

ROMANIAN PUBLIC LIBRARIES SITUATION

-A Panoramic View of the Year 2001 –

LIBRARY STATISTICS IN ROMANIA

The period 1998-2002 has been favorable to some major changes concerning library statistics, data collection and communication, development of performance indicators and their use in evaluation, promotion of a unitary technology, usage of the comparisons.

Stage Characterization

- it has developed a sustained activity of statistical data collection and communication;
- it has begun the statistical data collection in automated system;
- it has been adopted and it is being used the *ISO 2789 for Library Statistics Standard*;
- it is being used the *ISO 11620 for Performance Measurements and Indicators Standard*;
- it took place a special research program for library statistics and performance indicators named *Romanian Performances in Public Libraries – PROBIP 2000*;
- starting from 1998 Romania participates in *LIBECON European Project* for library statistics;
- Libraries National Committee*, a new created body, stipulated by Libraries Law, has special tasks concerning the Library statistics and performance evaluation;
- in professional associations (ANBPR, ABIR, ABIDOB, ABBNR) there are statistics committees coordinated by *The Statistics Committee of the Romanian Librarians' Associations Federation*;
- there are constant preoccupations of the librarians' associations for the adjustment of the library statistics to the changes in libraries;
- statistical data and information are more and more used in library management.

What Do We Have Available?

We have statistical data that cover:

- all types of public libraries during the period 1991-1999 and 2001;
- university libraries and The National Library of Romania in 2001;
- public libraries from UE and CEE countries in 2000.

We have statistical instruments of data collection:

- Statistics modulus integrated to the TINLIB library soft;

- Library activity evidence book and The Register of Stock Movement adjusted to the current stage;

We have specific performance measurements and indicators:

- Main performance indicators (17) are used at national level for the evaluation and the comparison of the public library activity.
- Secondary performance indicators (12) are used at local level by each public library for a more profound activity evaluation.

Conclusions

In Romania there are constant preoccupations for:

- the adjustment of the library statistics to the current stage of libraries development;
- the harmonization of the library statistics to the needs of the international standards;
- the usage of the statistics as a management instrument;
- the improvement of the standardization and the increasing of the standards.

THE MAIN PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS (1999, 2001)

The Resources the public libraries possessed in 2001 emphasize the trends that existed. It has been noticed a ***diminution of the number of public libraries*** (2.814) compared to the year 1999 with 70. This has been a phenomenon often seen in rural environment, where because of the lacking of funds for the payment of staff salaries, many village libraries have been either temporarily or permanently closed.

The number of service points (3.190) has increased with 33 through the foundation of new branches or loan points in the villages belonging to the communes.

The disparity among public libraries types is very big. County libraries have a service point for 33.000 inhabitants, town libraries for 16.000 inhabitants and village libraries for 3.779 inhabitants.

Public libraries collections have increased with 907.439, totalizing 49.348.344 documents. The main causes of this increase are the acquisition of documents and the small quantity of removed documents. If we analyze the structure of the collections according to the category of documents they contain: 98,72% books and serials, 0,14 manuscripts, 0,62% AV documents, 0,01% CD-ROMS, 0,48% other documents. This structure emphasizes the traditional character of our collections.

Documents acquisition (1.040.752) has registered an increase with 247.137 documents. This should be appreciated. The trend has been constantly increasing for the latest 12 years even if the increases were small. The main causes of this increase are: library preoccupation in finding

some other financial resources except those from the budget, The Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs Program of book acquisition in public libraries funds obtained from projects.

12,78% of the funds destined to the acquisition were obtained from other financial resources than the budget.

The percentage of the acquisition of varied categories of documents is different compared to the percentage of documents represented in collections: 77,94% are books and serials , 0,6% manuscripts, 1,03% AV documents, 0,15% CD-ROMS, 0,64% other documents.

There are obviously emphasized the insurance of other information sources except those on paper: AV documents and electronic documents.

Library staff: 5.257 employees, among which 4.475 librarians, 66 IT employees and 717 other staff.

Compared to the year 1999 the number of the employees increased with 276 among which 95 librarians and 18 other staff.

Financial Resources (15.001.176 Euro) increased with almost 50% and were provided in a percentage of 97% by budget incomes and 89,45% were used for current costs and 10,55% for capital costs. Among current costs, employees costs have the highest weight, 72,85%. Only 10,39% represent acquisition costs.

Facilities and Services

According to the LIBECON questionnaire three important aspects have been noticed:

Stock percentage offered at open access (73,8%) has increased with 9%

A high percentage have the village libraries in which 96,4% of their stock is at open access.

Town libraries offer 79% of their stock at open access and county libraries only 42,1% because here appears a space deficiency.

The percentage of the catalogued recordings in automated system (9,11%) has increased with 1,3%.

1992 was the first year in which started the constitution of data bases in county libraries and has been realized 0,23% of recordings.

The increases have been constant for the latest 10 years but only in county libraries that have had technology.

Workstation for the users (288) increase with 189.

In 1993 there were only 3 workstations for the users and now more and more town and village libraries have computers and access to Internet.

Out of these 288 work stations 114 are connected to Internet. According to Law, libraries play a strategic part in the development of the informational society and the programs that will be established according to the adopted national strategy will ensure the technology needed for the fulfillment of this “role”.

Use and Users

Enlisted users (2.046.676) represented 9,12% of country population, ***decreasing*** with 22.335, compared to the year 1999. This diminution may be explained by the fact that starting with the year 2001 public libraries have passed to using a personalized license, valid at all service points, thus eliminating “multiple registration”. The license is valid for five years.

Loan transactions (36.324.232) have increased with 1.166.893. Taking into account this aspect the year 2001 was a good year. The use of the libraries for documents loan is large.

Library visits (16.890.884) have increased with 937.885. They include both the direct use of the library and the use from the distance by phone, fax, mail. Very few libraries have web pages and the evidence of the e-mail visits isn't adopted yet.

CONCLUSIONS

- the resources for the libraries are insufficient;
- the facilities and the services offered are suitable but insufficient;
- libraries use is increasing;
- the impact of library in society isn't sufficient as concerns the number of the users;
- libraries use a unitary method for the statistical data collection and report;
- it is being developed a management based on evaluation instruments;
- it has already been covered important stages in library statistics adjustment to the libraries development stage;
- the harmonization with the international practices is mostly realized;
- because of the data supply Romania can be compared to other countries.

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***Performance Indicators Obtained by the
Romanian Public Libraries in 2001***

Library Context

1. Current costs from budget incomes per capita:	0,59 euro
1.1 Current costs from library's own incomes or other income per capita	0,01 euro
2. Costs for the staff per capita:	0,43 euro
2.1 % costs for the staff:	72,85%
3. Acquisition costs from budget incomes per capita:	0,05 euro
3.1 Acquisition costs from library's own incomes or other incomes per capita:	0,01 euro
3.2 Percentage of costs for acquisition from budget incomes:	9.22%
3.3 Percentage of costs for acquisition from budget incomes per capita:	79.76%
4. Capital costs per capita:	0,07 euro

Library Staff

5. Employees at 1000 inhabitants:	0.23 employees
5.1 Number of inhabitants per specialized employee:	4,939.54 inhabitants
5.2 % specialized employees:	86.38 specialized employees

Library Collections:

6. Documents in stock per capita :	2.20 documents
7. Documents acquired from budget incomes per capita:	0.03 documents
7.1 Books and serials acquired from budget incomes per capita:	0.01 books/serials
7.2 Documents acquired at 1000 inhabitants:	46.40 documents
8. Added copies per added title:	2.37 copies
9 Stock Renewal Rate:	47.42 years

Utilization and Users:

10. Enlisted users as % of population:	9.12%
11. Active users as % of population:	8.91%
12 Costs per active user:	6,72 euro
13 Documents on loan per capita:	1.62 documents
13.1 Documents on loan per active user:	18.18 documents
13.2 Documents on loan per employee:	6,909.69 documents
13.3 Documents on loan per visit:	2.15 documents
14. Library visits per capita:	0.75 visits
14.1 Library visits per active user:	8.45 visits
15. Cost per library visit:	0,79 euro