



## Position Paper on European Community Action in Support of Culture - the Ariane Programme

A Community initiative in establishing a support programme in the field of books and reading is very much welcomed by EBLIDA (European Bureau of Library, Information and Documentation Associations).

We had hoped that the library recommendations adopted under the Gutenberg Programme and during the DG X Campaign on Books and Reading would have been included in the [Ariane Programme](#). The libraries in Europe expected the Ariane Programme to be the actual implementation of these recommendations.

However, the Ariane Programme is mainly focused on literary translations and the production of books and not on the dissemination of books and the promotion of reading. Opportunities for libraries are only being mentioned explicitly in a small paragraph with the accompanying measures. The Ariane Programme contains the library policy for the coming years, therefore it is of the utmost importance that libraries in Europe be recognized as the promoters of cultural and literary heritage.

With regard to this recognition it is very important to get library experts in the experts group for the Ariane Programme. Umbrella organisations should be officially invited as observers at those expert meetings. Last year, EBLIDA offered its participation together with the FEP (Federation of European Publishers) for the Campaign on Books and Reading, but we were not accepted. Such a participation would be of use for a wider spread and coordination of European actions.

Recently, 6 October 1994, the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education and Media of the European Parliament has adopted an amendment for the Budget 1995 to allocate 700.000 ECU to the following topics of the Gutenberg resolution:

- to support European networks in the field of books and reading,
- to finance technological innovations in books and reading for the benefit of the disabled and those with reading disabilities,
- and to fund measures by libraries to promote reading among disadvantaged groups.

EBLIDA is very much in favour of that. Besides this we would like to suggest:

- a programme initiated by the European Commission similar to the Kaleidoscope Programme, for library activities and networking,
- to grant financial support to crucial European projects in the area of books and reading, such as:
  1. **SEALS project:** the Selection, Acquisition and Loans Systems (SEALS) project is aiming to provide an improved access to European language adult fiction by establishing circulating collections of books, novels and short stories in French, German, Italian and Spanish.
  2. **European Theatre Reading Day:** every year a story of a famous European writer of children's books is being translated into all the European languages. Then the story will be read aloud at the same day throughout Europe in theatres and libraries. Each year it is organised by a different Member State.
  3. **Easy-to-Read database:** a European database with information on books and non-book material for people with reading disabilities, to be used by librarians and library users
  4. **International Poetry Exchange Programme:** in each European country a contemporary poem from a living poet will be chosen to be translated. Then the poem is exchanged with another European country where the same process has taken place. The exchanged

foreign poems in translation are commented on by readers and the poet. The documentation produced would highlight the role of poets, poetry, literature and libraries in European cultures, the process of translation and the range of alternative interpretations of a single text by different readers around Europe.

These actions were adopted during the two library events under the DG X Campaign for Books and Reading.

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