

Users' perceptions of the benefits of ICT in public libraries in Denmark

Final report

March 2013

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Acknowledgements

The authors of this report are grateful for the input and assistance of the following people who helped ensure the success of the project:

Jan Braeckman	Bibnet	Belgium
Kelly Carey	GMMB	
Marcel Chiranov	Biblionet Romania	Romania
Mikkel Christoffersen	Kulturstyrelsen / Danish Agency for Culture	Denmark
Giedrė Čistovienė	National Library of Lithuania	Lithuania
Chris Coward	Technology and Social Change Group (TASCHA), University of Washington	
Annie Dourlent	Bibliothèque publique d'information	France
Elaine Fulton	Scottish Library and Information Council/CILIP in Scotland	United Kingdom
Francoise Gaudet	Bibliothèque publique d'information	France
Robin Knowles	Civic Agenda	
Maciej Kochanowicz	Library Development Program, Information Society Development Foundation	Poland
Alexandre Lemaire	Fédération Wallonie Bruxelles Service de la lecture publique	Belgium
Zdenek Matušík	Association of Library and Information Professionals of the Czech Republic (SKIP)	Czech Republic
Maria Antonia Carrato Mena	Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte	Spain
Dan Mount	Civic Agenda	
Julia Nagy	GMMB	
Margarida Oleiro	Direção-Geral do Livro, dos Arquivos e das Bibliotecas	Portugal
Marjolein Oomes	Netherlands Institute for Public Libraries	Netherlands
Helen Osborn	Libraries NI	United Kingdom
Kristine Paberza	State Agency „Culture Information Systems“	Latvia
Jeremy Paley	Global Libraries, Bill & Melinda Gates foundation	USA
Stefano Parise	Comune di Milano	Italy
Aldo Pirola	Comune di Milano	Italy
Vasilis Polyhronopoulos	Total Quality Unit of Greek Academic Libraries	Greece
Renata Sadunishvili	Independent consultant	Lithuania
Janet Sawaya	Global Libraries, Bill & Melinda Gates foundation	USA
Miriam Schriefers	Deutscher Bibliotheksverband e.V.	Germany
David Streatfield	Consultant	United Kingdom
Ian Watson	Adult & Community Services Directorate, Lancashire County Council	United Kingdom
Barbro Wigell-Ryynänen	Ministry of Education and Culture	Finland
Branimira Vezhdarova	Glob@l Libraries – Bulgaria	Bulgaria
Anna Kåring Wagman	Swedish Library Association	Sweden
Helen Williams	CyMAL: Museums Archives and Libraries Wales Council of Libraries and Archives at the Ministry of Education	United Kingdom
Dr George Zachos		Greece

Disclaimer

This report is based on research funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates foundation. The findings and conclusions contained within are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect positions or policies of the Bill & Melinda Gates foundation.

Executive summary

Objectives and research approach

TNS, an independent research company with a global presence, was commissioned by the Bill & Melinda Gates foundation to conduct research across 17 EU countries to identify perceptions and types of use of public libraries. The purpose of the research was to understand the impact that public libraries in the EU have on users' lives.

The research included:

- a workshop among the study stakeholders to discuss the priorities for the research;
- desk research, to collate key data concerning libraries;
- a survey of a representative sample of the population aged 15 and over in each of the 17 countries;
- a survey among library users and public access computer (PAC) users aged 15 and over, in each of the 17 countries, conducted in libraries; and
- qualitative research among library users and library staff.

This report provides a brief overview of the results for Denmark and compares the results to the EU total.

The public library landscape

- The desk research estimates that there are 449 public libraries in Denmark, which equates to 0.8 libraries per 10,000 population, much lower than the average of 1.3 libraries per 10,000 population across the EU.
- It is estimated that almost all public libraries in Denmark offer public computer access.

Library and PAC usage

- An estimated 2.6 million adults in Denmark, just under three in five adults in the country (57%) had used a public library in the last 12 months, compared with just under a quarter (23%) of all adults across Europe.
- An estimated 0.8 million adults in Denmark, 19% of adults, had used PACs in the last 12 months, considerably higher than the average of 4% of adults across the EU.
- PAC users in Denmark were more likely than the EU average to be women, to be aged 55+, and to have remained in full time education beyond the age of 19.
- The primary motivations of PAC users across the EU are the free nature of the service together with the lack of other options that people have. PAC users in Denmark, compared with users across the EU, were less likely to say they had no other option for computer access, and were more likely to have mentioned getting help from library staff as a reason for using computers in public libraries.
- Overall, it is estimated that 0.2 million PAC users in Denmark had nowhere else to access the internet, or to access the internet free of charge.
- The value placed on the PAC service was lower among users in Denmark than the EU average. Overall, 85% of PAC users in Denmark said that the library's computer and internet connection services were valuable, compared with 92% of all EU PAC users. PAC users in Denmark were much less likely to say the service was extremely valuable (15%) compared with the EU average (36%).
- Satisfaction with computers and the internet at public libraries was high among users: 92% of users in Denmark were satisfied.

Perceptions and impacts of public libraries

- Around two thirds of library users in Denmark considered 'free access to computers' and 'free access to the internet' important (compared with around seven out of ten library users across Europe).
- Around three quarters (76%) of the general public in Denmark (including both library users and non-users) felt libraries were either very effective, effective or fairly effective at meeting the needs of their local community. This was higher than the average across the EU of 64%.
- Around a quarter (24%) of the public in Denmark felt that public libraries merited more financial support than at present, significantly lower than the EU average (40%).
- Overall 82% of PAC users in Denmark said their PAC use had delivered at least one impact for them, similar to the average across the EU (83%) and representing approximately 0.7 million people in Denmark.
- Library users in Denmark were more likely than the EU average to strongly agree that public libraries 'Are accessible to everyone' (77% compared with 70% EU), 'Provide access to information for those who don't have it elsewhere' (71% compared with 65% EU), and 'Are friendly and welcoming' (63% compared with 58% EU).

Informal and non-formal learning

- In Denmark 36% of library users had taken part in an educational activity in a library in the last 12 months, which was higher than the EU average of 25%.

Employment and use of PACs for business

- Around a fifth (19%) of PAC users in Denmark had used library computers in the last 12 months to support some employment related activity, below the EU average of 30%. This represents an estimated 157,000 PAC users in Denmark who had used PAC for employment related activity.
- An estimated 63,000 PAC users in Denmark had used a PAC to apply for a job in the last 12 months, and an estimated 12,000 adults were successful in securing employment by this means.

E-government and active citizenship

- The library survey found that three in ten PAC users in Denmark (30%) had used PACs to interact with public authorities in the last 12 months, higher than the EU average of one in four (24%). The most common ways in which PAC users in Denmark interacted with public authorities were to obtain information from public authorities' websites (24%) and to download official forms (13%).
- Overall, 13% of PAC users in Denmark had used PAC for civic engagement activities in the past 3 months, much lower than the average for users across the EU (26%). The two most common community engagement activities in Denmark were seeking information on consumer/legal rights (6% Denmark compared with 11% EU) and seeking information on local/national/EU government activity or politics (6% compared with 10% EU).

1. Background and methodology

1.1 Context for the research

Public libraries across the European Union (EU) have long played an important role in communities by providing free access to information, guidance from trained librarians, and public meeting space. As meaningful participation in society increasingly requires access to digital information and resources, many public libraries in the EU have expanded their offerings to include access to information and communications technologies (ICTs) like computers and the Internet.

There is a growing body of evidence about the ways public access to ICTs contributes to economic, health, education, and social development¹. For instance, the Global Impact Study on Public Access to ICTs, which covers five developing countries, found that those using Public Access Computers reported positive impact related to communication (79%), education (78%), access to government information (40%) and health (37%). More than 80% of public services in the EU are now fully available online,² but in 2011, just 41% of the EU population used government services electronically.³ Today, some Europeans have their first experiences with computers or the Internet at a public library, and for some individuals this may remain the only place they can access ICTs (or access them without paying unaffordable fees)⁴.

Under the Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, the EU has set ambitious objectives in many of the development areas to which access-to-information efforts contribute – specifically employment, innovation, education, and social inclusion. EU Member States are expected to meet targets in these areas by 2020. There is anecdotal evidence that ICT access through public libraries can support the implementation of the specific growth, education, and cohesion policies related to the EU 2020 Strategy, such as digital skills and inclusion milestones described under the Digital Agenda for Europe (one of seven flagship initiatives of the Strategy) or informal and non-formal learning, which is mentioned in three of the seven flagship initiatives. In other policy areas, such as supporting a skilled workforce and connecting people to employment opportunities, public libraries' roles may be less obvious and additional data are needed to demonstrate the contributions of public libraries and help them secure EU support for their work.

This research, which includes EU-wide and country-specific reports, was commissioned by the Bill & Melinda Gates foundation to illuminate the role of public libraries in supporting social and economic policies under the EU 2020 Strategy.

1.2 Research objectives

The main purpose of the research was to understand the impact that public libraries in the EU have on users' lives.

1.3 Research method

The research was conducted in the following seventeen countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, Greece, Spain, Finland, France, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania and the United Kingdom.

¹ See [The Global Impact Study of Public Access to Information & Communication Technology](#) about the scale, character, and impacts of public access to information and communication technologies. Looking at libraries, telecenters, and cybercafes, the study investigates impact in a number of areas, including communication and leisure, culture and language, education, employment and income, governance, and health. Implemented by the University of Washington's [Technology & Social Change Group](#) (TASCHA), the Study is part of a broader research project supported by Canada's [International Development Research Centre](#) (IDRC) and a grant to IDRC from the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#).

² [Eurostat](#), 2010

³ [Eurostat](#), 2011

⁴ Sciadas, G., with Lyons, H., Rothschild, C., & Sey, A. (2012). *Public access to ICTs: Sculpting the profile of users*. Seattle: Technology & Social Change Group, University of Washington Information School.

The research involved several phases. First, desk research was carried out to collate existing information showing the public library landscape in the survey countries, using sources such as IFLA, national and local library statistics, local library associations, national statistical offices, Eurostat, Eurobarometer and so on. Survey work was carried out in October/November 2012.

- A representative sample of 1,045 members of the public aged 15+ in Denmark (17,816 across the 17 countries) were interviewed regarding their usage of libraries, computers in libraries and their attitudes towards libraries.
- Interviews were carried out in libraries. In Denmark, 707 interviews were conducted with people who had not used Public Access Computers (PACs) in libraries (12,537 across the 17 countries) and 703 with those who had (11,716 across the 17 countries). The interviews in Denmark were conducted in 24 libraries which were selected and contacted with help from a representative of the Danish Agency for Culture. Respondents were interviewed face-to-face.
- Qualitative fieldwork was conducted, consisting in each country of five 60-minute depth interviews with library managers and four 90-minute group discussions with PAC users. At least 3 libraries were represented in each country, in both urban and semi-rural locations.

Survey results were weighted to ensure that the final results were representative of the population within each country. Weighting was also applied to rebalance the weight of each country within the pan-European totals, in proportion to the population size.

1.4 This report

This report provides a brief overview of the results for Denmark and compares the results to the EU total. EU results are based on findings from the 17 countries included in this study. Individual reports for each country surveyed have been produced as well as an overall report⁵.

Throughout this report where we refer to:

- A 'library': This means a public library, which anyone can go to, and does not include school, college, or university libraries'
- PAC user/usage': This refers to usage of a public access computer to access the internet within a public library, and is based on those who responded affirmatively to the following question:

Have you used a public access computer in a public library to access the internet in the last 12 months? Please do not include using your personal computer or smart phone in the library.

Throughout this report comparisons are made between the findings in Denmark and the average across the EU. The EU average is calculated based on responses from the 17 countries in the survey. It should be noted that figures for Denmark are *included* in the EU average, which has the effect of lessening the statistical power of comparisons between the Denmark and EU figures.

While most of the data is presented in terms of percentages, on a number of occasions throughout this report data have been grossed up to represent the population of Denmark and are presented in terms of estimated numbers.

⁵ Quick, Prior, Toombs, Taylor and Currenti (2013): *Cross-European survey to measure users' perceptions of the benefits of ICT in public libraries* (funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation)

2. The public library landscape and internet provision

In 2011 there were a total of 449 public library service points in Denmark which equates to 0.8 libraries per 10,000 population, much lower than the average across EU of 1.3 libraries per 10,000.

These 449 libraries break down as follows: 97 main public libraries and 352 branch libraries.

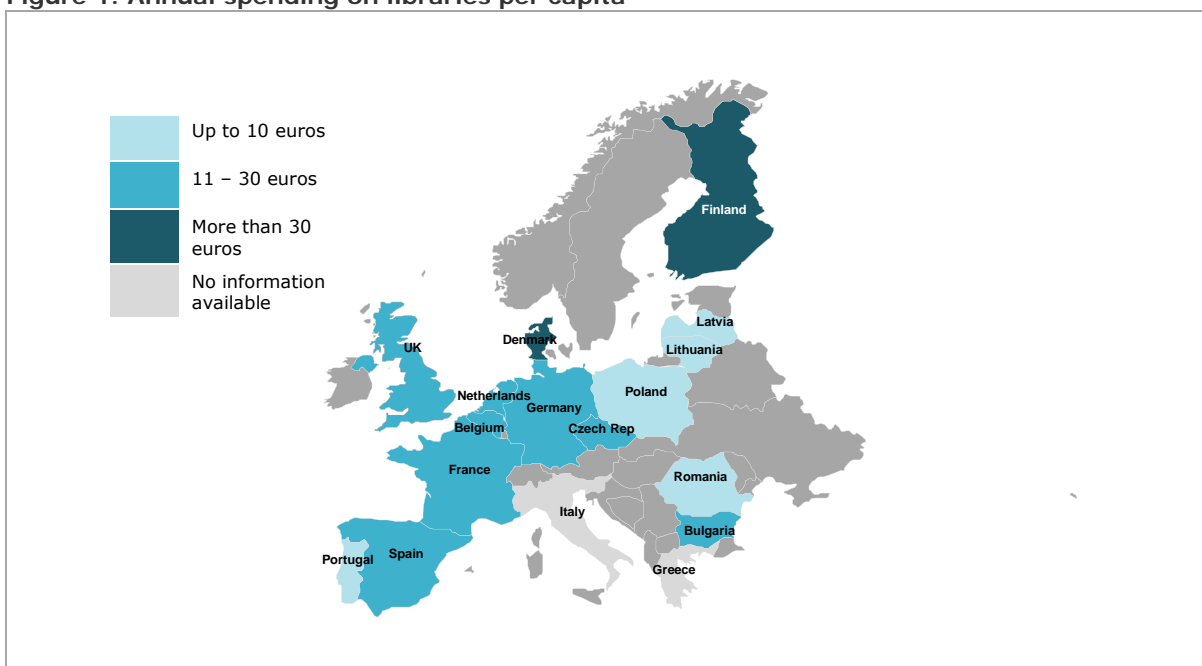
The municipal reform in 2007 had major consequences for the library service. The number of libraries decreased and the remaining libraries grew in size. The number of branch libraries has declined since 2009 (by around 5%).

The Danish library system is based on the concept of the citizen's fundamental right to knowledge and information and is generally considered to be one of the best in the world. All local authorities in Denmark must run a public library with departments for children and adults (either alone or in cooperation with other local authorities). The Danish Agency for Culture is the central body at government level responsible for all matters relating to libraries and reports into the Ministry of Culture.

There are intense efforts underway to further increase the digital library offer in public libraries in Denmark. Libraries use bibliotek.dk, a database linking public and research libraries. The website is financed by the Danish government and run by the Danish National Library Authority. The Danish Bibliographic Centre is responsible for the development and maintenance of this database. This source contains approximately 9 million items and is searchable from a Z39.50 interface. Requests for specific items, a very well-used facility, can be placed through local libraries via bibliotek.dk.

Annual public spending on libraries per capita in Denmark at 65.4 Euros was significantly above the average across the EU:

Figure 1: Annual spending on libraries per capita



Source: TNS desk research

There are no official figures on the number of public libraries offering public computer access and internet access but it is estimated that almost all public libraries in Denmark have computers, and similarly that almost all libraries in Denmark offer access to the Internet.

There is information on the number of public computers in libraries (5,164) and the number of Internet computers in public libraries (4,944), providing an average figure of 10.3 computers per public library.

Eurostat data (2011) on Internet access at home shows that Denmark has one of the highest levels in Europe, with 90% of households having access to the Internet, compared with an EU average of 73%. It may therefore be expected that demand for and usage of PAC services would be lower in Denmark than in other countries.

3. Library and PAC usage

3.1 Access to libraries and PACs

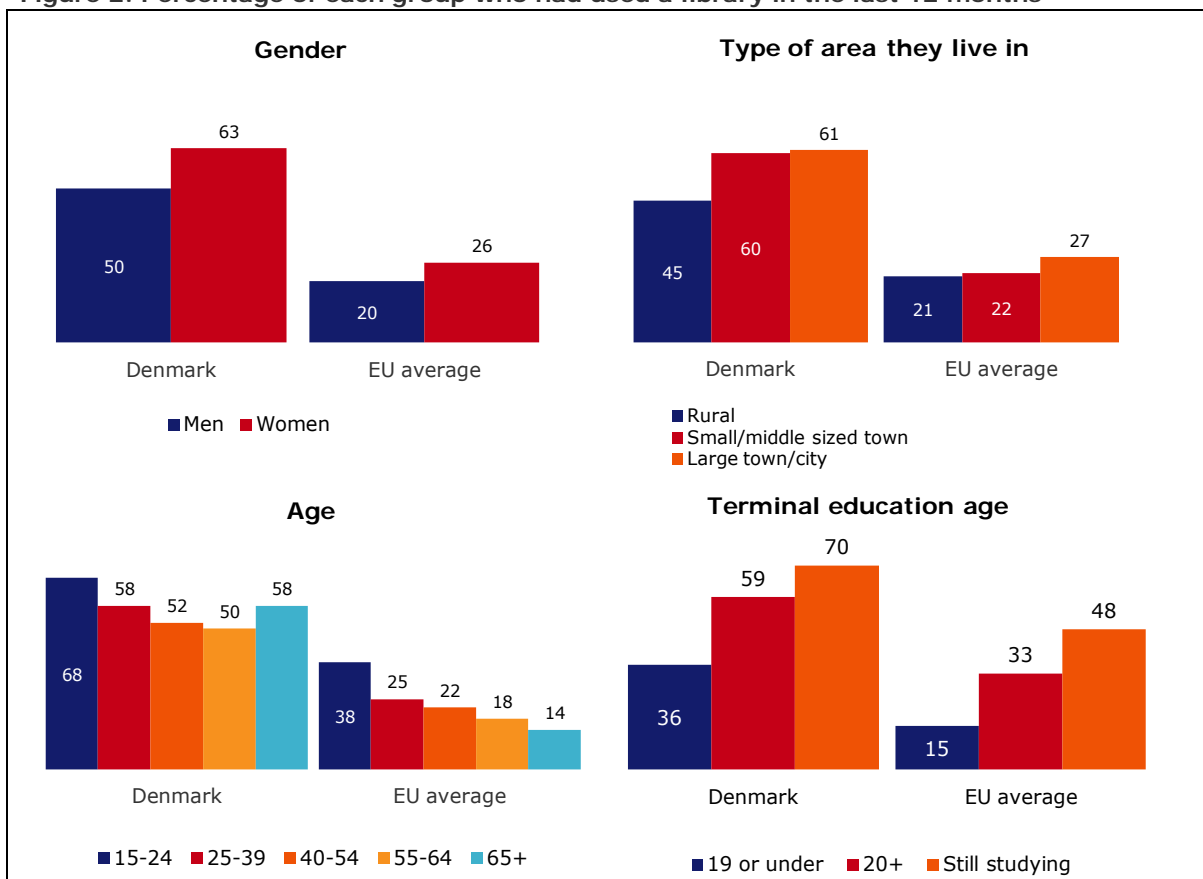
The general public survey found that library usage in Denmark was considerably higher than the EU average.

- An estimated 2.6 million adults in Denmark, just under three in five adults in the country (57%) had used a public library in the last 12 months, compared with just under a quarter (23%) of all adults across Europe.
- An estimated 1.3 million adults, nearly three in ten adults in Denmark (28%), had used a library at least once a month, twice the EU average of 14%.

The prevalence of library use in the last 12 months, by different groups in Denmark and across the EU, is shown in Figure 2. In Denmark:

- Women (63%) were more likely than men (50%) to have visited a library, as was the case across the EU. Usage was much higher in Denmark than across the EU for both women (EU average 26%) and men (EU average 20%)
- Library usage was highest among those aged 15-24 (68%), followed by those aged 25-39 (58%) and those aged 65+ (58%). Across all age groups library usage in Denmark was much higher than the comparable EU average.
- Library use was much higher among those who were still studying – seven in ten (70%) of whom had used a public library in the last 12 months, above the EU average (48%). Among those who stopped full-time education either aged 19 or under or aged 20+ the incidence of library usage was much higher in Denmark than across the EU.
- Library use was higher in large towns or cities (61%) and smaller towns (60%), compared with rural areas (45%). Across all three the incidence of usage was much higher in Denmark than across the EU, with the greatest differences being in large towns or cities (EU average 27%) and smaller towns (EU average 22%).

Figure 2: Percentage of each group who had used a library in the last 12 months



Source: Omnibus survey – Q1. Have you visited a public library in the last 12 months?
 Base: Denmark – All adults (1045), Men (511), Women (534), 15-24 (110), 25-39 (174), 40-54 (248) 55-64 (217), 65+ (296), Large town/city (325), Small town (463), Rural area (255), Finished education 19 or under (194), 20 or over (713), Still studying (122), Born in Denmark (984), Born outside Denmark (61). EU - All adults (17816), Men (8521), Women (9295), 15-24 (2636), 25-39 (4152), 40-54 (4592), 55-64 (2937), 65+ (3496), Large town/city (5352), Small town (6653), Rural area (5633), Finished education 19 or under (9943), 20 or over (5500), Still studying (1801), Born in EU (16966), Born outside EU (1061).

The profile of library users in Denmark, compared with across the EU, was:

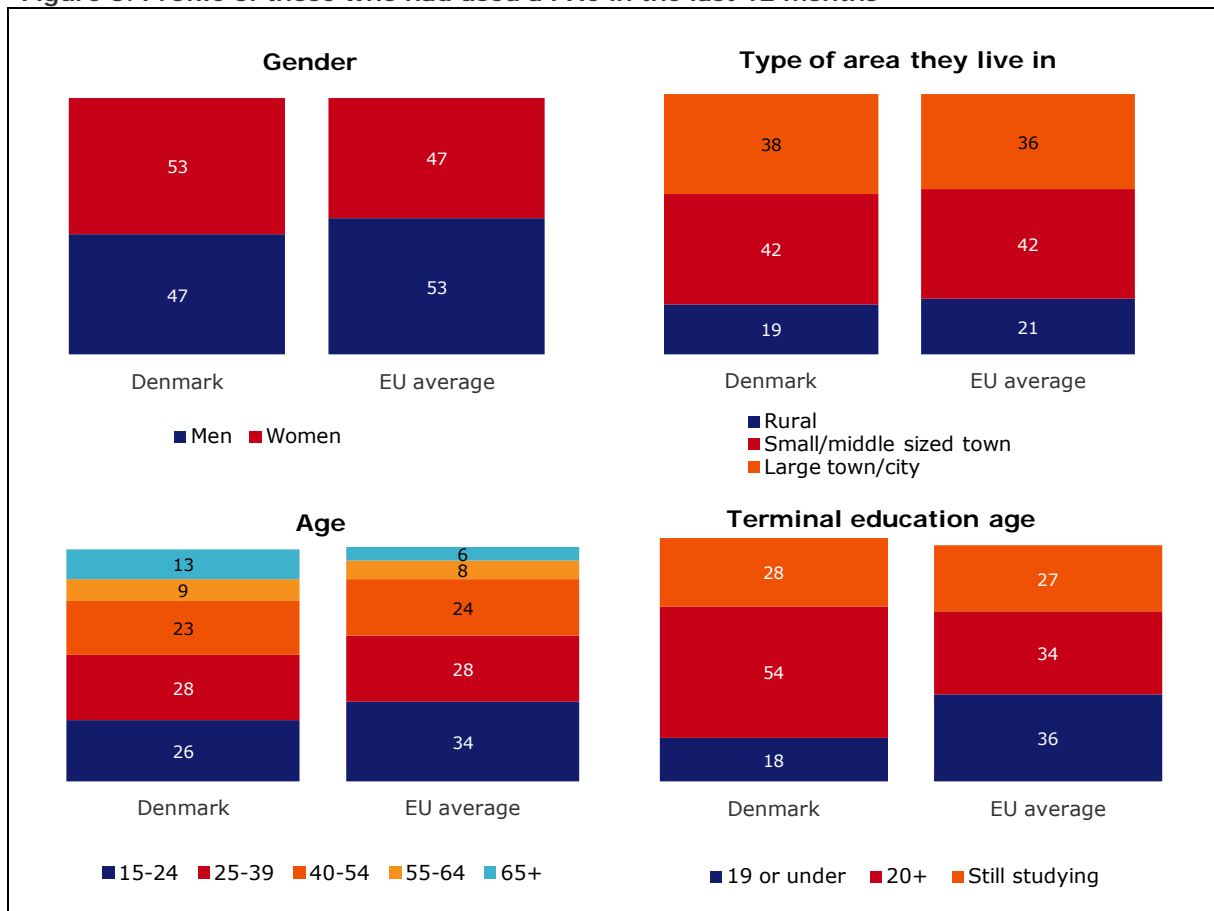
- 44% of library users in Denmark were men and 56% women, broadly in line with the EU average (42% men, 58% women)
- Users in Denmark had a somewhat older age profile than the EU average – 19% were aged 15-24, 23% aged 25-39, 23% aged 40-54, 15% aged 55-64 and 21% aged 65+; compared with the EU average of 25% aged 15-24, 26% aged 25-39, 25% aged 40-54, 12% aged 55-64 and 12% aged 65+.

Around a third (32%) of those who had visited a library in Denmark in the last 12 months had used a PAC, more than twice the EU average of 14%. When those who had not used a PAC were asked why this was, the large majority (77%) said they had no need to because they had a computer/internet at home. However, a significant minority of 5% said they did not know how to use computers or the internet, implying that there is potential for libraries to further increase their customer base for PAC.

In total, the survey found that 19% of adults in Denmark had used PACs in the last 12 months, considerably higher than the average of 4% of adults across the EU countries. This is estimated to be around 0.8 million adults in Denmark.

PAC users in Denmark were more likely than the EU average to be women, to be aged 55+ and to have remained in full-time education beyond the age of 19, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Profile of those who had used a PAC in the last 12 months



Source: Library survey – C4. Have you used a public access computer in a public library to access the Internet in the last 12 months?

Base: All PAC users: Denmark (703), EU (11716).

Twelve per cent of PAC users in Denmark made use of PACs at least once a week, compared with 23% across the EU, with 32% doing so once to three times a month (compared with 29% across the EU). Over a half (55%) had used PACs once every three months or less often, compared with the EU average of 47%.

The qualitative research also explored how libraries had tried to increase PAC usage and meet the needs of users. Libraries did not generally promote their IT equipment to the wider community as the service was already well-entrenched and well-known.

*“We do not use targeted marketing to promote our computer facilities. We have had these facilities for so many years that it is commonly known that you can find these at a library”
(Library Manager, Semi-rural, Denmark).*

To publicise the structured ICT courses offered, libraries distributed brochures with the course lists primarily in the library itself but also at cultural centers or public offices. Library staff felt there was a lack of communication with people who did not already use the library, particularly hard-to-reach groups such as ethnic minorities.

“We don’t really help those who can’t already take care of themselves” (Library Manager, Urban, Denmark)

Library staff felt they lacked the resources to enable staff to devote enough time to attracting users and supporting them with ICT use.

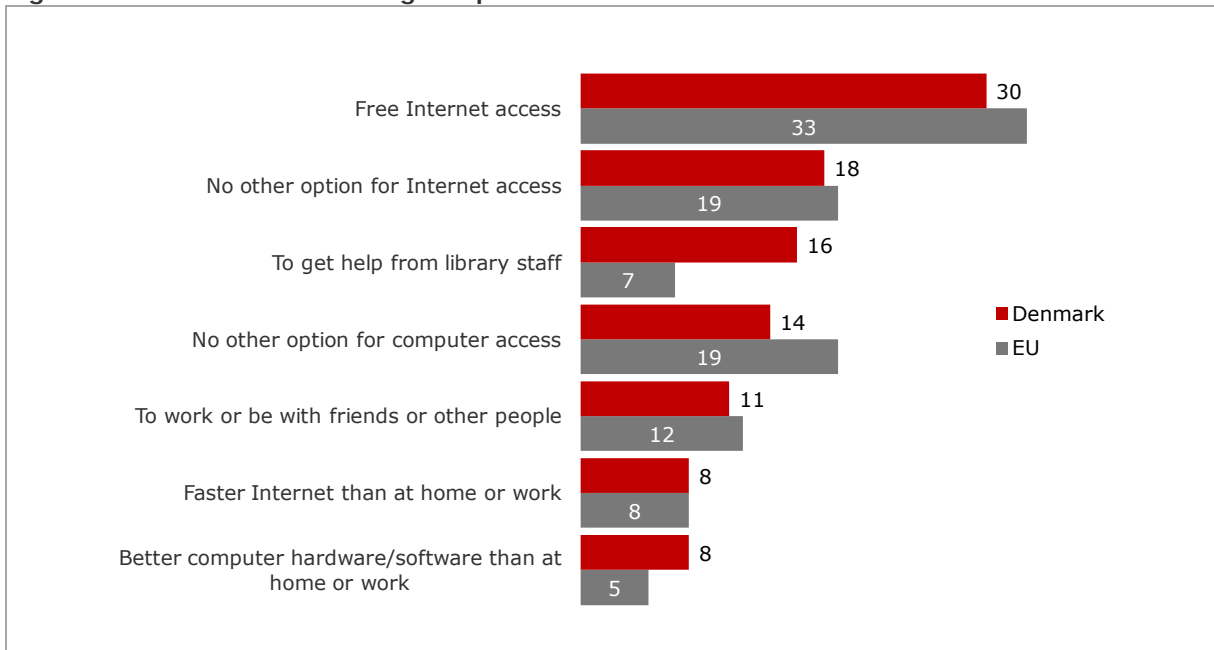
However attempts to attract non-users, particularly older people and ethnic minorities, had been made by two semi-rural libraries, by working in partnership with Ældre Sagen and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration. Both authorities had funded the library to promote their services to these groups.

Another semi-rural library was working on the idea of an ICT-bus. This bus was to be situated at a central location where the target group could be found. The bus would include ICT-hardware and an advisor and citizens could come to use the ICT on the bus. Many libraries were also enlisting volunteers, such as young students who were proficient in ICT, to provide support and advice to ICT users.

3.2 Reasons for using PACs

PAC users interviewed in the in-library survey were asked what their main reasons were for using computers, the internet and software in public libraries within the last 12 months. It is clear that in Denmark and across the EU, the primary motivations for PAC users are the free nature of the service and the lack of any other option for Internet access. Users in Denmark were, however, less likely than those in the 17 EU countries as a whole to have said that they had no other option for computer access (14% compared with 19% across the EU). They were much more likely than users across the EU to have mentioned getting help from library staff as a reason for using PACs in libraries (16% vs. 7%).

Figure 4: Main reasons for using computers in libraries



Source: Library Survey - C8 What are the main reasons you have chosen to use computers, Internet and software at public libraries in the last 12 months?

Base: All PAC users- Denmark (703); EU (11716)

PAC users were also asked two more direct questions as to what other options they had, firstly regarding where else they could access the internet from, and secondly, where else they could access the internet 'for free'. In Denmark, 7% of PAC users said that they had no other options for accessing the internet (compared with 11% across the EU), and a further 18% that there was no other source of free internet for them (compared with 14% across the EU). Overall, it is estimated that 0.2 million PAC users in Denmark (25% of PAC users) had nowhere else to access the internet, or to access the internet free of charge.

Older users (aged 65+) were particularly likely to indicate that they did not have any other options for accessing the internet, a quarter (25%) saying that this was the case, compared with nobody aged 15-24, 4% of those aged 25-39, 11% of 40-54 year olds and 5% of those aged 55-64.

Users in Denmark were less likely to place high value on the PAC service than users across the 17 EU countries as a whole, as shown in Figure 5. Overall, 85% of PAC users in Denmark said that the library's computer and Internet connection services were valuable, somewhat below the figure for PAC users across the EU (92%). PAC users in Denmark were much less likely to say that the service was extremely valuable (15%) compared with the EU average (36%), as shown in Figure 5.

The library's computers and internet connection were valued particularly highly in Denmark by users aged 65 and over where around three in ten (29%) rated the services as extremely valuable.

In the qualitative research, users were asked the main reasons for using ICT in libraries. A key factor was users' poor financial situation, which made free use of ICT in the library more attractive.

*"I guess I use the library much more now because I am unemployed and not well off."
(Recent user, female, 53)*

Newcomers to the city did not yet have internet at home so used the library to be able to go online to search for housing, jobs and anything else they needed.

"When I moved to the city from abroad, I used the library to search for a flat, as I didn't have internet" (User, 24, male, Denmark).

The technical expertise and assistance of librarians was another factor that attracted users of library ICT services, as was the free use of hardware such as scanners and printers that they might not have at home. The library's atmosphere of peace also enabled users to concentrate and relax better than other locations could.

"I use the library as a place to be, which is quiet and doesn't cost me anything. I will sit there and read for university. I will get up and look around... To relax. (User, 28, male, Denmark)

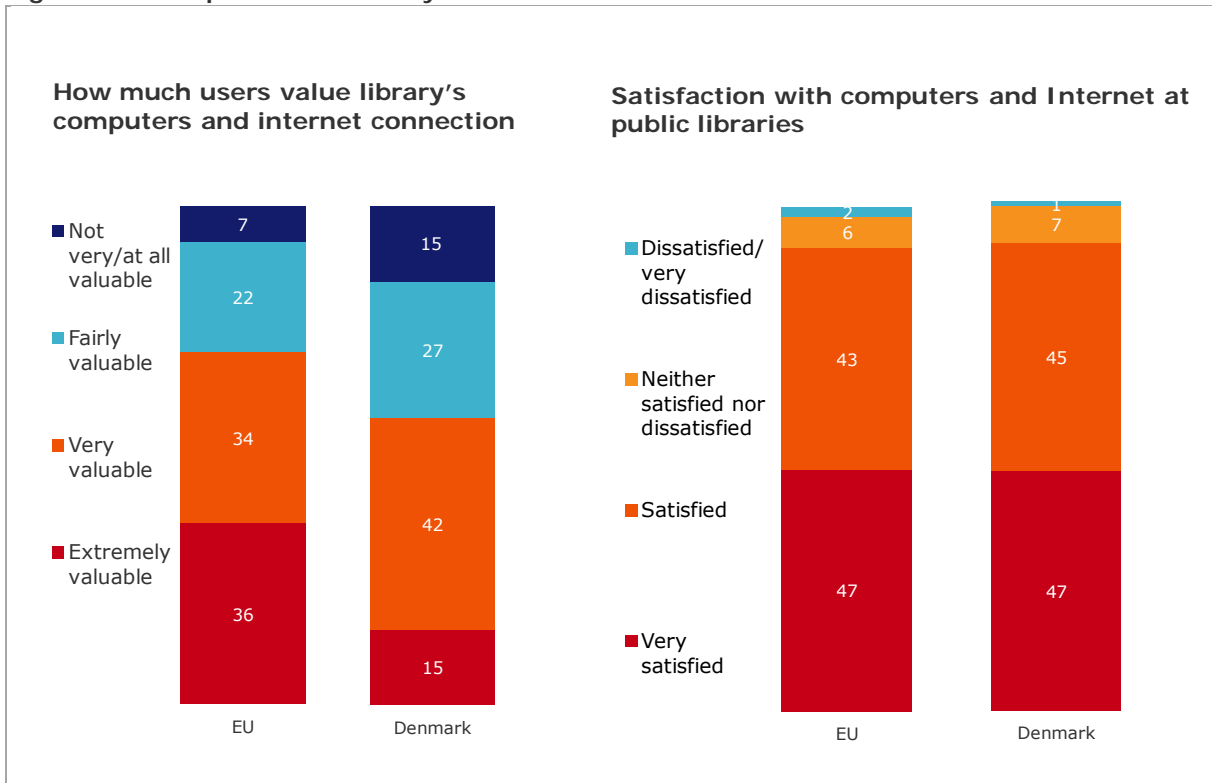
The free training courses provided by the library also attracted users, who explained that they could not find free of charge training elsewhere.

For less confident ICT-users, the library provided the support from librarians that gave them the confidence to use ICT, as they were reassured that someone was there in case something went wrong. Others enjoyed the social interaction of being in the library and learning about ICT.

"I go to the seminars here and hope to find someone with the same interests as mine. I need the contact to the outside world, so I don't come to a dead stop" (User, female, 59, Denmark).

Satisfaction with computers and the internet at public libraries was high among users in Denmark and similar to the findings at the overall EU level, as shown in Figure 5. Almost all PAC users in Denmark (92%) said that they were satisfied. Around one in two (47%) users said that they were very satisfied, in line with the EU average (47%).

Figure 5: Value placed on PACs by users and satisfaction with PACs



Source: Library survey - C30 How much do you value the library's computers and Internet connection? & C31 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your access to computers and the Internet at public libraries?

Base: All PAC users. Denmark (703); EU (11716)

In Denmark, eight in ten PAC users (81%) said that when they go to a library to use a computer they find a free computer straightaway, which is higher than the EU average (72%). Around one in seven users (15%) said that they had to wait up to 10 minutes, similar to the EU average (16%), while only 1% said that they had to wait at least 10 minutes for a computer to be available, compared with 7% across the EU.

In the qualitative research, the number of computers available to users varied according to the size of the library. Local libraries in one semi-rural areas had 2 to 3 computers whereas the main library in the same area had 20-22 computers. Other libraries in semi-rural areas had about 4 - 5 computers. PCs had Microsoft Office software installed and Internet Explorer.

Urban libraries also had laptops, mainly for use in their ICT training courses, and one urban library had iPads and Macs for public usage. Urban libraries were also more likely to have a wider range of software available to users, such as Photoshop.

There were not high numbers of printers or scanners available to users, and in one main library in an urban area which had 900,000 visitors a year, there was only one scanner, which staff saw as being inadequate.

Both users and library staff reported the internet connection speed to be good and were also satisfied with the software on the computers, which met users' needs. Library staff felt they had enough PCs for users as many people have computers at home these days, however they also reported that computers were always in use. Users views on this subject differed to those of library staff, as they felt there were not enough computers and some had stopped coming to use PCs in the library as often they were all occupied. In some libraries, training sessions used the PCs that were usually available for users, so that when training sessions were on there were no computers available for other users. The quality of the computers was seen as being average, although most users reported some aspect of the computers as unsatisfactory, such as that they were too dirty, too old or too noisy. Some library staff, primarily in urban areas, stated a need for more advanced software such as Adobe ID, although this was not a need raised by users themselves.

"There is a problem with space. I could not be sure that there was a computer available here, if I came and really had something important to do" (User, male, 28).

4. Impressions of public libraries

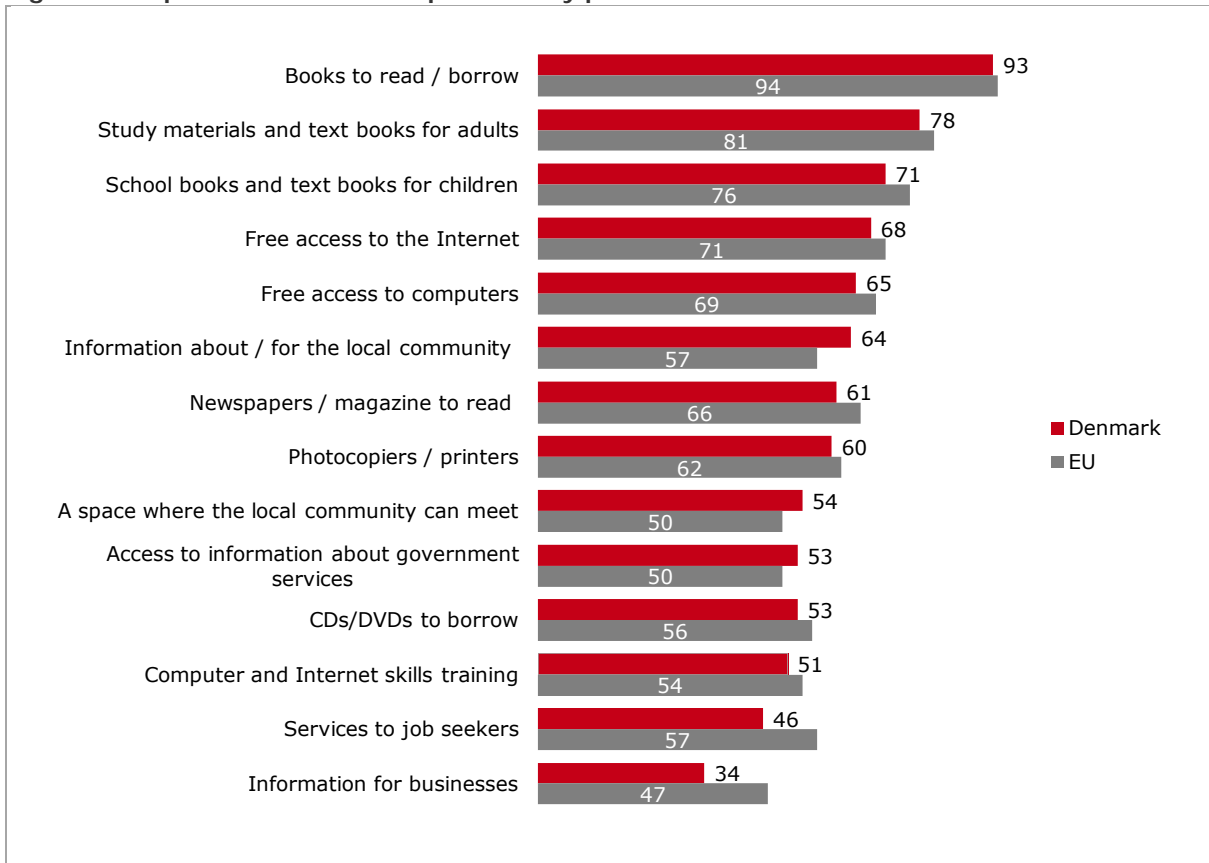
4.1 Importance of library services

Library users (both PAC users and non-PAC users) were asked to rate each of a list of services that could be offered by libraries, on a 5-point scale from 'extremely important' to 'not at all important'. Figure 6 shows the percentage in Denmark, and across the EU, rating each service as 4 or 5 on the scale.

For most of the services, the proportion of users in Denmark rating services as 4 or 5 on the scale was similar to the equivalent proportion across the EU, with the largest difference being in relation to 'information for businesses' which was rated as important by a third of users in Denmark (34%) but nearly half (47%) of users across the 17 countries. The core service of 'books to read/borrow' was considered the most important, rated as important by 93% of users in Denmark (and 94% across the EU). 'Study materials and text books for adults' (78%) and 'School books and text books for children' (71%) were considered the next most important services by users in Denmark.

'Free access to the internet' and 'free access to computers' were both rated among the most important services by library users in Denmark, around two thirds considering each important, slightly lower than the equivalent figure of around seven in ten users across Europe. Around half of users in Denmark (51%) rated the provision of computer and Internet skills training as an important service, just below the EU average of 54%.

Figure 6: Importance of services provided by public libraries



Source: Library survey - C15 How important is this service that can be provided by public libraries.

Base: All library users - Denmark (1410); EU (24253)

In the qualitative research, users described the library environment very positively, and considered it to be an inspiring, welcoming and vibrant place. Vibrancy was preferred as long as it was not too noisy. At some libraries problems with noise were reported, as many young people talked loudly and even used their mobile phones. Staff were reported to be non-intrusive yet supportive, by 'just being there' and the library was seen as a source of inspiration, as users went for one purpose but often found their interest lead on to something else. The library was described as comfortable, and while some went because it was a quiet, calm place where they could get away from noise at home or elsewhere, others liked the vivacity, flow of people and the social atmosphere.

4.2 Effectiveness and funding of public libraries

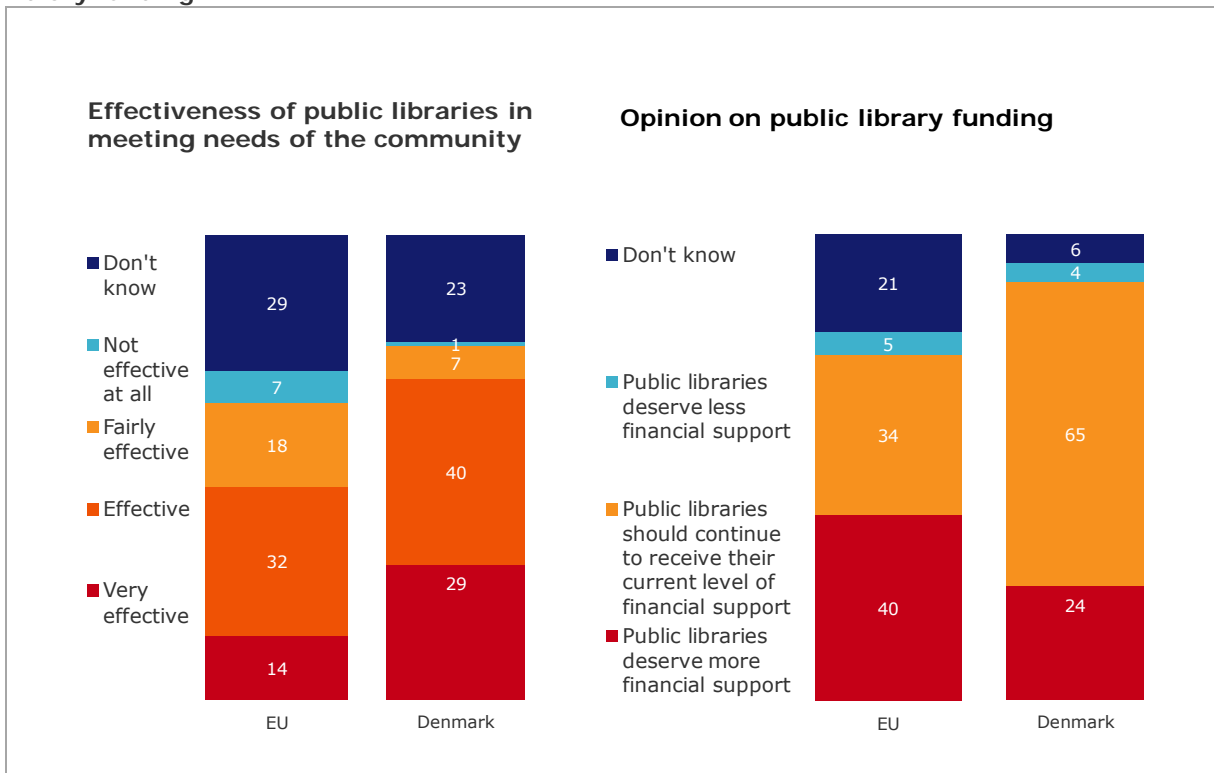
Three quarters (76%) of the general public in Denmark (including both library users and non-users) felt libraries were either very effective, effective or fairly effective at meeting the needs of their local community. This was higher than the average across the 17 EU survey countries of 64%.

Library users and PAC users in Denmark were almost unanimous in their opinion that libraries were effective in meeting the needs of their local community – 92% of all library users felt they were effective, rising to 94% among PAC users.

A quarter (24%) of the public in Denmark felt that public libraries merited more financial support than at present, significantly lower than the average of all 17 EU countries (40%). Almost all the remainder either felt that the funding should continue as at present (65%) or did not express an opinion (6%). Only 4% of the public in Denmark felt that public libraries deserve less financial support, similar to the EU average (5%).

Library users and PAC users were only slightly more likely than non-users to say that libraries deserve more financial support – 29% of all library users and 28% of PAC users were in favour of more financial support for libraries.

Figure 7: Effectiveness of public libraries in meeting community needs and opinion on public library funding



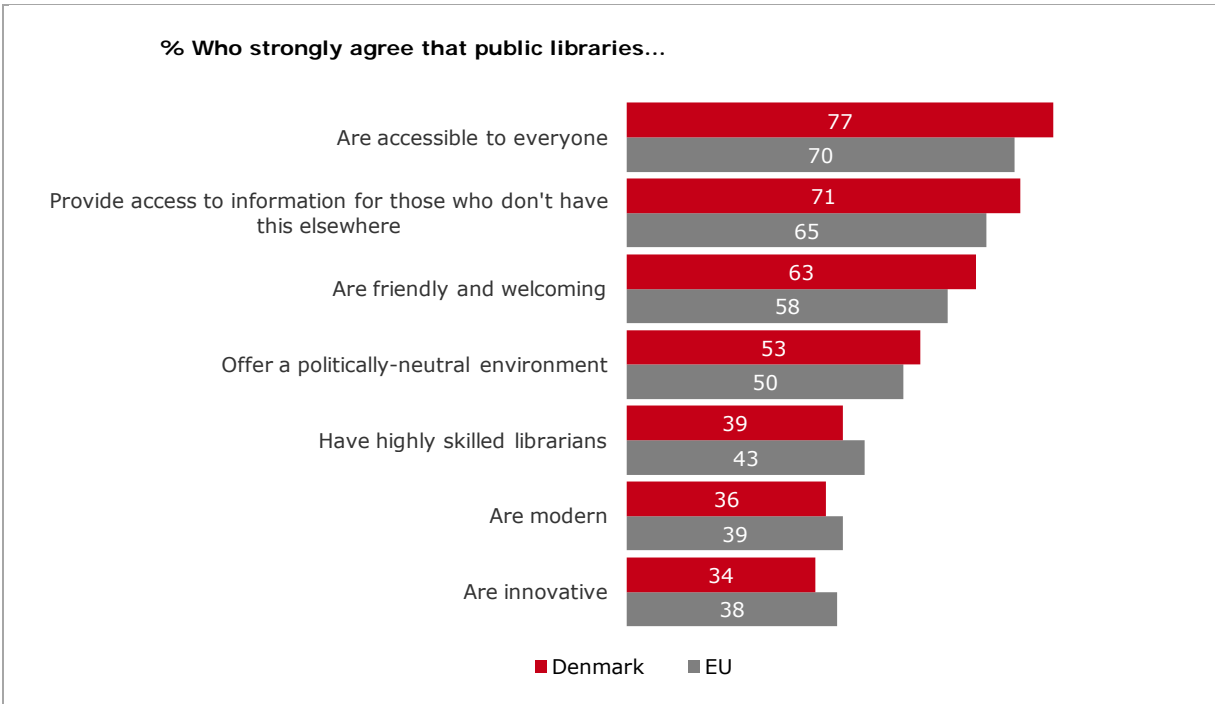
Source: Omnibus survey- Q6 How effective do you think your local public library is at meeting the needs of your community? & Q7 Which of the following statements represents most closely your opinion regarding the current funding for public libraries?

Base: All adults - Denmark (1045); EU (17816)

4.3 Perceptions of public libraries

All library users were asked their opinions of public libraries, through a series of agree/disagree statements. Figure 8 shows the proportions in Denmark and across the EU countries as a whole who strongly agreed with each of these statements. Library users in Denmark had broadly similar opinions to users across the EU. They were a little more likely to strongly agree that public libraries 'Are accessible to everyone' (77% compared with 70% EU), 'Provide access to information for those who don't have it elsewhere' (71% versus 65% EU) and 'Are friendly and welcoming' (63% compared with 58% across the EU).

Figure 8: Perceptions of public libraries



Source: Library survey- C29 How far do you agree or disagree with the following statements.
 Base: All library users. Denmark (1045); EU (24253)

5. Informal and non-formal learning

Public libraries are key players in the delivery of the non-formal/informal component of the European Commission's lifelong learning policy, particularly with regard to *inclusive* delivery. The role of libraries in providing education to users was explored through asking all library users whether or not they had taken part in any educational activities in a public library within the last 12 months.

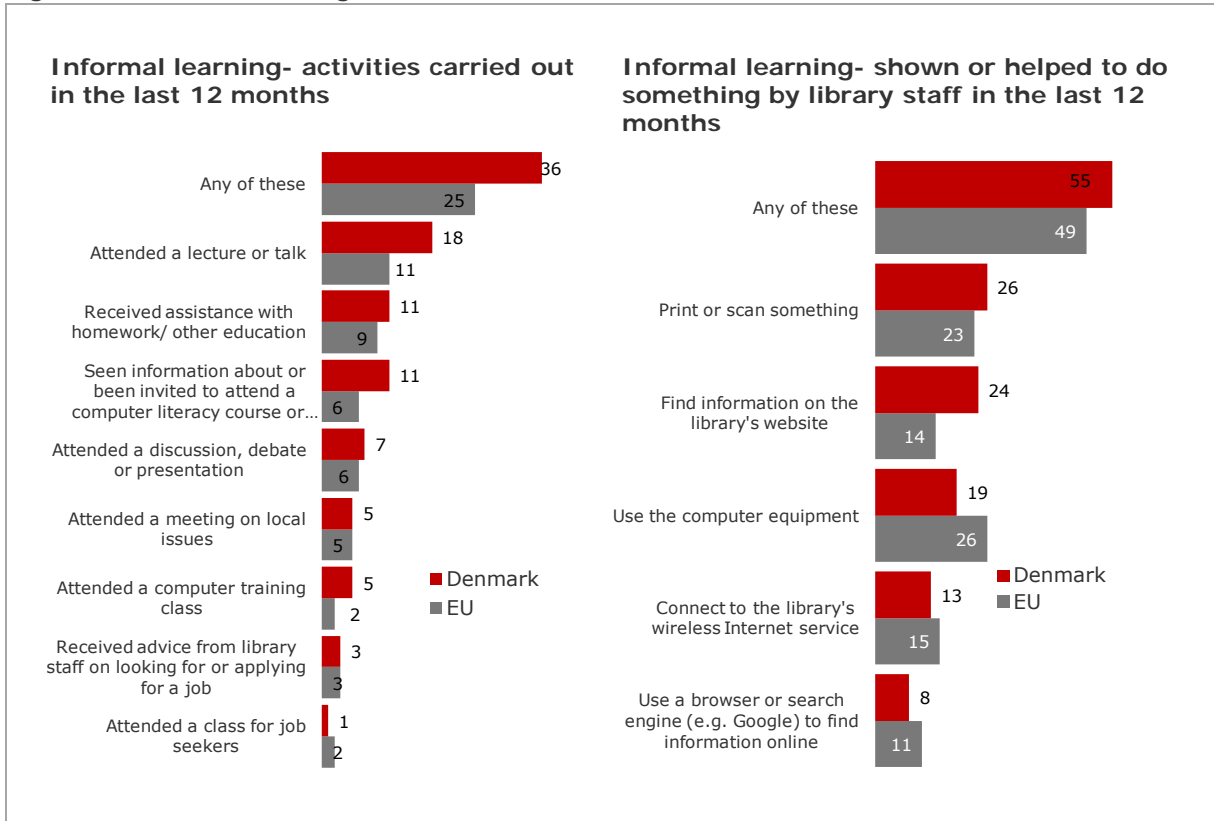
Overall, in Denmark just over a third of all users (36%) had taken part in one of the educational activities in libraries asked about in the last 12 months, somewhat higher than the EU average of 25%.

Engagement levels in some educational activities in libraries were higher in Denmark than for the EU as a whole (Figure 9), most notably on:

- Attending a lecture or talk (18% vs. EU average of 11%)
- Seeing information on or being invited to attend a computer literacy course (11% vs. EU average of 6%)
- Attending a computer training class (5% vs. EU average of 2%)

In terms of computer training, c.127,000 adults in Denmark attended a computer training class in a library in the last 12 months.

Figure 9: Informal learning activities carried out or been shown to users in the last 12 months



Source: Library survey-C16 In the last 12 months, have you done any of the following things in a public library & C17 In the last 12 months, have you been shown how or helped to do any of the following things by staff at a public library...

Base: C16- All library users - Denmark (1045); EU (24253). C17- All PAC users – Denmark (703); EU (11716).

As Figure 9 shows, public library staff play an important role in assisting library users in informal learning. Overall, more than half (55%) of library users in Denmark had been shown or helped to do something by a member of library staff within the last 12 months, which was slightly above the EU average of 49%.

The most common ways in which library staff assisted library users in Denmark were with printing or scanning something and help finding information on the library's website (each mentioned by around one in four users), followed by help in using the computer equipment (mentioned by just under one in five users).

In the qualitative research, users were generally very satisfied with the support they received from library staff. They felt that the librarians were well-trained and willing to help with many kinds of requests. As an example, users were very positive about the web workshop, which was open Monday to Friday from 10-7 where users could stop by and get help with their problems straight away. This web workshop was run at the main library in an urban area. Overall, users of all competency levels reported librarians to be sufficiently knowledgeable in IT to meet their support needs., and this human aspect of interaction with librarians was a significant positive of the library service. The exception to this was some users of smaller, local libraries, who expressed frustration with the lack of IT skills of librarians.

However library managers reported that resource for providing ad hoc assistance and guidance to users was scarce, particularly in the larger, urban libraries. In the semi-urban libraries with lower visitor numbers, staff had more time to help ICT users. The main libraries had enrolled a body of volunteers with IT skills to assist users during certain hours. Staff also reported that the web workshop lacked equipment and manpower, and currently had just one employee helping users with all IT issues.

More specific training was offered by libraries in a variety of ICT areas, including Senior Surf for older users, introduction to Facebook, how to use Google, how to use an iPad, how to shop online and how to use Word for beginners. More advanced training was also provided on topics such as family history, audio-editing and website design. So as to avoid conflict with educational associations that offer training in software at a fee, libraries provided 'introduction' courses and help for people to communicate with the authorities through e-government. Urban libraries tended to offer more advanced courses such as "Using your smartphone and tablet" and "Cloud-technology", but lacked beginners' courses which would have been helpful for certain groups such as older people. In libraries which did offer beginners' courses, they were always oversubscribed, suggesting there was a need to offer more of this level of training.

Users who had participated in courses were positive about the content of the courses, even though they are not necessarily optimistic about their abilities.

"We knew that we had to get on the boat. It was fantastic, but then afterwards you forget what you learned. We lost interest in it" (recent user, female, 82, Denmark).

"I have participated in a lot of courses. It has not been easy for me, but I know that it's important in order to survive and keep up." (user, female, 67, Denmark)

The majority of users in the qualitative sample had not taken library courses in ICT however, primarily due to a lack of awareness that courses were offered. When told about the courses provided in their library, they expressed an interest in participating in them and a desire to know more about them.

"I have at several occasions searched for courses but I had to drop it. Where can I find them on the website?" (User, male, 26, Denmark)

6. Use of PACs for employment and business

Public libraries have a role to play not only in providing a community gateway to higher level skills – but also to employment, and therefore the role of the public library in helping Europeans access employment opportunities was a key theme within the research.

Around a fifth (19%) of PAC users in Denmark had used library computers in the last 12 months to support some employment related activity, somewhat lower than the EU average of 30%. This represents an estimated 157,000 PAC users in Denmark who had used PAC for employment related activity.

Overall, 7% of PAC users in Denmark had used a PAC to apply for a job (either in Denmark or in another EU country) in the last 12 months - this represents approximately 63,000 adults in Denmark. Of those respondents who applied for a job through PAC, 20% said that they were successful. This means that in all 1% of PAC users in Denmark – or an estimated 12,000 adults – applied for and got a job via a PAC in the last 12 months.

Public library staff have a role to play in supporting employment related PAC activities, as is shown in Figure 10; only a small minority (5%) of PAC users in Denmark indicated that they had been shown or helped to do some employment-related PAC activity (much lower than the EU average of 11%). The most common way in which library staff assisted library users in Denmark was in helping them to write a CV (3% compared with an EU average of 5%).

Figure 10: Employment related PAC activities carried out in last 12 months

Employment related activities - Used computers in last 12 months to...			Employment related activities - Been shown/helped to... by library staff in the last 12 months		
%	Denmark	EU	%	Denmark	EU
Any listed below	19	30	Any listed below	5	11
Find information about searching and/or applying for jobs	7	14	Improve skills needed in your current job	2	4
Search for jobs	7	13	How to write a CV	3	5
Write a CV or covering letter	7	12	How to develop skills needed to obtain a job	2	2
Improve skills needed in your current job	6	11	How to look for a job online (such as finding a recruitment company, searching for information about an employer)	2	3
Apply for jobs in this country	7	10	How to apply for a job online	2	2
Search for information about an employer	8	8	How to look for and apply for jobs in other EU countries	1	1
Find a recruitment company	2	5			
Use spread sheet/data	2	3			
Search for jobs in other EU countries	1	2			
Apply for jobs in other EU countries	1	1			

Source: Library survey-C18 In the last 12 months, have you used the computers available in public libraries to...& C20 In the last 12 months, have you been shown how / helped to do any of the following things by staff at a public library....

Base: All PAC users. Denmark (703); EU (11716).

PAC users were asked whether they had used PACs for a range of business-related activities in the last 3 months. A small minority of PAC users had used a PAC for participating in professional networks (3%, compared with the EU average of 6%). Around three in ten (29%) had used a PAC for finding information related to a business they worked in, above the EU average of 20%, and a small minority (2%) for finding ways or places to sell their own products or goods (compared with the EU average of 4%).

In the qualitative sample the libraries were offering courses and guidance that related to most items on the 2020 EU plan, however the two areas of this plan concerned with the establishment of the labour market were not part of service offered by the libraries. This was because assistance and guidance in these areas was offered by local job centres which also put computers and guidance at the disposal of the

job seekers with regard to them both finding and applying for jobs as well as them familiarising themselves with the rules and regulations concerned with entrepreneurship.

7. E-government and active citizenship

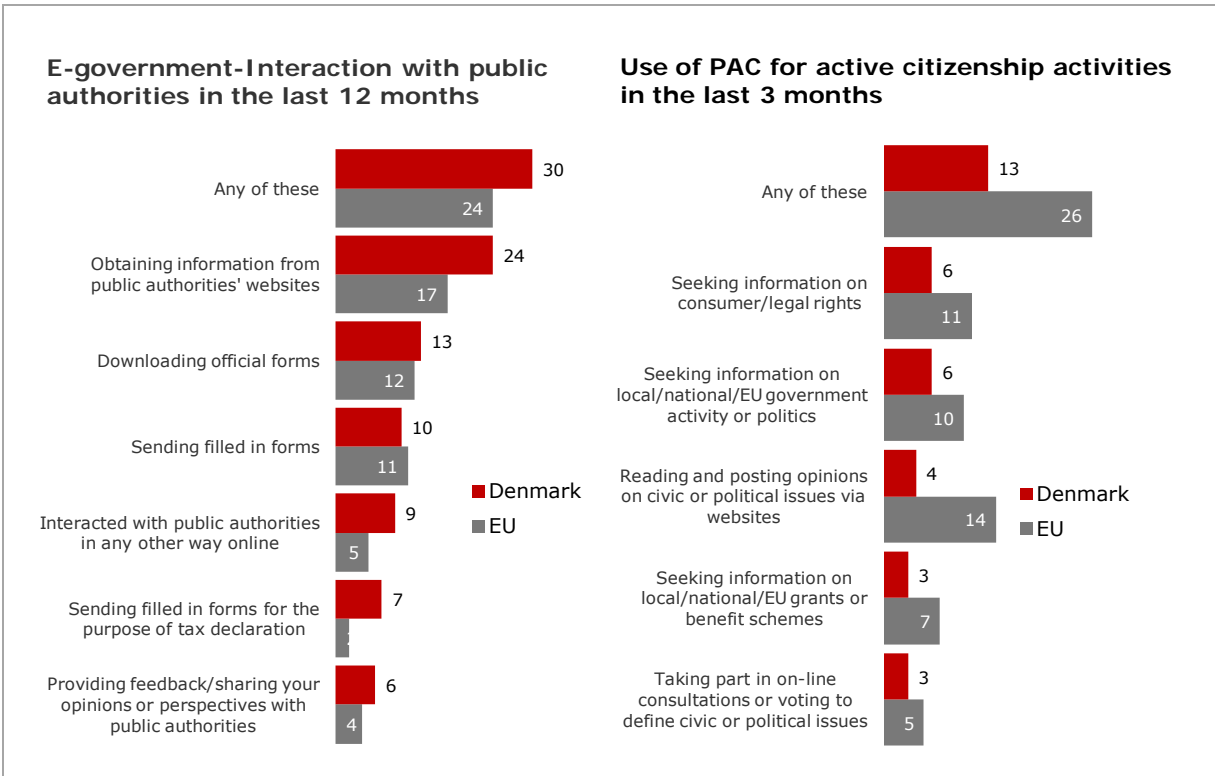
As part of the 'Connecting Europe' agenda, public libraries represent a network of public digital access points which can assist in the effective delivery of access to e-government. Computer users were asked about their interaction with public authorities using PACs, including obtaining information from public authorities' websites, downloading official forms, sending filled in forms, providing feedback/sharing opinions or perspectives with public authorities, and any other way they had interacted with public authorities online.

According to Eurostat data, E-government usage by individuals in Denmark is substantially higher than the EU average. Four fifths (81%) of adults in Denmark had used the internet in the last 12 months to interact with public authorities, compared with 41% across the EU. Citizens in Denmark were also much more likely than the EU average to use the Internet to obtain information from public authorities' web sites (78% compared with 35%).

The library survey found that around three in ten PAC users in Denmark (30%) had used PACs to interact with public authorities in the last 12 months, slightly higher than the EU average (24%), but significantly lower than the Eurostat finding for all adults in Denmark. The most common ways in which PAC users in Denmark interacted with public authorities were to obtain information from public authorities' websites (24%, compared with the EU average of 17%) and downloading official forms (13%, in line with the EU average of 12%). In each case, these figures were but much lower than the Eurostat findings for all adults in Denmark.

Computer users were also asked about their use of PACs for activities related to civic engagement and active citizenship (Figure 11). This covered areas such as civic participation (reading/posting opinions, taking part in on-line consultations, petitions etc.) and seeking information on consumer or legal rights, and on government activity or politics, or grants and benefit schemes. Overall, 13% of PAC users in Denmark had used PAC for engagement activities in the past 3 months, much lower than the average for users across the EU (26%). The two most common community engagement activities mentioned by users in Denmark were seeking information on consumer/legal rights (6% Denmark compared with 11% EU) and seeking information on local/national/EU government activity or politics (6% vs. 10% EU).

Figure 11: E-government-Interaction with public authorities in the last 12 months



Source: Library survey-C23 Did you interact with public authorities over the Internet using a computer at a public library for private purposes in the last 12 months for the following activities & C10 For which of the following activities have you used the Internet on computers in public libraries in the last 3 months...
 Base: All PAC users. Denmark (703); EU (11716)

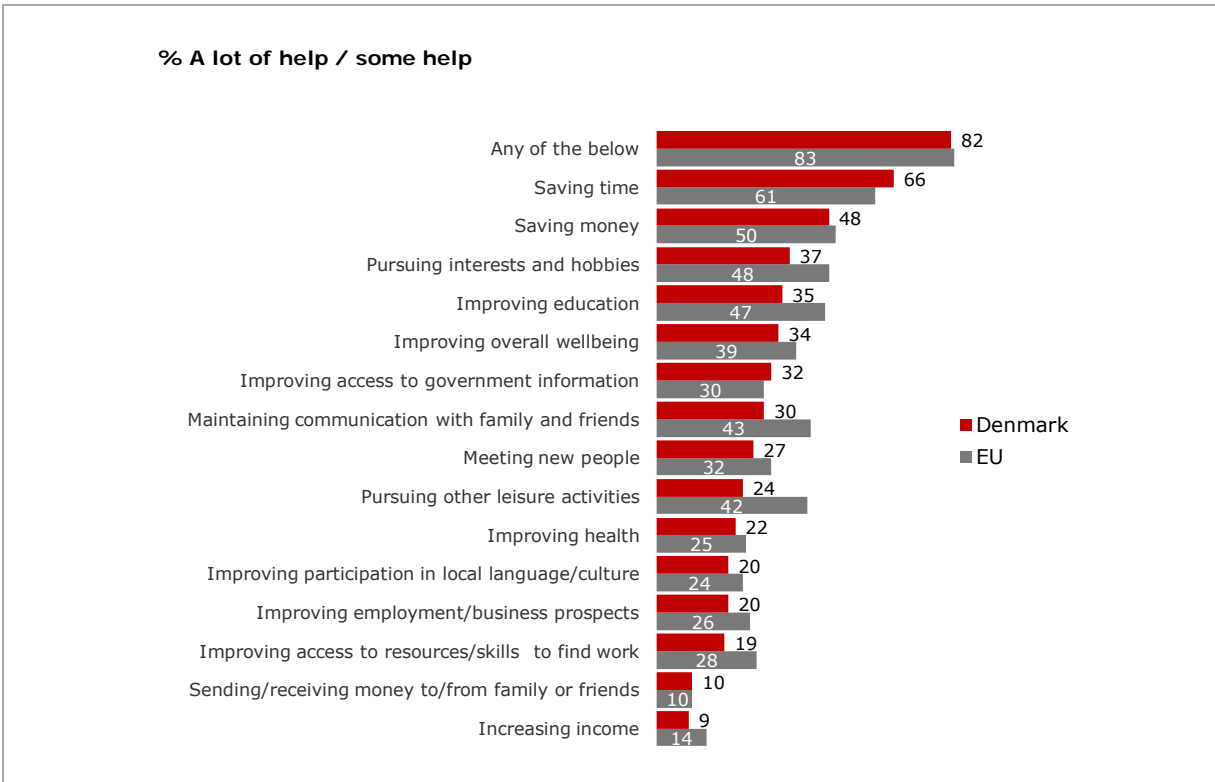
8. Impacts

A key aim of this research was to evaluate the impact of increased digital engagement through PAC use for users. This was assessed by asking PAC users how helpful using computers at public libraries had been for them in the last 12 months, across a wide range of areas including saving time and money, and increasing access to information and resources.

Overall more than eight in ten PAC users in Denmark (82%) said that their PAC use had been helpful to them in at least one of the areas asked about, similar to the average across the EU (83%) and representing approximately 697,000 people in Denmark.

Figure 12 shows the proportions who said PAC use had been helpful in each area, within Denmark and across the EU.

Figure 12: Impact of PAC for users



Source: Library survey- C28 In the last 12 months, has using computers at public libraries been helpful to you in the following areas?

Base: C28- PAC users- Denmark (703); EU (11716).

PAC users in Denmark were less likely than users across the EU to have found PAC use helpful in almost all of the areas asked about. As well as the general area of saving time (66% Denmark, 61% EU), PAC use was rated as helpful across a range of leisure and social areas such as pursuing interests and hobbies (37% DK, 48% EU) and maintaining communication with family and friends (30% DK, 43% EU), as well as in improving overall wellbeing (34% DK, 39% EU). Just under half (48%) of PAC users in Denmark, compared with half (50%) across the EU, said PAC was helpful in saving money, which represents an estimated 0.4 million PAC users in Denmark.

Overall it is estimated that in Denmark, PAC usage in the last 12 months helped:

- 297,000 people to improve their education
- 173,000 people to improve their employment or business prospects
- 158,000 people to improve their access to resources necessary to find work
- 76,000 people to increase their income
- 275,000 people to improve their access to government information services.

In the qualitative research, users reported various positive impacts of ICT usage in the library, and were typically very excited about the progress they had made with their ICT skills. Older users were particularly likely to feel a strong sense of achievement because they had not had much prior experience of computers. Many users acknowledged that they would never master computers but felt that with adequate help and supervision from the library staff they had gained the confidence and skills to try to

learn more about ICT on their own. Users reported no longer being afraid of computers, and a sense of pride in having overcome these obstacles.

"First I was very insecure and had many worries: 'Am I any good at this? Will I be able to do what they ask of me?' But the course was great. The tutor explained nicely and slowly what to do and little by little., I was able to build up enough confidence and skills. And I succeeded! So I signed up again for another course" (User, female, 59, Denmark).

"It gives me freedom to be able to use the computer" (Recent user, male, 70, Denmark)

"I am proud of being able to take care of myself. I am not afraid of it [the computer] anymore. Now I surf the internet, read the newspaper online, and I really enjoy it" (User, female, 59, Denmark).

Users commented that using certain digital solutions had enriched their lives due to the various opportunities ICT provided, and found that the internet had given them much more control over their own lives. Being able to buy a holiday online and using Netbank [to manage private bank accounts online] were examples of what "made their life easier". Another important impact was that users had learnt to communicate through email and online methods so that they had been able to maintain contact with friends and family all over the world. In addition, the internet makes it possible for them to be informed about their hobbies, history and so on:

"I feel a closer connection to people, when I receive a picture by e-mail from my family in New York. This is valuable to me" (recent user, female 70, Denmark)

"Now I live in the city, but I enjoy being able to go online and see what is happening to my native soil. When something new is being built and so on" (User, male, 62, Denmark).

"I have found almost everything online. My dog, my education, my job, travels" (User, female, 22, Denmark)

The democratic nature of library ICT service was continually mentioned as a key aspect of the service, as it was provided for everyone and was free of charge.

"Having computers and these services at libraries are really important – even in the Danish society. Because not everyone has these possibilities, and IT needs to be accessible for everyone" (user, female, 55, Denmark)

"The library is the only place where you can come and don't have to pay for services. That's a huge democratic benefit" (Recent user, male, 25, Denmark).