



GLOB@L LIBRARIES - BULGARIA PROGRAMME

LIBRARY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

For the planning purposes of the Glob@l Libraries – Bulgaria Programme, a library needs assessment (NA) was conducted in the period from June to August 2008. Each library was visited by a team composed of a librarian and an ICT specialist, who completed a detailed questionnaire.

The NA collected information on the performance, premises, hardware, software, Internet connectivity, human capital needs and renovation needs of 2,351 public libraries.

SUMMARY OF SURVEY FINDINGS

1. SURVEYED LIBRARIES – GENERAL FEATURES

2. DISTRIBUTION OF INTERVIEWED LIBRARIES ACCORDING TO LIBRARY INDICATORS

3. STAFF OF INTERVIEWED LIBRARIES

4. FACILITIES

5. EQUIPMENT

6. AVAILABILITY OF AUTOMATED LIBRARY SYSTEMS

7. NETWORK CONNECTIVITY (INTERNET CONNECTION)

1. SURVEYED LIBRARIES – GENERAL FEATURES

Figure 1

Distribution of interviewed libraries according to library type (*number*)

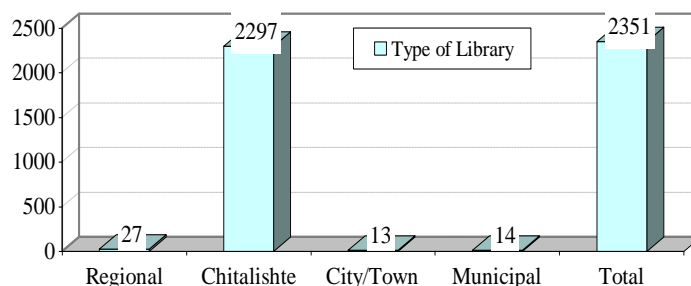
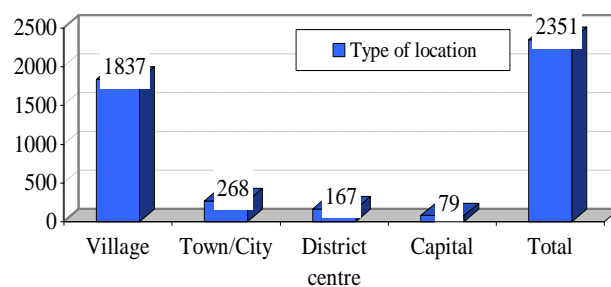
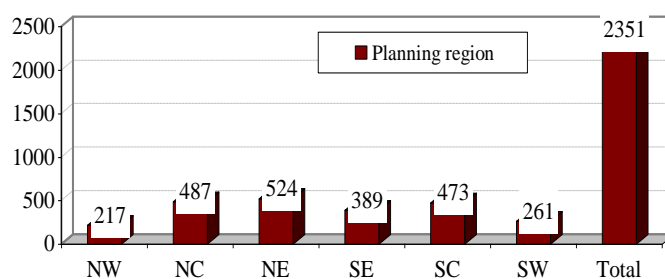


Figure 2Distribution of interviewed libraries according to type of location (*number*)**Figure 3**Distribution of interviewed libraries according to planning region (*number*)**Table 1**

Distribution of interviewed libraries by district

District	Number	%	District	Number	%
Blagoevgrad	80	3.4	Pleven	128	5.4
Burgas	102	4.3	Plovdiv	124	5.3
Varna	88	3.7	Razgrad	62	2.6
Veliko Tarnovo	124	5.3	Ruse	86	3.7
Vidin	54	2.3	Silistra	83	3.5
Vratsa	90	3.8	Sliven	80	3.4
Gabrovo	47	2.0	Smolyan	52	2.2
Dobrich	101	4.3	Sofia City	107	4.6
Kardjali	55	2.3	Sofia District	97	4.1
Kyustendil	60	2.6	Stara Zagora	102	4.3
Lovech	102	4.3	Targovishte	85	3.6
Montana	73	3.1	Haskovo	66	2.8
Pazardjik	74	3.1	Shumen	105	4.5
Pernik	45	1.9	Yambol	79	3.4
			Total	2,351	100.0

Table 2
Distribution of interviewed libraries according to type of location

	No. of libraries	%
District centres	245	10.4
Other towns and large villages – more than 5,000 people	159	6.8
Small towns and villages – 2,000 – 5,000 people	285	12.1
Towns and villages – 1,000 – 2,000 people	502	21.4
Towns and villages – 500 – 1,000 people	564	24.0
Towns and villages – less than 500 people	596	25.4
Total	2,351	100.0

2. DISTRIBUTION OF INTERVIEWED LIBRARIES ACCORDING TO LIBRARY INDICATORS

Table 3
Distribution of interviewed libraries according to total volume of library stock

	No. of libraries	%
No data available	103	4.4
Less than 2,000	92	3.9
2,001 – 5,000	371	15.8
5,001 – 10,000	828	35.2
More than 10,000	957	40.7
Total	2,351	100.0

Table 4
Distribution of interviewed libraries according to number of library materials acquired in 2007

	No. of libraries	%
No data available	181	7.7
No materials acquired	233	9.9
1 – 20	282	12.0
21 – 50	371	15.8
51 – 100	429	18.2
101 – 200	399	17.0
201 – 500	309	13.1
More than 500	147	6.3
Total	2,351	100.0

Table 5
Distribution of interviewed libraries according to total number of visits in 2007

	No. of libraries	%
Less than 253	296	12.6
254 and more	1,767	75.2
No data available	288	12.3
Total	2,351	100.0

Table 6
Distribution of interviewed libraries according to groups of visitors in 2007

Groups by occupation/profession	No. of libraries	%
Students (school and university)	1,728	73.5
Teachers, professors, scholars, scientists	31	1.3
Pensioners	306	13.0
Workers and employees	68	2.9
Specialists in a certain area	17	.7
Unemployed, housewives, women on maternity leave	11	.5
Others	13	.6
No data available	177	7.5
Total	2,351	100.0

Table 7
Distribution of interviewed libraries according to number of library materials borrowed in 2007

	No. of libraries	%
Up to 253 (1 borrow per day)	180	7.7
254 – 500	154	6.6
501 – 1,000	321	13.7
1,001 – 2,000	433	18.4
2,001 – 5,000	539	22.9
More than 5,000	428	18.2
No data available	296	12.6
Total	2,351	100.0

Table 8
Distribution of interviewed libraries according to number of reference and bibliographical services delivered in 2007

	No. of libraries	%
No such services delivered	414	17.6
Up to 20	332	14.1
21 – 50	407	17.3
51 – 100	263	11.2
101 – 200	127	5.4
201 – 500	808	34.4
Total	2,351	100.0

Table 9
Distribution of interviewed libraries according to number of open hours for visitors (hours per day)

	No. of libraries	%
Library not open for visitors	20	0.9
1 – 4 hours	372	15.8
5 and more hours	1,938	82.4
No data available	21	0.9
Total	2,351	100.0

3. STAFF OF INTERVIEWED LIBRARIES

14 respondents did not answer the question about the total number of library staff and **24 libraries reported they did not have any library staff**. 2,071 libraries (88%) had only one staff member and as few as 242 libraries (10%) – more than one.

1,378 respondents (59%) did not have any librarians or did not report to have any librarians. Only 973 libraries (about 41%) employed at least one librarian. Survey data shows that 1,008 libraries (almost 43% of respondents) had a secretary librarian and 323 libraries (about 14%) – a community centre (chitalishte) secretary. (Secretary Librarian or chitalishte secretary means a person in charge of all chitalishte activities, incl. library services). Moreover, 43 libraries (2%) employed a part-time librarian under a civil contract and another 47 libraries (2%) – a volunteer. Further data processing indicates that 982 (42%) out of 1,087 libraries (46%) with one staff member employed a secretary librarian; in 25 out of another 217 libraries employing more than one staff member, part of the services were also delivered by a secretary librarian.

A key question is how many libraries are actually operational. Survey findings show that 21 of all interviewed libraries did not specify any open hours, 20 libraries reported they were not operational, 372 libraries were open up to 4 hours a day and 1,938 libraries – 5 or more hours a day.

24 libraries answered they did not have any staff, therefore, they were not operational. However, 9 libraries employing one staff were open 0 hours a day (i.e. they were not operational) and another 14 libraries did not answer the question about the number of their open hours (which is a good reason for questioning their actual operations). In addition, 357 libraries having one staff reported up to 4 open hours a day; 6 libraries with more than one staff reported up to 4 open hours a day and 6 libraries did not answer the question.

To summarize the above information, the following conclusions can be made:

- As mentioned above, as few as 973 out of a total of 2,351 libraries answered they had a one full time staff librarian and 1,378 libraries reported they did not have a full-time staff in charge of library services. 4 libraries served by a staff librarian were actually not operational (they reported either no data on the number of open hours or 0 open hours a day), another 79 libraries were open up to 4 hours a day and 890 libraries – 5 or more hours a day;
- 3 libraries served by a secretary librarian were not operational and another 5 libraries did not specify the number of their open hours; 185 libraries served by a secretary librarian were open up to 4 hours a day and 815 libraries - 5 or more hours a day;

- 5 libraries served by a chitalishte secretary were open 0 hours a day or did not specify the actual number of open hours, 75 libraries reported they were open up to 4 hours a day and 243 libraries – 5 or more hours a day;
- A total of 41 libraries were actually not operational (they did not employ any staff or did not specify the number of open hours), 372 libraries were open up to 4 hours a day and 1,938 libraries – 5 or more hours a day.

Note: It should be mentioned here that some of the libraries which reported up to 4 open hours a day had a half-time staff position to deliver library services and others employed either a volunteer or an employee under a civil contract. For the purpose of programme implementation, it would be advisable to support a full-time staff position for these libraries when including them in the relevant support packages.

Altogether, data regarding the staff employed in interviewed libraries is alarming. This finding is sustained not only by the aforementioned data but also by the provided information about staff quality. For example:

- **1,213 libraries (52%)** had **no staff with library qualification** and another 861 libraries (37%) – only one staff member with library qualification. Moreover, 115 respondents (5%) did not answer the question but we can assume they did not employ any staff with library qualification. As few as 162 libraries (7%) employed more than one staff member and they had library qualification.
- In **1,024 libraries (44%)** there was **no staff with computer literacy**, 118 libraries (5%) did not answer (but we can again assume that they do not employ any computer literate library staff). 1,043 libraries (44%) had at least one computer literate staff and only 166 libraries (7%) – more than one.

4. FACILITIES

Most of the interviewed libraries were located in a single facility. As few as 62 libraries (about 3%) answered they had premises in more than one facility. At the same time, most of the libraries used two or three premises (Table 17).

Table 10
Premises used by interviewed libraries

	No. of libraries	%
1	558	23.7
2	784	33.3
3	600	25.5
4 and more	397	16.9
none/no data available	12	0.5
Total	2,351	100.0

However, though 16 libraries did not report any data, the total space occupied by the majority of the remaining 2,335 libraries was not large:

- 663 libraries (28%) were located in premises whose space totaled 50 sq. m.
- 996 libraries (42%) – 51 – 100 sq. m.
- 676 libraries (29%) – more than 100 sq. m. (see also Table 11)

Table 11
Library public area space

	No. of libraries	%
Up to 20 sq. m.	143	6.1
21 - 50 sq. m.	742	31.6
51 - 70 sq. m.	467	19.9
71 - 100 sq. m.	498	21.2
101 - 250 sq. m.	374	15.9
More than 250 sq. m.	101	4.3
No data/no space available	26	1.1
Total	2,351	100.0

At the same time, the number of respondents stating a need of renovation works in the building or the library is considerable. For example, only 680 libraries (29%) did not need any renovation of public area premises but 1,671 respondents (71%) needed such renovation (Table 12). The need of reequipping libraries with office furniture, rack systems, etc. is even more urgent (Table 13).

Table 12
Renovation needs of interviewed libraries

Declared renovation cost	Building where the library is located	Public service area	Other premises
Less than BGN 2,000	223	615	308
BGN 2,001 – 5,000	223	481	147
BGN 5,001 – 10,000	189	306	66
More than BGN 10,000	342	269	44
No renovation needs	1,374	680	1,786
Total	2,351	2,351	2,351

Table 13
Equipment needs of interviewed libraries

Declared equipment cost	Public service area	Library staff premises	Other library premises
Less than BGN 500	363	608	77
BGN 501 – 1,000	651	97	199
BGN 1,001 – 2,000	498	50	174
More than BGN 2,000	389	45	138
No re-equipment needs	450	1,551	1,763
Total	2,351	2,351	2,351

5. EQUIPMENT

1,526 out of 2,351 interviewed libraries (65%) did not have any computers and 556 libraries (24%) had only one computer. An even more alarming finding is that as few as 329 libraries (14%) bought their only computer in or after 2006 and 1,901 libraries (81%) were not equipped with a computer (Figures 4-5).

The number of computerized workplaces (CWs) available in interviewed libraries is very low:

- 1,586 (about 68%) libraries did not have any CWs for library staff and 40 libraries (2%) did not answer; 590 (25%) libraries had one CW for library staff and only 135 libraries (6%) – more than one CW;
- 2,060 libraries (about 88%) did not have any CWs for visitors but 41 respondents (about 2%) did not answer (which essentially means a lack of CWs); 152 libraries (about 6%) had one CW and only 96 libraries (4%) reported more than one CW for library users.

Survey data on the availability of computer equipment shows that, in actual fact, public libraries did not have computer equipment (Table 14). This applies especially to community centre (chitalishte) libraries – 1,520 (about 65%) of them did not have any computers.

Figure 4
Computer equipment in interviewed libraries

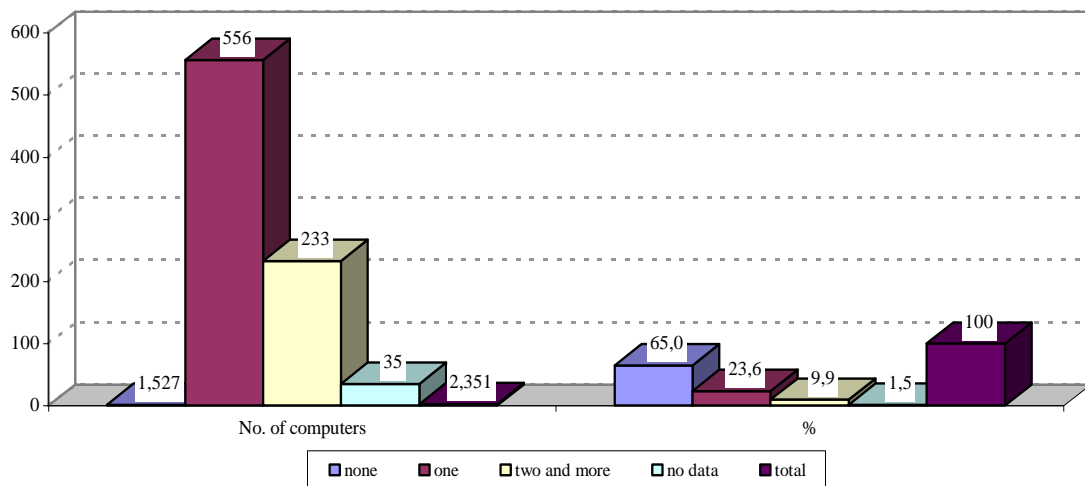
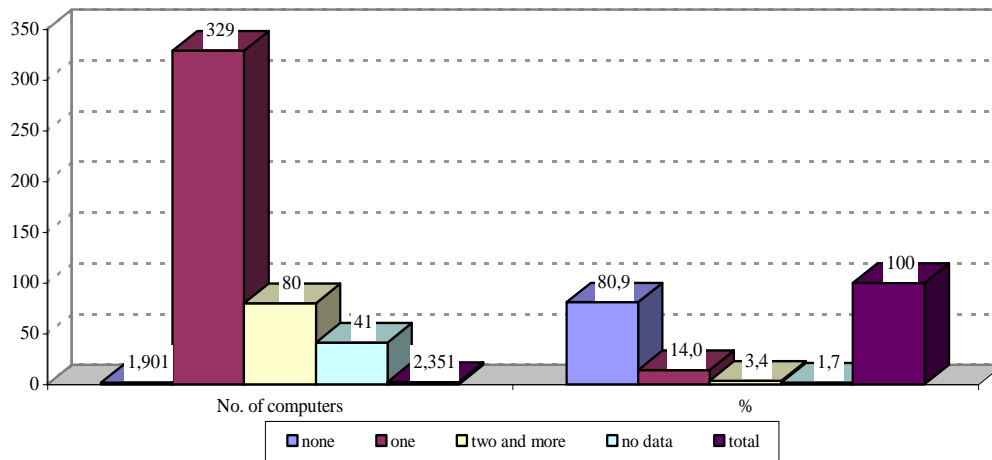


Figure 5

New computer equipment (purchased in or after 2006) in interviewed libraries

**Table 14**

Computer equipment according to library type (number of libraries)

Type of library	Total number of computers available in the library				Total
	none	one	two and more	no data	
regional	0	0	27	0	27
chitalishte	1,520	551	192	34	2,297
city	2	3	8	0	13
municipal	4	2	7	1	14
Total	1,526	556	234	35	2,351

As mentioned above, 1,526 libraries reported they did not have any computers (old or new) and 35 libraries did not answer the question. 789 libraries had some computer equipment (at least one computer). As few as 409 of them had some computer equipment (at least one computer) purchased in or after 2006. A total of 1,901 libraries (81%) did not have any new computers, 41 libraries (2%) did not answer the question, 329 libraries (14%) had only one new computer and only 80 libraries (3%) – more than one new computer (purchased in or after 2006).

As to libraries having some computer equipment, it is important to find out what kind of peripheral devices they are equipped with. As shown in Table 15 below, data is not reassuring. Findings based on this indicator are more than unsatisfactory, too.

Table 15

Peripheral devices available in interviewed libraries (number of libraries)

Device availability	Printer	Scanner	Multifunctional device	Specialized peripheral device for disabled people
no device available	1,974	2,249	2,097	2,340
device available	377	102	254	11
total	2,351	2,351	2,351	2,351

6. AVAILABILITY OF AUTOMATED LIBRARY SYSTEMS

Mostly due to the low values regarding technical equipment, only 207 libraries (9%) reported they had some type of software system for automation of library operations. 37 libraries did not report any data and 2,107 libraries (about 90%) stated they did not have such software (Table 16).

Table 16
Automated library systems available as reported in questionnaires

	No.	%		No.	%
“Automated Library”, PC-TM Company	1	0.0	ab	1	0.0
“AB”	7	0.3	ABC	3	0.1
“AB”, PC-TM Company	1	0.0	AB	3	0.1
“BookDB 2”	1	0.0	AIS “Library”	1	0.0
“Softlib”, 2003	1	0.0	ECatalogue	1	0.0
3 Softlib modules	1	0.0	Automated Library	1	0.0
AB-WIN, PC-TM Company	1	0.0	AB-libraries	1	0.0
AB-WIN	1	0.0	AB-software	1	0.0
AB	6	0.3	AB	74	3.1
ABV	1	0.0	AB, PC-TM Company	1	0.0
Abwin	1	0.0	AB, PC-TM Company	1	0.0
CD/ISIS	1	0.0	AB, PC-TM Company	2	0.1
CDS ISIS	1	0.0	AB, PC-TM Company	2	0.1
CDS/ISIS	2	0.1	AB, modules 1 and 2	1	0.0
CSD/ISIS for Windows ver. 1.4 (2002)	1	0.0	e-lib	1	0.0
E-lib	7	0.3	E-Lib	5	0.2
E-lib, SoftLib	3	0.1	Automated Library (AB)	1	0.0
Elib	1	0.0	Electronic Catalogue	1	0.0
isis	1	0.0	ibis e-lib	1	0.0
ISIS	9	0.4	E-Lib Integrated Library System	3	0.1
ISIS/DOS	1	0.0	My Library – ML	1	0.0
ISIS_DOS 3.0.	1	0.0	IBIS – E-lib 3.2/Windows	1	0.0
Libis	1	0.0	OPEN BIBLIO	1	0.0
PC-TM	1	0.0	Custom-made	1	0.0
phpMyLibrary	1	0.0	Adapted warehouse accounting software	1	0.0
SDS/ISIS FOR WINDOWS 1.4	1	0.0	“AB” software	1	0.0
Softlib	1	0.0	Own software	3	0.1
WINISIS – Softlib	1	0.0	Own system	1	0.0
winisis	1	0.0	Soft lib	5	0.2
Winisis	2	0.1	Softlib	2	0.1
WINISIS	2	0.1	SoftLib	9	0.4
WINISIS, Softlib	1	0.0	SoftLib CDS/ISIS	1	0.0

Winsis 1.5	1	0.0
Wisis	1	0.0
AB, modules: classifiers, books, borrowing service	1	0.0

AB software, 2004	1	0.0
Software by Engineer L. Georgiev	4	0.2
Old custom made software, 1997	1	0.0
Total	203	6.5

7. NETWORK CONNECTIVITY (INTERNET CONNECTION)

A total of 1,392 respondents (59%) pointed out that **there was no internet access** in the **buildings** where their libraries are located and 26 libraries (1%) did not answer the question. Only 933 libraries (40%) reported they had internet access in their buildings.

Findings regarding computer equipment availability in interviewed libraries naturally relates to their internet connectivity. Actually, it is easy to explain why 1,464 libraries (62%) did not answer the question about availability of internet connection. The answers provided by 887 libraries (38%) indicate that:

- 384 respondents (16%) had no computers with internet connection,
- 344 respondents (15%) had one computer with internet connection,
- 159 libraries (7%) had two or more computers connected to the internet (see also Table 17).

Table 17
Computerized workplaces (CWs) with internet access in interviewed libraries

	CWs with internet access for library staff		CWs with internet access for visitors	
	No.	%	No.	%
No CWs	413	17.6	684	29.1
1 CW	374	15.9	127	5.4
Two and more CWs	101	4.3	72	3.1
Total answers provided	888	37.8	883	37.6
No answer	1,463	62.2	1,468	62.4
Total	2,351	100.0	2,351	100.0