



Federico Motta
President

FEP GENERAL ASSEMBLY
20th November 2009

Resolution unanimously adopted

The Federation of European Publishers (FEP) represents 26 national associations of book publishers of the European Union and of the European Economic Area and acts on behalf of its members in discussions and negotiations with the Institutions of the European Union particularly concerning legislation, regulation and taxation.

Meeting for their General Assembly on 20th November 2009, FEP and its Member Associations were made aware that the Icelandic Government has decided not to increase the rate of VAT applicable to books from 7 to 14% as previously considered. We therefore unanimously welcome this decision.

In the current economic downturn, as well as in the long run, the improvement of skills must be a priority; this is why books, fundamental vehicles of education and knowledge diffusion, should benefit from conditions fostering their widest possible circulation and consumption.

Various studies indicate the detrimental effects of declines in readership not only in cultural, social and civic terms but also economically speaking; raising taxation on books would correspond to damaging national culture as well as imposing a higher burden on a production factor decisive for creativity, innovation and long-term development.

We strongly believe Iceland cannot afford to endanger its book sector – which has been able so far to weather the crisis without serious consequences – through measures that might bring little benefits in the short period but will certainly have highly negative effects in the long run. The disruption of the book sector would hinder the diffusion of culture and knowledge and thus adversely affect the economy and society well beyond the publishing industry itself.

Countries that have raised VAT on books abruptly have soon experienced serious difficulties in the publishing sector; this can only translate into a deterioration of readership levels, thus negatively affecting any goals in terms of training and education, as well as of competitiveness and employment. On the other hand, a number of EU Member States that had planned or implemented an increase of VAT on books have, during the past months, finally reconsidered their intentions.

This has realigned those countries with the principles which underlie the reduced rates of VAT applied now in 25 out of the 27 EU Member States. Such principles have been further confirmed by the adoption in May of a Directive that consolidates the VAT regime; the new provisions include a widening of the definition of books in order to expand the benefits of reduced rates beyond the printed domain. This was a clear and strong signal by the European institutions to all the EU Member States.

Therefore, FEP Member Associations unanimously express full support for the decision by the Icelandic Government. This in fact pays due consideration to the undeniable social, economic, cultural and political benefits associated with a wider readership and a healthy publishing sector.



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AUSTRIA - HAUPTVERBAND DES ÖSTERREICHISCHEN BUCHHANDELS
BELGIUM - VLAAMSE UITGEVERS VERENIGING - ASSOCIATION DES EDITEURS BELGES
BULGARIA - АСОЦИАЦИЯ БЪЛГАРСКА КНИГА
CZECH REPUBLIC - SVAZ ČESKÝCH KNIHKUPCŮ A NAKLADATELŮ
CYPRUS - PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION OF CYPRUS
DENMARK - DEN DANSKE FORLÆGGERFORENING
ESTONIA - EESTI KIRJASTUSTE LIIT
FINLAND - SUOMEN KUSTANNUSYHDISTYS
FRANCE - SYNDICAT NATIONAL DE L'EDITION
GERMANY - BÖRSENVEREIN DES DEUTSCHEN BUCHHANDELS
GREECE - HELLENIC FEDERATION PUBLISHERS AND BOOKSELLERS
HUNGARY - A MAGYAR KÖNYVKIADOK ES KÖNYVTERJESZTOK EGYESÜLESE
ICELAND - FELAG ÍSLENSKRA BOKAUTGEFENDA
IRELAND - THE IRISH BOOK PUBLISHERS' ASSOCIATION
ITALY - ASSOCIAZIONE ITALIANA EDITORI
LITHUANIA - LIETUVOS LEIDĖJŲ ASOCIACIJA
LUXEMBOURG - FEDERATION LUXEMBOURGEOISE DES EDITEURS DE LIVRES
THE NETHERLANDS - NEDERLANDS UITGEVERSVERBOND
NORWAY - DEN NORSKE FORLEGGERFORENING
POLAND - POLSKA IZBA KSIĄŻKI
PORTUGAL - ASSOCIAÇÃO PORTUGUESA DE EDITORES E LIVREIROS
SLOVENIA - SLOVENIAN PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION
SPAIN - FEDERACION DE GREMIOS DE EDITORES DE ESPAÑA
SWEDEN - SVENSKA FÖRLÄGGARE FÖRENINGEN
UNITED KINGDOM - THE PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION