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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation on the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO’s adherence to the WTO principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: Foreword - Supplementary information

The committee responsible for this document is ISO/TC 46, Information and documentation, Subcommittee SC 8, Quality — Statistics and performance evaluation.

This third edition cancels and replaces the second edition (ISO 11620:2008), which has been technically revised.
Introduction

This International Standard is concerned with the evaluation of libraries of all types.

The main purpose of this International Standard is to endorse the use of performance indicators regarding the quality of library services in libraries and to spread knowledge about how to conduct performance measurement.

This International Standard specifies the requirements of a performance indicator for libraries and establishes a set of indicators to be used by libraries of all types. It also provides guidance on how to implement performance indicators in libraries where such indicators are not already in use.

The quality of library services is related to the broader topic of quality management and quality assurance. This International Standard acknowledges and supports the International Standards prepared by ISO/TC 176.

This International Standard provides a standardized terminology and concise definitions of the performance indicators. Furthermore, this International Standard contains concise descriptions of the indicators and of the collection and the analysis of data needed. Detailed information concerning methodology and analysis is provided in the publications listed in the Bibliography.

Every indicator in this International Standard is given a unique name. This name sometimes differs from the literature upon which its description is based. Such differences are documented in the descriptions of the indicators.

The performance indicators included in this International Standard are either in widespread use, well documented in the literature, or sufficiently field-tested and validated through national efforts. Some of the descriptions of indicators incorporate modifications of indicators described elsewhere; these reflect the practical experience or the need to generalize. Input and resource-based ratios are very well documented in the literature and provide a context for library performance indicators as defined in this International Standard.

There are some library activities and services for which, during the development of this International Standard, there was a general lack of tested and well-documented indicators. In addition, electronic services will continue to develop and evolve, and such evolution will require monitoring as related to the indicators in this International Standard. The library and information community is encouraged to establish mechanisms and to give high priority to developing relevant indicators for existing and emerging library services and resources.

This International Standard will be maintained by a working group that will monitor developments and incorporate additional indicators as they are tested and validated.
Information and documentation — Library performance indicators

1 Scope

This International Standard is applicable to all types of libraries in all countries. However, not all performance indicators apply to all libraries. Limitations on the applicability of individual performance indicators are listed in the scope clause of the description of each indicator (see Annex B).

Performance indicators can be used for comparison over time within the same library. Comparisons between libraries can also be made, but only with caution. Comparisons between libraries will need to take into account any differences in the constituencies of the libraries and library attributes, with a good understanding of the indicators used, limitations to comparisons, and careful interpretation of the data.

There are other limitations to the performance indicators in this International Standard that depend on local factors, such as the community the library serves, service mandates, and technology infrastructure configuration. Results from the use of performance indicators in this International Standard are intended to be interpreted with regard to these factors.

Performance indicators are not specified for all services, activities, and uses of the resources of the library, either because such indicators have not been proposed and tested at the time of formulation of this International Standard, or because they did not fulfil the criteria specified (see 4.2).

The performance indicators included in this International Standard do not reflect all possible measures or evaluation techniques. This International Standard offers accepted, tested, and publicly accessible (i.e. non-proprietary) methodologies and approaches to measuring a range of library service performance.

This International Standard is not intended to exclude the use of performance indicators not specified in it.

This International Standard does not include indicators for assessing the impact of library services either on individuals, the communities that libraries serve, or on society at this time. Library impact assessment will be dealt with by a specific International Standard (ISO 16439).

Throughout the text, the names of indicators are printed with initial capitals for significant words, e.g. Library Visits per Capita. This helps to distinguish the names from supporting text.

2 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

2.1 access
successful request of a library-provided online service

Note 1 to entry: An access is one cycle of user activities that typically starts when a user connects to a library-provided online service and ends by a terminating activity that is either explicit (by leaving the database through log-out or exit) or implicit (timeout due to user inactivity).

Note 2 to entry: Accesses to the library website are counted as virtual visits.

Note 3 to entry: Requests of a general entrance or gateway page should be excluded.

Note 4 to entry: If possible, requests by search engines should be excluded.

SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.1]
2.2 accessibility
ease of reaching and using a service or facility

2.3 active borrower
registered user who has borrowed at least one item during the reporting period

Note 1 to entry: This count underrates the number of active users, but is still for many libraries the only manageable measure.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.2]

2.4 active user
registered user who has visited or made use of library facilities or services during the reporting period

Note 1 to entry: This includes active borrowers.

Note 2 to entry: This can include the use of electronic library services, if it is possible, to identify electronic use and virtual visits of the individual user, or if data can be obtained by means of surveys.

Note 3 to entry: If a library identifies non-registered active users, e.g. by surveys, these should be counted separately.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.3]

2.5 appropriateness
suitability of any given indicator for evaluating a specific activity

2.6 availability
degree to which content, documents, facilities, or services are actually provided by the library at the time required by users

2.7 content unit
computer-processed uniquely identifiable textual or audio-visual piece of published work that can be original or a digest of other published work

Note 1 to entry: This includes documents or parts of documents (e.g. articles, abstracts, content tables, images) and descriptive records.

Note 2 to entry: Adapted from COUNTER code of practice, Release 3:2008.

Note 3 to entry: PDF, Postscript, HTML, and other formats of the same content unit will be counted as separate items.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.9]

2.8 database
collection of electronically stored descriptive records or content units (including facts, texts, pictures, and sound) with a common user interface and software for the retrieval and manipulation of the data

Note 1 to entry: The units or records are usually collected with a particular intent and are related to a defined topic. A database can be issued on CD-ROM, diskette, or other direct-access method, or as a computer file accessed via dial-up methods or via the Internet.

Note 2 to entry: Licensed databases are counted separately even if access to several licensed database products is effected through the same interface.
Note 3 to entry: A common interface providing access to a packet of serials or digital documents, usually offered by a publisher or vendor, is also to be counted as database. Additionally, the single serials or digital documents should be counted as serials or digital documents.

SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.10

2.9 descriptive record
computer-processed bibliographic or other individual record in a standard format that references and/or describes a document in any physical form or a content unit

Note 1 to entry: A collection of descriptive records is usually published in the form of a database.

Note 2 to entry: The record can include elements such as title, author, subject, abstract, date of origin, etc.

SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.12

2.10 digital document
information unit with a defined content, born digital, or digitized, that has been created or digitized by the library or acquired in digital form as part of the library collection

Note 1 to entry: This includes eBooks, electronic patents, networked audiovisual documents, and other digital documents, e.g. reports, cartographic and music documents, preprints, etc. Databases and electronic serials are excluded.

Note 2 to entry: Items incorporated in databases are covered by 3.8.

Note 3 to entry: A digital document can be structured into one or more files.

Note 4 to entry: A digital document consists of one or more content units. Before digitization, the library has to decide which content units should be searchable afterwards, e.g. articles in serials or songs on records.

SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.13

2.11 digitization
process of converting analogue materials into digital form

Note 1 to entry: Digitization for document supply from the library collection to a user or institution is excluded.

Note 2 to entry: Digitization for preservation purposes is included.

Note 3 to entry: Mass digitization is included.

Note 4 to entry: Purchase of electronic copies for replacing print copies is excluded.

SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.15

2.12 document
recorded information or material object, which can be treated as a unit in a documentation process

Note 1 to entry: Documents can differ in form and characteristics.

SOURCE: ISO 5127:2001, 1.2.02

2.13 download
successful request of a content unit from a library-provided online service or other Internet service

SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.6
2.14 **eBook**
non-serial digital document, licensed or not, where searchable text is prevalent, and which can be seen in analogy to a print book (monograph)

Note 1 to entry: The use of eBooks is, in many cases, dependent on a dedicated device and/or a special reader or viewing software.

Note 2 to entry: eBooks can be lent to users either on portable devices (eBook readers) or by transmitting the contents to the user's PC or other device for a limited time period.

Note 3 to entry: Doctoral dissertations in electronic format are included.

Note 4 to entry: Documents digitized by the library are included.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.20]

2.15 **effectiveness**
measure of the degree to which given objectives are achieved

Note 1 to entry: An activity is effective if it maximizes the results it was established to produce.

2.16 **efficiency**
measure of the utilization of resources to realize a given objective

Note 1 to entry: An activity is efficient if it minimizes the use of resources, or produces better performance with the same resources.

2.17 **electronic document delivery, mediated**
electronic transmission of a document or part of a document from the library collection to a user, mediated by library staff, not necessarily via another library

Note 1 to entry: Electronic transmission of documents to members of the population to be served is included. Fax transmission is excluded.

Note 2 to entry: Can be split up as to transmission with or without charge to the user.

Note 3 to entry: Unmediated downloading by users from the electronic collection of the library is excluded.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.7]

2.18 **electronic service**
library service delivered via electronic means, whether from local servers or provided via networks

Note 1 to entry: Electronic library services include the online catalogue, library website, electronic collection, electronic lending, electronic document delivery (mediated), electronic reference service, user training by electronic means, services for mobile devices, services for interactive use (including services on social networks), and Internet access offered via the library.

Note 2 to entry: This does not include booking physical services (e.g. rooms or library tours) by electronic means.

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.8]

2.19 **evaluation**
process of estimating the effectiveness, efficiency, utility, and relevance of a service or facility
2.20  
**external user**  
user of a library who does not belong to that library's population to be served  

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.12]

2.21  
**facilities**  
equipment, study places, etc. provided for library users  

Note 1 to entry: Includes photocopiers, online terminals, CD-ROM workstations, seats for reading, and study carrels, but excludes toilets, cafes, and public telephones.

2.22  
**free Internet resource**  
internet resource with unrestricted (open) access for which no payment is required  

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.23]

2.23  
**full-time equivalent**  
**FTE**  
measurement equal to one staff person working a full-time work schedule for one year  

Note 1 to entry: For example, if out of three persons employed as librarians, one works quarter-time, one works half-time, and one works full-time, then the FTE of these three persons would be $0,25 + 0,5 + 1,0 = 1,75$ librarians (FTE).  

Note 2 to entry: Not all libraries can use the same number of hours per year to determine an FTE. Thus, any comparative measures between libraries might need to consider any differences in hours.

2.24  
**goal**  
desired state of affairs to be achieved by the implementation of agreed policies

2.25  
**indicator**  
expression (which can be numeric, symbolic, or verbal) used to characterize activities (events, objects, persons) both in quantitative and qualitative terms in order to assess the value of the activities characterized, and the associated method

2.26  
**in-house use**  
documents taken by a user from open access stock for use on the premises  

Note 1 to entry: In-house use includes browsing at the shelves in the sense of a short investigation of the contents, but excludes looking at the side or spine titles only for selecting material.  

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.2.14]

2.27  
**institutional repository**  
open access repository for storing the publications of an institution, or a group of institutions, such as e-prints, technical reports, theses and dissertations, datasets, and teaching and learning materials  

[SOURCE: ISO 2789:2013, 2.3.26]