

Dear Mr Heinz Fischer, President of the Austrian Republic,

Dear colleagues,

On behalf of the European publishing community I would like to express my sincerest appreciation for the invitation to meet you today in this splendid palace.

We are absolutely delighted to be here, in this building filled with history. Meetings at the highest national and international level, taking place here, have been in all our history books. Hence, it is a wonderful privilege to be here with you.

FEP represents 28 national book publishers associations of the European Union and the European Economic Area; we are therefore the voice of book publishing, the first cultural industry in Europe. We represent a dynamic, forward-looking sector, which has adopted information technologies very early in its production process and is now rapidly moving also in the consumer side of the digital market, always exploring new ways to bring timeless content to the readers of today and tomorrow.

We have meetings today and tomorrow, which they don't seal the fate of Europe, have a great importance in the way our sector is going to be perceived in the coming years in our content.

I am sure that the inspiration we will draw from this visit and from meeting you, will greatly inspire us for the discussions we will have.

I wish also to express my gratitude to my colleagues from the Austrian Publishers and Booksellers Association for having arranged such an extraordinary visit.

Thank you for your invitation and your attention.

Dear Mr Josef Ostermayer, Minister of Culture
Dear colleagues

On behalf of the European publishing community I would like to express my sincerest appreciation for the invitation to this gala dinner today in this magnificent palace.

FEP represents 28 national book publishers associations of the European Union and the European Economic Area; we are the voice of book publishing, the first cultural industry in Europe. Publishing is a dynamic, forward-looking sector. For us the digital technologies have been part of our everyday production process and today, we are also rapidly moving in the consumer side of the digital market, as publishers are always exploring new ways to bring high quality content to the readers wherever they are, whatever their interests are.

The meetings we had today and will have tomorrow are addressing all of the issues affecting book publishing in Europe. They are mainly focusing on the initiatives coming from the European institutions which might be challenging, to say the least.

We will need your help and your sound understanding of the publishing ecosystem to make sure that whatever comes out of the European legislative process, is making publishing stronger.

Europe needs a strong publishing sector. Europe needs independent publishing. Europe needs a sustainable publishing industry.

The conditions for Europe to remain the leading force in publishing, with seven out of the 10 largest publishers being European, are there; we need favourable taxation also for digital publications, we need a copyright regime that encourages investments, we need interoperability to encourage diversity.

And we need our politicians to continue supporting all these policies. Thank you for your own support.

Allow me to seize the opportunity to reiterate my gratitude to my colleagues from the Austrian Publishers and Booksellers Association for having arranged such a lovely gala dinner.

Thank you for your invitation and your attention.