

EIBF AND FEP WELCOME THE POSITION OF THE COMPETITIVENESS COUNCIL
ON THE PROPOSAL FOR A REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL ON
ADDRESSING UNJUSTIFIED GEO-BLOCKING

Brussels, 29 November 2016

The European & International Booksellers Federation - EIBF – and the Federation of European Publishers - FEP - welcome the compromise text voted by the Competitiveness Council, at its meeting of 28 November.

Booksellers and publishers have embraced the digital revolution and a growing number of publishers and booksellers are providing their customers with an e-book offer on their home market, and increasingly across borders.

By confirming that the scope of the Directive will neither extend to the provision of access nor the use or selling of copyright-protected works, the Council is recognising that the e-book market is a nascent one at least at the present time.

FEP & EIBF have noted with satisfaction that the Council fully acknowledges that laws of Member States may also require, in accordance with Union law, traders to respect certain rules on the pricing of books (fixed book price laws).

Similarly, EIBF and FEP express their approval of the fact that the Council recognizes that under competition law, contractual freedom is essential for any business, including the book industry and that it must be respected in all circumstances.

Both federations welcome the decision of the Council to extend the Review Clause to four years after the entry into force of the Regulation, which will enable the book industry to have a better view of the evolution of the e-book market.

Said Fabian Paagman, co-President of EIBF: *“As a bookseller, my objective is to sell as many books and e-books as possible. Every business aims to grow and retailers across the continent are eager to build up business models to expand their activities to cross-border sales, at an appropriate time, and under the absolutely indispensable condition that this does not damage their economic sustainability”.*

FEP President Henrique Mota added: *“We publish books aimed at the widest possible audience, both in our home market and for all those readers reading our languages. E-books have the same objectives and possibly in the future, will represent an easier means to reach readers across borders. But there are many hurdles to be addressed for our main partners, booksellers, to be able to trade in e-books under the right business models”.*

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About EIBF: The European and International Booksellers Federation represents national booksellers associations in the European Union and beyond. EIBF Members in turn have in membership booksellers of all kinds: brick and mortar bookshops, online bookshops, independents, chains.

About FEP: The Federation of European Publishers represents 28 national associations of publishers of books and learned journals' in the European Union and the Economic Area. FEP is thus the voice of publishers in Europe.

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