

# THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (NDS/VAKE)

of public libraries in Finland



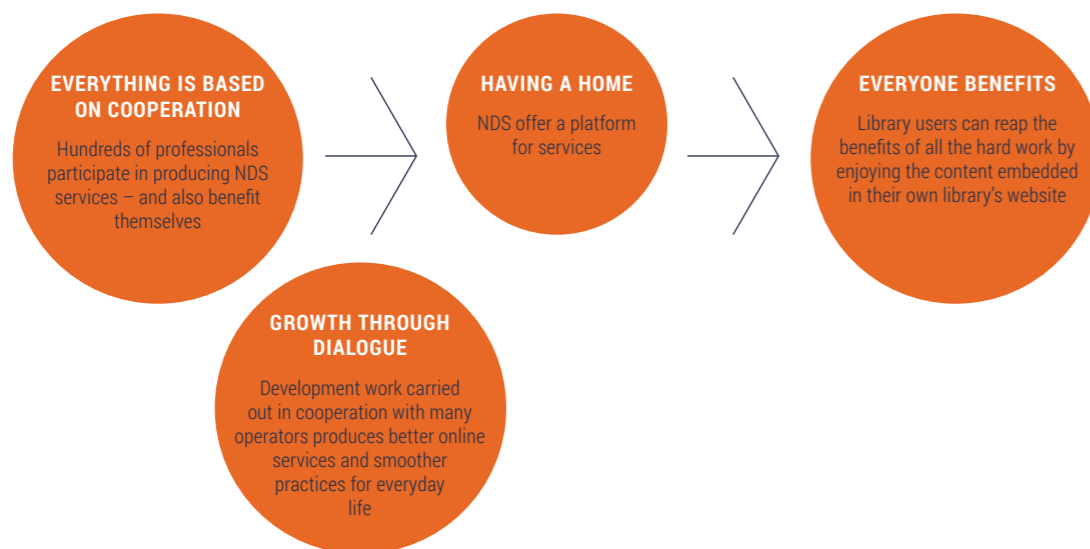
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
SERVICES RESPONSIBILITY



LIBRARIES.FI

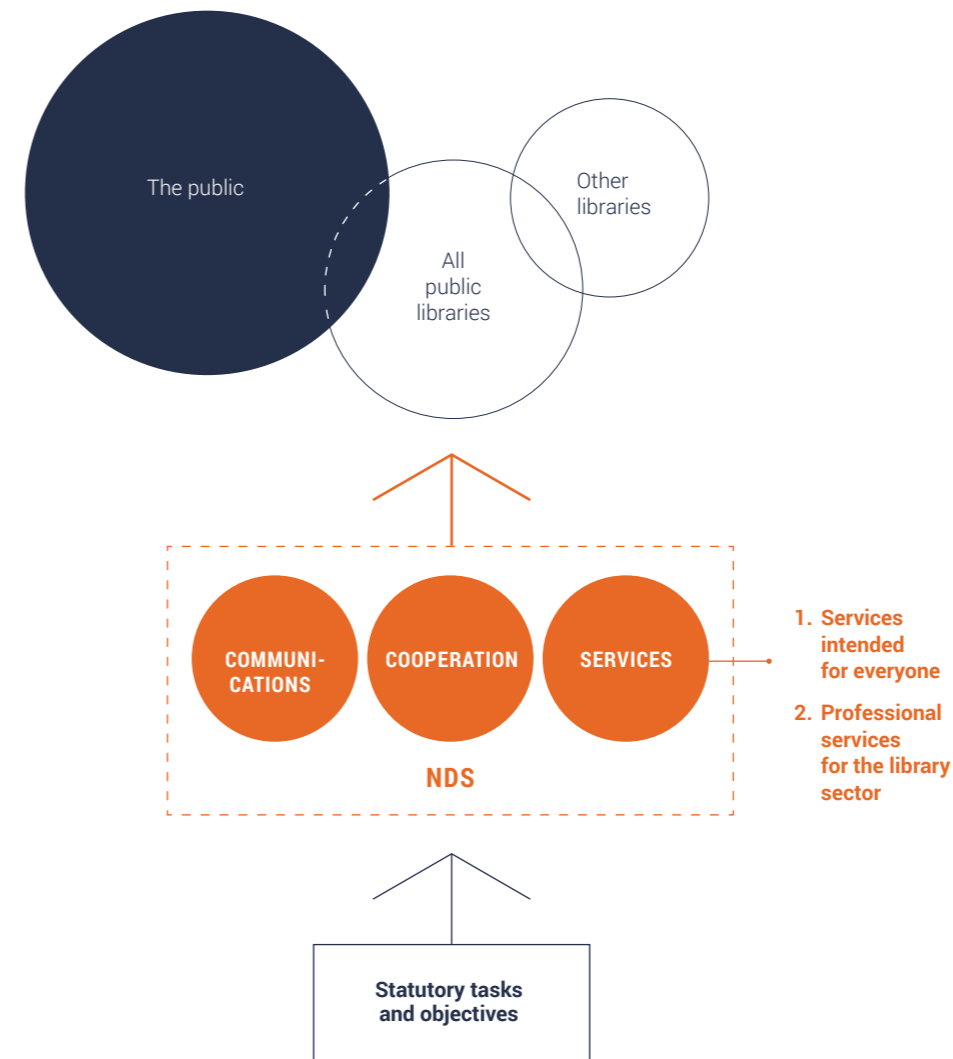
# What and for whom?

- National Development Services or NDS/VAKE (short for valtakunnalliset kehittämisspalvelut in Finnish) produce and develop online resources, platform and interface services, communications and other services for the use of public libraries throughout Finland.
- In addition to this, NDS promote and support cooperation between libraries and advances international communications.
- The Public Libraries Act (2016) defines NDS as follows: “To help public libraries develop their activities in a balanced and equitable way, the public library assigned with the national development responsibility shall provide shared services to all public libraries and promote cooperation between the public libraries.” (section 7 of 1492/2016).
- Helsinki City Library has been assigned the National Development Services responsibility, and its activities are funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture.



## Cooperation and shared services

Services and databases are produced and developed together with other libraries and central interest groups, whilst ensuring that digitalisation goals and work in municipalities does not fall by the wayside. These services and databases are also intended to be compatible with other online services. This way, individual libraries do not have to do everything on their own.



## Did you know?

60€

The spending on public library activities was per resident (2019)

853

public libraries in Finland (2019)

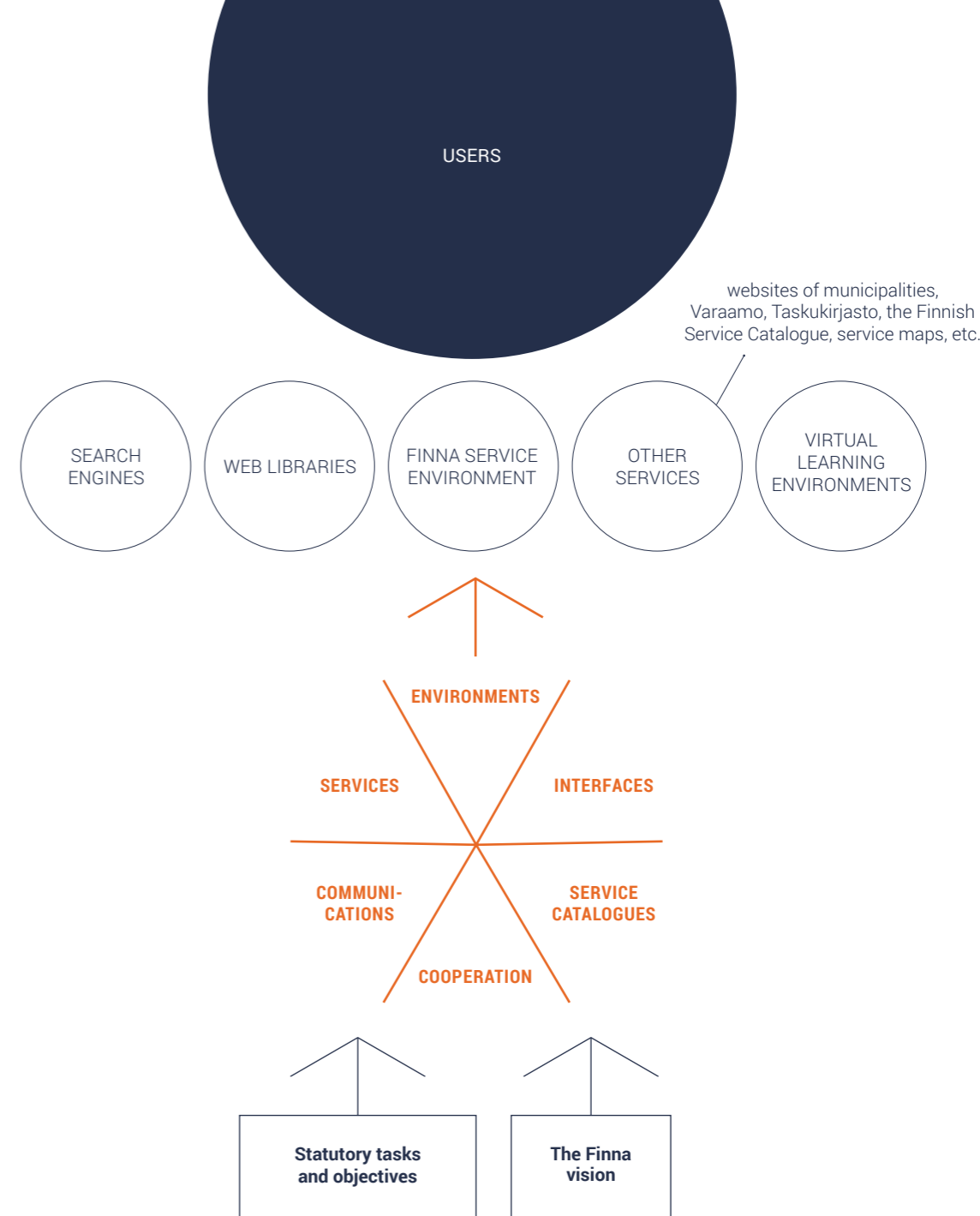
## Quote

“For me, Kirjastot.fi is a professionally important site.”

(User survey 2019)

# Cooperation with wide-spread societal benefits

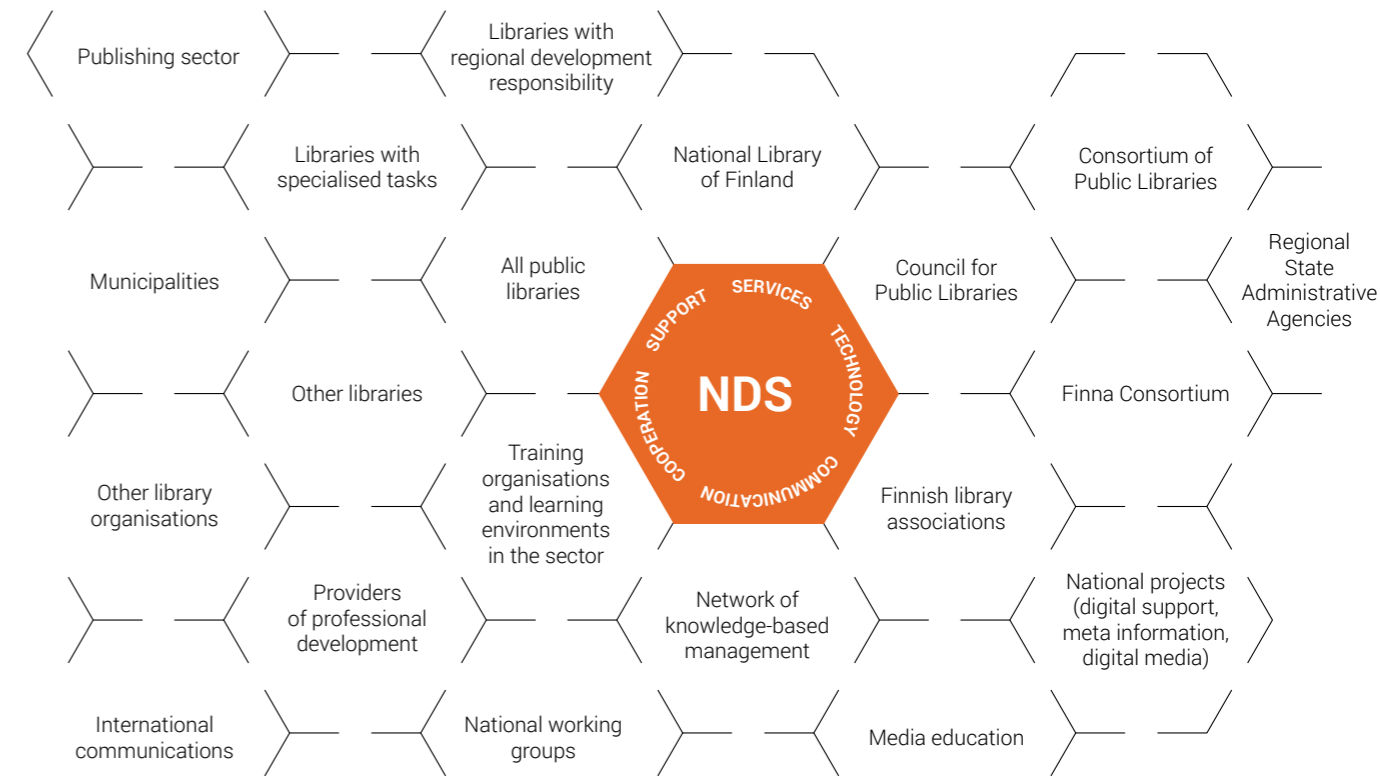
- Close cooperation between national operators is key. Realising the Finna vision is also a vital element of NDS activities.
- Finna.fi is a service environment of the National Library of Finland, promoting greater access to resources in museums, archives and libraries for the wider public. Finna is also a popular online library platform.



# Public library professionals are major service users

NDS offer professional library services:

- ➔ information
- ➔ tools
- ➔ communications services
- ➔ communication channels
- ➔ impact assessment services
- ➔ monitoring of the development of the sector
- ➔ support for continuing training
- ➔ promotion of cooperation and networking between libraries
- ➔ influence in working groups within the sector
- ➔ networking outside the sector



Working with interest groups is vital to NDS, and it benefits all libraries. NDS also serve as a link between the publishing industry and the archive and museum sector.

Did you know?

**+500%**  
self-service hours  
in libraries  
(2015–2019)

**+10%**  
loans by children  
in all libraries  
(2015–2019)

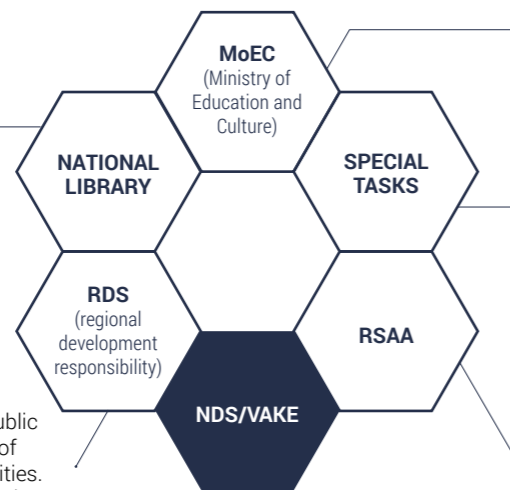
**+390%**  
e-magazine views  
(2015–2019)

# National playing field

NDS cooperation functions on many levels.

The mission of the **National Library** is to develop and offer national services for university libraries, public libraries, universities of applied sciences libraries and specialist libraries and to promote national and international cooperation in the library sector. (section 70 of 558/2009)

The aim of a public library with a **regional development responsibility** is to create favourable conditions for the public libraries located within its area of operation to improve their activities. The purpose of the regional development responsibility is to support the development of the public libraries and the professional competence of library staff as well as to promote mutual cooperation between the public libraries within the area of operation. (section 8 of 1492/2016)



**Ministry of Education and Culture** funds and regulates VAKE/NDS's work.

**Special responsibilities** for maintaining Sámi, Russian and multilingual libraries and the national special responsibility for library services promoting reading and literacy among children and young people. (minedu.fi)

**Regional State Administrative Agencies** monitor and promote library operations and assess the accessibility and quality of library services. (avi.fi; section 4 of 896/2009)

Did you know?

2 M

users borrowed material from the library (2019)

53.7 M

a total of 53.7 million visits were made to the library (2019)

40 000

events (2019)

# Highlights from NDS services

Probably the most prominent part of NDS are the online content and services, which are created together with a grand network of professionals. Different content areas can be presented and shared with the help of embedded features, feeds and interfaces in libraries' online services and on social media.



**Biblioteken.fi** is an extensive collection of Swedish-language library resources and current affairs notifications. The services include easy access to national professional resources in Swedish, such as subscribing to library news and, training notifications in a dedicated calendar (Fortbildningskalender).



The **Digi.kirjastot.fi** service contains material digitised by public libraries, including parts of regional collections and rare materials. The service complements the national digitalisation project and is mostly accessed through Finna.fi.



**Kirjasampo.fi** is an extensive literature service. Highlights include a database of Finnish literature, current articles, book recommendations including older works and blog lists. Also available in Swedish.



**Kirjastot.fi** serves as a national communications and educational information channel for library professionals. Visitors can subscribe to news bulletins and notifications and see what is going on in a dedicated training calendar (Kirjastoalan koulutuskalenteri). The site also contains compiled statistical information on Finnish libraries and projects.



**Makupalat.fi** is a directory of online research resources curated by professionals. Users can browse by topic or make use of its powerful search engine. Also available in Swedish.



**Tilastot.kirjastot.fi** is a collection of comprehensive annual statistics on all public libraries in Finland, offering users a handy visualisation tool to aid their research. Also available in Swedish and English.



Visit **eKirjasto.kirjastot.fi** to find the e-books, audio books and e-magazines held by all public libraries with one search. It also includes music and film services, and you can look for themed material to read and listen to. Also available in Swedish and English.



**Fono.fi** is the search engine for the Finnish Broadcasting Company sound database, and allows users to explore composers, songs and themes. Also available in Swedish and English.



Visit **Library Directory/Kirkanta** for basic information on all public libraries, such as opening hours and location, which are also updated on local library websites throughout the country. The directory spans a wide range of educational institutions and specialist libraries. Also available in Swedish and English.



**Kirjastokaista.fi** is the joint online TV channel of libraries and provides users with the likes of videos, radio shows and podcasts on literature, libraries and library services. Kirjastokaista also serves as an educational channel for library professionals, students and teachers, for example. Also available in Swedish and English.



**Libraries.fi** provides a good overview of the building blocks of current Finnish public library for international audiences. The main theme areas, enlivened by fresh case studies, are Functional society, Digitality and Reading promotion.



**Ask a Librarian** is a joint online information service provided by Finnish libraries, where questions submitted by customers are responded to by drawing on the expertise of library staff, who can also suggest potential source material and provide research guidance. Questions are answered within three days. Also available in Swedish and English.



**Musiikkikirjastot.fi** offers a comprehensive set of topical articles, tips and information. The 'Musiikin tiedonhaku' (music research) section includes databases and websites of libraries, archives and other music operators, both Finnish and international. The website also offers the 'Kysy musiikista' (Ask about music) service.

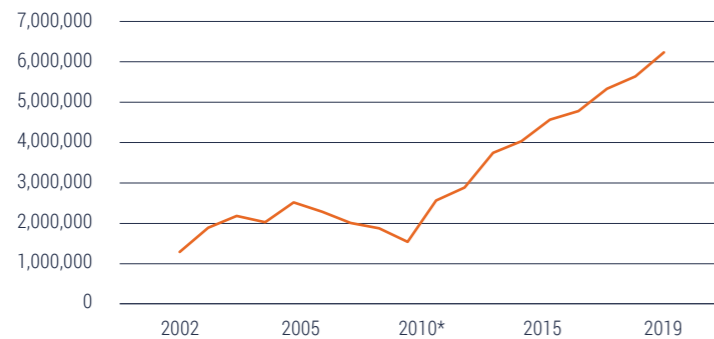


**Sivupiiri** (kirjasampo.fi/sivupiiri) showcases a fantastic range of Finnish and translated children's and young adult literature with the help of daily tips and recommendations, as well as compiling news on the goings-on, events and prizes in the world of children's and young adult literature. Also available in Swedish.

# Kirjastot.fi has found its audience

- The first version of Kirjastot.fi, 'SYKE, Suomen Yleisten Kirjastojen Etusivu' – the frontpage of Finnish public libraries, was established in 1995. Since then, the portal has multiplied the number of services it offers.
- Social media has been used actively by many services on the Kirjastot.fi website for a long time. The site is associated with more than 20 social media accounts in three languages on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Vimeo, SoundCloud and YouTube.

**Kirjastot.fi services – number of sessions 2002–2019**

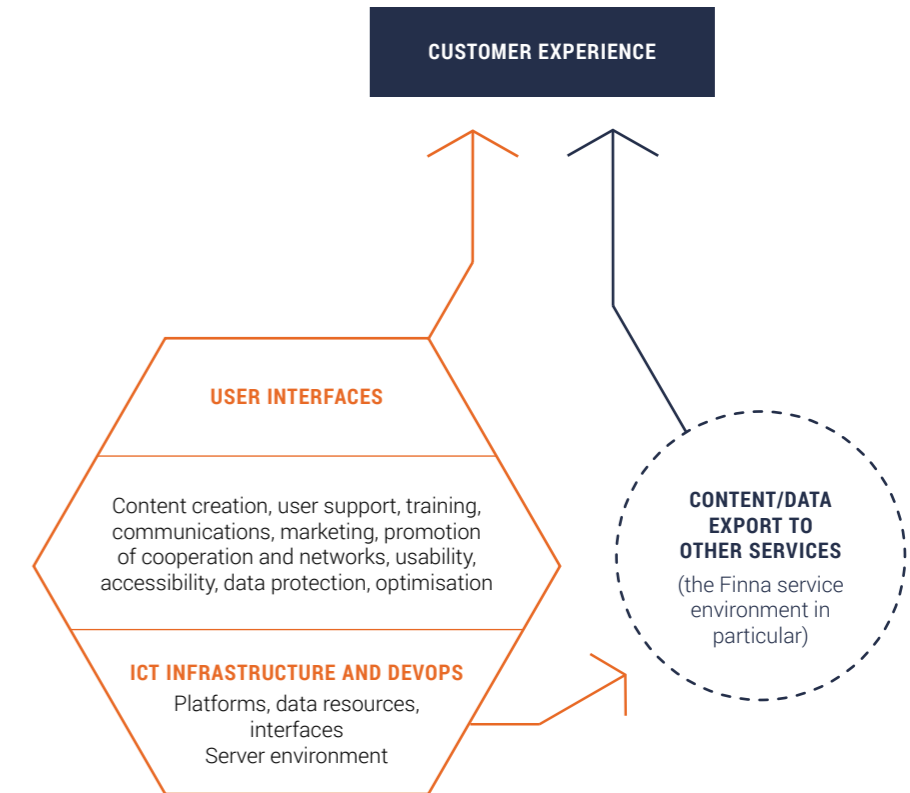


The extent of the services has varied over the years. Previous statistics (1997–2001) are not compatible. Source: Google Analytics

\* WTM statistics were used to some extent up until 2010



## NDS online service levels



### Quote

*“A service whose potential should be promoted more.”*

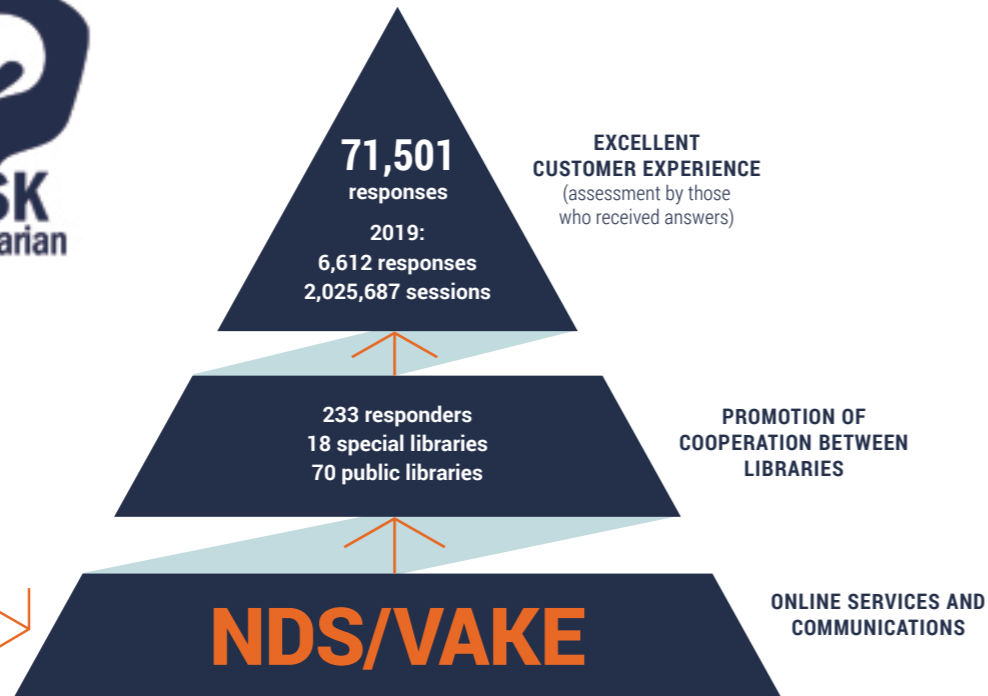
(User survey 2019)

# A library service for everyone

Ask a Librarian is a shared library service, which illustrates the many roles of NDS.



- Technical maintenance and development
- User interfaces, accessibility
- Support for responders
- Response coordination and editorial work
- Training and instructions for responders
- Communications and marketing



# User survey 2019



Very useful	52%
Useful	35%
Usable, but not necessary	11%
Unnecessary	1%
Cannot specify	1%

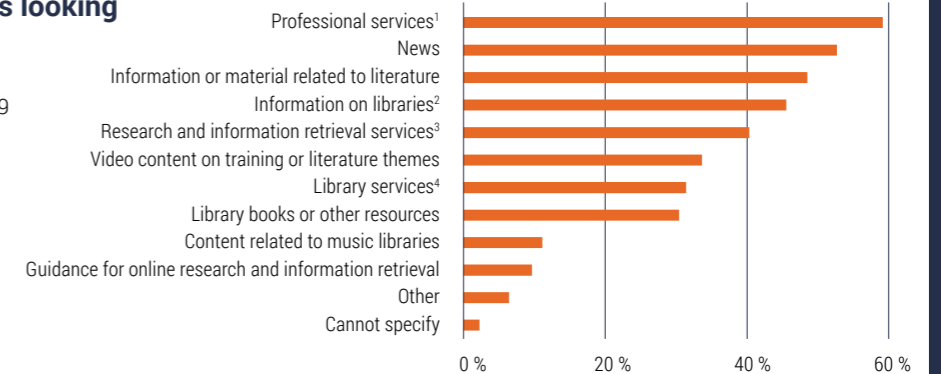
**69%**  
of active users\* considers the website good or very good

\* library professionals that visit the website at least weekly

*"I am very pleased that we have this kind of national service."*

## What were respondents looking for on the site?

Kirjastot.fi user survey  
19 November – 9 December 2019



<sup>1</sup> e.g. jobs, materials  
<sup>2</sup> e.g. statistics, project information, information on Council of Public Libraries or regional development responsibility activities  
<sup>3</sup> e.g. Makupalat.fi, Ask a Librarian contact and service information, loan renewals, etc.  
<sup>4</sup>



# NDS 2020

The NDS network offers a great range of means for supporting and developing Finland's libraries and their services

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Libraries.fi



NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
SERVICES RESPONSIBILITY



LIBRARIES.fi

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