

Public libraries in 2019

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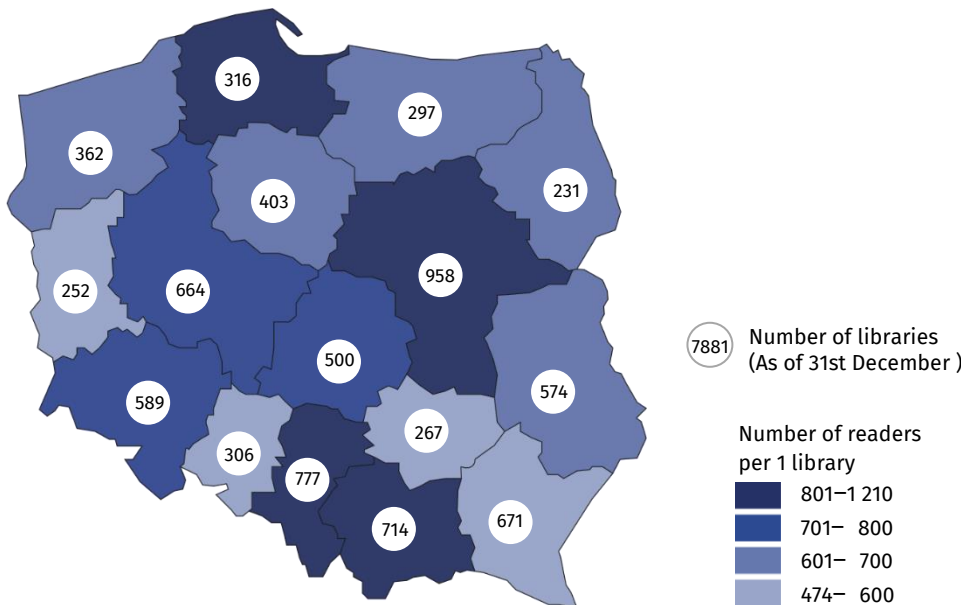
↓ 8.1%
Decrease in the number of library points in comparison to 2018

As of the end of 2019, there were 7,881 public libraries, including 5,272 libraries branches. Public libraries carried 875 branches for children and youths and 995 libraries points. During the year 5,983.7 thousand readers borrowed 102.7 million volumes of collection.

The largest number of libraries (including branches) were operating in Mazowieckie Voivodship (12.2% of the total number of entities), followed by Śląskie Voivodship (9.9%). Most entities (65.1%) were active in rural areas.

On average, there were 4,870 inhabitants per 1 public library, most in the Pomorskie Voivodship (7,417), and the least in Podkarpackie Voivodship (3,170).

Map 1. Public libraries (including branches) in 2019



On average, there were 759 readers per 1 public library

Accessibility of libraries for readers

More than a half (55.7%) of active public libraries offered their services for 5 days in a week. On Saturday, 22.0% of the total number of active entities were available, while 0,4% on Sunday. On average, 1 library was open during the week for 33 hours.

Library collection

As at the end of 2019 public libraries had 127.0 million volumes of collection, of which 98.5% were books. Libraries dispose also almost 6 million materials forming special collection, among which most numerous category constituted audio-visual materials (3.1 million). On average, 1 public library offered readers 10 current magazines titles.

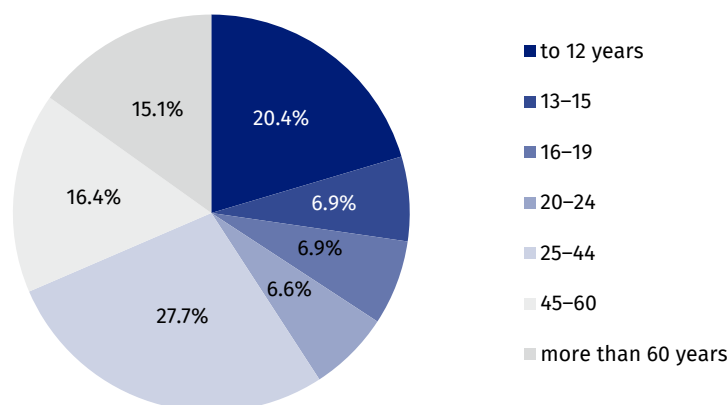
Within special collection audio-visual materials were the most numerous (53.7% of total number of special collection)

Readers and loans

In 2019 almost 6 million readers were registered. They borrowed 102.7 million volumes of collection and 3.7 million library materials constituting special collection. In comparison to 2018 the number of readers increased by 0.5%.

The most numerous group of readers in public libraries by age category were people aged 25–44 years (2.2 million). In terms of occupation, the majority of readers were persons employed (38.2% of the total number of readers), followed by studying people (36.8%).

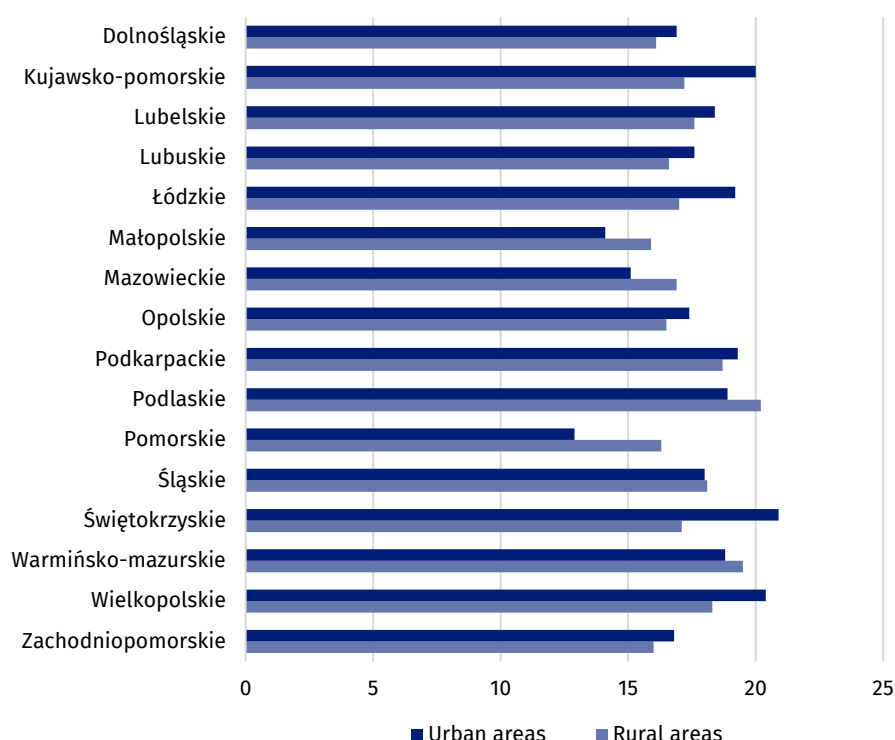
Chart 1. The structure of readers in public libraries by age in 2019



The largest group of readers were people aged 25–44 years

On average, there were 17.2 borrowed volumes of collection per 1 reader. The highest rate was recorded in Wielkopolskie Voivodship (19.7), the lowest – in Pomorskie Voivodship (13.5).

Chart 2. Loans of collection in volumes per 1 reader in public libraries in 2019



Facilities for people with special needs

As of the end of 2019 public libraries had 743 specially adapted places in reading rooms for people with special needs. Libraries in cities were better equipped with facilities for users with disabilities (64.2%). For the blind, visually impaired and seniors, the institutions made available 875 “talking books”, i.e. devices enabling the reproduction of spoken books. Audio-players for readers had 4.1% libraries.

Electronic services in public libraries

Public libraries are expanding their offer with services provided with help of new technologies. 5,665 libraries made available on-line catalogues (4.9% more in comparison to 2018). Access to licensed collection (electronic books and magazines, data bases and other electronic collections) was enabled by 2,011 libraries. Public libraries have websites, on which they provide digitized content, e-books or links to materials of other libraries or websites. Nearly half of the libraries (46.8%) additionally had accounts on social networks and posted entries about current events, photos, and information about their services.

Other forms of public libraries activity

Besides of the basic activities, public libraries carry out other tasks, e.g. popularisation or education. In 2019 public libraries organised, among others 275.0 thousand various type of meetings and events, in which 7.0 million participants took part.

On average, 26 people participated in 1 event organised by library

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