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Winners of 2014 European Union Prize for Literature announced at Frankfurt Book Fair

The winners of the 2014 European Union Prize for Literature were announced today at the Frankfurt Book Fair. The award recognises the best new and emerging authors in Europe. This year's winners are: **Ben Blushi** (Albania), **Milen Ruskov** (Bulgaria), **Jan Němec** (Czech Republic), **Makis Tsitas** (Greece), **Oddný Eir** (Iceland), **Janis Jonevs** (Latvia), **Armin Öhri** (Liechtenstein), **Pierre J. Mejlak** (Malta), **Ognjen Spahić** (Montenegro), **Marente de Moor** (The Netherlands), **Uglješa Šajtinac** (Serbia), **Birgül Oğuz** (Turkey) and **Evie Wyld** (United Kingdom).

The European Union Prize for Literature (EUPL) is open to [countries](#) participating in *Creative Europe*, the EU funding programme for the cultural and creative sectors. Each year, national juries in a third of the countries -13 this time - nominate the winning authors. See memo for authors' biographies and a synopsis of the winning books.

"My warmest congratulations to the winners of the European Union Prize for Literature," said Androulla Vassiliou, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth. *"The Prize is dedicated to the best new and emerging authors in Europe, regardless of their country of origin or language. The aim is to showcase Europe's best contemporary literature, encourage cross-border sales and promote the translation, publishing and reading of literature from other countries. The EU's new Creative Europe programme offers grants for translation, helping authors to attract readers beyond national and linguistic borders."*

Each winner receives € 5 000. More importantly, they benefit from extra promotion and international visibility. Their publishers are encouraged to apply for EU funding to have the winning books translated into other languages to reach new markets.

Since the Prize was launched in 2009, the EU has provided funding for the translation of books by 56 (out of 59) EUPL winners, into 20 different European languages, covering a total of 203 translations - on average 3-4 translations per book. The winners also benefit from extra visibility at Europe's major book fairs, including Frankfurt, London, Göteborg and the Passaporta Festival in Brussels.

This year's Prize winners will be presented with their awards during a gala ceremony at the *Concert Noble* in Brussels on 18 November, in the presence of the European Commissioner for Education and Culture, members of the European Parliament and representatives of the Italian Presidency of the EU.

The EUPL is organised by the European Commission in cooperation with the European Booksellers' Federation, the European Writers' Council and the Federation of European Publishers.

"Once again we are spoiled with 13 promising writers who illustrate our strong European literary heritage. As representatives of booksellers, we are looking forward to providing them with the promotional platform they deserve and to seeing their books displayed in as many bookshops as possible, all over Europe, and hopefully beyond..." Said Kyra Dreher and Fabian Paagman, Vice-Presidents of the European Booksellers Federation.



Dr. Pirjo Hiidenmaa, President of the European Writers' Council, said: "Thirteen new authors coming to the European scene! These authors are already known in their own countries and their own languages, and now their critics and experts have selected them to drive them forward. We welcome these new language creators and storytellers who will entertain readers and challenge our thinking."

Pierre Dutilleul, President of the Federation of European Publishers, added: "The European motto is "united in diversity". In this search of a balance between union and national singularity, literature plays a rather unique role, as it helps building bridges between our different cultures. These bridges, which foster mutual understanding, are more than necessary if we are to pursue our European endeavor. This year again, 13 European laureates, have succeeded in making us more European, more open to diversity and differences by sharing with us the uniqueness of their cultures. As a publisher, I hope these emerging authors will find readers throughout Europe thanks to the magic of translation."

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Background

The EUPL receives funding from the new Creative Europe programme, which aims to strengthen the competitiveness of the cultural and creative sectors, and to promote cultural diversity. The new programme will have a total budget of €1.46 billion in 2014-2020, which represents a 9% increase compared with previous levels. The programme will provide funding for the translation of 4,500 books. It will also enable more than 250 000 artists, cultural professionals and their works to gain international visibility, as well as supporting hundreds of European cultural cooperation projects, platforms and networks.

Under the previous Culture Programme, 2009-2013, the European Commission granted €2.5 million a year on average for literary translation and more than €2.4 million for cooperation projects involving the book sector. In 2014, in its first year, the new Creative Europe programme has allocated €3.6 million for literary translation.

The book and publishing industry contributes €23 billion to the EU's GDP and employs 135 000 people full time. Book publishing is a significant part of the cultural and creative sectors, which account for up to 4.5% of EU GDP and more than 8 million jobs. Although these sectors have proved relatively resilient in the crisis, they also face considerable challenges stemming from the digital shift, globalisation and a market which is fragmented along cultural and linguistic lines.



Countries currently participating in Creative Europe are: the 28 EU Member States, Norway, Iceland, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. More countries are likely to join from 2015.

For more information

[MEMO/14/567](#): Authors' biographies and synopsis of the winning books

Website of the Prize: <http://www.euprizeliterature.eu/>

Culture portal of the European Union <http://ec.europa.eu/culture>