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# Sustainability: fashionable trend or real concern for Italian consumers?



**OSSERVATORIO SULLA SOSTENIBILITÀ**

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# Objectives

- To investigate on a representative sample of Italian consumers:
  - ❖ Attitudes towards sustainability (at environmental, economic and social level)
  - ❖ Main areas/topics of interest
  - ❖ Perceived interest and commitment
  - ❖ Perceived level of information on sustainability issues (in terms of both quantity and quality)

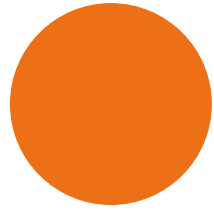
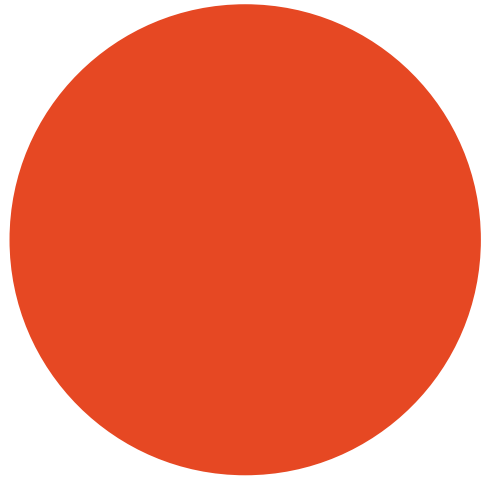
# Methodology

- Online questionnaire (CAWI), including:
  - ❖ Ad-hoc measures
  - ❖ Validated measures (*The Attitudes toward Sustainable Development scale*, Biasutti & Frate, 2016)
- Field: November 2018
- Representative sample of Italian consumers (N = 1437)

# Notes

When referring to environmental, economic, and social sustainability, the following definitions were provided to respondents:

- **ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY** → the maintenance of the factors and practices that contribute to the quality of environment on a long-term basis.
- **ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY** → the ability to generate quality employment and income for the population in order to promote secure economic growth.
- **SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY** → the equal promotion of human wellbeing (such as safety, health, education, justice, etc.)



***SAMPLE***



# Sample

Respondents		
	N = 1437	%
<b><u>SEX</u></b>		
Men	683	<b>47.6</b>
Women	754	<b>52.4</b>



Respondents		
	N = 1437	%
<b><u>AGE COHORT</u></b>		
18-24	136	<b>9.5</b>
25-34	228	<b>15.8</b>
35-44	270	<b>18.8</b>
45-54	255	<b>17.7</b>
55-64	197	<b>13.7</b>
Over 64	351	<b>24.4</b>

# Sample

Respondents		
	N = 1437	%
<b><u>EDUCATION</u></b>		
Primary school	215	<b>15.0</b>
Secondary school	955	<b>66.4</b>
University degree and above	267	<b>18.6</b>

Respondents		
	N = 1437	%
<b><u>REGION</u></b>		
Piemonte	101	<b>7.0</b>
Valle d'Aosta	1	<b>0.1</b>
Lombardia	248	<b>17.2</b>
Trentino Alto Adige	10	<b>0.7</b>
Friuli Venezia Giulia	98	<b>6.8</b>
Veneto	58	<b>4.0</b>
Liguria	35	<b>2.5</b>
Emilia Romagna	113	<b>7.8</b>
Toscana	80	<b>5.5</b>
Umbria	25	<b>1.7</b>
Marche	45	<b>3.1</b>
Lazio	136	<b>9.4</b>
Abruzzo	33	<b>2.3</b>
Molise	7	<b>0.5</b>
Campania	125	<b>8.7</b>
Puglia	110	<b>7.7</b>
Basilicata	20	<b>1.4</b>
Calabria	32	<b>2.2</b>
Sicilia	125	<b>8.7</b>
Sardegna	36	<b>2.5</b>

***ITALIANS' ATTITUDES  
TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY***





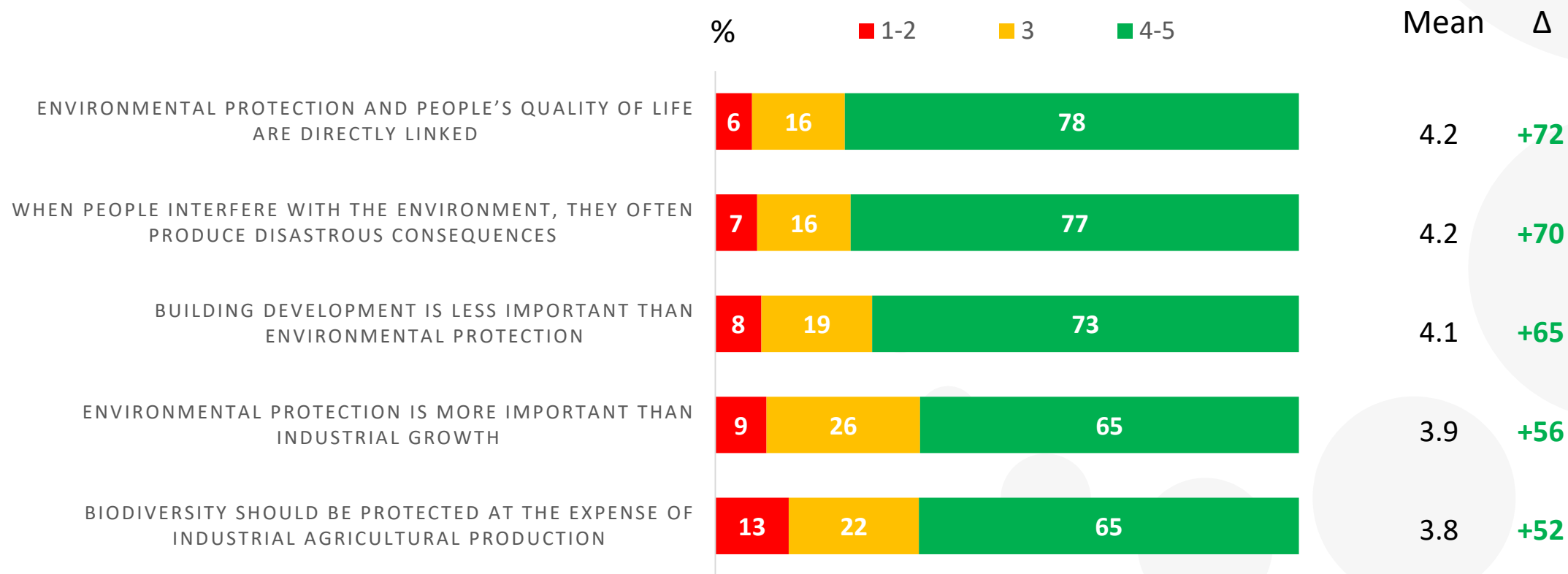


# ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Italians have an overall positive attitude towards environmental protection. There are only a few concerns in relation to what extent the environment should be protected at the expenses of the industrial growth and agricultural production.

*'Please indicate the extent of your agreement/disagreement with the following statements:'*

N = 1437





# ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

	Male N = 684	Female N = 754	North-W N = 385	North-E N = 279	Center N = 285	South N = 327	Islands N = 161
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Δ tot

Environmental protection and people's quality of life are directly linked

+72	+70	+73	+69	+75	+78	+70	+63
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When people interfere with the environment, they often produce disastrous consequences

+70	+66	+74	+68	+70	+69	+73	+68
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Building development is less important than environmental protection

+65	+63	+68	+60	+75	+68	+66	+52
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Environmental protection is more important than industrial growth

+56	+50	+61	+49	+67	+53	+61	+50
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Biodiversity should be protected at the expense of industrial agricultural production

+52	+50	+55	+52	+64	+48	+52	+42
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○/⊘ = Significant differences (positive/negative), p < .05.



# ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

	$\Delta$ tot	Before '45 N = 197	Baby boomers N = 426	X Gen N = 473	Millennials N = 227	Z Gen N = 114
Environmental protection and people's quality of life are directly linked	<b>+72</b>	+72	+77	<b>+63</b>	+71	<b>+46</b>
When people interfere with the environment, they often produce disastrous consequences	<b>+70</b>	+70	<b>+77</b>	+73	+67	<b>+34</b>
Building development is less important than environmental protection	<b>+65</b>	<b>+55</b>	<b>+74</b>	+67	+60	<b>+39</b>
Environmental protection is more important than industrial growth	<b>+56</b>	+55	<b>+77</b>	<b>+67</b>	+60	<b>+39</b>
Biodiversity should be protected at the expense of industrial agricultural production	<b>+52</b>	+51	<b>+58</b>	+49	+58	<b>+41</b>

○/⊘ = Significant differences (positive/negative),  $p < .05$ .

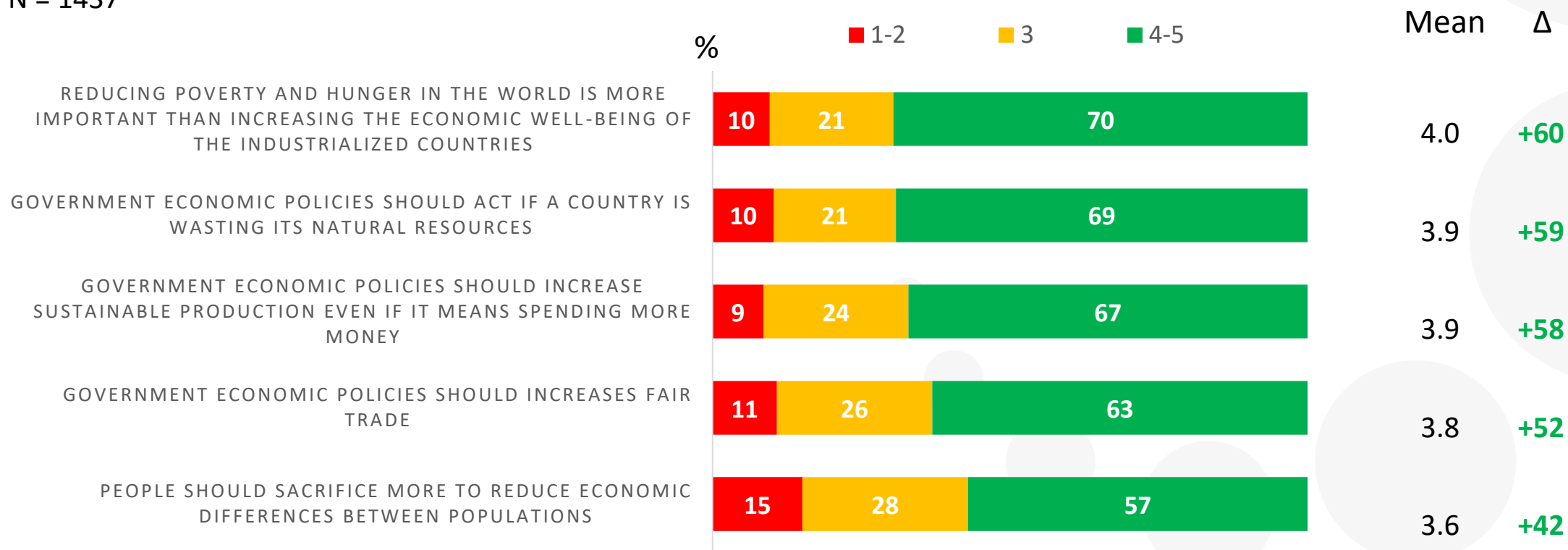


# ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

Italians show an overall positive attitude also towards economic sustainability. Some concerns can be noted in relation to how much people should sacrifice to reduce economic differences.

*'Please indicate the extent of your agreement/disagreement with the following statements:'*

N = 1437





# ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

	Male N = 684	Female N = 754	North-W N = 385	North-E N = 279	Center N = 285	South N = 327	Islands N = 161
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Δ tot

Reducing poverty and hunger in the world is more important than increasing the economic well-being of the industrialized countries

+60	+58	+61	+54	+63	+62	+65	+55
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Government economic policies should act if a country is wasting its natural resources

+59	+54	+64	+51	+61	+54	+65	+48
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Government economic policies should increase sustainable production even if it means spending more money

+58	+57	+60	+50	+63	+64	+65	+49
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Government economic policies should increase fair trade

+52	+45	+59	+51	+47	+48	+65	+47
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People should sacrifice more to reduce economic differences between populations

+42	+39	+44	+37	+38	+48	+42	+51
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○/⊘ = Significant differences (positive/negative), p < .05.



# ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

		Before '45 N = 197	Baby boomers N = 426	X Gen N = 473	Millennials N = 227	Z Gen N = 114
	$\Delta$ tot					
Reducing poverty and hunger in the world is more important than increasing the economic well-being of the industrialized countries	+60	+57	+67	+59	+55	+50
Government economic policies should act if a country is wasting its natural resources	+59	+62	+62	+62	+55	+41
Government economic policies should increase sustainable production even if it means spending more money	+58	+49	+59	+62	+66	+39
Government economic policies should increase fair trade	+52	+48	+55	+54	+49	+47
People should sacrifice more to reduce economic differences between populations	+42	+33	+47	+45	+45	+26

○/⊘ = Significant differences (positive/negative),  $p < .05$ .

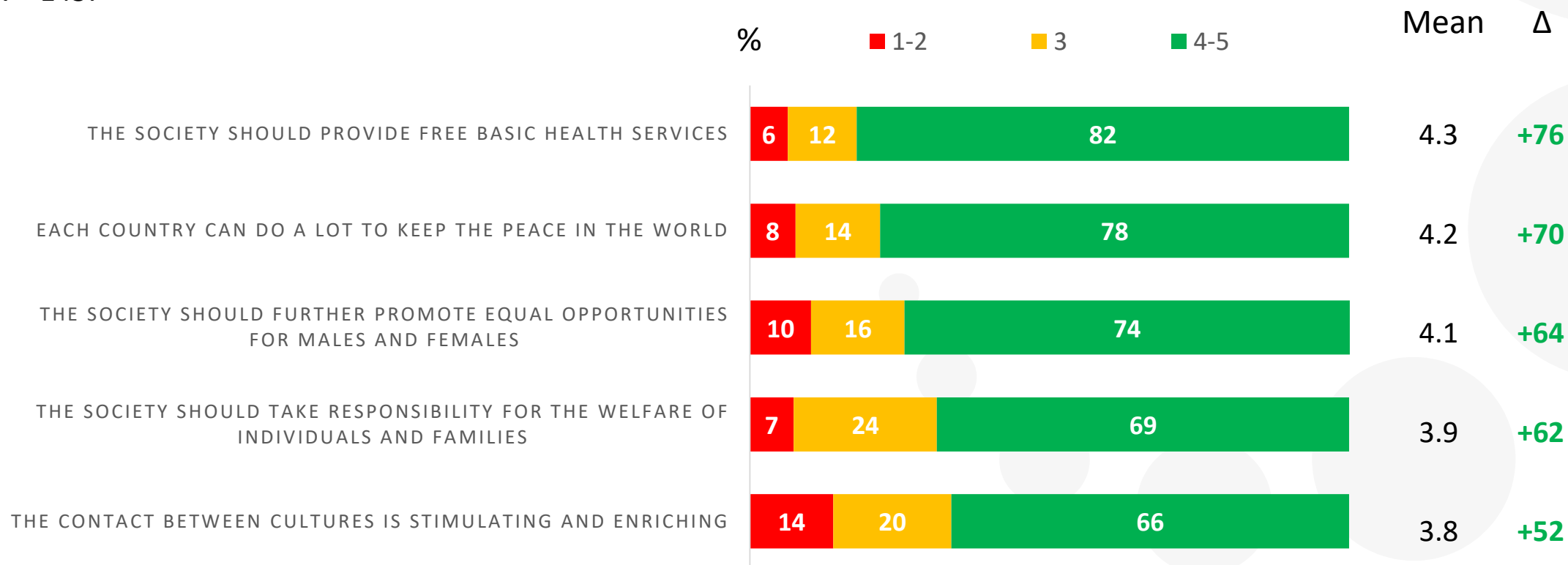


# SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Italians appear to have even more positive attitudes towards social sustainability. However, not everyone agrees that the contact between cultures is stimulating and enriching.

*'Please indicate the extent of your agreement/disagreement with the following statements:'*

N = 1437





# SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

	Male N = 684	Female N = 754	North-W N = 385	North-E N = 279	Center N = 285	South N = 327	Islands N = 161
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Δ tot

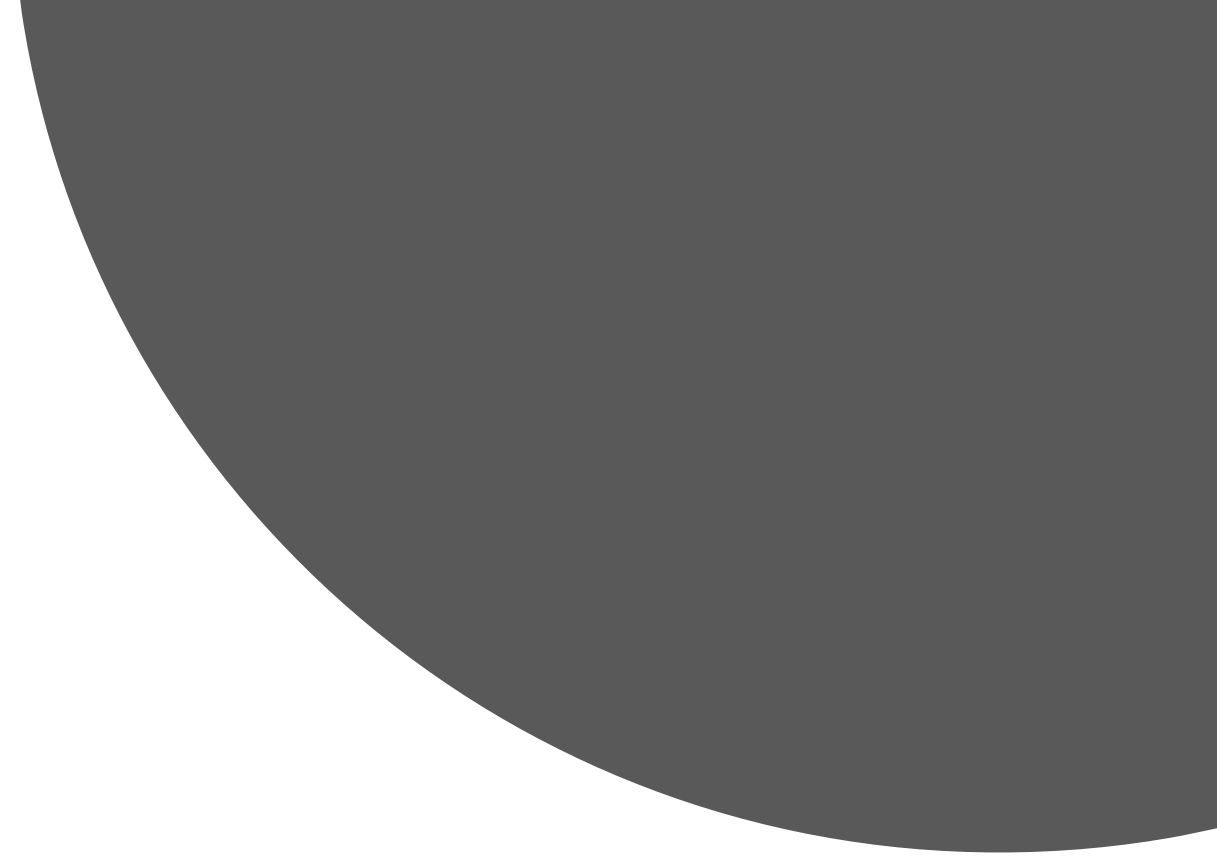
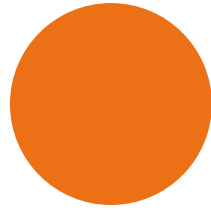
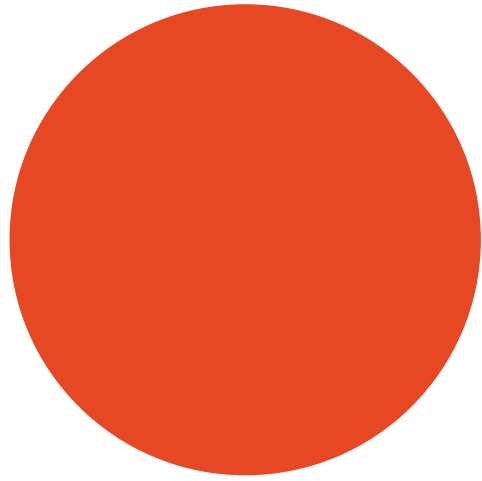
The society should provide free basic health services	+76	+74	+77	+78	+78	+76	+77	+66
Each country can do a lot to keep the peace in the world	+70	+70	+70	+61	+78	+73	+76	+67
The society should further promote equal opportunities for males and females	+64	+55	+70	+62	+67	+61	+70	+64
The society should take responsibility for the welfare of individuals and families	+62	+59	+64	+55	+61	+67	+70	+51
The contact between cultures is stimulating and enriching	+52	+43	+62	+50	+51	+56	+50	+63





# SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

		Before '45 N = 197	Baby boomers N = 426	X Gen N = 473	Millennials N = 227	Z Gen N = 114
	$\Delta$ tot					
The society should provide free basic health services	+76	+67	+79	+78	+74	+71
Each country can do a lot to keep the peace in the world	+70	+70	+75	+73	+69	+55
The society should further promote equal opportunities for males and females	+64	+63	+68	+70	+59	+37
The society should take responsibility for the welfare of individuals and families	+62	+55	+65	+66	+56	+55
The contact between cultures is stimulating and enriching	+52	+41	+48	+60	+56	+55



***RELEVANCE, ATTENTION,  
AND COMMITMENT  
TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY***

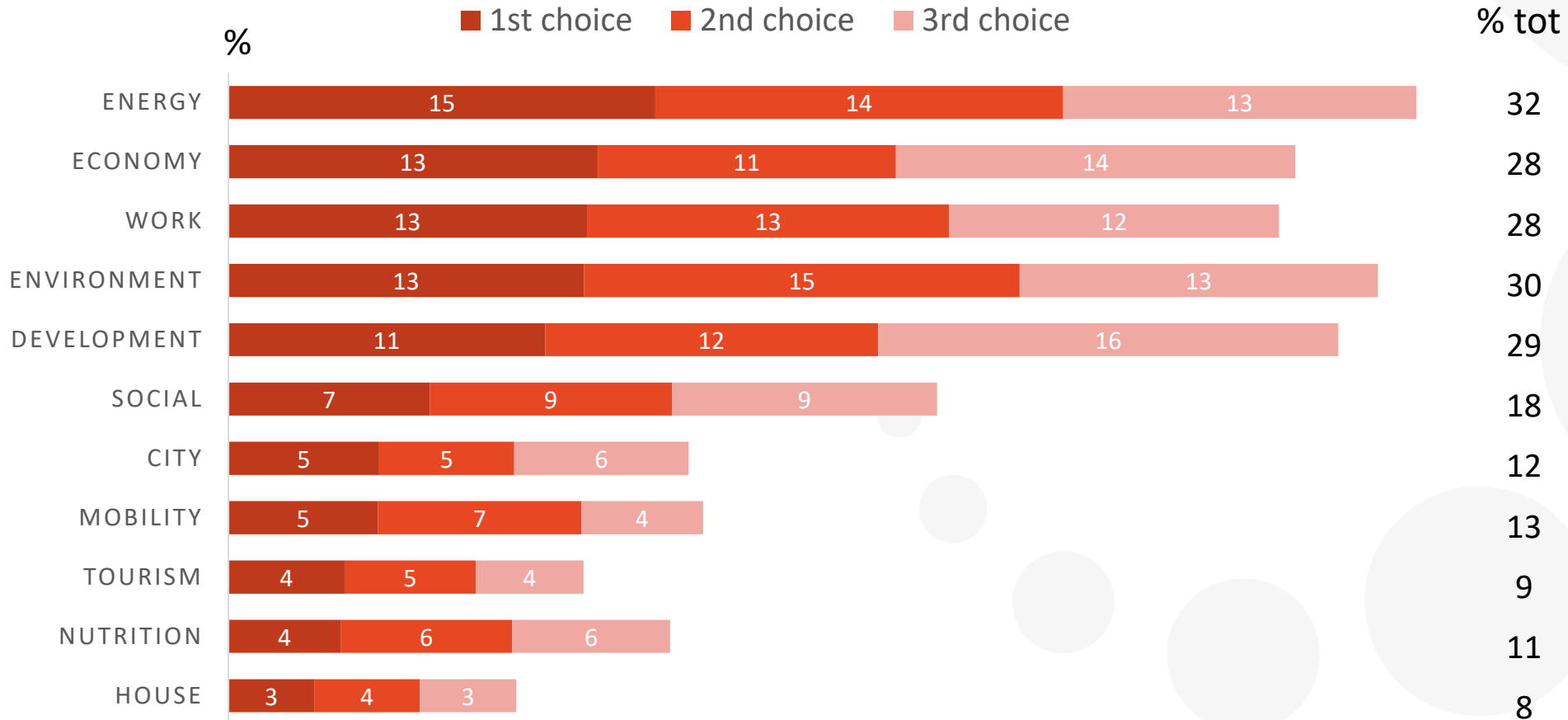


# PRIORITY AREAS

According to Italian consumers, the priority areas are sustainable **energy**, **economy**, **work**, and **environment**. The topics of sustainable tourism, nutrition, and housing appear to be less relevant.

*'According to you, what are the three priority areas in relation to sustainability?'*

N = 1437




# PRIORITY AREAS

		Male N = 684	Female N = 754	North-W N = 385	North-E N = 279	Center N = 285	South N = 327	Islands N = 161
	% 1st choice							
Energy	<b>15</b>	15	15	15	18	18	12	14
Economy	<b>13</b>	14	12	14	10	11	15	14
Work	<b>13</b>	12	14	11	12	11	16	12
Environment	<b>13</b>	12	13	9	14	14	12	18
Development	<b>11</b>	12	10	14	12	11	16	12
Social	<b>7</b>	8	6	3	8	8	8	11
City	<b>5</b>	5	5	4	7	5	5	7
Mobility	<b>5</b>	6	4	9	4	6	3	3
Tourism	<b>4</b>	5	4	3	5	5	4	4
Nutrition	<b>4</b>	3	5	5	2	2	6	6
House	<b>3</b>	3	3	4	2	3	2	2

 /  = Significant differences (positive/negative), p < .05.

# PRIORITY AREAS

	% First choice	Before '45 N = 197	Baby boomers N = 426	X Gen N = 473	Millennials N = 227	Z Gen N = 114
Energy	<b>15</b>	13	15	12	18	<b>26</b>
Economy	<b>13</b>	15	15	12	11	12
Work	<b>13</b>	15	13	14	9	8
Environment	<b>13</b>	10	15	11	13	13
Development	<b>11</b>	<b>17</b>	9	13	11	<b>3</b>
Social	<b>7</b>	6	8	6	6	11
City	<b>5</b>	4	4	6	6	9
Mobility	<b>5</b>	3	5	5	<b>9</b>	3
Tourism	<b>4</b>	3	5	4	4	5
Nutrition	<b>4</b>	4	3	5	5	3
House	<b>3</b>	3	3	3	3	2

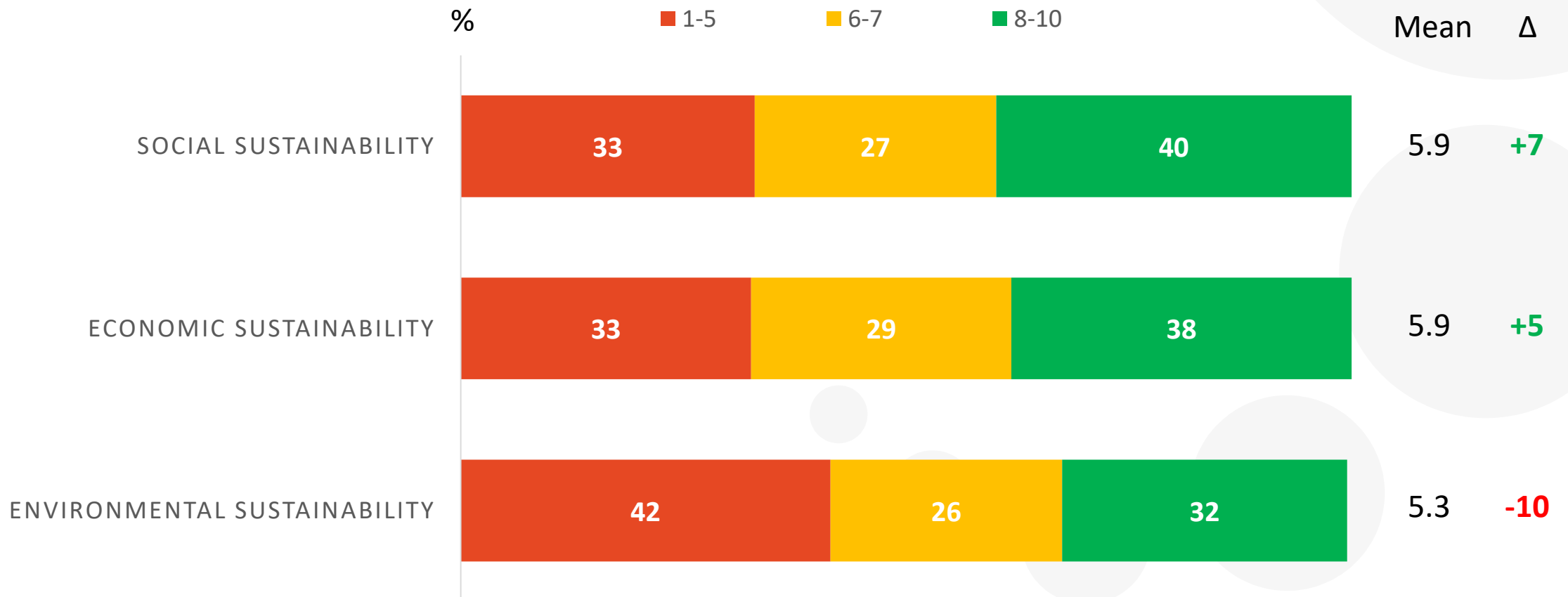
 /  = Significant differences (positive/negative), p < .05.

# PERCEIVED INTEREST

Environmental sustainability is the area where Italians perceive less interest and attention on behalf of their co-citizens.

*'According to you, what is the level of attention and interest of Italian citizens towards...'*

N = 1437



# PERCEIVED INTEREST

		Male N = 684	Female N = 754	North-W N = 385	North-E N = 279	Center N = 285	South N = 327	Islands N = 161
	Δ tot							
SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY	+7	+2	+11	-6	+11	+7	+19	+8
ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY	+5	+2	+8	-3	+12	+3	+12	+8
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	-10	-14	-5	-20	0	-14	-1	-7

○/⊘ = Significant differences (positive/negative), p < .05.

# PERCEIVED INTEREST

	$\Delta$ tot	Before '45 N = 197	Baby boomers N = 426	X Gen N = 473	Millennials N = 227	Z Gen N = 114
SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY	+7	+11	0	+10	+9	+13
ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY	+5	+8	-1	+6	+11	+18
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	-10	-16	-18	-4	0	-7

○/⊘ = Significant differences (positive/negative), p < .05.

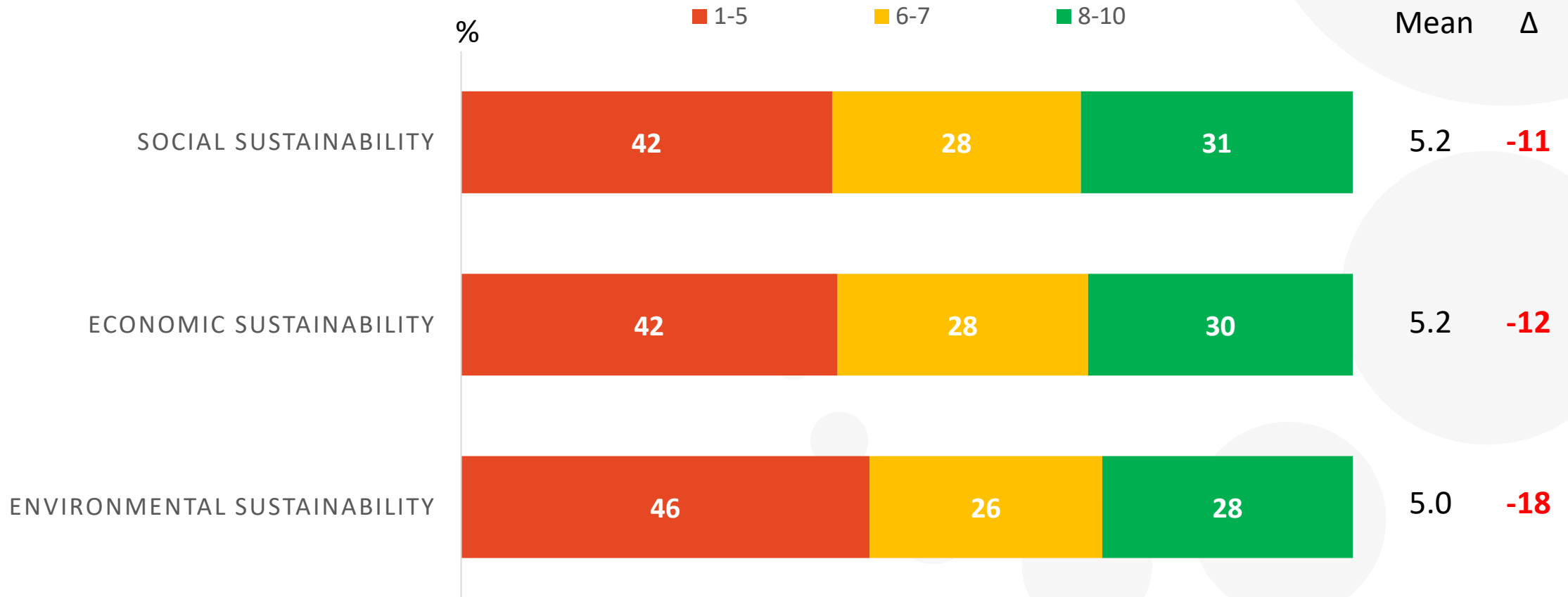


# PERCEIVED COMMITMENT

More than 40% of respondents believe that their co-citizens' commitment in making the difference in relation to sustainability issues is insufficient

*'According to you, what is the level of commitment in making the difference of Italian citizens towards...'*

N = 1437




# PERCEIVED COMMITMENT

		Male N = 684	Female N = 754	North-W N = 385	North-E N = 279	Center N = 285	South N = 327	Islands N = 161
	Δ tot							
SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY	-11	-19	-4	-20	-1	-20	-4	-5
ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY	-12	-17	-9	-25	-3	-17	-4	-7
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	-18	-25	-11	-27	-10	-25	-10	-18

○/⊙ = Significant differences (positive/negative), p < .05.

# PERCEIVED COMMITMENT

	$\Delta$ tot	Before '45 N = 197	Baby boomers N = 426	X Gen N = 473	Millennials N = 227	Z Gen N = 114
SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY	-11	-15	-21	-7	-2	+4
ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY	-12	-13	-25	-13	+4	+3
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	-18	-21	-30	-15	-6	-2

 /  = Significant differences (positive/negative), p < .05.

***PERCEIVED LEVEL OF  
INFORMATION***



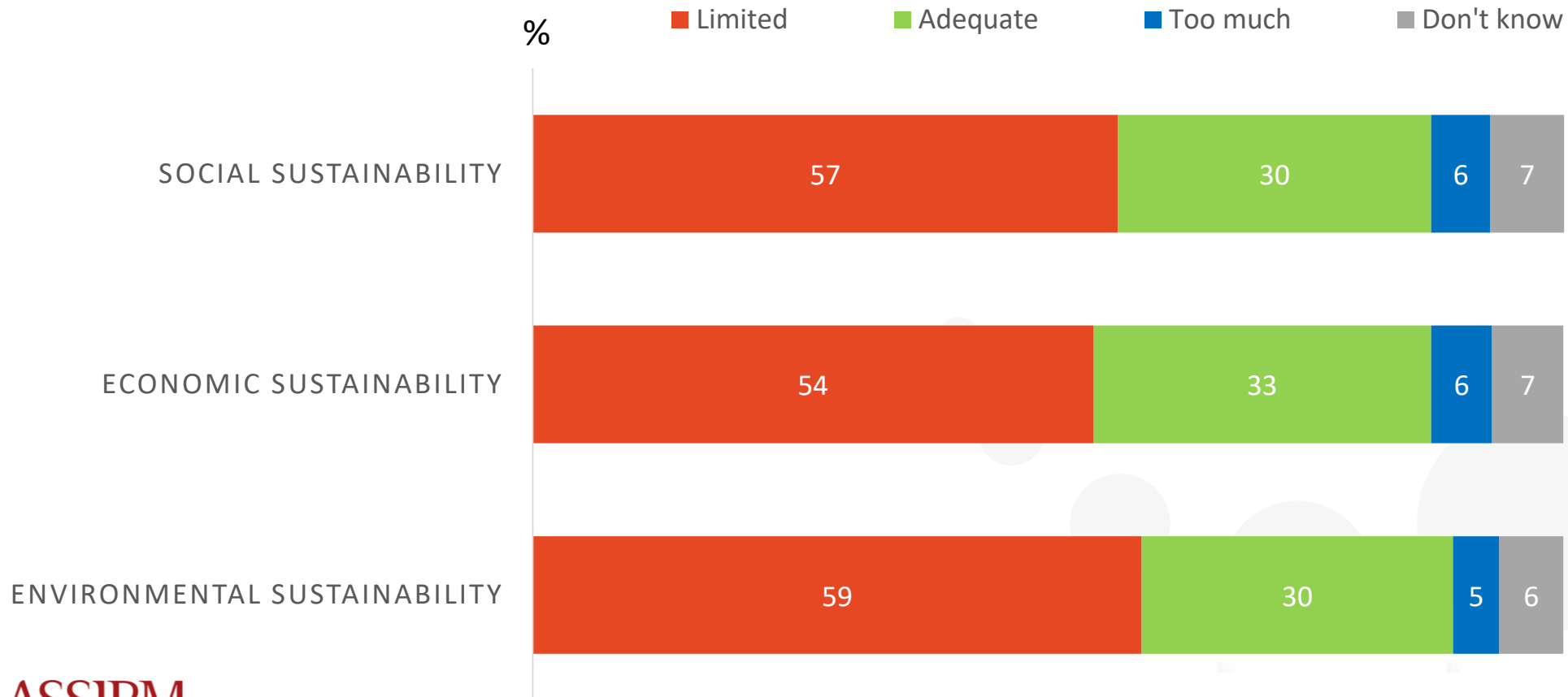


# QUANTITY OF INFORMATION

More than 50% of Italians believe that the quantity of available information on sustainable issues is not sufficient.

*'How do you evaluate the amount of available information?'*

N = 1437





# QUANTITY OF INFORMATION



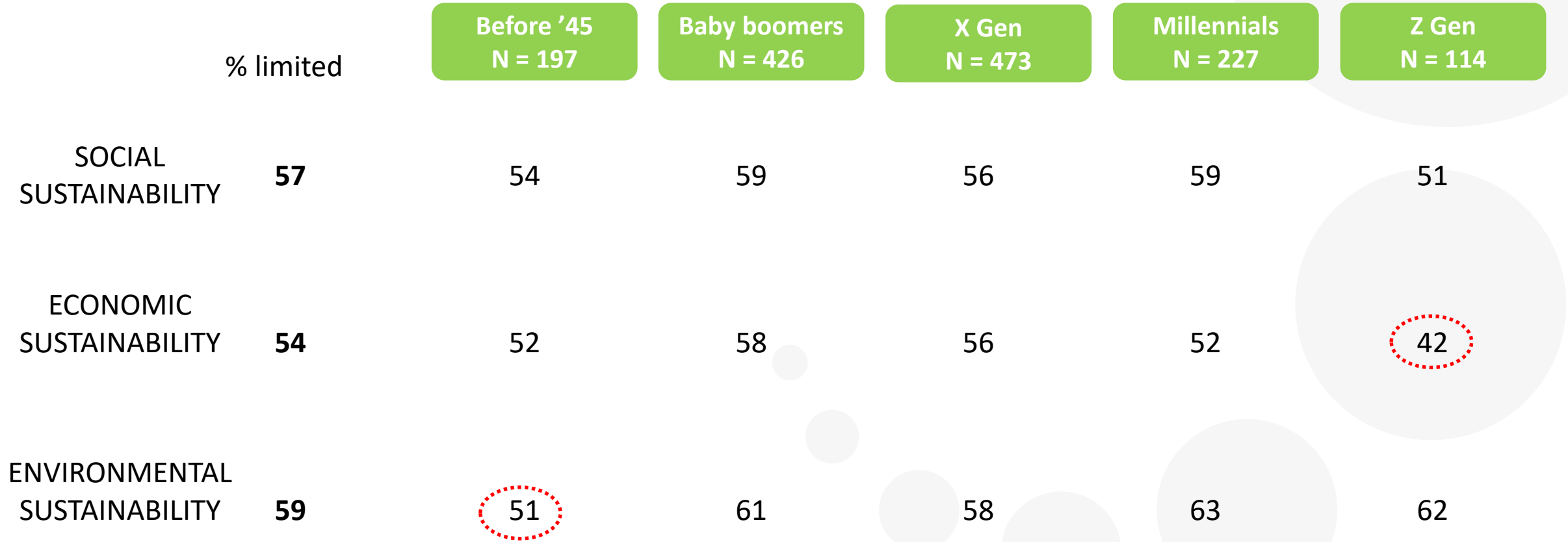
% limited

		Male N = 684	Female N = 754	North-W N = 385	North-E N = 279	Center N = 285	South N = 327	Islands N = 161
SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY	<b>57</b>	59	55	57	58	61	<b>51</b>	59
ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY	<b>54</b>	56	53	57	53	56	49	59
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	<b>59</b>	62	56	59	58	63	58	56

/ = Significant differences (positive/negative), p < .05.



# QUANTITY OF INFORMATION



○/⊘ = Significant differences (positive/negative), p < .05.

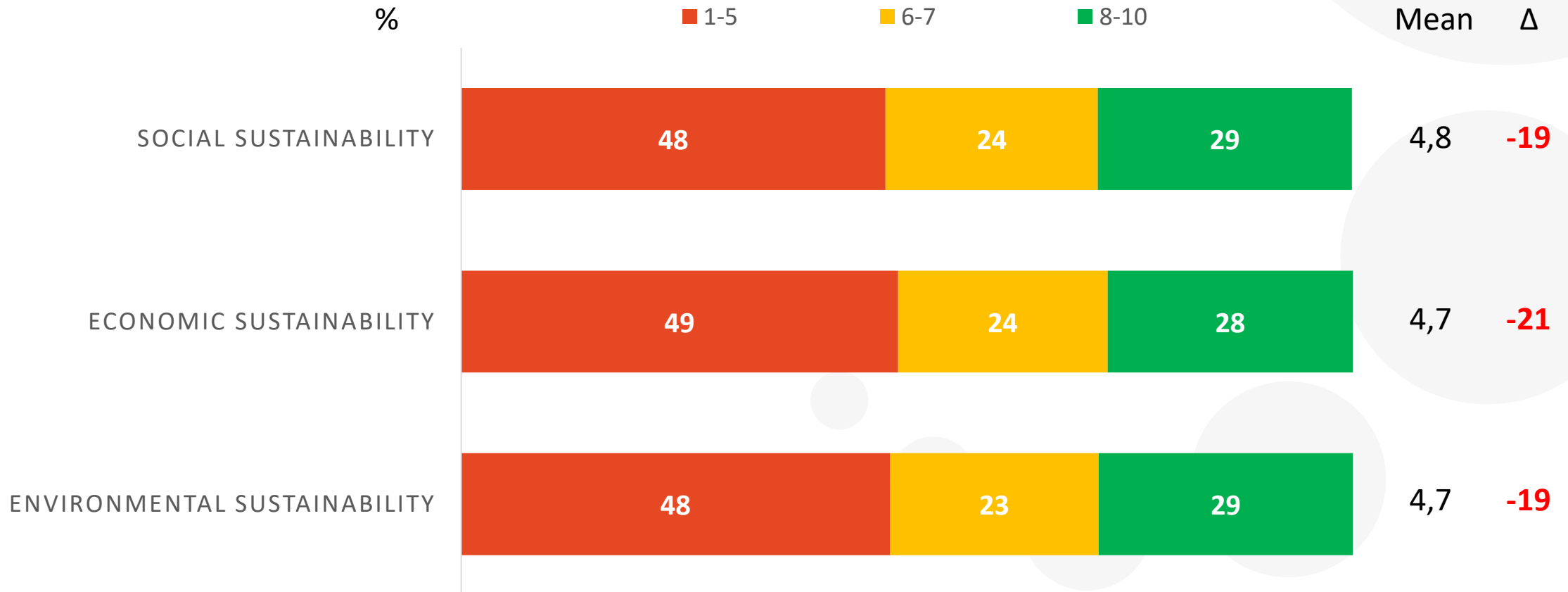


# QUALITY OF INFORMATION

Almost 50% of Italians believe that the available information on sustainable issues is not sufficiently correct, transparent and reliable.

*'How do you evaluate the quality of information (correctness, transparency, reliability)?'*

N = 1437







# QUALITY OF INFORMATION

	Male N = 684	Female N = 754	North-W N = 385	North-E N = 279	Center N = 285	South N = 327	Islands N = 161
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Δ tot



SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY	-19	-23	-15	-20	-15	-24	-20	-15
ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY	-21	-23	-20	-23	-19	-24	-22	-18
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	-19	-23	-16	-20	-16	-23	-22	-14

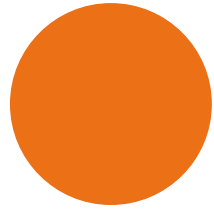
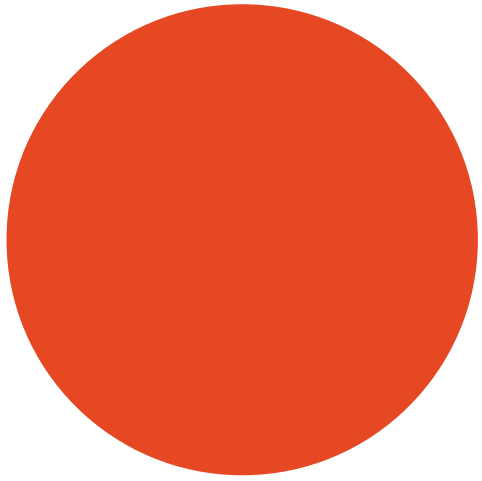
○/● = Significant differences (positive/negative), p < .05.



# QUALITY OF INFORMATION

	$\Delta$ tot	Before '45 N = 197	Baby boomers N = 426	X Gen N = 473	Millennials N = 227	Z Gen N = 114
SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY	-19	-22	-30	-19	-10	+7
ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY	-21	-25	-31	-22	-12	+2
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	-19	-26	-31	-21	-3	+5

 /  = Significant differences (positive/negative),  $p < .05$ .



# ***FINAL REMARKS***



## IN CONCLUSION...

- Sustainability in its different facets appears to be a **shared concern for Italians, at least at the «declared level»**.
- Italians' **attention is particularly focused on the economic consequences of sustainability**, while the environmental dimension appears less considered
- Among the generations, **«baby boomers» appear more sensitized about sustainability**, while the youngest appears less concerned or at least more sceptical
- However, although the issues related to sustainability today are part of Italians' social representations, **public opinion doesn't appear ready and prepared to really enact sustainable actions**
- The declared feeling is of a still **scarce and poorly practical knowledge about the topic and of a still vague commitment toward it**

# IN CONCLUSION...

- There is thus **need for further socio-political action aimed at educate citizens and at sustain their evolution toward more sustainable lifestyles and decisions**
- ... and this first monitor can be considered as **a real world lab to verify the impact of media and politic campaign about sustainability** (i.e. such the Greta Thunberg's one)

