



PRESS RELEASE

European book publishers welcome the adoption of the VAT action plan by the Commission

On **7 April 2016**, the European Commission adopted its Action Plan on Value Added Tax. The Action Plan includes a “Proposal for removing VAT obstacles to cross-border e-commerce - e-publications”. Book publishers are investing important resources to offer the benefits of technological developments to their readers. They also invest in standardisation, including through the ePub standard, which is offering both interoperability and accessibility as key features. You can read more about ePub and the recently created European Digital Reading Lab that is currently meeting in Bordeaux for its first conference, [here](#).

FEP President Pierre Dutilleul welcomes the Commission’s Action Plan: ‘Publishing is very much a 21st century industry and has been developing a strategy to bring books, in whatever format, to its readers and users. We are clearly satisfied that the Commission has heard our arguments in the field of VAT. EBooks are different from print books in many aspects despite having the same function that is to inform, educate, entertain. They differ for example in the possibility for them to be accessed in many different ways compared to printed books. I am thinking of streaming services that are being experienced all around Europe, such as Izneo in France. It is too early to know how reading habits will evolve; however, avoiding tax discrimination is an important step towards a thriving eBook market. I wish to thank the Commission, as well as the Parliament and the Council, for having voiced their support for a fair solution’.

The Action Plan also reads “But current rules do not fully take into account technological and economic developments. This is for example the case for e-books and electronic newspapers, which cannot benefit from reduced rates available for physical publications. This issue will be addressed in the context of the Digital Single Market strategy.”

FEP and its members are looking forward to continue working with the Commission and the other institutions to find the most appropriate solutions for Europe to remain the cutting edge of publishing. The Federation of European Publishers represents 28 national book publishers’ associations in the European Union and the European Economic Area.

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