# Towards a new UniCat union catalogue: ULiège's perceptions

UniCat Workshop
KBR, 19 February 2025

# Abstract

This report presents insights from the UniCat Workshop and the ULiege Survey conducted to assess perceptions and expectations regarding the evolution of the UniCat union catalogue. The workshop gathered ULiège librarians to discuss various aspects of UniCat, including content, metadata quality, user interface, and potential new services. Key points included the need for more electronic resources, better metadata quality for copy-cataloguing, enhanced deduplication, more integration with ULiège's catalogue and a streamlined user interface with improved filtering capabilities.

A survey conducted among students, faculty, and staff at ULiège received 280 responses, revealing that 53% of respondents were familiar with UniCat. A significant 97.97% of participants supported the continuation of the project, emphasizing the importance of integrating open access content from Belgian repositories and expanding the range of digital resources available. The survey also highlighted the demand for new features, such as the direct display of document availability and the integration of UniCat data into the ULiège library catalogue, notably to facilitate interlibrary loans.

These findings underline the ongoing relevance of UniCat and provide valuable directions for its future development, ensuring it remains a central tool in Belgium's academic and library landscape.

# Part 1

## Workshop

Internal workshop
with ULiège librarians

# Part 2

## Survey

Survey results
within the ULiège community

# **Workshop**

Internal workshop with ULiège librarians

# Workshop in 4 steps

1) <u>Step 1</u>: information about UniCat, history of the project, statistics, costs for ULiège

2) <u>Step 2</u>: questions, thoughts, exchanges... around **Content**, **Metadata Quality**, **UI** and **New Services**

3) <u>Step 3</u>: presentation of the 2019-2024 survey results (similar to what Jan has presented)

4) <u>Step 4</u>: same questions than at step 2, but the reflections went further and were sometimes revised in the light of the survey responses presented just before

# Content

- **More (electronic) materials** other than simply traditional catalogue data
  - Open archives of Belgian institutions, but only records with a full text
  - But if more results and resources, filtering should remain easy
- Integration of **digitised heritage collections** <u>not</u> seen as a priority
- Nice if UniCat could evolve in such a way as to make it possible to dispense completely with Antilope
  - Useful in the context of **shared preservation projects** for journals
  - Useful to have **holding information and statement** in UniCat
- Too bad that **public libraries** cannot join UniCat
  - But aware of governance problems

# Metadata Quality

- The fact that the metadata displayed is limited is no bad thing.
  - Not too much info (less is more)
- But **copy-cataloguing** from UniCat would be nice
  - <u>Mixed solution</u>: where the database (back-end) would contain the richest possible records (for copy cataloguing) and the front-end would only offer a simplified display by default (as it does now).
- **Support info** (print/physical vs. electronic/digital) should be visible and displayed on the search results page.
- Improvement in the **deduplication** results would be appreciated.
- Any **loss of information** as a result of successive updates to the data provided by the participating libraries should be avoided.

# User Interface

- Ability to filter results using **facets** is essential
- Pity that there is no possibility of filtering on **subjects** (keywords) or **themes** (classifications) < disparity of sources and partners
- On **mobile** devices
- JISC's **Library Hub Discover** (https://discover.libraryhub.jisc.ac.uk/): useful example for the new UniCat
  - clear **distinction between paper and electronic** documents
  - information on document **availability**
- Keep the UI **simple and lean**
  - Advanced search: are all existing indexes really used? Statistics?
- **Indexing issues**
  - with punctuation elements such as colons, special characters, apostrophes, etc, -> needs to be fixed
  - Searches on ISBN-10/13 do not always work well
- **Multilingual** environment (ENG, FRE and DUT) is <u>not</u> a priority

# New Services

- UniCat is sometimes used in libraries as a **decision-making aid** when deciding whether or not to make a new **acquisition**.
  - Already elsewhere?
  - ILL request instead of purchase?
  - Useful to have a **feed or alert** system to keep it informed of partners' latest acquisitions

- UniCat as a qualitative **copy-cataloguing** source

- **Displaying resource availability information** (holdings, call numbers, availability status) directly in UniCat

- Integrating UniCat data **into the ULiège library catalogue**

# Survey

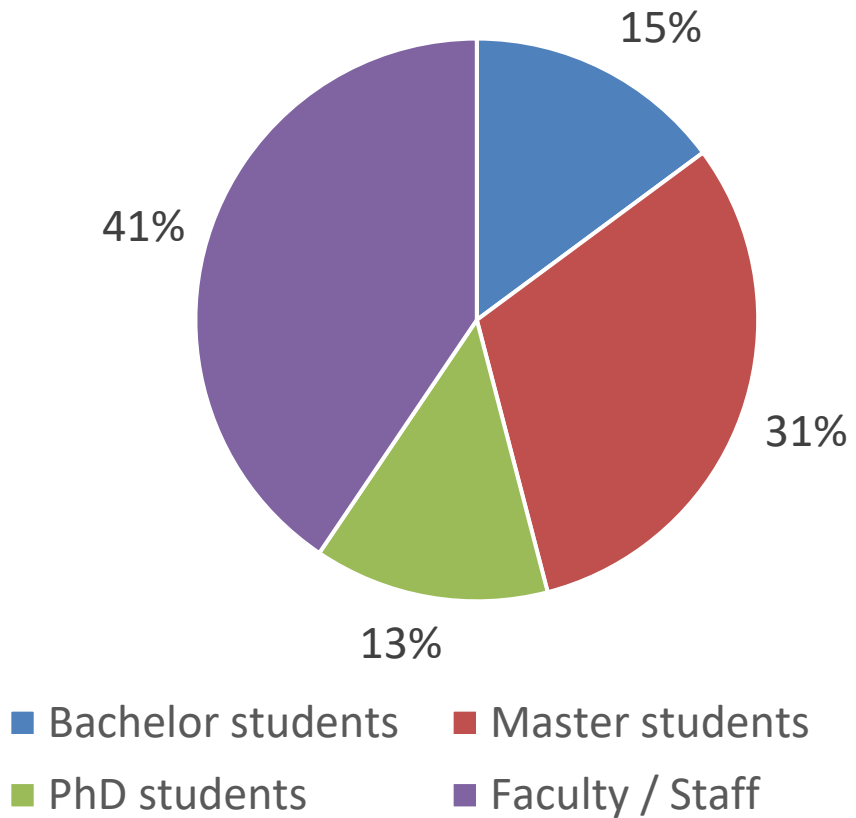Survey results within the ULiège community

# Survey

- Launched in December 2024

- Open to students, faculty and staff members
  - Promotion within the humanities and social sciences


- 280 responses
  - **148** know UniCat → 6 questions about UniCat
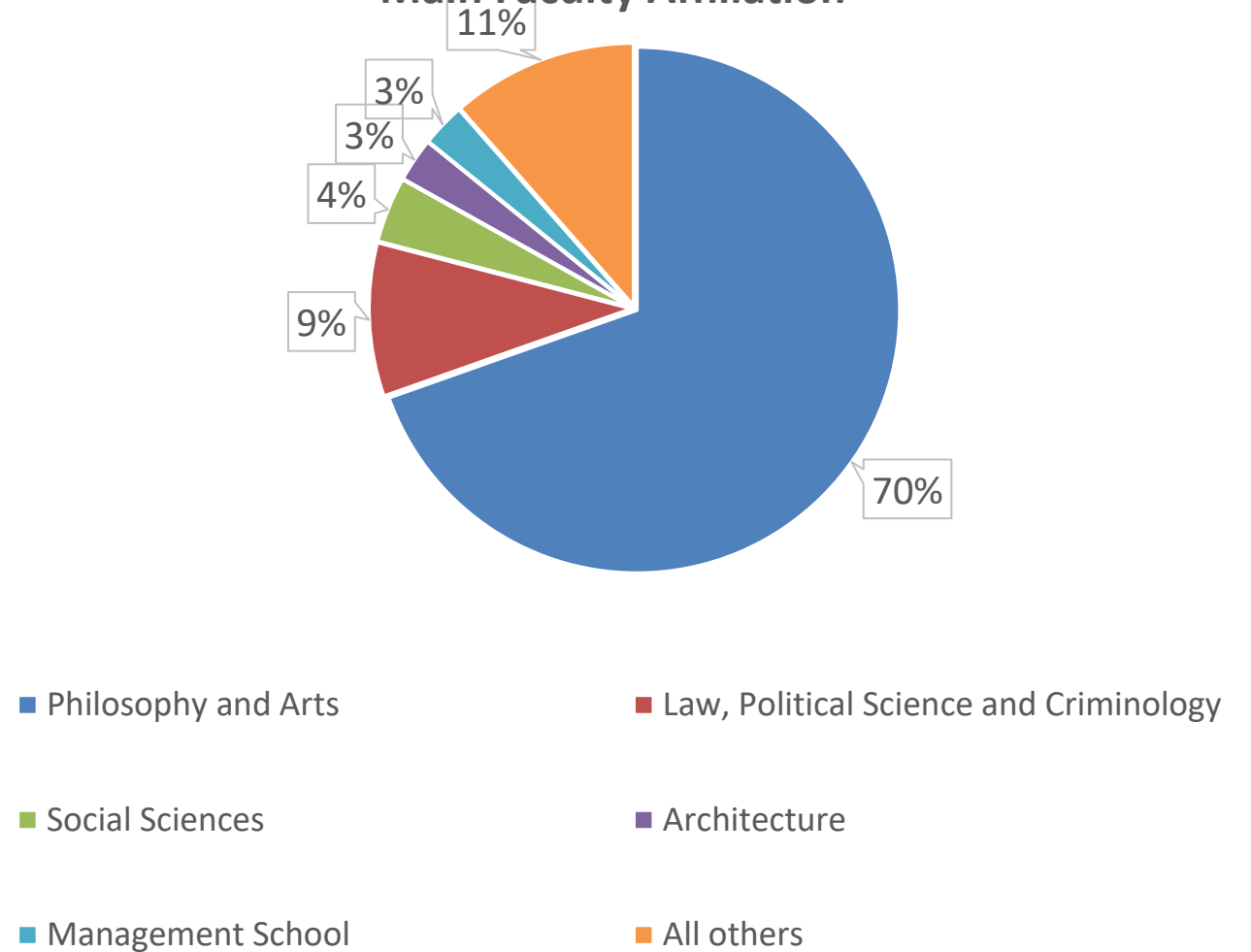  - 132 don't know → survey stops
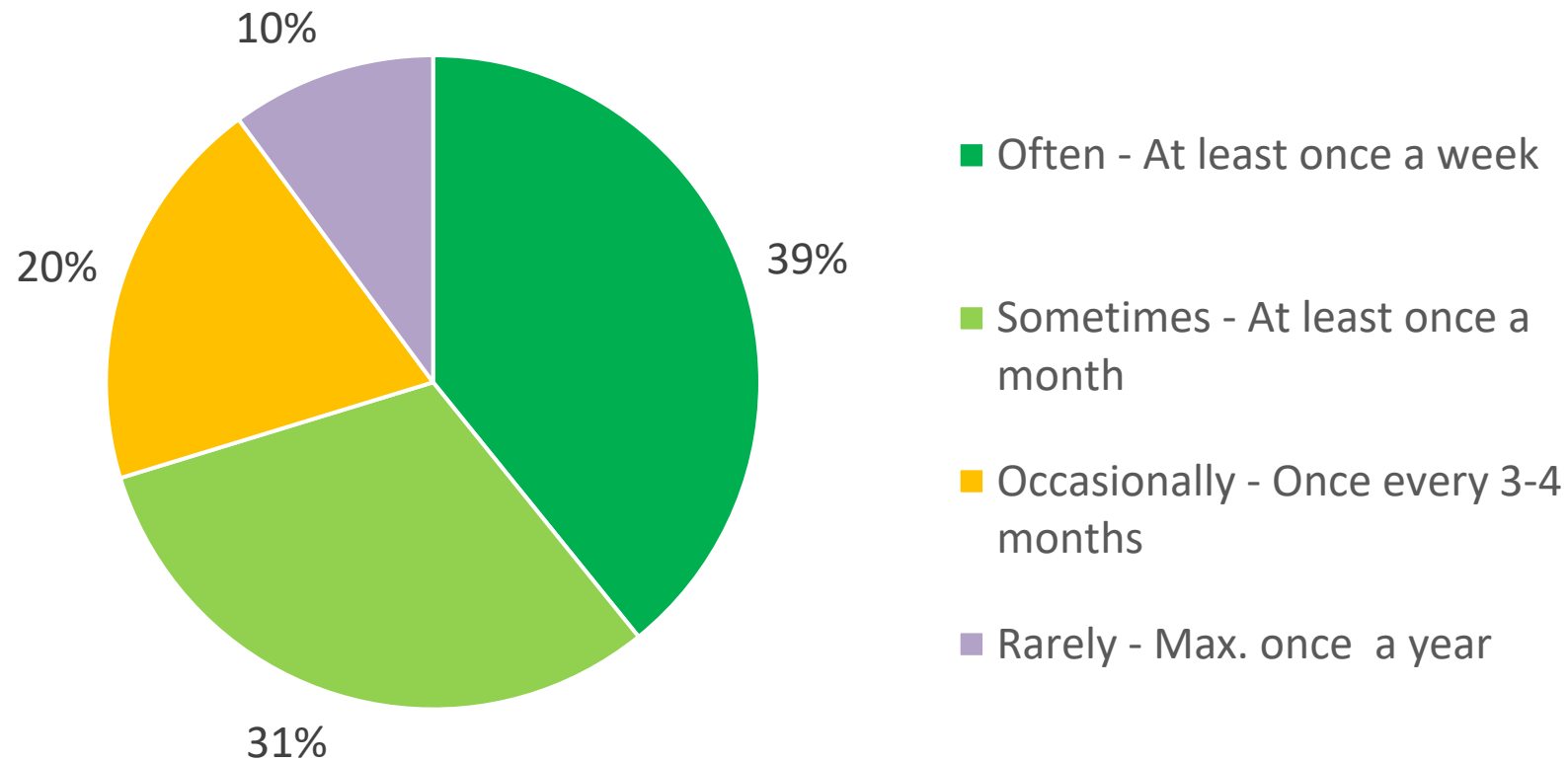
# Respondents



**Respondent Profiles**

- Bachelor students — 15%
- Master students — 31%
- PhD students — 13%
- Faculty / Staff — 41%

**Main Faculty Affiliation**

- Philosophy and Arts — 70%
- Law, Political Science and Criminology — 9%
- Social Sciences — 4%
- Architecture — 3%
- Management School — 3%
- All others — 11%

# Question 1

## How often do you use UniCat on average?



Pie chart showing:
- 39% — Often - At least once a week (dark green)
- 31% — Sometimes - At least once a month (light green)
- 20% — Occasionally - Once every 3-4 months (yellow/orange)
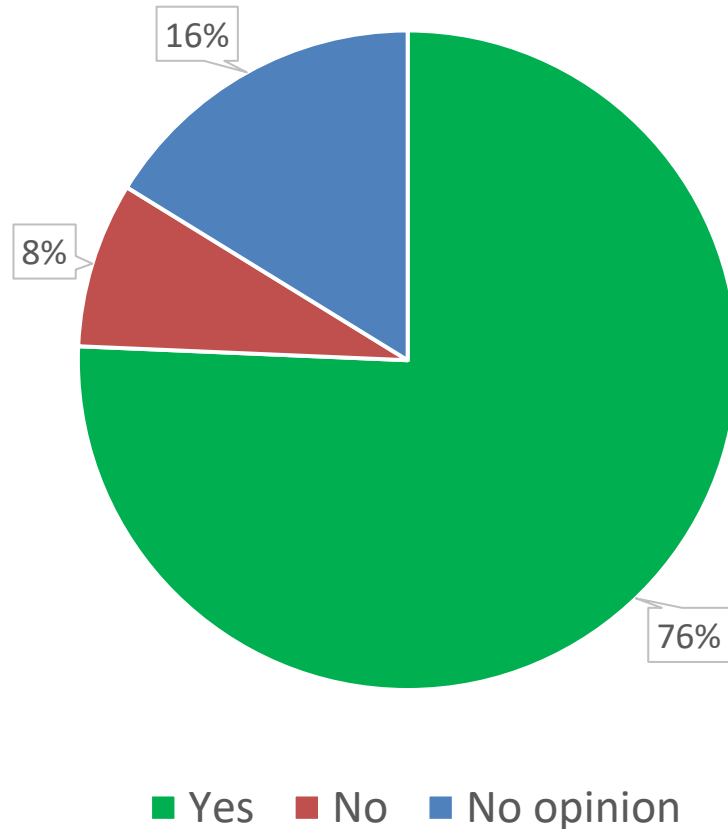- 10% — Rarely - Max. once a year (purple)

# Question 2

**Do you think the UniCat project is useful and should be continued?**

- Massive approval rate: **97.97%** of respondents support the continuation of the project.

- No negative feedback:
  - No respondent selected 'No' as an answer.
  - 3 answered "I have no opinion" (2.03%)

# Question 3

**Do you think open access content from Belgian open archives (such as ORBi, DIAL, DI-fusion, LIRIAS, etc.) should be accessible through UniCat?**
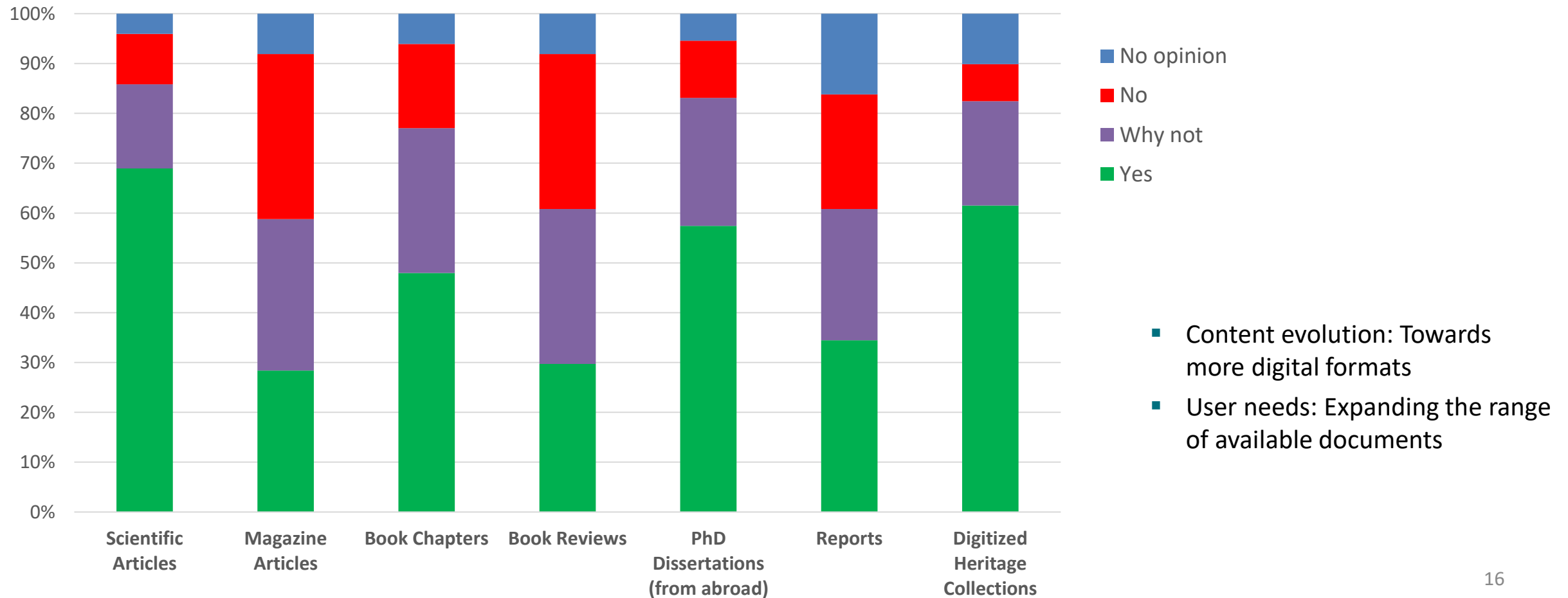
16%

8%

76%

- ■ Yes  ■ No  ■ No opinion

- ▪ Importance of open archives: Easier access to Belgian academic publications.

- ▪ Potential advantage: Centralization of scientific information.

# Question 4

## UniCat currently references books, theses, dissertations, and periodicals. Do you think it should also include additional resource types in electronic format?
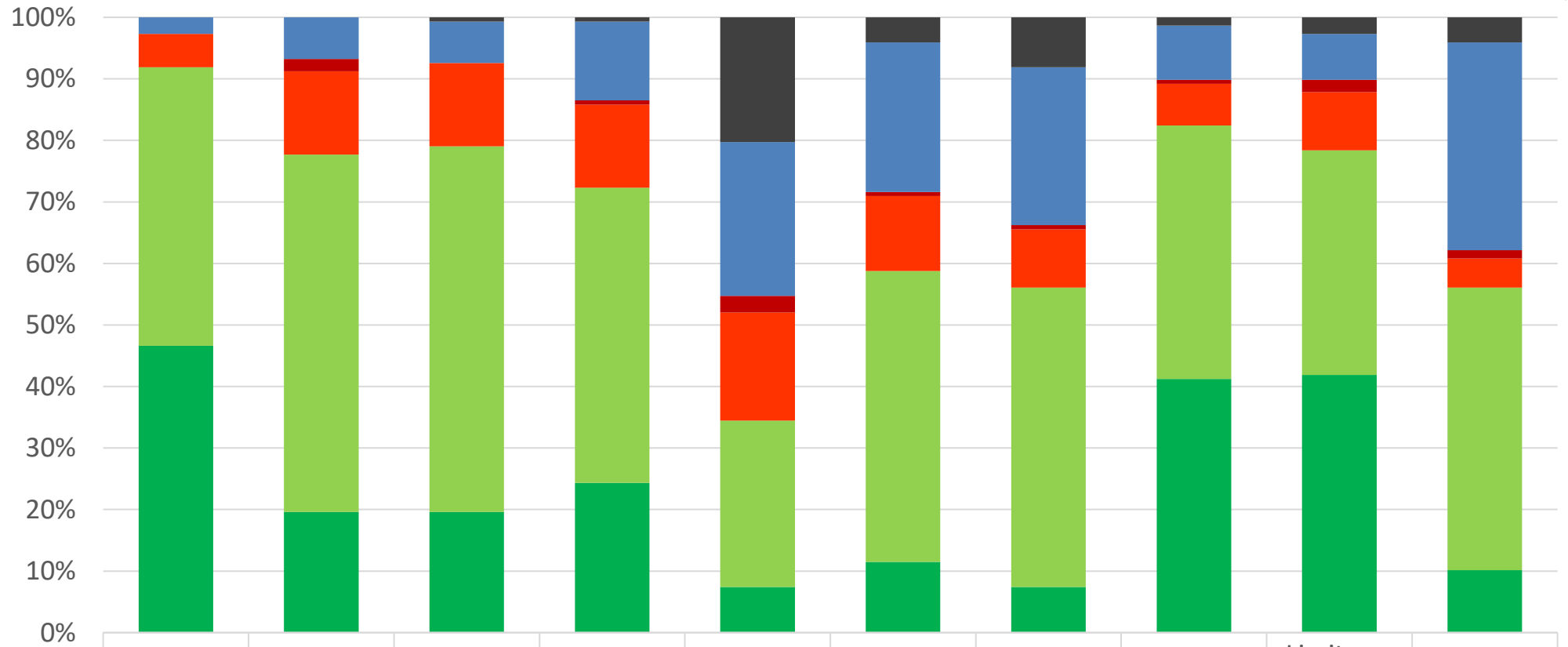


- Content evolution: Towards more digital formats
- User needs: Expanding the range of available documents

# Question 5

**To what extent do you agree with these statements about UniCat?**

Ten assertions have been proposed:
1. UniCat's interface is easy to use
2. The amount of information on books, theses, journals, etc. is sufficient.
3. Record quality is sufficient
4. Links to original catalogues work fairly well
5. Record deduplication works fairly well
6. Facets (for filtering) work fairly well
7. Search indexes work well
8. Multilingual environment (English, French, Dutch) is important
9. Limiting results easily, especially on books and journals, is important
10. Regular updating of data is satisfactory

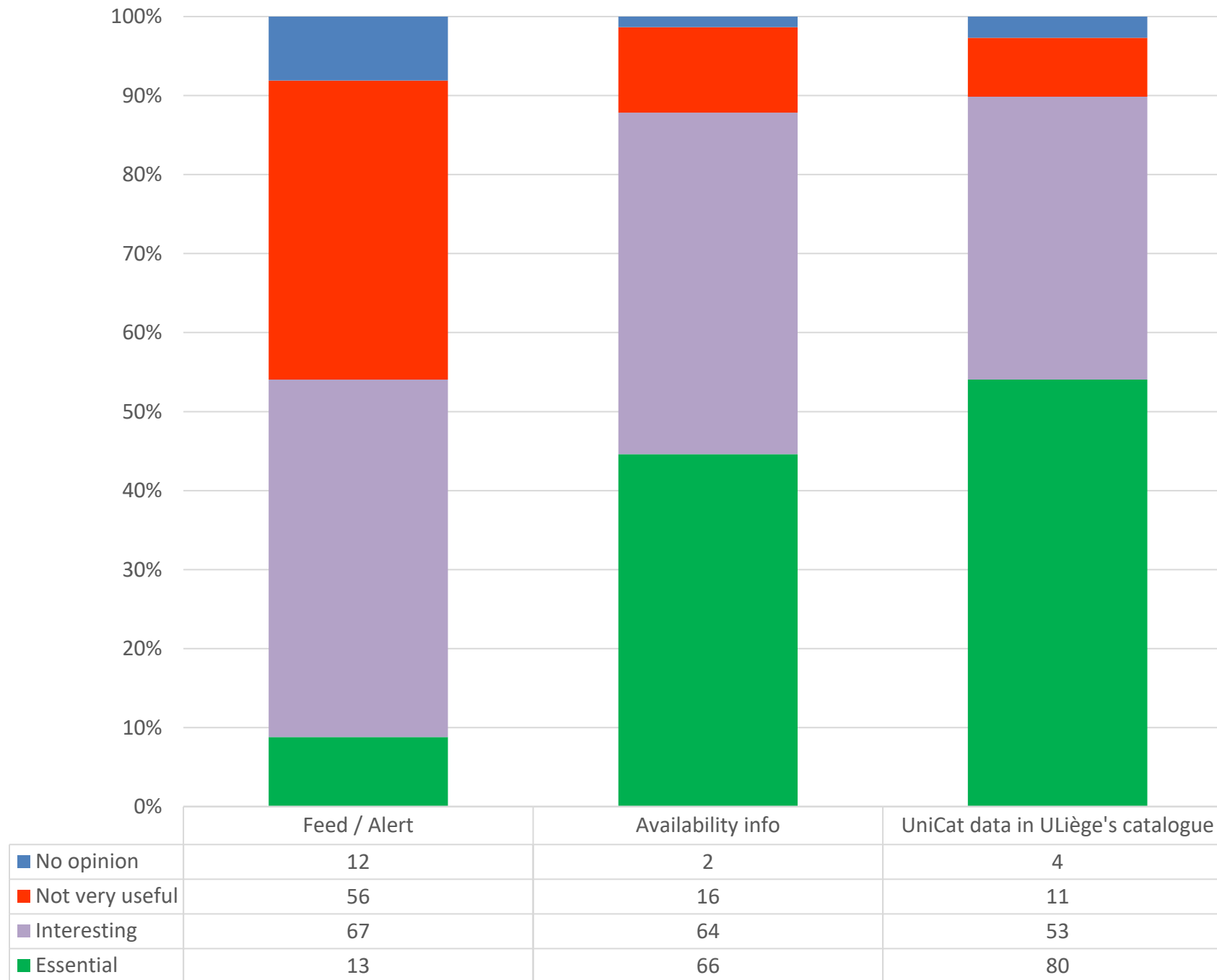| | Easy to use | Amount of info | Quality | Links | Dedup | Facets | Indexes | Multilingui sm | Limits on books and journals | Updates |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ■ I don't understand the assertion | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 30 | 6 | 12 | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| ■ No opinion | 4 | 10 | 10 | 19 | 37 | 36 | 38 | 13 | 11 | 50 |
| ■ Strongly disagree | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| ■ Disagree | 8 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 26 | 18 | 14 | 10 | 14 | 7 |
| ■ Agree | 67 | 86 | 88 | 71 | 40 | 70 | 72 | 61 | 54 | 68 |
| ■ Strongly agree | 69 | 29 | 29 | 36 | 11 | 17 | 11 | 61 | 62 | 15 |

# Question 6

## How would you rate these new features if they were added to UniCat?

Participants were asked to express their opinions on these three proposals.

1. A **feed or alert system** to keep you informed of new releases and the **latest acquisitions** from partner libraries.

2. **Display document availability information** directly in UniCat (without having to go back to the original catalogs).

3. **Integrating UniCat data into the ULiège library catalogue**. For example, if a book or periodical cannot be found in the ULiège collections, users can easily extend their search and display what is available elsewhere, in UniCat partner libraries, with the possibility of directly creating an ILL request or a purchase request.

| | Feed / Alert | Availability info | UniCat data in ULiège's catalogue |
|---|---|---|---|
| ■ No opinion | 12 | 2 | 4 |
| ■ Not very useful | 56 | 16 | 11 |
| ■ Interesting | 67 | 64 | 53 |
| ■ Essential | 13 | 66 | 80 |

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# Part 2
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**To be continued in the workshop…**