



Libraries and the homeless: experiences, challenges and opportunities

Sanja Bunić

Zagreb City Libraries

C R O A T I A

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3 models of interaction between the library and the homeless

- 1) The library as a living room** – the homeless rarely come by
- 2) The library comes to the shelter** – a step into the unknown for the library and the homeless
- 3) The library as a safe place** – the homeless know that they are accepted and can ask for help





Library services within the 1st model

- 1) Information literacy workshops for the homeless
- 2) The homeless as volunteers in the library
- 3) Creative workshops with the homeless
- 4) Occasional sales of items made by the homeless and the sale of the *Street Lamps* magazine
- 5) Assisted article writing for the *Street Lamps* magazine
- 6) Promoting programs that include the homeless
- 7) Gatherings *Bring Along A Friend*





Workshops, sales, promoting...





eifl

knowledge without boundaries

The donor that offers financial and expert support as well as promotes the library's active role in changes in society





knjigom do krova

MREŽA KNJIŽNICA ZA
OSNAŽIVANJE BESKUČNIKA

A Book for a Roof: the Network of Libraries for Empowering the Homeless

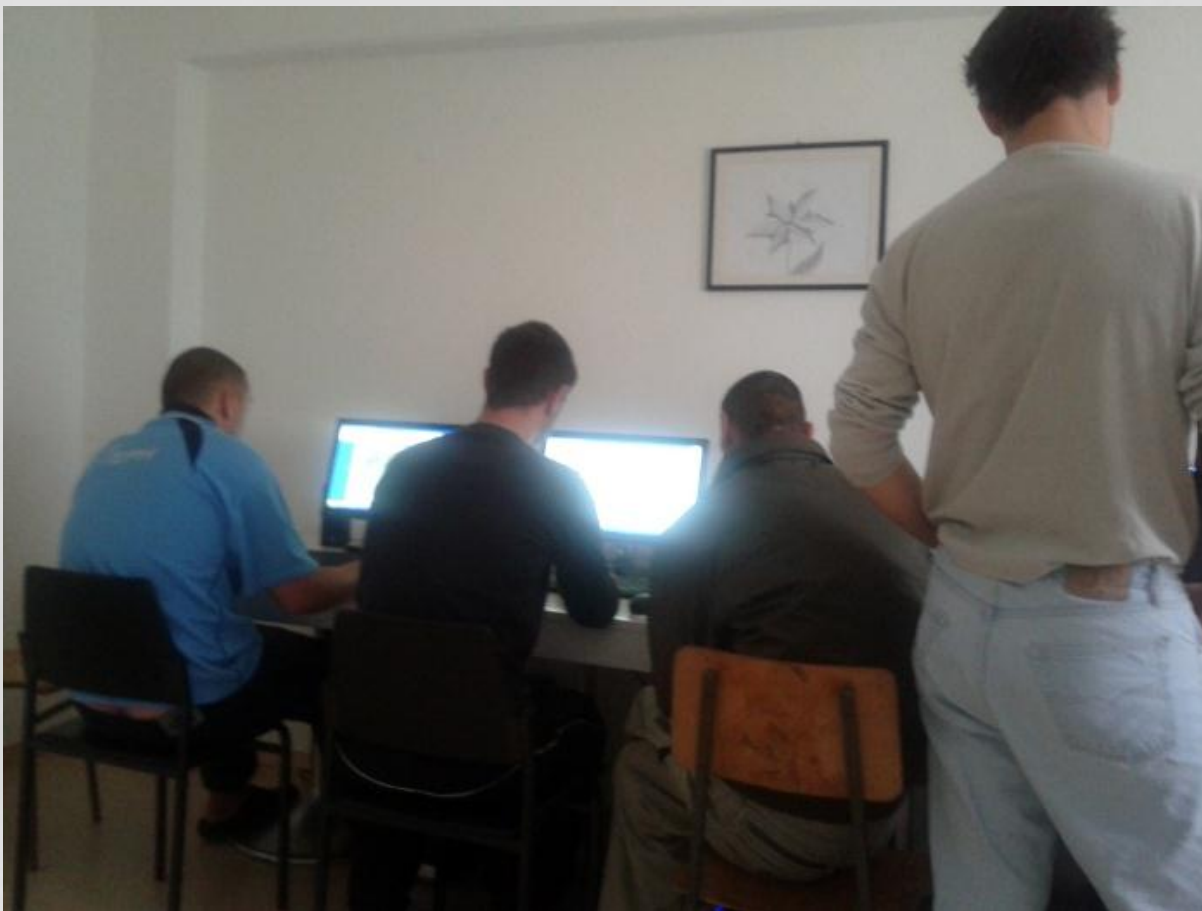
- **donating 4 computers and printers to the Shelter for the homeless Kosnica**
- **IT and information literacy workshops in Kosnica and at the central City Library**
- **workshops for support in finding jobs**
- **breaking down prejudice about the library and the homeless**





A step into the unknown





Building trust





Being accepted





...expanding the social network...





Challenges:

- **users' unpredictable behaviour**
- **individual approach**
- **hard not to involve oneself in difficult life stories**
- **need for additional knowledge in the fields of psychiatry, social work, law...**
- **partners cannot always be available when help is needed**
- **success is rare, progress is slow**
- **risk of developing the "burnout" syndrome**
- **are you ready for activism? (Chip Ward)**





Do you want to hear some life stories?



Opportunities:

- **libraries – desirable partners**
- **create a network of different NGOs and institutions**
- **contribute to solving specific existential problems**
- **become aware of their potential and their own resources (human, space, contacts...)**
- **more visible in society**
- **attract the media**





Solving legal problems





Designing websites, establishing business contacts.....





Conference Notes



THE SECOND CHANCE: challenges and perspectives in working with the homeless

City Library of Zagreb
Starčevićev trg 4

31. May 2012.



Assembling experts from different
areas of life



The attention of the media





Cross the bridge to reach the homeless





Thank you for your attention!

sanja.bunic@kgz.hr

