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I. Approval

This document has been approved by:

Name	Title	Date	Version
Marian Val	Project Coordinator	23/07/2025	V2

II. Scope of the deliverable and objectives

This deliverable aims to collect congress conclusions. This document presents activities done and conclusions achieved. It is a document in pdf format to be published in the project website and to support the promotion of project activities.

Executive summary

Euskal Editoreen Elkartea, EDITOREAK, member of the Lit-Up group, was in charge of organizing the **Lit-Up plus Galeusca Congress**. This Congress served as a summary of all the experiences developed over the three-year Lit-Up project.

The session held on **June 11, 2025**, in **San Sebastián, Basque Country**, as part of the Lit-Up plus Congress, provided an opportunity to share the experiences of the Lit-Up project members with the publishers of the Galeusca network (Galician, Basque, and Catalan languages) and to present the topics addressed throughout the Lit-Up experience.

A selection of participants from the Lit-Up project, along with several Galeusca publishers, put together a set of topics of highest interest to all attendees. These topics were explored in three roundtables and a final conclusions presentation.

The experiences focused on the following questions:

- **How to promote bibliodiversity.**
- **How to overcome cultural differences through proximity.**
- **What are the future challenges for the growth of the book sector.**
- **Presentation of conclusions.**

The topics discussed in the roundtables were followed by **41 participants**, including Galician, Basque, and Catalan publishers, Lit-Up members, and cultural agents from various nationalities.

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1. Introduction

Task 6.4 LIT-UP Congress is the closing activity in WP4 and a milestone in the project implementation. This event concentrates the work done during the project in terms of clustering strategy. From workshops celebrated in the context of the different activities, conclusions obtained, and the cooperation in the context of Galeuska, the Congress pretends to identify some strategies in which the cooperation between associations and companies working in small languages in EU should work in next years.

The Congress has been structured in different round tables driven by LIT-UP partners and including participants from the industry and arriving from different locations which gives more interest to the interaction.

The three round tables celebrated were:

1. WHY AND HOW TO CONTINUE PROMOTING BIBLIO-DIVERSITY
2. CAN IDEOLOGICAL PROXIMITIES OVERCOME CULTURAL DIFFERENCES?
3. FUTURE CHALLENGES FOR GROWTH IN THE BOOK SECTOR: A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

Finally, the Congress was completed with a Conclusions Session.

The congress closed with a session dedicated to the conclusions of the day, given by the Basque journalist, Itziar Ugarte.

Itziar Ugarte took part in the whole day, listening to everything that was said at the three round tables organised, and gave the congress participants her vision of what had taken place. These minutes are listed below.

2. Congress contents

LIT-UP + GALEUSCA MEETING

June 10–12, 2025, Donostia-San Sebastian

Opening Session

The Opening Session of the **Lit-Up plus Galeusca Congress** served to introduce the Lit-Up partners and the Galeusca Publishers Congress, which has been held since 1986 and brings together publishers that publish in Spain's three co-official languages: Galician, Basque, and Catalan. The session was presented by **Carmen Elvira**, president of the **Euskal Editoreen Elkartea** (Basque Publishers Association).

For its part, the **Publishers Association of the Valencian Community**, leader of the Lit-Up project, through its delegate **Marian Val**, presented the Lit-Up project—particularly the training initiatives—to attendees and members of the Galeusca Congress.

Conclusions of the Three Roundtables Held on June 11

I. WHY AND HOW TO CONTINUE PROMOTING BIBLIO-DIVERSITY

Moderator: Barbara Pregelj (Malinc, Slovenia)

Participants:

- Lander Majuelo (Pamiela, Basque Country)
- Ana Guerra (Obradoiro, Galicia)
- Francesc Gil-Lluch (Saldonar, Catalonia)

Pregelj opened by discussing the concept of "bibliodiversity," noting that while it enjoys broad consensus in theory, in practice it leads to clear asymmetries. "It is our right to speak in our own voice. And yet, this should not be taken for granted," she warned. "Our cultural practices—especially those from the periphery—face significant challenges against a monocultural discourse, which today is based on dominant economic thinking."

She asked participants how they experience bibliodiversity, how they position their work within it, what challenges they face, and what good practices exist.

All three speakers emphasized the highly competitive context in which they work.

Majuelo explained that bibliodiversity is not a claim in his context, but “a reality with boundaries.” These boundaries include a clear situation of diglossia and a market dominated by French and Spanish. He noted a recurring question: “What do we need more—greater activism or more institutional support?”

Guerra stated that they operate mainly in the fields of textbooks and children's and young adult literature, where the dynamics differ. Still, within an asymmetric bibliodiversity, prioritizing works by Galician authors remains a key strategy. As publishers, they also feel a “responsibility to be generous” toward languages and literatures that lack official status and face even tougher conditions.

Gil-Lluch spoke about the need to go “beyond the convinced reader.” He recalled that around 2008, after the economic crisis, many publishing houses emerged in the Catalan Countries with the central idea of occupying as much content space as possible with Catalan editions. He stressed the importance of fieldwork by publishers' associations to detect areas still untouched by Catalan. “Otherwise, we'd just be chasing the committed reader, which has its limits. The aim is to reach new audiences—those who may discover Catalan through an appealing book, even if they're not activists.”

All three emphasized that quality work is a precondition for growing bibliodiversity.

They also discussed translation—its role in their contexts and the languages from which they translate.

Majuelo noted that translations into Basque have gained prestige, largely due to their quality. He emphasized that translating authors from small languages is often not harder than translating bestselling American authors. He pointed to a shift in trends: “In Basque literature, works were often translated just because they weren't available in Basque—like the classics of world literature. I think that's changed. Now it's more open, and translations aren't just published out of obligation.”

Gil-Lluch mentioned that internalized prejudices are often the main barrier. He cited Sally Rooney's *Intermezzo* as an example, where the Catalan edition was the top seller in Catalonia—more than the English original or the Spanish edition. “Looking closely,

you see that outcomes can be more complex—and better—than expected. But we need to go against mental routines."

It was also noted that Catalan literature still enjoys significantly greater volume than the others. However, even now, the availability of books in English—especially for younger readers—was not considered an immediate threat.

Continuing on translations, Pregelj raised a point: despite Spanish being one of the world's major languages, only 1-3% of translations come from Spanish.

Majuelo responded by bringing the focus to the Basque sphere, stating that the problems of Basque literature are essentially the problems of the Basque language. "We're often saved or condemned by the notion that Basque is very different from nearby languages. But the real problem isn't just that people who don't speak Basque are completely unaware of what's happening in Basque literature. It's that even those of us who do speak it sometimes don't take this production seriously enough. We should at least thank the creators—the quality is very high (...) Sometimes I wonder if we ourselves are the ones setting the limits."

Guerra mentioned the lack of visibility for Galician-language works in bookstores compared to Spanish. Gil-Lluch, from a more optimistic standpoint, said they face the challenge of Spanish dominance "with great enthusiasm."

As for good practices, Majuelo stressed the importance of continuing dialogue between small literatures: "I don't know in what format, but collaboration must continue. We've seen here how, despite each of us having our own problems at home, we understand each other's position easily."

Guerra agreed and advocated for strengthening networks between translators, editors, and literatures. "Since we have fewer cards to play, we have to play the best ones." She also called for more funding and mentioned private initiatives such as Yolanda Castaño's residency project for small-language writers.

Gil-Lluch also supported joint efforts. He described how earlier generations within Catalan literature were often at odds, but younger ones have overcome this and now operate collectively—joint presentations, coordinated reviews, panel discussions, etc.

From a personal perspective, he spoke about creating an environment that inspires participation: "I entered this world because I wanted to be part of it. From the outside, it seemed the best place to be. Defending the Catalan cause brought me closer to the countries I admired, and the world of reading reflected the best values. That's what we need to transmit—especially now, when banality dominates."

An audience member expressed concern about young readers. Majuelo replied: "Young people should be left in peace. They need space to tell us to get lost and become readers and writers themselves. Things happen outside our radar."

II. CAN IDEOLOGICAL PROXIMITIES OVERCOME CULTURAL DIFFERENCES?

Moderator: Mirjam Vellinga (Afûk, Friesland)

Participants:

- Henrike Olasolo (Zirimiri Press, Netherlands)
- Africa Ramirez (Balandra, Valencia)

Olasolo and Ramirez discussed their publishing work with Zirimiri Press (working in Dutch) and Balandra (in Catalan), respectively. Vellinga, on the other hand, works for an organization that publishes in Frisian—though not a literary publisher—and noted that about 50 books are published annually in Frisian today.

Olasolo added nuance to the term “minority languages,” pointing out that it is always an externally imposed adjective. She said they try to avoid using it and cited Milan Kundera’s idea that there are not large or small languages or countries—the difference is not size, but each one’s “existential threat.”

Zirimiri usually publishes works translated from Basque and Catalan into Dutch. While Dutch could be seen as an “enemy” of Frisian, Olasolo explained they have deep ties and that they use that connection to work in favor of bibliodiversity.

Ramirez, active in publishing since the 1990s, highlighted her long experience attending international fairs like Frankfurt’s. She was critical of the limited space given to publishers like theirs and literature in lesser-spoken languages in such events. She insisted that receiving equal treatment with major-language publishers is a “duty.” “And this is ensured by institutional support and editorial networks,” she added. “It’s not enough for us to be token participants. We are companies, just like the rest, working to publish books. We don’t only need shared booths—we need catalogs and visibility. We deserve recognition, our languages and our literatures.”

She emphasized the importance of networks among small publishers, as tools of “empowerment.”

They also discussed translation using concrete cases. Olasolo referred to the success in the Netherlands of the Dutch translations of **Mothers Don’t** by Katixa Agirre and **From Up There You Can See the Sea** by Julen Gabiria. The latter was translated into

Dutch before Spanish, and Olasolo saw this as a good example of bridge-building among small languages.

Ramirez stressed that translations “set worldviews in motion,” and both participants agreed on the literary value of local stories. Olasolo remarked: “We’re in the Netherlands and want to include books from Basque and Catalan. How do we do that? First, by seeing it as an opportunity, not a problem. Readers want to travel, and content from a specific context is great for that. We avoid generalizations and abstractions. A concrete story is a gift.”

They acknowledged that it’s impossible to predict a book’s reception—regardless of language. Ramirez said that if a publisher succeeds with 30% of their catalog, “that’s a major win.” Olasolo added that one of the biggest issues in the Netherlands is that books often get only one real sales opportunity: “It seems like all the cards are played in that first moment.” They also emphasized how helpful it is to gain press coverage and especially a good review.

Vellinga asked if small literatures were doing enough to translate authors from other small-language contexts. Both participants answered likely not—they still have “homework” to do. Ramirez advocated for “courage,” suggesting that experimenting with translations between minority languages could open new paths. “In the book world, almost everything has already been invented—including co-editions. I think the digital sector intimidates publishers, but there may be opportunities—like releasing a book in multiple languages on digital platforms, or launching shared marketing campaigns. Why not?”

Ramirez ended by proposing “resistance” as a guiding motto, and emphasized fighting against prejudices and marketing standards: “Our small literatures should not have small images.”

III. FUTURE CHALLENGES FOR GROWTH IN THE BOOK SECTOR: A EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

Moderator: Ana Urrestarazu (EEE, Basque Country)

Participants:

- Olga Perez Vitoria (Cultural Advisor, The Greens–European Free Alliance, European Parliament)
- Xiomara Villa (Cultural Advisor, The Greens–European Free Alliance, European Parliament)
- Pedro Madina (AEPV, Fandogamia, Valencia)

[Although Olga Perez Vitoria was scheduled to speak, due to issues, Xiomara Villa took her place in the first part of the session alongside Pedro Madina. Perez later joined.]

The session focused on a document adopted by the European Parliament in September 2023 titled "The Future of the European Book Sector." Ana Urrestarazu provided context, emphasizing that although it may have gone unnoticed by the sector, it could mark an important milestone—particularly since it recognizes books as essential cultural goods. For instance, she noted that had it been in effect during the COVID-19 pandemic, book distribution could have been ensured (if states had also adopted it).

Urrestarazu explained that while the document was still a draft, Olga Perez gave the Basque Publishers Association a chance to contribute, and at least three proposals made it into the final version:

- Promoting reading on paper among children under 8
- Supporting translations of European books and the working conditions of translators
- Developing specific programs for the production and dissemination of literature in Europe's minoritized languages

The text contains 61 specific recommendations (available in full in Spanish), and several were highlighted during the session, including:

- Urging the European Commission to allocate a budget for implementing the document's goals, and revising the Creative Europe program for 2021–2027
- Promoting paper reading while acknowledging the risks of digital spaces, especially among teens and youth
- Situating book protection within the green transition logic, noting that digital books are not inherently "greener" and proposing alternatives like sourcing paper and ink locally
- Creating a certification seal for independent bookstores
- Reaffirming the importance of maintaining and restoring school libraries

They explained that the European Parliament's cultural department began drafting this document two years ago, and this is the first time the book sector has been analyzed as a distinct entity. They tried to include all stakeholders—authors, publishers, distributors, translators, readers, and educators.

The goal was to provide the sector with a tool to use in negotiations with local institutions—with the backing of the European Parliament.

"This document is key for exerting political pressure and guidance," they stressed.

They also said this is a “moment for struggle” as the European Commission is being restructured. Other factors to consider going forward include: ensuring freedom of expression and diversity (amid growing oppositional stances); the question of artificial intelligence; and the need for a stable budget.

They briefly discussed other laws affecting the sector, such as those on public procurement. “The criteria used in other industries shouldn’t apply to public procurement in the book sector,” they argued.

Pedro Madina, representing the comics field (Fandogamia), emphasized the need to recognize publishers as “cultural agents.” “Sometimes administrations treat bookstores as part of the cultural sector, but not publishers. It’s as if our work is purely commercial. But this document recognizes us as part of cultural development—and that’s crucial. Otherwise, our work is viewed as just another industry.”

The Parliament’s cultural advisors reminded attendees that the European Commission doesn’t have the authority to implement the measures—it’s up to local associations and publishers to apply pressure on their governments, using the adopted text as a form of endorsement. They cited examples where this has been done. “Some institutions take EU recommendations very seriously, others don’t. Implementation will depend on that.”

Finally, Perez and Villa emphasized the importance of unity within the sector. They said that during the document’s development, it was difficult to find a permanent, structured point of contact among publishers (unlike with bookstores, which are better organized). They expressed a desire to continue staying in touch and collaborating where possible.



3. Conclusions

1. Bibliodiversity is a cultural necessity, not just an ideal

- Although there is broad theoretical consensus on its value, in practice, **deep asymmetries** persist.
- Publishers working in minoritized languages operate in markets dominated by majority languages (Spanish, French, English).
- **Editorial quality**, commitment to one's own language, and innovation are essential to sustaining bibliodiversity.

2. The crucial role of translation

- Translations can legitimize small languages and reach new audiences.
- The importance of translating not only from dominant languages but also **between minoritized languages** was emphasized (e.g., from Basque into Dutch before Spanish).
- There is a need to overcome internal prejudices about the supposed inferiority of one's own language.

3. Collaborative networks as tools of resistance

- **Alliances among small publishers**, translators, and creators are highly valued.
- Cooperation among like-minded projects in different languages fosters **shared visibility** and multiplies impact.
- Joint initiatives such as multilingual outreach campaigns and digital co-editions were proposed.

4. Specific challenges for the growth of the European book sector

- The European Parliament's 2023 document on the future of books was discussed:
 - It recognizes books as **essential cultural goods**.
 - It proposes structural support for **minoritized languages**, translators, and independent bookstores.
 - It promotes paper reading in childhood and adolescence and calls for a revised digital policy from ecological and cultural perspectives.
- However, implementation depends on **local publishing activism** and pressure on national institutions.

5. A new editorial generation with a collective focus

- A generational shift is evident, with a move toward **collaborative and supportive work**, breaking away from past divisions.
- Younger publishers are committed to building a more inclusive, politically aware, and transformative sector.

6. Cultural resistance as a guiding motto

- In the face of market standards and cultural trivialization, there is a call for **resistance, courage, and coherence**.
- Minoritized languages and literatures should not have “small images”—they deserve ambition, professionalism, and recognition.