



Mr Janez Janša
Prime Minister

Mr Zdravko Počivalšek
Minister of Economy

Republic of Slovenia

Brussels, 21 April 2020

Dear Mr Janša, dear Mr Počivalšek,

We hope you are well in this difficult time. We, representing European book 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, and the impact will be worse if this situation persists.

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 benefits to society, the publishing sector needs concrete and urgent help. We are therefore calling on all Member States to support their authors, publishers and booksellers with an array of measures, and to encourage the European Union also to play a role. We have addressed the Ministers of Culture of the EU who met on 8th April, and we want now to bring our message to you directly.

It is essential to move quickly: our sector needs both immediate actions, from the existing 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 support financially the entire book value chain to help it cope with the immediate effect of the crisis, and take any other necessary measures and initiatives – for example increasing investments in buying books for libraries and other institutions.

Taking immediate and robust action will be all the more essential in countries like Slovenia, where the publishing sector, while a valid contributor to culture and society as in every other country, is nonetheless already vulnerable, due to a comparatively small market, among other reasons.



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.

Stay safe, yours sincerely

Rudy Vanschoonbeek
President
Federation of European Publishers

FEP members:

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