

Accessibility of libraries for readers

More than a half (60.4%) of active public libraries offered their services 5 days a week. On Saturday, 15.0% of the total number of active entities were available and on Sunday 0,4%. On average, 1 library was open for 32 hours per week.

Library collection

As of the end of 2020 public libraries had 125.0 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 (3.2 million). On average, 1 public library offered readers 10 current magazines titles.

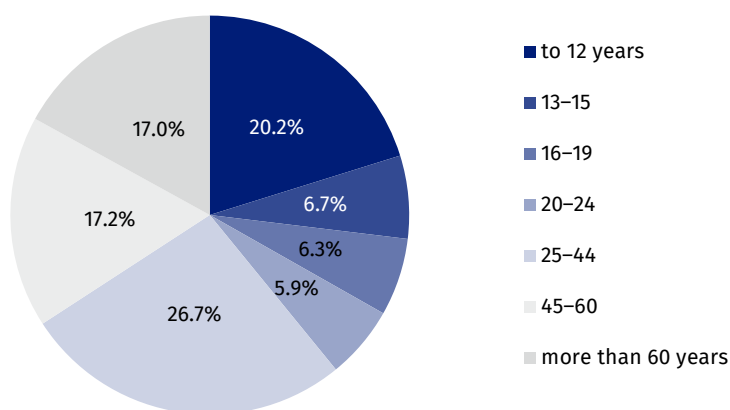
Within special collection, audio-visual materials were the most numerous (54.7% of the total number of special collection)

Readers and loans

In 2020 almost 5 million readers were registered. They borrowed 77.5 million volumes of collection and 2.4 million library materials constituting special collection. In comparison to 2019 the number of readers decreased by 17.8% and loans by 24.5%

The most numerous group of readers in public libraries by age category were people aged 25–44 years (1.3 million). In terms of occupation, the majority of readers were persons employed (39.0% of the total number of readers), followed by studying people (34.9%).

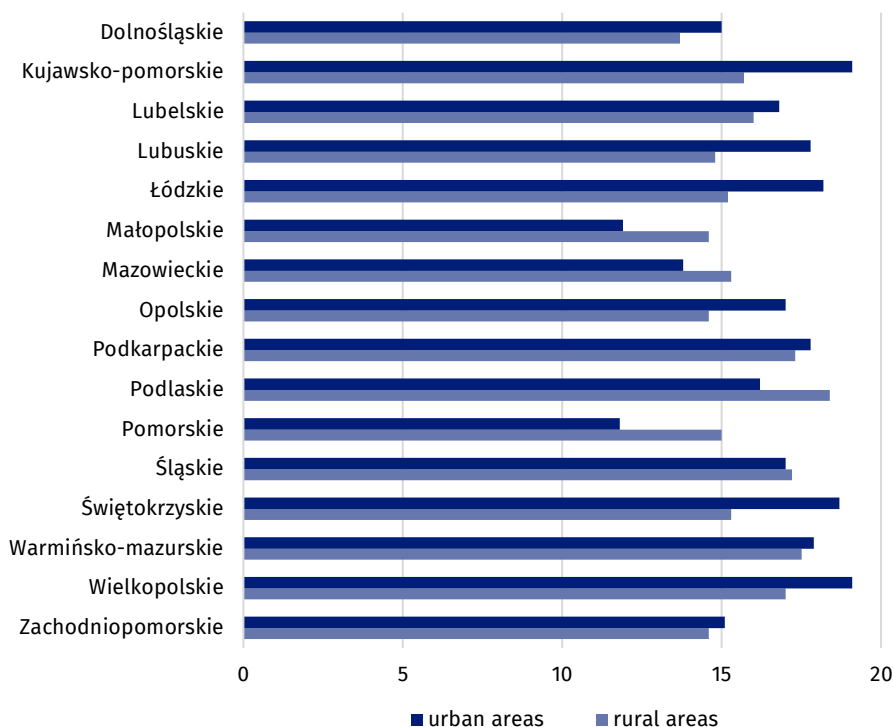
Chart 1. The structure of readers in public libraries by age in 2020



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

On average, there were 16 borrowed volumes of collection per 1 reader. The highest rate was recorded in Wielkopolskie Voivodship (18.4), the lowest – in Pomorskie Voivodship (12.4).

Chart 2. Loans of collection in volumes per 1 reader in public libraries in 2020



Facilities for people with special needs

As of the end of 2020 public libraries had 606 specially adapted places in reading rooms for people with special needs. Libraries in cities were better equipped with facilities for users with disabilities (68.3%). For the blind, visually impaired and seniors, the institutions made available 1,042 “talking books”, i.e. devices enabling the reproduction of spoken books. Audio-players for readers had 4.7% libraries.

Electronic services in public libraries

Public libraries are expanding their offer with services provided with help of new technologies. 5,789 libraries made available on-line catalogues (2.2% more in comparison to 2019). Access to licensed collection (electronic books and magazines, data bases and other electronic collections) was offered by 2,343 libraries. Public libraries have websites, on which they provide digitized content, e-books or links to materials of other libraries or websites. More than half of the libraries (51.4%) additionally had accounts on social networks and posted entries about current events, photos, and information about their services.

The possibility of providing services online meant that nearly 56% of public libraries did not limit the availability of their services. Of these, 46.9% allowed readers to access e-books remotely, 26.9% allowed on-line registration of new readers, and 21.2% allowed readers to order scans or digitization of indicated articles/publications free of charge. In addition, libraries also offered the possibility of remote use of audio books or remote access to the press (current and archive issues).

Other forms of public libraries activity

In 2020 public libraries organised, among others 112.7 thousand various type of meetings and events attended by 3.6 million participants. Compared to the previous year, the number of events organised by public libraries decreased by 59.0%, and the organised events were much more virtual (15.9 thousand in 2020 compared to 0.8 thousand in 2019).

On average, 32 people participated in 1 event organised by library

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Prepared by:
Statistical Office in Kraków
Director Agnieszka Szlubowska
Office: tel. (+48 12) 420 40 50

Issued by:
**The Spokesperson for the President
of Statistics Poland**
Karolina Banaszek
Mobile: (+48) 695 255 011

Press Office

Office: tel. (+48 22) 608 34 91, 608 38 04

e-mail: obslugaprasowa@stat.gov.pl



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