

Mobile Libraries in Turkey

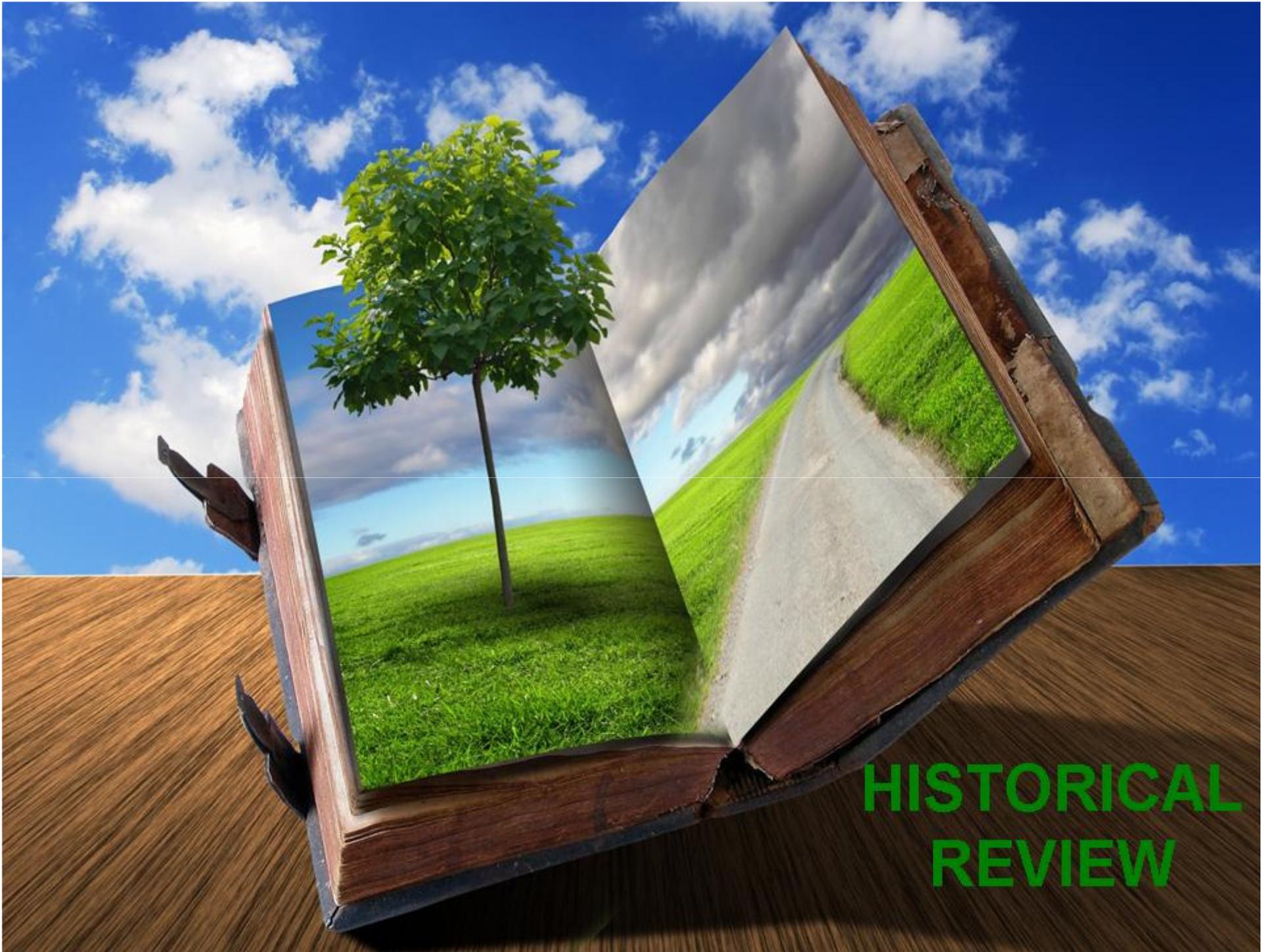
by Ozlem Akat

Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism

In 1958, a dream of rural dwellers in Urgup, a small town in central Turkey came true after Mustafa Guzelgoz, the town librarian attended a ceremony. At the ceremony, some of the seats were allocated to the notables of the town. However, sadly, Mr. Guzelgoz was not recognized, nor was he given a seat. This was the turning point for the mobile library services in Turkey. Because the librarian recognized the need to provide the community with the high-quality services in order to become a prominent and well respected member of it. Thereupon, he decided to launch the first donkey-drawn mobile library service so that he could spread knowledge and literature to the most hidden and inaccessible 36 villages where no librarian had ever set foot. This initiative gave inspiration to the other libraries and was soon replicated around the country as a cost-effective way to encourage the literacy in poor communities.

Although there are some older records attesting the existence of motorized mobile libraries in Turkey, it was only by the 1960s that the interest and the experience in mobile library services developed. Having a comprehensive, country-wide network of public libraries, General Directorate of Libraries and Publications runs 35 mobile libraries which are dedicated to providing free and equitable access to on-line information, library and electronic services for rural and isolated communities. Open to everyone, mobile libraries serve nearly 5.000 stops in towns and villages across the county.

The Mobile Libraries in Turkey have played a significant role in bridging the information gap between urban and rural residents. Today, and certainly in the future, they will continue to have this important mission. From the donkey-drawn mobile libraries to the modern ones, they are taking their wares to the heart of an appreciative public in Turkey.



**HISTORICAL
REVIEW**

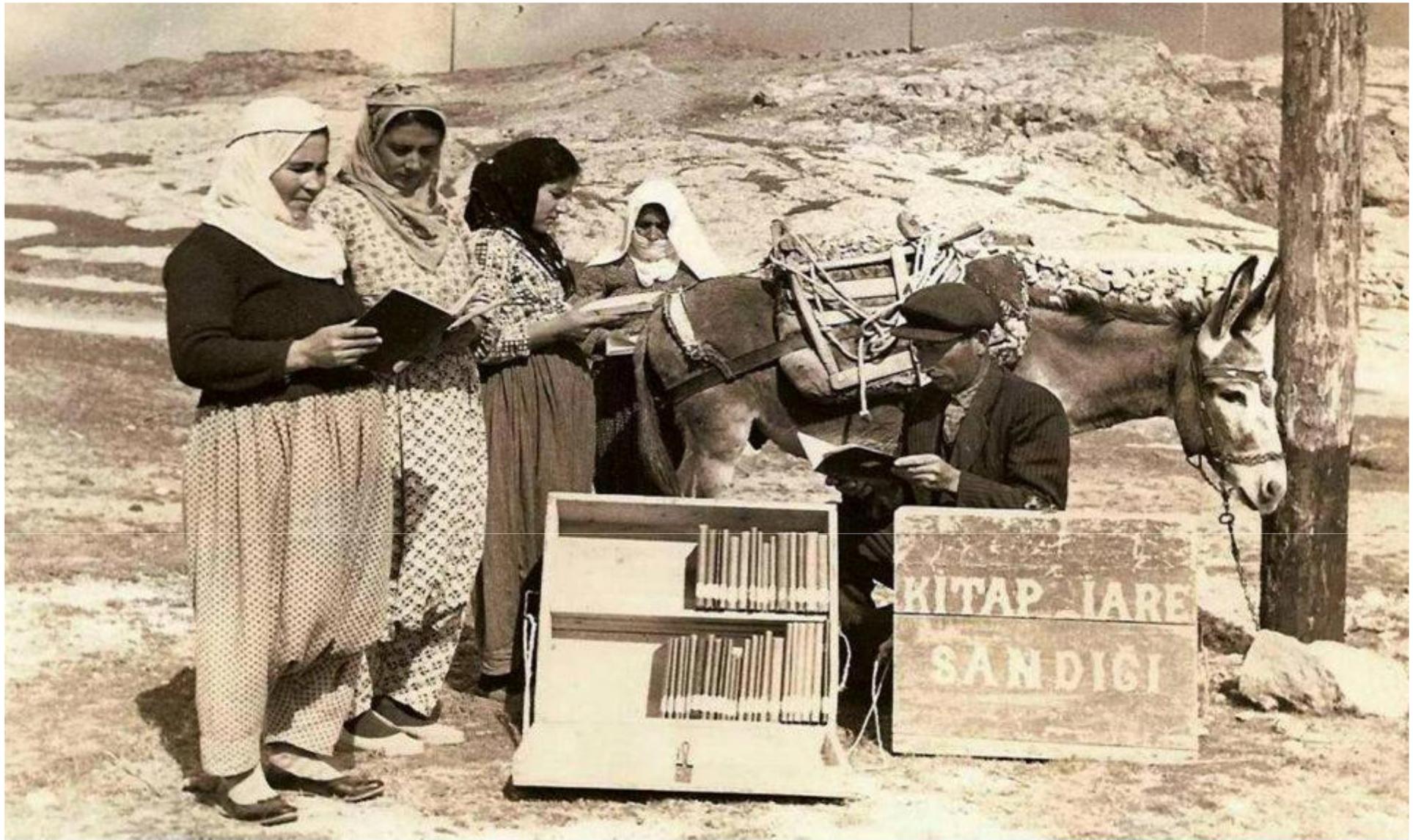


1958 was the year of mobile libraries in Turkey.

The first mobile library service in Turkey was launched by Mustafa Guzelgoz.



It was a donkey-drawn mobile library.



The initiative achieved its goals.

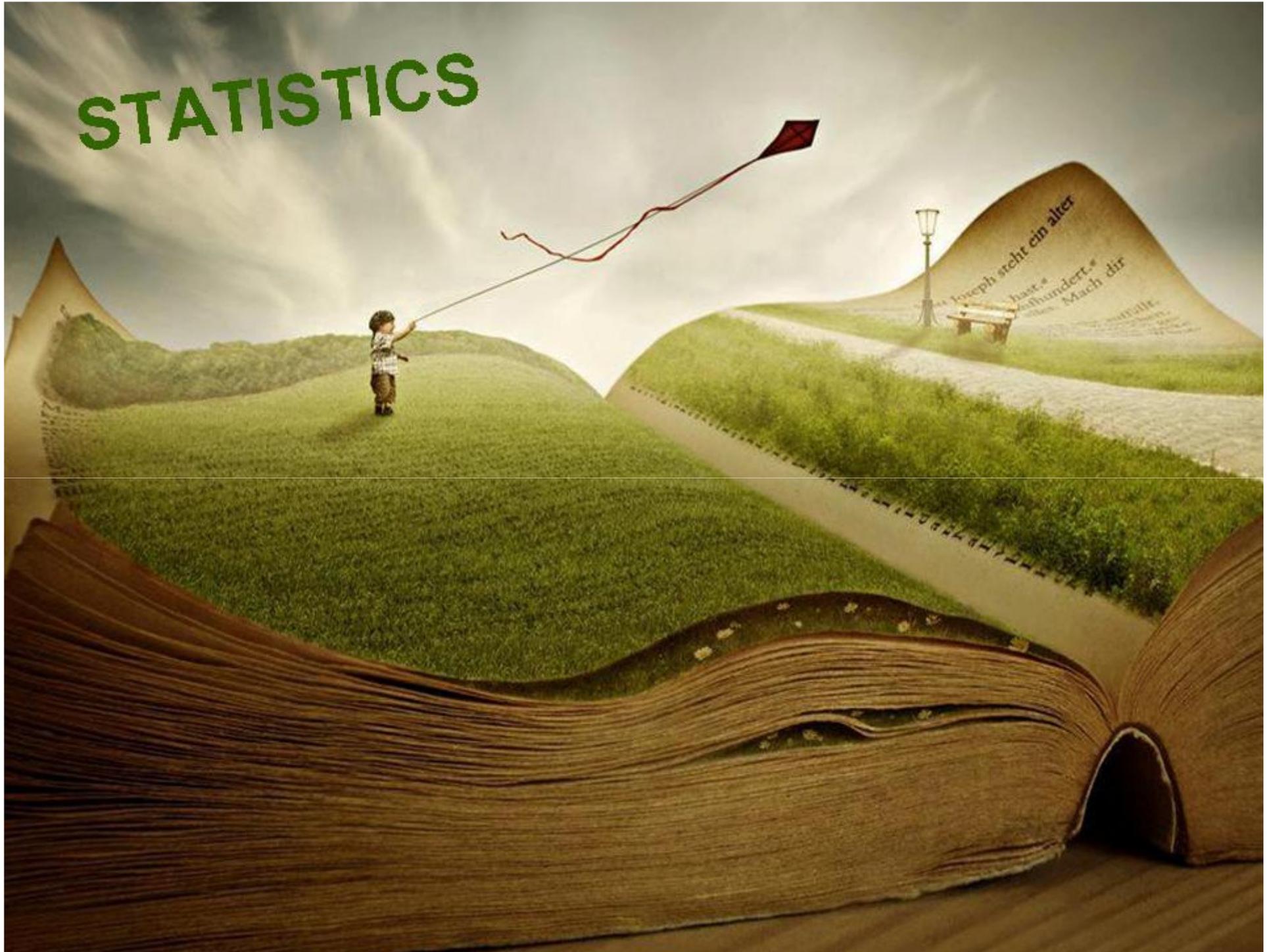


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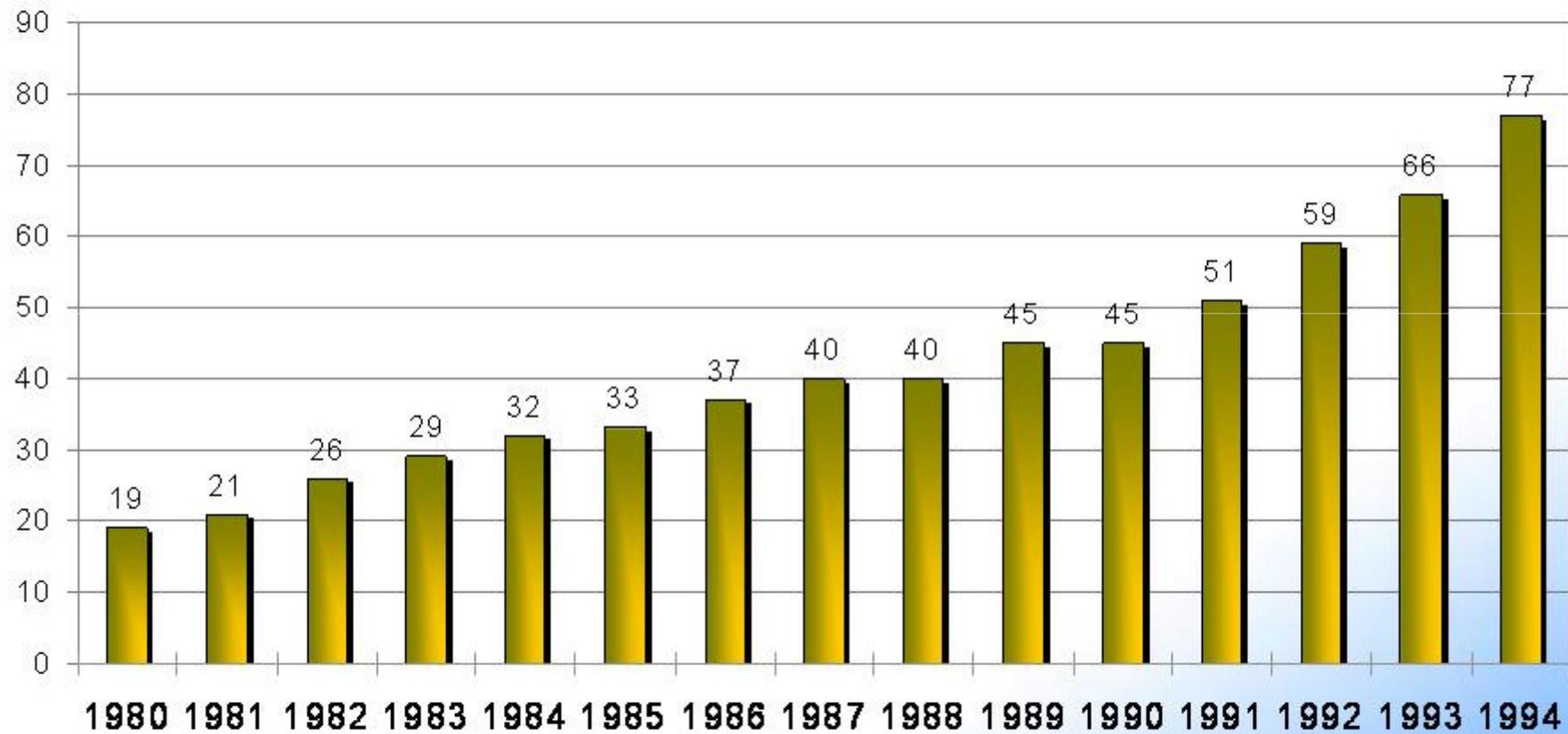
The exact number of mobile libraries in use until the 1980's is hard to determine.



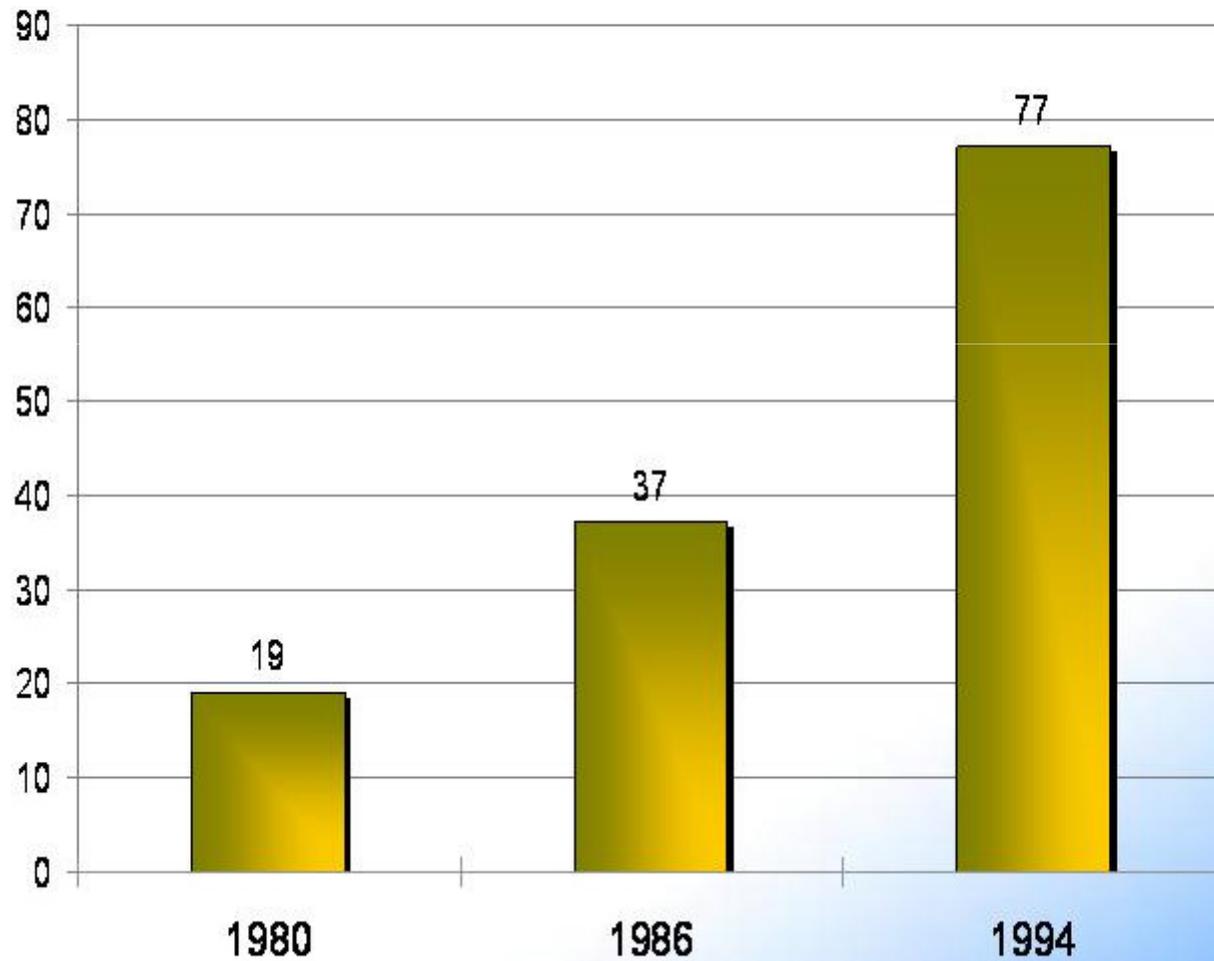
STATISTICS



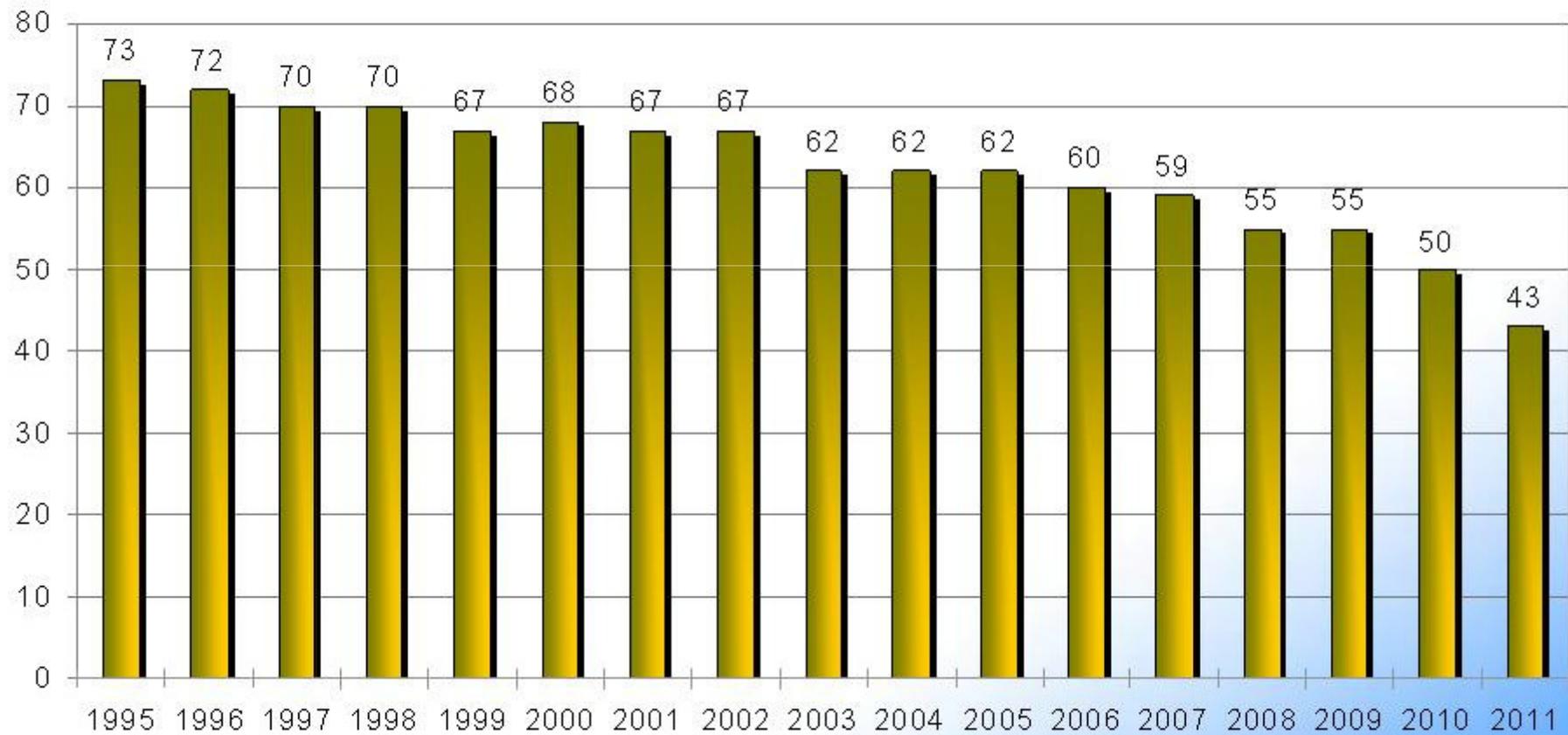
Number of Mobile Libraries (1980-1994)



Number of Mobile Libraries (1980, 1986 and 1994)



Number of Mobile Libraries (1995-2011)



2011

43 Mobile Libraries

6,617 Stops

99,468 Items

29,485 Registered Users

244,323 Loans of Items

737 Places Served

234,236 Visits

CURRENT SITUATION



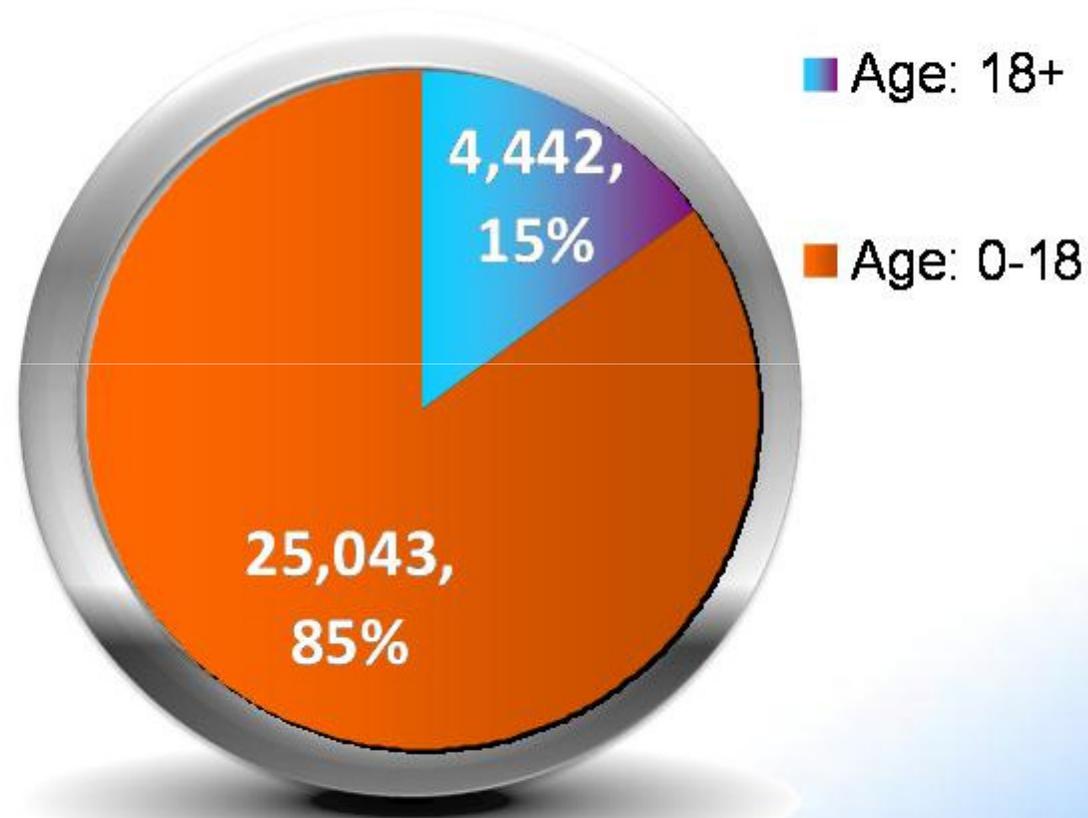
PATRONS





Without their mobile library, their patrons would have no access to library services at all.

Age breakdown of mobile library patrons in Turkey (2011)





Through the diversity of mobile library collections and activities children can discover for themselves the joy of reading and the excitement of exploring new knowledge.



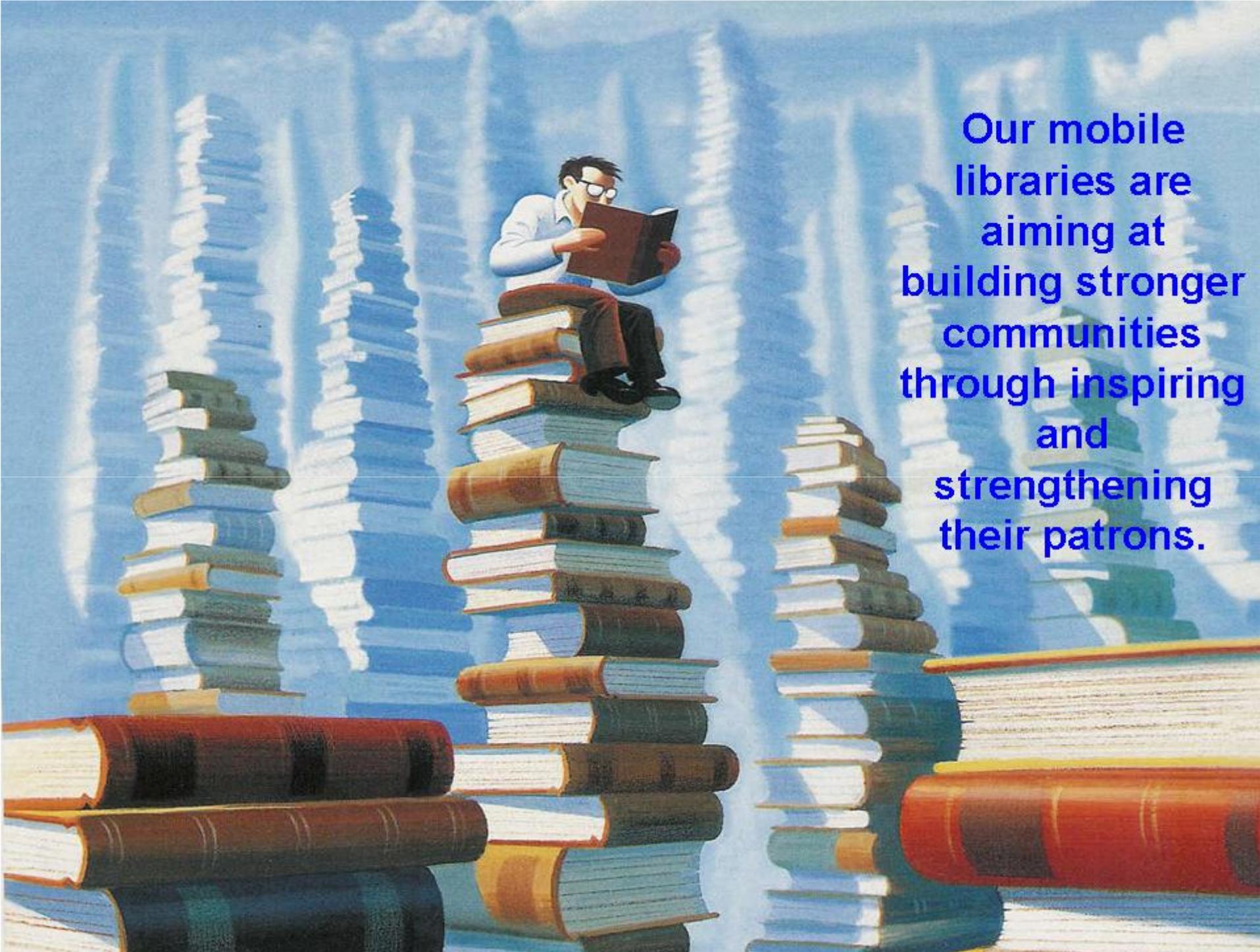
We're offering these kids the opportunity to have fun and develop literacy skills at a developmentally appropriate time.



No matter how close the nearest library facility is, it will not be close enough for many of our elderly who are ill or who do not drive.

Mobile libraries also call at city or town halls.



An illustration of a man with glasses, wearing a light blue shirt and dark trousers, sitting on a tall stack of books. He is holding an open book and reading. The stack of books is the tallest among several other stacks of books of varying heights. The background is a bright blue sky with soft, white clouds. The overall scene conveys a sense of knowledge, learning, and the power of books.

Our mobile libraries are aiming at building stronger communities through inspiring and strengthening their patrons.

VEHICLES



The vehicles differ widely in size and capacity.





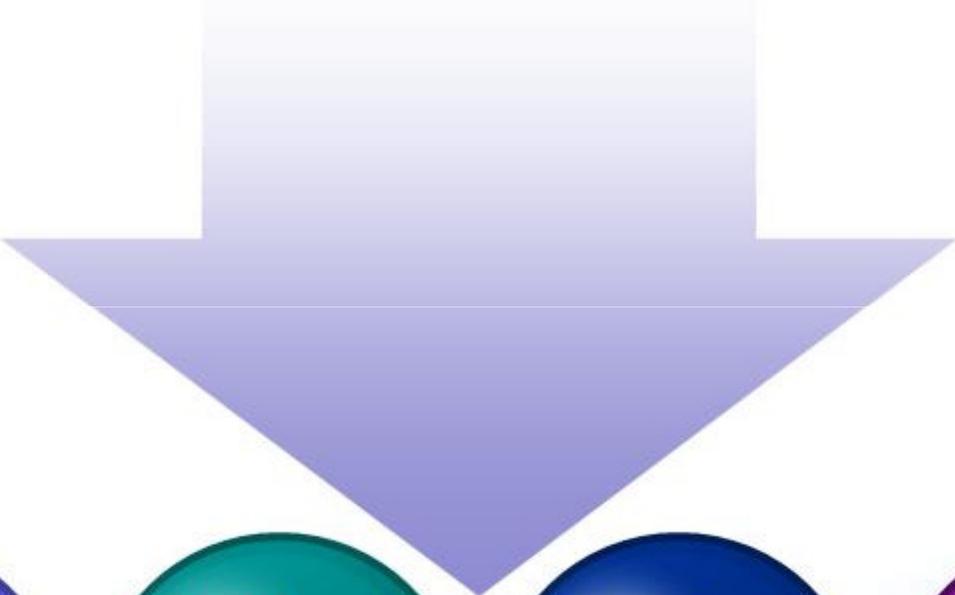
“No furniture so charming as books.”

Sydney Smith

BUDGET



General Directorate of Libraries and Publications



Public
Libraries

Children's
and Youth
Libraries

Literature-
Museum
Libraries

Mobile
Libraries

Mobile libraries' annual operating budget constitutes about %2 of all public library system's operating budget.



STAFF



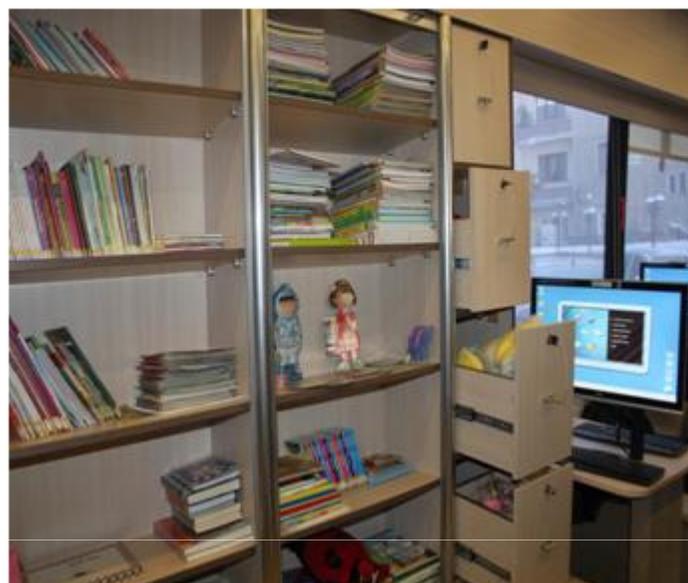
The most important asset of our mobile libraries is



..our dedicated staff...



COOL-TECH-NO-LOGY-ZON



Classic - a book
which people praise
and don't read.

-Mark Twain





By delivering a world of knowledge with our mobile libraries; we are offering our patrons the opportunity to travel around the world.

17 % of the Turkish mobile libraries offer their patrons free Internet access.





FUTURE

PLANS

55 years after the first donkey-drawn mobile library was making its way slowly down dirt roads, mobile libraries in Turkey continue to adapt throughout the many years, remaining fresh to new generations.



Thank You
for your kind attention!

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