

Executive Summary

Libraries NI Customer Survey 2019

Adult questionnaire (Age 16 years and over)

September 2019



Introduction

Libraries NI undertook its third customer survey in 32 of its 96 libraries from Monday 29 April to Saturday 18 May 2019. This allowed customers in these libraries to express their views on various aspects of the public library service.

During the fieldwork period, all adult customers visiting the selected libraries in the random sample were asked to complete either an online or paper questionnaire. A total of 3,663 respondents completed the questionnaire either fully or in part.

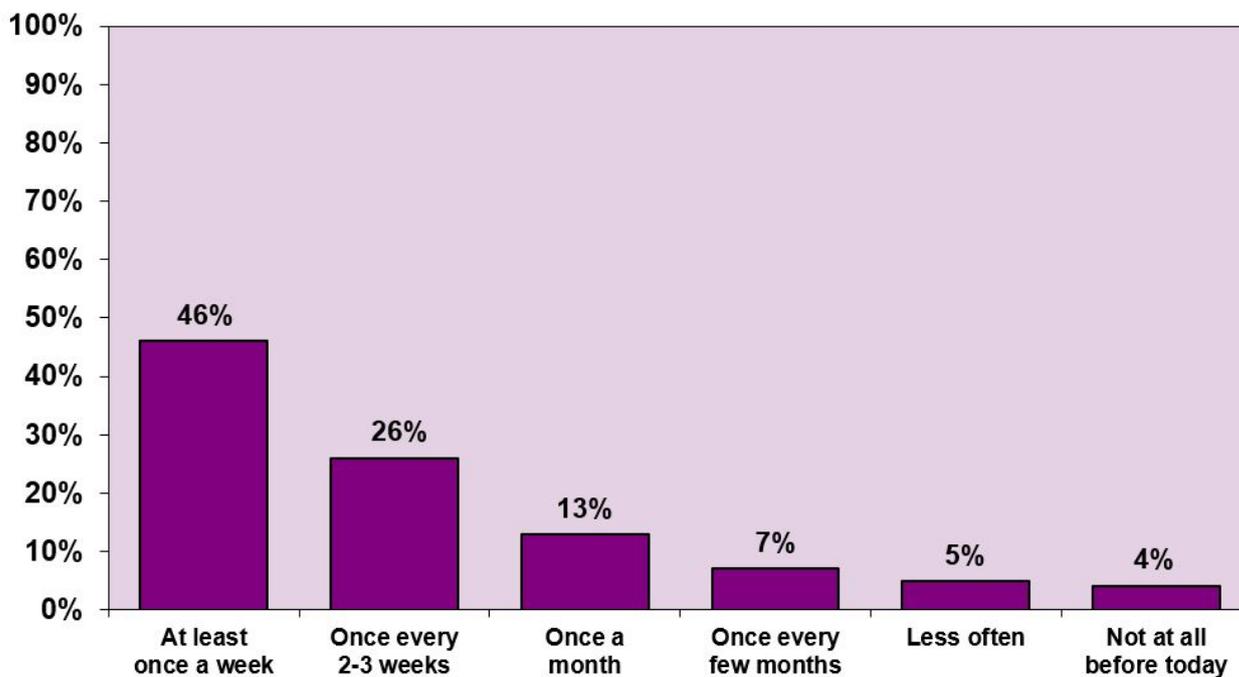
See **Notes to Readers** at the end of this summary for additional technical information.

The sections underneath outline the key findings of the survey, reflect the structure of the questionnaire and emphasise the responses given in each section.

Contact with the library

96% of customers have used the library service in the 12 months prior to the survey, with 72% having used it at least once every 2 - 3 weeks.

Q: How often have you used the public library service in the last 12 months?



Number of valid responses = 3,640

Those customers who used the public library service in the 12 months before the survey experienced the following benefits as a result:

- 59% said that using it has improved their knowledge
- 35% said that using it has made them feel better about themselves
- 34% said that library has helped them get information about and/or access other public services
- 33% have had fun
- 32% have felt less isolated
- 30% said that it is a safe place to meet friends and/or new people
- 29% they have learned new skills/developed existing skills
- 26% have made new friends.

By using the library service in the last 12 months customers also said that they have:

- read more for pleasure (66%)
- socialised more with others (37%)
- met new people (32%)
- developed new interests (29%).

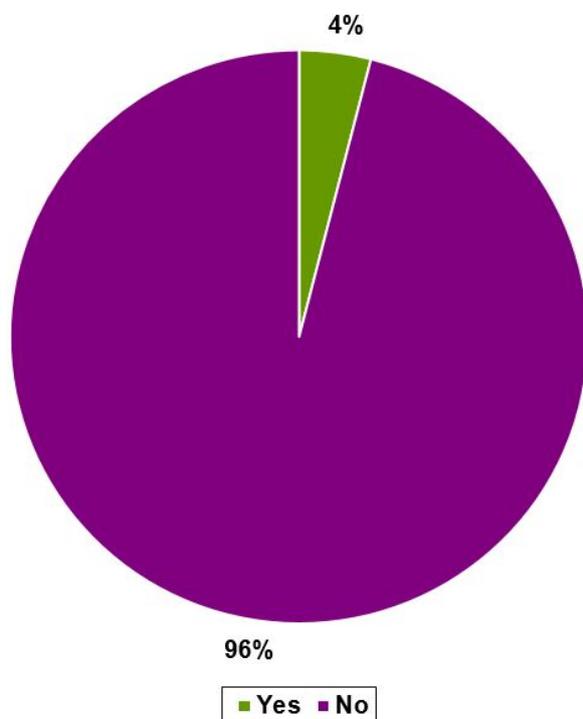
Of those customers who had not used the public library service at all in the 12 months prior to the survey:

- 55% said that they didn't need to use it or used other information sources
- 24% said it was difficult to find the time.

Customer awareness and use of services

96% of customers had visited the library in which they completed the survey before i.e. it was not their first time.

Q: Is this the first time you have visited this library?



Number of valid responses = 3,492

Awareness of services

- 82% were aware they can use their library card in any NI library
- 74% were aware of photocopying/printing/scanning facilities
- 74% were aware there is free access to library computers/Internet/Wi-Fi for members
- 71% were aware that items can be requested from other Libraries NI libraries
- 57% were aware of information/research resources
- 53% were aware of events/activities for adults
- 52% were aware of the Libraries NI website
- 2% of customers were not aware of any of the services listed.

Use of services

The most common reasons given for visiting the library at the time of the survey were:

- to borrow/return/renew books (50%)
- to use the computers e.g. Internet, Wi-Fi, emails, word processing, spreadsheets (30%)
- to browse/read books or newspapers (27%).

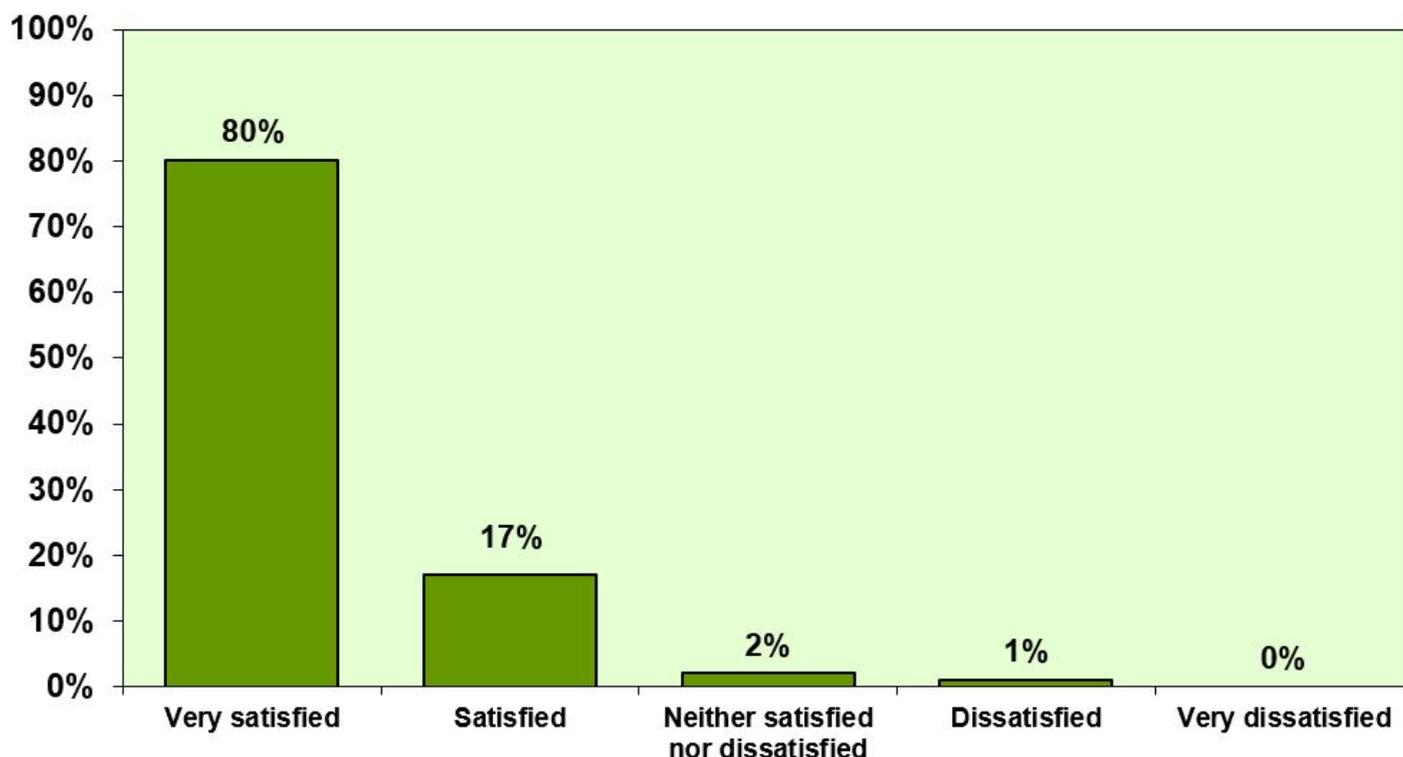
The last time they visited the library:

- 65% borrowed/returned/renewed books
- 38% browsed/read books or newspapers
- 35% used computers e.g. Internet, Wi-Fi, emails, word processing, spreadsheets.

Service satisfaction

97% of customers were satisfied with their overall experience when they last visited the library

Q: Still thinking about the last time you visited this library, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your overall experience?



Number of valid responses = 3,304

- 53% of customers told someone e.g. friends/family/colleagues/post on social media etc. about their experience the last time they visited the library.

Library staff

The majority of customers agreed that library staff:

- were approachable and friendly (97%)
- were readily available to help them (97%)
- had the knowledge and skills to answer their queries (95%)
- dealt with their queries promptly (96%)
- treated them with respect (97%)
- kept them informed of library services (86%).

Q: How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about staff in this library?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No. responses [#]
Library staff...						
are approachable and friendly	81%	16%	2%	0%	0%	3,244
are readily available to help me	79%	18%	2%	1%	0%	3,185
have the knowledge and skills to answer my queries	75%	20%	5%	0%	0%	3,065
deal with my queries promptly	78%	18%	3%	0%	0%	3,089
treat me with respect	81%	16%	2%	0%	0%	3,183
keep me informed of library services (e.g. events, activities, classes etc.)	68%	18%	12%	2%	1%	2,975

[#] Don't know/Not applicable responses have been excluded from the analysis

Library environment

- 81% of customers are satisfied with library opening hours
- 93% are satisfied with the clarity/prominence of signs inside the library
- 94% are satisfied with the layout of the library
- 93% are satisfied with the furniture in the library
- 97% are satisfied with the lighting
- 94% are satisfied with the heating.

Library stock

87% customers have browsed through or borrowed items from the library in the last 12 months, with 51% having done so at least once every 2 - 3 weeks.

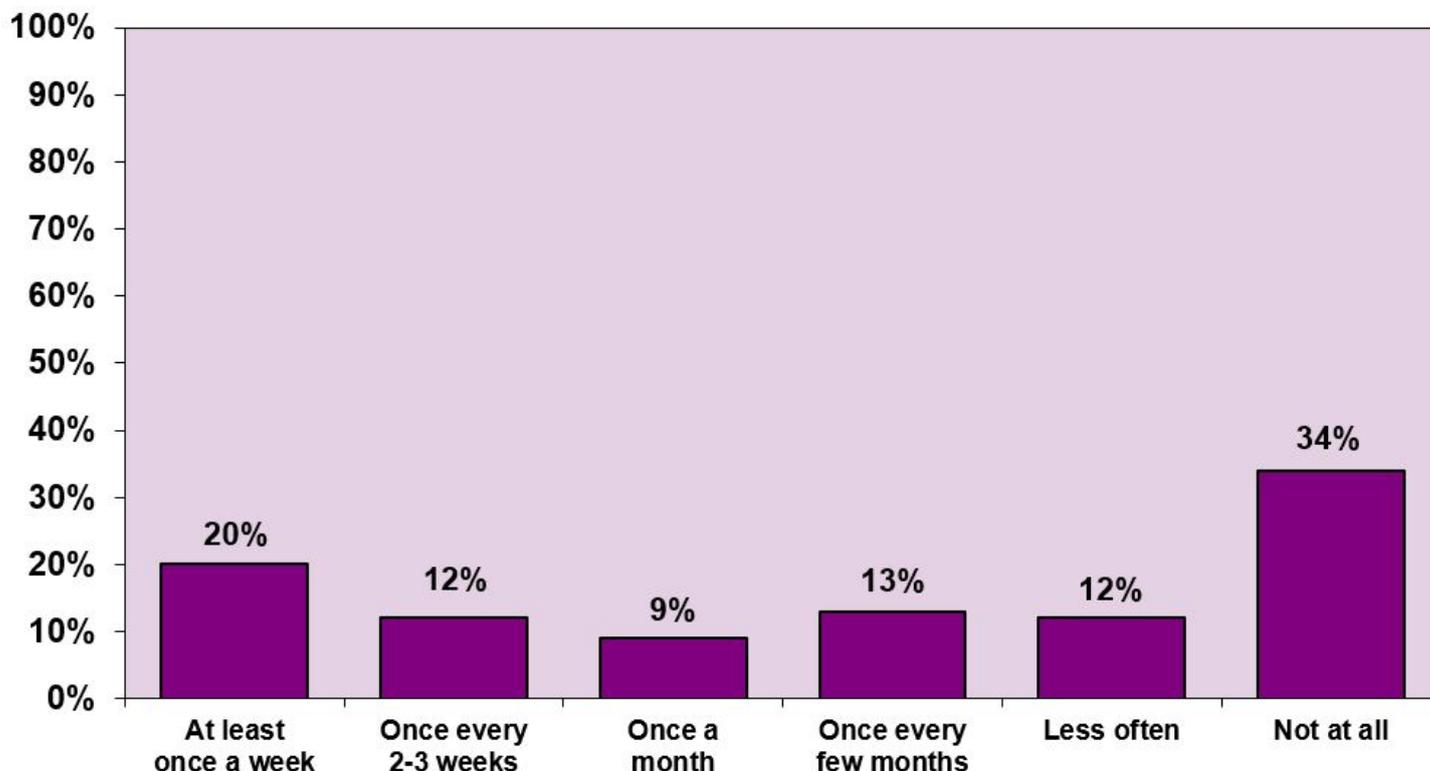
Of those customers who have browsed through or borrowed items of stock in the last 12 months:

- 90% agreed that there is a wide variety of items available
- 97% agreed that the items are in good condition
- 77% agreed that the items they are looking for on the shelves are usually there.

Library IT services

66% of customers have used library IT services or equipment in the last 12 months, with just over 41% having done so at least once a month.

Q: How often have you used IT services or equipment e.g. computer, Internet, Wi-Fi, printer, scanner, photocopier etc. in this library in the last 12 months?



Number of valid responses = 3,170

Of those customers who have used the library IT services or equipment in the last 12 months, the majority agreed that:

- there is usually a computer available when they need one (93%)
- library staff provide useful support with accessing and using online resources/services (91%)
- photocopying, printing and scanning facilities meet their needs (93%)
- Internet broadband speed meets their needs (88%)
- Wi-Fi meets their needs (84%)
- their ability to access and use online resources/services have improved due to support provided by library staff (83%)
- library catalogue meets their needs (79%)
- eBooks, downloadable audiobooks etc. meet their needs (72%)
- Libraries NI app meets their needs (69%)
- eMagazines meet their needs (66%).

Libraries NI website/communication

58% of customers have used the Libraries NI website in the last 12 months, with 33% having done so at least once a month.

Of those customers who have used the Libraries NI website in the last 12 months:

- 38% used it for library details
- 35% used it to access the library catalogue
- 35% used it for event information
- 13% used it for various other reasons including renewing loans and checking opening times.

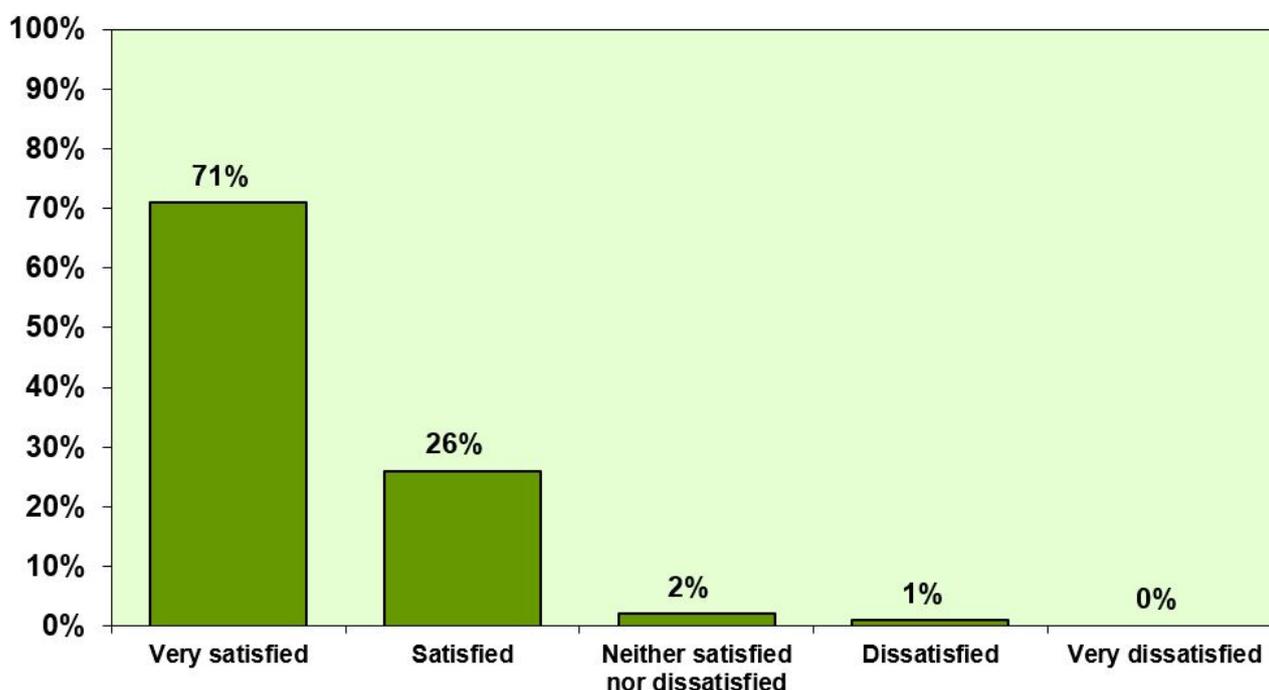
20% of customers have contacted Libraries NI with a query in the last 12 months and they used the following methods of communication:

- telephone call to branch library (61%)
- telephone call to general enquiries (11%)
- email to branch library (10%)
- email to enquiries (8%)
- feedback form on website (3%)
- message via branch library Facebook/Twitter page (3%)
- message via Libraries NI Facebook/Twitter page (2%)
- some other method - mostly face-to-face contact with library staff (23%).

Overall view

Overall, 97% of customers are satisfied with the public library service – 26% satisfied and 71% very satisfied.

Q: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the public library service?

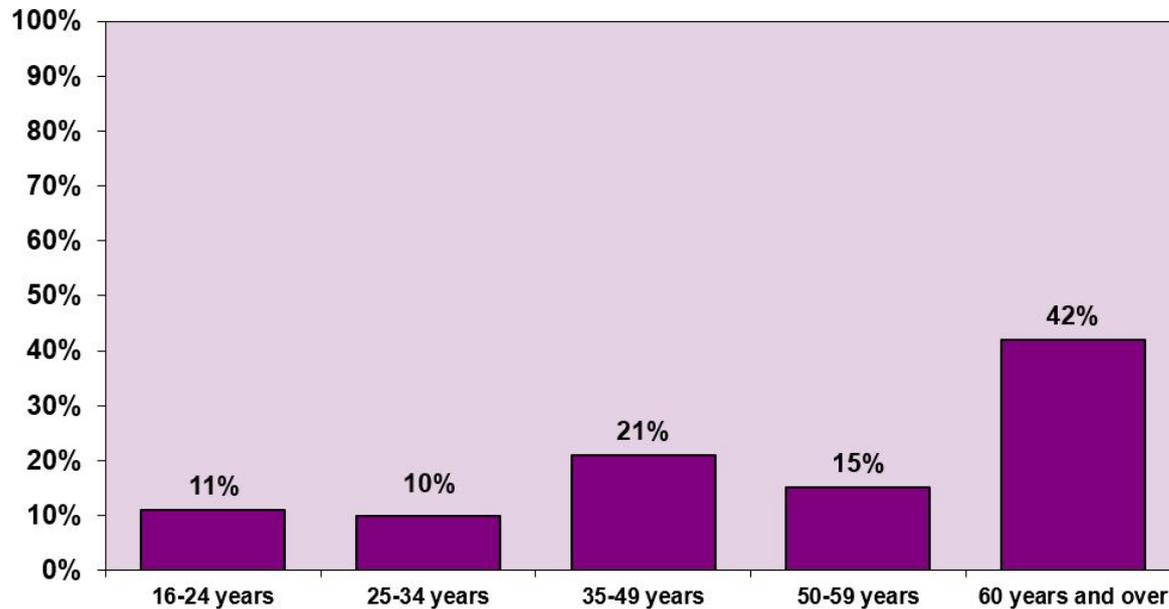


Number of valid responses = 3,311

About you

Of library customers surveyed - 66% female, 34% male

Q: Age



Number of valid responses = 3,314

- 42% are aged 60 years and over
- 21% are aged between 35 - 49 years
- 15% are aged between 50 - 59 years
- 11% are aged between 16 - 24 years
- 10% are aged between 25 - 34 years.

Relationship status of library customers surveyed:

- 50% are married/cohabiting
- 34% are single
- 8% are divorced/separated
- 8% are widowed
- 1% are in a civil partnership.

Birthplace and ethnicity of library customers surveyed:

- 82% were born in Northern Ireland
- 6% were born in England
- 4% were born in Republic of Ireland
- 2% were born in Scotland
- 96% are of white ethnic origin.

Employment status of library customers surveyed:

- 38% are employed
 - 18% are full time
 - 14% are part time
 - 5% are self-employed
- 37% are retired
- 10% are students.

Disability and health status of library customers surveyed:

- 15% consider themselves to have a disability or illness that substantially limits their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The nature of the disability/illness relates to:
 - mobility (51%)
 - mental health (37%)
 - hearing (14%)
 - sight (11%)
 - learning (10%).
- 27% reported they have someone who is dependent on them i.e. a child, someone with an incapacitating disability or an elderly person
- 73% reported that they have no dependants.

Library customers surveyed describe the place where they live as:

- a small city or town (44%)
- a big city (13%)
- on the outskirts of a big city (18%)
- country village (15%)
- a farm/home in the country (9%).

Notes to Readers:

Percentages quoted throughout are rounded to the nearest whole number. Therefore the sum of percentages may not add up to 100% exactly in some cases.

Also in questions where the customer could give more than one answer, the sum of percentages will be greater than 100%.

In the text of this summary, 'strongly agreed' and 'agreed' (and 'very satisfied' and 'satisfied') have been merged and referred to as 'agreed' (and 'satisfied') for ease of reading. Similarly, 'strongly disagreed' and 'disagreed' (and 'very dissatisfied' and 'dissatisfied') have been merged and referred to as 'disagreed' (and 'dissatisfied').