Survey Impact COVID-19
Reopening the library

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KB|National Library of the Netherlands,

On behalf of CDNL
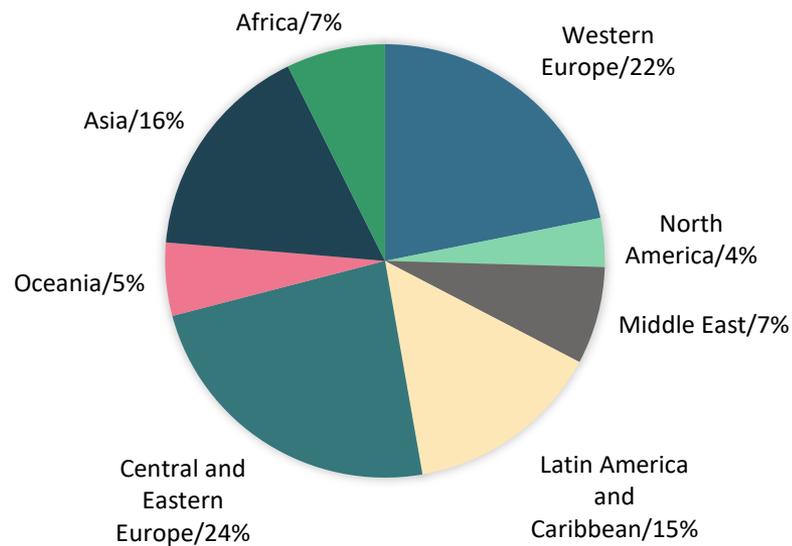
June 2020

General Summary

Summary

During the COVID crisis, National Libraries (NL) make maximum use of digital opportunities: both for patrons (by providing and expanding services) and for employees (by enabling and optimizing teleworking options). Regarding the resumption of physical services, NL are concerned with health, the availability of resources to monitor that health and they are considering ways to better regulate visits to their buildings. All in all, National Libraries succeed in ensuring their business continuity during an unprecedented global crisis.

As a follow-up to our earlier survey on COVID-related challenges for National Libraries, CDNL and IFLA have once again asked the KB (national library of the Netherlands) to conduct a survey. The focus of this 'Reopening the Library' survey was on the next phase; no longer absorbing the first shock, but rather dealing with it.
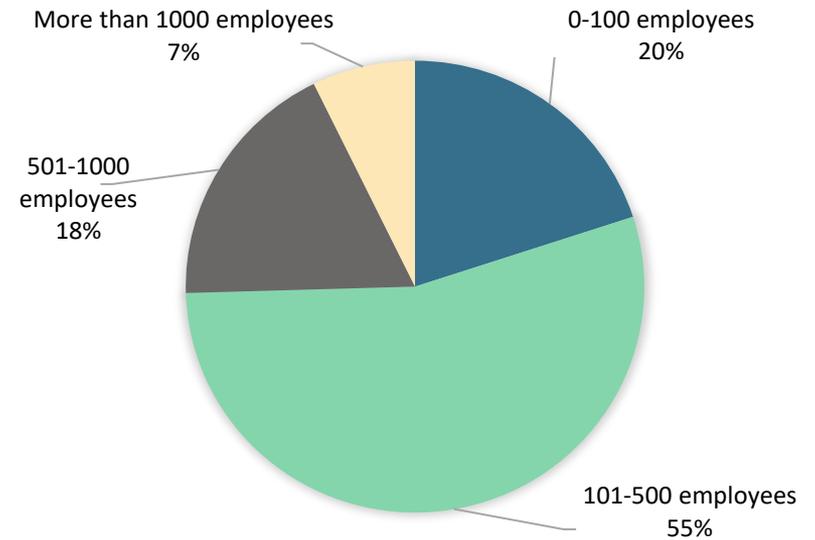
About the survey: the survey was conducted between May 29 and June 10 (2020). Changes since then in situations and/or national requirements/regulations have not been taken into account. If you would like to amend your situation, or participate in the survey as well (for example to share your concerns and best practices), please feel free to contact us at cdnl@kb.nl. We intend to conduct a follow-up survey later this year. 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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55 National Libraries responded to the survey

Region

- Africa/7%
- Western Europe/22%
- Asia/16%
- North America/4%
- Oceania/5%
- Middle East/7%
- Central and Eastern Europe/24%
- Latin America and Caribbean/15%

Size of workforce

- More than 1000 employees 7%
- 0-100 employees 20%
- 501-1000 employees 18%
- 101-500 employees 55%
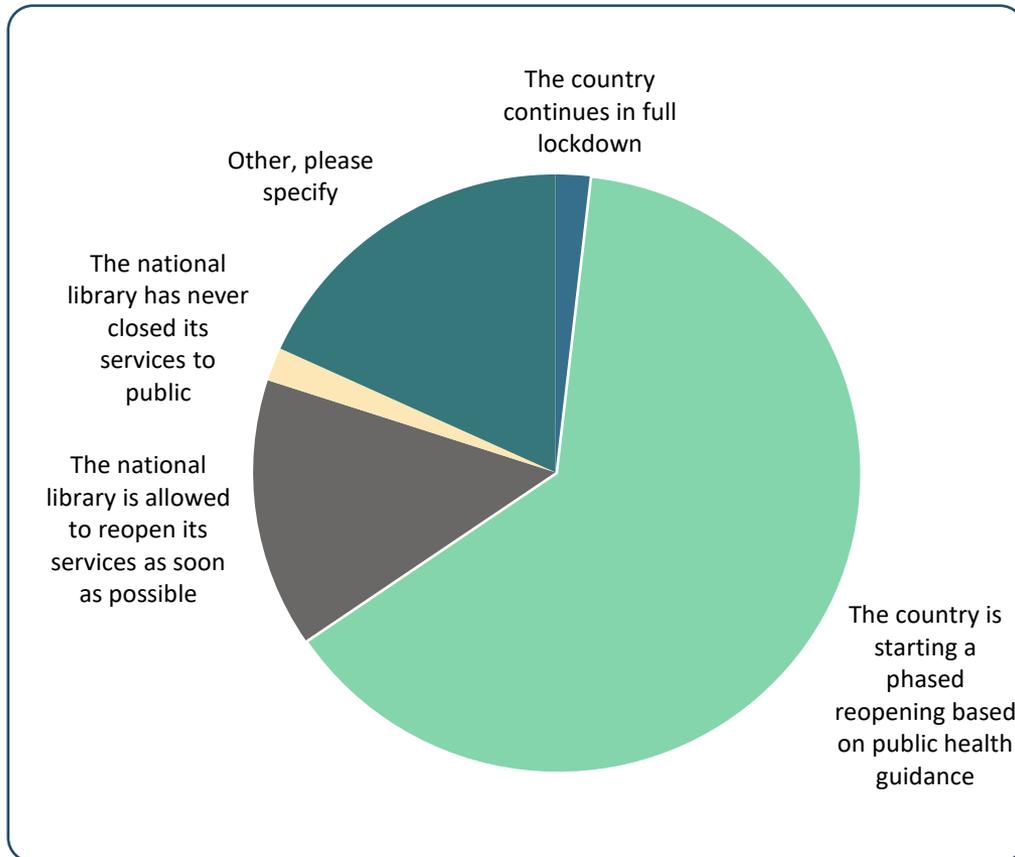
Current situation in the country regarding the measures that have been taken to contain the COVID-19 outbreak

The country
continues in full
lockdown

Other, please
specify

The national
library has never
closed its
services to
public

The national
library is allowed
to reopen its
services as soon
as possible

The country is
starting a
phased
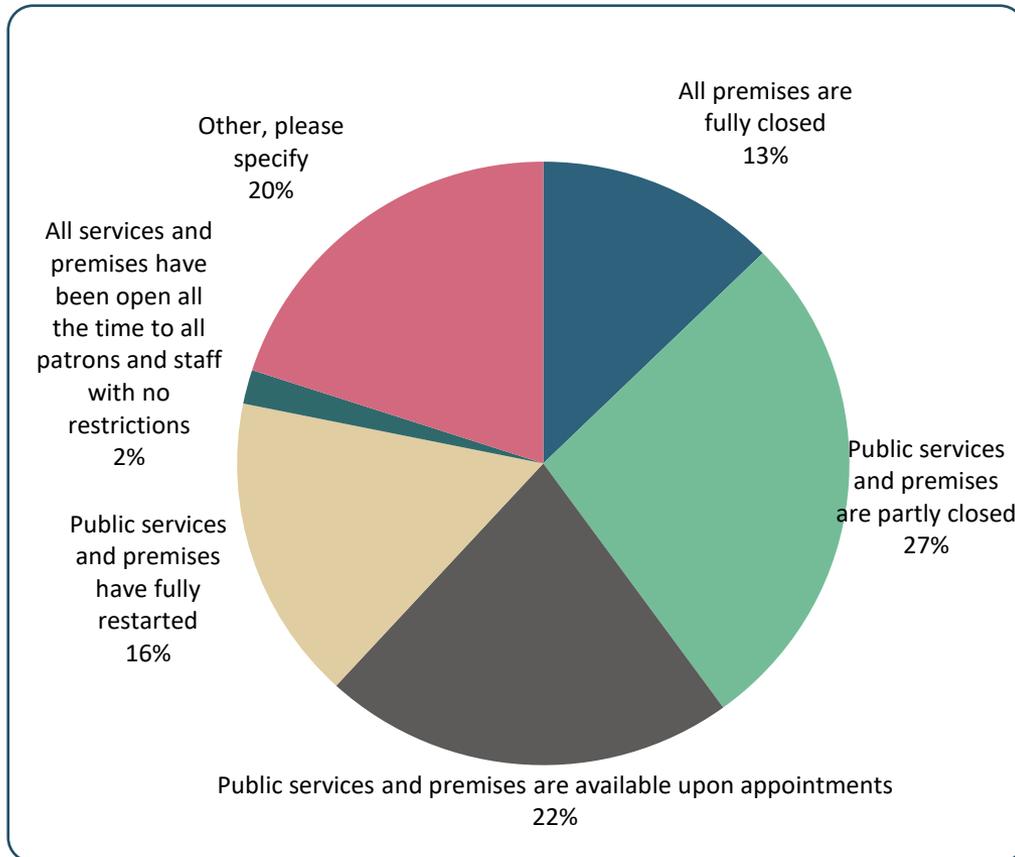reopening based
on public health
guidance

64% (35) of the respondents is starting a phased reopening of the library, and 15% (8) will open as soon as possible.

1 library in Western Europe states the country is still in full lockdown, as is the library.

From the 10 libraries that stated "other", half is already opened after the lockdown, the other half remains closed.

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Current situation of the public services and premises of the National Library

All premises are fully closed — 13%

Public services and premises are partly closed — 27%

Public services and premises are available upon appointments — 22%

Public services and premises have fully restarted — 16%

All services and premises have been open all the time to all patrons and staff with no restrictions — 2%
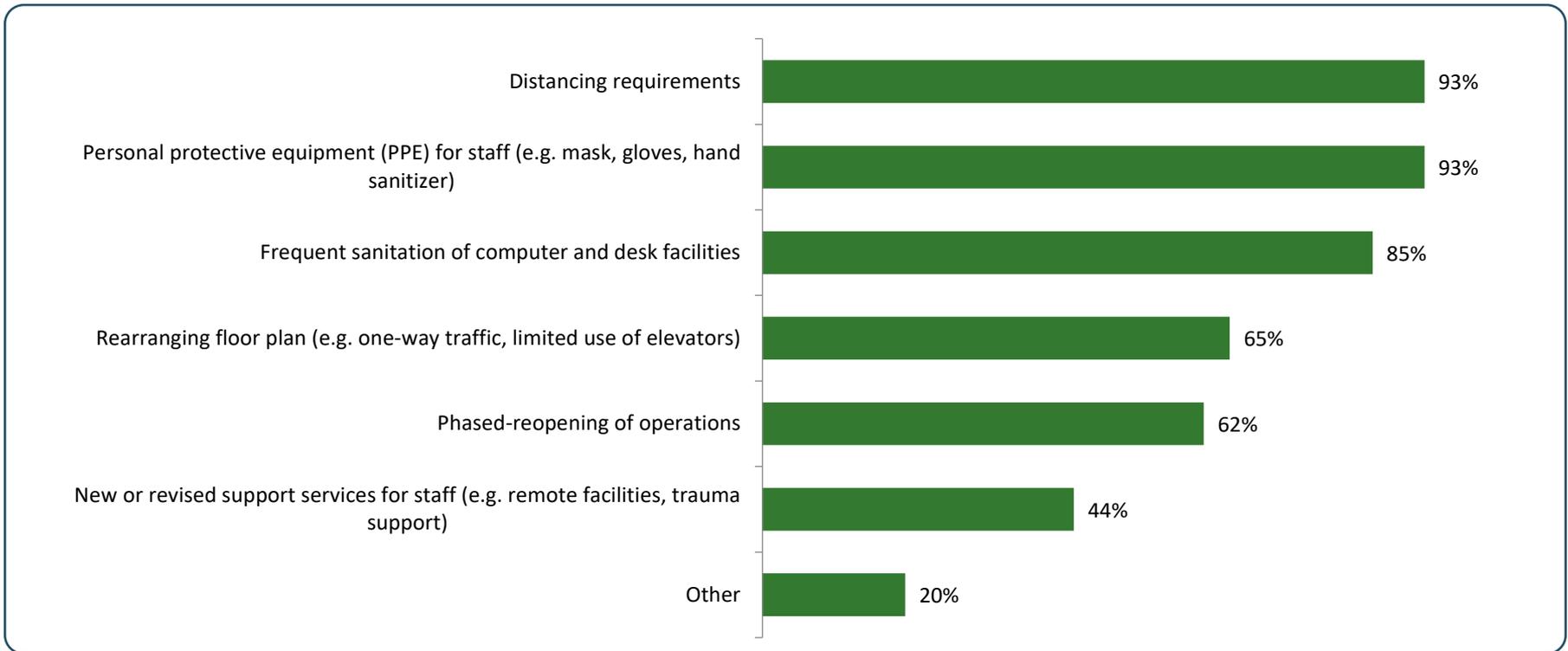
Other, please specify — 20%

40% of the libraries are open again (mainly in Europe), half of them only upon appointment.

40% of the libraries have premises that are still fully or partially closed, mainly in Central and Latin America.

1 library (in Asia) stayed open the whole time during the crisis.

20% of the libraries stated "Other". In various cases the premises are open (to staff), but the public services are still closed. Where the public services are open, there are various restrictions.
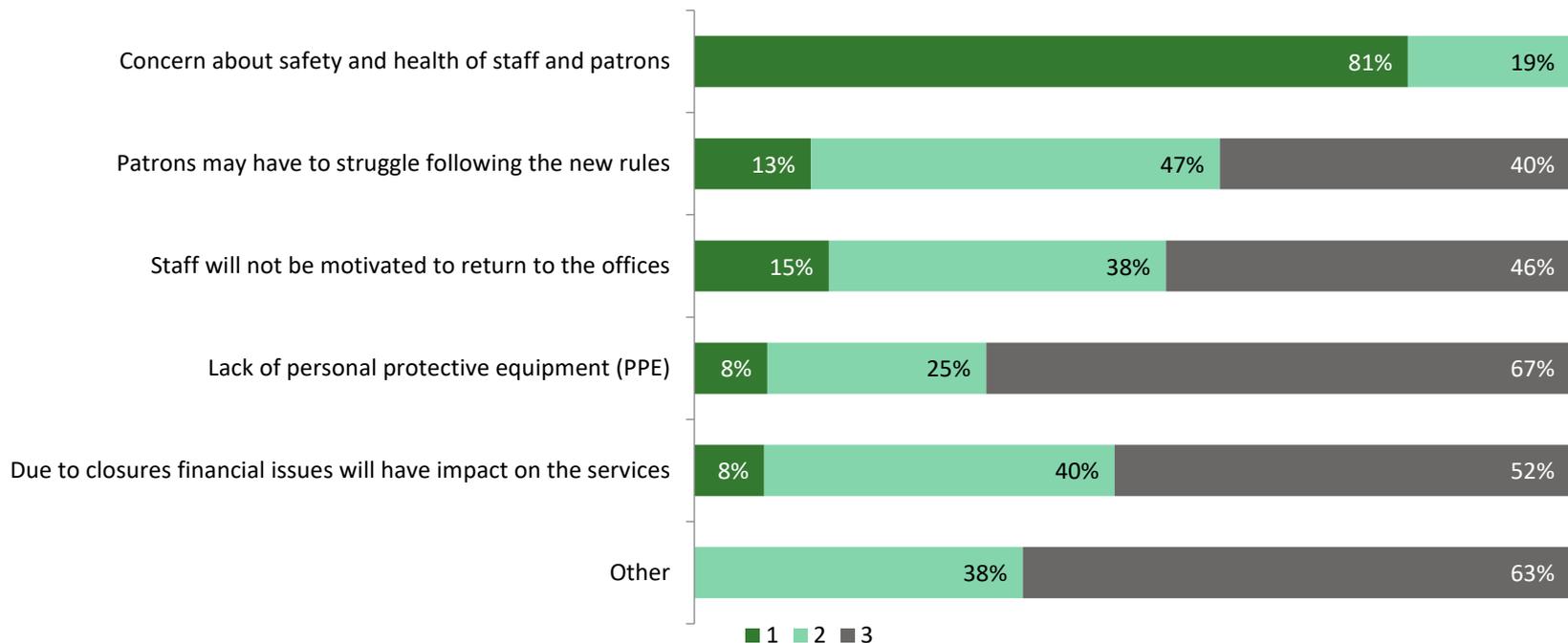
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Measures that will be/are in place in the building when opening the offices to your staff

Measure	Percentage
Distancing requirements	93%
Personal protective equipment (PPE) for staff (e.g. mask, gloves, hand sanitizer)	93%
Frequent sanitation of computer and desk facilities	85%
Rearranging floor plan (e.g. one-way traffic, limited use of elevators)	65%
Phased-reopening of operations	62%
New or revised support services for staff (e.g. remote facilities, trauma support)	44%
Other	20%

Other, e.g.

- 2 National Libraries (1 from Asia, 1 from Europe) are planning to work with temperature screening before entering the library.
- In most cases staff will continue to work from home. When on the premises, there are restrictions for example on the number of people and hours of the working day in each office.

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Biggest challenges in reopening successfully

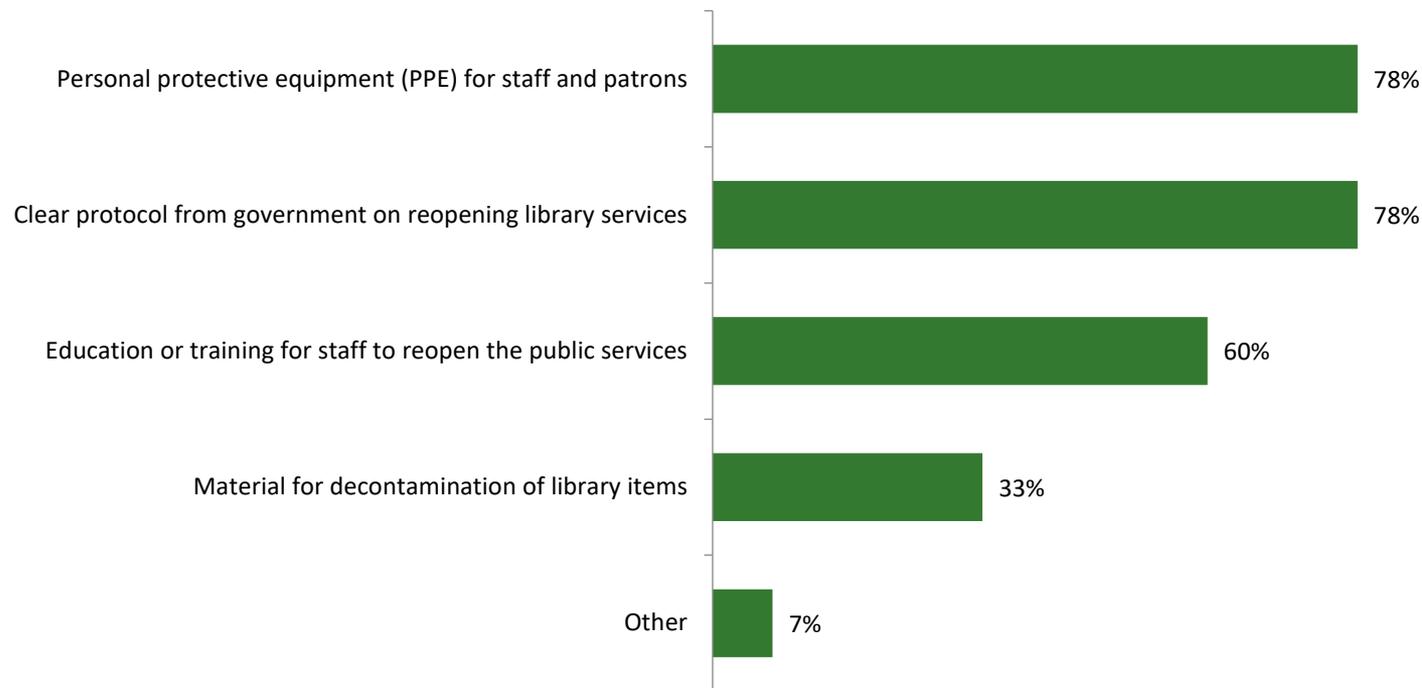| Challenge	1	2	3
Concern about safety and health of staff and patrons	81%	19%	
Patrons may have to struggle following the new rules	13%	47%	40%
Staff will not be motivated to return to the offices	15%	38%	46%
Lack of personal protective equipment (PPE)	8%	25%	67%
Due to closures financial issues will have impact on the services	8%	40%	52%
Other		38%	63%

■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3

The main concern for almost all libraries is about safety and health.

1 National Library from Western Europe has concerns about staff vacations on public services.
1 National Library from Central Europe doesn't expect any challenges in reopening.

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Resources needed for reopening successfully

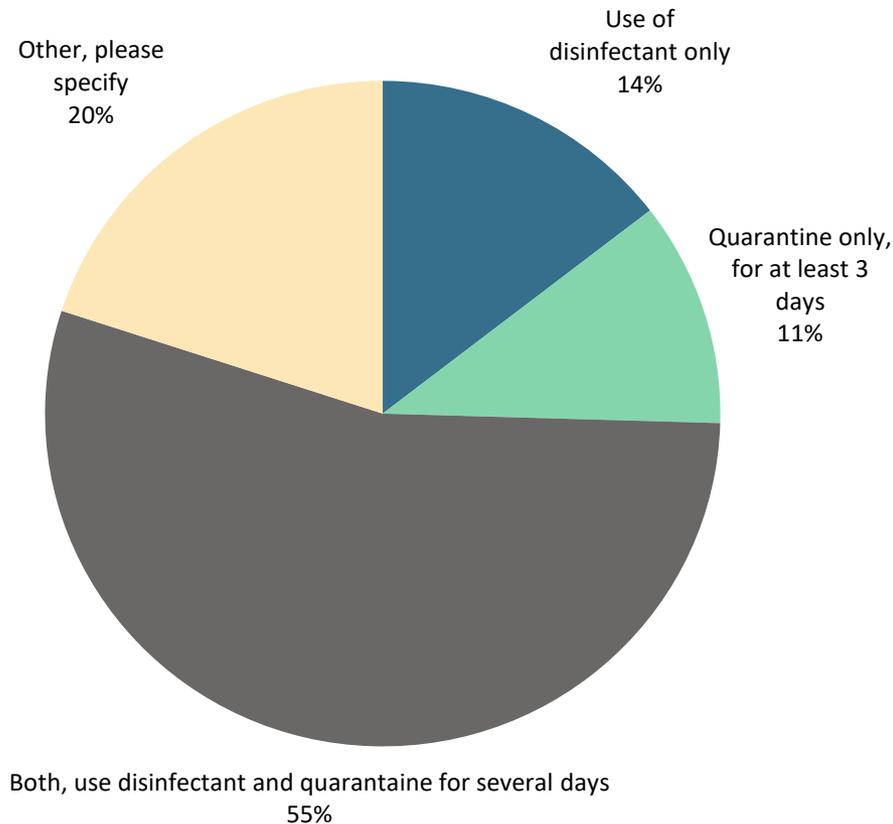|	
Personal protective equipment (PPE) for staff and patrons	78%
Clear protocol from government on reopening library services	78%
Education or training for staff to reopen the public services	60%
Material for decontamination of library items	33%
Other	7%

Other, e.g.

4 libraries that stated "Other":
- 2 of them already reopened
- 1 library doesn't need any kind of (additional) resources
- 1 library needs a specific protocol prepared by the National Library's Director and Vice Director

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Plans for sanitizing library items and other surfaces

Use of disinfectant only
14%

Quarantine only, for at least 3 days
11%

Other, please specify
20%

Both, use disinfectant and quarantaine for several days
55%

- There is little conformity in the way library items are sanitized.

- Most of the respondents (55%) use both disinfectant and quarantine.
- Various libraries already quit using the quarantine method.
- Quarantine periods vary from 24 hours to 14 days.

- Several libraries also state that other parts of the building (inside and outside) are sanitized, as are materials like keyboards and workspaces.

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Lessons learned from the measures taken to contain COVID-19 outbreak

Examples

Organization:
- The library should take preventive and control measures in a timely, resolute, and effective manner
- Communication and anticipation of the organization of measures are fundamental
- Health and safety is key, telework will be part of our workplace for the foreseeable future

Services:
- Virtual services for libraries are very basic, and being local and thinking local has expired
- Development of electronic resources of the National Library and strengthening of online services
- Digitization is more important than ever
- We need to translate more services into an online format and to have more activities on social networks

Other:
- It's easier to close than to reopen

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47% of the respondents have developed plans, processes or procedures to anticipate a new lockdown

Examples

- Utilise the sanitation protocols that we have established for the handling of library materials, as well as the testing of staff when they arrive at work

- Working on new online services and preparing the library staff to be ready for remote online work as soon as the lockdown is announced

- A six part three phase plan for restoring onsite operations that provides flexibility to move forward or fall back incrementally based on health conditions

- A COVID-19 Plan for accessing and working in the building and developed training material for all staff

- Rollback protocols to go back to the previous phase

- More equipment for staff to work from home

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73% of the respondents have developed new digital services in the last few months

Examples

- Education
  - Trainings
  - Presentations
  - Curator talks
  - Information on COVID-19
- Digital access
  - Discovery tools
  - Digitizing on demand
  - Ask a librarian service, etc.
- Exhibitions
  - Online exhibitions
  - Storytelling etc.

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User registrations during the Covid-19 crisis

Ca. 30% of the respondents has taken measures to facilitate new user registrations, e.g.:

- Developed options for remote registration (no need to come to the library anymore)
- Online workspace reservations

47% of the respondents had an increase of users

- Increase is between 30% and 130%
- Public engagement increased

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47% of the respondents encountered difficulties in providing digital access

Examples

- Copyright issues

- Connectivity (increased number of users)

- Learning new digital tools and platforms (also for staff)

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82% of the respondents intend to continue the measures once the restrictions are fully lifted

- Most National Libraries intend to continue safety measures, even once they are formally lifted (e.g. no longer prescribed by their governments). Measures several National Libraries intend to continue, include:
  - Social distancing;
  - Personal hygiene;
  - Thorough and frequent cleaning of equipment (such as computers);
  - Working-from-home / teleworking for staff.

- It cannot be stated yet when (and: whether) National Libraries will lift these additional measures.

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Financial support received from the government for the national library to overcome the COVID-19 crisis

0-100.000 USD
34%

Other
60%

100.000-250.000 USD
0%

250.000-500.000 USD
6%
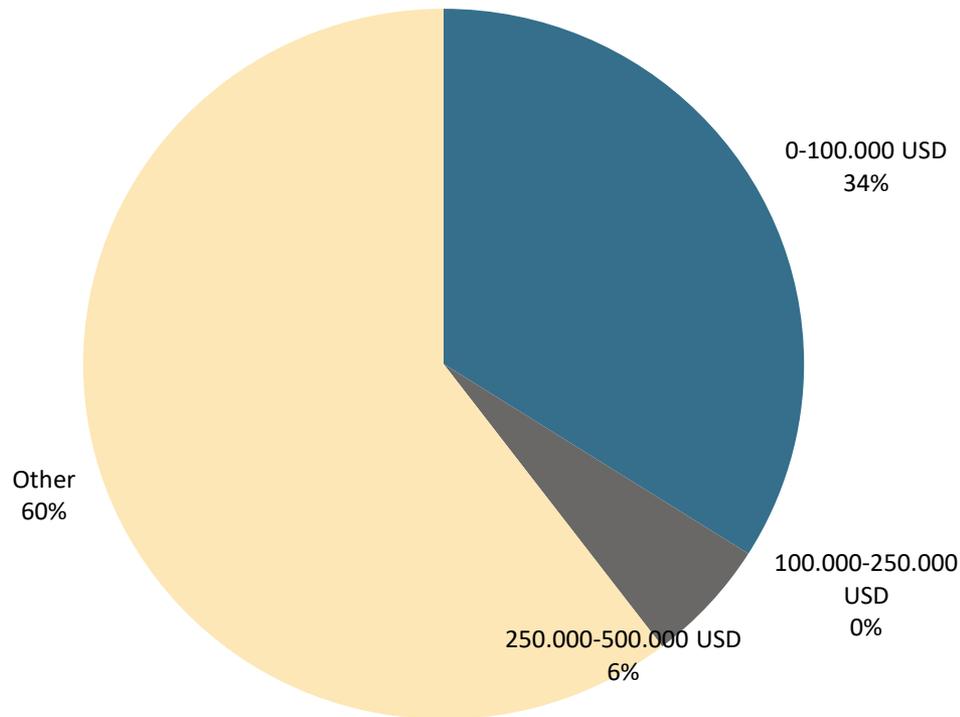
- Only three respondents (6%) indicate that they receive $250k+ financial support from their government.
- From the specifications given by respondents opting for either 'Other' or '0-100k', it became clear that the majority in both categories intended to gave the same answer: they did not receive any financial support.
- Therefore, it can be concluded that in general, National Libraries did not receive financial support from their governments.
- Several National Libraries express their hopes that this may change in the (near) future.

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