

WHY BIBLIONET?

Access to information is essential in today's globalized society. In Romania, more than 50% of people lack access to the Internet. Through the Global Libraries program, public libraries will become a common space where citizens can come together, inform their lives, and contribute to community discourse.

Biblionet is a partnership between IREX, the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, the Ministry of Communications and Informational Society, EOS Foundation (Educating for an Open Society), the National Association of Public Libraries and Librarians in Romania (ANBPR), Intuitext and Romanian public libraries.

Bretea Romana: Mayor Ioan Jurj tried to refurbish the old library, but quickly realized it would be costly and the results less than satisfactory. Instead, he found an alternative: a former local bar.

“There may be other communities where libraries are closed and turned into bars, but here, in Bretea, we believe that people who are well informed are also better prepared for life. Information gives you power, shapes your future and makes you stronger. Those who lack information can't find their way towards the future.”

The library in Bretea Romana has come full circle: it is once again a place to meet people, tell your story and listen to others, but now the visitors are surrounded by books, the low hum of computers running and, sometimes, a joyful cry from an enthusiastic user.



Harlau: Through the collective effort of library users, local businesses, and public officials: the toilets were modernized, wood work was repainted, the roof was re-placed and a security system to protect their computers was put in place.



Now, Iuliana believes *“The library is a much friendlier place due to the volunteers and sponsors who helped as much as they could. Our thanks go to all those who volunteered their time, skills and optimism to make the Harlau library a more attractive space for them and their families.”*

GET INVOLVED:

- Talk to your librarian about ways to connect your library with your community.
- Visit our website at www.biblionet.ro and share how your library is making a difference.

PROGRAM FACTS:

BIBLIONET is building a modern public library system in Romania by:

- Equipping more than **2,000** public libraries with technology so that citizens have better access to information.
- Training **over 3,000** librarians in how to use new technology to provide better services to library visitors and establishing up to **41** new training centers for librarians across the country.
- Helping develop the capacity of The National Association of Public Libraries and Librarians (**ANBPR**) to advocate on behalf of libraries and librarians.
- Fostering government support for the recognition of the essential role of libraries in a society.



PROGRAM STAGES:

- In the first two rounds more than 4,400 computers were delivered, of which 451 laptops to the county libraries, for their Training Centers. Biblionet Program now includes 922 local libraries and over 1,300 librarians were trained.
- Every library included in the Biblionet program becomes a hotspot, allowing anyone to access the Internet and the World Wide Web.
- The implementation of the third round of the program will end in February 2012, when 565 libraries will have been added, taking Biblionet to a total of almost 1,500 local libraries, having 6,460 computers and peripherals, and almost 2,175 newly trained librarians.
- Intuitext has made a donation of 4,500 educational packets to the libraries included in the program. This is the most significant contribution of a private company in Romania for the modernization of the public library system.

LIBRARIES IN ROMANIA

There are currently nearly 3,000 public libraries in Romania serving a population of more than 21 million, though fewer than 10% currently have public access internet computers.

ANBPR

The National Association of Public Libraries and Librarians (ANBPR) was founded in 1990 to provide professional direction for libraries and the library profession in Romania. The ANBPR has over 3,000 individual members and library chapters in nearly all of Romania's counties. The ANBPR has taken the lead in representing Romanian librarians' interests on a national level, conducting training in new areas, publishing professional development materials and advocating for changes in national policy.

EOS

EOS is a British charity that, starting with 1995, developed a series of educational programs in cooperation with EOS Romania Foundation, to address the use of ICT in the Romanian compulsory education system. EOS Romania was founded in 1998 and continued to develop new programs promoting the mainstream use of computers in education.

INTUITEXT

Intuitext is the educational software company of Softwin Group and one of the most innovative international computer lessons producer. The electronic educational products developed by Intuitext are adapted to the learning requirements of the new student generation, converting abstract notions and theoretical information into attractive multimedia content.

IREX

IREX is an international nonprofit organization providing leadership and innovative programs to improve the quality of education, strengthen independent media, and foster pluralistic civil society development. Founded in 1968, IREX works in more than 50 countries with a staff of over 500 professionals worldwide. IREX has received funding to implement Biblionet in Romania from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

THE BILL & MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION – GLOBAL LIBRARIES

The foundation's Global Libraries initiative is working to open the world of knowledge, information, and opportunity to many more people. Part of the Global Development Program, Global Libraries works with select countries that demonstrate a need and a readiness to help public libraries provide free access to computers and the Internet, and training on how to make full use of these tools. The initiative is helping transform public libraries into vital resources that can help improve the lives of millions of people.

MICROSOFT

Microsoft Corporation is donating software worth approximately 15 million dollars to the libraries included in the program, as part of the global initiative to endow communities with accessible and useful technology.

