Public libraries

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1. ADVERTISEMENT

This table provides information on the number of library organizations, collections, loans, users and staff and operating data.

Data available from: 1999

Status of figures:

The 2022 figures are provisional. Other figures have been finalized.

Changes as of 15 September 2023:

The final 2021 figures have been posted.

The provisional figures of 2022 have been added.

When will the new figures come out?

In July 2024, the provisional figures for the year 2023 will appear and the final figures for the year 2022 will be posted.

2. DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATION OF SYMBOLS

Definitions:

Library organization (or: Basic Library).

Organization with legal personality that provides one or more public library facilities accessible to all and that is predominantly subsidized or maintained by one or more municipalities or public bodies. The statistics describe these library organizations, and not the individual library branches. A public library facility accessible to all includes at least the following functions, which contribute to the personal development and improvement of the social opportunities of the general public:

a. making available knowledge and information;

b. providing opportunities for development and education;

c. promoting reading and introduction to literature;

d. organizing meetings and debates;

e. introducing people to art and culture.

These functions are laid down in the Public Library Facilities Act, which has been in force since 1 January 2015.

Collection

The total number of physical copies owned by the libraries (books, sheet music, audiovisual materials and other collection materials), including leased materials and specific sub-collections for the purpose of school media library services, materials for lending stations and the like. Excluding e-books. Since 2006, no figures are available on the size of the subcollections of loose magazines and other materials.

Lending

This comprises total recorded physical loans by libraries excluding renewals of physical materials. Lending of loose magazines and other materials has not been included since 2006.

Registered users

These are the personally registered memberships, including library bus memberships. These are memberships for borrowing materials. A person is also still a member until no later than 3 months after the last date the membership expired. Not included are: collective memberships of e.g. schools, homes and the like, trial subscriptions and/or other permanent lending points. A distinction is made between youth and adult members: youth members are members who are 17 years of age or younger on 31 December of the calendar year and have a valid membership. Adult members are members who are 18 years or older on 31 December of the calendar year and have a valid membership.

Full-timers

Full-timers have a full weekly job and thus occupy a full workplace. A full working week covers 36 hours according to the collective agreement for libraries.

Part-timers

Staff members who do not occupy a full working position. A full working week refers to 36 hours according to the CLA for libraries.

Provincial Support Institution (POI)

Predominantly subsidized or maintained by one or more provinces that provides a package of support activities for local libraries in the relevant province or provinces.

Information regarding figures before 2005

Until 2001, the figures also included so-called 'people's libraries'. People's libraries are unrecognized library institutions and, unlike recognized library institutions, have, among other things, limited opening hours and limited

collection. Also, popular libraries usually do not have expert, trained staff, but work exclusively with volunteers.

In the year 2000, a process of library renewal was initiated. Within this framework, not only new forms of cooperation between libraries emerged, but mergers also took place. The library renewal resulted in the formation of the library organisations described above, which have formed the population of the study since 2005. Due to library renewal and the mergers associated with it, the number of institutions has been decreasing year-on-year since 2005. Thus, the decrease in the number of library organisations is not due to closure of library branches.

Until 2005, the figures also included Provincial Service Organisations (PSOs); organisations that mainly provided support services to public libraries at the provincial level. When the new library law (Public Library Facilities System Act (Wsob)) came into force in January 2015, these organisations continued under the name Provincial Support Institutions (POIs).

Explanation of symbols:

nothing (blank) = the figure cannot occur on logical grounds

. = the figure is unknown, insufficiently reliable or secret

\* = provisional figures

\*\* = further provisional figures

In case of rounding, the totals may not correspond exactly to the sum of the totals. Corrected figures in the tables are not marked as such.

3. LINKS TO RELEVANT TABLES AND ARTICLES

Relevant tables:

This table is a continuation of 3 tables, which contain figures for the year 1995, these tables can be found in the theme: archive.

Other tables on public libraries can be found under the theme Culture.

Relevant articles:

More information can be found on the theme page Leisure and culture.

4. DESCRIPTION OF SOURCES AND METHODS

Data for this table were obtained through an annual written survey of public libraries until 2005, in cooperation with the Association of Public Libraries (VOB), formerly the Netherlands Library and Reading Centre (NBLC). Since 2006, data have been obtained through an annual electronic survey, conducted in cooperation with the VOB until 2014. From 2015, the electronic survey is conducted in cooperation with the Koninklijke Bibliotheek (KB).

The research methodology of this table can be found in the Public Libraries research description.

5. MORE INFORMATION

Infoservice

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Topics

* Number of public libraries

The figures up to and including 2001 also include the so-called 'people's libraries', and up to and including 2005 also include the provincial library centres (PBCs). From 2005, the figures refer to the total of all public library organisations or 'basic libraries'. They do not include individual library branches.

* Collection

o Includes the total physical collection owned by the libraries, including rented materials and specific sub-collections for the benefit of school multimedia library services, materials for lending stations and the like.

* Since 2006, no figures are available on the size of the sub-collections loose magazines and other materials.

Collection excludes e-books. For data on this, see the new table National Digital Public Library, link is in the notes.

* Total collection

The sum of the physical sub-collections books, sheet music, audiovisual materials, loose magazines and other. From 2006 excluding loose magazines and other.

* Books

Physical books, excluding e-books. For data on this, see the new table National Digital Public Library, link is in the notes.

Total books

* Books for adults

Adults = persons aged 18 and over.

* Total adult books

Fiction

Texts arising mainly from the writer's imagination. In particular, fairy tales, novels, novellas, plays, poetry, comics are considered fiction.

Non-fiction

Texts whose main purpose is to convey information. For example, general informative books, dictionaries, essays and other essays, scientific works, textbooks and travel guides. Newspaper and magazine articles are also included in non-fiction.

Reference works

With effect from 2008, this category has been merged with the category 'Books for adults; Non-fiction'.

* Books for youth

Youth = persons up to 17 years of age.

* Total books for young people

Fiction

Texts arising mainly from the writer's imagination. In particular, fairy tales, novels, novellas, plays, poetry, comics are considered fiction.

Non-fiction

Texts whose main purpose is to convey information. For example, general informative books, dictionaries, essays and other essays, scientific works, textbooks and travel guides. Newspaper and magazine articles are also included in non-fiction.

Reference works

With effect from 2008, this category has been merged with the category 'Books for young people; Development books'.

* Sheet music
* Audiovisual materials
* Total audiovisual materials
* Music CDs
* DVDs
* CD-ROMs, CD-Is

With effect from 2008, this category has been merged with the category 'Audiovisual materials; Other audiovisual materials'.

* Other audiovisual materials

Microfiche, software, play and learning materials, artwork, videocassettes and small graphic materials (clippings, brochures, wall charts and the like).

* Loose magazines
* Other collections

Lending

This includes total recorded physical loans by libraries. Excludes e-books. Loans of loose magazines and other material have not been included since 2006. From 2008, the number of loans shown in the table excludes renewals. As a result, the number of loans in 2008 is lower than in 2007.

Total loans

The sum of physical loans of books, sheet music and audiovisual materials, loose magazines and other. Lending of loose magazines and other materials has not been included since 2006.

The number of loans excludes the lending of e-books. For figures on this, see the new table National Digital Public Library, link is in the notes.

Books

* Total lent books

Books for adults

Adults = persons aged 18 and over.

* Total books for adults

Fiction

Texts arising mainly from the writer's imagination. In particular, fairy tales, novels, novellas, plays, poetry, comics are considered fiction.

Non-fiction

Texts whose main purpose is to convey information. For example, general informative books, dictionaries, essays and other essays, scientific works, textbooks and travel guides. Newspaper and magazine articles are also included in non-fiction.

Reference works

With effect from 2008, this category has been merged with the category 'Books for adults; Non-fiction'.

Books for youth

Youth = persons up to 17 years of age.

* Total books for young people

Fiction

Texts arising mainly from the writer's imagination. In particular, fairy tales, novels, novellas, plays, poetry, comics are considered fiction.

Non-fiction

Texts whose main purpose is to convey information. For example, general informative books, dictionaries, essays and other essays, scientific works, textbooks and travel guides. Newspaper and magazine articles are also included in non-fiction.

Reference works

With effect from 2008, this category has been merged with the category 'Books for young people; Development books'.

Sheet music

Audiovisual materials

Total audiovisual materials

Music CDs

DVDs

CD-ROMs, CD-Is

With effect from 2008, this category has been merged with the category 'Audiovisual materials; Other audiovisual materials'.

Other audiovisual materials

Microfiche, software, play and learning materials, works of art, videocassettes and small graphic materials (clippings folders, brochures, wall charts and the like).

Loose magazines

Other loans

* Registered users

These are the personally registered memberships, including library bus memberships. These are memberships for being able to borrow materials. Not included are: collective memberships of e.g. schools, homes and the like, trial subscriptions and/or other permanent lending points.

* Total enrolled users

Youth

Youth = persons up to 17 years of age.

Adults

Adults = persons aged 18 and over.

* Libraries by contribution rate

This concerns the annual membership fee in the situation that no further lending money is charged per borrowed book.

If a lending fee is charged, the institution is classified under 'No ordinary membership fee', regardless of the amount of the membership fee.

No figures are available for the years 2005, 2006 and 2007, due to the poor quality of the data material supplied on this point.

Since 2008, no information is collected on the contribution rate.

Total libraries

Contribution rate up to €15

Contribution rate €15 to €20

Contribution rate €20 to €25

Contribution rate €25 and more

No ordinary contribution rate

This concerns libraries that only charge an annual membership fee in combination with a borrowing fee per borrowed book.

Staff

Salaried staff, other salaried non-salaried staff and volunteers. A full working week refers to 36 hours according to the collective labour agreement for libraries. No figures are available for 2004 and 2005 due to the poor quality of the data material supplied on this point. As of 2006, only figures on total paid staff are available. Due to the poor quality of the data material supplied, no further breakdown between salaried and non-salaried staff is possible.

* Total salaried staff

Total salaried staff and other salaried non-salaried staff.

Total persons

Number of full-timers

Full-timers have a full weekly job and thus occupy a full workplace. A full working week refers to 36 hours according to the CLA for libraries.

Number of part-timers

Staff who do not occupy a full working position. A full working week refers to 36 hours according to the CLA for libraries.

Total labour years

A labour year is a measure of labour volume calculated by converting all jobs (full-time and part-time) in a year into full-time equivalents (FTE).

For example, two half jobs (0.5 fte each) together yield a labour volume of one labour year. The full-time equivalent of an employee's job is determined by dividing the agreed annual working hours by the agreed annual working hours associated with a full-time job in the relevant industry.

Salaried staff

Total persons

* Number of full-time employees

Full-timers have a full weekly job and thus occupy a full workplace. A full working week refers to 36 hours according to the CLA for libraries.

* Number of part-timers

Staff who do not occupy a full working position. A full working week refers to 36 hours according to the CLA for libraries.

* Total labour years

A labour year is a measure of labour volume calculated by converting all jobs (full-time and part-time) in a year into full-time equivalents (FTE).

For example, two half jobs (0.5 fte each) together yield a labour volume of one labour year. The full-time equivalent of an employee's job is determined by dividing the agreed annual working hours by the agreed annual working hours associated with a full-time job in the

relevant industry.

Non-employed personnel

Total persons

Number of full-timers

Full-timers have a full weekly job and thus occupy a full workplace. A full working week refers to 36 hours according to the CLA for libraries.

Number of part-timers

Staff who do not occupy a full working position. A full working week refers to 36 hours according to the CLA for libraries.

Total working years

A labour year is a measure of labour volume calculated by converting all jobs (full-time and part-time) in a year into full-time equivalents (FTE).

For example, two half jobs (0.5 fte each) together yield a labour volume of one labour year. The full-time equivalent of an employee's job is determined by dividing the agreed annual working time by the agreed annual working hours belonging to a full-time job in the relevant industry.

* Volunteers
* Total persons
* Total labour years

A labour year is a measure of labour volume calculated by converting all jobs (full-time and part-time) in a year into full-time equivalents (FTE).

For example, two half jobs (0.5 fte each) together yield a labour volume of one labour year. The full-time equivalent of an employee's job is determined by dividing the agreed annual working hours by the agreed annual working hours associated with a full-time job in the

relevant industry.

* Operating

The totality of income and expenses, excluding withdrawals and additions to reserves and excluding balances.

Income

Excluding withdrawals from reserves, negative balances. Up to and including 2005, this included receipts from provincial library exchanges (PBCs) for services provided to affiliated public libraries (AOBs) and independent public libraries (ZOBs). Up to and including 2003, this also included the PBCs' income for the lending of salaried staff to the AOBs and ZOBs. From 2004, however, these staff are considered as salaried staff at the latter libraries. As a result, from 2004 the item Recharged staff costs no longer appears. NB. Up to and including 2003, the costs for the above-mentioned personnel occurred both in the item 'Personnel in salaried employment' (at the PBCs) and in the item 'Personnel not in salaried employment' (at the libraries). From 2004, the charges now occur only in the item 'Salaried staff'.

Total income

User income

Income from subscription fees, borrowing fees and the like from registered users.

Income from mobile services

Income through library buses.

Grants and contributions

Total subsidies and contributions

Grants and contributions municipalities

Grants and contributions provinces

Other grants and contributions

Grants and contributions other than from municipalities and provinces.

Income related to pass-through

Revenues from services (excluding mobile services) that are not part of the basic functions of local libraries (e.g. activities, the library in schools, rental of rooms).

Until 2004 these were the receipts of provincial library centres (PBCs) for services provided to affiliated public libraries (AOBs) and independent public libraries (ZOBs). Up to and including 2003 including the PBCs' income for loaning salaried staff to the AOBs and ZOBs. From 2004, however, these staff are considered as salaried staff of the latter libraries. As a result, from 2004 the item Recharged staff costs no longer occurs. Also with effect from 2004, the remaining other recharged costs are no longer broken down. Total recharged costs suffice.

Total income recharged

Revenues from services (excluding mobile services) that do not belong to the basic functions of local libraries (e.g. activities, the library at school, room rental).

Until 2004 these were receipts from provincial library centres (PBCs) for services provided to affiliated public libraries (AOBs) and independent public libraries (ZOBs). Up to and including 2003 including the PBCs' income for loaning salaried staff to the AOBs and ZOBs. From 2004, however, these staff are considered to be salaried staff of the latter libraries. As a result, from 2004 the item Recharged staff costs no longer occurs. Also with effect from 2004, the remaining other recharged costs are no longer broken down. Total recharged costs suffice.

Recharged staff costs

Up to and including 2003, this item includes income from PBCs for the loan of salaried staff to the AOBs and ZOBs.

From 2004, staff actually employed by PBCs, but lent to libraries against payment, are considered to be employed by the latter libraries. As a result, from 2004, this item no longer occurs.

Recharged mobile services

Recharged media costs

Other recharged costs

Interest received

Other income

Expenses

Excluding additions to reserves, positive balances. Until 2005 this included payments from affiliated public libraries (AOBs) and independent public libraries (ZOBs) to provincial library exchanges (PBCs) for services rendered. Up to and including 2003 charges also included payment from the AOBs and ZOBs to the PBCs for staff loaned by the PBCs to these libraries. This payment was included in the expense item 'Staff not on loan'. From 2004, however, staff actually employed by PBCs, but lent to libraries against payment, are considered to be employed by the latter libraries. As a result, from 2004 onwards, these staff do not appear in the item 'Non-employed staff'. NB. Up to and including 2003, the costs for the above-mentioned staff thus appeared both in the item 'Paid staff' (at the PBCs) and in the item 'Non-paid staff' (at the libraries). In return, these costs were counted as income at the PBCs. From 2004 onwards, the costs now occur only in the item 'Personnel in salaried employment', without being counted as income.

Total expenses

Housing costs

Up to and including 2003 excluding mortgage interest and depreciation on behalf of buildings. From 2004 including mortgage interest and depreciation on buildings.

Salaried staff

Non-employed personnel

Non-salaried staff

Until 2003, the charges also included the payment from the AOBs and ZOBs to the PBCs for staff loaned by the PBCs to these libraries. This payment was included in the expense item 'Staff not on loan'. From 2004, however, staff actually employed by PBCs, but lent to libraries against payment, are considered to be employed by the latter libraries. As a result, from 2004, these staff no longer appear in the item 'Non-employed staff'.

Administration and automation

Media costs

Interest paid

Up to and including 2003 including mortgage interest.

With effect from 2004, interest payments and depreciation are included in the expense items to which they relate.

Depreciation

Up to and including 2003 including depreciation on behalf of buildings.

With effect from 2004, interest payments and depreciation are included in the expense items to which they relate.

Other expenses

Management and organisation costs, insurance, extraordinary expenses and the like.

- Periods

o 2005, excluding provincial organisations

Excluding provincial library exchanges. Figures including provincial library central organisations are also known for 2005, as for the years 1999 to with 2004. From 2006, provincial library exchanges were no longer observed. No figures are available for 2005 on the number of persons (not) in paid employment and their volume of work due to the poor quality of data material on this point. The same applies to contribution rates.

o 2006, excluding provincial organisations

No figures are available for 2006 on the size of the sub-collections of loose journals and other material and the corresponding loans, due to the poor quality of the data material on this point. The same applies to the number of persons (not) in paid employment and their volume of work and to membership fees.

o 2007, excluding provincial organisations

For 2007, no figures are available on the size of the subsets of loose journals and other material and the corresponding loans, due to the poor quality of the data material on this point. The same applies to the number of persons (not) in paid employment and their volume of work and to membership fees.

o 2008, excluding provincial organisations

o For 2008, no figures are available on the size of the subcollections of loose journals and other material and the corresponding loans, due to the poor quality of the data material on this point. The same applies to the number of persons (not) in employment and their volume of work. As of 2008, a number of categories of collections and loans merged. The category 'Books for adults; Reference works' has been merged with the category 'Books for adults; Non-fiction'. The category 'Books for young people; Reference works' has been merged with the category 'Books for young people; Development books'. The category 'Audiovisual materials; CD-ROMs, CD-Is' has been merged with the category 'Audiovisual materials; Other audiovisual materials'. Because libraries excluded renewals from their statement on the number of loans in 2008, the number of loans in 2008 was lower than in 2007.

o 2009, excluding provincial organizations

No figures are available for 2009 on the size of the sub-collections of individual journals and other material and the associated loans, due to the poor quality of the data material on this point. The same applies to the number of persons (not) employed and their volume of work.

o 2010, excluding provincial organizations

No figures are available for 2010 on the size of the sub-collections of individual journals and other material and the associated loans, due to the poor quality of the data material on this point. The same applies to the number of persons (not) employed and their volume of work.

o 2011, excluding provincial organizations

No figures are available for 2011 on the size of the sub-collections of individual journals and other material and the associated loans, due to the poor quality of the data material on this point. The same applies to the number of persons (not) employed and their volume of work.

o 2012, excluding provincial organizations

No figures are available for 2012 on the size of the sub-collections of individual journals and other material and the associated loans, due to the low quality of the data material on this point. The same applies to the number of persons (not) employed and their volume of work.

o 2013, excluding provincial organizations

No figures are available for 2013 on the size of the sub-collections of individual journals and other material and the associated loans, due to the low quality of the data material on this point. The same applies to the number of persons (not) employed and their volume of work.

o 2014, excluding provincial organizations

No figures are available for 2014 on the size of the sub-collections of individual journals and other material and the associated loans, due to the low quality of the data material on this point. The same applies to the number of persons (not) employed and their volume of work.

o 2015, excluding provincial organizations

No figures are available for 2015 on the size of the sub-collections of individual journals and other material and the associated loans, due to the low quality of the data material on this point. The same applies to the number of persons (not) employed and their volume of work.

o 2016, excluding provincial organizations

No figures are available for 2016 on the size of the sub-collections of individual journals and other material and the associated loans, due to the low quality of the data material on this point. The same applies to the number of persons (not) employed and their volume of work.

o 2017, excluding provincial organizations

No figures are available for 2017 on the size of the sub-collections of individual journals and other material and the associated loans, due to the low quality of the data material on this point. The same applies to the number of persons (not) employed and their volume of work.

o 2018, excluding provincial organizations

No figures are available for 2018 on the size of the sub-collections of individual journals and other material and the associated loans, due to the low quality of the data material on this point. The same applies to the number of persons (not) employed and their volume of work.

o 2019, excluding provincial organizations

No figures are available for 2019 on the size of the sub-collections of individual journals and other material and the associated loans, due to the low quality of the data material on this point. The same applies to the number of persons (not) employed and their volume of work.

o 2020, excluding provincial organizations

No figures are available for 2020 on the size of the sub-collections of individual journals and other material and the associated loans, due to the low quality of the data material on this point. The same applies to the number of persons (not) employed and their volume of work.

o 2021, excluding provincial organizations

No figures are available for 2021 on the size of the sub-collections of individual journals and other material and the associated loans, due to the low quality of the data material on this point. The same applies to the number of persons (not) employed and their volume of work.

o 2022, excluding provincial organizations\*

o Provisional figures

No figures are available for 2022 on the size of the sub-collections of individual journals and other material and the associated loans, due to the low quality of the data material on this point. The same applies to the number of persons (not) employed and their volume of work.