Krajina čitateľov

The Land of Readers in 2025

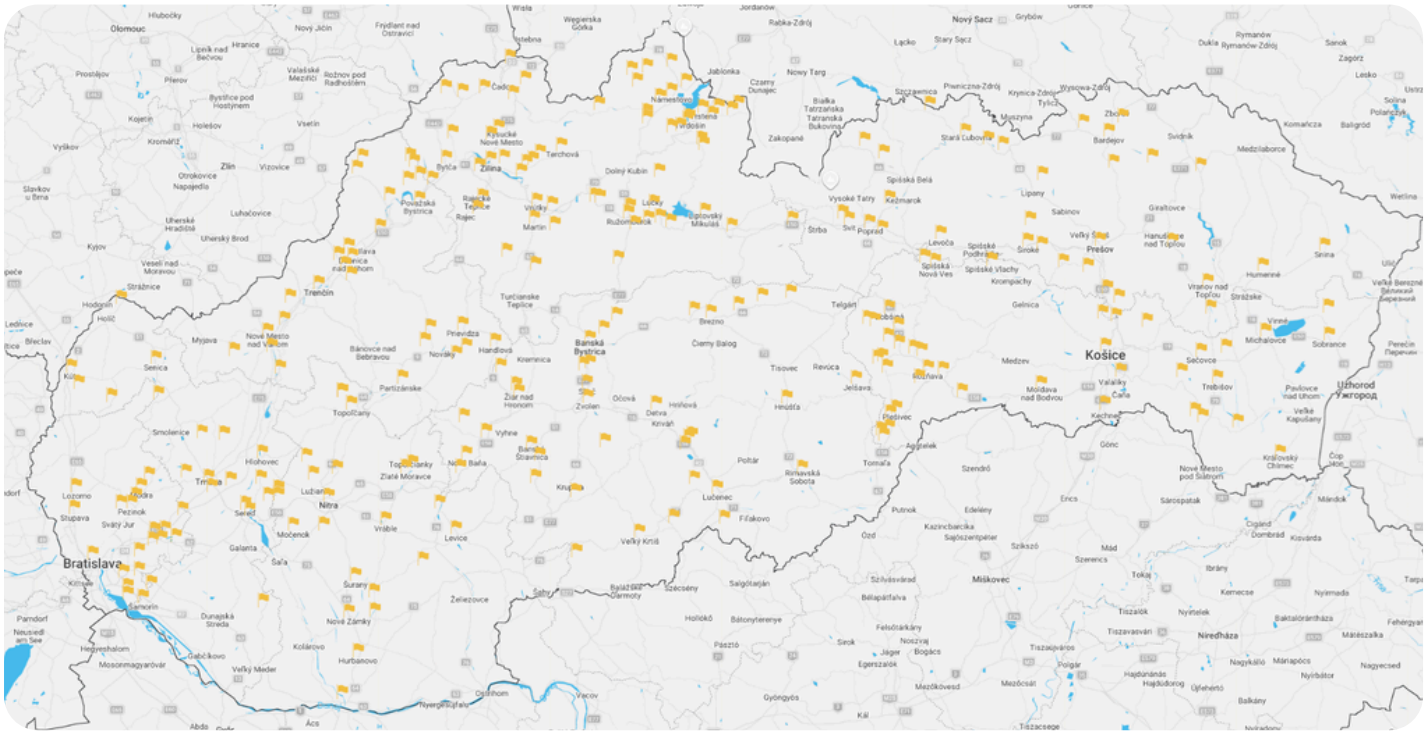


KRAJINACITATELOV.SK

THIS CLASSROOM IS FULL OF READERS

In 2025, **235 teachers joined our *Naša trieda číta* (This Classroom Is Full of Readers) programme**. Together, they established **161 new classroom libraries** – places where books are always within reach and reading can become a natural part of everyday classroom life.

By the end of the year, classroom libraries created through The Land of Readers could be found in **20% of primary schools across Slovakia** and in **90% of the country's districts**. We are delighted that books are reaching children across the country and that classroom reading is gaining more room for pleasure, freedom and curiosity.



88 %

of students enjoy reading more

80 %

of students talk more about books

78 %

of teachers see children reading who previously struggled with reading or did not enjoy it

Plans for the coming years

A major milestone for our classroom library programme in 2025 was the approval of funding from the EU Structural Funds through Slovakia's Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family under Programme Slovakia, to scale social innovations in education.

Through **This Classroom Is Full of Readers 2.0**, we will establish **350 new classroom libraries** over the next two years and involve at least as many teachers.

The project will include training and practical resources to help teachers make the most of their classroom libraries – vibrant spaces for reading, conversations, book recommendations and nurturing children's identities as readers.



Classroom libraries encourage children to pick up books more often. As a result, they gradually strengthen their reading skills and gain confidence as readers.

Working with Hannah Schneewind

2025 was full of conferences and professional events in Slovakia and abroad. After a year, we welcomed back our colleague from the United States, **literacy development expert Hannah Schneewind**.

At Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica, Hannah spoke to future teachers about **how to foster literacy in everyday school practice**.

At the Festival of Good Education in Zvolen, Hannah joined us to lead a workshop on a love of books and reading identities.

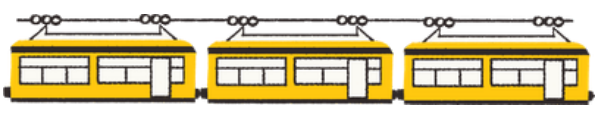
Hannah discussed the importance of the student–teacher relationship in reading in an interview with the newspaper Korzár.



Trainings and conferences

Our long-term goal is to give teachers, librarians and the wider public practical tools – and the confidence to see reading as a relationship that can be nurtured with care in everyday life. In 2025, we shared the experience of The Land of Readers at events in Slovakia and internationally.

- At the **Baltic Sea Conference on Literacy in Tallinn**, we explored how to strengthen students' identities as readers and why children need to feel that they truly are readers.
- At the **RISE Bookselling conference in Riga**, we delivered a keynote on how partnerships between the nonprofit and business sectors can help spread the joy of reading across an entire country.
- At an **EURead members' meeting in Brussels**, we exchanged the latest insights with organisations promoting reading across Europe.
- As the literacy expert partner, we contributed practical advice on developing reading skills to **Čítanka o nás a o svete** (A Reader About Us and the World), published by the NGO Človek v ohrození.
- We trained **screenwriters of Slovak television series** on how to feature books and reading in a natural yet educational way.
- We spoke at the event **Učíme pre život** (Teaching for Life) and **Konferencia domáceho vzdelávania** (Home Education Conference). Throughout the year, we also provided training for teachers and librarians in Prievidza, Košice and other towns.



THE SUMMER READ-THROUGH

2025 marked the **10th anniversary of Prečítané leto (The Summer Read-Through)**, a project that helps reduce the effects of the summer slide. As part of the project, we created a playful travel booklet ***Knižka na cesty*** (Book for Travel), inviting children to read and helping them spend their summer days actively and independently. Our social media campaign offered dozens of book recommendations for readers of all kinds, as well as ideas for reading together with adults.

The booklet was brought to life with cheerful illustrations by **Dávid Soboň** and graphic design by **Zuzana Bartová**.





109

participating libraries and community centres

45 000

booklets distributed

407 840

Instagram post views

95 %

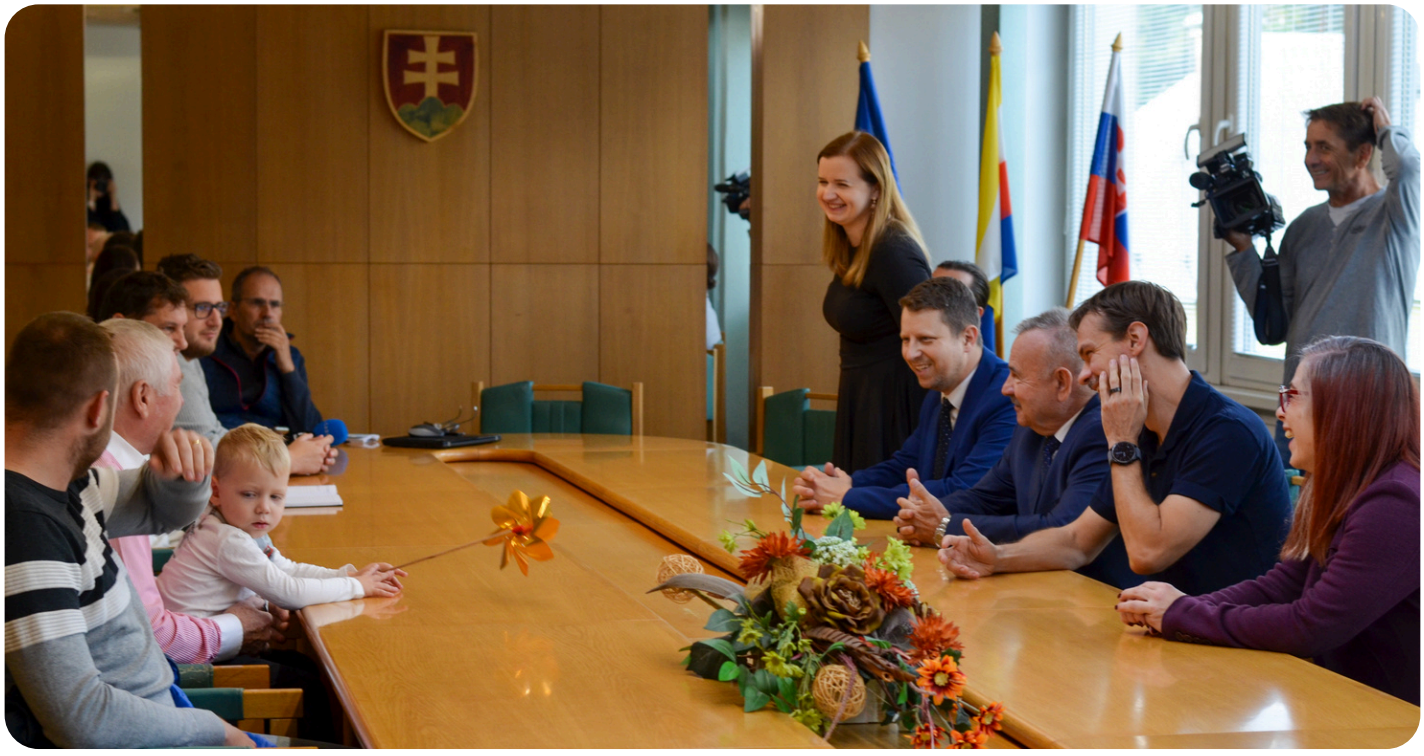
of parents said The Summer Read-Through helped them read more with their children during the summer holidays

PLEASE GIVE ME A BOOK

In October 2025, we brought one our long-held dreams to life: **making sure books reach children from the very first days of their lives**. With financial support from Martinus, Slovakia's leading bookseller, we launched ***Prosím si knižku* (Please Give Me a Book), a pilot book-gifting programme** in the city of Martin, giving newborn babies their very first book. Every child whose birth certificate is issued by the Martin registry office receives a book, regardless of their family's background or circumstances. During the first year of the pilot, we aim to give away approximately **600 book packages**.

In developing the programme, we drew on the experience of international partners in the Global Network for Early Years Bookgifting, of which we are a member. Its distinctive visual identity was created by by acclaimed Slovak illustrator **Mária Nerádová**.

In 2026, we plan to formalise our partnership with the city of Martin through a memorandum of cooperation and explore the next step: giving books to slightly older children during routine visits to their paediatricians.



RESEARCH

In 2025, we changed pace in our research work. We spent part of the year gaining new experience in design thinking through a collaboration with Martinus and design agency Lighting Beetle* on a project to **understand undecided bookshop customers and create an environment where everyone can find the right book**. We will draw on these insights when designing new experiments at The Land of Readers and deepening our understanding of how children and teenagers read.

Towards the end of the year, we partnered with **Vajanského Primary School in Modra** on its own research project ***Pohyblivá knižnica*** (The Mobile Library). Together with the local library, the school set out to bring books closer to students. They raised the funds through crowdfunding, and librarians then began regularly visiting classrooms to introduce new books. The Land of Readers is measuring how the programme affects students' attitudes towards reading. The project continues into 2026, when we will evaluate its results.



BOOK SPONSORSHIP

Our mission is to bring books to places where they are not taken for granted and where they can open up new possibilities. In 2025, we supported **organisations, schools and initiatives working closely with children** in a wide range of settings, including:

- Cesta von
- OZ Križovatka
- Kaspian občianske združenie
- Centrá včasnej intervencie
- Únia materských centier
- Bratislavské dobrovoľnícke centrum
- Knižnica Strečno
- ZŠ Alma

We are proud to have given classroom libraries to every finalist of ***Učiteľská osobnosť Slovenska*** (Slovakia's Teacher of the Year award) again this year. These libraries will help them offer more reading for pleasure, develop new reading activities and inspire other teachers.



Mravenčí chůva

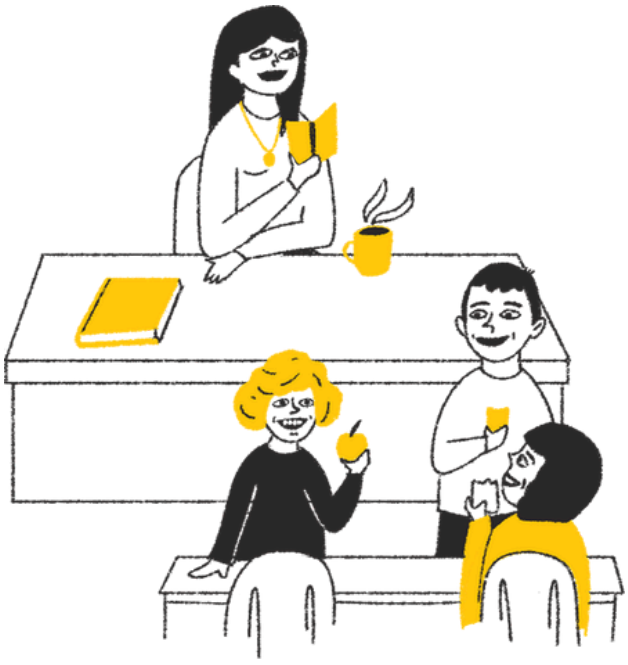
Mravenčí chůva runs the **Czech version of The Summer Read-Through** under the name ***Pročtené léto***. The organisation builds and maintains partnerships with Czech libraries and centres and helps parents read with their children during the summer holidays. They also curated a selection of children's books for the Czech version of the booklet ***Knížka na cesty***.

ZŠ Alma

For the second year running, we have been helping Alma Primary School in Zvolen build a culture of reading. We organised training for teachers and parents and brought **new classroom libraries** to students. Every classroom in the school now has one. We also **monitor students' identities as readers and their reading habits.** Based on these findings, we recommend specific interventions and improvements to school processes.

Faculty of Education, Comenius University

At the end of the year, we signed a **Memorandum of Cooperation with the Faculty of Education at Comenius University in Bratislava**. We look forward to exchanging experiences, sharing good practice and discussing the latest insights into literacy development.



MEDIA AND FESTIVALS

We are delighted by the growing interest in reading across the media. We spoke about reading several times on the television programme **Teleráno**. A reading-themed episode of the entertainment show **Milujem Slovensko** also received a wonderful response, with our Viki introducing the activities of The Land of Readers.

- An episode about parents reading with their children from the podcast series **Otcovia v plienkach** struck a chord with listeners.
- We spoke to SME about how to encourage children to read more.
- In an interview with Bystriny, we discussed the importance of reading for pleasure.

We also brought our stand, book recommendations and reading corner to these Slovak festivals:

- **Brak**
- **Pohoda**
- **Atmosféra**
- **Rozčítajme Košice**
- **Svet deťom**



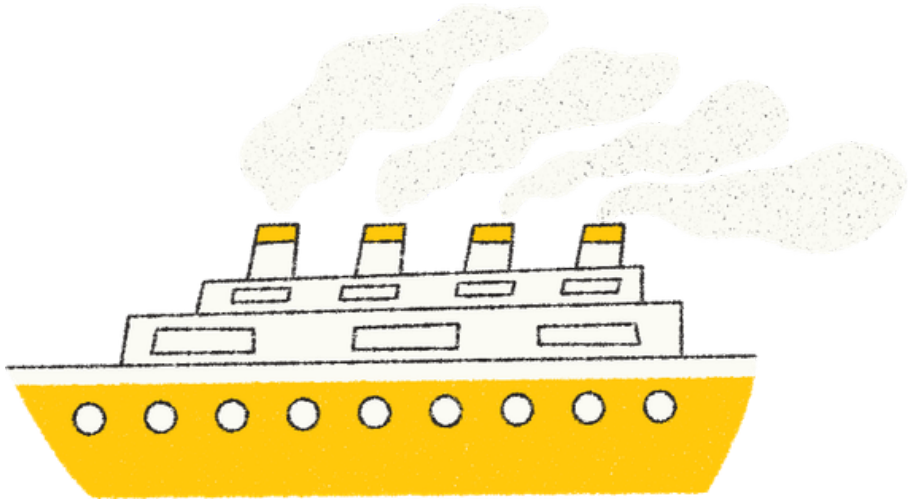
FUNDING

The main financial partner of The Land of Readers is Martinus, s.r.o.

During the year, The Land of Readers also received funding from ticket sales and fees for services provided.

In 2025, The Land of Readers successfully secured funding under Programme Slovakia for a project to scale proven approaches in education. The grant agreement will come into effect on 9 February 2026.

The Land of Readers is an independent legal entity with its own decision-making and executive powers.



Our team

We are delighted to help strengthen a culture of reading in Slovakia. Here is our team in 2025.



Viki Marcinová

Founder and Visionary.
Viki is the public face and voice of The Land of Readers. Her passion is infectious, and she is also instrumental in bringing new projects to life.



Tomáš Horváth

Team Manager and Coordinator.
Tomáš brings a strategic perspective and exceptional coaching skills to the team.



Daniela Sochorová

Researcher and Analyst.
Daniela loves data and enjoys exploring how reading works. She leads our Reading Identities project.



Marcela Uličná

Coordinator of This Classroom Is Full of Readers.
Marci helps establish and expand classroom libraries and move the programme forward. She also helps our team make realistic plans for everything we do.



Monika Freml

Content Manager.
Monika has a way with words that encourages and comforts. She oversees communications for The Land of Readers and coordinates The Summer Read-Through.



Zuzana Bránická

Social Media Coordinator.
Zuzka writes about books, photographs them and makes videos. She does it all with an agility and kindness that are part of The Land of Readers' DNA.



Terézia Molnárová

Children's Book Expert.
Terka knows children's books inside out. She curates tailored book selections for schools and manages The Land of Readers's book sponsorships.



Michaela Rybárová

Project Manager.
Michaela currently leads the pilot book-gifting programme Please Give Me a Book.