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და ბაზარმწოდებელთა ასოციაცია  
GEORGIAN PUBLISHERS AND BOOKSELLERS ASSOCIATION

**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **UNESCO'S TBILISI — WORLD BOOK CAPITAL 2021: RENEWING THE BOOK STOCK OF PUBLIC SCHOOL LIBRARIES PROJECT IS LAUNCHED**

The first stage for the Project of Renewing the Book Stock of Public School Libraries across Tbilisi has been launched within the framework of UNESCO "Tbilisi —World Book Capital 2021".

The project is organised by Tbilisi City Hall, the Tbilisi Multifunctional Libraries Union, and the Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association.

At the first stage of the project the book stocks of 62 public school libraries will be renewed. Each school will receive a 900 GEL voucher which will be used to purchase books from more than 30 publishing houses and book distributing organisations operating in Georgia.

The programme aims to fill Tbilisi public school libraries with the latest editions of books, bring school students closer to modern literature, and to improve literacy.

The project will carry on to 2021 and, by the end of the year, all Public Schools Libraries in Tbilisi will have renewed their book stocks.

*"Tbilisi will officially receive the status of World Book Capital in April 2021. Until then, preparatory work is underway. Education has always been a priority of Tbilisi City Hall, so I am glad that we [the project organisers] are starting the project with activities planned specially for school students. By the end of 2021 the libraries of all Tbilisi public schools will be enriched with new books", – said Deputy Mayor of Tbilisi Andria Basilaia.*

*"Providing the public school libraries with new books is one of the main components of the project which will be implemented in several stages and will eventually cover all public schools. The project is crucial for both school children and local publishers who have been severely affected by the pandemic", – says Ninia Matcharashvili, Director of the Tbilisi City Hall Multifunctional Libraries the Tbilisi — World Book Capital 2021 project.*

*“Renewing the book stocks of libraries has always been a priority for the Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association, that’s why the Association has been providing books to the regional libraries of Georgia for years. This time around, the UNESCO project has given the Association a unique opportunity to renew the book stocks of Tbilisi school libraries... It will make the libraries a much more attractive space for school children, where new books will surely bring new readers”, –* says the Deputy Chairman of Georgian Publishers and Booksellers Association, Gvantsa Jobava.

According to the decision of UNESCO, Tbilisi will receive the status of World Book Capital on April 23, 2021 from the previous name holder, Kuala Lumpur. More than 100 educational, cognitive and infrastructural projects are planned to be implemented during 2021 within the framework of the World Book Capital project.

The UNESCO World Book Capital programme focuses on supporting access to, and the production of books. Built on the understanding that high levels of literacy and reading are linked to greater well-being and performance in other areas of development, it looks to celebrate innovative and leading practices at the local level.