

FUA-LEVEL WATER EFFICIENCY AND REUSE RELATED PUBLIC PERCEPTION ASSESSMENT - MARIBOR FUA

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Version 1
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1. BACKGROUND

The data collection was implemented between 23th October 2019 and 28th February 2020, basically targeting the inhabitants of Maribor FUA online. Employees in public utility companies and in the municipality of Maribor have been encouraged to fill out the survey online. 229 answers were collected during the period in the respective FUA. Even though the number has not reached the expected targeted audience of approximately 400 people, we consider comparatively to other FUAs in the project that are more than 10 times larger in size, that our sampling represents a sufficient representative pattern for relevant analysis.

1.1. Gender

By the available statistics the gender distribution in Maribor is 51% female and 49% male in the age group over 15. In the sample of the survey male gender is slightly over half: 52% of responders are male and 48% are female.

1.2. Age

The group of middle age population is slightly overrepresented in the sample: 81% of responders are in the age 26-65, compared to the 57% rate in the whole population of Maribor. Young people are representing 11,5% of the sample population, elderly 7,5%.

1.3. Residence

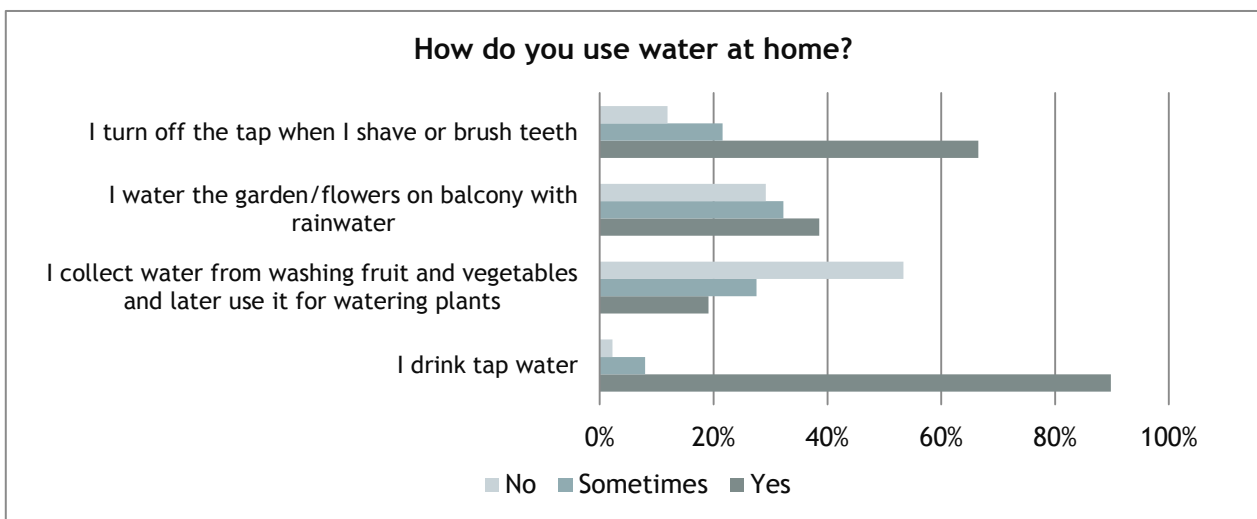
The sample focuses mainly on Municipality of Maribor (65% of responses comes from Municipality of Maribor) and 35% of the responders are living in other settlements of the FUA.



2. PERSONAL USES

2.1. Habits

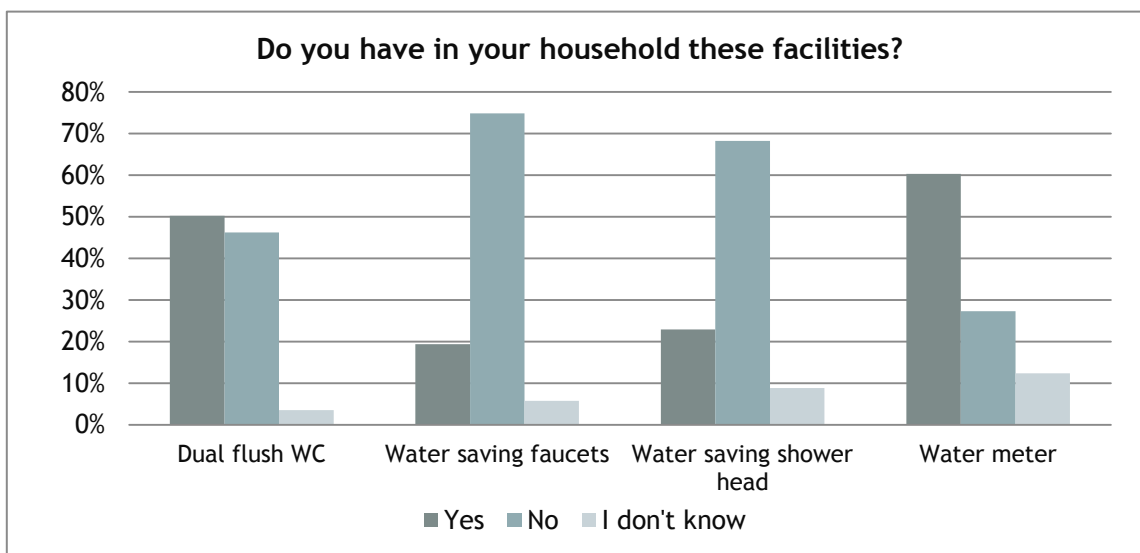
Approximately 65% of responders in the FUA level turn off the tap during saving and brushing teeth, whereas 22% turn it off sometimes, and 12% never. Using tap water for watering gardens and flowers on balconies is more evenly distributed, since around one third of respondents uses tap water for watering 38% of time, whereas around 29% never uses it and 33% sometimes. Water collected from washing fruit and vegetables is seldom reused for watering plants (only 18%), but a vast majority of people (90%) use tap water for drinking.





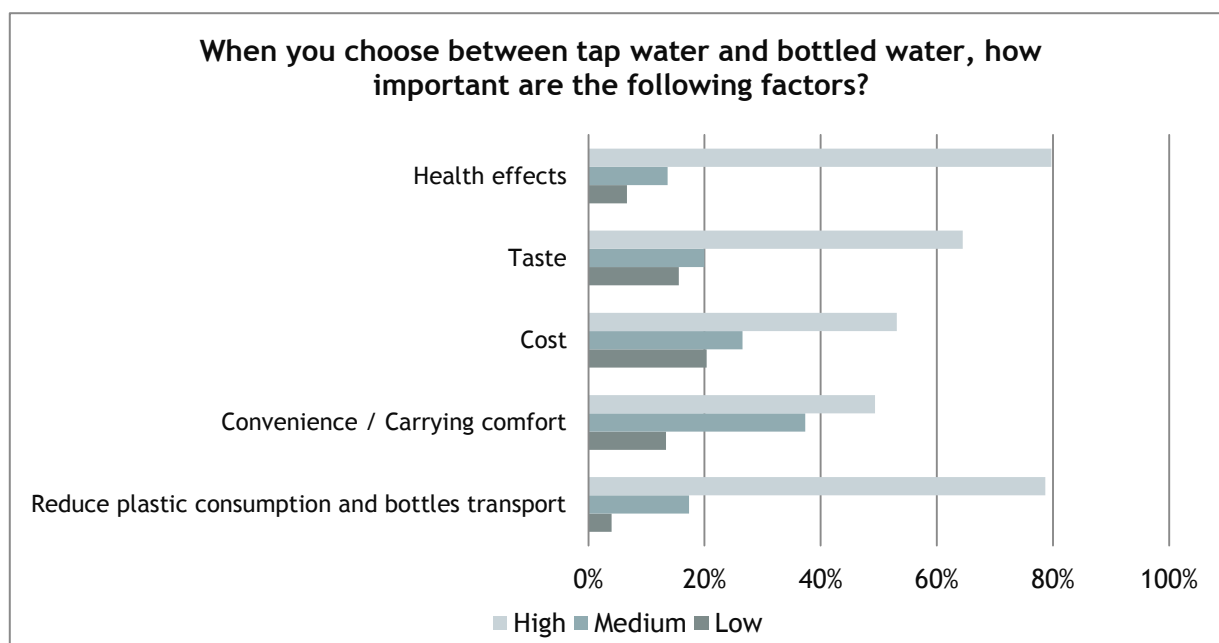
2.2. Facilities

Water meters are quite widespread, especially due to the efforts and investment of Maribor Water Supply Company in the last years (60%). The standardisation of dual flush WC utilities in Slovenia's suppliers has resulted in 50% of households having installed at least one, whereas the water saving faucets and shower heads have not yet reached FUA's households (just 19% have water saving faucets and 21% shower heads).



2.3. Bottle or tap?

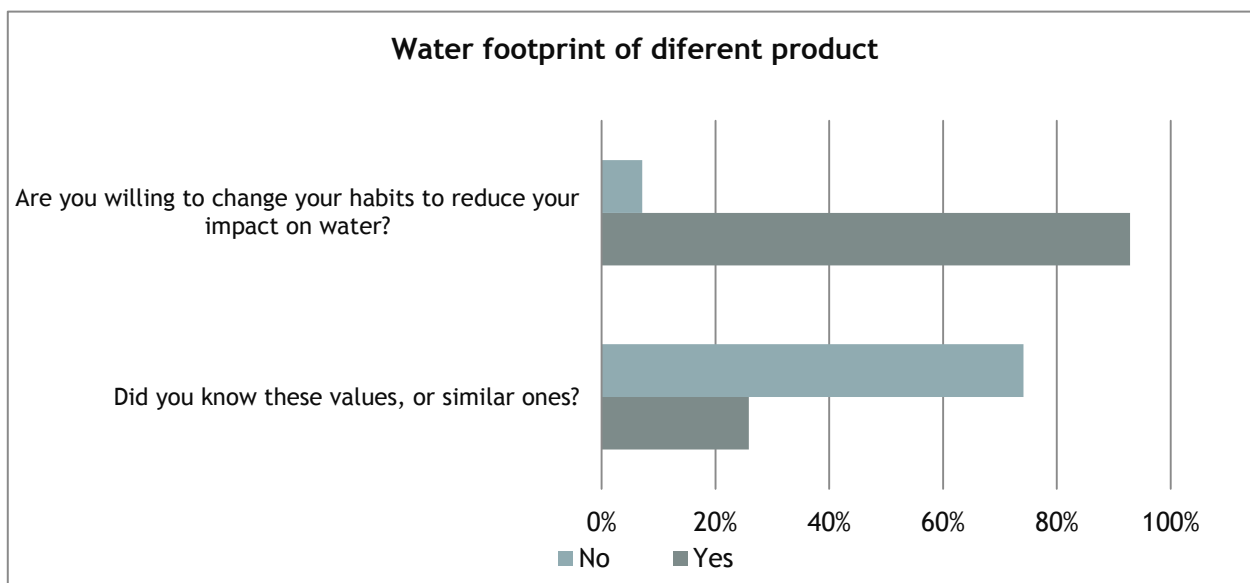
The undisputed quality of water provided to the FUA by Maribor Water Supply Company has a strong recognition among the citizens, since 80% of them use it because of its health effect and 65% because of taste. The appropriate price point of our water is reflected in 53% of people using it to save money. The most surprising answers reaching almost 80% is that citizens do not use bottled water because of plastics reduction, putting Maribor FUA level at the top of conscious citizens' environmental awareness and fortifies the success of Maribor in going circular since 2015.





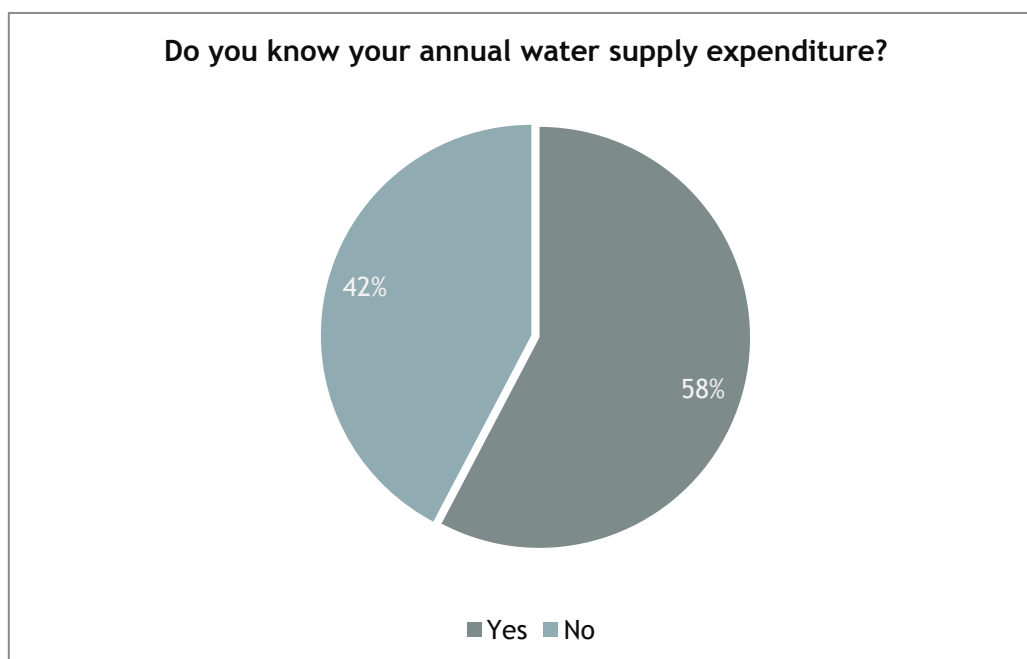
2.4. Water footprint

More than 90% of respondents would be willing to change their habits in order to positively affect the impacts on water, but the awareness among them is quite low (25%) demonstrating that much has to be done in this area.



2.5. Annual costs

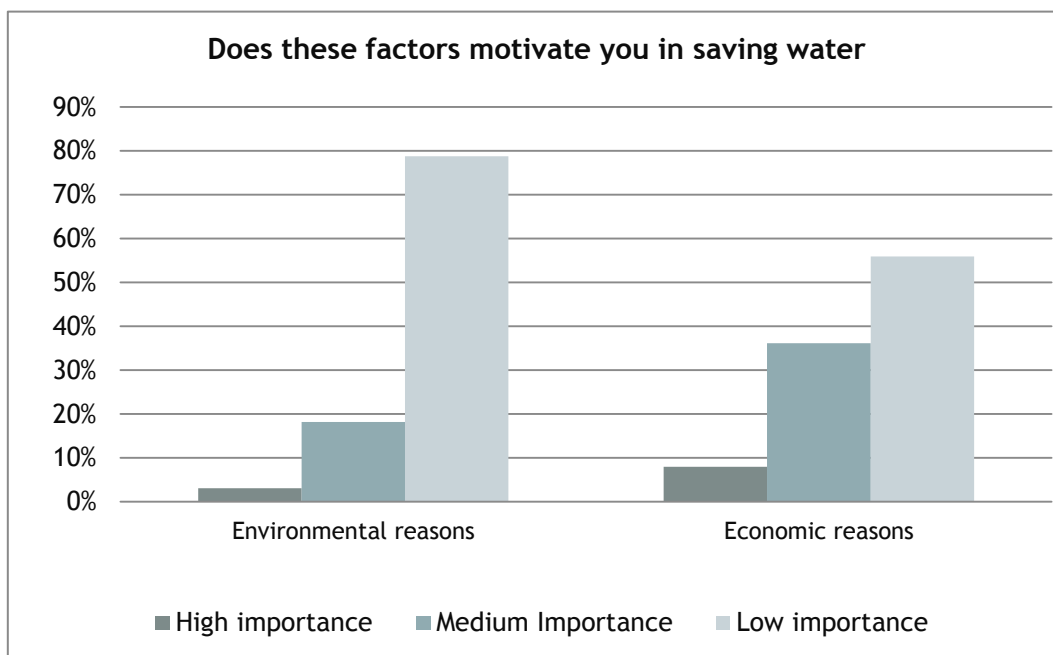
58% of people are aware of their annual water supply expenditure. There is still some confusion among citizens on exact water cost, since the water supply data is used to calculate the cost for sewage and sewage sludge. Even though the monthlies come in separate bills, the popular perception is still confused sometimes.





2.6. Motivation

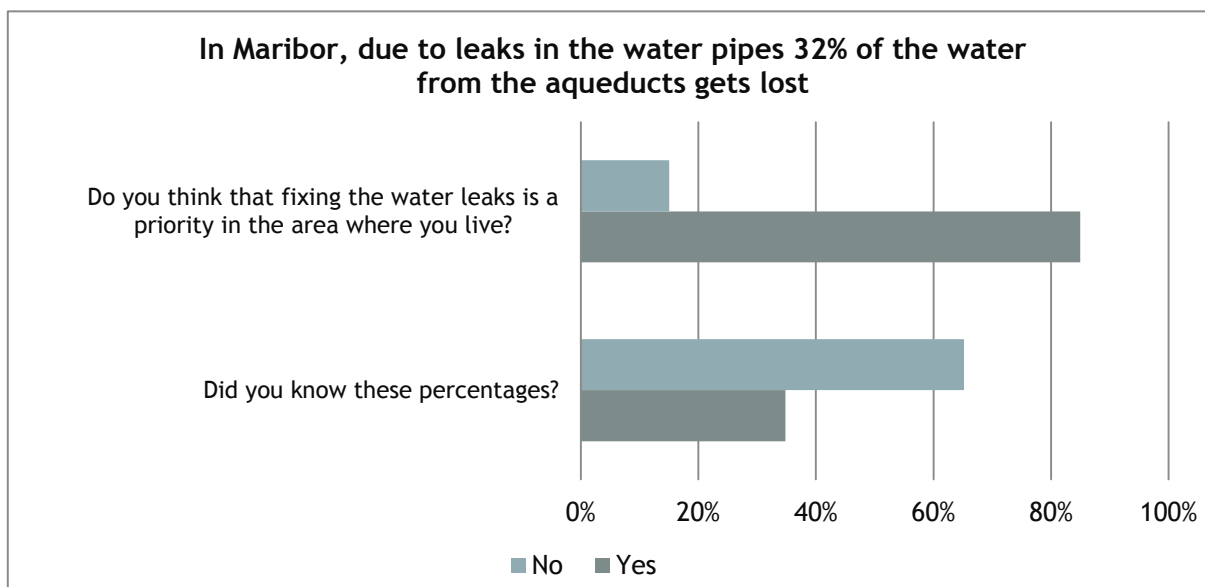
Extremely negative answers were received about factors on saving water. Respondents prioritise the economic reasons far beyond the environmental ones, when it comes to water savings. Again, this perception calls for stronger engagement, dissemination, communication campaigns raising awareness among citizens on the importance of water sensitive urban existence.





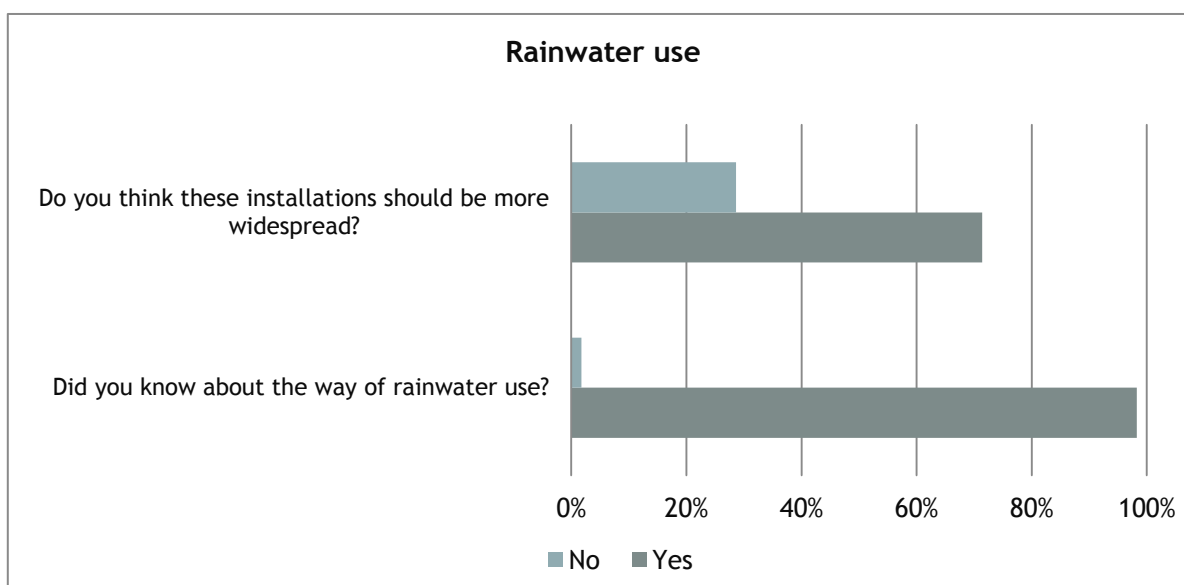
3. PROPER WATER USE AND REUSE

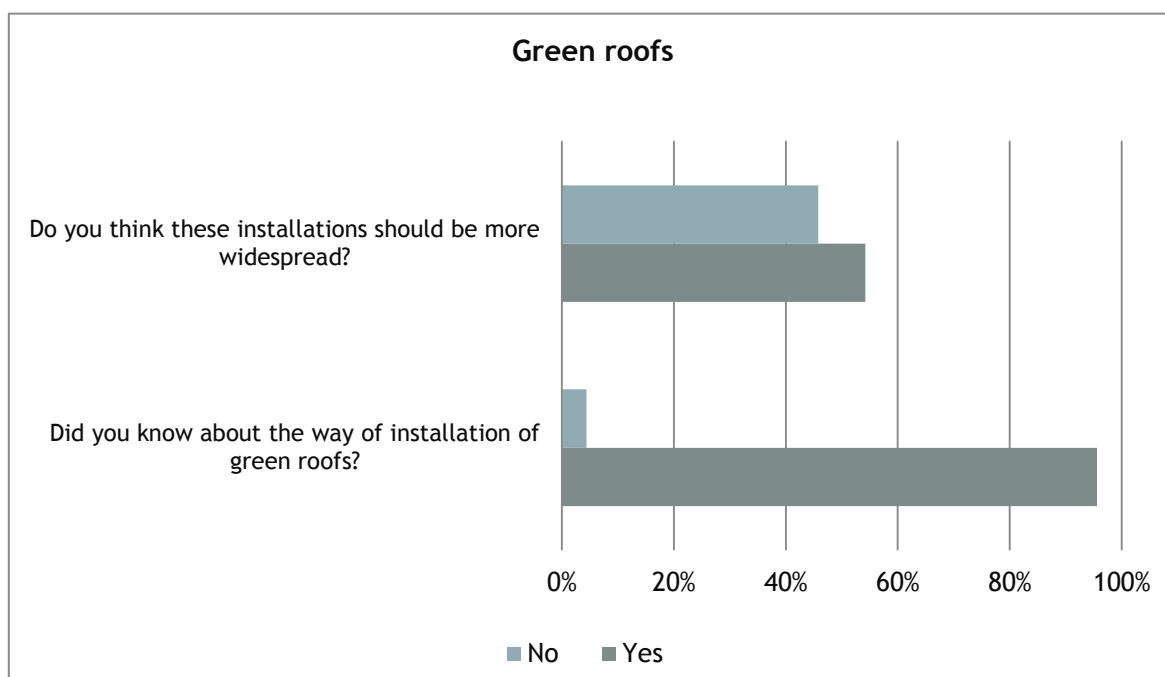
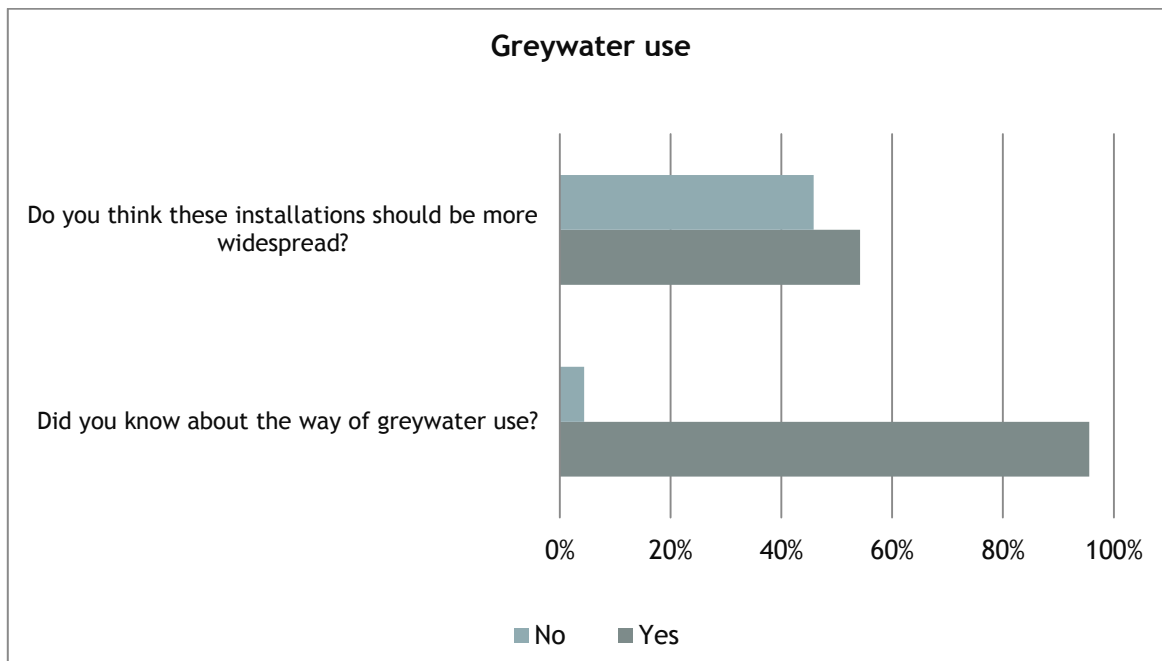
More than 80% of respondents are aware that repairing leakages in the water supply systems should be a priority in the FUA, but more than 60% are not familiar with the data on water leakages, which are showing Maribor Water Supply Company's success in reducing water losses putting them at the top of Slovenian FUAs.



3.1. Rainwater use, greywater and green roofs

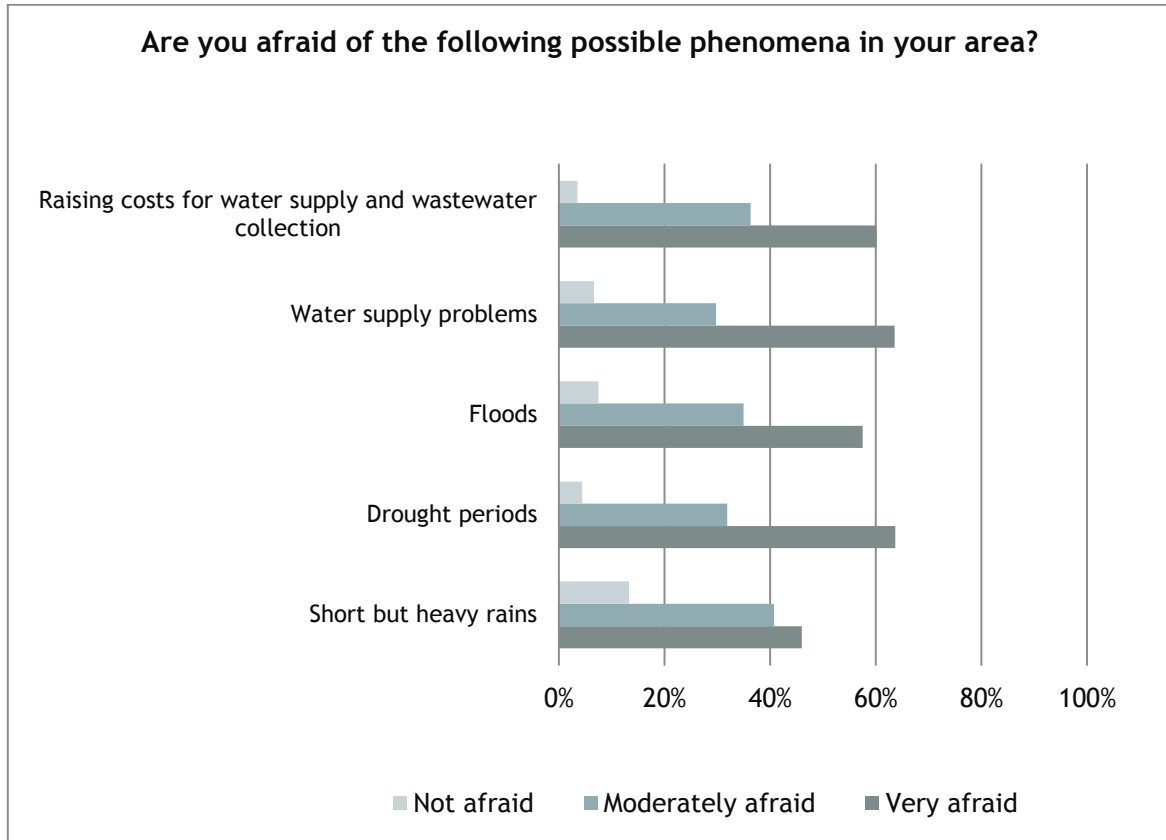
Almost 100% of respondents are familiar with use of rainwater, which is quite a common practice in our FUA, especially in family houses each capturing and storing in around 1m³ large water tanks the rainwater directly collected from their roofs. 70% of people also believe that having special rainwater-intended installations would be beneficial. About 95% of citizens are also familiar with the greywater use and green roofs installations, but only 55% are of the opinion that these installations should be more widespread, calling for further awareness raising in these areas as well.





3.2. Effects of climate change: are you afraid?

Results in this sections, especially interpreted with the results in section 2.6., show quite a disparity between cause and effect of human behaviour towards the environment. On the one hand, results in this section show overall concern about climate change (approximately 60% across the board are very concerned about floods, droughts, cost increase and supply shortages), but on the other hand obviously do not consider their actions affecting the environments (see results in 2.6.).





3.3. Information campaigns

To conclude, results in this section clearly show, what we have been figuring out throughout this survey results - the citizens are extremely willing to learn and listen about proper use and reuse of water. But, as we have explained, they have not yet been properly informed that their singular (person- or household-level) actions considered cumulatively can alleviate the water pressure and climate pressure overall and greatly benefit the environment. This is a target area that should be prioritised in FUA-level communication activities overall, and in the City Water Circles project.

