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Council reaches political agreement on VAT rates reform – All Member States can apply the lowest available rates to books and journals

The Federation of European Publishers wishes to warmly welcome the General Approach reached today by the ECOFIN Council on the proposed Directive amending Directive 2006/112/EC as regards rates of value added tax, which once again recognises that books and journals deserve the most favourable fiscal treatment in view of their social, cultural and economic value and their contribution to education and democratic life.

Not only does the Council's agreement maintain books and journals on the list of items to which reduced rates can apply, it singles them out among the narrower group of goods and services that may enjoy super-reduced or zero rates. It also grants all Member States the full freedom to choose which rates to apply, thus addressing the current inequality whereby only certain countries can use the super-reduced and zero rates.

According to Peter Kraus vom Cleff, President of FEP, "Member States have made a clear statement in favour of books and journals and now have the opportunity to take a concrete step and put it into practice. We hope all EU countries seize the chance and introduce preferential fiscal treatment for books and journals in all formats, or – why not – even improve the current regime."

FEP and its members find this the right moment to re-iterate their call for books and journals to be taxed at the lowest available rate of VAT, which soon might be zero for any Member State with the vision to take such a forward-looking step.

ENDS

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FEP is an independent, non-commercial umbrella association of book publishers' associations in the European Union. FEP represents 29 national associations of publishers of books, learned journals and educational materials of the European Union, the European Economic Area and other European countries. Thus, FEP is the voice of the great majority of publishers in Europe.

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