

## **Ingram Public Library Collection Development Plan**

### **Introduction:**

Located in the suburb of Ingram, Pennsylvania, the Ingram Public Library strives to meet the needs of its diverse patrons. As of the 2010 town census, the town of Ingram had a population of 22,783, with 92% of the town's population identifying English as its primary language, while the other eight percent spoke Spanish. Ingram's demographics, however, are rapidly changing. This is in part due to a rejuvenation of the area's anthracite coal mining industry. Long abandoned, new investors have focused on re-opening the region's historical coal mines. This activity prompted thousands of new migrants, who are predominantly Slavic, to move into the region. As it is the responsibility of the library to meet the needs of all of the community's residents, the library is learning about Ingram's newest residents in order to best serve them. This includes determining if they need resources made available in their native language or if they can utilize the existing English-language resources available in the library. From preliminary discussions with some of the new migrants, it appears that most speak some English.

The library offers a variety of services to its patrons, including providing computer access, offering information literacy classes, hosting job fairs every month, and providing resources to enrich the lives of the youngest residents of the community. There are volunteers, many of whom are former educators, who provide tutoring services to school-age children everyday after school. This is a great way to ensure that students keep up with the demands made of them by their teachers. Additionally, the library hosts reading parties every month for children who read at least one book in the previous month. In order to qualify, children must write a brief report on the book that they read and spend about five minutes discussing it with a staff member. Additionally, the library has a collection of books, electronic resources, compact discs, DVDs, and video games to meet the needs of the community. The Ingram Public Library is also testing out a new program that allows residents to borrow laptops for up to one week at a time, with a one-time renewal if a hold has not been placed on the laptop.

The majority of the library's print resources are in English, but there is a small section of books for Spanish speakers within the library as well. Efforts are being made to expand the library's multicultural holdings by subscribing to more foreign language databases. The library employs one Spanish-speaking librarian, who is well-liked by all in the community and is able to assist individuals who speak either English or Spanish. To ensure that the library is properly catering to its patrons, the library administers periodic surveys and creates focus groups that reveal the interests and needs of the area's residents. The Ingram Public Library wants to not only meet the needs of today's residents but challenges itself to provide the resources that will help residents be successful over the next fifty years. By studying census records, attending county board meetings, and conducting periodic surveys of the community's residents, the Ingram Public Library is able to maintain a collection of resources and services that rival the greatest libraries in the United States.

**Needs Assessment:**Purpose of Needs Assessment

The purpose of this needs assessment is to ascertain the library collection needs of Ingram, Pennsylvania's growing Slavic population. While feedback is expected on other areas of library services, including staffing, sufficiency of facilities, diversity of community education programs, and other potential offerings; discerning this community's perception of the library's holdings is the assessment's primary objective. Findings will drive decision making regarding future collection investment so as to ensure that all of Ingram Public Library's potential patrons are well served.

**Methodology:**

In preparing for this study, Ingram Public Library staff members first looked to recent census data to ascertain the size of the potential Slavic patron base. In comparing town demographics from 2010 to 2015, the town experienced a population growth of 5 percent. While English remains the predominant language in the town, 2015 data reflects that there are a growing number of people who speak either Russian or Polish. The percentage of those who speak Spanish remained relatively constant.

***Q: What is your primary spoken language?***

	Male		Female		TOTAL	%
	> 18 years	<= 18 years	> 18 years	<= 18 years		
English	2934	7126	3354	7546	20960	92%
Spanish	255	620	292	656	1823	8%
Russian	-	-	-	-	-	
Polish	-	-	-	-	-	
Other	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>TOTAL</b>	3190	7746	3645	8202	22783	100%

Source: Hypothetical Ingram, Pennsylvania Town Census (2010)

	Male		Female		TOTAL	%
	> 18 years	<= 18 years	> 18 years	<= 18 years		
English	2796	6790	3196	7190	19972	81%
Spanish	294	714	336	756	2100	9%
Russian	184	629	178	400	1850	8%
Polish	75	251	118	266	710	3%
Other	-	-	-	-	-	
<b>TOTAL</b>	3349	8384	3828	8612	24632	100%

Source: Hypothetical Ingram, Pennsylvania Town Census (2015)

### Surveys

Quantitative data was collected to better understand the library needs of Ingram's Slavic population. Library staff and administrators created a survey for this purpose. The survey is directed toward a Slavic audience, consists of nine questions, and was distributed to individuals over 18 years old. For this first assessment, the Ingram Public Library is relying on the adult Slavic patrons to provide guidance regarding materials for children and teens. Future surveys focusing on patrons under 18 may be created to gather more specific data regarding the needs of the younger population.

Utilizing public records, the survey was mailed to Slavic households. Library staff members also handed surveys to Slavic patrons when they visited the library. Patrons could mail the survey to the library in a pre-addressed, postage-paid envelope, or they could complete it at the library and deposit it into a locked box near the entrance.

### Focus Groups

Qualitative insights have also been collected to achieve a more holistic understanding of Ingram's Slavic population's library collection needs. To do so, the Ingram Public Library solicited the assistance of graduate students who were currently enrolled in a Masters of Marketing Research Program at nearby Ingram College to conduct a series of three (3) interactive focus groups. These groups consisted of 5-8 participants each, including a mix of mine workers and their spouses who self-identified as being of both of Slavic origin and who immigrated to the United States within the past five (5) years. Participants were all over the age of eighteen, and specified that they had visited the Ingram Public Library at least once within the previous year. Focus group participants were recruited by placing notices on bulletin boards at the mines and in the mine employee newsletter, as well as at local shops that the Slavic community is known to frequent.

### Results

The survey data is very interesting and very helpful for discovering the opinions, wants, and needs of the Slavic residents of Ingram. About half of the respondents have positive opinions of public libraries, and about half have a neutral opinion. There are almost no negative opinions toward public libraries by the respondents. Despite the lack of negative opinions, only about 46 percent of the respondents feel comfortable asking for help from library staff. The other half do not feel comfortable asking for assistance.

Only about one third of the respondents visit the library once a month or more. Almost half of them visit only once or twice a year. Leisure-related activities appear to be the main objective for Slavic patrons. About 65 percent of the respondents listed this as their main reason for visiting the library. About seven percent stated school-related activities brought them to the library, and a mere five percent were prompted by work-related reasons. Besides seeking materials, access to a computer would prompt about 45 percent of the respondents to visit the library. DVD and CD checkout appeals to about 23 percent; children's story time would appeal to about 18 percent; about 14 percent would be likely to visit for continuing education classes.

When the respondents do visit the Ingram Public Library, they are able to find their desired materials most of the time. Almost a third of the respondents find the desired item 100 percent of the time. Forty-four percent find the desired item 75 percent of the time. About 16 percent find the item half of the time, and only seven percent find the desired item 25 percent of the time. For the Slavic respondents, about 54 percent of them prefer books written in Russian; about 35 percent prefer titles in Polish, and about 11 percent prefer titles in English. When asked if they would utilize books in English,

about 79 percent of the respondents said they would be very likely to use English books. About 16 percent said they would, depending on the topic of the book. Only about five percent of the respondents said that they would not be very likely to use English books.

Regarding resources that the respondents would like more of, about half of them would like more multi-language resources. In the open-ended comments section, almost five percent of the respondents specify that they want titles in Ukrainian. About one third of those surveyed would like more job-related resources. About eleven percent of the respondents would like more children's related resources, and about six percent would like more travel-related resources.

The data from the focus groups offers information that matches the answers received on the survey. Most participants related positive experiences and opinions of the Ingram Public Library and its staff. Access to the computers is important, and some participants indicated that they have a hard time being able to use the computers at the library, because they are already in use by other patrons. The participants also indicated that a library staff member who spoke Russian would be very helpful for them. Books in Russian and Polish were requested by several participants, as were resources about the local community, education, and jobs. Another participant requested that the library extend its hours to accommodate more of the working population.

### Discussion and Conclusion

A library needs to be a continuously evolving organism in order to meet the demands of an ever-changing community. In addition to staying abreast of global trends and advancements in technology, a library must be aware of who its users are and what services and materials it can provide that are essential to the daily life of all members of the community. The Ingram Public Library strives to be a relevant resource to the community. Recognizing a shift in the community's demographics, the library administration reached out to the quickly growing Slavic community in an effort to gain an understanding of what they expect in a public library. Based on survey responses and the analysis of the discussions that occurred during the interactive focus group sessions, the Ingram Public Library acquired enough new information from the community to implement minor policy changes, modify the library's hours, introduce new programs and adjust the collection development plan.

The Ingram Public Library has a new focus on accessibility for all patrons. When library users are unable to locate the materials they are looking for or have difficulty communicating with the library staff, their needs are not being met. It may not be possible to hire a qualified staff member who speaks Russian or Polish, so the library will try to recruit bilingual volunteers when possible. High school students of Slavic origin, among others, are encouraged to apply for such positions in order to meet the town's community service requirement for high school graduation. Additionally, the library decided to create new multilingual signage throughout the library, guiding patrons to specific sections and resources throughout the building. With the assistance of volunteers and other members of the community, the library staff has also produced several multilingual reference guides. These binders are kept at the circulation and reference desks to encourage patrons to ask for help in locating materials. Commonly requested reference guides are available on the library's website as well. Library staff created generic lists of common topics about which patrons may be seeking information. Community volunteers then translated these lists into Spanish, Russian, Polish and Ukrainian. Visitors to the library are now able to flip through these binders to locate the topic they are seeking from lists compiled in their native languages. They can point to a subject on the guide sheet and the English translation is next to it so the librarian knows which section of the library to direct them to or what types of questions need to be asked to get a better understanding of the specific materials being sought. New topics, subjects and translations can be added to the binders as needs arise or interests and trends change.

Since 45% of survey respondents said that computer usage was the reason they visited the library, this is another area that the Ingram Public Library wanted to improve accessibility for the Slavic

community. The library will alter its hours one day a week on a trial basis. The library will open three hours later in order to stay open later, providing access to computers for those who work during the day. The library has also arranged for community volunteers to be present during these later hours to assist with translations between the library staff and the visitors, if necessary. Library staff and volunteers will also be available to help with on-line job related searches as well as providing instruction on how to use databases that provide access to Slavic newspapers and periodicals.

This needs assessment study has proven to the administration of the Ingram Public Library that there is an immediate need to make adjustments to their collection development plan. There is an overwhelming demand for the library to begin incorporating books in Slavic languages into their collection, both for adults and children. The library plans to begin purchasing Russian translations of best sellers as they become available. They also intend to purchase Russian, Polish and Ukrainian translations of literary classics and popular series of children's and young adult books.

In response to the demand of the Slavic community, the Ingram Public Library intends to institute programming involving these new materials. Children's story time will focus on books being read in multiple languages, incorporating the translations of American stories along with stories that were written in Slavic languages. The library can hold book discussion groups for adults. If the library collection has the same title in several languages, any member of the community will be able to read the book in the language they are most comfortable reading, but then attend a discussion in English. Additional sessions could be held where the conversation is spoken in other languages or volunteers could assist in translation. The Ingram Public Library has also started an English conversation group in the evening for those who wish to improve their English speaking skills.

Finally, the library has created a "Welcome to Ingram" workshop that holds a session on a weekday morning, a weekday evening and one Saturday each month. Library staff and volunteers attempt to present all the information that new immigrants settling in Ingram will need for a smooth transition. Representatives from local agencies are present as well, providing an all-access opportunity for new residents. There is someone from the local school district to answer questions about new student registration, an associate from the local bank is available to help fill out forms to open new accounts, and local staffing agencies bring applications and listings of available jobs in the area. The community college sets up a table with representatives from enrollment services and academic advising to help create learning plans for those interested in attending classes. They share a table with an advisor who helps with GED preparation and test taking. Volunteers from the community are also on hand to discuss public transportation and explain bus routes, provide directions to grocery stores, utility offices and other government or social service agencies. Each session ends with a tour of the library and an introduction to the resources and services available at the library.

The Ingram Public Library is aware of how imperative it is to match the appropriate resource to the needs of its community (Tucker & Torrence, 2004). Based on the direct responses of the growing Slavic population in Ingram, the library intends for its collection development plan to be more user-centered in an attempt to provide the community with immediate access to their sought after information (Shirkey, 2011; Lee, 2000). The Ingram Public Library is aware this new focus will require flexibility and creativity on the part of the administration and staff as well as some patience on the part of library users. However, the library hopes that by opening a direct line of communication with the community, they will be kept informed of the needs and demands of the community as they change. The library administration intends to hold a formal review of the collection development policy each year and will institute focus groups and user surveys whenever they feel like they don't have a grasp on what the community expects from them (Selby, 2011). A public library should be the hub of any community, and the Ingram Public Library intends to stay relevant by keeping pace with the changing needs of its community.

## References

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- Selby, C. (2011). Honesty is the best policy: Collection development policy revisions in an era of change. *Technical Services Law Librarian*, 36(4), 8-9.
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## Appendix A: Survey and Results Data

**Directions:** In order to meet the needs of library users, the Ingram Public Library periodically conducts surveys of library patrons and potential patrons to ensure that it maintains resources sufficient to meet the needs of the community. Your support in answering the following questions is greatly appreciated. Please provide any additional comments or comments regarding answer choices at the bottom of the survey. Thank

**1. How do you feel about public libraries?**

- |    |                         |    |   |
|----|-------------------------|----|---|
| a. | Essential for Community | c. | Neither Positive, Nor Negative Sentiments |
| b. | Generally Like          | d. | Not Essential for Community               |

**2. How often do you utilize the library?**

- |    |                    |    |                     |
|----|--------------------|----|---------------------|
| a. | Every Few Days     | c. | 1-2 Times per Month |
| b. | 1-2 Times per Year | d. | Never               |

**3. What is the main reason that you visit the library?**

- |    |                |    |                            |
|----|----------------|----|----------------------------|
| a. | Work-Related   | c. | Leisure-Related            |
| b. | School-Related | d. | I Do Not Visit the Library |

**4. When you visit the library, what percentage of the time are you able to find the materials that you desire?**

- |    |      |    |      |
|----|------|----|------|
| a. | 25 % | c. | 75%  |
| b. | 50 % | d. | 100% |

**5. How comfortable do you feel with asking questions of library staff upon visiting?**

- |    |                      |    |                             |
|----|----------------------|----|-----------------------------|
| a. | Very Comfortable     | c. | Only When Absolutely Needed |
| b. | Somewhat Comfortable | d. | Not at All                  |

**6. Which of the following is your preferred language for reading books?**

- |    |         |    |         |
|----|---------|----|---------|
| a. | English | c. | Spanish |
| b. | Russian | d. | Polish  |

**7. How likely are you to utilize books that are printed in English versus the language selected in question 6?**

- |    |                            |    |   |
|----|----------------------------|----|---|
| a. | Not Very Likely (25%)      | c. | Very Likely (75%)                         |
| b. | Depends on the Topic (50%) | d. | Equally Literate in Both Languages (100%) |

**8. Aside from seeking research materials, which of the following would most prompt you to visit the library?**

- |    |                 |    |                              |
|----|-----------------|----|------------------------------|
| a. | Computer Access | c. | Children's Story time        |
| b. | DVD/CD Rentals  | d. | Continuing Education Classes |

**9. Which of the following resources do you feel that the library should have more of?**

- |    |                          |    |                              |
|----|--------------------------|----|------------------------------|
| a. | Multi-Language Resources | c. | Travel-Related Resources     |
| b. | Job-Related Resources    | d. | Children's-Related Resources |

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B: Survey Results

### 1. How do you feel about public libraries?

Essential for Community	17.4%
Generally Like	33.1%
Neither Positive, Nor Negative Sentiments	48.8%
Not Essential for Community	0.6%

### 2. How often do you utilize the library?

Every Few Days	7.3%
1-2 Times per Year	43.4%
1-2 Times per Month	26.6%
Never	22.6%

### 3. What is the main reason that you visit the library?

Work-Related	5.0%
School-Related	7.1%
Leisure-Related	65.2%
I Do Not Visit the Library	22.6%

### 4. When you visit the library, what percentage of the time are you able to find the materials that you desire?

25%	6.9%
50%	16.1%
75%	44.0%
100%	32.9%

### 5. How comfortable do you feel with asking questions of library staff upon visiting?

Very Comfortable	9.2%
Somewhat Comfortable	36.7%
Only When Absolutely Needed	27.9%
Not at All	26.2%

### 6. Which of the following is your preferred language for reading books?

English	11.5%
Russian	53.9%
Spanish	0.0%
Polish	34.6%

### 7. How likely are you to utilize books that are printed in English versus the language selected in question 6?

Not Very Likely	4.8%
Depends on the Topic	15.7%
Very Likely	36.7%
Equally Literate in Both Languages	42.8%



**8. Aside from seeking research materials, which of the following would most prompt you to visit the library?**

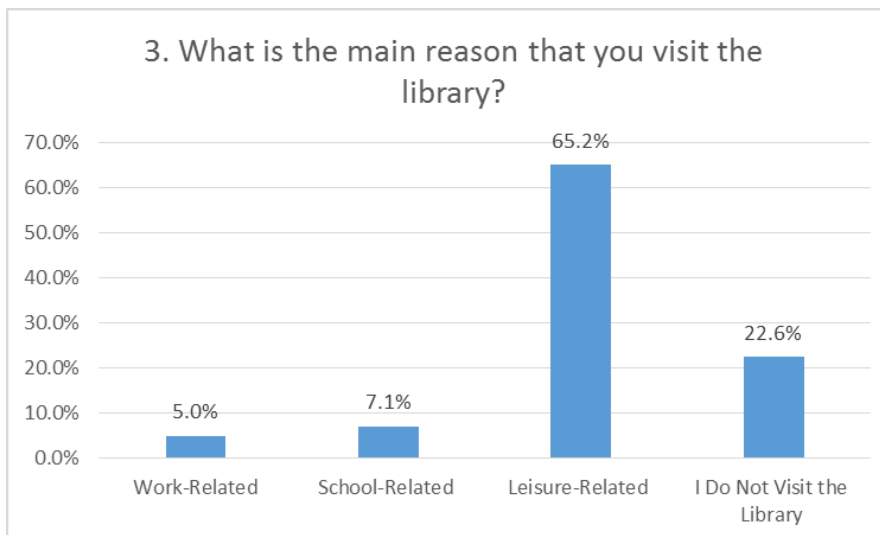
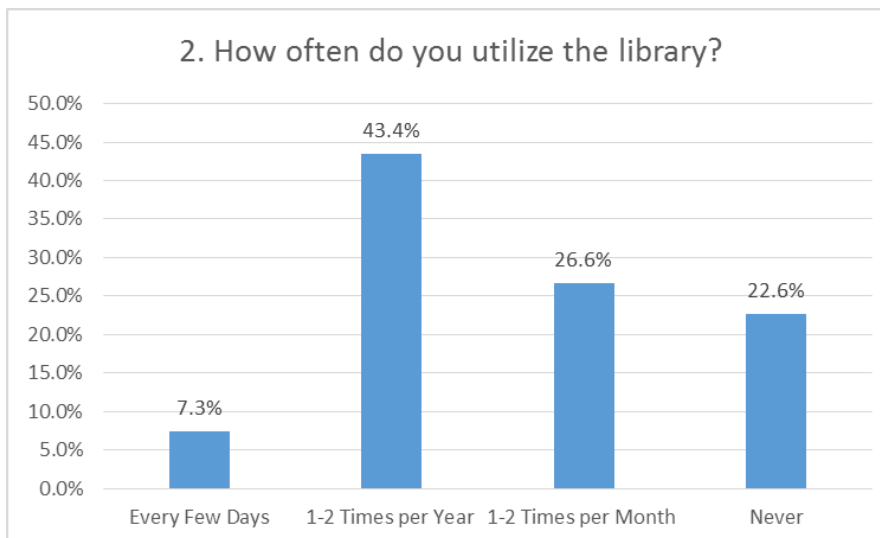
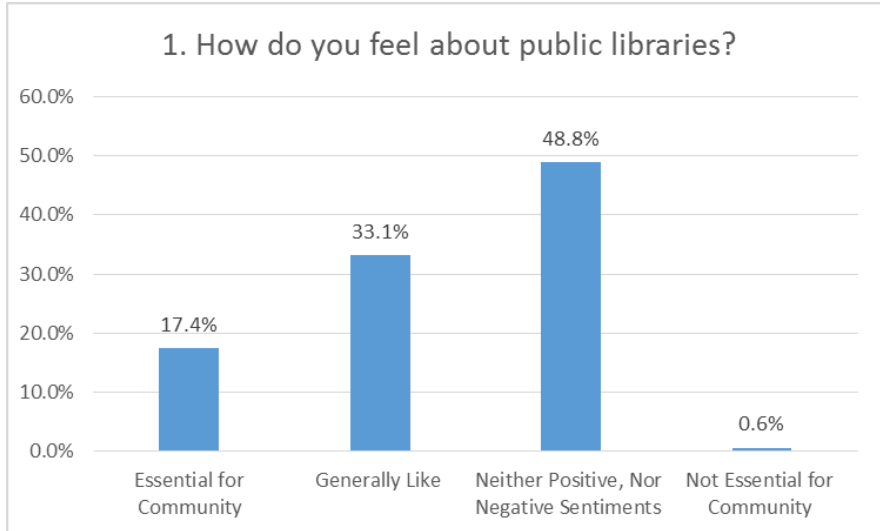
Computer Access	45.3%
DVD/CD Rentals	22.6%
Children's Story time	18.2%
Continuing Education Classes	13.8%

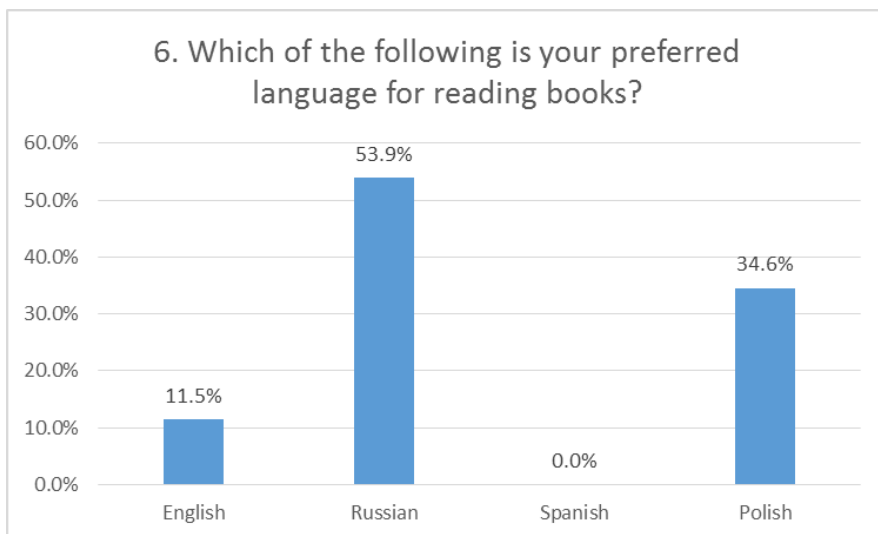
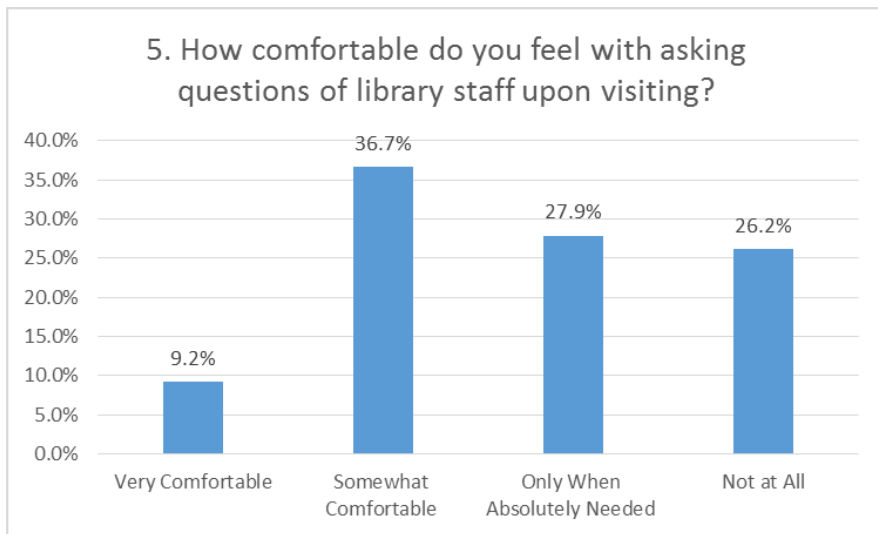
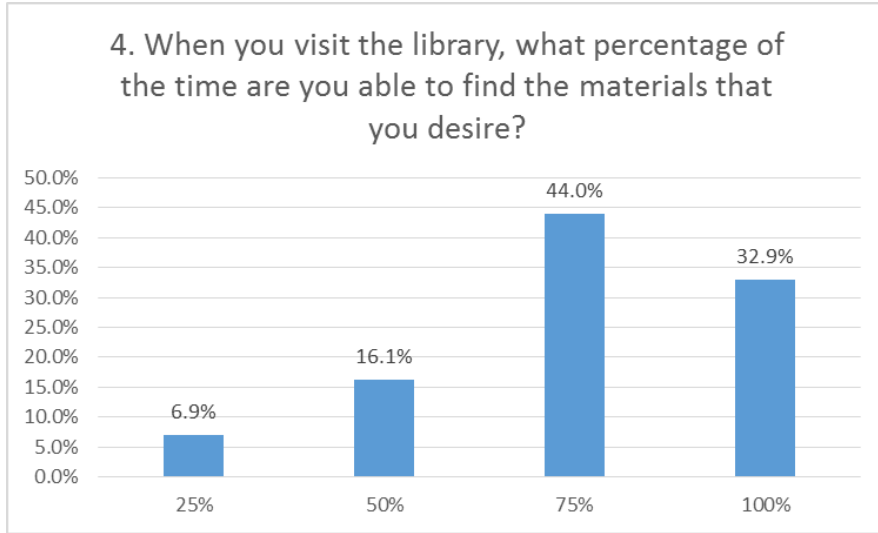
**9. Which of the following resources do you feel that the library should have more of?**

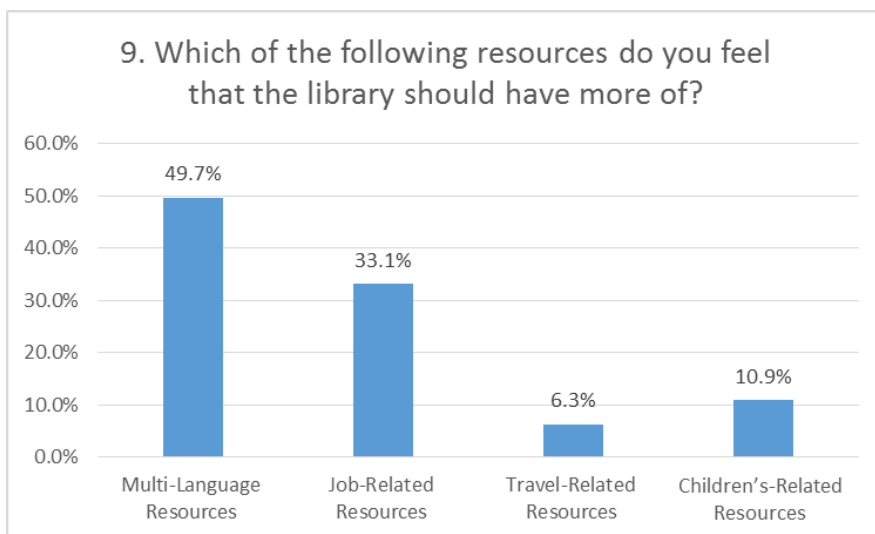
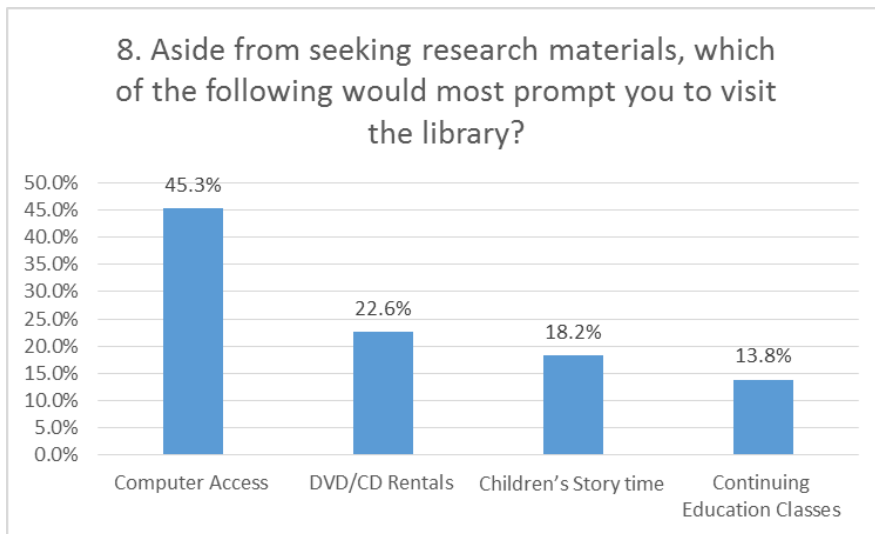
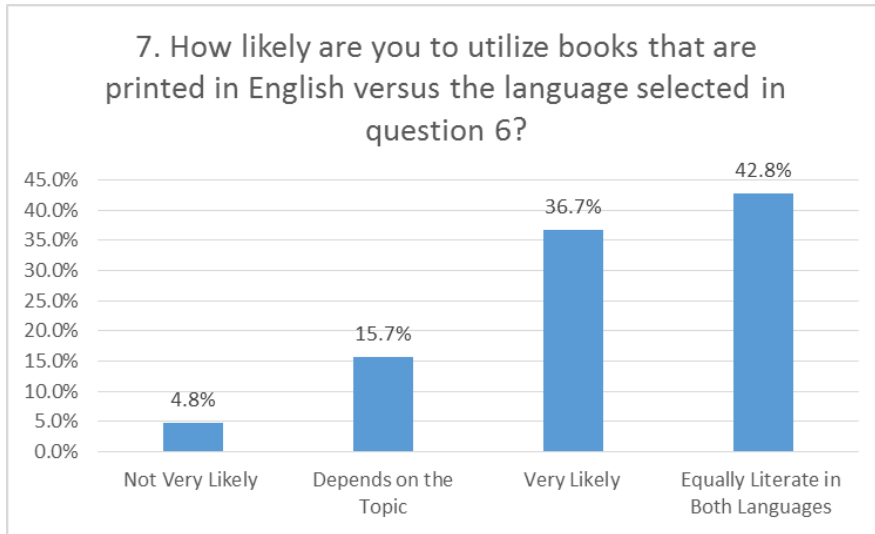
Multi-Language Resources	49.7%
Job-Related Resources	33.1%
Travel-Related Resources	6.3%
Children's-Related Resources	10.9%

In the Comments section, 23 respondents (4.8%) indicated that they also like to read materials in Ukrainian.

See next page for graphical representations of the survey data.







## Appendix C: Ingram Public Library Focus Groups: Moderator's Guide and Responses

### Welcome

Hello, and welcome to our session. Thanks for taking the time to join us to talk about the Ingram Public Library. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. The library staff at Ingram Public Library has asked me to speak with you today about the library's services. As the newest members of the Ingram community, they are very interested in what you like and don't like about the library, and how they can improve the library's collection for your use. Each of you has volunteered to participate in this discussion as someone who has visited the Ingram Public Library at least once in the past year, and we appreciate your willingness to share your feedback.

Please be assured that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions I am going to ask you. You won't hurt my feelings if your comments are negative; I don't work for the Ingram Public Library, and often times the negative comments can be the most helpful to making improvements.

I'm going to tape record this session because I'd prefer to listen to your responses to my questions, and want to be sure I have a record of your responses so I can type them up afterwards. Please be assured that your responses will be kept completely confidential, and that they will only be used by the library staff so as to help them plan for their collection's development.

Please write your first name on the name tags I've provided to you, so that we can address each other this evening. Be assured though that names will not be used in the report that I provide to the library.

### Questions and Participant Responses

1. Let's start today's discussion by going around the room and introducing ourselves.

*(Note: names not recorded for confidentiality purposes.)*

2. How do you think a community's public library should serve its patrons?

*It should have lots of books, obviously, in languages that reflect the community it serves.*

*Computers and internet access are very important.*

*For people who are new to the United States, information on getting education and jobs is important.*

*Computer classes.*

*Books, DVDs, and other information about the local community.*

*Books in many languages.*

*Books, magazines, reference materials*

2. Tell me about the positive experiences you've had at the Ingram Public Library.

*The staff is always cheerful and welcoming.*

*I agree, everyone seems to want to be helpful.*

*I walked in, but was overwhelmed and intimidated so I left.*

*It's a very quiet and pleasant environment.*

*It's a very comfortable place.*

*There are a number of computers that are always available for me to use.*

*We must be visiting the library at different times, the computers always seem occupied when I want to use one.*

*The collection is very big – for books in English anyway.*

3. Tell me about any disappointments you've experienced

*I speak English, but not very well. I wish there was someone who spoke Russian who could help me. I agree, the staff wants to help me, but when I don't know the right English words to ask my questions, they cannot help.*

*I speak and read English well, but I want to be able to read books in Polish and Russian. The Ingram Public Library does not have any books in any Slavic languages.*

*As I said previously, the computers always seem occupied, particularly in the evenings when I leave the mines. I do not have a computer at home and rely on the library to keep current on the news from my home country.*

*My children read and speak English well, but only speak Polish and Russian. Their reading skills in those languages are poor. I think it is important that they stay connected to their heritage. There are no children's books in Polish or Russian. I'd like them to participate in the reading club by reading books in those languages.*

4. Of all the things we've talked about during this discussion, what is most important to you?

*The library should buy books for adults and children in Polish and Russian.*

*I agree, I'm not interested in DVDs or CDs in Polish or Russian. I can hear and speak English well and prefer to listen to American music and watch movies in English. I'm not able to read English well, though, and want more Russian language books.*

*I want my children to be able to participate in the reading club by reading books in Polish. Please buy Polish books.*

*Please hire someone on your staff that can speak Russian to help those who don't speak English well.*

5. Is there anything else you'd like to tell the staff of the Ingram Public Library?

*Stay open for longer hours so that those that work early or late shifts can visit.*

Thank you for your time today and for your honest feedback. Again, please be assured that your responses will be kept confidential. Your willingness to participate in these discussions is greatly appreciated. Please know that your input will directly impact the library's plans for collection development.