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Public Libraries in the United States Survey

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Introduction

Public libraries provide critical learning and information resources for individuals, families, local businesses, and non-profits. They broaden opportunities for people of all ages through access to collections and technology and by providing expert assistance from information professionals. Many public libraries anchor community improvement efforts by providing programming that addresses the health, educational, and workforce development needs of local residents. In communities across the country, local libraries compliment commercial development activity and provide attractive neighborhood amenities in residential settings.

FY 2010, there were 8,951 public libraries in the 50 states and the District of Columbia with 17,078 public library branches and bookmobiles. This total translates to approximately 3.0 public libraries and 5.8 outlets for every 100,000 people. Although libraries in cities and suburbs comprise just over a quarter (28.4 percent) of all public libraries, they serve almost three-quarters (72.5 percent) of the population. In FY 2010, there were 487 public libraries in cities, 2,055 in suburban areas, 2,222 in towns, and 4,187 in rural areas.

The relatively high use rates and program attendance highlight the public value provided by local libraries at a time of dramatic economic, technology, and demographic change. The Public Libraries in the United States Survey is one important way of examining when, where and how library services are changing to meet those needs. The data, supplied annually by over 98% of public libraries across the country, provides information policymakers

and practitioners need to make informed decisions about the support and strategic management of these valuable local assets.

The FY 2010 report focusses on the character of public library services, funding and resource changes, and current trends in the public library workforce. As with past annual reports, the first section highlights statistics at the national level. In this section, data from all states has been aggregated to provide current national estimates and to examine trends from prior years.

For the first time, the report includes a section of public library indicators. This section is designed to highlight important changes in public services and resources each indicator explores how national estimates differ from those found by region, local, and state. Statistically significant differences are reported for each indicator.

We have also included state profiles developed for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The profiles contrast public library statistics at the state level to corresponding regional and national level statistics. These state profiles are available online at <http://www.ims.gov/PLS>. The section below provides is a brief overview of the national level findings.

Highlights of Library Services in FY 2010

The data analyzed in this report are from the Public Libraries in the United States Survey (PLS),¹ an annual survey that has been conducted since 1989. FY 2010 provides the most recent and comprehensive overview of

¹ For more information on the PLS, including access to public data files and data documentation, see the IMLS website: <http://www.ims.gov/pls/>.

the conditions in public libraries in the United States. This year's data show the continued impact of the U.S. recession on public libraries. Nationally public libraries saw reductions in operating revenue, service hours, and staffing. Yet despite these challenges many public libraries continue to maintain service levels to meet demand. Circulation, program attendance, and computer usage all saw observable increases. Although this year's survey identified a slight decrease in the per capita visitation it is not clear whether or not this change is due to increased availability of online services (i.e. library card and book renewal, remote use of catalog and databases), a reduction in service hours or resources due to budget cuts, a natural decline from the post-recessionary spikes in 2008 and 2009 or some other variable. Future analysis by IMLS will weigh the relative impact of these different variables in greater detail.

Public Library Services and Operations

- While physical visits to library buildings decreased for the first time in 10 years from the prior year, visitation still remains strong with an overall 10-year increase of 32.7 percent. On average, Americans visited a public library 5.3 times per year, a 10-year increase of 21.7 percent. Although the national visitation rate is down slightly from 2009, the story at the state level is mixed, with most states showing a decrease, but some having increases.
- Public libraries offered 3.75 million programs to the public in FY 2010, which amounts to an average of at least 1 program a day for every library system in the country. The majority of these programs (61.5%) are designed for children. Attendance at programs has continued to increase, indicating an increased demand for these services.
- Public libraries circulated 2.46 billion materials in FY 2010, the highest circulation in 10 years, representing a continued increasing trend. Circulation of children's materials has increased by 28.3 percent in the last 10 years and comprises over one-third of all materials circulated in public libraries.
- The composition of public library collections has changed dramatically in recent years. While books in print continue to dominate the physical portion of the collection, making up 87.1 percent of the total in FY 2010, the share of non-print materials, including audio and video materials and electronic books, has increased. The number of e-books has tripled since FY 2003.
- Public access computer use continued to be one of the fastest growing services in public libraries. In FY 2010, public libraries reported a computer use rate of more than one use for every five visits to the library. Public libraries have responded to demand by increasing access, doubling the number of computers in the past 10 years.

Public Library Resources

- Public libraries had \$11.3 billion in revenue in FY 2010, a decrease of 3.5 percent from FY 2009, after adjusting for inflation. Although local governments have generally been the largest source of revenue for public libraries, they have had to take on an even larger role as state support declined over 10 years.
- Public libraries reported operating expenditures of \$10.77 billion dollars in FY 2010, the first decrease since FY 2001. Although expenditures across all U.S. public libraries were \$36.18 per capita, per capita expenditures varied across states.

Public Library Workforce

- The recession has had an impact on the public library workforce, which has decreased by 6,385 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff since FY 2008, a decrease of 3.9 percent. Staff-related expenditures were \$7.21 billion, 67.0 percent of public library expenses in FY 2010.
- Librarians made up one-third of all library staff. Although the majority of these librarians hold a Master's degree in Library and Information Studies from a program accredited by the American Library Association (ALA-MLS), only half of all libraries reported having a librarian with an ALA-MLS on staff.

Data and Analysis

The PLS is a universe survey, which means that information is collected from all public libraries in the United States. When information is available from an entire population, estimates are made by summing units to the population or subpopulation. In the present report, national estimates are based on summing data across all public libraries to the national level. For estimates based on subpopulations, such as state, region, or locale, data are summed up to the level of the subpopulation.

A public library is established under state laws or regulations to serve a community, district, or region. In this document, we report only on public libraries that meet all criteria in the definition of a public library developed

by the Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS). Under this definition, a public library provides, at a minimum, the following:

- An organized collection of printed or other library materials, or a combination thereof;
- Paid staff;
- An established schedule in which services of the staff are available to the public;
- Facilities necessary to support such a collection, staff, and schedule; and
- Support in whole or in part with public funds.

A community may have only one public library or a public library system, which may have a central library and multiple branches or bookmobiles. Any reference to a public library in this report refers to the administrative

entity, either a single-outlet library or a library system. References to outlets refer to central libraries, branch libraries, and bookmobiles.

In this report, we examine trends across time and across subgroups. In some cases, it might appear that one estimate is larger than another. However, a statistical test may find that the apparent difference is not a statistical difference. In cases where there is no statistical difference, the difference is not reported as such. In the analyses of the data for this report, we used a variety of statistical tests, including analysis of variance, correlation, and growth modeling of time series. Significance was set at an alpha level of .01.

All calculations in the PLS report are based on unrounded estimates. At times, the reader may find a calculation, such as a percentage change, is not identical to the calculation obtained by using the rounded values showing in the report or supplemental tables.

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The National Picture

Although the effects of the U.S. recession were felt locally in the year prior, Fiscal Year 2010 (FY 2010) was the first time the effects of the recession became evident at a national level. Public libraries experienced losses both in revenue and in the workforce. Despite these reductions, public libraries still maintained service levels in visitation and circulation. In addition, they have continued to add to their electronic resources, especially e-books, allowing them to expand their reach geographically.

Public Libraries

Public libraries served 297.6 million people throughout the United States, a number that is equivalent to 96.4 percent of the total U.S. population. In FY 2010, there were 8,951 public libraries (administrative entities)¹ in the 50 states and the District of Columbia (**Figure A**). There were 17,078 public library outlets, including branches and bookmobiles.² This translates to approximately 3.0 public libraries and 5.8 outlets for every 100,000 people. Public libraries had an average of 1.9 outlets, ranging from single outlet libraries (7,204 of all public libraries) to libraries with up to 90 outlets (including branches and bookmobiles). Most public libraries (81.0 percent) are single outlet libraries. While the population within the legal service area increased by 9.2 percent from FY 2001 to 2010, the number of public libraries remained stable, with a 10-year increase of less than 1 percent.

Although libraries in cities and suburbs comprise just over a quarter (28.4 percent) of all public libraries, they serve almost three-quarters (72.5 percent) of the population. Public libraries in cities have 2.9 outlets per 100,000 people, whereas libraries in rural areas have 16.94 outlets per 100,000 people. In FY 2010, there were 487 public libraries in cities, 2,055 in suburban areas, 2,222 in towns, and 4,187 in rural areas.³ Public libraries in cities operate in densely populated areas, so one library can serve many people, often by having multiple branches throughout the city. In contrast, public libraries in rural areas often serve a population spread over a large geographic area. Even though they have different challenges in meeting the needs of the people in their service areas, public libraries in all locales use a variety of strategies to extend their reach, including bookmobiles, books by mail, expanded digital resources and outreach programs.

There are eight regions in the United States, as designated by the Bureau of Economic Analysis.⁴ In FY 2010, the Great Lakes region had the most public libraries (21.0 percent), which served 15.0 percent of the U.S. population. The Southeast region, which served the highest proportion of the population (25.8 percent), had 12.7 percent of all public libraries and 22.5 percent of all outlets. Public libraries in the Rocky Mountains region had the fewest number of outlets (4.4 percent) and served the smallest proportion of the population (18.0 percent).

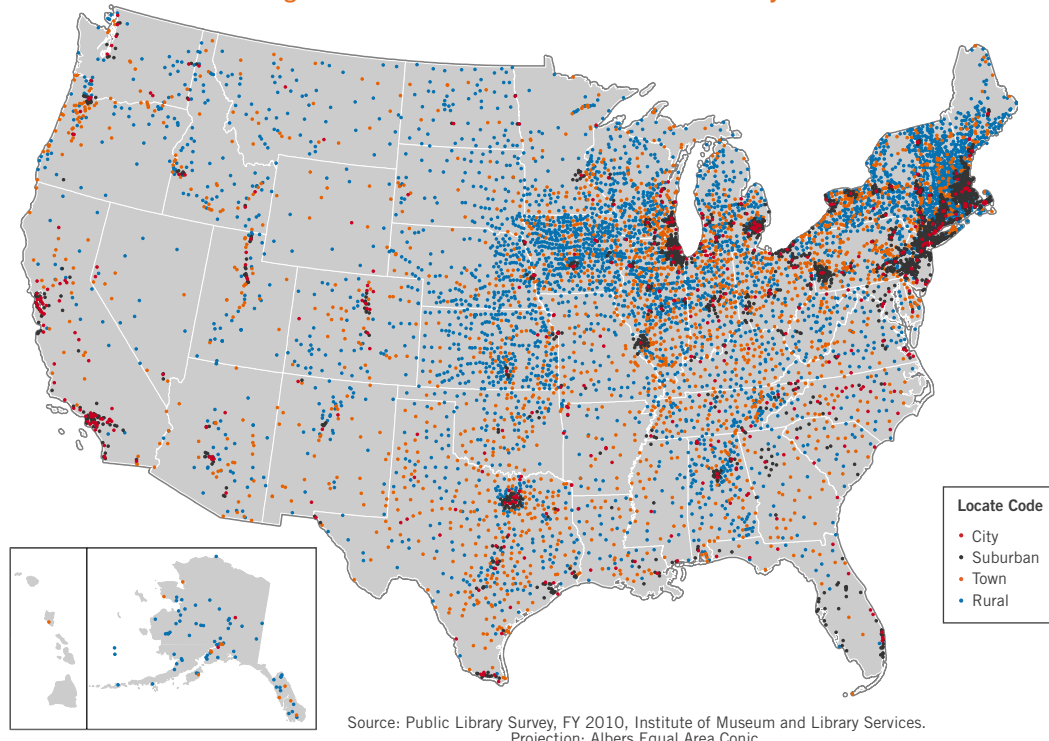
¹ A public library, whether a single-outlet library or library system, is one that meets all criteria of the Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) definition, as described in the Readers Guide. For more information, see the PLS FY 2010 Data Documentation.

² There were also 3 books-by-mail outlets, direct mail order services which provide books and other library materials. These outlets serve rural residents, the homebound, and others without direct access to a public library.

³ Locality and region identifies general information about where a public library is situated. For more information on locale and regional designations, see the Technical Notes in Appendix B.

⁴ For more information on regional designations, see the Technical Notes in Appendix B.

Figure A: Public Libraries in the United States by Locale



Public Library Funding *Operating Revenue*

Total operating revenue for public libraries was \$11.30 billion in FY 2010 (**Figure B**), falling for the first time in 10 years, most likely a result of budget cuts from the recession. From FY 2009 to 2010, total revenue decreased by \$407.79 million, a 3.5 percent decrease after adjusting for inflation.⁵ Revenue per capita was \$37.97, which reflected a 1-year decrease of 3.9 percent, but a 10-year increase of 3.1 percent from FY 2001.

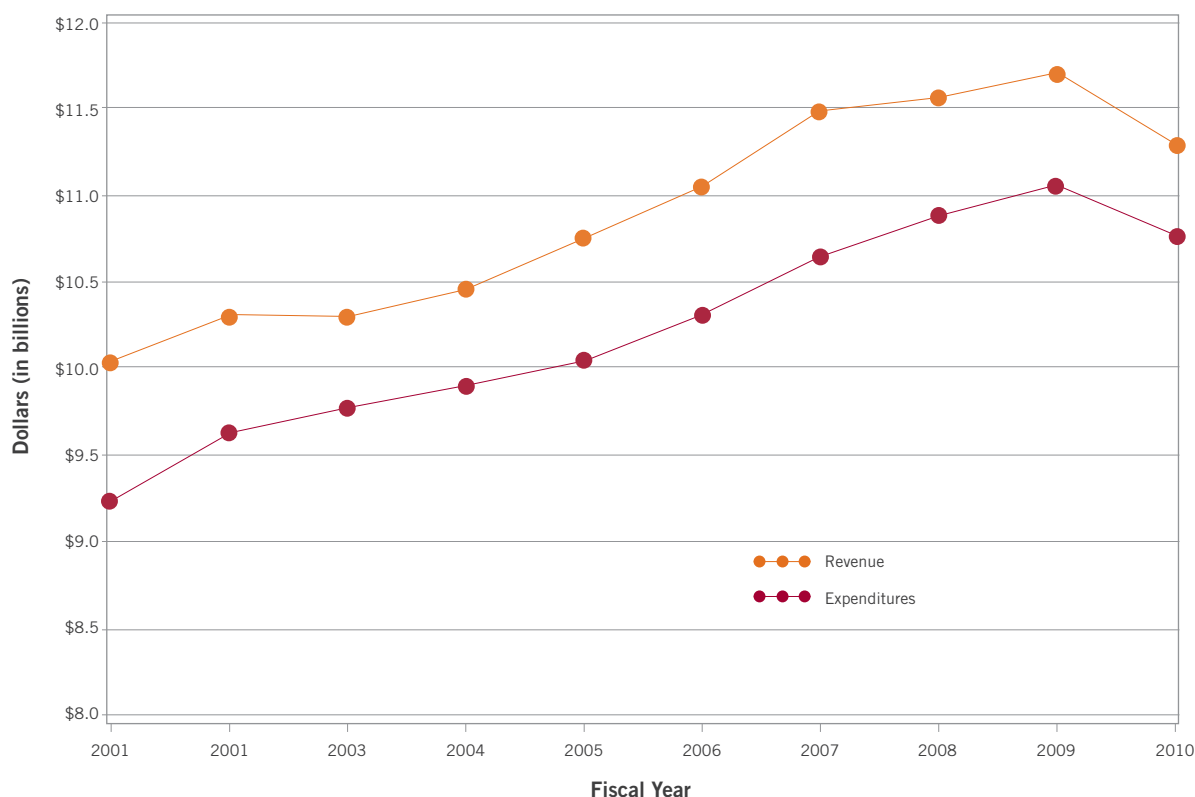
Over 10 years (FY 2001 to 2010), there have been changes in the distribution of revenue sources for public libraries. Although most of the revenue for public libraries has come from local government streams, the proportion of total revenue coming from local government has increased. In FY 2010, revenue from local government accounted for 84.8 percent of total revenue, which is an increase of 9.7 percent since FY 2001. In contrast, revenue from state government was 7.1 percent of total revenue, which is a 10-year decrease of 44.6 percent.

Revenue from local governments accounted for \$9.58 billion in FY 2010, a decrease of \$269.09 million (2.7 percent) from FY 2009. However, revenue from local government has increased over the long term, exhibiting a 10-year increase of \$1.83 billion, which is an increase of 23.5 percent after adjusting for inflation. In contrast, revenue from state government has steadily decreased since FY 2001. Revenues from state government accounted for \$799.41 million, a decrease of \$83.17 million (9.4 percent) from FY 2009 and an overall 10-year decrease of \$481.40 million (37.6 percent) since FY 2001.

Public libraries received \$52.30 million in revenue from the federal government, an increase of \$5.19 million (11.0 percent) from FY 2009. Other sources of revenue, including donations, provided \$863.45 million of total revenue. This was a 1-year decrease of \$60.74 million (6.6 percent). Revenue from the federal government and other sources has decreased over the prior 10 years. In FY 2010, federal government revenue was 0.5 percent and other revenue was 7.6 percent of total revenue, decreases of 19.3 percent and 18.5 percent, respectively.

⁵ All financial trends are adjusted for inflation using a GDP deflator. Figures are presented in 2010 constant dollars. Percent change is based on adjusted values. More information about the calculation of the deflator and the adjustment are found in the Technical Notes in Appendix B.

Figure B: US Public Library Revenue and Expenditures: Total Operating Revenue and Expenditures, FY 2001-2010 (in constant 2010 dollars)



Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2001-2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services/National Center for Education Statistics.

Operating Expenditures

Total operating expenditures for public libraries were \$10.77 billion in FY 2010, a decrease of \$285.20 million from FY 2009, a 1-year decrease of 2.6 percent after adjusting for inflation. This was the first year of decreased expenditures since FY 2001, with an overall 10-year increase of 16.5 percent. Per capita spending at public libraries was \$36.18 in FY 2010, reflecting a decrease of 3.0 percent since FY 2009, but a 10-year increase of 6.7 percent.

Most of the spending in public libraries goes to staffing expenses, which accounted for \$7.21 billion (67.0 percent) of total expenditures in FY 2010. Staff-related expenditures decreased by 2.0 percent from the prior year. These decreases are related to reductions in the public library workforce, which decreased by 3.2 percent from FY 2009 to 2010.

The composition of staffing expenses has changed from FY 2001 to 2010, with a change in the proportion of salary to benefit expenses. In FY 2010, salary-related expenditures were \$5.43 billion, which accounted for 75.3 percent of staffing expenditures; benefits-related expenditures were \$1.78 billion. Over the prior 10 years, benefits-related expenses changed from 18.8 percent in FY 2001 to 24.7 percent in 2010, reflecting the stress that external factors, such as rising health-care costs,⁶ have put on staffing at public libraries.

Expenditures on collections were \$1.26 billion in FY 2010, a decrease of \$66.56 million (5.0 percent) from FY 2009. Collections expenditures, which comprised 11.7 percent of all operating expenses in FY 2010, have decreased over the prior 10 years by 10.4 percent. Expenditures on electronic materials, which were 1.4 percent of operating expenses, were \$155.75 million in FY 2010. Although this was a decrease of \$3.07 mil-

⁶ Family premiums for employer-sponsored health care coverage have increased by 97 percent since 2002. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Office of the Actuary, National Health Statistics Group, National Health Care Expenditures Data, January 2012.

lion (1.9 percent) from FY 2009, it is also an increase of 52.7 percent since FY 2003, the first time this information was collected. This overall increase illustrates the changing face of library collections and services, with libraries meeting the public's need for access to computing and digital materials.

Public Library Services

Public libraries provide valuable services to the people in their legal service areas. They provide opportunities for learning to patrons across the lifespan and across different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. Although most programs are offered at the local libraries, many libraries have outreach programs to bring resources into classrooms and to underserved areas.

There were 1.57 billion visits to public libraries during FY 2010. Although this was down by 16.76 million (1.1 percent) from FY 2009, the first time visitation has decreased since FY 2001, it is a 10-year increase of 32.7 percent. Similarly, per capita physical visits to libraries showed a decrease from the prior year⁷. Overall, individuals within a legal service area visited the public library an average of 5.28 times, a decrease of 1.5 percent from FY 2009, but an overall 10-year increase of 21.7 percent.

Public libraries were open an average of 40.3 hours per week in FY 2010. This includes services by branches and bookmobiles, so hours open ranged from an annual total of 42 hours (0.8 hours per week) to 6,132 hours (117.9 hours per week). The hours open in FY 2010 reflect a 1-year decrease of 1.7 percent from FY 2009.

Programs

Public libraries are important to a democratic society and help to create a nation of learners. One way that libraries support lifelong learning is by offering public programs. Public libraries offer a wide range of programs for people of all ages, including story time for toddlers and preschoolers, homework and after-school programs for teens, author book readings, and computer classes for adults and seniors.

Public libraries offered 3.75 million programs to the public in FY 2010, an increase of 44.6 percent since FY 2004, the first year these data were recorded in this survey. Participation in these programs reached 86.64

million, a 6-year increase of 28.8 percent. There were 12.61 programs offered per 1,000 people, a 6-year increase of 37.4 percent. Average attendance at programs at public libraries was 23.09 people per program, a decrease of 11.0 percent since FY 2004. When programs have lower attendance, each participant can get more individual attention. The increase in overall attendance suggests that demand for these programs continues to increase. The increase in the number of programs, along with the smaller class sizes indicated by the decrease in average attendance, suggests that public libraries are meeting the demands of the general public by offering more programs.

Children's programs accounted for the majority (61.5 percent) of all public library programs in FY 2010. Libraries offered 2.31 million programs for children, an increase of 21.9 percent since FY 2005, the first year this information was collected. Attendance at children's programs reached 60.50 million, a 10-year increase of 17.2 percent. There were 7.75 children's programs offered per 1,000 people. Average attendance at children's programs increased to 26.24 children per program, a 1-year increase of 1.1 percent.

Programming for young adults was first reported in FY 2009. In FY 2010, young adult programs comprised 7.9 percent of all programs reported. There were 294,990 programs offered for young adults at public libraries, with attendance of 4.91 million. Based on libraries that reported young adult programming for both years⁸, the number of young adult programs increased by 6.3 percent, and attendance at these programs increased by 2.8 percent. Average attendance at programs for young adults was 16.64 people per program.

Access to Computers and the Internet

Public libraries provided the general public with access to 244,842 Internet-ready computer terminals in FY 2010. This is an increase of 5.8 percent since FY 2009, and a doubling of access over the 10 years since FY 2001. Overall, public libraries provide 4.1 computers per 5,000 people in their legal service areas. There were 367.80 million user-sessions on these computers, an increase of 10.1 percent since FY 2006, the first time this metric was reported. There were 234.11 computer uses per 1,000 visits to public libraries, a 1-year increase of 1.7 percent.

⁷ The Public Library Survey of the United States does not collect data on the on-line visits or transaction of public libraries.

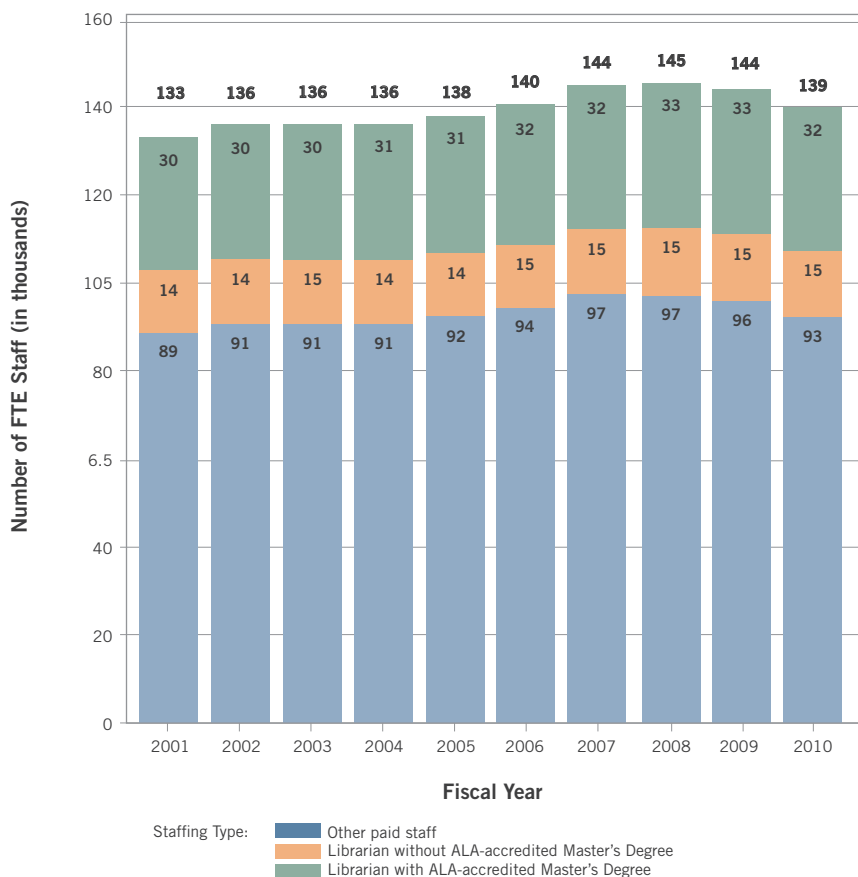
⁸ Because this data element has only been collected for 2 years, data were not imputed for either year. There were 7,529 public libraries that reported data for young adult programming and attendance for both years. These libraries were the only libraries used to calculate the annual percent change.

Public Library Workforce

Public library services were supported by 139,370 full-time equivalent (FTE)⁹ staff in FY 2010 (Figure C). This reflects a 1-year decrease of 3.2 percent, but a 10-year increase of 4.8 percent. One-third of total library staff (46,849) held positions with the title of librarian in FY 2010, providing 3.9 FTE per 25,000 people within library service areas, a decrease of 2.5 percent from FY 2009. Other paid staff (66.4 percent) totaled 92,521, providing 11.7 FTE per 25,000 people within library service areas. These staff supported library services at all levels in a wide variety of positions, including library paraprofessionals who serve as library clerks and technicians as well as staff who provide operational support, such as maintenance, security, IT and general administration. Total other paid staff decreased 3.7 percent from FY 2009, but showed a 10-year increase of 4.4 percent.

The recession has had an impact on the public library workforce. Public library workforce decreased overall by 6,385 FTE staff since FY 2008, a decrease of 3.9 percent. In terms of job loss, other paid staff took the initial hit from the recession, with a 1.2 percent decrease from FY 2008 to 2009 and a 4.6 percent decrease from FY 2008 to 2010. Librarians did not experience a loss in the first year after the recession, but there was a decrease of 2,622 FTE librarian positions, a decrease of 2.2 percent since FY 2009. Of those staff with the title librarian, over 68 percent (31,932) had a Master's degree in Library and Information Studies from a program accredited by the American Library Association (ALA-MLS), a decrease of 3.0 percent from FY 2009, but a 10-year increase of 6.4 percent. Approximately half (50.2 percent) of all libraries have at least one ALA-MLS librarian on staff, a metric that has steadily increased for 10 years for an overall increase of 10.1 percent.

Figure C: US Public Library - Number of FTE Staff by Type, FY 2001-2010



Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services/National Center for Education Statistics.

⁹ Full-time equivalent (FTE) is a way to measure workload. In the PLS, a value of 1.0 FTE refers to 40 hours per week. For more information on FTE, see the Technical Notes in Appendix B.

Circulating the Collection

The service that people most closely associate with public libraries is access to collections. People use library materials for information, inspiration and entertainment. Public libraries provide exemplary stewardship of a wide array of materials in different formats, including books, audio recordings, videos and digital materials. Public libraries also facilitate the use of technology as a medium to access this information. Recently, libraries have leveraged the flexibility of digital materials, particularly e-books, as a way to expand the reach of their collection.

Circulation has continued to increase. Public libraries circulated 2.46 billion materials in FY 2010, a 1-year increase of 2.1 percent and a 10-year increase of 38.0 percent. Circulation per capita was 8.3, an increase of 26.4 percent over 10 years. Circulation per 1,000 visits was 1,567.2, an increase of 4.0 percent over 10 years. Circulation of children's materials comprised 34.0 percent of total circulation, at 837.12 million materials. This reflects an increase of 2.7 percent since FY 2009 and a 10-year increase of 28.3 percent.

There were 171.07 million people¹⁰ who were registered to borrow materials from public libraries in FY 2010. This is an increase of 1.0 percent from FY 2009 and an increase of 6.0 percent since FY 2006, the first year these data were recorded in the survey.

Collections

Public libraries had 927.60 million materials available for circulation in their collections in FY 2010. There was no significant change in the collection size from FY 2009. Overall, collection size has increased by 12.8 percent since FY 2001.

The complexion of collections in public libraries has been changing over the past ten years, reflecting changes that have taken place in digital media and technology as a whole. Although the majority of collection materials remain books in print (87.1 percent of the total collection in FY 2010), this proportion has decreased over the prior 10 years. Public libraries had 808.40 million print materials, mostly books, in their collections in FY 2010. Although this is a 10-year increase of 6.0 percent, book volume has been decreasing since FY 2005. In contrast, there were 18.5 million electronic books (e-books) available for circulation, a 1-year increase of 22.5 percent. E-book volume has increased by 323.5 percent since 2003, the first time this metric was collected in the survey.

Audio and video materials continued to increase in FY 2010. There were 55.05 million total audio materials, both physical and downloadable¹¹, which include music and audio books. This was a 1-year increase of 4.3 percent and a 10-year increase of 61.2 percent. There were 53.21 million total video materials, both physical and downloadable. This was a 1-year increase of 5.0 percent and a 10-year increase of 112.4 percent.

¹⁰ This number may include duplicative counting of people who are registered to borrow books in multiple systems. In systems with reciprocity, which allows for registered borrows in one public library system to borrow books in another system, a person would be registered only once.

¹¹ Although audio and video materials have been collected since FY 2001, FY 2010 was the first time audio and video materials were separated into physical and downloadable units in the collection. Because this was the first year to include these items separately, missing data were not imputed for the downloadable audio or video materials. Fewer than one-third (29.30 percent) of all libraries had data missing for one or both of these data elements: 0.68 percent missing video downloadable, 2.09 percent missing audio downloadable, and 26.53 percent missing both audio and video downloadable. Most of the missing data resulted from non-reporting of all libraries in the following states: CT, DE, FL, GA, IL, KY, NC, NJ, OK, SC, VA, WI, and WV.

Public Libraries Survey: Indicators

Section 1. Public Library Services & Operations

Indicator 1. Public Library Visitation Per Capita

Indicator 2. Library Programs for Children, Youth and Adults

Indicator 3. Sources of Public Library Revenue

Indicator 4. Change in Public Library Operating Expenditures

Indicator 1. Public Library Visitation Per Capita

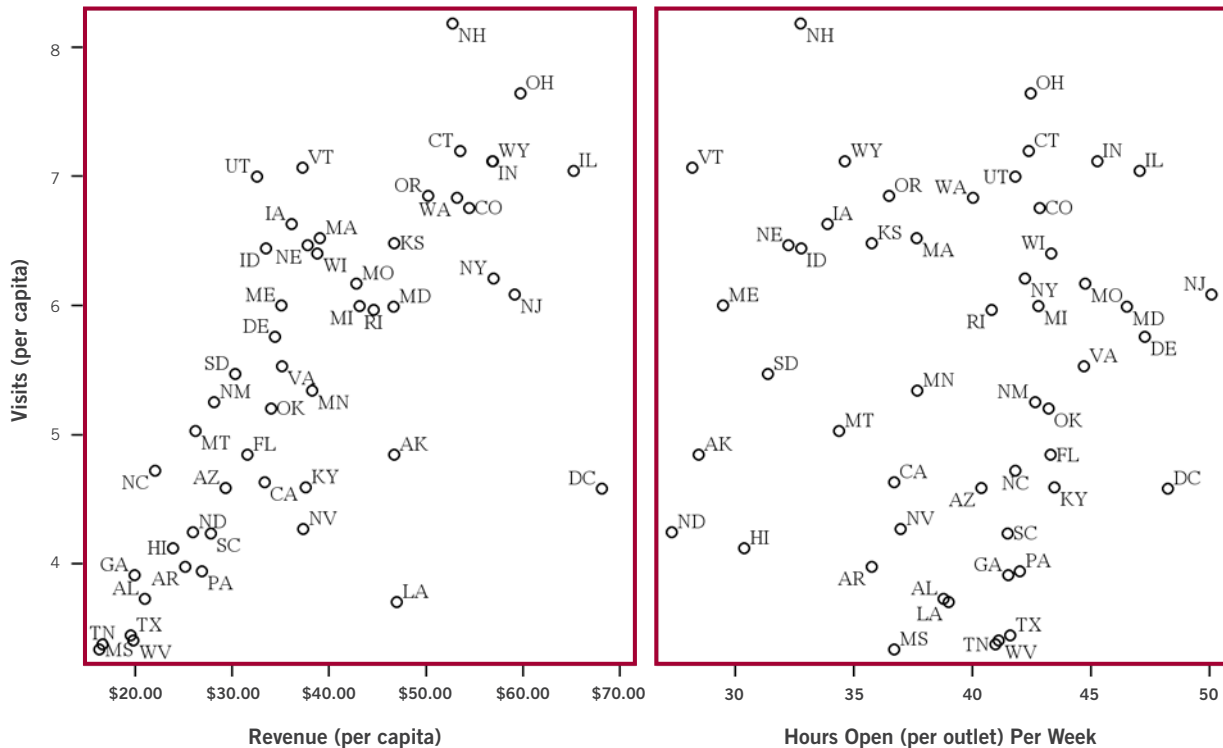
While physical visits to library buildings decreased for the first time in 10 years from the prior year, visitation still remains strong with an overall 10-year increase of 32.7 percent. On average, Americans visited a public library 5.3 times per year, a 10-year increase of 21.7 percent. Although the national visitation rate is down slightly from 2009, the story at the state level is mixed, with most states showing a decrease, but some having increases.

Public library buildings had 1.57 billion visits during FY 10. Although this was down by 16.76 million (1.1 percent) from FY 2009 (the first time visitation has decreased since FY 2001), visitation showed a 10-year increase of 32.7 percent. Similarly, library visitation per capita showed a decrease from the prior year. Overall, individuals within a legal service area visited a public library an average of 5.3 times, a decrease of 1.5 percent from FY 2009, but an overall 10-year increase of 21.7 percent.

Visitation has historically had a strong relationship with revenue. Visitation is driven by collection size, access

to technology, and programs, which all rely upon a sufficient financial base. Since the recession began in FY 2008, public libraries have had to deal with budget cuts, some of which manifest in a reduction of hours open. In FY 2010, there was a 1.7 percent decrease in hours open from the prior year. There was a strong positive relationship between visitation per capita and revenue per capita¹ in FY 2010 (Figure 1-1), but only a weak relationship between visitation per capita and hours open per week. However, this is a relationship that we will continue to monitor.

Figure 1-1: Revenue Per Capita, Hours Open Per Week, and Visits Per Capita, FY 2010



Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services.

¹ Pearson correlation coefficients: visitation per capita and revenue per capita = .55, $p < .0001$; visitation per capita and hours open per week = .18.

Indicator 1. Public Library Visitation Per Capita

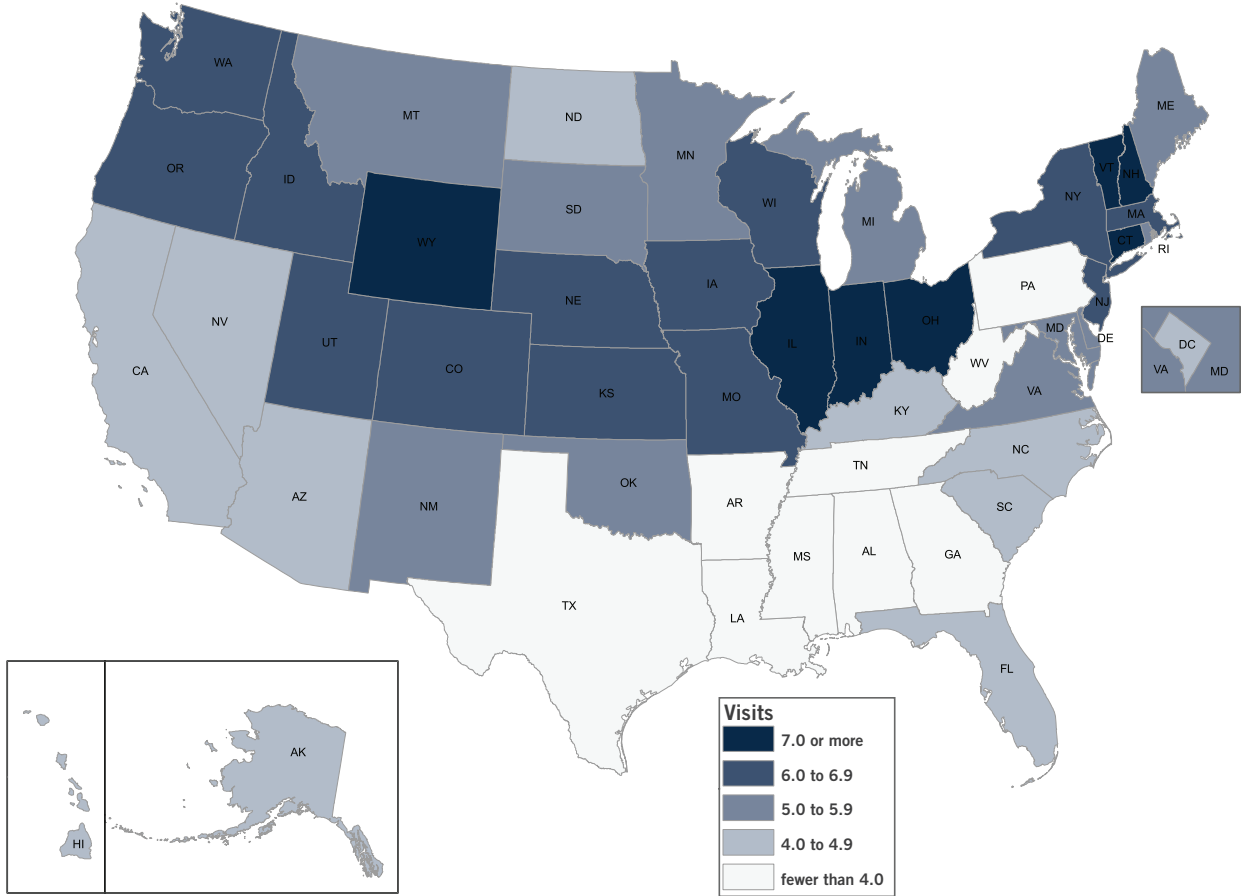
Visitation per capita was significantly higher for libraries in suburban areas than in any of the other locale types. In FY 2010, visitation per capita in suburban libraries was 5.8 visits; in city libraries it was 5.2; in town libraries it was 4.7; and in rural libraries it was 4.7. Suburban libraries did not see an increase in visitation per capita from FY 2009. Rather, these differences are the result of decreasing visitation in libraries in cities and rural areas, specifically in large cities (decrease of 3.8 percent) and distant rural (decrease of 6.4 percent) public libraries.

Public libraries in the southeast and southwest regions had significantly lower visitation per capita than libraries in other regions of the country. As a group, public libraries in the southeast had a visitation per capita of 4.3 visits, a rate not significantly different from FY 2009. In contrast, visitation per capita for libraries in the southwest was 3.9, which was a significant

decrease of 4.2 percent from the prior year. Public libraries in the New England region were the only group, to see a significant increase. Visitation per capita in New England libraries was 6.7 visits, an increase of 2.1 percent from the prior year.

Visitation per capita varied by state in FY 2010, as seen in **Figure 1-2**. The states with the highest rates of visitation per capita were New Hampshire (8.2), Ohio (7.6), Connecticut (7.2), and Wyoming (7.1). The lowest rates were in Mississippi (3.3), Tennessee (3.4), West Virginia (3.4), and Texas (3.4). Twenty-three states saw an increase in visitation per capita from FY 2009. States with the highest percent change were New Hampshire (increase of 37.9 percent), Louisiana (6.6 percent), and New Mexico (5.2 percent). States with the highest decreases in visitation per capita were Oklahoma (decrease of 26.1 percent), Hawaii (11.7 percent), and Georgia (9.7 percent).

Figure 1-2: Visits per Capita, FY 2010



Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services. Projection: Albers Equal Area Conic.

Indicator 2. Library Programs for Children, Youth and Adults

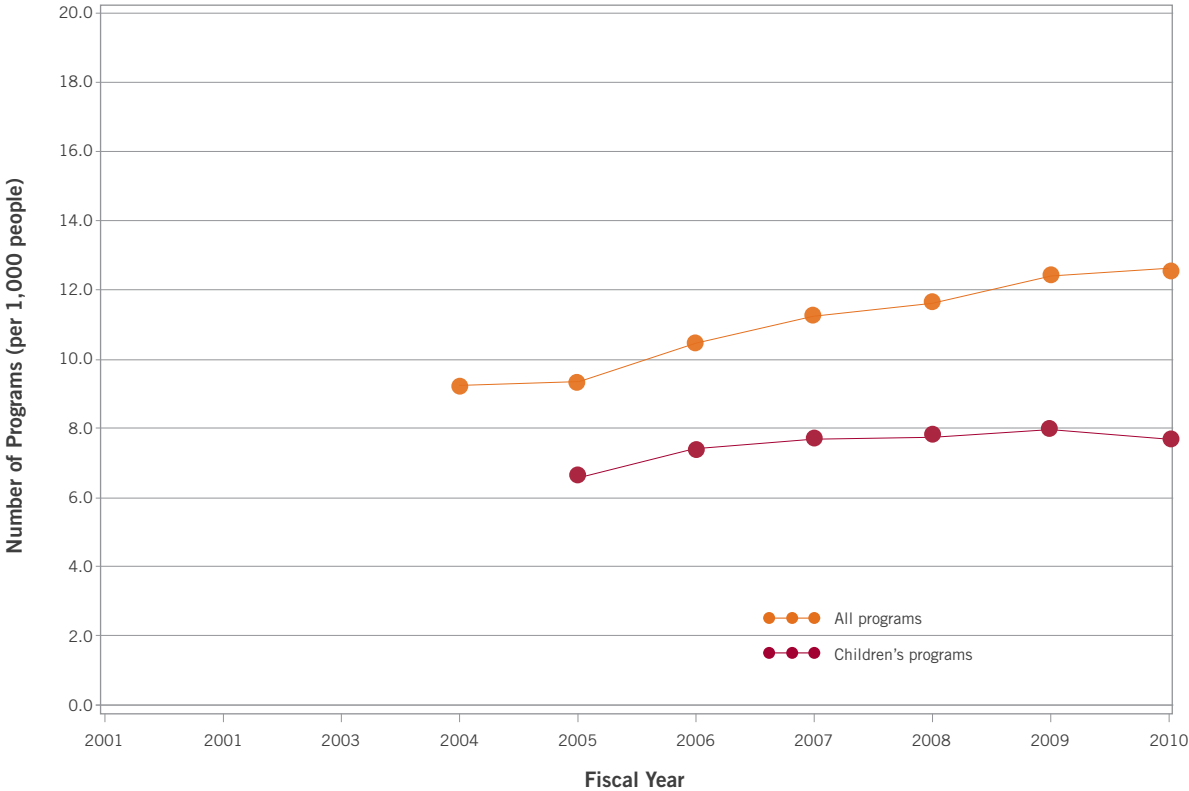
Public libraries offered 3.75 million programs to the public in FY 2010, or an average of at least 1 program per day for every library system in the country. The majority of these programs (61.5 percent) are designed for children. Attendance at programs has continued to increase, indicating an increased demand for these services.

Public libraries offered 3.75 million programs to the public in FY 2010, an increase of 44.6 percent since FY 2004, the first year this information was collected. Attendance at these programs reached 86.64 million, a 6-year increase of 28.8 percent. There were 12.61 programs offered per 1,000 people (**Figure 2-1**). There was a moderate, but significant, relationship between per capita expenditures and the number of programs offered and program attendance.¹

Program offerings differed across locales. Public libraries in rural areas offered significantly more programs

per capita, with 16.7 per 1,000 people, which was a 1-year increase of 2.3 percent from FY 2009. Suburban and town libraries offered 12.9 and 13.3 programs per thousand people, respectively, similar to the national rate of 12.6. Libraries in cities had the lowest rate of offerings at 10.5 per 1,000 people. These variances highlight the differences between how public libraries in these very diverse environments provide services to their populations. Although libraries in central cities offer a greater number of programs on average, the program per capita estimates are lower than other areas due to population density.

Figure 2-1: US Public Library – Programs Per 1,000 People, FY 2001-2010



Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2001-2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services/National Center for Education Statistics.

¹ Pearson correlation coefficients: Total Programs per capita with Total Operating Expenditures per capita = .39 and Total Program Attendance with Total Operating Expenditures per capita = .35, both p < .0001.

Indicator 2. Library Programs for Children, Youth and Adults

There were also regional differences in programming. As a region, New England offered significantly more programs per capita (21.8 per 1,000 people) than other regions, with a 1-year increase of 5.5 percent. The Southeast (9.5 per 1,000) and Southwest (8.6 per 1,000) offered significantly fewer programs. Regional differences reflected state-level differences, as well. Vermont (40.4), New Hampshire (37.1), and Maine (27.2) offered the highest number of programs per 1,000 people. The fewest programs relative to population were offered in Tennessee (5.8), Georgia (6.1), and Hawaii (6.7).

Children's programs accounted for the majority (61.5 percent) of all public library programs in FY 2010. Libraries offered 2.31 million programs for children, an increase of 21.9 percent since FY 2005, the first year this information was collected. In FY 2010, programs for young adult comprised 7.9 percent of all programs reported. There were 294,990 programs offered for young adults² at public libraries, with attendance of 4.91 million.

In FY 2010, there were 7.75 children's programs offered per 1,000 people. Programs for children mirrored the pattern of overall programming across locales. Libraries in rural areas offered 10.7 children's programs per 1,000 people, the highest ratio; libraries in cities offered 6.3, the lowest. Public libraries in suburban areas (7.8) and towns (8.7) were similar to the national rate of 7.7 per 1,000 people.

Regional differences in children's programs were also similar to patterns of overall programming. New England offered the most children's programs per thousand people (13.7); the Southeast (5.7) and Southwest (5.0) regions had the fewest offerings per 1000 people. Vermont (26.8), New Hampshire (23.6), and Wyoming (20.6) offered the most children's programs. The fewest offerings were in Hawaii (2.7), Virginia (3.3), and Alabama (3.9).

Average attendance at all programs at public libraries was 23.09 people per program, a decrease of 11.0 percent since FY 2004. Smaller average program attendance allows for attendees to get more individualized attention at each program. The increase in both the number of programs and overall attendance, coupled with decreasing average program attendance, suggests that public libraries are meeting the demands of the general public by offering more programs.

In FY 2010, programs at rural libraries had lower average attendance (19.6), compared to libraries in other locales (**Figure 2-2**). Other locales were more similar to the national rate: city (24.2), suburban (23.7), and town (23.1). Average attendance was lowest in the New England and Mideast regions, with average attendances of 20.8 and 23.0, respectively.

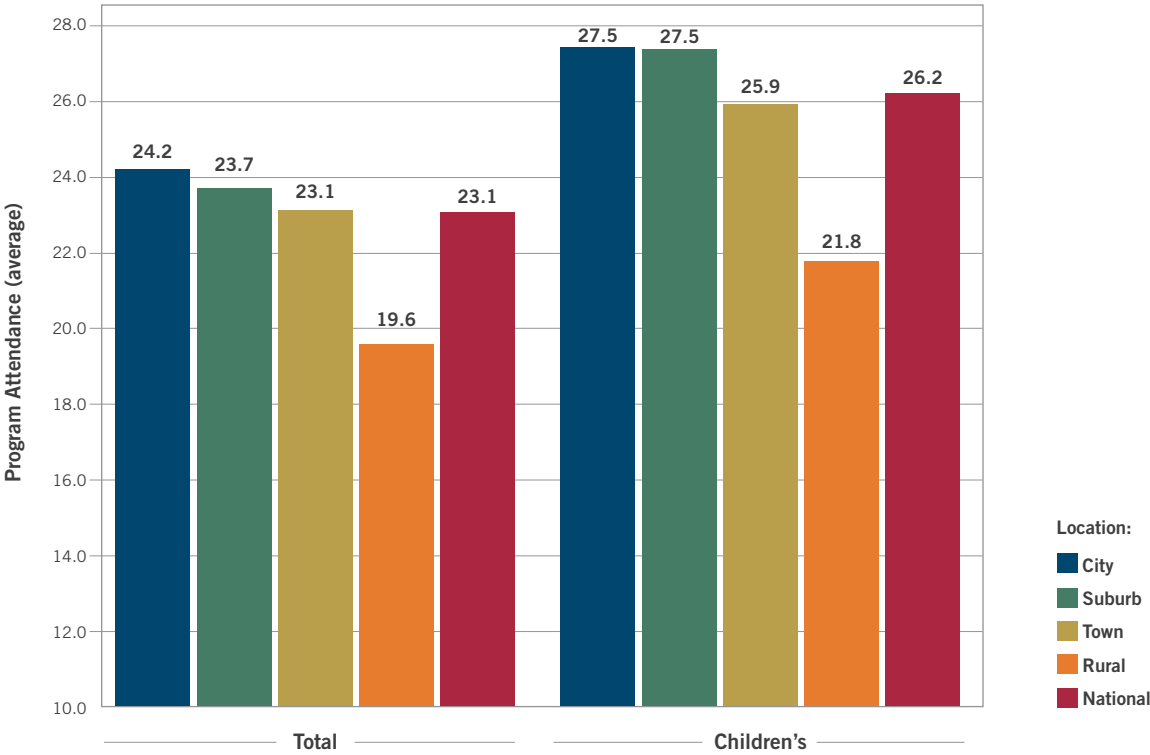
Attendance at children's programs reached 60.50 million, a 10-year increase of 17.2 percent. Although the number of programs for children and attendance at these programs decreased from the levels recorded in FY 2009, neither of these decreases was significant. Average attendance at children's programs increased to 26.2 children per program, a 1-year increase of 1.1 percent.

Public libraries in rural areas have the lowest average attendance at children's programs, at 21.8 per program. Average attendance at children's programs in city, suburban, and town libraries was similar to the national average attendance rate. Maine and Rhode Island had the lowest average attendance, both of which were 15.6 per program. In contrast, Utah (39.7), Oklahoma (35.1), and Hawaii (34.8) had the highest average attendance.

² Only 8,451 public libraries (94.4%) reported data for young adult programming.

Indicator 2. Library Programs for Children, Youth and Adults

Figure 2-2: US Public Library – Programs by Locale Average Program Attendance, FY 2010



Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Indicator 3. Sources of Public Library Revenue

Public libraries had \$11.30 billion in revenue in FY 2010, a decrease from FY 2009 of 3.5 percent, after adjusting for inflation. Although local governments have generally been the largest source of revenue for public libraries, they have had to take on an even larger role as state support declined over 10 years.

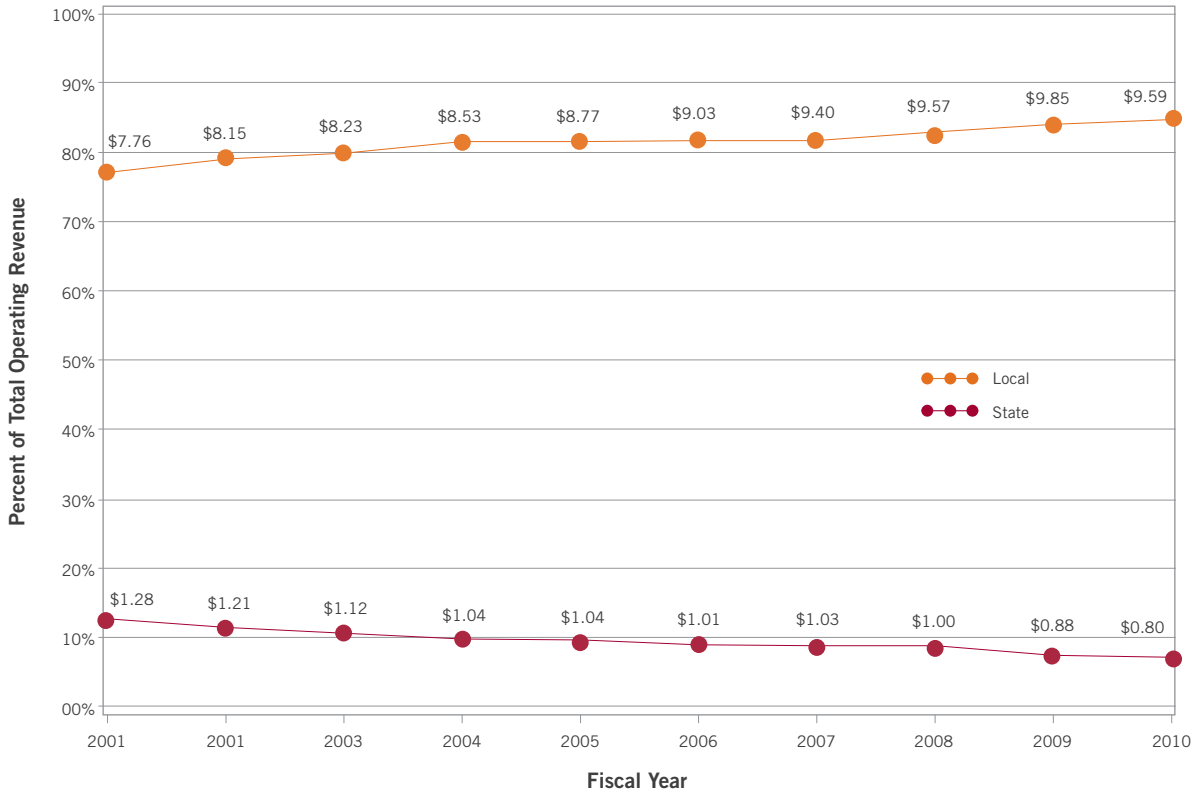
Total operating revenue for public libraries was \$11.30 billion in FY 2010 (Figure B on page 9), falling for the first time in 10 years, most likely a result of budget cuts from the recession. From FY 2009 to 2010, total revenue decreased by \$407.79 million, a 3.5 percent decrease after adjusting for inflation.¹ Revenue per capita was \$37.97, which reflected a 1-year decrease of 3.9 percent, but a 10-year increase of 3.1 percent from FY 2001.

Over 10 years (FY 2001 to 2010), there have been changes in the distribution of revenue sources for pub-

lic libraries (Figure 3-1). Although most of the revenue for public libraries has come from local government streams, the proportion of total revenue coming from local government has increased. In FY 2010, revenue from local government accounted for 84.8 percent of total revenue, an increase of 9.7 percent since FY 2001. In contrast, revenue from state government was 7.1 percent of total revenue, a 10-year decrease of 44.6 percent.

Revenue from local governments accounted for \$9.58 billion in FY 2010, a decrease of \$269.09 million (2.7

Figure 3-1: Percentage of US Public Library Operating Revenue by Source, FY 2001-2010 (Labels are Revenue in Billions, Constant 2010 Dollars)



Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2001-2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services/National Center for Education Statistics.

¹ All financial trends are adjusted for inflation using a GDP deflator. Figures are presented in 2010 constant dollars. Percent change is based on adjusted values. More information about the calculation of the deflator and the adjustment are found in the Technical Notes in Appendix B.

Indicator 3. Sources of Public Library Revenue

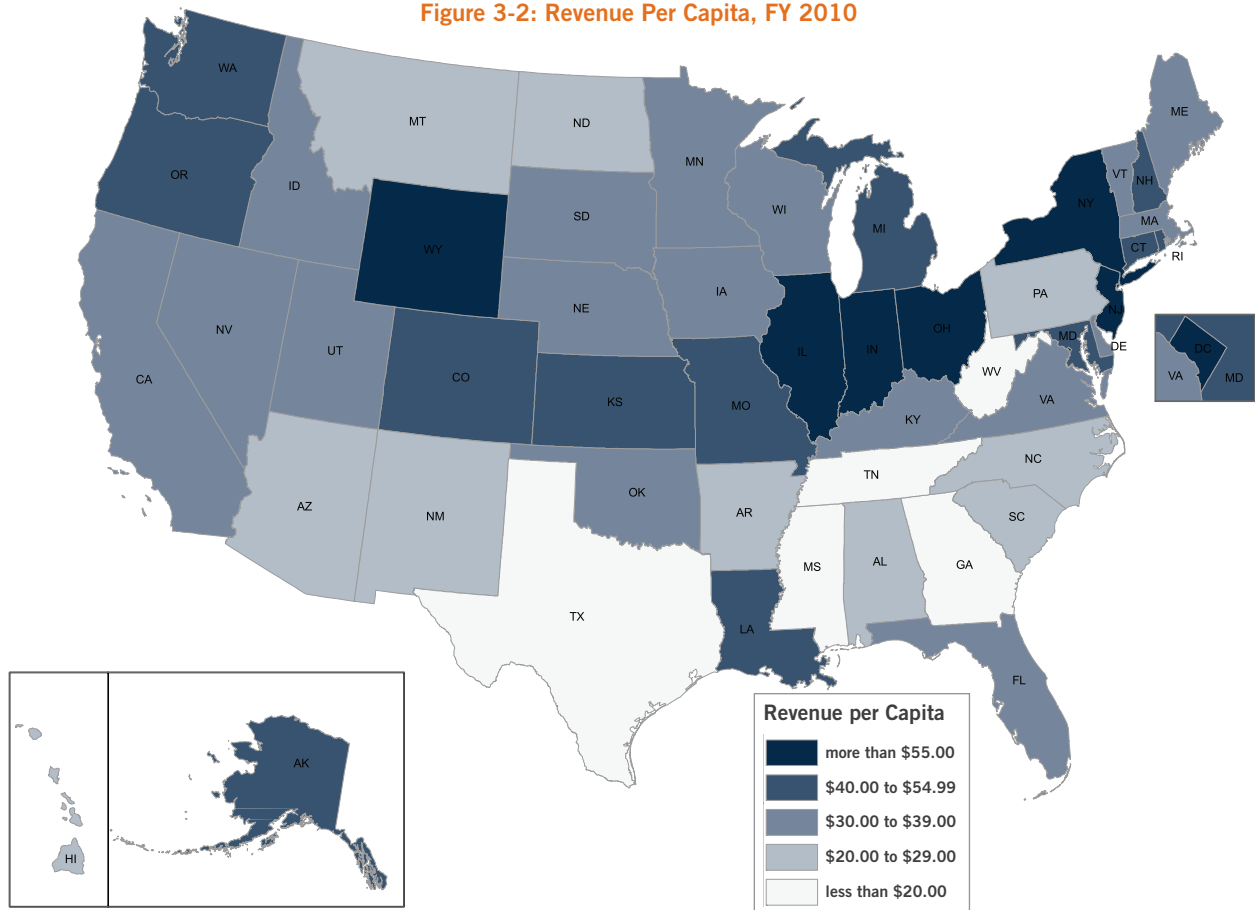
percent) from FY 2009. However, revenue from local government has increased over the long term, exhibiting a 10-year increase of \$1.83 billion, an increase of 23.5 percent after adjusting for inflation. In contrast, revenue from state government has steadily decreased since FY 2001. Revenues from state government accounted for \$799.41 million, a decrease of \$83.17 million (9.4 percent) from FY 2009 and an overall 10-year decrease of \$481.40 million (37.6 percent) since FY 2001.

There were significant differences across locales for revenue per capita. The largest decrease in revenue per capita occurred in libraries in cities. Revenue per capita for city libraries was \$39.09 in FY 2010, a decrease of 6.5 percent from the prior year. The largest decreases were seen in large cities (decrease of 9.8 percent). Even though there was a 1-year decrease of 3.1 percent, revenue per capita for suburban libraries in FY 2010 remained the highest at \$43.65. Lowest revenues were in town and rural libraries, at \$28.13 and \$29.70, respectively, both of which were lower than the national revenue per capita of \$37.97.

Revenue per capita also varied by region. Revenue per capita in the Great Lakes region was \$54.47, the highest of all regions, with no change from the prior year. In contrast, four regions experienced significant decreases in revenue per capita from FY 2009. Although the Mideast region has the second highest revenue per capita (\$48.06), it experienced a decrease of 10.1 percent from the prior year, the largest 1-year decrease of any region. The other three regions to experience significant decreases in revenue per capita also had the lowest revenues: Southwest, Southeast, and Far West. These regions experienced a decrease in their revenues from the prior year. In FY 2010, revenue per capita in the Southwest was \$23.06 (decrease of 3.7 percent), in the Southeast revenue was \$27.33 (decrease of 3.4 percent), and in the Far West revenue was \$37.11 (decrease of 4.0 percent).

Revenue per capita for public libraries varied across states (Figure 3-2). Despite having one of the largest decreases in revenues (12.9 percent), the District of Columbia has the highest revenue per capita (\$68.15).

Figure 3-2: Revenue Per Capita, FY 2010



Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services.
Projection: Albers Equal Area Conic.

Indicator 3. Sources of Public Library Revenue

Revenue per capita was also highest in Illinois (\$65.23), Ohio (\$59.75), and New Jersey (\$59.12). States with the lowest revenue per capita were Mississippi (\$16.29), Tennessee (\$16.65), and Texas (\$19.54). Thirty-seven states saw a decrease in their per capita public library revenues. In addition to the

District, the largest percent decreases were in New York (14.3 percent) and Georgia (11.5 percent). Despite the effects of the recession, 14 states did see increases in revenue per capita. The largest percent increases were in New Hampshire (29.4 percent) and Louisiana (17.2 percent).

Technical Notes

All financial trends are adjusted for inflation using a GDP deflator. Absolute differences and percent change are presented in 2010 constant dollars. More information about the calculation of the deflator and the adjustment are found in the Technical Notes in the Appendix.

Indicator 4. Change in Public Library Operating Expenditures

Public libraries reported operating expenditures of \$10.77 billion in FY 2010, the first decrease since FY 2001. Although expenditures across all U.S. public libraries were \$36.18 per capita, per capita expenditures varied across states. State-level expenditures ranged from almost \$60 to less than \$20 per capita.

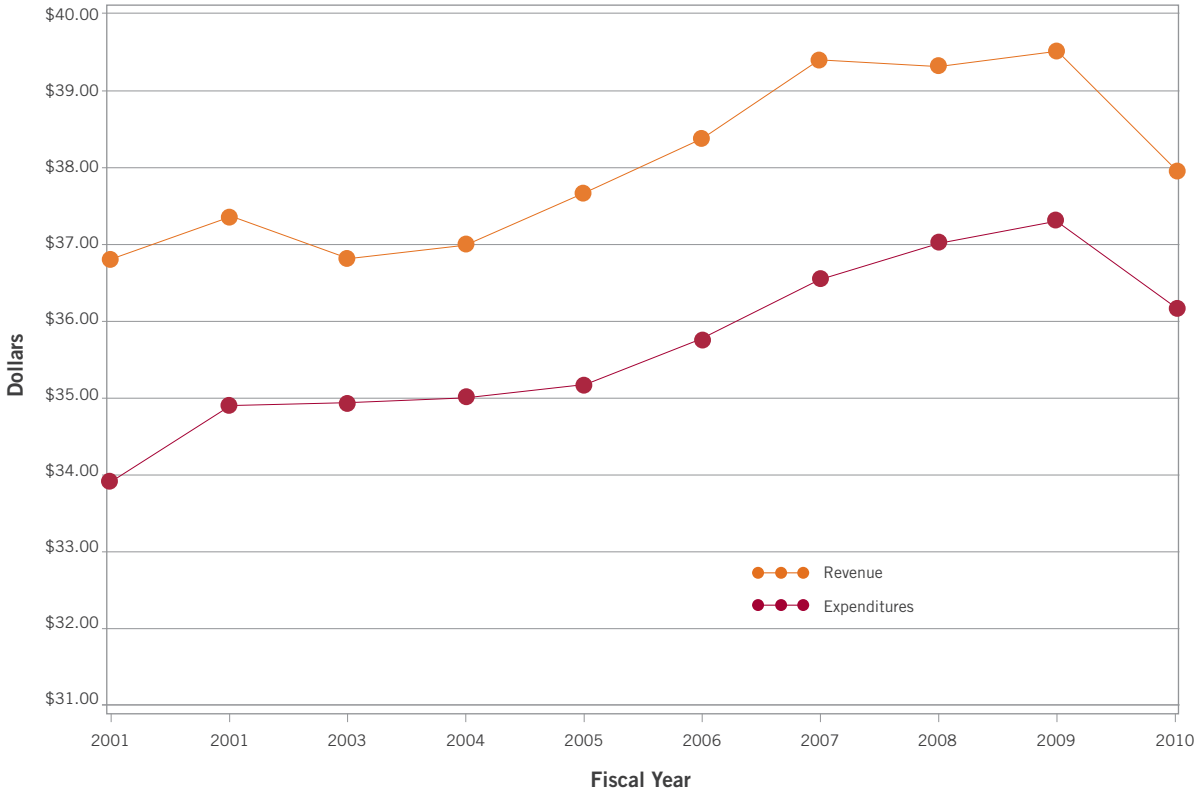
Total operating expenditures in public libraries were \$10.77 billion in FY 2010, a decrease of \$285.20 million from FY 2009, and a 1-year decrease of 2.6 percent after adjusting for inflation. This was the first year of decreased expenditures since FY 2001, with an overall 10-year increase of 16.5 percent. Per capita spending at public libraries was \$36.18 in FY 2010, reflecting a decrease of 3.0 percent since FY 2009, but a 10-year increase of 6.7 percent (Figure 4-1).

There were differences in expenditures per capita across locale and region. Public libraries in suburban areas had the highest per capita expenditure at \$41.37. The expenditure rate per capita in city libraries

was \$38.20, which was similar to the national per capita rate. Town and rural libraries had the lowest expenditures, at \$25.83 and \$27.45, respectively. Expenditures per capita were lowest in the Southwest (\$22.12) and Southeast (\$25.50) regions. The highest regional expenditures were in the Great Lakes (\$49.91), Midwest (\$47.57), and New England (\$45.11) (Figure 4-2).

Highest per capita expenditures were found in the District of Columbia (\$67.78), and states of Illinois (\$59.46), and New York (\$58.01). States with the lowest per capita expenditures were Mississippi (\$15.99), Tennessee (\$16.17), and West Virginia (\$18.04). Thir-

Figure 4-1: US Public Library Revenue and Expenditures: Per Capita Operating Revenue and Per Capita Expenditures, FY 2001-2010 (in constant 2010 dollars)



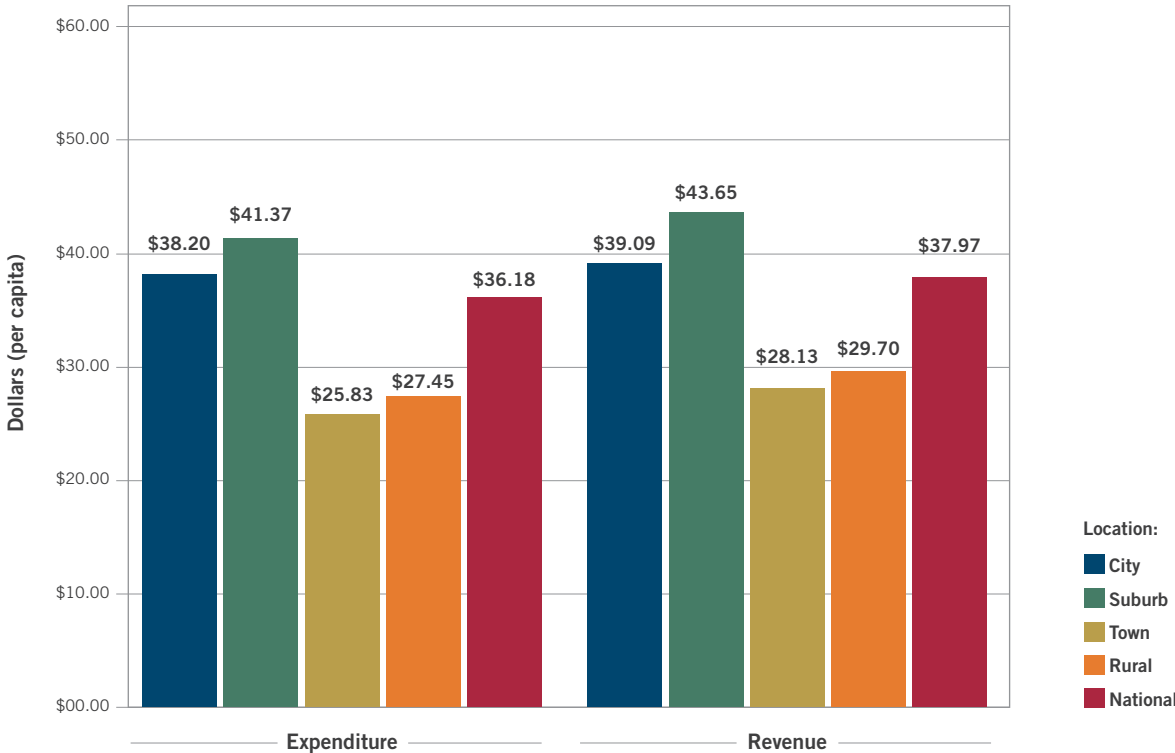
Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2001-2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services/National Center for Education Statistics.

Indicator 4. Change in Public Library Operating Expenditures

ty-six states had decreases in their per capita operating expenditures from FY 2009. The largest decreases were in the District of Columbia (decrease of 14.6 percent)

and Georgia (decrease of 12.3 percent); the largest increases were in New Hampshire (increase of 30.6 percent) and Louisiana (increase of 6.8 percent).

Figure 4-2: US Public Library – Per Capita Operating Revenue and Expenditure by Locale, FY 2010



Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Public Libraries Survey: Indicators

Section 2. Public Library Resources

Indicator 5. Circulation of Public Libraries

Indicator 6. Change in Public Library Collections

Indicator 7. Computers and the Internet

Indicator 5. Circulation in Public Libraries

Public libraries circulation continues to increase with 2.46 billion materials circulated in FY 2010, the highest circulation in 10 years. Circulation of children's materials has increased by 28.3 percent in the last 10 years and comprises over one-third of all materials circulated in public libraries.

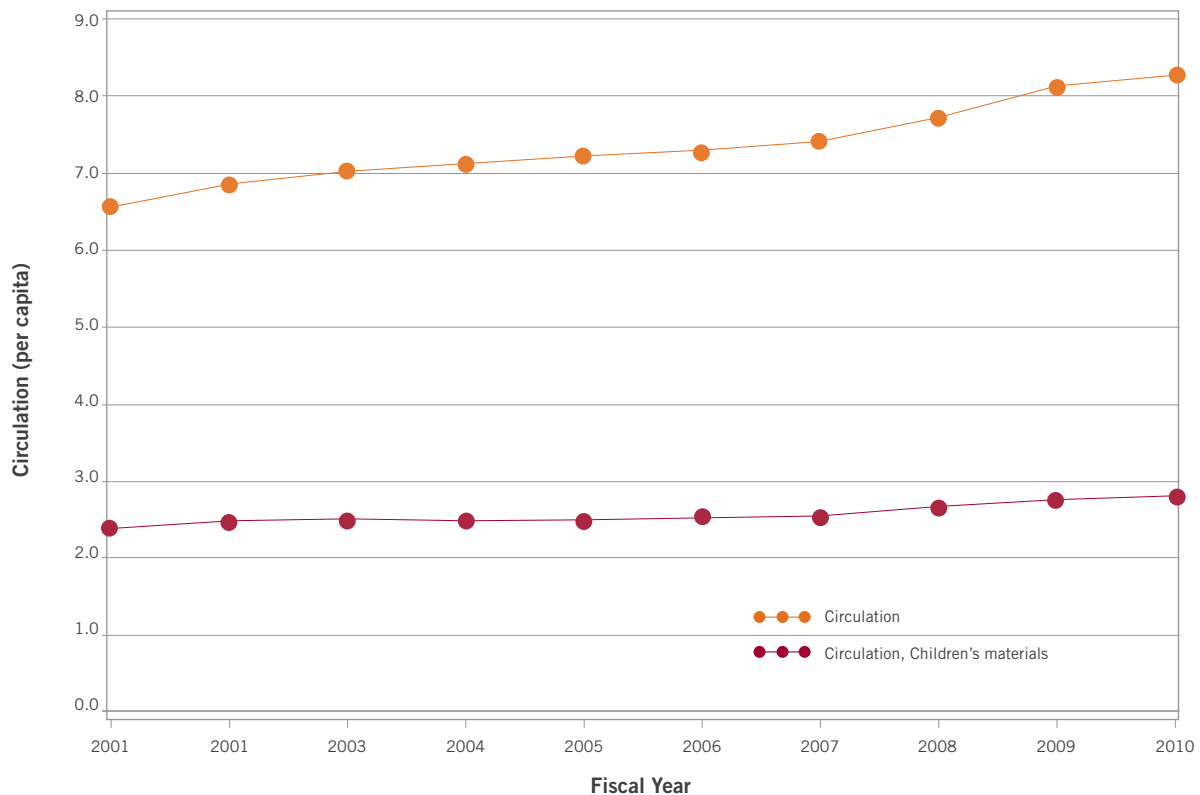
Public libraries circulated 2.46 billion materials in FY 2010, a 1-year increase of 2.1 percent and a 10-year increase of 38.0 percent (**Figure 5-1**). Circulation per capita was 8.3, an increase of 26.4 percent over 10 years. Circulation per 1,000 visits was 1,567.2, an increase of 4.0 percent over 10 years. Circulation of children's materials comprised 34.0 percent of total circulation, at 837.12 million materials. This reflects an increase of 2.7 percent since FY 2009 and a 10-year increase of 28.3 percent. There was a strong, positive relationship between circulation per capita and expenditures on collections.¹

Public libraries in suburban areas had the highest circulation per capita, both in total circulation and for

children's material. Circulation per capita for all materials in suburban libraries was 9.8, an increase of 2.2 percent from FY 2009. Circulation per capita for children's materials was 3.5, an increase of 2.6 percent. Per capita circulation was also higher in cities than it was in town or rural libraries. Circulation per capita of all materials was 7.9 at city libraries; circulation per capita of children's materials was 2.6, a 1-year increase of 3.6 percent.

There were regional differences in circulation per capita. The Rocky Mountain and Great Lakes regions had the highest circulation per capita. In the Rocky Mountains, circulation per capita was 12.4 for all materials and 4.5 for children's materials. In the

Figure 5-1: US Public Library – Circulation Per Capita, FY 2001-2010



Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2001-2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services/National Center for Education Statistics.

¹ Pearson correlation coefficient: Circulation per capita and Expenditures on Collections = .60, $p < .0001$.

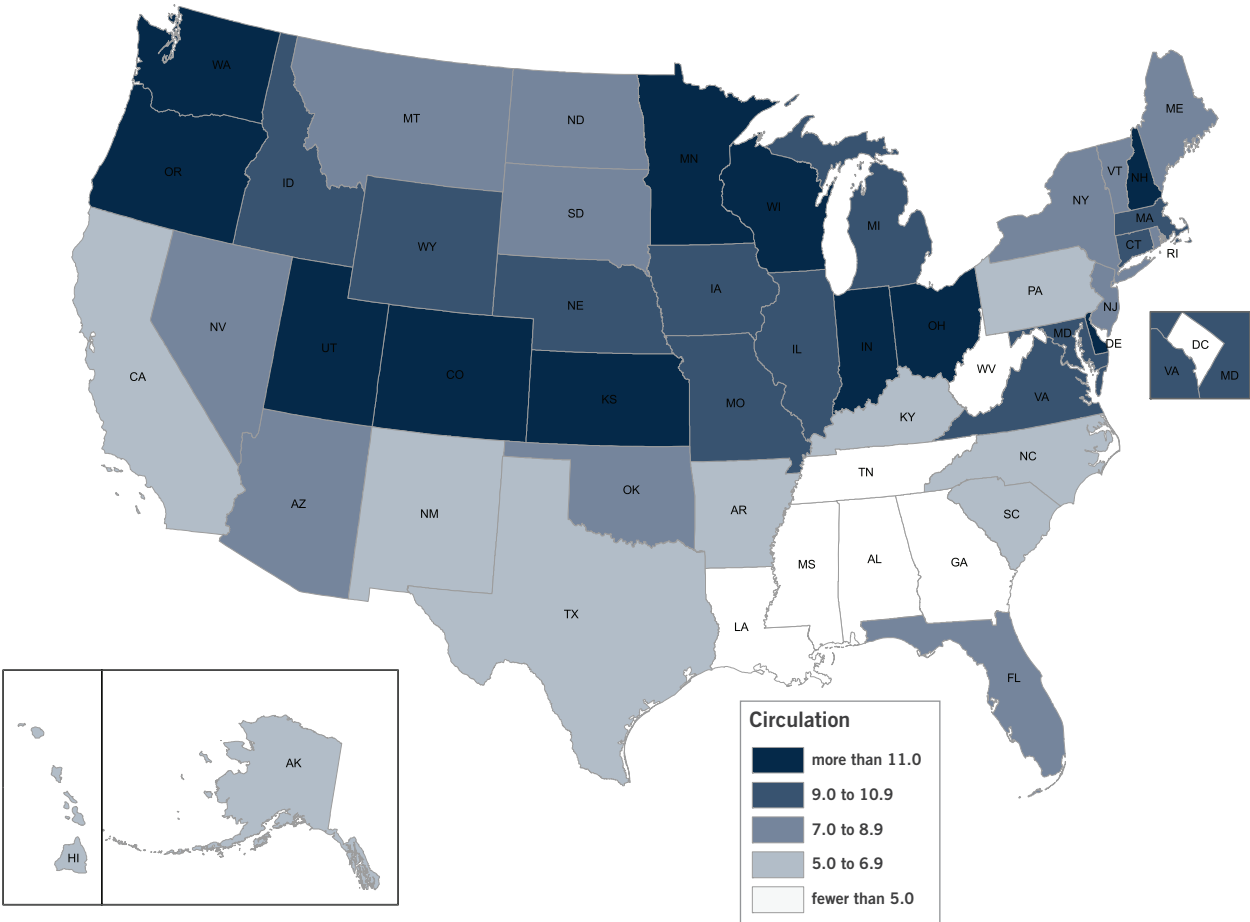
Indicator 5. Circulation in Public Libraries

Great Lakes, circulation was 12.2 overall and 4.0 for children’s materials. The New England region, with a circulation per capita of 9.7, saw the highest annual increase (8.2 percent). The lowest rates of circulation per capita were in the Southeast (6.1 total, 2.0 children’s) and Southwest (6.0 total, 2.1 children’s). The percent of total circulation that was children’s material ranged from 32.5 to 36.3 percent per region.

Circulation per capita also varied by state (Figure 5-2). States with the highest circulation per capita were Ohio

(16.3), Oregon (16.2), and Indiana (13.7). The lowest rates of circulation per capita were in Mississippi (3.0), Tennessee (4.2), and West Virginia (4.4). Ohio and Oregon also had the highest rates of children’s circulation, at 6.2 and 4.8, respectively. The lowest circulation per capita of children’s material was in Mississippi (0.8) and Louisiana (1.1). Circulation of children’s material as a percentage of overall circulation ranged from a low of 24.4 percent in the District of Columbia to a high of 42.9 percent in Idaho.

Figure 5-2: Circulation Per Capita, FY 2010



Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services.
 Projection: Albers Equal Area Conic.

Indicator 6. Change in Public Library Collections

The composition of public library collections has changed dramatically in recent years. While books in print continue to dominate the physical portion of the collection, making up 87.1 percent of the total in FY 2010, the share of non-print materials, including audio and video materials and electronic books, has increased. The number of e-books has tripled since FY 2003.

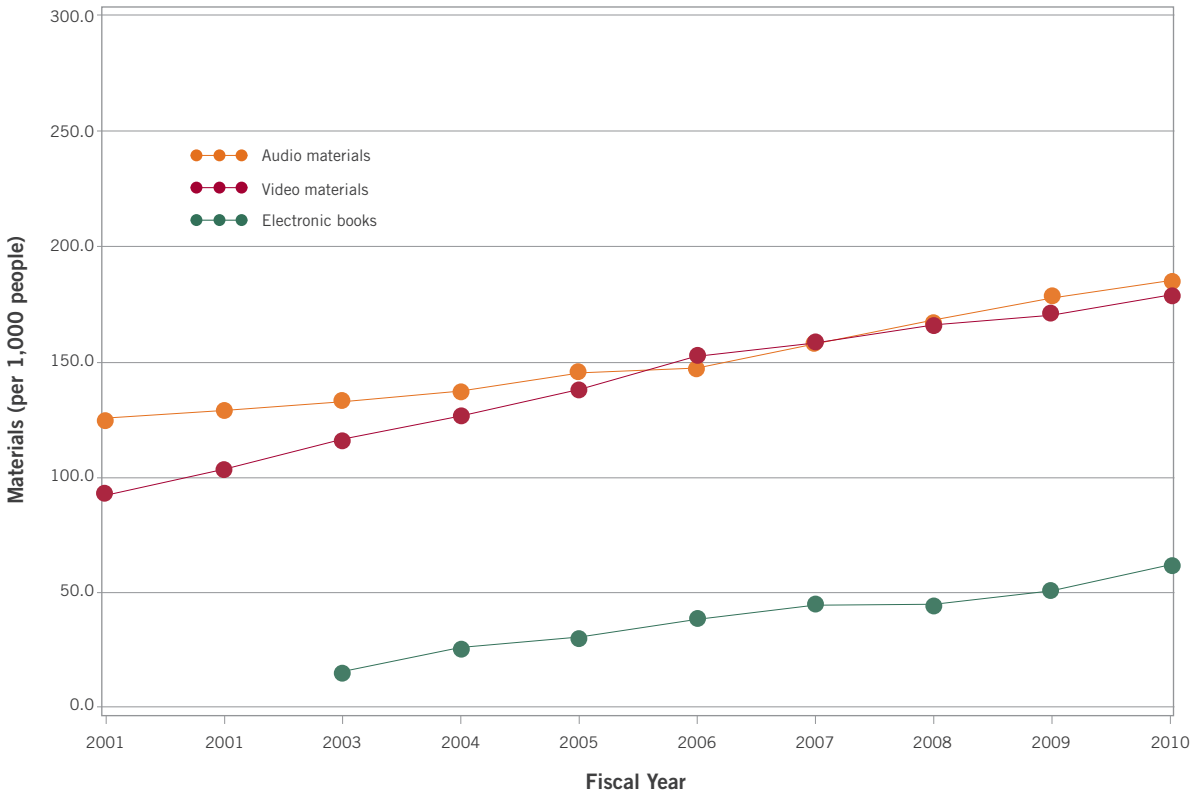
The complexion of collections in public libraries has been changing over the past several years, reflecting changes that have taken place in digital media and technology as a whole. Although the majority of collection materials remain books in print (87.1 percent of the total collection in FY 2010), this proportion has decreased over the prior 10 years.

Non-print materials in public library collections, including audio and video materials in both physical and downloadable formats, and electronic books (e-books), have increased dramatically since FY 2001 (Figure 6-1). There were 55.05 million total audio materials, both physical and downloadable¹, which include music and audio books. This was a 1-year increase of 4.3 percent and a 10-year increase of 61.2 percent. There

were 53.21 million total video materials, both physical and downloadable. This was a 1-year increase of 5.0 percent and a 10-year increase of 112.4 percent. The fastest growth in non-print materials has been in e-book holdings. In FY 2010, there were 18.50 million electronic books (e-books) available for circulation, a 1-year increase of 22.5 percent. E-book volume has increased by 323.5 percent since 2003, the first time this metric was collected in the survey.

Public libraries in towns and rural areas had the highest number of e-books per 1,000 people. In FY 2010, rural libraries had 148.4 e-books per 1,000 people, an increase of 12.5 percent. Because they are downloadable and, thus, do not require a visit to a physical building that might be many miles away, e-books

Figure 6-1: Public Library Collections: Non-print Materials Per 1,000 People, FY 2001-2010



Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2001-2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services/National Center for Education Statistics.

¹ Note on audio and video downloadable materials: Fewer than one-third (29.30 percent) of all libraries had data missing for one or more of the audio or video elements: 0.68 percent missing video downloadable, 2.09 percent missing audio downloadable, and 26.53 percent missing both audio and video downloadable. Most of the missing data resulted from non-reporting by all libraries in specific states. For more information, see the Technical Notes in the Appendix.

Indicator 6. Change in Public Library Collections

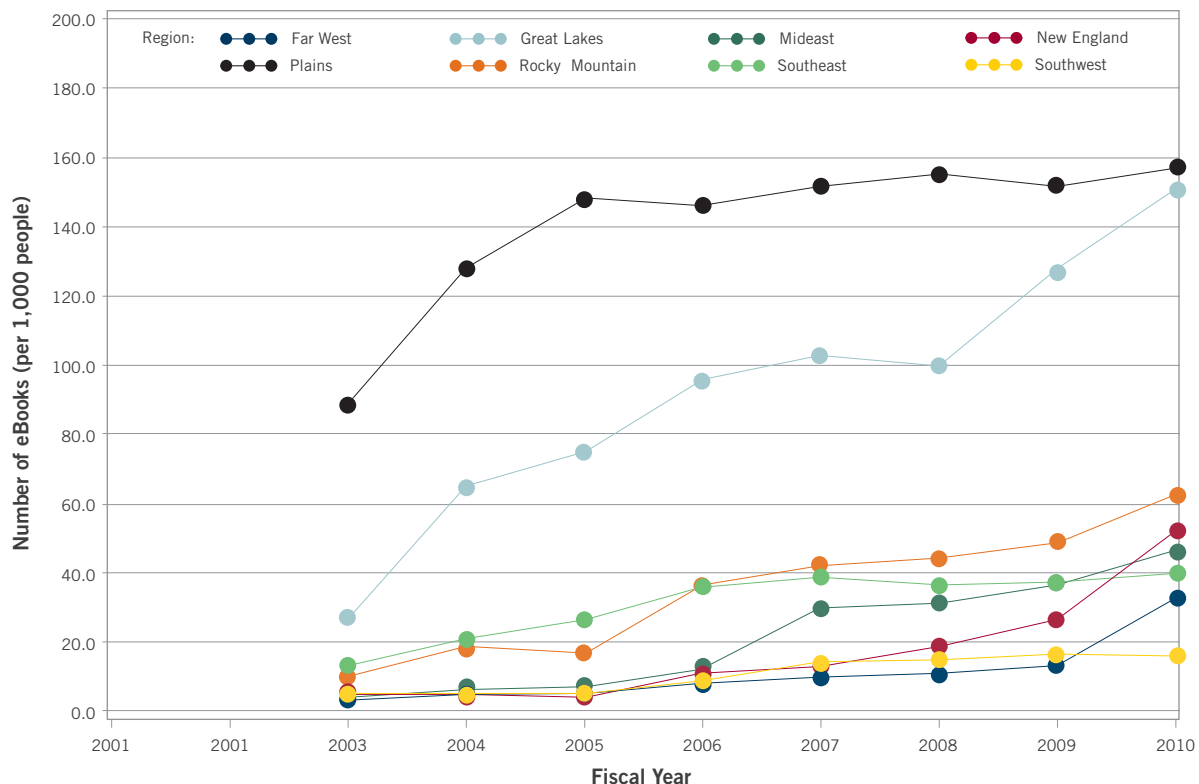
demonstrate great utility in enabling rural libraries to provide resources to their patrons. City libraries had the lowest rate of e-books per 1,000 people, at 23.5, but this is mostly due to the large service population, rather than the size of the holdings. Town and suburban libraries saw the largest growth in e-books per 1,000 people from FY 2009, with 26.6 percent and 27.8 percent increases, respectively.

Although the addition of e-books as part of public library collections has grown across the United States, some regions began to integrate this resource very early (**Figure 6-2**). As a region, the Plains had the highest number of e-books per 1,000 people at 157.2, followed by the Great Lakes (150.9). The states that comprise the Plains and Great Lakes regions also have many rural libraries, so the demand for resources that can be disseminated quickly and easily to a geographically dispersed populace is high. States in the Plains region assimilated e-books into their collections relatively early compared to other regions. The Great Lakes adopted quickly afterward. Other regions have begun to add substantially to their e-book holdings. However, the Southwest region continues to lag behind. In FY 2010, the region had 16.1 e-books per 1,000 people, the only region that did not see an increase in e-book volume.

Because states often leverage resources to increase public access to e-books, there are widely varying differences across states in e-book holdings at public libraries. States with the highest number of e-books per 1,000 people were Wisconsin (482.1), Minnesota (405.2), and Montana (337.9), reflecting the regional differences at the state level. The lowest numbers of e-book per capita were in Wyoming (0.84), Oklahoma (3.1), and Georgia (3.2). Thirty-seven states saw an increase in their e-book holdings from FY 2009. Oregon, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island had the highest percent change, while Connecticut, Kansas, and Vermont saw losses.

Expenditures on collections totaled \$1.26 billion in FY 2010, a decrease of \$66.56 million (5.0 percent) from FY 2009. Collection expenditures, which comprised 11.7 percent of all operating expenses in FY 2010, decreased over the prior 10 years by 10.4 percent. Expenditures on electronic materials, which were 1.4 percent of operating expenses, were \$155.75 million in FY 2010. Although this was a decrease of 1.9 percent from the prior year, it was also an increase of 52.7 percent since FY 2003, the first time this information was collected. States varied on their per capita expenditures on electronic materials, from \$1.47 in Washington to \$0.11 in Mississippi.

Figure 6-2: US Public Library – Number of eBooks Per 1,000 People by Region, FY 2001-2010



Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services/National Center for Education Statistics.

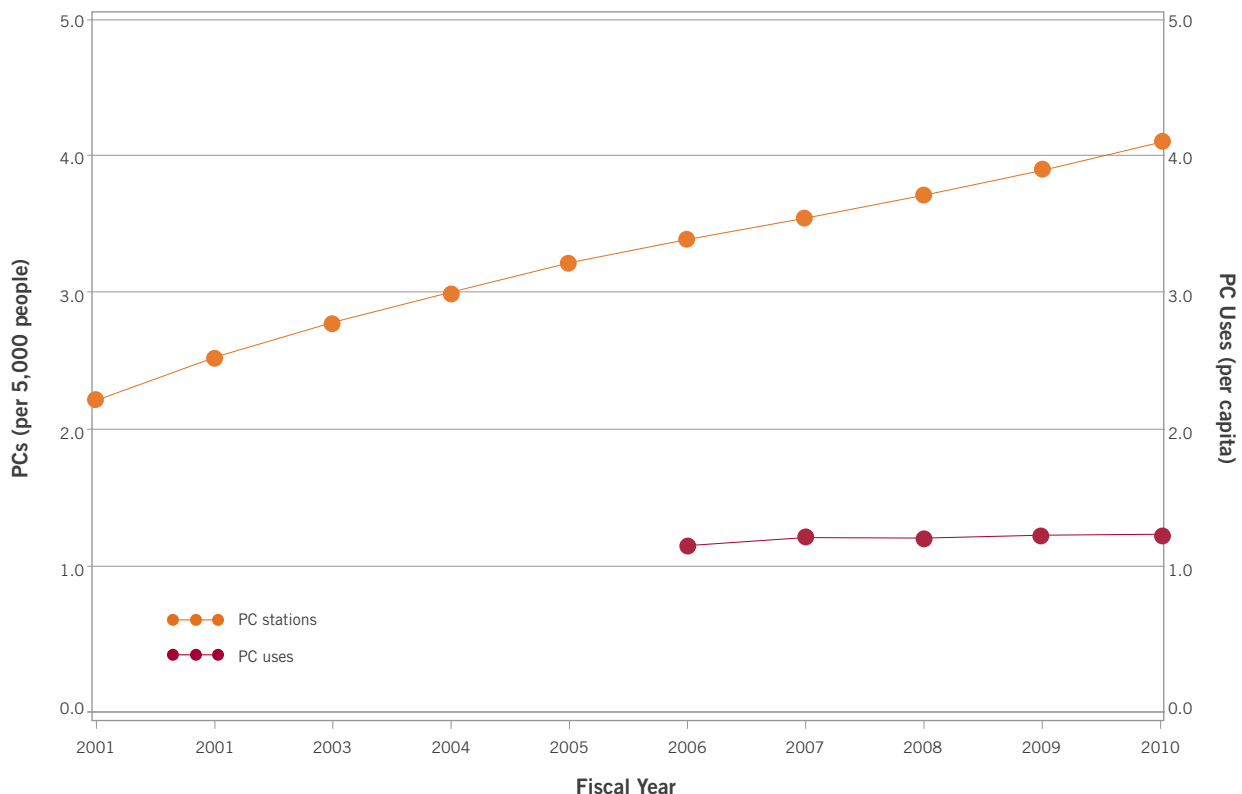
Indicator 7. Computers and the Internet

Providing public access computers continued to be one of the fastest growing services in public libraries. In FY 2010, public libraries reported a computer use rate of more than one use for every five visits to the library. Public libraries have responded to demand by increasing access, doubling the number of computers in the past 10 years.

Public libraries provided the general public with access to 244,842 Internet-ready computer terminals in FY 2010 (**Figure 7-1**). This is an increase of 5.8 percent since FY 2009 and a 10-year increase of 100.5 percent. Overall, this is 4.1 computers per 5,000 people in the legal service areas for public libraries. There were 367.80 million user-sessions on these computers, an increase of 10.1 percent since FY 2006, the first time this metric was reported. There were 234.11 computer uses per 1,000 visits to public libraries, a 1-year increase of 1.7. There was a strong relationship between computer uses per capita and visits per capita.¹

Public libraries in rural areas had the highest ratio of Internet-accessible computers (**Figure 7-2**). There were 6.1 PCs per 5,000 people, a 1-year increase of 3.4 percent. The other locales also saw an increase in their PC accessibility: city libraries had 3.6 per 5,000 (an increase of 5.6 percent); suburban libraries had 3.8 (increase of 5.8 percent); and town libraries had 4.3 (increase of 4.8 percent). Libraries in the Plains had the highest number of Internet computers, with 5.6 per 5,000 people in the service area, an increase of 4.7 from FY 2009. In contrast, libraries in the Far West had the fewest number of Internet computers, at 2.7 per

Figure 7-1: US Public Library – Internet PCs Per 5,000 People and PC Uses Per Capita, FY 2001-2010



Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2001-2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services/National Center for Education Statistics.

¹ Pearson correlation coefficient: PC uses per capita and visits per capita = .66 / PCs per capita and visits per capita = .41, both $p < .0001$.

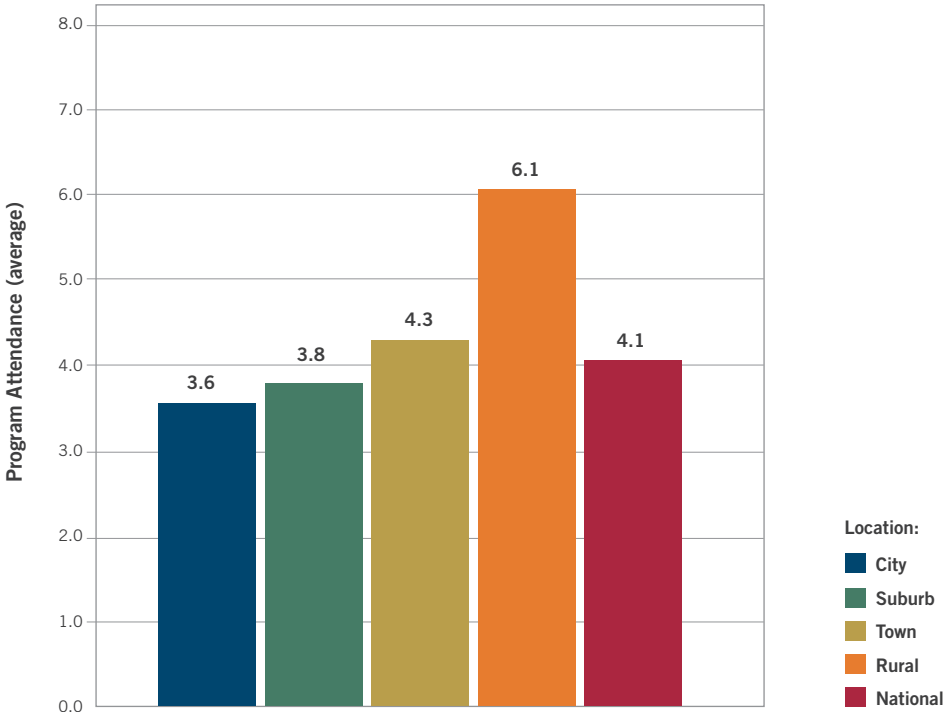
Indicator 7. Computers and the Internet

5,000 people. New England and the Southeast regions saw the biggest change, with 1-year increases of 8.2 and 7.9 percent, respectively. Vermont and Kansas had the most computers per population; Hawaii, Nevada, and California had the fewest.

Libraries in suburban and rural areas saw increases in the number of computer uses per 1,000 visits (**Figure**

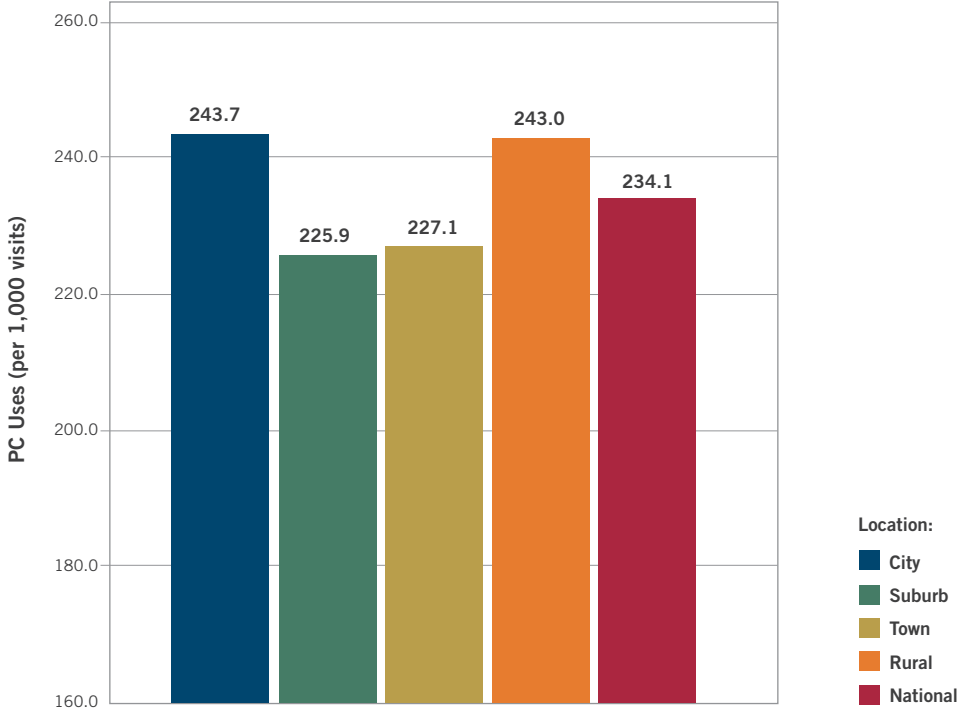
7-3). Suburban libraries had 225.9 uses per 1,000 visits, an increase of 3.3 percent, and rural libraries had 243.0 uses, an increase of 3.6 percent. Computer use varied across regions, from 200.0 per 1,000 visits in the Mideast to 271.7 in the Southeast. States with the highest computer usage were Louisiana and Kansas, while the lowest computer usage was in Hawaii and the District of Columbia.

Figure 7-2: US Public Library – Internet PCs Per 5,000 People by Locale, FY 2010



Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Figure 7-3: US Public Library – PC Uses Per 1,000 Visits by Locale, FY 2010



Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Public Libraries Survey: Indicators

Section 3. Public Library Workforce

Indicator 8. Public Library Staffing

Indicator 9. Librarians

Indicator 8. Public Library Staffing

The recession has had an impact on the public library workforce, which has decreased by 6,385 FTE staff since FY 2008, a decrease of 3.9 percent. Staff-related expenditures were \$7.21 billion, 67.0 percent of public library expenses in FY 2010.

The recession has had an impact on the public library workforce. The public library workforce decreased overall by 6,385 FTE staff since FY 2008, a decrease of 3.9 percent. In terms of job loss, other paid staff took the initial hit from the recession, with a 1.2 percent decrease from FY 2008 to 2009 and a 4.6 percent decrease from FY 2008 to 2010. Librarians did not experience a loss in the first year after the recession, but there was a decrease of 2,622 FTE librarian positions, a decrease of 2.2 percent, since FY 2009.

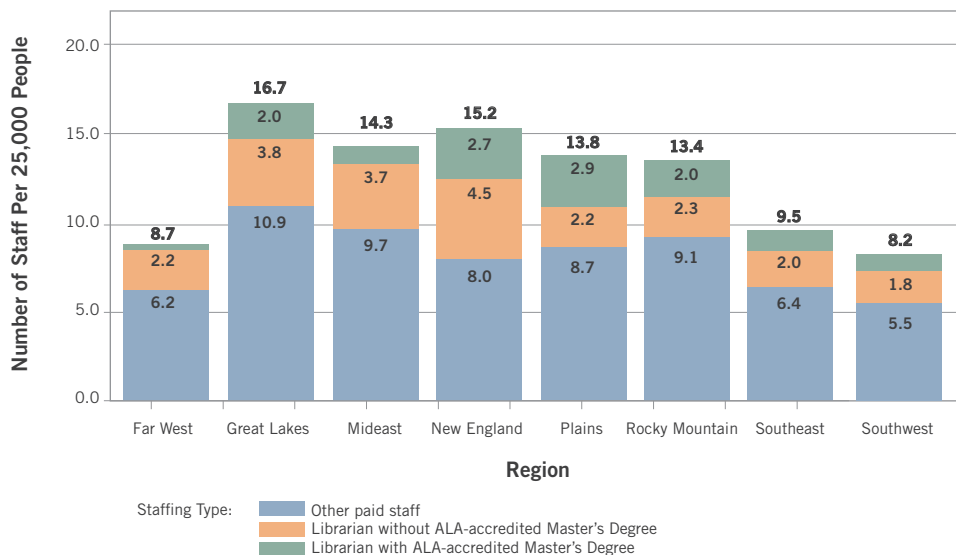
Public library services were supported by 139,370 full-time equivalent¹ staff in FY 2010 (Figure C on page 11). This reflects a 1-year decrease of 3.2 percent, but a 10-year increase of 4.8 percent. One-third of total library staff (46,849) held positions with the title of librarian in FY 2010, providing 3.9 FTEs per 25,000 people within library service areas, a decrease of 2.5 percent from FY 2009. Other paid staff (66.4 percent) totaled 92,521, providing 11.7 FTEs per 25,000

people within library service areas. These staff supported library services at all levels in a wide variety of positions, including library paraprofessionals who serve as library clerks and technicians, as well as staff who provide operational support such as maintenance, security, IT, and general administration. Total other paid staff decreased 3.7 percent from FY 2009, but showed a 10-year increase of 4.4 percent.

There were no significant differences across locales in the number of total staff per capita. However, all locales experience decreases in their workforce, and there were differences in the magnitude of these losses. Libraries in cities and suburbs lost the most, with decreases of 5.2 percent and 4.1 percent, respectively. This was above the national decrease of 3.6 percent.

There were regional differences in total staff (Figure 8-1). The Southwest and Far West regions had the lowest number of total staff per 25,000 people, at 8.3

Figure 8-1: US Public Library – Number of FTE Staff Per 25,000 People by Region, FY 2010



Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services.

¹ Full-time equivalent (FTE) is a way to measure workload. In the PLS, a value of 1.0 FTE refers to 40 hours per week. For more information on FTE, see the Technical Notes in Appendix B.

Indicator 8. Public Library Staffing

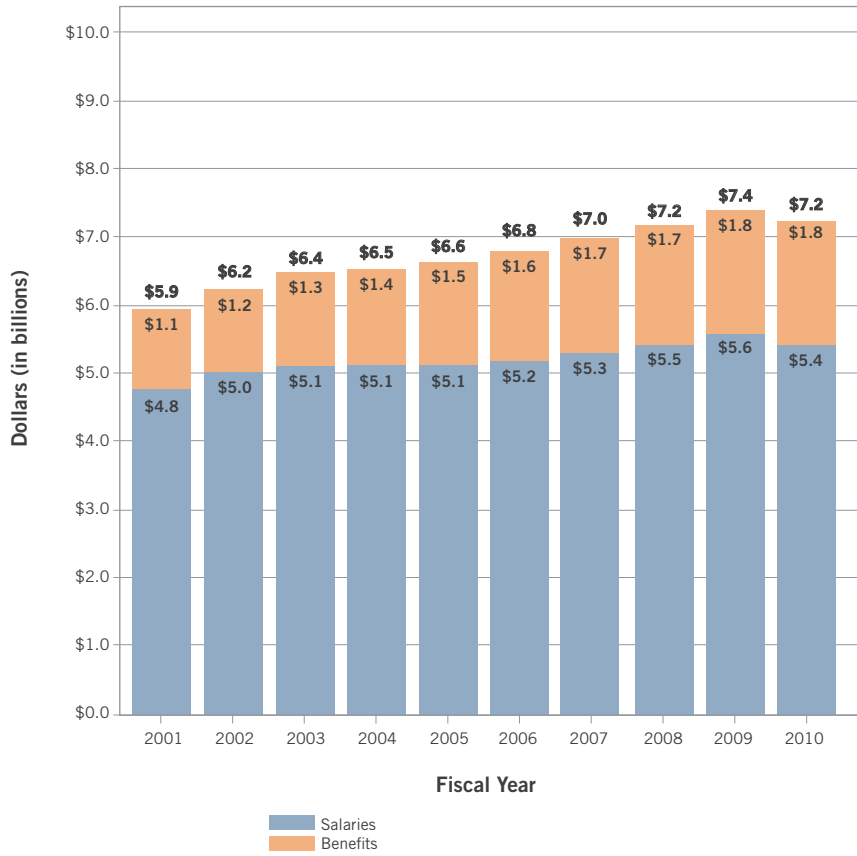
and 8.7, respectively. As with the locales, there were also differences in the magnitude of change from FY 2009. The greatest workforce loss was in the Mideast, with a 1-year decrease of 6.3 percent. The Far West (decrease of 4.5 percent) and Southeast (decrease of 3.6 percent) also saw significant change from the prior year. Wyoming (21.1) and New Hampshire (20.7) have the largest workforce per 25,000 people; Tennessee (7.1) and Georgia (7.5) have the smallest.

Most of the spending in public libraries goes to staffing expenses, which accounted for \$7.21 billion (67.0 percent) of total expenditures in FY 2010. This reflected a decrease of \$150.61 million (2.0 percent) from the prior year. The composition of staffing expenses has changed from FY 2001 to 2010, with a change in the proportion of salary to benefit expenses (Figure 8-2). In FY 2010, salary-related expenditures were \$5.43

billion, which accounted for 75.3 percent of staffing expenditures; benefits-related expenditures were \$1.78 million. Over the prior 10 years, benefits-related expenses changed from 18.8 percent in FY 2001 to 24.7 percent in 2010, reflecting the stress that rising healthcare costs have put on staffing at public libraries.

Many things influence per capita spending on public library staffing, including the number of staff, the service area, and the cost of living. The percentage of operating expenditures that were spent on staffing ranged from 58.3 percent in Louisiana to 73.2 percent in New Hampshire. The highest per capita expenditures on staffing were found in the District of Columbia (\$43.94), New York (\$41.58), and Wyoming (\$40.40). States with the lowest spending were Mississippi (\$10.78), Tennessee (\$11.03), and West Virginia (\$11.92).

Figure 8-2: US Public Library Staff Expenditures: Salaries and Benefits (in constant 2010 dollars), FY 2001-2010



Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services/National Center for Education Statistics.

Indicator 9. Librarians

Librarians made up one-third of all library staff. Although the majority of these librarians hold a Master's degree in Library and Information Studies from a program accredited by the American Library Association (ALA-MLS), only half of all libraries reported having a librarian with an ALA-MLS on staff.

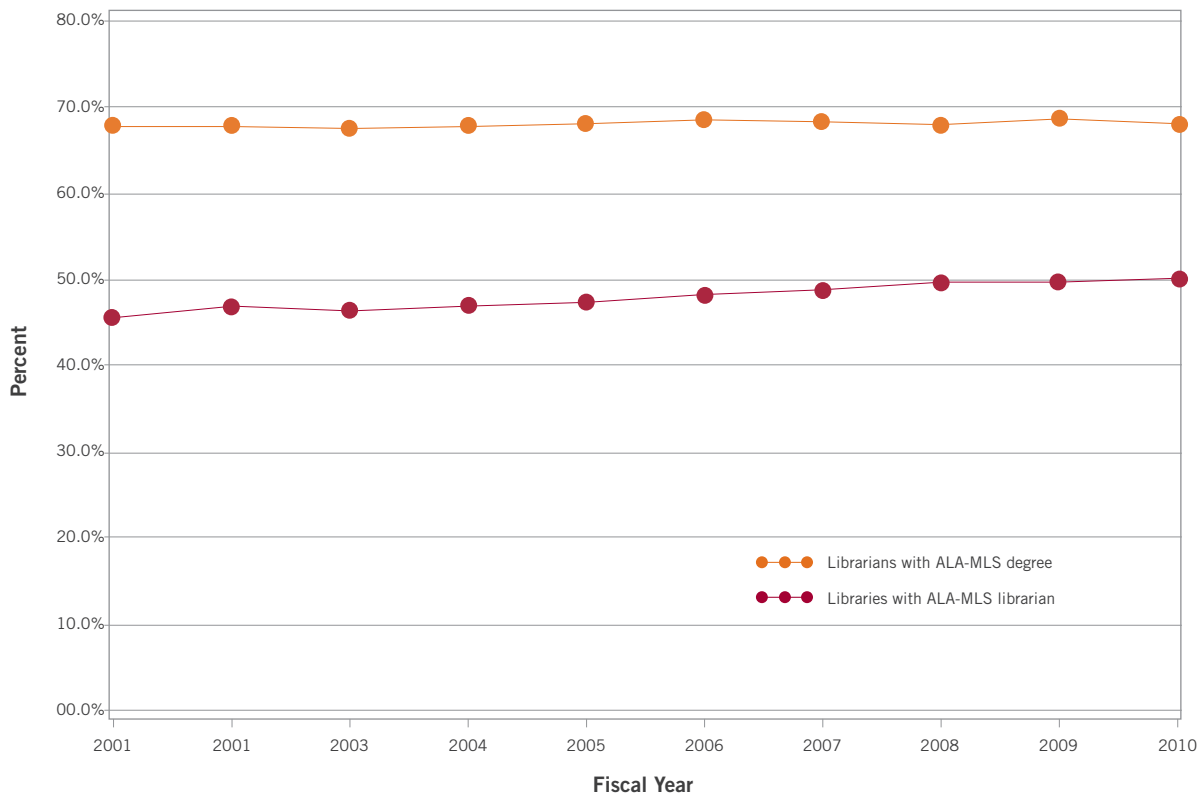
There were 46,849 employees who held the title of librarian working at public libraries in FY 2010, which accounted for one-third (33.6 percent) of all library staff. Overall, this provides 3.94 librarians per 25,000 people, a decrease of 2.5 percent from FY 2009.

Public libraries in rural areas had the highest number of librarians per capita. Rural libraries had 5.1 librarians per 25,000 people. In contrast, city libraries had 3.3. Libraries in cities experienced the biggest loss of librarians, with a 1-year decrease of 4.4 percent. New England had the most librarians per capita, with 7.3 per 25,000 people. The Far West and Southwest regions had the fewest librarians per capita, with 2.4 and 2.8 per 25,000 people, respectively. The Mideast had the

largest loss, a decrease of 6.3 percent from FY 2009. New Hampshire had the most librarians per capita, with 11.7 per 25,000 people, followed by Vermont (9.2) and Wyoming (8.7). Georgia (1.8), Arkansas (1.9) and North Carolina (1.9) had the fewest.

Out of all librarians, 31,932 (68.2 percent) had a Master's degree in Library and Information Studies from a program accredited by the American Library Association, a decrease of 3.0 percent from FY 2009, but a 10-year increase of 6.4 percent (**Figure 9-1**). Approximately half (50.2 percent) of all libraries had a librarian with an ALA-MLS on staff, a metric that has steadily increased for 10 years for an overall increase of 10.1 percent.

Figure 9-1: US Public Library – Libraries with ALA-degreed Librarian and Librarians with ALA-MLS Degrees, FY 2001-2010



Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2001-2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services/National Center for Education Statistics.

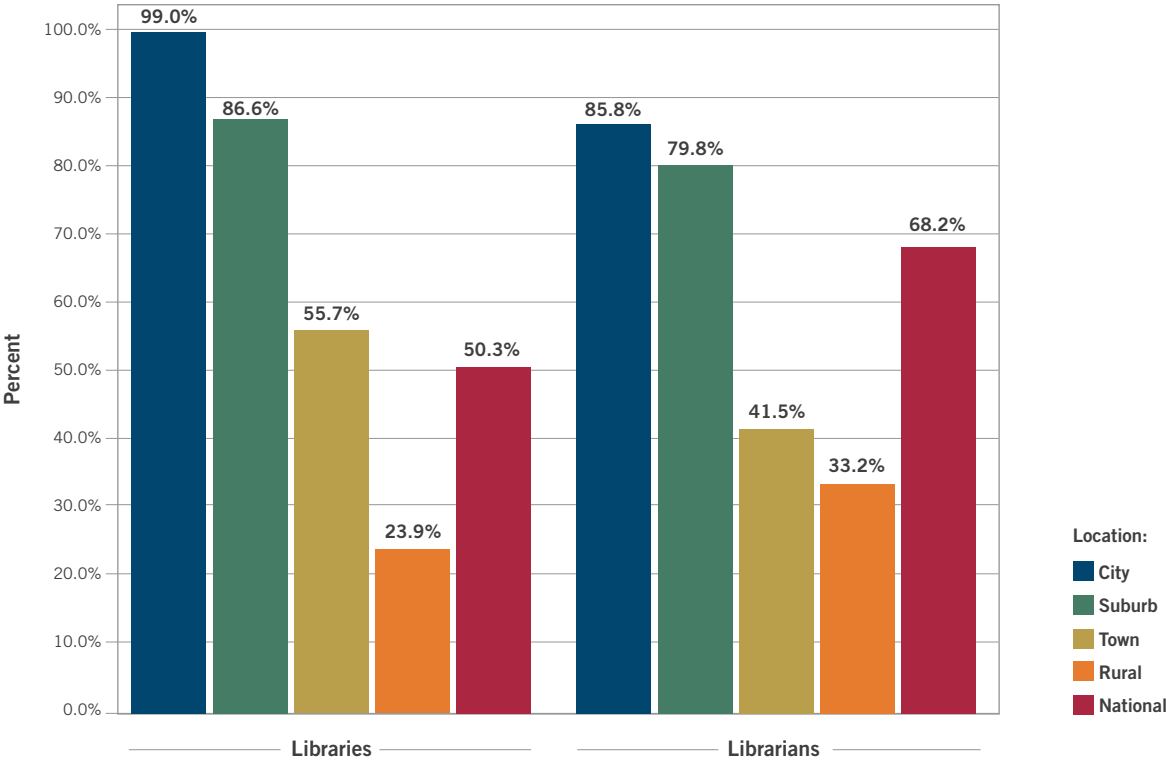
Indicator 9. Librarians

There were locale differences for librarians with ALA-MLS degrees (Figure 9-2). Most librarians in cities (85.8 percent) and suburbs (79.8 percent) had ALA-MLS degrees. In contrast, fewer than half of all librarians in towns (41.5 percent) and rural areas (33.2 percent) had ALA-MLS degrees. The percentage of librarians with ALA-MLS degrees can be related to state policy. In some states, librarians are required to have an ALA-accredited Master’s degree. The highest percentages of librarians with ALA-MLS degrees were found in the District of Columbia (100.0 percent), New Jersey (99.9 percent), and Hawaii (99.4 percent). States with the lowest percentages were Mississippi (21.0 percent), South Dakota (23.1 percent), and Wyoming (25.2 percent).

There were large differences in the percentage of libraries with ALA-MLS degreed librarians on staff by locale.

Almost all (99.0 percent) public libraries in cities have ALA-MLS degreed librarians on staff. In contrast, only 23.9 percent of rural libraries have an ALA-MLS librarian on staff. These levels have remained fairly stable over the past 10 years. There are also regional differences in the percentages of libraries that have ALA-MLS degreed librarians on staff, ranging from 21.0 percent in the Plains to 68.7 in the Far West. As with the locale trend, these percentages have changed little since FY 2001. The District of Columbia and four states report that all libraries have a librarian with an ALA-accredited MLS on staff: the District of Columbia, Georgia, Hawaii, Maryland, and Rhode Island. States with the fewest libraries with an ALA-MLS librarian on staff are North Dakota (11.0 percent), Nebraska (13.9 percent), and Iowa (16.6 percent).

Figure 9-2: US Public Library Staffing by Locale
Percent of Libraries and Librarians with ALA-MLS, FY 2010



Source: Public Library Survey, FY 2010, Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Public Libraries Survey: Appendix



Appendix A – About the Public Libraries Survey

Appendix B – Technical Notes

Note 1. Commonly Used Measures

Note 2. Adjusting for Inflation: Financial Indicators and Calculations

Note 3. Public Libraries in the United States Survey, FY 2010

The Public Libraries Survey (PLS) is a voluntary survey conducted annually by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). IMLS collects these data under the mandate in the Museum and Library Services Act of 2003, as stated in SEC. 210. The U.S. Census Bureau is the data collection agent for IMLS. The fiscal year (FY) 2010 survey is the 23rd in the series.

Survey Purpose and Data Items Included in This Report

The PLS provides a national census of public libraries and their public service outlets (see *Key Library Terminology* below). These data are useful to federal, state, and local policymakers; library and public policy researchers; and the public, journalists, and others.

This report provides summary information about public libraries in the 50 states and the District of Columbia for state FY 2010.¹ It covers service measures such as number of users of public Internet computers, number of Internet computers used by the general public, reference transactions, interlibrary loans, circulation, library visits, children's program attendance, and circulation of children's materials. It also includes information about size of collection, staffing, operating revenue and expenditures, type of legal basis, and number and type of public library service outlets. This report is based on the final data file.

The PLS is designed as a universe survey. The survey frame consists of 9,299 public libraries (9,241 public libraries in the 50 states and the District of Columbia and 58 public libraries in the outlying areas of Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands), as identified by state library agencies. Public libraries in one outlying area, American Samoa, are not included in the survey frame because their state library agency has never responded to the request for participation in the survey.

The survey frame includes 290 public libraries that do not meet all the criteria in the FSCS Public Library Definition (see item 203 of the Administrative Entity definitions for the criteria). These libraries are included in the data files because they qualify as public libraries under state law. However, beginning with the FY 2010 report, the 290 non-FSCS libraries are excluded from the tables for a total of 8,951 public libraries in the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

A total of 9,100 of the 9,299 public libraries in the survey frame responded to the FY 2010 PLS (including Guam, Puerto Rico, and the non-FSCS libraries), for a unit response rate of 97.9 percent. Item response rates are included in the tables in this report.² The data were submitted over the Internet via a web-based reporting system. (See Data Collection in Appendix B, Note 3, for more information.)

Congressional Authorization

Two separate laws cover protection of the confidentiality of individually identifiable information collected by the Institute of Museum and Library Services - the Privacy Act of 1974 and the E-Government Act of 2002. The Guidelines for Ensuring and Maximizing the Quality, Objectivity, Utility, and Integrity of Information Disseminated by the Institute of Museum and Library Services are prepared under the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2001, Section 515(b).

IMLS will fulfill the congressional mandate in the Museum and Library Services Act of 2003 as stated in Section 210. Analysis of Impact of Museum and Library Services:

From amounts described in Sections 214(c) and 275(b), the Director shall carry out and publish analyses of the impact of...library services. Such analyses—

- (1) shall be conducted in ongoing consultation with—
 - (A) State library administrative agencies;
 - (B) State, regional, and national library... organizations; and
 - (C) other relevant agencies and organizations;
- (2) shall identify national needs for, and trends of... library services provided with funds made available under subtitles B and C...

IMLS library survey activities will be designed to address high-priority library data needs; provide consistent, reliable, complete, and accurate indicators of the status and trends of state and public libraries; and report timely, useful, and high-quality data to the U.S. Congress, the States, other education policymakers, practitioners, data users, and the general public.

¹ The fiscal year reporting period varies among states and among local jurisdictions in some states. Please see *Reporting Period* in Appendix B, Note 3, for more information.

² The item response rates in the total line of the tables do not include the outlying areas or libraries that do not meet FSCS criteria.

Key Library Terminology³

- **Public library.** A public library is an entity that is established under state enabling laws or regulations to serve a community, district, or region, and that provides at least the following: (1) an organized collection of printed or other library materials, or a combination thereof; (2) paid staff; (3) an established schedule in which services of the staff are available to the public; (4) the facilities necessary to support such a collection, staff, and schedule; and (5) is supported in whole or in part with public funds.
- **Administrative entity.** An administrative entity is the agency that is legally established under local or state law to provide public library service to the population of a local jurisdiction. The administrative entity may have a single public library service outlet, or it may have more than one public library service outlet. (Note: In this report, the term public library means an administrative entity.)
- **Public library service outlet.** Public libraries can have one or more outlets that provide direct service to the public. The three types of public library service outlets included in this report are central library outlets, branch library outlets, and bookmobile outlets. Information on a fourth type of outlet, books-by-mail-only outlets, was collected but omitted from this report because these outlets are not open to the public. The four outlet types are defined in the Data File Documentation (Appendix F in item 709 of the definitions).

Supplemental Tables

As a supplement to this report, IMLS has provided 78 tables to make available additional data about the findings in this report. These tables offer statistics at both the national and state levels for variables presented in this report, as well as additional variables found in the PLS data files. Tables 1 through 1B provide overview data by state about the number of public libraries and population of legal service areas. Tables 2 through 31 are in sets of two each. The base table in each set (Tables 2 through 31) displays data for the nation as a whole and for each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The “A” table in each set displays the same data by 11 ranges of population of legal service area. Tables 30 through 33 include data about square footage. Tables 34 through 46 are state rankings on key

variables. The supplemental tables are available only online: <http://www.ims.gov/PLS>.

Survey Questionnaire and Data Elements

IMLS develops the questionnaire for the PLS in partnership with its stakeholders in the library community, specifically the Library Statistics Working Group and the State Data Coordinators. The questionnaire used in the FY 2010 survey is published in the data documentation, *Data File Documentation: Public Libraries Survey: Fiscal year 2010* (IMLS-2012-PLS-01), available online at <http://www.ims.gov/PLS>. In addition to the survey, the data documentation provides definitions of items, including those used in this report.

History of the Public Libraries Survey

In 1985, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the American Library Association (ALA) conducted a pilot project in 15 states to assess the feasibility of a federal-state cooperative program for the collection of public library data. The project was jointly funded by NCES and the U.S. Department of Education’s former Library Programs (LP) office. In 1987, the project’s final report recommended the development of a nationwide data collection system. The Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988 (P.L. 100-297) charged NCES with developing a voluntary Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for the annual collection of public library data.⁴ To carry out this mandate, a task force was formed by NCES and the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS), and the FSCS was established in 1988.

The first survey report in this series, *Public Libraries in 50 States and the District of Columbia: 1989*, which included data from 8,699 public libraries in 50 states and the District of Columbia, was released by NCES in 1991. A data file and survey report have been released annually since then. The states have always submitted their data electronically, via customized personal computer survey software through FY 2004, and via a web-based application beginning in FY 2005.

On October 1, 2007 the survey was transferred from NCES to IMLS. The FY 2006 survey was collected by NCES and released by IMLS. The FY 2010 survey is the fourth PLS data collection and release by IMLS.

³ More detailed definitions of the terms used in this report can be found in the data documentation, IMLS publication IMLS-2012-PLS-01, *Data File Documentation: Public Libraries Survey: Fiscal Year 2010*. The data documentation is available for download from the IMLS website: www.ims.gov/PLS.

⁴ This was superseded by the National Education Statistics Act of 1994 (P.L. 103-382) and, more recently, by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002.

Note 1. Commonly Used Measures

In this report we present statistics for metrics related to aspects of financial, operational, and service activities in public libraries in the United States. National level summaries of these metrics are presented for FY 2010, and 10-year trends are presented for many metrics from FY 2001 through FY 2010. Some data elements, such as the number of children's programs offered, were added to the survey more recently. For analyses of these metrics, changes were reported based on the fiscal year in which the data element was introduced. In the indicators, metrics are also broken out and presented by state, region, or locality.

Per Capita

For long-term trends, statistics are often presented in per capita metrics, which controls for population growth and allows for standardized comparison of metrics over time. For this report, we used the unduplicated population of the legal service area served by each public library. In addition to per-person analyses in a public library's service area, trends in services are sometimes examined in terms of the number of visitors. By examining both per capita and per-visit trends, we can see not only the role that public libraries play in their communities at-large, but also how people who come to public libraries use the resources available.

Locale

Federal agencies use various approaches to classify community types. In this report, libraries were classified using a system of locale codes developed by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Working with the U.S. Census Bureau, NCES revised these codes by using improved geocoding technology and the 2000 Office of Management and Budget (OMB) definitions of metro areas. Thus, the locale codes rely on proximity to an urbanized area, rather than population size and county boundaries.

Beginning with the FY 2008 data file, locale codes have been added to the outlet and administrative entity datasets for the Public Libraries Survey. Locale codes identify general characteristics about where a public library is situated. The codes allow users to quickly identify which library outlets and administrative entities are located in cities, suburbs, towns, or rural areas. The locale codes are based on an address's proximity to an urbanized area, defined as a densely settled core with densely settled surrounding areas.

The locale code system classifies a territory into four major categories: urban, suburban, town, and rural (**Table B-1-1**). Each category has three sub-categories. For urban and suburban areas, gradations are based on population size: large, medium, or small. Towns and rural areas are sub-categorized based on their distance from an urbanized area: fringe, distant, or remote. The Census Bureau developed the coding methodology as a way to identify the location of public schools for the Common Core of Data, a survey collected by the National Center for Education Statistics.

These locale codes provide a new way to analyze library services in the United States. By incorporating objective measures of rurality and urbanicity into the data files, researchers and practitioners can benchmark services in a fundamentally different way by basing comparisons on community attributes, as well as the attributes of the libraries themselves. In other words, library services in rural remote areas can now be compared to library services in other rural remote areas within the same state or across the country by using a standardized rurality/urbanicity metric that is applied consistently to each library in the country. Once communities of interest have been selected, comparisons can be made to any data that are available in the PLS, whether they are related to aspects of finance, operations, or service.

As of FY 2008, each library outlet and administrative entity in the survey has been assigned one of the 12 locale codes. Starting with the FY 2009 survey data files, bookmobiles and books-by-mail only outlets were also assigned locale codes. For more information on the NCES locale categories, see the website: http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/rural_locales.asp.

Geographic Region

Analyses in this report are also presented by geographic region. The Public Libraries Survey uses the geographic regional classification developed by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). The classification is comprised of eight geographic regions: New England, Mideast, Great Lakes, Plains, Southeast, Southwest, Rocky Mountains, and Far West (**Figure B-1-1**).

Full Time Equivalent (FTE)

In analyses of the workforce, information on employment is classified according to full-time equivalent (FTE). FTE is a unit that measures the workload of an employed person. It is used to aid in comparisons of workload across contexts. An FTE of 1.0 indicates

that the person is the equivalent to a full-time worker, usually 40 hours per week. An FTE of 0.5 indicates a person works half-time. So if a library reports that they

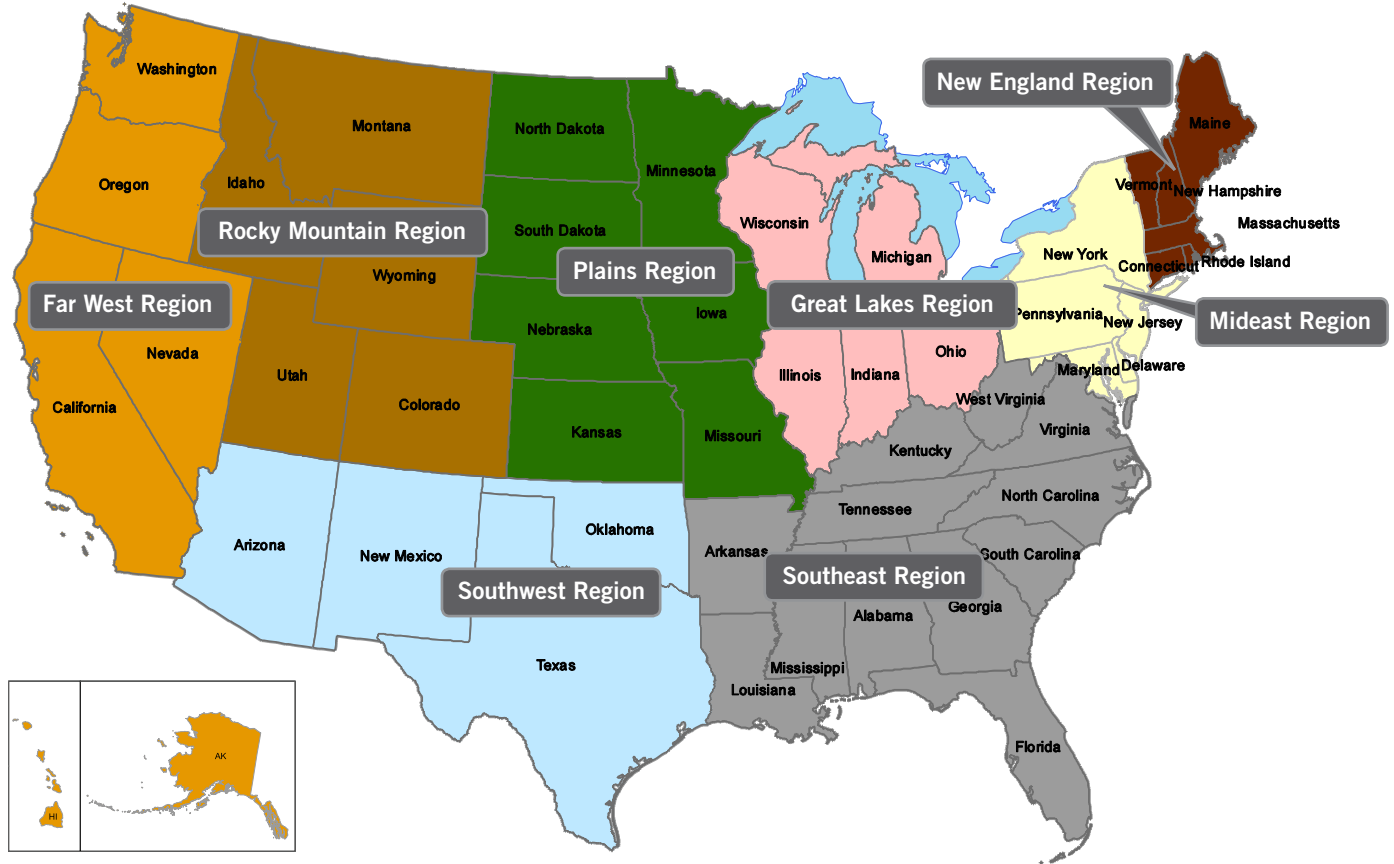
have 2.0 FTE, it may, for example, refer to 2 full-time employees or 4 part-time employees (each working approximately 20 hours per week).

Table B-1-1: Urban-centric Locale Categories

City	<p>Large: Territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population of 250,000 or more</p> <p>Midsize: Territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population less than 250,000 and greater than or equal to 100,000</p> <p>Small: Territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population less than 100,000</p>
Suburb	<p>Large: Territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population of 250,000 or more</p> <p>Midsize: Territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population less than 250,000 and greater than or equal to 100,000</p> <p>Small: Territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population less than 100,000</p>
Town	<p>Fringe: Territory inside an urban cluster that is less than or equal to 10 miles from an urbanized area</p> <p>Distant: Territory inside an urban cluster that is more than 10 miles and less than or equal to 35 miles from an urbanized area</p> <p>Remote: Territory inside an urban cluster that is more than 35 miles from an urbanized area</p>
Rural	<p>Fringe: Census-defined rural territory that is less than or equal to 5 miles from an urbanized area, as well as rural territory that is less than or equal to 2.5 miles from an urban cluster</p> <p>Distant: Census-defined rural territory that is more than 5 miles but less than or equal to 25 miles from an urbanized area, as well as rural territory that is more than 2.5 miles but less than or equal to 10 miles from an urban cluster</p> <p>Remote: Census-defined rural territory that is more than 25 miles from an urbanized area and is also more than 10 miles from an urban cluster</p>

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Common Core of Data (CCD), Identification of Locale Codes, from http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/rural_locales.asp.

Figure B-1-1: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis Regional Classifications



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) Regional Definitions
<http://www.bea.gov/regional/docs/regions.cfm>.

Note 2. Adjusting for Inflation: Financial Indicators and Calculations

For financial trends that report dollar amounts over time, such as 10-year revenue trends, metrics are presented in constant dollars. Constant dollars are an adjusted value of currency that accounts for inflation. We use this adjustment in order to compare monetary values from one period to another. For the present analyses, inflation was accounted for using a GDP (gross domestic product) deflator,¹ as shown in Equation 1 below.

Equation 1:

$$\text{GDP Deflator} = \frac{(\text{Nominal GDP})}{(\text{Real GDP})}$$

In general, a real value is one in which the effects of inflation have been taken into account, and a nominal value is one in which the effects have not. Thus, the Real GDP is the value of all the goods and services produced in the United States expressed relative to some base year, and the Nominal GDP is the value of the same goods and services expressed in current prices.

To calculate the value in constant dollars for a target year, multiply a value from a base year by a ratio of the GDP Deflators from the base year and the target year. For example, to calculate the amount of revenue from the year 2000 in 2009 constant dollars, multiply the original value of revenue in 2000 by the ratio of the deflators from year 2009 to 2000 (see Equation 2, below).

Equation 2:

$$\text{Value}_{\text{constant 2009 dollars}} = \text{Value}_{2000} \times \frac{(\text{GDP Deflator 2009})}{(\text{GDP Deflator 2000})}$$

¹ Information on US GDP was obtained from the Bureau of Economic Analysis (<http://www.bea.gov/>).

Note 3. Public Libraries in the United States Survey, FY 2010

Survey Universe

The PLS is designed as a universe survey. The survey frame consists of 9,299 public libraries (9,241 public libraries in the 50 states and the District of Columbia and 58 public libraries in the outlying areas of Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands), as identified by state library agencies. (Public libraries in one outlying area, American Samoa, are not included in the survey frame because their state library agency has never responded to the request for participation in the survey. Because their public libraries have not been identified, they are not included in the response rate calculations.) The survey frame includes 290 public libraries that do not meet all the criteria in the FSCS Public Library Definition¹ (see item 203 of the Administrative Entity definitions for the criteria). The non-FSCS libraries were included in the imputation process for nonresponse. These libraries are included in the data files because they qualify as public libraries under state law. However, beginning with the FY 2010 report, the 290 non-FSCS libraries are excluded from the tables, for a total of 8,951 public libraries in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Military libraries that provide public library service and libraries that serve residents of institutions are not included.

Survey Response

Unit response. A total of 9,100 of the 9,299 public libraries in the survey frame responded to the FY 2010 PLS (including Guam, Puerto Rico and the 290 non-FSCS libraries), for a unit response rate of 97.9 percent. For the 8,951 libraries in this report, the unit response rate was 98.7 percent. Public libraries are defined as respondents if they reported population of the legal service area and at least three of the five following items: total paid employees, total operating revenue, total operating expenditures, print materials, and total circulation. (Note: Some individual survey items, such as population of legal service area, service outlets, and type of legal basis have a 100.0 percent response rate for their state because the state library agency provided these data for all public libraries in its state.)

Total response. The base for calculating response rates to individual survey items is the total number of libraries in the survey frame, including unit non-respondents.

Data file and publication response rates. The total response rates in the data file differ from the total response rates in the published report. This is because the non-responding outlying areas of the Northern Mariana Islands and the Virgin Islands and the non-FSCS libraries are included in the data file but are not included in the publication. The responding outlying areas of Guam and Puerto Rico are included in the data file. However, only Guam is included in the publication, due to low response rates in Puerto Rico. The response rates for the outlying territories are not included in the national totals in the publication.

Reporting period. The FY 2010 PLS requested data for state fiscal year 2010. Most state fiscal years are either a calendar year or the period July-June. In some states, the FY reporting period varies among local jurisdictions. These states are listed in the *Other* column in **Table B-3-1**. Regardless, each public library provided data for a 12-month period. The FY starting date and ending date of each public library are included in the data file.

Calculations Included in the Tables

Percentages rather than raw numbers are used in some tables to provide a clearer picture of data patterns. Percentage distributions may not sum to 100 due to rounding. To obtain a raw number from a percentage distribution table, multiply the percentage for the item by the total for the item. (The total may be in a different table.) For example, in Table 5, the number of public libraries in the 50 states and the District of Columbia with municipal government as their legal basis is 4,717 ($8,951 \times 0.527$). The percentages are rounded, so multiplying a percentage by a total may not give an exact count for a desired category.

Selected tables include per capita values for some items and *per 1,000 population* or *per 5,000 population* values for others (e.g., Tables 8 and 11). Scales (per capita, per 1,000, etc.) were selected to provide the clearest display of differences across categories in the data. The calculations are based on the total *unduplicated* population of legal service areas (instead of the total population of legal service areas) in order to eliminate duplicative reporting due to overlapping service areas. The state population estimate was not used as the basis for the calculations because some states have unserved populations. See Population items below for more information.

¹ A public library is established under state laws or regulations to serve a community, district, or region. IMLS reports on public libraries that meet all criteria in the definition of a public library developed by the Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS). Under this definition, a public library provides, at a minimum, the following: (1) an organized collection of printed or other library materials, or a combination thereof; (2) paid staff; (3) an established schedule in which services of the staff are available to the public; (4) facilities necessary to support such a collection, staff, and schedule; and (5) support in whole or in part with public funds.

Table B-3-1: Reporting Periods of Public Libraries: Fiscal Year 2010

July 2009 Through June 2010	January 2010 Through December 2010	Other ¹
Arizona	Arkansas	Alabama ²
California	Colorado	Alaska ³
Connecticut	Indiana	District of Columbia ²
Delaware	Kansas	Florida ²
Georgia	Louisiana	Idaho ²
Hawaii	Minnesota	Illinois ¹¹
Iowa	North Dakota	Maine ⁵
Kentucky	New Jersey	Michigan ⁶
Maryland	Ohio	Mississippi ²
Massachusetts	South Dakota	Missouri ⁷
Montana	Washington	Nebraska ⁴
Nevada	Wisconsin	New Hampshire ⁸
New Mexico	Puerto Rico	New York ⁹
North Carolina		Pennsylvania ⁸
Oklahoma		Texas ¹⁰
Oregon		Utah ⁸
Rhode Island		Vermont ⁴
South Carolina		Guam ²
Tennessee		
Virginia		
West Virginia		
Wyoming		

SOURCE: Institute of Museum and Library Services, Survey of Public Libraries in the United States, Fiscal Year 2010.

¹ The reporting period varies among localities for the states in this column; however, each public library provided data for a 12-month period.

² October 2009 to September 2010.

³ January 2009 to June 2010.

⁴ January 2009 to December 2010.

⁵ April 2009 to December 2010.

⁶ December 2008 to September 2010.

⁷ October 2008 to December 2010.

⁸ July 2009 to December 2010.

⁹ March 2009 to December 2010.

¹⁰ February 2009 to December 2010.

¹¹ October 2008 to June 2010.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire used in the FY 2010 survey is published in the data documentation, *Data File Documentation: Public Libraries Survey: Fiscal Year 2010* (IMLS-2012-PLS-01), available online at <http://www.ims.gov/PLS>. In addition to the survey, the data documentation provides definitions of items, including those used in this report. A few key survey items are discussed below.

Library visits and reference transactions. Public libraries reported annual library visits and annual reference transactions based on actual counts, if available. Otherwise, annual estimates were provided based on a typical week in October, multiplied by 52.

Population items. The PLS has three population items: (1) Population of Legal Service Area for each public library, (2) Total Unduplicated Population of Legal Service Areas for each state, and (3) State Total Population Estimate. The population data are provided by the state library agency. The methods of calculation for the first two items vary significantly among states, and the state reporting periods also vary. The Total Unduplicated Population of Legal Service Areas does not include

unserved areas and may vary from data provided by sources using standard methodology (e.g., the Census Bureau).

The total Population of Legal Service Areas for all public libraries in a state may exceed the state's Total Unduplicated Population of Legal Service Areas or the State Total Population Estimate. This happens in states where there are overlaps in population of legal service areas served by individual libraries, resulting in the same population being counted twice. Twenty-seven states had such overlapping service areas in FY 2010 (**Table B-3-2**).

To enable meaningful state comparisons using total Population of Legal Service Area data (for example, the number of print materials per capita), the Population of Legal Service Area data were adjusted to eliminate duplicative reporting due to overlapping service areas. The Public Library Data File includes a derived unduplicated population of legal service area figure for each library for this purpose (the variable is called POPU_UND). This value was prorated for each library by calculating the ratio of a library's Population of Legal Service Area to the state's total Population of Legal Service Area and

Table B-3-2: States with Public Libraries with Overlapping Service Areas: Fiscal Year 2010

Arkansas	Minnesota
Arizona	Mississippi
Colorado	Nebraska
Connecticut	New Hampshire
Florida	New Jersey
Idaho	New York
Indiana	Pennsylvania
Kansas	Rhode Island
Kentucky	South Dakota
Louisiana	Utah
Maine	Vermont
Massachusetts	Virginia
Maryland	Puerto Rico
Michigan	

SOURCE: Institute of Museum and Library Services, Survey of Public Libraries in the United States, Fiscal Year 2010.

applying the ratio to the state's Total Unduplicated Population of Legal Service Areas. (The latter item is a single, state-reported figure found in the Public Library State Summary/State Characteristics Data File; the variable is called POPU_UND in this file also.)

Paid Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE) Staff. Paid staff members were reported in FTEs (Table 17). To ensure comparable data, 40 hours was set as the measure of full-time employment (for example, 60 hours per week of part-time work by employees in a staff category, divided by the 40-hour measure, equals 1.50 FTEs). FTE data were reported to two decimal places (rounded to one decimal place in the tables).

Data Collection

The FY 2010 PLS was released to the states over the Internet on December 8, 2010. States were placed into one of three reporting groups (with survey due dates of April 13, August 3, or August 24, 2011), based on their fiscal cycles or claim of extraordinary reporting hardship. States reported their data over the Internet via a web-based reporting system called WebPLUS (Web Public Library Universe System). The Census Bureau (the data collection agent) developed WebPLUS. IMLS completed editing follow-up in November of 2011. The editing process is described in the *Editing* section below.

Editing

State level. The respondent generates an edit report following direct data entry or import of their data into WebPLUS. The edit report, which can be viewed on-screen or printed, is used to identify and correct any errors, and to confirm the accuracy of data that generated edit warnings, but required no change, before submitting the final file to the Census Bureau. In the FY 2010 PLS, four types of edit checks were performed:

1. *Relational edit checks.*
2. *Out-of-range edit checks.*
3. *Arithmetic edit checks.*
4. *Blank, zero, or invalid data edit checks.*

For more information on edit checks, see the PLS FY 2010 Data Documentation.

The WebPLUS application generates state summary tables (showing state totals for all numeric data items) and single-library tables (showing data for individual public libraries in a state). The application also generates state item response tables. Respondents were encouraged to review the tables for data quality issues before submitting their data to IMLS. State data submissions also included a signed form from the Chief Officer of the State Library Agency certifying the accuracy of the data.

National level. The Census Bureau and IMLS reviewed and edited the state data submissions, working closely with the PLS State Data Coordinators.

Imputation

Imputation is a procedure for estimating a value for a specific data item for which the response is missing. This section describes the imputation methods that were used to fill in the missing data items for the FY 2010 survey year. A total of 51 data items were imputed.

The responding and non-responding libraries were sorted into imputation cells based on OBE region code (Bureau of Economic Analysis region code, formerly Office of Business Economics) and the size of the population. Each state is assigned an OBE region code (e.g., 01- New England (CT ME MA NH RI VT)). The cumulative root frequency method was used to determine the imputation cells.

Imputations were performed for non-responding libraries using the data calculated from respondents in their imputation cells. Item imputation was performed on each record with nonresponsive variables. Following are descriptions of each imputation method¹ used for the Public Libraries Survey.

Imputations were performed in two stages. In the first stage, imputations were carried out for nearly all missing values using the following methods: prior year times mean growth rate, adjusted cell mean, cell mean, prior year ratio, cell median ratio, direct substitution of prior year data, cell median, and special imputations. In the second stage, imputed values were adjusted for some missing values (based on the variable) using the following methods: obtained value by relationship of total to detail items, ranking, special imputations, and consistency checks.

¹ For more information on cumulative root frequency method, see Cochran, W. (1977) *Sampling Techniques*, 3rd edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Non-sampling Errors

Because all units in the universe are surveyed, the data are not subject to sampling error, but they are subject to non-sampling errors, such as errors in response, nonresponse errors, coverage errors arising from an incomplete listing of public libraries, coding errors, or processing errors.

IMLS made every effort to mitigate such errors. The editing efforts described above are designed to decrease the number of errors due to inaccurate response or due to processing problems. Imputation lessens the effect of nonresponse. IMLS makes efforts to obtain complete listings of public libraries from the state library agencies. Despite these efforts,, some non-sampling error likely remains in the data.

Note: Errors in response to the audio and video downloadables were confirmed by some states. The data were incorrectly reported as ‘units’ instead of ‘titles’. The incorrect data for these states were deleted from the data files.

Caveats for Using the Data

The data include imputations, at the unit and item levels, for nonresponding libraries. See the *Imputation* section for a discussion of imputation methodology. Comparisons to data prior to FY 1992 should be made with caution, as earlier data do not include imputations for nonresponse, and the percentage of libraries responding to a given item varied widely among the states.

State data comparisons should be made with caution because of differences in reporting periods (see Table B-1) and adherence to survey definitions. The definitions used by some states in collecting data from their public libraries may not be consistent with the PLS definitions.

The District of Columbia, while not a state, is included in this report. Special care should be used in comparing data for a city to state data. Caution should also be used in comparing Hawaii’s data to other states, as all public library data are reported under one entity, the Hawaii State Public Library System.

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