

Latvian writers and politics

Our struggle 2012 - 2013

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Brief insight into the sector

- ▶ Latvian literary language is the creator of contemporary Latvian and its preserver. Existence of the nation and language is being provided by national literature.
- ▶ Literary language is developed by national literature, that is created by writers. They provide work to editors, publishers, artists and book designers, librarians and publishing houses.
- ▶ Literature and book publishing is the biggest creative industry in Latvia. (*Biceps* research).
- ▶ The publishing of Latvian literature are not commercial projects. They still do exist on the bases of publishers and writers enthusiasm.
- ▶ In Latvian profession classifier such professions as writer, poet etc. are included, yet, there is no social protection for these professionals.

State support to literature

- ▶ Support to literature in 2012 – (214 752 LVL from the budget of KM; 188 088 LVL from the budget of VKKF, total 403 000 LVL) or **0,4%** from KM budget **103 millions**.
- ▶ In comparison with other creative professions, who are employed in state theatres, orchestras etc., writers in Latvia have no social protection.

What did we ask for I

- ▶ To name Latvian literature as prior
- ▶ To make changes in the budget of KM in order to invest 5% of it in the development of literature for:
 - ▶ writers grants and awards
 - ▶ purchase of books for libraries and schools
 - ▶ financing of literary magazine
 - ▶ financing for translating and publishing books abroad
 - ▶ promoting of reading programmes for children;

What did we ask for II

- ▶ To establish social security law for representatives of creative professions
- ▶ To finance VKKF from alcohol, tobacco and gambling taxes.
- ▶ To include Latvian literature and language development in the program of National Development plan.

What did we get so far?

- ▶ Almost one half of a million LVL for literature, that was assigned through VKKF at the end of 2012
- ▶ Lots of new literary projects started
- ▶ The change of attitudes in society and among politicians
- ▶ Growth of self – respect
- ▶ Group working on the Law for creative persons
- ▶ Foundation, that will support professional writers with grants. Patron of the foundation is the President of Latvia Andris Berzins

Conclusions

Sometimes it is important to talk with politicians.
Sometimes it is even worth doing it.

We will continue our dialogue. Situation of
literature in Latvia must change.

Thank you!