



Press release



EUROEAST
CULTURE

Eastern Partnership Culture Programme

book
PLATFORM

Official launch of a 2,5-years' European Union funded project about books and publishing in Armenia, Georgia and Ukraine

The very first press-conference on the occasion of the launch of Book Platform project will take place on the **28th March (Wednesday) at 13:00 h** at the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia, Tbilisi 0105, Sanapiro Str.4. The Book platform project is funded by the European Union and is implemented in frames of the Eastern Partnership Cultural programme.

The project will be presented by a representative of the Delegation of the European Union to Georgia, a representative of the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia, Yana Genova (director of Next Page Foundation), Anna Portarska (project manager), Nino Goginashvilli (project manager for Georgia), Katerina Smagily (project manager for Ukraine) and Vahan Khachatryan (project manager for Armenia). The press conference is kindly hosted by the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia.

THE BOOK PLATFORM is a new EU-funded project to support book sectors in Armenia, Georgia and Ukraine. The project idea is in line with the overall objective of the Eastern Partnership Cultural programme to support the role of culture in the region's sustainable development and promote regional cooperation among public institutions, civil society, cultural and academic organisations in the Eastern Partnership region and with the European Union.

On the 26-27th March, here in Tbilisi the project started with the first training on strategic planning and fundraising for non-governmental organizations and associations. The training gathered 21 participants coming from Georgia, Armenia and Ukraine and was moderated by the British expert in cultural management Sue Kay.

Over the next two and a half years the book sectors in Armenia, Georgia and Ukraine will be getting a helping hand in overcoming the challenges that publishing, writing and translating faces today. The project is for everybody that is professionally involved and concerned about the future of the book: publishers, writers, translators, booksellers, librarians and their associations but also for public bodies in the cultural sphere and for cultural organizations. In a long-term perspective the project is about the readers who have the right to access to high quality books, in their own languages and at affordable prices.

The activities of the project target three crucial themes for any publishing sector:

THE INDUSTRY or how publishers can continue playing their role of providing high quality books while remaining commercially viable;

THE READERSHIP or what happens to reading audiences in the 21st century and how they can be attracted to books;

THE INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE or how readers and writers communicate across cultures via translations and how to open-up literatures for more translations.

More follows

In the next few years the project will offer to Georgian, Armenian and Ukrainian book professionals the possibility to increase their skills and knowledge, to get involved in international networks with colleagues abroad and to acquire key data that will help taking smart decisions about the future.

In cooperation with partners in the countries, we will offer:

- 9 training workshops by internationally recognized trainers and local co-trainers; 10 distant mentorship schemes and 10 internships of one week each in partner organizations abroad;
- quantitative and qualitative studies on the publishing industries, on literary translations flows and on reading habits in each of the three countries. All studies will be accompanied by recommendations and results will be discussed with public bodies, media and book professionals;
- participation in book events abroad and editorial visits of European colleagues to the three countries. This part of the program will aim at helping the development of resources for promotion of contemporary literature from the three countries and to open up local literary scenes to the international market.

These activities will include more than 190 trainees, 10 key book figures from EU countries, 12 studies, more than 10 public events in the countries and abroad, and the collective efforts of 30 key organizations that are so far involved in the project.

And much more than that: the Book Platform is to be indeed a platform of real professional and human exchange between colleagues from participating countries but also with the ones in the European Union.

Draft test version of the website is to be found at www.bookplatform.org

Implementing partnership

The Project Lead is Next Page Foundation (Sofia, Bulgaria) in partnership with the National Publishers Association (Armenia), the Georgian Book Publishers Association (Georgia), the Renaissance Foundation (Ukraine) and the Council of European Associations of Literary Translators (Brussels). In addition, the project got a letter of support by the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia.

Financially, the project is so far backed up by a grant kindly provided by the European Union, by Next Page Foundation's and partners' own contributions.

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The European Commission is the EU's executive body.

"The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders".

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