

Abstract

The paper deals with the issue of valuation and calculation of efficiency of public library services. In the introduction the paper explains the motivation for the research undertaken. The first (theoretical) chapter places the whole issue in the general economic and legislative framework, in particular relating libraries to the concept of public goods and describing different approaches to determining their value. It explains the concepts of efficiency and return on investment (ROI). It describes specific approaches to measuring the efficiency of libraries as a whole, with particular attention to the contingent valuation method and its development. It describes in detail several studies that the author considers to be of particular methodological value. The chapter concludes with information and descriptions of two key ISO standards that are directly related to the issue.

Chapter 2 describes research on the efficiency of the library as a whole (referred to as ROI 1.0) conducted in 2012 at the Municipal Library in Prague (MKP) and verified in three other cities.

Chapter 3 captures the effort to determine the effectiveness of one selected service (ROI 2.0), namely lending services (i.e. circulations of library items). It describes the chosen taxonomy of individual library services and the basic principles of cost budgeting according to this taxonomy. The paper describes the analysis carried out in 2012 at the MKP and its outputs. Particular attention is paid to the issue of staff costs and library premises costs.

Chapter 4 compares the efficiency of lending services with the efficiency of making e-books published by the library available, which are examined using similar methods.

Chapter 5 discusses the answers to the research questions and summarises the whole thesis.

E-books - Library efficiency - Value of public services - ISO 11620 - ISO 16439 - Contingent valuation - ROI - Public libraries