State of Digitalization in Czech Nonprofits

2023

About the Survey

In 2021, we comprehensively mapped the state of IT in Czech nonprofits and the IT needs of nonprofit organizations for the first time. This year, we followed up on this survey and expanded it to include additional areas. Specifically, we looked at how much organizations are utilizing automation options or whether they are using any tools with artificial intelligence.

In this year's survey, 634 organizations participated, a result that completely exceeded our expectations. This is nearly double the number of organizations compared to 2021. We believe that this gives us even more accurate data this year about the needs and challenges facing Czech nonprofit organizations in the area of digitalization. A big thank you to all the participating organizations, who on average spent 74 minutes on the questionnaire.

In the previous survey, one of the most pressing issues surprisingly turned out to be hardware inadequacy. This year's survey showed that this problem persists in Czech nonprofits – 43% of organizations indicated that they do not have enough funds to acquire suitable equipment. Organizations also cannot rely on donated computers and phones as we see that the number of organizations receiving used hardware as a donation is declining.

At the same time, we know that good hardware accelerates the digitalization process for organizations and offers them broader possibilities for the use of automation or artificial intelligence. Without quality, or at least good laptops or desktop computers, the path to effective use of technology for organizations is very slow and inefficient.

Also IT security remains a significant concern. In the survey, only 26% of organizations indicated that they have written cybersecurity policies. Only 32% of organizations provide training in this area to the users of their systems, and 13% of organizations admitted that they do not address the possibility of data leaks at all. Organizations are aware of these shortcomings though, and 48% of them are seeking training on IT security.

This summary is only an excerpt of all the data and findings we collected and focuses on the main findings. If you are interested in other topics and more details about usage of different systems like CRM, online meetings, or digital signing tools, we are happy to share them with you. Please, contact Radka Bystřická at radka.bystricka@sdruzenivia.cz.

This survey would not be possible without our generous partners: Google Czech Republic and Ipsos. Thank you!

Research and Analysis

The research involved 634 respondents from the ranks of IT workers, directors, and operations managers of nonprofit organizations. Each organization responded only once. Data collection took place from March 1 to March 31, 2023, and for the survey, we chose a quantitative research type and the technique of written questioning. The questionnaire consisted of both open and closed questions. The quantitative analysis of the survey responses was carried out by the Ipsos agency. The interpretation of the data and the summary were prepared by the VIA Association team under the leadership of Radka Bystřická.

Survey Organizers

VIA Association

VIA Association is a nonprofit organization that builds the technological capacities of Czech nonprofit organizations and public libraries, by providing access to software, hardware, IT services, and related education. Thanks to this, these organizations achieve their goals and fulfill their missions more effectively and easily. VIA Association is the Czech representative for the TechSoup Global Network. It operates also an expert volunteering portal Um Sem Um Tam, organizes educational events and in recent years has also actively begun to engage in strengthening digital literacy and combating disinformation.

www.sdruzenivia.cz
www.techsoup.cz
www.umseumtam.cz
www.akademiemedialnigramotnosti.cz

Open Society Fund Prague

The Open Society Fund Prague is a Czech foundation with a thirty-year history. Its mission is to strengthen open society and democracy in the Czech Republic: it supports and educates civil society and develops a state where everyone has equal opportunities and engages in their surroundings. The foundation addresses sensitive and neglected topics and, together with donors, looks for active citizens who will further develop them. During its operation, the Open Society Fund has supported more than 10,000 projects of Czech nonprofit organizations and individuals with an amount exceeding 80 million EUR.

www.osf.cz

Survey Partners

Google Czech Republic

Google Czech Republic is a part of the global technology company Google, whose mission is to organize information from around the world so that it is universally accessible and useful. Google Czech Republic focuses on providing top-notch internet services for Czech users and has been actively engaged in supporting digitalization processes in the Czech Republic since its inception. The Google Czech Republic team actively collaborates with local partners, supports the development of startups, and digital education.

https://czechrepublic.googleblog.com/

Ipsos

Ipsos Agency has been operating in the Czech Republic since 1992 and is the largest research agency in the country. It conducts market research and public opinion surveys, carries out both quantitative and qualitative research, organizes activation workshops, professional seminars, and also provides consulting services. It is part of the global Ipsos network, actively collaborating with branches in 90 countries around the world.

www.ipsos.cz

Types of Nonprofits

In the survey, organizations identified themselves as professional, volunteer-based, or civic. Each of these types differs in its internal functioning and has specific needs not only for IT infrastructure and expertise but also differs in their users' working hours and their needs, as well as the budget for information technology. In case of volunteer and professional organizations, we further categorize them by the number of employees. This has resulted in six basic groups, in which we have found statistically significant similarities. Most of the data in this analysis is therefore discussed from the perspective of these six groups.

Professional Organizations

These are organizations where the majority of the team consists of employees for whom working for the organization is their primary employment. Most of the core users of the organization's operational systems are working during regular working days and hours. The organization handles similar agendas as regular companies—financial administration, payroll accounting, HR, operational systems, etc.

We further divide them into

Professional Small
– up to 10 employees

Professional Midsize
– with 11 to 50 employees

Professional Large
– with more than 50 employees

Civic Organizations

This refers to entirely volunteer-based associations, often small local groups. The users are not employees and perform activities for the organization in their free time. These organizations usually have a low budget. They typically lack the standard operational agenda that professional and volunteer organizations must address. IT systems are mainly needed for sharing documents and communication among members. Examples include various hobby, community, or activist associations. We do not divide them further.

Volunteer Organizations

These organizations have a few core employees, but the majority of the organizations' activities is done by volunteers. It is not uncommon for the organization to have only one employee as a coordinator. Core staff members maintain a standard business day schedule, whereas volunteers typically contribute their time outside of these established hours, often on a less frequent basis.These organizations have to tackle a similar agenda as professional associations, although to a lesser extent. Their main focus, though, is on efficiently organizing volunteers and supporting their activities.

We further divide them into:

Volunteer Small
– up to 10 employees

Volunteer Large
– with more than 10 employees

Sometimes the types of organizations can overlap – even large professional organizations may have volunteers, and thus similar needs to volunteer organizations. However, the basic division outlined above helps us effectively define basic needs and allows for comparison.

Main Findings

43% organizations report that they do not have sufficient funds to acquire the necessary equipment (computers, phones, ...)

7% organizations exclusively use software that is personally owned by employees or members for work in the organization; in the case of civic and volunteer organizations, this ratio climbs to 30 - 50%

22% organizations exclusively use shared file storage on on-premise servers

19% organizations does NOT use any shared file storage

Google Workspace is the favourite cloud storage provider and it is used by 67% of organizations

20% organizations use free versions / home versions of cloud storage instead of a nonprofit version

4% organizations having a written digital strategy

Main Findings

17% of organizations do NOT address the possibility of data leaks at all

74% of organizations do NOT have written cybersecurity policies

WhatsApp remains the second most popular tool for internal communication after email; it is followed by Facebook Messenger and Google Chat/Meet

Microsoft 365 leads among large professional organizations: they use it for storage, email management, internal communication, online meetings, and automation

Google Meet remains the most popular tool for hosting online meetings and webinars, just as it was in 2021
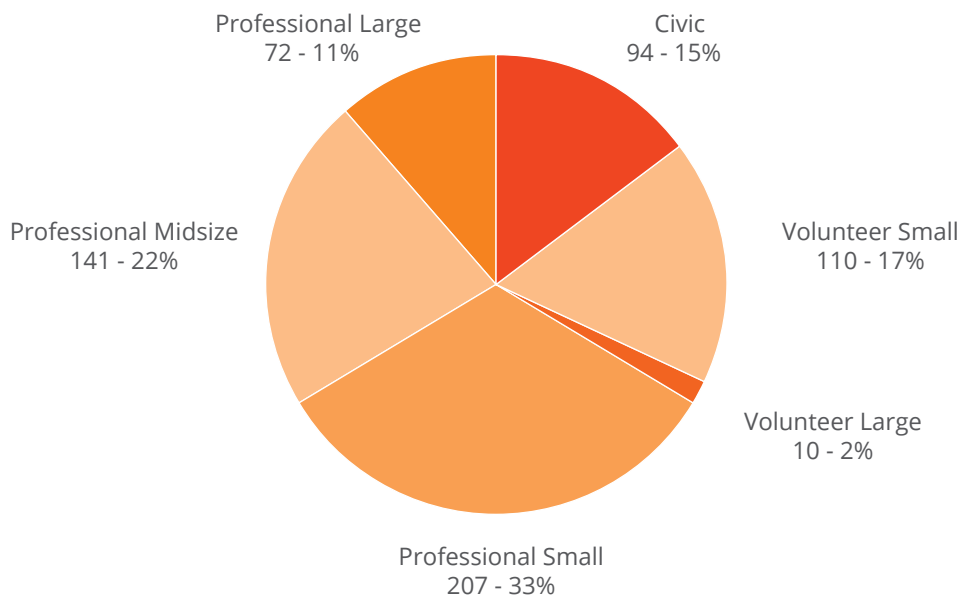
7% of organizations use some tool with artificial intelligence for work; however, this usually involves individuals experimenting with various capabilities of these systems, rather than a comprehensive organizational effort

6% of organizations use some tools for automation

lack of funds most organizations cite it as the main obstacle to developing their IT infrastructure
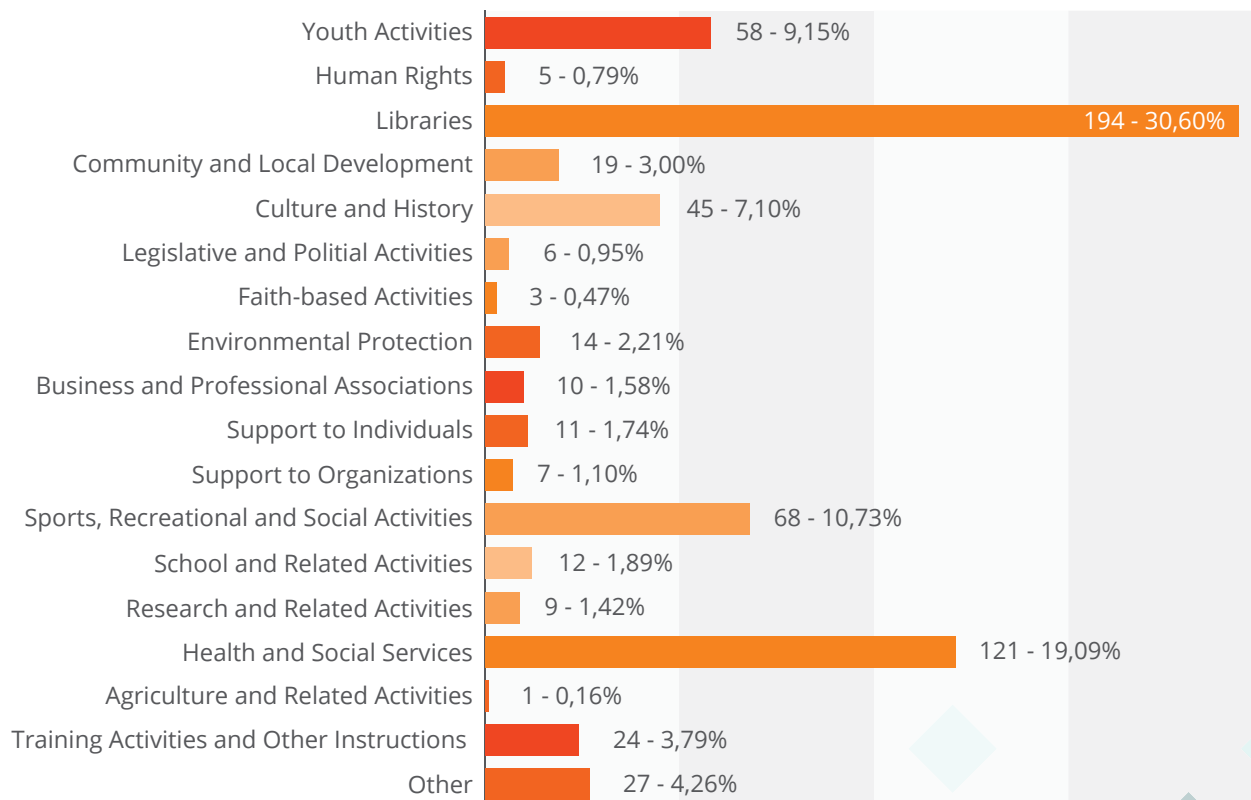
Surveyed Organizations
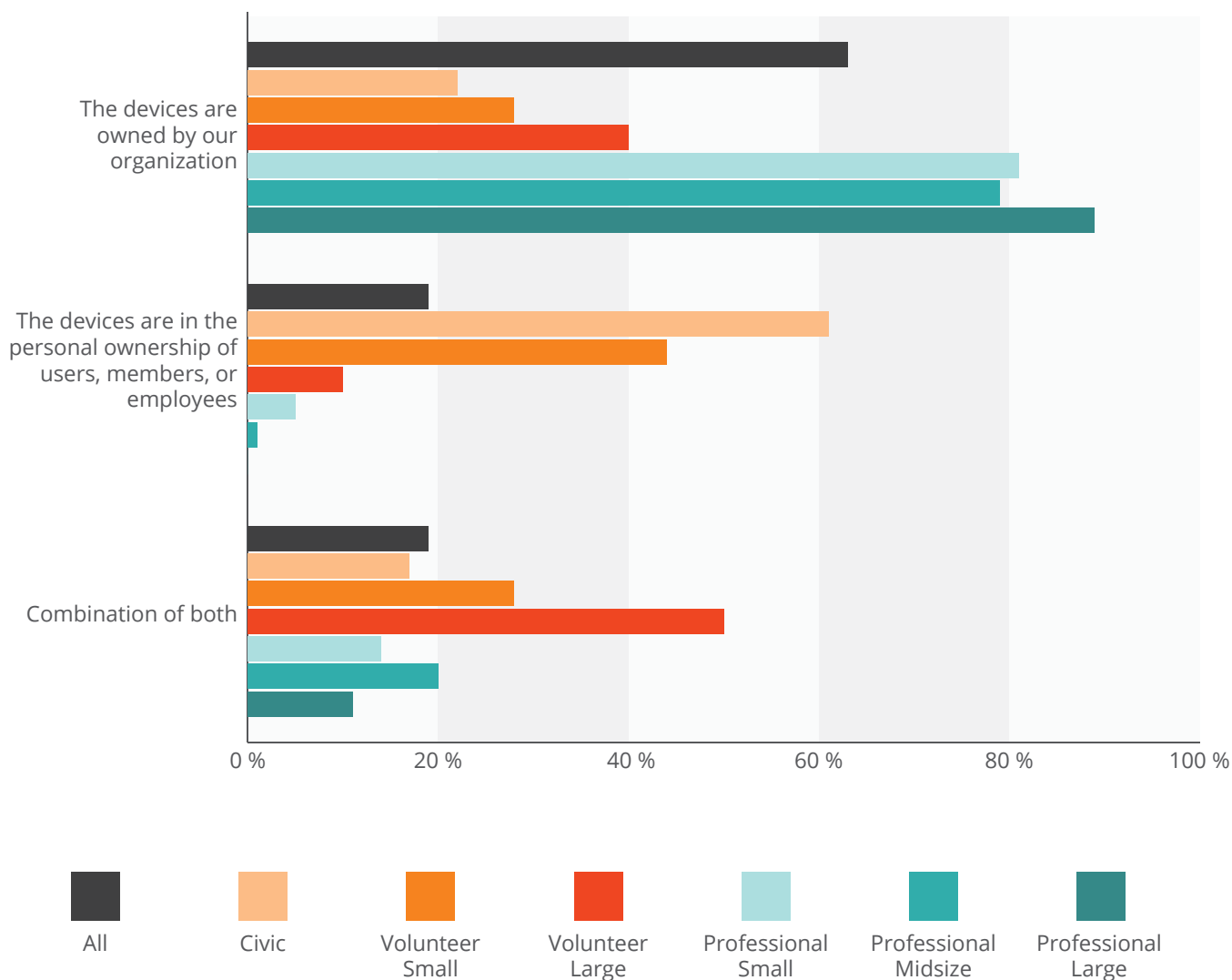
Organizations taking part in the survey per their type

Professional Large
72 - 11%

Civic
94 - 15%

Professional Midsize
141 - 22%

Volunteer Small
110 - 17%

Volunteer Large
10 - 2%

Professional Small
207 - 33%

See Types of Nonprofits described above

Organizations taking part in the survey per their activity

Activity	Value
Youth Activities	58 - 9,15%
Human Rights	5 - 0,79%
Libraries	194 - 30,60%
Community and Local Development	19 - 3,00%
Culture and History	45 - 7,10%
Legislative and Politial Activities	6 - 0,95%
Faith-based Activities	3 - 0,47%
Environmental Protection	14 - 2,21%
Business and Professional Associations	10 - 1,58%
Support to Individuals	11 - 1,74%
Support to Organizations	7 - 1,10%
Sports, Recreational and Social Activities	68 - 10,73%
School and Related Activities	12 - 1,89%
Research and Related Activities	9 - 1,42%
Health and Social Services	121 - 19,09%
Agriculture and Related Activities	1 - 0,16%
Training Activities and Other Instructions	24 - 3,79%
Other	27 - 4,26%

Hardware

Who owns the computers that you use in your organization?

Legend: All · Civic · Volunteer Small · Volunteer Large · Professional Small · Professional Midsize · Professional Large

Most of the surveyed organizations use only computers owned by the organization for work (63%); as expected, a higher proportion is seen among professional organizations. The largest proportion of personal computers used is among civic organizations (61%).

Hardware

When you think about the hardware and operating systems that you use in your organization, do you feel any needs, shortcomings, or obstacles to development?

■ All	■ Civic
■ Volunteer Small	■ Volunteer Large
■ Professional Small	■ Professional Midsize
■ Professional Large	
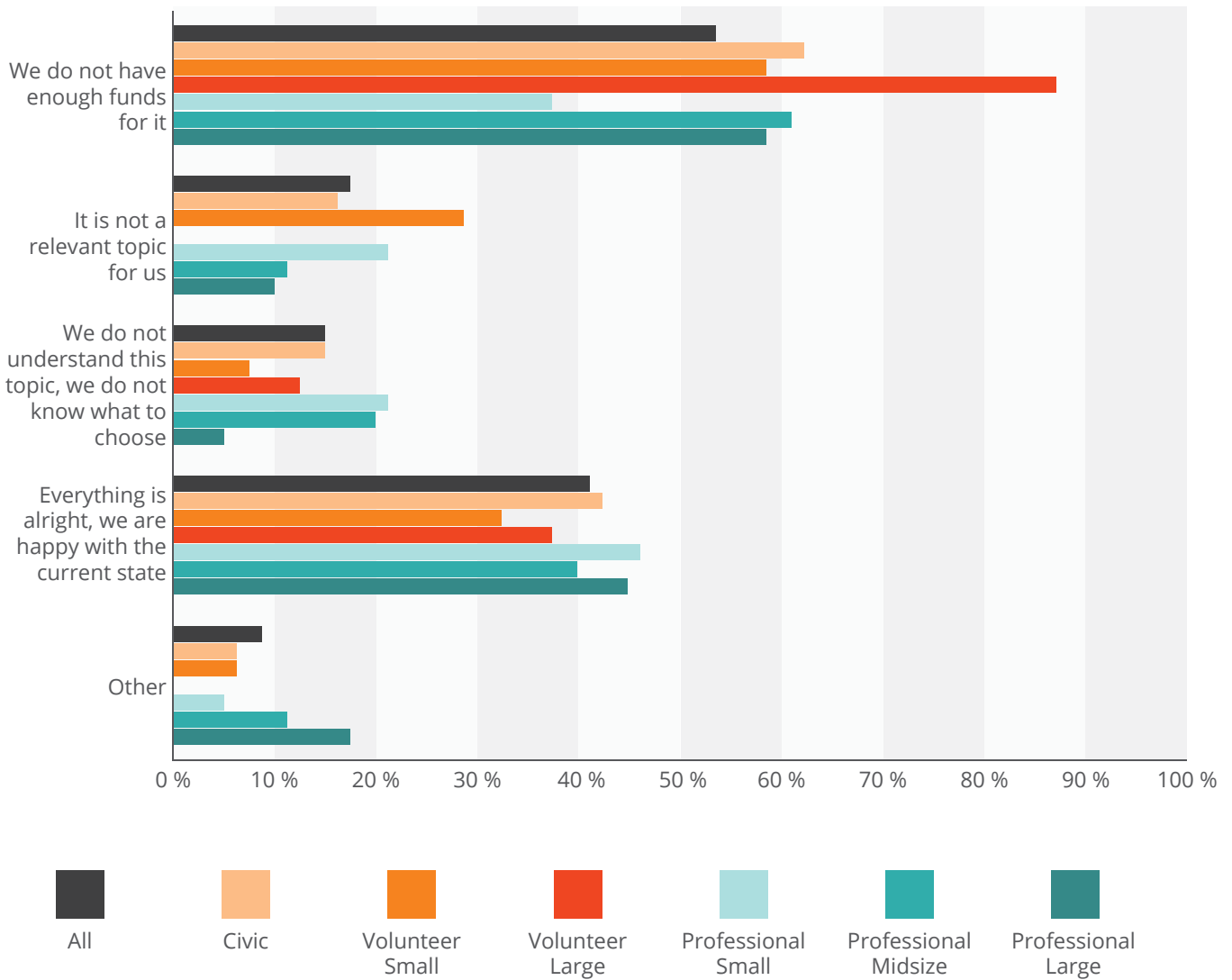
The most frequently cited obstacle with regards to hardware equipment were financial constraints, and this is true across all types and sizes of organizations. One-tenth of organizations also state that they do not know which equipment to choose for their organization.

Software Ownerhip

Does your organization own any software licenses or subscriptions to IT tools and services?


The majority of organizations use software owned by the organization (larger organizations are more likely to do so). In civic and volunteer organizations, we see a high proportion of the use of software in personal ownership (either purely or in combination with software owned by the organization).

The main reasons organizations resort to using software in personal ownership are financial constraints and the fact that they use the personal devices (computers and others) of employees or members. Here, we see how a lack of funding for IT infrastructure leads to unsystematic use of applications, which can result in both lower work efficiency and greater vulnerability to cyber-attacks. Organizations are also forced to expose themselves to the risk of data or document loss when employees or members leave, simply because they lose access to the tool that the individual was using for work. Another issue is inefficient and problematic collaboration—people often use different types of tools or different versions of them.

Document Management

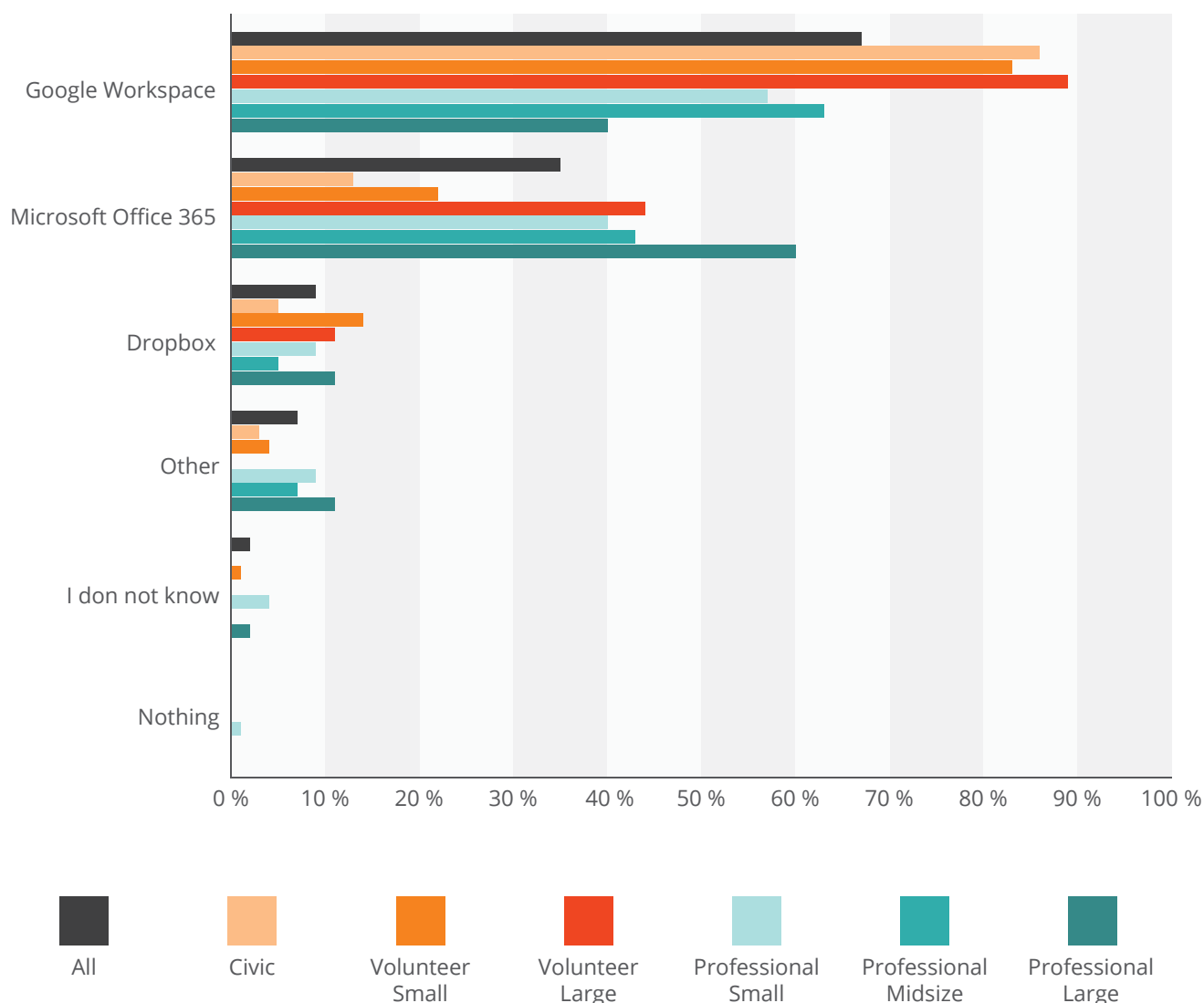## How do you store and share documents in your organization?
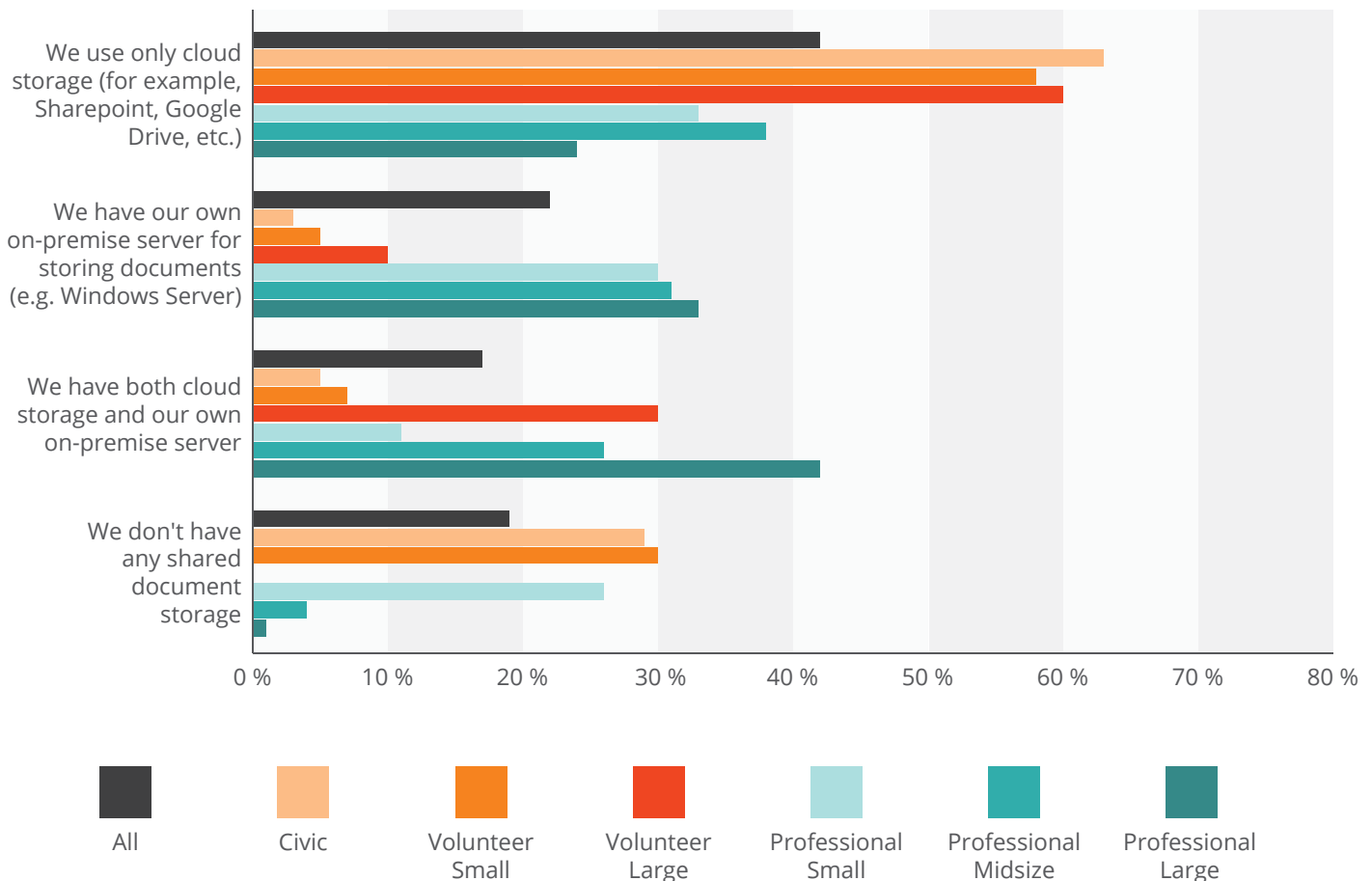
We still encounter organizations that have no shared document storage, whether cloud-based or on-premise: 19% of respondents indicated this in the survey. The situation is worse for civic and volunteer organizations, but a quarter of small professional organizations are also in the same boat.

Today, 42% of organizations exclusively use cloud-based storage, with civic and volunteer organizations faring better in this regard. So, with these types of organizations, we either see no storage solutions in place or cloud-based solutions being used. Among professional organizations, we frequently see the use of on-premise servers, either alone or in combination with cloud storage. The high rate of on-premise server use could be a result of relying on older infrastructure from times when cloud solutions were not as widely available, and organizations are either wary of migrating to a cloud environment or lack the finances to do so. Another possible reason is that there still exists a certain aversion to cloud solutions among IT administrators.

Document Management

What cloud storage do you use?

Legend:
- All
- Civic
- Volunteer Small
- Volunteer Large
- Professional Small
- Professional Midsize
- Professional Large

Organizations that use cloud storage prefer Google Workspace. In second place overall is Microsoft 365's storage service, which, however, is the leader among large professional organizations, thereby confirming data from 2021. In third place is Dropbox. Other solutions appeared only occasionally.
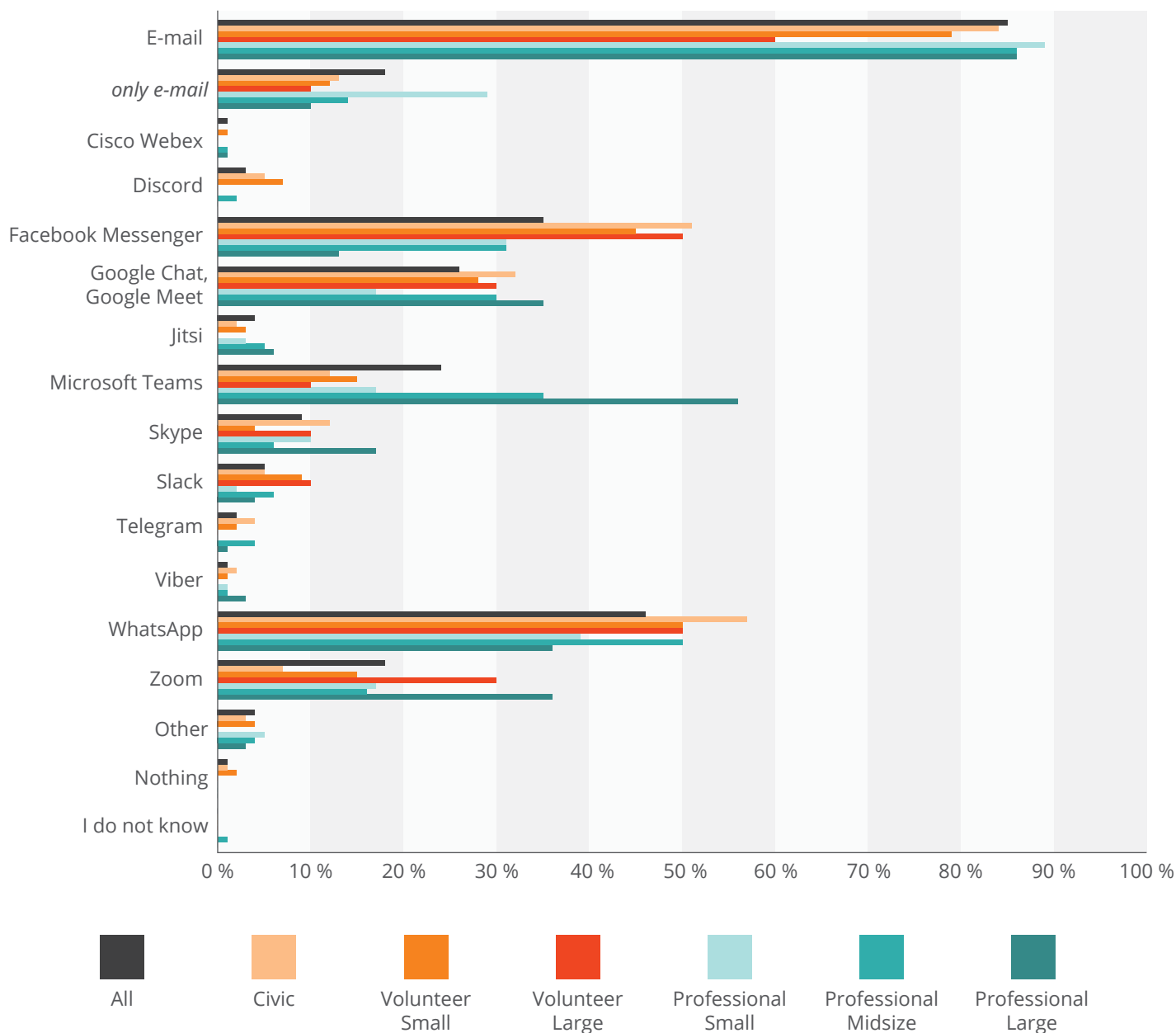
Document Management

What version of cloud storage do you use?

Legend:
All · Civic · Volunteer Small · Volunteer Large · Professional Small · Professional Midsize · Professional Large
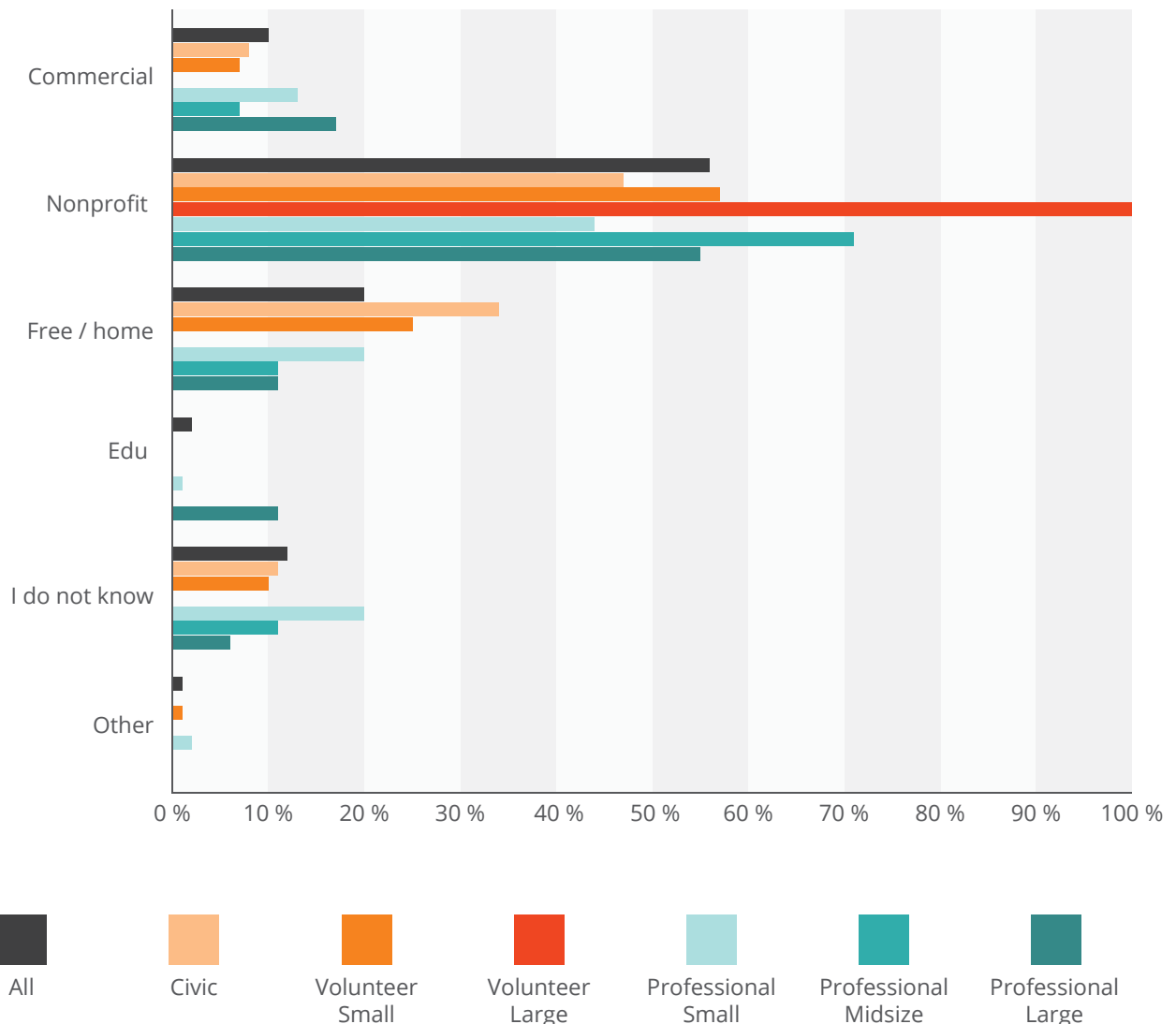
This year, we also looked at which version of cloud document storage organizations use, revealing a few problematic facts. Firstly, 20% of organizations use free versions of storage solutions intended for personal use. The situation is worst among civic organizations, where a full third of them use the free versions. These versions often lack access management and may have lower levels of security. They are therefore very unsuitable for organizational use and pose a security risk. We also see that 10% of organizations use commercial versions of storage solutions, which are associated with higher licensing costs. Some organizations are using edu or academic licenses or other. Nonprofits liceses are used by 56% of surveyed organizations.
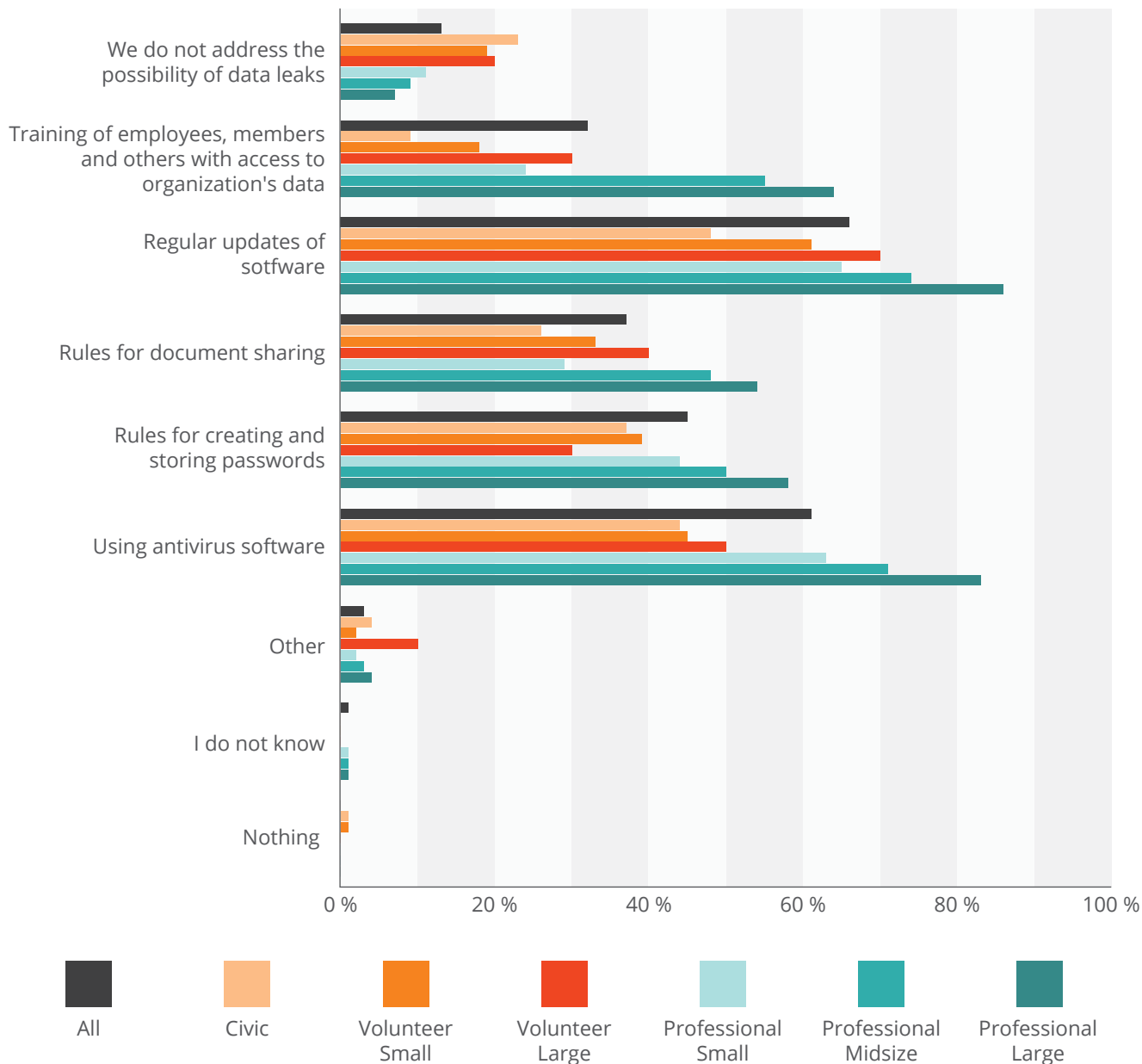
Internal Communication

What tools do you use for internal (team) online communication?

Legend:
- **All**
- **Civic**
- **Volunteer Small**
- **Volunteer Large**
- **Professional Small**
- **Professional Midsize**
- **Professional Large**

Categories (top to bottom):
- E-mail
- only e-mail
- Cisco Webex
- Discord
- Facebook Messenger
- Google Chat, Google Meet
- Jitsi
- Microsoft Teams
- Skype
- Slack
- Telegram
- Viber
- WhatsApp
- Zoom
- Other
- Nothing
- I do not know

The most commonly used tool for internal communication among organizations remains email, which is often used in combination with other tools. Only 18% of organizations exclusively use email for internal communication. The second most popular tool is WhatsApp, used by 46% of organizations, followed by Facebook Messenger with 35%. Tools designed for team collaboration, such as Google Chat and Microsoft Teams, appear further down the list. The high usage rate of open chat applications like WhatsApp and Messenger is very problematic, as organizations may not have the knowledge to secure their conversations. In line with findings from other chapters, Microsoft Teams, which is part of Microsoft 365, is the most popular application among large professional organizations.

Cybersecurity

How do you secure your organization's data against leaks?

Legend: All · Civic · Volunteer Small · Volunteer Large · Professional Small · Professional Midsize · Professional Large

Categories (top to bottom):
- We do not address the possibility of data leaks
- Training of employees, members and others with access to organization's data
- Regular updates of sotfware
- Rules for document sharing
- Rules for creating and storing passwords
- Using antivirus software
- Other
- I do not know
- Nothing

Data security is one of the key tasks of IT administration in organizations and applies to all types of organizations. From the survey, we can see that most organizations focus on basic security methods: regularly updating the software they use or using antivirus software. Fewer organizations have established rules for password settings (45%), rules for sharing documents (37%), or provide training to their employees and members (32%). Thirteen percent of organizations admitted that they do not address data leakage prevention at all.
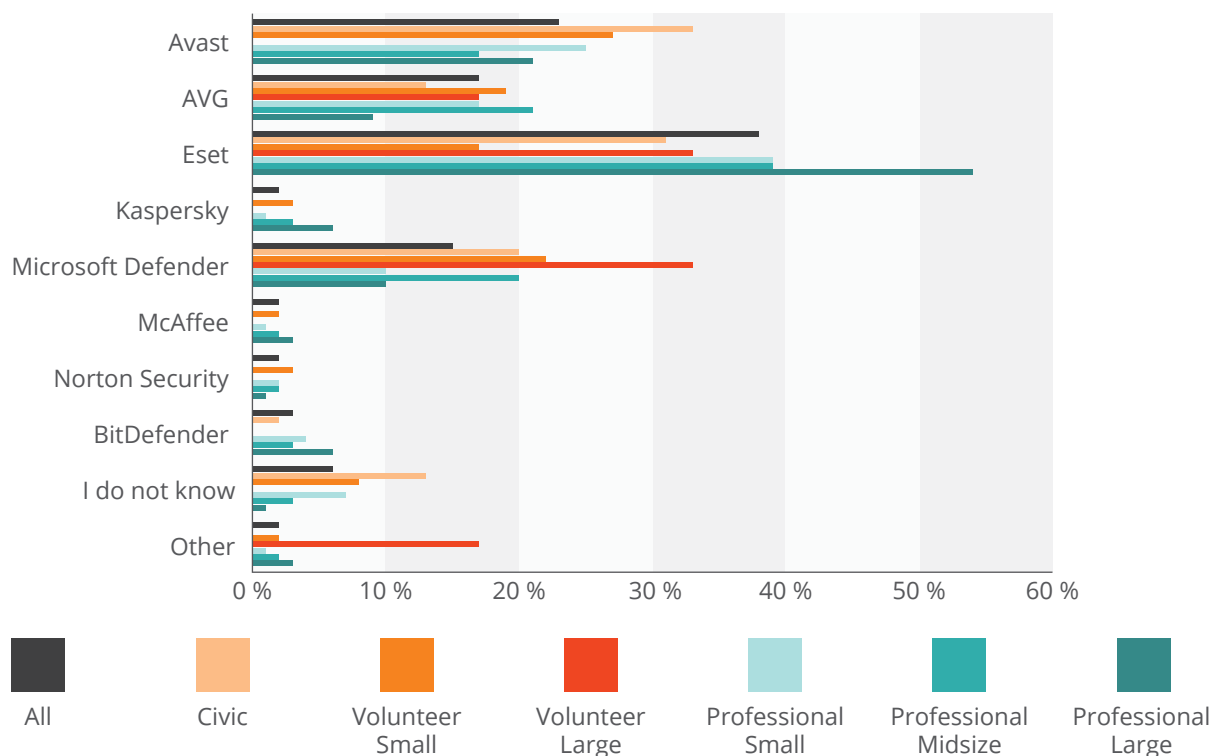
Cybersecurity

Do you have written cybersecurity policies?

Compared to the survey in 2021, the proportion of organizations that have written cybersecurity policies has decreased from 35% to 26%. One possible interpretation is the significantly larger sample of organizations taking part in the survey compared to the previous one. The situation is worst among civic organizations, where only 7% of them have written policies. Large professional organizations are in the best position, with nearly half of them having written policies.
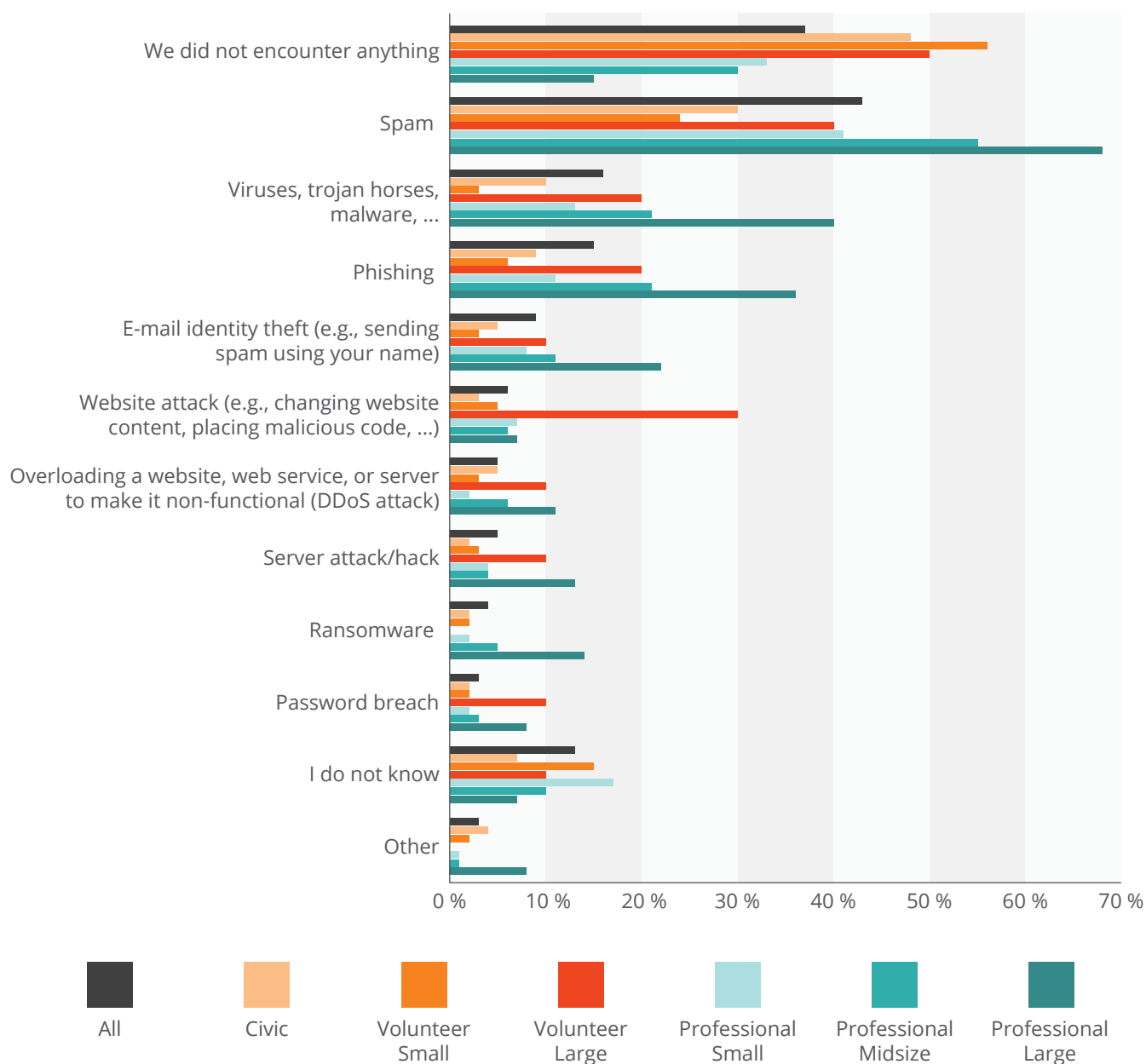
What antivirus do you use?

The most popular antivirus is Eset, which has jumped from 28% to 38% compared to the 2021 survey. Avast remains in second place but has slightly declined, dropping from 28% to 23%. Other options include AVG and Microsoft Defender.
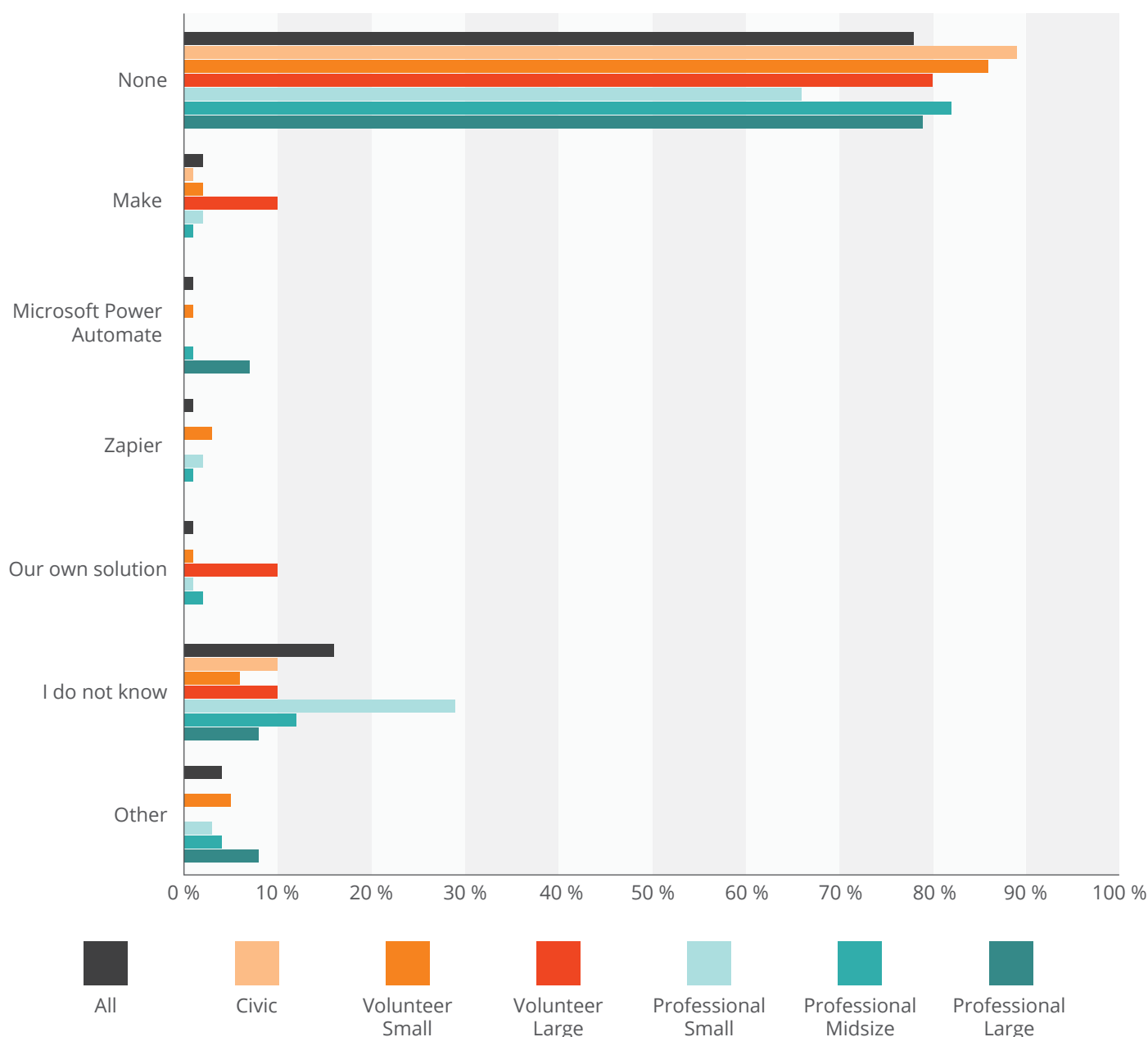
Cybersecurity

Have you encountered a cyberattack in your organization in the last 2 years? If yes, what type of attack was it?

Legend: All · Civic · Volunteer Small · Volunteer Large · Professional Small · Professional Midsize · Professional Large

Compared to 2021, the number of organizations reporting that they have encountered some form of cyber attack has increased from 29% to 37%. However, it cannot be said with certainty whether the actual number of attacks on nonprofit organizations has increased or whether awareness of various threats has increased, allowing organizations to better recognize them. The most commonly reported type of attack was spam (43%). In second place, we see viruses and Trojans (16%), followed by phishing (15%). The occurrence of phishing has decreased from 25% in 2021, but when making a year-on-year comparison, we must be cautious because organizations often do not distinguish between spam and phishing. Data breaches were recognized and acknowledged by 2% of respondents, which corresponds to 12 organizations. This is slightly less than in 2021 when data breaches affected 15 organizations among those surveyed.

Automation and AI

What tools do you use for automating processes and routine tasks in your organization?

Legend: All, Civic, Volunteer Small, Volunteer Large, Professional Small, Professional Midsize, Professional Large

Given the significant progress in automation and artificial intelligence in recent times, our survey sought to understand how proficient non-profit organizations are in these areas. According to our data, the use of automation is still in its infancy, with 78% of organizations not actively utilizing any tools. Another 16% responded that they don't know, indicating that automation is likely not common in these organizations either. The remaining few mentioned tools like Make, Microsoft Power Automate, and Zapier. Among large professional organizations, the usage of Microsoft Power Automate increased to 7%, which aligns with Microsoft 365 being the most common system in these organizations. Additionally, large organizations often have IT administrators who can leverage more advanced features of systems like Power Automate.

Automation and AI

Do you use any tools or applications with artificial intelligence in your work?

Tools with artificial intelligence are used by only 7% of organizations. Professional midsized organizations perform the best in this regard, with a rate of 10%. Caution is needed when interpreting the data for large volunteer organizations, as this group in the survey includes only 10 organizations, meaning that 20% in the table corresponds to 2 organizations.
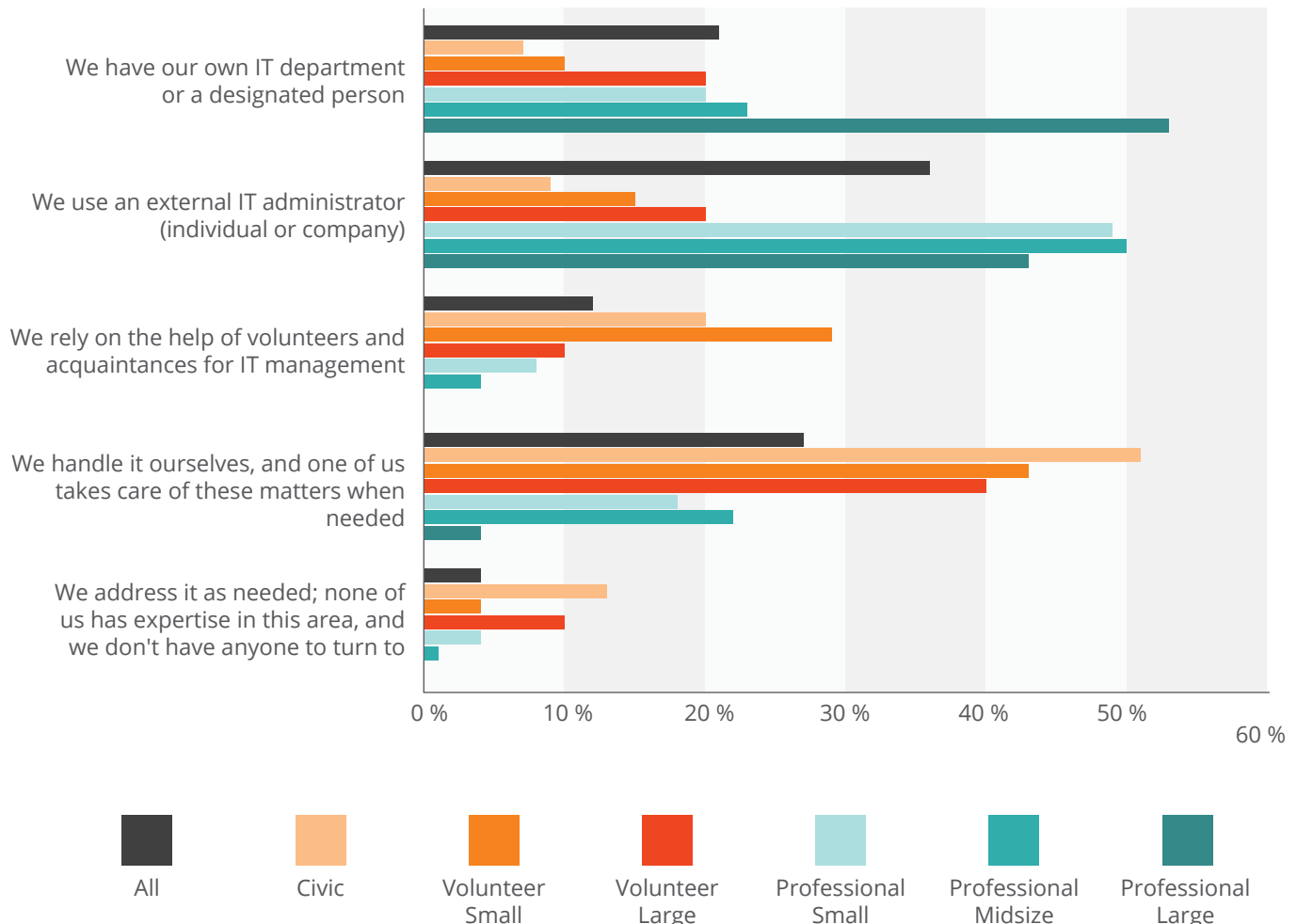
What AI tools or applications do you use and how?
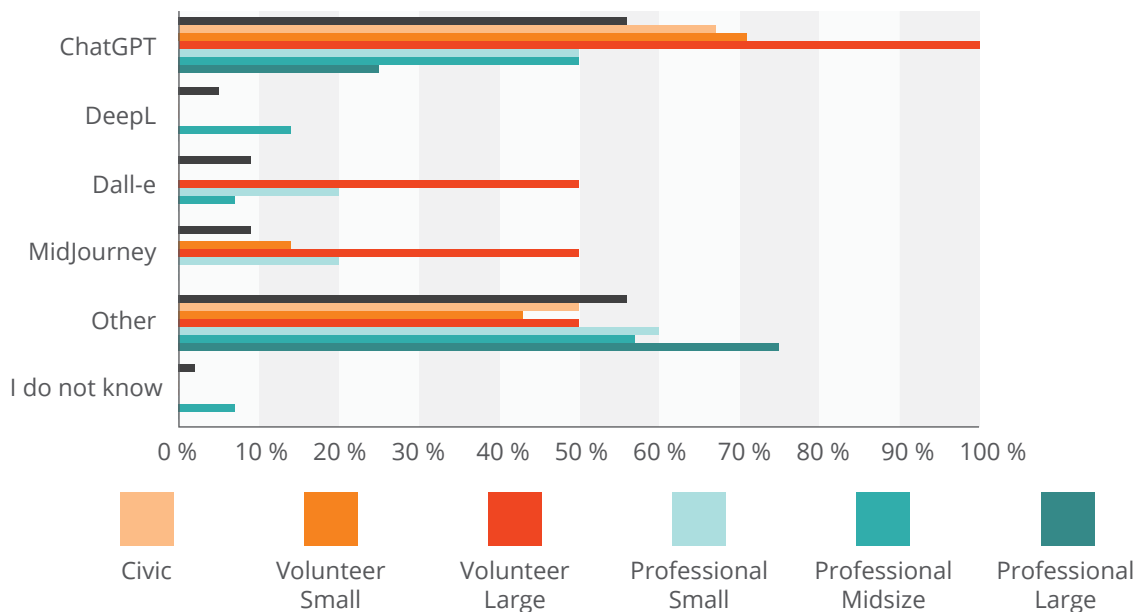
If organizations use AI, they most commonly work with ChatGPT: more than half of these organizations use it. Organizations also use graphic tools like DALL·E or MidJourney, among others. Organizations often mentioned that they try to use AI features of tools they already commonly use (such as Adobe or Canva). Some organizations described AI as a tool for proactive indivdiuals, while others are attempting to systematically integrate AI into their organization's regular activities.

IT Management

How do you manage IT in your organization?

We have our own IT department or a designated person

We use an external IT administrator (individual or company)

We rely on the help of volunteers and acquaintances for IT management

We handle it ourselves, and one of us takes care of these matters when needed

We address it as needed; none of us has expertise in this area, and we don't have anyone to turn to

Legend: All · Civic · Volunteer Small · Volunteer Large · Professional Small · Professional Midsize · Professional Large

Own IT departments or IT administrators are more common among large professional organizations (53%), with other professional organizations most often using external IT administrators. For civic and volunteer organizations, it's common for them to handle IT management themselves, with one person within the organization taking care of it as an additional task alongside their regular duties. These results are generally consistent with the findings from 2021 (although the question and provided answers were phrased slightly differently this year, which could affect comparisons). The most significant shift is seen among large professional organizations, where there has been an increase in the use of expert administrators, whether in-house or external, and self-management has nearly disappeared. The results reflect the reality of the nonprofit sector: smaller organizations often lack the resources to hire professional administrators and are forced to rely on their own abilities to manage IT. Therefore, it's crucial, from our perspective, for smaller organizations to at least use professional systems capable of handling many tasks for them and incorporating various security features that organizations might not be able to implement on their own (systems like Microsoft 365 or Google Workspace, for example).

Digital Transformation

Does your organization have a defined digital strategy?
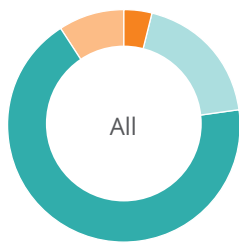

Yes, we have a written strategy | **Yes, we have plans, but we haven't formalized them into a strategy** | **No** | **I do not know**

From this question, we can see that very few organizations have clear plans for where they want to go with digitalization. The majority of organizations, 68%, haven't thought about it and handle development ad hoc. Only 4% of organizations have a documented strategy, with the majority being large professional organizations (13%). In our view, this situation also highlights a widespread lack of awareness in many organizations about the tools at their disposal, what can be accomplished with them, and a deficiency in digital skills.

Do you think there are obstacles to introducing new IT tools in your organization? If so, what are they?
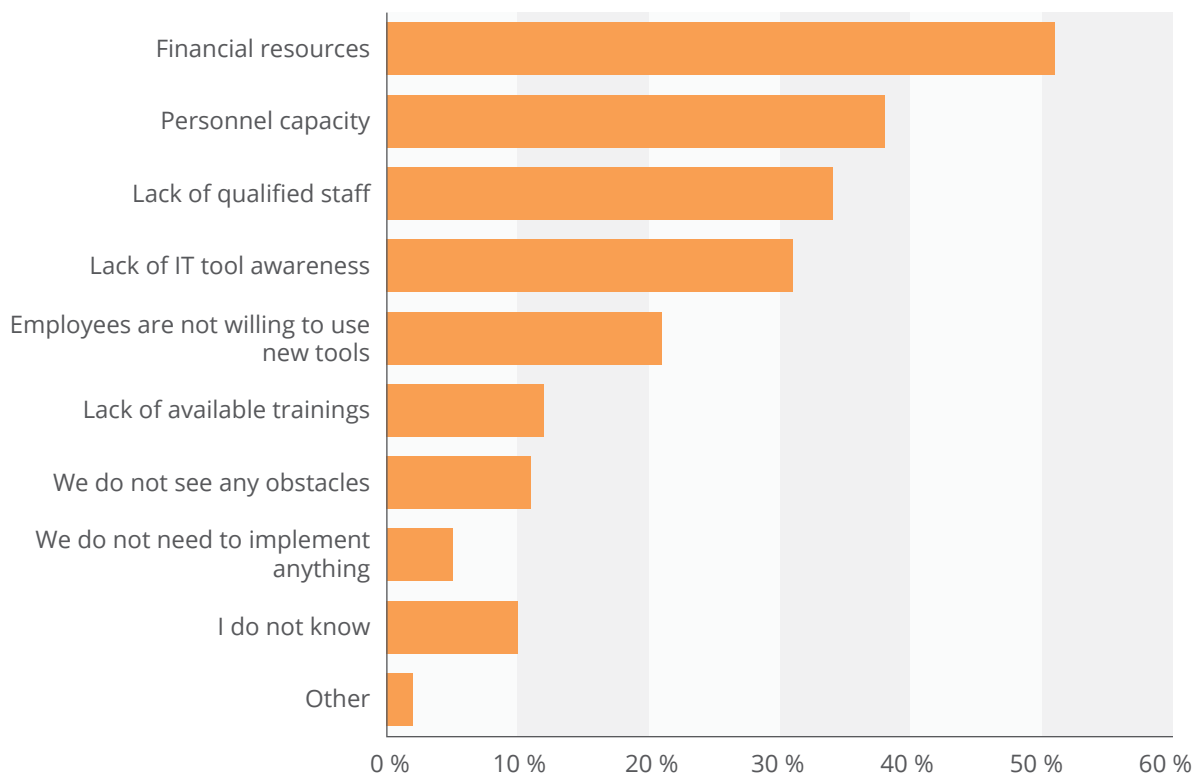
Unsurprisingly, organizations primarily mention financial resources as the main obstacle, with this response even appearing in 65% of large professional organizations. Other obstacles were also frequently mentioned, such as personnel capacity, a lack of qualified employees, as well as a lack of awareness about IT tools, which was mentioned by almost a third of organizations and was often named within individual topics. In large professional organizations, the percentages of mentions for individual obstacles are about 10 to 20 percentage points higher than the average, while other types of organizations are similar to the average.

The authors interacted with the following artificial intelligence tools to create or assist in the creation of content and translations included in this report: ChatGPT-3.5, ChatGPT-4.0.