

European Commission  
Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth  
Commissioner Iliana Ivanova  
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 200  
1049 Brussels  
Belgium

EURead ASBL  
Hookstrasse 64  
4700 Eupen  
Belgium

[www.euread.com](http://www.euread.com)

Belfius Bank  
IBAN: BE10 0689 0452 2704  
BIC: GKCCBEBB

15.11.2023

Register: 063 792 106 96  
(Belgium)

## Day of European Authors

Dear Commissioner Iwanowa,

First of all, I would like to congratulate you for becoming Commissioner for Education, Youth, Sports and Culture – one of the key responsibilities to shape the Europe of tomorrow. We wish you and your team lots of success and a portion of fortune which is always needed for lasting and sustainable impact.

I am also writing today as CEO of the German Reading Foundation and Chair of EURead, the European network for reading promotion and literacy, representing 35 organisations and foundations from 23 countries across Europe to express our concern about the visibility and importance of the lack of reading competence and literacy in Europe.

More than 73 million adult Europeans cannot properly read and write.

More than one fourth of all children in Europe leave primary school without having the reading competencies they should obtain.

More than 4 out of 10 families do not read aloud to their children at home.

More than 23 percent of youth lack the reading competence they need to start in a successful life.

We as EURead members believe and are committed to change this: in each of our countries and across Europe for a better future of each child – but also for a better future of Europe.

Therefore, we have been quite euphoric about the European Commission's decision last year to initiate and celebrate the Day of European Authors – organized by the Creative Europe – Culture team. Various European networks have been invited to contribute ideas including libraries, booksellers, authors, translators and reading promotion and literacy organisations like EURead.

Despite the fact that we see value in bringing actors from different areas together, we felt a clear disappointment that the Creative Europe team expected us to contribute to the Day of European Authors but being unable to cover costs for important events, structures and occasions and campaigns.

### Members:

Anne Çocuk Eğitim Vakfı, ACEV (TR)  
Asociación Artística Sociocultural Mestiza (I)  
Bonniers Familjestiftelse (SE)  
Booktrust (England, Wales, Northern IE, UK)  
Children's Books Ireland (IE)  
Detski Knigi Foundation (BG)  
Diavazontas Megalono (GR)  
Federation of European Publishers (BE)  
Foreningen Iles (NO)  
Good Books (PL)  
Hungarian Reading Association (HU)  
Idereen Leest, Flanders (BE)  
Kitabistan (AZE)  
LitCam (DE)  
Lukukeskus Läscentrum (FI)  
Medienzentrum DG (BE)  
Nati per leegere (IT)  
National Library Lithuania (LT)  
National Literacy Agency (MLT)  
Österreichisches Bibliothekswerk (AU)  
Österreichischer Buchklub der Jugend (AU)  
Plano Nacional de Leitura (PRT)  
Schweizerisches Institut für Kinder- und Jugendmedien (CH)  
Scottish Book Trust (SCO)  
Stichting Lezen (NL)  
Stiftung Lesen (DE)  
Svet Knihy, Ltd. (CZ)  
The Lithuanian Section of IBBY (LT)  
The Polish Book Institute (PL)  
The Reading Agency (UK)  
The Things We Learn - Was steht da? (AU)  
Turkish Publishers (TR)

### Management Board:

Dr Jörg F. Maas (Chair)  
Stiftung Lesen (GER)  
Diana Gerald (Co-Chair)  
BookTrust (England, Wales, Northern Ireland, UK)  
Gerlien van Dalen (Co-Chair)  
Stichting Lezen (NL)

We would have wished to see a clearer and measurable commitment from the European Commission to not only bring together authors from different countries and languages, but to put more efforts and financial commitments for reading promotion and literacy across Europe. Because without these important competencies, there will be shortly and in the near future no need to support authors, booksellers and libraries anymore when the diminishing demand and needs of young people for books and stories continues in the way it currently does.

We would like to encourage you and the European Commission to put a much stronger emphasis and financial support to reading promotion and literacy programs and campaigns.

The Day of European Authors is maybe one occasion to shed light on the need to invest more in reading and literacy. Europe needs far more initiatives and lasting commitment to overcome the devastating and alarming figures about the literacy rates of children, youths and adults in Europe.

Sincerely yours,



Dr. Joerg F. Maas  
CEO of German Reading Foundation  
Chair of EURead