
**Information and documentation —
Performance indicators for national
libraries**

*Information et documentation — Indicateurs de performance des
bibliothèques nationales*

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ISO copyright office
Case postale 56 • CH-1211 Geneva 20
Tel. + 41 22 749 01 11
Fax + 41 22 749 09 47
E-mail copyright@iso.org
Web www.iso.org

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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.

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The main task of technical committees is to prepare International Standards. Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

In exceptional circumstances, when a technical committee has collected data of a different kind from that which is normally published as an International Standard ("state of the art", for example), it may decide by a simple majority vote of its participating members to publish a Technical Report. A Technical Report is entirely informative in nature and does not have to be reviewed until the data it provides are considered to be no longer valid or useful.

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.

ISO/TR 28118 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 46, *Information and documentation*, Subcommittee SC 8, *Quality — Statistics and performance evaluation*.

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Introduction

This Technical Report is concerned with the evaluation of the performance of national libraries.

For several years, national libraries have felt the need to get consensus on a common list of relevant performance indicators for assessing the quality and performance of their services. Several groups, e.g. within the IFLA Section of National Libraries and CENL (Conference of European National Libraries), have tried to assess the present use of performance measurement in national libraries and discussed possible performance indicators, preferably using performance indicators in existing handbooks and standards.

The second edition of ISO 11620 (see Reference [5] in the Bibliography) establishes a list of performance indicators for libraries that include performance indicators for electronic library services. ISO 11620 aims at comprising performance indicators for all types of libraries, but does not cover all tasks and services of every type of library. This Technical Report establishes the list of performance indicators that are relevant to the special tasks and services of national libraries.

National libraries have important tasks that differ from those of other libraries, such as the collection and preservation of the national documentary heritage, the publication of a national bibliography and a leading role in international cooperation. Therefore, it is important that performance indicators for national libraries consider topics such as

- the coverage of the national imprint (print and electronic),
- the speed and comprehensiveness of the national bibliography,
- the effort for preserving the national documentary heritage, and
- the international engagement of the library.

National libraries are unique institutions in their countries, and their data are not easily comparable. The main problems for measuring performance in national libraries are the following.

- a) National libraries can have several functions (e.g. university and national library, parliamentary and national library).
- b) There can be more than one national library in one country.
- c) National libraries have no specified clientele or primary user group like public or university libraries. Therefore, output data cannot be set in comparison to “members of the population”.
- d) Mission, tasks and functions of national libraries can differ between countries.

This Technical Report selects performance indicators from ISO 11620 that are appropriate to the tasks of national libraries or can be adapted to such tasks. Additionally, it presents new performance indicators that have been used or tested by a national library and that cover the topics not considered in ISO 11620.

This Technical Report provides standardized terminology and definitions for data to be used in the performance indicators. Furthermore, this Technical Report contains concise descriptions of the performance indicators, of the collection and the analysis of data needed, and of examples where the performance indicators have been used.

Annex B describes all efforts of assessing the quality and performance of an institution by starting with the statement of the general mission and tasks established for their national library.

Some national libraries have started creating collections based on national elements found on the Internet. As it is too early to describe performance indicators for this activity, a short overview of methods and quality issues is given in Annex C.

Texts in this Technical Report are partly based on ISO 11620.

Throughout this Technical Report, the names of performance indicators are printed with the first letter of significant words capitalized, e.g. Percentage of the Collection in Stable Condition. This helps to distinguish these names from supporting text.

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Information and documentation — Performance indicators for national libraries

1 Scope

This Technical Report establishes the performance indicators for national libraries. It is also applicable to libraries with regional tasks and without a defined population to be served, as many of their evaluation problems correspond to those of national libraries.

The performance indicators are of special interest for comparison over time within the same library. Comparisons between libraries are possible, if differences in the tasks and constituencies of the libraries are taken into account.

This Technical Report does not include performance indicators for evaluating the outcomes or impact of library services either on individuals, on the communities that libraries serve, or on society at this time. Since this is an evolving area of performance measurement for libraries, such performance indicators can be added at a later date.

This Technical Report is not intended to exclude the use of any performance indicators which have not been specified herein.

2 Terms and definitions

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

2.1

accessibility

ease of reaching and using a service or facility

[ISO 11620:2008, definition 2.1]

2.2

active user

registered user who has visited or made use of library facilities or services during the reporting period

NOTE This can include the use of electronic library services within or outside the library.

[ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.3.2]

2.3

book

non-serial printed document in codex form

[ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.2.5]

2.4

capital expenditure

expenditure which results in the acquisition of, or addition to, fixed assets

NOTE 1 This includes expenditure on building sites, new buildings and extensions, furnishings and equipment for new and expanded buildings, computer systems (hardware and software), etc. When applicable, local and national sales/purchase taxes [e.g. Value Added Tax (VAT)] are included.

NOTE 2 Adapted from ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.5.1.

2.5

closed stacks

stacks normally not accessible to users

2.6

conservation

intervention techniques applied to prevent, arrest or delay deterioration

[ISO 5127:2001, definition 6.1.03]

2.7

content downloaded

content unit that is successfully requested from a database, electronic serial or digital document

[ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.3.3]

2.8

content unit

computer-processed uniquely identifiable textual or audiovisual piece of published work that may be original or a digest of other published work

NOTE 1 Adapted from the definition of item in COUNTER code of practice, Release 2:2004.

NOTE 2 Descriptive records are excluded.

NOTE 3 PDF, Postscript, HTML and other formats of the same content unit will be counted as separate items.

[ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.2.9]

2.9

cultural event

event with cultural, literary, educational, or scholarly intent, e.g. exhibitions, author visits, literary discussions, workshops, etc.

NOTE 1 Only events arranged by the library are included. Events inside the library premises organized by institutions outside the library are excluded.

NOTE 2 User training lessons organized by the library are excluded.

2.10

database

collection of electronically stored descriptive records or content units (including facts, full texts, pictures, and sound) with a common user interface and software for the retrieval and manipulation of the data

NOTE 1 The units or records are usually collected with a particular intent and are related to a defined topic. A database can be issued on CD-ROM, diskette, or other direct-access method, or as a computer file accessed via dial-up methods or via the Internet.

NOTE 2 Licensed databases are counted separately even if access to several licensed database products is effected through the same interface.

NOTE 3 A common interface providing access to a packet of serials or digital documents, usually offered by a publisher or vendor, is also to be counted as database. Additionally, the single serials or digital documents should be counted as serials or digital documents.

[ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.2.10]

2.11

digital document

information unit with a defined content that has been digitized by the library or acquired in digital form as part of the library collection

NOTE 1 This includes eBooks, electronic patents, networked audiovisual documents and other digital documents, e.g. reports, cartographic and music documents, preprints, etc. Databases and electronic serials are excluded.

NOTE 2 Items incorporated in databases are excluded.

NOTE 3 A digital document can be structured into one or more files.

NOTE 4 A digital document consists of one or more content units.

NOTE 5 Adapted from ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.2.12.

2.12

document

recorded information or material object, which can be treated as a unit in a documentation process

[ISO 5127:2001, definition 1.2.02]

NOTE Documents can differ in their physical form and characteristics.

2.13

document processing

everything done to a document after it is acquired by a library, before it is placed on the shelves or, in the case of an electronic document, on the server, including acquisition, descriptive cataloguing, subject indexing, if applicable binding, physical processing, and shelving

2.14

document retrieval

process of recovering specific documents from a store

[ISO 5127:2001, definition 1.2.06]

2.15

download

successful request of a descriptive record or content unit, e.g. for displaying, printing, saving, or emailing

NOTE For web server logs, successful requests are those with specific return codes, as defined by NCSA (National Center for Supercomputing Applications).

[ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.3.4]

2.16

effectiveness

measure of the degree to which given objectives are achieved

NOTE An activity is effective if it maximizes the results it was established to produce.

[ISO 11620:2008, definition 2.14]

2.17
efficiency

measure of the utilization of resources to realize a given objective

NOTE An activity is efficient if it minimizes the use of resources, or produces better performance with the same resources.

[ISO 11620:2008, definition 2.15]

2.18
electronic resource

all resources in electronic form in the library collection

NOTE 1 See also ISO 2789:2006, A.2.3.

NOTE 2 Electronic resources include databases, electronic serials, digital documents, and computer files. Free Internet resources which have been catalogued by the library in its online catalogue or a database are excluded.

2.19
electronic service

electronic library service, which is either supplied from local servers or accessible via networks

NOTE Electronic library services include the online catalogue, the library website, the electronic collection, electronic document delivery (mediated), electronic reference service, user training on electronic services and Internet access offered via the library.

[ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.3.6]

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2.20
evaluation

process of estimating the effectiveness, efficiency, ~~utility and relevance~~ of a service or facility

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[ISO 11620:2008, definition 2.17]

2.21
full-time equivalent

FTE
a measurement equal to one staff member working a full-time work schedule for one year

EXAMPLE If out of three persons employed as librarians, one works quarter-time, one works half-time, and one works full-time, then the FTE of these three persons would be $0,25 + 0,5 + 1,0 = 1,75$ librarians (FTE).

NOTE Not all libraries may use the same number of hours per year to determine an FTE. Thus, any comparative measures between libraries may need to consider any differences in hours.

[ISO 11620:2008, definition 2.21]

2.22
goal

desired state of affairs to be achieved by the implementation of agreed policies

[ISO 11620:2008, definition 2.22]

2.23
home page

page which serves as the visual unit that is displayed when accessing the library's website

NOTE 1 The home page may appear after the redirection through an entry page.

NOTE 2 See ISO 2789:2006, A.5.3.4.

2.24**income generated**

income generated by library operations and from fees, charges, subscriptions and donations that is available to the library for expenditure

NOTE See ISO 2789:2006, 6.5.3.

2.25**indicator**

expression (which may be numeric, symbolic or verbal) used to characterize activities (events, objects, persons) both in quantitative and qualitative terms in order to assess the value of the activities characterized, and the associated method

NOTE Adapted from ISO 11620:2008, definition 2.23.

2.26**information request
reference enquiry**

information contact that involves the knowledge or use of one or more information sources (such as printed and non-printed materials, machine-readable databases, the library's own and other institutions' catalogues) by library staff

NOTE 1 Adapted from ANSI/NISO Z39.7-2004.

NOTE 2 The information request can also involve recommendations, interpretation, or instruction in the use of such sources.

NOTE 3 One information request may address several questions.

NOTE 4 The request can be delivered personally or by means of telephone, regular mail, fax or electronic media (via email, the library website or other networked communications mechanisms).

NOTE 5 It is essential that libraries do not include directional and administrative enquiries, e.g. for locating staff or facilities, regarding opening times or about handling equipment such as reader printers or computer terminals.

NOTE 6 Enquiries are also excluded, if asked for the purpose of locating items of stock that have already been identified bibliographically.

NOTE 7 Adapted from ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.3.9.

2.27**in-house use**

documents taken by a user from open access stock for use on the premises

NOTE In-house use includes browsing at the shelves in the sense of a short investigation of the contents, but excludes looking at the titles only for selecting material.

[ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.3.10]

2.28**ILL****interlibrary lending**

loan of a document in its physical form or delivery of a document, or part of it, in copied form, from one library to another which is not under the same administration

NOTE Mediated transmission of documents in electronic form is counted as electronic document delivery.

[ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.3.11]

2.29

library collection

all documents provided by a library for its users

NOTE 1 Comprises documents held locally and remote resources for which permanent or temporary access rights have been acquired.

NOTE 2 Access rights can be acquired by the library itself, by a consortium and/or through external funding.

NOTE 3 Acquisition is to be understood as deliberately selecting a document, securing access rights and including it in the online catalogue or other databases of the library. Interlibrary lending and document delivery are excluded.

NOTE 4 Does not include links to Internet resources for which the library has not secured access rights by legal agreements (e.g. legal deposit right), license or other contractual and/or cooperative agreement. Free Internet resources which have been catalogued by the library in its online catalogue or a database need to be counted separately.

[ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.2.22]

2.30

library employee

person who works for a library in return for payment

[ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.6.1]

2.31

library website

unique domain on the Internet consisting of a collection of web pages that is published by a library to provide access to the library's services and resources

NOTE 1 The pages of a website are usually interconnected by the use of hypertext links.

NOTE 2 Excludes documents that fit the definitions of electronic collection and free Internet resources that can be linked from the library website.

NOTE 3 Excludes web services in the library's domain that are operated on behalf of other organizations.

[ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.3.13]

2.32

loan

direct lending or delivery transaction of an item in non-electronic form (e.g. book), of an electronic document on a physical carrier (e.g. CD-ROM) or other device (e.g. eBook reader), or transmission of an electronic document to one user for a limited time period (e.g. eBook)

NOTE 1 Loans include user-initiated renewals as well as registered loans within the library (on-site loans). Renewals need to be counted separately.

NOTE 2 Loans include copied documents supplied in place of original documents (including fax) and printouts of electronic documents made by library staff for the user.

NOTE 3 Loans of documents in physical form to distance users are included here.

NOTE 4 Mediated electronic transmission of documents is counted as electronic document delivery if their use is permitted for unlimited time. This includes transmissions to members of the population to be served.

[ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.3.14]

2.33**mass conservation**

simultaneous treatment of a large number of documents by automated conservation techniques

[ISO 5127:2001, definition 6.7.36]

2.34**mission**

statement approved by the authorities formulating the organization's goals and its choices in services and product development

[ISO 11620:2008, definition 2.28]

2.35**national bibliography**

bibliography in which documents published in a single country are recorded and described

NOTE In some countries, the national bibliography also covers foreign publications relative to the country and also the works by their nationals which are published abroad.

[ISO 9707:2008, definition 2.21]

2.36**national collection**

the national library's collection of the national imprint and the national documentary heritage in the form of manuscripts, archival materials, cartographic material, printed music documents, pictures, photographs and audiovisual documents in conventional or electronic format

NOTE Websites can be part of the national collection.

2.37**national imprint**

all documents in all formats published in a country

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NOTE Includes commercial and non-commercial publications.

2.38**national library**

library that is responsible for acquiring and conserving copies of all relevant documents in the country in which the library is located; it can function as a legal deposit library

NOTE 1 Adapted from ISO 5127:2001, definition 3.2.02.

NOTE 2 A national library will also normally perform some or all of the following functions: produce the national bibliography; hold and keep up-to-date a large and representative collection of foreign literature including documents about the country; act as a national bibliographic information centre; compile union catalogues; supervise the administration of other libraries and/or promote collaboration; coordinate a research and development service, etc.

2.39**non-commercial publications**

documents in print and electronic format published by non-profit institutions, such as reports, theses and dissertations, conference proceedings etc., often not available through normal book trade channels

2.40**objective**

specific target for an activity to be attained as a contribution to achieving the goal of an organization

[ISO 11620:2008, definition 2.29]

2.41

online catalogue

database of bibliographical records describing the collection usually of one particular library or library system

[ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.3.15]

2.42

operating expenditure

ordinary expenditure

expenditure incurred in the running of a library

NOTE Money spent on staff and on resources that are used and replaced regularly. This includes expenditure on employees, rent, acquisitions and licensing, binding, computer network (operations and maintenance), telecommunication, building maintenance, repair or replacement of existing furnishings and equipment, etc. This can also be termed 'current' or 'recurrent' expenditure. When applicable, local and national sales/purchase taxes [e.g. Value Added Tax (VAT)] are included.

[ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.5.3]

2.43

performance

effectiveness of the provision of services by the library and the efficiency of the allocation and use of resources in providing services

[ISO 11620:2008, definition 2.30]

2.44

performance indicator

numerical, symbolic or verbal expression, derived from library statistics and data used to characterize the performance of a library

[ISO 11620:2008, definition 2.31] standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/6e4090c4-69e2-4aaf-9818-7cc713ee0701/iso-tr-28118-2009

2.45

preservation

all measures taken including financial and strategic decisions, to maintain the integrity and extend the life of documents or collections

[ISO 5127:2001, definition 6.1.01]

2.46

publication

document offered for general distribution and usually produced in multiple copies

[ISO 5127:2001, definition 2.1.11]

2.47

rare material

incunabula, books published before 1800, manuscripts (including fragments and rolls, autographs, music manuscripts)

NOTE The definition excludes archives and records concerning private persons, institutions and organizations (collections containing manuscripts, letters, notes, photos, and other material given by bequest to the library or purchased as such by, or on behalf of, the library).

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2.48**restoration**

actions taken to return a document which has suffered deterioration or damage as closely as practicable to its original state

NOTE In archival restoration, no attempt is made to recreate missing text, etc., and all restoration work is kept clearly evident.

[ISO 5127:2001, definition 6.1.04]

2.49**seat**

seat provided for users for reading or studying, whether with or without equipment

NOTE Includes seats in carrels, in seminar and study rooms and the audiovisual and children's departments of the library. Excludes seats in halls, lecture and auditory theatres intended for audiences of special events. Also excludes floor space on which users may sit and similar informal seating.

[ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.4.5]

2.50**special grant**

grant of a non-recurrent nature to fund (or partly fund) projects

[ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.5.4]

2.51**stable condition**

suitability for use

NOTE Stable material may have some damage but can be used without immediate risk of further damage. Unstable material will be further damaged if used.

2.52**storage**

preservation measures for keeping documents under defined conditions and permitting their retrieval or that of the information contained in them

[ISO 5127:2001, definition 6.1.08]

2.53**title**

words at the head of a document thus identifying it and normally distinguishing it from others

[ISO 5127:2001, definition 4.2.1.4.01]

NOTE For measuring purposes, "title" describes a document, which forms a separate item with a distinctive title, whether issued in one or several physical units, and disregarding the number of copies of the document held by the library.

[ISO 11620:2008, definition 2.42]

2.54**user**

recipient of library services

NOTE The recipient may be a person or an institution, including libraries.

[ISO 2789:2006, definition 3.3.27]

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damaged if used
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