



PUBLIC LIBRARY VISITORS SURVEY– MOLDOVA 2015

Survey Results

Wave 2

Chisinau 2015

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Subject matter: This report provides an analysis of services provided by public libraries in Moldova, both those benefiting of Novateca program and those not under this program. Visitors of Novateca and NonNovateca entities assessed the impact these public libraries had on their quality of life. The report presents findings from the second wave survey (2015). The findings result from a comparative analysis of two surveys: in 2014 and 2015.

Methodology: The study was conducted based on a nationally representative survey covering all rayons of the country (both rural and urban areas), with the exception of Transnistrian region, for each of the two target group. The target group were visitors aged 14 years and more of public libraries from Novateca network and outside Novateca network. A total number of 600 visitors of Novateca libraries and 604 visitors of NonNovateca libraries have been interviewed, using a probabilistic and random sampling scheme. The error margin for this sample size is $\pm 4.0\%$. Data were collected in December 20, 2015 – January 27, 2016.

Main findings:

- Public libraries under the Novateca program continue to register higher share of regular visitors, compare to NonNovateca;
- Access to the services provided by a public library continues to be assessed as important / extremely important by most clients of the libraries, both Novateca and NonNovateca;
- In the second wave many Novateca services have been accessed less compare to the first wave;
- Overall, digital technologies have been used to the same extent in those two waves and continue to be perceived as the most important service provided by a library (mainly Novateca);
- Public libraries are an important source of acquiring technology habits in terms of: physical manipulations of equipment (computers, fax machines, copy machines etc.); operating Microsoft Office applications; using internet for various purposes (communication, looking for information, accessing e-services etc.), acquiring advanced abilities such as programing languages;
- The share of people who used Novateca library for communication purposes significantly decreased in 2015 compare to the previous survey.
- Services provided by public libraries positively impact the quality of life of persons accessing these services: e.g. save time, strengthens communication and relationships between families and friends abroad, improves academic performance of students, increases qualification of (potential) employees, raises awareness of community members about community issues and increases their participation in community life etc.
- The percentage of responses for various questions in the survey decreased in the second wave. It doesn't necessarily mean worsening of the quality of services Novateca libraries provide or worsening of the general perception about the Program. The decrease is rather due to the fact that Novateca program expanded considerably in 2015, thus increasing its coverage, especially in rural areas. On the other side, the data collection (field work) lasted longer and the probability to include irregular visitors in the survey was higher, or the survey shows that irregular visitors are less likely to use wide range of public library services. It is therefore some variances in the responses occurred. However, most variances between the two surveys are within the limit of sampling error.

Main conclusion: Modernization of libraries through widening the range of services provided lead to higher overall usage of library and consequently positively impacts the quality of people's life. The report concludes that Novateca libraries have more loyal and satisfied visitors, are highly valued by the public, but also prove significant positive impact at the individual and community level.

General recommendation: start /continue to invest in libraries infrastructure and human resources as these entities represent valuable resource centers at community level. It is recommended to continue the replication of the Novateca program at the country level.

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

Background information

Novateca is a program funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in cooperation with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and administered by IREX Moldova.

Through a five-year national program, Novateca is providing Moldovan citizens with access to relevant information and modern, locally tailored services in public libraries to enrich their lives, drawing on technology tools and trained librarians who can guide them in this process.

In order to measure the impact that libraries have on users' lives across several key program areas, but also to monitor the progress of program Public Library Visitors Survey is to be carried out on an annual basis, starting with the current one.

This is the second wave survey report (2015).

Four specific objectives have been followed by the survey:

- Provide information necessary for understanding the situation of public libraries and access to information in Moldova;
- Provide information for potential advocacy campaigns;
- Provide comparative analysis for libraries supported by Novateca and those outside the network;
- Provide longitudinal analysis with previously conducted survey(s).

Methodology and sample characteristics

Type of study: quantitative survey

Data collection method: combination of CAPI and PAPI method at public libraries in Moldova

Research technique: face-to-face interview with library visitors performed at the entrance of selected libraries, on the basis of structured questionnaires.

Target population: public library visitors aged 14 years and more, Moldovan residents, urban and rural area

Target libraries:

- libraries within Novateca network
- libraries outside Novateca network as a control group

Sample size:

- 600 respondents – visitors of Novateca libraries.
- 604 respondents – visitors of NonNovateca libraries.

Research tools: structured questionnaire, developed by Client and improved by CIVIS.

Language of interview: Romanian or Russian, depending of the respondent preference.

Questionnaire pre-test: Questionnaire was preliminary tested and finalized following the results of pre-test before multiplication.

Average length of interviews: 17 minutes.

Fieldwork period: December 20, 2015 – January 27, 2016.

Distribution of data collection by day of week:

Day of week	Number	Per cent
Monday	288	23.9
Tuesday	230	19.1
Wednesday	221	18.4
Thursday	134	11.1
Friday	153	12.7
Saturday	57	4.8
Sunday	121	10.0
Total	1204	100

Sample designSample characteristics:

- stratified – the following 2 stratification criteria were used:
 - *by region* – “X” regions similar to the administrative territorial units;
 - *by settlement* – villages, towns and municipalities;
- *strata volume* – the volumes of strata formed as a result of classification by regions and type of settlements include the number of registered users based on the official records for each public library.
- probabilistic – libraries are selected based on a probabilistic scheme, each one having a initial known non-zero probability to be included in the sample;
- multistage – in order to minimize the cost of the survey a multistage sample design is used:
 - *primary sampling unit (PSU) (library)* – the libraries from each stratum included in the sample are randomly selected with probability proportional to size (PPS) from each region.
 - *ultimate sampling unit (USU – respondent / library visitor)* – the respondents / library visitors is randomly selected, using a step approach. The step is differential by type and size of locality, as well as urban or rural.

Reference population: totality of library users. The information for sample design is based on the most recent official records about public library users, dated 2014.

Sampling frame: the list of all libraries. The sampling frame is different for each target group.

According to the *updated* list of libraries within Novateca Network provided by the Client, the total number of these libraries is 411 with a total registered of 235,867 users. While, there are registered in total 1,382 libraries in the country with a total number of 812,840 registered users.

Weighting procedure: The age group and gender profile obtained from this survey was compared with similar age groups (the target respondent for Barometer of Public Opinion was age range of 18+) and gender of respondents interviewed for the nation-wide Barometer of Public Opinion: December 2015, who were asked *how often they visited a public library during last 12 months*. It was observed that the differences of percentage for each age group and gender of public library visitors were included in the standard sampling error of +/- 4% for a sample size of 600 respondents. Due to this, the sample for second wave was not weighted.

Difficulties encountered / lessons learned

The following difficulties and lessons learned were faced repeatedly and should be mentioned:

1. The daily flow of visitors is very low in rural areas, but also in rayonal centers. The real number of visitors is far from the reported number by libraries. This made difficult to use step approach in case of all libraries. In order to solve this issue, interviewers visited respondent at home or they were invited to library. Respondents were selected from library registers using step procedure. Librarians assisted CIVIS interviewers to identify selected visitors.
2. For some libraries, especially in rural areas, registers are old and includes also people registered long time ago, which actually even do not visit library.
3. Visitors who come to libraries more often are more likely to be interviewed, while those with lower frequency are less likely. This impacted the age and maybe gender of resulted profile of respondents. It seems that young people, especially students, create the main group of library visitors, but many of them also visit library more often due to their educational responsibilities. In order to avoid situation with low presence of elder groups of visitors, it was slightly balanced with quota procedure.
4. The low flow of visitors, especially, in rural areas is also due to the cold season, when many public libraries are not heated. In these cases, libraries are either closed, or open for a couple of hours during the day or opened upon request of individual visitors. Due to this situation it is advised to conduct the field work for the next waves in warm seasons – autumn or spring.
5. Another barrier was that head of libraries were busy at the end of year with closing / finalizing accounting and statistical reports.

However, generally, the survey was well perceived both by interviewers and respondents due to the interested topic.

Librarians were very polite and provided necessary support to interviewers.

Socio-demographic profile of respondents

Figure D1. Gender profile

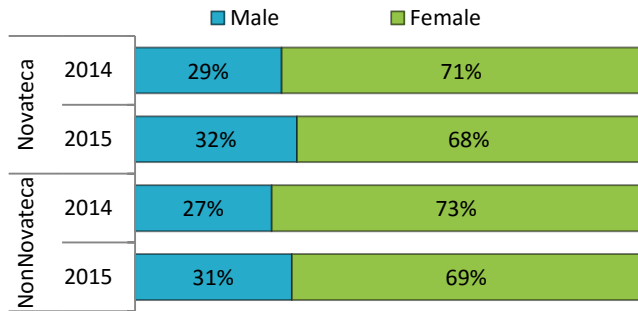


Figure D2. Age profile

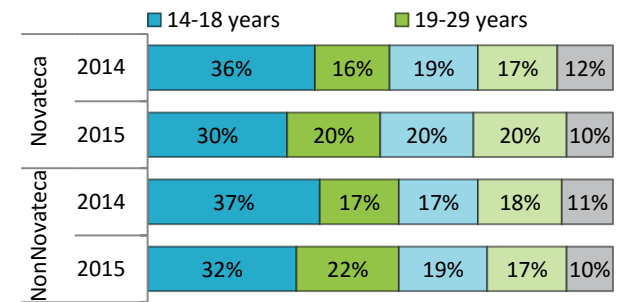
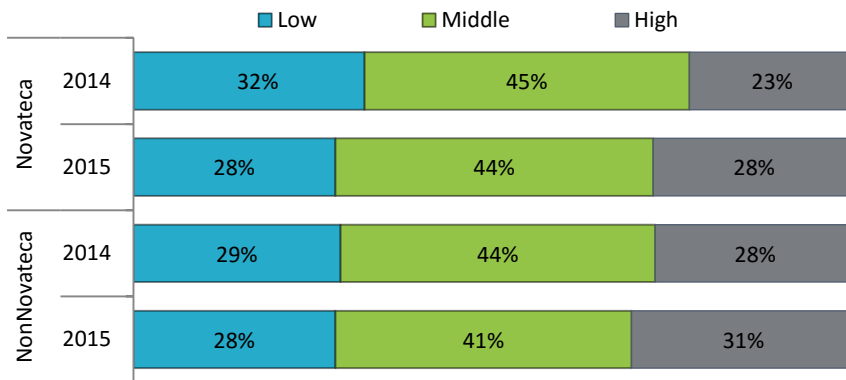


Figure D3. Level of education



Note: Grouping of level of education is done using the following principle: low level – primary and gymnasium school (up to 8 grade), middle level – includes secondary school, lyceum and technical/vocation school; high level – university, master degree, PhD.

Figure D4. Employment status

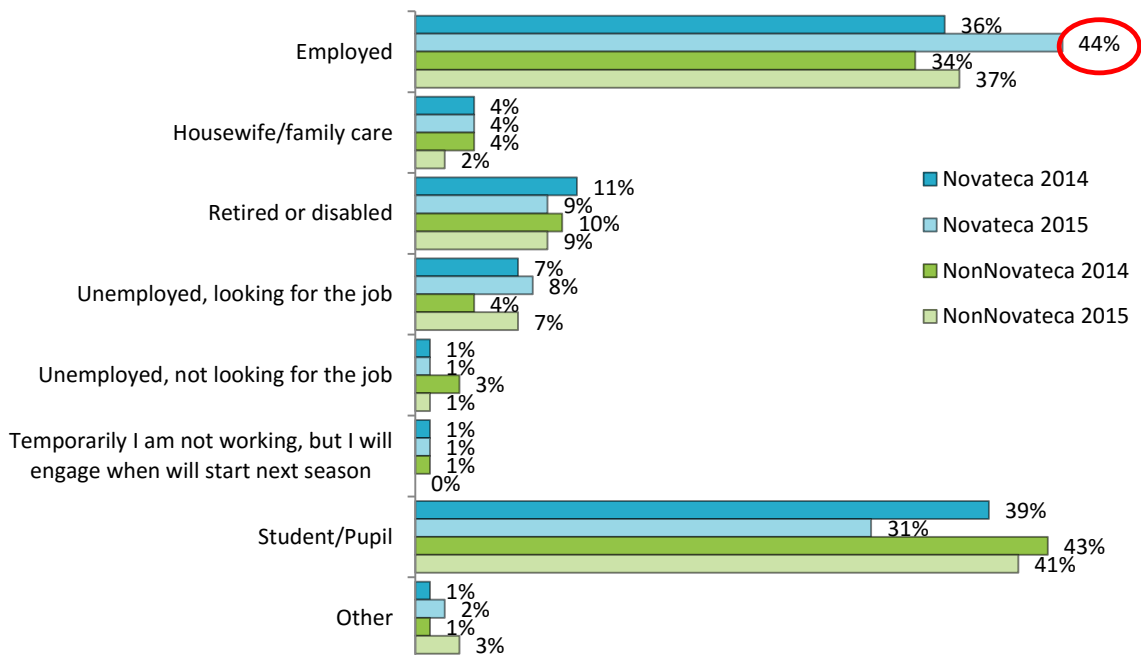


Figure D5. Health status (disability)

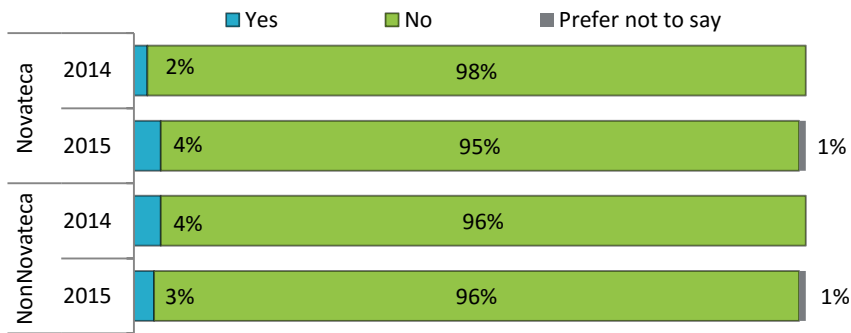


Figure D6. Access to technologies at home

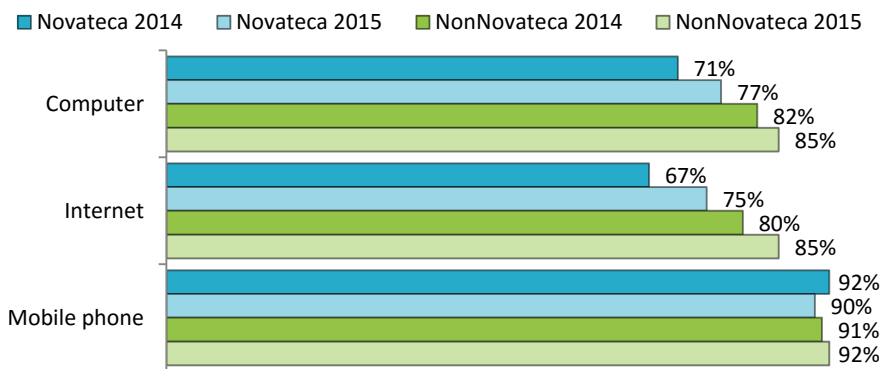


Figure D7. Ethnicity

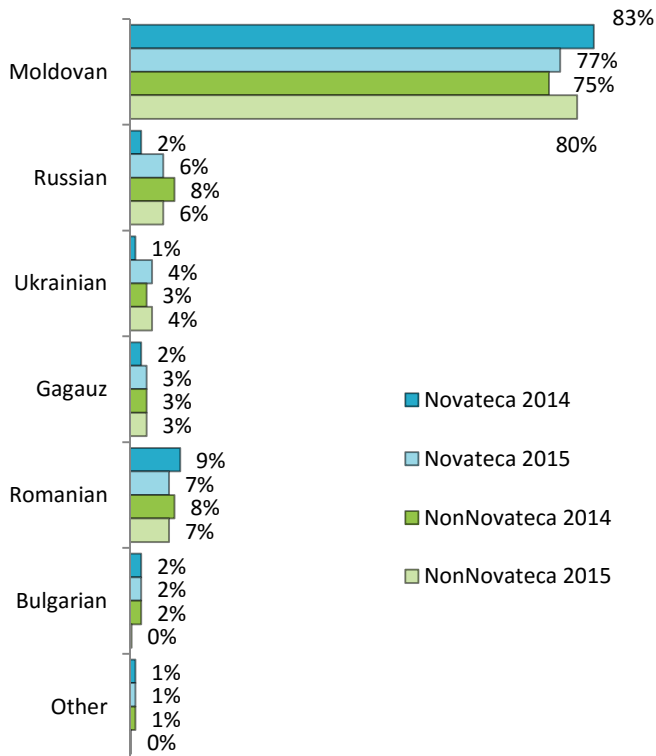


Figure D8. Residence

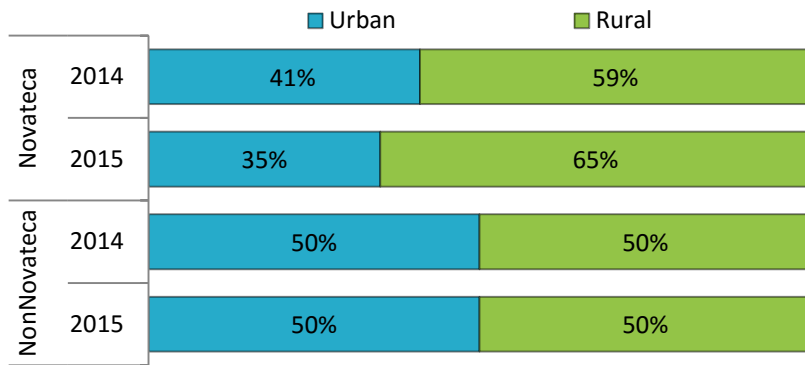


Figure D9. Region

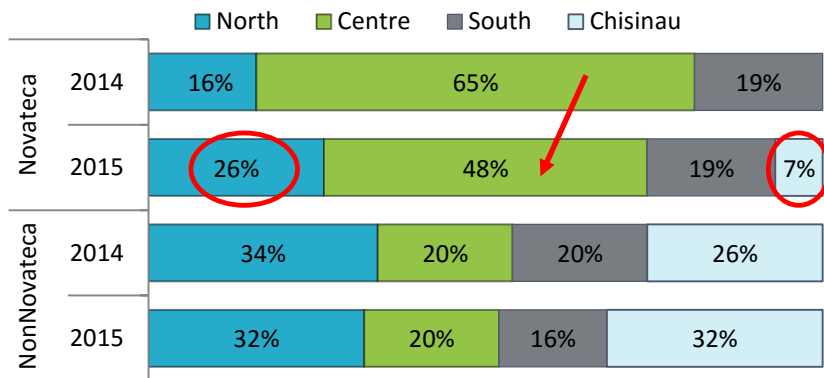
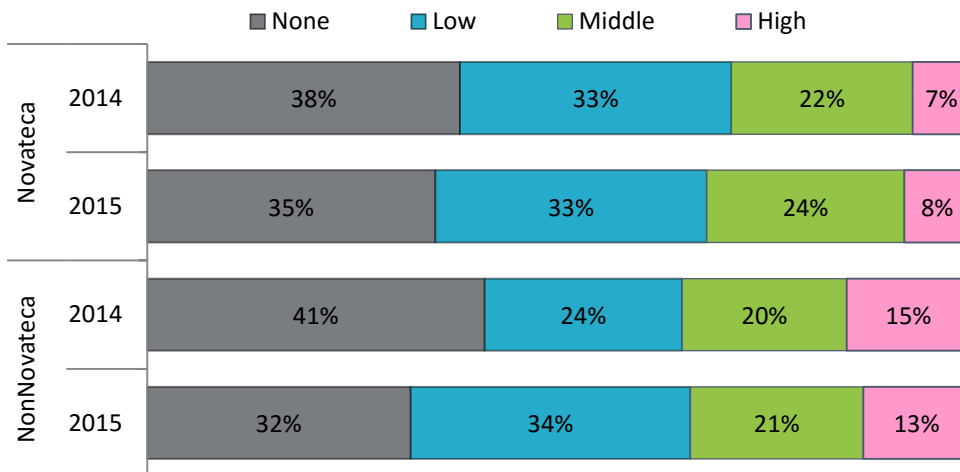


Figure D10. Level of personal income



Note: Calculation of level of income is based on the official data of minimum monthly amount of living: low – below amount of 1,800 MDL; medium – 1,801-3,600 MDL and high – more than 3,600 MDL

OVERALL STATUS AND PERCEPTIONS

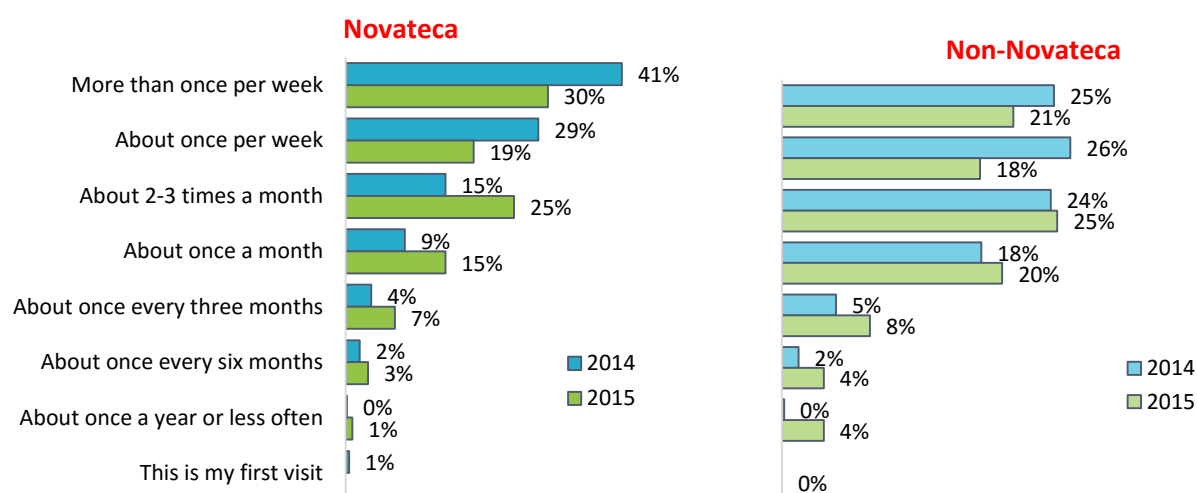
Frequency of visits at public library

The frequency of visits of Novateca libraries decreased in the second wave. As shown in the Figure 1, the percentages of people who came often to the library (at least once per week) decreased (from 70% in 2014 to 49% in 2015), while the share of those visiting the library once or several times per month increased (from 24% in 2014 to 40% in 2015). This finding might be explained by: a) the fact that Novateca network expanded significantly during last year and b), most likely, the field work period for second wave was longer than in the first wave, leading to more opportunities for irregular visitors to be covered.

The situation is similar for NonNovateca responses (less people visit the library at least weakly).

However, Novateca clients still visit public libraries significantly more often compare to NonNovateca users – Figure F1. Half of Novateca users (49%) and 39% of NonNovateca visitors go regularly to public libraries (more than once per week or about once a week).

Figure F1. Frequency of visits at public library (%)



Sample: 420/600 Novateca respondents and 409/604 NonNovateca respondents

F1. How often have you visited a public library in the last 12 months?

The overall profile of Novateca users going *regularly* to public libraries is women, people from Northern region, those lower educated, all ages (less those aged 25-39), with almost equal shares in terms of residence (rural or urban).

Perception of importance of services a public library should provide

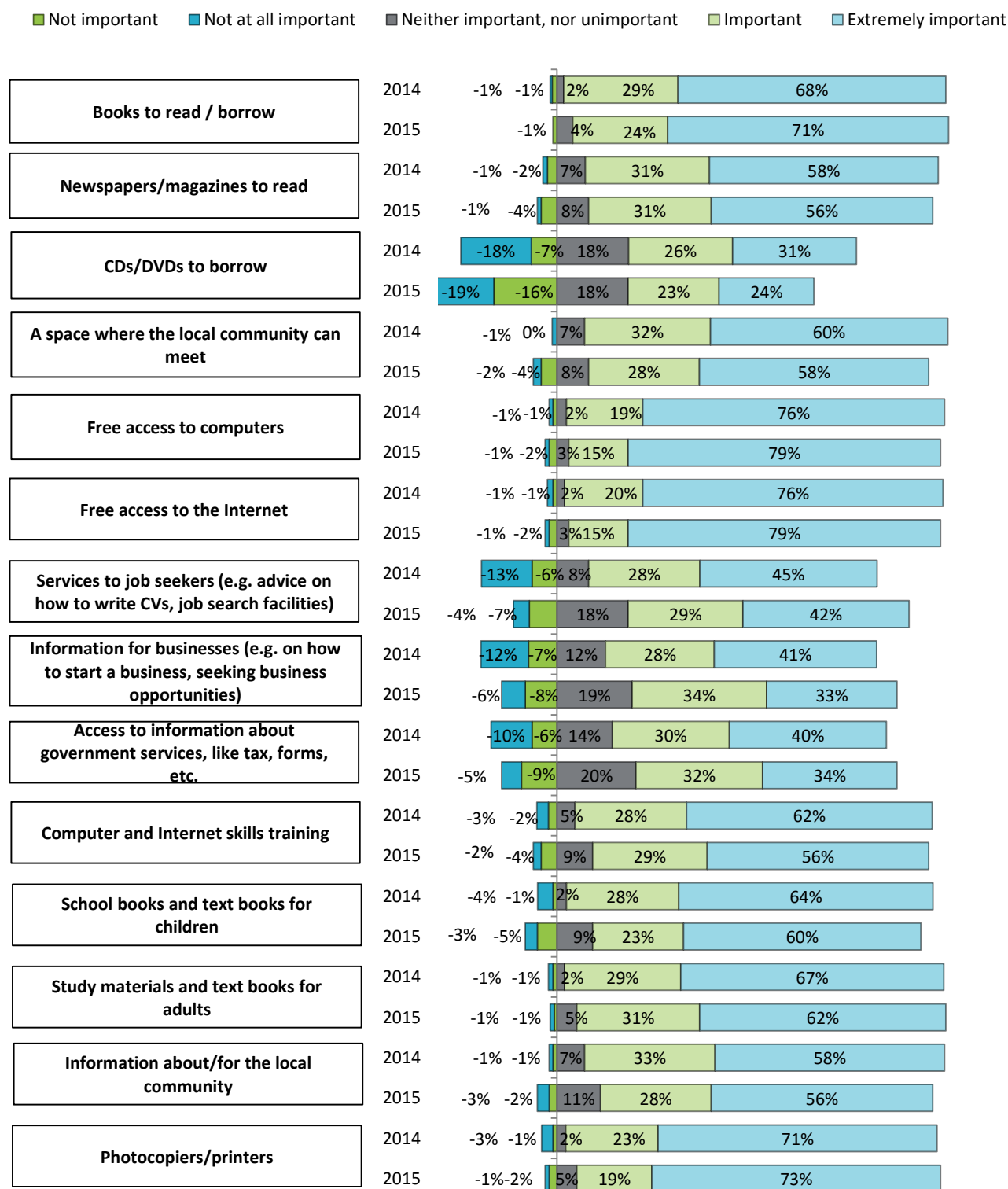
Access to the services provided by a public library continues to be assessed as important / extremely important by most clients of the libraries, both Novateca and NonNovateca (Figure F2.1). Among different types of services provided, technologies (access to computer and internet, and availability of photocopiers / printers) continue to be most appreciated. These are followed by printed information sources (books to read / borrow; school books and books for children; study materials for adults; newspapers / magazines to read; other information). As for the expertise insured by the libraries' personnel, it is more important in terms of computer skills training, and less important in terms of obtaining business-related information, information about government services or in terms of finding / applying for a job. At the same time, respondents perceive public libraries as a place where community members can meet, socialize and collaborate. They highly appreciate the events organized within the library (exhibitions, meetings with book authors, chess and checker tournaments, meetings with foreign delegations, events for elder people and for pupils etc.).

The data also shows that borrowing CDs/DVDs is still the most “unpopular” service according to clients of both types of libraries. Moreover, the importance of this service considerably decreased in the second wave.

Another evidence-based finding is that in 2015 there were fewer clients of Novateca considering that it is not important for a library to provide information for business and/or information about government services.

The data to prove these statements is presented in Figures F2.1 - F2.2.

Figure F2.1. Importance of various services to be available in a public library – Novateca



Sample: 420/600 Novateca respondents / F2. How important you think each service is?

Even if most respondent rated the majority services as important or very important, some differences in perceptions can be noted for specific social and demographic variables. In case of Novateca users, women, rural residents, people from North and those with higher level of education seem to be more interested in the wide range of public library services comparing with urban residents, men and lower educated people. As per the age of respondents, older people are more interested in reading newspapers and magazines in the library, accessing information about public / government services and in meeting with other community members. Younger clients are more interested in accessing computer and internet for free, in finding information for business. In case of NonNovateca users, women, people from South and rural residents seem to be more interested in services provided.

The profile of visitors for each type of service is described below:

Books to read / borrow: residents from North (more than from other regions), women (more than men), with almost equal shares of people from rural and urban area, different age categories and level of education;

Newspapers / magazines to read: predominantly residents from North, age 25 +, women, with higher education;

CDs / DVs to borrow: predominantly respondents from North and South, younger than 55 years old, women;

A space where the local community can meet: predominantly visitors from Centre and Chisinau, age 39 +, women, average level of education;

Free access to computers: to a higher extent, residents from North and South, rural area, younger than 55, women;

Free access to internet: to a higher extent, residents from North, rural area, younger than 55, women;

Services to job seekers: to a higher extent, residents from North and Centre, rural area, aged 25-54, women, with average and high level of education;

Information for business: predominantly respondents from North, rural area, aged 25-39, average and high education;

Information about government services: predominantly from outside Chisinau, rural, aged 25 +, women, average and high education;

Computer and internet skills training: predominantly from North and Centre, aged 14-24 and 40-54, women;

School books for children: most often respondents from North and Chisinau, rural area, women;

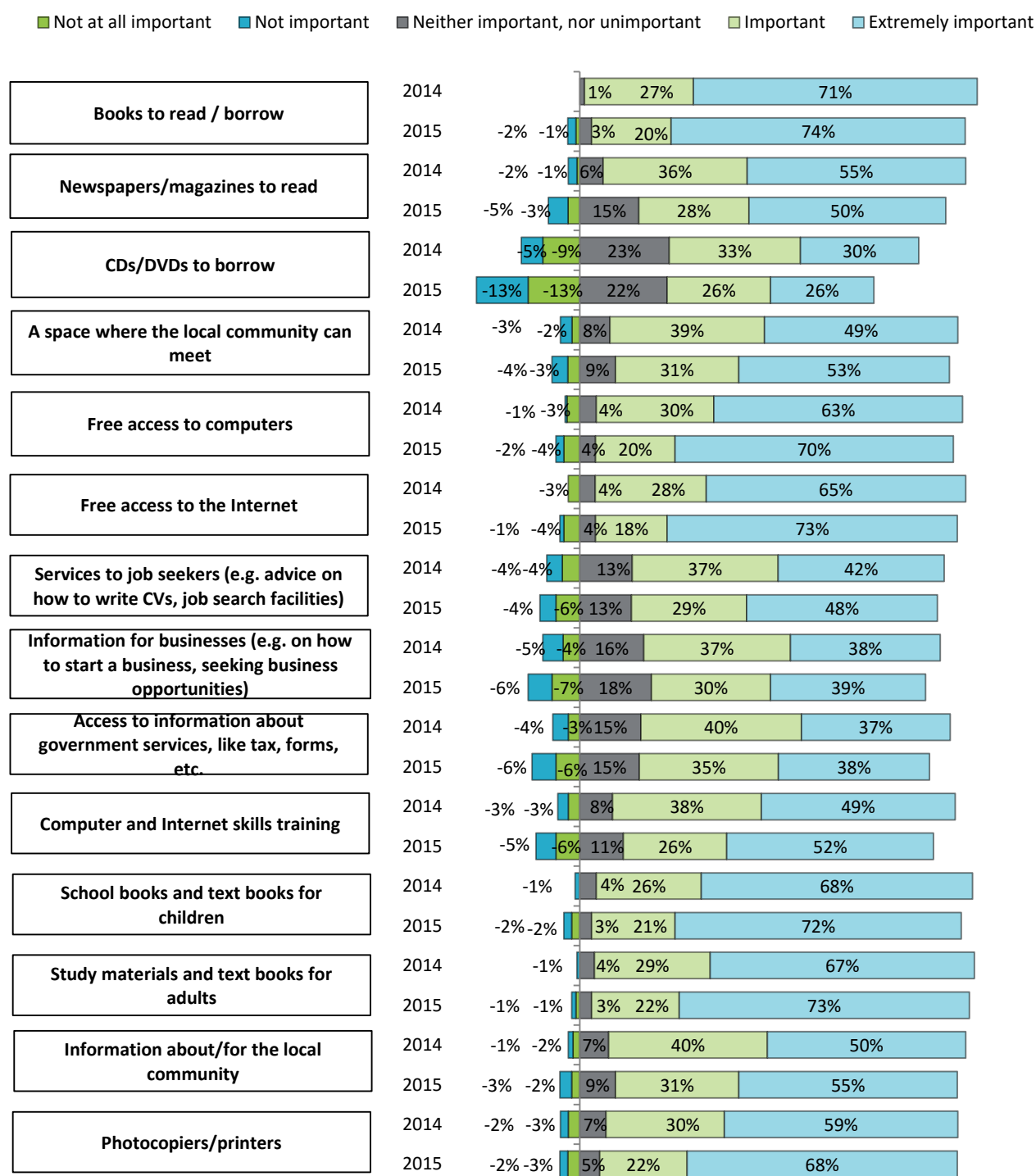
Study material for adults: to a higher extent people from Chisinau. As for other characteristics – residence, age, sex and education – there are no significant differences;

Information about the local community: to a higher extent people from Chisinau, from rural area, aged 40 – 54, women, average and high education;

Photocopiers / printers: from all regions (except Chisinau), rural area, with no differences based on age, sex and education.

Another observation based on Figures 2.1. and 2.2 is that visitors of Novateca libraries assess to a higher extent (difference of 5%-9%) the importance of modern technologies, as compared to NonNovateca visitors. Therefore, higher percentage of Novateca visitors appreciate as *extremely important* free access to computers and Internet, photocopiers / printers, as well as computer and internet skills training. On the other side, more visitors (6% - 12% more compared to Novateca) of NonNovateca libraries appreciate as *extremely important* availability of services to job seekers, information for business, school books and text books for children and study materials and text books for adults.

Figure F2.2. Importance of various services to be available in a public library – Non-Novateca



Sample: 409/604 NonNovateca respondents / F2. How important you think each service is?

The comparative analysis of two survey waves shows that the perception of importance of a wide range of services slightly decreased (although not exceeding the sampling error) in the second wave for both types of libraries.

Visitors of NonNovateca libraries seem to be less interested in the computer and internet skills training compare to Novateca clients. However, they are more interested in study materials and text books for children, information on government services, as well as information about services for job seekers.

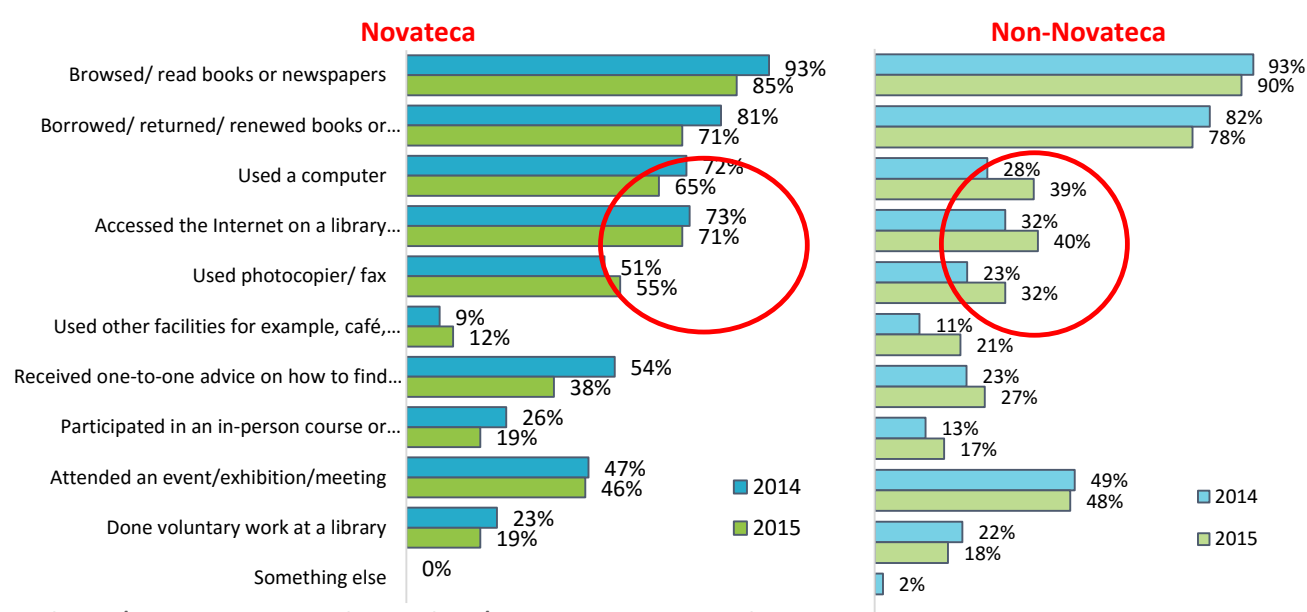
Services accessed during the last 12 months

In the second wave many Novateca services have been used less compare to the first wave, while most NonNovateca services have been accessed more often – Figure F3.

The use of traditional services provided by a public library still prevails. Thus, almost all respondents who went to a library during the last 12 months either browsed / read books or newspapers (85% Novateca and 90% NonNovateca users) or borrowed / renewed books or other materials on electronic format (71% of Novateca and 78% of NonNovateca users) – Figure F3.

Accessing technologies (computer, Internet through the library’s Wi-Fi, photocopier or a fax machine) is the second type of services used by visitors. Incidence of modern technologies usage continues to be considerably higher in Novateca libraries. However, an increase in the usage of various technologies has been registered at NonNovateca libraries, while Novateca visitors continued to use them overall to the same extent in 2015 compare to 2014.

Figure F3. Activities performed in a public library during the last 12 months (%)



Sample: 420/600 Novateca respondents and 409/604 NonNovateca respondents

F3. What activities have you engaged in at a public library in the last 12 months?

Multiple answer

Another important finding is a sharp decrease of accessing personal consultations on internet and computer usage by Novateca users (from 54% to 38% for “one-to-one advice on how to find information on Internet or use a computer”, and from 26% to 19% for “participation in-person course or training session”). To a certain degree it is due to the fact that many of Novateca clients have received these services once and didn’t access them later in 2015, as already having appropriate skills.

Libraries also offer new recreation and entrepreneurial opportunities such as attending an event / exhibition / meeting organized inside the public library (almost half respondents of both categories). These services have been accessed to the same extent in 2015 compare to 2014.

The socio-demographics show the following for the Novateca clients:

- Overall, clients who went to library to read books and newspaper and to borrow books or other things are most often from Center, female, with higher education, and those who do not use internet.
- The computer and internet services were most often accessed by youth, residents of Chisinau and South region, from rural area, male, with low level of education, going often to a library and using internet.
- Advice and/or training have been received more often by people from Center, aged 40 and more, female, with high level of education, going frequently to a library and internet users.

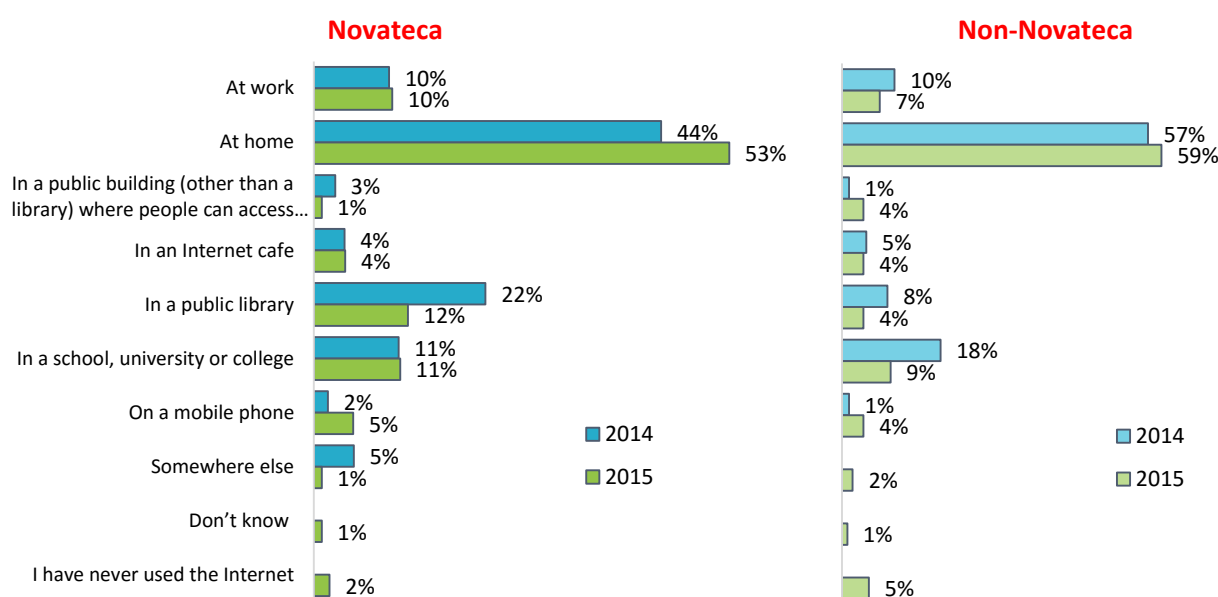
- Exhibitions, meetings and other events have been more often attended by Chisinau and urban residents, aged 40 and more, with high level of education, going frequently to a library and internet users. These categories are also more often using library facilities such as café, shop etc.

USE OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Use of Internet

There are many different places where people accessed internet for the first time – at home, at school and at work, or in a public library. Most people (both categories) used internet at home for the first time (and during 2015 the share of them increased) – Figure F4. These are predominantly people from urban area (as urban area insures better / higher internet access), from South, women, people with low and average level of education, aged 14-24.

Figure F4. First experience of using Internet (%)



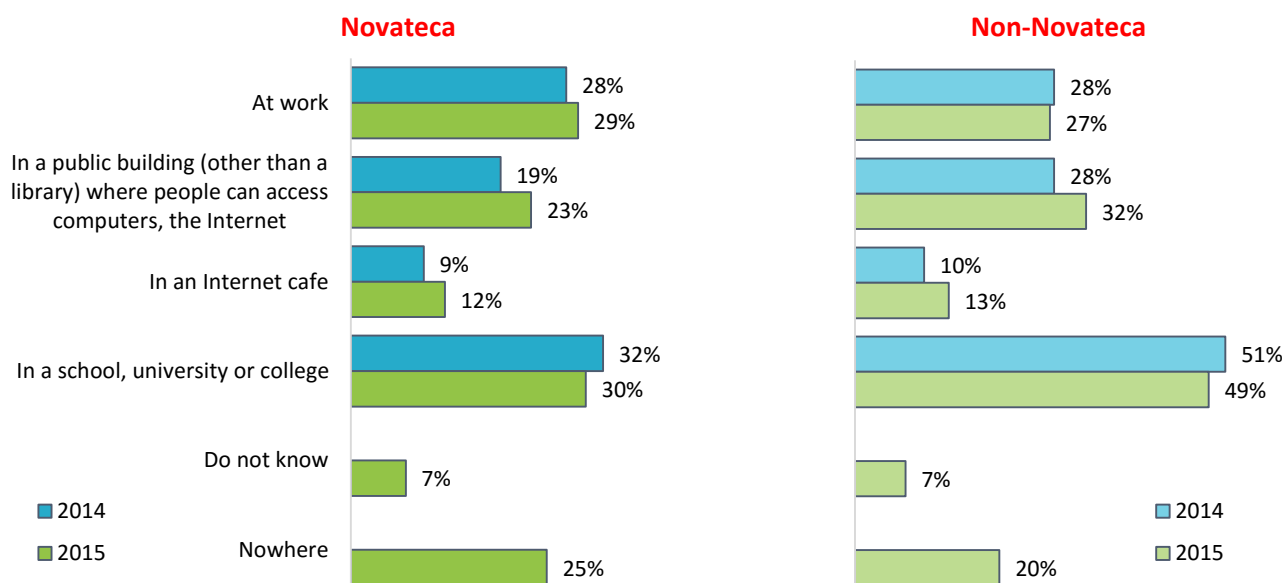
Sample: 420/600 Novateca respondents and 409/604 NonNovateca respondents

F4. Where was the first place you used the internet?

In 2015 Novateca libraries kept the second place in terms of the place where the respondent accessed Internet for the first time. The incidence of this answer during the 2nd wave decreased compare to the previous survey (from 22% to 12%). It could be due to the Novateca network extension, i.e. covering more visitors with computer at home (53% in second wave stated home as first place of Internet usage compared to 44% during wave 1). Overall, public library has been chosen more often by respondents who probably have fewer opportunities to access internet in another context. These are predominantly people from rural area, of an older age (40 and more), male, with low and average level of education, who visit public library quite often.

Public libraries are still chosen considerably less by NonNovateca beneficiaries to use internet for the first time – 4%. These were predominantly urban residents, living in the North and Centre, people of an older age, female, with low and average level of education, people who often go to a library. This might be explained by the lack of / low-speed internet connection in NonNovateca libraries, which according to NonNovateca respondents is one of the most often stated problems these libraries face. Another problem would be insufficient number of computers per person to be used.

Figure F5. Places where Internet can be accessed at no charge (%)



Sample: 420/600 Novateca respondents and 409/604 NonNovateca respondents

F5. Other than at a public library, where can you access the Internet for free?
(multiple choices)

There are many possibilities to access internet at no charge nowadays. Excluding the public library, home and mobile phone as sources for free internet, most people accessed Internet in educational settings (app. 1/3 of Novateca and half NonNovateca users), followed by other public buildings (app. 1/5 of Novateca and 1/3 of NonNovateca users), as well as at work (app. 1/4 of both categories) – Figure F5.

During the first wave no respondents declared “there is no free of charge Internet”. In 2015 the share of these responses was 25% among Novateca users and 20% of NonNovateca users. These were predominantly rural residents, people from North, aged 25 and more, male, with low and average level of education.

Technology used at the public library during the last 12 months

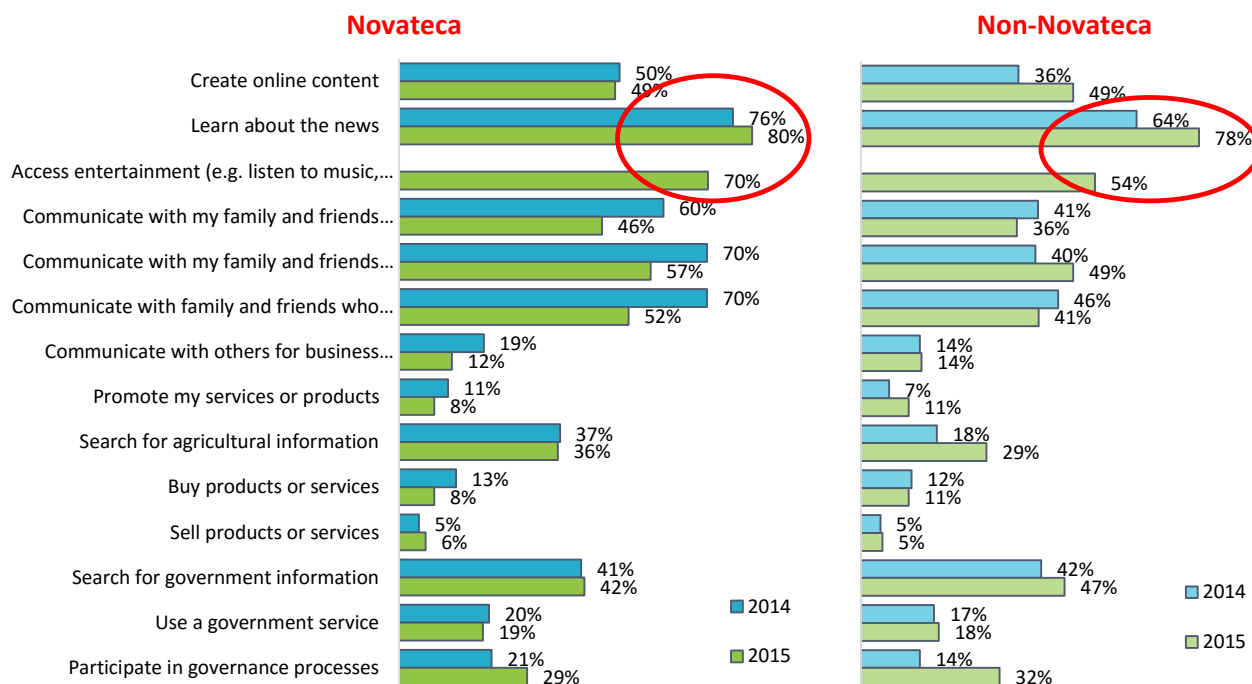
Modern technologies available in the public libraries are mainly used for information and entertainment purposes (Figure T1).

Thus, most people access public libraries to get updated regarding news (80% Novateca and 78% NonNovateca). The profile of these users is predominantly: urban residents, people aged 40 and more, female, highly educated, going often to a library, internet users. People also come to library to search for information on agriculture, to look for government information (mostly people aged 40 and more, with high level of education, going often to a library, using Internet, people from rural area (for agriculture info) and urban area (for government info).

Slightly over 2/3 of Novateca clients and over half NonNovateca users access libraries for entertainment purposes (music, films etc.). These are predominantly respondents living in North and South, from urban area, young people, men, having a low level of education, frequent users of a library and those using Internet.

According to Figure T1, e-mail, Skype or social media is used to communicate with family members and friends. The profile of Novateca clients who use IT in the public library to communicate with friends and family is mostly: urban area, men, people with high level of education, going often to a library, using internet. Of note, the share of people who used Novateca library for communication purposes significantly decreased in 2015 compare to the previous survey. In particular, this decrease is registered within the group of rural resident visitors, aged 40 +, females and those with high level of education. This trend might be explained by higher access to Internet at home for these groups, as compared with previous wave.

Figure T1. Technology used at the public library during the last 12 months (%)

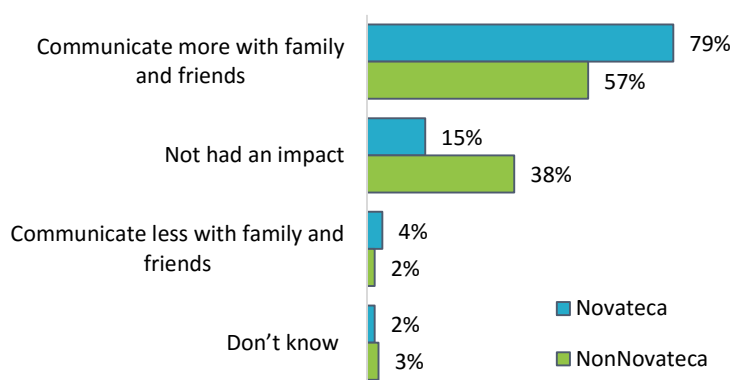


Sub-sample: 339/470 Novateca respondents and 157/284 NonNovateca respondents who use computer at library

T1. Have you used technology (e.g. WiFi, Internet, computers, Facebook, Skype) at a public library in the last 12 months in any of the following ways? (only affirmative answers)

Access to technologies in the public libraries clearly influences the communication behavior of respondents. People using digital tools provided by public libraries to communicate with relatives and friends believe that these tools induce a stronger bond with relatives and friends, as they communicate more often (Figure T2) (79% of Novateca users and 57% of NonNovateca clients). This *advantage* has been mentioned in particular by people residing in rural area, with average level of education, respondents aged over 40.

Figure T2. Benefits out of technology provided by public libraries – more communication (%)



Sub-sample: Novateca – 326 respondents / NonNovateca – 168 respondents which use computer at library and communicate with family through Internet

T2 How has having access to technology such as Wifi, computer, internet within public libraries impacted on how much you communicate with your family and friends?

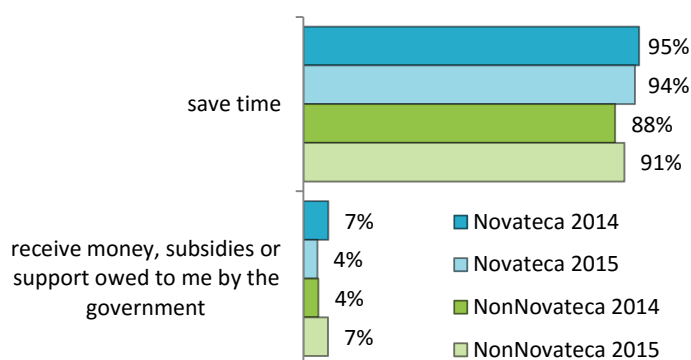
Another finding is that Novateca visitors assess the benefit out of using IT to a higher degree compare to NonNovateca users, and this is probably due to the fact that NonNovateca clients use less modern technologies. As shown in Figure T2, only 15% of Novateca users consider technologies provided by the libraries had no impact for their communication pattern as compared to 38% of NonNovateca users.

Another form of communication is creating an online content (e.g., posting on a wall or comment board, blogging, updating an online profile, uploading photos, designing websites or web content) which is also used quite often, by half respondents (Figure T1).

Among Novateca users these are mainly young people aged 14-24, from Center, urban area, with low and high level of education. Among NonNovateca users these are predominantly people aged 14-24 and 25-39, from South, rural area, with low and high level of education.

Although to a lower extent, digital services are also used for obtaining information about and for getting involved in various government / governance-related issues. As shown in Figure T3 some respondents took benefit of digital services: 4% of Novateca users and 7% of NonNovateca users could receive money, subsidies or support owed to them by the government. Most important advantage, however, is the time saving. Thus, 94% of Novateca and 91% of NonNovateca users saved time for government / governance-related issues due to digital tools provided by public libraries.

Figure T3. Benefits out of technology provided by public libraries – saving in time as regard interaction with government services (%)



Sub-sample: 173/238 Novateca respondents and 73/154 NonNovateca respondents, which use computer at library and search for government information or use a government service or participate in governance processes

T3. By accessing a government service using technology at the public library (e.g., WiFi, computer, internet) did you... (affirmative answers only)

Technology is less used for business-related purposes such as communicating with (potential) business partners and/or clients, promoting services or products. Some of public libraries clients use digital services to buy and sell products or services.

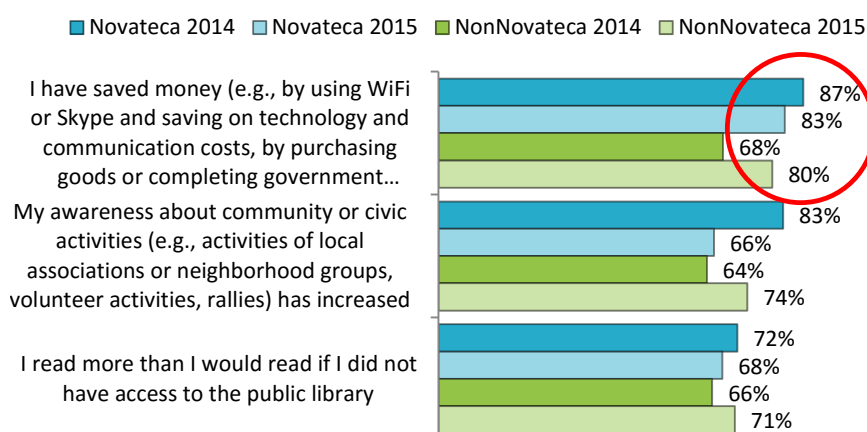
The data presented in Figure T1 also shows that Novateca beneficiaries are generally more active in using technologies provided by public libraries compare to NonNovateca beneficiaries.

Irrespective the purpose of accessing technology provided by public libraries, the majority of users mentioned they benefited in many different ways out of it (Figure T4).

The use of modern technology in public

libraries is highly appreciated by both Novateca and NonNovateca users. Moreover, the percentage of NonNovateca visitors who believe that accessing public library helped them with saving money, getting aware about community activities, increased in 2015 compare to 2014. As for Novateca users, the opinions are quite similar if compare those 2 waves of the survey, except for awareness about community or civic activities (which shows an important decrease).

Figure T4. Benefits out of technology provided by public libraries – saving in money and information awareness (%)



Sub-sample: 339/470 Novateca respondents and 157/284 NonNovateca respondents who use computer at library

T4. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with each statement. (affirmative answers only)

According to Figure T4 the majority of public libraries' visitors:

- saved money due to digital tools provided (e.g., saving on technology and communication costs by using Wi-Fi or Skype; saving on travel costs by purchasing goods or completing government forms online as the prices are cheaper online) – the most important benefit for both Novateca and NonNovateca users;
- got more aware of civic and community activities due to digital tools provided (e.g., activities of local associations or neighborhood groups, volunteer activities, rallies),

in particular NonNovateca users;

- had read more due to digital tools provided.

SERVICES PROVIDED BY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

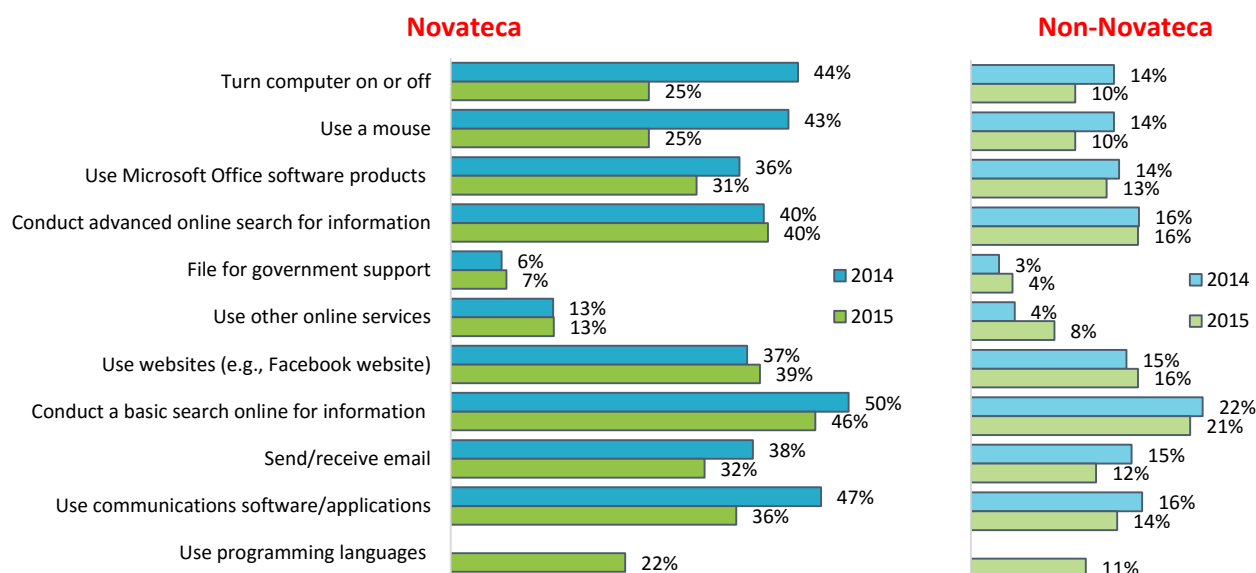
Benefits of assistance provided by the library staff or outside experts

The library staff (especially Novateca personnel) continues to contribute to basic computer literacy of visitors. As a result of assistance provided by the public library staff or outside experts, respondents acquired different skills – Figure S1. Some of them started with initial technical manipulations, such as turning the computer on or off, using a mouse. Other clients got abilities in using Microsoft Office software products, as well as using online services for different purposes. However, most people have been guided in learning how to use Internet for various purposes:

- to a greater extent – online searching for information; sending and receiving e-mails; using communication software / applications (e.g. Skype); using social media (e.g., Facebook);
- to a lower extent – using online services such as e-banking, paying bills, purchasing goods; applying for state financial assistance.

In addition, every fifth Novateca library visitor mentioned use of programming languages. This fact rises the importance of library as a place where people can learn advanced computer skills. Programming languages was more often used by visitors from Centre and Chisinau, aged 14-24, low level of education.

Figure S1. Knowledge / skills acquired due to assistance provided by the library staff or outside experts (%)



Sample: 420/600 Novateca respondents and 409/604 NonNovateca respondents

S1. I will read out a list of skills. Which of these have you learnt as a result of public library services? (positive answers only)

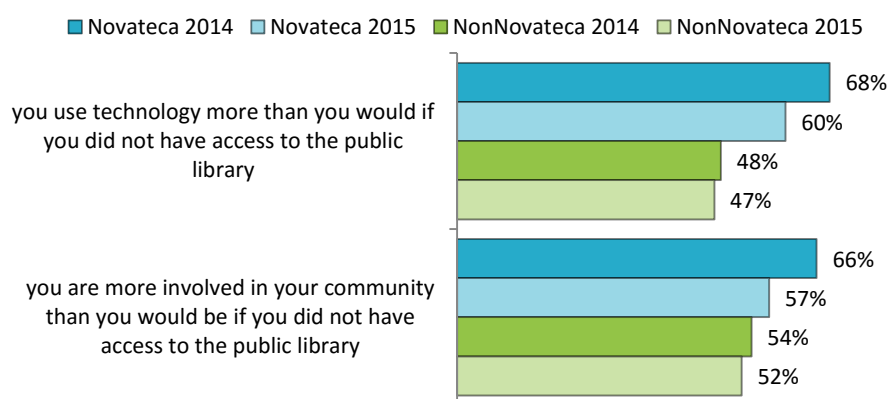
The share of skills acquired due to assistance provided by public libraries is significantly higher among the responses of Novateca users compare to NonNovateca users – Figure S1 (at least two times higher).

The profile of Novateca respondents differs based on the type of skills acquired. Thus, basic skills (turn off/on the computer, use a mouse) have been reported predominantly by elder people, respondents from rural area. People from North and Center, women, people 40 age +, with an average level of education most often have been assisted in using the Microsoft and Internet for searching information or for communication. People aged 14 - 39 years old, men, with a high level of education were predominant among those who received assistance in using online services such as e-banking, paying bills, purchasing goods; applying for state financial assistance. For all categories there is a direct relationship between frequency of visits and benefiting of services: those who visit libraries often benefit of services to a higher extent.

Benefits of services provided by the public library

As mentioned previously, a public library currently provides a variety of services: technology, venue for events, trainings and assistance on behalf of library staff etc. Due to services provided by the public library many people believe they use technology to a higher extent and are more involved in their community lives than if they would not have access to the public library. The share of Novateca users among those mentioning these benefits is higher compare to NonNovateca users – Figure S2.

Figure S2. Benefits out of technology and assistance provided by the public libraries (%)



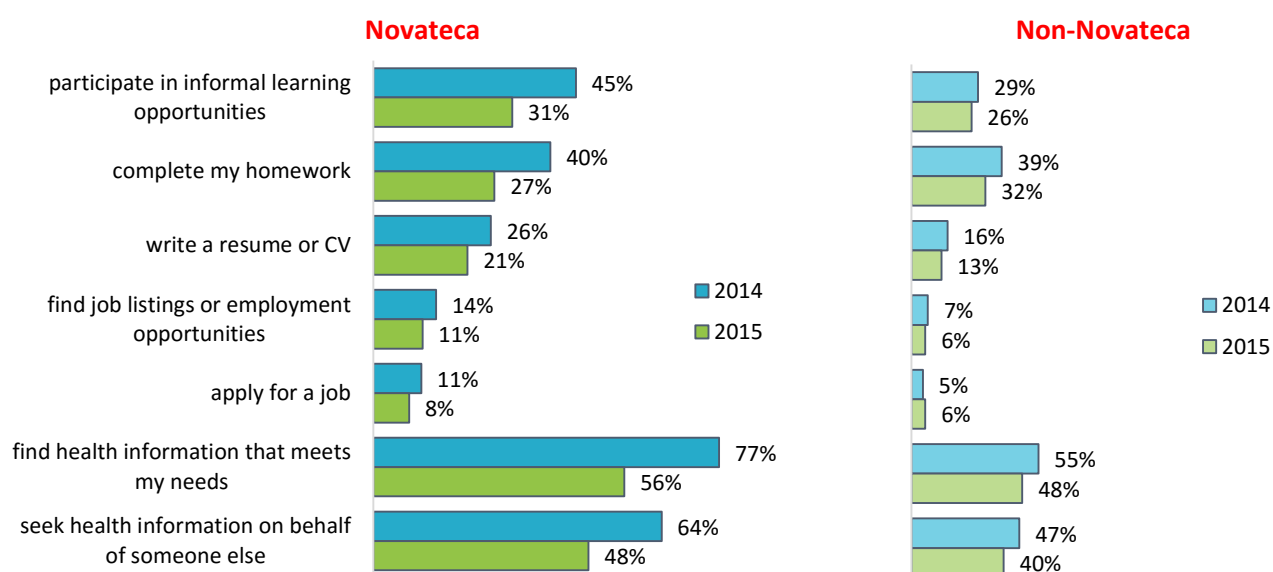
During the 2nd wave the share of respondents considering these benefits has decreased (in particular among Novateca users). The decrease might be explained by the enlargement of Novateca network and therefore less time exposure to services, as well as larger coverage in the sample of non-regular visitors who are less impacted / interested.

Sample: 420/600 Novateca respondents and 409/604 NonNovateca respondents
 S2. Do you agree or disagree that because of services provided by the public library (e.g., access to computers, Internet, WiFi, or other technology; assistance or training from library staff) ...? (only affirmative answers)

Purposes the public library services were used for during the last 12 months

The trends in using public libraries remained the same. In this regard, during the last 12 months most people continued to look for health information (either to meet their personal needs or on behalf of others) – Figure S3.

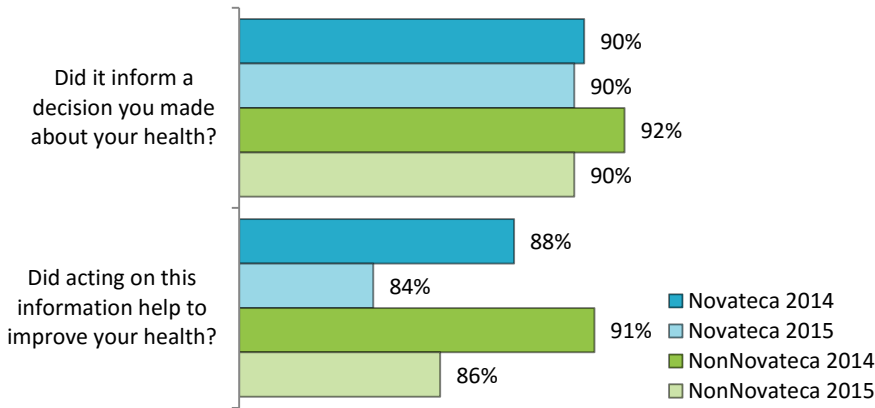
Figure S3. During the last 12 months, I have used public library services to... (%)



Sample: 420/600 Novateca respondents and 409/604 NonNovateca respondents
 S3. In the last 12 months, which of the following things have you used public library services to do? (only affirmative answers)

Health information included various aspects: symptoms, medical treatment, medical service providers, diet, nutrition, fitness etc. Finally, it had benefits both for service users themselves (as the information found made them decide about their health condition and / or improved their health condition), and for other people (as the information found due to service provided by the library was disseminated among other people) – Figure S5. As per the profile of respondents, in terms of region and sex, these benefits have been mentioned most often by women and those residing outside Chisinau. As for other socio-demographics (age, level of education and residence) no differences have been registered in the answers.

Figure S5. Benefits of health information for library users (%)

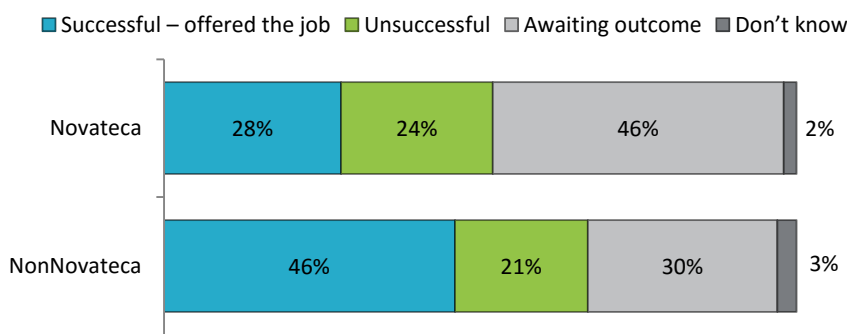


Besides health related issues, people used library service during the last year for learning purposes (homework and accessing informal learning opportunities) – Figure S3.

Subsample: 325/335 Novateca respondents and 230/291 NonNovateca respondents who used public library services to find health information for themselves or for someone else S5. Thinking of the health information you found using public library services... (affirmative answers)

As for the other general purpose – employment – public library services are rarely used (Figure S3). The employment related issues refer to writing a CV, looking for a job opportunity, and applying for a job. Although rarely used, employment related services provided in public libraries seem to have a certain positive impact (Figure S4).

Figure S4. Benefits of employment (%)



13 Novateca respondents (out of 46 who used public library services to find a job) and of 15 NonNovateca respondents (out of 33), finally were employed. These were predominantly people residing in Center and South, urban area, women, with average and high level of education. However, due to very small sub-sample of this group, data only show some potential trend.

Subsample: 46 Novateca respondents and 33 NonNovateca respondents who used public library services to apply for a job S4. What was the outcome of the job application which you made using the public library services?

Regardless the purpose (information on health issues, employment or learning opportunities), Novateca users

accessed public libraries to a higher extent compare to NonNovateca users.

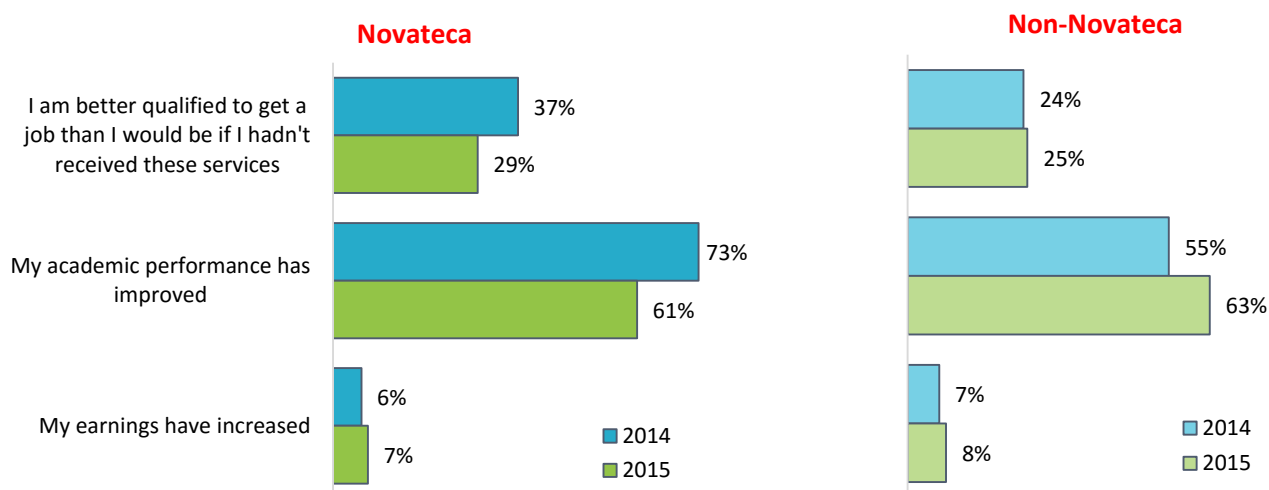
As shown in Figure S3, the percentage of people using public libraries decreased in 2015 compare to the first wave. This is mainly due to increased survey sample, which balanced the shares to a certain extent.

Benefits of using public library services in terms of qualification, academic performance, earnings, business opportunities, and agricultural income

Access and use of public library resources continue to positively impact the academic performances of respondents, as well as the job related aspects – Figure S6. According to survey results, students are most impacted by the services they access at public libraries: 2/3 of Novateca and NonNovateca users consider their academic performance improved. They are followed by job seekers: approximately ¼ of Novateca and NonNovateca users believe they are better qualified after using the library services.

The access to public library services also positively impacted the earnings of some respondents.

Figure S6. Benefits of using public library services in terms of qualification, academic performance and earnings



Sample: 420/600 Novateca respondents and 409/604 NonNovateca respondents

S6. Do you agree or disagree that as a result of resources, information, and opportunities you accessed using public library services (e.g., computers, Internet, WiFi, or other technology; assistance or training from library staff or outside experts)...

The share of Novateca users who declared benefits in terms of better academic performances and qualifications decreased in 2015. However, the decrease is consistent with the lower incidence of users of respective services in 2015.

The survey also offered the possibility to respondents (through open-ended questions) to express their feeling about public libraries and provide recommendations in order to improve this community service.

Novateca users were generally more satisfied with the public library, with services provided, and with the library staff compare to NonNovateca users. Thus, 27% of Novateca users and 9% of NonNovateca users mentioned they are satisfied with and grateful for the services provided.

Regarding recommendations provided in the open-ended questions:

- 19% of Novateca and 24% of NonNovateca users suggested improve physical infrastructure of the libraries (repair the building / rooms, equip with new furniture, repair toilets, modernize the lightening system, heat the spaces);
- 18% of Novateca and 33% of NonNovateca users suggested supplying the libraries with new and modern printed material, with material in Romanian language and in Latin script, supply with Encyclopedias and Dictionaries, newspapers and journals; with foreign literature and specific material (on arts, medicine, health, psychology, economy, accountancy, astrology, sport etc.); bestsellers; with teaching materials and school books;
- 8% of Novateca and 33% of NonNovateca users recommended equipping the library with modern technologies such as (more) computers, printer, copy machine, projector, camera (video and photo),

- 12% of NonNovateca visitors (vs none of Novateca users) suggested insuring free internet connection in the library;
- 13% of Novateca and 24% of NonNovateca users provided other recommendations, such as diversifying services provided for children, young people and for the elders, digitize the library catalogs; insure access to electronic libraries; provide more trainings on diverse topics, improve borrowing procedures, promote public library as a makerspace for community members, where conferences, roundtables, workshops and other events could be organized, advertising the libraries etc.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

The main conclusion of this report is that Novateca continues to be a highly valued program, which should be replicated at national level. The spontaneous satisfaction score granted to Novateca libraries is illustrative in this regard – 27% compare to 10% for NonNovateca users.

Novateca program expanded considerably its network in 2015, thus increasing its coverage among rural areas, in particular Northern and Chisinau regions.

Novateca public libraries represent a source of space, access, staff, digital and printed materials, knowledge, and connections that can improve the well-being of community members and support their development. The access and usage of modern technologies is net superior in Novateca libraries (on average two times higher) if compare to NonNovateca libraries.

Due to Novateca program public libraries become many-sided community centers, very often the only community asset (especially in rural area and for low-income citizen). Libraries' shift to offering a wide range of digital, educational, social and entrepreneurial tools lead to higher overall usage of the library (49% of Novateca visitor go to libraries at least once per week compare to 39% of NonNovateca visitors).

A public library contributes to the economic wellbeing of community members: e.g., free access to technologies and assistance provided by library staff in looking for employment-related information and in applying for a job, helped people to find jobs, thereby increasing their individual and family income (*28% of Novateca and 46% of NonNovateca users got employed; 7% of Novateca and 8% of NonNovateca users increased their income*). Free access to technologies provided by public libraries saved people's time (*37% Novateca users and 23% NonNovateca users*) and money (*65% Novateca users and 37% NonNovateca users*).

Technologies available at public libraries are highly used to communicate with family members and friends, strengthening the links between them (*79% of Novateca users and 57% of NonNovateca clients communicate more with their family and friends due to modern technology provided by public libraries*).

Access to services in public libraries improves the academic performance of their visitors (*2/3 of both Novateca and NonNovateca users*).

The report highlights a comparative advantage of Novateca libraries, as they benefit of technology tools, of qualified human resources who can guide clients in accessing relevant information and modern services, and of a range of non-traditional services provided. Therefore, Novateca public libraries are visited more often and are better assessed by respondents. The share of Novateca respondents stating benefits out of using library services is higher compare to NonNovateca users. The share of respondents showing satisfaction with the services is also higher among Novateca clients.

The scores / percentage of usage and benefits for most indicators are quite the same in 2015 compare to 2014. Most variances between the two surveys are within the limit of sampling error. However, some changes in comparison with the previous year have been observed:

- The frequency of visits of Novateca libraries decreased in the second wave (lower percentage of those accessing the library weekly and increased share of those accessing the library not that often).
- Access to the services provided by a public library continues to be assessed as important / extremely important by most clients of the libraries, both Novateca and NonNovateca
- The perception of importance of a wide range of services slightly decreased (however not exceeding the sampling error) in the second wave for both types of libraries.
- In the second wave many Novateca services have been accessed less compare to the first wave (borrowing books, reading newspapers, using a computer, receiving advices, and benefiting of training). The highest difference was registered for "one-to-one advice on how to find information on Internet or use a computer" (from 54% to 38%) and for "participation in-person course or training session" (from 26% to 19%). However, it could be assumed that to a certain degree it is due to the fact that many of Novateca clients have received these services once and didn't access them later in 2015, as already having appropriate skills.

- Novateca visitors continued to use technologies overall to the same extent in 2015 compare to 2014. Incidence of modern technologies usage continues to be considerably higher in Novateca libraries compare to NonNovateca.
- Most people (both categories) used internet at home for the first time (and during 2015 the share of them increased);
- The share of people who used Novateca library for communication purposes significantly decreased in 2015 compare to the previous survey, which might be explained by increase of access to Internet at home.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are quite similar to the first wave survey.

The general recommendation is to scale-up successful practices to maximize the impact of the program (where it is implemented) and to replicate this model at the country level.

Some specific recommendations refer to:

- Equipping the library with (more) computers, printer, copy machine, projector, camera (video and photo);
- Insure internet connection (where no Internet is provided), speed up the Wi-Fi and the internet connection, provide free internet;
- Digitization of services (e.g., digitization of catalogs, of information, provide e-books);
- Continuous staffing of the libraries and staff development;
- Improve infrastructure of NonNovateca libraries in particular (renovate location, install / repair the heating system, improve lightning system, equip with appropriate furniture etc.)
- Supply with material based on population needs.
- Partnering with local stakeholders, private sector and civil society to engage with new audiences and to garner support;
- Open the library to more activities (specifically promote the idea of makerspaces);
- Provide early literacy for kids, help for students of all ages, provide life-long learning for adults and seniors through involvement of libraries' staff and outside experts;
- Make libraries more accessible for people with disabilities;
- Providing entertainment and a community gathering place;
- Promote the services using mass-media;
- Adjust time schedule to population needs;
- Improve borrowing facilities.