



Responding institution:
Lebanese Library Association

Lebanon has responded twice previously, in 2001 and in 2003. There are an estimated 70 public libraries in Lebanon and 3 077 schools (1 509 public and 1 568 private). An average of 30% of Lebanese private schools have their own private library and only 5% of the public schools do have a library, which gives an estimated total of 545 school libraries in Lebanon. (The size and collection of each library depend on the size, the number of students and the school fees.) There are 86 university libraries in Lebanon, but only about 15 of these are considered of important value, according to the respondent. There is an estimated number of 15 government-funded research libraries (for details see Government and Ministry Libraries at http://www.llaweb.org/lib_directory/index.php).

Internet penetration is fairly low, with 15.4% of the population being Internet users. Levels of access in the country's libraries are as follows: public libraries 41-60%, government-funded research libraries less than 20%, school libraries 61-80%, and university libraries 81-100%. In the libraries where Internet access is provided, it is free of charge. The state has made no extra funding available to improve Internet access in the last two years.

The respondent has indicated that very much local content is available on the Internet (in English and French), but that very little content is available in local languages. The literacy rate is given as 87.4%.

The respondent has indicated that the library association is in favour of filtering information to a certain extent (e.g. for children), and that the use of filtering software is widespread in libraries. The reason given for the use of such software is the protection of children and the prevention of crime.

The library association has not yet adopted the IFLA Internet Manifesto or the Glasgow Declaration, and no formal code of ethics has been adopted.

User privacy and anti-terror legislation

No anti-terror legislation has been passed. It is felt that such legislation would impact on user privacy, and also that the keeping of user records would affect the freedom of expression of the individual Internet library user. Specifically, if records were to be kept, then users would refrain from borrowing books from the library or alter their choice of reading. The respondent has added: "In Lebanon there is no governmental blockage or proxy control of websites. The idea of such monitoring will obviously trigger the social and human rights organisations to revolt against it."

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

There have been incidents in the last two years that adversely affected the freedom of access to information or the freedom of expression: "Lebanon is a sectarian country with a long history of conflict. There are still governmental laws that ban religious and sometimes political books that offend different communities. Although the Da Vinci Code book was

banned in Lebanon, most of the readers have their own private copy smuggled into the country, but the book is not available in libraries or bookstores.”

The Amnesty International reports for 2006 (<http://web.amnesty.org/report2006/lbn-summary-eng>) and for 2007 (<http://web.amnesty.org/pages/315-030506-feature-eng>) mention several incidents of attacks against journalists and broadcasters.

In December 2006, the International Press Institute (IPI) produced a report on press freedom in Lebanon entitled "Media in Lebanon: Reporting on a Nation Divided". Commenting on the report, IPI director Johann P. Fritz said: "The Lebanese media offers diverse and wide-ranging opinion and analysis, and enjoys a greater degree of press freedom than many of its regional neighbours, which are home to the some of the most restrictive media environments in the world." (<http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/80050>).

HIV/Aids awareness

There are no specific library programmes to raise awareness of HIV/Aids. There are, however, programmes run by health professionals, international organisations, private schools and universities, and even nightclubs. There are no specific programmes for community members who are unable to read. The reason for this is said to be "lack of initiative".

Women and freedom of access to information

No library programmes that focus on the promotion of women's literacy in Lebanon have been indicated. However, mention is made of the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World, founded by the Lebanese American University, which has specific programmes for the empowerment of women.

IFLA Internet Manifesto

The IFLA Internet Manifesto has not been adopted, but the respondent has indicated that it will be adopted within the next two years.

IFLA Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom

The Glasgow Declaration has not been adopted, but the respondent has indicated that it will be adopted within the next two years.

Ethics

The library association has not formally adopted a code of ethics. However, the Lebanese library association's mission statement provides a frame of reference for professional conduct (see <http://www.llaweb.org/aboutus/mission.php>). The respondent has indicated that a formal code of ethics will be adopted within the next two years.

Main indicators

Country name:	Lebanon
Population:	3 925 502 (July 2007 est.)
Main language:	Arabic (official), French, English, Armenian
Literacy:	87.4%
Literacy reported by respondent:	87.4%

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



Libraries and Internet access

Lebanon contributed to the World Report series in 2003 and 2001. The following section compares data and answers from 2007 with the 2003 IFLA/FAIFE World Report and adds context from the respondent's estimates, where possible.

Library services

Estimated number of public libraries*:	70
Estimated number of school libraries:	545
Estimated number of university libraries:	86
Estimated number of government-funded research libraries:	15
Source of these numbers:	Ministry of Culture, http://www.llaweb.org/lib_directory/index.php

Internet access

Population online**:	700 000 users as of Sept. 2006 (15.4%)
Percentage of public libraries offering Internet access to users:	41-60% (2003: 41-60%)
Percentage of school libraries offering Internet access to users:	61-80%
Percentage of university libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100%
Percentage of government-funded research libraries offering Internet access to users:	Less than 20%
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 little
Is the library association in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals:	Yes, to a certain degree (2003: Yes, to a certain degree; reason not indicated)
Is the use of filtering software widespread in your country's libraries:	Yes – for the protection of children and to prevent crime and pornography (2003: No)
Is it free of charge for library users to access the Internet on library computers:	Yes, in all libraries (2003: Yes, extra funding has been received from the state and other authorities)
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:	No

* 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.