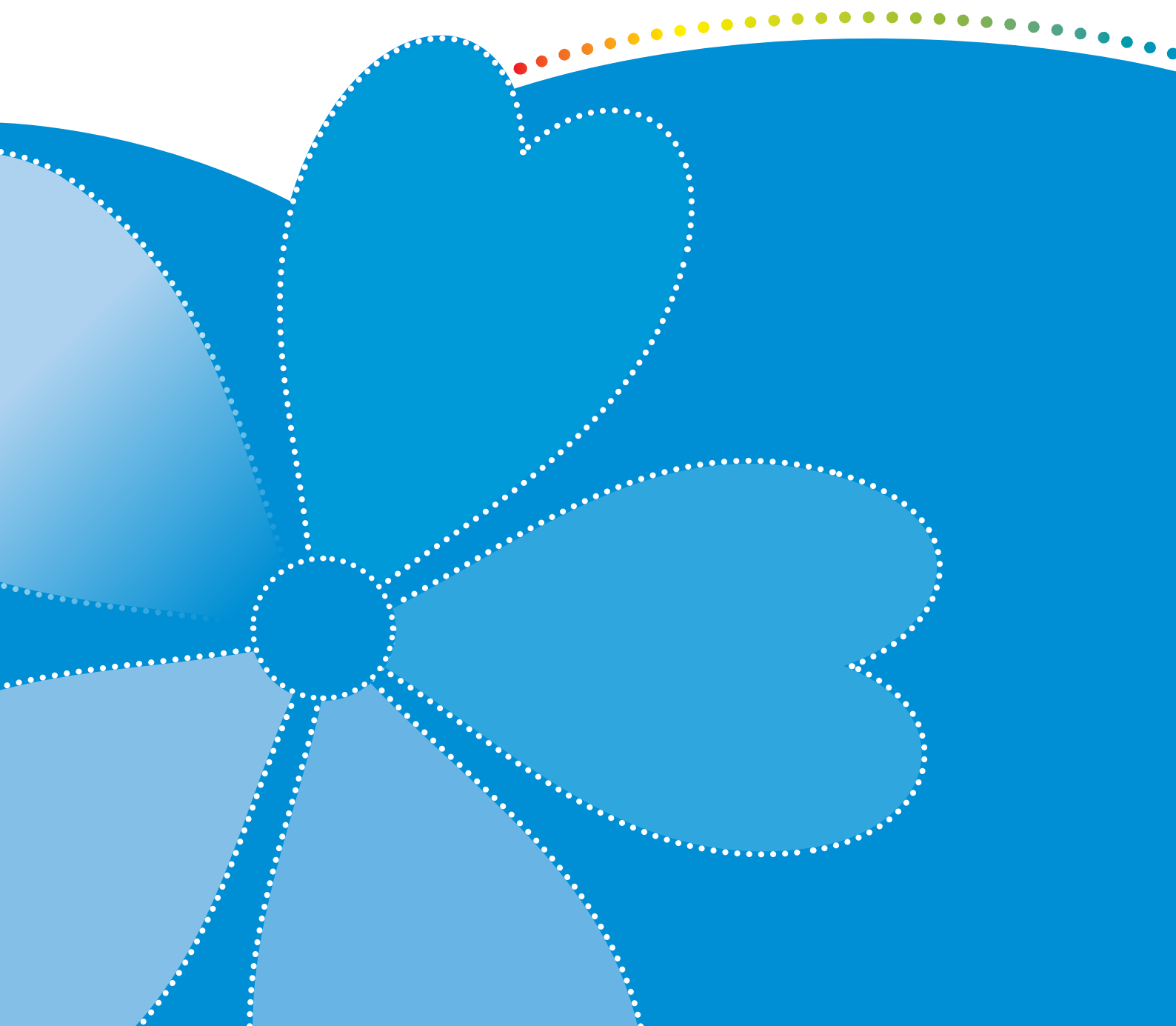


Libraries for Innovation:

Changes in Libraries and Society

Report on the Impact
Assessment Studies
2008–2012



Bibliotekos pažangai

Libraries for Innovation:

Changes in Libraries and Society

Report on the Impact
Assessment Studies 2008–2012

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Prepared and published during the implementation
of the Project Libraries for Innovation

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Table of contents

 Introduction 2

 Summary 4

 Libraries – a Unique Network
and the Benefits of Broadening of Services 6

Public Internet Access Services:
Internet, Training and Consultations 7

Image of the Library – a Popular and
Constantly Innovating Community Centre 12

Libraries – Trustworthy and Helpful Partners 14

 Libraries Create a Harmonious and Resourceful Society 16

Library – a Composition of Universal and Modern Services 17

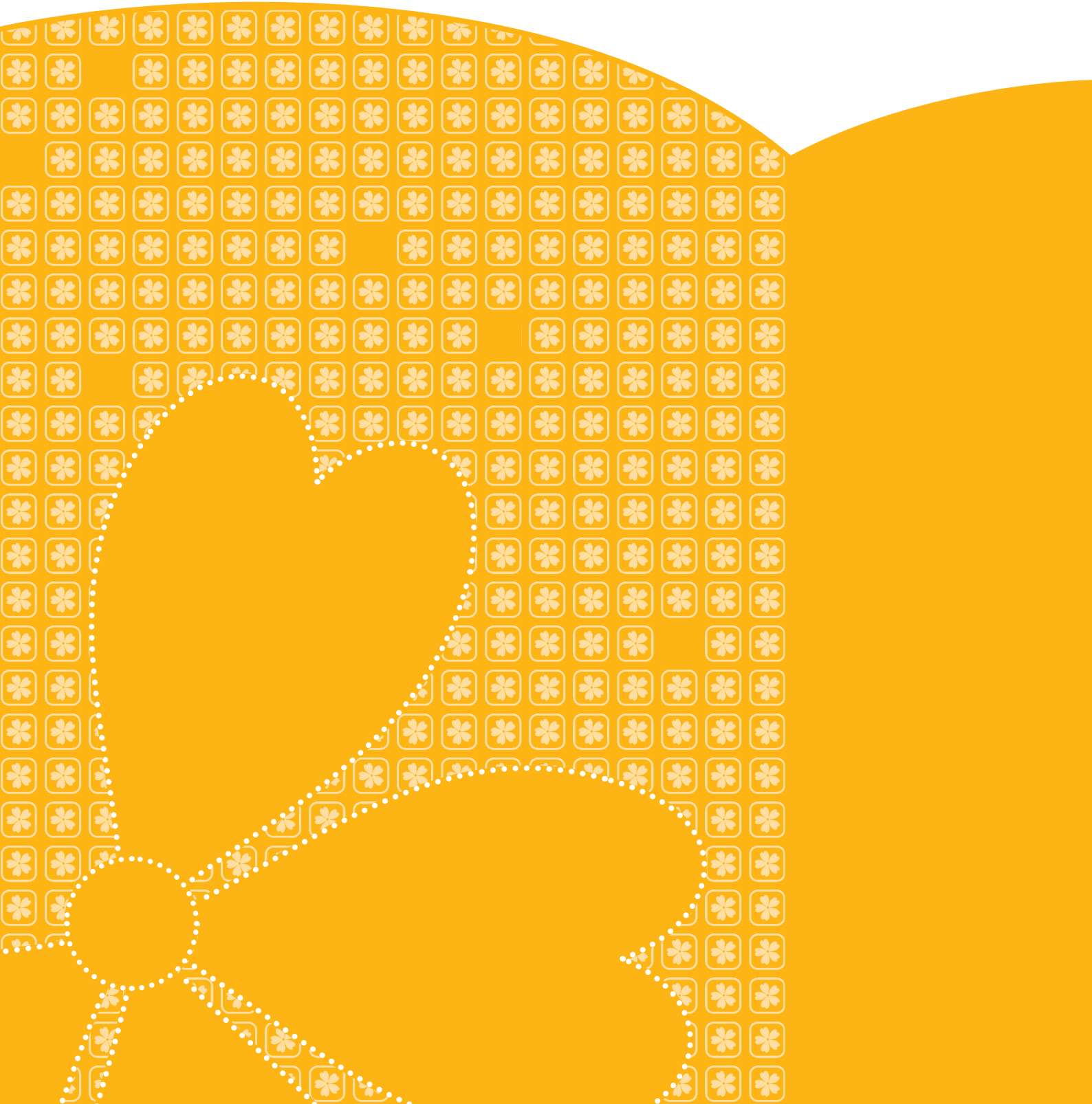
Training in Lithuania – Decreasing Digital Divide 19

Internet in Libraries – Benefit for Society 24

Library – a Democratic Social Space 26

 Libraries for Innovation – the Largest Digital
Literacy Project in Lithuania 28

✿ Introduction



Between 2008 and 2012, more than 1,300 Lithuanian public libraries underwent dynamic changes that increased their attractiveness to the public and various partners, highlighted advantages of the library system, and also revealed the benefits to society that potentially is created through the developing their services.

Public libraries are the most intensely used cultural institutions in the regions of Lithuania attracting about 700,000 readers annually; the Internet in libraries was accessed 11 million times. Over the past few years, after balancing the differences in urban and rural libraries in regard to public access computer and Internet infrastructure and the digital competences of librarians, they **have become a unique public service network that is serving different purposes, including development of the digital skills of all Lithuanians, especially socially vulnerable groups, supporting social integration, providing access to e-government information and other e-services.** Furthermore they widen informal education possibilities for the public.

The project *Libraries for Innovation* implemented in 2008–2012 has helped to strengthen the network of public libraries uniting 1,306 libraries throughout Lithuania.

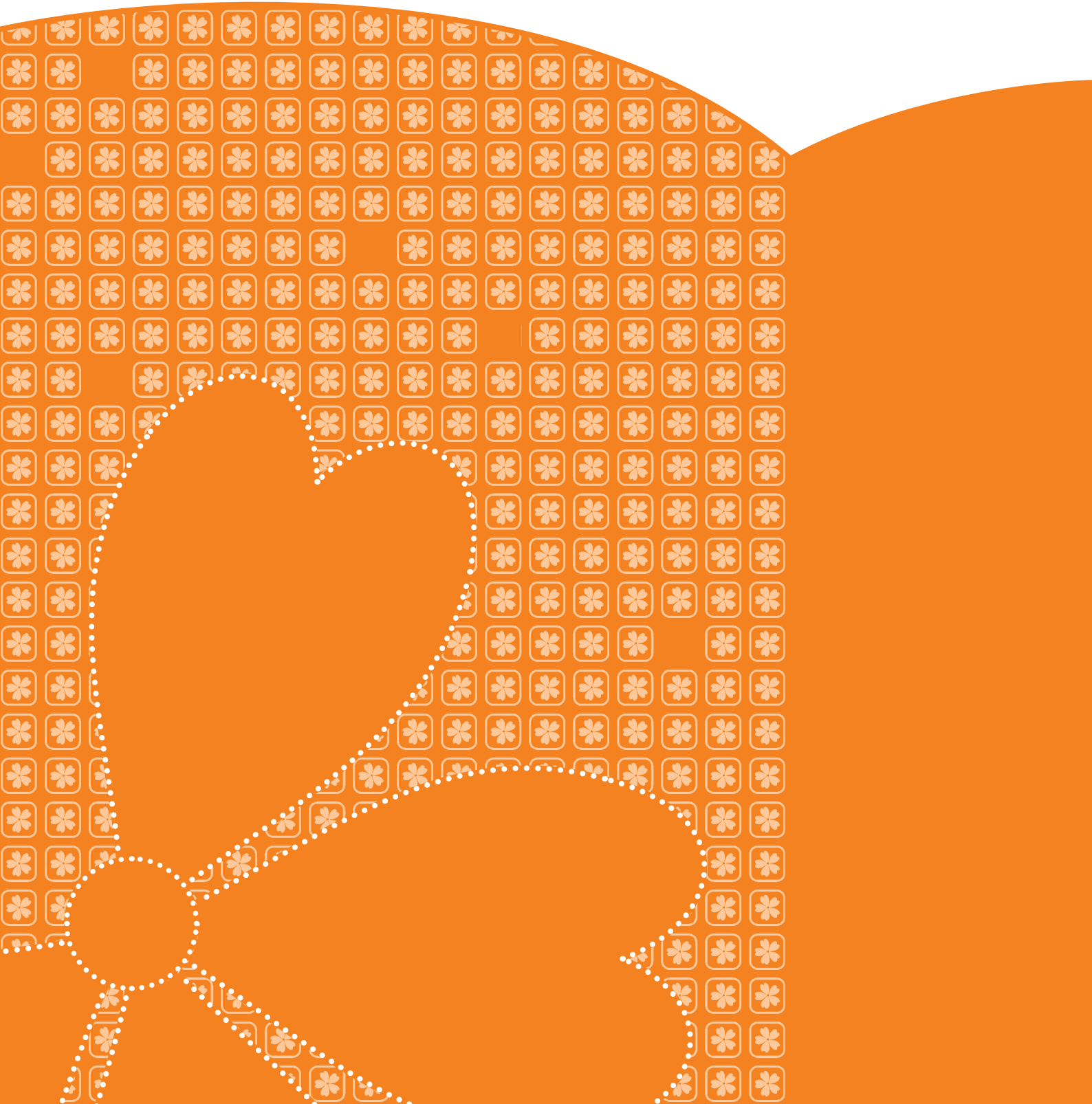
This can be regarded as the largest initiative for digital literacy development in the country.

After successfully adapting to the changing needs of society, **libraries today have become initiators of social innovation and change in their communities**, moreover librarians have become consultants to the local communities on information, reading, life-long learning opportunities, and e-services. Using the available sources of cultural and business information, equipment, premises, and personnel competences, public libraries promote the development of the sustainable and smart society in Lithuania.

The strong, as never before, network of public libraries – horizontal geographically and universal in terms of the content – may be used to reach objectives of social cohesion and economic development on the national and regional level.

Public opinion surveys of Lithuanian residents and of library visitors, socially vulnerable groups in particular, library directors, librarians as well as external experts, confirm that public libraries, as a result of this impetus to their development, have all the conditions to remain centres of modern society development after 2012.

Summary



During the implementation of the *Libraries for Innovation* project, in 2008–2012 sociological surveys of the residents and targeted social groups revealed important changes, which not only strengthened the role of libraries in society, but also had a significant impact on the overall social improvements in the country.

- **The number of libraries offering free public Internet access has increased by almost double and, currently makes 97%. The technological inequalities between rural and urban libraries has been overcome – the number of rural libraries providing public Internet access (PIA) service has doubled** and has reached the same level as urban libraries.
- The role of libraries as no cost public Internet access providers has become significant to a large part of society. **In 2011, nearly 400,000 registered library users – twice as many as in 2008 – used PIA services.**
- **The competences of librarians in the use of information technologies (IT) increased.** In 2008, 76% of librarians acknowledged having sufficient computer skills; in 2011 this figure was 96%. In 2011, 95% of librarians reported using the Internet fully, while in 2008 there were 77% competent personnel .
- Having improved their skills, librarians became the most active ‘missionaries’ for digital literacy in Lithuania. **In 2011, 90% of librarians had experience in organising training courses – twice as many as in 2008 (38%).** The total number of people who attended courses organised by libraries during 2008–2012 is over 75,000 (65,000 people attended courses under the training programmes of the *Libraries for Innovation* project, more than 460 thousands of consultations were provided to the public).
- **Since 2008, the number of PIA users, who have attended digital literacy courses in libraries has shown a two-fold increase. In 2011 compared to 2008 four times as many people with disabilities, the unemployed and people living in rural areas, as well as five times as many retired people** participated in digital literacy courses organised by libraries,.
- **The active participation of librarians resulted decrease of the digital divide in Lithuanian society.** In recent years, senior citizens and rural residents are the two biggest groups to have joined the increasing numbers of new Internet users in Lithuania – these social groups are particularly active in using the digital literacy training services and free PIA services provided by libraries.
- **Digital skills of PIA users of the retirement age group were increased particularly.** In 2008 only 43% of this group assessed their computer literacy skills as satisfactory; in 2011 the figure was 82%. The number of disabled users of PIA who assessed their ICT skills as good during the same period rose from 64% to 80%.
- **The majority of PIA users receive social and economic benefits: 74% of PIA users identified that they spend leisure time, 60% use Internet for communication purposes, and 41% ameliorate their economic wellbeing.**
- **Public libraries have become much more active in organising joint activities in partnership with various public and private sector organisations.** In 2011, regular contacts with businesses were established by 63% of libraries – it is twice more than in 2010.
- **Awareness of the PIA services was significantly increased among Lithuanian residents.** In 2011 82% of Lithuanian resident were aware of the PIA services, while 60% knew about it in 2008.
- **The mission and role of libraries has expanded, and the public image of this institution was improved.** In 2008 libraries were mainly associated with the promotion of reading, now they are considered as multi-service providers, centres of information, culture, education, and a community draw in, constantly innovating and encouraging people to actively use libraries. **The most popular services in libraries are free Internet access (76%), reading of periodicals (79%), lending books (98%).**



 **Libraries** – a Unique
Network and the Benefits
of Broadening of Services



Public Internet Access Services: Internet, Training and Consultations

Free Internet access is provided by 97% of libraries

There are more than 1,300 **public libraries in Lithuania, regularly visited by over 30% of the adult population and about 75% of school-age children.**

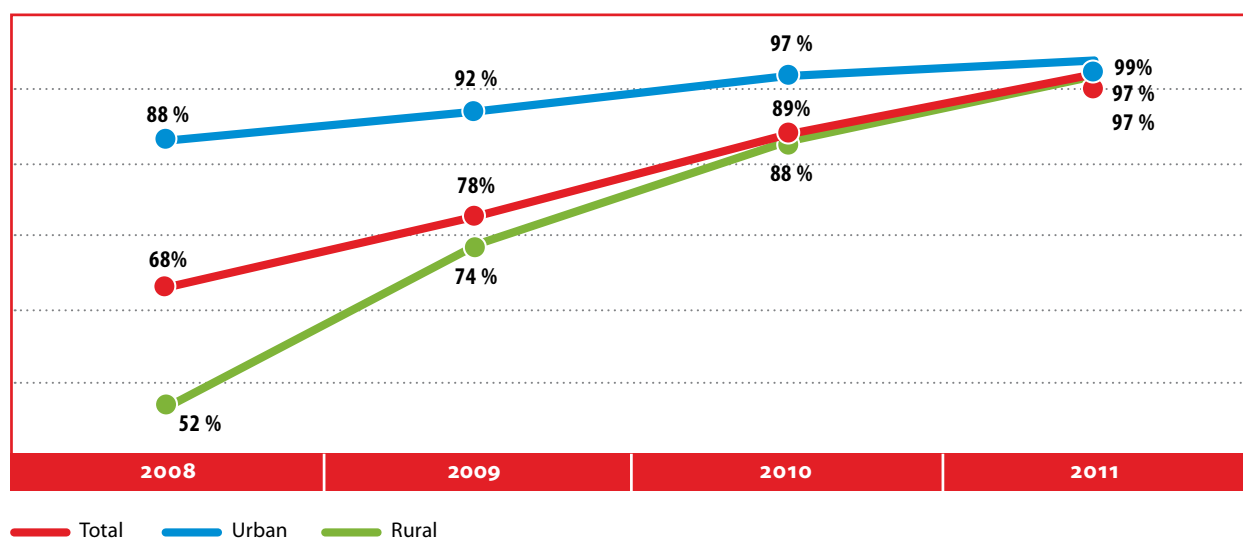
In recent years, public libraries have become one of the most popular places where people use free Internet service. In 2008 public Internet access (PIA) services were provided by only 68% of the libraries of Lithuania; in 2011 this figure had increased to 97%.

A large information technology (IT) leap was recorded in rural libraries. The number of rural libraries providing PIA services over the 2008–2012 period increased almost two fold and almost caught up with the number of urban libraries.

Free Internet access provided by rural libraries is particularly important for the local population – public opinion survey shows that rural residents have fewer opportunities to use computers and the Internet.

In addition, in some remote areas with an undeveloped IT network, **rural libraries become almost the only places where local residents can take advantage of free Internet.** For example, in October 2011, such 'white spots' in terms of IT were Sipony's Village (Birštonas District) and Senasalis Village (Vilnius District). After providing Internet access in the libraries of these villages, local residents were connected to the world.

The share of libraries/ branches/ subdivisions providing PIA



Source: The representative survey of libraries' staff. "Social Information Centre"



Wireless connection for visitors and partners

All public libraries, providing PIA services have wireless Internet connection. In 2011, this service was available at around 60% of libraries, but this number is growing rapidly every year.

In 2008, only 19% of urban and 10% of rural libraries had wireless Internet connection. However, after three years, all libraries had the technical capability for wireless Internet and in 2011, 77% of urban and 56% of rural libraries provided the service to the public.

Wireless technology is attractive not only for library users, but also for partners – public sector institutions and business enterprises. By using this infrastructure, more opportunities open up to implement information projects for library visitors.

The number of Internet users has doubled in three years

The public particularly needed the development of PIA and PC workstations in libraries. In 2011, nearly 400,000 registered library users, twice as many as in 2008, used the PIA service. The number of registered PIA users in rural areas during this period grew at an even faster pace – from 64,000 to 175,000.

Awareness about PIA is increased

An increasing number of people are aware of and actively use the free PIA services offered by libraries. In 2008, 60% of the population was aware of such services while in 2011, 82%.

Awareness of free Internet access has particularly increased among those groups of society with limited access to the Internet at home or at work. In 2011, 72% of retired people were aware of this service – twice as many as in 2008, 71% of people with disabilities and 74% of the unemployed.

In 2011, 54% of PIA users considered the library as the main point of Internet access (2008 – 41%).

Library – an important place for using the Internet

Disabled people, retired people, the unemployed, and inhabitants of rural areas with less possibilities to access the Internet are particularly active PIA users at libraries.

According to the 2011 survey, 54% (in 2008, 41%) of all PIA users identify the library as the place where they mostly use a computer that has Internet connection.

Generally, 22% of PIA users have no other Internet access than the public library. Again, the majority of

'Everything started from my rural library – I found out about the courses of how to use the computer and the Internet. I decided to learn the tricks of technology, so I enlisted myself on a course. During the training I realised that the Internet is the space where I can learn about everything that interests me. The Internet has made my life easier, I can now find out what is going on in the world at any time of the day. One of my biggest desires to find my childhood friends came true. Communicating with them I cannot believe how widely dispersed we are throughout the world. I've found a lot of like-minded people with whom I can share my work. Since my adolescent years I've loved creating poems, and now I can share my creative work with friends and new acquaintances.'

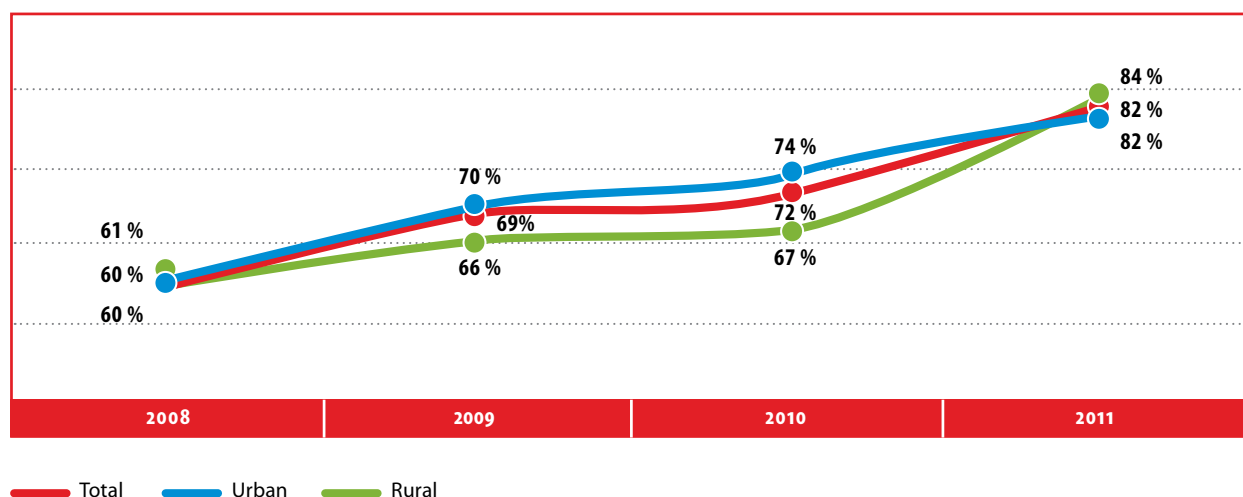
A visitor of Kupiškis public library, Rudiliai unit

'I've learned how to use the computer in the library, also how to browse various heritage websites. I found not only my parents' and grandparents' relatives, but also much-needed material for historical articles. I will soon be in my eighties, I can finish all my work on the computer much quicker. I'm grateful to our librarian for all of this.'

A visitor of Justiniškės library (Vilnius)

The share of residents who are aware of the opportunity to use PIA in libraries

(% of residents who are aware of PIA)



Source: The representative survey of 15-74 y.o.a. the residents' of Lithuania. "Social Information Centre"

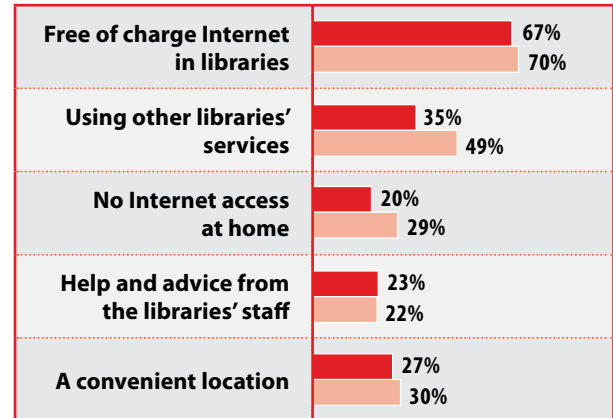


such people are from socially vulnerable groups and older people: every second retired person, disabled person and the unemployed have no alternative Internet access. Therefore, the social mission of libraries in providing residents with free access to the Internet is becoming even more important.

The social aspect of the PIA service is also apparent in the analysis of the reasons that encourage visitors to use the Internet in libraries.

Two-thirds of the PIA users, who have alternative Internet access, say that they use PIA because this service is free. One third of the PIA customers see it as an important opportunity to take advantage not only of PIA, but also of other library services. One in four users consider the library as a strategic location for Internet access. Approximately the same

The main reasons to use Internet in libraries
(% of interviewed who can use the Internet not only in the library)



■ 2011, n=1577 ■ 2008, n=727

Source: The survey of 15-74 y.o.a PIA users in Libraries. "Social Information Centre"

number of people uses the Internet because they can get help from library staff.

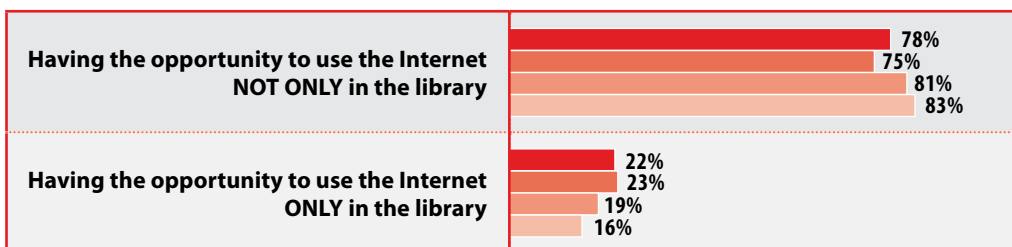
Free Internet in libraries is particularly important for vulnerable social groups who have fewer opportunities to use IT at home or at work. In 2011, **according to the data of the PIA customer survey, 76% of retired people, 78% of people with disabilities, and 83% of the unemployed considered the library as the main place for Internet access.**

Improved librarian skills are passed on to visitors

In addition to providing free Internet access, librarians also consult the PIA users and organise digital literacy courses for the public. PC skills that have been strengthened over the past few years allow them to provide qualified services.

Opportunities to use the Internet

(% of the interviewed who are using the Internet in libraries)



■ 2011, n= 2024
■ 2010, n= 2028
■ 2009, n= 1069
■ 2008, n= 877

Source: The survey of 15-74 y.o.a PIA users in libraries. "Social Information Centre"



According to the data of the 2011 survey, 96% of library personnel had sufficient computer skills, a fifth more than in 2008 (76%). As many as 95% of librarians indicated that they had sufficient Internet skills compared to 77% of respondents in 2008.

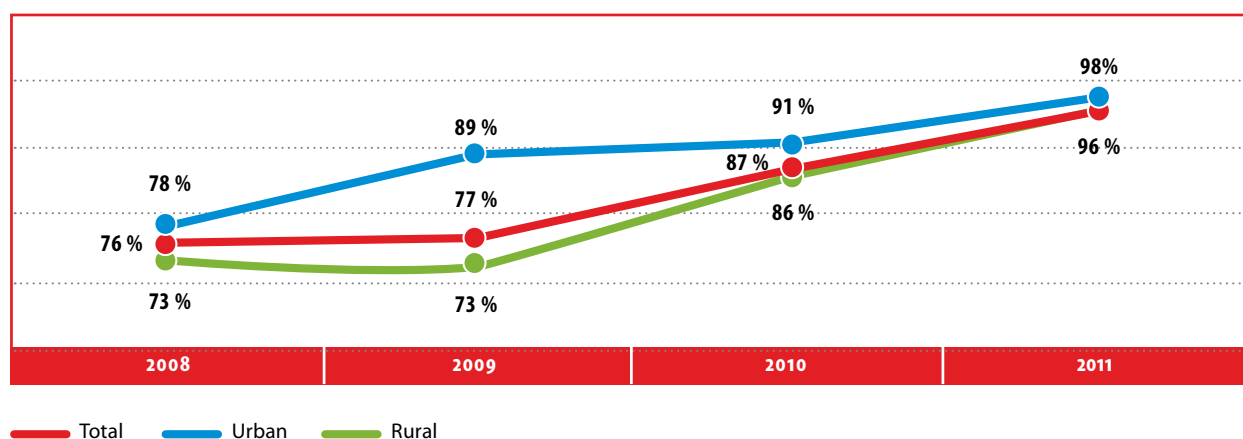
Over three years, the number of librarians using computers in their work rose by quarter, reaching 99% in 2011.

Librarians not only increased their theoretical IT knowledge, but also actively share their skills with hundreds of thousands of visitors by organising training and consulting programmes. **In 2011, almost 90% of librarians had experience in organising training courses – two fold more than in 2008.**

During the project implementation period, the share of libraries' staff who provided consultations regarding the usage of information technologies to the users from hard to reach target groups was increasing constantly. **During the entire Project implementation period, the share of the libraries' staff that provided such consultations increased from 49% in 2008 to 79% in 2011.**

According to the survey, the public noticed the improvement of librarians competences in ICTs. In 2011, 92% of the population agreed that highly qualified employees worked in libraries and 96% that librarians provided beneficial assistance to visitors.

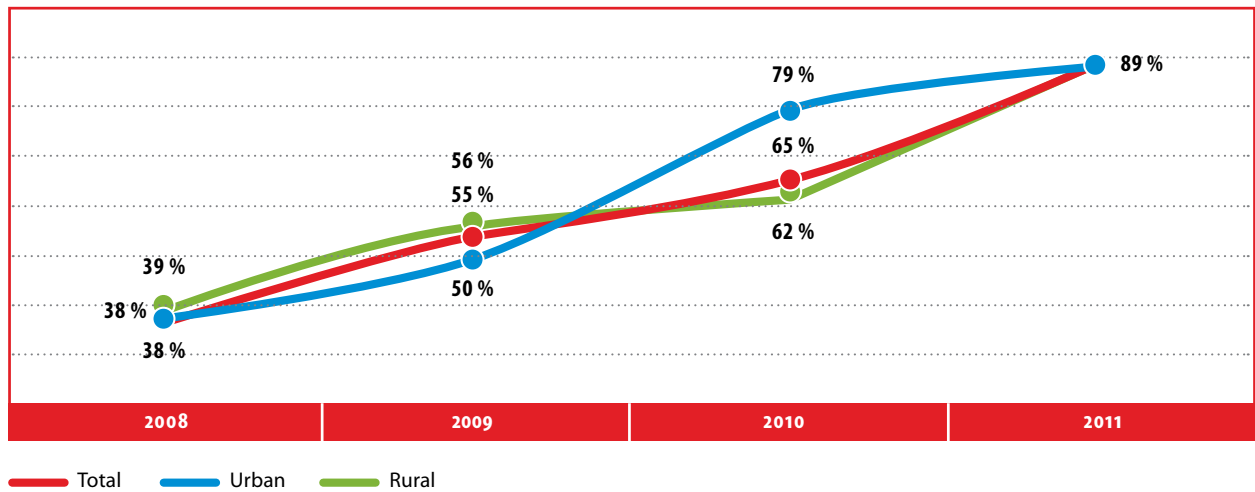
The evaluation of the computer literacy skills of libraries' staff (% of librarians evaluating their computer literacy skills as sufficient)



Source: The representative survey of libraries' staff. "Social Information Centre"

The share of libraries' staff having experience of consulting PIA users

(% of librarians who contributed to the organization of the training programs/ projects at least once)



Source: The representative survey of libraries' staff. "Social Information Centre"

'Nobody, even my children, was willing to teach me. I learned from friends that it is possible to learn how to use the computer in the library. I am endlessly grateful to the librarian who taught me how to enter text on the computer, find information, and upload an announcement or photos. I managed to sell an item I did not need on the internet. I could not have done it had it not been for the knowledge I acquired in the library.'

A visitor of Ežerėlis library (Kaunas district)

Image of the Library – a Popular and Constantly Innovating Community Centre

Libraries – among the most popular cultural institutions

Lithuanian public libraries visited by up to 1 million people every year are not only some of the most popular, but also most highly valued cultural institutions. The public evaluated services provided by cultural institutions and prioritised libraries. According to the data of the 2012 survey of residents of Lithuanian municipalities, 75% of respondents are satisfied with the services of libraries. According to this indicator, libraries are ranked ahead of cultural centres, entertainment venues, heritage sites, museums, and galleries.

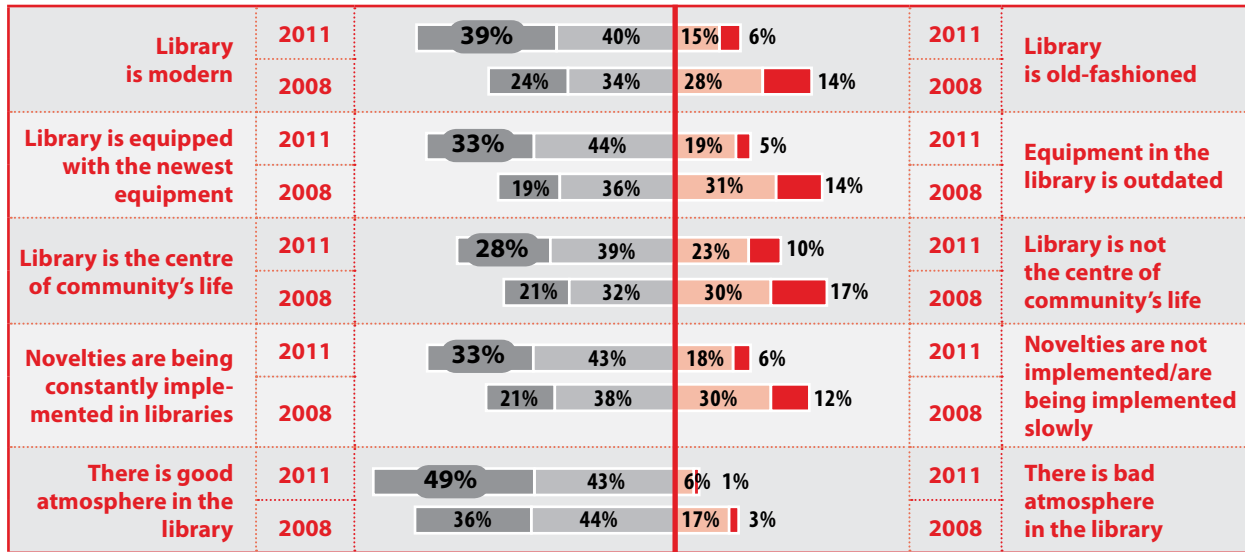
Of those who have visited libraries in recent years, 96% have been satisfied with the services provided.

Such high rates of customer satisfaction are determined by changes in the libraries. Both library users and the general public notice and appreciate the constant efforts to change, update, and meet the needs of modern society.

According to the data of surveys, the number of those who believe that the library is a modern place for communicating with other people and providing complex services is increasing every year. In 2008, only 58% of the population named the library as a modern institution; in 2011 this figure was 79%.

Image of the library

(% of all respondents, n=1536)

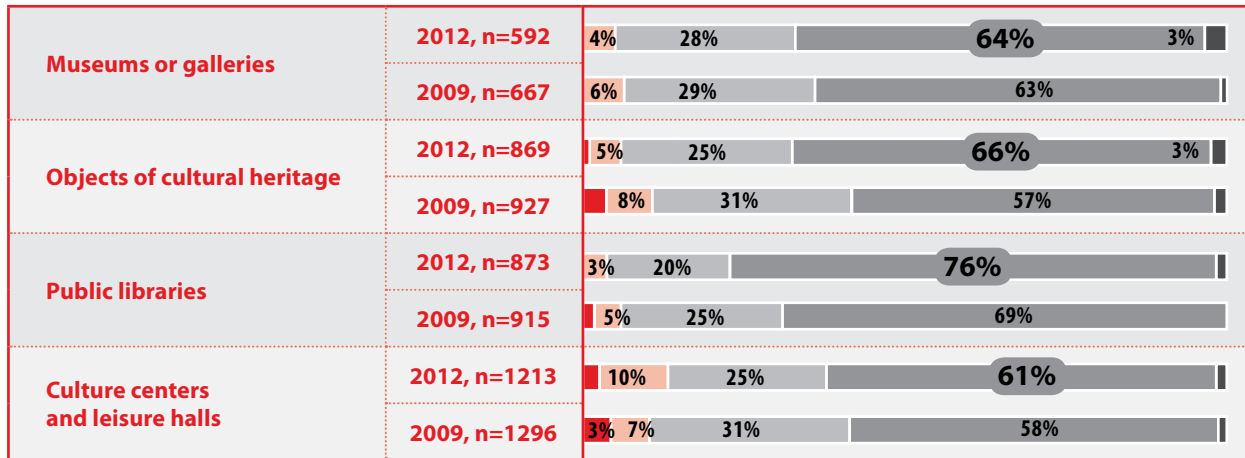


■ Most suitable for the library □ A little bit more suitable for the library □ A little bit more suitable for the library ■ Most suitable for the library

Source: The representative survey of 15-74 y.o.a. the residents' of Lithuania. "Social Information Centre"

The satisfaction with the culture and leisure services provided in municipalities

(% of the respondents who evaluated the usage of a particular service)



■ Dissatisfied □ More dissatisfied □ More satisfied □ Satisfied ■ Don't know/ hard to say

Source: The representative survey of the 15-74 y.o.a the residents of 5 municipalities. "Social Information Centre"



Libraries – Trustworthy and Helpful Partners

Growing cooperation initiatives

The dynamic change of environment requires the libraries to implement regular innovations, search for new ways to attract visitors and improve the quality of customer service. Such changes in modern society are only possible with the assistance of partners. Close cooperation with public and private sector organisations, communities, and visitors allows libraries to implement continuous change, and obtain additional human and material resources for their development.

Partnership based on the principles of mutual benefit – organisations cooperating with libraries actively use the network of libraries, their facilities and services to meet their current or potential customers and other target groups.

The 2011 survey of libraries’ directors revealed a range of partnership activities conducted in over 90% of libraries. At least 85% of libraries had contacts with state institutions and two-thirds of the libraries had partnerships with businesses.

Compared to 2010, the number of partnerships with private businesses increased significantly. In 2010 42% of libraries had relationships with businesses; in 2011 this figure was 63%.

Partnership provides mutual benefits

Library partners benefit from the cooperation. It is essential for many public sector organisations and private enterprises to reach that third of the population who visit public libraries. They also make use of the information and human resources available at the libraries.

Leaflets, flyers, discount coupons, and invitations of cooperating organisations are distributed to library visitors. Library visitors using virtual services are also important for businesses. In addition, libraries allow their partners to use their premises for training courses. Many public libraries, using their document resources, offer their partners a service for collecting electronic versions of relevant articles and publications.

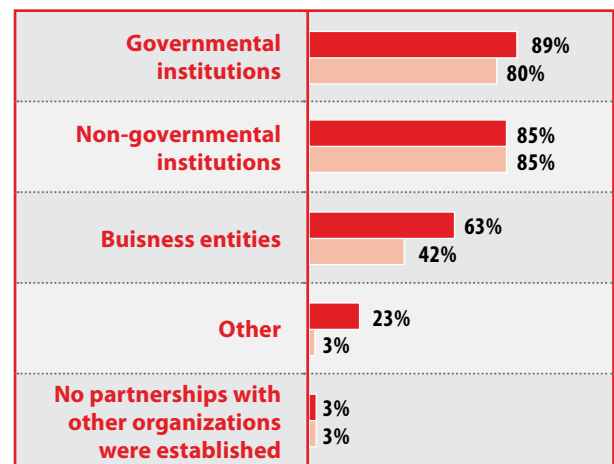
Libraries that collaborate with partners receive both social and economic benefits. Social assistance is usually provided by non-governmental organisations helping to organise events in support of maintaining libraries in a public space, advertising library services, and recommending visits to them. Meanwhile, governmental



institutions are the social and economic partners of libraries. Compared with other organisations, they are major contributors to library activities helping them establish business relationships with influential people.

Businesses are key economic facilitators of libraries: 58% of them provide material resources, 68% support them financially. In 2010, library directors specified governmental institutions as their main financial sponsors; in 2011 they indicated private companies. Donations to libraries by businesses were increased by one third during one year.

Partnerships with other organizations (% of all respondents interviewed, n=65)



■ 2011 □ 2010

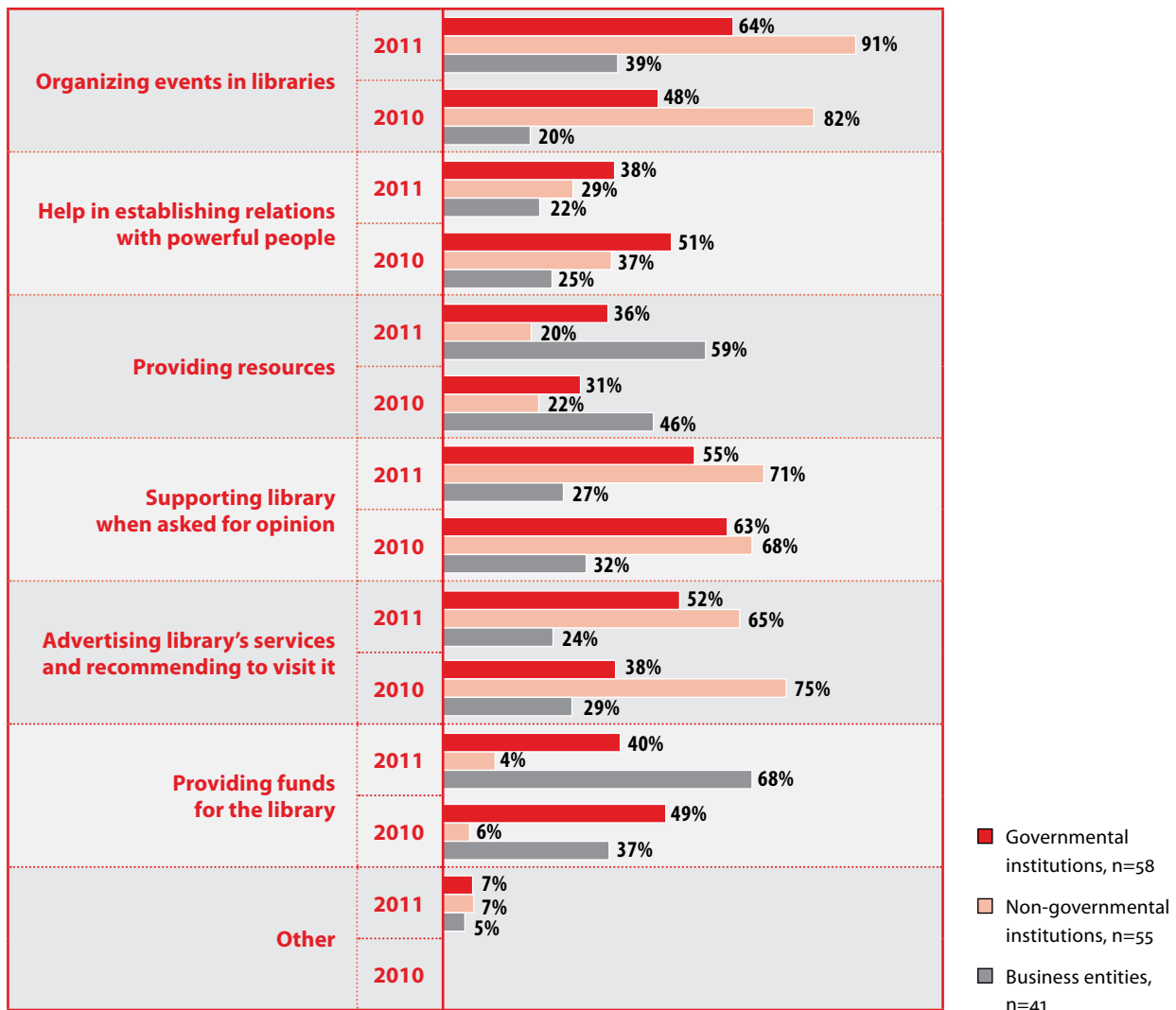
Source: The representative survey of libraries’ directors. “Social Information Centre”

'Earlier libraries had to prove their value, now there are no doubts about it. If there is a question of closing a library, people rise to defend it. Isn't this the best recognition of the progress of libraries?'

An expert from the Seimas (Parliament)



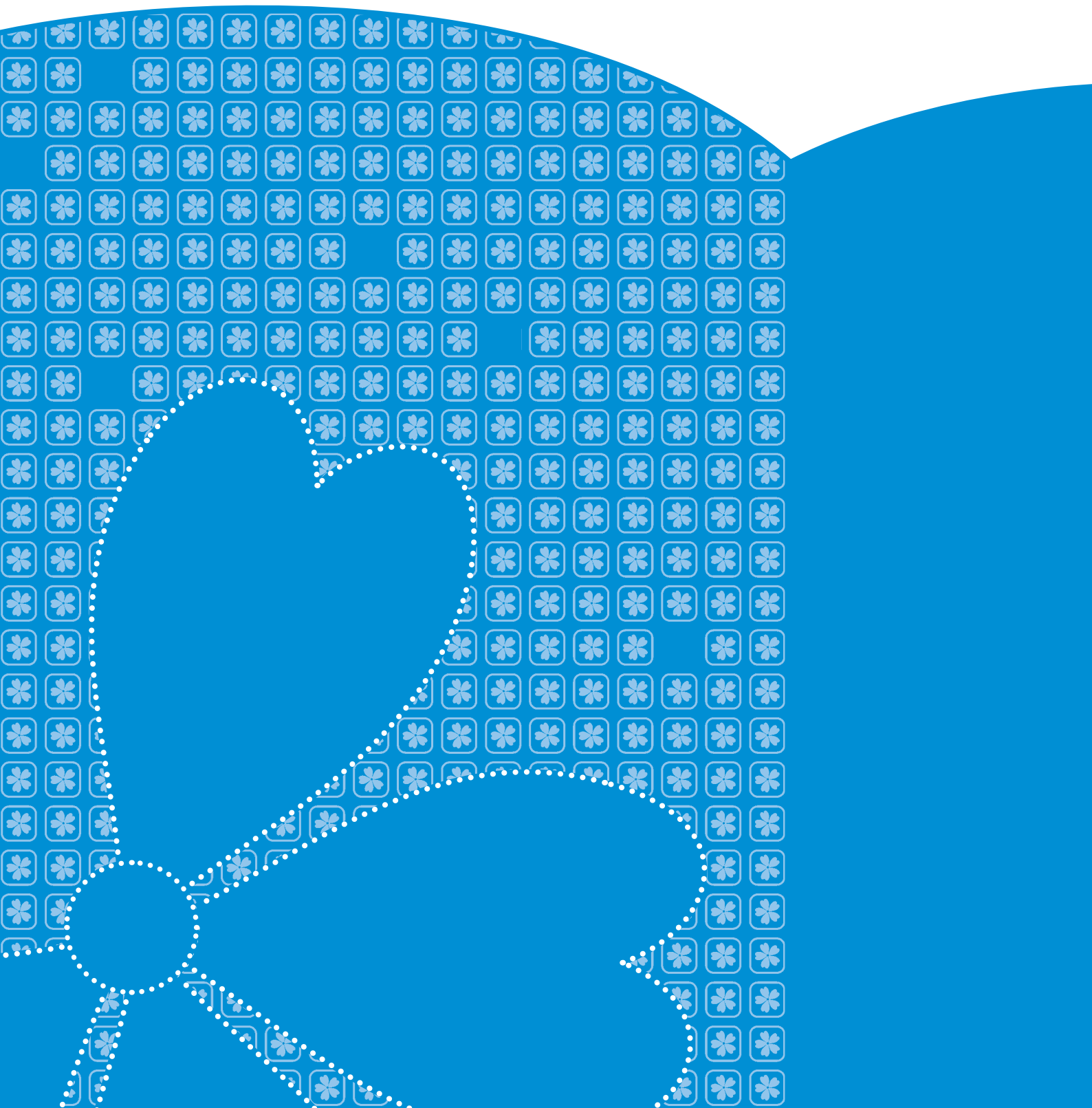
Areas of support, provided by partners
(% respondents of target groups)



Source: The representative survey of libraries' directors. "Social Information Centre"



 **Libraries** Create
a Harmonious and
Resourceful Society



Library – a Composition of Universal and Modern Services

The mission of libraries is extended

Library directors, employees, and experts in the field of culture noted the changing activities of libraries, which include more services and functions. A qualitative opinion survey of these groups revealed a substantial change in perception of the role of the library since 2008.

In 2008, the library was seen as a passive facilitator of information and administrator of information sources; however its role has now expanded considerably. Since 2009, the mission has been understood as multifunctional, covering a wide range of areas. Public libraries provide comprehensive information, create a social space for the public, in particular, to socially-vulnerable groups, educate and train community members. Furthermore, since 2011, the library's mission has been associated with innovations – the provision and promotion of innovations, and teaching in their use.

Today, the library is perceived as a provider of multiple services, a centre of information, culture, education, and a community attraction.

Libraries create changes in society

The mission of libraries covering an increasing number of activities shows that in recent years the newly strengthened libraries have taken the initiative of making changes in society. The strong contribution of libraries towards a sustainable and smart society can be seen today – **public library activities significantly contributed to the decline in the digital divide. The PIA services offered by libraries and IT training have increased the number of people using the benefits of the Internet.**

The 2011 survey data show that 71% of the Lithuanian population aged 15-74 can use a computer and 68% have Internet access. People with a higher level of education and younger people are most active in taking advantage of the uses of IT in Lithuania; this is the same as the rest of the EU. For the younger generation IT technology is already a regular part of their daily life. For example, a survey of 12-14 year-old teenagers shows

Libraries are associated with

(% of all of the interviewed, n=2024)

Books, literature, various periodicals	70%
Information, knowledge, studies and education	50%
Computers	46%
A place to communicate, spend leisure time and play	24%

Source: The survey of 15-74 y.o.a PIA users in libraries. "Social Information Centre"



that 99% of them have Internet access at home or at school and actively use it.

Unfortunately, nearly one-third of the population remains on the other side of the digital divide. Part of the population, especially socially vulnerable groups, simply do not have the opportunities to take advantage of IT. According to the 2011 data, 79% of retired people, 57% of people with disabilities, 53% of the unemployed, and 43% of the rural population neither use the Internet at work nor at home. This is significantly more than the average for the country as a whole (32%).

These groups get support from public libraries that provide free PIA services, offer training and advice to their visitors.

A composition of modern services

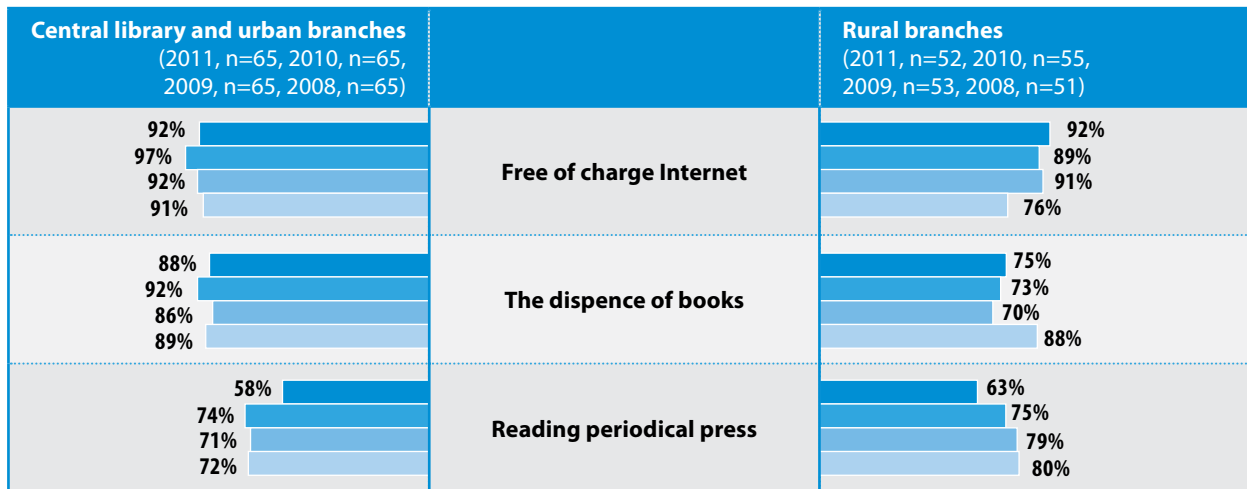
Both library visitors and the rest of the public are aware not only of such individual services as the use of computers or lending of books, but the complex of services of modern knowledge, information, and leisure.

For 70% of visitors who use public Internet access (PIA) services, the library is associated with books, literature, and various publications, for 50% – as a source of information, knowledge, and research. Nearly the same

'I've learned the rules of communication in social networks, how to upload photos and videos. In the library I realised that the computer and the Internet provide an opportunity not only to play or correspond with friends, but also help to deepen my knowledge about cars, technologies, etc. I am happy to be able to get ready for lessons and projects in the library.'

A visitor of Meškuičiai library
(Šiauliai district)

The most popular services provided to libraries' visitors (% of libraries' directors of target groups)



■ 2011 ■ 2010 ■ 2009 ■ 2008

Source: The representative survey of libraries' directors. "Social Information Centre"

number of users associate the library with computers, Internet, and email, whereas a quarter of all users – with the right place to socialise, spend time, and play.

Internet – among the most popular services

PIA in recent years has become not only one of the most well-known, but also one of the most popular services of public libraries. According to the public opinion survey, more than 40% of the Lithuanian population either use these services themselves, or say that their acquaintances or family members are PIA service users.

In the opinion of library directors, free Internet, lending of books and reading of periodicals were the three most popular services in both urban and rural libraries. Of these services, free Internet was mentioned by 92% of directors.

The three most popular services mentioned by directors of libraries as those best known by the public. The 2011 survey showed that of the services offered by libraries, 98% mentioned lending of books, 79% – reading of periodicals, and 76% – free Internet access.

'I am a teacher of the older generation and the computer has become a necessity in my work for finding information, preparing for my classes, and getting ready with my handouts. With the help of the librarian I learned how to apply information technology capabilities at work and improve the quality of my teaching.'

A visitor of Vabalninkas library (Biržai district)

Training in Libraries – Decreasing Digital Divide

Tens of thousands attend training

In 2011, public opinion survey data revealed that 57% of the population have sufficiently good IT skills. **However,**

the representatives of socially vulnerable groups do not feel that they have acquired these skills: 86% of retired people, 72% of people with disabilities, 61% of the unemployed, and 51% of the rural population identified their IT skills as insufficient.

Increasing the IT competences of these groups and their integration into a smart society is a difficult challenge and not only for Lithuania. The problem of digital



divide is seen in many more economically advanced EU countries. In 2010, the Digital Agenda published by the European Commission states that about a third of Europeans have never used the Internet. At the same time the need to provide access to knowledge and acquire the skills needed for the digital era for all European citizens regardless of their age or social background differences is emphasised.

Libraries with the help of various public and private initiatives are constantly growing numbers of the population integrated into digital environment. One of the largest initiatives to deal with the problem of digital divide are digital literacy courses organised in public libraries. In recent years, public libraries have become the main agencies for digital literacy training in Lithuania. In 2008–2011, over 75,000 people acquired IT skills at the libraries.

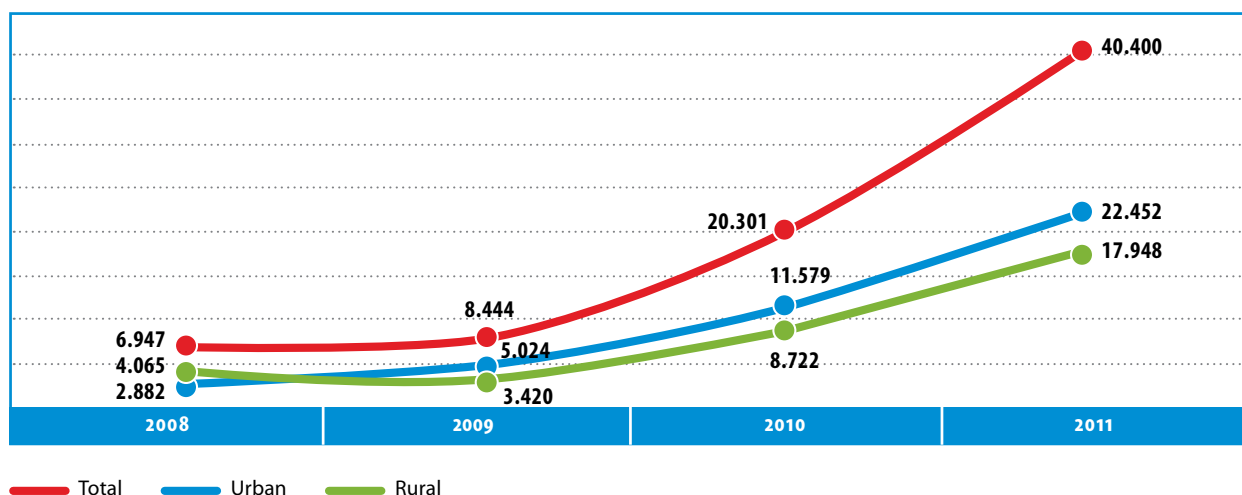
Many social groups represented at the trainings

In 2011, IT training services were provided for library visitors by as many as 92% of libraries. There was a significant increase in digital literacy trainings compared to the previous year. In 2009, at least 3 training programmes were offered by 13% of libraries, whereas in 2011 this figure was 65%.

The number of people from socially vulnerable groups – disabled people, unemployed, retired people, and rural inhabitants – attending digital literacy courses has significantly increased.

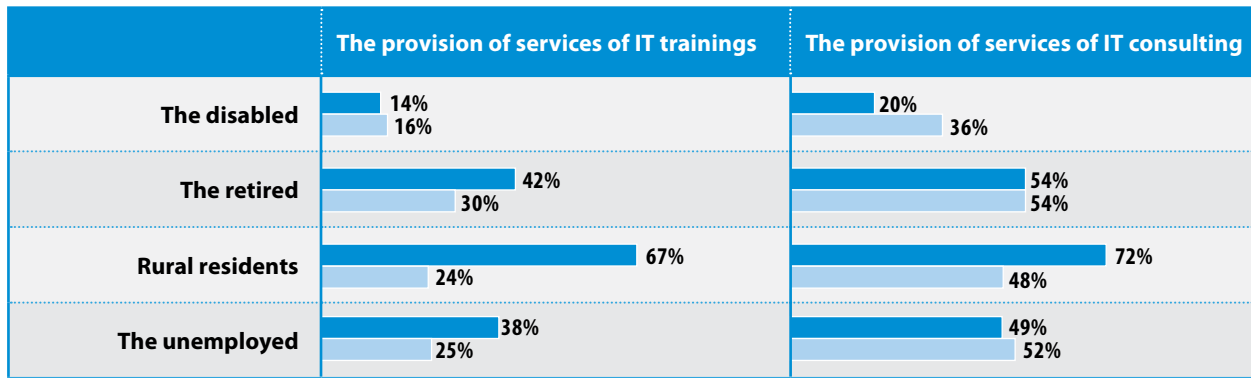
According to the survey of librarians, when comparing 2011 with 2009, **four times as many people with disabilities (22% of the total number of library visitors**

The number of residents who participated in IT trainings (factual survey, units)



Source: The Factual survey of libraries' representatives. "Social Information Centre"

Trainings and consultations organized for resident groups by libraries (% of all libraries' staff, whose libraries have PIA)



■ 2011 ■ 2008

Source: The representative survey of libraries' staff. "Social Information Centre"

with disabilities), and unemployed (58%), and rural inhabitants (64%), and five times as many retired people (49%) attended digital literacy courses.

Higher participation of the representatives of social groups in training courses is determined by more focused activities of public libraries. In 2011, 74% of libraries organised at least one course for representatives of 'hard to reach' groups, twice as many as in 2008.

Courses are required in rural areas

In 2011, 29% of PIA library users indicated they learned to use a PC at special computer courses. This figure is almost double the 2008 figure. Rural library PIA users of rural libraries make particularly large share of those

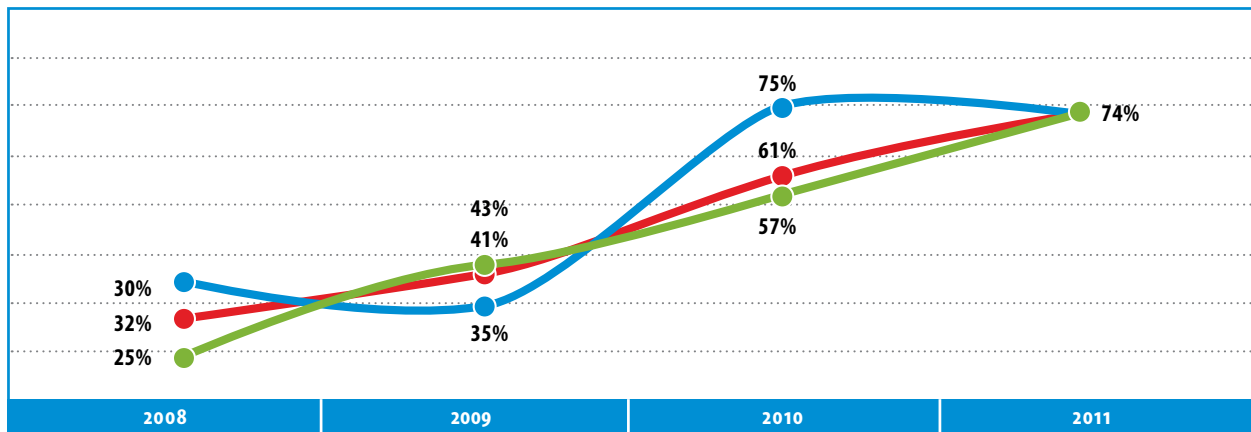
who learned to use PC at courses: 19% in 2008 and 37%, twice as many, in 2011.

Digital literacy training is popular among socially disadvantaged groups with 66% of retired people and 55% of the disabled people who use library PIA services acknowledging that this is how they acquired their PC skills.

Since the beginning of the project *Libraries for Innovation* in 2008, the number of PIA users attending digital literacy courses has doubled.

Last year, 60% of all PIA users who attended digital literacy courses indicated that courses were organised by a public library. In villages this number is 68%.

The provision of the services of IT trainings to hard to reach target groups (% of librarians who provided at least one IT training to difficult to reach target groups)



— Total — Urban — Rural

Source: The representative survey of libraries' staff. "Social Information Centre"

Where did one learn to use the computer? (% of the residents of target groups)



Source: The survey of 15-74 y.o.a PIA users in libraries. "Social Information Centre"

'I live in the village and never thought I would need a computer and the Internet. After graduating from a computer literacy course in the library and familiarising myself with the opportunities offered by the Internet, I can say: the Internet is cool. I have health problems and therefore often see doctors. Registration with the doctor on the Internet saves a lot of time. Having browsed the Internet and read about my illnesses I now know more than my doctor. I can find out milk indicators on the Internet which is also important to me. I am a philatelist and can find much information on the Internet that I need and communicate with like-minded partners. I realise that my life without the Internet would not be of great quality. Thanks to digital literacy courses I found the window to the world.

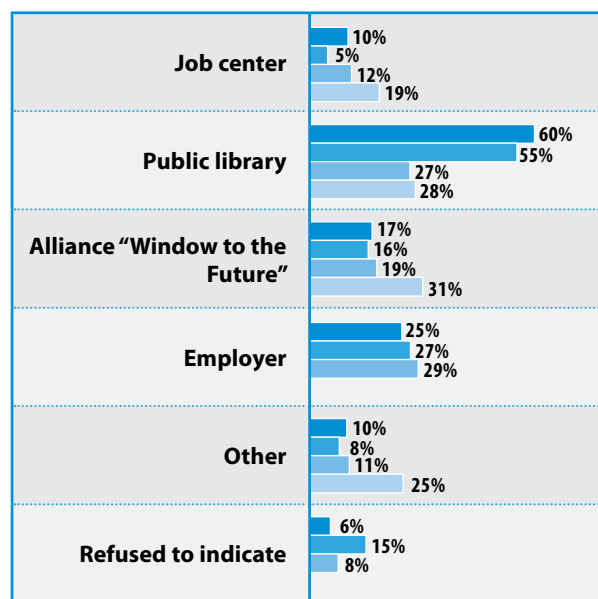
A visitor of the public library of Kaišiadorys district

Narrowing the inequalities between rural and urban areas

The activity of librarians in providing free PIA services and organising digital literacy trainings has significantly contributed to the narrowing of the digital divide between urban and rural populations.

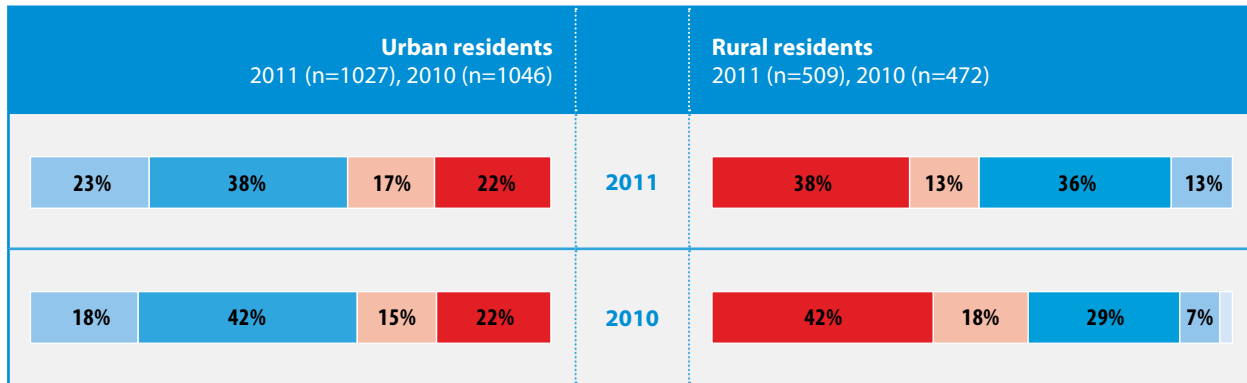
Although a larger proportion of the urban population has IT skills than in rural areas (77% and 60% respectively), in recent years, the digital literacy level has improved much faster among rural population. In 2010 36% of the

Digital literacy courses were organized by: (% of all the interviewed who learnt to use the computer at computer literacy courses)



Source: The survey of 15-74 y.o.a PIA users in libraries. "Social Information Centre"

Evaluation of computer literacy (%, respondents of target groups)



■ Fully insufficient ■ Insufficient ■ Sufficient ■ Fully sufficient ■ Don't know

Source: The survey of 15-74 y.o.a PIA users in libraries. "Social Information Centre"

rural population considered their computer literacy skills sufficient, while in 2011 the figure was 49%.

In recent years, people living in rural areas have improved their skills in using various Internet resources much faster than urban residents. **Skills of the rural population in using the Internet for general purposes, search engines, Internet telephony, and participation in chats and forums have improved.**

A significant increase in Internet use among senior citizens was noted In 2011 compared with 2010. **Dwellers of rural areas and senior citizens are the two most recent groups to have joined the increasing numbers of new Internet users in Lithuania.**

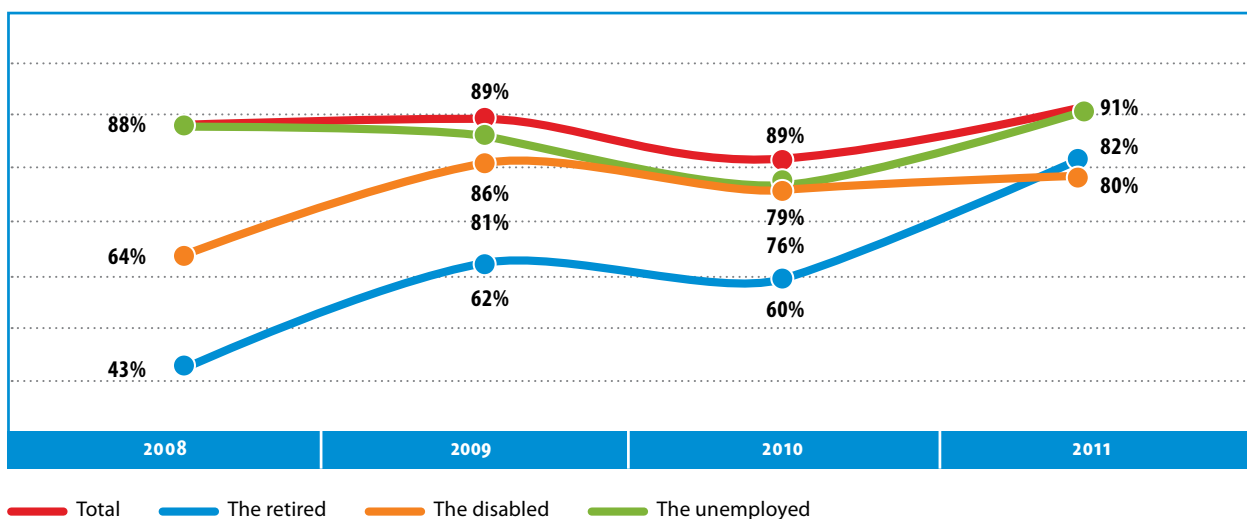
ICT competences improved

Public library activities in offering free PIA services, training and providing advice to visitors determine the growing levels of digital literacy of the population, improving Internet use skills. According to the 2011 survey, 91% of PIA users said they had good or fairly good computer literacy skills.

PIA users of retirement age considerably strengthened their competences. In 2008, only 43% of retired people assessed their computer literacy skills as satisfactory and in 2011 – 82%. The number of disabled users of PIA with good computer literacy skills during this period rose from 64% to 80% respectively.

The evaluation of the skills of PIA users to use the Internet for general purposes

(% of PIA users evaluating the skills of Internet usage for general purposes as sufficient)



Source: The survey of 15-74 y.o.a PIA users in libraries. "Social Information Centre"

Internet skills of PIA users have also improved. An impressive leap in assessing the knowledge of Internet proficiency has been recorded among the retired people who are PIA users: in 2008, less than one-third of retired people had sufficient skills to use the Internet while in 2011, their number increased to 76%. The proportion of disabled people, who are PIA users and can use the Internet well, has risen from 56% to 74%.

‘When you don’t have any job, the most urgent issue is always money. At the library you can get things free of charge. You can also prepare your CV and send it to prospective employers – wherever in the world.’

A library visitor, unemployed

Internet in Libraries – Benefit for Society

Internet – for communication and for other practical use

Free provision of PIA services in public libraries helps people to feel the tangible benefits of IT in their daily lives. **Members of the public claim that in using the Internet they see not only social but also economic benefits.**

Three aims encourage the majority of library users to use the Internet. The first two readily show social benefit. They are the possibility to spend leisure time in an interesting way (74% of the population), to communicate, and stay connected with family and friends (60%). Meanwhile, the third aim is solely due to economic benefit – to manage work or commercial matters (41%).

The use of the Internet by 12-14-year-olds, the most active users of digital technologies, also has a practical benefit. According to the survey, 95% of teenagers use the Internet for communication and leisure and 94% – for study purposes.

Library is becoming an important place for residents, who use internet at library for work and commerce purposes.

The place where the Internet is used for work and commercial purposes the most often (% of the interviewed who have used a particular service at least once)

		In the public library	Elsewhere
Looking for information regarding goods or service	2011, n=1337	70%	57%
	2008, n=1382	54%	57%
Ordering or buying goods or services online	2011, n=705	55%	66%
	2008, n=305	31%	74%
Looking for work or employees	2011, n=930	73%	51%
	2008, n=559	52%	55%
Advertising or/ and selling one’s good or services	2011, n=523	59%	61%
	2008, n=297	36%	64%
Using the e-banking services	2011, n=1011	54%	65%
	2008, n=504	37%	73%

■ 2011 ■ 2008

Source: The survey of 15-74 y.o.a PIA users in libraries. "Social Information Centre"



In comparison to 2008 number of PIA users who looking for work or employees (73%), advertising or/and selling one's good or services (59%), ordering or buying goods or services online (55%), using the e- banking services (54%) have increased.

People who use the Internet in libraries identified very specific economic advantages of the Internet which helped them to improve their lives. **Last year, using the Internet 29% of PIA users managed to save money, 10% found a job, 10% earned money or increased their income using the Internet, 13% purchased items or services online, and 24% used the Internet to take care of their health.**

PIA in the libraries helps to improve lives

Various social and commercial benefits of the Internet are emphasised by socially vulnerable groups of society, who actively use free Internet in the libraries.

According to the 2011 survey of PIA users, **95% of the unemployed and 79% of people with disabilities use Internet for work and commerce. The unemployed actively use the Internet for communication (86%); the proportion of pensioners and the disabled using the Internet for this purpose is over three quarters. Older people mostly use the Internet for health purposes (84%), the proportion of unemployed and the disabled using the Internet for this purpose is 63% and 74% respectively.**

For children from socially disadvantaged families, PIA services satisfy their socialisation needs – free Internet is usually used for communication, leisure, and games, as well as to search for information for study purposes.

Search for information, e-mail communication, work-related activity, and online banking are the PIA services mainly used in rural areas.

'One day I came to the library and saw some women at the computer. I found out that they were learning how to use the computer. I too wanted to learn to use the computer. Now I am very happy. I can find answers to all my questions on the Internet. I read newspapers and magazines on the Internet; I've found some new recipes for preserving vegetables. I communicate with my niece who lives abroad using Skype.'

A visitor of J. Bielinis library (Biržai district)

'I'm retired. My children gave me a computer as a gift, but I could not use it. The librarian invited me to learn at the library. Now I can use the internet freely, I make payments on the internet, I communicate with my children using Skype, and I use email. I've found new friends and we exchange recipes and other information. My life has become much more interesting.'

A visitor of Joniškis library (Molėtai district)

In summary, **for disadvantaged groups of society the PIA library services mostly satisfy their needs by providing opportunities for socialisation, creating a favourable environment for interaction and providing practical improvements to their everyday life.**

Library – a Democratic Social Space

Library becomes ‘the third place’

Two-thirds of the population believe that the library is the centre of the community life. This assessment is most prominent in rural areas. Because of the reduction of cultural centres and other public service providers, libraries in many locations have become centres of cultural life and social interaction centres.

It is no coincidence that rural residents are more likely than city dwellers to see the library as a popular, trendy, modern communication space, which employs cheerful and courteous staff.

Public libraries in many locations, particularly in rural areas, have become the ‘third place’ (after home and workplace or an academic institution) where community members can satisfy their socialisation and self-expression needs.

‘Various events organised for children in the library help socially-deprived children to escape from their poor environment. They play, communicate, and spend leisure time at the computer. If not the library, these kids would not have anything to do after school.’

A library visitor,
rural inhabitant



Members of socially vulnerable groups visiting libraries have also noticed this changing face of libraries. In 2008, representatives of these groups saw the library, first of all, as a place for reading, a repository of information and knowledge, in 2011, the library is seen as a centre of attraction providing modern services to the community.

Social and communication space

The possibility of free Internet access with the help of qualified library staff is very important for some of the public, particularly for those on lower incomes and other socially vulnerable groups. According to the PIA customer survey, 70% of visitors use Internet in libraries at least once a week (13% – every day, 42% – several times a week, and 15% – once a week).

On the other hand, **every year more and more people gain access to the Internet at home, so public Internet access is not the main attraction of the library, it is supplemented with other services.**

As surveys suggest, the majority of PIA customers come to libraries not only for free Internet access. The library is important to them not only because of the Internet, but also as a multi-service provider. According to the



2011 survey, more than 70% of PIA users borrow books, almost 60% read periodicals, one third use information databases, watch videos or listen to sound clips.

Most users state librarian support as one of the main reasons for visiting the library.

Many visitors, particularly in rural libraries, expand their communication opportunities – for them the library is important as a social space, a place for meetings.

Older people actively enjoy socialisation opportunities. In libraries they not only interact directly or via the Internet but also participate in club activities, organise various cultural and educational events.

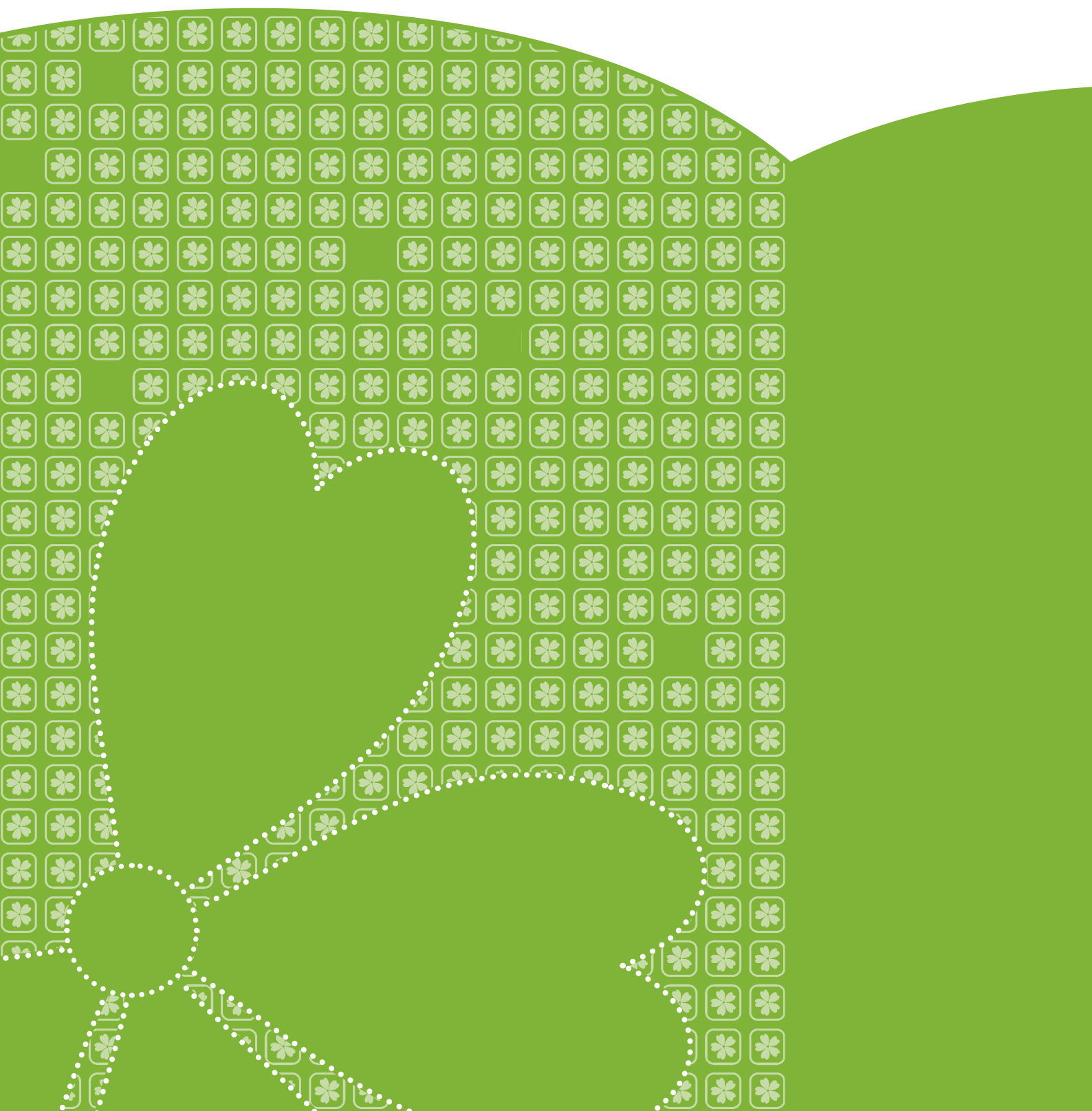
The unemployed, who have a lot of free time, also use libraries very actively. Many libraries cooperate with regional labour exchange divisions; with the result that the unemployed carry out a variety of legal procedures, actively participate in IT training courses and other projects offered by libraries.

All this shows that the free Internet service that many libraries, especially in rural areas, launched in recent years has become not just an artificial 'graft', but has naturally contributed to and successfully supplemented the range of modern library services.





Libraries for Innovation – the Largest Digital Literacy Project in Lithuania



Activities of the 2008–2012 *Libraries for Innovation* project contributed to initiation of the social change in society brought about by public libraries. This project is one of the largest private public sector partnership (PPP) initiatives in Lithuania.

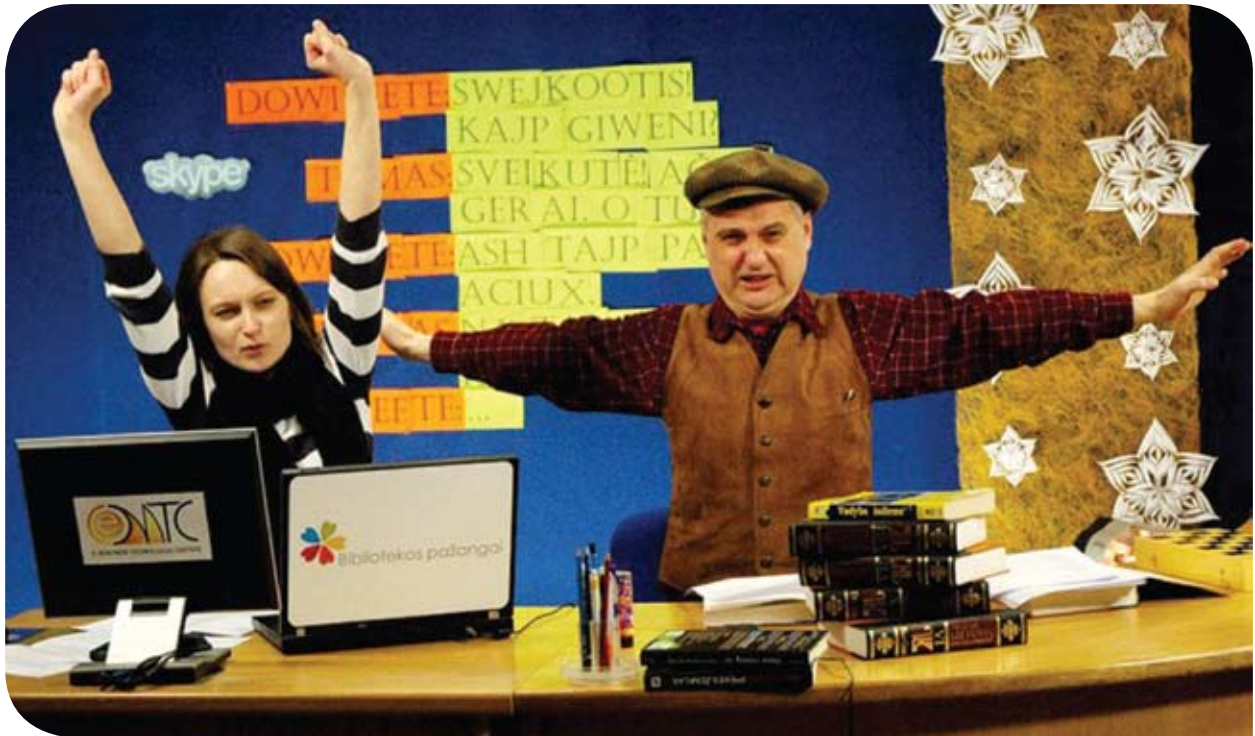
Investment in infrastructure and in services

Four and a half years of the project bridged the digital divide by investing both in the technical base (infrastructure) and people's knowledge and skills (human resources). The project is unique for its complex investment – even though the bulk of the money was spent on modern IT equipment to be installed in libraries, some investment was made in encouraging the population to use the equipment not only for practical needs, but also for social and economic benefits.

At the beginning of the project *Libraries for Innovation* the following objectives were set:

- To provide public Internet access in all potential libraries and to modernise and expand it in the libraries that already have Internet connection.
- To strengthen the digital competence of library employees and to encourage them to help local communities to learn about IT opportunities.
- To encourage the population, especially elderly people and rural dwellers, to make more active use of opportunities provided by the Internet.
- The results of opinion surveys and statistical data show that these main aims were achieved. Such results can be mainly attributed to the successful activities of public libraries and the enthusiasm of librarians in trying out new spaces and initiating changes in society and by the successful functioning of the public libraries.





A leap of information technologies in libraries

The network of Lithuanian public libraries in the period 2008–2012 experienced the greatest technological leap since the reestablishment of independence. According to the information of the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania, at the end of 2011, there were 6,185 computers in 1,306 public libraries – 2.5 times more than in 2007 (2,390), of which 97% have Internet connection.

This technological progress was determined by activities of the project *Libraries for Innovation*, which involved 1,276 public libraries. **During the project, nearly 1,000 libraries installed or substantially stepped up public Internet access; over 3,300 computers were installed for visitors in the libraries and almost 900 multifunctional printing, copying, and scanning devices were provided. Software for the blind and visually impaired was installed in 72 libraries.**

All libraries providing free Internet services also have wireless connection. Librarians who provide services to public Internet access users and IT professionals working in libraries were provided with over 1,400 laptops.

The public library modernisation programme implemented during the economic recession gave libraries the opportunity to at least amortise reduced state funding. In addition, upgrading of the libraries has made them more attractive to partners from the private business sector.

Increased competences of employees

During the 2008–2011 period, nearly 3,000 librarians working in public libraries improved their IT skills at courses organised by the project *Libraries for Innovation*.

Internet and computer in libraries are now seen as a daily working tool, although a few years ago IT was seen as only one of a library's services.

According to the 2011 opinion polls, more than 90% of library visitors recognise that libraries employ highly skilled workers.

Training in libraries reduced the digital divide

The significant increase in the level of their IT competences enabled librarians to become competent digital literacy promoters. Since 2008, over 65,000 Lithuanians attended digital literacy training organised by public libraries under the programmes of the project *Libraries for Innovation*. According to the number of participants this is the largest digital literacy development project in the country's history.

Older people and residents of rural areas were the most active participants of the training. They were the key target audiences of the project Libraries for Innovation. It is these groups that have been most active in recent years in supplementing the ranks of Internet users in Lithuania – this is clearly shown by the results of practical training.

Services provided by libraries which are planned to be strengthened in the near future (% of libraries' directors of target groups)

Central library and urban branches (2011, n=65)		Rural branches (2011, n=52)
57%	The dispense of books	65%
28%	The dispense of other publications	17%
23%	Reading periodical press	48%
40%	Free of charge Internet	56%
58%	Computer literacy courses	58%
55%	Information databases online	21%

Source: The representative survey of libraries' directors. "Social Information Centre"

ICT trainings in libraries will continue

Surveys show that public libraries have become the most popular organisers of digital literacy course. After the end of the *Libraries for Innovation* project, training courses will be developed further. At least 60% of libraries intend to further strengthen digital literacy training.

In the near future, directors of libraries plan to strengthen specified book lending (57% in urban and 65% in rural libraries) and digital literacy courses (58% in both urban and rural libraries).

Strengthening of IT training services offers sufficiently large opportunities to libraries. First of all, it is possible to further increase the number of visitors, in particular those from the socially excluded groups, who have less Internet access opportunities. Second, it is possible to develop the content of the training itself – even though many PIA service users have a sufficient basic IT competence, they would want to deepen the IT skills that need interactive and special knowledge (such as programming, using formulas, etc.).

Further innovations and new visitors in the libraries

The *Libraries for Innovation* project provided modern computer hardware and software in many public libraries. This allowed expanding the range of other services and innovations. Libraries began to organise more

events, and campaigns for all visitors, including the 'hard to reach' social groups.

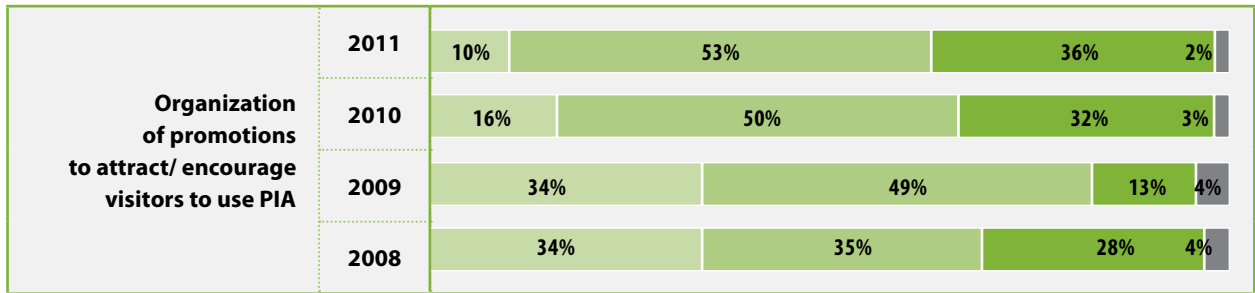
One of these campaigns was the broadcast of Internet TV (dedicated to the older population, the unemployed, and other social groups) programmes on gardening, natural products, health issues, and job search opportunities. As a result of these broadcasts, clubs and hobby groups of library visitors were formed who continue their activities in the country's libraries.

Many activities have been particularly organised for the rural population. In 2011, more than two-thirds of librarians reported that they organised campaigns for attracting and promoting PIA services to rural inhabitants. A slightly smaller number of libraries organised campaigns promoting the use of PIA and intended for retired people (43%) and the unemployed (30%).

With the help of libraries thousands of visitors became active users of electronic public sector services. Libraries collaborated in the electronic census of the country's population, and promoted e-services offered by SODRA (State Social Insurance) and Tax Inspectorate.

With the initiative of the *Libraries for Innovation* project, public libraries have also become much more active mediators in disseminating information between the authorities and the public. Meetings of communities with local government representatives and politicians are more often organised in the libraries.

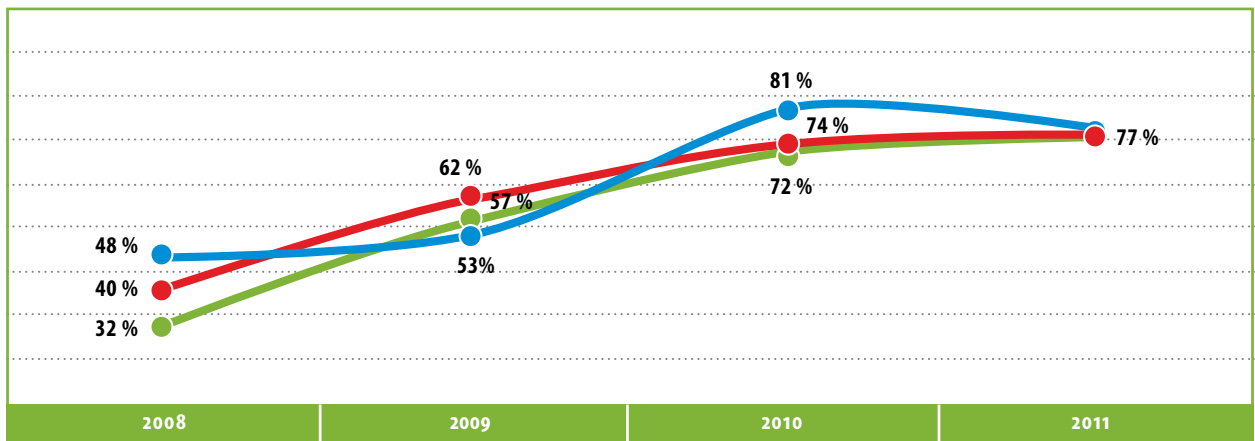
The quantity of promotions organized to attract/ encourage visitors to use PIA (% of libraries' staff, whose libraries have PIA)



Legend: Never (lightest green), 1-2 times (medium green), 3 times and more (darkest green), Difficult to say (grey)

Source: The representative survey of libraries' staff. "Social Information Centre"

The organization of events to attract/ encourage difficult to reach target groups to use PIA (% of librarians who organized at least one event to attract/ encourage difficult to reach target groups to use PIA)



Legend: Total (red), Urban (blue), Rural (green)

Source: The representative survey of libraries' staff. "Social Information Centre"

These innovations have become an integral part of the changing content of library services and have contributed to the modern image of a universal library.

Ahead – On-going Changes

Having upgraded their IT infrastructure, increased the competences of employees, and encouraged tens of thousands of people to use the advantages provided by the Internet, in recent years public libraries have expanded their mission.

If at end of 2008, the library's mission was mainly associ-

ated with the promotion of reading, now it covers many more areas of activity. Public libraries today are multi-service providers, centres of information, culture, education, and a community attraction, constantly innovating and encouraging people to actively use libraries.

All these changes in libraries have been noticed and assessed by visitors and the wider public. Following the end of the *Libraries for Innovation* project, public libraries intend to continue acting in a dynamic environment; they plan not only to expand the function of being the centre of community life, but also to contribute to the further progress of society.

Surveys conducted by Project

1. The Representative Survey of Lithuanian Residents

Research target group - Lithuanian residents of 15-74 years old.

The survey method - The survey of Lithuanian residents was carried out by using the methodology of face-to-face interview in respondents' home.

Sample size

- 2008: 1536 residents were interviewed.
- 2009: 1555 residents were interviewed.
- 2010: 1518 residents were interviewed.
- 2011: 1536 residents were interviewed.

2. The Representative Survey of the Children in Lithuania

Research target group - 12-14 years old children.

The survey method - The survey of Children in Lithuania was carried out by using the methodology of face-to-face interview in respondents' home.

Sample size

- 2008: 608 children were interviewed.
- 2009: 609 children were interviewed.
- 2010: 600 children were interviewed.
- 2011: 608 children were interviewed.

3. The Survey of PIA Users in Libraries

Research target group - PIA users in libraries of 15-74 years old.

The survey method - The survey of PIA users was conducted as a direct interview or by an online questionnaire by interviewing the respondent in the library.

Sample size

- 2008: 1246 PIA users were interviewed.
- 2009: 1091 PIA users were interviewed.
- 2010: 2028 PIA users were interviewed.
- 2011: 2024 PIA users were interviewed.

4. The Survey of Libraries' Staff

Research target group:

1. Members of staffs who serve or will be serving the PIA visitors.
2. Members of staff who participated or will be participating in trainings related with PIA operations.

The survey method - Internet survey of librarians.

Sample size

- 2008: 609 librarians were interviewed.
- 2009: 611 librarians were interviewed.
- 2010: 609 librarians were interviewed.
- 2011: 620 librarians were interviewed.

5. The Survey of Libraries' Directors

Research target group - libraries' directors.

The survey method - Internet survey of libraries' directors.

Sample size

- 2008-2011: annually 65 libraries' directors were interviewed.

6. The Survey of the Residents of Municipalities

Research target group - Residents of age 15-74 of five Lithuanian regions' municipalities (Kedainiai, Kupiskis, Prienai, Ukmerge and Silale).

The survey method - The survey of Residents of five Lithuanian regions' municipalities was carried out by using the methodology of face-to-face interview in respondents' home.

Sample size

- 2008: 2020 residents of municipalities were interviewed.
- 2009: 2018 residents of municipalities were interviewed.
- 2010: 2023 residents of municipalities were interviewed.
- 2011: 2005 residents of municipalities were interviewed.

7. Factual Survey of Libraries' Representatives

Research target group - The libraries participating in the project "Libraries for Innovation".

The survey method - The libraries' representatives on line survey.

Sample size

- 2008: 1225 libraries' representatives were interviewed.
- 2009: 1248 libraries' representatives were interviewed.
- 2010: 1287 libraries' representatives were interviewed.
- 2011: 1276 libraries' representatives were interviewed.

8. Qualitative Research of Libraries' Staff and other Interested Groups

The survey method. Two main methods of qualitative research were used:

- In-depth interviews (ID).
- focused group discussions (FGD).

Research target groups included:

- Experts of different levels (national and municipalities' experts) who are involved in libraries' activities - representatives of national and local government and other internal or external experts.
- Libraries' directors.
- The staff of urban public libraries or their rural branches who are already working or planning to work with PIA.

2008-2011 research annually included: 8 IDI with experts; 2 FGD with libraries' directors; 2 FGD with librarians.

9. Qualitative Research with the Representatives of PIA Users Including Children and the Representatives of Hard to Reach Groups

The survey method. Two main methods of qualitative research were used:

- In-depth interviews (ID).
- focused group discussions (FGD).

Research target groups

The target group of the qualitative research - PIA in libraries - included:

- Seniors
- Rural residents
- The unemployed
- Children of 12-14 years old from families at social risk
- Children of 12-14 years old whose parents (one or both of them) have left for work abroad
- The disabled.

Respondents meeting the above mentioned characteristics were selected by applying targeted sampling. Respondents were selected to participate in focussed groups proportionately according to age, gender and the place of residence (these criteria were combined together).

While defining the recruitment points of the place of residence, the following recruitment criteria were applied:

- Maximum 2 respondents were recruited from one recruitment point.
- There was a distribution of respondents from rural/ urban areas.

Respondents meeting the above mentioned characteristics were selected by applying targeted sampling. Respondents were selected to participate in focussed groups proportionately according to age, gender and the place of residence.

2008-2011 research annually included: 12 IDI with disable and unemployed; 10-13 FGD with seniors, rural residents, children of 12-14 years old from families at social risk, children of 12-14 years old whose parents (one or both of them) have left for work abroad.

Surveys were commissioned by project "Libraries for innovation" for: 2008 RAIT, 2009 TNS Gallup and GfK, 2010 RAIT, 2011 SIC.

