
**Information and documentation —
International archives statistics**

*Information et documentation — Statistiques internationales des
archives*

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ISO copyright office
CP 401 • Ch. de Blandonnet 8
CH-1214 Vernier, Geneva
Phone: +41 22 749 01 11
Email: copyright@iso.org
Website: www.iso.org

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Contents

	Page
Foreword.....	v
Introduction.....	vi
1 Scope.....	1
2 Normative references.....	1
3 Terms and definitions.....	1
3.1 General.....	1
3.2 Types.....	2
3.3 Governing authority of archives.....	3
3.4 Archives services, programs and use.....	4
3.5 Holdings.....	7
3.6 Space and facilities.....	11
3.7 Funding and expenditure.....	13
3.8 Holdings management.....	14
3.9 Archives staff.....	17
4 Structure and tasks of archives.....	18
4.1 General.....	18
4.2 Tasks of archives.....	18
4.2.1 General.....	18
4.2.2 Appraisal.....	18
4.2.3 Acquisition.....	19
4.2.4 Arrangement and description.....	19
4.2.5 Preservation and conservation.....	20
4.2.6 Access to archives and their holdings.....	20
4.2.7 Public outreach.....	21
4.2.8 Technical advice.....	21
5 Uses and benefits of archives statistics.....	21
5.1 Background.....	21
5.1.1 General.....	21
5.1.2 Objectives.....	21
5.1.3 Quality.....	22
5.2 Selection of statistics for the archives.....	22
5.3 Use of statistics.....	22
5.3.1 General.....	22
5.3.2 External communication.....	22
5.4 Presenting statistics to stakeholders.....	23
6 Reporting statistical data.....	23
6.1 General.....	23
6.2 Time period to which data refer.....	23
6.3 Data estimated by sample.....	24
7 Collecting statistical data.....	24
7.1 General.....	24
7.2 Archives.....	24
7.2.1 Overview.....	24
7.2.2 Types.....	24
7.2.3 Foundation year.....	25
7.2.4 Governing authority of the archives.....	25
7.2.5 Ownership.....	25
7.2.6 Number of archives separate physical locations.....	25
7.2.7 Archives website.....	26
7.3 Archives services and their use.....	26
7.3.1 General.....	26
7.3.2 Opening hours and conditions.....	26

7.3.3	Users.....	26
7.3.4	Consultancy rooms.....	27
7.3.5	Technical equipment.....	27
7.3.6	Reference and informational questions.....	27
7.3.7	Online use and services.....	28
7.3.8	Use, copies and loans of archives holdings.....	29
7.3.9	Activities.....	30
7.3.10	Publications.....	31
7.4	Holdings.....	32
7.4.1	General.....	32
7.4.2	Years covered by the archives holdings.....	32
7.4.3	Total holdings at the end of the reporting period.....	32
7.4.4	Acquisitions during the reporting period.....	33
7.4.5	Acquisition mode.....	33
7.4.6	Deaccessions during the reporting period.....	33
7.4.7	Deaccession mode.....	33
7.4.8	Descriptive records and finding aids.....	34
7.4.9	Appraisal assessment.....	34
7.5	Funding and expenditure.....	34
7.5.1	Operating (ordinary) expenditures.....	34
7.5.2	Capital expenditures.....	36
7.6	Space and facilities.....	36
7.6.1	User places.....	36
7.6.2	Public access workstations.....	37
7.6.3	Reprographic facilities.....	37
7.6.4	Public access Wi-Fi.....	37
7.6.5	Space.....	37
7.6.6	Security and environmental systems.....	38
7.7	Management.....	38
7.7.1	Cooperative projects.....	38
7.7.2	Partnerships.....	39
7.7.3	Preservation/conservation.....	39
7.7.4	Digitization.....	40
7.7.5	Microform.....	40
7.8	Archives staff.....	40
7.8.1	General.....	40
7.8.2	Total staff.....	40
7.8.3	Staff training.....	41
7.8.4	Professional education.....	41
7.8.5	Staff allocation to service areas/working areas.....	41
7.8.6	Auxiliary archivist.....	42
	Bibliography.....	43

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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.

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).

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).

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

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

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

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

This document collects statistics for measuring the archives performance of their tasks, services and use.

[Clauses 3](#) and [7](#) form the core of this document. [Clause 3](#) provides definitions for most of the elements which constitute archives and archives services; these are for statistical purposes only. [Clause 7](#) recommends how each of these elements should be counted. Users need to consult both clauses for the complete picture.

It is recognized that not all measures specified in this document can be collected by archives of different types, sizes, and functions.

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Information and documentation — International archives statistics

1 Scope

This document specifies guidelines for the archives community on the collection and reporting of statistics for the following purposes:

- strategic planning and internal management of archives;
- aggregating and comparing operational and performance statistics at regional, national, and international levels;
- reporting to stakeholders such as funding institutions, politicians, researchers, and the general public;
- promoting the role and value of archives for advancing learning and research, education and culture, and social and economic life;
- improving the management of processes, reinforcing transparency and supporting good governance.

This document does not apply to records centres responsible for records that are still in the legal custody of the organization that created or received them, although it is recognized that some archives also have responsibilities for appraising, acquiring, and managing the current records of organizations that can or not be transferred to the archives for permanent retention. When applying this document to archives that also perform records management functions, the archives can exclude statistics that pertain to its records management functions, including measures pertaining to holdings and their usage and preservation, funding and expenditures, space and facilities, staffing and management.

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2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

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

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <http://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1 General

3.1.1 archives

<organization> organization or part of an organization responsible for selection, acquisition, preservation, and availability of one or more *archives* (3.1.2)

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.2.3.01, modified — Note 1 to entry until Note 4 to entry has been omitted]

3.1.2 archives

<holdings>materials, items, records or documents created or received by a person, family or organization, public or private, in the conduct of their affairs and preserved because of the enduring value contained in them or as evidence of the functions and responsibilities of their creator, especially those materials maintained using the principles of provenance, original order and collective control

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.6.1.03, modified — Items, records or documents have been included to define archives. Note 1 to entry has been omitted.]

3.2 Types

3.2.1 national archives

central *archives* (3.1.1) consisting of and responsible for the *archives* (3.1.2) mainly emanating from the central government of a state

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.6.4.2.03]

3.2.2 regional archives

archives (3.1.1) consisting of and responsible for the *archives* (3.1.2) mainly emanating from the intermediate levels of government

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.6.4.2.04]

3.2.3 local archives

archives (3.1.1) consisting of and responsible for the *archives* (3.1.2) mainly emanating from municipalities or other local governmental authorities

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.6.4.2.05]

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3.2.4 departmental archives

archives (3.1.1) of a government department or administrative agency, institution or organization

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.6.4.2.06, modified — Note 1 to entry has been omitted.]

3.2.5 university archives

archives (3.1.1) of or relating to a university

Note 1 to entry: For academic institutions other than universities, such as independent research institutes, select "other type not listed above" in 7.2.1.

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.6.4.2.07]

3.2.6 corporate archives

documents and other materials created or received by a group of people (a company, an organization) in the course of operations and preserved for their enduring value

Note 1 to entry: Includes business *archives* (3.1.1).

Note 2 to entry: Includes foundation *archives* (3.1.1).

[SOURCE: SAA Glossary <https://dictionary.archivists.org>]

3.2.7**audiovisual archives**

archives (3.1.1) and *archives* (3.1.2) of documents in which sound and/or pictures are prominent, and which requires the use of special equipment to be seen and/or heard

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.3.3.07, modified — Archives of documents have been added to the definition. Notes 1 and 2 to entry have been omitted.]

3.2.8**family archives**

archives (3.2.2) of or relating to a family or similar genealogical entity

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.6.4.2.01]

3.2.9**religious archives**

archives (3.1.1) of religious bodies and communities

3.3 Governing authority of archives**3.3.1****governing authority**

body with legal and fiduciary responsibility for the *archives* (3.1.1) and for approving archives policy

[SOURCE: ISO 18461:2016, 2.3.1, modified — "Archives" is used to replace "museum". Note 1 to entry has been omitted.]

3.3.2**state-governed archives**

archives (3.1.1) governed by governmental authorities at the national level

Note 1 to entry: Lower levels of government are accommodated by *locally-governed archives* (3.3.3)/*regionally-governed archives* (3.1.1).

[SOURCE: ISO 18461:2016, 2.3.6, modified — The term and definition for "state-governed museum" have been adapted to define "stage-governed archives". Note 1 to entry has been added.]

3.3.3**locally-governed archives**

archives (3.1.1) governed by city or municipal authorities

[SOURCE: ISO 18461:2016, 2.3.2, modified — The term and definition for "locally-governed museum" have been adapted to define "locally-governed archives".]

3.3.4**regionally governed archives**

archives (3.1.1) governed by regional authorities (federal units, province or county authorities)

[SOURCE: ISO 18461:2016, 2.3.2, modified — The term and definition for "regionally-governed museum" have been adapted to define "regionally-governed archives".]

3.3.5**other public-governed archives**

archives (3.1.1) governed by other public authorities

[SOURCE: ISO 18461:2016, 2.3.3, modified — The term and definition for "other public-governed museum" have been adapted to define "other public-governed archives". Notes to entry have been omitted.]

3.3.6

internationally-governed archives

archives (3.1.1) governed by an international organization (such as non-profit or non-governmental agencies that operate internationally)

3.3.7

privately-governed archives

archives (3.1.1) governed by private entities (such as non-profit or for-profit organizations registered under private law), families or individuals

[SOURCE: ISO 18461:2016, 2.3.4, modified — The term and definition for "private-governed museum" have been adapted to define "private-governed archives". Note 1 to entry has been omitted.]

3.3.8

public/private partnership archives

archives (3.1.1) governed jointly, in partnership of a public and private entity

[SOURCE: ISO 18461:2016, 2.3.5, modified — The term and definition for "public/private partnership museum" have been adapted to define "public/private partnership archives". Notes to entry have been omitted.]

3.4 Archives services, programs and use

3.4.1

access

right, opportunity, means of finding, using or retrieving information, documents and records

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.11.1.01, modified — Documents and records have been added to definition. Note 1 to entry has been omitted.]

3.4.2

download

successful request of a content unit from an archives-provided online service or other internet service

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.6, modified — In the definition, a library has been replaced by an archive.]

3.4.4

event

pre-arranged activity, in some cases ongoing or repeatable, with cultural, educational, social, political, scholarly, or other intent involving a group of people

EXAMPLE Exhibitions, author visits, literary discussions, workshops, etc.

Note 1 to entry: Only events arranged by the *archives* (3.1.1) on its own or in partnership with other institutions are included, whether inside or outside the *archives* (3.1.1) premises. Events inside the *archives* (3.1.1) premises organized by institutions outside the *archives* (3.2.1) without the *archives'* (3.2.1) cooperation are excluded.

Note 2 to entry: User education lessons and pre-arranged *archives* (3.1.1) visits are excluded.

Note 3 to entry: Ongoing programs are excluded (i.e. education program, exhibition program) but each session of a program is counted as one event.

Note 4 to entry: Virtual events are included.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.9, modified — The definition has been modified to include frequency of the term. Note 1 to entry has been omitted and subsequent notes have been renumbered. In Note 2 to entry, "education" has been used to replace "training" and "archives visits" replaces "library tours". Note 3 to entry has been modified to exclude ongoing programs.]

3.4.5 exhibition

curated display of objects on a clear concept and communicating a message

Note 1 to entry: See also ISO 25639-1:2008, 3.1 and ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.10.

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.11.1.09]

3.4.6 informational question

directional and/or administrative inquiry delivered to *archives* (3.1.1) staff

Note 1 to entry: This includes e.g. questions for locating staff or facilities, questions regarding opening times and registering procedures, and questions about handling equipment such as printers and computer terminals.

Note 2 to entry: It is essential that archives do not include *reference questions* (3.4.11) in this category.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.13, modified — "Archives" replaces "library". Note 2 to entry has been replaced. Note 3 to entry has been omitted.]

3.4.7 loan

lending of items in the archives' holdings to, or borrowing an item from, other collecting organizations, private collectors, or agencies

[SOURCE: ISO 18461:2016, 2.4.7, modified — "Items in the archives' holdings" replaces "object in the museum's collection". Note 1 to entry has been omitted.]

3.4.8 physical visit

act of entering into one or all of the parts of the archive's premises to access the services and programs of the archives

[SOURCE: ISO 18461:2016, 2.4.14, modified — "To access the services and programs of the archives" has been added to the definition.]

3.4.9 program

pre-arranged ongoing and repeatable activity having an intent within the mission of the *archives* (3.1.1)

Note 1 to entry: The activity would usually be of a cultural, educational, social, political, or scholarly nature, etc.

Note 2 to entry: Programs can be organized inside or outside the *archives* (3.1.1) premises.

Note 3 to entry: Programs inside the *archives* (3.1.1) premises organized by institutions outside the archives without the archives participation should be counted separately.

Note 4 to entry: Ongoing programs are included under events (i.e. education program, exhibition program) but each session of a program is counted as one event.

Note 5 to entry: Virtual programs are included, but should be counted separately.

[SOURCE: ISO 18461:2016, 2.4.15, modified — Archives replaces museum. In Note 1 to entry, the second line has been deleted. In Notes 2 and 3 to entry, archives replaces museums. Note 4 to entry has been replaced.]

3.4.10 publishing

publishing activities by *archives* (3.1.1), issuing documents for sale or licensing to the public in analogue or digital format

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.5.8, modified — Archives replaces libraries. Notes 1 and 2 to entry have been omitted.]

3.4.11

reference question

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 *archives'* (3.1.1) own and other institutions catalogues and finding aids) by *archives* (3.1.1) staff

Note 1 to entry: It is essential that *archives* (3.1.1) do not include *informational questions* (3.4.6) in this category.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.26, modified — Archives replaces library's, and finding aids has been added to the definition. Notes 1 to 4 to entry have been omitted. and subsequent Note 5 to entry has been renumbered and (directional and administrative) questions, e.g. for locating staff or facilities, regarding opening times or about handling equipment such as printers or computer terminals has been omitted.]

3.4.12

registered user

person or organization registered with *archives* (3.1.1) in order to use its holdings and/or services onsite or elsewhere

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.28, modified — Archives replaces library, holdings replaces collection, services onsite or elsewhere replace within or away from the library. Notes 1 and 2 to entry have been omitted.]

3.4.13

reproduction services

services provided by the *archives* (3.1.1) to create copies replacing original documents produced for their users

3.4.14

social network service

electronic service designed to allow users to establish a personal or organizational profile and contact other individuals for the purposes of communicating, collaborating, and/or sharing content with them

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.33]

3.4.15

user

recipient of services provided by the *archives* (3.1.1)

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.36, modified — services provided by archives replaces library services. Notes 1 and 2 to entry have been omitted.]

3.4.16

user education

instruction program designed to teach users how to utilize effectively the sources and the information services available in an *archives* (3.1.1)

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.11.5.05, modified — The definition has been amended to apply to archives.]

3.4.17

virtual event

event in digital format, specifically designed for use via the Internet

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.38, modified — Digital replaces electronic.]

3.4.18 virtual visit

session

one continuous cycle of user activities on the *archives* (3.1.1) website, regardless of the number of pages or elements viewed

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.39, modified — Archives replaces library, by users from outside the library's IP address space (usually from outside the library premises) has been omitted. Notes to entry have been omitted.]

3.4.19 visitor

person (individual) entering the *archives* (3.1.1) premises to access the services and programs of the archives

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.40, modified — Visitor replaces visit, archives replaces library, to access the services and programs of the archives has been added to the definition.]

3.4.20 website

collection of logically connected web pages managed as a single entity and accessed through the same base URL

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017 3.3.3.24]

3.5 Holdings

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3.5.1 analogue document

object usable without digital equipment [ISO 24083:2021](https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/b5e18e07-243e-4439-b2b8-049d9dc59f11/iso-24083-2021)

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.3.3.01, modified — object replaces document]

3.5.2 architectural document

items and materials that are created or assembled as part of the design, construction, and documentation of buildings and similar large structures, and that are preserved for their administrative, legal, fiscal, or archival value

[SOURCE: SAA Glossary <https://dictionary.archivists.org>, modified — architectural document replaces architectural record, items replaces documents.]

3.5.3 archival unit

single document or set of documents in an *archives* (3.1.1), treated as an entity

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.4.4.07]

3.5.4 archive group

record group

primary division in archival arrangement at the level of the independent originating unit or agency

Note 1 to entry: See also fonds

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 4.6.3.27]

3.5.5

artefact

object made or shaped by a human, such as a tool or a work of art

[SOURCE: ISO 18461:2016, 2.5.4]

3.5.6

audiovisual document

document in which sound and/or pictures are prominent, and which requires the use of special equipment to be seen and/or heard

Note 1 to entry: This includes audio documents such as phonographic records, tapes, cassettes, audio compact discs, DVDs, files of digital audio recordings; visual documents such as slides, filmstrips, transparencies; and combined audiovisual documents, such as motion pictures, video recordings, etc.

Note 2 to entry: Microforms are excluded.

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.3.3.07, modified — Film strips has been added, computer games have been omitted in Note 1 to entry. In Note 2 to entry, for library and museum statistics purposes has been omitted.]

3.5.7

born-digital document

document that has been created originally in digital form

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.5]

3.5.8

cartographic document

conventional representation, on a reduced scale, of concrete or abstract phenomena which can be localized in space and time

Note 1 to entry: This includes documents such as two- and three-dimensional maps, globes, plans, topographic models, tactile maps and aerial representations, but excludes atlases and any other cartographic documents in codex, micro, audio-visual and digital form.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.6 – modified — Note 1 to entry has been omitted.]

3.5.9

collection

gathering of documents accumulated on the basis of some common characteristic without regard to the provenance of those documents

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.6.1.05, modified — documents accumulated replaces items assembled, without regard to the provenance of those documents has replaced for some purpose, or as the result of some process. Note 1 to entry has been omitted.]

3.5.10

container

receptacle, box, package or housing used to hold materials

[SOURCE: SAA Glossary <https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/container.html>, modified — a box has been added to definition.]

3.5.11

digital collection

all objects in digital form in the *archives* (3.1.1) holdings, whether born-digital or digitized

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3.5.12**digital document**

information unit with a defined content, born-digital or digitized, that has been created or digitized by the *archives* (3.1.1) or acquired in digital form

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.13, modified — Archives replaces library, as part of the library collection is omitted in the definition. Notes to entry have been omitted.]

3.5.13**digitized document**

document that has been digitized from the analogue holdings of the *archives* (3.1.1)

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.16, modified — Part of the electronic collection containing those has been omitted, documents replaces items, holdings of the archives replaces collection of the library.]

3.5.14**document**

information which can be treated as a unit in a documentation process

Note 1 to entry: The information may be recorded using analogue or digital means.

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.1.1.38, modified — recorded information or material object has been replaced. Notes to entry have been omitted and a new Note 1 to entry has been added.]

3.5.15**file**

set of related records either analogue or electronic kept together either for current use by the creator or in the process of archival arrangement, because they relate to the same subject, activity or transaction

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.4.4.01, modified — Set of related records either analogue or electronic kept replaces organized unit of documents grouped. Note 1 to entry has been omitted.]

3.5.16**folder**

sheet of cardboard, file cover or heavy paper stock that is used as a loose cover to keep documents and other flat materials together, especially for purposes of filing

[SOURCE: SAA Glossary <https://dictionary.archivists.org>]

3.5.17**fonds**

whole of the records, regardless of form or medium, organically created and/or accumulated and used by a particular person, family, or corporate body in the course of that creator's activities and functions

[SOURCE: ISAD (G):1999 Glossary of terms associated with the general rules, modified — Note 1 to entry is omitted.]

3.5.18**graphic document**

manuscript or printed document in which pictorial representation is the most prominent feature

Note 1 to entry: This is pictorial rather than linguistic, musical or cartographic in form. Includes art prints, art originals, art reproductions, photographs, posters, study prints, technical drawings, etc., but excludes graphic items in codex form or in microform, audiovisual or digital form.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.25, modified — manuscript has been included.]