

**SURVEY OF STAFF OF THE LIBRARIES AND REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER  
GROUPS CONCERNED**



**REPORT**

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## **SURVEY OF STAFF OF THE LIBRARIES AND REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER GROUPS CONCERNED**

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE SURVEY**

Staff of the libraries described in the project are directors and employees of the libraries. Representatives of other groups concerned described in the project are authority figures, representatives of trade unions of the libraries and outside experts. The list of them was presented by the group of the project *For the Progress of the Library*.

Focus group discussions (FGD) were held with the heads and staff of the libraries. In-depth interviews (IDI) were conducted with representatives of other groups concerned.

The in-depth interview is a direct personal conversation held according to a solid interview thematic structure devised in advance, aimed at finding out a respondent's opinion, evaluations, attitude and experience related to the topic analyzed. The duration of an interview is between 45 and 60 minutes.

The focus group discussion is an organized discussion with a formed group of people, aimed at finding out their opinion, attitude and experience related to the topic analyzed. The discussion is held under a scenario constructed in advance. The number of participants varies from 8 to 10 people.

Two FGDs were held with the target group of librarians by proportionally involving representatives from all counties of Lithuania: by inviting two participants from each county – one participant from a library in the city and one participant from a library in the village. The same principle was applied to select participants in two FGDs with the directors of the libraries.

IDIs with representatives of other groups concerned were carried out using the list presented by representatives of the project *For the Progress of the Library*.

In total, 4 FGDs and 8 IDIs were held:

- two FGDs with librarians who are working or are to work with public Internet access (librarians).
- two FGDs with the heads of public libraries of Lithuania (directors).
- eight interviews with representatives of other groups concerned (experts).

**SURVEY OF STAFF OF THE LIBRARIES AND REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER GROUPS CONCERNED**  
**SUMMARY OF THE STUDY (according to the study indicators)**

**2. INDICATOR [Increased] Ability and Motivation of the Staff of Libraries to Use Information Technologies**

**2A. [Improved] Knowledge and Skills of Librarians in Using Information Technologies p. 11**

All librarians who took part in the study most often assess their current skills and knowledge of using information technologies as satisfactory. Quite a large part of librarians, out of those who took part in the study, has indicated that for the most part they are learning to use new information technologies that the library receives, independently.

Self-assessment of librarians is confirmed by representatives of other stakeholder groups (experts) that took part in the study. According some experts, despite their current low level of ability, a part of the staff of libraries can learn to use information technologies sufficiently in order to be able to carry out their direct responsibilities. On the other hand, experts indicate that the reasons for the current situation must be identified and eliminated. As one of the reasons is indicated poor remuneration for the librarian's work which is little linked to the assessment of the current ability and the encouragement of its improvement.

As one stimulus to learn to use information technologies, librarians mentioned cooperation with various institutions – the Tax Inspectorate, the Labour Exchange. Such cooperation enables librarians to attract more visitors to the library, including those who visit the library infrequently. Such cooperation also helps the librarian not only to acquire the lacking knowledge but to avoid additional work.

Librarians maintain that computer literacy courses or other courses that they were on have been useful but insufficient. While learning independently many librarians face difficulties due to poor knowledge of the English language.

Assessing their own ability to give advice to and teach library visitors to use various information technologies, the majority of librarians have expressed an opinion that they are able to help successfully only those users whose skills are very superficial.

The staff of libraries (librarians and library heads) have identified practically no activities or areas, related to library services, where modern information technologies would be used as a means for the provision of a service, and not as a service itself. One could suppose that this has to do both with the current low ability to use modern information technologies and with insufficient ability to organize the development of services and their provision.

It is likely that in libraries, the introduction of the Libis system will contribute to the improvement of the level of librarians' skills of using information technologies. Though both experts and librarians recognize that this must be followed by special training courses and practice. The use of the Libis programme will have to be linked to other activities where the skills of using modern information technologies are also necessary.

**2B. [Improved] Representation and Public Relations' Skills of Librarians p. 14**

As for the ability of libraries to give publicity to the services provided by the library, both the staff of libraries and experts assess that ability in a reserved way and their assessment is mixed. The majority of respondents of all target groups maintain that library staff lacks ability to present the services they provide and to communicate productively with the existing and potential partners of activities.

The majority of respondents acknowledge that awareness raising campaigns of library services are not planned and foreseen in advance and more often are random. On the other hand, opinions expressed by the library staff enable us to suppose that giving publicity to

services is directly linked to the introduction of new services and that it is considered that the existing services do not need additional publicity. The library, as an institution, is also perceived as a matter-of-course value perceived by society whose services do not need consistent publicity and advertising. On the other hand, the very awareness raising process is perceived as a direct, organized, focussed one-off action but not as a sequence of actions or activities which would last for as long as the service is provided.

Most heads of the libraries and experts noticed that the majority of promotion campaigns were conducted locally, in the field of activities of a specific library and public Internet access, however, a very small number of massive promotion campaigns enabling strengthening the popularity and standing of the library as an institution were run at the national level. According to the respondents, individual libraries are not able either financially or in terms of human resources to organize bigger sustained campaigns enabling potential visitors who do not currently visit libraries for a variety of reasons to turn their attention to the library's activities and services. Such campaigns, like the creation of new services, require constant cooperation among different institutions not only at the local, but also at the national level.

#### **4. INDICATOR [Improved] access for specific groups and social groups difficult to access:**

##### **4D. Existence of programmes or other mechanisms to involve groups difficult to access p. 19**

Asked to single out groups difficult to access from potential public Internet access users, respondents, first of all mentioned elderly visitors. Other groups singled out by the survey - physically handicapped people, the unemployed, children from complicated social environment or children having one or two parents living abroad, or rural inhabitants – were not indicated by staff of the libraries as groups difficult to access.

On the other hand, many employees of the libraries who participated in the survey singled out middle-aged working people as a target group that was the most difficult to access. Representatives of this target group who took part in the survey of library visitors also stated that time when public Internet access was available was one of the factors preventing them from more frequent visits to the library.

According to librarians, the unemployed evaluate the opportunity to use public Internet access in the library rather than at the labour exchange more favourably. The majority of librarians stated that they were closely cooperating with labour exchange offices and sought to guarantee people looking for a job in the library all possible information.

Children are considered to be a target group that is the easiest to access. In this case, the more complicated the environment in which a child lives is, the easier, librarians believe, it is to retain him or her in a library.

It is an important point to make that the attitudes of librarians towards children from an unfavourable social environment are mixed and sometimes negative. In communication with such children, staff members of libraries must face their problems but they do not always have enough competence to assess the situation adequately, to respond adequately to the problem or to help addressing it.

Library staff has indicated that they seek to encourage older library visitors to use possibilities provided by public Internet access. They are invited to computer literacy courses, hobby clubs and individual consultations. According to librarians, these measures are effective and some of library's senior visitors also become Internet users in the library. On the other hand, the staff of libraries has not mentioned any active steps or mechanisms to attract to public Internet access points those older citizens who do not visit the library.

The smallest number of services or ways to attract people to public Internet access points was related to persons with physical disability. Librarians say that among the current visitors

the number of these people is very small. In the same way as with older persons, most attention is given to those who come to the library themselves.

As an additional source of attracting new users is perceived the availability of wireless Internet in the library. This measure is most attractive to active users who study and work and who visit the library less frequently for the most usual purpose – books, periodical publications. It is also likely that this measure is effective in attracting to libraries those users who arrive at the settlement just for a while.

At the moment productive cooperation with educational establishments, the Tax Inspectorate and the Labour Exchange enables libraries to expand their spectrum of services and attract new visitors. It is likely that cooperation with other institutions or initiatives, which provide e-services, would allow achieving no worse results. Health care or self-government institutions, e-shops, developers of distance teaching programmes could be valuable partners in attracting new visitors to public Internet access points.

## **5. INDICATOR [Improved] Representation of Libraries**

### **5A. The Library's Reputation, Public Perception and Profile p. 25**

The majority of all the respondents who took part in the study, like respondent-visitors, most often indicated the following tasks as the ones related to the library: accumulation of the printed information (books, encyclopaedias, periodical publications) and its availability for use (reading in the library, borrowing and taking it home, etc.). Only a part of experts more often associated the library with computers and the Internet.

Modern information technologies associated with the library are the same as in the user group – i.e. the computer and the Internet. All staff members of libraries who took part in the study have acknowledged that the appearance of the computer and the Internet in the library has indeed changed the library's image and its perception in the community for the better. The library staff have confirmed quantitative factors, as mentioned by the users, indicating the change:

- General increase of visitors,
- Change in the visitor's social demographic profile – the appearance of more younger visitors who did not at all come to the library before.

Evaluating the changes, both librarians and experts expressed various opinions. On the other hand, the assessment is in one way or another related to the funding of activities on the libraries. Librarians first of all mention the increased workload which, in their opinion, is not properly paid for. Library managers and experts appreciated an increased number of visitors but regretted not being able to meet their needs with the current funding.

According to the experts, the library has changed very little compared with other public or social institutions. The change is minor either from the quantitative point of view (part of the experts believes that the libraries' network is considerably too large for the functions that are currently assigned to them) or from the qualitative point of view (work methods employed are old, the spectrum of services is not changing).

A possible transformation in order to serve the society better, according to the experts and some of the directors of libraries, could be transformation of the library into a place of gathering and communication of the community. In this way the main function of the library as identified today – i.e. to ensure the accumulation of information and its availability to the user – is expanded to include exchange of information as well as establishment and maintenance of social relations. According to the majority of the experts, the current stock of computers and the possibility of connecting them into a single network would serve well to advance this function.

## **5B. [Expanded] Mission of Libraries and Areas of Competence p. 28**

The majority of the respondents identified "promotion of reading" as the key mission of libraries.

Search for information and its provision are singled out as activities related to this mission. Librarians have indicated that quite a large part of visitors understand these activities directly – i.e. the librarian must find the necessary information and present it in the format desired by the visitor.

Both users and librarians have mentioned an acute problem – shortage of books, and not only new books. However, only very seldom they mentioned the service of ordering books from other libraries.

Various reviews and subscription for online news have been mentioned by experts as a promising service provided by the library, which would correspond with its assumed mission and could attract to libraries the users who use modern information technologies outside the library.

All experts are in agreement that contemporary library should allow the user to avail of all means that are currently used to receive and transfer information. However, quite a large part of them agree that at the moment this is more of a theoretic rather than practical possibility.

As an additional area of competence, which enables a diversification of services and at the same time, in cooperation with other institutions, satisfaction of needs of the community and society, the area of services related to financial settlements has been indicated.

As a possible expansion of library's activities and initiation of new forms of visitor communication, starting hobby clubs or clubs for different age groups has been indicated. According to experts, such a niche could be availed of by libraries in cities too. Heads of libraries, whose libraries have started such clubs, maintain that they animate the library's life a great deal and that they also attract visitors who may use library services less frequently.

Experts have identified yet another possibility for libraries to expand their activities using the existing ability of inviting and gathering visitors. A certain form of developing civic stance – debates with candidates to the elected government institutions. It has been mentioned that in some individual libraries they already carried out such activities before; however, it is possible to include more libraries into that and to make use of public Internet access.

A review of services listed by users, the ones that they use in the library, and a spectrum of services offered as confirmed by the library staff, enable one to maintain that at the moment the library performs more of a role of a mediator or the administrator of information sources. The library makes available for use the products created by others – people can read or borrow the printed information (books, periodical publications), or use the Internet free of charge. However, the library offers very few products that would have been developed by the library itself.

## **6. INDICATOR [Increased] local, regional and national funding of libraries:**

### **6A. Funding for libraries p. 33**

All respondents stated that at present funding for libraries was inadequate. The state was pointed out as the main and practically the only source of funding. None of the respondents indicated any other possible sources. A number of experts mentioned EU funding, however, it is also related to state funding, since a library as an individual applicant cannot seek this funding.

According to a number of experts, one of the fields that could contribute to the development of libraries by at the same time using resources possessed by the libraries is cooperation with commercial structures. In this case, effective action by a library and its attempt to analyze itself and provide attractive data for potential partners would also be necessary. By

summarizing the opinion of the staff of libraries and experts about resources currently possessed by the libraries and their skills in publicizing their services, it can be stated that additional training in this field is necessary for them. On the other hand, this activity could be coordinated not by individual public libraries, but rather by the organization uniting or representing them.

Salaries of librarians are a problem mentioned by all groups of respondents that took part in the survey. A low salary was called a factor which strongly demotivated the staff of the libraries. Admitting that it was difficult to increase salaries of librarians, some respondents said that they could also be motivated by other non-financial ways – organization of training and seminars on topics relevant to them, as well as better technical means of work. On the other hand, according to a number of respondents, low salaries do not allow libraries to compete on the labour market for qualified employees and quite often libraries have to content themselves with the staff who lack initiative and refrain from looking for unconventional solutions.

## **6B. Funding for public Internet access p. 34**

Respondents admitted that at present funding of Internet access was somewhat complicated and created tension in the municipalities when allocation of funds had to be made. While funding of libraries, although considered inadequate, is already a usual thing for everyone, Internet access is new and funding for it is quite often the result of the efforts of the library director and obligations assumed by him or her.

It is important to note that speaking about funding for Internet access; all the respondents mentioned a charge on Internet connection. No other things related to the Internet access were mentioned. It can be assumed that computers, software or office equipment were, to a large extent, received thanks to the participation in the projects. The renewal of these means was not considered by any respondent.

## **7. INDICATOR [Increased] social benefit from IT for individuals and communities**

### **7B. Understanding of the benefit provided by the public Internet access for the community by librarians p. 36**

Staff of the libraries associated benefit brought by the public Internet access in a library primarily with a larger number of library visitors and the increased use of library services. Employees of the libraries consider the very fact that residents visit the library to be a benefit both for the user who can make use of services offered to him or her and for the librarian who has a possibility of providing a service. In this case, users, librarians and experts jointly appreciate an indirect benefit from the Internet access in a library. A new service stimulated the use of old services in the target group that rarely visited a library before the establishment of free Internet access there.

The target groups of children, the unemployed and pensioners are singled out by the library staff as the ones that benefit most from the public Internet access in a library. These groups are singled out as the ones with the most limited financial resources, therefore, in this case, free Internet is an alternative allowing them to receive services which would otherwise be unaffordable to them. On the other hand, employees of the libraries, like users who participated in the survey, stated that pensioners used opportunities provided by the public Internet access in the library the least.

The target group of children increased most because of the establishment of the public Internet access in the libraries.

Librarians also confirmed the change in the behaviour model of schoolchildren pointed out by the users.

According to librarians, the common benefit for all users living in smaller towns and villages is office services – scanning, printing and copying. The provision of these services is also presented as a way to attract visitors to a library by offering services which they cannot receive in other places. When visitors come to libraries, they try to introduce visitors to other services, thus guaranteeing a sufficient number of visitors.

### **7C. Understanding of the benefit of public Internet access by other groups concerned p. 37**

The group of experts associate the concept of benefit (provided by the public Internet access in a library) rather with the expansion of the range of opportunities and reduction of social exclusion among the users living in rural areas. The benefit obtained by this group is partly related to a reduction in spending, however, it is stressed more strongly that, thanks to free Internet access in the libraries, rural inhabitants are enabled to use more services, to receive them quicker and to make use of means which are considered progressive by the society (and also by this group).

The main services singled out by the experts do not differ from those pointed out by the users or the library staff.

Analysing the current supply of the library services, experts expressed the opinion that the mission of libraries should be expanded by not just manipulation of printed matter or other information. Focus from information storage and its dissemination should shift to the exchange of information and activation of social life of the community. The benefit for the community would then be not only an opportunity to receive, but also an opportunity to provide and exchange information, services and experience.

Experts noticed that free Internet use in a library had a short-term impact – it stimulated users to buy computers and establish Internet connection, however, at the same time eventually reduced the number of library visitors. It can be held to be a long-term benefit of free Internet access and, partly, its primary purpose.

According to the experts, in order to retain public Internet access users, it is necessary to offer them additional services and form a new understanding of benefit. Use of e-services provided by the municipality is singled out as one of possible areas of use. On the other hand, experts admit that it can exist only if municipalities themselves understand the benefit received from the provision of such services.

Benefit received by other social groups from the opportunity to use the Internet for free is to a large extent perceived as financial support – first of all, benefit from saving money is stressed.

While staff and visitors of the libraries emphasized the changes in behaviour models in the target group of children, experts pointed out, as an additional benefit, a possible change not only in the use of services currently provided by the public sector, but also in behaviour models accompanying the use. Greater publicity about the provision of services in the state institutions, reduced bureaucracy and more purposeful organization of employment of the personnel are indicated as an additional value or an impact on public life.

## **8.INDICATOR [Increased] Supply and Use of Relevant Content:**

### **8B. [New] Content and Services in the Library p. 41**

Services provided by the library, according to the experts, do not differ from those identified by the users:

- Accumulation and dissemination of printed information (books, periodical publications),
- Free Internet,
- Organization of events (related to literature and others),
- Training.

The experts have indicated that in libraries, training is not organized consistently and it is rather a result of initiatives of the managers of specific libraries rather than a consistent activity with the purpose of dissemination of library services or education of library visitors. Considering a possibility for the library to become a certain training (including distance training) centre, experts have indicated that in order to do that the legal framework needs amendment. Having in mind the fact that in libraries practically all services are provided free of charge, while distance teaching programmes are designed also with the purpose of selling, it is obvious that individual libraries have very limited possibilities to provide such a service. On the other hand, the library can act as a mediator between the supplier and the user if there is a clear well-regulated mechanism for such activities.

Training programmes or the very training courses could be presented to the users via the virtual space of the library (websites) which would then be used on a wider scale and would become more attractive to the user. At the moment, no library staff member out of those who took part in the study mentioned services that would have been already moved to the virtual space or the plan to move certain services into the virtual space.

None of the respondents mentioned new library services that would be under development or recently developed.

### **8C. [Increased] Scope of Local Content on the Internet p. 42**

Speaking about the current websites of libraries, many of the respondents have admitted that they are often poor and of no value to the ordinary user. On the other hand, all respondents have maintained that libraries do not have sufficient human and financial resources in order to change the situation – i.e. to develop and regularly update information. The respondents suggested that resources be centralized and the maintenance of websites be coordinated at the county level.

One of the key factors determining the content of the library's website could be the profile of the user for whom the website is designed. In this study, no participant has identified such an addressee.

Both experts and library heads have agreed with the idea that library websites often are considered a matter of secondary importance when financial, as well as human, resources are planned and allocated.

New content on the Internet is directly related with a certain number of specialists who provide maintenance to websites. In this project, all target groups speak about the lack of such specialists. Experts have mentioned initiatives where help is provided to the administrators of library websites, but these initiatives are private and based on good informal interpersonal relations.

Taking into account the fact that on library websites you can more often find outdated rather than regularly updated information and that library staff members tend to concentrate their effort and resources on the communication with the physical and not the virtual visitor, it is possible to assume that decisions concerning "the virtual library", a possible package of its services and links with websites and services of other institutions should be made at a higher level than the public library.

Only a smaller part of the respondents working in libraries has agreed with the statement that the presence of library services and information about the library on the Internet is a necessity for a successful development of the library and in order for it to remain attractive to the user.

## **9. INDICATOR Innovations in the chain of libraries:**

### **9A. Examples of innovations in the libraries [occurred with the help of the project] p. 46**

The majority of the respondents did not indicate any changes which had taken place in the libraries for the last six months since the beginning of the survey. Speaking about changes which had occurred for the past one or two years, the same things were mentioned as pointed out by library visitors – changes in the material environment:

- A number of new books increased in the libraries.
- The image of libraries improved after renovation of their buildings. A number of library visitors also went up.
- After a renewal of computer equipment or change of the Internet provider in the communities during a fixed period of time, these factors did not remain unnoticed.

On the other hand, a number of experts and directors consider initiatives which are being currently introduced in the libraries to be a consequence of personal efforts of the library staff or of a strong external pressure. At the same time it is stressed that one of the reasons for insufficient changes in the library is the IT fear of librarians themselves and not daring to use IT.

## **10. INDICATOR [Increased] support for librarians:**

### **10A. [Improved] maintenance of libraries p. 47**

According to librarians, technical aid is insufficient in the libraries where the respondents from the group of librarians work. Just those working in library buildings which have been or are soon to be renovated evaluated the present situation somewhat more moderately, however, it is likely that this is due to the fact that equipment in those libraries has been/is to be renewed and the issue of maintenance will not be so relevant for some time. The majority of the respondents stated that when problems with IT equipment emerged they usually called a specialist from the public library or the municipality, however, help needed was not always provided duly.

Experts believe that technical aid that is currently provided for libraries is insufficient. Although a number of libraries employ IT specialists, their salaries do not correspond to the situation on the market, which stimulates rotation of specialists and prevents libraries from hiring highly qualified specialists or hiring a sufficient number of them.

### **10B. [Improved] methodological aid for librarians p. 48**

Existing methodological aid for librarians was evaluated with moderation by all target groups. Seminars and courses were pointed out as the main existing means. The majority of librarians contemplating possible changes in this field mentioned the necessity to change the content of those courses – to make them more useful for everyday work. Topics can be relatively divided into ones related to IT innovations (the latest Word, Excel), to work means (the English language, computer literacy, public relations) and to professional innovations (interpretation of a literary work, promotion of reading).

On the other hand, the very quality of existing courses was evaluated with moderation by stating that quite often they were rather formal. A number of surveyed librarians indicated that more often courses were useful for broadening one's horizons and at the level of practical application they are beneficial, depending on the situation in the library and the creativity of librarians themselves.

An impression is created that at present staff of libraries consider the current situation concerning provision of methodological aid to be formal and little applicable to everyday activities. Experts and librarians stated that a mechanism was necessary to maintain constant methodological aid provided at that time when it was necessary for a particular librarian.



## **2. INDICATOR [Increased] Ability and Motivation of the Staff of Libraries to Use Information Technologies**

### **2A. [Improved] Knowledge and Skills of Librarians in Using Information Technologies**

All librarians who took part in the study most often assess their current skills and knowledge of using information technologies as satisfactory. Quite a large part of librarians, out of those who took part in the study, has indicated that for the most part they are learning to use new information technologies that the library receives, independently. Rural librarians assessed their abilities as poorer compared with those who work in the city. It has been maintained that quite often librarians from the country and small towns lack basic knowledge and they are not only unable to use fully the available means but also experience emotional discomfort when they can not give advice to visitors on the issues related to the use of the computer and the Internet, or even have to get advice from other visitors on how to perform one or another action.

*I work as a librarian in a rural branch, and there is Excel and all programmes, and we do not know how to use them, but we learn as we work, we learn independently as we face one or another issue in the course of our work. (Librarians)*

*I do not directly use the computer in my work, I only need it every third Saturday during a shift. I work in the division which serves visitors, in my work I use the computer very seldom. (Librarians)*

*I only know how to write an e-mail, because we received a computer only recently, we only have one computer and we find it difficult to share it. (Librarians)*

*Indeed, we could make much wider use of it, but there are no possibilities, no means. (Librarians)*

Self-assessment of librarians is confirmed by representatives of other stakeholder groups (experts) that took part in the study. According some experts, despite their current low level of ability, a part of the staff of libraries can learn to use information technologies sufficiently in order to be able to carry out their direct responsibilities. On the other hand, experts indicate that the reasons for the current situation must be identified and eliminated. As one of the reasons is indicated poor remuneration for the librarian's work which is little linked to the assessment of the current ability and the encouragement of its improvement.

*I have been in communication with librarians quite a lot, and the situation is quite problematic in this area, and those librarians who need to have this knowledge because of their responsibilities in the establishment of those public Internet access points, some of them have difficulty even using the mouse, I met them during those briefings that we gave. As for their ability to learn, the majority are willing and are doing their best. Some of them are doing better, some of them are doing worse. Some of them learn these skills with quite a difficulty and they are even somewhat afraid to learn. Their level and motivation is very different. (1 Ekspert)*

*The main problem is people, their ability, and librarians' salaries are not high, some librarians are close to old pension age, and there are no young people, and we have the staff without a proper education. Therefore decisions concerning the legislation need to be made, that is again on the shoulders of local self-government, there is a need for more legal regulation, say, in respect of the staff who work with Internet access points, these staff members will teach visitors, while they themselves need training. (2 Ekspert)*

*If that does not affect my salary, then it is very convenient for me if there are fewer visitors, the furniture does not wear that much, and I do not need to put in additional effort. But it depends upon motivation. There are not so many altruists, are there, so the employer, the state must motivate the employee. First they must motivate the head, then he will motivate his employees, there needs to be developed a system of salaries, but it has not been developed, though the Ministry says that it is there. (3 Ekspert)*

A small part of librarians working in urban libraries has indicated that they actively use information technologies not only for their direct responsibilities but also for interpersonal communication and the search for additional information necessary in their work. However, other librarians taking part in the study accept such experience as surprising stories. One may suppose that these are more of exceptions from the common practice.

*We use Skype, electronic mail, online information search... We look for materials for work, look for ideas. **You have mentioned conferences...** Yes, there is, for example, such a portal bendruomenė.lt (community.lt) and since we librarians are also members of the community, we can get useful information there. If we need to conduct a meeting, it is a useful site to look for information; also, if you are not able to go to a conference, you can find feedback there. (Librarians)*

*We even have such a connection between branches of libraries, because we receive information and instructions from the central library. So we write to each other. (Librarians)*

Several respondents in the librarians' target group have indicated that they independently find and install programmes helping them to work more creatively and in a better organized way.

*About a month ago I downloaded Picasa, a programme helping to organize your photos. **Have you downloaded it by yourself?** Yes, I found an offer on Google and... **Have you learnt to use it by yourself? Successfully?** Yes, by myself. Yes, I am glad to say – successfully; you know, you have so many photos and you do not know where they are, and this software allows you to group them in such an orderly way. (Librarians)*

As one stimulus to learn to use information technologies, librarians mentioned cooperation with various institutions – the Tax Inspectorate, the Labour Exchange. Such cooperation enables librarians to attract more visitors to the library, including those who visit the library infrequently. Such cooperation also helps the librarian not only to acquire the lacking knowledge but to avoid additional work.

*It has already been a third year running that Tax Inspectorate specialists from our area come to the library, and my business is just to invite people, and those specialists work with the people, they just sit and work, and I do not need to interfere at all. (Librarians)*

Librarians maintain that computer literacy courses or other courses that they were on have been useful but insufficient. While learning independently many librarians face difficulties due to poor knowledge of the English language.

*I have been given a computer that is multifunctional so I studied its programmes carefully but they are in English, and I do not know English so I pressed different buttons – and still the computer is cleverer than I am. (Librarians)*

*The English language is an obstacle to us because we do not understand instructions so our children translate them for us. (Librarians)*

Assessing their own ability to give advice to and teach library visitors to use various information technologies, the majority of librarians have expressed an opinion that they are able to help successfully only those users whose skills are very superficial. On the other hand, a part of librarians has indicated that when they face problems in the use of the computer and the Internet, they do not always have somebody to ask for advice and they have no other option but to ask the people who do not have to provide advice to them, namely, staff members of other institutions, family members or even better skilled library visitors. Such a situation causes emotional discomfort to the staff member and diminishes his/her authority in his/her own and visitors' eyes.

*- The information technology teacher helps me. He works at school, and he has helped me. Pupils, children.*

*- My children help me, I am ashamed to ask visitors – so I telephone my children and ask. (Librarians)*

*First of all – lack of knowledge. If it is something new, we at once do not have enough knowledge. And then also the instructions – it would be better if they were in Lithuanian. Or it would be good to have someone who would give a good explanation, who already knows how to use it; this is the easiest way to learn. (Librarians)*

*We know that there are programmes which make advertising stands, they put everything nicely together, there are layout programmes – we know about them, and I go to the information technology teacher and he does everything nicely for me, but I do not know how to do that. (Librarians)*

The staff of libraries (librarians and library heads) have identified practically no activities or areas, related to library services, where modern information technologies would be used as a means for the provision of a service, and not as a service itself. One could suppose that this has to do both with the current low ability to use modern information technologies and with insufficient ability to organize the development of services and their provision.

Both users and librarians state that a large number of people want to learn English. During the discussions, the majority of the heads of the libraries said that their libraries were carrying out special training programmes allowing people to learn the language on their own, however, they were used rather rarely. It can be assumed that librarians lack skills in organizing such training or in providing information about the existing service. Just a few libraries indicated that they organized similar training by using the material they had and formed clubs in which people willing to put the material learnt into practice could do it.

*Well, as for learning, in Lithuania the knowledge of a foreign language is a problem, not many people know foreign languages, in the service sector too, and foreigners find it hard to communicate in shops and similar places. Learning a foreign language will be relevant for at least 10 years... If you are going to work in the service sector, you will need to learn. (Heads of libraries)*

*- Somebody should give you impetus at first so that you will learn by yourself later.*

*- We have been doing this step by step for as long as 8 years, perhaps, and the same number of people gather each year and always and it never falls. We use video, 24 lessons, usually about 20-30 people gather and they complete this course in three months, however, additionally, a tutor works with them individually or they borrow books from our library and work with them additionally... These are programmes for learning English which are carried out by many in Lithuania... Well, our library teaches English and we are thinking of forming some club in which, after learning a little bit of language, you can practise speaking and communicate.*

*- And we have already had and now have clubs to which a group of people come from England and Scotland, so we have also done for our people. (Directors of the libraries)*

However, as the number of fields in which librarians become involved is increasing, the heads of the libraries and librarians doubt whether it is worth engaging with it. It can be

presumed that it is partly related to a low salary which was complained about by most librarians who took part in the survey (see Indicator 6).

*In this case, it is necessary to create conditions for encouraging and informing people, for helping them, rather than teaching. It is necessary to be careful so that it won't be that we teach English and something else...it is necessary to find so that a librarian will show that it is worth doing... (Directors of the libraries)*

It is likely that in libraries, the introduction of the Libis system will contribute to the improvement of the level of librarians' skills of using information technologies. Though both experts and librarians recognize that this must be followed by special training courses and practice. The use of the Libis programme will have to be linked to other activities where the skills of using modern information technologies are also necessary.

*The libraries, where the Libis system has been introduced, that computerization information system, I believe that they must already have enough skills to use it, i.e. to give training, but they would be the user of the system. And speaking about the readiness to become a helper to people or a teacher, for that purpose it would be necessary to separate that qualification, to train, to improve so that they would not only help the person, as with book stocks, to find what is necessary, but would also help with the Internet in general, and with the library's services, and with search for information. (6 Ekspert)*

*Well, now we are trying to master that Libis programme. To take photographs of events with web cameras, what is going on in the library. (Librarians)*

*You know, I must say that public libraries do not want those tickets so much. **Why?** Because the number of users will decrease – due to fee-paying tickets. The library will give out fewer books because the librarian will not have time, he will not be able to do other tasks. I can already see that this lady who serves visitors no longer talks. Well, yes, because if you are on your own, you just sit and scan. **But it is easier to scan than to type on the computer or to write into a log?** Yes, I agree, it is easier and simpler. **Then why does she need more time for that now and how was she able to write everything before?** I do not know why, I only know that public libraries avoid those tickets. (Librarians)*

The promotion of skills of using information technologies, according to experts, is not only an opportunity for the development of the librarian's profession but also a qualitative change of the very infrastructure of libraries related with that development.

*There are Internet access points where, well, the librarian himself is interested in new developments, there are also points where, say, perhaps one of the motivating factors is also a fear to lose the job because some libraries are being closed down in villages, and that appearance of the computer and new functions save them from being closed down. I hope that the project "Bibliotekos pažangai" ("For the Progress of Libraries") will have a greater impact here. And we are looking forward to that very much because I have participated in two projects already, but that was insufficient, and those briefings were more of getting familiar with the nature of work, and they were very brief, we only had one day to speak about how to continue the communication, how to stay in touch via e-mail, that was only giving the tools to them so that afterwards they could start doing that independently. (1 Ekspert)*

## **2B. [Improved] Representation and Public Relations' Skills of Librarians**

As for the ability of libraries to give publicity to the services provided by the library, both the staff of libraries and experts assess that ability in a reserved way and their assessment is mixed. The majority of respondents of all target groups maintain that library staff lacks ability to present the services they provide and to communicate productively with the existing and potential partners of activities.

The majority of respondents acknowledge that awareness raising campaigns of library services are not planned and foreseen in advance and more often are random. Among the reasons for that were identified a lack of financial resources and knowledge. On the other hand, opinions expressed by the library staff enable us to suppose that giving publicity to services is directly linked to the introduction of new services and that it is considered that the existing services do not need additional publicity. The library, as an institution, is also perceived as a matter-of-course value perceived by society whose services do not need consistent publicity and advertising. On the other hand, the very awareness raising process is perceived as a direct, organized, focussed one-off action but not as a sequence of actions or activities which would last for as long as the service is provided.

As the main measures, which are at the moment used to give publicity to the library's activities and services, have been indicated:

- Various scheduled cultural events (exhibitions, concerts, meetings, etc.), as the ones enabling a larger gathering of people in the library where the existing services would be reminded of or new services would be introduced. The majority of events are more often linked to certain occasions than targeted at separate groups.
- Preparation and dissemination, in the library, of various printed information about the library's services.
- Posting of various pieces of information on the libraries' websites (though the majority of them are accessed by very few visitors) or cooperation with other regional websites.
- Cooperation with institutions that provide services relevant to library visitors (the Labour Exchange, the Tax Inspectorate, community centres, etc.) both in a role of mediator in the provision of their services and in organizing joint events.

*They already have many community events, we organize joint events with certain institutions and we are in good cooperation. Well, they prepare projects, we give them recommendations and provide premises. (Heads of libraries)*

*There is information in regional newspapers, on the website, there are various leaflets and flyers. Our services are introduced. The main steps are posting the information on the website... And the leaflet and flyers. (Heads of libraries)*

*We have our mini website and there are leaflets. We write posters – information about services and prices, we advertise ourselves on the village notice board.*

*We try to cooperate with schools, larger events take place in the library, we invite them to us if there is an event; we follow the principle that we want to attract as many events as possible to the library because it also means advertising the library, and the events do not necessarily need to be related to culture. (Librarians)*

*We organize open-door days during the librarians' week, we announce that in the newspaper and on our notice board, in the library. For example, we also produce flyers and we distribute them. **Where do you distribute them?** Well, it depends, either in the library itself or sometimes, when we produce a lot of them, we drop them into post boxes. (Librarians)*

*We distribute book markers with services listed on them, give them during events. (Librarians)*

*We do planning for a year in advance. **And what about plans of giving publicity to the services?** No, no, just events. And the publicity – according to the need. Or as a copycat – somebody else did it and I am going to do that too. (Librarians)*

*What we do we place an advertisement when, for example, there is time to file tax returns that there will be training. (Librarians)*

*In villages, they have their own channels for the dissemination of information. (Heads of libraries)*

*Once a month there would have been some information about us in a regional newspaper. There were notices on the door and that is all. Now it is already a matter of course to us too, that there is the Internet. But I believe that those people who used to visit the library before, they come and they know that the Internet is free of charge, but those who did not come before, they did not come not because the Internet is free, but because they did not need that and they do not need it now. But if they are going to come to the library for a different purpose, they will find out that we also have things like that. (3 Ekspert)*

Several experts have indicated that there also exists a certain avoidance to give publicity to library's services. According to them, the librarian should receive appropriate training and he/she should be encouraged to assume more and more diverse responsibilities in respect of the visitor.

*The reasoning is that if I am going to give more publicity to what I do, then more people will know about it and I will be given more tasks. (4 Ekspert)*

*You see, how I understand it, librarians perhaps even publicize, but then they are afraid that they will have to shoulder more work and, say, the salary remains the same but there is more and more work. This reduces their motivation. We are in the habit of putting more things into a cart once somebody pulls it. Besides, 10 people would be standing by and giving advice on how to pull. All that could be developed in a centralized way. That is how we started our cooperation with the Tax Inspectorate; it means that often the situation is redeemed by somebody who knows how to do it, and the willingness to act depends on incentives to the tutor or librarian. (4 Ekspert)*

Many librarians indirectly noted that representation of a library and promotion of its services created problems when new visitors, users of a new service, were beginning to flow into a library after a successful campaign. Users come to libraries interested, yet imagining the service in the way somewhat different from that in which a librarian perceives it, and the latter confronts a dilemma about whether to provide the service in the way imagined by a visitor or to try to change a user's understanding, at the same time risking to cause a conflict and lose that user. A number of librarians admitted that they lacked knowledge of communicating with a growing group of child visitors and of promoting services accessible via IT in the library to the group and elderly users who avoided using them etc. Respondents working in rural libraries noticed a new behaviour model which emerged in the group of women having little children. In order to settle their affairs, women bring their children to the library as if to a kindergarten and leave them to a librarian to look after them. When this practice continues, librarians feel used and distracted from their direct activities, yet, they do not know how they could avoid this situation. In their opinion, simply to refuse to look after children would mean to offend and lose a client.

*There are sort of sly mothers who bring their children to the library and leave there as if in a kindergarten.*

It is likely that special training or the self-aid line coordinated from one centre and operating by using computers and the Internet which a library already has would help to cope with such and similar situations.

***Do you have sufficient skills in communicating with such children?*** *Personally I lack these skills, not skills in communicating with small children, but rather with teenagers who I definitely need to learn to communicate with. Teenagers have nowhere to go. My working hours are long, I work until eight p.m., so they hang around the bus stop and come here, no films are shown, no diskos are organized, where will they go? All of them come to the library.*

In this way, present modern technology in a library would be used for the good not only of visitors, but also of employees. It is important to note that many librarians sincerely rejoiced at the opportunity to use new computers and various technical means. It is likely to be evaluated by librarians as incentive.

Library visitors believe that a librarian is able to assist an Internet and computer user in so far as he or she knows how to use them. It can be assumed that creation of work tools and the content and provision of them for a librarian would eventually have an impact on the use of information technology among visitors. The majority of the libraries' employees who took part in the survey indicated that although they assumed an obligation to consult public Internet access users and to stimulate its use among library visitors, very often librarians, instead of encouraging a potential user to develop his or her own skills, simply carried out his or her requested activities for him or her, thus creating an image of a helpful employee, but at the same time getting the feeling that as the number of similar users was increasing, they would not be able to cope with the load of their work any longer.

*If it is necessary to do anything, we do everything for older people, because they say: "It will take us too long, you'd better do it". Very often they are afraid of making a mistake or showing that they don't know how to do it, because of that they don't even try. (Librarians)*

*For example, children of elderly people have already gone abroad and they need to find those e-mails written to them. (Librarians)*

*Let's say, last time such a person came and said that he needed some tractor. So you are simply searching too because he doesn't know where to search. I was searching myself because he said: "You search, I'm afraid, I'll spoil something", because people are afraid, although they have it at home, they say: "it is official here somehow, I'm afraid of damaging something". (Librarians)*

*In theory, they are doing promotion, however, they are doing an awful lot with all their action so that no-one would come, first of all, employees are unfriendly, perhaps they aren't able to communicate. If a person is doing the same work over and over again, he or she becomes angry, because, I often think, a highly qualified person should not be given a semi-skilled job, since he or she is a specialist and, secondly, dissatisfaction is growing. He or she isn't realizing his or her potential and is also angry. Libraries employ a lot of such people. (3 Ekspert)*

Most heads of the libraries and experts noticed that the majority of promotion campaigns were conducted locally, in the field of activities of a specific library and public Internet access, however, a very small number of massive promotion campaigns enabling strengthening the popularity and standing of the library as an institution were run at the national level. According to the respondents, individual libraries are not able either financially or in terms of human resources to organize bigger sustained campaigns enabling potential visitors who do not currently visit libraries for a variety of reasons to turn their attention to the library's activities and services. Such campaigns, like the creation of new services, require constant cooperation among different institutions not only at the local, but also at the national level.

*The function of these points was sort of dual, first, people were taught how to use those means and, secondly, they used services, because as I said, e.g. a library which has a large network is at the municipality's disposal, if it creates an ordinary website, a library can operate it, as I say „live", so that it could communicate with the municipality. (4 Ekspert)*

*It organizes events or invites people, perhaps some know how to do it and have those skills, however, if a library performs only traditional functions, I guess, they certainly didn't have conditions for developing such skills, they didn't need it so far. (1 Ekspert)*

*It is Information Centres that could promote IT on Internet websites. (Heads of libraries)*

*I've heard that they established a database of books not a long time ago here, I guess. It is some sort of solid, but I don't have any more information. (5 Ekspert)*

*The centralized company Langas j Ateitj (Wingow to the Future) is effective in merely reaching a mass user, however, it doesn't eliminate promotion where that need exists and, I believe, it is certainly necessary to disseminate some information in your community, and librarians themselves should be able and want to do it. It should be done. (1 Ekspert)*

*Not only a library should do it, because the best and the most optimal way is chosen in every territory and in every region. The most optimal way sometimes means to equip premises and to find people, which requires quite much more investment than training of librarians and to give them a certain additional pay for an additional work load is cheaper. In my opinion, it is necessary to find ways to serve people. (6 Ekspert)*

*It is easier to involve villages, all people know each other here and invite another person. If farming is discussed, they come, or they meet there. Whereas it is more difficult to attract people in cities, people there should be very interested. (3 Ekspert)*

Information road signs indicating the @ sign and the distance to the nearest point were mentioned as one of effective measures to inform both inhabitants of settlements which have public Internet access points and travellers passing by. Libraries can implement this measure which would be a long-term source of information only with the support of municipal institutions.

*Libraries belong to municipalities, in this case, the municipality should be concerned. (Heads of libraries)*

***Some libraries said that they would like to put up signs, but they were not allowed. It means that something is wrong, it is the matter of the municipality itself, since it decides what sign to put up. Do you think such a sign is necessary? Well, at least indication that the Internet is available would be effective, because it means providing information. And it should be guaranteed. If it were put up near public Internet access points, it would somewhat encourage society to take interest in the Internet and use it. (8 Ekspert)***

*I think that it is necessary, because I myself missed this sign, when passing by the village, I would have stopped for a while and used an e-mail or something. (7 Ekspert)*

#### **4.INDICATOR [Improved] access for specific groups and social groups difficult to access:**

#### **4D. Existence of programmes or other mechanisms to involve groups difficult to access**

Asked to single out groups difficult to access from potential public Internet access users, respondents, first of all mentioned elderly visitors. Other groups singled out by the survey - physically handicapped people, the unemployed, children from complicated social environment or children having one or two parents living abroad, or rural inhabitants – were not indicated by staff of the libraries as groups difficult to access.

*There is no-one who can be singled out as a disabled person, all people are rural inhabitants there, if you invite one person, all gather. Besides, the number of such people isn't large and you won't organize an event for a few there. When one person comes, he or she brings another one, how can I ask that person to leave? (Librarians)*

*Those children even come unpleasantly close to you, children from normal families will never come that close. The library is a second home to them, you come to work - they are already standing by the door, you go out to have lunch - they are standing by the door, because it is warm and calm here and also computers are here. Children of good parents have computers and the Internet at home...(Librarians)*

*Usually, children come to such public institutions, because they find both different games and generally calmer atmosphere here. (Librarians)*

On the other hand, many employees of the libraries who participated in the survey singled out middle-aged working people as a target group that was the most difficult to access. Representatives of this target group who took part in the survey of library visitors also stated that time when public Internet access was available was one of the factors preventing them from more frequent visits to the library. On the other hand, librarians themselves said that they did not imagine what they could offer active working people. It can be maintained that it is one of the factors why these library visitors belong to the minority.

*Actually, our events are still usually organized during working hours, they simply work and they fall out not because they don't want, but because their life is different. (Librarians)*

According to librarians, the unemployed evaluate the opportunity to use public Internet access in the library rather than at the labour exchange more favourably. The majority of librarians stated that they were closely cooperating with labour exchange offices and sought to guarantee people looking for a job in the library all possible information. Librarians note that a library is a favourable place for such activities because not only job-seekers feel better there, but also those who are not actively looking for a job yet and would not apply to the labour exchange. They can also familiarize themselves in a library with information provided by the labour exchange and perhaps use it. At the same time the labour exchange has an opportunity to publicize its services among potential clients.

*In a village they don't have to go to the district centre, they can do everything in the library. The labour exchange is situated nearby in our town, however, they also come to us, because probably the atmosphere is not that official. The labour exchange has provided a computer and installed that special program, and it always gives booklets and changes them periodically. Not necessarily job-seekers drop by, but maybe he or she will take that booklet and maybe he or she will eventually change that job. Students also come, schoolchildren choose professions and look for summer jobs. Perhaps when a young person comes to the library, he or she doesn't even think of a job, but after finding such information he or she will give thought to it. (Librarians)*

Children are considered to be a target group that is the easiest to access. In this case, the more complicated the environment in which a child lives is, the easier, librarians believe, it is to retain him or her in a library. Staff of the libraries pointed out that certain competition between the library's and social services' activities exists in some settlements. On the other hand, all respondents indicated that children were the most active users of public Internet access.

*Our social workers just send children to the children day care centre where it is checked if the children are there. And when they come to the day care centre, then they come to the library too. (Librarians)*

*While I can see a slightly different problem here. At least in our village, social workers have their responsibilities and they do their job, and if we started to interfere they would say that it was not our business. It depends on the area, in the city maybe they work in a different way, but in the country work is divided like this... (Librarians)*

*Well, when he comes he finds out that he is not alone, he finds likeminded people and no longer feels so lonely. (Librarians)*

*And during a break, teachers come looking for them so that they do not miss classes. Well, we try to calm them down so that they do not make noise. (Librarians)*

*The child will not be completely open with the teacher, while with the librarian he will be more open, the child feels constrained by the teacher, maybe the teacher offended him. (Librarians)*

It is an important point to make that the attitudes of librarians towards children from an unfavourable social environment are mixed and sometimes negative. In communication with such children, staff members of libraries must face their problems but they do not always have enough competence to assess the situation adequately, to respond adequately to the problem or to help addressing it. In such situations, cooperation with competent institutions is undoubtedly desired.

*For that purpose, in every neighbourhood office there are social workers and social educators to work with social risk families and children, and it is their job. There are also children rights' protection services, they could work in a team. If the staff can see the child in the library all the time, they should ask why, and then they could pass this information on to other people or the service, but the staff of libraries must know what to do in such situations, maybe they need to be told that during training. Everyone must do their job, must be responsible for their area of activity. (2 Ekspert)*

On the other hand, taking account of the fact that society has certain attitudes that do not always correspond with the reality (e.g. that in families where parents work and are well-off, children do not experience any problems which would need to be reported to relevant social services for mediation), which often hinders identification of problems, the library could provide links to information in the format acceptable to the children's target group about who/what he/she can approach independently to receive help in a difficult situation. It is likely that the library's website can be used for that purpose too.

*This information could be provided on the municipality's website too, I believe they should provide information about services provided to children, about day centres, about leisure activities' groups that children can join, etc. And when a child accesses the library's website, the municipality, the link for children or pupils, he must find everything there. (2 Ekspert)*

Several librarians have indicated measures that they use to attract the children's target group to the library, but they have not identified any sub-groups.

*In general, we encourage very much such pre-school age readers to come because parents usually want to register children's books into their logbooks, while we want children to have their own logbook for the registration of books, in this way later on children come to the library by themselves. (Librarians)*

*In our library, when we arranged a literacy course, learners brought their children, but they needed to learn, and it was like a real kindergarten, but they did not have where to leave the children. (Librarians)*

*Toy libraries, they perform with dolls, stage plays. Those who have children can go to literature and other classes. (Heads of libraries)*

Library staff has indicated that they seek to encourage older library visitors to use possibilities provided by public Internet access. They are invited to computer literacy courses, hobby clubs and individual consultations. According to librarians, these measures are effective and some of library's senior visitors also become Internet users in the library. On the other hand, the staff of libraries has not mentioned any active steps or mechanisms to attract to public Internet access points those older citizens who do not visit the library.

*We arranged a computer literacy course for senior citizens, and they came to the course very willingly. They said, "We do not want to die without having touched this computer, without an understanding what it is". (Librarians)*

*When there is a computer literacy course in the library, we invite pensioners who visit the library, we tell them, "Please come, do not be afraid, we will teach you how to do everything", but they say, "Well, I do not understand anything here, I will damage your computers", then we encourage them personally so that they would not be afraid. (Librarians)*

*Older people have questions about the payment for public utilities and other services, they find it difficult to make payments online so they come and ask, and especially if they pay different rates for using electricity during the day and during the night, they find that very complicated. Then I tell them, "Look, you have six receipts and for each of them you need to pay 1.5 litas, and if you paid online then everything would be much less expensive". Then she tells me, "How does it work, dear, is the Internet going to bite a piece of this receipt, how am I going to prove that I made the payment indeed?" They do not understand online possibilities at all, do not understand how unlimited possibilities are. (Librarians)*

*Well, when there is a young person here, then older people are ashamed to ask if they do not know something. On Tuesday afternoons, only older people come, there is basic training only for them, for a couple of months. They received some training and they do not need more, they visit the library. (Heads of libraries)*

*It is better to let them sit at the computer by themselves, then pensioners are not afraid. They need to be able to do that independently, and since they do not work they can even come during the working hours. (Heads of libraries)*

Respondents have also mentioned ways of attracting senior visitors not by directly inviting them to computer literacy courses but by inviting to events where among the usual measures, information technologies are also used. These methods have been assessed by librarians as very successful.

*In May, on the occasion of the Europe Day, we organized a Day of Senior Citizens and we invited those senior visitors, took their photos, enlarged the photos with the computer, arranged an exhibition and then organized a party; this idea generated a lot of interest in the town, everyone dressed up, all hairdresser's were busy, senior visitors came to the photo session and to the opening of the exhibition, and it was a big event. (Librarians)*

*Once we organized a meeting for senior visitors, I showed them around here, showed them computers and everything, and then we did such a nonsense – we let single women into a club where they can meet men, well, that was a sight to see, but we did it for fun. And they enjoyed it, they said, "We will come tomorrow evening for sure". (Librarians)*

The smallest number of services or ways to attract people to public Internet access points was related to persons with physical disability. Librarians say that among the current visitors the number of these people is very small. In the same way as with older persons, most attention is given to those who come to the library themselves. Also, the majority of staff members of libraries have reiterated the visitors' opinion that the majority of persons with physical disability have Internet connection at home therefore they don't have to use it somewhere else. Part of library staff members and all experts have emphasized that for people with physical disability it is important to create conditions to socialize, therefore in this case the Internet could serve as a certain excuse when they would come to the library to share their experience and meet people, but not because they can use the Internet free of charge. The majority of respondents have indicated that a possibility of attracting representatives of this target group is directly related with a physical possibility for them to get into the library's premises. If the buildings are not adapted, then it is not possible to do that.

*Well, for example, in my library there is no suitable entrance. When they were younger, still children, it was possible to lift the wheelchair, and now they do not come because of the stairs, so the sister takes the books or mother, and they have the Internet at home and everything. (Librarians)*

*We have one deaf and dumb person so he is very happy when he can be in the library, he studies at a special school but in summer when he arrives here, then he spends with us the entire summer, there is a special programme and he communicates. (Librarians)*

*We have constructed a lift for the disabled and have cut a door on the second floor to SoDra (the State Social Insurance Agency), from the library we can get there. We also have the first floor... they can get to the bank, and on the ground floor there is a coffee shop. So you implemented physical changes in the library, namely, the lift and the door, with the purpose of helping the disabled? Yes. (Heads of libraries)*

All respondents maintain that the main reason for which visitors come to the library is the printed information – books and periodical publications. The staff of the library is of the opinion that the main purpose of the library and its mission in the society is to provide information via the printed artefacts. Both the staff of libraries and visitors maintain that an acute shortage of new books has been felt for a while already.

*They complain not about a shortage of readers but about a shortage of book stocks. Stocks are very poor indeed. (6 Ekspert)*

This problem is addressed only partially by using the possibility of ordering books from other libraries, but only the minority of the libraries out of those who took part in the study avail of this possibility, and users practically never mentioned it. Heads of libraries have indicated that readers who read in foreign languages could be offered a possibility of addressing virtual libraries. However, taking account of the fact that many visitors have not mentioned this possibility we may suppose that this service is not given sufficient publicity and is not thus used as one of the ways to attract new visitors. An important point to mention is that a similar mechanism has already been used in the work of libraries. The majority of librarians and library visitors have mentioned that upon the appearance of computers and the Internet in libraries and because the number of copies of periodical publications was insufficient, after a while and due to the efforts of the library staff, part of *confirmed* readers switched from reading printed periodical publications to reading their electronic versions. Speaking about

virtual libraries, knowledge of a foreign language will be one of the preconditions for using the service because, according to heads of libraries, virtual libraries with publications in Lithuanian are very poor. On the other hand, library heads have mentioned that libraries seek to activate and promote learning of the English language, therefore it is likely that these services could be linked and presented to the user as an attractive product available only in the library, where a standard language learning course is supplemented with a possibility of reading books in the original language, and all this package of services is provided to the user free of charge.

As an additional source of attracting new users is perceived the availability of wireless Internet in the library. This measure is most attractive to active users who study and work and who visit the library less frequently for the most usual purpose – books, periodical publications. It is also likely that this measure is effective in attracting to libraries those users who arrive at the settlement just for a while. On the other hand, the attraction of such users creates and promotes a new practice in using library services – not a local one, when the user visits only one library, but a *network-based* one, when the user visits several libraries knowing that in all of them it will be possible to use similar services.

*Wireless Internet is a very important source of attraction, we already have it, and people are asking about it a lot, because they stay with grandparents who do not have Internet access. (3 Ekspert)*

All libraries try to provide all possible office services like sending a fax, photocopying, etc. These services are often provided with active participation of the librarian, i.e. the visitor often would not independently make photocopies or printouts of the necessary material. Although these services take the time of library staff members, all of them maintain that these are among the most effective measures to attract the visitor to the library, and the staff wishes to have in the library as much as and as modern as possible of such office equipment.

The renovation of the library, perceived by users as a means to attract new users, has been confirmed by librarians. All staff of libraries who works in renovated libraries maintains that just due to this fact the number of their visitors has grown. As the main factor is identified *human curiosity*.

*Well, we have been working in a new library just for two months, and I believe that we give out more books now. (3 Ekspert)*

*Now we have premises in a Maxima supermarket, it is an ideal place for visitors and we can feel that very much, now we have three times more readers than before. (Librarians)*

At the moment productive cooperation with educational establishments, the Tax Inspectorate and the Labour Exchange enables libraries to expand their spectrum of services and attract new visitors. It is likely that cooperation with other institutions or initiatives, which provide e-services, would allow achieving no worse results. Health care or self-government institutions, e-shops, developers of distance teaching programmes could be valuable partners in attracting new visitors to public Internet access points.

*A pensioner came and asked for a service; she went to see our local doctor and he told her that it was possible to register online for an appointment in a larger clinic, so she came to our library. (Librarians)*

*As for e-learning, I can indeed see libraries as one of the last resorts in reaching those users, and they are often insufficiently motivated to learn something additional, maybe they are somewhat disabled from the point of view of computer literacy, maybe from the financial point of view, if services are fee-*

*payable there, but I think that in the future these issues will be addressed because there is additional funding available and there are institutions interested in that teaching. (1 Ekspert)*

*We can indeed see libraries as a place where pupils can come and improve their skills, be it e-business or design... The librarian in this case is a tutor who guides them in the current supply of services, who finds services that are of interest to the user. (1 Ekspert)*

On the other hand, the librarian finds himself/herself in an ambiguous situation because mediation in the provision of other institutions' services (making payments, filing tax returns, etc.) is not a direct service or function of the library, just a service available to visitors once you have public Internet access. The user who perhaps has no computer at home, or did not learn to use it, encounters the problem of using the computer and the Internet, and here we as if have a conflict – for a librarian, it is additional work but on the other hand, these are his/her visitors who do not necessarily think whether an online service is provided by the library or another institution. According to experts, in such a case the librarian must assist the user, and librarians accept that as an inevitable obligation.

*The public sector must serve people. Yes, and if there indeed exists such a need, then it is possible to find ways and possibilities of doing that. The question is how to motivate librarians, but that it is necessary, I am saying 100 per cent because we must serve people. (6 Ekspert)*

*It must be free for people who use it for non-commercial purposes but to meet their personal needs, an old person would look for something; people must be provided with possibilities, we must educate the user so that he could feel his potential, what he can get from that. (6 Ekspert)*

*A young person finds everything simple, if he has a question, he would use Google, access Wikipedia. An older person asks how he can find something out. We must convince people that via the Internet they can find out even their neighbour's educational background and his wife's first name. (7 Ekspert)*

*So far we have managed to do everything thanks to other services. We use what we receive from that, we do not buy anything else...*

*Into every marker, we put a piece of paper, with all our details, about the 2 per cent of the income tax that readers can give to the library.*

One head of the library has indicated that they encountered external obstacles in the development and use of the library's website.

*What causes problems is data protection. For example, we gave up our website before we introduced the necessary protection because we originally had a website through which a Japanese hacker, using our server, was able to access a bank in Warsaw... There was a scandal. ...Well, you see, the thing is that there is some chaos in the application of all these new technologies, for example, maybe we do not have a specialist for the salary that they can earn. There is one person who works in three jobs for that salary. **So the technologies also require servicing?** Yes. The problem is how to use the technologies without violating the necessary requirements...*

## **5. INDICATOR [Improved] Representation of Libraries**

### **5A. The Library's Reputation, Public Perception and Profile**

The majority of all the respondents who took part in the study, like respondent-visitors, most often indicated the following tasks as the ones related to the library: accumulation of the printed information (books, encyclopaedias, periodical publications) and its availability for use (reading in the library, borrowing and taking it home, etc.). Only a part of experts more often associated the library with computers and the Internet.

Modern information technologies associated with the library are the same as in the user group – i.e. the computer and the Internet. All staff members of libraries who took part in the study have acknowledged that the appearance of the computer and the Internet in the library has indeed changed the library's image and its perception in the community for the better. The library staff have confirmed quantitative factors, as mentioned by the users, indicating the change:

- General increase of visitors,
- Change in the visitor's social demographic profile – the appearance of more younger visitors who did not at all come to the library before.

Evaluating the changes, both librarians and experts expressed various opinions. On the other hand, the assessment is in one way or another related to the funding of activities on the libraries. Librarians first of all mention the increased workload which, in their opinion, is not properly paid for. Library managers and experts appreciated an increased number of visitors but regretted not being able to meet their needs with the current funding.

According to the experts, the library has changed very little compared with other public or social institutions. The change is minor either from the quantitative point of view (part of the experts believes that the libraries' network is considerably too large for the functions that are currently assigned to them) or from the qualitative point of view (work methods employed are old, the spectrum of services is not changing).

A possible transformation in order to serve the society better, according to the experts and some of the directors of libraries, could be transformation of the library into a place of gathering and communication of the community. In this way the main function of the library as identified today – i.e. to ensure the accumulation of information and its availability to the user – is expanded to include exchange of information as well as establishment and maintenance of social relations. According to the majority of the experts, the current stock of computers and the possibility of connecting them into a single network would serve well to advance this function.

Librarians have given an ambiguous evaluation of the fact that the number of visitors in the libraries is increasing and that the libraries are being renovated. All respondents-librarians maintain that they, too, find it more enjoyable to work in renovated or new buildings.

*Well, yes, of course, there is an improvement. There is more respect. (Librarians)*

*And the library's image in the society is improving very much, too, it no longer is just a place for storing books but also a source of information and a place of Internet access. (Librarians)*

*New furniture, computers, all of this has an impact. We receive compliments – that we "have changed a lot". We also have a computer of the Labour Exchange. (Librarians)*

*I believe that this investment changes the image quite a lot, all investment. We are happy to see libraries doing better and becoming the centre of services where you can receive all copying services. (1 Ekspert)*

On the other hand, librarians have mentioned that the public does not have an adequate opinion of their work. Librarians maintain that the public predominantly has an idealized and too positive an image of the librarian's responsibilities and competences. Renovated buildings raise the status of the librarian though changes in the attitude towards him/her are not always pleasant to librarians.

***They say that we are sitting and doing nothing...*** Yes, indeed, the image of librarians is still like that, we are still as if somewhat inferior. On the one hand, we are cultural workers but cultural workers are always perceived as more superior than librarians. (Librarians)

*I have been working in the library for a long time already, and when I used to work for 80 roubles, everybody used to say that I was "stupid", and now everybody is envious – the work is clean, I am well read... **So the attitude of the public, that you do no work, is still strong.** Very poor. When I started working people thought that my salary was 3000 litas. Most often I hear opinions like this "You have higher education and you sit in the library???" To work in the library is not considered a good career. (Librarians)*

*First of all, we hear that we have such a good job – we sit among books, we can read everything and we do nothing. A very easy and clean job. (Librarians)*

*We read books. We do no work, drink coffee and read newspapers. The status is now improving a lot because we have good premises and everything. Others think that what we do is just give out books. (Librarians)*

*Well, indeed, yes, in a library with no computers the salary is the same as in the one with computers, while with computers the workload is 50% higher. (Librarians)*

It is likely that partially such an attitude is formed by insufficient publicity of services and public awareness raising via unsuitable information channels. The majority of respondents have mentioned that planned campaigns of publicizing the services were carried out only once the public Internet access points were established in the libraries. This fact has been confirmed by respondents-users. As for measures used to maintain publicity today, leaflets have been mentioned; they are most often disseminated in the library itself; as well as posters in places frequented by the public – measures which hardly allow reaching and influencing the target groups. On the other hand, taking account of how participants of the study assess the funding of libraries and what priorities they identify, such ways of raising public profile are logical. According to library heads and experts, the library's profile in society is too low, it gives insufficient publicity to its services and its presence in society. According to them, individual libraries can not develop a comprehensive publicity campaign, this should be the responsibility of the National Library.

*Well, librarians must take part everywhere, they must be seen because they receive money. But if you just sit and say that it is enough for you whatever they give, then... Library must follow the motto – not only provide services but to be visible too. It is very important, this visibility. (3 Ekspert)*

*At the moment, there is a paper library. Now if the National Library which must order the music for the entire Lithuania and we must dance to it, so if the National Library can only see the paper library, then the librarian will not be able to see a virtual library for a long time. (3 Ekspert)*

Rural libraries have an exceptional reputation of the cultural centre though it is these libraries that have the poorest spectrum of services and quite conservative users. An important point to make is that in these libraries the staff feels very vulnerable.

*The library is still there, while in other regions in hospitals there are no libraries any more. They are very happy to be able to come to my library any time to read the newspaper and use the Internet. (Librarians)*

*We organize and run, and we do everything. The library also has to write various reports about cultural life. **And then the mayor speaks about how active cultural life is?** Yes, of course. And in newspapers you can read articles about various events. **And who writes those articles?** We do. (Librarians)*

*There are working hours and we indeed are at work all the time, while cultural workers are not always at work. We are valued just because we are here all the time. If we are not, they right away miss us – if I am not at work for a day, they right away ask "Why? Where are you?" (Librarians)*

*Schools are closed down, and here is just a library. There is no money and that is it. Perhaps they would talk among themselves but they would not go on strike for sure. Only if you initiated it yourself, perhaps you would collect signatures. (Librarians)*

## **5B. [Expanded] Mission of Libraries and Areas of Competence**

The majority of the respondents identified "promotion of reading" as the key mission of libraries.

Search for information and its provision are singled out as activities related to this mission. Librarians have indicated that quite a large part of visitors understand these activities directly – i.e. the librarian must find the necessary information and present it in the format desired by the visitor. Such behaviour has been mentioned more often by librarians who work in urban libraries.

*Our readers are a little lazy so they find it easier to come and ask where one or another book is located rather than use the catalogues. We try to explain to them how to use the catalogues but they would answer "I do not understand anything here", and indeed sometimes you are sorry for that person who keeps looking because he/she indeed does not know that principle, maybe this is also our mistake though we try to stop using the card catalogue, but people still find it more reliable to come and say what they need instead of ordering books from the reading-room even with the help of the computer. (Librarians)*

*They think that we must know everything, ask questions, decipher what they need. They say "Last week the daily "Respublika" wrote this and that, how do I find it now?" and we must look. (Librarians)*

The mission of helping the visitor-learner has been emphasized by all respondents; however, librarians have indicated that with the emergence of public Internet access in libraries this help has assumed a new form. Instead of compiling literature and doing the homework according to tasks assigned by teachers, pupils just look for already written essays on the Internet and present them during lessons as their own. Librarians say that quite often this is done in the lessons of those teachers who do not use the Internet.

*Children now know how to find everything, they make the necessary changes and they have what they need. In our town, both teachers of Lithuanian do not use the Internet so children are very happy about it; they copy their homework without reading it and get 10 points out of 10. (Librarians)*

*They do not manage to read all the required books – maybe they get a lot of homework to do – so they read reviews, abstracts online, it is a way out for them. (Librarians)*

The respondents have mentioned cases when, instead of looking for such essays independently, visitors ask librarians to find them. One could suppose that the librarian, instead of collecting information for the pupil, could prepare lists or reviews of *cribbing (copying) page* addresses for the school – pupils and teachers, this way encouraging teachers to use modern technologies and encouraging pupils to use the technologies for the purpose of self-education and not cheating.

Both users and librarians have mentioned an acute problem – shortage of books, and not only new books. However, only very seldom they mentioned the service of ordering books from other libraries.

Various reviews and subscription for online news have been mentioned by experts as a promising service provided by the library, which would correspond with its assumed mission and could attract to libraries the users who use modern information technologies outside the library.

*There is an unused possibility... Now from Google every day I receive a digest of news that are relevant to me, and I find it very convenient; so for example, I could make an inquiry to the National Library asking for information on, say, war and peace or something similar. And if they get a publication on that or an interesting text, I could automatically receive a message that there was one. I would need such a service indeed. (7 Ekspert)*

*And such a service could be provided not only by the National Library, it is already provided by some foreign libraries. Even in networks of settlements they have a service like this, they send you a message that in their network they have a new piece of information and if you want to read it, please go there and there using the key words. They can prepare summaries of newspaper reviews, on request. The service can be ordered according to the areas of interest. (7 Ekspert)*

All experts are in agreement that contemporary library should allow the user to avail of all means that are currently used to receive and transfer information. However, quite a large part of them agree that at the moment this is more of a theoretic rather than practical possibility.

*In the past, I used to go to the library and read newspapers so now the library must make available the same services – access to electronic newspapers, and to books if they are stored in electronic forms; and I do not know whether libraries allow developing something online, join the... well, now it is popular, there are groups which discuss something online. Maybe it would be possible to join an online forum where they discuss a certain book and to find out what people think. Information flows are huge therefore we are not able to grasp everything and we use, say, the information provided by others about a book. While before the librarian used to tell us that. (4 Ekspert)*

As an additional area of competence, which enables a diversification of services and at the same time, in cooperation with other institutions, satisfaction of needs of the community and society, the area of services related to financial settlements has been indicated. According to the experts, in future a range of possibilities of buying and paying online will only increase. Evaluating fears experienced by a part of users and their avoidance to use the Internet for settlements, experts have expressed an opinion that one of possible ways to reduce the fears could be the education of users with active involvement of representatives of banks through which all settlements are made.

*Well, for young people too, if they do not have Internet access at home and do not use online banking services, they go 12 kilometres just to insert a card into an ATM and to see whether a benefit has been transferred to their account or not. They do not know how to use online banking, and when I tell them to come to me and order the service, they look at me as if I told them to go to outer space and look if a benefit transfer had been made. They are simply afraid, they do not trust that service. (Librarians)*

*We could set such a procedure that a computer in the library is a place to make payments. I used to live in another country, and there many people use postal services because it is the easiest way to make payments. (7 Ekspert)*

*The most effective way would be to have bank representatives come and explain everything because all settlements of electronic shops are made through banks, and if people make cash payments in banks, it is the same here, just in electronic space. Banks in this case could indeed play the major role, they could... provide a list of shops or update it or even provide it on their websites, and I believe that these people could look at that like at doing business. (5 Ekspert)*

As a possible expansion of library's activities and initiation of new forms of visitor communication, starting hobby clubs or clubs for different age groups has been indicated. According to experts, such a niche could be availed of by libraries in cities too. Heads of libraries, whose libraries have started such clubs, maintain that they animate the library's life a great deal and that they also attract visitors who may use library services less frequently. According to experts, libraries could expand activities of clubs related to services which libraries singled out as key – clubs of readers, Internet users, etc.

*In cities, we need to attract people who just want to read books because currently the dominating opinion is that if you need a book, you just go to a bookshop and buy it, but in fact you need not necessarily buy it. That is what is lacking probably, more emphasis on people coming and reading, taking books home and bringing them back; abroad I have seen coffee shops with books, like coffee homes, where people come and communicate. You could set up book clubs and organize events – one evening you would choose one theme, another evening – a different theme. Because such clubs are emerging, and they gather in one or another coffee shop, but they could just gather in the library. (5 Ekspert)*

*Maybe we will develop a club culture because now this culture is weak here, even intellectuals find it hard to gather in clubs, it depends on our lifestyle, and this lifestyle is changing. The libraries could become – because the infrastructure is wide, down to regions, to villages – become a place of attraction for people where they could not only exchange printed publications but this could also be a place of training for participants of the information society, a place where they could get familiar with what was available, after all, a place where the possibilities of the Internet as a phenomenon would be exhausted. (7 Ekspert)*

*We act as a cultural centre. All events are on our shoulders. (Librarians)*

Librarians have indicated that they set up hobby clubs (needlework or other work clubs, readers' clubs) or clubs for a certain age group (for senior visitors), they organize events and exhibitions to attract new and to keep old users. On the other hand, such activities form the image of the library as a cultural centre of the community.

*We have started a senior visitors' club, it has no specific name but it connects people who gather to discuss the books they have read, both new and old. Sometimes a certain book is selected, then a group of people read it and afterwards they share their impressions about it. We have taken over this practice from other people's experience. (Librarians)*

*It has been a third year running that we organize an exhibition of children's works that they cut from paper. Last year we took part in a project, received funding and then arranged an exhibition in a regional library, afterwards this exhibition went around other libraries too. (Librarians)*

*It was very difficult to start clubs but we organized a trip to Vilnius and so on, and then it became easier. In our location, there was a woman who knew how to do embroidery with cross stitches, she did very nice pictures so I organized an exhibition, and her photograph was in the newspaper. After such coverage, the exhibition attracted even old ladies which never came to the library but they wanted to see an exhibition, they said that they had seen it in the newspaper. So you see, you need to advertise what you do. (Librarians)*

*Male pensioners in our location are not so much into reading books as they are into politics. Now they have even started a politics club. (Heads of libraries)*

*Every Thursday at 11 o'clock all the disabled people gather and spend some time together; sometimes we invite a guest speaker who holds a discussion, and they enjoy it, they say that it is boring to stay at home all the time. (Librarians)*

Experts have identified yet another possibility for libraries to expand their activities using the existing ability of inviting and gathering visitors. A certain form of developing civic stance – debates with candidates to the elected government institutions. It has been mentioned that in some individual libraries they already carried out such activities before; however, it is possible to include more libraries into that and to make use of public Internet access.

*To create a social network, even among visitors of all libraries, among librarians too; information technologies allow that, we only need to find how to motivate people to express their opinions and communicate, and then all that could pull that person from, say, his village into a certain wider communication circle. There is no doubt that people start communicating more enthusiastically when they know one another. Then they can find common interests, not only common hobbies but even interests that could give some financial benefit. (1 Ekspert)*

A review of services listed by users, the ones that they use in the library, and a spectrum of services offered as confirmed by the library staff, enable one to maintain that at the moment the library performs more of a role of a mediator or the administrator of information sources. The library makes available for use the products created by others – people can read or borrow the printed information (books, periodical publications), or use the Internet free of charge. However, the library offers very few products that would have been developed by the library itself. The main product created by the library locally is events that all target groups mention very often. Librarians and heads of libraries as if justify the importance of the presence of the library (and at the same time, their own importance) in the community by the number of events. On the other hand, a very large part of the events that take place in libraries is only to a small extent related with the services and mission identified as key both by the staff of libraries and by users – i.e. conveyance to the user of possibilities and benefits provided by information sources.

*Without funding, we need to remember that libraries are not long shelves full of stuff to read. (7 Ekspert)*

An important point to mention is one consequence of the activities in society of public Internet access points set up in libraries. Upon the establishment of such points, society witnessed a parallel development of a commercial branch of this service. One could suppose that public and commercial Internet access points would split the users on the basis of their financial possibilities and areas of interest; however, currently one can notice a trend of a rapid reduction of commercial Internet access points, they are getting fewer and fewer. It is likely that giving good publicity to free-of-charge Internet access and organization of computer literacy courses influenced the attraction of potential users of commercial access points to libraries. On the other hand, public Internet access points also see a process of reduction of visitors, though it is not as rapid. Both heads of libraries and experts are of the opinion that the availability of free-of-charge Internet access and the skills gained using it encouraged the users, previously sceptical towards having their own computer and Internet access, to purchase a computer. One could suppose that public Internet access points had partially contributed to the decline of commercial provision of this service. On the other hand, the fact that the user, having acquired certain computer literacy skills, practically can see no difference between where to use the Internet – at home or in the library (except for

the difference that in the library the Internet is free of charge), indicates that in libraries he/she can not find services meeting his/her needs.

*Giving out books is a basis but we can not limit ourselves to that, because the trend is that, say, in Denmark they have libraries but you do not see a single staff member, all of them are busy developing content. What we notice is how they become invisible, and the library is available and accessible 24 hours a day. Lithuania should follow such a model; but the vision must be developed not by the City or Country librarians but by the National Library and the Ministry of Culture. **Have you currently noticed any changes in that direction?** I do not think so. Things stay the way they used to be. (3 Ekspert)*

## **6. INDICATOR [Increased] local, regional and national funding of libraries:**

### **6A. Funding for libraries**

All respondents stated that at present funding for libraries was inadequate. The state was pointed out as the main and practically the only source of funding. None of the respondents indicated any other possible sources. A number of experts mentioned EU funding, however, it is also related to state funding, since a library as an individual applicant cannot seek this funding.

*Well, the entire world has not found any ways. Only the state is concerned about informal education of people. This is how it is, either one is concerned or not. (3 Ekspert)*

*If the Ministry of the Interior or the Ministry of Culture, or anybody else becomes responsible for the supervision, sufficient resources, ideas etc. will emerge to initiate activities and projects, perhaps also the association of public Internet access points could strongly play a certain role here. (1 Ekspert)*

*Well, the majority of the founders of libraries are municipal institutions and councils, and they receive funds from the municipality, while the state money is allocated only for the creation of the fund and additionally for some individual programmes, such as the purchase of computers or promotion. While municipalities allocate funds for salaries, according to different tables. Basically, funding of libraries has not changed since the Soviet times. We have calculated that nothing has changed. (3 Ekspert)*

According to a number of experts, one of the fields that could contribute to the development of libraries by at the same time using resources possessed by the libraries is cooperation with commercial structures. In this case, effective action by a library and its attempt to analyze itself and provide attractive data for potential partners would also be necessary. By summarizing the opinion of the staff of libraries and experts about resources currently possessed by the libraries and their skills in publicizing their services, it can be stated that additional training in this field is necessary for them. On the other hand, this activity could be coordinated not by individual public libraries, but rather by the organization uniting or representing them. Experts pointed out the two following areas that could be developed by using resources possessed by a library: distance training and e-commerce.

*First of all, it should be understood who that library visitor is in order to answer the question. Because if, as we have already spoken about, it is perceived more generally and more globally, taking into consideration not only a university student who doesn't always have money, the cooperation between business and the library could more social, however, in order for it to be useful both for one party and the other, it should be an educated person who could do it. But in our case, it is necessary, well, to see who a visitor is, and cooperation could be started, the same as when we have put cash-registers which receive a commission charge for a ticket. (5 Ekspert)*

*We can record from where the ticket was bought or we can arrange the recording of such information. Eventually, if it is bought on the Internet by connecting to the library's network, a commission charge is paid for it. (5 Ekspert)*

*It was even attempted to create a business model, we also thought about mobile commerce services when cash is not used, but rather it would be paid by an SMS message, and when the supervisor had a virtual account in which that money for those services would accumulate and which he or she could use later. However, all this is still rather a sort of beautiful dream and utopia. It is slightly halted by the costs of the very mobile commerce. (1 Ekspert)*

According to the respondents, although funding of libraries is limited, not all opportunities are used to create new services and publicize them. Successful performance of a library is to a large extent related to its director's performance and management skills.

*I guess, 90 percent is the director's input. (3 Ekspert)*

*There are people who take care of it, but maybe it is a problem that many look at it in an uncreative way. They just ask for the money, know that it won't be received and that's it, they finish their work. Very often, reluctance to act is covered by objective funding issues. (6 Ekspert)*

*I know that librarians probably earn a minimum salary, we encountered a problem when they said: "You put computers here and who is going to pay me additionally for it?" This problem should be solved both at the level of the Ministry of Culture and at the level of municipalities. A librarian cannot definitely be further treated like that, like a person who receives a minimum salary, it is already the problem of the state. (1 Ekspert)*

*There is a state approved programme for the renovation of libraries until 2013. **Is it for walls and windows?** Yes, it is. It is what I think, if in any case municipalities are interested for this structure and the centre of culture to have not only a beautiful interior, but also a beautiful exterior, it is natural and then, in such a case, when surroundings are attractive and the building is renovated, the municipality saves funds and can invest in another part, object or field of the same area, whether it is stock or salaries. Eventually, the sources. It is for books and everything. (2 Ekspert)*

*Libraries are municipal budget institutions. Budget institutions receive some support, but it is very limited. Perhaps, it is based on the residents' income tax, 2 percent can influence those people. (2 Ekspert)*

Salaries of librarians are a problem mentioned by all groups of respondents that took part in the survey. A low salary was called a factor which strongly demotivated the staff of the libraries. Admitting that it was difficult to increase salaries of librarians, some respondents said that they could also be motivated by other non-financial ways – organization of training and seminars on topics relevant to them, as well as better technical means of work. On the other hand, according to a number of respondents, low salaries do not allow libraries to compete on the labour market for qualified employees and quite often libraries have to content themselves with the staff who lack initiative and refrain from looking for unconventional solutions.

*Measures of motivation, perhaps financial, need to be found so that libraries having public Internet access points would certainly become a centre of education that would be used by people. (7 Ekspert)*

*All exhibitions from everywhere are organized in our library – when a school wants to arrange some exhibition or anything else, it is organized here. We have extremely large premises and receive many visitors, however we do the cleaning ourselves. You won't clean during working hours and won't lift the chairs, so we scrub after work. I wish we would be paid for this additionally. (Librarians)*

## **6B. Funding for public Internet access**

Respondents admitted that at present funding of Internet access was somewhat complicated and created tension in the municipalities when allocation of funds had to be made. While funding of libraries, although considered inadequate, is already a usual thing for everyone, Internet access is new and funding for it is quite often the result of the efforts of the library director and obligations assumed by him or her. Directors indicated that they encountered financial difficulties when municipal budgets were drafted before the establishment of the Internet connection in the libraries and, although this factor was known, the municipalities could not include funding for something that was not established when the budget was

being approved. In this case, Internet access was financed from the “other funds”, which are claimed by plenty of applicants and they are not always *less important than the free Internet*. Employees of municipalities and heads of libraries face difficulties in finding funds that can be legally used to finance Internet access. The majority of experts stated that when planning a municipal budget, funding of Internet access should be included in the list of permanent expenditure and have a separate budget line.

*Funds are planned when the number of such access points increase in the municipality, for which funds should be allocated. I have social problems, pay those and the others, and now it appears that it is necessary to pay for the Internet access. Firstly, it would be easier for the municipality if it could use those access points, as I say “municipality on-line”, understanding would be gained then and a person won't have then to go to the municipality each time to consult, mutual understanding should exist. Of course, when it is necessary to pay, everyone is looking for those funds. (4 Ekspert)*

*The municipality thinks that it has built a library, then where will more money come from? Spending is increasing. The librarian and the director begin to fear then and start turning everything off. All sorts of items of comfort are turned off and they start economising. **Is public Internet financed at the expense of comfort?** It is usually like that, that spending. (3 Ekspert)*

*Namely these funds allocated for public Internet access would become some new equivalent to the pupil's basket, when some amount was allocated and the municipality knew that it would have that amount for a year. (2 Ekspert)*

*There are target allocations, intended to fund the functions delegated by the state...The Internet is sort of the state-delegated...It is sort of service for the residents. I guess, the law of the local government doesn't even lay down such a function. Valid legislation stipulates if a municipality is delegated with some functions, money should be allocated to implement those public functions. That is legal regulation. **What about the Internet in this situation?** This is how it should be logically, however, another law sets out four functions and one is contractual, and now when implementing this project the municipalities sign a contract and they know what they receive, they undertake to perform something, it is already one, as you say, payment, obligation of the municipalities to act in this way. No law lays down this, yet, it is an agreement. (2 Ekspert)*

It is important to note that speaking about funding for Internet access; all the respondents mentioned a charge on Internet connection. No other things related to the Internet access were mentioned. It can be assumed that computers, software or office equipment were, to a large extent, received thanks to the participation in the projects. The renewal of these means was not considered by any respondent.

## **7. INDICATOR [Increased] social benefit from IT for individuals and communities**

### **7B. Understanding of the benefit provided by the public Internet access for the community by librarians**

Staff of the libraries associated benefit brought by the public Internet access in a library primarily with a larger number of library visitors and the increased use of library services. Employees of the libraries consider the very fact that residents visit the library to be a benefit both for the user who can make use of services offered to him or her and for the librarian who has a possibility of providing a service. In this case, users, librarians and experts jointly appreciate an indirect benefit from the Internet access in a library. A new service stimulated the use of old services in the target group that rarely visited a library before the establishment of free Internet access there. Services pointed out by the staff of the libraries as ones provided for the users are identified in the same way as by the users – *books, the press, the Internet and events*. Personnel of the libraries did not mention any services which were not pointed out by the groups of users (including services intended for a narrow circle of users).

The target groups of children, the unemployed and pensioners are singled out by the library staff as the ones that benefit most from the public Internet access in a library. These groups are singled out as the ones with the most limited financial resources, therefore, in this case, free Internet is an alternative allowing them to receive services which would otherwise be unaffordable to them. On the other hand, employees of the libraries, like users who participated in the survey, stated that pensioners used opportunities provided by the public Internet access in the library the least.

The target group of children increased most because of the establishment of the public Internet access in the libraries. On the other hand, a number of librarians state that they have to limit Internet use in this group. On the other hand, positive changes are observed in this target group. Librarians offer children to print publications (books and magazines) as an alternative to the computer and the Internet.

*Yes, we do limit the use of the Internet. We limit it not because we don't have computers, but because of children themselves. Yet, the most interesting is that the issue of children's literature has increased. (Directors of the libraries)*

*Speaking about schoolchildren, if they were allowed, they would sit there day and night, but since we limit the Internet use, nothing is left for them then but to borrow some book or to go to the reading-room for periodicals. (Librarians)*

*Children acquire more skills, they have lessons in information science, but they are not frequent enough and here children can strengthen these skills. (Librarians)*

Librarians also confirmed the change in the behaviour model of schoolchildren pointed out by the users.

{Children themselves confirmed that both they and their friends sometimes skipped school and went to the library instead. The very absence from school is an old practice and a problem which is encountered by the school community. On the other hand, a number of children surveyed and adults stated that after the establishment of the public Internet access in the libraries, the behaviour model of schoolchildren changed – they started going to a library and spend time there instead of playing outside. Standards of behaviour are stricter in a library than outside and a library has a person who ensures the observance of those standards.}

*Pupils of the eight grade become better in my library. If they are asked to leave lessons, they come here, use the Internet for some time and then, they are quite good, they go to the next lesson and don't hang around outside. (Librarians)*

According to librarians, the common benefit for all users living in smaller towns and villages is office services – scanning, printing and copying. The provision of these services is also presented as a way to attract visitors to a library by offering services which they cannot receive in other places. When visitors come to libraries, they try to introduce visitors to other services, thus guaranteeing a sufficient number of visitors.

### **7C. Understanding of the benefit of public Internet access by other groups concerned**

The group of experts associate the concept of benefit (provided by the public Internet access in a library) rather with the expansion of the range of opportunities and reduction of social exclusion among the users living in rural areas. The benefit obtained by this group is partly related to a reduction in spending, however, it is stressed more strongly that, thanks to free Internet access in the libraries, rural inhabitants are enabled to use more services, to receive them quicker and to make use of means which are considered progressive by the society (and also by this group). According to them, this group has more limited financial opportunities and use skills than all other existing groups of users. Free Internet access is the only opportunity to acquire those skills by using minimum finances. In summarising the experts' ideas, the following stages of benefit that a library visitor who starts using the computer and the Internet in a library goes through can be singled out:

- A) familiarizing oneself with the services and opportunities provided by them
- B) change in the use models of individual services – shift to e-services
- C) acquisition of one's own computer
- D) expansion of the range of e-services used at home
- E) expansion of e-services and Internet use points.

The majority of experts believe that rural inhabitants are at present going through stages B and C.

*The benefit is for rural inhabitants, although they still lack that computer literacy skills. Certainly, first of all, it is about their training in the future, yet, a bicycle is certainly not necessary if you can't ride it...It is relevant to rural inhabitants who don't have Internet access at home and don't have a computer at the same time, and so that they could make use of some services, pay taxes, however, it should be oriented mostly towards them, since they neither have the skills nor material resources. (2 Ekspert)*

*They can find some information and pay for something. All this, and perhaps at the same time they can read newspapers or learn the language. (2 Ekspert)*

*The number of computers in the countryside has been growing very rapidly. I really think that those established public Internet access points have made a major contribution, because usually a person doesn't want what he or she doesn't know, but after trying and touching it for the first time, he or she begins to wish to have this thing and acquires it, perhaps children learn and it should be bought to them, perhaps, an additional benefit will be received. And this really determines IT expansion very strongly both among home users and those who don't have a possibility of acquiring a computer; also this accessibility of e-services is quickly growing. (1 Ekspert)*

*The function of these points was sort of two-fold, firstly, to teach people how to use people how to use those tools and, secondly, to make them use the services. (4 Ekspert)*

The main services singled out by the experts do not differ from those pointed out by the users or the library staff.

*Sources are provided which may be written and now also printed, for example press: newspapers and magazines. And at the same time the Internet access has been recently available, thanks to which people can choose material for them, maybe even make money transfers. (2 Ekspert)*

Analysing the current supply of the library services, experts expressed the opinion that the mission of libraries should be expanded by not just manipulation of printed matter or other information. Focus from information storage and its dissemination should shift to the exchange of information and activation of social life of the community. The benefit for the community would then be not only an opportunity to receive, but also an opportunity to provide and exchange information, services and experience. Practically all experts agreed with the statement that free Internet and the computer in the library were only a resource which purposes of use should be renewed when the use situation changes.

*From this aspect, the library can become not only a source of information, but also a club, a place for communication of people, yet, it certainly requires particular investment. We can't say that a library is only Internet access. (7 Ekspert)*

*It is a library which should make an effort, because the number of people using the computer at home will still grow and, let's say, if my computer literacy improves, it won't be necessary for me to go to the public Internet access points. So, the efficiency of the library decreases. (4 Ekspert)*

*One thing is to train and know well what to do and the other thing is that public services are oriented towards encouraging people to make payments or to take interest in and use the computer. (2 Ekspert)*

Experts noticed that free Internet use in a library had a short-term impact – it stimulated users to buy computers and establish Internet connection, however, at the same time eventually reduced the number of library visitors. It can be held to be a long-term benefit of free Internet access and, partly, its primary purpose. Promotion of computer literacy and of the use of information technology is currently taking the following form – having learnt how to use them, people acquire their own computer and establish Internet connection at home. Yet, according to the experts, in order to retain public Internet access users, it is necessary to offer them additional services and form a new understanding of benefit. Use of e-services provided by the municipality is singled out as one of possible areas of use. On the other hand, experts admit that it can exist only if municipalities themselves understand the benefit received from the provision of such services. Experts believe that it would be possible to popularize these services and to learn to use them in the libraries.

*It slightly defeats the purpose, because it teaches, a person learns and, if he or she sees that he or she has the money, he or she acquires a computer and that's it, the person doesn't come any more. (4 Ekspert)*

*The aim is what information technology gives and what the Internet gives, and, generally, those opportunities. The aim is to make people feel the benefit. (6 Ekspert)*

*A person can apply for financial assistance, complete electronic forms, fill in an application a number of kilometres away and send it, besides, perhaps a problem with an electronic signature can arise, but people would save time and money. (2 Ekspert)*

*What is the point of my browsing the website of the municipality? I just found working hours and that's it. Why is it not possible to settle your matters electronically? (4 Ekspert)*

*There will always be a problem with the municipality, because it is not independent and the government can simply summon them. Sometimes it is difficult for the central government, since you*

can't force it, that is, the municipality itself settles the disputes. So, talks are necessary, perhaps the Parliament could help, a political solution should be found. **Does the average Lithuanian resident have a possibility of free use?** He or she should know how to do it. A person should be able to access and use, let's say, that service which is officially declared. (8 Ekspert)

Benefit received by other social groups from the opportunity to use the Internet for free is to a large extent perceived as financial support – first of all, benefit from saving money is stressed. On the other hand, a certain amount of money at a person's disposal is considered to be an underlying condition for beginning to use the computer and the Internet.

*The unemployed wouldn't use the computer and the Internet. Pensioners and children wouldn't either... They wouldn't, perhaps, be allocated so much money. (3 Ekspert)*

While staff and visitors of the libraries emphasized the changes in behaviour models in the target group of children, experts pointed out, as an additional benefit, a possible change not only in the use of services currently provided by the public sector, but also in behaviour models accompanying the use. Greater publicity about the provision of services in the state institutions, reduced bureaucracy and more purposeful organization of employment of the personnel are indicated as an additional value or an impact on public life.

*The public sector should be as much as possible accessible to all people. It shouldn't be closed, because the use of computers will reduce bureaucracy and reduce the serious problem of corruption, since if I complete a form on-line, nobody will change it and everything is all-right. **Would it bring publicity and transparency?** Yes, it would definitely. It would bring them both more rapidly and quicker, fewer administrative personnel would perhaps be necessary then. They could then retrain into specialists. (2 Ekspert)*

Another possible application of the public Internet access points was mentioned during the survey. Experts' evaluation of a possibility of having the e-voting system used in elections in Lithuania was mixed due to one of its shortcomings – difficult implementation of free choice and expression of will.

*You never know who is standing behind my back at my home and what he or she is saying to me. (7 Ekspert)*

Public Internet access points can be considered to be an alternative place for e-voting. In this case, the possibility of free choice and expression of will can be guaranteed and at the same time the implementation process of voting can be simplified – in this case, it is not necessary to print ballot papers, and vote counting and other data processing become easier.

It should be mentioned that not all experts were unanimous about the fact that public Internet access was free. It can be assumed that information that taxpayers pay for this Internet by promoting the service can have an impact on the attraction of new users who are not brave enough to use it yet.

*I don't want to agree with the statement that it is free because it is paid for. Yet, not the very person will pay for it, but rather the municipality. And that entire socialistic principle that everything what is free is good is not always perceived positively, perhaps is not even valued, if you get it for free. If you paid somehow, maybe indirectly, perhaps there would be more then, in my opinion, perhaps it would be an encouragement. Well, let a monthly charge of 2-3-5 litas be imposed on a resident, but you pay and you know that you can use the Internet for this money the entire month. However, when an ordinary person pays, e.g. when you do sports, you pay a monthly subscription fee and you don't want to lose your money. Nevertheless, first of all, people should do it because of the interest. (2 Ekspert)*

Experts expressed the opinion that free Internet access should attract e-services to the libraries by putting the users on equal footing wherever he or she is.

*At present, we have neither a library, nor anything in villages. But we will have everything then. And those services will be analogous to the ones in the centre. (6 Ekspert)*

## **8.INDICATOR [Increased] Supply and Use of Relevant Content:**

### **8B. [New] Content and Services in the Library**

Services provided by the library, according to the experts, do not differ from those identified by the users:

- Accumulation and dissemination of printed information (books, periodical publications),
- Free Internet,
- Organization of events (related to literature and others),
- Training.

The experts have indicated that in libraries, training is not organized consistently and it is rather a result of initiatives of the managers of specific libraries rather than a consistent activity with the purpose of dissemination of library services or education of library visitors. As one reasons reduced funding has been indicated as the former funding sources (the Open Society Fund – Lithuania) have stopped while new sources have not been found.

*We do not organize training because nobody wants that responsibility, nobody wants to do the job for free. When we received funding from the Soros Fund, we used to deliver online training to the population. And now I do not know about any initiatives like that. (3 Ekspert)*

Considering a possibility for the library to become a certain training (including distance training) centre, experts have indicated that in order to do that the legal framework needs amendment. Having in mind the fact that in libraries practically all services are provided free of charge, while distance teaching programmes are designed also with the purpose of selling, it is obvious that individual libraries have very limited possibilities to provide such a service. On the other hand, the library can act as a mediator between the supplier and the user if there is a clear well-regulated mechanism for such activities.

*E-learning services are mostly provided in the system of higher education. Services provided to students are funded in a different way where the funding model used is not a pure business model. As for pupils, what we try doing is making a step towards another model where the user himself/herself pays for the service, then this money is distributed to lecturers for their work and so on. But the use of this model has not yet attained such a scale as to reach the mass user. (1 Ekspert)*

Experts have indicated that even today quite a number of distance teaching models have already been developed; and these models could be of interest to public Internet access users but due to the current insufficient legal framework this is not possible at the moment. Such a service in the library would be an excellent opportunity to relate the existing resource (free Internet access points) and the declared mission (of information provision and education).

*Quite a number of training courses have been developed within the framework of the programmes of the structural funds and their legal framework needs amendment if we want to further deliver those training courses and to receive money at least in order to be able to support ourselves. I mean such strange instructions and requirements, for example, as the requirement not to sell or commercialize what has been developed using the European Social Fund financing; indeed, such requirements are a major obstacle. (1 Ekspert)*

*In my opinion, we need short courses but a lot of them. (1 Ekspert)*

Training programmes or the very training courses could be presented to the users via the virtual space of the library (websites) which would then be used on a wider scale and would

become more attractive to the user. At the moment, no library staff member out of those who took part in the study mentioned services that would have been already moved to the virtual space or the plan to move certain services into the virtual space.

*The library has its visitors, and physically they can with current technologies, and they will also be able to do that with the technologies that we plan to have and with what is being done, so they can join a certain administration system, we will have a system where visitors will have to register in order to access it, and the visitor could be presented personalized information too, depending on what he/she was browsing in the Internet for, maybe we could look at what was of interest to him/her, look at his/her profile, how he/she completed it, look at his/her details and maybe suggest that he/she try one or another service. Such more virtual communities. (1 Ekspert)*

None of the respondents mentioned new library services that would be under development or recently developed.

### **8C. [Increased] Scope of Local Content on the Internet**

Speaking about the current websites of libraries, many of the respondents have admitted that they are often poor and of no value to the ordinary user. On the other hand, all respondents have maintained that libraries do not have sufficient human and financial resources in order to change the situation – i.e. to develop and regularly update information. The respondents suggested that resources be centralized and the maintenance of websites be coordinated at the county level. Many respondents have noticed that the library's website competes with similar websites of municipalities, tourism information centres, schools, etc.; websites of libraries contain information of similar content, while in order to attract the user it is important to be different and capture the user's attention.

*Those websites most often are boring, all are the same. Both municipal and provincial websites are very simple. They would be more interesting if they were more sophisticated, if there were links to other websites, but now they usually contain only the library's address, the catalogue and some information on the region. (7 Ekspert)*

*The library's mission is to educate, therefore its website will never have too many links; indeed they could construct a website for the libraries and all the spectrum of the library services, and then another part of the site could contain at least the basic search system. As for the links to administrative institutions, there is no need of dozens of links but it is important to provide links to the essential websites which would further open the world to the user. (6 Ekspert)*

*The major problem is that we need to strengthen the municipal administration, then it would be possible to consolidate technical skills of the human resources, and in this way we could consolidate the service provision of websites. In Lithuania, there are 60 municipalities, their services and objectives are about the same and if, let's say, it is difficult to keep those people in each municipality, because we are talking about 60 people who are highly qualified technicians, so if the work was organised on the basis of the association, then it would be enough to have 10 people and they could help the others. The work could even be organized on a distance basis, they could look at websites from a distance, monitor if programmes or something else was changed and they could reinstall the programmes. (8 Ekspert)*

One of the key factors determining the content of the library's website could be the profile of the user for whom the website is designed. In this study, no participant has identified such an addressee. One could suppose that these websites are not intended for any specific group of users. Since library users are perceived as a very wide group, its website could take account of that and also of the fact that users have different competences in using the website to meet their needs.

*The website needs to have simple information on how to use it showing some simple steps to be followed. E.g. "search", etc., such methodological recommendations are indeed necessary to those users who are beginners. Depending on their IT literacy. (2 Ekspert)*

Both experts and library heads have agreed with the idea that library websites often are considered a matter of secondary importance when financial, as well as human, resources are planned and allocated. In the opinion of the majority of respondents, after the construction of a website, it is usually not maintained or updated as often as the user would like to.

*In general, the same goes for websites of various institutions, not only libraries. They construct a website and leave it; this is just a waste of money. Now we have a site bibliotekos.lt, and not a single cent has been allocated for its maintenance so all the work is done by volunteers... (3 Ekspert)*

*Maybe in 5 points out of 50 they know how to post news and write what is going on. (1 Ekspert)*

New content on the Internet is directly related with a certain number of specialists who provide maintenance to websites. In this project, all target groups speak about the lack of such specialists. Experts have mentioned initiatives where help is provided to the administrators of library websites, but these initiatives are private and based on good informal interpersonal relations, therefore they are not long-term and it is not possible to present them as recommended models of activity.

*Within the framework of the project, they initiated a certain format of help and I was happy to hear that following the end of the project that format was still there – they still gave advice to one another and described problems. Those who have had similar problems would respond. So those who are active in the development of the website and who, let's say, share their experience, they also post news and try to advance the technologies. (1 Ekspert)*

*There is an acute shortage of IT specialists because after a couple of years' work they gain experience and leave for the private sector. If there were 10 specialists, they would need to go across all Lithuania? Although when there is a network, then they do not need to travel, and if there are those centres, as according to the project, then these specialists could at least serve their own area, that would be good. (3 Ekspert)*

Such helpful initiatives can not ensure consistent technical or intellectual assistance either to developers of services or to the maintenance. Taking into account the fact that on library websites you can more often find outdated rather than regularly updated information and that library staff members tend to concentrate their effort and resources on the communication with the physical and not the virtual visitor, it is possible to assume that decisions concerning "the virtual library", a possible package of its services and links with websites and services of other institutions should be made at a higher level than the public library. Experts indicate that individual municipalities, which usually are one of the founders of a library, are not always able to address these issues independently therefore there is a need for a political decision by the municipalities' association or similar institutions to assume these functions and activities.

*At the moment, there is a paper library. Now if the National Library which must dictate the rules to the entire Lithuania and we must abide to them, so if the National Library can only see the paper library, then the librarian will not be able to see a virtual library for a long time. (3 Ekspert)*

*Well, of course, it would be quite naïve to expect the use of some super technologies and possibilities therefore any attempt is welcome. For a village library to have its own website is a big thing as it is. (1 Ekspert)*

*Not each municipality by itself, but maybe better the administration because this is a political issue. The association of municipalities. Let's have technicians in the municipal administration that will help municipalities to do everything. In one municipality, they have the Internet and the library is right there, and everything is fine because they address these issues today. As in Norway, the association functions as a strong centre, and they say that they have standards and have been in communication with municipalities and find the consensus. **But this means that these issues should be addressed not by individual municipalities but by their association?** That is what I say that, unfortunately, in this country everything is left to municipalities. And in the administration only two or three people work with information and communication technologies, and even these are specialists of general nature. **The number of people also shows certain attitude.** If they accumulated and allocated funding, then municipalities would have to put some of the funding together in order to get the product. Then it would be more convenient for them to take part in all projects financed from the EU funds because they could take part as a centralized entity and they could all avail of everything. The library would be a resource, point of infrastructure, which can do that. There they have a person who is trained. (8 Ekspert)*

Only a smaller part of the respondents working in libraries has agreed with the statement that the presence of library services and information about the library on the Internet is a necessity for a successful development of the library and in order for it to remain attractive to the user. A bigger part of respondents was of the opinion that without many options to choose from, in smaller towns and villages, the library even without a *live* website would be sufficiently popular among the visitors and well-known. Some of the experts have indicated that the library websites could contain not only information about the services developed or provided by the library itself but also links to the sites where users could receive other e-services provided by other institutions.

*For example, I access the central library website and right away it would provide a link to me to the municipality where I am. This link needs to be provided without me having to look for it for a long time. For example, I click once on the link to the municipality and this directs me to the website of my municipality. This is a matter for the ministry to address, and the ministry will do that because it has funding, it has ideas too. Then this website will be linked to public access points. (4 Ekspert)*

*It could be a simple thing, like the homepage when the system right away shows the municipality's website. (2 Ekspert)*

*For example, I would be able to file a simple application without having to go anywhere, well, but this is already a matter of content. We need to create that content so that the individual could see the benefit, and not just keep repeating that he/she needs to learn and learn. The state must generate the content and provide translations because an educated person is more active and has his/her own opinion. (4 Ekspert)*

Considering a possibility to have access on the library's website to the services provided by other institutions, experts first of all indicated services of the municipality or even the neighbourhood office which were provided online. This is would be efficient not in every municipality but rather in those where the centres are far away from one another.

*In this way we have "On-Line Library" and the municipality must take that into account. The thing is that these centres are scattered and I must come to the municipal centre in order to apply for that service. The library, which has a wide network and which is within the competence of the municipality, if it constructs a good website, then the library can perform that function, as I say, "live" so that the user is able to communicate with the municipality. (4 Ekspert)*

*We need to ensure that as wide as possible spectrum of services provided by the municipality or other institutions is available online, and if this is not possible then it means that funding is not being used efficiently. (2 Ekspert)*

*One must understand that people who live close to one another have common interests and needs, so they need to be able to find something similar. We do not at all need as many links as possible to other libraries and what is going on there; the user will find that information on other websites. It would be much more useful for people to find out about what is going on in their region or town, the latest news. (7 Ekspert)*

Part of the respondents was of the opinion that the content offered by the library could be expanded outside the boundaries of services provided by the library, and upon the provision of new content, suitable tools attractive to the user must be chosen.

***So here the library represented the town?*** *Yes, represented its community, posted information even about businesses, advertised places to visit in that location in order to promote tourism, posted information about various organizations, about the rural community, the church, about things that the town has to be proud about. (1 Ekspert)*

*Libraries' websites are not visited often. Therefore, we have developed a regional web portal. And provided a link to the library. But now there is no one to post information there, staff members do not have time. But as far as I can see the websites are improving. However, there are no forums or blogs, while they should be there, you can see them in foreign websites. In foreign websites, there is everything, the latest innovations – what comes to the developers' mind, while here libraries work outside the mainstream of life. (3 Ekspert)*

*The website of the library could provide a possibility for visitors to communicate, using all the latest developments; its website could be a place where discussions take place and there is a certain follow-up... Trying to somewhat use the modern technologies. (1 Ekspert)*

*From the municipalities' administration point of view, they are interested in including certain questions into the training, in engaging the population so that the users, instead of going somewhere and wasting their time, could use those online services. (2 Ekspert)*

The respondents have identified commercial institutions or companies that could have an interest in posting information on the library's website – such as banks, news portals, electronic commerce or providers of rural tourism services. Some of the mentioned institutions could also post links to the library's website, this way increasing the value of the service they provided; in such a case the library would not only provide information about the existing possibilities but would itself use the virtual space to give publicity to its services and attract new visitors.

*At the moment, if we placed our link we would not expect much profit, yet we would agree to post it if it were possible. It is promising. When people are better at using the computer and the Internet, the simple sites, we would expect them to also use our links. (5 Ekspert)*

*In public access points, when you open a box you can see comments so I opened it, these comments help us to give better publicity to the services that are already there. (4 Ekspert)*

## 9. INDICATOR Innovations in the chain of libraries:

### 9A. Examples of innovations in the libraries [occurred with the help of the project]

The majority of the respondents did not indicate any changes which had taken place in the libraries for the last six months since the beginning of the survey. Speaking about changes which had occurred for the past one or two years, the same things were mentioned as pointed out by library visitors – changes in the material environment:

- A number of new books increased in the libraries.
- The image of libraries improved after renovation of their buildings. A number of library visitors also went up.
- After a renewal of computer equipment or change of the Internet provider in the communities during a fixed period of time, these factors did not remain unnoticed.

On the other hand, a number of experts and directors consider initiatives which are being currently introduced in the libraries to be a consequence of personal efforts of the library staff or of a strong external pressure. At the same time it is stressed that one of the reasons for insufficient changes in the library is the IT fear of librarians themselves and not daring to use IT.

*Nothing will work out here. It is what we have and that's all. If there is motivation and if the payment system changes, several employees will receive good salaries, they will create that product as it is in the entire world. And a book can be issued by any hired unemployed person, the main thing is for him or her to be literate. (3 Ekspert)*

*Denmark has libraries in which one doesn't see any employee, however, all of them work and create the content. As far as we see, they become invisible and the library is available and accessible twenty-four hours a day. (3 Ekspert)*

*The issue of qualification and selection of staff is always relevant. No-one will say here how to select a good librarian. It should be like everywhere, there should be a policy. **Is it an advantage or a disadvantage that they do not compete against each other in the provision of services?** I have no idea when we see the competition among libraries. I guess it is more in the discharge of duties, because for the competition to exist, the very service needs to be competitive. I don't know I need to think more. If it was possible to create competition, it would definitely be great. (6 Ekspert))*

As far as possible changes to take place thanks to the project *For the Progress of the Library* are concerned, the experts indicated stimulation of the emergence of new services and a wider use of IT in user groups that at present use computers and the Internet rarely. The project is also expected to encourage other institutions to create services and products for users who could access them via public Internet access points in the libraries. Experts consider public Internet access points in the libraries to be a resource which should be an object of attraction for different municipal, business and educational institutions. For example, as a Project consequence or encouraged change of the Project the opportunity to transform the services provided by the municipal institutions could be possible in the future. In this case, points of Internet access established and renewed during the project and trained staff would be a resource ensuring a successful introduction of new services.

*It is obviously even outside the framework of this project, because there is additional investment in all areas here which should be introduced in municipalities and some network related to community centres and library centres so that they could be able to use it, yet the theme should be created, shown to a person and taught. Only then we can start using it. At present the one-stop-shop principle is being considered in all municipalities. And maybe it would be a sort of connection. (2 Ekspert))*

## 10. INDICATOR [Increased] support for librarians:

### 10A. [Improved] maintenance of libraries

According to librarians, technical aid is insufficient in the libraries where the respondents from the group of librarians work. Just those working in library buildings which have been or are soon to be renovated evaluated the present situation somewhat more moderately, however, it is likely that this is due to the fact that equipment in those libraries has been/is to be renewed and the issue of maintenance will not be so relevant for some time. The majority of the respondents stated that when problems with IT equipment emerged they usually called a specialist from the public library or the municipality, however, help needed was not always provided duly.

Experts believe that technical aid that is currently provided for libraries is insufficient. Although a number of libraries employ IT specialists, their salaries do not correspond to the situation on the market, which stimulates rotation of specialists and prevents libraries from hiring highly qualified specialists or hiring a sufficient number of them.

*Large libraries employ computer specialists, though their number is very small. However, if they didn't have an individual company that no-one purportedly knows about, libraries wouldn't have any at all, since one and a half thousand litas is not a salary. **And what about small libraries?** It is said that those in the suburbs, they are doing badly, many of them lack staff. It is the responsibility of the library how the library will maintain its computers. It is better with computer specialists. They do everything quicker. It is expensive to conclude an agreement with a company, forty litas per working day, speaking about servers, and if we have about 110 computers in the central library, let's add a price of around 150, multiply it by forty and it will be per month, and plus VAT and it should be multiplied by twelve; besides we have two servers, so it is cheaper to employ computer specialists. (3 Ekspert)*

*Computers in our public library are constantly maintained. If anything breaks down, it is replaced and new parts are bought. (Librarians)*

Librarians regard provision of additional IT means and premises for libraries as a technical aid. Multimedia projectors and laptops were usually mentioned.

*Multimedia could be used for integrated lessons. It would be easier to present new books to readers (Librarians).*

*I am waiting for two computers, one of which will be portable. One will be my own, I won't have to share computers with visitors. (Librarians)*

*We need premises, since it is too little space here, the library is packed, we would have a normal reading-room, since now everything is crammed, the children read in the same room where the computers are. (Librarians)*

The majority of experts agreed that computers should be renewed in the libraries and renovation should be carried out despite the fact that an increasing number of residents acquired and would acquire computers for personal use.

*Those newly installed are definitely quite good. But all those installed about four years ago are rather old and those computers need to be renewed. The economic situation will be different in three years and now it is difficult to forecast. It is certainly necessary to renew computers and to think how it will further develop, yet, I believe that almost everyone will have a computer at home as soon as in 3-5 years and the library will perhaps be just the place where I can drop by visiting that place or wishing to have a face-to-face conversation with my community members, it will be a kind of place of*

*gathering rather than the place where I have access to technology. Technology will be generally accessible.*

*If we consider the period of five years, if we don't plan any further changes in terms of functions of that centre [public Internet access], this won't be necessary in five years. However, I believe and imagine that it won't be static and it will be quite a dynamic area. With the installation of computers both the price and the function of the library will change, it will expand its range of services and people at home will perhaps connect to the library to receive its own services of some kind. It is difficult to say what will be in five years...Therefore, this investment will pay off and it is without doubt. (1 Ekspert)*

## **10B. [Improved] methodological aid for librarians**

Existing methodological aid for librarians was evaluated with moderation by all target groups. Seminars and courses were pointed out as the main existing means. The majority of librarians contemplating possible changes in this field mentioned the necessity to change the content of those courses – to make them more useful for everyday work. Topics can be relatively divided into ones related to IT innovations (the latest Word, Excel), to work means (the English language, computer literacy, public relations) and to professional innovations (interpretation of a literary work, promotion of reading).

*Such a project is still in preparation for our library to teach our staff English namely with the help of distance learning in an individual manner. (Librarians)*

*We know English as far as computer terms, such as “yes”, “no”, “cancel”, “next”, are concerned. (Librarians)*

*We constantly receive it from the stock, e.g. compact disks. (Librarians)*

*We would like to learn how to use the computer, because we took just an introductory course in computer literacy and then, as far as I know, there was also the second stage, but no-one organized such courses for us for free. (Librarians)*

*I know that the computer provides plenty of opportunities, because of that you want to know more and be smarter using both the latest Word and Excel, since after our computers were replaced, I didn't know any more how to use them. (Librarians)*

On the other hand, the very quality of existing courses was evaluated with moderation by stating that quite often they were rather formal. A number of surveyed librarians indicated that more often courses were useful for broadening one's horizons and at the level of practical application they are beneficial, depending on the situation in the library and the creativity of librarians themselves.

*I try to make use of some ideas provided by every course and try to apply them. We also have such meetings during which everybody who has returned from courses shares his or her experience. (Librarians)*

*One still receives some information. (Librarians)*

*Well, not all things which are taught at some courses are applied in our libraries, e.g. when foreign experience is shared, they have some possibilities and we have the other, yet, in terms of ideas, yes. (Librarians)*

*Sometimes specialists from Vilnius come to our library, also refresher courses are organized, all of us are gathered, we sign there and receive certificates. (Librarians)*

An impression is created that at present staff of libraries consider the current situation concerning provision of methodological aid to be formal and little applicable to everyday activities. Experts and librarians stated that a mechanism was necessary to maintain constant methodological aid provided at that time when it was necessary for a particular librarian.

*We receive it by telephone yet, just according to the need, when something is needed, I make a call. (Librarians)*

*There is a methodological centre – the national library. As far as non-receipt of methodological aid is concerned, Lithuanian librarians are used to not receiving that aid anymore and they even don't ask for it any more, because all districts work on their own, acting according to their knowledge. However, it is more expensive. You don't know yourself what is necessary. Yet, experience sharing is the best aid. Or an expert who can provide answers, can work and live in Klaipėda, but, e.g. a specialist in the field also offers answers. His or her salary should be adequate. (3 Ekspert)*

*A number of users of website biblioteka.lt are librarians and the best aid is consulting each other and get an answer immediately, several people ask and you answer, it would be effective. (3 Ekspert)*

Personnel of libraries believe that methodological aid not only encourages professional development of a librarian, but also strengthens his or her position.

*Several times a visitor came to me and asked: "What is it? I don't know how to use it", and I said after looking at it: "I don't know either". (Librarians)*

*I would like a lot to learn to declare income to the Tax Inspectorate on-line. (Librarians)*

*I had to go to Klaipėda but didn't know either where that hotel was situated, or how to get there, so my son used the Internet to find the hotel and how to get there and everything. I would like to be able to do it too. (Librarians)*

*Well, first of all, our image will improve. And then also requirements will probably stiffen again. (Librarians)*

Another work aspect which requires additional help is updating and proofreading of libraries' websites. Since not all libraries have employees who can engage in this and possess sufficient skills, it would be purposeful to provide persons who are responsible for the maintenance of websites with basic knowledge.

*We really need help with the development of websites. Or for example, when we need to place some photo, we don't really know how to do it and we lack this very much. (Librarians)*

On the other hand, a number of librarians evaluating their work load and fields in which they required help expressed an opinion that they did not feel that they should develop the area of their competences, if at the same time their pay for an increased work load did not increase. It can be said that this is a contradictory situation – on the one hand, a librarian should acquire new knowledge and skills in different areas to develop professionally, but on the other hand, due to an inadequate definition of areas of competence, a number of librarians do not have enough motivation for professional development. In this case, methodological aid could also be perceived as a formal one and training - as a waste of time.

*- Sometimes you think – you are a librarian, well, you earn a salary, but at present you perform so many functions that sometimes you think what you really have to do under your regulations. When*

*we didn't have those computers, you issued a book, completed the register, put the catalogues in order and everything was clear.*

*- And now we additionally have computers, it is still information, the aim of libraries is to provide information rather than organize events, it is totally unclear what we are doing in that area.*

*- We already try to survive – we have the community, during the Year of Reading we are only with children, with a book, with reading, we don't go anywhere else.*

*- And sometimes we organize something and everybody thinks that the library turned into a cultural centre. (Librarians)*