

## Bulgaria




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### Responding institution:

***Union of Librarians and Information Services Officers (ULISO)***

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Bulgaria submitted reports in 2001 and 2003, and it is encouraging to have this report after the absence of one in 2005. According to the National Statistics Institute, there are 2 722 public libraries, 81 university libraries, 1 465 school libraries and 184 government-funded research libraries in Bulgaria.

Between 41-60% of the university and government-funded libraries offer Internet access, while a figure of less than 20% is recorded for public and school libraries. Internet access is free of charge at school libraries, and the state has made some extra funding available in the past number of years to expand access. There is an average amount of local content on the Internet, but very much content is available in local languages. According to the respondent, Bulgaria has literacy rates of 73% for women and 83.9% for men, which differs considerably from the 98.2% given in the 2007 *CIA World Factbook*.

ULISO supports the filtering of information to a certain degree for the protection of children, but there is no widespread use of software for this purpose in the country's libraries.

According to the report, no anti-terrorism legislation has been passed in the past few years and there have been no incidents of violation of intellectual freedom. There are, however, reported incidents in other credible sources, as identified below. The respondent

believes that anti-terrorism legislation would impact on user privacy, but that keeping user records does not affect the individual's freedom of expression.

There is no involvement with HIV/Aids awareness programmes because this is not considered a big problem in Bulgaria. The Ministry of Health does not regard libraries as suitable centres for disseminating this kind of information. There are, however, a large number of sources on general healthcare available in the country's public libraries.

No special programmes for women's literacy or programmes focusing on women's information needs receive attention from libraries. The reason is that this is a fairly new issue in Bulgaria, which has become more obvious in the challenges accompanying the transition to a market economy. In the light of these changes, the introduction of such programmes is being considered.

ULISO adopted a code of ethics in 2002, which is available online at <http://www.lib.bg>. It has also adopted the IFLA Internet Manifesto but not the Glasgow Declaration, although the intention is to do so within the next two years.

### **User privacy and anti-terror legislation**

There has been no new anti-terror legislation in the past two years.

### **Reported incidents/violations of intellectual freedom in the past two years**

Although access to public information improved in 2006, proposed amendments in 2007 to the Freedom

of Information Act are worrying to human rights organisations. A number of letters of protest have been sent to the Bulgarian National Assembly, which is considering the implementation of these amendments. Organised crime and corruption affect the work of Bulgarian journalists. There have been incidents of violent attacks on, and death threats to journalists.

*Sources:*

<http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/83583>

[http://www.rsf.org/IMG/pdf/rapport\\_en\\_bd-4.pdf](http://www.rsf.org/IMG/pdf/rapport_en_bd-4.pdf)

#### **HIV/Aids awareness**

This is not considered a big problem in Bulgaria, and there is no library involvement in HIV/Aids awareness programmes. A large number of sources on general healthcare are available in the public libraries.

#### **Women and freedom of access to information**

Libraries have no special women's literacy programmes

or programmes that focus on women's information needs. This is because these are fairly new issues in Bulgaria. They have become more obvious in the transition to a market economy, and the introduction of such programmes is now being considered.

#### **IFLA Internet Manifesto**

The IFLA Internet Manifesto has been adopted, but there is no elaboration on how it has been implemented.

#### **IFLA Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom**

Although the Glasgow Declaration has not yet been adopted, the intention is to do so within the next two years.

#### **Ethics**

ULISO adopted a code of ethics in 2002, which is available online at <http://www.lib.bg>.

### Main indicators

Country name:	Bulgaria
Population:	7 322 858 (July 2007 est.)
Main language:	Bulgarian 84.5%, Turkish 9.6%, Roma 4.1%, other and unspecified 1.8% (2001 census)
Literacy:	98.2%
Literacy reported by respondent:	Illiteracy: women (27%), men (16.1%)

Population figures, language and literacy are from the *CIA World Factbook*, 2007 edition (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>).



### Libraries and Internet access

Bulgaria contributed to the World Report series in 2003 and 2001. The following section compares data and answers from 2007 with the 2003 IFLA/FAIFE World Report and adds context from the respondent's estimates, where possible.

#### Library services

Estimated number of public libraries*:	2 722
Estimated number of school libraries:	1 465
Estimated number of university libraries:	81
Estimated number of government-funded research libraries:	184
Source of these numbers:	National Statistics Institute, 2006

#### Internet access

Population online**:	2 200 000 Internet users as of Sept. 2005 (28.7%) (2003: 7.67%)
Percentage of public libraries offering Internet access to users:	Less than 20% (2003: Less than 20%)
Percentage of school libraries offering Internet access to users:	Less than 20%
Percentage of university libraries offering Internet access to users:	41-60%
Percentage of government-funded research libraries offering Internet access to users:	41-60%
In your estimate, how much local content*** is available on the Internet:	Average
<i>To what degree is content on the Internet available in local languages:</i>	Very much
Is the library association in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals:	Yes, to a certain degree – for the protection of children (2003: No)
Is the use of filtering software widespread in your country's libraries:	No (2003: No)
Is it free of charge for library users to access the Internet on library computers:	Yes, in school libraries; a low fee for access to the Internet is required in public libraries (2003: No)
Has the state or other library authorities made any extra funding available for Internet access in the library system of your country in the last two years:	Yes, in some cases

\* Public library service points, including branch libraries.

\*\* Online population numbers are from Internet World Stats ([www.Internetworldstats.com](http://www.Internetworldstats.com)).

\*\*\* Local content is defined as content that originates in the country.