Library Map of the World DATA – definitions

Library Types

Library Type	Full name	Definition
National	National libraries	National library is a library that is responsible for acquiring and conserving copies of all relevant documents published in the country in which the library is located. The definition of "national library" allows for more than one national library in a country.
Academic	Academic libraries	Academic library is a library whose primary function is to cover the information needs of learning and research. This includes libraries of institutions of higher education and general research libraries.
Public	Public libraries	Public library is a general library that is open to the public (even if its services are primarily intended for a particular part of the population to be served, such as children, visually impaired persons, or hospital patients) and that serves the whole population of a local or regional community and is usually financed, in whole or in part, from public funds. Its basic services are free of charge or available for a subsidized fee.
Community	Community libraries	Community library is a library that is not part of an area's statutory library provision and is not managed or fully funded by a local or national government authority. A community library provides library services to the population of a local or regional community and may be managed and funded by community groups, charities, NGOs and others. However, they may still receive some public funding from the local authority to provide library services based on different funding models.
School	School libraries	School library is a library attached to all types of schools below the third (tertiary) level of education whose primary function is to serve the pupils and teachers of such a school, however it may also serve the general public.
Other	Other libraries	Other libraries are all other libraries that do not appear in one of other categories of libraries (national, academic, public, community and school libraries) and are not included elsewhere in this survey. Other libraries may include, for example, special libraries, government libraries, medical libraries, industrial and commercial libraries and other libraries that are not included elsewhere.

Regions / Countries / M49 Code

The naming and listing of countries included in the Library Map of the World is based on definitions used by United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD).

According to the UNSD Methodology on [Standard country or area codes for statistical use (M49)](#) there are 249 countries or areas in the world.

The assignment of countries or areas to specific regions is also based on United Nations definitions with the exception of the Americas. In the Library Map of the World, this has been split to list Northern America separately from Latin America and the Caribbean.

Metrics

Metric	Full name	Definition
Libraries	Number of libraries (library service points)	Library service point is a fixed or mobile facility through which library provides a service to its users. Central libraries, branch libraries, mobile libraries, and external service points located in different geographical locations and managed by one administrative unit are all each individual service points. Number of libraries (displayed on the LMW Data Page) is the total number of central/main libraries, branch libraries, external service points and mobile libraries (total number of library service points).
Internet_Access	Number of libraries (library service points) with Internet access	Internet access is an Internet connection by a user from a workstation owned by the library or from a user's private computer in the library via the library's network. Number of libraries with Internet access (displayed on the LMW Data Page is the total number of libraries (library service points) at the end of the year.
Staff	Full-time staff	Full-time equivalent (FTE) staff are all library employees who work for the library in return for payment. It includes professional staff, qualified staff, project staff and assistants. Other staff (library employees who work in security and on domestic duties, for example, cleaners, porters, caretakers and catering staff) and volunteers are excluded. In counting library employees, the concept of fulltime equivalent (FTE) is being used to convert figures for the number of part-time workers to the equivalent number of full-time workers. Number of full-time staff (displayed on the LMW Data Page) is the full-time equivalent staff at the end of the year.
Volunteers	Volunteers	Volunteer is a person working on library tasks without payment. In counting volunteers, the concept of headcount is being used. Number of volunteers (displayed on the LMW Data Page) is the total number of volunteers at the end of the year.

Users	Registered users	Registered user is a person or organization registered with a library in order to use its collection and/or services within or away from the library. Users may be registered upon their request or automatically when enrolling in the institutions.
		Number of registered users (displayed on the LMW Data Page) is the total number of registered users (users with a library card) at the end of the year.
Visits	Physical visits	Physical visit is a person (individual) entering the library premises.
		Number of physical visits (displayed on the LMW Data Page) is the total number of physical visits made by individuals to the library premises at the end of the year.
Loans_books	Physical loans (Books)	Physical loan is a direct lending or delivery transaction of an item in physical form.
		Physical loans (Books) include loans of items in-non-electronic form.
		Number of physical loans (displayed on the LMW Data Page) is the total number of physical loans during the year, including loans of items in non-electronic form (e.g. books) and loans of electronic documents on a physical carrier (e.g. CD-ROM).
Loans_documents	Physical loans (Documents on physical carrier)	Physical loan is a direct lending or delivery transaction of an item in physical form.
		Physical loans (Documents on physical carrier) include loans of electronic documents on a physical carrier.
		Number of physical loans (displayed on the LMW Data Page) is the total number of physical loans during the year, including loans of items in non-electronic form (e.g. books) and loans of electronic documents on a physical carrier (e.g. CD-ROM).
Loans_eBooks	Electronic loans (eBooks)	Electronic loan is a transmission of an electronic document to a user for a limited time period and/or a download of a content unit from a library-provided online service or other internet service (e.g. database, electronic serial or digital document).
		eBook is a non-serial digital document, licenced or not, where searchable text is prevalent, and similar to a print book (monograph). eBooks can be lent to users either on portable devices (eBook readers) or by transmitting the contents to the user's PC or other device for a limited time period.
		Number of electronic loans (displayed on the LMW Data Page) is the total number of electronic loans during the year, including loans of eBooks and audio books, and downloads from the library's electronic collection.

Loans_audio_books	Electronic loans (Audio books)	Electronic loan is a transmission of an electronic document to a user for a limited time period and/or a download of a content unit from a library-provided online service or other internet service (e.g. database, electronic serial or digital document).
		Audio book (or talking book) is a sound recording of readings of a book, magazine, or newspaper, usually designed for use by visually impaired people. Audio books can be lent to users either on a physical carrier or other device, or by transmitting the content to the user's PC or other device for a limited time period.
		Number of electronic loans (displayed on the LMW Data Page) is the total number of electronic loans during the year, including loans of eBooks and audio books, and downloads from the library's electronic collection.
Loans_downloads	Electronic loans (Downloads)	Electronic loan is a transmission of an electronic document to a user for a limited time period and/or a download of a content unit from a library-provided online service or other internet service (e.g. database, electronic serial or digital document).
		Download is a content unit that is successfully requested from a library-provided online service or other internet service (e.g. database, electronic serial or digital document).
		Number of electronic loans (displayed on the LMW Data Page) is the total number of electronic loans during the year, including loans of eBooks and audio books, and downloads from the library's electronic collection.

Legend

N/A	Not Applicable
-	No Data
0	Zero

More information

Visit About Page of the Library Map of the World website: https://librarymap.ifla.org/about

Definitions in other languages: https://librarymap.ifla.org/guide-for-contributors

Contact the LMW team: librarymap@ifla.org