

# Transformation of Public Policy in Ukrainian Book Publishing as a Basis for Resisting Russian Cultural Expansion During and After the War



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**Abstract** This paper examines the transformation of public policy to strengthen Ukrainian book publishing and counter Russian cultural influence. Employing a mixed-methods approach, it combines analysis of legislative changes and industry reports with expert interviews involving key stakeholders such as publishers, editors, and government officials.

The findings reveal a discernible trend that has intensified since the Russian invasion in 2014: a decrease in the presence of Russian books in the Ukrainian market and a simultaneous rise in support for Ukrainian publishing. Legislative alterations, including restrictions on importing Russian book products and active promotion of Ukrainian literature, underscore this shift. Moreover, the government has initiated programs to bolster Ukrainian publishers and bookstores. The Ukrainian Book Institute (UBI), a state institution, has received augmented funding for initiatives such as library book replenishment, to enhance the accessibility of Ukrainian literature. Additionally, new industry associations have been established to further professionalize the sector.

Despite these efforts, the publishing industry has been significantly impacted by the ongoing war. The adoption of digitization, particularly through e-books and audiobooks, holds promise for the industry's future. However, challenges persist, including the absence of a reliable system for collecting data on e-book sales, which impedes informed decision-making.

Crucial tasks for government organizations and the publishing community in post-war reconstruction include bringing state standards for book publishing into line with European legislation; providing state support for the publication and distribution of Ukrainian books (especially e-books and audiobooks), and continuing state programs to promote reading in the Ukrainian language. Additionally, efforts to popularize Ukrainian books globally and promote Ukrainian culture,

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science, and education through Ukrainian fiction, non-fiction and academic book translation programs are imperative.

## Introduction

The book market in Ukraine plays a vital role in the country's creative economy and information security. Throughout the war, the development of public policies to restore and strengthen the Ukrainian book publishing system has become increasingly important. These reforms are crucial for safeguarding national interests, effectively countering Russia's aggressive information policy, and promoting the development of Ukrainian culture, science, and education, independent of the influence of Soviet and Russian narratives.

This paper will focus especially on a public policy regarding publishing books for the trade book market.

Public policy on publishing school textbooks, as well as publishing open monographs and open e-textbooks for university education and science, in line with the [National Open Science Plan](#) ratified by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 8 October 2022 (Decree № 892-p), requires a separate study.

## Background. Forming Public Policy in Book Publishing Before the War: 1991–2013

### *Overview of Ukrainian Legislation on the Book Publishing Market*

In 1997, the main legislative document on book publishing was approved—the Law of Ukraine «[On Publishing](#)».

This law regulates the procedures for organizing and conducting publishing activities, the production and distribution of publishing products, and the relationships and functioning of publishers, printing houses, and booksellers. Its aim is the promotion of national and cultural development of the Ukrainian people, citizens of Ukraine of all nationalities, strengthening of their spirituality and morality, access of members of society to universal values, protecting the rights and interests of authors, publishers, producers, distributors and consumers of publishing products.

It also outlines the fundamental principles of the State policy in publishing which is determined by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and is founded on the principles of publishing freedom, countering monopolization, strengthening the material, technical, organizational, legal, and scientific infrastructure of publishing, and ensuring the social and legal protection of its employees ([Article 5](#)).

According to [article 4, «Legislation on publishing»](#) the Law «On publishing» relations in publishing are regulated by the:

- **Constitution of Ukraine (1996)**: Fundamental Law of Ukraine which provides for the right to «everyone to entrepreneurial activity that is not prohibited by law» (including in book publishing—M. Z.) ([Article 42](#)), and stipulates that «citizens shall be guaranteed the freedom of literary, artistic, scientific, and technical creative activities, protection of intellectual property, their copyright, moral and material interests arising in connection with various types of intellectual activity» ([Article 54](#)).
- **Economic Code of Ukraine (2003)**: «Shall determine fundamentals of economic activity in Ukraine and regulate economic relations arising in the process of organisation and exercising economic activity between economic entities, as well as between these entities and other parties to economic activity» ([Article 1](#)). This document, therefore, regulates the activities of book publishing, printing and distributing companies, which are part of the creative economy.
- **Laws of Ukraine:**
  - **On Information (1992, 2011—new edition)**: defines the prohibition of censorship and interference in the professional activity of journalists and media, «control the content of disseminated information, in particular for disseminating or preventing the dissemination of the complete information, withholding socially necessary information, imposing a prohibition to cover certain topics, display certain persons or disseminate information about them, prohibition to criticise the public authorities, except for the cases determined by law, an agreement between a founder (owner) and employees, editorial’s articles of association» ([Article 24](#)).
  - **On Mandatory Copies of Documents (1999)**: regulated the general principles of the state policy of filling the National Information Fund of Ukraine with mandatory copies of documents; regulating the information relations connected with the functioning of the system of mandatory copies of documents; define the duties and rights of those creating and receiving documents ([Article 2](#)).
  - **On Copyright and Related Rights (1994, 2001—new edition)**: «shall protect personal non-proprietary rights and proprietary rights of authors and their successors related to the creation and use of works of science, literature and art—copyright, and the rights of performers, manufacturers of phonograms and videograms and broadcast organisations—related rights» ([Preface](#)). Defines the Powers of the Institution in the protection of copyright and related rights, which «shall ensure the formation and implementation of state policy in the field of copyright and related rights protection» ([Article 4](#)).
  - **On State Secrets (1994, 1999—new edition)**: [Article 31](#) «Restrictions on the publication of secret information» obliges publishers to comply with the norms of this Law and other legal acts on state secrets when preparing materials for publication, distribution in the press and other media.
  - **On State Support of Book Publishing in Ukraine (2003)**: Defines that the state policy in book publishing is based on the recognition of the mental, scientific, educational, cultural and creative function of books in society and

the principles of freedom in book publishing, opposing its monopolization, strengthening the material, technical, organizational, legal and scientific foundations of book publishing, and guaranteeing social and legal protection of its employees ([Article 5](#)).

- *Other regulatory legal acts.*

### ***First Steps Towards the Institutionalisation of Ukrainian Book Publishing***

After Ukraine regained independence in 1991, a new publishing landscape was started creating. This process involved the establishment of new commercial publishing houses, printing houses and bookstores, as well as the creation of a new state and non-profit institution aimed at shaping public policy and developing Ukrainian book publishing. Brief information on these institutions follows.

**1994**, the [Ukrainian Publishers & Booksellers Association](#) (UPBA) was registered by the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine on June 17, 1994, as the *Ukrainian Association of Non-State Publishing Houses*. In September 1996, it was re-registered as the *Ukrainian Association of Publishers Charitable Organization*, and in 2000 it once again changed its name to the Charitable Organization (CO) *Ukrainian Publishers & Booksellers Association*.

**1994**, the [Publishers' Forum](#), a non-governmental organisation, was established. It is the creator of the iconic Lviv Publishers' Forum fair and later the BookForum festival, and aims to develop the Ukrainian book market and integrate it into the global publishing context.

**In 1995**, the [Ukrainian Library Association](#), an independent all-Ukrainian non-governmental organisation with individual and collective membership started its work. It is a voluntary association of people professionally involved in library, bibliographic and information activities and all those interested in their development.

**2011**, the Mystetskyi Arsenal cultural, art and museum complex hosted the International [Book Arsenal](#) Festival for the first time, bringing together Ukrainian and foreign publishers, writers and illustrators to present their works, hold discussions and take part in lectures and meetings.

The 11th Book Arsenal Festival—prevented in 2022 by Russia's attack—was successfully held in Kyiv in 2023 from 22 to 25 June, with about 28,000 visitors.

Because of the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war, the festival offered a limited format, but attracted a significant number of guests — President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and the First Lady attended the festival, as well as international guests, including Gvantsa Jobava, Vice President of the International Publishers Association. «My visit here is a gesture to say: we are here now, in solidarity, when you endure this difficult situation when you are at war. Meanwhile, you are so brave that you decided to hold a book fair during the war, and it is so inspiring. Your festival is a sign that even in these dreadful conditions, books and reading still matter.»

Gvantsa said in a conversation with the Chytomo team ([CHYTOMO](#) is the largest independent media covering publishing and contemporary literary and cultural processes in Ukraine.—M. Z.) (Baturevych, 2023).

Yulia Kozlovets, director of Book Arsenal, told the audience at the opening of the festival on 22 June 2023: «Preparation for the festival took place during the times that you and I experienced together: blackouts, bombings, airstrikes. At that time, we were doing our thing. Each of us, walking through the Art Arsenal today, thinks about our gratitude to the Armed Forces of Ukraine, which allow us to do our work and be who we are» (Porter, 2023).

## **War-Related Public Policy in Book Publishing Changes: 2014–2023**

### ***Legislative Changes in the Ukrainian State Policy on Book Publishing from 2014 to February 2022***

«Even though Ukraine regained its independence 30 years ago, the formation of the national book market began only 6 years ago (after the Revolution of Dignity in 2014.—M. Z.) and continues to this day», emphasized the authors of the study survey on the development of the national publishing market «[30th Anniversary of Independent Book Publishing in Ukraine](#)», conducted by the cultural and publishing project [Chytomo](#) and the NGO «[Publishers' Forum](#)» with the support of the [Ukrainian Cultural Foundation](#) in 2021 (Baturevych & Khmelovska, 2021).

The Law «On Publishing» provided for the possibility of publishing books in the Russian language for the needs of the Russian population in our country. This provision of the law facilitated the expansion of Russian-language literature on the Ukrainian book market and created significant competition for publishers of books in Ukrainian.

Marjana Savka, editor-in-chief and co-founder of Lviv's [Old Lion Publishing House](#), tells [Publishing Perspectives](#) that «in every year since Ukraine's independence" in 1991, «we have lost to Russian publishers both in sales and in obtaining licenses for world bestsellers. Only after 2014, when the ban on the import of Russian books into Ukraine came into force, were our publishers able to become owners of our market. At that point, we saw a breakthrough: new publishers, genres, a lot of translated literature» (Gerden, 2021).

In December 2016, Ukraine passed a law called «[On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine on Restriction of Access to the Ukrainian Market of Foreign Printed Products with Anti-Ukrainian Content](#)». This law made changes to the «On Publishing» law, and these changes are worth noting especially two key points:

1. Adding a new paragraph to the second part of Article 28 «Restrictions on Publishing Rights» which says on

*prohibited in the field of publishing to publish, produce and/or distribute products containing material (statements, appeals, etc.), the content of which is aimed at eliminating Ukraine's independence, changing the constitutional order by force, violating the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the state, undermining its security, illegally seizing state power, propagating war, violence, communist and/or national socialist (Nazi) totalitarian regimes and their symbols, inciting inter-ethnic, racial, religious hatred, committing terrorist acts, violating human rights and freedoms and public health.*

2. Addition of a new article [28<sup>1</sup>. Importation from the territory of the aggressor state, the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine of publishing products that can be distributed in the territory of Ukraine](#), which provide for obtaining the relevant permit for importation into the customs territory of Ukraine and distribution in its territory of publishing products originating or manufactured and/or imported from the territory of the aggressor state, the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine.

*The analysis and evaluation of publishing products for classification which may not be distributed in the territory of Ukraine, shall be carried out by the Council of Experts of the Central Executive Body, which ensures the formation and implementation of the state policy in the sphere of information, comprising representatives of state authorities, industrial associations, trade unions, public experts, publishers, leaders of culture, art, science and education, social psychologists, media experts and other information specialists ([Part 4 of this Article](#)).*

An important milestone in the development of state policy in the book publishing sector was the adoption in January 2016 of the Law of Ukraine «[On Amending Certain Laws of Ukraine on Improving the System of Public Administration in Book Publishing](#)». This law regulates the objectives, functions, structure, rules of participation in implementing of state support programmes for book publishing and the financing of the newly created state body, the Book Institute of Ukraine, and adds relevant new parts and chapters to the acts of Ukraine «[On State Support of Book Publishing in Ukraine](#)», «[On Publishing](#)», «[On Library and Librarianship](#)» and «[On Culture](#)».

In 2018–2021, the [Ukrainian Book Institute](#) implemented programmes to replenish library collections at the expense of the state budget:

- In 2018—714 titles from 91 publishers were purchased for 986,449 copies;
- In 2019—551 titles from 80 publishers for 669,609 copies;
- In 2020—720 titles from 90 publishers for 350,000 copies;
- In 2021—684 titles from 86 publishers for 331,077 copies.

Thanks to this program, publishers have received funding to create new publishing projects, and over 500 public libraries across Ukraine—free new books for Ukrainian children and adults.

## ***Institutional Development on Book Publishing Industry***

Since 2014, Ukraine has witnessed the establishment of various public and state institutions that have actively contributed to the development of national book publishing.

In 2014, the [Ukrainian Institute of National Memory](#) was founded as the central executive body responsible for implementing state policies aimed at restoring and preserving the nation's historical memory. Its impact on the book industry has been notable through its efforts to popularize Ukraine's history, celebrate prominent figures, and publish a series of books that expose the atrocities committed by the communist totalitarian regime in Ukraine.

In 2017, the [Ukrainian Book Institute](#) was established and emerged as a governmental entity under the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine. Its mission is to shape state policy in book publishing, promote book reading in Ukraine, support the book industry, provide incentives for translations and popularize Ukrainian literature abroad.

In 2019, the [Ukrainian Editors' Association](#) began its work as a non-profit public organisation with the main goal of bringing together professionals in the editorial field. Its task is to coordinate the efforts of individuals, organisations and institutions interested in improving the level of language and publishing culture in the book industry, as well as to provide methodological, informational, analytical, scientific and practical assistance in the professional activities of editors.

In 2020, the [National Intellectual Property Office](#) was created and entrusted with several key tasks:

- Acceptance and consideration of applications for state registration of copyright in works of science, literature and art, as well as for the registration of agreements relating to the rights of authors to works, their registration;
- Issue of certificates on registration of copyright to the work; publications in the official bulletin on the copyright and related rights;
- Implementation of international cooperation in the field of the legal protection of intellectual property and representation of interests of Ukraine in the protection of copyright and related rights in the World Intellectual Property Organisation and other international organisations by the law;
- Informing and providing explanations on the implementation of state policy in the field of copyright and related rights ([article 4<sup>1</sup>, Law of Ukraine «On Copyright And Related Rights](#)).

## ***Changes in Public Policy on Book Publishing After February 24, 2022***

On 19 June 2022, 306 deputies of the Verkhovna Rada supported the law 2309-IX «[On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine on the Establishment of Restrictions on the Import and Distribution of Publishing Products Related to the Aggressor State, the Republic of Belarus and the Temporarily Occupied Territory of Ukraine](#)». This law introduced stricter regulations on the import of publishing products from Russia, which were defined by an earlier legislative act adopted in 2016.

The new edition of the [Article 28<sup>1</sup>](#) of the Law «On Publishing» (2016) limits the import of publishing products from Russia and the Republic of Belarus and prohibits the distribution and import of book publications that include works by citizens of the aggressor state (see [Table 1](#) for more details).

The second important law adopted on the same day, 19 June 2022, was the Law of Ukraine «[On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine to Stimulate the Development of Ukrainian Book Publishing and Book Distribution](#)». It provided for important amendments to several laws of Ukraine, in particular:

- Replacement of Part Nine of Article 5 of the Law of Ukraine «On Publishing» with a new part of the following content:

*The State shall provide support to publishing subjects, and create favourable conditions for the development of national book publishing by the Law of Ukraine*

**Table 1** Comparison of the content of part one of Article 281 of the Law of Ukraine «On Publishing» in the 2016 and 2022 revisions

2016	2022
<p><b>Article 28<sup>1</sup>. Importation from the territory of the aggressor state, the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine of publishing products that can be distributed in the territory of Ukraine</b></p> <p><i>Publishing products originating from or are published and/or imported from the territory of the aggressor state, the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine, may be imported into the customs territory of Ukraine and distributed on its territory, subject to the presence of an appropriate permit, except for publishing products imported by individual citizens in hand luggage or checked baggage in a total amount of no more than 10 copies.</i></p>	<p><b>Article 28<sup>1</sup>. Importation and distribution of publishing products related to the aggressor state, the Republic of Belarus, and the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine</b></p> <p><i>It is prohibited to import into the customs territory of Ukraine and/or distribute on its territory publishing products originating from or published, and/or imported from <b>the territory of the aggressor state, the Republic of Belarus, the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine</b> (except for the distribution of publishing products, originating or published in the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine before its temporary occupation), <b>as well as book publications containing works whose authors are or were in any period after 1991 citizens of the aggressor state, except former citizens of the aggressor state who are (or at the time of death were) citizens of Ukraine and do not have (at the time of death did not have) the citizenship of the aggressor state.</b></i></p>

*«On State Support of Book Publishing in Ukraine», including by reimbursing the actual expenses of distributors of publishing products (book products) for renting real estate used by the publishing subject as a specialised bookstore.*

- Addition of the Law of Ukraine «On State Support of Book Publishing in Ukraine» a new Article 82 «Activities of the Ukrainian Institute of Books to Support of Distributors of Publishing Products (Book Products)», which defines the requirements for distributors of publishing products to receive state subsidies, and a new Article 83 «Activities of the Ukrainian Institute of Books on Implementation of the Programme of Providing Citizens of Ukraine with Annual Support as a Certificate for the Purchase of Books».
- Addition of Article 26 of the Law of Ukraine «[On Supporting the Functioning of the Ukrainian Language as the State Language](#)» of the following content
  1. Books in Ukraine are published and distributed in the state language and/or languages of the indigenous peoples of Ukraine, the official languages of the European Union.
  2. Book may be published and distributed in languages other than those specified in the first part of this article in the following cases:
    - a. A book, published in Ukraine or imported into Ukraine by the procedure established by law, contains only works in the original language or translated into the state language, languages of the indigenous peoples of Ukraine, or official languages of the European Union;
    - b. The book was published by order of the state authorities of Ukraine in the interests of national security, repelling Russian aggression against Ukraine and is not subject to sale or distribution in any other way through the book distribution network in Ukraine;
    - c. The book was published before January 1, 2023, except for books whose distribution is prohibited by the Law of Ukraine “On Publishing”.
  3. The requirements of parts one and two of this article apply to books in electronic form, including audio files.

In the context of state support for book publishing, the active work of the Ukrainian Book Institute deserves special attention. As stated on the official website of the state institution:

*We keep on working despite the war. Although almost all of our employees have left Kyiv, we are still doing everything we can to make Ukrainian books known and accessible in the world, to make our Ukrainian voices louder.*

***We get the world acquainted with Ukrainian literature! —***

*During the war, we are doing it even more intensively, as international book fairs provide us with withstands even though our funds envisaged for those events have been reallocated to the Armed Forces of Ukraine. We actively cooperate with other cultural institutions in Ukraine and all over the world so that decision-makers in the book industry could hear Ukraine and our appeals. Our foreign colleagues prevent Russia from presenting*

*its books, and they listen to us, whenever we tell them about Ukrainian publications and show great interest in our translation rights catalogues.*

***We help publish new books! —***

*We have come to understand that so many Ukrainian children leaving homes have lost books, a part of the strongest connection with one's home, so we have initiated the project of book publishing for refugee children abroad. We have found foreign partners, ready to fundraise, print book layouts provided by Ukrainian publishers for free and distribute books free of charge among refugee support centres where children can read and find something familiar and dear to their hearts.*

***We translate Ukrainian authors into foreign languages! —***

*We are currently unable to support projects where expenses are needed, as all the funds are being allocated to the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Although, during difficult times of war, foreign partners are on our side, encouraging a total boycott of Russian books initiated by us and inviting us to their organizations. In particular, the UBI has already become a member of the ENLIT international translators' community.*

***We restock public libraries! —***

*We cannot spend money on books, as those funds are needed to protect our people, but we are researching catalogues of Western public libraries and looking for anti-Ukrainian books. We are calling on libraries to withdraw those books so that Ukrainian culture, literature and history could be represented by our authors, rather than by lying Russian narratives.*

***We research the book market! —***

*Despite the ongoing war, we believe in our Victory and have started to prepare. We keep abreast and gather information from publishing houses and libraries about their losses and needs so that we could develop a strategy for the industry's recovery and start implementing it right after the Victory.*

***We do our best so that you could read! —***

*So that you could read about Ukraine. So that people could understand us, Ukrainians, translate our books and read all over the world.*

An important contribution to protecting Ukrainian culture from Russian expansion is also the decision of the Ministry of Culture and Social Policy of Ukraine to remove Russian literature from Ukrainian library collections and replace it with high-quality Ukrainian literature and books from Ukrainian publishers. This process began in 2022 and is based on methodological recommendations developed and approved by the Ministry's specially created Council for the Development of Library Affairs, which includes leading library experts from all corners of Ukraine.

Ukrainian publishers' books will be used instead to replenish library funds. Despite facing financial difficulties and suspending the implementation of the state programme to replenish library funds in 2022, funds were still allocated in 2023 to publish, print and deliver 134 book titles to the libraries of Ukraine. These book projects were a winner of the art competition announced by the Ministry of Culture in 2023. They were selected according to three priority thematic directions:

- 1) Artistic and popular-scientific books for different age groups of readers: the history of Ukraine of different periods in the Context of the Struggle for the Development of Statehood, sovereignty and Independence; our heroes: Biographies of prominent Ukrainians (all historical periods); achievements and prospects of the unconquered Ukraine, development of Ukraine as an independent state;

- 2) Books for children and adults aimed at national-patriotic education, promotion of democratic values, cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue, gender equality, the inadmissibility of violence, development of leadership skills, ecological self-awareness, responsibility for the environment, critical thinking;
- 3) Books commemorating the heroic deeds of war veterans in defence of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of Ukraine.

## **Roadmap for Changing Public Policy on Book Publishing in Post-War Ukraine: Towards Integration into the European Publishing Community**

The formation of state policy in book publishing during the war and in the postwar period should simultaneously take place in several directions:

1. Harmonisation of state standards in book publishing with European legislation and current Ukrainian and international publishing practices.
2. State support for the publishing and distribution of Ukrainian books.
3. Digitalisation of the publishing industry: state policy on creation, distribution and accounting of e-books and audiobooks.
4. Implementation of state programmes to support reading.
5. Continuation and deepening of the Translate Ukraine State Grant Programme.

### ***Harmonisation of State Standards in Book Publishing with European Legislation and Current Ukrainian and International Publishing Practices***

Ukraine has several regulatory documents on standardisation in publishing:

1. National Standards of Ukraine:
  - DSTU 4861:2007. Information and Documentation. Edition. Basic Information (ISO 8:1977, NEQ; ISO 1086:1991, NEQ; ISO 7275:1985, NEQ);
  - DSTU 3814:2013. Information and Documentation. Editions. International Standard Book Numbering;
  - DSTU 7157:2010. Information and Documentation. Electronic Editions. Main Types and Basic Information;
  - DSTU 3017:2015. Information and Documentation. Editions. Main Types. Terms and Definitions of Concepts;
  - DSTU 8344:2015. Information and Documentation. Editions. Main Elements. Terms and Definitions of Concepts.
2. Industry standards of Ukraine:

SOU 18.1-02477019-09:2015. Edition. Publishing Design and Printing. Quality indicators;

SOU 18.1-02477019-11:2014. Edition for Children. General Technical Requirements;

SOU 18.1-02477019-07:2015. Printing Industry. Textbooks and Study Guide for School. General Technical Requirement;

DSanPiN 5.5.6-138—2007. State Sanitary Norms and Rules. Hygienic Requirements for Printed Products for Children.

We mentioned only the main standards, the full list of publishing standards is available on the website of the [Book Chamber of Ukraine](#).

Unfortunately, in practice, many publishers do not adhere to current publishing industry standards. There are several reasons for this:

1. The texts of the standards are not publicly accessible, Ukrainian publishers can only purchase a paper or electronic version of the standards by placing an order on the website of the [National Standardization Body](#), but the cost of the standards ranges from 20 to 50 Euro, which is quite expensive considering the financial capabilities of Ukrainian publishers, especially in conditions of war.
2. The use of publishing standards is optional and failing to comply with the relevant standards does not entail any administrative or financial obligations for publishers.
3. The standards in publishing are not updated often enough to keep pace with changes and innovative publishing development needs. As a result, these standards become outdated. Take, for instance, the DSTU 7157: 2010. Information and documentation. Electronic editions. This standard has not been updated for 13 years and therefore does not fully cover many modern electronic books.

Special attention should be paid to the National Publishing Standards of Ukraine. These implement the intergovernmental standards (GOST) through reprinting. The Interstate Council for Standardisation, Metrology and Certification (ICSC), a regional organisation for standardisation and regulatory documentation in the CIS countries, developed these standards. In fact, they are copies of the Russian national standards, published in the Russian language and adopted by the «cover method».

We propose the following solutions to the problems outlined above:

1. Cancellation of the national standards developed by the Russian Book Chamber and preparation of Ukrainian national standards instead.
2. Expansion of the technical committee «Information and Documentation», which develops standards in book publishing, by adding new members from professional associations, particularly the Ukrainian Publishers & Booksellers Association, the [Ukrainian Editors' Association](#), and teachers of the «Publishing and Editing» education program at Ukrainian universities.
3. Conduction a survey of publishers on current practices in using standards and the feasibility of standardising certain aspects of publishing.

4. Identification of standards that need to be updated, holding a broad discussion in the professional publishing community and bringing them in line with international standards and current practices in the European book area.
5. Amending the Law «On Publishing» to require publishers to comply with certain standards, such as the DSTU 4861:2007. Information and Documentation. Edition. Basic Information (ISO 8:1977, NEQ; ISO 1086:1991, NEQ; ISO 7275:1985, NEQ).
6. Implementation of the principle of the state policy on standardisation regarding «accessibility of national standards and codes of good practice as well as information about them for users» ([Article 4, Paragraph 7, Part Two of the Law of Ukraine «On Standardisation»](#)).

### ***State Support for the Publishing and Distribution of Ukrainian Books***

Similar to other countries, Ukraine's publishing industry experienced significant losses during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the article titled «Discounts, Free Popcorn and Gifts: How Bookstores and Cinemas Compete for Zelensky's Grant», author Ihor Orel reports that the Ukrainian book market's pre-pandemic value was estimated at UAH 2.5 billion. Since 2020, sales have declined by 30–50%, as stated by Oleksandra Koval, Director of the Ukrainian Book Institute. Notably, one in five bookstores closed in 2020 (Orel, 2021).

A significant turnaround occurred with the introduction of the «eSupport» state program at the end of 2021. This initiative granted UAH 1000 to each vaccinated Ukrainian citizen, which could be redeemed over 4 months for purchasing cultural products such as books and films. It allocated an impressive UAH 11 billion to the program for 2021–2022. This endeavour resulted in UAH 1.2 billion in sales for bookstores and publishers within 2 months. The book industry sustained itself during the initial months of the war through the residual impact of this program.

A similar mechanism to support publishers by providing citizens of Ukraine with assistance as a certificate for the purchase of books was introduced by Article 83 of the Law of Ukraine «[On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine to Stimulate the Development of Ukrainian Book Publishing and Book Distribution](#)» which was adopted on July 10, 2022.

According to the law, the certificate can only be used to buy books in the official language of the state. Citizens of Ukraine are issued the certificate free of charge upon the acquisition of a birth certificate and a citizenship passport if they are 14 years of age or older; the cost of the certificate is 0.3 times the minimum subsistence amount for able-bodied persons established by law; in 2023, the cost of the certificate will be UAH 833.

In addition, Article 82 of the Ukrainian Law, «On Publishing», offers state subsidies to distributors of publishing products to cover expenses for renting real

estate (buildings, structures or premises), including separate premises used as specialist bookstores.

These programs should have been implemented on January 1, 2023. However, as stated on the official website of the Ukrainian Book Institute, during the period of martial law, Ukraine's economy is facing unprecedented challenges. The available financial resources of the state are primarily directed towards repelling armed aggression, ensuring the uninterrupted functioning of the budgetary sphere, addressing the vital needs of territorial communities' residents, implementing territorial defence measures, and safeguarding public safety. As a result, the Law of Ukraine «On the State Budget of Ukraine for 2023» did not allocate funds for implementing these programs. Implementing these programs will be considered by the Government after the conclusion or cancellation of martial law in Ukraine (Official position of the Ukrainian Book Institute on granting certificates and subsidies, 2023).

It is noteworthy that Ukrainian publishers and book distributors are not waiting for government support, but are already opening new publishing houses and bookstores during the war:

- *In Kharkiv, while some bookstores remain closed, the Knygoland chain (part of The Ranok Corporation), has against all odds, opened the largest bookstore in Ukraine with a floor space of 650 square meters.*
- *The fifth «The Old Lion Bookstore-Café» has already opened in Lviv, and the publishing house plans to open several more bookstores in Lviv and other cities.*
- *Why? Because bookstores are not only a business. Bookstores are a social responsibility for those who are willing to «rebuild Ukraine». Bookstores could also be a dream project that can't be postponed any longer. New bookstores are being opened by book chains, publishers, and entrepreneurs from other realms — whether IT or the event promotion industry» (Baturevych, 2023).*

### ***Digitalisation of the Publishing Industry: State Policy on Publishing, Distribution and Accounting of E-Books and Audiobooks***

The authors of the «Report Based on the results of the all-Ukrainian sociological research «Reading in the Context of media consumption and life construction», prepared for the governmental organization Ukrainian Book Institute by Infosapience LLC in 2020 recommended «to promote electronic and audiobooks in Ukraine—both paid and free, as among these types of books Russian-language content is much more prevalent than among printed books» (Vološevych & Shurenkova, 2020, p. 24).

As part of the research on digital transformations in the publishing industry, the author of this article surveyed book publishers through the personal distribution of questionnaires during the Book Arsenal event (April 2016 and May 2017) and

through online surveys with the support of the Ukrainian Association of Publishers and Booksellers and the Book Chamber of Ukraine (June—November 2017). In total, representatives of 136 Ukrainian publishers responded to the survey questions. Only 33.1% of these publishers released e-books from time to time. Fewer than ten publishers regularly released new titles in both print and digital formats. At the same time, among 66.9% of the surveyed publishers focused only on printed books, 49.4% planned to diversify their activities in the future by entering the digital book market (Zhenchenko, 2019, p. 273).

The lack of sales statistics is one problem for the Ukrainian book market. As a result, the exact amount of revenue generated by the sale of electronic publications is not known. According to the monograph «Digital Transformations of the Publishing Industry», the Ukrainian ebook market shows similar trends to Eastern European countries such as Slovenia, Bulgaria and Hungary, where revenue from electronic publications did not exceed 1% of total book sales in 2018 [(Zhenchenko, 2019), p. 274].

Similar figures presented by the authors of the study «Publishing in Ukraine: A Review of the Sector, Final Report 2020»: «Most publishers estimated their e-book revenue to be between 1–3% of turnover» [(Shercliff, 2021), p. 24].

The major obstacle to the development of e-book publishing not only is electronic piracy but also the lack of places for selling legal e-books and audiobooks with protected digital content. Publishers also noted the following issues during the survey:

- *‘We are just starting to work with e-books, but there are no safe spaces to sell them. There’s a huge level of piracy.’*
- *‘Audiobooks, there is a lack of places to sell them.’*
- *‘We publish and sell e-books and people do buy a little, but we don’t make much money.’ [(Shercliff, 2021), p. 24].*

The second, no less important problem is the absence of an e-book accounting system. Data collection and statistical accounting of various aspects of publishing in Ukraine is carried out by the Book Chamber of Ukraine according to the requirements of the international standard ISO SO 9707:2008 Information and documentation—Statistics on the production and distribution of books, newspapers, periodicals and electronic publications [(Gorobets, 2018), p. 4].

In 2014 the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting approved the form 1-B (books) «Report on the publication of book products», which contains information on the title, ISBN, the language of the publication, its volume, circulation, manufacturer’s data, date of distribution of the mandatory copy, name of the budget programme (if the books were published at the expense of the budget programme), but this form is focused on the accounting of printed publications only. The Book Chamber of Ukraine compiles statistics on e-book publishing only based on mandatory copies of local e-books on CD-ROM, which does not correspond to modern technologies of e-book production.

We propose the following solutions to the above problems:

1. Adding information on the publishing of paper books in electronic and audio formats to the reporting in Form 1-B.
2. Encourage at the state level the creation and development of digital platforms for distributing e-books and audiobooks by Ukrainian publishers.
3. Developing mechanisms for public e-book procurement from publishers to fill [Ukraine's digital libraries](#).
4. Improving Ukrainian legislation in electronic publishing and anti-piracy by the best practices of European legislation.

### ***Implementation of State Programmes to Support Reading***

The [Ukrainian Book Institute](#) researches reading habits in Ukraine. In 2020, two all-Ukrainian types of research were conducted: «Reading in the Context of media consumption and Life Construction» and «Reading in the Context of media consumption: impact of Lockdown on Ukrainians' reading behaviours».

The study «Reading in the Context of Media Consumption and Life Construction» found that «one-third of Ukrainians prefer to read books in Ukrainian. And this share has increased significantly—32% against 24% in 2018» (Vološevych & Shurenkova, 2020, p. 71).

During the war, book prices increased and the purchasing power of the population decreased significantly, as a result of which the demand for book products decreased. Against this background, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted Resolution No. 190-r on 3 March 2023, approving the Reading as a Life Strategy for the period until 2032 and an operational plan for its implementation from 2023 to 2025, which includes several key actions by the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine and the State Committee of Television and Radio of Ukraine.

- Introducing European standards for the provision and monitoring of compulsory free copies by publishers.
- Preventing the distribution of counterfeit book products.
- Promoting the creation and dissemination of the Ukrainian narrative and the popularisation of the cultures of Ukraine's partner countries.

### ***Continuation and Development of the Translate Ukraine State Grant Programme***

Translate Ukraine—is a programme of the Ukrainian Book Institute which partly compensates the expenses of the publisher on the translation and publishing of Ukrainian literature in foreign languages.

The Institute supports the projects of translations of literary works or anthologies of literary works written in Ukrainian and published by Ukrainian publishers. The

number of applications for participation in the Translation Support Program from one publisher is unlimited.

By the [Regulation](#), Ukrainian publishers can participate in the Translation Support Program for translations of Ukrainian literary works into other languages. Applications for translation of Ukrainian literary works that have already been translated and published on the applicant's book market in the relevant foreign language are not accepted for participation in the Program.

This programme enabled 53 literary works to get translated into 21 different languages, including English, German, Italian, French, Slovak and Polish, as well as Arabic, Hebrew, Mongolian, Macedonian and others, in 24 countries. A total of £114,000 has been allocated to the programme to support the translation of works by Ukrainian authors. According to the official website of the [Ukrainian Book Institute](#), these 53 translations represent 30% of the total translations of Ukrainian literature to be published in other languages in 2020.

## Conclusions

Even in the difficult times of war, with limited state funding for creative industry programmes, Ukrainian state institutions are actively working to establish a state policy for book publishing, recognising that the Ukrainian book serves as a crucial tool on the cultural front. Important tasks for the post-war restoration of book publishing for state organisations, professional associations and the publishing community include updating publishing standards and the system of statistical accounting of book products, especially in the field of e-books and audiobooks; seeking grant support from international organisations for the restoration and development of Ukrainian publishing houses and book distributors; creating new digital platforms for e-book publishing and distribution of digital publishing content; promoting reading practices among children and teenagers and increasing the visibility of Ukraine and Ukrainian literature in the international cultural space promoting reading.

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