RDA in the UK implementation survey 2025

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ABSTRACT

This article presents the results of the RDA in the UK implementation survey 2025, which was jointly conducted by the UK Committee on RDA and the CILIP Metadata and Discovery Group.

Introduction

The following survey was conducted jointly by the UK Committee on RDA (UKCoR) and the Metadata & Discovery Group (MDG) to provide a snapshot of the current state of implementation and planning of the Resource Description and Access (RDA) standard in the UK. The timing was chosen to coincide with libraries starting to implement Official RDA in the run up to the removal of Original RDA from the RDA Toolkit, set for May 2027.

To allow for direct comparison, some of the questions included closely follow those of a similar survey published in Issue 173, December 2013 of Catalogue & Index (Danskin, 2013). New questions were included to provide wider context, assess training requirements and in anticipation of comparison needs with future surveys.

The survey was conducted using MS Office forms and announced through JISCMAIL lists (CIG-E-FORUM, LIS-RDA, ARLIS-LINK, LIS-RAREBOOKS, LIS-E-RESOURCES, and LIS-UKBIBS), LinkedIn, MDG's monthly email bulletin and word of mouth. There were 63 responses received in total between 20th October and 21st November 2025. Two responses have been discounted as one represented a non-UK institution and the other was a repetition from a single person at an institution, which brings the total valid number of responses to 61.

Overview

As before, most respondents are from the academic community, with lower responses from the public library sector. There were several museums, archives, specialist and company libraries who responded as well. Implementation of Original RDA is ubiquitous across the sample survey, but few of those are either planning to or in the process of implementing Official RDA.

As with the previous survey, interoperability remains a key asset of RDA and this time around cost effectiveness was less of a factor. Considerable reservations are felt at the need to train and develop staff to the new standard while continuing with business as usual. There are also concerns about the lack of practical application of the new standard within current library systems environments.

The results

In this section we present the data from the responses, arranged by section. There were five sections and 25 questions in all. As well as providing the numbers, visuals are included to illustrate the raw data. We have also mapped some of the data to show trends across the sector.

Section 1 – About you

This section recorded basic information about the respondents; their name, organisation and contact details.

Contrary to the 2013 survey, multiple submissions from the same institution were permitted. However, no duplicate entries were received, and this allowed for a direct comparison showing an increase of 32% in the response rate to the 2025 survey.

It was encouraging to see just how many respondents indicated they were willing to be part of the conversation going forward, by responding in the affirmative to being contacted post-survey. This will allow UKCoR to engage more widely with the sector and early adopters, as well as to follow up on individual comments.

Section 2 – Your organisation

This section recorded information about sector, region and staffing resources. Question 5 allowed us to directly compare with the corresponding question of the 2013 survey. Questions 6 and 7 were newly added to provide an overview of resource allocation by region and sector.

Question 5: Which of the following best describes your organisation?

The results broadly mirror those of the 2013 survey in that, the majority of responses (58.7%) came from academic/research libraries; all three national libraries responded; and from some types (school, archive, information unit) there were no responses. It is of note that no repository responded, although RDA is supposed to be beneficial for describing digital collections. Perhaps that's a reflection on where the metadata for these resources comes from – namely academics. It was also noted by one of the respondents that e-resource metadata is mostly driven by supply chains and is lost in Discovery layers anyway.

| Type of Library	Number of responses
Academic library	35
Museum or Gallery	7
Specialist library	7
National Library	3
Company Library	3
Public Library	3
Health Library	2
Bibliographic service	1
Independent consultant	1

Table 1: Normalised distribution of responses across library types
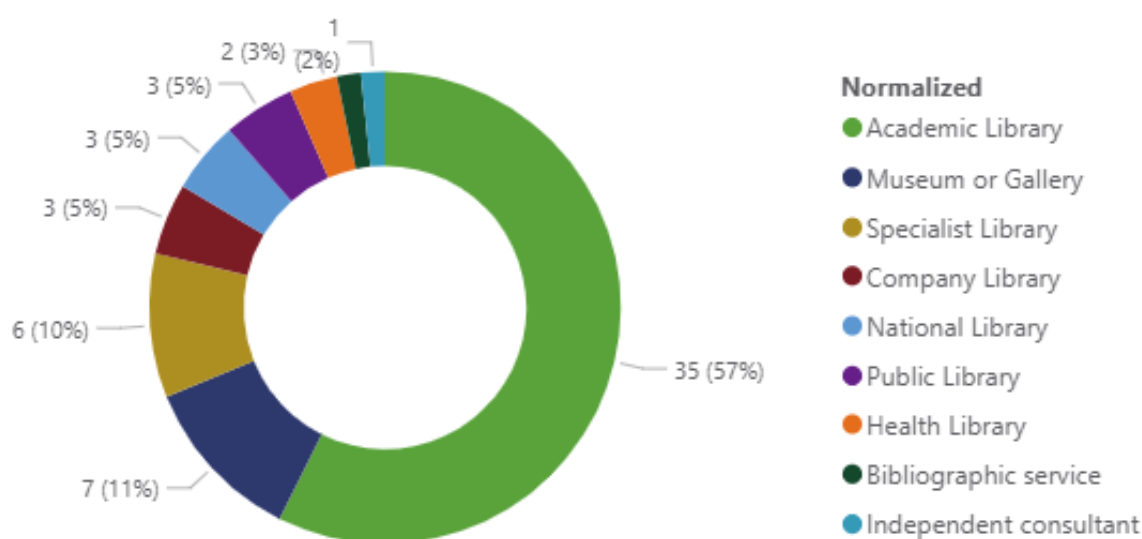
Figure 1: Normalised distribution of responses across library types

We realised, from the 12 responses under 'Other', that we had inadvertently omitted to add 'Public library' and 'Specialist library' as options. Those 12 responses have been normalised where possible. For example, added to the 'Specialist library' type were the three responses from Cathedral libraries, one from a Conservatoire library, and one from a law library. The two responses from research/charitable libraries with a medical focus have been added to the 'Health library' type. It should be noted however that there were no responses from NHS libraries.
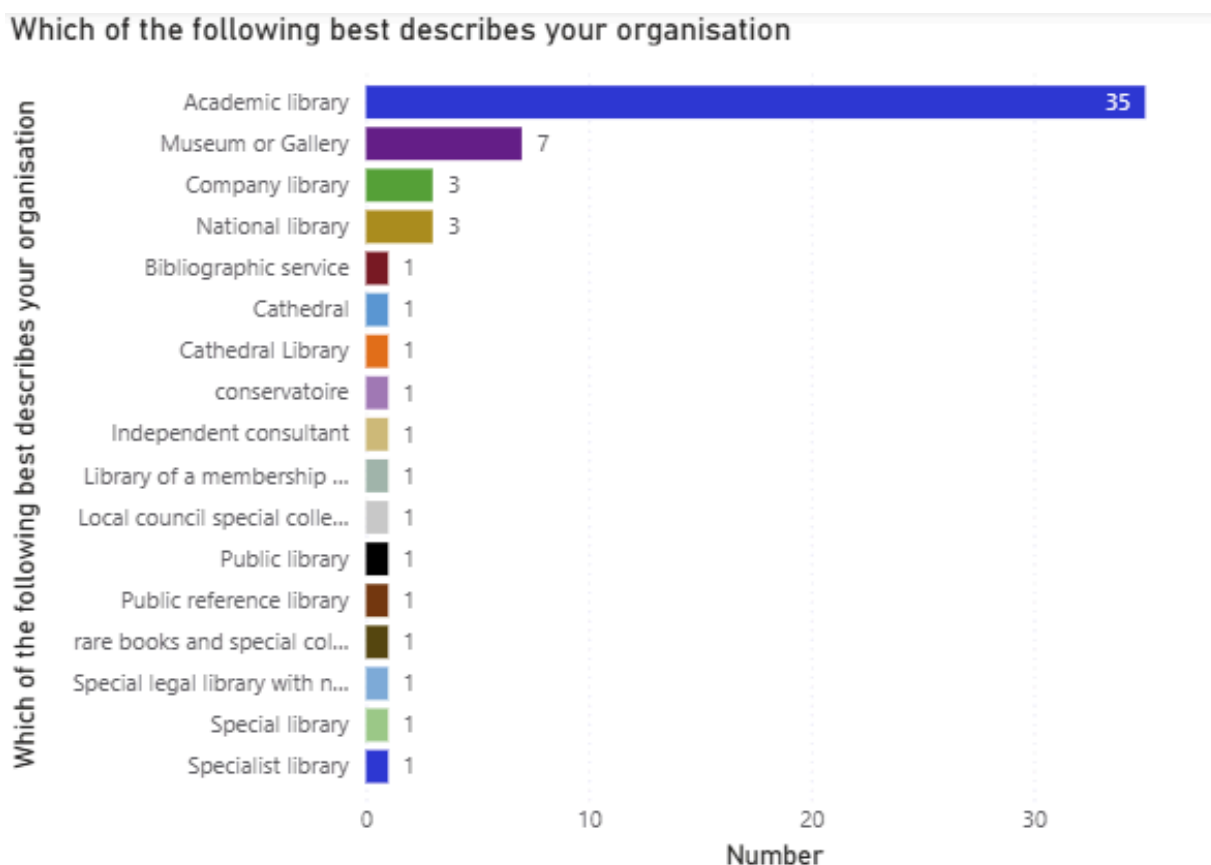

Figure 2: Distribution of responses across library types before normalisation

Question 6: In which region is your organisation based?

This question was introduced to help ascertain the strength of implementation by area and/or training needs, whether implementation and/or awareness is stronger in areas where collaborations already exist and whether local training is likely to be well attended.

A third of respondents were from the London region, with a spread across other English regions, Wales and Scotland. One institution has two regional locations London and Yorkshire and Humber but only the latter is counted in this data. The only region from which there was no response was Northern Ireland. As academic libraries make up the bulk of respondents it is unsurprising that they were also the libraries best represented in the regions. However, all the other institutions together are still reasonably representative of the regions and nations together, but with a greater bias towards London. Below we show 3 views of the regional split. Firstly, we show the raw regional split (Table 2 and Figure 3). Then we show two views of the regional split by Academic Library (Figure 4) and by all the other types (Figure 5). Again, we find that the regional splits are representative across these both groups, but our specialist and museum libraries skew to London.
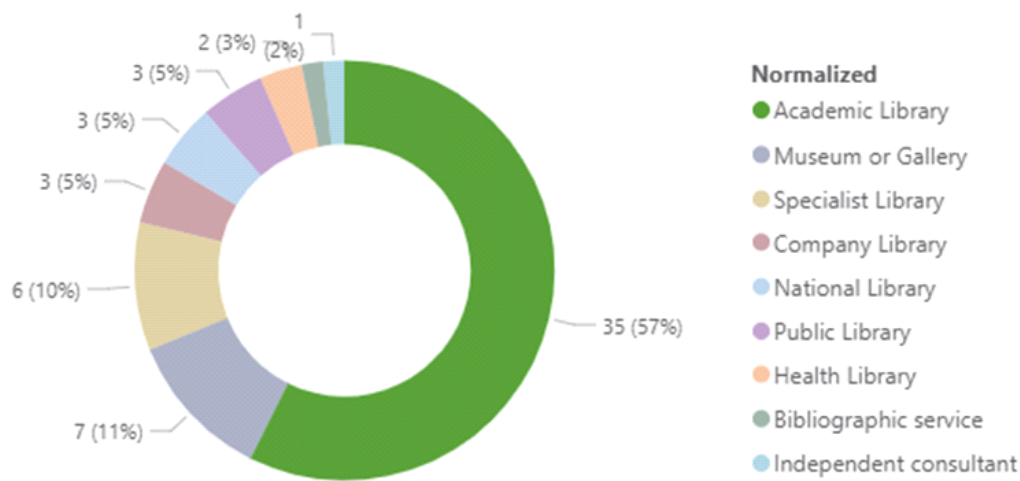
In which region is your organisation based?
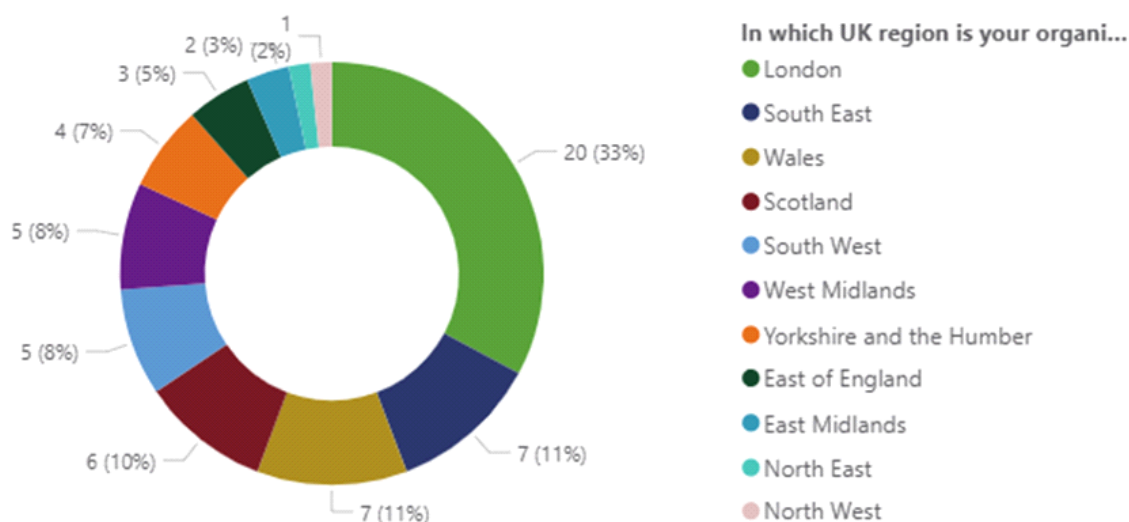
Figure 3: Regional split of responses visualisation

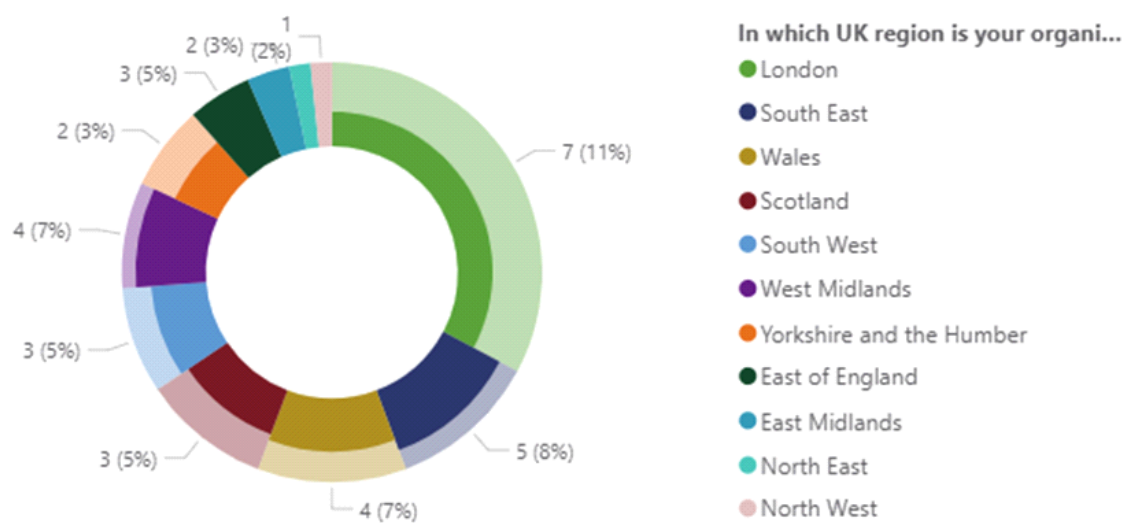| In which UK region is your organisation based?	Number
London	20
South East	7
Wales	7
Scotland	6
South West	5
West Midlands	5
Yorkshire and the Humber	4
East of England	3
East Midlands	2
North West	2
North East	1

Table 2: Regional split of responses

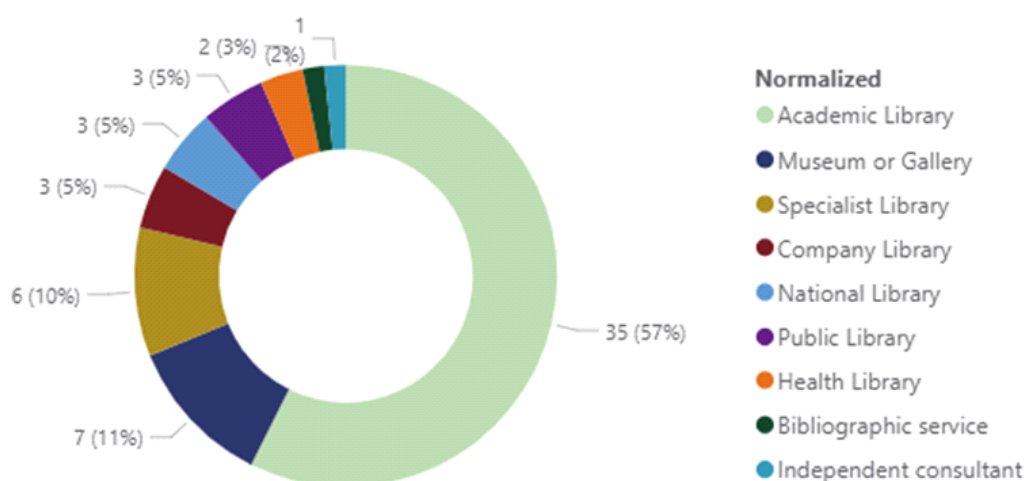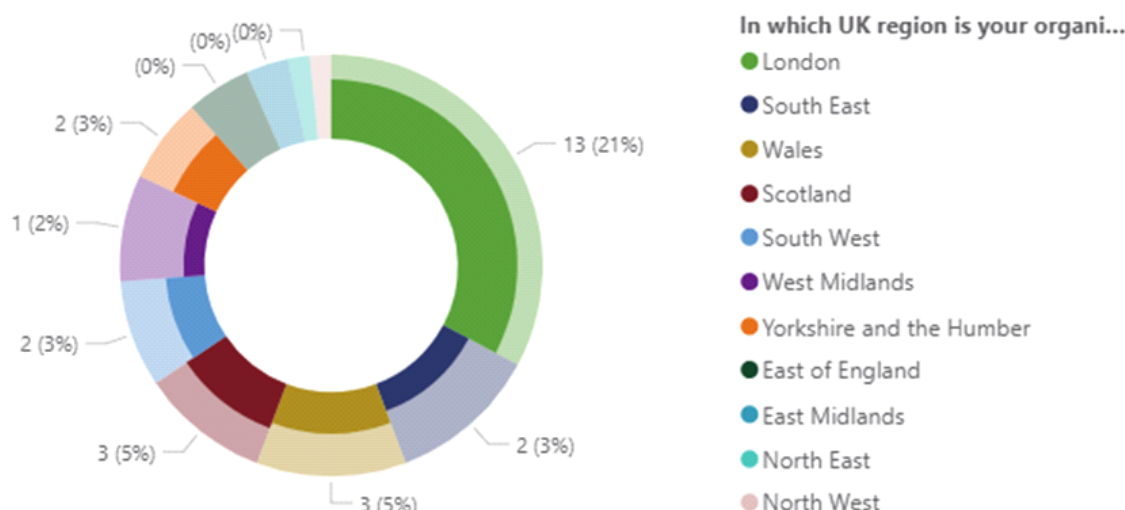**Figure 4**: Regional split of responses from academic libraries

Type of Library (All other Libraries Highlighted)

Normalized
- Academic Library
- Museum or Gallery
- Specialist Library
- Company Library
- National Library
- Public Library
- Health Library
- Bibliographic service
- Independent consultant

In which region is your organisation based?

In which UK region is your organi...
- London
- South East
- Wales
- Scotland
- South West
- West Midlands
- Yorkshire and the Humber
- East of England
- East Midlands
- North East
- North West

Figure 5: Regional split of responses from non-academic libraries

Question 7: How many cataloguers in your organisation? This includes anyone involved in cataloguing, regardless of whether it is a main element of their role.

This question was introduced to get an indication of the number of cataloguers employed and as a guide to help us determine likely training needs by organisation type. If it is retained in subsequent surveys a direct comparison can be made over time of the number of cataloguers within the sector.

No respondents selected the option for zero cataloguers, so we cannot see if libraries without cataloguers are engaged with RDA. The majority of institutions (74.2%) employ between 1-5 cataloguers. The national libraries, bibliographic service and a small number of academic libraries command more than 11 staff. It would be
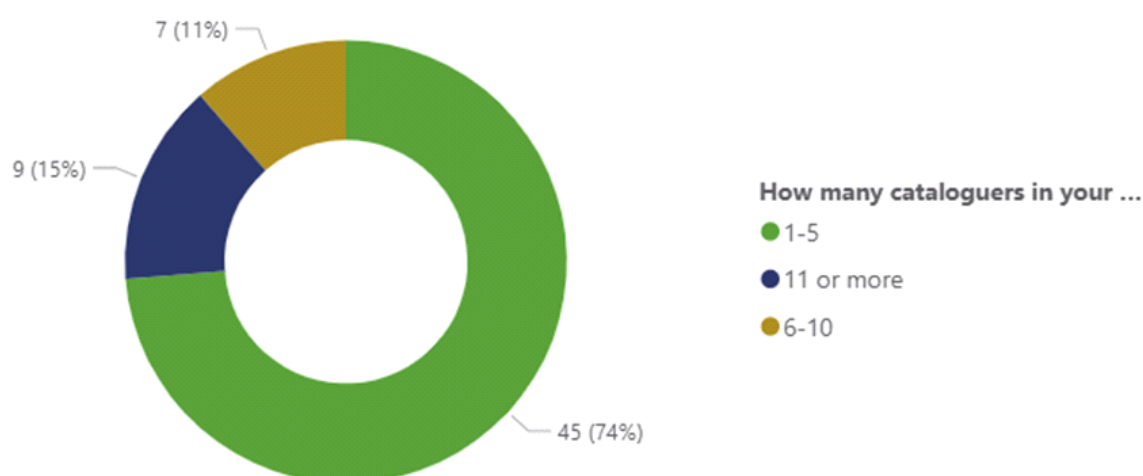
interesting to know whether that figure is simply commensurate with the size of collections requiring metadata creation/management.

One thing that becomes clear by analysing the data in conjunction with other questions in the survey is that even comparatively well-resourced institutions are not very engaged with RDA. These institutions above all should have a strategic interest in the development of RDA but still report in large numbers that they cannot resource it or are not engaged with the process.

How many cataloguers in your organisation?	Number
1-5	45
6-10	7
11 or more	9

Table 3: Number of cataloguers in organisation

Figure 6: Number of cataloguers in organisation visualisation

How many cataloguers?	Number	Type of library
11 or more	5	Academic Library
11 or more	1	Bibliographic Services
11 or more	3	National Library
6-10	6	Academic Library
6-10	1	Museum or Gallery
1-5	24	Academic Library
1-5	3	Company Library
1-5	2	Health Library
1-5	1	Independent consultant
1-5	6	Museum or Gallery
1-5	3	Public Library
1-5	6	Specialist Library

Table 4: Number of cataloguers by type of library
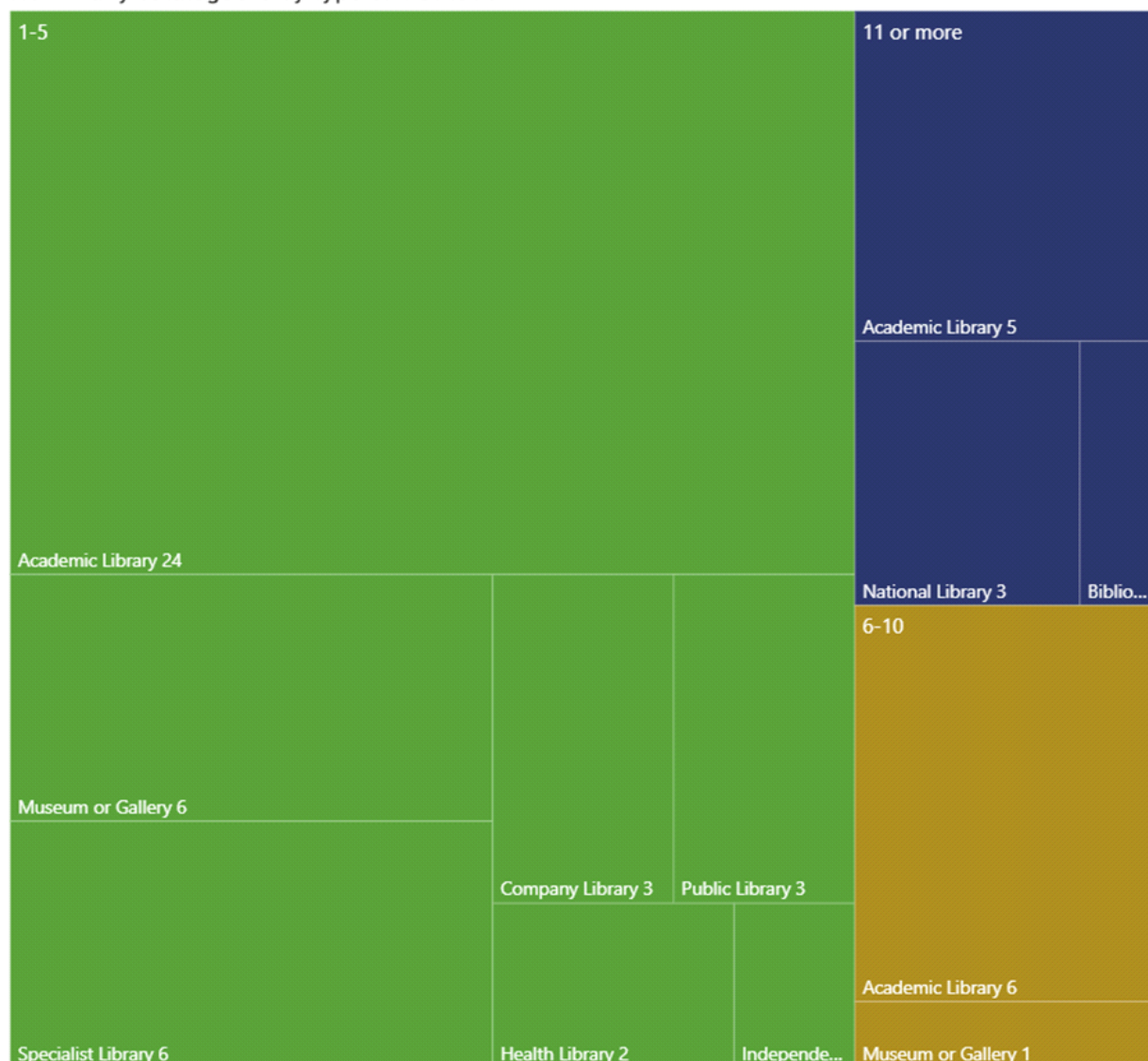
Figure 7: Number of cataloguers by type of library visualisation

Section 3 – Your cataloguing practices

This section consisted of four questions, the purpose of which was to allow us to analyse how much of the workforce is engaged in copy or original cataloguing (Question 8), whether imported metadata is to Official RDA standard (Question 9), identify UK libraries capable of implementing RDA within a linked data or relational/ object oriented scenario, and record the diversity of encoding standards in use. All questions in this section were newly introduced and so there is no direct comparison with the data from the 2013 survey.

Question 8: Do you do copy cataloguing, original cataloguing or both?

There's still very much a need for cataloguers to be trained in the latest standards, even if the majority are now mostly copy cataloguing. Interestingly, of the institutions with 11 or more staff members most (67%) are copy cataloguing with some original cataloguing and the rest (33%) are doing original cataloguing with some copy cataloguing. None of these institutions was exclusively original cataloguing. It was primarily the specialist, museum and archive institutions (13 in total, Figures 10.1 and 10.2) that were exclusively original cataloguing. Of those, six have implemented Original RDA and the rest have not implemented either version of RDA. The latter may be attributable to the fact that these institutions predominately have small cataloguing teams.

Do you do copy cataloguing, original cataloguing or both?	Number
Mostly copy cataloguing, with some original cataloguing	38
Mostly original cataloguing, with some copy cataloguing	15
All original cataloguing	8
All copy cataloguing	0

Table 5: Distribution of copy and original cataloguing
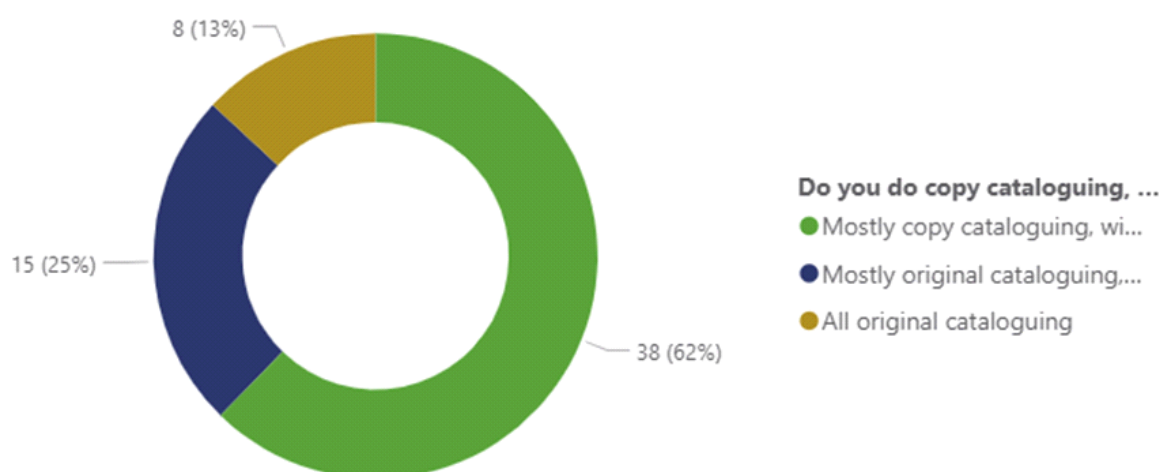
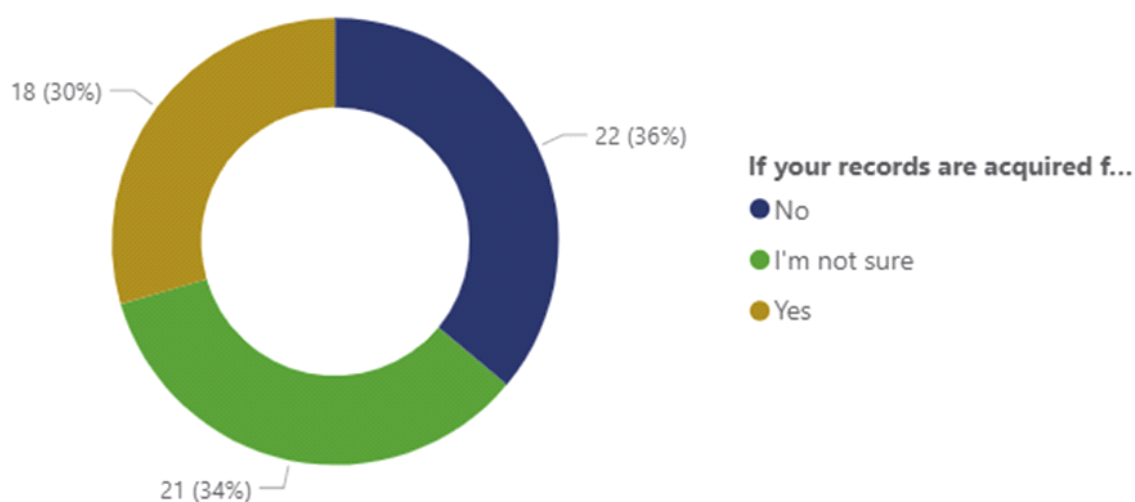**Figure 8**: Distribution of copy and original cataloguing visualisation

Question 9: If your records are acquired from external providers, do they provide records to Official RDA standard?

Only 28.5% of respondents know that their external records are being catalogued to Official RDA standard. In hindsight, a question allowing respondents to record the record supplier(s) they use would have been useful to identify the more progressive suppliers and allowed us to confirm the accuracy of the statements. That most libraries feel they are not getting Official RDA or unable to comment suggests a sluggish uptake of the new standard across the supply chain. Interesting to note, one National Library was not receiving Official RDA records while the other two were.

If your records are acquired from external providers, do they provide records to Official RDA standard?	Number
I'm not sure	21
No	22
Yes	18

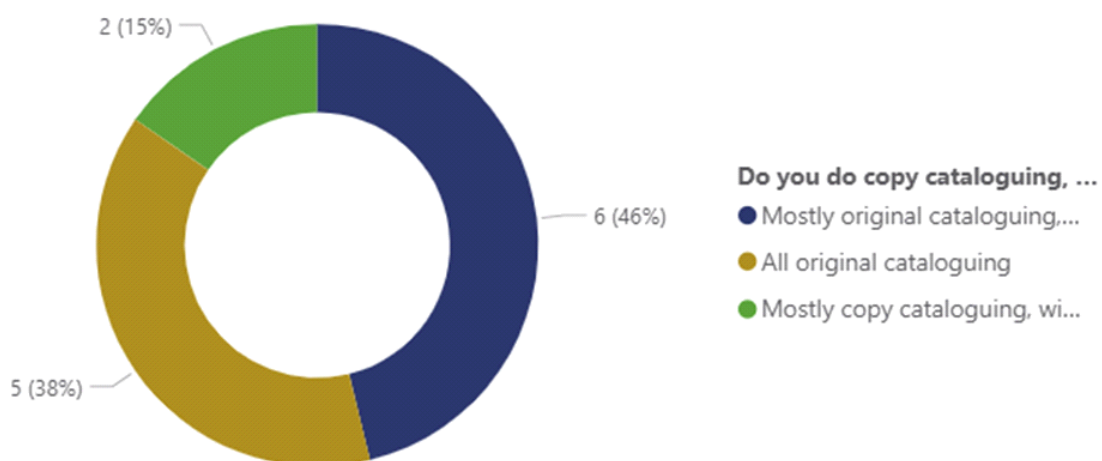**Table 6**: RDA adoption in external provider records

Figure 9: RDA adoption in external provider records visualisation

The following visuals filter out all but the specialist and museum libraries. It shows most of these libraries have 1-5 cataloguer(s), doing mostly original cataloguing. Just about a third of these libraries take Official RDA records from external vendors, while over half do not use RDA.

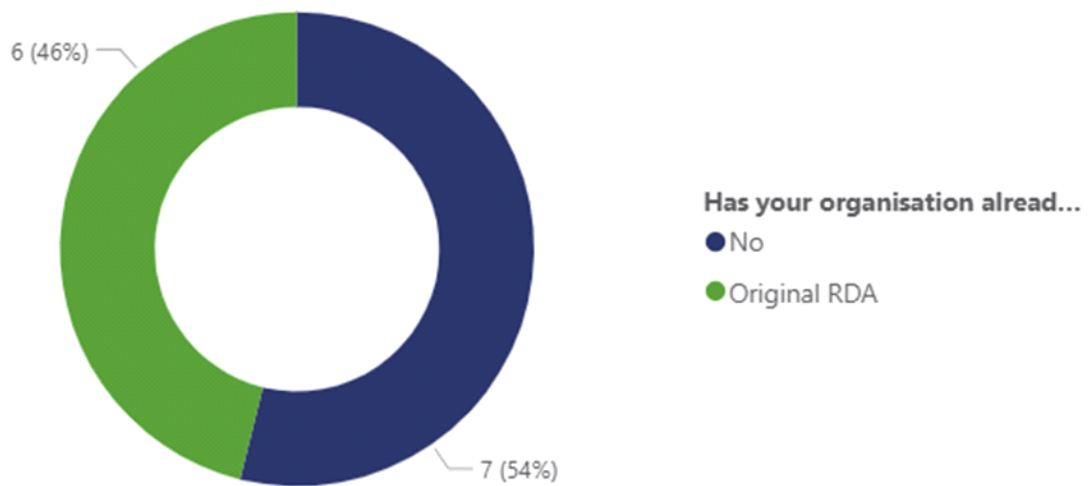## How many cataloguers in your organisation?

1 (8%)

12 (92%)

How many cataloguers in your ...
- 1-5
- 6-10

Do you do copy cataloguing, original cataloguing or both?

2 (15%)

6 (46%)

5 (38%)

Do you do copy cataloguing, ...
- Mostly original cataloguing,...
- All original cataloguing
- Mostly copy cataloguing, wi...

Figure 10.1: Number of cataloguers and distribution of copy and original cataloguing in specialist and museum libraries

If your records are acquired from external providers, do they provide records to Official RDA standard?

2 (15%)

4 (31%)

7 (54%)

If your records are acquired f...
- I'm not sure
- Yes
- No

6 (46%)

7 (54%)

Has your organisation alread...
- No
- Original RDA

Figure 10.2: Standard of external provider records and adoption of Original RDA in specialist and museum libraries

In contrast for the organisations with the most cataloguers only 3 are doing mostly original cataloguing while the other 6 are doing mostly copy cataloguing.

How many cataloguers in your organisation?

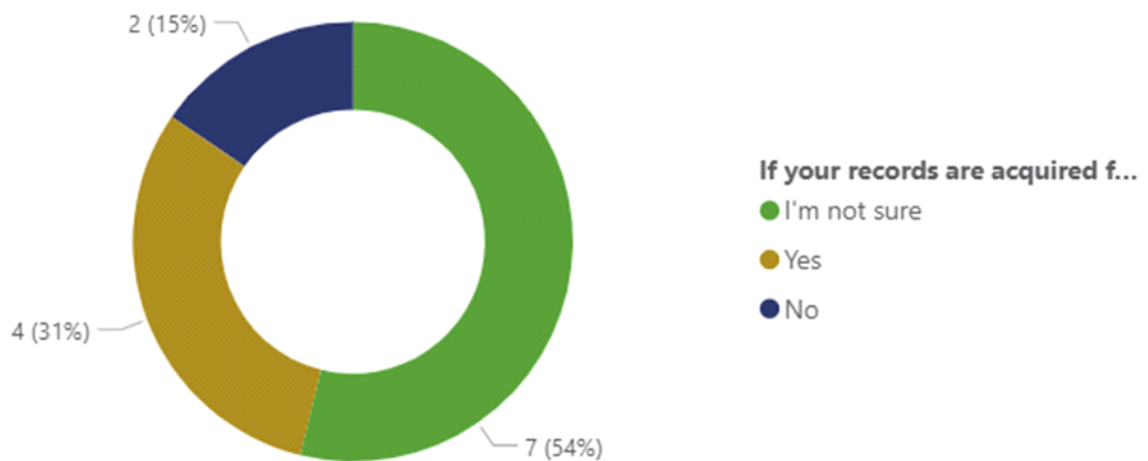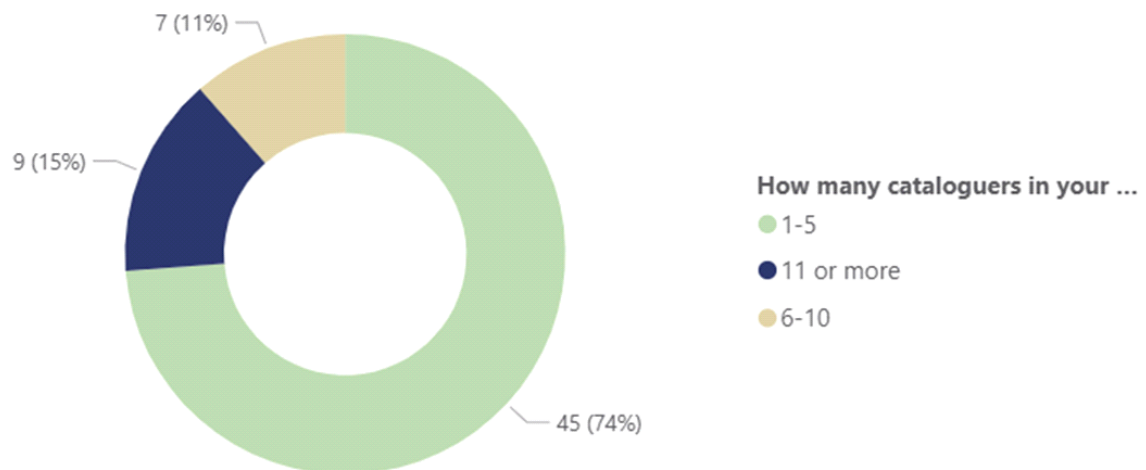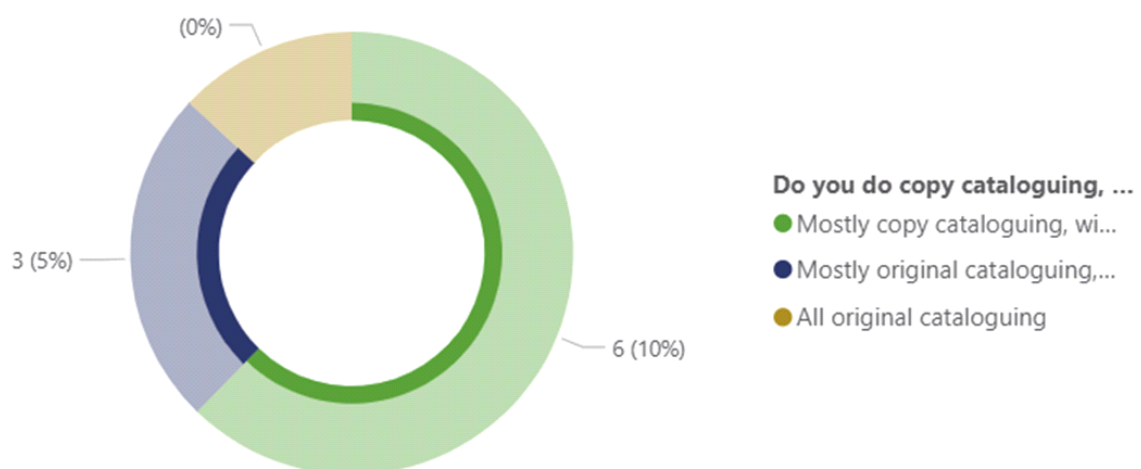**Do you do copy cataloguing, original cataloguing or both?**

Figure 11: Distribution of copy and original cataloguing in organisation with the most cataloguers.

Question 10: Which of the following implementation scenarios best suits your data structure?

The vast majority of users will want to implement Official RDA via traditional ILS roots, and this is the case across the sectors as well. In terms of libraries using more than one option it is academic libraries and a national library that are interested in something outside of the ILS model.

This reinforces the message that until there is a wider call for a linked data application to be offered by vendors libraries are unlikely to see the benefit of moving to, and therefore the need to implement, Official RDA.

Which of the following implementation scenarios best suits your database structure?	Number
Bibliographic/Authority data (i.e. standard ILS)	46
I'm not sure	8
More than one of the above	6
Flat file data (i.e. data about a resource that is recorded in a single record)	1

Table 7: RDA implementation scenarios
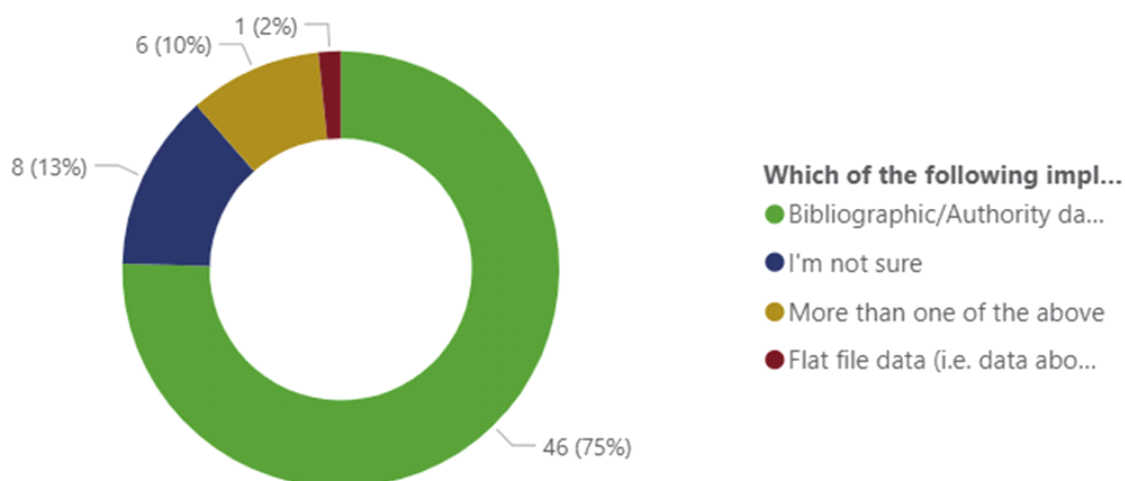
**Figure 12**: RDA implementation scenarios visualisation

Question 11: Which encoding standard do you catalogue to? (Select all that apply)

This data shows how many of the encoding standards are used by the responding institutions, with most only using one. There are a small number of institutions using more than one encoding scheme. The predominate scheme in use is MARC21. While it is important that RDA works with MARC21, other schemes may be used. It'll become more important to do so if library data is to be lifted out of current data silos. Some libraries stated they are adopting BIBFRAME and others are using their own scheme.

The available choices in the survey were: MARC21, UNIMARC, BIBFRAME, METS, TEI and EAD. The table below incorporates responses from the comments entered under the option for 'Other'.

Which encoding standard do you catalogue to? (Please select all that apply)	Number
MARC 21	57
Dublin Core	5
EAD (Encoded Archival Description)	5
TEI (Text Encoding Initiative)	2
BIBFRAME	1
In house LRM based, with a view to being mappable to all formats	1
LMS is web-based platform that doesn't facilitate particular encoding	1
METS (Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standard)	1
Own	1
Spectrum for museum collections	1
Unencoded/local standard (in Soutron ILS)	1
XML	1

Table 8: Encoding standards used
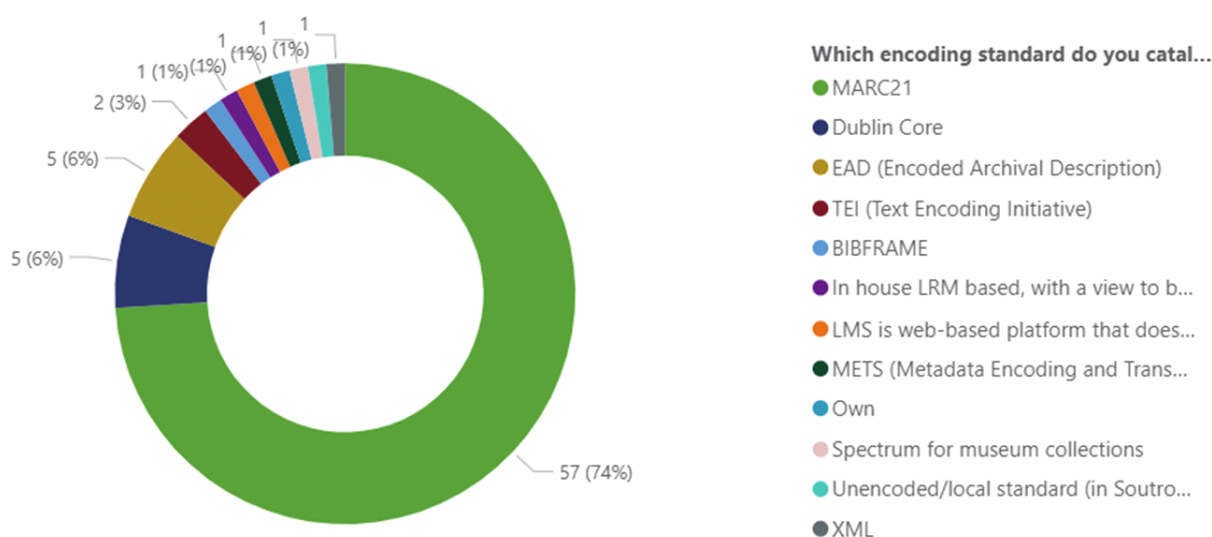
Figure 13: Encoding standards used visualisation

Section 4 – Official RDA implementation

This was the largest section of the survey, with a total of 10 questions focused on implementation. Several of the questions mirrored those of the 2013 survey, adjusted to reflect implementation of Official RDA. Where necessary some of the questions were adjusted to collect data on both Original and Official RDA implementation.

There were new questions added to assess use of the RDA Toolkit, RDA Registry and the stages of implementation completed by those who are implementing Official RDA.

Question 12: Has your organisation already implemented Original RDA or Official RDA?

The overwhelming majority of institutions are yet to move to Official RDA; less than 10% of respondents have done so. Most institutions who responded, have implemented Original RDA. Just under a third of respondents have either not implemented the standard or are unsure if they have. The uncertainty may come from lack of clarity in the distinction between the RDA cataloguing standard and its application in an encoding scheme. It may also be down to cataloguing practices that have remained static since AACR2 days.

Has your organisation already implemented Original or Official RDA?	Number
Original RDA	40
No	13
Official RDA	5
I'm not sure	3

Table 9: RDA implementation
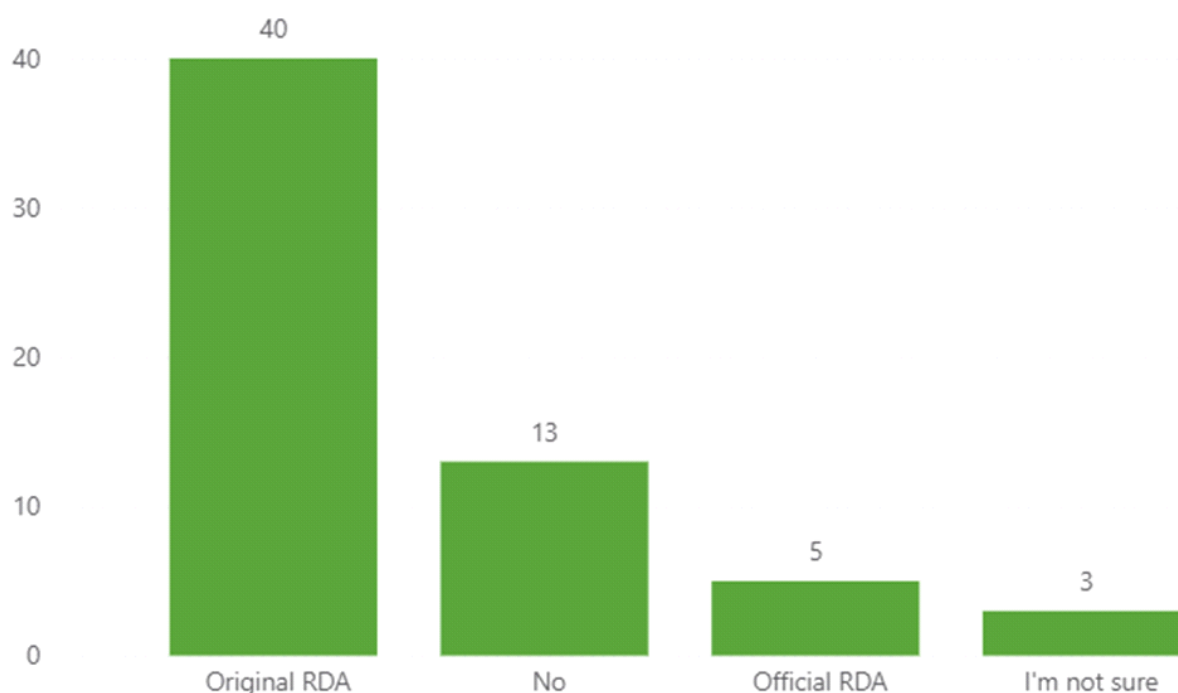
Figure 14: RDA implementation visualisation

Of the academic institutions who responded to the survey, 25 have adopted Original RDA, five have adopted Official RDA, four have not adopted any form of RDA and two are unsure of their RDA status.
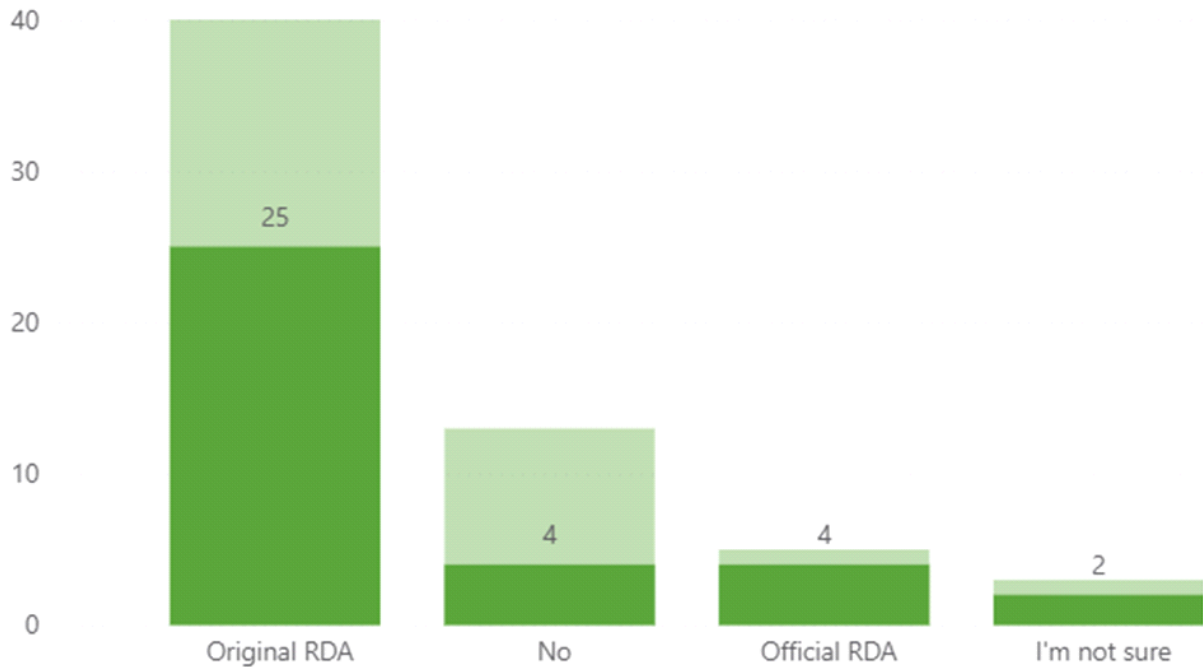
Figure 15: RDA implementation in academic libraries

*Question 13: Has your organisation taken a decision to implement Official RDA in the future?*

Despite the widespread adoption of the Original RDA standard most institutions currently have no plans to implement Official RDA. In fact, there is a marked difference in attitude between now and 2013. Whereas currently the majority (61%) are undecided, in 2013 the majority were planning to implement within 18 months.
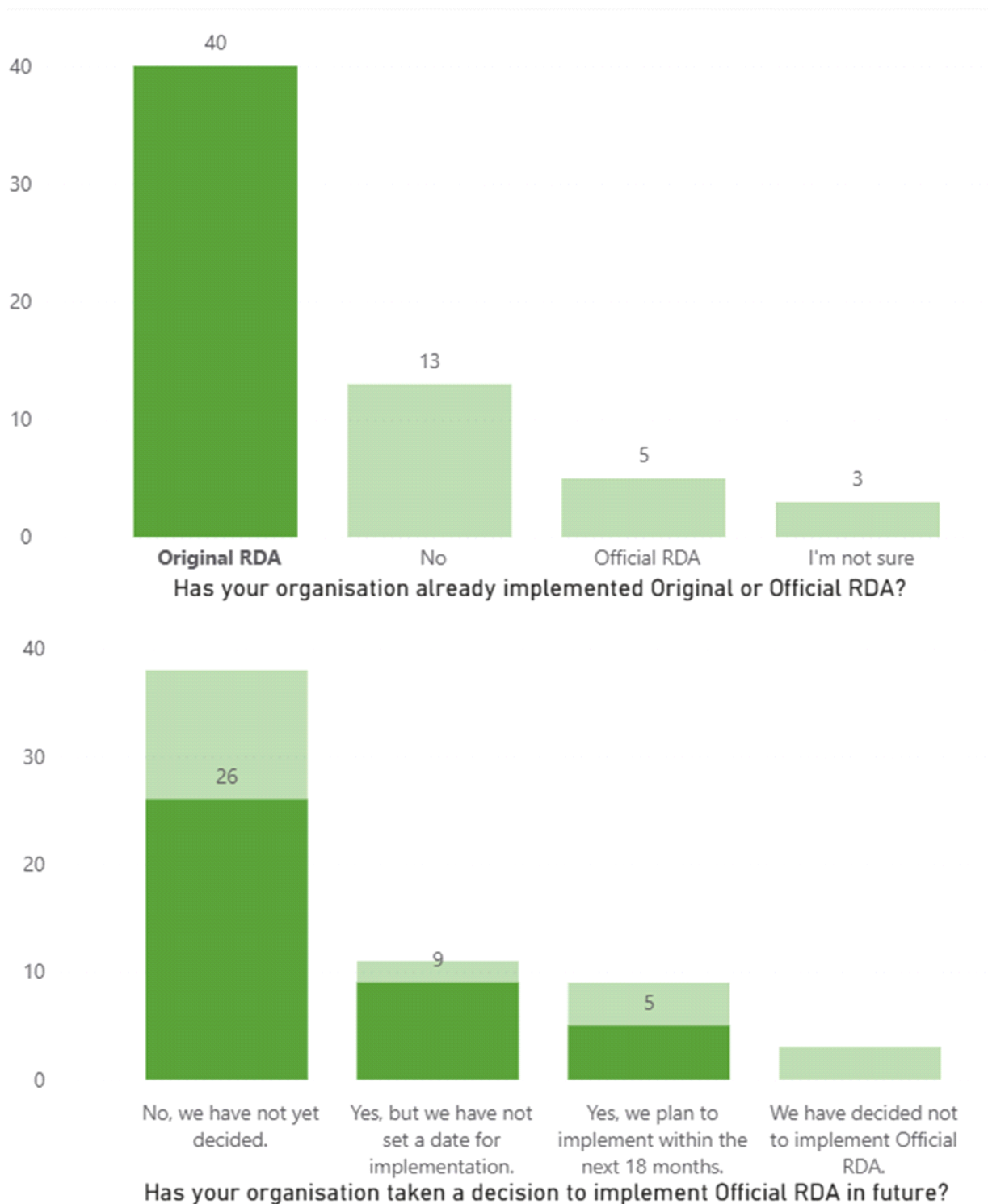
Of those who have implemented Original RDA, nine will implement Official RDA but with no date, five will implement it within the next 18 months and the rest remain undecided (Figure 17). Of those who have yet to adopt Original RDA or are not sure (16 organisations), most have no plans to adopt Official RDA, one will adopt in the next 18 months and three will not adopt the standard at all (Figure 18).

| Has your organisation taken a decision to implement Official RDA in future?	Number
No, we have not yet decided.	38
Yes, but we have not set a date for implementation.	11
Yes, we plan to implement within the next 18 months.	9
We have decided not to implement Official RDA.	3

Table 10: Official RDA implementation plans
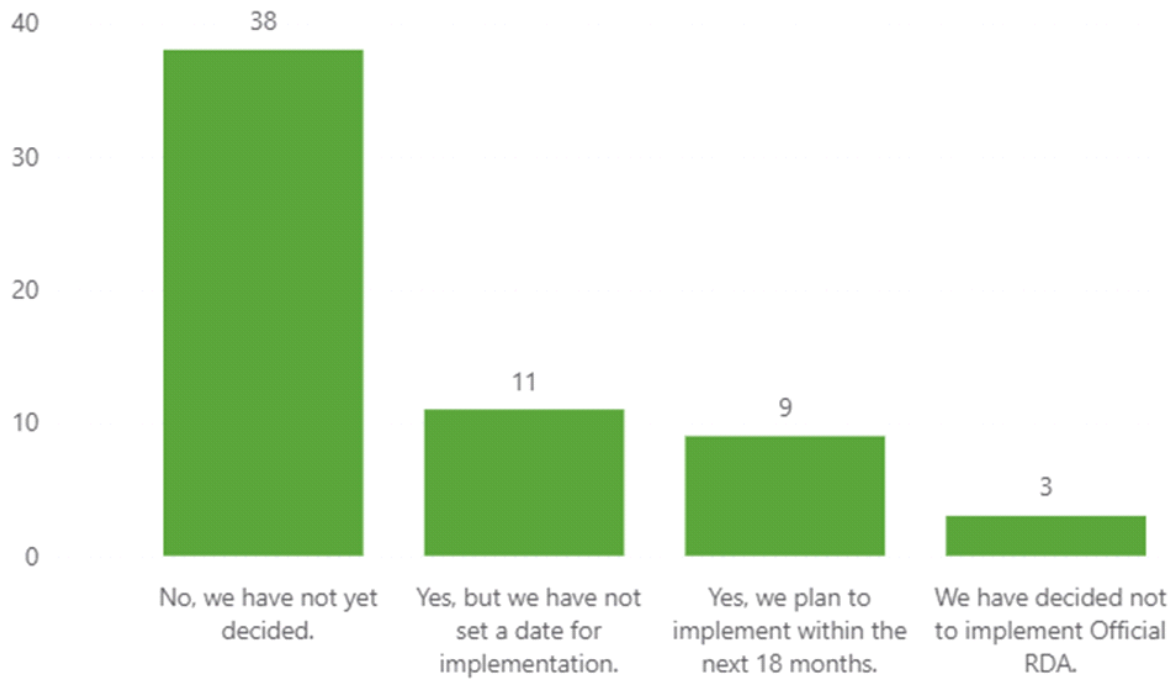
Figure 16: Official RDA implementation plans visualisation

Figure 17: Official RDA implementation plans in libraries that have implemented Original RDA
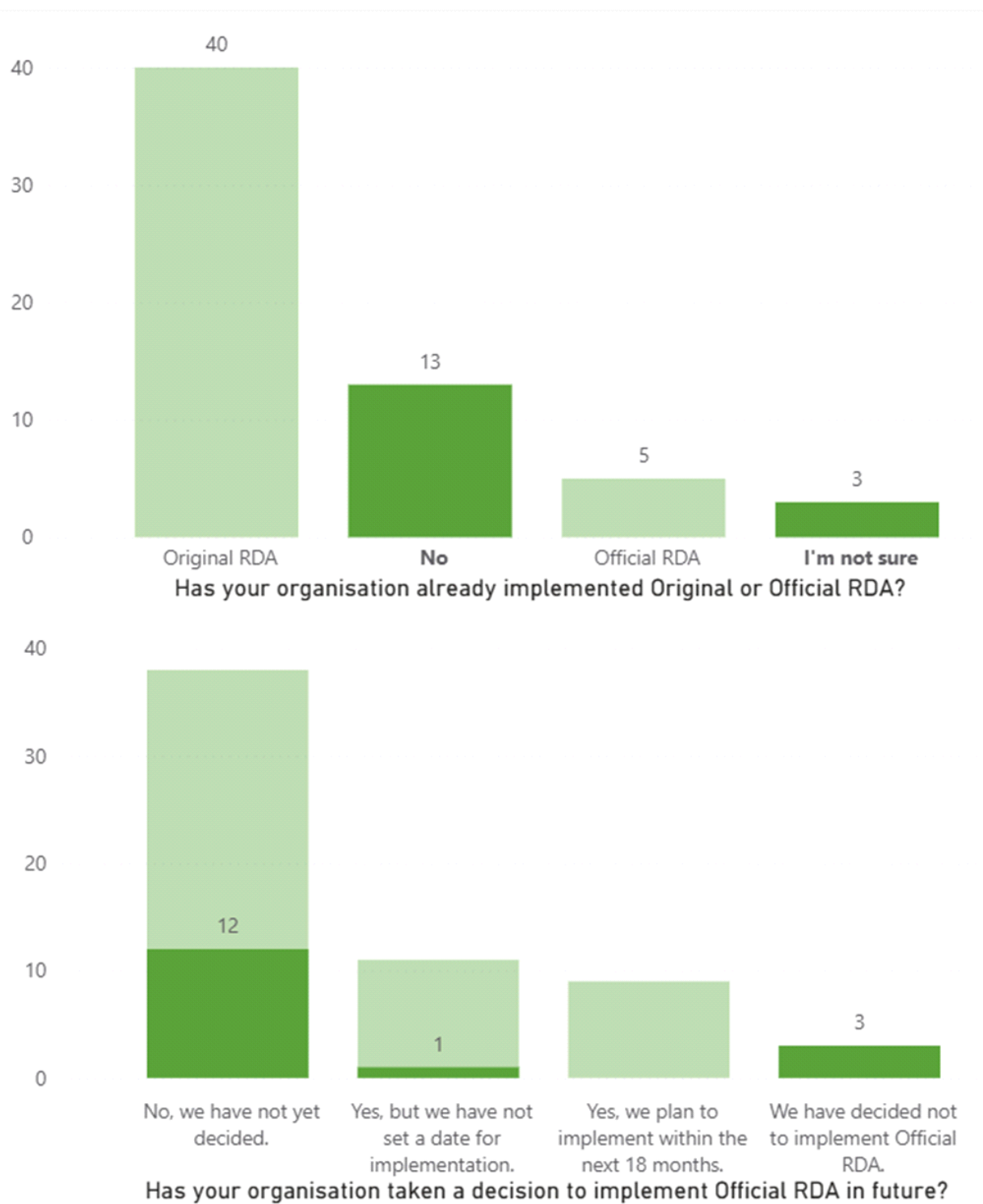
Figure 18: Official RDA implementation plans in libraries that have not implemented Original RDA
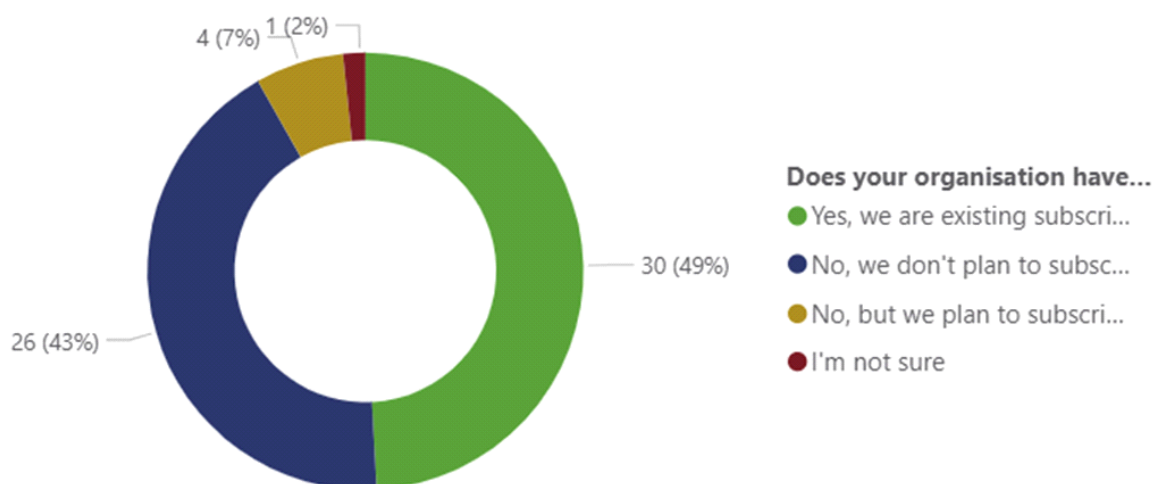
Question 14: Does your organisation have a subscription to the RDA toolkit?

Half of those surveyed have an active subscription to the RDA Toolkit. While this is positive it also shows that while many institutions regard RDA as essential for their cataloguing workflows, they do not value a subscription to the toolkit (Figure 20). This is worrying as changes are being made to the standard, and will continue to be made, which institutions will need to be aware of and to incorporate into their local practice. The quarterly Toolkit releases which document the changes are only available to subscribers.

All six respondents who have implemented Official RDA are RDA Toolkit subscribers. All three national libraries are subscribers, likely because all three have stated they are planning to implement Official RDA at some point. Of the 18 academic libraries who responded and are Toolkit subscribers, all have already implemented Original RDA, seven said they intend to implement Official RDA but have not set a date and 11 are undecided.

Does your organisation have a subscription to the RDA Toolkit? (http://access.rdatoolkit.org/)	Number
Yes, we are existing subscribers	30
No, we don't plan to subscribe	26
No, but we plan to subscribe	4
I'm not sure	1

Table 11: RDA Toolkit subscription

Figure 19: RDA Toolkit subscription visualisation
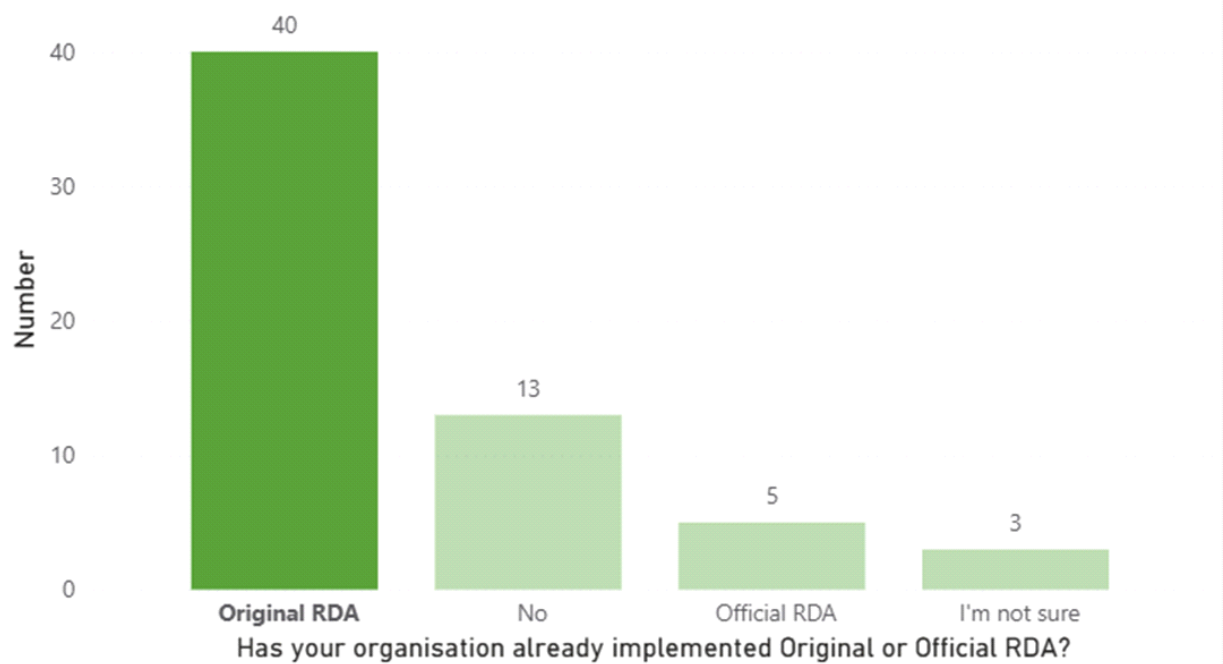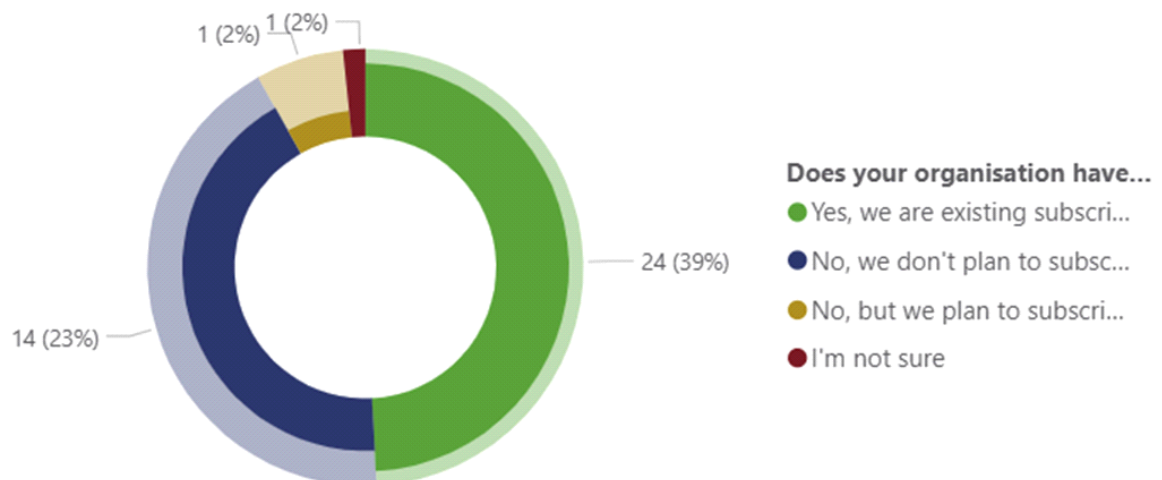
Figure 20: RDA Toolkit subscription uptake in libraries that have implemented Original RDA

Question 15: Does your organisation use the RDA registry?

The final question on the current use of RDA tools is on the use of the RDA Registry. Given that even amongst the most engaged users of RDA use of the Toolkit was not 100% it should come as no surprise that the Registry was also very ill used, however, perhaps that is because there isn't much awareness of its usefulness. For example, RDA element sets can be downloaded to assist with creating an application profile, and this requires no subscription to the Toolkit

Only a handful (8) are using the Registry. Of these, one is a national library, three are academic libraries, one is a museum, one is a cathedral, one is a bibliographic service, and one is an independent consultant. These libraries have stated they will implement Official RDA, with only two still undecided (Figure 22).

Does your organisation use the RDA Registry? (https://www.rdaregistry.info/)	Number
No	47
Yes	8
I'm not sure	6

Table 12: RDA Registry use
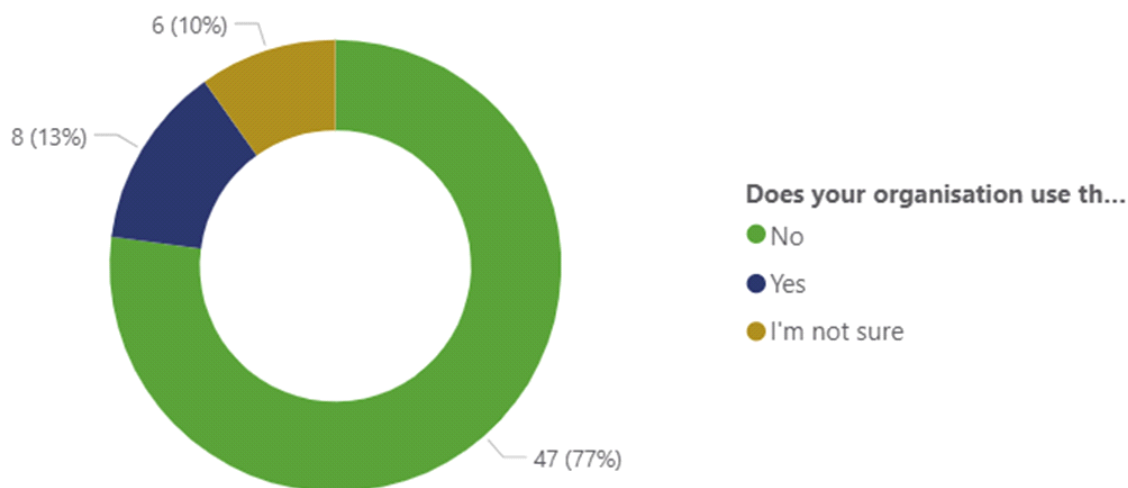
Figure 21: RDA Toolkit Registry use visualisation

Type of Library

Normalized
- ● Academic Libr...
- ● Museum or Ga...
- ● Specialist Library
- ● Company Libra...
- ● National Library
- ● Public Library
- ● Health Library
▼

Does your organisation use the RDA Registry? (https://www.rdaregistry.info/)
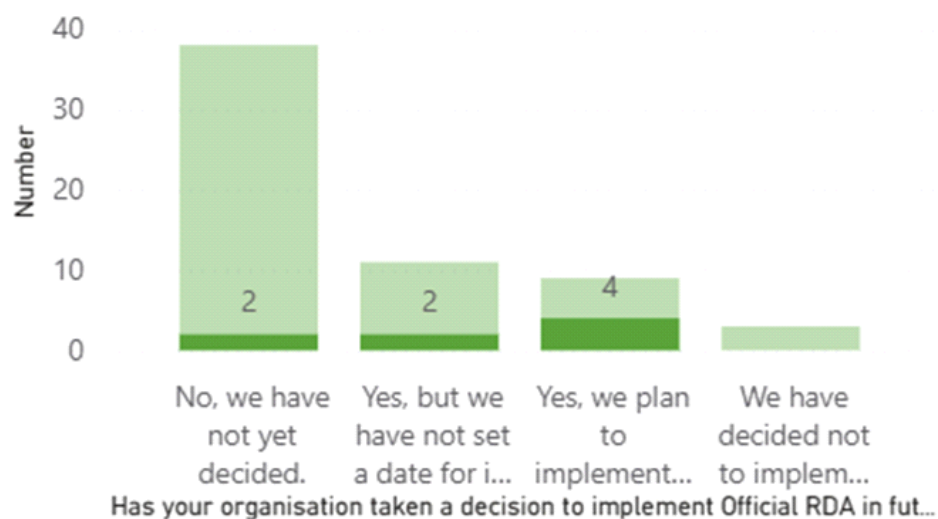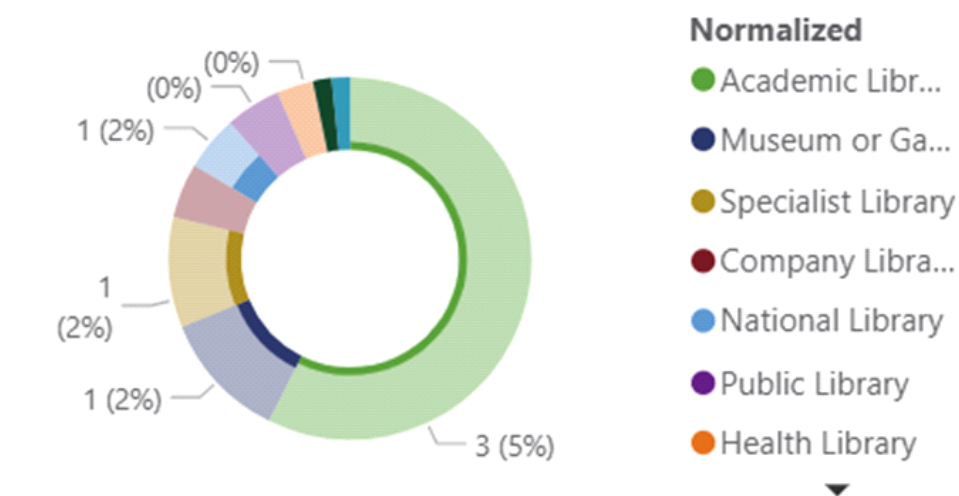
Does your organisa...
- ● No
- ● Yes
- ● I'm not sure
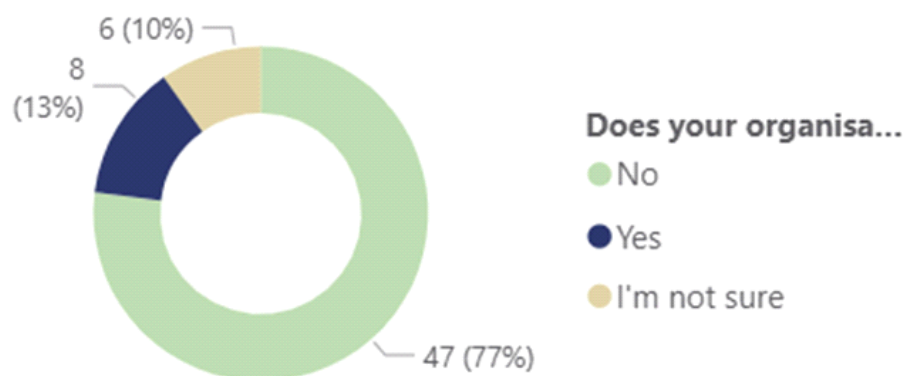
Figure 22: Official RDA implementation plans and library types of RDA Registry users

Question 16: What are your reasons for implementing Official RDA?

Just over a third cannot answer this question as they are not planning to implement Official RDA. If we remove all the responses that indicate no benefit, we can see some clear indicators of the reasons to implement. The primary reason, interoperability, mirrors the results of the 2013 survey. RDA covering the material collected, the need for a replacement standard and the entity-relationship models built-in to RDA are the next highest scoring answers. A few wish to be compliant with standards, be pioneers and make use of RDA as a cost-effective model. Worth noting that only 1.6% this time round, compared to 6.4% in 2013, felt RDA is cost-effective.

What are your reasons for implementing Official RDA?	Number
Not applicable (we are/will not be implementing Official RDA)	34
Interoperability	16
RDA covers the range of materials we collect	11
Current cataloguing code requires revision or replacement	10
We want to implement an entity-relationship cataloguing model	9
Aim to pioneer	1
CIP contract requirements, plus general aim to use current international standards	1
Consistency with UK recommendations	1
RDA is cost effective	1
We are a joint repositories and cataloguing team where REF and Open Access work always trumps cataloguing of library resources. RDA is seen as a nice to have rather than essential.	1

Table 13: Official RDA implementation reasons
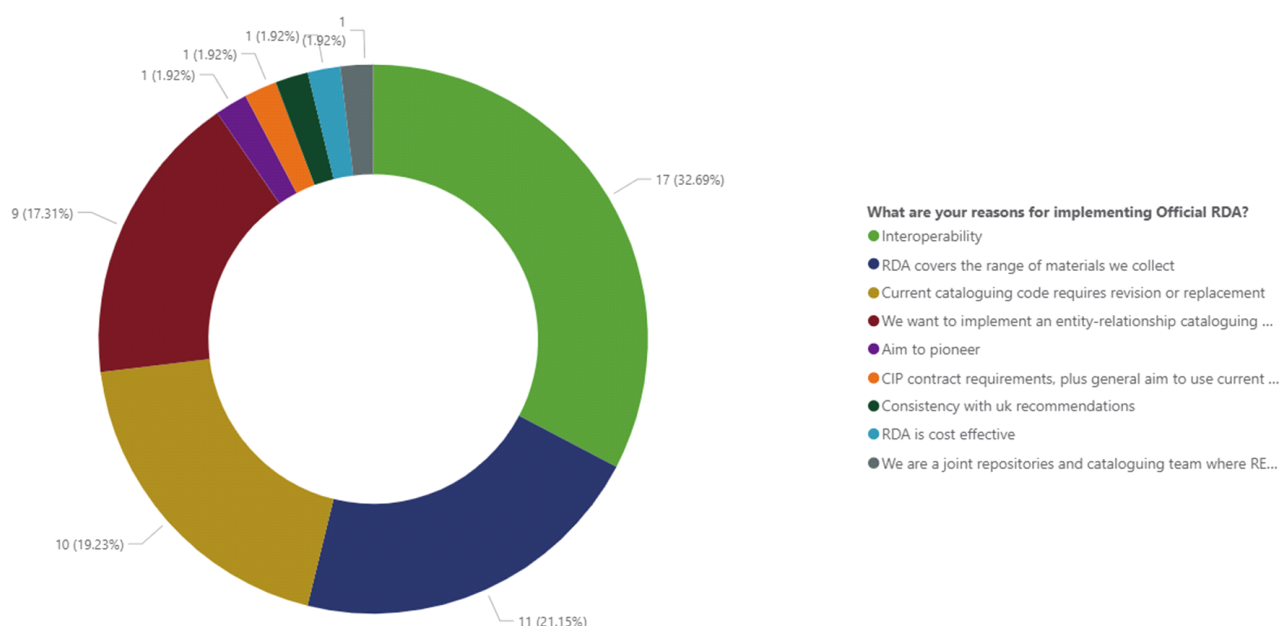
Figure 23: Official RDA implementation reasons visualisation

Question 17: What are your reasons for not implementing Official RDA?

Unfortunately, whatever the technical reason, this question did not work for the participants and has null results. However, from the comments made elsewhere in the survey we can deduce that the perceived costs of implementation, the cost of subscription and the lack of clear-cut benefits would have scored highly as they did in 2013.

Question 18 & 19: What benefits do you expect to gain by implementing Official RDA in the short term (18-24 months)? What benefits do you expect to gain by implementing Official RDA in the long term (more than 2 years)?

Nearly half of institutions are not planning to implement and therefore, see no benefits short or long term to Official RDA. This result seems to be born out of a general lack of embrace by the community of the new standard. To look at the benefits anticipated by those who have decided to implement Official RDA we disregarded the 'not applicable' answers in the further analysis.

There were two qualitative answers amongst these responses. One reflected on the perceived benefits of interoperability and cost savings alongside reputational prestige. The other suggested that RDA was a "nice to have". However, there were some differences between long- and short-term benefits. Interoperability and improved resource discovery stand out as primary benefits, but over the long-term being more responsive to change and enhancing productivity become more important. It is worth reflecting that these benefits, while not unimportant, are unlikely to make for a strong enough business case to senior leadership teams in most academic organisations. The RSC should advocate more on the short- and long-term tangible benefits of Official RDA to empower metadata specialists to make a stronger case for implementation.

If the survey is re-run after the 2027 switch off, it would be useful to include a question to help us understand the benefits which were in fact gained by implementing Official RDA.

What benefits do you expect to gain by implementing Official RDA in the short term (18-24 months)?	Number
Not applicable (we are/will not be implementing Official RDA)	34
Interoperability	13
Improved resource recovery	8
More responsive to change	4
Qualitative answers	2

Table 14: Expected short term benefits of Official RDA implementation
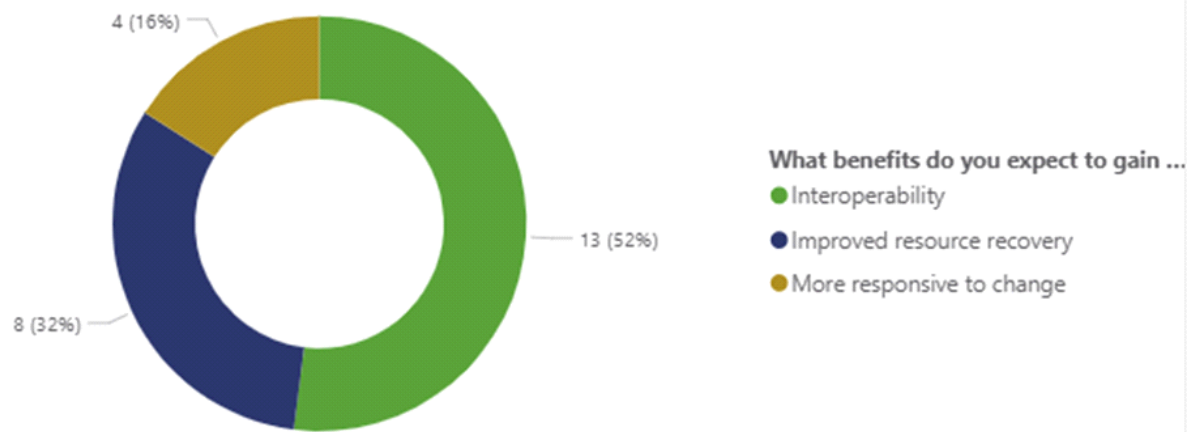
Figure 24: Expected short term (18-24 month) gains of Official RDA implementation visualisation

What benefits do you expect to gain by implementing Official RDA in the long term (more than 2 years)?	Number
Not applicable (we are/will not be implementing Official RDA)	33
Interoperability	9
Improved resource recovery	9
More responsive to change	5
Enhanced productivity	2
Qualitative answers	3

Table 15: Expected long term benefits of Official RDA implementation
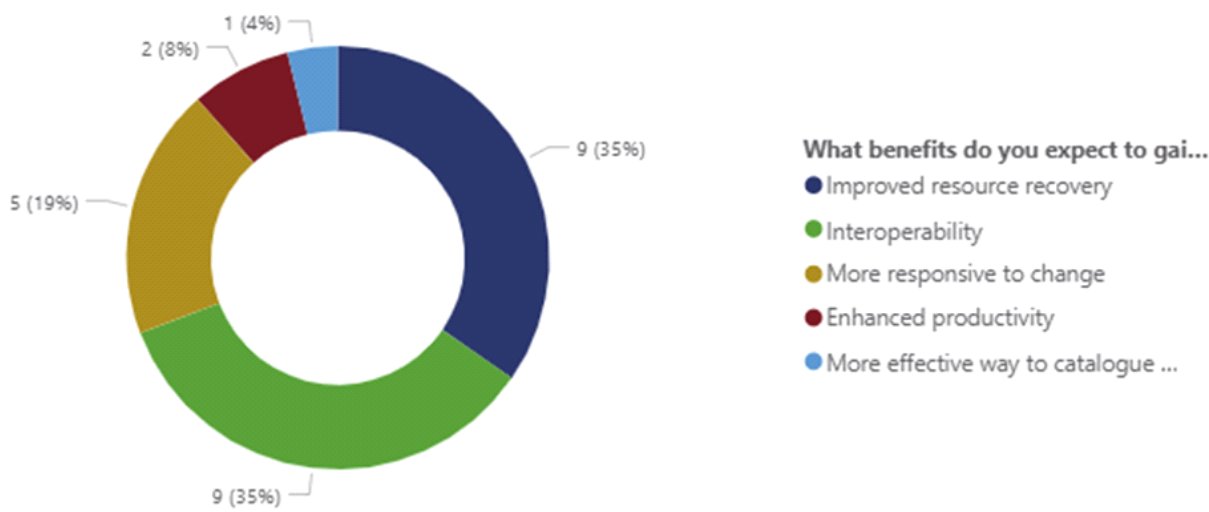
Figure 25: Expected long term (more than 2 years) gains of Official RDA implementation visualisation

Question 20: What material types are in scope for Official RDA at your organisation?

There is a good mixture here of material types that libraries using RDA intend to catalogue. A few will apply the standard to all material types. Most are interested in using it for books and serials. There are also a wide range of use cases across all the sectors.

Material types in RDA	Number
Printed books	39
Serials (Diachronic works)	29
Music	24
Sound Recordings	23
Cartographic Resources	15
Moving Image	15
All materials	13
Ephemera	13
n/a	9
Graphic Materials and Still Images	8
Manuscripts	7
Objects and Realia	7
Archival materials	5
eBooks	1

Table 16: Material types in scope
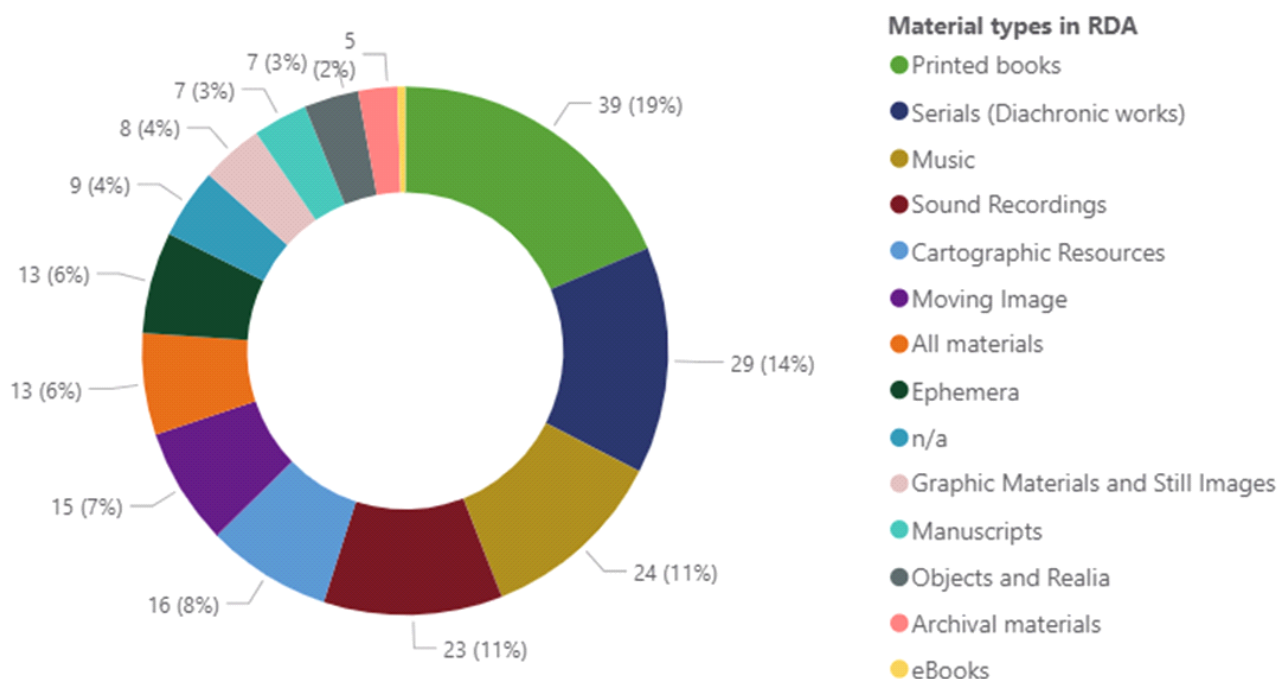
Figure 26: Material types in scope visualisation

Question 21: What stages of implementation have you undertaken? (Please select all that apply)

Half of the surveyed institutions have no plans to implement Official RDA. Of the rest just under half (12) have completed more than one implementation stage, while the others (15) have completed only a single stage. The tree graph (Figure 28) shows all the stages of implementation of those who have done something (each number representing a single institution) but excluding those who selected not implementing.

Most respondents who plan to implement Official RDA have undertaken initial scoping work and familiarisation with their own procedures and the RDA Toolkit. Based on the information submitted, only three libraries have created application profiles (two academic and one national) and yet this is considered an essential part of implementation. Application profiles are highlighted as a training need by the comments submitted in Section 5 of the survey.

Very few respondents selected the option for 'Secured organisational support and resources', which may be reflected by comments on the perceived difficulty of presenting a business case for the adoption of Official RDA.

Which of these stages of implementation have you undertaken? (Please select all that apply)	Number
Not applicable (we are/will not be implementing Official RDA)	36
Reviewed local cataloguing policies and procedures	13
Become familiar with the RDA Toolkit and implementation scenarios	12
Scoping work	12
Strategy and objectives	10
Prepared training materials for cataloguers, staff and users	8
Formed a project team and established milestones	6
Secured organisational support and resources	6
Created a communication, training and implementation timetable	5
Created application profiles / policy documents	5
Developed an action plan	5
Tested RDA sample records for in scope material types in your system	5
Tested RDA sample records in your users' catalogue interface	5
Set a date for rolling out your implementation of Official RDA	3
Requested and reviewed feedback	2

Table 17: Stages of Official RDA implementation undertaken
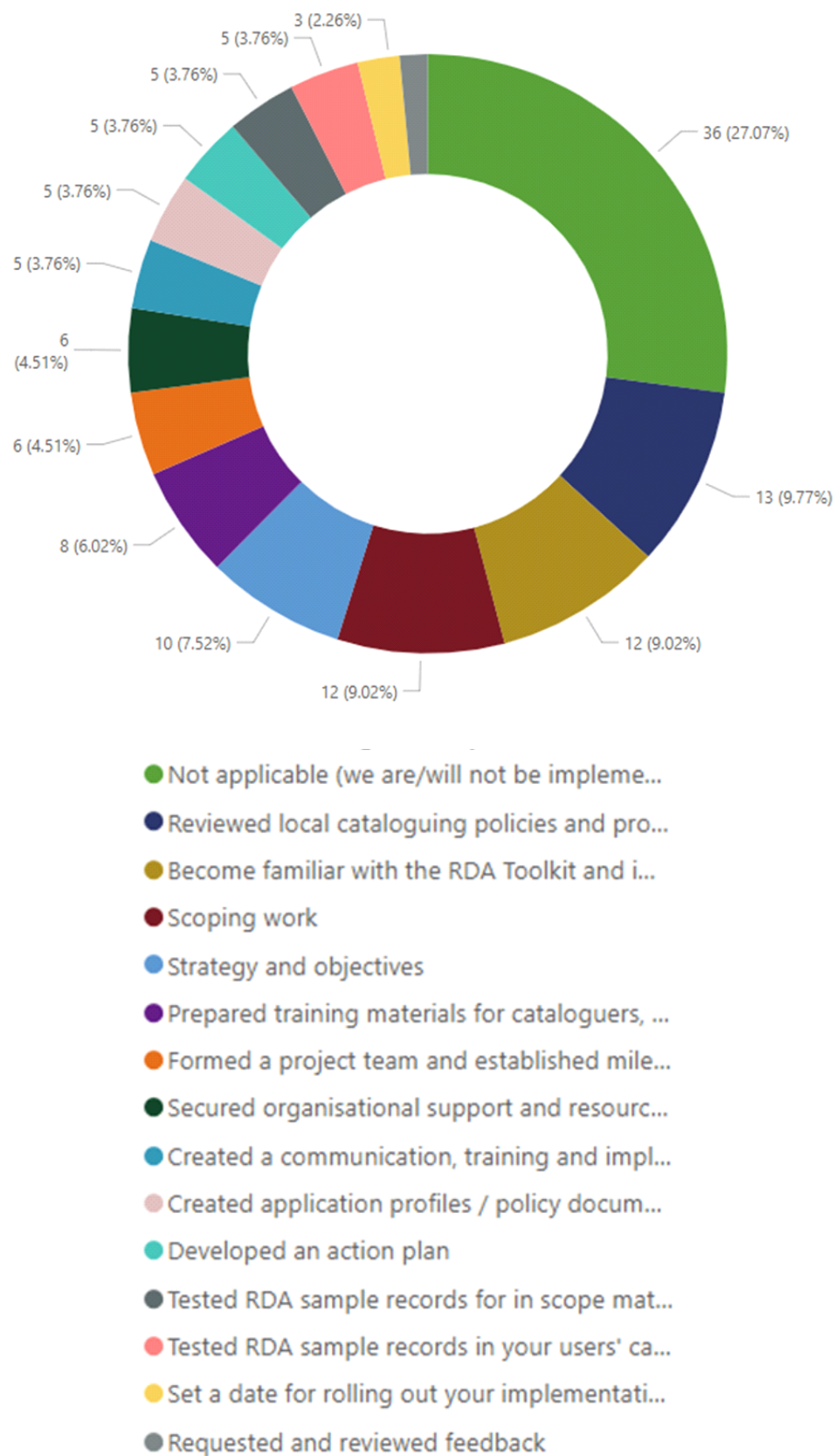
Figure 27: Stages of Official RDA implementation undertaken, visualisation
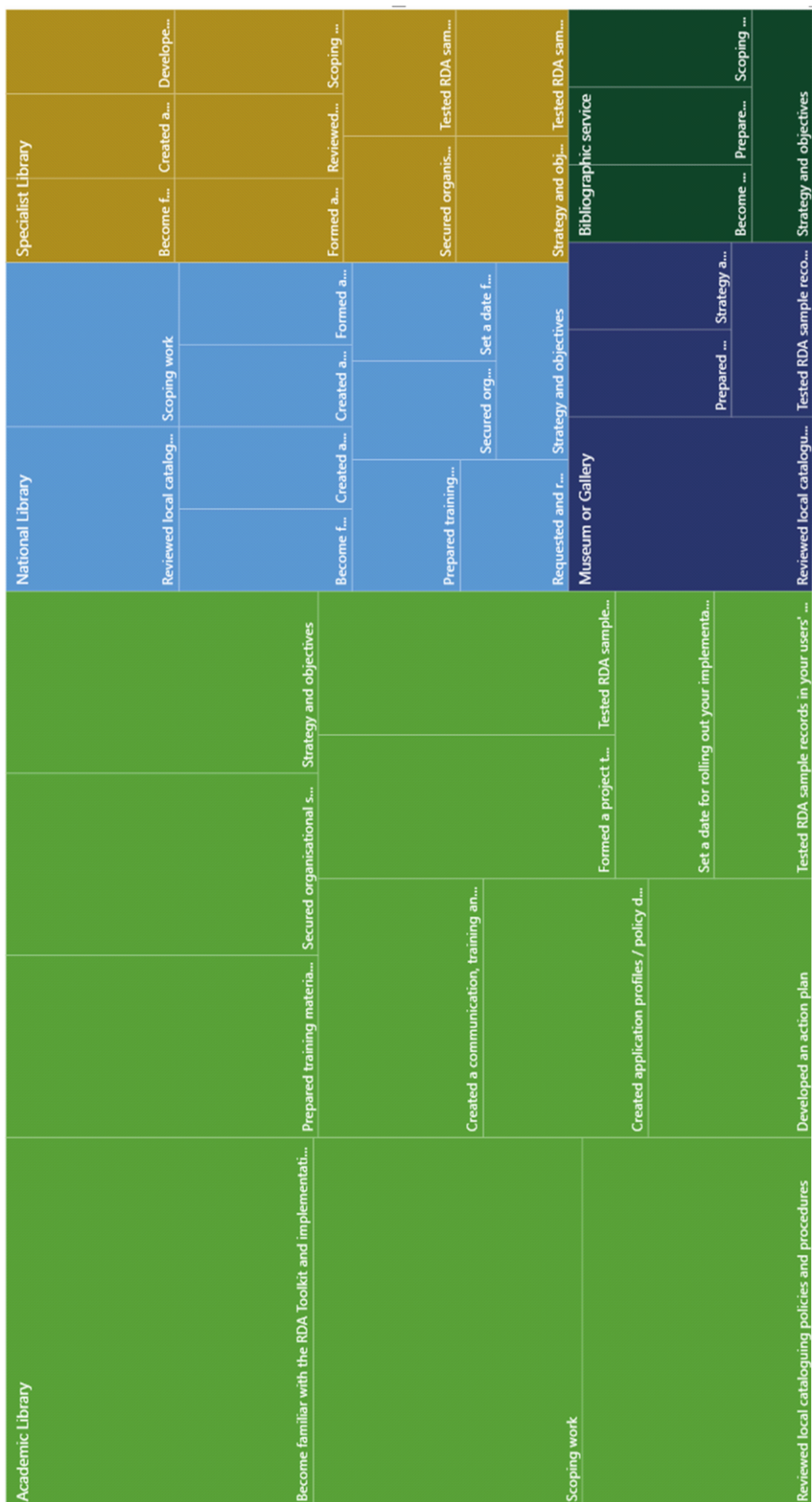
Figure 28: Stages of Official RDA implementation undertaken by library type

Section 5 – Training needs/further comments

This final section was designed to assist UKCoR and MDG in planning future RDA-related activities of maximum impact and in the most cost-effective manner. The comments evidence a need for refreshers on the theory, advice and documentation on the practical side of implementation, and the sharing of information from existing successful implementations. Online delivery was the overall preferred method.

Question 22: What are your anticipated training and development needs for Resource Description and Access?

This question provided a rich set of training needs from the community and feedback about RDA itself. There were requests for further information on the difference between original and Official RDA, for assistance with the practical aspects of implementation such as creating application profiles, but there were also comments on implementation without access to the RDA Toolkit and requests for the provision of clear proof of the benefits.

We present here a snapshot of comments, anonymised:

- In order to make it work fully, training in how to facilitate full entity management
- … basic Official RDA training will be needed
- No plans
- not yet considered
- Guidance in creating application profiles, provision of templates. Introductory session on why Official RDA is different, why most cataloguers won't be working direct in RDA Toolkit
- … in-between training that allows us to make use of the systems we currently have - on RDA in Marc21, and on Bibframe
- … we would need training on developing our own or using existing application profiles for each of the format types within scope
- Generally, I'd like to see the gulf between those who've learned practical application on the job, and the experts who have a lot of theoretical knowledge bridged through training resources
- … I would like very straightforward, practical training to help me adapt my current practice to the latest version of RDA
- Use of the Official RDA Toolkit - Basics of application and structure of Official RDA - Major differences between Original and Official RDA - How to create and link new workflows in/to Official RDA - … a clear overview of the benefits to our users and library of the Official RDA would be a great start.
- … our library have the original RDA book in printed format. [The cataloguers] rarely look at it. Records are MARC based …, and classed as RDA, because 3XX tags are included. That's about the limit of it. There are no further indications

of upgrading to the Toolkit, and making a business case for the subscription to the Toolkit. So, no training currently necessary.

- I'd like to better understand the conceptual model behind the official RDA - how it relates to FRBR and LRM, its framework, terminology, and its role in linked data.

- Specific RDA Toolkit training, overall 3R training

- Application profiles, policy statements and examples for materials which we currently catalogue to Original RDA. Explanations of new properties, classes and relationships. Suitable infrastructure and systems development

- To upgrade to Official RDA, we need free-at-the-point-of-use training materials for MARC21 and BIBFRAME. Our senior management don't see the value of upgrading.

- … understanding on how to use the toolkit more effectively. Examples to work from.

- It depends on how much the standards genuinely change to reflect the standard, and how much of this work we will undertake locally and how much assume our LMS/service providers will undertake for us

- … basic RDA training for new cataloguers as they are recruited

- We do a lot of guesswork due to not having a RDA toolkit subscription

- creating application profiles, RDA policies, guidelines from the RDA Toolkit and how to map those with existing MARC21 [standards and ILS setup]

- More information about the benefits of Official RDA

- It would be great to have a recorded webinar of an overview summary/ introduction of the changes and how libraries who have minimal cataloguing staff could go about implementing it.

- We need guidance from someone who has the Toolkit. We don't use it and don't find it cost effective. Our entire [group] has decided to forego any implementation of 'new RDA' until sometime in the far future.

- We cannot justify paying for access to the toolkit but I catalogue using in-house templates which include basic RDA fields.

*Question 23: What are your preferred delivery methods?*

For the smaller and specialist libraries bite-size content and asynchronous learning were welcomed. Almost all groups wanted a mix of video and webinar content. Academic libraries showed a strong preference for online delivery of content.

Library type	What are your preferred delivery methods?	Number
Academic Library	Video content	21
Academic Library	Live webinars	19
Academic Library	Asynchronous learning module (e.g. Moodle)	16
Academic Library	In-person training workshops	15
Academic Library	All of the above	1
Academic Library	already implemented	1
Academic Library	Books & self-study	1
Academic Library	Clearly written guidance and text	1
Academic Library	Mix of above	1
Academic Library	No plans.	1
Academic Library	Standalone manuals of standards that one can read and annotate	1
Bibliographic services	In-person training workshops	1
Bibliographic services	Live webinars	1
Bibliographic services	Video content	1
Company Library	Live webinars	3
Company Library	Asynchronous learning module (e.g. Moodle)	2
Company Library	In-person training workshops	1
Company Library	Video content	1
Health Library	Bite-size short form multimedia content	1
Health Library	In-person training workshops	1
Health Library	Live webinars	1
Health Library	Video content	1
Independent consultant	In-person training workshops	1
Independent consultant	Live webinars	1
Museum or Gallery	Video content	6
Museum or Gallery	Live webinars	5
Museum or Gallery	In-person training workshops	4
Museum or Gallery	Bite-size short form multimedia content	3
Museum or Gallery	Asynchronous learning module (e.g. Moodle)	1

Table 18: Preferred learning methods (continued on next page)

Library type	What are your preferred delivery methods?	Number
National Library	Bite-size short form multimedia content	2
National Library	In-person training workshops	2
National Library	Live webinars	2
National Library	Video content	2
National Library	Asynchronous learning module (e.g. Moodle)	1
Public Library	In-person training workshops	2
Public Library	Live webinars	1
Public Library	N/A	1
Specialist Library	Bite-size short form multimedia content	2
Specialist Library	Asynchronous learning module (e.g. Moodle)	1
Specialist Library	DK	1
Specialist Library	In-person training workshops	1
Specialist Library	Live webinars	1
Specialist Library	N/A	1
Specialist Library	none	1
Specialist Library	Video content	1

Table 18: Preferred learning methods (continued from previous page)
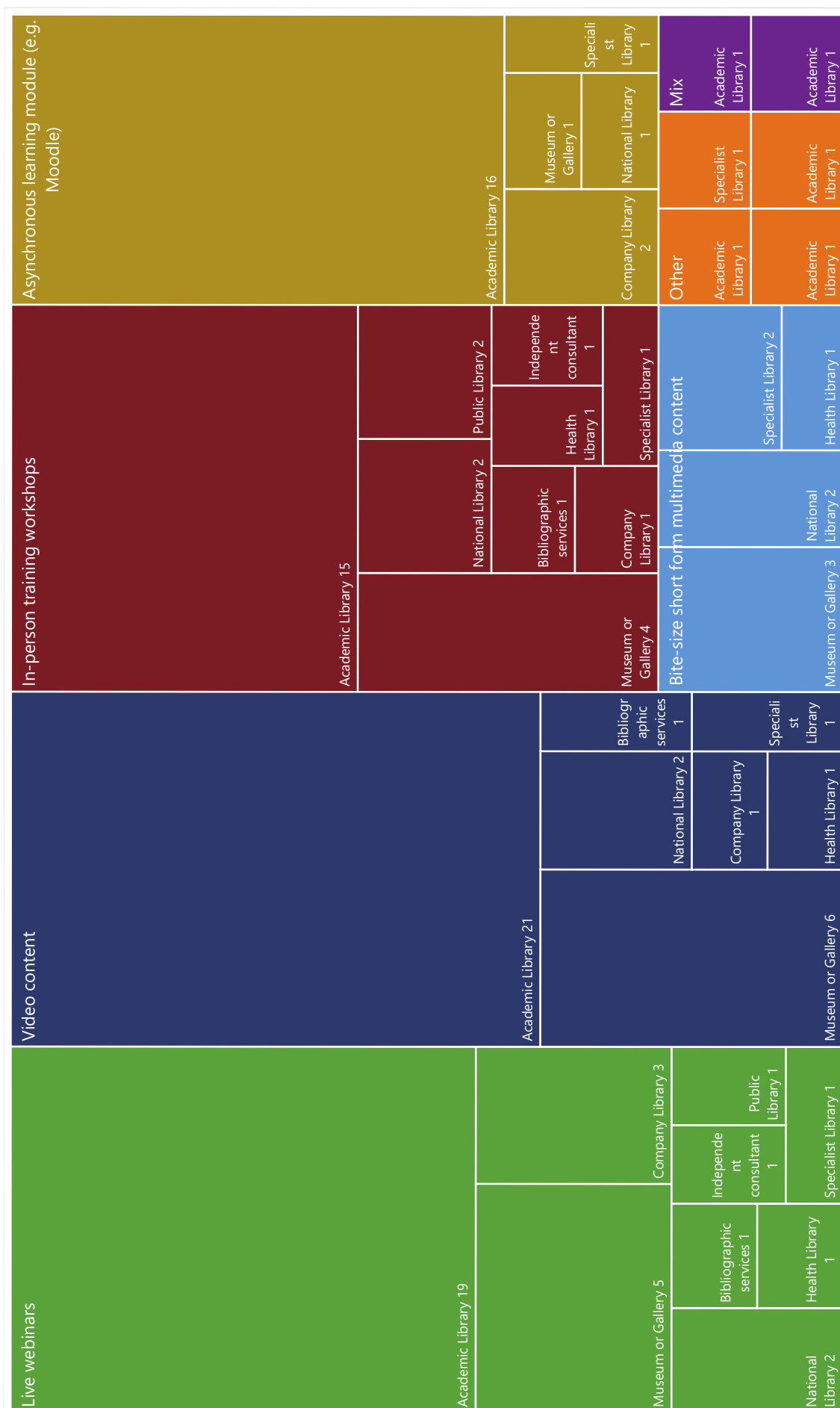
Figure 29: Preferred learning methods visualisation

Question 24: Is there any other content that you would like to see UKCoR produce?

We again supply a "warts and all" sample of responses for this question:

- Advantages of subscribing to the RDA Toolkit
- Instructions on everything for free, reference materials and videos
- UKCoR to continue to keep the UK cataloguing up-to-date with new developments in RDA
- Official RDA is such a theoretical model, we will need guidelines for application
- Case studies/practical evidence of benefits of switching to Official RDA.
- … a 'real-life' Application profile would provide a "Ah" moment for many!
- … [I]nfo on if any libraries are not implementing or how very small organisations … plan on implementing it and retro-converting all their records. And if they have what they gained by doing it.
- Usable manuals
- Updates from institutions that are implementing Official RDA
- Practical implementation guidance aimed at a small team
- Free-at-the-point-of-use training materials for MARC21 and BIBFRAME
- Self-paced interactive content
- Not sure (39/61 responses)
- Support for public libraries
- There [must] be engagement from the sector and a willingness to tell UKCoR what they can do to help. I think it's fair to say that engagement, particularly with RDA, has tailed off.
- More information on benefits of Official RDA

Question 25: Any further comments about anything in the survey?

There were 26 responses to this question. Some commented on flaws in the survey design for which the authors of this report can only apologise. We present here another snapshot of the comments made by the community.

- We consider ourselves RDA, but have not really done anything to facilitate full relational functionality. I don't think Alma does it, or if it does, what we can do to help it work is unknown to me

- XXXX would welcome working with other UK libraries on best practice, given shortage of cataloguer resource in UK academic libraries. We have anxieties around future of original RDA and whether it will be archived effectively

- I have answered N/A to the Official RDA implementation questions. I still feel there's a huge need to be convinced of the need and the effort involved before implementing Official RDA, even greater than there was for Original RDA, which was easier to go along with as the New Standard. We have much less control of incoming data than then; we are comparatively well staffed (staffing is more likely to go down than up) but I am extremely reluctant to have to retrain all my staff with no demonstrable benefit; there are other more exciting projects to pursue with greater chance of concrete results and closer alignment with institutional priorities (wikidata, retro cataloguing, collection management)

- The main barrier to implementing RDA in our library is that the quantity of new cataloguing we do is very small. We focus on e-resources for current provision and these are not added to our LMS but our surfaced through a discovery service. So, although we would like to keep up there are some barriers to making the change

- How do we try to convince the community that RDA is a necessity, not a nice to have? We have bibliographic standards for a reason, and the way the Toolkit is priced and produced is a way of ensuring that we have two classes of cataloguers - the haves and the have-nots. And the have-nots are going to be the smaller libraries with a small cataloguing department, or solo librarians who are not interested in cataloguing and do it as a necessity. I also find the language in the Toolkit to be unclear

- After attending a few webinars and workshops, our institution has just begun a general conversation about adopting and implementing the official RDA. So far, we metadata specialists have provided introductory information to help put everything into context. This appears to be quite a significant shift, and it's important for us to gain a clearer understanding of the framework and the elements involved at different levels - such as tools, policies, workflows, and the time and resources required for implementation. The next step will be to have a more in-depth discussion about what migrating to the new RDA entails - what the requirements are, the steps involved, and how to assess its feasibility and potential impact

- Smaller institutions like us do not need complex and involved RDA implementation process, it makes it sound daunting when it does not need to be
- We weren't even aware of Official RDA - nor of the differences between original and official RDA!
- At present, we can't see many advantages to implementing Official RDA whilst we continue to use a MARC structure. It would cause us to reframe our understanding of bibliographic data, but the presentation of it in MARC would be unlikely to change
- We heard back from [a vendor] that they have not implemented Official RDA yet, hence my answers. I imagine our catalogue will therefore be a hybrid in the future and I am interested in learning more
- The new form of RDA is very obtuse and doesn't make any sense to me
- We are a very small specialist library with AACR2, RDA and older non-roman script bib records. TBH I didn't even know there was new RDA until this survey. Our priorities really are quick solid cataloguing to get books available as quickly as possible, with little expense.

References

Danskin, A. (2013) 'RDA in the UK: implementation survey', *Catalogue & Index*, 173, pp. 2-12. Available at: https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.cilip.org.uk/resource/collection/F71F19C3-49CF-462D-8165-B07967EE07F0/Catalogue_and_Index_issue_173,_December_2013.pdf [Accessed 14 December 2025]