

# An examination of regeneration policies of historic buildings in relation to the tourism and leisure industry

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## BACKGROUND

- Cultural heritage shared values, policies and objectives seek to build upon links with other areas of policy in particular tourism, local government and national planning.
- Improvement of townscapes and environment in historic cores are objectives of the National Strategy for Cultural Heritage<sup>1</sup> and Strategic Plan for the Environment and Development (SPED).<sup>2</sup>
- The inclusion of historical urban areas of cities and historic cores of other numerous towns and villages as part of the Valletta 2018 European Capital of Culture is amongst the objectives of the Draft National Tourism Policy 2015-2020.<sup>3</sup> The Valletta 2018 Foundation aims to identify sites and spaces of cultural relevance within each locality.

## OBJECTIVES

- To examine local councils' awareness and opinion of existing and proposed legislation and policies, current consultation practices and to what extent local councils are contributing in broadening participation.
- To explore what local councils are currently doing and what are they prepared to do in order to improve governance in the locality's built heritage sector, in view of funding programmes, resources and limitations.
- To examine consultation, collaboration and participation of local councils with national authorities.

## METHOD

- Survey methods were employed as part of a three-phase mixed methods sequential explanatory design. whereby the quantitative survey study will be followed by qualitative interviews and focus groups.
- Pre-piloted questionnaires were developed from the National Strategy for Cultural Heritage<sup>1</sup> and SPED.<sup>2</sup>
- Questionnaire items comprised open, closed and 5-point Likert scales.
- All Mayors of Malta and Gozo were included in this study.
- Questionnaires were sent between November and December 2014.
- Approvals obtained: Research Ethics Committee University of Bolton.

## RESULTS

- Response rates: 65% (44/68).
- Less than half of respondents (45%) strongly agreed/agreed that they were aware of the existing Cultural Heritage Act 2002 (Chapter 445).
- Slightly more than a third of respondents (39%) strongly agreed/agreed that they are aware of the proposed policies of the Cultural Heritage Act 2002 (Chapter 445).
- Only 18% (8/44) strongly agreed/agreed that there is no conflict between planning policies as set out by the policy makers of national authorities and government.
- Figure 1 depicts tasks and measures for improving governance in the locality's built heritage sector.
- Figure 2 illustrates the perception of local councils on the fate of their submission to authorities and Figure 3 shows their willingness to actively participate in policy development.

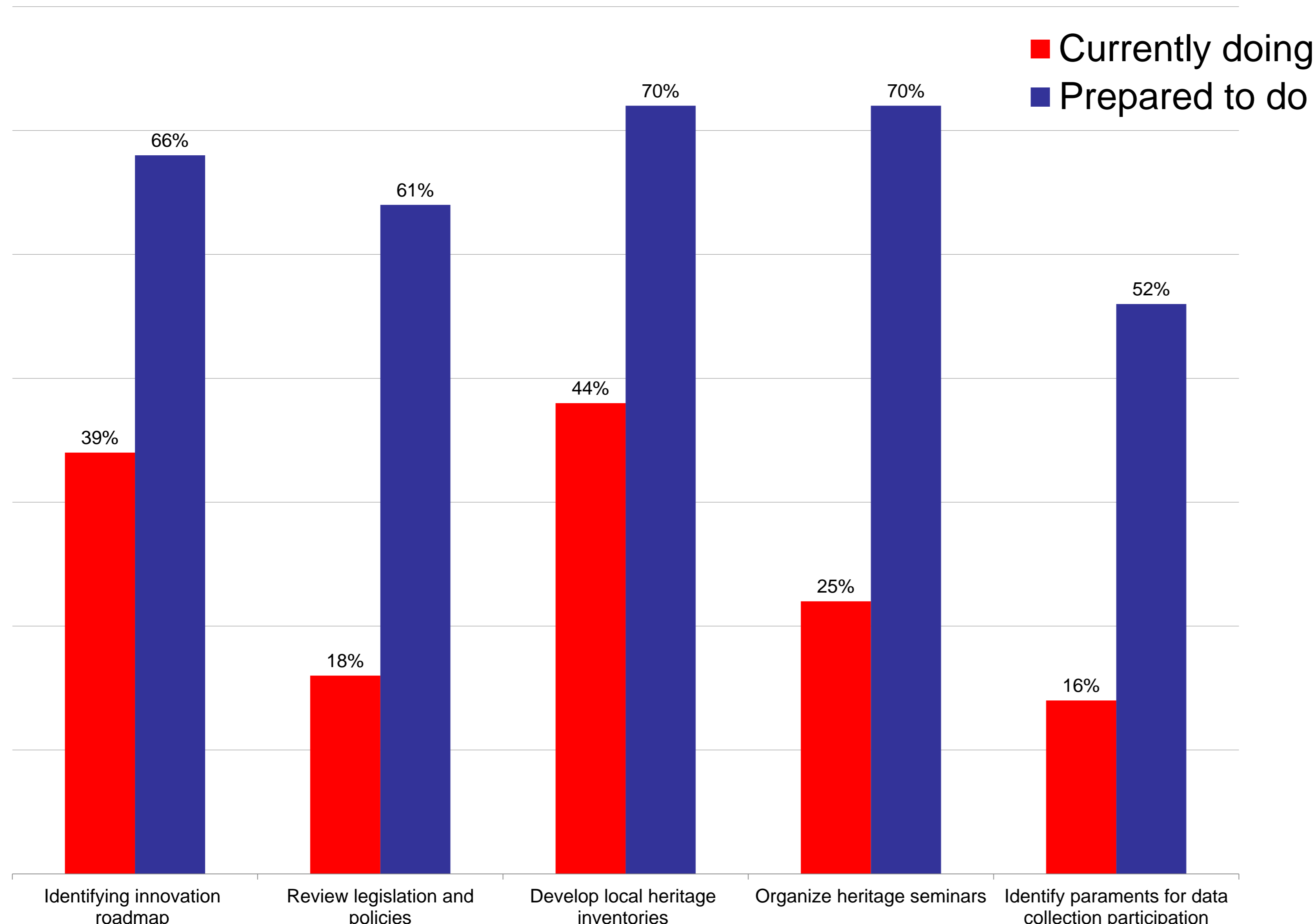


Figure 1: Tasks and measures for improving governance in the locality's built heritage sector

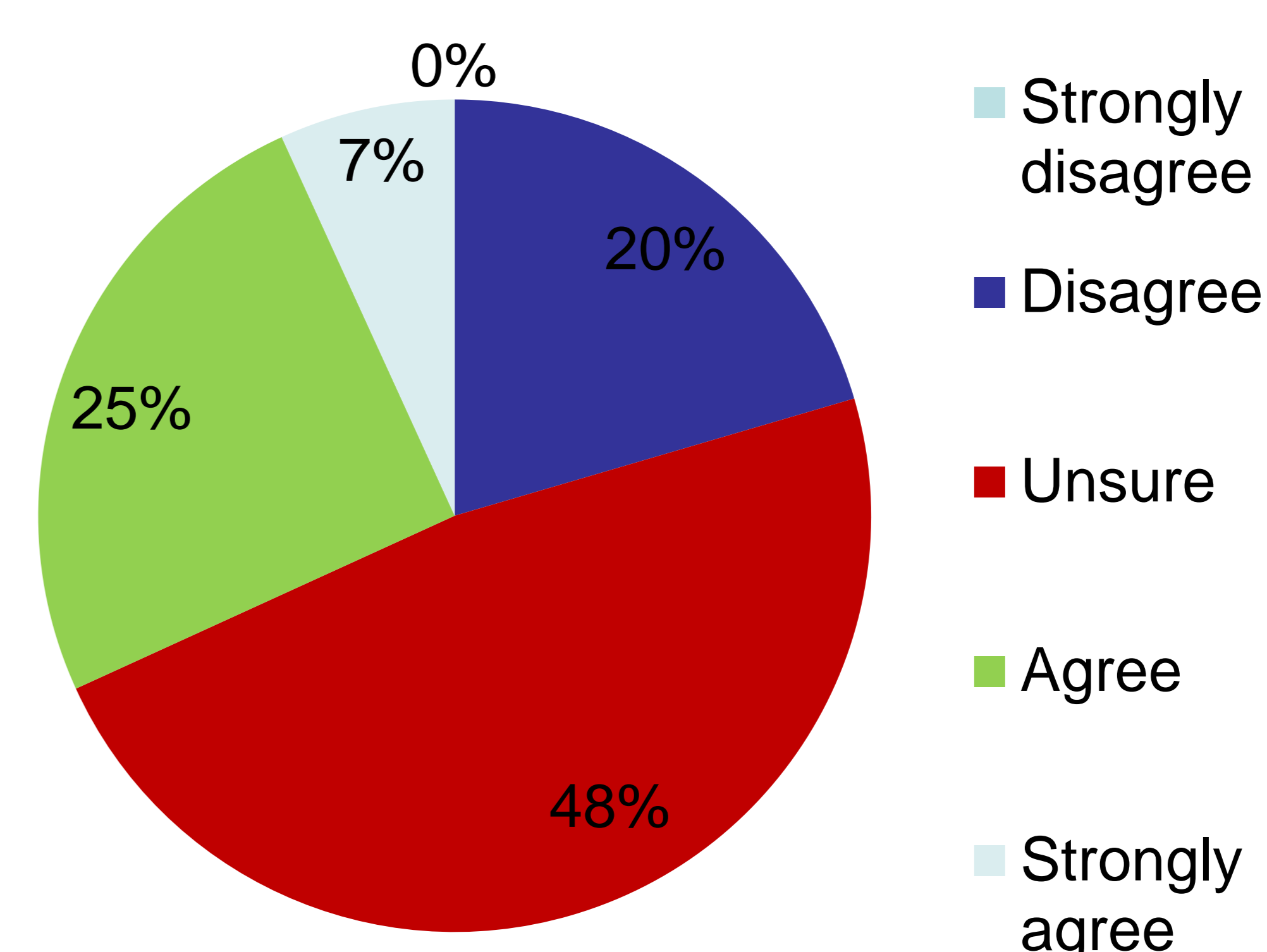


Figure 2: The local council feels assured that their concerns are seriously taken into account by the authorities

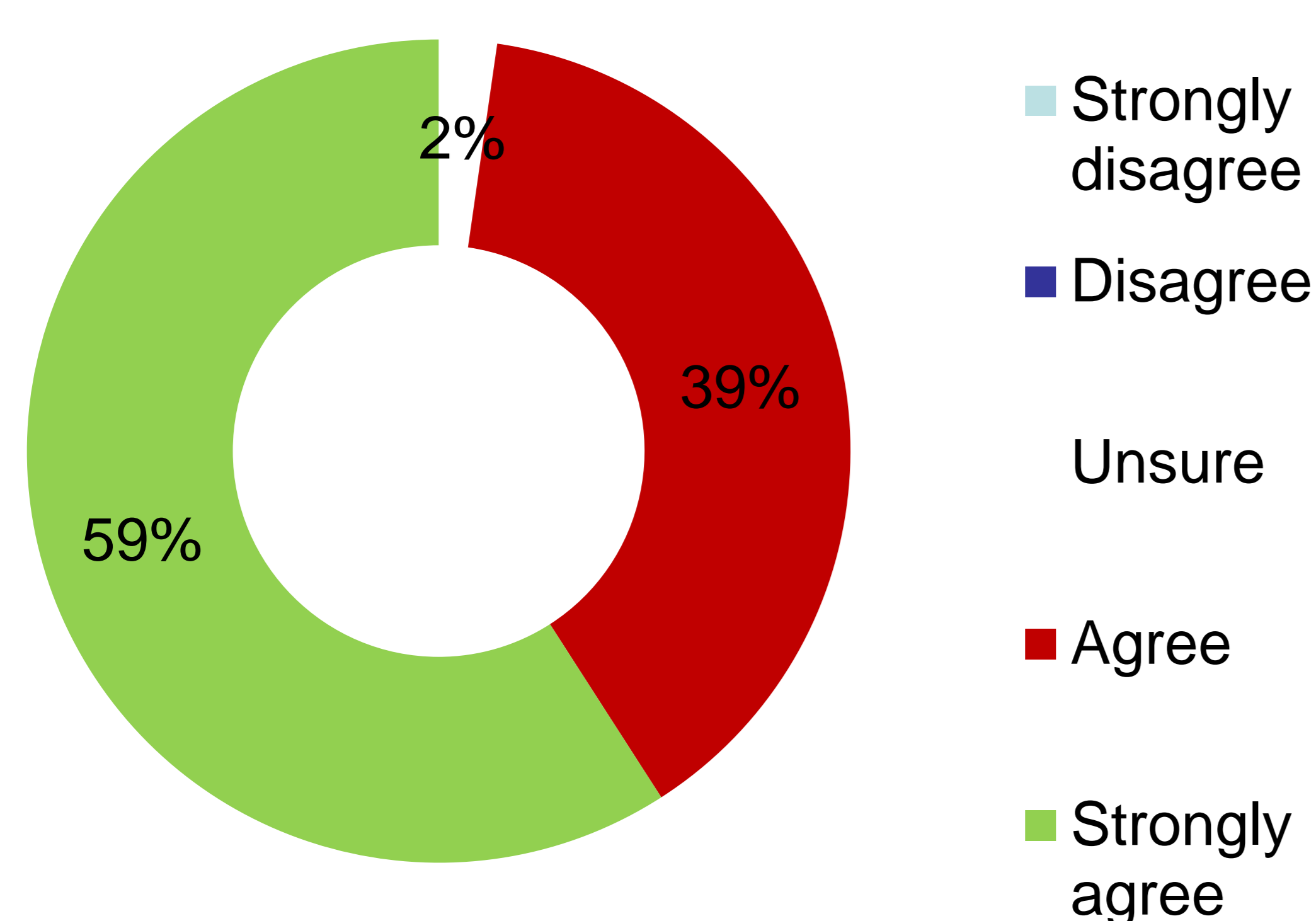


Figure 3: Willingness of local councils to participate in policy development

## CONCLUSIONS

- Strategies to increase awareness and improve current involvement of local councils in policy development are imperative. This study clear shows that local councils are willing to actively participate in policy development.

## REFERENCES

1. Ministry for Tourism, Culture and Environment (2012) National strategy for the cultural heritage. Available from: <http://www.culturalheritage.gov.mt/filebank/National%20Strategy%20for%20the%20Cultural%20Heritage-May2012-Draft%20for%20Consultation.%20Version%202.pdf> [1st March 2015]
2. Malta Environment and Planning Authority (2014) Strategic Plan for Environment and Development. Available from: <http://www.mepa.org.mt/sped> [1st March 2015]
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