



Press release
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The French Parliament has adopted the law on the digitisation of out-of-commerce XXth century books

The French Authors Association (*Société des gens de Lettres/ SDGL*) and the French Publishers Association (*Syndicat national de l'édition/ SNE*) welcome the adoption by Parliament of the law on digital exploitation of out-of-commerce XXth century books.

This important project, which was initiated by the French Ministry of Culture in 2010, had been turned into a framework agreement signed on 1st February 2011 by the Ministry of Culture, the Government Investment Committee, the French National Library, the SNE and the SGDL.

The project aims to enable the general public to access works of the XXth century literary heritage, which, although in copyright, are no longer commercially available today. The digitisation, which is intended to be exhaustive, would concern about 500.000 works featured in the catalogue of the French National Library's legal deposit. The digitisation will also enable to make available the so-called orphan works, whose rightholders could not be identified or located.

The law also provides for the establishment of a collective management society with equal representation of authors and publishers, in order to ensure the collection and fair distribution of copyrights when the above-mentioned works are brought back to market. For rightholders, the project is therefore a real opportunity to have works distributed for the second time and obtain remuneration.

The SDGL and SNE took part in every stage of the project development and are now very proud of its implementation. This innovative system will make it possible to access, in compliance with authors' and publishers' rights, hundreds of thousands of books currently unavailable for readers.

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