











Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2023/2053(INI)	Procedure completed
The future of the European book sector		
Subject 4.45.08 Cultural and artistic activities, books and reading, arts		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Culture and Education	 FRANKOWSKI Tomasz Shadow rapporteur  SMERIGLIO Massimiliano  JOVEVA Irena  RIBA I GINER Diana  ROOKEN Rob  GRISET Catherine  MAUREL Emmanuel	24/01/2023
European Commission	Commission DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture	Commissioner SCHINAS Margaritis	

Key events			
20/04/2023	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
18/07/2023	Vote in committee		
31/07/2023	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0257/2023	Summary
13/09/2023	Debate in Parliament		
14/09/2023	Results of vote in Parliament		

14/09/2023	Decision by Parliament	T9-0329/2023	Summary
14/09/2023	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2023/2053(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CULT/9/11750

Documentation gateway

Committee draft report		PE746.972	08/05/2023	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE749.259	06/06/2023	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0257/2023	31/07/2023	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0329/2023	14/09/2023	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2023)618	17/01/2024	EC	

The future of the European book sector

The Committee on Culture and Education adopted an own-initiative report by Tomasz FRANKOWSKI (EPP, PL) on the future of the European book sector.

Books play an essential role in our societies, as an invaluable source of knowledge, education, culture, information and entertainment and a vital means of preserving and disseminating the EUs values, cultural and linguistic diversity and cultural heritage. The European book sector is one of the largest cultural and creative industries in Europe, with around 600 000 titles published annually, and the overall value chain is estimated to employ more than half a million people in the EU.

The societal importance of access to books

The report called on all Member States to recognise books as essential goods and take measures at national level to further promote reading from an early age. It stressed the value of books as tools for promoting diversity and the inclusion of groups at risk of marginalisation in society, in particular people lacking digital skills, people with disabilities and minorities.

Members called on Member States, in this regard, to implement the [European Accessibility Act](#) and to take measures to ensure that books are available in accessible formats for people with disabilities. They recalled the need to respect the derogations granted by the European Accessibility Act, particularly for small and micro-publishers, and to ensure that the requirement to make e-books accessible does not result in a diminished range of books on offer on the market.

Supporting and promoting better circulation of European books

The report called for a budget increase for the Creative Europe programme for 2028-2034, in particular by dedicating more funds to the book sector and support to the translation of European non-fiction books. In this regard, Horizon Europe should also be extended to book sector.

Member States are urged to promote diverse works of significant cultural and societal value by increasing the acquisition budget of libraries so that they can expand the range of their books and collections, support local bookshops and safeguard the investment capacity of publishers.

Members stressed the need to support the creation and translation of European books, in particular by enhancing public funding at national and European level so as to improve the circulation, visibility and diversity of translated books. They underlined the importance of mobility and exchanges for authors and translators in order to facilitate their creative work.

Members stressed the need to support the translation of European non-fiction books, particularly via the Creative Europe programme, which does not currently allow for this;

Members support the further promotion and wider outreach of the EUPL in the Member States, including through the creation of a category for European childrens books.

Towards an inclusive reading culture

Members called for more initiatives to promote reading in the Member States, such as the introduction of cultural vouchers, particularly for

young people and marginalised groups. They called for more support for childrens books in particular, which should be promoted by establishing a first book programme, or similar initiatives at national level to encourage reading.

Underlining the importance of early childhood reading, particularly of printed books, the report stressed the role of school libraries and trained librarians in providing guidance, facilitating access to knowledge and fostering reading habits.

Member States are called on to establish a network of reading ambassadors, consisting of respected and influential role models who would share their passion and enthusiasm in order to promote reading. For its part, the Commission should create a label for independent bookshops in the EU in order to boost the visibility of local bookshops and promote the diversity of European books.

Members welcomed the various initiatives to support Ukraine since the beginning of the war, and in particular those aimed at ensuring childrens access to books, facilitating the integration of refugees and protecting Ukrainian culture. They called on the Commission to ensure that sufficient funding continues to support the Ukrainian book sector, including artists and authors, for the duration of the war and the reconstruction of the country.

Challenges for the future growth of the book sector

Members called on the Commission and the Member States to support the sector in its green transition, in particular through financial incentives, research and collaboration between all actors in the supply chain, including on the use of raw materials, sustainable packaging and transport needed for the production and distribution of printed books.

The Commission and the Member States are called on to monitor paper and ink production and to support the development of the industrial capacities of the European book sector in order to reduce carbon emissions by printing books in Europe.

The report welcomed the sectors efforts to produce printed books in a greener and more sustainable manner through the use of certified and recycled paper. It called on the Commission to create a Printed in Europe label.

Acknowledging the use in the sector of artificial intelligence (AI), Members stressed the importance of transparency related to AI training, including data collections and their sources. They encouraged the Commission to: (i) support training for those involved in the book sector to equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to adapt successfully to changes related to AI; (ii) support research and innovation projects on the use of AI in order to enhance the efficiency of the sector, notably with regard to environmental sustainability and accessibility.

The report called for books to be zero-rated for VAT in the Member States, irrespective of their format or how they are accessed, in order to support the knowledge economy, encourage reading and promote its lifelong benefits. Members called for the interoperability of e-books across devices, as consumers should be able to acquire their e-books from any supplier, regardless of their e-reading device, and to access, read, store and transfer any e-book in any format.

The future of the European book sector

The European Parliament adopted by 513 votes to 11, with 8 abstentions, a resolution on the future of the European book sector.

The European book industry is one of Europe's most important cultural and creative sectors, with around 600 000 titles published each year. The overall value chain is estimated to employ more than half a million people in the European Union.

The societal importance of access to books

Parliament called on all Member States to consider books as an essential goods and to take measures at national level to encourage reading from an early age. It stressed the need to strike a balance in the book ecosystem by safeguarding the role of the various players in the value chain, such as authors, publishers, printers, distributors, translators, bookshops and libraries.

Stressing the value of books as a tool for promoting diversity and the inclusion of groups at risk of marginalisation in society, Members called on Member States to implement the [European legislative act on accessibility](#) as soon as possible and to take measures to ensure that books are available in formats accessible to people with disabilities.

They called on Member States to provide sufficient financial and structural support to the sector, particularly to SMEs and micro-enterprises, while funding research and innovation to increase accessibility.

Supporting and promoting better circulation of European books

Parliament called on the Commission and the Member States to increase the budget of the Creative Europe programme for 2028-2034, in particular by allocating more funds to the book sector, and to extend its support to the sector through the Horizon Europe programme for 2028-2034.

Member States are invited to promote a diversity of works of significant cultural and societal value by increasing the acquisition budget of libraries, to support local bookshops and safeguard the investment capacity of publishers.

Members stressed the need to support the creation and translation of European books, including non-fiction, and the importance of mobility and exchanges for authors and translators to facilitate their creative work. They supported the continued promotion of the European Union Prize for Literature and the extension of its scope in the Member States, in particular through the creation of a category for European children's books.

Towards an inclusive reading culture

Members called for more initiatives to promote reading in the Member States, such as the introduction of cultural vouchers, particularly for young people and marginalised groups, which could make it easier to buy books. Children's books should be given greater support through the establishment of a first book programme or similar initiatives at national level to encourage reading. Member States should set up a network of reading ambassadors, respected and influential role models, who would share their passion and enthusiasm to promote reading.

The resolution emphasised the role of libraries and independent bookshops as cornerstones of the local community. It called on the Commission to create a label for independent bookshops in the EU in order to increase the visibility of local bookshops and promote the diversity of European books.

The Commission should ensure that sufficient funds continue to support the Ukrainian book sector, including artists and authors, during the war and the reconstruction of the country.

Challenges for the future growth of the book sector

Parliament called on the Commission and the Member States to support the sector in its green transition, in particular through financial incentives, research and collaboration between all actors in the supply chain, including on the use of raw materials, sustainable packaging and transport needed for the production and distribution of printed books. The Commission should take account of the importance of paper in the design and implementation of green transition policies. It is called on to create a Printed in Europe label.

The Commission should also establish clear guidelines for the implementation of the Deforestation Regulation, taking into account the specific nature and complexity of the book sector chain.

Acknowledging the use in the sector of artificial intelligence (AI), Members stressed the importance of transparency related to AI training, including data collections and their sources. They encouraged the Commission to: (i) support training for those involved in the book sector to equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to adapt successfully to changes related to AI; (ii) support research and innovation projects on the use of AI in order to enhance the efficiency of the sector, notably with regard to environmental sustainability and accessibility.

The resolution stressed the need to ensure fair competition and transparency of publishing house ownership in the book market in order to guarantee consumer choice and cultural diversity. It underlined the unfair practices by certain dominant online players that abuse their position to the detriment of smaller actors in the value chain.

Parliament called for books to be zero-rated for VAT in the Member States, irrespective of their format or how they are accessed, in order to support the knowledge economy, encourage reading and promote its lifelong benefits.

Lastly, Members called for the interoperability of e-books across devices, as consumers should be able to acquire their e-books from any supplier, regardless of their e-reading device, and to access, read, store and transfer any e-book in any format.

Transparency				
RIBA I GINER Diana	Shadow rapporteur	CULT	25/05/2023	Gremi de Llibreters de Catalunya
RIBA I GINER Diana	Shadow rapporteur	CULT	25/05/2023	PEN Català
RIBA I GINER Diana	Shadow rapporteur	CULT	25/05/2023	Associació d'Escriptors en Llengua Catalana
RIBA I GINER Diana	Shadow rapporteur	CULT	25/05/2023	Gremi d'Editors de Catalunya
FRANKOWSKI Tomasz	Rapporteur	CULT	25/04/2023	Wydawnictwo Wytwórnia
FRANKOWSKI Tomasz	Rapporteur	CULT	25/04/2023	Wydawnictwo Dwie Siostry
FRANKOWSKI Tomasz	Rapporteur	CULT	24/04/2023	Association internationale des libraires francophones (AILF)
FRANKOWSKI Tomasz	Rapporteur	CULT	11/04/2023	European and International Booksellers Federation (EIBF)
FRANKOWSKI Tomasz	Rapporteur	CULT	21/03/2023	Fundacja Powszechnego Czytania Universal Reading Foundation
FRANKOWSKI Tomasz	Rapporteur	CULT	21/03/2023	International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions Knowledge Rights 21