2014-2020 Operational Programme for the European Union Funds Investments in Lithuania

VYTAUTAS MAGNUS UNIVERSITY
M C M X X I I

THE DIGITAL AND NETWORK SOCIETY NEEDS FOR OPEN ONLINE LEARNING

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Transformations

Educational reformers, innovators and researchers suggest that the appearance of digital technologies will radically transform

- what people learn,
- how they learn, and
- where they learn.

Yet there are existing disagreements on the speed and scope of this change.

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Networks and digital technologies have become the main characteristics of our society and take an important role in the society transforming it into global economies and shaping educational systems, organizations and ways that people learn (Ehlers, 2013).

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The aim of this presentation is to present the results of a theoretical research and empirical survey implemented in Lithuania to clarify the digital and networked society needs for open and online learning.

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The findings of different research publications (Chunngam et al., 2014; Kuo, Belland, 2016; Leping, Wenzhen, 2012), suggest that open online learning taking place outside educational institutions is important for informal learning and makes it easier for individuals to build and share knowledge, *because it:*

- *disregards physical distance and*
- *makes it easier to share interests.*

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Open online learning may:

- Promote learner agency and autonomy (Suzuki, 2013),
- Give learner an opportunity to balance different commitments (Zhang, Cheng, 2012),
- Facilitate the exchange of ideas and practices among people of different cultural backgrounds (Koutsoupidou, 2014),
- Highlight blended learning approach and online learner-learner interaction (Cocquyt at al, 2017).

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With the progress in mobile technologies, rapid increase of mobile devices and mobile applications, mobile learning has gained interest among educators and learning material developers (Hsu et al., 2014)

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The discussions about the meaning of open online learning and how it should be organized responding to the main needs of adult learners continue.

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Members of society, particularly adults, are diverse learners in their nature, needs, and preferences. Comparison and combination of digitally orientated adult learner needs for particular learning style, time, place and pace of learning with online delivery system give directions for online course designers how to create and organize courses.

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The survey

- The survey of digital networked society open online learning needs was organized in Lithuania in March 2018.
- Statistically representative survey covered 1000 respondents in Lithuania.
- 1000 adults 18-74 were interviewed at home.

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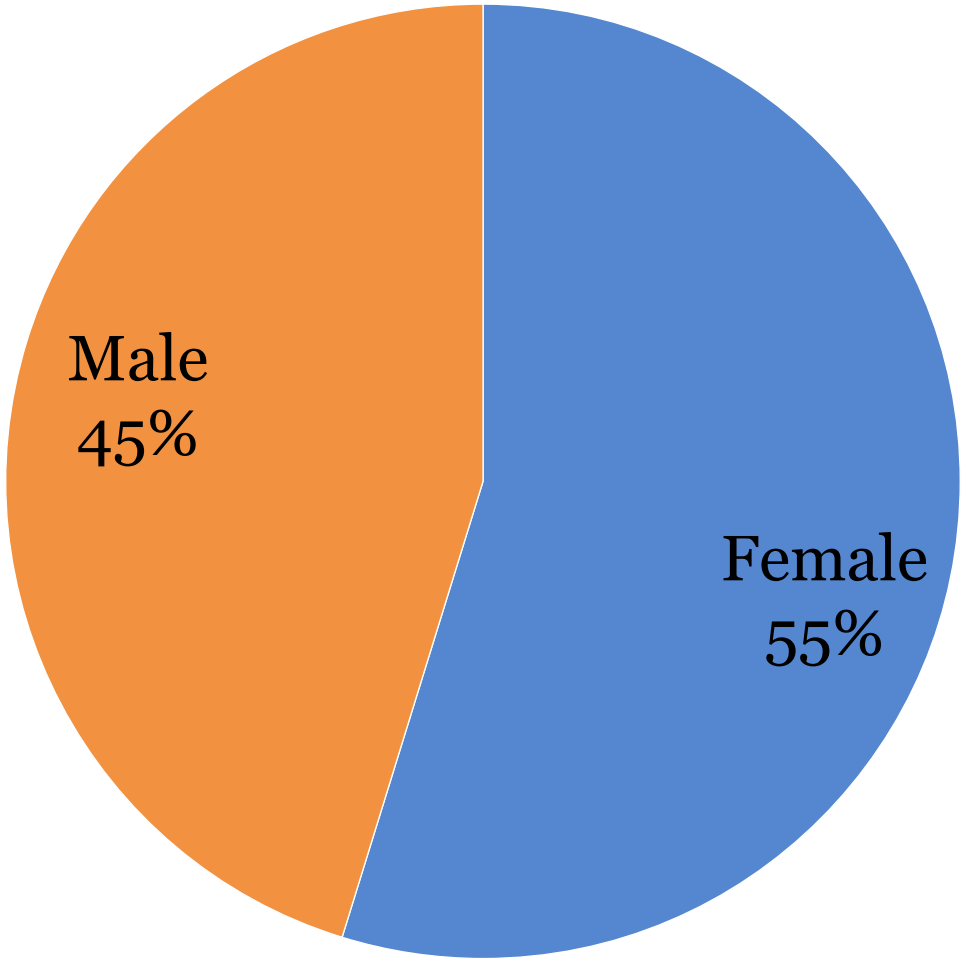

Respondents by sex

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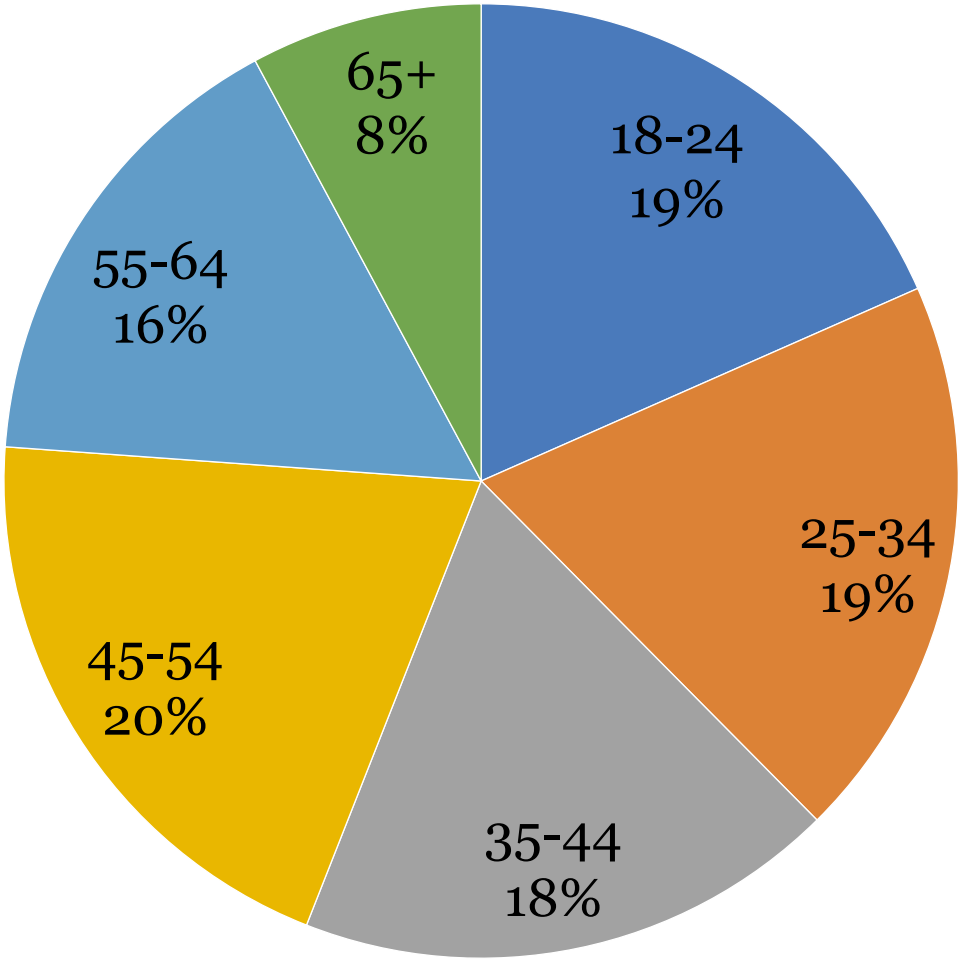

Respondents by age

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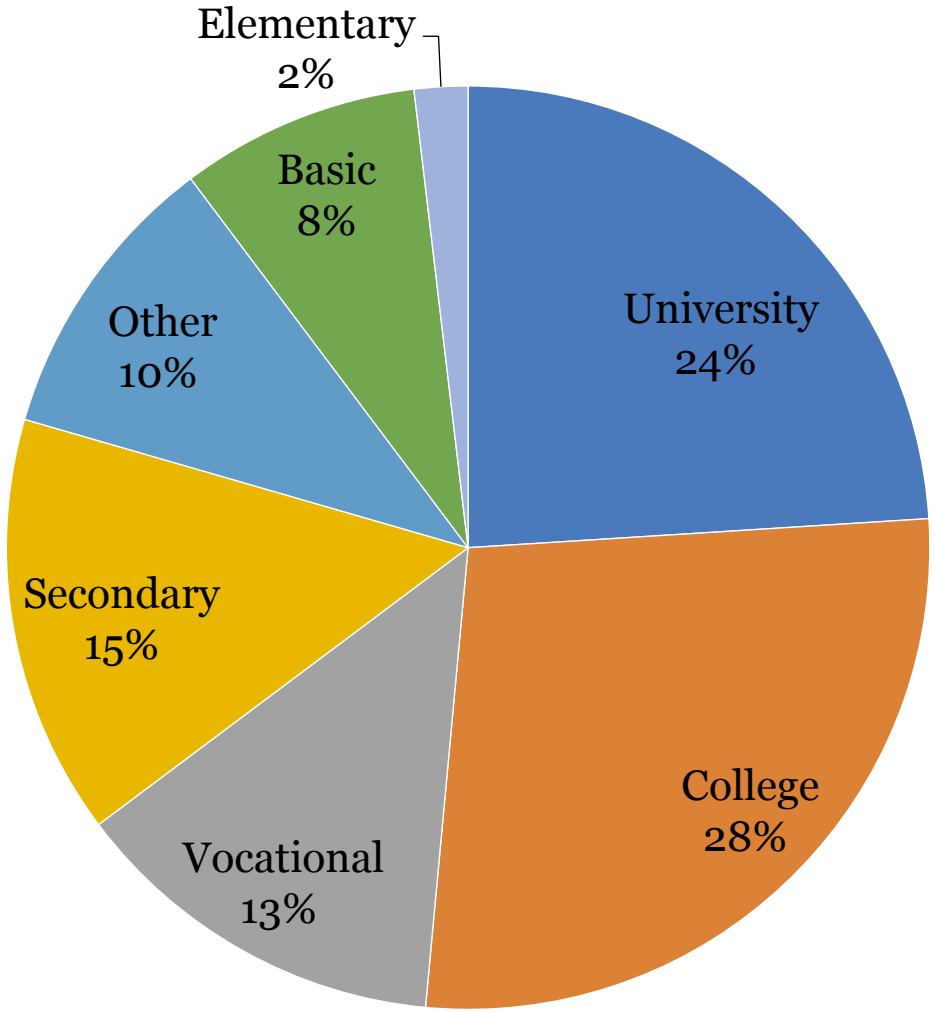

Educational background

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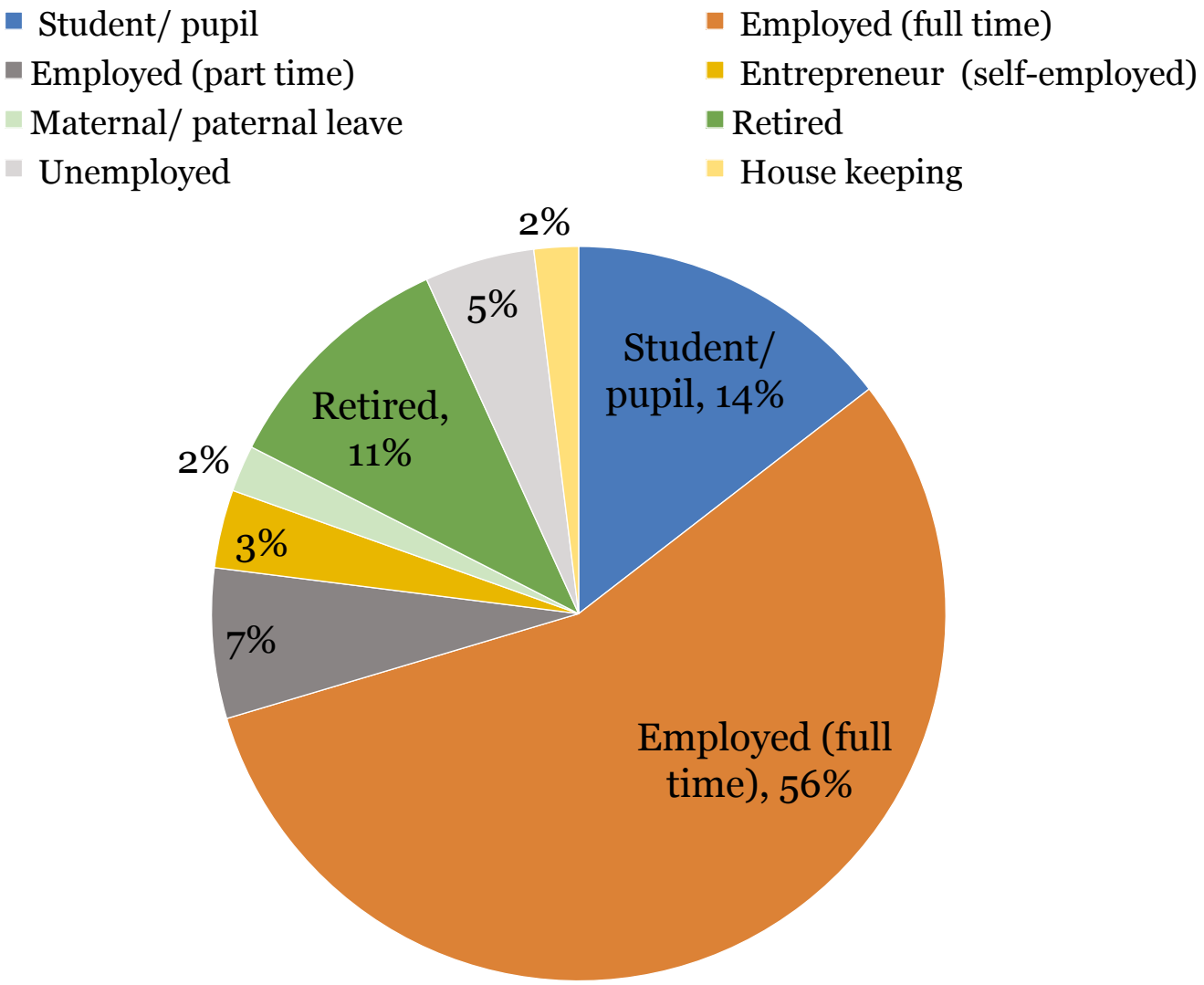
Occupation



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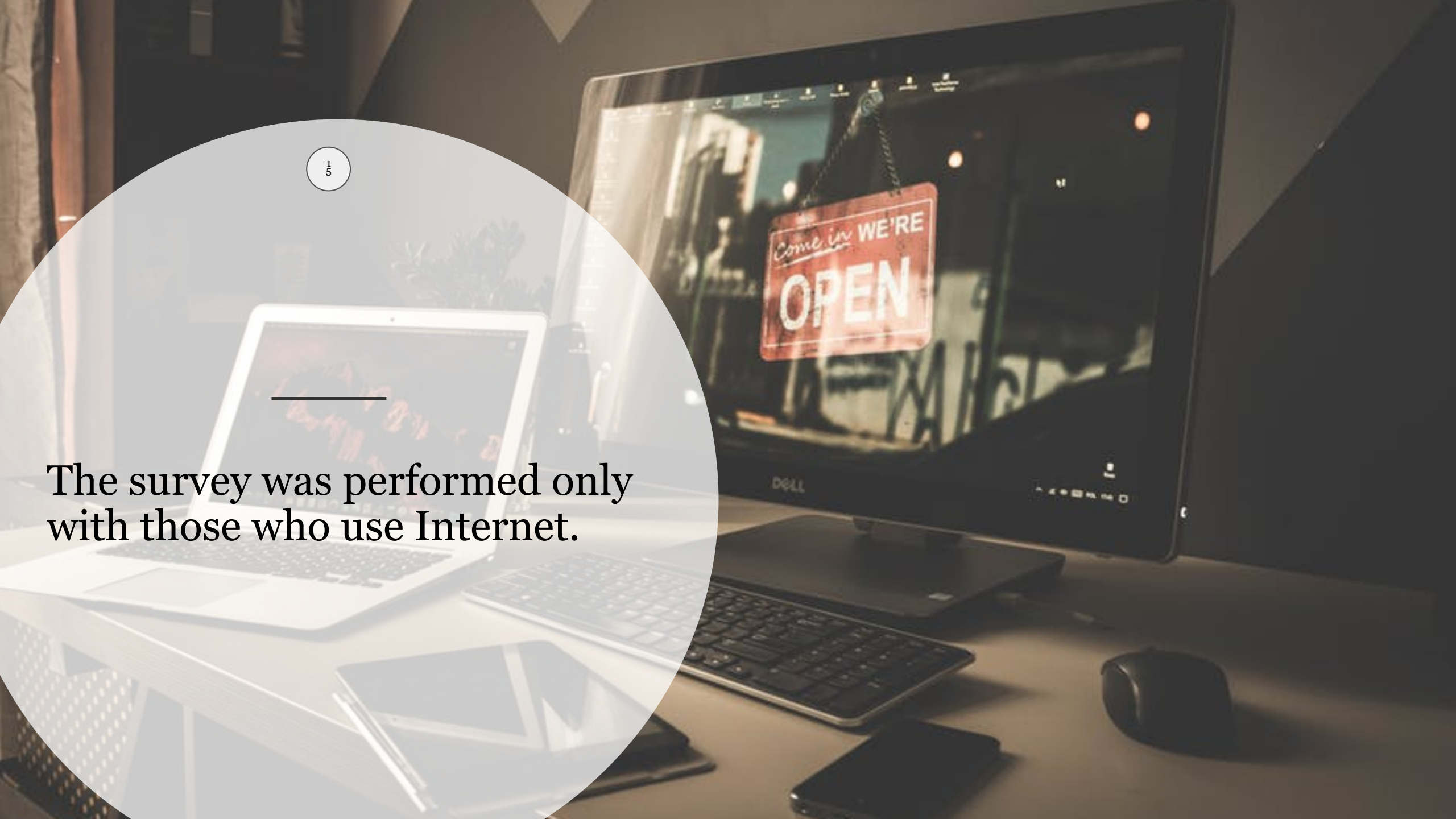
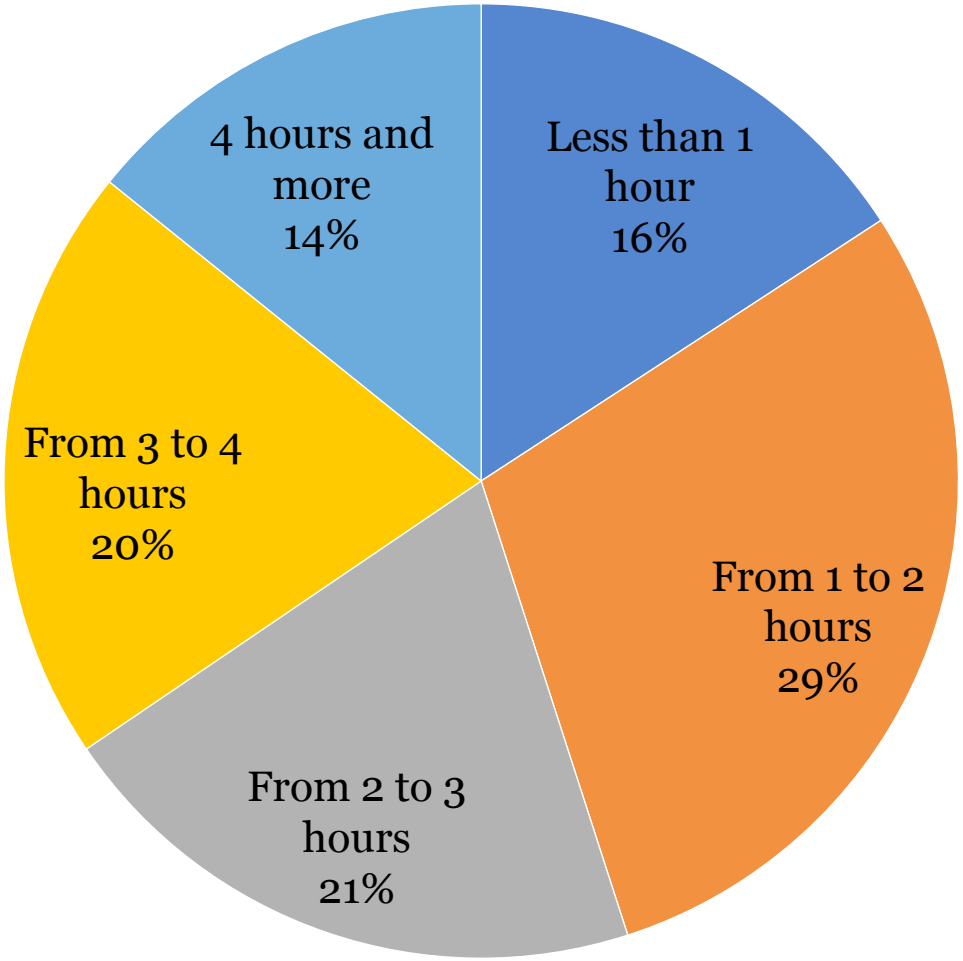


The survey was performed only with those who use Internet.



Daily Internet usage

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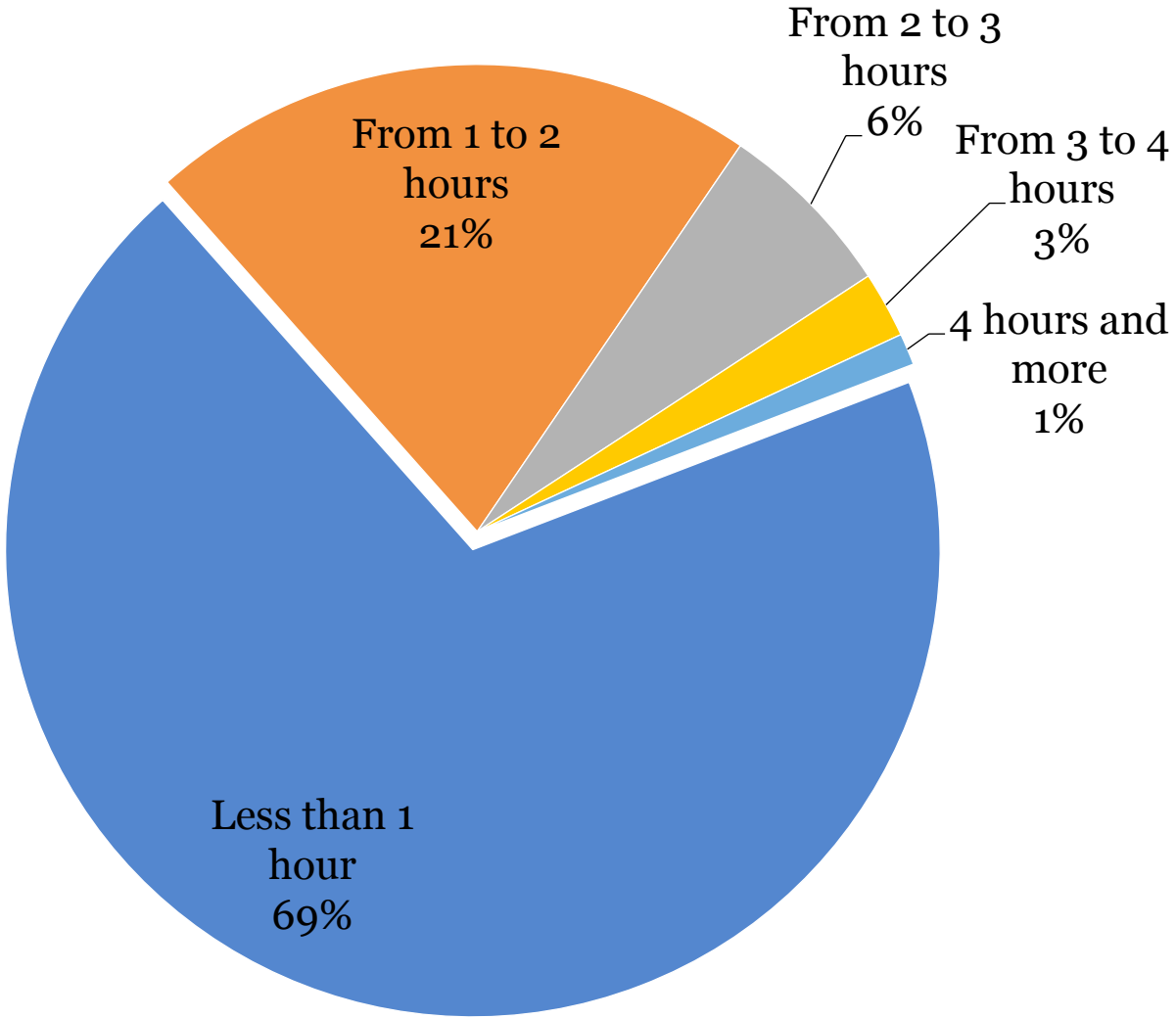

Daily internet usage for learning purposes

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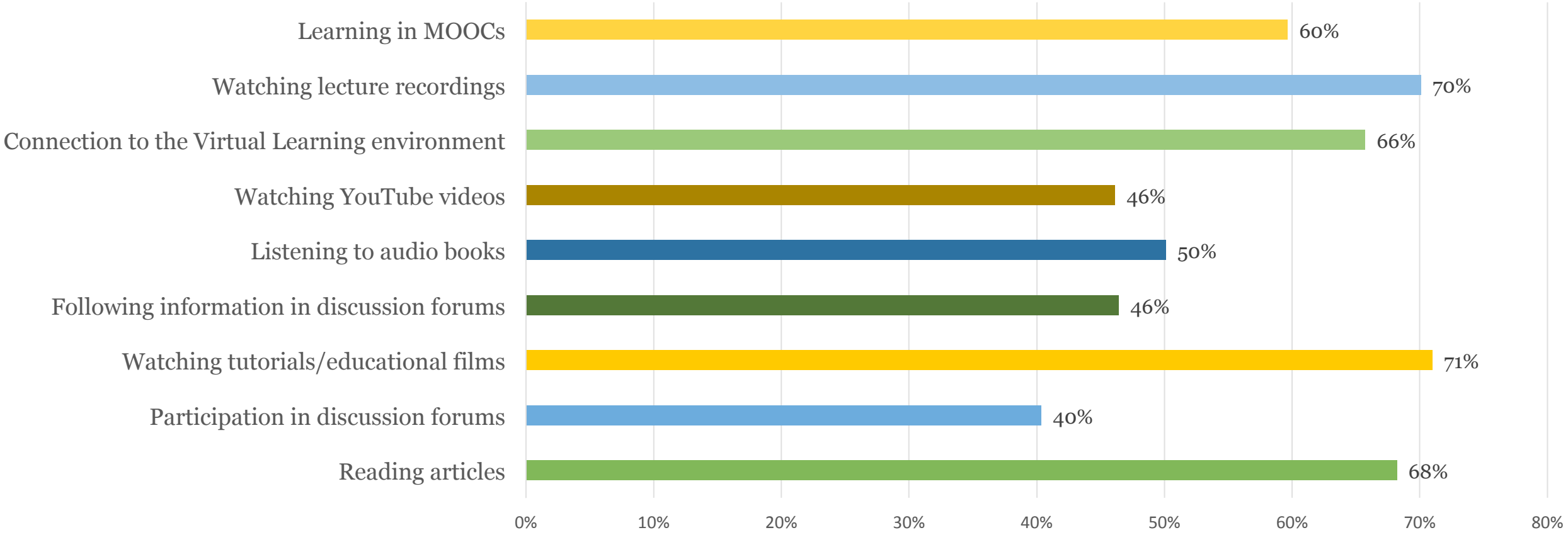
What open online learning means to them?



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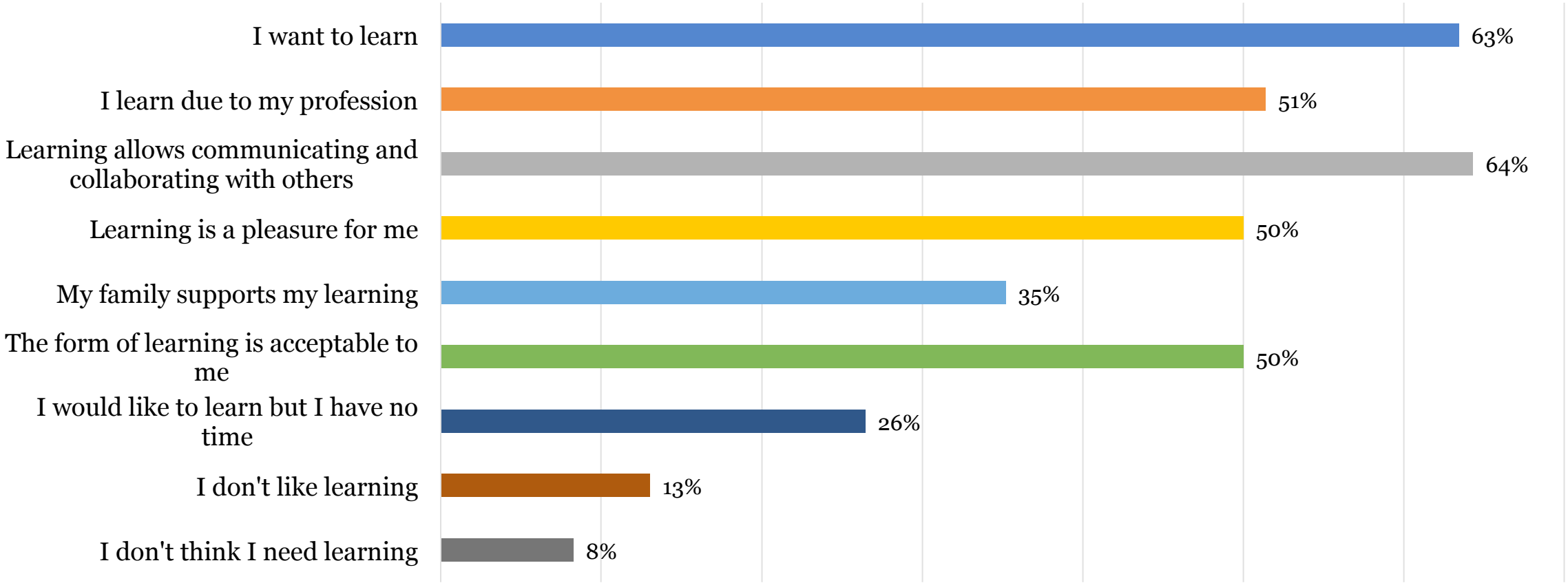
Why do I learn?



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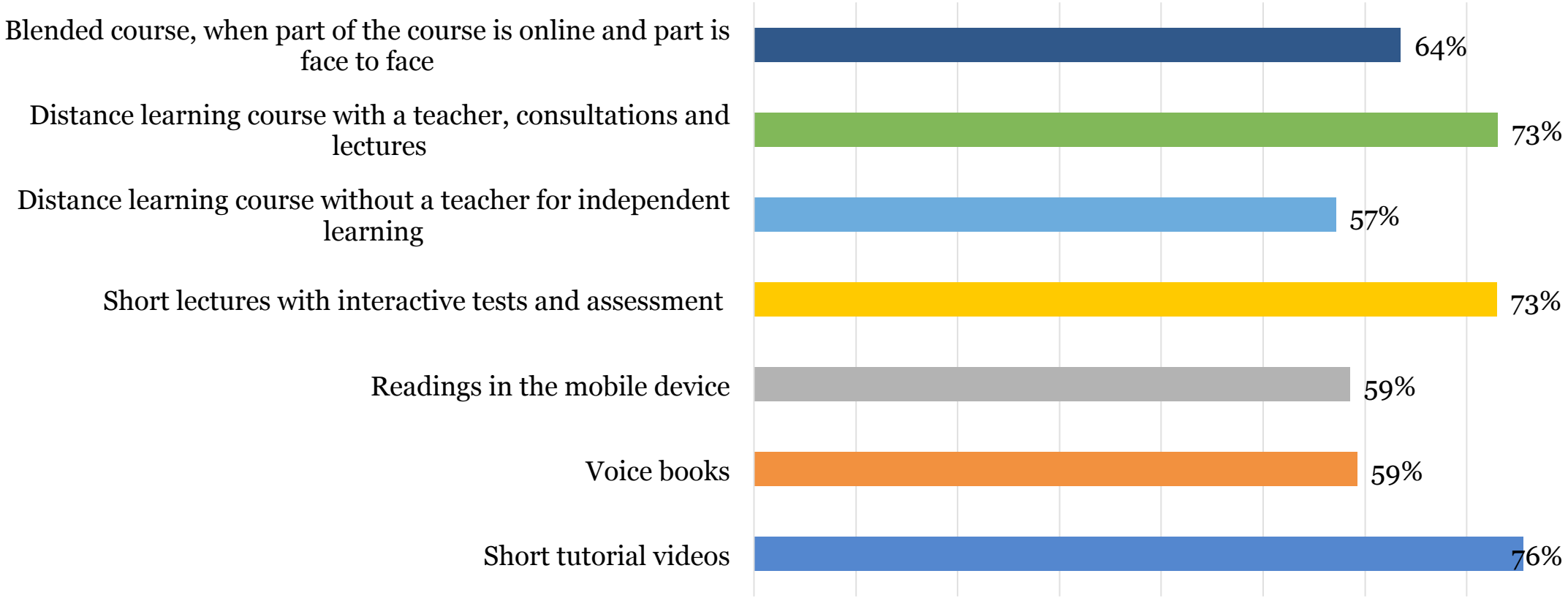
I prefer to learn online via



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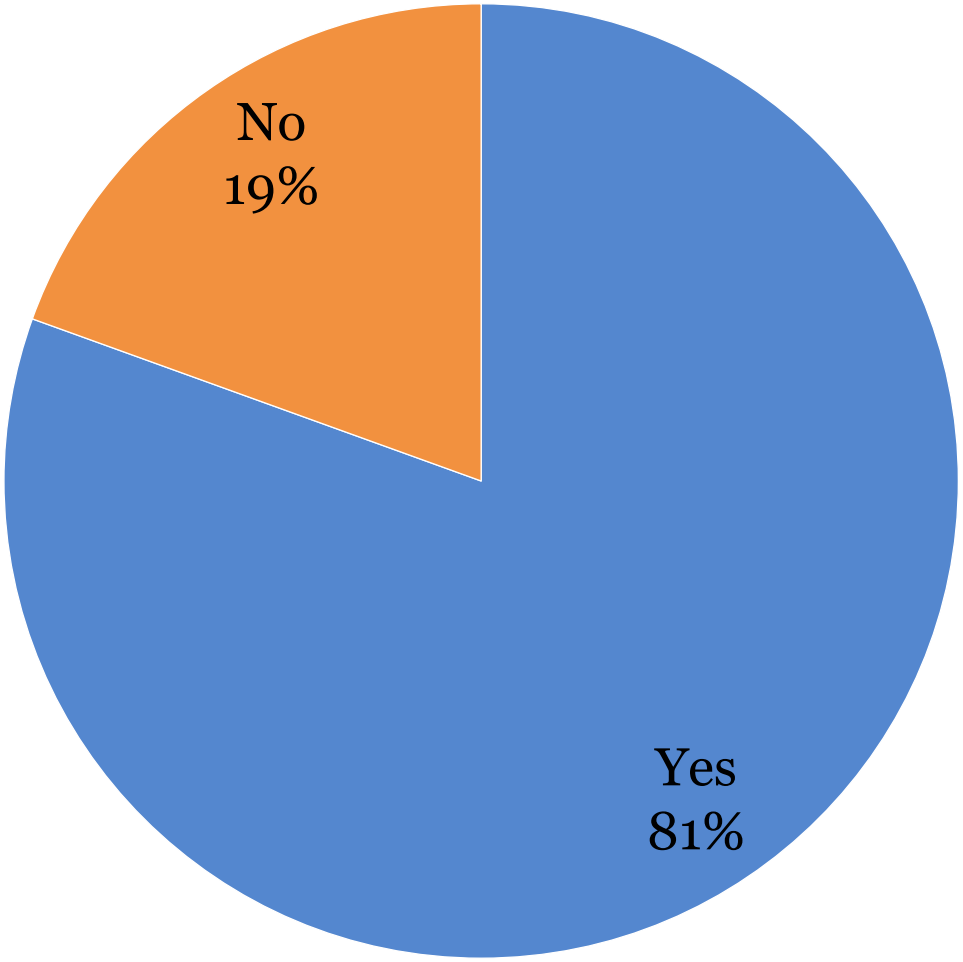

Having a social network account

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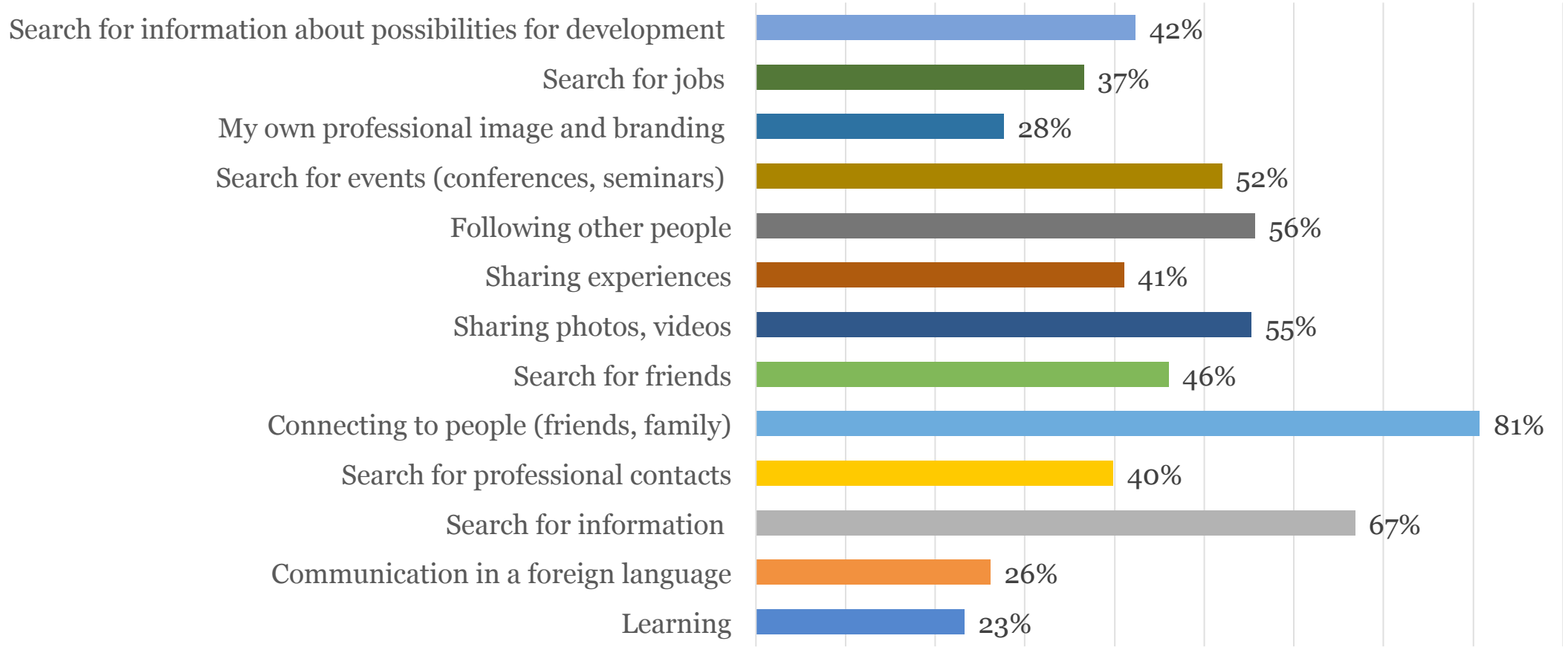

Usage of social networks

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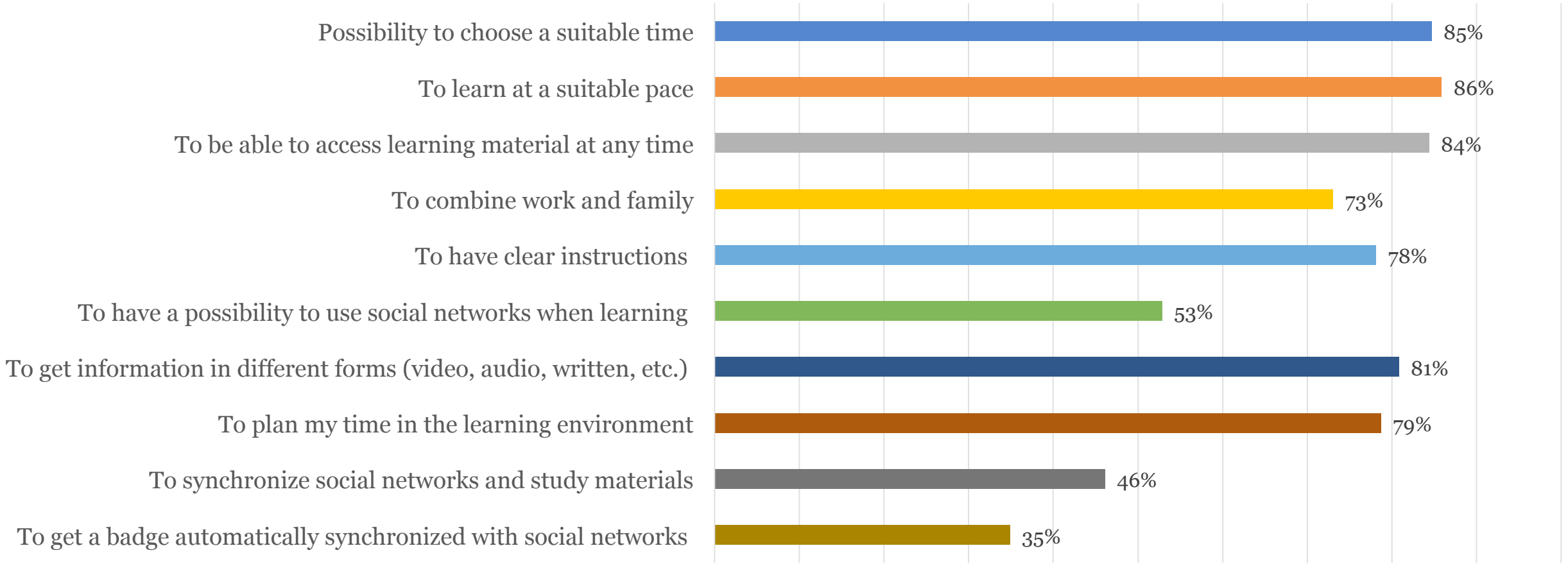
What matters when learning online



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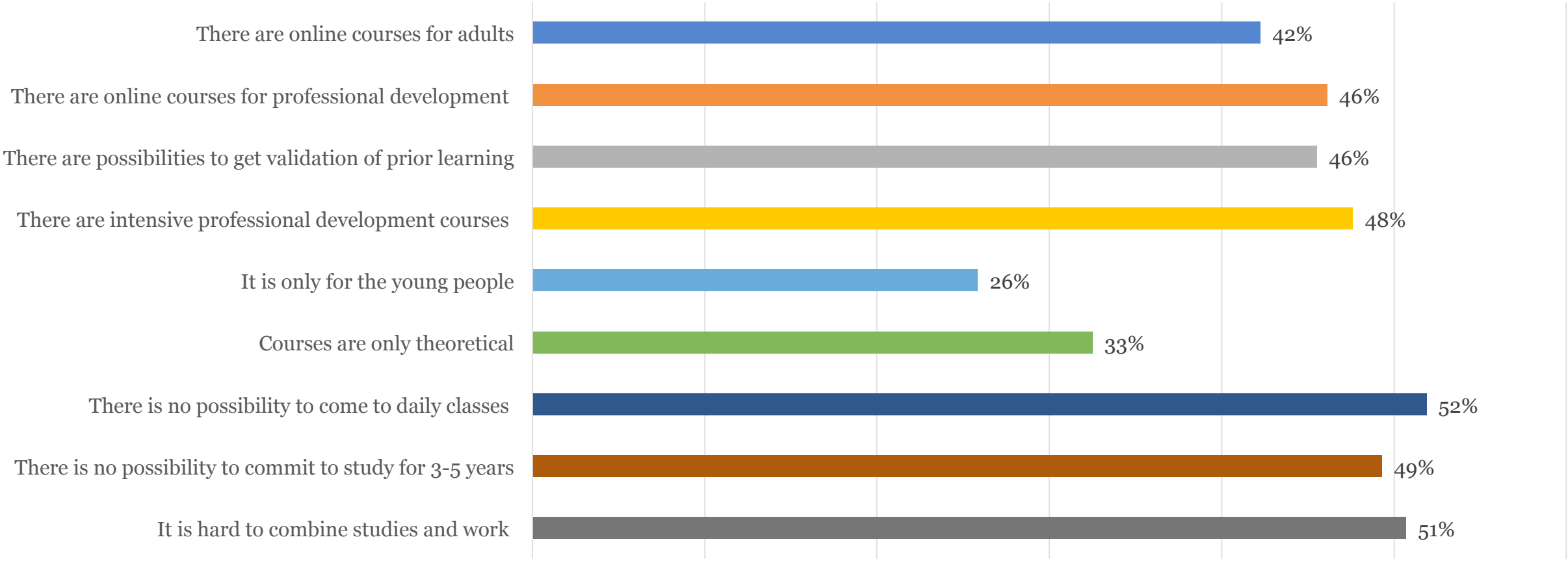
Higher education in LT: responding online learning needs of adults



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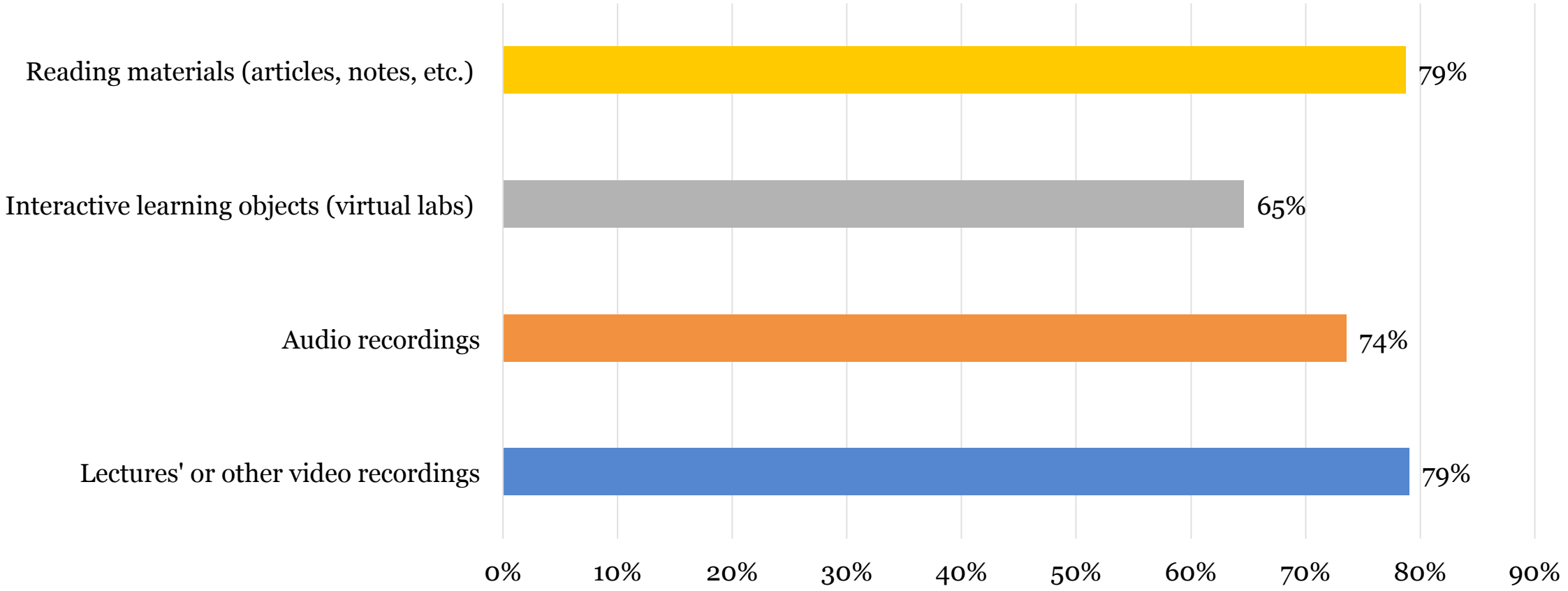

Preferable OER

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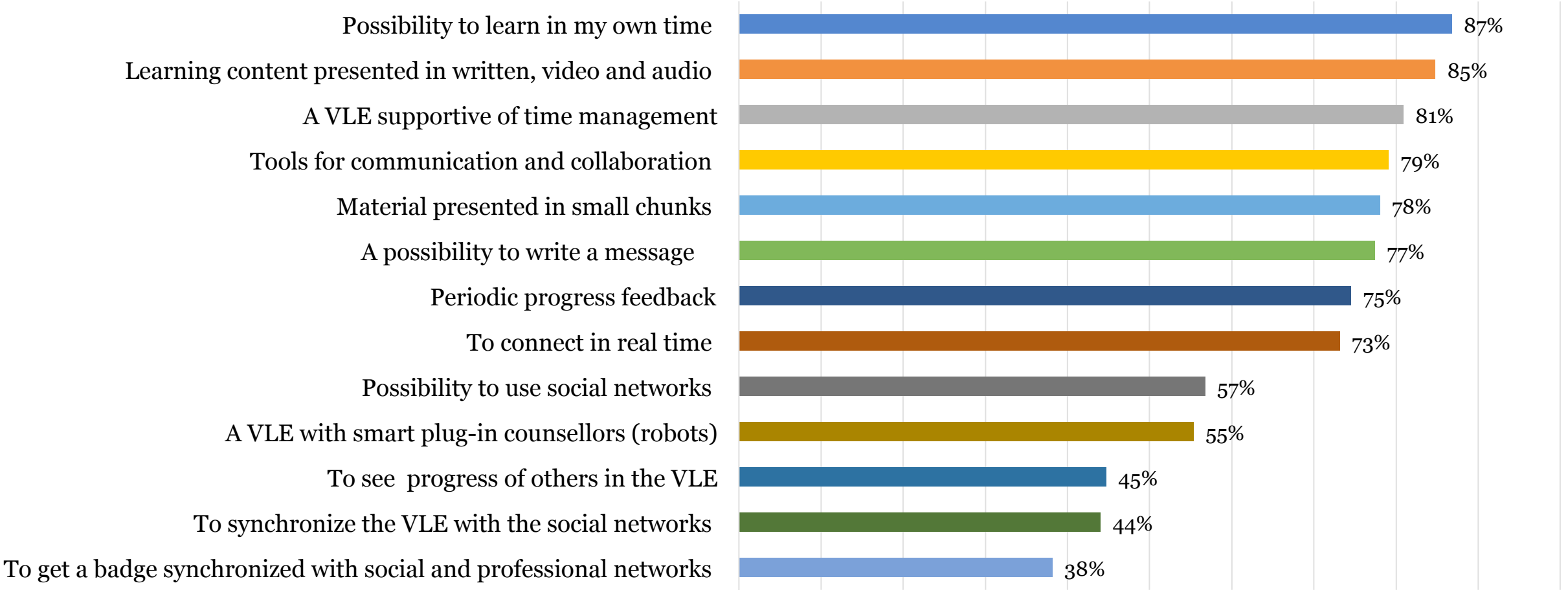
Preferable features for virtual learning environment (VLE)



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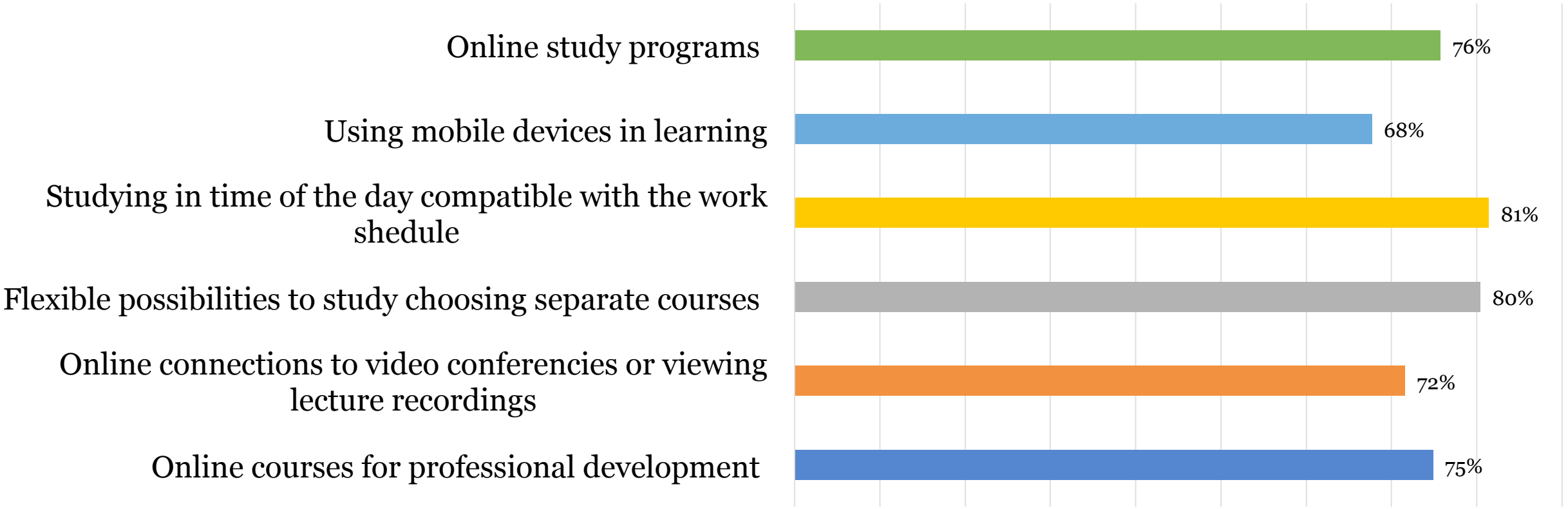
What would make learning/professional development in the university/college more attractive



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Digital network society members prefer learning online using:

- Different forms of resources (videos, audios or readings in small chunks) or online courses (with and without a teacher);
- VLE for -
  - Suitable time and pace for learning,
  - Communication and collabortion tools,
  - Instructions, time management and feedback;
- Teacher guidiance and feedback is important;
- Adults want to learn online, but they are willing to control their time, learn within the existing time limitations, in a chosen pace and time;
- Learners use social networks to search for information, events – seminars, conferences and development possibilities and connect to other people;
- Learners expect from universities online courses and flexible study programs to be able to connect in their own time adjusted to work and family life, including with mobile devices.

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What do online learners need in your country and your cases?

Pictures from www.pexels.com

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