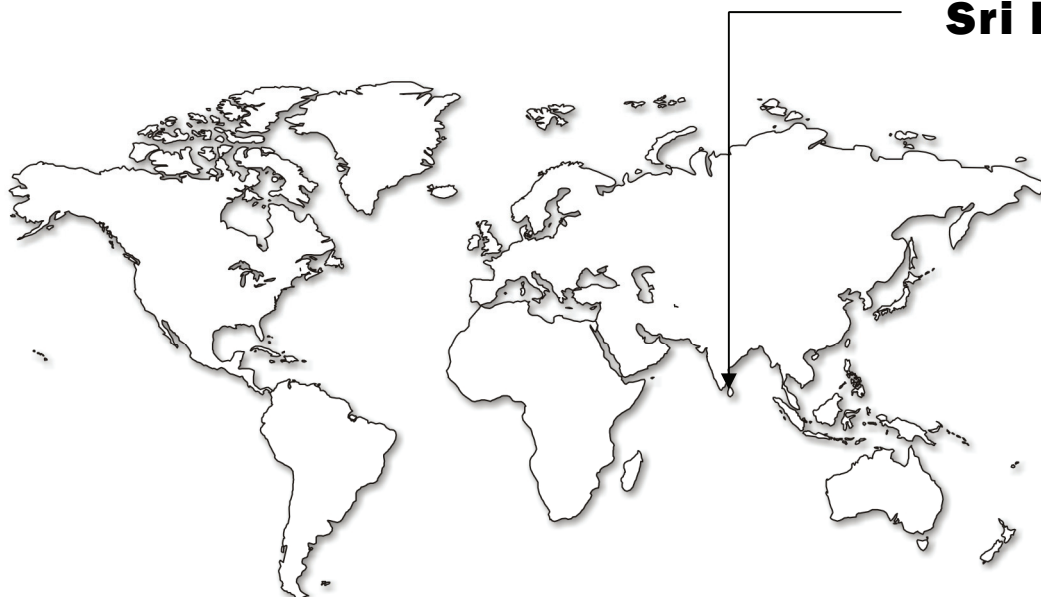


Sri Lanka



Responding institution:

Sri Lanka Library Association

Sri Lanka responded to the IFLA questionnaire twice previously, in 2001 and 2005. There are an estimated number of 1 264 public libraries in Sri Lanka, as well as 4 945 school libraries and 15 university libraries. The number of government-funded research libraries is given as 24.

Internet penetration is low and only 1.8% of the population are Internet users. Levels of access in the public and school libraries are correspondingly low. Less than 20% of all public libraries and school libraries offer Internet access to their users. Of the university libraries, 81-100% offer Internet access, as do 61-80% of the government-funded research libraries. Internet access is provided free of charge in university and school libraries. The Information and Communication Agency provided free access to the newly created e-centres for a limited period.

The respondent has indicated that very little local content is available on the Internet, and practically nothing is available in local languages. The literacy rate is given as 90.7%.

Although the respondent has indicated that the library association is in favour of filtering information to a certain extent (e.g. for children), the use of filtering software is not widespread in the country's libraries.

The library association has not adopted either the IFLA Internet Manifesto or the Glasgow Declaration, but a

code of ethics has been adopted. No further information has been supplied.

Although no incidents occurred in the last two years that adversely affected the freedom of access to information or freedom of expression in the library context, journalists have been affected. This is as a result of the Sri Lankan government's attempt to reimpose the Criminal Defamation Act.

User privacy and anti-terror legislation

No anti-terror legislation has been passed. It is felt that keeping user records would affect the freedom of expression of the individual Internet library user.

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

The respondent has indicated that the freedom of access to information and the freedom of expression may be affected because the government is attempting to bring back criminal defamation law.

This is supported by third-party sources. The Criminal Defamation Act was repealed by the UNP government in June 2002 as a result of campaigns by national as well as international media and press freedom organisations. At a cabinet meeting held on 27 June 2007, the issue of reimposing the Act was discussed, but was put on hold as three Ministers opposed the reintroduction of criminal defamation (<http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/84458/>).

HIV/Aids awareness

The respondent has indicated that the Alcohol and

Drug Information Centre is involved in programmes to raise awareness of HIV/Aids. No programmes are specifically focused on supplying users who cannot read with information in this regard.

Women and freedom of access to information

Libraries have no special programmes that focus on the promotion of women's literacy, and also no programmes that focus specifically on women's access to certain topics (e.g. social information, the economy, education, health and family planning). Family Planning Association Centres offer such programmes.

IFLA Internet Manifesto

The IFLA Internet Manifesto has not been adopted, but it is planned to do so within the next two years.

IFLA Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom

The Glasgow Declaration has not been adopted and it has not been indicated whether the library association plans to do so within the next two years.

Ethics

The respondent has indicated that the library association adopted a code of ethics, but no further information has been supplied. The code is also not available on the Internet.

Main indicators

Country name:	Sri Lanka
Population:	20 926 315 (July 2007 est.)
Main language:	Sinhala (official and national language) 74%, Tamil (national language) 18%, other 8% (English is commonly used in government and is spoken competently by about 10% of the population)
Literacy:	90.7%
Literacy reported by respondent:	90.7% (UNDP 2005)

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

Sri Lanka contributed to the World Report series in 2005 and 2001. The following section compares data and answers from 2007 with the 2005 IFLA/FAIFE World Report and adds context from the respondent's estimates, where possible.

Library services

Estimated number of public libraries*:	1 264 (2005: 935)
Estimated number of school libraries:	4 945
Estimated number of university libraries:	15
Estimated number of government-funded research libraries:	24
Source of these numbers:	National Library

Internet access

Population online**:	350 000 Internet users as of April 2007 (1.8%) (2005: 1.2%)
Percentage of public libraries offering Internet access to users:	Less than 20% (2005: Less than 20%)
Percentage of school libraries offering Internet access to users:	Less than 20%
Percentage of university libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100%
Percentage of government-funded research libraries offering Internet access to users:	61-80%
In your estimate, how much local content*** is available on the Internet:	Very little
<i>To what degree is content on the Internet available in local languages:</i>	Very little
Is the library association in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals:	Yes, to a certain degree (2005: Yes, to a certain degree in order to protect children, safeguard national security and prevent crime)
Is the use of filtering software widespread in your country's libraries:	No (2005: No)
Is it free of charge for library users to access the Internet on library computers:	Yes, in university libraries and school libraries (2005: Yes, in research libraries)
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 – the Information and Communication Agency provided free access to the newly created e-centres for a limited period (2005: No)

* Public library service points, including branch libraries.

** Online population numbers are from Internet World Stats (www.internetworldstats.com).

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