

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-003646/25
to the Commission
Valentina Palmisano (The Left)
(19 September 2025)**

Subject: Support for independent bookshops and reading

In Italy, Law No 15/2020 ('Provisions for the promotion of and support for reading') introduced tools intended to help independent bookshops and small bookshop operators, with the aim of safeguarding editorial pluralism, widespread access to reading and more cultural diversity.

However, years after the law came into force, the requisite implementing decrees still have yet to be adopted. That delay is hindering the full application of the measures and has caused economic difficulties for many independent bookstores, which play a fundamental role in the dissemination of culture and the bolstering of social cohesion in local communities.

Through Article 167 TFEU, the EU undertook to fostering cooperation between Member States and supporting the promotion of cultural diversity. What is more, the most recent Regulation (EU) 2021/818, which establishes the Creative Europe programme (2021-2027), highlights the importance of safeguarding editorial pluralism and of promoting access to culture throughout the EU.

In the light of the above:

1. What will the Commission do to ensure that Member States which adopt national measures to that effect actually apply them?
2. Does it not believe that support for these cultural assets, which are essential for editorial diversity and social cohesion among the regions, should be stepped up, including by dint of EU funds and targeted initiatives?

Submitted: 19.9.2025

**Answer given by Mr Micallef on behalf of the European Commission
(26 November 2025)**

In accordance with Article 167 Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, action by the EU on culture aims at encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, supporting and supplementing their actions in areas such as literary creation.

These efforts are implemented through the adoption of incentive measures designed to encourage cultural development and exchange, while respecting the diversity of national cultural policies, excluding harmonisation and regulations of the Member States.

The Creative Europe programme ⁽¹⁾ is the Commission's flagship initiative to support culture and audiovisual sectors, including the book and literature sectors.

The programme funding is allocated through calls that involve participation of multiple partners from Creative Europe countries. Different funding schemes and actions of Creative Europe include support to literary translations — more than 500 books are translated each year.

The programme also supports reading promotion through European Authors Day ⁽²⁾ and cooperation projects such as RISE Plus ⁽³⁾ aimed at strengthening the European booksellers.

Furthermore, the Commission also supports the book sector and reading promotion initiatives through other EU programmes like Erasmus+ ⁽⁴⁾ and Horizon Europe ⁽⁵⁾.

The Commission remains strongly committed to safeguarding editorial pluralism and freedom of expression which are core European values.

⁽¹⁾ <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe>.

⁽²⁾ <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/cultural-and-creative-sectors/books-and-publishing/european-authors-day>.

⁽³⁾ <https://risebookselling.eu/>.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/it>.

⁽⁵⁾ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en.

The safeguarding and promotion of these values feature prominently in the Culture Compass for Europe ⁽⁶⁾, which was adopted on 12 November 2025.

⁽⁶⁾ <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/news/commission-adopts-new-culture-compass-for-europe>.