

Strasbourg, 14 September 2023

EIBF welcomes today's adoption of "The future of the European book sector" report by European Parliament plenary

Today, 14th September 2023, Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) have adopted a report on the future of the European book sector during the plenary session in Strasbourg, sending a strong message of support towards the sector and bringing forward a number of recommendations to support its growth in the years to come.

As the leading organisation representing the bookselling sector at European and international levels, EIBF has contributed and fed into the content of the report, and has been actively involved in the process to ensure that the priorities and needs of the sector were adequately represented.

The adoption of this report comes at a crucial time, as bookshops are gradually recovering from the difficult period of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, there are still many changes and challenges to face. The digital revolution is constantly shaking up our world, requiring not only retailers such as booksellers to adapt their business models and services, but also lawmakers to rethink policies and legislation. Meanwhile, the severity of climate change and its impact on the sector also cannot be overstated. Furthermore, Europe is currently experiencing an inflation and cost of living crisis affecting book prices and purchasing power, as well as a wave of censorship and attacks against the freedom of expression in cultural spaces, targeting libraries, publishers and bookshops.

Bookselling is not immune to these challenges, and booksellers need to play their part in the digital and green transition. As an innovative and resilient sector, it intends to do so. However, the sector needs the means and support to adapt and thrive in these times, and EIBF welcomes that the report largely supports these calls, for instance, by calling for further educational and professional training opportunities in the book sector, proper enforcement of the Digital Markets Act (DMA) to ensure fair competition online, the designation of bookshops as safe and welcoming spaces and the promotion of measures such as culture vouchers, which have proven to be invaluable to the sector while helping introduce new readers to bookshops.

Overall, EIBF is very pleased that this report reflects the essential role of books and the value of the European book sector, advocates for measures that are in the best interest of the bookselling sector and, most importantly, reiterates the European Parliament's full support for the sector.

Fabian Paagman, EIBF Co-President says *"We're glad to finally see a report from the European Parliament that focuses on the needs of the European book sector and includes measures that can help it continue to thrive. The acknowledgement of European bookshops as cornerstones of local communities and safe and welcoming spaces is particularly positive. We count on the European Commission and Member States to implement the recommendations laid out in this report"*.

EIBF congratulates MEP Tomasz Frankowski (EPP), the lead rapporteur of the file, as well as the shadow rapporteurs and other supportive MEPs for their engagement, open communication and willingness to support the sector.

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