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# Towards adult information literacy assessment in Latvia

UNESCO Media and Information  
Literacy Competency Matrix  
in practice

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- Research objectives
- Target audience of the research
- Theoretical approach
- Research methodology
- Main results
- Conclusions

Study has been carried out within framework of the Project “Development of Innovative Diagnostic Instruments for Regional Growth”



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1. To develop **diagnostic instruments** for the assessment of information literacy **knowledge** and **skills** of adult population.
2. To develop **methodology** for estimating information literacy levels and education needs in adult population group based on the UNESCO **Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Competency Matrix**.
3. To characterize the information literacy levels and education needs of adult population in **a sample territory** of Latvia (Kekava district).

1. Adult population between the ages of **25** and **62**.  
'Economically active population' is a social group, who obtains and processes information to **increase or change their qualifications** based on the requirements of labour market, and/or to **satisfy their daily interests**.
2. Micro model of the economically active population in a sample territory of Latvia (Kekava district):
  - proportional distribution of age, education, occupation, gender, and computer literacy.

## ‘Livelihood’ concept

- Broadened by **social** and **cultural** dimensions.
- Resources that can be used or shared to satisfy the needs of an individual, family or other social group:
  - e.g., “information, cultural knowledge, social networks and legal rights, tools, land or other physical resources”.

Wisner B., Blaikie P., Cannon T., & Davis I. (2004)

## ‘Information literacy’ concept

- “A set of competencies that empowers citizens to access, retrieve, understand, evaluate and use, create, as well as share information and media content in all formats, using various tools, in a critical, ethical and effective way, in order to participate and engage in personal, professional and societal activities.”

UNESCO Global Media and Information Literacy  
Assessment Framework (2013)

## UNESCO MIL Assessment Framework

- “The MIL framework leads to the assessment of proficiency levels for grading the various MIL competencies.”

UNESCO Global Media and Information Literacy  
Assessment Framework (2013)

- Three information literacy levels of this framework, and additional zero level:
  - information literacy is so low that it can become a serious constraint for obtaining information.

## Focus group interviews

1. Importance of information in the respondents' daily life (situations when information is required; sources where to find it).
2. Problems that prevent finding the needed information.
3. Knowledge and skills dealing with information:
  - a lack of specific skills and/or education needs.

The software **NVivo** was used for data analysis.



## Knowledge questionnaire

(23 questions on various daily life situations)

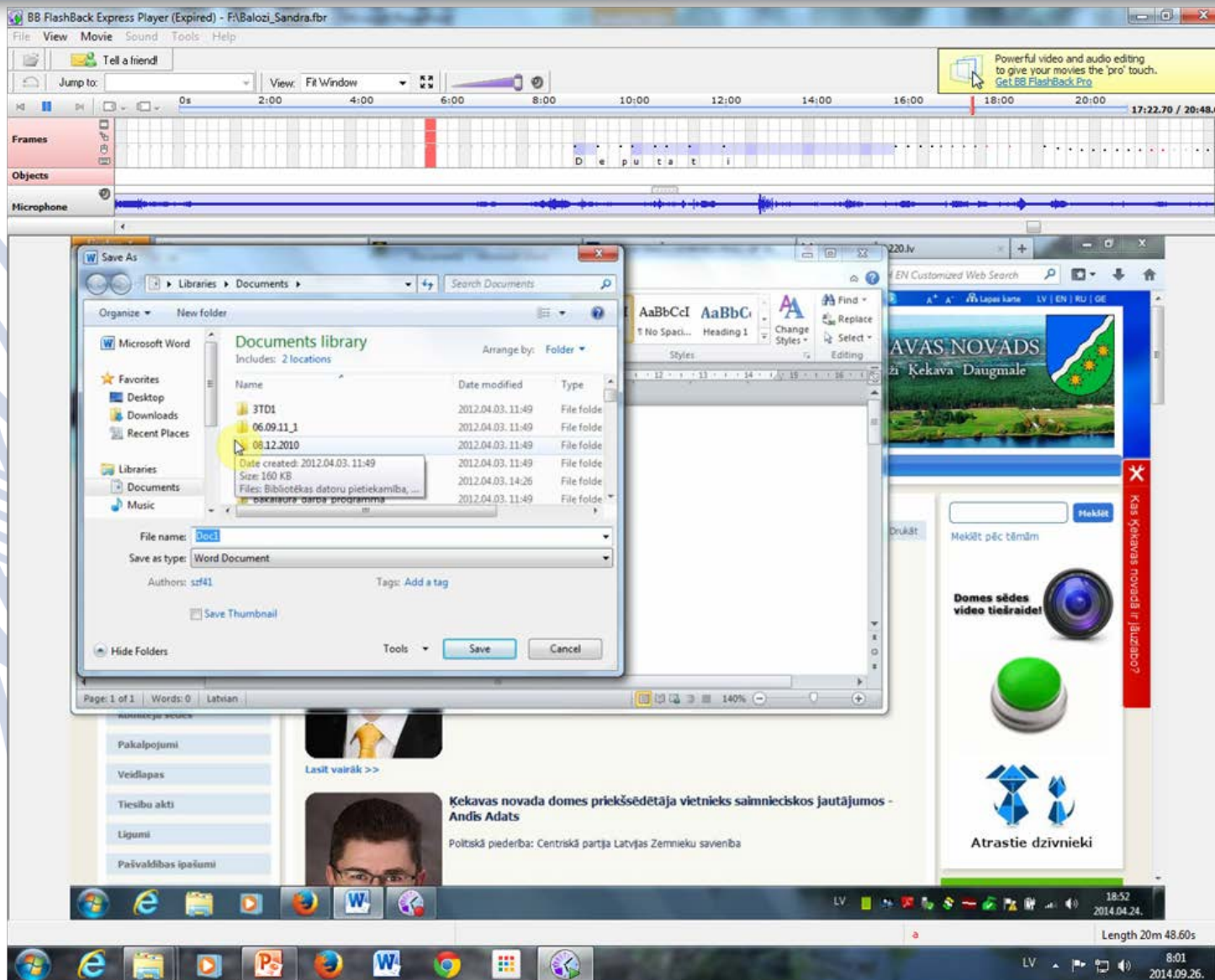
1. Block A (MIL C1: *Access*) determines knowledge of accessing information.
2. Block B (MIL C2: *Evaluation*) shows knowledge of the various information reliability criteria.
3. Block C (MIL C3: *Creation*) focuses on knowledge of the use of information found .

The software **SPSS** (*Statistical Package for the Social Sciences*) was used for data analysis.

## Practical tasks

1. Practical information search in the Internet environment.
2. **Think aloud** traced thoughts and motivation for:
  - 1) selecting a particular way to search;
  - 2) selecting specific information source;
  - 3) questioning the credibility of the source;
  - 4) making a final selection;
  - 5) summarizing the information in a new form.

The software **BB Flash Back Express** was used to record the sequence of practical task process.



**Fig. 1.** Search for a member of the Municipal Council

## Information practice and education needs (focus group discussions)

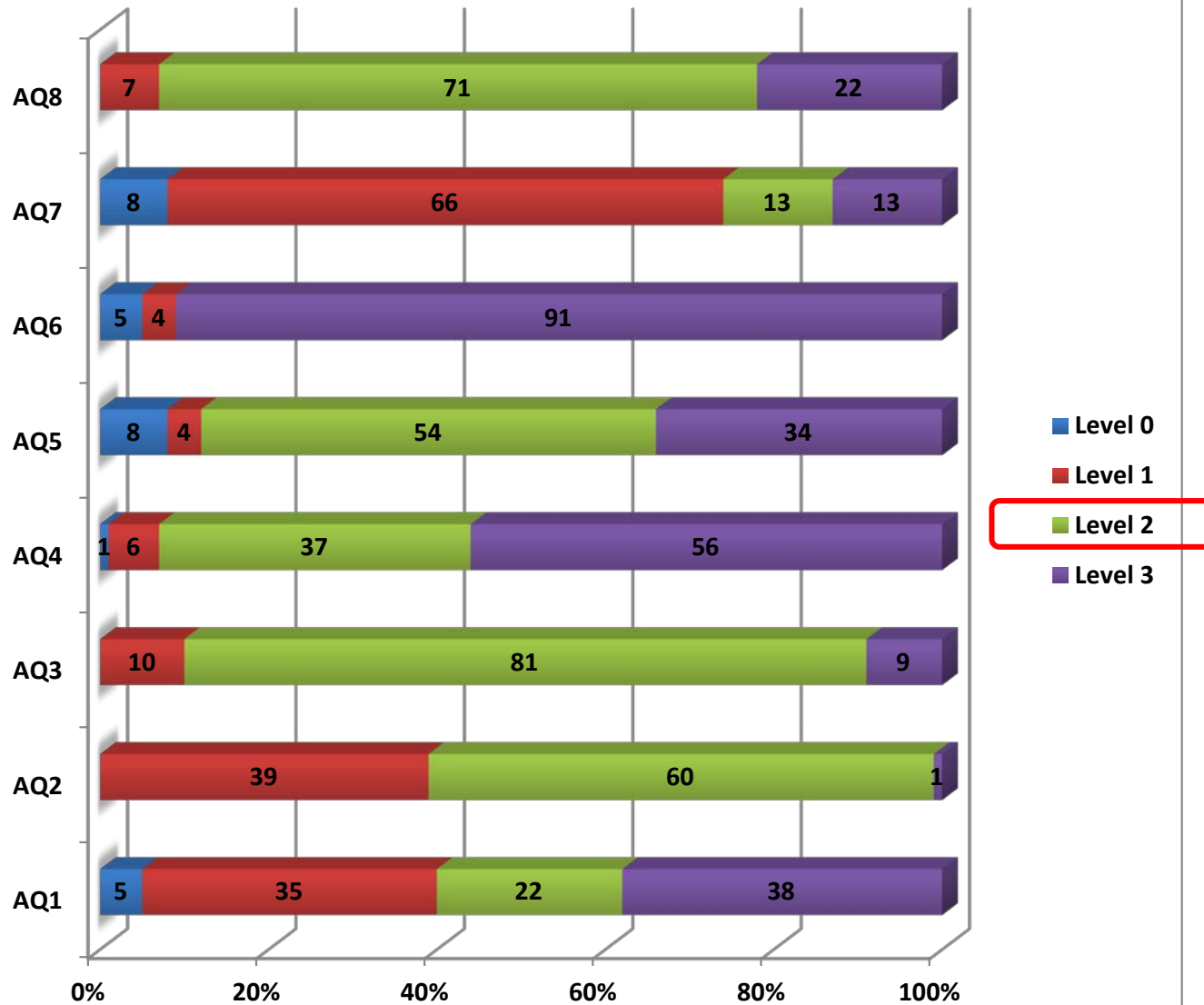
Six data sets:

1. Subject categories of needed information.
2. Information sources.
3. Information communication channels.
4. Problems in obtaining information.
5. Lack of specific knowledge and skills.
6. Information literacy education needs.

## Knowledge in access, evaluation and creation of information (knowledge questionnaire)

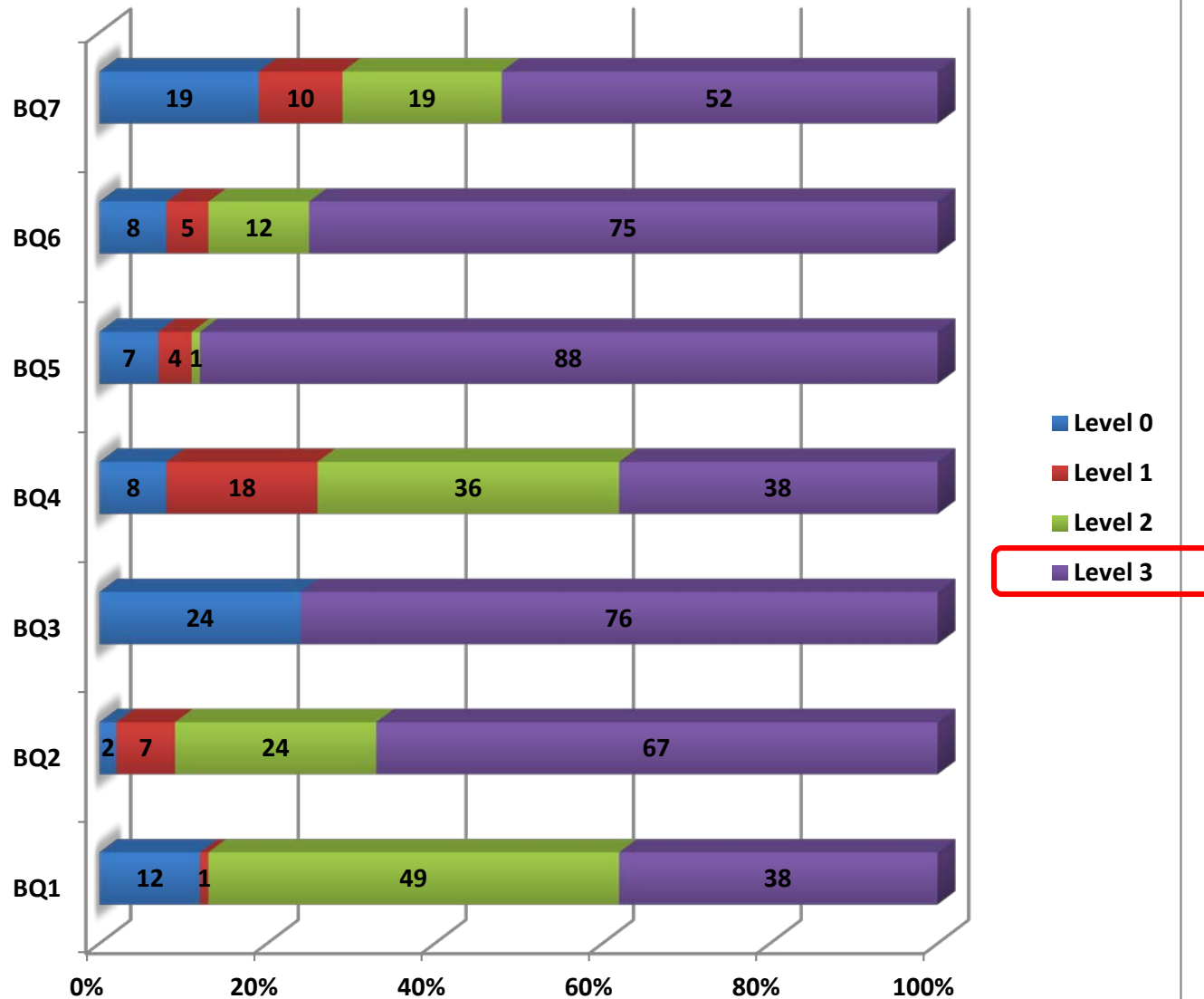
1. Average level of the respondents:
  - 1) for C1: *Access* is level 2;
  - 2) for C2: *Evaluation* is level 3;
  - 3) for C3: *Creation* is level 1-2.
2. C3: *Creation* is the most challenging MIL Component in terms of overall knowledge required.

# IL levels (C1: Access)



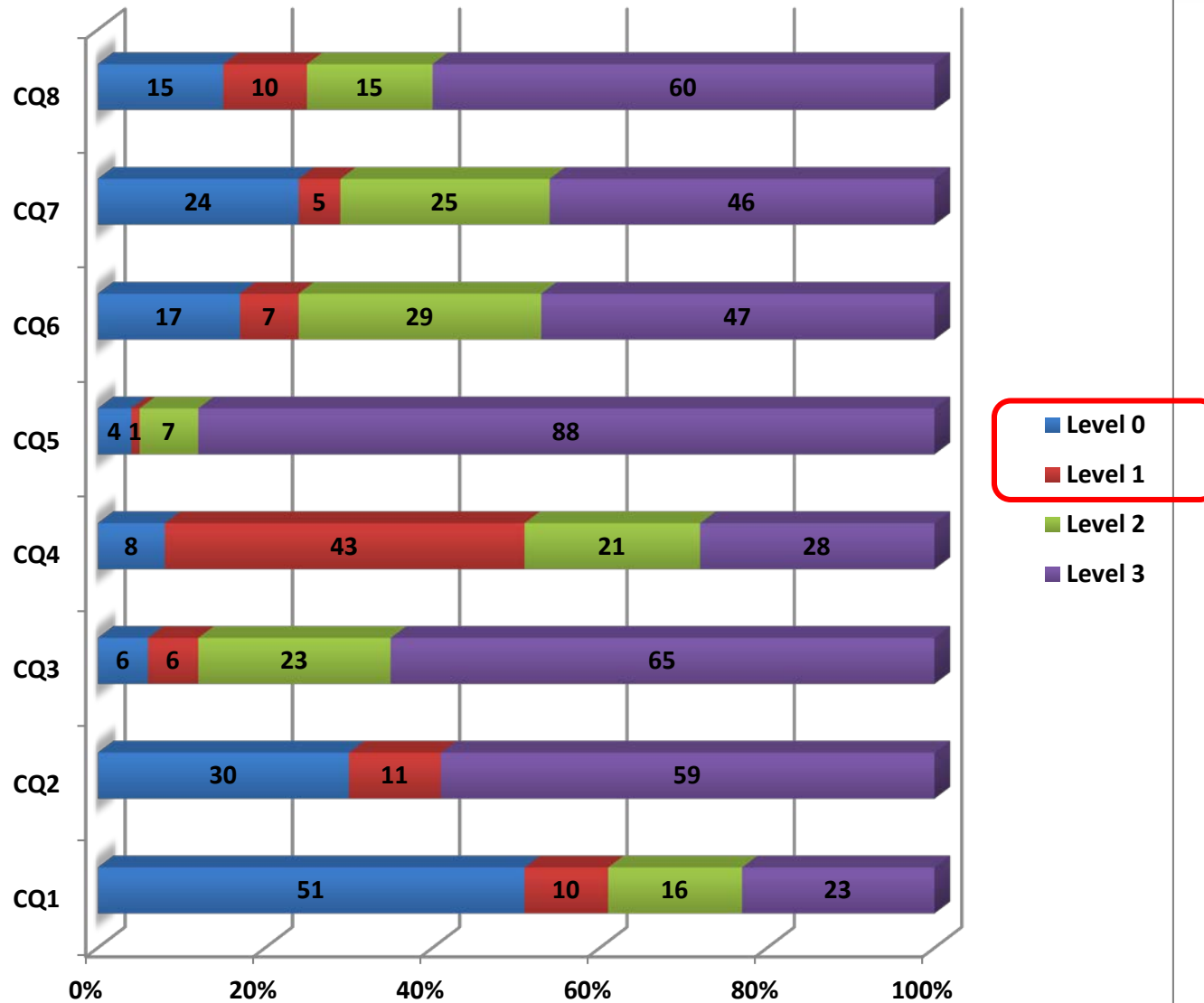
**Fig. 2.** IL levels for MIL C1: Access (%)

# IL levels (C2: Evaluation)



**Fig. 3.** IL levels for MIL C2: Evaluation (%)

# IL levels (C3: Creation)



**Fig. 4.** IL levels for MIL C3: Creation (%)



## Skills in access, evaluation and creation of information (practical tasks)

1. Average level of the respondents:
  - 1) for C1: *Access* is level 2;
  - 2) for C2: *Evaluation* is level 2;
  - 3) for C3: *Creation* is level 1.
2. Although 75.5% of respondents had self evaluated their ability to find needed information online as high, the results of practical tasks showed many shortcomings.

# IL levels (practical tasks)

No	Respondents	1. Access Level	2. Evaluation Level	3. Creation Level	Total
1.	Woman (61, higher education)	3	3	3	3
		3	3	1	2
2.	Woman (34, higher education)	3	2	2	2
		3	2	2	2
3.	Woman (51, higher education)	2	2	2	2
		3	3	2	3
4.	Woman (29, secondary education)	3	2	1	2
		3	3	2	3
5.	Man (41, secondary education)	1	0	0	0
6.	Man (33, secondary special education)	1	0	0	0
7.	Woman (59, secondary education)	3	2	2	2
8.	Man (47, higher education)	1	1	1	1
		3	3	1	2
Average		2	2	1	2
Mod		3	2,5	2	2

**Table 1.**  
Results of  
practical tasks  
(*think aloud*)

1. Division of competence indicators into four (0-3) levels within three MIL components used in the study provides several benefits:
  - a) it enables objective assessment of information literacy;
  - b) it allows more specific identification of poor/lacking knowledge and skills that have to be acquired or improved in order to achieve the highest level.
2. Questionnaire might be a good self-assessment tool for information literacy.

3. Although in terms of data collection and processing practical tasks on searching information on the Internet and use of *think aloud* are time consuming, they provide credible and accurate results about people's information literacy.
4. Application of various methods in the study ensures unbiased results: it compares the opinions expressed in focus groups with questionnaires and the results of practical tasks.

1. Wisner B., Blaikie P., Cannon T., & Davis I. (2004). At Risk: Natural Hazards, People's Vulnerability, and Disasters. Routledge, New York (NY), 2nd ed., ISBN 978-0415252164.
2. UNESCO (2013). Global Media and Information Literacy Assessment Framework: Country Readiness and Competencies. Retrieved from <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/global-media-and-information-literacy-assessment-framework>



**Thank you for your attention!**  
**Any questions?**