



WORKFORCE ISSUES IN LIBRARY & INFORMATION SCIENCE

WILIS



Workforce Issues in Library and Information Science (WILIS):

General Overview of the WILIS 1 Survey

WILIS Short Report 1

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WILIS is a collaborative research partnership of the UNC Chapel Hill School of Information and Library Science and the UNC Institute on Aging, funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services through its Librarians for the 21st Century Program.

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WILIS 1 Study Team Members

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The WILIS studies

- WILIS 1 is a comprehensive study of the career patterns of graduates of LIS programs in North Carolina since 1964.
- WILIS 2 is a project to develop a shared recent graduates survey that may be used by all LIS programs.

Participating LIS programs

- Appalachian State University Library Science Program
<http://www.ced.appstate.edu/departments/les/>
- Central Carolina Community College Library and Information Technology Program
http://www.cccc.edu/Programs/Library_Info_Technology.html
- East Carolina University Department of Library Science and Instructional Technology
<http://lsit.coe.ecu.edu/>
- North Carolina Central University School of Library and Information Sciences
<http://www.nccuslis.org/>
- UNC Chapel Hill School of Information and Library Science
<http://www.ils.unc.edu/index.html>
- UNC Greensboro Department of Library and Information Studies
<http://www.uncg.edu/lis/>

North Carolina – a profile

- **Demographics** (Source: US Census Bureau, 2004-2007)
 - **Population** – 9,069,370 (2007 est.)
 - 51.0% Female
 - 74.0% White, 21.7% Black, 6.7% Hispanic
 - 12.2% 65 years or older
 - **Median household income** – \$40,863
 - **Education**
 - 78.1% of adults (25+) are high school graduates
 - 22.5% of adults (25+) have a bachelor's degree or higher

- **Number of libraries** (Source: National Center for Education Statistics)
 - **Public** – 383 service outlets, 40 bookmobiles (2005)
 - **School** – 1,877 public school library/media centers (2000)
 - **Academic** – 125 in post-secondary degree-granting institutions (2006)

Methodology

WILIS 1 components

- **University-based LIS programs**

1964–2005 graduates of five LIS programs in North Carolina

- Pilot survey of 750 graduates (April-May 2007)
- Non-response survey of 400 non-respondents (June-August 2007)
- Full survey of remaining 7,566 graduates (Sept-Dec 2007)
 - Includes 169 UNC-Chapel Hill 2006-2007 graduates who received email-contact only (Oct-Dec 2007)

- **Community college-based LIS program**

All 58 graduates of the Central Carolina Community College program since its founding in 2000

- Full survey (Dec 2007-March 2008)



WILIS 1 pilot study method

- 505/9089 – 5.5% unable to contact
- Randomly selected 750 graduates from the five university programs
- Solicited updated alumni contact information
- Sent postcards to check accuracy of the lists (119 cases updated)
- Sent invitation letter
- Sent email reminder
- Sent second letter and/or email
- Conducted non-response study

WILIS 1 non-response study

- Conducted June-August 2007
 - Web, paper and telephone surveys
- Comparison of pilot participants and non-respondents indicated representativeness
- Conducting the non-response study increased the overall pilot study response rate by 8%
- As a result, we added an additional mailed letter to the full survey design

WILIS 1 method

- Obtained alumni contact information from LIS programs
- Used AlumniFinder to update contact information
- Used listservs to solicit updated contact information from alumni
- Used postcards to check address accuracy
- Sent invitation letter
- Sent second letter reminder
- Sent email reminders

Results

WILIS 1 response rates

- 7,566 graduates from the five LIS university programs in NC
- 35.1% response rate for all programs
- 31.4% response rate for graduates with a library science master's degree
- 26.2% response rate for graduates with an information science master's degree

Respondents by graduation year cohort

Graduation Year	All Programs N=2627
1964-1973	13%
1974-1983	20%
1984-1993	21%
1994-2003	33%
2004-2007	13%
Total	100%

Respondents by type of degree

	All Programs N=2653
Bachelor's degree – library science (BLS, BSLS)	2% (N=59)
Bachelor's degree – information science (BSIS)	.4% (N=10)
Master's degree – library science (MA, MLS, MSLS, MLIS)	89% (N=2369)
Master's degree – information science (MSIS, MIS)	6% (N=165)
Dual Master's degrees (MLS/MIS)	.2% (N=6)
PhD – information and library science	2% (N=44)
Total	100%

Demographic composition

	All Programs N=2627
Gender	82% female
Overall mean age	50.2, sd 12.2
Overall median age	56
Mean age for those currently working	47.9, sd 10.9 (N=2054)
Median age for those currently working	50
Ethnicity	11% non-white

Where are NC LIS graduates now?

- 14 countries
 - Austria
 - Bahrain
 - Bermuda
 - China
 - England
 - Germany
 - Israel
 - Italy
 - Japan
 - New Zealand
 - Peru
 - Spain
 - Taiwan
 - United States (all 50)
- 76% live in the Southeastern US, primarily in NC (57%) and VA (9%)

All Respondents
N=2530

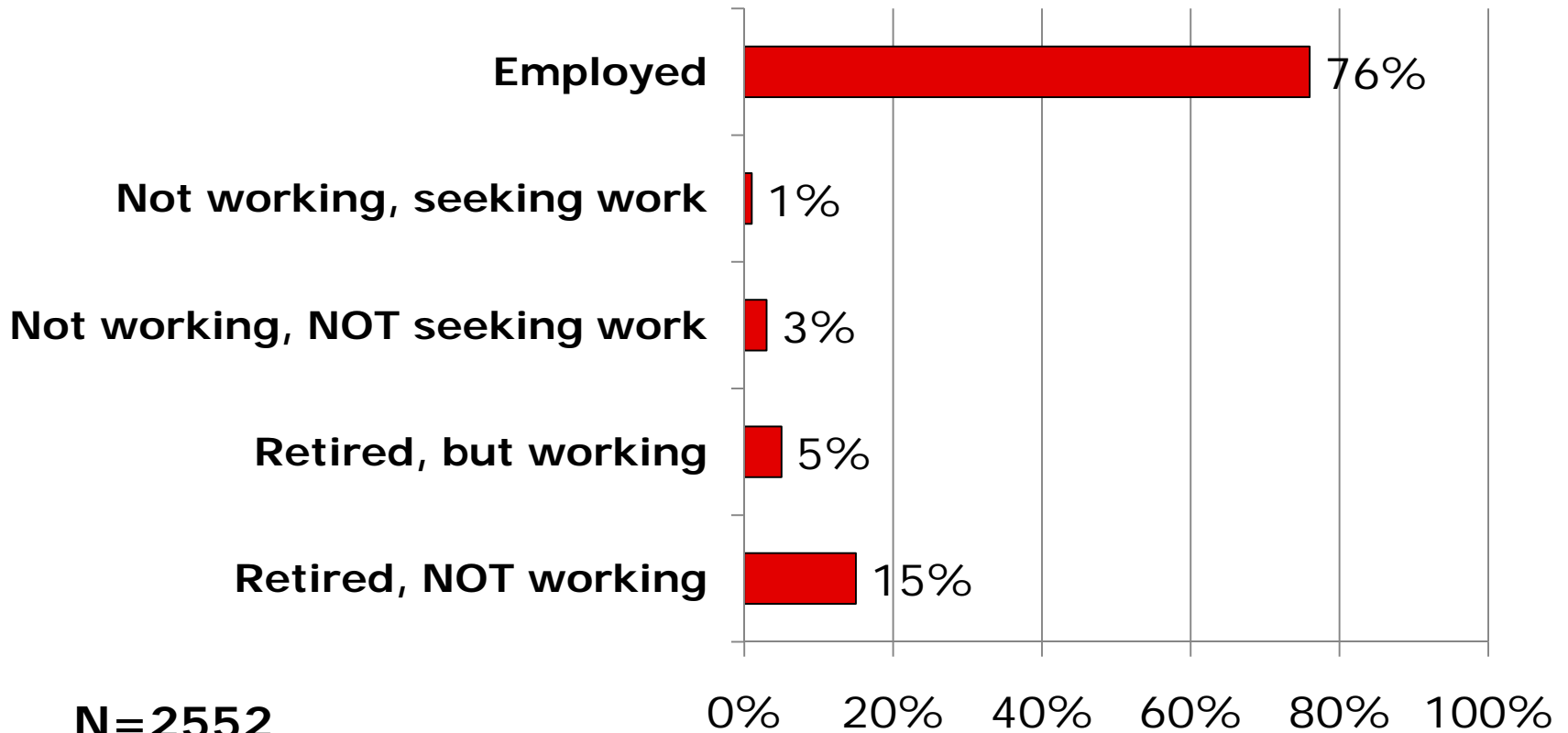
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LIS as an aging workforce

- In 2000, median age of the U.S. labor force was 39.3 years
- In 2004, average age of U.S. nurses was 46.8 years
- The WILIS median age of working LIS grads was 50.0 years
- Average age at LIS graduation was 32.7 years

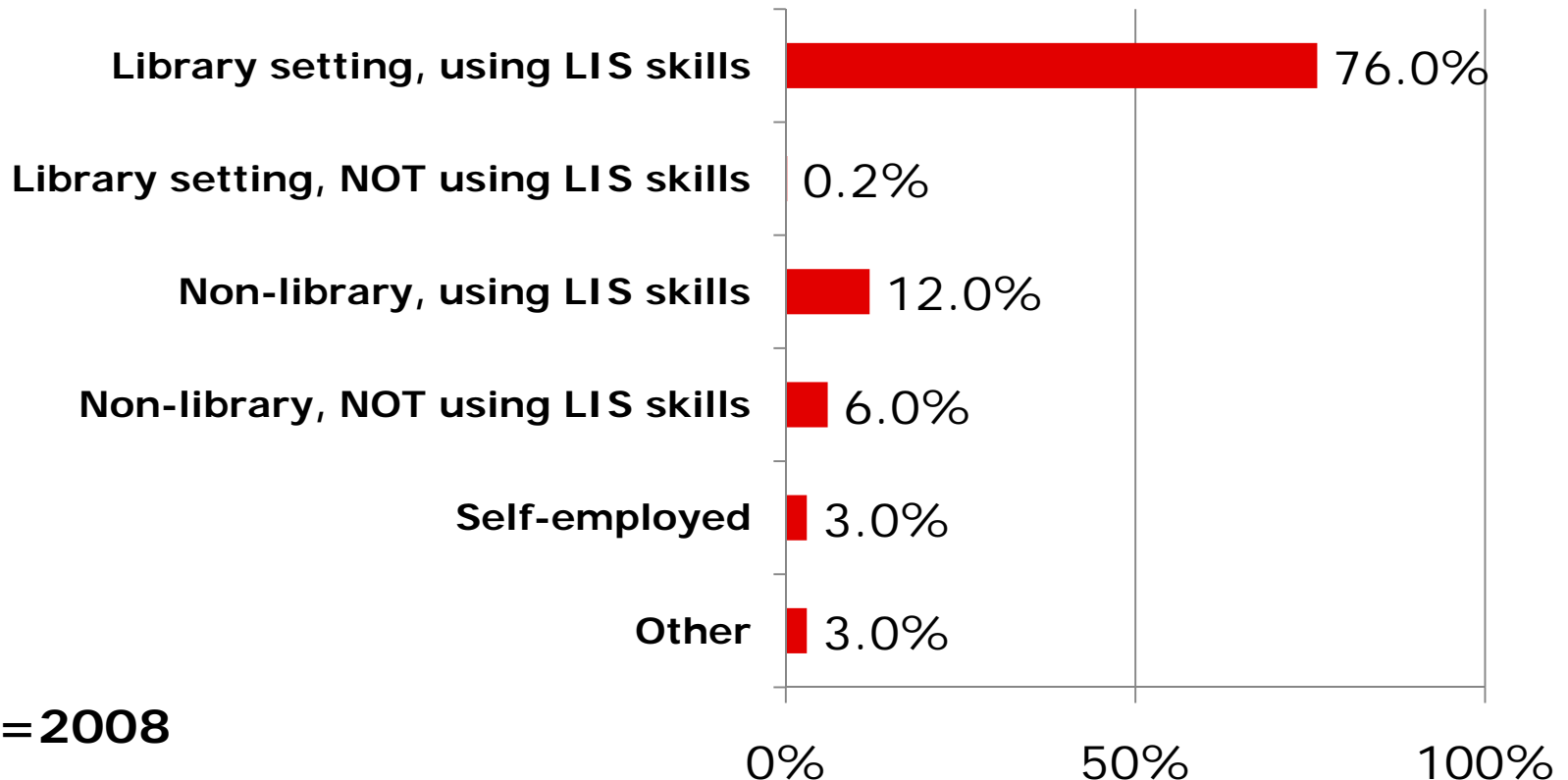
Current Employment

Current employment status



Setting of current job

Which of the following best describes your current job?



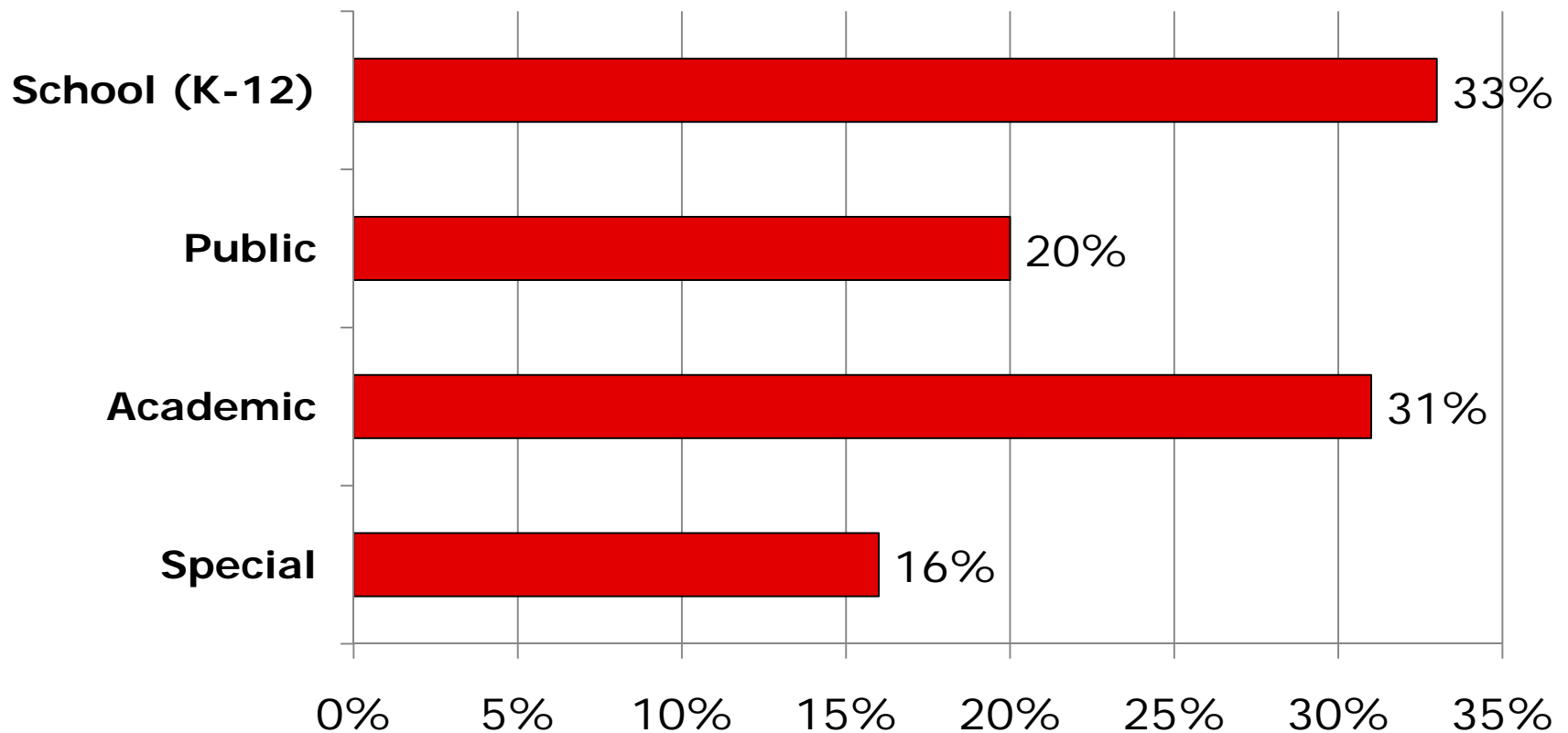
N=2008

Setting of current job

Which of the following best describes your current job?

	MSLS N=1801	MSIS N=132
Library setting, using LIS skills	80%	21%
Library setting, NOT using LIS skills	.2%	1%
Non-library, using LIS skills	9%	51%
Non-library, NOT using LIS skills	5%	13%
Self-employed	3%	7%
Other	3%	7%

Current job, by type of library

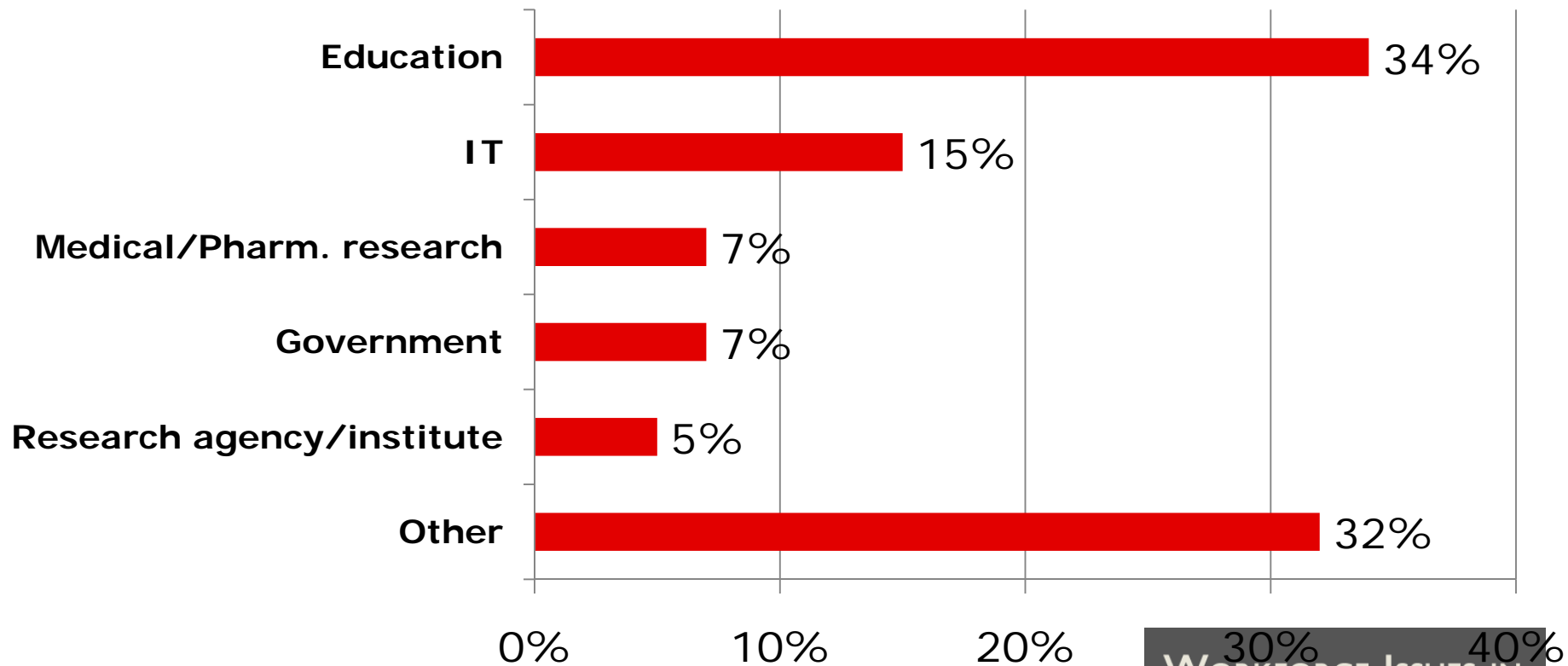


Working in Libraries
N=1515

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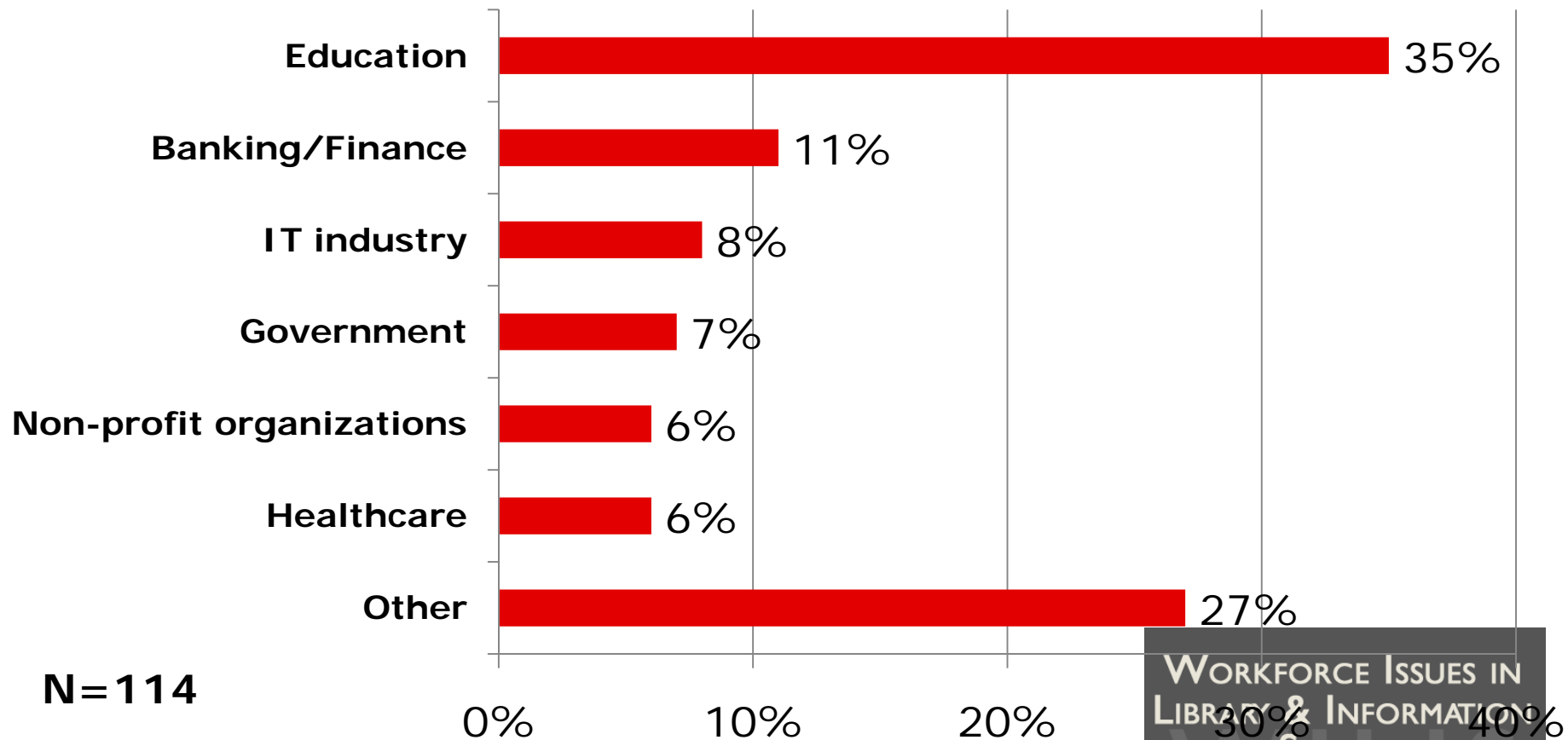
If not in libraries, where are LIS grads working? [those using LIS skills]



N=231



If not in libraries, where are LIS grads working? [those NOT using LIS skills]



N=114

Current job

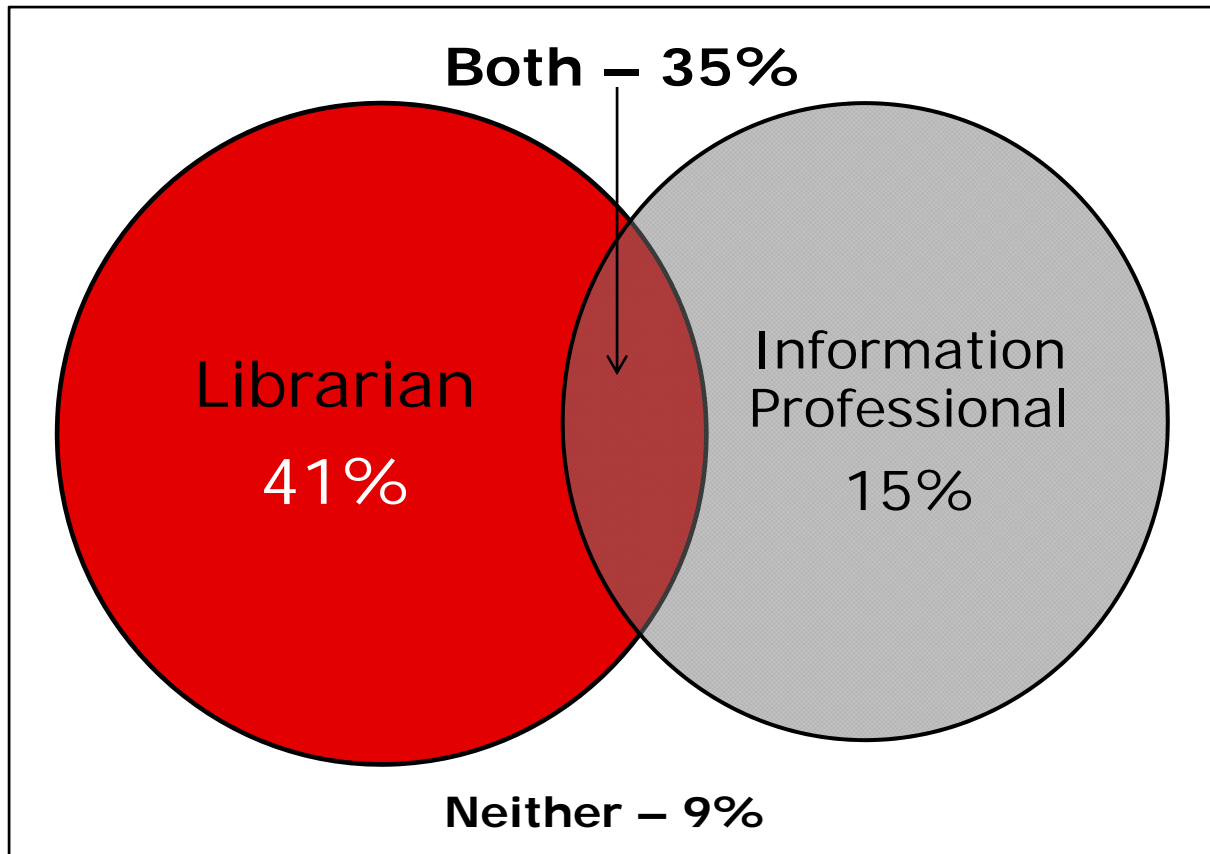
	All Programs (N=1998)
Average number of hours worked per week	39.71, sd. 9.95
Considered full-time	89%
Supervise others	60%
Librarians (N=1455)	
Average annual salary	\$51,952
Median annual salary	\$50,000
Non-librarians (N=418)	
Average annual salary	\$73,471
Median annual salary	\$62,400

Average US librarian salary: \$57,809 (median - \$53,000)

Source: 2007 American Library Association – Allied Professional Association Salary Survey

Professional identity

Do you consider yourself to be a librarian, an information professional, both, or neither?



**Currently
working,
N=2057**

If neither, what do you consider yourself to be?

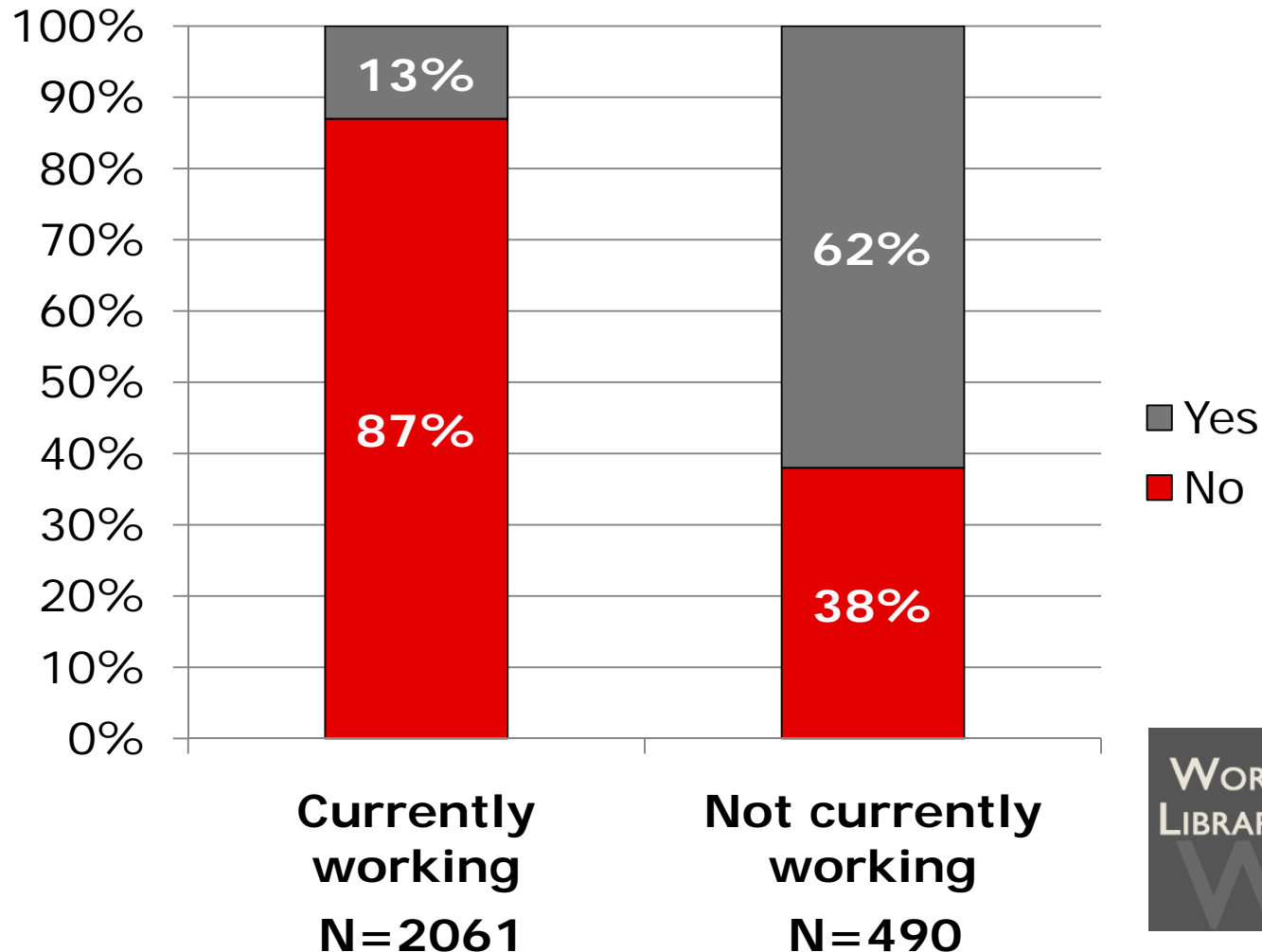
N=182

Selected answers

-
- Accountant
 - Antiquarian appraiser
 - Archivist
 - Artist
 - Bioinformatician
 - Bookseller
 - Business analyst
 - Business owner
 - Church communications director
 - Community college administrator
 - Computer analyst
 - Consultant
 - Copyeditor
 - Corporate researcher
 - Data architect
 - Director of preschool
 - Director of nonprofit
 - Financial professional
 - Freelance editor/writer
 - Healthcare professional
 - Insurance professional
 - Intelligence liaison officer
 - Internet software engineer
 - IT professional
 - Massage therapist
 - Museum educator
 - Nail technician
 - Network engineer
 - Office manager
 - Paraprofessional
 - Professional coach
 - Professor of criminal justice
 - Project manager
 - Sales manager
 - Teacher of transcendental meditation
 - Principal
 - Systems engineer
 - Stay at home mom
 - Teacher
 - Professor of LIS
 - Retired librarian
 - Attorney
 - Missionary
 - Student
 - Volunteer
 - Homemaker
 - Field botanist
 - Grandmother
 - Disabled
 - Career changer
 - Nurse
 - Musician
 - Pastor
 - Social worker
 - Writer

Professional identity

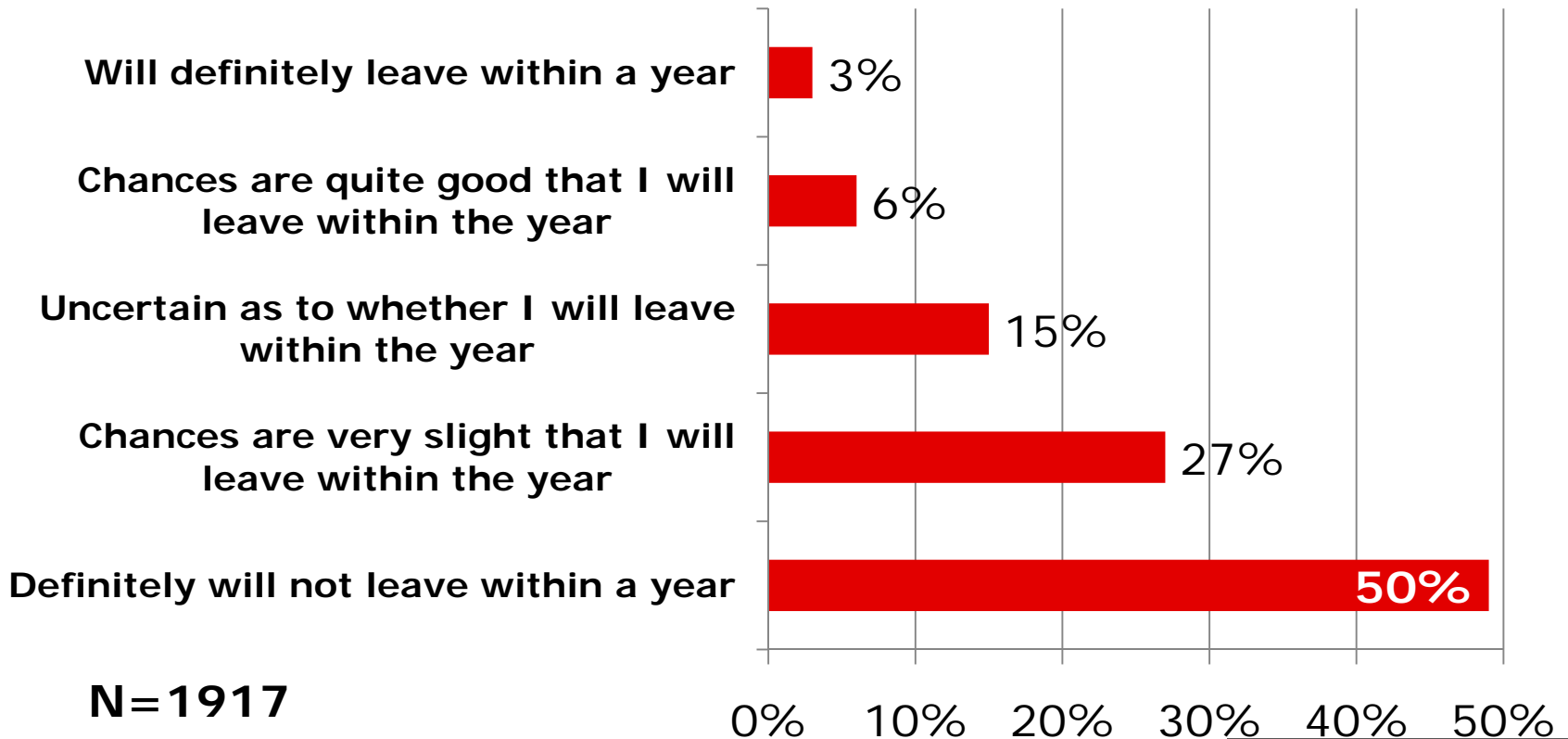
Do you consider yourself to have left the LIS field?



Retention

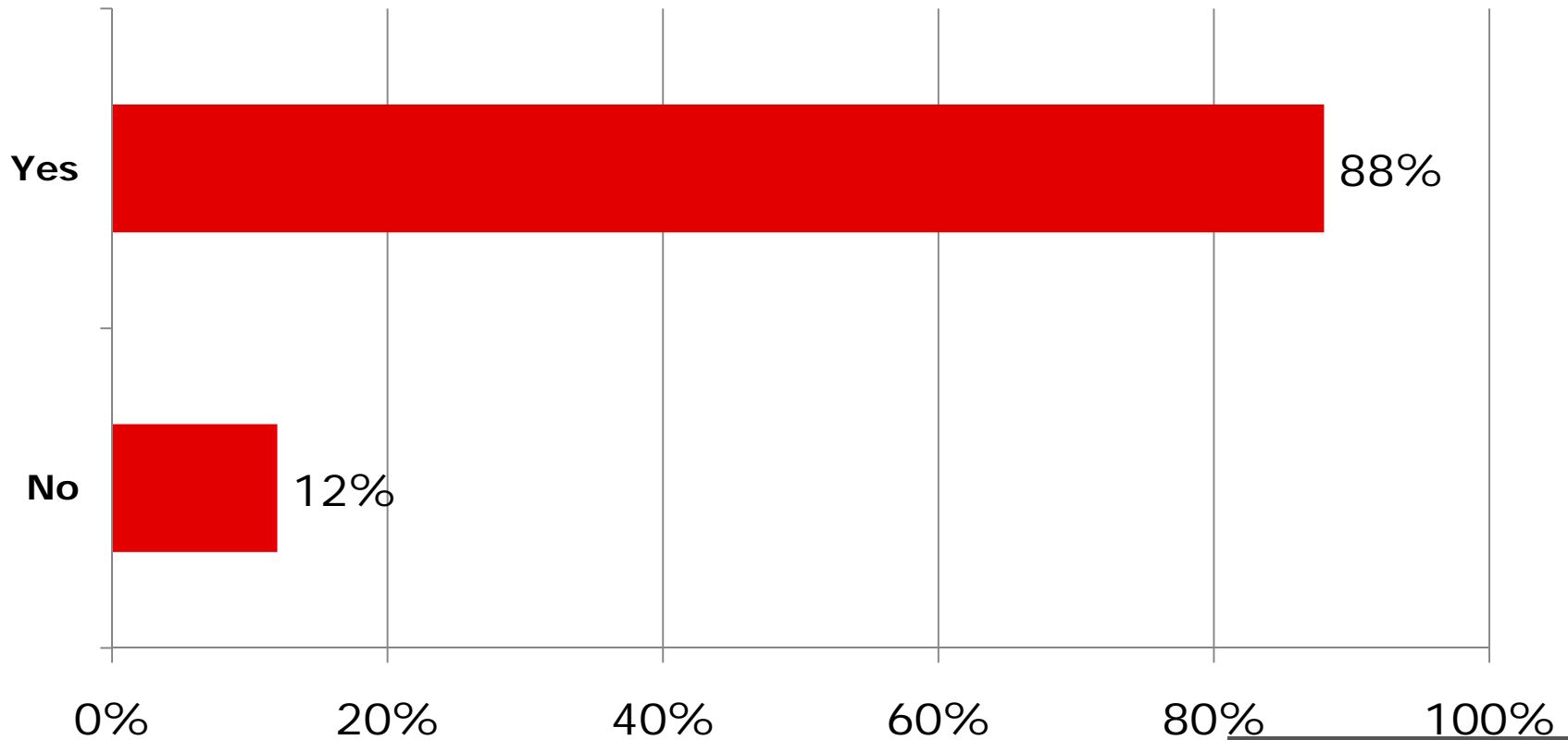
Retention – current job

Do you expect to leave your current employer in the coming year?



Retention – LIS field

Do you think you will be working in LIS 3 years from now?

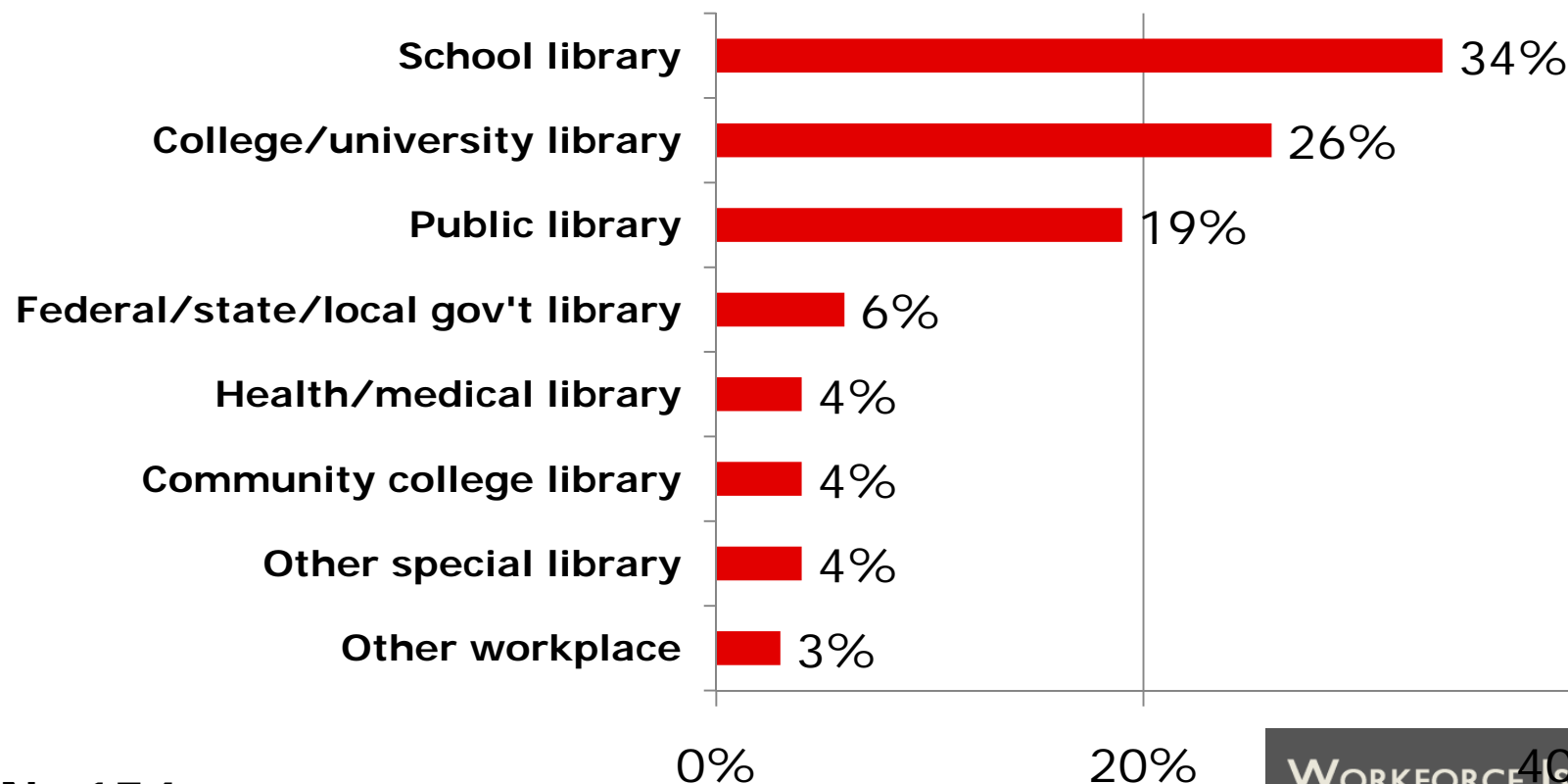


N=1578



Retention – LIS field

12% (154 respondents) indicate they will not be working in LIS 3 years from now. What jobs will they be leaving?

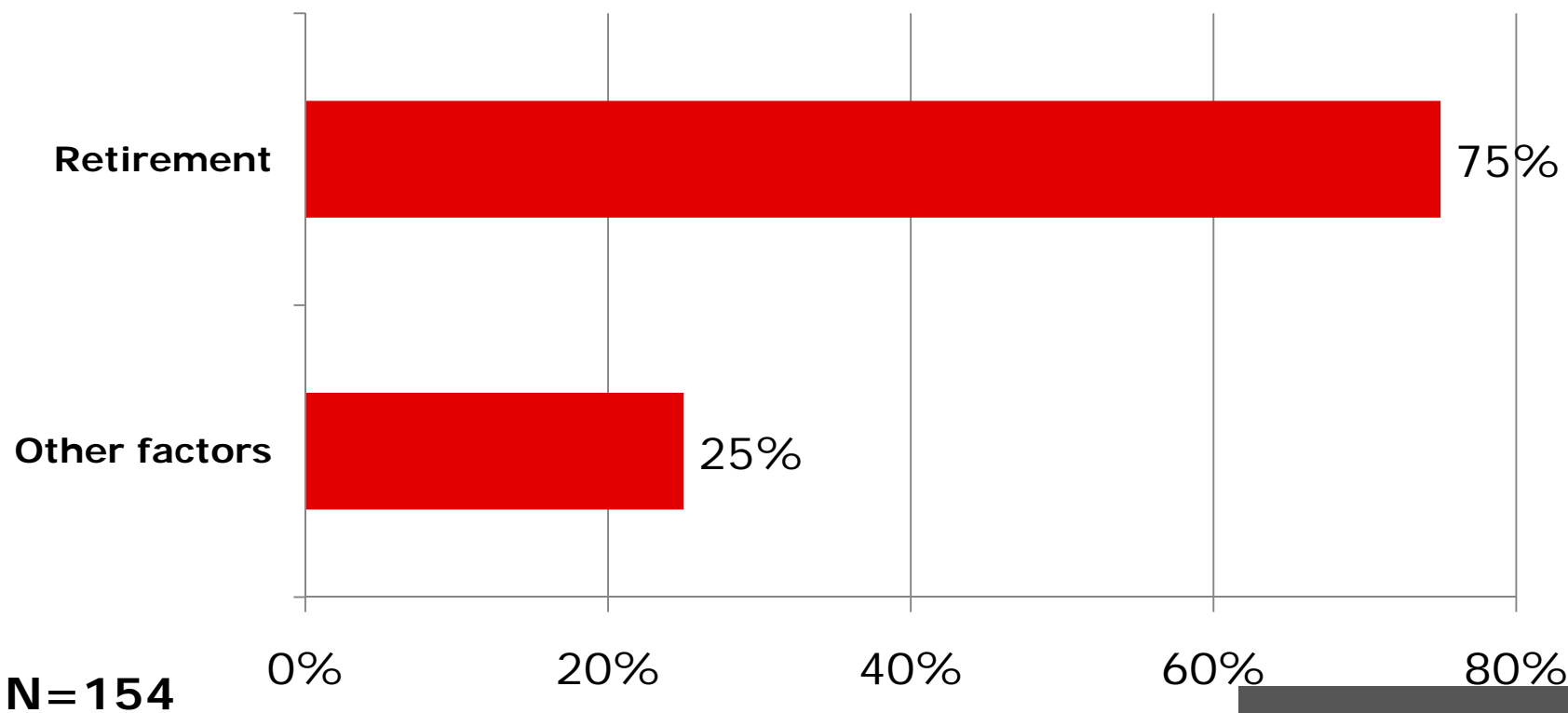


N=154



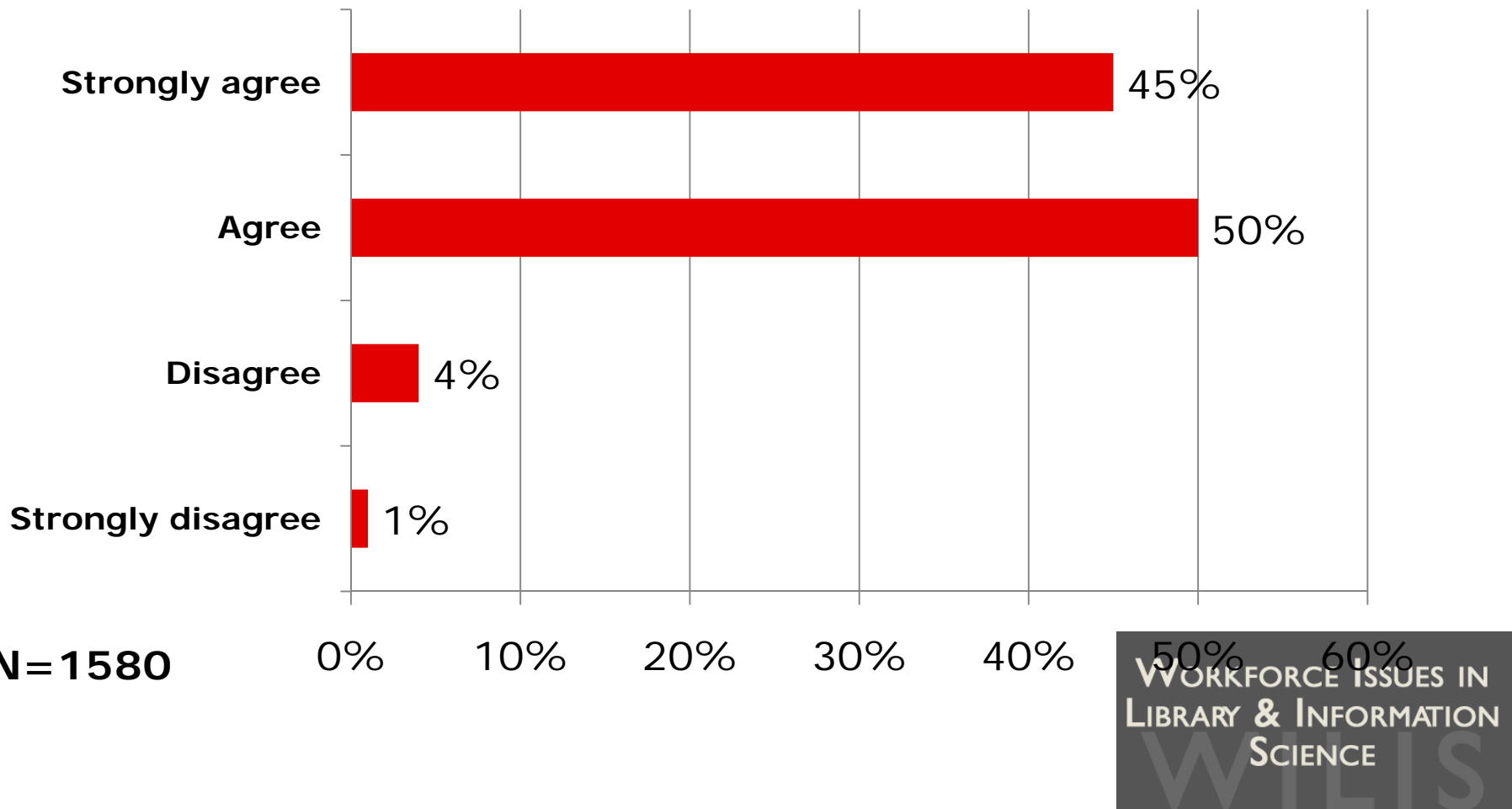
Retention – LIS field

Why will they no longer be in LIS 3 years from now?



Career satisfaction of current LIS professionals

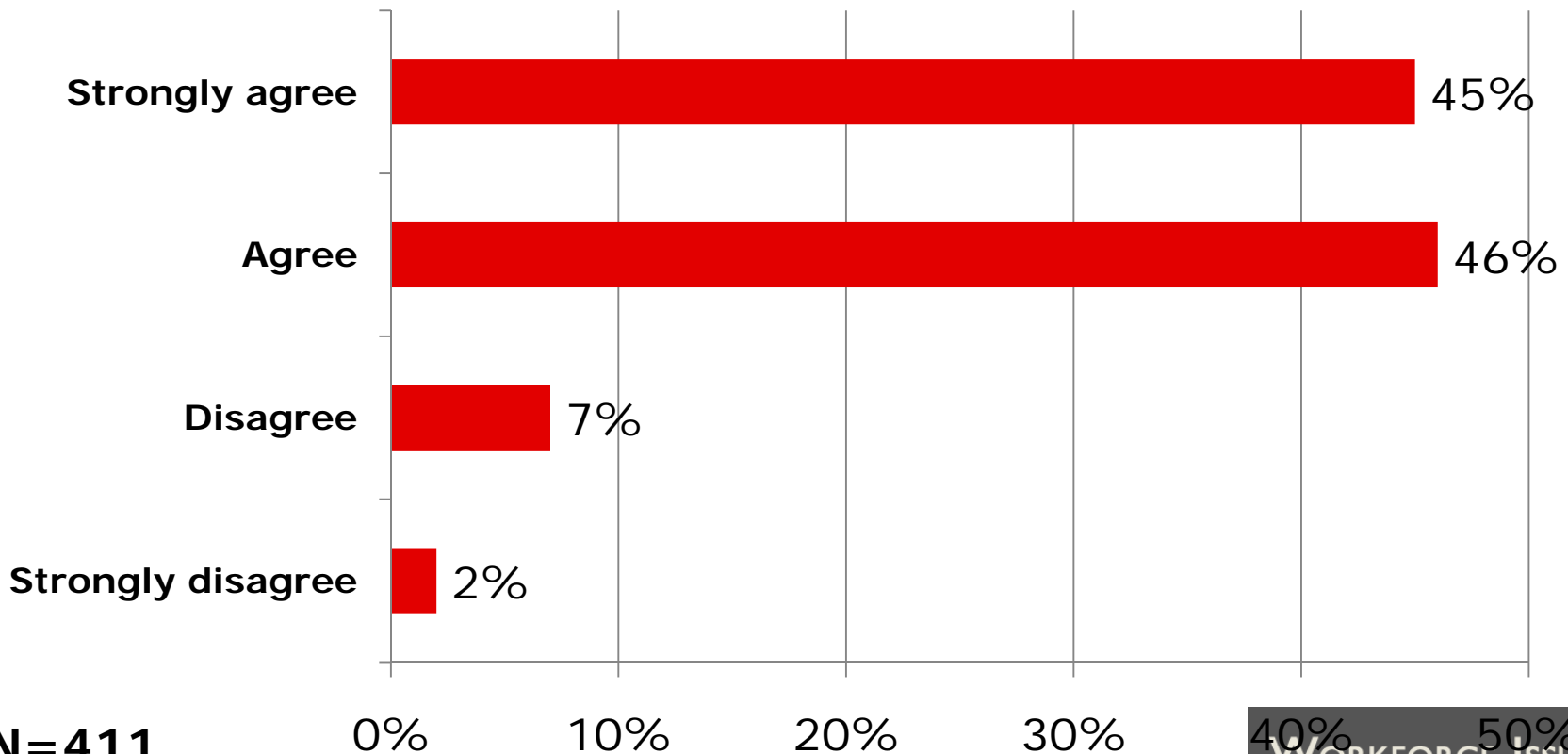
Overall, I am satisfied with LIS as a career



Retirement

Career satisfaction of retired LIS professionals

Overall, I am satisfied with LIS as a career



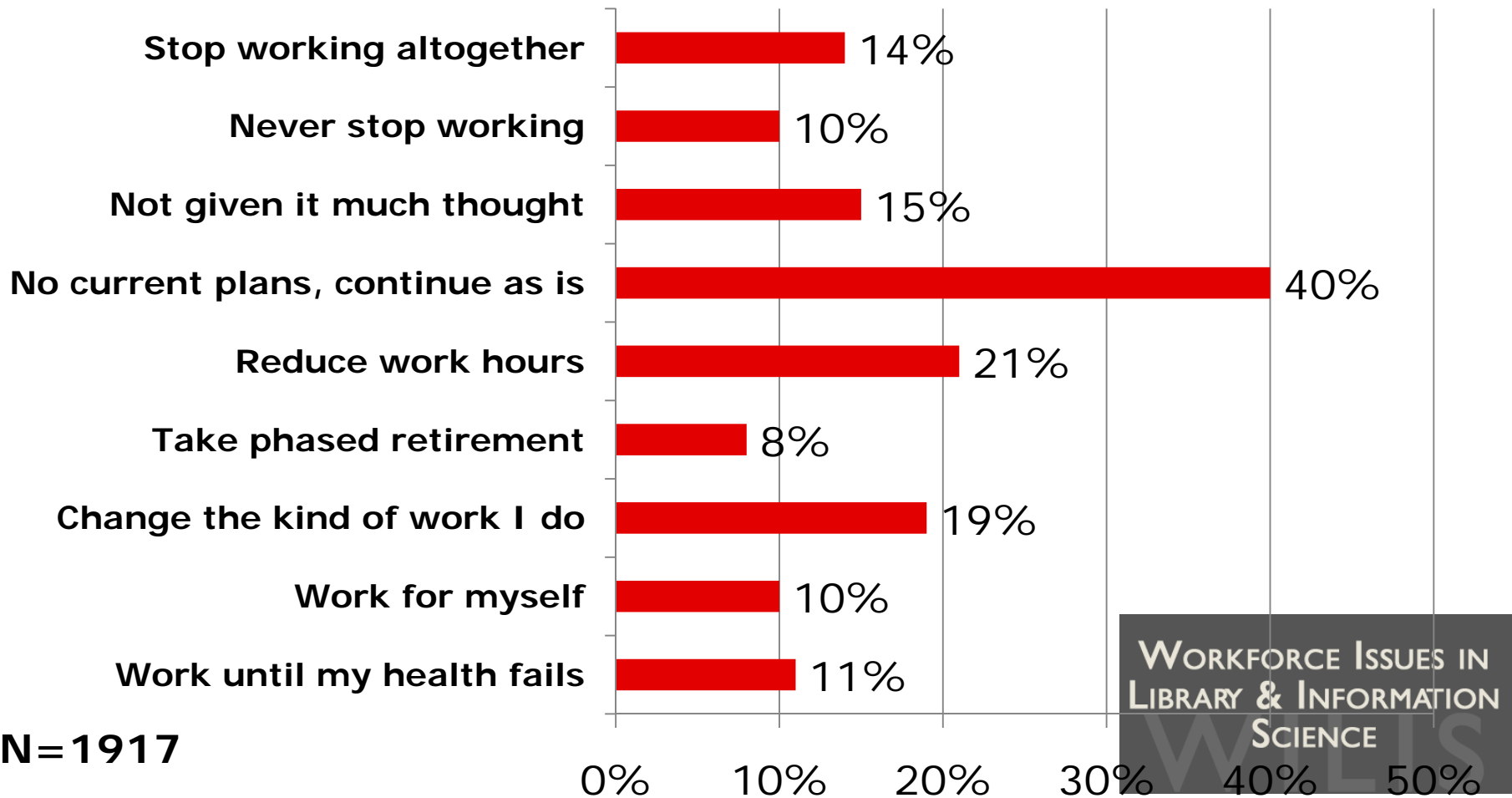
N=411

Retirement

- 25% will definitely be working full-time after 62 (N=1912)
- 8% will definitely be working full-time after 65 (N=1458)
- 23% will definitely NOT be working full-time after 65 (N=1458)

Retirement plans

Regarding your retirement plans, which of the following do you plan to do?



Volunteering

- 86% expect to volunteer after they retire (N=1905)
- 65% expect to volunteer in a library or information setting (N=1616)
- 78% expect to use LIS skills in their volunteer work (N=1620)



Workforce projections

How many are likely to leave the full time workforce? (if intentions hold true)

- 5 years from now (2013), 49% of those 62+ are likely to have left – 12% of workforce
- 10 years from now (2018), 63% of those 62+ are likely to have left – 23% of workforce



Workforce projections

What types of libraries will experience the most retirements?

- Of those who will likely retire 5 years from now (2013) (n=182)
 - 41% are school librarians (n=74)
 - 23% are public librarians (n=42)
 - 27% are academic librarians (n=49)
 - 9% are special librarians (n=17)

- 71% are from NC, SC, GA, and VA, but the other 29% are distributed across the US



Workforce projections

What types of libraries will experience the most retirements?

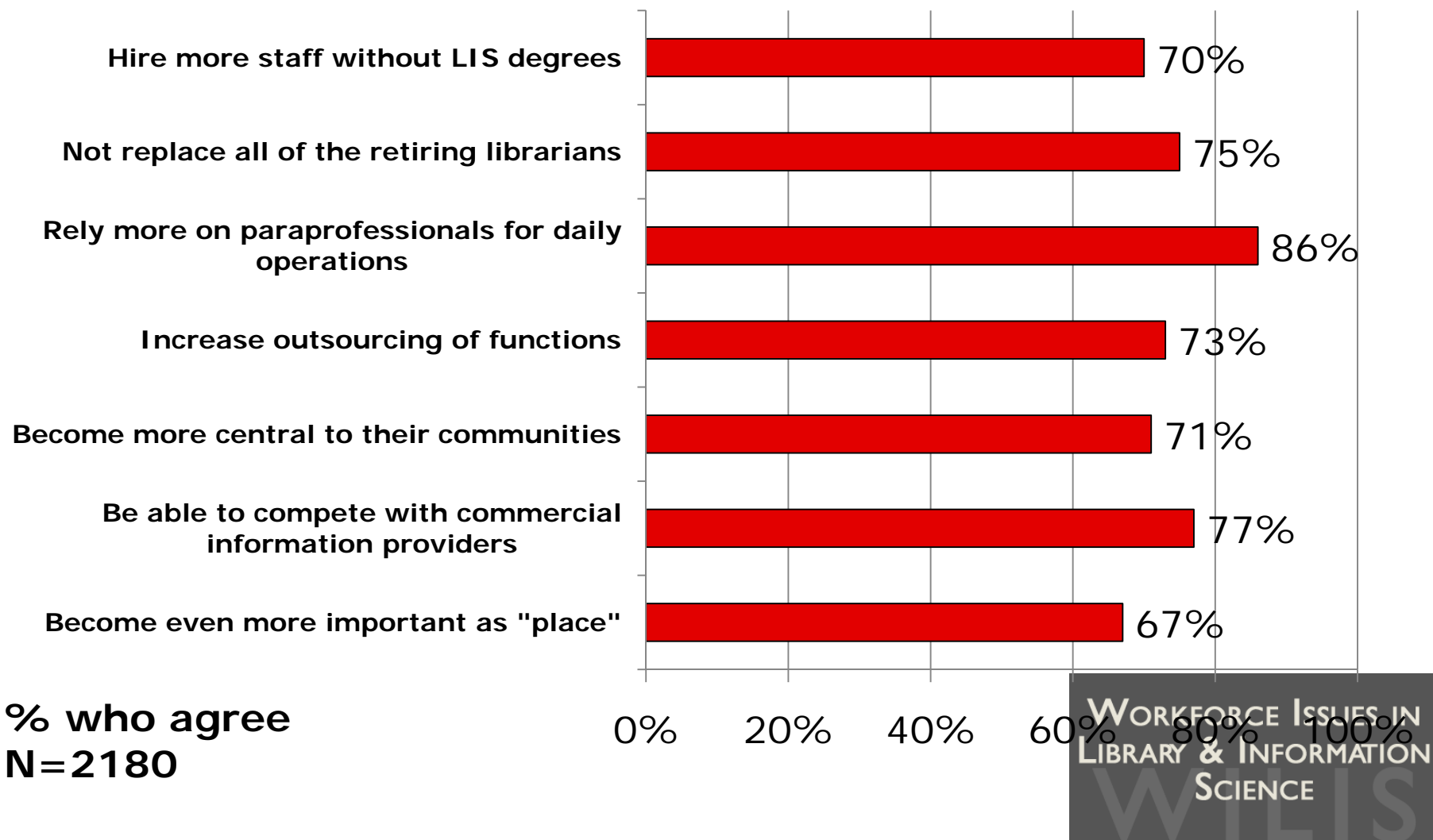
- Of those who will likely retire 10 years from now (2018) (n=357)
 - 43% are school librarians (n=154)
 - 23% are public librarians (n=81)
 - 25% are academic librarians (n=88)
 - 9% are special librarians (n=34)

- 78% are from NC, SC, GA, and VA, but the other 22% are distributed across the US

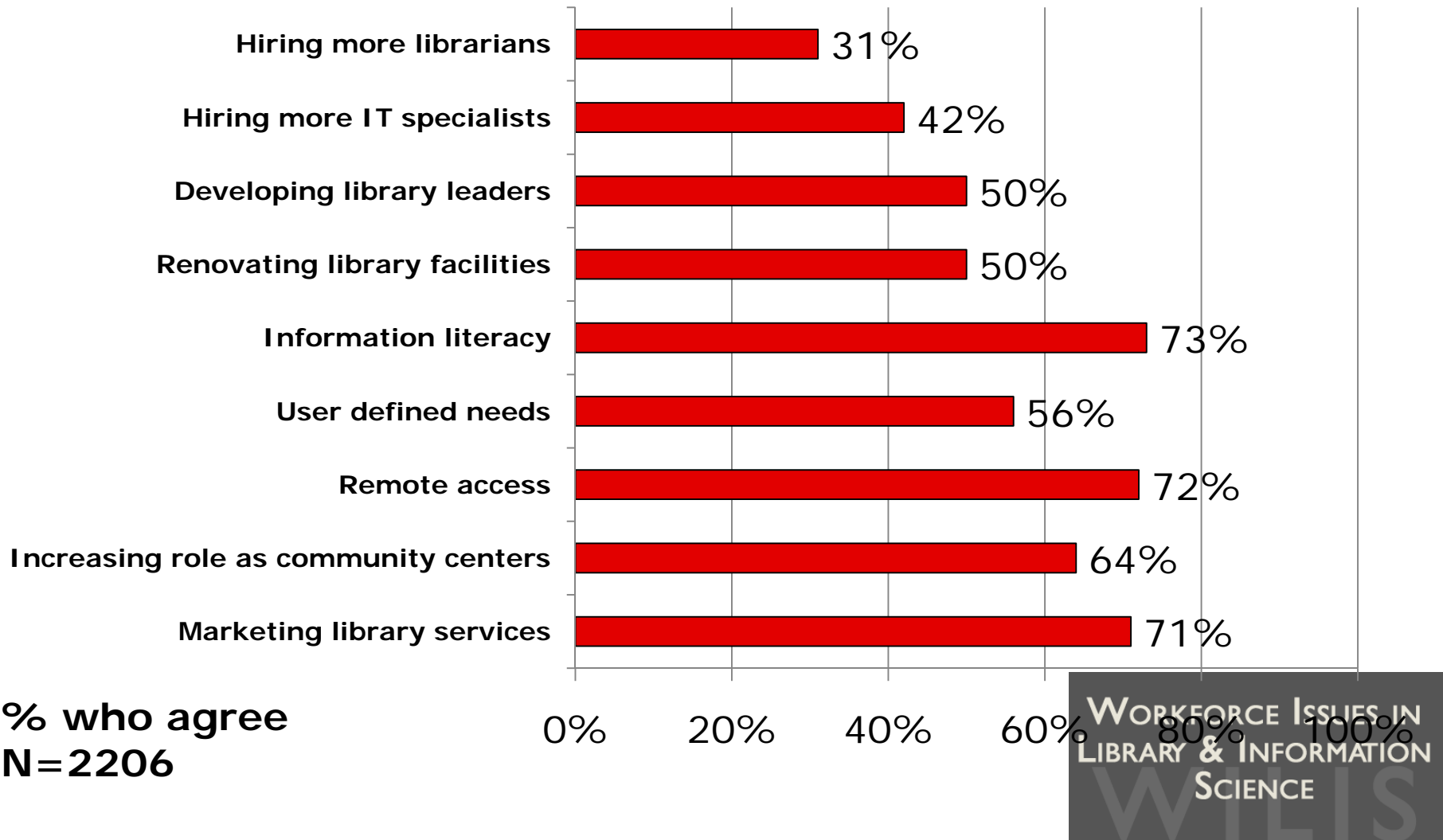
Trends

Trends

In the future, libraries will...



In the future, libraries should increase their focus on...



Highlights

- LIS is an aging workforce and overall employment is high
- Most LIS graduates tend to work in libraries and most consider themselves to be working in the LIS field
- Almost all graduates use LIS skills in their work even if they have left the field.
- Respondents work in a variety of workplaces but the traditional library settings (school, academic, public) still top the list.
- A majority of respondents (65%) intend to volunteer in a library or information setting after they retire.

Future analysis

- Over 1,700 variables available
- Detailed work histories
- Detailed educational histories
- Job quality
- Recruitment
- Retention
- Retirement issues
- LIS program evaluation [recent grads]

Future reports

- By type of employer
- Deans, directors and chairs survey
- Race, ethnicity, gender, and age
- Recruitment and retention
- Historical trends
- Survey toolkit

Note that these are preliminary descriptive results only. For further information, contact the investigators at wilis@unc.edu