



Policy recommendations 1st edition



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INTRODUCTION

This document is meant to provide a series of policy recommendations to enhance the integration of ICT and book publishing, by creating an environment conducive to such integration and eliminating barriers that hamper it. For the sake of these recommendations, policies are construed in their broader meaning of all instruments at the disposal of policy makers looking for securing the smooth running of the markets concerned and the satisfaction of consumers. This applies also to the identification of areas for public investment, including research and development and the allocation of project funding.

The recommendations stem from the dialogue between the communities of book publishers and ICT providers and draw inspiration from wider discussions held at TISP events, the business cases collected within the project as well as the experiences and reflections of the project partners.

A few, general recommendations can be made as an introduction to the more specific ones following, as a way to set the scene.

For a start, decision-makers should take a holistic approach to cultural and creative industries, including how they interact with ICT; this should ensure the consistency of policies, which should be aligned, or at least coordinated with close exchanges. At the same time, they should adopt a sectorial approach, taking into account the specificities of each sector. In a TISP context, all partners agree that the social, political and cultural aspects of publishing should be considered and put on the same level as ICT and innovation.

Maybe more than other industries, book publishing needs improved access to research, finance and networking. Many infrastructure measures are a concern for all SMEs across the board (reduction of bureaucracy, adjustments to EU-wide legislation and regulations), but are nonetheless among the most pressing needs when it comes to achieving an innovative single digital market.

It is in the interest of ICT companies as well as publishers to maintain a diverse industry which provides smaller players with a level playing field. Policies aimed at enhancing all operators' ability to invest in new digital publishing products, the possibility to experiment with technologies for innovation and multimedia, to provide content in different and attractive forms, and so on (in particular in small language markets) are most welcome to this effect.

Especially for innovative SMEs it is important to have access to optimal infrastructural conditions. Those are usually beyond their control: they need to have a reasonable chance to "plug" in their innovative solutions into existing platforms and environments. So, the more openness is secured to this effect the more support is given to innovative European SMEs.

Concerning ICT more specifically, it should be noted that Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) - and publishers among them – have been so far using ICT more than developing them (although this is likely to change due to widespread hiring of ICT skills by publishers); funding programmes should

take the current state of play into account. Publishers contribute more to innovation by way of innovative deployment and applications of ICT than by creating new ICT from scratch. Whether to simply match this fact or to remedy it by enabling publishers to delve deeper into ICT innovation, an appropriate environment, complete with more accessible public funding, should therefore be devoted to the support of infrastructure measures in general, as opposed to the often deceptive quest for an elusive single “disruptive” innovation. All TISP partners concur that the power of the market relies on functional infrastructure, while innovations are a natural outcome of a properly functioning market.

Within this framework, support should go to operators and initiatives aimed at reducing the digital divide, especially with regard to categories with special needs (for example, in the field of accessibility for the visually impaired).

1. TAKING STOCK

TISP has already met one of its main goals: to foster more understanding and possibly cooperation between the book publishing and ICT industries.

We have learnt that there is more common ground than differences:

1. Book publishing and ICT are **businesses** alike, therefore they can speak the same language.
2. Both businesses thrive on the exploitation of **intellectual property** although their take of it might differ, the reason why this set of issues was deliberately left out of the scope of TISP.
3. Their prosperity hinges on: 1/ their ability to **innovate** continually whether by way of seminal content or devices/services deemed to be game-changers; 2/ their savvy at putting them on the right **market** at the exact right time.
4. Both businesses have earned **top positions in world markets**: cooperation may only take them both to new heights. TISP is meant to help them get there and support Europe's broader economy in the process.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 SOLUTIONS ADDRESSING COMMERCIAL NEEDS

Since we are talking about businesses, it should be clear that technology and innovation should provide **integrated publishing-technological solutions to address commercial needs**. Indeed, the value to society of a diverse publishing industry is immense. As crucial to a diverse publishing industry is a very diverse network of sales and trade infrastructure. Policy support should therefore focus on:

- Using ICT to protect and expand this diversity; in the B2C domain, through small and big online book stores, big online platforms, independent networks of authors, booksellers and readers; in the B2B domain, through exchange platforms from book fairs, expert communities of practice and other social networks.
- Facilitating the online presence of retailers and their ability to offer good purchasing and reading experiences, complete with an attractive legal offer of e-books and other e-content, enhancing the development and quick adoption of ICT solutions for e-commerce in all its aspects; this includes removing barriers to e-commerce in general, facilitating access to markets and supporting implementation and adaptation to other policies (such as compliance with the new VAT rules of 2015: VAT monitoring, MOSS returns, etc.).
- Building technical solutions to improve the accessibility to new markets (ensuring an efficient and effective presence in the digital marketplace) and new communities (including people with disabilities); for example, social networks may boost this socialisation and make it more productive.
- Developing ICT solutions to assist publishers in protecting their IP in a user-friendly, consumption-enhancing way and facilitating rights communication, claims, clearance and discovery.

2.2 FOSTERING COOPERATION BETWEEN ICT AND BOOK SECTORS

Initiatives that further help publishers understand technology and ICT providers see huge potential outlets in publishing will be highly beneficial (creation of joint academies, courses, etc.). It is worth noting that such support would help deliver on the claimed objectives of the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs launched by President Barroso and led by a group of four other Members of the European Commission: Vice President Kroes, Vice President Tajani, Commissioner Vassiliou and Commissioner Andor. Efforts should focus on further **enhancing opportunities for cooperation between the two sectors**, a cooperation that has only to gain from adequate infrastructure. Some possibilities include:

- Encouraging the creation and flourishing of virtual and real meeting spaces and places; indeed personal exchanges and knowledge transfer are the most important building blocks for stable business relationships and best practices.
- Organising events and supporting projects that include a full range of stakeholders: software providers, start-ups, web and application developers, but also publishers, content and service providers, aggregators, operators in the supply chain, standard setting bodies (from both IT and publishing), etc.
- Encouraging increased participation of publishers in international ICT and web-related development and standardisation activities (such as W3C among other bodies).
- Stimulating further convergence between book publishing and other creative sectors, to enhance the trans-media aspects of book production (for example via clustering, etc.); this growing convergence has to rely on the industry operators themselves.
- Encouraging and giving prominence (also in funding) to practical collaborative initiatives such as joint projects, labs and incubators that can foster R&D&I.
- Establishing a cross-European interdisciplinary centre of excellence for the publishing industry to share cross media knowledge.
- Creating programmes for smaller European projects in the ICT/publishing intersection, making access to funding through them easier still (e.g. by building networks between national industry associations, European Commission contact points, fairs, B2B publications, etc.) to especially and sustainably support small first-time applicants to such funding programs (ideas have to be developed to keep administration overheads as low as possible); since content / media products are culture / language specific, give special attention to cross-language and cross-cultural aspects under a European perspective (localization procedures, etc.), possibly by linking them to relevant existing programs.
- Developing an advanced matchmaking database of publishing and ICT demands and solutions: cooperation opportunities, licencing of content or technological solutions, etc.; this database could include proposals or tools for generation of ideas on the basis of the database contents.
- Developing a programme for scouting trips for associations and individuals to cities and areas with a high innovation rate in the fields where our two industries overlap.
- Developing a curated database of best practices of projects and products in the intersection area of ICT and publishing.

2.3 ICT FOR MORE ATTRACTIVE E-PRODUCTS

Integrated ICT/publishing solutions can make books more attractive - especially to the digital natives - by turning them into trans-media boosters of creativity or apps which prolong the story of

a book or give it a new angle. Investment should be encouraged in **technologies that improve products, production, distribution and marketing processes**. Examples include:

- Speed of change or updating of content; IT content needs to be constantly improved and updated at the speed of implementation, and publishing needs solutions with the issue of version tracking and linking on the Web, which is especially important for e-books.

2.4 MARKET DATA AND SEMANTIC DATA

Data and metadata have always been very important for book publishing and their relevance can only increase as more and more book content is delivered online. Investments are needed to **enhance the capacity of generating quality metadata as well as of processing large amounts of data** for a range of purposes (from content creation to content discovery and market analysis). Efforts should focus on:

- Increasing the capacity to generate and analyse market data (and attention should be paid to the interplay with other areas of legislation concerning the use of commercial data).
- Developing ICT tools to support standards adoption, especially among smaller publishing companies; equally the publishing sector should produce new resources to enable ICT to grasp the potential in the publishing world's data and content management standards.
- Encouraging the application of good metadata and actionable identifiers, since linking together different types of content with common subjects and audiences is the primary purpose of metadata.
- Promoting initiatives in the field of creating, cleaning and exploiting book industry data (product data, ordering and sales and book content data).
- Developing common semantic standards, which must be understood and implemented consistently (e.g. ISO standards, EDItEUR and IDPF international trade standards, local / national standards).
- Fostering the creation of standards and infrastructure for metadata about right ownership and licensing with a view to facilitate discovery and clearance.
- Documenting and spreading best practices in all the above areas.

2.5 ONLINE DISCOVERY

The Internet is characterised by what seems to be an almost infinite amount of 'information'. Finding the relevant information is crucial and discoverability tools need to be explored. ICT can provide inexpensive **ways to make the online discovery easier**.

This is closely linked to the issue of data and metadata: semantic web technologies can be particularly helpful in this area and the concept of discoverability itself needs to be broadened in the era of Web 2.0 and semantic / social technologies. ICT can help process large data volumes

efficiently, and publishers can provide the experience and proven semantic definitions to feed back into the loop.

Possible actions encompass:

- Supporting innovation in application of semantic web to the sector, also promoting integration with typical editorial skills; as an example, classification information could be crowd-sourced or extracted automatically from full text and then editorially enhanced.
- Promoting the use of Web 2.0 and social tools to help users to discover books and other e-content starting from their reading experience.

2.6 ICT TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY OF BOOKS FOR PRINT IMPAIRED PEOPLE

Genuine equal opportunities for print impaired people will be achieved when accessibility features will be incorporated in the mainstream publishing and distribution of books.

ICT provides great opportunities to **enhance the accessibility of books for people with print impairments**. Policies and funding opportunities should foster the further development and especially implementation and deployment of integrated ICT/publishing solutions aimed to improve accessibility to digital publications while not thwarting consumers' choice and preference, using e-book and metadata standards that allow publishing accessible e-books (ePub 3) and messaging information about their accessibility elements in a machine readable form (ONIX 3.0).

Furthermore, efforts should be made to ensure that accessibility features are embedded all along the book value chain (from file formats to reading software, DRM and devices, retailer websites and online payment service providers). The LIA project in Italy is a very good example in this area.

Policy measures include:

- Supporting innovation actions to encourage publishers “to produce directly their books in accessible formats”, as stated in the Digital Agenda for Europe (Pillar VI, Action 65).
- Supporting design and development of applications, tools, device, web retailer portals, etc. that fully support the accessibility features of files and metadata.

2.7 DIGITAL EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

It is a documented fact that digital content works wonders at capturing the attention and unleashing the imagination of the younger generation. ICT and publishing should increasingly work together to **support the creation and adoption of digital school books**. Efforts should focus (in school, but also beyond, in vocational, higher and continuing education) on:

- Supporting the adoption of ICT equipment and of digital professional material in order to achieve the digitisation of schools while ensuring quality and pedagogical results.

- Developing solutions for personalised and adaptive learning, for example through intelligent use of metadata and enrichment of educational content.
- Encouraging the development of formats that facilitate the integration of educational content in a variety of school platforms and devices.
- Improving the e-skills of teachers, paying due attention to their capacity to select and use quality e-content in pedagogical contexts.

2.8 E-SKILLS

Digital skills have an increasing importance in the economy, including in the publishing sector. Any targeted initiatives to **enhance ICT skills** will benefit both sectors and should be supported, as well as those coupling media and publishing skills with ICT curricula. Examples include:

- Including ICT skills development in most curricula in higher education, and especially in humanities; the publishing sector is highly likely to incorporate hybrid professional profiles.
- Creating programmes that support the development of specific cross-European vocational as well as academic courses (including distance learning ones) that systematically integrate skills and competencies in the intersection between content and ICT and that bring them into a productive relation with other important topics like entrepreneurship, management and leadership / HR, processes, kick-off funding, marketing, etc.
- Promoting internships of ICT students – international or not - at publishing houses.
- Supporting publishers in promoting the publishing sector as a creative and innovative industry with digital challenges and opportunities, to universities and other higher education institutions with an ICT programme.
- Developing a placement program for specialists as well as executives from companies of one area to spend several months in a company of the other.
- Again, it is worth noting that Sections 7 and 8 fit tightly the objectives of the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs.

2.9 ACCESS TO ICT FOR SMES IN THE PUBLISHING INDUSTRY

Most companies in publishing are SMEs and as such often do not engage in R&D activities of their own. Access to research in ICT-related fields is therefore scarce. Infrastructure programmes should be encouraged that **enable low-threshold access to research in ICT for publishing companies**, connecting ICT companies, publishing companies and research centres.

2.10 ACCESS TO FINANCE

Access to finance is another bottleneck that hinders innovation. Banks have long been one of the main sources of financing for publishers. However, as emphasised by the Green Paper on the

potential of cultural and creative industries of the European Commission¹, SMEs in this sector suffer because of the lack of capacity of the financial system to fully recognise the value of intangible assets such as copyright.

With the growing need for innovation, the risks facing creditors and debtors are also on the rise. **Alternative sources of financing are needed for the creative industries investing in ICT**, and for publishing in particular. Inspiration in this respect can be drawn from the funding schemes available in the ICT sector.

2.11 RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN THE BOOK SECTOR

Improved knowledge of the sectors that warrant some type of support or intervention is always a good starting point. **Research** should be supported **on the book sector**, both on more general issues such as market development and trends, cultural trends, reading behaviours, and more specifically on the interaction of ICT and book publishing and reading, as well as on past experiences of productive relations between content and technology.

R&I is to be supported in all the phases of the production and distribution of books, not limited to digital products. Fields for digitally-powered innovation include (though not limited to):

- Content management systems and, more in general, technologies for the management of the production process of paper and electronic books in integrated and cost effective way.
- Design and development of new products and services, in all the publishing areas (children and adult fiction and non-fiction, educational content, research journals and monographs, professional content, including databases, etc.).
- Logistics for effective distribution of paper books.
- E-commerce of paper and e-books.
- Semantic web, social tools, web 2.0 for book promotion.
- Rights and rights information management to facilitate licensing where applicable.
- User-friendly DRM where applicable.
- Reading software, multilingual text-to-speech, reading devices.

2.12 ENHANCING EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURES

A lot of relevant work has been done already in the field of applying ICT to create solutions for the book sector, via cooperative efforts often supported as European projects or by private operators

¹ http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/;ELX_SESSIONID=B6PLTs3T8qmMLtrk9cmwkkGjp6M9pQ2NjH6zpGv4rGQXrhFg28lh!-1833460205?uri=CELEX:52010DC0183

looking for market solutions. Further **solutions should be built** in a wide range of areas **on existing infrastructure and networks**, and more networks should be created to link individual solutions that would prove much more beneficial if connected with others. Examples include:

- Supporting existing networks that provide ICT solutions, such as ARROW and RDI.
- Interconnect existing databases via robust networks to improve information management in areas such as content discovery.

2.13 STOP VAT DISCRIMINATION FOR E-BOOKS

Finally, EU Member States should be allowed to apply **reduced rates of VAT to e-books**, the way it works with print books. Despite being a matter of fiscal policy, this measure is strictly connected with the ICT/publishing intersection as it deals specifically with digital books. It is widely recognised within and outside the TISP consortium that this single measure would unleash the potential of the e-book market across Europe.

LIST OF REFERENCES

Green Paper - Unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries (COM/2010/0183)

Note to the reader:

The TISP project will release a 2nd edition of the policy recommendations in December 2015. TISP welcomes all stakeholders to join the discussion.

If you are interested to contribute with your proposals or a best practice that could support our recommendations, please get in touch with us using the contact details listed below.

THE TISP PROJECT

*TISP (Technology and Innovation for Smart Publishing) is the European project aiming to foster the connection between **publishing companies and ICT enterprises**, in order to stimulate new partnerships and business models.*

*TISP is a platform for sharing experiences, market analyses and business case studies. Publishing and new technologies can find, within an international network, room for a debate about innovation, where supply and demand can match to support the creation of **innovative products and services** as well as **new technological solutions useful for the professionals** of the book value chain.*

*To this end, several **professional meetings** will be organised (at least four each year) in occasion of the most important trade events in the two domains, and further networking activities will go on throughout the project's life with different communication tools and channels.*

*The results of the exchanges between stakeholders as well as the outcomes of TISP events are gathered in the **TISP Smart Book** (web-site: <http://www.smartbook-tisp.eu/>), a web resource consisting of a set of business cases and other relevant material that may support decision making by companies in launching new business models. Among the objectives of the project, there is also the elaboration of **policy recommendations** which, shaped by feedback from the TISP events, will be addressed to the competent institutions, at national and EU level.*

Started in January 2013 with an expected duration of three years, TISP is based on a consortium of 25 organisations from 12 countries, under the coordination of AIE, Associazione Italiana Editori. The consortium is composed by the umbrella organisations of the two sectors involved, the Federation of European Publishers and DigitalEurope, the organisers of the world's three most important book fairs, the Bologna Children's Book Fair, the Frankfurt Book Fair and the London Book Fair, sixteen national trade associations and four research institutes.

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