

## **INFORMATION ON THE NORWEGIAN PARTNERS**

### **THE MULTILINGUAL LIBRARY IN OSLO**

**1. What activities in the area of multiculturalism are taken by your library and what is their purpose?**

The Multilingual Library (ML) is a national competence centre for library services aimed at minorities in Norway. Our main activity is to buy and lend books in 57 different languages. ML purpose is to contribute to creating a vigorous multicultural society by giving other libraries access to our multilingual collections, and to promote the value and necessity of making libraries more multicultural.

**2. Who is the recipient of these activities (other librarians, local communities)? Why do you direct your activities to these groups?**

Our services and activities are aimed at Norwegian libraries, including public libraries, school libraries, county libraries, libraries in hospitals and prisons. The ML was created with the sole purpose of being a national center where knowledge of minorities and large multilingual collections can be accessed and be used by all Norwegian libraries whenever they need it.

**3. What institutions, organizations and individuals does the library cooperate with while carrying out the multicultural activities?**

Our purpose and our directives are to collaborate with all kinds of libraries to promote the idea of multiculturalism in libraries. We collaborate with sister-libraries in Denmark and Sweden in sharing competences. We collaborate with the National Library and NGOs in staging events and holding yearly conferences.

**4. What value can you see in the cooperation with Polish libraries? What would you like to learn from them?**

Since Polish is one of our largest and most popular collections, we would like to gain more knowledge in general about Polish literature and how we can learn systematically about the current trends in Polish literature.

We would like to get advice in how to best promote and make know to Polish people living in Norway about the existence of the ML and what we have to offer.

We would like to get ideas how to promote our collection of children's books and would like to learn more about contemporary Polish children's literature. We are interested in learning more about the illustrators of children's books and how to promote high quality picture books.

We think that Polish librarians have knowledge in all these areas and we are eager to establish contacts that hopefully can be sustained for years to come and to learn as much as we can from our Polish colleagues.

**5. Brief information about the mini-project coordinator in Norway.**

Oddbjorn Hansen:

I am a senior librarian at The Multilingual Library. I work with many of the Asian languages we have, and I am responsible for our “integration-collection” called START, that consists of language courses and books that promote multiculturalism and integration. I am the Norwegian coordinator in the project.

Urszula Lach:

I am the Best practice specialist in the project and have been working at The Multilingual Library since 1983. I am responsible for the Polish collection in the library.

**BUSKERUD COUNTY LIBRARY**

**1. What activities in the area of multiculturalism are taken by your library and what is their purpose?**

Buskerud County Library is a regional competence center and a development partner to 21 public libraries and 13 libraries in secondary school. It is a tool to implement a national and regional aims and enterprises. In the area of multiculturalism we support the libraries in services, cooperation and competence.

**2. Who is the recipient of these activities (other librarians, local communities)? Why do you direct your activities to these groups?**

Our services and activities are aimed at Norwegian librarians and library workers. As a county library, we make bridges between the national/international library networks and municipal libraries.

**3. What institutions, organizations and individuals does the library cooperate with while carrying out the multicultural activities?**

We collaborate with public libraries, school libraries, immigrant organizations, volunteer centers, refugee guides (Red Cross), health institutions, culture institutions, The Norwegian Mountaineering Association, The Hunter and Fishermen’s Association, The Garden Society, a local school music band, a yoga trainer...

**4. What value can you see in the cooperation with Polish libraries? What would you like to learn from them?**

5000 of the inhabitants in Buskerud County are immigrants from Poland. For the librarians in our county it would be useful to know more about libraries and society in Poland. What do the Poles expect from our libraries? What kind of services do they want, and what kind of services should be prioritized?

**5. Brief information about the mini-project coordinator in Norway.**

Camilla Sørbye:

I am an advisor in Buskerud County Library. I am responsible for projects that support and develop the public libraries and school libraries in our county as multicultural meeting places. By education I am a teacher, and I have been teaching immigrants both in primary school and adult education.

**HORDALAND COUNTY LIBRARY**

**1. What activities in the area of multiculturalism are taken by your library and what is their purpose?**

Hordaland County Library develops public libraries and secondary school libraries in the county by giving advice and assisting libraries. We give advice to local authorities and library directors. We organize interlibrary loans and develop competence for librarians in our region.

We have been working with multiculturalism through a project that developed tools to help rural libraries promote cross-cultural information, dialogue and understanding.

**2. Who is the recipient of these activities (other librarians, local communities)? Why do you direct your activities to these groups?**

Our services and activities are aimed at librarians at public libraries and secondary school libraries in Hordaland County. The librarians provide frontline services in the libraries and have daily encounters with users from different cultural backgrounds. We aim at professionalizing cross-cultural meetings by equipping the librarians with knowledge and competence.

**3. What institutions, organizations and individuals does the library cooperate with while carrying out the multicultural activities?**

In all our activities we cooperate with public libraries and secondary school libraries. When it comes to multicultural activities, we also cooperate with a local introduction office for foreigners, another section at the county council (provided courses in cross cultural understanding), and The Norwegian National Library (funded the project).

**4. What value can you see in the cooperation with Polish libraries? What would you like to learn from them?**

Polish people are by far the largest group of foreign citizens living in Hordaland county, which means that they are users or potential users of library services in all or most of the municipalities.

Through our cooperation with Polish libraries, we hope to get advice, tips and knowledge on how the libraries in Hordaland can provide best possible services to our citizens with a Polish background– and also how the County Library can assist them in achieving these quality services.

**5. Brief information about the mini-project coordinator in Norway.**

Elin Golten:

I am a special adviser at Hordaland County Library, The Department of Culture & Sports at the County Council. In my work I initiate, fund and run development projects towards the public libraries in my county. I also organize courses, meetings and conferences for librarians. Some of my main tasks are e-lending for libraries, competence development for librarians and multicultural library services.

**OPPLAND COUNTY LIBRARY**

**1. What activities in the area of multiculturalism are taken by your library and what is their purpose?**

Oppland county library is a center of competence and an initiator of library development in the Norwegian county of Oppland. Projects conducted by us:

- Training librarians to lead reading group for immigrants.
- Apply for funding and organize project with the aim to develop better multicultural library services in public libraries, but also to strengthen the library as a meeting place and arena for inclusion in a multicultural community.
- Participation in EUs Grundtvig-program for lifelong learning. We have participated in two projects with inclusion of immigrants as one of the goals.

**2. Who is the recipient of these activities (other librarians, local communities)? Why do you direct your activities to these groups?**

We coordinate and provide services for 26 public and 15 high school libraries. Everyone working in the libraries in our County are recipients of our services. Our assignment is to be a centre of competence and an initiator of library development in public and school libraries in our County. The local community benefits from the activities being conducted in libraries working with us in our projects.

**3. What institutions, organizations and individuals does the library cooperate with while carrying out the multicultural activities?**

We cooperate with the public libraries. In some of our projects we have cooperated with the multicultural council in Oppland County. The public libraries cooperate with local partners such as adult learning centers, schools, kindergartens and volunteer organizations. In international projects funded by the EU, we have been cooperating with partners who work with adult learning in different European countries.

**4. What value can you see in the cooperation with Polish libraries? What would you like to learn from them?**

Polish immigrants are the largest group of immigrants in our county. It is valuable for us to learn more about Polish culture and society.

Cooperating with other libraries either in our own country or in other countries will always be valuable. We learn from meeting people and libraries that have different experiences and other points of view than us. Sharing our experience will also make us reflect on how we work and what we do. We have so far in this project, experienced that questions from the Polish librarians have made us see ourselves and our multicultural projects in a new perspective.

We also hope that we get to learn some best practice from the Polish libraries. It will be interesting to visit the libraries and learn more about how you work in Poland.

## 5. Brief information about the mini-project coordinator in Norway.

Silje Grøtan Torp:

I'm a library advisor and project manager. I've got experience in working with multicultural and international projects, among other things. I have a background as a librarian working in different libraries and organizations. I've also been head librarian in a small public library.

### BERGEN PUBLIC LIBRARY

#### 1. What activities in the area of multiculturalism are taken by your library and what is their purpose?

One of the main multicultural activities is to create, maintain and lend out a collection of books and films in about 40 languages. We also cooperate with various minority groups to have events in the library, in Norwegian or their mother tongue. In this way the library wants to support the minorities' need of maintaining their language and identity, at the same time as they are integrated into the Norwegian society.

Weekly events: A Norwegian language café to practice speaking, a "laptop-club" for refugees and a reading group for immigrant women. Bergen city is a member of International Cities of Refuge Network (ICORN) and the library hosts and coordinates the guest writer's activities.

#### 2. Who is the recipient of these activities (other librarians, local communities)? Why do you direct your activities to these groups?

Our services and activities are aimed at both the immigrant and minority population of Bergen and the Norwegian population, mainly people in the local community, ie. Bergen. The immigrant population wants to maintain their mother language and have contact with their home countries and also be integrated into the Norwegian society. The Norwegian population needs to get to know the minorities and immigrants and their background. Integration is a two way activity.

#### 3. What institutions, organizations and individuals does the library cooperate with while carrying out the multicultural activities?

We cooperate with The Introduction Center for refugees in Bergen municipality, the school who teaches immigrants Norwegian, other schools and kindergartens, the immigrant council, the Red

Cross and the humanitarian organizations and several immigrant organizations. We cooperate with the Multilingual library in Oslo, and have a project with the public libraries in Oslo, Kristiansand, Stavanger and Trondheim.

**4. What value can you see in the cooperation with Polish libraries? What would you like to learn from them?** Page | 6

There is a great Polish population in Bergen, and books in Polish are one of our largest and most popular collections including films and audiobooks. As more and more Polish immigrant workers also bring their families we need to learn more about Polish literature for children and adults to be able to give our new immigrants and guest workers a good collection of books in their mother tongue. Meeting Polish librarians will teach us about their literature and give us good advices how to promote and present Polish literature, language and culture.

**5. Brief information about the mini-project coordinator in Norway.**

I am the head of the section of art, architecture, design and young new Scandinavian literature. I also work closely with the librarians in the multilingual section and I am an assistant coordinator for our refugee-author as Bergen is a member of ICORN (International Cities of Refugee Network).