

Public libraries in 2021

29.06.2022

↑ 20.5%

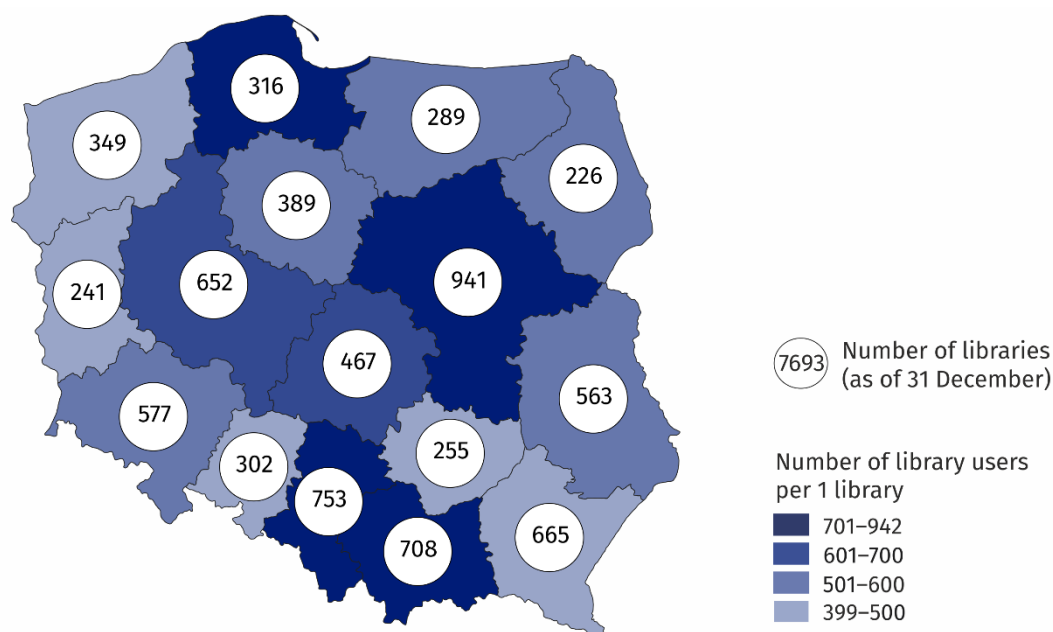
Increase of number of libraries offering remote access to licensed collections in comparison to 2020

As of the end of 2021 there were 7,693 public libraries, which conducted 873 branches for children and youth and 842 library service points. 4.8 million library users¹ borrowed 89.1 million volumes of collection during the year.

In 2021, due to the ongoing state of epidemic in Poland, cultural entities continued to operate under the conditions of temporary constraints. The restrictions on the activity of cultural entities had different scope and forms, but were less restrictive compared to the previous year.

The largest number of public libraries (including branches) were operating in Mazowieckie voivodship (941), and the least in Podlaskie voivodship (226). Public libraries and their branches conducted 842 library service points, most of which were located in Lubelskie voivodship (135). Most library units (65.0%) conducted their activities in the countryside.

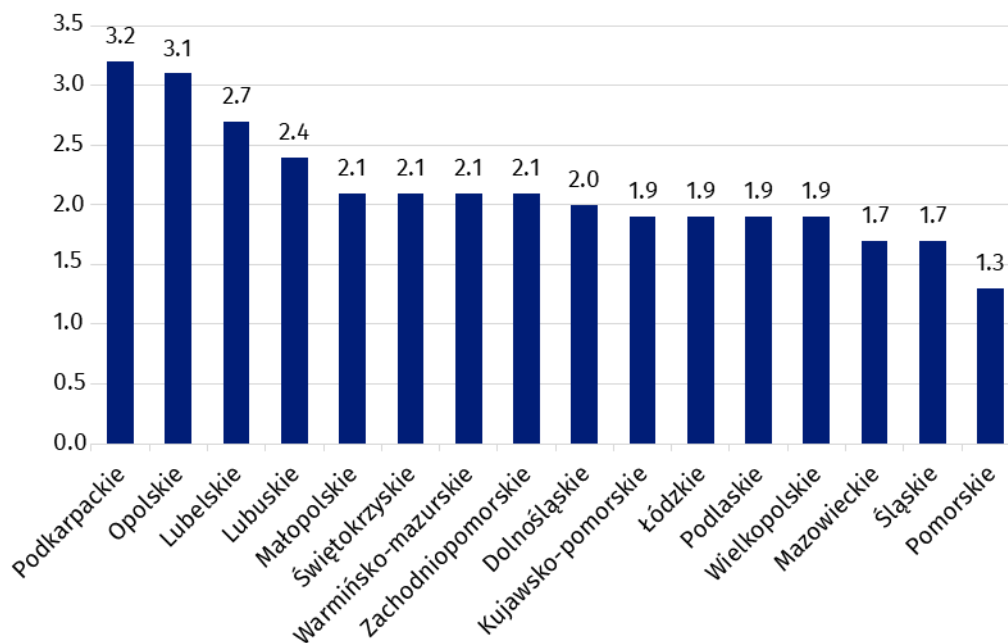
Map 1. Public libraries (and branches) in 2021



¹ Users registered in the library, who borrowed at least one volume in reported year.

Most public libraries per 10 thousand people were in Podkarpackie voivodship (3.2), and the least in Pomorskie voivodship (1.3).

Chart 1. Public libraries per 10 thousand people by voivodships in 2021

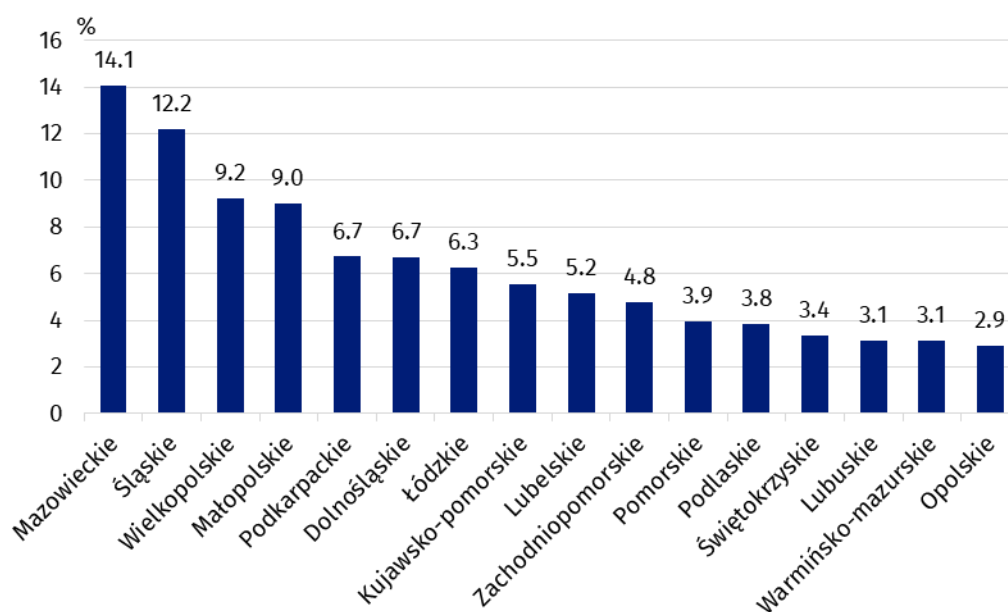


Library collection

As of the end of 2021, public libraries had 124.7 million volumes of collection, within which books constituted the largest share (98.5%). Libraries also had 5.9 million library materials forming special collection, among which the largest share had audio-visual materials (55.8%).

There were on average 16,207 volumes of collection per 1 public library. The most in Podlaskie voivodship (21,065), and the least in Lubelskie voivodship (11,425).

Chart 2. Collection of public libraries by voivodships in 2021



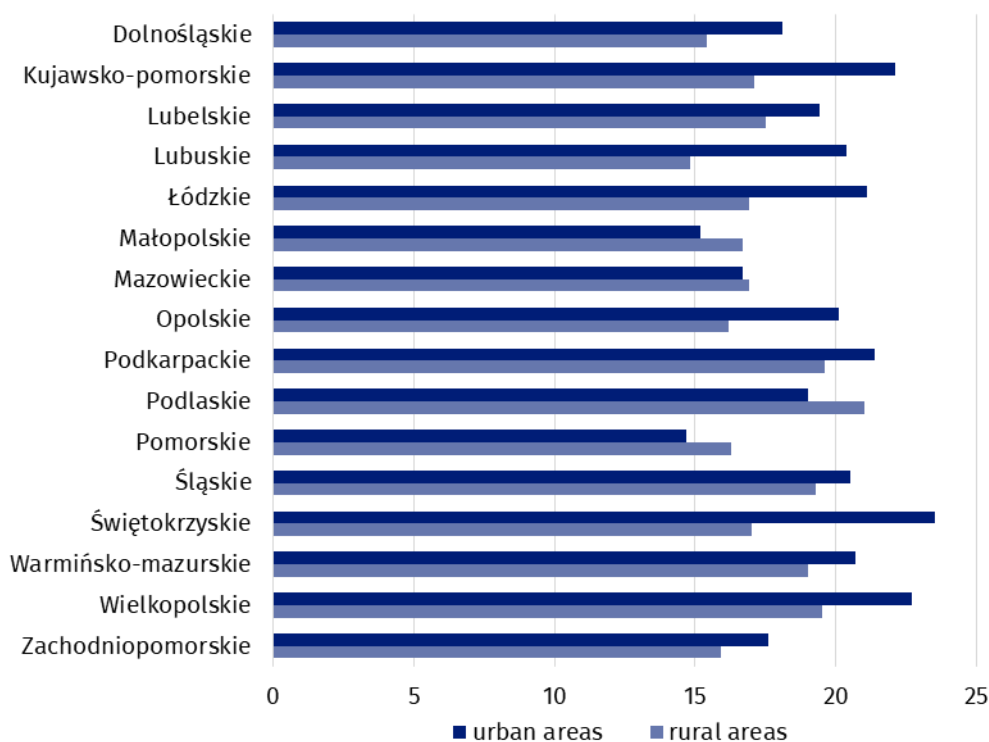
Library users, out-of-library loans and remote use of services

4.8 million library users were registered in public libraries. They borrowed 89.1 million volumes of collection and 2.7 million library materials constituting special collection. In comparison to previous year number of library users decreased by 2.3%, and loans increased by 14.9%.

2,824 public libraries (20.5% more than in the previous year) had access to remote forms of making electronic collections available from outside the institution's network. As part of remote logins to electronic collection, 34.2 million document downloads were made (increase by 62.2% in comparison to 2021).

There were almost 19 volumes of loans of collection per 1 library user. The highest indicator was recorded in Wielkopolskie voivodship (22), and the lowest in Pomorskie voivodship (15).

Chart 3. Loans of collection in volumes per 1 library user in public libraries in 2021



Other forms of libraries activity

In addition to its statutory activities, which is to make the collection available to library users, libraries also act as places where cultural and educational meetings are organised. In 2021 there were 133.9 thousand events and 21.5 thousand on-line events, in which 3.5 million and 2.0 million participants respectively participated. Furthermore libraries organised 329 conferences and seminars, which gathered 17.6 thousand participants and different kind of trainings (e.g. for library users, library science students and librarians), in which 1.3 million people participated.

On average in 1 event organised by library participated 26 people, and in on-line event – 92 people

Computerisation of libraries

As of the end of 2021 7,369 library units were registered, which used 51.6 thousand computers, of which 25.7 thousand intended for library users. 1,350 computers were equipped with program for reading electronic books. Library computer program was used by 6,470 public libraries and branches (1.1% more than at the end of 2020).

Working in libraries

22.0 thousand employees were employed in public libraries. 15.5 thousand people worked on library position, nearly half of them (48.8%) had high level qualification and 21.1% intermediate. 14.6 thousand employees regardless of their position benefited from improving their professional competences.

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Terms used in official statistics

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[Branch](#)

[Library service point](#)

[Library collections](#)

[Collection](#)

[Audiovisual materials](#)

[Library users \(users actively borrowing books\)](#)

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