

# The impact of public libraries in Denmark: A haven in our community

## A library visit is much more than a number

The vast majority of citizens in Denmark use the public library at some point in their life. But we do not know much about why and what it means to them. Not until now.

The study *The impact of public libraries in Denmark: A haven in our community* is initiated by Roskilde Central Library and carried out by the consulting company Seismonaut. The study shows that the public library has a diverse impact on the citizens, and that the most common impacts are:

- **Haven:** The public library is a haven in everyday life, where citizens find room for contemplation and take time for themselves and each other.
- **Perspective:** The public library is a credible communicator of knowledge and gives citizens an enlightened and critical perspective on life.
- **Community:** The public library is a place where citizens experience togetherness - alone, or with others - and where they experience that materials and facilities are a common property without financial barriers to use.
- **Creativity:** The public library is a source of inspiration and stimulates users' imagination. The public library can also help motivate users to try something new and acquire new skills.

Meanwhile, the study shows that the **public library's staff** has a great impact on the citizens. The staff is the human face of the library and serves for many as a relational point of reference in the local community. Users are happy to meet a person who can help with information retrieval, recommendations for new readings - and with everything else.

Citizens also value the library as a place where one can **trust** what one sees and hears. In an age where it is difficult to distinguish information from misinformation, it is of great importance to citizens that the public library curates and disseminates knowledge and information - physically and digitally.

## 96.5% of the citizens of Denmark use the library at some point in their life

**“In the past, only experts have been asked about the impact of culture and not ordinary people. It has always been the expert's understanding of the subject that has dominated. There is a great democratizing potential in turning it around and examining the individual's experience.”**

- Tone Roald, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Copenhagen

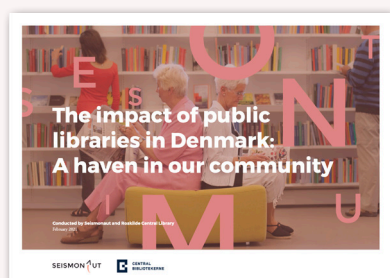
**“To me, it feels like the library is a place with a heart. It's a place that wants the best for me, and where I'm not a product or customer”**

Man, 39 years

**“There are lots of different people who share this place. You share books, you share magazines, and so forth. It ties a community together”**

Woman, 18 years

## Download the report here!



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