Survey Impact COVID-19

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CONFERENCE OF DIRECTORS OF NATIONAL LIBRARIES

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KB, National Library of the Netherlands,

On behalf of CDNL, in cooperation with IFLA

April 2020

General Summary

The situation National Libraries (NL's) are facing due to the COVID-19 pandemic is unprecedented. National Librarians worry about staff and patron health, about their funding, and about their business continuity. In addition, a moment of crisis calls for and is met by great creativity, also among NL's: digital services (sometimes new and/or expended) are rolled out rapidly, as are initiatives for staff development (through online courses and/or webinars). To give more insight into these concerns and chances, the KB (the National Library of the Netherlands) – requested by CDNL (currently chaired by dr. Lily Knibbeler, general director of the KB) and in collaboration with IFLA's Standing Committee for National Libraries – conducted a survey among NL's; this report presents the outcome of that survey.
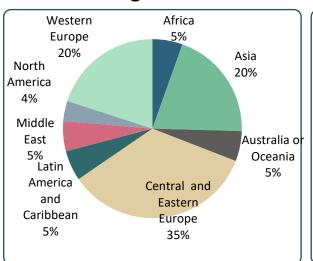
In this report, one will find:
- More details on the respondents. Good to know: 55 NL's in 53 countries all over the world have responded to the survey.
- Insight in how NL's responded to the COVID-19 outbreak and the impact it had on their organisations.
- The most mentioned challenges the pandemic causes for NL's now and in the forseeable future.
- Interesting and working examples of (esp. online or distant) services still provided, although virtually all NL's closed their premises.

About the survey: the survey was conducted between March 31 and April 9 (2020). Changes since then in situations and/or national requirements/regulations have not been taken into account. If you would like to amend your situation, or participate in the survey as well (for example to share your concerns and best practices), please feel free to contact us at cdnl@kb.nl. We intend to conduct a follow-up survey in the near future. If you would like to discuss challenges or best practices with colleagues whose contact details you don't have yet, let us know.
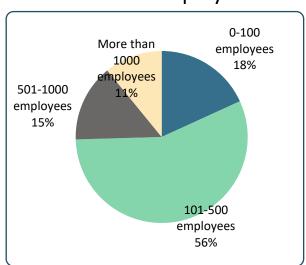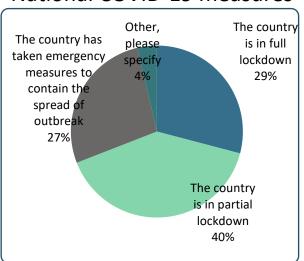
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About the respondents

Region

- Western Europe 20%
- Africa 5%
- Asia 20%
- North America 4%
- Middle East 5%
- Latin America and Caribbean 5%
- Central and Eastern Europe 35%
- Australia or Oceania 5%

Number of employees

- More than 1000 employees 11%
- 0-100 employees 18%
- 501-1000 employees 15%
- 101-500 employees 56%

National COVID-19 measures

- The country has taken emergency measures to contain the spread of outbreak 27%
- Other, please specify 4%
- The country is in full lockdown 29%
- The country is in partial lockdown 40%

Summary

55 NL's have responded to the survey until 9 April. All respondents are located in 53 countries all over the world. Among the respondents 19 NL's are located in Central and Eastern Europe, 11 in Western Europe, 11 in Asia, 3 in Africa, 3 in Latin America and Caribbean, 3 in Middle East, 3 in Australia or Oceania and 2 in North America.

40% of responding libraries (22) is located in countries with partial lockdown, 29% of the responding libraries (16) stated their country is in full lockdown, 27% of responding libraries (15) is located in countries that have taken emergency measures to contain the spread of outbreak.

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The National Libraries are open/closed

To the patrons

- 85% of the libraries is fully closed to the patrons

- 10% of the libraries is partially closed, or open with restrictive measures, e.g.
  - Chairs set apart 1 m. and restricted number of patrons allowed in the reading rooms
  - Contact free pick-up points for requested publications

To the employees

- 65% of the libraries partial or fully closed the offices

- Only 1 library has a fully opened office

- In all other cases restrictive measures are taken, e.g.
  - Employees work remotely/from home
  - Only a small home lending unit works in the library
  - Only designated staff is present (security, finance, cleaning)
  - Only closed, basic teams come to the library

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Arrangements taken by the National Libraries in response to the COVID-19 outbreak

Overview of Arrangements

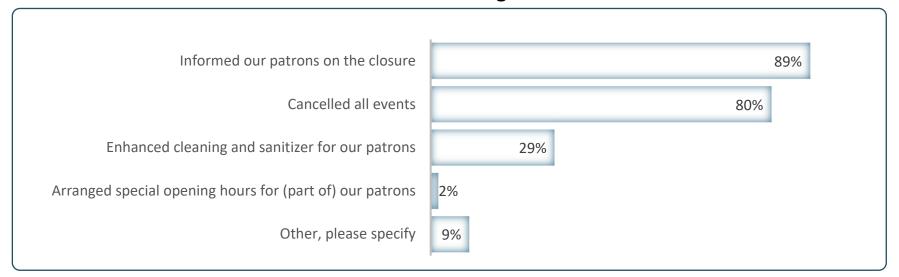| Arrangement	Percentage
Cancelled all international travels	95%
Provide "work from home" facilities	87%
Cancelled all domestic travels	73%
Self-quarantine for employees	58%
Disseminated protective gear for employees	58%
Arranged special flexible working hours	53%
Implemented a shift schedule to rotate staff	53%
Addressed employee's psychological stress	38%
Arranged for temperature checks in the workplace	36%
Cancelled only non-essential travel	20%
Subisidies for internet expenses	16%
Other, please specify	20%

Other, e.g.

- Appealed to staff members to work in physical distance of about 2m.
- All staff must stay at home for four weeks
- Implemented additional sanitation arrangements including regular sterilization of work surfaces, door handles and switches

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Arrangements taken by the National Libraries for their on-site public services

Overview of Arrangements

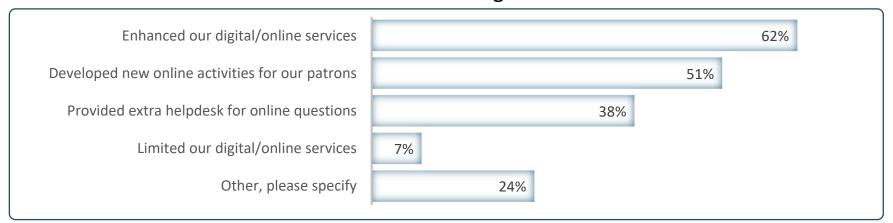| Arrangement	Percentage
Informed our patrons on the closure	89%
Cancelled all events	80%
Enhanced cleaning and sanitizer for our patrons	29%
Arranged special opening hours for (part of) our patrons	2%
Other, please specify	9%

Other, e.g.

- Patron can order books and fetch them at specific hours at a specific door. Otherwise we digitize and send
- We have placed chairs at 1 m. apart and we have restricted the numbers going into the reading rooms
- All non-essential services are closed

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Arrangements taken by the National Libraries for their digital/online services

Overview of Arrangements

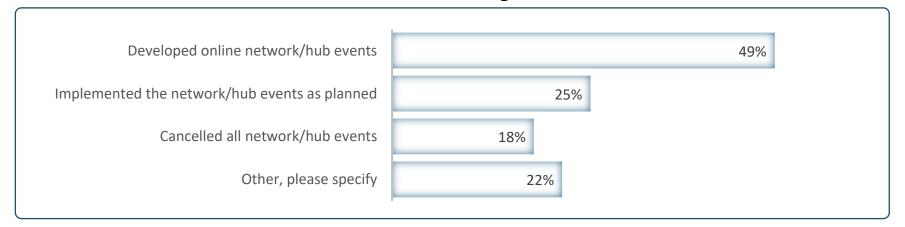| Arrangement	Percentage
Enhanced our digital/online services	62%
Developed new online activities for our patrons	51%
Provided extra helpdesk for online questions	38%
Limited our digital/online services	7%
Other, please specify	24%

Other, e.g.

- Special help page on the National Library-web for the library community
- Promoting existing digital/online services
- Providing all digital resources free online for our patrons
- Downloading e-newspapers available as no printed newspapers are available during this partial lock down
- Offering suggested reads on Facebook page
- Working closely with our Government IT to provide digital services

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Arrangements taken by the National Libraries for their network/hub function

Overview of Arrangements

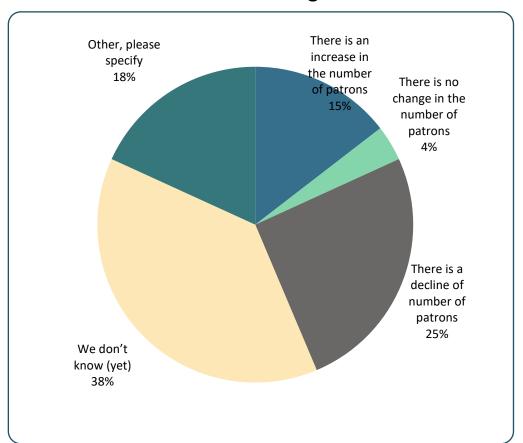| Arrangement	Percentage
Developed online network/hub events	49%
Implemented the network/hub events as planned	25%
Cancelled all network/hub events	18%
Other, please specify	22%

Other, e.g.

- All planned events (like seminars, courses, meeting) for the library network where cancelled, but our library specialists are still working with colleagues from other libraries via emails, phone calls, etc.
- Online cooperation is being carried out as normal (e.g. union catalogue)
- We cooperate with and provide methodical support for all libraries in country. All meetings are cancelled, but communication goes online, guidelines and presentations for library professionals are provided. Interlibrary loan service is provided

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What is the impact of measures to the number of library patrons?

Overview of Arrangements

Pie chart:
- Other, please specify 18%
- There is an increase in the number of patrons 15%
- There is no change in the number of patrons 4%
- There is a decline of number of patrons 25%
- We don't know (yet) 38%

A general observation is that there is a decline in the onsite patrons (as the libraries are closed), but an increase in online patrons, e.g. website visits, use of online services and social media.

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Financial overview

Liquidity concerns	Almost 75% of the National Libraries is (slightly or more) concerned about the liquidity of the institution, due to the COVID-19 crisis
Government support granted	20% of the libraries grants financial support from the government if needed, 10% doesn't. 70% doesn't know (yet)
Government support shortened	50% of the libraries believes the government will shorten the financial support due to the crisis, 50% believes they won't

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Alternative activities or services as response to the COVID-19 crisis

80% of the respondents have developed or have plans to develop alternative activities as a response to the COVID-19 crisis:

For patrons, e.g.	For employees, e.g.
• Educational training platforms • Read me a book campaign for kids • Online lessons for children and teenagers • Online lessons about COVID-19 • Open access to online periodicals • Digital reading rooms • Virtual tours • Live streamed talks of librarians • Cultural programs	• Professional development opportunities • Home working guidance • Web conferences/online meetings

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Main concerns about the COVID-19 crisis for National Libraries

1 Staff health/employability, including 'single point of failure' (very limited number of employees with certain knowledge or skills)

2 Funding/budget cuts & effect on strategy ('I won't be able to digitize, as this is an 'extra' for my government')

3 At large: working in a context where the economy crashes completely and all the challenges this brings

4 Significant loss of patrons and/or the ability & willingness of patrons to visit us

5 Remote work / Work from home
1. Quality
2. (Weakening of) working relationships
3. Concerns about things that have to take place physically, e.g. acquisition

6 How to scientifically carry out disinfection and cleaning of the space and circulation items in the library

7 Uncertainty: how long will this (and: what?) last, what will the world look like after this, will it come back next year

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Best Practices: Library related

Arrangements taken for the organization of the library

Sweden	Appoint, train and maintain an agile crises organization that can function in unexpected situations
Macedonia	Request internet companies, water, heating companies to shorten bills to avoid liquidity

Arrangements taken for the public services of the library

Estonia	Home lending via automated parcel service covering the entire country
Poland	Recommendation for treatment and quarantining books returning to libraries after the pandemic ends

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Best Practices: Library related (2)

Arrangements taken for the digital/online library services

Iceland	Most of our e-materials is open to the public
United Kingdom	Guidance on home learning, online courses
Philippines	Online storytelling, online learning modules for public libraries
Indonesia	Creating online services that can be downloaded from the cellphone
China	Online reading such as "family reading contest" activity
Sri Lanka	Downloading e-newspapers as no printed newspapers are available during the lock down
The Netherlands	Various online initiatives, like the ThuisBieb-app (Home Library app) which contains over a hundred free ebooks, the national campaign #ikleesthuis (#Ireadathome) which makes the Dutch people aware of the pleasure of reading. Launch of a ten-part series of Storytime sessions for children, called 'Huisarrest' (Being grounded). Audio books (all ages) are available in the LuisterBieb app. One hundred extra audio books have been temporarily added to the audio book app and have been made available free of charge to the public also to those without a membership

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Best Practices: Health related

Singapore	Learning package on mobile app where people could learn through videos, websites and journals, etc. on pandemics as well as on mental wellbeing
Lithuania	Started coordinating the production of 3D printed protective face shields in Lithuanian libraries in cooperation with the Robotics School
Switzerland	The local cultural institutions donated 10,000 gloves, 200 masks, 80 protective sets and 40 protective suits to the hospital
Korea	By establishing COVID-19 disaster archive, the library is collecting and providing web materials on the outbreak, spread, efforts to contain the spread and medical/scientific/social/economic aspect of COVID-19
China	Provide information and reference services for legislative decision-making agencies on epidemic prevention and control, and conduct special research around topics such as public safety system construction, public health agency emergency capabilities, national strategic material reserve systems, boosting economic development, and international epidemic response cooperation
Qatar	Subject guide with reliable resources about the virus on the website of the National Library

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