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Information and documentation — Library performance indicators

Information et documentation — Indicateurs de performance des bibliothèques

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Information and documentation — Library performance indicators

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ISO 11620:2023(E)

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 document 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).

ISO draws attention to the possibility that the implementation of this document may involve the use of (a) patent(s). ISO takes no position concerning the evidence, validity or applicability of any claimed patent rights in respect thereof. As of the date of publication of this document, ISO had not received notice of (a) patent(s) which may be required to implement this document. However, implementers are cautioned that this may not represent the latest information, which may be obtained from the patent database available at www.iso.org/patents. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

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*.

This fourth edition cancels and replaces the third edition (ISO 11620:2014), which has been technically revised.

The main changes are as follows:

- addition of library training participation indicators aligned with relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs);
- addition of library awareness, impact related indicators;
- addition of staff research and research support related indicators; and
- deletion of several indicators no longer relevant or feasible.

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 is concerned with the evaluation of libraries of all types.

The main purpose of this document is to endorse the use of performance indicators regarding the quality of library services in libraries and to spread knowledge about how to conduct performance measurement.

Performance indicators can be used for comparison over time within the same library. Comparisons between libraries can also be made, but only with caution. Comparisons between libraries will need to consider any differences in the constituencies of the libraries and library attributes, with a good understanding of the indicators used, limitations to comparisons, and careful interpretation of the data.

There are other limitations to the performance indicators in this document that depend on local factors, such as the community the library serves, service mandates, and the technological and financial infrastructure. Results from the use of performance indicators in this document are intended to be interpreted with regard to these factors.

Performance indicators are not specified for all services, activities, and types of use of the library, either because such indicators have not been proposed and tested at the time of formulation of this document, or because they did not fulfil the criteria specified (see [5.2](#)).

The performance indicators included in this document do not reflect all possible measures or evaluation techniques. It offers accepted, tested, and publicly accessible (i.e. non-proprietary) methodologies and approaches to measuring a range of library service performance.

The quality of library services is related to the broader topic of quality management and quality assurance. This document acknowledges and supports the International Standards prepared by ISO/TC 176.

Every indicator in this document is given a unique name. This name sometimes differs from the literature upon which its description is based. Such differences are documented in the descriptions of the indicators.

The performance indicators included in this document are either in widespread use, well documented in the literature, or sufficiently field-tested. Additional indicators have been developed by the working group in analogy to existing ones in order to cover as far as possible all library services and activities.

Library services will continue to develop and evolve, and such evolution will require monitoring as related to the indicators in this document. The library and information community is encouraged to establish mechanisms and to give high priority to developing relevant indicators for existing and emerging library services and resources.

This document will be maintained by a working group that will monitor developments and incorporate additional indicators as they are tested and validated.

Information and documentation — Library performance indicators

1 Scope

This document specifies the requirements of a performance indicator for libraries and establishes a set of indicators to be used by libraries of all types. It also provides guidance on how to implement performance indicators in libraries where such indicators are not already in use.

This document is applicable to all types of libraries in all countries. However, not all performance indicators apply to all libraries. Limitations on the applicability of individual performance indicators are listed in the scope clause of the description of each indicator (see [Annex A](#)).

This document provides a standardized terminology and concise definitions of the performance indicators. Furthermore, it contains detailed descriptions of the indicators and of the collection and the analysis of data needed.

This document is not intended to exclude the use of performance indicators not specified in it.

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 terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>

— IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1

access

<virtual> successful request of a library-provided online service

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2022, 3.2.1]

3.2

access

<physical> right, opportunity, means of finding, using or retrieving information, of using a service; or entering a building

[SOURCE: ISO 15489-1:2016, 3.1, modified — “of using a service; or entering a building” has been added.]

3.3

accessibility

ease of reaching and using a service or facility

ISO 11620:2023(E)

3.4

active borrower

registered user who has borrowed at least one item during the reporting period

Note 1 to entry: This count underrates the number of active users, but is still for many libraries the only manageable measure.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2022, 3.2.3]

3.5

active user

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

Note 1 to entry: This includes active borrowers.

Note 2 to entry: This can include the use of digital library services, if it is possible, to identify digital use and virtual visits of the individual user, or if data can be obtained by means of surveys.

Note 3 to entry: If a library identifies non-registered active users, e.g. by surveys, these should be counted separately.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2022, 3.2.4]

3.6

appropriateness

suitability of any given indicator for evaluating a specific activity

3.7

availability

degree to which content, documents, facilities, or services are actually provided by the library at the time required by users

3.8

capital expenditure

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

Note 1 to entry: 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. -29e03ad7987d/sist-iso-11620-2023

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2022, 3.6.1]

3.9

closed stacks

stacks that are not accessible to users

[SOURCE: ISO/TR 11219:2012, 2.19, modified — Note 1 to entry has been deleted.]

3.10

conservation

preservation measures and actions applied to prevent, arrest or delay deterioration of a document or other material object

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.12.1.01]

3.11

content unit

original or a digest of other published work

Note 1 to entry: This includes documents or parts of documents (e.g. articles, abstracts, content tables, images) and descriptive records.

Note 2 to entry: PDF, Postscript, HTML and other formats of the same content unit will be counted as separate items.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2022, 3.3.9]

3.12

database

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

Note 1 to entry: 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 to entry: Licensed databases are counted separately even if access to several licensed database products is affected through the same interface.

Note 3 to entry: 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.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2022, 3.3.10]

3.13

descriptive record

computer-processed bibliographic or other individual record in a standard format that references and/or describes a document in any physical form or a content unit

Note 1 to entry: A collection of descriptive records is usually published in the form of a database.

Note 2 to entry: The record can include elements such as title, author, subject, abstract, date of origin.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2022, 3.3.12]

3.14

digital collection

all resources in digital form in the library collection, whether born digital or digitized

Note 1 to entry: The digital collection includes databases, electronic serials, and digital documents.

Note 2 to entry: Free Internet resources which have been catalogued by the library in its online catalogue or a database are counted separately.

Note 3 to entry: The resources can be networked, installed on stand-alone workstations or stored on physical carriers.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2022, 3.3.13]

3.15

digital document

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

Note 1 to entry: 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 to entry: Items incorporated in databases are covered by [3.12](#).

Note 3 to entry: A digital document can be structured into one or more files.

Note 4 to entry: A digital document consists of one or more content units. Before digitization, the library should decide which content units should be searchable afterwards, e.g. articles in serials or songs on records.

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[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2022, 3.3.14]

3.16**digital service**

library service delivered digitally, whether from local servers or provided via networks

Note 1 to entry: Digital library services include the online catalogue, the library website, the digital collection, electronic lending, electronic document delivery (mediated), digital reference service, digitally delivered user training, services for mobile devices, services for interactive use (including services on social networks), and Internet access offered via the library.

Note 2 to entry: This does not include booking physical services (e.g. rooms or library tours) digitally.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2022, 3.2.10]

3.17**digitization**

process of converting analogue materials into digital form

Note 1 to entry: Digitization for document supply from the library collection to a user or institution is excluded.

Note 2 to entry: Digitization for preservation purposes is included.

Note 3 to entry: Mass digitization is included.

Note 4 to entry: Purchase of electronic copies for replacing print copies is excluded.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2022, 3.3.17]

3.18**document**

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

Note 1 to entry: Documents can differ in form and characteristics.

[SOURCE: ISO 5127:2017, 3.1.1.38, modified — Notes to entry have been deleted and replaced.]

3.19**download**

successful request of a content unit from a library-provided online service or other Internet service

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2022, 3.2.12]

3.20**eBook**

electronic book

non-serial digital document, licensed or not, where searchable text is prevalent, and which can be seen in analogy to a print book (monograph)

Note 1 to entry: The use of eBooks is, in many cases, dependent on a dedicated device and/or a special reader or viewing software.

Note 2 to entry: 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.

Note 3 to entry: Doctoral dissertations in electronic format are included.

Note 4 to entry: Documents digitized by the library are included.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2022, 3.3.22]

3.21**educational services**

learning sessions and learning materials and programmes in all formats for children and adults for the purpose of enhancing skills in library and information use

Note 1 to entry: This includes the provision of services for schools and the cooperation with other libraries in preparing and offering educational services.

Note 2 to entry: Education of librarians is excluded.

[SOURCE: ISO 21248: 2019, 3.22]

3.22**effectiveness**

measure of the degree to which given objectives are achieved

Note 1 to entry: An activity is effective if it maximizes the results it was established to produce.

3.23**efficiency**

measure of the utilization of resources to realize a given objective

Note 1 to entry: An activity is efficient if it minimizes the use of resources or produces better performance with the same resources.

3.24**electronic document delivery, mediated**

electronic transmission of a document or part of a document from the library collection to a user, mediated by library staff, not necessarily via another library

Note 1 to entry: Electronic transmission of documents to members of the population to be served is included. Fax transmission is excluded.

Note 2 to entry: Can be split up as to transmission with or without charge to the user.

Note 3 to entry: Unmediated downloading by users from the electronic collection of the library is excluded.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2022, 3.2.14]

[SIST ISO 11620:2023](https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/0ac20325-b70e-433e-8b5a-29e03ad7987d/sist-iso-11620-2023)

3.25**evaluation**

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

3.26**event**

pre-arranged activity with cultural, educational, social, political, scholarly, or other intent

EXAMPLE Exhibitions, author visits, literary discussions, workshops

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

Note 2 to entry: User training lessons and library tours are excluded.

Note 3 to entry: Ongoing programs are included. Each session of a program is counted as one event.

Note 4 to entry: Virtual events are included.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2022 3.2.16]

ISO 11620:2023(E)**3.27****external user**

user of a library who does not belong to that library's population to be served

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2022, 3.2.19]

3.28**facilities**

equipment, study places, etc. provided for library users

Note 1 to entry: Includes photocopiers, online terminals, CD-ROM workstations, seats for reading, and study carrels, but excludes toilets, cafes, and public telephones.

3.29**fixed level of proficiency**

FLP

minimum benchmark of basic knowledge in a domain (literacy or numeracy) measured through learning assessments

[SOURCE: UNESCO SGD indicator metadata – Indicator 4.4.1 (Harmonized metadata template - format version 1.0)]

3.30**free Internet resource**

internet resource with unrestricted (open) access for which no payment is required

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2022, 3.3.26]

3.31**full-time equivalent**

FTE

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

Note 1 to entry: For 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 2 to entry: Not all libraries can use the same number of hours per year to determine an FTE. Thus, any comparative measures between libraries might need to consider any differences in hours.

3.32**functional literacy**

ability to understand, evaluate, use and engage with written texts to participate in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential

[SOURCE: OECD, 2016]

3.33**functional numeracy**

ability to access, use, interpret and communicate mathematical information and ideas, in order to engage in and manage the mathematical demands of a range of situations in adult life

[SOURCE: OECD, 2016]

3.34**goal**

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

3.35**impact**

difference or change in an individual or group resulting from the contact with library services

Note 1 to entry: The change can be tangible or intangible.