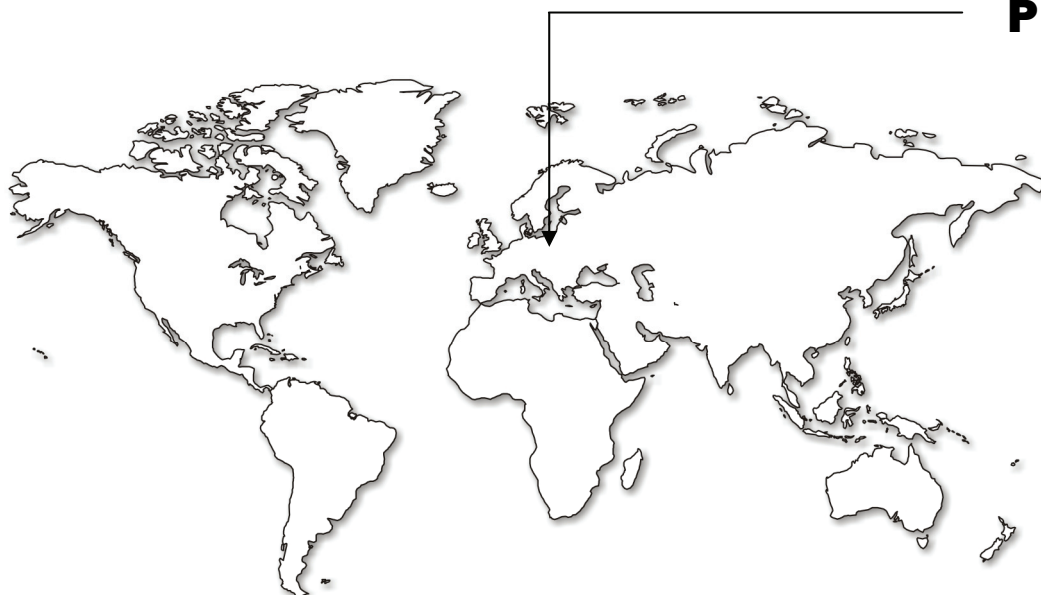# Poland

Responding institution:
Stowarzyszenie Bibliotekarzy Polskich (SBP)

Poland is responding for the third time, with previous responses in 2003 and 2005. This report concerns 5 955 public library service points and 15 200 school libraries. No mention has been made of the other types of research libraries. (The 2005 report referred to 8 700 public library service points and 3 000 research libraries; there is no obvious explanation for the large discrepancy in the estimated figures for 2005 and 2007.)

Internet penetration for Poland was estimated at 29.9% in October 2006 (*CIA World Factbook,* 2007 edition). Some 41-60% of public and school libraries, as well as government-funded research libraries, offer access to the Internet for their users. Access provided by university libraries is estimated at 81-100%.

Both local content and local languages are very well represented on the Internet. The respondent has estimated the literacy rate for Poland at 98% (99.8% in the 2007 *CIA World Factbook*).

Access to the Internet is free of charge to users of school and university libraries. (No information has been provided on the other library types.) During the last two years, the state and other library authorities have in some instances made extra funding available for Internet access (e.g. for small towns and disabled people).

The library association in Poland is not in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals. The use of filtering software is, however, to a certain degree widespread in the country. The protection of children and the safeguarding of religious values have been offered as reasons.

The respondent has indicated that libraries in Poland are not troubled by anti-terror legislation, and that there have been no incidents of violation of intellectual freedom. Several incidents have, however, been noted by third-party sources. No sources have been suggested by the respondent to provide more insight into the status of intellectual freedom in Poland.

Public libraries in Poland have been involved in programmes promoting HIV/Aids awareness, but not in programmes to provide members of the community who cannot read with such information. They have also not been involved in special programmes to promote women's literacy or women's access to information.

The Polish library association adopted a code of ethics in 2005. Both the IFLA Internet Manifesto and the IFLA Glasgow Declaration have been adopted by the Polish library community.

User privacy and anti-terror legislation

No anti-terror legislation has been passed in Poland. The respondent is of the opinion that if such legislation were to be adopted, it would not impact on user privacy. Moreover, the keeping of library user records would not affect the individual Internet library user's freedom of expression.

Reported incidents/violations of intellectual freedom in the past two years

According to the respondent, there have been no incidents of reported violations of intellectual freedom. Third-party sources, however, note several concerns about the violation of intellectual freedom in Poland, for example reports on racism and intolerance towards minorities (http://web.amnesty.org/report 2006/pol-summary-eng; http://web.amnesty.org/ library/Index/ENGEUR370012006?open&of=ENG-315). Other reports include:

- a lawsuit against a journalist for "defaming the Polish people" (http://www.ifex.org/en/content/ view/archivealerts/26/offset/25);

- suspension of an editor (http://www.indexonline. org/en/indexindex/articles/2005/2/poland-editor-suspended-over-youth-debate-on.shtml);

- concerns about censorship by the Polish media (http://hrw.org/english/docs/2007/03/16/poland 15511.htm); and

- the blocking of software patents (http://www.edri. org/edrigram/number3.2/softpat).

HIV/Aids awareness

Public libraries have been involved in programmes promoting HIV/Aids awareness, but not in programmes to provide HIV/Aids information to members of the community unable to read. This is possibly due to the high literacy rate in Poland. (It is, however, contrary to the response in 2005 stating that information on HIV/Aids is provided to people who cannot read.)

Women and freedom of access to information

According to the respondent, there is no need for special programmes to promote women's literacy or women's access to information, as such programmes fall within the field of interest of other institutions. The high literacy rate for Poland could also be an influencing factor. (In 2005, however, it was reported that libraries in Poland have been involved in initiatives to promote women's access to information.)

IFLA Internet Manifesto

The IFLA Internet Manifesto has been adopted. Librarians refer to it to promote access to information in Poland.

IFLA Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom

The IFLA Glasgow Declaration has been adopted and new Internet services are available in libraries.

Ethics

The Polish library association adopted a code of ethics in 2005 (see http://www.ebib.info/content/view/35/ 45/). Great effort is being made to promote the code, for example by referring to it during meetings and discussions, as well as on the Internet.

Main indicators

Country name:	Poland
Population:	38 518 241 (July 2007 est.)
Main language:	Polish 97.8%, other and unspecified 2.2% (2002 census)
Literacy:	99.8%
Literacy reported by respondent:	98%

Population figures, language and literacy are from the
CIA World Factbook, 2007 edition
(https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html).

Poland

Libraries and Internet access

Poland contributed to the World Report series in 2005 and 2003. The following section compares data and answers from 2007 with the 2005 IFLA/FAIFE World Report and adds context from the respondent's estimates, where possible.

Library services

Estimated number of public libraries*:	5 955 (2005: 8 700)
Estimated number of school libraries:	15 200
Estimated number of university libraries:	No data provided
Estimated number of government-funded research libraries:	No data provided
Source of these numbers:	State statistics

Internet access

Population online**:	11 400 000 Internet users as of Oct. 2006 (29.9%) (2005: 27.5%)
Percentage of public libraries offering Internet access to users:	41-60% (2005: 21-40%)
Percentage of school libraries offering Internet access to users:	41-60%
Percentage of university libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100%
Percentage of government-funded research libraries offering Internet access to users:	41-60%
In your estimate, how much local content*** is available on the Internet:	Very much
To what degree is content on the Internet available in local languages:	Very much
Is the library association in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals:	No (2005: No)
Is the use of filtering software widespread in your country's libraries:	Yes, to a certain degree – to protect children and safeguard religious values (2005: No)
Is it free of charge for library users to access the Internet on library computers:	Yes, in university libraries and school libraries (2005: Yes, in public libraries only)
Has the state or other library authorities made any extra funding available for Internet access in the library system of your country in the last two years:	Yes, in some cases – in small towns, for disabled people (2005: Yes)

* Public library service points, including branch libraries.
** Online population numbers are from Internet World Stats (www.internetworldstats.com).
*** Local content is defined as content that originates in the country.