



NORDLUND, MARIKA  
STENBERG, LEA  
LEMPOLA, HANNA-MARI

# Use of information technology, reasons for non-use, age group 75–89

– survey summary

# Contents

To the Reader.....	3
Use of information technology, reasons for non-use, age group 75–89 – survey summary .....	4
Annexed Diagrams .....	9

## To the Reader

According to expectations prevailing in the society, technology is expected to support the everyday life and coping of elderly people to an ever-increasing extent. Technologies and services are being developed, eagerly and in abundance. Compiled information on use of technology by the elderly is scarce, although the designers and developers would have use such information. In particular, little is known about the attitudes and factors preventing the elderly from using information technology. Because of this, the survey in question was carried out by the two Projects working in the field.

The KÄKÄTE Project is a joint project of the Union for Senior Services and the Central Union for the Welfare of the Aged launched in January 2010. The focus of the five-year project funded by RAY (Finland's Slot Machine Association) is to improve the possibilities of living longer at home and to facilitate the assisting work by means of technology. The KÄKÄTE Project has produced a lot of information on technology intended for the elderly. One example is a guide published by the Project on the computer centres or corners intended for joint use by the elderly. Additional information: [www.ikateknologia.fi](http://www.ikateknologia.fi)

LähiVerkko is a joint project launched by the Retirement Association (Eläkeliitto) and Finnish Association for Substance Abuse Prevention (EHYT) in 2013. The objective of the five-year project is to offer support, information, and easy tools for the elderly facilitating the use of information technology in everyday life. Through this, the objective is to strengthen the sense of community, inclusion, and interaction extending over generations. For example, LähiVerkko strives to get the elderly online by telling them about free video calls that can be used for keeping in touch with their relatives and grandchildren living at distant locations. Additional information: [www.lahiverkko.fi](http://www.lahiverkko.fi)

This summary presents the most significant results of the survey. The annexed tables can be referenced for a more detailed overview of the results.

In April 2014

KÄKÄTE Project and LähiVerkko Project

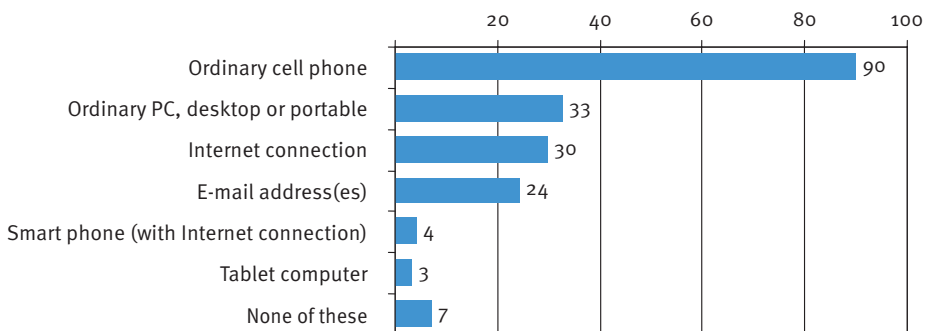
# Use of information technology, reasons for non-use, age group 75–89 – survey summary

**A large proportion of elderly people believe that they can learn to use information technology if only provided with the right kind of guidance. One-third of the elderly already actively use IT and the Internet to search for information, for example, but some senior citizens do not feel the need for or are not willing to learn to use the new technology. They could be more eager if the hardware and software were easier to use.**

90% of 75–89 years old Finns have a cell phone, one-third have access to the Internet. 24% of the elderly have an e-mail address. Only 4% of the respondents admitted to having a smartphone and 3% a tablet computer. This information is based on the joint survey carried out by the KÄKÄTE Project (User Centered Technology for Elderly People and Care Givers) and LähiVerkko Project. The survey executed by TNS Gallup included telephone interviews with 600 elderly people in December 2013. The sample is representative of the entire 75–89 y.o. population of Finland, which includes about 412,000 people.

---

## Which of the following do you use? (% , n=601)



**Figure 1: Use of IT equipment in the age group 75–89.**

Based on the survey, it can be concluded that computers are used most often by men, age group 75–79, living with a spouse, former managers or upper management, inhabitants of the Uusimaa region. Accordingly, women belonging to the oldest age group (85–89 years of age), living alone, blue-collar or agricultural background, inhabitants of regions other than Southern Finland, use computers least often.

## Every fourth senior citizen searches information from the Internet; every fifth uses online banking services

81% of the elderly respondents with access to an Internet connection claimed to have **searched information on various topics from the Internet**. 73% of the Internet users admitted to **using online banking services**. In addition to those using the services independently, this figure could include the persons whose bank accounts are handled by a relative, for example. Almost 70% of the elderly people using the Internet also use **E-mail**.

If the entire sample is considered, 24% of the 75–89 years old respondents use the Internet for information retrieval, 22% for online banking, and 21% for E-mail services. Thus, contrary to a common belief, use of the Internet for managing one’s affairs is not very widespread among the elderly. At the same time, many public and private services have moved or are moving to the web. The survey results suggest that equality of the citizens could be in danger if online services were to suppress services offered through other channels.

## Most of the elderly interested in information technology have already found what they were looking for

When asked whether they would like to use a device currently inaccessible for them, 5% of the respondents told that they would like to have a **computer**, 7% a **tablet**, and 4% a **smartphone**. Two-thirds of the elderly respondents with no access to the Internet had **no interest in gaining such access**. Numerically, this means 188,000 people – almost one-half of the 75-89 years old population. However, every fifth (19%) respondent would **like to search the web on matters** of interest and almost as many (18%) would like to **take care of banking transactions online**, if they had access to the Internet.

### What devices are in use, what new devices would be welcome? (% of all respondents, n = 601)

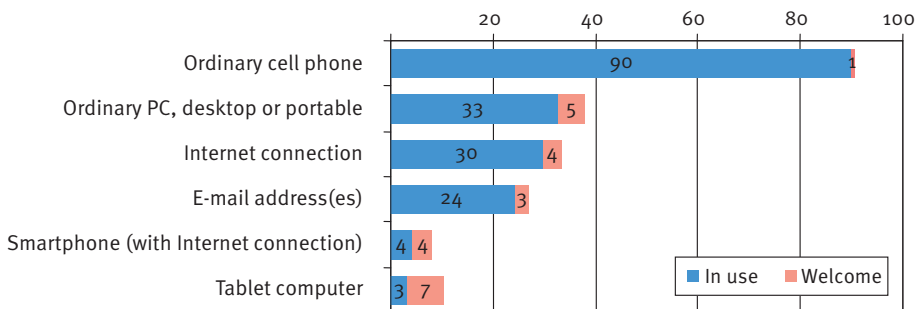


Figure 2: Use of devices, new device preferences in the age group 75–89.

86% of the elderly respondents who did not have access to a computer, tablet, or smartphone **did not feel the need for such devices**. In this respect, there are no age group based differences between the respondents.

The majority (70%) of senior citizens who already use a computer **feel that the use is sufficient** and see no need for increased use in the future. To some extent, use that is more active is prevented by that approx. one-half of the elderly respondents who already used a computer considered the **hardware and software too difficult to master**. Almost 50% of the respondents claimed that they simply **do not want to learn more** thorough use. One of the key observations when reviewing survey results was that most of the elderly respondents interested in information technology had already acquired the devices and learned to use them. Senior citizens not yet interested in information technology should be encouraged in different ways and possibilities for using computers should be created.

The elderly should be assisted in making use of the Internet.

## IT-related guidance is needed

Personal computer skills guidance is likely to lower the threshold as regards trying out new technology. However, only 10% of the respondents who did not have access to a computer **expressed the desire for such guidance**. Of those already using a computer, significantly more admitted that guidance would be welcome – almost one-half (44%). Of the computer users who had already received such guidance, more than one-third (36%) would like additional instruction. This suggests that as computers become familiar, the interest in further education increases. The number of elderly people wishing for more guidance is actually quite large.

Those interested in computer skills training or consulting would prefer receiving it from someone close (83% of the respondents), from a peer instructor (54%) or from a community college instructor (53%). Especially those who do not yet have a computer but would like to learn how to use it would prefer being taught by someone close (88%) or peer instructor (67%).

Elderly people who do not have a computer would prefer to be taught by someone close or a peer instructor.

In general, the respondents believe that the elderly are capable of learning computer skills. 79% of all respondents subscribed to the statement **‘The elderly can learn to use computers in the same way young people do, as long as they get the right kind of guidance’**. In particular, those who already use a computer (82%) and those who had received computer skills training (85%) support this statement. In this connection, the belief of the elderly respondents in IT education is encouraging, even though they consider computers and software difficult to use.

Of the respondents having access to a computer, 58% felt that **it is difficult to keep up with the development of computers**. Of those who had received computer training, as many were of the same opinion. 46% of all respondents in the age group 75–89 considered **learning computer skills difficult**. This opinion is supported by 40% of those who already use a computer and one-half of those who do not have access to a computer. Even in the case of respondents who had received guidance, 40% agreed to this. Therefore, more user-friendly computers and software could spark more interest.

## **IT skills are not considered inevitable**

43% of all respondents were of opinion that **computer skills are not necessary in order to cope in the modern society**. As could be expected, this opinion is mostly supported by those who do not have a computer (52% of such respondents), who have not received computer training (48% of such respondents), and the oldest respondents (48% of 85–89 year olds). On the other hand, 53% of all the respondents considered computers useful to themselves; of those who used a computer, 92% supported this opinion. Perhaps one cannot imagine or see the benefits before actually trying them out in practice.

35% of all respondents would like to keep in touch with their friends with the help of new technology. Of the respondents with access to the Internet, two-thirds (67%) would like to use it for keeping in touch with their friends. The willingness for keeping in touch is the strongest in the youngest age group (42% of the 75–79 year olds), among those living with a spouse (48%), and among those with many close relatives or friends (43% of the respondents who had 6 or more close friends).


## **The joys and benefits of information technology**

The results indicate that most of the elderly respondents interested in information technology have already acquired the devices and learned how to use them. The challenge is to encourage the senior citizens who do not feel the need for information technology to try it out. On the other hand, everyone should have the right of choosing whether to use a computer or not. It must be possible to take care of things at customer service face-to-face or over the phone, in addition to online solutions. Alternative ways for this are required in the future as well, since aging causes various changes in the functional abilities. There is no guarantee that people who have learned to use online services in the past need not cope with this in older age.

The society must take into account the individuality of people as service consumers. The readiness for development of easy-to-use devices and software is required,

but other ways for providing services to the people are also necessary. Numerous senior citizens have already been left outside the technology and information society. The citizens' inequality is reflected in the Internet skills and the willingness to use it.

Information technology could be introduced to the elderly through some entertaining or useful activity. People's interest could be sparked by different things: some would like to keep in touch with their grandchildren living on the other side of the globe, others visit their childhood landscapes using interactive maps, some scan old photos from their family albums for the future generations to see, etc.

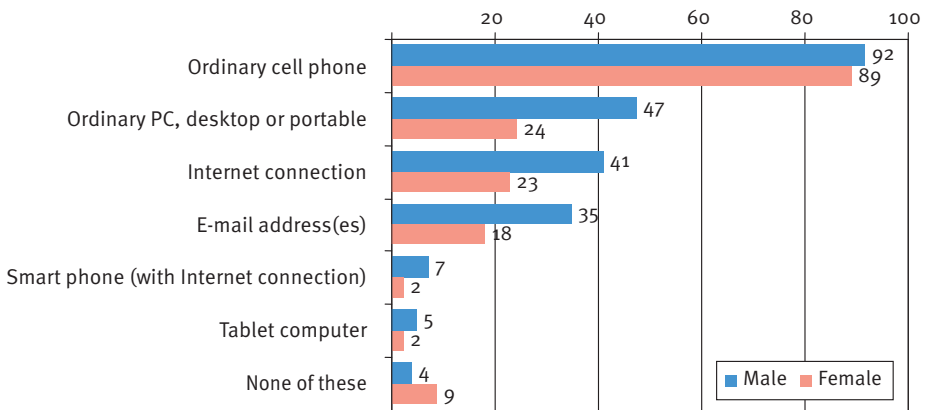
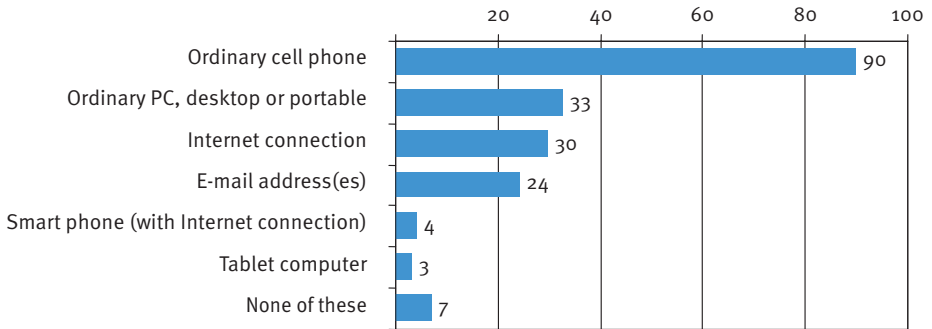


A large number of senior citizens have been left outside the information society. The citizens' inequality is reflected in the use of the Internet.

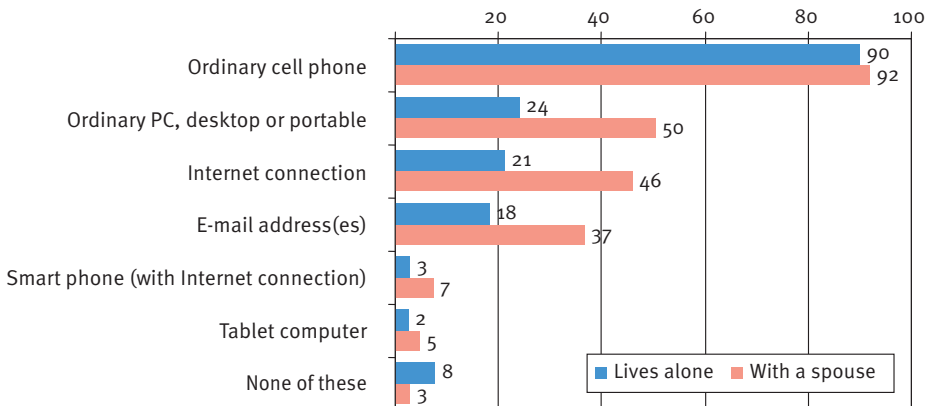


# Annexed Diagrams

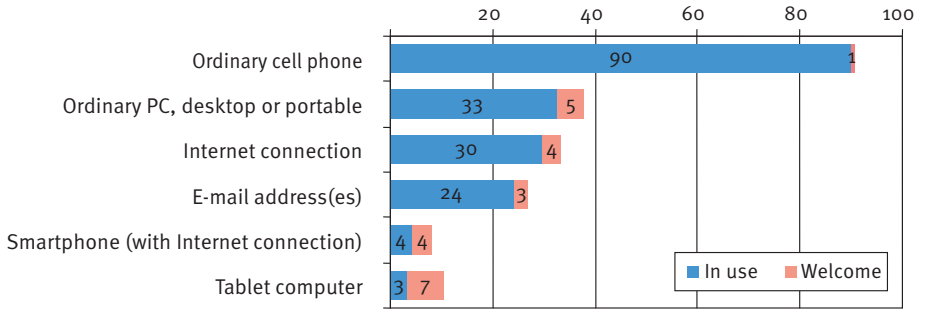
Which of the following do you use? (% , n = 601)



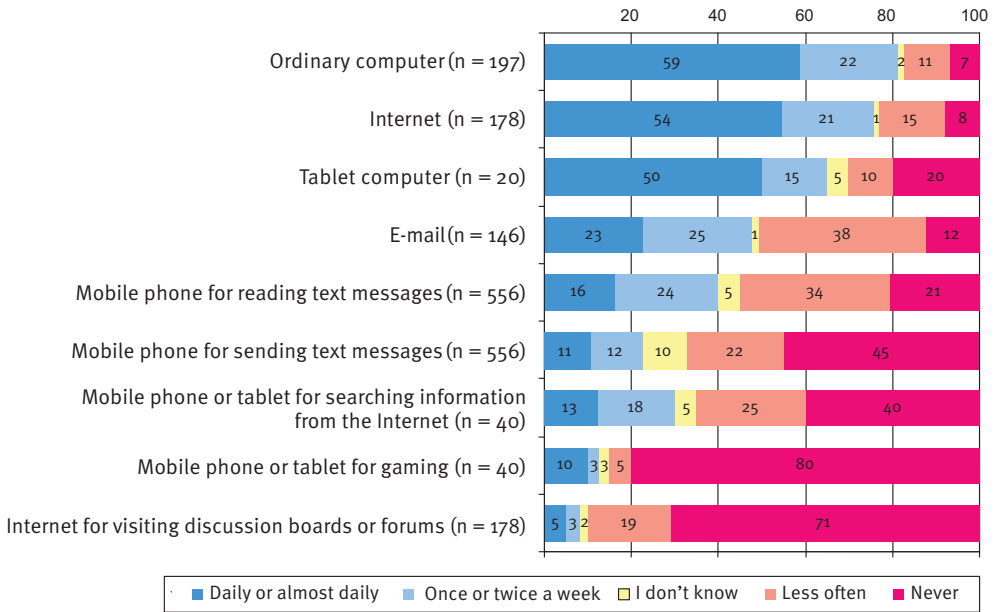
Which of the following do you use? (% , n = 601)



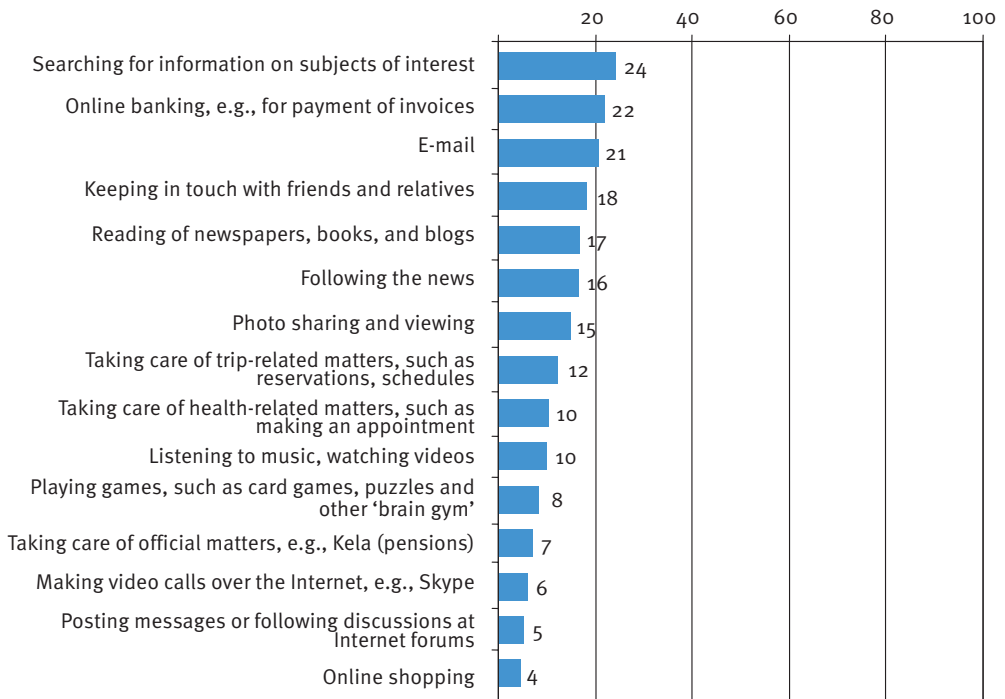
**What devices are in use, what new devices would be welcome?**  
 (% of all respondents, n = 601)



**How often do you use the following hardware or software?**  
 (% of those who use the means in question)

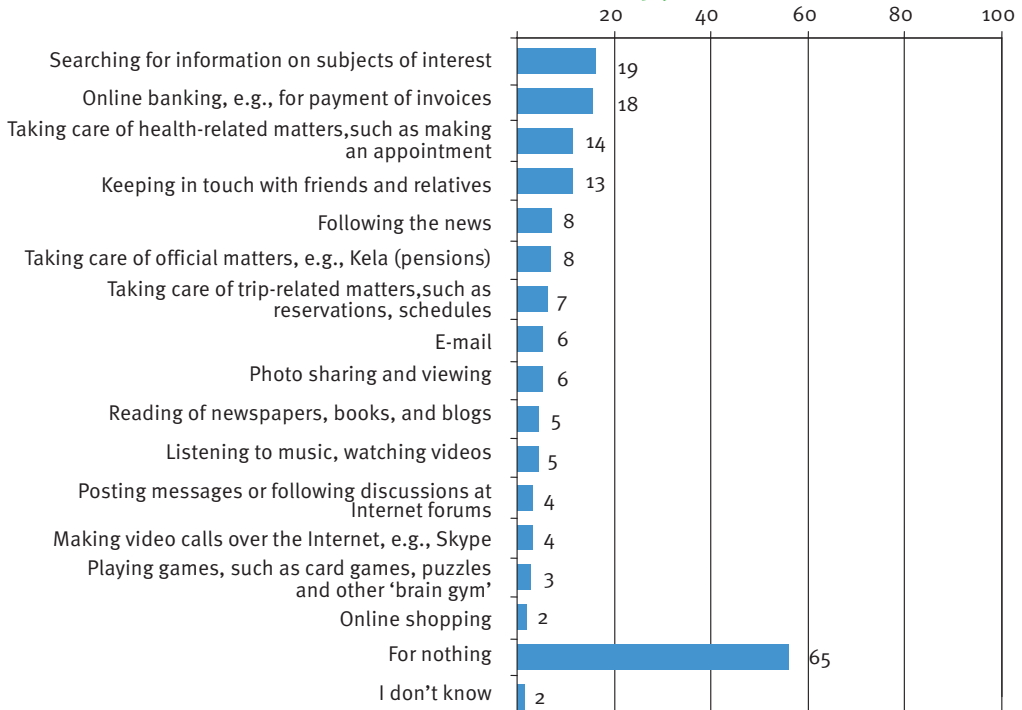


**For what purposes do you use the Internet? (% of all respondents, n = 601)**

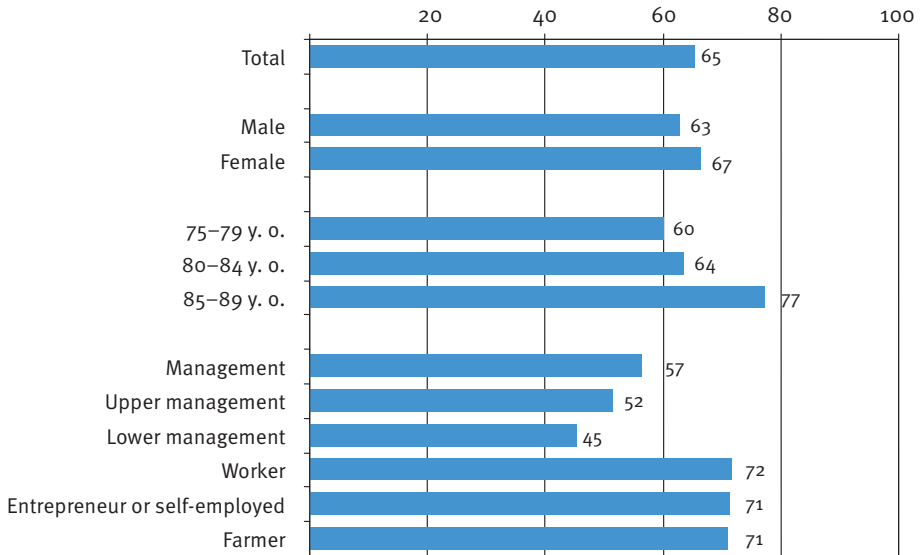


**For what purposes would you like to use the Internet?**

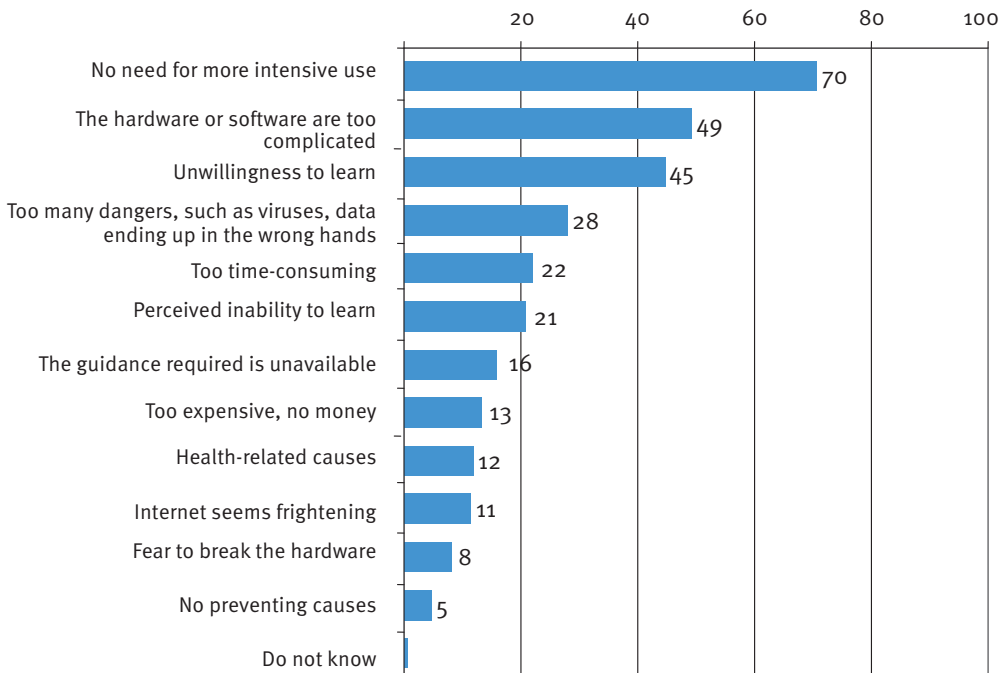
**(% of those who have no access to the Internet, n = 419)**



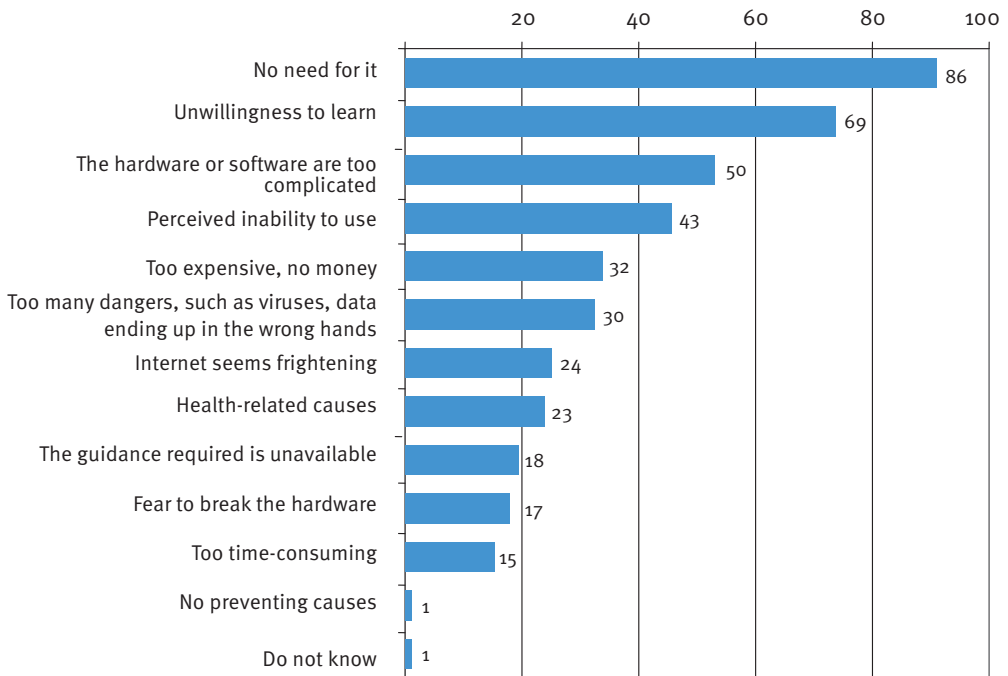
**Would not like to use the Internet for anything  
(% of those who have no access to the Internet, n = 419)**



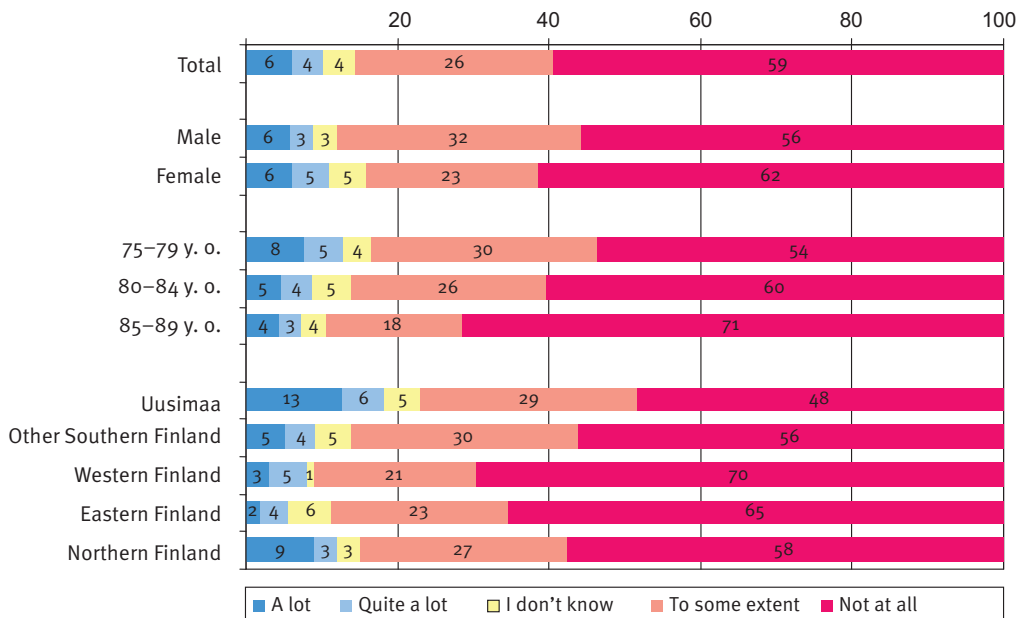
**Which of the following could prevent further use of a computer, smartphone, or the Internet? (% of those who have access to a computer, smartphone, or the Internet, n = 210)**



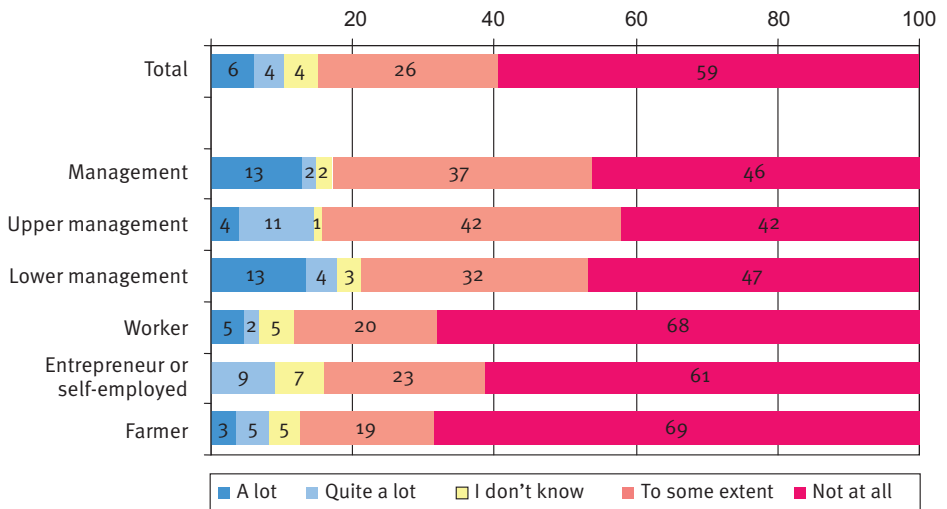
**Which of the following could be the cause of not using a computer, smartphone, or the Internet? (% of those who have no access to the a computer, smartphone, or the Internet, n = 391)**



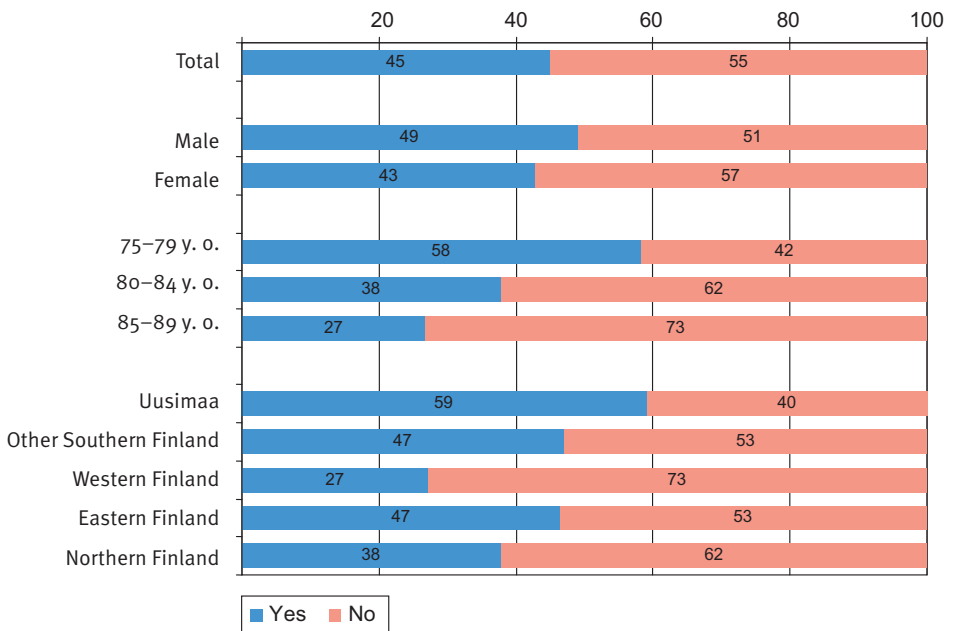
**To what extent do you feel the need to improve your skills by learning or being instructed on the use of computers or mobile phones? (% , n = 601)**



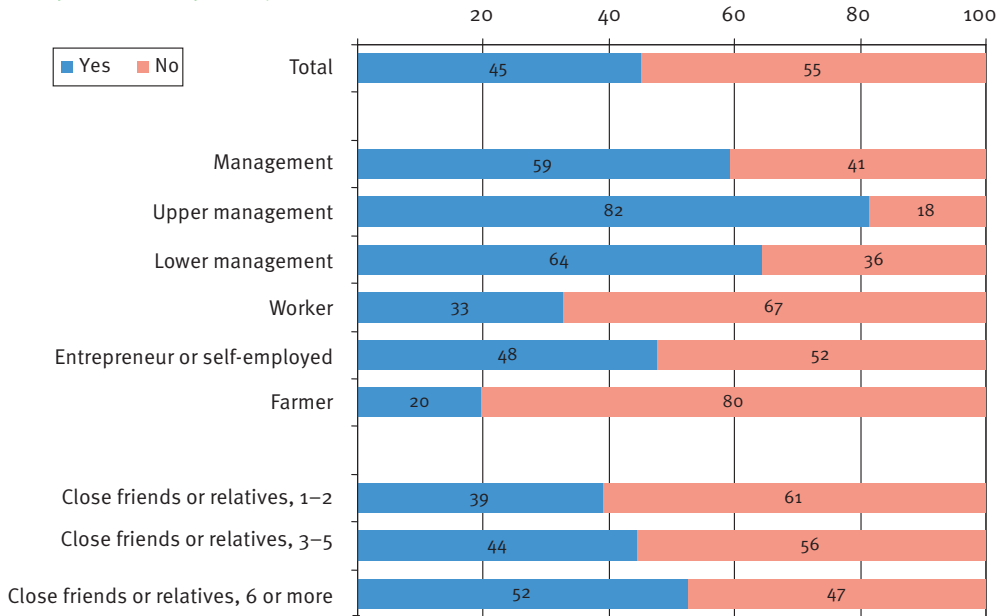
**To what extent do you feel the need to improve your skills by learning or being instructed on the use of computers or mobile phones? (% , n = 601)**



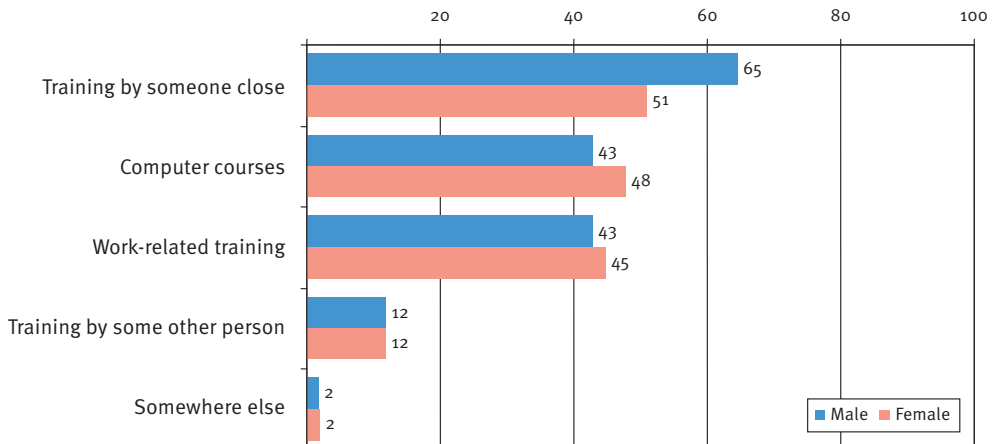
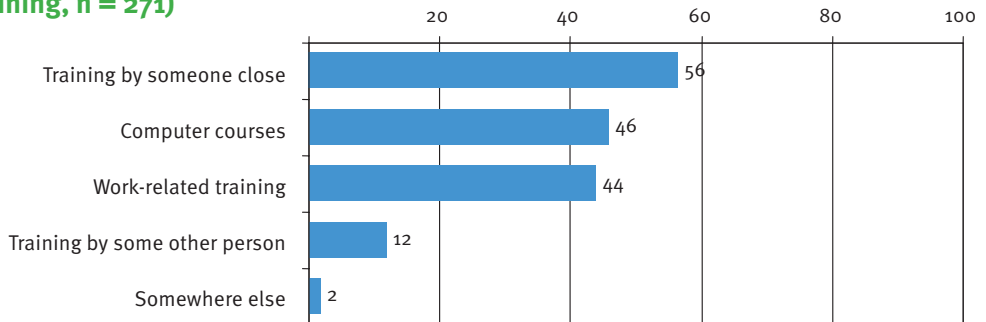
**Have you had any computer skills training? (% , n = 601)**



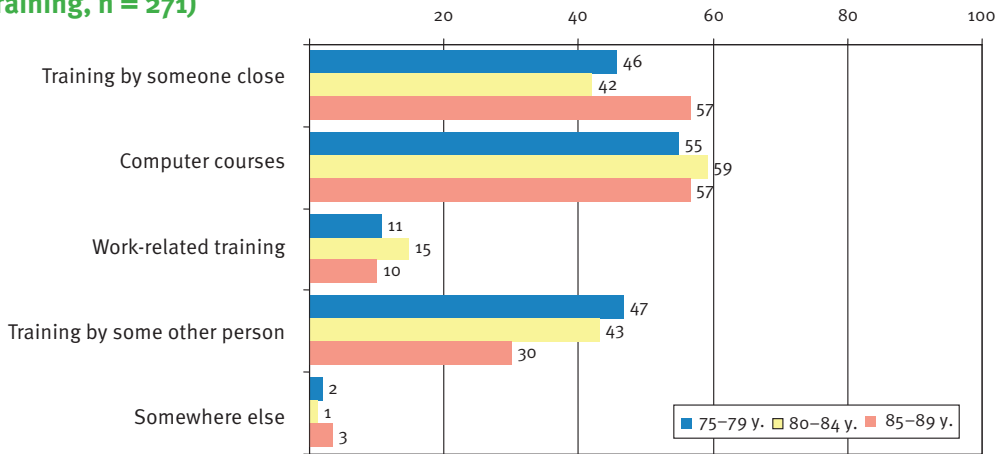
## Have you had any computer skills training? (% , n = 601)



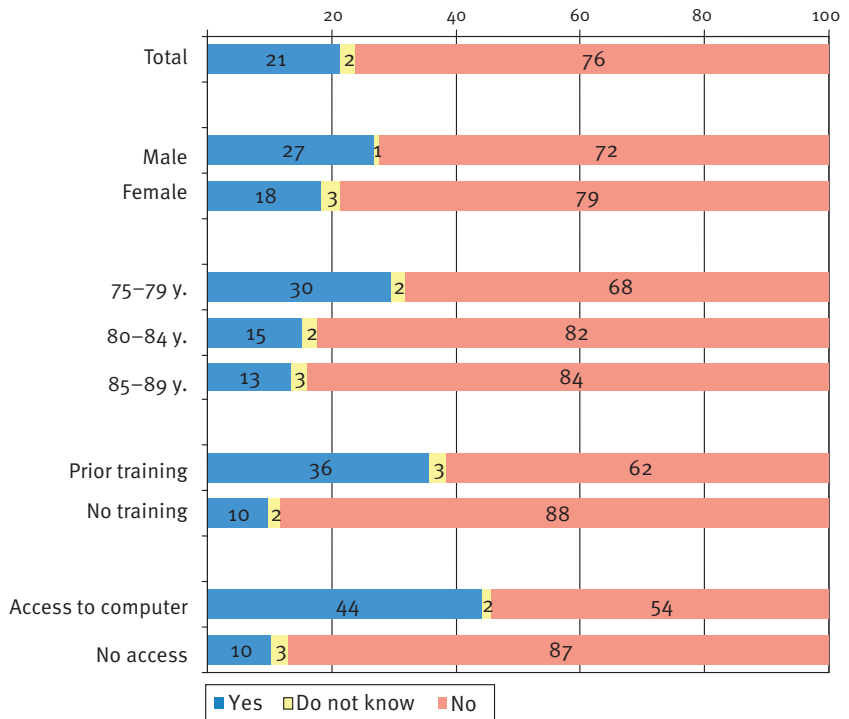
## What kind of computer skills training have you had? (% of those who had training, n = 271)



**What kind of computer skills training have you had? (% of those who had training, n = 271)**

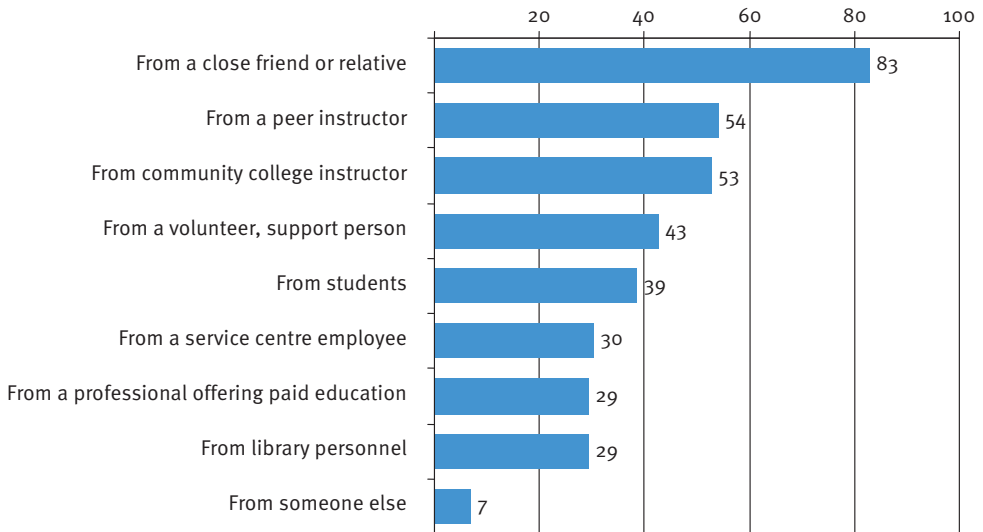


**Would you like to have computer skills training? (% , n = 601)**

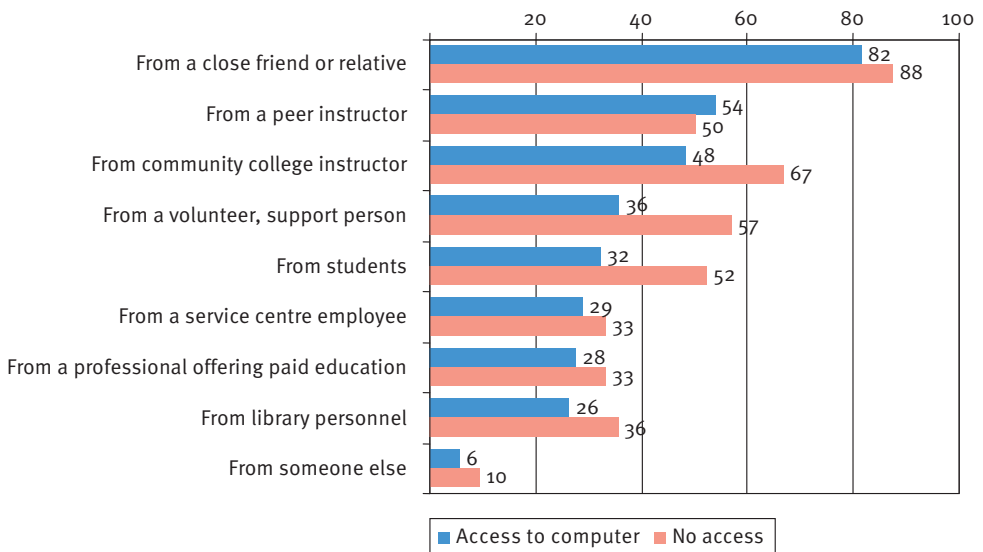




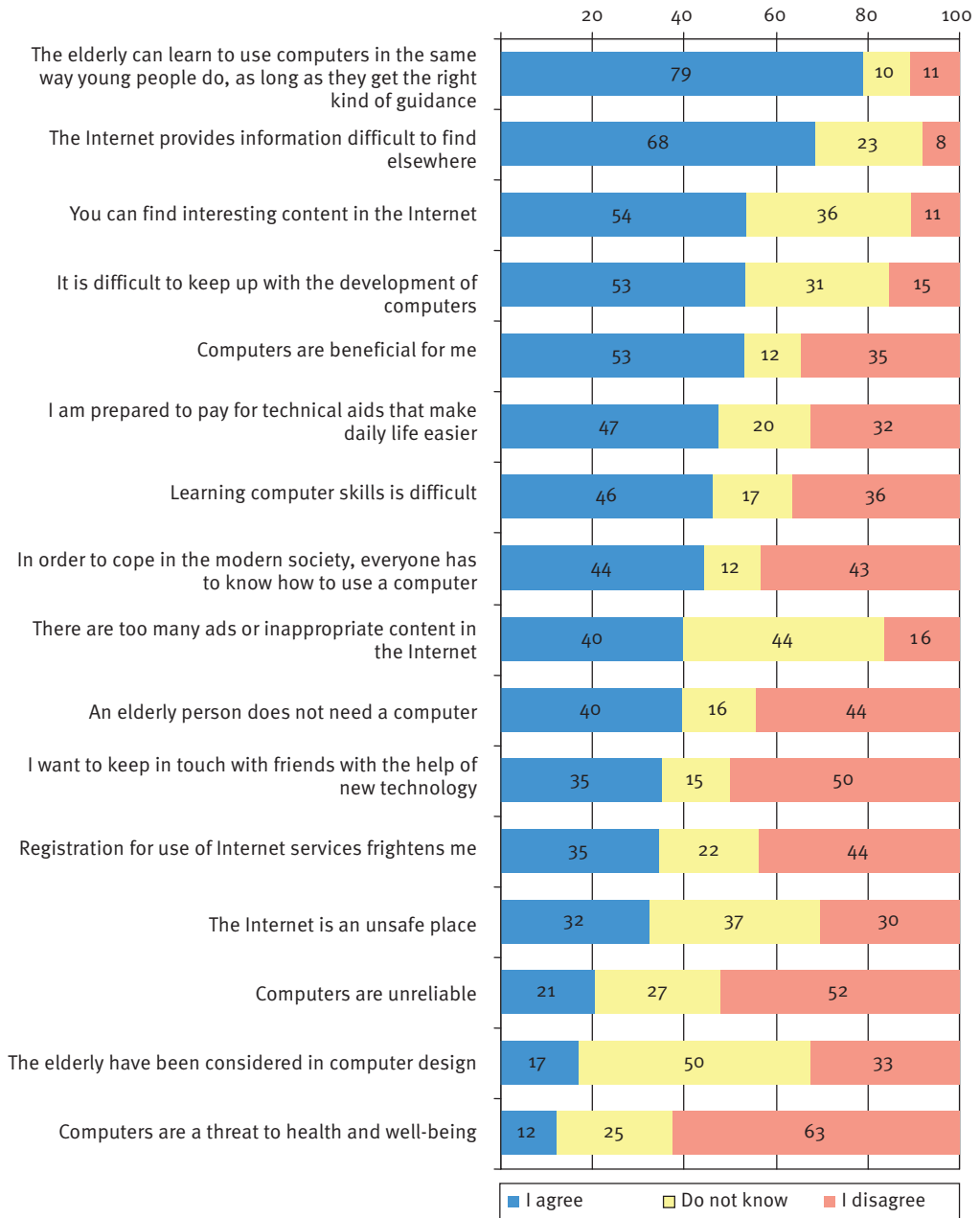
**From whom you would prefer to receive computer skills training or guidance? (% of those who would like training, n = 129)**



**From whom you would prefer to receive computer skills training or guidance? (% of those who would like training, n = 129)**



## Opinions on computer use and the Internet (% , n = 601)







Vanhus- ja lähimmäispalvelun liitto ry



**Vanhustyön keskusliitto**  
CENTRALFÖRBUNDET FÖR DE GAMLAS VÄL RY



**[www.ikateknologia.fi](http://www.ikateknologia.fi) • [www.lahiverkko.fi](http://www.lahiverkko.fi)**

The KÄKÄTE Project is a joint project of the Union for Senior Services and the Central Union for the Welfare of the Aged; Lähiverkko is a joint project of the Retirement Association and EHYT ry. Both projects are financed by RAY.