

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

HAB195

(Question Serial No. 2698)

Head: (95) Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not Specified

Programme: (5) Public Libraries

Controlling Officer: Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Ms Michelle LI)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home Affairs

Question:

One of the tasks of the Department is to strengthen the library collection to provide a balanced mix of library materials for free use by the public. Please provide the following information:

- (a) What were the types and languages of the library collection items newly acquired and the total expenditures involved over the past 3 years? Please provide information in the table below:

Year	Number of newly acquired library items in simplified Chinese characters	Proportion of newly acquired library items in simplified Chinese characters	Expenditure on newly acquired library items in simplified Chinese characters	Number of newly acquired library items in traditional Chinese characters	Proportion of newly acquired library items in traditional Chinese characters	Expenditure on newly acquired library items in traditional Chinese characters	Number of newly acquired library items in English	Proportion of newly acquired library items in English	Expenditure on newly acquired library items in English
2015-16									
2016-17									
2017-18									
2018-19 (Estimate)									

- (b) What is the distribution of the library collection by type and language at present? Please provide information in the table below:

Number of library items in simplified Chinese characters	Proportion of library items in simplified Chinese characters	Number of library items in traditional Chinese characters	Proportion of library items in traditional Chinese characters	Number of library items in English	Proportion of library items in English	Number of library items in other languages	Proportion of library items in other languages

- (c) What was the distribution of library items written off by public libraries by type and language over the past 3 years? Please provide information in the table below:

Year	Number of written-off library items in simplified Chinese characters	Proportion of written-off library items in simplified Chinese characters	Number of written-off library items in traditional Chinese characters	Proportion of written-off library items in traditional Chinese characters	Number of written-off library items in English	Proportion of written-off library items in English	Number of written-off library items in other languages	Proportion of written-off library items in other languages
2015-16								
2016-17								
2017-18								
2018-19 (Estimate)								

- (d) Is the Department planning to introduce items in other languages into the library collections for ethnic minorities? How many library items are suitable for ethnic minorities at present?
- (e) Has the Department introduced any braille book and audio book for lending to persons in need? How many library items are suitable for visually impaired or hearing impaired persons?

Asked by: Hon MO Claudia (Member Question No. (LegCo use): 27)

Reply:

- (a) The total expenditure in acquiring library materials and details on the acquisition of printed books in traditional Chinese characters, simplified Chinese characters and English, as well as non-print materials, in the past 3 years are set out at **Annex I**.

In 2018-19, the Hong Kong Public Libraries (HKPL) plans to acquire about 840 000 items of new books and non-print materials at a total of about \$63.91 million, among which Chinese books, English books and non-print materials are about 600 000 items, 190 000 items and 50 000 items respectively. Breakdown on the numbers of traditional Chinese characters and simplified Chinese characters books to be acquired in 2018-19 is not available at this stage.

- (b) As at 31 December 2017, the HKPL had a collection of 13.04 million items of print materials (books) and 1.86 million items of non-print materials (multimedia materials). The HKPL focuses on acquiring print materials in the 2 main languages of Chinese and English, where the numbers of Chinese and English books in the library collections of the HKPL were about 9.20 million and 3.84 million, accounting for 70.6% and 29.4% respectively of the total number of printed books. Acquisition of print materials in other languages will also be considered if they are bilingual, with one of the languages being Chinese or English.

As the HKPL handles Chinese books as a single category without differentiation between traditional Chinese characters and simplified Chinese characters, no breakdown figures are available. The multimedia materials in the collection are not differentiated by languages and hence breakdown figures by languages are also not available.

- (c) The total number of Chinese books, English books and non-print materials withdrawn in the past 3 years are at Annex II. Breakdown on other library materials, Chinese books in traditional Chinese characters and simplified Chinese characters, and books in other languages is not available. Information on the library items to be withdrawn in 2018-19 is not available at this stage.
- (d) The HKPL currently subscribes to about 110 titles of newspapers and periodicals published in the languages of various ethnic minorities. These titles, covering the information on various subjects including current affairs, language learning, sports and fitness, leisure and entertainment, etc., are available at the Hong Kong Central Library and 11 branch libraries.
- (e) At present, the HKPL has about 141 000 physical audio books and 600 braille books. In addition, the public can access about 168 900 e-books including 6 100 audio e-books in the 9 e-book collections acquired or subscribed by the HKPL through the Internet workstations in static libraries that are equipped with Cantonese and English voice synthesizer software. We will continue to identify more physical audio books and suitable audio e-books in the market to meet the needs of the people with special needs.

Acquisition of library materials by the Hong Kong Public Libraries (HKPL) in the past 3 years

Financial Year	Total Expenditure on Acquisition of Library Materials (\$ million) ⁽¹⁾	Acquisition of Chinese Books						Acquisition of English Books			Acquisition of Non-print Materials ⁽⁴⁾		
		Traditional Chinese ⁽²⁾			Simplified Chinese ⁽²⁾			Items ('000)	Proportion ⁽³⁾ (%)	Expenditure (\$ million)	Items ('000)	Proportion ⁽³⁾ (%)	Expenditure (\$ million)
		Items ('000)	Proportion ⁽³⁾ (%)	Expenditure (\$ million)	Items ('000)	Proportion ⁽³⁾ (%)	Expenditure (\$ million)						
2015-16	97.34	528	63.6	23.83	54	6.5	2.07	192	23.1	26.68	56	6.8	11.57
2016-17	98.48	541	64.1	24.50	39	4.6	1.62	209	24.8	27.64	55	6.5	10.56
2017-18 (Estimated)	96.00	496	65.4	25.14	24	3.2	1.19	194	25.6	26.33	44	5.8	10.35

Notes

- (1) Library materials include printed books, non-print materials, newspapers, periodicals, e-resources, etc. The expenditure excludes the cost of book binding.
- (2) Estimate figures based on the number of Chinese books acquired through the relevant contract suppliers of the HKPL per annum.
- (3) Proportion to the total number of Chinese books, English books and non-printed materials acquired in the respective financial year.
- (4) Non-print materials refer to multimedia materials.

Total number of Chinese books, English books and non-print materials⁽¹⁾ withdrawn in the past 3 years

Financial Year	Number of Chinese Books withdrawn ('000 items)	Proportion ⁽²⁾ (%)	Number of English Books withdrawn ('000 items)	Proportion ⁽²⁾ (%)	Number of Non-print Materials ⁽¹⁾ withdrawn ('000 items)	Proportion ⁽²⁾ (%)
2015-16	268	67.7	95	24.0	33	8.3
2016-17	399	69.9	135	23.6	37	6.5
2017-18 (up to February 2018)	105	71.9	33	22.6	8	5.5

Notes

(1) Non-print materials refer to multimedia materials.

(2) Proportion to the total number of Chinese books, English books and non-print materials withdrawn in the respective financial year.

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