REPORT ON THE STATE OF LIBRARIES 2018/2019
“Zugang und Teilhabe im digitalen Wandel” (Access and participation in digital change) was the title of the first Federal Congress on Library Policy held by the German Library Association in Berlin on 1 and 2 March 2018. This describes the core mission of public and research libraries. Libraries need political support, reliable framework conditions and strategic development opportunities in order to cope with these challenges innovatively and in line with current conditions.

I therefore welcome the statements on library policy in the coalition agreement, which acknowledge “the increasing importance” of libraries. The resulting perspectives are now to be promptly implemented. For this purpose, the German Library Association represents over 9,000 libraries in Germany. Contemporary international, European and German copyright law, which promotes teaching and research in the digital world and enables public libraries to lend e-books as well as printed books, is the key to future services offered by libraries.

Similarly, further development of the library landscape can and must also be promoted at federal level. Another important step in this regard is the “hochdrei” funding programme of the Federal Cultural Foundation, which aims to strengthen libraries as “third places” of urban society.

This year’s report on the situation facing libraries shows what further steps are urgently needed in order to provide cutting-edge library services for all citizens and what successes libraries have achieved.

I hope you find this an inspiring read!

Sincerely,
Barbara Lison
Federal Chairperson of the German Library Association (dbv)

“Libraries have always been specialists in information. This expertise is even more important in the digital age: the wealth of information and knowledge must be wisely organised. People need places to discuss and debate matters beyond the World Wide Web. Moreover, academic institutions are counting on the support of libraries for new duties such as licence administration or the introduction of Open Access.

In this way, libraries are helping to make research findings accessible to more people, providing firm support for Open Science.”
Anja Karliczek, Federal Minister of Education and Research

“Libraries are a key location for media education. As digitisation becomes more widespread, they are transforming themselves into creative spaces where users find information, join in and try things out. Libraries are expanding their services and are involved in media education for children, young people and adults. Numerous libraries are supporting an initiative launched by my establishment, entitled ‘Lokale Netzwerke für ein Gutes Aufwachsen mit Medien’ [Local networks for a good upbringing with media]. For instance, they offer parents’ evenings for console and online gaming or programming, but also for video shoots or drawing comics for children. We still need the active support of libraries so that all children can enjoy a good upbringing with media!”
Dr Franziska Giffey, Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

“Many large libraries in Germany embraced provenance research years ago and are examining books from their stocks with regard to their origin. These books are suspected of having been seized as a result of National Socialist persecution. It is very important to me to reinforce this provenance research in Germany. I more than tripled the funds for this in my cultural budget during my first term of office, and in 2015 I founded the German Lost Cultural Heritage Foundation together with the federal states and local authorities. I hope that even more libraries, in particular city libraries, will take advantage of the services offered by the Foundation and embark upon and reinforce provenance research among their stocks with the help of the advice and financial support opportunities available there.”
Prof. Monika Grütters, Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media
Open Science aims to make science more transparent, faster and more accessible to all. Research libraries are key hubs, accompanying this cultural change in research and supporting stakeholders in its implementation.

Digitisation requires the development and expansion of new services. For this, libraries require extended customer services which recognise the potential of digitisation beyond their traditional range of tasks and implement it in appropriate service developments and tools for academic research, teaching and innovation.

As information specialists, libraries perform an important advisory function on topics such as Open Data, Open Science and Open Access and are able to promote these specifically. They provide a platform, a point of contact and a meeting place for researchers and support them in all phases of the research process, as well as in cooperation and teaching.

Advisory services and service offerings for academic publishing and research data storage, publication and open access are important duties performed by libraries due to the digital transformation of science and the associated variety of publication formats and options.

Research libraries in Germany can only successfully implement these functions in cooperation with the overall system. To develop sustainable and lasting structures, it is therefore necessary to reinforce them by means of a strategic approach, with targeted measures and coordinated investments at all levels of the research system.
As public, non-commercial places of learning and education, libraries are part of municipal services of general interest. Digital change is expanding their cultural and educational mission and offers opportunities to implement this in new ways and reach target groups more effectively. Local authorities should strategically develop this potential.

Libraries have been dealing with digitisation matters for years like no other municipal institution: libraries in particular make many digital offerings and services accessible to all citizens and thus counteract the digital divide in society.

At the same time, their importance as a “third place” has increased in the digital world, as a meeting place for exchange and communication alongside the home and workplace. They can only develop their potential for the digital urban society if they are taken into account in municipal digital strategies and “Smart City” concepts. A key factor here is the fact that the highly dynamic processes of digitisation require openness for the development of new offerings. To be able to design these, cultural institutions need internal and external structures that facilitate agile management processes.

The dbv calls for:

**Facilitation of contemporary copyright and equal access to e-books**

Will digitisation increase the importance of libraries in urban society?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>65.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>35.03%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Is there a digital strategy in your community that includes the library?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>43.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>44.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know nothing about that</td>
<td>16.45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Is the library in your community part of formalised urban or regional development processes?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Within the cultural institutions</td>
<td>19.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within the overall administration</td>
<td>44.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated processes of administration, economics and civil society</td>
<td>39.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>54.44%</td>
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Library stocks are a national cultural asset and are protected. But where do they come from? How did books get into libraries? From whom were they wrongly taken? Provenance research at libraries deals with these questions. It assists with the protection of cultural assets, establishes information systems and fulfills the obligation of all public institutions to search for cultural assets seized as a result of National Socialist persecution.

Researching the origins and fates of books and their owners and making them visible is a task that will take generations and requires reliable structures. For this reason, the dbv is increasingly calling for sustainable support for the consolidation of specialized knowledge at public libraries as well.

Cultural assets worldwide, including books, are destroyed, looted and taken away; they migrate from place to place by legal or illegal means. Collections were scattered and thus destroyed after the National Socialists came to power in 1933. Libraries - as an important part of historical-political education - can trace the origins of their stocks of books and make hidden networks visible. Only in this way can cultural assets be responsibly acquired and preserved. The origin of these complex cultural assets must be researched and prepared for the public. This requires a broad range of expertise that can only be acquired over many years. To consolidate this knowledge in the long term, policymakers and sponsors must recognize that provenance research and indexing is an important task for libraries.

The dbv therefore calls for sustainable support for the expansion of the digital infrastructure for provenance information on the basis of standards established internationally by libraries, as well as the long-term safeguarding of jobs for provenance researchers and the increased networking of data.

Sunday opening hours in Europe

While museums, theatres, research libraries and other cultural institutions are able to open on Sundays, this has not been legally possible for city and community libraries with their own staff. This needs to change as a matter of urgency.

People who work long hours, families and pupils generally do not have time to use the services and public spaces offered by libraries during the week. A pilot project at Bremen City Library 2012/2013 and the current opening hours of the American Memorial Library in Berlin and the Mönchengladbach City Library due to services offered by third parties are proving, by way of consistently high visitor numbers, that there is a need for local libraries to open on Sundays and that this will be accepted by the public.

The opening hours of libraries on Sundays are subject to federal legislation and are regulated within the framework of the Federal Working Hours Act, which only needs to be updated slightly to allow city and local libraries to open to the public on Sundays for educational and leisure purposes.
THE DBV CALLS FOR:

USE OF THE POTENTIAL OF LIBRARIES TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABILITY TARGETS

As broadly based cultural and educational institutions, libraries are relevant stakeholders in the attainment of the sustainability targets of the Federal Government and the United Nations Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

This is true in a number of regards. Libraries are free to use and there are usually no barriers to their use, they are places of integration, inclusion and diversity and they offer a central place where people can go. They have always worked according to the principles of resource sharing, as is evidenced by lending. Their structure makes them original institutions of social, economic and ecological sustainability.

Their core mission – providing free access to information – is fundamentally linked to these targets. The option of public access to information helps to provide a foundation for self-sufficient decisions and insights.

Nations in which people are able to obtain relevant information offer better conditions for combating poverty and inequality, optimising their economic conditions, offering high-quality educational opportunities, contributing to the health of the population, and promoting the culture, research and sustainability of the country. The networked library system can be used to distribute information on sustainable consumption and lifestyles, thus raising awareness of the social significance of sustainability. Libraries aim to ensure the sustainability of their activities when it comes to the procurement of media and materials. This means they can also act as a role model for other public institutions.

To achieve the sustainability targets, the Federal Government, states and local authorities need to set up libraries by 2025.

Sustainability targets

1. NO POVERTY
2. ZERO HUNGER
3. GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
4. QUALITY EDUCATION
5. GENDER EQUALITY
6. CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
7. AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
8. DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
9. INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
10. REDUCED INEQUALITY
11. SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
12. RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
13. LIFE ON LAND
14. LIFE BELOW WATER
15. LIFE ON LAND
16. PEACE JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
17. PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

THE DBV CALLS FOR:

INVESTMENT IN LIBRARIES NOW IN ORDER TO SHAPE DIGITAL CHANGE

This year’s survey of around 1,350 institutions by the German Library Association on the financial situation at public libraries once again proves that no additional funds are available for the increased range of services.

The stagnation in the funding of libraries is tantamount to genuine cuts as libraries take on a variety of additional socially relevant responsibilities in the fields of cultural and digital education, integration and inclusion, for example. Digitalisation is also changing the range of media and services on offer: providing both analogue and digital media and services requires greater expenditure, as these are associated with additional costs. In the future, libraries will have to be better equipped by their sponsors to handle strategic further development and modern services in communities.

Development of overall budget

75.63% of total budgets for 2018 are unchanged from the previous year

Provision and expansion of digital services

41.56% of libraries need additional funding for this