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The Federation of European Publishers met President Barroso

This Monday 10 January 2011, the President of the European Commission met a delegation of European publishers. The delegation led by FEP President, the Irish publisher Fergal Tobin (Gill&Macmillan) was composed of FEP Vice-President Piotr Marciszuk (Stentor, Poland), Christine de Mazières (CEO Syndicat national de l'Édition), Nick Fowler (Elsevier, United Kingdom), Antoine Gallimard (Gallimard, France), Richard Mollet (CEO The Publishers Association, UK), Henrique Mota, (Principia, Portugal), Karl-Peter Winters (Representative of the German Publishers, Otto Schmidt KG, Germany) and Anne Bergman-Tahon (Director FEP) .

The publishers are responsible for the leading cultural industry in Europe, with a retail turnover of more than 40 billion €. The FEP welcomes the support of the European Commission to sustain a healthy European books' and learned journals' sector.

We fully share the views of the President of the Commission concerning the importance of freedom to publish, a fundamental principle for all European publishers who are at the forefront of the dissemination of new ideas.

Publishers welcome the Commission's initiatives to maintain copyright principles in the digital environment, by establishing best practices and by supporting voluntary arrangements among stakeholders. Several agreements are being finalised with libraries and other entities to provide online access to out of commerce works¹.

We also welcome the Green Paper on the future of value added tax which questions the rationale of having different rates for printed or audio books² and ebooks.

FEP President Fergal Tobin said *'when our sector is going through major changes notably with the introduction of reading tablets and the uptake of ebooks, which is a growing part of our market, it is comforting to know that the European Institutions recognise and support the value of publishing in a democratic society'*.

The Federation of European Publishers (FEP) represents 26 national associations of publishers from the European Union and the European Economic Area Member States. The largest markets in terms of publishers' turnover in 2009 were Germany, followed by the United Kingdom, France, Spain and Italy. A total of about 515,000 new titles were issued by publishers in 2009. There was therefore an increase of an estimated 1% in the title output from the previous survey. The countries reporting the largest new titles output were the UK (133,224), Germany (81,793), Spain (41,917), France (38,445) and Italy (37,845). European publishers hold a total of close to 6.5 million different titles in stock, the countries reporting the largest availability being the UK (2.4 million), Germany (around 1.2 million), Italy (almost 700,000), France (over 600,000) and Spain (over 400,000).

¹ Most of these agreements are based on the due diligent search to exclude works that are still in commerce or for which the rights holders choose not to have their works available on the internet (moral rights).

² Annex 3 of the VAT Directive allows reduced VAT rates for books on all physical means of support. 25 Member States tax printed books at zero or reduced rates.



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