

Seedbed intervention



Fig. 57 Illustration based on canvas input by the participants/ picture credit: Linda Blåfors



Umeå

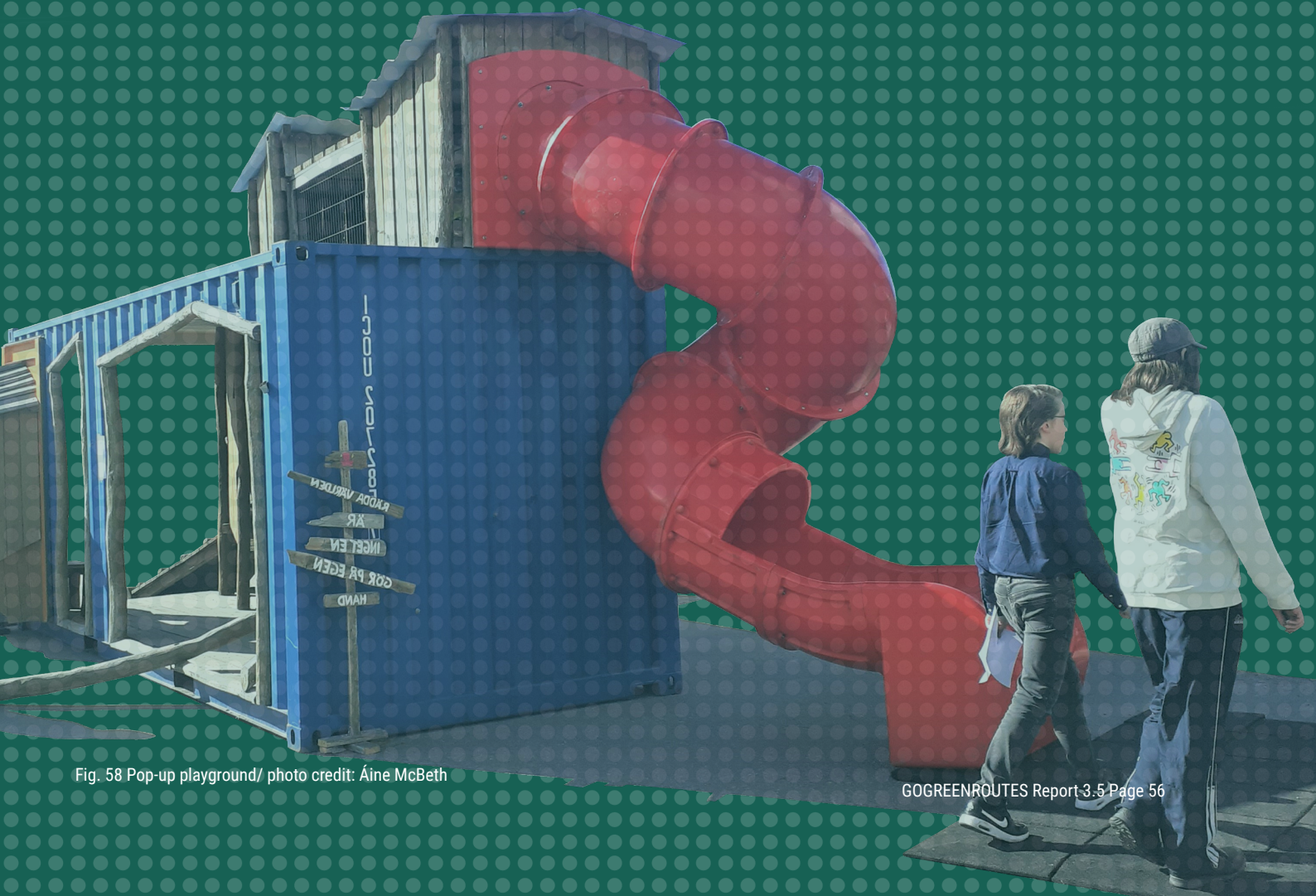
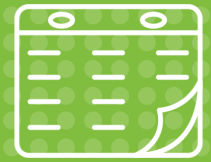


Fig. 58 Pop-up playground/ photo credit: Áine McBeth

Umeå



Fig. 59 Pop-up playground/ photo credit: Áine McBeth



2nd of September 2022
1 pm – 6 pm
Bölevägen



Estimated 200 people
visited the event



47 people filled out the survey

The Cultivating City of Umeå carried out its seedbed intervention. Bölevägen is the name of the street that will be reconstructed over the next two years, along four green spaces that will be designed and developed. The seedbed intervention site, Aspgården, was an empty area close to an English school along Bölevägen. The aim of the seedbed intervention was to collect ideas of the citizens on how to design the largest of the green areas at Bölevägen and to raise awareness of the possibilities to re-design the surroundings. The event was a drop-in style with a set agenda including talks and concerts. Visitors could find out about the reconstruction of Bölevägen, GoGreenRoutes and new housing schemes that will be developed in the area. Visitors discussed the project with municipality members and were encouraged to fill out a survey relating to the parklet. In addition to the families who came to the event, there were also a group of five-year-olds from Böle Preschool, a large group of schoolchildren and a school-age childcare group. Pictures of the children from Böle Preschool where they had previously drawn how they wanted the green patch at their pre-school to look like were hung up for public viewing. The event was promoted using posters for advertising, a press release, flyers posted to property owners and targeted Facebook advertising.



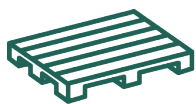
Fig. 60 Band playing/
photo credit: Áine McBeth



Scan me to find more pictures from the event!



Fig. 61 Collage of seedbed interventions/ photo credit: Umeå Kommun/ Julia Gäckle/ Áine McBeth



Alejandro Hajek Coll and his School of Architecture students built an amphitheatre, called “Pallet Parliament” out of pallets. The School of Architecture also painted patterns in the asphalt to bring vibrancy to the abandoned car park. They had borrowed decorations and flowers from the city hall reception and the UmeCom festival to increase the greenery in the area.



The amphitheatre gave space for two bands to perform, attracting visitors, even those who usually don't get involved in consultation processes. One of the bands had an average age of over 80, their fans seemed to be around the same age. This helped ensure that insights gathered covered an intergenerational perspective.



The municipality team cleared the area, removed mounds of soil, swept the asphalt and assembled the ‘Cado box’ (a pop-up playground). Children who visited the seedbed intervention played here. The Cado box and benches remain at Aspgården until it is taken in during the winter.

How nice that something is happening in our area!

I like that you can go there and roll snowmen, make snow angels, etc. I don't want the whole area to be shovelled or rebuilt, it's nice that it's a little open and untouched.

Coffee, play and relaxation



Bölevägen will be under reconstruction for two years with the addition of a preschool and flats. During this time the Umeå Municipality will allow the citizens to use the space where the seedbed intervention took place (Aspgården). The event closed with a discussion on how to organize the people who want to animate the space during reconstruction.

Pictures of the day



Fig. 62 GoGreenRoutes info tent setup/ photo credit: Umeå Kommun

There were two tents set up at the seedbed intervention. At the first tent participants could find out about the detailed plans for the area over the next 2 years, before moving to the second tent where they shared their thoughts on what could be incorporated into the green space for the new plans.



Fig. 63 'Swingin' Grandpas' performing at the event/ photo credit: Umeå Kommun

Over 200 participants came along as there was an exciting schedule with bands playing and a pop up playground!



Fig. 64 Tent to fill out the survey/ photo credit: Áine McBeth

The local school students attended the event and took part in the photovoice method of engagement. They took photos of elements of the area that they liked using an instant polaroid camera. Many photographed the flowers and nature around the carpark.

Preparation by the city

The Umeå seedbed intervention was prepared collectively by the Umeå municipality team (led by Eva Lövheim), Alejandro Hajek Coll (Umeå municipality) and GoGreenRoutes partners. The Umeå city GoGreenRoutes team helped make posters for advertising, flyers to send to the property owners in the Bölevägen area and targeted Facebook advertising. A press release was also sent out on the 25th of August. Printed flyers advertising the event were hand delivered by members of the team. Unfortunately, a large local employer in the area Volvo dropped out of the event unexpectedly, but wrote about the event in their weekly newsletter and urged its staff to attend, which many did. A sign was erected at the target area a week beforehand, with text explaining the development of "Bölevägen", so people would understand the abandoned car park would be animated with a temporary amphitheatre and pop up park as part of the seedbed intervention. The survey to be completed by participants was created on esMaker, an online survey and analysis tool.

A member of the preparations team removed mounds of soil, the asphalt was swept and the Cado box was assembled (a pop-up playground). This pop up playground was constructed from an old metal freight container. Additionally benches and six large flower pots were put in place. Alejandro Hajek Coll and his School of Architecture students built an amphitheatre, called "Pallet Parliament" out of pallets. Pupils from the English School adjacent to the seedbed intervention site helped Mr Hajek Coll and the students to build the Pallet Parliament. The School of Architecture had also painted patterns in the asphalt bringing vibrancy to the abandoned car park. Alejandro also assisted the municipality in completing a layout sketch of the area that could be sent to the Police for the police permit. Decorations were borrowed from the city hall reception and the UmeCom festival that took place the weekend before in Brosparken. The preparations were highly collaborative with sustainability built into the heart of the process, through the use of recycled materials.

The English school had an open house from 3-5pm and they sent people over to the seedbed intervention event. Interns documented with mobile cameras and other municipality staff members from the planning department were also there for a while and helped where it was needed at the time. The municipality also hired a sound technician, and Linda Blåfors a graphic illustrator who captured the activities and feelings on the day in a fun illustration.

The city partner had planned to hire a specialist in public consultation event planning, however this did not work out. The event came together with the help of many within the city's municipality.

"We had completely forgot about coffee, but fortunately the 9th grade pupils sold coffee and fika at the school yard."
(City Partner)



Fig. 65 Decorated Pallet Parliament/
photo credit: Julia Gäckle

Day of intervention

On the day there was one information tent with material detailing the development of the road over the next two years and information about GoGreenRoutes. In the information tent visitors could talk about and ask questions concerning the detailed plans for the area. They were also able to discuss pollinators and urban gardening with a member of the County Administrative Board. Additionally, they could speak to an urban planner from the municipality about Bölevägen's reconstruction. There was a second tent within which the canvas method and photovoice activity took place. Participants could write what they wished for Enbärsvägen/Bölevägen and borrow polaroid cameras to take pictures of places they like. Members of the city's Overview Planning team were responsible for ensuring that the visitors answered the survey about the park Enbärsvägen/Bölevägen and the nine questions from GoGreenRoutes.



Fig. 66 Visitors playing or talking at the Pallet Parliament/ photo credit: Umeå Kommun

At the end of the event Umea city partner hosted an "UmeCom Live session" with focus on the area where the event was held (Aspogården). A property including a pre-school and flats will be built there in some years, but until then Umeå Municipality will let citizens use the area as they would like. The conversation focus was not on what they could do there, instead participants of the UmeCom session brainstormed ideas of how to organize the people who want to do something together on the site. A lot of people came to Böledagen! There were all ages, both families with children and preschool children from Böle preschool, pupils from the English school and Volvo employees. One of the bands from Evelyn had an average age of over 80, their fans seemed to be around the same age.

Timeline

- 1:00 - 6:00pm
 Information about projects in the area:
 - Bölevägen and GoGreenRoutes
 - Survey of parklet Enbärsvägen/Bölevägen +GGR-questions
 - Böleå 12:2 (Housing and a new pre-school)
 - Aspogården (Housing and enlargement of the English School)
 - Bölesholmarna and Lundabron (A green area nearby)
- 1:00 - 1:45pm
 Böle förskola visit (5- years old)
- 1:30 - 3:30pm
 Bands playing:
 Pupils from the International English School and a local band rehearsal room organisation
- 4:00 - 5:00pm
 UmeCom (Umeå's citizen workshop to help realising ideas that make Umeå better and more fun)
- 6:00pm
 End of the day



Fig. 67 People visiting the Pallet Parliament/ photo credit: Julia Gäckle

Unexpectedly, many visitors were positive about the changes, even though they were told that Bölevägen will be under reconstruction for two years, meaning the bus will run a detour and that deep shafts will be dug into the road. There were a few people who were unhappy about the development in the area however it was felt that the negativity was diluted with a lot of positive people. An estimated 200 people visited Böledagen, possibly more. At one snapshot, there were 70 people there at the same time, just after 1pm when the event started. However, despite the high turnout at the event, there were only around 30 survey responses. The survey was kept online until the 25th of September and the municipality advertised it further bringing the total to 47 surveys answered.

“It was a cool and initially quite windy day, but the sun shone all the time and it got warmer towards the end of the day.”
(City Partner)

Having a pop up playground and band playing encouraged those who do not usually attend public consultation events to come along. It’s a great way to gather insights from locals while being fun and engaging.

The children loved the pop up playground meaning many of the comments gathered through the canvas method related to park equipment. As many participants were at the event to find out about the construction work to take place over the next two year on the road, they had comments unrelated to the green spaces but to the housing development. The main concern about the future residential development is that it is much taller than anything in the area, some were unhappy with the height of the building.

Photovoice

positively received by the youth in Umeå. Initially participants were allowed to take the polaroid camera with them while they walked around the site to take a photo of something that aroused an emotion. This approach worked well with adults; however, it was difficult to keep track of the polaroid cameras when groups of young people and children participated. The approach was changed slightly on this reflection and a member of ICLEI walked with the school children, keeping an eye on the polaroid camera. This ensured that the 20 polaroid photos were representative of all age groups and that none of the polaroid's were lost.

“Handing out the cameras to parents with children unaccompanied was complicated after a while because, despite instructions, photos were often taken of the families or friends and not of the surroundings in combination with the indication of a feeling. After a while we went along with the participants and helped them with questions.”

(Julia Gäckle)



Fig. 70 CardoBox playground/ photo credit: Umeå Kommun

Survey results

Main findings in Umeå

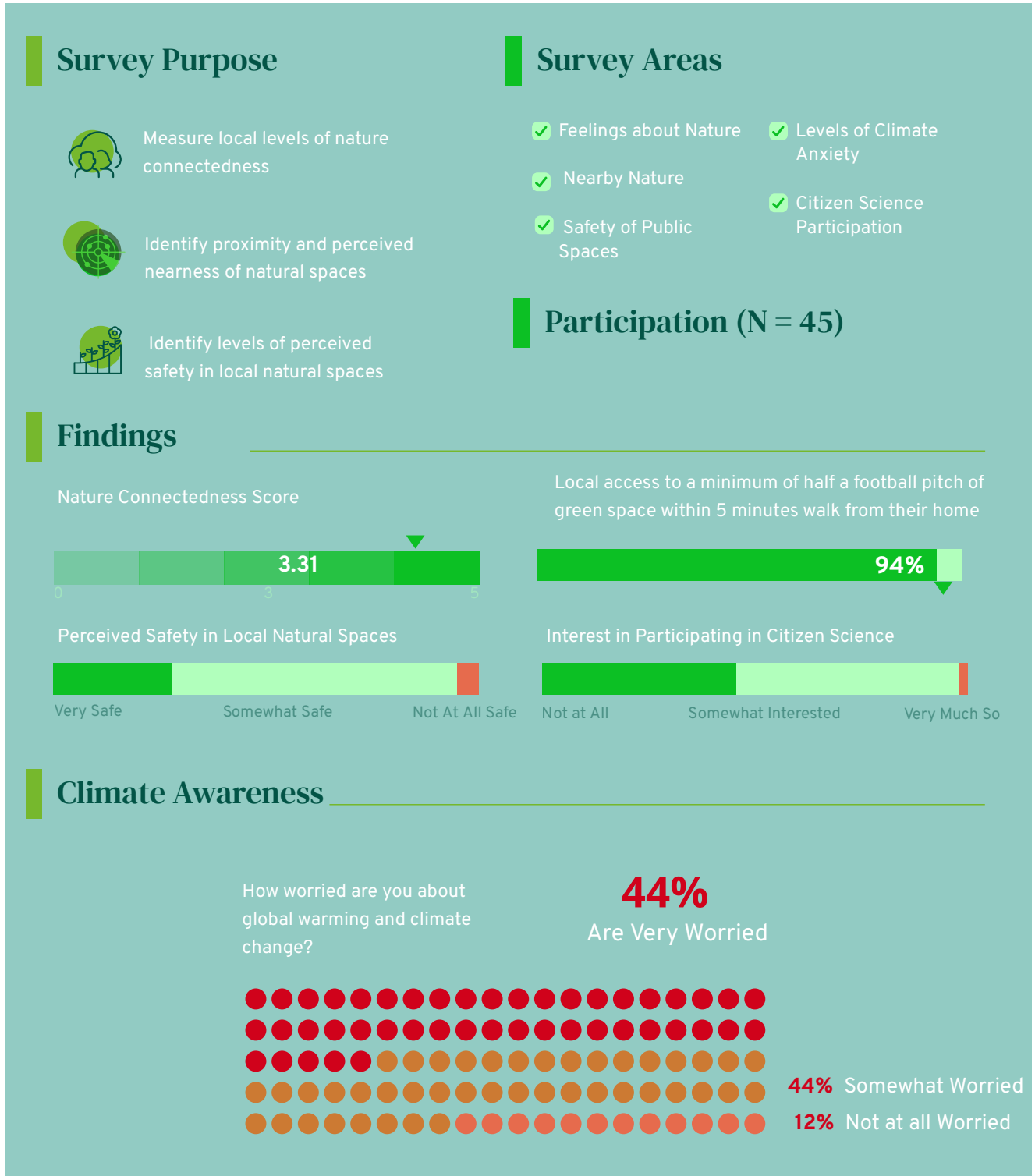


Fig. 71 Main findings of the survey/ credit: Tadhg Macintyre

Survey results

Main findings in Umeå

The total number of survey responses collected in Bölevägen, Umeå, was 47. This included online and paper questionnaires.

Of the 47 participants, 58% were female, 36% were male and 6% preferred not to say. 13% were 18 years or older while 13% were 17 years or younger. 93% of the respondents have access to a minimum of 0.5 hectares of green or blue natural space within a 5 minutes' walk of their home.

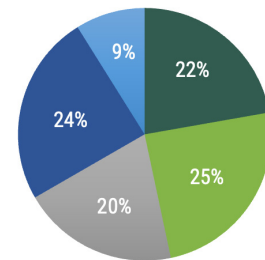
75% of the respondents 'take notice of wildlife wherever they are', with only 53% agreeing that 'their relationship to nature is part of who they are'. 42% agree that they 'feel very connected to all living things and the earth', with 36% neither agree nor disagree with this statement.

Interestingly, 30 of the 47 respondents believe that one of the main benefits of introducing more natural features in a neighbourhood or city is to reduce stress levels. Other common benefits included 'experiencing a connection with the natural environment', 'enjoying scenery' and 'sharing time with family and friends'. Only 9% of the respondents believe that nature based solutions 'very much so' promote their health. Respondents also felt the same about nature-based solutions promoting 'nature and biodiversity', with only 9% choosing 'very much so' and 55% choosing 'not at all'. However, the respondents did feel that nature-based solutions promote 'sustainable actions' with 18% choosing 'very much so' and 43% choosing 'somewhat'.

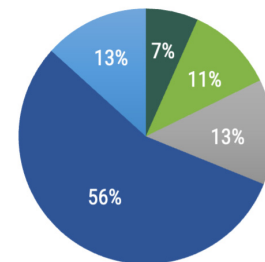
Respondents were asked to rate their response to a number of questions from 0-10. The responses show that respondents would like the green area to have fruit bushes and contain good conditions for pollinators. While the majority would like the green area to be designed to delay storm water, there were 13 ratings at 5 and below. Interestingly, the majority of respondents were less enthusiastic about room for urban farming on the green area, 7 respondents answered this question with a 0, highlighting a strong opposition to this idea.

The results show a preference for designing the green space as a park with many in favour of it benefiting biodiversity. It is not as clear cut as to whether the respondents would like the surface to be planted with trees, 20 responded 5 or below while 23 responded 6 and above. There may be fears that trees will lead to shading of some nearby houses as alluded to in the quote. Similarly, when asked if they would like the green space to reduce noise, many fell between 2-8, this may be due to a lack of noise in the area as it is currently.

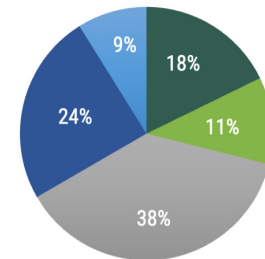
„My ideal vacation spot would be a remote, wilderness area“



„I always think about how my actions affect the environment“



„My connection to nature and the environment is a part of my spirituality“



- 1. Disagree strongly
- 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 5. Agree Strongly
- 2. Disagree a little
- 4. Agree a little

Fig. 72 Survey results/ credit: Jannis Meul