

**Press release**  
**Brussels, 7 April 2020**

FEP President has written to all Culture Ministers of the EU and of Iceland and Norway ahead of the Culture Council of 8 April 2020. Rudy Vanschoonbeek wrote “we, representing European publishers, the first cultural industry in Europe, want you to know how terribly our sector has been hit by the crisis. New titles are cancelled (with dramatic consequences for the authors, the translators and the editors), and bookshops are mostly closed (whilst booksellers are finding smart solutions to deliver books and e-sales are growing, this is nowhere close to replacing the lost sales in shops). The sector has already suffered a cumulative loss of some 25% of the estimated 2020 turnover.

Yet, despite their serious financial and logistical difficulties, European publishers are supporting society in general as well as their communities with many initiatives during the crisis. Examples are trade publishers promoting “reading-at-home” campaigns and supporting booksellers, or numerous educational publishers supporting schools with their digital content and didactic platforms, and there are many more.

In the coming days and months, in order to continue delivering benefit to society, the publishing sector needs concrete and urgent help. We call on all Member States to support their authors, publishers and booksellers with an array of measures. But there is also a role for the European Union. It is essential to move quickly: our sector needs both immediate measures, from the existing national EU budget, and medium-term measures to allow the industry to restart once the situation changes. In addition to the measures that are taken transversally for all companies, we ask that you commit to

- Fully finance the Creative Europe Programme as requested by the Parliament and within it a specific budget line dedicated to books;
- Upgrade the Financial Guarantee dedicated to the creative sectors so as to cover the urgent liquidity needs of enterprises in the publishing value-chain;
- Ensure that any EU money earmarked to help address the crisis includes funds dedicated to the cultural sectors, including the book sector;
- Support financially the entire book value chain to help it cope with the immediate effect of the crisis;
- Step up public investments in buying books for institutions, particularly libraries in order to restore the sustainability of the sector.

We often hear: *Books and culture are important for the future of Europe; they are a core asset of the European economy.* Today is the time to demonstrate that the book sector is really a priority for Europe. We are counting on you”.

All 29 FEP member associations have been invited to relay their joint message with their respective Ministers so that the call of the book world is heard and that concrete actions are taken toward restoring the sustainability of the sector.

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