



PRESS RELEASE

FEP statement on the Council conclusions on high quality, transparent, open, trustworthy and equitable scholarly publishing

Brussels, 23 May 2023

The Federation of European Publishers (FEP) would like to take the opportunity of today's adoption of Council conclusions on "high-quality, transparent, open, trustworthy and equitable scholarly publishing" to reaffirm the **vital role of scholarly publishers in the research ecosystem**. FEP represents 29 national associations of publishers of books, learned journals and educational content in all formats across Europe and is as such the voice of the great majority of European publishers.

Scholarly publishers share and support the aims of the Council conclusions that scholarly publishing should be high-quality, transparent, open, trustworthy, and foster equity. Academic publishing requires specific competences, infrastructures, and continuous, substantial investment, to ensure the efficient dissemination of trustworthy research among academic communities and beyond. Publishers provide the stewardship necessary to preserve the scholarly record, take responsibility for it, and bring the innovation in technologies and standards necessary to help solve common challenges, especially around fraudulent science.

In brief, **the scholarly publishing sector brings a unique contribution to science and its quality**, thanks to the significant investments made over the years by academic publishers which accompany and facilitate the digital transition in the scholarly domain. While European academic publishers have worldwide renown and are synonymous with scientific accuracy and breakthrough publications, the majority of European academic publishers are SMEs that operate for the most part within the boundaries of their language area and cover the full range of disciplines. Publishers compete intensely with each other to innovatively service a growing range of readers and formats.

This is why we believe that there is a crucial role for the private sector in **offering a broad range of different routes to publication, including in the interests of freedom of research**. Independent businesses are free to allow a multitude of scholarly voices to be heard and views to be expressed, beyond the influence of governments, something that has proven to be particularly important in the fields of the social and political sciences.

European publishers are supportive of Open Access, based on the co-existence of various models, provided that they remain **voluntary and flexible**, in order to ensure the viability and diversity of the ecosystem, and that they respect freedom to publish and copyright. Publishers support a plurality of models that take into account the specificities of the different contexts (such as different languages,

disciplines, company sizes). As acknowledged by the founding document of Open Access, «there is no need to favour one of these solutions over the others for all disciplines or nations»¹.

Scholarly publishers of all disciplines and sizes, publishing in all languages and under all types of models, stand willing and ready to keep supporting the dissemination of research and knowledge and call on the EU and its Member States to acknowledge their role and grant the conditions for maintaining a fruitful and mutually beneficial cooperation, **ensuring a diverse and sustainable environment for academic publishing**. Only thus will publishers fulfil their part as key stakeholders in the process of advancing the goals set forth in the Council Conclusions.

Contacts

Enrico Turrin
Deputy Director
eturrin@fep-fee.eu
www.fep-fee.eu
+32 2 776 84 64 (direct)

¹ <https://www.budapestopenaccessinitiative.org/read/>