

## Comparative Analysis of the Situation and Evolution of Public Library Services in Cities and Regions all over the world

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<http://tibidabo-project.gesem.net>

### Introduction

The Tibidabo project began in the middle of 2003 as an initiative of the Libraries Consortium of Barcelona (LCB) and the Library Service of the *Diputació de Barcelona*, (The Provincial Council of Barcelona).

1. The ***Consorti de Biblioteques*** (<http://bcn.cat/biblioteques>) is a local entity that emerged from the collaboration between the City Council of Barcelona and the Provincial Council of Barcelona. This organisation was created to carry out the management of the public libraries of the city of Barcelona.
2. The ***Diputació de Barcelona*** (<http://www.diba.cat>) is a local entity that functions at the provincial level, acting throughout the Province of Barcelona. Its mission is to give support and offer services to the town and city councils, so as to ensure balanced planning and provision in the territory.

The aim of the Tibidabo Project is to make available comparative facts and figures about the Public Libraries of the city and province of Barcelona in relation to similar territories of Europe. The idea is to be able to compare similar services as we can only achieve a better future by knowing in depth the strengths and weaknesses of an organisation..

From the outset, the Tibidabo Project has been an innovative and ambitious project in the field of research and comparison of cultural indicators of libraries, creating an international network that shows new trends for modernising and adapting the libraries to the citizens of the future.

Libraries are cultural centres for the cities and they should become a gateway to culture for the citizens. To achieve this it is necessary that they lead the renovation and are very active centres. The Tibidabo Project aims to get a comparison and co-operation of the library networks so as to establish connections between similar centres and to find new lines of work.

## Approach and Objectives

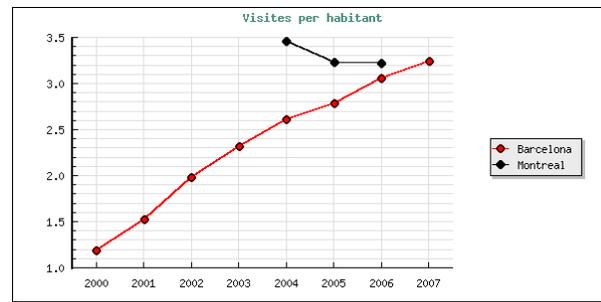
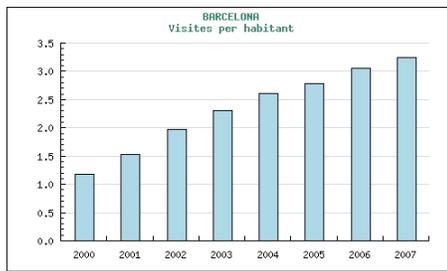
The Tibidabo Project is a useful tool for any participating city or region as it provides data about other library networks so as to be able to compare and evaluate them.

The main objectives are:

- To contribute to a **synthetic vision** of the evolution of the public library thanks to the information about other cities and regions with comparable characteristics (territorial, demographic, resources, etc.).
- To work with a **chosen group of indicators** that reflect: the capacity of the service of the public library, its informative, human and economic resources, giving special emphasis to the activity and use made by the citizens.
- To allow a **comparative analysis** of the different situations.
- To offer **detailed information** of other cities and their territorial units so as to have the biggest number as possible of elements to compare.
- **To co-operate and connect different networks** and facilities to be able to work on the constant renovation of the libraries as active centres.
- **To compare so as to improve.** It is necessary to compare as we can only plan a better future if we know the strengths and weaknesses of an organisation.
- In this way the aim is to show the situation of the libraries so as to:
  - foster the use of the libraries.
  - make their service more agile.
  - achieve greater efficacy.
  - keep up-to-date.
- That the library is the reference agent for fostering the reading habits of the citizens.
- To increase the number of citizens, social collectives and sections of the population that make use of the services of the libraries.

## Working Methodology

- To carry out a study of the cities and regions with similar characteristics (population, network of libraries, etc.) and invite them to participate.
- To select the necessary indicators so as to evaluate the use and running of the Network of Public Libraries.
- For the introduction and consultation of the statistical data, this website has been produced in which each of the participants can include their figures, and automatically a comparative graphic and report is produced which can be freely consulted.



- Subsequently the promoting institutions of the project will carry out an analysis of the information collected, and a report that includes all the information will be produced.
- All the participating cities and regions will also be invited to produce a report analysing the figures.

## Collection of data and Selection of Indicators

The aim is to obtain all the necessary statistical data to be able to carry out a detailed analysis of the current situation of the Network of Public Libraries. There are two main blocks of collected data:

1. General facts and figures about the territory (city and region)  
That includes socio-demographic data so as to get a description of the social reality of the setting to be studied.
2. Facts and figures about the Network of Public Libraries  
A group of selected indicators will be worked on that reflect the capacity of the service of the Public Libraries and the use made of this by the citizens. These indicators are grouped in three blocks:
  3. Indicators
    - 3.1.-**RESOURCES** to evaluate the efficiency of the management of the resources and to find out if they are sufficient and adequate. It includes data about: Economic resources (incomes, expenses, and investments), Human Resources, and communication mechanisms.

3.2.-**COLLECTIONS** so as to evaluate the suitability of the supply of the collection to the demand and the need.

It includes the statistical data about: The Main collection, Acquisitions and Discards.

3.3.-**SERVICES** for evaluating the efficacy of the services offered by the Public Libraries and to find out about the use made by the citizens. It includes statistical data about: Uses of the Library, Onsite use, Online Use, Users, Service points and Training and cultural activities.

## Definition of indicators

### RESOURCES

#### **Inhabitants per Service Point**

Details: Service Point (SP) means the whole library that offers services to the users. This includes the fixed SP and the number of mobile SP in the network as of 31st December of the year.

It is the average number of inhabitants per Service Point (SP).

#### **Seats per inhabitants and per user**

Details: Reading point means seat (with or without a table) the library network offers. We will calculate the average number of seats per inhabitant and per user.

#### **M2 per 1000 inhabitants**

Details: The sum of the area in square metres of the SP of the Public Libraries network (PL) on 31st December of the year. Number of square metres that the PL network offers per 1000 inhabitants.

#### **M2 per PS**

It is the average number of square metres per service point.

#### **Access points to Internet per 1000 inhabitants**

Details: Number of computers (PCs) connected Internet available for the public in the PL network on 31st December. Number of access points to Internet available per 1000 inhabitants.

### **Economic resources**

#### **Expenditure per habitant**

It is the average total expenditure number of the library per inhabitant.

#### **Expenditure per visit**

It is the average total expenditure of the library per visit received.

**We will breakdown the expenditure in all its items and we will produce the corresponding indicator per inhabitant and per visit so as to get the average.**

#### **Expenditure (in staff, in acquisitions per inhabitant, in acquisitions per loan, in communication), per inhabitant and per visit:**

Expenditure means the amount spent on staff (salaries, etc.), the amount spent on acquisitions (incorporation of documents to the collections, etc.), the amount spent on communication (for the promotion and diffusion of the libraries, leaflets, posters, etc.) and other expenses (material not in the inventory, running and maintenance costs, the amount spent on activities, programmes and projects, etc.)

### **Investments:**

#### **Investment per PL**

Details: the total amount of investment for the whole of the public library network throughout the year. Investment is considered to be the capital destined for the acquisition of furnished properties (buildings, construction and extensions, furniture, the initial collections, etc.)

It is the total amount of the investment for the whole of the public library network per SP.

#### **Investment per inhabitant.**

It is the average of the total investment for the PL network per inhabitant.

### **Human Resources**

#### **Staff per 1000 inhabitants**

It is the average number of staff that work in the PL per 1000 inhabitants.

#### **M2 per staff**

It is the average number of m2 for each worker of a library.

## COLLECTIONS

### **Volumes per inhabitant**

Details: volumes means all the documents that there are in the library: books, magazines, CDs, DVDs, etc.  
The indicator gives us the average number of documents per inhabitant.

### **Volumes per SP**

It is the average number of de documents per service point.

### **Main collection (books) per 1000 inhabitants**

It is the average number of the main collection (Books) that there are in the public libraries per 1000 inhabitants.  
The IFLA / UNESCO guidelines for the public library services (2001) establish that "in general lines the collection should have between 1.5 and 2.5 books per person".

### **Acquisitions per 1000 inhabitants**

It is the average number of acquisitions that are made each year per 1000 inhabitants.

### **Acquisitions per SP**

It is the average number of acquisitions that are made each year per SP.

### **Renewal rate of the collection**

The renewal rate of the collection is the percentage of renewals of the collection in relation to the documents included and the documents that have been withdrawn or deselected, that is to say, the amount of weeding.  
The calculation is based on the following formula.  $(\text{Acquisitions} + \text{Withdrawals from collection} / \text{Volumes} + (\text{Acquisitions} - \text{withdrawals} (1/1/200\_)) * 100$

There are other ways of calculating this rate but the international guidelines do not establish a fixed criteria. Given that this is a project of comparison of data, any formula could be valid, provided everyone uses the same one. The Tibidabo Project automatically uses this formula and for this reason it is important that the figures for the registration of volumes is respected by everyone.

### **Growth of the collection**

Growth of the collection in relation to what there was at the beginning of the year, as a percentage. This figure is indicative of the increase undergone by the public libraries network of the collection.

## SERVICES

### **Opening hours per 1000 inhabitants**

The number of hours during which the library network is open per 1000 inhabitants.

### **Visits per inhabitant**

Details: visit means the act of entering any service point to use any of its services.

It is the total of visits that have been made during a year divided by the total of the population. With this figure we can know the rate of use by the inhabitants of the services offered by the public libraries network.

### **Visits per day of service**

It is the total of visits per day of service that the libraries have received.

## **Indicators of loans**

**We have extensively broken down the indicators with regard to the loans service of the libraries so as to be able to make a clear interpretation. It is important to read them together given that they are all closely related and only with a global and inter-related analysis is it possible to achieve a correct evaluation of the service.**

### **Uses of loans per inhabitant**

Details: Uses of the loan service. Uses of the loans service means the total number of users who have made use of the loan service, the daily total, irrespective of the number of documents that have been borrowed on each occasion.

It is the average number of uses of the loan service per inhabitant.

### **Loans per visit**

It is the average number of uses of the loan service that are carried out in the library per visit. Therefore, we will know the number of visits that use the loan service and in this way know the importance given to this service within the total of all the services offered by the libraries.

### **Number of loans per registered user**

It is the average number of uses of the loan service in the library compared with the number of registered users. So as to find out what the annual use is of the loan service by the total of registered user.

### **Loans per day of service**

It is the average number of loans which take place on a day of service of the public libraries.

### **Loans per visit**

It is the average number of loans in the library per visit.

### **Loans per uses of loan**

It is the average number of volumes borrowed each time a loan takes place. The aim is to find out if there are many users who make use of the loan service a lot or if the use of this service is very spread.

**Loans per registered user**

Details: registered user means that the person is registered and has a library card to be able to use all the services.

It is the average number of loans in the library with respect to the number of registered users.

**Loans per inhabitant**

It is the average number of loans made in a library in one year per inhabitant. The indicator will evaluate the rate of use of the collections of the libraries by part of the population.

**Nº accesses to Internet per inhabitant (from the computers of the library)**

It is the average number of connection to Internet carried out in the libraries per inhabitant. It doesn't include access made from personal laptops by means of the WiFi service.

**Nº accesses to Internet per visit**

It is the average number of accesses to Internet per visit to the libraries. This indicator will evaluate the percentage use of this service.

**Nº accesses to Internet per access point**

It is the average number of uses of the Internet service per access point offered.

**Number of consultations of the collection catalogue**

It is the average number of consultations of the collection catalogue of the library that each inhabitant has made.

**Number of consultations of the collection catalogue per visit**

It is the average number of consultations of the collection catalogue of the library that each visit has made.

**Website visits per inhabitant**

It is the average number of consultations of the library website that each inhabitant has made .

**Website visits per registered population**

It is the average number o consultations of the library website with regard to the registered population.

**Cultural activities per 10,000 inhabitants**

It is the average number of cultural activities that the library offers per 10,000 inhabitants.

**Cultural activities per SP**

It is the average number of cultural activities that the library network offers per service point.

### Summary file of participants

Listing of Cities		Listing of Regions	
Data	City	Data	Region
	Barcelona		Província Barcelona
	Birmingham		Condado West Midlands
	Bologna		
	Bremen		
	Bucarest		
	Dublin		
	Genova		
	Gold Coast City		
	Helsinki		Regió Usimaa
	Lyon		
	Lisboa		
	Madrid		Comunitat Autonoma Madrid
	Manchester		
	Marsella		
	Montreal		
	Oslo		Regió d'Oslo
	Praga		
	Queens (NY)		
	Riga		
	Rotterdam		
	Seattle		
	Stuttgart		
	Valencia		Província de València
	Warsaw (Varsòvia)		
	Zagreb		
	Zaragoza		Comunidad de Aragón
	Zurich		



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Do not hesitate to contact us if you want more information about Tibidabo Project or if you are interested in being a participating city or region:

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