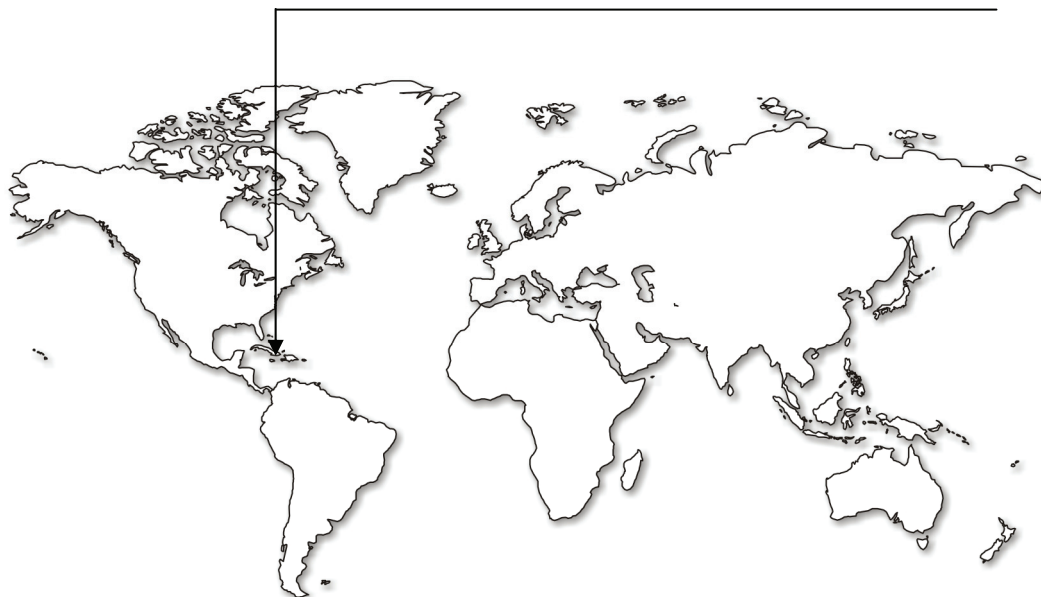


Cuba

**Responding institution:**

Asociacion Cubana de Bibliotecarios (ASCUBI)

Cuba responded to the IFLA/FAIFE questionnaire in 2001 and 2005. There are an estimated number of 405 public libraries in Cuba. The source for the data is indicated as Subdireccion Metodologica, Sistema Nacional de Bibliotecas and Biblioteca Nacional José Martí. The respondent has indicated an estimate of 85 university research libraries, 4 341 school libraries and 42 government-funded research libraries, compared with the 2005 response, where it was indicated that there are 31 research libraries. The source for these figures are given as Direccion de Informacion Ministerio de Educacion (<http://www.rimed.cu/>); Instituto Documentacion e Informacion Cientifico Tecnologica (http://www.redciencia.cu/cienciacu_en/canales/canales_int_en.php?can=5n); (<http://www.mes.edu.cu>).

Internet penetration is currently low in Cuba, with only 1.7% of the population being Internet users. Levels of access in the country's public libraries are correspondingly low – less than 20% of all public libraries offer Internet access to their users. Internet access in university, school and government-funded research libraries is markedly higher, with an access of 61-80% in school libraries and 81-100% in university and government-funded research libraries.

Although the respondent has indicated that Internet access is free of charge in these libraries, it has also been stated that at Biblioteca Nacional José Martí

(BNJM), the Cuban national library, a small fee equivalent to US\$0.05 per hour is charged to assist in management procedures. Some provincial libraries provide limited access depending on local resources.

The state has made extra funding available to improve Internet access in the last two years. The Biblioteca Nacional José Martí is providing the national public library system with computers and is implementing a national public library network. The respondent has indicated that other institutions also provide Internet access. Examples include:

- *Joven Club de Computacion* (Computer Club for Young People). Founded in 2001, it offers training courses and access to the Internet to all levels of the population, including children. There are 599 such clubs, with 4 600 computers, in all parts of the country and they provide free access to the Internet. In 2006 the clubs had an enrolment of 215 226 persons (<http://www.one.cu>).
- Professional societies, such as *Union de Escritores y Artistas de Cuba* (Cuban Writers and Artists Union), which provide services (Internet cafés) for their members at very low rates.
- *Centro Cultural Dulce Maria Loynaz* offer these services at a rate of US\$0.80 per month.
- *Instituto Cubano del Libro* and other institutions provide Internet services for writers, artists, editors and journalists at a very low cost or free of charge.

An average amount of local content is available on the Internet, but nothing or practically nothing is available in local languages. The literacy rate is given as 98% on

the questionnaire (99% in the 2007 *CIA World Factbook*).

Although the respondent has indicated that the use of filtering software is not widespread in the country's libraries, it has not been mentioned whether the library association is in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals. The respondent has stated that ASCUBI does not have knowledge of filtering software on personal computers or in networks to prevent Internet access. Independent third-party sources, however, indicate that access to the Internet is severely limited outside government offices and educational institutions (see below).

Although the library association adopted a code of ethics in 2003 and the IFLA Internet Manifesto has been adopted, the Glasgow Declaration has not.

User privacy and anti-terror legislation

No anti-terror legislation has been passed. The respondent has stated that even if such legislation were passed, it would not impact on user privacy. Also, the keeping of user records does not affect the freedom of expression of the individual Internet library user. User records are used to provide statistical data, for example on user preferences, in order to improve library services. There is a relationship of trust between the library user and the librarian, and such a matter is therefore a question of ethics.

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

The respondent has indicated that no incidents have occurred in the last two years that adversely affected freedom of access to information or freedom of expression. Examples of "reverse filtering" implemented by, for example, the USA, have been given (see below).

Independent third-party sources nevertheless report that restrictions on freedom of expression, association and movement continue to cause great concern. In its 2007 report, Amnesty International states that severe restrictions on freedom of expression and association persist. All print and broadcast media remain under state control and there has been a rise in harassment and intimidation of independent journalist and librarians (<http://thereport.amnesty.org/page/1066/eng/>). (See also <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AMR25/001/2006/en/022b7cc6-a2ca-11dc-8d74-6f45f39984e5/amr250012006en.pdf>.) There are several references to specific incidents on the website of Reporters Without Borders (<http://www.rsf.org>).

Both Amnesty International (see above) and Reporters

Without Borders (http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=20534) report that access to the Internet is severely limited outside governmental offices and educational institutions. Examples of limited Internet access, Internet monitoring and penalties for subsequent transgressions are provided.

The OpenNet Initiative (<http://opennet.net/research/profiles/cuba>) reports that the severely restricted Internet use is due to a combination of Cuban government policy, US trade embargoes and personal economic limitations. Those having access are limited by extensive monitoring. It is also mentioned that access is further restricted by the US government's sponsorship of reverse filtering, which encourages websites to prevent access from Cuba.

The respondent makes specific reference to the statement by Ramiro Valdés Menéndez, Minister of Informatics and Communications at the opening of the 12th Information Technology Convention and Fair 2007 (http://www.cubaminrex.cu/sociedad_informacion/2007/DiscursoRamiro.htm). The respondent has also provided additional examples of reverse filtering by the USA, for instance, where attempts to access certain websites and/or services fail because access to them would be an infringement of US laws (according to the site owners or commercial companies).

HIV/Aids awareness

Cuban libraries have special programmes to raise awareness of HIV/Aids. A specialised information network, INFOMED (<http://www.sld.cu>), exists for medical doctors, paramedics, professors, librarians and the general public. It serves 859 medical libraries located at hospitals and polyclinics in general. With specific reference to HIV, it has a special website (<http://www.sld.cu/servicios/sida>).

At the 2006 IFLA World Conference in Seoul there was a paper by a Cuban specialist librarian from INFOMED, entitled the *Design of community information service, BILIOSIDA Cuba: Possibilities of application in other countries* (<http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla72/papers/152-Pobea-es.pdf>).

At the 2007 IFLA conference in Durban, South Africa, there was a much-visited poster on the subject submitted by specialists from INFOMED. Each one of those hospitals and polyclinics has been equipped with four computers and a library, and 368 of them have already been connected to the Internet.

Although libraries in Cuba are involved in programmes to provide HIV/Aids information to members of the community unable to read, these programmes are more generic in nature and include, for example, the

display of posters on the topic. Other projects and services, for example a telephone helpline, are run by other institutions.

Women and freedom of access to information

Libraries in Cuba have no special programmes focusing on the promotion of women's literacy. Although libraries do have programmes that focus specifically on women's access to certain topics (e.g. social information, the economy, education, health and family planning), they are more generic in nature.

Public libraries promote reading among women with special book talks and reading recommendations in matters, including social awareness. Other organisations that provide such programmes and access to related information include the *Federacion de Mujeres Cubanas* (Cuban Women Federation) (<http://www.mujeres.cubaweb.cu>) and *Casa de Orientacion de la Mujer y la Familia* (House for Women and Family Orientation) (<http://www.lademajagua.co.cu/infgran4749.htm>).

IFLA Internet Manifesto

The IFLA Internet Manifesto has been adopted. (No further information has been supplied.)

IFLA Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom

The Glasgow Declaration has not been adopted. The respondent has indicated the library association's intent to adopt it within the next two years.

Ethics

The library association adopted a code of ethics in 2003 (it is available at http://www.bnjm.cu/secciones/asociaciones/ascubi/codigo_etica.pdf). The respondent has stated that the library code of ethics is in line with the unwritten code of ethics that applies to everyone in Cuba with regard to appropriate behaviour within a given society.

Main indicators

Country name:	Cuba
Population:	11 394 043 (July 2007 est.)
Main language:	Spanish
Literacy:	99.8%
Literacy reported by respondent:	98%

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

Cuba 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*:	405 (2005: 412)
Estimated number of school libraries:	4 341
Estimated number of university libraries:	85
Estimated number of government-funded research libraries:	42
Source of these numbers:	Subdireccion Metodologica; Sistema Nacional de Bibliotecas; Biblioteca Nacional José Martí; Direccion de Informacion Ministerio de Educacion (www.rimed.cu/); Instituto Documentacion e Informacion Cientifico Tecnologica (http://www.redciencia.cu/cienciacu_en/canales/canales_int_en.php?can=5n); (http://www.mes.edu.cu)

Internet access

Population online**:	190 000 users as of Sept. 2006 (1.7%) (2005: 1.1%)
Percentage of public libraries offering Internet access to users:	Less than 20% (2005: 41-60%)
Percentage of school libraries offering Internet access to users:	61-80%
Percentage of university libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100%
Percentage of government-funded research libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100%
In your estimate, how much local content*** is available on the Internet:	Average
To what degree is content on the Internet available in local languages:	Nothing, or practically nothing
Is the library association in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals:	No data provided (2005: Yes, to a certain degree in order to protect children and safeguard national culture)
Is the use of filtering software widespread in your country's libraries:	No (2005: Yes, to a certain degree)
Is it free of charge for library users to access the Internet on library computers:	Yes, in public libraries, university libraries, school libraries and statutory research council libraries (2005: Yes, in all 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 (2005: Yes)

* 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.