2016/17

REPORT ON THE STATE OF LIBRARIES IN GERMANY

FACTS AND FIGURES

DEAR READER

Photo: German Library
Association / Jens Schlüter

The central aim of the German Library Association is to provide all citizens with access to the best possible library services.
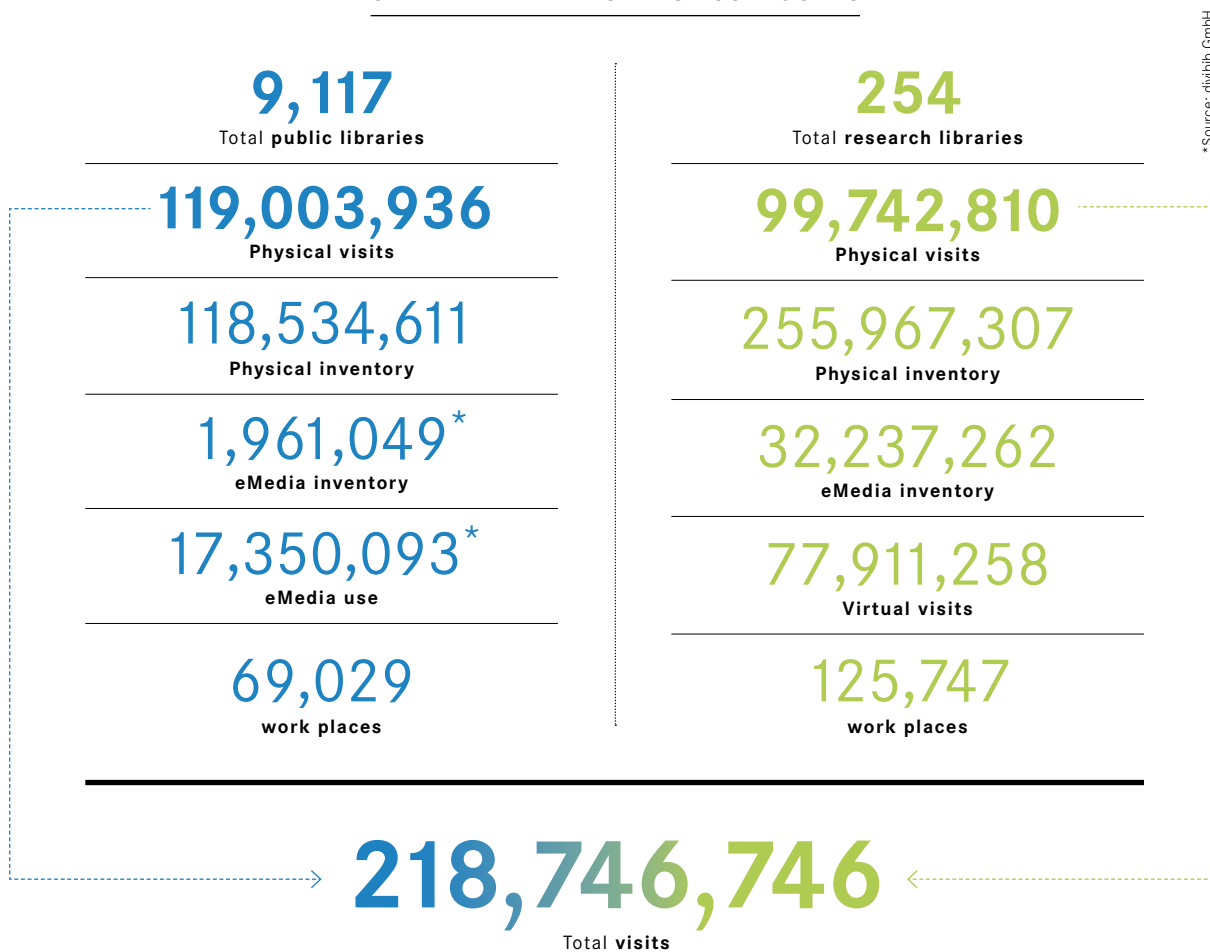
This can only be achieved if the legal and financial framework for the work of libraries is secured and optimised. The Association is committed to this, together with its over 2,100 members.

It campaigns for a contemporary cultural and educational landscape with modern, efficient libraries. For everyone. Political decisions are required to achieve this goal. This report highlights where there is a need for action.

Happy reading!

BARBARA LISON
Federal Chairwoman of the German Library Association

PUBLIC AND RESEARCH LIBRARIES **2015**
GERMAN LIBRARY STATISTICS FIGURES

*Source: divibib GmbH

9,117	**254**
Total **public libraries**	Total **research libraries**
119,003,936	**99,742,810**
Physical visits	**Physical visits**
118,534,611	255,967,307
Physical inventory	**Physical inventory**
1,961,049*	32,237,262
eMedia inventory	**eMedia inventory**
17,350,093*	77,911,258
eMedia use	**Virtual visits**
69,029	125,747
work places	**work places**

218,746,746
Total **visits**

LIBRARIES:
WHAT THE POLITICIANS SAY

DR. CLAUDIA BOGEDAN

President of the
Standing Conference of
the Ministers of Education
and Cultural Affairs

The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) is very aware of the importance of libraries as essential places of education and integration and as service providers to the modern knowledge society. In this regard, the states believe there is considerable potential in the online availability of (previously digitalised) cultural assets from museums, libraries, archives and media, which can be presented via special platforms and integrated into existing or future learning environments. Networking between the education sectors, including science and culture, can create new synergies. This not only refers to establishing the basic requirements for teaching and learning in an increasingly digital world, but also to understanding organisation-related standards that impact internal processes.

Copyright regulations are only effective if they allow greater choice of and improved access to content, meet the needs of research, education, cultural heritage and inclusion, and create fair and sustainable framework conditions for authors and the creative industry. The European Commission aims to achieve this with its latest proposals for modernising the EU copyright framework in light of digital transformation.

The new regulations for preserving our cultural heritage, regarding out-of-print works, text and data mining, teaching and formats for the visually impaired and those with reading difficulties will therefore help libraries perform their important and varied duties.

GÜNTHER OETTINGER

EU Commissioner for
Digital Economy and
Society

DR. HELGA TRÜPEL

Member of the European Parliament, Vice-Chair
of the Committee on Culture and Education,
Member of the Green/EFA Party

Libraries are essential public places in our towns and cities, providing us all with information, events and a variety of cultural services. They are important social areas and meeting places and contribute to social cohesion.

We need these physical meeting and information-sharing venues, especially in the digital world and especially for people with limited financial resources. At the same time, however, libraries must also be able to lend digital books that they have licensed and offer a selection of these. In light of the forthcoming reform of copyright law, a solution must therefore be found for libraries that secures their position as key stakeholders in analogue and digital cultural communications.

THE DBV CALLS FOR:

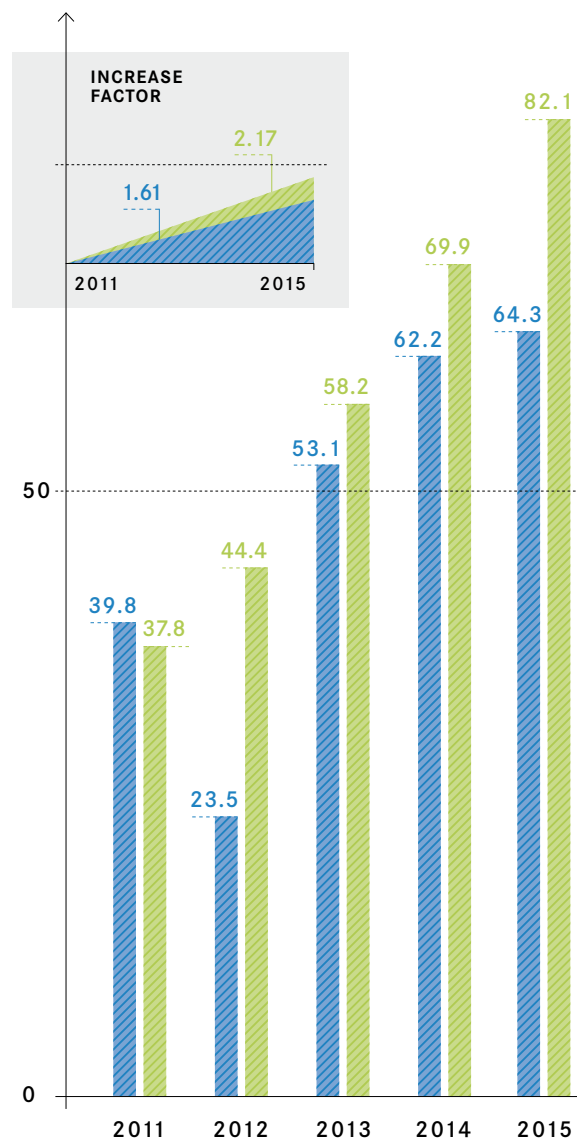# STRENGTHENING LIBRARIES AS KEY LOCATIONS WITHIN URBAN SOCIETY

Libraries are the heart of urban society: as public cultural venues with a large network of partners, they have an impact on the city, offering space for education, employment and leisure within their premises. They impart key skills for life in the digital society. Their educational and cultural services are open to all sections of the population. A forward-looking urban policy must therefore place the library at the centre of its municipal strategy and guarantee its funding.

Libraries ensure free access to information, thereby creating the basis both for social and cultural inclusion and the integration of all citizens. In times of unrestricted digital networking, more urban venues need direct personal communication. The library as an open learning establishment for exchanging ideas and collaborative working is therefore becoming even more important within the city. Growing visitor numbers prove that libraries are in greater demand than ever. With digital services and the promotion of reading, media and information literacy, city libraries contribute to cultural education and help bridge society's digital divide.

As establishments that are part of a local authority's so-called "voluntary responsibilities", libraries are not adequately protected. The local authorities are required to recognise the services of their urban development establishments and strategically develop these for the benefit of their citizens. The federal government, states and local authorities must jointly provide a contemporary public education infrastructure, including libraries. The guidelines adopted by the Association of German Cities, the Association of German Towns and Municipalities and the dbv in 2016 provide an excellent basis for this.

WEB 2.0 AND **WI-FI**
IN LIBRARIES IN COMMUNITIES
WITH OVER 50,000 RESIDENTS[*]

ALL FIGURES IN PER CENT

INCREASE FACTOR

2011 — 1.61 · 2015 — 2.17

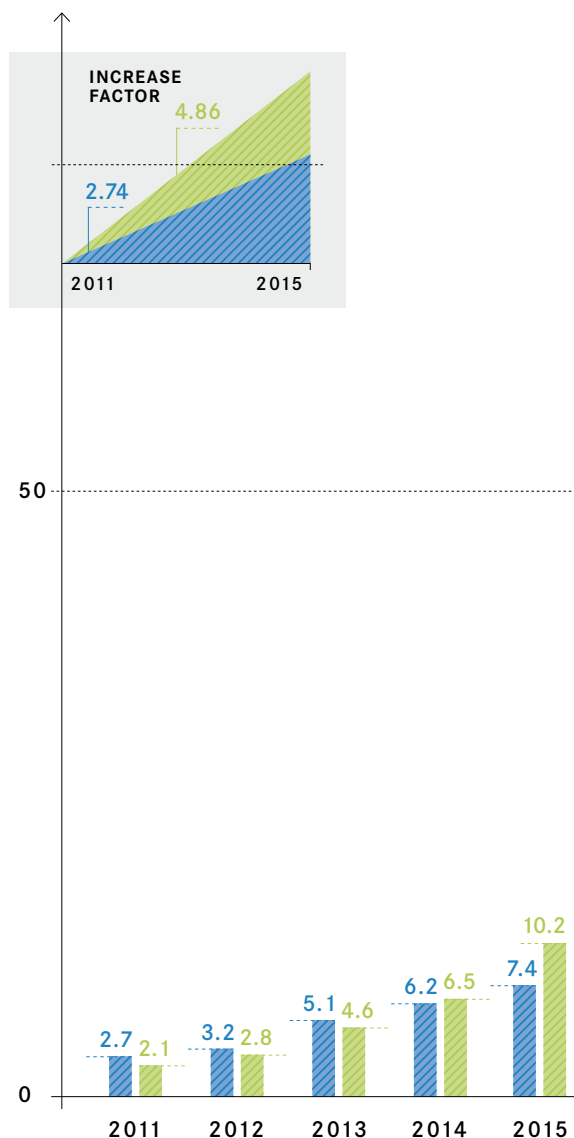|	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Web 2.0 (blue)	39.8	23.5	53.1	62.2	64.3
Wi-Fi (green)	37.8	44.4	58.2	69.9	82.1

THE DBV CALLS FOR:

SUPPORTING LIBRARIES IN RURAL AREAS AS PLACES FOR INNOVATION AND INTEGRATION

WEB 2.0 AND WI-FI
IN LIBRARIES IN COMMUNITIES
WITH UNDER 50,000 RESIDENTS*

ALL FIGURES IN PER CENT

INCREASE FACTOR

4.86

2.74

2011   2015

50

10.2

7.4

6.2   6.5

5.1   4.6

3.2   2.8

2.7   2.1

0

2011   2012   2013   2014   2015

*Source: German Library Statistics, 2015
**Source: Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture

The transformation of rural areas in Germany is profound. Around 90 per cent of Germany is made up of rural areas. More than half its population lives in villages, municipalities and rural cities**, where the consequences of demographic transformation are particularly noticeable, including the ageing, reduction and globalisation of the population. When designing the necessary changes, libraries often play a crucial role as one of the last remaining local cultural and educational establishments.

Beyond municipal boundaries, regional and local decision-makers must agree what role the library should play in the creation of equal urban and rural living conditions in the respective region. Libraries can become vibrant residents' centres in order to meet the challenges of rural areas. Their recreational qualities are crucial and must continue to be improved.

Libraries must be in a position to be able to better fulfil their role as professional digital education cooperation partners with schools, nurseries and other local stakeholders. Libraries are adapting their services, in order to maintain and extend their social relevance in rural areas. However, the successful development of online services is largely dependent on the framework conditions under which libraries operate. In particular, there is a lack of modern basic technical equipment, Internet access and Wi-Fi. They therefore require structural and financial support from the federal government, states governments, local authorities and also among others, in order to ensure their connection to fast, reliable data networks. The guidelines adopted by the Association of German Cities, the Association of German Towns and Municipalities and the dbv in 2016 explain the necessary next steps.

THE DBV CALLS FOR:

PRESERVATION OF OUR CULTURAL ASSETS IS A NATIONAL TASK

Photo: JF Mueller

The written records in Germany's archives and libraries commemorate its cultural heritage. But millions of valuable originals are at risk of deterioration by factors such as acidic paper and insufficient storage. The Coordination Office for the Preservation of the Written Cultural Heritage (KEK) is rightly calling for the protection of this heritage to be considered a joint federal government and states task. The stakeholders must be connected and appropriate resources and staff provided.

Back in 2009, the "Alliance for the Preservation of the Written Cultural Heritage" referred to the enormous challenges faced by archives and libraries when preserving their inventories. The Coordination Office subsequently established by politicians states that 1.8 million shelf meters of archive papers and around 9 million library volumes should be protected against gradual deterioration as a matter of priority. In order to be able to handle at least one per cent of the endangered cultural assets per year, however, an additional EUR 63.2 million would have to be spent. Digitalisation cannot replace the preservation of valuable originals.

The German Library Association explicitly supports the KEK's recommendations for national action made in October 2015: the federal government and states must agree a common funding programme. The preservation of our cultural heritage cannot remain the task of individual libraries and archives. At a national level, the strategically supported sharing of experience, appropriate coordination and better division of labour for specialised procedures would create significant synergies when preserving inventories.

THE DBV CALLS FOR:

SUSTAINABLE FUNDING FOR INFORMATION INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE HUMANITIES

As a young, interdisciplinary area of the humanities and cultural sciences, "digital humanities" has huge potential. Not only are the research subjects changing, but also the methods. Typical work and research fields include digital editions of books, quantitative text analyses and the visualisation of data structures. Libraries are providing new services for this, in collaboration with researchers and computer scientists.

Many universities and their libraries are currently developing new centres, associations and cooperative relationships. A large number of new research centres are being established in the field of "digital humanities".

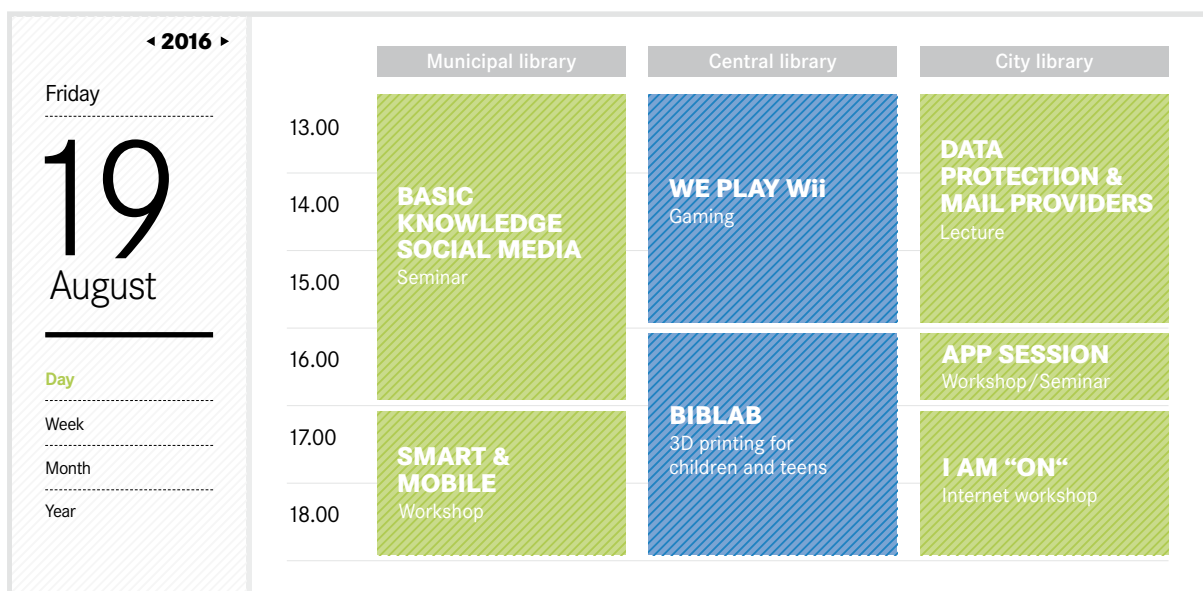In order to be able to exploit the synergies of the digital humanities, even closer collaboration is needed between libraries and university computer centres, as well as researchers, colleges, states, the federal government, funding agencies and scientific organisations. Computer centres provide data storage expertise and libraries their knowledge of audit and retrieval. Libraries can help with the creation of data management plans, advise on the selection of specialist repositories, provide long-term archiving and support publication processes.

There is currently a lack of sustainable funding for this new information infrastructure for the humanities – at a national and regional level. In particular, investment must be made in high-quality digitalisation and retro-digitalisation by specialist staff and state-of-the-art technology, and in the development of the necessary social and technical infrastructure in libraries, in addition to the fundamentals of research work. Libraries must also be regarded as part of the national digital strategy.

THE DBV CALLS FOR:

LIBRARIES MUST BE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE DIGITAL STRATEGIES OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND STATES

	◂ 2016 ▸		Municipal library	Central library	City library
Friday		13.00	**BASIC KNOWLEDGE SOCIAL MEDIA** Seminar	**WE PLAY Wii** Gaming	**DATA PROTECTION & MAIL PROVIDERS** Lecture
19 August		14.00			
		15.00			
Day		16.00		**BIBLAB** 3D printing for children and teens	**APP SESSION** Workshop / Seminar
Week		17.00	**SMART & MOBILE** Workshop		**I AM "ON"** Internet workshop
Month					
Year		18.00			

Digital transformation has become one of the key organisational tasks for business, science, society and politics. The federal government and states also want to intensify their digital transformation activities in education. Libraries already play a major role in the societal task of shaping the framework conditions for digital transformation and increasing social inclusion in the digital world.

As part of its digital agenda, the federal government is developing a digital learning strategy, together with the federal states and other stakeholders in the education system. The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs is also planning to draw up a comprehensive strategy for education in the digital world.

As the most visited educational and cultural establishments, libraries – with their broad educational mandate – help ensure the social inclusion of all citizens, and believe the provision of digital education to be a key objective. Thanks to their various digital services, such as providing content or promoting media and information literacy to all generations and all sections of the population, libraries provide access to and guidance with digital knowledge, can therefore reduce the digital divide among the population and provide considerable assistance with qualification requirements in the workplace.

Libraries are educational and cultural establishments that are open and freely accessible to the entire population, especially in the digital age. They should therefore be included as an integral part of digital strategies, both at a national and state level.

THE DBV CALLS FOR:

INCLUSION OF LIBRARIES IN NATIONAL, STATE AND MUNICIPAL INTEGRATION PLANS

Libraries support the cities, municipalities and states with the integration of refugees, by providing a variety of specially designed education services for this target group.

Be it a small municipal or large city library – Germany's public libraries are supporting the successful everyday integration of refugees and asylum seekers, with their extensive range of specialised projects, events, language courses and self-study media and materials. They help refugee children learn German, for instance, with suitable language and movement games and the reading of books. They organise discussion groups, at which refugees can establish contacts, improve their language skills and use a wide range of media services in various languages.

Many research libraries are also involved in this important area, offering programmes for refugee academics, current and potential students that provide free access to scientific resources and work stations in the library. They are entitled to free library and Internet use and can borrow self-study courses in German, for example. English-language information and advice services and "welcome shelves" with dictionaries in various languages are also available. Research libraries also help refugees prepare their applications to study in Germany.

In order to continue to provide these library services and be able to expand and organise them in collaboration with the states and local authorities, libraries should be included in national, state and municipal integration plans.

THE DBV CALLS FOR:

AN END TO AUSTERITY MEASURES! AND THE REINFORCEMENT OF LIBRAR- IES AS CULTURAL MEETING PLACES

IMPACT OF THE FUNDING SITUATION
ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICES

ALL FIGURES IN PER CENT

35.9

state that the provi-
sion and expansion
of digital services is
not possible with the
existing budget.

42.4

need additional funds
in order to provide
educational services
for target groups with
special needs (the
educationally disad-
vantaged, pensioners,
people with disabili-
ties, etc.).

Libraries are key institutions in the coordination system of changing urban society and perform vital work as cultural establishments and meeting places, especially in rural areas. But due to their lack of financial resources and a frequent lack of strategic integration within municipalities, their role is further weakened. This year, the German Library Association's financial survey of around 1,350 public libraries shows that only limited basic services and opportunities can be provided in many libraries, due to a lack of funds.

After years of austerity measures, libraries still have inadequate financial resources in 2016: despite growing demands and additional tasks as a result of digital developments and the integration of refugees, the important work of libraries remains under-funded, even though it is indispensable for the cultural and social inclusion of many people. And this trend is set to continue, despite high visitor numbers and record tax revenues.

As last year, around a quarter of the libraries surveyed are affected by budgetary consolidation measures, and almost a further 11 % are planning these. In cities with over 100,000 residents, the situation is even more strained: around 48 % are implementing appropriate measures, and almost 27 % are planning to do so. 21 % of respondents are subject to a global spending freeze, and in metropolitan cities, this figure is even 39 %.
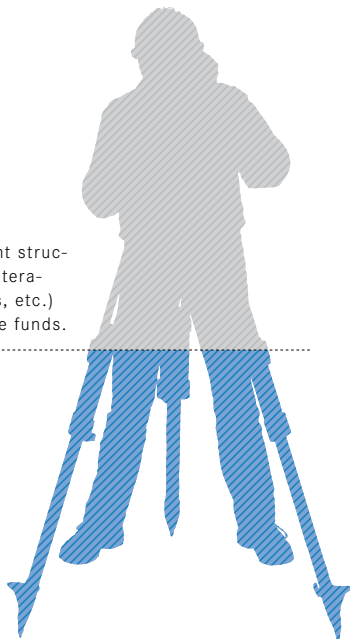
Instead of being able to expand urgently required services to encourage reading and promote media and information literacy, libraries are having to restrict their activities: a fifth of all libraries are having to reduce their services accordingly as a result of austerity measures. In order to

IMPACT OF THE FUNDING SITUATION
ON INVESTMENT AND FUTURE PROJECTS

ALL FIGURES IN PER CENT

IMPACT OF THE FUNDING SITUATION
ON STAFF DEVELOPMENT

ALL FIGURES IN PER CENT

46.1

cannot implement structural projects (alterations, new builds, etc.) with the available funds.
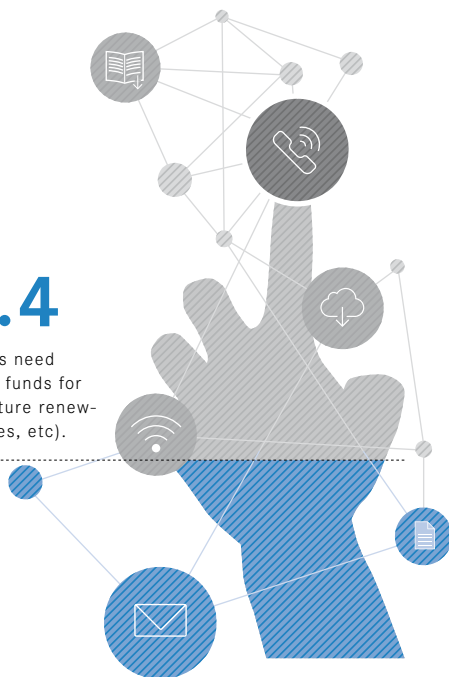
48.1

of libraries need additional funds for staff recruitment.

Source: dbv Members' Survey, 2016

47.4

of libraries need additional funds for infrastructure renewal (facilities, etc).

be able to respond to the changing task profile of libraries and technical transformation, while maintaining high service quality, libraries need funding for the systematic, continuous training of existing staff and the opportunity to be able to appoint additional qualified staff – including from areas such as media education and computer science. Around 48 % of libraries state that they require additional funds for HR.

In order to be able to support our society's educational opportunities and cultural cohesion in future, our library services must be able to deliver their full potential. This requires them to be appropriately integrated into the educational and cultural policy strategies of our local authorities, as well as innovation-promoting funding commensurate with their tasks. The effectiveness of libraries as voluntary municipal services is particularly at risk, especially in municipalities with emergency budgets.