



Taking Our Pulse

The OCLC Research Survey of Special Collections and Archives

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Coalition for Networked Information
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Overview

- Survey population
- Project objectives
- Data & action items
- Q&A

What's wrong with this [big] picture?

- Overall *collections* size is growing
- *Use* is increasing
- Too many materials remain “*hidden*”
- *Backlogs* continue to grow
- *Staffing* is stable
- 75% of library *budgets* have been cut

Project objectives

1. Obtain *current data* to determine changes across the ARL libraries since 1998
2. *Expand* ARL's survey population
3. Enable institutions to place themselves in the context of *norms*
4. Provide data to support *decision-making*
5. Recommend *actions* based on survey results

Survey population

Libraries surveyed: 275

Rate of response: 61% (169)

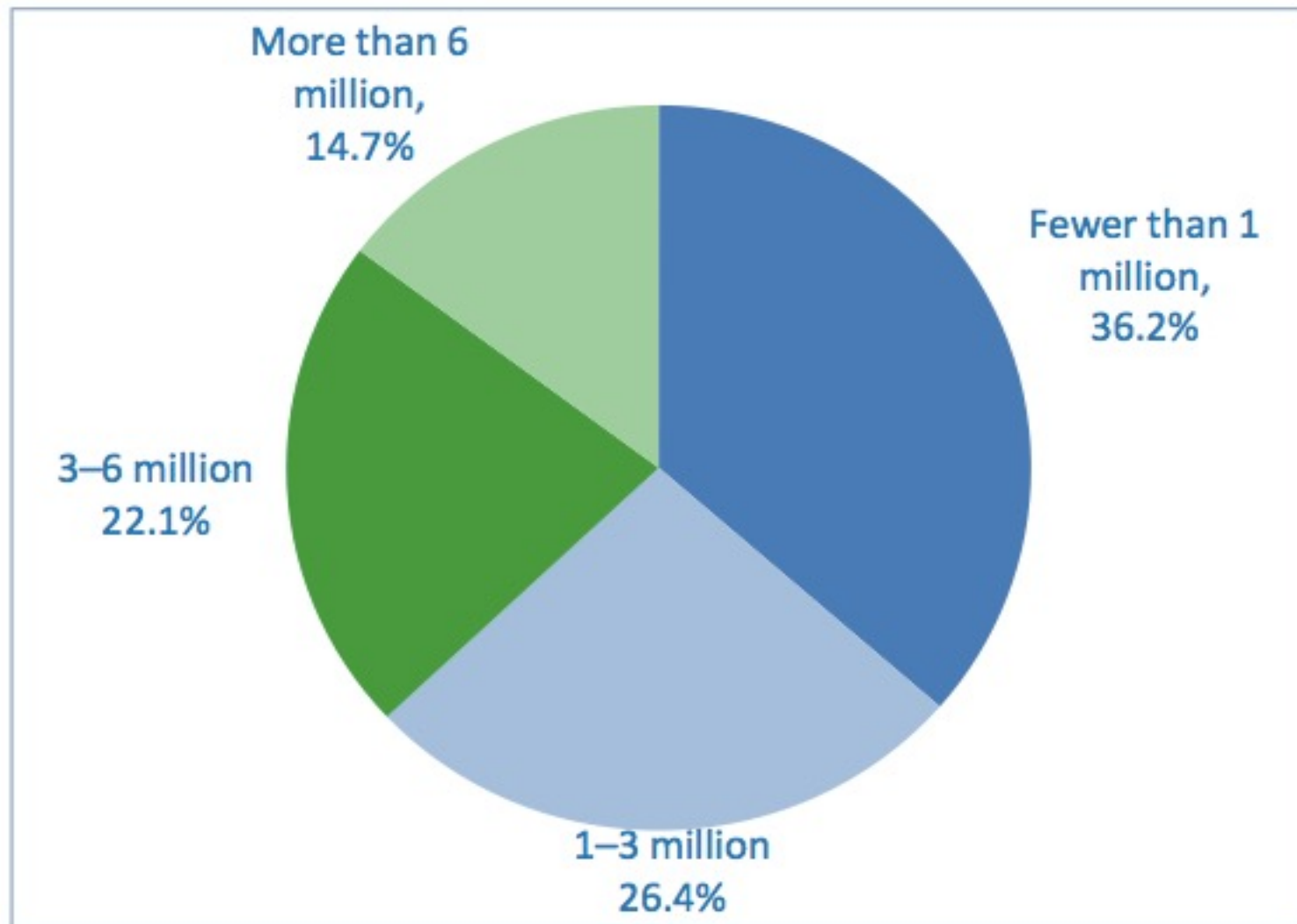
Five membership organizations

- Association of Research Libraries
- Canadian Association of Research Libraries
- Independent Research Libraries Association
- Oberlin Group
- RLG Partnership

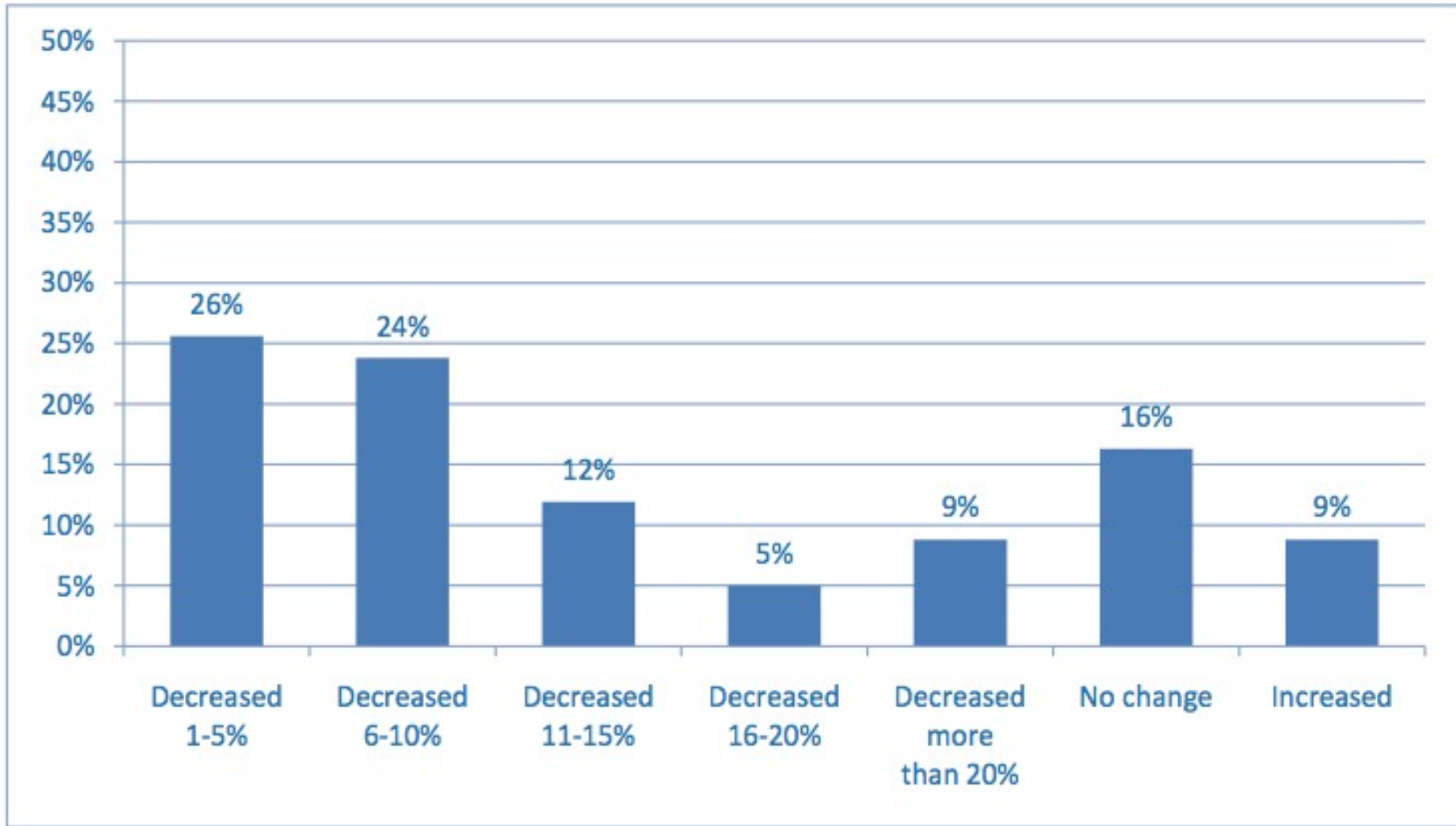
Respondents by type of institution

	Number of responses	Percent of responses
Universities	100	59%
Colleges	32	19%
Independent research libraries	13	8%
Museums	8	5%
Historical societies	6	3%
National institutions	5	3%
Governmental libraries	2	1%
Public libraries	2	1%
Consortium	1	1%
Total	169	100.0%

Printed volumes in overall library



Change in overall library funding



Key to percentages in figures:

Red = % of respondents

Black = numerical data

“Your three most challenging issues” **

1. Space: 64%

1. Born-digital materials: 37%

2. Digitization: 35%

*** Funding and staffing were disallowed.
Respondents could name up to three challenges.*

Top education and training needs

1. Born-digital materials: 83%
1. Information technology: 65%
2. Intellectual property: 56%
3. Cataloging and metadata: 51%

Assessment: Action item

Develop and promulgate metrics that enable *standardized measurement* of key elements of special collections use and management.

Collections: Growth

Mean ARL collections growth since 1998

- Books: 50%
- Archives/manuscripts: 50%
- Audio: 240%
- Visual and moving image: 300%
- Microforms: *decreased* 80%

Special collections in remote storage: 67%

Collections: Sample questions

Is dramatic **growth** of collections **sustainable**?
If not, what should change?

Why are formal collaborative collection
development **partnerships** still so rare?

Collections: Action items

Identify barriers that limit *collaborative collection development*. Define key characteristics and desired outcomes of effective collaboration.

Take collective action to share resources for cost-effective *preservation of at-risk audiovisual materials*.

User services: Onsite visits

ARL

- Mean: 6,200
- Median: 3,100

CARL

- Mean: 4,900
- Median: 2,300

IRLA

- Mean: 8,300
- Median: 4,400

Oberlin

- Mean: 788
- Median: 731

RLG

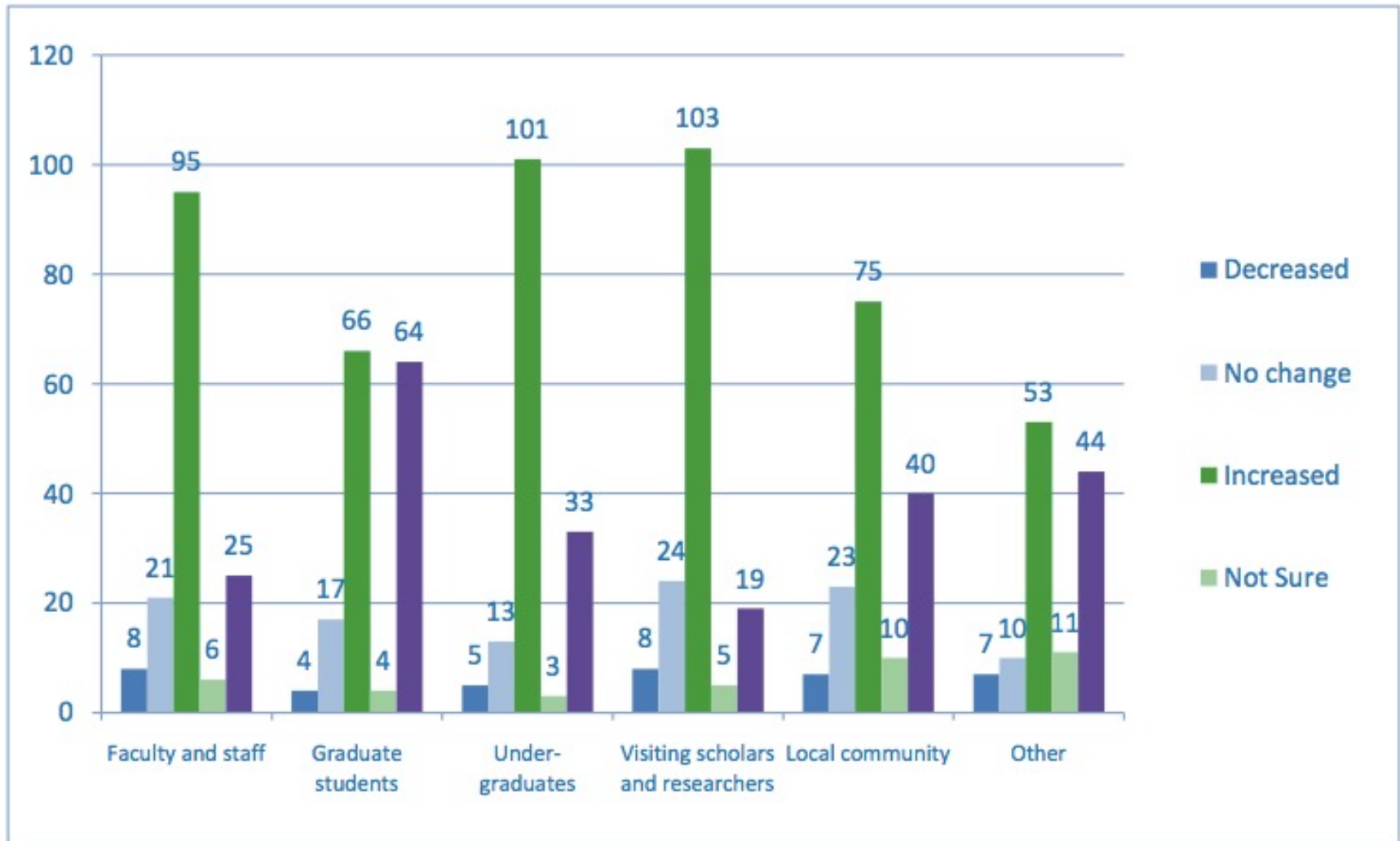
- Mean: 7,500
- Median: 4,500

User services: Onsite visits

Percent of each type of user

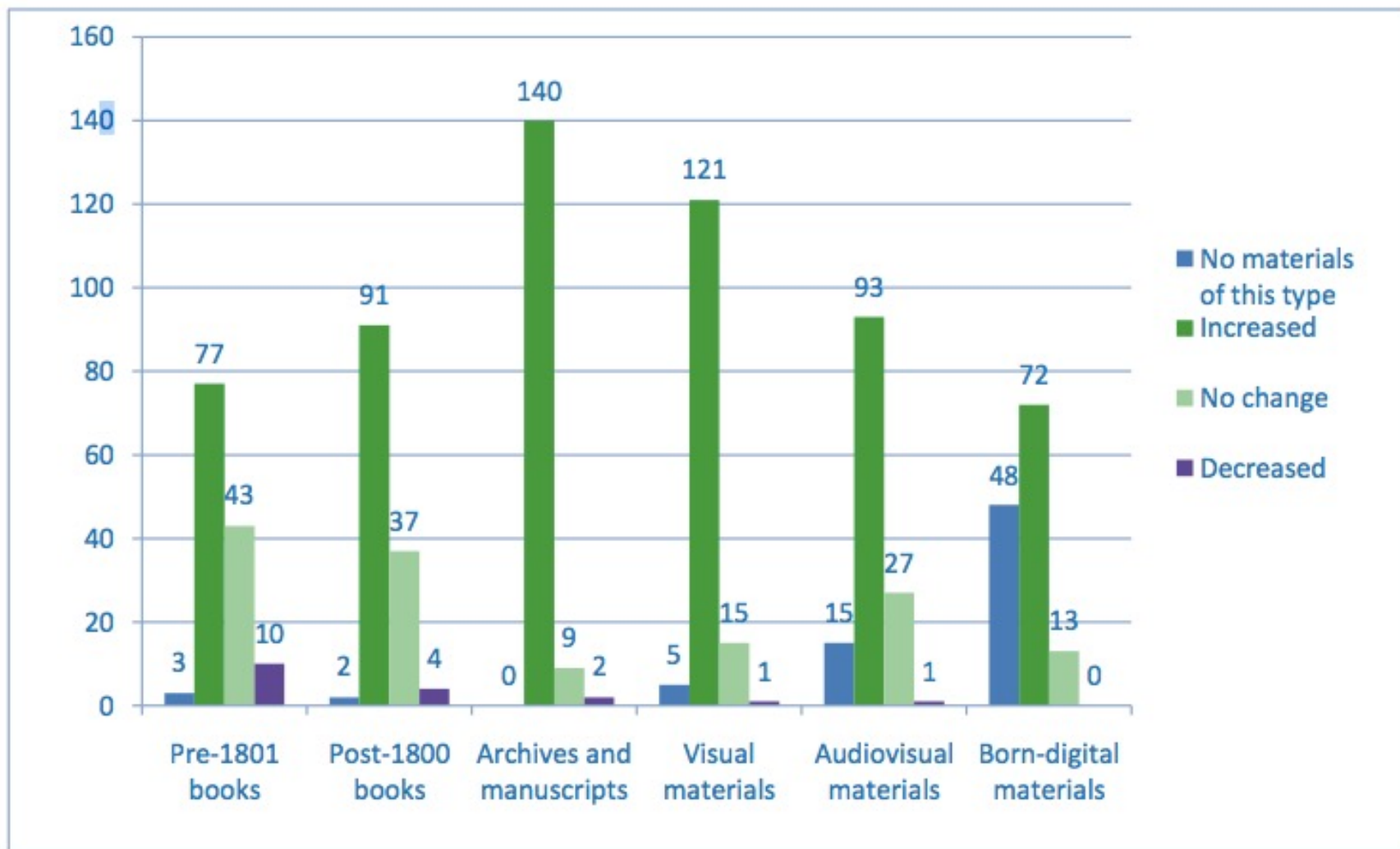
- Faculty/staff: 9%
- Graduate students: 5%
- Undergraduates: 12%
- Visiting scholars/researchers: 24%
- Local community: 7%
- “Other”: 43%

Changes in level of use by type of user



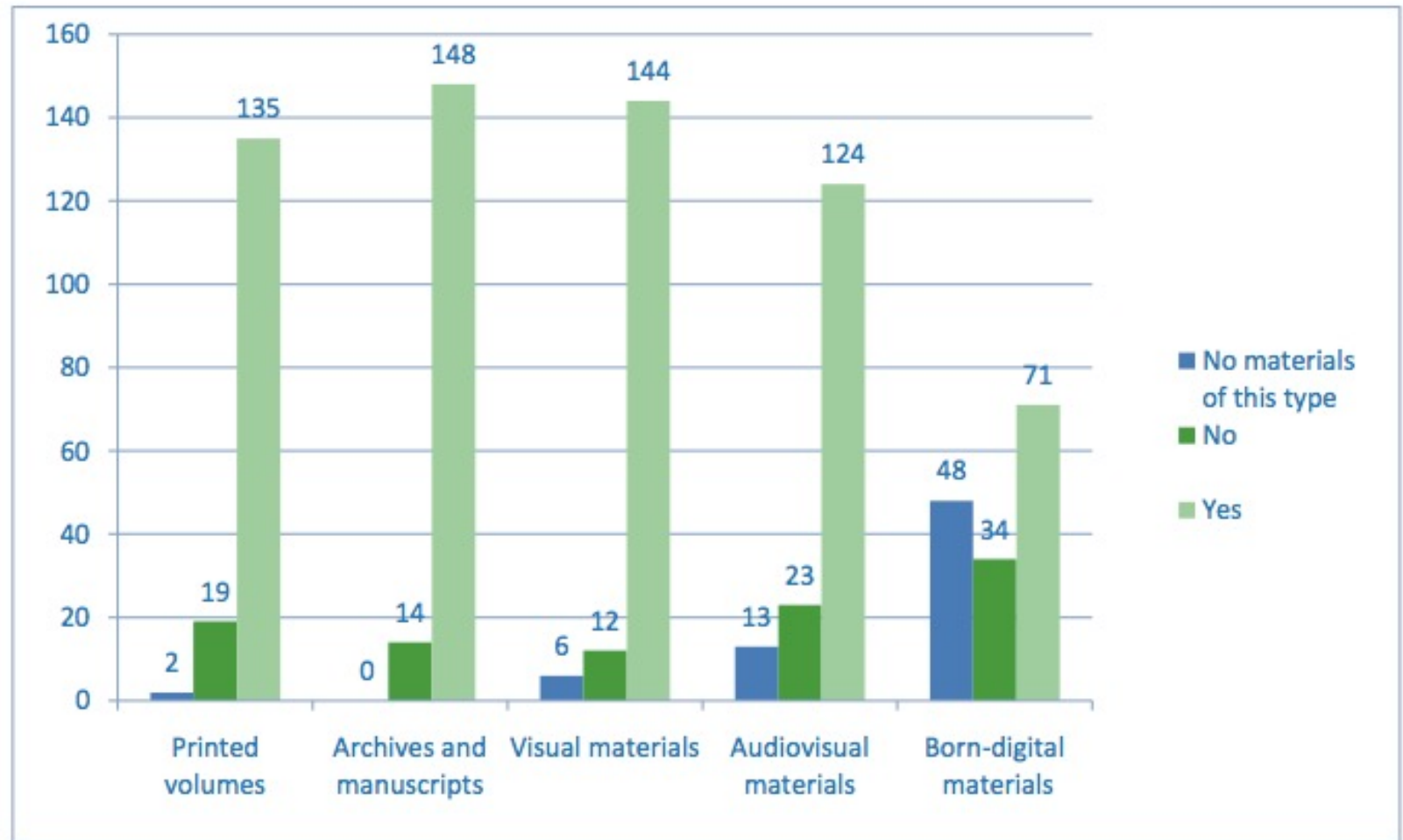
Note: Numbers of respondents.

Changes in use by format



Note: Numbers of respondents.

Access to uncataloged/unprocessed materials



Note: Numbers of respondents.

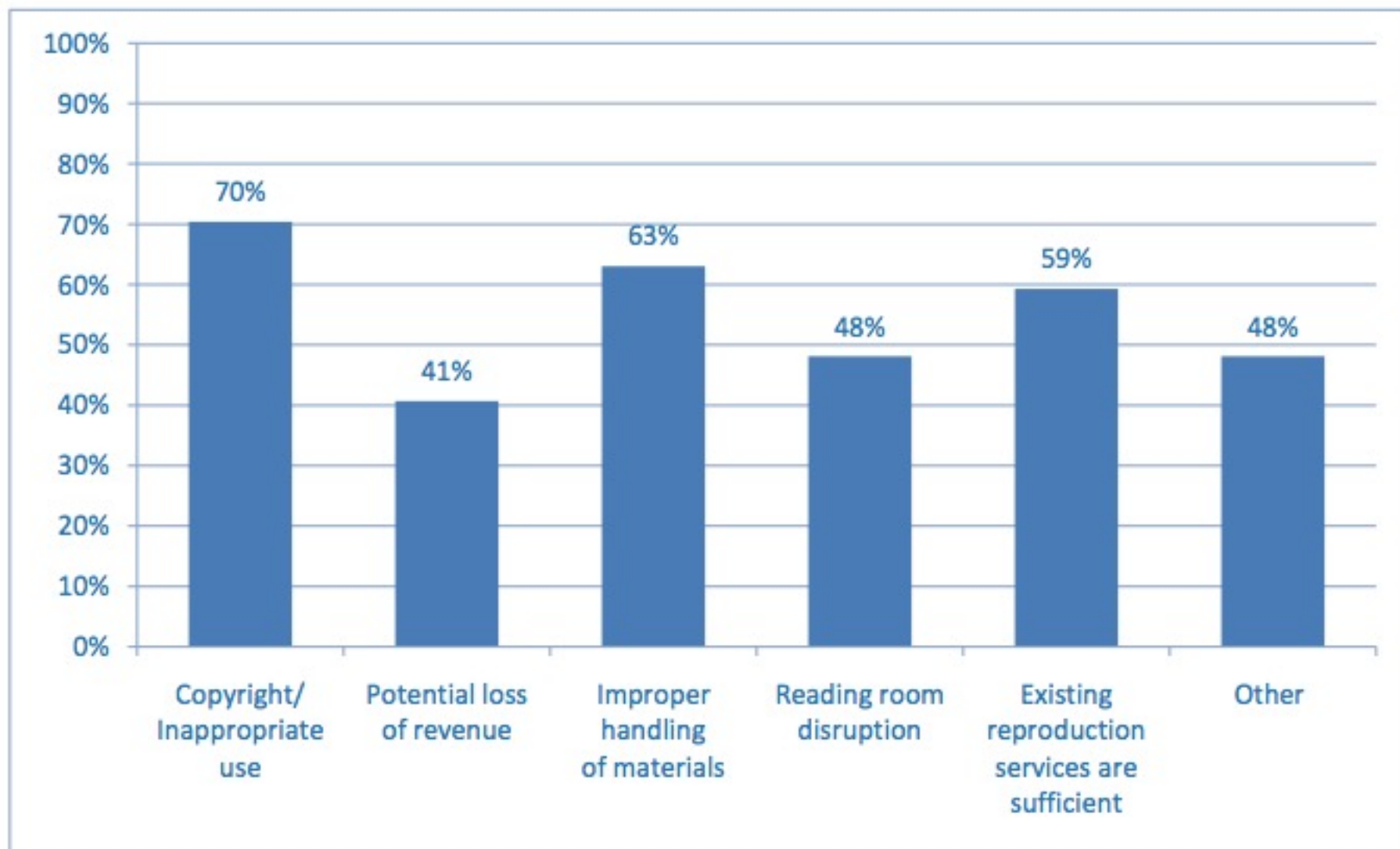
Use of digital cameras

Users may employ personal digital cameras in the special collections reading room: **87%**

C.f. Lisa Miller, et al. “*Capture and Release*”: *Digital Cameras in the Reading Room*. OCLC Research, 2010.

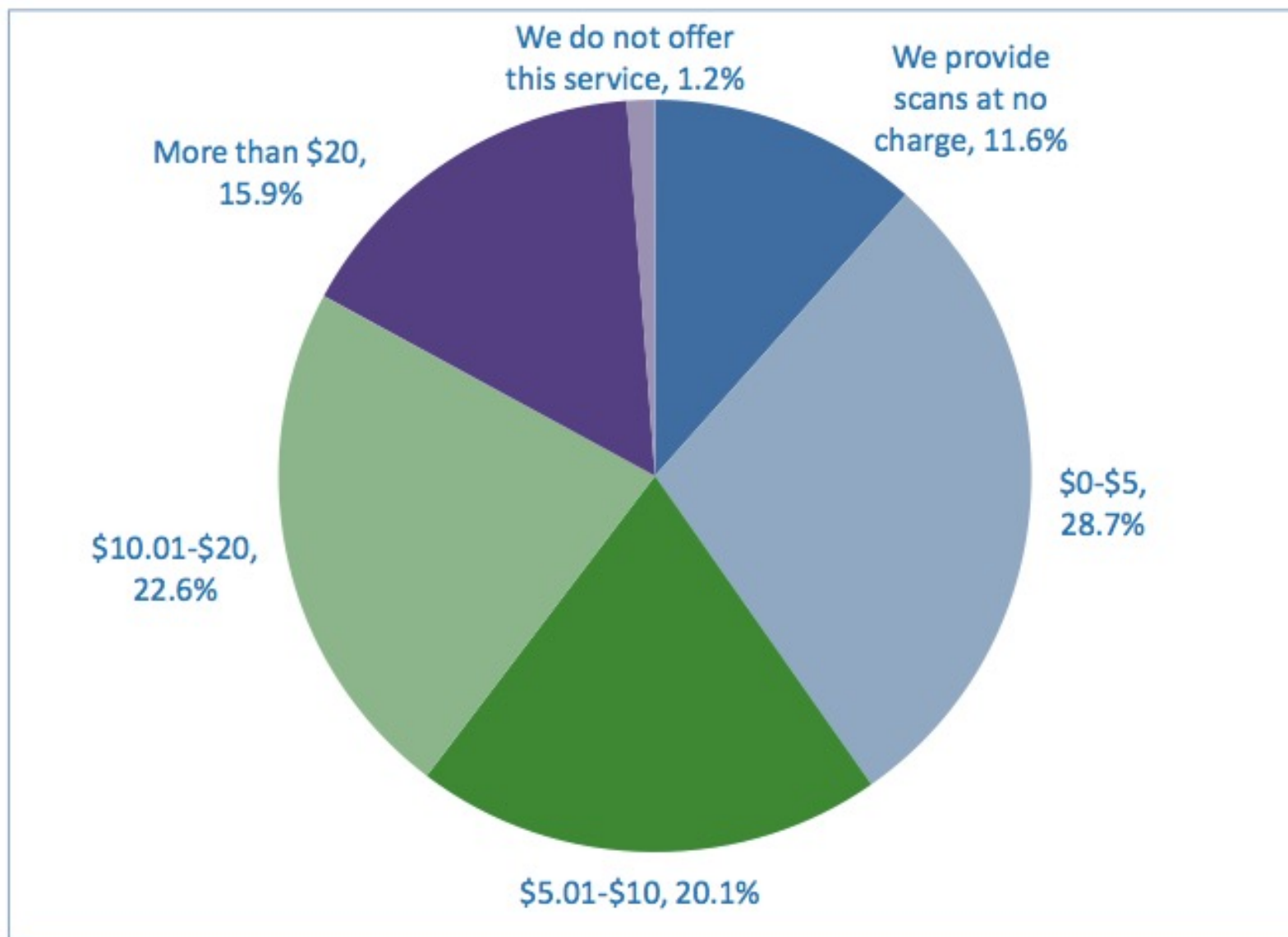
<http://www.oclc.org/research/publications/library/2010/2010-05.pdf>

Reasons to disallow digital camera use

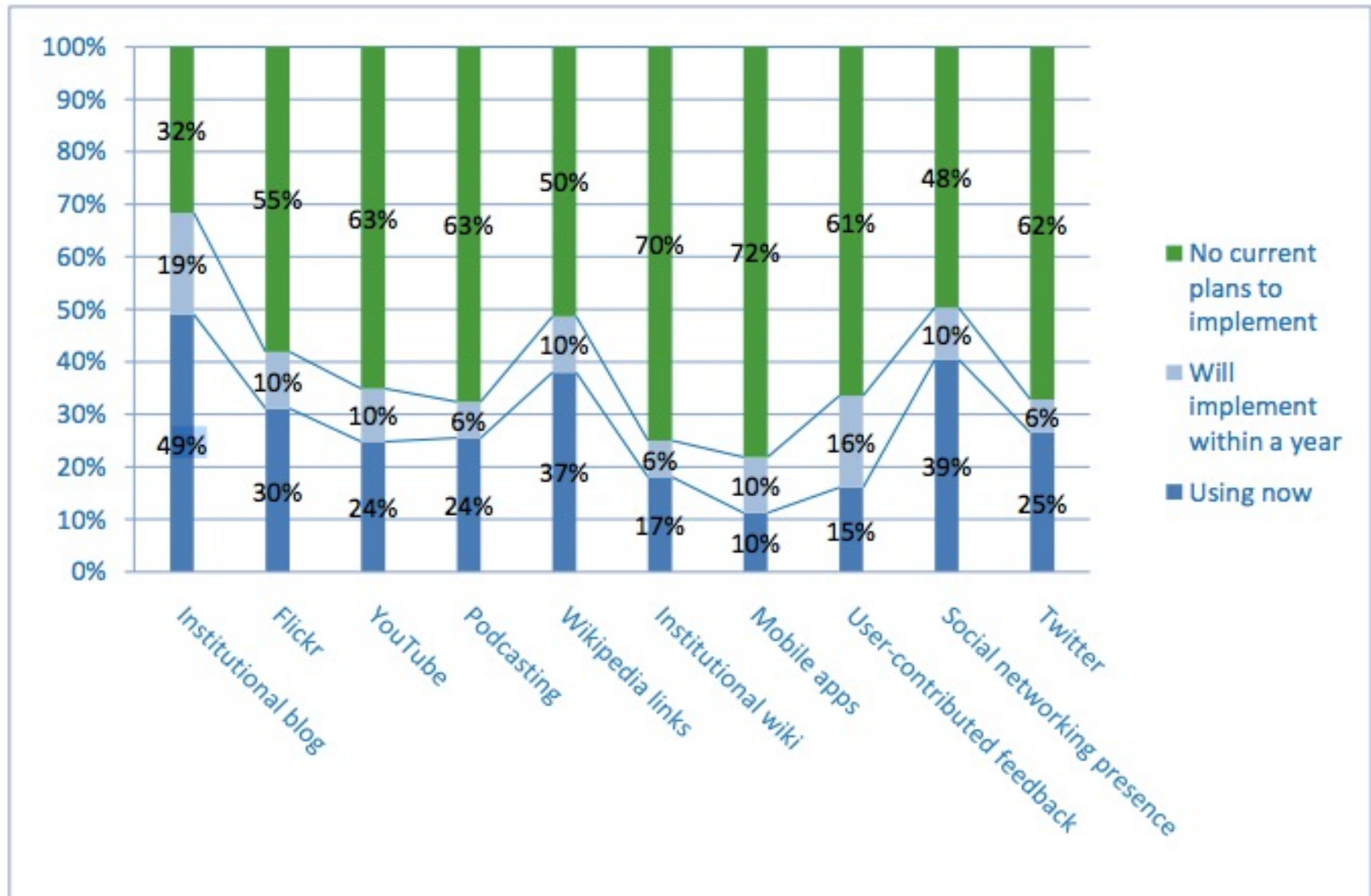


Note: n=27

Average charge for a digital scan



Web-based communication methods



User services: Sample question

**Does the level of use of special collections
justify the resources being expended?**

User services: Action items

Develop and liberally implement exemplary policies to *facilitate* rather than inhibit *access* to and *interlibrary loan* of rare and unique materials.

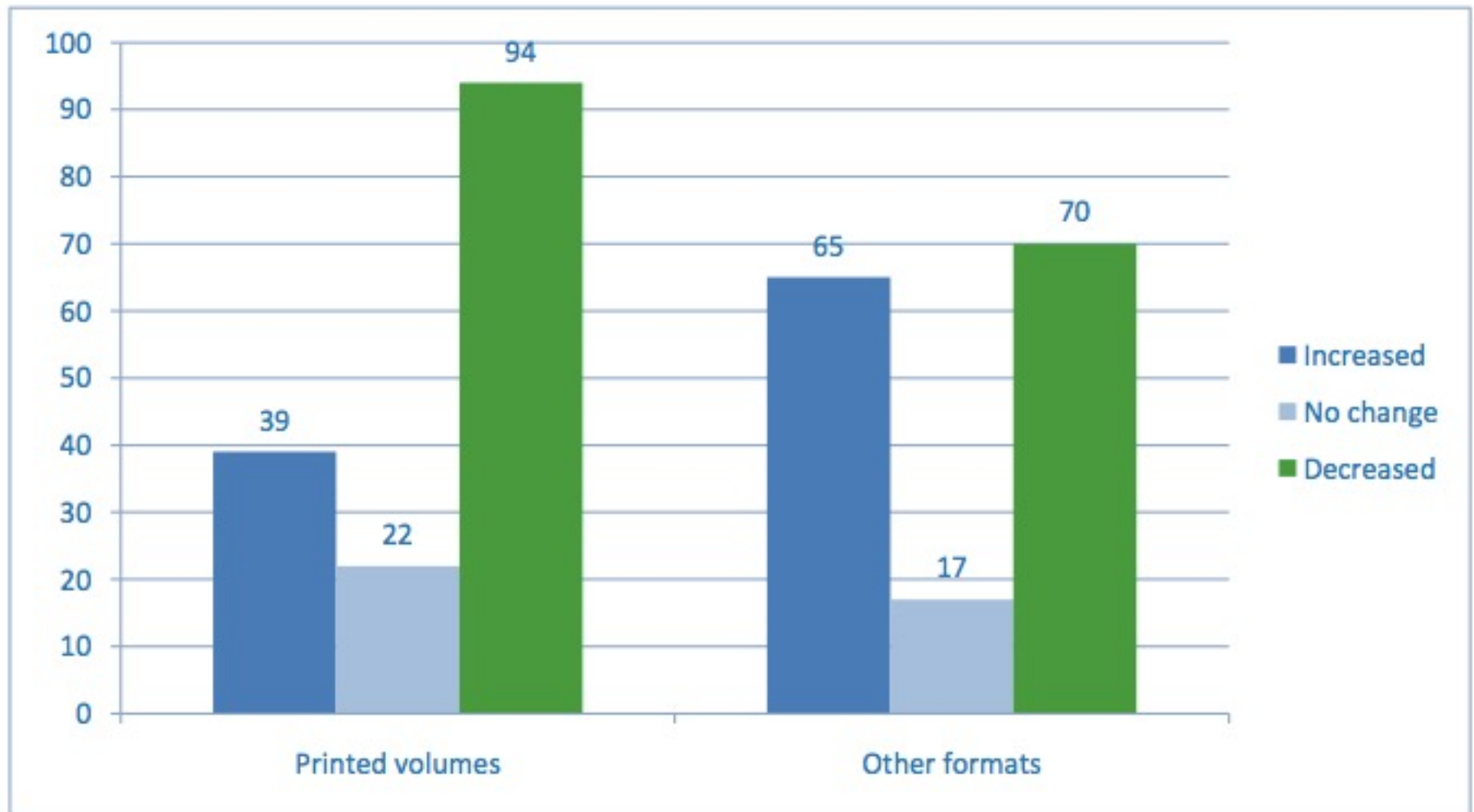
Cataloging and metadata

Online catalog records

- Books: 85%
- Maps: 42%
- Archival formats: 50% or less

ARLs show minimal improvement in “exposing hidden collections”

Change in size of backlogs



Note: Numbers of respondents.

Cataloging & metadata: Sample questions

Why are so many **backlogs** continuing to **increase**?

Why hasn't the emphasis on **sustainable metadata** methodologies had more **payoff**?

Cataloging and metadata: Action items

Compile, disseminate, and adopt a slate of *replicable, sustainable methodologies* for cataloging and processing to facilitate exposure of materials that remain hidden and *stop the growth of backlogs*.

Develop *shared capacities to create metadata* for published materials such as maps and printed graphics for which cataloging resources appear to be scarce.

Archival management

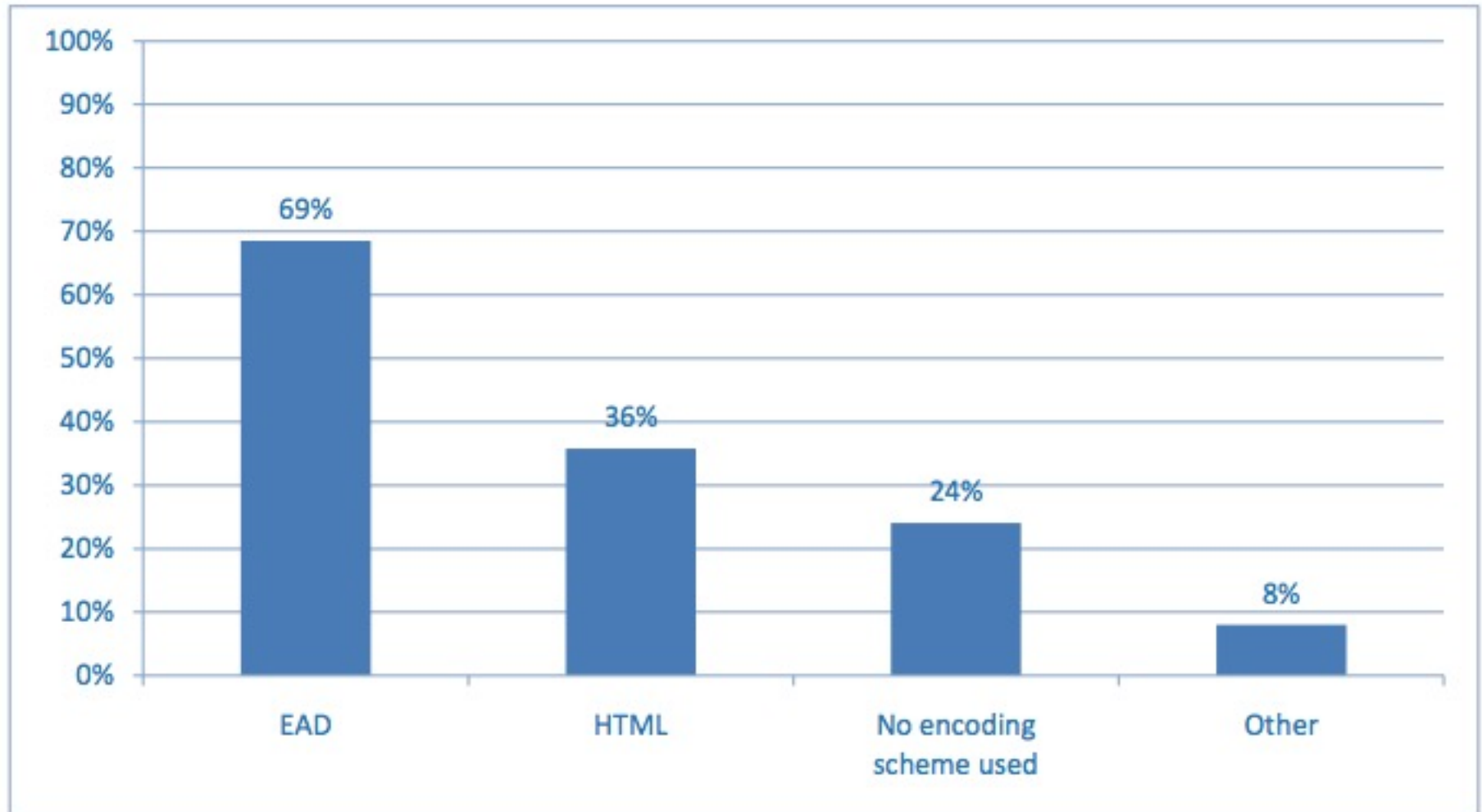
Archival finding aids

- Online: 44%
- Print-only or in local silos: 30%

Simplified processing techniques

- Always: 18%
- Sometimes: 57%

Encoding of archival finding aids



Note: Respondents could check all that apply. Percent of respondents, not finding aids.

Archival management

Finding aids tools are not standardized

- Most commonly used: word processing, databases
- Archivists Toolkit: 34%
- Archon: 11%
- ArchivesSpace tentatively forthcoming (AT + Archon)

Institutional archives

- Reports to library: 87%
- Responsible for records management: 70%

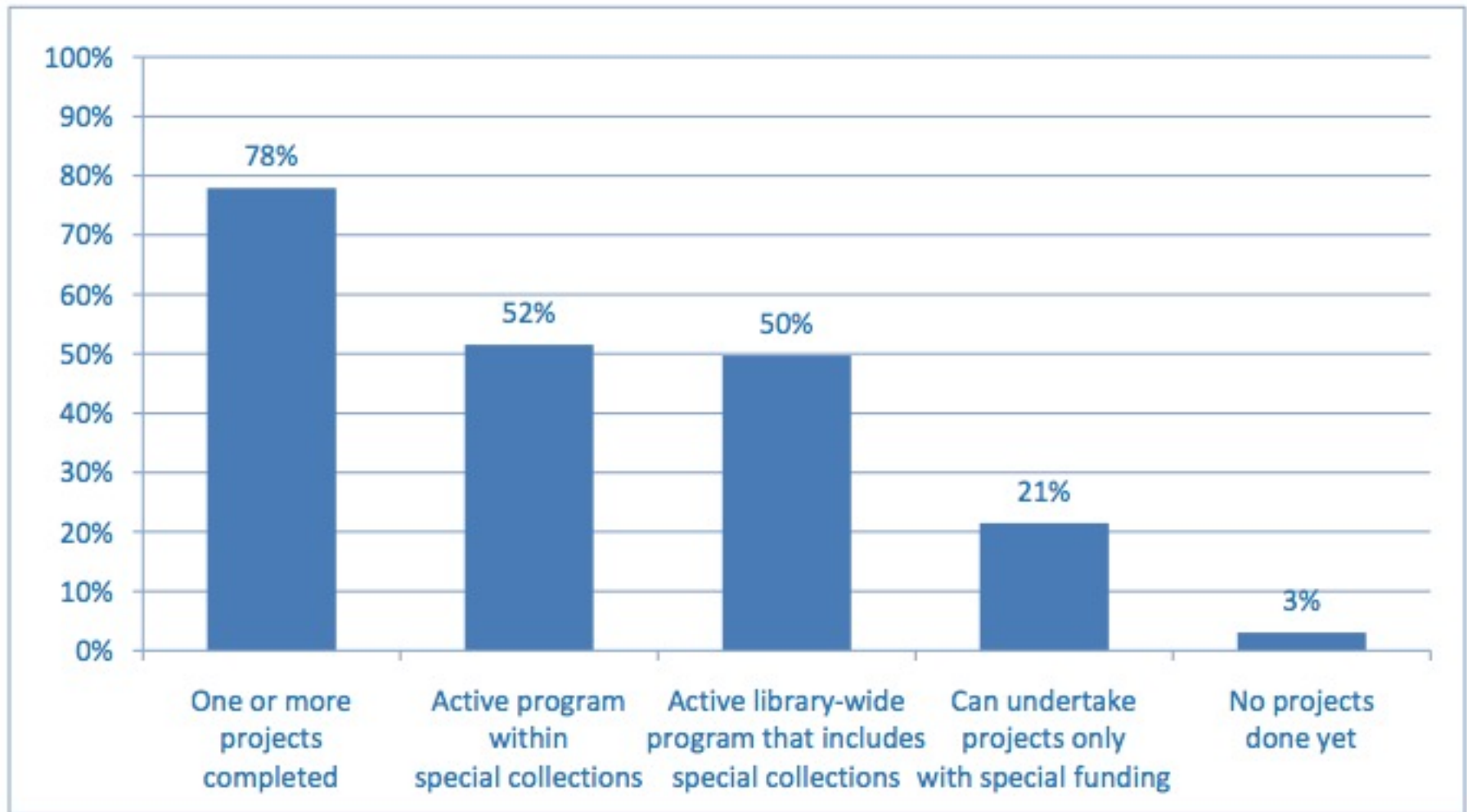
Archival management: Action item

Convert legacy finding aids using affordable methodologies to enable Internet access.

Resist the urge to upgrade or expand the data.

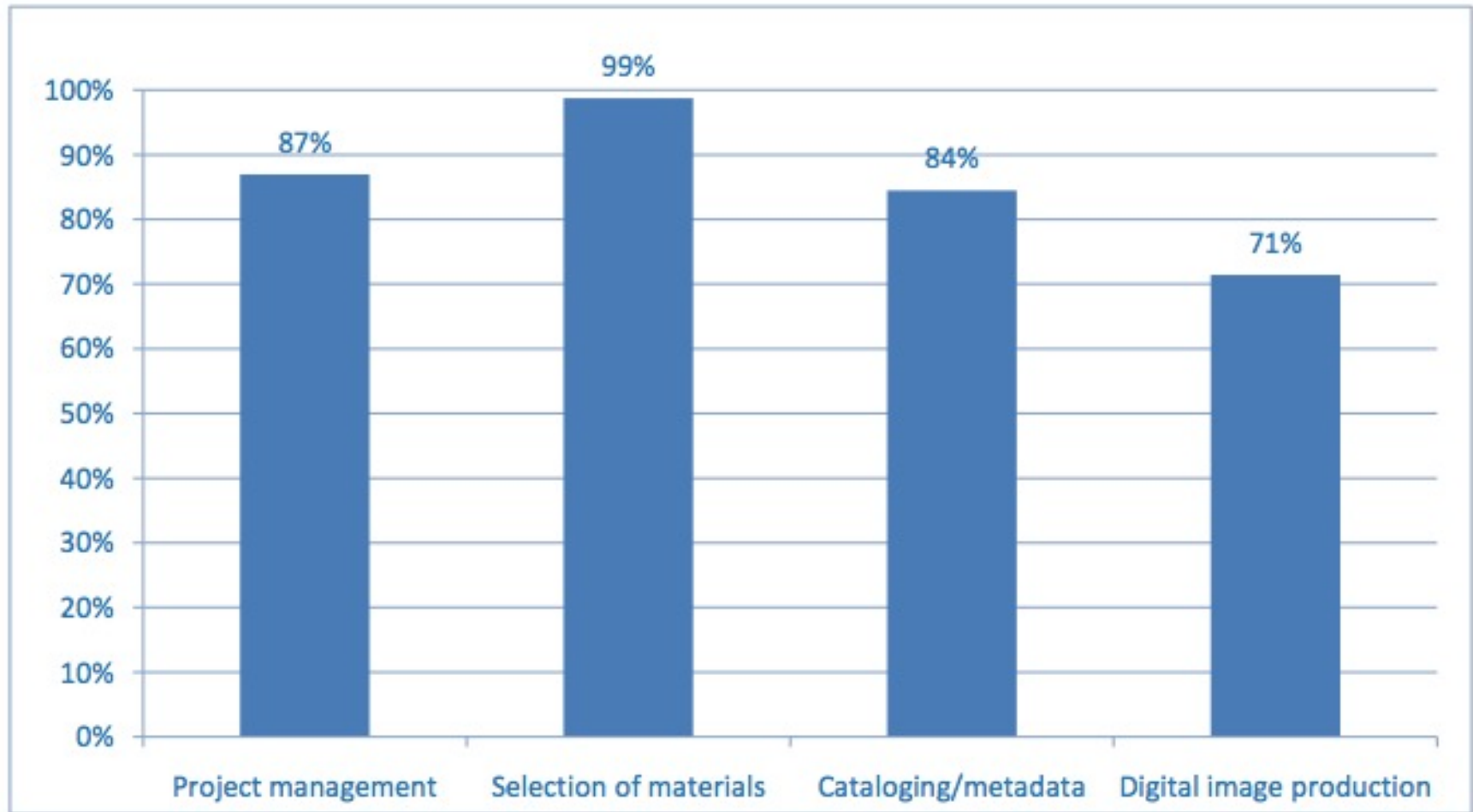
Develop tools to facilitate conversion from local databases.

Digitization

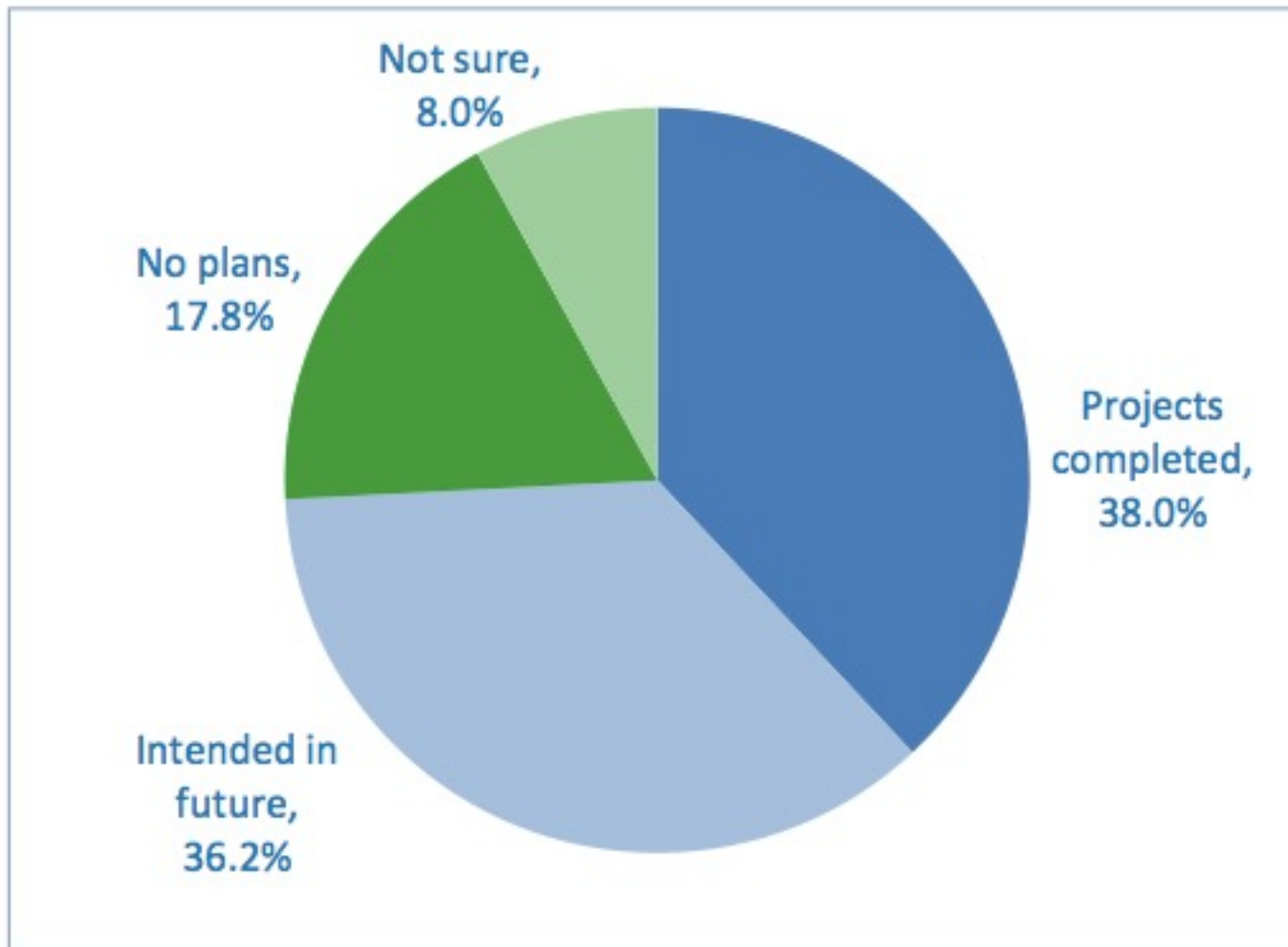


Note: Respondents could check all that apply.

Special collections involvement in digitization projects



Large-scale digitization of special collections



Definition: Systematic reproduction of entire collections using streamlined production methods that account for special needs.

Licensed content

Content licensed to commercial firms for digitization: **26%**

C.f. Principles to Guide Vendor/Publisher Relations in Large- Scale Digitization Projects of Special Collections Materials. ARL policy, approved July 2010.

http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/principles_large_scale_digitization.pdf

Digitization: Sample questions

What constitutes an effective **large-scale digitization** project?

Can we collaborate to complete the corpus of **digitized rare books**?

Digitization: Action items

Develop models for *large-scale digitization* of special collections, including methodologies for selection of appropriate collections, security, safe handling, sustainable metadata creation, and ambitious productivity levels.

Determine the scope of the existing corpus of *digitized rare books*, differentiating those available as open access from those that are licensed. Identify the most important gaps and implement collaborative projects to complete the corpus.

Born-digital archival materials

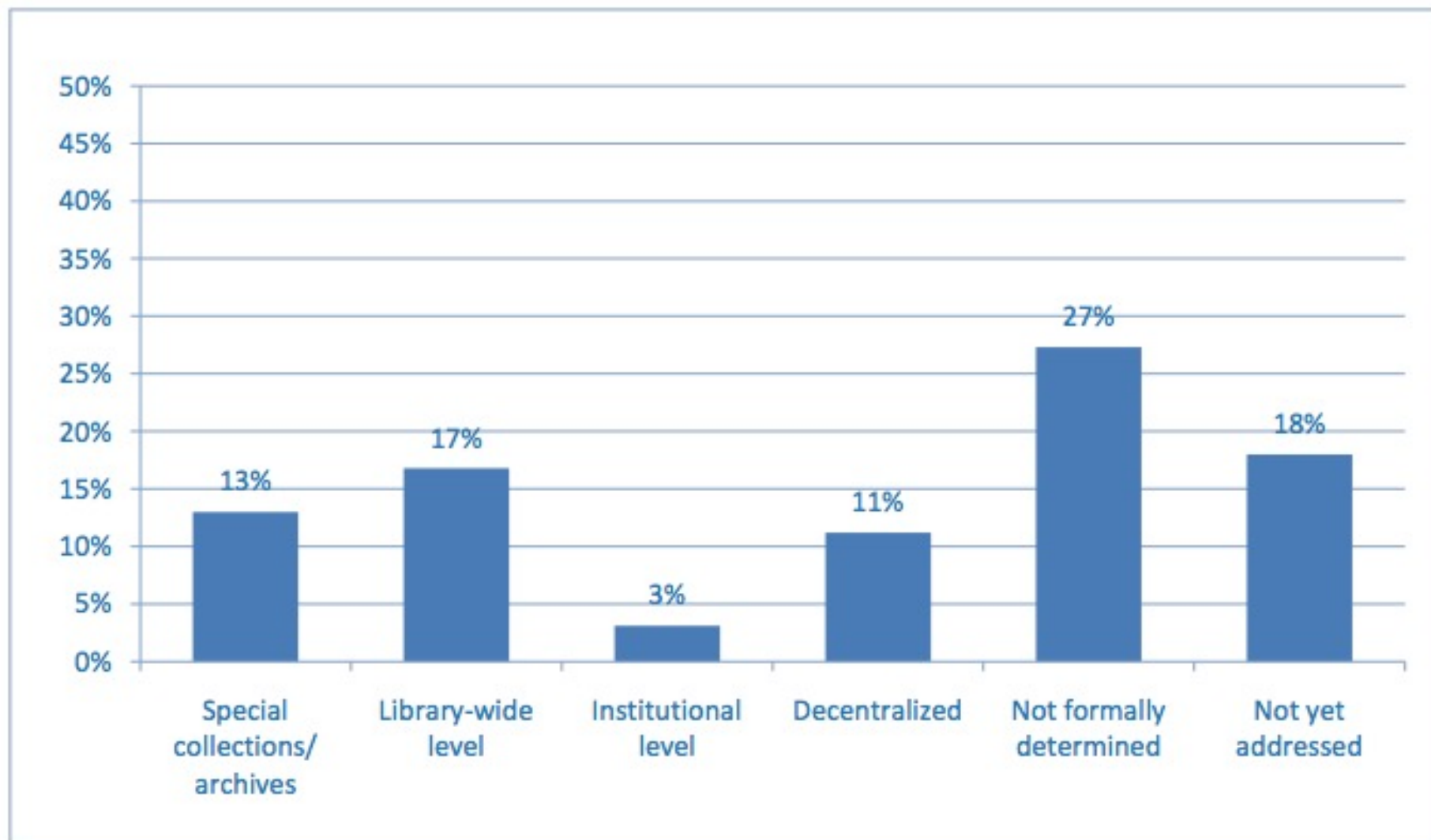
In a nutshell ...

- Undercollected
- Undercounted
- Undermanaged
- Unpreserved
- Inaccessible

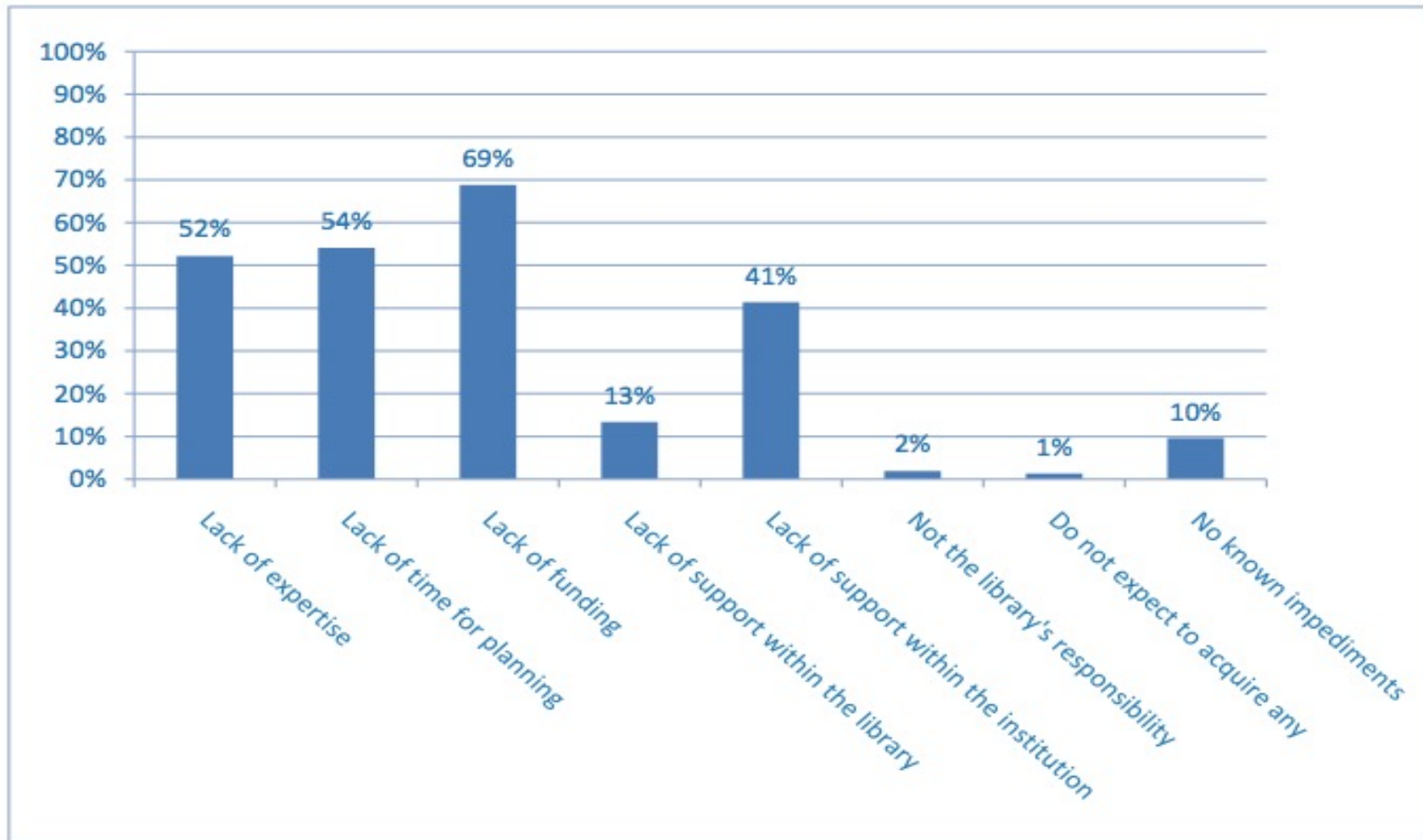
Born-digital archival materials

- Holdings reported by: 35%
 - Mean gigabytes: 1500 GB
 - Median gigabytes: 90 GB
 - Percent held by top two libraries: 51%
 - Percent held by top 13 libraries: 93%
- Digital materials currently held by: 79%
- Assignment of responsibility for born-digital management: 44%
- Education/training needed by: 83%
- We surmise that collecting is generally passive, sporadic, limited.

Responsibility for born-digital archival materials

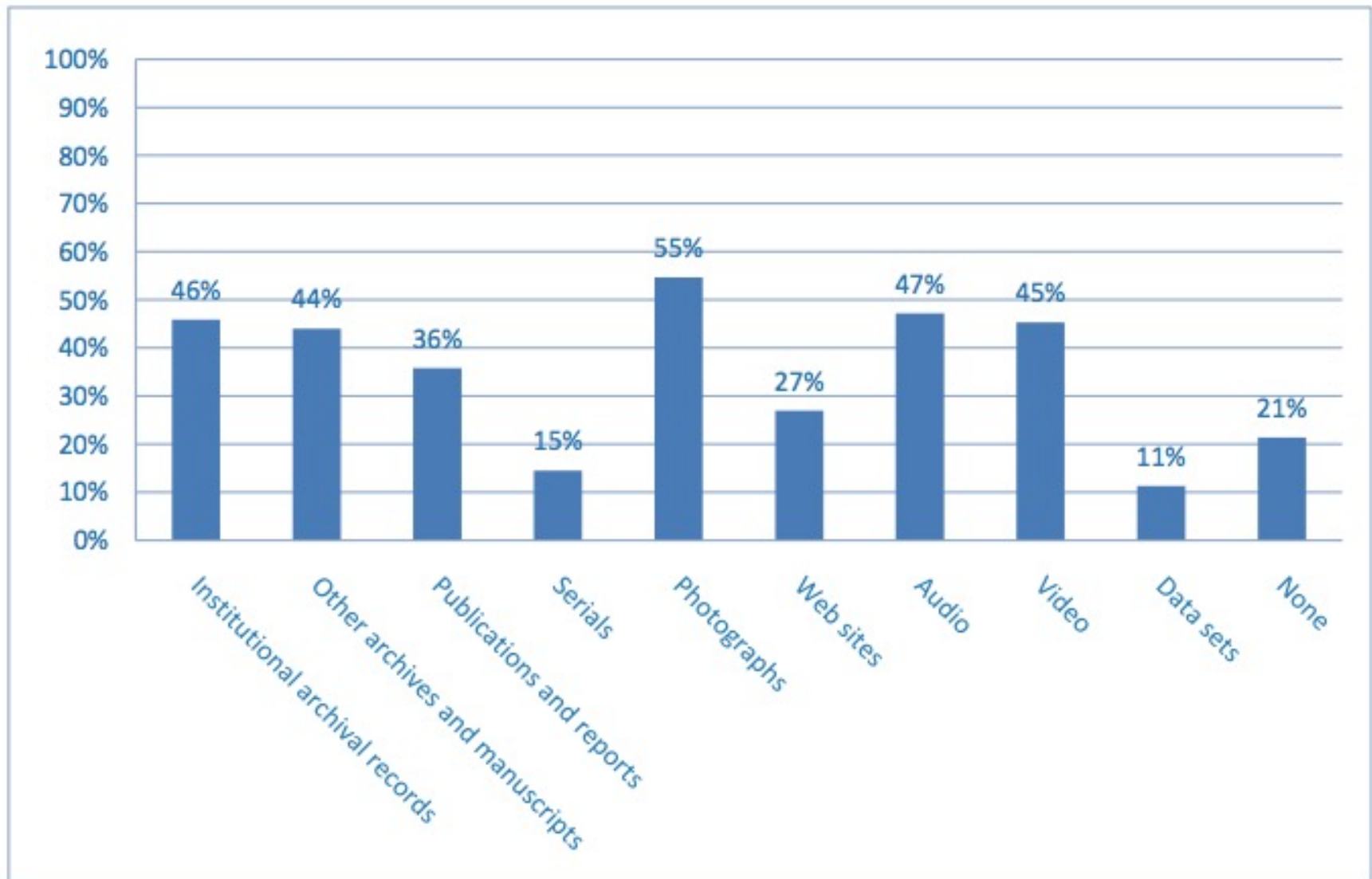


Impediments to born-digital management



Note: Respondents could check all that apply.

Born-digital materials already held



Born-digital materials: Sample questions

What would best help us **jump-start** progress on managing **born-digital** archival materials?

C.f. Ricky Erway. *Defining “born digital.”* OCLC Research, 2010.

<http://www.oclc.org/research/activities/hiddencollections/borndigital.pdf>

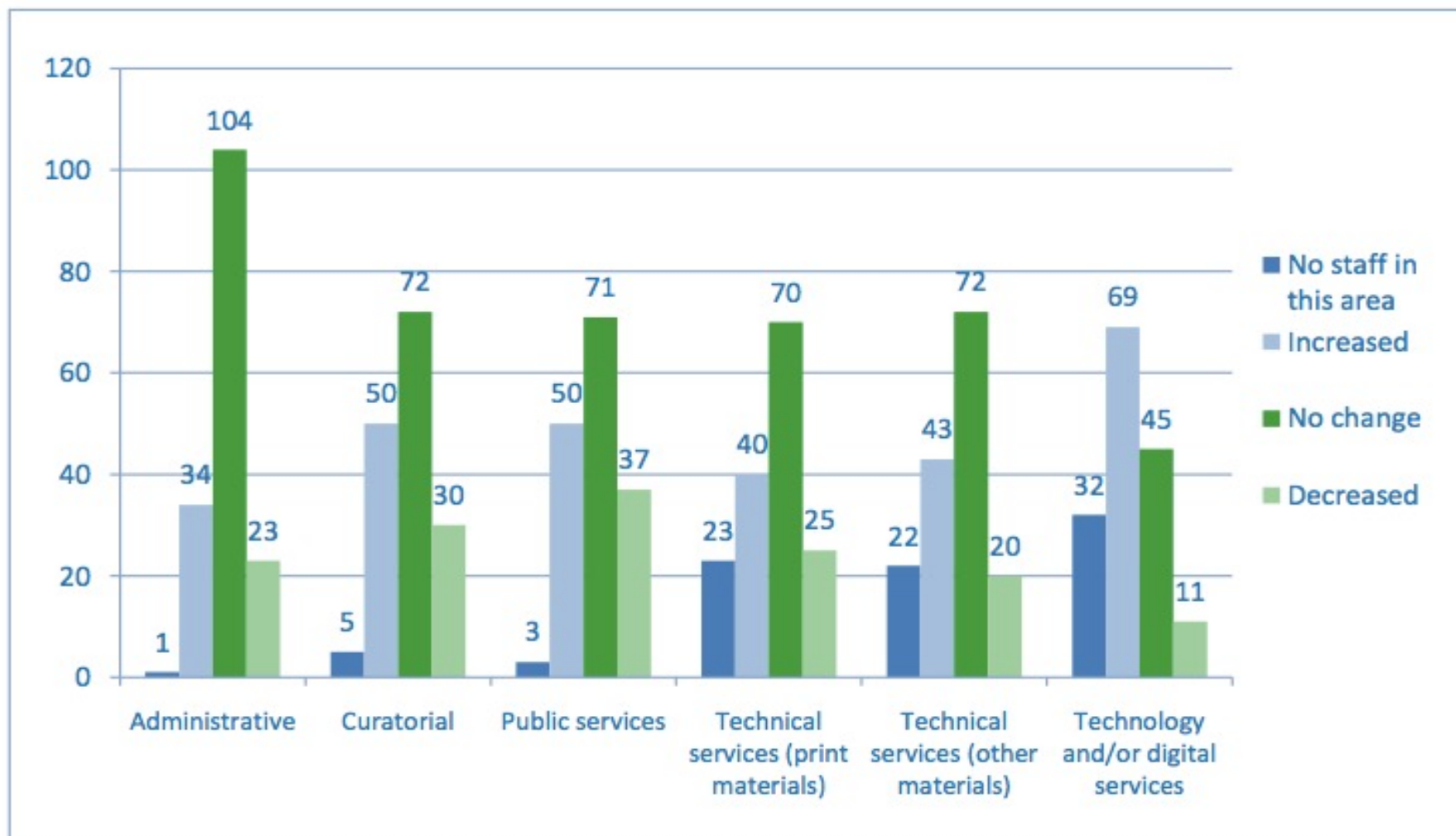
Born-digital materials: Action items

Define the characteristics of born-digital materials that warrant *management as “special collections.”*

Define a reasonable set of *basic steps* for initiating an institutional program for responsibly managing born-digital archival materials.

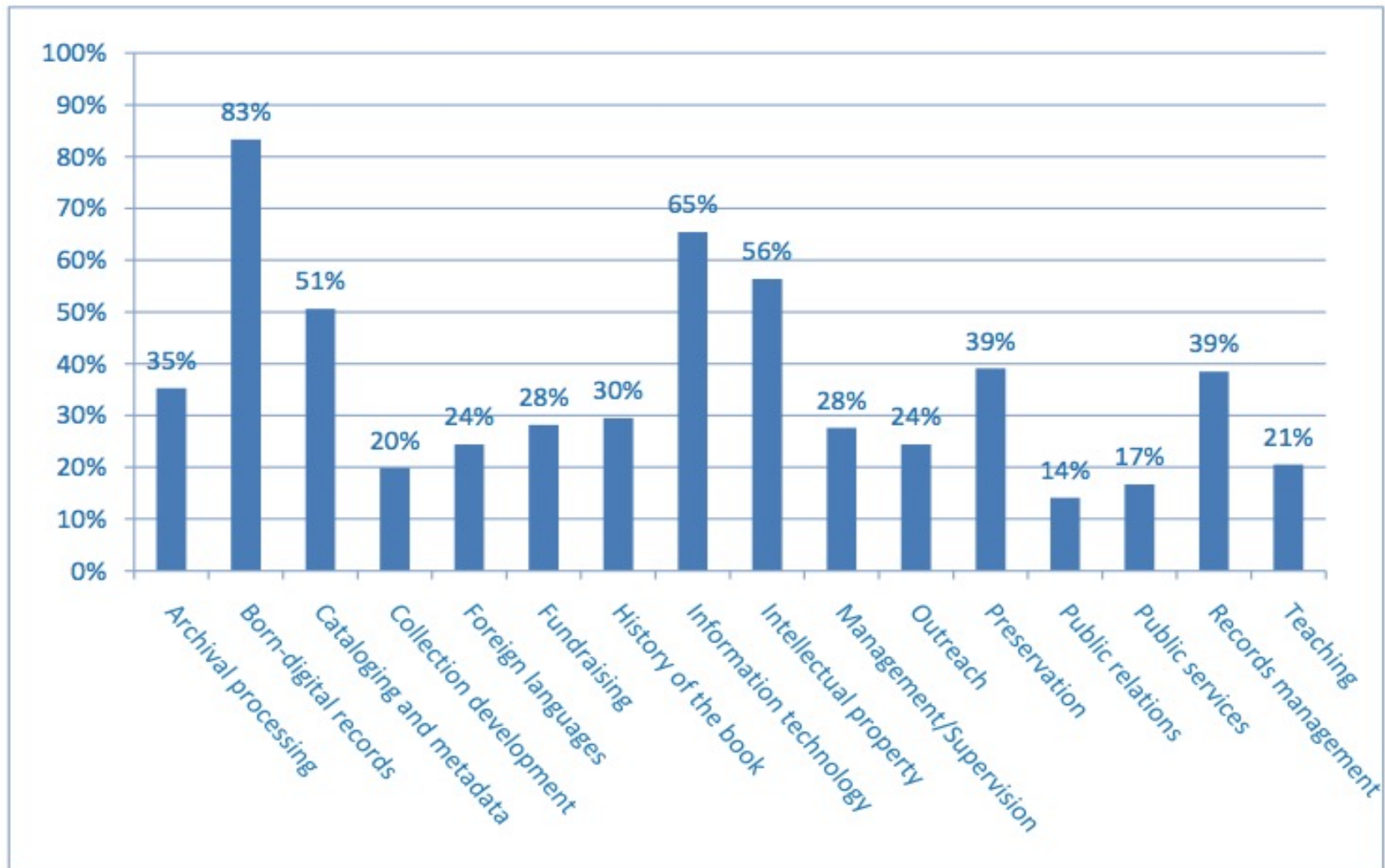
Develop *use cases and cost models* for selection, management, and preservation of born-digital archival materials.

Changes in staffing levels



Note: Numbers of respondents.

Education and training needs



Staffing: Action items

Confirm high-priority areas in which *education and training* opportunities are not adequate for particular segments of the professional community. Exert pressure on appropriate organizations to fill the gaps.

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<http://www.oclc.org/research/publications/library/2010/2010-11.pdf>