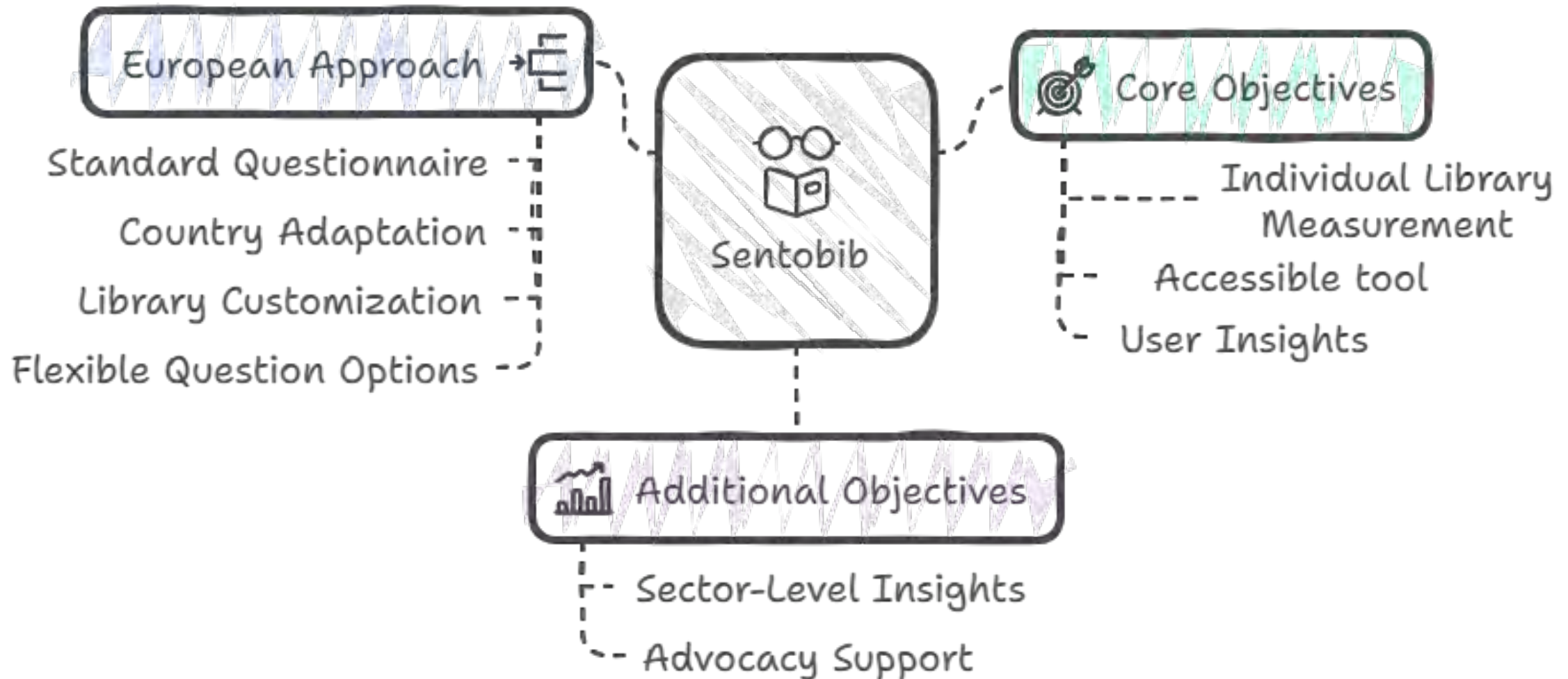


Sentobib objectives



Pilot study in 2022 in Flanders, Belgium: 150 libraries

2024: 7 European countries

- EBLIDA
- Germany - DBV
- the Netherlands - VOB
- Belgium – VVBAD & APBFB
- France - ABF
- Austria - BVÖ
- Italy - AIB
- Spain

2024: over 1,000 participating library locations

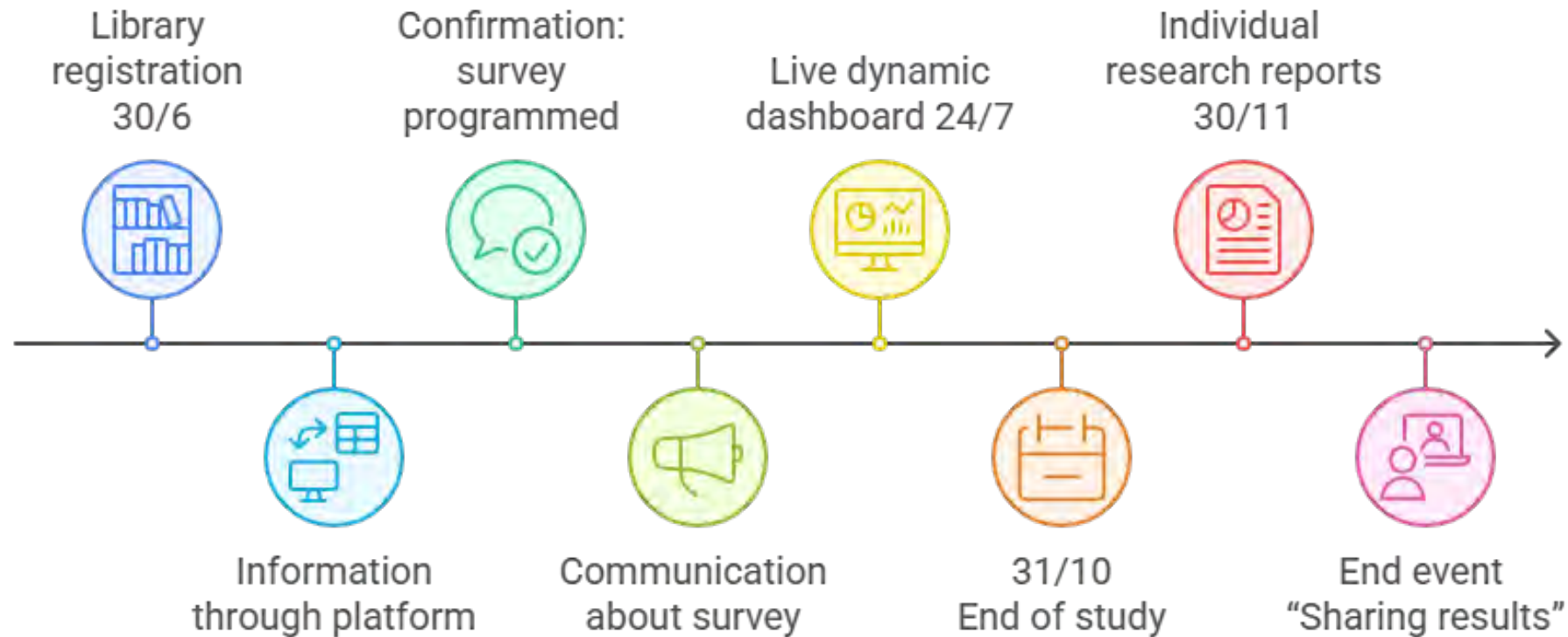
- Individual libraries
- Organizations with multiple locations

Participation: 160,000 adults – 22,600 children

- Austria: 2,712 adults – 375 children
- Belgium: 26,777 adults – 3,272 children
- France: 15,297 adults – 1,878 children
- Germany: 96,486 adults – 15,750 children
- Italy: 1,108 adults – 83 children
- The Netherlands: 15,818 adults – 1,167 children



Sentobib 2025



European results



Libraries with impact

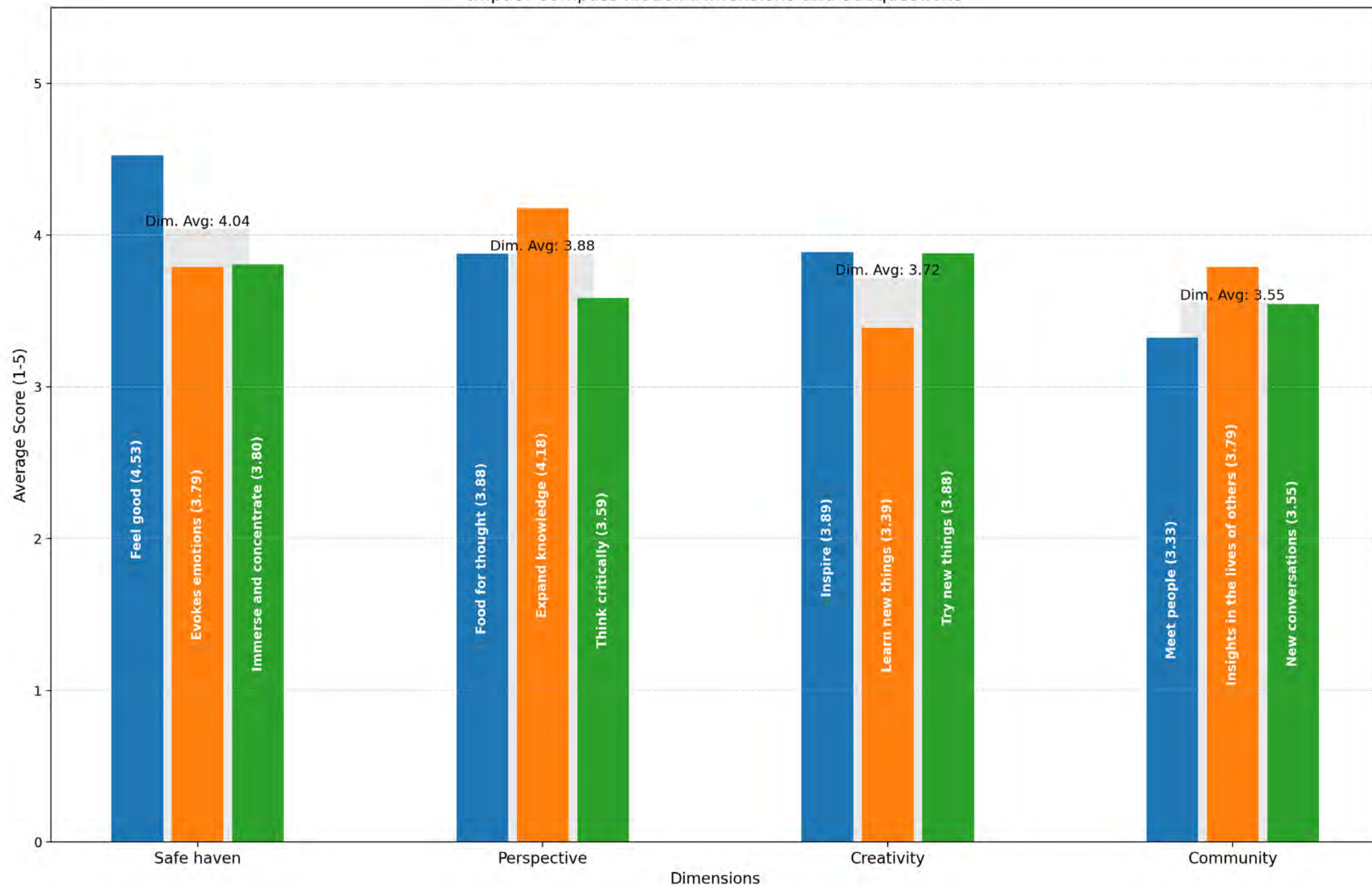


Impact Compass Model

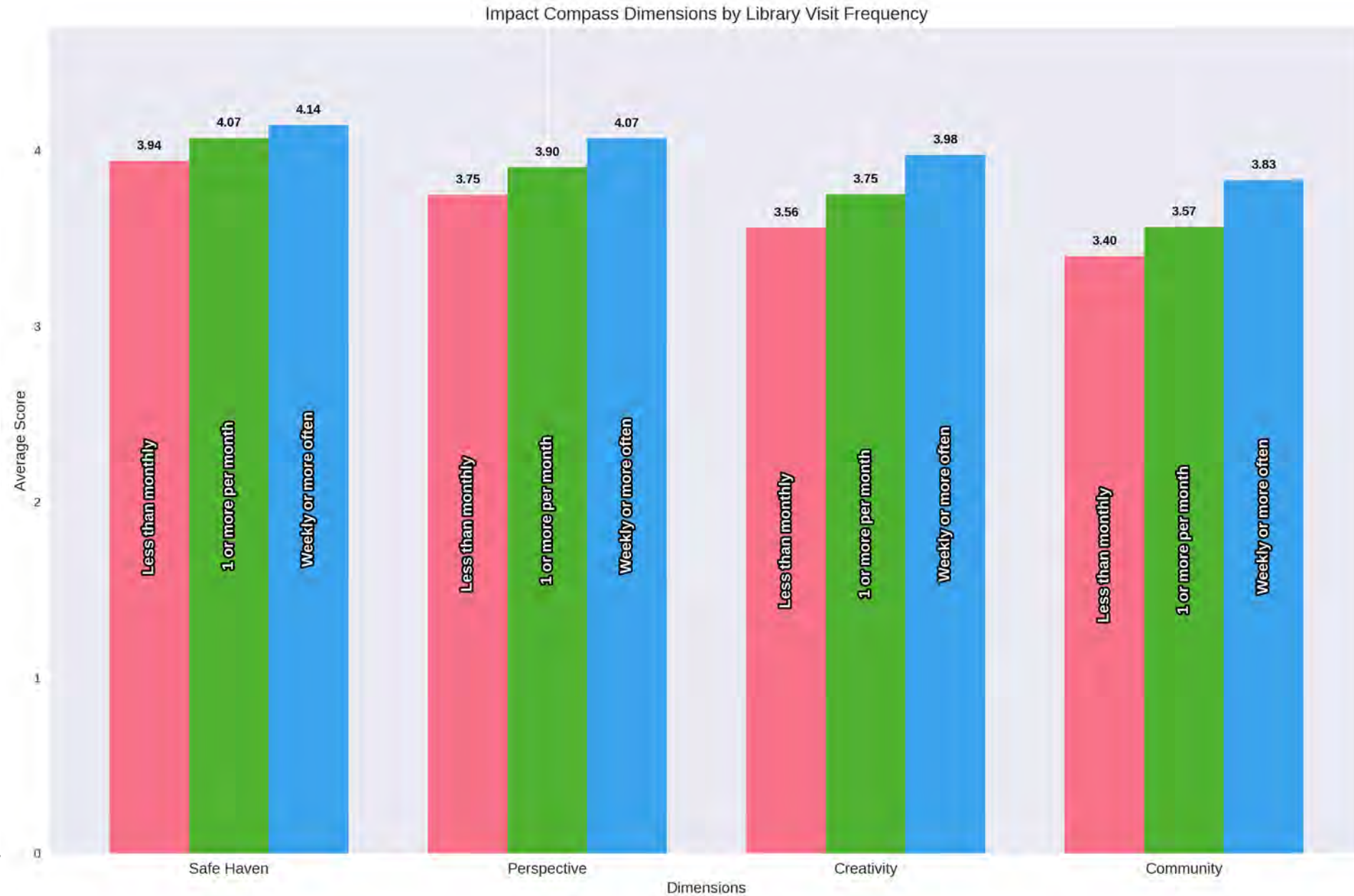
- Safe Haven
 - I feel good in the library. (comfortable, relaxed, calm)
 - The library evokes emotions in me. (E.g., pleasure, being moved, ...)
 - In the library, I can immerse myself in something and concentrate
- Perspective
 - The library gives me food for thought
 - The library expands my knowledge and broadens my view
 - The library helps me to think critically
- Creativity
 - The library inspires me
 - I learned new things thanks to the library (e.g., computer skills, reading skills, cooking, ...)
 - The library motivates me to try something new (e.g., read a new genre of books, listen to something new, create something, ...)
- Community
 - In the library, I meet other people.
 - The library gives me insight into the lives of others (e.g., through characters in books or films, by meeting people there).
 - Thanks to the library, I can have new or different conversations with people in my environment (e.g., about things I read in books).



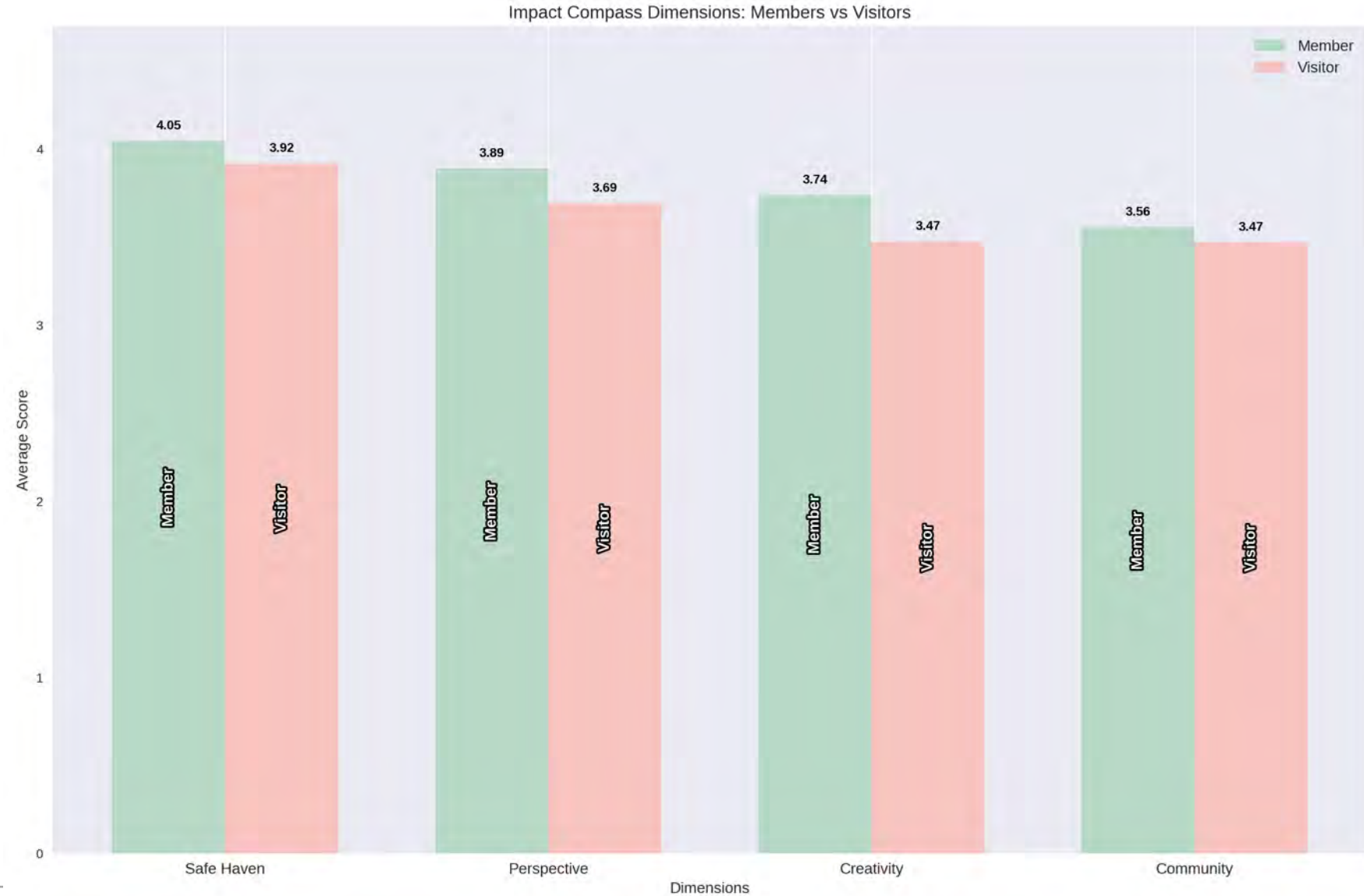
Impact Compass Model: Dimensions and Subquestions



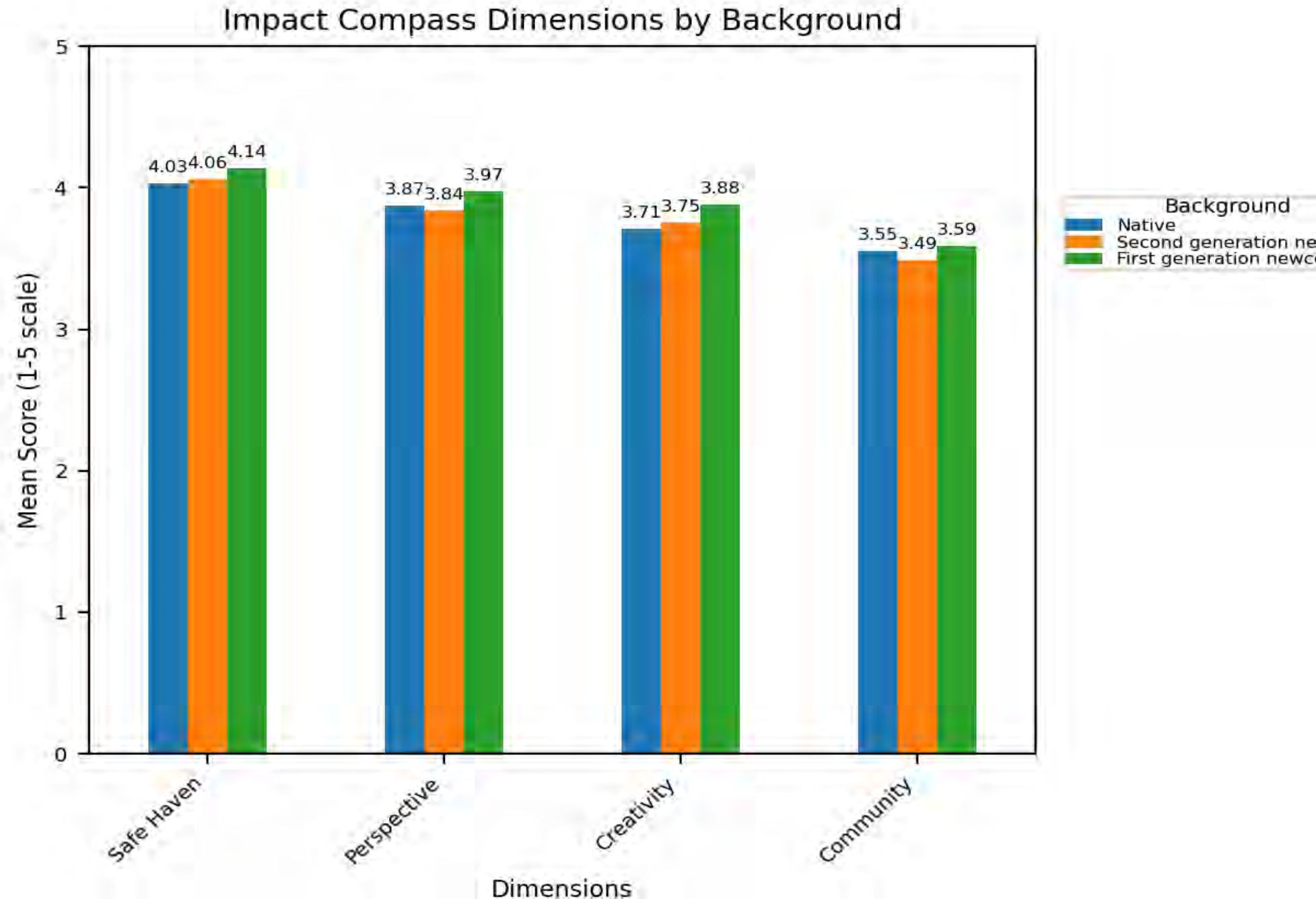
- Very positive impact across all visit frequencies
- Clear increasing impact of libraries on more frequent users



- Very positive impact across both user groups
- Clear increasing impact of libraries on users that are actual members, using the full potential of the libraries



- Very positive impact across all groups
- Clear increasing impact for non-native users
- Important role of libraries in the integration of newcomers

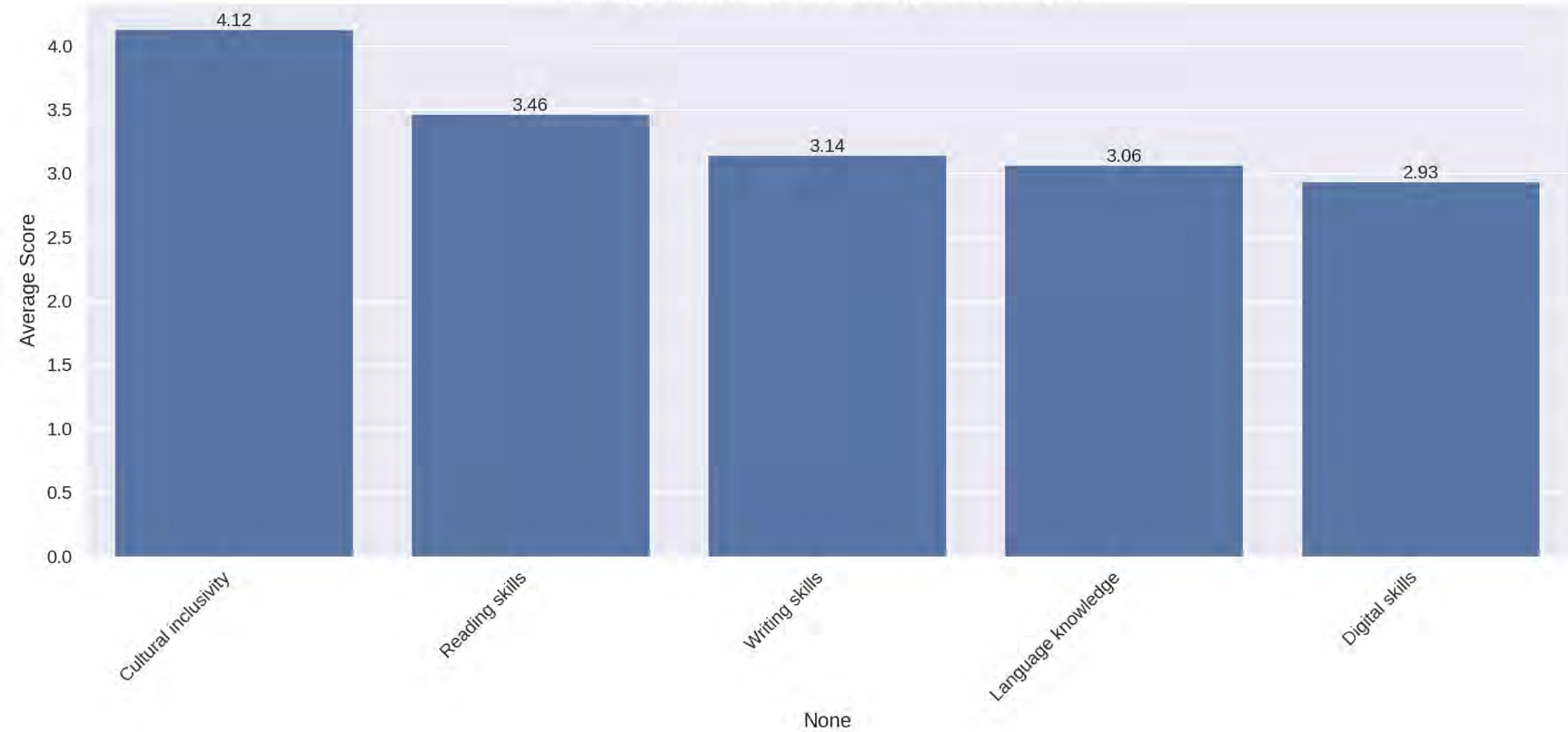




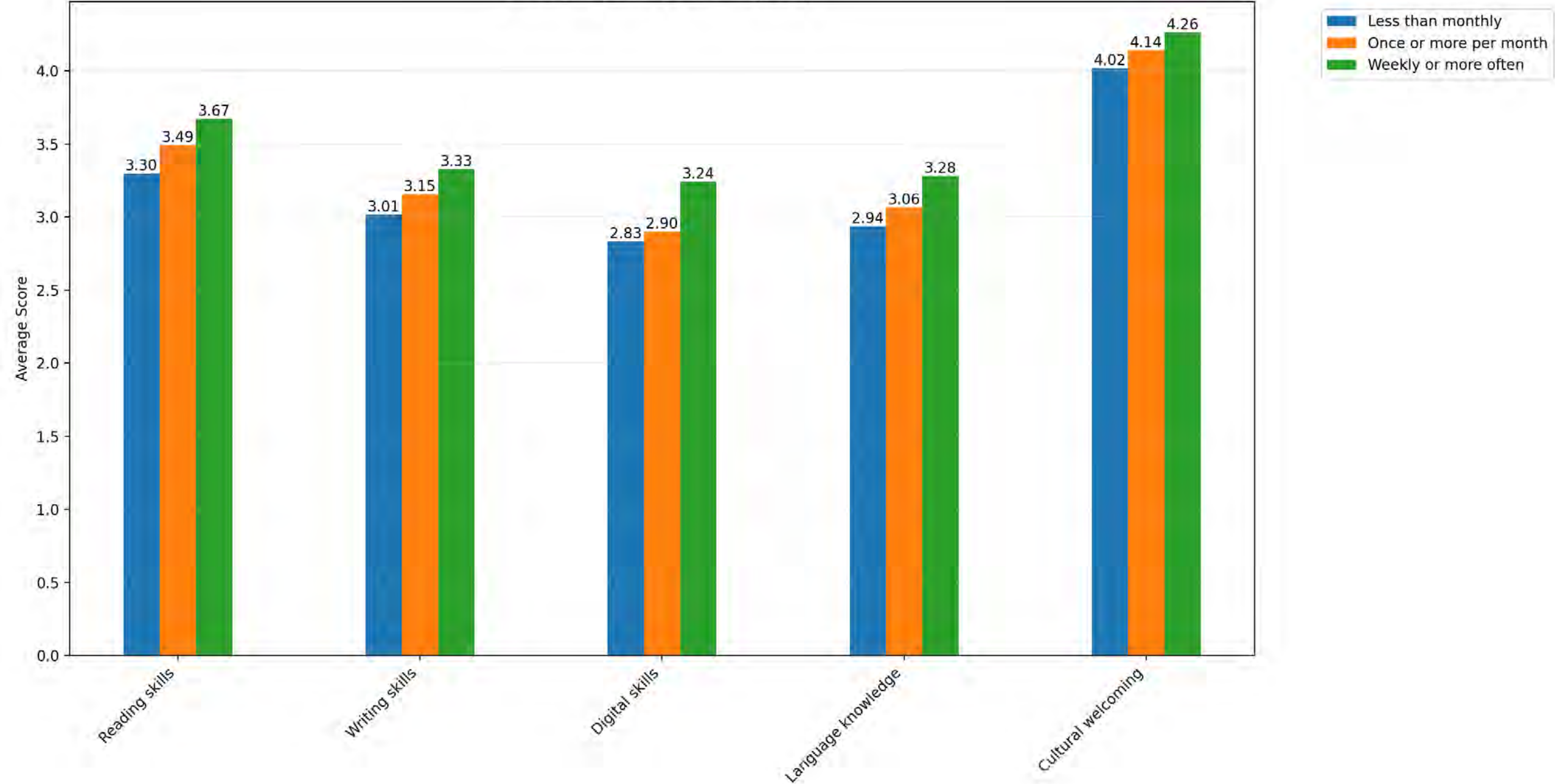
Skills and inclusivity

- Reading skills: The library helps me to improve my reading skills
 - Writing skills: The library helps me to improve my writing skills
 - Digital skills: The library helps me to improve my digital skills (working with a computer, using the internet, digital government, social media, ...)
 - Language knowledge: The library helps me to improve my language knowledge
 - Cultural inclusivity: The library is a welcoming house for all cultures and backgrounds
-

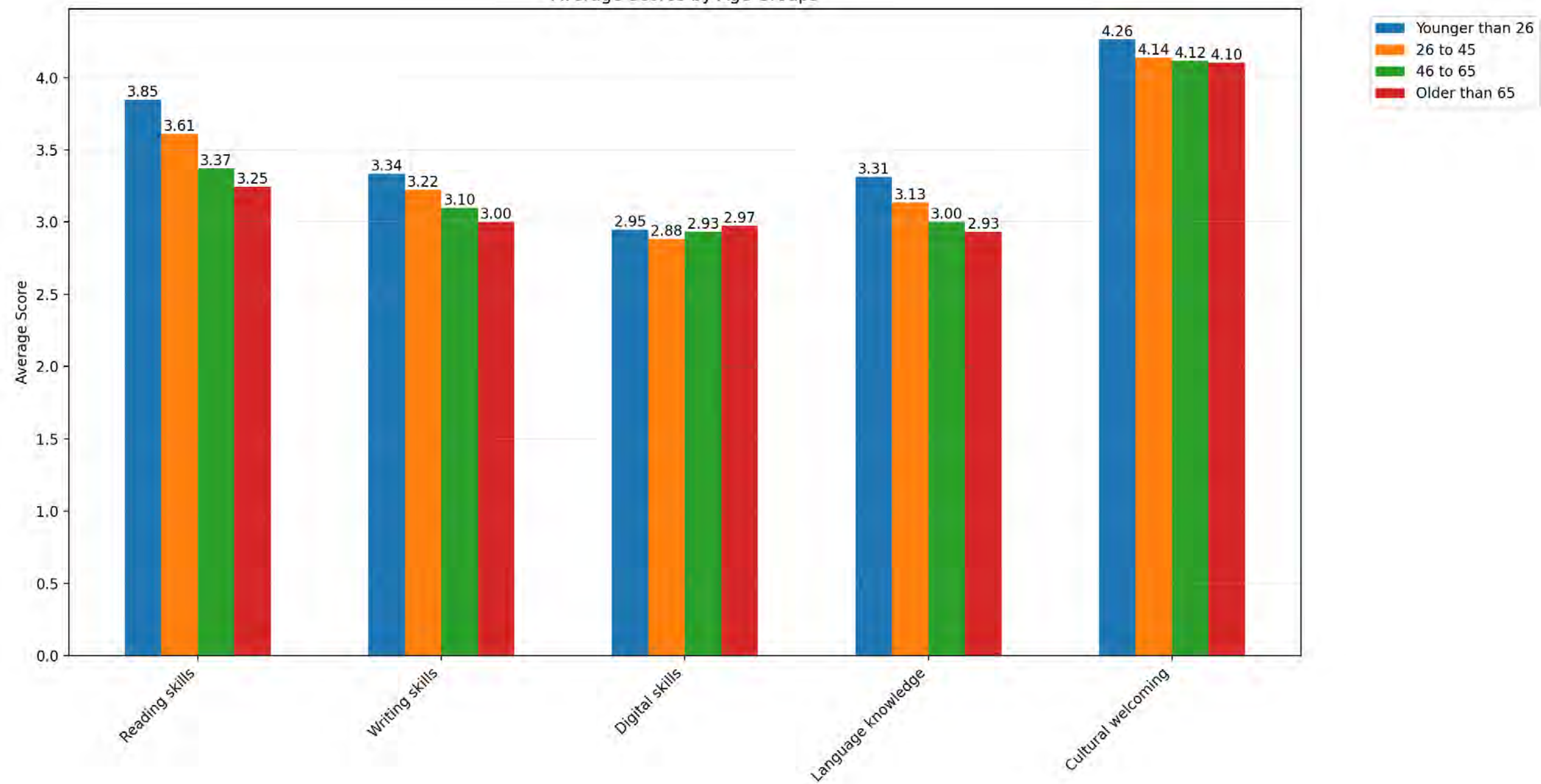
Average Scores for Different Library Services Impact



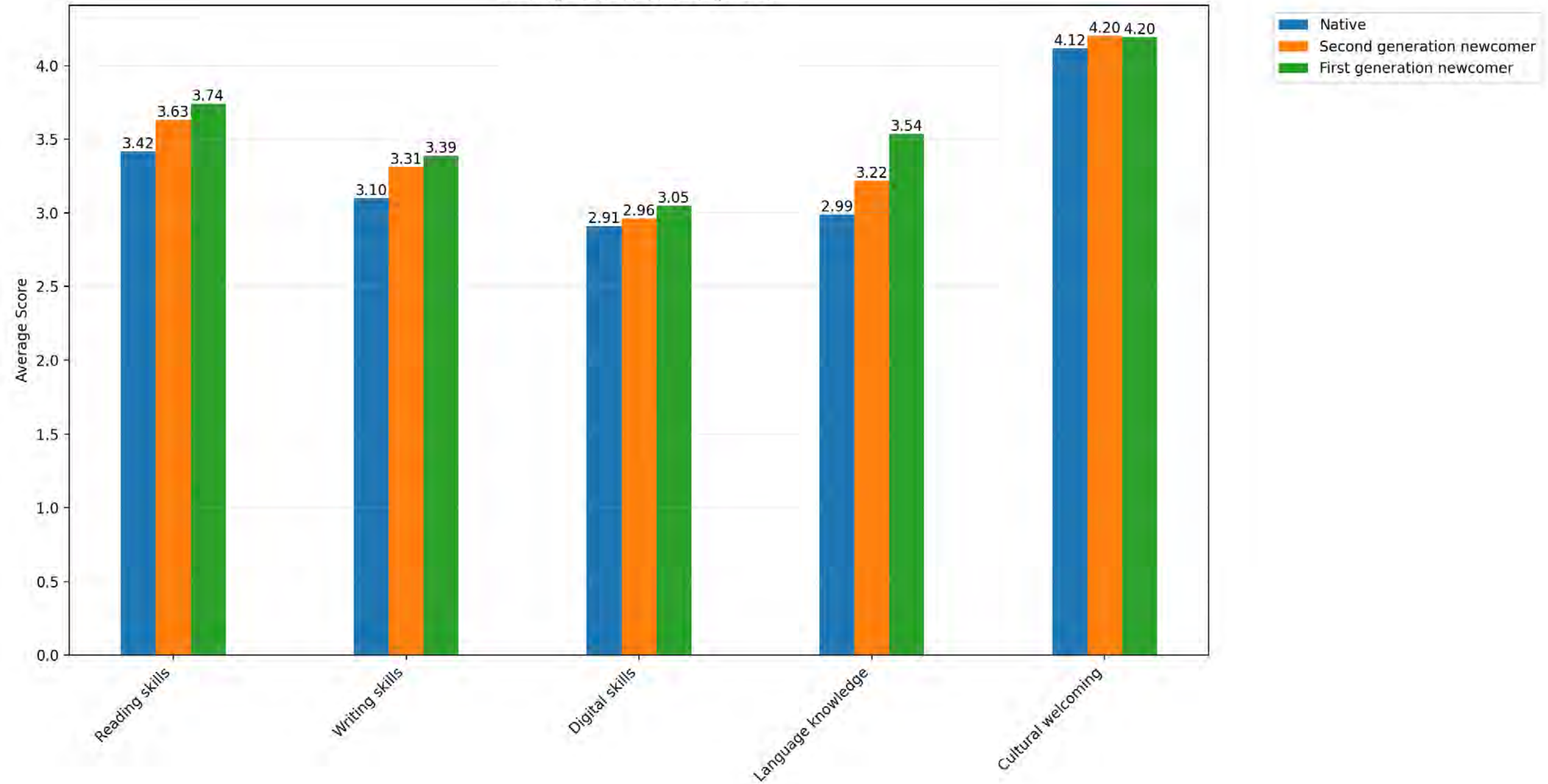
Average Scores by Visit Frequency




Average Scores by Age Groups



Average Scores by Background



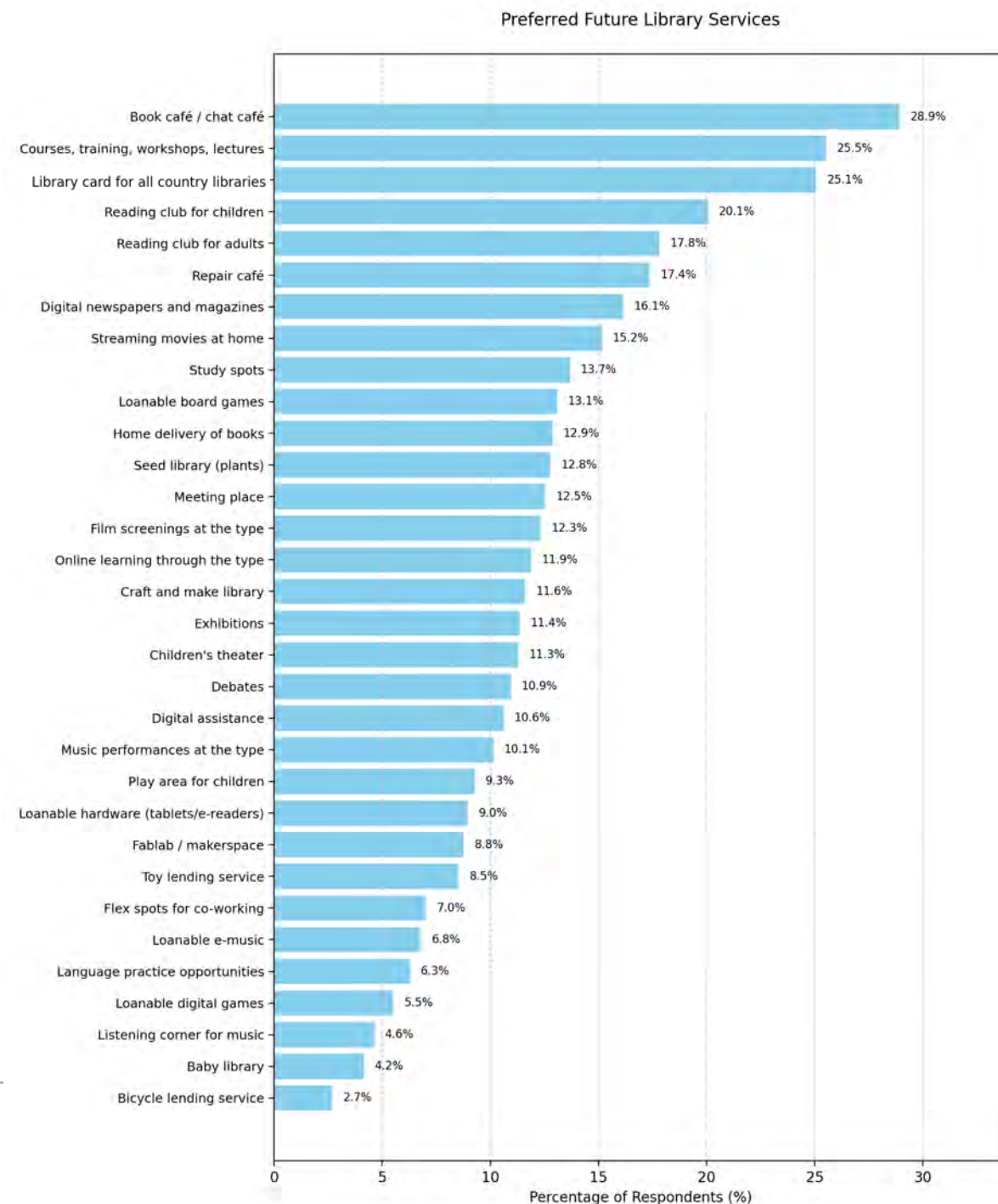
A photograph of a modern library interior. In the foreground, four people (three women and one man) are sitting around a small round wooden table, working on laptops. They are positioned next to a large floor-to-ceiling window that offers a view of a city with colorful buildings. In the background, there are long study tables with black chairs, bookshelves, and a bright orange armchair. The ceiling has recessed lighting. A semi-transparent dark rectangle is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the title and subtitle text.

Library of the future

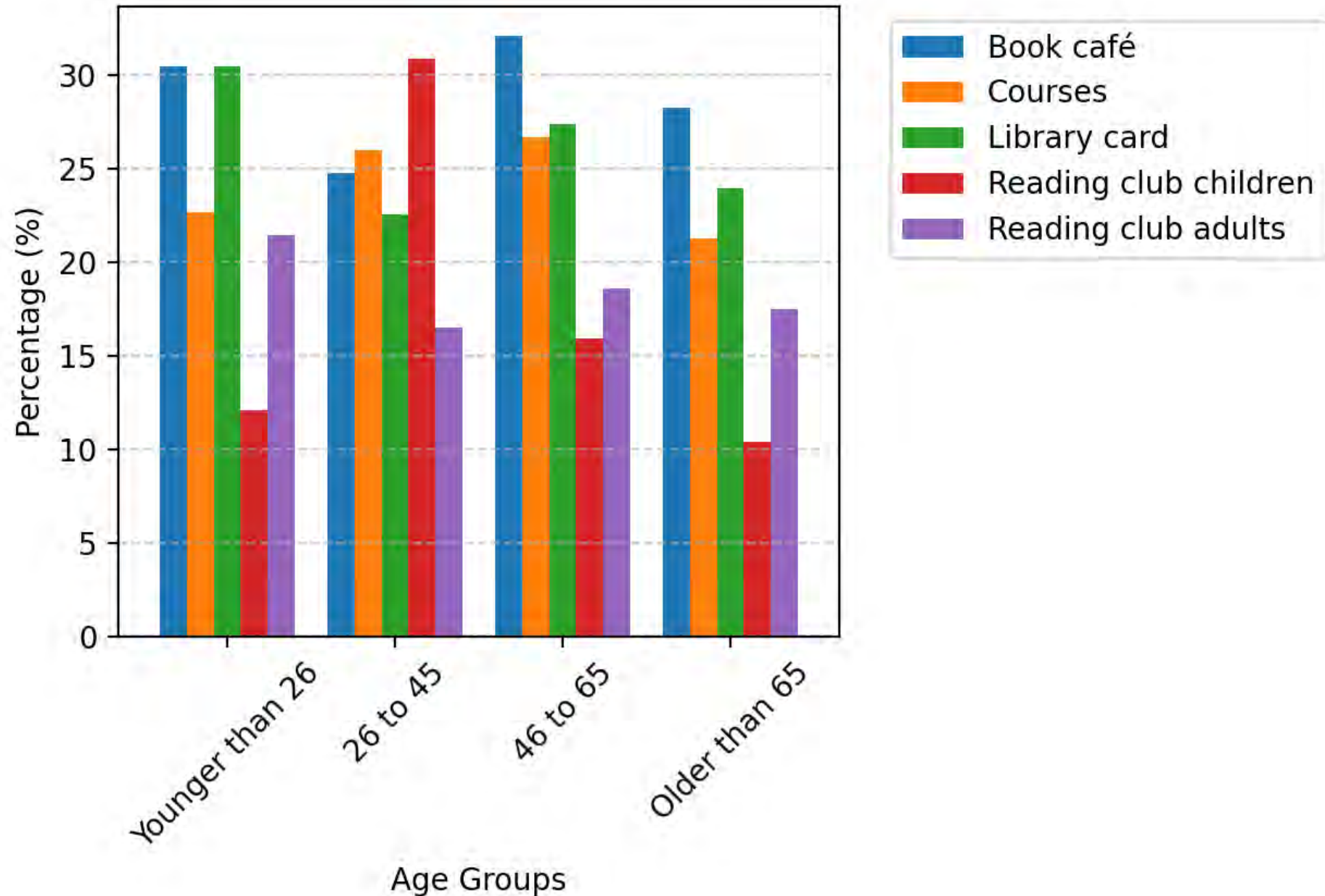
Different groups, different expectations...

Preferred offer

- Top 5 most desired services:
 - Book café / chat café (28.90%)
 - Courses, training, workshops, lectures (25.52%)
 - Library card for all country libraries (25.07%)
 - Reading club for children (20.06%)
 - Reading club for adults (17.81%)
- The results show a preference for social and educational services (book cafés, courses, reading clubs)

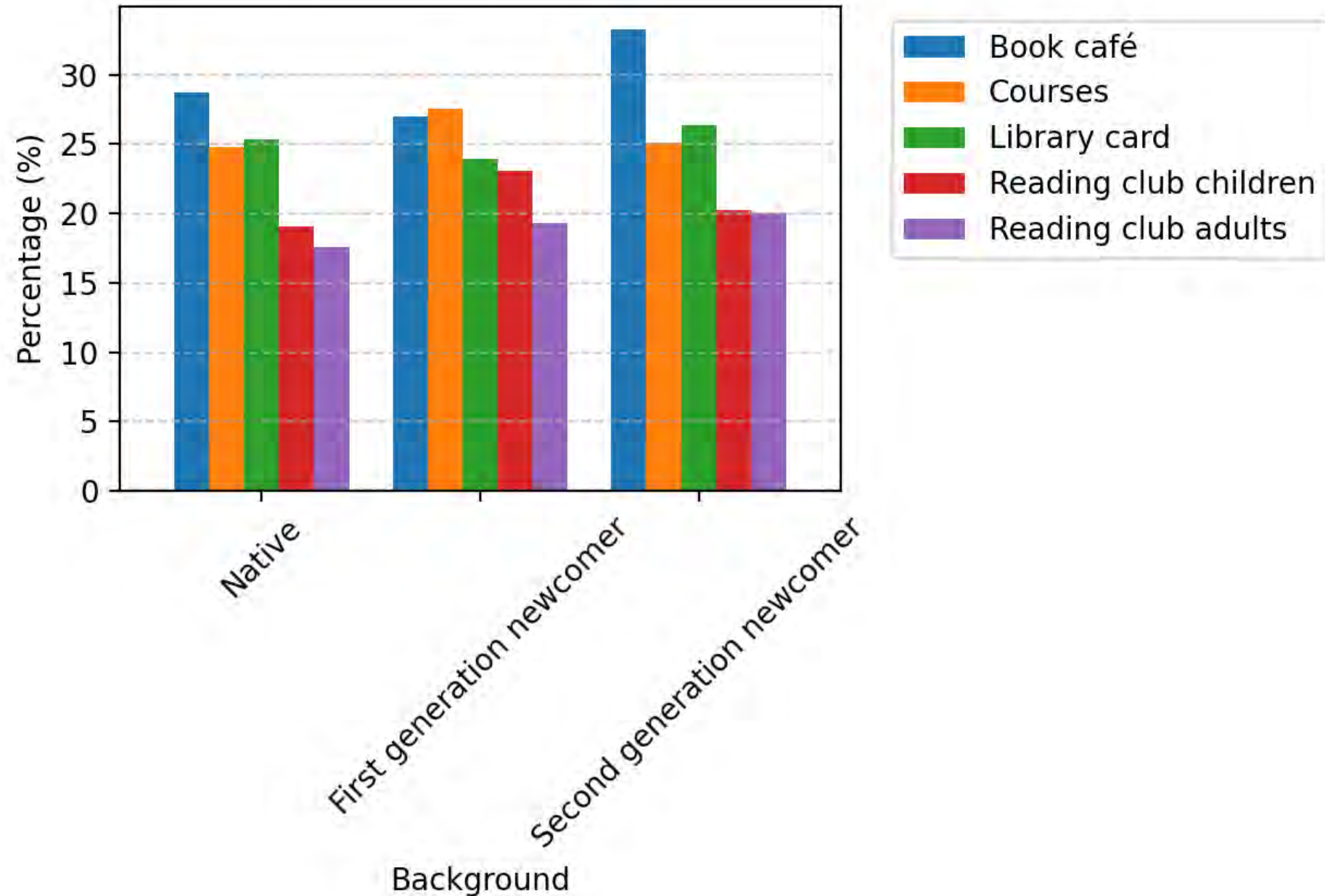


Top 5 Services by Age Groups



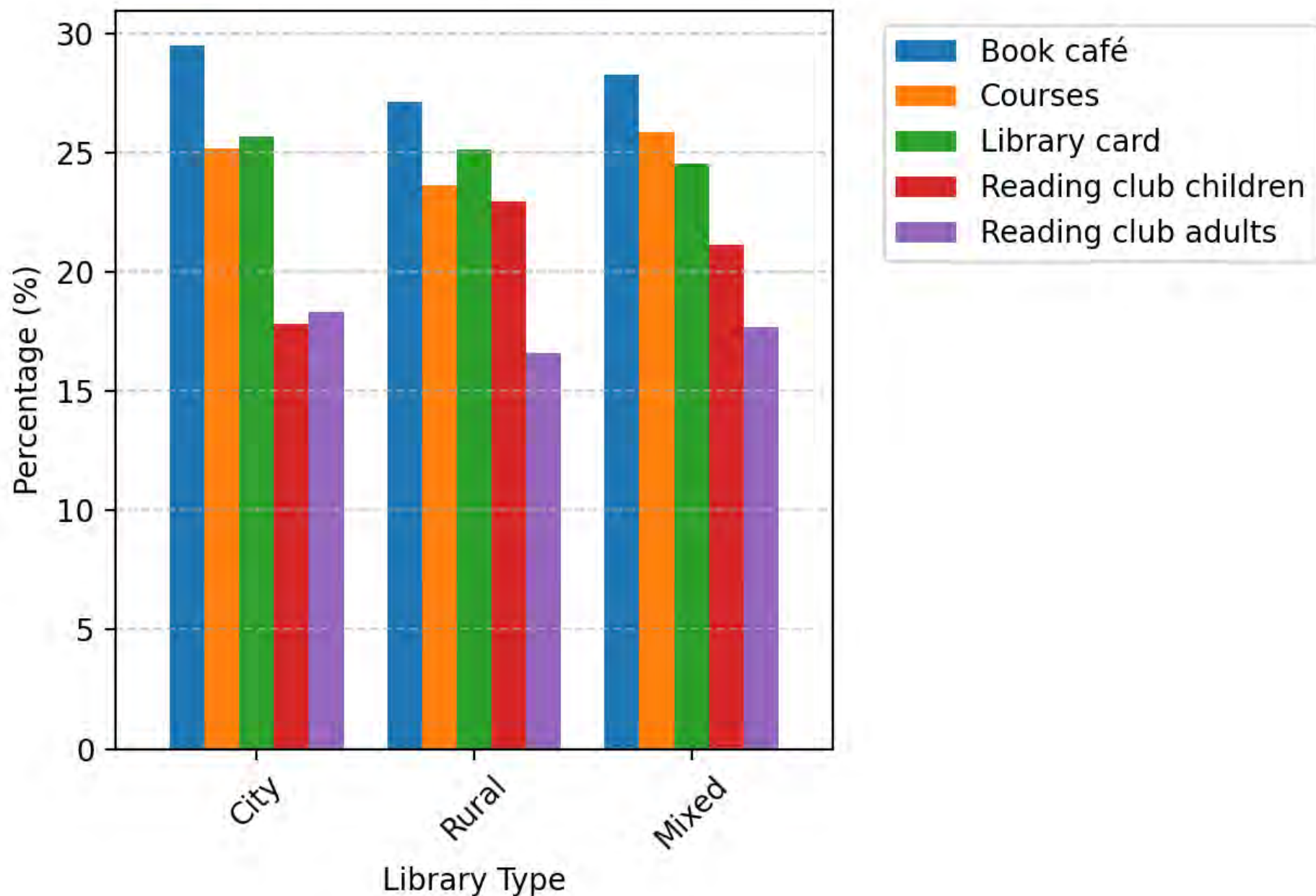
- '26-45' show highest interest in reading clubs for children (31%), likely due to having young families
- '46-65' show strongest interest in book café (32%) and courses
- Library card for multiple libraries is highest among the youngest group

Top 5 Services by Background



- First generation newcomers prefer courses (28%) more than other groups
- Reading club interest is higher among newcomers compared to natives
- Library card for multiple libraries is relatively consistent across backgrounds

Top 5 Services by Library Type



- City libraries show highest interest in book café (29.5%)
- Rural libraries have higher interest in reading clubs for children (23%)
- Mixed libraries show balanced service usage across all categories
- Library card for multiple libraries is consistent across all library types



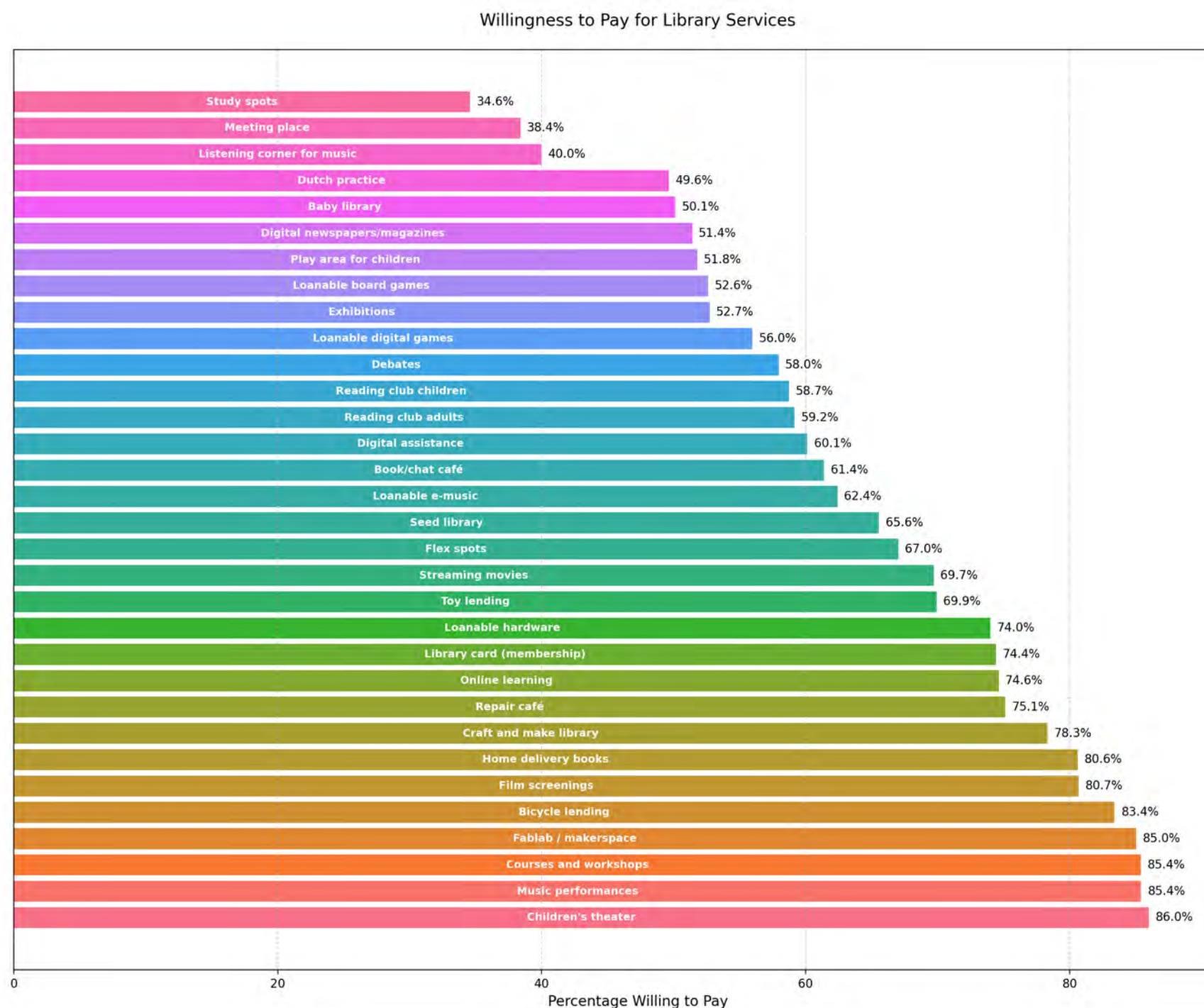
**Willingness to
pay**

- Users are **most willing to pay** for:

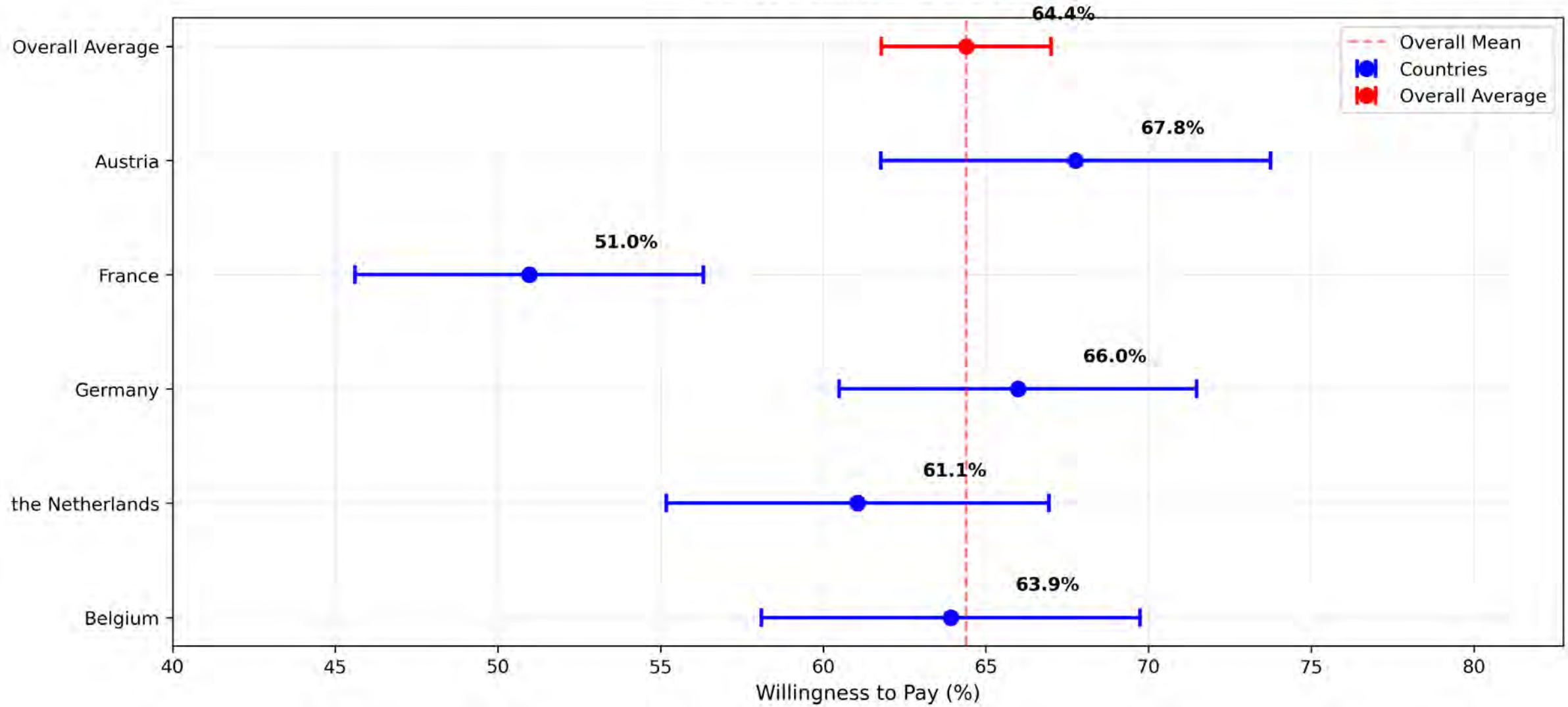
- Interactive and cultural activities (theater, music, courses)
- Modern maker facilities (fablab, makerspace)
- Innovative services (bicycle lending, home delivery)

- While they are **least willing to pay** for:

- Basic facilities (study spots, meeting places)
- Traditional services (listening corner, newspapers)
- Language and early childhood services



Average Willingness to Pay by Country
with 95% Confidence Intervals

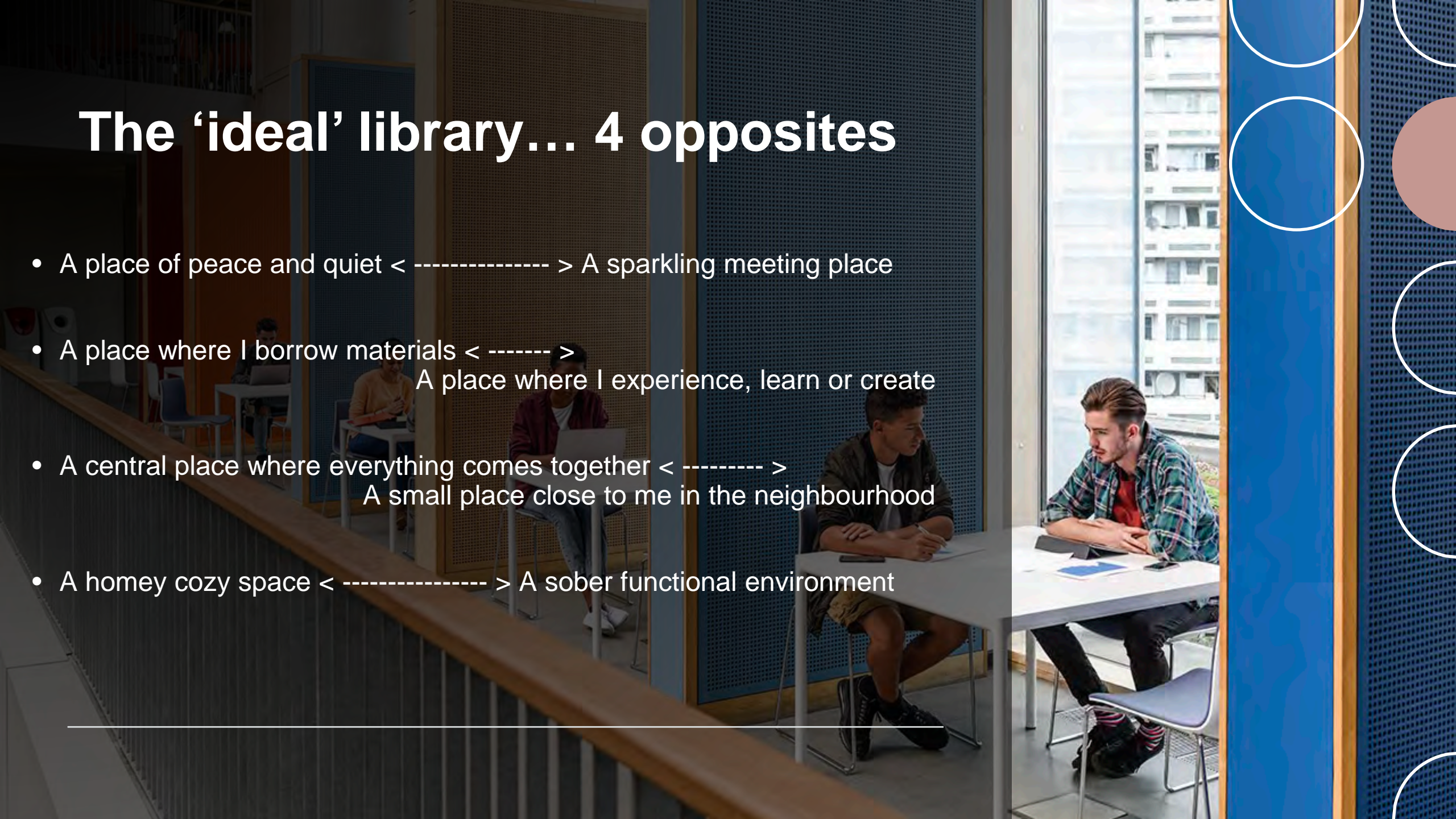


The ideal library

Statements “the ideal library”

The 'ideal' library... 4 opposites

- A place of peace and quiet < ----- > A sparkling meeting place
- A place where I borrow materials < ----- >
A place where I experience, learn or create
- A central place where everything comes together < ----- >
A small place close to me in the neighbourhood
- A homey cozy space < ----- > A sober functional environment



Cozy vs. Functional

- Strongest preference among all questions
- Preference for cozy, homey spaces

Central vs. Neighborhood

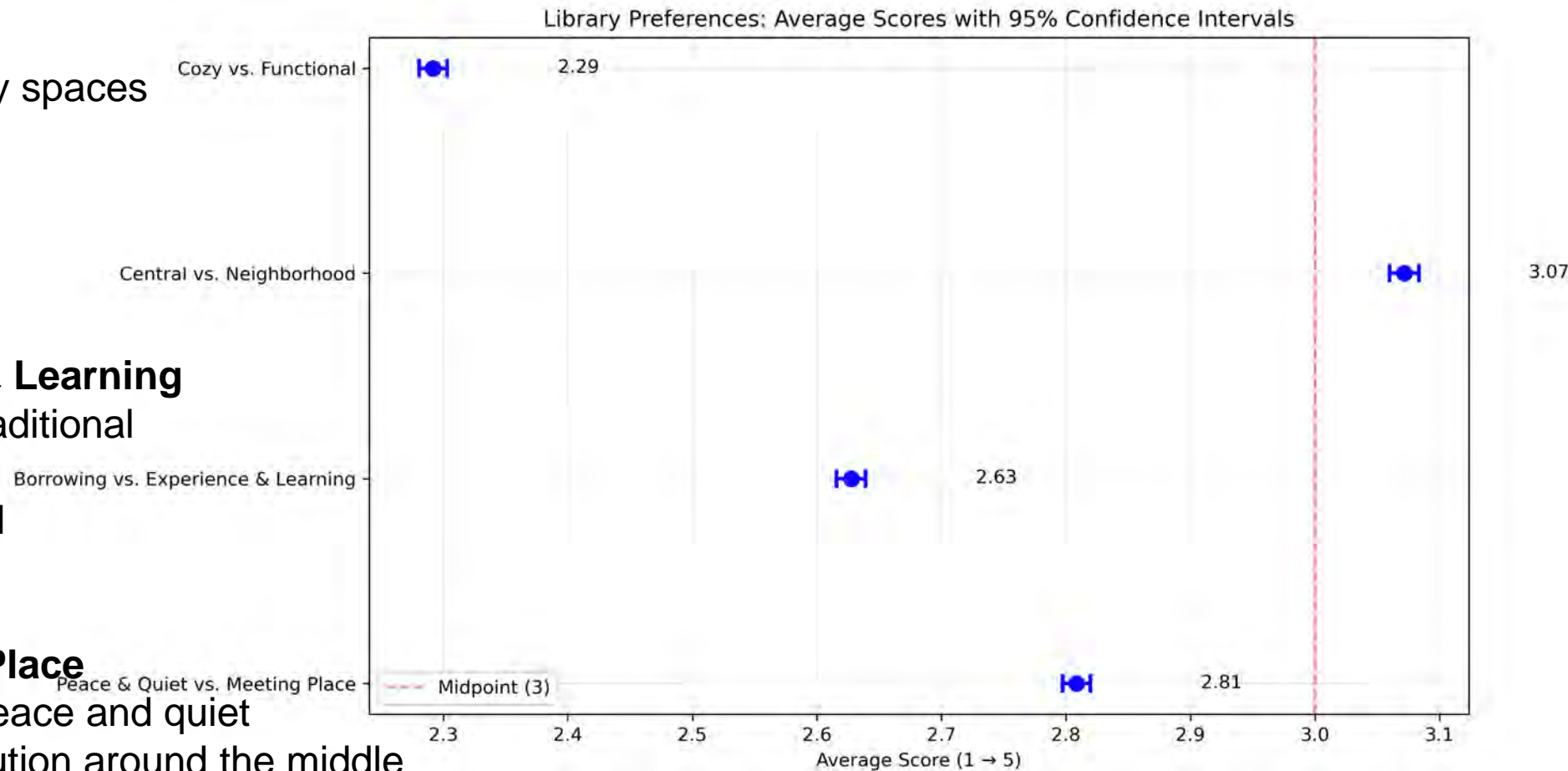
- Very slight preference for neighborhood locations

Borrowing vs. Experience & Learning

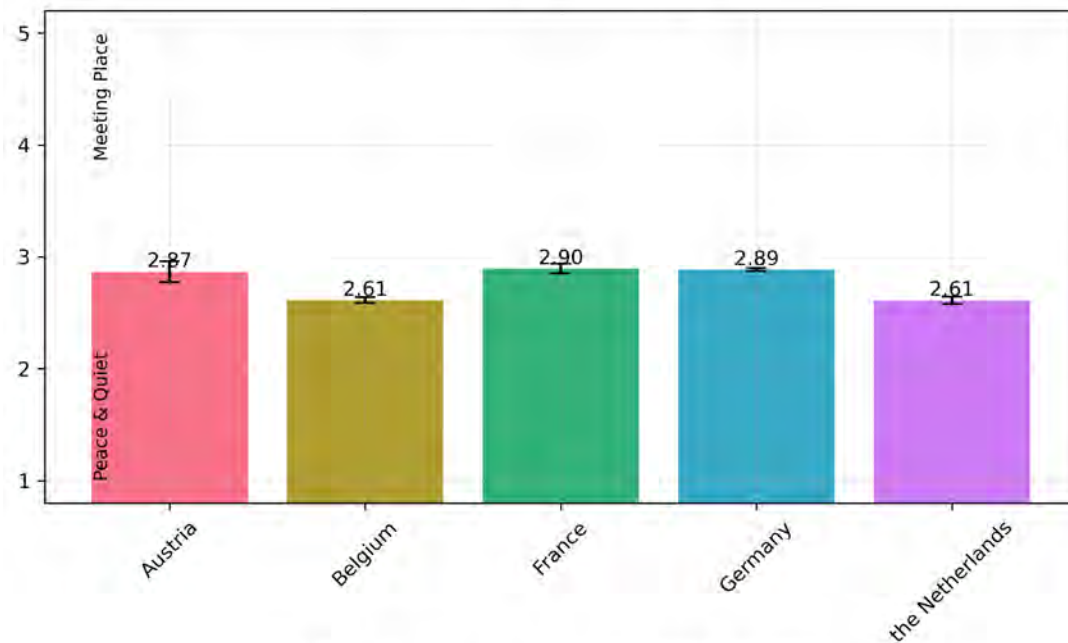
- Moderate preference for traditional borrowing function
- People still value traditional library services

Peace & Quiet vs. Meeting Place

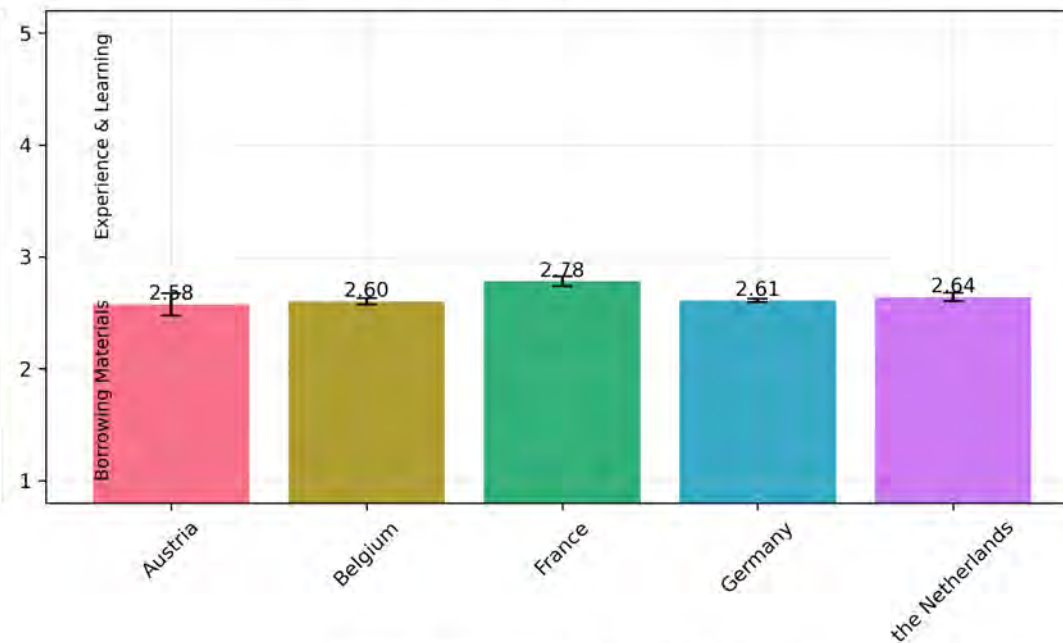
- Slight preference toward peace and quiet
- Relatively balanced distribution around the middle



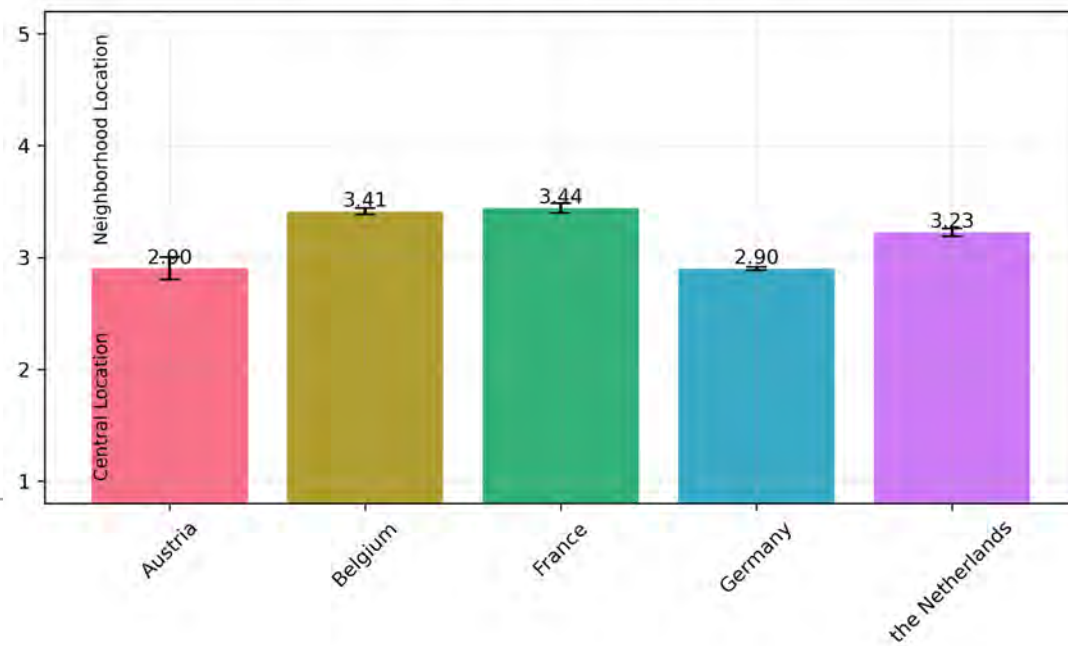
Peace & Quiet vs. Meeting Place



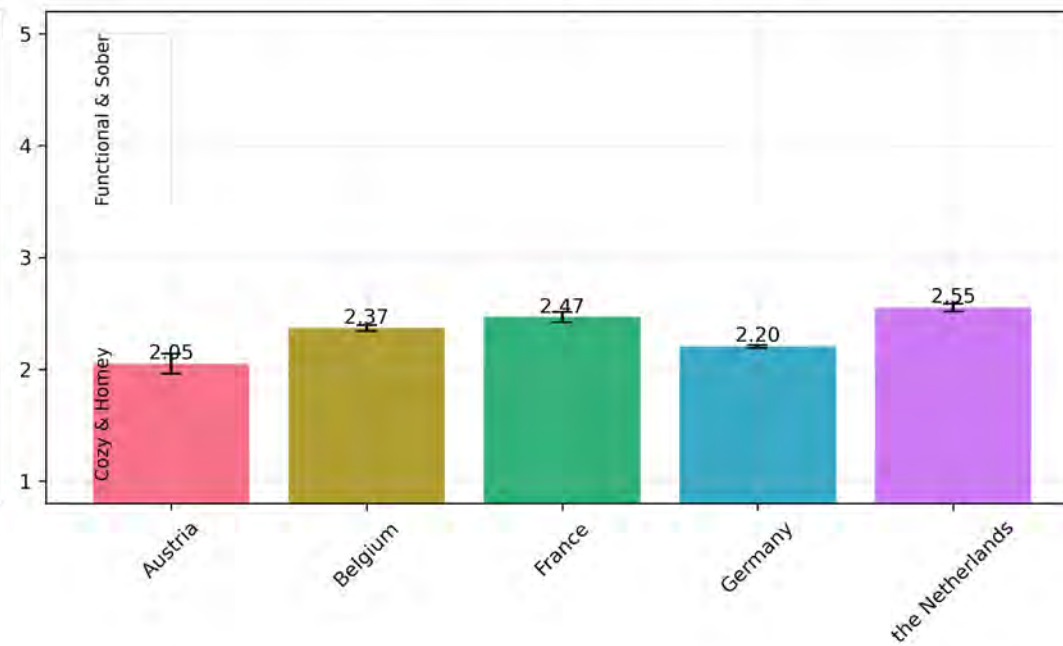
Borrowing Materials vs. Experience & Learning



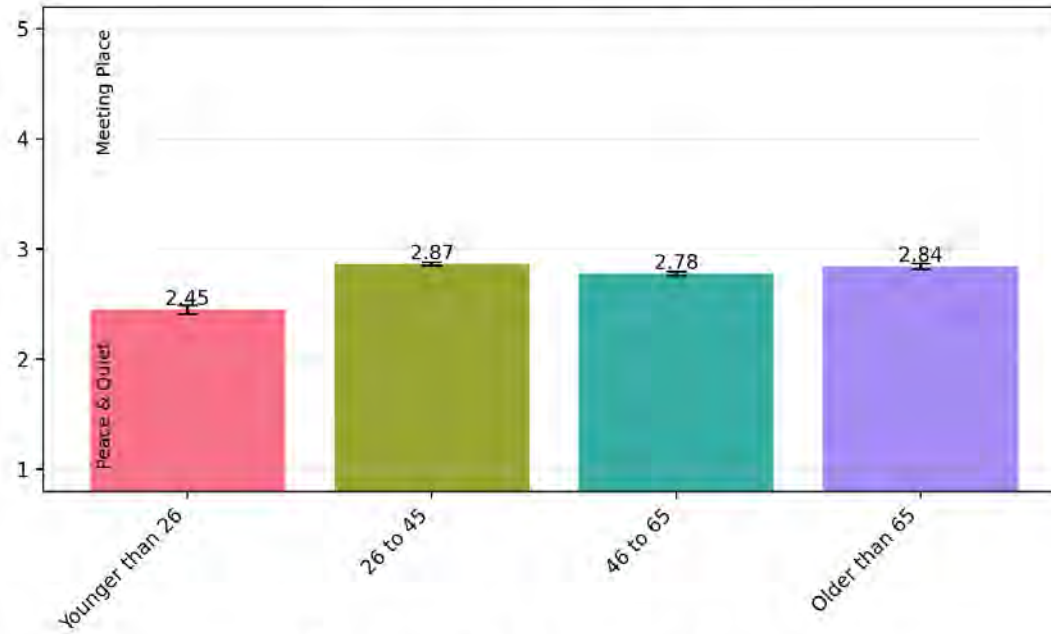
Central Location vs. Neighborhood Location



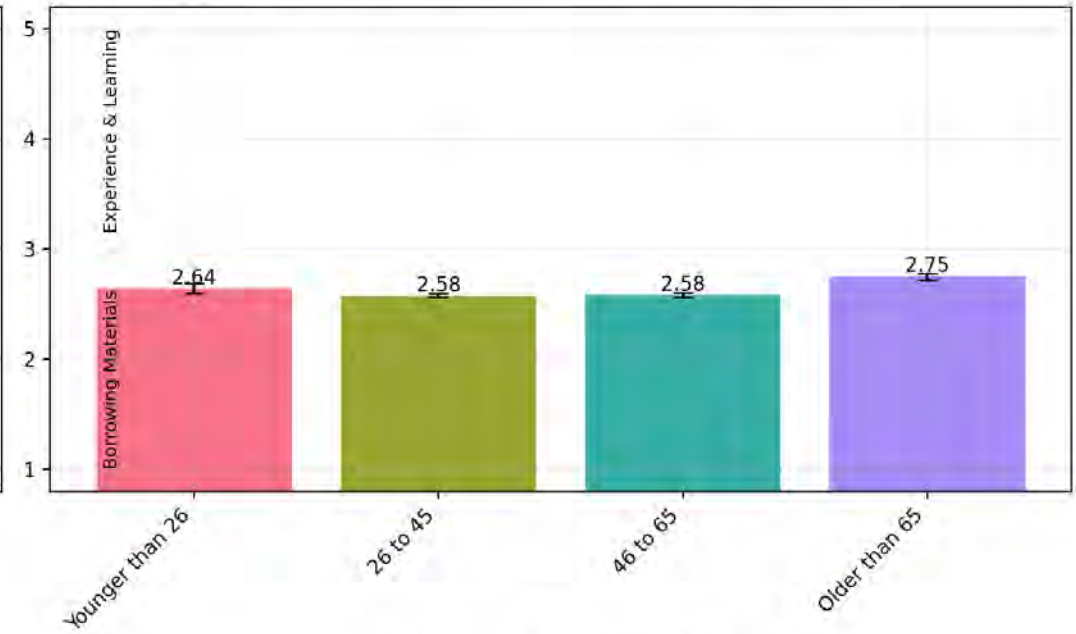
Cozy & Homey vs. Functional & Sober



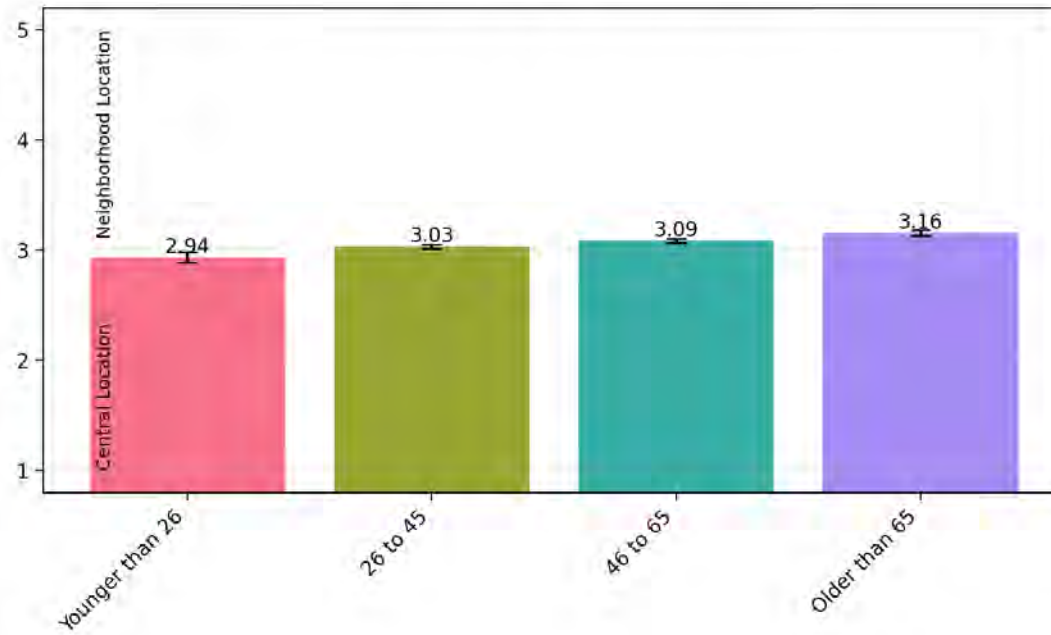
Peace & Quiet vs. Meeting Place



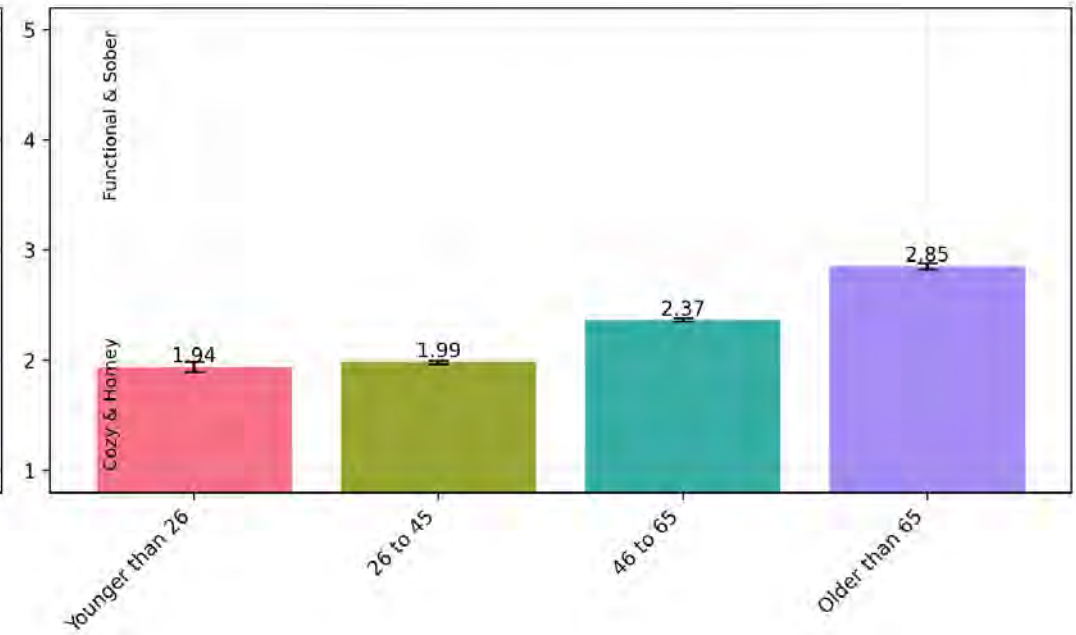
Borrowing Materials vs. Experience & Learning



Central Location vs. Neighborhood Location



Cozy & Homey vs. Functional & Sober



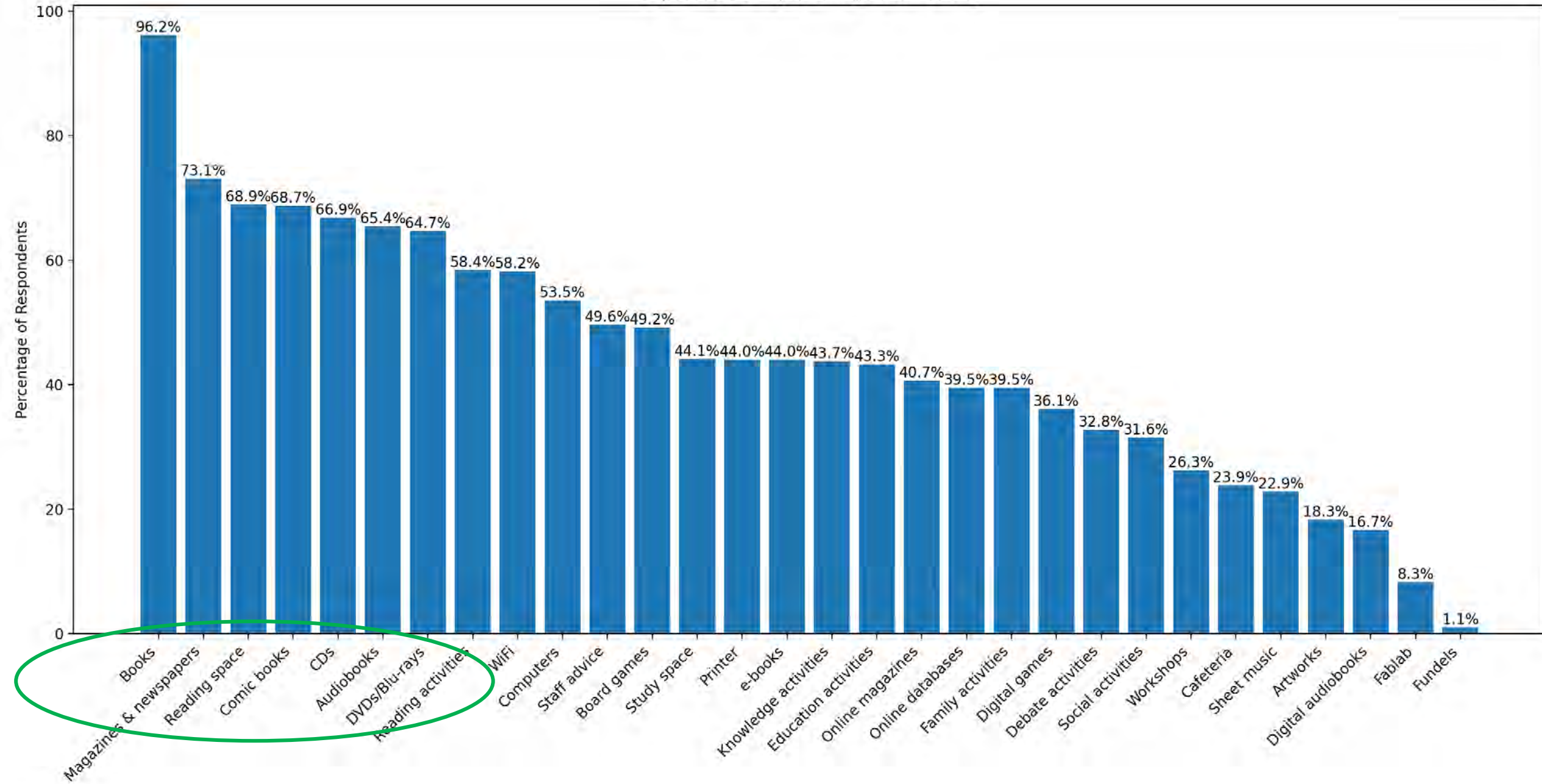
Non-users



Familiarity with the library offer by non-users



Expected Library Offerings (Non-users)



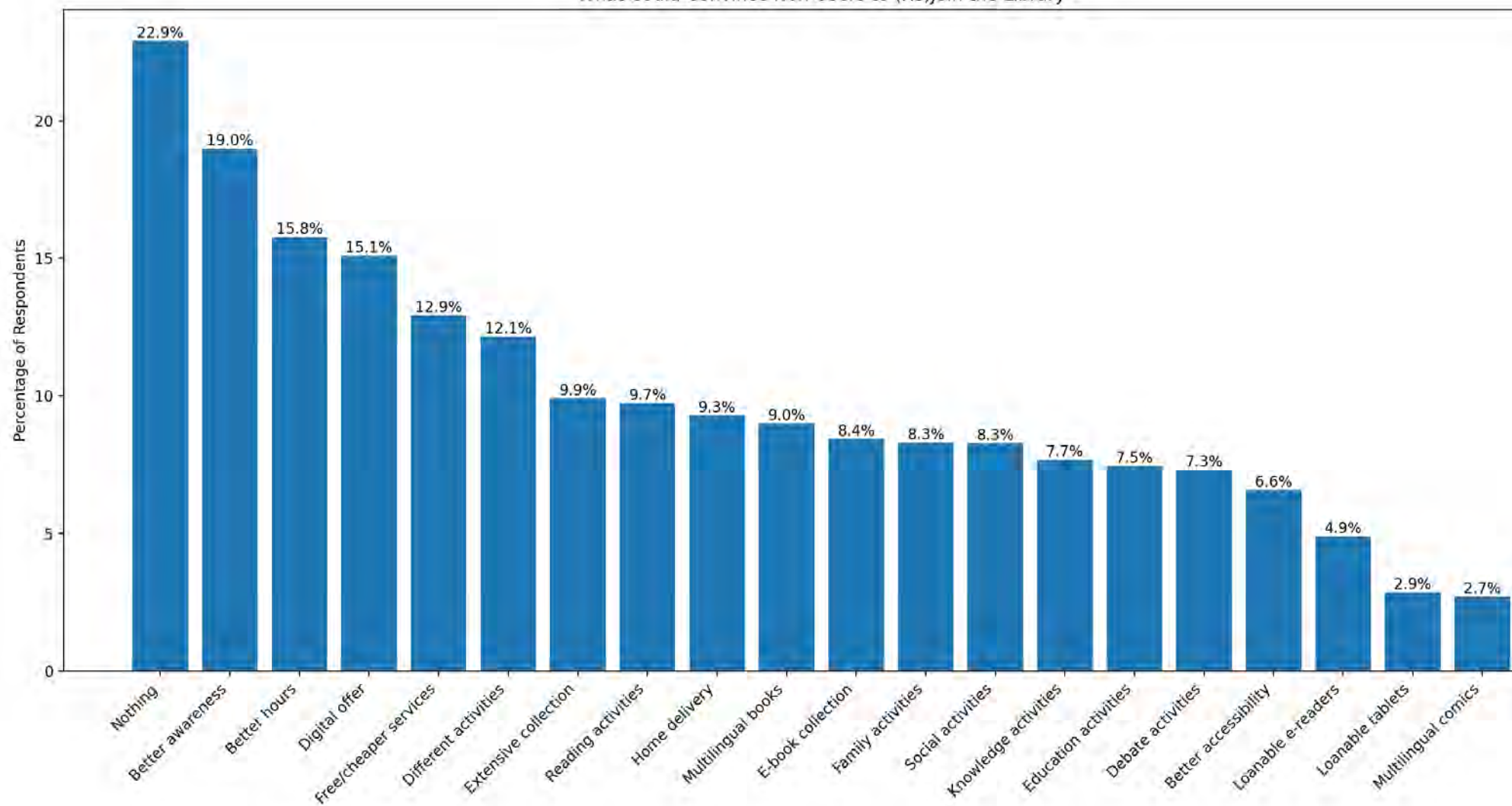
What could convince non-users



Potential opportunities

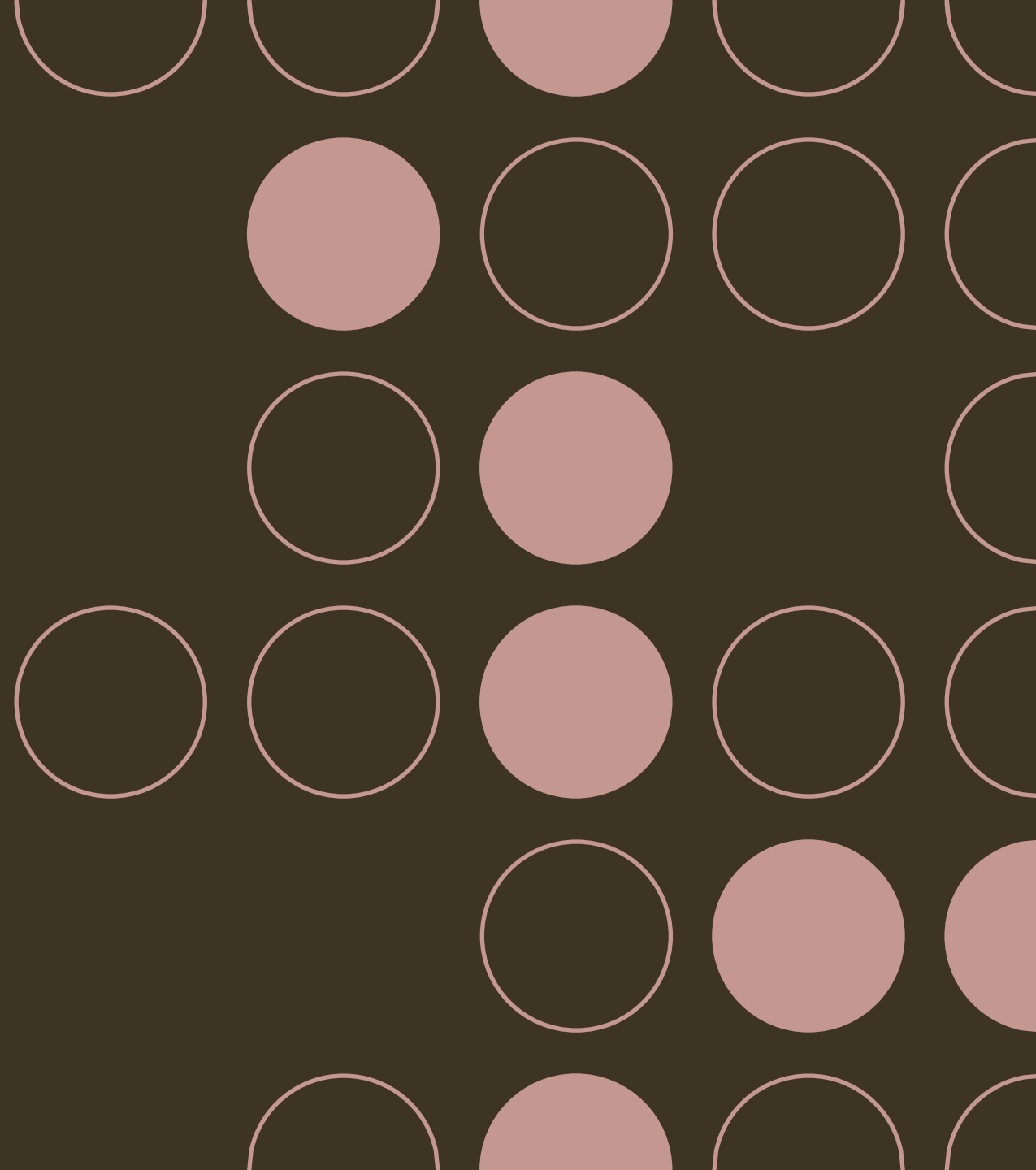
- Communication towards non-users (19% indicates “better awareness”)
- Looking at opening hours (Especially for the age groups between 26 and 65)
- A (broader) digital offer could convince 15%.

What Could Convince Non-Users to (Re)join the Library



Impact of the library *for non-users*

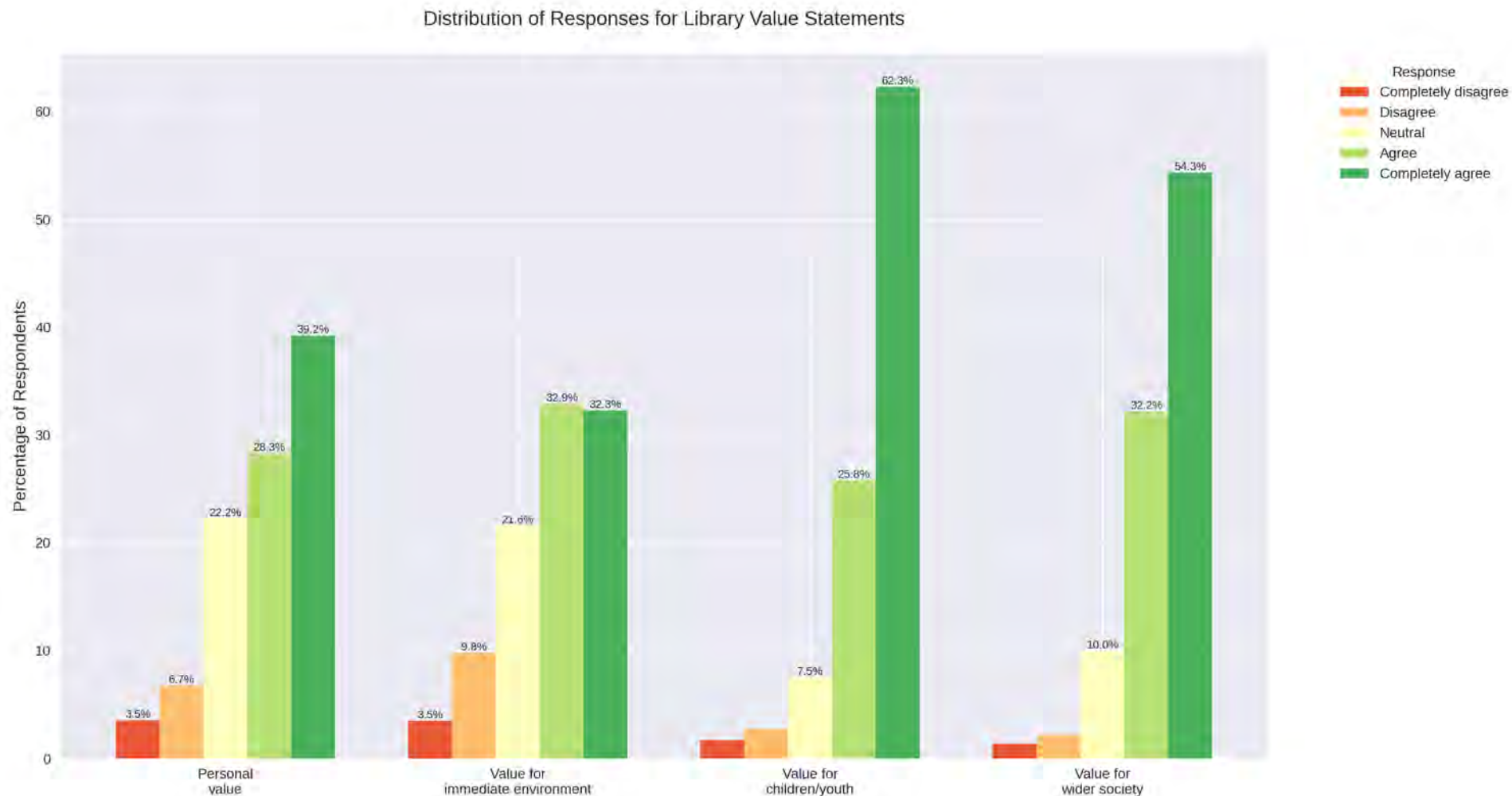
- Libraries hold great value for me personally
 - Libraries hold great value for my immediate environment (e.g., parents, children, friends)
 - Libraries hold great value for children and youth
 - Libraries hold great value for the wider society (e.g., other adults, disadvantaged groups, older people, ...)
-



Very positive responses to all statements

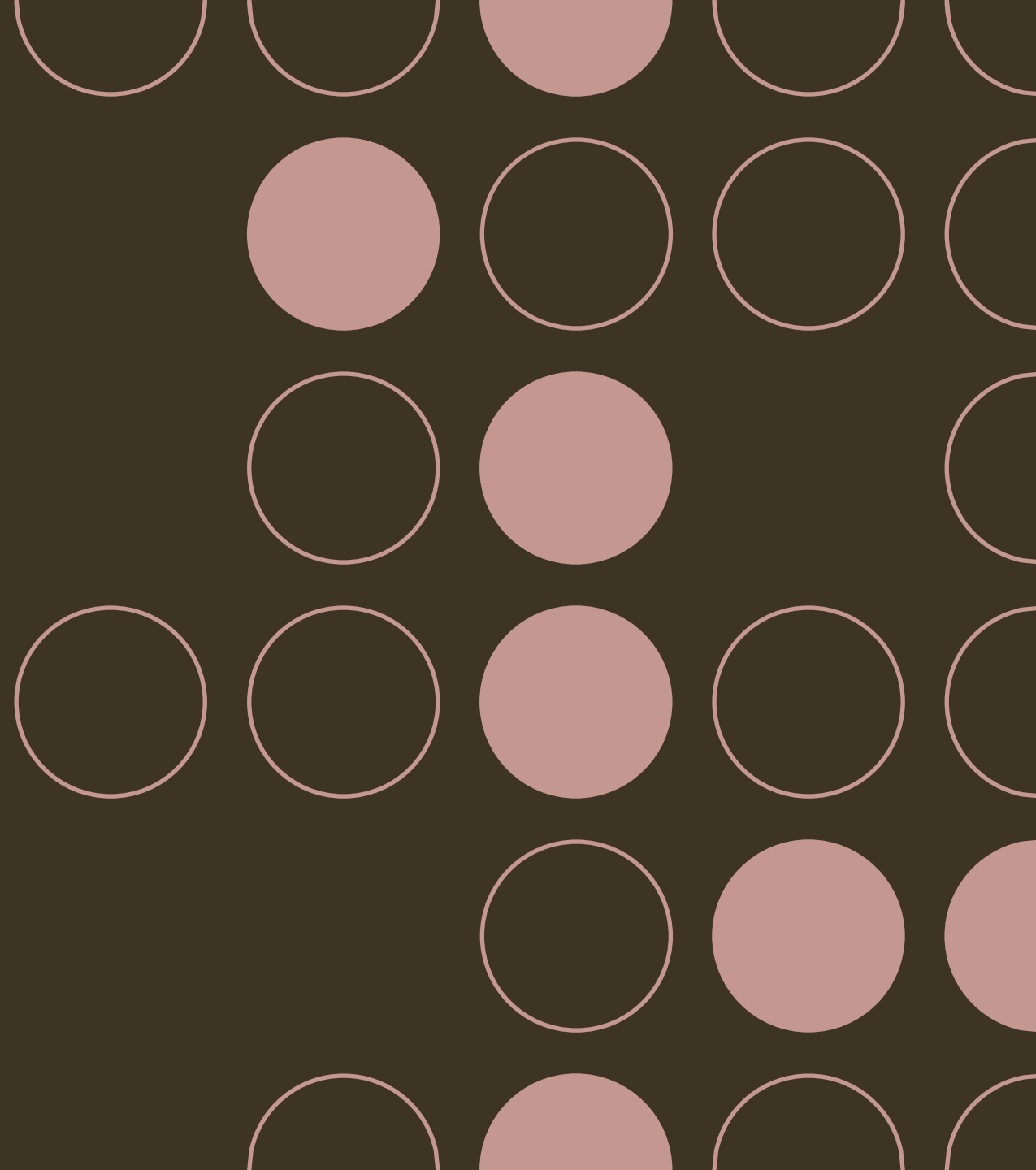
Clear positive gradient from personal to societal value

- Personal and “immediate environment” value positive, but more moderate
- Strongest perceived value for societal benefits, especially children and youth.



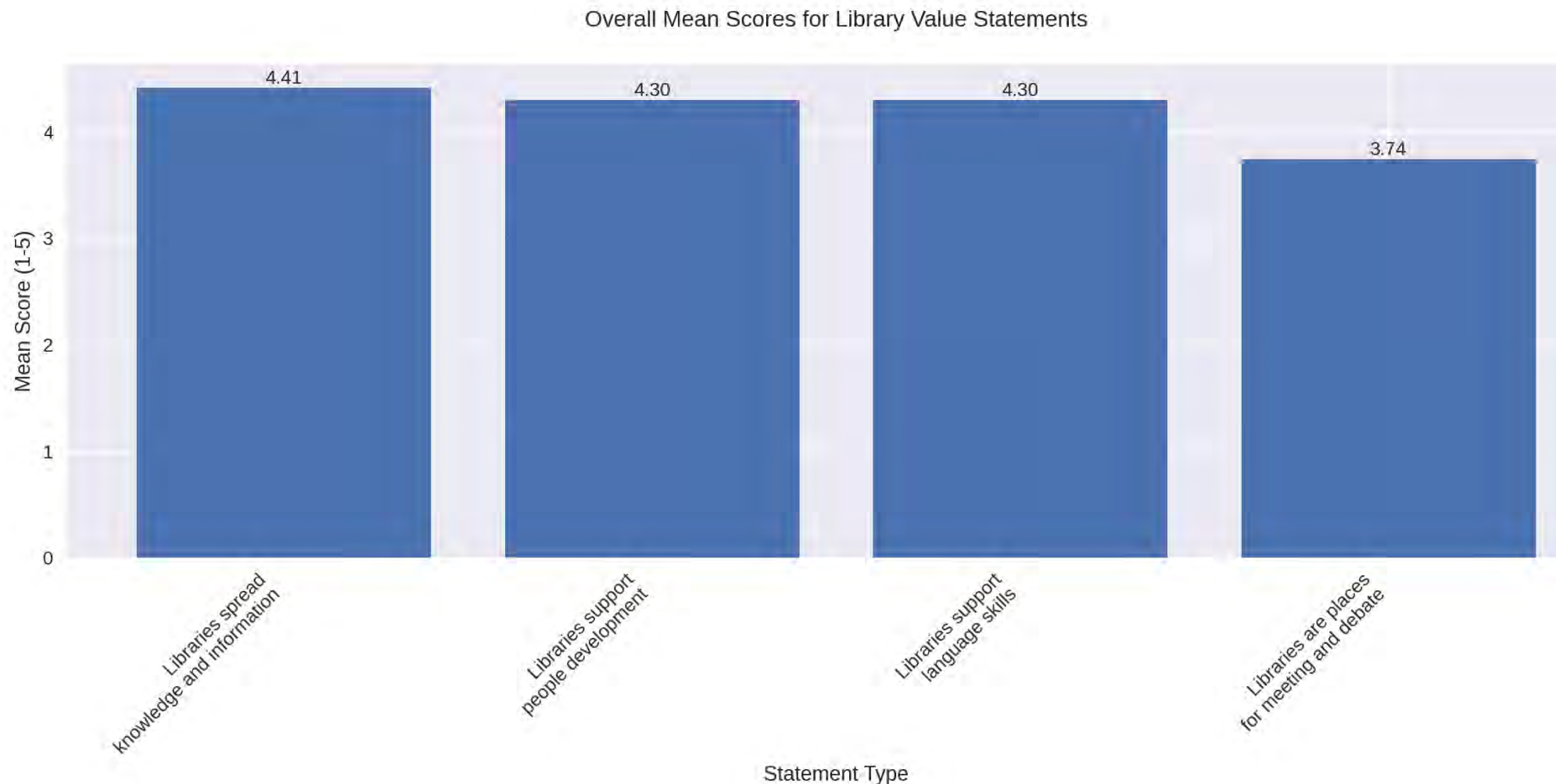
Impact of the library *for non-users* (2)

- Libraries hold great value because they spread knowledge and information
 - Libraries hold great value because they support the development of people
 - Libraries hold great value for people's language skills
 - Libraries hold great value as a place for meeting and debate
-



- All value perceptions very positive

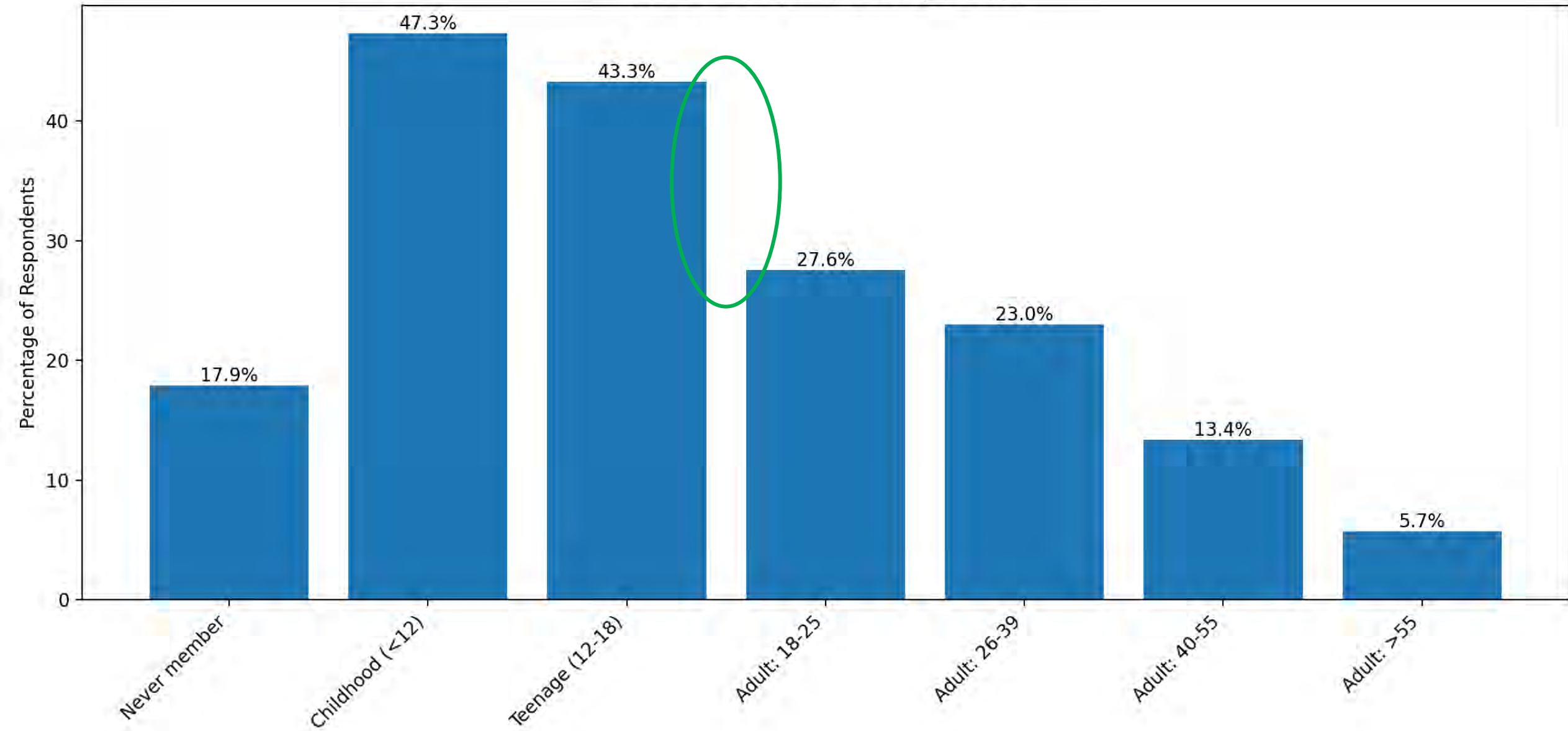
- Knowledge and information spread ranks highest (4.41 on 5)
- People development and language skills equal (4.30)
- Meeting and debate are notably lower (3.74)



Membership patterns of non-users



Overall Library Membership Periods



A young girl with Down syndrome is the central figure, standing in a library. She has light brown hair tied back and is wearing a bright pink long-sleeved shirt with a purple harness. Her hands are clasped in front of her. The background is filled with bookshelves, some of which are out of focus. On the right side of the image, there are decorative white circles of varying sizes, some of which are partially cut off by the edge. A dark, semi-transparent horizontal band runs across the middle of the image, serving as a background for the text.

Conclusion

A (few) conclusions of Sentobib...

- The **impact** of libraries on the wellbeing of its users is very **positive**
 - 🛡️ Seen as a safe haven, providing perspective, stimulating creativity and playing a strong community role
 - 👉 Opportunity: further position the library as a place to meet others & to learn new skills
 - 🌍 Very strong impact overall, but even higher for newcomers
- The **value** of libraries for broader society is also **confirmed by non-users**
- The **library of the future** will be a place where balance is important
 - 📚 The “traditional offer” remains important and should meet new services. Special attention to ‘meeting other people’, offering ‘courses and workshops’ and continued involvement of children.
 - 🏠 The library environment should find a balance between a peaceful and a vivid place, where the traditional offer finds new services. A focus on a cozy environment where everyone feels at home.
- **Non-users** could potentially be convinced to come (back) to the library
 - 🔔 by increasing awareness, especially on the less traditional offer of the library
 - 🕒 by looking at opening hours and a 💻 digital offer
- **Local differences per library** can be very relevant.
 - 📊 Every library is different, local research and results are crucial to support the interests of the library on the individual level.

Thank you!

- Visit www.sentobib.eu
- 📄 Register your library and take part in the European Sentobib study.
- 📧 Questions? Contact us at contact@sentobib.eu
- 🌍 Country not yet part of the study? Get in touch with us...

