

FUTURE OF BOOKS AND LITERACY AT THE CENTER OF THE SECOND EDITION OF BOOK 2.0

- The Second Edition of Book 2.0 brought together around 600 participants and 65 speakers, one-third of whom were international, reinforcing the strategic relevance of the event.
- A study presented at the event highlighted the improvement in the Portuguese reading habits, with growth in book sales and an increase in sales among younger people.
- The ‘Carbon Footprint Whitepaper’ was presented, offering practical recommendations for the book sector to address climate impacts and achieve Net Zero.
- Key topics of this edition went beyond the future of reading, including planet sustainability, freedom of expression and writing, new perspectives on education, the latent concern of mental health (especially among young people), and the importance of financial literacy in a country where around two million people live in poverty, among other subjects.

Lisbon, 12 September 2024 – After two days of intense debate and exchange of ideas about the future of books and literacy, the organizers of [Book 2.0](#) are very positive about the event, which recorded a higher number of participants compared to the first edition. Among the 600 participants who took part in the two-day event at Museu do Oriente, the majority were women (62%), and there was a 32% increase in international participants, showing the relevance of this initiative by the [Portuguese Publishers and Booksellers Association \(APEL\)](#).

“APEL and its members wanted to take responsibility for promoting the discussion around the challenges and opportunities facing books and literacy in Portugal, calling authors, publishers, associations, and thinkers from both national and international spheres to join in on the conversation. We have a long road ahead, but knowing that more and more people are opening doors to new worlds and ideas, especially the younger ones, gives us hope for the future. Undoubtedly, reading, literacy, and digitalization are key to influencing the next generation to resist manipulation and develop strong critical thinking,” said **Pedro Sobral, President of APEL**. *“For the second consecutive year, Book 2.0 has provided a platform for a fruitful and necessary debate, driven by two studies: one related to the buying and reading habits of the Portuguese people and another conducted among paper producers, printers, publishers, distributors, and booksellers, which resulted in a Carbon Footprint Whitepaper. We also have an ethical duty to build a sustainable future for our industry, which will ensure that books will nurture the next generation of readers and protect our environment.”*

One of the most significant moments of the first day of Book 2.0 was the presentation of the study **“Book Market: Buying and Reading Habits in Portugal”**, developed by Nielsen/GFK for APEL. This study revealed that the Portuguese publishing market experienced significant growth of around 7% in 2023, with a

total volume of 187 million euros, compared to 175 million euros in 2022. According to the study, the percentage of Portuguese people who bought books increased to 65% in 2023 (vs. 62% in 2022), but the most noteworthy change was in the profile of buyers: the 25-34 age group became the top purchasers (76%), and the 15-24 age group was the one that reported buying more books than in 2022, with 41%. The middle class (C) regained its leadership in book purchases (73%).

On the afternoon of the first day of Book 2.0, the "*Carbon Footprint Whitepaper*" of the book sector was presented, offering practical recommendations aimed at promoting collective efforts to tackle climate impacts, particularly through identifying areas where collective actions can be taken to accelerate emissions reduction across the supply chain. This '*Carbon Footprint Whitepaper*' resulted from a study led by Rachel Martin, Global Sustainability Director at Elsevier, which involved the participation of Portuguese paper producers, printers, publishers, distributors, and booksellers. The document recommends setting a vision for 2050 to accelerate the aggregation and sharing of carbon data, as well as raising awareness of compliance with emerging regulations. Collaboration across the supply chain is essential for reducing carbon emissions. The study also emphasizes the need for innovation, especially in paper production and resource optimization in printing.

Book 2.0 #The Future of Reading brought us, for the second year in a row, **two days filled with many inspiring conversations and topics**. On the 5th and 6th of September 2024, at the iconic Oriente Museum in Lisbon, we had the opportunity to discuss issues that affect us all, to rethink new and stronger policies for the country in a persistent and resilient path to preserve our legacy and wisdom. The event featured **65 speakers on stage** – including authors, thinkers, business leaders, political decision-makers, and journalists – who shared powerful reflections that resonate beyond Book 2.0 and Portugal, opening new horizons for what is to come. **Topics covered far beyond the future of reading**, with highlights on planet sustainability, freedom of expression and writing, new approaches to education, the growing concern of mental health, particularly among younger generations, the importance of financial literacy in a country with nearly two million people living in poverty, among others.

The **current role of public libraries** was also a key national topic, recognized not only as spaces for reading and learning, but also as cultural hubs with expanded programming, fostering connections with local communities, as well as workspaces and places of silence and connection. This session was promoted in partnership with [Direção-Geral do Livro, dos Arquivos e das Bibliotecas \(DGLAB\)](#) and [Rede de Bibliotecas Municipais de Lisboa \(BLX\)](#).

Another highlight of this second edition of Book 2.0 was the **profound impact of rising temperatures on our planet**, in a talk by [Jeff Goodell](#), journalist and best-selling author of *'The Heat Will Kill You First'*, a regular on the biggest US television channels to comment on issues related to energy and the environment, where he says that our world was built for a climate that no longer exists, which applies both to our cities and urban infrastructures, but also to our cultural and religious reality. *"Much of the literature and discussions about climate change are placed in the future, even by people who know the subject and understand it well. There is a tendency to think that climate change and its risks are something that will happen to people in distant places or future generations. They do not realize that the risk is happening now,"* alerts Jeff Goodell.

Happiness was also a key topic presented in the Education chapter, reflecting on the importance of unlocking the potential of each person, especially the younger ones, and rethinking current education and learning models. This is a growing concern in a country where **mental health and depression rates** are among the highest in Europe. Portugal is the second OECD country with the highest use of antidepressants, and when it comes to anxiolytics, it is the highest. Book 2.0 brought us a profound reflection on what it means to be happy and how we can deconstruct this concept in an age where basic recommendations and advice are undervalued due to lack of time, leading to more immediate and easier solutions.

How can digital platforms support education? How can they increase a country's literacy? *'What School Doesn't Teach You'* was another topic addressed in this second edition of Book 2.0, where **financial literacy** was discussed. Despite recent improvements in financial knowledge, Portugal ranks near the bottom in the European context (based on a Eurobarometer on financial literacy conducted for the European Commission in 2023). Today, digital platforms play an important role in disseminating knowledge. Educational programs that support the learning systems of young people, such as the example presented by [Jovens for Schools](#) the largest financial education company in Brazil, which designs programs on financial education, entrepreneurship, and socio-emotional education in a fun, practical, and intuitive way, were discussed.

The 2024 edition of Book 2.0 had the High Patronage of His Excellency the [President of the Portuguese Republic](#) and the support of the [Lisbon City Council](#), [Rede de Bibliotecas de Lisboa – BLX](#), [Direção-Geral do Livro, dos Arquivos e das Bibliotecas \(DGLAB\)](#), [Plano Nacional de Leitura](#), [Fundação Oriente](#), [International Publishers Association](#), [European and International Booksellers Federation](#), [World Literacy Foundation](#), [Federation of European Publishers](#), [Clube das Mulheres Escritoras](#), [C. Santos VP](#) and [Altis Belém](#), with [Vanilla Project](#) as strategic partner and producer.

Book 2.0 #The Future of Reading is undoubtedly the **largest event discussing the future of books, literacy, and education in Portugal and Europe**, with the third edition already planned for 2025.

All sessions will soon be available on the [Youtube](#) and [Spotify](#) channels.

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