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**Information and documentation —  
International library statistics**

*Information et documentation — Statistiques internationales de  
bibliothèques*



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# Contents

Page

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>1 Scope</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Terms and definitions</b>	<b>1</b>
2.1 Libraries	1
2.2 Library services and use	4
2.3 Collections	10
2.4 Access and facilities	17
2.5 Management	19
2.6 Funding and expenditure	20
2.7 Library staff	21
<b>3 Current tasks of libraries</b>	<b>22</b>
3.1 General	22
3.2 Types of libraries	22
3.3 Changes in user activities	23
<b>4 Uses and benefits of statistics</b>	<b>24</b>
4.1 Background	24
4.2 Developments in library practice	24
4.3 Selection of statistics for the library	25
4.4 Use of statistics	25
4.5 Presenting statistics to stakeholders	26
<b>5 Reporting statistical data</b>	<b>26</b>
5.1 General	26
5.2 Time period to which data refer	27
5.3 Data estimated by sample	27
<b>6 Collecting statistical data</b>	<b>27</b>
6.1 Libraries	27
6.2 Services and use	29
6.3 Collection	39
6.4 Access and facilities	46
6.5 Management	48
6.6 Funding and expenditure (during the reporting period)	49
6.7 Library staff (at the end of the reporting period)	51
<b>Annex A (informative) Recommended categories for further statistical analysis</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Annex B (informative) Grossing up</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Annex C (informative) Alphabetical index</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>71</b>

## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents)).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation on the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the WTO principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: Foreword - Supplementary information

The committee responsible for this document is ISO/TC 46, *Information and documentation*, Subcommittee SC 8, *Quality — Statistics and performance evaluation*.

This fifth edition cancels and replaces the fourth edition (ISO 2789:2006), which has been technically revised to overcome problems in the practical application of ISO 2789:2006 and to take account of the new developments in library services.

## Introduction

This International Standard provides guidance to the library and information services community on the collection and reporting of statistics.

[Clauses 2](#) and [6](#) form the core of this International Standard. [Clause 2](#) provides definitions for most of the elements which constitute a library service; these are for statistical purposes only. [Clause 6](#) recommends how each of these elements should be counted. Users will need to consult both clauses for the complete picture.

This International Standard includes definitions and counting procedures for all types of resources and services that libraries offer to their users. The former [Annex A](#), including definitions and procedures for electronic resources and services, has been integrated into the main part of the standard, as these resources and services have become a normal part of library activities.

In order to explain the reasons for incorporating a number of new library services into this International Standard, [Clause 3](#) has been added to describe the current tasks of libraries.

It is recognized that not all measures specified in this International Standard can be collected by libraries of different types and sizes. To give greater completeness, several additional measures (important for some sectors only) are described in [Annex A](#). The aim is to ensure that, where a particular statistic is collected, the same definitions and methods are used.

[Annex B](#) is important for the compilation and publication of national statistics so that they can be truly comparable between countries and over time.

The strong requirement to describe and publicize library activities can only be satisfied if data collection in libraries follows the lines of this International Standard. As far as possible, it is advisable that libraries collect all data named in this International Standard that concern their activities.

Developments in relation to this International Standard will be monitored and additional statistical measures will be incorporated as needed.

An alphabetical index is given in [Annex C](#).



# Information and documentation — International library statistics

## 1 Scope

This International Standard specifies rules for the library and information services community on the collection and reporting of statistics:

- for the purposes of international reporting;
- to ensure conformity between countries for those statistical measures that are frequently used by library managers, but do not qualify for international reporting;
- to encourage good practice in the use of statistics for the management of library and information services.

## 2 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

### 2.1 Libraries

#### 2.1.1

##### **academic library**

library whose primary function is to cover the information needs of learning and research

Note 1 to entry: This includes libraries of institutions of higher education and general research libraries.

#### 2.1.2

##### **administrative unit**

any independent library, or group of libraries, under a single directorate or a single administration

Note 1 to entry: The term “independent” does not imply legal or financial independence but only that the library is a recognizably separate unit, typically within a larger organization.

Note 2 to entry: The administrative unit can be a single library or a larger organization, typically containing a central/main library, branch libraries and administrative functions. See the Example in [6.1.1](#).

#### 2.1.3

##### **branch library**

part of a larger administrative unit providing, in separate quarters, a service for a particular user group (e.g. children, faculties) or for a locally defined clientele

Note 1 to entry: Institute, departmental and other affiliated libraries are included. Mobile libraries and external service points are excluded.

#### 2.1.4

##### **central library**

##### **main library**

usually that part or those parts of an administrative unit where the main administrative functions and the important parts of the library collection and services are located

Note 1 to entry: An administrative unit comprising several branch libraries does not necessarily include a central library.