



TREŠAIS TĒVA DĒLS

public libraries for progress

# Towards an assessment of public library value: statistics on the policy makers' agenda

**Kristine Paberza**

Department of Information and Library Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Latvia

Public Library Development Project “Third Father’s Son”, State Agency “Culture Information Systems”

# Latvia



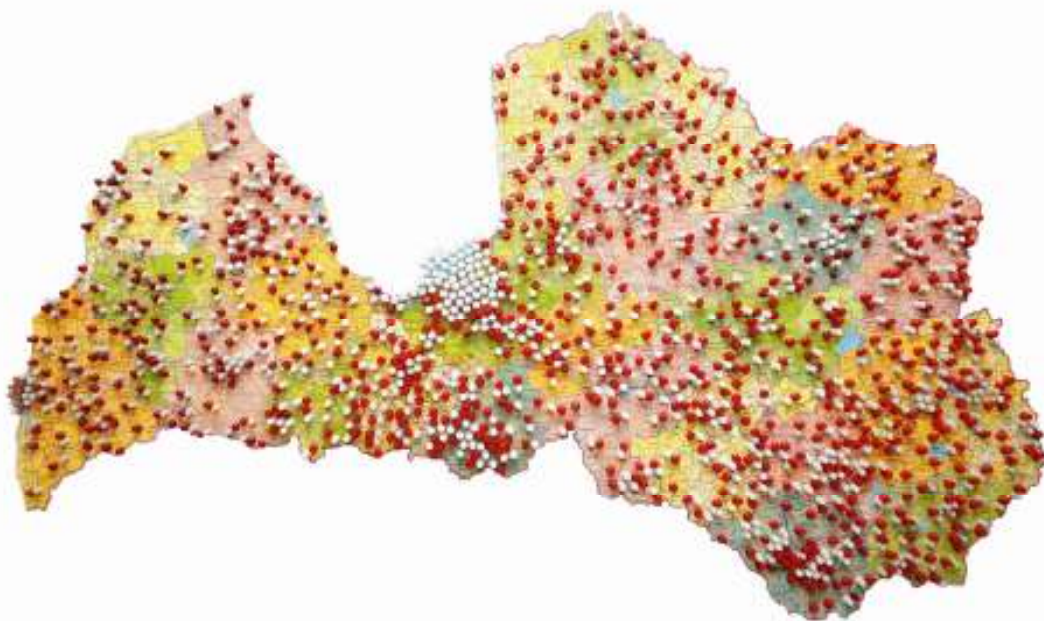
- The central country of the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania)
- In North-eastern Europe, on the east coast of the Baltic Sea
- In 1991 Latvia became independent from the Soviet Union
- Democratic, parliamentary republic
- Memberships:

European Union, NATO, United Nations Organization, Council of Europe, World Trade Organization, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, etc.

- Area: 64,589 sq.km or 24,937 sq. miles
- Population: 2,270,700
- Ethnic composition:
  - 59.03% Latvian,
  - 28.29% Russian,
  - 3.74% Belorussian,
  - 2.53% Ukrainian,
  - 6.41% other nationalities
- Official language: Latvian



# Libraries in Latvia



The Riga City Library (*Bibliotheca Rigensis*) was established in 1524 and it is considered to be one of the first public libraries in Europe!

## Library system in Latvia:

- Latvian National Library;
- Latvian Academic Library;
- 864 public libraries;**
- Latvian Library for the Blind with 7 branches in regions;**
- 45 special libraries;
- 48 libraries belonging to institutions of higher education;
- 1062 school libraries
- There is one library per 1123 residents
- 46% of population use library services
- 240 library users per one librarian

# Trešais tēva dēls – Third Father's Son

## Global Libraries initiative in Latvia

Through strengthening capacities  
of public libraries  
to facilitate proactive use of ICT resources  
among people in Latvia  
thus striving to improve the quality of their  
lives

Third Father's  
Son is a hero  
from Latvian folk  
legend who  
brought light to  
an entire country



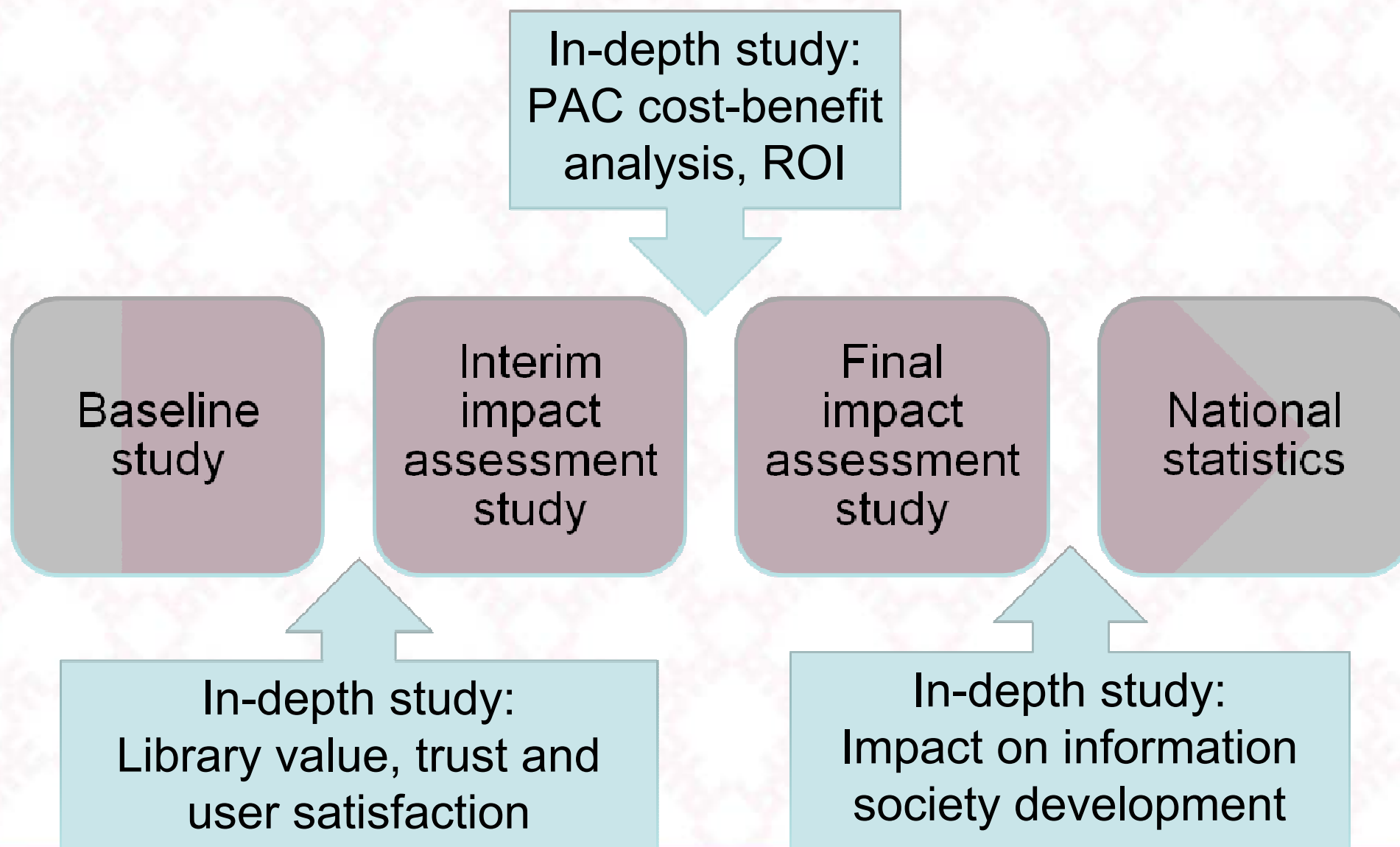
# Impact Planning and Assessment for Development

## Information Society Development Guidelines for 2006 – 2013

To create a knowledge-based economy and to improve the quality of life, to ensure that everybody can and will use the possibilities offered by ICT and content in order to achieve this objective



# Context of the study



# Approach to the study

- Context oriented research approach (Durrance, 2002)
- Information ecology approach (Davenport & Prusak, 1997; Stepp, 1999)
- Theory of use-oriented value of information and information services (Saracevic & Kantor, 1997)
- Ecological theory of human information behavior (Williamson, 2005)



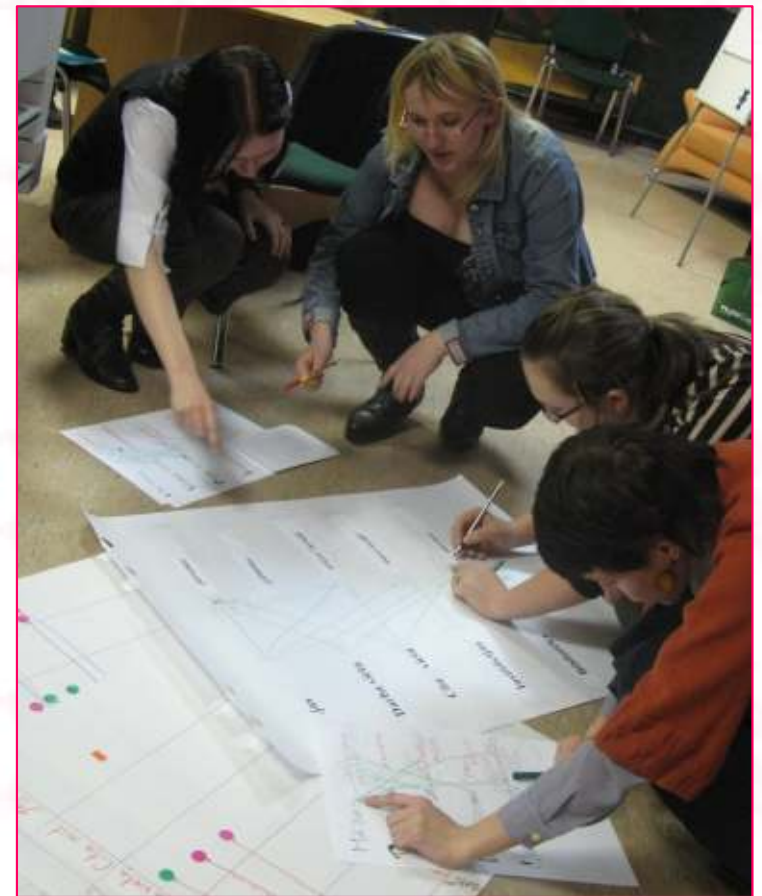
# Main research questions

1. What is the value of public library in society in general and at the level of local community?
2. What is the trust level in public libraries, librarians and information received through library?
3. What is the satisfaction with public library services?

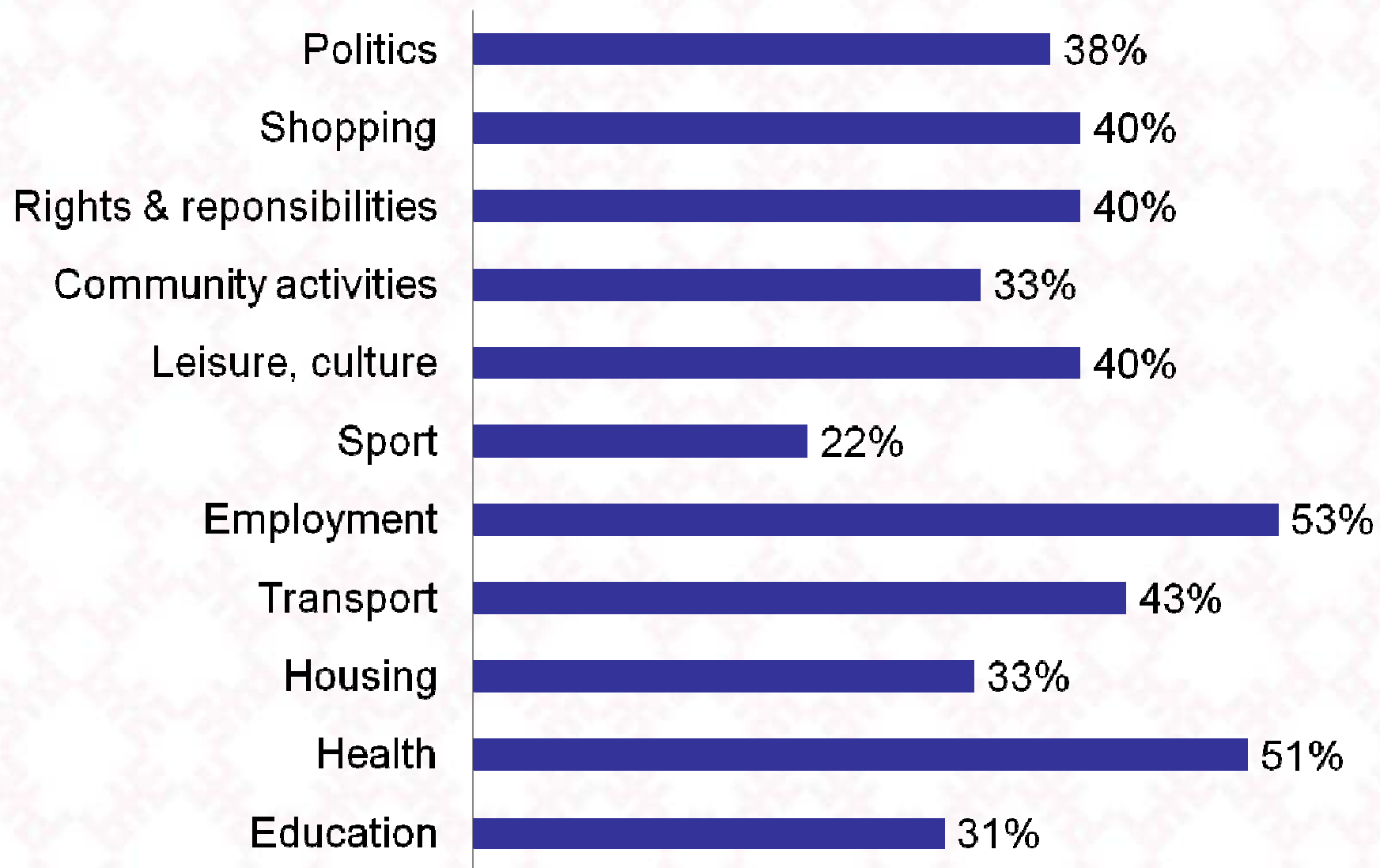
# Data collection instruments

Representative survey of inhabitants of Latvia (n=1064) including library users as well as non-users

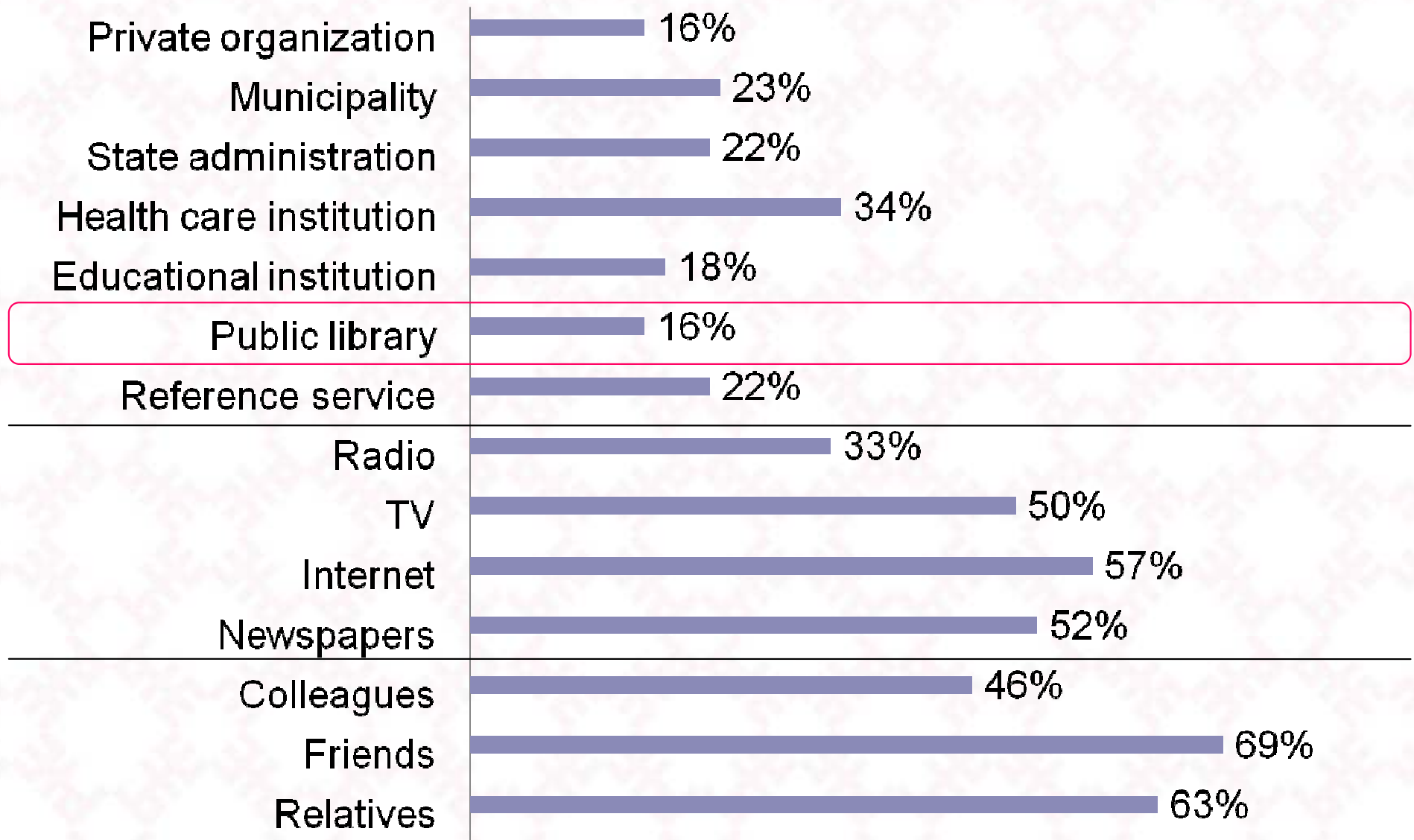
Information ecology mapping during FDGs (n=10) covering both urban as well as rural areas



# Information needs

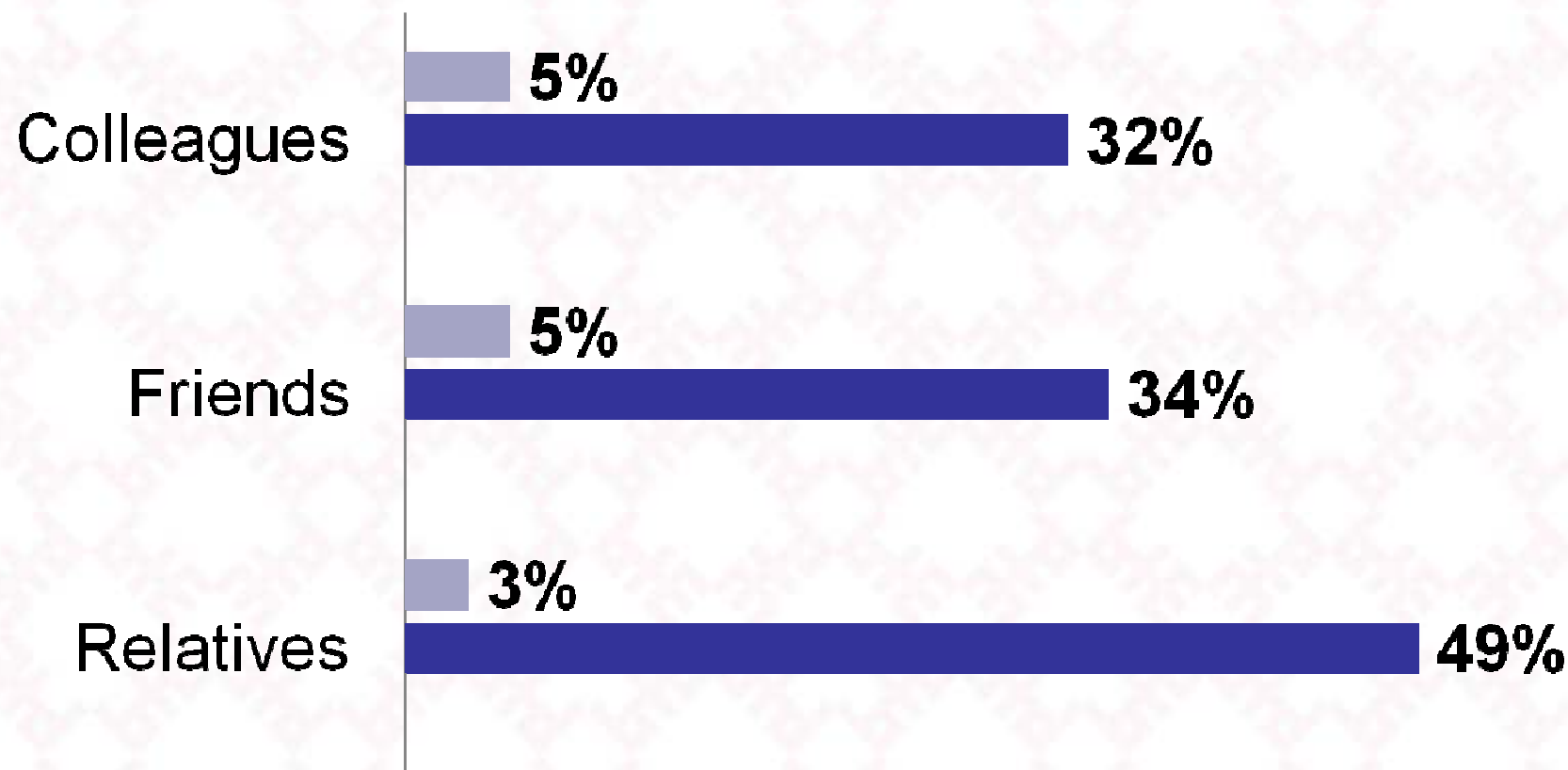


# Information sources



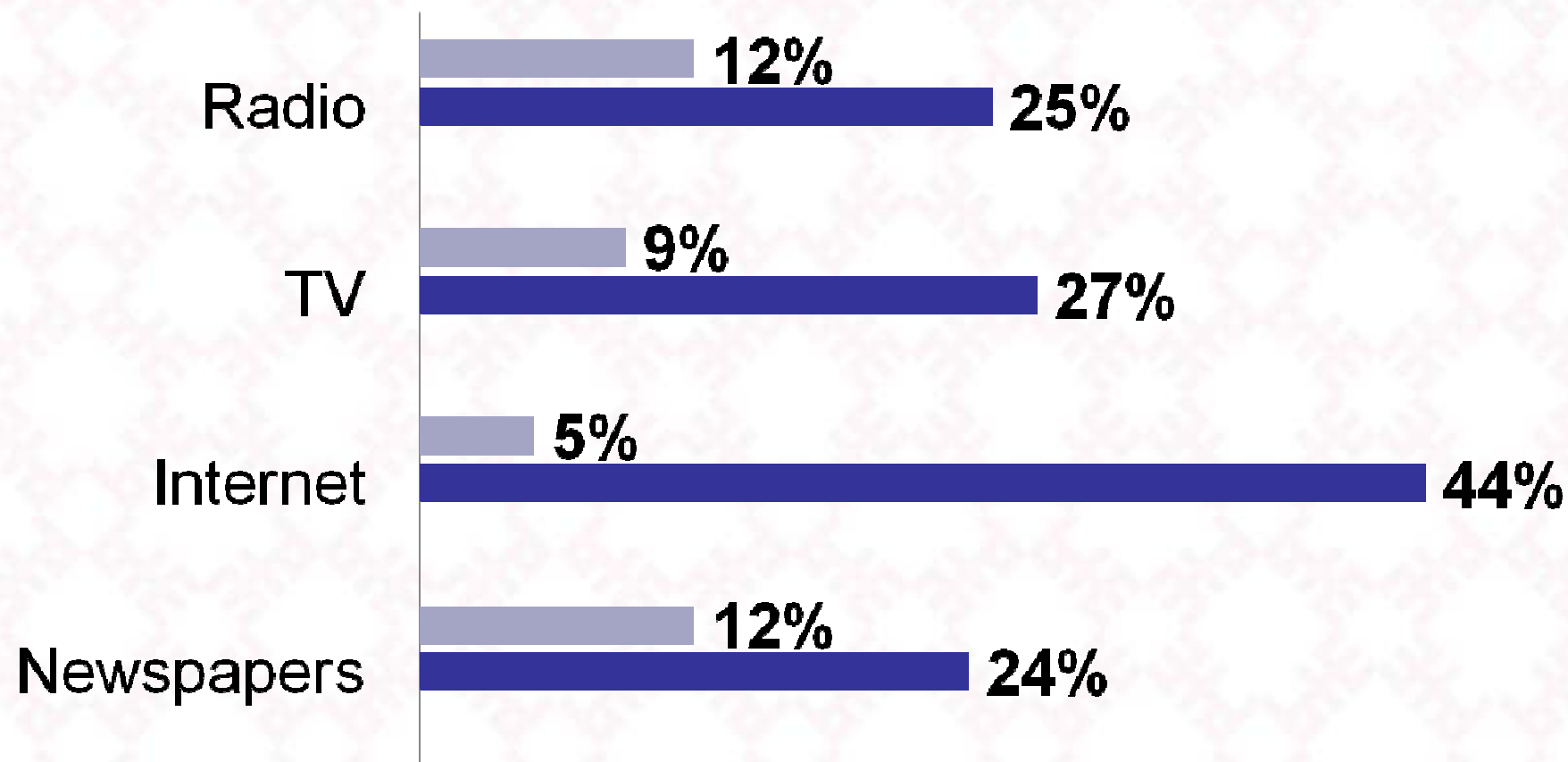
# Satisfaction of information needs personal networks

- Didn't receive necessary information
- Completely received necessary information



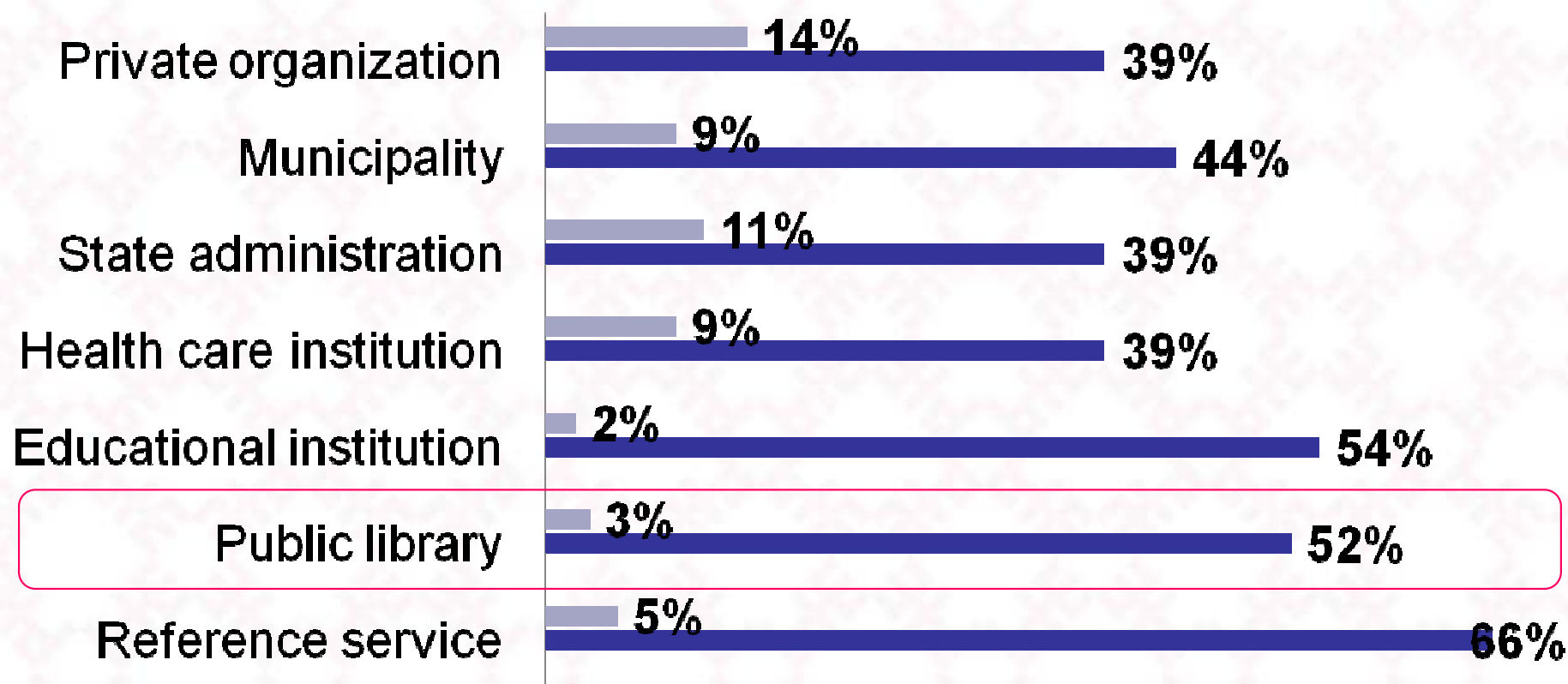
# Satisfaction of information needs media sources

- Didn't receive necessary information
- Completely received necessary information



# Satisfaction of information needs institutional sources

- Didn't receive necessary information
- Completely received necessary information



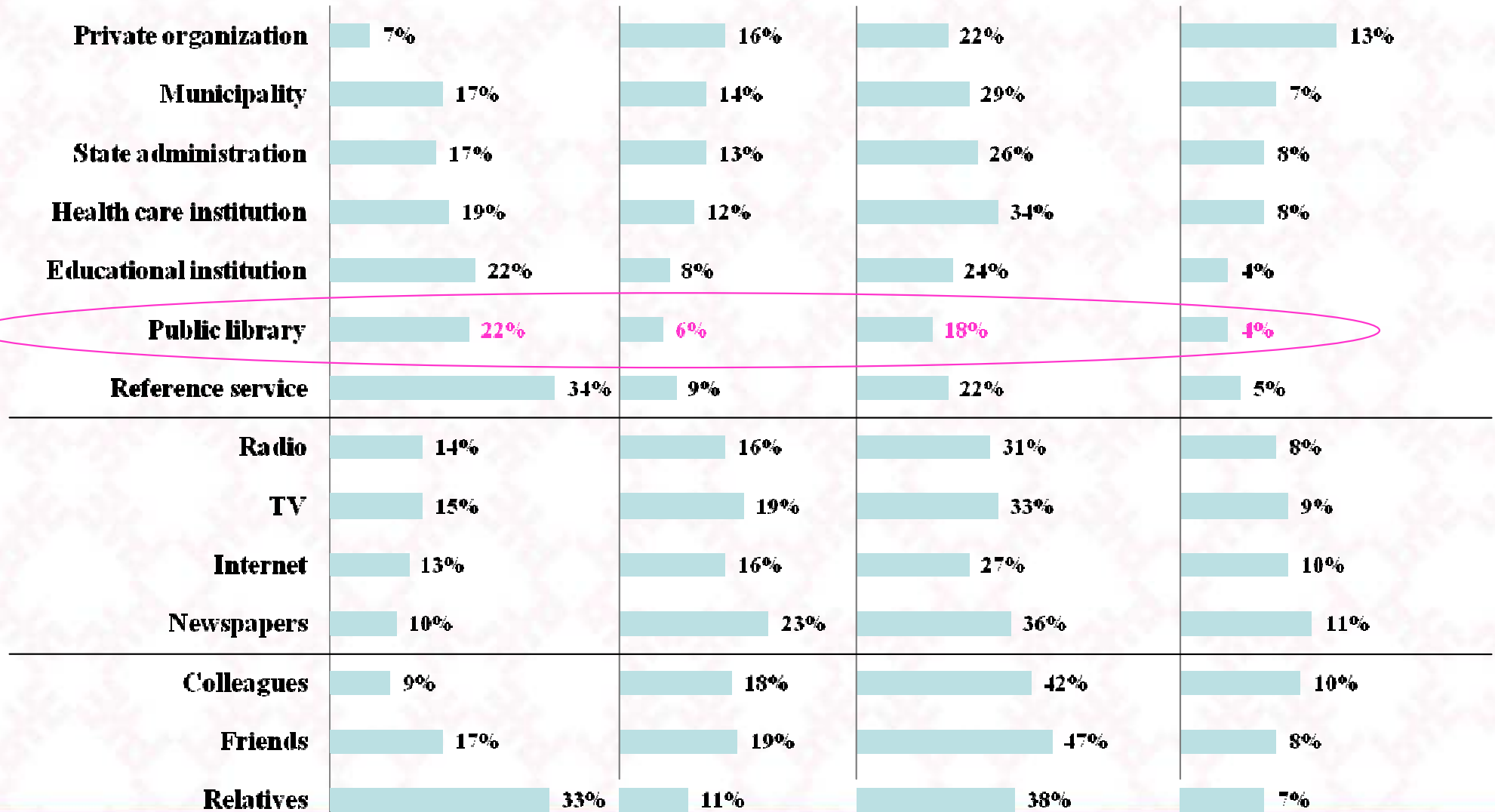
# Trust in information sources

Never have to verify

Often verify

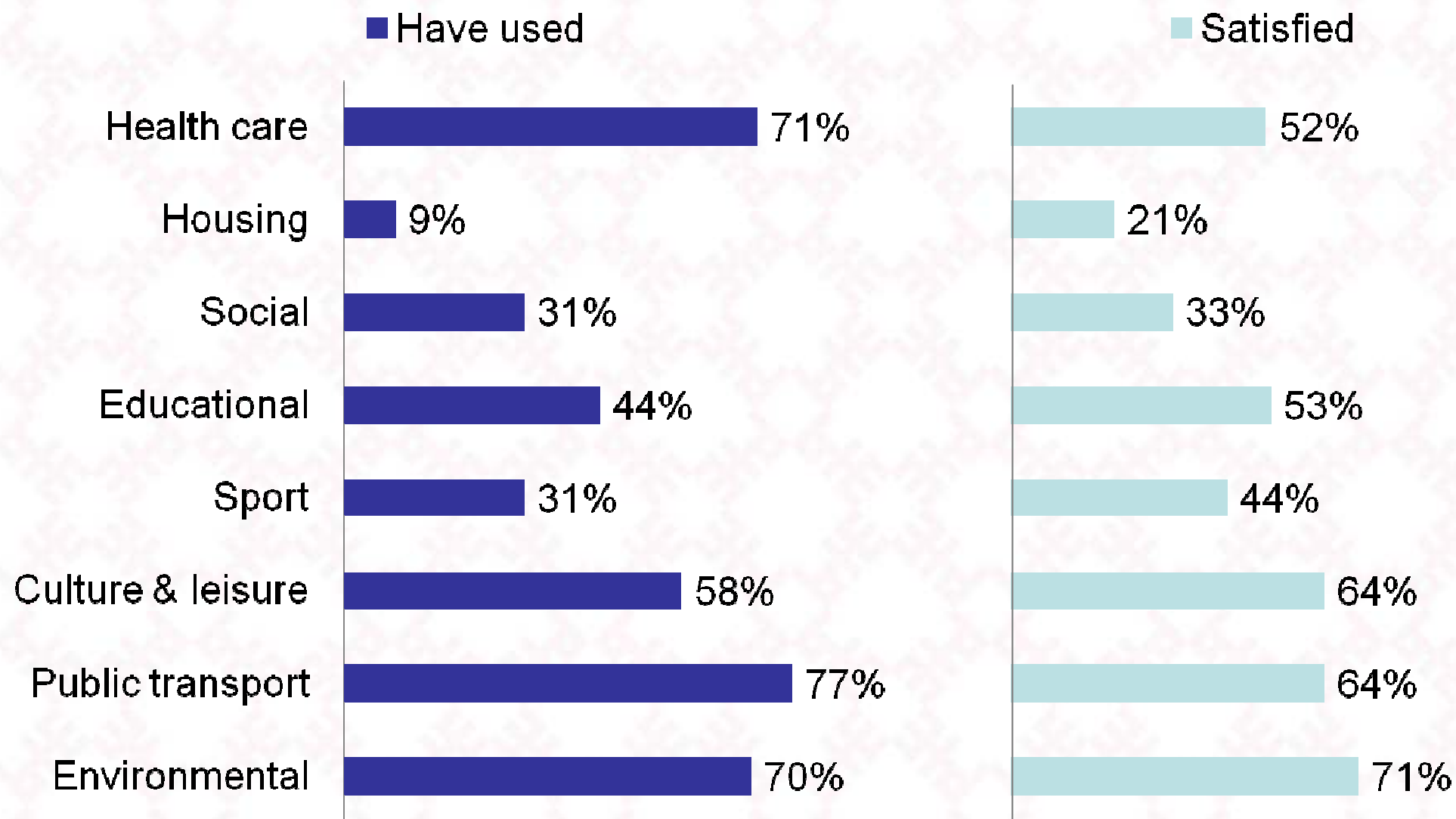
Sometimes verify

Always verify

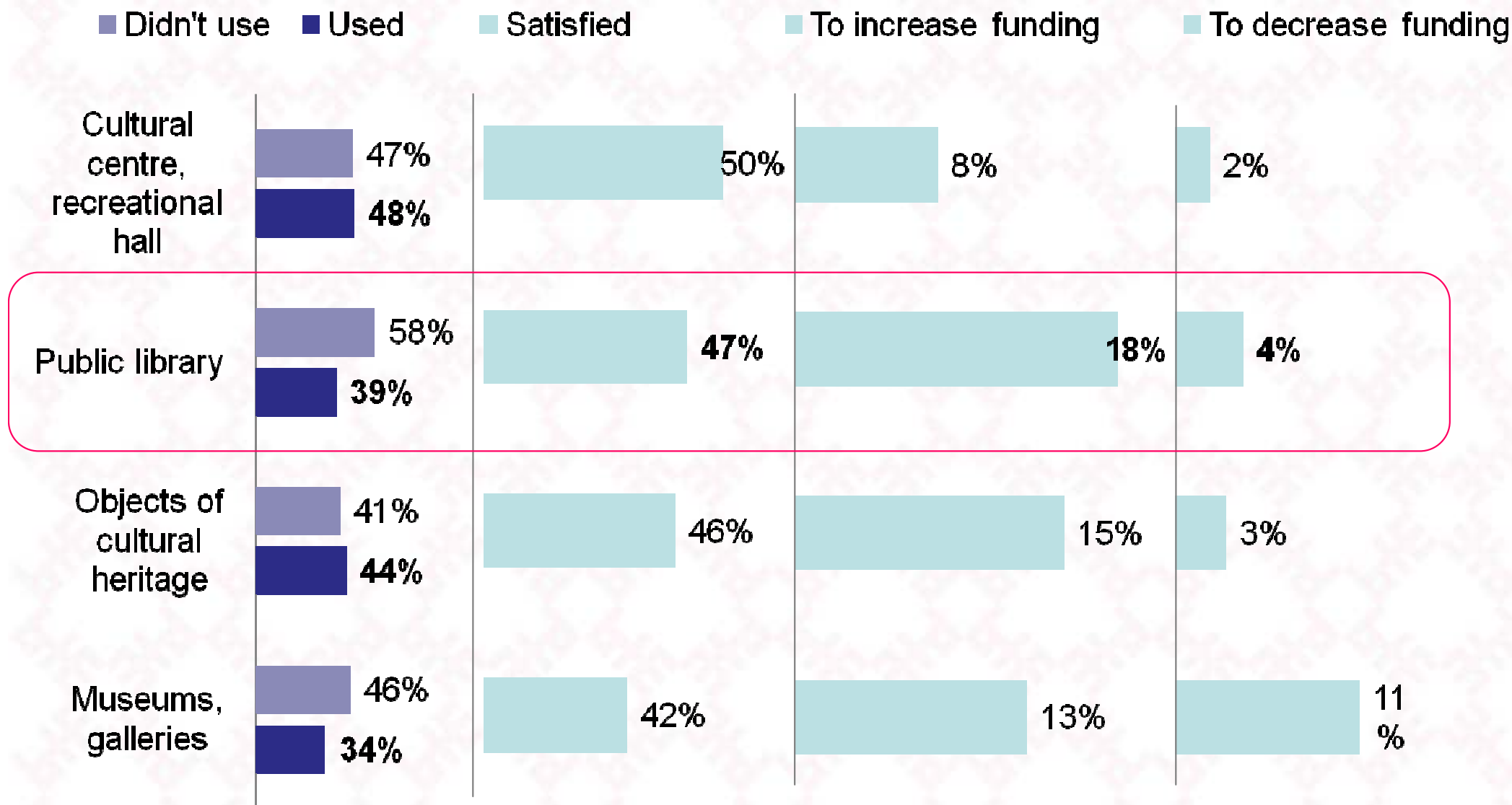




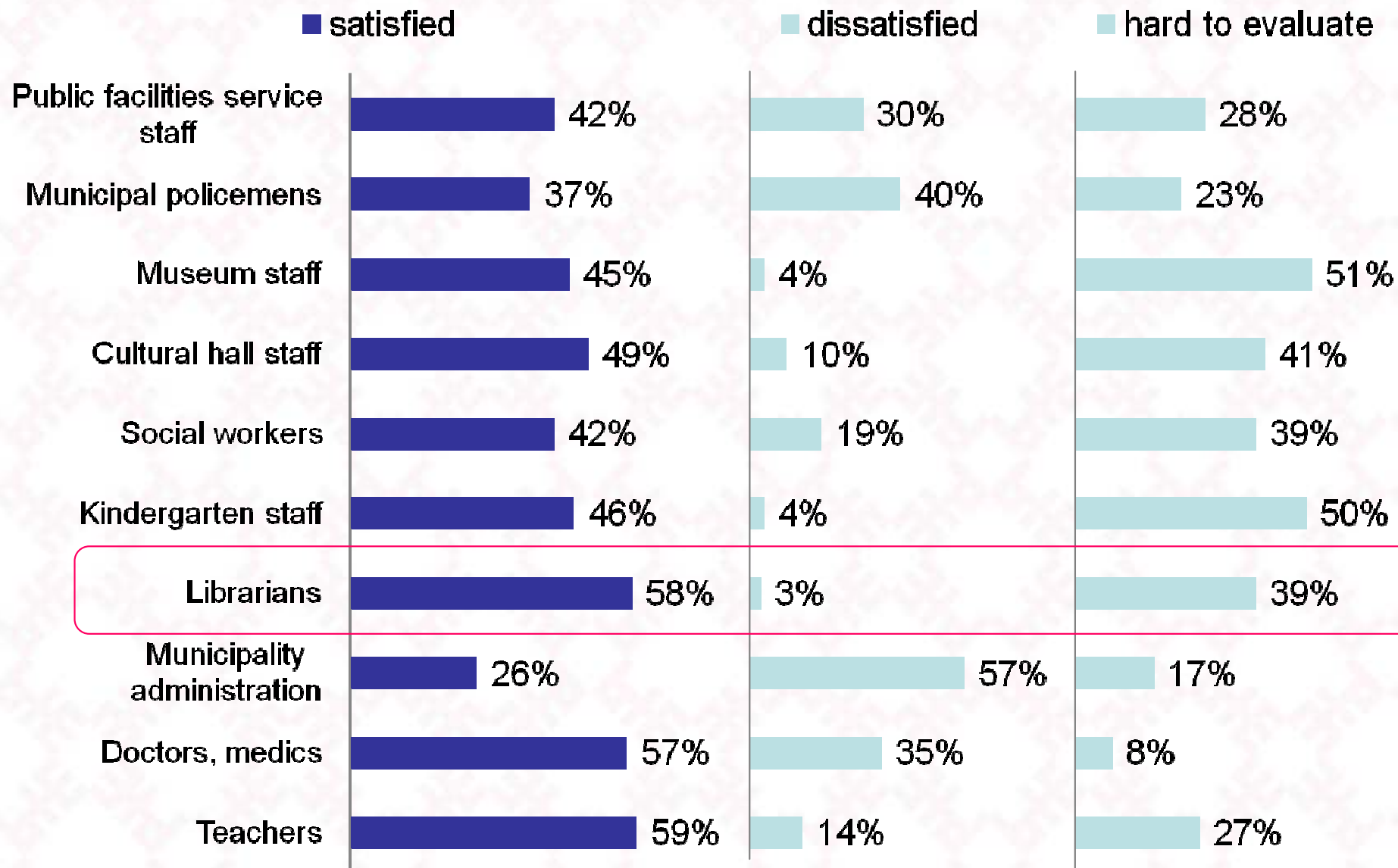
# Usage of municipality services



# Usage of culture & leisure services



# Quality of staff performance

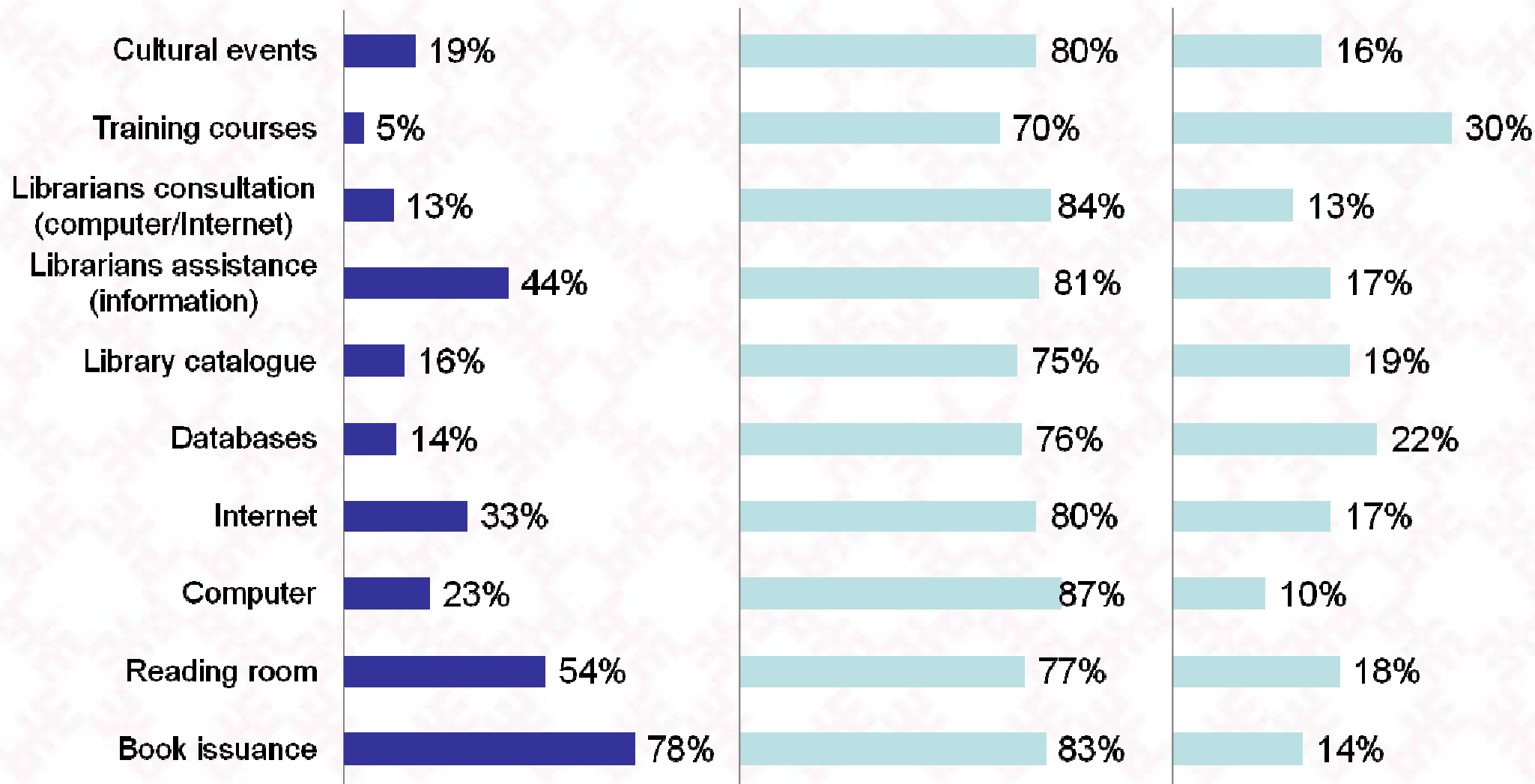


# Satisfaction with library services

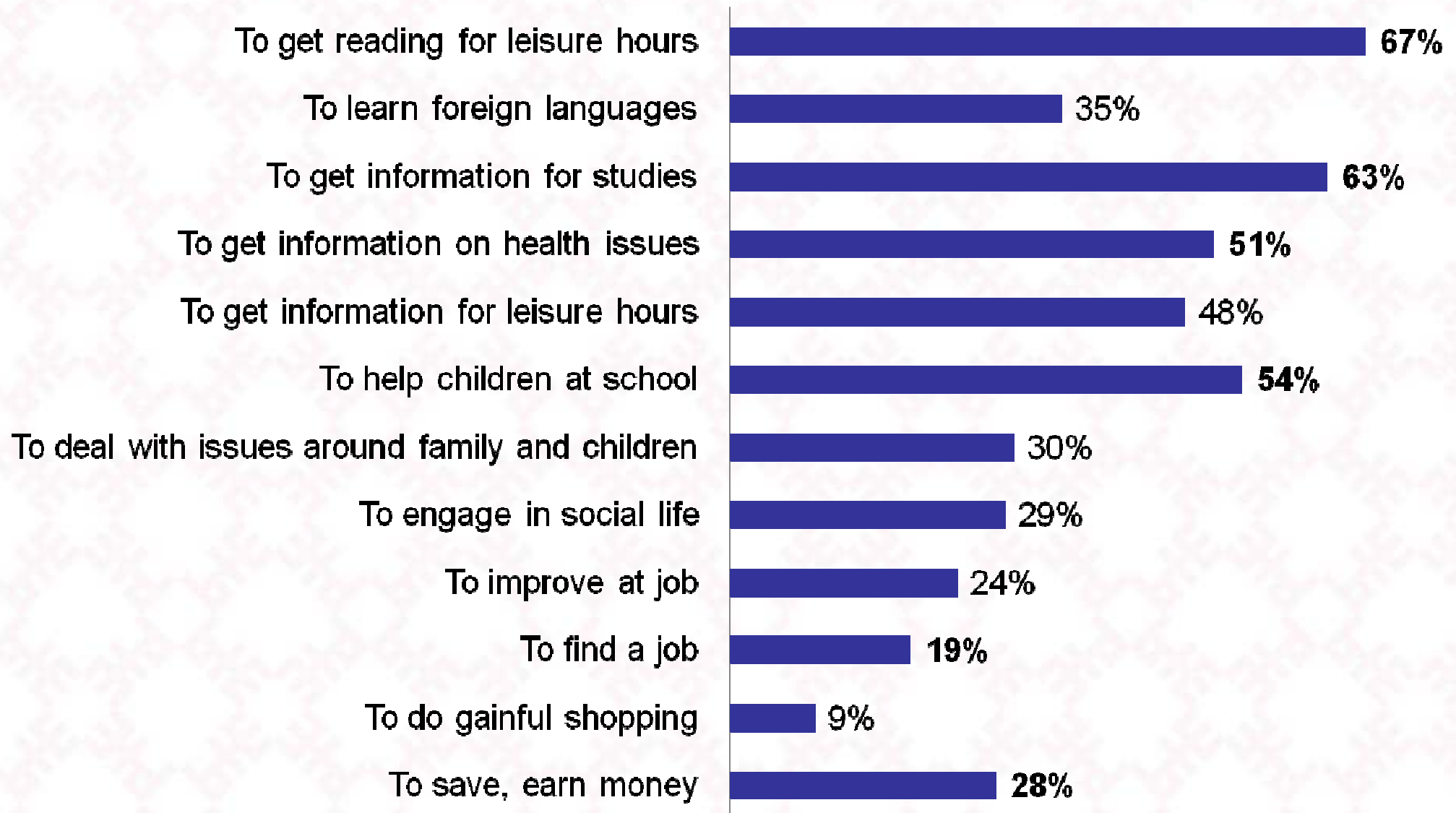
■ Usage of library services

■ Satisfied

■ Rather satisfied



# Experienced benefits



# CONCLUSIONS

- Context-oriented information ecology approach allows measuring magnitude of public library importance
- Exploration of information needs and information ecology of local communities allows identifying of potential areas of development for public libraries
- Public library is trusted as information source since it provides reliable and credible information
- Quality of public library staff performance is highly valued
- Public library makes an effect on users mostly in areas of leisure and education; economic effects are also identified

# THANK YOU!

**Kristine Paberza**

**Impact Assessment Specialist**

State Agency “Culture Information Systems”

53-2 Terbatas Street

Riga, LV-1011, Latvia

Phone: +371 67 844 887

Fax: +371 67 843 084

E-mail: [kristine.paberza@3td.lv](mailto:kristine.paberza@3td.lv)

Web: [www.3td.lv](http://www.3td.lv)