

Next Page Foundation

A brief summary of projects completed in the period 2002-2010

I. OVERVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

The Next Page Foundation was found in early 2001 as the first spin-off organization of the OSI Information Program. Over the first 3 years the Foundation was directing its efforts in establishing itself as an independent entity and implementing a strategy largely based on the twofold strategic approach taken by the former OSI publishing programs, that is, to support content provision (e.g. translations) and to create the conditions under which quality content can be published and distributed (e.g. infrastructural projects). During this period, the Foundation was to a big extent acting as an OSI network program and an umbrella for the - then vigorous - Soros Foundations publishing network.

Since late 2004, Next Page started positioning itself as an independent entity more effectively via developing its own programs and projects, creating new partnerships and alliances, and starting more successful fundraising. This coincided with the enlargement of its geographical area of activities which in 2005 incorporated a new and challenging area - the Arabic-speaking world.

Some examples of the different types of impact of the work of the Foundation so far include:

1. Content provision by direct co-funding for translations that results in a increased diversity and quality of book production in the target languages.

⇒ contributed towards the publication of **271 book and other publications** of which:

80 translations in 16 languages on media, Islam, cultural policy, Balkan history, gender, gay&lesbian and other current political issues;

62 East-East translations, primarily across the new "EU-divide";

10 co-productions between publishers of Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia;

49 publications in Romani language (8 available also in digital formats) distributed in 12 countries;

2 original titles for young adults published bi-lingually (Romani and local language);

9 translations of contemporary Arabic authors into East European languages;.

15 translations into Arabic of works from Iran, Turkey and India;

9 translations into Arabic of works by Eastern European authors;

4 original Arabic books for young adults;

31 original comics works of diversity issues

⇒ provided **free e-access to 11 translations** of key books on media issues in 5 CEE languages thus also piloting a new form of cooperation between copyright holders;

⇒ launched the **Small Digital Romani Library**: online digital full-text access to the content of 8 Romani titles and related information;

⇒ co-funded and promoted **RomLex**, the richest freely accessible electronic resource of Romani language and its varieties;

⇒ stimulated **alliances between CEE cultural journals** for boosting the flow of translations between them that resulted in the publication of 2270 pages by 120 authors in 13 periodicals;

- ⇒ stimulated revitalization of the library and publishing exchange in former Yugoslavia by launching a **library exchange scheme comprising of 2,538 titles**;
- ⇒ helped the launching of the first **fully functioning Books-in-Print catalogues in Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia that cover more than 80% of the annual book production.**

2. Convener, network builder and debate facilitator

- ⇒ started informal syndicates on several key issues such as the network b/w authors, publishers and researchers for **exploring the process of “internationalization” of written Romani language**;
- ⇒ **initiated consortia** and sustainable partnership alliances: on reading development for young adults - for Roma (through *Our Stories* project) and in the Arab world (through *Read Right Now* project) as well as between CEE cultural journals;
- ⇒ launched a **mobility scheme for cultural journalists** in Eastern Europe for 8 study visits in 7 countries’;
- ⇒ bridged international organizations and numerous **grass-roots Roma organizations** in CEE for sustainable partnership beyond the Foundations’ projects;
- ⇒ co-organized **young adult literature festivals** in Palestine and Egypt for over 100 participants;
- ⇒ catalyzed the creation of a young adults section (500+ visitors a day) in a **peer-to-peer writing website** www.culturalworkshop.slangonline.com;
- ⇒ facilitated **cooperation between comics authors from Eastern Europe and the Arab world** within the *comiXculture 2* project gathering 13 participants from 7 countries.

3. Research

- ⇒ completed and distributed 5 pioneering and nationally representative qualitative studies **on readership in the Arab world** (presented in Cairo and Frankfurt, featured in numerous Arabic and international media as well as in academic and policy studies);
- ⇒ carried out a **study on Arabic translation policies**, players and issues that was presented at three major Arabic and one international event; freely accessible electronically, 100 printed copies published on demand and widely quoted in media, by NGOs and used in university courses;
- ⇒ 1 qualitative research study on the **usage of IT tools by Arab publishers**;
- ⇒ 2 groundbreaking studies on current situation of **Kurdish-language publishing** in a) Turkey and b) Syria. Their printed versions got 9 reviews in Turkish and Kurdish media for less than a month;
- ⇒ 1 qualitative research study on the current and potential **applications of PoD technology** in Serbia;
- ⇒ 1 pioneering methodology and 3 studies on the **impact of Translation Project** scheme in Ukraine, Bulgaria and Lithuania;
- ⇒ commissioned and disseminated a *Manual for Romani Publishers* with practical guidelines for this specific field and *Recommendation Paper on Publishing in Romani* with an overview of the area and scenarios for future development;
- ⇒ developed the first ever mapping of **contemporary literary authors from Roma origin** in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, and documented their publications;
- ⇒ commissioned and disseminated *Promoting Reading among Roma* - guidelines for Roma educators, authors and publishers on effective approaches for development of reading habits and audiences;
- ⇒ *Creating Multicultural Books for Children* - guidelines for authors of books for Romani

children;

⇒ commissioned and co-funded the first ever *Book Market Survey of Serbia*;

⇒ developed the research project *Why Do We Speak Like That? Language Changes in the Transition Period* analyzing the post-1989 changes in language in Ukraine and Bulgaria and resulting in 8 original research papers;

⇒ researched and documented the *Translation Flow between East European Languages and Arabic and Turkish 1989-2010* resulting in 24 surveys of the translations situation between different language combinations;

⇒ launched and carried out the first ever bibliography and qualitative study of literary translations from Bulgarian into other languages published in *Translation and Transition. Bulgarian Literature in Translation in the period 1989-2010*, together with recommendations for an enhanced policy for promoting Bulgarian literature.

4. Promotion / raising awareness on neglected issues

⇒ via the translations support project, introduced new political concepts in the local languages of translation and thus indirectly influenced decision- and opinion-makers such as politicians, experts, media and NGOs

⇒ introduced the very notion of cross-border distribution of Romani publications (by clusters of language varieties) and facilitated international distribution for all of its 40+ supported publications;

⇒ facilitated inclusion of Romani publications into the mainstream distribution networks of their countries of publication (app. 70% of supported Romani publications can be found in mainstream bookshops);

⇒ raised the profile of books in Romani through offering higher quality and a wider range of materials for this group;

⇒ piloted innovative promotion techniques for East-East book translations by co-funding 4 large promotion projects by local publishers (incl. 10 countries, 19 authors, 20 events);

⇒ introduced the notion of socially engaged comics works in Bulgaria, and supported development of creative practices in this area within the *comixculture 1* project;

⇒ boosted the development of original and contemporary literary works for young adults in two different language areas: Roma in the Balkans (*Our Stories* project) and 3 Arabic-speaking countries (*Read Write Now* project)

5. Policy

Albeit NP does not have a separate program line for policy projects, most of its programs have a policy component. Some examples of successes in the field include:

⇒ “Roma reading” issue included in the agenda of key international organizations working on reading development (IRA, IBBY, CTI);

⇒ campaigned for best practices and encouraged local efforts for **improving state policies in promotion of translations** by providing a forum for exchange of ideas between key officials from 1) CEE via the conference “*Promoting Translations - Ideas, Practices, Innovations*” conference, Vienna 2006, 33 participants from 24 organizations and 2) in the Arab world via a panel discussion on “*Prospects for Promotion of Arabic Literature Abroad*”, Amman 2006 and 3) in Bulgaria within the project *Translation and Transition*.

⇒ supported further development of the **European foreign cultural policy** and the efforts of the Anna Lindh Foundation for Intercultural Dialogue by providing evidence-based studies and recommendations on the translations flows between South Mediterranean and EU countries;

⇒ backed-up **public policies in promotion of reading and literacy** in several Arab countries with quantitative data of the What Arabs Read survey

6. Capacity building

⇒ created a pool of **experienced Roma publishers** in CEE and the Balkans by providing 2 international trainings for 20+ participants, a series of face-to-face consultations and internships with mainstream publishers;

⇒ increased competencies of **children authors from Romani origin** via 2 international and 3 national workshops as well as numerous face-to-face consultations on creating multicultural books for children;

individual mentoring of 10 Roma authors;

⇒ developed **network of expertise on young adult literature** comprising of 10 Arab authors, 2 libraries, 4 NGOs and cultural institutions;

⇒ increased level of professional knowledge and skills of **Serbian and Croatian publishers** by providing 9 trainings seminars for a total of 216 participants, and 48 individual consultations;

⇒ informally **advised** 2 cultural ministries (Bulgaria and Ukraine) on public strategies for promotion of literature abroad;

⇒ indirectly: through on-going consultations for grantees (particularly in the *Romani Publications program*);

⇒ assisted in further development of creative skills in 22 young Bulgarian comics creators by the first workshop on socially engaged comics in the country.

7. New ideas and solutions

⇒ enlarged the **regional book market in former Yugoslavia** by forging regional cooperation (1 fully functioning distribution center with a regional outreach; 40 mobility grants);

⇒ initiated a project for **digitalization of the Romani literature** heritage and copyrighted materials by the 24 libraries participating in The European Library - TEL project;

⇒ increased awareness of the value of the **e-access and PoD amongst Roma publishers** and authors with whom the project collaborated via workshops and consultations;

⇒ Launched South-South translations grant program. Developed and customized the program to the Arab publishing context;

⇒ Initiated a pilot for transfer of know-how on promotion of “marginal” literatures b/w CEE and key Arab players in the field;

⇒ Developed creative approach and secured 3rd party co-funding for tackling issues in young adult literature in 4 Arab countries.