

AKTIVITETSCENTRET  
SUNDHOLM  
USER SURVEY  
THE EMPLOYMENT  
2014



# Content

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# Foreword

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Beskæftigelsen (The Employment) is a special offer for homeless and vulnerable Copenhagensers and form one half of Aktivitetscentret Sundholm (Activity Centre Sundholm) under Centre for Vulnerable Adults and Families of the Social Services.

This survey is an attempt to prove how and why The Employment – not just according to our own perception – is contributing to a unique difference for the target group.

The Employment works in an area and with a target group, where it often is difficult to prove the effects of the daily efforts. Many users find themselves in a chaotic life situation where instability and set backs are a precondition.

But although the user group is defined by varying degrees of stability it is our professional assessment, that the snapshot taken with this survey is comprehensive for the users of The Employment in general.

We have chosen – where it is relevant to the survey – to use the professional assessments of the staff to supplement the numbers. Besides that are areas as violence and health examined to general information about the user group.

In the Employment we work to create a flexible work community where the users are inspired, motivated and urged to take initiative to positive life changes. By letting the user take part in such working context, a basis for creating steady daily routines, developing professional competences, improving ability to cooperate and boosting self-esteem is shaped. To create positive change in these four areas is exactly the main objective for The Employment. Through this, The Employment can create a constructive break for the user who gains time, stability and possibility to clarify his or her life situation – often with guidance and support from the staff. This shapes a basis that makes it possible for the user to take care of other problems such as alcohol or drug abuse or an often problematic housing and job situation.

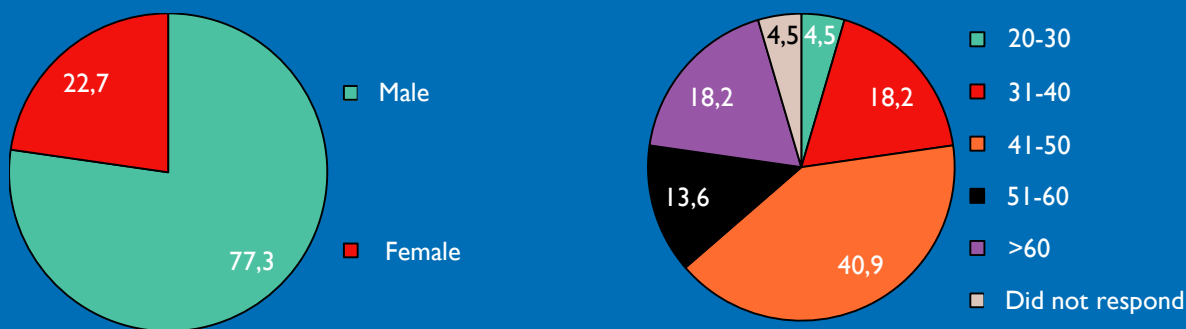
The survey before us affirms that The Employment functions as intended and that is to a very high degree. Besides that the survey paints a picture of a healthy department with a high level of user satisfaction that through its special structure is able to create unique result.

We are as managers and staff in the Activity Centre very proud of this and we are happy to share the results of our work with the reader.

Enjoy your reading  
Mia Rahbek, manager in The Employment  
September 2014

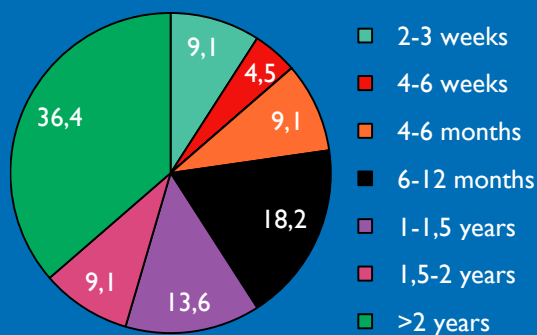
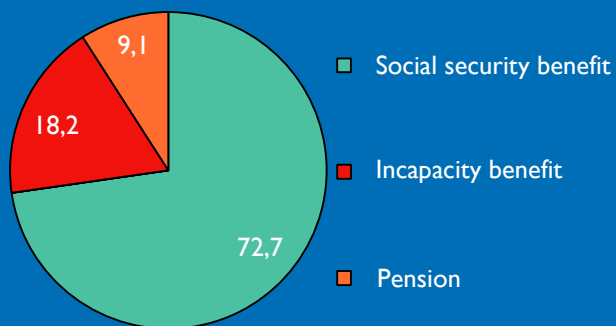
# I The user

The typical user in The Employment is a male in his 40's with social security benefit as only income. The main part of the users has been part of The Employment more than two years but there is in general great variation in how long time the users have been part of The Employment. With a little background knowledge about the general composition of the target group it is hardly surprising that the user group of The Employment looks as it does.



## GENDER

## AGE



## INCOME

## DURATION OF STAY

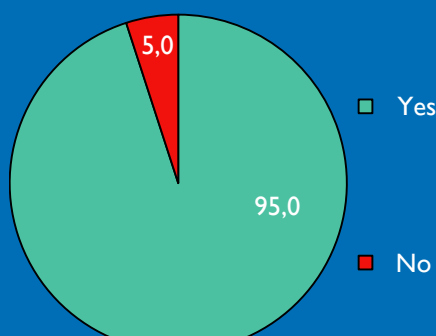
The great variation in how long the users have been part of The Employment has a good correlation with the staff's experience about the users very differentiated life situations and consequently different needs for support and guidance. The facts that most users have been part of The Employment more than two years is according to the staff's professional assessment a sign that the problems of the users are very complex with a long term need for support and stability as a consequence. The fact that more than 50 % of the users have been part of The Employment for more than one year must be interpreted as an indication that The Employment as a whole is able

to create the stability that the user and 'the system' otherwise haven't been able to create this far. This interpretation is in line with the staff's notion of The Employment as a stable frame work around a needed break, which you can turn to in a chaotic daily life.

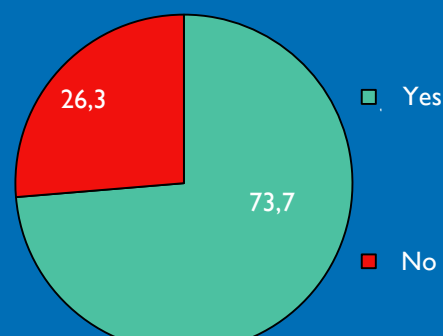
**Remark of The Employment:** Relatively more women uses the institutions in the Sundholm area compared to what you see in other institutions for the target group. This must be seen as a natural consequence from the fact that the institution for vulnerable women under the Social Service is placed in the same area. This is also reflected in The Employment, where we see an increased interest among women. We also see a tendency that the user group is getting younger. It must be assumed that this tendency will increase as a consequence of the reform of young people's access to social security benefits. In The Employment we are very aware about these changes that constantly are reshaping our user group. Therefore we always work determined to adjust our services, so that they at any given time are relevant and meaningful.

## 2 The aims

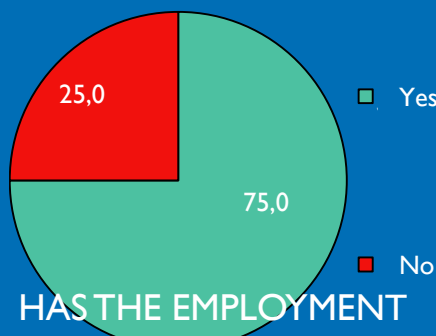
The Employment works towards four main targets: Establishing a steady daily routine, training of social competences, developing of professional competences and a positive effect on self-esteem. As problems and life situations are very unique from user to user, it is very difficult set up absolute targets for the user group as a whole. From the result of the survey it is although possible to ascertain that The Employment makes a positive impact on a great part of the user group – within all four targets.



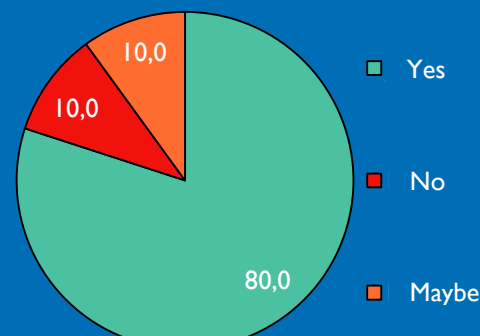
DOES THE EMPLOYMENT AFFECT YOUR DAILY ROUTINES POSITIVELY?



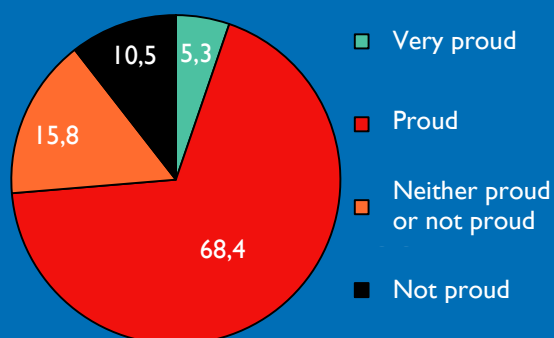
HAS THE EMPLOYMENT IMPROVED YOUR COOPERATION SKILLS?



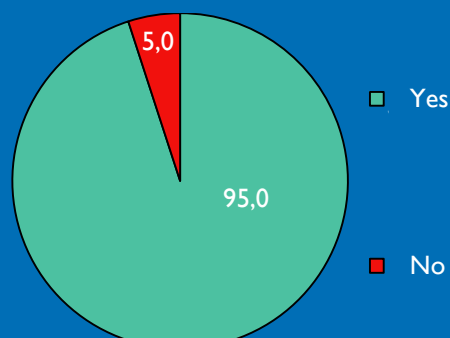
HAS THE EMPLOYMENT IMPROVED YOUR PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCES?



HAS THE EMPLOYMENT IMPROVED YOUR SELF-ESTEEM?

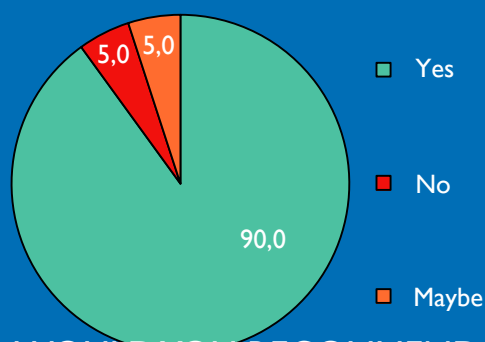


ARE YOU PROUD TO BE PART OF THE EMPLOYMENT?



HAS THE EMPLOYMENT HELPED YOUR LIFE SITUATION IN GENERAL?

The positive impact of The Employment on the self-esteem of the user group is underlined by the fact that 73.3 % of the users are either proud or very proud to be at part of The Employment. 95 % answer that The Employment has helped their life situation in general and 90 % will recommend The Employment to others in the same situation.



WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THE EMPLOYMENT TO OTHERS?

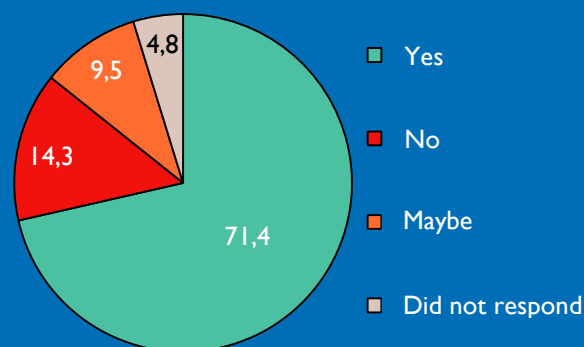
**Remark of The Employment:** Every day in The Employment we work on creating a working community that imitates the real labour market as much as possible. That is why we put a lot of focus on uniforms, meeting times, working routines, professional qualification etc. At the same time we work on a new certification system that should make it easier for the user to prove the skills gained under the stay in The Employment. This should again make it easier for the user to shift from The Employment to the real labour market<sup>1</sup>. In line with our values we always seek to create an equal and respectful dialogue. Seen in the light of the results in chapter 9, we are sure that this is the reason for the positive feedback in this chapter.

<sup>1</sup> It is although worth to remember that many users find them self in a situation where a shift to the ordinary labour

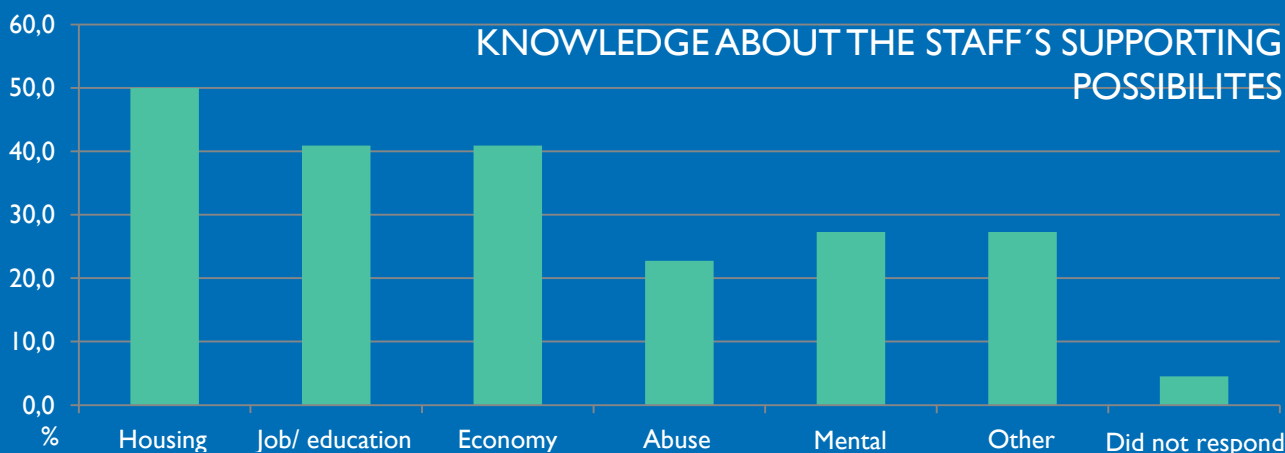
# 3 Support

Besides the users stances on the primary task in The Employment, the user satisfaction and knowledge about the staff's supporting possibilities have also been examined.

A picture of a broad knowledge about the staff's supporting possibilities in association with different problems is painted in this connection.

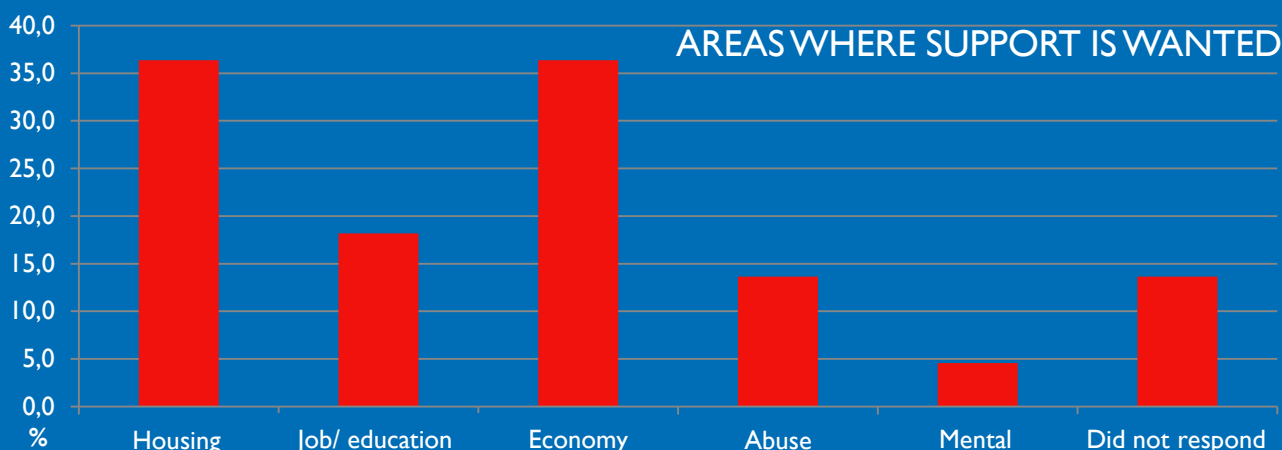


DO YOU KNOW THE STAFF'S SUPPORTING POSSIBILITIES?

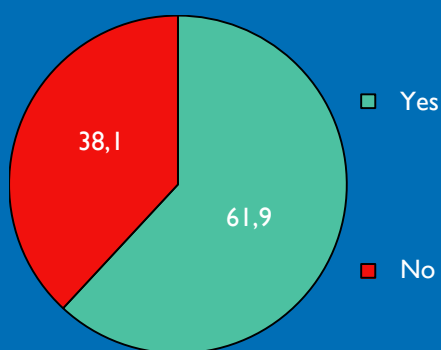


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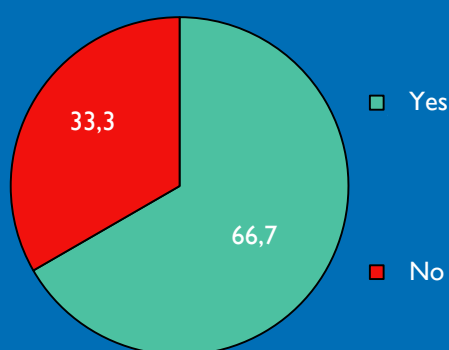




It is not surprising that most users know about the possible help they can get in connection with their housing situation. Otherwise the users know about the supporting possibilities that must be assumed to correlate with general needs of the user group. It must be noticed that the best known supporting possibilities are those that are main focus of the Employment.

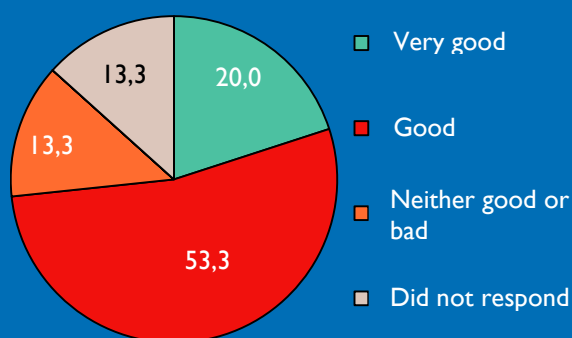


DID YOU WANT SUPPORT FROM THE STAFF?

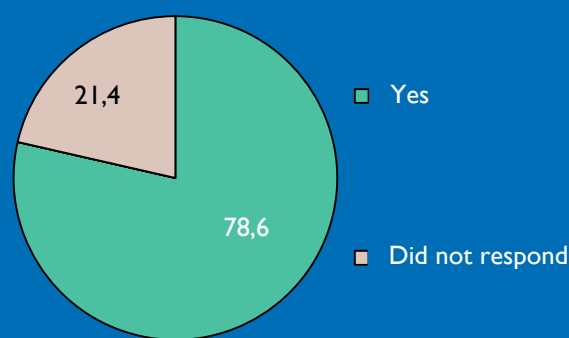


HAVE YOU RECIVED SUPPORT?

7

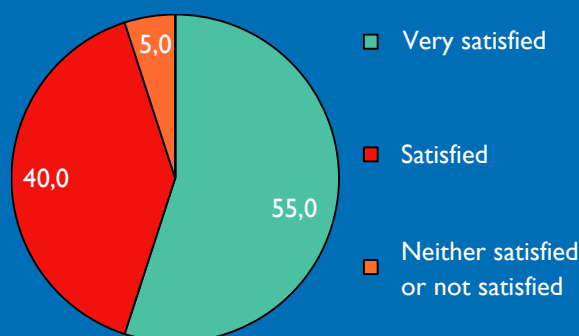


QUALITY OF THE SUPPORT



WAS THE SUPPORT OFFERED TO YOU SUFFICIENTLY FAST?

At the same time it is remarkable that the number of users who have received support is actually bigger than those wishing support when they came to The Employment. It is even more remarkable that far the most users who have received support were either satisfied or very satisfied with the support and found that the support in general was offered sufficiently quickly.



SATISFACTION WITH THE STAFF

95 % respond that they are either satisfied or very satisfied with the staff in general.

**Remark of The Employment:** The support that is offered in The Employment is organised in different ways depending on which area the support is needed for. We are able to offer direct support in areas as job, education and economy within our own institution. In areas as drug or alcohol abuse, mental illness and housing we have a bridge-building function to other services better suited for the job. That is why we always seek to improve and extend our relationship with partners and we are always very aware when another service can handle a given challenge better than us.

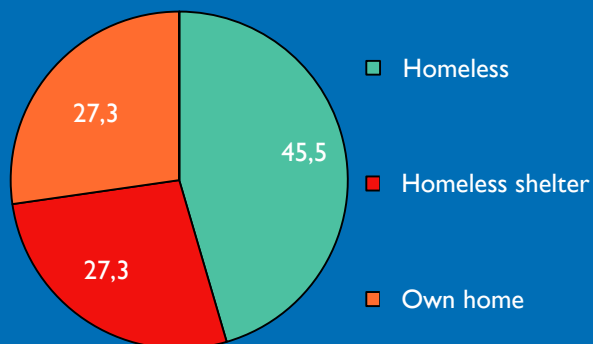
At the same time we must admit that there is room for improvement when it comes to the users' knowledge about our supporting possibilities. It is also possible to improve the motivational work

so that more users realise and admit their need for support. This must be seen under the circumstance that background knowledge reveals that negligible few within the target group do not need any support of some kind.

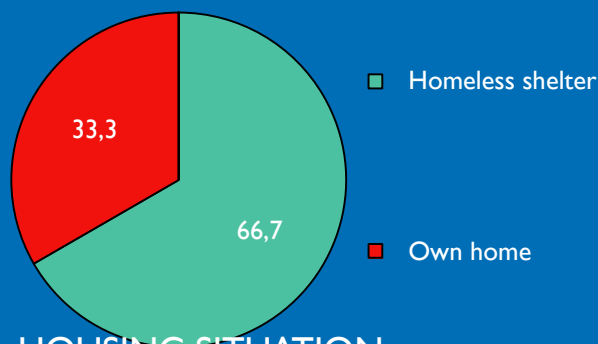
***” The staff is amazing. Everyone is extreme welcoming and friendly. It is cool that they are so flexible. It makes you fell wanted.”***  
**(- quotation for a user)**

# 4 Housing situation

When it comes to housing, a remarkable difference is seen before and after registration in The Employment.

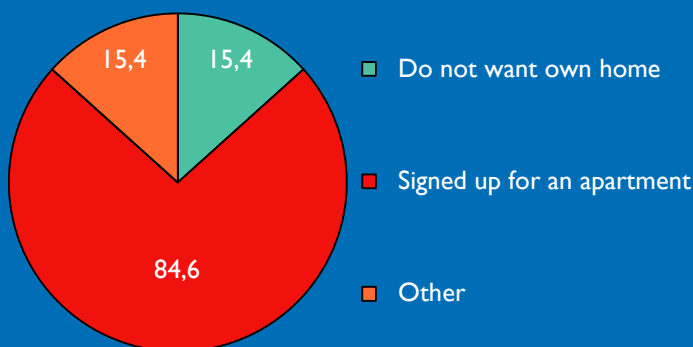


HOUSING SITUATION - BEFORE



HOUSING SITUATION - TODAY

Where 45.5 % state that they were homeless before, no one consider themselves homeless after they registered in The Employment. The share of those who lives in homeless shelters increase almost equivalent with the drop in the number of homeless people.



STATUS FOR USERS IN HOMELESS SHELTERS

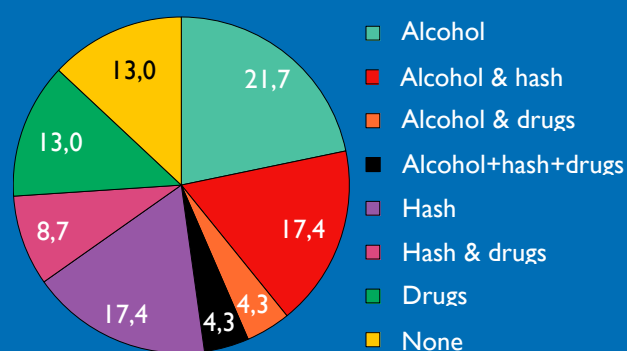
84.6 % of those who stated that they today live in a homeless shelter are signed up for apartment.

**Remarks of The Employment:** As mentioned in chapter 3 housing is not an area, where we offer direct support. The many hours that the users spend in The Employment make it although possible for us to take the first steps and build a bridge to services within the housing area.

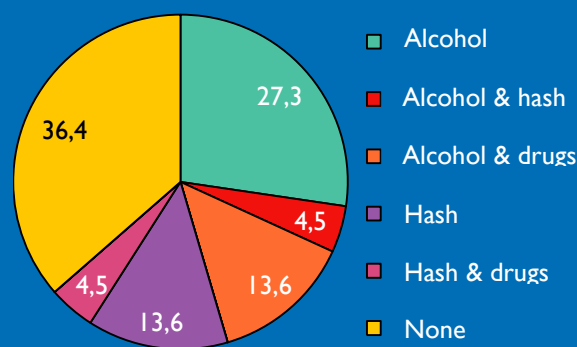
With the new 'housing-first-strategy' in mind the big change in the housing situation within the user group must be ascribed to the enhanced focus on stabilising the housing situation of the user. This means that persons that earlier were considered too unstable and chaotic to handle their own home today, get their own apartment in much greater numbers – often with support from the CTI. This although increase the need for support and stability in other areas so that the person will be able to maintain their new homes. It is the staff's clear conviction that the stability created through The Employment also works as a safeguard against setbacks. With the relative long stays in The Employment (59.1 % +1 year) in mind, it can be discussed if the one year that The Employment is allowed to handle users who have their own home is enough – especially when many users get their own home so much quicker today.

# 5 Abuse

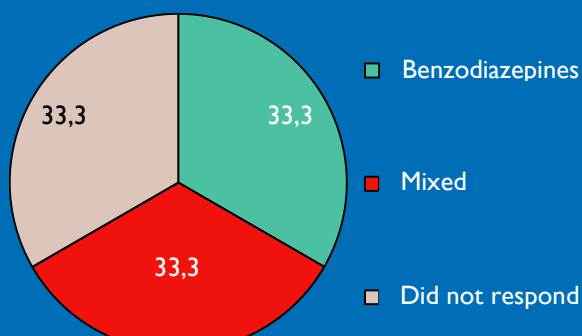
The area of drug and alcohol abuse is often an area where you see a big difference between the users and the staff's perception of what is an abuse and what is just normal consumption – when it comes to the quantity *and* the quality of the drugs. It is although worth to notice the big changes in the users abuse that is seen before, under and after participation in The Employment – according to the users themselves.



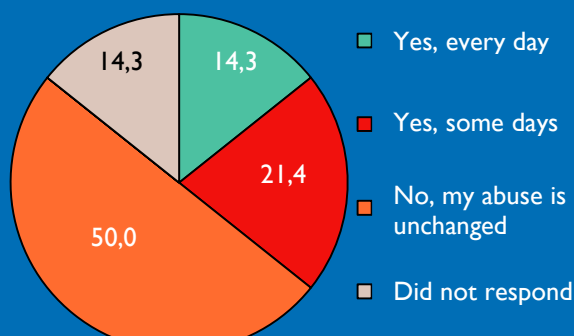
ABUSE - BEFORE



ABUSE - TODAY



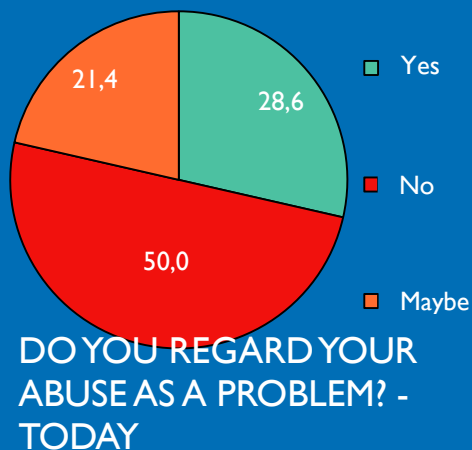
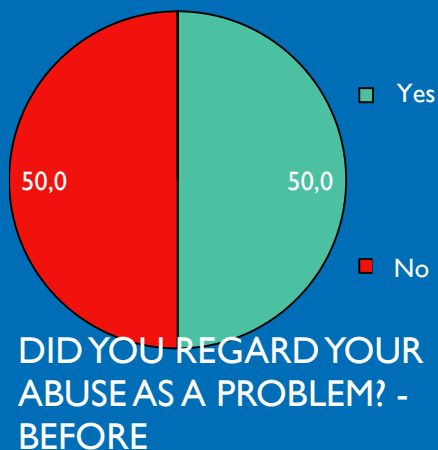
TYPE OF ABUSE AMONG DRUG ADDICTS DURING THE WORKING HOURS



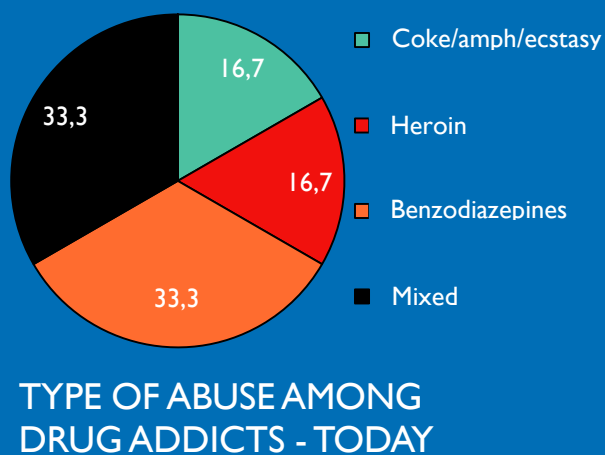
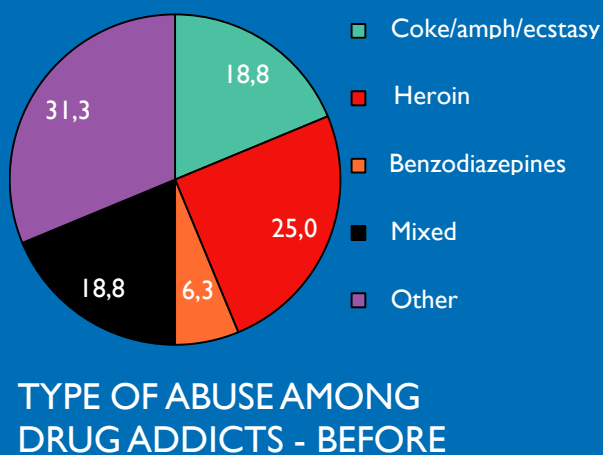
DOES THE EMPLOYMENT REDUCE YOUR ABUSE OUTSIDE WORKING HOURS?

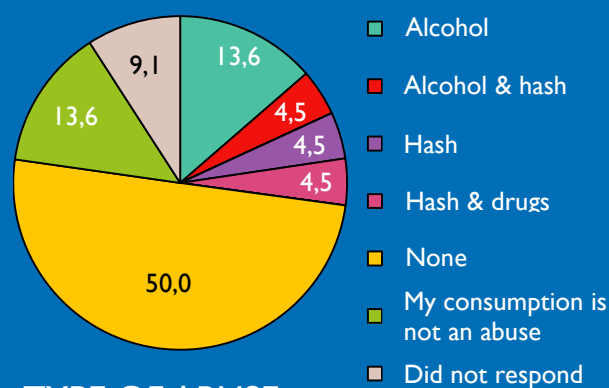
The share of users that consider themselves as clean increases from 13 % before registration in the Employment to 36.4 % under participation in The Employment, while entire 50 % declare themselves clean during working hours. Furthermore 35.7 % says that one day's participation in The Employment also reduces the abuse outside working hours – either every day or some days.

Even though many factors affect the users drug or alcohol abuse, the numbers clearly indicate that participation in The Employment in itself has a significant reducing effect on abuse of different kinds.

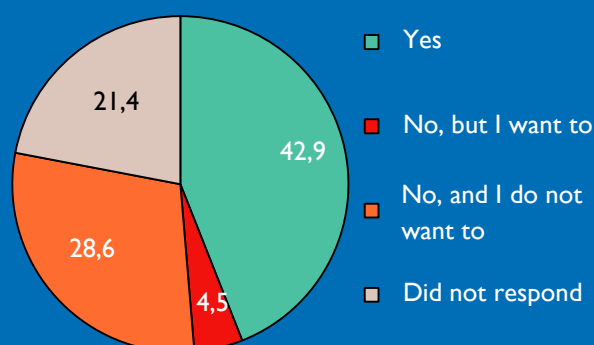


Even though the share of users that don't see their abuse as a problem is unchanged before and after registration in The Employment, the number of those who answers 'maybe' grows significantly.





**TYPE OF ABUSE  
DURING WORKING HOURS**



**ARE YOU IN TREATMENT FOR  
YOUR ABUSE?**

As one can see from the numbers, there is a big change in the type of abuse among the drug addicts before and after registration in The Employment<sup>2</sup> and accordingly during working hours. 42.9 % of those stating that they have a drug abuse say that they are in treatment for their abuse. As indicated by the numbers alcohol is a part of most users' abuse in general. All those who don't consider their consumption of alcohol as a part of their abuse must be added to this.

**Remarks of The Employment:** The numbers are in line with the staff's assessment of The Employment as a service that has an abuse reducing effect in itself.

Even though the role of The Employment in the area of drug and alcohol abuse mostly is limited to bridge building to actual treatment services, The Employment still plays a crucial role when it comes to establishing contact to these services. The contact is often based on the stability which The Employment – as mentioned earlier – is able to create in many users' lives.

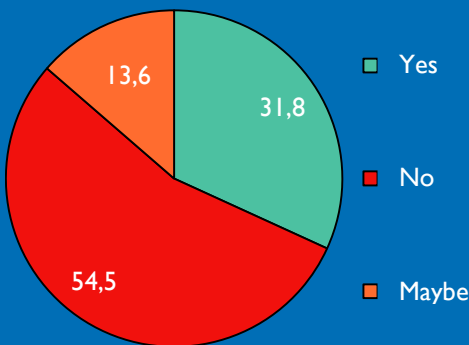
It is difficult to say why so many more answers 'maybe', when they are asked whether their abuse is a problem after they are registered in The Employment. Seen in the light of the stability and abuse reducing function of The Employment, it can be assumed that many get their abuse reduced to a level, where it is no longer as big of a problem. It is although required to further motivate the 50 %, who still don't see their abuse as a problem.

<sup>2</sup> It is outside the scope of this survey to conclude further on these changes. The changes are although worth noticing.

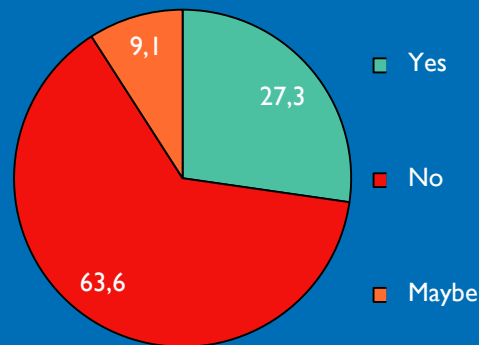


# 6 Mental illness

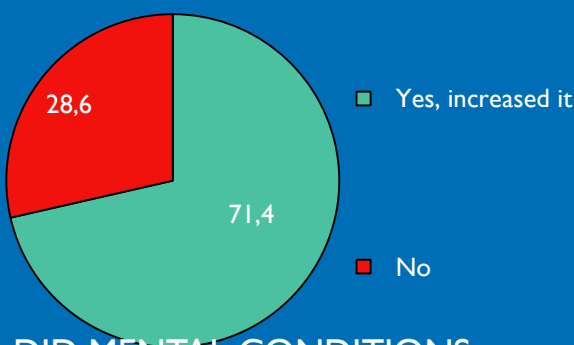
It is difficult for the staff of The Employment to assess the mental conditions of the users because of the staff's lacking knowledge in the area. It is a deliberate choice to keep it this way, as The Employment doesn't want to mix employment, treatment and diagnosis in the same service. The following numbers are although included in this survey as mental issues play a big role in many users' lives. The hope is that the numbers can give some general indications on the state of mental health within the group of vulnerable adults. Especially within this area it is worth to keep in mind that the numbers are based on the users own statements and that recognition is an important step in handling mental issues.



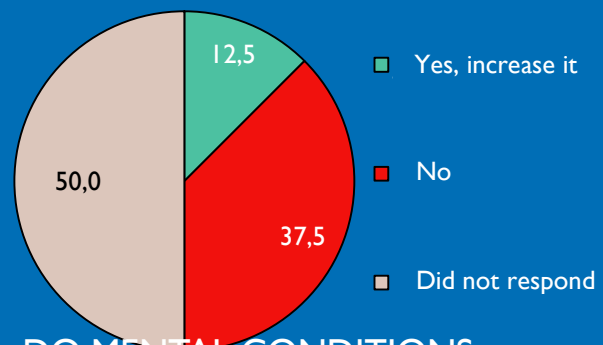
DID YOU HAVE A MENTAL CONDITION? - BEFORE



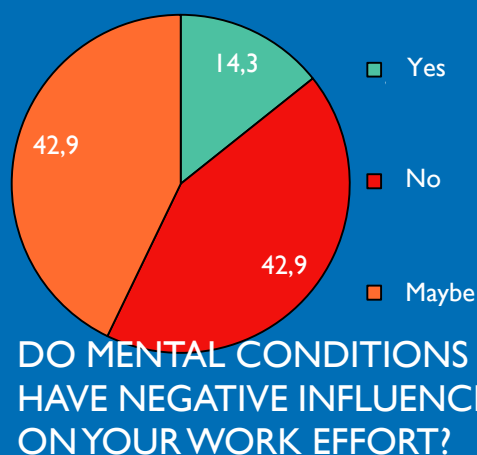
DO YOU HAVE A MENTAL CONDITION? - TODAY



DID MENTAL CONDITIONS INFLUENCE YOUR ABUSE? - BEFORE



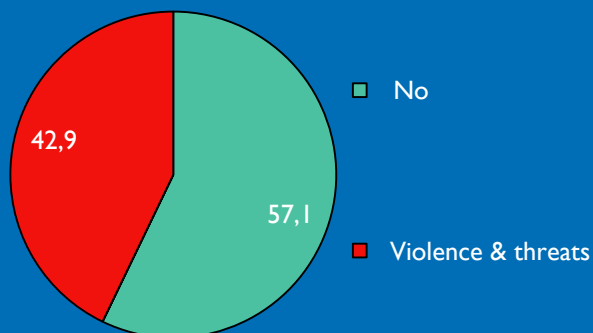
DO MENTAL CONDITIONS INFLUENCE YOUR ABUSE? - TODAY



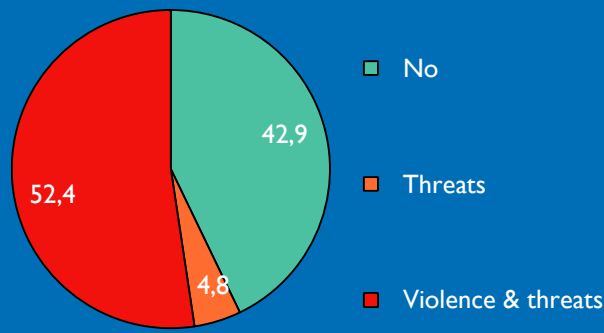
**Remarks of The Employment:** The positive changes in the users' statements before and after their registration in The Employment can be understood as an indication that the mental issues are improved by different factors – including participation in The Employment. The professional assessment of the staff is though that the changes very likely are caused by the serenity, stability and the feeling of belonging to a community that is created by The Employment, which sets out a frame work that enables enhanced self-knowledge and clarification – also on the mental issues. More users therefore become aware of their mental problems and become better at handling them under their stay in The Employment.

# 7 Violence

The users' experiences with violence are also included in this survey as violence and violent conflicts inevitably are part of the work with the target group of the Activity Centre.

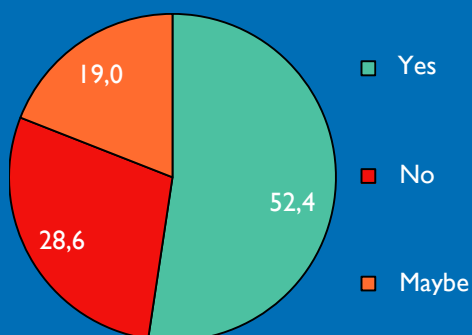


HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED VIOLENCE? - PERSONALLY

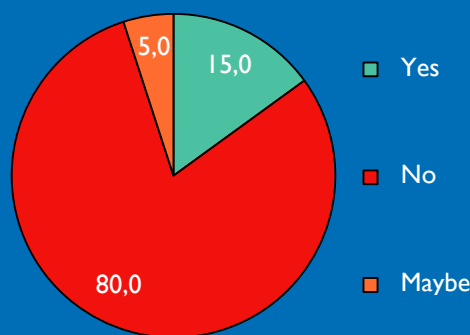


HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED VIOLENCE? - TOWARDS OTHERS

42.9 % of the users have experienced violence or threats directed towards themselves while almost 50 % have experienced violence and threats directed towards others.



IS VIOLENCE AVOIDABLE?



IS VIOLENCE A PROBLEM IN GENERAL?

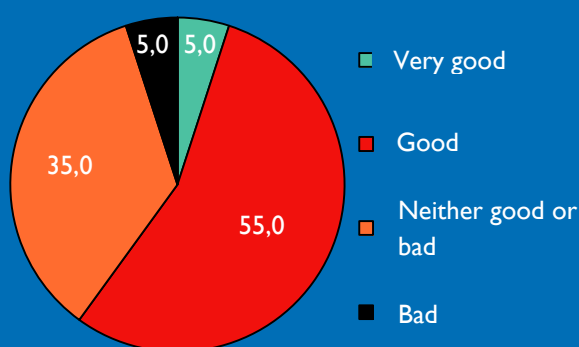
A little bit more than 50 % find that it is possible to avoid violence. There is almost perfect correlation between these persons and those who haven't experienced violence or threats directed towards themselves. In this connection it is worth mentioning that an entire 80 % don't see violence as a general problem in The Employment.

**Remarks of The Employment:** Even though many have experienced violence and threats, we are still happy that just as many don't have. The fact that 80 % say that violence isn't a problem in general indicates that violence is only a minor problem in The Employment – especially when the target group is taken into account. In The employment we are sure that the general low level of conflict is caused by our praxis, where we meet each other on an equal basis – according to our values. We thereby create a respectful dialogue that creates a frame work where users, as well as staff, feel a common ownership for our institution. In that way the cause for conflicts is reduced significantly, as we work towards a common goal.

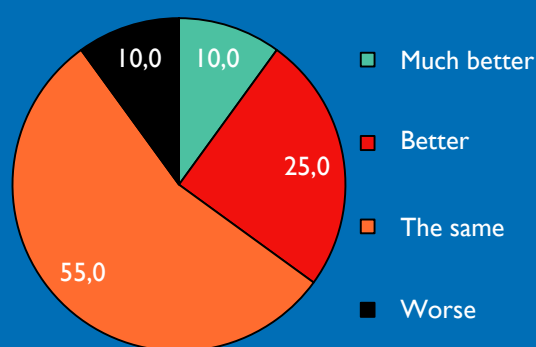
Even though the numbers are satisfying we always seek to prevent and minimize the number of conflicts.

# 8 Health, diet and well-being

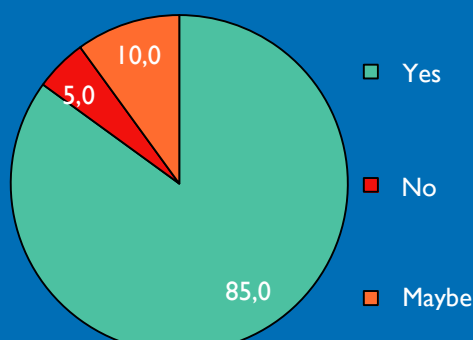
As part of the general clarification of the circumstances in the Activity Centre this survey also includes health, dietary and well-being among the user group in general. This area has been examined as a part of the effort of Centre for Vulnerable Adults and Families to enhance focus on this area among the target group of the centre. It is not within the scope of this survey to conclude further on the numbers in this chapter as the staff of the Activity Centre doesn't possess the needed competences or resources for that.



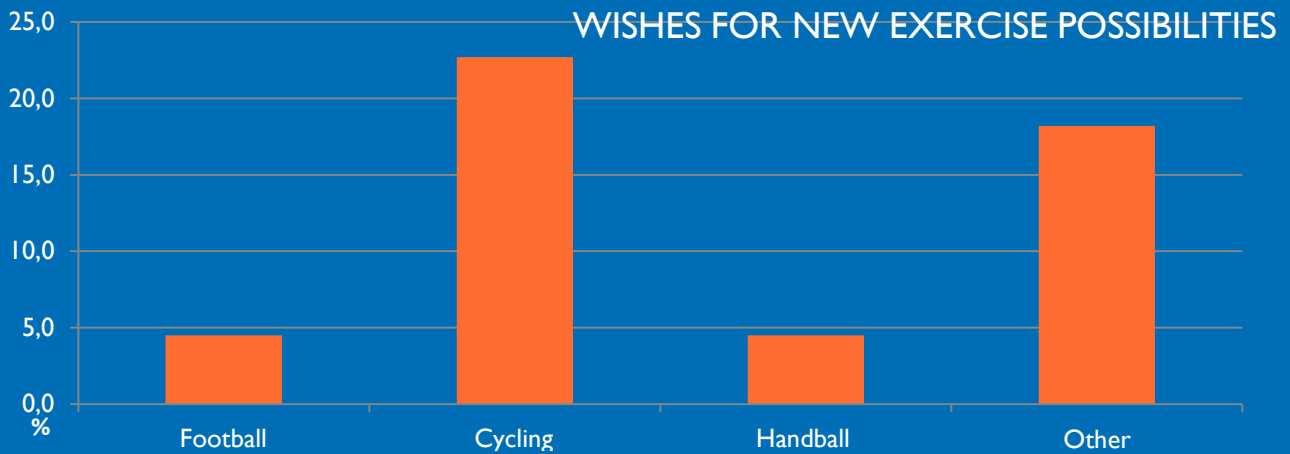
ATTITUDE REGARDING OWN HEALTH



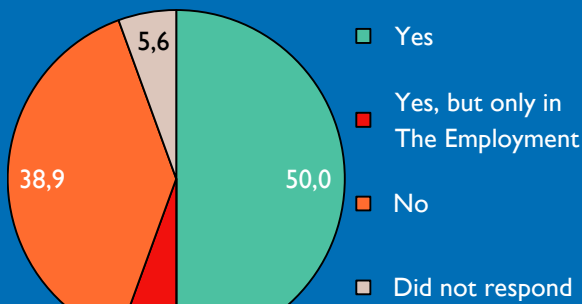
HEALTH COMPARED WITH 1 YEAR AGO



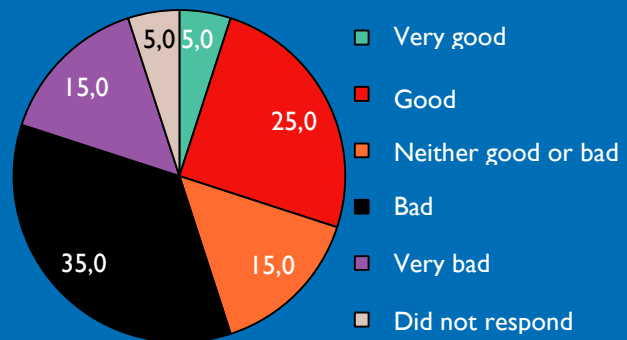
ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE EXERCISE POSSIBILITIES IN THE ACTIVITY CENTRE?



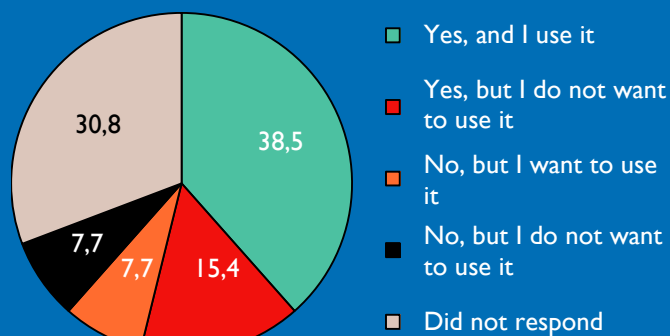
Some user wanted a billiard team, a step machine and a shooting range – stated under ‘other’.



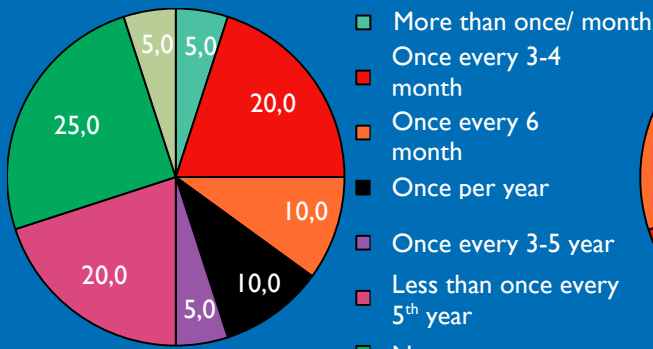
**DOES THE FOOD IN AC TAKE YOUR HEALTH CONDITION INTO ACCOUNT?**



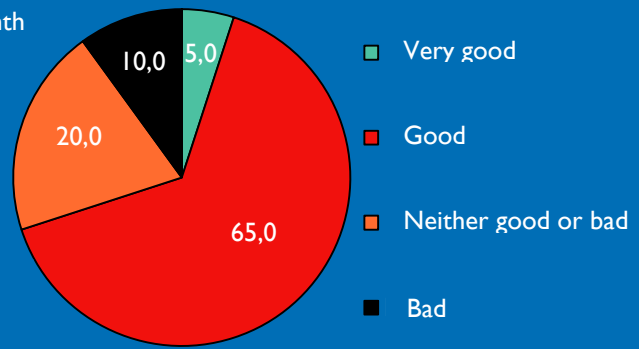
**ATTITUDE TOWARD OWN DENTAL HEALTH**



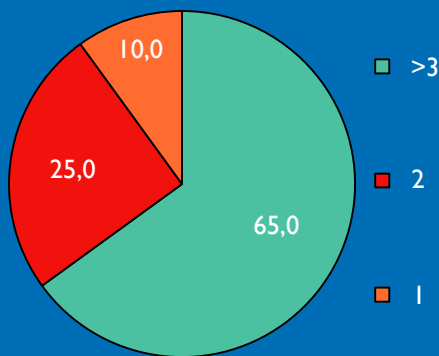
**DO YOU KNOW THE FREE DENTIST DEALS FOR HOMELESS PEOPLE?**



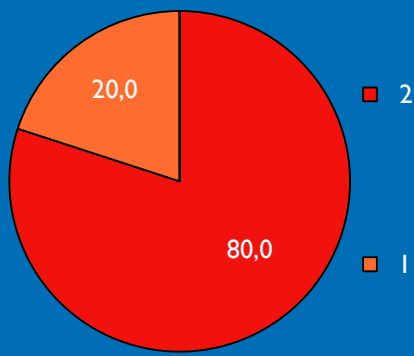
FREQUENCY OF VISITS AT THE GP



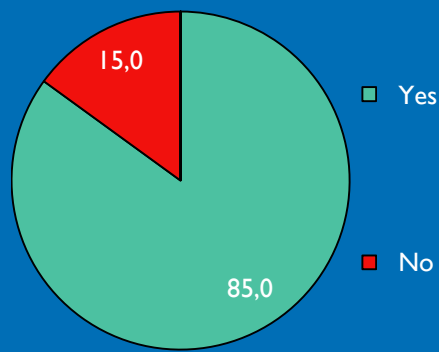
GENERAL TRUST IN THE HEALTH AUTHORITIES



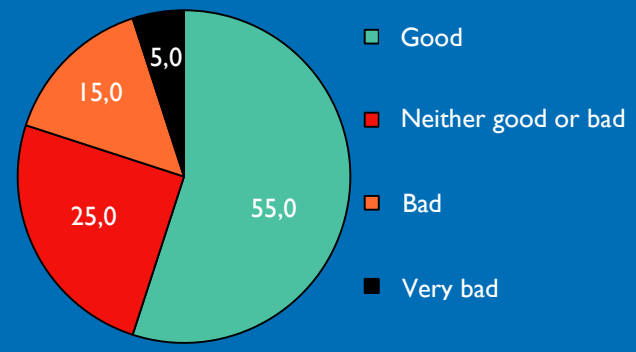
MEALS PER DAY



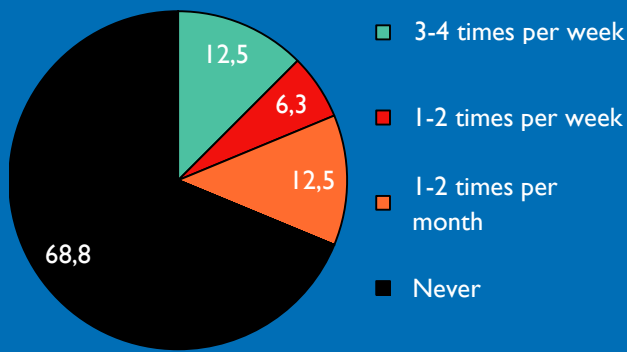
DAILY MEALS IN THE EMPLOYMENT



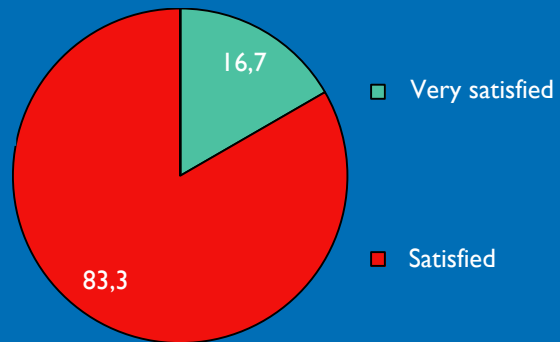
DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN THE BREAKFAST?



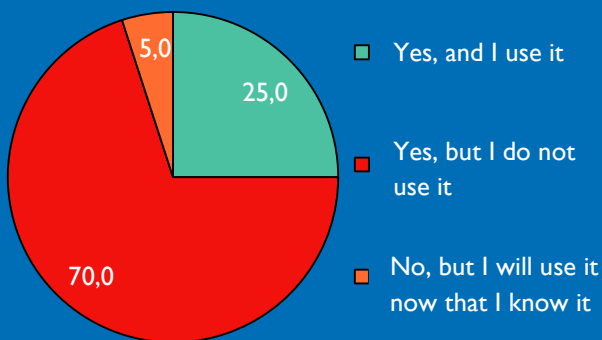
THE QUALITY OF THE FOOD IN THE EMPLOYMENT



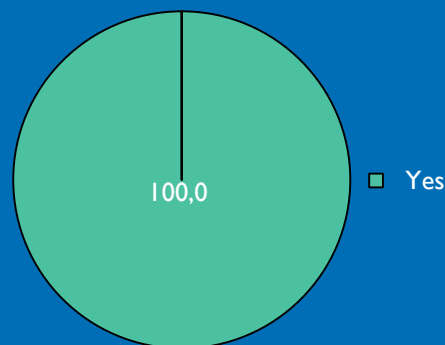
USE OF THE GYM



SATISFACTION WITH THE GYM AMONG IT'S USERS



DO YOU KNOW THE GYM IN #18?

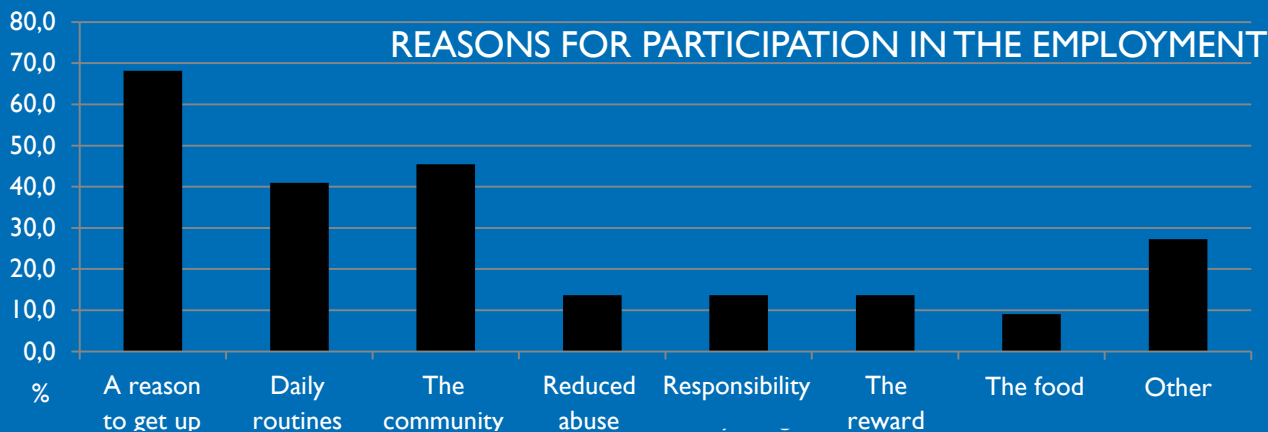


DO YOU KNOW THE CLOTHES IN # 18?

**Remarks of The Employment:** We are aware that the health area in general has been neglected in The Employment and in the Activity Centre as a whole. For just as long we have wanted to do something about it. In spite of our lack of resources and competences in the area, we have set up some limited initiatives such as running teams, wellness days and yoga. We constantly try to improve and prioritise our effort by consulting professionals to the extent that is possible for us. We hope that the numbers in this chapter can be used as a baseline for deeper examination and initiatives in the area. The fact that many users use our services for many hours each week gives us a unique possibility for influence – also in the health area.



# 9 The services



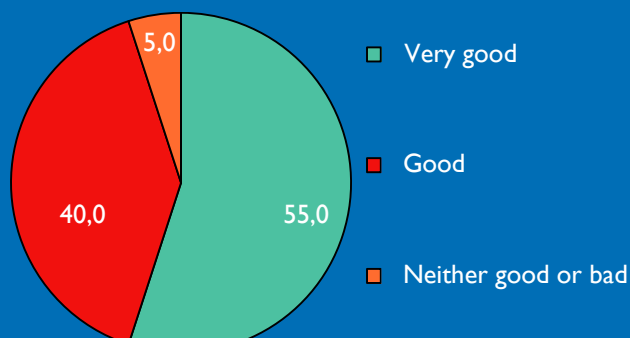
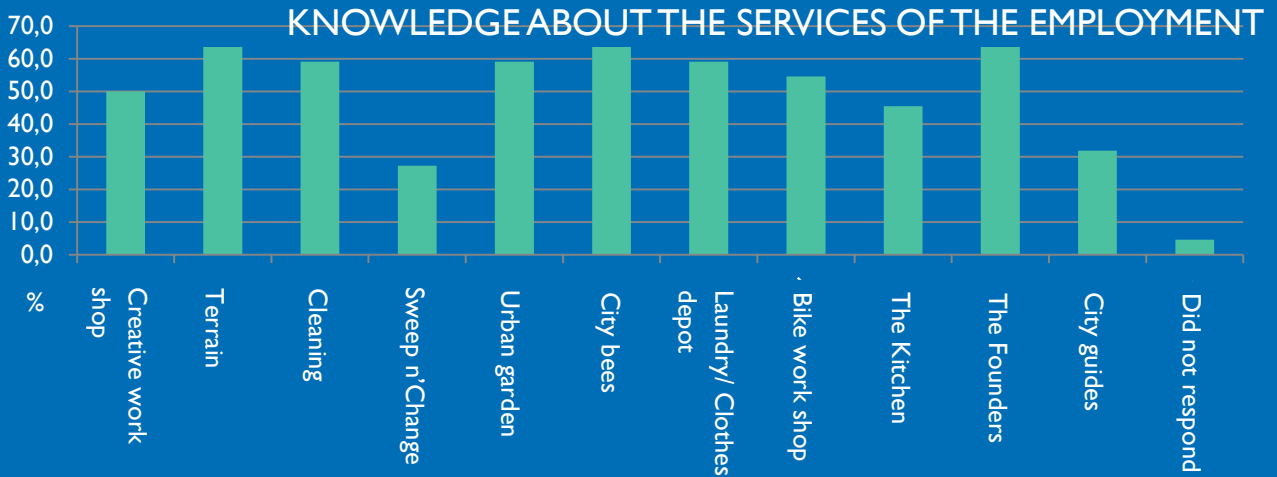
As earlier surveys have shown, there are three main reasons for the users to participate in The Employment: 'A reason to get up in the morning', 'a daily routine' and 'the feeling of belonging to a community'. Some users also stated 'stay away from crime', 'to feel welcome', 'because I want to change my life' and 'because it is nice' – under 'others'.

23

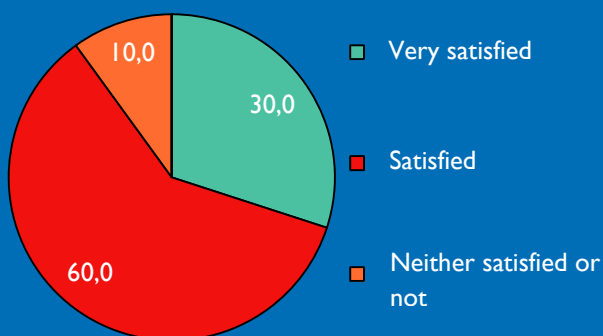


IN WICH PARTICULAR SERVICE DO YOU PARTICIPATE?

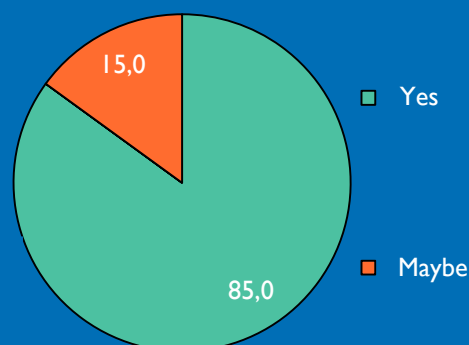
Besides that, the numbers show that the services of The Employment are broadly used. Likewise, the users' knowledge about each individual service is broadly spread. The 'biggest' and most visible services are although best known.



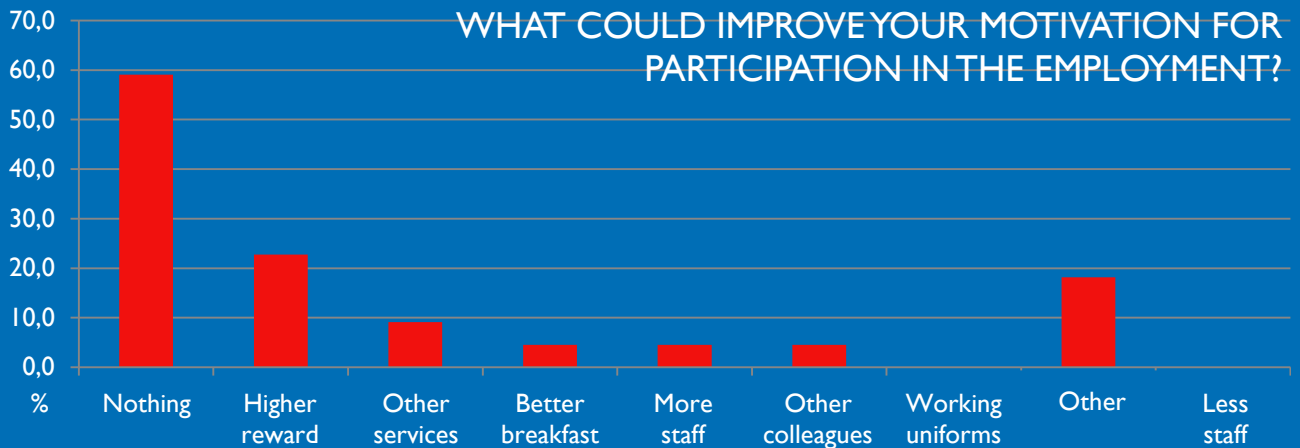
HOW DOES THE SERVICES FIT TO YOUR INTERESTS AND WISHES?



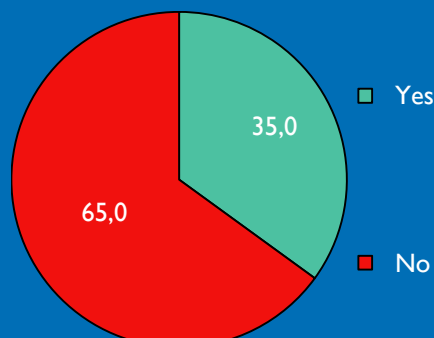
SATISFACTION WITH THE WORK ENVIRONMENT



ARE THE SERVICES SUFFICIENTLY MEANINGFUL?



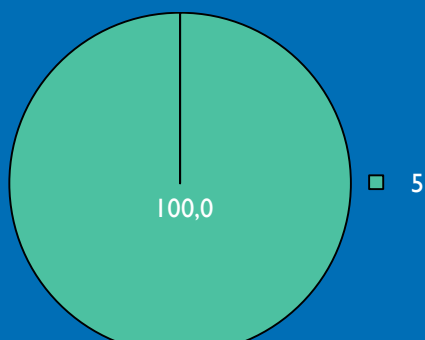
The numbers show that the users to a large extent are satisfied with the substance of each service, their work environment and find the services meaningful in general. At the same time only a few users find reason to change anything about the current set-up in The Employment – except a raise. 35 % would like The Employment to extend the opening hours.



### WOULD IT HELP YOU IF THE SERVICES WERE OPEN LONGER TIME?

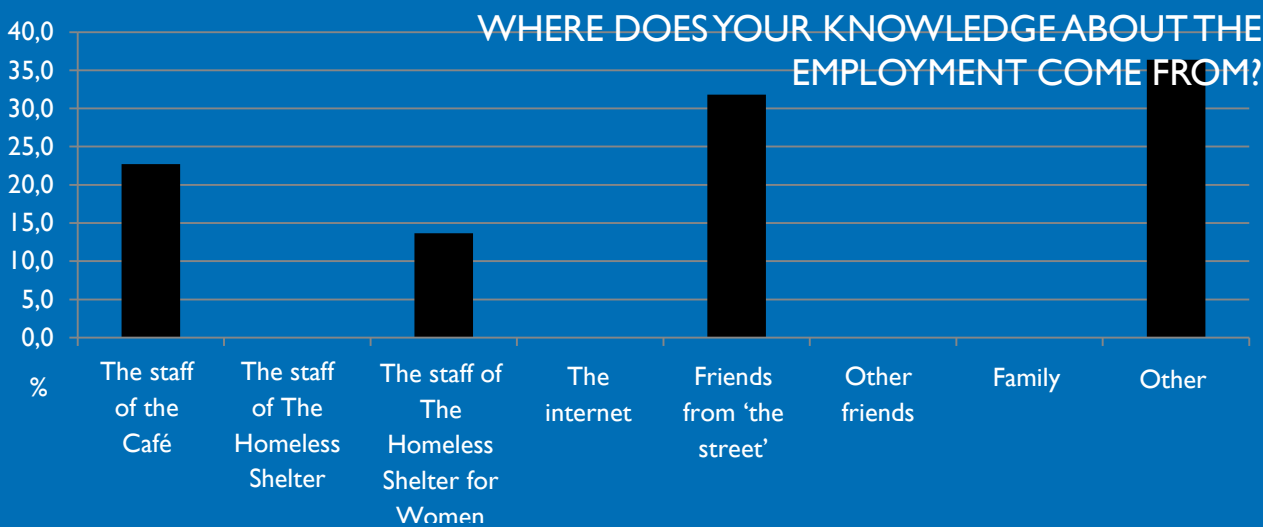


The answers are very different when the users are asked about what gives the services the sense of meaningfulness. 'To be trusted', 'the freedom to invent', 'that I express myself physically' and 'that I'm not alone' are stated under 'others'.

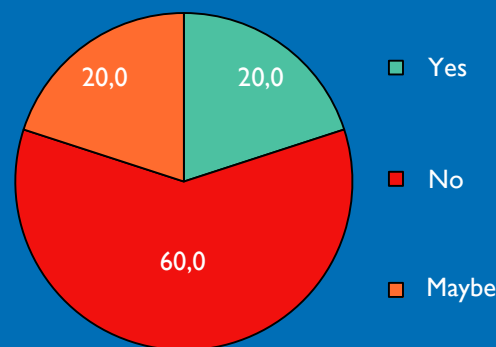
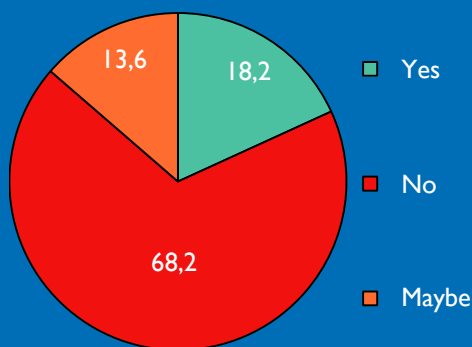
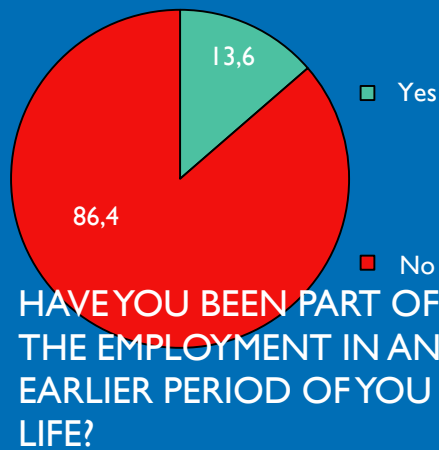


HOW MANY DAYS PER WEEK DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN THE EMPLOYMENT?

Even though all the respondents answered that they participate in The Employment five days a week – this is only a (little) incorrect. The answers must although be seen as a clear indication that the users *want* to be in The Employment as much as possible.



At the same time, the numbers show that knowledge about The Employment to at large extent comes from channels that are not put up by the Activity Centre. 'From a girl friend', 'from another user' and 'from the staff in a homeless shelter' are stated under 'other'.



The numbers show that 13 % of the users in The Employment have been registered in The Employment in an earlier state of their life. The number of those who can see themselves in an ordinary job increase after a stay in The Employment.

**Remarks of The Employment:** The professional assessment of the staff is that the user satisfaction to a large extent is caused by the broad and dynamic variation of service provided by The Employment. We are always ready to open and close services as the needs change. To this, one must add the already mentioned efforts to create an including an equal dialogue – in line with our values.

Even though we always appreciate personal recommendations we find an improvement of the knowledge established through ‘official’ channels desirable<sup>3</sup>.

***” The best thing is that you have something to get up to in morning and to be a part of a community.”***  
**(- quotation from a user)**

<sup>3</sup> By the end of this survey new initiatives have been started to secure a better external communication in general.

# Conclusion

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The survey has shown that The Employment creates notable positive changes in the life situations in the user group as a whole. It is clear to see that The Employment fully lives up to its main targets about establishing a steady daily routine, training of social competences, developing of professional competences and a positive effect on self-esteem. One can furthermore see other positive outcomes of the fulfilling of the four main targets.

This means that the users also tell about positive changes in their housing situation, attitude toward an ordinary job and especially on alcohol and drug abuse after registration in The Employment. The Employment particularly seems valuable to the increased number of users that get their own home so much faster today. There although seems to be disparity in this matter between the one year The Employment is allowed to provide service for persons after they get their own home and what the need actually is.

As a workplace where the users participate up to 32 hours a week The Employment must be ascribed a lot of the reason for the mentioned changes. This underlines the role of social employment as more than just regular employment. The place is furthermore a mediator to relevant services such as CTI and alcohol and drug treatment.

The survey shows besides this that The Employment in general is a healthy and well functioning service with great user satisfaction when it comes to everything from work environment, the substance and meaningfulness of the individual services and the staff's work and competences as whole. The great satisfaction experienced when it comes to the individual services and the changes seen in the users' life situations must to a large extent be ascribed to the working method of The Employment. On a basis of values about respect and equal dialogue an including work community is created - creating the motivation for changes. The Employment seeks to meet the needs and wishes of the users to secure this, so that a meaningful service always is ready no matter of the composition of the user group.

Finally the survey has given a good insight in the general composition of the user group, the experience of violence in their everyday life, their health, dietary and mental conditions and knowledge about where the users' knowledge about The Employment comes from. These numbers can serve as an important source of information in future studies in the respective area.

The numbers has furthermore shown in which areas there is room for improvements in The Employment. Among there are the health area and the general motivation and information work, which could secure a greater payoff from the daily efforts.

# About the survey

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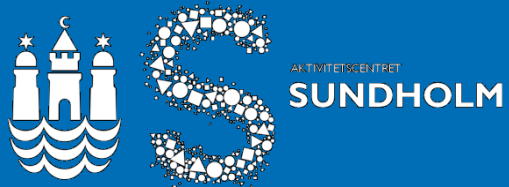
The survey has been carried out as a collection of semi-structured, qualitative and anonymous interviews. The interviewer has categorised the answers of the respondents within a number of predetermined categories that the respondents didn't know about, in order to make the following quantification possible. The interviewer has ensured that the answers have been categorised by the same criteria throughout the survey. It has been voluntarily to reply in every single question.

This way of carrying out the survey has been chosen in order to get a representative and a nuanced picture of the user group of The Employment as possible. In this way it has been possible to collect more honest and nuanced answers than if the survey had been all quantitative. As the user group at the same time has very unique and individual problems it wasn't possible to make an all qualitative survey either. To make a representative basis, a qualitative survey would demand a number of comprehensive interviews that weren't possible to carry out due to time and resource matters.

22 out of 33 possible users were interviewed. It must be remembered that the survey is based on the users' own statements and a general reservation must be made in that sense. In that way, the numbers do not represent the actual truth but the users' own perception of their life situation – which in this connection must be seen as just as relevant.

The survey was carried out by  
Line Seier Madsen, anthropologist  
From August 2013 to January 2014

The survey was written and edited by  
Jesper Paaske, MA International Business Communication  
April 2014



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