

SHARING ECONOMY IN LUND MUNICIPALITY

Surveying citizens on interests for sharing to reduce consumption



Source: Voytenko Palgan Y, Mont O and Sulkakoski S (2021) Governing the sharing economy: Towards a comprehensive analytical framework of municipal governance. *Cities* 108: 102994. DOI: [10.1016/j.cities.2020.102994](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2020.102994)

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Lunds Kommun can advance a circular economy, supported by resident input, through enabling, providing, and regulating roles of governance to become climate neutral by 2030.

While various organizations in Lund currently allow citizens to participate in a sharing community, Lunds Kommun, the city municipality, is beginning their journey to strategically advance a circular economy. Because it reduces consumption through extending the life of goods, shifting to a more circular economy is a key component of strategic initiatives such as becoming a climate neutral city by 2030 and LundaEko. Making such a shift requires an approach centered around residents' needs and opinions. This project focuses on gathering information about people's current practices and views regarding a sharing economy.

METHODS

Awareness, desires, and concerns regarding a sharing economy in Lund were evaluated through 25 intercept interviews and 165 survey responses across a variety of demographics.

We used a survey and intercept interviews to learn about residents' opinions regarding a circular economy. The survey, modeled off parallel studies in Gothenburg and Malmö, was disseminated to almost 20,000 past doctoral students, staff, and faculty at Lund University, the Lund Municipality web page, and various Facebook groups including one for the Ukrainian community. Of those emailed directly, the response rate was 0.67%. The resulting 165 survey respondents (also highlighted in **Exhibits 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5**) represented a wide mix of:

- time spent in Lund *(63% live in Lund, 34% work in Lund),*
- ages *(20% under 35, 22% over 55, the rest in between),*
- genders *(61% female, 37% male),*
- monthly incomes *(38% <40K SEK/mo., 27% >60K SEK/mo., 32% in between),*
- number of children *(45% without children, 55% with one or more child).*

Because the survey was voluntary, the sample is likely biased towards being "green-minded." Additionally, intercept interviewees were randomly selected around the city, generating diverse perspectives from individuals like parents, students, and small business owners.

FINDINGS

Findings revealed peoples' current awareness of sharing economies, their favored methods and goods for sharing, and their greatest priorities and concerns in participating. Statistical tests were run to pinpoint the significance of these preferences in various demographic groups.

Survey participants have a little to moderate amount of knowledge regarding existing sharing economy resources in Lund, with some groups knowing less. **Exhibit 6** shows 55% of survey respondents know only a little about existing resources in Lund and 28% know a moderate amount. The results in **Exhibit 7** indicate that wealthier individuals (60k SEK or more per month), who have greater purchasing ability, share less and rate their knowledge lower.

Repairing, selling/buying second-hand, and renting from an organization were the most favorable way to participate in a sharing economy. One survey respondent noted that it was “more cumbersome to have to manage a conversation with a private person.” And, while most receptive amongst young individuals, ‘spontaneous attitudes’ towards borrowing, lending, and renting to and from a private person were generally negative overall (somewhat or very) among 16% of respondents. In contrast, only 3% of people had negative views about renting from a company, highlighting that business to person is likely a better option for sharing than person to person (**Exhibit 8**). Further behavioral findings reveal that 96.1% of respondents were positive (somewhat positive or very positive) for two or more sharing behaviors, 77.1% for at least half of behaviors, and 40.1% were positive about all 8 behaviors. All attitudes are shown in **Exhibit 9**.

Beyond behavior, there is convergence between people’s most unused items and ones they want to share, as well as items they currently don’t share, but can imagine sharing. **Exhibit 10** shows that people are more willing to share items if they have them but are not being used. The most prominent of these items are detailed in **Exhibit 11**. There is also a strong relationship between things that people are not currently sharing but can imagine sharing. Shown in **Exhibit 12**, items like services, sporting equipment, bikes and electronics all have a large gap between percent of people who already share these items and people who can imagine sharing them. Specific items that were found to be popular for sharing are detailed in **Exhibits 13, 14, and 15** with the greatest opportunity for increased sharing in tools and gardening equipment (86% can imagine sharing that don’t already). This shows people can imagine more sharing across all categories and there is significant opportunity to advance the economy.

Current sharing patterns for these behaviors and goods remain consistent across demographics, except for varying levels of interest between genders and age groups.

Women currently share more, are more interested in further participation, and are more willing to learn about sharing resources than men. Women also view repairing, renting from a company, selling second hand, and renting from a private person more positively. Younger individuals (under 45) are currently more involved in sharing, and more interested in greater participation, than older groups (45+). For example, 80% of younger individuals can imagine sharing sports/camping equipment, but only 56% of older individuals can. **Exhibits 16 and 17** further detail goods and behavior differences between young and older age groups.

Convenience, hygiene, and legitimacy are the main considerations for residents when considering participating in sharing. Participants from both the interviews and survey wanted sharing to be convenient (as evidenced by a focus on time efficiency and ease of access) and an activity they can trust (as evidenced by a focus on hygiene and safety). 48% of respondents stressed the importance of liability, as 34% saw hygiene as an obstacle, and 35% were worried about it being time consuming (**Exhibit 18**). Of 25 interviews, 20% brought up hygiene as a main concern. Close proximity was in 80% of survey respondents' top three priorities, and a clear understanding of “what/when things are available” was in 75% of respondents' top three priorities from eight options. So, residents value convenience not only in terms of location, but

also with regards to easy access to information. Individuals would prefer a trusted mediator organization, like the city, to monitor safety and provide more central locations.

IMPLICATIONS

Lunds Kommun can regulate, enable, and provide convenient and legitimate sharing by creating ‘Standards of Sharing,’ a sharing economy webpage, and sharing events. Public willingness revealed by the survey is contingent on key safeguards, like hygiene and breakage protection, as well as awareness of availability and convenient locations. Regulating, enabling, and providing governance roles will be important and are completed through the communication, matchmaking, regulating, and hosting activities of the recommendations (**Exhibit 19**).

The city municipality can create clear expectations and standards for sharing economies that bring security and elevate quality to attract more participants. Referencing the Governance Framework (**Exhibit 19**), the Regulating role provides a basis for implementing “Standards of Sharing,” introducing a code of conduct around hygiene, breakage, and rental processes for resource libraries and organizations. This measure works to address concerns about hygiene and legitimacy that we outlined in the findings.

Lunds Kommun can organize sharing events where the public can learn about circular economy organizations while securely and conveniently sharing goods. Serving the enabling and matchmaker governance roles, Lunds Kommun should host events (in city-owned spaces) where organizations, who meet the ‘Standards of Sharing’ mentioned, can engage with people interested in sharing. Inspired by the multiple interviewees that mentioned attending formal events as their only sharing method to date, hosting events would allow for quick swapping to create a norm of convenience and opportunity to educate people about sharing.

Lunds Kommun can create a digital platform that includes links to verified organizations and detailed educational resources to learn more about what a sharing economy entails and its direct benefits. A digital platform would allow Lunds Kommun to again enable and matchmake, as well as communicate. It would link organizations’ resource libraries and be a source to track availability and outline steps needed to reserve or rent items. Additionally, it would provide information about Standards of Sharing and the benefits of circular economies, alleviating knowledge barriers. An example of the website is detailed in **Exhibit 20**.

Lunds Kommun strives to be a city with a successful sharing economy, and can advance their goals by empowering the interests of residents and existing organizations to have convenience, legitimacy, and trust within a sharing economy. Exhibits 19 and 21 highlight these specific areas of the framework that Lunds Kommun should focus on, with the key roles regulating, enabling, and providing.

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: The majority of respondents either lived in Lund permanently or worked in Lund, taking up a combined 97% of the geographic spread

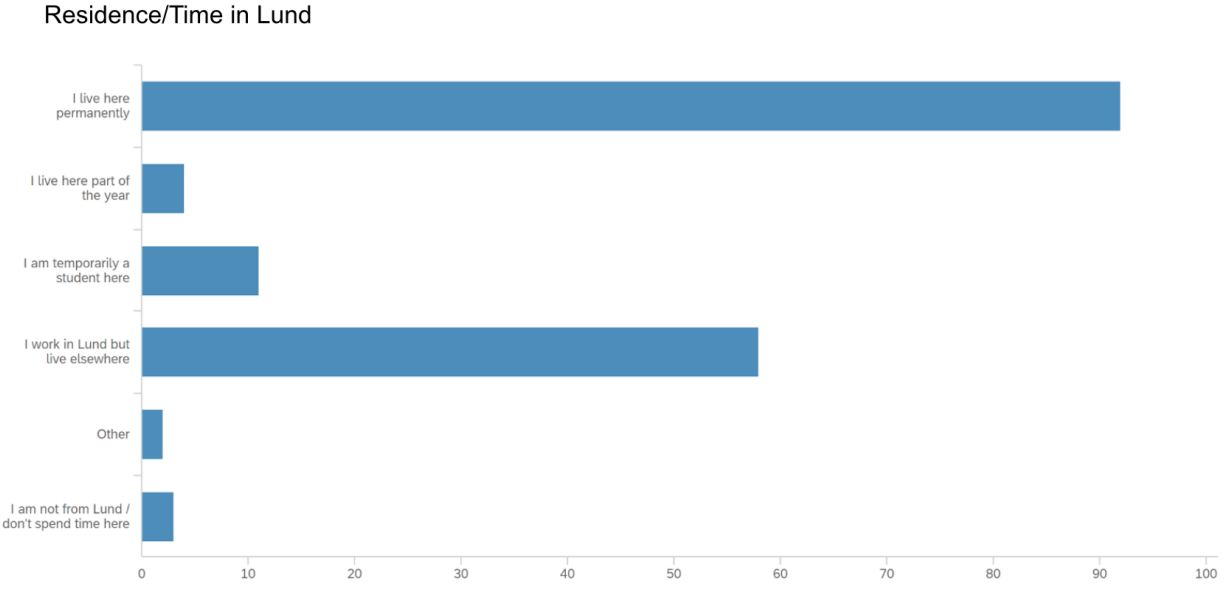


Exhibit 2: 20% of respondents were under 35, 22% were over 55, and the remaining 58% were between the two

Age

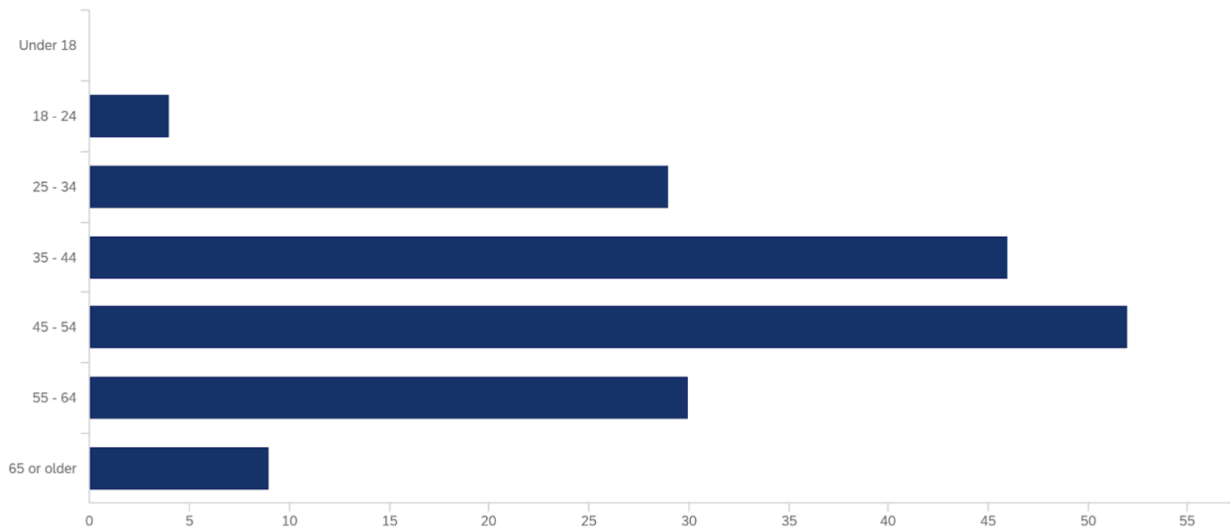


Exhibit 3: 61% of survey respondents were female, while 37% were male

Gender

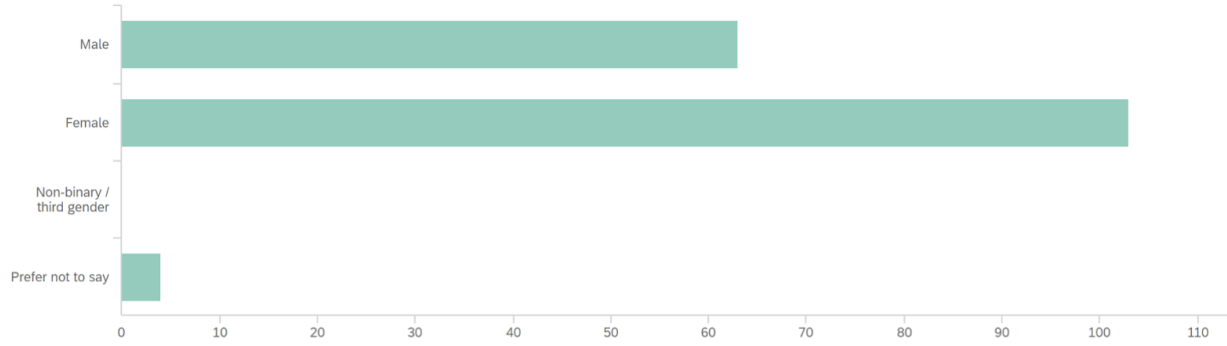


Exhibit 4: 27% of respondents make more than 60K SEK per/mo., while 38% make less than 40K SEK per/mo., and the remaining 32% fall somewhere between

Income

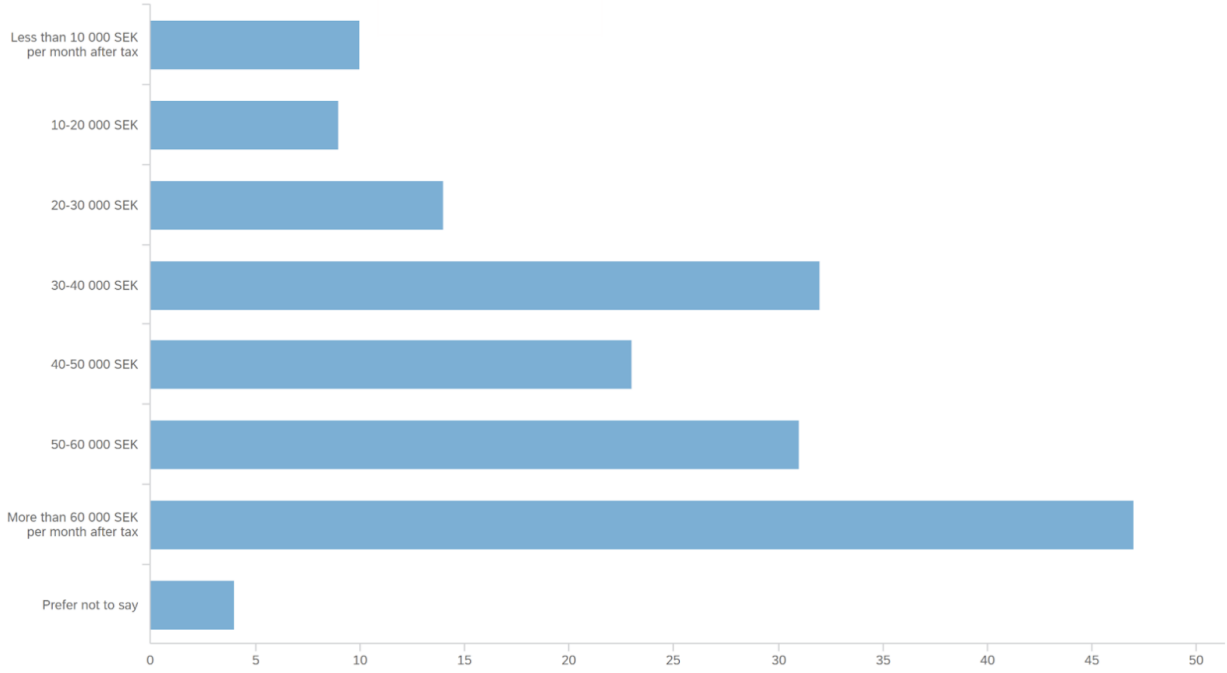


Exhibit 5: 45% of respondents had no children, while 55% had one or more child

Children

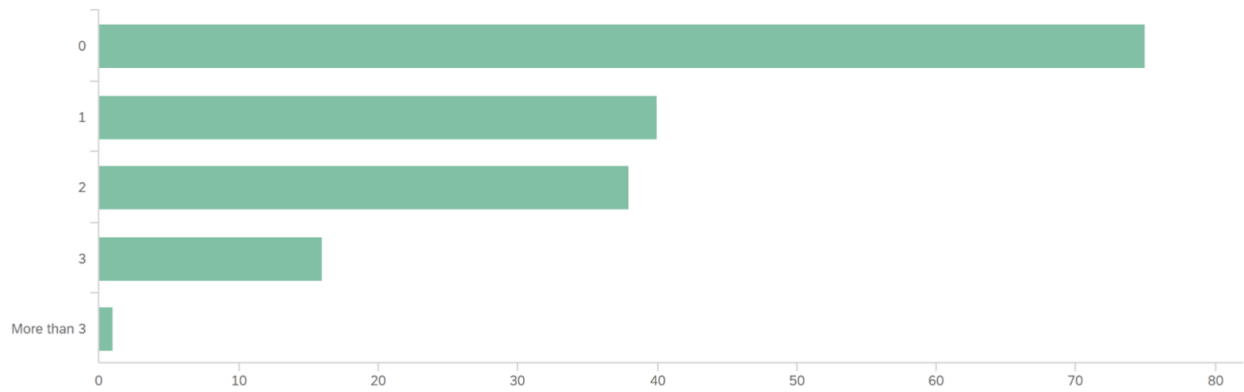


Exhibit 6: 55% of survey respondents answered that they knew a little about sharing economy resources in Lund, and 28% answered that they knew a moderate amount, with the remaining 17% relatively distributed between knowing a lot and not knowing anything

How much Participants know about Existing Sharing Economy Resources in Lund

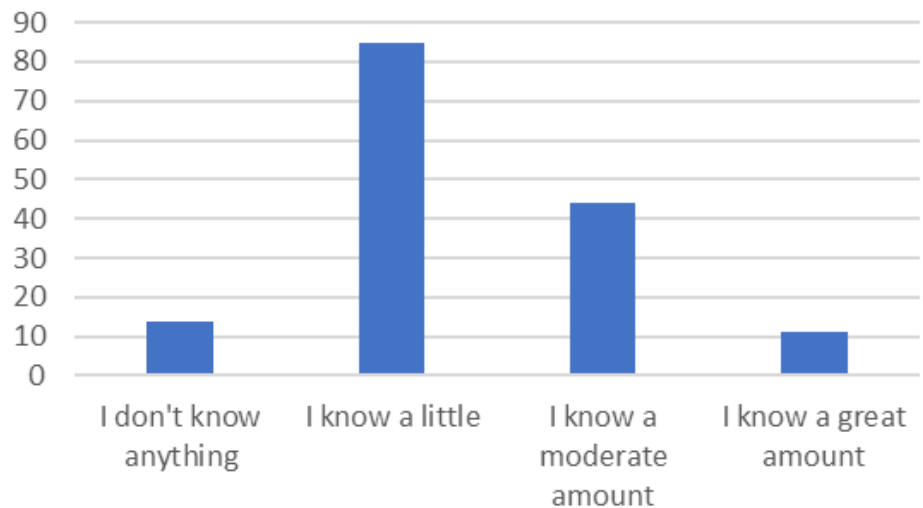


Exhibit 7: Wealthier individuals rate their knowledge of a sharing economy lower than other income groups

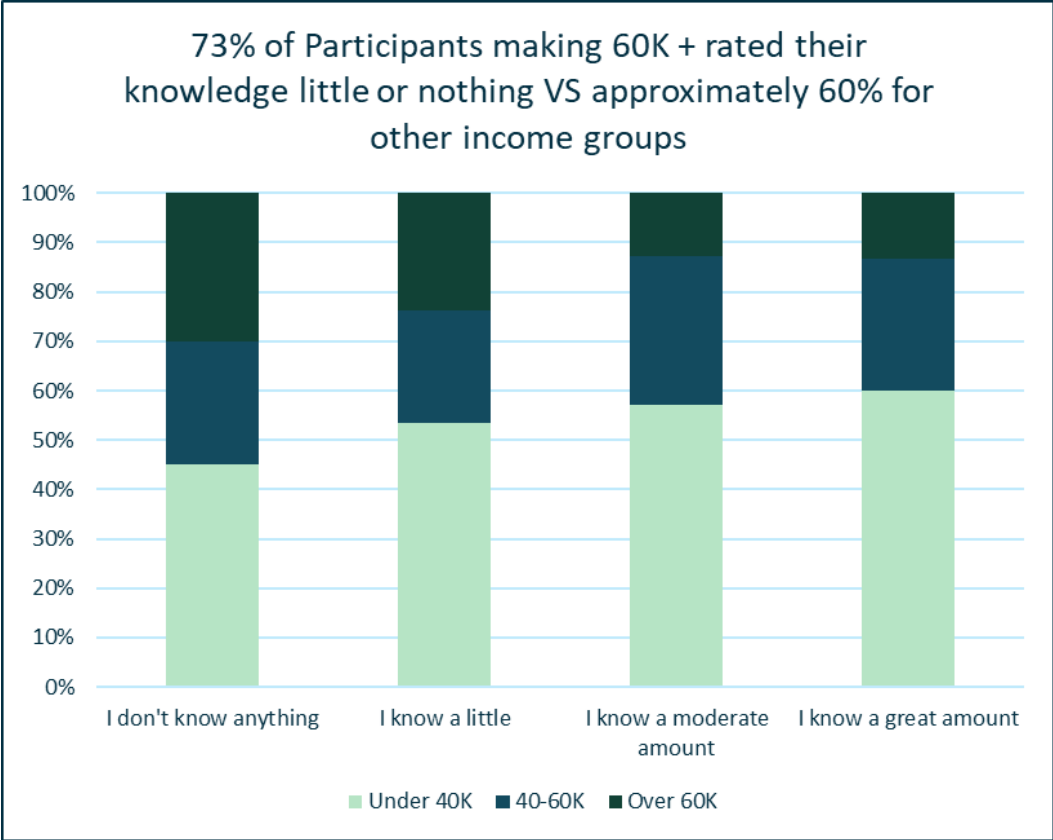


Exhibit 8: People rated the action of renting to and from a private person far more negatively than borrowing from a company

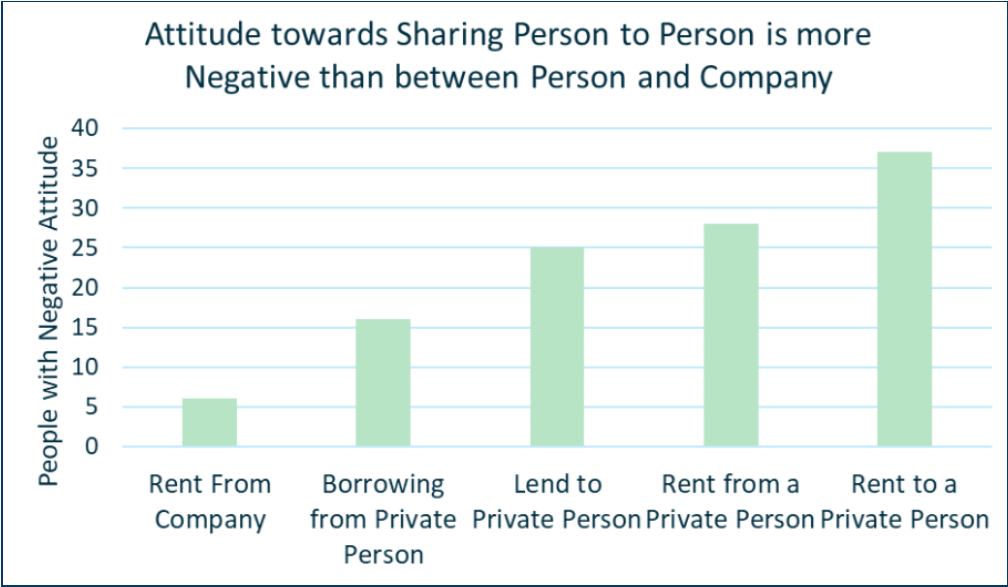


Exhibit 9: Percent positive vs. percent negative for each sharing economy practice.

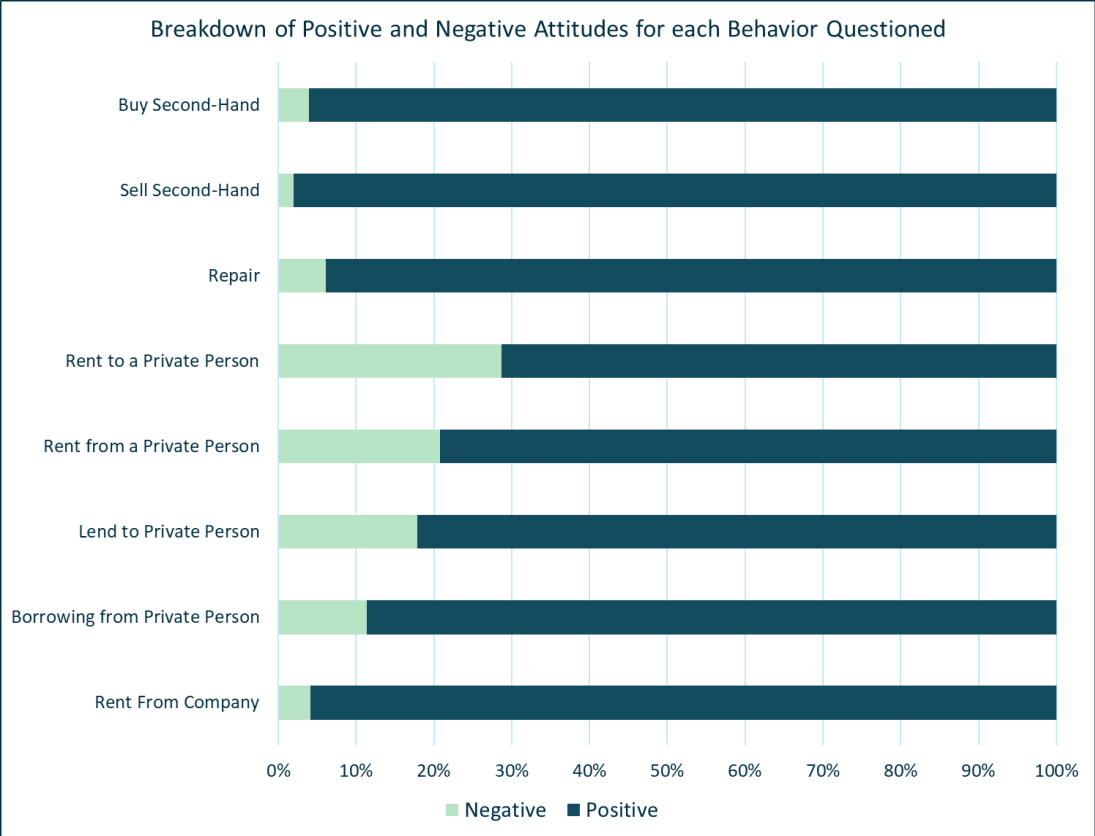


Exhibit 10: There is a positive, linear correlation between the percent of people with extra of a certain item and the percent of people currently sharing that particular item

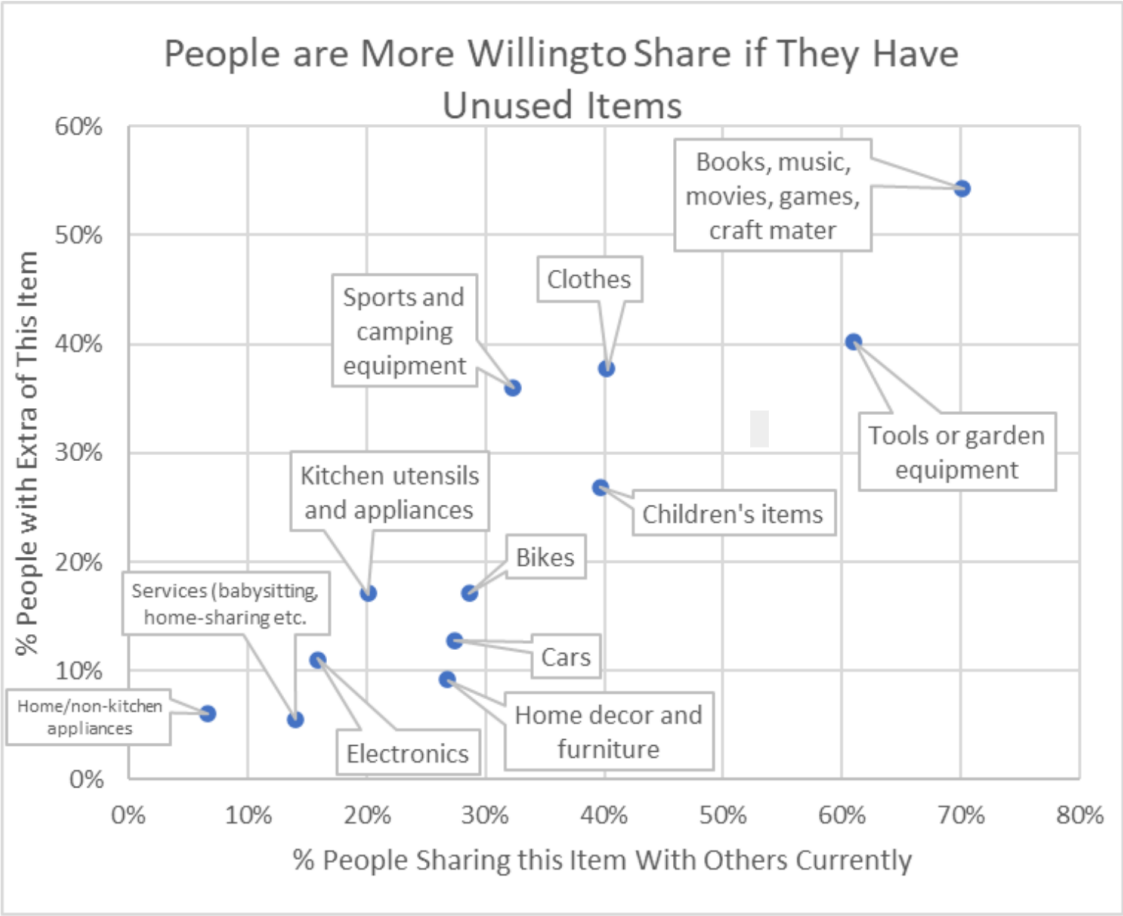


Exhibit 11: Entertainment paraphernalia is most commonly answered when asked in which areas do you have the most unused items, with equipment and clothes being the next most answered (survey results)

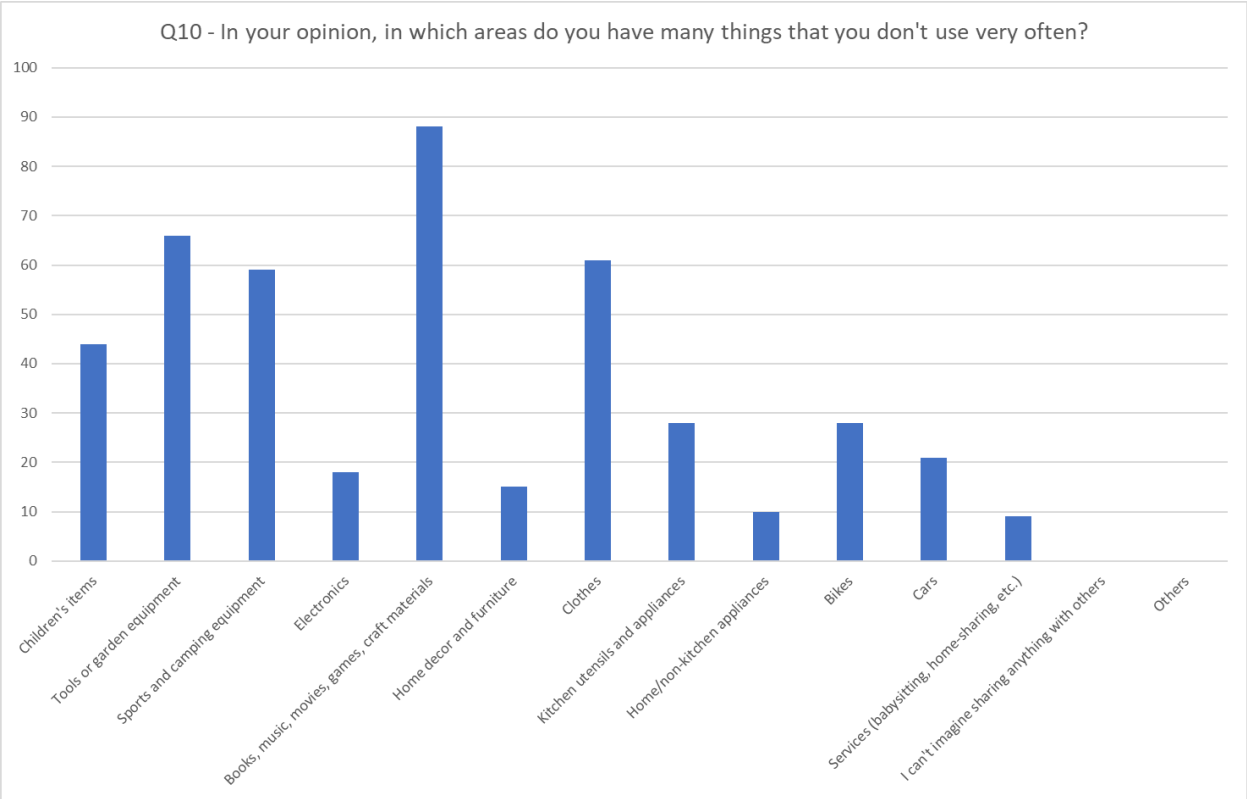


Exhibit 12: There is a 40% gap between the percentage of people currently sharing services (babysitting, home-sharing, etc.) and those who can imagine sharing it, with sports and camping equipment, kitchen utensils, and transportation having similar differences

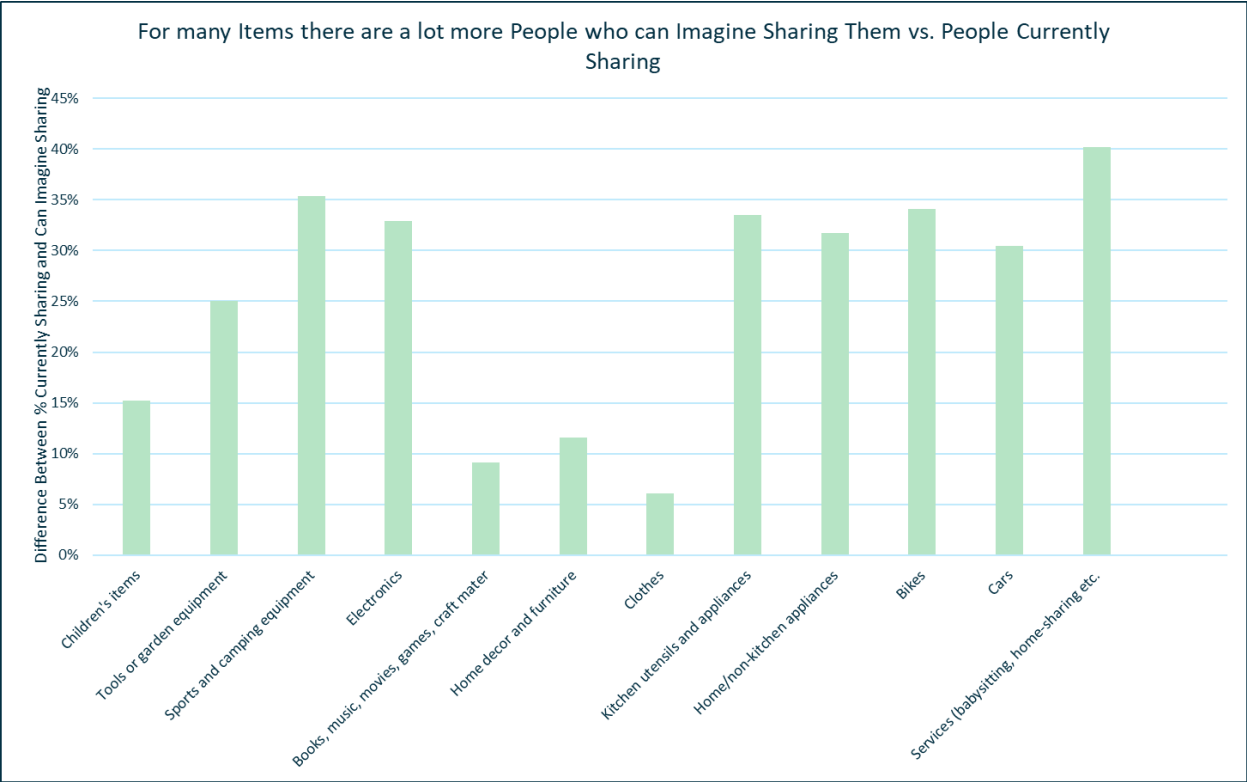


Exhibit 13: Entertainment paraphernalia is currently the most commonly shared category, with tools/gardening equipment not far behind (survey results)

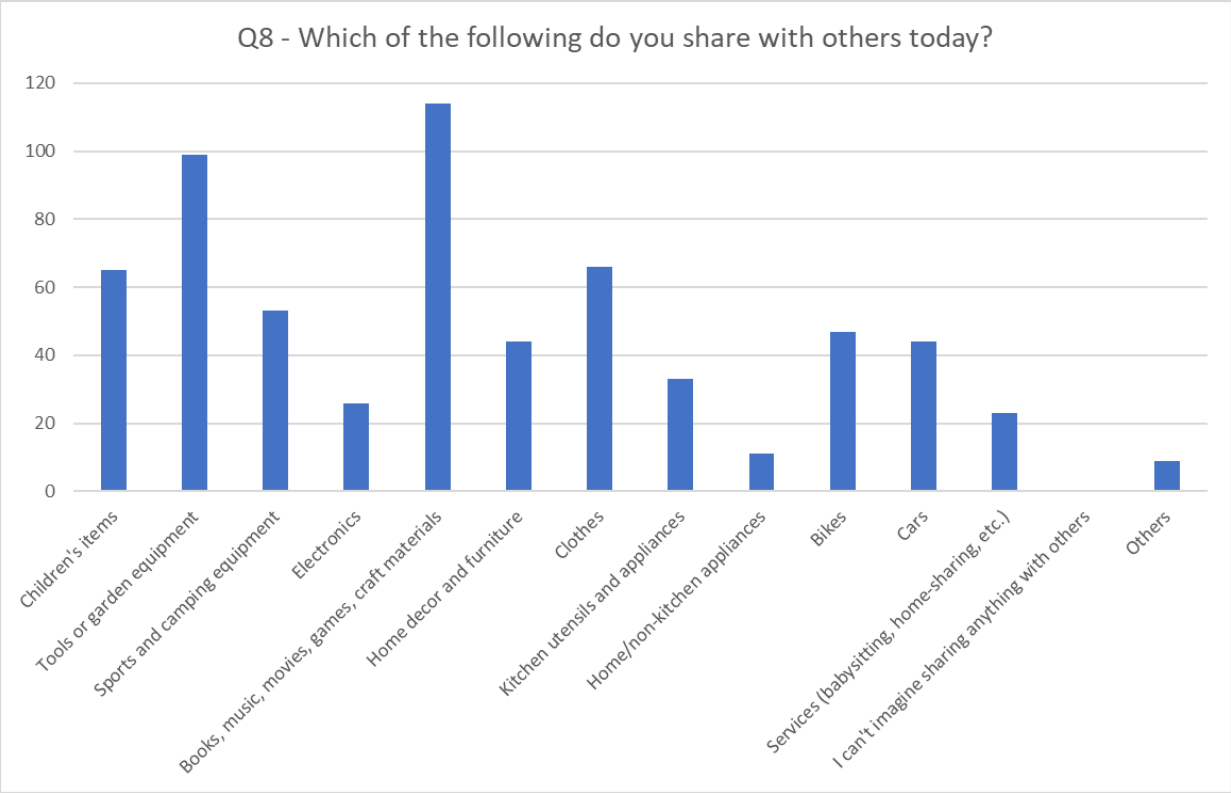


Exhibit 14: Tools, gardening and camping equipment and entertainment paraphernalia are the most commonly answered items when asked what items are most easily imaginable to share, with transportation falling not too far behind (survey results)

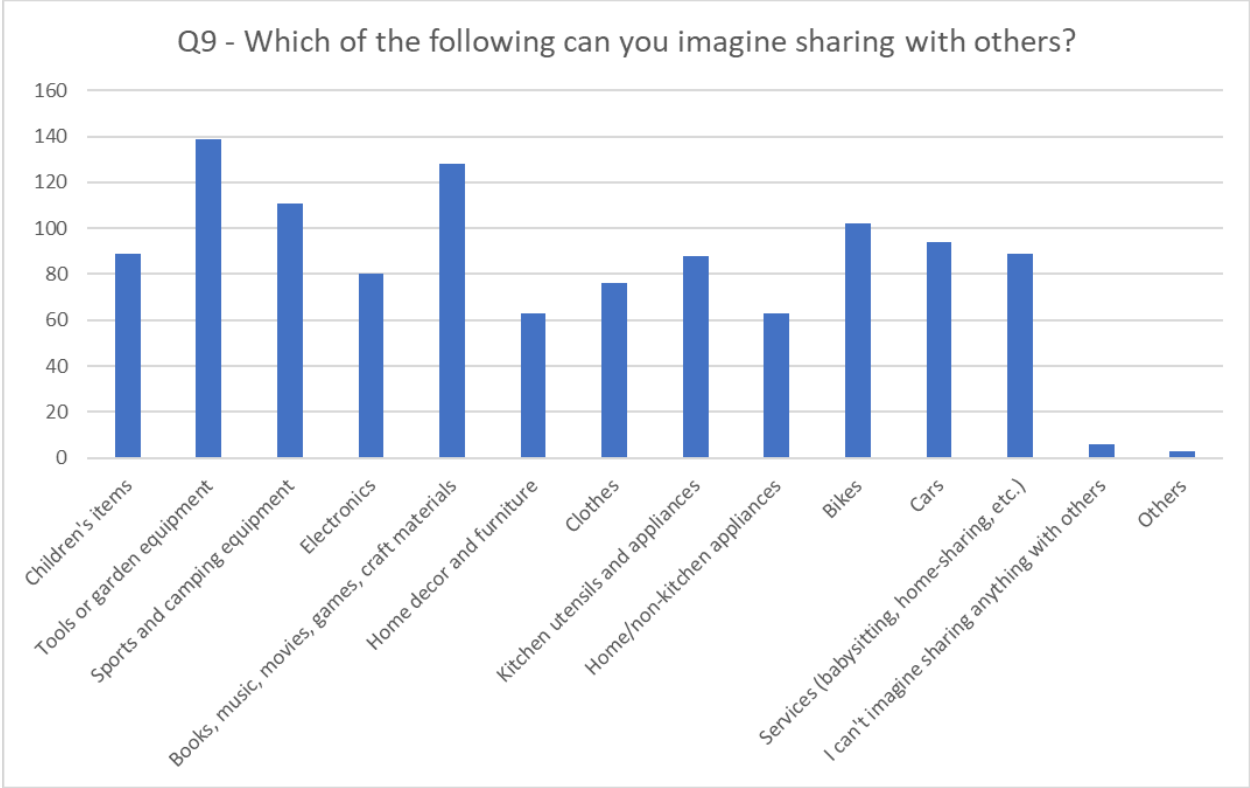


Exhibit 15: World cloud highlights that children’s items, clothes, and camping equipment are the most common answers when asked what is most ideal to share (intercept interview results)



Exhibit 16: Younger participants were more interested in sharing items such as sports/camping equipment, home appliances, kitchen appliances, and clothes

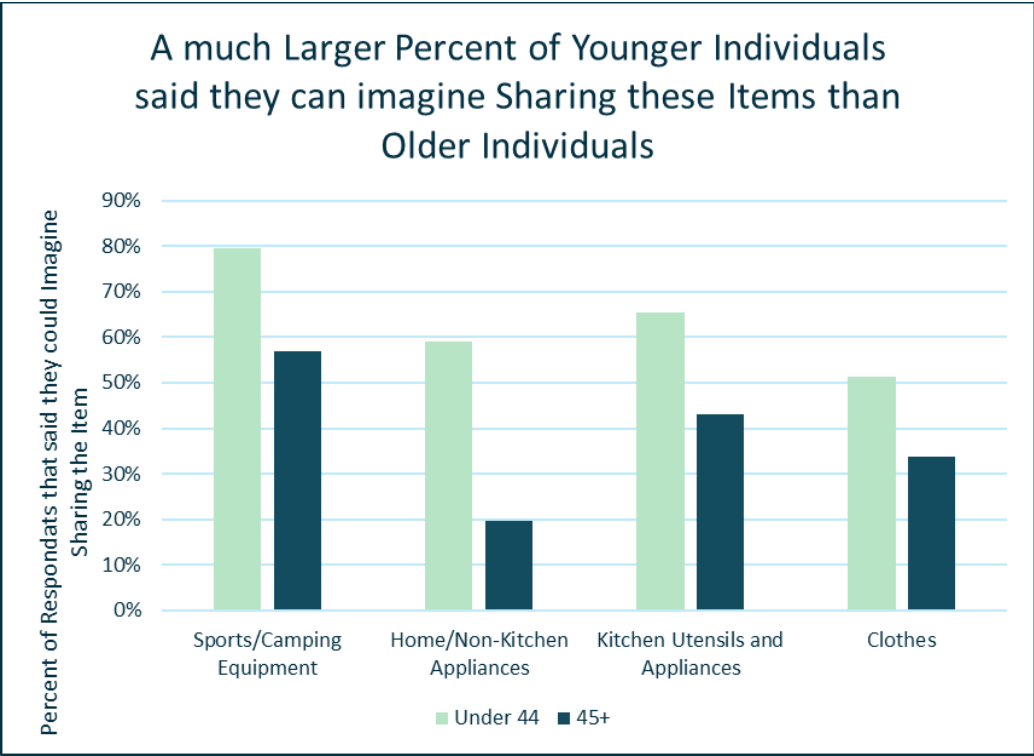


Exhibit 17: Younger participants had a more positive view than older groups on selling/buying second-hand, borrowing/lending from a private person, and renting to/from a private person

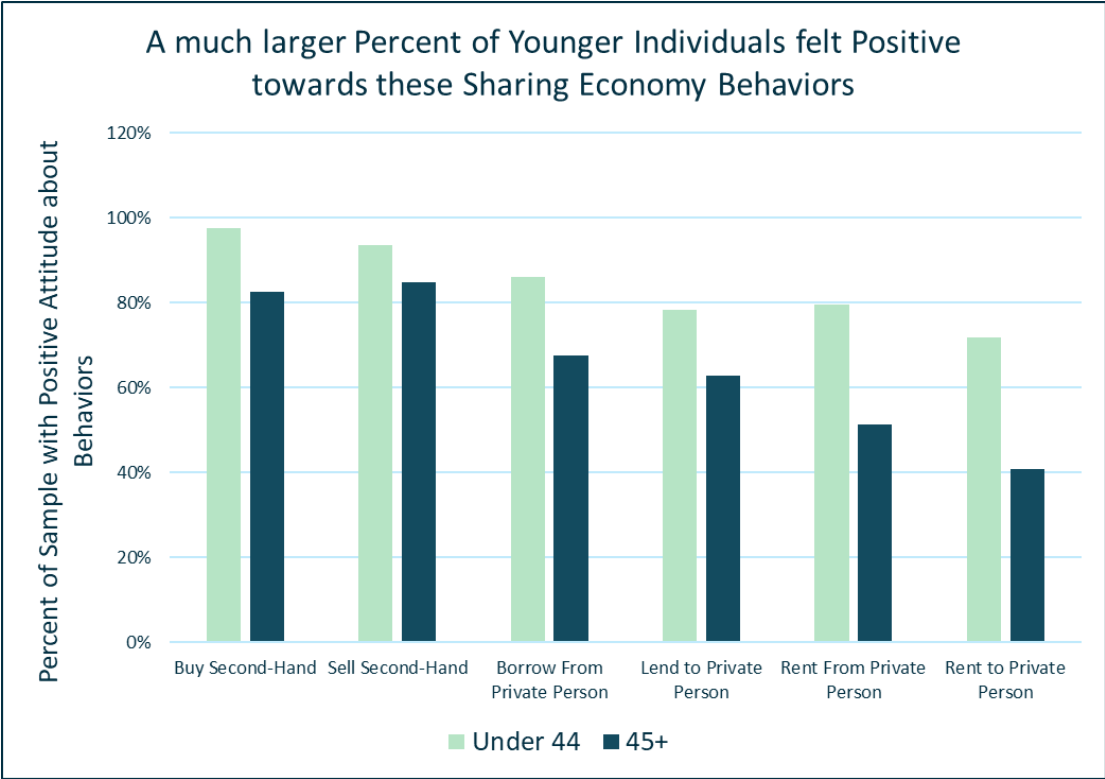


Exhibit 18: Lack of knowledge around availability of items, fear of lost items, and hygienic issues were the most common answers when asked about obstacles preventing survey respondents from participating in sharing

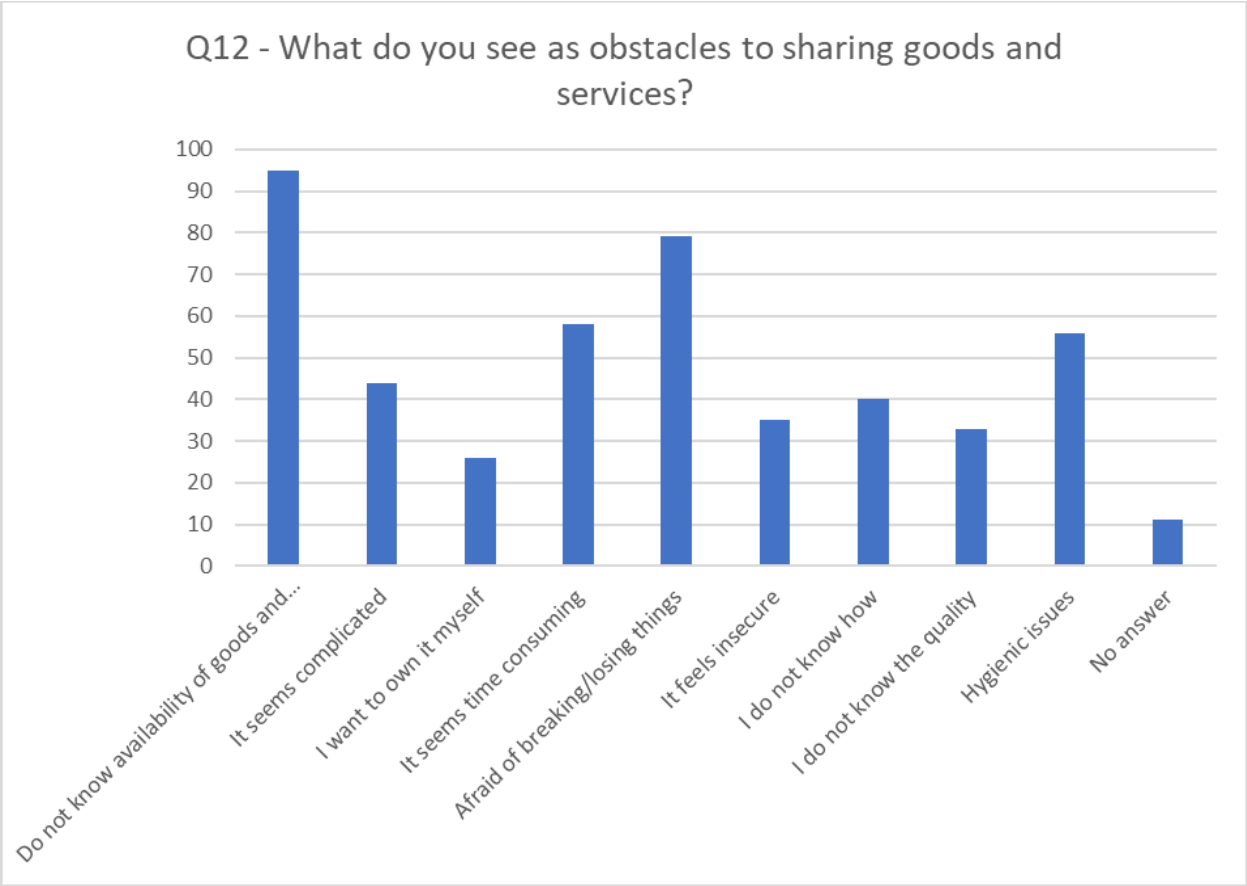


Exhibit 19: Lund must to focus on acting as the matchmaker, communicator, regular, and host in order to strategically advance a sharing economy (colored in the Governance Framework)



Exhibit 20: Mock-ups of a sample Lunds Kommun website that could serve as a directory for sharing economy resources

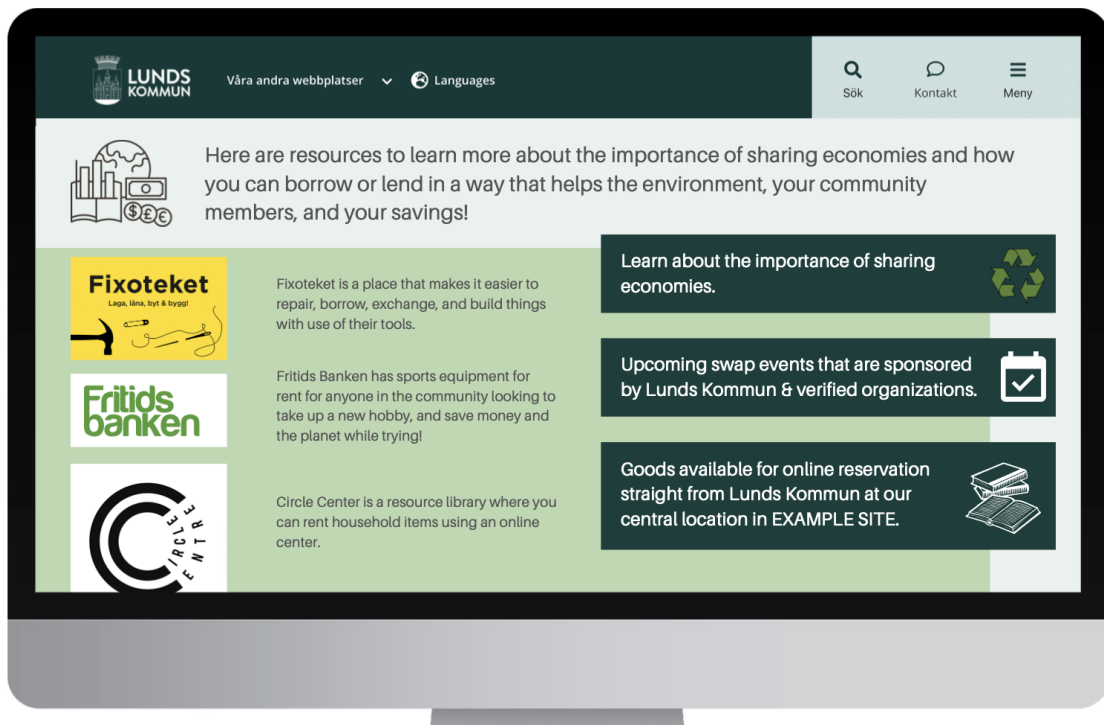
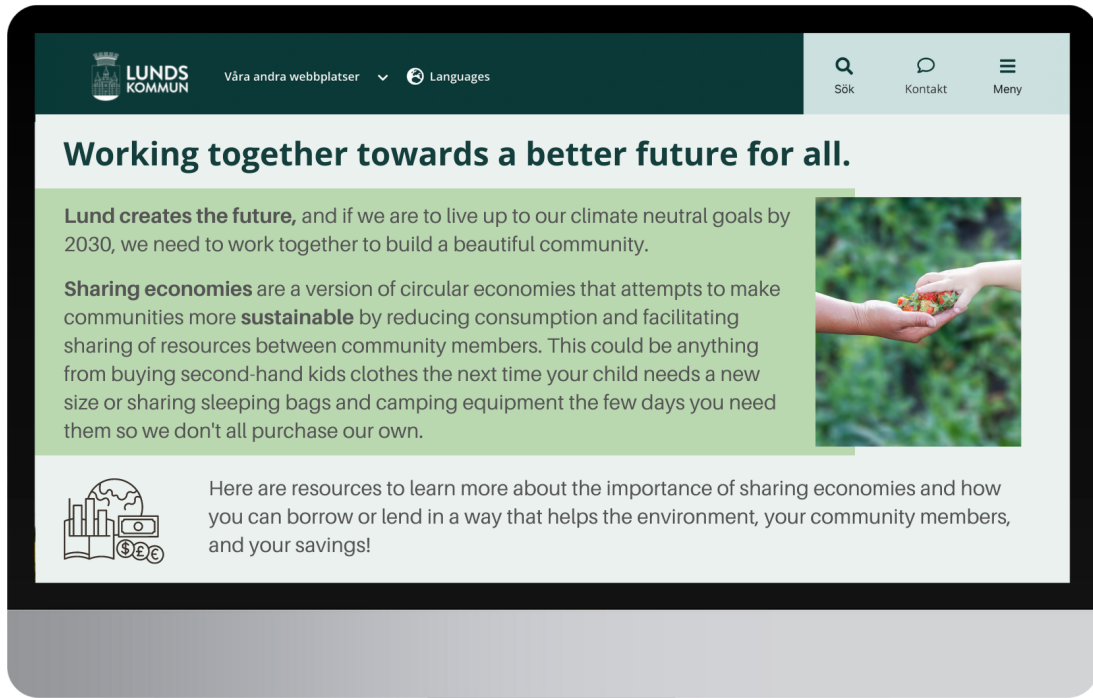






Exhibit 21: Matrix depicting the areas of the Governance Framework that our recommendations fall under

	Communicating	Matchmaking	Regulating	Hosting
Standards of Sharing				
Sharing Economy Web Page				
Organized Sharing Events		