

Ljubljana UNESCO City of Literature

Membership

Monitoring

Report

2015–2019



Organizacija Združenih
narodov za izobraževanje,
znanost in kulturo



Mestna občina
Ljubljana

**LJUBLJANA:
MESTO/CITY
OF/LITERA-
TURE ...**

Table of Contents

2	1. Executive Summary	3
	2. General Information	6
	3. Contribution to the Programme's Global Management	7
	4. Major Initiatives Implemented at the Local and City Level to Achieve the Objectives of the UCCN	8
	5. Major Initiatives Implemented through Inter-city and International Cooperation to Achieve the Objectives of the UCCN	19
	6. Proposed Action Plan for the Forthcoming Mid-Term Period of Four Years	24
	7. Appendices	26

1. Executive Summary

3



Introduction

Ljubljana has been a proud member of the UCCN since December 2015, when it became committed to expanding the excellent heritage of Ljubljana as the UNESCO World Book Capital of 2010, fostering a politics of openness and accessibility of culture, especially in regards to books.

In Ljubljana, the book has – even in the digital age – retained its central status in the lives of both individuals and society as a whole, remaining the driving force in the development of humankind and the humanisation of the world. Looking back over the first four years of membership in the UCCN, one is reminded of the many lasting additions and countless events accomplished by artists of all ages and various artistic expressions, together with the realisation of how the book has – after a legacy of half a millennium – finally found a permanent home in Ljubljana.

As a city of literature, Ljubljana is in the broadest sense – together with its major strategic documents – aligned with and conforms to the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, promoting the founding principles of UNESCO, freedom of speech, human rights, and the UCCN's Mission Statement. Utmost consideration is given to the accessibility of books as the foundation of knowledge, creativity, and the transmission of information, thereby fulfilling the terms of the application.

2015 saw the establishment of Vodnik Homestead (Vodnikova domačija), a house of reading, writing and storytelling, just outside the city centre. Vodnik Homestead has since become a lively literary hub, having hosted well over 50,000 visitors over the years and initiated programmes for various target audiences. Among these are two important literary festivals, the Children's Book Festival (Otroški knjižni festival) and Etc. (Itn.), a festival of socially engaged writing, which is organised by and for young people. Vodnik Homestead has also put due emphasis on book illustration, an artform with a long-standing tradition in Slovenia with many exceptional artists who work in this field.

An expansion of the centre for illustration is planned for the Old Sugar Factory Palace (Palača Cukrarna), one wing of the Old sugar Factory, a historic building that the City Council will have renovated by 2023. As the Old Sugar Factory Palace will also house a new centre for young people, where programmes focused on younger audiences will coexist with those aimed at fostering a richer reading culture in general.

To foreground the significance of the availability of books and of building one's own library at home, the project Ljubljana Reads (Ljubljana bere) presents all three-year-olds, first-graders and fourth-graders with a chosen book of the highest literary quality.

Fabula, the city's principal literary festival, invites the world's most celebrated writers to Ljubljana and publishes their work in translation at an affordable price.

All in all, Ljubljana supports a rich array of literary events, thus underlining the importance of the book and encouraging people to read.

The largest literary organisation in the city is the Ljubljana City Library (Mestna knjižnica Ljubljana).

Ljubljana, having been a member of ICORN since 2011, a network giving shelter to writers and artists at risk, fulfills its commitment to being an open city that encourages international exchange. To date, the city has given shelter to six artists, forced to leave their countries on account of their writing and of endorsing human rights.

In 2016, since the city implemented the most changes towards building a more sustainable development and becoming environment friendly in the least amount of time, Ljubljana was nominated the European Green Capital (an initiative of the European Commission). Furthermore, Ljubljana is a member of the Zero Waste Europe network, having been Europe's first Zero Waste capital. The city has committed to the sustained encouragement of recycling, the prevention of waste production, and the reduction of the amount of food waste.

In 2019, the City Council has supported various book-related programmes and projects by means of two public calls for tenders with a net worth of €95,000; Vodnik Homestead with UNESCO City of Literature Office was supported financially with €140,000, the Ljubljana City Library with €8,400,000.

Finally, the latest official report on book reading and buying habits needs to be briefly addressed. Every five years a nation-wide survey is carried out, with the 2019 results, which were published in *The Book and its Readers VI (Knjiga in bralci VI)*, proving to be cause for concern. Compared to the results of the previous survey, the number of people who do not buy a single book in a year has risen, as has, even more alarmingly, the number of people who do not consider themselves readers at all.

There is no doubt that these issues will have to be addressed within a broader perspective and on a national level. While some measures have already been implemented – such as reduced VAT for books which comes into effect on January 1, 2020 – much work still remains to be done. Therefore, many of the City of Literature's efforts are geared towards consolidating the publishing industry, at least on the level of the city, to better coordinate all stakeholders and make their efforts more recognisable and effective. Some of the related activities include the placing of literature within contexts where it has not been present before (e.g. a bookshelf and literary events at the Ljubljana Jazz Festival or book section at

.....

5

the Beavers (Bobri), a festival for young people), a series of articles (and a book) on home libraries, or the joint promotion of literary events, not least as part of the City of Literature's newly launched website.

Finally, a city of literature has to be for everyone interested in books, be it professionals of the trade or simply readers. Ljubljana offers space to everyone – including publishers, readers, book illustrators, translators, writers, to name but a few. It is a literary home where they can collaborate and coexist peacefully.

2. General Information

6

We nurture
literature here.

2. 1. Name of the city

Ljubljana

2. 2. Country

Slovenia

2. 3. Creative field

Literature

2. 4. Date of designation

2015

2. 5. Date of submission of the current report

2019

2. 6. Entity responsible for the report

Ljubljana City Council, Department for Culture
Ljubljana UNESCO City of Literature office

2. 7. Previous reports submitted and dates

0

2. 8. Focal points of interest

Damjan Zorc, Coordinator
Divja misel, Inštitut za neprofitno komunikacijo
Vodnikova cesta 65
1000 Ljubljana
Slovenia
+386 41 541 306
damjan@ljubljanacityofliterature.com
www.ljubljanacityofliterature.com

3. Contribution to the Programme's Global Management

7

We talk

literature here.

3. 1. Number of UCCN Annual Meetings attended in the last four years

Östersund, Sweden: 2016

Enghien-les-Bains, France: 2017

Kraków, Poland: 2018

Fabriano: 2019

3. 2. Hosting of an UCCN Annual Meeting and dates

N/A

3. 3. Hosting of a working or coordination meeting addressed to one or more specific UCCN creative field representatives

Plans are currently underway to host the subnetwork meeting in Ljubljana in 2022.

3. 4. Hosting of an international conference or meeting on specific issues salient to the Creative Cities with a large participation of members of the Network

N/A

3. 5. Financial and/or in-kind support provided to UNESCO's Secretariat in order to ensure the management, communication and visibility of the UCCN (type of contribution, estimated value, main objectives, and dates)

The Ljubljana City of Literature Office supports UNESCO financially and in in-kind terms through attending the annual UCCN conferences and at least once a year at the subnetwork meetings. The head of the Department for Culture of the Ljubljana City Council also regularly attends meetings, both the general meetings and those of the subgroup.

The City of Literature office was also a member of the Communications & Promotions Working Group in the period 2016–2018, working actively towards building an effective network, building a strategic plan for the network and improving communication, knowledge-sharing and consolidation of activities.

3. 6. Serving as cluster coordinator or deputy coordinator and period

Damjan Zorc has served as Deputy Coordinator to the cluster coordinator Sandeep Mahal from Nottingham since 2018 (a four-year term).

3. 7. Participation in the evaluation of previous applications (number of applications evaluated per Call for Application), of previous Membership Monitoring Reports (number of reports evaluated per reporting exercise)

The City of Literature office has participated in the review and assessment of applications of aspirant cities. In 2017 it reviewed and assessed applications from thirteen cities. In 2019, it has done so for eighteen cities that wanted to join the network.

4. Major Initiatives Implemented at the Local and City Level to Achieve the Objectives of the UCCN

8

We breathe
literature here.

The UNESCO Creative Cities Network objectives:

- 1) Strengthen international cooperation between cities that have recognised creativity as a strategic factor of their sustainable development.
- 2) Stimulate and enhance initiatives led by member cities to make creativity an essential component of urban development, notably through partnerships involving the public and private sectors and civil society.
- 3) Strengthen the creation, production, distribution and dissemination of cultural activities, goods and services.
- 4) Develop hubs of creativity and innovation and broaden opportunities for creators and professionals in the cultural sector.
- 5) Improve access to and participation in cultural life as well as the enjoyment of cultural goods and services, notably for marginalized or vulnerable groups and individuals.
- 6) Fully integrate culture and creativity into local development strategies and plans.

Member of ICORN

SDG: 10, 16

UCCN Objectives: 1, 4, 5

Ljubljana has been a member of the International Cities of Refuge Network (ICORN) since 2011 and gives refuge to persecuted writers and artists from around the world who were exiled from their own countries and found a safe new home for writing and creating a new social network in Ljubljana. In May 2014, Ljubljana hosted the ICORN General Assembly, where the term 'writer' was first enlarged to include musicians and visual artists.

In Slovenia, the residency is managed by the Department for Culture of the Ljubljana City Council and the Ljubljana City Library, in cooperation with the Slovene PEN Centre. So far, Ljubljana has hosted Moroccan journalists and human rights defenders Ali Amar and Zineb El Rhazoui, Ethiopian writer and journalist Girma T. Fantaye – who in 2019 was able to go back home after almost 10 years of exile – and Iraqi poet and journalist Sameer Sayegh. Currently, the city is hosting an Iranian journalist and human rights activist Shiva Nazarahari and her husband Pooyesh Azizeddin, also a human rights activist and cultural worker.

The hosted writers took part in all of the major literary festivals in Slovenia: Fabula, Days of Poetry and Wine, Vilenica and Faces of Peace. Ljubljana City Library also started a series of events entitled Literature in Exile to give voice to all exiled writers and artists in the country and abroad.

The City of Ljubljana joined ICORN when holding the title of the World Book Capital with a clear vision to promote the values of freedom of thought and expression, as well as hospitality by giving the hosted writers and artists a space to live, create and continue to express themselves – to be safe, but not silent.

Initiatives at the City Level

Joint Promotion of Literary Activities and the City of Literature

SDG: 4, 9, 11

UCCN Objectives: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

As the consolidation of all literary stakeholders and activities is among the City of Literature's topmost priorities, several key initiatives have been implemented. Each month the City of Literature asks organisers to submit their selection of literary events, among which ten are chosen for inclusion in posters and leaflets for distribution around the city (venues, cafés, libraries, bookshops, public ad spaces), as well as for a paid ad in a literary magazine and the municipal newspaper with a reach of around 130,000 households. The criteria are: quality, diversity of organisers, venues, target groups.

The City of Literature also commissions literary portraits of venerable individuals from the field of literature, and essays by known writers and editors to get different views on what it means to be a City of Literature. A booklet of the essays was published both in Slovene and English.

Home Libraries

SDG: 4, 9, 11

UCCN Objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

In 2018, the City of Literature office initiated a project on home libraries with *Outsider*, a renowned magazine of architecture and design. For each issue, a piece is commissioned on a library in the home of known residents of Ljubljana from all walks of life, not only literature. The aim of this project is to promote reading to reach a new public: stressing the importance of actually building and owning a library at home, connecting interesting people in the city with books, promoting the buying of books and of reading outside of the field of literature.

In 2019, the nine articles written so far have been compiled into a book and published.

In the near future, the City of Literature office intends to collaborate on this with other Cities of Literature, many of which have shown interest in the project.



Literary Breakfasts

SDG: 8, 9, 11, 17

UCCN Objectives: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Once a season the City of Literature office brings together relevant partners and those interested in literature. The event is of an internal nature during work hours in the morning to create an intimate environment, it is not open to the wider public and media. The participants listen to short presentations on relevant topics. Before and after the presentation there is a chance to connect and talk about important dilemmas and projects and ideas in a friendly manner. The idea is to connect relevant partners and to promote the fact that the UNESCO title is something everyone can benefit from – to connect, work together, showcase important cases, share information and knowledge.



Literary Awards

The highest national awards for arts and culture, the Prešeren and the Prešeren Fund Awards, are awarded annually at a ceremony in Ljubljana. Though the awards are not limited to literature, the list of recipients includes many writers as well. Other awards for writers, illustrators, or translators connected with the city, include but are not limited to: the Jenko Award (poetry), the Kresnik (best novel), the Župančič Award (the highest award by the municipality), the Stritar Award (young critics), the Sovre Award (accomplished translators), the Desetnica (children's/YA), the Critics' Sieve (kritiško sito, book of the year), the Zlatirepec (comics), as well as several others connected with the book fair (best debut, book of the year in various categories, best design etc.).

Literary Magazines

Literary magazines have always played an important part in the history and development of the Slovene language, and continue to do so in the present. In Ljubljana, two of the country's most esteemed literary magazines are published: *Sodobnost*, officially the oldest literary magazine in Slovenia, and *Literatura*, having celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2019. Others include *Mentor*, a magazine for (mostly) aspiring writers, or *Primerjalna književnost*,

a journal published by the Slovenian Comparative Literature Association. In the past, there have been several others, such as the esteemed *Nova revija* or the alternative *Idiot*. However, there are also several literary magazines being published online by publishers from Ljubljana: *www.ludliteratura.si* (published by LUD Literatura), *AirBeletrina* (published by Beletrina) or *Vrabc Anarhist* (published by the Slovene Writers' Association).

Literary Spaces

In addition to libraries, bookshops, publishing houses – of which the vast majority are situated in Ljubljana – and literary- or publishing-related organizations – such as, among others, the Slovene Writers' Association or the Chamber of Publishers and Booksellers – there are many spaces, either wholly dedicated to literature or which occasionally are keen to support it. The Trubar House of Literature (a division of the City Library) has been a central literary venue since 2010, when Ljubljana was the UNESCO World Book Capital. Moreover, in 2015, at the supervision of the Department for Culture of the City Council of Ljubljana, Vodnik Homestead became a dedicated 'house of reading, writing, and storytelling,' and has since grown into one of the most innovative and important literary venues in the city.

Literature is also welcome at a large number of cafés, performance spaces or other spaces, which might primarily be connected to other arts, such as cinemas or theatres.

Trubar House of Literature (Trubarjeva hiša literature)

Located in the old centre of Ljubljana, the Trubar House of Literature is the central place dedicated to hosting literary events, promoting the culture of reading and fostering an open dialogue on wider cultural topics. It was opened in 2010 when Ljubljana was the UNESCO World Book Capital, and has hosted innumerable events, ranging from discussion groups, workshops, readings, symposia and performances, as well as certain singular events that were part of larger festivals, such as Vilenica. In almost a decade, it has forged alliances with many other houses of literature across Europe, whereas currently it is actively supporting Ljubljana's bid for the UNESCO European Capital of Culture. The Trubar House of Literature is a division of the city library.

Vodnik Homestead (Vodnikova domačija)

Vodnik Homestead – the birthplace of Slovenia's first poet, Valentin Vodnik – is situated in the Šiška district and is an excellent example of the transformation of a building which is part of the national cultural heritage into a lively urban literary hub. The organisation develops and successfully implements several programmes, aimed at promoting books and reading for different age groups, bringing together different stakeholders. Both special programmes for schools as well as regular programmes for children innovatively put the book on stage, complete with live music, storytelling, and graphic animation. Several literary series endorse underrepresented fields and specific target groups (e.g., African literature, authors from ex-Yugoslavia, the writing of refugees, reading aloud for the elderly). Vodnik Homestead organises two festivals: Etc. (Itn.), a festival of socially engaged writing for young people, and the Children's Book Festival (Otroški knjižni festival), both developing novel approaches to the presentation of books and authors. Numerous events advocate the buying of books, something that is paramount for such a narrow linguistic area as Slovenia and the survival of its publishers. Vodnik Homestead also includes a dedicated Writing Room, supporting artists and offering space not only for distraction-free creation, but also for writing workshops. Vodnik Homestead's gallery, with its many exhibitions and

successful trade shows, is quickly becoming a centre for illustration that promotes and brings illustrators together.

Vodnik Homestead is supported by the Department for Culture of the City Council. Since May 2015, when it was established as a house of reading, writing and storytelling, it has hosted more than 1,000 events with a total attendance of 50,000 people.

The City Reads (Mesto bere)

SDG: 4, 5, 10

UCCN Objectives: 3, 4, 5, 6

For almost ten years, this project – one of many – led by the Ljubljana City Library, has brought together the readers of Ljubljana in an exciting reading adventure. Every year the project focuses on the literature of a chosen country or region (e.g. Europe, North America, South America, Asia, Africa, Australia, etc.), inviting readers to read selected titles and partake in group activities, discussions and a competition with prizes.

Other notable projects of the Ljubljana City Library include Reading Month, Workplace Library (a library bookshelf for businesses), workshops for all generations, computer and media literacy classes, reading initiatives for families, events in other languages (for residents not fluent in Slovene), and events demonstrating the varieties of cultures and promoting a tolerant society.

Events, Festivals

Ljubljana is the site of several festivals, literary or otherwise: some of them of major importance for both the literary field and the cultural life of the city; others smaller in scope, but all the more focused on a particular niche or topic. Some notable examples are listed below.

Moreover, the major literary festivals which take place in different locations than Ljubljana, include additional events in Ljubljana. Among them are Pranger (a unique international meeting of literary critics, poets, and translators, fostering the culture of civilised yet critical dialogue), Days of Poetry and Wine (Dnevi poezije in vina, the most esteemed international poetry festival in the region), Vilenica (the traditional international meeting of writers from Central Europe, along with the international Vilenica Award, a scholarship and a writer in residence).

In fact, the largest part of the organisers of these events are based in Ljubljana (as is the case with the publishing house Beletrina, the organiser of the Days of Poetry and Wine in Ptuj and the Slovene Writers' Association, the organiser of Vilenica which traditionally takes place in the Karst region, famously including an event in the Vilenica cave). The decentralisation of these festivals aims to also bring culture to other parts of the country.

Among related accomplishments of and for the City of Literature is the inclusion of literature in certain other festivals and cultural activities where it might have been absent before. Examples include a pop-up bookshop and literary events at the Ljubljana Jazz Festival (with a curated selection of literature, related to jazz and creative practices in music), literary events at Beavers (Bobri), a festival of culture and art education aimed at children and young people (a festival that previously included almost no literary events at all), as well as Summer on the Big Screen and Between the Covers (Poletje na platnu in med platnicami), a new festival merging literature with cinema, complete with a pop-up bookshop.

With all these activities, Ljubljana is a true literary crossroads, impossible to miss or avoid.

Slovene Book Fair (Slovenski knjižni sejem)

SDG: 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 13, 16, 17

UCCN Objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Since 1972, the fair has, in 35 editions, brought together more than a hundred publishers, tens of thousands of visitors, international guests, local and foreign authors, and schools. It also hosts several hundred events. Besides being the main professional publishing event, it is, as a trade fair, also a crucial event for book sales. It takes place in November at the Cankarjev dom Culture and Congress Centre.

For the third time in a row Ljubljana, City of Literature had a space at the Ljubljana Book Fair, offering information on literary Ljubljana and international creative cities, networking schools, visitors and professionals. In the hustle and bustle of the fair it also offers chairs for people to just relax and read. Most importantly, the City of Literature's space at the fair is a place where different stakeholders can connect and interact.

Fabula Festival (Literature Sveta Fabula)

Fabula, organised by the publishing house Beletrina, is the largest and most important literary festival, not only in Ljubljana, but in the whole country, if not an even wider region. Though it has existed since 2003, the festival has in its current form existed for nearly ten years, since Ljubljana held the title of World Book Capital in 2010. It takes place mainly at the Cankarjev dom culture and congress centre in March. Guests of the festival include famous writers from all around the world, including the likes of Herta Müller, Jonathan Franzen, Hanif Kureishi, Janice Galloway, David Grossman, Richard Flanagan and many others. The festival attracts a wide audience, often selling out large halls in the Cankarjev Dom Congress and Culture Centre. Guests of the festival also have their books published in Slovene translation, made available at an attractive price.

In the last four years, there have been 8500 visitors, 60 events, 30 foreign guests, and 20 books published.



Howl (Vzkrik)

Participants at this festival are emerging playwrights who get the opportunity to work on their texts with experienced authors, directors, and actors. The participants' texts are also given a public performance, followed by discussions and talks.

Storytelling Festival (Pripovedovalski festival)

This one of a kind festival focuses on the art of storytelling, expanding on its traditions and looking for new ways of incorporating it into contemporary culture. The festival with its international guests includes discussions and collaborations with other forms of artistic expression. It takes place mainly at the Cankarjev Dom Culture and Congress Centre every March.



Book Night and Bookstores' Night (Noč knjige, Noč knjigarn)

The night of April 23rd is the single date with the most literary events for the general public in the country. During the course of this event (which in fact lasts longer than a single night), 200 activities take place at 150 locations throughout the country and beyond, with the majority taking place in Ljubljana. It is an initiative that invites all local stakeholders, schools, and publishers to participate and prepare their own events. On this date many bookstores stay open until late into the evening, even all through the night. Similarly, on Bookstores' Night, usually taking place in June, bookstores stay open late and prepare special sales and literary events.

World Book Day and Slovene Book Days (Slovenski dnevi knjige)

A local favourite, the more casual single-day, open-air book fair on World Book Day is a place for book lovers, where stalls are offered to all publishers who are willing to participate. Slovene Book Days, on the other hand, is a festival and a week-long open-air book fair, organised by the Slovene Writers Association. It takes place on a chosen time in spring and includes various literary events, including the award ceremony for the Critics' Sieve award.

Publisher's Draft (Prepišno uredništvo)

Once a year the publishing house LUD Literatura organises an open-door week, transforming their offices (or a chosen location for pop-up events) into the site of an intimate festival of reading culture. Writers, editors, designers and readers of all generations partake in talks and discussions in order to better understand literature and empower the reader, emphasising their right to choose and to gain access to great books.

Literature Alive (Živa književnost)

This small, but charming and cherished international festival, blends literature with music. It takes place on a street in the old town in front of the Škuc Gallery (Škuc being the organiser). Part of the festival is a translation workshop, focused on a chosen language, urging collaboration between Slovene and foreign writers to tackle the difficult task of translation.

Kresnik Award Ceremony

At midsummer, the Cankar peak of Rožnik hill in Tivoli Park is transformed into a magical celebration of literature. Kresnik is among the most important awards – and a favourite of the media – along with the traditional bonfire, lighted by the recipient of the award.

Ink (Tinta)

Ink, an international comic book festival, takes on the task of reflecting and promoting the art of comics. It invites several of the most prominent international comic book artists to Ljubljana for intense workshops, discussions and other events, opening a dialogue between comics and other arts. Part of the festival is the award ceremony for the Zlatirepec award for best comic book.



Library under the Treetops (Knjižnica pod krošnjami)

SDG: 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11

UCCN Objectives: 3, 4, 5, 6

Library under the Treetops is a recognised and well-attended parade of free reading, browsing and enjoyment on different public spaces around the country, popular among all generations of Slovene and foreign visitors.

It started in 2005 and has grown slowly into one of the most recognized programmes which promote a reading culture in Slovenia. It was started in Ljubljana and spread around the country. In 2019, it is estimated that at 12 locations in Ljubljana and at an additional 16 locations around Slovenia there were more than 40,000 local and foreign visitors.



Ljubljana Reads (Ljubljana bere)

SDG: 4

UCCN Objectives: 3, 5, 6

The city started this project in 2008 to systematically develop the reading culture for different target groups, especially for children and young people. Every three-year old is given a quality Slovenian picture book at their medical check-up and an invitation to join a library; every first-grade pupil receives a book on the first day of school, and every fourth-grade pupil receives a book when they visit their school library. The books are chosen by a professional commission through public tender.

I Grow with a Book (Rastem s knjigo)

SDG: 4

UCCN Objectives: 3, 5, 6

I Grow with a Book is a national project for the advancement of reading culture, intended to prompt school children into reading and visiting libraries. An appointed committee chooses two books to be presented to all seventh-graders and high school freshmen, who are all also taken on a tour of the nearest library, learning about its activities and programmes. Appointed schools are also visited by the authors of the chosen books. In the school year 2019/2020, 445 general primary schools and 32 special schools have participated, with

19,890 books having been handed out, of which 361 books were given to special schools and 515 books to schools beyond the borders of Slovenia, while 19,700 books were handed out to high school students.

We Include and Activate! (Vključujemo in aktiviramo)

SDG: 3, 4, 10

UCCN Objectives: 3, 5, 6

The project We Include and Activate!, funded by the European Social Fund, has been underway for the past four years. The project's beneficiaries have been gaining knowledge that will help them integrate into society. The project brings together two groups: Slovene writers and four vulnerable target groups (prisoners just before the end of their sentence, persons with mental disabilities, persons with mental disorders, and recovering addicts). During its four years, the project has reached 41 groups across the country and included 82 mentors tutoring over 300 participants. So far the project has achieved an 80% success-rate with an almanac having been published every year. As part of the project, two books describing the lives of prisoners have been published, while some participants even published their own books.

Anniversaries

In the past several years, Ljubljana has lead or taken part in several activities related to anniversaries of important literary figures, with major exhibitions, book projects (including commissioned work, such as comics), theatre performances and literary series. 2018 was dedicated to the great writer Ivan Cankar and the centenary of his death. Similarly, 2019 (the bicentenary of his death) was dedicated to Valentin Vodnik, the nation's first poet, who was also a linguist and editor. As part of this, many programmes have been started, among them the cycling tour through Vodnik's Ljubljana.

Additionally, Slovenia's oldest and largest institution of higher learning – the University of Ljubljana – celebrated its centenary in 2019 with special events, including literary ones, throughout the year.



Etc. (Itn.)**SDG: 4, 5, 10****UCCN Objectives: 3, 4, 5, 6**

Etc., a festival of socially engaged literature for young people, is conceived as a web of events, focused on a chosen collection of books, authors and topics. Every year, a wide team of high-school pupils, students, experienced editors and other stakeholders in the field of literature strive to find new and fascinating approaches of presenting their books, authors and topics to the public.

The festival is developed by members of the collective *Novi dijak* (the New High-School Student). It is their task to choose the festival's topics and books, host discussions, help with the organisation and promotion: in fact, to put together all the events.

In the three years of its existence, the festival has forged many forms of intergenerational cooperation between authors and high-school students.

**Children's Book Festival (Otroški knjižni festival)**

This festival is a one-day book feast for children just before the summer holidays. Publishers offer their books at a discount, while Vodnik Homestead and its gardens transform into a playground of joyful book-related activities, including performances, story-telling, concerts and workshops.



5. Major Initiatives Implemented Through Inter-City and International Cooperation to Achieve the Objectives of the UCCN

19

Women Writers' Route

SDG: 4, 5, 10

UCCN Objectives: 1, 2, 5

The International Foundation Forum of Slavic Cultures, based in Ljubljana, is the initiator and organiser of a new cultural pathway of the Council of Europe, dedicated to European women writers, combining several Slavic countries, and will bring into the limelight life stories and literary works which mark the struggle for human and women's rights in the 20th century.

The new cultural pathway will establish an efficient network for intercultural dialogue and enhance the visibility, significance, contribution and reputation of women writers to European culture and the European history of human rights and democracy; it will open new cultural and educational exchanges for young Europeans, and cultural tourism.

Hosting of the Traduki and Literaturhaus.net Meetings

SDG: 4, 17

UCCN Objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4

In November 2019, Ljubljana was visited by members of two international literary networks: Traduki, a European network for literature and books that advances the exchange between the participants, mainly through a translation programme, and Literaturhaus.net, a network that fosters the development and international cooperation of special spaces, dedicated to literature. Both groups chose Ljubljana to hold their internal meetings as well as to learn more about and connect with the local literary scene and its stakeholders. Both groups were in Ljubljana at the same time in order to further facilitate the exchange of ideas. The guests present represented more than ten countries. The meetings, organised by the National Book Agency and the City of Literature office, included literary performances, discussions, and presentations of best practice.

Translation Seminar of Slovenian Literature (Prevajalski seminar)

SDG: 4, 17

UCCN Objectives: 1, 2, 4, 5

The annual seminar, organised by the Slovenian Book Agency and the Slovenian Association of Literary Translators, is an important opportunity for translators from various target languages to learn about contemporary Slovenian literature and its various cultural backgrounds. In 2019 the seminar, in which 13 translators from 9 countries took part, was held in Maribor, but included events in Ljubljana too, including a meeting with publishers and fellows of the Slovenian Literary Fellowship. Translators are never just translators, rather they are cultural bridge-builders and facilitators of dialogue. Ljubljana as a City of Literature would like to directly acknowledge their importance for enriching world literature and helping maintain an open, diverse society.

Slovenian Literary Fellowship

SDG: 4, 9, 17

UCCN Objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6

The annual professional fellowship programme, organised by the National Book Agency, is aimed at international publishers, journalists and cultural managers. During the programme, which lasts for several days, the fellows meet with awarded local authors, translators, and

publishers, learn more about the country and forge plans for concrete future collaboration. In 2019, 17 guests from 6 different countries were present; in light of the upcoming guest of honor role at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2022, there was an emphasis on German participants and an additional focus on children's literature. In 2019, the fellows also had the opportunity to meet with the director of the Frankfurt Book Fair, Jürgen Boos, and the Head of the Guest of Honour programme, Simone Bühler, in Slovenia.

The Art of Criticism (Umetnost kritike)

SDG: 4

UCCN Objectives: 1, 2, 4

Organised by LUD Literatura and the Slovene Association of Literary Critics, Ljubljana has been hosting an annual meeting of critics with paper presentations and panel discussions. Each year the international symposium on literary criticism and book reviewing – open to the public – focuses on a given topic, deemed pertinent for the current state and future of criticism, not only as a literary practice, but also as a social interaction. Like translators, critics share the important function of connecting different cultures, yet generally lack any opportunities for international networking. One of the aims of the symposium is to fill this gap and mobilise an international forum for critical thinking. Indeed, in 2019 one of the participants was also a guest of the City of Literature's residency Writer in the Park.

Writer in the Park

SDG: 17

UCCN Objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

In 2018 the City of Literature's office published the first annual call for applications for the residency programme Writer in the Park, a residency programme connecting writers from various Cities of Literature. Eligible applicants are writers, connected with other Cities of Literature across the world. In 2018, 50 applications were received, with the number having increased in 2019 to 75 applications. A special committee invites two writers to spend a month in the beautiful Swisshouse Arts Centre in the heart of Ljubljana, providing them with a stipend, opportunities for networking and interacting with the local scene, or simply with the peace and quiet needed for writing. Excerpts from the residents' work are translated into Slovene and published, with the guests being invited to submit a discrete piece about the city or otherwise incorporate its echo into their work. Thus far, the guests were: Gala Uzryutova (Russian Federation), James Hopkin (UK), Nikolai Duffy (UK), and Katherine Brabon (Australia).



Ljubljana Days in Prague

In 2017, as part of the year-long celebration of our greatest architect Jože Plečnik, Ljubljana was a guest in Prague, a city where Plečnik was very active as well. In addition to the city of Ljubljana bringing local musicians, culinary experts and other tourist workers to the Czech capital, Ljubljana collaborated with the Prague City of Literature office to organize a literary event involving locating and displaying dozens of publications by Slovenian authors translated into Czech, which were obtained by the Prague public libraries and made available to the public during the event. Ljubljana also co-organised a reading by a Czech and a Slovene author, both winners of the European Union Prize for Literature.

World Poetry Day

As part of the World Poetry Day celebrations in the Cities of Literature around the world, Ljubljana organizes a 24-hour reading of poetry on several locations across the city. The Ljubljana City of Literature office also supported and organised readings and workshops of our authors in Granada's celebration of World Poetry Day.

Re:Vision, Writing the Contemporary

In 2018, the Ljubljana City of Literature office partnered with Nottingham and three other creative cities (Dublin, Katowice and Tartu) to organise special workshops. Dr Daniel Cordle, from Nottingham Trent University, delivered a research-led creative-critical writing workshops in Ljubljana City of Literature. This workshop reached a variety of writers, aged from 18 to 55, and used an innovative approach, combining the reading and discussion of short works of literature, philosophy and critical texts, the consideration of art and other objects, and creative writing exercises to explore what it means to live in the twenty-first century. The project also included an intensive online writing course.

Visiting Other Cities of Literature

In 2017, Ljubljana went on a study trip to Krakow to learn about the Cities of Literature network and the creative cities network as a whole. In 2018, Ljubljana was invited to Utrecht, a newly designated City of Literature, to present its case.

In 2018, Ljubljana was invited to Utrecht for an event during their international festival to present our case to the relevant stakeholders: librarians, bookshop owners, writers, poets, publishers, representatives from the city council, marketing departments. The value of the title and network for the city were discussed and best practices presented.

In 2019, Ljubljana hosted a delegation from Wonju, a city that applied for the UNESCO city of literature and got designated the same year.

Angoulême

UCCN Objectives: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6

In 2019, the City Council of Ljubljana signed an agreement for a collaboration between la Cité, the Slovenian National Book Agency, the city of Angoulême, and the French Institute in Slovenia for the promotion of comics. Following this agreement, a delegation from France is scheduled to visit Ljubljana in 2020. The aim of the agreement is the encouragement of exchanges between Slovene and French authors, the joint development and execution of educational programmes associated with comics, both in terms of lifelong

learning and as part of the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana. Furthermore, it aims to encourage scholarly work in the field of Slovene comics and to devise collaborative exhibitions.

Attendance at International Book Fairs

Every year the Slovenian Book Agency, based in Ljubljana, organises presentations of Slovenian literature and authors at important international European book fairs (Bologna, Leipzig, Frankfurt, Prague, Moscow and Shanghai). In addition to national stands, the Agency provides additional support for the international recognition of Slovenian authors. Ljubljana, as a City of Literature, was also present in Frankfurt and is already making plans to attend other fairs as well.

Slovenia - Guest of Honour Country at the Bologna Children's Book Fair 2021

The Bologna Children's Book Fair is, beside Frankfurt Book Fair, the international platform at which the greatest number of Slovene publishers from the field of children's and young adult literature are presented. The Slovenian Book Agency, main organiser of Slovenian stand at the Book Fair, has for years been arranging organised transport and visits to the fair, further demonstrating the importance of this event for the book sector and the interested public in Ljubljana and Slovenia.

More so than other international book fairs, Bologna is engaged in and is developing its focus on book illustration. Every year illustrators submit their work to the annual curated Illustrators Exhibition which receives several thousand entries. In recent years representatives from Slovenia have often been selected for the exhibition (2019 – Ana Zavadlav, 2018 – Andreja Peklar, 2015 – Maja Kastelic).

The appearance of Slovenia as honorary guest in 2021 is a unique opportunity to focus attention on our book publishing industry and the rich creativity and tradition Slovenia possesses in the field of books for children and young adults.

The organisers of the fair have long recognized Slovenia as a country where authors' expression in the fields of illustration and literature for children exist at the highest level, and Ljubljana in particular, where the majority of Slovene authors and publishers are based.

The project also represents an important bridge to Slovenia's guest appearance at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2022.

Slovenia - Guest of Honour Country at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2022

The presentation of Slovenia as the main guest at the most important international book fair is significant both from the point of view of the long-term visibility and positioning of Slovenian authors and Slovenian creativity in the field of books. A successful performance of countries as main guests at the Frankfurt Book Fair substantially increases the number of publications of showcased authors in German-speaking countries and other book markets. At the same time, the performance enhances the cultural and tourist potential of the country and contributes to the economic growth and the development of cultural and service activities and creates new employment opportunities. Ljubljana has already hosted

.....
a string of events and networking activities, related to Slovenia's appearance in Frankfurt, and will continue to do so.



6. Proposed Action Plan for the Forthcoming Mid-Term Period of Four Years

24

Complete renovation of Vodnik Homestead

Vodnik Homestead has become one of the city's key spaces for literature. The City Council has invested heavily both in managing and maintaining it. Currently, a complete renovation is being devised, including renewed structural engineering, a redecoration of its surroundings and an outdoor stage. With the necessary documentation being acquired in 2020, the actual work is scheduled to begin in 2021, with an estimated cost of €550,000.

Hosting the Meeting of the Cities of Literature Network in 2022

Ljubljana is making plans to bring together delegates from the Cities of Literature for the annual subnetwork meeting. In 2022 Slovenia will be a guest of honour at the Frankfurt Fair, so this will be a perfect opportunity to showcase literary Ljubljana to international delegates. The organisation will be done in cooperation with the Slovenian Book Agency.

Old Sugar Factory and Old Sugar Factory Palace (Cukrarna, Palača Cukrarna)

In the next few years, the City Council is going to convert a former sugar factory into a unique space for connecting books with young people, with an estimated surface area of 2000 m², of which one half will be entirely devoted to literature. The Palace will house the first and only specialised library for the young people, together with a youth centre and will run programmes for encouraging reading that will involve young people. In the factory, there will also be a residency for ICORN members, together with rooms for writers and translators. Additionally, it will house the City of Literature and ICORN offices as well as a permanent exhibition of Slovene book illustration and a bookshop. Long term programmes for specific age groups will be developed, along with the investigation of new concepts which are as yet unrealised.



Creative Writing Course at the University of Ljubljana

Though it offers several important literature-related courses (e.g., comparative literature, translation, language studies etc.), the University of Ljubljana, celebrating its centenary in 2019, surprisingly does not offer a comprehensive creative writing course, which would be integral for the professionalisation of writing in Slovene. Therefore, the City of Literature office has devised a detailed action plan and brought together a group of professionals in favour of the idea. For several years, the proposed course has had the support of the Faculty of Art's Dean, several writers, professors and the Department for Culture of the City Council, though the question of funding still remains unanswered, not to mention various bureaucratic obstacles. Nevertheless, the City of Literature office has already discussed it with partners from other Cities of literature willing to collaborate or engage in exchanges. The creative writing course could be among the activities based in the renovated Old Sugar Factory.

Literary Walks through the City

In cooperation with Ljubljana Urban Tours, the City of Literature will organise special literary tours and walks through the city, discovering its rich – and sometimes forgotten or even suppressed – literary heritage. The existing and popular Feminist Tour, organised by the same company, full of fascinating, if sometimes alarming details, provided an early example.

The first walking tour across women's literary Ljubljana will be on 8th March 2020.

7. Appendices

26

The annual budget of the City of Ljubljana and its share for culture

Year	Annual city budget for culture with investments (in EUR)	Total annual budget for the city	Annual city budget for the city (% of the total annual budget for the city)
2015	25,694,799	357,476,337	7.19
2016	26,979,060	300,860,319	8.97
2017	29,260,954	298,474,350	9.80
2018	33,573,508	366,632,452	9.16
2019	37,158,898	396,647,151	9.37

Ljubljana City Library

The Ljubljana City Library, with its 34 branches and 46 stops of the Bibliobus (mobile library), is the country's largest library and the most diversified cultural foundation in the municipality of Ljubljana. Every year the library is open 60,000 hours and frequented by 2,400,000 visitors. It counts 85,000 active members, who borrow over 4,700,000 items on loan (of a total of over 1,700,000 items). Every year the library organises over 3,850 cultural events, catering to all tastes and generations, free of charge. On average, every inhabitant visits the City Library 5 times per year.