

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY**HAB133****(Question Serial No. 2221)**Head: (95) Leisure and Cultural Services DepartmentSubhead (No. & title): (-) Not SpecifiedProgramme: (5) Public LibrariesControlling Officer: Director of Leisure and Cultural Services (Vincent LIU)Director of Bureau: Secretary for Home AffairsQuestion:

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 in the past 5 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									
2019-20									

- (b) What is the distribution of the library collection by type and language? 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 in 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
2016-17								
2017-18								
2018-19								
2019-20								
2020-21 (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?
- (e) Has the Department introduced any braille books and audio books for loans to persons in need? How many library items are suitable for visually impaired or hearing impaired persons?

Asked by: Hon MO Claudia (LegCo internal reference no.: 50)

Reply:

- (a) The total expenditure on 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 5 years are set out at Annex I.
- (b) As at 31 December 2019, the Hong Kong Public Libraries (HKPL) had a collection of 13.29 million items of print materials (books) and 1.83 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 9.38 million and 3.91 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 numbers of Chinese books, English books and non-print materials withdrawn in the past 5 years are at Annex II. As the collections of the HKPL are mainly materials in the 2 languages of Chinese and English, and that books withdrawn are only categorised as Chinese and English books without further sub-categorisation into traditional Chinese characters or simplified Chinese characters, no breakdown figures are available.

- (d) The HKPL currently subscribes to about 100 titles of newspapers and periodicals published in languages of various ethnic minorities. These titles, covering 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) As at 31 December 2019, the HKPL had about 130 000 physical audio books and 600 Braille books for visually impaired persons. In addition, the public can access about 216 000 e-books including 11 700 audio e-books in the 11 e-book collections acquired or subscribed to by the HKPL through the Internet workstations in static libraries that are equipped with Cantonese and English voice synthesiser software. We will continue to identify more physical audio books and suitable audio e-books in the market to meet public needs.

Acquisition of Library Materials by the Hong Kong Public Libraries (HKPL) in the Past 5 Years

Financial Year	Total Expenditure on Acquisition of Library Materials ⁽¹⁾ (\$ million)	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	95.52	496	65.5	25.13	23	3.1	1.19	194	25.6	26.32	44	5.8	10.35
2018-19	97.23	493	67.6	25.57	29	4.0	1.56	174	23.9	23.86	33	4.5	9.37
2019-20 (Estimate)	101.60	450	64.5	22.45	36	5.1	1.95	184	26.4	23.00	28	4.0	8.60

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 Numbers of Chinese Books, English Books and Non-print Materials⁽¹⁾ Withdrawn in the Past 5 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 Withdrawn (’000 items)	Proportion⁽²⁾ (%)
2015-16	268	67.7	95	24.0	33	8.3
2016-17	407	69.7	138	23.6	39	6.7
2017-18	370	72.0	118	23.0	26	5.0
2018-19 ⁽³⁾	352	68.5	107	20.9	54	10.6
2019-20 ⁽³⁾ (Up to February 2020)	67	73.6	16	17.6	8	8.8

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.
- (3) Figures in the financial year are subject to the completion of the withdrawal procedures.