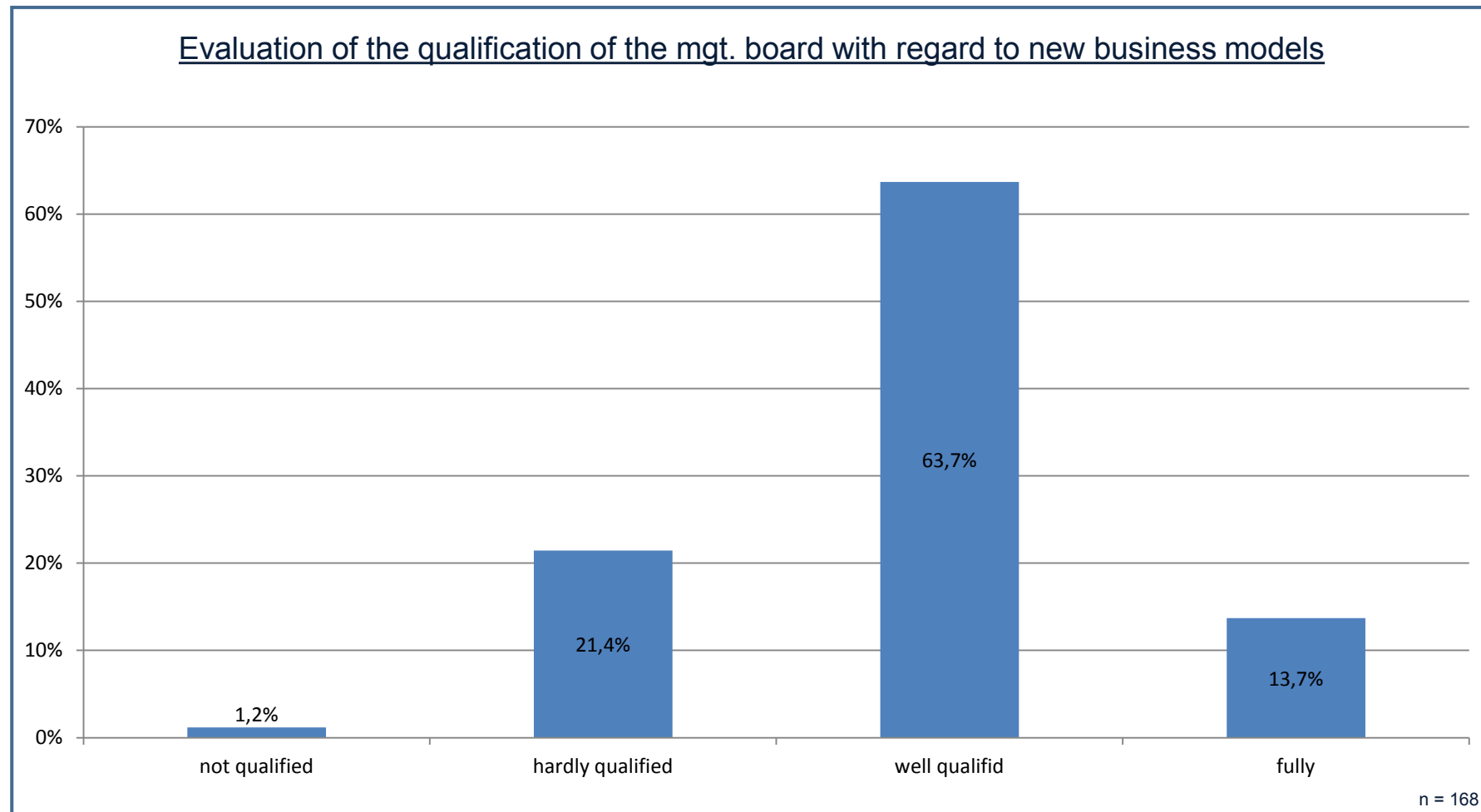
Human Capital Index



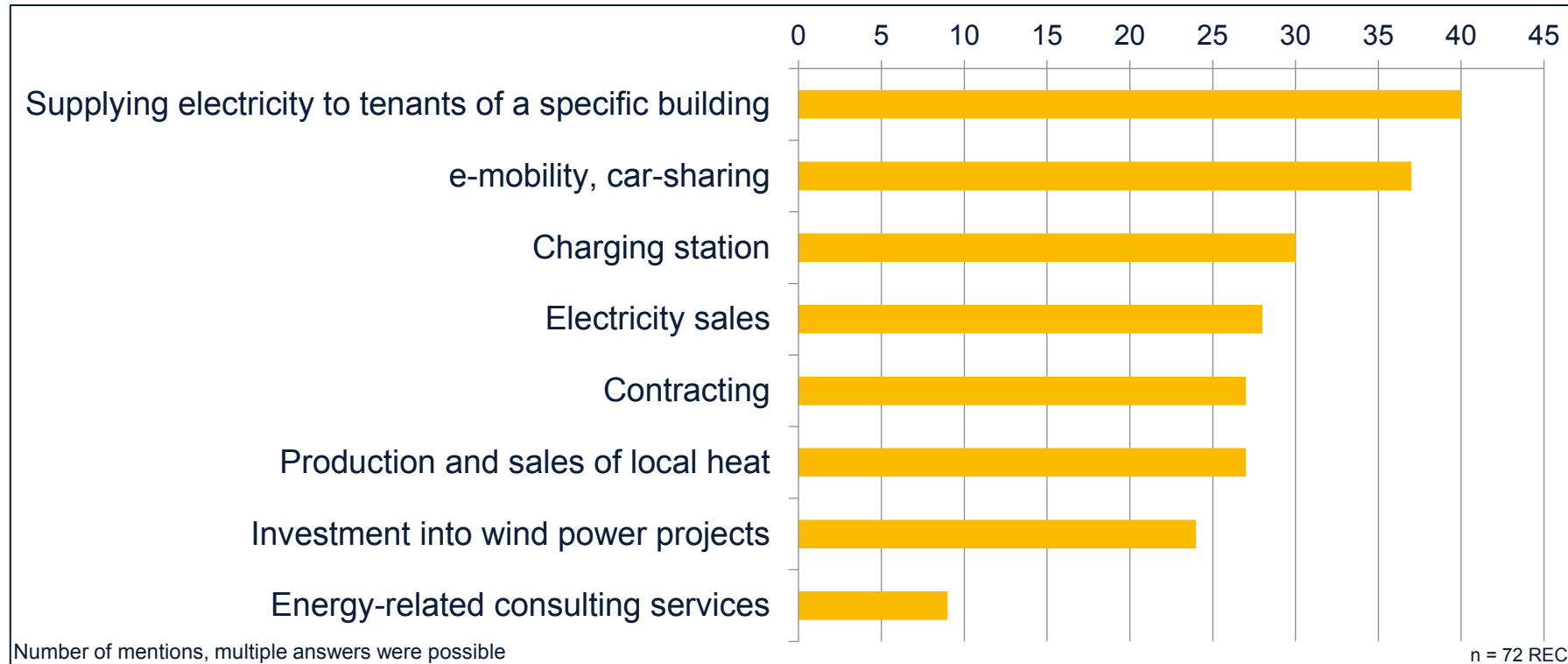
Results: Human Capital Scores



Results: Evaluation of qualifications



Results: Planned new business models



44% of all RECs who answered this question (n=121) are currently planning to change or expand their business models (according to their management board members)

Conclusion

- New business models demand other competencies
- Divergence of requirements and knowledge sets (and to a certain degree: self-perception) especially with regard to (necessary) new business models
- Volunteers certainly have time constraints
- Solutions?
 - Resource pooling
 - Training and development of managers
 - New (younger?) and paid managers
 - Partnerships

Literature

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